



**THE GEORGE  
WASHINGTON  
UNIVERSITY**  
WASHINGTON, DC

**Responsible University Official:**  
Director, Student Accounts Services  
**Responsible Office:** Student Accounts  
Services  
**Last Revised Date:** October 1, 2018

## **STUDENT ACCOUNTS PAST DUE BALANCES**

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### **Policy Statement**

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The payment of tuition and all other applicable fees becomes the responsibility of the student upon registration at the university. All balances are due by the first day of the semester.

Student accounts that are past due are encumbered and subject to interest, late fees, and are prohibited from accessing university services including but not limited to registration, grades, housing assignments, diplomas, and transcripts. Students whose registration privileges have been revoked or canceled for failure to make timely payments are not permitted to attend class or occupy University housing.

Student Accounts that are more than 90 days past due will be referred to a third party collection agency and/or attorney for collection.

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### **Reason for Policy**

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The purpose of this policy is to assist students in managing their financial accounts.

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### **Who is Governed by this Policy**

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Staff and students

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## Policy

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Upon registration, the student incurs a financial obligation to the university. Tuition, room and board and other fees are due and must be paid in full by the first day of the semester or upon registration if later, unless a student is actively participating in a [GW monthly payment plan](#).

Student accounts that are not paid in full by the first day of the semester and / or not actively participating in a [GW monthly payment plan](#) are considered past due and are subject to the following:

- A) Interest (assessed once per month on the outstanding balance).
- B) Late Payment Fees (assessed once per semester).
- C) Financial Encumbrance (HOLD)
- D) Assignment to a collection agency (if account is more than 90 days past due)

### Interest

Interest accrues monthly at an **ANNUAL PERCENTAGE RATE** of 12% on past due balances.

The university has an average of a 28-day billing cycle, depending on the timing of the semester start dates. The university has the right to bill at any time during the billing cycle, but will only assess interest after the previous due date has lapsed.

Interest and late fees may be waived if financial aid posted late due to no fault of the student.

### Late Payment Fees

A Late Payment Fee of \$150 is assessed once per semester on any account with an outstanding balance at the first statement due date after the semester starts (mid-October for the fall and mid-February for spring semesters). Late Payment fees are not assessed during the summer semester.

### **Financial Holds**

Current students with a past due balance of \$1,000 or more will have a financial hold placed on their accounts. If the student receives tuition benefits from the University, a hold will be placed on the account if there is a past due balance of \$75 or more.

A hold will also be placed on an account if a payment, previously credited to the account, is returned unpaid by a financial institution for any reason, in any amount.

A hold will also be placed on an account if there is no active address available in our system of record, and/or if mail is returned as undeliverable.

Graduating seniors with past due balance of \$50 or more will have a financial hold placed on their accounts. The balance of these accounts must be zero before a diploma will be issued. The hold will not prevent degree conferral but will prevent the issuance of transcripts, letters of completion, diplomas, etc.

### **Pre-Collection Services**

At the end of each semester, accounts with balances greater than \$1,000 and all balances that predate the semester that has just completed are sent to the university's pre-collection service provider (ECSI). A financial hold is placed on all accounts in the pre-collection process/cycle who meet the above criteria. Students whose accounts are in pre-collection process/cycle are eligible to enroll in an ECSI-administered payment plan depending on their balance. Students enrolled in an ECSI-administered payment plan may request the financial hold be removed and may be permitted to register for future semester classes. These students must keep their payment plans and their current semester account balance in good standing; they will not have access to other university services (transcripts, letters of completion, diplomas, etc.) until their past due balance is zero.

ECSI-administered payment plans are open to students in pre-collections only.

If a student defaults on their ECSI-administered payment plan, their account balance related to the payment plan will be placed with a collection agency regardless of the current semester's account balance status.

If a student enrolled in an ECSI-administered payment plan has not paid the current semester balance in full by the beginning of the current semester, a financial hold will be placed on the account restricting the student's future registration privileges, and their ability to receive transcripts, diplomas, and other academic information.

Accounts already placed with a collection agency may make payment agreements with their agency but are not eligible to register.

### **Other**

All other accounts related to former students, (students not currently enrolled or registered) with a past due balance, regardless of the amount, will have a financial

hold placed on their accounts. The balance of these accounts must be zero before the student's privileges above can be restored.

To resolve a hold during the two weeks prior to the semester start date and the first week after the semester start date, payments must be made via certified funds or wire transfer. Accounts will be encumbered for online ACH payments and payments by check for 10 business days to allow for payment processing.

### **Accounts Past Due more than 90 days**

Accounts in the Pre-Collection Service for 90 days or more and not enrolled in an ECSI payment plan will be referred to a third party collection agency and/or attorney for collection.

### **Billing Disputes**

The university will assume that the billing statements provided to the students are correct and that the student agrees to pay the amount due if the university is not informed in writing of an error within 60 days of the initial receipt of the statement on which the disputed amount appears. Written disputes can be submitted via email to SAO@gwu.edu.

If the university determines that a mistake has been made on the student's bill, the student will not have to pay interest related to the questioned amount. If the initial bill by the university is determined to be accurate the student may have to pay interest and will have to make up any missed payments on the questioned amount. In either case, the student will receive a statement of the amount due and the date that it is due.

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## **Definitions**

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**Encumbrance:** A restriction placed on an account.

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## **Contacts**

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| <b>Contact</b>        | <b>Telephone</b> | <b>Email</b> |
|-----------------------|------------------|--------------|
| Student Account Holds | 202-994-7350     | SAO@gwu.edu  |

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## **Document History**

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- **Last Revised Date:** October 1, 2018
- **Next Review Date:** September 20, 2019

- **Policy Origination Date:** Not Available

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## **Who Approved This Policy**

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Mark Diaz, Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer

*This policy, as well as all **university policies**, are located on the **Compliance Office website**.*