

Financial Obligations Policy

Policy Number: PRP 5361

Commonwealth University of Pennsylvania

Issued as Interim Policy **XX-XXX on XXX**, 2024

Issued by Eric Ness, Vice President for Fiscal Affairs

Responsible Office: Student Billing Office, Office of Financial Aid and Office of the Registrar

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for use by offices that are authorized to withhold a student transcript and/or diploma. These guidelines are intended to encourage student responsibility while supporting retention and student success.

In October 2023, the Department of Education published a final regulation addressing financial responsibility, administrative capability, certification procedures and Ability to Benefit. [Biden-Harris Administration Releases Final Rules that Strengthen Accountability for Colleges and Consumer Protection for Students | U.S. Department of Education.](#)

Within the certification procedure provisions, DOE made changes to its Program Participation Agreements with institutions to prohibit withholding transcripts in certain circumstances.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all members of the Commonwealth University of Pennsylvania community.

3. Definitions, Roles and Responsibilities

3.1. Definitions

- 3.1.1. **Financial Obligation** – Includes tuition, fees and fines owed by a student to the university.
- 3.1.2. **Restricting Office** – the office responsible for placing a restriction on a student's record under applicable standards or policies of the University.

3.2. Roles and Responsibilities

- 3.2.1. Restricting offices, including the Office of the Registrar, the Office of Financial Aid, and the Student Billing Office, will be responsible for placing, reviewing and reviewing restrictions on student accounts in accordance with applicable laws and governing policies, procedures and standards.

4. Policy

- 4.1. Transcripts and diplomas may be withheld where restrictions have been placed on a student's record, except in the following cases:
 - 4.1.1. A debt on a student's account is created because of an error made by the university's administration of Title IV funds;
 - 4.1.2. Fraud or misconduct by the university or its employees has been alleged and substantiated; and
 - 4.1.3. The student received Title IV aid and all institutional charges for that payment period were paid or included in an agreement with the University or its agent to pay.
- 4.2. The University will provide students with timely notice when a restriction has been placed on the student's record by a restricting office.
- 4.3. A student may request a review of any restrictions on their record.
- 4.4. If a student satisfies the restricting office's requirements, the restriction on the student's record or account will be removed.
- 4.5. Nothing in this policy is intended to prevent the University from utilizing all permissible methods of collecting a balance on a student's account.

5. Compliance and Enforcement

- 5.1 Restriction lists will be reviewed and updated regularly by the restricting office.
- 5.2 This policy and the related procedures will be reviewed every five years by the Office of Fiscal Affairs.

6. Supporting Documents

Final regulations implementing Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended, related to financial responsibility, administrative capability, certification procedures, and ability to pay, as issued by the U.S. Department of Education as more fully set forth at 34 CFR 668.

6.2 History

6.2.1 Issued as an Interim Policy by the Vice President for Fiscal Affairs, Financial Obligations Policy issued by Dr. Richard H. Rugen, Vice President for Administration and Finance, as an interim policy for Bloomsburg University on May 1, 2009

6.2.2 **Effective Date** – XXXX

6.3 **Related Policies** – N/A

6.4 **Related Procedures - Procedure for Financial Obligations, Procedure Number** XX-XXX

6.5 **Contacts for Additional Information and Reporting**

Student Billing Office

Attn: Director of Student Accounts

studentbilling@commonwealthu.edu

Main telephone number: 570.389.5261

Office of the Registrar

Attn: Registrar

registrar@commonwealthu.edu

Main telephone number: 570.389.4263

Office of Financial Aid

Attn: Director of Financial Aid

Main telephone number: 570.662.4129

financialaid@commonwealthu.edu