

**Rutgers University Senate  
Student Affairs Committee  
Response to Charge S-1211 on Deregistration for Non-payment of Term Bills  
December 2013**

The Student Affairs Committee was issued the following charge by the Senate Executive Committee:

**Charge S-1211 - Dropping Students from Rosters for Non-Payment of Term Bills:** Look into the practice of removing students from the roster if they do not pay their term bills on time.

**Background**

Issues were raised regarding students still attending classes after being deregistered for non-payment of term bills. Those students had no mechanism for receiving course assignments, or for having grades or attendance tracked in the event they were reinstated in the course. Reasons for non-payment of the term bills varied widely, but notably included late receipt of student loans or other forms of financial assistance. The Student Affairs Committee researched the issue, and its findings and recommendations are contained in this report.

**Summary of Investigation into Students Deregistered for Non-Payment of Term Bills**

On February 22, 2013, University Controller Theresa (Terry) Wooding and Newark Vice Chancellor for Academic Services and Programs John Gunkel briefed the Student Affairs Committee on the process by which students are deregistered due to non-payment. Of specific note during these briefings were the numerous attempts made by various Rutgers offices to communicate with students to resolve outstanding balances in advance of deregistration. Students are issued approximately 27 individual communications in a variety of formats prior to deregistration. These communications are delivered over an approximately two-month period through a variety of media, including email, phone, hard copy via USPS and/or campus mail, etc.

Efforts of staff from various financial units at Rutgers constitute a robust effort to encourage students to rectify their non-payment issues prior to deregistration. Unfortunately, for a significant percentage of the population, the act of deregistration and the ensuing separation from the classroom and course resources are the primary or only effective motivations to action.

On May 13, 2013, Senator and SAC member Michael Stillwagon met with Terry Wooding at ASB I. During this meeting, they discussed the multiple efforts used to communicate with students regarding outstanding, delinquent term bills. The current role of Residence Life staff in this process, which includes numerous communication regarding pending deregistration and removal from campus residency was reviewed. Also discussed was the timing for housing charges appearing on a student term bill, and whether those charges arriving earlier could be helpful. However, no immediate means of improving the situations relating to non-payment or deregistration were identified.

Given the extensive volume of communication preceding the cancellation of registration, we foresee any actions taken in lieu of deregistration as being unlikely to alter the student response to the aforementioned communications. Taking alternative action is likely to only further delay the process, and not significantly decrease the likelihood of students being deregistered in considerable numbers.

Additionally, there is no viable mechanism to keep students on course lists following deregistration, even if they continue to attend classes while deregistered.

## Conclusions

The Student Affairs Committee concludes that:

- No additional or modified action is recommended to change the policies or procedures currently employed regarding deregistration for non-payment.
- No further action can be taken to ameliorate the effect of deregistration on students still attending classes while deregistered.

### **Student Affairs Committee**

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