**R2T4 Policy**

Overview of Federal Policy

The College of San Mateo Financial Aid office is required to determine the earned and unearned portions of Title IV aid as of the date the student ceased attendance before the end of the payment period. These requirements do not apply to a student who did not actually cease attendance at the School. For example, when a student reduces his or her course load from 12 credits to 9 credits, the reduction represents a change in enrollment status, not a withdrawal.

Title IV funds are awarded to a student under the assumption that the student will attend school for the entire period for which the assistance is awarded. When a student withdraws, the student may no longer be eligible for the full amount of Title IV funds that the student was originally scheduled to receive.

The R2T4 regulations do not dictate an institutional refund policy. Instead, the College of San Mateo is required to determine the earned and unearned portions of Title IV aid as of the date the student ceased attendance based on the amount of time the student spent in attendance or was scheduled to be in attendance. Up through the 60 percent point in each payment period, a pro-rata schedule is used to determine the amount of the Title IV funds the student has earned at the time of withdrawal. After the 60 percent point in the term in which the student is enrolled in the payment period, a student has earned 100 percent of the Title IV funds the student was scheduled to receive during the period; there are no unearned funds. However, the Financial Aid office must still determine whether the student is eligible for a post-withdrawal disbursement (PWD). A PWD is when the student has received less Title IV aid than the amount earned, the school must offer a disbursement of the earned aid that was not received.

**Applicable Deadlines**
Two main deadlines impact most R2T4 calculations
● 45-day time frame to return Title IV funds as a result of the R2T4 calculation
● 30-day required notification of the need for authorization to make a PWD of Direct Loan funds

For a list of other R2T4 and PWD deadlines refer to Volume 5, Chapter 2 of the FSA Handbook.

**Overview of CSM Policy**

The requirements for Title IV program funds, when students withdraw, are separate from the College of San Mateo refund policy. Therefore, students may still have unpaid School charges. The College of San Mateo will charge the student for any Title IV program funds that the Financial Aid Office was required to return. The College of San Mateo has a designated team of financial aid technicians who, in compliance with Federal, state, and College guidelines, determine and process the earned and unearned portions of Federal, state, private and institutional aid as of the effective date the student withdrew, ceased attendance, or did not attend (i.e., No-Show).

**There are three ways to take a break from studies at the College of San Mateo:**

1**. Withdrawal -** is the act of discontinuing enrollment either before or during a quarter. Withdrawal without a leave of absence means that a student will leave The College of San Mateo without a plan to return.
2. Leave of Absence (LOA) - is a plan to leave the College of San Mateo while arranging for a specific pre-approved return date.

3. **Unofficial Withdrawals**- if a student does not officially withdraw from all classes but fails to earn a passing grade in at least one course, federal aid regulations require that we assume the student has “unofficially withdrawn,” unless it can be documented that the student completed the enrollment period. Unofficial withdrawals require a Title IV refund calculation at the midpoint of the enrollment

Any refund of registration fees paid will follow the refund schedule and be based on the effective date of the withdrawal. Federal Student Aid recipients may be required to return funds, with proration of the aid based on the number of days attended.

Students will withdraw from all classes on their WebSMART accounts to completely withdraw from all registered courses. To recalculate a student's eligibility for Title IV funds, the Financial Aid Office must determine the percentage of Federal Student Aid the student earned during the student's payment period. The College of San Mateo Admissions and Records office is the designated office of record for student withdrawals. The Registrar determines the effective date in which the student has withdrawn from the College. In most instances, the effective withdrawal date is based on the date the student submits the withdrawal on WebSMART

Documentation examples received for withdrawals including F/W grades

The Financial Aid office is sent reports with students who have withdrawn from classes. For Official Withdraws, the report is sent weekly throughout the semester. For Unofficial Withdraws, the report is sent once a semester after final grades have been posted.

**COVID Update**

On March 27, 2020, the Coronavirus Aid Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES) was passed, providing emergency flexibilities and regulatory relief for higher education institutions and their students.

Return of Title IV (R2T4) requires students who receive federal financial assistance and completely withdraw from all classes before completing more than 60% of the semester to return any unearned federal funds. The amount of the repayment will be calculated on a pro-rata basis of the number of calendar days in the term. Pell Grant, FSEOG, and Federal Direct Student Loans (Title IV federal financial aid) will be included in the calculation. Due to the disruption caused by COVID-19, requirements for students and schools to return unearned federal grants or loans to the Department of Education were waived for the Spring 2020 term. Beginning in the Summer 2020 term, students whose withdrawal is COVID related are required to complete an attestation indicating the reason for their withdrawal. If approved, the waiver may be applied.

More information can be found in our Handbook at:

<https://smccd.edu/financialaid/handbook.php#titleivheading>