



SOLUTIONS FOR PAYMENT PLANS, CREDIT BALANCES, AND PAST DUE ACCOUNTS

October 2021

Seven horizontal lines for notes.



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Carrie Jones, Director of Student Accounts
Loras College, Dubuque

Seven horizontal lines for notes.

Fun Facts About Me

- Director of Student Accounts since May of 2009
- Previously in banking- I worked as a teller all the way up through the branch manager position.
- Staff of one with a part-time backup. Primary duties at Loras include invoicing tuition, fees, housing, and meal plans, publishing monthly statements, administering semester payment plans, answering student and parent inquiries, 1098-T tax form publication, CARES/HEERF Act distribution, VA School Certifying Official, and "other duties as assigned" ☺
- First time being a panelist at a conference!



Seven horizontal lines for notes.

Fun Facts About Loras College

- Private, Liberal Arts, Catholic College located in Dubuque
- Founded in 1839, Loras College is the oldest post-secondary institution in the state.
- Undergraduate enrollment of 1,302
 - 37 Undergraduate programs including business administration, kinesiology, psychology, social work, education, and sport management just to name a few.
- Graduate enrollment of 88
 - Graduate programs include psychology, school counseling, athletic training, coaching, applied analytics, and biomedical sciences.



Tuition Payment Plans

- Transact Payments (also known as HigherOne and CASHNet)
- All students with an outstanding balance after charges and aid are applied are automatically enrolled in a 4-monthly payment plan for the term.
- Fall payment plan: August 15-November 15
- Spring payment plan: December 15-March 15
- No fee for the payment plan unless monthly payment is not made. \$50 service charge for each missed or incomplete payment.



Tuition Payment Plans (cont.)

- Biggest challenge is financial aid changes after the August 1 (for fall) or December 1 date (for spring). If a student gets additional financial aid we sometimes have to manually redistribute the payment plan so the payments equal out. Otherwise it will show the current payment of \$1,000 but subsequent payments of \$250.
- Another challenge is that our payment plan details do not update unless the plan is accessed and a 'fresh lookup' is done. This can lead to incorrect information on the statements as it relates to the payment plan details. Work in progress on a solution.
- Since we do not have the cashiering module through Transact, our over the counter payments do not post to the payment plan until we do a batch upload at end of business each day.



Issuing Credit Refund Balances

- Two options- paper check or eRefund.
- eRefunds are processed through Transact. Students must sign up through their online student account access. Parents cannot enroll for the student!
- Paper checks are mailed to home address on file. We do not allow students to pick up checks in the Business Office. This is an effort to drive eRefund signups.
- Only issue refunds once a week on Thursdays.
- Our biggest challenge with refunds is getting students to sign up for eRefund so we can direct deposit the funds and not have the expense of mailing checks home.



Past Due Balance Policies

- Students are allowed to carry up to \$500 from the fall semester over into the spring semester.
- Balances over \$500 are placed on registration hold and they cannot register until the balance is below \$500 or have secured aid that will bring their balance below \$500 in the near future (private loan, parent loan, etc.)
- We begin emailing students after the second payment is due in September to let them know they are behind on payments. Registration for J-term is in early October and registration for the spring term is in early November.



Past Due Balance Policies (cont.)

- If a student leaves the college for any reason but still has a balance due, the account is considered delinquent.
- Delinquent accounts incur a 3% delinquency charge each month on the outstanding balance.
- We send a final bill, 30-day, 60-day, and 90-day notices before the account is sent to a collection agency.
- We use:
 - L & M Accounts, Moline, IL
 - Cedar Financial, Calabasas, CA (primarily deal with our international accounts)
 - National Recoveries; Ham Lake, MN



Communication Methods

- Primary form of communication is the student's Loras College email address.
 - Have found that a 'catchy' subject line is the key to getting students to read the email (ie. Free Money Friday).
- We will contact a secondary email address or try the student via phone after multiple attempts through the Loras email have been unsuccessful.
- Text message students through Mongoose Cadence or Blackboard Connect.
 - Students can block texts
 - Limited number of characters for the message
 - Students cannot directly respond through Blackboard, but can message back through Mongoose



Questions?





SOLUTIONS FOR PAYMENT PLANS, CREDIT BALANCES, AND PAST DUE ACCOUNTS

Tim Bakula – Director of Financial Aid and Scholarships
University of Northern Iowa

Just the Facts: UNI and Me

- University of Northern Iowa
 - Public, regional-comprehensive university in Cedar Falls
 - Fall 2021 enrollment: 9,231 (undergrads and grads)
- Me
 - Director of Financial Aid and Scholarships since 2017.
 - Have worked in our office since 2003.
 - 11 full-time staff, 16 student employees.
 - Collaborate routinely with our Office of Business Operations



Just the Facts: Office of Business Operations

- Includes Accounts Payable, Accounts Receivable, Cashiering, Payroll, Purchasing, Perkins Loan (collection), and Student Accounts
- Student Accounts
 - 2 full-time staff and 2 student employees
- Cashiers
 - 2 full-time staff and 1 student employee
- Students serve as frontline to answering phones and walk-in traffic
- Also make outreach calls during registration, small balances not sent to collection, etc.



Tuition Payment Plans

- Utilize the delivered PeopleSoft payment plan
- Standard plan offered to students is a 5 month plan
 - Cost is \$20 per semester.
- Biggest challenge is getting students to enroll.
 - Cover this at orientation for first year students.
 - We market this to students through email several times before the due date to enroll passes.
 - All students receive the same communications regardless if they are first year or not.



Issuing Credit Refund Balances

- Refunds issued daily.
- Offer check or ACH for refunds.
- Students can enroll in Direct Deposit at anytime through student portal (MyUNiverse)
- Currently 70% of students are registered for direct deposit.
- Biggest challenges are getting students to enroll in ACH to limit the number of checks going out.
 - Currently started addressing students that haven't cashed paper checks much sooner in an effort to cut down on unclaimed property.
- An additional challenge we have had is PRO-ACTIVELY identifying the students that are enrolled in direct deposit and those that are not.
- Working on development of a report that could indicate which students have or have not registered for direct deposit prior to refunds going out. Plan to create a communication plan to target those students and get them to sign up.
- Paper checks are held 14 days for pick-up, then mailed to home address.



Past Due Balance Policies

- Allow a student to register with \$500 past due, however, everything 90+ days old must be paid.
- Work with our financial aid office for situations where a student may have future aid we can capture to cover the future bill and the past due bill. We have a form the student signs to authorize this.
- Accounts get a dunning letter at if they are 90+ days past due and are not enrolled.
 - If the don't respond to our letter in 30 days, (which we offer internal collections via payment plan, etc) we place them with an agency for pre-collect.
 - They are rolled over to first placement 30 days after that.
- Work closely with the office of financial aid, student success and retention, and the dean of students to resolve past due balances, and keep students from the collections process.



Questions?





LYNNETTE LYONS

Finance Manager at Northeast Iowa
Community College

Finance Manager Northeast Iowa Community College

- 32 years with NICC
 - 12 years – Continuing Education Department (now Business & Community Solutions)
 - 20 years – Finance Department with the past 5 years as Finance Manager
- Primary Functions of Finance Manager
 - Student receivables, including payment plan, statement and collection processes
 - Student refunds, both personal payments and financial aid
 - Student sponsorship processing, including high school concurrent enrollment
 - Financial aid posting and reconciliation
 - Federal drawdown of financial aid and applicable grants from G5
 - Annual 1098-T processing
 - AR and non-AR code set-up
 - Banking processes, quarterly investment review, certified budget assistance



Northeast Iowa Community College

• The NICC district consists of all or part of 13 counties in northeast Iowa:

Allamakee	Bremer	Buchanan	Chickasaw
Clayton	Delaware	Dubuque	Fayette
Jackson	Jones	Howard	Mitchell
Winnesheik			



• Locations:

Campuses



Callmar Campus
Our main campus is located in Callmar. In the scenic Upper Iowa River valley, 10 miles south of Decorah on Hwy. 150.



Peoria Campus
The Peoria campus is located 15 minutes west of Dubuque on Hwy 20.



Additional Locations

		
<p>Cresco Center* The Cresco Center is located on Hwy. 9 northwest of the Calmar Campus.</p>	<p>Dubuque Center* The Dubuque Center is located in the heart of downtown Dubuque at the Town Clock.</p>	<p>Manchester Center The Manchester Center is located in the Dupaco Community Credit Union Building on Hwy. 13 in Manchester.</p>
		
<p>New Hampton* The New Hampton service location is housed inside the New Hampton High School.</p>	<p>RAMS / Oelwein Center* The Regional Academy for Math and Science, Oelwein Center, is located off of Hwy. 150 in Oelwein.</p>	<p>Town Clock Business Center The Town Clock Business Center is located in the heart of downtown Dubuque at the Town Clock.</p>



		
<p>Waukon Center* The Waukon Center is located inside the Waukon Wellness Center building.</p>	<p>Wildier Business Center The Wildier Business Center is located on the Calmar Campus.</p>	<p>Iowa's Dairy Center Iowa's Dairy Center is located at the south end of the Calmar Campus.</p>
	<p>High Schools Cascade High School* Crestwood High School* Clayton Ridge High School* Deoraon High School* Eastern Alamakee High School* MFL, Mar Mac High School* New Hampton* North Fayette Valley High School* Postville High School* South Winneshiek High School* Turkey Valley High School* West Dubuque High School*</p>	
<p>NECAS The National Education Center for Agricultural Safety is located on the Peosta Campus.</p>		

*Additional locations where it is possible for a student to complete 50 percent or more of a degree program or certificate.



Enrollment at Northeast Iowa Community College

Fall 2021 by Headcount

- 53% High School students (2,199)
- 47% College Students (1,917)

Fall 2021 by Credit Hours

- 36% High School students (11,136)
- 64% College Students (19,588)



Programs at Northeast Iowa Community College

Associate of Arts

- Associate of Arts
- Business Transfer Major
- Criminal Justice Transfer Major
- Elementary Education Transfer Major
- English Transfer Major
- Exercise Science and Kinesiology Transfer Major
- History Transfer Major
- Human and Family Services Transfer Major
- Psychology Transfer Major
- Secondary Education Transfer Major
- Social Work Transfer Major
- Sociology Transfer Major

Associate of Science

- Associate of Science
- Agriculture Business Transfer Major
- Agriculture Education Transfer Major
- Agronomy Transfer Major
- Animal Science Transfer Major
- Biology Transfer Major
- Mathematics Transfer Major



Programs at Northeast Iowa Community College

Associate of Applied Science

- Accounting Specialist
- Administrative Office Management
- Agriculture Business
- Agriculture Finance
- Agronomy and Crop Science
- Applied Management
- Automotive Technology
- Beef Science Technology
- Business Administration
- Computer Analyst: Business and Web Programming
- Computer Analyst: Networking Administration and Tech Support
- Computer Technology, Networking and Programming
- Dairy Science Technology
- Engineering Technology

- Finance
- Firefighting Specialist
- Graphic Design
- Health Information Technology
- Industrial Electrician
- Industrial Maintenance Technician
- John Deere Tech
- Marketing and Digital Media
- Medical Laboratory Technician
- Nursing
- Paralegal
- Paramedic
- Production & Companion Animal Vet Tech
- Radiologic Technology
- Respiratory Care
- Surgical Technology



Programs at Northeast Iowa Community College

Diploma

- Accounting Clerk
- Administrative Office Associate
- Applied Agriculture Studies
- Automotive Mechanics
- Avionics Electronic Technician
- Building Trades
- Carpentry
- Commercial-Residential Electrician
- Computer Numerical Control (CNC) Machinist Technician
- Construction Business Management
- Dental Assisting
- Diesel Mechanics
- Early Childhood
- Gas Utility Construction and Service

- Heating and Air Conditioning
- Industrial Maintenance Technician
- Medical Assistant
- Paramedic
- Practical Nursing
- Welding



Programs at Northeast Iowa Community College

Certificate

- Agriculture Business: Agriculture Finance
- Agriculture Business: Precision Agriculture
- Business Administration
- Computer Aided Design (CAD) Specialist
- Computer Analyst: Data Center Technician
- Computer Analyst: Information Security
- Computer Analyst: Mobile Application Development
- Data Analytics
- Early Childhood Education

Career Pathway Certificate

- Computer Numerical Control Operator (CNC)
- Industrial Sewing
- Intro to Industrial Maintenance
- Welding (Basic & GMAW)
- Semi-Truck Driving
- Culinary Foundations
- Customer Service
- Building Construction
- Construction Equipment Operator
- Child Care
- Certified Nurse Aide
- Emergency Medical Technician
- Pharmacy Technician
- Phlebotomy Technician
- Web Application Bootcamp



Student Finances at Northeast Iowa Community College

Payment Plan ~ Nelnet

- Real-time balance from Colleague, including anticipated FA
- \$25 enrollment fee per semester
- Checking/savings ACH or credit card
- Student can "invite" another party to their proxy portal to authorize payments
- 5th of the month payment (can request a change to the 20th)
- Payments attempted 3x if necessary, 5th and 20th of current month and 5th of the following month
- Payment plan concludes when balance is 0 or on the last day of the following month (December, May, August). Unresolved balances are handled by NICC
- Nelnet information with link is provided in Self-Service > Student Finance, MyCampus Important Student Account Information task, email communication, and tuition due reminder brochure
- Nelnet platform works well with Colleague with access to online reconciliation reports and daily activity email

Fall 2021 Payment plan available on June 2, 2021				
Last day to enroll online	Required down payment	Number of payments	Months of payments	Enrollment fee
July 1	none	5	July-Nov	\$25
August 3	none	4	Aug-Nov	\$25
*August 26	25%	3	Sept-Nov	\$25
Spring 2022 Payment plan available on November 2, 2021				
Last day to enroll online	Required down payment	Number of payments	Months of payments	Enrollment fee
December 2	none	5	Dec-April	\$25
December 31	none	4	Jan-April	\$25
*January 27	25%	3	Feb-April	\$25
Summer 2022 Payment plan available on March 2, 2022				
Last day to enroll online	Required down payment	Number of payments	Months of payments	Enrollment fee
May 3	none	3	May-July	\$25
*May 26	40%	2	June & July	\$25



Student Finances at Northeast Iowa Community College

Refunds ~ BankMobile or NICC

- Personal payments via debit or credit card are refunded back to the card by NICC and ACH Payments Inc
- Personal payments via cash or check are refunded through BankMobile
- Financial Aid refunds are processed through BankMobile, except for parent plus loans and some alternative loans
- New student demographic information is uploaded on a weekly basis to BankMobile at least one week prior to the start of a semester (18 years of age+)
- Students can select to open a Vibe checking account with BankMobile or utilize an existing bank account they already have for depositing of refunds
- BankMobile issues a paper check to inactive accounts or those without a preference selected within 21 days of receiving the funds from NICC
- BankMobile emails student on days 1, 4, 7, 12, and 17 that they have a refund available and how to make a preference before a paper check is issued
- BankMobile information with link is provided in Self-Service > Student Finance, MyCampus important Student Account Information task, email communication, and tuition due reminder brochure
- BankMobile offers ease of access to student information along with many report capabilities for staff

Challenges

- Keeping addresses current at BankMobile
- Students disregarding emails and letters
- BankMobile envelope considered "junk mail"
- Refund checks remain uncashed when student decides they no longer want the loan
- Additional outreach needed via email/text message/phone calls to correct ACH information once an error or change occurs



Student Finances at Northeast Iowa Community College

Past Due Balances

- **Registration holds are placed on a student's account when:**
 - FAFSA not filed, personal payment not made or sponsorship in place
 - Student is not enrolled in Nelnet payment plan or has an unresolved balance at end of payment plan
 - Remaining anticipated financial aid is insufficient to cover remaining balance
 - Student has a return of Title IV or other funding resulting in a balance due
 - Personal payments via check or credit card are returned
 - Semester ending balance is over \$200
- **Balance Due Statement Process**
 - Begins after the initial financial aid disbursement
 - Students are mailed at least three (3) monthly paper statements
 - Third statement provides communication that failure to pay may result in their balance being referred to our collection agency, National Recoveries, (1 year) and the State of Iowa Offset program (5 years)
 - Aging balance report is monitored continuously throughout the semester by the Finance Office and Student Services staff continue to work with students to finalize required documents in order to complete their financial aid package



Questions?


