



Policy Number: VIII-2.21
Policy Section: Fiscal and Business Affairs
Authority: Cameron Carden Act of 2024 (Education Article, Anno. Code of MD, Section 15–138)
Effective Date: 11/25/24
Applicable Group(s): All students enrolled at UMES
Responsible Office: Office of Institutional Equity (OIE), Dean of Students, Counseling Center, Health Services, Student Accounts, & Office of the Registrar.

Cameron Carden Act - Policy on Tuition Credit to Students Who Withdraw from All Courses or the Institution for Extenuating Circumstances

I. Policy Statement

In compliance with the Cameron Carden Act of 2024, the University of Maryland Eastern Shore (UMES) has adopted this policy to allow students to withdraw from all courses and/or from the institution for a given semester due to documented extenuating circumstances. The policy establishes a framework for the review and potential approval of institutional tuition credits for students whose circumstances significantly inhibit their ability to complete any enrolled coursework during the semester of withdrawal.

This policy applies only to full-semester withdrawals and does not apply to partial withdrawals, course-level withdrawals, or situations where a student is able to complete one or more courses, including through the assignment of an incomplete.

Federal Financial Aid Considerations

Approval of a tuition credit under this policy applies only to institutional charges paid out of pocket by the student and does not supersede federal or state financial aid regulations.

Under Return of Title IV (R2T4) regulations, students who received federal financial aid and withdraw before completing 60% of the semester may be required to return a portion of unearned aid. UMES calculates earned and unearned aid based on the student's last date of attendance, excluding scheduled breaks longer than four days. After the 60% point, all federal aid is considered earned.

If a student is classified as "never attended," all Title IV aid must be returned, as aid can only be earned once attendance has begun.

Approval of a tuition credit under this policy does not guarantee a refund and does not prevent required adjustments or returns of federal, state, or third-party financial aid.

UMES is required to report withdrawn students to the National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS), which may affect in-school deferment and loan repayment status.

II. Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that UMES students who experience serious and documented extenuating circumstances are afforded an equitable process to withdraw from all courses and/or the institution and to request consideration of an institutional tuition credit for eligible out-of-pocket expenses. The policy is designed to minimize undue financial burden while prioritizing student well-being, fairness, and compliance with state and federal regulations. An application under this policy may be submitted at any time following the semester in which the extenuating circumstance occurred, provided appropriate documentation is submitted.

III. Definitions

Extenuating Circumstances: Situations that significantly hinder a student's ability to continue their education during a given semester, including but not limited to serious illness, injury, hospitalization, severe mental health conditions, military activation, or other extraordinary life events. The Counseling Center may assist with clarification of mental health-related documentation, as appropriate.

Inhibit a Student's Ability to Acquire an Education at the Institution: A condition in which, during the semester of withdrawal, the student is unable to complete **any** enrolled coursework due to extenuating circumstances. This policy does not apply when a student is able to complete one or more courses, including through an incomplete.

Paid by the Student: Funds provided directly by the student or on behalf of the student, excluding grants, scholarships, tuition remission, or third-party contracts, as defined by BOR Policy VIII-2.20.

Tuition and Fees: "Tuition" as defined in BOR Policy VIII-2.01 and mandatory fees as defined in BOR Policy VII-2.50.

IV. Policy Provisions

Submission Requirements for Requests Under the Cameron Carden Act

All requests for an exceptional circumstance withdrawal under the Cameron Carden Act must be submitted in writing and accompanied by supporting documentation. Requests must be submitted via email to registrar@umes.edu.

Email Subject Line Requirement:

To ensure timely routing and review, the email subject line must read:

Request for Cameron Carden Act Review

The written request should clearly describe the extenuating circumstance, the semester impacted, and include all relevant third-party documentation. Incomplete submissions may delay review or result in denial.

IV. Policy Provisions

A. Eligibility for Tuition Credit

Students who withdraw from all courses or from the institution due to approved extenuating circumstances may be eligible for an institutional tuition credit for tuition and mandatory fees paid out of pocket.

Approval of a tuition credit results in an adjustment to the student's UMES account and does not guarantee a cash refund.

Housing and meal plan charges are reviewed and adjusted separately and may be prorated based on the student's last date of usage. Tuition credits, if approved, may be applied toward outstanding housing or meal plan balances. Students will not receive credits or refunds for services already used.

B. Documentation Requirements

Students must submit verifiable third-party documentation supporting the extenuating circumstances for the semester in question. Documentation may include medical records, clinician statements, military orders, or other official records on appropriate letterhead. Documentation is reviewed by the Office of Institutional Equity (OIE), in consultation with the Counseling Center and Health Services, as appropriate. Upon determination, OIE will issue a written decision and, if approved, notify the Office of the Registrar within 10 business days of receipt of a complete application.

C. Withdrawal and Tuition Credit Request Process

The University will publish and maintain a standardized process outlining how students may initiate a full withdrawal and submit a tuition credit request under this policy. Students are responsible for submitting required documentation and initiating the withdrawal process.

D. Tuition Remission

Tuition remission benefits are governed by Human Resources policies and applicable employment agreements. Approval of a withdrawal under this policy does not automatically

preserve or extend tuition remission eligibility. Students receiving or expecting tuition remission must consult Human Resources to determine individual impact.

V. Examples of Approved Extenuating Circumstances

The following examples are illustrative and do not represent an exhaustive list. Documentation will be verified by OIE in consultation with Health Services and/or the Counseling Center.

- Severe physical illness or hospitalization
- Serious mental health crisis preventing academic participation
- Significant injury or surgical recovery
- Death of an immediate family member
- Involuntary call to military duty
- Primary caregiver responsibilities for an immediate family member
- Victimization by a crime that substantially impairs academic functioning

Incarceration: Students who are incarcerated may request a withdrawal; however, institutional tuition and fees are not subject to removal under this provision.

VI. Administrative Withdrawal (Institution-Initiated)

Administrative withdrawal is distinct from student-initiated withdrawals under the Cameron Carden Act and may be initiated by UMES only in extraordinary circumstances. An administrative withdrawal may be initiated when severe, unforeseen circumstances prevent a student from initiating the withdrawal process and continuation in the semester would pose academic, health, or safety risks.

Committee Review

Cases are reviewed by the UMES Administrative Withdrawal Committee, which includes representatives from:

Office of Institutional Equity	Bursar's Office
Counseling Center	Health Services
Registrar's Office	Academic Affairs

Decisions are documented and communicated to the student in writing, including any applicable financial adjustments and re-enrollment guidance.

VII. Appeals Process

Students may appeal a denial under this policy within 10 calendar days of notification.

Appeals may be submitted only after an initial Cameron Carden Act request has been formally denied and must be based on new, substantive information not reasonably available at the time of the original review.

Grounds for Appeal

An appeal may be considered only if one or more of the following criteria are met:

- **New Documentation:** Verifiable documentation not previously available that directly addresses the basis for denial.
- **Material Change in Circumstances:** A significant change that now meets the criteria for extenuating circumstances under the Cameron Carden Act.

Ineligible Grounds for Appeal

- Re-submission of previously reviewed materials
- Disagreement with the decision absent new evidence
- Financial hardship alone

Appeal Review and Decision

Appeals are reviewed by a standing Cameron Carden Appeals Committee, which, when feasible, does not include individuals involved in the original determination. A written decision will be issued within 10 business days of receipt of a complete appeal.


VIII. Related Policies

- BOR VIII-2.01 – Definition of Tuition
- BOR VII-2.50 – Fees Required for All Students
- BOR VIII-2.20 – Student Financial Aid and Remission Policies

Implementation and Review

This policy will be implemented by the Office of Institutional Equity in collaboration with other departments such as the Counseling Center, Health Services, Registrar, Auxiliary, Residence Life, and the Bursar's Office (faculty senate). The institution will periodically review the policy to ensure compliance with the Cameron Carden Act and adjust as necessary. The policy will be reviewed biennially by the responsible offices to ensure continued compliance with the Cameron Carden Act and the Board of Regents' standards. Feedback from students and staff will be collected through surveys to inform future revisions.

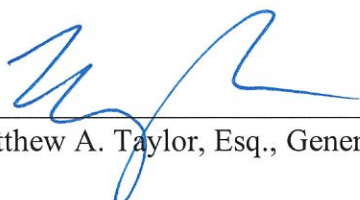
Approved:



Dr. Heidi M. Anderson, President 3-20-2026
Date:



Rondall Allen, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs 3/20/26
Date



Matthew A. Taylor, Esq., General Counsel 3/20/26
Date