

Stephen F. Austin State University
Student Fiscal Appeals
Guidelines and Procedures

Fiscal appeals will be considered when a student believes that extenuating circumstances justify removal or modification of charges. In accordance with Stephen F. Austin State University (SFA) Policy 6.19, Student Fiscal Appeals, following are the guidelines and procedures for a student to make a fiscal appeal.

The student should first contact the office that initiated the charge or denied a request to see if the matter can be resolved without an appeal. See the table below for the office to contact for the charge or dispute.

| Student Business Services | Registrar's Office |
|---|--|
| Penalty for excess hours to graduate (30 and 40 hour rule) | \$1,000 rebate eligibility |
| Withdrawal due to extenuating circumstances other than medical issues | Withdrawal from SFA due to extenuating circumstances concerning medical issues |
| Tuition and fee charges | Withdrawal from SFA due to military call-up |
| Loss of eligibility for certain exemptions and/or waivers | |
| All other fiscal matters | |

If the matter is not resolved after discussion with the assigned office and the student believes there are extenuating circumstances that warrant an appeal, the student must submit the electronic Student Fiscal Appeal Form for adjudication by the Fiscal Appeals Panel, governed by the following guidelines and procedures.

The following may be appealed to the Fiscal Appeals Panel:

- penalty for excessive time to graduation (the 30 and 45 hour rule)
- extenuating circumstances culminating in withdrawal
- late add fee
- reinstatement fee
- \$1,000 tuition rebate
- penalty for repetition of a course more than twice (3-peat)
- loss of eligibility for certain exemptions or waivers

The following are NOT subject to appeal to the Fiscal Appeals Panel:

- fiscal policy that is prescribed by State and/or Federal law
- student's error on registration or situations resulting from a deliberate decision or series of decisions by the student. Examples:
 - a student determines that his coursework load is too heavy and decides to drop a course(s)

- a student registers for a course and later realizes that he does not have the necessary background for the course and drops it
- student's failure to notify SFA of a decision not to attend classes, unless there is documented evidence of extraordinary circumstances beyond the student's control
- lack of attendance in a course(s)
- charges that are adjudicated by another panel or office designated for that purpose. Examples:
 - parking fines are appealed through the Parking and Traffic Office
 - financial aid issues are appealed through the Financial Aid Office
 - housing issues are appealed through the Residence Life Office

Student Procedures to file an appeal with the Fiscal Appeals Panel

- Appeals must be submitted on the electronic SFA Student Fiscal Appeal Form within 60 days from the date of the disputed charge on the student's account
 - appeals will be considered for the specific charge and specific term for which the appeal is requested
 - previous or subsequent semesters will not be considered
- Documentation supporting what the student deems an extraordinary circumstance must be included/attached before submitting the electronic form
- Student contact information should be current
- Tuition and fee charges must be paid by due dates, regardless of the status of an appeal
 - A refund will be issued, if appropriate, if the student's appeal is successful

Fiscal Appeals Panel process

- Student fiscal appeals are submitted to the Fiscal Appeals Panel for review
- Additional information may be requested by the Fiscal Appeals Panel
 - The student will have 14 calendar days to submit the additional information
 - If not submitted, the appeal process will continue without consideration of any additional information
- All decisions by the Fiscal Appeals Panel will be made within 60 days from the date the form was submitted or receipt of additional information requested by the panel
 - In the event the decision on the appeal is not made within the prescribed time period, the appeal shall be considered successful
- The decision of the Fiscal Appeals Panel will be communicated electronically to the student email address provided and to applicable SFA offices

Burden of proof

The burden of proof shall be upon the student to prove his or her case by a preponderance of the evidence in the written appeal. Appeals must be accompanied by all evidence and supporting documents that will be considered by the Fiscal Appeals Panel.

- Illness based fiscal appeals
 - must include a medical statement signed by the physician, complete with dates of injury/illness and expected dates of convalescence, if applicable

- appeals will be considered when the student has suffered a severe injury or illness, or when the student is responsible for the care of a sick, injured, or needy person
- Bereavement/death based fiscal appeals
 - must include documentation of the relationship of the student to the deceased: a death certificate, documentation from the funeral home, or obituary from a legitimate news source must also be submitted
 - bereavement/death based fiscal appeals will be considered only in the case of the student's immediate family member
- Economic hardship based fiscal appeals
 - only available for appeal of the penalty for excessive time to graduation, the penalty for repetition of a course, or for the loss of an exemption and/or waiver, based on the continuation requirements for that exemption and/or waiver
 - must include documentation that substantiates the economic hardship

Permission to access records

- The act of filing an appeal is construed as the student authorizing the following
 - All Fiscal Appeals Panel members to have full access to the student's education records that may have a bearing on appeal deliberations
 - The Fiscal Appeals Panel to seek additional verification or information as needed

NOTE: Decisions resulting from the student fiscal appeals process do not impact petitions to have grades or academic records changed. The Registrar's Office should be contacted for information on appeal of academic records.