Return of Military Tuition Assistance when Students Withdraw from College

Department of Defense Military Tuition Assistance (TA) programs include all branches of Military Service: Army, Air Force, and Navy. SUNY Plattsburgh has a policy that returns any unearned TA funds to the Military Service Branch on a pro-rated basis for service members who withdraw from a course prior to 60% of the course length. The service member is responsible for any college account balance that is created by the return of unearned TA funds. In instances when a Service member withdraws due to a military service obligation, SUNY Plattsburgh will work with the affected Service member to identify solutions that will not result in student debt for the returned portion.

When a student withdraws, the length of the course and effective withdrawal date determine the amount of TA funds that must be returned to the Military Service Branch. If a service member withdraws with an effective date prior to 60% of the course, TA funds are earned proportionally based upon the number of days of active participation and course length. If a service member withdraws with an effective date after actively participating for 60% of the course, the service member is considered to have earned 100% of TA funds and no funds must be returned to the Military Service Branch.

The course length is published in the online course schedule for a semester. For TA purposes, SUNY Plattsburgh uses the last date of active participation in a class as the effective withdrawal date for both official and unofficial withdrawals. Active participation includes attending a class, completing an assignment, taking an exam or quiz, etc. If a course is online, it also includes participating in an online discussion, but would not include a simple login with no active participation. An official withdrawal occurs when a student completes the college process to withdraw from a course or from the college (i.e. all courses). An unofficial withdrawal occurs when a student never attends or stops actively participating in a course or all courses in term. After a term ends, the Financial Aid Office reviews all students who did not earn any credits in a course or in a term. For unofficial withdraws, for TA purposes SUNY Plattsburgh also uses the last date of active participation in a class as the effective withdrawal date.

Once the course length and effective withdrawal date have been determined, SUNY Plattsburgh must return any unearned portion of TA funds back to the Military Service Branch. The amount of unearned TA funds to be returned is calculated using the following formulas:

- **Percent of Earned TA Funds** = (Number of days between the course start date and effective withdrawal date) / (Number of days between the course start date and course end date)
- **Percent of Unearned TA Funds** = 100% - Percent of earned TA Funds
- **Amount of Unearned TA Funds** = Percent of unearned TA funds * amount TA funds originally scheduled to receive
For example, suppose a service member originally receives $1,000 in TA funds for a course that lasts 100 days. If this service member officially or unofficially withdraws with an effective date on day 30 of the course, he or she would earn 30% of TA funds, leaving 70% unearned. In this example, SUNY Plattsburgh would be legally obligated to return $700 back to the appropriate Military Service Branch (70% * $1,000). The service member would be responsible for any college account balance that was created from this return.

Note that a student is considered to have earned 100% of TA funds if the effective withdrawal date occurs on or after 60% of the course length. College breaks that last five or more days are excluded in the calculation of the semester length. Also note that SUNY Plattsburgh will return 100% of TA funds if the effective course withdrawal date occurs by the deadline for no tuition liability, which is the end of the add/drop period for a course.

The requirements for the return of TA funds when you withdraw are separate from SUNY Plattsburgh's refund schedules for tuition and fees. Therefore, you may still owe funds to the SUNY Plattsburgh to cover unpaid institutional charges. Visit our Bill Paying & Refunds webpage for more information regarding tuition and fee liability that result from withdrawals.

If you have questions about your DOD TA program funds, contact the SUNY Plattsburgh Financial Aid Office. TTY users may call 1-800-730-8913. Information is also available at www.goarmyed.com, www.navycollege.navy.mil, and www.navycollege.navy.mil.