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28 April 2020

Dear Faculty, Staff, and Students,

The semester is winding to a close with only one week left in a semester we will never forget. The resilience of our Tiger team is remarkable.

Along the way, we have made every attempt to keep you updated with the latest information. Indeed, it seems that new information comes out almost daily and sometimes contradicts previous information. Providing good information has been challenging. Unfortunately, we recently provided a piece of information that needs to be corrected.

Last week, we sent out an update stating that the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES) will provide emergency public assistance funding for all students and would be based on current credit hours in which they are enrolled. The US Department of Education (DOE) has provided further guidance on who may receive the emergency funding: Students who were taking on-ground courses as of March 13 and students who completed the FAFSA or are eligible to complete the FAFSA may receive the funding.

There are several categories of students who are not FAFSA eligible. Concurrent high school students, international or undocumented students, students in default of student loans, men who have not registered with the Selective Service, and those not making academic progress are not eligible for the emergency funding. Additionally, the DOE has excluded students who were taking only online courses on March 13, 2020. The reasoning behind the DOE's decision is that online students did not experience the same disruption to their learning as those students who were forced to move from on-ground to online instruction.

We believe the majority of our students have experienced life disruption and should receive assistance. However, we must follow the law as established in the CARES Act. The following link will take you to the frequently asked questions provided by the US Department of Education should you want additional information: [www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/heerfstudentfaqs.pdf](http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/heerfstudentfaqs.pdf).

Eligible students will receive an email from [evals@ecok.edu](mailto:evals@ecok.edu) to certify their eligibility and need. The funds will be issued to the Bank Mobile card the University uses for refunds. Bank Mobile recently sent an email to students asking them to verify the process they receive refunds.

The ECU Foundation has the SHARE fund should a student have a financial need. A faculty or staff member must make a recommendation on behalf of a student. More information may be found on the [ECU Foundation webpage](#).

We have also changed our financial hold policy to help students stay enrolled and provide them more time to pay their spring balance. The financial hold is typically \$500. It has been raised to \$2,000 for the summer and fall 2020 semesters. Students will need to set up payment plans in order to pay the full amount owed before they may enroll in any subsequent semesters. We will resume the \$500 financial hold going into the spring 2021 semester. Transcripts and diplomas are not released until all balances are paid in full.

We will continue to keep you informed as information and data are made available. We have an indelible bond that makes us Tigers. We will continue to be resilient and adaptable.

Stay safe and healthy.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Katricia Pierson".

Katricia G. Pierson, PhD  
President