

May 12, 2017

To: Sonoma State Students

From: Stan Nosek
Interim Vice President for Administration and Finance / Chief Financial Officer

Subject: Credit Card Transaction Fees

Historically, when Sonoma State students paid their tuition and fees with a credit or debit card, the campus covered the processing costs assessed by the credit card companies. We did this because we didn't want to see our students charged those additional processing costs and we still don't. The expense to the campus for handling these costs in this way is now approaching \$1 million dollars annually. Student fees are the source used to pay this expense.

Effective July 1, 2017, students who still wish to pay their tuition and fees online by credit or debit card will be assessed the 2.75 percent non-refundable service fee paid to our third party provider, CASHNet® SmartPay. Students wishing to avoid this service fee can pay their student fees online by electronic check. Simply log into your student account and select electronic check for your method of payment. You'll be asked to provide your bank routing number and account number, which can be found on the bottom of your paper check. Student fees paid by financial aid will not be affected by this change. Point of sale transactions around campus, such as food venues, the bookstore, box office, health center, campus prints or the recreation center, are not assessed a credit or debit card processing fee, so nothing changes with those transactions.

Effective January 1, 2018, the Seawolf Service Center will no longer accept credit or debit cards for payments. We are evaluating other payment acceptance options for the Seawolf Service Center that will not include a cost while allowing us to continue providing a high level of service to our students.

This change aligns Sonoma State's payment acceptance practices with the other 22 CSU campuses. We trust and hope you will use the alternatives outlined above and that you can appreciate our rationale for the change. The bottom line for the university is that we'd rather have the \$1 million sent annually to credit card processors remain on campus and be used for various campus priorities, most importantly graduation and student success initiatives, improvements to facilities, and other student services. With these changes, we can do that and still allow our students to avoid extra charges.

I would like to thank the Academic Planning, Assessment and Resources Committee, the Student Affairs Division, and the new Associated Student executives for providing feedback and consultation during the evaluation of this change.