

Updated draft letter to students/parents

From: Matt Kramer <kramerm@[REDACTED]>
To: GABEL, JOAN <jgabel@[REDACTED]>, Mike Berthelsen <berth004@[REDACTED]>, Julie Tonneson <tonne001@[REDACTED]>, Chuck Tombarge <tombarge@[REDACTED]>, Jake Ricker <rick0127@[REDACTED]>, HALDEMAN, WILLIAM <haldeman@[REDACTED]>, Brian Burnett <burnett@[REDACTED]>
Sent: March 30, 2020 4:12 52 PM CDT
Received: March 30, 2020 4:13 01 PM CDT
Attachments: Comprehensive Refund Message.docx

I've pasted in the text below, and attached a Word file if you are doing track changes.

Several things (and these are important!):

First, clarification on student services fee. I meant only that portion that applies to "student organizations" and have changed the text to reflect that.

Second, a number of edits were to describe Twin Cities specific things. That can't live in this letter. That will have to be a specific communication, after the fact, to TC Students. For example, an edit someone gave me was how students can return their parking pass. Again, that would come from PTS to those students who have parking contracts, not in a general letter from the President.

Third, on the health services fee, I have left in the 10% reduction. That is the amount that that Georgia used. The edits I received had removed this. I have no idea what the implication is, but if someone can't go to Boynton for a cold and sinus infection, the 10% seems like a fair way to comp them for now having to go somewhere else.

Fifth, I ignored a number of edits that explained why someone won't get credit. For example, there was an edit on Metro Transit passes. We don't need to address third party products that students buy via us. We can't refund someone else's money.

Sixth, a number of people commented on "refund" versus "credit." Refund seems easier to understand, particularly if you are graduating. But I'm okay with either one. The challenge in using Credit is that we also use "credits" to refer to class credits.

Seventh, this has been seen by many in UR, but has not had wider circulation with the Provost's office, Chancellors, or others as designated by the President.

Finally, my first version, and this one, does not have any language in it that refers to tuition credit. The Georgia letter explicitly addresses this and tells the recipients that no such credit is forthcoming. If we want to add that, easy to do.

To all University of Minnesota students and parents/guardians systemwide

Subject – Comprehensive Student Refund Plan

Dear students and parents,

At my direction, the University of Minnesota has created the Comprehensive Student Refund Plan, a systemwide approach that considers an extensive list of your specific expenses and fees, and outlines

appropriate financial credit for these items in light of changes to University operations in response to the public health challenges of COVID-19.

The Comprehensive Student Refund Plan is based on a start date of April 1 and addresses expenses and fees that you would have paid through the end of the semester. Because individual credit amounts will vary depending on your campus, the services you access from the University, and the housing or meal plans you have purchased, please read carefully to estimate what your individual credit will be. **Please know that receiving financial credit requires no action from you. The credit you are entitled too will be automatically placed in your student account in the next two weeks.**

The situation we find ourselves in because of COVID-19 is challenging for all of us. The difficult, real-time decisions my leadership team and I are forced to make as circumstances rapidly evolve are decisions none of us ever anticipated. We know these decisions affect many lives across our University family. We will continue to consider every decision we make and if we can improve upon it, or make it stronger for our students, we will do so. This comprehensive approach should help address the questions many of you have raised directly to me and other leaders at the University.

The Comprehensive Student Refund Plan includes:

- **Housing and Residential Life:** If you have a contract for any Housing and Residential Life service (housing, dining, flexible spending meal plans), on any campus, you will receive a 100% credit of your expenses from April 1 through May 15, which is the latest day that any of our campuses are in session.
- **Parking fees:** For students who have paid for parking on the Crookston, Duluth, Morris, or Twin Cities campuses, you will receive 100% of your parking fee for the months of April and May as a credit. Rochester has no University-owned parking.
- **Recreation and Wellness fee:** For students on the Crookston, Duluth, Morris, and Twin Cities campuses, you will receive a prorated credit equivalent to refunding your fees from April 1 through May 15. For students at the Rochester campus, you will not be charged for April and May fees from the Rochester YMCA since the YMCA will, in turn, not be billing the University of Minnesota Rochester for this time period.
- **Student Services fee:** In recognition that student groups are no longer able to meet in person, although many continue to meet virtually, we will refund 50% of the student services fee allocated to student organizations that would have applied from April 1 through May 15.
- **University Health Services:** Our facilities across the system continue to be open and operational for students who remain on campus, particularly international students and students for whom remaining on campus is their safest or only option. Our facilities and employees remain on the front lines by serving students, staff, and faculty who are concerned about COVID-19, as well as regular and other unanticipated health concerns as they arise. While telephone or other remote access continues for a wide variety of services (mental health, pharmacy, etc.), we recognize that, for many students, accessing on-campus health services is not a viable option at this time. Accordingly we will rebate 10% of the health fee from April 1 to May 15.
- **Transportation and Safety:** For Duluth and the Twin Cities campuses, you will receive a prorated credit equivalent to refunding your fees from April 1 through May 15. Crookston, Morris, and Rochester campuses do not charge this fee.

What to expect next

We will credit all accounts between April 6 and April 20. Again, this will happen automatically and requires no action from you. This two-week period will allow us to calculate credit amounts and ensure all credits are compliant with financial aid rules based on Department of Education guidance. If you have not received your credit by April 20, please contact the One Stop office or the business office on your campus. Students who have a remaining balance will see these credits offset remaining charges. Any excess credit will either be applied to your fall charges or, if you are graduating, be rebated to you after all other University obligations are satisfied.

Please note that credits associated with Study Abroad/Study Away programs are in process and will be issued on an ongoing basis. You will receive a separate communication once credits for these programs are finalized. Please contact the One Stop office on your campus with questions.

Thank you for your patience and understanding. Your success has never been more important to all of our University's leadership, including me. We stand behind you through this uncertain time and in support of your continued academic success.

With warmest wishes,

Joan Gabel

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Matt Kramer, Ed.D.

Vice-President | University Relations | university-relations.umn.edu

University of Minnesota | system.umn.edu

kramerm@ [REDACTED] | [REDACTED]