**Introduction, the Importance of FERPA and Billing & Payment Policies**

Hi and welcome. Northern Arizona University’s Student and Departmental Account Services or SDAS for short is here to help you understand your NAU Student Account billing activity whether you are a student or a parent. SDAS is responsible for managing student account transactions and collecting payment for Northern Arizona University.

Unlike the Financial Aid office, we are not involved with the awarding and processing of student financial aid such as loans and grants. But we do promise to consistently provide you with timely and accurate, easily understandable billing information you need to fulfill your financial requirements here at NAU.

We have provided a series of tutorials broken up by topic for your reference. Please feel free to skip to the topics that interest you the most or watch the entire collection in full.

If afterwards you have any additional questions about your account balance, charges or credits to your student account, or need information about making payments to NAU, please take a look at our website at nau.edu/sdas. And remember, you can also contact us via telephone at 928-523-3122 or email us at sdas@nau.edu. Our customer service staff will be glad to assist you with any inquiries you may have.

In this video we will discuss the importance of FERPA and cover a few of the fundamental billing and payment policies that you need to keep in mind as a parent or legal guardian of a student, or as a student of Northern Arizona University.

What is FERPA?

Standing for the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, FERPA is the federal law that entrusts every university with the responsibility to protect confidential student information regardless of age once they enroll at an institute of higher education. It governs what information NAU can or cannot share and to whom that information is provided.

As you can guess, this can cause a lot of frustration for parents and legal guardians since NAU is prohibited from talking to anyone other than the student without the student’s prior authorization.

So if you are a parent or legal guardian who wants to be able to discuss your student’s account activity or a student wanting a parent or legal guardian to have access to your student account, it is important that the student signs and submits the Release of Information form to the Registrar’s office here on campus.

Once this Release of Information is on file, the parent and legal guardian will be able to discuss specific and protected student account details with a student accounts representative. The FERPA form can be found online at the Registrar’s website at nau.edu/registrar/ferpa/info/ or can be picked up in person from the Student Accounts office or the Registrar’s Office.

Northern Arizona University values Information Security and encourages students to never share their login information. If there are others assisting a student with the finances, students have the ability to add individuals as Authorized users for the TouchNet payment system. Authorized users can view statements, pay bills, and sign up for text message alerts using their own unique login information for the payment system.

All students and Authorized Users must go online to view and print student account activity. We encourage you to check your account each month to keep track of incidental charges that may be assessed to your account.

The university communication policy states, “The University considers email an official method of communication regarding business related information. Official messages will be sent to university email accounts only.”

Students holding a balance will have an eBill generated on a monthly basis advising them of current and future due amounts. An email notification will be sent to the student and any Authorized Users when a new eBill has been generated encouraging them to check their account for specific due dates and amounts. Ebills can be viewed in the TouchNet payment system.

In addition, students will receive email notifications once a new charge has been added or a balance becomes past due.

While SDAS does not assess charges outside of late payment and penalty charges, additional charges can be assessed by various departments throughout the university. For example, if you were to borrow a library book and failed to return that book to the library on time, the library billing office will post a fine to your account. This can occur at any time throughout the semester, which is why it is important to check your student account balance each month.

You also need to be aware of the university’s late payment policy. If payment is received after the due date or the amount received is less than the amount due, then a late fee will be assessed. Late fee amounts will vary based on the past due balance, ranging from $5 to $50. We strongly encourage students to enroll in a payment plan if they will not be able to pay their tuition and mandatory university fees in full by the due date to prevent additional fees from posting to the account. You can enroll in the payment plan through the LOUIE Student Center under the ‘Finances’ Section.

Furthermore, if fees become past due, a financial hold will be placed on the account after 7 days of delinquency. Financial holds prevent students from registering for classes, receiving official transcripts and/or receiving their diploma. NAU also reserves the right to restrict personal check and e-check payments by placing a hold after two returned checks.

For more billing and payment information, please refer to our website at nau.edu/SDAS. If you have any questions, you may contact us by phone at 928-523-3122 to speak with our Student Account representatives.

Thank you for watching.