



April 17, 2020

Dear Campus Community,

Your patience and flexibility have been a great help to the College's leadership as we work through many complex issues. Such graciousness is not a surprise in our extraordinary community, but it has been a noteworthy blessing in these difficult times. As you know, we have many concerns to consider as we manage the various safety, academic and financial challenges before us.

In a previous communication, I advised you to expect further information on our refund policy before the end of this week. Given the financial impact of this decision, the Board of Trustees has contributed a significant amount of time in the development of this policy. Our prayer has been to find the right path, as stewards of the College at a time of heightened financial risk, for serving our students, their families, and the longer-term security of the institution.

### **Preserving Our Independence**

In formulating this policy, the Board has agreed to maintain the College's long-standing independence by not pursuing or accepting federal funding from any federal source including the CARES Act. The CARES funding, which amounts to \$14 billion for higher education, may be used by other institutions to offset the cost of refunds for room and board. The preservation of our freedom is far more important to the future of Grove City College's distinctive mission and principles than this immediate benefit.

### **Refund Considerations**

Many issues required careful consideration, including:

1. How can the College best manage this unbudgeted multi-million-dollar cost?
2. To what extent should the ongoing costs associated with maintaining residence halls and student belongings in the absence of students be taken into consideration?
3. How should financial aid be factored into the refund amount?
4. Should we distinguish between seniors and returning students in the form of this refund?

### **Refund Policy**

After extensive deliberation on these questions and other factors, the Board has adopted the following policy:

- I. Refunds will be provided for unused room and board charges subject to a few limitations. Graduating seniors will receive a refund via check or direct deposit as part of their final student account refund which will be disbursed in mid-June once all final account charges and class gifts have been assessed. Students returning next year will receive a credit towards their Fall 2020 semester charges as part of the Fall semester billing in late June.
- II. The amount of the refund/credit will be 75% of the room charge from March 23 until the end of the semester and 100% of the savings received from our food contractor Bon Appetit for the meals not served to students. In calculating the refund, we recognized that students were required in most cases to be off campus and prepared for online classes by March 23. The percentage of return for room charges takes into consideration the ongoing costs for maintenance, housekeeping, resident directors, utilities, insurance and other fixed costs.



- III. Financial aid awarded directly from the College, or through the College from an outside funding source, will reduce the refund/credit by a prorated amount. For example, if a student received GCC financial aid this spring for 100% of tuition, room and board, no refund/credit will be provided. Similarly, if a student received GCC financial aid amounting to 35% of tuition, room and board costs, the refund/credit will be reduced by 35%. Refunds/credits will be based on what students proportionally paid for room and board.
- IV. The vast majority of students will receive a refund or credit ranging between \$1800 and \$900 depending on the amount of financial aid received and whether the student resided on upper campus or the Colonial Hall Apartments. The Financial Services Office will provide a communication to each student with a specific dollar amount no later than the week of May 4th. We appreciate your patience as we finalize the process.

### **Donating Back the Refund**

We are enormously grateful to those of you who have already offered to donate your refund/credit back to the College. This obviously is a wonderful blessing as we work to manage this major budget challenge. A large participation in this opportunity will strengthen GCC's reputation as a community with an exemplary culture. If you wish to indicate your willingness to make that gift at this time, please use the link below to email our Advancement Office (provide your name and telephone number). You will be contacted by a member of our team to discuss the donation process that best meets your needs and situation.

Please email: [giving@gcc.edu](mailto:giving@gcc.edu) with memo line "Refund Donation."

We understand that many of you will prefer to make a decision on a gift when you receive from us the amount of your refund or credit. Additionally, we fully appreciate that your economic circumstances may be very difficult at this time. There's no doubt that many in our College family have lost jobs or income. Unanticipated expenses have been incurred. We understand if you cannot afford to donate the refund/credit. We're thankful that we have a campus culture that even permits us to ask with hopeful anticipation.

### **Returning to Our Distinctive Experience in the Fall**

Finally, all of us are beginning to hear about the "new normal" that awaits when the COVID-19 threat subsides. Social distancing, face masks and thermometers may be with us for a while as we slowly reopen portions of our economy. I wonder if our new behavior will also include heightened joy from the embrace of loved ones (I'm dying to hug my grandchildren), new-found appreciation for genuine fellowship, and a changed perspective on what matters most in our lives. I'm truly optimistic about the College's future knowing that the Lord will use our earthly trials for His glory and our good.

We are committed to doing everything within our power to resume face-to-face classes next fall. While we plan for a range of contingencies, we remain hopeful as we trust in God for what lies ahead.

In His peace,

Paul McNulty  
*President*