



### **Credit Card use for Tuition: VIU Message and FAQ**

In an effort to reduce costs and remain competitive with other universities, VIU will no longer accept credit cards for payment on tuition, Students' Union fees and student activity fees.

This change takes effect September 1, 2010.

Application fees, tuition deposits, and fees for registration services, e.g. transcripts, duplicate diplomas, etc. can still be paid by credit card.

Credit cards can also still be used in VIU's bookstore, cafeteria and for student housing.

Credit card company transaction fees are the reason for enacting the new practice. The annual cost to VIU to administer credit card payments is over \$420,000 annually. Credit card fees related to the payment of tuition are between \$330,000 and \$340,000 annually. We believe that these funds can be better used to develop quality programs and services for students attending VIU.

Tuitions fees are capped by the government, so VIU is unable to pass on the credit card fees to students.

*Programs administered through VIU's Centre for Continuing Studies and International Education will be exempt from this change in credit card use. VIU will re-examine this exemption in June 2011.*

Tuition payments will be accepted by cash, money order, debit card payment, personal cheque, online banking or by credit card cheques.

Others Schools that have discontinued accepting credit card payments for tuition include:

- Camosun College
- Dalhousie University
- UBC – in 2007 saved 2.5 million in transaction fees
- University of Alberta
- Concordia University
- University of PEI

Many schools such as the University of Toronto, Queen's, McGill and UVic have never accepted credit card payments on tuition due to the transaction costs.

VIU has developed an FAQ on this topic. The FAQ can be accessed and printed by going to: <http://www.viu.ca/students/>

**VIU: Credit Card use – FAQs**

**1. Can I use my credit card to pay my tuition, Student Union fees and activity fees?**

- a. No, in an effort to reduce costs and remain competitive with other universities, VIU will no longer accept credit cards for payment of tuition, Students' Union fees and activity fees.
- b. This change takes effect September 1<sup>st</sup> 2010.
- c. Credit cards can be used to make payments on application fees; tuition deposits, and fees for registration services (e.g. transcripts, duplicate diplomas, etc.).
- d. Credit cards can also be used at the Bookstore, Cafeteria and Western Student Housing.
- e. Tuition payments will be accepted by cash, money order, debit card payment, personal cheque, credit card cheque or via online banking.

**2. Can I get a cash advance on my credit card and use those funds to pay my tuition?**

- a. Yes, most credit cards allow for cash advances. Please contact your financial institution for details.

**3. What can I use my credit card to pay?**

- a. Credit cards can be used to make payments on application fees, tuition deposits, and fees for registration services (e.g. transcripts, duplicate diplomas, etc.).
- b. Credit cards can also be used at the Bookstore, Cafeteria and Western Student Housing.

**4. Why has VIU stopped allowing the use of credit cards to pay tuition?**

- a. Transaction fees associated with credit card use are the reason for enacting the new practice.
- b. The annual cost to VIU to administer credit card payments for all purchases is over \$420,000 annually.
- c. The annual cost to VIU to administer credit cards payments on tuition is between \$330,000 and \$340,000.

- d. This change is aimed at reducing operational costs at the university.
- 5. Can VIU add transaction fees to the costs of tuition and allow student to continue to use credit cards?**
- a. No. Tuitions fees are capped by the government, so VIU is unable to pass on the credit card fees to students.
- 6. What happens if I am waiting for student loans to come through?**
- a. VIU's practice related to students on student loans has not changed. Please contact Financial Aid if you require additional information 250- 740-6423.
- 7. When will this change regarding credit card use take place?**
- a. This change takes effect September 1, 2010
- 8. Will this change impact Continuing Studies programs and classes?**
- a. VIU's Centre for Continuing Studies will be exempt from this change in practice for one year. This exemption will be reviewed in June 2011
- 9. Will this change impact international students?**
- a. No. International student fees are cost recovery. There is no revenue loss to the institution. Additionally international banking regulations make it difficult for international students to use alternative payment methods.
- 10. Will this change impact any other services at VIU?**
- a. This change impacts tuition, Students' Union fees and activity fees only. Application fees, tuition deposits, and fees for registration services (e.g. transcripts, duplicate diplomas, etc.) will still be payable by credit card.
- b. Credit cards can be used in VIU's bookstore, cafeteria and Western Student Housing.
- 11. What will VIU do with the money it saves on credit card fees?**
- a. These funds will be used towards programs and services for students at VIU.
- 12. Is VIU the only school to implement this change to credit card use?**
- a. Over the past several years many universities and colleges have stopped accepting credit cards for tuition.

- b. Others Schools that have discontinued the use of credit card for tuition include:
  - i. Camosun College
  - ii. Dallhousie University
  - iii. UBC – in 2007 saved 2.5 million in transaction fees
  - iv. University of Alberta
  - v. University of PEI

Many schools such as the University of Toronto, Queen's, McGill and UVic have never accepted credit card payments on tuition due to the transaction costs.

**13. How can I pay my tuition, Students' Union fees and activity fees?**

- a. These fees can be paid using cash, money order, debit card payment, personal cheque, credit card cheque or via online banking.