

## Course Fees

### Establishment and Budgetary Review

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- Attachment 1 - Course Fee Request includes Vice Chancellor or Dean's approval
  - Attachment 2 - Course Fee Budget Summary
  - Attachment 3 - Course Fee Year-End Report
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#### **I. UCOP DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY FOR COURSE FEES**

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In April 2000, the Office of the President revised the Delegation of Authority-Control over Miscellaneous Student Fees, Service Charges, and Deposits and delegated to each Chancellor the authority to establish Course Fees to recover the costs of materials, supplies, equipment, and support services not covered by the normal instructional budget. The purpose of the policy is to provide consistent creation and treatment of Course Fees across the UC system, to clarify the authority of the Chancellors with respect to Course Fees, and to assure that students are not burdened with instruction-related costs that should be borne by the State. In October 2009, the Office of the President revised the Guidelines for Implementing Course Fees.

#### **II. POLICY GUIDELINES**

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In general, state funds are expected to cover normal instructional costs and Course Fees are assumed to be needed only in exceptional situations. Increases in Course Fees should be kept moderate and gradual, and campuses are encouraged to include course fees in financial aid student budgets. The fees assessed must be mandatory for all students enrolled in a course, and must be assessed to enrolled students by the campus' centralized student billing system.

The following may be included in Course Fees:

- (1) The cost of providing course materials or supplies to be consumed, retained or used by the student. These materials and supplies may include, but are not limited to, such items as chemicals, solutions, gloves, filters, biological specimens, artists' media, glassware, photographic chemicals and other one-time use items. These also may include the reproduction costs for supplemental materials such as laboratory manuals and noncommercial computer software and costs associated with providing live models for art classes (*Science laboratories and art studios are examples of courses in which students are required to purchase consumable supplies*).
- (2) Special costs associated with the use of University-owned tools, musical instruments, or other equipment, so long as the student is given ownership (if purchased) or extensive use (if rented) of the tools or equipment and, where feasible, has the option of securing equivalent tools or equipment elsewhere. Tools and equipment may include scientific or medical tools, musical instruments, video and audio equipment, and other equipment related to enrollment in a course. These may include the costs associated with the use of University-owned tools and equipment for out-of class learning activities or extracurricular use, or the purchase of computer software, if the student retains ownership of the software (*Health Sciences courses are examples of courses in which students are*

*required to purchase tools and instruments. Film Production or music performance courses are examples of courses in which students may be required to rent, for exclusive or extensive access to University-owned equipment or instruments.)*

- (3) The cost of other materials or services necessary to provide a special supplemental educational experience of direct benefit to the student, such as travel costs for archeological digs, or the cost for film rentals. (*Anthropology courses offering special field trip opportunities to students and private music instruction are examples of courses providing a special supplemental educational experience for which a fee may be charged*).

The following may not be included in Course Fees:

#### General UCOP Policy of what cannot be included in Course Fees

- (1) Costs relating to the provision of facilities or services required for the general operation of the institution.
- (2) Salaries, wages and employee benefits of personnel providing instructional support (including honoraria).
  - Course fees for individual music instruction are an approved exception that meet UCOP policy.
- (3) Allowances for maintenance, depreciation and replacement of instructional equipment located and utilized in classrooms and laboratories primarily during scheduled periods of instruction.
- (4) Reproduction of copyrighted materials for course readers or audio or video collections.\*
- (5) Course syllabi.

\*Note: Although the UCOP guidelines state that the purchase of audio or video collections is not an allowed cost for Course Fees, in many instances the cost to purchase the item is less than the cost to rent. UCOP has agreed that the purchase of audio or video items that are used by the students for viewing in the class and then placed in the Library for review outside of class is an allowable charge for Course Fees in that it provides a special supplemental educational experience of direct benefit to the students.

#### Specific UCSC Policy of what cannot be included in Course Fees\*\*

- Costs that should be borne by the Division as costs related to instruction:
  - Divisional computer upgrades
  - Computer software or licenses that enhance Divisional property
  - Equipment used to enhance the Division
  - Honoraria, including the cost for guest lecturers as part of a course
  - Expenses that support faculty or staff when a course is offered off-campus, such as airfare, other transportation, or food and lodging.

\*\*List may be refined or adjusted in the future, as needed, based on recommendations received from the Miscellaneous and Course Fee Advisory Committee.

### **III. MISCELLANEOUS AND COURSE FEE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

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The Miscellaneous and Course Fee Advisory Committee (MCFAC) includes representatives from the Academic Senate Committee on Planning and Budget, Student Success, the Student Fee Advisory Committee, the Academic Divisions, the campus Registrar's Office, the Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Education and from Budget Analysis and Planning.

The charge of the committee is as follows:

- Develop procedures for the periodic review and re-establishment of fees.
- Communicate campus procedures for the development and submittal of the fee proposals to initiate new fees and adjustments to existing fees. This includes:
  - Annual reporting requirements
  - Moderate and gradual fee increases
- Review the Miscellaneous Fee and Course Fee proposals, including adjustments to existing fees. This includes:
  - Review the need for a fee, and the basis for the fee level. Fees may only include those costs that are allowable and appropriate, according to UCOP and campus policy.
  - Evaluate the potential impact on students, faculty, and staff. This includes financial impact, and whether fees will impede student access to courses needed for graduation.
  - Is there a reasonable relationship between the fee and its purpose? Is the fee applied consistently and appropriately?
- Make recommendations to the Chancellor for the approval, approval with reservations, or disapproval of Miscellaneous Fees and Course Fees. The Committee may also recommend that a fee proposal be returned to the initiator with suggestions for consideration.

#### **IV ESTABLISHMENT OF A NEW OR REVISED COURSE FEE**

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Departments may not assess and collect mandatory course-related fees that have not been specifically approved by the Chancellor. The campus Miscellaneous and Course Fees Advisory Committee (MCFAC) is responsible for the review of new fee proposals, including proposals to adjust existing fees, and for providing recommendations to the Chancellor. The MCFAC encourages departments to plan the submission of Course Fees proposals for implementation at the beginning of the Academic Year (Fall). The following is a required six-step process.

##### **Review and Approval Process**

**Step 1:** The chair of an academic department or the director of an academic program submits a course fee proposal to the academic dean. The proposal shall contain appropriate supporting materials, as described below in the “Proposal Format” section.

**Step 2:** If the academic dean concurs with the chair or director’s proposal, he or she forwards the proposal package to the Chair of the MCFAC in Budget Analysis and Planning by the due date specified.

**Step 3:** The Chair of the MCFAC distributes the proposal to all MCFAC members for review and discussion. The divisions proposing the course fees may be requested to be present at the meeting when their fee is reviewed to present the fee and answer any questions the MCFAC might have.

**Step 4:** Final committee recommendations to the Chancellor shall be made by March. If the Miscellaneous and Course Fee Advisory Committee recommends that a fee should not be approved, the appropriate Dean/Vice Chancellor has authority to appeal the decision to the Chancellor.

**Step 5:** The Chancellor determines whether to authorize the fee.

**Step 6:** Upon receiving approval from the Chancellor, the MCFAC will make adjustments to the list of campus Course Fees, will send a list of approved fees to the Divisions for review and concurrence with the accuracy of the list of fees, and will forward the “Official” reconciled list to the Registrar’s Office before *May 1* to be incorporated in the Fall Student Schedule of Classes and the Campus Catalog. The Registrar’s Office will enter the Course Fee information into the Schedule of Classes and the Campus Catalog. The Registrar’s Office will enter the Course Fee charges to students into the AIS system, and the charges will automatically be posted to student accounts. The Accounts Receivable Office should be contacted for procedures related to billing adjustments and collections, and General Accounting for the distribution and reconciliation of Course Fee income. An appropriate fund number in the student fee fund range should be established (contact Rob Jarvis in Accounting at [rsjarvis@ucsc.edu](mailto:rsjarvis@ucsc.edu) and a permanent budget should be established for the Course Fee (contact Budget Analysis & Planning) to establish a new organization code.

### **Fee Communication**

Approved course fees must be communicated to all affected constituencies. Fees may not be charged without prior notification via the student Schedule of Classes. In addition, the campus General Catalog must be revised at the earliest possible opportunity to include a statement indicating that a Course Fee is required. It is the department’s responsibility to contact the Registrar’s Office to ensure that a statement regarding the required fee appears within the individual course listing.

### **Proposal Format**

Completed Course Fee Request Forms, Attachment 1 and Attachment 2, must accompany the proposal to establish a new Course Fee or adjust an existing Course Fee.

Attachment 1 – Identifies Fee request and includes Vice Chancellor or Dean’s approval.

Attachment 2 – Course Fee Budget Summary identifying the Course, projected number of students that will be paying the fees, proposed fee amount, the projected annual revenue and specific cost categories included in the fee.

Attachment 3 – Course Fee Year-End Report for Course Fee income and expenses **MUST** be submitted for A existing fees regardless if a change to the fee is being requested. This form must be signed by the Vice Chancellor or Dean. [Annual Review and Reporting](#)

Departments are required to utilize current year versions of all submittal attachments. The forms may be accessed at <https://planning.ucsc.edu/budget/operations-forms-training/miscellaneous-fees-and-course-fees/miscfees-guide.html>

### **Fee Limits**

The following elements shall be considered when determining what constitutes a reasonable fee:

- Existing course fees
- Cost per student
- Relationship between the fee and its purpose

### **Fee Revenues**

Fee revenues shall be retained by the department in a designated FOAPAL to be applied only to the cost of materials or services associated with the approved course fees. Revenues collected for a specific course cannot be transferred to cover the costs of other courses.

### **Year-End Surplus/Deficit Balances**

Surplus balances must be retained in a departmental account to be used in the subsequent year towards the same class. The departments must absorb any deficit balances. An adjustment of the fee level is required to help reduce the amount of any future surpluses or deficits.

### **Billing and Refunds**

Each Course Fee must be included in the Student's Accounts Receivable Billing System (AIS). If a student drops a course by the end of the third week of instruction, the student will receive a full refund. Course Fees will not be refunded to students who drop after the end of the third week of classes. Fee waivers may be granted as an exception and processed by the Accounts Receivable System. Each Division must specify its appeal process in the Course Fee proposal.

### **Student Aid**

The cost of Course Fees shall be included in the student financial aid budget for determination of students' financial aid awards. Course Fee costs are covered under the "books and supplies" or the "personal expenses" categories in the student aid budgets.

### **Annual Review and Reporting**

During the annual Miscellaneous and Course Fee Advisory Committee review of fees, Departments, through the academic deans' offices, must provide the campus' Budget Office with a year-end report on the prior year's Course Fee income and expenses (Attachment 3). This form must be signed the Vice Chancellor or Dean. The Budget Office will review the reports as part of the Course Fee review process. The reports will be used to ensure justification for continuance of the fee, campus compliance with system-wide policies and for annual reporting to the Office of the President.