

**Institutional Student Fee Plan  
University of Colorado Denver  
Denver Campus  
Anschutz Medical Campus  
September 2016  
Effective: FY 2016-17**

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## I) PLAN OVERVIEW

- A) This Institutional Plan was created to define the purpose of student fees and to outline the process for establishing, changing, and eliminating student fees at the Denver and Anschutz Medical campuses of the University of Colorado Denver. The plan represents a partnership between students, schools and colleges, and campus administration to appropriately assess and review student fees.
- B) Section 23-5-119.5, C.R.S., requires institutional fee plans to include:
- The types and purposes of student fees collected;
  - The procedures for establishing, reviewing, changing, and eliminating student fees, including student involvement in each process;
  - Procedures by which students may contest the imposition or amount of a fee and a process for resolving disputes of fees; and
  - A plan for addressing reserve fund balances.
- C) The fee categories covered by the Plan include:
- 1) Student purpose/activity fees;
  - 2) Administrative fees;
  - 3) Course fees; and
  - 4) Program/instructional fees.
- D) The Plan allows existing fees to be increased due to inflation without student input. Inflation is defined as the percentage change in the Consumer Price Index for the Denver-Boulder consolidated metropolitan statistical area for all urban consumers, all goods, as published by the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, or its successor index. Inflationary increases are not automatic for existing fees and must be requested during the annual proposal and review cycle with the CU Board of Regents.
- E) The Plan does not cover:
- Tuition, except when used for the purpose of construction or substantial renovation of facilities, as required by 23-5-103(1) C.R.S. [see Section III A) 3) below].
  - “Charges for service” to cover specific services that are incidental to instructional activities, including but not limited to application and matriculation charges, fines and penalties, sponsored charges, late add-drop registrations, thesis publication charges, and non-mandatory user charges (e.g., recreation and event tickets). Students are responsible for paying directly for service charges as defined here.

## **II) PROCEDURES FOR PROPOSING AND APPROVING FEES**

### **A) General Procedures Common to All Fee Proposals**

- 1) New, increased, eliminated, and modified student fees must be approved by the Management Fee Review Team (MFRT), the Chancellor, and the CU Board of Regents. The MFRT includes the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, the Vice Chancellor for Finance, the Bursar, representatives from Student Affairs and Budget and Finance, and other designated staff as needed. The MFRT makes recommendations to the Provost and Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance. In addition, the MFRT will communicate with each campus' Student Fee Committee to update them on the proposed fees and the student feedback received.
- 2) Proposal requirements, forms, and due dates for fee proposals and review (collectively titled "Student Fee Request Submission Requirements and Process") are distributed annually in the fall by a representative of the MFRT. All fee requests must comply with these requirements and timeline.
- 3) All types of student fee requests require student input, including administrative fees, as outlined in the "Student Fee Request Submission Requirements and Process" document.
- 4) At any time during the proposal and review cycle, a fee proposal may be disapproved by the Chancellor, Provost, or Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance (VCAF) at their discretion based on the best interests of the university, its programs, and affected students. No new or increased fee will be implemented without obtaining appropriate approvals.
- 5) The submission of fee proposal(s) includes acknowledgement that:
  - (a) The unit(s) submitting fee proposals typically will receive the revenue generated by the fee(s), unless otherwise indicated in the request;<sup>1</sup>
  - (b) All fee revenue will be expended only for its approved purposes; and
  - (c) The fee(s) will be reviewed periodically through the established process that includes recommendations to the Provost and VCAF for their continuation or termination. (See below, Section VI.)
- 6) The approval process for Auraria fees follows the Auraria institutional plan for student fees. After Auraria fees are approved by that process, these fees must be approved by the Chancellor and the CU Board of Regents before the fees can be assessed.

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<sup>1</sup>Some administrative units may in fact request a fee change even though they do not receive the revenue directly. For instance, the revenue from the Student Information System Fee is allocated to several different units, but the Budget Office may facilitate a request for revision.

## **B) Program Fees**

- 1) Program fees help to manage expenses by pooling the resources from fees charged to all students in a program to provide sufficient funding to schools and colleges for specific instructional purposes. Program fees are mandatory fees related to the instructional program or college, but not to the specific course offering. Some program fees are college-specific fees and some are major-, program-, unit-, or department specific. They can be academic, instructional, or administrative charges. Technology fees associated with the offering of online, non-cash funded courses are considered program fees.
- 2) Revenue from program fees may be spent only on items approved by the CU Board of Regents during the fee change approval process.
- 3) Unless otherwise specified and justified, students charged a program/instructional fee shall not be ineligible for the services, materials, or benefits supported by the fee based solely on their status as members (e.g., majors) or nonmembers of the school/college or department or program charging the fee.
- 4) Approval of any new program fees or increases in existing fees (in excess of inflation as defined above) or changes to their original scope or purpose does not require an affirmative vote of students. Approval does require, however, consultation with the affected students' governing body as described in the Student Fee Request Submission Requirements and Process document.
- 5) Any school or college, department, or unit proposing new program fees, an increase or decrease in an existing program fee, or change in purpose or scope to existing fees must submit a request as described in the Student Fee Request Submission Requirements and Process document.

## **C) Course Fees**

- 1) Course Fees are designed to cover the incremental costs of a particular course. Course fees are mandatory fees that a student must pay to enroll in specific courses, such as lab fees, music fees, art fees, and materials fees.
- 2) Course fees may also cover the contractual cost of providing a service supporting the course curriculum, such as CPR certification costs or standardized patient use.
- 3) All sections of the same course offering must have the same course fee charge for all sections.
- 4) Revenue from course fees must be spent in the year they are collected for the course for which they were collected.

- 5) Revenue from course fees may be spent only on items approved by the University of Colorado Board of Regents during the annual fee approval process. Course fees should not be used for general (not specific to the course) classroom materials and supplies or to generate funds for repair or replacement of equipment in excess of the actual costs necessary for covering the breakage of equipment.
- 6) Approval of new course fees or increases in existing fees (in excess of inflation as defined above) or changes to their original purpose or scope does not require a vote of students. Approval does require, however, consultation with the affected students' governing body as described in the Student Fee Request Submission Requirements and Process document.
- 7) Any school or college, academic department or program, or administrative unit proposing new course fees or a change in purpose or scope or increase to existing fees must submit a request as described in the Student Fee Request Submission Requirements and Process document.

#### **D) Campus-wide Administrative Fees**

- 1) Administrative Fees provide support for broad administrative or instructional related services, e.g., technology support and infrastructure (including systems support), library use, and general purpose academic and administrative operations, facility construction, and debt reduction. Administrative fees are not established by schools or colleges. Administrative fees do not include charges for service.
- 2) An academic department or program, or administrative unit proposing new administrative fees or a change in purpose or scope or increase to existing fees must submit a request as described in the Student Fee Request Submission Requirements and Process document.
- 3) Administrative fees must be approved by the student body via referendum, whether it is a new fee or a change in purpose or scope or increase above inflation to an existing fee. The student body referendum process is outlined in E below.

#### **E) Student Purpose/Activity Fees**

- 1) Student Purpose/Activity fees include but are not limited to fees funding student government, student services, student clubs and organizations, student cultural events, or student social events. An example is the RTD fee. Student government has a role in how these fees are assessed and used.

- 2) The campus-specific Student Fee Review Committees have their own processes reflected in separate official documents. Please see the Office of Student Affairs for these documents. There are no student-directed programs at CU Denver.
- 3) In addition to Section II. A above, the student fee process must include the following steps:
  - (a) Submission of a timely fee proposal to the VC for Student Affairs.
  - (b) Review by the appropriate student fee review committee (see below) and student government as reflected in the individual student government's governing documents.
  - (c) Review and approval by the Management Fee Review Team.
  - (d) Review and approval by the Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance, the Provost, and Chancellor.
  - (e) New Student Purpose/Activity Fees must be subject to a student referendum. Before conducting any student referendum, processes a-d must be completed.
  - (f) Before implementation, final review and approval rests with the CU Board of Regents.
- 4) For Denver Campus-only fees, proposals are reviewed by the Denver Campus Student Fee Review Committee, which, in addition to students, includes member(s) representing central administration.
- 5) For Anschutz Medical Campus-only fees, proposals are reviewed by a standing committee as designated by the Office of Academic Affairs and the Student Senate, which, in addition to students, includes member(s) representing central administration.
- 6) Student Body Referendum on Fee Proposals
  - (a) The time and manner of student referenda on fee proposals are coordinated by the AVC for Student Life or designee and the respective student government president(s).
  - (b) The proposal(s) along with any other information about the issues and instructions for voting (full disclosure) shall be disseminated to the intended student body and student government representatives no later than the time required by the individual student government governing documents, or ten (10) days before voting begins, whichever is earlier.
  - (c) Information distributed by the student government(s) and/or the administration concerning fee proposals shall be factual and unbiased. The administration and student government shall not campaign for or against a proposed fee.

- (d) Any proposal that is defeated by a vote of the student body may not be resubmitted for a student vote until the next regularly scheduled fee proposal and review cycle.
  - (e) If a referendum vote is affirmative (approved by a majority of enrolled voting students), the Provost, VCAF, and Chancellor must review and approve the finalized proposal(s) before it is submitted to the CU Board of Regents for a final decision. If the referendum is scheduled after the Board of Regents meeting, the fee may be submitted to the Board of Regents for review noting the fee increase is subject to approval by referendum vote.
- 7) Any significant amounts of unspent fee revenue from prior years may be approved for expenditure in accordance with the processes detailed in this section and Section II. A.

### **III) SPECIAL FEE RESTRICTIONS AND CONDITIONS**

#### **A) Fees for Facility Construction**

CU Denver permits fee assessments on its campuses to cover facilities construction, provided that the following guidelines are met:

- 1) All other financing options have been explored.
- 2) Students approve the use of fee revenue through a regular spring cycle student vote (referendum).
- 3) Fees for facility construction are not automatically subject to inflationary increase. Cost of living increases, if any, must be delineated in the applicable referendum.
- 4) Tuition for Facility Construction: CU Denver may pledge tuition revenue on its campuses to provide for facilities construction once all financing options have been explored. CU Denver will communicate with representative students regarding plans for tuition pledged new construction.

#### **B) Bond Fees**

Bond fees for auxiliary facilities have specific rules found in §23-5-119.5, C.R.S.. Bond fees are not automatically subject to inflationary increase. Cost of living increases for bond fees, if any, must be delineated in the applicable referendum.

### **IV) NOTICE OF NEW OR INCREASED FEES**

- A) Each CU Denver campus shall give students at least a 30-day website notice prior to posting on bills any new fee assessment or change to an existing fee. Such notice will specify:
  - 1) The amount of new fee or change;

- 2) The reason for the fee assessment or change;
- 3) The purpose for which the revenues received will be used; and
- 4) Whether the assessment or increase is permanent or temporary (including expiration date if applicable).

B) All fees approved in accord with this Plan are itemized separately on student bills.

## **V) PROCEDURES FOR RESOLVING STUDENT FEE COMPLAINTS**

- A) Students with a complaint concerning any mandatory fee or fee process shall submit written complaints:
- 1) Regarding process and access for the Denver Campus in writing to the Judicial Council
  - 2) Regarding the use of fee monies for the Denver Campus to the SFRC
  - 3) Affecting the Anschutz Medical Campus to the Anschutz Student Senate
  - 4) To both, either 1) or 2) and 3) if the fee crosses campuses
  - 5) And all complaints to the Management Fee Review Team, c/o AVC for Student Life.
- B) Written complaints regarding mandatory fees must contain evidence that the fee approval process for a new, increased, or changed fee was not followed in the correct manner, that the fee-paying student has been denied access to the benefit, or that the fee revenue is not being spent for the service that was approved.
- C) The entities receiving the complaint will prepare a response to the complaint, including recommendation(s) for its resolution.
- D) The Provost and Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance are responsible for final approval of complaint resolutions.

## **VI) PROCEDURES FOR REVIEWING EXISTING FEES**

- A) All fees covered by this Plan will be reviewed periodically and at least every four years. Fees will be reviewed with regard to original purpose, intended and current use of fee revenue, impact on students and academic units, adequate student inclusion in and access to the services or goods provided, billing procedures, financial aid issues, problematic impacts, and other fee-specific factors. The Plan also provides for an annual institutional review of uncommitted fee fund balances over \$100,000 and for the assessment of General Administrative Recharge in accordance with campus policies.
- B) The manner and timing for the reviews of student purpose/activity fees shall be coordinated between the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs or designee and the

Vice Chancellor for Budget and Finance or designee in consultation with respective campus student government representatives, standing fee review committees, and other parties relevant to the type and purpose of the reviewed fee(s). Recommendations will be forwarded to the Provost for a final decision on continuance or termination of the fee(s).

- C) The manner and timing for the reviews of program/instructional and course fees shall be determined by the Management Fee Review Team and the Provost, and conducted in consultation with appropriate campus parties (e.g., student government representatives, deans, and other academic administrators) affected by or associated with the reviewed fee(s). Recommendations will be forwarded to the Provost and Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance for final decisions on continuance or termination of the fee(s).

## **VII) CHANGES TO THE INSTITUTIONAL STUDENT FEE PLAN**

This Plan may be revised, as necessary, by campus administration with the collaboration of student government organizations. This plan will be submitted to the CU Board of Regents for annual review and shall be made available to students and the public on the CU Denver website.