

Ohio University

Student Fee Guidelines and Procedures

(Revised 1/20/2023)

This document provides a description and of the three categories of student fees and the associated approval process. This document is not intended to cover tuition or room and board fees. The three fee categories are academic course-related fees, broad-based fees and user fees, charges, and fines. Fees can be created or changed on an annual basis during the budgeting process. All fees and changes to established fees must be approved by the Ohio University Board of Trustees.

General Principles for Establishing Student Fees

The following general principles govern the establishment of new fees or changes to existing fees on campus. These principles apply regardless of the University fiscal entity to which the revenue is credited.

- Instructional fees are expected to cover all routine costs of courses. Course fees cover extraordinary costs only.
- Fees should recover costs when no other dedicated funds are available for that purpose.
- Fees should be set based on the cost of the activity/service for which the fee is levied.
- Fees must be used to support the activity/service being provided by the fee.
- A consultation process with impacted students is encouraged where appropriate.
- If waivers are permitted, a fee waiver policy must exist and be included as part of the fee proposal. Documentation supporting waivers must be maintained by the department for audit purposes.

Fee Structure and Minimum Amount

Fees must be implemented in whole dollar amounts. Fee requests for less than \$10 per student or less than \$1,000 in annual revenue will not be reviewed or approved unless an exception is granted by the Provost. For courses with variable credit hours, the minimum per credit hour rate that will be considered is \$5.00.

State Mandated Freeze on Undergraduate Fees

Effective July 1, 2017, the State of Ohio has imposed a freeze on the assessment of all undergraduate fees, with limited exceptions. Per Ohio's FY18-19 State Operating Budget, undergraduate fees **not subject to the freeze** include:

- Student Health Insurance Fees
- Fees for auxiliary goods or services provided to students at the cost incurred to the institution
- Fees assessed to students as a pass-through for licensure and certification examinations
- Elective course fees associated with travel experiences
- Elective charges
- Fines
- Career Service Fees
- Fees that offset the cost of providing textbooks for students

Consistent with the Ohio Legislature's historical intent to limit student fee increases, Ohio University is **only accepting undergraduate student fee requests that clearly meet at least one of the State of Ohio's list of allowable exceptions**. Since all fee increases are subject to the review and approval of the

Ohio Department of Higher Education, we recommend that departments and planning units limit student fee requests when possible and not rely upon increased revenue from the new fees as part of their annual budget.

Procedure for Approving New Fee or Increase to Existing Fee

The following procedures are designed to ensure that appropriate approvals are obtained and accurate records are maintained for all fees assessed. The requirements in this section apply regardless of the University fiscal entity to which the revenue is credited.

1. The academic or administrative unit requesting the fee completes the Student Fee Proposal or Course Fee Proposal form as applicable.
2. The requesting department must obtain approval signatures from the Unit Director/Department Chair/School Director, Finance Manager or CFAO, and the Dean/Vice President.
3. The Student Fee Proposal form is submitted to Budget Planning and Analysis and the Course Fee Proposal form is submitted to the Associate Provost for Academic Budget and Planning at the beginning of Spring Semester. After review, recommended fees are referred to the Executive Budget Group for consideration. Those approved are submitted to the Ohio University Board of Trustees for final approval.
4. The Budget Planning and Analysis Office will notify the requesting department, the department's Finance Manager or CFAO, the Office of the University Registrar, and the Office of the Bursar of all fee proposal decisions (approval/disapproval).
5. Fee changes/additions will be effective the following fall term unless a later implementation is approved or desired.

Procedure for Eliminating, Suspending, Decreasing or Transferring an Existing Fee

A department or planning unit can eliminate, suspend, or decrease an existing student fee by notifying the appropriate office (Office of the University Registrar or the Office of the Bursar) via memo. The memo must be sent by an authorized agent of the department or planning unit (Department Chair/School Director, Finance Manager or CFAO, Dean, or Vice President) and include the fee name or description, the course ID (if applicable), and the date or term the fee is to be eliminated, suspended, or decreased.

A fee that is suspended or decreased may be reinstated to its original approved rate via memo to the appropriate office (Office of the University Registrar or the Office of the Bursar) via memo. The memo must be sent by an authorized agent of the department or planning unit (Department Chair/School Director, Finance Manager or CFAO, Dean, or Vice President) and include the fee name or description, the course ID (if applicable), and the date or term the fee is to be reinstated to its original approved rate.

Once a fee is eliminated it may not be reinstated without formal review.

A course fee may be transferred to a new course number provided the course number change has been approved by the University Curriculum Council (UCC). A course fee that is to be transferred should be communicated to the Office of the University Registrar via memo upon the approval of the course number change by UCC.

Academic Course Fees

Course Fees are defined as charges in addition to the regular instructional fee (tuition) that are attached to a specific course. Course Fees are assessed based on the campus offering the course to all students in a course or to individual students based on optional equipment and activities.

Course Fees for undergraduate courses are limited by the State of Ohio to extraordinary costs for aviation flight expenses, study away travel expenses, and pass through costs for external licensure or certification (e.g. nursing, teacher certification, etc.)

Course Fees are not restricted for graduate courses but should be kept at a minimum and program level fees (program fee or specialized services/materials fee) assessed on a credit hour basis should be considered as an alternative.

Course fees, when approved, must be used solely for support of the courses involved. All units must administer the fee funds in ways that provide students paying those fees a reasonable opportunity to benefit equitably from the expenditure of the fee funds. Difficulty in securing adequate regular budget support shall not be the determining factor in the decision to charge selected students a course fee.

Collection of course fees in the classroom or department is not allowed. Course fees assessed by the university must be deposited to and expended from university accounts to support the activity/service being provided by the fee except in those instances where payments are more appropriately paid directly to vendors. Course fees will be added to a student's account through the tuition assessment process. The course fee revenue will be credited to the account indicated on the Course Fee proposal form when the fee is charged to the student accounts.

Course fees must be identified in the Course Offerings in advance of priority registration for the term in which the fee is assessed.

Broad-Based Fees

Broad-based fees are generally charged to all enrolled students to finance discrete activities that benefit the student body, excluding those activities that are part of the core instructional program. These include, but are not limited to: technology fee, orientation fee, program fee, application fee.

Technology Fee Note: Undergraduate Technology Fees are rolled into the Tuition Guarantee so revenue related to these costs is allocated through the budget process as opposed to setting a fee charged to undergraduate students. Only graduate students are charged a technology fee. The level of funding provided to colleges from these two sources should be part of a comprehensive plan to build and maintain an infrastructure that offers students the highest quality learning environment. It should be used to address specific technology needs such as computing and information technology, lab equipment or maker space equipment.

User Fees, Charges, and Fines

User fees, charges, and fines may include but are not limited to: late registration fee, late payment fee, library fees and fines, chemistry breakage cards, returned check charge, finance charge, residence hall room condition assessments, parking violation fees, patient/client-care charges, voluntary fees for selected student health services, equipment rentals, equipment damages, locker rentals, lost key charges.

Fees that are market-based, voluntary, and not course-specific require Planning Unit Head review and approval only. The Planning Unit is responsible for publishing these fees. Fee approved by the Planning Unit Head are subject to review at any time by the Executive Budget Group.