

## Purpose and Background

The Board Policy titled "[Institutional Plan for Student Fees](#)" (Policy) was developed in accordance with §23-5-119.5, C.R.S. (2012) and the Colorado Department of Higher Education policy on [Student Fees \(Section IV, Part C\)](#). These guidelines supplement the policy to provide additional information, background, and procedures.

It is the intent of Management that the following will be considered when setting fee rates:

- Perform the fee process in an open and transparent manner, including opportunities for student input;
- Promote clarity, simplicity and predictability for students and families;
- Consider access and affordability for students; and
- Enhance the quality of educational programs and offerings, strengthen financial position and support strategic plans and goals.

These guidelines and procedures were completed to ensure compliance with the above intent. If there are omissions, exceptions, or unintended consequences in these guidelines, the treatment of fee activity will be governed by intent.

The general categories of fees and charges include the following:

**Mandatory fees** are charged to all students (graduate or undergraduate), degree or non-degree seeking, courses selected and/or program or study. They are used to support student related activities outside the classroom. These activities are primarily self-supporting, but may receive gift fund or general fund subsidies. Examples include the Recreation Center, Athletics Program, Academic Building Construction, and Student Center fees. Revenue is used to support the program operations, building operations, capital, controlled maintenance, and debt-service payments. New mandatory fees or fee increases greater than 1% above CPI, are subject to the [student approval process](#) and consideration by the Board of Trustees. A complete list of [mandatory fees](#) may be found in the Policy.

**Course Specific/Program Specific fees** fund specific activities that are related to a course or program, but are outside the normal cost of providing instruction. Examples include laboratory fees, field trip fees, or fees for specific tools or other consumables. Course fees are only charged to students enrolled in a particular course or program, and may only benefit the respective courses. Course fees require *review* by the student government (USG and GSG) for potential feedback or input and are approved by the Board of Trustees.

**Administrative fees** cover the costs of delivering specific services which are incidental to instructional activities. Examples include application, orientation, room and board, and study abroad fees. Administrative fees require *review* by the student government for potential feedback or input and are approved by the Board of Trustees.

**Other Charges** include activities that are provided for the convenience of students, faculty, and staff and are typically payment for services or products. Examples include the Copy Center, Outdoor Recreation rentals, and Dental Clinic fees. Other charges are provided to student government for *informational* purposes and do not require Board approval.

The Fees and Charges process is managed by the **Fees/Charges Administrator** (Administrator) who may be the Department Head, Director or any other individual responsible for administering and overseeing the fee or charge.

## Fees

### *Approval Process*

Mines strives to provide an open and transparent process for setting and changing fees. It is intended that the approval process be inclusive and represent a cohesive decision for the benefit of the student and that promotes the strategic goals and initiatives for the institution. This process requires review and input from students, Budget Committee, and Executive Officers prior to submitting a recommendation to the Board for final approval.

**Step 1 - Proposal Submission:** A request for a new fee or an increase to a fee should be submitted for Executive review and discussion at the start of the academic year, no later than October 15. A fee proposal should be completed by the Administrator. The proposal should include a completed [fee template](#), a financial break-even analysis, and other justification that is applicable to the fee. The proposal will be reviewed by the respective Dean or Vice President. If approved, they will schedule an Executive review including the Provost, the Executive Vice President and the Vice President for Student Life.

**Step 2 - Executive Review:** The Executive review ensures the proposal complies with the intent of the Board regarding fees. They will review the purpose (strategic) of the proposal and the potential impact on operations (financial position), cost of attendance (affordability), and relations with the State (compliance). If the proposal is approved, the Executive Vice President will approve the fee to move forward in the Budget process.

**Step 3 - Student Vote:** Per the [Policy](#), all new (or increases greater than 1% above CPI) for **Mandatory Fees** shall be approved by a vote of the Undergraduate Student Government (USG) and the Graduate Student Government (GSG). This process occurs during the fall semester. When the Executive review is complete, the EVP will forward the approval to the [Dean of Students](#) who will work with the administrator to present the proposal for consideration by the student governments. The proposal and presentation will be added to an agenda item for review and input at the following USG/GSG joint meeting. The student governments may choose to vote at that meeting or at a subsequent meeting if more information is desired. A [timeline](#) for the approval of mandatory fees may be found in the policy.

**Step 4 - Budget Process:** Once approved by the Executives and student governance (as applicable), fee templates must be submitted to the [Budget Office](#) by **November 30** to be included in the cost of attendance calculations and the institutional budget request with the [Schedule of Fees and Charges](#) or “fee packet”. The budget request requires review by the Campus Budget Committee and if approved, they will submit their recommendation to the President for consideration. If the President approves, then it will be submitted to the Board of Trustees for consideration.

**Student review and input:** In conjunction with the Budget Process, the Undergraduate and Graduate student governments (USG and GSG) have the opportunity to review and provide input on *all* fees. The Budget Office will provide the [Schedule of Fees and Charges](#) to the Dean of Students in early March. The Dean of Student will then provide the Schedule to the USG and GSG presidents for review before the joint USG and GSG meeting in mid-March. During the joint USG and GSG meeting the Schedule will be presented as a business topic, and an open forum will be conducted. Feedback will be provided to the Administrator, the Budget Office, and to their Student Representative to the Board as necessary. Input and feedback on the Schedule will be provided to the Board of Trustees at their meeting in early spring (typically April) by the Student Representative to the Board. If a student has concerns regarding student related fee issues, then they may follow the [Complaint Resolution process](#).

Step 5 - Implementation: After Board approval, the Budget Office will update the [Schedule of Fees and Charges](#) and will inform the appropriate stakeholders. The schedule will be posted on the Budget Office website and will be linked to websites for the Bursar, Admissions, and the Graduate Office. It is recommended that Administrators provide information regarding their fees and charges on their home department websites as appropriate.

When a new fee is approved, the Administrator must contact the [Controller's Office](#) to initiate the setup of a new Banner Index. The Controller's office will work with the Administrator to manage collections and the accounting for revenue and related expenses.

### *Fee Management*

It is the Administrator's responsibility to ensure the financial management of the fee is in compliance with state statutes and policies, as well as all Mines policies, procedures, and guidelines.

In order to maintain access and affordability to students, all fees should be set at a level where the overall operating activity is expected to break even on average and, at a minimum, maintain a positive cash balance. Cash balances may include working capital (30-60 days) and reserves for equipment replacement, planned capital construction, and controlled maintenance. Excess fund balances will be reviewed with respective fee administrator to determine how it will be used and managed. Funds derived from fees, in general, may not be used to subsidize normal instructional activities (General Fund) or to support unrelated activities. Expense or cash transfers between fee and other institutional accounts may only occur for corrections or exceptions approved by the Director of Budget and will be subject to a case by case analysis.

Each year the Budget Office will request Administrators to update the [fee template](#) to include:

- Forecasted revenue and expense for the current year and projections for the following year;
- Current fee rate;
- Fund balance; and
- Explanation for excess fund balance and variance explanations for differences between revenues and expense

Fee templates will be due to the Budget Office no later than November 30 to be included in the Cost of Attendance Calculation and/or the campus budget request process.

The Vice President for each respective area will approve the updated template and submit to the Budget Office for final approval by the Executive Vice President.

## Other Charges

Other charges are for those activities provided for convenience and primarily to faculty, students and staff. Incidental sales to external customers may occur, but are expected to be immaterial to overall operations. Other charges that are most often provided to students, faculty and staff are included in the [Schedule of Fees and Charges](#) for informational purposes.

### *Process – Other Charges*

Step 1 - Budget Process: Administrators will submit updates for all other charges to the [Budget Office](#) via email by **November 30** to be included in the [Schedule of Fees and Charges](#) or "fee packet" for informational purposes. A template is not required.

Step 2 - Student review and input: In conjunction with the Budget Process, the Budget Office will provide the [Schedule of Fees and Charges](#) to USG and GSG presidents in early March for informational purposes.

Step 3 - Implementation: Once the budget process is complete, the Budget Office will update the [Schedule of Fees and Charges](#) and will inform the appropriate stakeholders. The schedule will be posted on the Budget Office website and will be linked to websites for the Bursar, Admissions, and the Graduate Office. It is recommended that Administrators provide information regarding their fees and charges on their home department websites as appropriate.

To implement a new charge, the Administrator must contact the [Controller's Office](#) to initiate the setup of a new Banner Index. The Controller's office will work with the Administrator to manage collections and the accounting for revenue and related expenses

### *Management – Other Charges*

It is the Administrator's responsibility to ensure the financial management of the fee is in compliance with State statutes and policies, as well as all Mines policies, procedures, and guidelines. Included in these policies are three that specifically address sales and services of "other" activity to the Mines community as well as external customers:

- [Educational Business Activities Policy](#)
- [Unrelated Business Income Tax Policy](#)
- [University Facilities Use Policy](#)

In general, the activity should be self-supporting and revenues should not be used to subsidize other activity. Exceptions may be approved by the budget office.

## Timeline

The estimated timeline outlined below was developed to coordinate with Board meetings and the academic year calendar. Adjustments may occur based on changes in schedules for the Board meetings.

- *August – September:* New fees, or fee increase proposals are submitted to the Executive Team for review and approval
- *October – November:* New Mandatory Fees and increases greater than 1% above CPI are approved by USG and GSG
- *November:* All Fee templates and updates for charges are submitted to the Budget Office
- *March:* Schedule of Fees and Charges is reviewed by USG and GSG Councils
- *March – April:* Schedule of Fees and Charges reviewed by Budget Committee and President
- *April – May:* Board approval of fees and final budget

# Decision Tree

