

# University of Northern Colorado

## Student Fee Plan

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**Originally Approved by the Board of Trustees:**  
*September 14, 2012*

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## I. Introduction

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Colorado House Bill 11-1301 made significant changes to Colorado Revised Statutes (“C.R.S.”) § 23-5-119.5, which regulates fees for colleges and universities. One intention of the legislation was to provide greater flexibility in developing student fee policy appropriate to the unique nature of each institution, while offering meaningful opportunities for student input and providing for transparency and disclosure. Consistent with legislative intent, the University of Northern Colorado engages in meaningful processes for receiving and considering student input concerning the amount assessed in fees and the purposes for which those fees are used.

The core operations of the University of Northern Colorado – including, for example, instruction, academic support, student services, research, overhead and operating costs – are funded through the general resources of tuition, state support, grants, and gifts. Student fees are charged for

- costs unique to a course or academic program
- resources such as library materials and technology
- additional programs and activities that enhance and support the overall student experience
- costs for specifically identifiable facilities, services, and activities
- costs for periodic, intermittent, or optional events or services (application-processing, orientation, commencement, copies of transcripts, and similar services)

The use of student fee revenue may benefit students both directly and indirectly. For example, capital construction timelines mean that some current students may not benefit directly from fees for capital improvements, but up-to-date facilities enhance and support the overall student experience and ultimately increase the value of the degree conferred. Likewise, a student may not take advantage of all the programs funded through specific fees, but these fees benefit the student body as a whole. Fines and penalties such as late fees or parking violations are not student fees and therefore are outside the scope of this plan.

This plan was prepared in accordance with C.R.S. § 23-5-119.5 and the draft Colorado Commission of Higher Education's Policy VI-C (as revised June 2012).

## II. Student Fees Definition and Categorization

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### A. Academic Program and Course Fees

Fees charged for costs unique to a course or program of study, typically for supplies, equipment or specialized infrastructure, and services.

1. **Participation Fees** – Fees assessed for courses where the amount of the fee is passed through to a vendor for expenses incurred to use specialized facilities or services such as bowling alleys, ski lifts, or SCUBA instruction. Also may include an amount to cover the travel cost of field trips required for the course.

2. **Assessment Fees** - Fees assessed to cover the pass-through cost to vendors for administering tests and assessment tools in courses designed to provide students with applied experience in administration and interpretation of achievement, psychological, and other types of tests. Also covers the cost of assessing safety and quality of skill performance before a student can proceed to the next phase of their educational program, such as clinical rotations for nursing students.
3. **Supervision Fees** - Fees assessed to cover the costs of faculty travel and related expenses for courses involving supervision of clinical rotations and student teaching.
4. **Course Fees** – Fees assessed to underwrite in whole or in part the cost of consumable supplies in a laboratory or classroom including fees charged for repair and replacement of specialized laboratory equipment.
5. **Program Fees** - Fees assessed to students based upon their program of study for higher than average costs of delivering the program.

#### **B. Academic Resource Fees**

Fees charged for resources that directly support a student's educational experience.

1. **On-Line Course Fees** - Fees assessed for all students enrolled in an online course to pay for costs related to online delivery of the course.
2. **Technology Fees** – Campus-wide mandatory fees paid by all students on campus, assessed based on their programs of study, for the purpose of providing or purchasing equipment or programmatic activities relating to computer equipment, computer laboratory equipment, or other technology.
3. **Library Fees** – Campus-wide mandatory fees paid by all students on campus, assessed based upon a student's program of study, for the cost of library materials purchased in support of the program of study.

#### **C. Student Activity, Program and Initiative Fees**

Fees charged to provide activities, programs and resources that enhance the overall student experience.

1. **Student Activities Fees** – Fees supporting student activities including clubs, cultural centers, student government, and similar activities. Allocation of these fees is governed by the Student Fee Allocation Process described in Student Senate Bylaws.
2. **Specialized Initiative Fees** – Fees for a particular student initiative that may be for a specified period of time. The LEAF (Leadership for Environmental Action Fund) is an example of such fees.

#### **D. Campus Capital Fees**

Fees charged to construct, maintain, furnish, and equip buildings and infrastructure for academic facilities, defined by draft CCHE policy VI-C-1.50 as “facilities that are core to the role and mission of the institution and may include, but not be limited to, space dedicated to instructional, student services, or administration,” including debt service on bonds.

#### **E. Student Services Fees**

Fees charged to provide specific student services that contribute to student engagement and academic success, including, but not limited to, intercollegiate athletics, intramurals, Greek life, campus recreation and wellness, Bear Bus, health center, student newspaper, and counseling services.

#### **F. Administrative Fees**

Fees charged to cover the administrative support of supporting student activities, programs and services.

#### **G. Auxiliary Facility Fees**

Fees charged to construct, maintain, operate, furnish, and equip buildings and infrastructure for auxiliary facilities as defined by C.R.S. § 23-5-101.5.

1. **Student Facility Fees** – Fees for the maintenance, expansion, renovation, operation, and/or lease of facilities generally available to all students such as food service, athletics, college stores, parking, student centers, recreational facilities, health center, and similar facilities.
2. **Student Bond Fees** – Fees for debt service on bonds issued for construction, furnishing, and equipping of facilities generally available to all students.

#### **H. Student Health Insurance**

Fees charged to cover health insurance premiums for those who do not have insurance through their employer or parents. Students are required to be covered under a health insurance policy.

#### **I. Other Fees**

Fees charged for periodic, intermittent, or optional events or services.

1. **Charge for Service** - A charge to cover the costs of delivering specific services. Charges for service are neither campus-wide nor mandatory for all students. Charges for service are, however, required for students who meet the criteria for which the charge is being assessed. These charges may include, but are not limited to application fees, add/drop fees, orientation fees, and matriculation fees.
2. **User Fee** - A fee to exercise a privilege or receive a service provided by an auxiliary facility, including, but not limited to, parking fees, space rental, meal plans, locker rentals, and recreation center usage fees. User fees do not include any general fee charged to all students.

### III. Procedures for Student Fees

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#### A. General Procedure

1. Establishment, review, modification to and discontinuance of student fees shall be included in the annual budget process of the university and include consultation with students. The Board of Trustees approves all new fees, changes to existing fees, and discontinuance of fees. In doing so, the Board of Trustees will include in its considerations financial aid available from all sources for students with documented need and will strive to maintain access and affordability for resident students.
2. Member or members of the student body may propose fees under Student Senate Bylaws, Chapter III, Election Code, Section 7, Referendum, Opinion Poll, Recall, and Student Cabinet Vacancy.
3. Student Senate Bylaws, Chapter II, Part V, Section 1 B states: “Student Senate may recommend an increase per student fees by the official CPI rate of inflation for Denver-Boulder-Greeley for the year prior to the year of the SFAP.”

#### B. Use of Fees

1. The allocation of Student Activity, Program and Initiative Fees is governed by the student fee allocation process (SFAP). The process is conducted annually in accordance with Student Senate Bylaws, Chapter II, Student Fee Allocation Process.
2. The allocation of other student fees is accomplished as part of the annual budget process, which includes consultation with students where appropriate.

#### C. Timeline

The Board of Trustees adopts the University’s operating budget in June of each year. The budget contains any provision for new, increased, decreased, or eliminated fees.

##### **Student Senate Student Fee Allocation (SFAP) Timeline**

- October – SFAP training; focused on the purpose and procedure for each phase of the SFAP process, responsibilities of program directors and student senate members, and budget and other documents pertinent to the process
- November – End of the year report due to the Student Senate Director of Finance
- November – Initial budget review to evaluate each SFAP program for conformance with goals and objectives of the funded activity, level of service provided to students, and appropriateness of expenditures
- December – Initial budget request
- February – Student fee open forum
- March – Program increase reading to Student Senate
- April – Student election and vote on new student fees requiring student vote
- April – Grievances due to AA/EO
- April to May – Student representation at Board of Trustees meeting to discuss new student fees passed in vote
- June – Approval by UNC Board of Trustees

#### **D. Complaint Resolution Process**

Student Senate Bylaws, Chapter VII, Section 6, Grievance Procedure outlines the purpose of the procedure and general guidelines, how to file a grievance, forms of grievances, and the role of the Student Rights Advocate and the Ethics Committee in the grievance process.

### **IV. Review and Evaluation**

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During the fall semester, University administrative staff will confer with Student Senate representatives to review fee rate assessments, fee expenditures, institution fee policies, and fee reserve fund balances.

### **V. Disclosures and Billing Statements**

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Once approved by the Board of Trustees, the University will provide to students at least thirty days' advance notice of a new fee assessment or fee increase. The notice will, at a minimum, specify

- the amount of the new fee or of the fee increase
- the reason for the new fee or fee increase
- the purpose for which the University will use the revenues received from the new fee or fee increase
- whether the new fee or fee increase is temporary or permanent, and if temporary, the expected date on which the new fee or fee increase will be discontinued

As soon as practicable each year the University will make reasonable efforts to provide on the University web site current information about tuition rates and fees, including information concerning the purposes of the fees charged by the University. The University may provide information about fees that are specific to courses or programs either on its web site or in the most recent course catalog, whichever is most appropriate.

The University will provide a function for calculating tuition and fees. Currently there is a website to assist students in estimating their annual and total cost of attendance.

The bill for each student will include a clear itemization of the fees charged to the student. Fees used for debt service on bonds will be separately identified.

### **VI. Fees Related to Bonds**

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Debt service and user fees for bond-funded auxiliary facilities will comply with C.R.S § 23-5-119.5 (5).