

CCA FIN 10.2: Institutional Fee Plan

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GUIDELINE

PART A – Fee Categories

The purpose of the Institutional Fee Plan (Plan) is to define how student fees are proposed, approved, assessed, and allocated at Community College of Aurora (College or CCA). This Plan has been developed to be in compliance with Colorado Revised Statutes (CRS) (23-1-123), Colorado Department of Higher Education (CDHE) Policy VI-Part C, and State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education (SBCCOE) Board Policy (BP) 4 – 20.

I. Definitions

- A. Definitions of Fees and Charges: Terms associated with Fees and Charges at Community College of Aurora are defined as follows:
1. Fees: Any mandatory assessment against students (excluding tuition), including those assessed as (1) a condition of enrollment in the College, or (2) a condition of enrollment in a particular program or course.
 2. Inflationary Increases: Any additional assessment to a fee or charge, based on the rate of inflation, which is the percentage change in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for the Denver-Boulder-Greeley metropolitan area.
 3. Charges: Assessments against students to generally cover the cost of delivering specific services or for the privilege of using an auxiliary service or facility.
 - a. Charges for Service: Assessments to cover the costs of delivering specific services that are incidental to instructional activities, including but not limited to application charges, add/drop charges, fines and penalties, transcript charges, late charges, testing charges, student identification

card charges, orientation charges, matriculation charges and health insurance charges. Charges for Service do not include admission to events or other such ancillary activities and are not Fees as described above.

- b. User Charges: Assessments against students for the privilege of using or receiving the service of an auxiliary facility. A User Charge is assessed to only those students making use of the service or auxiliary facility, including but not limited to parking registration charges and outdoor pursuits charges.

II. Categorization of Fees

- A. Scope of Fee: Every Fee shall be classified as to whether its scope is Campus-wide or Non-Campus-wide.

1. Campus-wide Fees: Mandatory assessments to all students, the revenues from which are used for academic or nonacademic purposes, including but not limited to the following:
 - a. Support for student programs, including but not limited to cultural or social events, off-campus housing assistance, student clubs, student organizations, and student media;
 - b. Construction, maintenance, operation, or lease of areas that are used as student centers, recreational facilities, parking lots, child care centers, or for payment of bonds issued for principal or interest payments on long-term debt for student facilities;
 - c. Establishment and operation of campus health clinics or contract health services;
 - d. Support for intercollegiate or intramural/club sport activities or for payment of bonds allocated for the principal or interest payments on the long-term debt of any facility used for intercollegiate athletics;
 - e. Payment of direct and indirect operating expenses of student government;
 - f. Providing or purchasing equipment or programmatic activities relating to computer equipment, laboratory equipment or other;
 - g. Providing administrative services, including registration fees;

restricted for costs directly related to the associated course and each section of the course must be assessed the same Course Specific Fee.

2. Student Activity Fees: Mandatory campus-wide fees assessed for a specific purpose. Student Activity Fees apply to student centers, recreation facilities, intercollegiate athletics, child care centers, campus health clinics or contract health services, student government, and similar facilities and services; and any general fee, the revenue from which is appropriated by student government for a specific purpose.
 - a. Student Government Fee – A student revenue fee used exclusively to fund student activities, clubs and organizations, student travel to in-state and out of state conferences and competitions, campus center operations and maintenance, ID's, and the replacement and renewal of campus center furnishings. Fee rates are approved by SBCCOE annually.
 - b. Student Parking Fee – To cover operation and maintenance costs of those facilities. Fee rates are approved by SBCCOE annually.
 - c. Student Center Bond Fee – To pay the principal and interest on CCA's Series 2010A Refinance Bonds and to cover operation, improvement, and maintenance costs of the Student Center. Fee rates are approved by SBCCOE annually.
 - d. Technology Fee – To replace and upgrade technology associated with classroom instruction including, but not limited to computer lab workstations, classroom presentation technology and wireless infrastructure upgrades. Fee rates are approved by SBCCOE annually.
3. Administrative Fees: Mandatory campus-wide fees assessed to provide administrative and support services.
4. Academic Facility Fees: Use of tuition or fees may be used for academic facilities construction, provided the following conditions are met:
 - a. All other financing options have been explored;
 - b. Students approved the use of funds through a student vote or referendum or student government approval (as specified in the Part B of this Plan). Note: Only the use of a student fee for academic facilities construction must be approved by vote or referendum or by student government. The College may use tuition for the construction or renovation of academic facilities without approval by student vote or referendum, provided that, at a minimum, the College has explored all

other financing options, has presented their proposed use of tuition revenues at a public meeting, and has informed students which capital projects will be funded with tuition revenues;

- c. Any referendum relating to the use of fees under this section is initiated by the student government.
5. **Mandatory Insurance Fees:** Fees charged for insurance required beyond regular health insurance based on the nature of the course.
 6. **User Fees:** Fees paid by students to exercise a privilege or receive a service by an auxiliary facility. This excludes continuing education fees and ticket sales for music or theatre events.
 7. **Charge for Service:** Charges to cover the costs of delivering specific services which are incidental to the instructional activities.
 - a. **Registration Fee:** The CCCS system-wide registration fee that was non-refundable, per Board Policy, was changed in April 2008 by SBCCOE to be a refundable fee, at the discretion of each College. CCA decided that the registration fee would be refundable at the effective date of the change, which was at the beginning of the Fall 2008 semester. Although the registration fee is uniform across the system, each college is responsible for the collection, maintenance, and administration of this revenue to defray costs of registration. Fee rates are approved by SBCCOE annually.
 - b. **Return Check Charge:** CCA assesses a processing fee for all checks returned to the College due to insufficient funds.

III. Timelines

Typically, the timeline for review and approval of student fees will approximate the following:

- A. Late January – Proposals for student fees and other charges by the appropriate departments are submitted to the Vice President of Administrative Services (VPAS).
- B. Early February – Preliminary proposals for new and existing student fees (in excess of inflation and consistent with BP 4-20) and other charges are forwarded by the VPAS to Student Government for review and comment. It is the responsibility of the VPAS to work with the CCCS Office of Legal Affairs for the approval of student fee ballot language.

- C. Mid-February – Student Government open forum on student fees. Preliminary proposals for new and existing student fees (in excess of inflation and consistent with BP 4-20) and other charges are forwarded by the VPAS to President’s Cabinet for review and comment.
 - D. End of February – Preliminary recommendations from Student Government and President’s Cabinet are due to the VPAS.
 - E. Early March – The VPAS forwards summary of preliminary recommendations on the proposals for student fees and other charges to the President. If approved by the President, the VPAS forwards the summary of preliminary recommendations to the CCCS Budget Office.
 - F. SBCCOE April Board Meeting (2nd Wednesday of the month) – An overview of preliminary recommendations for student fee and other charges are presented by CCCS Budget Office to the SBCCOE on behalf of all CCCS colleges.
 - G. SBCCOE April Board Meeting (2nd Wednesday of the month) – Proposal for new and existing fees (in excess of inflation) requiring student vote and must be approved or rejected (contingent upon affirmative student vote).
 - H. Third week of April – Students have traditionally voted on fee issues within the Spring Student Government ballot. The timeline for said election is spelled out in the Student Government Constitution as “the 14th calendar week of Spring Semester.” There is also clarification within the Student Government Constitution defining and stipulating to “special elections” which may also apply to fee issues.
 - I. Fall Semester – New approved fees and increases to existing fee go into effect.
- IV. Review of Fee Fund Balances

College budget staff, along with the organization manager, will periodically review each fee fund throughout the fiscal year. The review include evaluation of revenue collection, expenditures, estimated fund balance, and appropriate use of fee revenues. The level of allowable fund balance for each fee area is determined by College leadership in light of the current financial situation of the College and/or unique circumstances of that particular fee’s plans (i.e. saving for a piece of equipment, etc.).

PART B – Elections and Required Approvals

- I. Student Elections

Under the circumstances as outlined below, students are required to approve new fees and increases in existing fees. The President is responsible for administering all student elections concerning fees, upon SBCCOE approval of the referendum plan. The referendum plan for the proposed fee will include the form of notice to students of the amount, the reason for the assessment, the purpose for which the College will use the revenue, and whether the fee is permanent or temporary, and if temporary, a repeal date for the fee. The referendum plan will also include the effect of enrollment fluctuations. A simple majority of the votes cast determines the outcome of any student election.

The College may conduct a student vote once each term. This election will be scheduled in consultation with Student Government and will be announced to the students at least thirty (30) days in advance. The Student Government Constitution specifies when its regularly scheduled elections will be held which currently is the fifth calendar week of fall semester and the fourteenth calendar week of spring semester.

The results of successful referendum elections are not subject to appeal and proceed directly to SBCCOE for disposition. No new fee, fee increases, or fee extension that is defeated by a vote of the student body may be resubmitted for a student vote until the following regularly scheduled election. All student fee elections are advisory to the SBCCOE.

II. Student Approval Not Required

- A. Existing fees, new fees, or increases in fees relating to permanent student purposes.
- B. Existing fees, new fees, or increases in fees relating to administrative fees for a specific academic course.
- C. Any fee assessed for repayment of bonds issued or incurred prior to July 1, 1997.
- D. Increase in any fee that is applied to repayment of bonds issued or incurred prior to July 1, 1997, if the fee increase is necessitated by a covenant in the authorizing bond resolution or other agreement for the specific project.
- E. Increase in any fee that is applied to the repayment of bonds issued or incurred prior to July 1, 1997, if the fee increase is assessed for the repayment on bonds that are issued to refund existing bonds for the specific project and the maturity date of the refunding bonds is the same or earlier than the maturity date of the existing bonds.

III. Student Approval Required (by a Majority of Votes)

- A. New fee or fee increase (in excess of inflation only) assessed to cover administrative costs.

- B. New fee or fee increase (in excess of inflation only) assessed for non-permanent student purposes. New non-permanent student purpose fee or fee increases after July 1, 1997, must contain an expiration date. Non-permanent student purpose fees in existence prior to July 1, 1997, and which are not scheduled to expire prior to July 1, 2000, shall be subject to approval by student election at the first regularly scheduled student election after July 1, 2000.

IV. Itemization of Student Fees on Billing Statements

The College shall separately disclose the fees charged to students in its student billing statements. This requirement applies to fees, the purpose of which is to cover any administrative costs; permanent student purpose fees; and non-permanent student purpose fees. Such itemization shall not be required for any academic course fee that is specifically listed in the course catalog. Itemization shall not be required for detailed allocations of general student fees; however, such itemization may include an itemization of other general student fees. The portion of fees from any general student fee for the repayment of bonds or other debt shall also be disclosed on the billing statement.

Each billing statement will conspicuously identify any optional student fees or charges that are automatically assessed unless the student chooses not to pay the fee through a negative check-off.

PART C – Participation and Appeal Processes

Student participation in the development of campus and statewide fees occurs at two (2) levels through recognized governance bodies. At the first level the College's recognized student governance body, which is Student Government, is consulted by President and/or his or her designees. At the second level, a State Student Advisory Council (SSAC) exists and is advised by CCCS staff. Additionally, the SSAC vice chair sits on the SBCCOE as a non-voting member as provided by BP 4-25 and CRS 23-60-104.

I. Student Participation and Appeal Process

Student Government is consulted by College administration about the fees listed above on a routine basis.

- A. Will consult with elected representatives of Student Government once in the fall term to review the current year's fees and again in the spring term prior to submission of student fees for the next fiscal year to SBCCOE. Specific dates will be established by College administration that correspond with the dates and timeline for final SBCCOE action on all student fees.

- B. Student Government is responsible each fall term to notify the President of the names of no more than five (5) students, who also are members of the Student Government Budget Hearing Committee. These individuals will serve as representatives to the College's internal fee allocation process. As stated in the Student Government Constitution, these five (5) student representatives consist of the Student Government President (Chair), Student Government Treasurer, one other Student Government member (senator or officer), and two students at-large (not Student Government members). Students who are not members in good standing will not be allowed to serve.
- C. It is the responsibility of the College administration to provide a copy of this Organizational Guideline, any subsequent revisions thereto, and target dates for the internal fee allocation process to the student representatives identified above by January 31 each year.
- D. Student fee request must be submitted to CCCS by mid-March of each year. Accordingly, sufficient time should be earmarked for consultation between College administration and students to meet established deadlines. All existing fees will be submitted to CCCS unless a specific exception is made by the CCCS Vice President for Finance. New and increased fees must include a rationale and an accompanying statement documenting the purposes to which the additional revenue will be applied.
- E. In the event student representatives to the internal fee process do not agree with elements of the final fee proposal, both parties will commit to seeking informal resolution.
- F. If informal resolution to the issue or issues identified in e above does not occur, the Student Government President may file a written appeal with the President by February 21 or the working day closest thereto. A written appeal will state the substantive grounds for the appeal. Any appeals filed after this date will not be considered.
- G. The President will respond to the written appeal within five (5) working days. The President's written response will include rationale for either accepting or denying the written appeal.
- H. Within five (5) working days, by a simple majority of the membership of Student Government, Student Government may reject the President's response. If a majority is not attained or if Student Government fails to take action, the President's response is final and no further appeals on the same issue are possible.

- I. If Student Government rejects the President's response, the President of Student Government may file a written appeal with the advisor to SSAC within three (3) working days, as provided in the following section.
- J. College administration and Student Government may waive the appeal timelines by mutual consent.

PART C – SBCCOE Participation and Appeal Processes

The SBCCOE will approve all student fees prior to their implementation. The procedures above provide a mechanism for students to participate in the process of establishing fees, including the opportunity for the students and student representatives to address the SBCCOE during discussion and action of student fee proposals.

It is the responsibility of the College administration to provide the Student Government President with the final action taken by SBCCOE on student fees after the Board meeting in which student fees are approved. It is the responsibility of the Student Government President to inform members of the Student Government and other students of final SBCCOE action on student fees.