

# Red Rocks Community College

## Institutional Fee Plan

The Red Rocks Community College Institutional Fee Plan (Plan) provides guidelines for the appropriate assessment, use and review of student fees in compliance with Colorado Revised Statutes 23-1-123, Colorado Department of Higher Education Policy Section VI- part C 3.00 Student Fee Policy, and State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education (Board) BP 4-20. In compliance with BP 4-20, the Plan will be submitted for Board review annually. The college President is responsible for establishing the Plan and it is administered by the Vice President of Administrative Services.

### **DEFINITIONS and FEE CATAGORIES:**

A fee is defined as any amount assessed to students as a condition of enrollment in the college and/or as a condition of enrollment in a particular course or program.

#### Instructional Fees:

- **Course Specific Fees:** Mandatory fees associated with courses that help defray the cost of offering specific courses. These include, but are not limited to: field trips; required materials fees for laboratory, music, art, vocational, occupational, technical, and physical education courses; uniforms and specialized equipment; testing fees required for completion of a course; malpractice insurance; digital textbooks; high/medium CIP course fees; and CISCO fees as further described below.
- **High/medium and CISCO fees:** In April 2010 the SBCCOE approved a revision of its 2000 approved Classification of Instructional Program (CIP) codes that are used to determine those courses that will be assessed a course fee. All courses offered by the Colorado Community College System (CCCS) are identified according to three cost factor categories based on costs of delivery: low cost, medium cost, and high cost. In addition to these levels the SBCCOE has approved a separate rate for CISCO courses. Course fee rates for all medium, high cost and CISCO courses are approved by SBCCOE each fiscal year and not subject to individual request by the college.
- **Program Fees:** Mandatory fees associated with academic programs that help defray the costs of offering specific programs. These include, but are not limited to, music, art, vocational, occupational, technical, and physical education programs; testing fees required for completion of a program; and malpractice insurance.

#### Student Fees:

- **Student Activity Fees:** Mandatory fees associated with enrollment in the college and/or campus that are assessed for a specific purpose. These fees include, but are not limited to, student centers, athletics, student government, contract health services, and/or similar services and facilities; non-bonded parking fees; and any general fee, the revenue from which is appropriated by student government for a specific purpose.

#### Bond Fees:

- Fees assessed and pledged to build, renovate and/or operate and maintain auxiliary facilities or, as allowable in statute, academic facilities.

#### Use Fees:

- **Administrative Fees Unrelated to a Specific Academic Course or Program:** These are mandatory campus-wide fees charged to provide administrative services which may include, but not limited to, renewal and replacement equipment costs, technology fees, computer labs and printers and registration fees.
- **Auxiliary Sales and Services:** Charges to provide elective services such as housing and food service plans. These charges are not campus-wide or mandatory for all students.
- **Sales and Services of Educational Activities:** Charges to provide elective services such as fees for testing and other services that are non-mandatory or are strongly encouraged. These charges are not campus-wide or mandatory for all students.
- **Miscellaneous Charges/Charge for Service:** Charges to cover the cost of delivering specific services. Charges for service are not campus-wide or mandatory for all students, but are required for students who meet the criteria for which the charge is being assessed. These may include, but are not limited to, graduation and commencement, application processing charge, Accuplacer, optional materials charges, deferred payment plan enrollment, promissory notes, and return check fees.

Optional Fees:

- Those fees or charges that are automatically assessed unless the student chooses not to pay. These shall be refunded to any student who paid the fee upon request. The refund shall be available during the entire term in which the fee was paid. *Red Rocks Community College does not currently charge any optional fees.*

**ADMINISTRATION, FEE USE AND COMPLAINT RESOLUTION PROCESS**

A Fee may not be substituted for tuition and shall not be used to provide general revenue to the college. Tuition and/or fees may be used for academic facilities construction subject to Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHHE) fee policies. Any such building must comply with the provisions of series 16 of Board Policy.

All fee rates must be approved annually by the Board. Each fee is separately itemized on the student billing statement; however, instructional course and program fees are specifically listed in the course schedule and are shown in aggregate on the student billing statement. All fees must be included and disclosed in the college schedule each semester. Course specific fees are published in the schedule with the related course listing.

New fees or changes in rates of fees may be requested on an annual basis to be approved by the Board in the spring as scheduled by CCCS administration. These fees are then effective the following fall semester for that academic year. Faculty submit their requests for instructional fees to their dean for approval. When approved, the dean submits the requests to the Vice President of Administrative Services for submission for Board approval. Requests for new or changed non instructional fees are submitted through the appropriate supervisor to the Vice President of Administrative Services.

Revenue and the related expenses for all instructional fees, student fees and bond fees must be accounted for separately and not comingled with any other departmental revenues and expenses. At the end of the year, any unspent fee revenue must be rolled forward to the new fiscal year and into the same related fee Organization Code as appropriate. Year end balances may not be diverted to other departmental needs.

**Review of Fee Fund Balances:**

Fees are intended to cover only the actual costs of specific materials on a per student basis or an actual charge by a third party for use of their facilities or for a specific stated service and should not accumulate unspent fund balances in excess of 50% of the fee's annual revenues, absent an approved plan for a future acquisition. In

some cases, fund balances may be accumulated for a specific purpose such as a future acquisition of capital equipment needed by a program. A spending plan for such fund balances must be filed with the Vice President of Administrative Services. If the department continually rolls a balance of unspent fee revenue into a new fiscal year, the department will be required to provide a spending plan (compliant with these guidelines) or reduce the fee order to eliminate the balance in a timely manner. Red Rocks Community College's budget staff, along with the organization manager, periodically reviews fee fund activity throughout the year. The review includes an evaluation of revenue collection, expenditures, appropriate use of fee revenues, and estimated fund balance. Fee balances must be reviewed annually by the appropriate dean or department supervisor at the end of the fall semester in preparation of submitting changes for Board approval for the next academic year. A spending plan for accumulated fund balance of student activity fees must be created by student government in consultation with and approval of Student Life staff and submitted to the Vice President of Student Success for final approval.

### Instructional fees:

Revenue from instructional fees can be used to buy tangible and consumable supplies, services, or to provide access to a facility that enhances the experience of the student and is critical to the academic outcomes of the course.

Examples of allowable expenses include, but are not limited to:

- Art Supplies for painting, drawing, photography
- Software licenses that allow each student to access particular software
- Consumable laboratory supplies, slides, chemicals, electronic equipment etc.
- Paper and ink for specialized printers (e.g. photography)
- Travel costs associated with field trips, locally, regionally, nationally or internationally
- Student or other supplemental assistance used to support labs or assist with non-teaching duties

Examples of expenses that are NOT allowable include, but not limited to:

- General classroom instructional equipment such as smart boards, computers, projectors or maintenance and replacement of these items
- Computer labs accessible to students other than those enrolled in courses that charge the fee
- Materials that are not required to be used by all students or necessary for successful completion of the course
- Faculty and staff salaries or equipment
- Student or staff assistants to help grade or teach parts of the course, or regularly salaried lab coordinators

Students with a complaint concerning an existing mandatory course fee charged by an academic unit should register this complaint in a written communication to the dean for that academic area. Complaints must contain evidence that the fee approval procedure was not followed in a correct manner, or that the fee revenue is not being used for the intended purpose. Complaints may not be based on an individual's desire to avoid paying the fee. The Dean will investigate the complaint. If the complaint is validated, the dean will make a recommendation of steps being taken to correct the situation to the Vice President of Instruction. The Vice President of Instruction shall have the final responsibility for resolution of complaints.

### Student Activity Fees:

With the exception of the student parking fee, student activity fees are administered through the Office of Student Life. All programs and services offered through the Office of Student Life are funded by the student activity fee and are fully disclosed on the RRCC web site at <http://www.rrcc.edu/studentlife/fees.html>. The

student parking fee is administered by the office of the VP of Administrative Services. Revenue from the parking fee can be used to maintain parking lots and sidewalks. Acceptable expenses include, but are not limited to, resurfacing and stripping parking lots, maintaining parking lot and walkway lighting, and snow plowing.

Student approval through a majority vote of the student body is required for a new student activity fee or an increase in an existing student activity fee in excess of inflation, and new bond fee or fee increase in excess of inflation assessed for the construction, renovation, and /or operation of auxiliary or academic facilities or operations. In all other circumstances, student approval is not required.

Students with a complaint concerning an existing student activity fee should register this complaint in a written communication to the Director of Student Life. Complaints must contain evidence that the fee approval procedure was not followed in a correct manner, or that the fee revenue is not being used for the intended purpose. Complaints may not be based on an individual's desire to avoid paying the fee. The Director of Student Life will investigate the complaint. If the complaint is validated, the director will make a recommendation of steps being taken to correct the situation to the Vice President of Student Success. The Vice President of Student Success shall have the final responsibility for resolution of complaints.

### **PROCEDURES FOR STUDENT VOTE**

The college president, or his or her delegate, is responsible for administering all student elections concerning fees. The Student Government may hold only one referendum per Fall and Spring semester. All referendum issues must be publicized college-wide for at least thirty (30) days prior to the referendum. Referendum issues must pass with a simple majority vote of those who voted. Referendums must be at least one week long and must end at least one week before the end of the semester. All voters must be members of the student body, and their participation must be recorded by some system in which their names can be noted for purposes of voter eligibility. Voting must be made available to all student body members, regardless of class schedule or campus of attendance. Each member of the student body is allowed to fill out one ballot per referendum. Referendum results shall be tabulated by the Primary Advisor and at least two Student Government officers.

Ballots must be kept for at least thirty days following the determination of election results in case of protest or contest of the tabulation. Any student protest of referendum procedure must be filed in writing with the Primary Advisor within fourteen days of the referendum in question. Upon appearance of a just cause for complaint of referendum fraud or malfeasance, a new referendum can be held following a simple majority vote of approval by Student Government members.