

1 Course Fees

2 Effective: Moved to Policy Library from UPM 2.5(13)

3 Updated/Revised: January 16, 2019

4 Contact: [Office of the Registrar](#)

5 Policy Statement

6 Course fees, charged to students, provide a distinct resource to enhance the instruction beyond
7 what is ordinarily provided. Revenue from course fees support students' experiences in these
8 specific courses for which they are enrolled. The minimum charge is \$25 per student. Variable
9 course fees are not allowed.

10 Definition and Examples

11 **Course fees** are warranted when the proposed fee results in enhancement of the educational
12 experience beyond that ordinarily provided. Whereas, ordinary **costs of a course** are expected
13 to be borne by the department offering the course.

14 Examples of costs that are permitted as course fees:

- 15 • Amortized replacement costs of equipment used in the course, with an expected usable
16 life of less than five years. Examples include equipment used for a particular course and
17 not a particular department.
- 18 • Equipment rental. Examples include athletic equipment used in a kinesiology course.
- 19 • Instructional materials and supplies used as part of the course. These are items with a
20 unit cost of less than \$5,000. Examples include laboratory items and teaching aids.
- 21 • Maintenance costs of instructional equipment used for a particular course.
- 22 • Professional and scientific staff time (such as lab and field technicians) in enhancing the
23 students' experiences for the specific courses for which they are enrolled.
- 24 • Professional support beyond what is ordinarily provided. Examples include staff time
25 that is unique for a particular teaching department.
- 26 • Required travel and participation costs for enrolled students to visit off-campus sites.
27 This includes the cost of the instructor's travel and admission when accompanying
28 students.
- 29 • Rental costs for the use of facilities.

30 Examples of costs that are not permitted as course fees:

- 31 • Delivery costs for offering a course off campus. See delivery fee
32 (<http://www.registrar.iastate.edu/fees/glossary-of-fees>).
- 33 • General-purpose computers. See technology fee
34 (<http://www.registrar.iastate.edu/fees/glossary-of-fees>).
- 35 • Guest speakers.

- 36 • Material related to the mechanics of teaching the course, such as course outlines,
37 syllabi, exams and similar handouts.
- 38 • Salary and wages for any university instructor, administrative staff, or teaching assistant
39 with the exception of those employed to provide individual music lessons.
- 40 • Supplemental written materials, such as supplemental readings. If a department does
41 not wish to cover the costs of such materials, and the students are to have ownership,
42 the materials should be sold to the students through the university book store or other
43 local distributors. This procedure simplifies the financial transaction, and helps to avoid
44 possible copyright infringement.
- 45 • Transportation to sites related to student teaching, clinical assignments and other
46 practical activity. This is considered a personal expense.

47 **Roles and Responsibilities**

48 **Instructor**

- 49 • Recommends fees, keeping recommendations as low as possible.
- 50 • Reviews rates annually and recommends adjustments when appropriate.

51 **Academic department offering the course**

- 52 • Submits requests via the authorization system in AccessPlus prior to assessing a new
53 course fee. The fees must be based on reasonable estimates of the anticipated costs or
54 previous records of actual costs, and should be kept as low as possible.
- 55 • Reviews existing course fees annually if there are plans to renew them for the next
56 year's catalog.
- 57 • Separately tracks the revenue and expenses associated with each unique course fee
58 within the university financial system. Revenues should not be co-mingled with other
59 activities of the unit. Billing, posting of revenue and receipt of and payments of course
60 fees must be processed by the Accounts Receivable Office.
- 61 • Authorizes the spending of the fees for the intended purpose as stated in the
62 justification submitted for approval.
- 63 • Ensures that resources are used wisely and in a manner consistent with university
64 policies.

65 **Academic college offering the course**

- 66 • Reviews and approves course fees submitted.
- 67 • Retains documentation supporting the fee amount for a period of 10 years. Course fees
68 should be based on plausible estimates of the anticipated costs or previous records of
69 actual costs. The appropriateness of the amounts charged for course fees cannot be
70 properly justified without complete and accurate documentation of the costs.
- 71 • Reviews fiscal year-end balances. Course fee operations are expected to run on a break-
72 even basis for students enrolled in a particular course. Accounts with a fiscal year-end
73 free balance of +/- 20% of the annual course fee revenue requires investigation as
74 follows.

- 75 • If an account surplus, consider whether the course fee should be reduced in the future.
76 If a course has not been offered for two consecutive semesters (and a course fee is
77 cancelled), balances may be used in one of the following ways:
78 ○ Fund expenses in courses where fees are not sufficient to cover current
79 consumable costs
80 ○ Consolidate into an account that would have broader applicability to student-
81 focused initiatives
82 • If the account is in a deficit, consider whether the fee should be increased in the future
83 and whether there are other funding sources that should be used to fund the activity.
84 Accumulated deficits are the responsibility of the departments.

85 **Senior Vice President and Provost**

- 86 • Authorizes exceptions to the course fee policy on a case-by-case basis, for a duration no
87 greater than three years. Special consideration will be given to establish a variable fee
88 for courses that involve different travel locations by section within the same term.
89 • Conducts annual audits of course fee transactional activity, sharing a summary of
90 findings with the Tuition and Fee Oversight Committee, Provost Council, and Academic
91 Fiscal Officers.

92 **Registrar**

- 93 • Makes available the complete cost of attendance for students' review prior to course
94 registration.
95 • Establishes process and deadlines to ensure that this information is available for
96 publication in the schedule of courses.

97 **Who to Call with Questions**

- 98 • The fiscal officer in each college provides interpretation of the course fee policy: advises
99 on the collection of fees, account structure, and account balances; and considers
100 requests for exceptions.
101 • The Registrar's Scheduling and Fees Office handles questions and comments regarding
102 the course fee policy.

103 **Resources**

- 104 • [AccessPlus Login Page](#)
105 • [Accounts Receivable Office](#)
106 • [Office of the Registrar](#)
107 • [Special Course Fees Definitions, Processes and Procedures](#)

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