

# University of California, Los Angeles

## Student User Fee Policy

### Section I: OVERVIEW AND PURPOSE

The University of California and the individual campuses charge both mandatory and voluntary fees to students for a variety of purposes, and there are several mechanisms through which these fees are approved. For information on the various types of fees, contact the Office of Academic Planning and Budget. The University of California *Policy on Campus-Based Student Fees* may be viewed on the UCOP Web site at <http://www.ucop.edu/ucophome/uwnews/aospol/uc90.html>.

**This document pertains only to the charging of user fees to students.**

In 1996, the President delegated to the Chancellors the authority to approve the charging of fees to students for certain programs, services and supplies. This authority may not be redelegated. The April, 2000, revision of the *Delegation of Authority – Control over Miscellaneous Student Fees, Service Charges, and Deposits* may be viewed on the UCOP website at <http://www.ucop.edu/ucophome/coordrev/da/da2115att1.html>.

The UCLA Student User Fee Policy implements for the UCLA campus the provisions of the Delegation of Authority, describes the situations under which various voluntary fees may be charged, and outlines procedures to establish a new student user fee and to change an existing student user fee. The UCLA Office of Academic Planning and Budget (APB) is the office of record for matters concerning initiation of all fees charged to students, including user fees. APB is responsible for establishing and maintaining the procedures for review, approval and oversight for all fees.

A student user fee is a type of sales and service fee, and thus is subject to the provisions of UCLA Policy 340, Sales and Services Activities and Service Enterprises: Recharge Rates, User Fees, and Budgets. Because the fee is charged to the special user group of students, specific review processes and evaluation guidelines are appropriate. This policy outlines the special review processes for any academic or administrative unit that proposes to require students to pay a fee for access to a program, service or supplies. It provides guidelines to aid in determining whether it is appropriate to charge a user fee for specific programs, services or supplies. UCLA Policy 340 can be viewed on the APB Web Site at [www.apb.ucla.edu](http://www.apb.ucla.edu). Click on Sales & Service Fund Information.

This 2003 revision updates and supersedes the 1998 *Policy on the Charging of User Fees in Student Fee-Funded Programs* to respond to changes in planning and budgeting at UCLA. The policy supplements but does not replace UCLA Policy 340.

### Section II: DEFINITIONS AND POLICY SCOPE

A user fee is a fee charged only to individuals who use a specific program or service, or to individuals purchasing certain supplies. This policy applies to fees charged to students for programs, services or supplies, where students are the primary or a significant portion of the intended user group or audience. This policy also applies to fees charged in any program receiving permanent Student Services Fee funds. This policy applies only to voluntary user fees charged to individual students enrolled at UCLA.

This policy is predicated on the assumption that there are no “free” services for students. All student services are either pre-paid through allocations of revenue from the mandatory Student Services Fee, supported by other funds such as gifts or contracts & grants, or paid at the time of service through user fees. Direct user fees, especially those charged to regularly enrolled students, may be imposed only after careful consideration.

### **Definition of Students Covered by Policy**

This policy applies to user fees charged to regularly enrolled undergraduate, graduate or professional students at UCLA who have paid the mandatory university and campus student fees, including the Student Services Fee.

This policy does not apply to individuals who have not paid mandatory student fees including the Student Services Fee. Some examples of these individuals include students enrolled in the self-supporting degree programs; post-doctoral fellows; interns; residents. Services should be provided to members of these groups on the same fee-for-service basis that applies to other non-students such as faculty, staff, alumni, and members of the general public. In no case should enrolled students subsidize the cost of providing services to non-students.

This policy does not apply to Summer Session students who were not regularly enrolled during Spring Quarter. Students who are regularly enrolled in the Spring term and who remain on campus during the summer between academic years may be entitled to services at a “student” rate during the summer. Former students may be eligible for a “student” rate for one additional quarter following withdrawal or graduation. Service-providers who feel it appropriate to grant student privileges to non-students should explain the circumstances in which they would do so as part of their fee proposal.

### **Description of Fees Covered by Policy**

Student user fees, to which this policy applies, may be grouped into several categories. This list is not exhaustive, but is intended to provide guidance in applying the policy to specific situations.

(1) ***Health and wellness services and supplies***, including medical and psychological office visits, over-the-counter and prescription medications and supplies, individual or group training and counseling services. The prices for these services and supplies are generally set on a full cost-reimbursement basis, often with some subsidy from Student Services Fee support provided to the department(s) and program(s).

(2) ***Recreation classes and equipment***, including recreation class and fitness fees, trips or outings, sport entry fees, and equipment rental or sale. The prices for these services and supplies are generally set on a cost-reimbursement basis, often with some subsidy from Student Services Fee support.

(3) ***Career and legal services***, including the programs and services of the Career Center and Student Legal Services, transcripts and letters of recommendation, visa services, and Child Care Services. The prices for these services and supplies are generally set on a cost-reimbursement basis, often with some subsidy from Student Services Fee support provided to the department(s) and program(s).

(4) ***Cultural and athletic events***, including performances offered by the Center for Performing Arts and various academic departments, and Intercollegiate Athletics. These events are discretionary and compete with a wide variety of cultural and athletic offerings in the Los Angeles area. The user fee policy applies only to those programs receiving Student Services Fee support.

(5) ***Optional course materials fees***, such as supplies sold by departments as a convenience to students but available elsewhere. This category includes technology fees, such as the use of a computer lab outside of classroom hours, and printers/scanners/etc., set up exclusively or largely for student use. This category also includes the rental of lockers. Note that this category does not include mandatory course materials fees such as the Instructional Enhancement Initiative (IEI) fee, all of which are covered by the (more restrictive) Course Materials Fee Policy.

(6) ***Expedited or enhanced services fees***, such as overnight processing, for services which are otherwise provided at no charge.

(7) ***Administrative service charges, fines and forfeitures***, charged by UCLA departments are also covered by this policy. This category includes library fines, replacement charges for the BruinCard, late filing of study lists, and breakage fees. Administrative service charges, fines and forfeitures are intended to encourage compliance with administrative policies and procedures. The significant consequences of events such as missed appointments or late filing are primarily inconvenience to other students, and lost time and adverse impact on an organization's ability to serve its student clientele in a timely and cost-effective manner.

### **Description of Fees Not Covered by This Policy**

This policy does not apply to all fees charged to regularly enrolled students. Fees excluded from this policy are described below. In such cases, programs are encouraged to provide low-cost access for students.

(1) Mandatory fees that must be paid by all registered students to whom the fee applies to fund student related services and programs. These fees include, but are not limited to, the Educational Fee, the Student Services Fee, non-resident tuition, student health insurance, student government and activities, and fees related to the construction and maintenance of fee-funded facilities. Mandatory campuswide student fees must be approved by The Regents or the President. They are governed by University of California Policy 90.00, *Policy on Campus-Based Student Fees*.

(2) Mandatory course materials fees based on enrollment in specific courses or programs. The *Course Materials Fee Policy*, which includes guidelines and procedures for implementing mandatory course materials fees may be found on the APB website, [www.apb.ucla.edu](http://www.apb.ucla.edu).

(3) Fees charged by University Extension, for Summer Session, or for Orientation.

(4) Fees charged by ASUCLA. ASUCLA is governed by a student-majority board of directors under a Statement of Understanding with the UCLA administration, and all prices, charges and fees are set through policies and procedures are overseen by the board.

(5) Fees charged by the Housing Office (residence halls and apartments). Housing is part of a self-funded, systemwide bond-supported system that must meet financial criteria imposed by the bondholders. Incidental programming and administrative fees charged to residents are also excluded from this policy, because a long-standing consultative process, including the election of resident student leaders, already exists. It is noted that the Student Fee Advisory Committee (SFAC), through its Services Advisory Team (SAT) process, may review and comment upon the adequacy of the consultative processes used by the Housing Office.

(6) Fees charged by Parking and Transportation Services. These programs are part of a self-funded, bonded system that must meet financial criteria imposed by the bondholders. In addition, a consultative mechanism, including faculty, staff and students, is employed when parking fees, in particular, are increased. The parking charges are reviewed annually by the Chancellor as part of the Parking and Transportation Services budget.

(7) Fees charged by programs that exist primarily to provide teaching and research opportunities, including the University Elementary School.

(8) Fees imposed uniformly by a department to all users of particular technology (e.g., departmental copiers). It is noted that many departments are required to establish rates that meet Federal guidelines and thus may not be able to offer a special price for students.

(9) Fees charged for programs, services or supplies where the primary target audience(s) or user group(s) are generally assumed to be members of the larger UCLA or external community. In many of these programs, students are welcomed and encouraged and form an important part of the audience, but the program has been designed for a broad audience that includes both the student and the larger community. For example, the policy does not apply to admission fees for museums and galleries, purchases in gallery gift shops, publications, and conference/symposia registration. The policy does not apply to admission to cultural, athletic and other events unless the unit sponsoring the event receives Student Services Fee funding. If the unit receives Student Services Fee funding, the user fee policy – and its requirements for review by SFAC of fees charged to students – does apply.

### **Section III: PROPOSAL GUIDELINES**

An organization seeking to initiate or increase a student user fee must first submit a proposal to APB. (A proposal to eliminate or reduce a fee follows the same procedures.) A student user fee is a type of sales and service fee, and thus is subject to the provisions of UCLA Policy 340 for sales and service activities. Because the fee is charged to the students, additional review processes and evaluation guidelines are appropriate.

The proposal must meet the University's criteria for review of all sales and services activities, including the methodology for determining rates. At that time, a determination is made by the

Associate Vice Chancellor, Academic Planning and Budget, regarding whether the proposal is a student user fee, and thus whether it will be reviewed by the Student Fee Advisory Committee (SFAC) under this policy. Organizations are encouraged to seek advice from the Office of Academic Planning and Budget before submitting a formal proposal.

A program may request “conceptual approval” from SFAC in advance of completing the formal application by bringing the matter to SFAC as an item to be discussed during a regular meeting. However, the fee may not be implemented until the formal application is completed, reviewed by APB and SFAC, and final approval is granted by the Chancellor.

Some services are, in fact, sets or groups of services. For example, Cultural and Recreational Affairs offers many classes, at different rates (prices). The Ashe Center sells many over-the-counter medications, at different prices. Proposals for user fees for groups of services or supplies are acceptable. A program offering multiple services or supplies (e.g., Ashe Center over-the-counter medications) may propose to set its rates as “cost plus” a fixed percentage to cover indirect costs. The calculation of the indirect cost component must be approved by the Office of Academic Planning and Budget for compliance with Federal guidelines for rate setting. This restriction applies even when no Federal contracts or grants will be charged for the services or supplies.

A program which has multiple audiences or users (e.g., the Center for Performing Arts, Intercollegiate Athletics) may propose that the student user fee(s) be set at a percentage of the price charged to non-students for specific events.

A program may propose a fee “not to exceed” a specific amount, or may propose a fee that is scheduled to increase on a specific schedule (e.g., “\$10 per activity for 2002-03, increasing to \$15 in 2002-03 and \$20 in 2003-04).

There are two categories of user fee proposals: (1) new fees for programs and/or services or sales of commodities; and (2) price increases to existing sales or services. Administrative service charges and penalties follow the same procedures as any other student user fee.

#### New Fees

An application to charge a new student user fee, either for an existing service or for a new or significantly expanded service should include the information indicated below. This information may be incorporated into the application or attached as a supplemental document.

1. A statement of the amount of the proposed fee.
2. A detailed description of the specific services to be provided.
3. The rationale for the user fee and why the service should not, or cannot, be provided through Student Services Fee funding or other fund sources. Proposals should refer to Section V of this document, Evaluation of the Student User Fee Proposal.
4. Evidence of a client base for these services as well as evidence of student support.
5. An analysis of similar services that already exist on and/or off campus. Indicate what services are provided, to whom, and the resources involved in supporting these services.
6. A comparison of the service availability and fee-setting rationale at other UC campuses should also be included if other UC campuses provide a similar service.
7. An analysis of how the fee will affect student access to the service.
8. A 3-year budget plan, which includes anticipated expense for providing the service and all anticipated sources of funds.

9. Evidence of support from any sources of funds other than the user fee itself.
10. A plan for assessing and collecting the fee in a safe and cost effective manner. Consideration should be given to the physical safety of staff and users through implementation of approved cash handling procedures or use of the campus Billing and Accounts Receivable (BAR) system.
11. Evidence of consultation with an appropriate student advisory group. This group may be a School- or department-based student association (e.g., the Law School's Student Bar Association), or an *ad hoc* group assembled for this purpose, or some combination.

APB staff may require additional information as part of the review of the proposal under Policy 340.

#### Price Increases to Existing Fees

The Associate Vice Chancellor – Academic Planning and Budget has the authority to approve a request to increase a fee by the current (one-year) rate of inflation. The AVC will report to SFAC when such increases are approved.

Information on the University of California annual inflation rate for budgetary purposes (salary adjustments and price increases) is provided to the campus in the Chancellor's annual budgetary call letter or by APB.

An application to increase a student user fee by an amount exceeding one-year inflation is submitted to APB following the procedures outlined in Policy 340, and should include the following information:

1. A statement of the amount of the proposed fee increase, its percentage increase over the current fee, and the current rate of inflation.
2. The rationale for increasing the user fee, including why other fund sources cannot be used.
3. Projected effect of the increased user fee on students.
4. A budget plan which includes anticipated expense for providing the service and all anticipated sources of funds. The budget plan should demonstrate the need for the fee increase to cover costs.
5. An analysis and cost comparison of similar services available elsewhere on and off campus.
6. Evidence of consultation with an appropriate student advisory group. This group may be a School- or department-based student association (e.g., the Law School's Student Bar Association), or an *ad hoc* group assembled for this purpose, or some combination.

APB staff may require additional information as part of the review of the proposal under Policy 340.

#### **Section IV: PROPOSAL PROCESS AND TIMELINE**

The decision to propose a new student user fee or change an existing fee rests with the Dean or Vice Chancellor of the organization. A program or department must complete its internal consultative process before an application is submitted. The process must include consultation

with an appropriate student advisory group that is representative of the students who will be directly affected by the fee.

After the internal consultative process is completed, there are three steps involved in the submission and review of proposals.

1. An organization submits an application for a new fee or to change an existing student user fee following the directions contained in UCLA Policy 340. The application is submitted to the Associate Vice Chancellor of Academic Planning and Budget over the signature of the appropriate Dean or Vice Chancellor. UCLA Policy 340 can be viewed on the APB Web Site at [www.apb.ucla.edu](http://www.apb.ucla.edu), under Sales & Services Fund Information. To ensure that SFAC has sufficient time for review, proposals should be submitted to APB not later than the end of Fall Quarter preceding the academic year in which the user fee would be implemented or changed.
2. APB analyzes the proposal and works with the unit to ensure that the components comply with Policy 340. If the proposal is determined to be a student user fee, APB then presents it, along with an analysis, to the SFAC for review. After reviewing the proposal, the SFAC may request that the organization proposing the new user fee attend an SFAC meeting to discuss its proposal and respond to questions.
3. The SFAC forwards its recommendation on the student user fee application to the Assistant Vice Chancellor of Academic Planning and Budget, who will include the SFAC recommendation with the APB recommendation to the Chancellor. All student user fees must be approved by the Chancellor before implementation.

## **Section V: PROPOSAL REVIEW AND EVALUATION**

The May 1996 Delegation of Authority stipulates that “as appropriate, Chancellors should use on-going advisory groups that include students to advise them on campus miscellaneous fees.” At UCLA, the Student Fee Advisory Committee (SFAC) is the appropriate advisory group. The SFAC is a student-majority committee that advises the Chancellor on student fee issues and represents the student consultation process at the Chancellor’s level. The SFAC applies a broad institutional point of view. It reviews both the original proposal for a fee and subsequent adjustments in the fee level. The SFAC may recommend approval, approval with reservations, or disapproval, or recommend that a proposal be returned to the initiator with suggestions for further consideration.

The Chancellor will consider the recommendation of SFAC, of the administration, and of others in making his decision. The Office of Academic Planning and Budget coordinates the recommendation process.

When reviewing proposals, the SFAC will consider the following criteria:

- Adherence to University and campus policy in matters involving student-fees.
- Alternatives to imposition of new student fees.
- Fairness and equity across various groups of students.
- Potential undue impact on sub-groups of students.
- Available alternatives to the service or supplies, both on- and off-campus.

- The number or percentage of students using the service.

In determining whether a user fee is appropriate the SFAC will consider whether the program, service or materials are “basic” or “enhanced,” as well as whether the service is available only from on-campus providers.

- *Basic services* are required for academic success; for student health, welfare and safety; or provide a basic exposure to non-academic experiences commonly agreed to be vital to the university experience. Basic student services are the first priority for funding through University resources. The primary source is assumed to be the Student Services Fee. Financial need should not preclude any student from accessing basic services. It is noted that the definition of a “basic” service will change over time, as priorities and available resources change, and that consensus may not be achieved. Services should be reviewed on an on-going basis regarding whether they should continue to be considered “basic” or “enhanced,” in the context of user fees.

- *Enhanced services* are adjuncts or improvements to student life, and are frequently offered at a more advanced level. Enhanced services are often vital components of student services; however, students may often choose to forgo enhanced services without serious detriment to academic success or personal development. Enhanced services are generally considered to be supplemental, discretionary, elective, or optional, and often include a level of convenience and/or expedience, such as faster-than-normal turn-around, faxed responses, or payment options such as credit cards. To the extent possible, enhanced services may also be provided from University resources, in particular the Student Services Fee.

- A distinction may be drawn between services that are provided only by on-campus providers and those readily available in the local market. When students are a “captive market” of a campus service, particular care should be taken to ensure that user fees do not become a barrier to access. UCLA service organizations often compete with off-campus organizations in part by tailoring their services to UCLA students’ needs. Additionally, the UCLA services have the advantage of being more convenient to students on campus.

The matrix below has been developed to assist evaluation of user fee proposals:

	<i>Provided <b>only</b> by on-campus providers</i>	<i>Provided by <b>both</b> on-campus and off campus providers</i>
<b>BASIC SERVICES</b> <i>Necessary for academic success; for student health, welfare and safety; or provide a basic exposure to non-academic experiences.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Single provider.</li> <li>• Mandatory use.</li> </ul> <b>Student user fee not appropriate.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multiple providers.</li> <li>• Mandatory use.</li> </ul> <b>Student user fee not usually appropriate.</b>
<b>ENHANCED SERVICES</b> <i>Supplemental, discretionary, elective, or optional.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Single provider.</li> <li>• Discretionary use.</li> </ul> <b>Possible candidate for student user fee.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multiple providers.</li> <li>• Discretionary use.</li> </ul> <b>Most likely candidate for student user fee .</b>

Note: Administrative service charges and penalties are considered “enhanced” services.

A service may not fall clearly within any single frame of the matrix. A multiple funding arrangement, involving a university subsidy and a reduced fee charged to student users may be

appropriate in some cases. The classification of a service as “basic” or “enhanced” may change over time.

An organization that cannot afford to continue to provide basic services may be eligible to request an allocation of Student Services Fee funds in lieu of implementing a student user fee. Decisions regarding the allocation of Student Services Fee funds are made by the Chancellor following consultation with the Student Fee Advisory Committee and others. For additional information, refer to the *UCLA Student Services Fee Guidelines*, available on the APB website, and contact the Office of Academic Planning and Budget.

With the exception of administrative service charges and penalties, the total user fee revenue realized from students may not exceed the direct and appropriate indirect costs of providing the service to students. The revenue from user fees remains with the program through which the service is provided. Requests for exceptions to this policy must be presented by the appropriate Dean or Vice Chancellor to APB, reviewed by SFAC, and approved by the Chancellor.

#### **SECTION VI: PERIODIC REVIEW OF USER FEES**

The Office of Academic Planning and Budget will review all user fees on a periodic basis, and provide a summary of the analysis to the SFAC as part of the Committee’s annual orientation. These reviews will take place on a rotating basis, with any particular fee, or group of fees, reviewed no less frequently than every three years.

This summary will include the basis for the fee(s), e.g., fixed amount, cost-plus, percentage of charge to non-students, and the total amount collected from students over a three-year period.

The SFAC may request an *ad hoc* in-depth review of any fees or groups of fees at any time.