

Date: April 12, 2010
Subject: Fee Policy at the University of Washington

This brief presents a summary of the governance of fees at the UW. The bulk of the brief discusses academic fees at the University, including tuition, services and activities fees, technology fees, course fees, orientation fees, application fees, and fees for credit courses or degree programs offered through UW Educational Outreach.

How does the State Legislature govern fees at the University of Washington?

Tuition: Tuition comprises operating and building fees. The division of tuition into the operating and building fee is determined by the Higher Education Coordinating Board, which specifies the percentage of tuition that goes toward the building fee. The State Legislature delegated full tuition setting authority to the UW Board of Regents for nonresident and graduate tuition rates in 2003. The Legislature retained some control over resident undergraduate tuition rates by setting a maximum percent increase cap.

Other fees: In addition to its authority for resident undergraduate tuition setting, the Legislature retains general authority to approve any fee that would be levied to *all* students, unless it is one of the fees already approved by the Legislature (services and activities fees, and technology fees). Additionally, Initiative 960 requires that all proposed fee increases or new fees be included with biennial operating budget requests submitted to the Office of Financial Management (OFM). In turn, the state operating budget is written to allow the UW Board of Regents to increase fees by amounts deemed “reasonable and necessary.” Such fee increases have traditionally occurred when the Board of Regents approves the UW Budget every July.

What processes do the UW Regents, the President and Administration of UW follow in setting fees?

At the institutional level, processes for establishing new fees and modifying existing fees are guided by carefully crafted policy. First, the Board of Regents has reserved the authority to approve certain fees, including tuition rates for the state-subsidized academic program; services and activities fees; technology fees; Summer Quarter tuition; residence hall and family housing rates; and other fees intended to cover instructional costs.

All other fee approvals are delegated to the president, who has in turn delegated some fee approval authority to the provost, deans or vice presidents. The official UW Administrative Policy Statement (APS 33.1 – User Fee Approval Policy) specifies both who has the authority to approve certain fees and what costs are recoverable via fees. In general, the president approves “university wide” fees, the provost approves any course fee greater than \$50 per quarter and various “instructional related fees” (such as fees to cover immunizations for health sciences students who perform clinical work in hospitals), and deans are authorized to approve course fees of less than \$50 per quarter.

Examples of other UW fees not associated with a specific course at the UW include undergraduate and graduate application fees, transcript fees, key deposits for student housing, and other academic related fees like the School of Dentistry’s dental kits. Additionally, there are fines for negligence or tardiness including illegal parking, late registration, and overdue library materials. These fees and fines are delegated to various administrative units on campus, as discussed above.

How many courses carry a fee and what is the average fee?

There are currently 861 recorded course fees billed through Student Fiscal Services. Just over 7 percent of courses have course fees associated with them, ranging from \$3 to \$701. In FY 2009, the average course fee was \$45. The total revenue from course fees billed through Student Fiscal Services from all UW campuses for FY 2009 was \$2,394,976. Note

that there are a few instances where a course or other instructional fee is charged to students, but not through Student Fiscal Services as part of the student’s quarterly billing of tuition and fees.

For comparison, in FY 2009 the services and activities fee charged to students generated \$11,640,000 in revenue, the technology fee charged to students generated \$4,291,000 and the IMA bond fee (charged to UW students on the Seattle campus) generated \$3,124,000. These are fees that are determined by the students themselves. While the services and activities and technology fees are mentioned in statute, the IMA bond fee is levied to all Seattle students and must be reported to the state, as per current requirements.

2008-09 Course Fees by College

| | <i>College</i> | <i>Percentage of Course Enrollments in Course Sections with Fees</i> | <i>Percentage of Course Sections with Fees</i> | <i>Total Fee Collections</i> | <i>Lowest Fee</i> | <i>Highest Fee</i> | <i>Average Course Fee Paid*</i> |
|-------------------------|---|--|--|------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------|
| Seattle Campus | Built Environments | 38.0% | 28.5% | \$180,106 | \$7 | \$100 | \$41 |
| | College of Arts & Sciences | 11.5% | 8.3% | \$1,429,873 | \$3 | \$120 | \$41 |
| | Business School | 0.0% | 0.0% | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 |
| | College of Education | 2.6% | 1.7% | \$46,264 | \$200 | \$217 | \$215 |
| | College of Engineering | 9.7% | 6.2% | \$171,455 | \$5 | \$75 | \$41 |
| | College of Ocean & Fishery Sciences | 7.3% | 6.1% | \$26,870 | \$20 | \$500 | \$59 |
| | College of Forest Resources | 43.4% | 23.8% | \$76,393 | \$5 | \$495 | \$28 |
| | The Information School | 1.1% | 1.4% | \$2,700 | \$45 | \$45 | \$45 |
| | School of Law | 0.0% | 0.0% | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 |
| | Evans School of Public Affairs | 0.0% | 0.0% | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 |
| | School of Social Work | 13.9% | 5.1% | \$31,660 | \$30 | \$50 | \$48 |
| | School of Dentistry | 0.8% | 1.0% | \$32,175 | \$275 | \$475 | \$418 |
| | School of Medicine | 0.9% | 0.9% | \$100,108 | \$40 | \$701 | \$339 |
| | School of Nursing | 11.7% | 18.8% | \$33,760 | \$10 | \$85 | \$45 |
| | School of Pharmacy | 19.3% | 7.5% | \$70,610 | \$10 | \$475 | \$57 |
| School of Public Health | 0.0% | 0.0% | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | |
| Bothell Campus | Business Total | 0.0% | 0.0% | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 |
| | Software Systems | 50.3% | 40.6% | \$9,392 | \$16 | \$16 | \$16 |
| | Education Total | 12.4% | 13.4% | \$56,125 | \$150 | \$251 | \$231 |
| | Liberal Studies Total | 6.9% | 9.7% | \$19,897 | \$10 | \$50 | \$32 |
| | Nursing Total | 10.2% | 18.4% | \$5,215 | \$35 | \$35 | \$35 |
| Tacoma Campus | Business Total | 0.0% | 0.0% | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 |
| | Computer & Software Systems | 0.0% | 0.0% | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 |
| | Education Total | 9.6% | 5.1% | \$40,992 | \$224 | \$224 | \$224 |
| | Interdisciplinary Arts & Sciences Total | 11.1% | 13.8% | \$46,872 | \$10 | \$150 | \$38 |
| | Urban Studies Total | 2.5% | 2.6% | \$1,725 | \$75 | \$75 | \$75 |
| | Nursing Total | 10.7% | 7.2% | \$6,084 | \$36 | \$36 | \$36 |
| | Social Work Total | 0.0% | 0.0% | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 |

*This is the average paid by any student enrolling in a course section with an associated fee.