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## SPECIAL COURSE FEE MANUAL

### I. INTRODUCTION

The Colorado State University Special Course Fee (SCF) Manual sets forth the rules and procedures for establishing special course fees to be assessed to students pursuant to the authority granted in C.R.S. § 23-5-119.5(3)(b) and Colorado Commission on Higher Education Policy Section VI, Part C, 3.00.

Ultimate authority to recommend Special Course Fees to the Board of Governors rests with the President.

Special Course Fees are those mandatory fees that a student is assessed when enrolling in specific courses which have cost-intensive components that are not provided through tuition. For example, these fees may be assessed for equipment rentals, animal maintenance, field trips, "special" expendable materials, etc. Special Course Fee revenue must be used for costs directly related to the classes for which they are charged.

Note: Tech Fees and the Music Program Fee fall within the COURSE sub-fund (25 account), however, this Manual only covers those accounts for Special Course Fees. Tech Fee accounts are designated 259xxxx, and the Music Program Fee is designated by the "PF-Program Fee" account type code. Generally, any item that would be appropriately covered by a Charge for Technology should be funded through a Tech Fee.

#### Examples of Non-Allowed Expenses

Items for which fees will **not** be approved for a Special Course Fee and will be the responsibility of the department and/or college include, but are not limited to:

- Expenses that do not primarily benefit students within the course.
- Salaries/Wages and/or administrative support for any personnel including visiting professors, guest lecturers, graduate assistants, teaching assistants, learning assistants, student hourlies, and non-student hourlies and on-site supervisors, except for fees for private lessons (see Section III, Type A/B Course Fee, Bullet Point 3).
- Classroom space, utility costs, building remodeling and/or maintenance on/in any University facility.
- Usual classroom equipment and maintenance such as desks, chairs/stools, tables/benches, television, fixed/permanent classroom AV equipment, and computer projection screens.
- Textbooks and other required printed or electronic learning materials.
- Expenses associated with experimental courses. Experimental courses are excluded as they are still under development and notification of the course offering, and therefore the fees cannot follow the usual procedures.

- Honoraria or travel expense reimbursement for guest lecturers.
- Honoraria for off-campus instructors or supervisors.
- Lodging or per diem\* for instructors or supervisors accompanying students on trips.
- Per diem\* for students is not allowed; however, food is an allowed expense for situations – such as backcountry trips – where restaurants or grocery stores are not readily available. The estimated food expense must be based on reasonable costs and/or past experience. Post all food to Object Code 6649.

## II. RESPONSIBILITIES

### Special Course Fee Committee

The overall charge to this committee is to ensure accuracy of and accountability for course fees. The Special Course Fee (SCF) Committee is responsible for:

- Reviewing and recommending updates to the SCF Manual as necessary, but at a minimum, every five years;
- Reviewing and recommending to the Provost new, changed, and cancelled on an annual basis; and
- Reviewing and recommending to the Provost appropriate action for noncompliance of policy and procedures.

The SCF Committee is appointed by the Provost and makes recommendations to the Provost on Special Course Fee matters. Membership consists of representation from various entities across campus, who bring important perspectives to the committee's deliberations:

- Vice Provost for Undergraduate Affairs, Office of the Provost, Chair
- College Dean,\* or Associate/Assistant Dean (designated by Dean)
- Academic Department Chair/Head\*
- Accounting Fiscal Officer, Academic Department\*
- Budget Manager for the Office of the Provost
- Registrar, Registrar's Office, or designee
- Faculty member\* or Staff member
- Representative of Business and Financial Services
- Vice President, Associated Students of Colorado State University, or designee\*\*

\*These appointments are for four-year terms. At the completion of the term, reappointment is at the option of the Provost and Committee member. If the member is not reappointed, the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Affairs will recommend a replacement. All other appointments are standing appointments based on the responsibilities of the position.

\*\*By the nature of ASCSU terms, student appointments will be for one year. This individual will provide the student perspective on the committee and provide an annual report to the ASCSU Cabinet.

### **Department Head or Chair of Departments with SCFs**

The responsibilities of the department head or chair of those departments with approved SCFs include:

1. Being familiar with all policies and procedures related to requesting and monitoring SCFs;
2. Tracking changes to the course associated with the SCF and ensuring the submission of updated forms, as needed;
3. Appointing an individual to be the Responsible Person/Fiscal Officer for COURSE sub-fund (25 account) in the Quali Financial System for a given course fee;
4. Ensuring activities and expenditures in COURSE sub-fund (25 account) are compliant with the SCF policies and procedures contained in this Manual and with the University fiscal policy outlined in the University Financial Rules and Financial Procedure Instructions to support the Letter of Attestation signed annually by the Dean of the College;
5. Maintaining documentation of the COURSE sub-fund with respect to reviews, requests, expenditures and correspondence to ensure timely availability of records upon request to University administration, external auditors and/or State agencies;
6. Participating in all required audits of the SCF accounts; and
7. Complying with the University document-retention process for SCF forms and other relevant documents for the duration of the course fee plus the University Accounting Records Retention period.

### **Responsible Person/Fiscal Officer for Course Sub-Fund (25 Account)**

The Responsible Person must be identified on the SCF Request Form. The responsibilities of this position include but are not limited to:

1. Responding to questions regarding the specific SCF;
2. Ensuring compliance with the Special Course Fee Manual, specifically:
  - a. Tracking changes to the course associated with the SCF and submitting updated forms, as needed;
  - b. The monthly reconciliation is completed in an accurate and timely manner;

- c. The annual review is completed for each SCF account in an accurate and timely manner after every fiscal year end;
  - d. The expenditures are consistent with the approved Special Course Fee Request; and
  - e. If the special course fee is no longer needed, the SCF is canceled and the account's fund balance is appropriately cleared and closed;
3. Ensuring activity/expenditures are compliant with the policies and procedures contained in this Manual and with the University Financial Rules and Financial Procedure Instructions;
  4. Approving all transactions related to the SCF account in the Quali Financial System; and
  5. Providing feedback to the Special Course Fee Committee for improvements to this Manual.

### III. DEFINITIONS OF FEE TYPES

Colorado State University Special Course Fees are categorized into four types.

#### 1. Type A/B Course Fee

Each student enrolled in the course pays a fixed or variable fee to cover the costs incurred by the University on a semester-by-semester basis (Fall, Spring and Summer session) for:

1. The rental and/or use of nonacademic facilities and equipment (e.g., livestock boarding or ice skating rinks);
2. The institutional costs for field placements, including long-distance phone calls and postage, and travel costs of the Colorado State University coordinator;
3. The costs of special services required to meet curricular and accreditation requirements, for example: providing livestock and laboratory animals; live models used in art; instrument tuning; annual equipment maintenance; individual private lessons; and other services;
4. The transportation of students and their accompanying instructor or supervisor, if traveling in the same vehicle, for courses requiring off-campus trips (bus, van, auto, air, etc.);
5. The lodging of students for courses requiring off-campus, overnight trips;
6. Food. Food (whether groceries or restaurant meals) is a rarely approved SCF expense. However, if you do request food, list it on page 3 of the SCF Request Form under **Services**. Accounting Staff must post all food to Object Code 6649.

Each student enrolled in the course pays a fixed or variable fee based upon the student's use of expendable materials. These materials are generally one of the two following types:

1. Materials used by the student in the creation, construction, and/or fabrication of class projects (e.g., canvas for painting; consumable materials for welding, plumbing, and electrical labs; fabric for apparel; wood or stone for sculpting; film for documentaries, etc.) that leads to a product which becomes the student's property.
2. Materials supplied by the department because of the inability to make individual purchases economically or easily (e.g., photo processing chemicals; brewing supplies; materials for physiological testing; materials to build small construction projects; supplies to conduct experiments; USB drives that are supplied to students as their own personal property, etc.), or other *unusual* costs associated with a course offering.

## **2. Type C Course Fee**

Students pay a fee based upon damage to and/or non-return of equipment used in the course, e.g., glassware and/or specialized instruments used in a laboratory. In addition, students pay a fee for specific services that are refunded if the student has not participated in voluntary activities, e.g., voluntary field trips, or has previously met the requirements, e.g., background check, first aid certification, etc. The fee will be assessed at the beginning of the semester (or as arranged for the specific needs of the departments), and those students who have returned the equipment undamaged, met the requirements prior to the start of term, or did not participate in voluntary activities will receive a credit in the amount of the assessed fee.



### **3. Type D Course Fee**

This type of fee is paid by each student as a fixed fee to provide funds for maintenance, replacement or upgrade of equipment – purchased originally through department funds – that has more than a one-year useful life. The amount of the fee must be based on a multi-year amortization schedule that identifies the year in which the replacements/upgrades are expected to occur.

Type D course fees are the only course fees designed to roll forward over a number of years. Funds accumulated through Type D fees are audited every other year to assure that they are being accumulated and expended according to the amortization schedule provided in the fee proposal.

#### 4. Type E Course Fee

This type of fee is paid by students for digital learning objects required in a course, typically procured via license or access fees, such as for eTextbooks, eWorkbooks, and other such materials required for the course. Such types of materials are typically available to all students on the first day of class, and may save students significantly on textbook fees, allow a print copy to be obtained, persist across semesters or even academic years, provide competency-based, adaptive, personalized learning, provide interactivity with the instructor and with other students, and allow by faculty choice the harvesting of information of student performance to inform advising and enhance student success. These Type E materials do not include charges that would normally be funded from technology fees.

License or access fees required for access to Type E materials are approved by instructors – working with the CSU Bookstore – in a time frame adequate for delivery of such materials on the first day of class. *Such fees do not require the completion of the Special Course Fee Request form, nor the approval of the SCF Committee.* The CSU Bookstore shall be fiscally responsible for all fiscal matters associated with such license or access fees.

#### Other Definitions

1. **Fixed fees** are set amounts that are the same for each student enrolled in the course. Indicate the amount to be assessed per student (or per credit) per term. The vast majority of SCFs are fixed fees. Fixed fees are assessed through the registration system.
2. **Variable fees** are assessed to each student enrolled in the course based on expenses that fluctuate, e.g., expendable materials, damage to and/or non-return of equipment, or travel that varies by location, etc. These fees may vary by student and/or by term. Variable fees are assessed by the department through Student Accounts Receivable.

#### **IV. SPECIAL COURSE FEE APPROVAL PROCESS AND TIMING**

The deadline for submitting SCF Request Forms to the Special Course Fee Committee is February 1 of each year. The requests received by this date, and subsequently approved, will be effective the Fall semester of the upcoming academic year.

Each SCF Request Form for a new, changed or cancelled fee must be reviewed and considered by the Special Course Fee Committee to make recommendations to the Provost and, if approved by the Provost, to make recommendations to the President for submission to the Board of Governors (BOG).

- The Committee's review will occur during the spring and the process will be submitted at the May BOG meeting and finalized at the June BOG meeting.
- All requests approved by the Board of Governors will be appropriately published to provide notification to students. This published list will include the new or changed amount of each fee and state that these new or changed fees will be effective in the upcoming Fall semester.

## **V. SPECIAL COURSE FEE ACCOUNTS**

All fixed SCFs will be assessed and collected through normal student accounts receivable or registration procedures and automatically credited to the designated SCF account number in Kuali. SCFs are assessed to all sections of a course, regardless of teaching modality or instructor.

Although SCFs are reviewed by the Special Course Fee Committee on an annual basis, it is each department's responsibility to manage the fee on a semester basis. All SCF accounts (except Type D) must be expended during the semester in which they were collected. If the COURSE sub-fund balance is in deficit or has a surplus, please refer to Guidelines in Section VIII.

### **Fee Collection and Distribution**

Fees will appear on Student Accounts Receivable statements and be collected through the University Cashier's Office. The revenue from these fees will be credited directly to the appropriate SCF account, which is in the COURSE sub-fund.

Business and Financial Services has a Course Fee report that each Fiscal Officer of an SCF Account can access at any time to arrive at the number of students and the amount paid by each student by Term. The report is located on the [Business and Financial Services Campus Portal](#).

As students can submit appeals for courses, SCF accounts can be impacted if an appeal is approved. The Course Fee Report can be affected as approval will affect the term in which the appeal is processed rather than the term in which the student registered for the course.

### **SCF Accountability**

On an annual basis COURSE sub-fund accounts will be subject to a review for compliance and accuracy through procedures facilitated by the SCF Committee, led by the Provost's Office and Business and Financial Services. Not less than once every five years a COURSE sub-fund account will be subject to the Annual Review process.

Particular attention will be paid to accounts with any of the following conditions: Type D fees (reviewed every other year), deficit remaining on June 30, balances that should be refunded to students, zero annual revenue, or less than \$200 annual revenue. In addition, Business and Financial Services may choose a SCF account based on prior history of the account, prior year's plans on spending a surplus fund balance or for any reasonable cause.

### **SCF Account Surplus**

Account balances (Type A/B) must be refunded to students if the resulting refund will be \$5 or more per student. If the resulting refunds will be under \$5 per student, a refund may be made at the discretion of the department.

Type C fees should be refunded based on circumstances surrounding the fee and if any of the was use due to broken or non-returned equipment, participation in voluntary field trips, etc.

If there is still an account balance of \$20 or more in the Quali Financial System for COURSE sub-fund accounts after refunds have been made, a Plan to Utilize a Surplus must be submitted to Business and Financial Services during the Annual Review Process.

If the SCF revenue is found to be in surplus consistently, departments can submit a SCF Request Form to decrease the fee.

**SCF Account Deficit**

Departments are responsible for resolving course fee balance deficits by using departmental funds. If course fee revenue is found to be insufficient to cover approved expenses, departments can submit a SCF Request Form to increase the fee.



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### **IMPORTANT DATES**

February 1	Completed requests for new Special Course Fees, changes to current fees, or fee cancellations are due to the Provost's Office.
April 1	Board of Governors report, updated Comprehensive List, and Revenue Change Report due to the Office of Budgets.
May	Board of Governors reviews Special Course Fees.
June	Board of Governors approves Special Course Fees.
June 30	Fiscal year end.
September	Annual Review Forms due for all special course fee accounts if the annual revenue for the account does not exceed the \$200 minimum or Business and Financial Services requests one for the account.
End of each semester	Any applicable refunds must be made.

### **RESOURCES**

The following Faculty Policies, Forms and Resources are available:

- Comprehensive List of Special Course Fees
- Special Course Fee Request Form – Standard
- Special Course Fee Request Form – Fees with Ranges
- Annual Review Form