

Course Fee Guidance¹

Course² fees are charged to support activities in a particular instructional course, laboratory or studio section. Course fees are approved only for instructional activities that provide an educational experience of particular benefit to the student and which cost more than a typical course of similar type in the same academic college. Course fees must be charged to all students in the particular course and must be expended only for materials or activities in that course. Course fees must benefit all students in a course equally.

Departments should be aware that the added costs of course fees are not always captured in financial aid awards. Course fees can be an unexpected cost to students and units should be confident that an additional charge for a particular course is warranted.

Course fees requests are limited to costs documented for:

- Field trips off campus as part of the instructional program. Costs may include transportation and admissions charges. Costs for food, lodging, and incidentals, which are usually considered personal expenses, may only be included in the charges if they are incurred directly as part of the trip and if provision as a group results in a substantial reduction in cost to the student or provides necessary logistic or safety efficiencies.
- Services or activities provided by a third-party or a self-support unit at the university as part of instruction. Examples include ski lift tickets, admission to plays, or charges for laboratory analyses by service centers or private providers. In some cases, this can include charges for spaces or facilities not managed by the offering unit (rental of a field for example).
- Private lessons, modeling, or professional services provided by staff not normally part of the academic unit.
- Materials for projects that yield a tangible product retained by the student or equipment retained by the student, if that equipment has value outside of the specific course activities (for example a standard make of camera required for a photography course).
- Specialized consumable materials or services for laboratory sections in lower-division service courses³ (usually those with more than 50% of enrollments from non-majors). Examples of such materials or services include gloves, pipettes, reagents, Petri dishes, lab coat cleaning service, glassware, molecular biology kits, human cadavers, preserved or live material (e.g., microbial cultures, fungi, animals, plants) for use in observations, experiments and/or dissections.

Course fees may not be charged or used for:

- Costs for faculty of any rank or graduate teaching assistants, except as noted above.

¹ This document draws on ideas and language in the course fee policy for the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (<http://www.provost.illinois.edu/programs/cps/coursefees.html>)

² Course as used here denotes any lecture, laboratory, studio or other scheduled instruction activity

³ While there are upper-division courses that are primarily service courses, the UBC recommends that those be weighted by disciplinary cost in the budget model, so the higher cost is recognized. Lower-division courses are not weighted by discipline, to discourage cross-college “poaching” so course fees may be appropriate in limited circumstances.

- Use or maintenance of equipment, specimens, licenses, or other materials retained by the department or college. Units may charge a reasonable deposit for equipment assigned to a student during a course to insure return in working order.
- Materials, licenses, and equipment required for completion of the assigned instructional activities in a course except as noted above.⁴ An exception to this may be made if laboratory or other exercises for an online section of a course requires that materials be packaged and provided to a student for completion of the exercises at a site other than an OSU campus.
- Health and safety equipment required for carrying out assigned class activities, as this equipment is unlikely to have any useful value after the course. These kinds of equipment are normally considered a personal expense and students may be required to buy specific equipment from the bookstore or a third party retailer. An exception may be made if the equipment can be provided to the students by the department at a substantial savings compared to the market price available to students or if there are particularly restrictive requirements on the type of equipment necessary to adequately meet a safety or health standard.
- Regular instructional materials or equipment (syllabi, text books, test books, class handouts, blackboards, projection equipment, etc.).
- Renovation or repair of instructional facilities or equipment.

Course fees must be approved by the Provost or their designated representative after review and recommendation by a Course Fee committee established by the Provost. The Course Fee Committee will establish a process for submission, documentation, and review of course fee proposals, including approval by department chairs and deans. Course Fees must be published in the University's Catalog or the Schedule of Classes and made visible to students when they register.

Requests for new course fees or increases in existing fees will normally be reviewed once per year in winter term for implementation the following fall quarter. The course fee committee will establish a process for "out-of-cycle" approvals to accommodate new programs or rapidly growing programs, as at OSU-Cascades. Existing course fees will be reviewed at least once every three years to confirm the appropriateness of the charge.

Units that charge differential tuition are expected to have few, if any, additional course fee charges. Such charges must be clearly documented as outside the scope of what differential tuition charges were approved to support.

NOTE: The University Budget Committee recommends that Enrollment Management, in consultation with the Provost's Council of Deans, consider providing an avenue for additional financial aid to address cases where the cost of a course fee creates a barrier to a student taking a particular course. The existing Assistance Fund may be a model for such support. The UBC did not have enough information to suggest specific mechanisms or amounts for providing students with the opportunity to ask for additional aid that also met requirements for Federal reporting and management of Financial Aid.

⁴ The committee recognizes that this is a change in policy and will require that the revenues currently received from course fees for some charges that would be disallowed under this revised policy will have to be made up for the units affected.

Appendix A: Summary of the various course fee charges in fiscal year 2015 by unit and by type for reference.

Oregon State University
Student Fees (acct begins w/017)
Fiscal Year 2015

Sorted for Course Fees Only

	Type	Amounts
Summer Session Instr		
	Field Trip	3,029.00
Academic Affairs		
	Special Exam	10,498.75
Grad School		
	Field Trip	1,652.00
	Conference & Short Course	3,000.00
Research Ctrs & Inst		
	Field Trip	4,331.00
	Auth Course Fees	2,952.00
	Auth Lab Fees	300.00
Honors		
	Field Trip	
Cascades		
	Field Trip	24,809.75
	Conference & Short Course	3,900.00
	Auth Course Fees	2,688.95
	Auth Lab fees	3,105.00
Ag Science		
	Auth Course Fees	60,335.50
	Field Trip	39,738.75
	Auth Lab Fees	11,857.75
Vet Med		
	Auth Course Fees	140.00
Forestry		
	Field Trip	30,798.00
	Auth Course Fees	2,520.00
Liberal Arts		
	Music Fee	725,634.17
	Auth Lab Fees	41,475.88
	Field Trip	26,599.18
	Auth Course Fees	10,049.75
Science		
	Auth Lab Fees	489,226.50
	Auth Course Fees	110,642.25
	Field Trip	4,098.00
CEOAS		
	Field Trip	43,271.05
	Auth Lab Fees	24,612.00
	Auth Course Fees	16,625.00
	Miscellaneous	15,550.00
Business		
	Miscellaneous	117,380.00
	Auth Lab Fees	(25.00)
Engineering		
	Auth Course Fees	130,958.00
	Field Trip	9,284.00
	Auth Lab Fees	8,480.00
Education		
	Auth Course Fees	39,200.00
	Miscellaneous	16,045.00
PHHS		
	Auth Course Fees	1,106,907.00
	Auth Lab Fees	7,142.00
Pharmacy		
	Auth Lab Fees	30,950.00
	Auth Course Fees	8,850.00
	Miscellaneous	5,650.00

Sum of Amounts	
Row Labels	Total
Auth Course Fees	1,491,868
Auth Lab Fees	617,124
Conference & Short Course	6,900
Field Trip	187,611
Miscellaneous	154,625
Music Fee	725,634
Special Exam	10,499
(blank)	
Grand Total	3,194,261