

## Memorandum

From: University Curriculum Policy Review Board and Special Course Fee Committee (Chairperson: Ann Darling)

To: Senate Executive Committee

Re: Proposal for revising Policy 6-406 on Special Course Fees

Date: April 6, 2018

### **I. Introduction:**

This is a proposal to revise policy governing who will make decisions about special course and program fees and how those decisions will be made. The proposal specifically is to revise existing University Policy 6-406.

The overall project began as an outcome of a regular audit of the Special Course Fee Committee. A report from that audit, completed in July of 2017, is included with these proposal documents. The audit recommended that Policy 6-406 be reviewed for specific areas of inconsistency with practice. The review also included efforts to update the policy to match or enhance current practice. A decision was made to revise the Policy in two phases because some changes were needed to be made urgently, and other changes required more extensive consideration and consultation of concerned parties within the University. The more urgent changes were dealt with in the first phase, resulting in Revision 7 of the Policy, which was approved by the Academic Senate and Board of Trustees to take effect in October, 2017. That version and the legislative history for that Phase 1 proposal may be seen at <https://regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-406.php>.

The primary effect of that Phase 1 revision was to change the decision-making structure for approval of special program fees, so that the the Special Student Course Fee Committee now makes recommendations, which are considered by the University Budget Committee when it makes the final decisions.

Work on the second phase of changes has been underway since then, and now results in this proposal for Revision 8 of the Policy, which if approved is recommended to take effect immediately upon final approval.

A subcommittee of the Special Course Fee Committee (SCFC) was composed to review and revise policy 6-406. Recommendations from this sub-committee were discussed at two meetings of the entire committee. Support was given that all revisions had been discussed and approved and permission to move to the Senate was granted. Below is a description of policy recommendations and responses as identified in the proposed policy revisions.

**Changes recommended:** Changes to Policy 6-406 should be considered to clarify roles and responsibilities and provide for full compliance. Some items to consider include adding concise definitions of fees, oversight transparency provisions, committee composition, and applying fee expiration requirements.

Detailed language is prosed to define breakage fee, key deposits, private instruction as well as special course and special program fees.

The two areas of most concern to the audit and the functioning of the committee concerned student membership on the committee and processes for reviewing expired fees. Proposed revisions require that four students will always sit on the SCFC and that nominations for these representatives will come from the colleges, on a rotating basis. Technology recently purchased by the Office of Curriculum Administration now allows us to track special course and program fee activity. Proposed revisions require that colleges will conduct a thorough review of special course and program fees levied in their unit every three years on a rotating basis. These reports will be used by the SCFC to review and retire or renew special course fees and make recommendations to the University Budget committee about special program fees.

**Deficiencies Noted:**

- Current policy states that reports should be submitted to the President of the University and the President of the Academic Senate. However, such reports have not been submitted nor missed.

Proposed revisions require that an annual report be submitted to the Vice President for Academic Affairs for both main campus and Health Sciences with a copy to the President of the Academic Senate. These annual reports will document the activities of the SCFC over the year.

- Current policy is mute on deadlines for submitting and processing special course fees. This has sometimes led to fees being attached to courses *after* students have begun to register.

Proposed revisions require that proposals for special course fees be submitted at the same time that all other curriculum proposals are submitted. This deadline permits time for the SCFC to review proposals and for necessary revisions to be accepted. Policy also requires that any approved fees be attached *before* the schedule of courses is made public.

- Current policy was ambiguous about how fee deposits were to be processed. This led to some fees being deposited in incorrect accounts.

Proposed revisions clearly state that special course fees must be paid to Income Accounting and cannot be directed to gift accounts.