

STANDARD ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

26.01.01.M0.01 Procedures for Field Trip Fee Approval and Collection

Approved May 3, 2004

Revised October 1, 2010

Revised September 30, 2013

Next scheduled review: September 30, 2016

Standard Administrative Procedure Statement

These procedures apply to off-campus field trips and fee approval.

Reason for SAP

Procedures provide guidance for requesting field trip fees.

Definitions

Field trips - are typically defined as class experiences held at a site other than the normal class location, undertaken to expand student understanding and/or application of educational concepts and knowledge. Clinical rotations, practicums, and student teaching are not considered field trips. The faculty member or instructor responsible for the course shall determine whether a field trip is required or optional for the satisfactory completion of a particular course.

Field Trip Fees - Fees assessed to cover expenses associated with a field trip. Field trip fees may be required of all students taking a course that includes a required field trip or optional for a course with an optional field trip.

Official Procedure/ Responsibilities/ Process

1. APPROVAL

- 1.1 Written approval of the department head is required in advance for all off-campus field trips.
- 1.2 Colleges and schools within the Health Science Center unit do not charge a separate field trip fee for any field trips.
- 1.3 New Fees and Fee Increases:

Approval is required for new field trip fees and for increases to existing field trip fees in accordance with these procedures. A request for approval is initiated by the faculty/instructor through a "[Request for Approval of Course Field Trip and Fee Form](#)" A request for a new fee or a fee increase must then be recommended for approval by the department head, dean, Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, and the Student Fee Committee. The fee is submitted to the President for approval and forwarded through the Chancellor to the Board of Regents for confirmation (See [System Policy 26.01](#)). The Student Fee Committee shall notify the sponsoring department of the President's decision regarding approval of the fee.

- 1.4 Fees for required field trips are to be approved prior to the beginning of the semester in which the field trip will occur. Fees for optional field trips should be approved prior to the beginning of the semester or at the earliest time possible thereafter. Once approved, a fee is not resubmitted for approval unless it is to be increased.
- 1.5 Field trip fees are to be based on directly related costs expected to be incurred in providing the field trip.
 - 1.5.1 Field trip activities for which costs are incurred shall be consistent with the field trip objectives. The costs should be reasonable in amount, reflect the actions of a prudent person, and comply with System policies, regulations, and University rules.
 - 1.5.1.1. Field trip costs for faculty/instructor and students may include transportation, lodging, meals, admission fees, and other direct costs of providing the trip. The fee also may include a reasonable amount for administrative charges and contingencies such as medical care, unexpected transportation changes, or other emergencies.
 - 1.5.1.2. Faculty/instructor time or salary is not an applicable field trip cost and cannot be paid from the proceeds of a field trip fee. However, fees may be used to pay for guest lecturers who are not University employees.
 - 1.5.2 Fees submitted for approval should reasonably cover the maximum expected costs of the trip. Varied field trip itineraries, objectives, and other factors may impact the fee charges for a specific semester; therefore, fee changes may be set at a cost that is less than the approved fee. Fee charges for required field trips may not be added to a course, or increased, once students have registered for that course. However, fee charges may be reduced before or after a trip (See Section 2.1.3 of this Standard Administrative Procedure).

1.5.3 The department will retain supporting documentation justifying the approved fee, student fee charges, and residuals in the event of inquiry.

1.5.4 The department is responsible for actual costs that exceed collected fees.

2. FEE COLLECTION

2.1 All field trip fees will be assessed and collected through Student Business Services to enhance financial control, accommodate financial aid and emergency loan processes, and facilitate federal tax reporting requirements under the Taxpayer Relief Act of 1997.

2.1.1 The charges for approved field trip fees shall be reviewed annually by the college under which the related course is administered. Student Business Services will provide each college a listing of charges for approved fees. Any change to the fee charges will be noted on the list and returned to Student Business Services for consolidation into one list and then forwarded to the Student Fee Committee for review. Departments are to apply the provisions of section 1.2 of this procedure if charges for existing fees are to be increased to a larger amount.

2.1.2 For approved field trip fees, departments are to provide Student Business Services with accurate information regarding fees to be charged for each semester. Departments should submit information regarding courses and field trip fee charges to Student Business Services according to the following schedule:

- a. July 1 for a fall semester;
- b. October 1 for a spring semester;
- c. April 1 for a summer term.

Charges for new or existing fees approved after these dates are to be submitted to Student Business Services as soon as possible.

2.1.3 If a department determines field trip charges need to be reduced prior to the first billing of the semester, written notification is to be provided to Student Business Services. Departments may reduce the fee charge directly on the student accounts receivable system, if the change occurs after the first billing.

2.2 The Student Fee Committee will notify Student Business Services and Financial Management Operations when fees are approved. Financial Management Operations will establish a FAMIS account and forward the appropriate account information to Student Business Services and the department. A separate FAMIS

account is to be used for each course for which a field trip fee is charged. If a course has more than one field trip fee, each fee may be tracked in individual support accounts.

2.3 Student Business Services is responsible for providing student refunds.

2.3.1 Student Business Services will provide a student refund when notified by the department that a field trip fee is no longer applicable due to trip cancellation or other changes. The department is responsible for providing funds if prepaid expenditures are not returned or otherwise recovered when a field trip is unexpectedly cancelled.

2.3.2 Student Business Services will provide a student refund when notified by the department that a refund is due based on the balance remaining after actual field trip costs are paid. If the department determines the refund would be too small to be cost effective, the residual may be retained for other field trip expenses. Where practical, residuals should be used for the course in which the original field trip occurred.

3. FEE NOTIFICATIONS

3.1 Departments are to provide advance notification of fees for required or optional field trips within a time frame for students to make an informed decision regarding course registration or field trip participation. Information may be communicated through University catalogues, class syllabi, program brochures, web sites, etc.

3.2 Departments are to notify students of the field trip fee refund policy prior to fee assessment and have students document their understanding by providing their signature acknowledging receipt of information regarding field trip fee refunds.

Related Statutes, Policies, or Requirements

Authority-Section 54.504 of the Texas Education Code

Supplements [System Policy 26.01](#)

Forms

[Field Trip Fee Request Form](#)

Contact Office

OFFICES OF RESPONSIBILITY:

[Vice President for Finance and CFO](#)

[Student Business Services](#)

[Office of the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs](#)