

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

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Revised May 4, 2018

Next scheduled review: May 4, 2023

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 - are 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 a course with an optional field trip.

Official Procedure/ Responsibilities/ Process

1. APPROVAL

- 1.1 Written approval of the department head and the assistant dean of finance in the respective dean's office is required in advance for all off-campus field trips. For all foreign travel field trips, written approval is also required from the director of the Study Abroad Program Office in advance of the trip.
- 1.2 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, assistant dean, director of Study Abroad Program Office (for foreign travel field trips only) and the Office of the Provost and the University Budget Office. The fee is submitted to the Provost and Executive Vice President, as delegated by the President, for approval and forwarded through the Chancellor to the Board of Regents for confirmation (See [System Policy 26.01](#)). The Office of the Provost shall notify the sponsoring department of the Provost's decision regarding approval of the fee.
- 1.3 Fees for required and optional field trips are to be approved according to the schedule in 2.1.2. Once approved, a fee is not resubmitted for approval unless it is to be increased, or there are changes to any of the following: course or section number, the semester for trip, location of the trip, or the trip is changed from optional to required or vice versa. For foreign field trips, changes to the instructor or the dates within the semester must be provided by email to the Study Abroad Programs Office prior to the trip.
- 1.4 Field trip fees are to be based on directly related costs expected to be incurred in providing the field trip.
 - 1.4.1 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.
 - 1.4.1.1 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.
 - 1.4.1.2 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.

- 1.4.2 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).
- 1.4.3 The department will retain supporting documentation justifying the approved fee, student fee charges, and residuals in the event of inquiry.
- 1.4.4 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.
 - 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 Office of the Provost and the University Budget Office 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 through the Office of the Provost and the University Budget Office to Student Business Services according to the following schedule:
 - a. February 15 for the upcoming summer or fall semester;
 - b. September 15 for the upcoming spring semester;
- 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.

- 2.1.4 Field trip fees that are required may be subject to state mandated exemptions under Texas Education Code, Title 3, Chapter 54 for eligible students.
- 2.2 The Office of the Provost will notify Student Business Services when fees are approved. Departments will work with Financial Management Operations to establish a FAMIS account and forward the appropriate account information to Student Business Services. 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.
 - 2.3.3 Field trip fee accounts are subject to annual certification of balances to ensure funding is expended or refunded as required.

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. In addition, all field trip fees associated with a specific course will be communicated through the course scheduling process.
- 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:

[Exec. Vice President for Finance and Operations and CFO](#)

[Student Business Services](#)

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