



BOARD OF REGENTS OF
THE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF GEORGIA

CHANCELLOR STEVE WRIGLEY
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October 29, 2019

Presidents
University System of Georgia
Sent via email

Dear Presidents:

As you know, student fees are a significant portion of the overall costs of attending college. This includes both mandatory fees, approved by the Board of Regents each year, and the elective fees and other charges approved by you at the institutional level. These fees support a number of high-impact operations that are important to student engagement and outcomes in higher education, including student activities, transportation, and health centers.

As a system, we have made strides in recent years to provide quality service levels while keeping fee increases to a minimum. Under your leadership, your teams have identified ways to cut costs in our auxiliary services and operate these enterprises more efficiently. There are also notable examples of sweeping reductions of elective student fees, such as the steps taken by Georgia Southern University during consolidation or the recent announcement of the elimination of course and lab fees at the University of Georgia.

As you begin preparing your fee requests for Fiscal Year 2021, please continue to push even harder in the direction of maintaining an affordable college experience. New fees or fee increases should not be submitted during the upcoming request cycle. They will not be taken to the Board for approval. You should also refrain from creating any new elective fees on your campus.

The only exception will be for those mandatory fees supporting PPV projects. Maintaining our credit ratings is critical to long-term affordability. As in the past, before requesting an increase, you should review all project costs, identify where efficiencies can be realized, explore other non-fee sources of revenue, and examine the availability of reserves to sustain the project.

Each year, we ask institutions to evaluate **all fees** assessed to students prior to submitting fee requests. Continue to do this. Every fee-supported activity should be viewed through the lens of student success and each should support the USG mission of graduating more students. Act on opportunities to reduce or eliminate a fee. Institutions are to review the level of services and activities funded through fees as well as the sustainability of the budget that supports them. Enrollment realities must be considered when determining the level of services a fee can provide. Those programs that provide the greatest support to student outcomes should be prioritized.

USG Presidents
October 29, 2019
Page 2

Consideration may be given to an increase to an existing mandatory fee if there is also an equal or greater reduction to other mandatory fees, so that the overall fee burden to the student does not increase. Institutions must still demonstrate a strong business case as to why an increased fee is critical, even if the increase is offset elsewhere.

Detailed instructions and templates will be provided by the Office of Fiscal Affairs under separate cover. All templates and supporting documentation must be submitted by the established due date.

Thank you for your continued leadership as we create a more educated Georgia at an affordable price.

Sincerely,



Steve W. Wrigley

cc: USG Chief Business Officers
USG Chief Academic Officers
Tracey Cook, Executive Vice Chancellor for Strategy and Fiscal Affairs
Tristan Denley, Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
Teresa MacCartney, Executive Vice Chancellor for Administration
Ashley Jones, Chief of Staff