

Dear Presidents,

Mandatory student fees continue to be an important component of the overall cost of attendance at all our colleges and universities. We are approaching the time of year when we typically provide guidance regarding the opportunity to request fee changes for the coming fiscal year.

This year, we are taking a different approach. The USO fiscal team has worked with your CBOs this summer to test an approach that seeks to revise the underlying structure of our fee administration policies and address issues regarding who pays fees and in what amounts. Rather than asking you to propose changes to your current fee levels, we are asking you to recalculate mandatory fee levels that would be needed if this revised approach to fee administration is implemented.

As an outcome of recommendations from the Senate Student Fee Study Committee and including the findings of our own system wide student fee working group, the proposed changes involve taking a more standardized approach to fee administration across the institutions within the University System. Each institution will calculate a new base amount for each mandatory fee. This base amount will be determined by establishing a fee level at which your targeted spending can be achieved by charging mandatory fees as follows:

1. Full-time, in person students pay the full base fee amount
2. Full-time, fully online students pay 50% of the base fee amount
3. Part-time students, taking 6 or fewer credit hours, pay 50% of the base fee amount
4. Part-time students who are fully online pay 25% of the base fee amount
5. In person students attending classes at instructional sites with reduced services pay fees at the same rate as fully online students

We are providing detailed instructions and templates for making the calculations to determine these new “base rates” to your business offices under separate cover and will include a due date of December 4th for your submission. While this is earlier than usual for fee submissions, extra time will be needed to perform a detailed evaluation of the proposals and prepare them for Board review and consideration.

Please assure that your business office, your student affairs team, and any other administrative units within your institution that are directly involved in your fee administration process are fully engaged in thinking through your calculations regarding the proposed revisions to your base fee rates. We are confident that there will be “anomalies” throughout the system that will not be fully addressed by the recommended methodology for calculating these new base fees. By engaging your entire team in this process, those anomalies are more likely to be discovered as early as possible.

You are likely aware of the requirements to engage your student fee committee for input and advice during the process of recommending mandatory fee changes. That guidance may be found in the Board Policy Manual, section 7.3.2.1. You are encouraged to brief your student fee committees about the potential changes to the overall fee administration methodology and solicit their feedback. You should also note that the requirements for committee votes and/or campus referenda will not be applicable should the revised approach to administering fees be adopted. If implemented, these changes would be required by the Board of Regents, and would not necessitate action by the fee committees, nor would they activate referenda requirements described in the Procedures Manual.

Finally, please be aware that there is no guarantee that this revised fee administration paradigm will be adopted. Our early work with CBOs indicates that this approach might allow a more rational and consistent approach to charging fees while maintaining or reducing overall fee levels. We will not be able to make that determination until we receive final calculations from all institutions.

Thank you for your continued leadership toward providing excellent student services while minimizing the cost of attending our great colleges and universities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sonny Perdue". The signature is written in a dark ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Dr. Sonny Perdue

Chancellor

cc: Chief Business Officers  
Chief Academic Officers  
Vice Presidents for Student Affairs  
Tracey Cook  
Teresa McCartney  
Ashwani Monga  
Ashley Jones  
Jeff Davis  
Allen Huff