**Program Fee Policy**

**The University of Southern Mississippi**

Under IHL Board Policy 702.02(C), fees are allowable for supplies, activities or services made available to students. Program Fees are fees charged to cover certain costs associated with a specific academic program, in excess of those covered by general tuition.  These programs typically have a specialized delivery format such as online classes with two to three weekend In-Person meetings. The program fees will be charged by semester, not course, and are shown in the student account summary as a separate charge not included in tuition. These charges will only be present for those programs that have received proper approval from the administration of The University of Southern Mississippi.

These fees may be used for a variety of purposes; however they must be unique and directly relate to actual expenses of the program. Examples include but are not limited to: costs associated with student travel, such as field trips or other off campus events, tangible goods or other items of value retained by students during the course of the program, wages for guest speakers, and costs associated with specialized equipment, supplies, or expendable products required for the class such as books, parking permits, and food.

Proceeds from approved program fees shall be restricted to and used solely for those reasons specified in the Program Fee Request form. At no time shall these fees be used to pay for costs that are normally covered by the department’s regular budget such as salaries and wages for faculty (including adjuncts) or staff, student scholarships, travel expenses (unless required to support student participation at an approved conference), and normal consumption of materials purchased by the department during the regular course of a program.

Departments requesting revenues from program fees must complete a Program Fee Request form available on Business Services website at http://eduprod.usm.edu/business-services/forms-and-policies. The form is for new program fee requests or for changes to current program fees. The form must contain justification for the additional fees or for a change in fees, including revenue projections and a detailed breakdown of expenses associated with the program.

Program Fee Request forms must be approved by the Department Chair and submitted to the Dean by February 1 for the upcoming academic year (fall, spring, summer). Once approved at the Dean’s level, the paperwork should be submitted to the Provost no later than February 15. Once approved by the Provost and Vice President for Finance and Administration, it will be the department’s responsibility to communicate the program fee costs to program applicants. All revenue generated by program fees must be deposited to a departmental program fee budget within the designated fund. This budget must be established prior to making the request for new program fee.

Each Dean has oversight responsibility to ensure the program fee revenue is being used as intended.   A financial report for each department charging a program fee must be submitted to the applicable Dean at the end of each fiscal year. These reports will be retained by the Deans and made available for review by the Provost upon request. The Program Fee Financial Report template is available on the Business Services web site. Improper use of proceeds from program fees by a department may result in the decrease or removal of those specific fees.