



### Operating Instruction 2.8.1.1 Student Fee Referendum

#### Part 1. Purpose

To provide general guidance on the implementation of a campus referendum.

#### Part 2. Authority

In 2017, the Minnesota Legislature passed Minn. Stat. § 135A.0434 Mandatory Student Activity Fees Referendum.

#### Referendum

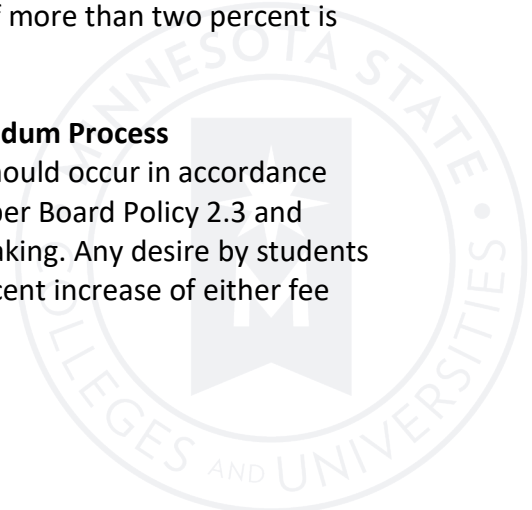
The governing body of a public postsecondary institution must not increase mandatory student activity fees by greater than two percent relative to the previous academic year unless the increase is approved by a majority of students voting in a campus referendum. This section does not apply to fees paid by students that are directly related to academic, administrative, health services, or debt obligations, including bonds issued under sections 136F.90 to 136F.98.

#### Part 3. Application

- a. This legislation impacts any proposed increase greater than two percent at a Minnesota State college or university for the following types of student activity fees: the student life activity fee or the athletics fee.
- b. The student life activity fee and athletics fee are two separate fees per Board Policy 5.11. Therefore, the greater than two percent threshold applies to each fee separately. The campus student association and/or the college or university president shall not propose an aggregate increase of both fees, combined.
- c. A referendum for fee increases must only consider an increase for the upcoming fiscal year. A referendum is required each year that an increase of more than two percent is contemplated.

#### Part 4. Student Life Activity and/or Athletics Fees Campus Referendum Process

- a. Discussion of the student life activity fee and athletics fee should occur in accordance with regular consultation and review processes on campus per Board Policy 2.3 and System Procedure 2.3.1 Student Involvement in Decision Making. Any desire by students and/or the administration to pursue a greater than two percent increase of either fee must be communicated as part of the consultation process.



- b. Any proposal to increase the student life activity fee must occur in accordance with the annual budget process as outlined by Board Policy 2.8 and System Procedure 2.8.1 Student Life. When an increase in the athletics fee is under consideration, it is recommended that a process similar to that used for the student life activity fee increase be used. (See System Procedure 5.11.1, Part 4, Subpart D.) If the campus student association and/or the college or university president is recommending an increase greater than two percent for either fee, the annual budget process must include enough time for the college or university to conduct a campus referendum(s).
- c. If the campus student association recommends a greater than two percent increase to either the student life activity or athletics fee, and the president of the college or university approves of the proposal, a campus referendum must be scheduled in the spring to correspond with the campus budgeting process. If the timing aligns, the referendum vote should be held as part of the campus student association elections. The administration shall consult with the campus student association in regards to the referendum process and jointly create campus referendum guidelines (e.g., time, dates, locations, ballot, counting of ballots, complaint resolution process, etc.).
- d. If a college or university president modifies the campus student association's student life activity or athletics fee recommendation, and the modification increases the fee greater than two percent, the president shall consult with the campus student association prior to the administration conducting a referendum. Additionally, the administration shall consult with the campus student association in regards to the referendum process and jointly create campus referendum guidelines (i.e., time, dates, locations, ballot, counting of ballots, complaint resolution process, etc.).
- e. Student association leaders and/or college or university administrators shall provide clear information concerning the rationale for the fee increase. The campus student association and the campus administration shall promote the referendum to ensure student awareness.
- f. Students who are taking one or more credit-based courses during the academic term in which the referendum is being held are eligible to vote in the campus referendum as long as they are not solely taking the course(s) at an offsite location through a concurrent enrollment program. Voting in a campus referendum must remain open and accessible to eligible students for a minimum of one business day. If the referendum is being held simultaneously with the campus student association elections, the referendum voting period must remain open for the same length of time as the elections.
- g. A successful campus referendum requires greater than 50 percent of the participating students voting in the affirmative.

- h. Results of a campus referendum must be communicated to all students. The results reported must include the number of students who voted and the number of affirmative and negative votes.

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Date of Adoption: 02/12/18

Date of Implementation: 02/12/18

Date of Last Review: 01/05/23

Date and Subject of Revision:

01/05/23 – Clarified Part 3a, made technical edit to Part 4b by replacing the Part 5 reference with a Part 4 reference.

No Additional HISTORY.