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## Course Fee Assessments: University of Tennessee, Knoxville

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**A**ssessment of fees as a means of financing the rising costs of incidental materials required in many courses offered at the University of Tennessee is an idea that has met with some resistance from the University's administration. While there is no stated official policy, philosophically the assessment of fees would be viewed as a way to disguise a tuition increase. An informal poll of peer institutions conducted by the office of Academic Affairs suggests that most of these assess only minor lab fees. Exceptions to this are found at the University of North Carolina and the University of Texas at Austin.

Currently, at the University of Tennessee, the costs of course specific expendable materials are absorbed by the operating budget of the department concerned. There are a few departments in which fees are assessed. In most cases these are long standing established amounts and recent requests for increase have been frozen in the Chancellor's office. The most apparent of these established fees is in the Department of Music. The music fee, \$60 for one half-hour lesson per week, per semester and \$120 for one hour lesson per week, per semester is published in the undergraduate catalog. This amount is up from \$45 and \$90 in the 1994-95 catalog. This fee is collected as a part of registration to help defer the additional costs of one-on-one teaching. Some portion of the revenue from this fee is returned to the department for the maintenance of secured practice room facilities.

The Department of Art also has a number of long standing established fees. These fees range from \$10 to \$100, depending on the media involved. Some requests for increase have been proposed, but these have been denied. An informal poll of art students conducted in the department suggests that the fear that students will perceive fees as a disguised tuition hike is unfounded. Most art students stated that they felt better about paying a directed fee for a particular course. These fees are collected as a part of registration and are maintained in a special account in the department. Complex bookkeeping is required to ensure that the monies are spent on the particular course for which they were collected. The revenue is most often used to purchase more economical bulk materials, provide maintenance for equipment and facilities and incidentals, such as kiln fuel.

Currently in the Department of Theatre, there are no fees assessed for specific courses. There is, however, considerable expense involved in teaching many of the technical courses. The following are examples:

<u>COURSE</u>	<u>CAPACITY</u>	<u>COST PER STUDENT</u>
Basic Stage Costume	20	\$10.00
Stage Millinery	10	\$40.00
Dyeing and Fabric Painting	6	\$60.00
Stage Make-up	10	\$35.00
(In addition, Make-up students purchase a \$46.00 make-up kit.)		
Scene Painting	6	\$100.00
Period Furniture Building	4	\$120.00
Intro to Scene Technology	25	\$15.00
Welding	8	\$175.00

These costs are currently absorbed into the operating budget of the production program in the Department of Theatre.

#### REFERENCES AND NOTES

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