Florida Gulf Coast University Board of Trustees
June 18, 2013

SUBJECT: Nurse Anesthesia Clinical Education Fee

PROPOSED BOARD ACTION

Ratification of the creation of the Anesthesia Clinical Education Fee created January 2007 and its redefinition as a Nurse Anesthesia Clinical Practicum Material & Supply Fee established in May 2013.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In January of 2007, FGCU administrators implemented the Anesthesia Clinical Education Fee under the “Off-Campus Educational Activities Fee”. The off-campus educational activities fee is used to meet specific higher education needs of the State when special circumstances result in specific, identifiable increased costs to the university. The Anesthesia Clinical Education Fee was assessed for costs incurred while offering courses at off-campus clinical sites to students who took the following courses: NGR 5436L, NGR 5434L, NGR 5433L, NGR 5437L, NGR 5431L, and NGR 5432L. These courses are necessary to meet accreditation standards of the Council on Accreditation of Nurse Anesthesia Educational Programs and deliver a quality nurse anesthesia program. The Anesthesia Clinical Education Fee was implemented after extensive consultation with other state universities also offering a Nurse Anesthesia program and assessing a fee.

In April of 2013, the Board of Governors made an inquiry to various institutions within the State University System, including FGCU, regarding the authority to assess the Anesthesia Clinical Education Fee after a student at another state institution challenged a “tuition plus” fee at his institution. Also in April, FGCU received a letter from Chancellor Brogan (See letter dated April 23, 2013 from Chancellor Brogan) stating that the University’s assessment of materials and supply fee required FGCU Board of Trustees approval. However, the FGCU Board of Trustees did, in fact, approve the assessment of a materials and supply fee in 2011 under Regulation FGCU-PR7.003. Upon further review of the fees assessed in the Nurse Anesthesia program, the Administration recognized that though we acted in good faith in the establishment of the Nurse Anesthesia Clinical Education Fee, it should not have initially been created as an “Off-Campus Education Activities Fee,” but rather a “Materials and Supply Fee.” The
Off-Campus Education Activities Fee is an allowable fee and was applied to expenses directly related to the program, as well as for materials and supplies. Contrarily, the Materials and Supply Fee may only be expended for a student’s instructional activities related to identifiable materials and supplies which are consumed during the course. (See letter dated April 30, 2013 from Governor Kuntz.)

In May of 2013, the Nurse Anesthesia Clinical Education Fee was discontinued and this Off-Campus Education Activities Fee is no longer applied in the Nurse Anesthesia program. The School of Nursing has since established a Materials & Supply Fee for each of the Nurse Anesthesia Clinical Practicum courses (NGR 5436L, NGR 5434L, NGR 5433L, NGR 5437L, NGR 5431L, and NGR 5432L). This fee will assess the student the costs of identifiable materials and supplies which are consumed during the course for the students instructional activities.

The University Administration is asking the FGCU Board of Trustees to ratify the establishment of the Nurse Anesthesia Clinical Education Fee from its inception in 2007 and, going forward, to its redefinition today. Evidence of such ratification would then be provided to The Board of Governors.


Prepared by: Director of Budgets and Management Services Jennifer Baker

Legal Review by: Vice President and General Counsel Vee Leonard (May 10, 2013)

Submitted by: Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Ron Toll
April 23, 2013

President Wilson Bradshaw
Florida Gulf Coast University
10501 FGCU Boulevard South
Ft. Myers, Florida 33965

Dear President Bradshaw:

It has come to my attention that Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU) has been charging a materials and supplies fee for a graduate program that should have been brought before the FGCU Board of Trustees for approval. While university boards of trustees have the authority to charge a materials and supplies fee to offset the cost of materials or supplies that are consumed in the course of the student’s instruction activities pursuant to section 1009.24, Florida Statutes, and Board of Governors Regulation 7.003(7), board approval is required.

It is my understanding that the university will be taking this matter to the FGCU Board of Trustees for its review and request that you provide me with a report of the resolution of the issue.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Frank T. Brogan
Chancellor
April 30, 2013

Dear Budget/Finance Chairs:

As this academic year comes to a close, preparations are already underway for the start of the Fall 2013 term. A part of these preparations is consideration of new or increased local and miscellaneous fees, such as lab fees, material and supply fees, and other fees as authorized in Section 1009.24, Florida Statutes, and Board of Governors’ Regulation 7.003.

As you review the various proposed fees that come before your board, I ask that you pay special attention to lab, material, and supply fees to ensure that they are in compliance with existing statutes and regulations. It is important that each one is directly tied to the cost of the material or supply item consumed by the student and that such cost is justified and verifiable. If your board has delegated to university administration the discretion to increase existing fees that are statutorily authorized, I encourage you to at least review these fees since they will be incorporated in the operating budget that ultimately comes to your board for approval.

As you know, increases in local fees add to the students’ economic burden, which is a concern that is always at the center of discussion for the Board of Governors Budget and Finance Committee. As is our practice every year, this committee will pay close attention to the potential impact on students when considering those fee requests that come to the Board of Governors.

Thank you for the hard work you do on behalf of our 335,000 students.

Sincerely,

Thomas G. Kuntz, Chair
Budget & Finance Committee

cc: Board of Governors
    Boards of Trustees
    University Presidents
    University Provosts
    University CFOs