

**State University System
Florida Board of Governors
Request to Implement a New Fee - Regulation 7.003(23)**

University: University of South Florida

Date	
University Board of Trustees approval date:	
Proposed fall implementation date (year):	2011-2012
Description	
New fee title:	Student Green Energy Fund
Amount of new fee (per credit hour if applicable):	Resident UG: a maximum of \$1.00 per credit hour in the first year Resident Grad: a maximum of \$1.00 per credit hour in the first year
Proposed new fee as a percentage of tuition: ¹	Undergraduate Resident Per Credit Hour: 0.58% Grad Resident Per Credit Hour: 0.27%
Purpose	
Describe the purpose to be served or accomplished with this fee:	
<p>The Student Green Energy Fee is a nominal fee, (a maximum of \$1.00 in its first year,) that would be used to reduce energy costs and lower greenhouse gas emissions at the University of South Florida (USF). The Student Green Energy Fee will be expended only for establishing or improving the use of renewable energy technologies or energy efficiencies that directly lower the university's greenhouse gas emissions, waste, or energy costs. At USF, the revenue generated from a Student Green Energy Fee could be used to fulfill the targets set forth by the American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment (ACUPCC) signed by University System President Judy Genshaft in 2008.</p> <p>The intent of the proposed fee aligns with the intentions of the strategic plan for the Board of Governors by helping fulfill some of the Mission Statement as well as the goals outlined in the plan. The Mission Statement includes a section about the importance of promoting technological development. Such a fee helps promote technological development by investing in new and innovative technologies to help the University conserve energy and reduce costs. These proposals also encourage collaboration among departments, thus supporting the goal of increased integrated, interdisciplinary co-operation. The proposed fee will help USF meet its goal of increased fiscal self-sufficiency through monetary savings from reduced energy costs.</p>	
Demonstrable Student-Based Need / Involvement	
Describe the student-based need for the fee that is currently not being met through existing services, operations, or another fee:	
<p>The campaign for a Student Green Energy Fee in Florida was first organized by students at the University of Florida in the 2006-2007 academic year. Since then, students across the State University</p>	

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System of Florida have been working to advocate for a Student Green Energy Fund at their campuses. At the University of South Florida the work toward this initiative has been going on since 2008. The necessity of this initiative became apparent with the signing of the American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment (ACUPCC) by President Judy Genshaft in 2008 which specifies the identification of steps for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions on campus.

The ACUPCC obligates USF-Tampa to conduct an annual greenhouse gas emissions inventory and develop a long-term Climate Action Plan (CAP) to reduce and, eventually, eliminate greenhouse gas emissions from the Tampa campus operations and infrastructure. In 2009, the USF Office of Sustainability was established to oversee these requirements. Since then, the Office has created a greenhouse gas inventory (baseline AY 2007-2008) and a CAP. One of the major sources of greenhouse gas emissions identified by the CAP was energy consumption by the University. From this assessment, the CAP recommends how energy consumption can be reduced so as to lower greenhouse gas emissions and energy costs. In the CAP for USF, The Office of Sustainability has identified that the main barrier to implementing the proposed energy projects is the cost of these initiatives. A Student Green Energy Fee would provide the initial investment necessary to pay for these projects. More specifically, for energy conservation projects recommended in the CAP, most require capital outlay to fund first cost aspects of these projects. After this outlay, these initiatives do not require continual investment from recurring operations costs. Thus, the resulting energy savings from these measures have the potential for a very high return on investment. Such projects would also allow USF to work towards meeting the goals outlined in the ACUPCC while reducing the burden of energy costs for the University.

Possible projects that could be implemented include:

- Sunscreens on southern window exposures
- Renovations to seek LEED certification for existing buildings on campus
- Install windows in buildings with a high solar heat gain coefficient (SHGC)
- Install sensors to adjust lighting and heating/cooling in buildings depending upon outdoor conditions
- Solar trees on the top of parking garages (providing shade and energy)
- Energy efficient roofs on buildings with high levels of insulation and reflectivity (through a variety of materials)

Since the beginning of this campaign, students at USF Tampa have conducted two non-binding student referenda (in Spring 2009 and Fall 2010) to gauge student support. Both of these passed with a majority of students being in favor of a Student Green Energy Fund at USF. The most recent referendum in Fall 2010 was placed on the ballot through the collection of over 950 student petition signatures requesting for a referendum on the Student Green Energy Fund. Students then were able to vote in the referendum election, and endorsed the initiative by 69%. USF St. Petersburg students have also been advocating for a Student Green Energy Fund. The non-binding student referendum at USF Saint Petersburg was endorsed by 77% of students participating in the election. USF Polytechnic and Sarasota-Manatee are also being approached about the initiative to gain their support.

**State University System
Florida Board of Governors
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Describe the process used to assure substantial student input or involvement:

- (A) Each University Board of Trustees may establish a Student Green Energy Fee to be paid by all students if the fee is approved by the student body of the university that seeks to establish the fee. In order to establish the fee, a referendum of the university's student body must be called by the student legislative body and conducted by the Student Government. The referendum must include the proposed amount of the fee and an explanation of its purpose. (USF has already conducted two non-binding referenda in 2009 and 2010, both of which were endorsed by the majority of students, with the most recent referendum passing by 69%.) A University's Board of Trustees may not establish the fee without the approval of a majority of the students participating in the referendum.
- (B) A Student Green Energy Fee established under this section may not exceed \$1 per credit hour during its first year of implementation. The initial amount of the fee must be in accordance with the referendum described in paragraph (A) and may be changed only if approved by a referendum of the university's student body called for by the student legislative body and conducted by the Student Government. The fee shall not be included in any award under the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program established pursuant to ss. 1009.53-1009.538.
- (C) The Student Green Energy Fee will be expended only for establishing or improving the use of renewable energy technologies or energy efficiencies that directly lower the university's greenhouse gas emissions, waste, or energy costs. The money generated by each campus is to remain within that individual campus. A fee committee will be established at each University of South Florida campus that votes to enact the fee. This committee will make recommendations to the University System President, or her delegate, and the University Board of Trustees regarding how the revenue from the fee is to be spent and any subsequent changes to the fee. At least one-half of the committee must be students appointed by the Student Body President. The remainder of the committee shall be appointed by the University System President, or her delegate. A chair, appointed jointly by the University System President, or her delegate, and the Student Body President, shall vote only in the case of a tie.
- (D) After the Student Green Energy Fee is implemented for 3 years, the University's Student Government will conduct a referendum to assess the student body's interest in continuing the fee. If a majority of students participating in the referendum votes to discontinue the fee, the fee will not be collected, and any remaining revenue will be dispensed by the renewable energy fee committee within two fiscal years after the referendum. The University may reestablish the fee as provided in paragraph (A) no sooner than one year after the referendum discontinuing the fee.

**State University System
Florida Board of Governors
Request to Implement a New Fee - Regulation 7.003(23)**

Student Impact

Explain the financial impact of the fee on students, including those with financial need:

While this is a fee being added to student's tuition, it is nominal in comparison to the tuition that students currently pay per semester. This fee will have minimal impact on students financially. For a student enrolled in 12 credit hours per semester, the high end yearly cost would be \$24. Per credit hour this is only .58% of a resident undergraduate's per credit hour tuition. It is covered by financial aid and would not be included in the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program, thus not burdening the budget for this program.

The projects generated through this fee would have numerous benefits for students. Campus wide, this fee has the potential to generate necessary revenue. This fund would allow USF to make significant investments in campus sustainability through energy projects. The added benefit of this is that these investments would help situate USF as a regional and national leader in campus sustainability. The sustainability of a university is now a factor that students consider when choosing a university to attend. These improvements would help USF attract new types of students, and in turn, diversify its student body.

A Student Green Energy Fee at USF would also contribute to a culture of sustainability on campus. This fee would create a sense of empowerment among students because of their tangible impact on campus through these energy projects. All projects funded by the Student Green Energy Fund would include an informational plaque to explain how the project works, its costs and benefits, and how it was funded. This would allow students to see the physical implementation of the money generated from the fee, and cultivate a sense of real world change at USF.

An added benefit is that projects would help students become better equipped for entering the workforce after graduation. Sustainability is now being integrated into the everyday vernacular of many jobs and careers. A Student Green Energy Fee, and the projects resulting from it, would help to incorporate sustainability into the USF experience. Students would then graduate from a university with a legacy for sustainability, and be more sufficiently prepared to become part of this new type of workforce.

Restrictions / Limitations

Identify any proposed restrictions, limitations, or conditions to be placed on the new fee:

This fee has numerous restrictions that would help to ensure responsible use of funds generated. The Student Green Energy Fee will be expended only for establishing or improving the use of renewable energy technologies or energy efficiencies that directly lower the university's greenhouse gas emissions, waste, or energy costs. A fee committee shall be established at each University of South Florida campus with a Student Green Energy Fee to make recommendations to the University President, or her delegate, and the University Board of Trustees regarding how the revenue from the fee is to be spent and any subsequent changes to the fee. The committee will report annually to the BOT expenditures and activities. At least one-half of the committee must be students appointed by the

**State University System
Florida Board of Governors
Request to Implement a New Fee – Regulation 7.003(23)**

Student Body President. The remainder of the committee shall be appointed by the University System President, or her delegate. A chair, appointed jointly by the University System President, or her delegate, and the Student Body President, shall vote only in the case of a tie.

Any person or entity bringing a proposal to the fee committee would be encouraged to seek grants and matching funds. Projects should be considered based on return on investment, energy savings, visibility, and degree of innovation. We suggest a phased approach to the projects supported by the fee, starting with energy efficiency projects that have a high return on investment, and later working up to large renewable energy projects.

Any changes to the fee must be approved by a majority of students voting in a referendum election. Every three years the fee would sunset, thus giving students the opportunity to vote on retaining the fee at USF. This allows the traditional four-year student to vote on the fee while he or she is at USF.

Revenues / Expenditures

Annual estimated revenue to be collected:	USF Tampa- \$986,047 USF Saint Petersburg- \$110,269 USF Polytechnic- \$36,260 USF Sarasota-Manatee- \$46,633
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Describe the service or operation to be implemented and estimated expenditures (attach operating budget expenditure form).

This proposed fee would lead to projects that establish or improve the use of renewable energy technologies or energy efficiencies that directly lower the university's greenhouse gas emissions, waste, or energy costs. This could be initiatives including but not limited to: energy efficiency measures for older buildings, a waste to energy digester and renewable energy production on campus. The projects to be implemented would be chosen by the fee steering committee, with expenditure varying depending upon the project being implemented. Each individual campus with the fee would establish a steering committee to determine which projects will be implemented on that particular campus. Some projects that USF Tampa is already considering include:

- Sunscreens on southern window exposures
- Renovations to seek LEED certification for existing buildings on campus
- Install windows in buildings with a high solar heat gain coefficient (SHGC)
- Install sensors to adjust lighting and heating/cooling in buildings depending upon outdoor conditions
- Solar trees on the top of parking garages (providing shade and energy)
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Accountability Measures

Indicate how the university will monitor the success of the new fee. Provide specific performance metrics that will be used.

**State University System
Florida Board of Governors
Request to Implement a New Fee - Regulation 7.003(23)**

USF has already begun utilizing a metric in order to operationalize the CAP. The Office of Sustainability at USF has joined the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment, and Rating System (STARS), administered by the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE.) This metric also would be used to measure progress of programs implemented as a result of the proposed fee. The System encompasses a comprehensive online monitoring tool for schools to track and assess their progress toward creating a climate neutral campus. With regard to energy consumption (measured in MMBtu), the System has specific quantitative metrics to measure total building energy consumption, use of renewable electricity and non-electric renewable energy (purchased or generated on site), use of Renewable Energy Certificates (RECs), co-generation technology using renewable and non-renewable fuel sources, timers and other systems (motion, infrared, or light sensors) to regulate lighting and temperature on occupancy hours, application of Light Emitting Diode (LED) technology, development of a centralized energy management system to track energy consumption and performance throughout the campus, and metering for all energy consumption (including electricity, natural gas, and purchased steam) on campus. Additional metrics for assessing the impact of Student Green Energy Fund projects and initiatives can be added over time as the System evolves.

Utilizing STARS to monitor progress of funds generated by the fee would also have the added benefit of equipping students with data demonstrating the progress made by fee usage. This would help them to make informed choices when voting whether to retain the fee every three years. Performance will be measured from the greenhouse gas inventory conducted by faculty members of the Greenhouse Gas Emissions Subcommittee of the Sustainability Initiative Steering Committee, established after the signing of ACUPCC. From this baseline, emissions reductions can be determined, as can energy savings.

Other Information

This is a student-generated and student-supported request for the authority to hold campus specific student referenda to decide if they wish to support the fee and at what level.