

STATE BOARD OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES
Technology Fee Maximum

Background:

G.S. 115D-5(a) states, “That State Board shall have the authority with respect to individual institutions: . . . to establish student tuition and fees within policies for tuition and fees established by the General Assembly”. Neither the General Statutes, nor Session Laws establish any further policies associated specifically with student technology fees. Per 1E SBCCC 700.99(c)(3) authorizes community colleges to charge students a “Computer Use and Technology Fee”. This rule states that “(t)his fee shall not exceed the maximum established by the State Board”.

On July 19, 2002, the State Board adopted a maximum technology fee of \$16 per semester for curriculum and \$5 for Occupational Continuing Education classes. On February 21, 2014, the State Board initiated rule-making to repeal the existing SBCCC Chapter E. “Student Tuition and Fees” and adopt a revised set of rules for Chapter E. The proposed re-write of Chapter E maintains the technology fee maximums that are currently in force. At its February 19, 2014 meeting, the NC Association of Community College Presidents voted to request that the State Board remove the maximums placed on technology fees.

In addition to technology fees, colleges are currently authorized to charge students three additional types of fees as a condition of enrollment:

- **Student activity fees:** Colleges are currently authorized to charge up to \$65 per year. Under the proposed re-write of Chapter E, colleges would be authorized to charge up to \$35 per academic term.
- **Parking fees:** The State Board has not established a maximum for this fee.
- **Required specific fees:** While the State Board has not established a maximum for these fees, the proposed re-write of Chapter E would require colleges to set these fees based on the estimated cost of providing the academic good or service that is required for a course.

Options:

The State Board could consider the following options:

1. Maintain the existing policy of authorizing colleges to charge students technology fees up to \$16 per academic term and \$5 per continuing education course.
2. Modify the State Board’s rule to increase the maximum technology fee authorized.
3. Modify the State Board’s rule to authorize a college to charge a technology fee above a certain maximum only if specifically approved by the State Board.
4. Remove the maximum on technology fees from the State Board’s rule and allow colleges to set technology fee rates at whatever level the local Board of Trustees chooses. (The NCACCP has voted to support this option.)