

Students charged an extra \$3 in fees

Student government will propose a refund for the 2013-14 year.

By Jessica New
Staff Writer

Last year, a \$1.50 additional fee was charged to all students each semester, leading to an extra \$76,086 in revenue for the student activities fund.

University officials and student government are working to correct the erroneous \$3 increase in the 2011-12 student activities fee.

Administrators caught the error in April and alerted the student government, but the fee had already been charged to students.

Dwayne Pinkney, vice provost for finance and academic planning, said the Student Activities Fund Office proposed the fee increase for

2011-12 following recent University budget cuts. The Board of Trustees and the UNC-system Board of Governors approved the fee increase.

The Board of Governors approved the measure after the fee failed to pass a February 2011 student referendum.

Pinkney said the students' vote was not taken into account because of a communication failure between administrators.

"Ideally, the fee would've never been presented to the Board of Governors," Pinkney said.

Administrators decided that trying to reimburse students was not feasible and decided to let student government leaders allocate the extra revenue.

Pinkney said tracking down each student would have cost more money than they were charged for.

Administrators are work-

ing to put in safeguards to ensure that such an administrative communication error does not occur again.

"Without an established protocol, there was a communication gap," Pinkney said.

"That's being addressed so this won't happen in the future."

Student Body President Will Leimenstoll said Pinkney came to student leaders as soon as the error was found.

Leimenstoll said that because it has already been approved, students will still have to pay the fee increase for the 2012-13 year. But students will also receive a \$1.50 credit each semester, negating the extra charge.

Leimenstoll said student

government will propose a \$3 student fee decrease for the 2013-14 academic year to correct the error.

"I think we found a way to make the best of the situation and use the funds in a responsible manner," he said.

Because the student activities fees are designated to help student organizations, student government leaders decided to proportionally divide the \$76,086 between the organizations that normally receive funding from the activities fees.

"Since the money was taken for that purpose anyway, students will still benefit from it," said Paige Comparato, speaker of Student Congress.

"I think we found a way to make the best of the situation and use the funds in a responsible manner."

Will Leimenstoll,
student body president

More than half the revenue was allocated to the Student Activities Fund Office Endowment.

Almost one-third of the additional revenue was allocated to the Graduate and Professional Student Federation, and will be used to establish an emergency fund for graduate students.


"We've had two situations in the past semester where graduate students had emergencies and applied to dean

of students (emergency fund), and got some money but it wasn't enough to resolve their emergency," said Michael Bertucci, president of the GPSF.

Less than 4 percent will be allocated annually for the next four years toward the Student Congress fund for student organizations.

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