

**The University of Kansas  
Financial Impact Statement**

**LEGAL SERVICES FOR STUDENTS FEE  
2005-2006**

**I. PROPOSED FEE**

Effective with the Fall semester, 2005, the Legal Services for Students Fee would be increased as follows:

	<u>Present</u> <u>2004-2005</u>	<u>Proposed Fee</u> <u>2005-2006</u>	<u>Increase</u>	<u>Percent</u>
<b>PER SEMESTER</b>				
Students enrolled in six hours or more*	\$7.00	\$8.50	\$1.50	21.4%
<b>PER SUMMER SESSION</b>				
Students enrolled in five hours or more*	\$3.50	\$4.25	\$.75	21.4%

\*Fee is assessed at an hourly rate for enrollments of less than six hours per semester or less than five hours per Summer Session.

**II. FEE CHANGE JUSTIFICATION**

Legal Services for Students (LSS) has been fully funded by Student Senate and in operation since 1979. This service provides legal assistance in areas of law, where students often need advice, and for which it is difficult to obtain legal counsel at an affordable price. This office consults and advises students on any legal matter, i.e., matters relating to consumer contracts, divorce, adoption, child support, alcohol offenses, loans, landlord/tenant situations, income tax reporting, automobile accidents, identity theft, immigration, etc. In matters where the University is an adversary of a student, Legal Services for Students may provide information about the University grievance and conduct procedures as well as advising regarding their legal rights. They may not attend or participate in hearings or proceedings. They also will not advise in matters in which students are adversarial parties against one another. LSS plays an important role in supporting the academic mission and assists students in reaching academic success by allowing them to focus on classroom and academic issues. LSS assists in improving

retention by reducing financial risks and/or other problems students face. This also leads to increased graduation rates. Legal Services for Students emphasizes its role of educating students of their legal rights and responsibilities through the development of brochures, seminars and workshops. The Student Senate Legal Services for Students Advisory Board and Dean of Students' Office provides operational oversight. The Board consists of eleven (11) members, of which ten (10) are students. Legal Services for Students operates budgetarily as a unit within the purview of the Office of the Vice Provost for Student Success.

The current staff level does not allow for handling very many litigation cases because they are so time consuming. The fee increase will cover costs of an additional staff attorney who will specialize in litigation on behalf of KU students that face legal controversies and will provide a voice in the community to prevent landlords, businesses, and other groups from treating KU students in any manner other than a fair, equitable, and legal one. The added revenue may provide funds to hire an additional legal intern and raise all legal interns' salaries to be comparable to law clerk positions in our geographic area. Another attorney position may be able to be increased from 75% to 100% to expand student access to the services.

The proposed Legal Services for Students Fee is anticipated to yield approximately \$412,850 per year. This represents a supplement of about \$73,000. The proposed increase will enhance and broaden access to the valued services that are provided through this fee.

### **III. STUDENT INVOLVEMENT IN THE FEE INCREASE PROPOSAL**

The proposed fee increase was developed by the Legal Services for Students Advisory Board and unanimously recommended on November 16, 2004 to forward through the approval process. The Student Senate Required Campus Fee Review Committee discussed and recommended approval on February 21, 2005. It was passed by the Student Senate Finance Committee on February 23 and submitted to the Student Senate for consideration. Student Senate approved the increase on March 2, 2005. Although the Student Body President supported the legislative intent, he vetoed the bill March 13 with a recommendation that Senate put the fee increase proposal to referendum for approval instead. Senate concurred and the referendum vote was held April 13-14, 2005. The increase passed favorably by referendum receiving 67% of the voting students' approval. The recommendation has been reviewed and approved by the central administrative staff of the University.

### **IV. NUMBER OF STUDENTS AFFECTED**

All students, undergraduate and graduate, who pay the required campus fees, would be affected by the change. Students enrolled in six or more hours each semester will pay the \$8.50 Legal Services for Students Fee and students enrolled in five hours or more will pay the \$4.25 Legal Services for Students Fee during Summer Session. Other students will pay the prorated hourly fee rate. The estimated income is based on a combined fall/spring FTE enrollment of 46,100 and a summer FTE of 5,000.

## **V. IMPACT ON STUDENTS**

This fee represents only a small portion of the full fees (tuition and required campus fees) paid by students. The increase in staff will improve the access to legal advice and expand the services provided. It is not anticipated that this fee increase will adversely affect the ability of students to finance their education.