2024 Opinion Polls

Graduate Student Ballot:

- Graduate Student Life Programming
- Future Funding Measure for UCSC Climate Coalition
- Resource Centers
- Student Participation in Campus Governance

Undergraduate Student Ballot:

- Future Funding Measure for UCSC Climate Coalition
- Resource Centers
- Student Participation in Campus Governance

Opinion Poll: Graduate Student Life Programming

Introduction:

The Graduate Student Commons (GSC) is the first graduate student center on the UCSC campus, established in 2001. The mission of the GSC is to provide a comfortable and welcoming space that will attract a wide spectrum of graduate students and foster graduate student interaction and a sense of community. To that end, the GSC offers a variety of spaces, including small study rooms, computer terminals, and a lounge for social interaction to promote graduate student academic well-being, success, and camaraderie.

In addition to providing a dedicated physical space for graduate students, the GSC believes a variety of programming is important to the development and retention of well-rounded and healthy graduate students. To that end, the GSC hosts a variety of student life wellbeing programs, including personal and professional development, social activities, health, wellness, spiritual, and financial events that are designed to help graduate students succeed at UC Santa Cruz, and in the world beyond. All GSC events are open to all currently enrolled graduate students and postdoctoral scholars.

The GSC is run by two entities, the Director of Graduate Student Life and the GSC Governance Board (GSCGB). The Director of Graduate Student Life is responsible for the day-to-day management of the GSC, while the GSCGB manages the budget and enacts usage policies of the GSC. The GSCGB is composed primarily of graduate students, as well as non-voting representatives from the broader campus community.

Question 1:

If a small additional fee ensures funding for the programming offered by the Graduate Student Commons (GSC) was on the ballot, would you vote “yes”?
• Yes
• No

**Question 2:**

• $16/quarter ($48/year)
• $20/quarter ($60/year)
• $24/quarter ($72/year)
• $28/quarter ($84/year)
• $32/quarter ($96/year)
• $36/quarter ($108/year)
Opinion Poll: Future Funding Measure for UCSC Climate Coalition

Question 1: Do you think UCSC should provide more extracurricular opportunities for students to learn about and solve the climate and biodiversity crises?
- Yes
- No

Question 2: If a small fee to fund UCSC Climate Coalition events and initiatives were on next year’s ballot, would you vote “yes”?
- Yes
- No

Question 3: What would be the maximum fee amount that you would be willing to contribute?
- $0.25 per quarter ($0.75 per year)
- $0.50 per quarter ($1.50 per year)
- $0.75 per quarter ($2.25 per year)
- $1.00 per quarter ($3.00 per year)

Rationale: Since 2021, the UCSC Climate Coalition (bit.ly/ucscccc) – a mostly student group with some faculty and staff also involved – has organized and supported student activists in their demands for on-campus climate leadership, all through private and departmental donations and without any official UCSC sponsorship. This opinion poll asks if UCSC students would support a future ballot measure to contribute a small amount quarterly to create a more stable budget for the Climate Coalition’s vital work, which includes the decarbonization and electrification initiatives on campus and more climate education opportunities for students. These funds would be used to support these efforts through part-time paid internships for UCSC students, interactive campus events with provided refreshments, and other resources as needed. Stable funding would allow for the Climate Coalition to support the people power and resources needed to fight for crucial changes on campus. The purpose of conducting this informal poll is to evaluate whether or not this measure would pass on an official campus-wide ballot.

Here is a short description of some of the events that the Climate Coalition organizes:

Our annual (fall) Student Climate Conference (see e.g. bit.ly/CliCon23Schedule) where 160-170 students experience the format and expectations of a professional conference, serving on peer-review juries, giving papers, participating in panel discussions, and exhibiting art alongside students from other UC campuses;

Our annual (spring) Earth Day Teach-In and Rally (see e.g. bit.ly/EDTeach) where students and faculty offer an alternative day of environmental-justice and climate-oriented academic programming;
Throughout the academic year: movie nights, field trips, hikes, talks, and art events that, like the Climate Conference and Earth Day events, typically include minor refreshments and vibrant discussion, and which are open to the entire campus and surrounding
community.

We are an educational AND action-oriented organization. In 2.5 years of existence, our activism has...

- Jumpstarted UCSC’s Decarbonization and Electrification process, putting us in the forefront of UC campuses,
- Pushed for protected bike lanes, more/safer/electric buses, and free or deeply discounted carpool permits,
- Championed a climate GE that would not increase time-to-degree,
- Partnered with other on- and off-campus environmental and social justice groups to ensure that student voices are heard on matters of climate and sustainability.

Our primary campaign going forward collaborates with a national movement for COMPLETE FOSSIL FUEL DISSOCIATION by demanding that UCSC

- Prohibit (or at least require transparency for) fossil fuel funding of faculty research,
- Ban present/former fossil fuel executives and their attorneys from sitting on UCSC advisory boards,
- End fossil fuel companies’ recruitment of students via Handshake
- And at the UC level, we’re working with sister organizations on other UC campuses to demand that UC end fossil finance: to transition UC banking out of the “dirty banks” that fund fossil fuel expansion, and to fully divest the UC Retirement Fund from fossil fuel and petrochemical portfolios. We want UC to be earth-friendly and justice-oriented in deed, not just in its publicity.

**Budget**: A twenty-five cent/quarter (x 3 quarters) student fee would, after the 33% deduction for “Return to Aid” that supports undergraduate financial aid, generate $9,450/year for Climate Coalition events and initiatives:

$2,000 for our Student Climate Conference  
$1,500 for our Earth Day Teach-in and rally  
$1,000 for refreshments at our public events, over the year,  
$1,000 for educational and publicity materials, and  
$3,950 for part-time hires of student interns.

Should UCSC students approve a higher fee measure, e.g. fifty cents per quarter per year, the budgets for our first four line items would not change, but we would have more money – up to $13,000 total – to hire students for research and organizing and possibly to fund students attending climate-related events off campus.

Unlike other groups, the UCSC Climate Coalition would spend no student-fee monies for staff salaries; the staff time required to administer these fees would be done on a volunteer basis.

If a majority of students who complete this opinion poll indicate a willingness to support this student fee, the UCSC Climate Coalition will pursue placing a referendum on the Spring 2025 student Election Ballot. Thank you so much for completing this opinion poll!
**Opinion Poll: Resource Centers**

The UCSC Resource Centers include the African American Resource and Cultural Center (AARCC), American Indian Resource Center (AIRC), Asian American & Pacific Islander Resource Center (AAPIRC), Chicanx Latinx Resource Center (El Centro), Lionel Cantú Queer Resource Center (The Cantú), and Womxn’s Center.

The vision of the Resource Centers is to affirm students’ diverse and intersecting identities, and encourage their academic success, to ensure they will graduate with a sense of belonging and commitment to UCSC.

Resource Centers are dependent on temporary funding to hire 80-100 students, and sponsor 250-300 events campus-wide each year. A student fee measure would ensure student employment and programs continue to be offered for students and the campus community.

Examples of Resource Centers' annual programs and services include:

- **SERVICES:** Bay Tree Community Study Jams, and food and basic needs pantries at Ethnic Resource Centers, Cantú Queer Center, and Womxn’s Center locations, as well as drop in hours with CAPS Let’s Talk, Career Success, CalFresh, and Slug Success

- **FALL WELCOME EVENTS AND ORIENTATIONS:** La Bienvenida, Trans and Queer Fall Mixer, Womxn’s Center Fall Ball, American Indian Fall Welcome, Welcome Black BBQ, Black Academy, AA/PI/SWANA Bridge to Success (BtS), QTBIPOC Orientation

- **CULTURAL, EDUCATIONAL, AND COMMUNITY PROGRAMS:** Indigethanx, IndigeFest, People of Color Sustainability Collective Initiative, Comedy Night, Asian American/Pacific Islander/SWANA Heritage Month, Black Love Gala, Dia de los Muertos Ceremonia, Pan Dulce Fridays, Makers Market, Women’s Gala Award Ceremony and Sexual Assault Awareness Month, Stonewall Speaker Series, and SWANA spaces

- **LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT:** 80-100 student employees, academic interns; peer mentor and peer education/training; Student Leadership Institute, project coordination, writing and public speaking, cultural competency, and research skills

- **GRADUATION EVENTS:** Black Grad, Chicanx Latinx Grad, Womxn’s Center Graduation Reception, AIRC Year End Ceremony, AA/PI/SWANA Year End Ceremony, Lavender Ceremony

1) If a measure to support the Resource Centers was on the ballot, would you vote “yes” for a student fee toward events, programs, and services for undergraduate and graduate students, as well as for student employment and professional staff support, and operational expenses for the Resource Centers?
   a) Yes
b) No

2) What would be the maximum fee amount that you would agree to contribute?
   a) $20/quarter
   b) $25/quarter
   c) $30/quarter
   d) $40/quarter

3) If you would vote “no” on the Resource Centers measure, why? Select all that apply.
   a) The Resource Centers are not relevant to my student experiences.
   b) I would like for there to be more institutional fiscal commitment.
   c) I generally oppose student fees.
   d) Other reason: ____________________

4) Would you support the formation of a SWANA Resource Center (Southwest Asian and North African, otherwise known as Middle Eastern)?
   a) Yes
   b) No
**Opinion Poll: Student Participation in Campus Governance**

If We Pay, Should We Have a Say?

This poll asks students to voice their opinions on the importance of student participation in the governance of our campus, including vital services such as TAPS, as well as University administrators’ obligation to actively support students’ participation.

Students have long been dissatisfied with the state of Transportation and Parking Services (TAPS) at UCSC, and last year, the Student Union Governance Board put out a campuswide opinion poll to verify this fact. The results were staggering; out of the students who voted in the election, over 90% felt TAPS was not transparent or providing adequate services to students.

This year, a campus shuttle hit a stonewall, leading to the death of the driver and injuring 5 students. Immediately following this tragedy, the California Highway Patrol found the University failed to comply with state safety inspection requirements and that TAPS’s transit operations were an “Imminent Danger to Public Safety.” Over half of the inspected vehicles were taken out of service.

The Student Union Governance Board, in consultation with the SUA, the Graduate Student Association (GSA), all ten colleges, the Big 5 organizations, engaging education, and Student Media Council proposed a ballot measure to address our current transportation crisis. This measure would have established a student-chanred commission dedicated to gathering and presenting student feedback on TAPS, codify student input as an unskippable part of TAPS’s decision-making process, and require TAPS present to this commission and publish for the student body budgets, policies, and enforcement changes before any sort of implementation.

However, campus administrators have dismissed this student effort, requiring changes to the measure which removed requirements for the University to remain transparent and accountable to students by 1) presenting the TAPS budget to students; 2) attending one annual student-facilitated townhall to listen to students’ concerns; and 3) reporting on how student concerns were and will be addressed. These changes were made without citing any policy or legal basis, and if SUGB did not accept these changes, the measure would be blocked from reaching the ballot.

UC policy states that student participation in campus governance is “important to the sound development of policy [and] should be encouraged and strengthened through the involvement of all levels of student representation.” (120.00 of the campus Student Handbook) These edits fly in the face of this policy, and as such, SUGB rejected them, sending the measure back to the UC Office of the President for final approval before putting it on the ballot.

However, since then, UCOP has been unresponsive, despite multiple attempts to reach out, which has prevented SUGB from running the measure in this year’s election.
Please select your level of agreement for each of the following statements:
Strongly disagree (1) Disagree (2) Agree (3) Strongly agree (4)

1. UCSC administrators involve students in decisions about campus services that impact students’ lives.
2. UCSC administrators make decisions that show they understand the day-to-day lives of students and result in student-friendly services.
3. When students voice concerns about campus services, administrators are responsive and make improvements according to student suggestions.
4. Given that UCSC students pay the highest transit fee of any UC campus ($513/per student for Fall, Winter, and Spring Quarters, with an additional $171 charged to summer session students), I would vote to support a measure that gives students the ability to participate in the governance of this fee.
5. I would vote to support a measure that gives students the power to hold TAPS accountable to student concerns and needs.