

Measure #: 71

Referendum Title: Amendment to College Student Government Fee

Ballot Type: Amendment to an existing fee

Ballot Author: College Programs Coordinators

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Question:

Shall the undergraduate students of UCSC increase the College Student Government Fee from \$10/per undergraduate student/per quarter to \$20/per undergraduate student/per quarter over a four (4) year period to be allocated by separate student governments at each college? Under the advisement of the College Programs Coordinators, fee increase would go to support student events, student salaries, stipends for orientation staff, and funding allocations for student orgs. Effective fall quarter 2019 with an increase of \$7, increasing \$1 each fall until the total fee is \$20.

	Fall Qtr	Winter Otr	Spring Qtr	Annual Total
2019-2020	\$17	\$17	\$17	\$51
2020-2021	\$18	\$18	\$18	\$54
2021-2022	\$19	\$19	\$19	\$57
2022-2023	\$20	\$20	\$20	\$60

Summary Points:

- This fee was enacted in 1965 when the UCSC opened at \$8. It was increased in 1982 to \$10 per undergraduate student. No increase has been enacted in 37 years.
- When the fee was enacted the minimum wage in CA was \$1.25. In 1982 when the fee was increased, the CA minimum wage was \$3.35. In Santa Cruz minimum wage is increasing \$1 a year until 2022 when it will be \$15.00. This is an increase of 348%.
- Inflation has increased 162% (average rate of 2.7% each year), since the last time the fee was increased. Such as operating expenses like the cost of producing events has increased (i.e. Goods and service valued at \$100.00 in 1982 now cost \$260.00.)
- Fee will generate approximately \$355,992¹ (inclusive of return-to-aid) in the first year. Funding will be provided to the ten colleges and it will be the sole responsibility of the student governments to allocate and administer these funds.
- 33% of the fee increases will be subject to return-to-aid. The return-to-aid component will generate approximately \$117,477 in the first year.
- Fee will be assessed to all undergraduate students enrolled in the Fall, Winter, and Spring quarters.

¹ Based on the 2017-2018 three-quarter undergraduate student enrollment of 16,952.

- Revenue from the increase will continue to “carry out diverse programs and activities such as, but not limited to, orientation programs, college nights, support for college student organizations, college newsletters, concerts, lectures, films, dances, and college graduation ceremonies:
 - Stipends for fall orientation leaders
 - Funding requests for student governments
 - Student events
 - Student labor
 - Commencement
- Student Fee Advisory Committee Opinion Statement: The Student Fee Advisory Committee (SFAC) supports this fee as it will allow colleges to pay students for leadership positions during welcome week and will result in increased funding for student run organizations.
- The fee is sponsored for undergraduates on the ballot by:
 - resolution of all ten officially established student councils or governing associations of the colleges, and
 - resolution of the Student Union Assembly.

Background:

The College Student Government Fee (originally the College Membership Fee) was enacted in 1965 at the founding of UCSC, and originally approved by the Regents at \$8 per undergraduate student per quarter. The increase from \$8 per student per quarter to \$10 per student per quarter was approved in the 1982 elections due to increased operational expenses. The 1995 elections established that the fee shall be allocated by separate student governments organized at each college rather than by existing college procedures. In 1989, an agreement was made to contribute funding to the Committee on Ethnic Programming (CEP) out of the College Student Government funds. As of 2018, this contribution totals \$10,985 annually.

These fees shall continue to be the principal source of funds to carry out diverse programs and activities such as, but not limited to, orientation programs, college nights, support for college student organizations, college newsletters, concerts, lectures, films, dances, and college graduation ceremonies in each of the colleges. In compliance with University and campus policies, new funding will support stipends for fall orientation leaders, funding requests for student governments, student events, student labor, and commencement. Allocation for fall quarter college programs must be approved for expenditure during the preceding spring quarter to allow sufficient time for college program planning and preparation.

If this measure does not pass, the College Student Government Fees shall continue to be allocated, as is currently the case within the separate college structures at \$10 per quarter per student.

Why is an increase being proposed?

The intent of this measure is to bring the funds generated by the student government fee in alignment with current costs for materials, services (performances, non-student technical support, etc.) and (student) salaries. In response to increasingly impacted budgets, student governments have needed to make difficult funding decisions. Due to increasing minimum wage, inflation, and a variety of other impacts outlined below, revenue from the increases is being proposed for purposes such as:

- *Stipends for fall orientation leaders:*
Each college recruits and trains a group of student volunteers to help welcome new students in the fall. In some cases these students volunteer over 100 hours and give up 2-3 weeks of their summers to do so. Due to the nature of this being an unpaid position, it is difficult to recruit and retain a diverse and representative pool of student leaders. As the position requires students to donate a significant amount of unpaid labor to fill a crucial role in orienting incoming students to our college, College Programs Coordinators advocate for moving this from a volunteer, to a paid stipend position.

- *Funding Requests for Student Organizations:*

Our college governments have the power to support student-driven programs in a variety of ways, one of which includes funding student organizations across campus include those affiliated with SOMeCA, OPERS, and academic departments. With increasing costs across the entire of the college government fee, funding allocations are often first to be hit as part of the college student government's discretionary funding.

There is a strong culture of student organizations requesting for funding from student governments. Currently, many student governments are only to fund 30-50% of what is requested of them. Increasing the budget for student organization funding allocations allows student governments to continue empower student initiatives across campus that align with their mission, values, and theme. Overall, an increase to this line item helps to further develop a culture of student empowerment: Students supporting other students through financial support and programs.

- *Student Events:*

Funds generated by the Student Government Fee, even with allowance for increased enrollments, are not keeping pace with the cost of doing programs and events. Costs for virtually all aspects of programs and events have increased since the Student Government Fee was last amended (1982). Due the increased costs relative to the funds generated by the current \$10.00 / quarter student government fee, the quantity, type, scale and quality of programs produced and supported by both College Programs/Activities Offices and College Senates -- is negatively impacted. An increase in this fee would support higher quality, more frequent and a greater variety of student programming in the colleges.

- *Student Labor:*

College Programs/Activities Offices pay current minimum wage (\$12.00 in 2019, increasing to \$15.00 by 2022), which is significantly higher than 1982 minimum of \$3.35 per hour when this fee was last raised. As student labor costs have increased, it can reduce options for student government discretionary fee. Student governments are forced to choose between decreasing student job opportunities or decreasing other areas of their budget such as programming, funding allocations, etc. This fee increase reduces that tension and/or creates the potential for more employment, leadership opportunities, and professional development for students.

- *Commencement:*

Primarily, the cost of creating the 2 major venue sites for commencement have been borne by the college student governments funds. The costs of holding commencement have grown significantly. For example, from 2013 to 2017 alone, costs for the 2 main venues on campus have increased dramatically. The campus saw a 64% between 2014 and 2017, and a 41% increase a 1 year period alone from 2016-2017.

Students and College staff have had little to no control over these rising costs. In January 2018, AVC Matthews proposed an agreement that established a fixed contribution for the 2018 ceremonies, with the intent of decreasing this amount in future years. We are in the first year of this arrangement and it is unknown what the model will be for funding commencement moving forward.

Currently, the average cost for commencement activities amounts to about 20% of the entire student government budget at each college (\$10,605 on average). This amount includes venue and college specific costs including: renting, building, and running the main venues, security, traffic and parking, receptions, print programs, staffing and myriad miscellaneous costs. The College Program Coordinators and student leaders are already strongly advocating to stabilize or reduce overall commencement costs. The fee increase will not be used to cover additional Commencement costs, rather it would allow student governments to reduce the overall percentage of the budget that is allocated to a single annual event.

Note on Carry-Forward Account:

As of February 1, 2019, there is \$492,638.40 in a carry-forward account for this fee (97% of an annual budget). College governments know this account as “Prior” and, like the current year’s budget, have sole discretion over spending out of this account. There are over 20 projects those college student governments are currently working on utilizing money in this account, with projected costs totaling \$404,593.78.

Endorsements:

Stevenson Student Council
Merrill Student Government
Rachel Carson College Council
Cowell Student Senate
College Nine Senate
College Ten Senate
Ten Colleges Debate Union
Korean American Student Association
Porter College Senate
Game Design & Arts Collaboration