

Measure Title: Provide continued support and funding for the Sustainability Office to expand student engagement opportunities

Measure #: Measure 45

Question:

Shall the undergraduate students of UCSC provide funding for the Sustainability Office to engage undergraduate students through instances such as hiring more student interns, funding collaborative projects outlined in campus sustainability plan and providing initial funds for a revolving loan fund for projects that implement sustainable and cost saving technology and practices by establishing a new compulsory fee of \$2.75 per quarter, per student, beginning Fall 2010?

Summary Points

- New undergraduate compulsory fee of \$2.75 per quarter, per student.
- Fee begins Fall Quarter 2010 and is a temporary fee with an ending date of summer Quarter 2020
- Fee will be assessed to all undergraduates enrolled in the fall, winter, spring and summer quarters
- Fee will generate approximately \$125,886* annually
- This fee includes a 33% Return-to-Aid component, in which 33% of all fees collected will automatically go to financial aid to help those students who are on financial aid, cover the expense of the fee. This will be approximately \$41,542 per year.
- Fee is sponsored for undergraduates on the ballot by College Student Governments.
- The fee will be assessed only in coordination with an agreement from the administration to contribute funds to the Sustainability Office that equal no less than 75% of those funds contributed by the student body through the proposed measure after the return to aid component is removed. Currently, the administration has agreed to contribute funds for a Sustainability Manager's salary, benefits and office operations costs estimated at \$150,000 per year for three years (through 2012). This commitment would fulfill the aforementioned request for an administrative contribution. In following years until summer 2020 the fee will be assessed in each year that the administration contributes funds equaling no less than 75% of those contributed by the student body through the proposed measure after the return to aid component is removed. In years in which the Administration's contribution is not met, the fee will not be assessed.
- The funds would be used by the Sustainability Office which is currently housed in the Division of Business and Administrative Services.

*Three quarter enrollment estimate based on Fall 2009 third-week enrollment of 15,259

Ballot Statement

How the fee will be used? The fee will be used to engage students through instances such as hiring more student interns, funding collaborative projects outlined in the Campus Sustainability Plan and providing initial funds for a revolving loan fund for projects that implement sustainable and cost saving technology or practices. The fee may also be used to support existing student groups who are working on sustainability and cost saving technology or practices or student groups who are interested in being more sustainable student organizations and not directly involved with sustainability on our campus.

Why is the fee needed? UCSC students have a history of publicly supporting sustainability measures and have shown a willingness to devote student fees to the support of a Sustainability

Office. In light of budget cuts, particularly to operations, such a fee would be an important step in preserving the Sustainability Office, encouraging administrative action, promoting student involvement, and of critical importance, furthering sustainability. Funding the office is a critical step towards achieving sustainability, especially as the Sustainability Office is quickly growing towards filling a particular need for institutional change and working with administration and the UC system. Having such a central office encourages collaboration and organization, and office staff provides an important informational and advisory resource. Already the office has played a role in creating important evaluation documents such as the Campus Sustainability Assessment, coordinating key groups such as the Committee on Sustainability and Stewardship and related working groups, and in advising campus actions to achieve the most sustainable results. The Sustainability Office is currently drafting a Campus Sustainability Plan based on the previous work in the Campus Sustainability Assessment. The plan has created clear and attainable goals for the campus to become more sustainable. The Sustainability Office also engages many students, staff, faculty and administration in collaborative projects. Student interns may also help foster these efforts by providing a valuable student connection, workforce, and will receive important training as well. Many other UC and college campuses maintain or are establishing Sustainability Offices and staff/coordinating positions to support the ever increasing need for sustainable practices. Current examples in California alone include: Stanford, Chico, Humboldt, Asusa Pacific, California Institute of Technology, UC Berkeley, UC Davis, UC Riverside, UC Santa Barbara, UC San Diego and UC San Francisco.

Who will benefit from the fee? Students, faculty and staff concerned about furthering sustainability and preserving the natural environment of UCSC and the surrounding area will benefit. Funds will go towards supporting not only sustainable projects that could lower costs for both students and offices alike, but will also go to directly fund student positions and education. Not only will sustainability groups benefit but student groups that are not directly involved with sustainability may benefit from assistance and support from this fee.

Student Consultation Method:

Last year the ballot measure for a \$3.75 per quarter, per student fee to support the Sustainability Office was supported by 53.36% of the students who voted, however because the minimum 25% voter turn-out threshold was not reached the measure did not pass. In addition to recent consultations with students and administration that encouraged such a fee, students voted in favor (2,569 voted yes versus 903 who voted no) on a 2005 opinion poll that asked "Would the undergraduates and graduate students of UCSC support the creation of an Office of Sustainability, which will facilitate collaboration between students, the administration, faculty, staff, and the community to create, implement and monitor sustainability practices on campus to be outlined in an official campus sustainability plan?" Students also voted in favor (1,065 voted yes versus 304 who voted no) on a similar 2004 opinion poll that asked "Do the students of UCSC support funding for two Campus Sustainability Coordinators who will work with students, staff, faculty, administration, and the community (specifically UC Santa Cruz Dining) to reduce energy usage, improve resource conservation, and increase the overall sustainability of the UCSC campus through education, outreach, data collection, and program implementation?"