



## **Senate Bill No. 2014/2015-064** ***The Wellness Referendum Fee***

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### **Primary Sponsor**

Madison Gordon (ASUC Senator)

### **Cosponsors**

Dree Kavoussi (ASUC Senator); Melissa Hsu (ASUC Senator); Claudia Covello (Director of University Health Services); Bene Gatzert (UHS Strategic Initiatives Manager); Amy Honigman (UHS Psychiatrist); Michael Weinberger (Director of RecSports); Devin Wicks (RecSports Director of Fitness and Wellness Operations); Julian Ledesma (Interim Director of Educational Opportunity Program); Avisha Chugani (Educational Opportunity Program Academic Counselor); Matt Grigorieff (Graduate Assembly Representative); Dax Kangas (Graduate Assembly Representative); Crystal Noel (Graduate Assembly Representative); Omar Alonzo (Director of Wellness for Office of ASUC Senator Heredia); Deepika Dilip (Director of Wellness for Office of ASUC Senator Gordon); Wyatt Anderson (Director of Wellness for Office of ASUC Senator Gordon); Luciano Zuniga (Director of Wellness for Office of ASUC Senator Gordon); Pallavi Chada (Project Assistant of Health and Wellness for Office of ASUC Senator Kavoussi); Mili Adhikari (Project Assistant of Health and Wellness for Office of ASUC Senator Kavoussi); Marium Navid (ASUC Senator); Tanay Nandgaonkar (ASUC Senator); Bo Nguyen (ASUC Senator); Hannah Frankl (ASUC Senator); Grant Genske (ASUC Senator); Austin Pritzkat (ASUC Senator); Ori Herschmann (ASUC Senator); Vinay Ramesh (ASUC Senate); Baltazar Dasalla (ASUC Senator); Haley Broder (ASUC Senator); King Xiong (ASUC Senator); Yordanos Dejen (ASUC Senator); Lavanya Jawaharlal (ASUC Senator); Meghna Grover (Co-Chair of Mental Health Coalition)

A proposed mandatory fee would create new wellness services and continue existing wellness fees. The Wellness Referendum Fee would replace the Recreational Sports Fee (\$55) set to expire in 2016 and the Intramural Sports Fee (\$28.50) set to expire in 2017. Upon assessment of Wellness Referendum Fee, the Recreational Sports Fee and the Intramural Sports Fee will no longer be assessed, but the original referendum language for those fees will still apply to their governance. The replacement of the two mandatory RSF fees would support existing services offered at RSF and the California Memorial Stadium ("CMS") Fitness Center, including operations, existing debt service, and a reserve

fund for equipment replacement and maintenance. The Wellness Referendum Fee would also add an additional \$54 to mandatory campus-based fees to fund a *new* campus-wide wellness program. The fee increase for a new wellness program would go towards cutting down referral and wait times at the University Health Services Tang Center, improving access to mental health services, providing opportunities for healthier living, and providing extra support for students with greatest wellness need. These new wellness services would be accessible by undergraduate and graduate students, not just those enrolled in the Student Health Insurance Program (SHIP). Additionally, the fee would buy-out the voluntary RSF student membership fee of \$10 by increasing mandatory campus-based fees by \$8.50. In total, the Wellness Referendum Fee of \$146 would be assessed in Fall, Spring and a reduced amount (75%) in the Summer. The proposed mandatory fee would be assessed to undergraduate and graduate students starting in Fall 2015 and ending in Spring 2045. One-third ( $\frac{1}{3}$ ) of the proposed fee would be returned to Financial Aid in accordance with campus policy to help offset the cost of this fee for the neediest students who are eligible for campus-based financial aid.

### **Background**

While the UC Berkeley student body has expanded over 20% in the last 17 years, the services for health and wellness have not been able to keep up. We envision a new future that supports students and their wellness holistically.

If it is not replaced, the Recreational Sports fees that expire in 2016 and 2017 will cause the Recreational Sports department to lose nearly 40% of its operating budget, triggering dramatic cuts to facility hours and services.

Every year UC Berkeley loses professors, students, and community members to suicide. Other serious mental health complications afflict students to the point of impacting performance, as reported on surveys. UC Berkeley students have identified stress as an academic impediment at a rate higher than the national percentage, and more than 60 percent of students feel overwhelmed by anxiety, yet integration of mental health counseling into academic departments is extremely limited.

Wellness, health, and recreation services are in dire need of improvement at UC Berkeley, which lacks new, innovative mind-body services that students want. Students of color, LGBTQIA students, veterans, student parents, international students, students with disabilities, and other student populations face unique wellness challenges that require additional support not currently available to them. Sexual assault is a pressing issue at UC Berkeley, but the campus lacks the resources to adequately meet student need; in particular, students need a sexual assault resource center.

The Wellness Referendum Fee will provide new fee revenue that will be used exclusively to support wellness services and programming for students, as well as renovations, furnishings, and alterations to existing spaces required to support these new wellness programs.

### **Student Involvement**

During the past year, a student Wellness Work Group supported by the ASUC and

Graduate Assembly (also known as the ASUC Wellness Coalition) collaborated with administrators from UHS, Rec Sports, and Equity and Inclusion to develop a transparent student-driven wellness program. Feedback was gathered from the larger GA and ASUC governing bodies, student surveys, student groups such as the Disabled Students Union, Cal Veterans Group, CO-OP system, and other campus committees that included students from the Health Fee Advisory Board, Student Health Advisory Committee, Rec Sports Board of Governors, Bike Advocacy Committee, and Graduate Student Mental Health Committee.

#### Fees at Other UC Campuses

There is no comparable funding model, nor is there a wellness program that is similar in scope and size to this one. The strong partnership between UHS, Rec Sports, and students enabled this innovative vision to occur.

### **Purpose of the Wellness Referendum Fee**

#### Continuation of existing Recreational Sports programs and services

Currently, UC Berkeley students pay two mandatory fees to support the general operations of the Recreational Sports Department and a voluntary RSF membership fee to access services. These fees cover part of the operational and maintenance costs of the Rec Sports Facilities as well as pay the final portions of the RSF bond. The replacement of these fees would generate the necessary revenue to cover one-third return-to-aid (not currently applicable to the Intramural Sports Fee or RSF membership fee), the operation and debt service for the CMS Satellite Fitness Center, and continued partial coverage of the operational and maintenance costs of the Recreational Sports.

#### UHS Wellness Improvements

*Extended Hours:* Currently, the Tang Center is closed at the times students are most available to use them: evening and weekends when they are not in class. The additional revenue generated by the new Wellness Referendum Fee will extend hours of operations for Urgent Care and Counseling and Psychological Services (CPS) to meet student demand, for example extended hours on select weekdays, Saturdays, and Sundays.

*Counseling and Psychological Services:* The additional revenue generated by the new Wellness Referendum Fee will provide, for the first time, mental health experts at the Tang Center's primary care clinics to immediately assist students who may benefit from an intervention or continued counseling without facing the average 10-day wait time for an appointment.

#### New Wellness Services

*Cardio, Strength Training, and Multi-Purpose Spaces:* The fee will assist with furnishings and space alteration needs to support expanded fitness services, much of which will be managed by the Rec Sports Department. This is a top priority program that will be implemented, as space is available.

*Relaxation, Yoga & Meditation spaces:* The Wellness Referendum fee will assist with furnishings and space alterations for this purpose.

*Health Classes:* The Wellness Referendum fee will support classes on various topics including nutrition, stress management, and well being.

#### Diversity Student Wellness Programs

The Wellness Referendum Fee will support specific wellness programs for underserved student populations including, but not limited to, wellness programs that meet the needs of students of color, veterans, international students, and LGBTQIA communities, and students with disabilities. Possible examples include hiring physical therapists to work specifically with students with disabilities, veteran wellness specific programs, competitive sports program for student athletes with disabilities, or hiring counselors with skills, knowledge and abilities who can well serve communities of color. Counselors who come from and understand the needs of underserved populations will be prioritized in the hiring process

#### Sexual Assault Prevention and Support Programs

To better support the needs of those who have experienced sexual and/or gendered violence, the wellness program will support advocacy staff and services to work with survivors and spearhead educational programs. Relevant stakeholders including student survivors and any office centered on gendered violence, prevention, education, and survivor services will oversee the use of such funds.

#### Wellness Financial Sustainability Plan

To ease student costs over time, a portion of new fee revenue will support wellness fundraising efforts that will have responsibility for, among other things, implementing strategies to offset student costs for new services and coordinate such efforts with other campus stakeholders.

### **Breakdown of the Wellness Referendum Fee**

Starting in 2015-16, the following existing fees totaling \$93.50 will be replaced with \$92 of the total \$146 Wellness Referendum Fee:

- 2006 Recreational Sports Fee for Fall, Spring and Summer, scheduled to increase to \$55 and expiring at the end of the Spring 2016.
- 1981 Intramural Sports Facility Fee at \$28.50 assessed in Fall and Spring, expiring at the end of Spring 2017 (not currently assessed in Summer).
- Voluntary RSF membership fee of \$10 that students are required to pay to access RSF facilities and services (charged separately in Fall, Spring and Summer).
- One-third ( $\frac{1}{3}$ ) of all fee revenue will be returned to financial aid in accordance with campus policy to help offset the cost of this fee for the neediest students who are eligible for campus-based financial aid.

Starting in 2015-16, a new fee of \$54 included in the total \$146 Wellness Referendum Fee will be used to fund the following expenditures (ordered largest to smallest):

1. Mandatory return of one-third ( $\frac{1}{3}$ ) of fee revenue to financial aid in accordance with campus policy to help offset the cost of this fee for the neediest students who are eligible for campus-based financial aid [\$18]

2. UHS extended hours and counselors in primary care [52% of net fee revenue or \$19]
3. New wellness services including operational, furnishings, and alteration costs to provide such services [31% of net fee revenue or \$11]
4. Diversity student wellness programs and associated cost [11% of net fee revenue or \$4]
5. Sexual Assault Prevention and Support Programs [3% of net fee revenue or \$1]
6. Wellness financial sustainability officer [3% of net fee revenue or \$1]
7. If supplementary funds come in for the same purposes delineated here, the Wellness Referendum Fee Advisory Committee may recommend that the fee be decreased accordingly.

The Wellness Referendum Fee will be assessed for 30 years starting in Fall 2015 through Spring 2045 and will be collected during fall, spring and a reduced amount (75%) in summer. The revenue generated by the fee is intended to supplement but not supplant existing or future funding for the services described in this proposal.

### **Wellness Referendum Fee Advisory Committee**

The entire Wellness Referendum Fee will be overseen by the Wellness Referendum Fee Advisory Committee, an advisory body to the Chancellor, which will be charged with ensuring that the fee revenue supports the original intention of the referendum and will be responsible for monitoring the revenue and expenses of such programs. The portion of the fee dedicated to health care related services will be increased annually according to the Price Waterhouse Healthcare rate of inflation. The remaining portion of the fee, including the \$92 to support existing RSF programs and services, will be increased annually to adjust for inflation according to the applicable Consumer Price Index. In addition, either portion of the fee may be increased up to an additional 3% per year based on the recommendation of the Wellness Referendum Fee Advisory Committee, subject to review by the Chancellor's Advisory Committee on Student Services and Fees and the Chancellor's approval, in order to sustain the same level of services. The Fee Committee can also recommend a decrease in the fee if the same level of services costs less than the adjusted inflation. Let it also be noted that the Board of Governors outlined in the 1981 Intramural Sports Facility Referendum maintain its composition and scope of control as it pertains to Recreational Sports spaces moving forward.

The Wellness Referendum Fee Advisory Committee will be housed under the Associated Students of the University of California and will have the following composition:

Voting Members: Four ASUC elected representatives appointed by the Academic Affairs Vice President (AAVP); Four GA elected representatives appointed by the Campus Affairs Vice President (CAVP) ; One Committee on Student Fees (CSF) Representative

Non-Voting Members: University Health Services (UHS) Administrative Representative; Rec Sports Administrative Representative; Disabled Students Program (DSP) Administrative Representative; Center for Educational Equity and Excellence (CE3) Administrative Representative.

### ASUC Ballot Language

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Associated Students of the University of California place the following question as Proposition 4 titled “Wellness Referendum Fee” on the 2015 ASUC General Elections:

“The Wellness Referendum Fee, to be assessed to all undergraduate and graduate students for Fall, Spring and partially assessed in Summer starting in Fall 2015 and ending in Spring 2045 would support a commitment to wellness at Cal by (1) extending the hours of operation for Urgent Care and Counseling services on select weekdays and weekends; (2) creating new wellness efforts such as expanded cardio, multi-purpose, yoga, and relaxation spaces; (3) combatting sexual assault and providing resources to survivors; (4) offering nutrition, stress management, and well-being classes; (5) implementing specific wellness services for underserved students – all for a total *increase* of \$54 in *new* student fees – and would also replace the expiring Recreational Sports Fee (\$55), the Intramural Sports Fee (\$28.50), and the RSF student membership fee of \$10, totaling in full to \$146 for both new and continuing services. In accordance with campus return-to-aid policy, one-third (33%) of the fee will go to Financial Aid. Do you approve this fee?”

Given, that the exact title and wording of this proposition shall be subject to certification, and if need be, adjustment by the Elections Council pursuant to ASUCBL 4302.

**Appendix: [The Wellness Referendum Fee Combined Model](#)**