
Campus Elections 2023

Measure #: 78**Referendum Title:** Sustainability Office Fee**Ballot Type:** New fee (amendment to a terminated fee)**Ballot Author:** Sustainability Office

Question: Shall the undergraduate students of UC Santa Cruz re-establish the Sustainability Office Fee at \$3.00 per quarter, an increase of \$0.25 from the \$2.75 level in Spring 2020 when the fee expired, increasing annually by 3% through FY 2032-33, to provide undergraduate students paid on-campus job opportunities to support advancement of the Campus Sustainability Plan, support professional development opportunities, and fund the Sustainability & Social Justice Inter-Organizational Retreat, which serves approximately 100 students annually?

Summary points

- The previous Sustainability Office Fee, known as Measure 45, terminated in Summer Quarter 2020 without a vote of renewal when not enough of the student body voted in the election. The referendum was again put to vote last Spring Quarter 2022 and did not pass when not enough of the student body voted in the election. This referendum will re-establish the fee to be assessed beginning in Fall Quarter 2023.
- In FY 2023-24, the fee level will be set to \$3.00 per student per quarter, which is a \$0.25 increase compared to the \$2.75 per student per quarter level in the last year the fee was assessed in FY 2019-20.
- Starting in Fall 2024, the fee will be subject to an annual increase of 3% up to \$3.91 through FY 2032-33 (\$13.29/year).
- Fee will be assessed to all undergraduate students enrolled in the Fall, Winter, and Spring quarters. A reduced fee will be charged in summer quarter based on the level of services available and consultation with the Student Fee Advisory Committee.
- In FY 2023-24, the fee will generate approximately \$153,000; in FY 2027-28, the fee will generate approximately \$175,000; in FY 2032-33, the fee will generate approximately \$202,000.
- Proposed fee term is 10 years and will terminate after Summer Quarter 2033 if the fee is not renewed.
- Fee will be used in the following ways:
 - On-campus undergraduate student employment opportunities in the Sustainability Office as well as in other campus partner departments;
 - Undergraduate student professional development opportunities, like the annual Sustainability & Social Justice Inter-Organizational Retreat;
 - Professional staff support for the above activities, which ranges from 15 – 20% of the net revenue to the Office.
- The Sustainability Office will offer employment opportunities to students eligible for federal work-study, the current budget for this fee includes three work-study opportunities. Work study positions for student employment will be pursued each year as appropriate.
- This fee includes a 33% Return-to-Aid component, in which 33% of the fee will automatically go to undergraduate Financial Aid. The Return-to-Aid amount will be approximately \$51,000 in FY 2023-24; in FY 2027-28, approximately \$58,000; in FY 2032-33, approximately \$67,000.

- The Student Fee Advisory Committee opinion statement:

The Student Fee Advisory Committee supports the extension and subsequent increases. We believe it will enable student employment in the Sustainability Office to continue operations and increase student-led efforts within UCSC and surrounding communities. We acknowledge that if this fee is not passed the services of the office will be further reduced.

- Fee is sponsored for placement on the ballot for *undergraduate students* by resolution of the Student Union Assembly.

Ballot Statement

How will the fee be used / how has the fee been used?

From 2010 - 2020, the Sustainability Office received funding from Measure 45, the previous Sustainability Office Fee, to:

- Provide undergraduate students paid on-campus jobs to support advancement of the Campus Sustainability Plan. Since 2010, the Sustainability Office has provided meaningful **sustainability-related employment to more than 250 paid student employees**;
- Fund professional development opportunities for undergraduate students. Since 2010, the Sustainability Office has **offered professional development experiences and/or professional conference attendance to 25 students**;
- Fund the Sustainability & Social Justice Inter-Organizational Retreat, which serves approximately 100 students annually. Since 2010, the Sustainability Office **has engaged more than 950 students in the annual Sustainability & Social Justice Inter Organizational Retreat**.
- Fund professional staff support for the above activities, up to 20% of the net fee revenue to the Office, as needed.

The fee, if passed, will continue to fund these initiatives.

What is the Sustainability Office?

The Sustainability Office strives to foster a culture of diverse, equitable and inclusive sustainability at UCSC. We actively engage students, staff, faculty and community members to improve UCSC's environmental performance, seeking to model the way that large institutions can work collaboratively to solve some of the world's biggest environmental and social justice challenges.

Sustainability Office goals:

1. **Institutionalize sustainability.** Work proactively to integrate sustainability into the core responsibilities and daily activities of faculty, students, and staff.
2. **Improve environmental performance** through the [Campus Sustainability Plan](#).
3. **Create centralized communication and promote successes.** Create a central space for coordination of campus sustainability activities, educational initiatives, noteworthy campus achievements, reporting and national rankings.
4. **Promote a culture of inclusive sustainability.** Work to advance different cultural definitions of how to care for environmental spaces and human communities, and promote multicultural

inclusion in sustainability initiatives across campus.

5. Integrate sustainability into the classroom. Build bridges between operations, teaching and research to establish UCSC as a living, learning laboratory in which students can learn and apply sustainability principles and techniques.

Who will benefit from the fee?

All students, faculty, and staff invested in furthering sustainability at UC Santa Cruz will benefit. Those not directly involved with sustainability will also benefit from the advancement of the Campus Sustainability Plan, the Sustainability Office goals, and reducing UC Santa Cruz's collective environmental impact. Collaborative projects, such as the Sustainability and Social Justice Inter-Organizational Retreat, promote social and environmental justice efforts.

Over the next ten years of the fee, approximately 300 students will receive hourly pay from their student employment through the fee measure in the Sustainability Office. These students will benefit from experience in the workforce and in sustainability implementation projects, as well as from professional development opportunities and professional conference attendance.

Over the next ten years of the fee, up to 1,000 students who will attend the Sustainability & Social Justice Inter-Organizational Retreat will benefit from impactful keynote speeches (including from influential UC Santa Cruz alumni) and student-led workshops on sustainability and social justice-oriented topics, while connecting and building relationships with students across campus.

What does a yes vote mean?

If the Sustainability Office Fee passes, the Sustainability Office will have the ability to offer approximately 25+ hourly paid positions to undergraduate students annually; to provide high-impact professional development and conference attendance to employed students; and to expand existing programs, including the Sustainability & Social Justice Inter-Organizational Retreat, which serves approximately 100 students annually.

What does a no vote mean?

If the Sustainability Office Fee does not pass, the Sustainability Office will need to change its current funding structure, likely resulting in a reduction of student employees. Since 2020, the Sustainability Office has been able to support paid opportunities for students with some temporary funding, however, those funds are temporary and do not provide a sustainable funding structure to guarantee student employment opportunities. Without the funds generated from this proposed fee measure, the Sustainability Office would need to reconsider whether it will be able to offer 25+ paid positions to undergraduate students or continue existing programs, including the annual Sustainability & Social Justice Inter Organizational Retreat, which serves approximately 100 students.

Student Consultation Method

This proposed fee measure, Measure 78, received the official endorsement of the UCSC Undergraduate Student Union Assembly in Spring 2023.

The Sustainability Office Fee has a long history of strong student support: in a 2009 opinion poll, 53.36% of voting undergraduate and graduate students voiced their support in favor of a \$3.75/quarter fee (\$15/year) to support the Sustainability Office. Following an evaluation of core budget needs, and being mindful of the increasing number and amount of fees students are assessed, in 2010, the Sustainability Office pursued Measure 45 at a \$2.75/quarter fee,

which passed with 62.94% of the undergraduate vote.

An opinion poll was placed on the 2019 campus elections. The opinion poll asked:

Question 1: If a measure to renew support of the Sustainability Office was on a future election ballot, would you vote “yes” to continue the current \$2.75/quarter fee to: i) fund paid student positions in sustainability across campus and in the Sustainability Office; and ii) promote cross campus dialogue and collaboration through opportunities such as the annual Sustainability & Social Justice Inter-Organizational Retreat, which serves over 100 students?

Question 2: If yes to Question 1, what is the maximum fee amount you would agree to contribute? \$2.75/quarter (\$11/year) \$3.00/quarter (\$12/year) \$3.25/quarter (\$13/year) \$3.50/quarter (\$14/year) \$3.75/quarter (\$15/year) If a majority of students who complete this opinion poll indicate a willingness to support this student fee, the Sustainability Office will pursue placing a referendum on the Spring 2020 student Election Ballot.

The results from the opinion poll demonstrated strong student support - **74.51%** of both undergraduate and graduate students who participated in the poll affirmed that if a measure were placed on the ballot in the next election to renew support of the Sustainability Office, they would vote in support of the measure. The poll results provided insight into how much the students who voted in favor of the opinion poll would be willing to be assessed on a potential fee each quarter - 30% of students indicated that they would support a potential measure continuing at the same rate (\$2.75/quarter); about 20% would support a \$0.25 increase (\$3.00/quarter); and 38% would support a \$1 increase to \$3.75/quarter or \$15/year.

Campus elections in 2020 and 2022 demonstrated strong support among voting undergraduates. Each election resulted in an 80% approval rate for the Sustainability Office Fee; unfortunately both years, not enough of the student body voted in the election for fee measures to be passed.

Endorsements: Previous endorsements were obtained from SUA, Cowell, Crown, Porter, Carson and Lewis Colleges, we will be seeking endorsements this year from across campus throughout the next two months.

10 Year Budget Projection for the Sustainability Office Fee

Fiscal Year	Proposed Fee Rate	Sustainability Annual Expenses	Proposed Fee Revenue (after return to aid)	Annual Surplus or (Deficit)	Carryforward from Prior Year	Remaining Balance	Percent of Revenue in Remaining Balance (not prudent reserve)
FY24	\$ 3.00	\$95,279	\$103,017	\$7,738	\$0	\$7,738	7.51%
FY25	\$ 3.09	\$99,562	\$107,042	\$7,480	\$7,738	\$15,218	14.22%
FY26	\$ 3.18	\$106,758	\$110,253	\$3,495	\$15,218	\$18,713	16.97%
FY27	\$ 3.28	\$111,193	\$113,561	\$2,368	\$18,713	\$21,081	18.56%
FY28	\$ 3.38	\$115,688	\$116,968	\$1,280	\$21,081	\$22,361	19.12%
FY29	\$ 3.48	\$120,730	\$120,477	-\$253	\$22,361	\$22,108	18.35%
FY30	\$ 3.58	\$125,388	\$124,091	-\$1,297	\$22,108	\$20,811	16.77%
FY31	\$ 3.69	\$127,113	\$127,814	\$700	\$20,811	\$21,511	16.83%
FY32	\$ 3.80	\$132,463	\$131,648	-\$815	\$21,511	\$20,696	15.72%
FY33	\$ 3.91	\$134,293	\$135,598	\$1,304	\$20,696	\$22,000	16.22%