

## **Proposed FAQs for the CFAC website:**

### **The Proposed Fee Increases**

#### **How do I learn more about the two fee increases being proposed?**

Two fees are being proposed: The proposed increase to the IRA fee would allow for the growth and development of the Cultural Centers to support students' personal and academic success on campus. The proposed increase to the Student Health and Wellness fee would allow for the expansion of mental health services by SDSU's Counseling & Psychological Services to support students to thrive academically, emotionally and socially.

You can learn more about the Health and Wellness Fee online:

<https://bfa.sdsu.edu/financial/budget/fall2019hsf.aspx>

You can learn more about the Instructionally Related Activities Fee online:

<https://bfa.sdsu.edu/financial/budget/fall2019ira.aspx>

### **The Open Forums, Schedule and Process**

#### **Why can't I just vote on this? Why do I have to provide feedback by attending a presentation?**

The California State University system has established two mechanisms for increasing fees as outlined in Executive Order 1102 (<https://calstate.policystat.com/policy/6590675/latest/>). The mechanism identified for these proposed fee increases is alternative consultation. Alternative consultation was selected because it is the best way to engage our campus community in a meaningful process about the two proposed fees. Open forums are being held to ensure that students have a clear understanding of the fees, and to engage in a discussion about the two fees, which includes addressing students questions. As student input and consultation are important to SDSU, students will provide their feedback to the Campus Fee Advisory Committee (CFAC) forums by completing a feedback form, which includes selecting an option for the two fees and providing written comments if you'd like to share additional perspectives with CFAC.

#### **When are the open forums scheduled?**

The scheduled open forums will take place from October 22 to November 15. There are forty open forums scheduled. The list of forums can be found here:

<https://bfa.sdsu.edu/financial/budget/fall2019alternativeconsultation.aspx>

#### **What do I need to bring to an open forum?**

Please remember to bring your SDSUcard to the open forum.

### **What if I cannot attend a scheduled open forum?**

For those students unable to attend a scheduled open forum, you may visit SDSU's Testing Services located in the Student Services West building, Room 2549, starting Monday, October 28, and through Friday, November 15 (with the exception for Monday, November 11, which is a holiday closure date in observance of Veterans Day). Students can drop in between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. Please bring your SDSUcard and plan on being present for 45 minutes to watch the full presentation and to complete a feedback form.

### **Can I attend more than one open forum?**

Yes. However, while you can attend multiple open forums, each student may only submit feedback once for each fee.

### **When would the fee change this take effect?**

If either of the proposed fee increases are passed, the new fee amounts would take effect in Fall 2020.

### **When will I know if the fees are approved?**

The Campus Fee Advisory Committee (CFAC) will make a recommendation at their November 22nd meeting. This meeting is open to SDSU students, faculty and staff. Please bring your SDSUcard as it will be required at check-in to attend the CFAC meeting. The time and location for that meeting can be found on <https://sdsu.edu/alternativeconsult>.

The CFAC website will also post the CFAC meeting minutes and approved recommendations related to the two fee proposals on their website here: <https://bfa.sdsu.edu/financial/budget/cfacmins.aspx>

Once a decision is made on the two proposed fee increases, there will be an ad placed in the Daily Aztec and the fee information will be posted on SDSU's Money Matters website when it is published for the fall 2020 semester: <https://bfa.sdsu.edu/financial/student/money.aspx> where mandatory fee information is posted.

### **What is the process for determining if the fee(s) will pass?**

The Campus Fee Advisory Committee (CFAC) will compile and analyze student feedback, engage in committee discussions and ultimately make a recommendation to SDSU President Adela de la Torre based on student feedback.

CFAC will review the feedback and take action on the two proposed fees at the meeting on November 22nd (see FAQ above). It is anticipated that they will determine their recommendation for the SDSU President at the November 22nd CFAC meeting.

President de la Torre is responsible for making the final campus decision. If approved by the President, the recommendation will move on to the California State University Chancellor for final review and approval.

### **I need help. Where do I go?**

#### **What if I need accommodations to attend an open forum?**

If you require an accommodation for your participation in a scheduled open forum, please contact the Student Ability Success Center at either calling 619-594-6473 or by emailing [sascinfo@sdsu.edu](mailto:sascinfo@sdsu.edu).

#### **What if my student organization would like to attend an open forum?**

If your student organization is interested in hosting an open forum, please email the Campus Fee Advisory Committee via [cfac@sdsu.edu](mailto:cfac@sdsu.edu).

#### **How can I find out more information?**

For more information, you can email the Campus Fee Advisory Committee (CFAC) at [cfac@sdsu.edu](mailto:cfac@sdsu.edu).

### **The Campus Fee Advisory Committee and History of Fees**

#### **What is CFAC?**

CFAC is an acronym for the Campus Fee Advisory Committee. CFAC is a campus committee comprised of students, faculty, staff and administrators, with the majority of members being students. You can learn more by visiting the CFAC website online:

<https://bfa.sdsu.edu/financial/budget/cfacpage.aspx>

#### **When were these fees last increased?**

- The IRA fee was last increased in 2009.
- The health fee was increased in 2010.

#### **Do other campuses have similar fees?**

Yes. To learn more about similar fees at the other 22 California State University system campuses, visit the CSU's site about mandatory fees:: <https://www2.calstate.edu/attend/paying-for-college/csu-costs/tuition-and-fees/campus-mandatory-fees>

### **What is the Higher Education Price Index?**

The Higher Education Price Index, or HEPI as it is commonly referred to, is an inflation index designed specifically for higher education. Additional information can be found on the CommonFund website: <https://www.commonfund.org/commonfund-institute/higher-education-price-index-hepi-2/>

### **Why does the university add the Higher Education Price Index to student fees?**

Costs to provide services to students increase annually due to inflation and other factors. To account for this increased cost, the increased fee ensures that the same level of services provided to students can be sustained over time.

### **Responses to Frequently Asked Questions During the Open Forums**

#### **Why isn't the university paying for this if this is a priority?**

The university operating fund budget for SDSU is comprised of state appropriations and student fees. While state appropriations have increased, these increases are largely designated to support mandatory cost increases such as employee compensation and minimum wage increases and employee health and retirement costs. State appropriations also include funding for Graduation Initiative 2025 and state-funded enrollment growth which goes toward hiring faculty and advisors and other efforts to support student success. Tuition fees from enrollment growth provide the campus with limited funding to support other campus priorities. These limited funds are allocated via a shared governance budgeting model. Budget proposals are vetted through various campus committees culminating with the President's Budget Advisory Committee (PBAC) making a final budget recommendation to the President for her approval. While many budget proposals are a priority for the campus not all proposals can be funded due to limited resources. Additional information about the university budget is available on the [Budget & Finance website](#).

The cultural centers received \$300,000 in one-time funding during the 2019/20 budget process. While the cultural centers can continue to request an allocation of operating funds, it will be considered amongst all other budget requests and may not be approved due to limited availability of funding.

The current Student Health Services Fee is the funding source for providing health services to students. This fee was increased in 2010 and included access to counseling services. The demand

for mental health services has more than doubled since that time and existing fee revenues cannot support adding the staffing to address this increased demand. This self-supporting student fee model for health and wellness services is consistent with other CSU campuses.

**The university is constructing new buildings (i.e., new student housing) so why can't it pay for these services?**

The university has multiple funding sources in addition to the state appropriations and student tuition fees that fund our university operating fund budget.

We also have what we call self-supporting funds where the revenues are designated (restricted by law) for specific purposes such as student housing fees and campus parking fees. For example, housing revenues can only be used to support student housing operations and the maintenance and construction of student housing facilities. These restricted funds cannot be repurposed to support the proposed fees for mental health services and cultural centers.

We also have self-supporting auxiliary organizations which operate for the benefit of the university – they include Associated Students (student organizations, student activities and facilities), Aztec Shops (bookstore, dining services, some housing), SDSU Research Foundation (grants and contracts activities) and the Campanile Foundation (philanthropy). Donor funds, for example, are often designated for a specific purpose and are not available to support university operational needs such as mental health services and cultural centers for which fees are being proposed.

**Why can't the university use its reserves to pay for these services?**

**R**eserve funds are one-time (non-recurring) meaning that these funds can only support costs that are not ongoing. The proposed fees for mental health services and cultural centers are ongoing costs and will need to have a recurring, stable source of funding which a student fee can provide.

The university operating fund had balances of \$149 million and \$156 million as of fiscal year-end 2017/18 and 2018/19 respectively. Of the \$156 million balance in fiscal year 2018/19, \$128 million is non-discretionary and has been designated through our standard budget processes for specific purposes such as financial aid, new faculty start-up packages and deferred maintenance. Only \$28 million is categorized as discretionary and serves as the campus's reserve for economic uncertainty. The \$28 million translates into a reserve of 3 weeks of the fiscal year 2019/20 operating budget. The financial best practice is to have a five to six month reserve. To ensure financial stability, the campus goal is to build a reserve that equals to at least three months of operating budget.

**What are Academic Success Centers?**

San Diego State University's consortium of Academic Success Centers (Black Resource Center, Center for Intercultural Relations, Latinx Resource Center, Native Resource Center, Pride Center, and Women's Resource Center) offer culturally-relevant mentoring, academic support systems, academic coaching, and retention activities that help students to navigate their college experience.

### **What if I don't need these services?**

SDSU's Academic Success Centers are open to all students on campus. In addition to community-specific resources, important trainings, programs and events are offered throughout the year to provide learning opportunities to all students. Even if you don't find yourself in need of using one of our Centers, it is likely that someone you are connected with on campus will need support navigating issues that are addressed in our Centers.

C&PS seeks to impact the entire campus community, making it a safer and healthier learning environment. According to the National College Health Assessment data, our students report the top two barriers to their academic success are stress and anxiety.

### **Aren't I already paying for mental health services as part of my health services fee?**

Mental health services have been significantly expanded since 2015 in an attempt to meet the mental health needs of our students, however, demand for treatment and crisis services has increased at higher rates than the investment that is possible with the current fee. An increase would allow us to improve access to services and bring us in line with what is recommended in terms of therapist-to-student ratio.

### **Doesn't the university already have identity centers? Why can't they pay for the development of new ones?**

Over the past 15 years, San Diego State University has developed a Center for Intercultural Relations, Pride Center, Women's Resource Center, and Black Resource Center. In response to student requests, our campus is now planning to open a Latinx Resource Center, Native Resource Center, and Asian American Pacific Islander Desi American space.

### **Will financial aid cover these proposed fees?**

Yes, students can use their financial aid to pay for these fees. Nearly all of the low income students currently enrolled, or future enrollees, will not need to make any changes to the types of aid or scholarships they currently apply for and receive to pay tuition and fees.

Most low-income students currently pay for school through a combination of state and federal grants, work study earnings and/or scholarships. For these students, the fee increase would be offset by grants.

**I heard there is a return to aid component, what is that?**

3% of the revenue collected from each fee will be returned to students to help offset the impact of the fee increase. These funds will be awarded per academic term and will support up to 2000 awards annually. The funds provided to cover the fees will not have to be paid back and will be coordinated through our Economic Crisis Response Team, or ECRT as it is more commonly referred to. Integrating this into our ECRT program will allow us to provide additional support if needed for those students who share with us that they are experiencing a financial hardship.

**What new services will I be receiving if this is passed and how does it differ from what I already receive?**

*For the Instructionally Related Activities Fee:*

SDSU will be able to offer students a Latinx Resource Center, Native Resource Center, and Asian Pacific Islander Desi American Center. In addition to these spaces, the following resources will be available to historically underrepresented and underserved students:

- Culturally-specific mentoring programs
- Academic case-management to support students impacted by equity achievement gaps
- Academic support services (e.g., tutoring, supplemental support services)
- Programs focused on effective learning skills and strategies
- Programs focused on increased sense of belonging
- Staff hires dedicated to programs and initiatives that support students from historically underserved communities
- Leadership and academic success initiatives to empower, guide and support men of color
- Parent and family engagement programs for historically underserved populations
- Leadership and professional development opportunities for historically underserved student leaders
- Expanded opportunities for student engagement through student assistant positions, internships, and student-focused programs

*For the Student Health and Wellness Fee:*

The current C&PS therapist-to-student ratio falls short of the national standard, impacting the services offered. The current ratio for fall 2019 is 1:1813.

Since 2015, the therapist-to-student ratio at C&PS has increased steadily(1:2857 as compared to the current 1:1813). Investments have been made to hire additional therapists in an attempt to address rapidly growing demand. The increase in demand has outpaced the investments. Moreover, the budget cannot sustain the investments and additional funding is needed to support the existing staffing levels and augment the department with additional staff to best serve the needs of SDSU students.

This fee increase will support the Counseling & Psychological Services existing and additional operations to bring their therapists to one of three ratios (1 to 1000, 1 to 1300, 1 to 1500, depending on students' feedback) and provide critical infrastructure support such as a 24-hour SDSU access line and case managers to supplement the services provided by the therapists.

### **Is there funding from SDSU for this?**

There is not funding to support these initiatives at the levels described in the fee increase proposals

### **What happens if they don't pass?**

If either of the fees is not approved, they will not be implemented as outlined in the information pamphlet and presentation.

### **Why alternative consultation verses referendum?**

Alternative consultation is utilized when an issue is complex and sharing more detailed information through public presentations, forums as there are called, are warranted. Alternative consultation allows for the university to outline the breadth of the services and the impact on students. This process also serves to involve students in the decision-making process.

Both the Student Health and Wellness Fee and the Instructionally Related Activities Fee were last increased via alternative consultation process.

### **How do I learn more about where the funds will go in these fees are approved?**

Included in the information pamphlet for both fees are details about where the funds will go if the fees are approved.

Student Health and Wellness Fee Information Pamphlet:

<https://bfa.sdsu.edu/financial/budget/fall2019hsf.aspx>



Instructionally Related Activities Fee Information Pamphlet:

<https://bfa.sdsu.edu/financial/budget/fall2019ira.aspx>

**How do I know how much money the funds would generate if the fees are approved?**

Included in the information pamphlet for both fees are details about how much money will be generated if the fees are approved.

Student Health and Wellness Fee Information Pamphlet:

<https://bfa.sdsu.edu/financial/budget/fall2019hsf.aspx>

Instructionally Related Activities Fee Information Pamphlet:

<https://bfa.sdsu.edu/financial/budget/fall2019ira.aspx>

**I understand there is a current bill in the legislation that may support improving the student to therapist ratio at California public universities. If this is passed how would this impact the fee?**

If Senate Bill 968: Postsecondary education: mental health counselors, is passed into law and funds are provided to SDSU to support an increase in the therapist to student ratio, CFAC would review the funds being collected from the increase in the Student Health and Wellness Fee (if approved) to determine if the increase in the fee amount collected per semester could be reduced and still deliver the same services when combined with the additional sustainable, state funding.

**How can I advocate for more funds to support SDSU?**

Students interested in advocating for additional funding for SDSU can get involved through SDSU's Associated Students: <https://as.sdsu.edu/govt/voice/>

Or the California State Student Association: <https://calstatestudents.org/>