

Office of the President
July 11, 2001

TO MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE:

ITEM FOR ACTION

For Meeting of July 18, 2001

APPROVAL OF STUDENT-SPONSORED INCREASE IN STUDENT GOVERNMENT FEE, BERKELEY CAMPUS

The President recommends that the Committee on Finance recommend to The Regents that, effective Fall Semester 2001, the Associated Students (ASUC) Fee at the Berkeley campus be increased by \$17 from \$10.50 per student per semester to \$27.50 per student per semester for an annual fee of \$55.00/year.

BACKGROUND

The Associated Students University of California Constitution was adopted and the ASUC Fee was initiated at Berkeley in 1900. The ASUC is the official governing body for both graduate and undergraduate students, and the current \$10.50 per student per semester student government fee has been in place for more than thirty years. The ASUC Fee is one of the lowest student government fees in the country. In 1968 the ASUC Fee was incorporated into a new fee entitled the Berkeley Campus Fees. The ASUC portion of the Berkeley Campus Fees supports the activities of the student government itself and the Berkeley Graduate Assembly, as well as many student groups and activities, concerts, public speakers, publications, community outreach, and other student-centered programs that further the educational mission of the University. The ASUC has had to reduce a number of its activities in recent years because the Fee level has not kept pace with the rate of inflation.

The ASUC Senate adopted the following resolution that was subsequently included on the ballot for the ASUC April 2001 elections:

“The mandatory Student Activity Fee supports and finances student organizations that engage in activities that further the educational mission of the University. Should the mandatory Student Activity Fee be increased to \$27.50 per semester in order to increase funding for student activities?”

In keeping with Berkeley campus practice, it is proposed that \$11.40 of the \$17 per semester fee increase be used to support the ASUC student activities and \$5.60 (33%) be directed to student financial aid. Implementation of the fee increase will affect needy students. The campus' financial aid budget for student aid recipients will be supplemented to cover the proposed \$17 per semester fee increase and funded by the \$5.60 portion of the fee increase. It is estimated that the fee increase will generate an additional \$1,027,000 per year, of which \$342,000 will be returned-to-aid.

Campus mandatory fee policies require that for a ballot measure to be valid at least 20% of the registered students must vote in a valid election with a simple majority approving the measure. The referendum was held April 10-13, 2001 at walk-in polling locations throughout the campus. The campus' official Spring 2001 enrollment is 30,214 students and a valid voting pool was determined to be 6,043 students. The referendum measure was approved with 6,507 (21.5%) students voting on the measure and 3,573 (54.9%) students voting to approve the fee increase. These results met the campus' voter turnout and majority approval requirements. The Berkeley League of Women Voters monitored the vote, and the votes were counted by an ASUC elections council on which the League was represented.