



Senate Bill No. 2014/2015-063

Bringing Life to the UC Berkeley Experience (B.L.U.E.) Fee Referendum

Primary Sponsor

Justin Kong (Executive Vice President)

Cosponsors

Lavanya Jawaharlal (ASUC Senator), Marium Navid (ASUC Senator)

Drafted By:

Justin Kong (Executive Vice President), Lavanya Jawaharlal (ASUC Senator), Marium Navid (ASUC Senator), Alek Klimek (Senate Vice Chair), Dennis Lee (Chief Financial Officer, ASUC), Camilo Ossa (former Assistant Director of Budget and Finance, Office of the EVP, ASUC), Mike Le (Director of Analytics, Office of the EVP, ASUC), Paula Lofgren (Director of Business & Finance, ASUC Student Union)

The Bringing Life to UC Berkeley Experience (B.L.U.E.) Fee Referendum is a student-initiated referendum to increase the ASUC Student Activity Fee by \$20 per student per semester, for a total of \$47.50/semester or \$95/year to provide support to student government and student groups at UC Berkeley, to enhance the breadth of student life and culture of Cal, and to expand the growth of financial aid to support students' college experience. The increase will not apply to summer session students, who will continue to be assessed a \$3 fee.

The Associated Students of the University of California (ASUC) was founded in 1887 and has been continuously serving the student body since then. The ASUC is the official governing body for both graduate and undergraduate students and the \$27.50 per student per semester student government fee has been in place for over a decade. The ASUC Student Activity Fee supports the activities of the student government itself, the 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 has not kept pace with the rate of inflation.

Purpose of the Fee

The ASUC Student Activity Fee will be allocated annually to:

Financial Aid, in accordance with campus policy to help offset the cost of the fee for the neediest students who are eligible for campus-based financial aid.

Undergraduate and graduate student organizations, which include a variety of professional, social, community-based, and interest-focused groups on campus and which provide opportunities to enhance the academic and non-academic student experience.

The ASUC and the Graduate Assembly, which promote undergraduate and graduate interests in the governance of the campus, provide student services, and coordinate activities for students.

Bridges Multicultural Resource Center, an ASUC-sponsored organization, which supports underrepresented, low-income, and first-generation college students in finding and establishing a community at Cal and enhancing their academic and personal experience

ASUC SUPERB, an ASUC-sponsored program, which provides undergraduate and graduate students with a welcome festival including concerts, film screenings, games, comedies, performances, and other special events throughout the academic year to enhance the artistic and emotional student experience.

The Public Service Center, in its capacity as an ASUC-sponsored umbrella organization, which encourages larger engagement in public service through increasing support for undergraduate and graduate service-based organizations and other social justice initiatives.

Breakdown of the Fee

In accordance with Berkeley campus policy, one-third ($\frac{1}{3}$) of the \$20 fee increase to be assessed for Fall and Spring students will be returned to financial aid and the remaining two-thirds will support student activities. Implementation of the fee will result in an increase in total student fees and will affect needy students. The campus' financial aid budget for student aid recipients will be increased to cover this fee and will be funded by 25.9% of the total Fall and Spring fee. It is estimated that the fee increase will generate an additional \$1,440,000 per year, of which \$482,400 will be returned-to-aid, based on an annual student enrollment of 36,000.

	Current Fall/Spring Fee		Proposed Fall/Spring Fee	
	Per Semester	Percentage	Per Semester (15-16)	Percentage
Student Activities	\$21.90	79.60%	\$35.20	74.10%
Financial Aid	\$5.60	20.40%	\$12.30	25.90%

Total Fee	\$27.50	100%	\$47.50	100%
-----------	---------	------	---------	------

Of the total amount of the student fee allocated to student activities, 7.1% will be allocated towards the Bridges Multicultural Resource Center, 7.1% will be allocated towards ASUC SUPERB, and 2.84% will be allocated towards the Public Service Center in its capacity as an ASUC-sponsored umbrella organization, and all remaining funds will be allocated to the ASUC General Fund and Graduate Assembly as described below.

Breakdown:	2015-2016 Amount	Percentage of Student Activities Portion
Bridges Multicultural Resource Center	\$2.50	7.10%
ASUC SUPERB	\$2.50	7.10%
Public Service Center	\$1.00	2.84%
ASUC General Fund / Graduate Assembly	\$29.20	82.96%
Total Student Activities	\$35.20	100%

Remaining funds will be allocated to the ASUC General Fund and the Graduate Assembly based on the “fair share percentage” to fund student organizations and student government. The amount contributed by graduate and professional students shall be allocated to the Graduate Assembly (approx. 28% in 2015). The amount contributed by undergraduate students shall be allocated to the ASUC General Fund (approx. 72% in 2015).

Estimated Fair Share Breakdown*:	2015-2016 Amount	Percentage
ASUC General Fund	~\$21.02	~72%
Graduate Assembly	~\$8.18	~28%

*based on “fair share percentage”.

It is estimated that the 2015-16 fee level will generate a total of \$1,513,440 per year for the ASUC General Fund, \$590,000 per year for the Graduate Assembly, \$180,000 per year for the Bridges Multicultural Resource Center, \$180,000 per year for SUPERB, and \$72,000 per year for the Public Service Center.

Oversight

The portion of student fee going to financial aid will be subject to the financial aid policies and procedures of the University.

The portion received by the ASUC General Fund will be subject to ASUC regulations, outlined in the ASUC Constitution and Bylaws and shall be administered by the ASUC Senate. The portion received by the Graduate Assembly will be subject to ASUC and Graduate Assembly regulations as outlined in the ASUC Constitution and Graduate Assembly Charter.

The portion received by the Bridges Multicultural Resource Center, Public Service Center in its capacity as ASUC-sponsored umbrella organization, and ASUC SUPERB will be subject to ASUC regulations, outlined in the ASUC Constitution and Bylaws. Should any of these organizations cease to exist as an ASUC-sponsored organization, ASUC-sponsored umbrella organization, or ASUC-sponsored program these funds shall revert back to the ASUC General Fund and Graduate Assembly based on the fair share percentage.

Inflation Adjustment

The ASUC Student Activity Fee will be adjusted for inflation annually using the following procedures.

The annual rate of inflation will be based on the monthly San Francisco Area Consumer Price Index (SF-CPI), released by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The annual rate of inflation will be calculated by comparing the SF-CPI of January (or the nearest month, if none is published for January) of the new academic year with the SF-CPI of January (or the nearest month, if none is published for January) of the previous year. For example, the inflation rate for the academic year 2016-2017 will be calculated by comparing the SF-CPI of January 2016 to the SF-CPI of January 2015.

If there is negative inflation (deflation) in a certain year the fee shall not be adjusted. The fee shall not be adjusted in subsequent years until the SF-CPI recovers to above its previous level.

The total annual increase shall be equal to the inflation adjustment for the student activities portion plus an amount equal to one half ($\frac{1}{2}$) of the inflation adjustment for the student activities portion set aside for the financial aid portion. Thus, in any one year one third ($\frac{1}{3}$) of the increase will be set aside for the financial aid portion. The increase to the student activities portion will be distributed proportionately to the line items of the student activity portion breakdown.

The ASUC Chief Financial Officer, based on the guidelines described above, will propose the annual ASUC Student Activity Fee adjustment. The proposed annual adjustment will be subject to review by the Chancellor's Advisory Committee on Student Services and Fees, or its successor, and final approval by the Chancellor, but the final annual adjustment will not be higher than the increase proposed by the ASUC.

Ballot Language

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Associated Students of the University of California place the following question as Proposition 2 titled "Bringing Life to the UC Berkeley Experience (B.L.U.E.) Fee Referendum" on the 2015 ASUC General Elections:

“The Bringing Life to the UC Berkeley Experience will support and finance student organizations that engage in activities that further the educational mission of the university. Should the Student Activity Fee be increased by \$20 per semester for Fall and Spring students, to a total of \$47.50 per semester such that 25.9% will be directed to student financial aid and the other 74.1% to student activities, given that the total fee shall be subject to an annual adjustment for inflation, and given that from the student activities amount: 7.1% will be allocated to the Bridges Multicultural Resource Center, 7.1% will be allocated to ASUC SUPERB, 2.84% will be allocated to the Public Service Center, and all remaining funds will be allocated to the ASUC General Fund and Graduate Assembly (proportionally based on the amount of the fee paid by undergraduate students / graduate and professional students) to be used for student organizations, programs, and activities?

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.