

WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

ITEM SUBMITTED TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

DATE: February 12, 2021

TO: Members of the Board of Trustees

FROM: President Sabah Randhawa by:
Richard Van Den Hul, Vice President, Business and Financial Affairs
Faye Gallant, Executive Director, Budget and Financial Planning

SUBJECT: REDUCTION TO SPRING QUARTER 2021 MANDATORY STUDENT FEES

PURPOSE: Action Item

Purpose of Submittal:

As the COVID-19 pandemic has led Western to transition academic program to a primarily remote teaching and learning environment, registered students' ability to take advantage of some of the services, programs, and facilities that are supported by their mandatory fee dollars has been compromised. While the ongoing support of those services and facilities is critically important in several respects, students and families are understandably concerned that the decreased level of service is not being reflected in a decrease in mandatory student fees.

It is important to note that some of the services supported by mandatory student fees, such as counseling and health and wellness services continue to be offered remotely. In other instances, mandatory fee revenue supports truly "mandatory" expenditures for student-endorsed commitments, such as pledges on the bonds used to construct the Multicultural Center and Wade King Student Recreation Center, both approved by votes of the students. The technology fee supports access to laptops, cloud computing and critical software that is especially important in a remote learning environment.

The Services and Activities (S & A) fee supports student programs. For the Viking Union, Associated Students, and Campus Recreation (the areas that make up the new Student Engagement unit) services will be delivered at the level allowed to practice safe social distancing and to allow students to be in community through clubs and activities (primarily virtual), operate student government, ensure student programs and advocacy for WWU underrepresented students, and support civic and community engagement. In addition, building operations for continuity and maintenance are still required as well as opening of facilities to the level allowed by health and safety guidelines. Athletics and DRAC programs have also been modified and adapted to applicable health and safety guidelines.

Service areas are currently working creatively to continue delivering the important activities, infrastructure, and support that are essential to student success and the Western experience.

Despite these commitments, through the use of reserves and other forms of one-time cost-reductions noted in the attached documents, we believe that mandatory student fee levels can be reduced for Spring Quarter 2021 from originally established levels without compromising the delivery of essential services or defaulting on bond covenants, and provide for student employment supported by these fees to be maintained remotely where possible and as funding allows. **Taken together, the reductions would amount to a total decrease of \$47.79 or 8.0% on mandatory student fee rates for Spring Quarter 2021 from those previously set by the Board of Trustees for the 2020-2021 academic year.** The supporting materials compare this rate to the previously established rate and the reduced rate approved for Fall Quarter 2020 and Winter Quarter 2021.

Proposed Motion:

***MOVED*, that the Board of Trustees of Western Washington University, upon the recommendation of the President, approve the reduction of Spring Quarter 2021 mandatory student fee levels as proposed in the attached supporting document for the following fees:**

- Services & Activities Fee* (*Proposed decrease \$15.54 for Spring Quarter; 6.9%*)
- Student Recreation Fee* (*No decrease*)
- Student Health Services Fee (*No decrease*)
- Student Technology Fee (*Proposed decrease \$1.75 for Spring Quarter, 5.0%*)
- Non-Academic Building Fee* (*No decrease*)
- Sustainability, Equity, and Justice Fund Fee (*Proposed decrease \$4.00 for Spring Quarter; 44.4%*)
- Student Alternative Transportation Fee (*Proposed decrease \$25.50 for Spring Quarter; 89.5%*)
- Legislative Action Fee (*Proposed decrease \$1.00 for Spring Quarter; 100%*)
- Multicultural Center Fee* (*No decrease*)

**Fees that support bond debt payments*

Supporting Information:

Attachment A: Supporting Information for Reducing Spring Quarter 2021 Mandatory Student Fees

Attachment B: WWU 5-year Mandatory Fees History

Supporting Information for Reducing Spring Quarter 2021 Mandatory Student Fees

**Board of Trustees
February 12, 2021**

Fee Change History

At the June 2020 meeting, the Trustees approved a proposal to increase the total quarterly mandatory student fees by \$1.00 in AY2020-21, from \$599.94 to \$600.94 per quarter.

In August 2020, due to the impacts of COVID-19 on operations, the Trustees approved reducing the mandatory fees for Fall Quarter by \$68.71, to \$532.23.

In November 2020, due to the impacts of COVID-19 on operations, the Trustees approved reducing the mandatory fees for Winter Quarter by \$44.79, to \$556.15.

The Board of Trustees is now asked to approve a Spring Quarter rate of \$553.15, a reduction of \$47.79 or 8.0% from the originally established level.

Attachment B provides the prior five years of mandatory fee rates.

Proposed Reductions

The table below summarizes proposed changes in mandatory student fees for Spring 2021, compared to the originally established level, the reduced levels for Fall 2020 and Winter 2021.

WWU Mandatory Student Fee (Quarterly)	2020-21 Academic Year Original Fee Level	Fall 2020 Reductions from Original Level			Winter 2021 Reductions from Original Level			Spring 2021 Reductions from Original Level		
		Fall 2020 Reduced Fee Level	Approved Reduction Amount	Reduction %	Winter 2021 Reduced Fee Level	Approved Reduction Amount	Approved Reduction %	Spring 2021 Proposed Fee Level	Proposed Reduction Amount	Proposed Reduction %
*Services & Activities (S&A) Fee (TOTAL)	223.98	223.98	-	0.0%	208.44	15.54	6.9%	208.44	15.54	6.9%
*Student Recreation Fee (S&A)	109.46	75.00	34.46	31.5%	109.46	-	0.0%	109.46	-	0.0%
Student Health Services Fee	117.00	117.00	-	0.0%	117.00	-	0.0%	117.00	-	0.0%
Student Technology Fee	35.00	31.25	3.75	10.7%	33.25	1.75	5.0%	33.25	1.75	5.0%
*Non-Academic Building Fee	47.00	47.00	-	0.0%	47.00	-	0.0%	47.00	-	0.0%
Sustainability, Equity & Justice Fund Fee	9.00	7.00	2.00	22.2%	7.00	2.00	22.2%	5.00	4.00	44.4%
Student Alternative Transportation Fee	28.50	-	28.50	100.0%	3.00	25.50	89.5%	3.00	25.50	89.5%
Legislative Action Fee	1.00	1.00	-	0.0%	1.00	-	0.0%	-	1.00	100.0%
*Multicultural Center Fee	30.00	30.00	-	0.0%	30.00	-	0.0%	30.00	-	0.0%
Total	\$ 600.94	\$532.23	\$ 68.71	11.4%	\$556.15	\$ 44.79	7.5%	\$553.15	\$ 47.79	8.0%

Services & Activities Fee

The S&A Fee Committee operates under the authority of RCW 28B.15.045 and makes recommendations to the WWU Board of Trustees on the distribution of fees to constituent groups after the required 3.5% allocation to a Student Financial Aid/loan Fund and after Housing & Dining receives the amount required by bond covenant.

Allocations for 2020-2021 approved at the June 2020 Board of Trustees meeting were as follows. Spring Quarter proposed reductions total 13.9% with constituent proposed percentages shown in parentheses below:

- 3.5% for a Student Financial Aid/Loan Fund as required by law
- Housing & Dining System* (bond covenant currently \$32 per full-time student and \$6.40 per part-time student) (approximately 15.4% of the total fee) (approximately 14.01% Spring Quarter)
- Music Copyright Fees (0.2% of the total fee in Fall quarter) (0% Spring Quarter since 100% of the expense is paid Fall Quarter)
- Remaining funds (approximately 80.9% of the total fee) (approximately 82.5% Spring Quarter) are distributed to these constituents:
 - Associated Students (44.3% or 35.9% of the total fee) (39.44% or 32.53% of the total Spring Quarter fee)
 - Athletics (32.1% or 26.0% of the total fee) (34.9% or 28.79% of the total Spring Quarter fee)
 - Campus Recreation (7.0% or 5.6% of the total fee) (7.61% or 6.28% of the total Spring Quarter fee)
 - Department Related Activities (DRAC) (16.6% or 13.4% of the total fee) (18.05% or 14.89% of the total Spring Quarter fee)

*Note: * Bond covenants pledge the fee to the “Housing & Dining System”, a self-supporting, bond-issuing auxiliary enterprise of WWU that includes University Residences and the Viking Union. It is an ongoing revenue pledge to the System as a whole rather than a pledge to any particular building.*

Student Recreation Fee

\$109.46 for students taking 6 or more credits. This fee is a critical revenue source for the Student Recreation Center, and a minimum level must remain in place to meet its bond covenants in 2020-2021. However, the fee also funds operations, which will resume in a limited manner for Winter Quarter following health and safety guidelines.

The Student Recreation Center is a self-supporting enterprise providing open recreation, fitness, and wellness services. The Student Recreation Fee was initiated by student vote and pledged to bonds by the Board of Trustees. The fee covers bond debt payments and other fixed facility and personnel costs as well as the long-term maintenance and operation of the facility. The Center is able to offer many student employment opportunities, and more recent fee increases have helped fund substantial increases in minimum wages. Additional revenues of approximately \$560,000 (e.g. voluntary memberships, rentals, course fees) assist in funding operations. These additional revenues are dependent on the facility being open and operational.

As with the general Services & Activities Fee, RCWs stipulate that 3.5% of the Recreation Fee be allocated to a Student Financial Aid/Loan Fund for need-based aid and outline the process for student involvement in the fee proposal and budget review process.

Student Health Services Fee

\$117 for students enrolled in 6 or more credits. We propose that this fee remain at its usual level, given the increased demand for health, counseling, and wellness services during Winter Quarter.

Fee revenues are used to maintain a standard of health care for Western's campus and as a contingency for emergencies. This fee provides a stable funding base for WWU's health related services by providing accessible medical, mental health, and wellness services to students. Each of the departments provides a variety of clinical and educational services to Western's students. In Spring Quarter of 2021, all departments will continue to be fully operational and students will be able to access telehealth and telecounseling services.

Student Technology Fee (STF)

\$35 for students taking 6 credits or above; \$17.50 for student taking 1-5 credits. We propose that this fee be reduced for Spring Quarter by 5.0% to \$33.25 for students taking 6 credits or above. While there will be an increased demand for technology in 2020-2021, print quotas will be dramatically reduced.

This fee supports the acquisition of technology to enrich students' academic experience. The fee was implemented in 1995 to meet the direct needs of students in accessing technology on campus at a time when state-allocated equipment funds were inadequate to support new technology needs. Since the initial implementation, students have continually renewed the fee. In spring of 2018, the fee was renewed during the student elections, with 71% approval.

Non-Academic Building Fee

\$47 for students enrolled in 6 or more credits. We propose that this fee remain in place as a critical revenue source legally pledged to the Housing & Dining System within its bond covenants. Fee revenues are used for the improvement and development of the Viking Union on the Bellingham campus, including its ongoing maintenance, repair and renewal. It has made facility renovations and improvements possible, including a portion of the funding for the addition of the Multicultural Center.

Sustainability, Equity and Justice Fund Fee

Normally \$9 assessed at 90 cents per credit with students taking 10+ credits paying the full fee. We propose that this fee be reduced by 44.4% to \$5 assessed at 50 cents per credit after consideration of fund balances and the ability to temporarily modify the level of funds available for project allocation.

The Sustainability, Equity & Justice Fund Grant Program promotes sustainability by providing students with the opportunity to create and implement projects that positively impact environmental, social, health, and economic practices on our campus and in our community. Started by student initiative, it began as a fund aimed solely at purchasing Renewable Energy Credits to offset 100% of campus electricity usage with green energy. As the cost to purchase green energy declined, students voted in 2010 to renew the fee and expand the program by offering grant for innovative student-driven project proposals. At the proposed rate, existing projects could be sustained.

Student Alternative Transportation Fee

The Alternative Transportation Fee (ATF) - normally \$28.50 per quarter - was not charged Spring, Summer and Fall Quarters of 2020. Reserves were used to cover ongoing Student Transportation Program expenses. The fee was set at \$3 for Winter Quarter 2021. The

primary reason for this was that since March, Whatcom Transportation Authority (WTA) buses have been running fare free. WTA may begin charging a fare again in Summer 2021.

The Alternative Transportation Fee recommendation is for \$3 for Spring quarter 2021, a reduction of 89.5% from the original \$28.50 fee level (the same reduction as Winter quarter 2021). No bus pass will be included for this fee, but the revenues from this reduced fee will allow an \$11.50 per student subsidy for students who opt-in to pay \$28.50 for a bus pass rather than paying the WTA's normal individual rate of \$40.

Legislative Action Fee

Propose eliminating this fee for Spring Quarter. Fee revenues fund student representation and advocacy efforts at the campus, local, state and federal levels. A Legislative Affairs Council (LAC) administers the funds.

Multicultural Center Fee

\$30 for students enrolled in 6 or more credits. We propose that this fee remain in place as a critical revenue source legally pledged to the Housing & Dining System within its bond covenants.

This is a student-initiated fee used to expand Ethnic Student Center and Multicultural Services space at the Viking Union/Bookstore Complex. This fee is used to fund a portion of the construction, maintenance, and facility operations of the new space. Programmatic funding comes from other funding sources.

WWU Mandatory Student Fees - 5-Year Summary

Average Increase of 0.2% for existing fees

It is proposed to increase one of the nine existing mandatory student fees for 2020-2021. This proposal constitutes a net average increase of 0.2% for all existing mandatory student fees (\$1.00 per quarter.)

Proposed Fee Increases - Effective Fall Quarter for 2020-2021

Mandatory Fee	Notes	Proposed Change for 2020-2021	Quarterly Fees					Academic Year Fees				
			Actual				Proposed	Actual				Proposed
			2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-2020	2020-2021	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-2020	2020-2021
Existing Fees												
Services & Activities (S&A) Fee	(1) (2)	Proposed increase of \$7.10 per quarter (4.0%). RCW 28B.15.069 limits the increase on S&A Fees to the portion of the fee not pledged to bonds, which effectively reduces the 4% proposed fee to 3.4%. Fee is prorated per credit with 10+ credits paying the full fee.	\$205.00	\$209.50	\$216.60	\$223.98	\$223.98	\$615.00	\$628.50	\$649.80	\$671.94	\$671.94
Student Recreation Fee (S&A)	(1)	Proposed increase of \$4 per quarter (4.0% increase). RCW's limit the increase of S&A Fees to 4%. Fee is charged to students taking 6+ credits. Other students may voluntarily pay the fee to obtain access/services.	\$99.00	\$101.20	\$105.25	\$109.46	\$109.46	\$297.00	\$303.60	\$315.75	\$328.38	\$328.38
Student Health Services Fee		Proposed increase of \$7 per quarter (6.6% increase). Fee is charged to students taking 6+ credits. Other students may voluntarily pay the fee to obtain services.	\$96.00	\$106.00	\$113.00	\$117.00	\$117.00	\$288.00	\$318.00	\$339.00	\$351.00	\$351.00
Student Technology Fee		No proposed change. The full fee is charged to students taking 6+ credits. Those taking 1-5 credits are charged \$17.50. In Spring 2018, students voted 71% in favor of a 5 year renewal of this fee at the \$35 level.	\$35.00	\$35.00	\$35.00	\$35.00	\$35.00	\$105.00	\$105.00	\$105.00	\$105.00	\$105.00
Non-Academic Building Fee		No proposed increase. Fee is charged to students taking 6+ credits.	\$43.00	\$45.00	\$45.00	\$47.00	\$47.00	\$129.00	\$135.00	\$135.00	\$141.00	\$141.00
Sustainable Action Fund Fee (renamed from "Green Energy Fee")		In Spring 2018, students voted 84.6% in favor of reauthorization of this fee and recommend an increase to 90 cents per credit level with a \$9 per quarter maximum. The fee funds renewable energy certificates (RECs), student leadership positions and sustainable energy projects.	\$7.00	\$7.00	\$9.00	\$9.00	\$9.00	\$21.00	\$21.00	\$27.00	\$27.00	\$27.00
Student Alternative Transportation Fee		No proposed change. In a Spring 2017 student referendum, students voted 93.6% in favor of re-authorizing the fee for 5 years beginning Fall 2017 and ending by Fall 2022, unless renewed by student vote. The re-authorization allows the Associated Students Board to recommend fee increases of a maximum 5% per year during that period; increases of more than 5% per year would need student voter approval. The Fee is charged to students taking 6+ credits. Summer quarter fee is less than academic quarters because the extra late night shuttle service is not provided; the summer rate covers just the bus pass and will remain at \$21.	\$26.25	\$26.25	\$26.25	\$27.50	\$28.50	\$78.75	\$78.75	\$78.75	\$82.50	\$85.50
Legislative Action Fee	(3)	No proposed change. To fund student representation and advocacy efforts at the campus, local, state, and federal levels.	\$1.00	\$1.00	\$1.00	\$1.00	\$1.00	\$3.00	\$3.00	\$3.00	\$3.00	\$3.00
Multicultural Services Fee	(1) (4)	No proposed increase. In Spring, 2016, the AS Board put a referendum on the ballot and students voted 62.7% in favor of a new fee for expanded ESC/Multicultural Services Space at the Viking Union/Bookstore Complex. The fee began Fall 2017 at a rate of \$30 for students taking 6 or more credits. This fee has been pledged to bonds and funds a portion of the construction, maintenance, and operations of the new Multicultural Center at the Viking Union.	N/A ⁽⁴⁾	\$30.00	\$30.00	\$30.00	\$30.00	N/A ⁽⁴⁾	\$90.00	\$90.00	\$90.00	\$90.00
Total Mandatory Fees			\$512.25	\$560.95	\$581.10	\$599.94	\$600.94	\$1,536.75	\$1,682.85	\$1,743.30	\$1,799.82	\$1,802.82
<i>\$ Amount Increase</i>				\$48.70	\$20.15	\$18.84	\$1.00		\$146.10	\$60.45	\$56.52	\$3.00
<i>Annual % Increase</i>				9.5%	3.6%	3.2%	0.2%		9.5%	3.6%	3.2%	0.2%
<i>Cumulative Increase</i>							17.3%					17.3%
<i>Average Annual Increase (non compounded)</i>							4.3%					4.3%

Notes:

(1) Fee is subject to 3.5% Student Financial Aid/Loan Fee deduction and increases are limited to 4% by SSHB 1433 signed into law on 3/22/18.

(2) Bond Covenants pledge a minimum of \$32 per full-time student per quarter and \$6.40 per part-time student per quarter to the Housing & Dining System.

(3) Mandatory \$1 per quarter billed but with the ability to "opt-out."

(4) The Multicultural Center Fee began Fall 2017. It is pledged to the Housing & Dining System, but not directly to bonds. In March 2018, bond counsel informed WWU that this fee is not technically an S&A Fee so does not follow those RCW's, but the institution has been collecting 3.5% for the Student Financial Aid/Loan Fee.