WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY
ITEM SUBMITTED TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

DATE: August 21, 2020
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 Fall Quarter 2020 Mandatory Student Fees
PURPOSE: Action Item

Purpose of Submittal:
As the COVID-19 pandemic has led Western to transition academic program delivery for Fall Quarter 2020 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 services supported by mandatory student fees, such as counseling and health and wellness services, and library and cloud-based research resources continue to be offered remotely. In other instances, mandatory fee revenue supports truly “mandatory” expenditures for student-endorsed commitments, such as service 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. In addition, mandatory fees support some student employees who are able to continue working remotely. Fee changes are further constrained by a projected drop in student enrollment for Fall Quarter as a result of COVID-19. With fewer students paying fees, 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 Fall Quarter 2020 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 $68.71 or 11.4% on mandatory student fee rates from those previously set by the Board of Trustees for Fall Quarter 2020.
Proposed Motion:

MOVED, that the Board of Trustees of Western Washington University, upon the recommendation of the President, approve the reduction of Fall Quarter 2020 mandatory student fee levels as proposed in the attached supporting document for the following fees:

- Services & Activities Fee (No decrease)
- Student Recreation Fee (Proposed decrease $34.46 for Fall Quarter; 31.5%)
- Student Health Services Fee (No decrease)
- Student Technology Fee (Proposed decrease $3.75 for Fall Quarter, 10.7%)
- Non-Academic Building Fee (No decrease)
- Sustainability, Equity, and Justice Fund Fee (Proposed decrease $2.00 for Fall Quarter; 22.2%)
- Student Alternative Transportation Fee (Proposed decrease $28.50 for Fall Quarter; 100%)
- Legislative Action Fee (No decrease)
- Multicultural Center Services Fee (No decrease)

Supporting Information:

Attachment A: Supporting Information on Reducing Fall Quarter 2020 Mandatory Student Fees
Mandatory Fees
Mandatory student fees represent a number of different fees, used for a range of services provided by the university. Many services supported by mandatory student fees, such as counseling and health and wellness services and library and cloud-based research resources and others, continue to be offered remotely. In other instances, mandatory fee revenue supports truly “mandatory” expenditures for student-endorsed commitments, such as service on the bonds used to construct projects like 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. In addition, mandatory fees support some student employees (including those in the AS) who are able to continue working remotely.

Fee changes are further constrained by a projected drop in student enrollment for Fall Quarter as a result of COVID-19. With fewer students paying fees, 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. In some areas, adding fee reductions would erode our ability to meet student needs or fulfill bond commitments.

Despite these commitments, budget analysis from fee-supported areas concluded that, through the use of reserves and other forms of one-time cost-reductions, mandatory student fee levels can be reduced for Fall Quarter 2020 without compromising the remote 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.

The table below summarizes proposed changes in mandatory student fees for Fall 2020.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quarterly Fee</th>
<th>Current Level</th>
<th>Proposed Level</th>
<th>Reduction</th>
<th>% Reduction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Services &amp; Activities</td>
<td>223.98</td>
<td>223.98</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Recreation</td>
<td>109.46</td>
<td>75.00</td>
<td>34.46</td>
<td>31.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Health Services</td>
<td>117.00</td>
<td>117.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Technology</td>
<td>35.00</td>
<td>31.25</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Academic Building</td>
<td>47.00</td>
<td>47.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainability, Equity, and Justice Fund</td>
<td>9.00</td>
<td>7.00</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>22.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative Transportation</td>
<td>28.50</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>28.50</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legislative Action</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multicultural Center</td>
<td>30.00</td>
<td>30.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Services & Activities (S&A) Fee** (billed with tuition): $223.98 assessed at $22.40 per credit, with students enrolled in 10 or more credits paying the full fee. This fee is not proposed for reduction. Areas supported by the S&A fee were able to use reserves in Spring Quarter in order to pass a reduction on to students. Those reserves are no longer available for this purpose.

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 included:

- 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)
- Music Copyright Fees (0.2% of the total fee)
- Remaining funds (approximately 80.9% of the total fee) are distributed to these constituents:
  - Associated Students (44.3% or 35.9% of the total fee)
  - Athletics (32.1% or 26.0% of the total fee)
  - Campus Recreation (7.0% or 5.6% of the total fee)
  - Department Related Activities (DRAC) (16.6% or 13.4% of the total fee)

Per RCW, students have a strong voice in recommending budgets for these fees. The process requires open hearings to provide opportunity for input from the campus. A large portion of the budget funds student employment.

*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. We propose that this fee be reduced by 31.5% to $75.00. 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 2020-21. However, the fee also funds operations, and reserves will be utilized to the degree prudent in order to reduce the fee in recognition of students’ inability to utilize the facility during at least a majority, if not all of Fall Quarter.

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 (included below). 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.

Note: Personnel & Operation costs shown above include many fixed costs that cannot be avoided in a temporary shut-down.

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 Fall 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 Fall Quarter of 2020, 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 Fall Quarter by 10.7% to $31.25 for students taking 6 credits or above and to $15.60 for students taking 1-5 credits. While there will be an increased demand for technology in Fall 2020, 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 for the Housing & Dining System in meeting its bond covenants in 2020-21. Fee revenues are used for the improvement and development of the Viking Union on the Bellingham campus. This fee has been pledged for bond payments and the ongoing maintenance, repair and renewal operations of the Viking Union, and 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: $9 assessed at 90 cents per credit with students taking 10+ credits paying the full fee. We propose that this fee be reduced by $22.2% to $7 assessed at 70 cents per credit after consideration of fund balances and the ability to temporally 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:** $28.50; WAIVED for Fall Quarter, usually assessed when enrolled for 6 or more credits. The fee is used to provide all students with a Whatcom Transportation Authority (WTA) bus pass and late night shuttle service. Late night shuttle service will not run for Fall Quarter. Western will work with the WTA to help students acquire bus passes on an as-requested basis. The Sustainable Transportation website provides more information and transportation-related updates.

**Legislative Action Fee:** No change proposed for Fall Quarter. Spring reductions were possible due to use of reserves. Fee revenues fund student representation and advocacy efforts at the campus, local, state and federal levels. The 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 for the Housing & Dining System in meeting its bond covenants in 2020-2021.

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 and is pledged to bond payments. Programmatic funding comes from other funding sources.