



Student Union Assembly (SUA)

1156 High Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95064
Student Union Assembly 2nd floor, c/o Soar

May 12th, 2015

To: George Blumenthal, Chancellor

RE: Modification of Campus Student Government Fee

The Student Union Assembly (SUA), as the official governing unit of the undergraduate student body of the University of California, Santa Cruz, holds membership in the University of California Student Association (UCSA), which represents and advocates for the entire University of California student body.

UCSA requires that its members pay dues at a minimum rate of \$1.30 per student per year. UCSA may change this amount at any time, and encourages its members to pay more than the minimum.

SUA's sole revenue source is the Campus Student Government Fee. The most recent amendment, Measure 8, was passed in Spring 2002 and established a compulsory campus fee of \$7 per student per quarter. Measure 8 was adopted before return-to-aid was required for campus fees, and as such SUA receives the full amount that students pay into the fee.

SUA develops and passes a budget at the end of each fiscal year, and is generally free to allocate funds as it sees fit. Measure 8 imposes a single requirement on SUA's yearly budget:

If the fee increase is approved, \$0.67 per student per quarter will give UCSC automatic membership into the University of California Student Association (UC Systemwide student government).

In other words, Measure 8 requires that SUA pay \$2.01 per student per year in dues to UCSA, \$0.71 more per student than UCSA requires. As such, under Measure 8's current language, SUA cannot exercise discretion over its contribution to UCSA. If UCSA were to increase minimum dues higher than \$2.01 per student per year, SUA would be legally barred from paying sufficient dues.

At current enrollment levels, SUA has a working budget of approximately \$300,000 per year. UCSA dues at the levels mandated by Measure 8 are approximately \$30,000 per year; UCSA dues at the minimum level are approximately \$20,000 per year.



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It is clear that the intent of this passage in Measure 8 was to require that SUA maintain membership in UCSA. But as it is written, the passage is unnecessarily restrictive.

SUA could attempt to rectify the problem by running another amendment to the Campus Student Government Fee on a future ballot. But this process would be time consuming, expensive, and may fail.

It is the understanding of SUA that University of California chancellors are empowered to unilaterally institute, abolish, or modify campus fees at any time. As such, in its April 28th, 2015 meeting, SUA adopted a motion by consensus that I request that you modify Measure 8's language so that it does not require SUA to pay an exact amount in dues to UCSA. The motion suggested the following alternate language:

If the fee increase is approved, at least the minimum asked from UCSA will be allocated so that UCSC will be granted automatic membership into the University of California Student Association (UC Systemwide student government).

I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,
Justin Lardinois
Chair, Student Union Assembly

cc: Ashish Sahni, Associate Chancellor
Alma Sifuentes, Dean of Students
Lucy Rojas, Assistant Dean of Students/Campus Elections Commissioner