

2015-2016 Mandatory Student Fees Sustainable Action Fund Proposal

Proposed Motion: Move to approve the Sustainable Action Fund monetary level for fiscal year 2016 as \$.70 per academic credit not to exceed \$7.00 per quarter.

Green Energy Fee History

The Green Energy Fee was first established at Western Washington University in 2005 after the Students for Renewable Energy (SRE), an Associated Students (AS) Club at Western, worked with key members of Western's staff, faculty and administration to include the ballot measure in the 2005 AS elections. The student body approved the initiation of the fee with an 85 percent approval rate. The initial fee, titled the Renewable Energy Fee, was set at \$.40 per academic credit per quarter not to exceed \$4.00. The fee was used solely to purchase Renewable Energy Certificates (REC's), which fund the expansion of renewable power production and offset Western's carbon output.

In 2010 the fee was restructured to include the use of surplus funds for a grant program that students could access to implement projects that 1) increase energy efficiency; 2) decrease energy consumption; 3) generate renewable energy; 4) reduce greenhouse gas pollution. The student body voted to renew the fee, newly titled the Green Energy Fee (GEF), with an 80 percent approval rate. The GEF currently stands at \$.70 per academic credit per quarter not to exceed \$7.00.

Since the fees restructure in 2010, the GEF has provided funding, guidance and support for over 20 student-led projects, including Water Bottle Refill Stations, Parking Lot LED Lighting Retrofitting, High-Speed Hand Dryers, the Environmental Building Solar Array, the Sustainable and Energy-Efficient Dorm (SEED) Pilot, and much more. Aside from reducing Western's environmental impact, the personal impact on students who have designed and implemented projects cannot be put in simple terms, as well as the educational experience their projects have provided for the thousands of individuals who have and continue to utilize their ideas.

In May of 2015 the Sustainable Action Fund was overwhelmingly approved by students with 86 percent of voter approval. The structure of the SAF is going to be shaped by the Sustainable Action Fund Task Force, a committee of students, faculty and staff, over the summer of 2015.

The fund will support projects and educational experiences that provide substantial environmental benefits, opportunities for student learning and engagement, and help to keep Western Washington University at the forefront of sustainable practices. Such projects and educational experiences would include the following:

1. The purchase of renewable energy certificates (REC's) to help fund the expansion of renewable power production and offset 100 percent of WWU's carbon output.
2. **Fund three student leadership positions within the Associated Students Environmental and Sustainability Programs (ESP) Office dedicated to:**
 - a. Actions and campaigns that directly influence WWU's sustainability
 - b. Educating the WWU community on sustainability issues
 - c. Empowering students to tackle their own vision of a better world
 - d. Assisting, encouraging, promoting, and advocating for movement by the institution towards a sustainable future
3. A campus-wide grant program that awards funding to:
 - a) Innovative, exciting and practical student-driven and student-led project proposals that will:
 - Advance efforts in creating a culture of sustainability at WWU

- Decrease energy consumption and generate renewable energy
 - Empower and provide students the resources to further their visions of sustainability on campus
 - Connect organizations within WWU and the Bellingham community, and integrate sustainability into every WWU department.
 - Reduce greenhouse gas pollution
 - Educate students, faculty, staff and visitors on the importance of sustainable practices
4. Continuing to fund an operational employee positions that are responsible for overseeing and coordinating the funds associated programs.

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Effective Fall Quarter 2015 and expires the end of Summer Quarter 2018