
TO: Dr. Jeffrey Armstrong
University President

FROM: Keith Humphrey
Vice President for Student Affairs

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Vice President for Administration & Finance

SUBJECT: Proposed Health Service Fee Increase

DATE: 09/08/2017

Campus Health & Wellbeing is hereby requesting your approval to proceed with the steps necessary for an Alternative Consultation in fall quarter 2017 to adjust the Health Service fee in support of an expansion of student physical and emotional health resources on campus.

Fee Adjustment Justification:

- The last Health Services Fee adjustment took place nine years ago. At that time the fee was raised \$30 per quarter.
- Increased enrollment and utilization: Cal Poly's enrollment has grown 12% between the years of 2008 and 2017, yet medical provider staffing has decreased by 15%. At the same time, the utilization increased by 14%. The increase in enrollment and student demand, paired with a drop in provider staff, has resulted in long waits, reduced availability of appointments, early closings, the inability to see students on follow-up as quickly as desired, and declining patient satisfaction.
- Other Medical and Mental Health Resources: Access to primary and specialty health care resources in San Luis Obispo is inadequate. A reduction in the services provided by Campus Health & Wellbeing would be a hardship for students as they would then become more dependent on an already insufficient local system. In addition to that, a significant portion of Cal Poly students carry medical insurance that is not accepted in San Luis Obispo County.
- The ASI Board of Directors submitted Resolution #17-05 in support of increased mental health resources and the expansion of the campus Health Center.
- Parental requests for an expansion of medical and mental health services were received via the Parent & Family Programs Advisory Board at their Spring 2017 meeting.
- The California State Student Association issued a resolution in March 2017 in favor of more mental health resources in all CSUs.

Fee Purpose:

The purpose of the Health Services Fee adjustment is to hire additional medical and mental health providers to meet student demand.

Fee Details:

- The Alternative Consultation should take place in Fall 2017.
- The proposed fee options are as follows:
 - A. Fee increase amount shall not exceed \$99: Counselor to student ratio - 1:1,000. Effect: average wait time for non-crisis appointments will decrease by up to four days.
 - B. Fee increase amount shall not exceed \$114: Counselor to student ratio -1:800. Effect: average wait time for non-crisis appointments will decrease by up to five days and longer-term individual treatment.
- The fee shall be assessed an annual inflation adjustment of 4% instead of the currently applied Higher Education Price Index (HEPI) to more accurately reflect inflation in the healthcare industry.
- A 30% portion of the additional fee amount shall be set aside and made available for financial aid awards.
- The fee shall be phased in over four years effective Fall 2018 and apply only to all new incoming students.

We appreciate your support in this effort and look forward to further campus-wide dialogue regarding the future of Campus Health & Wellbeing.

Please contact us with any questions, concerns or requests for additional information.

Approved: _____

Dr. Jeffrey Armstrong
University President

Date: _____

Campus Health and Wellbeing
Student Health Fee Alternative Consultation
Justification Statement

A critical component of student success and timely graduation is student health and wellbeing. Students who are struggling with unmet physical or emotional health needs will not be fully engaged in curricular or co-curricular learning experiences, potentially resulting in an interruption or cessation of their studies. Lack of mental health resources are increasingly becoming one of the most common reasons for departure from universities around the country by students who may otherwise be in good academic standing.

At Cal Poly, the need for an expansion of Campus Health & Wellbeing (Health Services, Counseling Services, and Health Education & Wellbeing) is clear. An official request for additional services was made by a resolution from the ASI Board of Directors and the Parent & Family Programs Advisory Board.

Currently, Health Services is unable to accommodate every student that presents for care, often “closing” to non-emergent patients in the early afternoon. This leaves about 1/3 of the business day where non-emergent patients are turned away due to lack of capacity. This is further compounded by two factors: 1) the lack of availability of general health care in the San Luis Obispo area other than emergency rooms and 2) a significant portion of Cal Poly students carry medical insurance that is not accepted in San Luis Obispo County. Limited access to care in the community means Cal Poly needs to be equipped to provide services to all Cal Poly students.

In order to meet the needs of Cal Poly students now and in the future, Campus Health & Wellbeing must be staffed to treat every student that presents for services. Counseling Services is also significantly under-staffed according to national best practices. On average, the counselor to student ratio should be 1 counselor for every 1,000 students. Cal Poly currently has one counselor for every 1,550. On a residential campus such as Cal Poly, the ratio of counselors to students should be better than the national best practice given the lack of mental health resources in an underserved community like San Luis Obispo. This situation results in students having to wait several weeks to begin regular therapy appointments, and in most cases having to meet with a counselor every other week. This situation also results in most students being referred off campus for therapy after 3-4 sessions as the demand for therapy far exceeds the number of available counselors. Counseling Services must operate a triage model whereby only the most severe clinical cases are seen for individual therapy with all other students receiving group therapy and/or a referral off-campus for individual therapy. Seeing a private therapist off campus can be very costly, which is a barrier to students getting continued care.

Counseling Services has an obligation to provide therapeutic treatment to more students, on a regular basis, for longer duration than current staffing allows.

Prevention is key in providing proactive wellbeing resources and education to students for purposes of early intervention and to maintain a healthy level of functioning. Wellbeing & Health Education currently does not have the resources to adequately reach all students. Additional staffing is required in order to provide quality wellbeing education services and individual appointments.

Additional funds throughout Campus Health & Wellbeing are critical in order to provide needed services. Hiring additional medical and mental health providers to meet student demand is the overall purpose of this fee adjustment. The fee includes an annual 4% inflation escalator to allow Campus Health & Wellbeing to keep pace with the rising costs of health care. The fee also includes a 30% set aside of the total fee increase amount to provide financial aid for low-income students that would cover the increase in the fee. The university will contribute a substantial amount to the cost of additional administrative support staff to ensure that student fees are going directly to additional medical and mental health providers.

The fee would be phased in over four years and only applied to new students. Current Cal Poly students would not pay the increased fee but would be able to access the expanded services provided by the fee increase.

The rationale for phasing the fee in over four years is to ensure that current students do not experience an unplanned increase in their health fee. Prospective students would be informed of this fee prior to their deadline to enroll, so that it can be factored as a cost of attendance. Phasing the fee in over four years also allows Campus Health & Wellbeing the time to adequately hire additional medical and mental health professionals, as it would be impossible to significantly expand the staff in one year. This ensures that Campus Health & Wellbeing is only requesting fees from students that it can reasonably use.