



Kriss Worthington

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CONSENT CALENDAR

November 15, 2005

To: Honorable Mayor and
Members of the City Council

From: Councilmember Kriss Worthington

Subject: Support the UC Students Association in urging the UC Regents to stop fee increases and save financial aid.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Berkeley City Council support the University of California Students Association in urging the UC Regents to vote against a proposed student fee increase and vote for a restoration of the original 33% return to institutional aid policy.

BACKGROUND:

The UC's average undergraduate total cost of attendance in 2004 was \$19,434. The National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, in its report *Measuring Up 2004*, found that for low and middle-income California families, the net cost of providing for a student at a public four-year college or university represents nearly half of their annual income. An average California family cannot afford a public education with another round of fee hikes on the immediate horizon and while the university has cut the level of institutional financial aid to students by \$12 million.

The UC Board of Regents is meeting at UC Berkeley November 16-17, and is expected to increase UC fees for the third consecutive year, while continuing to under fund institutional financial aid. Since 2003, system wide undergraduate fees have skyrocketed from \$3,429 to \$6,141. Should the vote pass, fees will rise 8% to \$6,632 for 2006-07. It is important to note that student fees are only a part of the cost of attendance. The components of the total cost of attendance include housing, food, transportation, books and other academic supplies, and personal expenses in addition to UC fees.

Graduate students and the academic departments who fund some of these students have also experienced a huge financial burden due to the recent increases in graduate fees, from \$5,219 in Fall 2003, to \$6,897 in Fall 2005. The Regents are also expected to approve a 10% increase to graduate fees in November, bringing graduate fees to 7,586.80 in 2006-07.

Finally, professional students, who rarely receive either merit or need-based grant aid, and graduating with significant loan debt, have experienced some of the steepest fee increases in recent years (40% in 2003, 30% in 2004, and more than 10% earlier this year). Professional students are finding it increasingly difficult to complete their programs without incurring unmanageable debt, and sacrificing public interest careers.

Currently, 25% of all student fee generated revenue is reallocated for financial aid. The UC Student Association is also urging the Board of Regents to restore a 33% rate return to institutional financial aid, which was cut to 25% in the past year.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

NONE

CONTACT PERSON:

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