

December 3, 2024

Graduate Student Association Fee Referendum 2025-2026

Ballot Language

Issue

Effective Fall 2025, do you approve a \$8.67 per quarter (\$26 for the year) GSA fee increase annually adjusted for CPI. The total GSA fee cost will be \$97/year adjusted for CPI.

YES

A yes vote approves the annual \$97/year adjusted for CPI GSA fee and provides support to graduate student parents, graduate students of color, and the GSA Pantry. A YES vote allocates \$34,200 to the GSA Pantry for year-long operations, \$20,000 to the GSA for a new GSOC+ division, and earmarks \$48,500 for student parents.

NO

A no vote rejects the increase in the GSA fee.

Overview

The GSA is expanding to support graduate student needs. The GSA needs more people, more committees, and more support. As the university faces budget reductions, it has been difficult to secure support for graduate student priorities. This fee referendum provides support for three areas that the GSA has prioritized: the GSA Pantry, the RSO GSOC+, and the GSA Pantry.

In recognition of the GSA's focus on DEI and community engagement, the fee referendum addresses unique challenges and needs faced by graduate students. This includes addressing basic needs and food insecurity by expanding operations to the GSA Pantry year round. It includes providing permanent funding to the RSO Graduate Students of Color+ and transitions GSOC+ into the GSA to better serve graduate students. Finally, it provides support to student parents by including a 0.5 FTE of staff support for student parents.

The referendum proposes a \$8.67/quarter (\$26/year) increase in the Graduate Student Association (GSA) fee. The increase in the GSA fee represents $\frac{1}{3}$ of the annual ASUCD fee. The increase will result in an additional \$103,000 annually for the GSA.

To be Done:

There will be further outreach to all graduate students through focus groups and surveys. The consultation process will include town halls with the GSA general assembly (GA), the MBA, Vet Med, Nursing, and Medicine. This outreach must be completed by Feb 11 when the final language is submitted to COSAF.

Description

1. Fee Implementation

- The current GSA fee will be increased by \$8.67 per quarter, starting in the Fall Quarter of the 2025-2026 academic year. It will be assessed to all [graduate students that fall under the purview of the Graduate Student Association \(GSA\)](#).
- This fee will be subject to an annual increase based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI) to account for inflation and rising operational costs.

2. Use of Funds- GSA Pantry

- The proposal provides an increase in the allocation of money towards the GSA Pantry of \$34,200/year. The Pantry Coordinator would be paid \$9,600/year (8 hours work/week) and the two Pantry Assistants paid \$4,800/year (4 hours work/week). An additional \$15,000 would be committed to the GSA Pantry.

3. Use of Funds- GSOC+

- The proposal provides \$20,000/year for GSOC+. GSOC+ would shift from an RSO into a subdivision of the GSA.
- These additional funds are earmarked explicitly for use by GSOC+ and DEI initiatives and are enshrined to ensure GSOC+ can retain its role as a vital counterspace for students of color. Use of funding is broad, but it is strongly recommended that funding is used to support community dinners, initiatives, programs, resources, and for labor that promotes the academic, professional, and personal success of Graduate Students of Color+. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Community dinners.
- Professional development workshops and networking events.
- Cultural and community-building events that provide spaces for students of color.
- Labor by members of GSOC+ including a GSOC+ advisory committee.

4. Use of Funds- Student Parents

- The proposal provides \$48,500 earmarked for student parent support. The proposal provides a 0.5 FTE for an office coordinator to serve Student Parents. The projected cost is \$38,500/year. Base salary is 27,500 and benefits of 11,000. The salary will be adjusted to CPI.
- The proposal provides \$10,000 to be earmarked for the construction of a Student Parent Center.

5. Advisory Committee

- A GSA Fee advisory committee comprising representatives from the GSA and other relevant stakeholders will be established to oversee the allocation of the additional funds. This committee will ensure that the funds are used effectively and transparently to support the intended initiatives.

6. Oversight and Accountability

- The advisory committee will provide an annual report detailing the allocation and impact of the additional funds that will be presented to the GSA General Assembly.
- This report will be made available to all graduate students and will include information on funded programs, expenditures, and outcomes.
- Graduate students will have the opportunity to provide feedback and suggest improvements to ensure that the funds continue to meet the evolving needs of the GSA Pantry, GSOC+, and graduate student parents.



Graduate Student Association

Initiative Provisions

Advisory Vote- The outcome of the vote shall be advisory to the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, Dean of Graduate Studies, and the Chancellor, and the President of the University of California.

Voting – “Minimum voting pools” have been determined in accordance with University regulations. A minimum voter turnout of twenty percent (20%) of the graduate student population is required for a valid vote. The exact number of graduate students required will be provided by the University Registrar in advance of the election, and will be based on the winter quarter 2025 data. In addition, this referendum requires ratification by at least fifty percent (50%) affirmative vote for approval.

Return to Aid: In accordance with UCOP policy, this fee will provide funding available in Academic Year 2025-26 and subsequent years of twenty five percent (25%) of this fee annually to support graduate students with the greatest financial need.