

# COSAF Report

## *Referendum Ballot Language feedback for SASI Revote*

November 15th 2021

### **1. Is the ballot language clear what will happen if a student votes 'YES' on the SASI Revote referenda? What could be added or removed to make this more clear?**

Yes the ballot language is clear.

I do not think the ballot language is clear on what a 'yes' vote on SASI would mean. It is not clear on what is going to happen to ICA without the funding of SASI. All the person voting knows is that they wont have to pay \$343 annually/quarterly? As a voter I would want to know what that would mean for the program.

No. The only information is given how the 'yes' would affect each individual student. We need more information on how a 'yes' would affect ICA funding, and how that would affect student athletes, athletic divisions, facilities, etc.

No, the ballot language is not clear. The word "nullification" leads to confusion. A better way to phrase the question is: "YES, the portion of the SASI fee that goes toward ICA should be maintained."

It is largely clear however it would be less ambiguous if the exact details of how the funds are spent is given.

Yes – I approve the nullification of the portion of the SASI fee that goes toward ICA. Yeah for me the ballot language is pretty clear and it makes much more sense than any other voting referenda, if a student types yes on the SASI Re-vote referenda

It is clear to me as a COSAF member but I'm concerned if students who don't pay attention to the formation of their fees can understand quickly and clearly. I recommend you include more contents and fuller perspectives into the top section so that even if a student does not have time/patience to read the entire article, they can make a decision by reading just the top portion. You will get a better chance to get more students to vote and participate. I recommend the top portion includes: 1) why re-vote; 2) what will happen to SASI fees effective xxxx; 3) how it may impact intercollegiate athletic programs and/or institution. Summarize in top portion and refer students to following sections for details. I also recommend condensing to no more than 2 pages and add page number to each page.

The Ballot language is very concise and transparent on what a 'YES' vote is; it should be kept as is.

No - what happens if ICA funding is eliminated? No more sports? Would we cut sports teams? How would we decide which teams to cut? Where would the funding come from (I'm sure ICA has exhausted all other avenues of funding)?

No, it is not clear. It does not include any of the impacts that would occur listed by Budget and Institutional Analysis. This should absolutely be included in the SASI Re-vote referenda.

I believe the ballot language is clear and I able to understand the consequences of voting YES on the SASI Re-vote referenda.

While the ballot language is very clear and explicit, I think it is a little deceiving and should definitely be expanded on. Something about how completely nullifying this fee may result in some varsity sports being cut, athletic staff losing their jobs, athletes losing their scholarships, no longer free entry at sporting events, and all those kinds of things are extremely necessary to include.

Yes, the ballot language is clear on what will happen if a student votes 'Yes'. In my opinion, nothing needs to me added/removed.

I would replace the word "nullification" with "removal".

It should reference Table 2 ("... of the SASI fee that goes towards ICA, as projected in Table 2"). Maybe nullify is needed to be legally / technically correct? I feel it would be clearer to say eliminate or something along these lines.

## 2. Is the ballot language clear what will happen if a student votes 'NO'? What could be added or removed to make this more clear?

Yes the ballot language is clear.

I do not think the ballot language is clear on what a 'no' vote on SASI would mean as it doesn't really explain what SASI under the athletics program would continue to do.

Yes, but clarity could be added by listing a few examples of what is funded with our student fees.

No, the ballot language is not clear. The double negative leads to confusion. A better way to phrase the question is: "NO, the portion of the SASI fee that goes toward ICA should be terminated."

No, it is unclear how the activities funded by SASI would be funded and further developed if there were to be a 'no' vote on this issue.

If the students vote a No on the SASI- referenda it can affect the undergraduate student's athletics.

Same opinion as above.

Yes, it is very clear.

Yes

Yes, there will be no change to the already voted upon SASI referendum.

I believe the ballot language is clear and I am able to understand the consequences of voting NO on the SASI Re-vote referenda.

I believe the ballot language for a "NO" vote is very clear, and obviously would make no changes to the fee we are paying and benefits we receive.

Yes, the ballot language is clear on what will happen if a student votes 'No'. In my opinion, nothing needs to be added/removed.

I would replace the word "nullification" with "removal".

This should reference Table 1 ("... of the SASI fee that goes towards ICA, as projected in Table 1"). I think it is otherwise clear that the SASI funding will remain unchanged in this case.

## 3. Are there any parts of the ballot language that you find ambiguous? What is ambiguous about that part and how can it be made more clear?

No. It is clear

One discrepancy I found confusing on the ballot was the date for when the referenda would take effect if passed. On the first page, it states that this would be 'Effective Fall 2022'. Yet, the last page of the referenda states that this would be 'Effective Fall 2023'. Secondly, on the chart of data with a breakdown for what 'each undergraduate pays' it is not clear if this is \$343.56/year i.e. \$114.52/quarter. This makes it unclear for voters to see how much they actually pay into for athletics. Third, the election results of 13.7% seems to be comparing the amount of students who participated in the election to the overall student body at the time. I thought when we calculate approval rates for elections we only consider those who actively participate in elections as not voting can be taken as a sign of compliance. Either way, it seems weird to include it relative to the total campus population and not just considering those who actually participated. Considering we now only need 20% participation with 60% approval (instated after SASI) of the campus to participate in our elections currently, that isn't a large portion of the campus either.

What will happen if ICA doesn't receive the funding?

Both the YES and NO ballot language choices are ambiguous and could be seen as misleading.

NO, It's very clear to me and I understand everything that has been recorded.

Yes, why re-vote is not articulated. I think it could be included in the Background portion.

It is unclear what would happen if ICA funding was eliminated. There is no plan for gradually acclimating ICA to new funding sources which seems unrealistic and dangerous for UCD's finance dept.

The figures on the ballot have been skewed. Saying that something passed by 13% is incorrect when really it passed by over 50%. In a Presidential Election, we do not say 30 something percent of people voted for Biden.

All parts of the ballot language are clear and straightforward and there doesn't appear to be any ambiguity about what is being presented.

Yes, the entire ballot is very ambiguous. All that is mentioned is that SASI was initially created during a time of economic turmoil to support our ICA program. Nowhere in the referendum does it say explicitly where our student fees are going. You simply say "Athletics," but never expand that it is for things like facilities upkeep and maintenance, travel costs, medical care for injured athletes, and so much more. By leaving like this out it in a way deceives the voters and makes it very ambiguous what their \$343.56 is going to.

On the topic of the projected use of the Stasi fund if not applied to the ICA chart, where do these figures come from? I.e. how can we predict that the Cross Cultural Center and Women's Resources & Research Center will get an even 6% increase in funding. Also, what were the 2 other options UCD students had when it came to the 1994 Spring vote?

In the overview it is stated "was approved by 52% of the UC Davis undergraduate student body". That is not true. The statement should read "was approved by 52% of the UC Davis undergraduate student body that voted".

What benefits may be lost -- I.e. "As a result of this resolution passing, and the ICA fee being nullified, undergraduate students may have to pay for entry to sports games". However, funding to the other programs (i.e. Campus Recreation, the Cross Cultural Center, and Women's Resources and Research Center) would remain unchanged. Is this an advisory vote? Or is it binding? (students need to know) I would strongly oppose language that says sports programs or facilities would be cut -- as this isn't a given (someone could argue this in an opinion appended to the resolution itself). Instead it could say, "ICA would losses a significant source of funding that would require significant institutional or external support to fill. As of yet no such funding has been identified."

#### 4. Is the ballot language neutral? Why or why not?

I do not believe the ballot language is neutral as the ballot does not seem to explain what Intercollegiate Athletics provides to the campus with SASI nor how other campus departments that are popular like Campus Recreation benefit from Intercollegiate Athletics.

Yes. It is neutral.

No. It seems focused on saving each individual student money, and does not address how ICA is affected, or why they need this funding.

The word "nullification" is a very strong word-choice, and does not lead to the appearance of neutrality.

Yeah, it is neutral because the difference is pretty clear

I think you should give students full background before you ask them to vote on something. Friday's presentations have more contents, which could be summarized and presented to students.

Yes, it is neutral and easy to understand.

No - I am uncomfortable with the statistic of "13.7%" approval. This is not how voting is typically reported and any student would probably see that number and assume that the SASI fee was not enacted by a majority of voters.

No, there are skewed figures and the language does not share any of the REAL impacts of a yes vote. I assume that it is purposeful but I see that you represent the initial figure of SASI in terms of quarters, \$34/quarter, and the current figure in years, \$387.38/year. This adds a false sense of a larger than actual percent change. Please represent each in either both or the same term.

I believe the ballot language is neutral as it appears to only provide facts and doesn't attempt to use leading, biased phrasing.

The ballot language is neutral and very clearly and explicitly states the data and facts of SASI.

The ballot language is neutral because there is no clear listing of how removal of the Stasi from ICA will benefit UCD, and there are no jabs about the execution of the Stasi fees.

I think the language is neutral.

Overall it should address a few of the negatives (in a non-alarmist, factual way) of what the loss in benefits to the students and the change in program funding for ICA. Otherwise, I felt that it is reasonably neutral. \*\*Please avoid language that is alarmist, has accusations of impropriety, implies racial/gender biases in funding, etc. This is language for campaigns and opinions, not the ballot itself\*\* (there were two versions and one had this type of insinuation)

## 5. Do you have any specific recommendations to pass along regarding the ballot language of the SASI Revote referenda?

No I do not.

The overview should be more than just comparing the amount students pay for SASI in the athletics program to our other campus departments. You should touch on how there would be less financial aid for students due to the fact that ICA would no longer be contributing 25% of what they receive from students as 'Return to Aid'. Again though, referenda lacks general explanation of SASI under the ICA program which is necessary as students aren't going to be familiar with everything a university is going to have to offer. I definitely think there needs to be more explanation on the consequences of a 'yes' and 'no' vote. I think how TGIF presented it in their referenda would be an improvement.

More information on how ICA is affected by the outcome of the vote.

I feel it is important to explain the drastic increase in the SASI fees. As it had clearly not incrementally increased taking account general rates of inflation in the economy.

No i don't but I would recommend it if they can present some more information on how it can affect the campus and the students.

No.

It isn't clear what would happen to ICA if their funding from SASI was removed. I think this referendum should consider how we might gradually decrease ICA funding instead of eliminating it altogether. This referendum assumes the school, the athletics department, and college athletes have the capacity (and the time) to magically make this funding appear. Some of the numbers in tables are rounded, resulting in inaccurate totals. The effective date mentioned in paragraph 1 does not match the timeline described in the last paragraph.

You stated in the last paragraph of the second to last page that 13.7% of the UCD Undergraduate Population voted in this referendum when actually 26.7% of the population did. Please check all of your numbers. I found some errors. Thank you.

I do not have any specific recommendations at this time.

I recommend adding lots more information about explicitly what the Athletics fees obtained from SASI, and exactly what the repercussions of nullifying a fee like this would mean for students and staff on our campus. Also, the flow of the document feels unnatural, I believe the information in the background at the end would be much more helpful it was closer to the beginning of the article before the breakdown of SASI's allocation.

No.

Tables 1 and 2 should list "Intercollegiate Athletics (ICA)" not Athletics -- best to be super super clear. Throughout, it should reference Tables by their numbers wherever applicable. It needs to be clear in the overview that this isn't defunding the CCC, CRU, WRRRC, its confusing that you discuss nullification above and then list out all programs in the overview. Why is it important that there were 3 options? Why not just list the results. (Delete "UCD Students had three choices")