

ACTION ITEM #4

WSU Pullman

Proposed Compton Union Building Mandatory Student Fee Rate Change

Effective Fall Semester 2024

(Leslie Brunelli/Elizabeth Chilton/Romando Nash/Sean Greene)

April 19, 2024

TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF REGENTS

SUBJECT: WSU Pullman, Proposed Compton Union Building Mandatory Student Fee Rate Change, effective fall semester 2024

PROPOSED: That the Board of Regents authorize a rate change for the Compton Union Building mandatory student fee, effective fall semester 2024.

SUBMITTED BY: Leslie Brunelli, Executive Vice President, Finance & Administration/CFO
Elizabeth Chilton, Provost and Executive Vice President and Chancellor,
WSU Pullman

**SUPPORTING
INFORMATION:**

The Compton Union Building (CUB) is an integrative educational, social, and physical environment that is central to student life on the WSU Pullman campus. It inspires personal and academic growth, intercultural engagement, and community activism among students and provides vital spaces for connection, study, well-being, leadership, and relaxation. It sees an average of 8,000 people each day during the academic year and provides essential services and support for thousands of events and meetings each semester, including signature events such as New Cougar Orientation, Experience WSU, multicultural student conferences and graduations, La Bienvenida, Showcase, and many more.

To support these key services, the CUB is proposing an 8.3% increase in its mandatory fee, which has not increased since the facility reopened in 2008 after an \$86 million renovation. The fee would increase to \$130/semester, from the current \$120/semester; a \$10 per semester increase for each student. All WSU Pullman-based undergraduate and graduate students enrolled in 7 or more credit hours during the fall and spring semesters pay the fee. Part-time students pay a prorated fee per credit (up to 7) during the academic year; students enrolled during summer semester pay based on the number of weeks enrolled.

	Current Rate	Proposed Rate	\$ Increase	% Increase
Full Time (Semester)	\$120	\$130	\$10	8.33%
Summer (1 credit)	\$72	\$78	\$6	8.33%
Summer (2 credits)	\$48	\$52	\$4	8.33%
Summer (3+ credits)	\$24	\$26	\$2	8.33%

* Rates reflected represent both resident and non-resident fees

The proposed increase in the CUB Mandatory Student Fee will:

- Assist in covering the \$5.7 million annual bond payment (expiring in 2039), which accounts for approximately 60% of operating expenses;
- Allow the facility to operate and provide services at current levels, including hours of operations, event support, maintenance, technology hardware, and custodial support; and
- Maintain student employment at existing levels (the CUB currently employs an average of 80 students annually).

Historically, the mandatory fee has accounted for approximately 50% of CUB revenue. Due to enrollment declines, the mandatory fees collected in FY24 will be the lowest amount since 2008. Over the last five years, total mandatory fee collection has decreased by \$1 million, while expenses have continued to rise.

In addition to decreases in mandatory fees, the CUB's annual S&A fee funding has decreased as well; the FY24 allocation is 10% less than the FY20 allocation. This reduction in total fee collection has resulted in forecasted operating deficits for a second consecutive year.

The current funding stream for the CUB is not sustainable. Failure to change the revenue stream will result in reductions in support and services to students and the greater campus community, as well as cuts to student jobs. Reductions would likely include reduced hours of operation, deferred maintenance, and delayed furnishing and equipment replacement.

The CUB Advisory Board, which is primarily composed of students (9 of 15 seats) and includes representatives from both ASWSU and GPSA, strongly supports a fee increase due to the CUB's fixed revenue sources, its dependence on the fee, and recent declines in enrollment. On Nov. 8,

2023, the board voted unanimously to support the proposed fee increase and has indicated that they would support an additional or regular increase in future years. Subsequently the S&A Committee, also composed primarily of students (9 of 15 seats) voted to endorse this fee increase on March 19, 2024; it passed with 10 votes in favor, 1 opposed and 3 abstentions.