Introduction
In 1999, 88.8% of the student body voted to institute the Class Pass program on the UC Berkeley campus. In 2001, 88.5% of the student body voted to renew the program for another four years. In order to provide students with control over costs of their mandatory, student-imposed fees, there is a third renewal and a referendum to continue the Class Pass program, scheduled for February 21, February 22, and February 23, 2006. The purpose of this student fee referendum is to give students a yes or no option of continuing the current Class Pass program by voting on an increase over the current $37.20 per semester fee to a fee of $58.50 per semester, to maintain and enhance both the AC Transit and Bear Transit services. The Class Pass Advisory Committee, an independent committee composed of representatives from both the undergraduate and graduate student bodies, is proposing a $21.30 per semester increase of the mandatory “Class Pass” fee to the total fee amount of $58.50. Over the course of the seven-year mandatory fee, it will be indexed in the third year and the seventh year to address increased operational costs.

The Committee on Student Fees (CSF) is the non-partisan student voice on student fees and policy at UC Berkeley. To educate the campus community, we have created a Voter’s Guide to help teach students about the referendum process and the details of this fee increase. We encourage you to visit our website at http://www.berkeleycsf.org or to stop by our office at 210 Eshleman Hall.

Class Pass Program Renewal Summary

Purpose:
To provide the following services to registered UC Berkeley students:
- Unlimited ride program that currently includes rides all year long (including the summer) on:
  - Any AC Transit bus
  - Transbay service to San Francisco
  - The connector from the Fremont BART Station to Stanford University
  - Bear Transit campus shuttles (excluding Richmond Field Station line)
- New direct all night Service from San Francisco after midnight to downtown Berkeley
- Access to new “Rapid Bus” line down Telegraph Avenue terminating at the West Crescent on the Berkeley campus
- Funding to install technology at bus shelters (that may also be accessible online and via cell phone) to let riders know when the next bus will arrive at their preferred bus stop

Requested Fee Amount:

2006-2007 through 2008-2009 \( \rightarrow \) $58.50 per semester
2009-2010 through 2011-2012 \( \rightarrow \) $69.50 per semester
2012-2013 \( \rightarrow \) $80.00 per semester

Voter’s Guide

Why Vote Yes:
The proposed Class Pass program fee increase over the current $37.20 per semester fee is necessary to support increased costs for AC Transit, and additional funding required for campus Bear Transit operational costs. It also covers improvement and expansion costs to the current Class Pass program, making it more accessible and useful to students. For example, students at UC Santa Cruz pay $138, and
students at UCLA pay $86 per semester for transit programs. The following are the top reasons why you should vote in favor of this fee increase to continue the program:

- The Class Pass program has proven to be an integral part of the campus access program. Over 3.5 million rides on AC Transit and 650,000 rides on campus Bear Transit are taken by students every year.

- The Class Pass program provides students with greater mobility. It offers rides around the campus and throughout the Bay Area. Unlimited use of all AC Transit bus lines makes regional transit cost effective, provides more housing options, and comfortable, dry travel during inclement weather.

- The Class Pass ensures that Berkeley students have access to affordable, reliable bus transit services as the cost of public transportation continues to rise. The Class Pass has an annual value of nearly $1400 but will be offered to students at an annual value of less than $150.
  - AC Transit currently charges $1.75 per local ride and $3.50 per Transbay ride. It offers local monthly passes for $70.00 and Transbay monthly passes for $116.00.
  - Bear Transit currently charges $0.50 per campus shuttle ride and $1.00 per hill shuttle ride.
  - Cal students will have paid for the value of their Class Pass after taking 34 local trips and 17 Transbay trips in a semester.

- The Class Pass program improves student safety; both AC Transit and Bear Transit offer night service to preferred destinations.

- This program offers equity. It offers all registered students access to low-cost transportation.

- This program is environmentally friendly. It reduces automobile congestion in and around campus. It decreases the demand for parking and minimizes pollution.

- Renewal of this program will offer numerous enhancements that are pertinent to student needs such as service from San Francisco after midnight directly to downtown Berkeley, a possible new service from Emeryville to the Berkeley campus, expansion of campus shuttles with four perimeter routes, and new “next bus” technology. “Next bus” technology is a GPS-based technology which predicts when the next bus connected to that system will arrive at that particular bus stop.

- Purchase of single tickets or monthly passes do not have a financial aid component and will most likely come directly from students’ personal budgets.

**Voter’s Guide**

**Why Vote No:**

Renewal of “Class Pass” will force students to further subsidize other students’ transportation needs. Students should only pay fees for the transportation they use. This fee is one of many other mandatory campus fees, which will inevitably increase with inflation. The following are the top reasons why you should vote against this fee:
In the past four years, students’ fees have risen more than 55% for resident undergraduates. If it is approved, the new Class Pass fee, at $58.50, will be the highest campus-based fee.

Three-fourths of the UCB student population do not use AC Transit services as their primary mode of transportation, and should not be required to pay for or subsidize the transportation needs of students who primarily depend on it. Unless a student takes 34 local trips or 17 Transbay trips per semester, the Class Pass does not pay for itself.

Students should not be required to pay for or subsidize transportation to nearby cities, such as San Francisco or Emeryville, if they will not use the services to these specific destinations.

The campus should be responsible for subsidizing student transit use, such as the Class Pass program, to meet obligations under the long-range development plan (a framework of policies and guidelines provided to shape future decisions on land use, enrollment, housing, parking, and transit) and to provide safe and convenient access for students.

With the proliferation of mandatory student fees for different purposes, it is difficult to know from year to year which fees students should be supporting. With the high turnover of the student population, voting to implement mandatory student fees such as the Class Pass program is problematic.

Students should be provided a more refined option for subsidized transit passes, where individual students can pay only for the transit services they use instead of paying a potentially higher amount that includes services they do not need.

The time frame for this Class Pass fee is 7 years, meaning it will impact students who never had a chance to vote on it. Future students should not be required to pay fees for which they had no opportunity of review or comment.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the Class Pass program?

The Class Pass program makes it possible for registered students ride the following, free of charge:
   - Any AC Transit bus
   - Transbay service to San Francisco
   - The connector from the Fremont BART Station to Stanford University
   - Bear Transit campus shuttles (excluding Richmond Field Station line)

2. What is a student fee referendum and how much will the fee be?

A student fee referendum is an election in which students determine whether to approve a mandatory student fee, payable by all registered students, which will fund specific student-related services or programs. Student fee referenda may be proposed by campus departments to pay for these services and programs, and the referenda must be developed with the input of student representatives. If a referendum passes, student representation is also required in overseeing the use of the fee, for as long as the fee is in effect.
If the referendum passes, the Class Pass Fee will be $58.50 per semester, and will be imposed beginning in the Fall 2006 semester, essentially continuing the existing Class Pass fee.

3. How many students must vote in the referendum?

Twenty percent (20%) of all currently registered students must vote in the Class Pass election for it to be valid. Students who select “Abstain” on their Class Pass ballot will not be counted towards this 20% requirement.

4. How many votes are required to pass the referendum?

A simple majority of all students who vote “Yes” or “No” (i.e., not including those who select “Abstain”) in the Class Pass election (50%+1) must approve the referendum for it to pass.

5. How will student fees from this referendum be used?

Fees from this referendum will maintain the unlimited ride program that currently includes rides all year long (including the summer) on:
   • Any AC Transit bus
   • Transbay service to San Francisco
   • The connector from the Fremont BART Station to Stanford University
   • Bear Transit campus shuttles (excluding Richmond Field Station line)

The fees will also support the following enhancements:
   • New direct all night Service from San Francisco after midnight to downtown Berkeley
   • Access to new “Rapid Bus” line down Telegraph Avenue terminating at the West Crescent on the Berkeley campus
   • Funding to install technology at bus shelters (that may also be accessible online and via cell phone) to let riders know when the next bus will arrive at their preferred bus stop

6. How often would I have to use AC Transit services to break even?

An individual local trip on AC Transit costs $1.75, and an individual Transbay trip costs $3.50. If you took 34 local trips or 17 Transbay trips on AC Transit per semester, the cost of the Class Pass would be covered by fares you would otherwise be required to pay for those individual trips. Also, the cost of the Class Pass for a full semester is less than a one-month AC Transit Pass, which costs $70.00 for local trips and $116.00 for Transbay trips.

7. What are examples of other student referendum fees?

One example is the “Safeguard Student Health” fee, which was passed by students in March 2005. There is also a Class Pass fee currently in effect that will expire after Spring 2006 unless renewed by student approval of this fee referendum election.

8. How are student referenda fees different from registration fees?
Student referendum fees are specifically approved by students in campus wide elections, and are paid in addition to University registration and educational fees. The Registrar maintains a current line-item list of student fees, including those approved via student fee referendum elections.

9. One-third of the fees from the referendum are described as “Return to Financial Aid.” What is this?

“Return to Financial Aid” is a campus-based program that allows the Financial Aid Office to help financial aid recipient students offset the increased costs associated with new mandatory campus-based fees.

According to UC Berkeley rules governing student fee referenda, and in keeping with Berkeley campus practice, one-third of the proposed fee revenue will be directed to the Financial Aid Office to help offset the cost of this fee for the neediest students who are eligible for campus-based financial aid so that those students can cover the increase in fees. Financial aid will also cover the fee increase for graduate students on fellowships, GSI-ships, GSR-ships for whom the cost of the Class Pass fee is waived.

10. Who oversees the student fee referendum process?

Student fee referendum elections are overseen by the Student Fee Referendum Committee (SFRC), composed of students and campus staff members, and the campus Election Manager, who is appointed by the SFRC to conduct, monitor, and verify the election.

11. If the referendum passes, but I did not vote for it, do I still have to pay the fee?

Yes. The class pass is a 100% participation measure enabling the cost of the program to be spread over a larger population, thereby reducing the cost per person significantly. If the referendum is approved, the student class pass fee will be imposed on every registered student. Individual students, regardless of whether they use student the transit services, will be unable to opt out of the fee.

12. What happens if this referendum fails?

If the Class Pass referendum is not approved, Bear Transit services will be severely reduced. In addition, students will no longer have unlimited access to AC Transit services, and would instead be required to purchase single tickets or monthly rider passes.

13. How do the two student body governments feel about this referendum?

The Associated Students of University of California (ASUC) and the Graduate Assembly (GA) both support the Class Pass program renewal referendum.