

GreenFee Resolution Georgia Southern University 2011

Resolution:000001

Approval of a “Green Fee” for Georgia Southern University

Submitted By: Christina Belge

Where as it is the responsibility of the Student Government Association to vote on and approve or disapprove all resolutions presented I put forth a resolution for the Approval of a “Green Fee” at Georgia Southern University. A “Green Fee” is a fee that Georgia Southern University has been working toward for some time. Specifically, in 2008, Senator Jessica Sparrow of the Student Government Association and President of Student Alliance for a Green Earth conducted a student survey about having a Green Fee. Here are the results:

SAGE survey-2011

New Green Fee results:

Polling question:

How much would you be willing to pay per semester to fund the reduction of energy use on campus and help maintain sustainable events and programs?

Number of students polled: **1266**

Percent for \$0: 19%

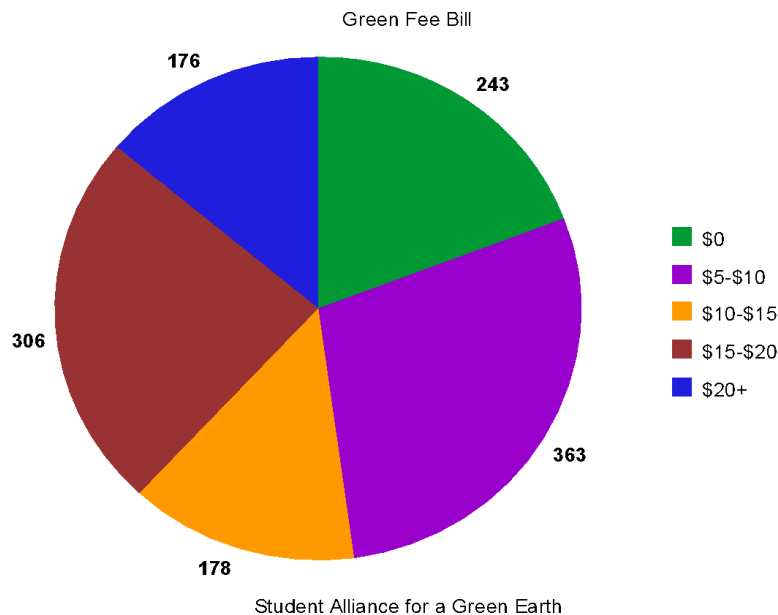
Percent for \$5-\$10: **29%**

Percent for \$10-\$15: 14%

Percent for \$15-\$20: 24%

Percent for \$20+: 14%

Overall support for green fee: 81%



In accordance with the push for a green fee there has been a strong environmental movement at Georgia Southern University. Currently, out of the 2,000 plus universities in the country we are ranked 253rd in the nation in terms of sustainability. We currently have a campus Sustainability Coordinator housed in Environmental Safety Services, as well as an academic Center for Sustainability, currently funded by the College of Science and Technology. COST supports a part-time director and provides a small pool of funds for speakers and sustainability activities. Continued funding for the Center for Sustainability is uncertain, due to potential changes in the structure of COST. With a loss of funding, Center for Sustainability activities including curriculum, speakers, campus activities, and community outreach will cease.

As shown from the survey there is wide student support for this Green Fee. Not only that, but students are compassionate about this issue, our generation has been proven to care more about the environment than any previous generation and we are the ones to make the push for change. Furthermore, this is not just an initiative supported by the students, but by the administration as well. Last year, President Brooks Keel signed the President's Climate Commitment which is dedicated to reducing the university's environmental impact and educating our students by integrating sustainability into their curriculum.

In response to the Presidential Climate Commitment as well as the state's commitment to lower energy consumption by 15%, from 2007 levels, by 2020, Dr. Keel formed the Energy Task Force. The task force consists of faculty, staff, and one student who have outlined how to meet this goal. Many of the suggestions outline the need for funding of environmental projects such as retro-fitting, re-lamping, and even marketing to promote to students to use less energy, for example, stickers on mirrors all over campus to turn off lights when leaving and to report leaking sinks to maintenance. In order to reach this goal an enormous amount of work is being allocated to the campus Sustainability Coordinator as well as the Center for Sustainability.

The Green fee would be given directly to the Center of Sustainability to be broken down into four sections (but are flexible to change when absolutely necessary):

1 Environmental Projects-\$5.50

The Center for Sustainability, in accordance with suggestions from the Energy Task Force Committee will work together to link students and physical plant to work on sustainability projects across campus such as re-lamping, diversifying plant life, and retro-fitting to make building more environmentally friendly, energy efficient, etc.

2 Environmental Education-\$2.50

The Center for Sustainability will use this portion of the fee to bring in outside guest speakers as part of the Sustainability Seminar Series like those who have been hired in the past such as Ed Bagley Jr., and Majora Carter.

3 Marketing and Promotion-\$.75

This portion of the fee will go toward the promotion of GSU's sustainability efforts, advertising for events, and promotional stickers aforementioned to remind students to turn off lights, turn of the sink, and unplug all appliances when they are not in use.

4 Personnel -\$1.25

This portion of the fee will be used to hire much needed personnel for the Center for Sustainability as well as provide salaries for the current workers. Currently there is just the director and one unpaid intern. This money would go towards the director's pay and more importantly the pay of several graduate assistants as well as undergraduate interns.

3/9/2011

Lastly, deciding how projects will get approved will work much like the Student Technology Fee. There will be a group of students appointed from SGA and SAGE to serve on this committee along with members of Physical Plant as well as Faculty and Staff who represent a wide variety of departments across campus. They will work with the Center for Sustainability to distribute the funds fairly and in conjunction with the aforementioned breakdown of the \$10 fee.

This fee has been deemed necessary by some members of Dr. Keel's Energy Task Force. In order to reduce our energy consumption by 15% this has to happen. There needs to be funding for the Energy Task Force's projects and recommendations. Furthermore, it should be kept in mind that ultimately this fee is a cost-effective move for Georgia Southern University. With implementation of projects and environmental education across campus we will not only reduce the energy consumption by 15% by the year 2020, but save the University tons of money that could be used to reduce student fees, hire more faculty, or be put towards student affairs.

Now, therefore it be resolved to approve, adopt, and authorize Georgia Southern University should enact a "Green fee" of \$10 per semester as part of student fees for all students to support the growth of Georgia Southern University's Presidential Climate commitment as well as the Clean Energy Initiative developed in 2008 and to support the Center for Sustainability.