

**Referendum 53-01**  
**Referendum Concerning the Modification of Student Chinook Fee**

**Associated Students of  
Washington State University  
Fifty-Third Senate**

**Authored By:  
Senator Velazquez**

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE FIFTY-THIRD SENATE OF THE ASSOCIATED  
STUDENTS OF WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY**

Section 1:

Referendum

The existing mandatory Chinook student fee is no longer sufficient to sustain existing service levels. The Chinook Student Center offers student union and recreation amenities to support student mental, social, academic, and physical wellbeing. The Chinook Student Center is an important space on campus for undergraduate students with more than 265,000 uses per year to study, relax, exercise, participate in e-sports, meet with groups, host events, and have a meal.

The existing mandatory Chinook student fee is currently \$98 per semester for full-time undergraduate students (7 credits or more). The fee has not been increased since the Chinook opened in 2017, despite significant increases in operating costs due to inflation for staff salaries, student wage rates, equipment, supplies, and utilities. Facility hours were reduced this fiscal year in response to the current budget shortfall. The current fee is not sufficient to sustain previous or existing levels of service.

The mandatory Chinook student fee, pending an affirmative vote of the student body to support an increase to this student fee, would increase by \$5 dollars for the Fall and Spring semesters and \$3 for the Summer. More specifically, an affirmative vote would modify fees:

- From \$98 to \$103 per Fall and Spring semester for full-time students (7 credits or more)
- From \$59 to \$62 for the Summer for students enrolled in 3 or more credits (\$21 for 1 credit and \$42 for 2 credits)
- Elected memberships (graduate students/alumni/faculty/staff membership/community members) pricing would increase by approximately 5%

This initiative has been reviewed and endorsed by the University Recreation Advisory Board, which is composed of five (5) faculty/staff/alumni and eleven (11) students representing the Associated Students of Washington State University (ASWSU), the Graduate and Professional Student Association (GPSA), first year students and students from across the WSU Pullman community. The University Recreation Advisory Board was originally established to review the use of funds derived from the mandatory Student Recreation student fee and currently advises all University Recreation operations including the Student Recreation Center, programs and services funded by the Services and Activities Fees, and the Chinook Student Center.

This fee increase would be applied in the Fall 2024 semester. The funds derived

from this proposed increase would generate an additional estimated amount of \$45,000 per semester based on projected undergraduate enrollment. In future years, the Chinook fee could be increased by no more than 5% annually upon the recommendation of the University Recreation Advisory Board to the ASWSU Senate and approved by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the ASWSU Senate. Upon passage, the additional fees would allow Chinook to maintain current levels of services and operations.

Failure to increase the mandatory Chinook fee, will result in a reduction in operating hours and student employment opportunities starting in the 2024-2025 academic year.

**Referendum Question:**

To help prevent a further decrease in service levels, do you support raising the semester Chinook fee from \$98 to \$103 per semester beginning in Fall 2024, with the option to increase the fee in future academic years by no more than 5% annually, upon the recommendation of the University Recreation Advisory Group to the ASWSU Senate, and approved by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the ASWSU Senate?

- No
- Yes

**Section 2:**

Failure of this ASWSU referendum will result in the mandatory Chinook fee continuing at its current cost and terms.

**Section 3:**

Upon passage, this initiative will go to the undergraduate student body for a vote in the ASWSU Spring 2024 General Election. If approved by the qualified voters of this Association, the new fees would be presented to the Board of Regents of Washington State University for implementation beginning the 2024-2025 academic year.