Class Pass Renewal Referendum

Introduction

The Class Pass Renewal Referendum is a student-initiated fee referendum to renew the class pass program that provides unlimited bus rides on AC transit and campus shuttles to UC Berkeley students.

Background

In February 2006, 80% of the UC Berkeley students who voted in the Class Pass Program referendum approved the continuation of the Class Pass for a period of seven years. That was the second renewal of the Class Pass, allowing registered students to take unlimited rides on AC Transit buses. The first referendum was approved by 89% of student voters in 1999. The unlimited ride program includes:

- Transbay service to San Francisco
- The connector from the Fremont BART station to Stanford University
- Bear Transit campus shuttles (excluding Richmond Field Station) all year
- Unlimited rides during the summer

Each year, UC Berkeley students have taken over 3.5 million rides on AC Transit bus service, greatly reducing the need for students to bring a vehicle to campus. As the cost of transportation continues to rise, this fee will ensure that Berkeley students have access to affordable, reliable bus transit service for the next seven years.

The referendum covers the period from the fall of 2013 through the summer of 2020, seven years.

Purpose of the Fee

If approved, the fee will continue the current Class Pass program of unlimited 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, Perimeter and Hill (excluding Richmond Field Station line)
- Direct all-night service from San Francisco after midnight to downtown Berkeley

If the Class Pass referendum is not approved, Bear Transit service will be severely reduced. Students will no longer have unlimited access to AC Transit services, and would instead be required to purchase single fares or monthly rider passes. Single rides on AC Transit buses are currently $2.10 for local travel and $4.20 for Transbay. A monthly pass is $80/month for local travel only and $151.20/month for local and Transbay access.

Breakdown of the Fee

This fee is subject to the following costs and conditions:

- Collection of the fee will begin in the Fall 2013 semester. It will be a $74.00 charge per semester for all undergraduate and graduate students, including students who are enrolled in self-supporting degree programs. The Spring class pass remains valid for students who also enroll in Summer sessions; Summer session students who were not enrolled for the previous Spring semester will have a charge equal to half the previous semester charge. For example, those 2014 summer session students who were not enrolled for spring 2014 will be charged $37.00. The renewed Class Pass fee schedule will take effect upon expiration of the current Class Pass fee in Fall 2013. Fees will remain in place for seven (7) years, and will be charged in the following amounts:

    - 2013-14 to 2015-16 (Years 1-3): $74.00 per semester
    - 2016-17 to 2017-18 (Years 4-5): $76.00 per semester
    - 2018-19 to 2019-20 (Years 6-7): $80.00 per semester

The following table shows fees under the current program and proposed fees under the referendum

	Current		*Proposed*		
	FY11/12	**FY12/13**	**Years 1-3 FY13/14 to FY15/16**	**Years 4-5 FY16/17& FY17/18**	**Years 6-7 FY18/19& FY19-20**
AC Transit Amount	$33.00	$38.00	$37.00	$38.50	$41.00
Parking & Transportation Shuttle	$9.95	$10.95	$12.33	$12.17	$12.33
Alternate Technology	$2.30	$3.30	$0	$0	$0
Rounding	*$0.08*	*$0.08*	-	-	-
Subtotal	$45.33	$52.33	$49.33	$50.67	$53.33
Return to Financial Aid (33%)	$22.67	$26.17	$24.67	$25.33	$26.67
Total Referendum Fee	**$68.00**	**$78.50**	**$74.00**	**$76.00**	**$80.00**

- In accordance with campus policy, one-third of all mandatory student-imposed fees are returned to financial aid to help offset the cost of this fee for the neediest students who are eligible for campus-based financial aid.

Funds Disbursement

The Registrar disburses the funds in the following manner:

- According to UC Policy, 1/3 of the referendum fee is returned to Financial Aid
- The AC Transit portion of the referendum fee is transferred into a discrete liability account. This account is associated with Parking & Transportation.
    - This transfer happens as part of the monthly financial close process and usually goes through the third month of the semester. For example, for the fall semester of 2012, the Registrar transferred the first installment of the Referendum funds at the end of August with the final transfer happening in December.
- The P&T campus shuttle portion of the referendum is transferred into the P&T operating funds on the same schedule, during month end financial close.

Payment to AC Transit

- The Registrar determines the final official student enrollment numbers by the third month of a semester.
- The Registrar sends notice to both AC Transit and P&T indicating the official registration count.
- AC Transit creates an invoice based on the number provided by the Registrar and submits the invoice to P&T for payment.
- P&T works with campus procurement and disbursements to pay the invoice.
- The invoice is paid with the funds in the same discrete liability account originally established and funded by Registrar.

Oversight of the Fee

The Class Pass Program Advisory Committee, an independent committee consisting of representatives assigned by the sitting ASUC President and the sitting Graduate Assembly President, the administration, and AC Transit, will periodically evaluate the program and ensure that fee monies are properly allocated.

Ballot Language

The following language will be placed on the Spring 2013 ASUC ballot for a vote of the student body:

"A renewal of the current Class Pass Referendum will continue to provide unlimited student access on AC Transit (including service to San Francisco) and the campus shuttles (e.g. Perimeter & Hill shuttles), including the Night Safety Shuttle, for the duration of the referendum (7 years), effective Fall 2013, with a $4.50 decrease in the per-semester fee (from 2012 levels of $78.50 to $74.00) for the first 3 years, increasing to $76.00 for the 4th and 5th years and to $80.00 for the 6th and 7th years. If the Class Pass referendum is not approved undergraduate and graduate students will no longer have unlimited access to AC Transit services and Bear Transit service will be severely reduced. Do you approve of this fee?"