SONOMA STATE
UNIVERSITY

PROPOSAL TO REDIRECT INSTRUCTIONALLY RELATED ACTIVITIES MANDATORY STUDENT FEES

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Executive Summary

Sonoma State University is projecting a base budget deficit of approximately $23.9 million for FY25/26, primarily due to the loss of student tuition and fee revenue resulting from a significant enrollment decline. Additional cost increases related to personnel, annual price increases for supplies and utilities, and inflation are also contributing to the deficit. Despite the University's efforts to close the base budget gap over the past several years, the campus is moving forward with making further reductions for FY25/26, including the difficult decision to eliminate NCAA Division II Athletics. Therefore, to avoid additional program reductions, the University is proposing redistributing the Instructionally Related Activities (IRA) funding that is currently earmarked to partially fund the Athletics Program to support other campus programs that align with the purpose of the IRA funding. This redistribution will reduce the need to make further cuts to vital programs and services provided to students and will better support student success, student life and visual and performing arts initiatives. Given ongoing enrollment challenges and budget deficits, moving forward with this proposal is essential for optimizing resource utilization and ensuring support to programs that serve the majority of the student body.

Background

The IRA Fee is a Category II campus-based mandatory fee that is paid by all enrolled students and its use is dictated by Education Code 89230.

Per the approved 2003 student fee referendum, the current fee distribution structure defines four (4) Permanently Funded programs. The structure also provides for an annually funded program pool from which programs can apply for funding each year and typically ranges from 30-45 annually funded programs, depending on available financial resources. The current allocations are distributed based on the following percentages:

Current IRA Distribution		
Program Name	**Percentage of IRA Budgeted Revenues**	**FY25/26 Projected Allocation[1]**
Athletics	62.25%	$2,040,403.37
Children's School	2.11%	$69,160.66
Library – Extended Hours	6.26%	$205,187.55

[1] Projected available revenue for distribution to programs is based on current budget assumptions for FY25/26: 5548 student headcount and $319/semester for IRA (which includes the 2.8% CPI increase.)

Performing Arts	15.91%	$512,491.04
Annually Funded Program Pool	13.47%	$441,513.79
TOTAL	100.00%	$3,277,756.41

With the elimination of the Athletics program, the University is recommending reallocating the funding earmarked for Athletics and reestablishing the permanently funded programs to best serve the current and future students of Sonoma State University.

Recommendation

In order to maximize the financial resources and better support students, it is recommended that the funding currently earmarked for Athletics be redistributed to support campus programs that align with the purpose of IRA funding listed as follows: Career Pathways and Preparation, The HUB (Honoring, Uniting and Belonging), Performing Arts, Arts Integration and Club Sports. These program investments and the proposed new distribution model go beyond what is currently being provided to enhance the programs and services available to students.

The proposed new distribution model would consist of seven (7) permanently funded IRA programs that would receive annual funding allocations based on the following percentage of budgeted IRA fee revenues:

Proposed IRA Distribution		
Program Name	**Percentage of IRA Budgeted Revenues**	**FY25/26 Projected Allocation[2]**
Career Pathways and Preparation	36.07%	$1,182,286.74
The HUB	5.74%	$188,143.22
Club Sports	9.15%	$299,914.71
Children's School	3.64%	$119,310.33
Library – Extended Hours	6.26%	$205,187.55
Performing Arts	24.15%	$791,578.17
Arts Integration	4.46%	$146,187.94

[2] Projected available revenue for distribution to programs is based on current budget assumptions for FY25/26: 5548 student headcount and $319/semester for IRA (which includes the 2.8% CPI increase.)

Annually Funded Program Pool	10.53%	$345,147.75
TOTAL	100.00%	$3,277,756.41

The proposed new funding model would be utilized to support programs and services that serve the majority of the student body and would enhance these programs and services to support student success.

Career Pathways and Preparation

These programs are designed to equip all students—regardless of major or background—with the skills, experiences, and industry connections needed to succeed in today's workforce. By integrating academic and career advising, aligning curriculum with employability plans, and expanding employer engagement efforts, these initiatives support both career-focused and pre-professional pathways, including students pursuing graduate or professional school. This holistic approach strengthens retention, enhances graduation rates, and ensures students are career-ready, helping Sonoma State produce graduates who are confident, competitive, and well-prepared for their next steps. This funding will support the development of a more robust Career Pathways and Preparation program.

The HUB

The HUB fosters connection and meaningful conversation between students, staff and faculty to build community within and between cultures, and across different worldviews. It enriches campus life by supporting student identity development and community engagement, both creating and nurturing students' sense of belonging. This funding will provide on-going financial support to the HUB which is of vital importance to student support and the co-curricular programs and services that are offered to all SSU students through this area.

Club Sports

Club sports provide students with opportunities for physical activity, leadership, and teamwork outside of varsity athletics. They contribute to campus spirit and student well-being, enhancing the overall college experience and campus co-curricular culture. This funding will enhance the club sports program by increasing the number of sport clubs offered to students and adding in sport clubs such as but not limited to: Basketball, Softball, Rugby, Ultimate Frisbee and more. In addition, funding will be used to aid with equipment purchases, travel and support staff to build a more robust sport club program ultimately increasing participation and enhancing the overall student experience.

Children's School

The Children's School serves as the laboratory school for the campus offering thousands of hours of internships and observation hours to numerous majors on campus. The school also offers hands-on teaching and learning opportunities for students studying education and child development. An increase in the IRA allocation will continue to support the observation hours, internships, and classroom activities in the school and allow for further expansion of the learning activities in the school.

Library – Extended Hours
Extended library hours support student success by providing greater access to academic resources and quiet study spaces. This demonstrates the university's commitment to academic excellence and student needs. Continued funding from IRA to this program will ensure that the student staff hired to support extended hours of access in the Library will remain, providing accessibility to a critical academic resource outside of the campus business hours of 8am-5pm.

Performing Arts
Performing arts programs cultivate creativity, expression, and cultural appreciation among students. They also attract talent and provide vibrant public programming that engages the broader community. This funding will provide on-going revenue to maintain technical staff currently assigned to the Center for Performing Arts (CPA) with the intent to help support supplemental programming through Arts Integration involving both the Department of Music and Green Music Center. This helps ensure SSU students continue to have access to and can participate in the wide array of ensembles and shows that are offered through the Performing Arts and Green Music Center programs. This funding also allows the campus to offer co-curricular programming in theatre and dance as integrated into other performing and visual arts.

Arts Integration
Integrating music, visual arts, and other performing arts (such as co-curricular programming in theater and dance) across all academic disciplines at Sonoma State fosters innovation, critical thinking, and emotional intelligence. It enriches the academic environment and supports a well-rounded liberal arts education. This on-going funding will provide for .5 FTE to help manage the Arts Integration program as well as permanent funding to bring artists to Sonoma State with the specific intention of showcasing an interdisciplinary approach that incorporates the visual and performing arts with disciplines across the three Colleges. The funding for the programming has typically been awarded through the annual request process.

It is recommended that this change take place through the Alternative Consultation Process which would include the following steps:

1. The President shall inform the Student Fee Advisory Committee (SFAC) of their intent to begin alternative consultation on the proposal;
2. Review the proposal and develop alternative consultation strategies with the SFAC and the Associated Students;
3. Implement the alternative consultation strategies and inform the Cabinet, Associated Students, Staff Council, Academic Senate and other campus constituents on the details of the proposal and collect feedback;
4. Complete alternative consultation and summarize the results of the process;
5. The SFAC will make a final recommendation to the President;
6. The President will review SFAC's recommendation and make a final decision;
7. The adjusted fee structure will be implemented for the 2025-2026 academic year.

Redefining the permanently funded programs and redistributing the funding to align with current campus priorities within the confines of the Education Code restrictions will reduce the need to make additional base reductions to vital programs and services that serve the majority of the student body and make investments for the future of Sonoma State.

This proposal will not change the amount students pay as the fee will remain the same with the exception of the annual Consumer Price Index (CPI) increase which applies to all Category II fees per the approved 2001 Student Fee Referendum.