

Tuition and Fee Rate Increase Request

Fee name: Cougar Food Pantry Funding

	Resident	Non-Resident
Current Rate (Annual)	New Fee	New Fee
Proposed Rate (Annual)	\$10 annually	\$10 annually
\$ Increase	New fee	New Fee
% Increase	New Fee	New Fee

Description of who pays the fee: *(undergraduates, graduates, full-time, part-time, / what campus/what terms - fall, spring and summer?):*

All graduate and professional students enrolled at WSU Pullman will be assessed the fee.

Fall and Spring Semester:

Graduate and professional students enrolled at WSU Pullman during the fall and spring semesters will be assessed a \$5 fee per semester.

Summer Session:

This fee will not be charged during the summer session.

A similar fee was initiated by WSU Pullman ASWSU Senate and passed via undergraduate student election in March 2021.

Justification for the increase / consequence for not increasing:

Food insecurity impacts college student success. This includes food-insecure students falling into lower GPA categories compared to their food-secure counterparts, diminishing students' ability to excel in class, and contributing to lower attendance and completion rates. Food insecurity also contributes to added stress and depression. To make their food dollars stretch, food-insecure students choose cheaper, highly processed, often fast foods that can contribute to the overconsumption of added sugars, refined grains, and added fats. This poses dangers to future health outcomes.

Additional funding provided by the graduate student fee will help stock the Cougar Food Pantry with food and hygiene supplies. Graduate students and undergraduate students will now be contributing to the operation and decision-making processes of the Cougar Food Pantry.

Due to rising demand, the Cougar Food Pantry and the Associated Students of Washington State University (ASWSU) may limit food pantry usage if this fee is not initiated. Since undergraduate student fees are currently the primary funding source, graduate students risk losing access to the Cougar Food Pantry.

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Decision Support information: when was the last increase, 5-year rate history, peer comparisons, etc.)

This is a new fee. A stand-alone fee is preferable to other solutions because it provides a dedicated revenue stream to support the food pantry.

Alternatives Considered:

No other options were considered; it was determined that a mandatory fee provides a sustaining source of revenue to create a sustainable solution for food insecurity for students on the WSU Pullman campus.

How have (or will) you communicate impacts of the rate increase to students? What was the feedback received?

This action was validated by 80.5% of the WSU Pullman voting graduate students on March 4-8 2024.

Please Attach Any Supporting Documents

- GPSA Referendum - Referendum Concerning Cougar Food Pantry Funding
- ASWSU Referendum 50-01 – Election Results

GPSA 2024-2025 General Election

Referendum Title: Cougar Food Pantry Funding

Ballot Type: Enact a New Fee

Ballot Author: Food Security Committee

Question: Shall the fee-paying Pullman graduate and professional students establish a \$5 per semester mandatory fee to support the Cougar Food Pantry to continue utilizing the services and supplement funds provided by fee-paying undergraduate students?"

Summary Points

- This referendum would establish an increase in Student & Activity fees that would go into effect beginning in the Fall 2024 semester.
- The fee would be \$5 per graduate student on the Pullman campus each semester. This is a one-time fee increase that will continue annually.
- The fee will be incurred by all fee-paying Pullman campus graduate students enrolled in the Fall and Spring semesters.
- Proposed fee term is 10 years and will terminate after Spring Quarter 2034 if the fee is not renewed.
- The Cougar Food Pantry is primarily funded by fee-paying Pullman undergraduate students. Currently, graduate students do not contribute to the Cougar Food Pantry.
- Graduate students are food insecure. Approximately, 40% of Cougar Food Pantry users are graduate students.
- Offsetting costs associated with food can alleviate financial stress to allocate funding for other basic needs including medical care, housing, childcare, etc.
- Fee will be used in the following ways:
 - Food supplies such as non-perishable foods; fresh fruits and vegetables when available; herbs and spices; culturally responsive foods; and other items as determined by the Cougar Food Pantry administrator.
 - Hygienic products such as toothpaste, deodorant, toilet paper, shampoo/conditioner/body wash, and personal care products.

Ballot Statement

- How will the fee be used?
 - The fee will be used to provide both graduate and undergraduate students items from the food pantry free of cost to the students.
- How will the referendum vote pass?
 - According to the GPSA By-Laws Article VII Section 3, the referendum question will be approved with a majority vote and at least 15% of the Graduate and Professional student population must vote.
- How will oversight be provided of the use of graduate student fees?
 - Currently, two graduate students and two undergraduate students sit on the Cougar Food Pantry Advisory Board.

- If the additional graduate fee is passed, GPSA will provide two additional representatives to the Cougar Food Pantry Advisory Board to help provide oversight of the fund usage.
- Who will benefit from the fee?
 - All graduate and undergraduate students facing food insecurity.
- Why is this important?
 - Food insecurity impacts college student success. This includes food-insecure students falling into lower GPA categories compared to their food-secure counterparts, diminishing students' ability to excel in class, and contributing to lower attendance and completion rates.
 - Food insecurity also contributes to added stress and depression.
 - To make their food dollars stretch, food-insecure students choose cheaper, highly processed, often fast foods that can contribute to the overconsumption of added sugars, refined grains, and added fats. This poses dangers to future health outcomes.
- What a “yes” vote means.
 - Additional funding provided by the graduate student fee will help stock the Cougar Food Pantry with food and hygiene supplies.
 - Graduate students and undergraduate students will now be contributing to the operation and decision-making processes of the Cougar Food Pantry.
- What a “no” vote means.
 - Due to rising demand, the Cougar Food Pantry and the Associated Students of Washington State University (ASWSU) may limit food pantry usage.
 - As undergraduate student fees are currently the primary funding source, graduate students risk losing access to the Cougar Food Pantry.

Election's summary

Submitted 354 ballots out of 2232 eligible voters. Voter Turnout: 15.9%.

Yes (Selected)	285	80.5%
No (Selected)	66	18.6%
Blank	3	0.8%