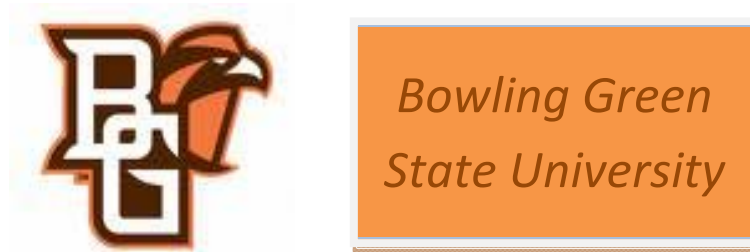


Proposal for a Student Green Fee at BGSU



**Developed for the consideration of the
Bowling Green State University Board of Trustees**

April 2009

Proposed by:

Undergraduates Students:

Jazmine Bennett, Jon Dinan, Daniel Jacoby

and Environmental Sustainability Coordinator (Interim):

Dr. Nicholas Hennessy

Table of Contents

Mission statement -----	3
Energy at BGSU -----	3
Sustainability Responsibility-----	3
Energy Master Plan-----	3
House Bill 251-----	3
The Proposal -----	3
How Fee Will Be Administered-----	3
Donations from Non-Students-----	4
Potential Projects-----	4
Group Structure and Distribution of Resources-----	4
Self-Assessment-----	5
Estimated Funds from Student Green Fee-----	5
Institutions with Similar Fees -----	6
How a Green Fee works at other institutions-----	7
Showing of Student Support -----	8
Unanimous USG Proposal for Support -----	9

Mission Statement

The mission of the Student Green Fee is to minimize the environmental impact of BGSU by supporting Green initiatives and educational projects that can be proposed and decided on by students. The Student Green Fee will bring a sense of environmental responsibility and literacy, in addition to positive notoriety, to the campus while making BGSU a leader and role model for Ohio, as well as all institutions of higher education in the area of environmental sustainability.

Energy at BGSU

BGSU's Commitment to Environmental Sustainability

BGSU has a responsibility to be a leader in the field of environmental sustainability, specifically reducing its carbon footprint, exploration and implementation of renewable energy, and education about renewable energy. This area of increasing importance has been recognized by the administration at BGSU and it is the institution's duty, along with that of every student, faculty, and staff member to do their part in the area of environmental sustainability.

Energy Master Plan

BGSU is in the process of creating its own energy master plan; this Student Green Fee Proposal will supplement that plan and make energy accountability the responsibility of not only the University but also every student who attends BGSU. The BGSU energy master plan will involve substantially reducing both carbon emissions and energy consumption throughout campus through a variety of environmental sustainability options. The Student Green Fee plan is proposed not to duplicate the overall BGSU energy master plan, but rather to allow students and other members of BGSU's community to come up with innovative ideas that will work collaboratively with the overall BGSU energy master plan and for the overall betterment of environmental sustainability.

House Bill 251

House Bill 251, passed by the Ohio Legislature in 2008, mandates that public institutions reduce their energy consumption by 20% over the next 10 years. The energy master plan that BGSU is creating is designed to fulfill this requirement. The passage of this bill in the Ohio Legislature is recognition from the highest level of state government of the importance of energy consumption and stresses individual responsibility for making our state a clean and healthy place to live.

The Proposal

How the Fee will be Administered

A \$5 fee will be added to the student fees of every undergraduate and graduate student every semester. All students will have the opportunity to opt out of the fee if they choose not to support this proposal. Thus, this fee is strictly voluntary in nature. The fee will be presented in the same manner as the longstanding Student Legal Fee with which students at BGSU are

familiar. An optional fee allows students to choose whether they want to support this program. While all students across campus will be encouraged to support this important cause, no one will be forced to do so.

Donations from Non-Students

Donations from non-students (including, for example, alumni and friends of the university) for this cause are acceptable and may be solicited, but it will be up to the group in charge of determining the distribution of the funds to decide what projects will be funded. While we encourage donations, projects favored by donors will not receive priority.

Potential Projects

While the range of projects that could be proposed and implemented is nearly limitless and is only constrained by resources and imagination, there are some initial ideas that this fee could support. One potential option is the purchasing of renewable energy, whether through the existing Wood County wind turbines if possible or any other future renewable energy source. Another possible project could be the education of the BGSU community through creative marketing and educational programming, including bringing in energy conservation and renewable energy specialists as campus speakers. The funds could be used to create our own source of renewable energy right here on campus, either in a small or larger proportion. (Examples of actual projects funded by similar programs at other universities are listed below, in the section headed “Institutions with Similar Fees.”) The Student Green Fee Group (described below) could decide to supplement University objectives and work with the administration to combine efforts and resources on projects. The Student Green Fee Group may also look at other universities’ green energy projects and model ideas after them as they see fit.

Group Structure and Distribution of Resources

The “Student Green Fee Group” will be charged with the responsibility of distributing funds. This group will be made up of faculty, staff, and students from across the University. The membership of the group will include the following:

Three undergraduate students

- One student from the Undergraduate Student Government
- Two students at large approved by the school of The Earth, Environment & Society

One graduate student

- Member of the Graduate Student Senate

One staff member

- Appointed by the President of Bowling Green State University

One faculty member

- Member of the Faculty Senate appointed by the Chair of Faculty Senate

The Student Green Fee Group will have the following responsibilities:

- Review proposals and make selections for funding on the basis of a project's feasibility, its potential for positive impact on the environment, and its ability to be funded.
- If no adequate proposal is submitted, to decide how the funds should be allocated to promote environmental sustainability on BGSU's campus.
- Assure that all accepted proposals will directly and positive affect the campus.
- Market and advertise the fee, the projects selected and being implemented/accomplished, and environmental sustainability at BGSU.
- Follow up after funds are allocated to be sure such funds are being used appropriately.

Self-Assessment

To be sure the Green Fee is achieving its desired effect it is important to have periodic assessments done. The first comprehensive review will be done two semesters after the fee has been instituted. This review should include a measurement of student support as shown by the percent of students paying the fee, a review of completed programs, campus involvement demonstrated by projects submitted, and effective use of the generated resources. The review will be undertaken by the Student Green Fee Group. If at the end of the assessment it is determined that the fee is not reaching its desired effect, is not supported by the student population, and is not utilizing the generated funds effectively, then consideration will be given to terminating or modifying the program. If, however, the program is deemed successful, the assessment will serve as an opportunity to summarize what the Student Green Fee Group is accomplishing and how it can continue to improve on its success. After the initial assessment, assuming the program continues, there will be an assessment of the program's effectiveness annually. In addition to the self assessment, an annual report on the progress and success of the program will be submitted to the President of Bowling Green State University on or before June 30th every year.

Estimated Funds from Student Green Fee

To develop an estimate for the possible financial success of this program, an estimate of 70% support by the student population was examined. This figure was developed by examining similar institutions and the success they have had on their campuses. The majority of universities researched received the initial support of between 70-80% of their student population. Of course, the percentage of support varies from university to university; this merely serves as a first semester estimate.

Assuming a graduate and undergraduate student population equaling that of the spring 2009 semester of 18,970 (2,905 and 16,064 respectively), with 70% student participation paying the optional \$5.00 semesterly Student Green Fee, the total amount of money raised per semester would equal \$66,395 per semester, and \$132,790 annually.

Institutions with Similar Fees

There is a great deal of positive precedent supporting the creation of such fees for environmental projects. Universities that have adopted some form of student fee, either mandatory, or voluntary, have utilized the money obtained using several distinct patterns:

“Hybrid” – These institutions put a portion of the student fee money towards both purchasing alternative energy from an off-campus source, and another portion towards on-campus sustainability and environmental projects. Examples include:

- Evergreen State College
- Mid-Tennessee State University
- Tennessee Technological University
- University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
- University of Colorado at Denver
- Community College of Denver
- University of Oregon
- University of Wisconsin, La Crosse

On-Campus Projects – These institutions put all of the student fee money towards green projects and activities on campus. Examples include:

- College of William and Mary
- Northland College
- Appalachian State University
- Bemidji State University
- University of Colorado at Colorado Springs
- University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
- Marshall University
- Kansas University
- Tufts University

Off-campus purchasing – These institutions put all of the student fee money towards the purchase of off-campus alternative energy, to be used on campus. Examples include:

- University of the South

- Western Washington University
- Connecticut College
- Warren Wilson College
- University of Denver
- Centre College
- Harvard University (Kennedy School of Government)
- University of California, Santa Cruz
- Central Oregon Community College
- University of Wisconsin, Green Bay
- Mesa State College
- University of Colorado at Boulder
- University of Utah
- University of Virginia
- Messiah College

How a Green Fee Works at Other Institutions

The following are just some of the institutions similar to Bowling Green State University and details about their fees:

- **University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign**
In March 2003, students at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign supported a \$2 per semester fee increase to purchase renewable energy and fund the installation of renewable energy and energy conservation technologies on campus. The increase went into effect in fall 2003, and covers both undergraduate and graduate students. The fee generates approximately \$140,000 annually, which is managed by the Energy Subcommittee of the Committee on a Sustainable Campus Environment. The Energy subcommittee is made up of eight student members appointed by the office of the Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs, and four faculty and staff members. (www.aashe.org)

So far, the university has used the money generated by the fee to start an initiative to build wind turbines to help power their campus along with using the creation of renewable energy as a teaching mechanism in the classroom. They have also used some of the money generated by the fee to start a solar power initiative in conjunction with other universities, school districts, and municipalities. Along with spending the money generated through the fee, they were also able to receive grants and matching donations to help fund their projects.
- **Appalachian State University**
In March 2004, 81% of voting students at Appalachian State University supported a \$5 per semester increase in student fees to fund the installation of renewable energy technologies on campus. The increase was approved by ASU's Board of Trustees in fall 2004, and by the University of North Carolina Board of Governors in spring 2005. The

fee went into effect at the beginning of the 05/06 school year, and generates between \$120,000 and \$150,000 annually. The funds are administered by a Renewable Energy Initiative Committee, comprised of six students selected by the committee through an application process, one member from Student Government Association, three faculty members, one staff representative, and a representative from ASU Design and Construction. The fee increase is to be collected for three years, meaning that it will expire before the 08/09 school year unless an extension is approved. (www.aashe.org)

Student Approval of this plan was 82%

Completed Projects:

- AppalCart Biodiesel Project: 10,000 gallon tank
- Biodiesel Collaborative Solar Thermal Panels: Solar thermal panels for heating.
- Supporting Biodiesel Collaborative Project
- Kerr Scott Photovoltaic

Current Projects:

- Solar Thermal Water Heating for Student Union
- Photovoltaics for Raley Hall
- Wind Project
- Informational Kiosk at Student Union

●Denver University

In spring 2005, students at DU supported a \$6 per quarter fee increase to purchase renewable energy. The fee went into effect at the beginning of the 06/07 academic year (www.aashe.org).

Denver had a pretty simple plan for their green fee. They took a \$6 per quarter fee (\$18 per academic year) and used it to purchase wind energy. In total, the university now spends \$81,000 on wind energy to power its three largest buildings for the next two years. This comes out to be roughly ten percent of the university's energy consumption.

Showing of Student Support

To demonstrate support from the student body for this Student Green Fee Proposal, a resolution was unanimously passed in the Undergraduate Student Government on March 16, 2009. The premise of the resolution was that students would support having the option to pay up to \$5 per semester in support of “green” energy and other environmental initiatives on campus. A copy of the Resolution is attached to this proposal.

S.R. 2008/09 – 09

A Resolution that shows student support for a five dollar optional student Green Fee at Bowling Green State University.

In the Senate of the Undergraduate Student Body here assembled,

1. **Whereas** there have been efforts to increase sustainability across the nation to lower
2. energy usage to help improve our environment and strengthen our economy; and

3. **Whereas** House Bill 251 was passed by the Ohio Legislature in 2008 which mandates
4. that public institutions reduce their energy consumption by twenty percent over the next
5. ten years; and

6. **Whereas** Bowling Green State University has created its own energy master plan which
7. will involve substantially reducing both carbon emissions and energy consumption
8. throughout campus through a variety of sustainability options; and

9. **Whereas** there are many University departments that often overlook things that can be
10. done to promote sustainability; and

11. **Whereas** an optional five dollar fee will supplement the current efforts to promote
12. sustainability by allowing further capital to be raised so that more sustainability projects
13. can be utilized at Bowling Green State University, and possibly purchase new forms of
14. renewable energy if it is deemed appropriate; and

15. **Whereas** donations will be requested from faculty and staff in order to further increase
16. the funding of this program; and

17. **Whereas** other universities who have had notable success with similar programs, which
18. include Middle Tennessee State, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, University
19. of Wisconsin-La Crosse, Appalachian State University, University of Denver, and many
20. other universities similar to Bowling Green State University; and

21. **Whereas** many of the projects the program supports will be developed, designed, and

22. implemented by students, which will promote creativity, independent thinking and
23. experiential learning; and

24. **Whereas** a committee made up of university students, including at least one member of
25. the Undergraduate Student Government, who will have to go through an application and
26. interview process, as well as a faculty member and a staff member; and

27. **Whereas** this committee will review proposals and make selection on the basis of a
28. projects ability to be done, its impact and its ability to be funded, and will decide where
29. else to allocate funds if no adequate proposal is submitted, in addition to making sure
30. proposals will directly effect campus, and will market and advertise the fee, the projects
31. being accomplished, and sustainability at Bowling Green State University; and

32. **Whereas** the student green fee program will bring a sense of environmental
33. responsibility to the campus while making Bowling Green State University a leader
34. among institutions in the State of Ohio in the area of environmental sustainability; and

35. **Let it be resolved** that the Student Body of Bowling Green State University supports a
36. proposal to include an optional five dollar student fee to support green initiatives and
37. sustainability at Bowling Green State University, also;

38. **Let it be resolved** that the Undergraduate Student Government representative will be
39. appointed in a manner to be decided by the General Assembly, and will be responsible
40. for reporting the actions of the committee and promoting its activities to the General
41. Assembly, while acting as a liaison between the committee and the voice of the student
42. body.