LONG BEACH -- A survey shows the unfairness of proposed new California State University fees, a student group said Monday.

Leaders of the group CSU Students for Quality Education said they surveyed nearly 2,400 students about the fee proposal, which comes before the CSU board of trustees today.

According to the CSU Chancellor's Office, the new fees have been proposed to discourage students from taking classes they don't need, taking large course loads and repeating classes.

The goal is to free up space in classes so the CSU can admit thousands of students who are eligible for the university but can't get in because there's no room, staff members in the Chancellor's Office say.

The student group on Monday said its survey showed students usually have good reasons for repeating classes, taking large course loads and accumulating more units than they need to graduate.

"Students aren't gaming the system," said Natalie Dorado, a student at San Bernardino State University. She spoke during a telephone conference call the student group held for reporters.

According to the group, four-fifths of the students surveyed said they have taken more than 16 units in a semester. Of those, 55 percent indicated they did so to take classes they needed when they became available.

Thirty percent of students who expect to graduate with more than 150 units said they would end up with extra units because they transferred to the CSU from community colleges with courses that didn't count toward graduation. Another 30 percent said because they couldn't always get classes they wanted, they had to take classes they didn't need so they'd have full loads and wouldn't lose financial aid.

Twenty-five percent who repeated classes said they did so because they failed the first time. Twenty-three percent said they repeated because of failing or dropping a class due to a personal crisis, a family emergency or because they couldn't keep up with working and going to school at the same time.
At their regular meeting today and Wednesday, the board of trustees is to decide whether to adopt three new fees.

Under the proposal, students with 160 units or more, total, would pay a fee of $372 for each additional unit.

Next year, this fee would apply to those who had 150 or more units.

Students who take 18 units or more in a semester would pay a fee of $180 for the 18th unit and for each unit in addition to that. And students who repeat courses would have to pay $91 for every unit repeated.