

Tuition Policy Advisory Council  
Meeting Notes  
November 19, 2004

The Tuition Policy Advisory Council met on Friday, November 19, 2004 in 203 MSC. The meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m.

Revised flat tuition models with premiums at \$400, \$500, and \$600 were presented. For modeling purposes, tuition flattens at 15 hours, designated tuition is \$75 and fees that are currently charged on a per credit hour basis are included in the numbers presented.

The consensus with the \$400 premium model was that students currently taking 14 hours would probably be motivated to take the 15<sup>th</sup> hour. Whereas, students currently taking 12 hours would probably not be motivated to take 15 hours.

With both the \$500 and \$600 premium models, flattening tuition at 14 or 15 hours would still generate revenue for the University. The University would become revenue neutral if tuition flattened at 13 hours and money would be lost flattening tuition at 12 hours. A premium may also need to be charged to part-time students.

Issues yet to be resolved include:

- At which point should tuition be flattened?
- Which premium should be charged?
- Should higher premiums be considered?
- What percentage of students might actually take more hours?
- What should be done with non-resident tuition?

Marketing flat tuition to the student body will need to be done very carefully, so that they are not put off before realizing the advantages. It was found that first stating that students will basically get classes for free for hours at or above 15 hours has a more positive effect than beginning the conversation with the rising cost of tuition.

It was noted that when considering a fixed rate tuition policy, things such as the impact to student financial aid, the creation of University risk reserves, and waivers to extend the fixed tuition period for students with substantiated special circumstances need to be studied. The recommended timeframe for a student to graduate is four years and one summer.

It was also recommended that it would not be wise to implement a hybrid of fixed and flat tuition initially because any modification in students' behavior cannot be guaranteed at this point in time. It might be possible to move to a hybrid in a few years after some predictability has been established.

Mandatory fees will be capped with tuition and the Student Services Fee is already capped at 12 hours.

There is no need to provide incentives for graduate students to finish their degrees in a timelier manner. Therefore, the recommendation is to leave graduate tuition on a per semester credit hour basis, as they currently pay \$46 more per SCH than undergraduates. The current policy stating that tuition be doubled for the graduate rate would have to be changed.

The question was raised as to why some part-time students would take 10 or 11 hours instead of becoming full-time students by increasing their course load by only one or two more hours. A chart provided by the Office of Institutional Studies and Planning shows the number of students by classification and semester credit load. It was noted that the majority of students taking 10 or 11 hours in fall 2004 were U4, which could be because of internships or student teaching or perhaps those hours may have been all that were left to meet degree requirements. For other students, it may be kinesiology courses or cases of classes with labs.

Student Financial Aid put together some information on time to graduation and its effect on student debt. This data will be shared with the Council at the next meeting.

The next meeting will be Friday, December 3. The flat rate subcommittee will meet beforehand to refine the flat rate tuition proposal and any Council member who would like to is welcome to attend. The revenue impact of including fees in the tuition models will also be considered at the next meeting.

It was suggested that the Council schedule a meeting for December 8 or December 9, which are reading days, as the regularly scheduled day of December 10 is the beginning of finals.

It was announced that Senator Tommy Williams, a Texas A&M University graduate, will on campus Tuesday, November 23, at 10:00 a.m. and he would like to meet with members of the Tuition Policy Advisory Council; student members in particular.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:15 p.m.