

Tuition Policy Advisory Council  
MEETING NOTES  
November 11, 2005

The Tuition Policy Advisory Council met on Friday, November 11, 2005 in 203 MSC. The meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m.

The TPAC web site subcommittee met with University Relations to discuss revamping the Tuition Policy Advisory Council's web site. The Council was presented with a rough draft layout of the web site. The University is currently working to give all of the University web sites a common look and feel. The Council liked the look of the preliminary web site, but the sub-committee will need to meet again to coordinate the content that will need to be posted. A meeting will be set up for next week.

The Mays Business School proposal to establish differential tuition was presented. As noted in the previous TPAC meeting, the Business School formed a committee to study the viability of differential tuition within the college. The committee was comprised of the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs, two faculty members, one staff member, and three students. The committee compared Texas A&M University and the Mays Business School to universities in Texas, public institutions within the Big XII, and Vision 2020 institutions for criteria such as cost of attendance, number of undergraduate degrees awarded per FTE faculty, and total fees per semester credit hour.

The differential tuition committee considered how differential tuition should be charged; whether all students taking a business course should be charged, all business students, or just business majors taking business major courses. The committee determined that the fairest method would be to charge business majors taking business major courses. The committee also recommended the implementation date of Fall 2006. However, the implementation date is negotiable. The students on the committee felt strongly that no student currently enrolled in the college should be grandfathered. How Agribusiness students would be affected needs to be considered.

An arbitrary rate of \$35 per hour was suggested, which would generate revenue of approximately \$2.7 million per academic year. 18% of the revenue must be set aside for financial aid. Over the course of a business major's entire undergraduate education, about \$2,100 in additional tuition would be incurred. The revenue would be used, in part, to hire more faculty; thereby creating smaller classes and more elective courses. The average salary for a professor in the Business School is about \$125,000 per year. Therefore, it is estimated that an additional 50-60 sections could be added, but the number of courses that could actually be offered would greatly depend on the desired courses and the faculty that would be required. Feedback from students will also be gathered to determine what they would like to see the additional revenue used for.

It was asked how the President's tuition cap would influence the decisions of the Tuition Policy Advisory Council. Perhaps differential tuition could be implemented gradually so as to not go above the 10% tuition cap. The colleges will provide proposals to the

Council; the Council will listen and then either amend or forward the proposals to the President. It is the President who will make the final decision. It is very important that the proposals include what the additional funds would be used for. The Council must make its final recommendations to Dr. Gates no later than the week of January 16 so that this information may be brought before the Board of Regents when they make tuition decisions at their March meeting. Therefore, the Colleges of Architecture and Engineering need to bring their proposals forward very soon. Liberal Arts is also beginning to consider differential tuition. Differential tuition could perhaps actually slow down the overall cost of education if all of the colleges were to implement. The idea of resource-centered management is one that some colleges would like to see take place because each college would then be responsible for its own costs.

The University of Texas has incorporated many fees into tuition and will be adding a utility fee. The article recommending the tuition increases for UT may be accessed at <http://www.utexas.edu/opa/news/2005/11/tuition03.html>.

The proposed new or increased student fees that have been presented to the Student Fee Committee were distributed to TPAC. The Student Fee Committee examined each fee individually and made comments regarding the proposals. The Fee Committee is scheduled to meet on Tuesday, November 15 and will present its recommendations to Dr. Gates on Tuesday, November 22. The committee will hear Dr. Gates' feedback on Friday, December 2 and the committee will meet again on Tuesday, December 2. The Tuition Policy Advisory Council discussed each fee and the comments/recommendations are as follows:

- Instructional Enhancement/Equipment Fee (IEEF)  
The Instructional Enhancement fee range was standardized last year at \$0-\$170/course, but the range did not give the College of Engineering room for growth, so the proposal is for a \$0-\$200/course range.

The Council unanimously agreed to forward this proposal to Dr. Gates.

- Career Center User Fee  
All students need to start preparing earlier for internships, coops, developing an Aggiefolio, etc. The Career Center would like to place Career Service Coordinators in every college and college career fairs are coordinated with the Career Center. The services provided impact the University at large so moving from a \$35/semester user fee to a \$12/semester fee for all students would be logical. The Council expressed concern that there would be duplication of effort with the colleges. The Council also would like to know how the amount of \$12/semester was arrived at. It was noted that the graduate students do not support because this fee would be of little benefit to them. It was suggested that the fee could be applied to all undergraduates and graduate students could be charged a user fee. The Executive Director of the Career Center will be invited to

further discuss the proposal with the Student Fee Committee on November 15 and the Student Senate at their next meeting on November 16.

The Council unanimously agreed that the Career Center User Fee should be returned to the Fee Committee for further consideration.

- Recreational Sports Fee  
The proposal is to increase the fee from \$78/semester for all students to \$98/semester for all students. The Recreational Sports Fee was approved by a student referendum.

The Council unanimously agreed to forward to President Gates.

- Group Hospital and Medical Services Fee  
The fee is currently at \$55/semester for all students, which is the lowest charge for this fee among the Big XII Schools. The recommendation is to increase the fee by \$15/semester for all students. The increase will help offset rising health care costs. Graduate students are in favor of the increase even though they have already seen an increase in their health care costs.

The Council agreed unanimously to go forward with this recommendation.

- Student Service Fee  
The current fee is \$12.50/SCH, with a proposed increase to \$13.08/SCH. An increase in the Student Service Fee needs to be passed by both the Student Senate and Graduate Student Council. The proposal is subject to approval by the Student Senate or by a student referendum.

The Council agreed unanimously to send the recommendation forward to Dr. Gates.

- Distance Learning/Technology Mediated Learning Fee  
\$40/SCH is currently charged to students who take distance education courses, but the proposal is to charge \$.65/SCH to all students. It was determined that this fee should continue to be a user fee because not all students can take advantage of distance education courses. It was also noted that if the University is moving to flat tuition, fees should not be charged by the semester credit hour. However, a SCH charge should be determined for part-time students.

The unanimous recommendation by the Council was to veto the proposition.

- Computer Access/Instructional Technology Fee  
The Council would like to know what areas would receive first priority if the increase in fees is not sufficient to cover all needs. A comparison of peer institutions should be made. The Associate Provost for Information Technology

will be invited to the November 15 meeting of the Student Fee Committee and the November 16 Student Senate meeting for further review. In addition to an SCH charge, it was again noted that the fee should have a flat rate for full-time students.

The Council unanimously asked that this proposal be taken back to committee.

- Doctoral Hours  
Doctoral students currently pay out-of-state tuition rates once they have taken 99 hours. The proposal is to change the limit to seven years or 99 hours, whichever is longer. It was reported that graduate students are in favor of the change. The University may receive less revenue because of this change since there is no longer State funding to support this.

The Council unanimously recommended the proposal move forward.

- Mays Business School MBA/Masters Program Fee  
The current fee is \$1,500/semester and the proposed change is to \$2,500/semester. The Mays Business School has the second cheapest MBA program in the United States and most of the fee goes to Career Services within the college. The Council will be notified as to how much of the fee goes towards student recruitment.

The Council unanimously agreed to send the proposal forward.

- Master of Land Economics and Real Estate Program Fee  
This would be a new fee comparable to the MBA fee. The proposed charge is \$1,500/semester.

The Council unanimously agreed to send forward to Dr. Gates.

The Tuition Policy Advisory Council's comments will be taken back to the Fee Committee for review.

The next TPAC meeting would fall on Friday, November 25, which is during the Thanksgiving break. The Council determined that the best time for the next meeting would be on Wednesday, December 7, a reading day. Agenda items for the next meeting should include the utility situation, fees that Dr. Gates recommends, and perhaps eliminating some fees by rolling them into tuition.

Several students noted that bus drivers and food service student workers are having difficulty working and taking 15 hours a semester. It was suggested that a leadership program could be initiated. The program must be rigorous, have structure and instruction, and have learning outcomes and assessment. The program would also have

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to be reviewed by the Faculty Senate Curriculum Committee and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

The Council was reminded that the University needs to be moving to a model that is instituted by most universities where tuition per semester is \$X. Students then take the number of hours per semester that best fit their individual circumstances.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:45 p.m.