

Tuition Policy Advisory Council
MEETING NOTES
March 3, 2006

The Tuition Policy Advisory Council met on Friday, March 3, 2006 in the Provost's Conference Room, 9th floor, Rudder Tower.

Guests: Joe Pettibon, Interim Assistant Provost and Executive Director of Student Financial Aid; Bob Piwonka, Director of Student Financial Services; and Deborah Wright, Director of Budgets.

The meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m.

Joe Pettibon reported that 75% of all A&M students receive some form of financial aid. 21% of these students have 100% of tuition and fees covered by grants and scholarships. The Deficit Reduction Act fixes interest rates on the Unsubsidized Stafford Loan at 6.8% and the Plus Loan at 8.5% and the origination fee is being phased out. Additionally, the annual borrowing limit of the Stafford Loan is increasing for some students. Mr. Pettibon added that some universities are implementing "hold harmless" clauses in their tuition policies for the lowest income students.

Bob Piwonka stated that Fiscal Appeals Panel consists of three faculty members, three undergraduate students, and three graduate students. The panel approved 110 of the tuition policy appeals that were filed in the fall of 2005. Some general approval categories have been established for appeals that involve departmental hour limits, graduating seniors, etc. 32 appeals were denied and the Panel has processed 20-30 more appeals so far this spring. It is anticipated that the process to hear flat rate tuition appeals may be phased out.

The enhancement fee was implemented in 2002. Students enrolled prior to that date were grandfathered and were therefore exempt from the fee. However, the exemption is about to be phased out.

The College of Engineering has decided not to develop a proposal for differential tuition at this time. The Colleges of Architecture, Liberal Arts and Education and Human Development are preparing proposals to bring forward to the Council. Dr. Gates has asked for three categories of clarification regarding the differential tuition proposal from the Mays Business School:

1. Impact on reinvestment faculty
2. Impact of tuition revenue (e.g. more course offerings, etc.)
3. Effect of SCH differential tuition charge on flat tuition

The University has unveiled plans to increase undergraduate enrollment by 2,500 students over the next five to six years and graduate enrollment by 1,000 students. For fall 2006, 350 new freshmen will be admitted, 500 transfer students and 170 graduate students. For each of the next five years, 350 additional freshmen will be admitted, while

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the number of transfer and graduate students will increase incrementally during that time. Meetings will be held with the individual deans next week to work out the specifics for each college.

According to spring 2006 data supplied by the Office of Institutional Studies and Planning, there has been a 32% increase in the number of students taking 15-17 SCH, while the number of students taking 12-14 SCH has decreased by 17%, so the tuition policy appears to be effecting change.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.