

Tuition Policy Advisory Council  
MEETING NOTES  
October 20, 2006

The Tuition Policy Advisory Council met on Friday, October 20, 2006 in the Provost's Conference Room, 9<sup>th</sup> floor, Rudder Tower.

The meeting was called to order at 8:00 a.m.

It was reported that the Council of Deans met on Wednesday, October 18. Differential tuition was one of the topics discussed. Specifically, the deans considered the concept of turning course fees into tuition for simplicity and for clarity on student tuition statements. The deans are pleased that the funds would then be eligible for set-asides for student financial aid; however, the supply cost of the course could be a concern if those funds were not used to adequately cover the cost of the course. Charging course-based differential tuition made more sense to the deans than did majors-based differential tuition because, in the event of majors-based differential tuition, one student would be paying one amount to take the course and another student with a different major would be paying a different amount to take the same course.

The President may approve differential tuition proposals from the various colleges as early as this fall. However, implementation would most likely not occur until 2008. Differential tuition for graduate students may not be affected for the time being.

The FY2007 budget would have approximately \$59 million in purchasing power for utilities. The utilities market is being closely monitored, and while there has been some recent positive movement, it remains very volatile. In fact, it was announced that natural gas prices increased more than 50% last month. A more in-depth discussion of the utilities situation could be discussed at the November TPAC meeting because a better idea of utility costs should be known by then.

A list of universities comparable to Texas A&M University and their associated non-resident undergraduate tuition and fees was distributed to the Council. Texas A&M University ranks among the lowest on the list. The Universities of Michigan-Ann Arbor and California-Berkeley are arguably the best public institutions on the list and their non-resident tuition and fees are also the highest. Perhaps they are better funded to provide a better education. The State of Texas dictates State mandated tuition, which is currently \$325 per semester credit hour for non-resident undergraduate students. The State reimburses the University through formula funding—approximately 40% of the E & G budget comes from general revenue funding. As such, an argument could be made that since non-resident students do not contribute to general revenue funding, those students should be charged more in designated tuition. The Division of Finance will research to see if this would be a feasible option. It was also noted that graduate out-of state tuition would not be changed.

It was reported that the out-of-state applications that Texas A&M receives are from strong academic candidates, such as National Merit and honors students. Out-of state students also bring another dimension of diversity to the University. The question was raised as to how many of these students qualify for scholarships. Texas A&M University's current out-of-state enrollment and applicant pool information will be discussed at the next meeting.

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Texas A&M University is in the process of increasing enrollment over the next five years. The goal is to increase undergraduate enrollment by 850 students (comprised of 700 new students and 150 transfer students) per year for the next five years. An enrollment report will be brought to the next meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 a.m.