



PA State System of Higher Education Board of Governors

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POLICY 1999-02-A: TUITION

See Also:

Amended: October 10, 2002, July 14, 2005, October 11, 2007, July 17, 2008, January 20, 2011, and January 26, 2017

Adopted: April 8, 1999

A. Purpose

The Board of Governors has statutory authority to set tuition for Pennsylvania's State System of Higher Education. This policy articulates the basic philosophy, objectives, and guidelines of the System's tuition structure, providing a common understanding of the basis for establishing tuition for the State System.

B. Definitions

- **Capacity**—The optimum academic year full-time equivalent student enrollment at each university that most efficiently utilizes its facilities and faculty.
- **Cohort**—A specific group of students established for tracking purposes; commonly used in reference to the group of new students enrolling at a university in an academic year.
- **Distance Education**—An educational process in which the instruction occurs with the instructor and student in different locations. Distance education makes use of one or more technologies, including web-conference, to deliver 80 percent or more of the instruction for the course to students who are separated from the instructor and to support interaction between the students and the instructor synchronously or asynchronously.
- **Full-Time Tuition**—The tuition rate charged to undergraduate students enrolled in 12 or more semester credits.
- **Graduate Student**—A student who holds at least a bachelor's or first professional degree and is enrolled at the post-baccalaureate level, including nondegree students in graduate courses who may or may not be admitted to a graduate program.
- **Out-of-State Student**—A student who is not legally domiciled in Pennsylvania, as defined in Board of Governors' Policy 1985-03, *Student Domicile Regulations*.

- **In-State Student**—A student who is legally domiciled in Pennsylvania, as defined in Board of Governors' Policy 1985-03, *Student Domicile Regulations*.
- **Technology Tuition Fee**—A separate tuition fee established by the Board of Governors for rendering technology resources and services to enhance student learning experiences.
- **Tuition**—The basic fee established by the Board of Governors for rendering educational services, as enumerated in Act 188 of 1982. The technology tuition fee is a form of tuition.
- **Undergraduate Student**—A student in a bachelor's degree program, an associate's degree program, a vocational or technical program below the baccalaureate level; or a nondegree-seeking student matriculated in a lower or upper division course.

C. Policy

1. Undergraduate Tuition

- a. The Board of Governors will establish annually undergraduate in-state tuition rate(s), based primarily on the financial requirements of each university within the System and the Commonwealth's commitment toward meeting those requirements. Secondary consideration will be given to other factors, such as change in enrollment demographics, family income, financial aid availability, inflation, and relative standing in terms of tuition charges at peer institutions of higher education.
- b. Undergraduate students enrolled in 12–18 credits in a fall or spring semester will be charged a full-time tuition rate, unless otherwise approved by the Board of Governors (see section C.1.e.). The full-time rate is equal to the per-credit rate for 12 credits per semester. Undergraduate students enrolled in a fall or spring semester for greater than 18 credits will be charged a full-time tuition rate for the first 18 credits and the appropriate per-credit rate for all remaining credits.
- c. The chancellor may adjust undergraduate in-state tuition rate(s) solely to allow the State System to establish partnerships with other institutions in collaborative/consortial arrangements.
- d. The Board of Governors will establish annually undergraduate out-of-state tuition rate(s) at a level to ensure that undergraduate out-of-state students are paying the System's average net cost of education.
- e. The Board of Governors, upon recommendation of the chancellor, may consider alternative in-state and/or out-of-state tuition rate structures for individual universities, based upon such factors as the average net cost of undergraduate education; the goals and objectives of the university and the System; the degree to which universities are at, above, or below student enrollment capacity; the current relationship between pricing, cost, and student demand; the change to student payment amounts; and student affordability.

Presidents, upon the approval of their council of trustees, may request that the chancellor recommend an alternative tuition rate structure for their university.

- 1) Alternative methods of charging tuition may include, but are not limited to:
 - a) Charging per-credit tuition regardless of number of credits in which the student is enrolled.
 - b) Modifying the range of credits for which the full-time tuition rate is applied.
 - c) Charging different tuition rates to different cohort groups.
 - 2) In addition, out-of-state tuition may be applied differently to out-of-state students based on the following demographic criteria:
 - a) Geographic region.
 - b) Academic program.
 - c) Scholastic and/or extracurricular achievement.
- f. Biennially, the president will provide to the chancellor an assessment of any in-state alternative tuition rate structures that have been approved by the Board of Governors. The assessment must address, at a minimum, enrollment, total and net revenue, student access, student affordability, and student success. Student-centered metrics must include an assessment of demographics, analysis of workforce earnings based on existing national and/or state data sets, and outcomes regarding status and time to degree attainment.

2. Graduate Tuition

- a. The Board of Governors will establish annually graduate in-state tuition rate(s) on a per-credit basis that reflect more accurately the System's average cost of graduate education.
- b. The Board of Governors will establish annually the graduate out-of-state tuition rate(s) at a level to ensure that graduate out-of-state students are paying the System's average net cost of graduate education.
- c. The chancellor, upon recommendation of the president, has the authority to adjust the graduate tuition rate for specific graduate programs, based upon such factors as the cost of instruction, the level of service provided to the student, and the level of tuition necessary for the university to offer programs.

3. Summer/Winter Session Tuition

The chancellor, upon the recommendation of the president, may set alternative tuition rates for summer or winter sessions.

4. Distance Education Tuition

- a. In-state distance education students, both graduate and undergraduate, will be charged at the appropriate prevailing per-credit resident rate.
- b. Out-of-state distance education students, both graduate and undergraduate, will be charged a per-credit tuition of at least 102 percent of the prevailing in-state

per-credit tuition rate. Presidents may set the out-of-state distance education per-credit tuition rate on a course-by-course or program-by-program basis.

- c. The chancellor, upon recommendation of the president, has the authority to adjust the in-state tuition rate for a particular course or program.
- d. This policy applies to students who are charged on a per-credit-hour basis. Full-time undergraduate students continue to pay full-time tuition, if applicable. The president may establish a full-time out-of-state undergraduate distance education rate based upon the per-credit out-of-state distance education rate for students enrolled 100 percent in distance education courses.

5. Technology Tuition Fee

- a. The Board of Governors will establish annually the technology tuition fee in a manner that is proportional to enrollment and residency status (in-state/out-of-state).
- b. Technology tuition fee revenues shall be expended only on instructional technology. These revenues shall be used for the direct benefit of students to help them achieve the learning objectives of their academic programs.

6. Implementation

The chancellor shall promulgate procedures and standards as necessary to ensure proper implementation of this policy.