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Governors State Announces Tuition for Academic Year 2010-2011

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The Trustees approved the tuition hike Friday, pointing to a continuing decline in state aid at a time when GSU is experiencing sharp enrollment increases. Even with the tuition increase, university officials say, GSU will still have the lowest undergraduate costs of any Chicago-area university.

"GSU remains dedicated to the principle of providing an exceptional, affordable education," said Dr. Elaine P. Maimon, university president. "The new tuition rates and fees allow us to maintain quality educational programs that best serve the needs of our students and the region."

Under the new tuition schedule, undergraduate students will pay an additional $13 per credit hour, which is rising from $224 to $237. The new tuition rates will be locked in four years for Illinois residents who enter the university in the 2010-2011 academic year. Tuition for most in-state graduate students is increasing by 5.7 percent.

Lorine Samuels, chair of the Board of Trustees, said the continuing decline in state aid to higher education over the last decade leaves GSU and other state universities little choice except to raise tuition.

"No one wants to increase tuition," Samuels said. "The Board of Trustees this year was faced with a balancing act between the resources available to us and how to provide the educational opportunities our students deserve. This board is committed to financial accountability on all levels and to keeping tuition and fees at the lowest level possible."

The Board of Trustees increased only one of GSU's mandatory fees, the Career and Counseling fee, by $2 per semester. All other mandatory fees will remain at their 2009-2010 levels.

Student Trustee Bryce Johnsen said the fee increase is necessary because it will go toward helping students find jobs. "These are challenging times and our students need the right Career and Counseling resources during their job search," he said. "This is a small price to pay for increased services."

With the new tuition rates, university officials say they will continue to assist qualified GSU students so they can receive financial aid from state and federal sources. More than half of GSU's students receive some form of financial aid. Last year, about $30 million in financial aid was distributed to GSU students.

Additionally, GSU is working with area community colleges to develop enrollment initiatives designed to provide a seamless transition from community colleges to GSU. For instance, GSU recently signed a dual admission agreement with Kankakee Community College and plans to sign similar agreements with other schools.

The agreement allows bachelor's degree seeking students to be admitted simultaneously to both institutions. Dually admitted students will be able to take advantage of GSU's Guaranteed Tuition Program, through which students who complete their KCC associate degrees in two years are eligible to pay the GSU tuition rate available the year they were dually admitted as freshmen at KCC.

Keeping tuition affordable is part of GSU's overall strategy to motivate community college students to complete associate degrees and transfer immediately to the university. Next week, President Maimon will meet with area community college presidents to further partnership initiatives through the creation of the Chicagoland Alliance for Degree Completion.