



West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission

Higher Education
News Clippings

Week of April 26, 2009

School Tuition Hikes Loom as Officials Await State Budget

Story by Walt Williams

Students planning to attend one of the state's public universities later this year can expect to pay more in tuition and fees than their peers do now.

University officials plan to raise tuition and fees 4 to 8 percent in the coming school year, in part to help cover what they expect will be cuts in state government funding.

The problem for administrators is they don't know yet what state lawmakers will do given the Legislature has yet to set a state budget.

"It is difficult because the appropriations we receive are a significant amount of the budget," said Ed Magee, vice president of administration and finance at Shepherd University.

The state Higher Education Policy Commission will vote May 1 to approve new tuition and fee schedules for all the state's public universities except West Virginia University and Marshall University.

Shepherd has asked for a 6.86 percent increase in undergraduate, in-state tuition and fees and a 5.95 percent increase in out-of-state rates. Full-year, in-state tuition at the university currently is about \$4,900, and the increase would push that to more than \$5,200.

Officials at Shepherd and the state's other four-year institutions expect the state government to slash their funding from 4 to 5 percent, although they really don't know yet what that final figure will be.

"We are anticipating as much as a 5 percent decrease in our state appropriation, when combined with the enrollment growth that we have been experiencing, an affordable increase is necessary in order to remain competitive," West Liberty State College President Robin Capehart said in a prepared statement. "Simply put, it is an investment in our growth as well an investment to continue to maintain a high quality education."

University officials also said operating costs are not getting cheaper. Officials at Fairmont State University said proposed increase in tuition will help pay for a 6 percent rate increase in the employer paid premium for PEIA medical insurance; utility increases for gas, electric and water; increases in technology costs; increases in custodial contract costs; and increases in heating, ventilating and air-conditioning contract costs.

State lawmakers adjourned the 2009 legislative session in April without passing a state budget. Gov. Joe Manchin and legislative leaders agreed to hold off on a decision until at least late May. The delay should give them more time to assess state revenues, which are rapidly dropping as the reality of a the weak economy.

Manchin already has indicated he will slash the budget and has asked officials in all parts of state government to cut costs by 4 percent. University officials, however, must set their budgets for the coming school year before they know what that final figure will be.

The increase in tuition and fees comes at a particularly bad time for students and their families.

Sources of financial aid are drying up due to the economy. State lawmakers also agreed to cap PROMISE scholarships at \$4,750 a year instead of having them pay full tuition and fees, although that change won't take effect until the 2010-2011 school year. Still, students starting college that year can likely expect another tuition hike on top of the hikes proposed for the coming year.

State funding for higher education has been shrinking for more than a decade. College administrators say they have had to raise tuition and fees to make up for the decline. Tuition and fees at West Liberty increased more than \$2,100 from 1998 to 2008, according to HEPC figures. The state's other public campuses experienced similar increases.

That's not to say critics don't contend the state's universities could do more to control their overall costs. Recently, one state lawmaker noted the incoming WVU president will earn an annual salary of roughly \$500,000 while the typical West Virginian earns less than \$40,000.

University officials counter that tuition and fees at the state's public universities are lower than their counterparts in other states, showing they are budget conscious.

The proposed increase under consideration by the HEPC does not include tuition and fees at the state's two-year community and technical colleges. The state Community and Technical College Council sets fees for public two-year institutions.

April 29, 2009

College students don't face big tuition hike, official says

by Ry Rivard, Daily Mail staff

Students attending West Virginia State Community and Technical College are unlikely to face a steep tuition increase this fall, said the head of the state Higher Education Policy Commission.

Chancellor Brain Noland said it's "highly doubtful" that West Virginia State University will end up raising tuition on the two-year college's students, a proposal that was discussed last week by officials at both institutions.

The increase, which was still being negotiated, could have raised annual tuition by 25 percent for community college students who took required general education courses at the university.

"It is highly doubtful that the outcome of those negotiations would necessitate an immediate and significant cost borne by students," Noland said Tuesday.

Right now, the university reduces its normal \$181 per credit hour rate to \$121 per hour for community college students who take its courses. In discussions between the two schools, W.Va. State said it would consider ending that arrangement and charging community college students the regular rate of \$181 per hour.

The two institutions share a campus in Institute but are being legally separated this summer because of a 2008 law. That law gives several state community colleges independence from their former four-year university partners so they can focus on workforce development.

"You've got two institutions that are embarking on new directions," Noland said. "There are going to be some growing pains."

But Noland said a big tuition increase for students would not be one of those, though tuition could go up in the range of 4 to 8 percent.

He said state officials are mindful of the impact such decisions have on students "particularly in the current economic climate."

The West Virginia State community college announced this month that it would change its name to Kanawha Valley Community and Technical College. The transition to the new name will take place over the summer.

Monday April 27, 2009

WVU Tech puts emphasis back on recruitment

by Mary J. Lewis

MONTGOMERY, W.Va. -- Some major administrative housekeeping has kept West Virginia University Institute of Technology's resources away from recruiting students.

That is changing in Montgomery.

The Community and Technical College's state-mandated separation from the institute was complete in July 2008, and WVU Tech's integration with West Virginia University, which started in 1996, will be finished this summer.

Scott Hurst, WVU Tech's campus provost, said there was no additional money or extra staff during the transition, so marketing and recruiting efforts took a back seat.

Now, employees are getting back to their regular jobs, and Michael Mattison, Tech's first dean of enrollment, is getting down to his.

Mattison, who began last fall, spearheaded Tech's first recruiting and early registration event of the year. It was held Saturday on the campus in eastern Kanawha County.

"It met all expectations," Mattison said.

About 270 incoming freshmen enrolled during the day.

Many of those students are engineering majors, said Rita Fairfax, who works in the admissions office.

She said the event was a lot of fun, especially with all the other activities going on.

Financial aid assistance and sessions for parents took place with other events, including the Golden Bears' spring football classic, a cookout, a concert and a car show. Several booths, including those from student groups as well as one for Valley Health in Cedar Grove, were set up as well.

Mattison said the goal Saturday was not only to introduce prospective students to Tech, but also to involve the community. He said he wants to have more such events.

He said at least five or six states in addition to West Virginia were represented. One family came to Montgomery from Jacksonville, Fla., he said.

Adewale Anthony and his parents drove six hours from Maryland to visit WVU Tech for the first time.

Ogunsanya Anthony said his son was attracted to the school's graphic design program and also hopes to walk on to the football team.

Jeremy Hunt of Point Pleasant already has been signed to the team. The 17-year-old kicker said he is coming to Tech for its electrical engineering program.

"The only choice for electrical engineering is here or in Morgantown," he said.

In fact, three WVU students are transferring to Montgomery for its engineering programs, according to Marilyn Potts, WVU's interim director of admissions.

Hurst said he hopes to lure more international students to WVU Tech, where more than 40 countries already are represented.

He added that one official has recently traveled to Romania and Scotland to recruit students and establish relations with schools there. Two Scottish students have committed to coming to Tech, he said.

Hurst also said recruiting efforts are ramping up elsewhere in the United States and officials recently have traveled to Austin, Texas; Miami; Philadelphia and Boston.

Charleston Daily Mail

DAILYMAIL.COM

April 29, 2009

Marshall president warns of hard times

by The Associated Press

HUNTINGTON, W.Va. -- The ailing economy is expected to squeeze higher education even harder next year, but Marshall University's president says faculty layoffs are all but out of the question.

President Stephen Kopp said at a General Faculty meeting Tuesday that other cost-cutting measures are on the table. They include operating fewer buildings during the summer, imposing a hiring freeze and developing a plan for energy savings.

Kopp also said faculty and staff members shouldn't expect pay raises in the coming state budget, which the Legislature is due to take up in May.

Applications to Marshall are up by about 10 percent, or 445 more than last year. Kopp says the school's overall enrollment could rise from 13,808 currently to 14,476 by 2012.

MU Board of Governors adds two degree programs

BILL ROSENBERGER, The Herald-Dispatch

HUNTINGTON -- The Marshall University Board of Governors approved the addition of two full bachelor's degree programs.

A four-year degree will soon be available in exercise science, changing from an area of emphasis on the physical education program. The same will happen with athletic training. It is being moved from a concentration to a bachelor of science degree with seven areas of concentration.

The board also discussed naming rights during an executive session. No information was made available about which facilities were up for discussion. New facilities that could be eligible include the freshman dormitories, the recreation center and the still under construction Erickson Alumni Center and Marshall University Foundation Hall.

President Stephen Kopp said the June 18 Board of Governors meeting will deal heavily with next year's budget, but nothing can be decided until the state budget is approved the Legislature. The Legislature is planning a special session on the budget later this month. He said he doesn't anticipate any increase in state appropriations, even with federal stimulus money tagged for higher education available.

The board also approved Marshall's inclusion in the Post-9/11 GI Bill Yellow Ribbon Program. It is voluntary, but state legislators passed a bill making it mandatory, however it still needs Gov. Joe Manchin's signature.

The program gives veterans the opportunity to attend Marshall at the lowest in-state tuition amount, and the Veterans Administration will pick up the tab. The same goes for metro and out-of-state students, except that Marshall and the VA agree to split the extra costs charged to those students.



Monday April 27, 2009

Students get jump start on higher education with statewide program

By CHARLY MARKWART, Princeton Times

PRINCETON — For most high school students and their parents, financial assistance of any kind for the pending costs of college tuition is a highly valued commodity.

Several Mercer County students have found that welcome help in the form of the Health Sciences & Technology Academy (HSTA), a statewide program of West Virginia University that provides pre-college, college and graduate training in health sciences to minority, underrepresented and rural students. Students who successfully complete the innovative four-year program receive full four-year tuition waivers to any state-supported college or university in West Virginia.

Currently, 40 students, 30 from Bluefield High School and 10 from Princeton Senior High School, participate in the county's HSTA chapter, founded 10 years ago. Tuesday evening, several of those students gathered at PSHS for the county HSTA symposium, where they presented the research projects they have worked all year to complete in a trial-run event intended as a preparation for next weekend's state symposium, held May 2 at Capital High School.

"The purpose of HSTA is to encourage students and to prepare them to be successful in college," said Kathy Morton, the State Education Coordinator for HSTA, who attended Tuesday's event. "It's just a phenomenal organization; 98 percent of our graduates attend college, and 94 percent of those students graduate with four-year degrees, with another 4 percent obtaining two-year degrees. They work in small groups, so they get individual attention from the teachers, and they are exposed to so many curriculum things that they wouldn't normally get in school. They're always being pushed to raise the bar."

HSTA members attend once-weekly after-school meetings throughout the school year, and are required to attend at least two summer institutes during their high school careers. During their regular meetings, students receive valuable hands-on research opportunities, working with partners and individually to complete the year-long research projects that they present at the state symposium, where over 700 presentations will be made by students from the 26 counties in which HSTA is represented.

"They have to learn to do research; they're doing actual college-level research, so by the time they are seniors, they're able to present as well as any college student," said Morton.

To qualify for acceptance into HSTA, students must meet one of the following four qualifications: African American, lower socio-economic class, first generation college-goer, or rural. Since all Mercer County students would qualify in the rural category,

potential members must meet another qualification. Students who wish to participate must apply during or after their eighth grade year. Applicants are then selected based on grade point averages and their ability to meet the above qualifications.

“I joined HSTA because it will help out with college, and it will probably look good on a college application,” said Daniel Traynham, a sophomore at PSHS. “I’m going to need the financial help going into the medical field, and also, you learn how to do a lot of work that will pay off in the end.”

In addition to tuition waivers for undergraduate studies, HSTA graduates who graduate from a four-year state college or university and who plan to work in a health sciences field receive free tuition for graduate school.

“So Daniel could literally go to medical school without ever paying tuition,” said Morton.

At Tuesday’s event, parents and HSTA teachers watched the county’s participants present their research projects, Powerpoint presentations relating to issues of the health sciences. While the students presented, audience members filled out forms rating the strengths and weaknesses of each presentation and helping to make the presenters aware of any necessary corrections in preparation of next weekend’s important state event.

“If the information on their slides is incorrect or missing, this will give them time to fix it before the state symposium,” said Yvonne Harris, field site coordinator for Mercer County HSTA.

COMMENTARY: Value of Higher Education a Bargain for West Virginians

By Rene A. Henry

Seattle, WV (HNN) – Everybody loves a bargain -- especially in tough economic times. West Virginians are very fortunate to have exceptional education values at two of their great public universities – Marshall University and West Virginia University.

Too many colleges and universities across the country have raised tuition and fees, frozen and cut back on enrollment, and forced more students deeper into debt. However, during this crisis it hasn't stopped many presidents and chancellors from taking significant pay raises. Salaries for public university presidents rose more than 7 percent last year and overall have risen more than 35 percent since 2003, according to a survey by The Chronicle of Higher Education.

Compared with their counterparts in surrounding states, the presidents of Marshall University and West Virginia University are grossly underpaid. Taxpayers, students, future students, parents and citizens of West Virginia are the major benefactors.

James Clements, the new president of West Virginia University, is paid \$450,000. Stephen Kopp, who has been at Marshall University since 2005 is paid \$275,000. Marshall's board of governors approved an additional \$50,000 in salary for Kopp but to be paid only by private funds. Unfortunately, the Marshall foundation has been unable to raise the money.

These salary figures may seem high to the average person, but to put things in perspective, E. Gordon Gee, president of Ohio State University, is paid more than three times the combined salaries of both Clements and Kopp. In 2008 he was paid \$1,346,255 and this year just received a \$310,000 bonus. Gee was president of WVU from 1981 to 1985.

Salaries of public university presidents in neighboring states include John T. Casteen, III, University of Virginia, \$797,048; Charles W. Steger, Virginia Tech, \$720,000; and Graham B. Spanier, Penn State, \$590,000. Last year when the University of Kentucky lost \$20 million in state aid, froze salaries for faculty and staff and cut nearly 200 positions, the board of trustees gave President Lee Todd a \$95,000 bonus, increasing his annual pay to \$550,000. When David P. Roselle resigned as president of the University of Delaware in 2007, his total compensation package was \$2.4 million, even more than the school's football coach!

The compensation of the leaders of colleges and universities pales in comparison to some of the packages given heads of Wall Street firms, banks and Fortune 500 companies. And many higher education president and chancellors are responsible for as many or more employees and students, budgets, programs and crises.

The cost of a college education has been rising faster than inflation, but tuition and fees at both WVU and Marshall are affordable. In most cases, the costs for a student from

Kentucky, Maryland, Ohio, Pennsylvania, or Virginia to attend either university are less than the in-state cost for them at their home state universities. Between 1985 and 1995, tuition increased 82 percent at public universities and rose again 6.6 percent in 2007. A plus factor for West Virginians is that approximately 70 percent of the students at WVU annually receive financial aid which averages \$10,178 per student.

West Virginians can be proud of the academic honors, research accomplishments, success of the athletic teams, and overall leadership at its two great institutions. WVU is highly ranked nationally, having graduated 25 Rhodes Scholars, 20 Truman Scholars, and 32 Goldwater Science Scholars. Sixteen members of its faculty have been honored by the Carnegie Foundation. While violence and crime also are rising on many university campuses, WVU has one of the nation's safest college campuses. The Morgantown campus was ranked 18th by Reader's Digest magazine among the country's public and private colleges and universities.

Under Kopp's leadership, Marshall's Huntington campus has opened several academic buildings and residence halls that were built with private funds. New academic programs have been launched, including an orthopedic residence program for the School of Medicine, the first new program of its kind anywhere in the U.S. in more than a decade. He also developed the Marshall Institute of Interdisciplinary Research through Governor Joe Manchin's "Bucks for Brains" legislation. This is expected to have a significant economic impact on the university and the surrounding area with new intellectual properties being transferred into businesses and jobs.

All West Virginians should thank and applaud the governing boards and leadership of both WVU and Marshall and be proud that students have an affordable opportunity for an education at both institutions.

Rene A. Henry, is an author and columnist who was born in Charleston and now lives in Seattle, Washington. He spent 10 years of his professional career in senior positions in higher education and is a Lifetime Old Gold WVU alumnus. His latest book, "Communicating In A Crisis," has a chapter dealing with crises in higher education. Many of his commentaries are posted on his website at www.renehenry.com.



April 28, 2009

Where Have All the Doctors Gone? They're retired.

By Juliet Lapidos

What caused the U.S. doctor shortage? Obama-administration officials have reportedly become alarmed by doctor shortages, especially since millions of previously uninsured people would gain coverage—and therefore increase demand—if the president manages to pass national health care reform. To make up for the physician shortfall, which several studies suggest could reach 100,000 over the next 20 years, the Association of American Medical Colleges is recommending a 30 percent increase in med-school enrollment. Why don't we have enough doctors?

Blame the baby boomers. Since 1965, the federal government has subsidized medical residencies through Medicare. To grow the population of doctors in the 1970s, Congress approved funds for additional places. The boomers who flooded into the profession back then, and who now represent one-third of the medical establishment, are starting to retire. That hasn't stopped the ranks of doctors from growing, even on a per capita basis. But the rate of that growth is expected to shrink considerably over the next decade as the number of retirees increases.

At the same time, consumer demand for medical services is expected to increase. Again, blame the baby boomers: While the total population is expected to increase by 18 percent over the next 10 years, the population over the age of 65 will expand by 54 percent. Since older people require more health care, we'll need more doctors to handle the same number of patients. According to some estimates, the demand for doctors will rise to between 1.09 million and 1.17 million by 2020—many tens of thousands more than we'll actually have.

There's also a distribution problem. According to the Times, the ratio of primary-care doctors to population is higher in Massachusetts than in many other states, in part because more people have medical insurance there. In certain regions of the country where malpractice insurance is particularly costly, specialists in so-called high-malpractice fields are in short supply: In West Virginia, for example, it's hard to find a neurosurgeon. And relatively few doctors want to work in rural areas, leading to dramatic, localized shortages of both primary care physicians and specialists.

Another strain on the doctor supply arises from changing expectations in the workplace. According to the Council on Graduate Medical Education, new physicians are working fewer hours than their predecessors, with a reduced patient load. They may also be devoting less time to patient care and more time to research.

Ironically, just a little more than a decade ago, there was a doctor surplus. In 1996, a committee of the Institute of Medicine warned that the United States had a surfeit of doctors caused by foreign-trained physicians coming here to work and recommended freezing med-school class sizes and limiting first-year residency positions. A year later, Slate ran an article on an alternative strategy for reducing the number of doctors approved by the federal Health Care Financing Administration. Under the Graduate

Medical Education Demonstration Project, 41 teaching hospitals received \$400 million in exchange for not training between 20 percent and 25 percent of the medical residents they would otherwise have trained over the next six years.

Explainer thanks Jesse Pines of the University of Pennsylvania and Edward Salsberg of the Association of American Medical Colleges.