PROPOSAL: Undergraduate Tuition Simplification Strategy

Background

The current undergraduate tuition and fee rate structures are difficult to understand and expressed differently from our peers, making Western’s good value hard to discern for prospective students and families who compare the cost of attendance here versus other public four-year schools in the state. A newly proposed streamlined tuition structure will bring new clarity for students and their families, making costs easier to understand and anticipate. This restructuring is a crucial step to enable multi-year financial aid strategies and simplified rate structures that would benefit students and families.

Currently, undergraduate tuition and fees at WMU vary by course modality (Main Campus in-person, regional in-person and online), residency status and lower and upper level. Main Campus and regional site credit hours are assessed based on residency status and class-level classification. A unique rate is assessed for online credit hours regardless of either residency status or class level. A $20 technology fee is also assessed per online course. An enrollment fee is assessed based on main campus in-person credit hours. Differential tuition is also assessed in three colleges by credit hour on main campus in-person and regional site courses.

Under the proposed approach, all registered undergraduate credit hours will be included in the University’s flat-rate tuition model. Programs that are 100% online are not included in the University’s flat-rate tuition model due to the market conditions and enrollment patterns that are particular to online degrees. Therefore, the pricing model for these programs will not change with the proposed tuition restructuring plan.

The proposed simplification strategy for undergraduate tuition includes:

- One tuition rate schedule across all course modalities (main, regional site or online).
- Enrollment fee would be eliminated by including it in the tuition rate, as other Michigan publics do.
- Eliminate the technology fee charged per online course.
- All registered credit hours will be included in the flat-rate tuition model wherein students pay the same rate for a course load that ranges from 12 to 15 credit hours while maintaining current student classifications for level and residency.
Eliminate the legacy tuition rate structure that has been in place for non-resident undergraduate students that were admitted prior to summer I 2017.

Programs that are 100% online are not included in the flat rate and will be assessed their own rate.

Student Assessment Fee and Sustainability Fee are student-body imposed fees administered outside of Western’s administration. They will continue to be assessed to all undergraduates and graduate students except those in fully online programs.

**Recommended Action**

It is recommended that effective with the Fall 2021 semester, the Board of Trustees approves the proposed undergraduate tuition assessment strategy.