PROPOSAL: GRADUATE TUITION RATES STRATEGY

Background

The University continues to evaluate the effectiveness of tuition rate strategies and has completed a comprehensive review of graduate tuition rates and graduate tuition assessment rules. Guiding principles for this review process include:

Simplify tuition rate structure and tuition assessment rules

WMU has historically charged different graduate tuition rates based on residency status as well as type of course and location the course is offered. As students have required greater flexibility in course offerings, many of them take advantage of the multiple course opportunities provided to them. For this reason, WMU’s students can be enrolled in main campus courses, courses held at our regional sites, and also taking online classes. With the multiple tuition rate structure, it is not always easy for a student to understand total tuition and fees that will be incurred. With rate and assessment simplification, transparency is increased.

Tuition rate adjustments are mindful of financial impact to students

Graduate tuition rates were also reviewed for market competitiveness. It was recognized that the main campus graduate non-resident rate is no longer competitive when considering its ratio to the main campus graduate student resident rate. The non-resident graduate rate is also no longer competitive when compared to peer institutions competing for the same student populations. It is being recommended that the graduate non-resident tuition ratio to resident tuition be adjusted downward.

WMU strives to be transparent when assessing both tuition and fees. We are also evolving to a simpler rate structure that is easy for the student to better understand the costs of education. We also need to remain competitive as we continue to recruit and retain our students. These goals are important to us as we are dedicated to being a school of choice.

The following graduate tuition rate strategies and tuition assessment rules are recommended effective Summer II 2020 to better align the non-resident tuition rate with peer institutions, the relationship between resident and non-resident rates, and to satisfy the guiding principles:

• Adjust the main campus ratio of non-resident graduate student rate to 1.5 times the resident graduate student rate. Residency status is determined at time of application and will persist throughout the student’s experience at WMU.
• Align regional site non-resident graduate tuition rates to main campus tuition rates. Resident graduate tuition rates are currently aligned regardless of physical location of where the class is offered.
• Assess graduate tuition rates by students’ primary campus of registration versus course location. Main campus rates will apply for all courses taken if a student is admitted as and remains a main campus student. Regional site rates will be applicable if the student is admitted by Extended University Programs in a program that is associated with a regional site and maintains this affiliation. The online rate will apply if the student is admitted to and continues with an online program.
• The enrollment fee and student assessed fees will be determined by the total registered credit hours for the students’ primary campus of registration.

**Recommended Action**

It is recommended that effective with the Summer II 2020 session, the Board of Trustees approve the proposed graduate tuition rate strategies and tuition assessment rules.