

TUITION

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to access education is essential."

Only in the post-Measure 5 years has there been discussions of alternative methods of financing the state system, running from the higher non-resident tuition to charging more for professional schools, such as the University law school and Oregon State University's veterinary school.

"As we look at the economics of our own business, if we go into the 1995-97 biennium facing the full impact of Measure 5, we won't have enough money to do what we're doing," Wilson said. "We have to continue to look at different ways of financing the business."

Board member Bob Bailey said the board is watching the impact of the currently implemented differential tuition programs before it makes any moves. He said, however, that the current discussions have brought up many possibilities, as well as problems.

One option is to let individual schools charge more than others depending on their perceived market value, he said. For instance, the University could charge more than Oregon State University, which could charge more than Portland State, if the schools determined they could attract students at higher prices.

The major problem with that, Bailey said, is it could present an elitist environment where a degree from Oregon State would appear more valuable than that of Southern Oregon State College.

"It's a possibility," Bailey said. "At the same time, some people may just want to pay more for the collegiate experience. If one school offers a full college environment for a higher cost, while another offers just classes for less money, maybe students should have that option. The real question is: Do we have different access points with different costs?"

Resource fee may increase tuition

By Rivers Janssen
Oregon Daily Emerald

University President Myles Brand has been lobbying the state Board of Higher Education to add an independent fee to students' tuition bills.

Brand wants to charge students a \$40-per-quarter "undergraduate resource fee," which he said would be earmarked specifically for Freshman Interest Groups, student/professor research projects, better faculty advising and other programs that would improve the student experience at the University.

The fee would be unique to this school unless another state institution made a similar request.

Both Oregon State University and Portland State University do charge engineering majors an extra \$100 per term, as other schools sometimes do for professional programs, but neither school charges the entire student body a resource fee, as Brand is proposing.

Brand said he doesn't like increasing fees at the University but said that if students want a good education, they may have to pay a little bit extra for it.

"It's all about providing a higher-quality education in a fiscally constrained environment," he said.

To that end, the University is also working on a productivity plan for the state chancellor's office to be presented in the spring; ideally, it would map out how the University can grow and prosper while actually getting \$10 million per year less from the state from 1995-97.

The University already charges non-residents more than other state schools and levies a \$2,750 resource fee on law students.

The \$40 resource fee isn't a particularly controversial concept given the fact that tuition has risen by about 50 percent at all state schools since 1990's Ballot Measure 5 passed. But it does represent another step away from the idea that all the state schools are cut from the same cloth.

That's exactly what angers Dick Meyers, president of Western Oregon State College. He doesn't want the University to charge more

than other state schools because he said it would lead to distorted perceptions about the quality of those institutions.

"It promotes the idea that because one school costs more, it is a better school," Meyers said.

Although universities currently charge more than colleges in Oregon, he said the quality of his school is as high as any other, citing as evidence a number of newly recruited faculty members and a high GPA among entering students.

"There are certainly advantages to charging more," Meyers said. "And I know we could charge more, but we don't want to. It's not good for the state."

That's the concern most people have about differential tuition — that it will restrict access to the state system as a whole.

"The mission of Oregon schools is to educate Oregon students," said Robert Nosse, executive director of the Oregon Student Lobby. "That's why public schools exist — for those of us who can't afford to attend private schools like Willamette and Lewis and Clark."

"I'm not opposed to us marketing ourselves, but that's not our mission," he said.

But the reality for Brand is that differential tuition already exists. He said it would be great if all students in the state could pay the same for their education, but in today's fiscal climate, it's a myth.

Brand said the real issue is that the state keeps cutting funding and raising tuition. A \$40 fee won't stop most students from attending the University, especially if they know the money will improve their educational experience, he said.

Brand said at least 10 percent to 20 percent of the fee would be put into financial aid programs to help students who can't afford the extra financial burden.

Another concern expressed by Nosse is that although the increase may be low at first, it could grow significantly within a few years. Brand said he doesn't know whether that's a possibility and said that the University will have to wait a few years until he can evaluate the fee's value.

start taking the place of residents, Wilson said, which the board does not want.

A second differential tuition option is to make certain programs more expensive than others, Bailey said. Majoring in engineering could cost more than majoring in English because engineering is a more expensive major to offer, he said.

That, too, is a controversial option because it's feared that a student will make a career choice based on a financial decision, such as majoring in Spanish only because it's an affordable major, not because it's what the student wants to do.

Board member Bobby Lee said he also fears students may have difficulty changing majors, especially if they have to reapply for financial aid every time they transfer to a cheaper or more expensive major.

"I'm concerned that this whole policy might constrain students in the field of studies that they can afford, especially in the undergraduate level," he said.

Wilson agrees.

"The thought process is that you don't want students making career choices based on financial decisions," she said.

At issue, however, is not whether differential tuition is feasible — it's already been implemented in a limited fashion — but whether students would be getting added value for paying more, she said.

For instance, certain classes or programs may not be offered if a school isn't allowed to charge slightly more for them.

"We would want to look at each case on its own merits," Wilson said. "We are open to looking at differential tuition, but each university and college must present a solid case."

"We are at a crisis," Wilson added. "Nothing is sacred. Everything deserves a fresh look."

In other words, can every Oregonian still get a college degree if several schools charge significantly more than others? The access question is the one that troubles all of the board members, who are worried simulta-

neously about acquiring new funding and providing higher education for all Oregonians.

Wilson said the state has to be prepared to serve 80,000 Oregonians in the future. It serves 60,000 now, and if Measure 5

were to be fully implemented, she said the state system would only be equipped to serve 45,000. Although the schools could probably continue to admit non-residents, sooner or later those non-residents will

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