

**THE UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
March 22-March 24, 2017
Laramie, Wyoming**

REVISED as of 3-20-17

These documents will replace page 247 of the March 22-24, 2017, University of Wyoming Board of Trustees Meeting Report.

AGENDA ITEM TITLE: Program Fees, Miller/Godby/Daniel Kerbs

CHECK THE APPROPRIATE BOX(ES):

- Work Session
- Education Session
- Information Item
- Other Specify: e.g., Committee of the Whole (Items for Approval)

BACKGROUND AND POLICY CONTEXT OF ISSUE:

To address the current funding challenges facing the University, and to ensure the University's mission was not compromised by immediate revenue shortfalls, President Laurie Nichols convened UW's Revenue Enhancement Sub-committee in early July, 2016. The committee's task was to consider the possible adoption of a program fee system to address the funding challenge the university faces while maintaining program quality and expanding student services. The committee reviewed the use of fees at other institutions to develop a plan with market-competitive and cost-based fee levels, and designed a program to be consistent with institutional goals. The fees were to be designed to:

- 1) Maintain instructional program quality by creating a revenue stream that reflects the higher costs of instruction present in these programs.
- 2) Create a revenue stream that allows the University of Wyoming to improve important student-centered institutional priorities, specifically to improve
 - retention rates of students enrolling at UW, which in turn recaptures lost tuition revenue.
 - time to graduation for students at UW.
 - career-readiness among UW graduates.
- 3) Be implemented in a transparent manner, ensuring the expected cost of attendance in any program and any program fees assessed were clearly identifiable.
- 4) Include accountability processes to ensure direct instructional and student service benefits can be assessed, and that reviews are implemented to regularly review fees charged.

Because of the potential complexity of implementing a comprehensive set of program fees, President Nichols convened a new committee in November 2016, the Program Fee Implementation Committee, to develop an implementation plan. The charge to the implementation committee was (1) to receive feedback from the campus, including students, on proposed program fees, (2) modify the proposal as appropriate incorporating feedback, (3) develop a plan and associated policy on

implementation of program fees that provided an open, accountable and transparent system that includes student, college and administrative involvement and (4) to make sure the necessary systems are in place to implement this program by Fall 2017. This committee also was to ensure involvement of students on campus. Whereas the development of the original program fee proposal required expertise in understanding program costs and institutional priorities, respect in a community of learning required that students be involved in the planning and development of such a program.

Findings of the report are:

- The program fee system proposed in October 2016 can be implemented by Fall 2017 if approved in Spring 2017.
- Revenue streams generated will achieve revenues considered necessary to maintain program quality and improve student retention and graduation rates.
- The system makes more transparent to students the cost of education at Wyoming by streamlining the existing fee structure.
- Accountability regarding fee use and success in achieving institutional and program goals can be developed. Policies do so are proposed below.
- While it is not expected that a significant proportion of members in our educational community, namely students, will welcome an increase in the cost of their education, they may accept it if the benefits of the proposed program can be successfully implemented as recommended.
- The report does consider program fee phase-in options to minimize the initial student impact of the proposed fees. While such an action could be problematic in allowing the goals of the program fee proposal to be accomplished, scaling back fees in proportion to those originally proposed and increasing them over time can work using existing UW financial systems. We find that a grandfathering system (allowing existing students to avoid an increase in their fees), however, would not be workable both due to the limitations of the UW financial system and due to practical matters regarding equity and revenue impacts across colleges.

PRIOR RELATED BOARD DISCUSSIONS/ACTIONS:

In October of 2016, the Board of Trustees heard the initial report “**A Proposal to Implement Program Fees to maintain and Improve Student Success While Covering the Costs of Instruction in Higher-Cost Programs at the University of Wyoming.**” The Board charged an implementation committee to further develop the proposal, receive further feedback, and investigate potential phase-in options.

WHY THIS ITEM IS BEFORE THE BOARD:

The Program Fee Implementation Committee’s report is completed and ready for Board discussion and possible action.

ACTION REQUIRED AT THIS BOARD MEETING:

Affirmative motion and vote to endorse and implement program fees, as proposed or as amended by the Board.

PROPOSED MOTION

“I move to approve the implementation plan for program fees as presented to the Board.”

PRESIDENT’S RECOMMENDATION:

The President agrees with the proposal.