

## **UW regents approve 5.5% tuition increase**

By Erica Perez of the Journal Sentinel

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Madison - Students attending four-year schools in the University of Wisconsin System will see a 5.5% base tuition increase along with jumps in student fees and room and board rates, under a budget approved by the Board of Regents on Thursday.

The tuition policy means students at UW-Milwaukee will pay about \$359 more per year. Students at UW-Madison will pay \$618 more per year, which includes a \$250 per-student surcharge for the Madison Initiative for Undergraduates, approved in May.

Low- and middle-income families will get some breaks. Students whose families earn less than \$60,000 yearly would likely qualify for state and federal grants to offset the tuition increase. At UW-Madison, students whose families have incomes of up to \$80,000 and demonstrated financial need can win grants to offset the \$250 surcharge.

**Tuition at the two-year UW Colleges will remain frozen at 2006-07 rates to preserve affordability** and keep the schools' rates competitive with technical college prices.

In addition, the Regents approved increasing mandatory fees for students by 5.8% on average at the four-year institutions and 4.4% on average at the two-year UW Colleges. Such fees will rise by \$38 at UWM, \$128 at UW-Madison and \$137 at UW-Eau Claire, for example.

The tuition and fee plan comes as part of the UW System's \$2.2 billion operating budget in 2009-10. State funding for the system will decrease by \$49.9 million while tuition revenue resulting from increases and additional enrollments will increase by \$70.4 million.

The increase in tuition revenue will not be enough to offset all the reductions called for in the state budget, however. Each campus has come up with plans to cut costs that will affect students.

As a result, students will in many ways be paying more for less. They will get fewer appointments with career counselors, see longer lines at the registrar's office, fewer class choices, bigger class sizes and in some cases, have to take longer to complete their degrees.

"At a time like this when so many are feeling squeezed by global economic troubles, we'd like to have no tuition increase at all," UW System President Kevin Reilly said. "In reality, though, that is not an option."

All but one of the Regents voted yes on the budget. Regent Kevin Opgenorth, a student at UW-Platteville, voted no.

"We can't keep expecting students to pay additional money and fill holes when they're receiving less," he said.