

## **ACTION ITEM #7**

### **Modification to Executive Policy #10 regarding Summer Session Tuition Rates (Joan King)**

TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF REGENTS

**SUBJECT:** Summer Session Tuition Policy

**PROPOSED:** That the Washington State University Board of Regents modify Executive Policy #10 regarding the establishment of summer session tuition.

**SUBMITTED BY:** Joan King, Associate Vice President and Chief University Budget Officer

**SUPPORTING INFORMATION:** State law authorizes the governing boards of the four-year institutions of higher education to establish tuition and fees for all students during the summer session.

WSU Executive Policy #10 was approved by the Board of Regents on November 16, 2001. With rapid escalation of academic year tuition upon which summer rates are based, summer session is becoming increasingly unaffordable and less viable for students seeking to accelerate their time to degree. WSU seeks to address this issue and modify the policy.

This action would modify Executive Policy #10 to:

1. Enable WSU to assess summer session tuition at a level less than the prior academic year.
2. Simplify the calculation of graduate level tuition rates for the summer session.
3. Create the opportunity to eliminate the ten dollar per credit differential assessed to non-resident students during the summer session.
4. Recognize that professional programs may assess summer session tuition at the appropriate part-time rate.

If these modifications are adopted, we propose to assess summer session tuition for 2012-2013 for all students at the 2011-2012 part-time student tuition rate. By doing so, summer session rates

would not increase by the 16% tuition increase approved for the 2012-2013 academic year. This effective decrease in summer session tuition could allow more students to undertake coursework during the summer, thereby helping them make progress toward graduation. Increased enrollment in summer session also is a means for the University to efficiently educate the larger student classes admitted in the two previous years and anticipated in the future.

ATTACHMENT 1: Executive Policy 10, redline

ATTACHMENT 2: Summer Session Report

# Washington State University Executive Policy Manual

Executive Policy #10  
Approved by Board of Regents, November 16, 2001

## Summer Session Tuition and Services and Activities Fees Policy

### Policy

Summer session tuition and fees and Services and Activities Fees are based on the preceding academic year's part-time rates.

### Summer Session Tuition and Fees

The summer session tuition and fees per credit hour:

- for ~~resident~~-undergraduate students, ~~are the same as for~~ shall not exceed the part-time undergraduate rate residents during the previous academic year;
- for ~~resident~~ graduate students, shall not exceed the part-time graduate rate during the previous academic year ~~are the average of the previous academic year's graduate and undergraduate rates for part-time resident students~~;
- for professional students, shall not exceed the part-time professional rate during the previous academic year;
- ~~for non-residents, both undergraduate and graduate, are \$10 more per credit hour than for residents.~~

### Services and Activities Fees

The Services and Activities Fee portion is to be the same for all students and be equal to the rate for part-time resident undergraduates during the previous academic year.

# WSU Summer Session – Five Year Review

## Summer Session Schedule

A majority of on-campus summer courses are taught in one of three blocks as shown below. Independent study, research credits and internship credits are generally scheduled over 12 weeks, in order to allow students to complete their studies anytime during the summer.

May				June				July			
7 - 11	14 - 18	21 - 25	28 - 1	4 - 8	11 - 15	18 - 22	25 - 29	2 - 6	9 - 13	16 - 20	23 - 27
Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7	Week 8	Week 9	Week 10	Week 11	Week 12

<b>Block A: May 7 – June 15</b> (Early 6-week)
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<b>Block B: June 4 – July 27</b> (8-week)
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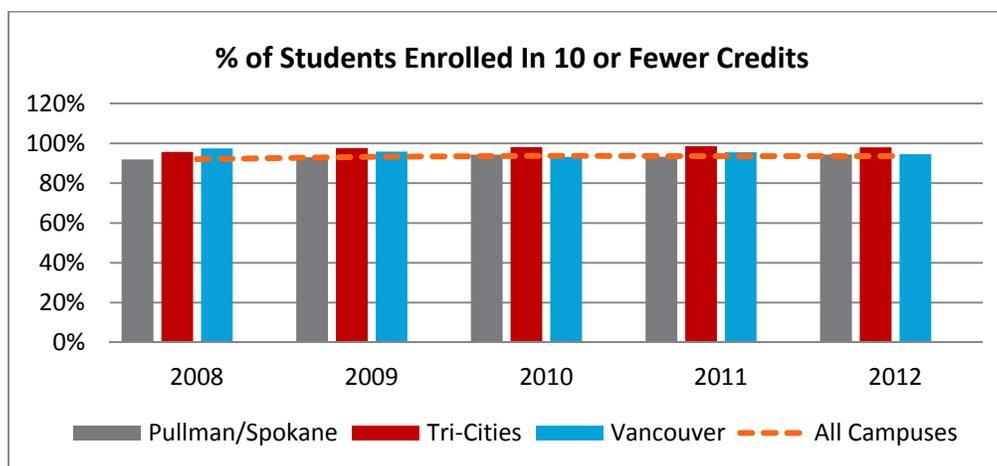
<b>Block C: June 18 – July 27</b> (Late 6-week)
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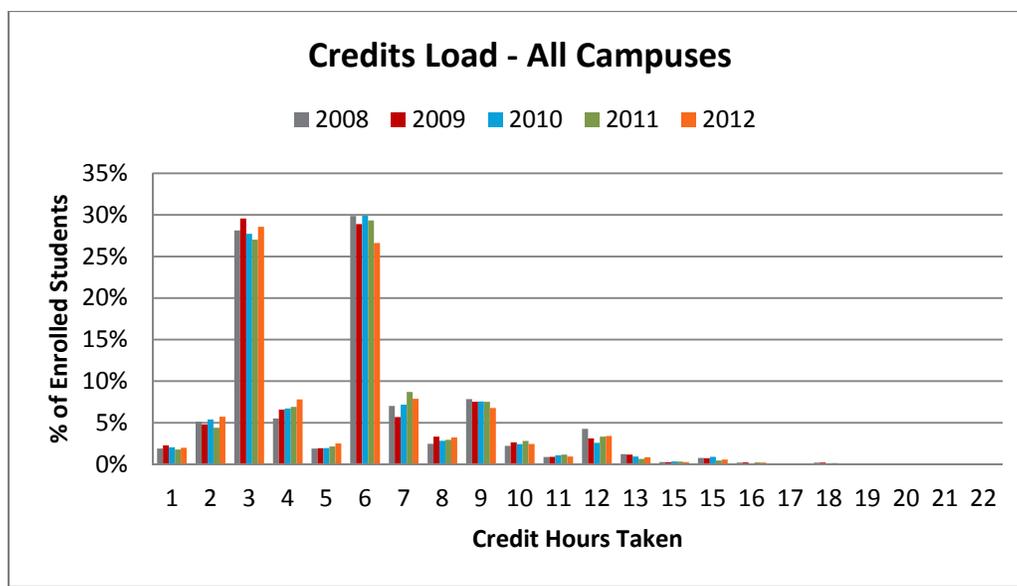
A number of courses are scheduled outside of the standard block. Examples include: early 8 week courses, 3 week courses, 4 week courses, 5 week courses, non-conforming 6 week courses, and non-conforming 8 week courses.

## Enrollment Trends

### Average Credit Load

Approximately 95% of students enroll in 10 or fewer credits during summer session, with similar distribution of credit loads taken each year.





The high percent of students enrolled in 10 or fewer credits may be attributable to a number of factors.

First, the timeline to complete a summer session course is more compressed than the standard academic semester. For example, 8 credits in the 8 week block is equivalent to 15 credits during a standard academic semester. Because of the short duration of summer session courses, students are advised to use caution when selecting the number of credits per block. The recommended credit load is no more than:

- 3 credits in a 4 week block
- 6 credits in a 6 week block
- 9 credits in an 8 week block

Second, many summer session students work part-time to earn additional funding for college or they may participate in other activities during the summer that make it difficult to take more than 10 credits. The Tri-Cities and Vancouver tend to have a higher percentage of part-time students year round which is reflected in the data.

Third, many students appear to enroll in summer session in order to complete select, key courses needed to graduate. Over 70% of summer session students are in their junior or senior year.

Fourth, unlike the fall or spring semesters wherein a flat tuition rate is assessed for 10 to 18 credit hours, summer session tuition is assessed for each credit hour taken. Thus, students pay tuition for each credit taken in excess of 10. For resident undergraduates, for example, it costs more to take 12 credits in the summer than during the academic year.

### Students Served

Summer session enrollment patterns tend to fluctuate from year to year. The largest single year change was a 10% decline between summer 2011 and summer 2012.

<b>Total Student Credit Hours Served</b>					
	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>
Pullman/Spokane	28,507	25,757	27,017	28,699	26,313
Tri-Cities	2,018	2,401	2,344	2,401	2,025
Vancouver	6,465	6,302	7,339	6,943	5,819
<b>Total</b>	<b>36,990</b>	<b>34,460</b>	<b>36,700</b>	<b>38,043</b>	<b>34,157</b>

<b>Unique Student Headcount</b>					
	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>
Pullman/Spokane	5,035	4,753	5,098	5,258	5,024
Tri-Cities	457	543	506	539	440
Vancouver	1,166	1,173	1,267	1,241	1,075
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,658</b>	<b>6,469</b>	<b>6,871</b>	<b>7,038</b>	<b>6,539</b>

Compared to 2008, student credit hours have changed as follows:

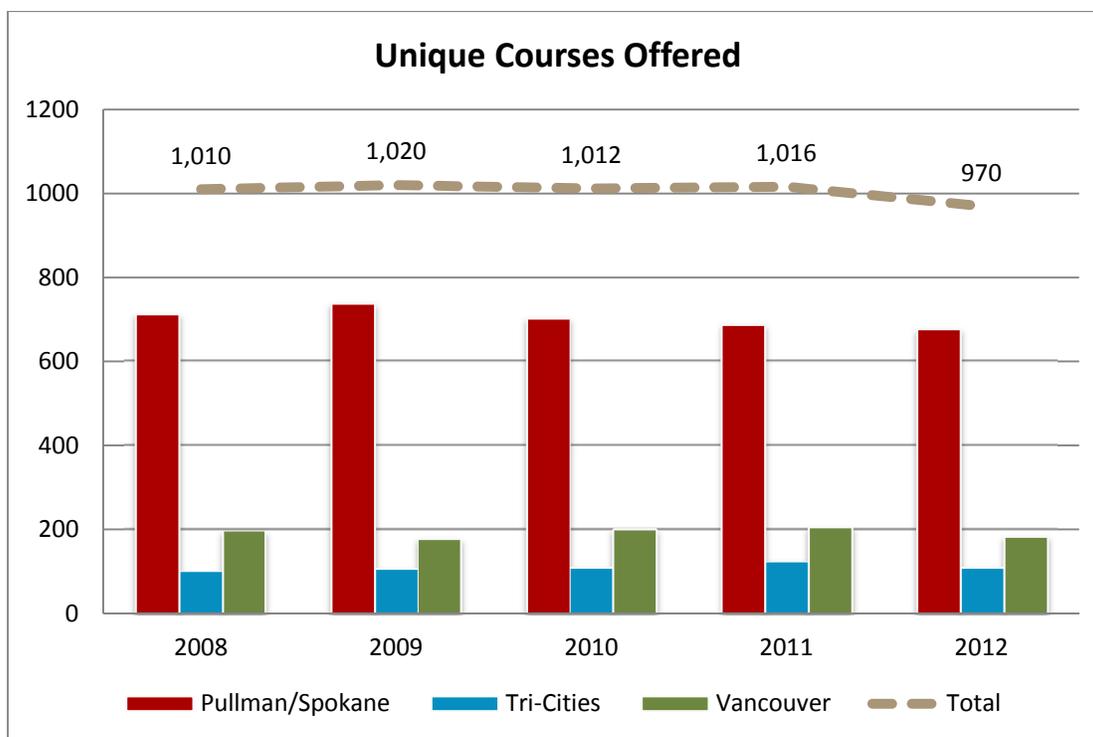
- 8% decline at Pullman/Spokane
- 0% change at Tri-Cities
- 10% decline at Vancouver

The number of unique student headcounts enrolling in summer session trends consistently with total student credit hours served over the last five years, except at Pullman/Spokane. At Pullman/Spokane the number of unique students participating in summer session has remained the same while the number of credits taken per student has declined compared to summer 2008. Thus, it appears that Pullman/Spokane students are taking fewer credits in the summer.

The decline in campus based summer enrollment may be partially attributed to large tuition increases over the last five years (approximately 57% increase) and declines in Federal Financial Aid grants for summer session activities.

### **Course Variety and Availability**

Since 2008, the number of unique, campus based courses offered during summer session has remained relatively flat system-wide. However, the number of unique courses offered on the Pullman/Spokane and Vancouver campuses has declined by 5% and 7% respectively. Meanwhile the number of unique courses offered at Tri-Cities has climbed by 9%.



### **Tuition Cost**

On-campus summer session tuition is assessed on a per credit basis. The per credit tuition rate for resident undergraduate students is calculated as:

$$(\text{Spring Semester Resident Full-Time Building + Operating + S\&A fees}) / 10$$

This calculation ensures that resident students enrolled in 10 or fewer credits in the summer session pay the same tuition per credit as during the academic year. Resident graduate tuition is set by taking half of the difference between the graduate and undergraduate tuition and adding that difference to the resident undergraduate rate calculated above. All non-resident students enrolled during the summer session pay a \$10 per credit hour differential above resident rates.

However, unlike the fall or spring semesters where a flat tuition rate is assessed for students taking 10 to 18 credit hours, summer session tuition is assessed for each credit hour taken. Thus it is more expensive, for example, to take 12 credits during the summer than during the academic year.

As summer session tuition rates are formulaically tied to the academic year rates, they have escalated rapidly over the last few years.

<b>Summer Session Tuition History (Per Credit Hour)</b>					
	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>
Resident Undergraduate	\$315	\$336	\$380	\$430	\$494
Resident Graduate	\$347	\$370	\$402	\$437	\$502

## **Business Model**

Summer session operates on a self-sustaining basis. No state funding is used to support summer session instructional activities. Each college operates summer courses on a very strict break-even approach that requires sufficient enrollment to cover the cost of instruction.

## **Revenue Sharing**

Each campus has a slightly different approach to sharing tuition revenue generated by summer session. In general, however, each campus uses tuition to first cover the direct cost of instruction. If residual tuition is available after direct instruction costs, it is typically split between the college and the campus. This residual is used to cover other college and campus costs incurred as a result of summer session operations. Overall, gross tuition revenue has increased by approximately 43% over the last 5 years. Trending with student credit hours taken, revenue fluctuates from year to year, with the largest year to year increase at 18% (summer 2010) and the smallest year to year change at 0% (2009).

<b>Tuition Revenue</b>					
	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>Est. 2012</b>
Pullman/Spokane	9,323,000	9,124,000	10,605,000	12,675,000	13,095,000
Tri-Cities	587,000	784,000	899,000	1,051,000	1,019,000
Vancouver	2,024,000	2,084,000	2,731,000	2,907,000	2,905,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>11,934,000</b>	<b>11,992,000</b>	<b>14,235,000</b>	<b>16,633,000</b>	<b>17,019,000</b>

## **Financial Aid – Summer Session**

The Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships places priority for student aid resources on the traditional academic year (i.e. fall and spring semesters). As a result, many students have little aid left for the summer session after using their funding for the fall and spring semesters. Typically, federal aid for summer consists of the grants and loans that a student may have qualified for, but did not receive, during the academic year. In addition, students are often awarded Parent PLUS Loans which can fill the balance or be declined in favor of an alternative/private loan.

Traditionally, summer aid is disbursed differently from aid received during the regular academic year. Students taking classes in multiple summer sessions will have all of their aid disbursed on the first day of class of their first session. Tuition is charged at the beginning of each summer block session, so it is important that students budget appropriately and hold the funds necessary for the following summer session in order to pay their tuition.

## **Academic Deficiency Rules and Summer Session**

Summer Session is an excellent opportunity for students to complete academic requirements and improve their grade point average (GPA). Most students do well in summer courses which positively impacts their GPA. Because there is no academic deficiency process in summer, students attend summer session without academic penalty. A poor summer GPA does not impact a student's fall academic deficiency, nor does it count against the student for Rule 39 (three semesters where cumulative GPA is below 2.0), as summer is not considered an academic term. The potential to improve a GPA is an important feature of summer session.