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Winthrop Still Whittling Tuition Request for Fall

Winthrop University

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Winthrop Still Whittling Tuition Request for Fall

Quick Facts

- "No more than last year's increase" of 4.9%, president vows.
- State yet to finalize budget containing new 6% cut.

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Anthony DiGiorgio

ROCK HILL, S.C. – **Winthrop University President Anthony DiGiorgio** told officers of the **Board of Trustees** today that his tuition recommendation for the next academic year will call for "no more than last year's increase of 4.9 percent, and hopefully somewhat lower."

DiGiorgio said the level of tuition increase is, "as always, driven by what level of state funding is approved in Columbia."

The Senate completed its version of the budget on Tuesday night after five weeks of debate, and legislative leaders now indicate final resolution is unlikely before the full **Winthrop Board of Trustees** is scheduled to meet on June 10. A conference committee must meet to work out differences between the House and Senate, then Governor Nikki Haley will have several days to consider vetoes of the legislative product. Legislators then are expected to return mid-month to deal with any vetoes before the state spending plan is finalized, just in time for the new fiscal year that begins July 1.

Under that expected timeline, Winthrop trustees will finalize tuition in a conference call later in the month, after the state budget work is completed. While the House and Senate have general agreement on operating base budget numbers, there are some differences in legislative directives called provisos that are a part of each year's budget still to be addressed. If legislators decide to adopt "free conference rules," numbers could change as well, DiGiorgio said, since conferees would not be bound to stay with either the House or Senate version of the budget.

"There was an amendment prepared by a senator last week that would have reduced Winthrop's state appropriation by 10 percent, on top of the 6 percent reduction already in the House plan," DiGiorgio reported, adding a commendation for Senate leaders who argued that the House- and committee-recommended 6 percent cut had gone far enough, especially since it is on top of a series of other recession-related cuts that have reduced higher education state funding by half over three years.

"Winthrop and Winthrop families owe Senate Finance Chairman Hugh Leatherman and other Finance Committee members a salute for the work they have been doing over the past five weeks," **DiGiorgio** said.

"Senator Leatherman is doing all he can to make it possible for Winthrop to shave a few more tenths of a percentage point from our tuition increase recommendation, so we want to share with our students and families our best estimate that tuition will increase no more than the 4.9 percent of last year," the president said, adding that "my hope is to recommend something lower, but as noted, the ability to do that will depend on the final state budget worked out by the House, Senate and governor."

University officials said students and families will be notified by e-mail and web notices at www.winthrop.edu.

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