



Summer 6-7-2013

Board Gives Tentative Approval to 3.1 Percent Tuition Increase for In-state Students

Winthrop University

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Winthrop University, "Board Gives Tentative Approval to 3.1 Percent Tuition Increase for In-state Students" (2013). *Winthrop News 2013*. 131.

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Board Gives Tentative Approval to 3.1 Percent Tuition Increase for In-state Students

Quick Facts

- Winthrop officials gave tentative approval to a 3.1 percent tuition increase for in-state students Friday.
- Students living on campus also would see a 5 percent increase in room and board fees.



Anthony DiGiorgio

ROCK HILL, S.C. – Winthrop University officials gave tentative approval to a **3.1 percent tuition increase** for in-state students Friday.

If the increase becomes final, Winthrop in-state undergraduate students would pay **\$6,715 in fall semester**, \$202 more than in fall 2012. Out-of-state students would pay **\$13,000** -- \$762 more than a year ago, a 6.2 percent increase.

Graduate students would pay **\$6,464 in-state**, and **\$12,453 out-of-state** (unless in designated critical-need programs, which are pro-rated). Students living on campus also would see a **5 percent increase in room and board fees**, which vary according to type of housing and meal plan chosen.

The 3.1 percent recommendation is the last to be made by **President Anthony DiGiorgio** before his retirement June 30, unless state appropriations to Winthrop are significantly changed during the remainder of the state's budgeting process, which will continue in a special session called for June 18.

Gov. Nikki Haley will review the **General Assembly's budget plan** once it is completed and issue any vetoes she chooses, then those vetoes will be reviewed by legislators in a second special session expected to be called before the end of the month. Legislators must override or sustain any vetoes in time for the new budget to take effect when the state's new fiscal year begins July 1.

In case appropriation changes do occur as the process in Columbia continues, the **Winthrop trustees** gave their board officers the authority to approve adjustments as needed. **Tuition bills** for the upcoming fall semester will be sent to students in **early July**, officials said.

So far, the House and Senate have agreed that the state budget will include \$750,000 in one-time funds for maintenance work on Winthrop's 127-year-old campus. That allocation was initiated earlier in the year by **Rep. Gary Simrill**. All state public universities also will be eligible for possible additional maintenance funds, but will have to be prepared to match those dollars with non-state funds.

Also pending is a Senate-approved **\$350,000 increase** to Winthrop's recurring operating base-- which would be the **first such increase** since Winthrop's state funding was reduced from \$26 million to less than \$13 million by a series of recession-driven appropriation reductions starting in 2007.

"One thing has remained the same during my entire 24 years at Winthrop," **DiGiorgio** said to trustees Friday. "There are only two main sources of funds for operating any university. Funds not provided to institutions by the state have to come from students and families as tuition.

"The state now provides less than 10 percent of Winthrop's funds," he added. "If the \$350,000 for

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next year is approved as a recurring allocation, that will be a first step toward extending benefits of the state's economic recovery to our annual operating budget. That's the good news. The bad news is, there's still \$12 million more to go to get back to the state funding level Winthrop had seven years ago."

Institutions like Winthrop coped with those reductions through a mix of **internal cost-saving initiatives** and **tuition increases** over the years of the **Great Recession**, the veteran president said, but the sudden change in the **public higher education funding model** lessened access for some students. The best way to increase access, he said, will be for states to return operating funding to institutions over time.

DiGiorgio said how long such an incremental return of funding might take, both in S.C. and nationally, is the "**greatest worry**" he has for higher education in general as he prepares to retire from the Winthrop presidency.

"**Education has been the engine of American progress for generations,**" he said. "It is a public good and worthy of public investment as much as ever."

As his retirement from the presidency approaches on June 30, DiGiorgio this week received two more recognitions for his long service to S.C. On Thursday, the State Commission on Higher Education honored him at the start of its last meeting for the fiscal year. Friday's Winthrop board meeting began with the presentation of a resolution adopted earlier this year by the [S.C. State Senate](#).

Following a sabbatical year that begins July 1, **DiGiorgio** will serve as **President Emeritus** and **Winthrop's Distinguished Professor Public Service and Leadership**.

For further information on the tentatively adopted tuition and fees, please visit the [Cashier's Office website](#).

[\[Back to Previous Page\]](#)

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