

AGENDA ITEM B4: ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

BOARD RULE 400.0000.00

TUITION AND FEE COMPARISONS

BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING: JANUARY 22, 2015

This report compares tuition and fees for 23 community colleges in Ohio and one in West Virginia. The table shows *annualized* tuition and fees data for full-time resident students in the most recent two years. Tuition and fee totals in this report have been *annualized* which means that tuition and fees for 15 term hours and the fees charged to all full-time resident students on a per term basis have been totaled and multiplied by two (for semesters) to produce an *annualized* total. This method for calculating annualized tuition and fees is prescribed by the Ohio Board of Regents and totals are reported in the Higher Education Information (HEI) *Fall 2014 Survey of Student Charges*. Tuition and fee rates for West Virginia Northern Community College students were calculated from the institution's website.

Table I, *Annualized tuition and fees, full-time residents in community colleges 2014 to 2015*

Community Colleges	2014	2015	Change 2014 to 2015	
Sinclair Community College*	\$ 2,872	\$ 2,972	\$ 100	3.5%
Lorain County Community College*	\$ 2,977	\$ 3,077	\$ 100	3.4%
Cuyahoga Community College*	\$ 3,036	\$ 3,136	\$ 100	3.3%
West Virginia Northern Community College	\$ 2,790	\$ 3,254	\$ 464	16.6%
Lakeland Community College*	\$ 3,217	\$ 3,315	\$ 98	3.0%
Eastern Gateway Community College*	\$ 3,240	\$ 3,330	\$ 90	2.8%
Columbus State Community College	\$ 3,978	\$ 4,078	\$ 100	2.5%
Rio Grande Community College*	\$ 3,984	\$ 4,085	\$ 101	2.5%
Clark State Community College	\$ 4,095	\$ 4,195	\$ 100	2.4%
Edison State Community College	\$ 4,150	\$ 4,219	\$ 69	1.7%
Southern State Community College	\$ 4,132	\$ 4,232	\$ 100	2.4%
Central Ohio Technical College	\$ 4,296	\$ 4,296	\$ -	0%
Owens State Community College	\$ 4,209	\$ 4,304	\$ 95	2.3%
Marion Technical College	\$ 4,282	\$ 4,382	\$ 100	2.3%
Hocking College	\$ 4,290	\$ 4,390	\$ 100	2.3%
Belmont College	\$ 4,310	\$ 4,409	\$ 99	2.3%
Terra State Community College	\$ 4,364	\$ 4,462	\$ 98	2.2%
North Central State College	\$ 4,389	\$ 4,488	\$ 99	2.3%
Washington State Community College	\$ 4,240	\$ 4,490	\$ 250	5.9%
Zane State Community College	\$ 4,506	\$ 4,560	\$ 54	1.2%
Stark State College of Technology	\$ 4,509	\$ 4,608	\$ 99	2.2%
Cincinnati State Technical and CC	\$ 4,618	\$ 4,718	\$ 100	2.2%
Northwest State Community College	\$ 4,620	\$ 4,720	\$ 100	2.2%
James A Rhodes State College	\$ 4,706	\$ 4,806	\$ 100	2.1%
* Asterisks denote institutions with levy support				

In Table I, *Annualized tuition and fees, full-time residents in community colleges 2014 to 2015* there are four columns of data. The first vertical column, labeled 2014, shows annualized tuition and fees for the 2013-2014 academic year. The second column, 2015, shows annualized tuition and fees for the current, 2014-2015, academic year. Institutions are arranged in the table from lowest to highest annualized tuition and fees in 2015. Sinclair Community College with annualized tuition and fees of \$2,972 for the 2014-2015 academic year is shown first. James A. Rhodes State College has the highest annualized tuition and fees at \$4,806 and appears last. The third and fourth columns, *Change 2014 to 2015*, display the dollar and percent values for changes in annualized tuition and fees from 2014 to 2015. The six community colleges that have levy support are marked with an asterisk in Table I.

Data Highlights

1. Across the 24 community colleges in Table I, annualized tuition and fees are highest at James A. Rhodes State College (\$4,806), and lowest are at Sinclair Community College (\$2,972).
2. Among the 23 Ohio community colleges, the average increase for 2015 was \$98, and the average percent increase was 2.4%. The increase in annualized tuition and fees at Belmont for the 2014-2015 academic year was \$99 which represents a 2.3% increase.
3. Colleges with levy support are among the colleges with the lowest annualized tuition and fees.

Conclusions

The overall context of higher education and how students will fund their college education is daunting, because financial aid is down in the state of Ohio. “The total budget for need-based aid in Ohio peaked in 2008 at \$183 million, while the 2013 budget was just \$86 million.” (Wallace, Lewis. *Got Debt? Ohio College Students Are Banking On It*. *Wyso.org*. 12/4/13). Budget cuts are responsible for most of this change. The Pell Grant funding unfortunately is outpaced by tuition increases and cost of living.

In Ohio, Community Colleges have been excluded from state need-based grants since 2010, when the Ohio Instructional Grant (OIG) and the Ohio College Opportunity Grant (OCOG) were stopped. Shortly after that time the OACC conducted a study that verified community college students are increasingly turning to loans. In addition, “About 68% of Ohio four-year college graduates in 2011 left college with debt averaging around \$28,683, which makes Ohio one of the worst states for student debt.” (www.nerdwallet.com/blog/nerdscholar/2013/student-debt-best-worst-states/).

That said, a number of conclusions and recommendations might be kept in mind for future decision-making at Belmont:

1. About 80% of all Belmont students in 2012-2013 received grants or scholarship aid. (Source: IPEDS Data Feedback Report 2014). This means that most students at Belmont are affected by financial aid. Therefore any increases in tuition should ideally coincide or align with Pell Grant awards. In other words, it would benefit students if tuition, fees, and book costs did not exceed the maximum Pell Grant award amount of \$5,730. It would be prudent to compare any change in the tuition and fee amount to the maximum

Pell Grant amount for a gap analysis. The Pell maximum is estimated to increase by \$120 to an award of \$5,850 as of mid-year, 2015.

2. Currently some students can go to full-time status and get tuition, fees, and books covered by the maximum Pell Grant amount if they are eligible. The college might consider moving toward financial aid awards focused on completion and encouraging these eligible students to take a minimum of 15 credit hours per semester. This would enable students to stay on sequence and complete sooner.
3. There were 1,906 students who completed a FAFSA for Belmont College in the Fall of 2014. 923 of these students enrolled during the Fall 2014 semester. For those students, the average Unmet Financial Need was \$1,575. Unmet Financial Need was determined by taking the student's estimated financial aid budget, subtracting the FAFSA-determined Expected Family Contribution, and finally subtracting the awarded financial aid. Of the 1,906 students who completed the FAFSA, 414 were determined to have no Unmet Financial Need. Of the 923 enrolled students, 509 had Unmet Financial Need.
4. In the 2014 financial aid award year, Belmont awarded \$493,582 in institutional, endowment and/or private financial aid to 231 students. Awards made to Trustees Scholars represented 89% of all institutional aid. In 2014, the average Trustees Scholarship was awarded at an average award of \$1,193. Any increase in tuition will necessarily have an effect on Trustees Scholarship awards, as these dollars cover the tuition cost (but not the fees) for recipients. Any increase in tuition and fees, therefore, may trigger an increased Unmet Financial Need if institutional awards do not account for tuition and fees increases. It is recommended that the decision to increase tuition take into consideration all student financial aid consequences that effect completion and retention.
5. The *Tuition Revenue per FTE Trend* chart below represents Belmont tuition revenue per FTE over the last eleven years. In 2004, annualized tuition revenue per FTE was \$2,360.59. Over the next nine years the tuition revenue per FTE increased to \$3,081.77. This is an increase of 30.6%, or \$721.18 per FTE in the ten year period. In 2014 the tuition revenue per FYE decreased for the first time to \$3,039.45. Financial analysis of tuition revenue per FTE is recommended to determine if federal funding is outpaced by tuition at Belmont. If so, to what degree? What can the student population bear?

Chart I, *Tuition Revenue per FTE Trend*

