THE UNIVERSITY of TEXAS SYSTEM
FOURTEEN INSTITUTIONS. UNLIMITED POSSIBILITIES.

SAC
UT SYSTEM
Student Advisory Council

Student Advisory Council
sac@utsystem.edu
WWW.UTSYSTEM.EDU

TO: James B. Milliken, Chancellor, UT System Administration

FROM: The U. T. System Student Advisory Council

DATE: April 27th, 2020

RE: Transparency of Projected and Actual Tuition and Fee Charges

---

We are writing to inform you of the U. T. System Student Advisory Council's recommendations regarding tuition and fee transparency. Our recommendations come after nearly six months of research, deliberation, and campus consultation. Students understand that tuition rates must rise from time to time in order to absorb inflation, most recently when the Board of Regents approved a 2.6 percent across the board increase in tuition. However, we believe that all students should have access to accurate, timely information regarding their tuition and fees.

It is critical that information regarding tuition and fees is transparent and clear to students. The timeliness and quality of presentation of billing information varies greatly across U. T. System institutions, and we believe that adopting certain minimum standards would enable a more informative and satisfactory student experience. The Council has identified three solutions that will benefit students in the academic institutions of the U.T. System.

1. We encourage each academic institution to adopt a process in which students, whether prospective or current, can break down the expected price of tuition and fees per credit hour, student type, and school. To do this, we are asking you to require institutions to publish the "Tuition and Fee Workbook" that is submitted to the Office of Academic Affairs during the tuition and fee process. This information should be published and communicated to students directly at least a semester in advance of any increases, giving students the opportunity to calculate their educational costs for the following semester. We suggest that the Tuition and Fee Workbook by U. T. San Antonio(http://www.utsa.edu/fiscalservices/tuition.cfm) is used as a model for other U. T. System institutions.

2. We also would like to recommend that academic institutions adopt a tool that enables students to enter information about their residency status, program of study, and semester credit hour load to estimate the cost of all tuition, as well as a student fee breakdown for a semester. We suggest that the Tuition Calculator used by U. T. Arlington (https://www.uta.edu/admissions/afford/tuition-estimator) serve as a model for other U. T. System academic institutions.

3. Lastly, once students register for classes, they should receive, in a timely manner, an itemized statement with a breakdown of the tuition and fees for which they will be charged. While we recognize these charges are subject to change if a student adds or drops courses, we believe that students should be able to keep track and monitor their bill. Additionally, after payments are processed, students should

receive a final itemized receipt outlining each tuition and fee charge. These practices are inconsistent across U. T. academic campuses and, sometimes, inadequate. Therefore, we encourage institutions to examine and improve these billing practices.

We would like to ask you to forward these recommendations to the eight U. T. academic institutions and require them to provide a status update on their efforts in January 2021.

Thank you for your consideration.