

Colleagues,

The University of Houston System Board of Regents will meet Tuesday (Feb. 16) to consider a tuition and fee proposal that recommends a 3.95 percent increase in tuition and fees. This would represent an increase of \$137.52 per 12-credit-hour semester.

All of us are sensitive to these difficult economic times, and I want to take a moment to explain the reasons behind this proposed increase, as well as to outline a variety of opportunities available to students to help offset these additional costs.

UH is proposing an increase that is within legislative recommendations for Texas universities – and is designed to meet specific priorities of our educational mission.

The proposed 3.95 percent increase allows UH to keep pace with inflation, maintain university operations, ensure quality and maintain our faculty-student ratio. In keeping with our strategic plan, it will allow us to increase scholarships, start new programs as needed, maintain balanced budgets and stay competitive in the marketplace. All of these initiatives are imperative if we are to provide a Tier One learning environment for our students.

How are we helping students and their families adjust to this proposed increase? We've taken a number of specific steps:

- The **Cougar Promise** family income ceiling is being raised from \$40,000 to \$45,000. The Cougar Promise will provide all tuition and fees to qualifying students for up to four years as long as students continue to meet eligibility criteria and maintain at least a 2.5 GPA.
- Summer undergraduate courses are **discounted by 5 percent**. Taking these summer courses can speed completion of a degree program, thereby, providing additional savings.
- The **Cougar Graduation Pledge** allows freshmen who earn 30 credit hours per year to receive \$3,000 toward tuition and fees during their college career. The Cougar Graduation Pledge effectively keeps the cost of college constant for those making significant progress toward a degree.
- 20 percent of the tuition increase will be set aside to **increase student financial aid**.

UH also offers multiple state- and university-funded scholarships and financial aid opportunities to help students with the cost of obtaining a degree. We will continue to focus on our mission of preparing our students to be globally competitive, while making every effort to keep higher education affordable for students.

Regards,

John Antel