WEST VIRGINIA CODE: §18B-10-1

§18B-10-1. Enrollment, tuition and other fees at education institutions; refund of fees.

(a) Each governing board shall fix tuition and other fees for each academic term for the different classes or categories of students enrolling at the state institution of higher education under its jurisdiction, including the fixing of different tuition and fees for online course delivery, and may include among the tuition and fees any one or more of the following as defined in section one-b of this article:

(1) Tuition and required educational and general fees;

(2) Auxiliary and auxiliary capital fees; and

(3) Required educational and general capital fees.

(b) A governing board may establish a single special revenue account for each or all of the following classifications of fees:

(1) All tuition and required educational and general fees collected;

(2) All auxiliary and auxiliary capital fees collected; and

(3) All required educational and general capital fees collected to support existing systemwide and institutional debt service and future systemwide and institutional debt service, capital projects and campus renewal for educational and general facilities.

(4) Subject to any covenants or restrictions imposed with respect to revenue bonds payable from the accounts, a governing board may expend funds from each special revenue account for any purpose for which funds were collected within that account regardless of the original purpose for which the funds were collected.

(5) If a governing board of an Exempted School establishes a single special revenue account for all the foregoing classifications of fees in this subsection, the governing board must account for each classification of fee separately in their internal accounting system.

(c) The purposes for which tuition and fees may be expended include, but are not limited to, health services, student activities, recreational, athletic and extracurricular activities. Additionally, tuition and fees may be used to finance a student’s attorney to perform legal services for students in civil matters at the institutions. The legal services are limited to those types of cases, programs or services approved by the president of the institution where the legal services are to be performed.

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(d) By October 1, 2011, the commission and council each shall propose a rule for legislative approval in accordance with article three-a, chapter twenty-nine-a of this code to govern the fixing, collection and expenditure of tuition and other fees by the governing boards under their respective jurisdictions.

(e) The schedule of all tuition and fees, and any changes in the schedule, shall be entered in the minutes of the meeting of the appropriate governing board and the board shall file with the commission or council, or both, as appropriate, and the Legislative Auditor a certified copy of the schedule and changes.

(f) The governing boards shall establish the rates to be charged full-time students, as defined in section one-b of this article, who are enrolled during a regular academic term. A governing board shall require by rule all fees be due not later than the end of the academic term, and shall provide for appropriate measures to provide for collections of fees past due.

(1) Undergraduate students taking fewer than twelve credit hours in a regular term shall have their fees reduced pro rata based upon one twelfth of the full-time rate per credit hour and graduate students taking fewer than nine credit hours in a regular term shall have their fees reduced pro rata based upon one ninth of the full-time rate per credit hour.

(2) Fees for students enrolled in summer terms or other nontraditional time periods shall be prorated based upon the number of credit hours for which the student enrolls in accordance with this subsection.

(3) The governing boards may establish rates applicable to tuition and fees for online course delivery without regard to the limitations contained in this subsection.

(g) All fees are due and payable by the student upon enrollment and registration for classes except as provided in this subsection:

(1) The governing boards shall permit fee payments to be made in installments over the course of the academic term.

(2) The governing boards also shall authorize the acceptance of credit cards or other payment methods which may be generally available to students for the payment of fees. The governing boards may charge the students for the reasonable and customary charges incurred in accepting credit cards and other methods of payment.

(3) If a governing board determines that a student’s finances are affected adversely by a legal work stoppage, it may allow the student an additional six months to pay the fees for any academic term. The governing board shall determine on a case-by-case basis whether the finances of a student are affected adversely.

(4) A governing board may charge interest or fees for any deferred or installment payment plans.

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(h) In addition to the other fees provided in this section, each governing board may impose, collect and distribute a fee to be used to finance a nonprofit, student-controlled public interest research group if the students at the institution demonstrate support for the increased fee in a manner and method established by that institution's elected student government. The fee may not be used to finance litigation against the institution.

(i) Governing boards shall retain tuition and fee revenues not pledged for bonded indebtedness or other purposes in accordance with the tuition rules proposed by the commission and council pursuant to this section. The tuition rules shall address the following areas:

(1) Providing a basis for establishing nonresident tuition and fees;

(2) Allowing governing boards to charge different tuition and fees for different programs;

(3) Authorizing a governing board to propose to the commission, council or both, as appropriate, a mandatory auxiliary fee under the following conditions: Provided, That the governing boards for the exempted schools may authorize a mandatory auxiliary fee without seeking approval of the commission:

(A) The fee shall be approved by the commission, council or both, as appropriate, and either the students below the senior level at the institution or the Legislature before becoming effective;

(B) Increases may not exceed previous state subsidies by more than ten percent;

(C) The fee may be used only to replace existing state funds subsidizing auxiliary services such as athletics or bookstores;

(D) If the fee is approved, the amount of the state subsidy shall be reduced annually by the amount of money generated for the institution by the fees. All state subsidies for the auxiliary services shall cease five years from the date the mandatory auxiliary fee is implemented;

(4) Establishing methodology, where applicable, to ensure that, within the appropriate time period under the compact, community and technical college tuition rates for students in all community and technical colleges will be commensurate with the tuition and fees charged by their peer institutions.

(j) A penalty may not be imposed by the commission or council upon any governing board based upon the number of nonresidents who attend the institution unless the commission or council determines that admission of nonresidents to any institution or program of study within the institution is impeding unreasonably the ability of resident students to attend the institution or participate in the programs of the institution. The governing boards shall report annually to the commission or council on the numbers of nonresidents and any other enrollment information the commission or council may request.

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(k) Tuition and fee increases of the governing boards, except the exempted schools, are subject to rules adopted by the commission and council pursuant to this section and in accordance with article three-a, chapter twenty-nine-a of this code. The commission or council, as appropriate, shall examine individually each request from a governing board, including the exempted schools, for an increase and make its determinations as follows:

(1) A tuition and fee increase for resident students proposed by a governing board requires the approval of the commission or council, as appropriate, for any tuition and fee increase greater than ten percent in any one year or where the increase would be more than seven percent per year, averaged over a rolling three year period calculated by averaging the proposed increase with the increase for the immediate two previous years;

(2) In determining whether to approve or deny a governing board's request for a tuition and/or fee increase for resident students greater than the increases granted pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection, the commission or council shall determine the progress the governing board has made toward meeting the conditions outlined in this subsection and shall make this determination the predominate factor in its decision. The commission or council shall consider the degree to which each governing board has met the following conditions:

(A) Maximizes resources available through nonresident tuition and fee charges to the satisfaction of the commission or council;

(B) Consistently achieves the benchmarks established in the compact pursuant to article one-d of this chapter or the master plan for exempted schools in article two-a of this chapter, including the provisions of article one-d required in the master plan;

(C) Continuously pursues the statewide goals for post-secondary education;

(D) Demonstrates to the satisfaction of the commission or council that an increase will be used to maintain high-quality programs at the institution;

(E) Demonstrates to the satisfaction of the commission or council that the governing board is making adequate progress toward achieving the goals for education established by the Southern Regional Education Board;

(F) Demonstrates to the satisfaction of the commission or council that the governing board has considered the average per capita income of West Virginia families and their ability to pay for any increases; and

(G) Demonstrates to the satisfaction of the commission or council that base appropriation increases have not kept pace with recognized nationwide inflationary benchmarks.

(3) This section does not require equal increases among governing boards nor does it require any level of increase by a governing board.

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(4) The commission and council shall report to the Legislative Oversight Commission on Education Accountability regarding the basis for approving or denying each request as determined using the criteria established in this subsection.

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