

# Memo

## Wayne State University Law School

To: Budget & Finance Committee of the Board of Governors

From: Michael J. McIntyre

Subject: University's Draft Proposal on Differential Tuition

Date: April 30, 2003

The Provost's Office has circulated a draft proposal on differential tuition. The Budget Committee became aware of the proposal from a reading of the materials distributed for this meeting of the Budget & Finance Committee of the Board of Governors. It was not consulted in the design of the proposal. From the very brief discussion of the proposal at the meeting of the Budget Committee this past Monday, it appears to me that there is some support for the basic concept of differential tuition. The committee, however, was not asked for its advice on the proposal and has not offered it.

My personal view is that a careful consideration of differential tuition is long overdue. The proposal indicates, correctly, that the university currently does not have a uniform tuition policy, although it does not have differentials by department, as appears to be contemplated in the draft proposal. The language of the draft proposal seems to imply that the existing tuition differences have been the result of some kind of careful study of markets and university priorities. Nothing could be further from the truth. In all of the cases with which I am familiar, the basic decision to raise tuition in certain departments or colleges was driven by the university's desire for increased revenues, and any studies presented were after-the-fact justifications for policies already decided on other grounds. I should note that I am not familiar with the recent differential tuition decision made with respect to the pharmacy program, as that matter did not come to the Budget Committee of the Academic Senate.

In my view, a glaring weakness in the draft proposal is the total lack of consultation contemplated with the faculty and with administrators in the affected departments. With all due respect, I do not believe that the Administration is competent to do a valid market study of the impact of tuition increases on student quality and on enrollment without extensive consultation with the faculty and administration in the targeted departments. Nor do I believe that the Administration is competent to determine without faculty consultation the relative contribution of various departments to the missions of the University. I strongly urge this committee to address the lack of consultation with faculty and department administrators when it considers the draft proposal.