

Rationale - Increasing Tuition Remission at UMass

As a benefit, members of the MSP and FSU receive a waiver of tuition for spouses and dependents enrolled in degree programs at UMass. Similar tuition remission is a nearly universal benefit for employees in higher education, and has a long history at this institution. However, the value of this benefit compared to the total cost of attending the university has been severely eroded during the past decade. It is important for our members, and for retention and recruitment of future faculty, that this benefit be increased to be competitive with peer institutions and significant with respect to the costs of a UMass education.

History - Static tuition levels and dramatic increases in “fees”

A new faculty member arriving at UMass in 1989 learned that his or her tuition remission benefit would cover more than 50% of the cost of tuition and fees for UMass attendance for their newborn child. Eighteen years later, when that child first enrolls in a UMass degree program as a freshman, the benefit covers less than 20% of tuition and fees, and only 10% of the total cost of a UMass education on the Amherst campus. The cause of the collapse in benefit value is largely due to the unique absence of tuition retention on UMass campuses, and the consequent increase in student fees that have allowed the system to remain solvent. Tuition represents an ever-shrinking fraction of the total cost of a UMass education. As a result the tuition remission has not kept pace with the cost of attendance, and has not matched the corresponding levels of benefit present at our peer institutions.

Table 1 - Tuition and fees in 18 years at UMass. % benefit represents the % of tuition remission.

Year of benefit	In-State Tuition	In-State Fees	Total Tuition & Fees	% Fees	% benefit
1989-90	\$1,512	\$1,468	\$2,980	49.3%	50.7%
1990-91	\$1,935	\$1,932	\$3,867	50.0%	50.0%
1991-92	\$2,052	\$2,811	\$4,863	57.8%	42.2%
1992-93	\$2,134	\$2,928	\$5,062	57.8%	42.2%
1993-94	\$2,220	\$3,247	\$5,467	59.4%	40.6%
1994-95	\$2,220	\$3,247	\$5,467	59.4%	40.6%
1995-96	\$2,220	\$3,294	\$5,514	59.7%	40.3%
1996-97	\$2,109	\$3,304	\$5,413	61.0%	39.0%
1997-98	\$2,004	\$3,325	\$5,329	62.4%	37.6%
1998-99	\$1,904	\$3,325	\$5,229	63.6%	36.4%
1999-2000	\$1,714	\$3,498	\$5,212	67.1%	32.9%
2000-01	\$1,714	\$3,498	\$5,212	67.1%	32.9%
2001-02	\$1,714	\$3,993	\$5,707	70.0%	30.0%
2002-03	\$1,714	\$4,768	\$6,482	73.6%	26.4%
2003-04	\$1,714	\$6,518	\$8,232	79.2%	20.8%
2004-05	\$1,714	\$7,294	\$9,008	81.0%	19.0%
2005-06	\$1,714	\$7,564	\$9,278	81.5%	18.5%
2006-07	\$1,714	\$7,881	\$9,595	82.1%	17.9%

UMass fails to match tuition remission benefit levels of peer institutions.

A survey of peer institutions clearly shows that UMass fails to match the level of benefit offered for faculty who compete for our hires and fire away our most productive professors.

Table 2. Tuition remission benefit of UMass, and peer institutions for 2006-2007 academic year. These data were obtained from public web sites for each institution.

University	Proportion	tuition or fees	Benefit value	Total cost of attendance	% of total cost
UMass	1	tuition only	\$ 1,714.00	\$ 17,221.00	10.0
MSU	0.5	tuition & fees	\$ 4,403.00	\$ 14,937.00	29.5
Rutgers	1	tuition & fees	\$ 7,233.00	\$ 19,000.00	38.1
UMD	1	tuition & fees	\$ 7,410.00	\$ 16,466.00	45.0
OSU	0.5	tuition & fees	\$ 4,333.50	\$ 15,903.00	27.2
UConn	1	tuition	\$ 6,456.00	\$ 16,628.00	38.8
PSU	0.75	tuition & fees	\$ 9,638.25	\$ 20,251.00	47.6

Proposal

The position of the MSP and FSU are that this tuition remission benefit must be increased to include all tuition and fees to make UMass competitive with University of Maryland, and Rutgers, peer institutions that commonly make competitive offers for hiring faculty in UMass searches.