



Differential Tuition

Differential tuition (DT) is a student-approved fee that provides UW Eau Claire with annual funding to support enhanced student experiences at the baccalaureate level.

Program History 1996 to 2010

Initiated in 1996 by UW-Eau Claire's Student Senate and approved by the UW System Board of Regents, DT provided supplemental funding for academic programs and activities not typically available at a regional comprehensive university. By 2009/10, full-time undergraduate students paid \$81.50 per semester and part-time undergraduate students paid a pro-rata share of the full-time charge. Graduate students did not pay differential tuition.

In 2010, DT funded programs and activities in the following categories: Faculty/Student Collaborative Research, First Year Experience, Internships/Practical Experiences, Capstone Experiences, Service-Learning and Innovative Projects. The Provost and Academic Affairs staff recommended funding decisions on an annual basis through a competitive proposal process. After developing an annual spending plan, Academic Affairs submitted the plan to Student Senate for review, and Student Senate issued an annual resolution in support of funding the plan. The Provost, working closely with members of the Student Senate Academic Affairs Commission, reviewed expenditures for the current fiscal year and planned funding levels by category for the following fiscal year. The Provost as well as faculty and staff representing various programs and activities funded by DT made annual presentations to the Commission and to the full Student Senate to ensure continuous feedback for improvement and maintenance of differential tuition funded programs.

Program Transformation 2010 to Present

Seeking to build on the excellence that makes UW-Eau Claire distinct, Chancellor Levin-Stankevich announced plans to pursue a substantial increase to differential tuition, called the Blugold Commitment, in August 2009. Following that announcement, campus leaders worked closely with elected student leaders and sought input from all students, parents, faculty, staff, alumni and friends of the University. Over the fall semester, staff in Academic Affairs developed a comprehensive initiative for introduction to Student Senate in December, 2009. After some amendments, the Student Senate passed the resolution.

In February, 2010, the UW System Board of Regents voted 14-2 to support the Blugold Commitment, a differential tuition increase of \$1,200 with up to 40 percent allocated specifically for financial assistance to students with need. The fee increase phases in over four years, beginning with an increase of \$300 (\$150 per semester) in fall 2010. This increase is in addition to the existing DT, resulting in a final 2010/11 DT of \$363. Students share governance in the investment of the resources and in monitoring the programmatic outcomes.

University leadership developed the following 10-year outcomes for Blugold Commitment funding:

- All undergraduate students, regardless of socioeconomic background, will participate in multiple high-impact educational practices such as: collaborative undergraduate research, global or multicultural study beyond the campus, and internships/practical experiences.
- Every freshman, working with faculty and staff advisors, will develop and regularly update a four-year graduation plan.
- The University's four-year graduation rate will increase to 40 percent.
- The University will seek a student-to-faculty ratio of 19 to 1.
- Student approval of academic advising will improve to 90 percent.

The Blugold Commitment Differential Tuition

Under the Blugold Commitment Differential Tuition (BCDT), funds are allocated in two areas, financial assistance and programming.

Financial Assistance: Up to 40% of the BCDT funds annually is used to provide financial assistance to students with need, using the following guidelines, as approved by the Student Senate December 6, 2010:

- All Pell-eligible students are to be held harmless for the BCDT increase
- All full-time students with an EFC of \$7,000 or less are to be held harmless
- All part-time students with an EFC of \$7,000 or less receive a grant of 50% of tuition increase
- Any additional available financial aid will be applied equally to students with an EFC between \$7,000 and \$10,000
- 3% of the available Blugold Commitment funds will be allocated to an Appeals Funds

Programming: Of the portion of funds identified for programming, 75% is allocated through an annual competitive proposal process for projects in the following categories: research and scholarly activity, immersion experiences, internships, practicum, learning and teaching, and innovative projects. Up to 25% can be allocated through the *Provost's Initiative*, specifically to address three areas of critical academic need: course availability for high demand enrollments; the improvement and expansion of advising; and the reform of UW Eau Claire's liberal education core.

The annual proposal process is managed by Academic Affairs. After a call for proposals, deans review and rank proposals for their respective colleges. Ranked proposals are submitted to Categorical Committees (one for each of the six categories outlined above). Categorical Committees are comprised of university faculty, staff and students who review and rank proposals, then forward to the Funding Analysis Committee composed of four members from Academic Affairs and four student representatives. The Funding Analysis Committee makes the final funding recommendations to the Provost and the Student Senate.

2010-12 Programmatic Funding

In spring 2010, following the approval of the Blugold Commitment by the Board of Regents, Academic Affairs managed a proposal process that was compressed to allow for implementation of initiatives by fall 2010. In addition, the Provost, academic deans and staff in Academic Affairs developed specific programmatic plans for the *Provost Initiative*, drawing input from plans developed in standing university committees, as well as incorporating specific concerns expressed by Student Senate leadership.

The Student Senate unanimously passed the Blugold Commitment funding allocation bill—incorporating both the funded proposals and the *Provost Initiative*—on May 17, 2010. The bill was forwarded to the Chancellor and approved for implementation. The 2010-11 BCDT allocated \$1,564,377 in one-time spending to 30 initiatives.

For the 2011-12 academic year, the campus determined funding priorities, again using the combination of competitive proposal process and the *Provost's Initiative*, as outlined above. For the first time, funding recommendations brought forward by the Funding Analysis Committee and by the Provost as part of the *Provost's Initiative*, included base funding for several programs and initiatives, and 17.60 positions either funded as multiple year awards or as base funding awards. In addition, for 2011-12, the *Provost's Initiative* laid the foundation for increased instructional capacity with the addition of 9.50 additional positions in academic departments or in college offices, where positions will have the maximum impact for course availability, advising or contributing efforts toward liberal education core reform and interdisciplinary education.

The Blugold Commitment funding allocation bill for 2011-12 was passed by a vote of 24-0-2 on January 24, 2011 and forwarded to the Chancellor for approval and implementation. The 2011-12 BCDT allocated \$6,676,972 to 62 proposals and the *Provost's Initiative*.