

3-2-1992

## Differential Tuition

The College at Brockport, College Senate

Follow this and additional works at: [https://digitalcommons.brockport.edu/senate\\_resolutions](https://digitalcommons.brockport.edu/senate_resolutions)



Part of the [Higher Education Commons](#)

---

### Repository Citation

The College at Brockport, College Senate, "Differential Tuition" (1992). *College Senate Resolutions*. 864.  
[https://digitalcommons.brockport.edu/senate\\_resolutions/864](https://digitalcommons.brockport.edu/senate_resolutions/864)

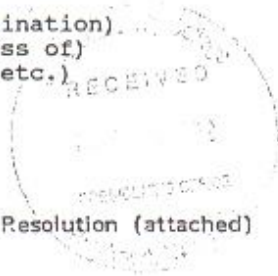
This Resolution is brought to you for free and open access by Digital Commons @Brockport. It has been accepted for inclusion in College Senate Resolutions by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @Brockport. For more information, please contact [kmyers@brockport.edu](mailto:kmyers@brockport.edu).

Resolution # 5 1991-92

TO: President John E. Van de Wetering  
FROM: The Faculty Senate Meeting on 3-2-92  
(Date)

RE: X I. Formal Resolution (Act of Determination).  
II. Recommendation (Urging the fitness of)  
III. Other (Notice, Request, Report, etc.)  
For your information

SUBJECT: Differential Tuition



The Brockport Faculty Senate endorses the Cortland Resolution (attached) on differential tuition.

Signed Edward J. Van Duzer Date Sent 3-10-92  
(For the Senate)

TO: The Faculty Senate  
FROM: President John E. Van de Wetering  
RE: I. Decision and Action Taken on Formal Resolution  
a. Accepted. Effective Date \_\_\_\_\_  
b. Deferred for discussion with the Faculty Senate on \_\_\_\_\_  
c. Unacceptable for the reasons contained in the attached explanation

II, III.  
a. Received and acknowledged  
b. Comment:

DISTRIBUTION: See attached list

Distribution Date 3/11/92 Signed: [Signature]  
(President of the College)

PROPOSED RESOLUTION ON DIFFERENTIAL TUITION

1 The Cortland College Faculty Senate:

2 Recognizing the dire need for increasing the fiscal strength of the State University of New York and the  
3 College at Cortland and recognizing as well the probable necessity for raising tuition as one means of  
4 increasing revenue sources for SUNY, and

5 Recalling the original concept of SUNY as a comprehensive and unitary university system encompassing  
6 all levels of study, research, and public service and recalling the central role of access -- both in terms  
7 of numbers and in terms of giving hitherto excluded social and economic groups expanded educational  
8 opportunities --in the founding of SUNY, and

9 Recalling also the mission framed by the commission for a State University in 1948, namely, to provide  
10 "a more effective assurance of equality of educational opportunity for all qualified youth" and its  
11 restatement in the current SUNY 2000 plan, namely, to establish "tuition which most effectively promotes  
12 the university's access goals"; and,

13 Noting with dismay that the Chancellor and the Board of Trustees are considering again the idea of  
14 differential tuition between the centers, the university colleges, and the specialized and two-year colleges,  
15 and that the Governor's 1992/93 budget proposal authorizes differential tuition, and

16 Believing also that it is more important for SUNY to adopt a long term tuition policy that, by balancing  
17 tuition levels with appropriate levels of student financial aid, would provide SUNY with an appropriate  
18 level of tuition income, would minimize the impact on access, and would honor the ideal of a state-wide  
19 unitary university -- a concept that makes SUNY truly a university that serves all the people of the state  
20 and is a model for others.

21 Enacts the following:

22 Whereas, differential tuition is the first step toward differential access, differential quality, differential  
23 prestige, differential support, and differential organizational patterns in SUNY; and

24 Whereas a policy of differential tuition would undercut the basic principles of the unitary public  
25 university by fostering unwelcome elitism and fragmentation;

26 And whereas alternative tuition policies can be adopted to help meet SUNY's serious fiscal needs while  
27 preserving a uniform, rational, fair, principled, and politically responsible tuition schedule that embodies  
28 the policy of treating public higher education as a social investment;

29 Therefore, Be It Resolved, that the Faculty Senate of SUNY Cortland resolutely opposes the idea of  
30 differential tuition; and

31 Be It Further Resolved, that the Faculty Senate support a tuition policy that is rational, fair, principled,  
32 and politically responsible and uniform in light of SUNY's needs, mission, and founding ideals; and

33 For purposes of implementation, Be It Further Resolved, that this opposition be communicated, along with  
34 a statement of rationale, to the Chancellor, the Statewide Faculty Senate, the Chairs of the Assembly and  
35 Senate Higher Education Committees, Assemblyman Rappleyea and Senator Seward, other area Legislators,  
36 the Chair of the SUNY Board of Trustees, and the Faculty Senates and Assemblies of all other SUNY  
37 four-year colleges.

Proposed By: H. Steck  
Social & Behavioral Sciences

February 3, 1992



Brief Statement of Rationale for Opposing a Policy of Differential Tuition

General Perspective

1. Let us start with the assumption that SUNY is a single unitary, comprehensive university; that access is central to SUNY's mission, a mission that is the raison d'être of its founding in 1948. Access is defined not simply in terms of capacity but also in terms of lowering social, ethnic, and economic barriers. The highest possible quality in teaching and scholarship at all levels is a core principle as well. As public higher education represents a social investment by the community, the university has the mission of serving New York. SUNY is also a politically responsible university. A tuition policy (which SUNY now lacks) must be consistent with these and similar principles. It is not just an expedient for raising money in any way that the market will bear.

Why is differential tuition wrong headed?

1. It would further intensify the patterns of staffing and funding that have already taken into account the different mission and needs of the centers, university colleges, and specialized/two-year colleges (~~see attached chart~~) and would propel SUNY along the path of becoming a sharply stratified system on the California model. It would lead to a class system within SUNY: one sector for the advantaged who can pay; one sector for "others".

2. It would impact on the meaning of a SUNY degree: employers, graduate schools, and the public in general would soon enough come to understand the meaning between different degrees: soon enough, we would see snobbery and elitism at work as University Centers, State Colleges, and Specialized and Two-Year Colleges become the formalized tiers of a remodeled SUNY. An element of this already exists, inevitably, but differential tuition would formalize and legitimize it. It would make four-year and two-year schools into "second class" institutions.

3. SED per student instructional cost figures do show that it does cost more at the centers compared to the four-year schools (\$4873 vs. \$3200). This data (from SED, Fiscal Indicators for Postsecondary Education) does not make it clear that the cost of undergraduate education differs the university colleges and the centers. If not, differential tuition will serve as a tax on undergraduates at centers for the purpose of supporting graduate and professional education. Further, the cost difference between undergraduate, graduate, and professional education is already reflected in different tuition rates between graduate and undergraduate education. And if the costs of undergraduate education at the centers are greater than elsewhere, the introduction of a privatizing "user fee" principle subverts the principles of access and quality. At any level, a uniform increase of \$500 will bring tuition over 25% of the per student cost.

4. It is not clear by any readily available public measures that the quality of undergraduate instruction at university centers (despite their undoubted advantages) is superior to that elsewhere in the system and it may, due to the use of graduate teaching assistants, be inferior.

5. Differential tuition would erect a financial barrier to needy students, thus limiting access and choice on economic grounds to potential students.

6. Will the Presidents at the Centers (some of whom have talked about closing four-year colleges) stand by and see their greater tuition given over to the system as a whole? Doubtful. Given the already differential patterns of funding and staffing, therefore, it appears that non-center campuses will be further impoverished in terms of relative resource allocation in the future, whatever rhetorical justifications are given presently. In addition to creating a stratified university in place of a unitary university of peers and excellence, it would aggravate tensions within the SUNY community.

OVER

7. The so-called "Champaign/Ripple" factor -- you get what you pay for; pay more, get more -- would affect perceptions of the university and constitute a profound philosophical and moral departure from the ideas which give rise to SUNY's commitment to access and quality at all levels. Consumer perception underwrite the pure market principle involved. Those with more income will be willing to pay more; those without will be sent elsewhere.

8. Graduate students at the university colleges (nearly 40% of those in SUNY) would suffer from decreased resources, thus subverting the claim that graduate education at the center requires greater resources.

9. No new principles have been enunciated since the Trustees' Ad Hoc Tuition Committee report of March 26, 1991; the only change is in the state's fiscal condition. In short, this is not a rational tuition policy, but a policy designed to extract all the market can bear from students. In light of this, it is more important that SUNY define a fair and uniform tuition policy that is consistent with SUNY's long-standing principles and does not sacrifice forty-two years of commitment for a quick infusion of cash. Since tuition seems likely to increase, preferred policy options do exist, e.g., (i) linking tuition to an objective formula such as HEPI or the SED cost-per-student figures; (ii) a uniform tuition increase to meet SUNY's fiscal needs, with enriched TAP to ease the burden on students in need.

10. Money is interchangeable. The increased income from differential tuition will go into the General Fund and it will be up to the Legislature and the Governor to decide how to spend it. There is nothing to suggest that SUNY or any part of it will be held harmless and the added differential tuition will be a fiscal add-on. It will be like lottery money; just another source of income to be used by the state to meet its budgetary needs.

11. Differential tuition is one part of a broader SUNY Central trend toward restructuring the University without broad public discussion. The new principles include privatizing (e.g., IFR's, hospital spin-off, increase fees), fragmenting (differential tuition), declining public accountability (flexibility without content). This parallels the state's decline commitment to public higher education, a fiscal matter.

12. Differential tuition would sacrifice for a quick fiscal fix the bedrock notion of SUNY and turn it in a more elitist direction. It would have consequences -- social, institutional, academic -- that we can not fully anticipate.

H. Steck

February 2, 1992