May 27, 2015

From: Jack Lee
To: Senate Committee on Planning and Budgeting
Cc: Ad Hoc Committee on Fee-Based Conversion
Interim President Ana Mari Cauce

Dear Colleagues,

Last fall, on behalf of the Senate Committee on Planning and Budgeting, I appointed an ad hoc subcommittee to recommend a university policy on conversion of tuition-supported programs to fee-based status. The subcommittee included the following SCPB members and invited guests:

- Jerry Baldasty (Interim Provost; Member, SCPB)
- Norm Beauchamp (Radiology Chair; Senate Vice Chair; Member, SCPB)
- Rovy Branon (Vice Provost, Educational Outreach)
- Chad Condon (Senator, ASUWT)
- Gary Farris (Graduate School)
- Lisa Graumlich (Dean, College of the Environment; Member, SCPB)
- Mark Haselkorn (HCDE; Member, SCPB)
- Daniel Jacoby (IAS/Bothell; Member, SCPB)
- Bill Kunz (IAS/Tacoma; Interim Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs)
- Jack Lee (Mathematics; Chair, SCPB)
- Justin Nygard (Director of Government Relations & Student Affairs, ASUWB)
- Alice Popejoy (President, GPSS; Ex Officio Member, SCPB)
- Dan Turner (Associate Dean, Foster School)
- Christina Xiao (President, ASUW; Ex Officio Member, SCPB)

The charge to the subcommittee was to recommend a university-wide policy regarding conversion of tuition-supported programs to fee-based status, in compliance with a new state law (SHB 1669), which states, in part,

> The state universities, regional universities, and The Evergreen State College shall each establish or designate a committee comprised of administrators, faculty, and students to create criteria upon which to evaluate, prior to a shift being made, the proposed shift of a degree program from a state-supported degree program to a self-supporting funding basis. Where possible, an existing budget or advisory committee shall be designated instead of establishing a new committee.

The administration and faculty leadership agreed that SCPB is the appropriate committee for this purpose, and the subcommittee was appointed to consult with appropriate stakeholders and recommend criteria to SCPB.

The subcommittee has now completed its work, and recommends that SCPB adopt the following policy statement:

> It is the policy of the University of Washington that tuition-supported programs will not be converted to fee-based status.
Since we have had a moratorium on such conversions since 2012, this amounts to making the current moratorium permanent. There was some discussion of allowing a “loophole” by which a unit could propose such a conversion under extraordinary circumstances; but an overwhelming majority of the subcommittee found it hard to imagine circumstances under which such a request should be approved, and were concerned that leaving a loophole might encourage abuse. It was also noted that UW already has tuition-setting authority for graduate programs, the most likely candidates for conversion, which means there should not be a need for changing their funding models. So this is our recommendation.

The next steps in the process should be

1. The President or Provost should issue an executive or administrative order naming SCPB as the officially designated committee to establish criteria for conversion to fee-based status under the terms of the law. Because of the requirement that the committee include administrators, faculty, and students, it would be appropriate to stipulate that the ex officio student leaders on SCPB (chairs of ASUW and GPSS) have voting rights for this purpose.

2. SCPB will vote on the proposed policy at its last regularly-scheduled meeting of the spring: Monday, June 8, 1:30-3:00pm in Gerberding 142. We are advised by the Office of Public Records that this doesn’t need to be an open meeting, but all members of the ad hoc committee are invited to attend.

Once the conversion policy is established by SCPB, we recommend that the central administration, faculty leadership, deans, student leadership, Graduate School, and Professional and Continuing Education continue a university-wide conversation about some of the broader issues surrounding fee-based courses, such as

- Do we have appropriate policies and criteria for deciding whether new programs should be fee-based?
- How do fee-based programs fit into the overall mission of the university?
- Do we have adequate policies and procedures for monitoring the quality and financial viability of existing fee-based programs?
- How can we ensure that growth in fee-based programs does not adversely affect access and diversity?
- Do we need new policies to address conversion in the other direction: fee-based programs being converted to tuition-supported status?
- How should fee-based programs interact with Activity-Based Budgeting?

These issues have already been addressed by several segments of the campus community, but we believe it would be a good idea for the conversation to engage a broader cross-section of the university. Here are some resources that should be useful in getting a university-wide conversation started:

- Graduate School 2014 Fee-Based Programs Report  
  [www.grad.washington.edu/about/reports/Fee-Based-2014.pdf](www.grad.washington.edu/about/reports/Fee-Based-2014.pdf)
- *The Future of Graduate Education? A Study of Fee-based Degree Programs at the University of Washington* (Master’s thesis by Dani Fitts, attached)
- *The Fee-Based Degree Program*  
  (UWEO policy notebook excerpt, attached)

Sincerely,

Jack Lee  
Chair, Senate Committee on Planning and Budgeting  
Professor of Mathematics