Title: **RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF INCREASING TRANSPARENCY IN DECISION MAKING AROUND FEE-BASED DEGREE PROGRAMS**

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Written by: Michelle Dillon (Library and Information Science) and Patricia Atwater (Health Services)

Resolution Number: 02.12-13

WHEREAS the fee-based model, which funds graduate and undergraduate programs through student fees alone, has previously been applied primarily to programs in which graduates have high earning potentials; and

WHEREAS responding to drastic cuts in state funding for higher education, the University of Washington has expanded the number of fee-based programs to include programs from which graduates do not typically have high earning potential; and

WHEREAS undergraduate, graduate and professional education at public universities like the UW has traditionally been supported in part by public investment, as a way to help meet workforce needs and promote economic growth; and

WHEREAS UW has seen a large increase in fee-based programs in the past ten years, with the proportion of entering graduate students in fee-based programs rising from 17% in 2003 to 41% in 2012\(^2\) and by comparison, only 8.3% of graduate students in the University of California system are enrolled in a fee-based program\(^3\); and

WHEREAS many graduate programs moved to the fee-based model are in fields that serve the public and non-profit sectors, including public health, library science, and nursing; and

WHEREAS moving to a fee-based model has resulted in massive tuition hikes for many graduate students; such as:


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School/degree</th>
<th>Year of transition</th>
<th>Change in residential tuition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School of Nursing--Nurse-Midwifery (DNP)(^4,5)</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Rose from $14,000 a year in 2008-2009 to between $25,000 and $30,000 a year in 2012-2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information School--Master of Library and Information Science (MLIS)(^6,7)</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Tuition to complete degree for 2011-2013 would have been $29,056 with state support but increased to $43,155 to complete degree as a fee-based program, an increase of nearly 50 percent</td>
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<tr>
<td>School of Public Health--Master of Public Health in Community-Oriented Public Health Practice(^8,9)</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Tuition to complete the two-year program increased from $20,421 for the class of 2009 to $34,845 for the class of 2013, an increase of nearly 60 percent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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WHEREAS, students enrolled in fee-based programs are ineligible for full tuition reimbursement for most on-campus employment\(^10,11\); and

WHEREAS students enrolled in fee-based programs no longer qualify for certain scholarships or fellowships containing a tuition reimbursement component, such as GO-MAP funding, the Huckabay Teaching Fellowship\(^12\), and the UWRA Graduate Student Fellowship in Aging, which are unable to cover the higher costs of fee-based tuition\(^13\); and

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\(^4\) School of Nursing UW. Nursing Program Costs. nursing.uw.edu. Available at: [http://nursing.uw.edu/node/769](http://nursing.uw.edu/node/769). Accessed January 14, 2013.


\(^8\) Personal communication with Donna Porter, Department of Health Services Associate Director of Academic Program Operations, November 26, 2012.


\(^12\) The Graduate School at the University of Washington. Huckabay Teaching Fellowship. [http://www.grad.washington.edu/students/fa/huckabay/index.shtml](http://www.grad.washington.edu/students/fa/huckabay/index.shtml).

\(^13\) Personal communication with Marilyn Gray, Assistant Director of Fellowships and Awards at the Graduate School, December 12, 2012.
WHEREAS graduate and professional students are ineligible for subsidized Stafford loans, the Pell Grant, the Washington State Need Grant, and most other need-based financial aid programs; and

WHEREAS the higher debt burden associated with fee-based degree program tuition can make it more difficult for graduates to pursue their chosen career paths and staff vital professions in Washington State; and

WHEREAS the higher expense of a graduate degree in a fee-based program may make it more difficult for students from low-income backgrounds to begin graduate programs, restricting the diversity of the graduate student body, leading to a workforce that is not representative of Washington State’s population, and creating deficits in the number of qualified workers in low-income communities, in which graduates from low-income backgrounds are more likely to practice; and

WHEREAS despite the negative impact on students, the implications of the transition from state-sponsorship to student-support have not been well-publicized to these students; and

WHEREAS in at least three departments that have undergone the transition, students were not notified of increased tuition until after acceptance of admission offers, those being the Master of Library and Information Science, the Community Oriented Public Health Practice Master of Public Health program and the Master in Health Administration program; and

WHEREAS the Graduate School Council has undertaken a study on UW’s fee-based programs; and

WHEREAS the UW has instituted a moratorium on moving programs from state support to fee-based through July 1, 2015; and

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL STUDENT SENATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON:

THAT GPSS encourages UW administration to continue to honor its moratorium on moving degree programs from state-supported to the fee-based model until at least 2015; and

THAT GPSS requests that UW administration develop, in concert with an advisory body composed of students, faculty and other stakeholders, and informed by the results of the report to be produced by the Graduate School Council on fee-based programs, a set of criteria with which to evaluate whether new and existing degree programs should be eligible for state funding in the tradition of public education or should be supported by student dollars alone under the fee-based model; and

THAT this advisory body consider as potential criteria whether a degree program serves the public interest and median earnings in the field served by that degree; and

THAT this advisory body continue as an oversight and guidance committee on this issue; and

THAT the advisory body establish a process for moving degree programs that do not meet the new criteria back to the state-supported category; and

THAT GPSS encourages the Graduate School Council to include in its report an evaluation of the effects of moving programs off of state support including the impact on students, disadvantaged groups, and the workforce the degree feeds into; and

THAT in the case of a decision to establish a new fee-based program, notification must be provided to all current students at least six months prior to any implementation and to all prospective students at least one month before the application deadline, with an estimation of tuition costs, and that these estimates should be honored; and

THAT GPSS supports a policy in which prior to any decision to increase tuition or fees within an existing fee-based program, the proposed tuition or fee increase along with an analysis stating what the additional revenue would be used for and why it is believed to be necessary should be well-publicized among the affected student body; and

THAT GPSS supports further that following the publishing of the proposed tuition or fee increase, a comment period should be used to solicit feedback from the affected student body regarding the impacts of and appropriateness of the proposed tuition increase, and that comments from students should be reviewed and considered; and

THAT GPSS supports further that any final decision regarding the proposed tuition increase should respond to every issue raised during the comment period; and

THAT GPSS urges the UW Administration to lobby the state legislature to restore funding for higher education, including support for graduate programs and, if needed, funding to restore state support to any degree programs not meeting the new criteria; and

THAT this resolution be forwarded to UW President Michael Young, UW Provost Ann Mari Cauce, the UW Board of Regents, and the UW Graduate School Council.

Presented to GPSS Senate and approved on February 13, 2013.