

**House Higher Education Committee
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UT Dallas Innovative Tuition Programs

- Four-Year, Fixed-Rate Tuition Plan
- Comet Connection

Four-Year, Fixed-Rate Tuition Plan

- Started in Fall 2007 – required of all new students entering then or thereafter
- Applies to tuition and all required fees – these are fixed for four years
- Goals of the plan:
 - Enhance predictability of tuition and required fees
 - Encourage graduation in 4 years – part of a comprehensive strategy at UT Dallas to increase 4-year graduation rate.
 - This strategy has worked – 4-year graduation rate at UT Dallas has increased from 32% in 2005 to 51% in 2012, now among the best of any public university in Texas.
 - Four-year fixed tuition plan has contributed significantly to this progress.
- In Fall 2012, 14,473 UT Dallas students paid zero tuition increase. This is approximately 75% of the student body. In fact, these students paid lesser rates that were set as long as four years ago.

Comet Connection

- Allows students who transfer from community colleges to lock in tuition rates for four years.
- Students can sign up for the UT Dallas Comet Connection, attend a community college, and then enroll at UT Dallas and pay the fixed-rate tuition they locked in when they signed up. This alternative was created to provide another mechanism to help families afford college while strongly encouraging graduation in four years.
- As of Fall 2012, 2,024 students had enrolled at UT Dallas through the Comet Connection.

General Comments

- At UT Dallas, tuition and fees are fixed for all undergraduate and graduate students. When the plan was implemented in 2007, continuing students had the opportunity to choose the fixed four-year plan or the annually adjusted plan. By 2011, all students (new and continuing) were on the fixed four-year plan.
- The fixed four-year plan is particularly well suited for UT Dallas because our student body is composed primarily of students who are in a position to graduate in four years.

- Fixed-rate tuition is not necessarily cheaper for students, though tuition clearly is more predictable. UT Dallas estimates annual cost increases and charges accordingly. Figure 1 illustrates the concept. Fixed-rate tuition removes the risk to the student in the “out years” but costs a little more in the first year.

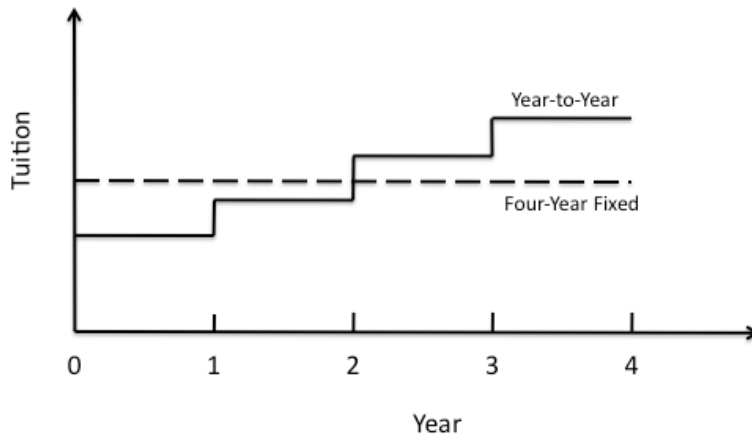


Figure 1. Concept of Fixed Versus Annually Adjusted Tuition.

- At UT Dallas, if a student does not graduate in four years, that student’s tuition rate rolls forward one year. For example, a student entering in Fall 2009 who has not graduated four years later in Fall 2013 rolls forward one year, paying the same rate as students entering in Fall 2010. This same process repeats each year if the student still has not graduated.
- While tuition and fees are fixed for continuing students, a new rate is set each year for new students because inflation drives costs up each year. In Fall 2013, for example, the tuition rate for entering resident undergraduate students will be 2.95% greater than the rate for students who entered in Fall 2012. The rates for tuition and required fees will then remain unchanged for four years.
- Students and parents have reacted very positively to the fixed four-year tuition plan. The University considers the innovative tuition plan to be a recruiting advantage.