

UW System proposing no tuition increase for resident undergrads

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The UW System is proposing that regents keep resident undergrad tuition rates flat for the upcoming school year, essentially keeping in place a freeze that lawmakers voted to let expire in the 2021-23 budget.

Regents this Thursday will vote on a resolution to recommend the system president not increase tuition at all for resident undergrads.

“The Board of Regents and President Thompson are committed to a thoughtful consideration of tuition, which will be taken up at the regents meeting this week,” said system spokesman Mark Pitsch.

Though the GOP-controlled Legislature had voted to allow the freeze to expire, some Republican lawmakers had warned the regents against immediately seeking a significant tuition increase.

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“Listen carefully, UW, you’re looking at the guardrails,” state Sen. Dale Kooyenga said after the Joint Finance Committee voted in May to leave a freeze out of the budget. “If UW decides to jack up tuition in a tone-deaf manner, this body will take action.”

The system has been barred by the state from increasing undergrad tuition for the last decade. This year’s budget — which passed both branches of the Legislature with bipartisan support — would give that authority back to UW.

Gov. Tony Evers in his budget proposal had recommended extending the freeze, but backfilling the lost revenue with \$50.4 million in additional state aid. Meanwhile the system, now led by President Tommy Thompson, has been calling for an end to the

freeze. Thompson previously said ending the freeze would provide “flexibility” for the system’s finances.

The budget lawmakers approved included an additional \$8.25 million in funding for the UW System targeted to programs such as \$5 million for a freshwater collaborative. But it included no increase for general operations.

After the Legislative Fiscal Bureau updated revenue projections to account for an additional \$4.4 billion the state is now expected to take in through mid-2023, Evers rescinded a \$45 million laps for the UW System for the 2020-21 fiscal year that had been implemented in case revenues fell short due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

According to materials for this week’s regents meeting, the cost for a typical resident undergraduate living on campus would increase 1 percent for 2021-22 when taking into account tuition, fees, and room and board.

See the [agenda](#).