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## UC president recommends huge tuition increases

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The price of a public education at the University of California may be going up again - not once, but twice.

UC President Mark Yudof is recommending a 15 percent increase in in-state undergraduate fees that would take effect next spring, and another 15 percent increase on top of that beginning in fall 2010.

The governing Board of Regents will hear details of the proposal - which also includes graduate-level fee increases of 15 percent - at its meeting Wednesday, but won't vote until November.

If approved, the undergraduate fee increases would be the eighth and ninth in seven years, and would send the price of a year at UC above the \$10,000 mark for the first time next fall.

"It makes me really angry," said Gracelynn West, 20, a first-generation college student at UC San Diego who expects to graduate in June with years of debt to pay off.

Though West has a job on campus, "I'm already looking to get another job to pay for the increasing fees," she said.

As usual when fees are raised, almost a third of the new money would be set aside for financial aid.

But West said the financial assistance is never enough.

"I still have to take out loans," she said.

The regents last raised UC's annual tuition by 9.3 percent in May, bringing this year's undergraduate fee to \$7,788.

Under Yudof's proposal, the new tuition for 2009-10 would become \$8,958, an increase of \$1,170, or 15 percent. Because most students pay each semester, they would see their spring bill rise by half that amount.

### Five-figure tuition

Fees would rise again next fall under the proposal, by \$1,344, or 15 percent, setting tuition at

\$10,302.

Add another \$13,000 or so for a dorm, plus the average \$938 fee charged by each campus, and the annual cost for a California resident to attend UC would top \$24,000 next year.

"Wow. When I hear that number, I think this is going to send yet another discouraging signal to low- and moderate-income students and families about whether college is still within reach," said Lauren Asher, president of the Institute for College Access and Success, a nonprofit group in Berkeley.

UC Vice President Patrick Lenz will make the case for the higher student fees in an 18-page report he will present Wednesday to the regents' finance committee meeting in San Francisco. The report, prepared by UC finance experts, says efforts to cut spending and raise fees to date have not been enough to close a budget shortfall of at least \$753 million anticipated for this year and next.

### **Lower funding, higher costs**

The report blames the shortfall on reduced funding from the state, a higher cost of doing business at the campus level - including soaring costs in retiree health benefits - and a mandatory contribution by UC into the university's retirement plan.

"The President and the Chancellors believe it will be extremely difficult to close the shortfall without severe damage to the University absent additional revenue," the report concludes.

The tuition increase for 2009-10 would generate \$117 million, and the increase for next year would bring in \$292 million.

### **Making ends meet**

Campuses have already laid off 884 employees this year and expect to lay off 1,006 more, the report says. Almost 2,000 jobs have also been eliminated in the past year, with nearly 2,000 more to go.

Other actions taken to save money have included raising student tuition, increasing class sizes - in some cases up to 25 percent, the report says - reducing nonunion salaries, and deferring hiring and purchasing.

The report compares UC's proposed fees against the fees at four other public schools: the universities of Illinois, Michigan and Virginia, and the State University of New York at Buffalo. When miscellaneous campus costs are added, the cost of attending UC in the 2010-11 school year would exceed for the first time the projected average cost to attend the other four schools.

### **Regents' meeting**

The University of California Board of Regents will meet on Wednesday and Thursday at the Mission Bay Community Center, 1675 Owens St., on the UCSF Mission Bay campus in San Francisco.

-- The meeting agenda can be found at [links.sfgate.com/ZIDP](http://links.sfgate.com/ZIDP)

-- The report addressing increased student fees can be found at [links.sfgate.com/ZIDQ](http://links.sfgate.com/ZIDQ)

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