University increases tuition for fall semester

By Leah Cavalier
leah2cavalier@gmail.com

The fall semester will begin with all the usual activities for University of Louisiana at Lafayette students -- along with a 10 percent increase in tuition.

"I understand (the increase) because of budget cuts, but at the same time it affects me because I'm paying for my own school," said Brinany Albarado, a junior mechanical engineering major.

Albarado has been paying her college education with student loans and covering the difference out-of-pocket. She said she is reluctant to take out more loans and plans to work more during school to pay the extra 10 percent. Her work schedule and education costs already restrict her to 12 credit hours per semester, which will keep her in school longer than the eight semester standard.

Albarado planned to take summer classes in 2016 to keep up with her degree plan, but is now hesitant due to the increase. Without the summer classes, her graduation date will be further delayed.

"Summer classes are already super expensive," said sophomore biology major Jianna Broussard.

TOPS and Federal Student Aid scholarships do not cover summer classes, so although Broussard receives money from both organizations, her summer tuition is her responsibility.

Broussard said she will probably have to take less summer classes which will set back her degree plan due to the increases.

The extra money generated from the tuition increase will be used in a couple of different ways, according to DeWayne Bowie, Ph.D., vice president for enrollment management.

Bowie said that 10 percent of the funds generated from the increase will go

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The tuition increase comes from a combination of the Granting Resources and Autonomy for Diplomas (GRAD) Act and HB 152.

The GRAD Act was passed in 2010 with the goal of improving performance in colleges and universities to result in more graduates.

Section one of the act states

“...by granting the institutions limited operational autonomy and flexibility”

“Autonomy means we don’t have to go through the legislation,” Bowie said.

He said the act allows the university to raise tuition if it meets certain performance standards.

The second factor of the tuition increase comes from HB 152, which was passed in the most recent legislative session. This bill gives management boards of public colleges and universities the authority to increase fees for the next two years.

UL Lafayette has also created a new “general and auxiliary” fee of $28.58 per credit hour starting in the fall semester.

Both TOPS and the university will adjust their merit-based scholarships to match the new tuition costs.

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Funds generated from the increase will also be used to “further enhance academic resources,” Bowie wrote in an email to students. He said while UL Lafayette currently lacks a specific plan, the money will most likely go towards more teachers, advising and student counseling opportunities.

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