



ALABAMA COMMUNITY
COLLEGE SYSTEM

Department of Postsecondary Education
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State Board of Education adjusts tuition rates

MONTGOMERY – The State Board of Education today authorized an adjustment of the tuition rate for community and technical colleges from \$71 to \$85 per credit hour for spring semester 2010, an adjustment of approximately 19.7 percent. The overall increase for the typical student is approximately 15.56 percent, since fees are not increasing. The tuition adjustment will produce approximately \$21,521,535 in additional revenue for 2009-10.

For fall semester 2010, tuition will be adjusted to \$90 per credit hour. An annual \$2 per credit hour increase was authorized for fall semester 2011 and beyond.

The board also authorized Athens State University to revise its current tuition schedule. The new tuition range will be \$127.00 to \$153.00 commencing with the spring 2010 semester. The initial increase to \$127.00 will generate \$362,000 in revenue.

Interim Chancellor Joan Y. Davis referenced *A Tale of Two Cities* in recommending the tuition rate adjustment. "It's the worst of times and the best of times," said Davis. On the one hand, we have record enrollment throughout the system. On the other hand, that record enrollment is straining already tight budgets and resources at our colleges."

In the recommendation supporting the tuition rate adjustment, the following rationale was provided to the board:

- At a time when America's community colleges are called upon to serve as the engines of economic recovery for a nation in crisis, state funds have diminished significantly while enrollment demands are escalating. In fact, during the history of the Alabama Community College System, never before has proration reached current multi-year levels, resulting in a total cumulative loss of state funding to the Alabama Community College System of \$92,623,480.
- It is predicted that Alabama will face severe economic challenges during the next two years. The cuts the state has made this year won't be enough to sustain government operations over the next two years. The state budget for the fiscal year starting October 1 was spared some pain because of \$3 billion the state got in federal stimulus money.
- The Rainy Day Fund is depleted; the Proration Prevention Account is also depleted; and tax collections are expected to remain flat or decline. The Alabama Community College System has not increased tuition and fees since 2004, and its member institutions have rapidly approached dangerously low levels of available funds to meet basic needs. It is obvious that no additional funding will be available for the Alabama Community College System for four to five years or more.

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- Given the declared 7.5 percent proration for 2009-2010, dire economic projections, absence of federal stimulus funds for the future, and projections that state funds available to postsecondary education will continue to decline, the urgency of need has reached epic proportions to minimally adjust tuition within the Alabama Community College System. The core mission of the Alabama Community College System is endangered by the lack of adequate funding to support access for students most in need of the education provided by the system.

The mission of The Alabama Community College System is to provide accessible, quality educational programs that support economic growth and the quality of life of the people of Alabama. The location of colleges, flexible class schedules and increasing options for distance learning make it possible for many to earn college credit while living and working in their own communities.

Even with the increase, tuition still remains less than 41 percent to 52 percent of that at Alabama's public universities which have increased tuition by more than 20 percent over the last two years.

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