



**DIRECTIVE 2019-023**

July 25, 2019

Re: CONSIDERATION OF A REQUEST BY THE UNIVERSITY OF CINCINNATI TO ESTABLISH AN UNDERGRADUATE TUITION GUARANTEE PROGRAM

Section 3345.48 of the Ohio Revised Code authorizes the board of trustees of a state university to establish an undergraduate tuition guarantee program. In establishing the program the board must adopt rules that include all of the following:

1. The number of credit hours required to earn an undergraduate degree in each major;
2. A guarantee that the general and instructional fee for each student in a cohort shall remain constant for four years so long as the student complies with the requirements of the programs;
3. A benchmark by which the board sets annual increases in general and instructional fees. This benchmark and any subsequent benchmark shall be subject to approval by the chancellor;
4. Eligibility requirements for students to participate in the program;
5. Student rights and privileges under the program;
6. Consequences to the university for students unable to complete a degree program within four years, as follows:
  - a. For a student who could not complete the program in four years due to a lack of available classes or space in classes provided by the university, the university shall provide the necessary course or courses for completion to the student free of charge.
  - b. For a student who could not complete the program in four years due to military service or other circumstances beyond a student's control, as determined by the board of trustees, the university shall provide the necessary course or courses for completion to the student at the student's initial cohort rate.
  - c. For a student who did not complete the program in four years for any other reason, as determined by the board of trustees, the university shall provide the necessary course or courses for completion to the student at a rate determined through a method established by the board under division (B)(7) of 3345.48.
7. Guidelines for adjusting a student's annual charges if the student, due to circumstances under the student's control, is unable to complete a degree program within four years;

8. A requirement that the rules adopted be published or posted in the university handbook, course catalog, and web site.

Prior to implementation the University of Cincinnati is required to submit its program and rules to the Chancellor for approval. On April 23, 2019 the board of trustees of the University of Cincinnati adopted an undergraduate tuition guarantee program and subsequently submitted the attached program to the Chancellor for approval.

Agency staff reviewed the request and posted its recommendations to the ODHE website for purposes of providing a public comment period before final approval by the Chancellor. No public comments were received.

Based upon my review, staff recommendations and public comments received, I hereby determine the program conforms in principle with the parameters and guidelines of section 3345.48 of the Ohio Revised Code and approve the University of Cincinnati's tuition guarantee program.

This Directive will take immediate effect.



Randy Gardner  
Chancellor, Ohio Department of Higher Education

mtc

**University of Cincinnati  
Recommendation to the Board of Trustees  
For Action**

**Date:** April 2, 2019

**Title:** TUITION GUARANTEE PROGRAM

**Synopsis:** Authority is requested to implement the University of Cincinnati Tuition Guarantee (UCTG) Program

The University of Cincinnati places a premium on affordability, accountability and access.

So much so that UC's undergraduate tuition has been frozen for the past four years. The upcoming spring 2019 graduating class (undergraduates who entered in Fall 2015) has never known a tuition hike throughout their college careers.

In order to maintain this level of stability for our students and their families into the future, the university has been evaluating the merits of Tuition Guarantee programs at counterpart universities across the State of Ohio, taking the time to ensure that any recommended plan would align with our guiding principles and values.

In Ohio, Tuition Guarantee programs have been in place since 2014. This allowed for review of such programs at a variety of institutions throughout the state. Currently, all but two public universities in the State of Ohio have implemented Tuition Guarantee programs.

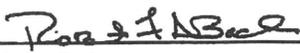
With this in mind, the University of Cincinnati Tuition Guarantee (UCTG) program is submitted for approval and acceptance for implementation for Fall 2019 semester. Key components of the UCTG include, but are not limited to:

- Implementation is subject to parameters established by the Ohio Department of Higher Education (ODHE) and the Ohio Revised Code 3345.48
- The UCTG will apply to all new degree-seeking undergraduate students enrolling at the Uptown Campus as well as regional campuses.
- Participation is required for all new first-year, degree-seeking undergraduates enrolling at UC for the first time in Fall Semester 2019 or later, and for all transfer students enrolling in Fall 2019 or later.
- The UCTG defaults to four-year programs and is automatically extended to five years for students participating in mandatory five-year programs.
- Students enrolled at the University of Cincinnati Uptown or regional campuses prior to Fall Semester 2019 are considered returning students for purposes of assessing tuition and other fees and are not covered by the UCTG. Tuition and other fees for these students are set annually by the Board of Trustees.

Prepared by:   
Patrick A. Kowalski  
Vice President for Finance

**APPROVED**

APR 23 2019

Reviewed by:   
Robert F. Ambach  
Senior Vice President  
Administration & Finance

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**FOR BOARD OFFICE USE ONLY:**

Recommendation Number: 19.04.23.02

Date of Board Approval: 4/23/19 Submitted by:   
President

## THE UNIVERSITY OF CINCINNATI TUITION GUARANTEE

### A. THE UNIVERSITY OF CINCINNATI TUITION GUARANTEE

The University of Cincinnati Tuition Guarantee is a Cohort-based, guaranteed undergraduate Tuition program adopted in accordance with Ohio Revised Code 3345.48. The University of Cincinnati's Tuition Guarantee provides all eligible new first year undergraduate students and their families the certainty that tuition, mandatory fees, and room and board charges will not increase over the ensuing four academic year period from their first enrollment as a degree-seeking student. The University of Cincinnati's Tuition Guarantee will apply to all new degree-seeking undergraduate students enrolling at the uptown campus as well as regional campuses (only students in a non-matriculating status will be excluded as all programs have pathways to baccalaureate degrees). For purposes of the Tuition Guarantee, a degree seeking student is defined as a baccalaureate student or an associate degree student enrolled in a program that has a bachelor's degree completion pathway. The University will complete an annual program review for all associate degree programs to identify baccalaureate degree completion pathways and measure student outcomes. UC will exempt from the Tuition Guarantee Program students enrolled in associate programs without demonstrable and sufficiently utilized bachelor's degree completion pathways as assessed via the annual program review. Participation in the program is required for all new first-year degree-seeking undergraduate in-state resident students enrolling at the University of Cincinnati for the first time in fall semester of 2019 or later, and for all transfer students enrolling in fall semester 2019 or later.

1. The four academic years of the University of Cincinnati Tuition Guarantee includes fall, spring, and summer terms. The four academic year term is guaranteed regardless of the student's enrollment status (full, part-time or not enrolled) during that time.
2. Undergraduate tuition, mandatory fees and room and board is set by the Board of Trustees each academic year and guaranteed for 4 academic years for each entering Cohort.

### B. TERMS

#### 1. New First-Year Students

A New First-Year Student is any undergraduate, degree-seeking student enrolled at any of the University of Cincinnati's campuses for the first time on or after fall 2019, and who has not been enrolled at any other college or postsecondary institution. New first-year students include students who enroll at the University of Cincinnati after graduating from high school, earning a GED, and/or non-traditional students who enroll at any of the University of Cincinnati campuses for the first time. New first-year students do not include non-degree-seeking students, College Credit Plus or Advanced High School; exchange students; and other students participating in other pre-enrollment or postsecondary option programs.

#### 2. Transfer and Transition Students

All eligible students transferring from a college or university outside of the University of Cincinnati (considered transfer students) will join in the Tuition Guarantee Cohort that aligns with the enrollment status based on the number of credit hours achieved at the time of transfer. As such, the student will then have the tuition guarantee for the remaining time of their guaranteed 4 years.

All students transferring campuses from a University of Cincinnati regional campus to uptown campus, or vice versa are considered transition campus students as specified in section D.2. These students, when changing campus will join the Cohort they began with at their starting campus, and will receive that Cohort's set of rates at the campus they are moving to for the remaining time of their guaranteed 4 years.

### 3. Returning Students

Students enrolled at the University of Cincinnati uptown or regional campus prior to fall semester 2019 are considered Returning Students for purposes of assessing tuition and other fees and are not covered by the University of Cincinnati Tuition Guarantee. Tuition and other fees are set annually by the Board of Trustees for these students.

### 4. Cohort

- a) Eligible new First-Year students are assigned to a Cohort (group) based on the semester in which the student first enrolls as a degree-seeking student. Each academic year contains one fall semester, one spring semester, and one summer semester.
  - Any new degree-seeking, undergraduate student who is registered for at least one (1) class as of the last day of the fall, spring, or summer term will be assigned to that Cohort year for purposes of determining Undergraduate Tuition, Mandatory Fees, and Room and Board for the four academic years (12 consecutive semesters) covered by the guaranteed Cohort price. Each Cohort commences with the first semester of enrollment and the pricing remains constant for four academic years (e.g., fall 2019 through summer 2023 or spring 2020 through fall 2024).
  - Students may complete as many undergraduate degrees, majors, minors, and/or certificates in conjunction with the undergraduate degree as they choose within their Cohort period.

### 5. Bachelor's Degree

An undergraduate degree requires the completion of a minimum of 120 semester credit hours. Bachelor's degree programs do not normally require more than 120 semester credit hours to be awarded unless the additional coursework is required to meet professional accreditation or licensing requirements. Programs that require more than 120 semester hours as part of the baseline program will qualify for one extension year (3 semesters) to the baseline tuition guarantee program – a listing of the programs that automatically qualify for the additional 3 semesters is listed in Appendix A. Students enrolled in 120 hour programs and need additional time to complete their program can request one extension of the guaranteed Cohort period following the procedures outlined in L. below.

A complete list of programs and their required credit hours can be viewed at <http://www.uc.edu/academics.html>. The list of programs and the required credit hours will be reviewed annually and updated as needed.

### 6. Tuition (Instructional and Mandatory Fees)

Undergraduate tuition is the sum of the undergraduate instructional fee and mandatory fees. Non-resident students also pay a non-resident surcharge, and international students pay an additional international surcharge that are not part of the guarantee. Under the University of Cincinnati Tuition Guarantee, tuition is set each academic year for four academic years for each entering Cohort. Full-

time students pay additional Tuition at their Tuition Guarantee Cohort rate per credit hour for overload status (defined as greater than 18 credit hours) . Part-time students are charged the per credit hour rate of the offering campus as determined by their cohort.

- a) Instructional Fee - These are the guaranteed instructional costs that eligible undergraduate first-time degree-seeking students will pay. Each incoming undergraduate resident Cohort is charged its unique, guaranteed rate for four academic years.
- b) Mandatory Fees - For uptown campus, these are campus fees charged to all students that include basic General fee, Campus Life fee, and ITIE fee. If an uptown campus student is classified as a "Distance Learning Student", the Campus Life fee would be omitted and replaced with a Distance Learning fee. For Regional campuses, these are the general fee and ITIE fee.

#### 7. Room and Board Charges

Room and Board charges are the guaranteed rates for the University of Cincinnati's housing and meal plan options. Students pay a fee based on the housing and meal plan selected. The schedule of fees and options are guaranteed for each Cohort for four academic years at the respective campus. The University of Cincinnati requires first-year students at the uptown campus outside of a 50 mile radius to reside in university-provided housing and to purchase a meal plan (with certain exceptions as outlined in the University housing guidelines). Regional students may elect room and board options where available.

#### 8. Fees, Charges, and Fines Not included in the Guarantee

Only undergraduate instructional and mandatory fees and room and board charges are included in the University of Cincinnati guarantee. All other charges, including but not limited to undergraduate non-resident surcharge, international surcharge course fees, technology fees (different from the ITIE fee), program fees, student health insurance, textbooks, charges and fines incurred by students such as late fees and graduate and professional tuition and fees are not included in the Tuition Guarantee Program.

### **C. DISSEMINATION**

The University Bursar, University Registrar, Admissions, Enrollment Management, and other student service offices using various methods including publishing on websites and in student handbooks and course catalogs will disseminate the terms of the University of Cincinnati Tuition Guarantee, along with the University of Cincinnati Board of Trustees' approved guaranteed Cohort prices.

### **D. ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS**

#### 1. Summer Term Start

Students whose first enrollment is a summer term will pay the prior Cohort tuition rate for the initial term, but will be assigned to the entering semester Cohort that immediately follows. Summer start students are typically students who have confirmed their enrollment and will be matriculating for the first time for the fall semester immediately following the summer term. By being assigned to the following semester Cohort, these students will receive the benefit of guaranteed tuition for four full years after completing the initial term.

#### 2. Students moving from/to the University of Cincinnati Regional Campuses (Campus change students.)

All students changing from a University of Cincinnati regional campus to uptown campus, or vice versa, will join the Cohort they began with at their starting campus, and will receive that Cohort's set of rates at the campus to which they are changing to for the remaining time of their guaranteed 4 years.

3. Transfer Students from other colleges or universities

All eligible students transferring from a college or university outside of the University of Cincinnati (considered transfer students) will join in the Tuition Guarantee Cohort that aligns with the enrollment status based on the number of credit hours achieved at the time of transfer. As such, the student will then have the tuition guarantee for the remaining time of their guaranteed 4 years.

4. Re-Enrolling Students

Re-enrolling students who were admitted in a degree-seeking program prior to fall 2019 are not covered by the University of Cincinnati Guarantee and will pay tuition and other fees associated with Returning Students.

When an undergraduate student originally assigned to a Tuition Guarantee Cohort seeks to re-enroll after any period of non-attendance and not more than four (4) academic years have elapsed since the student's initial degree-seeking enrollment, then the student will be assigned to the student's original Tuition Guarantee Cohort for the balance of the cohort period. If four (4) or more academic years have elapsed, then the re-enrolling student is assigned to the next Tuition Guarantee cohort (i.e. original Tuition Guarantee cohort plus one) at the campus to which they are re-enrolling (as defined in section K), unless it has been more than 15 semesters, then Tuition Guarantee cohort plus two; more than 18 semesters then Tuition Guarantee cohort plus three; etc.

5. Non-Degree Students

Students admitted or enrolled as non-degree-seeking students (students who are not pursuing an undergraduate degree or have not been admitted as a degree-seeking student at the University of Cincinnati) are not covered by the University of Cincinnati Guarantee and will not be assigned to a Tuition Guarantee Cohort unless the student is subsequently admitted and enrolls as an undergraduate degree-seeking student. Tuition, mandatory fees and room and board for these students will continue to be set annually by the Board of Trustees. This includes non-degree-seeking students or conditionally admitted students such as students enrolled in College Credit Plus or Advanced High School; exchange students, and other students participating in other pre-enrollment or postsecondary option programs. Once an undergraduate student is admitted as a New First Year degree-seeking student, the student will be assigned to the Cohort based on the semester in which the student first enrolled as a degree-seeking student.

6. Students enrolled full-time at Regional campuses taking uptown campus classes

Full-time regional campus students who take classes at the uptown campus will be assessed tuition based on the regional campus fee plus any applicable uptown campus differential rate. In these situations, the maximum rates charged will not exceed the total uptown campus rate for students taking up to 18 credit hours. As noted above in Section B6, Full-time students pay additional Tuition at their Tuition Guarantee Cohort rate per credit hour when in an overload status (defined as greater than 18 credit hours). Part-time students are charged the per credit hour rate

of the offering campus as determined by their cohort.

#### **E. EXCEPTIONS TO STANDARD LENGTH OF COHORT**

The University of Cincinnati Tuition Guarantee is for four (4) academic years commencing with either the fall or spring semester. Some students may require additional academic periods beyond the four (4) academic years to complete their baccalaureate degree and will continue to attend the University of Cincinnati beyond their Cohort period. When certain exceptions are met (as described in Section L of this document) students may extend their guaranteed Cohort price beyond their guaranteed Cohort period. A student must apply for an exception no later than one semester prior to the expiration of their Tuition Guarantee Cohort. Students with approved exceptions will be granted additional semesters at their guaranteed Tuition Guarantee Cohort price. The specific courses or length of the exception will be determined as part of any approval.

#### **F. ACADEMIC COSTS INCLUDED IN THE UNIVERSITY OF CINCINNATI TUITION GUARANTEE**

Tuition (Instructional and Mandatory Fees)

Tuition is the sum of the undergraduate Instructional Fee and Mandatory Fees. Non-resident students also pay a non-resident surcharge, and international student pay an additional international surcharge that are not part of the guarantee. Under the University of Cincinnati Tuition Guarantee, Tuition is set each academic year for four academic years for each entering fall and spring Tuition Guarantee Cohort. Full-time students are charged a flat Tuition Guarantee Cohort rate plus a per credit hour rate for any enrolled hours in overload status (defined as greater than 18 credit hours). Part-time students pay a Cohort per credit hour rate based on the offering college.

a) Instructional Fee

These are the guaranteed instructional costs that undergraduate degree-seeking students will pay. Each incoming Cohort is charged its unique, guaranteed rate for four academic years.

b) Mandatory Fee

For uptown campus, these are campus fees charged to all students that include basic General fee, Campus Life/Distance Learning fee, and ITIE fee.

For Regional campuses, these are the general fee, ITIE fee, and applicable distance learning fees.

A complete description of these fees can be found at

<http://www.uc.edu/academics.html>

#### **G. OTHER STUDENT COSTS INCLUDED IN THE UNIVERSITY OF CINCINNATI TUITION GUARANTEE**

The University of Cincinnati Tuition Guarantee is designed to provide a comprehensive set of costs

for completing an undergraduate degree at University of Cincinnati. The following costs are also included in the University of Cincinnati Tuition Guarantee:

1. Housing Rates (Room)

The University of Cincinnati Tuition Guarantee includes a guaranteed price schedule for housing that represents the various housing options available to undergraduate students. The rate charged to the eligible student is based upon the student's selected or assigned residence type and location. If a student changes from one room or hall type to another during the Cohort period, the housing rate charged to the student will be adjusted based on the guaranteed price schedule that is in effect throughout the student's Cohort period.

Student requests to reside in uptown on-campus housing beyond the second year and regional on-campus housing are subject to room availability. If space is available for a student who has already met the residency requirement, the established Cohort rate schedule for student rooms continues throughout the period covered by the guaranteed Tuition Guarantee Cohort price.

2. Meal Plan Rates (Board)

The University of Cincinnati Tuition Guarantee includes a number of meal plan options from which the eligible student may choose depending on whether the student is residing on- or off- campus. A meal plan is required for students residing in university housing during the first year. A Tuition Guarantee Cohort menu of meal plans and rates is included as part of the Cohort pricing, and the actual meal plan cost will be based on the meal plan selected by the student. While the meal plan price will remain guaranteed during the Tuition Guarantee Cohort period, individual meal items and merchandise in retail locations are subject to price changes.

**H. OTHER STUDENT COSTS NOT INCLUDED IN THE UNIVERSITY OF CINCINNATI TUITION GUARANTEE**

All other fees, fines, and costs related to attending the University of Cincinnati not specifically identified as part of the University of Cincinnati Tuition Guarantee are excluded from the guaranteed Tuition Guarantee Cohort price and are subject to price changes. These exclusions include but are not limited to non-resident surcharge, international surcharge differential and program fees, course and technology fees, student health insurance, and textbooks.

**I. COHORT PRICING BEYOND THE INITIAL YEAR**

1. Once the initial Tuition Guarantee Cohort Tuition is established, subsequent Tuition Guarantee Cohort increases in Tuition will be based on:

- a) The average rate of inflation, as defined within the State of Ohio Statutes; and
- b) The percentage amount the Ohio General Assembly restrains increases on in-state undergraduate Instructional and General Fees for the applicable fiscal year. If the General Assembly does not enact a limit on the increase of in-state undergraduate instructional and general fees, then no limit shall apply under this section for the Tuition Guarantee Cohort that first enrolls in any academic year for which the General Assembly does not prescribe a limit.
- c) This rate of increase will be benchmarked against peer four-year research institutions' four-year rolling cost averages to account for the impact of the Tuition Guarantee

Cohort pricing model on tuition changes. If the University of Cincinnati's Tuition Guarantee Cohort Tuition falls significantly below these institutions, the University of Cincinnati may elect to submit for approval by the Chancellor of the Department of Higher Education an increase in the forthcoming Tuition Guarantee Cohort Tuition pricing in excess of the stated limitation for Ohio residents.

2. Increases in Tuition Guarantee Cohort pricing for Room and Board charges are not subject to the pricing formula set forth above and the plan composition and rates will be determined by the University of Cincinnati Board of Trustees.

#### **J. STUDENTS WHO WITHDRAW AND RE-ENROLL**

If a student takes a leave, withdraws, is academically or judicially suspended, or dismissed from the University for one or more academic semesters, the four (4) academic year period covered by the guaranteed Tuition Guarantee Cohort price will not be extended. As a result, the student will lose the term(s) of eligibility while absent within the four (4) academic year Tuition Guarantee Cohort period. When the student re-enrolls, if four (4) academic years have not lapsed since the student's initial degree-seeking enrollment, then the student will be charged the guaranteed rate based on their original Tuition Guarantee Cohort for the balance of the Tuition Guarantee Cohort period. If four (4) or more academic years have elapsed, then the re-enrolling student is assigned to the next Tuition Guarantee cohort (i.e. original Tuition Guarantee cohort plus one) at the campus to which they are re-enrolling (as defined in section K), unless it has been more than 15 semesters, then Tuition Guarantee cohort plus two; more than 18 semesters then Tuition Guarantee cohort plus three; etc.

#### **K. STUDENTS WHO REQUIRE MORE THAN THEIR COHORT PERIOD TO GRADUATE**

Students who do not complete their undergraduate degree requirements and are not eligible for an exception (as defined below) by the end of their assigned Tuition Guarantee Cohort term, will be placed into the Tuition Guarantee Cohort that went into effect the year after their assigned Tuition Guarantee Cohort. The student will remain in that Tuition Guarantee Cohort for up to one year and if still enrolled after that Tuition Guarantee Cohort expires, will be placed into the subsequent Tuition Guarantee Cohort for the next year and so on until the student is no longer enrolled.

#### **L. EXCEPTIONS FOR STUDENTS WHO REQUIRE MORE THAN THEIR COHORT PERIOD TO GRADUATE**

Some students will take longer than their guaranteed Tuition Guarantee Cohort period to graduate due to circumstances beyond their control. No later than one semester prior to the expiration of their guaranteed Cohort term, a student may request, an extension of their guaranteed Tuition Guarantee Cohort price. Each case will be evaluated on its own merits to determine whether an extension should be granted and if so, the nature and duration of any extension.

1. A Tuition Guarantee Appeals Committee administered by the University Registrar will evaluate requests for exceptions. The appeal must fall within extenuating circumstances established by the Appeals Committee as described below.
  - a) If the Appeals Committee finds that the student cannot complete the degree program within the four (4) academic years of the student's Tuition Guarantee Cohort due solely to a lack of available mandatory or required courses or space in required or mandatory classes provided by the University, the University will provide the student with an opportunity to take the necessary course or courses without requiring the payment of

tuition.

- b) Other circumstances will be considered for an extension of the guaranteed Tuition Guarantee Cohort price beyond the four (4) academic years depending on the validity and impact of the circumstances including:
  - Enrollment in a degree program requiring more than 121 hours to graduate
  - Significant illness or Injury of the student
  - Physical or mental disability that necessitates a reduced course load as a reasonable accommodation
  - Medical Leave of Absence
  - Victim of Interpersonal Violence or Crime while enrolled
  
- c) If the Appeals Committee determines that the student has provided sufficient documentation of extenuating circumstances that were outside the control of the student and prevented the student from completing the student's program of study during the assigned Tuition Guarantee Cohort period, the Committee will determine the appropriate period of time or number of courses to extend the guaranteed Tuition Guarantee Cohort price.
  
- d) Any student called or voluntarily enlisting to military service in the United States Armed Services will be given an automatic extension of their guaranteed Tuition Guarantee Cohort price based upon the number of academic terms impacted by the student's military service absence (subject to presentation of appropriate military service documentation).