

Fixed Tuition Price Plans

Original Implementation: April 15, 2014

Latest Revision: July 21, 2020

Purpose

This policy affirms compliance with Texas Education Code requirements to offer a fixed tuition price plan to certain undergraduate students and establishes related restrictions and qualifications.

General

Section 54.017 of the Texas Education Code requires governing boards of general academic teaching institutions to offer a fixed tuition price plan to entering undergraduate students, including undergraduate students who transfer to the institution. Eligible freshmen or transfer students must be offered the opportunity to participate in a fixed tuition price plan for 12 consecutive semesters from the point of initial enrollment at any public or private institution, regardless of whether the student enrolls at any institution in those semesters. For purposes of this policy, one or more summer terms occurring in the same summer is considered a semester. Fees charged to a participating student may not exceed fees charged to a non-participating student. The statute permits the Board of Regents to establish restrictions and qualifications.

Stephen F. Austin State University (SFA) has adopted two plans to meet the legislative requirements: the Fixed Rate Tuition Plan (FRTP) and the Guaranteed Price Plan (GPP). The FRTP is effective beginning in the fall semester of 2014. Beginning with the fall semester of 2020, incoming students will be offered the GPP instead of the FRTP. Students already in the FRTP may remain in that plan if otherwise eligible. The restrictions and qualifications of the plans include the following provisions:

- The plans will apply to undergraduate students only.
- Only Texas resident students, or students defined under Texas Education Code Section 54.052 may participate in the FRTP or GPP.
- The FRTP or GPP is not available for any student who has previously enrolled at SFA, except for students who have only taken dual credit courses from SFA.
- An entering eligible student, either freshman or transfer, must accept or reject the FRTP or GPP prior to registering for the first semester. Students can change their decision any time prior to the first class day. Students eligible to make this election who enroll after the first class day must make their election prior to enrolling. That decision is non-revocable after they register.
- The FRTP applies to designated tuition only. The GPP freezes all mandatory tuition and fees.
- Entering students who participate in the FRTP are eligible to have a fixed level of designated tuition for four consecutive academic years that include fall, spring, and summer. The GPP fixes all mandatory tuition and fees for up to 12 consecutive semesters for qualified students. The FRTP and GPP will be effective for participating students for 12 “semesters” from their date of initial enrollment at SFA or another institution.
- An academic year will be considered three consecutive “semesters”, with the summer considered as one semester, regardless of whether a student enrolls in any or all of the summer

terms—Maymester, Summer I or Summer II.

- Students must enroll in a degree-seeking program.
- Students may voluntarily opt out of the FRTP or GPP option and pay the prevailing designated tuition rate in the next subsequent semester, unless they opt out prior to the first class day of the semester. Once a student opts out of the FRTP or GPP plan, they may not be reinstated.
- Students enrolled in the FRTP will be eligible for the same tuition cap as established by the Board of Regents for students enrolled outside the plan. If changes are made to the designated tuition cap, it will apply to all students.
- For purposes of planning and establishing cohorts, it is presumed that students will enroll in 30 hours a year for four years. Students may take more or less hours, as long as they do not exceed the allowable “consecutive semesters,” based on their assigned cohort.
- Each fiscal year will have tuition and fee rates assigned for that year based on an institutional needs assessment. Students entering the FRTP or GPP will be assigned a cohort based on the date of their initial enrollment at any institution. The rate for each cohort will be set by the Board of Regents.
- Transfer students enrolling at other institutions prior to the fall semester of 2011 will not be eligible for the FRTP.
- The excessive undergraduate credit hours’ penalty and the three-peat tuition penalty for repeating classes will apply to FRTP and GPP students. These penalties will be charged in addition to the FRTP or GPP designated tuition rate if students meet the conditions for which these penalties apply.
- Students eligible for exemptions and/or waivers will not be allowed to register in the FRTP or GPP. If a student is determined to be eligible for an exemption or waiver after enrollment, the student will no longer be eligible for the FRTP or GPP and the annual plan rate will be assessed for the current semester. (No retroactive adjustments to the account will be made for prior semesters)
- Students attending under contracts paid by a third party are not eligible to enroll in the FRTP or GPP.
- Students participating in the Texas Guaranteed Tuition Plan (formerly the Texas Tomorrow Fund) or the Texas Tuition Promise Fund are eligible to enroll in the FRTP or GPP.)

Cross Reference: Tex. Educ. Code §§ 54.017, .052

Responsible for Implementation: Vice President for Finance and Administration

Contact For Revision: Controller

Forms: None

Board Committee Assignment: Finance and Audit

Revision History: July 25, 2017
July 29, 2014