

From the *Tallahassee Democrat*
FSU OKs higher tuition

Cuts mean less full-time faculty, larger classes, says Wetherell

BY STEPHEN D. PRICE • FLORIDA CAPITAL BUREAU • JUNE 14, 2008

When the fall semester begins at Florida State University, students will face higher tuition, fewer classmates and larger classes. The FSU board of trustees on Friday approved higher tuition rates along with a two-year budget plan geared to help the university survive Florida's struggling economy and the budget cuts it's bringing.

Already, university officials have decreased student enrollment by about 2,000 and shaved 250 positions to help absorb state budget cuts.

"All this will mean larger classes, more adjunct faculty and less full-time faculty," said FSU president T.K. Wetherell. With enrollment reduced, getting into FSU will be more competitive, Wetherell said.

Before administration officials could tell the full board their plans to operate through state budget cuts, they learned on Thursday the state would decrease their first quarter allocation, which begins July 1, by 1 percent.

"We planned for budget cuts, but not so soon," said FSU Provost Larry Abele. That 1 percent adds up to roughly \$3 million and may be a precursor to further quarterly cuts in the coming fiscal year, Abele said.

The Legislature and the Board of Governors agreed to raise tuition by 6 percent. With an extra fee for freshman and transfer students, the top increase is 15 percent. Only about 5 percent of students at FSU pay the full tuition — most have all or part of their tuition paid by Bright Futures, other scholarships and grants.

For a full-time student with a typical course load, here's what the increase means:

- In-state tuition with differential fees increases to \$3,987 from \$3,470.
- Out-of-state tuition with differential fees increases to \$18,431 from \$16,602.
- Out-of-state tuition without differential fees increases to \$18,223 from \$16,602.

Tuition differential fees were approved by the 2007 Legislature and allow FSU, the University of Florida and the University of South Florida to levy extra charges for additional faculty. The fees will apply to newly enrolled undergraduates — freshmen and transfers — including students with Bright Futures scholarships.

Last fall, Wetherell declined to take two bonuses because of the financial cutbacks the university was forced to make. The performance and retention bonuses added up to \$285,000. But FSU attorneys learned Wetherell would still have to pay taxes on the bonuses, so the board voted to give him the money. Wetherell's annual salary is \$309,000.