Amid Colorado?s budget, funding shortfalls, CU raises tuition by up to 9 percent [1]

March 29, 2010

DENVER ? Citing the state?s ongoing budget shortfall and deep cuts to its state funding, the University of Colorado announced plans Monday to raise tuition by up to 9 percent on all four of its campuses starting in fall of 2010.

The CU Board of Regents voted 8-1 to raise tuition, one of the few revenue streams left for public universities still grappling with the effects of the national recession. Regent Tom Lucero, R-Johnstown, voted against the proposal. The vote came after the regents received a grim budget outlook from CU Vice President and Chief Financial Officer Kelly Fox.

The decision will mean that tuition rates for the average in-state College of Arts and Sciences undergraduate student will go up 9 percent ($572) at CU-Boulder for a total of $7,018 per year; by 9 percent ($504) at UC Denver for a total of $6,216 per year; and by 7 percent ($420) at UCCS for a total of $6,270 per year.

Nonresident undergraduate students in the College of Arts and Sciences will pay an extra 5 percent ($1,300) for a total of $28,000 per year at CU-Boulder; 2 percent ($384) for a total of $19,128 per year at UC Denver; and 2 percent ($320) for a total of $15,920 per year at UCCS. Despite the tuition increases?when other factors such as room and board, mandatory fees and books are taken into consideration?the total cost of attendance will rise by 4 percent at CU-Boulder; by 4.5 percent at UC Denver and 3.5 percent at UCCS, Fox told the regents.

?Raising tuition is never an easy decision. We know how difficult it can be for families to pay for college,? said CU President Bruce D. Benson. ?These tuition increases will help us continue to deliver high quality classroom instruction and student services, while striving to keep our commitment as a public university to remain accessible to all Colorado students.?

To offset tens of millions in state funding cuts CU has absorbed over the past year, the university has increased efforts to reduce its budget through work force reductions, streamlined operations, and a stepped up search for new revenue sources. Despite the tuition increases, CU remains more affordable than many of its peer institutions across the country, Fox said.

Since July 2009, Colorado has cut higher education funding by nearly 60 percent, which amounts to a $2,600 drop in per-student funding. The latest tuition increases will recoup only 20 percent of that funding gap. In Colorado, universities are being assisted by federal stimulus funding, one-time dollars that will disappear at the end of the 2011 fiscal year. Currently, only 3.3 percent of CU?s total annual operating budget stems from taxpayer-supported state funding.

Board of Regents Chair Steve Bosley said unprecedented higher education funding challenges are forcing CU and other public universities around the country to explore every option when it comes to providing access to all students and keeping important academic and research programs in place.

?CU is a public university. We have to honor our commitment to Colorado citizens by providing access to students of all backgrounds, and by offering them a good education without compromising the quality of our programs and services,? Bosley said. ?We have world-class academic and research programs in place that are contributing to Colorado?s economic, social and cultural well-being, and we can?t risk losing them.?

The *University of Colorado* is a premier public research university with four campuses: the University of Colorado at Boulder, the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs, the University of Colorado Denver and the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus. More than 56,000 students are pursuing academic degrees at CU. The National Science Foundation ranks CU seventh among public institutions in federal research expenditures in engineering and science. Academic prestige is marked by the university?s four Nobel laureates, seven MacArthur ?genius? Fellows, 18 alumni astronauts and 19 Rhodes Scholars. For more information about the entire CU system, and to access campus resources, go to www.cu.edu [2]. For more information about CU?s budget challenges and tuition increases, visit www.cu.edu/cubudgets [3]

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