

Student Facilities Fee goes toward campus improvements

New \$100 fee was included in Fall 2008 tuition bill

By ANGELA GREEN
STAFF WRITER
AKG145@PSU.EDU

This past summer, Penn State University's Board of Trustees approved a Student Facilities Fee, which students began paying in the Fall 2008 semester. The purpose of the fee is to fund improvements and expansions to non-academic, recreational and multi-use space for students.

According to the Penn State Student Facilities Fee Guiding Principals, fees raised at Penn State Harrisburg will be used for that location only and fees not spent in a particular year will roll over to the next.

The Student Facilities Fee Committee is responsible for collecting and prioritizing project ideas and submitting them to the Chancellor who will make the final decision on which projects receive funding.

Committee representatives include: Dr. Felicia Brown-Haywood, director of Student affairs; Dr. Donald Holtzman, senior director of Student life and enrollment services; Dr. Jason Ketter, Major gifts officer; Dr. Louis Hoffman, chair Faculty senate; Dr. Donna Howard, assistant director of Non-traditional students;

Ed Dankanich, director of Physical plant and maintenance operations, and seven student volunteers.

In order to ensure transparency and efficiency in reporting on the governance of funds, the committee will produce an annual statement regarding the disposition of fees. Additionally, they are expected to make every effort to explore additional sources of financial support to minimize fees charged to students.

According to Holtzman, students, the Council of Commonwealth Student Governments and the Student Government Association requested the fee of \$100.00 for full-time students. The Committee will take a long-term approach to funding major campus improvement projects and will fund various short-term projects as well so that current students can begin to see a return on their investment.

Some examples of improvements students have suggested are a fitness center, a spiritual center, air conditioning for the Capital Union Building, a game room and/or lights for the intramural field.

"This is a wonderful opportunity to better the campus for students," said Dankanich.

Economic troubles mean tough time for securing student loans

By KIRILL SOBIN
STAFF WRITER
KVD102@PSU.EDU

The mortgage disaster is now spreading into every aspect of the economy including student loans. Students most likely had trouble securing a private loan this year, or maybe had one canceled for the spring semester.

Economic issues shaping college affordability prompted a teleconference on Oct. 22. Kim Anderson of GotTuition.com, introduced the issue of increasing tuition and the hardship it brings to individual students, their families and overall economy.

Guest speakers were Bob Brandon of Campaign for College Affordability, Andrew Myers of Myers Research and Strategic Services and Ash McDaniel student at George Washington University.

McDaniel shared her story of the trouble she faced in obtaining a \$7,000 loan to cover her school costs at George Washington University, after receiving more than \$46,000 package in Stafford loans and grants. She applied with multiple banks, asked her mother, who has good credit, to cosign but was turned down again and again.

The bank told McDaniel due to the crisis on Wall Street, many private lenders – approximately 1,500 – that loaned money to students last year are no longer doing so.

According to Bob Brandon, from Campaign for College

Affordability, more than 400,000 high school graduates decided to forgo college last year due to rising cost and lack of financing.

Why is tuition spiraling out of control? It seems that this problem was put off for a long-long time and now a perfect storm is about to hit: Federal and State governments are reducing contribution, in fact Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education estimates tuition will rise to average of \$5,572, a four percent increase over last year.

The estimate does not include the \$22 million that Pennsylvania Governor Ed Rendell has asked the state universities to be prepared to give back this year unless the state's faltering fiscal situation improves, according to the Patriot News.

Despite rising tuition and financial difficulties, the higher education system of Pennsylvania has a record number of students this year at 112,597. The rising enrollment number has logical explanation, the economy is stalling, job outlook for unskilled workers is dwindling and the only way to ensure a possibility of higher income and relative stability in the workplace is education. How do you secure a private loan?

"Over the years we've seen an increasing number of students and families turning to alternative sources to fund sky-rocketing educational loans," said Edgar Lehman, Members 1st A.V.P. of consumer lending.

"We've always been committed

to meeting all the financial needs of our members and developing a relationship with them," Lehman said. "The private loans we saw in the marketplace featured high rates and fees, and were simply not very attractive for our members."

Private student loans often feature rates anywhere between six percent and 14 percent, along with origination fees of four percent to six percent, according to data.creditunions.com.

By offering highly competitive rates and zero origination fees, on a typical \$15,000 loan with a 20-year repayment period, credit unions partnered with Student Choice are saving borrowers more than \$10,000 over the life of the loan compared to what is generally available in the market place.

After researching numerous private student loan products and solutions, Members 1st decided to partner with Credit Union Student Choice, a new credit union service organization that was founded in 2008 by several of the nations leading credit unions.

"It was important to us that this product was designed by credit unions, for credit union members," said Lehman. "It met our requirements in terms of product flexibility and customization while providing excellent value for members. Since launching just three months ago, Members 1st has already approved 163 loans totaling more than \$2 million dollars."

The Capital Times

New positions.
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Please see page 23 for details.

Do you have Panic Disorder?

You may be eligible for a clinical research study at Penn State Milton S. Hershey Medical Center.

Have you experienced sudden, unexpected episodes of intense anxiety, accompanied by symptoms such as chest pain, rapid heart rate, sweating, shaking, shortness of breath, fear that you were dying, losing control, or going crazy?



Sleep and anxiety researchers at Penn State Milton S. Hershey Medical Center need volunteers with panic disorder and trouble falling asleep for a research study. The purpose of the study is to investigate whether ramelteon, an FDA-approved drug for chronic insomnia, improves sleep difficulty in panic disorder patients who are also treated with escitalopram for anxiety.

You may be eligible to participate if you:

- Are between ages 18 and 50
- Have panic disorder
- Have taken at least 30 minutes to fall asleep at least three times per week in the preceding month

Medical assessment and study drugs are provided at no charge, and compensation is available for time and travel.

Study Director: Ravi Singareddy, M.D.

For more information, call
Christie Schaeffer, R.N., 717-531-3779.

PENNSTATE HERSEY
Milton S. Hershey
Medical Center



This research study has been approved by the Institutional Review Board, under federal regulations, at Penn State Hershey Medical Center, Penn State College of Medicine.

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