

# Opinion: UC wrong to raise tuition

By Ted Gaines

The University of California Board of Regents recently voted to raise student tuition by as much as 25 percent over the next five years. The tuition increase would vary depending on the level of state funding, but could stretch to 5 percent each year for the next five years.

Current, in-state UC students pay \$12,192 in mandatory tuition and fees. According to the UC, the first-year increase could push those mandatory expenses up by \$612. A 5 percent increase over the duration of the plan would elevate those mandatory fees to nearly \$15,600. These fees are independent of room and board, books, transportation and any other expenses students face while earning a degree.



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This another gut punch to middle-class families already struggling to make ends meet in this high-cost state. Just two years ago, Californians had their taxes increased with Proposition 30, after being promised that the money would be used to freeze the skyrocketing cost of college. This year, only about two percent of those funds have been spent on universities. What an embarrassment.

The UC administrators should take a close look at this policy.

They are compensated like tech company CEOs with exorbitant salaries and lavish pensions. It's unconscionable that students are being asked to dig deeper while the expansion of the UC ruling class continues without pause.

It's political sport in California to see how much we can punish and antagonize the middle class, and this proposal is a gold-medal winner. I'm sick of it. I know that wealthy families won't be affected by this. The poorest families will be damaged, as the dream of college is dimmed by the thought of unattainable expenses, but they will qualify for more UC financial aid. But the hammer will truly fall on the families in the middle, who will get to fork over this money straight out of their checking accounts or by taking on loads of new debt that could take decades to pay off. Who is looking out for them?

Rather than raise tuition, the regents need to reduce spending, offer more online classes and limit faculty and executive pay raises. Any year there is a tuition increase, there should be an automatic freeze on administration salary increases.

I say no to the misguided and punishing tuition hikes. Our world-class universities must be open and available to everyone in the state, not just the wealthiest sliver.

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