

BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION

REQUEST FOR COMMITTEE AND BOARD ACTION

COMMITTEE: Fiscal Affairs and Administrative Policy **NO.:** FAAP 16-27

COMMITTEE DATE: April 26, 2016

BOARD DATE: May 3, 2016

APPROVAL OF LIST OF TUITION WAIVER PROGRAMS GOVERNED BY BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION WHICH SHALL BE ELIGIBLE FOR A TUITION CREDIT FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS

MOVED: For reasons set forth in the background document, the Board of Higher Education (BHE) seeks to align the BHE's tuition waiver program with FY2016 legislation which provides the University of Massachusetts (UMass) with the ability to retain tuition (also referred to as "tuition retention"). To that end, the BHE hereby adopts the attached list (Attachment A) and recognizes that all BHE-approved tuition waivers, grants and scholarships that are currently offered in the form of tuition waivers, as set forth in Attachment A, shall be offered by UMass as student tuition credits, effective July 1, 2016.

Authority: Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 75, Section 1 b; Chapter 146 of the Acts of 2015, Section 175

Contact: Dr. Clantha McCurdy, Senior Deputy Commissioner, Access and Student Financial Assistance
Sean P. Nelson, Deputy Commissioner for Administration and Finance

BHE Tuition Waiver Program

Background Information

The Massachusetts Board of Higher Education adopted a Tuition Waiver Program in 1981 designed to help alleviate the burden of tuition costs and to increase accessibility to public higher education

In July 2015, the Legislature passed and the Governor signed into law an amendment to the University of Massachusetts' (UMass) enabling statute, Chapter 75, which would allow UMass to adopt a new system of billing that conforms to best practices in higher education throughout the nation. Section 73 of Chapter 46 of the Acts of 2015. The ability to retain tuition, also referred to as "tuition retention," is the main provision of the law that will allow UMass to rationalize and restructure its tuition and fees in a way that is transparent and consistent with UMass's peer institutions.

The tuition retention legislation is an important step toward making the cost of attending UMass more understandable to students and their families. The University will be able to display student charges in a way that alleviates much of the confusion that currently exists around tuition and mandatory fees. The legislation included some key provisions such as:

- **MGL Chapter 75, Section 1b, Subsection c**, which addresses the goal of making student charges more transparent and easily understood through the establishment of an itemized list of student charges.
- **MGL Chapter 75, Section 1b, Subsection b**, provides UMass with the authority to set student charges, including tuition which is an effort to preserve affordability for residents of the Commonwealth.
- **MGL Chapter 75, Section 1b, Subsection f**, requires UMass to continue to commit to providing students with the same value of the tuition waivers as a defined credit towards a student's tuition.

There is great diversity among the type of waiver programs offered to students, many of which are offered in all institutions in the Massachusetts public higher education system. In order to align the BHE's tuition waiver program with the FY2016 tuition retention legislation, Department of Higher Education staff have been meeting regularly with representatives from the University of Massachusetts with the goal of effectuating implementation of any changes needed as a result of the legislation by July 1, 2016 (FY2017). Under the proposed structure, and in compliance with the FY16 legislative mandate, all tuition waiver programs currently offered by UMass shall become tuition credit programs, offered by UMass at current FY2016 rates. See Attachment A. This will enable the administration of standing programs across the higher education system while providing UMass with legislatively-mandated authority to manage such programs.

Attachment A: FAAP 16-27

That the Board of Higher Education and Board of Trustees of the University of Massachusetts hereby:

- 1) Recognize that for those tuition credits which are specific to the University of Massachusetts in accordance with the Acts of 2015, Chapter 46, Section 175 “Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, all tuition and fee waivers that are exclusive to the University of Massachusetts shall require only the approval by the Board of Trustees of the University of Massachusetts.”

- 2) Recognize those tuition credits which are governed by the Board of Higher Education and offered throughout all segments of public higher education shall have a tuition credit value up to the amount as approved by the BHE in FAAP motions 15-23 and 15-25:
 - National Guard
 - Active Duty Armed Forces
 - MA Department of Children and Families Adopted Children
 - MA Department of Children and Families Foster Care Child
 - MA Commission for the Blind
 - MA Rehabilitation Commission
 - Native American
 - Senior Citizens
 - Veterans/Vietnam Veterans
 - John and Abigail Adams Scholarship
 - MassTransfer (Joint Admissions/Tuition Advantage Program)
 - Stanley Z. Koplik Certificate of Mastery
 - Valedictorian

- 3) Recognize those tuition credits which are governed through consistent UMass and Board of Higher Education guidelines while directly managed by UMass in administration and determination of credit value:
 - Need-based
 - Aspiring Teachers
 - Career Advantage Program
 - Cooperative Association of States for Scholarship
 - Collaborative Teachers
 - Graduate Student
 - High Tech Scholar/Intern
 - Hurricane Katrina
 - Washington Center
 - Commonwealth September 11, 2001
 - Children of Fallen Service Member
 - BHE UPLAN

4) Recognize that in accordance with subsections (f) and (g) of Section 73 of Chapter 46 of the Acts of 2015:

“(f) All tuition waivers, grants and scholarships identified in chapter 15A or any other general or special law and reductions collectively bargained for that are in the form of tuition or fee waivers shall be student tuition credits. Students that are eligible for a tuition credit shall have their student charges reduced by the amount of the tuition credit.”

And that:

“(g) The Board of Trustees of the University of Massachusetts shall not accept any new tuition waivers, grants or scholarships identified in chapter 15A or any other general or special law or reductions collectively bargained for that are in the form of tuition or fee waivers effective on or after July 1, 2016 unless the reduction is accompanied with an appropriation that fully supports the reduction or the reduction is approved by the Board of Trustees.”