Overview

GPSC with the Office of Research and Assessment, were interested in student’s opinions of various fees. A sample of 3500 UA graduate and professional students were emailed with instructions to complete the survey in January of 2015; 410 students completed the survey. Responses were analyzed separately for Master (N=113) and Doctoral students (N=286).

Summary

Student awareness of fees was variable, and varied with type of fee. Fee creation, modification, and appropriation were not rated as a transparent process by respondents. Respondents favored a locked-in rate for fees; master students were more supportive to the creation for a fixed-fee program, but doctoral students were willing to pay more for the locked-in rate.

Recommendations:

• Increase student awareness about fees, especially about opportunities to opt-out of certain fees.
• Making the fee creation, modification, and appropriation process more transparent to students by increasing student awareness of available documentation from UA on fee creation, modification, and appropriation (e.g., meeting minutes, queries).
• Consider a fixed-fee program with UA administration. Students who plan to stay at UA longer may be more amenable to a higher rate for the fixed-fee.

Results -- Doctoral students

• Most know what university student fees are (234/286), program fees (167/286), class fees (220/286).
• Fewer students know about opt-in fees (172/286), and differential tuition (195/286).
• Most students do not know how to opt-out of some university or program fees (218/286).
• More than half of students disagree that university fees are reasonable (166/286).
• Most students are neutral in regard to program fees (89/237), and class fees (87/229).
• Most students disagree with the statement “the process of determining how much students should pay in fees is transparent to me” (242/285)
• Most students disagree with the statement “The process of determining differential tuition rates is transparent to me.” (209/261).
• Most students disagree with the statement “Student fees are spent in a way that is transparent to me” (219/285)
• Most students support a program that guarantees a “locked-in rate” for student fees (161/277)
• Most students would be willing to pay less than 5% more for the locked in rate (219/286), and some students were willing to spend 5-10% extra for the “locked-in rate” (63/286).

Results -- Masters students

• Masters students were slightly more amenable to their class and program fees than doctoral counterparts.
• Master’s students were slightly more amenable to the idea of a locked-in rate for student fees compared to doctoral students.
• Masters students didn’t want to spend as much (97/113 for less than 5%) for the locked-in rate as the doctoral students.