

**Youngstown State University Tuition Guarantee Plan: *The Penguin Tuition Promise***

**(This plan is subject to the approval of the YSU Board of Trustees and ODHE Chancellor)**

*Revised 10/24/2017*

**1. Introduction**

The YSU Penguin Tuition Promise is a cohort-based, level-rate tuition and fee guarantee model that assures a student and his/her family a set of fixed rates for the pursuit of an undergraduate degree at Youngstown State University within the parameters outlined in this document. A student's tuition rate is established based on first enrollment and remains unchanged for 12 consecutive terms. The Penguin Tuition Promise is designed to make the cost of college predictable and affordable, and encourages students to complete degree programs within 4 years. This program is governed by section 3345.48 of the Ohio Revised Code, and is subject to the approval of the Chancellor of the Ohio Department of Higher Education.

**2. Dissemination**

These principles, along with the rates approved by the YSU Board of Trustees will be published on the websites of the YSU Bursar, Office of Financial Aid & Scholarships, and other student service websites as may be appropriate.

**3. Definition of students included in the Penguin Tuition Promise**

Beginning with the 2018-19 academic year, every new undergraduate degree-seeking first-year or transfer student will be part of the initial cohort of the Penguin Tuition Promise.

Each year, a new cohort rate may be established by the YSU Board of Trustees, to be effective for each new cohort that enrolls for the first time or transfers in during the academic year.

Additional details regarding the establishment of the student's cohort:

- a. Establishment of the cohort group: Any new undergraduate degree-seeking transfer or first-year student registered for classes as of the day after the last day to withdrawal at 100% refund is considered "matriculated" for that Term. The first Term of enrollment establishes the cohort rate as outlined above. The establishment date is intentionally the same as the "no-refund" date. In addition this date has been chosen because all official transcripts include all classes enrolled as of this date. For flexible schedule classes, the published "no-refund" date is the cohort established date.
- b. Continuing students: Continuing students (students admitted and matriculated prior to summer term 2018) are not part of the Penguin Tuition Promise. These students will follow the traditional tuition model.
- c. Non-degree students: Students admitted or enrolled as non-degree students are not part of the Penguin Tuition Promise. However, once a student is defined as degree-seeking, he/she will be placed into the appropriate cohort, based upon the initial semester enrolled as an undergraduate degree-seeking student.



- d. Re-enrolling students: Students re-enrolled who were admitted in an undergraduate degree program prior to summer term 2018 will follow the traditional tuition model, just as the continuing students do, and are not part of the Penguin Tuition Promise. Re-enrolling students who were initially admitted summer term 2018 or later will be in their respective cohort rate and will follow the regular rules after 12 consecutive terms have elapsed unless they have stopped out and are required to be re-admitted.
- e. Re-admitted students: Students who have stopped out for a period of time designated by the University as to be re-admitted will fall into the cohort for the academic year in which they are re-admitted.

#### **4. Length of Cohort Guaranteed Rate**

A student in the Penguin Tuition Promise will have 12 consecutive terms, including the initial summer, fall, or spring term of enrollment at the tuition cohort rate regardless of course load. This provides all students the opportunity to complete as many hours, majors, minors, or degrees within the cohort period.

Because YSU's academic year begins with summer term, students whose first enrollment is summer term will have an automatic one (1) term extension at the end of their guaranteed cohort period.

#### **5. Tuition and fees included and excluded from the Penguin Tuition Promise**

Undergraduate resident tuition is the sum of the undergraduate instructional fee and mandatory general fees that are uniformly charged to a student cohort. Each incoming cohort is charged a unique, guaranteed rate for 12 consecutive semesters. Full-time students pay additional tuition at their cohort rate for credit hours taken in excess of the established 12-18 credit hour bulk rate during a given semester. Part-time students pay instructional fees on a prorated, per-credit hour basis at their cohort rate.

##### ***Fees included in the Penguin Tuition Promise:***

- a. The instructional fee covers instructional costs that eligible undergraduate students pay. Each incoming cohort is charged its unique, guaranteed instructional fee rate for 12 consecutive semesters.
- b. Mandatory fees include fees charged uniformly and universally to a student cohort as part of the blended general fee. A blended general fee significantly streamlines and reduces the number of miscellaneous fees that would otherwise appear on a student bill. The blended general fee includes:
  - General fee
  - Information services fee
  - Career services fee
  - First year experience fee
  - Matriculation fees
  - Graduation fee
- c. Lab & Materials Fee: in an effort to be transparent and ensure costs associated with individual courses are included in the Penguin Tuition Promise, a lab & materials fee is included as a single unchanging rate. An average per student cost has been determined and will be charged



to all students in each eligible cohort, thereby minimizing unanticipated fee changes to a student's bill that might otherwise occur from year to year.

- d. Housing and dining rates are included in the Penguin Tuition Promise but may vary depending on students' chosen or available residence type and meal plan selection.

***Fees NOT included in the Penguin Tuition Promise:***

- a. Nonresident surcharges.
- b. Transportation fees, which are not assessed universally or per-credit hour.
- c. Program and college fees recognize the cost differential associated with different programs and majors. These fees are not assessed uniformly or universally.
- d. Lab & materials fees on a limited number of special high-cost programs or activities may be assessed beyond or in addition to level-rate tuition and fees.
- e. Miscellaneous fines and service charges, such as late payment fees, library fines, and the (optional) duplicate diploma fee.

**6. Cohort Pricing Model**

After the first year, subsequent cohort increases will be determined by the combination of future biennial legislatively-prescribed tuition parameters and a rolling 5-year average of Consumer Price Index inflation (for all urban consumers).

**7. Full-Time / Part-Time Students**

Students in the Penguin Tuition Promise may enroll in as few or as many credit hours as they choose up to 20 hours per term according to the YSU Undergraduate Catalog. Exceeding the maximum number of hours requires approval from the dean of the student's college. The initial term of enrollment establishes the tuition cohort and the student has 12 consecutive terms with the guaranteed Penguin Tuition Promise rate.

**8. Students Who Stop-Out or Withdraw and Return**

If a student in the Penguin Tuition Promise cohort chooses to, for example withdraw (officially or unofficially), is financially suspended, administratively withdrawn, or is judicially suspended from YSU, they may use the term(s) of eligibility while absent within the 12 consecutive term guarantee. When this student re-enrolls, if 12 consecutive terms have not been exhausted since initial enrollment, then the student is still charged the guaranteed rate based on his/her original cohort. If 12 semesters have passed, then the re-enrolling student is moved to the cohort that went into effect the year immediately following his/her original cohort. The student will remain in that cohort for up to one year and if still enrolled after that cohort expires, will be placed into the next cohort for the next year and so on until the student is no longer enrolled. Students in this category will not be eligible for an extension of cohort request.

**9. Programs Requiring More Than 4 Years**

Students in programs that have been identified by the Ohio Department of Higher Education as requiring more than 128 hours to complete will automatically receive an additional term at the end of their 12<sup>th</sup> term of the guarantee. If a student internally transfers to one of these programs, he/she will receive the automatic extension of the Penguin Tuition Promise rate.

**10. Students Completing More Than One Credential**



Students may complete as many undergraduate degrees, majors and minors, as they are able within the 12 consecutive term guarantee of the Penguin Tuition Promise. Undergraduate students pursuing undergraduate and graduate course credit at the same time will have their fees assessed based on their cohort guarantee rate.

### **11. Students Graduating in Fewer Than 12 Terms**

Students who earn an undergraduate degree in fewer than 12 consecutive terms will continue to be permitted to enroll in classes at the initial cohort rate until 12 consecutive terms have passed.

### **12. Students Who Require More Than 4 Years to Graduate**

Students who take more than 12 consecutive terms to earn an undergraduate degree, are not in a program approved to require more than 4 years as defined in section 9 of this document, and are not part of an exception group (defined below), at the end of their 12<sup>th</sup> consecutive term, will automatically be placed into the cohort that went into effect the year after their assigned cohort. The student will remain in that cohort for up to one year and if still enrolled after that cohort expires, will be placed into the next cohort for the next year and so on until the student is no longer enrolled.

Students who take more than 12 consecutive terms to earn an undergraduate degree will be given the opportunity to request an extension of their current cohort rate by the end of their 12<sup>th</sup> consecutive term until no later than 30 days after the end of their 12<sup>th</sup> consecutive term. Students who receive an approved extension will have an extension to not exceed one (1) term immediately following their 12<sup>th</sup> consecutive term.

### **13. Exceptions for Students Requiring More Than 12 consecutive Terms**

There will be some students who require more than 12 consecutive terms to graduate due to circumstances beyond their control. Each case will be evaluated on its own merit. An appeals committee will be established to evaluate exceptional cases. In most cases, these extenuating circumstances fall within the precedents already established by YSU's long-standing Fees & Fines Appeals Committee, which will lay the foundation for a new process for appeals related to the Penguin Tuition Promise.

A student called to active military duty will be given an automatic extension of the guaranteed cohort rate for as many terms impacted by his/her time served.

A non-exhaustive list of examples of cases that could be considered for an exception appeal include:

- a. *Reasonable accommodation for disability:* If it is determined that additional semesters are a reasonable accommodation of a student's disability, the Associate Provost for Student Success will make a recommendation for the appropriate continuation.
- b. *Medical Conditions:* A student who has extenuating medical issues may submit an appeal to extend the cohort rate. The appeal will be evaluated individually and a determination made based on the nature of the medical issue.
- c. *Internships and Co-Ops:* A student in an approved internship and/or co-op through his/her college may be granted additional semesters at his/her established cohort rate equal to the terms he/she was enrolled in internships and/or co-op credit.



- d. *University Errors*: If it is determined that a University error caused a student to extend his/her enrollment beyond 12 terms, then the student will be afforded additional semesters to complete his/her degree.

If a student is not able to complete his/her degree program in the 4 years of their established cohort as a result of a required course being unavailable, YSU will provide the necessary courses in compliance with Ohio Revised Code section 3345.48. To be considered for this exception, a student must file an appeal through the Penguin Tuition Promise appeals committee by the last day to add a course in their 12<sup>th</sup> consecutive term. That appeal must demonstrate the affected course was required via a student's degree audit report, that the student had met with an advisor prior to the last day to add a course during the term in question to discuss alternatives, and that there was no resolution available.

