

## Announcement: SGA Advocates for Educational Affordability

On Saturday, March 7<sup>th</sup>, the DePaul University Board of Trustees set tuition rates for the 2015-2016 academic year. One of SGA's top initiatives is to advocate for educational affordability:

“Confront issues of the rising costs of higher education. Voice student concerns about rising tuition, advocate to enhance the scholarship opportunities on DePaul's Academic Works scholarship portal, and advance efforts to expand affordable textbook options for students. A major focus will be put on continuing efforts to advocate for the protection of the Monetary Award Program (MAP) as well as other forms of financial aid.”

### Background:

- Fee policy passes in the university Policy Review Group
  - In the fall of 2014, the Policy Review Group passed a new fees policy that the Student Government Association proposed the prior year. This new policy has eliminated 300+ course and class related fees.
  - This new policy has taken effect this current academic year.
  
- Student Representation on TPC and SRAC
  - Tuition Pricing Committee (TPC)
    - Matthew C. von Nida, President
      - Full committee - voting
      - Fees subcommittee - voting
    - Cristina Vera, Vice President
      - Full committee – nonvoting
      - Graduate tuition subcommittee – voting
    - Vanessa Cadavillo, Executive Vice President for Student Affairs
      - Full committee – nonvoting
      - Undergraduate tuition subcommittee – voting
  - Strategic Resource Allocation Committee
    - 2 SGA Members
      - Matthew C. von Nida – Voting
      - Cristina Vera – Nonvoting support

### Additional notes about next year's board approved budget:

- There will be a moderated increase in tuition
  - Rates:
    - 3.75% - 4.25% increase - new freshmen
    - 2.5% increase – continuing undergraduates
    - 1-2% increase – graduate students
  - Matthew, SGA's voting member of the Tuition Pricing Committee, **voted against the tuition price increases in TPC** to best represent student voice and students'

opposition to any kind of tuition increase. All three SGA members vocalized that they did not support a tuition rate increase in their subcommittees.

- Financial aid has also been set at 45% of the university budget reflecting the university's commitment to its mission.
- Though SGA understands the complexities of the tuition pricing and budget creation processes, we also understand that the 2015-2016 university budget relies on tuition rate increases. Therefore, Matthew, SGA's voting member of the Strategic Resource Allocation Committee, voted against the proposed budget.

**Conclusion:**

- SGA has been committed to its initiative of addressing educational affordability and student voice. To best represent student voice, SGA voted against the tuition price increase and the university budget. SGA's proposed elimination of course and class fees was approved by the Policy Review Group (PRG) during the fall quarter and is in effect this year forward. We have also continued to increase transparency around university enrollment, tuition pricing, financial aid, SRAC, the budget, and the economic climate of higher education by hosting informational sessions at which students could hear from and ask questions of expert DePaul administration.