

A Summary of the Final 2017-19 Budget for Higher Education

Wisconsin state lawmakers have approved a higher education budget that continues a tuition freeze at the University of Wisconsin System. The budget includes a small increase in state support for the UW System, distributing the funding based on how individual campuses perform on a set of outcome measures. The budget does not roll back significant budget cuts that lawmakers have made in recent years to the UW System or the technical college system. The two-year budget period runs through June 2019.

EXTENDING A UW TUITION FREEZE, WITH LITTLE RELIEF FROM PAST CUTS

The budget continues the freeze on UW tuition another two years, and will make 2018-19 the seventh straight year without an increase in resident undergraduate tuition at UW campuses.

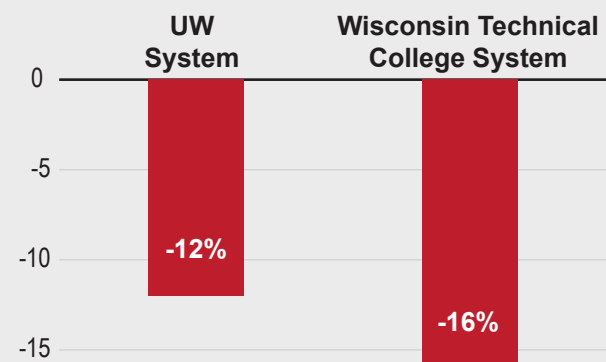
The bill includes \$26 million in the second year of the budget in new performance-based funding for the UW System, to be distributed among the campuses using a set of criteria. The criteria include expanding student access, improving student progress and completion, expanding contributions to the workforce, and enhancing operation efficiency. Currently, the Board of Regents distributes state support to UW campuses based on the previous year's budget, making adjustments as necessary or desired. The budget also adds \$5 million in the first year of the budget to increase enrollment in high-demand fields.

The budget continues a requirement that the state's technical college system allocate 30% of general state support to districts based on a performance funding formula, and tweaks the set of criteria to be used. Most general state support to the technical college system is distributed using a separate formula that accounts for differences in property values among districts, giving more state aid to districts with less capacity to increase local property tax support.

This budget will not do much to roll back the severe budget cuts that lawmakers made to the state's higher education systems in recent years. The amount of General Purpose Revenue (GPR, or general tax dollars) that the budget allocates to the UW System in the 2017-19 budget period represents a drop of 12% from the 2009-11 budget period, after taking inflation into account — a drop that does not take into account the loss

Even with Small Increase, State Spending on Higher Education Will Be Below Historical Levels

Change in General Purpose Revenue spending from the 2009-11 budget period to the 2017-19 budget, adjusted for inflation.



2013 Act 145 replaced \$406 million of technical college property tax revenues with state GPR. To make valid comparisons with current figures, this analysis adds the property tax buy-down amount to earlier funding levels.

Source: Analysis of figures from the Department of Administration
WISCONSIN BUDGET PROJECT

in resources from the tuition freeze. Spending on the technical college system represents a 16% percent drop from the 2009-11 budget period in GPR dollars.

State lawmakers boosted the amount of financial aid available to Wisconsin students attending college in the state by \$15 million, a 7% increase.

OTHER CHANGES TO HIGHER EDUCATION

The budget includes the following additional provisions that will affect higher education:

- Eliminating the board that regulates for-profit colleges, and shifting that responsibility to another part of state government.
- Doubling the number of programs offered under the UW's Flexible Option Program, which is aimed at providing educational opportunities to adults who have some college credit and significant work experience. Lawmakers did not allocate new resources to the UW System to fund this expansion;
- Providing \$5 million in one-time grant money to technical colleges for workforce training programs, as part of a larger workforce-training effort;
- Providing \$2 million a year starting in the second year of the budget for the state's workforce development agency to expand early college credit offerings for high school students; and
- Providing \$3 million for a policy center at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, named for former Governor Tommy Thompson. Lawmakers have said that the center will offset what they perceive as a liberal slant on campus. University leaders have said the center would be viewed more credibly if its board were nonpartisan or bipartisan, instead of largely appointed by Republican lawmakers.

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