

# Can colleges hold tuition line?

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By Tim Richard  
staff writer

To television watchers, it sounded as if Michigan colleges are getting a 10 percent budget boost next year.

They're not, according to chief executives at Oakland University, the University of Michigan-Dearborn and Schoolcraft College.

When all the numbers are shaken out, it's more like 4 or 5 percent.

"The big issue is whether we can hold the line on tuition," said Schoolcraft College President Richard McDowell, summing up the reaction to Gov. James J. Blanchard's fiscal 1985 budget message.

"As of this week, the colleges aren't sure they can hold."

BLANCHARD proposed an end to cuts for higher education, a halt to tuition increases that have made Michigan public colleges the most expensive in the nation, and "a substantial increase in state aid."

The increase amounts to 10 percent for four-year colleges and universities if they freeze tuitions, 6 percent if they don't. They would go from a current level of \$164 million to \$183 million.

Community colleges would be raised 10 percent — from the current \$145 million to \$159 million. The tuition-free condition apparently doesn't apply to the 29 two-year colleges.

There are two reasons the increases aren't as big as they seem, college officials say:

- The college fiscal year begins July 1 while the state's budget year begins Oct. 1, three months later. Therefore, the increase applies only for three-quarters of the college year.
- State aid amounts to 30 to 60 percent of a college's budget. And it's state aid which Blanchard wants to increase, not total college budgets.

FOR OAKLAND University, state aid amounts to 57 percent of the current \$38.3 million budget, according to Jerry L. Dahlmann, assistant to President Joseph Champagne. Thus, OU's state aid increase could be no more than a 5.7 percent in the total budget.

"We are supportive of holding the line on tuition," said Dahlmann. "But if we freeze tuition, we could end up in a deficit."

Reasons: OU is in the third year of

labor contracts; utility costs have risen faster than inflation; and inflation still runs at 3-plus percent.

AT UM-D, Chancellor William A. Jenkins calculated a 10 percent state aid increase would add only 3.4 percent in revenue because state aid is 54 percent of the \$20 million total campus budget.

SCHOOLCRAFT President McDowell said the 10 percent state aid increase would translate into only a 3.73 percent budget increase for his northwestern Wayne County two-year college.

McDowell, too, was unsure whether Schoolcraft would be able to hold the line on tuition. The last two fiscal years, Schoolcraft has charged \$25.50 per credit hour for district residents.

In fiscal 1983, property taxes (38 percent of the budget past year) are expected to rise 3.9 percent as property values increase. Student credit hours and tuition (30 percent of the budget) are expected to increase 3 percent.

STATE AID per full-time equated student reached a high of \$1,147 in 1978-9, he said, declining to a recession low of \$903. Blanchard's new budget would raise the level to \$1,063.

Oakland Community College President Robert P. Roelofs was out of town and unavailable for comment Tuesday. OCC has one of the lowest, per-pupil state aid figures in the state because of its strong property tax base. The impact of Blanchard's aid package is likely to be minimal.

## 2 jailed for Williams protest

Two anti-nuclear protesters, who threw red dye to a defense supplier's pond to commemorate atomic bomb destruction at Nagasaki, have been found guilty of trespassing.

Farmington Hills resident Marietta Jaeger and the Rev. Gordon Judd of Detroit were sentenced to 10 days in Oakland County Jail with credit for the time they have already spent there.

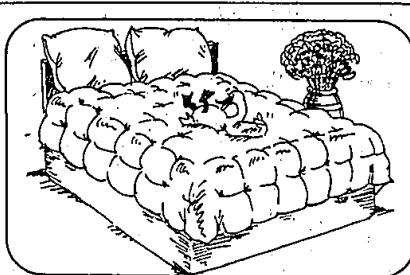
Fines and court costs of \$50 were suspended by Judge Harold M. Bui-

garelli after a jury trial Monday in 52nd District Court, Walled Lake.

THE TWO defendants were jailed Aug. 9 for trespassing and violating a June court injunction against entering

the grounds of Williams International Corp. in Walled Lake.

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