

**TEXAS A&M**  
**INTERNATIONAL**  
**UNIVERSITY™**  
**Optional Fixed Tuition and Fee Plan**  
**Frequently Asked Questions**

February 18, 2016

**Why does TAMIU offer an optional fixed tuition and fee plan?**

The Texas A&M University System believes students and their families should know the cost of obtaining a degree up front for students who commit to graduating on time. With the introduction of an optional fixed tuition and fee plan at all System universities, including TAMIU, Texas-resident, undergraduate students can expect a consistent rate throughout the plan's period.

**Will TAMIU students have to opt-in to the fixed tuition and fee plan?**

Yes, all Texas-resident, undergraduate students who elect the fixed tuition and fee plan will opt-in by completing the required opt-in form at the Bursar's Office no later than the 12<sup>th</sup> class day of a long semester and the 4<sup>th</sup> class day for a summer session. Please note: once a student opts-in, he/she may not opt out. Similarly, students who fail to opt-in by the deadlines above will not be able opt-in, as this option is available only for new students. A new student is one who is either a) enrolling at an institution of higher education (including TAMIU) for the first time following high school graduation or b) a transfer student someone who has previously enrolled at an institution of higher education and is now enrolling at the University. Please refer to the question on new transfer students below.

**How can students opt-in to a fixed tuition and fee plan?**

New students wishing to opt-in to the optional fixed tuition and fee plan may do by completing the required form available at the Bursar's Office before the 12<sup>th</sup> class day of the student's first long semester or, if the new student's first semester is a summer session, before the 4<sup>th</sup> class day. Once a student opts-in, he/she may not opt out. Similarly, students who fail to opt-in by the deadlines above will not be able opt-in, as this option is available only for new students. A new student is one who is either a) enrolling at an institution of higher education (including TAMIU) for the first time following high school graduation or b) a transfer student someone who has previously enrolled at an institution of higher education and is now enrolling at the University. Please refer to the question on new transfer students below.

**Are students able to switch between the optional fixed tuition and fee plan and the variable market rate?**

No. Students who opt-in by the requisite deadlines will remain in a fixed tuition and fee plan until their cohort expires (generally 12 semesters from the first date of enrollment in an institution of higher education following high school graduation). Similarly, new students who fail to opt-in by the requisite deadline will remain on a variable market rate for their time at the University.

**Is there be a fixed tuition and fee option for non-residents?**

No. At this time, fixed tuition and fee plans are available solely for Texas-resident, undergraduate students.

**Is there a fixed tuition and fee option for non-residents who qualify for in-state tuition by receiving a competitive waiver?**

No. Non-resident students who receive a competitive waiver are still classified as non-residents, and at this time, fixed tuition and fee plans are available solely for Texas-resident, undergraduate students.

**Is there be a fixed tuition and fee option for graduate and doctoral students?**

No, it applies only to Texas-resident, undergraduate students.

**What tuition and fees are included in the optional fixed tuition and fee plan?**

Tuition and mandatory fees (State-mandated Tuition, Designated Tuition, University Services, Health, Student Center, Student Services, Athletics, and Recreational Sports fees).

**Will course fees or instructional enhancement fees appear as a separate charge on a student's bill?**

No. Course fees and instructional enhancement fees have been eliminated.

**Will lab fees appear as a separate charge on a student's bill?**

Yes, but at TAMIU, these are charged only for science classes.

**What fees are charged as a separate line item on a student's bill?**

Study Abroad, field trip, lab, health insurance, three-peat, and orientation fees and other, non-academic costs (e.g. dorms and meal plans) are charged separately and not included in the fixed rate.

**Will students still be charged a higher tuition rate for courses repeated three or more times?**

Yes. The fixed tuition and fee rate excludes courses that a student enrolls in for a third time (three-peat).

**Will each college have a different fixed tuition and fee rate?**

No.

**How long will a student's optional fixed tuition and fee plan last?**

For students who opt-in each plan guarantees tuition and fees for four years for most majors (12 consecutive semesters). Students with majors that have more than 120 hours may request an additional semester through the appeals process. Please note the time period for fixed tuition and fees is a continuous clock, regardless of whether a student maintains continuous enrollment. Additionally, all summer terms in a given year count as one of the 12 consecutive semesters, so each calendar year has three consecutive semesters (Spring, Summer and Fall).

**What rate will a 5<sup>th</sup> year student (a student who doesn't graduate within the first 12 semesters) on an optional fixed tuition and fee plan be assigned?**

Once a student's initial fixed tuition and fee plan expires, the student will be charged the current, variable one-year (market) rate. This rate is subject to change annually until the student graduates.

**Do students need to be full-time to participate in the optional fixed tuition and fee plan?**

No. Rates are also fixed for part-time students, but the length of the guarantee remains the same. Students can be full-time in one semester and part-time in another semester, but the rates charged are those for the cohort the student was placed in at the time of initial enrollment.

**How is the optional fixed tuition and fee rate assigned to a student who opts-in?**

It is based on the first year of enrollment at any college or university following high school graduation.

**Will currently enrolled students be placed on an optional fixed tuition and fee plan?**

Currently enrolled students already on a fixed tuition and fee plan will remain on their plan until it expires. Starting in fall 2016, students wishing to participate must opt-in to the fixed tuition and fee plan.

**How will a December high school graduate who opts-in to a fixed tuition and fee plan be assigned to a fixed tuition and fee cohort if the high school doesn't issue the diploma or transcript until the following May or June?**

These high school graduates will be assigned based on the first semester of enrollment in an institution of higher education following the December (not May or June) graduation.

**How will new transfer students who opt-in to a fixed tuition and fee plan be assigned to a fixed tuition and fee cohort?**

New transfer students are assigned a cohort based on the first semester of enrollment in an institution of higher education following high school graduation assuming the student has provided TAMIU with proof of such enrollment in the form of a valid transcript. For instance, a student who transferred to TAMIU in Fall 2013 after completing his/her first year at a community college (following high school graduation in June 2012) would be assigned to the 2012/13 cohort – just as if he/she had enrolled at TAMIU immediately following high school. The student must have submitted his/her community college transcript showing that the first semester was in the 2012/13 academic year.

Students who fail to submit a transcript will be placed in a cohort based on the best information available to TAMIU. In this example, if the student fails to turn in a transcript, he/she would be included in the 2013/14 cohort. If a transcript is submitted at a later date, the student will be reassigned to a cohort and charged the new rate for subsequent semesters, but there will be no adjustments or refunds to charges for previous semesters.

**Does prior enrollment affect the length of a student's optional fixed tuition and fee plan?**

Yes, provided it occurred after high school graduation. For instance, a student who attends Laredo Community College for two years (six consecutive semesters) and then transfers to TAMIU will have his/her tuition and fees fixed for two more years (six additional semesters) at TAMIU. See above for how the student will be assigned to a

fixed tuition and fee cohort. Similarly, a student who has already been enrolled in an institution of higher education for a total of 12 or more semesters following high school graduation will not qualify for a fixed tuition and fee plan even though he/she is a new student at TAMIU.

**What happens if a student opts in to a fixed tuition and fee plan, but then stops out (leaves, but returns to the University)?**

Students who leave TAMIU and return will maintain the original rate (cohort), but also the original expiration of that rate/cohort. *The time period for fixed tuition and fees is a continuous clock regardless of whether the student maintains continuous enrollment.*

**What if a first-time, first-semester freshman student who opted-in drops all classes before the census date?**

This semester will not count towards the fixed tuition and fee plan's 12-semester period, but only because a first-time, first-semester freshman who drops all classes before census date will not have a record of enrollment.

**What if a transfer student who opted-in drops all classes before census date?**

This semester will count towards the fixed tuition and fee plan's 12-semester period since the guarantee is based on the first semester of enrollment in an institution of higher education following high school graduation, and *the time period for fixed tuition and fees is a continuous clock regardless of whether the student maintains continuous enrollment.*

**What if a continuing student who opted-in drops all classes before census date?**

This semester will count towards the fixed tuition and fee plan's 12-semester period since the guarantee is based on the first semester of enrollment in an institution of higher education following high school graduation, and *the time period for fixed tuition and fees is a continuous clock regardless of whether the student maintains continuous enrollment.*

**Do semesters of withdrawal count towards the fixed tuition and fee years?**

Yes.

**Can a student who opted in to a fixed tuition and fee plan appeal the expiration of the original fixed tuition and fee rate/cohort for extenuating circumstances?**

Yes. Appeals are handled through the Registrar's Office.

**What are some examples of extenuating circumstances for which an appeal would be granted?**

Military activation and significant medical issues or disabilities that prevent enrollment for one or more semesters are some examples, though there may certainly be other unusual circumstances that would qualify and be fully considered.