



Re: CONSIDERATION OF A REQUEST BY SINCLAIR COMMUNITY COLLEGE TO MODIFY THE LIMITATIONS APPLYING TO INCREASES IN IN-STATE UNDERGRADUATE INSTRUCTIONAL AND GENERAL FEES DUE TO EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES.

Section 371.20.90 of Am. Sub. H.B. 1 of the 128<sup>th</sup> General Assembly restrained boards of trustees at state-assisted institutions of higher education from increases in-state undergraduate instructional and general fees over 3.5% of the amount charged the previous academic year, except the limitation may be modified by the Chancellor of the Board of Regents, with the approval of the Controlling Board, to respond to exceptional circumstances as identified by the Chancellor. On August 14, 2009, the Chancellor signed Directive 2009-029 establishing procedures for institutions to follow when requesting a modification due to exceptional circumstances on the limitation on increases to in-state undergraduate instructional and general fees.

Pursuant to Section 371.20.90 of Am. Sub. H.B. 1 of the 128<sup>th</sup> General Assembly and Directive 2009-029, Sinclair Community College has requested that the limitation set forth in Section 371.20.90 of Am. Sub. H.B. 1 of the 128<sup>th</sup> General Assembly be modified beginning fiscal year 2011 to permit Sinclair to add a technology and student success services fee and increase out-of-county surcharge. The college has demonstrated the following:

- The College's Board of Trustees adopted a resolution at its meeting on March 9, 2010 setting forth the need for the increase in fees. A copy of the resolution is attached.
- The College provided a detailed explanation of the proposed increase. The technology and student success services fee would be phased in at a rate of \$3.00 per credit hour each year and increase the out-of-county surcharge by \$1.00 per credit hour.
- The College provided a table comparing its current tuition rate and its tuition rate if the requested increase is approved to similar Ohio public institutions. The table demonstrates the College currently has the lowest tuition rate of two-year institutions as it applies a per credit hour tuition rate and will remain the lowest for in-county students even after the implementation of the technology and student success services fee. A copy of the table is attached.
- The College anticipates about thirty percent of the student population will be impacted by the out-of-county surcharge increase.
- The proposed modification to the tuition structure is expected to generate \$4.4 million annually in tuition revenue with respect to the general fee in support of technology and student success services and \$250,000 annually in tuition revenue with respect to the increase in out-of-county surcharge.
- Sinclair Community College has made a significant commitment to improving its technology infrastructure, including adding 210 multi-media labs and increasing on-line offerings. Additionally, the College has been involved in a number of programs to improve student success and intends to extend those efforts to more

students. The revenue generated by this change in tuition will be used to support improved and upgraded technology offerings to students and improve student course completion and graduation.

- Sinclair has a long commitment to ensuring access by maintaining affordability. Excluding the current fiscal year, the college had not increased tuition 12 out of the last 19 years, holding tuition at zero increase before it was popular to do so or mandated by the state. Also, the college's general fee has not been increased since 1986. As a result of these actions, and shown in the attached chart, Sinclair's tuition over the past twenty years has increased at a much lower rate than the average of both Ohio public universities and community colleges. The additional revenues realized from these fee adjustments would fund increased technology needs and newly developed student success programs. These expenditures would address several goals in the University System of Ohio plan while benefitting students and increasing student learning.
- The College has demonstrated a commitment to efficiency. The implemented efficiency efforts of the College have doubled the mandated efficiency goals for two fiscal years. In fact, relative to other community colleges, much more of Sinclair's spending goes directly to instruction, academic support and student services. Conversely, Sinclair's administrative overhead per FTE student is well below the state average, as illustrated in the attached charts.
- The College has demonstrated that the combination of the lack of tuition and fee increases during the previous twenty years, a low tuition rate, the decrease in state support, and the need to replace and upgrade its technology infrastructure, including adding 210 multi-media labs, increasing on-line offerings, and the continuation of its student success services is an exceptional circumstance permitting a modification to the limitation on increases to in-state undergraduate instructional and general fees.

The request meets the Chancellor's standards, and the Chancellor identifies that the low tuition rate and no general fee increase since 1986 and the need to upgrade its technology infrastructure, increase on-line offerings and continue funding for student support services focusing on course completion and graduation at Sinclair Community College as an exceptional circumstance and recommends to the Controlling Board for approval the limitation imposed by Section 371.20.90 of Am. Sub. H.B. 1 of the 128<sup>th</sup> General Assembly be modified to permit Sinclair to add a technology and student success services fee phased in at a rate of \$3.00 per credit hour and increase out-of-county surcharge by \$1.00 per credit hour.

This directive will take effect immediately upon execution.

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Eric D. Fingerhut  
Chancellor, Ohio Board of Regents

# Sinclair Community College | REQUEST

## Special Fee Adjustment: HB 1 “Exceptional Circumstances” Provision

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### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In its commitment to providing access to a quality, affordable education, Sinclair Community College has long operated with the lowest tuition and general fees (for Montgomery County residents) and among the lowest general fees in the state. The college’s general fees of \$3.50/credit hour have been in place since 1986 with no increase in 24 years. Sinclair’s tuition has been frozen 12 of the past 19 years.

In the 24 years since Sinclair last established its general fees, technological advancements and emerging student success programs have improved educational opportunities and services to students, but at greater costs to the college.

- **Technology → Convenience for Students**

Technology has become ever more central to the delivery of instruction, both in the classroom and to broader audiences online. The increase in online instructional technologies enables students to complete their studies quicker, with more convenience and less cost to them. However, putting technological infrastructures in place –in all aspects of hardware, software and curriculum development – requires significant investment.

- **Intervention Programs → Greater Success for Students**

Sinclair has developed programs which identify at-risk students, closely tracking academic results in order to provide appropriate support services when needed. These programs have delivered documented outcomes in student success, such as course completion and retention, but at increased costs and only to a limited group. Expanding these programs will lead to greater success for more students.

Sinclair students would benefit from additional infrastructure, programs and services that would enable them to achieve their academic goals more quickly, more conveniently, and at lower cost. Putting these enhancements into place, however, will require resources Sinclair does not currently have.

Therefore, Sinclair Community College requests the following as permitted by the Chancellor’s Directive 2009-029, which establishes procedures for modification of fees under exceptional circumstances:

1. **Add a uniform Technology and Student Success Services Fee to help pay for the rising cost of technology and student success programs, services, and systems that directly benefit all Sinclair students.** The Technology and Student Success Services fee would be phased in over a two-year period starting in FY 2011 at a rate of \$3.00 per credit hour each year. **Even with this increase, Montgomery County residents would continue to pay the lowest total tuition and general fees in the state at \$2,365 annually.**
2. **Increase the out-of-county surcharge assessed to non-Montgomery County residents to maintain a balance in differentiation between in- and out-of-county tuitions and to contribute to the rising costs of the services as mentioned above.** The out-of-county tuition surcharge would apply to about 30% of Sinclair’s students and would be implemented starting in FY 2011, at a rate of \$1.00 per quarter credit hour.

Included in this request document are:

- I. **Sinclair Board Resolution**
- II. **The Case**
- III. **Proposed Fee Adjustments**

## I. SINCLAIR BOARD RESOLUTION

**SPECIAL FEE CONSIDERATION  
(RESOLUTION # 2010-10)  
MARCH 9, 2010**

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees of Sinclair Community College has frozen tuition 12 of 19 recent years (in addition to freezing tuition in the summer and fall terms of 2009); and

WHEREAS, Sinclair continues to offer the majority of its students the very lowest tuition rate in the State of Ohio (at least 13% lower than the second lowest rate in Ohio); and

WHEREAS, Sinclair's general fee of \$3.50 has not been increased since 1986; and

WHEREAS, technology and student success services are ever more important as students are turning to online classes and services and are in need of greater support to achieve their educational goals; and

WHEREAS, the costs for the technology and student success services that Sinclair students need and want are not covered by the long-established \$3.50 general fee; and

WHEREAS, all Sinclair students will benefit from an increase in technology and student success services saving them time and money as they complete their educational programs; and

WHEREAS, the thirty percent of Sinclair students who reside outside of Montgomery County will see even greater benefit from an increase in online services by reducing the frequency of having to travel to Sinclair facilities for business transactions; and

WHEREAS, in HB 1, the Chancellor of the Board of Regents has been granted the authority to modify an institution's instructional and general fee levels, subject to approval of the State of Ohio Controlling Board, to respond to "exceptional circumstances" as identified by the Chancellor; and

WHEREAS, the Chancellor has established a procedure for submitting a request of this nature that requires a resolution from Sinclair's Board of Trustees;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Trustees of Sinclair Community College direct the Sinclair President to submit to the Chancellor a specific proposal for fee adjustments above and beyond any other legislatively set tuition and fee levels, and to make this request under the "exceptional circumstances" provision of HB 1; and

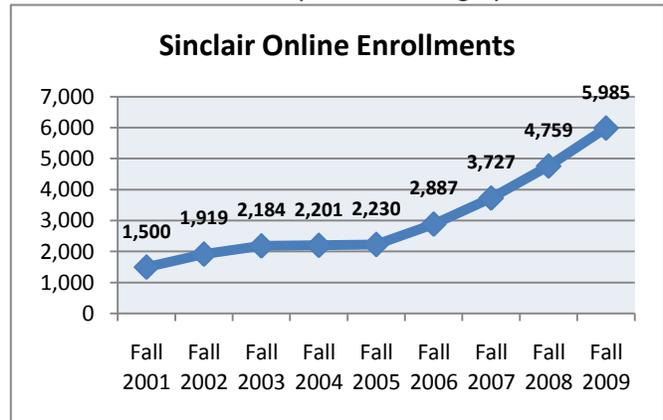
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the special fee adjustments requested be as follows: (1) add a technology and student success services fee to be phased in over a two-year period in the amount of \$3.00 per quarter credit hour per year to be implemented starting in FY 2011; and (2) increase the out-of-county surcharge fee in the amount of \$1.00 per quarter credit hour to be implemented during FY 2011; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that even with the implementation of these proposed fee adjustments, Sinclair students who reside in Montgomery County will continue to pay the lowest tuition in the state of Ohio while Sinclair's out-of-county tuition will rank favorably with the average of all of Ohio's community colleges.

BOARD ACTION: A motion was made by Trustee Robert Corbin and seconded by Trustee Bernard Wright. The motion carried.

## II. SINCLAIR’S CASE FOR EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES CONSIDERATION

Much has happened in technology and student success programming since 1986 when the Trustees of Sinclair Community College set student general fees at \$3.50 per quarter credit hour, the rate at which it remains to this day. In 1986, computer labs for coursework were scarce on campus while registration and fee bill payments were still conducted by students largely on paper. Though computers were used on campus for back-of-house functions, many students were able to complete their coursework without the aid of any computing devices. In 1986, the notion that a student could earn an entire degree without stepping foot on campus was unthinkable. As shown in the chart to the right, in the last three years alone, Sinclair’s online student enrollment has more than doubled, serving nearly 6,000 students online in the fall of 2009.



In the 24 ensuing years, not only has technology increased dramatically on campus, but a much greater emphasis has been placed on student success as well. Sinclair is not just providing students with important support services, such as counseling and academic advising, but has in recent years implemented a number of intensive initiatives to improve student success. For example, with the help of a \$3 million federal Title III grant, the college developed the Individualized Learning Plan which engages at-risk students during the admissions process in academic planning, self-awareness, and tracking programs that have reaped benefits for those students. The Title III grant is now finished. With the success of that program, the college would like to extend its success to more students leading to greater course completion and graduations rates, but is financially unable to do so with existing resources.

Given that Sinclair has not increased its \$3.50/credit hour general fee in 24 years, it is seeking permission to implement a new fee over two years, and to increase slightly the out-of-county surcharge. The additional revenues realized from these fee adjustments would fund increased technology needs and newly developed student success programs. These expenditures would address several goals in the University System of Ohio plan while benefitting students and increasing student learning.

## TECHNOLOGY

Sinclair already invests over \$15 million annually in IT operational and capital costs. Even so, there are important capital and program investments Sinclair is unable to make. Therefore, Sinclair seeks funding to expand its technology infrastructure on campus, as well as its online program offerings. The total cost for the college's additional technology needs over the next 10 years, over and above its current operations, is anticipated to exceed \$40 million.

### Infrastructure

- Within the next few years, the college will need to replace its existing and outdated administrative computer system, a monumental undertaking that the college cannot currently fund. Work is already underway on researching options. Current cost estimates are \$12-15 million for the conversion to a new system, which would be pursued following the college's conversion to a semester calendar in the fall of 2012.
- To enhance student learning, the college has already put in place 210 multi-media labs and classrooms. Funding is needed to purchase and install multi-media equipment in the remaining 116 rooms that have sub-standard or no multi-media capability.

### Online Programs and Support Services

- To meet the demand for online education, Sinclair has significantly grown its online offerings, from 4 online programs in the fall of 2007 to a total of 17 from which to choose by the fall of 2009. Increasing online offerings not only enables students to earn college credit while reducing time and travel commitments, but it also enables students to finish more quickly. Sinclair has found from online enrollment patterns that many students are augmenting on-campus schedules with online classes in order to squeeze in more credit hours per term. Given Sinclair's growth in online offerings and enrollments, the college's experiences will lead to statewide benefit. The development of new online programs funded by these new fee resources will be available for sharing on the new Ohio program sharing network.
- As student enrollment grows, it becomes important to implement online support services. All students, regardless of whether they are online only or on-campus only, will have access to these services. **Access to online services is especially vital to out-of-county students, enabling them to conduct important college business from their homes, saving them time and transportation costs.** Developing and implementing online student services requires investment in infrastructure, software development and ongoing maintenance. A suite of services has been identified that would allow for enhancements of the student experience such as: the expansion of 24/7 help desk and online counseling operations, secure online testing, online access to all of the college's instructional software, and diagnostic tools to allow for real-time troubleshooting of online connections.

USO Plan  
Measure #1 –  
Increase total  
enrollment

## STUDENT SUCCESS SERVICES FOR COMPLETION AND GRADUATION

The USO Plan and current discussions underway regarding the implementation of state funding tied to “success points” highlight the need to enable greater student success. Sinclair is an active participant in many state and national initiatives examining, implementing, and analyzing the results of student success programs, such as *Achieving the Dream* and the Gates Foundation-funded *Communities Learning in Partnership* program. While Sinclair has seen some success with small-scale efforts, these programs, which require intensive work in student engagement, support services and, in some cases, curriculum development, are expensive to implement, especially on larger scales. Though Sinclair has achieved some success with programs like the Title III-funded Individualized Learning Plan, to extend it to more students will require funding Sinclair does not currently have.

### USO Plan Measures:

- 4. First generation students
- 5. Black & Hispanic students
- 6. Graduation rate

- **Individualized Learning Plan (ILP)**

Developed with a federal Title III grant, this program is designed to provide a series of early interventions and wraparound support services to at-risk students identified during the admissions process. Due to limited funding, the program has been restrained in its implementation, serving about 2,000 students annually. Additional funding will allow another 2,500 students per year to benefit.

- **Academic Resource Centers (ARCs)**

Implemented with local foundation funding, Sinclair has worked with area school districts to place ten college resource centers in high schools, as well as centers in Sinclair facilities. In exchange for a room in the building, Sinclair provides computers, software and staffing to prepare high school students for college work. During the 2008-09 academic year, the centers served 2,171 students. In addition, through the alignment of the computer-based curriculum with Sinclair’s Developmental course curriculum, students were able to avoid the need for 1,468 credit hours in Development classes, resulting in a total student savings of over \$66,000. The number of these centers has been limited by funding. Additional centers are being requested by area school districts.

- **Support Programs for Displaced Workers**

Since 1990, the Dayton economy has lost about 30,000 manufacturing jobs. Just in the last two years, both the GM Truck and Bus Assembly and Delphi auto parts plants have been shuttered, putting thousands of people out of work. As a result, many displaced workers have turned to Sinclair, some with low academic skills and intimidated by the prevalence of computers and the normal processes of being a college student. To better serve these students and ensure their success, Sinclair was awarded the *Walmart Brighter Futures* grant in August of 2009. The two-year grant enables Sinclair to provide special services, such as a one-stop center with cross-trained counselors who are familiar with federal job training funding programs, as well as scholarships geared toward displaced workers and family members. In addition, Sinclair

### USO Plan Measure:

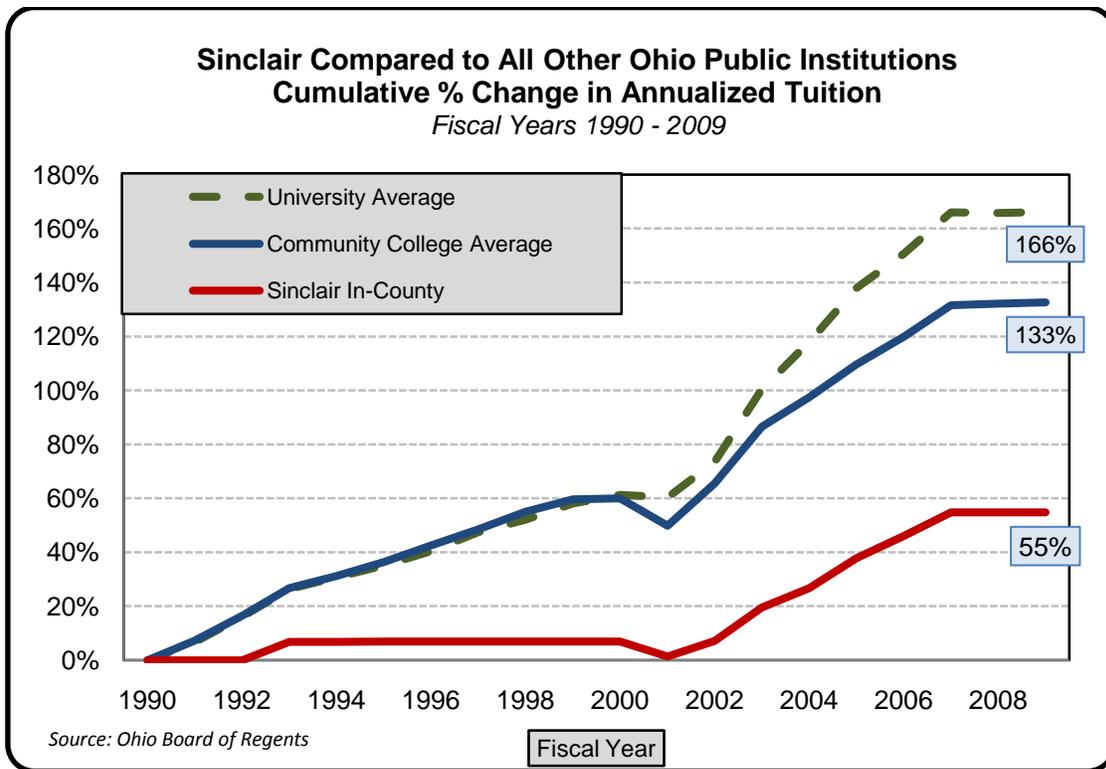
- 14. College credit during high school

### USO Plan Measure:

- 3. Enrollees aged 25 or older

provides special workshops and training sessions geared toward older students. In the Winter 2010 academic quarter alone, 1,837 displaced worker students were registered and receiving special services at Sinclair. Expansion of these services to more adult students, especially beyond the two-year grant funding period, will require additional funding.

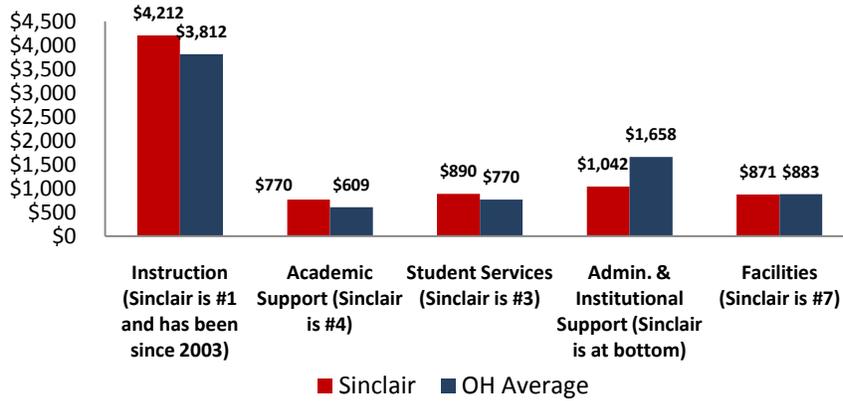
Sinclair has a long commitment to ensuring access by maintaining affordability. Excluding the current fiscal year, the college had not increased tuition 12 out of the last 19 years, holding tuition at zero increase before it was popular to do so or mandated by the state. As pointed out earlier, the college’s general fee has not been increased since 1986. As a result of these actions, and shown in the chart below, Sinclair’s tuition over the past twenty years has increased at a much lower rate than the average of both Ohio public universities and community colleges.



Sinclair has already implemented efficiencies leading to savings that have been reinvested in important programs and student services. Sinclair delivered double the level of financial efficiencies required by the state in 2008 and 2009 per HB 119. Relative to other community colleges, much more of Sinclair’s spending goes directly to instruction, academic support and student services. Conversely, Sinclair’s administrative overhead per FTE student is well below the state average, as illustrated in the charts below.

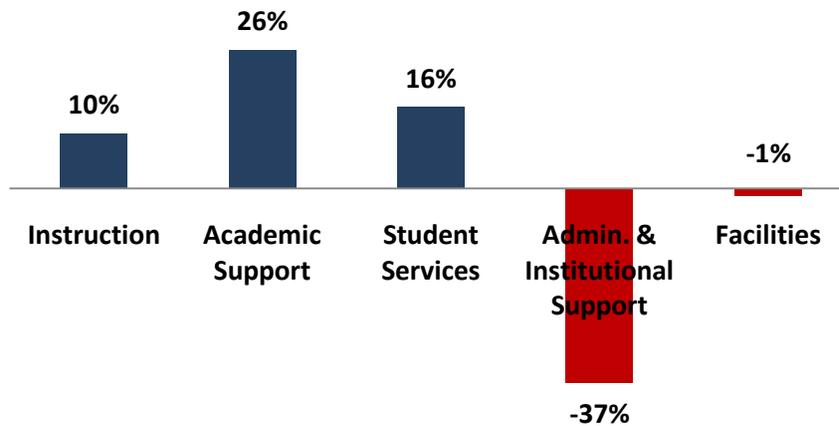
## Sinclair Spending Priorities per FTE Student

as Compared to Ohio Community College Average  
(FY 2008)



## Sinclair Spending Priorities per FTE Student

as Compared to Ohio Community College Average  
Percent Above and Below the OH Average  
(FY 2008)



While Sinclair has a long history of applying its resources to students and instruction, the college's currently constrained revenue is not enough to fund the vital services, programs and infrastructure students need to succeed.

### III. PROPOSED FEE ADJUSTMENTS

All of Sinclair's students will benefit from technological improvements. Many will benefit from increased student success services. To develop, implement and maintain needed technological enhancements and student success services, Sinclair must ask students to contribute to the costs.

Therefore, Sinclair is requesting consideration under the "exceptional circumstances" provision, to implement a new fee over a period of two years and to increase slightly an existing surcharge.

- 1. Add a uniform Technology and Student Success Services Fee to help pay for the rising cost of technology and student success programs, services, and systems that directly benefit all Sinclair students.** The technology and student success services fee would be phased in over a two-year period starting in FY 2011 at a rate of \$3.00 per credit hour each year. When fully implemented, this general fee would generate \$4.4 million annually. **Even with this increase, Montgomery County residents would continue to pay the lowest total tuition and general fees in the state at \$2,365 annually.**
- 2. Increase the out-of-county surcharge assessed to non-Montgomery County residents to maintain a balance in differentiation between in- and out-of-county tuitions and to contribute to the rising costs of the services as mentioned above.** The out-of-county surcharge would be implemented starting in FY 2011, at a rate of \$1.00 per quarter credit hour. This fee would generate \$240,000 annually.

**It must be stressed that even with the implementation of these proposed fee adjustments, Sinclair students will continue to pay among the lowest tuition and fee rates in the state.** As shown in the tables below, Sinclair's in-county rate will continue to be the lowest, while the out-of-county rate will be at about the community college sector average. Sinclair continues to maintain its commitment to access through affordability even with these changes.

<b>Sinclair's In-County Tuition Compared to Ohio Community Colleges (sorted low to high)</b>	
<b>Institution</b>	<b>FY 2010 Annualized</b>
<b>Sinclair - current as of Spring 2010</b>	<b>\$2,095</b>
<b>Sinclair - with special fee fully implemented (after 2 years)</b>	<b>\$2,365</b>
Cuyahoga	\$2,416
Lorain County	\$2,483
Jefferson	\$2,700
Lakeland	\$2,819
Owens State	\$3,278
Southern State	\$3,390
Clark State	\$3,566
Edison State	\$3,570
Central Ohio	\$3,600
Rio Grande	\$3,610
North Central State	\$3,634
Columbus State	\$3,638
Washington State	\$3,638
Hocking	\$3,669
Marion	\$3,716
Terra State	\$3,735
Belmont	\$3,784
Cincinnati State	\$3,867
Stark State	\$3,874
Zane State	\$3,915
Northwest State	\$3,990
Rhodes State	\$4,229
<i>Source: OBR Fall 2009 Survey</i>	

<b>Sinclair's Out-of-County Tuition Compared to Ohio Community Colleges (sorted low to high)</b>	
<b>Institution</b>	<b>FY 2010 Annualized</b>
Jefferson	\$2,880
Lorain County	\$2,990
Cuyahoga	\$3,194
Owens State	\$3,278
Southern State	\$3,390
<b>Sinclair - current as of Spring 2010</b>	<b>\$3,422</b>
Lakeland	\$3,447
Clark State	\$3,566
Edison State	\$3,570
Central Ohio	\$3,600
North Central State	\$3,634
Columbus State	\$3,638
Washington State	\$3,638
Hocking	\$3,669
Marion	\$3,716
Terra State	\$3,735
<b>Sinclair - with special fee fully implemented (after 2 years)</b>	<b>\$3,737</b>
Belmont	\$3,784
Cincinnati State	\$3,867
Stark State	\$3,874
Zane State	\$3,915
Northwest State	\$3,990
Rio Grande	\$4,210
Rhodes State	\$4,229
<i>Source: OBR Fall 2009 Survey</i>	

**Please note:** the comparison of Sinclair’s projected tuition after full implementation of the proposed special fee does not take into consideration potential increases in all of the other colleges’ tuition rates over the next two years. Consequently, Sinclair’s annualized tuition may compare even more favorably to other colleges’ at the end of the two-year implementation period.