

## **\$100 Institutional Fee Continued**

The \$100 mandatory fee which began in spring 2009, was approved by the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia in April 2009 and will be assessed for summer 2009, fall 2009, and spring 2010.

**Q:** What is the amount of the institutional fee and who has to pay it?

**A:** All students will pay a special institutional fee which is \$100 a semester at the research universities, including the University of Georgia. This is a mandatory fee.

**Q:** I thought this was a temporary fee. Why is the fee being extended?

**A:** The fee was originally set in December 2008 for the spring 2009 semester. At that time it was labeled as a temporary fee because, while the Board of Regents understood the economy was worsening and had been told to plan for budget cuts, the Governor had not yet made his budget recommendations and the General Assembly had not yet acted on those recommendations to set an amended budget for the current fiscal year or a new budget for the upcoming fiscal year. The temporary fee was part of the Regents' budget reduction plan and was needed to ensure academic quality. Now that the System's Fiscal Year 2010 budget has been set, which includes over 11% in budget cuts to System schools, including the University of Georgia, the Board of Regents has decided that a special institutional fee must be part of the overall strategy to ensure access and academic excellence for students. This is not a fee that the Regents want to put in place, but the times leave the Board little choice.

**Q:** So is this new fee permanent?

**A:** We do not know what the economy and consequently, the state's budget picture will look like for fiscal year 2011 and beyond. The special fee applies for the Fiscal Year 2010, which includes summer, fall and spring semesters. Next year the Board of Regents will make decisions on tuition and fees based upon the budget adopted by the General Assembly. No one can say – or should predict – what options the Regents will have and decisions they will take with respect to tuition and fees.

**Q:** Does the institutional fee apply to students on the guaranteed tuition plan?

**A:** Yes, the fee applies to all students, including those in the Guaranteed Tuition Plan.

**Q:** Is the fee covered by HOPE?

**A:** No, HOPE does not cover fees approved by the Board of Regents after January 2004. This fee is not HOPE eligible.

**Q:** Last December, when the institutional fee was passed, there was concern expressed by students about a lack of consultation. What, if any, input did students have on the new fee?

**A:** Students did voice their concerns last December. In February 2009, at the Student Advisory Council Meeting, both Vice Chancellor for Fiscal Affairs Usha Ramachandran and Chancellor Erroll B. Davis Jr. spoke at length with student leaders about the fee, the budget, and possible options for Fiscal Year 2010. Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Susan Herbst spoke to student government associations at both UGA and Georgia Tech. Prior to the April 2009 Board of Regents Meeting, USG presidents briefed student leaders on the campuses regarding the options. And of course, the Chancellor and Ms. Ramachandran again briefed the Student Advisory Council before the Regents' April Board meeting. Those meetings, particularly in February, allowed for significant student input. The decision to implement the new fee will not be endorsed by all, but the decision reflects what, in the Board's consideration, is the most equitable solution to maintain academic quality in the face of extraordinary budget pressures.