What is differential tuition?

In June 2007, Governor Charlie Crist signed the differential tuition bill authorizing the state's five public research universities – the University of South Florida, the University of Florida, Florida State University, University of Central Florida and Florida International University – to charge a supplemental fee, known as differential tuition, to students that are registered for undergraduate courses. The differential tuition fee provides the additional funding needed for research universities to continue to provide high level, competitive academic programs for undergraduate courses.

Students as well as the faculty need the best resources and support to realize their full intellectual potential – laboratories, libraries, academic advising, research experiences, and more. Unfortunately, in-state tuition for Florida public universities, which is near the lowest in the nation, does not provide the resources for the infrastructure of a research university. With recent state budget cuts, the per-student state funding for higher education has been reduced drastically while the demand for admission to the state’s universities – the top three research universities, in particular – is rapidly increasing.

What will USF do with this money?

State law requires that universities use these funds to improve the quality of undergraduate instruction and support services. The purpose of the differential tuition fee is for USF to provide high quality professors and academic advisors to enhance instruction and learning to help students stay on track for timely graduation.

When will USF start charging the differential tuition fee?

The university will assess this fee beginning in Fall 2008. The universities were authorized by the legislature to charge differential tuition to students who enrolled beginning in the Fall 2007, but the University of South Florida delayed these charges until Fall 2008 to have the time to implement properly and communicate differential tuition fees to students. Thus, all students (including non-degree seeking) admitted or readmitted to USF for a term beginning after July 1, 2007, will pay the differential tuition fee for enrollment taken at the undergraduate level beginning with the Fall 2008 term.

What about out-of-state or international students?

All students, even those who are not Florida residents, have a portion of their tuition that is classified as Florida in-state tuition. All Out-of-state students both degree and non-degree seeking, admitted or readmitted to USF for a term beginning after July 1, 2007, will pay the differential tuition fee for enrollment taken at the undergraduate level beginning with the Fall 2008 term.

I attend a regional campus. Will I have to pay the differential tuition fee?

The differential tuition fee is assessed on all undergraduate level courses.

I’m a graduate student. Will I have to pay the differential tuition fee?

It depends. The differential tuition fee will be charged to graduate students if they enroll in undergraduate courses.

I have a Florida Pre-Paid College Program. Will I have to pay differential tuition?

No. Florida Pre-Paid College Programs purchased prior to January 31, 2007 will cover the differential tuition fee. Florida Pre-Paid has introduced a new differential tuition plan that can be purchased for students aspiring to attend USF, UF, FSU, UCF or FIU.
Important Links


Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program – www.floridastudentfinancialaid.org/ssfad/bf

Florida Prepaid College Plan – http://www.myfloridaprepaid.com/