

Georgetown, Guyana

UG Council decides on tuition fees and salaries

Following intense discussion, the March 30 extra-ordinary meeting of the University of Guyana Council, chaired by Chancellor Eon Nigel Harris, voted to increase tuition fees. In making the decision the Council examined the University's projected budget deficit, the pressing needs of the University, and projected alternative income streams. Comparative data on private high schools and Universities in Guyana and the Caribbean region were examined and the tuition and fees at all the institutions examined were found to be several times higher than those of The University of Guyana (UG). Even with the unavoidable adjustments, fees at UG will still be comparatively lower.

The Council's decision will be applied to tuition fees for all programmes and for both continuing students and new students for the 2017-2018 academic year. However, input from the Students' Society was considered, leading to an incremental roll out, where continuing students will now pay an increase of 15% (about G\$2500 a month), and new students will be required to pay 18% (about G\$3000 a month) more. The Council also decided to incrementally increase the tuition fee by 10 % for 2018-2019 academic year for all students, and a further 10% for all students for 2019-2020.

At the same meeting, the Council also authorised the UG Administration to commence negotiations with the two University Unions for remuneration packages based on what the University could afford. The Council received clarification from the Ministry of Finance that the claim by the unions that the Government of Guyana had provided a fixed sum of money for salaries, which would amount to a 15 percent salary increase, was inaccurate. In this context, the UG Administration will continue to analyse the University's budget to determine the fullest possible extent of affordability. It also was stressed that staff performance will be a key factor in determining salaries and benefits, whether monetary or non-monetary.

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UG IN BRIEF

With a current enrollment of some 8,000 students, The University of Guyana (UG) has graduated more than 20,000 students who have gone on to successful careers locally, regionally and internationally. The University is also a major contributor to the national economy and to business and industry. Established in 1963 on a part-time basis with shared space at Queens College, UG moved to its own campus at Turkeyen in 1970 and expanded in 2000 with the addition of the Tain Campus. It now offers more than 60 Under-graduate and Post-graduate Programmes including the Natural Sciences, Engineering, Environmental Studies, Forestry, Urban Planning and Management, Tourism Studies, Education, Creative Arts, Economics, Law, Medicine, Optometry and Nursing. Several online programmes are available and The UG also offers extra-mural classes at four locations through its Institute of Distance and Continuing Education (IDCE). The UG also offers the opportunity for student engagement in debating, sports, and cultural, religious and professional activities.