



BRIDGEWATER COLLEGE

TO: *BRIDGEWATER COLLEGE STUDENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES*

FROM: *ANNE B. KEELER, VICE PRESIDENT FOR FINANCE*

DATE: *NOVEMBER 8, 2007*

SUBJECT: *2008-2009 TUITION AND FEES*

The Bridgewater College Board of Trustees has set the **standard comprehensive fee**¹ for tuition, room and board at \$32,990 for the 2008-2009 academic year. This represents a 7.11% increase over the total cost of \$30,800 in the current year. Tuition will be \$23,090 for non-residential students.

The standard comprehensive fee includes the Classic meal plan, which entitles the participant to 20 meals per week. Juniors and seniors (defined as students with at least 60 credit hours earned at the end of 2008 spring semester, as determined by the registrar) will be eligible to purchase reduced-meal plans. All residential students will have the opportunity to purchase Eagle Bucks to supplement their meal plans, for an additional charge. The available meal plan options and the applicable discounts or surcharges will be announced during meal plan sign-ups next spring.

Residents of the Student Apartments will pay an additional \$740 per year in comprehensive fees. Other room surcharges may apply to specific room assignments.

We know, as you do, that a college education is one of the most expensive investments made by any family. Here are a few of the strategies we employ to control cost increases:

- We offer our students a full range of scholarships and financial aid. In the current academic year, we will provide approximately \$15 million in scholarships. This amount does not include loans or grants obtained by

¹ Note that additional fees may apply to certain room assignments or meal plan options.

students from government and private sources. Over 96% of Bridgewater students receive financial aid directly from the College.

- We advocate for government assistance that benefits our students, such as the Virginia Tuition Assistance Grant (“TAG”) and the federal Pell grant.
- We plan all new construction with a focus on energy conservation and we strategically upgrade existing systems to lower energy costs as capital funds become available. During the past summer, we replaced three hundred fifty feet of underground steamline to correct wasteful steam leaks and upgraded the main boiler plant for additional gains in fuel efficiency. We expect annual fuel savings of \$40,000 to result from these projects. During the summer we also, as you know, completely renovated the kitchen and servery in the Kline Campus Center. In addition to the obvious service improvements resulting from the renovation, we converted from electric to natural gas appliances, with substantial energy efficiency increases. We remind you to conserve energy by keeping windows closed in residence halls and classrooms, and by turning off lights when you leave a room. These are small initiatives by individuals, but they can collectively make a difference in a community like ours.

What are some of the financial realities we face? In other words, why do we have to increase fees every year?

- To provide a safe, functional and attractive environment for living, studying and working. Although most new construction and major renovation projects are funded outside the operating budget, we will spend approximately \$7.4 million this year for the salaries and materials required to operate and maintain campus facilities. The debt service for previous capital improvements requires \$2.4 million from the operating budget each year.
- To remain competitive in the compensation of faculty and staff so that we continue to attract and retain outstanding teachers, scholars and student support staff. Success in this area obviously has direct positive impact on our students. As with all employers, the cost of employee health insurance has significantly increased compensation expenses over the past few years.
- To fund sufficient faculty positions to maintain small class sizes and make more classes (and more sections of existing classes) available.
- To respond to the ongoing and increasing demand for technology and technology support. During the current academic year, we will spend \$1.7 million to provide campus technology services and upgrade systems.

- To continue to provide high quality enrichment programs in areas such as music, athletics, drama, forensics, lectures and lyceum performances.

While Bridgewater College's comprehensive fees remain among the lowest of the private liberal arts institutions in Virginia, we recognize that the cost of college presents a significant financial challenge for families. We will continue to look for ways to be more efficient and limit future increases. More importantly, every member of the faculty and administrative team at Bridgewater College is charged with the mission to create the highest-quality learning environment possible. We believe that your experiences here will pay lifelong dividends on your investment.