

Any Way You Figure, It Costs a Lot of Money To Send a Kid to College

When out-of-state alumni of the '50s and '60s inquire about sending their college-bound offspring to the University of Oklahoma, there is often a tendency to preface the sales pitch with a word of caution. After all, these folks remember OU tuition as \$7, \$9 or \$12 an hour, not \$22.60 to \$72.80. Inevitably, however, the long-distance Sooners take the news better than those who have never left home.

Resident Sooners have seen the per-credit-hour tuition for the state system take three successive hikes. An in-state freshman or sophomore who paid \$528.50 in tuition and required fees for a typical 30-credit-hour year in 1979-80 was paying \$758 by 1983-84 and \$808 in 1984-85. The same student from outside Oklahoma will pay \$2,314 this year. An in-state junior or senior will pay \$907 for 1984-85, while his out-of-state counterpart will pay \$2,653. Graduate, law and medical study costs have increased accordingly.

If OU's non-residence brethren seem to take this news more stoically, it is because costs at most of the comprehensive universities in their home states have been increasing even more dramatically, as attested by 1984-85 tuition and fee figures for the nation's public and private colleges and universities compiled by the College Board and published in *The Chronicles of Higher Education*. Granted, the compilation of such a list is an inexact science; the term "required fees" includes different items in different institutions, a football ticket here, a student union fee there, a recreation center pass somewhere else. Individual schools also may have applied their own interpretations to the reporting instructions. But even allowing for these discrepancies, the College Board survey is very revealing.

Take the Big 8, for instance. The University of Oklahoma and Oklahoma State University are firmly entrenched at the bottom costwise, while the University of Colorado runs away with top honors at the other end of the scale. The average tuition and fees being paid by Coloradans at that

institution are \$1,453 for the 1984-85 school year; out-of-staters pay \$5,635.

The second most expensive Big 8 school is the University of Missouri, \$1,355 for in-staters and \$3,931 for out-of-staters, followed by the University of Nebraska, \$1,330 in-state and \$3,280 out-of-state; Iowa State University, \$1,242 in-state and \$3,450 out-of-state; Kansas State University, \$1,182 in-state and \$2,862 out-of-state; and the University of Kansas, \$1,148 in-state and \$2,828 out-of-state.

Trailing all Big 8 schools in these fixed costs is the University of Texas at Austin, which is charging \$420 for



in-state students and \$1,500 for out-of-staters. Interestingly, however, UT's low tuition is offset by relatively high dormitory rates, \$3,174 for nine months, compared to \$2,448 at OU. Tuition and fees at the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville run \$930 in-state and \$2,190 out-of-state; housing at Arkansas is also lower at \$2,200.

Tuition costs at the private institutions, most of which do not differentiate between in and out-of-state, are even more startling to the uninitiated college-shopper. At the top of the College Board's cost chart are a couple of names unfamiliar to most Southwesterners, Bennington College in Vermont at \$11,770 annually and Bard

College in New York at \$10,230. Among the better known institutions are Brown University, \$10,210; Princeton, \$10,200; Dartmouth, \$9,810; Harvard, \$9,800; Yale, \$9,750; Stanford, \$9,705; Columbia, \$9,665; Northwestern, \$9,615; Cornell, \$9,600; and California Institute of Technology, \$9,384.

Tuition and fees at private universities closer to home include Vanderbilt at \$7,100; Southern Methodist, \$6,316; and Rice, \$3,900. The University of Tulsa is listed at \$4,270 and Oklahoma City University at \$3,282.

Interesting as these comparisons may be, more relevant to the effect of rising tuition rates on enrollment at OU and OSU are the differences between costs at the two major universities and Oklahoma's state-supported regional colleges and junior colleges. Students at the four-year colleges average \$599 in-state and \$1,580 out-of-state, while the junior colleges average \$436 in-state, \$1,245 out-of-state.

The goal of the State Regents for Higher Education is to place tuition at 25 percent of the actual cost of each student's education. The most recent increases have put costs at OU and OSU over that magic 25 percent; the smaller schools are still short of the goal.

Any check-writing parent of a college student will testify that fixed costs — tuition, fees and \$250 in books — are just the beginning. OU's premier dormitories, Walker and Adams, and 20 meals a week run \$2,448 per 9-month year. Add another \$1,200 for personal miscellaneous expenses and \$333 for transportation, and undergraduate in-staters will average approximately \$5,088 a year and out-of-staters, \$6,714.

Of course, OU has less expensive dormitories, and off-campus rooms and apartments and eating arrangements can cost either more or less, depending on the student's life style and resources. It also matters whether the student is married, belongs to a sorority or fraternity, owns a car, has a scholarship or other financial aid, plans to work.

College students of today probably would agree with their counterparts of any other age. It sure doesn't hurt to have a rich father and a working mother.

— CJB