

## DEMANDS FROM THE KU INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

### Dear Chancellor Girod, Provost Bichelmeyer, and the KU Administration:

In the University Tuition and Fee Proposal approved unanimously by the Kansas Board of Regents, the University of Kansas states: "Given the extraordinary negative impact the COVID-19 pandemic is having on our students and their families, KU has taken the action of proposing no increase in tuition for our students." However, on page twenty-three of the same proposal, the International Student Fee had a 93.75% increase from \$160.00 in FY 2020 to \$310.00 in FY 2021. **This decision completely excludes the 2,100 international students at the university from having a raise in tuition for next year.** In addition, it is the second increase within a year. In FY 2019, we received a 60% increase from \$100.00 to \$160.00. These increases heavily burden international students and directly impact our ability to afford an education.

Undoubtedly, the COVID-19 pandemic has caused a tremendous level of stress and uncertainty for everyone. Coupled with this, since we, international students, are not legally allowed to work more than 20 hours a week during academic terms and are only allowed to work on campus, our means available to afford an education and a living become even more limited. Moreover, since the University is in a hiring freeze, it is very likely international students won't be able to find a job on campus, the ONLY option available to us. While some students may take a semester off due to financial instability, international students don't have this option at all. Not being able to afford school and taking a semester off would mean losing the VISAS most students come with, which means losing legal status in the United States.

We, the international students of the KU community, feel alienated by the decision of being left out of the flat tuition fee proposed for all students' well-being. Singling out the international student community for an increase of this magnitude sends the message that KU considers us as second class students. In addition, such a significant increase can also be perceived as a deterrent to international student enrollment. This decision reflects the lack of institutional support for international students and International Support Services (ISS) which creates a divide between international and domestic student communities, in a time when the university should be fostering unity and inclusivity.

### The International Jayhawk Community Demands the University:

- a) Abide to the University's original commitment of proposing no increase in tuition and fees. This commitment should apply to ALL students. Therefore, we demand a freeze of the International Student Fee to remain at the \$160.00 rate of FY 2020.
- b) Consider diversifying funding sources so that the burden of maintaining the ISS office is not only supported by the fee dollars of international students, which are already very elevated<sup>1</sup>. We are fully aware that out-of-state domestic students also pay a very elevated price per credit. We are simply demanding that the extra fees we have to pay as international students stay the same. This decision will help ease the restraints of both the ISS Office and International Students.
- c) Be more transparent about how tuition and fees paid by international students are being distributed throughout the University, considering ISS has already had to make several structural adjustments due to lack of funds. In addition, we urge the University to be more transparent in their communication to the international student community regarding changes in tuition and fees, as we learned about this through the UDK. Additionally, last year when our fees were also increased we didn't find out until two weeks after the start of the semester.
- d) Lift the hiring freeze impeding students' ability to work for the University so international students have a chance to remain fiscally solvent amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

We feel that the University is exploiting and alienating us, the international community, exacerbating divides between students domestic and international already present in the Jayhawk Community. We implore the University to treat us better and embody the values of Diversity and Inclusion that KU has proclaimed as paramount.

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<sup>1</sup> For the FY 2019-2020 undergraduate international students studying in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, paid on average \$919.65/credit compared to the \$346.15/credit that their in-state student counterparts paid. Apart from this, international students must pay other fees like the International Student Fee to which the University proposed a 93.75% increase.

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**SIGNED BY**

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African & Caribbean Student Association

Latin American Graduate Organization

Association for Computing Machinery

Latin American Student Union

Association of Indian Students

Lawrence Chapter of KU ISC (Jayhawkers)

Brazilian Students Association

Malaysian Student Association

Chemistry Graduate Student Organization

Muslim Student Association

Global Business Initiative

Pakistani Student Association

Global Partners

Programming Club

Graduate Association for the Department of Spanish & Portuguese

Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers

HackKU

Speech-Language-Hearing-Child Language Doctoral Program Graduate Student Organization

Hong Kong and Macau Student Association

SPLH Students of Color

Humanities Department Graduate Association

Sri Lankan Student Association

International Student Association

International Women's Association

Kansas Initiative Regarding International Sisterhood

KU Alternative Breaks

KU Blood Drive

KU Emacs Club

KU Fulbright Scholars Association

KU Graduate Teaching Assistant Coalition

KU International Grads

KU Vietnamese Student Association