

Truth-In-Tuition

Public Act 93-0228
Undergraduate Tuition Policy



Northern Illinois University

Division of Finance and Facilities

Office of the Bursar

WHAT IS TRUTH-IN-TUITION?

Public Act 93-0228 is referred to as "Truth-in-Tuition". In accordance with this law, Northern Illinois University provides eligible undergraduate students a fixed tuition rate for a time period of four continuous academic years beginning with the student's initial term of enrollment.

Note: This tuition policy is applicable to tuition rates only and does not apply to any fees, surcharges, room and board, or other charges the student may incur as part of the student's educational expenses at NIU.

WHO IS AN ELIGIBLE STUDENT?

To be **eligible you must be** an **Illinois resident**, an **undergraduate** student, and **seeking a degree for the first time**.

WHO IS NOT ELIGIBLE FOR TRUTH-IN-TUITION?

You are not eligible if you are:

- › an out-of-state student
- › a graduate student
- › a law student
- › a postgraduate student (i.e., already have a bachelor's degree)
- › a non-degree student
- › a visiting student
- › a non-graduated secondary school student

Students in these classifications will be charged tuition for each semester according to the current tuition rate schedule. [See Tuition, Fees, and Surcharges](#) page with the Office of the Bursar.

HOW DOES TRUTH-IN-TUITION WORK?

If you are an eligible student and you enroll for the first time at NIU, the tuition rate you are charged in your first Fall or Spring semester will be the tuition rate for four continuous years, i.e., for eight consecutive Fall and Spring semesters. If you do not graduate within this four year (eight semester) time period you will receive an additional one academic semester grace period during which the tuition rate schedule charged shall not exceed the rate schedule you were charged at the time you first enrolled at the University as in-state degree-seeking undergraduate student. This means, the fixed tuition rate is good for **nine (9) continuous semesters** including the grace period, if you have not completed your degree.

Example #1

A new student registers at NIU as an in-state, degree-seeking undergraduate in **Fall 2010** will be charged according to the tuition rates of the 2011 Academic Year (i.e., Fall 2010/Spring 2011 school year). The student will be charged this same tuition rate schedule (that is no increases in tuition rates) for the following semesters:

<u>Year 1</u>	<u>Year 2</u>	<u>Year 3</u>	<u>Year 4</u>	<u>Grace Period*</u>
Fall 2010	Fall 2011	Fall 2012	Fall 2013	Fall 2014
Spring 2011	Spring 2012	Spring 2013	Spring 2014	

Example #2

A new transfer student registers at NIU as an in-state, degree-seeking undergraduate in Spring 2011, the student will be charged according to the tuition rates of the 2011 Academic Year (i.e., Fall 2010/Spring 2011 school year). The student will be charged this same tuition rate schedule (with no increases in tuition rates) for the following semesters:

Sem. # 1 - Spring 2011	Sem. # 2 - Fall 2011
Sem. # 3 - Spring 2012	Sem. # 4 - Fall 2012
Sem. # 5 - Spring 2013	Sem. # 6 - Fall 2013
Sem. # 7 - Spring 2014	Sem. # 8 - Fall 2014
Sem. #9 (grace period) – Spring 2015	

Please Note: Once the clock for the fixed tuition rate starts for a student, it does not stop or restart again. The policy is for 9 continuous semesters of time, not for 9 semesters of attendance. Thus, the 9th semester remains the 9th semester whether the student attends every semester or not. The purpose behind the law and the policy is to assist parents'/students' planning for educational costs and for students to complete their degrees in a timely manner. [See Breaks in Attendance Section](#)

WHAT IF I DON'T GRADUATE BY THE END OF THE 9TH SEMESTER?

If you still have not completed your degree at the end of the 9th semester, **beginning with your 10th semester**, you will be subject to a tuition increase that is equivalent to the rate paid by students who entered the university one (1) academic year after the date of your original entry. You will then be eligible to receive this tuition rate for a maximum of three (3) consecutive semesters that is through the end of your 12th semester.

Example #3

An eligible student registers for the first time in Fall 2010. This student will be charged the 2011 Academic Year (Fall 2010/Spring 2011) tuition rates for 9 consecutive semesters. If after these 9 semesters the student has not completed his/her degree, beginning with the student's 10th semester the student will be charged the tuition rate equal to students that entered in the 2012 Academic Year (i.e., Fall 2011/Spring 2012). If the student has not graduated, he/she will be eligible to receive this tuition rate for a maximum of three (3) consecutive Fall/Spring semesters that is through the end of the student's 12th semester.

Charged the 2011 Tuition Rate

Semester # 1 – Fall 2010	Semester # 2 – Spring 2011
Semester # 3 – Fall 2011	Semester # 4 – Spring 2012
Semester # 5 – Fall 2012	Semester # 6 – Spring 2013
Semester # 7 – Fall 2013	Semester # 8 – Spring 2014
Semester # 9 – Fall 2014	

Charged the 2012 Tuition Rate

Semester # 11 – Fall 2015	Semester # 10 – Spring 2015
	Semester # 12 – Spring 2016

Please Note: Once the clock for the fixed tuition rate starts for a student, it does not stop or restart again. The policy is for 9 continuous semesters of time plus 3 more continuous semesters of time for a total of 12 continuous semesters of time, not for 12 semesters of attendance. Thus, the 12th semester remains the 12th semester whether the student attends every semester or not.

WHEN DO I NO LONGER QUALIFY FOR TRUTH-IN-TUITION?

If a student graduates anytime prior to the end of the 12 semesters, the student will no longer be eligible for the fixed tuition rate schedule, but will be charged according to his/her new student classification.

CAN I REQUEST AN EXTENSION?

Students can request an extension; however, such requests must be based upon the existence of unusual or extenuating circumstances which prohibited the student from earning a degree by the end of the grace period. Such requests **should be made in the student's 9th semester** and evidence of these unusual or extenuating circumstances must be presented with the appeal. Students should contact the College Office of their major to initiate the request.

HOW DOES THE TRUTH-IN-TUITION POLICY AFFECT STUDENTS WHO TAKE SUMMER TERM CLASSES?

Summer Sessions are not counted as part of the nine semesters. Once an eligible student is established with a fixed tuition rate, tuition charges for the student will be at this fixed rate even for Summer session classes. After the student graduates or has completed his/her ninth semester (i.e., Fall/Spring semester), the tuition rates for Summer, as with the Fall and Spring, will increase as indicated above.

HOW DOES THE TRUTH-IN-TUITION POLICY AFFECT STUDENTS WHO MAY START IN THE SUMMER TERM?

Summers Sessions are not charged against the nine continuous semesters for eligible students. If a student begins enrollment as a new, in-state, degree seeking undergraduate student with the Summer Term, for the nine continuous semesters this student will receive the fixed tuition rates of the subsequent Fall semester and the count of the student's nine eligible semesters will begin with that Fall Semester.

Example #4

A student is admitted and enrolls for the first time as a new in-state, undergraduate, degree student in Summer 2010. This student's fixed tuition rates and Truth-in-Tuition semester count will begin with Fall 2010. The student will, therefore, receive the fixed tuition rates of the 2011 Academic Year (i.e., Fall 2010/Spring 2011 school year) for nine continuous Fall/Spring semesters. Fall 2015 will be the student's grace period or 9th semester.

IS THERE A LIMIT TO THE AMOUNT OF CREDIT HOURS I CAN TAKE?

There is no requirement regarding the number of credit hours the student is taking per semester to retain this fixed tuition rate schedule. However, it is strongly recommended that students consider how many credit hours they need for graduation and plan accordingly.

Example #5

If a Truth-in-Tuition eligible student is entering with no (0) credit hours and is in a 120 credit hour degree program, the student will need to complete 30 credit hours each academic year to complete their degree within four years. The student will, therefore, need to: take at least 15 credit hours each Fall and Spring semester, or take at least 12 credit hours each Fall and Spring Semester, plus at least 6 credit hours each Summer Session

WHAT IF I AM A TRANSFER STUDENT?

Transfer students regardless of the number of credit hours they transfer will receive a fixed tuition rate schedule for the full number of consecutive semesters as indicated above, if needed. The count of these semesters would begin with the first Fall or Spring semester you enroll at NIU.

HOW ARE SPECIAL PROGRAMS (I.E. DUAL ADMISSIONS AND PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMS) HANDLED?

Undergraduate students in programs such as dual admissions and partnership programs will become eligible for a fixed tuition rate the semester they are admitted and registered as in-state, degree-seeking students **at NIU**. This means (for purposes of this tuition rate policy) they are treated the same as any other transfer student.

WHAT HAPPENS TO MY TRUTH-IN-TUITION IF I CHANGE MY RESIDENCY STATUS?

Out-of-State change to In-State

If an out-of-state, degree-seeking undergraduate's residency status changes to in-state, then the semester the student becomes an in-state, degree-seeking undergraduate, the student will be eligible for a fixed tuition rate schedule.

Example #6

A student registers as a new out-of-state, degree-seeking undergraduate in Fall 2010 and is charged out-of-state tuition rates. In Fall 2011 the student's residency status changes to in-state. As of Fall 2011, the student will be charged in-state tuition rates according the rate schedule of the 2012 Academic Year (i.e., Fall 2011/Spring 2012), since that is the year in which the student became in-state. Beginning with Fall 2011, this student will be eligible for that same tuition rate schedule for 9 consecutive semesters, that is, until and including Fall 2015, if needed.

In-State change to Out-of-State

If the residency status of a student who initially registered as an in-state, degree-seeking undergraduate changes to out-of-state, the student will be charged according to the out-of-state tuition rate schedule (which is subject to annual increases) effective the semester of the change.

Example #7

A student registers as a new in-state, degree-seeking undergraduate in Fall 2010 and is eligible for the fixed tuition rate schedule for the 2011 Academic Year (i.e., Fall 2010/Spring 2011) until Fall 2014. In Fall 2011, the student's residency status changes to out-of-state. As of Fall 2011, the student will no longer be charged according to the fixed tuition rate schedule, but will be charged out-of-state rates applicable to the student's new out-of-state status that semester (i.e. the out of state rate schedule for the Fall 2011/Spring 2012 Academic Year).

In-State to Out-of-State to In-State again

The student's residency status determines which tuition rate schedule the student is charged. However, as mentioned above, once the clock for the fixed tuition rate starts for a student, it does not stop or restart again. The policy is for 12 (9 plus 3) continuous semesters of time, not for 12 semesters of attendance. Thus, the 9th semester remains the 9th semester and the 12th semester remains the 12th semester, whether the student attends every semester or not, or whether the student's residency status remains the same or not.

Example #8

If the student in Example #7 was granted in-state status again in Fall 2012, the student will return to receiving the 2011 Academic Year in-state, tuition rates the student originally received when he/she was previously an in-state student. The ending semester for those rates will, also, be the same, Fall 2014.

HOW ARE BREAKS IN ATTENDANCE OR UNIVERSITY WITHDRAWALS HANDLED?

As mentioned above, once the clock for the fixed tuition rate starts for a student, it does not stop or restart again. The policy is for 12 (9 plus 3) continuous semesters of time, not for 12 semesters of attendance. Thus, the 9th semester remains the 9th semester and the 12th semester remains the 12th semester, whether the student attends every semester or not. The purpose behind the law and the policy is for students to complete their degrees in a timely manner.

Example #9

A student registers as a new in-state, degree-seeking undergraduate in Fall 2010 and is eligible for the fixed tuition rate schedule until (and including) Fall 2014. At the end of Spring 2011, the student is academically dismissed. The student does not return to NIU in Fall 2011. In Spring 2012, the student applies for and is granted reinstatement. Upon the student's return in Spring 2012, he/she will be charged according to the 2011 Academic Year tuition rate schedule (which was the student's original entry year – Fall 2010/Spring 2011) and the final semester the student will be eligible for those rates remains Fall 2014.