



News Release

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MISSOURI WESTERN BOARD OF REGENTS APPROVES NEW RESIDENCE HALL PROJECT

St. Joseph, Mo., March 27, 2003 – The Missouri Western State College Board of Regents approved a 6.7 percent increase in room and board rates for the next academic year and up to \$17.1 million for construction during phase one of the plan. Revenue bonds will be issued to finance the housing project, and residence hall fees will be used to repay the 30-year bonds.

The Board of Regents also accepted the long-range residential master plan presented by Dennis Strait, architect for Gould Evans. The plan looked at Western's residential housing needs over the next 50 years. He then presented the first phase of the residential hall plan, "Living Learning Communities." Phase one will include a new 400-bed residence hall, a residential student commons and improvements to existing halls.

"This is not your parents' dormitory; this is a residence hall for the 21st century – a living-learning center that creates 8-10 small communities that will have access to state-of-the-art technology," said Dr. David Arnold, vice-president of academic and student affairs. "Students within these communities will have the option to take classes together in what we call 'learning communities.' "

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This building will be a cornerstone for a new learning communities program. The program provides opportunities for first-year students to take classes and live together. According to Dr. Arnold, it naturally enhances first-year students' academic success.

The new residence hall will offer four-person suites and single occupancy rooms. Each wing of the hall will serve as a community of 40-50 residents with accompanying group meeting and kitchen space. The rooms will have individual control of heating and cooling as well as phone, cable and network connections. The heavy-frame, durable construction residence hall has a life of 50 to 100 years.

“Phase One: Living Learning Communities” will also include improvements to existing residence halls and a new residential student commons. Existing halls will receive electrical, mechanical and ventilation system improvements. A new commons building will feature a residential life service and security desk, and a lounge area with a small café.

Ron Olinger, vice president for financial planning and administration, presented the financial plan for phase one. A component of the plan included room and board rates for the 2003-2004 academic year. On average over the past seven years, room and board rates have increased about 6 percent each year. The Board of Regents approved a 6.7 percent increase for next year. This translates to \$2,029 a semester for students who live in the suite complexes and have a 20-meal plan. Students living in the apartments with a 20-meal plan would pay \$2,303 per semester.

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“At Western we have quality residential facilities at an affordable price, which is a great value for our students. With this year’s increase, Western’s rates remain very competitive with other four-year public institutions in the state,” explained Olinger.

Missouri Western State College is a four-year public institution providing a blend of traditional liberal arts and professional degree programs. The college offers student-centered, high quality instruction that focuses on experience-based learning, community service, and state-of-the-art technology. Western is located in St. Joseph, Mo. and is committed to the educational, economic, cultural and social development of the region it serves.

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