



# News Release

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## **WESTERN BOARD OF REGENTS APPROVE PRELIMINARY BUDGET**

**St. Joseph, Mo.** —June 27, 2003—At the end of the fiscal year 2003, Western’s state funding has been reduced by \$2.7 million, resulting in total reductions of \$5.9 million during the past two years. Anticipating further reductions in another tight budget year, the Missouri Western State College Board of Regents approved a preliminary budget and tuition increase for the next fiscal year.

“From a budgetary perspective, public higher education in Missouri will face a third difficult and increasingly uncertain year. Western will manage the situation with reason and planning across campus,” said President James Scanlon.

The approved budget plan assumes a balanced budget of \$36.4 million for the next year. This includes a \$1 million reduction in spending. In addition, the plan encumbers \$1 million in operating funds to act as a buffer for state withholdings.

The Board of Regents approved an 8.1 percent increase in tuition rates that will begin Fall 2003. The tuition for in-state students taking 15 hours will be \$2,049 per semester and \$3,837 for out-of-state students.

While state budget cuts continue to shift a greater proportion of the cost of higher education to students, sources of aid continue to be available for many students. For example, at Western an additional \$225,000 of the money generated from this approved

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tuition increase will directly go to provide additional financial aid to Western's students. In addition, Western's students received an average of \$2,450 in scholarships and/or grants this past academic year. Most of Western's students also are eligible for the Hope Scholarship or Lifetime Learning federal tax credits, worth up to \$1,500 a year.

“Western is committed to providing a college education at a reasonable cost and remains among the most affordable campuses in Missouri,” added Dr. Scanlon.

According to Dr. Scanlon, a detailed budget plan will be presented at a future meeting after the General Assembly and Governor approve the higher education budget.

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*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.*