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WACO—Baylor University regents took no action at their Oct. 22 meeting on a motion introduced one month earlier calling for President Robert Sloan's resignation. Instead, they focused on raising tuition 6.4 percent for the 2005-2006 school year.

At their Sept. 24 meeting, regents voted to postpone indefinitely a call for Sloan's resignation, and they unanimously rejected a request by the university's Faculty Senate to hold a facultywide referendum on Sloan's administration.

Earlier this month, the Baylor Faculty Senate voted 26-5, with one abstention, to proceed with the referendum—even though the Baylor Student Congress had asked them to reconsider, saying the vote would “add to the polarization of Baylor University.”

Since then, another group of faculty members bought a series of ads in the

Baylor Lariat student newspaper urging their co-workers to boycott the referendum.

One year ago, the Baylor regents voted 31-4 to affirm Sloan. But his support had eroded by the board's May meeting, when a motion to ask for his resignation failed by an 18-17 secret ballot.

Regents took no vote on Sloan's presidency at their July retreat, other than unanimously affirming the Baylor 2012 10-year plan.

Ironically, the Faculty Senate also voted unanimously this month to endorse Baylor 2012, even though the faculty organization twice passed "no confidence" votes in Sloan's leadership.

Baylor 2012—an ambitious plan to make Baylor a top-tier university—has become the often-controversial centerpiece of Sloan's administration.

Supporters of the plan—and the president—have applauded efforts to strengthen Baylor's Christian identity, expand facilities and raise academic standards.

Critics have faulted Sloan's administration for increasing debt due to capital expansion, failing to build relationships with faculty and alumni, imposing narrow religious restrictions on faculty—and raising tuition.

Sloan has pointed to the incoming freshman class as evidence that Baylor's 10-year plan is on the right track. While overall enrollment at Baylor is down slightly, the freshman class was the fourth-largest in the school's history, had higher SAT scores and showed greater diversity, with minority students making up 30.3 percent of the class.

Regents voted to raise tuition for undergraduate students—and most graduate students—entering Baylor in fall 2005 from \$17,900 to \$19,050 per year. Fees rise from \$1,980 to \$2,295. Total increase for tuition and

fees is 6.8 percent.

Tuition for students at Baylor's Truett Seminary increases 6.7 percent. Continuing law school students will face a 9 percent increase, and new law students will be charged a 12.5 percent increase.

Two years ago, Baylor moved to a flat-rate tuition structure rather than charging students for each semester hour in which they enroll. Graduate and undergraduate students who enrolled prior to fall 2002 were "grandfathered" under the former per-semester-hour structure, said Baylor spokesman Larry Brumley.

Students who were enrolled prior to fall 2002 will see their tuition increase to \$490 per hour—a 6.3 percent increase.

While 2005-2006 costs are not available for other schools, U.S. News & World Report's "America's Best Colleges 2005" provides information on tuition and fees for the 2004-2005 school year.

It reveals Baylor's cost of \$19,880 is slightly higher than Houston's Rice University at \$18,826, roughly comparable to Fort Worth's Texas Christian University at \$19,740, and less than Mercer University, a Baptist school in Macon, Ga., which is listed at \$22,050.

Even after the increase, Baylor's \$21,345 total for 2005-2006 remains substantially below 2004-2005 tuition and fee rates for Southern Methodist University in Dallas at \$25,358 or Duke University in Durham, N.C., at \$30,720.

In comparison, the usnews.com website reveals Baylor's tuition and fees are more than twice those charged at the least-expensive liberal arts university affiliated with the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

The site reports 2004-2005 tuition and fees are \$9,250 at Wayland Baptist

University in Plainview.

Tuition and fees at other BGCT-related universities listed on the website were \$11,610 for Dallas Baptist University, \$12,000 for Howard Payne University in Brownwood and East Texas Baptist University in Marshall, \$12,380 for the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor at Belton, \$12,915 for Houston Baptist University and \$13,376 for Hardin-Simmons University in Abilene.

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