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I am submitting this paper in response to President Rosenberg's open call for concept papers from any interested parties.

At the outset, I would like to address the phrase "entrepreneurial spirit" that President Rosenberg has so proudly used in his e-mail address. It is my opinion that FIU has developed too much of an entrepreneurial spirit, in that FIU is involved in increasing capital at the expense of students. By this I am referring to the egregious overcharging of graduate students throughout the College of Nursing and Health Sciences, and possibly in other colleges as well.

In the graduate program in which I was enrolled during the 2012-2013 academic year, students are required to pay a fee of \$230.00 per credit, above the expected rate of tuition and fees of \$422.00 for graduate in-state tuition. Over the span of the program, this fee totals approximately \$13,800.00. The amount of \$230.00 per credit is deducted from student loans (for those who have them), along with the normal and expected tuition and fees.

In the College of Nursing and Health Sciences, fees (I am also including the differential tuition in several departments) range from \$213.00 per credit to \$563.00 per credit. Total extra program costs due to these fees range from \$9,177.00 to \$39,973.00. These amounts are in addition to the regular and expected tuition and fees established by the State University System of Florida.

Students are not benefitting from FIU's entrepreneurial spirit, particularly those who are being overcharged to fuel it. There is an agreement between the State University System of Florida and the students enrolled in its universities. It is an agreement in which the rate of tuition is established. Any individual university that breaches that contract by charging whatever fees and/or differential tuition it desires (particularly when such fees and tuition have not been approved by either the university Board of Trustees or the Board of Governors), is taking advantage of its students in a most blatantly wrongful manner.

While institutions of higher learning have long been notorious for overcharging students, the amount of overcharging here is simply outrageous. It is clearly an example of institutional abuse of power, in that students, who have made necessary sacrifices and often life changes in order to be accepted and enrolled in a degree program, are in no position to complain. They have clear goals, to obtain an education and earn a degree, and therefore do not want to cause any trouble that may place their achievement of these goals in jeopardy. Knowing this, a university such as FIU may implement large fees, exercising their ability to operate with impunity.

According to the research paper entitled "How FIU Spends its Money" (easily found online), findings indicate that in the time period between 2002 and 2009, the number of FIU academic faculty grew by one half of 1 percent (5 positions). During the same period, the number of administrators increased by

96.8 percent (365 positions). Many of these are highly paid positions. At the time of the 2009 report, the average annual growth rate for faculty salaries was 3.5%, while the average annual growth rate of administrative salaries was 27.3%. The report contends that "Student tuition and fees were being diverted away from the personnel who directly serve students through teaching, research and service activities and toward administrative overhead."

It was even before the economic downturn that FIU began to hire numerous "administrators." Also numerous buildings have gone up in recent years, and several new construction projects are underway at present. Outwardly, at least, FIU shows no sign of financial distress. One has to wonder how much of the entrepreneurial spirit and financial well-being of FIU is due to the overcharging of graduate students in the amount of thousands of dollars per semester.

Documents indicate that departments in which such fees are implemented are expected to be financially self-supporting using those fees and any other outside sources of funding. This implies that students' real tuition is being diverted to other purposes. Apparently there is no stipulation that "real" tuition be applied to the costs of the student's educational program. Rather, "real" tuition goes into a general fund, and the Board of Trustees is able to use its discretion as to the purpose to which it is to be applied. If a department is "self-supporting" on an improper fee, then it is no longer a financial burden on the university. In the department in which I was a graduate student, there was no outward evidence of financial support of any type from the university administration.

In my humble opinion, FIU needs to scale back its entrepreneurial spirit, particularly where it results in the abuse of students and faculty. FIU should go back to being an educational institution that achieves its mission to meet the educational needs of the South Florida community. FIU should lay-off many of the numerous financial planners and investment advisors, so that it may devote its resources to education rather than administrative overhead, which must support these numerous highly-paid financial professionals. In short, FIU should focus on being primarily an educational institution, rather than being primarily an investment corporation.

FIU is in large part supported by Florida taxpayers. It is a public university that ideally exists to support the educational needs of the South Florida public. Therefore, I personally feel that it is extremely upsetting that such an institution would take advantage of its constituents in this way.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Daniel Weihnacht