



**Report to the Board of Regents
University System of Maryland Student Council
February 13, 2015**

The council will meet next on February 15th 2015 in Annapolis, MD.

Spring Semester Tuition Increases

I would like to thank Chancellor Kirwan for his diligence in including the Student Council on the discussion of raising tuition for the Spring 2015 semester. His commitment to shared governance is unwavering and a shining example for higher education leaders everywhere. I would also like to thank Chairman Shea for giving me the chance to speak to the Board on behalf of students. However, as you are aware, the USM Board of Regents voted 9-3 to approve Spring 2015 tuition increases at four institutions: FSU, SU, TU, and UMCP.

During the meeting, students received favorable support from several regents and for that I am very thankful, their votes to not increase tuition were appreciated. I would like to make clear that I understand, and have communicated widely, the very difficult situation that the presidents of these institutions and that the Board of Regents was in. The reality is that the state has betrayed students. Nearly half of our budget increases have been yanked away from USM without so much as a blink of the eye. And now, students are shouldering the costs. As it was made clear to me, this will likely not be the last strike against USM students. The institutions that were able to hold off the mid-year increases are expecting high tuition increases for the 2015-2016 Academic Year. Looking at our modest increase in the budget, as it currently stands, I am hopeful and optimistic, but I am aware of the realities that may lie ahead.

I have communicated to my council that this is our call to action. Students must show Annapolis that it is not acceptable to make promises to hundreds of thousands of citizens who are young adults, working mothers and fathers, grandparents, and people just trying to better themselves through a high-quality public education, and then not deliver. USM students are empowering the state and helping Maryland's economy grow, but we cannot do it alone. Students pay in great amounts to attend USM schools, but in doing so we expect a partnership. Solidarity will be our strength during this legislative session and the students of all USM institutions plan to stick together.

Lobbying Efforts

The date of our lobby day has been changed for logistical reasons; our lobby day will now take place on February 27th, 2015. The council would like to thank Assistant Vice Chancellor for Government Relations, Andy Clark, for his help in securing a room in Annapolis for students. The council's efforts toward developing a successful lobby day in Annapolis have been continuing under the leadership of our Director of Government Affairs, Kennard Wallace (UB). Our official agenda has been proposed and is expected to be amended and passed at our next meeting.

Vice Presidents for Student Affairs

The student council would like to thank the Vice Presidents for Student Affairs for their overwhelming and vocal support of our efforts to take a stand for student voices on adjudication panels for sexual assault. I appreciated being hosted at their most recent meeting at Coppin State University to discuss the council's work and to hear first-hand their deep passion for student issues. Students in USM would not be where they are today without the valiant team of VPSAs that we have behind us.

Respectfully submitted,
Zachary McGee
President