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Making the Ending Cost at MSU Cheaper



Around the United States, the cost of college tuition has been on the rise and it does not look like it is stopping anytime soon. As a college student you pay tens of thousands of dollars a year to get an education. Then, once you get out into the real world and finally get a job you are expected to give thousands back to the school in donations as goodwill. The average tuition price in the United States is about \$10,000 for state residents and \$22,000 for out of state residents (usnews.com). However, at Michigan State University (MSU), both the state and out of state tuition are above the national average; state tuition averages around \$14,460 a year and out of state tuition averages about \$39,405 a year (MSU). This does not include your room and board expenses. Who can really afford college? The way colleges take your money is outrageous and after paying all of this, one must ponder if the process is necessarily fair. The sad part is after paying thousands of dollars, the college process still looks to take the last penny from you. On top of all these core expenses, colleges never mention the fact there are plenty more living expenses that hit your bank accounts. According to the website collegefactual, the average student can expect to pay around \$2,900 on personal expenses. As a group of students, we all know the struggle of trying to find money to pay for college. Michigan State University needs to do better in finding ways to make tuition cheaper. There are plenty of ways to make college more affordable for every student. About 49% of undergraduate students receive some type of aid at Michigan State University (usnews). The cost of getting an education should never be an excuse.

Prior to college, students go to school for 12 years, learning the basics of life and a short overview of all the different types of studies that are out there. Why is it that once you get to college you still have to complete prerequisites? Often the prerequisite classes are similar to classes covered in high school curriculum. Many students feel that repeating these classes are a

waste of time and money. As a student, you go to college to further your learning skills in a way that will benefit you in your own future. At college, you select a major, and then with that major comes a set of classes you have to take that will prepare you to use your degree somewhere in the world. Michigan State University has course guidelines and these guidelines must be met by each individual student to allow them to graduate. Credits aren't cheap. Also, why require students to take classes that they will not enjoy, only to have a chance of hurting their GPA. Michigan State University preaches a set of goals that will create students for the future. That is true but MSU also looks for things in return. EVERY UNIVERSITY wants to have the best numbers and statistics across all categories. For example, universities thrive on having high GPAs and good test scores. By taking out prerequisites it will be more of a benefit to both the University and student body. I understand in some circumstances prerequisite classes may be beneficial. If you are an incoming freshman and choose no preference for your major, prerequisites will deepen your education in a broad spectrum allowing you to truly find your likes and dislikes. However, consider those students who select a major, yet need to complete prerequisites that are not directly related to their field of interest. This develops a frustrating aspect as to why would a University charge you thousands and thousands of dollars for something you may never use again in your lifetime.

At Michigan State University the average time it takes a student to finish a bachelor's degree is six years when generally a bachelor's degree is supposed to take four years. As you may be aware, under interim President Engler, a block tuition plan for the 2019-20 academic year will be instituted with the intent of encouraging students to graduate in four years. This new plan that MSU has put in place is called Go Green, Go 15. The point of this is to encourage

students to take more credits per semester at a cheaper price allowing them to graduate within the four years. Taking 12-18 credits will cost exactly the same price. On June 27, 2017, the acting president at the time, President Lou Anna Simon said, “The goal is partial to reduce students’ overall costs but also to increase the success ... If you take more credits, no matter your preparation for the first year, you are going to graduate higher. You have better predicted academic performance.” However, this is a problem. In a general overview, this may seem like a good idea, however:

- Go Green, Go 15 forces students to cram in a busier schedule than they could begin to imagine; causing them to over stress and possibly hurting their GPA and education in the long run.

MSU is offering a deal that you have to make worthwhile. When this idea first came into place, Simon said that students will have better academic performances; especially as first-year students. I am having trouble seeing this picture. With first-hand experience and as a student at MSU, I struggled in my first semester here at college. I took 14 credits, received an immense amount of work that I was not used to, and received a GPA of 1.01. I failed two classes and sat in disappointment. This new Go Green, Go 15 current deal is not the way. Students will see this as a temptation; a way to save big, go and graduate early in a highly stressed environment. The process of college does not work if you do not gain skills and a successful resume to prove it. I understand that a bachelor's degree is commonly completed on the standard four-year time scale and that has always been the case since our parents were in college. However, it does not have to be that way. There is no need to have students wasting more and more money. The goal is to spend as little as possible to get the best education as possible. If the modern bachelor

degree will take 3 years instead of 4 years that is okay. When our parents were in college, it would cost them about \$45.00 for 1 credit while today it will cost you \$482.00 for 1 credit. The world around us is always changing and evolving and we need to adjust to set ourselves up for success in the future.

There are plenty of people at MSU who would go against the idea of removing all prerequisite classes. These people are some of the most important people at MSU. Almost the entire idea of the Go Green, Go 15 goes against my idea of removing the prerequisites. This is because the idea is to take more classes. Taking more classes per year will allow students to take all prerequisites and all required classes in four years. After talking to Mrs. Melanie Foster, co-chair on the Board of Trustees, it would be hard to lower the per year tuition costs due to all of the expenses to operate MSU. At MSU, the average yearly budget of \$1,391,500,000 is used to cover salaries, supplies, and labor (Michigan State University). “The budget for salaries is just over 80% which does not provide a lot a room to work within the end” (Foster). As a group researching this topic we have to consider the thought of a good amount of the liberal arts classes, basic sciences classes, ISS classes, etc. Specifically, one of our group members has a major of actuarial science. A class that he has to take is Chemistry and chemistry has nothing to do with this job in the future. Chemistry is a hard class and risks bringing down a GPA that future careers will be looking at. There is no need for this.

Understanding the process of getting rid of prerequisites is going to take some getting used to. However, this is the better option than the Go Green, Go 15. Michigan State University has to realize that even though students are here to study and earn a degree, college is much more than that. At MSU students experience new relationships and living on their own. For some, this

adjustment may take some time. Also, many students work throughout the school year to earn money to pay for books, tuition, and other living expenses. On the MSU campus, there are hundreds of clubs to join. Thus, allowing you to try new things or join clubs that you have had a lifelong passion for. Getting rid of prerequisites will allow you to take the same amount of credits you are taking now. The price of tuition will be the same each year. However, in the long run, it will save the students money by being able to finish college faster without the stress of trying to rush and fit classes in. Let's be successful together and strive for a well rounded college experience where students are satisfied and confident in classes that directly influence their educational path as well as having time for their personal and community goals.

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