Committee OKs maximum tuition hikes by Florida universities

By LINDSAY PETERSON | The Tampa Tribune

After going up 15 percent last year, tuition this fall at the University of South Florida is likely to go up another 15 percent, to $3,070 per year, for a 30-hour class load.

A committee of the state university Board of Governors today recommended a 15 percent increase for all 11 state universities.

The Legislature this spring passed an 8-percent tuition increase and gave the universities the option of increasing that by up to 7 percent, with the approval of the state Board of Governors.

Trustees for five universities, including USF, have already approved the full, 15-percent increase and the other six are expected to do the same.

The increase at USF amounts to $102.33 per credit hour.

The 7-percent differential would raise a total of $23.8 million for the 11 universities. Of that $23.8 million, nearly $18 million would go toward hiring more professors and other education improvements. The rest would pay for scholarships for needy students.

The committee's recommendations go to the full board next week.

Florida's tuition rates are among the lowest in the nation. The new state law allows universities to increase tuition by 15 percent every year until the rates reach the national average, which is $6,585 for 30 hours.