

# Governors State to promise debt-free degrees: Maimon

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Governors State University hopes the promise of cash will translate into a promising future for 50 students working to complete a bachelor's degree.

Beginning in 2010 the university will cover tuition and fees to enable 50 low-income students to earn a bachelor's degree debt-free, according to university President Elaine Maimon. The endowment-backed GSU Promise would pay any shortfalls not covered by federal or state aid and an amount the student can afford to pay without loans, she said.

"We're looking to jump start the GSU Promise," Maimon said in a meeting with the SouthtownStar editorial board. "We want students to complete a bachelor's degree. Two years is not enough."

The university, which costs about \$8,300 to attend full-time for one year, is an upper-division university, meaning students begin classes there at the junior level. About 7,750 students attend GSU in University Park.



Maimon

## GSU PROMISE

To make a donation to help cover costs for low-income students pursuing a bachelor's degree at GSU, visit: [www.govst.edu/donate/](http://www.govst.edu/donate/)

Income is a key requirement for the GSU Promise, and any student seeking to apply for the GSU Promise money also must apply for and receive federal Pell Grant assistance. The 50 students will be chosen from a pool of applicants, however no process for application has yet been established.

The cash incentive also might boost enrollment overall, Maimon said, because students will be required to fill out federal aid forms to be eligible for GSU Promise money. Navigating those forms can be so complicated and intimidating that some students simply don't bother, Maimon said.

Also next fall, GSU will transition to semesters from its trimester system. The move is designed to ease scheduling problems that can arise when a student transfers from a community college, Maimon said.

"We're very focused on creating that seamless pathway to a bachelor's or beyond," Maimon said.