University Considers Tuition, But Final Decision In Doubt

By GRIFFIN SMITH

Rice University has made “no official decision” on the subject of tuition, President K. S. Pitzer said Monday.

But the school, tuition-free since its opening in 1912, is becoming more and more hard-pressed for money, Dr. Pitzer said. Although the 1962-63 budget is in the red for the first time, he explained that the real problem was not in the current financial situation, but in the indications for the future.

“If we extrapolate our financial trends,” he said, “it’s not that the fit is too bad today, but that the slopes are bad.” Rice, like any university faced with similar difficulties, must consider “casting about for new sources of income,” Dr. Pitzer added.

HE DESCRIBED consideration of tuition as a “general line of hypothetical thinking” now being examined by the University.

Three problems are directly associated with Rice’s tuition-free status, he said. Without tuition, the school loses money from outside sources such as National Merit and the National Science Foundation scholarships—money which would be paid to cover tuition costs, but is now simply kept by the scholarship agency. Rice absorbs the loss.

A SECOND problem stemming from the absence of tuition, Dr. Pitzer said, is that such a situation “conveys the impression that we don’t need money.” He mentioned last year’s Time article as one factor that tended to reduce outside contributions.

Finally, the University has always met with little sympathy from various national foundations which have felt that if the school could afford not to charge tuition, it didn’t need their money.

ANY TUITION program would involve a “generous” scholarship program, Dr. Pitzer said, “probably more generous with regard to a given set of circumstances than Harvard’s would be.”

Also, tuition would not apply to any student currently enrolled in undergraduate work at the University.

He stressed that no decision on tuition had yet been made. The terms of the Rice charter prohibit the charging of tuition, and involved legal action would be required to change the charter.