2019/2020 TUITION CONSULTATION FAQ:

1. Why is tuition for international students increasing at a higher rate than for domestic students?

UBC’s international and domestic student tuition rates are benchmarked against peer institutions’ rates. Beyond that, there are multiple factors affecting the difference in tuition rates between domestic and international students at UBC:

- Domestic student tuition increases are mandated by the provincial government not to exceed 2% per year. In recent years that has not kept up with the financial investment required for UBC to continue to deliver excellence in teaching, lead globally in research, and support the university’s additional strategic goals, while also managing the annual inflationary pressures facing the institution.

- The provincial government provides an operating grant for UBC to support the delivery of education to domestic students. In addition to the operating grant, over the 100 years of UBC’s history, the university has received hundreds of millions of dollars in public funds for the development and maintenance of infrastructure on both UBC campuses. These contributions allow UBC to provide domestic tuition rates that are below the national average. International students, conversely, are not supported by a provincial grant and are, hence, assessed the cost of an unsubsidized UBC education.

2. How is UBC advocating to Provincial and Federal Governments around access and equity in post secondary education?

As a public university created by provincial legislation and funded in large part by the provincial government, the university executive and administrators are in continuous contact with the provincial government. Those discussions include the university’s teaching and research mandate, university policies, exchanging UBC and government priorities, UBC’s broader social and economic contributions, and how the university’s finances enable these.

The university regularly discusses matters of student aid, accessibility and affordability with the provincial government, and has long-advocated for measures that would make university education more accessible while also allowing UBC to achieve excellence in education and research and remain fiscally sustainable. In recent years, for example, the university and its partners in the BC post-secondary sector have sought increases to the provincial operating grant (which is what allows domestic tuition to remain at comparatively low levels), expanded seats in highly competitive programs, improvements to student loan programs, graduate and undergraduate scholarships, new research funding, Indigenous student supports, student health, student housing construction, and capital funding for academic buildings.

Nationally, UBC, with its post-secondary sector partners, also advocates for measures that make higher education more accessible and affordable, including improvements to student grant and loan programs, graduate and undergraduate scholarships, Indigenous post-secondary education funding, support for work-integrated learning, student mobility programs, and research funding, among others.
3. How will UBC communicate to students how funds from tuition increases are used and how these developments and improvements are expected to benefit students?

UBC provides tuition details with students as early as possible and consistent with policy 71 ([https://universitycounsel.ubc.ca/files/2015/12/policy71.pdf](https://universitycounsel.ubc.ca/files/2015/12/policy71.pdf)), and works closely with the elected student leadership (AMS, GSS, UBCSUO) on a wide variety of topics including how revenues are utilized, and the details of the UBC operating budget. Some uses of the revenue from increased tuition, include:

- Covering annual inflationary cost increases
- Modernizing several core, but aging, technology systems, including the Student Information System (SIS)
- Addressing gaps in the student financial aid budget to ensure that students with financial need are supported through bursaries
- Matching donors’ contributions to the Blue and Gold Campaign
- Expanding the Tuum Est and doctoral student awards
- Recruiting and retaining exemplary faculty
- Maintaining and improving the physical infrastructure including classroom upgrades

UBC commits to continue to work with the elected student leadership to ensure that students have visibility into, and a voice in, the allocation of funds derived from tuition increases.

Students can view the current UBC budget materials on the UBC Finance and Operations website: [https://vpfo.ubc.ca/financial-reporting/current-budget/](https://vpfo.ubc.ca/financial-reporting/current-budget/)

In addition, Board of Governors budget discussions are webcast: [https://bog.ubc.ca/?page_id=14477](https://bog.ubc.ca/?page_id=14477)

4. Does UBC intend to increase tuition (by inflation or other amounts) every year?

To maintain existing services, modernize future service delivery for the UBC community, deliver against UBC’s strategic goals, and account for inflationary pressures on the university’s operating budget, annual tuition increases are likely needed.

5. What is UBC’s commitment to understanding and addressing issues of affordability for students?

UBC recognizes the issue of affordability for students, and actively works to address the issue:

- UBC administers a large student financial support program. In 2017/18 almost 28,000 students received financial assistance totalling almost $300M. $87M of that was delivered through the university operating fund.
- This year, UBC launched the Blue & Gold campaign, the largest fundraising campaign ever launched for students. Students can view the 2017/2018 Student Financial Support Annual Report here: [https://bog3.sites.olt.ubc.ca/files/2018/05/2_2018.06_Student-Financial-Support.pdf](https://bog3.sites.olt.ubc.ca/files/2018/05/2_2018.06_Student-Financial-Support.pdf)
• UBC is currently working to implement a Government Business Enterprise for Student Housing. This initiative would allow UBC to increase the number of student residences available on both campuses, as well as help to manage the costs of student housing going forward. Under the current student housing operating model, housing for students is below Vancouver rental marketplace rents (CMHC data) and in the middle of the range relative to peer institutions across Canada.

• As mentioned above, UBC engages with the provincial and federal governments to discuss the importance of ensuring that post-secondary education is accessible and affordable.

6. How will UBC improve the consultation process?

The University of British Columbia is committed to consulting with students about tuition and mandatory fees in a transparent and holistic manner. A broadcast email was sent to all students informing them of the consultation process, providing relevant information and urging them to provide feedback. This year, there were 7,770 page visits to the consultation materials, which led to UBC receiving 1,357 individual responses. These verbatim responses/feedback were shared with the UBC Board of Governors in advance of the vote on the tuition increase. This FAQ seeks to address the most commonly asked questions.

UBC strives to strengthen communications and engagement infrastructure for students to ensure that all students have the chance to be engaged in the consultation process. The university will continue to work with the elected student leadership on planning how new revenues from tuition are used.