

<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>NON-REFUNDABLE ACCEPTANCE DEPOSIT</b>
<b>MEETING DATE</b>	<b>DECEMBER 5, 2017</b>

Forwarded to the Board of Governors on the Recommendation of the President

**APPROVED FOR SUBMISSION**



Santa J. Ono, President and Vice-Chancellor

**FOR INFORMATION**

<b>Report Date</b>	October 11, 2017
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**Presented By** Andrew Szeri, Provost and Vice-President Academic  
 Catherine Dauvergne, Dean, Peter A. Allard School of Law

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Peter A. Allard School of Law J.D. program proposes to increase the current \$300 and \$500 non-refundable acceptance deposits for domestic and international students, respectively, to \$600 and \$1,000 for domestic and international students, respectively.

The deposits are required of students who accept an offer of admission to the J.D. program. The increases to these non-refundable acceptance deposits would be effective for the September 2018 intake. The acceptance deposits will be payable within 30 days of notification of an offer of admission to the program, and will be credited towards the first tuition instalment. If the student does not commence the program, after accepting the offer of admission, the deposit would not be refunded.

**INSTITUTIONAL STRATEGIC PRIORITIES SUPPORTED**

- Learning
  Research
  Innovation
  Engagement
  International
- (Internal / External)
- or  Operational

**DESCRIPTION & RATIONALE** Please refer to the attached memorandum approved by the President: Non-refundable Acceptance Deposit for the Juris Doctor (J.D.) Program.

**BENEFITS** The intent is to encourage applicants with offers of admission from other universities to make their decisions with respect to their choice of program in a timely manner. Such decisions will permit the Peter A. Allard School of Law to make offers to waitlisted students if and when spaces become available. Currently about one half of Canadian law schools require a minimum \$500 non-refundable deposit.

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<b>RISKS</b> Financial, Operational & Reputational	The Peter A. Allard School of Law does not foresee any hardship resulting from this deposit requirement. Potential students, typically early career professionals, are merely being asked to pay part of the first tuition instalment a few months before the commencement of the program. The deposit is then applied towards the student's first-year tuition installment.
<b>COSTS</b> Capital & Lifecycle Operating	N/A
<b>FINANCIAL</b> Funding Sources, Impact on Liquidity	N/A
<b>SCHEDULE</b> Implementation Timeline	Non-refundable acceptance deposits for the J.D. Program will be effective for incoming students commencing study in the 2018/19 academic year.
<b>CONSULTATION</b> Relevant Units, Internal & External Constituencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Peter A. Allard School of Law</li><li>• Allard Law Student Society</li><li>• Student Admission and Progression Committee</li></ul> <p>A consultation was undertaken with J.D. students and the AMS, by the VP Students Office, between September 6, 2017 and October 6, 2017. The report of the consultation is attached.</p>

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THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



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MEMORANDUM

TO: Dr. Santa J. Ono, President and Vice-Chancellor   
FROM: Professor Andrew Szeri, Provost and Vice-President Academic   
DATE: October 11, 2017  
RE: **Non-refundable Acceptance Deposit for the Juris Doctor (J.D.) Program**

It is hereby requested that the President approve an increase to the non-refundable acceptance deposit for domestic and international students applying to the Peter A. Allard School of Law Juris Doctor (J.D.) Program. The non-refundable deposit would be levied when a student (domestic or international) accepts an offer of admission and would be applied toward the student's first tuition instalment, effective for the academic year 2018/19.

**BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE**

The Peter A. Allard School of Law J.D. program proposes to increase the current \$300 domestic and \$500 international non-refundable acceptance deposits to \$600 for domestic students and \$1,000 for international students. The deposits are to be applied to the first instalment payment for tuition. The increase would be effective for the September 2018 intake. Students who accept an offer of admission and then fail to register will forfeit the deposit.

The J.D. program is a 3-year full-time professional program. In comparison, the Doctor of Medicine (M.D.) program requires a \$1,000 non-refundable acceptance deposit and the Doctor of Dental Medicine (D.M.D.) program requires a \$11,475 non-refundable acceptance deposit.

The non-refundable deposits required for undergraduate degree programs is currently \$500 for domestic students and \$1,000 for international students.

Each year applicants pay deposits to multiple law schools across North America. The holding of multiple offers of admission places hardship on those applicants who may be "waitlisted" for admission to our J.D. program. Often-times, the final decisions of these "overlapped" applicants may not be known or cleared until days prior to UBC's program orientation. This behaviour reduces the opportunity for a person on UBC's J.D. program waitlist because their offer arrives too late in their decision making process. It is anticipated that a non-refundable admission deposit will minimize the overlap without placing undue hardship on applicants.

Currently, about one half of the law schools in Canada require a minimum \$500 non-refundable deposit.

The intent is to encourage applicants to make their decisions with respect to choice of program in a timely manner. Such timely decisions would permit the Peter A. Allard School of Law to make offers to waitlisted students if and when space becomes available.

A consultation was undertaken with J.D. students and the AMS, by the VP Students Office, between September 6, 2017 and October 6, 2017. The report of the consultation is attached.

**Schedule of Implementation:**

Academic Year 2018/19.

<p><b>JURIS DOCTOR PROGRAM</b></p> <p><b>STUDENT NON-REFUNDABLE ACCEPTANCE DEPOSIT CONSULTATION REPORT</b></p>
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The Vice-President, Students Office, in partnership with the Peter A. Allard School of Law, conducted a student consultation regarding a proposed increase to the tuition deposit for the JD Program. This report outlines the consultation process and summarizes students' feedback, including the student representatives' submission verbatim in Appendix 2.

**Student Representative Bodies Invited to the Consultation**

- Alma Mater Society (AMS)
- Allard Law Students' Society (ALSS)

**Mode of Consultation**

The consultation consisted of an e-consultation and a face-to-face meeting. Student representative groups were invited to the consultation through email, and asked to distribute the invitation to their constituents as they felt appropriate. Student representative groups were also offered a face-to-face meeting to discuss the proposal. A meeting with student representatives and faculty representatives was not requested.

**Basis of Consultation:** The consultation was based on a non-refundable acceptance deposit proposal and rationale document created by the Peter A. Allard School of Law. Please see Appendix 1 for the invitation and rationale document.

**Timelines:** The e-consultation was conducted over the period of September 6<sup>th</sup>, 2017 to October 6<sup>th</sup>, 2017.

**Summary of Student Feedback:** A submission was received jointly from the AMS and ALSS. The verbatim submission is in Appendix 2. Additional comments were received from three students in the Peter A. Allard School of Law.

Organization	Summary
AMS and ALSS student comments	<p><b>EXCEPTIONS FOR FINANCIAL DIFFICULTY</b>            "Without flexibility to make exceptions for students of lower financial means, we are concerned that this increase could mean a student will either go to another law school with a lower deposit, put themselves in a precarious financial position, or will choose not to attend Allard at all."</p> <p><b>TIMELY OFFERS TO WAITLISTED STUDENTS</b>            "Increasing the deposit will encourage applicants to make timely decisions and allow Allard Law to make offers to waitlisted students when space is available."</p>
General student comments	<p><b>STUDENT DIVERSITY</b>            "The legal profession is in dire need of a diversified community. One way of ensuring a diverse community is keeping costs low."             "... I fear it will disproportionately affect low income students who already face substantial barriers in attending law school."</p> <p><b>EXCEPTIONS FOR FINANCIAL DIFFICULTY</b>            "I ask that students who are low income should have their fee waived or moved until September, to allow more time for funds."</p>

## APPENDIX 1: INVITATION TO CONSULTATION AND FEE CHANGE RATIONALE DOCUMENT

Good afternoon,

There is a submission by the Faculty of Law to change the admissions fee for the JD program.

In order to inform the program leads and the Board of Governors with regards to the **fee change proposal** for this program, the University is undertaking a consultative process to get your comments as student representatives, and provide an opportunity for students to provide individual comments on the tuition proposal if they wish. **Please note: the scope of this consultation process is limited to the fee change proposal.**

The consultation will consist of:

### 1. e-consultation

Please find attached a document which outline the details of the fee change proposal, including:

- an overview of the program,
- the rationale for fee change and
- the proposed fee change.

Please share the document and this email as you see appropriate. **Comments on the fee change proposal and student submissions can be provided confidentially to: [jenna.omassi@ubc.ca](mailto:jenna.omassi@ubc.ca) (Jenna Omassi, Advisor, Vice President Students Office).**

### 2. Face to Face meeting

If requested by student representatives, we can arrange a face-to-face meeting with the program leads regarding this tuition proposal. Please advise as soon as possible if you would like us to arrange a meeting.

**THE CONSULTATION PROCESS WILL END ON OCTOBER 6, 2017.**

### Confidentiality

Comments will be collected by the Vice-President Students Office, and only staff within that office will know the identity of individual students submitting comments. At no time will anyone outside of the Vice President Students Office know the identity of individual students who submit comments to this consultation. Your comments will only be used for the purposes of the tuition consultation.

Comments from individual students will be stripped of any identifying information to ensure confidentiality, but otherwise will be provided to the responsible program leads and Board of Governors verbatim.

Comments received from student organizations will be reported as coming from those organizations, and provided to the responsible faculty and Board of Governors as received. There will also be a summary report of the consultation developed for the Faculty and Board of Governors.

Please let me know if you have any questions about the process.

Thank you.

Jenna Omassi  
Advisor, Strategic Support Team  
Vice-President Students' Office  
University of British Columbia  
[jenna.omassi@ubc.ca](mailto:jenna.omassi@ubc.ca)

## CHANGE OF ADMISSIONS FEE CONSULTATION

### JD PROGRAM

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#### **Description:**

The Peter A. Allard School of Law J.D. degree is a 3 year full time professional program. The Juris Doctor (JD) program requires a student to acquire a minimum of 92 credits in three Winter Sessions in the Allard School of Law. First year consists of compulsory courses totaling 32 credits. In the upper two years of the program, students must complete a minimum of 60 upper year Law credits chosen from mandatory and optional courses. The second and third years (or upper years) consist of two Winter Sessions in each of which a minimum of 30 and a maximum of 34 credits shall be taken. Each session consists of two consecutive terms in each of which a minimum of 12 and a maximum of 18 credits shall be taken. With the permission of the Admissions Committee (on entry) or the Assistant Dean, Students (once admitted), a student may complete the Juris Doctor on a part-time basis, enrolling in a minimum of 6 credits per Winter session term. In the upper years, students must take four compulsory courses.

#### **Proposed Fee Change:**

The J.D. program proposes to increase the current \$300.00 domestic and \$500.00 international non-refundable tuition deposits to \$600.00 domestic and \$1,000.00 international non-refundable tuition deposits. The deposits are applied to tuition fees for students who enter the J.D. program. The scheduled implementation would be February of 2018 (date when deposits are first required to secure an offer to Allard Law) for entrance in September of 2018. This proposal would be a one-time increase. The non-refundable deposit has not experienced an increase in over 10 years.

#### **Fee Rationale:**

Currently the professional program of Medicine requires a \$1,000.00 non-refundable deposit and Dentistry requires an \$11,475.00 non-refundable deposit. The non-refundable deposit required by UBC Enrolment Services for undergraduate degrees is currently \$500.00 domestic and \$1,000.00 international.

The increased deposit will put our faculty more in line with Enrolment Services undergraduate non-refundable deposits while still being considerably less than the Faculty of Medicine.

Each year applicants pay deposits to multiple law schools across North America. By holding multiple places it places hardship on those applicants on our wait list who wish to attend our program. Often-times final decisions by these overlapped applicants may not be known or cleared until days prior to Orientation. This in turn decreases the opportunity for someone who needed or wanted to attend Allard Law as the offer arrived too late in the process. We hope to decrease this overlap by increasing the current non-refundable deposit without placing undue hardship on the applicants.

Currently almost half of the law schools across Canada require a minimum \$500.00 non-refundable deposit.

The intent of the fee change is to encourage applicants to make a decision in a timely manner. Such timely decisions permit Allard Law to make offers to waitlisted students if and when space becomes available.

## APPENDIX 2: STUDENT SUBMISSIONS

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There was a submission from the AMS.



Student Society  
of UBC Vancouver



ALLARD LAW  
STUDENTS' SOCIETY

### Submission to the UBC Board of Governors Regarding the Change of Admissions Fees for the Juris Doctorate Program October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2017

Dear Board of Governors,

This submission is being made on behalf of the Alma Mater Society (AMS) of UBC Vancouver and the Allard Law Students' Society in response to the request for feedback from the Vice President Students Office sent on September 6<sup>th</sup>, 2017 on the change of Admission Fees for the Juris Doctorate Program.

The proposed change would increase the current \$300.00 domestic and \$500.00 international non-refundable tuition deposits to \$600.00 domestic and \$1,000.00 international tuition deposits. This change does not increase tuition and, for perspective, is in line with the current non-refundable deposit required by UBC for undergraduate degrees of \$500.00 domestic and \$1,000.00 international.

Allard Law Admissions has assured us that exceptions are granted for students who are having financial difficulty when paying the initial deposit. We hope that these assurances can be formalized in writing. Without flexibility to make exceptions for students of lower financial means, we are concerned that this increase could mean a student will either go to another law school with a lower deposit, put themselves in a precarious financial position, or will choose not to attend Allard at all.

Increasing the deposit will encourage applicants to make timely decisions and allow Allard Law to make offers to waitlisted students when space is available. This change will allow students who have to stay on the waitlist too long see a spot open up for them in Allard Law. The AMS and ALSS support this change in the hope that it will allow Allard Law to make more timely offers to waitlisted students.

Although the ALSS and AMS support the current changes, we would like to reiterate that any future increases in the deposit or tuition will disproportionately affect applicants from historically underrepresented socioeconomic backgrounds, and will have the effect of discouraging applications broadly. Any future increase would be against Allard Law's Strategic plan which states the need to "promote legal education as an achievable and appealing goal for a diverse range of students, particularly, students from historically underrepresented socioeconomic groups including Indigenous communities."

The AMS and ALSS support the changes in their current form and are grateful to the University and Allard Law School for including student input in this process.

Sincerely,

**Max Holmes**  
Vice President Academic and University Affairs  
AMS Student Society of UBC Vancouver  
vpacademic@ams.ubc.ca

**Alexandra J. Scott**  
President  
Allard Law Students' Society  
president@allardlss.com

There were comments from three students provided verbatim.

**Submission A:**

I am an Indigenous law student and would like to give my input on the proposed admission fee increase. I can't speak for all Indigenous law students, but the admission fee was an issue for me. I was still in my undergrad where I was barely making it when I applied to Allard. I was extremely excited to have an offer to law school, but I had no idea how I was going to pay the \$300. I grew up in poverty. Neither of my parents had any money to lend me to accept my offer. I thought I was going to miss the deadline, and it ended up being the chef at the restaurant I worked at that lent me the money to accept my offer. It was a stressful time.

While I understand the increase at Allard is in line with undergrad admission fees etc., I ask that lower income families and people who are faced with barriers are considered. I ask that students who are low income should have their fee waived or moved until September, to allow more time for funds. I think this would allow people of low economic status to have a chance.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

**Submission B:**

No way should Allard increase its tuition deposit. Doing so will only harm those who are financially vulnerable. I don't see why the law school should care whether it's on par in terms of a deposit with Medicine/UBC/other law schools. We'd be better off spending that energy looking at if there are any pedagogical or substantive lessons they can offer. The comparison on the grounds of a deposit is not fruitful.

The legal profession is in dire need of a diversified community. One way of ensuring a diverse community is keeping costs low. For every applicant who makes multiple deposits at multiple schools (according to the rationale), there's an applicant who can barely scrounge together the deposit for one. Increasing Allard's deposit would be a step backwards: we need to make legal education more accessible, not less.

Scholarships, bursaries, student loans, and bank loans are not guaranteed at the time of acceptance. Those who are in financially precarious situations may not be able to pay the deposit and then \*hope\* they get a bursary.

There's no financial argument for this, either. Allard accepted some 200 1Ls this year. They obviously didn't have a problem getting students to pay the deposit.

The rationale is to prevent undue hardship on potentially overlapped students. But this move wouldn't alleviate any pressure; it would just shift that pressure to students who desperately want to go to law school but can't afford to pay a deposit. And as much as there are students who wouldn't be able to afford an increased deposit, there are also students at Allard for whom an increased deposit wouldn't matter at all. There's no guarantee that a higher deposit would actually result in fewer overlaps.

This proposal would set the legal education community and legal profession back in their generations-long efforts to diversify the student body and community of lawyers. It will harm those who can barely afford the deposit as is, and that just doesn't make sense.

## Submission C:

I am a mature student at Allard [...]. Throughout my whole application process and now starting at UBC, I am constantly reminded of how inaccessible law school is. Of course the biggest barrier is cost: paying for the LSAT, maybe LSAT prep courses or materials, application fees, deposits, textbooks, laptop, maybe moving costs, new clothes for formal events, and of course tuition and student fees. Many of these costs are assumed before student loans come through, meaning they have to be paid out of pocket. For applicants without a lot of cash, the \$300 deposit could create financial difficulties not relieved until student loans or other kinds of funding come in. For a student who is accepted early, the time difference between paying the deposit and starting school could be as much as 8 months. On top of this, scholarships and bursaries aren't disbursed until well into the school year.

Law schools across Canada already favour people from a better financial background: people who didn't have to work through their undergrads and could focus on getting good grades, people with the time to study for the LSAT (ie can afford to take time off work or hire babysitters), people who can afford application fees and LSAT fees, and people with the means to bridge the gap between student loans and unmet need. UBC has been a leader amongst law schools in Canada by keeping tuition and fees relatively low.

It is probably clear by now that I have deep misgivings about the proposed fee increase because I fear it will disproportionately affect low income students who already face substantial barriers in attending law school.

I have a number of other comments which I will present as succinctly as possible:

- I worry that people who can afford multiple deposits just to abandon them can probably also afford the extra \$300. Are we certain that increasing the fee will actually affect the intended students?
- How serious is this issue? How many people pay multiple deposits and abandon them each year? I worry that increasing this fee to target a small number of people would negatively affect the entire incoming class (ie deter less than 10 people but charging 190 "innocent" people is disproportionate)
- Allard's low deposit is a benefit and feature that Allard should be proud of. The fact that other places have it higher is not a good thing. They should be lowering their fees to not unduly penalize low-income applicants.
- The info sheet mentions that half of law schools in Canada have deposits above \$500. This also means that half of schools have fees *below* \$500. Thus, there is no indication of a consensus to have fees as high as are being proposed.
- How do we know students are "double dipping"? Some people may be dropping for legitimate and sympathetic reasons. I would not want to unduly penalize these students simply because they are indistinguishable from the "offending" students.

As for alternatives, with the limited time and information I was not able to come up with more than one solution, which I am aware is not necessarily an easy one: share the names of students who have paid deposits with other law schools at a set point in time (ie after adjudication of discretionary applicants). Students who have paid more than one deposit will only have their most recently paid deposit honoured.

I am aware this would require consent to share personal information, but UBC already gets consent from students to share information with the AMS upon application, so it is possible this would be relatively easy. Getting consent from the other schools to participate in this scheme may be more difficult; although, if they are also experiencing this problem maybe they would be amiable to cooperation.

However, I would not want a "difficult" solution to be dismissed simply on these grounds. I believe that if Allard has identified a problem, it is their responsibility to assume the burden of fixing it in a manner that affects as few students as possible. In other words, Allard needs to use its ample resources and human talent

to craft a solution that *only* targets the students in question as much as possible. Increasing the deposit seems impulsive and reactionary, and not well thought out.

I would also implore you, if this has not been done already, inquire as to how other schools have addressed this problem. I am concerned other schools with the higher fee have this problem regardless of the increase fee, but am hopeful that maybe one of them has already figured out something clever.

Thank you for taking the time to read this and for giving us the opportunity to submit feedback.