



SUBJECT	Non-Refundable Registration Deposit - Elimination
SUBMITTED TO	Finance Committee
MEETING DATE	April 7, 2021
SESSION CLASSIFICATION	Recommended session criteria from Board Meetings Policy: OPEN
REQUEST	Action requested - Approval IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED that the Finance Committee, in accordance with authority delegated by the Board of Governors, approves the elimination of the \$100 non-refundable registration deposit for all continuing students at both campuses.
LEAD EXECUTIVE	Andrew Szeri, Provost and Vice-President Academic, UBC Vancouver
SUPPORTED BY	Peter Smailes, Vice-President Finance & Operations Ananya Mukherjee Reed, Provost and Vice-President Academic, UBC Okanagan

PRIOR SUBMISSIONS

The subject matter of this submission has not previously been considered by the Finance Committee.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Enrolment Services recommends that the \$100 non-refundable registration deposit for all continuing students be eliminated effective June 1, 2021.

Background Information and Rationale

The \$100 non-refundable registration deposit (formerly known as TeleReg deposit) was introduced over 30 years ago to help mitigate challenges resulting from students who registered for courses but never attended. It was introduced as a deterrent.

All continuing undergraduate students (international and domestic) on the UBC Vancouver and Okanagan campuses currently pay the deposit before they are permitted to register in credit-based courses. Failure to make payment blocks access to all course registration functionality in the Student Service Centre. Students forfeit the registration deposit if they subsequently drop their courses, or if they are not able to enrol in courses for which they have been waitlisted. The deposit is applied towards the total tuition owing if students continue their registration in their courses and do not withdraw.

It is proposed that the administration eliminate the \$100 non-refundable registration deposit, which will better align with peer institutions' practices, and improve access, equity and fairness for students by not blocking them from course registration for financial reasons alone. The University of Victoria and SFU, as well as several local colleges do not use a registration deposit system.

Elimination of the deposit would remove a financial barrier for UBC's students who are unable to make this deposit or who are awaiting funding (e.g., sponsorship funding).

Financial Impact

UBC currently collects approximately \$300,000 each year through forfeited registration deposits from students on both campuses. In 2018-2019, 2,993 students (410 UBCO & 2583 UBCV) paid their registration deposits and then forfeited the amount when their registration was not completed or they dropped all their courses.

Enrolment Service advising staff on both campuses spend hours each registration period explaining to students how the non-refundable deposit works, and why they are not eligible for refunds. When this occurs, students can express frustration that they were not able to register in courses that they needed or dropped all their courses in advance of the drop deadline, and yet were required to forfeit the \$100 deposit.

The financial impact to the university will be forgoing annually \$300,000 in general operating revenue.

Schedule

A high-level review conducted by UBC IT confirmed that it is possible to change the registration deposit from \$100 to \$0 to support the change, if approved by the Board of Governors. The anticipated timeline to make the necessary IT changes is May 2021, in time for the Winter 2021/22 session registration period to open, as scheduled, in June 2021.

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS (optional reading for Governors)

1. <https://bog.ubc.ca/files/2015/03/MIN-BG-1989.01.pdf>
2. [http://www.library.ubc.ca/archives/pdfs/senate/UBC Senate Minutes 1989 05 17.pdf](http://www.library.ubc.ca/archives/pdfs/senate/UBC%20Senate%20Minutes%201989%2005%2017.pdf) (pgs. 9539-9540)