



Submission to the UBC Board of Governors Regarding the FY21-22 Allocation of Incremental Tuition Revenue to Student-Facing Priorities

June 3rd, 2021

Dear Board of Governors,

This submission is being made on behalf of the Alma Mater Society (AMS) of UBC Vancouver in regards to the FY21-22 Allocation of Incremental Tuition Revenue to Student-Facing Priorities (hereafter “the Allocation”). We appreciate the VP Finance and VP Students informing us of the current proposal for the Incremental Tuition Revenue and support the University’s commitments of allocating the incremental revenue towards student-directed priorities. Below, we propose three changes that will better address the challenges facing our students.

Need-based bursary instead of merit-based scholarship for international students.

The International Scholars Program (ISP) is a merit-based scholarship for incoming international students who demonstrate superior academic excellence. Allocating the incremental tuition revenue towards the recruitment of new students is not the best way to address the affordability challenges that are faced by current international students, who are most impacted by the tuition increases. The AMS proposes that half of the ISP funding (\$1.95 million) be allocated to need-based bursaries for international students, to put money towards supporting currently enrolled international students as well.

\$1 million of the contingency fund into the expansion of lecture capture technology.

In the proposed allocation, there is a contingency fund of \$2 million that is “reserved to be responsive to COVID-19 to support and meet student needs”. We propose that \$1 million (or however much of an increased allocation possible) be re-directed towards Lecture Capture technology. Given that there is already a COVID-19 contingency fund of \$7.3 million, it is not justified to further reserve an additional \$2 million from the incremental tuition that the University has committed to student-directed priorities. As pointed out at the April 19th Board of Governors meeting, part of the \$7.3 million contingency for the Vancouver campus will be required for non-student-facing items, because potentially another lockdown would cost us a lot with rapid testing, and other costs associated. With the recent BC public health orders, the possibility of having to use substantial emergency funding for non-student facing concerns, such as a potential lockdown, is unlikely. And, if we face a turn of events, a total of \$7.3 million (Vancouver Campus COVID-19 contingency) + \$1 million (proposed change to Allocation contingency) will suffice.



There are a myriad of advantages that lecture capture technology provides in terms of accommodations and accessibility. Thus, the AMS proposes to re-distribute \$1 million (or however much of an increased allocation possible) of the \$2 million contingency to Lecture Capture technology, the thorough expansion of which has been long called for by students, and will significantly improve students' learning experience during and post pandemic.

More funding to UBC Meal Share.

We fully support the University's commitment to improving students' food security. As revealed by the Academic Experience Survey (AES) results, 1 in 3 students are concerned about running out of money to buy food this year. However, the incremental tuition should be prioritized towards putting money directly into students' pockets for food, rather than making a one-time allocation towards research-oriented initiatives such as the Community Food Hub. Therefore, the AMS proposes to re-allocate \$100,000 from the Community Food Hub to UBC Meal Share, which addresses immediate food insecurity concerns by providing a \$100 relief for students to purchase food at eligible outlets on the UBC Vancouver campus. The re-allocated \$100,000 will turn into meals for 1000 students in need.

Please refer to Appendix for the proposed changes above.

Currently, students are distrustful towards the administration when it comes to tuition. According to the 2021 AES results, 72% of students believe that the university has not been transparent about what their tuition is going towards. We believe that this is an opportunity for all of us to start rebuilding that trust. We deeply appreciate the UBC Board of Governors' commitment to earnestly taking into consideration our recommendations as representatives of all 56,000+ UBC students. We look forward to working with the Board of Governors and the UBC Leadership to make education affordable and accessible to all students.

Sincerely,

Eshana Bhangu
Vice President, Academic and University Affairs
Alma Mater Society

Cole Evans
President
Alma Mater Society

Appendix. STUDENT DIRECTED PRIORITIES - UBCV		Proposed Allocation
Student Financial Aid		
Centennial Scholars Program		\$1,000,000
International Scholars Program		\$1,950,000
Technology Bursary		\$500,000
Student Self-Isolation Bursary		\$1,000,000
Emergency & General Bursaries (Undergraduate & Graduate; Domestic & International)		\$700,000
Need-based bursaries for international students		\$1,950,000
Subtotal		\$7,100,000
Cost of Living		
Housing Bursary		\$1,000,000
Bookstore Bursary (10% discount to students on course materials and supplies)		\$912,000
Food Security		
UBC Meal Share		\$480,000
AMS Food Bank		\$65,000
Community Food Hub		\$50,000
Graduate Life Centre Food Hub		\$150,000
New Affordable food outlet in IRC		\$100,000
Food		\$100,000
Support for Agora & Sprouts		\$55,000
Subtotal		\$2,912,000
Delivery of Hybrid Teaching & Student Programs and Services		
Support for student experience, space, programs/services, hybrid teaching/learning		
Delivery of student programs and services (eg. Student Ambassador Program WT1 & WT2, Student Study Spaces, Event Spaces, covid safety)		\$1,029,500
WorkLearn Program additional funding for increased experiential learning opportunities		\$450,000
Learning Space Upgrades to Support Hybrid Teaching - Lecture Capture		\$1,502,500*
Delivery of Hybrid Teaching (e.g. Extension of ACR Tech over student positions, Departmental additional TA training, Academic Essentials refresh, term LTHub support positions, Students as Partners Pilot Program, enhancement of Wi-Fi infrastructure)		\$1,206,000
Contingency (% of budget reserved to be responsive to COVID-19 to support and meet student needs)		\$1,000,000*
Subtotal		\$5,188,000
Total		\$15,200,000

*Note: re-allocate \$1 million or however much of an amount that the Board sees feasible towards the expansion of Lecture Capture technology.