



SUBJECT	Tuition Bachelor of Arts in Urban Studies
SUBMITTED TO	Finance Committee
MEETING DATE	March 22, 2022
SESSION CLASSIFICATION	Recommended session criteria from Board Meetings Policy: OPEN
REQUEST	REQUESTED – APPROVAL IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED that the Finance Committee, in accordance with authority delegated by the Board of Governors, approves tuition of \$187.23 per credit for domestic students and \$1,371.88 per credit for international students for the Bachelor of Arts in Urban Studies program, in alignment with other Faculty of Arts programs for 2021-2022, subject to increases as approved by the Board of Governors.
LEAD EXECUTIVE	Andrew Szeri, Provost and Vice-President Academic, UBC Vancouver
SUPPORTED BY	Simon Bates, Associate Provost Teaching & Learning

PRIOR SUBMISSIONS

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

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The School of Community and Regional Planning (SCARP) in the Faculty of Applied Science and the Department of Geography in the Faculty of Arts are proposing a new joint Bachelor of Arts Major in Urban Studies. This partnership enables a more robust integration of conceptual and applied training than either could accomplish on its own.

Pending approval from the Board of Governors and the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training, the program will admit its first cohort of students in September 2023. The program was approved by the UBC-Vancouver Senate in February 2022.

In the 2021-2022 academic year, tuition fees per credit for the program (consistent with other Faculty of Arts programs) are \$187.23 per credit for domestic students and \$1,371.88 per credit for international students. These fees are subject to increases as approved by the Board to remain consistent with tuition rates for the Bachelor of Arts leading up to the program’s launch in September 2023. The Faculty of Arts will be the faculty home and no new seats are required to support the program.

Initially, the program will put in place a cap of 50 students and entry will be application based, with potential for growth in subsequent years. The intention and resource capacity of the program necessitates that it remains a relatively small Major in order to support a tight and well-trained community of peers among students.

The Office of the Vice-President Students conducted a student consultation regarding the tuition proposal (as per Policy LR4). The e-consultation was conducted from October 22, 2021 to November 22, 2021. The AMS submitted a letter in support of the program noting that *“the program enables UBC to offer a form of educational training that uniquely prepares students to address the most complex challenges faced by British Columbia’s cities, such as climate change and incorporation of the land rights of indigenous peoples”*.

Over the next century, the world’s net population growth will take place in urban regions, and nearly every aspect of economic, social, political, technological, and environmental change is now urbanized. The challenges and opportunities of the world are framed by urban problems and possibilities, and debates about urban futures have

heightened during the latest global health pandemic. Cities are at the forefront of climate action; urban policy is seen by global and local governments as a catalyst for transition to a sustainable and just society and the relevant data and technologies are leaping forward. Now more than ever we need people who are deeply trained to understand and shape urbanization from the public, private, and civic sectors. The program will graduate students prepared to shape cities by critically integrating a strong set of technical skills with broad understanding of complex societal challenges. It offers clear tracks into non-profit, public, and private sector careers and positions students as strong applicants for a wide array of graduate studies with and urban focus across the social, environmental, and physical sciences.

Key elements of this specialization that are in alignment with UBC’s strategic plan include:

- *Strategy 3: People and Places >[Thriving Communities](#) >* The program connects students to local and extra-local communities in the process of learning how positive and beneficial urban environments take shape and can be encouraged.
- *Strategy 6: Research Excellence > [Collaborative Clusters](#) >* The program is built on a collaboration across two faculties and the urban lens is a wide container for a variety of intellectual pursuits, opening opportunities for partnerships with units across the University.
- *Strategy 13: Transformative Learning > [Practical Learning](#) >* The program integrates community engagement and applied professional experience throughout the degree program.
- *Strategy 16: Local and Global Engagement > [Public Relevance](#) >* Urban Studies faculty / students will regularly engage local challenges, ranging from climate justice to economic development.

Building on a longstanding commitment to incorporating Indigenous knowledge, perspectives, ways of knowing, and experiences into the offerings at SCARP and Geography, the program will address the following goals and actions in UBC’s Indigenous Strategic Plan:

- *Goal 4> [Indigenizing our curriculum](#)>* The program includes a required “Indigenous Urban Life” focus area and further content on Indigenous populations.
- *Goal 6> [Recruiting Indigenous people](#)>* In addition to existing courses taught by Indigenous scholars, the program will at a minimum require competence in teaching Indigenous content and working with Indigenous students within any new hires.
- *Goal 8> [Creating a holistic system of support](#)>* The program has a possibility to support transition for Indigenous students from undergraduate to graduate studies through close relation with SCARP’s Indigenous Community Planning Master.

APPENDICES

1. Tuition and Fee Assessment Details
2. Student Tuition Consultation Report

Tuition and Fee Assessment Details

Program Description: Bachelor of Arts in Urban Studies

Anticipated Start Date: September 2023

	Domestic	International
Tuition fees per credit – Note 1	\$187.23	\$1,371.88
Application fees (undergraduate) – Note 2	\$73.00	\$123.00
Non-refundable acceptance deposit – Note 3	\$500.00	\$1000.00
Other faculty and course fees	N/A	N/A

Note 1 – Proposed tuition reflects approved 2021/22 tuition for the Bachelor of Arts program and will be subject to increases as approved by the Board to remain consistent with the Bachelor of Arts program leading up to the program’s launch.

Note 2 – This is the current fee for the 2022W application cycle and is subject to increases as approved by the Board.

Note 3 – The non-refundable acceptance deposit will be applied towards the first tuition instalment.

BACHELOR OF ARTS – MAJOR IN URBAN STUDIES

STUDENT TUITION CONSULTATION REPORT

The Vice-President, Students Office, in partnership with the Faculties of Arts and Applied Science, conducted a student consultation regarding the tuition proposal for the Bachelor of Arts – Major in Urban Studies. This report outlines the consultation process and summarizes student feedback including the student representatives' submission verbatim in Appendix 2.

Student Representative Bodies Invited to the Consultation

- Alma Mater Society (AMS)
- Arts Undergraduate Society (AUS)

Mode of Consultation

The consultation consisted of an e-consultation. 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/zoom meeting to discuss the tuition proposal. A meeting was not requested by student representatives.

Basis of Consultation: The consultation was based on a tuition proposal and rationale document created by the Faculty. Please see Appendix 1 for the invitation and tuition rationale document.

Timelines: The e-consultation was conducted over the period of Friday, October 22nd, 2021 to Monday November 22, 2021.

Summary of Student Feedback: Submissions were received from the AMS, no submission was received from the AUS. The verbatim submissions are in Appendix 2.

No individual student submissions were received.

APPENDIX 1: INVITATION TO CONSULTATION AND TUITION RATIONALE DOCUMENT

Hello everyone,

There is a proposal by the Department of Geography in the Faculty of Arts and the School of Community and Regional Planning in the Faculty of Applied Science to create a new joint **BA in Urban Studies** program.

In order to inform the program leads and the Board of Governors with regards to the **tuition 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 tuition proposal.**

The consultation will consist of:

1. e-consultation

Please find attached a document which outlines the details of the tuition proposal, including:

- an overview of the program,
- the student consultation that has happened to date,
- the tuition rationale for the program, and
- the proposed tuition.

Please share the document and this email as you see appropriate. **Comments and student organization submissions on the tuition proposal can be provided to Tlell Elviss – Senior Program Strategist, Vice President Students Office (tlell.elviss@ubc.ca).**

2. Face to Face/Zoom meeting

If requested by student representatives, we can arrange a face-to-face/Zoom 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 MONDAY, NOVEMBER 22ND, 2021 AT MIDNIGHT.

Confidentiality

- Comments will be collected by the Vice-President Students Office, and only analysts 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,

Tlell

Tlell Elviss BSc | MA (She, Her, Hers)

Senior Program Strategist

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NEW PROGRAM TUITION CONSULTATION: BACHELOR OF ARTS – MAJOR IN URBAN STUDIES

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Over the next century, the world’s net population growth will take place in urban regions, and nearly every aspect of economic, social, political, technological, and environmental change is now urbanized. The challenges and opportunities of the world are framed by urban problems and possibilities, and debates about urban futures have heightened during the latest global health pandemic. Cities are at the forefront of climate action; urban policy is seen by global and local governments as a catalyst for transition to a sustainable and just society; and the relevant data and technologies are leaping forward. Now, more than ever, we need people who are deeply trained to understand and shape urbanization from the public, private, and civic sectors.

The School of Community and Regional Planning (SCARP) in the Faculty of Applied Science and the Department of Geography in the Faculty of Arts are proposing a new joint Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) Major in Urban Studies (URST). This partnership enables a more robust integration of conceptual and applied training than either could accomplish on its own.

The field of Urban Studies provides a comprehensive foundation for those who seek to shape cities. Conceptually, Urban Studies is concerned with ensuring that students have broad and deep knowledge of the historical and intellectual threads of urbanization throughout the world. This knowledge base is more than simple background context. It ensures that engagements with contemporary cities are informed by existing pathways and, most importantly, not repeating prior mistakes. In an applied sense, the field of Urban Studies is concerned with providing students with the fundamentals needed to wield their preferred tools of citymaking. While not an accredited program, the Major is designed to prepare graduates to enter a number of professions. Students may choose to begin their development of specialized skills in areas such as technical data analysis; development of finance strategies; dialog and engagement practices; or political and policy-oriented communications. With these tools, graduates have a visible and personalized professional identity that prepares them for professional practice or continued graduate training, premised on a strong ability to critically integrate specific urban interventions with broader efforts to address complex societal challenges.

UBC has had some form of interdisciplinary Urban Studies program for over 50 years, and a shared interest in the conceptual and applied aspects of urbanization makes up a cornerstone of UBC’s scholarly community. The rationale for the proposed Urban Studies major is compelling. Recognizing the growing need for early-stage education in this area, the province of British Columbia began requiring Urban Studies to be a part of K-12 school curriculum in September 2019. However, students in British Columbia currently cannot follow this educational path with a stand-alone Major in Urban Studies at any provincial college or university.

This program enables UBC to offer a form of educational training that uniquely prepares students to address the most complex challenges faced by British Columbia’s cities, such as climate change and incorporation of the rights of indigenous peoples. Professionals working in the private, public, and civic sectors have to reconcile these complex societal issues with particular interventions such as new developments, policies, or programs. Urban Studies is an excellent container for educating students with the requisite skills to be able to act in meaningful ways on the most challenging dilemmas faced by cities and society.

STUDENT CONSULTATION DURING THE PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

There is clear demand for a Major in Urban Studies from within the UBC student community. A recent survey of roughly 700 current UBC students and alumni shows overwhelming support (see Table 1 below) with 72.1%

indicating “strongly support” and another 20.7% indicating “somewhat support”. Further, over half (54%) of the total number of respondents indicated that they were very likely/likely to have chosen a major in Urban Studies had the option been available. In addition to survey results reported below, a series of focus groups with current graduate and undergraduate urban planning students was also completed in the initial round of proposal drafting.

Table 1: UBC Student and Alumni Survey Responses

Survey question: “Based on the information provided, please indicate your support for the proposal to develop an undergraduate Bachelor in Arts with a Major in Urban Studies? (This question is to determine levels of support/opposition to the proposition - it does not matter if you would not take the program yourself).”

Answer	%	Count
Strongly Support	72.1%	450
Somewhat Support	20.7%	129
Neutral / Undecided	4.2%	26
Somewhat Oppose	1.4%	9
Strongly Oppose	1.6%	10
Total	100%	624

- *“It makes sense to cohere UBC’s existing strengths into this specific major; I’m aware of demand from undergrads for it; the proposed plan is appealingly robust and also balanced in its ambitions for conceptual and practical knowledge (and applicability); could be a mutually beneficial way to tie to Vancouver & its neighborhoods & adjacent communities.”*
- *“Although I will be graduating soon, as a student interested I’m pursuing a career in city-planning and as a member of an undergraduate city-planning club, I have seen the significant amount of interest in urban planning amount the undergraduate students at UBC and believe it would be helpful to have a major in Urban studies.”*
- *“Urbanization will continue, issues within cities will continue to grow. Academic understanding and research will be critical to ensure future urban planning. Ensuring inclusivity and equity within researches and their deliveries, decolonizing approach to recognize the urban First Nation relations must be the standard. Our colonial mindset and practices must be critically analyzed and disintegrated, hence this approach must be incorporated into the program.”*
- *“Urban Studies is an increasingly influential field that has a strong presence across multiple academic disciplines: geography, planning, architecture and design, environmental sciences & humanities, anthropology, sociology, political science, and more. Neither one of these disciplines alone, in my view, is well-equipped to deliver a comprehensive education on issues of major importance related to cities. Therefore, I strongly support a BA with a Major in Urban Studies that recognizes the wider umbrella of Urban Studies intellectually and institutionally. Students would be well served by an academic major that recognizes the true breadth of issues facing cities today. Society would be well served by students who can critically analyze -- from multiple theoretical and geographical angles -how and why cities are becoming increasingly important spaces of concern as we move into a post-pandemic twenty-first century.”*

TUITION AND FEES RATIONALE

In the 2021/22 academic year, tuition fees per credit for the program (consistent with other Faculty of Arts programs) are:

- \$187.23 per credit for domestic students
- \$1,371.88 per credit for international students

These fees are subject to increases as approved by the Board to remain consistent with tuition rates for the Bachelor of Arts leading up to the program’s launch in September 2023.

Initially, the program will put in place a cap of 50 students and entry will be application-based, with potential for growth in subsequent years. The intention and resource capacity of the program necessitates that it remains a relatively small Major in order to support a tight and well-trained community of peers among students.

Table 2: Sample Tuition Rates of Comparable Programs in Canada

University	Program	Approx. \$ Per Credit: Domestic/International (CAD, 2021-2022)	Academic Home
University of Toronto	BA Urban Studies	\$203.30/\$1938.70	Faculty of Arts & Science - Innis College
York University	BA Urban Studies	\$203.90/\$1,049.90	Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies, Department of Social Science
University of Calgary	BA Urban Studies	\$205.50/\$739.60	Faculty of Arts, Department of Geography
University of Winnipeg	BA Urban and Inner City Studies	\$136.30/\$508.00	Faculty of Arts, Department of Urban and Inner-City
McGill University	BA Urban Studies	\$90.84* \$283.52**/\$883.34 *QC rate **RoC rate	Faculty of Arts, Department of Geography

PROPOSED TUITION AND FEES

Program Description: Bachelor of Arts – Major in Urban Studies

Anticipated Start Date: September 2023

	Domestic	International
Tuition fees per credit – Note 1	\$187.23	\$1,371.88
Application Fees (Undergraduate) – Note 2	\$73.00	\$123.00
Non-Refundable Acceptance Deposit – Note 3	\$500.00	\$1,000.00
Other Faculty and Course Fees	N/A	N/A

Note 1 – Proposed tuition reflects approved 2021/22 tuition for the Bachelor of Arts program and will be subject to increases as approved by the Board to remain consistent with the Bachelor of Arts program leading up to the program’s launch.

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Note 3 – The non-refundable acceptance deposit will be applied towards the first tuition instalment.

APPENDIX 2: STUDENT SUBMISSIONS & FACULTY RESPONSES

Submission from the AMS.



RE: New Major in Urban Studies Program

Dear members of the UBC Board of Governors,

This submission is being made on behalf of the Alma Mater Society (AMS) of UBC Vancouver in response to the request for feedback on the new proposal from the School of Community and Regional Planning (SCARP) in the Faculty of Applied Science and the Department of Geography in the Faculty of Arts to create a new major in Urban Studies.

Urban policy is seen by global and local governments as a catalyst for transition to a sustainable and just society, and the relevant data and technologies are leaping forward. Now, more than ever, we need people who are deeply trained to understand and shape urbanization from the public, private, and civic sectors. UBC has had some form of interdisciplinary Urban Studies program for over 50 years, and a shared interest in the conceptual and applied aspects of urbanization makes up a cornerstone of UBC's scholarly community. The new program is almost among one of the most affordable undergraduate urban studies programs in Canada.

The Alma Mater Society is in favour of this proposed program addition. We believe the new Major in Urban Studies program enables UBC to offer a form of educational training that uniquely prepares students to address the most complex challenges faced by British Columbia's cities, such as climate change and incorporation of the land rights of indigenous peoples. Furthermore, the Alma Mater Society appreciates UBC's extensive effort to explore the prospective student interest in and demand for the program.

The AMS would like to sincerely thank the School of Community and Regional Planning for their commitment to ensuring that student voices are heard. We hope to see this continue and look forward to working with UBC to make education affordable and accessible to UBC students across all levels. We also appreciate the Board's consideration of this submission.

Sincerely,

Eshana Bhangu

Vice President, Academic and University Affairs
Alma Mater Society