



SUBJECT	Tuition Certificate in Climate Studies and Action (UBC Vancouver)
SUBMITTED TO	Finance Committee
MEETING DATE	June 15, 2022
SESSION CLASSIFICATION	Recommended session criteria from Board Meetings Policy: OPEN
REQUEST	APPROVAL REQUESTED IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED that the Finance Committee, in accordance with authority delegated by the Board of Governors, approves 2022-2023 tuition of \$190.97 per credit for domestic students and \$1,426.75 per credit for international students for the Certificate in Climate Studies and Action, subject to increases as approved by the Board of Governors.
LEAD EXECUTIVE	Gage Averill, Provost and Vice-President Academic pro tem, UBC Vancouver
SUPPORTED BY	Simon Bates, Associate Provost Teaching & Learning Bhushan Gopaluni, Vice-Provost and AVP Faculty Planning pro tem

PRIOR SUBMISSIONS

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

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Department of Earth Ocean and Atmospheric Sciences (EOAS) in the Faculty of Science and the Department of Geography in the Faculty of Arts are proposing a new joint Certificate in Climate Studies. Students will fulfill 18 credits which includes three core courses, one elective course, a series of climate action labs and a climate action capstone project. It is designed for current undergraduate students across UBC Faculties, providing them with the opportunity to obtain a credential focused on formulating science and justice-based interdisciplinary actions to address the climate emergency.

The certificate was approved by the UBC Vancouver Senate in May 2022. Pending approval from the Board of Governors, the certificate will admit its first cohort of students in September 2022.

In the 2022-2023 academic year, tuition fees for the certificate are \$190.97 per credit for domestic students and \$1,426.75 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 certificate's launch in September 2022. The Faculty of Arts will be the faculty home.

Initially, the certificate will put in place a cap of 60 students and entry will be application based, with potential for growth in subsequent years. If new climate focussed capstone courses are developed at UBCV, they can be added to the certificate and will allow the enrollment to increase.

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 March 7, 2022 to April 7, 2022. No submissions were received from the Alma Mater Society, Arts Undergraduate Society, or Science Undergraduate Society.

This certificate is a response to the UBC-[declared climate emergency](#). Creating justice centered, action oriented, accessible, interdisciplinary and hopeful climate education opportunities was one of six strategic priorities in the UBC Climate Emergency Final Report and Recommendations.

The certificate moves interdisciplinarity priorities forward by crafting a partnership between two distinct departments, by teaching interdisciplinary thinking explicitly and by adhering to the principle of accessibility to students across all undergraduate programs. It focuses on climate action through the community engaged learning in order to empower students – to create engaged citizens that will lead climate action and social change.

Key elements of the program that are in alignment with UBC’s strategic plan include:

[Strategy 1: Great People](#): The new climate action labs and capstone will give students the concrete skills and techniques to be leaders in just climate transitions.

[Strategy 4: Inclusive Excellence](#): The certificate is centered around issues of climate justice, Indigenous self-determination and human rights in climate change education (also see ISP goals, below)

[Strategy 9: Knowledge Exchange](#): Students will create materials that contribute research and techniques to deal with climate challenges in local and regional contexts.

[Strategy 13: Practical Learning](#), and [Strategy 16: Public Relevance](#), and [Strategy 20: Community Engagement](#): All students must complete a series of Climate Action Labs (3 credits) and capstone course that teaches practical skills of climate action and that engages with community partners in different public settings.

This certificate has been developed with awareness of, participation in, and commitment to the university-wide effort to centre Indigenous self-determination and human rights as set out in the [UBC Indigenous Strategic Plan](#). Two core objectives of this climate certificate include: *“Apply an intersectional lens (including but not limited to processes of racialization, patriarchy and colonialism) to analyze social drivers and impacts of climate change”* and *“Ethically engage Indigenous worldviews, epistemologies and ontologies to interpret climate change and relate these ways of being and knowing as distinctly valuable alternatives to dominant paradigms”*. Core courses feature literature, guest or core instruction by Indigenous scholars.

The certificate has program objectives that reflect some themes and recommendations made in both [UBC Inclusion Action Plan](#) and the most recent [Anti-Racism and Inclusive Excellence task force report](#). The ARIE report notes the pressing need to *“establish and routinize anti-racism as academic, intellectual and activist work at UBC”* (p 33). Recommendation #25 calls to establish a culture of anti-racism and inclusivity on both UBC campuses. In line with this we note a core certificate objective aiming to understand the relationship between racialization and climate change (both as drivers and impacts); another key program learning objective asks students to *“Describe the disproportionate and compounding impacts of climate change across different communities with a focus on marginalized communities (including BIPOC and other equity-seeking communities) and with attention to both the increasing vulnerability and the ongoing resistance, hope and wisdom of marginalized communities”*. One required course engages the theme of *“racialization, extractivism, and climate change”*, as well as Black scholarship.

Towards the ISP and the ARIE objectives, EOAS and Geography aim to support IBPOC enrolment through the creation of an IBPOC-focused pot of funding to support one-two IBPOC students in taking the certificate each year. This fund is currently in development.

Ensuring the program responds to these ambitious strategic plans and task force recommendations will require ongoing reassessment and evaluation of program courses (including syllabi), enrollment, and student/faculty experiences.

APPENDICES

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

Tuition and Fee Assessment Details

Program Description: Certificate in Climate Studies and Action

Anticipated Start Date: September 2022

	Domestic	International
Tuition fees per credit – Note 1	\$190.97	\$1,426.75
Application Fees (Undergraduate) – Note 2	N/A	N/A
Non-Refundable Acceptance Deposit	N/A	N/A
Other Faculty and Course Fees	N/A	N/A

Note 1 – Proposed tuition represents approved tuition for the Bachelor of Arts program in 2022/23 and is subject to increases as established by the university.

Note 2 – The certificate is only open to UBC students. The Department is absorbing the administrative costs of the application process, registration, and student engagement for the program.

UNDERGRADUATE CERTIFICATE – CLIMATE STUDIES AND ACTION

STUDENT TUITION CONSULTATION REPORT

The Vice-President, Students Office, in partnership with the Faculties of Arts and Science conducted a student consultation regarding the tuition proposal for the Undergraduate Certificate – Climate Studies and Action. This report outlines the consultation process and summarizes student feedback.

Student Representative Bodies Invited to the Consultation

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

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 Monday March 7, 2022 to Thursday April 7, 2022.

Summary of Student Feedback: Submission was not received from the AMS, the AUS or the SUS.

No individual student submissions were received.

APPENDIX 1: INVITATION TO CONSULTATION AND TUITION RATIONALE DOCUMENT

*****This message is sent on behalf of Dr. Samantha Reid, Executive Director of the Office of the Vice President, Students*****

Hello everyone,

There is a proposal by the Department of Geography in the Faculty of Arts and the Department of Earth, Ocean, and Atmospheric Sciences in the Faculty of Science are proposing the development of a new collaborative, interdisciplinary undergraduate Certificate in Climate Studies and Action.

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 Irena Deretic – Administrative Coordinator, Office of the Vice President Students (ypsassist@mail.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 THURSDAY, APRIL 7TH, 2022 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,
Samantha

Samantha Reid Ph.D.

Executive Director

Office of the Vice President Students

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Sent by:

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NEW PROGRAM TUITION CONSULTATION TEMPLATE

CERTIFICATE IN CLIMATE STUDIES AND ACTION

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

UBC's Department of Geography (GEOG) in the Faculty of Arts and the Department of Earth, Ocean and Atmospheric Sciences (EOAS) in the Faculty of Science are proposing the development of a new collaborative, interdisciplinary undergraduate Certificate in Climate Studies and Action. The development of the certificate was supported by a University Sustainability Initiative (USI) fellowship. It is designed for undergraduate students across UBC Faculties, providing them with the opportunity to obtain a credential focused on formulating science and justice-based interdisciplinary actions to address the climate emergency. Students are required to fulfill 18 course credits to complete the certificate which includes three core courses, one elective course, a series of climate action labs and a climate action capstone project. The courses offer opportunities for community-based learning and engagement, as well as academic literature, lectures and discussion that integrate climate science, justice, policy and action. This certificate seeks to advance the University's Climate Emergency Recommendations by expanding climate education opportunities and resources for the UBC community and broader public and fostering a culture of engagement and advocacy on climate action.

As an action-oriented offering, this certificate aims to support and build future generations of students, researchers, and community leaders by providing practical learning and community-based experiences alongside more traditional academic learning. These experiences will allow participants to not only understand the social, economic, political and cultural processes that underlie climate change, but also assess the efficacy and equity of various climate solutions, experiment with strategies to identify leverage points for change and engage in public dialogue about climate change. This certificate advances those priorities by providing a core of undergraduate climate education that can serve as a base upon which other academic units may build, for example, by developing a diverse offering of minors and majors that matches the scale and complexity of the climate emergency. It will complement and build on existing strengths in environmental policy and sustainability at UBC that include the Environment and Sustainability Program in Geography (Faculty of Arts), the Environmental Science specialization in Earth Ocean and Atmospheric Sciences (Faculty of Science) and the Bachelor of Science in Natural Resources Conservation (Faculty of Forestry). We have received strong support from departments in both Arts and Science; and from other faculties across UBC (Forestry; LFS), as well as from students consulted about the program.

The certificate is intended to accommodate students from across faculties. Students are encouraged to enroll in the certificate at the end of their first year of university. However, student requests for late admission up to their 3rd year will be accommodated on a case-by-case basis when space is available, to allow flexibility and ensure accessibility for transfer students. These cases will be reviewed by the Program Chair and Undergrad Advisor as they arise. Graduates of the program will receive a Certificate in Climate Studies and Action that will appear on their transcript, and will be able to:

- **Apply climate literacy:** (a) Interpret climate change and its disproportionate impacts through an interdisciplinary, intersectional lens that combines climate science and the socio-political, economic,

cultural and historical drivers; (b) Delineate the scale and scope of decarbonization and energy transitions aligned with a 1.5°C future.

- **Critically assess climate strategies:** (a) Assess the efficacy and equity of various efforts, policies and strategies that have been developed to address climate change; (b) Engage concepts like climate justice and just transitions and debate their meaning, importance and application to climate change and decarbonization.
- **Develop a practice for climate action:** (a) Acquire an interdisciplinary practice that supports work in climate action including: systems and interdisciplinary thinking, value mapping, engaging diverse knowledge systems (including Indigenous), relationship building, reciprocal research practice and climate communications.
- **Contribute to climate action, discourse and activities:** (a) Engage with the climate change community within UBC and beyond; (b) Make critical and hopeful contributions to dialogue on climate change in public spaces; (c) Design and implement interdisciplinary, community-engaged climate action projects.

STUDENT CONSULTATION DURING THE PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

There is a strong interest for a credential such as the Certificate we propose. We conducted an Open Minds preliminary survey in October 2020 to gauge the level of interest for a new climate change credential, which received a total of 199 responses (46% UBC undergraduate students; 44% UBC alumni; 13% UBC graduate students). The responses informed our decision to structure the credential as a certificate and consider barriers to access and participation for students.

In that survey, more than half (**54%**) of respondents indicated ‘**very interested**’ in enrolling in a climate change credential at UBC. The main reasons for interest included:

- Recognition of climate change as an important and urgent issue to address
- Perceived need for application of climate change knowledge to every profession and field of work
- Interdisciplinary nature of credential
- Alignment of credential with existing degree and/or major
- High level of personal interest
- Good job prospects

Support for Climate Certificate – Sample UBC Student Survey Comments

- *“The climate crisis is unquestionably the biggest threat to continued human thriving and demands collective action on an unprecedented scale. A program/certificate dedicated to holistically training students in climate science, creative problem-solving, communication, and direct action would have been extremely appealing to me when I was a biology undergrad, as I often wished my biology degree had not only armed me with scientific expertise, but also skills to address the broader social issues preventing necessary collective action.”*
- *“I was looking for options of credentials that would apply to my area of interest/career during my undergrad but nothing was available. Climate change was (and is) still very important to me and I would have considered a credential in it as a valuable skill to have.”*
- *“Climate change is a major threat to all human kinds. From shifting weather patterns that threaten food production, to rising sea levels that increase the risk of catastrophic flooding, the impacts of climate change are global in scope and unprecedented in scale. I feel I am responsible to understand this topic comprehensively, then I can take my actions responsibly.”*
- *“I think we need experts in every domain of economic life. I would have liked to be equipped as a climate change studies graduate to work in jobs related to improving climate change.”*

Another **29%** of respondents were **'neutral/undecided'** and **17%** were **'not at all interested'** or expressed opposition to enrolling in a climate change credential. Some of the cited reasons included a lack of interest or perceived need for the credential or a feeling that this would afford minimal job prospects. Still others indicated that, while they acknowledged it was an "important and relevant [topic] in today's world", their "current degree doesn't allow for additional courses in other disciplines".

These results suggest that a large subset of UBC students would value a climate change credential at a proportion that would justify such an offering. They further hint at potential misconceptions among some UBC students about the importance of climate change and the value of a credential focussed on it, which perhaps themselves underline the need for targeted education about this topic.

Subsequently, we conducted three focus groups from July-August 2021 with 22 students from a broad range of disciplines, specifically targeting students outside of Geography and Environmental Science majors with a priority for students who identify as Indigenous, Black and/or People of Colour (IBPOC). The objective of the focus group sessions was to gather feedback on the program accessibility, structure, content, teaching styles, employability and climate action impact. The participants included 2nd to 4th year UBCV students and recent graduates from Engineering, Forestry, Land and Food Systems, Arts (Geography, Sociology, English, and First Nations and Indigenous Studies) and Science (Environmental Science, Biology, Computer Science). The feedback generated from the focus groups identified opportunities to engage in climate action (Climate Action Labs and Capstone) as the most valuable part of the certificate, helped create strategies to address accessibility issues and reiterated the demand for climate education opportunities.

We further consulted with external stakeholders in May to July 2021, including a recent student graduate of UBC Geography's Environment and Sustainability Program. This input helped shape the certificate's learning objectives, content and structure, and ensure that participants and graduates will be equipped with the tools to support and respond to the needs and demands of the broader climate community.

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 UBC Board of Governors leading up to the program's anticipated launch in September 2022.

There are no additional new fees associated with the program. Students will make decisions about enrolment in the certificate in their 2nd year, or no later than their 3rd year, as stated above. Depending on the students degree program, many of the required courses will fit into their electives, if they are not part of the students' required degree course options.

However, it is possible that students in some degree programs with more restrictive electives may have to take some courses outside their degree program (e.g., take the Capstone and/or the Climate action labs that are quite specific to the Certificate), and added tuition costs may be incurred. The Certificate Advisor and Student Manager in Geography will work with students to select the most efficient pathway through the program, given their home department degree specifications. Such early planning will reduce the chances of extra costs.

Initially, the program will put in place a cap of 60 students and entry will be application-based, with potential for growth in subsequent years. The program is intended to remain manageable so that successive cohorts may interact in the Climate Action Lab courses (all 2nd, 3rd, and 4th year cohorts will work together on Climate Action objectives). This model will support a community of peers among students.

PROPOSED TUITION AND FEES

Program Description: Certificate in Climate Studies and Action

Anticipated Start Date: September 2022

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

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