



December 2nd, 2024  
UBC Board of Governors

**RE: Proposed Tuition and Non-Instructional Fees for 2025-2026**

Dear members of the UBC Board of Governors,

This submission is made on behalf of the Alma Mater Society (AMS) regarding the proposed Tuition and Non-Instructional Fees for 2025-2026.

The AMS, as representatives of all 60,000+ students on the UBC Vancouver campus, must express its strong opposition towards the tuition and non-instructional fees increase for the 2025-2026 fiscal year. We understand that there are financial constraints facing the University this year. However, we ask the administration to take into consideration the financial strain on students. According to the Tuition Engagement Survey 2025/2026, the vast majority of students rank financial support as the number one area that deserves the most attention by the University, and around 75% of students disagree with the proposed tuition increase altogether<sup>1</sup>. Furthermore, with Vancouver listed as the *most expensive* city in North America this year as well as one of the most unaffordable cities in the world<sup>2</sup>, the cost of tuition increases weighs heavier on UBC students now more than ever. We ask that the Board consider the adverse implications this increase will have on student wellbeing and quality of life and situate the proposal in the context of record high levels of unaffordability across the student body.

The materials for “Tuition Engagement 2025-2026 and Tuition and Non-Instructional Fees 2025-2026”, state that should the proposed increases be approved, the University will be able to support areas “including supporting the recommendations from the Student Affordability Task Force.” We note that the same was stated in the proposal for the last fiscal year, yet updates on some key recommendations from the Task Force have shown progress to be slow with some recommendations declared unfeasible due to challenges we expect a University of UBC’s stature to be able to overcome. The lack of willingness to continue exploring mechanisms to assess financial need for international students and expand awards for continuing students to include need-based aid is particularly disappointing. The goal of this Task Force and its recommendations is to be leading and innovative – updates indicating little to no progress on areas of need-based financial aid, including the delay in updating the cost calculator to provide students with greater clarity and guidance to estimate multi-year costs and the decision to not move forward with amendments to Policy LR10, are underwhelming and unbecoming. We urge the relevant departments tasked with the implementation of those recommendations to re-evaluate and help fulfill the commitments made upon the completion of the Task Force report as well as in the proposal for tuition increases at the 2023 and 2024 December Meetings of the Board of Governors.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://bog3.sites.olt.ubc.ca/files/2024/11/6\\_2024.11\\_Tuition-Engagement-Tuition-and-Non-Instructional-Fees-2025-2026-1.pdf](https://bog3.sites.olt.ubc.ca/files/2024/11/6_2024.11_Tuition-Engagement-Tuition-and-Non-Instructional-Fees-2025-2026-1.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> <https://news.chapman.edu/2024/06/14/demographia-international-housing-affordability-report-highlights-global-housing-affordability-crisis/>



According to the 2023-2024 AMS Academic Experience Survey 48% of students report facing financial hardship related to the cost of tuition, and only 15% of respondents felt that UBC cared about their struggles related to the cost of education overall<sup>3</sup>. As the Board is likely aware, food insecurity remains a growing issue within the UBC Community, with the AMS Food Bank reporting a 90% increase in usage and a record high of 25,000+ visits in the 2023-2024 academic year<sup>4</sup>. Data gathered by both the AMS and UBC indicates that students still find themselves in an unaffordability crisis related to the cost of education at UBC. This barrier ultimately hinders students' ability to excel in and enjoy their core purpose of being at UBC; a high-quality academic experience.

We take this opportunity to acknowledge and appreciate that the administration has taken meaningful steps in their commitment, should tuition increases be approved, to “Provide funding to support an outstanding student experience, inclusive of funding for first-year experience, food security, and critical student mental health and well-being;” the Board of Governors should know that the impact of allocations to consistent food insecurity relief programs and mental health initiatives has certainly been felt by students, but we would not be deserving of our membership if we did not continue to push the University to address the affordability crisis and raise the particularly distressing impact of incremental tuition increases.

We urge the members of the Board and Administration to consider alternative revenue streams as opposed to tuition increases and, broadly, increase efforts to secure greater public funding for the University. The negative impact of tuition increases on students' academic experience amidst a larger crisis ought to be acknowledged and given greater consideration. The slow progress on key financial-aid-related recommendations from the Student Affordability Task Force makes the proposed increases even more difficult to digest, and we reiterate our belief that UBC has the ability to re-evaluate and meaningfully progress in that respect.

The AMS notes, in the strongest possible terms, it's opposition to the proposed tuition increases approved by the Board's Finance Committee and being considered by the Board of Governors. We appreciate your consideration of this submission and always value opportunities of engagement with the Administration and the Board. Please don't hesitate to reach out for further clarification or conversation.

Sincerely,

**Christian 'CK' Kyle**  
President  
Alma Mater Society

**Zarifa Nawar**  
Interim VP, Academic and University Affairs  
Alma Mater Society

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<sup>3</sup> [https://bog3.sites.olt.ubc.ca/files/2024/09/1.6.3\\_2024.09\\_AMS-Academic-Experience-Survey-Report.pdf](https://bog3.sites.olt.ubc.ca/files/2024/09/1.6.3_2024.09_AMS-Academic-Experience-Survey-Report.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> [https://ams.ubc-my.sharepoint.com/personal/harleenhunda\\_ams\\_ubc\\_ca/\\_layouts/15/onedrive.aspx?id=%2Fpersonal%2Fharleenhunda%5Fams%5Ffubc%5Fca%2FDocuments%2FAttachments%2FFood%20Bank%20Info%20Sheet%20202324%5Fv2%2E1%2Epdf&parent=%2Fpersonal%2Fharleenhunda%5Fams%5Ffubc%5Fca%2FDocuments%2FAttachments&ga=1](https://ams.ubc-my.sharepoint.com/personal/harleenhunda_ams_ubc_ca/_layouts/15/onedrive.aspx?id=%2Fpersonal%2Fharleenhunda%5Fams%5Ffubc%5Fca%2FDocuments%2FAttachments%2FFood%20Bank%20Info%20Sheet%20202324%5Fv2%2E1%2Epdf&parent=%2Fpersonal%2Fharleenhunda%5Fams%5Ffubc%5Fca%2FDocuments%2FAttachments&ga=1)