

## Frequently Asked Questions Concerning Compulsory Fees Charged for University Operated Services

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During the upcoming meeting of the University Affairs Board, the administration will present the proposed operating plans, budgets, and fees associated with a number of University operated student services on all three campuses for the upcoming fiscal year. The following frequently asked questions and answers are presented for the information of members of the Board.

### **What policies govern fees charged for University operated student services?**

Three U of T policies govern these fees: the *Policy on Ancillary Fees*; the *Policy for Compulsory Non-Academic Incidental Fees*; and the *Memorandum of Agreement between The University of Toronto, The Students' Administrative Council, The Graduate Students' Union and The Association of Part-time Undergraduate Students for a Long-Term Protocol on the Increase or Introduction of Compulsory Non-tuition Related Fees*. The policies are available on the Governing Council web site and are described on the page attached to this document.

### **What is the Protocol?**

The *Protocol* is the *Memorandum of Agreement between The University of Toronto, The Students' Administrative Council, The Graduate Students' Union and The Association of Part-time Undergraduate Students for a Long-Term Protocol on the Increase or Introduction of Compulsory Non-tuition Related Fees*. The *Protocol* describes the procedures and limitations associated with the establishment of and increases to compulsory non-academic incidental fees charged for University operated student services. The *Protocol* is required pursuant to a guideline of the Ministry of Training, Colleges & Universities. In the absence of a formal protocol, referenda are required in order to increase incidental fees or establish new fees.

### **What is UTI?**

UTI is the University of Toronto Index. Generally speaking, UTI is an indexation of a service's fee which takes into account changes in salary and benefit costs, revenue from other sources, occupancy costs, and changes in enrolment. It is calculated separately for each service's fee. The result of the calculation is an indexed fee. For comparison purposes, it is sometimes described as a percentage increase from the previous year. Appendix C of the *Protocol* describes the method for calculating UTI. Appendix E illustrates examples of the calculations.

### **What is CPI?**

CPI is the inflation factor equal to the Consumer Price Index as described in the University of Toronto's *Long-range Budget Projection Assumptions and Strategies* (or its equivalent).

### **What are COSS, QSS and CSS?**

COSS is the Council on Student Services, QSS is the UTM Quality Services to Students group, and CSS is the UTSC Council on Student Services. Pursuant to the *Protocol*, the main duty of

these bodies is to provide advice to University Affairs Board (UAB) in respect of the services' operating plans, budgets and changes in fees governed by the *Protocol*. Decisions of COSS, QSS and CSS (i.e., approval or failure to approve) related to operating plans and fees are conveyed to the UAB when the service's plan is under consideration by the Board.

**Are there limitations with respect to increases to fees charged for University operated services?**

Permanent increases to fees which are larger than CPI or UTI require the approval of either a majority of the student members of COSS present at the meeting at which the fee increase is considered or the majority of the relevant students voting in a referendum.

**If COSS, QSS, or CSS decline to recommend approval of operating plans and fees, what options are available to the administration?**

If COSS, QSS, or CSS fail to approve a proposed fee increase, the administration is entitled to seek approval by the University Affairs Board of: (a) a permanent fee increase of the lesser of the CPI increase or the UTI increase; and (b) a temporary (three year) increase of the greater of the CPI increase or the UTI increase.

**What rules govern referenda concerning increases to student services fees?**

Appendix D of the *Protocol* describes the procedures for referenda for increases in compulsory non-academic incidental fees covered by the *Protocol*. It provides that referenda must be conducted by mailing ballots to applicable students. The *Protocol* does not permit referenda to be conducted electronically via the Internet.

**Are student societies required to comply with the *Protocol* in respect of their own fees?**

No. However, student societies are required to meet the requirements articulated in the *Policy for Compulsory Non-Academic Incidental Fees*.

**Why is there more than one fee?**

Some fees for specific services have existed for more than three decades. General student services fees were introduced in 1993. The *Protocol* allows for the reallocation of resources in response to changing service demands. However, the reallocation may not, without appropriate approval, result in the creation of a new service or the discontinuation of an existing service.

**Why aren't the fees indexed automatically?**

The *Protocol* does not provide this as an option.

**What's the difference between compulsory non-academic incidental fees and other ancillary fees?**

'Compulsory non-academic incidental fees' include those charged for student services provided by the University, student societies, and special projects. Other ancillary fees are charged for a variety of items and services (e.g., the system access fee, library fines, and cost recoveries for equipment that becomes the property of a student). The University Affairs Board is responsible for matters concerning compulsory non-academic incidental fees. The Business Board is responsible for matters related to other ancillary fees.

**Are incidental fee increases automatically covered by OSAP and UTAPS?**

Both OSAP and UTAPS consider compulsory non-academic incidental fees to be part of the amount included in the assessment.

**Are incidental fees for student services refundable?**

No. With only a few exceptions, the University charges the applicable compulsory non-academic incidental fees to all students. There are, however, some portions of student society fees for which students may receive a refund upon request directly from the student society.

**How do students become aware of the services and organizations to which they pay fees?**

The individual fees charged are listed in the student account information available through the web service of ROSI. Students become aware of the services and organizations through a variety of means including University print publications, the University's web sites, student society handbooks, and various orientation programs including those offered by the various services.

**Who can I contact in the administration for more information about compulsory non-academic incidental fees and the University's practices concerning these matters?**

Jim Delaney, Director, Office of the Vice-Provost, Students, can answer questions concerning these matters (Phone: 416-978-4027 / Email: <jim.delaney@utoronto.ca>).

## Brief Summary of Relevant Policies and Regulations Which Govern Compulsory Non-Academic Incidental Fees at the University of Toronto

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There are three University of Toronto policies which govern compulsory non-academic incidental fees and charges of these fees to students:

***Policy on Ancillary Fees:*** The *Policy* describes categories of permitted ancillary fees including fees for services provided by the University, fees for student organizations, fees for special projects (normally capital projects), academic surcharges (e.g., studio fees), cost recovery fees (e.g., equipment), user fees and fines (e.g., library fines), and system wide fees (e.g., University Health Insurance Plan).

***Policy for Compulsory Non-Academic Incidental Fees:*** The *Policy* provides the requirements and conditions associated with compulsory charges of the first three categories of fees outlined in the *Policy on Ancillary Fees* (i.e., student services fees, student society fees, and special projects fees). The manner in which these fees are charged is also described.

***Memorandum of Agreement between The University of Toronto, The Students' Administrative Council, The Graduate Students' Union and The Association of Part-time Undergraduate Students for a Long-Term Protocol on the Increase or Introduction of Compulsory Non-tuition Related Fees:*** The *Protocol* describes the procedures and limitations associated with the establishment of and increases to compulsory non-academic incidental fees charged for University operated student services (i.e., category one of the *Policy on Ancillary Fees*). The terms of reference and rules of procedure for the Council on Student Services (COSS), which has an advisory role to the University Affairs Board on the approval of student service operating plans and fees, is also provided. Pursuant to the *Protocol*, the U of T at Mississauga, the U of T at Scarborough, and Innis College have established local bodies corresponding to COSS which deal with services for and compulsory service fees charged only to students in those divisions. [Note: pursuant to a condition of the approval by the Governing Council of the Scarborough Campus Students' Union as a 'representative student committee' of the University, the Students' Administrative Council continues to represent full-time UTSC students for the purposes of the *Protocol*.]

There is one key government regulation on issues related to compulsory ancillary fees:

Section 5.2 of the *Ontario Operating Funds Distribution Manual* (Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities) outlines conditions on charging non-tuition-related compulsory ancillary fees. In particular, the Ministry's guidelines require universities to establish protocols with student governments (defined as the minimum number of student organizations which have elected leadership and which when viewed in combination, represent all students charged compulsory fees) which set out the "means by which students will be involved in decisions to increase existing compulsory non-tuition-related ancillary fees or introduce new ones." The University's *Protocol* described above is mandated by this Ministry guideline. The guidelines became effective for the 1994-95 year and have not been reviewed or revised since. In the absence of a formal protocol, referenda are required.

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