

FOR RECOMMENDATION

PUBLIC

OPEN SESSION

TO: UTM Campus Affairs Committee

SPONSOR: Mark Overton, Dean of Student Affairs & Assistant Principal, Student Services

CONTACT INFO: 905-828-3872, mark.overton@utoronto.ca

PRESENTER: See Sponsor

DATE: January 30, 2025, for February 6, 2025

AGENDA ITEM: 3

ITEM IDENTIFICATION:

Compulsory Non-Academic Incidental Fees: UTM Student Societies (UTMAGS) – Proposals for Fee Increases

JURISDICTIONAL INFORMATION:

Section 5.1. of the *Terms of Reference* provides that student societies and compulsory non-academic incidental fees are within the responsibility of the UTM Campus Affairs Committee. Sections 5.4.1. and 5.4.2 state that fees for UTM representative student committees and campus student societies “are approved by the UTM Council on the recommendation of the UTM Campus Affairs Committee”.

Student society fees are subject to the terms and conditions of the *Policy on Ancillary Fees* (Category 2.0, “Student organizations and services provided by such organizations”, and Category 3.0, “Student levies for specific, limited projects”), and the *Policy for Compulsory Non-Academic Incidental Fees*.

Increases that are greater than the cost of living must be supported by referendum. Other increases must be supported by a previous referendum approving the concept of annual increases by the cost of living or an explicit inflation factor. The administrative procedures are outlined in the *Handbook for Student Societies*, which is published by the Office of the Vice-Provost, Students (OVPS).

Requests for increases are brought forward to the UTM Campus Affairs Committee by the administration on the assurances of the student societies that due constitutional and fair procedures have been followed within the societies concerned. If a complaint is received about the process related to a fee request from a student society, the OVPS makes inquiries about the issue and, if necessary, investigates matter further as part of the assessment of the request.

GOVERNANCE PATH:

1. **UTM Campus Affairs Committee [For Recommendation] (February 6, 2025)**
2. University Affairs Board [For Information] (February 26, 2025)
3. UTM Campus Council [For Approval] (March 3, 2025)
4. Executive Committee [For Confirmation] (March 25, 2025)

PREVIOUS ACTION TAKEN:

Requests for changes to existing student society fees and/or the establishment of new fees may be brought forward to the UTM Campus Affairs Committee on one or more occasions each year. The UTM Campus Affairs Committee last considered changes to student society fees on February 8, 2024.

HIGHLIGHTS:

The following student society has requested a change to a fee charged on their behalf by the University:

University of Toronto Mississauga Association of Graduate Students (UTMAGS)

- Mississauga Transit Summer U-Pass (full-time & part-time) – inflationary increase by \$2.44 per fall session and \$2.43 per winter session (from \$81.19 per fall and winter session to \$83.63 per fall session and \$83.62 per winter session)

If approved, the total fall/winter UTMAGS fee, charged to all UTM-affiliated graduate students*, will increase from \$243.57 per fall and winter session to \$246.01 per fall session and \$246.00 per winter session.

The request above have been reviewed by the Office of the Vice-Provost, Students in light of the requirements of the *Policy for Compulsory Non-Academic Incidental Fees* and was found to be in compliance. Additional information regarding this request has been included in this item's documentation.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

There are no net implications for the campus' operating budget.

* Further to UTMAGS' request, Mississauga Transit U-Pass fees will not be charged to Master of Forensic Accounting (MFAcc) and Master of Management and Professional Accounting (MMPA) students.

RECOMMENDATION:

Be It Recommended:

THAT, beginning in the Summer 2025 session, the University of Toronto Mississauga Association of Graduate Students (UTMAGS) fee be modified as follows:

- (a) an increase of \$2.44 per fall session and \$2.43 per winter session (full-time and part-time) in the Mississauga Transit Summer U-Pass portion of the fee.

DOCUMENTATION PROVIDED:

Compulsory Non-Academic Incidental Fees: UTM Student Societies - Proposals for Fee Increases



To: Members of the UTM Campus Affairs Committee
From: Mark Overton, Dean of Student Affairs & Assistant Principal, Student Services
Date: January 27, 2025
Re: Compulsory Non-Academic Incidental Fees: UTM Student Societies - Proposals for Fee Increases

A fee change request from a UTM student society has been received by the Office of the Vice-Provost, Students (OVPS) and described below. The OVPS manages the University-wide administrative processes related to student society fee change requests and keeps my office informed with respect to the fee change requests received from UTM student societies. The OVPS has reviewed the request below in light of the requirements of the *Policy for Compulsory Non-Academic Incidental Fees*, has found to be in compliance with these requirements, and has recommended it for approval.

Fee increases requests from student societies must meet a set of requirements. Section B.4 of the *Policy for Compulsory Non-Academic Incidental Fees* outlines the University's expectations:

Requests to change the fee collected on behalf of a student society and requests for new fees shall be approved only when evidence has been presented that the request has been authorized by due constitutional process in the organization. The procedures to request approval of a new fee or an increase to an existing fee shall be published in the Handbook for Student Societies.

Cost of Living Increases

(a) Where the amount of an increase in the fee charged is not greater than the year-over-year change in consumer prices for Ontario as measured by Statistics Canada (December-over-December) as of December 31 of the previous year, the request must be supported by the results of a previous referendum approving the principle of a cost-of-living adjustment. In special circumstances (e.g., when a portion of a student society fee is designated for a health plan or capital project), other inflation indexes or predetermined inflation factors may be used, provided that the request is supported by the results of a previous referendum approving the use of the specific inflation index or predetermined inflation factor.

Referendum Requirement

(b) Where the amount of an increase in the fee charged is greater than the year-over-year change in consumer prices, the request must be supported by the majority of the society's members voting in a recent referendum.

The *Handbook for Student Societies*, which is published by the OVPS on an annual basis, also provides that student society fee change requests must include the following:

Evidence that the request to change the existing fee (or to institute a new charge) has been authorized by due constitutional process of the organization. This evidence should include a copy of or specific reference to the section of the society's constitution and/or by-laws which relate to the mechanism for fee changes, minutes of the meeting at which the resolution to request the change was passed, details and results of any referenda related to the subject which may have been held within the division, and publicity given the matter to ensure that those who may be affected by the change are aware of the proposal, including size and purpose of the increase, and have had the opportunity to make their views known.

Normally, the administration intersects with student society fee change processes at two points. Initially, student societies are asked to seek advice from the OVPS on the wording of their referendum questions (with respect to clarity and technical language). The second point occurs after the referendum, when the society makes the formal request for a fee change. The recommendation for approval is derived from the assessment of whether or not the society has met the requirements established in the *Policy* and relevant procedures.

Occasionally, the OVPS is asked to look into complaints about referendum procedures and compliance with relevant portions of the society's constitution and/or by-laws. The results of these investigations play a significant role in the assessment of the request and the recommendation for approval.

The assessment of fee change requests is normally based upon the following expectations:

1. The student society must make the request in a manner consistent with the *Policy for Compulsory Non-Academic Incidental Fees* and the University's procedures for changes to student society fees;
2. When required, there must be a positive result in a referendum for a fee increase (special conditions established by the society, such as quorum, must also be met);
3. The referendum question should be clear and provide enough information for the society's members to gain a full understanding of the implications of the question and the proposed fee;
4. The referendum must be held in a fair manner, promoted in a reasonable manner, and provide all of the society's members with a reasonable opportunity to vote; and
5. The student society must comply with the provisions of its own constitution, by-laws, rules of procedure, and specific policies and procedures approved by its board or council.

Student societies that have previously received approval (through a previous referendum) from their members for an annual cost-of-living increase in one or more of the society's portions of its fee may request increases, upon approval by the society's board or council, of up to the previous Ontario December-over-December Consumer Price Index, as calculated by Statistics Canada. However, as outlined in the excerpt from the *Policy* above, where members of a society have given consent (through a previous referendum) to the concept of inflationary increases according to a specific inflation factor or measure, this inflation factor may be used. For example, the University of Toronto Mississauga Association of Graduate Students may request increases in the Mississauga Transit U-Pass portions of its fee of up to 10%.

It is important to note that, it is the student society’s own constitution, by-laws, and established policies that set the standards for acceptable results in referenda. In some cases, society constitutions establish a minimum voter turnout in order to consider a referendum result to be valid. The University has not established additional criteria with respect to valid referendum voter turnout.

In addition, with respect to both requests for fee changes based on a referendum and those only requiring the approval of a society’s board or council, the administration relies on the assurances of student societies that due constitutional processes and fair procedures have been followed.

University of Toronto Mississauga Association of Graduate Students (UTMAGS)

Background

The total UTMAGS fee for the Fall 2024/Winter 2025 sessions, charged to all UTM-affiliated graduate students*, was \$243.57 per session. The fee included \$81.19 per session for the Mississauga Transit Summer U-Pass fee.

Request

1. An inflationary increase in the Mississauga Transit Summer U-Pass portion of the fee. In accordance with the original referendum question, UTMAGS may request increases to the Mississauga Transit Summer U-Pass portion of the fee of up to 10% upon approval of a resolution by the UTMAGS Executive Committee.

On January 13, 2025, the UTMAGS Executive Committee approved a resolution to request an inflationary increase to the Mississauga Transit Summer U-Pass portion of the fee.

In the course of considering this request, the Office of the Vice-Provost, Students has not received any complaints concerning the process leading up to the request.

Summary of Changes

If approved, the total fall/winter UTMAGS fee, charged to all UTM-affiliated graduate students*, will increase from \$243.57 per fall and winter session to \$246.01 per fall session and \$246.00 per winter session.

University of Toronto Mississauga Association of Graduate Students	Summer 2025		Fall 2025		Winter 2026		Summer 2024		Fall 2024		Winter 2025	
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time
Mississauga Transit U-Pass (increases up to 10% permitted without referendum)			162.38	162.38	162.38	162.38			162.38	162.38	162.38	162.38
Mississauga Transit Summer U-Pass (increases up to 10% permitted without referendum)			83.63	83.63	83.62	83.62			81.19	81.19	81.19	81.19
TOTAL			\$246.01	\$246.01	\$246.00	\$246.00			\$243.57	\$243.57	\$243.57	\$243.57
Change from Previous Year			+1.0% \$2.44	+1.0% \$2.44	+1.0% \$2.43	+1.0% \$2.43			+2.9% (\$6.91)	+2.9% (\$6.91)	+2.9% (\$6.92)	+2.9% (\$6.92)

* Further to UTMAGS’ request, Mississauga Transit U-Pass fees will not be charged to Master of Forensic Accounting (MFAcc) and Master of Management and Professional Accounting (MMPA) students.

Recommendation

THAT, beginning in the Summer 2025 session, the University of Toronto Mississauga Association of Graduate Students (UTMAGS) fee be modified as follows:

- (a) an increase of \$2.44 per fall session and \$2.43 per winter session (full-time and part-time) in the Mississauga Transit Summer U-Pass portion of the fee.