

<b>Subject:</b> Ancillary Fees	<b>Policy Number:</b> EXT-3	<b>Last reviewed:</b> 2023 Feb. 21
<b>Approved by:</b> Council	<b>Managed by:</b> Advocacy & Policy Committee	<b>Next review:</b> 2025 Oct. 31

### Policy Rationale:

The increase of ancillary fees over the last decade creates new costs for students while funding from government stagnates. Ancillary fees support services and activities distinct from academic programming or general overhead for the institution.<sup>1</sup> As of 2007, the *Tuition Limit Policy* was extended to include institutional and program mandatory fees.<sup>2</sup> While we recognize that ancillary fees assist in the funding of services offered to students on campus, the budgeting process and allocation ought to adhere to a higher level of transparency. As those paying the fee, students deserve a greater opportunity to understand the costs and benefits of mandatory fees.

Challenges with affordability are exacerbated when a new fee replaces an existing fee at a significantly higher amount. While there are safeguards developed by Government to prevent such actions, challenges remain in relation to the creation of entirely new fees as well. Although ancillary fees have been captured under the 2% cap since 2007, this has not stopped ancillary fees from increasing exponentially at some schools. At BCIT ancillary fees have increased 19% since 2013. While this is considerably lower than the average across the sector (105%), there is always the potential for new fees to be introduced that will add to the cost of education, as has been seen at Vancouver Community College, University of the Fraser Valley, Vancouver Island University, and North Island College, where such fees have gone up over 250% in some cases.<sup>3</sup>

### External Policy Position:

1. The Student Association supports:
  - A. Strict oversight by Government of mandatory ancillary fees through the Tuition Limit Policy;
  - B. Meaningful student consultation by post-secondary institutions in relation to any fee increase;
  - C. Periodic review by institutions as to the ongoing necessity or efficacy of any ancillary fee;
  - D. The introduction of centralized reporting by Government of all individual ancillary fees charged at post-secondary institutions in British Columbia, such reporting to include the dates of each fee's introduction and the most recent review of its ongoing necessity; and

<sup>1</sup> Ontario: Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities *Tuition and Ancillary Fees Policy Directive* ([Link](#)).

<sup>2</sup> British Columbia: Tuition Limit Policy ([Link](#)).

<sup>3</sup> British Columbia: Mandatory Fees at Public Post-Secondary Institutions, by Economic Development Region, 2013/14 - 2022/23 ([Link](#)).

E. Increased transparency by Government and by institutions in relation to the following:

- A. The original rationale for the introduction of each ancillary fee currently in force;
- B. The results of any ancillary fee reviews undertaken in accordance with this Policy;  
and
- C. benefits to students arising from any services funded by a mandatory ancillary fee.

2. The Student Association opposes:

- A. New fees where another post-secondary institution provides the same service with no such fee;
- B. New fees where the proposed new service is not in fact new nor materially different from any existing services;
- C. New fees where the amount charged is not demonstrably justified, relative to the proposed service, or where those paying the fee contribute an unreasonable share of the cost of providing that service;
- D. New or increased fees where the proposed increase in revenue is not presented to the Board of Governors as a question formally voted on separately from the annual budget;
- E. New fees where the clear benefit to students of the service has not been demonstrated; and
- F. New or increased fees where the increased charge on students would amount to an overall increase in total tuition and fees in excess of the intended maximums in the Tuition Limit Policy.