

Tuition and fees student consultation:

WHAT WE HEARD

NOVEMBER 2025



UNIVERSITY OF
CALGARY



Annually, the University of Calgary engages in a meaningful, inclusive and substantive tuition fee engagement process that was developed in collaboration with the Students' Union (SU) and Graduate Students' Association (GSA). Feedback from this process has informed the development of the 2026-27 tuition and fee proposals.

The Tuition and Fees Consultation Committee (TFCC), which includes representation from the SU and GSA, is the formal mechanism for discussing potential tuition fee adjustments and mandatory non-instructional fees (MNIFs). In addition to TFCC, the 2026-27 Tuition engagement plan included additional activities to ensure all students had an opportunity to provide feedback and engage in the process. The all-student Fall Community Discussion: Tuition & More attracted only 9 participants, with 1,702 participating in the tuition and fee survey.

This document aims to share the findings and provide a summary of what we have heard from students through this engagement process.

Student Engagement Schedule of Activities

ACTIVITY	DATE
Tuition and Fees Consultation Committee Meeting #1: Share tuition and fee changes under consideration	Aug. 26, 2025
Student Engagement website updates	Week of Sept. 8, 2025
All-Student email regarding proposed changes to tuition and fees and survey link	Week of Sept. 8, 2025
Faculty-Specific Engagement activities kickoff	Week of Sept. 8, 2025
Tuition and Fees Consultation Committee Meeting #2: Review proposed changes to tuition and fees, discuss and listen	Sept. 22, 2025
Students' Legislative Council Meeting #1: review proposed changes to tuition and fees, discuss and listen to SU's feedback	Sept. 23, 2025
MNIF Reports available on Student Engagement website	Sept. 30, 2025
Graduate Students' Association Executive Council Meeting #1: Review proposed changes to tuition and fees, discuss and listen to GSA's feedback	Oct. 2, 2025
All-student Community Discussion: Tuition and More	Oct. 7, 2025
Tuition and Fees Consultation Committee Meeting #3: Listen to student feedback (SU/GSA presentation)	Oct. 15, 2025
Tuition and Fees Consultation Committee Meeting #4: Share final tuition and fees proposal	Nov. 4, 2025
Graduate Students' Association Executive Council meeting #2: Proposal Information Session – share draft proposal and report back on how students' feedback has been considered	Nov. 3, 2025
Students' Legislative Council Meeting #2: Proposal Information Session – share draft proposal and report back on how students' feedback has been considered	Nov. 4, 2025
Final proposed rates and "What We Heard" document available on Student Engagement website	Mid-November
University Governance – Finance and Property Committee Meeting – for recommendation to the Board	Nov. 17, 2025
University Governance – Board of Governors Meeting – for the Board approval	Dec. 12, 2025

Consultation Themes

Throughout the student feedback, several common themes emerged. These themes encompass a wide range of topics including:

- » Affordability and the impacts of tuition and fee increases;
- » Graduate student affordability and funding levels;
- » Quality of education and perceived value of tuition and fees; and
- » Financial strain and student wellbeing;
- » Mandatory Non-Instructional Fees and the services they cover;
- » Transparency and Accountability.
- » Impact on international students;

Summary of What We Heard

AFFORDABILITY AND THE IMPACTS OF TUITION AND FEE INCREASES

Students expressed strong opposition to tuition increases, citing already high costs and the cumulative negative impact of annual increases. Students are seeking predictability in future tuition rate increases and raised questions about whether increases align with inflation and if increases are justified given perceived lack of improvements in programs or facilities. Many students expressed frustration over not knowing how tuition funds are allocated and requested more transparency on where their tuition fees go.

FINANCIAL STRAIN AND STUDENT WELLBEING

Many students expressed deep concern about the financial pressures of university life, emphasizing the burden of tuition, fees and increased cost of living. They mentioned struggling to balance academic responsibilities with part-time work and described how financial stress affects their mental health and academic performance. Students expressed worry of accumulating unmanageable debt and long-term financial consequences. There were calls for increased scholarships, bursaries and financial aid.

IMPACT ON INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

International students expressed facing amplified challenges due to higher tuition rates, disproportionate fee increases and limited work opportunities. Concerns about food security and financial hardship were noted, with fears that further increases could worsen these issues and reduce diversity within our community.

GRADUATE STUDENT AFFORDABILITY AND FUNDING LEVELS

Graduate students highlighted the inadequacy of current funding levels, which do not keep pace with rising costs. Thesis-based students questioned paying full tuition after coursework completion and requested indexed funding increases and more scholarships, including for course-based students. They also highlighted the need for increased paid work integrated learning opportunities for course-based students. Professional graduate programs (e.g., MBA, EdD) were flagged as prohibitively expensive for many students, which may limit access for mid-career professionals.

MANDATORY NON-INSTRUCTIONAL FEES AND THE SERVICES THEY COVER

Students expressed dissatisfaction with paying for services they don't access, such as gym facilities or transit. There were calls for opt-out options and greater clarity on how MNIFs are allocated and what improvements result from fee increases.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION AND PERCEIVED VALUE OF TUITION AND FEES

Students reported receiving no noticeable improvements in teaching quality, facilities or services despite rising tuition and fee costs. Issues such as overcrowded classes, availability of courses, outdated online content and poor technology infrastructure including unreliable Wi-Fi were frequently mentioned. Students expect tuition increases to directly fund academic improvements rather than non-academic initiatives.

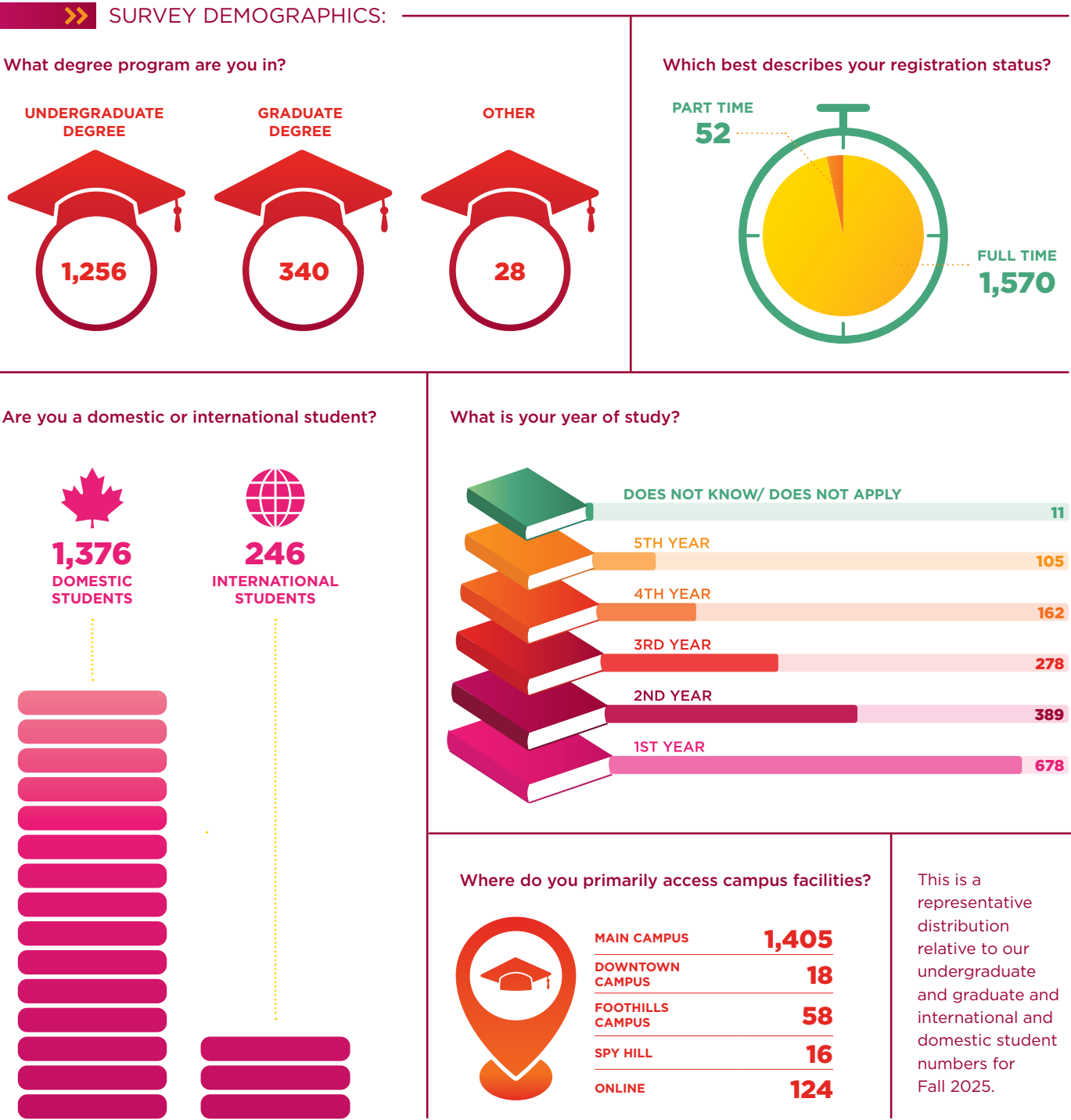
TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Students want clear communications on the need for tuition and fees increases, how the revenue is used and how efficiencies to reduce institutional costs are being found. Students want assurance that decisions are not predetermined and that their feedback during tuition and fee consultation influences outcomes. Government advocacy was identified as a high priority of students as a mechanism for increasing the university's base operating grant, thereby reducing the reliance on tuition and fee increases.



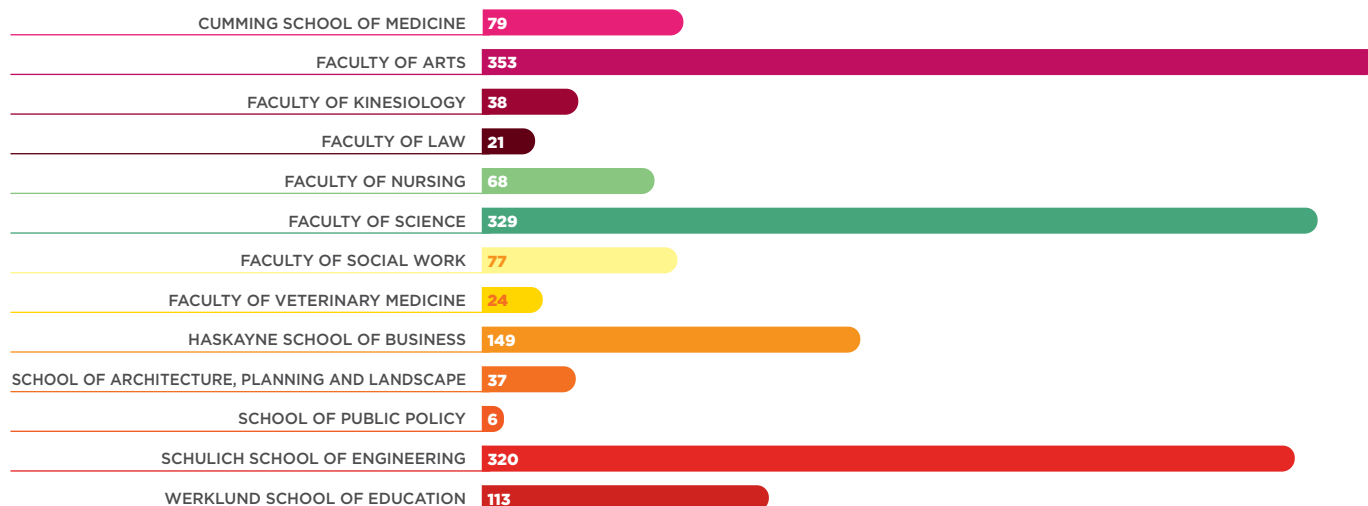
UCalgary Student Tuition and Fees Survey

UCalgary conducted an online survey on tuition and fees with an invitation to participate sent to all students enrolled at the University of Calgary. The survey was open from Sept. 11 - Oct. 15, 2025. 1,702 students participated.



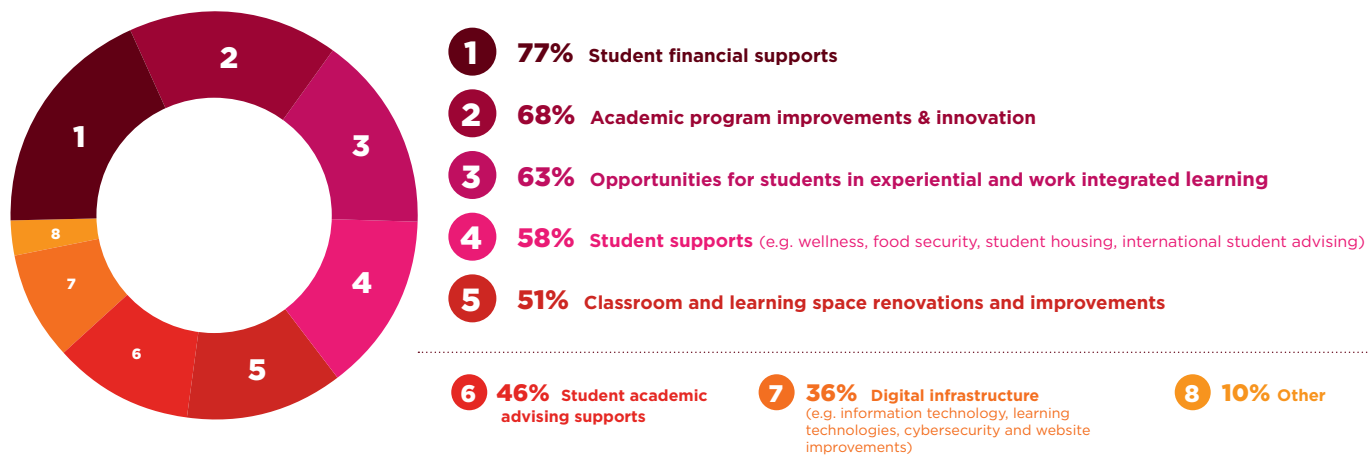
>> FACULTY DISTRIBUTION:

Select the Faculty/School you are primarily associated with (select one).

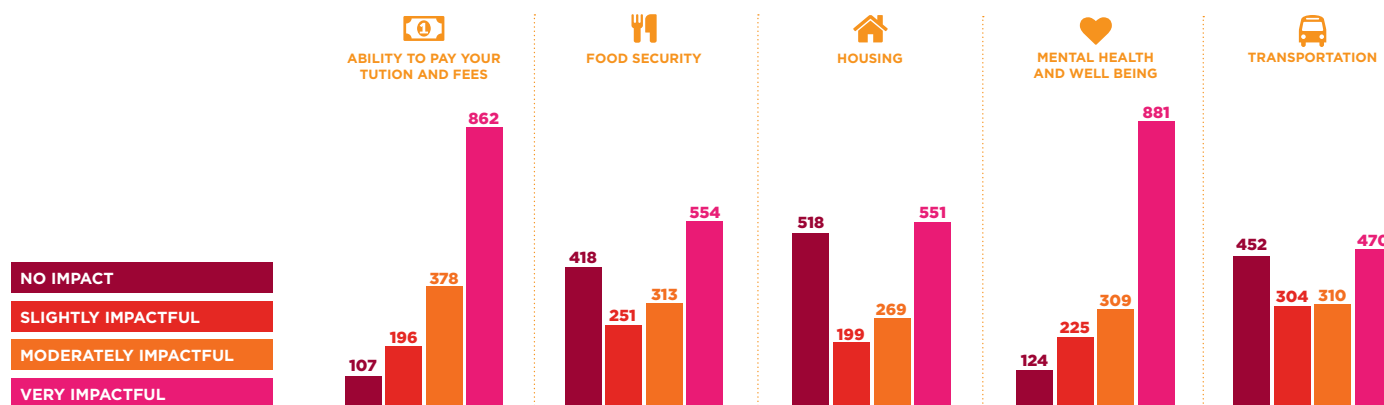


>> KEY FINDINGS:

From the list below, please select the top five (5) areas where we should focus our resources to enhance your learning and supportive campus environment.



Based on your situation, how does the increase in tuition and fees being considered impact you?



Students told us that the proposed increases would be moderately or very impactful on:

- » Ability to pay their tuition and fees – 80%
- » Mental health and wellbeing – 77%
- » Food security – 56%
- » Housing – 54%
- » Transportation – 51%

Students shared their priorities for where the University should focus resources to enhance learning and a supportive campus environment:

- » Student Financial Supports – 77%
- » Academic Program Improvements and Innovation – 68%
- » Opportunities for students in experiential and work integrated learning – 63%
- » Student Supports (wellness, food security, student housing, advising) – 58%
- » Classroom and learning space renovations and improvements – 51%
- » Digital infrastructure (e.g., informational technology, learning technologies, cybersecurity and website improvements) – 36%
- » Other – 10%

Students provided 480 open-ended comments grouped within the following key themes that have been included in the summary above:

- » Financial strain and affordability
- » Transparency and accountability
- » Equity and fairness
- » Quality of education and access to courses
- » Unpaid practicums
- » MNIF opt-out options

Overall Feedback

Students expressed significant concerns about affordability, financial strain and the perceived lack of value for rising tuition and fees. International and graduate students highlighted unique challenges, including disproportionate fee increases and insufficient funding. Concerns were expressed regarding Mandatory Non-Instructional Fees (MNIFs), transparency on what the fee covers and the lack of opt-out options for the services covered. In summary, there was opposition to tuition increases without clear program and service enhancements and a call for greater transparency, predictability and support.



What We Will Do with the Feedback

We would like to thank all students that took the time to participate in the 2026-27 tuition and fee consultation process. The feedback has been considered and follow-up conversations have occurred at both the Students' Legislative Council and the Graduate Representative Council. The information shared has informed the development of the 2026-27 tuition and fees proposal, will be provided to each individual unit responsible for the work and will be part of ongoing discussions with student leaders. In many cases, the priorities identified by students align with the priorities in both *Ahead of Tomorrow* and the *Academic Innovation Plan* and initiatives related to these themes are already underway across campus. For example:

- » The Academic Innovation Plan commits to reviews of a number of our student services, programs and supports.
- » A review of Student Wellness, Access and Support (SWAS) services, as part of Student Experience and Support (SES) was completed in 2024-25 and recommendations are being implemented.
- » A review of academic advising institutionally will be undertaken starting in winter 2026.
- » SES is now in process of a review of supports for international students as part of the SES strategic plan.
- » Student Wellness Services is providing flexible, on-demand wellness workshops and training to improve accessibility with a renewed focus on harm reduction, mental health promotion and collaborative, community-based initiatives. Expanded cultural and spiritual wellness programming is being offered that reflects diverse student identities and experiences.
- » The Program Innovation Hub provides dedicated and centralized support for faculties and units in the development of new programs and innovative changes to existing programs that closely align with student demand and the evolving labour market.
- » The Faculty of Graduate Studies Process and Systems Optimization (PaSO) project enabled the automation of many processes and system enhancements to provide students with information on program milestones, deadlines and progress directly via the Student Centre, and ensures their supervisors have access to the same information.
- » UCalgary's integrated and interdepartmental housing strategy for 2025 has been updated and includes the following support programs and initiatives: Temporary Housing Grant, Emergency Temporary Student Accommodation, Campus Food Hub including educational programming, Off-Campus Housing Advising and Services. New resources, such as a roommate finder for international students, housing webinars and online tools, have launched to better support students navigating the housing market.
- » The Office of Signature Learning Experiences has been launched in support of our commitment to expand access to student opportunities for active engagement in work integrated learning, research and creative scholarship. Work is also underway to expand access to work integrated learning for graduate students.

At the University of Calgary, students are central to our mission, and we are dedicated to engaging in a thorough tuition and fees consultation process. This commitment ensures that student input is not only considered, but also meaningfully addressed in the development of tuition and fee proposals and in identifying priority areas across the institution.

The feedback provided through the Tuition and Fees Consultation Survey, the Fall Community Discussion, faculty-led sessions, meetings with the Student Legislative Council and Graduate Representative Council, and the Tuition and Fees Consultation Committee, has been thoughtful and substantive and has informed the recommendations being put forward for consideration in the Tuition and Fee proposal. Thank you to the Students' Union and the Graduate Students' Association for their support and collaboration in the engagement process.