

Tuition Fee Guidelines

Background

St. Thomas University is a not-for-profit public university. The University's General Operating Fund covers the core functions of the University, including most of the expenditures directly related to, or in support of, offering programs of instruction to students. The General Operating Fund has two main revenue sources: the Provincial Government operating grant and tuition fees. This is reflective of the nature of post-secondary education as both a public and private good, receiving support from the Provincial Government as a public good, and from student tuition fees as a private good. The expenditure categories are those used generally for university reporting in Canada. At St. Thomas, salaries represent approximately 75% of operating expenditures.

The Federal and Provincial Governments offer a number of student financial aid programs to assist Canadian students to attend post-secondary education. The University also offers significant scholarship, bursaries and other financial awards to students, in order to maintain accessibility of the University to students. In 2018-19, 81% of international students and 44% of domestic students received a scholarship, bursary or other award from the University.

Annual Budget Process

On an annual basis, the University develops its budget based on the following principles:

- The need to achieve a balanced budget where expenditures do not exceed revenues;
- The importance of developing a budget plan that balances competing priorities in order to serve, to the best of our ability, the needs of students and other members of the community; and
- The desirability of allocating resources to areas that support the strategic direction of the University.

The development of the budget is guided by the President's Advisory Committee on the Budget. This Committee is comprised of the President and members drawn from faculty, staff and students. The annual budget process begins with the circulation of a Budget Development Report. This process provides an opportunity to the University community to learn about the University's financial operations and to provide feedback on our most important fiscal issues. To complement this Report, a Budget Town Hall takes place in March.

Guidelines for Setting Tuition Fees

The setting of tuition fees is an important component of the annual budget process. Tuition fee recommendations to the Board of Governors are developed based on the following considerations:

- The need to achieve a balanced budget in order to maintain the quality of the education and ensure the long-term sustainability of the University.
- The cost of programs and annual inflationary cost pressures such as collective agreement obligations. As is the case at other universities, the larger programs (i.e. B.A.) tend to subsidize the smaller programs (i.e. B.Ed. and B.SW.). However, the long-term goal is to have each program strive toward recovering their program costs. (Note: For the B.SW. program, there will be a closer review of the program's tuition fees when modifications to the program are implemented. Proposed program modifications are currently being

reviewed by the MPHEC.)

- The tuition fees for each program are to be set at a similar level as other universities in Atlantic Canada. This reflects the reality that we compete with other Atlantic universities to attract students to St. Thomas.
- The amount of financial support provided by the University to students in the form of scholarships, bursaries and other awards. In 2018-19, 81% of international students and 44% of domestic students received a scholarship, bursary or other award from the University.
- Undergraduate international students are not funded through government operating grants. Consequently, the international tuition fee should be at a level where the University can recover the cost of providing services. Secondary to the concept of recovering costs, the tuition fee level should be at a similar level as other universities in Atlantic Canada. The following table provides information on actual expenditures per FTE (FTE reflecting the total number of domestic and international students) at St. Thomas for the period of 2014-15 to 2017-18.

	2018-19**	2017-18	2016-17	2015-16	2014-15
actual operating expenditures		31,082,559	30,620,043	31,168,065	31,800,266
FTEs*		1,965	2,011	2,060	2,165
actual operating expenditures/FTEs		15,818	15,229	15,133	14,688
international tuition fee	15,230	14,503	13,747	13,385	13,192
variance		1,315	1,482	1,748	1,496
*based on MPHEC figures for domestic and international students					
(actual calculated FTEs, including the Part-time and new Sem 2)					
**year end actual expenditures not yet available					

Approval of Tuition Fees

The University's Board of Governance has authority to set tuition fees. This approval normally takes place at the May meeting of the Board of Governors.