

Extraordinary Tuition Consultation
Survey: Spotlight on Affected Programs
September 1, 2021
Prepared for UASU Executive Committee



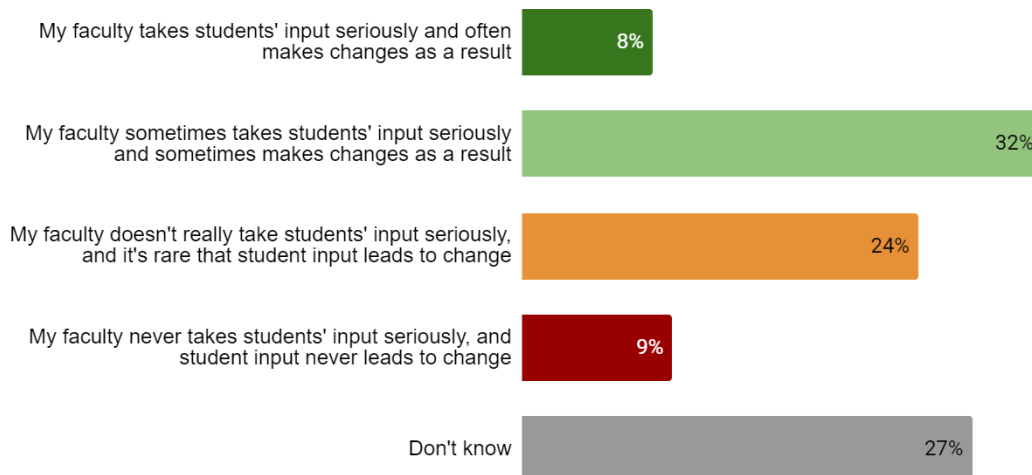
Overview

This survey ran from August 16 to August 30 on the UASU Perks platform. Out of 2104 respondents, 582 were domestic undergraduate students in the programs affected by proposed exceptional tuition increases.

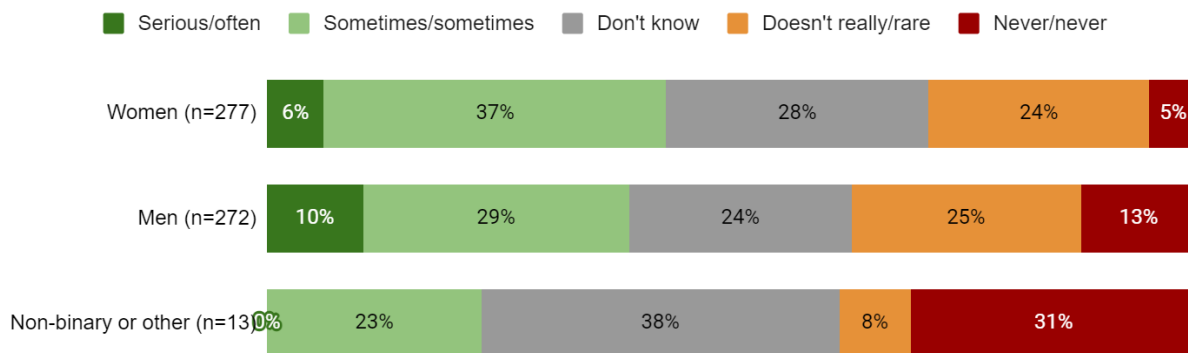
After a rushed consultation during Winter 2021 final exams, Advanced Education sent back the proposals for further consultation during September and October. This late-August survey (n=582, for our purposes) gives a sense of students' attitudes in the affected programs.

For clarity, the survey explained that the proposed increases would only affect new/future domestic students in these programs, meaning that respondents would not be personally impacted.

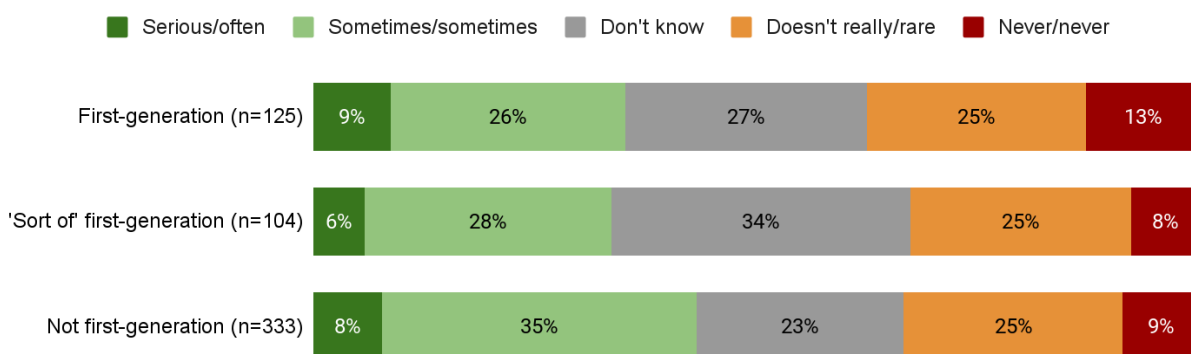
"Do you feel like your faculty takes students' input seriously?"



Gender tended to impact these opinions. Men tended toward more extreme opinions (at both ends of the spectrum) than women, while gender minority students tended toward negative opinions.



Self-identified first-generation students (both actual and 'sort of'/ambiguous cases) also tended toward more negative opinions.



Students noted consistent priorities:

- Multiple methods of consulting students transparently
- Consultations that do not take place during work hours
- Clear rationales for the proposed increases, and detailed explanations of how the money would be used
- Respecting student input and making change, as opposed to token consultation
- Reexamining the amount of the increases

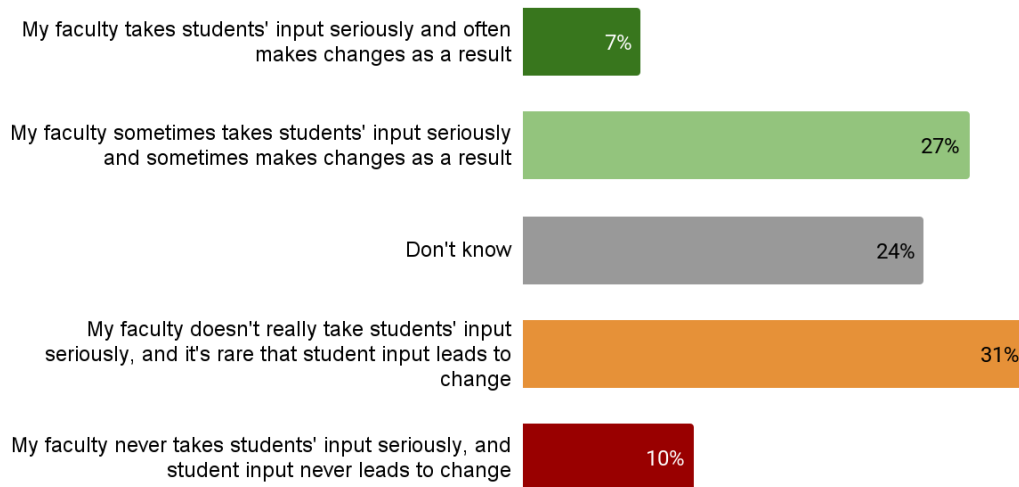
Engineering

Impacted Degree(s): BSc

Proposed Increase(s): 24.5%

Number of Identifiable Respondents: 221

Engineering: "Do you feel like your faculty takes students' input seriously?"



Consultation Preferences: Engineering

"A brief consultation ran during Winter 2021 final exams. Now the University has marching orders to run a more thorough consultation in September and October. In your opinion, what should good consultation look like?"

Some representative responses:

- Meaningful changes that either provide strong justification for substantial tuition hikes or reduction of tuition hikes to something in line with changes seen by other universities.
- Asking how this affects everyone, asking for possible solutions, asking people to rank possible solutions.
- Timed, well communicated and high rate participation of students about to be affected.
- Tell us exactly why you need more money, where the money will go, how it isn't already enough, and ask us what we think is reasonable.
- Taking notes of students' concerns and accommodating during these sessions.
- I don't remember the last consultation so I don't know.
- Audit proposed plans and identify flaws and/or other ways to cut the budget expenses. If no other options are possible, and such an increase in fees is essential, push them to explain what value will students gain in exchange for

increased tuition. At the moment many classes are of low quality and don't have the value of the charged amount of money. What are guarantees from the university that the educational product/service will increase in quality consequently? What is the objective metric to estimate if the delivered service meets the requirement? At the moment students are buying black-box services, and the university has no accountability towards the quality of delivered services.

- Both university students and university employees are affected by the budgetary cuts from the government. Will the above-mentioned faculties employees get the same salary cuts? Was there any third-party financial performance audit? What are the recommendations of a non-partisan audit company?
- Open doors meeting with various kinds of staff members and students with a time dedicated for Q&A.
- You must reevaluate your costs, see what you could cut without increase costs or lowering professors' salaries. Publish a detailed report of what the costs are. Publish said report and allow students to read it before asking them about the increase.
- Tell us where the extra money will go, and break it down as to how much will go where, and how it will benefit us.
- Mandatory polls or surveys would be really good to have everyone's input.
- Talking to all sectors of people in different wealth classes and from different backgrounds.
- I can't say exactly what it should look like, but the overall decision-making process should at least include: a) an analysis of the effect tuition increases will have on access to university education in the province for poorer students; b) estimation/calculation of the effect on total student numbers (since many students may choose other universities if UAlberta becomes more expensive, especially if the quality of education is not proportional to the price - this may mean increasing price actually decreases revenue); c) assessment of resultant total costs/tuition ratio per student, followed by comparison to other universities as a sanity check; and d) evaluation of other potential long-term revenue sources, including perhaps renting or developing (but NOT selling, as this would likely lose the university a lot in the long run) some of the land the University owns - provided a legal loophole, political maneuvering, or similar could provide the university with the ability to do this (if they can't already).
- Talking to parents of dependents (someone living under and being supported by a guardian) would provide greater insight into what needs to be done.
- Lots of input from students and a panel between students and the overseers.
- Doesn't matter to me as long as they know the students wouldn't be too pleased with the tuition increases. Surveys, public polls, open forum, etc. are all good options.
- Looking into the Dean's/ higher-ups' salaries and deciding if it would be worth it to cut their salaries rather than increasing the fees of already poor people.
- Discussion with past, current, and future students together.
- Lower tuition costs, at least by a few hundred dollars.
- Near impossible for students to not know about well beforehand and occurring when classes are not.

- Actually contacting students at a relatively not busy time of the year.
- Student opinion from the impacted groups of student and persuading the government(that especially during the pandemic) many struggle to earn money.
- Actually getting input from most students. Not some hidden consultation that no one knows about.
- Like listening to every single student who is saying not to do it, and then proceeding to not do it.
- Easy to attend events.
- Constant, with results based on feedback.
- I'm not too sure. Maybe allowing for a way for students to submit complaints in a way that's easily organized so that we can prioritize what to fix first.
- Sending surveys and questions directly to students and considering all responses prior to action. Engineering has said the tuition increase would go towards program enhancements, but what does that actually mean? Can students have an impact on where that money goes?
- Online surveys where students can express opinions honestly and openly as well as live events where students can give their opinions. The University should have to justify these tuition increases to the students who are paying for them.
- Full scale surveys, more town halls.
- Times that aren't scheduling during work hours like the engineering faculty is currently doing.
- Live debate between UAlberta president and UASU president.
- Transparent with news coming to students about what's going on instead of randomly doing tuition hikes like last time.
- I mean, not during finals would be a start. I'd like to see a consultation that encourages students to actually chime in - crucially, that needs to involve more than town halls and meetings. They need to give options to give feedback online, ideally asynchronously, to align with varying schedules. I'd also appreciate it if they were willing to have an actual dialogue, with explanations and information going both ways, rather than just a request for feedback that we all know will be ignored.
- I think it should really ask students if they think it is worth increasing the tuition fees and actually show students a plan of what it has planned to improve. The survey before never asked students how much the fees increase would affect their choice of the university asked what students think had improvements but did not make it clear why it was funding that is limiting and how it would really be necessary to increase that much tuition fees.
- Something that provides us with options for a lower tuition hike. I know the university may have limited options, but if they're actually asking us for our opinion, obviously we'd oppose a hike, so anything that gives a chance to minimize the financial load on students would be ideal.
- Coming to classrooms to speak to students directly.
- Information on why the tuition increases are needed, where the money is going to go.
- The faculty actually listening to students and implementing what they can.
- A good consultation would include actually making sure the students know what the changes are, and be clear about when and how they would be

implemented. Students got minimal info on the changes and it led to more confusion.

- No students want the hikes! Just listen to us! It feels condescending to ask us where we want the money to go when we just don't want the price to change.
- I feel like even though we expressed our voice (I was on a faculty governance club at the time), we didn't feel like our voice was actually acted upon or as if the decision was made and our voice was there for formalities. But I could be wrong.
- One that is very noticeable. I wasn't aware of the first one.
- They were handing out YouTube videos for lectures last year. I don't know why they need to increase tuition.
- I remember they asked for student opinions when drafting a budget, but I feel they didn't really take it into consideration.
- Roundtable talks and surveys. As well as an explanation of what this money will go towards.
- Reaching out to students individually on how they feel about it in plain terms. (No biased surveys.)
- Ask students if they're willing to pay more and give a good reason for the tuition hike instead of saying to improve the quality of education. Details needed.
- Don't know, but the money needs to come from somewhere now that the government funding has been decreased.
- They should publish their proposals in full for review by the student body.
- Don't make it a political campaign to convince us, just give us the facts. Why is the tuition hike needed, how does it benefit the students, will it actually benefit the majority of students or a select few, if tuition hikes occur fall 2022 will students be able to see results immediately or are we paying for future students to benefit?
- Actual effort put into getting student opinions that would reach the greatest number - a survey on eClass, university members actually going into classes of the affected disciplines and directly speaking to students (similarly to what is done during SU elections so class time is not impacted), town halls with actual advertising.
- Talking to various student unions and providing opportunities for student input.
- A survey is sent directly to every single student. There is a platform for students to send messages and talk with others about the change. There is a live discussion where feedback is accepted.
- Getting student input on what they think a successful program for their degree would be.
- Trying to minimize increases and if not then be transparent about where the money is going.
- Should let students know the pros and cons equally. If students only hear 'tuition hike' with no benefits to themselves, no one wants it.
- Actually consult students and make the consulting process accessible to students. In the past "consultations" like this have been difficult to be a part of and feel more like the institution is doing their due diligence to say "look we consulted" without actually trying.

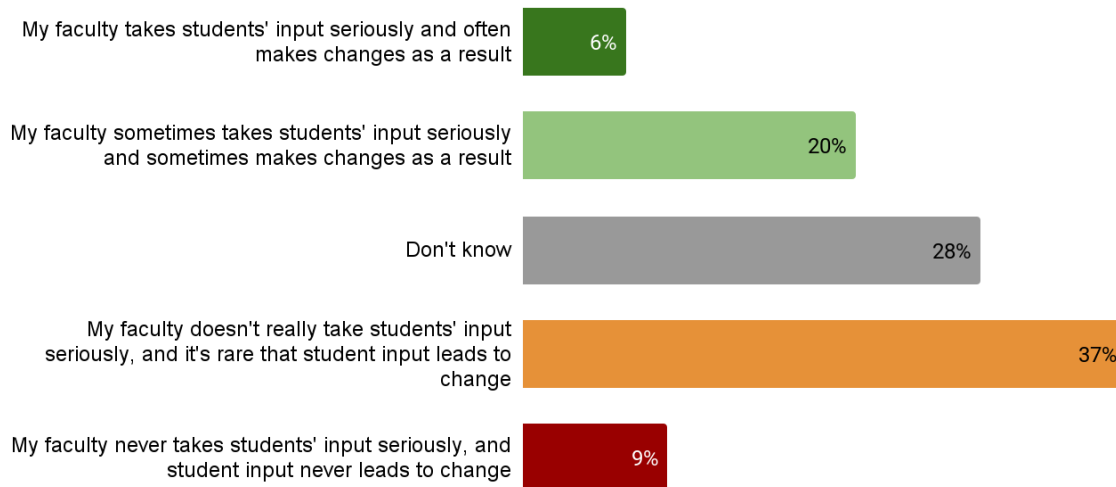
Business

Impacted Degree(s): BComm

Proposed Increase(s): 22%

Number of Identifiable Respondents: 79

Business: "Do you feel like your faculty takes students' input seriously?"



Consultation Preferences: Business

"A brief consultation ran during Winter 2021 final exams. Now the University has marching orders to run a more thorough consultation in September and October. In your opinion, what should good consultation look like?"

- Involve how sudden high increases will impact financial sustainability of students and if the quality will continue to decrease as price increases.
- I think students should be surveyed within their classes.
- Ensuring the tuition hikes are decreased.
- Talking to students in the minorities (French campus) as well as the majorly impacted programs.
- Go beyond the staff board.
- Aggressive.
- Sending out surveys with rewards to stir student responses.
- Consulting staff about who the highest paid admins are and cutting their salaries in half to offset the hikes.
- Don't do it so we don't need consultation.
- Consulting with people that understand the issues and keeping people that will be affected informed.
- Talking to at least half the students in the affected programs.

- Actually asking for feedback from students, and using the feedback given to actually make changes to their proposal.
- Open discussion where student voices and opinions are valued and heard.
- Discussing if it is worth it to lose significant amounts of domestic students to other schools because of the tuition increase.
- Conversation with various stakeholder groups and have lots of engagement.
- Actually listening.
- Large scale surveys and interviews with various random willing students and student representatives.
- Consideration towards interest on Student Loans. Perhaps arranging some meeting with Alberta Government for students affected by COVID.
- Representation for every group and equal speaking time for each.
- Not sure exactly. How about actually including reasonable student ideas?

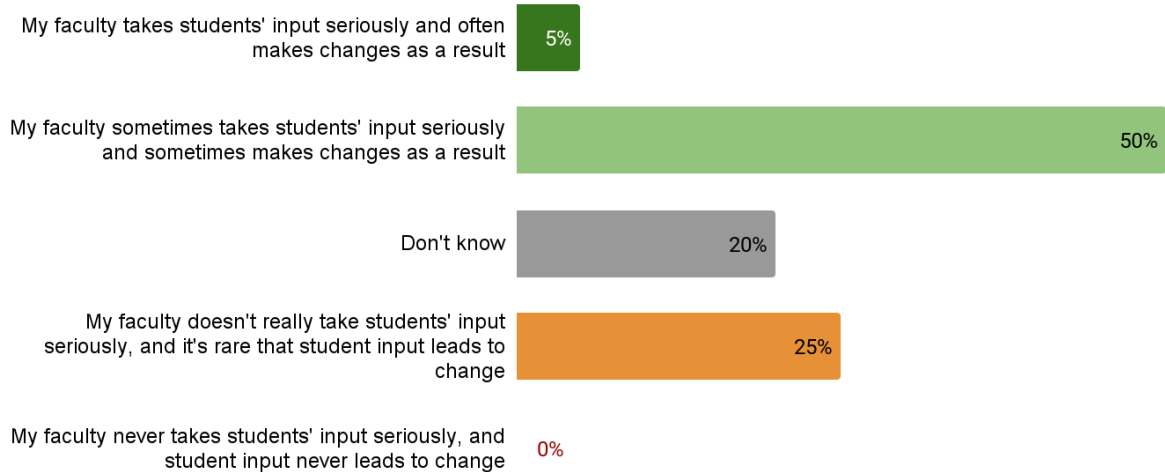
Law

Impacted Degree(s): JD

Proposed Increase(s): 35.5%

Number of Identifiable Respondents: 20

Law: "Do you feel like your faculty takes students' input seriously?"



Consultation Preferences: Law

"A brief consultation ran during Winter 2021 final exams. Now the University has marching orders to run a more thorough consultation in September and October. In your opinion, what should good consultation look like?"

- A town hall with students where questions are fielded and the impacts are discussed at length.
- An actual consultation, not just an information share (ie. saying they're consulting but have no intention of using any of the feedback).
- A structured survey to be sent to all of us impacted.
- Asking the students or considering how much debt people are already in, or make it worth the hike.
- Transparency on what costs the program has with its reduced budget and how the proposed hike will be split up.
- Public forums and surveys, presenting reasoning and options for alternatives.
- Good consultation would include meetings with students before a proposal has been drafted and more meetings with students after the proposal has been drafted.
- I don't know. It doesn't matter how much we complain, the university does what it needs to to sustain itself at the end of the day.
- Showing us the programs they are making to address our concerns. No vague promises of addressing our concerns in the future. Current, ongoing plans with a person accountable to making sure those concerns are addressed.

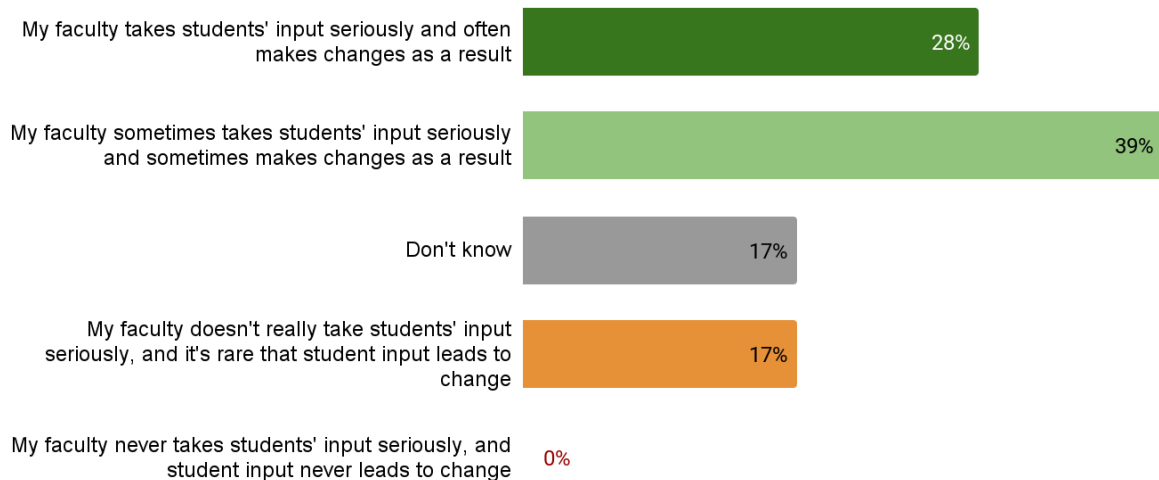
Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences (FoPPS)

Impacted Degree(s): PharmD

Proposed Increase(s): 44%

Number of Identifiable Respondents: 18

FoPPS: "Do you feel like your faculty takes students' input seriously?"



Consultation Preferences: FoPPS

"A brief consultation ran during Winter 2021 final exams. Now the University has marching orders to run a more thorough consultation in September and October. In your opinion, what should good consultation look like?"

- Getting students in the affected programs to take surveys about how the tuition hike would impact their ability to continue in the program.
- Taking students seriously.
- More than 1 event. Online, in-person, with people who actually have power/say on the matter.
- I have a feeling that whether a consultation happens, the increase will still happen. Hopefully a consultation would involve student union and student advocates speaking with those at the university making these decisions.
- Ask why they are doing this. And in what ways are they truly benefiting, they being the students and the university as a whole.

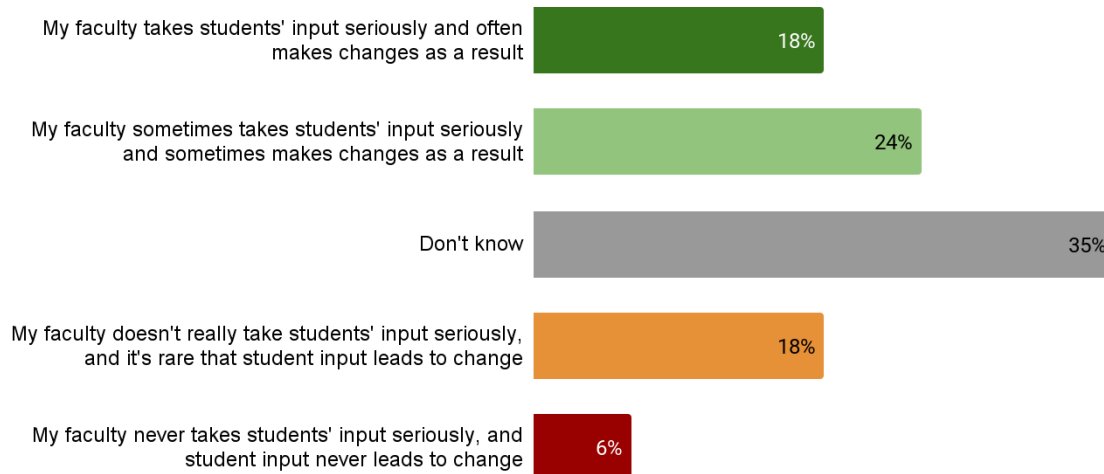
Medicine and Dentistry

Impacted Degree(s): DDS, APDDS, BSc in Radiation Therapy, BSc in Medical Laboratory Science

Proposed Increase(s): 40%, 16.2%, 20%, and 17% respectively

Number of Identifiable Respondents: 17

Med. & Dent.: "Do you feel like your faculty takes students' input seriously?"



Consultation Preferences: Medicine and Dentistry

"A brief consultation ran during Winter 2021 final exams. Now the University has marching orders to run a more thorough consultation in September and October. In your opinion, what should good consultation look like?"

- Takes place at a more convenient time.
- Townhall meeting held DURING TIMES WHEN STUDENTS CAN ATTEND!! The faculty of Engineering held theirs during times when most students were working in co-op terms and were unable to attend.
- Allow both sides to give their reasoning and make sure everyone's voice is heard
- Representation from students from various backgrounds.
- A panel Q & A with central university, School of Dentistry faculty, and current students.
- More participation from students being directly affected. Strong representatives to speak on behalf of students.
- They have been doing good, it's all the UCP's fault. What can UofA even do besides increase tuition. If we don't pay higher tuition they won't be able to afford those amazing profs.