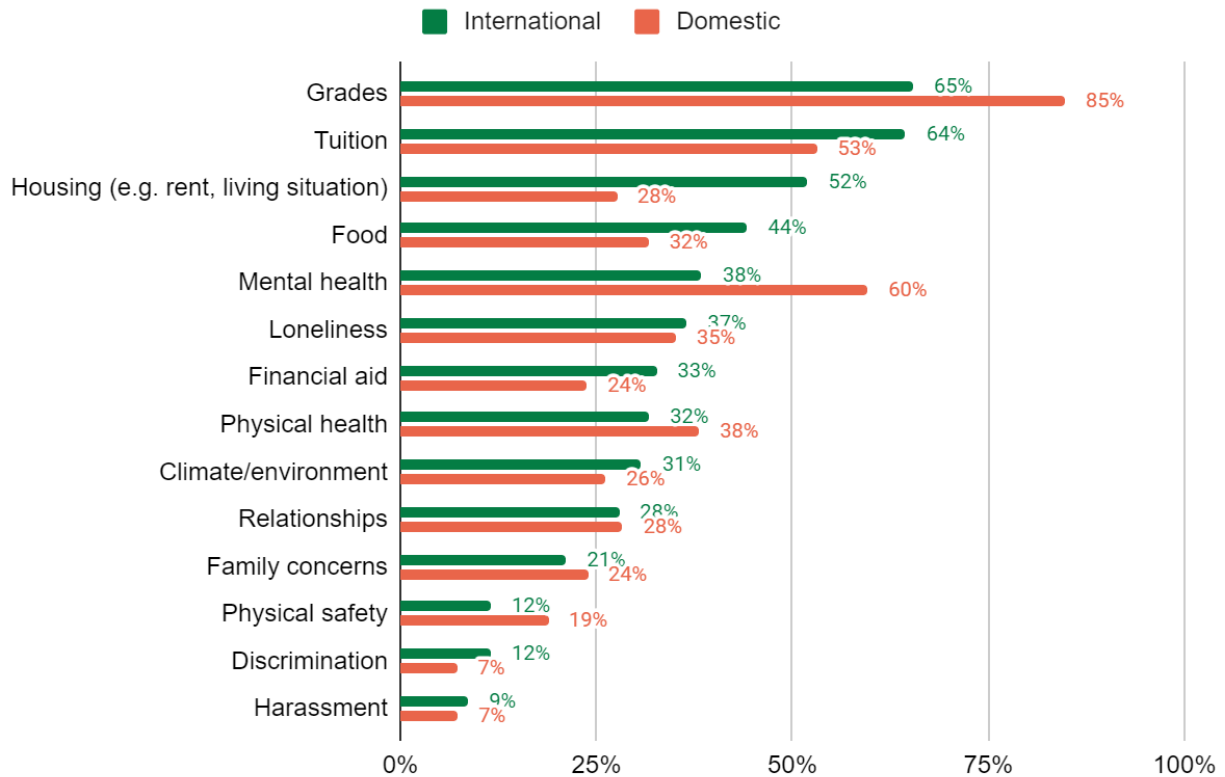


Overview

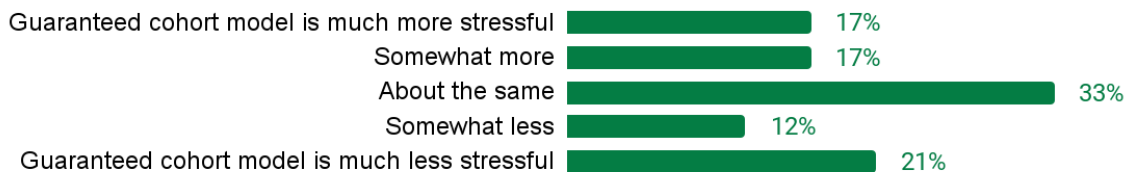
This survey ran on UASU Perks from October 23 to November 1. It reached 1,017 points of contact, approximately 55% of unique Perks users active during that time frame. The main intent of this survey was to get more information on the differing attitudes and experiences of international and domestic students related to tuition and academic support writ large. This survey was heavily informed by discussions between the Executives and the International Students' Association (ISA). 10.2% of respondents were international students, a strong turnout relative to past surveys.

- When asked about their biggest stress factors, international students were far more likely than domestic students to list housing (e.g. rent or living situation, +24 points), food (+12 points), tuition (+11 points), and financial aid (+9 points). International students were almost twice as likely as domestic students to highlight housing as one of their biggest sources of stress.
- When international students were asked whether the guaranteed cohort tuition model gave them more or less stress than if they were paying an increasing amount each year like domestic students do, 34% believed the cohort model was somewhat or much less stressful, and 33% believed it was somewhat or much more stressful. A follow-up text question suggested major uncertainties around co-ops and work-integrated learning, spring/summer courses, pressure to take large course loads, and the high cost of international tuition.
- In a question that attempted to get students to think about the total cost, rather than sticker price, of education, international and domestic students showed very similar rates of anxiety.
- International respondents were much less likely (-16 points) than domestic students to feel anxiety about changing classes.
- International students were more likely (+6 points) to strongly agree that they felt anxiety about the process of paying tuition, but overall were less likely to somewhat or strongly agree (-11 points). This and other questions suggest that international students face a diverse range of experiences and may not be consistently informed about processes.
- International respondents were much less likely than domestic students (-17 points) to feel anxiety about predictability of the total cost of their education. However, 64% of international respondents still feel anxiety about predictability even after years of the cohort model. This is likely linked to housing, food, and financial aid, among other factors.
- Indigenous students highlighted a variety of issues and situations around Indigenous-specific student aid. The consensus is that this aid often includes particular delays, sometimes in connection with University invoicing.

"What are your biggest stress factors right now? Choose all that apply."



"Do you think the guaranteed cohort tuition model gives you more or less stress than if you were paying an increasing amount each year like domestic students do?" [International students only.]



"Why do you feel that way? Is there anything you would like to share?"

- Cohort model is less stressful as we are aware of the tuition every year instead of worrying about the increase.
- Definitely prefer to know in advance what I'll pay throughout my degree.
- Guaranteed tuition model is less stressful but it has some loopholes that need to be addressed.

- Having prior knowledge about the fees I have to pay help me plan and prepare properly.
- I am an engineering student. Taking 6 courses is too stressful, and sucks the life out of any university student, making the overall university/higher education experience very miserable. However, if I now take less than 6 courses, I still have to pay the same amount of money which means if I extend my degree, it's going to get more expensive than what it already is.
- I don't quite get what exactly cohort model is.
- I still don't know why international has to pay 20k per term. It's a ludicrous amount. [Several other responses said very similar things.]
- I would really appreciate more scholarships like the entrance scholarship awards awarded to first years.
- I'd prefer to have a guaranteed amount, which helps me plan out finances for my entire degree rather than going by a year to year basis and seeing a tuition increase each time.
- Increasing tuition leads to low stipend pay for grad research students which is very difficult and stressful especially with increasing everyday expenses.
- It is predictable but at the same time is stressful when you consider options such as reduced course load or extending degrees due to domestic or academic issues.
- It just doesn't make any sense, especially for students in co-op programs.
- It's definitely less stressful to know that tuition fees won't increase over the years. However, the best way would be to reduce tuition fees much more for international students.
- It's okay as long as you don't wanna take spring summer courses coz then it makes it harder.
- Just the idea of knowing the amount of tuition I pay per year will not be exceeding a certain amount for the duration of my degree + 1 year, makes me not worry about increasing prices or any fluctuations that might occur.
- Lower tuition fees and more financial aid.
- More stressful because you pay more fees even for less courses.
- More stressful. Fees are too expensive for international students.
- No need to increase tuition. There is no point of increasing tuition. It's already high.
- Paying huge amount is itself stressful, increasing makes it more stressful, this doesn't apply that the current cohort model is the best.
- Probably because of how much it is regardless of how many courses I choose to take.
- The increase yearly is much much more than expected, hence less savings.
- The main reason is that even if we want to take 4 courses or less we still have to pay the full amount of tuition fees for that semester.
- The way I see it, it essentially forces me to have to do 5 courses per term for the next few years. Even though there is the additional one year, I still feel this way.
- There is an allotted amount my parents have set aside and it's useful to know it will be the same every year and not constantly increase.
- There is no particular financial aid for [my program]. As an international student, I am bound to pay the entire guaranteed tuition fee upfront and without aid, the

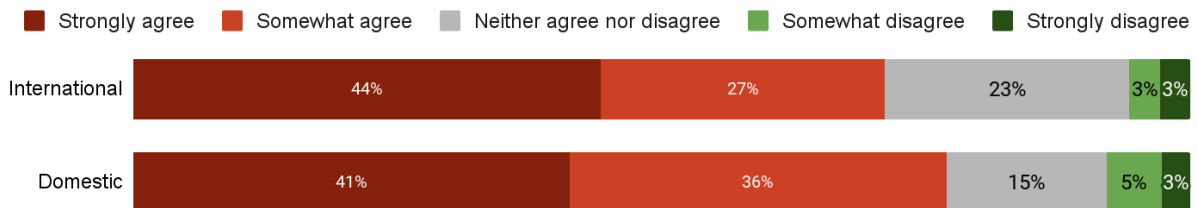
situation is really difficult. Even if there is any help, they come around only at the last moment, almost when most of us have paid the fees in full.

- Tuition is too high and I feel that the quality of the education I got does not compensate the amount I'm paying for it.
- you might need longer to complete your degree (internships, leaves of absence, delays in visa), and the guarantee only covers 5 years, no more.

"Agree or disagree? Thinking about how much financial aid I get (loans, grants, scholarships, etc.), I feel anxiety about the amount of tuition I pay."

This is a somewhat complicated question that attempts to get students to think about the total cost, rather than sticker price, of education. International and domestic students showed very similar rates of anxiety.

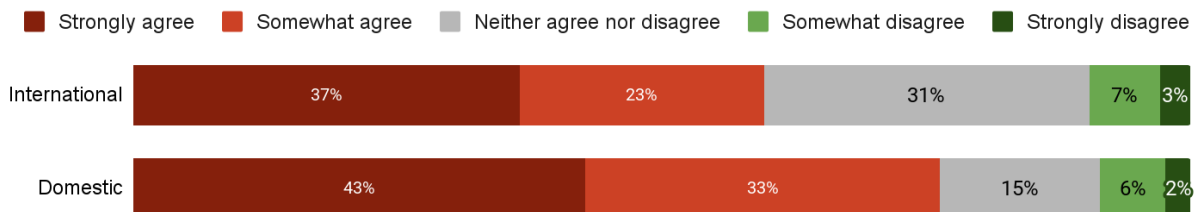
Feeling anxiety about tuition amounts in context of financial aid



"Agree or disagree? I feel anxiety about changing what classes I'm taking."

It has been reported that some international students feel anxiety around changing their class schedules due to uncertainty about the cohort model. This is certainly the case for some international students. However, international respondents to this survey were much less likely than domestic students to feel anxiety about changing classes.

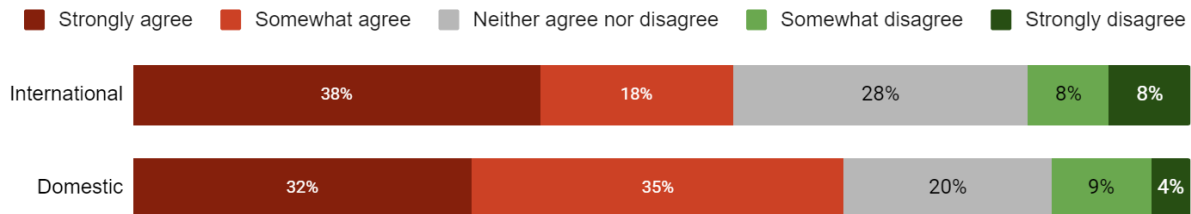
Feeling anxiety about changing classes



"Agree or disagree? I feel anxiety about the process of paying my tuition."

International students were more likely than domestic students (+6 points) to strongly agree, but overall were less likely to somewhat or strongly agree (-11 points). As with previous questions, this suggests that international student experiences may be inconsistent.

Feeling anxiety about the process of paying tuition

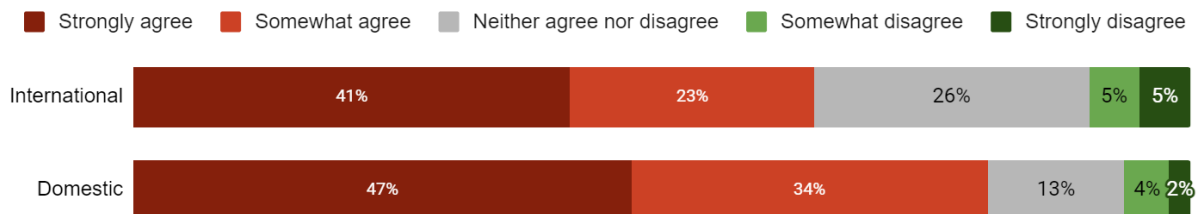


"Agree or disagree? I feel anxiety when thinking about the predictability of my total cost of education."

Predictability, of course, was the point of the cohort model and the justification for the major international tuition increase (27%, around \$6300/year) attached to that model's inception in 2020. This survey indicates that international students are much less likely than domestic students to feel anxiety about predictability.

However, 64% of international respondents still feel anxiety about predictability even after years of the cohort model. Potential reasons could be that the cohort model is not well understood, that financial aid uncertainty is a major factor, and/or that unpredictable housing and food costs (see the first question) weigh heavily on students' minds.

Feeling anxiety about the predictability of total cost of education



"If the University was going to allocate more money toward academic support, what resources/priorities/issues come to mind?"

Students provided over 6,600 words in these responses. The word 'tuition' appeared 220 times.

International Respondents

Very frequent responses mentioned housing, health (including mental health), tuition reductions, and financial aid. Some responses of note:

- Academic excellence scholarships for international students.
- Academic help center for high year of engineering.
- Allowing more scholarships in diverse fields.
- Cheaper textbook alternatives.
- I would recommend career support/recruiting encouragement.
- Increasing part time job opportunities for students to earn extra.
- More hours of tutoring.
- More spaces in classes and better system.
- More ways to tutor people who are nervous and shy one on one or in groups in person.
- Tutors for higher level courses. The lower level classes have plenty of help, but the upper level ones have almost nothing.
- writing supports

Domestic Respondents

Again, frequent responses touched on mental health and cost reductions. Disability and accessibility issues, including physical accessibility and neurodivergence, were very common here. Several students highlighted a connection between tuition increases and the cost of food. Some responses of note:

- A 24/7 study space. Due to the housing crisis in Canada, housing is so expensive that I, and a lot of my classmates must live very far away from campus, so when it is late, I really do not feel safe travelling home. I'd rather have a safe study space in a library or similar in which I can study during nighttime hours, 24/7.
- A better online portal (eClass) and better tutoring.
- Academic scheduling — bad timing, multiple midterms on the same day.
- Academic support for students with mental health issues (e.g. ADHD). I wanted to join the CCS workshops for managing ADHD this term, but there were no times available that worked for me and no way of accessing the workshops outside of those times.
- Academic support may come as a way of more support to the campus fund bank so no student has to go hungry while studying.
- Access to textbooks and online journal websites without having students pay out of pocket for required materials.
- Accessibility and accommodation on campus and educating professors on how to handle accommodations.
- Accessibility on campus.

- Actually accessible counsellors. They're too busy to do anything except an initial consultation.
- Additional resources for biology courses. I notice there are many study sessions for chemistry courses and a help room, but there is little for biology.
- Better coverage for mental health resources like therapy services (outside of campus).
- Better lecturer education (how to explain concepts well in class for everybody).
- Better mental health resources and financial aid for long term mental health problems.
- Better pathways.
- Bring in and make space for more doctors and mental health professionals so that people actually bother seeking help without knowing they'll get put on a waitlist for an entire semester.
- Bursaries, so that more people can access them and get more appropriate levels of support for their financial needs. The biggest problem causing academic failure tends to be a lack of financial resources, leading to things like hunger, extreme stress, unfavourable living conditions, having to work while studying, etc., all of which do not make for a good state of mind or state of life for academic success.
- Creating more resources for low income and independent students.
- Currently the counselling centres are overloaded and it's super hard to actually get a consult but the services are so needed.
- Decima Robinson.
- Easier access to basic shit like talking to someone. All these programs are cool and I but direct communication has been diluted a lot.
- Engineering mental health specifically.
- Ensuring all faculty and staff are adequately trained and prepared for handling students with accommodations in their classes. It's disappointing to see how oblivious some are to the needs of their students.
- Establishing community relations amongst students and faculty. It feels lonely on campus.
- Food cost on campus (other than in SUB Mart) is astronomical, we need access to cheaper food on campus because I eat one meal a day, it's all I can afford. Sometimes it's only a drink I can afford.
- For the love of god please help with tuition for all students. The prices are getting way out of hand.
- Given the cost of tuition, I would appreciate if all microwaves were working (and replaced relatively quickly when broken). If all lights worked in the study spaces, same with the power outlets when I go to plug in my computer. It would be nice if it didn't take weeks to get answers from the registrar when reaching out with requests.
- Good accessible pedways or spaces that can let you travel from one part of the university to another. Seems definitely hard for people that are from FAB to SUB (for example) to get materials with the external elements of weather and the long walk. Or even access areas or alleys near the school that are too dark or seem unsafe to walk into - perhaps lights or any fixtures that would make it brighter and safer now that winters are coming.

- Hire more staff to reduce wait times for support and counselling services. Make sure the staff are compassionate and not making issues worse.
- Hybridized academic help vs only in person academic centers.
- I am a graduate student who does biological research. It would be great if we had a bioinformatics core or support system. Or statistics support for researchers so we get the stats right in our papers.
- I do wish it was easier to access mental health resources outside of the "standard" issues (coming from someone who went looking for support for a not so standard issue). My current only experience seeking guidance was met with an immediate assumption that I'd just googled some symptoms and decided something was wrong with me, I felt very much like the doctor I spoke with was convinced as soon as I'd mentioned my issues that I was convinced it was worse than it was and there was no consideration that I could have been correct in my concerns or ideas about what is happening to me.
- I have both parents supporting me, at the same time we have 4/5 people in the household having disabilities or chronic illnesses meaning even though we make a collective \$110,000, we live CLOSE TO THE POVERTY LINE. I receive almost 0, if not 0, government or school funding. They won't even give me permanent disability funding because my parents technically make middle class.
- Provide more scholarship opportunities and some that aren't about extracurriculars. Like for example, I know many people who prioritize their grades over everything and simply do not have the time to be part of the exec team of random student groups because they are too busy getting a 4.0 and in their free time working to pay for tuition. To them is it worth it to take less hours of work to be in clubs? Or to study less and lose their 4.0? And they can't be eligible for most scholarships because of this. In general though maybe some more academic tutoring.
- I feel like career counselling should be free for students. Why is it \$50 per session when we already pay tuition to go here.
- I find academic writing center workshops helpful.
- I think reorganizing degree sequencing would help.
- I want support staff back. Where did they all go?
- I would like to see libraries open later; it's a little thing but it would help.
- Idk. I don't have the mental energy to solve this problem. Consult experts instead of asking students to come up with solutions to problems beyond their knowledge.
- Imagine having actual mental health resources, and not just overburdened badly structured system that only takes you if you've tried to hurt yourself a few times.
- Improving access to gender neutral bathrooms.
- Keeping buildings in better condition (washrooms that work specifically), and more scholarships available (even just multiple small ones).
- Lessen the cost of residence, improve after hours building access via ONEcard, and increase funding for academic accommodations.
- Lots of scholarships rely on people going above and beyond. It leaves disabled people who can't do that in the dust and without aid. How am I supposed to demonstrate leadership and excellence if I'm struggling to exist day to day because of my disability?

- Low income and low middle class income. Parking grants cause parking is so expensive. It's not always feasible or safe to bus in the winter. More scholarships not focused on academic achievement or school involvement. Such as writing contests (short story or essays) or art contests/ challenges.
- Lower tuition; I don't understand why they added things like VR to the new ECHA library, seems like a waste of money.
- Maybe more services at the writing center. Make it more well known!!
- Maybe some more leniency towards midterm exam conflicts instead of just having the percentage being transferred to the final.
- Mental health and building structure in students lives, lots of us haven't written exams since grade 9 or 10 so don't know what the process is like anymore.
- Mental health for neurodivergent people.
- More inclusive autism educated supports. As an autistic student I've found it difficult to use services provided by the university (academic, health centre, mental health supports) because everyone either knows nothing about autism or only knows a few stereotypes. Most methods of being provided help or service are not done in ways that work for me. I think differently, process the world differently, and have different struggles. The knowledge gap around autism, especially high making, afab, or bipoc, really limits my ability to use services or benefit from them.
- More jobs for students related to their fields.
- Please please please give students more help with offsetting tuition costs. Having to pay nearly 10k a year to go here (which is relatively cheap compared to other universities, but still) is entirely unreasonable and is the reason that many of my friends are either struggling to eat, or have ended up homeless.
- Restoring the chem labs in the Chem building. Those things really need to fix the equipment. Also, the elevators in the GSB are always broken.
- Scholarships for students to be able to engage in research but receive minimum wage. To make research more accessible to low income students, rural students paying rent, etc.
- Somehow make it safer for people on the LRT. And more secluded spaces for phone call appointments and such. I couldn't do one at my place and the study rooms were not private enough so I had to do an hour long doctors appointment in the bathroom.
- The Industrial Design Studio. The building is literally falling apart with leaks, heaters have fallen off the walls, we can't drink the tap water, and the coaches are falling apart.
- The wifi connection in certain buildings like education, and some lower levels of CCIS are just incredibly slow. Lecture rooms in buildings like Tory and some on the first level of ETLC have uncomfortable seating and pull-out tables that do not function properly. It's kind of difficult to write exams when what's in front of you is repeatedly sliding off because the table that you're writing on is extremely slanted or wobbly for its duration.
- They should stop raising tuition and focus on quality of education. We're all reading what the union is saying about how they're going to make half a billion dollars in tuition by 2030 and yet our teachers don't get paid.

- To alleviate some stress around food, there can be more hotdog/pancake events. The university as a whole as well as individual faculties can support their students this way.
- Upgrade the small desks in Tory.
- Warm clothing.
- Why doesn't the school encourage the option for remote learning. Many of these courses don't support it and it's a pain in the ass.

"Do you experience any issues or inconveniences with Indigenous-specific student aid like PSSSP or community sponsorship/grants?" [Indigenous students only.]

- Grants are typically given well beyond the tuition deadline so it makes it hard to create that money before it arrives.
- I do find issues finding them. I don't know where to look.
- I don't experience any issue however I don't know what PSSSP is as a Métis student.
- I find a lot of grants are very specific to certain faculties and fields of studies, which is great, but it would be nice to have some more general ones.
- I find it difficult to access/receive RLI [Rupert's Land Institute] funding.
- I have trouble working with communication between the university and Rupert's Land Institute for Métis funding. I end up paying out of pocket for paperwork that I shouldn't have to so I can secure my funding.
- I worry that with the rising cost of tuition my funding won't cover all of it and I will have to pay out of pocket. I also have no idea how to apply for student loans should I need them.
- I'm Indigenous, but feel wrong applying for grants due to my white complexion.
- Ineligibility for certain aids due to not being status.
- My band can be slow to contact, and the whole student dental and health benefits combined with tuition can cause some issues. I also am getting less money for my condensed practicum courses despite taking the same amount of credits and being in class almost the same amount of hours (14vs15).
- My band often doesn't receive the required invoice they need to cover costs in residence prior to the deadline.
- No, I find the programs and support has been very good for me as a Métis student, from awards such as Inspire etc.
- No I have issues with sponsorships tho
- Rupert's Land Institute has been very helpful over the course of my undergrad degree. No issues with them at all.
- Yes, I am not getting PSSSP.
- Yes, I applied for funding through the RLI back in May and just heard back at the end of October that I was approved. While this was great news, I had been trying to balance working full time on top of coming to school full time in order to pay my bills and tuition since September.
- Yes, it's hard to get band funding.
- Yes. Everything is slower coming in for student aid for Indigenous students.