

St. Francis Xavier University Consultation Agreement

Between:

St. Francis Xavier Students' Union (Students' Union)

and:

St. Francis Xavier University (University)

WHEREAS the University is committed to being a student centric institution, one that values and respects the views of the student body and;

WHEREAS the University recognizes and values the importance of the student voice in decision making processes;

WHEREAS the Students' Union is recognized as the primary liaison between the student body and the University Administration and;

WHEREAS both the University and the Students' Union are committed to responsible and informed consultation regarding the operations of the university;

It is hereby agreed that:

1. There will be student involvement in appropriate committees and other university forums.
2. Students will be consulted with regards to any addition or changes to tuition and fees.
3. The University and the Students' Union will respect, value and exemplify the following consultation principles:

Accountability and Transparency:

Demonstrated by:

- a) Providing adequate information to allow an informed response.
- b) Responding to information requests in a timely manner.
- c) Provision of information to ensure that designated funds are utilized for intended purposes.
- d) Regularly reviewing fees/relevant policies to ensure effectiveness and applicability.

Mutual Respect:

Demonstrated by:

- a) Adhering to established timelines.
- b) Cooperation for the good of StFX throughout the consultation process.
- c) Efficient and effective resolution of any disagreements or disputes by means of a collaborative process.
- d) Presenting information in plain language free of jargon.
- e) Clearly defining any necessary acronyms, explaining technical terms, and/or include a glossary of supporting terms.
- f) Offering genuine options:
 - i. Considering alternative plans where necessary.
 - ii. Ensuring that alternatives provided throughout the process are realistic and achievable.

Inclusion:

Demonstrated by:

- a) Consulting a variety of students and campus stakeholders.
- b) Respecting and accommodating the diverse needs and priorities that exist within the student body.
- c) Employing varying methods of communication.

4. The following process will be followed with respect to tuition, fee changes and introduction of new fees:

4.1 Changes to Tuition

1. All proposed tuition increases will be presented to the University Budget Committee for consideration.
2. For any change to tuition that is less than or equal to 3% presentation of the tuition increase and rationale to the University Budget Committee will be sufficient consultation.
3. For any change to tuition that is greater than 3%:
 - a) The University Administration shall notify the Students' Union President as outlined in Section 4.3.
 - b) The Students' Union President shall present the proposed tuition change along with supporting information to the Students' Union Representative Council (herein Council) for consideration.
 - c) The University will offer information sessions to inform students of proposed tuition increases along with rationale.
 - d) The results of the Council's vote on the proposed tuition change shall be made known to the University Budget Committee and the Board of Governors prior to their voting on the tuition change.

4. If the proposed tuition changes impact only a portion of the student body then the consultation process will be adjusted to ensure input is received from the impacted constituencies prior to approval of the tuition increases.
5. If the proposed tuition increase will only impact newly enrolled students, Section 4.1.2 applies.
6. If the University aims to restructure its tuition schedule from a program-based approach to a credit-based approach then all relevant information will be presented to the University Budget Committee. Given the varying impact that this change may have on individual programs the University will work with the Students' Union to develop appropriate consultation with the Student Body.

4.2 Ancillary and Auxiliary Fees

1. All proposed fee increases will be presented to the University Budget Committee for consideration.
2. For any proposed increase in fees that is less than or equal to 3% presentation of the fee increase and rationale to the University Budget Committee will be sufficient consultation.
3. For any proposed increase in fees that is greater than 3% but less than or equal to 5%:
 - a) The University Administration shall notify the Students' Union President as outlined in Section 4.3.
 - b) The Students' Union President shall present the proposed fee change along with supporting information to the Students' Union Representative Council (Council) for consideration.
 - c) The results of the Council's vote on the proposed fee change shall be made known to the University Budget Committee and the Board of Governors prior to their voting on the fee change.
4. For any proposed increase in fees that is greater than 5% or planned introduction of a new fee:
 - a) The University Administration shall notify the Students' Union President as outlined in the Section 4.3.
 - b) The Students' Union President shall present the proposed fee change along with supporting information to the Council for consideration.
 - c) At the discretion of the Council a student referendum (see Appendix A) may be run to seek approval for the fee change.
 - d) The results of either Council's vote or the student referendum shall be made known to the University Budget Committee and the Board of Governors prior to their voting on the fee change.

- e) In any case where a student referendum returns a result that shows greater than 75% against the change, the fee change will not be implemented.
5. If any of the proposed fee changes impact only a portion of the student body then the consultation process will be adjusted to ensure input is received from the impacted constituencies prior to approval of the fee increases.
- a) The University Administration shall notify the Students' Union President as outlined in the Section 4.3.
 - b) For any change to an existing fee that is less than or equal to 3%, Section 4.2.2 applies.
 - c) For any change to an existing fee that is greater than 3% but less than or equal to 5%, Section 4.2.3 applies.
 - d) For any change to an existing fee that is greater than 5%, Section 4.2.4 applies.
6. If the proposed fee increase will only impact newly enrolled students, Section 4.2.2 applies.

4.3 Introduction of New Fees

1. All proposed new fees will be presented to the University Budget Committee for consideration.
2. Following the timelines outlined in Section 4.4, the University Administration must present to the Students' Union President, a Terms of Reference for any new fees to be introduced. This Terms of Reference shall describe in detail what the fees will be used for, the duration that the fee will be imposed and reporting that will be done to ensure funds are used as intended.

4.4 Timeline for Fee Consultation

1. Whereas the consultation in regards to financial processes is more rigidly defined by a budgetary timeline of the University, the following timeline for all such financial consultation shall be followed for each fiscal year:
 - a) December 31 - University Administration shall submit, in writing, any additions of fees or changes to existing tuition and fees to the Students' Union President
 - b) February 15- The Students' Union President shall respond to University Administration based on the student consultation as outlined in this document.


4.5 Inflation Adjustment

In any year where the Canadian Consumer Price Index increases by greater than 3% the percentages contained in this agreement will be increased by a corresponding amount.


5. Term

The initial term of this agreement will begin on March 1, 2016 and end on February 28, 2019. This agreement may be renewed after the initial three year term and is subject to an annual review.


Signed, this 2 day of MARCH in the year 2016.




Troy Mrazek
President
St. Francis Xavier University
Students' Union



Dr. Kent MacDonald
President & Vice-Chancellor
St. Francis Xavier University



Alexandra Carney
Vice President Finance & Ops
St. Francis Xavier University
Students' Union



Mr. Andrew P. Beckett
Vice President Finance & Admin
St. Francis Xavier University

Appendix A: University Initiated Referendum

1. Each referendum question will deal with only one issue.
2. The Chief Returning Officer will ensure that all referendum questions are concise and clear.
3. Referenda must be held during the month of January, with results sent to the University Administration no later than February 15.
4. Quorum for all referenda shall be fifty percent (50%) of the student membership.
5. Any motion to place a question before the Union through a referendum must be presented as a written motion and signed by at least four (4) members of Council and distributed to all Council members at a meeting of Council. The motion shall then be put on the agenda of the next Council meeting at which time it will be discussed and voted upon. If passed, the question will be put to the student membership during the following referendum period.
6. Council and University Administration must approve the wording of the referendum question no less than twenty-one (21) days prior to the beginning of the referendum vote.
7. A veto by the Students' Union shall be warranted if the referendum results in 75% opposition by the voters to the proposed fee increase.