UBC Board of Governors c/o UBC Board of Governors Secretariat  
6328 Memorial Road, Room 121  
Old Administration Building  
Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z2

March 8, 2014

AMS Submission to Board of Governors regarding the proposed tuition structure for the Masters of Law in Common Law Per-Credit Tuition Structure and Unclassified Student Tuition

Dear UBC Board of Governors,

This submission is being made on behalf of the Alma Mater Society (AMS) of UBC Vancouver in response to the request for feedback from the Vice-President Students’ Office sent to the AMS on March 2nd, 2014. Student representatives were invited to engage in a discussion regarding the same with the Faculty of Law in the presence of the Director of the VP Students’ Office on March 7th, 2014. This submission outlines the student response to and concerns with the proposed tuition and the consultation process.

Overall, the AMS extend support to the outlined. The two changes make perfect sense and may even reduce costs for some domestic students. The first change is to move from a program cost to a per credit cost. The new domestic and international tuition has simply been calculated by dividing the program cost by the average number of credits taken by students, which will not change costs for students taking an average course load. The second change is to create the ability for unclassified students to take these courses, and the per-credit cost will simply be the same as for students registered in the program.

That said, there are concerns with the process in which this consultation was carried out. Our largest concern as student representatives is the extremely short timeframe in which the tuition consultation process was conducted. We commend the Faculty of Law for their openness to dialogue, however are disappointed with the lack of time for gathering feedback from various student groups. The AMS was expected to meet with the Faculty and produce a submission to the proposed fee structure within a week.

In the future, we recommend the University to amend its new program tuition consultation guidelines and take proactive measures to involve students in the consultation process for at least 30 days rather than the provided week for this item. This would enable the AMS to discuss the proposal with a more diverse range of students in greater detail without feeling rushed into decisions, and ensure proper accountability to students at large when developing new programs.
The AMS, on behalf of UBC students, is grateful to the University and Faculty of Law for including student input through various points in the process. The AMS strongly encourages the University to act on the above-mentioned recommendations in order to enhance and improve future consultation processes.

Sincerely,

Anne Kessler
Vice-President Academic and University Affairs
Alma Mater Society of UBC Vancouver
vpacademic@ams.ubc.ca