



Date: January 29, 2018 (revised)
(original submission: December 21, 2017)

To: Tatiana Gilbert, President, TRU Students Union

Cc: Christine Bovis-Crossen, Provost and Vice-President Academic
Karen Gamracy, Director of Advancement

From: Michael Bluhm, AVP Enrolment Services & University Registrar
Gordon Down, Manager Student Awards & Financial Support

Re: **Student Budget Consultation Report 2018/19 Response – Student Awards and Financial Support**

Ms. Gilbert,

Thank you for providing us with TRUSU's annual budget consultation report, and the additional details regarding the students' priority of seeing improvements to student awards and financial support. The concerns raised by students re-affirm for us the impact our work has on students and their educational journey, and the importance of adequately resourcing the services we provide.

You may recall, for two consecutive years the Division of Enrolment Services and University Registrar has acknowledged a nearly 50% increase in Foundation awards in the past five years with budget (Strategic Initiative Fund) requests for additional staff resources in order to keep pace and balance the administration of these awards with service and outreach to students.

Despite these SIF budget requests being unsuccessful, the Student Awards and Financial Support team has continued to work on incremental efficiencies in processes to absorb a growing volume of Foundation awards due to the great work of the Advancement office, and, most recently, new processes relating to provincial government mechanisms fostering greater access to postsecondary education (ABE tuition waivers; tuition funded for former youth in care). In addition to these initiatives and continued growth in donor-funded awards, we are anticipating a substantial increase in base-funded award money as a result of revenue from The Reach development on campus and the efforts of TRU Community Trust in the coming years.

Changes this year to the budget process have led to an opportunity for us to reframe our request for additional staff resources as a supplemental budget request rather than a SIF proposal. While we recognise that our request still competes with many other priorities across the VP Academic portfolio, we believe it is a viable request with a broad scope to serve students across the university. More specifically, this request is to fund a full-time ongoing Awards Coordinator position that will broaden the bandwidth of the Student Awards and Financial Support team, both at a functional and strategic planning level. This position is the top budget priority for the Division of Enrolment Services and University Registrar and we are hopeful that, in the coming months, we will have certainty to move forward with filling this position.

In addition to the proposed Awards Coordinator position, we have engaged with an external consultant to look at the organisational structure, processes and workflow within the Student Awards and Financial Support office. This work will take place during the first quarter of 2018 in preparation for the Awards Coordinator position to begin this spring. The consultant's work will give us further insight into areas where we could find greater process efficiencies and improved alignment of service with students' needs.

We anticipate that, the proposed installation of the Awards Coordinator position, in conjunction with the consulting work we're doing now, will mean that we can further advance our ongoing audit of financial aid offerings as well as prospective student need. Unfortunately, without the Awards Coordinator position, this work will continue at a slower pace than we would like.

We believe these collective efforts to take stock and bolster service provision and the administration of awards and financial support will be reflected in applicant conversion and student retention metrics as outlined in the draft institutional Strategic Enrolment Management plan's goals and objectives (see summary attached).

We look forward to enhancements which will more effectively assist students with a diverse array of money matters and raise students' awareness of the supports that are available to them.

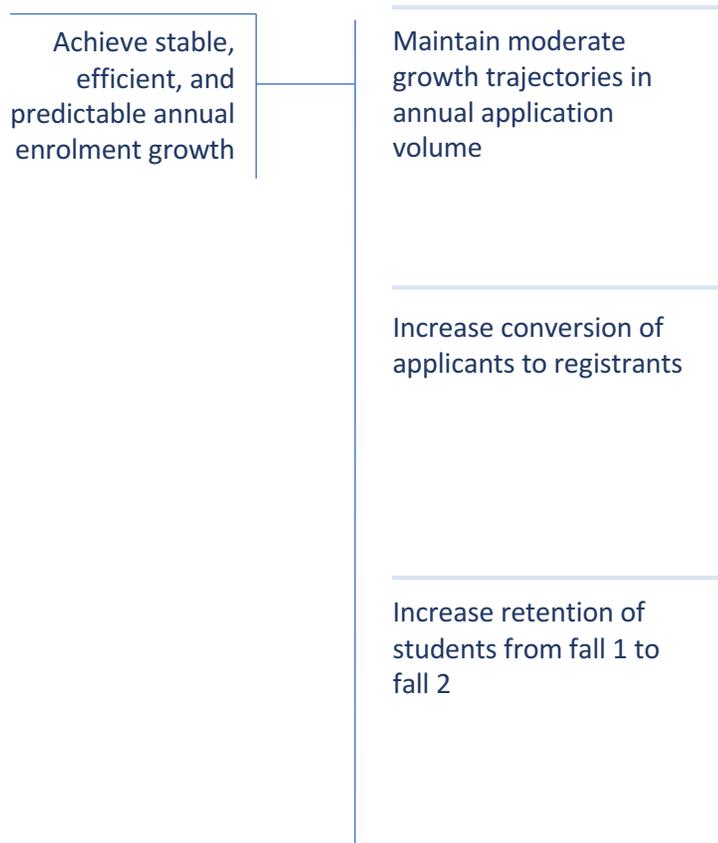
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael Bluhm', with a stylized, cursive style.

Michael Bluhm
AVP Enrolment Services & University Registrar

TRU SEM PLAN - DRAFT

GOALS



OBJECTIVES

