Brantford Athletic Fees: JLC Summary

# Background

A new YMCA (called the Brantford Laurier YMCA) will open in September near the Brantford Campus, and will be used by Laurier as its athletic facility for students and faculty.

Athletic fees rates are outlined in the Full-time Collective Agreement, 28.3.1: “Members shall have the right to use the University’s athletic facilities upon payment of an annual fee…” Currently the annual fee is $257.47 (this rises each year).

# JLC Discussion

At JLC, the Administration argued that the intent of the current CA language restricts it to the Waterloo athletic facilities, since no other facilities existed when the language was negotiated. Therefore, fees for new facilities should be considered separately in an LOU.

They also argued that the services offered at the Waterloo and Brantford facilities are not equivalent. The Waterloo fee is a base rate that covers access to the gym, equipment and pool; any other services, such as classes or lessons, require additional fees. The Brantford facility is all-inclusive; membership includes unlimited classes and lessons and personal training, as well as services not offered in Waterloo (e.g. sauna and hot tub). The YMCA has no way to split up or package services so some groups have more limited access than others. Membership is portable and includes access to any other Canadian YMCA facility.

The WLUFA JLC members did accept that the current CA rate is meant historically to apply to the Waterloo facility, and that there is enough difference in services offered between the two campuses that different fees would be warranted. Part of our consideration is that Brantford students will pay higher athletic fees than Waterloo students (39% vs 32% of their total student fees).

The Administration’s initial proposal for separate Brantford fees was the same as the standard fee available to any Brantford community member, with no discount, and with a $100 one-time fee to join. The WLUFA members on JLC pointed out that since the athletic fees are under the Benefits article in the CA, there should be some benefit provided to Brantford faculty. After discussions, we have recently agreed to a more reasonable fee proposal for Brantford faculty.

# Brantford Fees

The Brantford athletic fees will be $402.55/yr. To arrive at this rate, the Administration used the same discount received by Waterloo faculty. To calculate this, they:

1. calculated what Waterloo fees would be at the non-discounted community rate for base services plus classes, to arrive at an equivalent level of services offered at the Brantford YMCA
2. calculated that Laurier faculty receive a 34% on this community rate
3. looked at Brantford Laurier YMCA Adult General fees (see <https://www.ymcahbb.ca/Join-the-YMCA/Laurier-Brantford-YMCA/How-to-Join>). These fees are the standard rates for community members at YMCA locations in the Hamilton-Brantford area.
4. calculated a 34% discount on the Brantford Laurier YMCA fees. Based on a $606.06 annual YMCA Adult General rate, the discounted fees are $402.55/yr. If Brantford Members want a family membership, they pay $38/month in addition to their discounted membership rate (or $24.50 for children under 13 only).
5. For details, see the Brantford Athletic Fees spreadsheet.

The 34% discount, along with the $100 one-time membership fee, is being subsidized by the University as a benefit. Only Brantford faculty will receive this subsidy.

We realize that some Brantford faculty may not be pleased that their rate is higher than the Waterloo rate, but feel this approach is fair. The discount is equivalent to the one that Waterloo faculty receive. Although the fees are higher, the services provided are also greater.

In fact, Brantford faculty will actually be paying less than Waterloo faculty for equivalent services; the Waterloo rate with classes is $527.46, or $124.91 more than the Brantford Laurier YMCA rate. Given this higher rate for a lower level of service, WLUFA may want to consider proposing additional subsidies for Waterloo athletic fee rates during next round of negotiations.

Joanne Oud

JLC Co-chair

Aug 16, 2018