

Fitness Centre Expansion Fee

The 2024 writ of election for the Carleton University ancillary fee referenda has been issued by Melanie Chapman, University Ombudsperson and Chief Electoral Officer (CEO).

Architectural Renderings:







The Fitness Centre Expansion Fee will:

- Expand the current size of the Fitness Centre to 32,000 sq. ft., over two levels (current size of the Fitness Centre is 11,000 sq. ft.)
- Include all new cardio and weight training equipment
- Include four new Multipurpose Activities rooms for enhanced fitness classes
- Include a women's only fitness area
- Include Group Fitness classes in the Athletics Fee (yoga, spin, strength, Pilates)
- Include common areas and study space for all students
- NOT be paid by students until the construction is complete and the expanded facility is open (projected fall 2028)
- Will remain lower than the average Athletics fee charged at Ontario Universities
- Alumni discount of 25% will still apply to the new facility

Some Questions Answered:

Why does Athletics need an increase in the Athletics Fee?

The Department of Athletics and Recreation is an Ancillary Department, meaning we do not receive a budget from the University. The Department receives money from student fees,

which make up 38% of the revenue used to cover operating costs. The rest of the revenue is generated from external sources like summer camps, rentals and adult leagues.

The current facility is inadequate for the student population of roughly 30,000 students. The number one complaint by students is the overcrowding of the gym, followed by the failing and aging equipment.

The proposal for the additional Athletics Fee will enable the construction of this new Fitness Centre and give students a brand-new, state-of-the-art, facility.

What other benefits will the new facility provide?

The facility will include 4 new multipurpose rooms for strength, spin, yoga, and Pilates classes. Group fitness classes will also be included in the Athletics fee, whereas currently student pay extra for group fitness classes.

The new facility will also include plenty of modern common space for students to socialize and study. There will also be dining options within the facility.

What is the timeline for the completion of the new Fitness Centre?

Construction of the new Fitness Centre is projected to start in Spring 2026. The construction is expected to take two years to complete. During that time, the current Fitness Centre will be fully operational.

Toward the end of construction, the current Fitness Centre will be impacted as they link the existing facility with the new expansion. However, this will take place in the spring or summer when fewer students are on campus and using the facility.

What service disruption in the current fitness centre will result from the construction?

Minimal disruption is expected for most of the construction period. A more detailed construction schedule will be available in the months following a successful Yes vote in the referendum.

What will happen to the old Fitness Centre?

The old Fitness Centre will remain in place. The new facility will be an extension on the existing space with two floors - one for cardio and one for weight training. The interior will be renovated, and the equipment will be replaced with new, modern equipment.

Will the Student Athletes benefit from the new facility?

Varsity athletes will continue to use the existing High Performance Centre for their training. All student athletes, however, will have access to the Fitness Centre and multipurpose rooms. And like all students, student athletes will benefit from the modern common space the facility will provide for socializing and studying.

How do our fees compare to other Ontario Universities?

Currently, the Carleton student Athletic Fee is one of the lowest in the country at \$119/term. With the new fee, the Carleton Athletic Fee will remain below the provincial average.

- The Athletic Fee is in the bottom third of all Ontario Universities (\$119 per term)
- In 2024, the average undergraduate fee at Ontario Universities was \$173 per term.

What do students get for their current Athletics Fees and how will this change with the increased fee?

The Athletics Fee helps to offset the costs of operating and maintaining the facilities and subsidises program costs for students. Students have access to a variety of services and programs including:

- Over 40 hours of pool access per week
- The existing 11,000 sq ft fitness centre
- The Field house and indoor track for jogging and indoor field sports
- Open recreation tennis, badminton, volleyball, basketball and squash, open skate times, recreation hockey and ringette
- 25% discount on most instructional and fitness programs
- 62% discount on intramural programs based on community league rates
- Varsity and competitive sport opportunities

With the new fee, student will continue to have access to all the items listed above but in a brand-new, state-of-the-art facility that is triple in size.

One noteworthy addition is that access to all Group Fitness Classes will be included in the Athletic Fee. Currently, Group Fitness (CUFIT) is an additional cost for students (\$100 per term).

How many students does the department employ?

Athletics is the biggest employer of students on campus. The Department spends \$2.5 million in part-time student salaries on an annual basis. This returns more than one third of the Athletics Fee directly back to students.

The expansion of the Fitness Centre will enable us to double the number of student staff, including personal trainers, and offer a variety of internships and work study program for students.

What happens if the referendum fails and there is no increase?

The Department would have to redesign the facility to be smaller in scale and increase revenue from external sources to cover the cost of the construction and new fitness equipment. We would also need to reassess our program offerings, operation hours, and fees.

What will happen to the parking in P5 when the new facility is built?

By the time the facility is finished, the LRT will be fully operational on campus (projected start date of Nov 2024). The University will also have had time to assess the impact of the LRT and develop a sufficient transportation strategy to meet student and community demand.

What is the cost of the Fitness Centre and what happens with the fee once the construction is paid for?

The Department will take a loan to finance the expansion of the Fitness Centre. The loan will take 30 years to pay off, and once completed, the life cycle of the facility will need to be considered. Like all buildings, there will be on-going operating and maintenance costs including staffing, utilities, fitness equipment and repairs.