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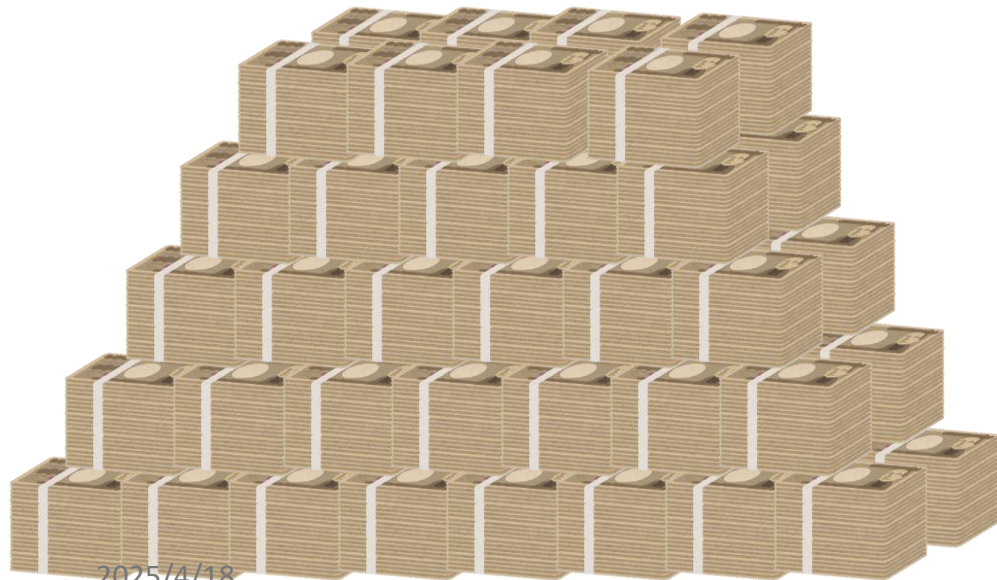
Basic idea behind the usage rules

- Minimize paperwork and time lag from application to start of use

- Quickly provide resources that would cost dozens of millions yens and take months to procure

- Welcome and encourage first-time users to try

- Create a community where experts from various fields of the university can easily meet, interact, and collaborate

Possibility of charges

- The gift credits are finite (USD 10M for 5 years) $\Rightarrow$ we can't say "you can use as much as you want for free"

- Give everybody an opportunity to use it during the 5 year period $\Rightarrow$ the simplistic first-come-first-serve rule is unacceptable

- The challenge is how to fairly allocate USD 10M to users, *without knowing in advance how many will use it and how much*

- A common approach is to let users write a research proposal and run a review committee, but it tends to
  - make the entry bar higher
  - and result in unused (or wasted) resources

The basic rule

- At the beginning of each month, decide the amount of gift credits all users can totally use for free ("*free tier*")

- At the end of each month, divide the free tier *fairly* to subscriptions

- If the total usage of all subscriptions $\leq$ the free tier
  $\Rightarrow$ no subscriptions are charged for the month

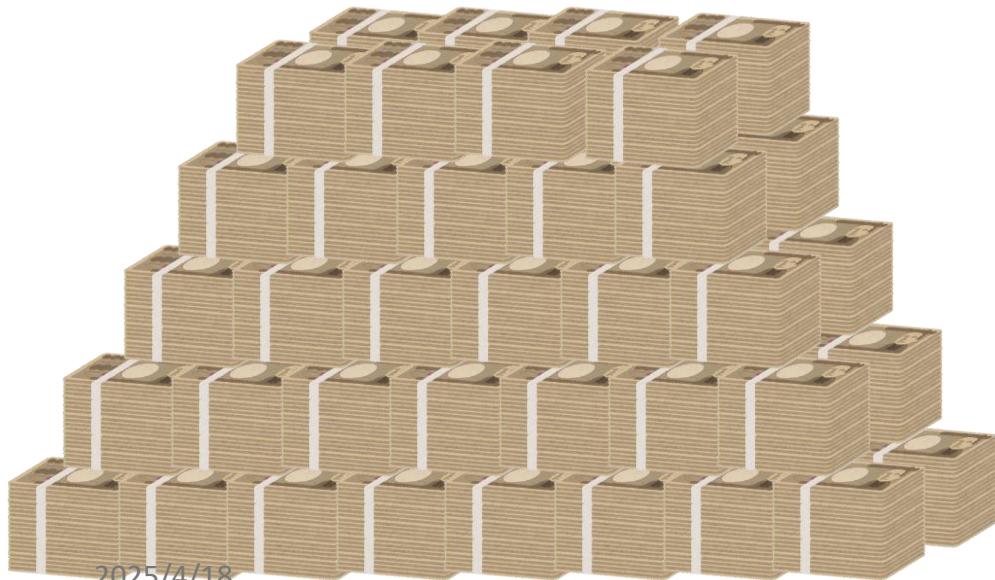Gift credits (initially 10M)
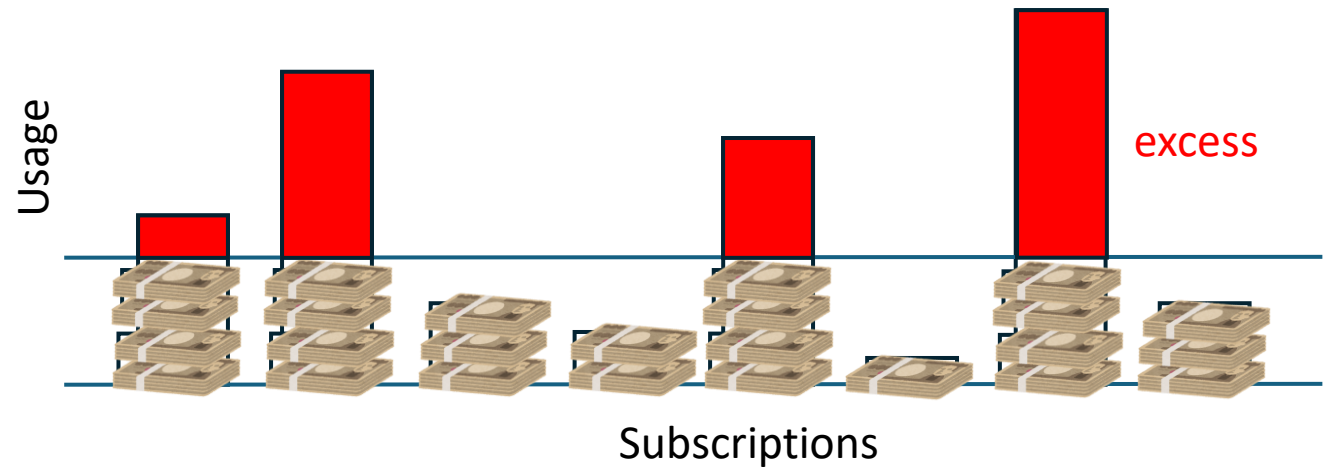
Usage

Subscriptions

Free tier

The basic rule

- Otherwise, comp up to a threshold
- Subscriptions that spend more than that are "excessive"
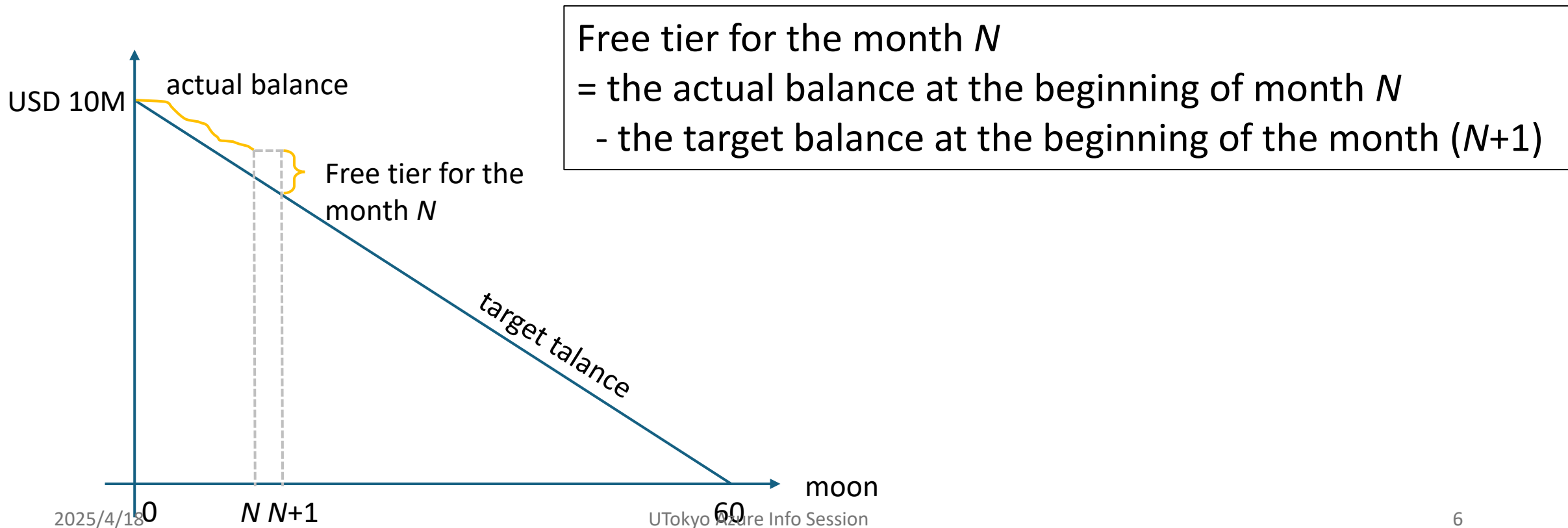 - The excess may not immediately become your bill (more on that later)

Gift credits (initially 10M)

excess
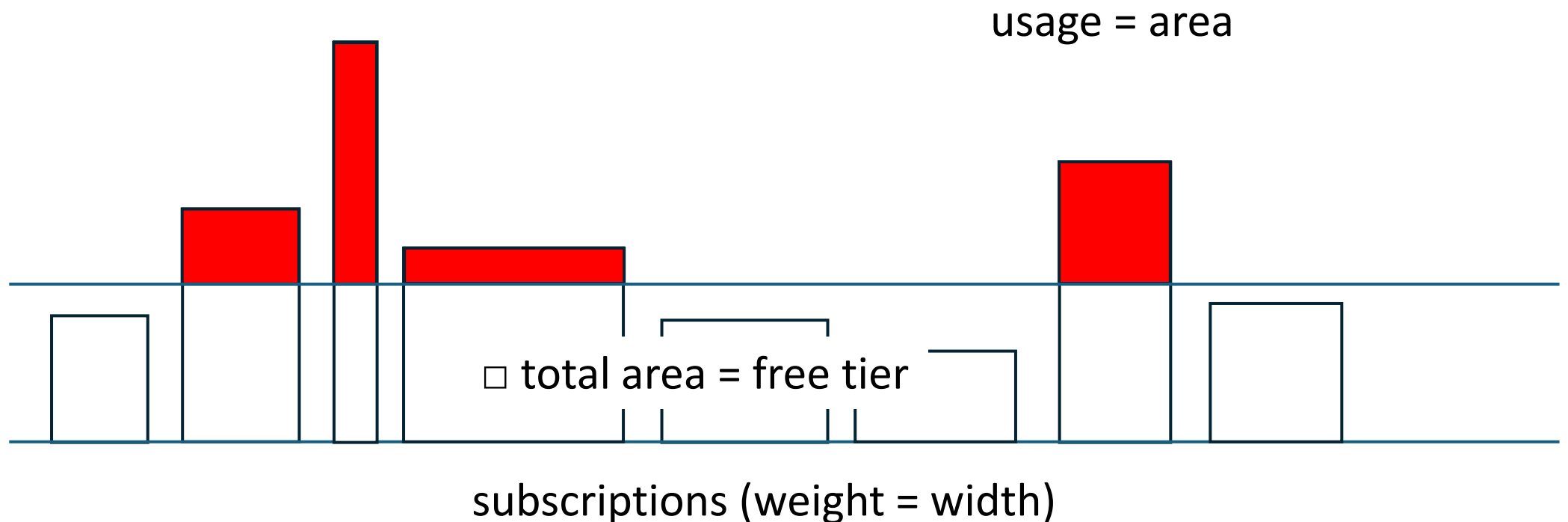
Usage

Subscriptions

Free tier

How to determine the free tier?

- Set the *"target balance"* of the credits that decreases in a constant pace
  - i.e., USD 10M in 5 years (60 months) ≈ USD 167K/month

Free tier for the month N
= the actual balance at the beginning of month N
  - the target balance at the beginning of the month (N+1)

actual balance

USD 10M

Free tier for the
month N

target talance

moon

0   N N+1   60

How to divide the free tier *fairly*?

- Roughly,
  - there are 10 subscriptions $\Rightarrow$ each one gets 1/10 of the free tier,
  - except that those who use less than that get up to the amount they actually use (i.e., *no roll over*)
- In addition, we take into account the number of people (N) registered in the subscription
  - give credits proportionally to the "weights" determined as follows
  - weight of N-member subscription $= \dfrac{N}{1 + \log_{10} N}$
  - slightly less than "N times for N members"

Illustration of how to divide the free tier

usage = area

□ total area = free tier
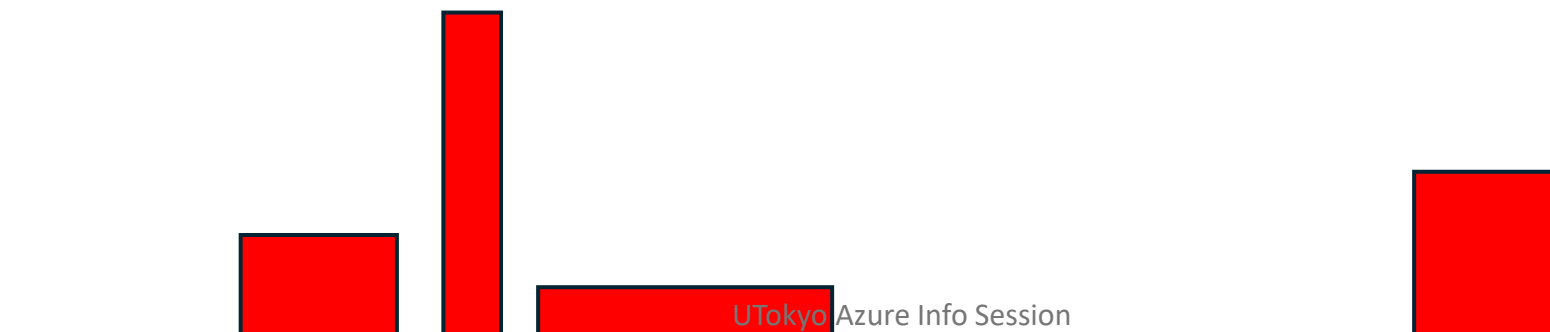
subscriptions (weight = width)

Exceeded usages and charges

- Usage beyond the allocated free credits = "excess"
- The excess amount will be carried over to the next month during a semester (= from that month to the next September or March)
  - excess usage may be offset by the free tier of subsequent month(s)
- The excess usage still remaining at the end of September or March becomes the actual charge on you

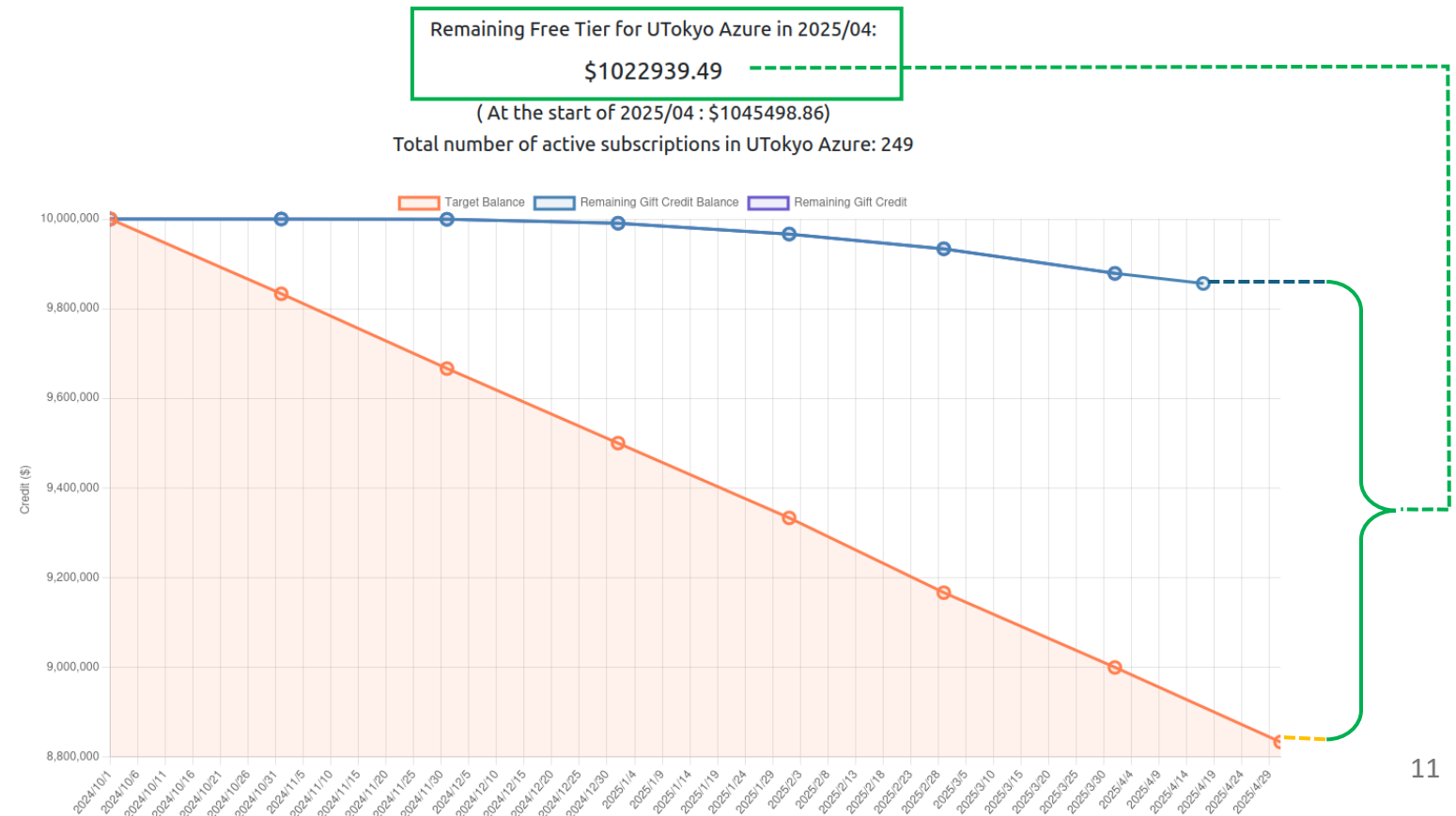State at the start of the month (N+1)

Planning your usage

- In particular, many of you will wonder "How much can I use without being charged?"

- Information you need:
  - How much is the free tier (of the whole university) this month?
  - How many subscriptions (weights, to be more precise) exist this month?
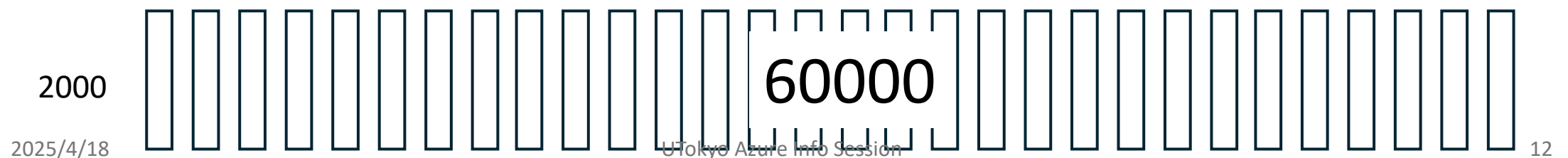 - How much does it cost to use services you use (price list)?

Free tier of the month

- ⇒ "UTokyo Azure Subscription Management" (on-campus access required) page
  - Remaining Free Tier for UTokyo Azure in XXXX/XX

Remaining Free Tier for UTokyo Azure in 2025/04:

$1022939.49

(At the start of 2025/04 : $1045498.86)

Total number of active subscriptions in UTokyo Azure: 249

"The guaranteed free tier" of subscription

- Let's say for example that on May 1st...
  - free tier of the month (of the whole university) = USD 60,000, and
  - there are 30 subscriptions (whose weights are all the same for simplicity)
- $\Rightarrow$ At this point, *you can deduce that each subscription can use, for free, at least* 60,000/30 = USD 2,000 in May
- Note that this can be known at the *beginning* of a month $\Rightarrow$ we call it "the guaranteed free credit" of that subscription of that month

2000

60000

How much is the guaranteed free tier of my subscription this month?

- ⇒ "UTokyo Azure Subscription Management" (on-campus access required) page
  - Guaranteed free tier and usage of your subscription
    - notified at the beginning of each month
  - Significance of guaranteed free tier : if your usage of the month is less than this, you won't be charged for that month, *no matter how much others use*

Guaranteed free tier for this subscription on 2025/03: $7895.6

Number of UTokyo Accounts having roles on this subscription: 4
Weight factor for this subscription: 1.0
Weight of this subscription: 2.5

As of 2025/03/26 14:40

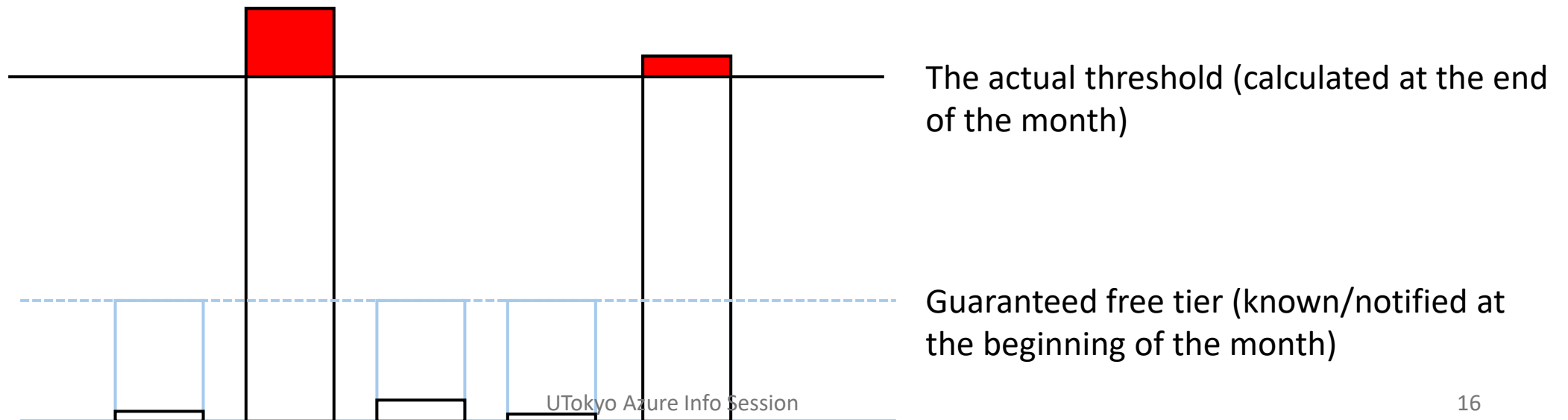| Period	2025/03	2025/02	2025/01	2024/12	2024/11	2024/10
Guaranteed free tier	$7895.6	$8152.7	$8046.9	$10895.5		
Usage (Carryover)	$1911.1 ($0.0)	$2433.3 ($0.0)	$2479.1 ($0.0)	$1626.4 ($0.0)		
Free Tier		$2433.3	$2479.1	$1626.4		
Charge		($0.0)	($0.0)	($0.0)	($0.0)	

Alert emails

- If the usage of a subscription exceeds a certain threshold (*), an alert email will be sent to its owner
  - Subject："Notification from UTokyo Azure: Subscription XYZ usage alert"
  - *: 50%, 75%, 90%, 100% of the guaranteed free tier

Important: automatic suspension

- By default, when a subscription uses 90% of the guaranteed free tier, *it will be automatically canceled (deleted) and all data will disappear*
  - so that you won't be charged in the default setting
- Unless you are OK with losing your work and data, please do the following ($\rightarrow$ Part 3)
  - Register a budget to pay for it (payment method)
  - Disable the automatic suspention toggle
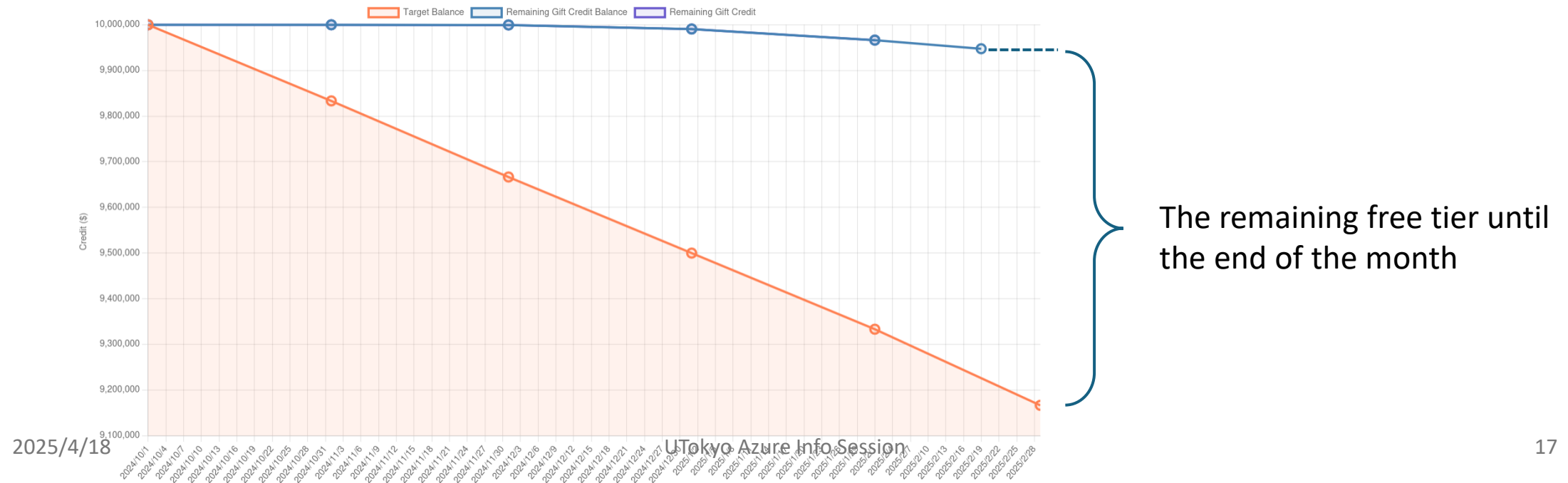
Want to use more than "guaranteed"?

- "The guaranteed free tier" is a conservative estimate, like:
  - *if you share a cake with five brothers and sisters, you can surely get 1/5*
- In practice, the remainder of underused subscriptions makes other subscriptions free, like:
  - *3 out of 5 didn't eat the cake until the expiration date → 2 can eat all*

The actual threshold (calculated at the end of the month)

Guaranteed free tier (known/notified at the beginning of the month)

To use more than guaranteed, …

- [On the "UTokyo Azure Subscription Management"](#) (On-campus access required) page, watch the remaining free tier of the month (of the whole university)

- Note that if everyone thinks the same, it may cost you (ouch!)
  - Don't forget to turn off the auto suspension (register billing info)

The remaining free tier until the end of the month

Tools to keep costs down

- You can calculate the approximate price with Azure's [pricing calculator](#)
  - Basis for using any service
- Some services in Azure (such as AI services) have safety valves that terminate after a period of inactivity