

Executive Summary

Governance

The Students' Union, University of Calgary (SU) is empowered by the Post-Secondary Learning Act, SA 2003, to act as the “students association” for the University of Calgary.

The SU therefore promotes the general welfare of students by championing their interests before relevant stakeholders, such as the University's administration and all levels of government. This duty is enshrined in its Union Bylaw (Section 5(1)(c) amended April 2024).

Advocacy Policy Framework

The purpose of the Advocacy Policy Framework is to consolidate the SU's current advocacy priorities and positions, and to clearly outline specific actions the SU seeks from all relevant stakeholders. It will be a living document that can be regularly reviewed to reflect new topics of interest and incorporate new data, up to and including new advocacy positions.

This way, the Framework can be applied to a broader audience than policy documents of the past, which were structured in legislative formats and lacked clear communication of the SU's positions and recommendations to decision-makers and stakeholders.

Specifically, this Framework will span both internal asks and internal facing content, and external asks and external facing content.

Contents

Campus Infrastructure
Open Educational Resources
Mental Health
Housing
Financial Aid

Sustainability
Tuition and Fees
Student Jobs
Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Prevention
Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

Statement

The Students' Union (SU) recognises campus infrastructure as vital to student welfare, academic success, and the student experience at the University of Calgary. Infrastructure investment directly impacts productivity and institutional reputation.

The SU advocates for a holistic, inclusive understanding of what students require from campus infrastructure. Communal spaces, study areas, facilities and IT services—and the accessibility standards of each—must be prioritised and frequently evaluated to meet the ever-evolving needs of students at the University of Calgary.

Background Rationale and Principles

As of 2023, the University of Calgary has outstanding repairs and maintenance which would cost \$740 million¹ to resolve. This presents not only an obstacle to providing a safe, well-maintained and accessible campus for its existing students, but also for the additional 10,000 undergraduates the University aims to enrol by 2030.²

Compounding matters is that provincial funding for post-secondary education in Alberta was cut by half a billion dollars between 2019 and 2023.³ The financial strain of repairs and upkeep at the University of Calgary will increase without interventions from relevant stakeholders.

Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholders	What action(s)/support does the SU want?
<p>Students' Union (Students' Legislative Council and Executives)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote a holistic, inclusive understanding of student needs regarding campus infrastructure, including but not limited to classrooms, study areas, social spaces, accessibility, and IT support. Engage with the University concerning the practice of deferred maintenance and campus infrastructure, emphasising the importance of prioritising student needs in decision-making around these issues. Assess and respond to issues concerning campus infrastructure and maintenance, centring the student experience and student satisfaction.

¹ University of Calgary. (2023, September 9) *2022-2023 Annual Report*. UCalgary
<<https://www.ucalgary.ca/sites/default/files/teams/157/2022-23%20Annual%20Report.pdf>> p. 24
² University of Calgary. (2023) *Ahead of Tomorrow: The University of Calgary's 2023-2030 Strategic Plan*. UCalgary
<<https://www.ucalgary.ca/sites/default/files/teams/10/Ahead-of-Tomorrow-Digital.pdf>> p. 5
³ Cailynn Klingbeil. (2023, August 23) *The political battle over postsecondary education in Alberta*. University Affairs
<<https://universityaffairs.ca/features/feature-article/the-political-battle-over-postsecondary-education-in-alberta/>>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote campus development and maintenance measures that prioritise accessibility.
University of Calgary's Undergraduate Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide insight as the group most impacted by campus projects, given the connection between campus infrastructure and the student experience, student welfare, and academic success.
University of Calgary's Leadership Team and Associated Departments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote a holistic, inclusive understanding of student needs regarding campus infrastructure, including but not limited to classrooms, study areas, social spaces, accessibility, and IT support. Promote student needs as priorities in the decision-making process around campus infrastructure, including efforts to address deferred maintenance. Assess and respond to campus infrastructure development and maintenance issues related to the student experience, centring student satisfaction. Engage in discussion with the SU regarding all the above.
Government of Alberta	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote a holistic, inclusive understanding of student needs regarding campus infrastructure, including but not limited to classrooms, study areas, social spaces, accessibility, and IT support. Promote student success by investing in the development and maintenance of campus infrastructure, including efforts to address deferred maintenance. Assess and respond to campus infrastructure development and maintenance issues related to the student experience, centring student satisfaction. Engage in discussion with the SU regarding all the above.

Conclusion

Advocacy efforts will be necessary to pursue better funding from the Government of Alberta to improve campus infrastructure. Advocacy efforts will also be necessary to engage with the University's administration in centring the student experience in its decision-making around infrastructure projects and maintenance. The SU must therefore continue to actively engage with the university and government bodies to maintain, develop and address campus infrastructure projects and concerns.

Statement

The Students' Union (SU) recognises the importance of prioritising sustainability in its governance, operations, and advocacy. Sustainability is defined by the United Nations as meeting “the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”⁴ Sustainability speaks to many aspects of the student experience, including but not limited to:

Academics	Accessibility	Construction, renovations and maintenance	Energy
Environmental decisions (including transportation)	Ethics, social responsibility and governance	Financial security	Health and wellness
Indigenous reconciliation	Purchasing decisions	Responsible use of resources (including waste and water management)	Student engagement

Sustainability is an intersectional issue that requires consideration of social responsibility, human rights, and Indigenous reconciliation in each of the SU's decisions and actions.

Background Rationale and Principles

The Students' Legislative Council (SLC) first approved a Sustainability Policy in 2007⁵, which was expanded by the SLC of 2022 to widen the definition of sustainability and provide more comprehensive approaches to its application.⁶ The SU currently offers a Sustainability Fund which provides capital to projects that promote sustainability on campus⁷, and adheres to a range of sustainable operational practices.⁸

⁴ Brundtland Commission. (1987, October) *Our Common Future*. United Nations

<<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/5987our-common-future.pdf>> p. 40

⁵ Students' Union of the University of Calgary. (2023) *Sustainability Fund*. <<https://www.su.ucalgary.ca/programs-services/funding-awards/sustainability-fund/>>

⁶ Mickail Hendi. (2022, 11 January) *Executive Trimester Report, Vice President Operations and Finance, September to December 2021*. Students' Union <<https://drive.google.com/file/d/18-CQRn56DbJR5y-HvjxYioKKIE4gVNUZ/view>> p.11-14

⁷ *Sustainability Fund*.

⁸ Students' Union of the University of Calgary. (2023) *Sustainability*. Students' Union <<https://www.su.ucalgary.ca/about/more/sustainability/>>

Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholders	What action(s)/support does the SU want?
Students' Union (Vice President Internal, General Manager and Students' Legislative Council)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consult with relevant bodies to promote sustainability throughout the SU's governance, operations, advocacy and the University of Calgary's campus overall.• Promote, implement and prioritise sustainability initiatives.
University of Calgary's Undergraduate Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide feedback around sustainability advocacy and hold the SU and University to account in becoming more sustainable on all fronts.
University of Calgary's: Office of Sustainability, Office of Indigenous Engagement, Student Accessibility Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Engage with the SU to implement and improve sustainability initiatives.• Promote and prioritise sustainability on campus.

Conclusion

As sustainability is an ongoing concern, the SU continues to advocate for, and support the development of, new initiatives throughout the University of Calgary.

Statement

Open Educational Resources (OERs) are educational materials that incur no cost to students who access them. Access to OERs can profoundly impact the cost, quality and accessibility of education, and it is therefore essential that student concerns are accurately reflected in advocacy for OERs. The SU will engage in discussions with necessary stakeholders, particularly university and government leadership, to advocate for the implementation, adaptation, distribution and use of OERs to effectively meet the needs of students.

Background Rationale and Principles

As defined by UNESCO, OERs are “learning, teaching and research materials in any format [which] reside in the public domain” or have been released from copyright “under an open license”, permitting “no-cost access, re-use, re-purpose, adaptation and redistribution by others.”⁹ OERs may include, but are not limited to, peer-reviewed textbooks, interactive resources, online tutorials, learning modules, and open-access journals.

University of Calgary students face an affordability crisis, as living expenses in the city rose 15% between 2020 and 2023.¹⁰ With the University suggesting that students should reserve \$600 for textbooks alone per academic year¹¹, access to OERs will help reduce the financial pressures students experience from needing to purchase costly materials.

Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholders	What action(s)/support does the SU want?
Students' Union (Students' Legislative Council and Executives)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocate for the creation, implementation and accessibility of OERs.
University of Calgary's Leadership Team and Associated Departments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement with the SU in understanding and supporting the need for accessible OERs for the student body. Support to increase the creation, implementation and accessibility of OERs.

⁹ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (2019, November 25) Recommendation on Open Educational Resources. UNESCO <<https://www.unesco.org/en/legal-affairs/recommendation-open-educational-resources-oer?hub=785>>

¹⁰ Bill Kaufmann. (2023, October 3) 'I live in instability': Survey shows one in four Calgarians can't meet basic financial needs. Calgary Herald <<https://calgaryherald.com/news/local-news/cost-of-living-struggles-rising-calgary>>

¹¹ University of Calgary. (2024) Undergraduate student cost estimator. UCalgary <<https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/finances/tuition-and-fees/undergraduate-student-cost-estimator>>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Efforts to adapt learning materials into OERs. • Assistance to increase the use of OERs to reduce the financial strain of costly educational materials.
City of Calgary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt strategies to use existing platforms and technology solutions, such as the public library system, to ensure OER distribution and access.
Government of Alberta	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support educational stakeholders in OER access, creation, distribution and usage. • Incorporate the promotion of OERs into provincial educational policy priorities, recognising the cost-efficiency of promoting legal open-source materials.
Government of Canada	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elevate awareness of OER benefits and applications. • Engage with international partners to invest in the research of educational content creation, to develop materials and infrastructure accordingly. • Incorporate the usage of OERs into national educational policy priorities, recognising the cost-efficiency of promoting legal open-source materials.

Conclusion

Students at the University of Calgary deserve an affordable education, and the SU will advocate for measures to achieve this, including supporting OERs. Increased use, implementation, adaptation and distribution of OERs will reduce students' expenses when accessing course materials. Advocating for OERs is instrumental to supporting student well-being because of their impact on the price, quality and accessibility of education.

Statement

The Students' Union (SU) recognises that tuition and fees significantly impact student welfare, academic success, and students' ability to pursue and continue studies at the University of Calgary. The SU will engage with the university's tuition and fee consultation process to represent students throughout discussions and advocate that changes to tuition and fees take student needs and concerns into account. The Students' Legislative Council (SLC) shall approve the SU's official position on university proposals, and the SU President shall vote accordingly on the University's Board of Governors.

Background Rationale and Principles

Students at the University of Calgary face an affordability crisis, as living expenses increased by 15% between 2020 and 2023.¹² They also face tuition increases for the fifth consecutive year. With provincial funding for post-secondary education having declined by half a billion dollars since 2019¹³, pressure has increased on tuition as a source of revenue.

Students therefore deserve to have a voice in decision-making regarding tuition and fees. The SU must therefore engage with the University of Calgary's administration to ensure the student voice is well-represented in the process, because students are the group impacted the most by decisions on the price of accessing education.

Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholders	What action(s)/support does the SU want?
Students' Union (Students' Legislative Council and Executives)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage in the tuition and fee consultation process. Advocate for adequate post-secondary funding from the Government of Alberta.
University of Calgary's Undergraduate Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide feedback and insight into the impact of tuition and fee increases on student welfare, academic success, and the ability to pursue or continue studies at the University.

¹² Bill Kaufmann. (2023, October 3) 'I live in instability': Survey shows one in four Calgarians can't meet basic financial needs. Calgary Herald <<https://calgaryherald.com/news/local-news/cost-of-living-struggles-rising-calgary>>

¹³ Cailynn Klingbeil. (2023, August 23) The political battle over postsecondary education in Alberta. University Affairs <<https://universityaffairs.ca/features/feature-article/the-political-battle-over-postsecondary-education-in-alberta/>>

<p style="text-align: center;">University of Calgary’s Leadership Team and Associated Departments</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meaningfully consider student concerns when making tuition and fee changes, utilising robust consultation. • Provide metrics to demonstrate how programs have improved through increased reliance on student dollars. • Provide metrics in Exceptional Tuition Increases (ETIs) proposals to communicate expected program improvement, goals and milestones. • Communicate how student feedback impacted the initial ETI proposal; justify areas in which student feedback was not considered. • Provide annual reports on the following: progress towards the goals ETIs were designated to fund, over a period of ten years; the spending of fee revenue, including justification of significant increases to spending in departments; to what line item(s) each dollar was allocated. • Demonstrate commitment to affordability by guaranteeing that increases to mandatory non-instructional fees (MNIFs) will not surpass inflation. • Consult with the SU and Graduate Students’ Association on the spending of MNIFs, requiring student consent to add additional initiatives or departments. • Allow the Dinos to sit as regular Tuition and Fees Consultation Committee members to answer fee questions. • Ensure the Dinos demonstrate increased benefit to students from the athletics fee.
<p style="text-align: center;">Government of Alberta</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stronger regulations for ETIs and international tuition increases. • Require that institutions record data to demonstrate how programs have improved through increased reliance on student tuition dollars. • Increase provincial investments in post-secondary base funding to reduce the burden on students. • Require that post-secondary institutions commit to transparency regarding proposals for ETIs, such as committing to decade-long reporting on progress towards meeting goals funded by ETIs, and to provide all other annual reports described above. • Require university administration to demonstrate how student consultation and feedback impacted the shaping and implementation of ETI proposals. • Require that all consultation methods—including surveys, town halls and meetings—include complete disclosure of the University’s initial ETI proposal. • Require student consent on ETI increases to ensure that institutions are not simply ticking the consultation box but rather are invested in the process and actively pursuing student feedback.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Require that the university cannot increase MNIFs beyond inflation in a given year.
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Conclusion

The University of Calgary's budget for the 2024-2025 budget relies, for the first time in its history, more on base funding sourced from student tuition than from the Government of Alberta.¹⁴ Now more than ever, students at the University of Calgary deserve to have advocates working to better their welfare, academic success, and overall university experience. Discussions about tuition and fees that position the student voice must be a pivotal part of these advocacy efforts.

¹⁴ Helen Pike. (2024, March 27) *Student leaders worry as U of C revenues now rely on tuition more than base grants*. CBC <<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/calgary/university-calgary-revenues-tuition-students-1.7156345>>

Statement

All students face factors that can significantly impact mental health, such as academic stress, peer pressure, competing work commitments, and changes in their support networks. The Students' Union (SU) recognises that mental health plays an important role in students' lives, and that support available on campus can be crucial to maintaining it.

The SU will engage with the University of Calgary and provincial government through robust and consistent advocacy efforts, to ensure students' needs are met, and that student concerns are reflected in funding and decision-making.

Background Rationale and Principles

Alberta's government has committed to allocating \$10 million between 2024 and 2027 to additional mental health services at post-secondary institutions in the province.¹⁵ A similar initiative from 2013 demonstrated that funding from these grants varies from institution to institution¹⁶, meaning some institutions may receive less per capita than others. Both initiatives centred on three-year disbursements. Longer-term commitments would allow institutions to better plan how to use grants to support student mental health.

42% of respondents to the SU's 2023 Annual Survey reported dissatisfaction with wellness services at the University of Calgary.¹⁷ The SU must engage with both the provincial government and the university's administration to ensure student voices are represented in decisions that will impact mental health provision at the University of Calgary.

Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholders	What action(s)/support does the SU want?
Students' Union (Students' Legislative Council and Executives)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with both university administrators and the provincial government to advocate for adequate and equitable funding for mental health resources on campus.

¹⁵ Helen Pike. (2024, March 27) *Student leaders worry as U of C revenues now rely on tuition more than base grants*. CBC <<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/calgary/university-calgary-revenues-tuition-students-1.7156345>>

¹⁶ Best Practices Network in Canadian Higher Education. (2015) *Alberta Post-Secondary Mental Health and Addiction Framework 2015*. Healthy Campus Alberta <https://bp-net.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/HealthyCampusAlberta_PostSecondaryFramework.pdf> p. 10

¹⁷ Students' Union. (2023, July) *SU 2023 Annual Survey - Students' Union, University of Calgary*. Students' Union <<https://www.su.ucalgary.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/2023-Annual-SU-Survey-Report.pdf>> p. 13

<p>University of Calgary's Undergraduate Students</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide feedback on how stressors such as academic stress, peer pressure, work commitments and changes in support networks impact their mental health, particularly as almost half of students could be expected to report poor mental health.¹⁸
<p>University of Calgary's Leadership Team and Wellness Services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage, maintain and implement mental health services and support at the University of Calgary. • Provide reporting on how funding is distributed to ensure that funding goes to frontline mental health services most used and needed by students. • Engage with the SU to address student concerns regarding satisfaction with mental health and wellness provisions.
<p>Government of Alberta</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adequately fund mental health resources at post-secondary institutions. • Consult with students and institutions to determine a per-capita amount for student mental health funding and consistently fund institutions based on the number of full-time equivalents enrolled at an institution. • Require institutional reporting to ensure that funding goes to frontline mental health services most used and needed by students. • Extend post-secondary investment into mental health services to allow for continued mental health support on campus.

Conclusion

It is unreasonable to expect students facing mental health challenges to seek support that is inconvenient and financially burdensome. Long-term mental health support on campus is vital for students, which means making these services more accessible. Students at the University of Calgary deserve to have advocates working to better the environment, wellness supports, and programming that impact student well-being and mental health.

¹⁸ Health Canada (2024, January 12) *Canadian Postsecondary Education Alcohol and Drug Use Survey 2021-2022*. Government of Canada <<https://health-infobase.canada.ca/alcohol/cpads/>>

Statement

The Students' Union (SU) recognises that students are enduring an affordability crisis, with living expenses in Calgary having risen by 15% since 2020¹⁹, and tuition having recently increased for the fourth consecutive year at the University of Calgary.²⁰ Summer job opportunities therefore significantly impact student welfare, academic success, and their ability to pursue or continue studies at the University of Calgary.

The Summer Temporary Employment Program (STEP)—which helped connect students with employers, often in their field of study—was cancelled by the Government of Alberta in 2019.²¹ As a result, fewer opportunities were available to students in recent summers.

Background Rationale and Principles

The youth unemployment rate in Canada is nearly double that of other demographics overall.²² The SU's summer advocacy survey for the summer of 2023 found that 29% of students either could not find full-time work, remained unemployed due to employment challenges, or had work opportunities cancelled.²³

The SU will engage with stakeholders, particularly the Government of Alberta, to advocate for the reinstatement or replacement of STEP to connect students with summer employment opportunities.

Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholders	What action(s)/support does the SU want?
<p>Students' Union (Students' Legislative Council and Executives)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with the government of Alberta to advocate for the reinstatement of STEP or the creation of a similar program.

¹⁹ Bill Kaufmann. (2023, October 3) 'I live in instability': Survey shows one in four Calgarians can't meet basic financial needs. Calgary Herald <<https://calgaryherald.com/news/local-news/cost-of-living-struggles-rising-calgary>>

²⁰ CBC News. (2023, January 20) University of Calgary board approves another tuition increase. CBC <<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/calgary/university-of-calgary-tuition-1.6721751>>

²¹ Helen Pike. (2019, October 28) Eliminated summer employment program a surprise for students. CBC <<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/calgary/alberta-summer-temporary-employment-program-1.5337557>>

²² Lisa Lalande, Pedro Barata. (2023, October 5) Young Canadians are staring at a bleak future of diminished economic prospects. The Globe and Mail <<https://www.theglobeandmail.com/business/commentary/article-young-canadians-jobs-unemployment-rate/>>

²³ Students' Union. (2023, November) 2023 Summer Advocacy Survey Report. <<https://www.su.ucalgary.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/2023-SU-Summer-Advocacy-Survey-Report.pdf>> p. 6

<p>University of Calgary's Undergraduate Students</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide insight into the effects on students of reduced summer job opportunities and reduced support to gain temporary summer employment.
<p>Government of Alberta</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reinstate or replace STEP to connect students to employers or ensure that students can be eligible for job subsidies included in the Jobs Now program. • Work with student groups to provide a program in support of student summer work. • Implement employment programs like those in B.C. and Ontario that offer students temporary positions in the provincial public service and other fields.

Conclusion

The Government of Alberta has yet to provide a cohesive course of action for students seeking summer work since the cancellation of STEP. Though it has announced two targeted jobs programs, Jobs Now and Alberta at Work, neither provide support for students. Many students rely on full-time summer work opportunities to not only afford to continue their education, but to gain valuable experience in the labour market or their field. The SU will therefore advocate for schemes to connect students and work opportunities.

Statement

The Students' Union (SU) recognises that students are facing a housing crisis. Vacancies in Calgary decreased by almost 4% between 2021 and 2023, with an expectation that even fewer listings will be available over the next two years.²⁴ Increased demand has resulted in Alberta's rents rising faster than any other province.²⁵ The SU will engage with all three levels of government and the university to advocate for housing solutions.

Background Rationale and Principles

The University of Calgary plans to increase undergraduate enrolment by 10,000 by 2030.²⁶ This will exacerbate the current challenges students face in a market where housing is both scarce and increasing in cost. Without a commitment to address these challenges, students will be forced to sacrifice safety and affordability to secure accommodation. Affordable housing strategies and enrolment increases must be managed together, to guarantee safe living situations for prospective students.

Housing in Calgary has significantly increased in price, pushing some students to obtain housing far from campus.²⁷ International students are especially impacted as they must search for housing in an unfamiliar market, often online, and attempt to secure housing before arriving, while also facing the financial burden of unregulated tuition hikes.²⁸

Land use redesignations, developments, and work to increase densification are essential to provide real and affordable solutions to the student housing crisis. The resulting increased housing opportunities will benefit all Calgarians.

Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholders	What action(s)/support does the SU want?
Students' Union (Students' Legislative Council and Executives)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with the University and all three levels of government, advocating for the implementation and support of housing solutions.

²⁴ Robson Fletcher. (2024, April 4) *Calgary's already tight rental market expected to be squeezed even further in 2024 and 2025*. CBC <<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/calgary/calgary-cmhc-housing-outlook-rental-real-estate-1.7163804>>

²⁵ Hiren Mansukhani. (2024, March 11) *Rents in Alberta growing faster than any other province in Canada*. Calgary Herald <<https://calgaryherald.com/news/local-news/rents-alberta-growing-faster-other-provinces-canada>>

²⁶ University of Calgary. (2023) *Ahead of Tomorrow: The University of Calgary's 2023-2030 Strategic Plan*. UCalgary <<https://www.ucalgary.ca/sites/default/files/teams/10/Ahead-of-Tomorrow-Digital.pdf>> p. 5

²⁷ Bill Kaufmann. (2023, July 12) *'Living in cars': U of C students face worsening housing shortage*. Calgary Herald <<https://calgaryherald.com/news/local-news/living-in-cars-u-of-c-students-face-worsening-housing-shortage>>

²⁸ Ibid.

University of Calgary's Undergraduate Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide insight into impact of housing challenges in Calgary on the student experience and wellbeing.
University of Calgary's Leadership Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage the University of Calgary Properties Group to engage with the SU and involve the SU as a respected voice and stakeholder. • Initiate a plan to increase student accommodations to align with other U15 Institutions ratios, such as the University of British Columbia. • Commit to increasing the ratio of students to university accommodations, in correspondence or ahead of projected enrolment increases. • Develop a short-term emergency housing program for students. • Increase support and resources for international students seeking housing. • Increase affordable housing in the University District, within existing and future developments.
City of Calgary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of landlord licensing to ensure safety in student accommodations. • Prioritise redesignation or rezoning projects that promote densification near the University. • Implement projects that prioritise affordable housing and multi-unit dwellings.
Government of Alberta	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce rental increase caps to provide students with stability and predictable rents for extended periods. • Establish affordable housing near the university to allow students to be involved in the vibrant campus community without having to sacrifice safety. • Implement projects that prioritise affordable housing, multi-unit dwellings, and the development of student residences.
Government of Canada	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the development of increased student residences. • Implement projects that prioritise affordable housing and multi-unit dwellings.

Conclusion

The challenges of the Calgary rental market, in addition to the financial strain of tuition and inflation, force many students to sacrifice basic needs. Increasing affordable housing near the university immerses students in the surrounding communities, fostering cooperation and long-term student relationships in those areas. Such community is only possible when supported by affordable housing options in existing and future developments.

Housing security impacts student welfare, academic success, and a student's ability to pursue or continue studies. The SU must continue to advocate for solutions resulting in student access to safe and affordable housing.

Statement

The Students' Union (SU) recognises that commitments to address sexual and gender-based violence at Albertan post-secondary institutions must be made by the Government of Alberta, University leadership, and community members. The SU strives to create an environment free of all sexual and gender-based violence through consistent advocacy efforts, particularly through engagement with the University of Calgary's Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Prevention and Support Office.

Background Rationale and Principles

43% of Albertan students have been subjected to sexual or gender-based violence while attending post-secondary education.²⁹ Students are at the highest risk of sexual assault during the first two months of a semester.³⁰ These statistics demonstrate how urgently measures must be taken to address this crisis.

Addressing sexual and gender-based violence sets a precedent for our campus community by making it clear that violence is not tolerated. Measures must be taken promptly to set this precedent and target an unacceptable amount of sexual and gender-based violence.

Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholders	What action(s)/support does the SU want?
Students' Union (Students' Legislative Council and Executives)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with the University and Government of Alberta, advocating for implementing and supporting efforts to reduce sexual and gender-based violence.
University of Calgary's Undergraduate Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support awareness and education to reduce the prevalence of sexual and gender-based violence.
University of Calgary's Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foster awareness and education designed to reduce the prevalence of sexual and gender-based violence. Prioritise campaigns and communications during the first two months of semesters to address the disproportionately high rates of violence that occur at this time.

²⁹ Government of Alberta. (2023, August 4) *Sexual and gender-based violence in Alberta post-secondary education*. Open Alberta <<https://open.alberta.ca/publications/sexual-gender-based-violence-alberta-post-secondary-education>>

³⁰ Rona Amiri. (2015, February 5) *Sexual Violence in Canada – An Equality Issue*. Battered Women's Support Services <<https://www.bwss.org/sexual-violence-in-canada-an-equality-issue/>>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage with the SU to develop plans for educating students. • Engage with the SU on advocating to the Government of Alberta for support that will benefit the University's Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Prevention and Support Office.
Government of Alberta	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foster awareness and education through a province-wide campaign around consent at Alberta post-secondary, sponsored by the Ministry of Advanced Education. • Create a working group which allows representatives to contribute to long-term plans on preventing violence at Albertan post-secondary. • Prioritise province-wide campaigns to address disproportionately high rates of violence during the first two months of classes. • Provide consistent, equitable funding to support survivors, as well as long-term and sustainable prevention plans.

Conclusion

Students deserve to feel safe, respected and welcome in their learning environments. This must be reflected in government and university funding, policy and programming.

A 2022 study conducted by the Canadian Women's Foundation study found 55% of respondents did not fully understand consent with regards to sexual activity.³¹ These results demonstrate a concerning lack of understanding around consent and the need for comprehensive sexual consent education. The SU will advocate for education as an essential tool for preventing sexual and gender-based violence, which must be available and accessible to all post-secondary students.

³¹ Canadian Women's Foundation. (2022, November 22) *New Study: Less than Half of People in Canada Know What Sexual Consent Means* <<https://canadianwomen.org/blog/consent-study/>>

Statement

The Students' Union (SU) recognises the vital role that student financial aid plays in student welfare, success, and their ability to pursue or continue studies at the University of Calgary. Such aid allows students to borrow money or receive grants to fund their education. As the costs of education, housing and educational materials increase, it is even more important that students have access to student financial aid. The SU will continue to advocate for equitable access to financial aid for students in Alberta.

Background Rationale and Principles

Tuition at the University of Calgary has increased by almost 33% since 2019.³² In its 2024 budget, the Government of Alberta increased loans available to students but reduced the availability of grants, which are broadly unavailable to undergraduates.³³ The budget also outlined that post-secondary institutions will be expected to cover more of their operating expenses independently by 2026,³⁴ increasing reliance on student tuition dollars.

It is important to note that Albertan undergraduates can expect to graduate with 19.5% more debt than the national average.³⁵ 73% of student respondents to the SU's 2023 annual survey expect to graduate with school-related debt.³⁶ Students at the University of Calgary are therefore expected to take on disproportionate levels of debt to satisfy rising tuition.

Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholders	What action(s)/support does the SU want?
<p>Students' Union (Students' Legislative Council and Executives)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with the Government of Alberta to improve student access to student financial aid.
<p>University of Calgary's Undergraduate Students</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide insight into the impact of gaps in student financial aid on the student experience.

³² Paula Tran. (2023, January 20) *University of Calgary students protest 4th consecutive tuition increase*. Global News <<https://globalnews.ca/news/9425359/university-of-calgary-student-protest-tuition/>>

³³ CBC News. (2024, March 4) *Post-secondary student groups unimpressed with provincial budget*. CBC <<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/calgary/alberta-provincial-budget-post-secondary-funding-1.7132706>>

³⁴ Katie Teeling, Lily Polenchuk and Aparajita Rahman. (2024, February 29) *Budget 2024's impact on Alberta post-secondary education*. The Gateway <<https://thegatewayonline.ca/2024/02/breaking-budget-2024s-impact-on-alberta-post-secondary-education/>>

³⁵ Statistics Canada. (Updated frequently) *Student debt from all sources, by province of study and level of study*. <<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=3710003601>>

³⁶ Students' Union. (2023, July) *SU 2023 Annual Survey - Students' Union, University of Calgary*. Students' Union <<https://www.su.ucalgary.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/2023-Annual-SU-Survey-Report.pdf>> p. 8

Government of Alberta	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Institute a balance between loans and non-repayable grants, more in-line with comparator provinces.• Ensure all eligible students have consistent access to student financial aid programs.• Reinststate the tuition tax credit or use this tax revenue to create new, non-repayable grants for students.• Expand eligibility for the Alberta Student Grant to include post-secondary undergraduate students.• Ensure parental income is not an undue factor in student aid eligibility decisions.
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Conclusion

As the post-secondary system evolves in response to funding cuts, the province of Alberta must make appropriate changes to student financial aid. It must be ensured that all eligible students receive funding. Alberta's current post-secondary system is heavily debt-based and could be adjusted to bring Alberta more proportionately in-line with other provinces.

Statement

The Students' Union (SU) is committed to equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) within its duty to promote the general welfare of undergraduates at the University of Calgary. Thousands of students from a range of diverse backgrounds enrol every year, and the SU acknowledges the importance of being able to include and advocate for every student it represents.

Background Rationale and Principles

Canada's 2022 census revealed the country has residents from over 450 ethnic and cultural origins, practicing 100 religions and speaking 450 languages.³⁷ As the country has grown, so has the University of Calgary, from 4,000 students in 1966 to more than 30,000 by 2016.³⁸

The SU has long benefited from the unique perspectives of leaders from diverse backgrounds. Paul Unongo, elected in 1963, was the first international student to become SU President, and he later became a politician in his native Nigeria. Naheed Nenshi, elected SU President in 1993, went on to be the first Muslim mayor of a major North American city.³⁹

The first woman to serve as SU President was Patricia Ruby, elected in 1976; she later founded a successful consulting firm in Calgary after graduation.⁴⁰ During her term, she was aided by Vice-President Victor Cowley, whose experience of living with paraplegia inspired him to dedicate his life to activism in support of people with disabilities, including students.⁴¹

The SU therefore looks to continue its strong history of advocating for equality and inclusion.

Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholders	What action(s)/support does the SU want?
<p>Students' Union (Students' Legislative Council and Executives)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocate for the inclusion and equitable treatment of under-represented and marginalized groups in the

³⁷ Statistics Canada. The Canadian census: A rich portrait of the country's religious and ethnocultural diversity. (26 October 2022)

<<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/221026/dq221026b-eng.htm>>

³⁸ UCalgary. Changing Face of Campus. (Accurate as of September 2024) <<https://www.ucalgary.ca/about/our-history/changing-face-campus>>

³⁹ The Gauntlet.

⁴⁰ The Gauntlet. Four former Students' Union presidents: Where are they now? (27 February 2017)

<<https://thegauntlet.ca/2017/02/28/four-former-students-union-presidents-where-are-they-now/>>

⁴¹ Ibid, and Vancouver Island University. Bill King, new Chair of Malaspina University-College Board. (9 October 1996)

<<https://news.viu.ca/bill-king-new-chair-malaspina-university-college-board>> and Vancouver Island University, Malaspina University-College loses friend and Board Chair Vic Cowley. (27 July 1999) <<https://news.viu.ca/malaspina-university-college-loses-friend-and-board-chair-vic-cowley>>

	<p>campus community, reviewing all current and future policies and governing documents through this lens.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve awareness and visibility of EDI as SU values. • Consult with Indigenous student groups for the purpose of sharing knowledge to support EDI initiatives and building relationships. • Ensure student representatives and staff are provided with education and training across a spectrum of EDI topics, to better equip them to support students. • Identify key advocacy areas where existing programming could be expanded to support student needs. • Ensure SU businesses and functions meet diverse dietary requirements and restrictions where food and beverages are served.
<p style="text-align: center;">University of Calgary's Administration</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foster productive working relationships between the SU and departments that promote and foster EDI principles (e.g. Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, the Women's Resource Centre, or Faith and Spirituality Centre). • Advocate that staff receive cultural sensitivity training, especially those in counselling and/or crisis management roles. • Maintain and revise trauma-informed sexual violence policies, programming and student supports. • Ensure the resident student meal plan provides food that meets the religious and cultural needs of students. • Provide support services for international students. • Ensure that campus infrastructure is accessible.
<p style="text-align: center;">Government of Alberta</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce and implement policies that benefit students from diverse backgrounds in post-secondary education, such as sexual violence prevention measures, mental health programming, EDI strategies and sensitivity training. • Raise awareness of EDI concerns and fund, maintain or improve relevant community initiatives, such as multicultural events or grants for students with diverse backgrounds and students with disabilities. • Promote and support accessibility measures in not just on-campus infrastructure, but buildings and services to the benefit of the wider community, such as government offices and transit solutions.

Conclusion

The SU will continue to identify and address barriers to equity, diversity and inclusion that students may face on campus—both by listening to students from all walks of life, and being led by them.