

University of Calgary Students' Union

# REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

---

2016 - 17







## Strategic and Annual Operating Plans

The Students' Union is guided by a strategic plan which is reviewed and renewed every three years. This plan illustrates the vision, mission and values of the SU and guides the allocation of resources towards student priorities.

Each year, the Students' Legislative Council (the SU's elected highest governing body) approves an annual operating plan which developed by the executives to direct their work for their term. The 74th executive created their plan for 2016-2017 with goals divided into three key priorities: **strengthen the organization**, **engage with students**, and **prioritize advocacy**.

## This Report

This report aims to inform students and the campus community on the progress and changes completed by the SU over the 2016-2017 academic year.

Want more information? You can check out our [website](#) or reach out to one of our student executives – they are always happy to speak with students! You can find their contact information on our [website](#).

**Want to keep up with the SU? Follow us on your favourite social media platform!**

   @suuofc



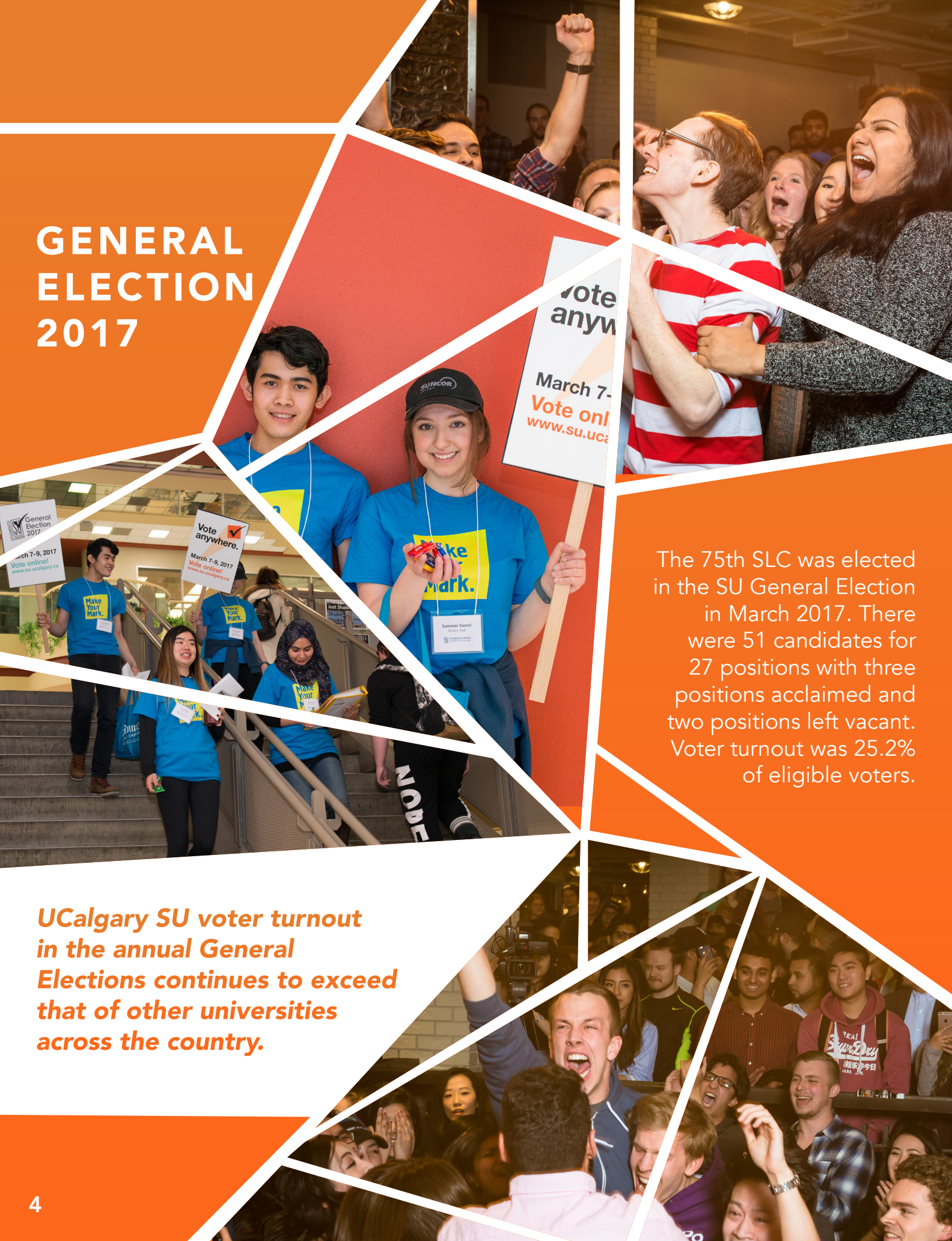
# STRENGTHEN THE ORGANIZATION



The SU continues to be a model for student associations across the country in terms of governance policy and practice (including transparency and accountability to students), management of our spaces on campus, staffing, and financial sustainability. We run multiple, successful businesses in Mac Hall, and the profits from these continue to make most of our annual revenue.



## GENERAL ELECTION 2017



**UCalgary SU voter turnout  
in the annual General  
Elections continues to exceed  
that of other universities  
across the country.**

The 75th SLC was elected in the SU General Election in March 2017. There were 51 candidates for 27 positions with three positions acclaimed and two positions left vacant. Voter turnout was 25.2% of eligible voters.

## LEGISLATIVE CHANGES

The Students' Legislative Council (SLC) made several notable changes to both the Union Bylaw, committee terms of references, and other union policy. These changes were adopted to improve transparency, accountability, and accessibility in student governance. During its term the SLC:

- Amended the Union Bylaw to create a new oath of office for all elected positions;
- Amended the Union Bylaw to clarify how and when SLC members can be excused from attending important meetings;
- Amended the Union Bylaw to permit appointed faculty representatives to vote and join committees;
- Amended the Elections Policy to clarify rules on endorsements, advertising, and eligibility;
- Amended the SLC Complaint Procedure to strengthen conflict of interest provisions;
- Amended the SLC Meeting Procedures to facilitate participation by members of the public;
- Amended the Operations and Finance Committee Terms of Reference to clarify internal reporting mechanisms; and
- Adopted the Mental Health Advocacy Policy to support the SU as it advocates for student welfare.



# FINANCES

UCalgary students continue to enjoy some of the lowest student union fees in the country while at the same time they benefit from the large number of businesses, programs, and services offered by their SU. This is possible through the strong financial stewardship of student money by the SU. Each year the SLC approves an annual operating budget of nearly \$13 million.

***UCalgary Students have not had an increase in SU fees since 1995.***

In accordance with the Union Bylaw, SLC, its Operations and Finance Committee, and the General Manager authorized extra-budgetary expenditures to a maximum of \$360,256.14 during the 2016/17 year. The largest authorization was for a \$350,000 addition to the MacHall defense fund to accommodate legal costs associated with the ongoing dispute. The other \$10,256.14 went to accommodate cost such as unanticipated Vice President External travel, Council of Alberta University Students all-executive meetings, and refugee student supports.

In addition to the SU's budget and extra-budgetary expenditures, the SU approves funding allocations for projects that benefit students through the Quality Money program. The UCalgary Board of Governors approved a renewed commitment to provide Quality Money funding to both the SU and the Graduate Students Associations until 2020.

***The annual operating budget is now available, for the first time, for review along with a breakdown of fees and the SU's financial statements on our [website](#).***



## MACHALL

On April 15, 2016, after three months of mediation, negotiations over the ownership and management of MacHall broke down.

On May 5 and June 3, 2016, the court heard the SU's injunction to prevent the termination of the License of Occupation, Operation, and Management Agreement (LOOMA). Justice Nixon rendered her decision on October 6 and denied the SU's injunction application.

The university took over management of MacHall and reception of tenant revenue on October 17. Beginning in October, the SU and the university negotiated a Letter of Intent (LOI) which was signed on March 21, 2017. The LOI sets out how the SU and university will interact with regards to the building until the conclusion of the ownership issues which is still before the courts and could take years to resolve.

Additionally, the SU and the university negotiated a Beverage Management Agreement (BMA) which was ultimately signed on August 2, 2016. The BMA sets out how the SU can operate and sell alcohol under the university's liquor licence.







# ENGAGE STUDENTS

The SU devotes significant resources each year to ensuring that undergraduate students have the best possible experience on campus. We offer a wide range of services, programs, and scholarships, host events, provide student leadership development opportunities, and support student initiatives. For the full list of everything we do for students, visit our [website](#).



## CLUBS

The SU provides supports for student-led activities on campus through our clubs system. Clubs who register with the SU have free access to space, funding, and various other kinds of assistance throughout the year. For more information on what we provide to student clubs, and a complete listing of all our clubs, visit our [website](#).



*There were 343 active clubs, holding more than 4,800 events, that are recognized and supported by the SU.*

## REFUGEE STUDENT PROGRAM

Working with the World University Service of Canada and the University of Calgary, the SU sponsors two refugee students to come and study here each year. Not only do we offer financial support, we also assist these students in becoming acclimated to ensure they will be successful. This year, both students came from refugee camps in Malawi after escaping violence in their native Rwanda.



## TEACHING EXCELLENCE AWARDS

Since 1984, the SU have recognized outstanding teaching at the University of Calgary with the Teaching Excellence Awards (TEA). TEA are the only teaching awards on campus where students determine the nominees and winners. This year, 566 students submitted nominations and the SU honoured 32 instructors and teaching assistants for their commitment to student success. The full list of award winners is available on our [website](#).



## UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM

This symposium is designed to encourage and celebrate undergraduate research across faculties. Each year students are encouraged to submit their projects to compete for awards in various categories. Last year, 32 awards totalling \$29,500 were given out.



*The SU handed out \$51,508 in travel grants, enabling 390 students to attend conferences and competitions, nationally and internationally.*





## VOLUNTEER SERVICES

Since 1993, the SU's Volunteer Services has provided volunteer opportunities and social services to students and other members of the campus community. Not only do we operate as a volunteer centre, connecting students with volunteer prospects both on and off campus, we also run ten of our own volunteer programs that students can get involved with. To find out more, check out our [website](#).

***The Volunteer Tax Program completed 1,075 student tax returns for free last year, an increase of nearly 21% from the previous year.***



## CAMPUS FOOD BANK

The Campus Food Bank provides 7-day emergency hampers to students in need. They also offer other programs designed to address student hunger on campus. Last year, they fed more than 5,000 people. Also, in May, the summer team distributed additional hampers to Fort McMurray evacuees seeking shelter at the University of Calgary.

## Q CENTRE

The SU's Q Centre for Sexual and Gender Diversity strives to create a safe, comfortable, and open space for LGBTQIA+ students. The Q Centre coordinators and volunteers raise awareness about community issues by promoting diversity and organizing educational activities and events. They also offer peer support and direct clients to community resources.



***A total of 14,746 hours were worked by SU volunteers last year.***



## PET THERAPY



Our monthly Pet Therapy events continue to be some of our most popular with students. We partner the Pet Access League Society to bring therapy dogs to campus to help students manage their stress. Last year, 1,693 people attended.

## SEX WEEK

The SU actively participates in Sex Week each year. This year, we offered twelve workshops and activities, including the Sex Week Carnival, Alphabet Soup: An introduction to LGBT language, Asexuality 101, Trans 101, BDSM 101, BDSM 201, and more. The workshops were hosted by the Q Centre, an integral part of the SU and its commitment to diversity.



*Last year, the Information Centre/ Lost and Found answered 11,441 questions and received 3,363 lost items.*

*3,029 students attended the SU's free yoga lessons, held over lunch three days a week throughout the year.*



*Bermuda Shorts Day, the SU's annual celebration of the last day of classes, was attended by 5,871 students.*



# PRIORITIZE ADVOCACY



The SU continues to have tremendous success representing the needs of students to the university and all levels of government. Our advocacy efforts continue to be effective, and we saw progress and successes on various issues over the past year.



## EYES HIGH 2017-2022

Fall 2017 saw the university refresh its strategic vision, Eyes High, through a comprehensive consultation process. Thanks to the hard work and advocacy of the SU, the renewed plan for 2017-2022 incorporates student experience as a prominent, explicit, and cross-cutting theme.

## INDIGENOUS STRATEGY

The university, through an innovative process, endeavours to create its first Indigenous Strategy. The SU has been part of this process to move the university towards truth and reconciliation with indigenous communities and students.

## SEXUAL VIOLENCE POLICY

The university undertook the development of a sexual violence policy to protect and support survivors of sexual violence on campus. The SU participated in the development committee and the campus community has been involved in the development of the policy through an extensive consultation process.

## MENTAL HEALTH ADVOCACY POLICY

On April 11, 2017 the SLC ratified the Mental Health Advocacy Policy. The new policy supports the SU as it advocates for student welfare to all levels of government. The policy advances eleven major priorities, including per-student mental health funding, food security, and assessment of student satisfaction with mental health services.

## TEXTBOOK BROKE ALBERTA

In September 2016 the SU took a lead role in the province wide Textbook Broke Alberta campaign. This campaign brought attention to the need for expanded use of open educational resources (OERs) in the classroom. OERs are essentially free textbooks that provide an alternative for students that increases the affordability of post-secondary education.

## TUITION REVIEW

The Government of Alberta has initiated a review of provincial tuition frameworks. As part of the process the province created an external stakeholder advisory group to discuss issue surrounding tuition and potential frameworks. The SU had representation on this group and looks forward to hearing the results of the review.

## UNICARD IN MACHALL

The Unicard is utilized by the university for the identification and access capabilities of students, faculty, and staff at the university. It is also used as a debit card for students for the residence meal plan. To increase the option for students, a deal was reached that had the university implement Unicard in Mac Hall with a successful Quality Money application by the SU for the installation costs.

## RE-ENTRY PARKING

In response to student concerns regarding the price structures of parking on campus, the university agreed to implement re-entry parking in certain parking lots during final exams. The plan is for the university to implement this system permanently in the next year.

## RESIDENCE COMPOSTING

With its commitment to sustainability, the SU brought together a number of campus partners including the Residence Students' Association, Residence Services, the Office of Sustainability, and the Sustainability Resource Centre to implement a composting pilot project in both Olympus and Cascade Halls.





## 74<sup>th</sup> Students' Legislative Council

### BACK ROW (Left to right):

Rio Valencerina (Speaker), Mark Shearer (Law), Maximillian Hum (Business), Sagar Grewal (Kinesiology), Zachary Risdon (Science), Tina Miller (Science), Sam Sirianni (Medicine), Steeven Toor (Medicine), Matt Abalos (Arts), Jessica Revington (Nursing)

### FRONT ROW (Left to right):

Jennifer Le (Engineering), Deanne Arada (Social Work) [resigned], Peter Friedrichsen (Arts), Patrick Ma (VP Student Life), Tristan Bray (VP External), Stephan Guscott (President), Branden Cave (VP Operations and Finance), Alicia Lunz (VP Academic), Courtney LeBlanc (Arts), Frank Finley (Arts), Zareen Tasnim (Engineering)

### MISSING FROM THE PHOTO:

Balraj Brar (Science), Eric Burow (Veterinary Medicine) [resigned], Carson Reveen (Education), Ryan Wallace (Business)







STUDENTS'  
SU  
UNION