

University of Calgary Students' Union

# REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

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2017 - 18









# 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 75th executive created their plan for 2017-2018 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 campus community members on the progress and changes completed by the SU over the 2017-2018 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

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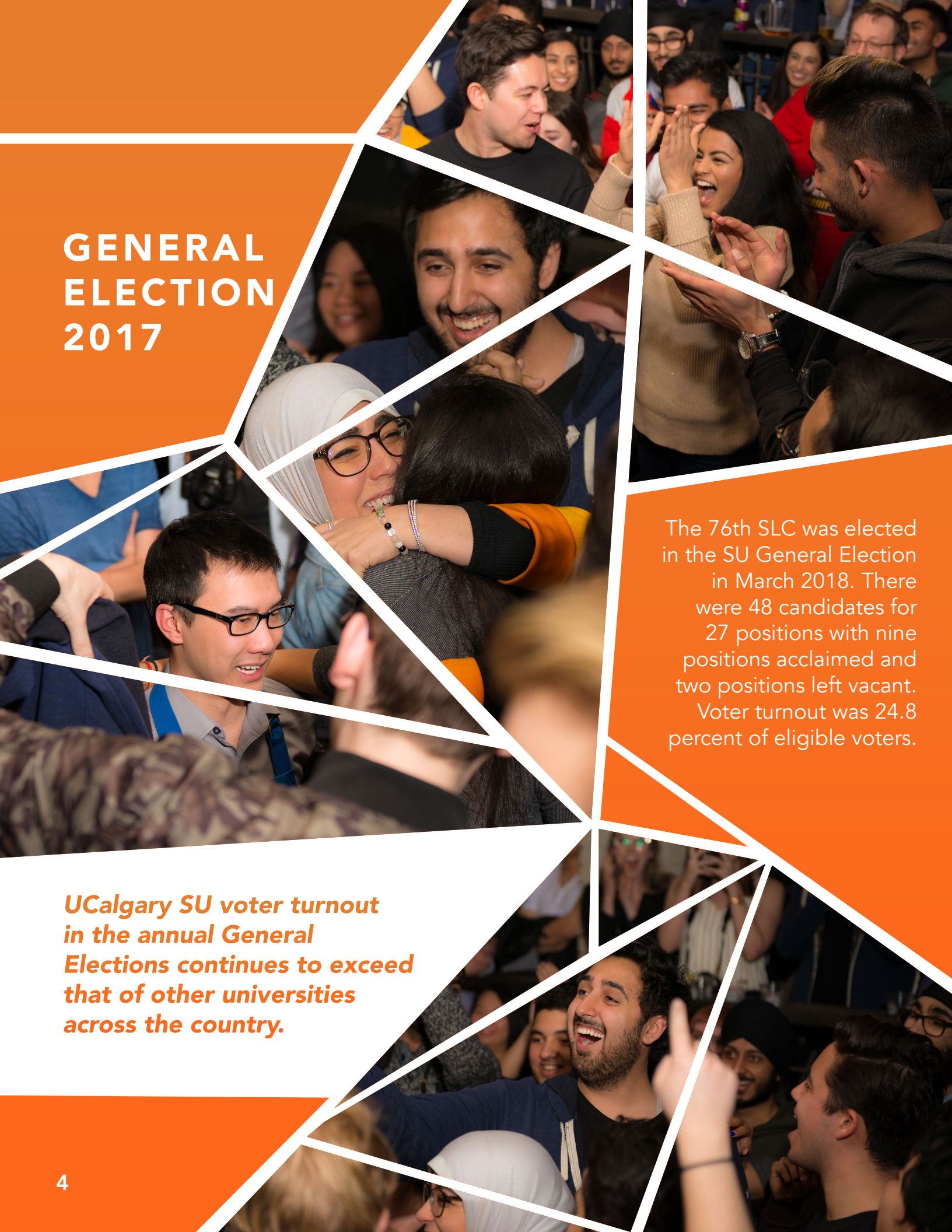






The SU continues to be a model for student associations across the country in terms of governance policy and practice (including transparency and accountability to students), management of our spaces on campus, staffing, and financial sustainability. We run multiple, successful businesses in Mac Hall, and the profits from these continue to make up about 90 percent of our annual revenue.





# GENERAL ELECTION 2017

The 76th SLC was elected in the SU General Election in March 2018. There were 48 candidates for 27 positions with nine positions acclaimed and two positions left vacant. Voter turnout was 24.8 percent of eligible voters.

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



# 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:

- Improved confidentiality measures for the University Relations Committee and renamed it the University and Government Relations Committee (UGRC);
- Standardized committee quorum requirements and public access measures and passed the SLC Committee Transparency Procedure;
- Strengthened conflict of interest provisions in the Union Bylaw;
- Approved the SLC Code of Conduct;
- Improved excusal rules in the Union Bylaw and the GFC Attendance Policy;
- Clarified the Policy Proposal Submission Procedure, allowing for better student engagement;
- Overhauled the Quality Money Terms of Reference, Project Evaluation Procedure, and Project Administration Procedure, as well as the Campus Improvement Fund Procedure;
- Repealed the Haskayne Student Levy Committee Terms of Reference;
- Standardized and clarified elements of the Elections Policy to fit current practice;
- Approved a formal definition of student experience;
- Approved the Campus Infrastructure Advocacy Policy;
- Clarified stakeholder consultation requirements in the Tuition and Fee Accountability Policy;
- Clarified triennial compensation review processes;
- Streamlined Nominations Committee processes by making subcommittee creation optional; and
- Amended the Union Bylaw, SLC Complaint Procedure, and SLC Meeting Procedure to facilitate a new meeting structure.



# 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 \$2,018,324 during the 2017-2018 year. The largest authorization was \$2,000,000 to renovate the Mac Hall Ballroom, a space that hasn't seen any structural upgrades since it was completed in 1969. The other \$18,324 went to accommodate costs such as unanticipated Vice President External travel, replacement of portable bars owned by Pepsi, and refugee student supports.

In addition to the SU's budget and extra-budgetary expenditures, the SU approved funding allocations for 12 projects, totaling \$1.83 million, that benefit students through the Quality Money program. Last year, 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 available for review, along with a breakdown of fees and the SU's financial statements, on our [website](#).***







## MACHALL

On February 6, 2018, after years of advocacy and negotiation, the SU signed two agreements with the University of Calgary that resolved our dispute over ownership and management of Mac Hall. This solution both protects students' rights and recognizes students' investments in the building.

The first agreement is the Stakeholder Rights Agreement (SRA) which is unlike anything previously signed between the SU and the university. The SRA grants the SU rights, including the rights to manage Mac Hall, occupy our current space within the building, and run our third-party businesses. Best of all, these rights are perpetual for the life of the building and may be extended to any mutually agreed upon expansion of Mac Hall or future student centre. The second agreement is the Management and Use of Space Agreement which operationalizes our right to manage the entire building. Both agreements have been made available to the public and can be found on our [website](#).



# ENGAGE STUDENTS

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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 support 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 352 active clubs, holding more than 5,400 events last year, that are recognized and supported by the SU.*



# 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, 1,149 students submitted nominations (more than double last year!) and the SU honoured 39 instructors and teaching assistants for their commitment to student success. The full list of award winners is available on our [website](#).



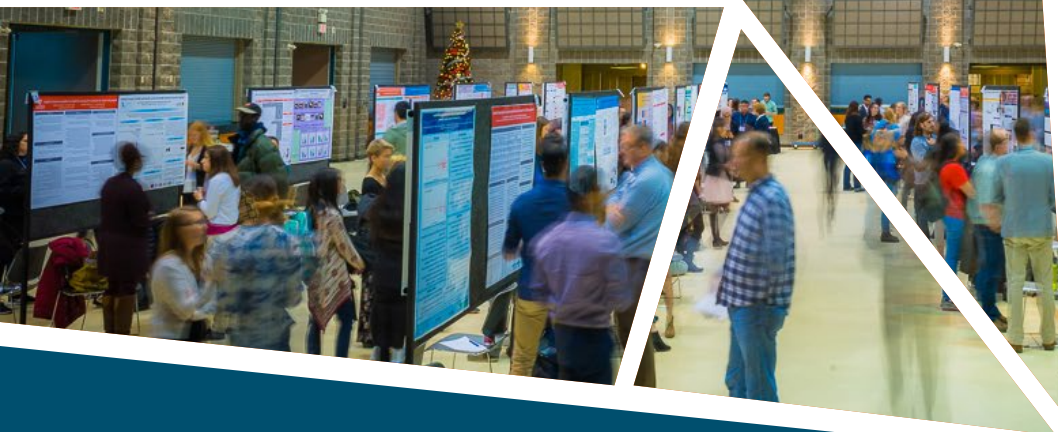


# REFUGEE STUDENT PROGRAM

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, one student came from Somalia. Unfortunately, our other student decided at the last minute not to participate in the program.



# 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, 27 awards totalling \$25,850 were given out.

***The SU handed out \$51,800 in travel grants, enabling 290 students to attend conferences and competitions, nationally and internationally.***





## VOLUNTEER SERVICES

Since 1993, the SU's Volunteer Services department 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 get students involved. To find out more, check out our [website](#).

***A total of 15,109 hours  
were worked by 419  
SU volunteers last year.***

***The Volunteer Tax  
Program completed  
998 student tax returns  
for free last year.***



***Last year, 70  
children received  
holiday gifts thanks  
to 30 community  
sponsors involved  
in the Campus Food  
Bank's Adopt-a-  
Family program.***



A photograph showing three young adults, two women and one man, smiling in front of tall metal shelves stocked with various canned food items like soups and pasta. One of the women is holding a small, decorated Christmas tree.

## CAMPUS FOOD BANK

The SU Campus Food Bank provides 7-day emergency hampers to campus community members. They also offer other programs designed to address student hunger on campus. SU volunteers perform client intakes, pack food hampers, and assist with general food bank operations. Last year, 38 SUVS volunteers worked over 2,000 hours to support Campus Food Bank programming and services, including the Breakfast Program. They fed 3,748 people.

## 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.



## PET THERAPY



Our monthly Pet Therapy sessions continue to be some of our most popular events with students. We partner the Pet Access League Society to bring therapy dogs to campus to help students manage their stress. Last year, 1,627 people attended.

## STRESSLESS WEEK

At the end of every fall term, the SU organizes drop-in activities to help students combat stress. This year, we offered eleven activities, including extra Pet Therapy sessions, yoga classes, a paint night, and a very popular build-your-own-terrarium workshop. Everything was free for students – 1,531 participated – and an integral part of the SU's commitment to good mental health.







**Last year, the Information Centre/ Lost and Found answered 9,862 questions and received 3,762 lost items.**

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



**The SU started distributing free period products to students this year, available at the Information Centre and the main SU offices. More than 21,000 period products were given out in the first eight months of this program.**



# PRIORITIZE ADVOCACY

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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.





## **ALL YOU CARE TO EAT MEAL PLAN**

Fall 2018 will bring with it a new meal plan for all first-year residence students. Thanks to the hard work and advocacy of the SU, the new all-you-care-to-eat meal plan will include more flex funds, ongoing evaluation and will only be mandatory for first-year students.

## **CAMPUS MENTAL HEALTH FUNDING**

The SU and the Council of Alberta University Students (CAUS) were excited to see their advocacy work pay off when the Government of Alberta announced \$25.8 million over three years towards post-secondary mental health services across the province. The SU was especially happy with the \$1 million per year over three years committed to the University of Calgary. This funding will go to increase resources, information and training to health services providers on campus, to expand resources and continue to decrease the stigma attached to mental health concerns.

## **OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES PILOT PROGRAM**

After years of working to promote the value of Open Educational Resources, the University of

Calgary in consultation with the SU developed the Open Educational Resources (OER) Pilot Project to address the issue of affordability of textbooks for students. This project provides professors with grants to adopt, adapt or create OERs for their own courses.

## **SECONDARY SUITES**

Finally, after over 15 years of advocacy by the SU, Calgary City Council made significant changes to secondary suite bylaws in the city this year. The new bylaws make secondary suites discretionary in homes zoned in R-1, R-C1 and R-C1L areas, which much of the area surrounding the university is. This change will make it easier for homeowners to bring their suites up to code and make it safer for students to rent basement suites.

## **TUITION LEGISLATION**

Fall 2018 will see the tuition freeze go into its fourth year. The SU, along with their colleagues at CAUS, continue to urge the Government of Alberta to find a long-term, legislated solution to the issue of unpredictable tuition for students in Alberta. The tuition freeze, for 2018-2019, will be coupled with \$17 million in backfill funding for institutions across the province.



## **FUNDING TO ADDRESS SEXUAL VIOLENCE ON CAMPUS**

The Government of Canada released their budget in early 2018 and the SU and the Canadian Alliance of Students' Associations (CASA) was happy to see \$5.5 million committed to develop a national best practice to address sexual violence and create safer campuses across the country, something we have been advocating for.

## **CANADA SUMMER JOBS PROGRAM**

Employment remained top of mind for UCalgary students this year and making it easier for students to gain work experience while in their degree continued to be a priority for the SU. We, as part of CASA, lobbied the Government of Canada to provide substantial investment into the Canada Summer Jobs program, which they did in their February budget.

## **FEDERAL RESEARCH FUNDING**

Creating research opportunities for undergraduate students is an advocacy priority for the SU. As such, we celebrated a significant investment of \$925 million by the Government of Canada into the research granting councils.

This funding will increase the base funding of the agencies and will commit substantial funding for the entire research sector in post-secondary.

## **REVIEW OF SU HEALTH AND DENTAL PLAN**

In response to student concerns about the SU Health and Dental Plan, a survey was created to ask students who are using the plan for their feedback. The survey saw a significant response rate and lead to changes to the SU Health and Dental website that will allow students to access information about their plan more easily.

## **DEFERRED MAINTENANCE**

The SU knows that students are concerned about the quality of spaces on campus. The issue of deferred maintenance continues to be one that the SU advocates on to both the university and the Government of Alberta. To ensure that the issue is taken seriously, the SU published their first Campus Infrastructure and Deferred Maintenance Report this year. The report outlines the impact to the student experience of over \$500 million in deferred maintenance and includes a number of recommendations to address this liability.





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

### BACK ROW (Left to right):

Marissa Bennett (Social Work), Kevin Dang (Science), Nabila Farid (Arts), Kayla Huggard (Science), Manpreet Deol (Engineering), Sumaira Islam (Arts), Sagar Grewal (Kinesiology), Frank Finley (Arts), Sarah Park (Medicine), Julie Choi (Medicine), Lucas Ocampo (Business), Emma Hopper (Deputy Speaker), Rio Valencerina (Speaker)

### FRONT ROW (Left to right):

Sheliza Ismail (Arts), Megan Leung (Education), Omer Mansoor (Science), Hilary Jahelka (VP Student Life), Ryan Wallace (VP Operations and Finance), Branden Cave (President), Tina Miller (VP Academic), Puncham Judge (VP External), Chinmoy Ayachit (Engineering), Nik Golob (Business), Jessica Revington (Nursing)

### MISSING FROM THE PHOTO:

Bassam Saifeddine (Law), Jarin Thundathil (Medicine)









STUDENTS' SU  
UNION