



University of Calgary
Students' Union

www.su.ucalgary.ca

@suuofc

REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

2023



HELLO *Hello*

& STRATEGIC 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. The 79th executives drafted, and the Students' Legislative Council (the SU's elected highest governing body) approved the strategic plan for the SU for 2022-2025.

Each year, the SLC also approves an annual operating plan which is developed by the executives to direct their work for their term. The 80th executive created their plan for 2022- 2023 with goals divided into three key priorities: engage with students, strengthen the organization, 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 2022-2023 academic year. Want more information? You can check out our website or reach out to one of our student executives – they're always happy to speak with students! You can find their contact information on our website.

the 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.



Nicole Schmidt | 80th SU President

LEGISLATIVE Changes



The *Students' Legislative Council* (SLC) dug deep into some important changes to policy documents at the SU with a revised Union Bylaw that included updates to reporting standards, administration, and a number of committees.

01

Approved the comprehensive review of the Students' Union Bylaw in March 2023 after a year-long effort, aiming to make the SU more efficient and implementing effective changes to its structure and operations for the betterment of the student body.

02

Policy Development and Review Committee is undergoing a transition to become the Governance and Oversight Committee to promote a more comprehensive and overarching focus on organizational governance.

03

A new Program and Services Committee has been formed by consolidating various committees, including the Pride Scholarship Working Group, International Student Financial Need Bursary Selection Committee, Clubs Committee, Committee of 10,000, and Undergraduate Research Symposium Working Group, under a single umbrella to streamline processes and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of work.

04

Refugee Student Board has been renamed to Refugee Student Program Committee to differentiate between a committee and boards at the Students' Union, and now reports to Program and Services Committee. Nominations Committee has been dissolved and functions are being replaced by a new Committee Appointments Procedure.

05

Existing terms of reference were modified to align with the evolving needs of the SU and updated Constitution and Union Bylaw, while new terms of reference were developed for several newly formed committees.

The 81st SLC was elected in the
SU General Election in March 2023.

***Voter turnout was
3,865 students.***





General **ELECTION**



81st Executives
(Left to right)

Arlington Antonio Santiago
VP Operations & Finance

Sandra Amin
VP Academic

Shaziah Jinnah Morsette
VP President

Ermia Rezaei-Afsah
VP Student Life

Mateusz Salmassi
VP External

General ELECTION

The 81st SLC was elected in the SU General Election in March 2023. There were 29 candidates for 28 positions with five positions left vacant.

**Voter turnout was
3,865 students.**

The General Election ballot also contained a plebiscite question about the mandatory Athletics Fee imposed by the university. Students each pay about \$115 annually and the fee supports the Dinos Athletics program. Students were provided seven options to choose from and could choose any number of options. The top three choices were: Students being able to opt out of the fee, the fee is not good value for money, and the fee should be reduced.



Candidates in debate.

FINANCES

UCalgary students continue to enjoy some of the lowest student association 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. No extra-budgetary expenditures were proposed or approved during the 2022-2023 year.

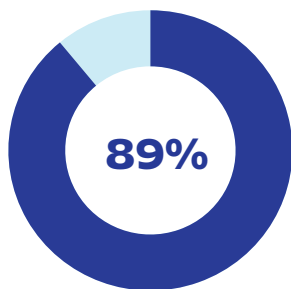


*Our students pay the **lowest SU fees** in the country.*

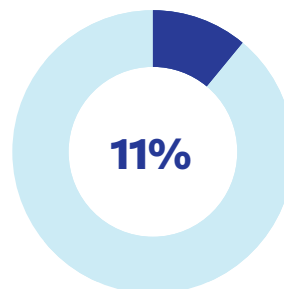


UCalgary students have not had an increase in the SU operating fee since 1995.

REVENUE SOURCES



+89%
of our revenue comes from SU businesses.

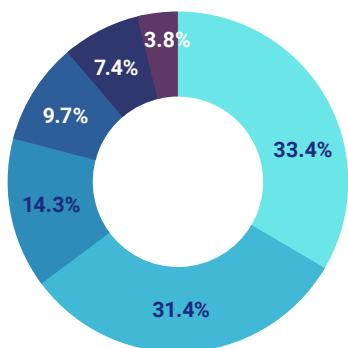


+11%
of our revenue is from Student Fees.



SU BUSINESS

Revenue Sources



\$2,524,088
MacEwan Student Centre Lease Revenue

\$2,366,476
MacEwan Conference & Event Centre

\$1,078,615
MacHall/Ballroom Concerts

\$729,662
Stör

\$558,007
The Den & Black Lounge

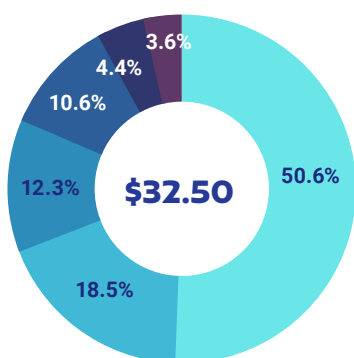
\$290,238
Bound & Copied

+89%
of our revenue
comes from
our family of
businesses.



SU Student Fees

BREAK DOWN



\$32.50 / Semester

**Our students pay
the *lowest SU fees*
in the country.**

\$16.45

Business Operations

This money is invested into our businesses which turn around and bring in revenue used to fund the vast majority of our operations.

\$6.02

Administration and Accounting

This makes sure we have a financial team that keeps our finance balances and our funds accounted for.

\$4.00

Building Maintenance

As building managers we make sure that Mac Hall is looking its best and working for students.

\$3.45

Programs & Services

This includes funding for student Clubs, the Q Centre, SU Campus Food Bank and a variety of on-campus events.

\$1.43

Marketing and Communications

Marketing and Communications spreads the word about what the SU is doing, promote programs and services for students and work to strengthen the campus community.

\$1.16

Student Government & Non-Partisan Advocacy

Student government keeps us accountable to students through elections, governance, policies and procedures. Our non-partisan advocacy ensures that students are at the table for decisions that impact them.

Funding **FOR CAMPUS** Improvement



The SU approved funding allocations for 10 projects, totalling almost \$1.9 million, that benefit students through the Quality Money program. These include:

01

Using an electric vehicle to make catering deliveries on campus and leading to a cleaner and quieter campus experience.

02

Providing an improved study space in the Kinesiology building.

03

Renovating and furnishing a new exam centre at the Spy Hill Campus.

04

Funding an annual Decolonizing Healthcare Congress event that addresses representation of Indigenous knowledge and physical presence of Indigeneity within a variety of healthcare professions and the institutions in which students are taught.

05

Renovating the Writing Symbols Lodge Red Lodge student lounge while reflecting Indigenous culture and creating a meaningful gathering space for students and the Indigenous community on campus.

06

Continuing to implement the SU Clubs Engage platform as the main tool to manage all club administration and business and ensure its success among clubs.

07

Creation of a student run tutoring program providing free, accessible, and effective support to medical students who are struggling or anticipate experiencing challenges succeeding in pre-clerkship courses.

08

Upgrading the Council Chambers space in Mac Hall to allow for more student engagement by creating a more accessible Students' Legislative Council.

09

Creation of a coaching program that helps to provide tools and community for students to envision and build a meaningful life and campus experience.

10

Establishing a bursary for students to offset the cost of personal therapy and counselling appointments.



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.



WELCOME WEEK

September marked the return of orientation activities, including the Dinos' Kickoff Tailgate party at McMahon Stadium, and a two-day Welcome Week event in Mac Hall. Welcome Week filled the north and south courtyards with a variety of sponsors and our own tables highlighting SU services and businesses.

CLUBS

The SU provides supports for student-led activities on campus through our clubs system. Clubs who register with the SU have complimentary 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. This year there were 359 active clubs recognized and supported by the SU.



TEACHING EXCELLENCE AWARDS

Since 1984, the SU has 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, 980 students submitted online nominations and the SU honoured 40 instructors and teaching assistants for their commitment to student success. The full list of award winners is available on our website.



SEX WEEK

In February, we participated in Sex and Gender Wellness Week, in collaboration with the Womens Resource Centre and Wellness Centre. Various on-campus groups hosted 13 events, including three events hosted by us. In addition to these events, we also participated in the Sex Week carnival, where we handed out cotton candy.



Q CENTRE

The SU's Q Centre for Sexual and Gender Diversity strives to create a safe, comfortable, and open space for 2SLGBTQI+ 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, direct clients to community resources, and award the Q Centre Pride Scholarship to undergraduate students who have made significant contributions to the 2SLGBTQI+ community on campus.

STRESSLESS WEEK

At the end of every fall term, the SU organizes drop-in activities to help students combat stress. This year, we offered several activities, including extra Pet Therapy sessions, yoga classes, and "SU Living Room" movie marathons featuring both throwback and contemporary movies.



WELLNESS WEDNESDAYS

Wellness Wednesdays are a series of monthly events focused on wellbeing. In the fall semester, we hosted 1) Stack the Mac - an event focused on addressing food security on campus where students donated boxed macaroni & cheese that was stacked to build a tower higher than Rex; 2) Take 10 – students were encouraged to “rest their brain and re-energize” by playing boardgames and brain teasers; 3) Disney Living Room – Disney movies were played throughout the day, along with make-your-own hot chocolate jars and snacks. In the winter semester, students participated in 1) WayBack Wednesday – early 2000’s movies were screened and students could watch these while making bracelets and keychains; 2) Laughter Yoga – Candice McPherson, a registered Laughter Yoga teacher joined us and offered mini sessions to help students destress; 3) Oscar Themed Living Room – Oscar nominated movies were shown and students could decorate frames for polaroid pictures.

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. 54 participants submitted short video presentations that were hosted and adjudicated on YouTube, and 34 winners were selected to present their research on stage at the symposium. \$33,250 in prizes and scholarships were awarded.

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, we welcomed one Somali student and one South Sudanese student, both of whom were living in a refugee camp in Kenya.



VOLUNTEER SERVICES

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 our own volunteer programs that students can get involved with.

VOLUNTEER TAX PROGRAM

The Volunteer Tax Clinic returned to near full capacity, having scaled down through the pandemic years. All appointment slots were filled early on, and coordinators continued to serve clients by referring them to outside agencies. In the end, volunteers processed over 840 tax returns.

CAMPUS FOOD BANK

The SU's Campus Food Bank (CFB) provides seven-day emergency hampers to campus community members. They also advocate on food security issues for students and offer on and off campus resources for students who need additional support. SU volunteers perform client intakes, pack food hampers, and assist with general food bank operations. This year, the CFB was able to increase our team to two part-time coordinators and 36 volunteers. Over the two semesters, 526 hamper requests were completed, up from 227 the previous year. The CFB fed 723 individuals, including 120 children.

The second annual Fall Harvest Food Drive was held in October once again and collected close to \$5,100 in donations and hundreds of pounds of food and toiletry items. As well, this year was the second year we offered Ramadan food hampers. The program was well-received and 69 hampers were accessed by students in need.

FINES FOR FOOD

In the winter semester, we partnered with UCalgary's Parking and Transportation Services for the third annual Fines for Food program. This program encouraged the campus community to pay their outstanding parking tickets during the second week of February, promising that half of the revenue would be redirected to the SU Campus Food Bank. Through this program, we collected \$9657.50 for the SU Campus Food Bank.



Prioritize **ADVOCACY**

The SU continues to effectively represent students and advocate their needs to the university and all levels of government. The last four years have been difficult for students with a 33% increase to tuition and a 20% increase to fees with no improvement to education quality. Our advocacy efforts continue to be effective, and we saw progress and successes on multiple issues over the past year.



PROVINCIAL ELECTIONS

The SU ran a Get Out the Vote campaign for the May provincial election, working to inform students about the election and encouraging them to pledge to vote. By pledging to vote students agreed to receive non-partisan election information and were entered to win great prizes from the Den and UCalgary Bookstore. The voter information booths around MacEwan Student Centre were well received and busy with students asking questions and signing up for more information.

In March the SU hosted Opposition Leader Rachel Notley to take questions from students about post-secondary and Calgary issues. The event was a great success, with more than 300 attendees and more watching the livestream online. A similar event was proposed to Premier Danielle Smith, but she declined.

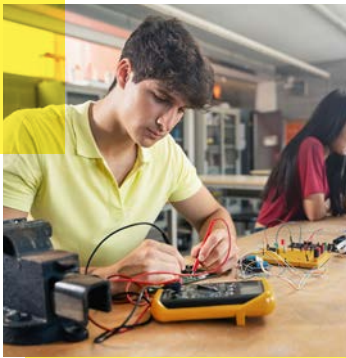
In the lead-up to the provincial election, the SU also hosted a series of interviews with provincial candidates throughout April and May on the SU's weekly CJSW radio show. This allowed candidates to share their perspectives on post-secondary issues and inform students before the election.

Advanced polling stations for the provincial election were available on-campus at the University of Calgary Hunter Student Commons Building and at the University of Calgary Foothills Campus in HMRB Atrium on May 23 through 26, providing students with an accessible place to cast their vote for the provincial election.



Rachel Notley
Opposition Leader

Nicole Schmidt
80th SU President



STUDENT JOBS

Student jobs have continued to be one of the SU's top advocacy priorities. Since the cancellation of the Summer Temporary Employment Program (STEP) in 2019 the SU has advocated that a student jobs program of some type be returned in its place. Currently, there are two provincewide jobs programs, Jobs Now and Alberta at Work, both of which students do not qualify for.

Unfortunately, no action has been taken by the provincial government to connect students to employers through a jobs program, but the SU's advocacy work has kept the issue in the media.

Despite these challenges, the Students' Union has stepped up, through the Student's Union Program for Education Related Work (SUPERWork). SUPERWork is a SU program that provides a \$1,000 wage subsidy award to University of Calgary undergraduate students who earn less than a competitive wage at a summer employment position related to their degree program. This allows students to make valuable connections in a career related to their area of study while lessening the financial pressure that often comes with taking a lower-paying position.

UPASS

The SU elected officials are working with the City of Calgary to discuss reimagining the UPASS to make it more equitable for all UCalgary students. Negotiations to better address student needs will continue, to reach a solution that provides a more effective transport option.



TUITION & FEES

*Students at the University of Calgary have now been confronted with the **fastest and largest** increases to tuition in Alberta's history.*

A Students' Union survey taken in 2022 found that nearly 20 percent of students would have to drop out because of tuition increases. Two-thirds said it would result in moderate or extreme financial strain. Since 2019, tuition has increased at the University of Calgary by approximately **33%** for domestic students and 40% for international students, equating to about \$1,200 and \$6,000 per year for domestic and international students, respectively.

In January the Board of Governors at the University of Calgary held a vote on a fourth tuition increase. This was to vote on an additional tuition increase of 5.5%. The university failed to consult with students about these tuition increases and the impact that they would have on students.

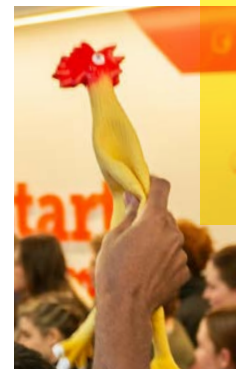
As a result, about 250 students protested outside the Board of Governors meeting boardroom. The protest gained attention from a variety of news outlets. This also brought awareness to what the looming increase in tuition would mean for students, many of whom were already financially strained from the rising costs of other goods and services.

The day after the protest Premier Danielle Smith committed to financial support for students. The announcement included a 2% cap to tuition increases set to come into effect for the 2024-2025 academic year. The protest really showed how powerful students can be when they come together to make their voices heard.

The SU is also concerned that the university will make up for any cost shortfalls through fees. Mandatory Non-Instructional Fees like student services, athletics, and campus recreation are unregulated and have increased by about 20% since 2019.

In March the SU organized a student rally for Alberta Student Day of Action, calling on the Alberta Government to freeze the fees and restore funding to postsecondary institutions. The rally brought students together to use their voices and ask for the government to support them at a time when they need it most. The response from students was incredible and allowed for a spotlight to be put on the government regarding these issues.

No action has been made by the provincial government to freeze fees or restore funding to postsecondary institutions, but significant media attention has been given to the issue.





STUDENTS PROTEST

against the largest tuition hike in Alberta history.



Mateusz Salmassi | 80th SU VP External



STUDENT NAME CHANGES

The SU has been advocating for the university to better support members of the queer community in pursuing preferred name changes. The SU has been pushing the university to make legal/primary name changes across university systems accessible and available for students. Thanks to the dedicated advocacy efforts of the SU Q Centre and SU elected officials, students seeking name changes are now able to request changes across multiple systems through a more streamlined process with one request. In the past, processes have been challenging and inaccessible for many students to seek name changes.



MENTAL HEALTH

The SU announced the new SU Mental Health Bursary in April. The bursary will begin in fall 2023 and allow 700 students to get a \$1,000 bursary for mental health therapy and services for UCalgary undergraduate students.



Nicole Schmidt
80th SU President

Advocating for students' mental health support.



80th STUDENTS' LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL



BACK ROW (left to right)

Sandra Amin (Science), Jacob Artuso (Schulich School of Engineering), Ermia Rezaei-Afsah (Arts), Nathaniel Tschupruk (Arts), Lauren Stoffregen (Veterinary Medicine), Daniel Fine (Haskayne School of Business), Coleson Proudfoot (Social Work), Areeba Nadeem (Arts).

FRONT ROW (left to right):

Jessie Dinh (Kinesiology), Reeana Tazreean (Cumming School of Medicine), Rachel Cabalteja (Arts), Mateusz Salmassi (Vice President External), Nicole Schmidt (President), Aly Samji (Vice President Operations & Finance), Shaziah Jinnah Morsette (Vice President Academic), Abhari Limbu (Schulich School of Engineering), Emily Macphail (Cumming School of Medicine), Pragma Chopra (Science), Dhvani Joshi (Werklund School of Education).

NOT SHOWN IN PHOTO

Harold Zhu (Science), Saliha Haq (Law), Siraaj Shah (Arts).



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