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 79th executive created their plan for 2021-2022 with goals divided into three key priorities: engage with students, strengthen the organization, and prioritize advocacy.

This report aims to inform students and the campus community on the progress and changes completed by the SU over the 2021-2022 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.

Want to keep up with the SU? Visit our website or follow us on your favourite social media platform!
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.
The 80th SLC was elected in the SU General Election in March 2022. For the first time in recent history, uncontested candidates faced a “Yes/No” vote on the ballot in a General Election, a breakaway from the previous acclamation system. There were 26 candidates for 28 positions with seven positions left vacant. Voter turnout was 2,390 students. The pandemic-related restrictions and delayed transition to in-person learning for the winter semester made voter engagement a challenge, leading to lower candidacies and voter turnout than normal.

The General Election ballot also contained three referenda questions pertaining to the future of the SU’s Health and Dental plan. The first question asked students whether they approve of a constitutional amendment to allow the cost of the health and dental program to grow with inflation, up to 4% per year. Students voted 56% against this question.

The final two questions asked students whether they support a lump sum increase to the individual health or dental plans. Students voted in support of increasing the dental fee by $10 with 56% in support. They also opposed a lump sum increase to the health plan of $20 with 50.4% opposing the change.

The Students’ Legislative Council (SLC) dug deep into some important policy documents at the SU, with a keen focus on research and deepening understanding of important social issues. During its term, the SLC:

- Amended the Policy Development and Review Committee Terms of Reference to implement a requirement that SU policies be reviewed through a lens of equity, diversity, and inclusion, as recommended by the 78th SLC’s Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Taskforce.

- Amended the Quality Money Committee Terms of Reference to ensure clarity and correct formatting of the document.

- Approved a new Strategic Plan for 2022-2025 with a refreshed Vision, Mission, and Values to guide the SU for the next three years.

- Approved a new Sustainability Policy, expanding the definition and scope of sustainability in the SU to include more aspects of social sustainability and add greater commitments and accountability to the policy.
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 2021-22 year.

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

FINANCES

11% of our revenue is from student fees:

- **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.
  $16.45

- **Student Government and Non-partisan Advocacy**
  Student government keeps us accountable to students. Our non-partisan advocacy ensures that students are at the table for decisions that impact them.
  $1.16

- **Building Maintenance**
  As building managers we make sure that Mac Hall is looking its best and working for students.
  $4.00

- **Programs and Services**
  This includes programs and services like funding for student clubs, the Q Centre, the SU Campus Food Bank, and a variety of on-campus events.
  $3.45

- **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.
  $1.43

- **Administration and Accounting**
  This makes sure that we have a financial team that keeps our finances balanced and our funds accounted for.
  $6.02

89% of our revenue comes from our family of businesses:

- **MacEwan Student Centre (lease revenue)**
  $1,877,729

- **MacEwan Conference and Event Centre**
  $622,366

- **The Den and Black Lounge**
  $365,286

- **Stör**
  $373,937

- **Mac Hall Concerts**
  $1,045,072

- **Bound and Copied**
  $193,244

$32.50 per semester, which is one of the lowest SU fees in the country.

- **OUR STUDENTS PAY**
  51% Mac Hall Concerts
  19% Bound and Copied
  12% Stör
  4% MacEwan Conference and Event Centre
  4% MacEwan Student Centre
  11% Business Operations

- **OUR REVENUE COMES FROM**
  89% Our Family of Businesses
  11% Student Fees
The SU approved funding allocations for 20 projects, totaling almost $2.15 million, that benefit students through the Quality Money and Sustainability Fund programs. These include:

- Establishing the Excellence in Volunteerism Award that will acknowledge the significant role of volunteers at the SU
- Commissioning a mural by an Indigenous artist to increase awareness of the contributions to modern medicine from Indigenous ways
- Continued renovation of the MacEwan Building accessible and gender-inclusive washroom
- Providing new laptops for the SU Volunteer Tax Program for increased security and privacy of clients’ personal information
- Creating a scholarship for students who are Indigenous to Turtle Island and have excelled at serving their community
- Updating the MacEwan Building with an automated perimeter locking system
- Launching an Elders in Residence program for the Faculty of Nursing
- Implementing addiction recovery programming and supports
- Upgrading the SU website

- Implementing an Immersive Campus Experience that supports the successful transition of first-year students who identify as neurodiverse
- Creating a scholarship for nursing students that recognizes the stress and challenges of the program while promoting leadership within the nursing faculty
- Launching a classroom visit initiative to provide students with effective strategies to improve their wellbeing and academic development
- Establishing a Pre-pathways to Education for Indigenous Students in Southern Alberta program to support the academic success of Indigenous students
- Creating an accessible and usable outdoor study space for residence students
- Renewal of the Social Work practicum support fund
- Renovating a study space in Science Theatres
- Initiating the “Able” Award scholarship that will support students with disabilities that are leaders for others in their community
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.
First year students began their academic careers in a hybrid online and in-person format this year. The SU participated in a virtual orientation event using our Instagram account, where we posted welcome content, fielded questions from students, and provided links to a central landing page on the SU website. Additionally, we hosted a Mac Hall services scavenger hunt that encouraged students to explore the various offices in the building. Fifty students participated in the hunt around our building. During Welcome Week the SU set up an information booth outside of the building and assisted over 500 students to learn about our programs and services. At the booth and online we also gave students the opportunity to enter to win a “Night on the SU”, a gift basket full of movie night essentials like snacks, Netflix gift card, and games to make for a fun night in.

**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, 702 students submitted online nominations and the SU honoured 39 instructors and teaching assistants for their commitment to student success. The TEA ceremony was held in person on April 20, 2022, after a two-year hiatus. Winners and their guests were celebrated by TEA committee members, deans and members of the university’s administration. The full list of award winners is available on our website.
WELLNESS WEDNESDAYS

This year, we hosted one Wellness Wednesday in-person as a “grab and go” style event. We offered a calming colouring kit to 454 students to complete on their own time as a way to relieve stress and express creativity.

STRESSLESS WEEK

At the end of every fall term, the SU organizes activities to help students combat stress. This year, we offered a modified “grab and go” event, giving away activity kits to nearly 500 students. The kits included supplies to create keychains, plant an herb garden, or try meditation. We also supplemented the kits with online content to support students during the exam period.

UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM

The symposium is designed to encourage and celebrate undergraduate research across faculties. Each year students submit their projects to compete for awards in various categories. The Undergraduate Research Symposium was moved online this year once again - participants submitted short video presentations that were hosted on YouTube. Thirty awards totalling $23,750 were given out at an in-person gathering attended by the winners and judges.

REFUGEE STUDENT PROGRAM

Working with the World University Service of Canada (WUSC) 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, but we also assist these students in becoming acclimated to their new home to ensure they will be successful. The SU was happy to receive two students for the 2021/2022 academic year after not being able to facilitate the arrival of any students in the 2020/2021 academic year due to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The students are from Somalia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo and are both enrolled in the Schulich School of Engineering.
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 nine of our own volunteer programs that students can get involved with.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, our Volunteer Services office remained closed, but we provided these essential services: Campus Food Bank, the Information Centre/Lost and Found, the Volunteer Tax Program and the Q Centre.

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 continued to follow strict health and safety procedures, but was able to increase our team numbers, adding 10 volunteers. Over the two semesters, 227 hamper requests were completed, more than doubling the requests from the previous year. Curbside pick-up was available and the CFB fed 393 individuals, including 107 children.

The second annual Fall Harvest Food Drive was held in October once again and collected close to $5,000 in donations and 4,500 food and toiletry items. As well, this year for the first time we offered Ramadan food hampers. The program was very well-received and over 63 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 second 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 over $6,200 for the SU Campus Food Bank.

VOLUNTEER TAX PROGRAM

After a two-year hiatus, the Volunteer Tax Clinic re-opened in 2022. Though the program was intentionally scaled down in the interest of health and safety measures, it was very successful, with all 300 appointments filled early on. Coordinators continued to serve clients by referring them to outside agencies.
Despite province-wide post-secondary sector budget cuts, 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 multiple issues over the past year.
The SU ran Get Out the Vote campaigns for both the municipal and federal elections in fall 2021. By agreeing to receive non-partisan elections information, students 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 the lead up to the municipal and federal elections, the SU VP External hosted a series of interviews with candidates on the SU’s weekly CJSW radio show. Seven candidates for mayor and candidates running in wards one, seven, eight, nine, and eleven were interviewed live. The federal candidates running in Calgary-Confederation, the university constituency, were also interviewed.

The SU ran one of the only livestreamed and publicly available mayoral forums of the 2021 municipal campaign. Nine candidates took the stage with guest moderator Rob Brown from CBC News to answer questions on issues like transit, student voting accessibility, climate change, the arena deal, and others. Over 15,000 people tuned in live or watched the recording.

The SU discovered that Elections Calgary was not planning to provide voting stations for the municipal election on the UCalgary campus or any campus across the city. The youth vote is not high and students should be engaged to increase turnout wherever possible.

The SU, through the Calgary Student Alliance (CSA), began meeting with Elections Calgary and was told that no changes would be made due to logistics and ballot printing issues. The SU and CSA took this to City Council and found allies on Council who supported our call and appeared at a news conference on the steps of City Hall. A week after the press conference, Elections Calgary determined that they would provide voting stations on five campuses across the city, including UCalgary. This allowed students to vote on campus for two days during the advance vote period.
EXITING THE COUNCIL OF ALBERTA UNIVERSITY STUDENTS (CAUS)

The SU made the decision to exit CAUS, the advocacy organization meant to represent students to the provincial government. The SU did not feel it was receiving value for the approximately $52,000 in annual dues it paid to the organization. CAUS failed to finish an external review of the organization that would have shed light on systemic issues within the organization and find ways for it to, once again, find its effectiveness as an advocacy body.

The SU remains in touch with CAUS and the member associations and intends to work with them on a case by case basis. The SU may look to rejoin CAUS once an external review occurs and the organization has identified, and begins to fix, the systemic issues that have rendered the organization less effective over the last few years.

In the meantime, the SU is launching its own provincial advocacy program to ensure that the voices of UCalgary students are adequately heard and represented to provincial officials.

STUDENT JOBS

One of the SU’s top advocacy priorities has been the return of some type of student job program since the cancellation of the Summer Temporary Employment Program (STEP) in 2019. Despite announcing two provincewide jobs programs, students were left out of both by the provincial government. Advocacy to the Official Opposition on the student jobs issue has led to questions being asked of government ministers and this issue being taken up by the media. Unfortunately, students are still being overlooked for a jobs program but the issue has been made higher profile over the last year.

UPASS AND CALGARY TRANSIT

The SU, through the Calgary Student Alliance, is working closely with elected officials at the City of Calgary and Calgary Transit on the UPass and transit safety. Until the last year, the SU and students generally, were a forgotten stakeholder and not engaged by Calgary Transit or the City of Calgary when making decisions on the UPass or student transit. This is changing thanks to SU and CSA efforts.
The SU successfully delayed Exceptional Tuition Increases (ETI) proposed by the university in May 2021. The SU forced the university to redo its consultation while students were on campus as opposed to while students were away on summer break. The increases in Engineering and Medicine will be on top of annual tuition increases and take effect for new students starting fall 2022. An Engineering student who starts this fall will pay about 60% more than a student who started in 2019.

ETIs are meant to improve program quality for students. The SU is continuing to call on the university to implement performance metrics to detail how this additional student money is spent and how it has improved the programs at one-, three-, and five-year intervals. So far, the SU has not received any metrics from the university.

On regular tuition increases, the SU had some success in lowering increases proposed by the university. The SU was also successful in ensuring that students were not paying fees for services they could not access due to online learning. The Campus Recreation and Athletics fees were not charged or were pro-rated for students as a result of SU advocacy.

The 2021-22 academic year marks the last year where the university can increase tuition by an average of 7% with no program above 10%. However, going forward the university will be able to increase tuition by inflation.

Despite skyrocketing inflation, the SU is 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 can be increased to full cost recovery.
79TH STUDENTS’ LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

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Vice President
External

Renzo Pereyra
Vice President
Academic

Nicole Schmidt
President

Assad Ali Bik
Vice President
Student Life

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