


<b>Sustainability Policy</b>		
<b>Parent Policy:</b> <b>Related Policies:</b>  <b>Approving Body:</b> <b>Passed:</b> <b>Amended:</b>	Union Bylaw Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Advocacy Policy; Campus Infrastructure Advocacy Policy Students' Legislative Council March 3, 2009 (66.67) March 29, 2022 (79.34)	

## History

Passed initially in 2009, the Sustainability Policy prioritizes sustainability in the Students' Union's governance, operations, and advocacy. To the SU, sustainability centers on students' present and future impact on the University of Calgary and the larger community. Starting in 2019, the SU began preliminary work to expand the scope of the policy. In 2022, the 79<sup>th</sup> SLC passed significant amendments to the Sustainability Policy to bring to the forefront a wider definition and application of sustainability, including social responsibility, human rights, and Indigenous reconciliation. The amendments also added greater focus and accountability for sustainability initiatives.

## Definitions

*Sustainability* means a set of inter-related dimensions and practices with the aim of meeting the needs of a community or organization in the present, without compromising the living systems of which humans are a part, ensuring their ability to thrive in perpetuity<sup>1</sup>. Sustainability speaks to many aspects of the campus environment and student experience, including but not limited to:

- Academics;
- Accessibility;
- Construction, renovations, and maintenance;
- Energy;
- Environment;
- Ethics, social responsibility, and governance;
- Financial security;
- Health and wellness;
- Indigenous reconciliation;
- Purchasing;
- Responsible use of resources;
- Student engagement;
- Transportation;
- Waste management; and,
- Water management.

## Authority

- 1 (1) The *Post-Secondary Learning Act* gives the Students' Union a mandate to promote and provide for the general welfare of the student body. The Constitution and the Union Bylaw establish the Students' Legislative Council as the body responsible for creating and approving Union Policy.

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<sup>1</sup> Definition adapted from those of the United Nations and the Universities of Alberta, Toronto, and British Columbia.

## **Purpose**

- 2 (1) This policy serves to demonstrate the Students' Union's commitment to sustainability and provides a vision for Students' Union governance, advocacy, and operations to ensure that it may continue to effectively serve and represent undergraduate student interests at the University of Calgary. This framework, which outlines principles and identifies areas for sustainability, allows for a broad and comprehensive understanding of what sustainability means to the organization.

## **Policy Statement**

- 3 (1) The Students' Union will strive to meet present and future needs of students in a socially, environmentally, and financially responsible manner, according to the following principles. The SU will:
  - (a) Weigh the risks, gains, and opportunity costs of decisions, including long-term benefits and detriments to future generations;
  - (b) Review all current and future Union Policy through a lens of sustainability, to reflect these values in relevant governing documents and bring about improved quality of life on campus for all of nature, including humans of all ages and backgrounds;
  - (c) Acknowledge that natural resources are finite and there are limits to growth;
  - (d) Acknowledge the human impact on climate change and, wherever possible, endeavor to reduce its ecological impact by seeking sustainable alternatives, striving toward minimal/zero waste, and exploring opportunities for self-sustaining development;
  - (e) Draw upon current best practices in sustainability through ongoing research, consultation, and engagement with the University of Calgary and business or community partners, including Indigenous communities and stakeholders;
  - (f) Where appropriate, support and work alongside university and student groups on sustainability initiatives;
  - (g) Incorporate awareness and educational outreach in sustainability initiatives; and,
  - (h) Solicit feedback from relevant stakeholders regarding the implementation of sustainability initiatives, when appropriate.

## **Accountability**

- 4 (1) SLC is responsible for the implementation and administration of this Advocacy Policy.
  - (2) SLC, its Committees, Elected Officials, and SU staff members are responsible for complying with this Advocacy Policy.
- 5 (1) The Vice President Operations and Finance and the General Manager or designate are responsible for consulting with relevant stakeholders and resources regarding the implementation of sustainability initiatives, when feasible, such as:
  - (a) The Institutional Sustainability Strategy of the University of Calgary;
  - (b) The Office of Indigenous Engagement;
  - (c) The Office of Sustainability;
  - (d) Student Accessibility Services; and,

- (e) The United Nations' Department of Economic and Social Affairs' 17 Sustainable Development Goals

**Review**

- 6 (1) PDRC is responsible for reviewing this Advocacy Policy on an annual basis.
- (2) This Advocacy Policy will expire three years after being passed at SLC, unless it is renewed by SLC prior to the date of expiry.

**Amendment History:** November 26, 2013 (71.40); November 1, 2016 (74.21); July 3, 2018 (76.10); March 29, 2022 (79.34).