

# 2015 LOBBY CONFERENCE



# COUNCIL of ALBERTA UNIVERSITY STUDENTS



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## WHO IS CAUS?

The Council of Alberta University Students (CAUS) represents over 100,000 university students across Alberta. We represent undergraduate students from MacEwan University, Mount Royal University, the University of Alberta, the University of Calgary, and the University of Lethbridge to the public, government, and other post-secondary education stakeholders.

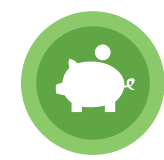
### MISSION

To ensure a high quality, affordable, and accessible post-secondary education for Alberta undergraduate students through strong research based advocacy.

### VISION

University students are active collaborators in developing a high quality post-secondary sector that is accessible and supportive to all students regardless of background or financial means.

CHAIR | Navneet Khinda | UASU VP External | 780-492-4241  
VICE CHAIR | Cam McCoy | SAMU President | 780-497-5472



## STUDENT FINANCIAL AID

- \$88.6 million in grants, bursaries, and debt relief was cut from the system in 2010.
- 60,352 students received government student loans in 2013/14 compared to 35,615 students in 2007/08 - this represents an increase of 70%.
- \$27,344 is how much debt Alberta students who borrow expect to be in at the end of their degree.
- A \$35,000 loan costs an extra \$5,100 to pay off over 10 years based on current interest rates.
- \$78 Million is the cost over four years of a rural, aboriginal and remote community bursary promised in the 2012 election that was never implemented.
- Converting half of the Alberta Completion Incentive Program, or approximately \$25 million, to upfront grants would encourage participation while maintaining an incentive for completion.



## TUITION & FEES

- Alberta's tuition and fees are among the most expensive in Canada. Only Ontario, Nova Scotia, and Saskatchewan have higher total tuition and fees.
- Since 2006, tuition in Alberta has been tied to CPI (a policy known as the tuition cap) which keeps costs predictable for students and revenue predictable for government and institutions.
- With cuts to base operating funding, institutions are increasingly placing new Mandatory Non-Instructional Fees on students to make up for budgetary shortfalls. Instead of covering "additional services" as intended, these fees are increasingly used as simply a cash grab.
- In 2014, students contributed their fair share, paying \$1,087,280,000 in annual tuition fees.
- Students are steadfast in their belief that the tuition cap remains a critical component of post-secondary regulation in Alberta.



## MENTAL HEALTH

- According to NCHA survey results, in the last twelve months 54% of students felt things were hopeless, 64% felt very lonely, 38% felt so depressed it was difficult to function, 9.5% seriously considered suicide, and 1.3% had attempted suicide.
- Translating these statistics to a campus of 30,000 students: 16,200 felt hopeless, 19,200 felt lonely, and 390 have attempted suicide.
- Lengthy wait times to see a counsellor or psychiatrist can be incredibly discouraging to already struggling students.
- In 2013, the Government of Alberta provided \$3 million over 3 years to the U of A, U of C and U of L. 2015 is the last year of this funding.
- Mount Royal and MacEwan were not part of the original funding for post-secondary institutions, however, their student populations are incredibly similar to U of A, U of C, and U of L.



## STUDENT EMPLOYMENT

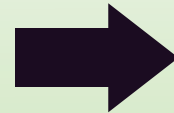
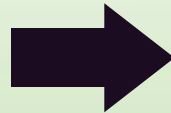
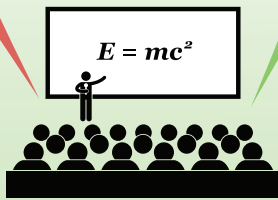
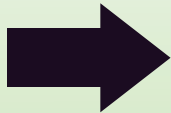
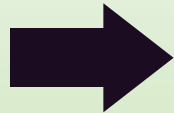
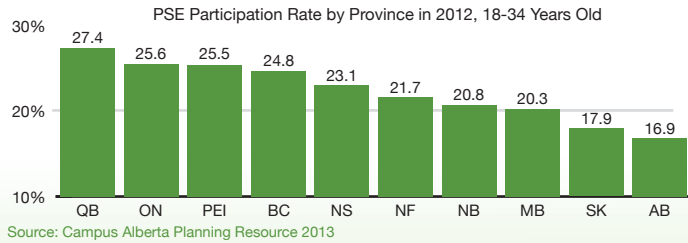
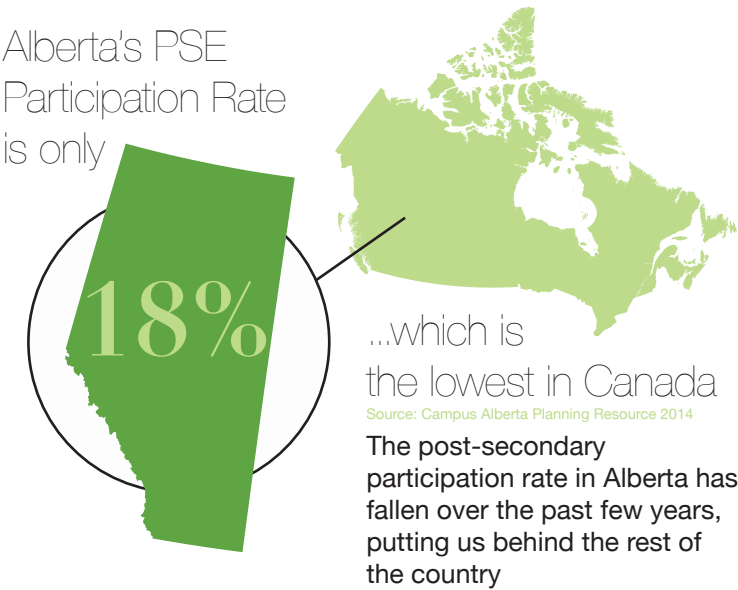
- Alberta is the only province in Canada that does not have a student employment program.
- Of the provinces in Canada, Alberta is tied with Saskatchewan for lowest minimum wage at \$10.20/hour.
- From discussions with the Ministry of Jobs, Skills, Training, and Labour, the program set to replace STEP is planned for \$3 million per year for a trial period of three years. This is far less than STEPs \$7.1 million, and far less than what is needed.
- The few details students have learned about the proposed replacement program indicate that it would be only for youth aged 30 and under who have completed a PSE degree and are either unemployed or underemployed.
- To fully realize the investment in post-secondary made by students, government, and tax payers, a program that helps successfully transition students into the workforce is imperative.



## FUNDING FOR PSE

- In Budget 2013, post-secondary funding was cut 7.3% - the single largest cut to the system in over 20 years.
- During the PC leadership race in August 2014, Premier Prentice promised "to restore Alberta's post-secondary funding cut in 2013."
- Institutions were promised increases of 2% for each of the next 3 years in the 2012 PC platform, but were instead forced to react to unpredictable cuts, and in the best case, 0% base funding.
- Budget 2013 cuts continue to be felt in our classrooms with larger class sizes, reduced course offerings, and cuts to programs and services all across campus.
- The answers and innovation required to break Alberta's boom and bust cycle will come from our universities and their students, thus, investing in PSE is the single best way to ensure a strong economic future for our province.

Alberta's PSE Participation Rate is only



1 OUT OF 5 STUDENTS has seriously considered attempting suicide

Source: NCHA Survey

on a campus of 30,000 STUDENTS

16,200 felt HOPELESS

19,200 felt LONELY

390 ATTEMPTED SUICIDE



in 2012 CAUS collected 12,000 student pledges to vote in the election



CAUS is already collecting vote pledges in anticipation of an election in 2015



**TUITION** is only one of the many costs of attending PSE

The cost of: TEXT BOOKS RENT and FOOD



continues to rise each year, which puts more pressure on students to take on additional part-time work to help cover expenses



Continued investment in our post-secondary institutions and the graduates they produce remains the single best way to ensure a strong economic future for our province. The answers and innovation required to break the boom and bust cycle Alberta continues to experience will come from our universities and their students.



**\$27,344** is the amount of DEBT Alberta students who borrow expect to be in at the end of their degree

Source: 2013 BMO Student Survey

Needing to pay off their debt, many graduates delay other major life events such as purchasing a house and getting married



ALBERTA is the **ONLY** province in CANADA that DOES NOT have a **STUDENT EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM**



Alberta is also tied with Saskatchewan for the province with the **LOWEST** minimum wage at \$10.20/hour



There has been increased enrollment in all sectors\* since 2008/09 and enrollment is projected to increase over the next ten years, with capacity shortages arising primarily in the Calgary region.

\*except for the Specialize Arts and Culture institutions sector

Source: Campus Alberta Planning Resource 2014

**\$1.1 BILLION** PAID BY STUDENTS IN 2013/14

**\$21 MILLION** FROM NEW MARKET MODIFIERS

**\$5,730** AVERAGE TUITION IN ALBERTA

**\$240 to \$450** RANGE IN PRICE OF MNIFs



Calgary has already seen a 200% increase in the number of students denied admission to PSE institutions between 2009/10 and 2013/14

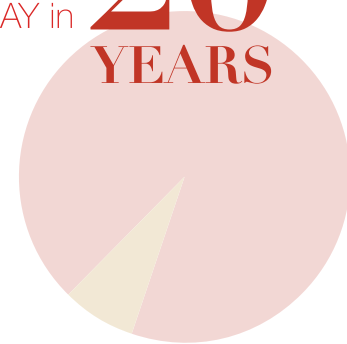
Source: Metro Calgary



7.3% of post-secondary funding was cut in Budget 2013

This was the **LARGEST CUT** to POST-SECONDARY in **20 YEARS**

If elected, Jim Prentice pledges to restore Alberta's post-secondary funding lost in 2013



Altogether in combined federal and provincial loans Albertans took on

**\$775 Million** in STUDENT LOANS in 2013/14: an average award of **\$12,850**

Source: Campus Alberta Planning Resource 2014



The importance of the **TUITION CAP** to Alberta students and the families that support them cannot be overstated

Since 2006, tuition increases have been tied to inflation, or the Consumer Price Index (CPI), which keeps pace with students' ability to pay. This cap means that expenses are predictable for students and that revenues are predictable for government and schools. Before the tuition cap was established, tuition rose unpredictably, more than tripling in real dollars between 1991/92 and 2001/02.