

To the University of Lethbridge community,

We are writing to you today to extend a collaborative message, and invite you to work with the University of Lethbridge Students' Union as we navigate the challenges of the current budget crisis. We must work together to commit to transparency, representation, and collaboration because we believe that is the only way that all members of our university community can weather this storm together.


The Students' Union fundamentally believes that education must be high quality, affordable, inclusive, and accessible. We believe responses to the budget crises must consider these pillars as well. Students are struggling to get accurate information which results in an unintended consequence of fear and misinformation. We need more direct lines of communications to the sources of these changes, and work together to disseminate accurate information and listen to student concerns. Currently, as we respond to the budget crisis, costs are falling more on the shoulders of students, and even where it may seem as though some cost saving opportunities will not directly impact students, we assure you that all decisions have a rippling effect on the learning environment.

We've all been pressuring the provincial government to sufficiently invest in the post-secondary sector. Students are feeling the whiplash effect of years of budget cuts and work has been done to improve the situation, but the fight is far from over. At this point, we believe that a collective effort is the only path forward. We need your help to not just preserve this institution but actively improve the student experience. A strong and reputable institution not only supports students, but is a vital means of recruiting staff, and cultivating employment opportunities and would positively impact Lethbridge and Southern Alberta. We need everyone to work together to ensure that changes to our institution will be positive, student focused, and that the student voice is being heard at every threshold.


We appreciate the commitments made so far in sharing accurate student focused information, however all of us can agree this is just the start. We are encouraged by the information gathering and sharing process, and would like to urge for this to continue, as the UofL cannot afford for students to be an afterthought in the decision-making process and must be involved at all levels. This letter is an invitation to all decision makers on campus to work with us, and one another in a concerted effort.

We are approaching the end of a full undergraduate degree cycle since the installation of our current provincial government. We have not seen the last of the struggles, as we prepare for a new provincial budget, the lasting impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, and as economic distress worsens. However, we have come to realize that we are all in the same boat, we are here to preserve the institution we all love. We can not continue to point fingers, or pass the buck. The time for that is over, and we must work together to row in the same direction in one boat. The ULSU is ready to row together, the question is, will you join us in doing so?

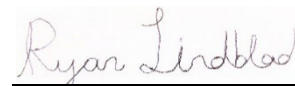
Yours in solidarity, the ULSU General Assembly,



Holly Kletke, President



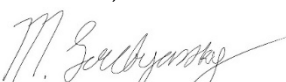
Rebecca Parkkari, VP Academic



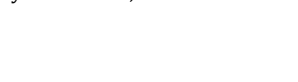
Ryan Lindblad, VP External



Mitchell Nixon, VP Student Affairs



Mark Serebryansky, VP Operations & Finance



Brenna Scott, Chair, General Assembly