

Dear University of Lethbridge Students,

We are extremely disappointed by the Government of Alberta's changes to the post-secondary education sector, and we are aware of the way this will have a deep impact on you as students.

While we are still finding out new information about the budget every day, there are a few points that will have an immediate impact on students:

- The University of Lethbridge will receive a 3.2% cut in its Campus Alberta Grant;
- The tuition freeze, which was implemented in 2015, will be removed;
- With the removal of the tuition freeze, individual universities will be allowed to increase tuition by 7% per year for three years;
- With the elimination of the tuition tax credit, students and their families will no longer be able to claim back tuition on their taxes;
- The Summer Temporary Employment Program (STEP) has been eliminated, meaning that employers will no longer receive funding to hire students during the summer break;
- The interest on student loans will go from prime to prime plus 1%, meaning that recent graduates will have to pay more per month to repay their loans.

In essence, work opportunities will be decreased for students, the University of Lethbridge will receive less funding, and tuition costs are allowed to make up the difference if the university so chooses. These actions will have severe consequences on the state of post-secondary in Alberta, and will undoubtedly add to your existing financial strain.

Post-secondary education is an opportunity for a person to achieve their dreams, and as such, we believe very strongly that every person should be able to access high quality, affordable, and predictable education. Our biggest priorities include maintaining the quality of education and student services on campus and making sure that students do not have to carry the weight of these budget cuts themselves. Our first priority is to advocate for changes that do not hold students solely responsible for making up the difference.

We at the ULSU are working very closely with other schools in the province to decide our next steps, and we intend to work with University administration to keep education at the University of Lethbridge accessible to anyone who wants to be here. We also want to reassure the University of Lethbridge community that we have a voice at the table when it comes to handling the presented cuts. We will work diligently to maintain the quality of life and education that students need on campus.

The students who attend the University of Lethbridge are the future creators, leaders, and contributors to Alberta, and receive one of the best, most unique educations possible. It is unfair that we as students are being held responsible for solving our province's debt, and as such, we need to work in solidarity together. Students should not have to suffer just to receive an education.

We, therefore, urge the members of the university community to work together to ensure that our voices are heard. If you have any questions regarding the effect that these changes will make on your quality of

life or education, we ask you to come forward. We will take your concerns to those who need to hear it: the Government of Alberta and the University Administration. Supporting students is our priority, our purpose, and our duty as a students' union. But we need your help in any way possible. Talk to your friends, your family, and any and all elected officials that you are able to. Prove to the government that our education is not worth cutting.

We realize that many people want to mobilize. We hear you, we support you, and we will keep you updated regarding this. We will not be quiet, and neither should you.

We encourage anyone who wants to know our next steps to reach out. Anyone who has concerns over the budget or will be adversely affected is urged to reach out to Bailey Harray, Vice-President External, at su.external@uleth.ca, 403-329-2780, Andrew Gammack, President, at su.president@uleth.ca, 403-329-2221, or visit the Students' Union office at SU180.

Yours in solidarity,

The ULSU Executive Council

Andrew Gammack, President

Bailey Harray, Vice-President External

Ryan Munn, Vice-President Student Affairs

Kate Potts, Vice-President Academic

Jordan Miles, Vice-President Operations and Finance