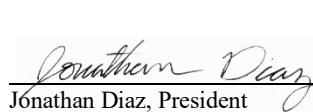


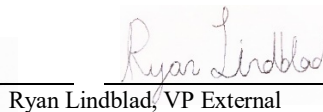
To the University of Lethbridge community,

The ULSU opposes the provincial budget released yesterday and we are saddened by the continued cuts we are seeing directed at our institutions, and the lack of support being provided to our students. In a time when post-secondary students have needed more support than ever due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the government has continued to make University more expensive, and thus less accessible for Albertans wanting to pursue post-secondary education. Across the sector, we have seen a cut of \$135 million to the Campus Alberta Grant. That is a massive cut to institutions that have already experienced layoffs, academic restructuring, and the delays of major projects due to previously slashed budgets. The University of Lethbridge itself has seen a cut of 5.8% to our funding, and this will work out to a reduction of approximately \$5.7 million for our institution which has already been slashed year after year. This also comes at a time when students will once again be looking at another potential hike in tuition of 7% in order to make up for these reductions in government funding. Once again, the Provincial government is expecting students, who are currently living in the worst health crisis of our lifetime, to pay higher prices while providing less support. This budget also shows the beginning of the performance-based metrics we have been fighting against for the entirety of this year. Due to advocating for the delay or cancellation of these metrics, we have seen that the government will only focus on 1 area in which metrics will be measured. The government will have 1 or 2 metrics based around Work Integrated learning. This is only currently a 1-year agreement but it will still put the UofL at risk of potentially losing 0-5% more of its funding if the measures are not met. The Mental Health Grant has been frozen for this year meaning there will be no cut to this funding, however, there will also be no increase as we have been advocating for. As of right now, this freeze is a 1-year agreement, but they are already in the process of making it one that lasts for 3 years. While we are happy that this funding will not be cut, we will also continue to advocate that this funding needs a massive increase before it is frozen so that student mental health can be properly supported. Regarding campus sexual violence, there currently exists no specific budget line for this area. It is important to note that this does not mean there is no funding, but just that we do not know what its funding looks like yet. In a meeting with the Advanced Education Minister on the night of the budget release, we asked about this subject and we were simply told that more specifics for that funding would be seen in April with the release of the Alberta 2030 review. Unhappy with this, we pressed on and insisted that if they truly plan to implement new campus sexual violence policies that are said to exist in the review, then we need to see guaranteed funding for it. It would need to see an increase in funding to ensure the new policies and initiatives can be implemented. Sadly, we still received no guarantee and thus we will continue to monitor this closely as we await the release of the Alberta 2030 review. In addition, we have seen that the forecast for the 2022-2023 budget also seems to include further cuts, signalling that even after this most recent round of slashing, the provincial government will not be finished with their attack on post-secondary education. Once again, the ULSU is opposed to this provincial budget, and are disappointed to see that the provincial government continues to put more financial pressure on students in a time when they are begging for support and relief. We will continue to advocate for greater support and greater funding for our students, and will keep our student body up to date with any new information we may receive over the coming weeks.

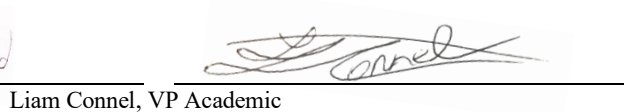
Yours in solidarity,



Jonathan Diaz, President



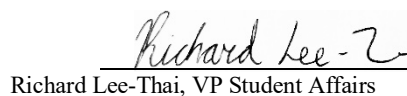
Ryan Lindblad, VP External



Liam Connel, VP Academic



Ethan Pullan, VP Operations & Finance



Richard Lee-Thai, VP Student Affairs