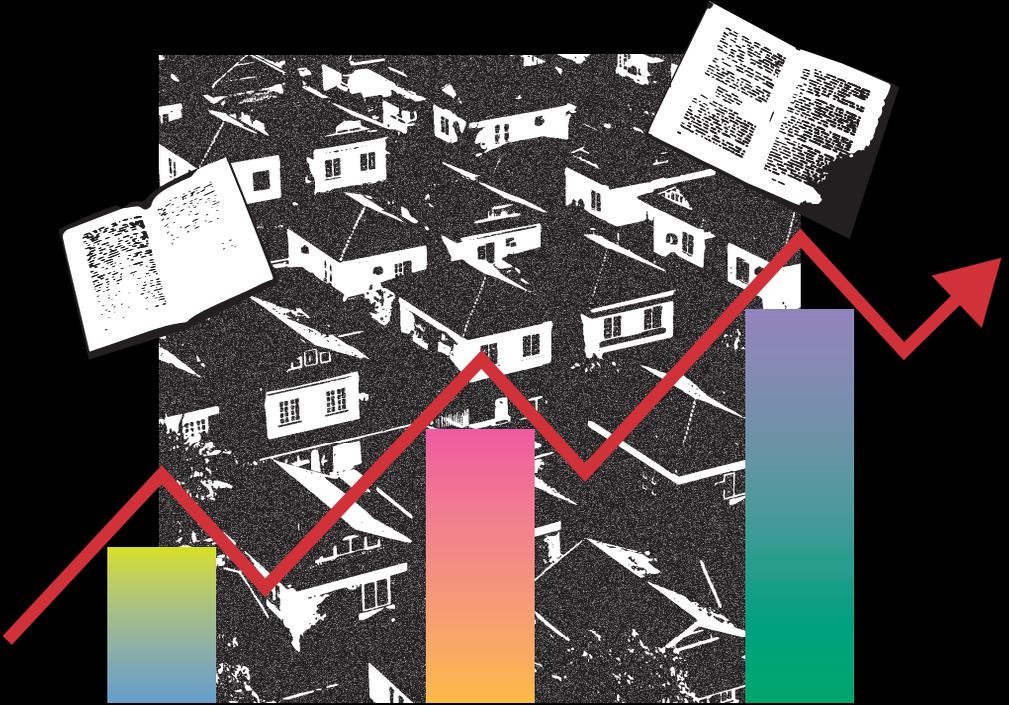


Student Issues:

Error 780: Tuition Bill Too Large





**GET OUT THE
VOTE**



**LET YOUR VOICE BE
HEARD IN THIS UPCOMING
PROVINCIAL ELECTION.**

***Pledge to vote
and have your say!***

LICENSETOCOMPLAIN.CA



Dear Students,

Welcome to the first edition of the Student Issues Zine: 'Error 780: Tuition Bill Too Large.' I am proud to have the opportunity to give students space to raise their voices and air their feelings about the rising cost of tuition and living expenses. Too many of us have been suffering behind closed doors. Our hope with this publication is to create community and collective awareness of the struggles we, as students, are facing.

This kind of community-building is a powerful strategy for making change. I want to thank every person who submitted a piece for this inaugural edition. Your pieces are powerful, beautiful, and reflective. I also want to thank you, readers, for joining this witnessing of the struggles, triumphs, and everyday experiences of students during these challenging times.

Together, we can make a difference and create a brighter future for ourselves and future generations of students. Join us as we explore these issues, find solutions, and work towards a more equitable and accessible education system.

Sincerely,

Christian Fotang

Your UASU VP External, 2022-23

Your UASU President-Elect, 2023-24

April 17 2023

To the politicians, governors, and other institutional leaders reading this,

We are at an inflection point in our post-secondary system where you have a choice: continue with policies that will price out a generation of talented, ambitious and driven students, or to invest in their future and in turn, the growth of Alberta.

Over the last four years, many students at the University of Alberta have seen the cost of their education rise by at least 30%. **1 in 3 students reduce or skip meals due to the cost of food**, 60% of students are **often or always physically and emotionally exhausted**, and 6-10% will wait **9 weeks or longer for a therapist appointment**.

Behind these numbers are stories: the real and lived experiences of students on the margins, struggling to make ends meet. Stories where every day is a choice to hunger for knowledge or to hunger for a basic meal. Stories of cries for help unheard by a system that responds only to tell you that your tuition payment is late. Stories of first generation students who may never realize their dreams of crossing the convocation stage because of unaffordability.

We created this zine to bring student-created art, poetry and essays to alert you - the decision makers - to the consequences of your actions. Funding cuts and tuition hikes have profound negative impacts on the over 35,000 students attending our University. As you read these pieces and reflect on this art, we hope you are impelled to take actions: to alleviate the pressures that we face, not just here at the University of Alberta but across our Province; to make choices that will rewrite the present story, where we can afford education, shelter, and our groceries at once.

Hungrily yours,

The Editors of the *Student Issues Zine*



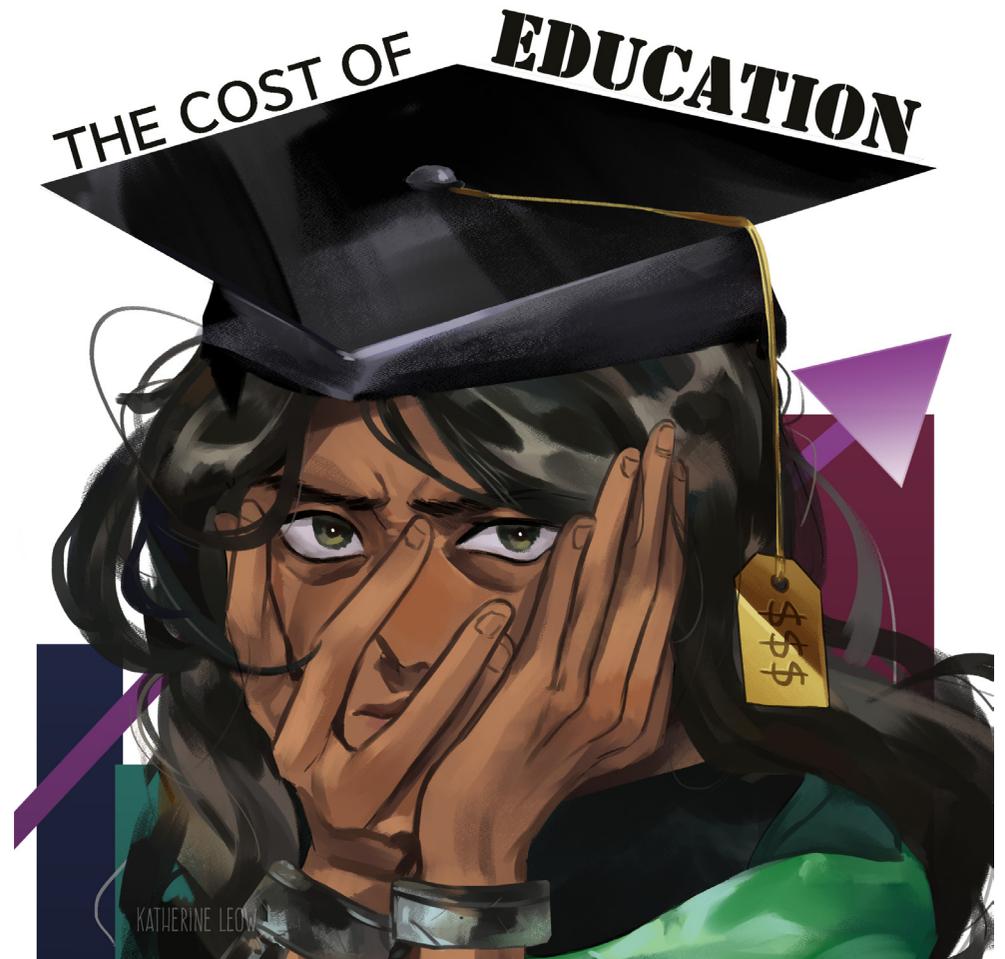
There's a little watch that tells the time and accordingly I clock my lies, so they slip out practiced, polished; blindingly white until I startle at my reflection; I have fallen for my own deceit, a small compromise.

Miles away, hunched over a desk; her graying hair peeking through her headscarf, my mother whispers frantic sweet words and shows photos of dinner just made; and I don't tell her to swipe her snot stained face; I am only a fragment of her, just untangled from her tight embrace.

We talk about people who leave but rarely about those who stay. And even less of those hanging by a thread, Migratory birds that fled with homecomings full of love and departures full of dread.

I notice the crease on his forehead before his smile; a tongue that wants me to stay a little while. Words that reach his lips and then fall dead; Slipping down, staining his shirt he ironed it for hours before trying to keep a level head.

I receive calls with high pitched voices; and my eyes overlook my brother wearing shoes two sizes too big and my sister's awe when she sees me touching the snow "Does it feel like pillows?" and a year's worth of dreams; does the land stretch ahead to possibilities unseen? I just nod my head yes; say nothing just smile; Ending the call before I tear up; sniffing into my father's sweater I stole, eyes blinking in the wrinkled argyle.



Katherine Leow

By Bareena Jamal

Canada is Great.

Canada is great.

Canada is beautiful.

Canada is a land of dreams and opportunities.

Dreams are goals.

Dreams are opportunities.

Dreams do come true,

However,

Opportunities are not for everyone.

Opportunities are given.

Opportunities are privileges.

With a good system in place,

With the right tools and institutions,

With a helping hand,

Dreams can become reality,

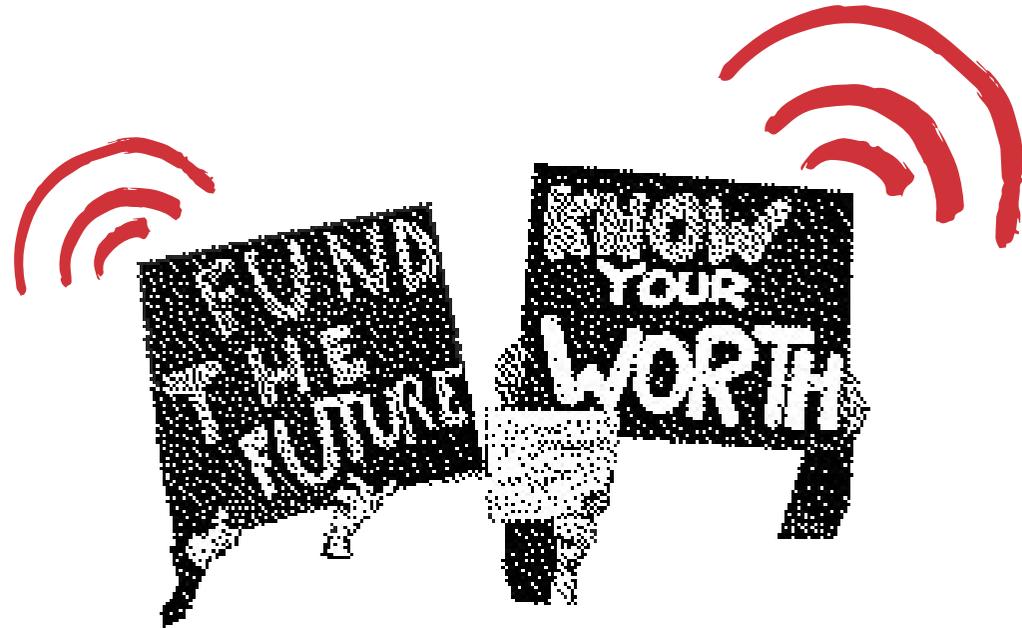
Opportunities can lead to freedom, and

With freedom comes self-identity.

Life, as it is, is difficult.

Life, as it is, is painful.

Life, as it is, is not a fairy tale.



Now more than ever, we need the right guidance

Now more than ever, we need assistance

Now more than ever, we need a helping hand.

Canada is great,

Canada is beautiful,

Canada is a land of dreams and opportunities.

By Jetro Dano

My grandfather once showed me a slip of paper
yellowed with age but crisp and flat.
\$20 in his pocket 70 years ago,
that's all he had at 18, crossing the sea.

No English and no degree
he made his fortune scrubbing laundry,
never stopping, never closing.
Always saving, never savouring his youth,
seeing the shadows of his father and grandfather
who scraped away for a green slip of paper.

White knuckles and scalding palms,
Backs hunched over,
All for the price of a promised life.
Carefully put away, even as the bar increased,
how it almost wasn't enough.

First \$50. Then \$100. Then \$500.
A few strokes of a pen on paper.

Even then, They would not, could not give up
giving their children a better chance.

When my grandfather arrived on prairie fields
He cherished that single bill,
for it was his alone to spend.

Now he sits with his feet up
perusing the Chinese paper,
eager to hear what I have learned,
living the path he never could take
I tell him, I can't go back next year

That I need to save.
He holds out a red envelope
which I accept with two hands
Inside is the \$20 bill.
For school, he says.



One of my many guilty pleasures is standing silently in Wine and Beyond and scrutinizing each bottle I happen to lay my eyes on. I strut through those sliding doors with my driver's license tucked securely into my back pocket and bask in the luxury of simply witnessing such fine fermented grape juices. The best time to go is in the evening. When the light from the refrigerators illuminates the pretentious artsy labels best, and the employees are off servicing actual adults that actually drink wine and don't just pretend to like the taste. I consider each contender with the most rigid criteria, peering through the cold glass at the bright yellow price tags and ignoring how prominent my eye bags look in my malformed reflection.

I imagine that I'm hosting a house party, that I'm older and successful, excelling at life. Warm jazz flows through a distant record player in a high rise apartment with long windows that look over the city skyline. I have the privilege of saying "it's vintage" nonchalantly of every piece of furniture or decor in the space, charming all of my guests with the carefully curated atmosphere. I'm an educated, even cultured individual in this fantasy, so of course I know the difference between malbec and merlot. I have obtained the godly ability to swirl the rounded glass, raise it to my nostrils and say with confidence that, yes, this is a really good wine. I tell my other guests to inhale the lovely alcohol aroma as well and eloquently explain the fragrances that they supposedly should be smelling.

I smile to myself as the jazz phases out and find myself staring at some wine with abstract mountains on it, realizing it would probably pay about a third of my tuition (probably less with the whole privatization thing). I walk around and curse myself out under my breath for wanting to be an elitist piece of

shit, but don't we all want to be elitist pieces of shit? Achieve some notion of success and be recognized for it. At least I could be a self aware elitist piece of shit and know that I'm a fraud, that statistically most people cannot tell the difference between a cheap and expensive wine.

In this true awareness though, the vision always shatters. The curse of reality cradled in a bulbous glass will be squeezed too tightly and suddenly dark red stains a stark white tablecloth. Working fifteen dollars an hour only to be able to afford a fraction of tuition, I've stopped dreaming about being able to buy a house, raise kids, or drive more than one vehicle. I even doubt if I will feel any passion for the job I end up with. I wonder if all my ambitions will be met with the same fate or if by some miracle they'll come to fruition.

I toil over this stain, scrub over it again and again with different methods like only using cash, tracking my monthly spending habits and most importantly denying myself costly cups of coffee. I put my whole shoulder into it and apply everything my parents told me to, but it still stays as a reminder that all my labour amounts to the same faded pink result.

Perhaps I like coming to Wine and Beyond because for a brief moment I can wrap the tablecloth around my eyes and remain blind to the ultimate outcome. I can pretend that the stain doesn't exist, and that job security does. That I'm not going through a grueling process for a career I have to keep for the next 45 years of my life. That my vision is actually attainable and whatever success I'm chasing is in my grasp, heavy, glinting in the light, sealed with wax, and stamped with a beautiful label.

The Tuition Spike

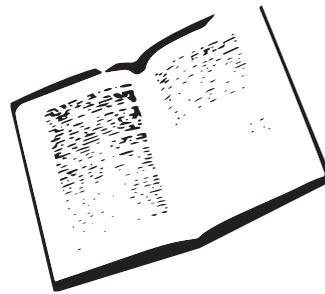
Education is an endless climb
Always reaching for the sky
You push, you toil, you try not to fall off
The mountain of people you push through
to reach the top

For the lucky few, an escalator climb
“Money solves everything for those who can buy”
Private tutors and guides aide in your climb
No job to distract you as you fly
Up, up, up to the sky
No need to look at the mountain nearby

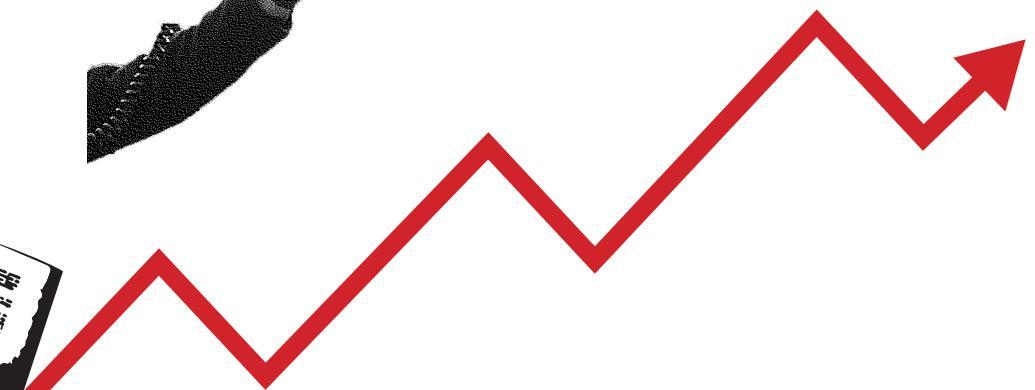
Climb the spire up the the top
Maintain your spot, but with caution
An economic crash can topple
Your dreams, your hopes, all you aspire
Because without money, you can't climb higher

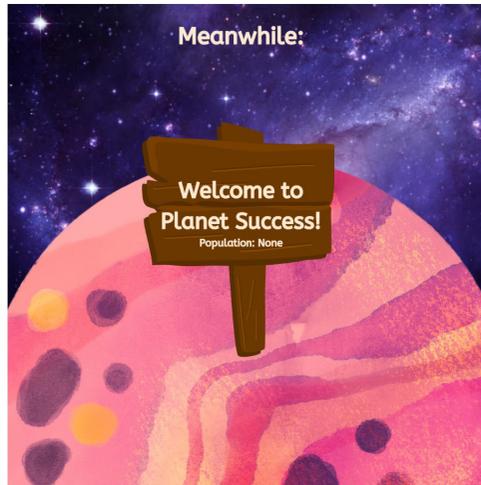
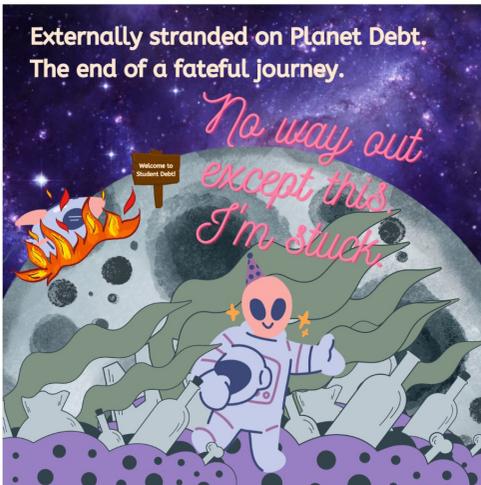
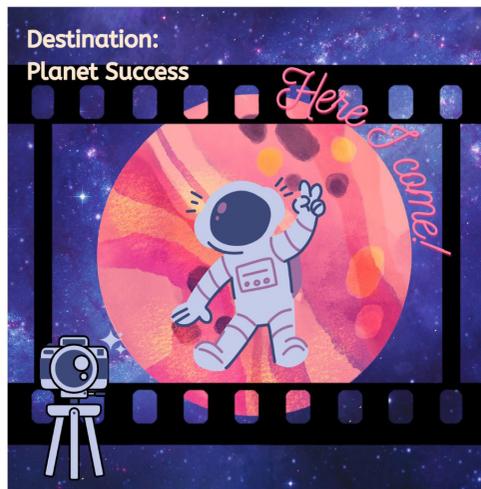
Your wit matters not in this challenging race
As your competition has less obstacles to face
You are at a disadvantage.
As tuition spikes, soon falls the chances
Of achieving the same
As the people at the top.

By Well Limsombutan



HALT THE HIKE





Thank You To Our Contributors

Bareena Jamal

Katherine Leow

Jetro Dano

Alexa Gee

Jude Scott

Well Limsombutan

Angelica Tam

Angelica Tam

**MAKE A DIFFERENCE &
HELP STOP TUITION HIKES**



**VOTE IN THE
PROVINCIAL ELECTION
MAY 29, 2023**



Thank You!



scan to view the zine online
in colour

