
Tuesday, December 6, 2016

6:00PM

Council Chambers, University Hall

LATE ADDITIONS (SC 2016-16)

2016-16/1 SPEAKERS BUSINESS

2016-16/2 PRESENTATIONS

2016-16/3 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

2016-16/4 BOARD AND COMMITTEE REPORT

2016-16/5 OPEN FORUM

2016-16/6 QUESTION PERIOD

2016-16/6c *COUNCILLOR LARSEN TO PRESIDENT RAHMAN:*****

Can the President comment on the current functions of the Social and Environmental Responsibility Committee [SERC]; including the last time the committee met and mandated feedback provided to the Executive Committee?

*****PRESIDENT RAHMAN'S RESPONSE:*****

Thank you for the question Councillor Larsen. SERC is currently undergoing a review of the current structure's capacity to carry out it's mandate, with the SustainSU Specialist and Involvement Team Lead heavily involved, since their unit oversees and supports Sustain SU operations and volunteers. The Executive Committee will have specific updates on this next semester after determining next steps on the review with SERC.

The last time SERC met as a committee was April 13, 2016. Meetings with individual members for the review have been ongoing throughout this semester, with the most recent meetings with students-at-large taking place on October 24th, 2016.

2016-16/6d

COUNCILLOR LARSEN TO THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

On Nov. 21st the Executive Committee discussed TRUMP LETTER, can a member of the Executive Committee expand on this discussion, in particular, did the committee craft a letter?

2016-16/6e

COUNCILLOR LARSEN TO THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

On Nov. 9th the Executive Committee discussed NON-PARTISAN STATEMENT AGAINST DISCRIMINATION IN POLITICS, can a member of the Executive Committee expand on this discussion, in particular the statement "Would like to see it more as a value inserted into the Students' Union rather than a formal statement"; what would 'value inserted' entail?

VICE PRESIDENT SANDARE'S RESPONSE to both items 6d and 6e:

Thank you very much for your question. Both agenda items labeled "Trump Letter" and "Non-Partisan Statement Against Discrimination In Politics" are centred around the same subject. It has come to my attention that a number of instances of discriminatory actions relating to race, ethnicity, sex, gender and religion seem to have risen since the rise of far-right rhetoric in politics both North and South of the border. As a non-partisan representative, I am planning to write-up a blog post outlining how I believe discriminatory rhetoric will negatively affect our student constituents, and how the Students' Union is committed to upholding values of inclusivity and the security of our student minorities on campus. Despite what is happening around us, I believe it is best to practice inclusive and non-discriminatory politics and focus on ways to support all students, regardless of who they are, where they are from and how they live.

With regards to the blog post, it is still in the process of being drafted. The "value" that needs to be added are calls to action on ways to bolster the promotion of inclusivity and the security of all our students, moving beyond a simple statement.

2016-16/6f

COUNCILLOR MONDA TO PRESIDENT RAHMAN:

Thank you for explaining some of the reasoning behind the higher base residence rent increase this year. I have additional concerns about the rent increases applied to all of our newest residence buildings. Pinecrest, Tamarack, Linden, and Alder House received a higher rent increase last year of 2.5%. This year, they are receiving the same raised base increase of 2.7% as all other residences. Graduate Residence (which also houses some undergraduate students in professional programs like Law and Medicine/Dentistry), is also receiving a higher

base increase of 3%, even though it had the same higher 3% increase last year. Why is the rent being raised faster on newer buildings, when they are already the most expensive residences? They are quickly becoming unaffordable for many students.

PRESIDENT RAHMAN'S RESPONSE:

Happy to answer the question. My only speculation for the proposed differential increases at the moment is that the residences identified will be impacted by the minimum wage increases and carbon tax increases differently, leading to different increases in their rent costs. However, this is only my speculation. These are good questions that I will ask at the upcoming Board meeting for clarification

2016-16/7

BOARD AND COMMITTEE BUSINESS

2016-16/8

GENERAL ORDERS

2016-16/8e

BANISTER MOVES to approve the proposal for a FAMF Referendum for the Augustana Students' Association.

Please see SC 16-16.14

2016-16/9

INFORMATION ITEMS

2016-16/9l

Report from the Audit Committee as written below.

The East Campus Village Residence Association Spring/Summer budget was approved. Audit set its first meeting date for the winter semester on Wednesday, January 11th at 4 pm. Councillor Hammond will be stepping down as Chair and a new chair will be elected at this meeting. A regular meeting schedule will be set at this meeting as well.

2016-16/9m

Report from the Vice President External.

Please see SC 16-16.15

2016-16/9n

Student Feedback on International Tuition Report

Please see SC 16-16.16

2016-16/9o

Report from the Finance Committee.

Please see SC 16-16.17

SC 16-16.14

Proposal to Create the ASA Faculty Association Membership Fee

The Augustana Students' Association, a Faculty Association of the University of Alberta Students' Union, shall set its membership fee at \$130 per year or \$65 per term. This membership fee will remain in effect while the Augustana Students' Association has Faculty and Campus Association status with the Students' Union. This fee will begin on September 1, 2017 and end on August 31, 2022.

The Augustana Students' Association membership fee will be utilized for the following purposes:

1. to promote the welfare of students at Augustana Faculty;
2. to encourage student participation in planning and administering student affairs;
3. to promote academic, cultural, and social interests;
4. to represent members to the administration of Augustana Faculty;
5. provide events and entertainment to encourage socialization;
6. to administer the business interests of the organization to the benefit of the membership; and
7. to provide space for social and community purposes.

The scope of the membership fee is to enhance the student experience at Augustana Faculty.

Refunds of membership fees shall be issued for those members who withdraw within thirty (30) calendar days of the start of the academic term. For those members who are philosophically opposed to or unable to pay the fee, refunds shall be issued.

Augustana Students' Association membership fees will be disbursed to the Faculty Association according to the following schedule:

Fall semester – upon approval of the financial reporting documents by the SU Audit Committee
Winter semester – by February 15th

The account shall be reconciled by our year end which is May 31st.

Fee Allocation (as percentage of budget):

Administration – 45%

Services – 18%

Marketing/Media – 11%

Entertainment/Events – 16%

Capital Expenditure/Investment Fund – 10%

In regard to financial oversight, the Augustana Students' Association employs someone to conduct and oversee the daily financial requirements of the organization. We use sound accounting practices, and our books are reviewed yearly by a professional accounting firm. The Association adheres to an annual budget that is approved by the Augustana Students' Council.



Dec. 5th, 2016
To: Students' Council
Re: Report to Students' Council

Council Report #16: EMP FEST, EMP FEST, EMP FEST!

Hello Council,

I know you are all studying hard with finals coming up. I hope that you've also found time to relax and destress between your study sessions these past few weeks. I'll keep today's report fairly brief!

UASU

EMP FEST

The majority of my time these past couple weeks has been spent working on EMP FEST. As I am sure you all know, the application for event proposals went live last week and I am very excited to see what kind of programming different organizations put through for event approval! The EMP FEST Advisory Committee also had it's first meeting last Friday, where we discussed the weeks key events, possibilities relating to outreach and event approval mechanisms. It was a very good meeting that brought together individuals representing the SU, Alumni Relations, the Career Center, University of Alberta International, as well as student representatives. Over the past couple weeks I have been meeting with representatives from various career centers across campus such as Arts, Sciences, Business and Campus Saint-Jean to ensure that there is optimal programming for a variety of students from all across campus. In addition, we are finalizing a \$5000 event sponsorship from the office of Alumni Relations to help run the event, one that will help ensure this event is the best possible for students here on campus.

Gateway Podcast

On the 21st, I had the opportunity to talk about Student Financial Aid through grants, as well as the cost of tuition in a podcast hosted by the Gateway. I enjoyed the conversation I had with Oumar about supporting students by lowering the cost of education, especially through grants, as well as the our stances on tuition.

UASU Podcast (The Voice of the Union)

Just last week I sat down with Fahim and spoke with him about the Lister Meal plan for this weeks episode of the Voice of the Union. We had a very good talk about the impact the

proposed changes to the meal plan would have had on our students. Please be sure to tune in and give it a listen!

Senate

Last Thursday and Friday I was off at our quarterly Senator Plenary. During Senate, we spent much of our time hammering down our where we plan to focus our efforts in regards to the Strategic Plan. Of the many presentations to Senate there were a few that really stuck out. There was one by the University Provost Steven Dew on the state of the university. His presentation touched on the tuition review, deferred maintenance funding as well as general university operations. In addition, we had our Friday morning plenary at the John A. McDougall school near Kingsway, where we had the opportunity to listen to the effect the Senate's USchool Program has on the low income and underprivileged students attending the elementary. It was incredible to hear the testimonials by the teachers on the effect the program has had on keeping many of these kids in school, and helping them develop a love for learning. (Kudos to the teachers and administrators who came out at 7:30am to speak to us about the programs effects!) However, the session that was by far my favourite was the Panel on Racism capping off our Friday morning plenary. The panel brought in experts in discrimination and racism such as a professor from the UofA (Melinda Smith), a city councillor and representatives from the City of Edmonton, members of the aboriginal community and a representative from John Hopkins. The panel discussed their own experiences, ways to combat racism as well as how to push for greater cultural education. They also provided a great answers to my question on how to move conversations about race and racism outside of the semi-insular circles of people who care, into the circles of people who do not. I am happy to have listened to, and taken part in such impactful discussion.

That's all for today folks! I wish you all the best of luck on your finals. I am sure that you will do stellar on your exams.

“Life is a highway, I want to ride it all night long” - Tom Cochrane,
Mike Sandare



Undergraduate Student Feedback on the Proposed International Student Fee Increases

Prepared December 4th, 2016

The Government of Alberta has shown that the financial accessibility and affordability of our post-secondary institutions is a priority through their tuition freezes for domestic students. However, the tuition freezes so far have only applied to domestic students, leaving international students as a vulnerable demographic with potential fee increases.

For the 2015 – 16 and 2016 – 17 academic years, increases to tuition by inflation were proposed with little pushback from students, both international and domestic. Now, however, the University of Alberta faces an uncertain budget and is proposing a 3.01% increase to international students' tuition.

While the Students' Union sympathizes with the financial uncertainty that the University is facing now, we find the proposed increases to international student tuition beyond inflation to be detrimental towards promoting diversity at our campus. In particular, the Students' Union believes that these moves will limit our student body's socioeconomic diversity, and prevent us from achieving our goals to be for the public good.

Our stance around international student tuition was developed through our consultations with the Provost's office, as well as through consulting our international student body. We worked closely with the International Students' Association, a student group aimed at bringing international students at the U of A together, and administered a survey to all undergraduates at the U of A.

International students took the consultations very seriously, distributing surveys through their networks and providing numerous written comments to the Students' Union. Our survey was able to reach over 1200 (n = 1235) students at the U of A, with 82% (n = 1017) respondents as international students and the remainder being permanent residents and domestic students.

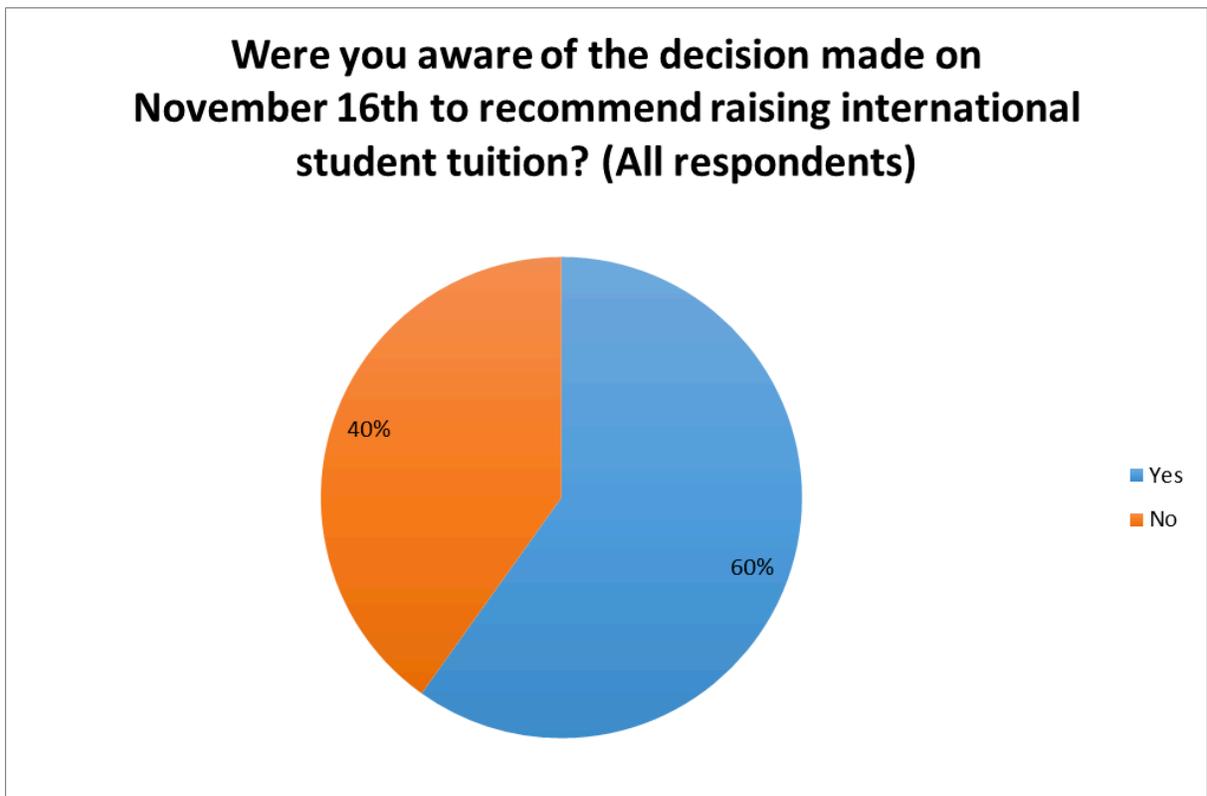
The survey was distributed starting on November 28th, and data was collected until December 2nd. Responses were collected by Google Forms. While the survey data represents the results of a self-selected sample, there is potential for bias, but a very significant proportion of the international undergraduate student population has completed this survey. Both quantitative and qualitative data was collected from this survey.

The majority of the open-ended comments centered around the following items:

- International students' lack of privileges, compared to domestic students, including predictability with their tuition increases;
- The trend of continual increases by the University of Alberta to raise international tuition beyond inflation;
- The perception that international students are simply cash cows to increase the university's revenue;
- A negative impact on students' mental health; and
- Lacking student financial aid for international students when compared to their high tuition costs.

It is important to acknowledge that some respondents were concerned about the university's ability to retain staff and administer programs here, and that domestic students' households tend to pay taxes towards public goods, including post-secondary education. However, these comments do indicate that international students should not be picking up the brunt of the university's budgetary shortfalls, and especially should not suffer a more expensive, and lower quality, post-secondary education.

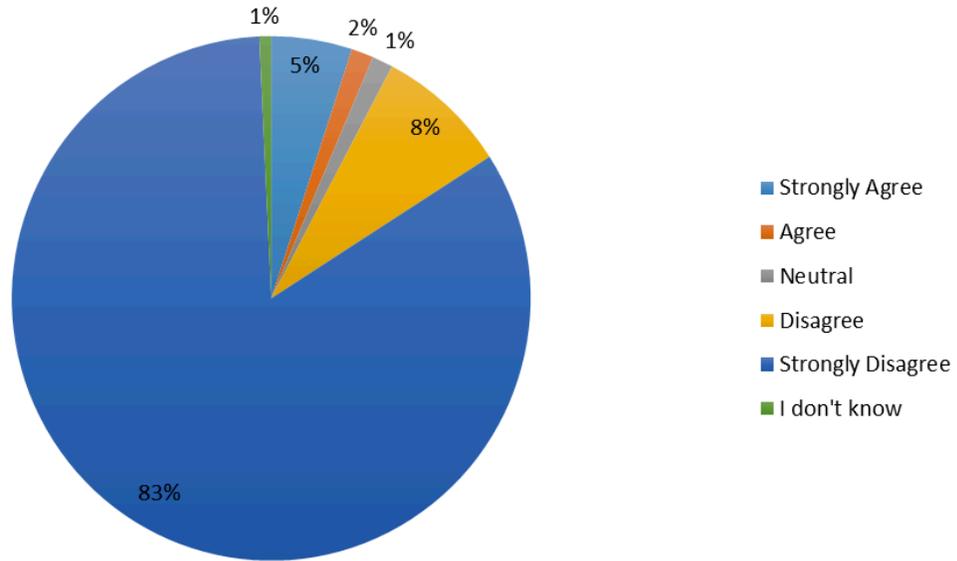
These concerns from students had been brought up previously by the Students' Union with the Offices of the Provost and VP Finance & Administration, though survey results were not ready in advance of those consultative meetings. Below are the responses collected within the survey:



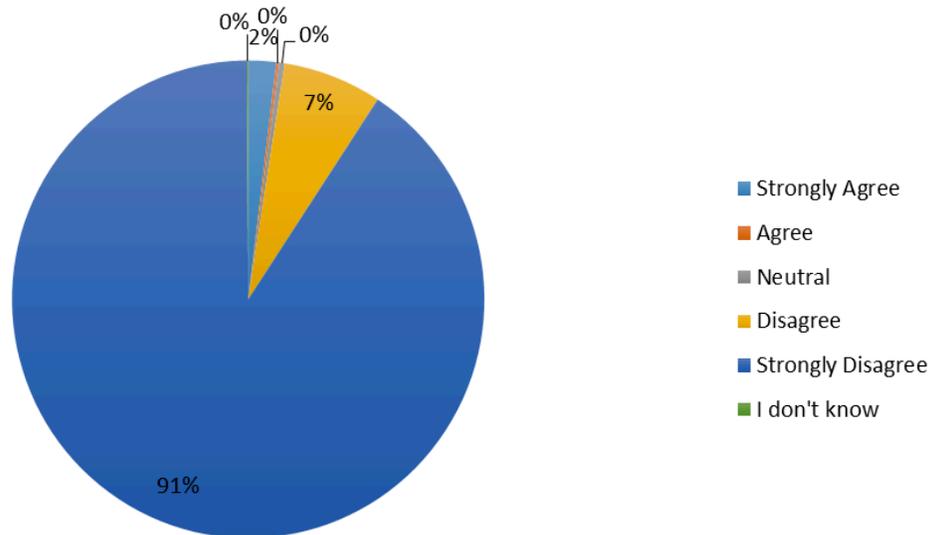
Students, domestic and international, were aware that there was a proposed increase to international students' tuition. This likely helped in achieving a high response rate for our survey, as students were keen to see their peers have a chance to voice their concerns to the Students' Union. The awareness responses' percentages from international students and domestic students were quite similar.

We then asked students about whether they agreed with proposed 3.01% increase in tuition for international students. Across both domestic and international students, 84% of them strongly disagreed with the decision. That value increased to 91% when only responses from international students were selected, while 41% of domestic students strongly disagreed with the proposed increases. 17% of domestic students disagreed with the proposed increase, 8% agreed and 23% of them strongly agreed with the proposed increase. The remaining 11% were undecided or neutral towards the increase.

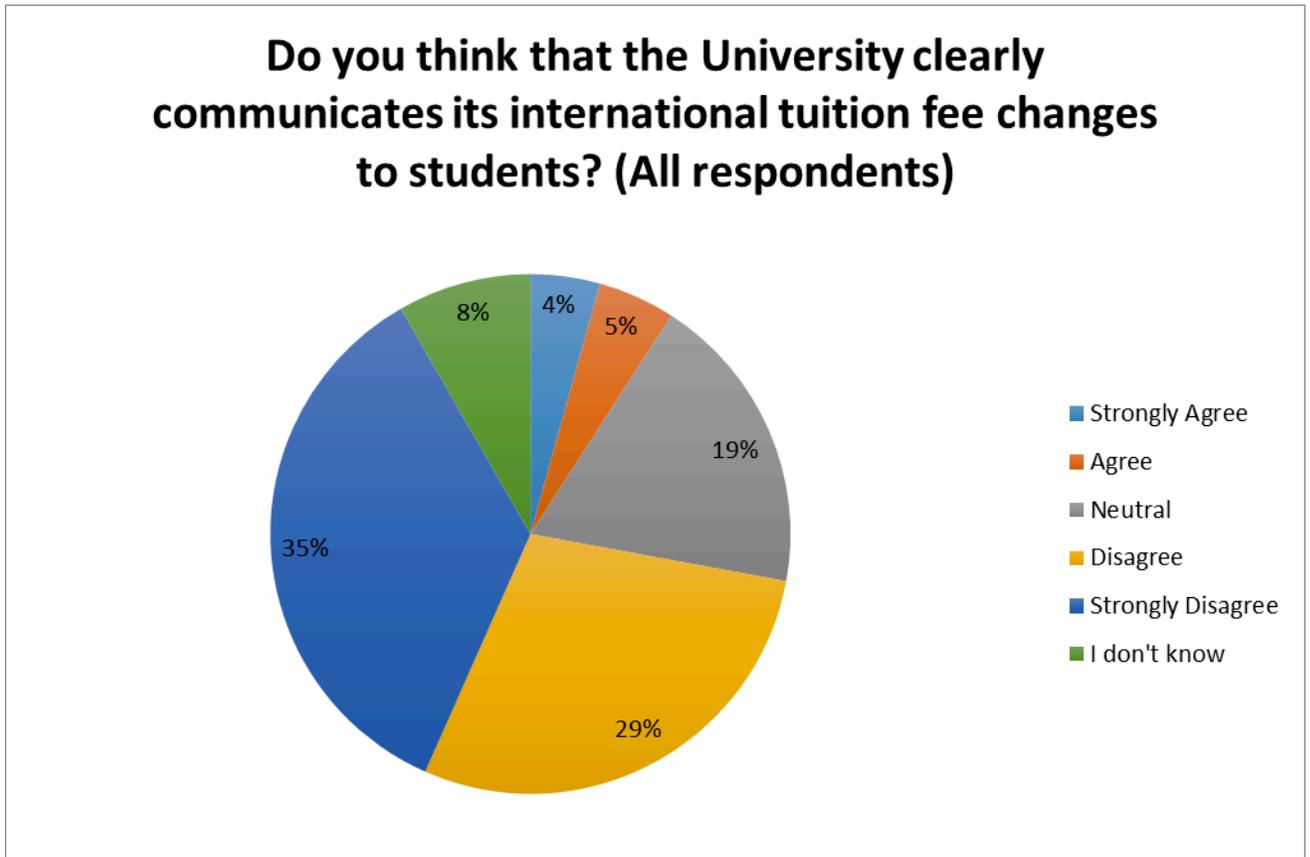
Do you agree with the proposed 3.01% increase for international students? (All respondents)



Do you agree with the proposed 3.01% increase for international students? (International respondents only)

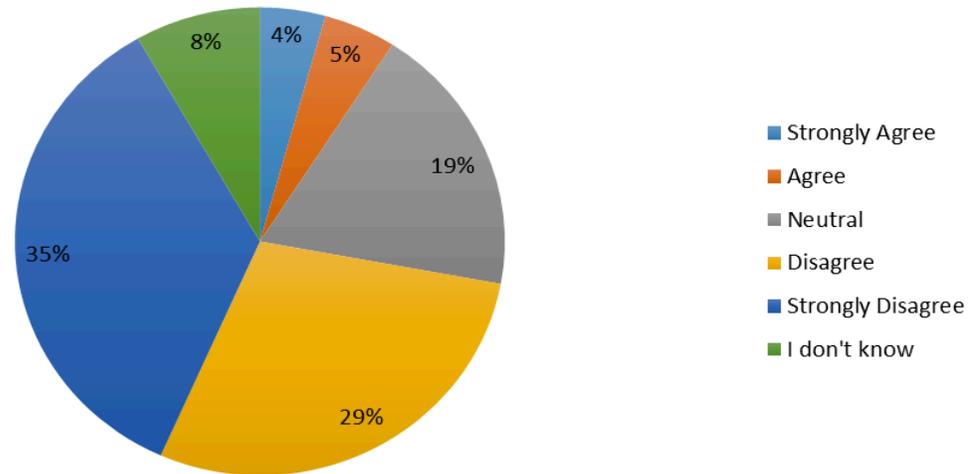


Students then responded to whether they thought international tuition fee changes were clearly communicated to students or not. Domestic and international student responses were quite similar, and on aggregate 35% of students strongly disagreed with the statement, while 29% disagreed.



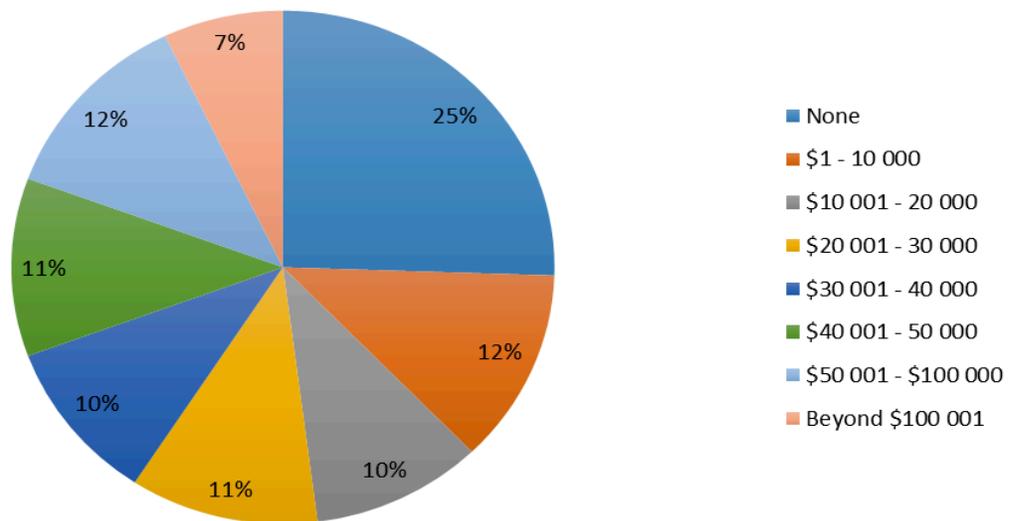
In closing, we asked questions around bursaries and scholarships for students, of which many students had comments on regarding the eligibility criteria and accessibility of these bursaries and scholarships. 60% of students, across domestic and international ones, are aware of bursaries and scholarships available for international students. However, students both domestic and international would like to see more financial support for international students, with 64% of them disagreeing or strongly disagreeing that there is enough financial support for international students studying at the U of A currently.

To what extent do you think that there are enough bursaries and scholarships available for international students? (All respondents)



The final question that was posed to students was how much debt they expect to graduate with by the end of their degree:

How much debt, in dollars, do you expect to graduate with? (International respondents only)



A strong majority of international students will leave the U of A with significant debt, and will go on to contribute to our economy as many of our graduates do. With growing debt as they study, however, many international students feel as though they were treated as cash cows by the University: gaining the same skills as their domestic classmates while having to pay upwards of three times their tuition rates for the same education.

With all of these key points raised by a substantial number of students, the Students' Union believes that the U of A will be providing an incredible disservice to its international student community if their tuition is increased at a level of 3.01%. International students should feel welcomed as integral members of our campus, however the proposed increases to their tuition will work counter to that goal, and will limit our socioeconomic diversity as a campus.

Additional Comments

The survey allowed students a space for general, open-ended comments about the proposed increases to international student tuition and their available financial aid. The following themes arose from these comments, as noted above:

- International students' lack of privileges, compared to domestic students, including predictability with tuition increases;
- The trend of continual increases by the University of Alberta to raise international tuition beyond inflation;
- The perception that international students are simply cash cows to increase the university's revenue;
- A negative impact on students' mental health; and
- The lack of student financial aid for international students when compared to their higher tuition costs.

All verbatim comments from students in response to the open-ended questions can be found upon request.



SC 16-16.17

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
STUDENTS' UNION

OFFICE OF THE
VICE PRESIDENT (OPERATIONS & FINANCE)

December 6, 2016

To: Students' Council

Re: Finance Committee Report to Students' Council

Good Afternoon Council,

Please let this serve as the written report for the Finance Committee meeting that occurred on Monday, November 28th, 2016 at 4PM.

The committee heard a presentation from the Students' Union Awards team on the successes and failures of this year's awards process. Notable was a very high amount of applications as well as a very successful awards night. The team suggested some changes to standing orders, which can be found in the minutes

FACRA sent their operating lease agreement to the committee, finalizing their DFU disbursement.

Please see posted minutes for details on each decision.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Robyn Paches', written over a light gray grid background.

Robyn Paches