

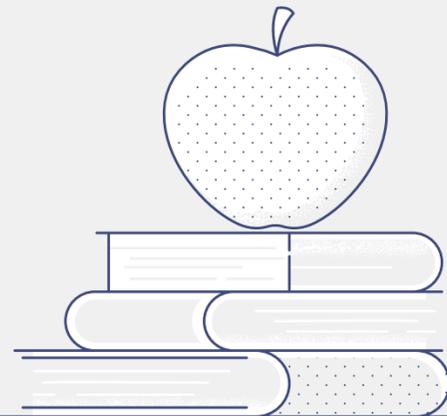
# **COUNCIL OF ALBERTA UNIVERSITY STUDENTS**

Samantha Scott - Chair  
Tera Leigh Cardinal - Vice Chair  
Alexandra Ages - Executive Director



# WHAT DOES CAUS DO?

Created in 1986 with the original purpose to facilitate information sharing and networking between university student unions, CAUS now exists as a leading student advocacy organization in Alberta.



## FOCUS

CAUS advocates on behalf of Albertan university students, specifically those who attend our 5 member schools. We advocate on issues such as affordability and accessibility to the government, the official opposition, the media, and community stakeholders.

## STRATEGY

Through means such as active relationship building with the government, consistent stakeholder meetings, media outreach, and cooperation with other student and PSE groups, we use a variety of approaches to address key issues impacting students.

## COST

In order to support costs associated with campaigns, internal advocacy, staffing, as well as physical infrastructure, CAUS members pay a set fee tied to each FLE. This fee is set according to CPI, and is currently \$2.11/FLE.

## TOOLS

Key tools utilized by CAUS include formal social media campaigns, physical advocacy work (such as our Penguins for PSE protest), strategic press releases, and stakeholder relations meetings.

# WHAT DOES CAUS ADVOCACY LOOK LIKE IN PRACTICE?



Edmonton

## 'Caught off guard': Low-income students in Alberta scramble to go back to school with lower grants



Alberta government lowering monthly full-time student grant funding from \$375 max to \$250

 Anna Wdowczyk · CBC News · Posted: Aug 06, 2022 9:30 AM MT | Last Updated: August 6



Funding for the Alberta student grant was maintained at \$54.4 million, but income eligibility thresholds changed in a way that, essentially, prevents students from middle-income families from benefitting. (Ben Nelms/CBC)

[174 comments](#) 

Some students are scrambling to find extra loans and adjust their personal spending, after the Alberta government announced in late July it would clip the amount of monthly funding received through its full-time student grant program.

New budget allocations mean the income thresholds to be eligible for the Alberta Student Grant for Full-Time Students have changed. The Alberta government says this allows more low-income students to tap into funding.

But as a result, students will receive less money per month than they did a year ago. Last year's monthly maximum was \$375, but that was clipped by one third to \$250 this coming school year.

"Students have been caught off guard by the lack of communication about these cuts to the funding that they are receiving," said Samantha Scott, a chair for the Council of Alberta University Students.

"Given the unprecedented rate of inflation and the current affordability crisis students are already facing, this has increased the struggle."



# Media Engagement

"Cost should never be a barrier to achieving your ambition. Young Albertans deserve to have the right skills and knowledge to succeed in tomorrow's economy," said Advanced Education Minister Demetrios Nicolaidis, in a statement.

"The New Beginnings Bursary will be just that for many Albertans: ensuring post-secondary education remains an accessible way to get ahead."

Samantha Scott, chair of the Council of Alberta University Students, said that "given the critical importance of post-secondary in accessing high-quality and high-paying jobs, the Council of Alberta University Students is pleased to see this tangible investment into supporting Alberta students.

"We recognize the crucial nature of supporting low-income students in accessing higher education and look forward to making sure those students are continually advocated for."

# Student Engagement

 CAUS  
Council of Alberta University Students

1/4

**Did you know that Alberta has had the highest tuition increases in the Country?**

Over the last three years, the Government of Alberta has allowed your tuition to be raised by **21%**

Find out how your representatives are fighting to keep education affordable: 

2/4

**We need the Government of Alberta to invest \$200 million in needs-based grants**

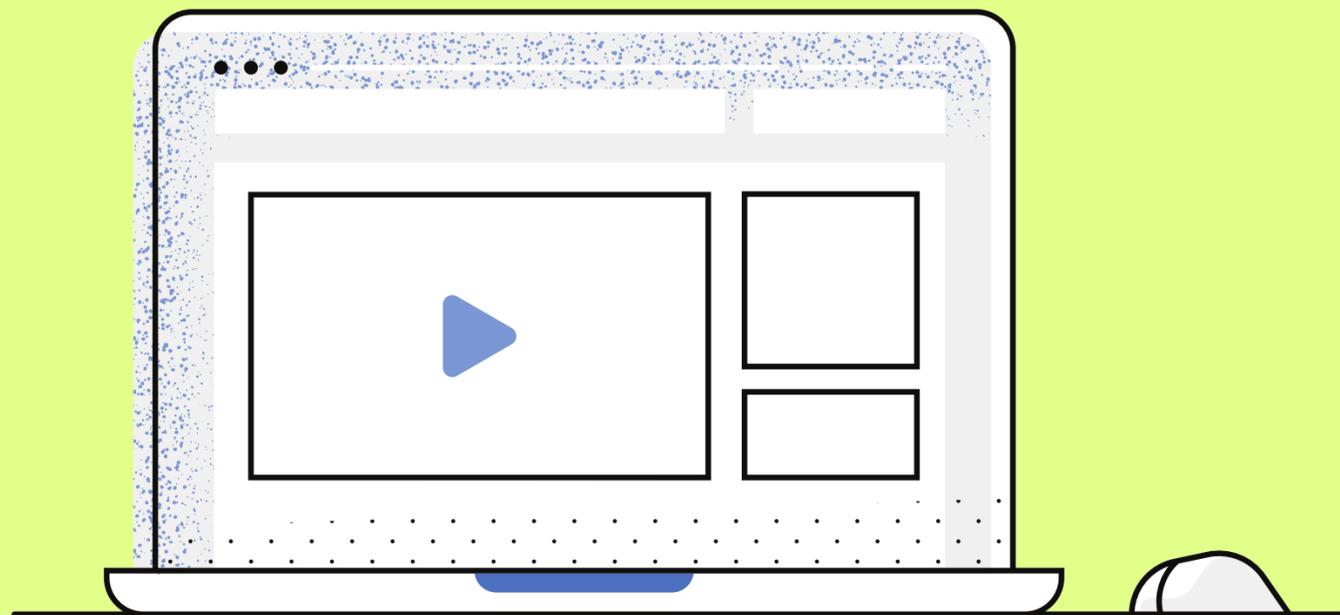
These grants will make sure that no student gets priced out of education

What else is CAUS asking for? 

# Government Relations



# ADDITIONAL BENEFITS FOR MEMBERS



Along with formal advocacy work, ranging from representation with elected officials to shareable press releases, CAUS seeks to ensure that members receive full value from being engaged with CAUS. We do this in a number of ways:

- CAUS hosts regular conferences, such as Counterparts, which serve as a networking event and learning opportunity for student leaders.
- We regularly promote the ongoing work of our members on social media, highlighting the activities and engagement of each SU/SA.
- Starting in September, CAUS will begin hosting lunch and learns, open to all student leaders at member schools, on topics such as diversity and equity, food security, and supporting first-generation students.
- All CAUS members will be able to benefit from our GOTV campaign this spring!

# CURRENT CAUS PRIORITIES

As we prepare for the 2023 election, CAUS has developed 6 key priority areas in collaboration with our members. These priorities will guide us in both internal and external advocacy during the months ahead.

- 01** INCREASING AFFORDABILITY OF POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION
- 02** ENDING DOMESTIC AND GENDER BASED VIOLENCE ON CAMPUS
- 03** DEVELOPING DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE
- 04** STRENGTHENING INDIGENOUS FUTURES
- 05** INVESTING IN CAMPUS MENTAL HEALTH
- 06** SUPPORTING STUDENTS' CAREER DEVELOPMENT



# **Increasing Affordability of Post-Secondary Education**

## **RECOMMENDATION #1**

The Government of Alberta invests an additional \$200 million annually into non-repayable up-front grants.

## **RECOMMENDATION #2**

The Government of Alberta assesses the use of an endowment-style fund for continued affordability.

# Ending Domestic and Gender Based Violence on Campus

## RECOMMENDATION #1

The Government of Alberta should allocate consistent and adequate funding towards efforts focused specifically on training and prevention of campus sexual violence in Alberta, based on the financial asks of individual PSIs.

## RECOMMENDATION #2

The Government of Alberta should work with individual PSIs and commit to consistent and sufficient funding for the most appropriate support services dedicated to anyone across Alberta affected by campus sexual violence.

## RECOMMENDATION #3

The Government of Alberta should fund the development of online-based training that institutions can use as a baseline to educate their campus staff and faculty on effective and supportive responses to sexual violence disclosures.

# Developing Digital Infrastructure

## RECOMMENDATION#1

That the Government of Alberta stays the course of the Alberta Broadband Strategy, recognizing the importance of ensuring equal access to digital infrastructure for all Albertans, particularly students.

## RECOMMENDATION #2

The Government of Alberta should direct increased funding towards operating grants for post-secondary institutions in order to specifically increase digital access and capacity.

# Strengthening Indigenous Futures

## RECOMMENDATION #1

To continue their commitment to the Indigenous people of this land, we ask that the government of Alberta invest capital in recruiting Indigenous learners to post-secondary education rurally, on reserves and in urban centres.

## RECOMMENDATION #2

We also ask that a portion of those funds be allocated to student associations, when applicable, so that there can be continuity across all post-secondary institutions in terms of cultural & educational Indigenous centres.

# Investing in Campus Mental Health

## RECOMMENDATION #1

The Government of Alberta increases mental health funding commitments to \$172 per FLE at each institution.

# Supporting Students' Career Development

## RECOMMENDATION #1

That the Government of Alberta pursues continued investment in and expansion of the Work-integrated Learning Industry Voucher pilot program.

## RECOMMENDATION #2

Standardization of the micro-credential framework across Alberta.

## RECOMMENDATION #3

Increased investment in career centers across Alberta's universities and PSIs to support students in developing professional networks and obtaining permanent positions in their fields of study postgraduation.

# Questions?

