

Mount Royal Faculty Association Standing Advocacy Goals

Preamble

Through these membership-approved advocacy goals, the Association affirms its commitment to a vision of universal, equitable access to affordable, high-quality public post-secondary education (PSE), comprising diverse programs of study and scholarship that grow our knowledge and understanding and that uphold our University's responsibilities to its many publics—that is, to healthy PSE as a public good. This is a vision of PSE in which all members of the academic staff play a decisive role in shared governance and participate meaningfully in protecting and strengthening the conditions necessary for robust academic work. We commit to engaging with the public on these issues. In committing to these goals, we recognize and oppose the neoliberal project that seeks to recast PSE as little more than the narrowly conceived servant of private interests.

Goals

1. A public funding regime for Alberta PSE that ensures predictable and stable funding at a level sufficient to support scholarship and universal, equitable access to affordable, high-quality public education across a diverse array of subjects, programs, and disciplines. This requires:
 - a. A large-scale and long-term public reinvestment in PSE, free from externally imposed regimes of targeted and performance-based funding, with the goal that revenue from base operating grants rises to at least two thirds of institutional operating revenue by 2030;
 - b. That annual operating grant increases are never less than the annual rate of provincial inflation, with an inflationary backfill of the base operating grant when tuition is frozen, with concomitant funding increases when enrolments increase, and with “lights on” adjustments accompanying capital projects;
 - c. That annual tuition and fee increases are never greater the annual rate of provincial inflation, with an aim to lower tuition and fees and increase student aid overall, and that exceptional tuition increases and the introduction of new fees are not used to circumvent tuition regulation;
 - d. That provincial funding be decoupled from unstable sources of provincial income such as resource revenues, and that it be stabilized through increased reliance on progressive taxation and a higher, inflation-indexed Canada Social Transfer;
 - e. That funding be provided according to rolling, multi-year commitments; and
 - f. That public institutions' financial planning and reporting instruments are more transparent, with resource allocations that are more clearly and demonstrably aligned in support of their core academic functions, and such that observers can clearly trace the links between categories of institutional revenue and categories of expense by object and function.

2. A governance model for public Alberta PSE that, while fostering meaningful and equitable engagement with their many publics, protects the integrity of institutions' academic missions, autonomy, and collegial governance as well as the academic freedom of faculty. This includes:

- a. Ensuring that legislative provisions permit the full participation of academic staff in the institutional and system-wide processes that shape the conditions of academic work, including but not limited to participation in governance structures, systems of peer review, and decision-making processes at all levels;
 - b. Strengthening the role and improving the function, as provided in the *Post-Secondary Learning Act*, of General Faculties Councils in the bicameral governance of universities; and
 - c. Limiting the undue or disproportionate influence of particular external interests on institutional priorities and planning, including by eliminating the Minister’s Advisory Council on Higher Education and Skills and its direction-setting role for PSE, repealing the regime of investment management agreements, and ensuring a transparent process for appointing public members of boards of governors such that boards reflect the diversity of the communities in which their institutions are embedded.
3. End colonial, discriminatory, unjust, and exploitative practices at Mount Royal and in PSE more broadly. This includes through:
- a. Advocating for the decolonization and Indigenization of the university, which includes supplemental public funding that supports the hiring and retention of Indigenous faculty;
 - b. Advocating for public policy that supports the wellness and occupational health and safety of Association members, as well as those of our campus communities;
 - c. Advocating for fair treatment of contract and limited-term academic staff, including through sufficient funding to support a pro-rata model of contract remuneration, appropriate benefits, and pathways to permanent employment for those seeking it;
 - d. Mandating institutional and sector-wide collection of data related to equity and precarious employment, and advocating for public policy that facilitates rectifying problems where they are identified; and
 - e. Advocating for an inclusive teaching/learning and scholarship environment, which includes recognition, support, and robust academic freedom protections for Indigenous, anti-racist, feminist, human rights, and politically informed work that places faculty in precarious positions in terms of hiring, promotion, and conditions of academic work.
4. Protect and enhance the quality of education at Mount Royal and of public PSE more broadly. This includes through:
- a. Advocating for public policy that enables pedagogically appropriate teaching workloads, class sizes, student-to-faculty ratios, and the personalized learning environment at Mount Royal;
 - b. Advocating for a higher ratio¹ of permanent to contract academic staff through increased funding for more permanent positions, such that the academic work in

¹ As measured by proportions of institutional workload undertaken, including by scheduled instructional course hours (SICH) assigned and by numbers of registrants taught.

support of Mount Royal's core academic function is fulfilled through a well-supported, primarily tenure-track/permanent faculty complement; and

- c. Protecting the academic freedom of faculty, including so that they may exercise their best professional judgement in matters of education, scholarship, collegial governance, etc.
5. A high level of public engagement with PSE issues. This includes through:
- a. Strengthening engagement between faculty of all appointment types (including permanent and contract), policymakers, and the public; and
 - b. Cultivating discussion and understanding of the value of PSE as a public good and as a public policy priority that matters.
6. A more democratic, fairer employment and labour relations regime for academic staff in Alberta. This includes through:
- a. Removing the employer's right to designate employees as in or out of the Association, to be replaced by standard *Labour Relations Code* means for determining union membership consistent with free association principles;
 - b. Repealing secret employer bargaining mandate legislation and limiting government interference in collective bargaining; and
 - c. Realizing a more democratic *Labour Relations Code* (e.g., repealing undemocratic restrictions on picketing).
7. Unless decided otherwise by the Executive Board, advocacy goals of the organizations of which the Association is a member shall be advocacy goals of the Association. This includes:
- a. Supporting the national advocacy campaigns and federal lobbying initiatives of the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT), including as related to matters of academic freedom, collegial governance, fair employment practices, equity in the workplace, fair copyright, federal research and education funding, and others;
 - b. Supporting the job actions of other member unions of the CAUT Defence Fund; and
 - c. Supporting the provincial advocacy efforts and lobbying initiatives of the Confederation of Alberta Faculty Associations (CAFA).