

**For immediate release: April 3, 2018**

The Students' Association of Mount Royal University (SAMRU) stands in solidarity with the University of Alberta Students' Union (UASU) in their efforts to seek remediation of overzealous and unjustifiable budget decisions made by the University of Alberta in the past year.

The University of Alberta 2018-19 budget, approved in October of last year, called for a 4% decrease in spending which has resulted in several support staff layoffs—a move likely to negatively impact student services on campus. In a recent move put forward by Administration and approved by the Board of Governors, international student tuition was raised by a full 3.14%, campus residence fees went up by 4%, and resident meal plan fees were increased by 15.8%. These decisions come at a time when the Government of Alberta has committed to a 2% increase to the Campus Alberta grant and \$17 million in backfill funding.

Given these drastic changes place a heavy burden on a segment of Alberta students—especially international students—SAMRU shares the concerns of UASU regarding the impact on affordability of post-secondary, quality of education, and quality of student life. Campus residents and international students are valuable members of our organizations, committed students, and strong contributors to the Canadian economy. SAMRU maintains that education must remain affordable and accessible across the province, to our students and all students.

Due to the coordinated nature of Alberta's post-secondary system, publicly funded universities do not stand in isolation. Disregard for student welfare and the public good has potential to cascade across the system; a stand must be taken before it spreads. SAMRU joins the UASU as well as University of Alberta staff and faculty in asking the University of Alberta to re-evaluate its 2018-19 budget decisions and recent increases in light of the Campus Alberta grant increase and backfill funding.

In solidarity,

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