



Working Conditions are Learning Conditions

<https://www.stopsecuts.ca/>

ACIFA is part of the Public Interest Alberta campaign to stop the cuts to Alberta's post-secondary education system. Post-secondary institutions are important to students and Alberta communities and have a significant economic impact on their region's prosperity.

We ask the provincial government to

- stop further budget cuts on post-secondary education for the coming budget year, including the planned cuts to operating grants,
- stop the drastic tuition increases for undergraduate and graduate students,
- remove performance-based funding metrics, especially those focused on labour market outcomes,
- immediately freeze support staff layoffs & return position numbers to reasonable levels,
- end the hiring freeze of tenure track professors, and
- end the precarious nature of long-term sessional positions.

Rationale

Cuts to the Campus Alberta Grants from the Government of Alberta have placed severe strain on students, faculty, and staff who are trying to maintain quality post-secondary education in Alberta's universities, colleges, and polytechnics.

These cuts will have a drastic impact on the culture and economy of our province, and on the well-being of our citizens. It is imperative that we continue to communicate how important post-secondary education is to the very fabric of this province.

Provincial government cuts have resulted in an unprecedented number of layoffs and a refusal of post-secondary institutions to replace retiring staff. These actions have resulted in students now being required to navigate their post-secondary experience without adequate support; furthermore, faculty have lost the technical and research supports required to accomplish both their teaching and research objectives.

The recent and proposed cuts to faculty and staff place our research and economic goals in jeopardy. This is unconscionable at a moment when the province is looking to both diversify and restart our economy as we come out of the COVID-19 crisis.

Increases in tuitions and fees have placed increasing stress on students and their families, meaning there will be less money for them to spend at local businesses to help restart our struggling economy.

Layoffs and redundancies (elimination of positions when staff retire) mean fewer employed Albertans across the entire province. This is a major issue in big cities, but has even greater impact in smaller or rural locations where the post-secondary institution is often one of the community's biggest employers.



ACIFA is concerned that these cuts will affect the smaller rural colleges even more.

These cuts have led to program closures, especially in the rural colleges. The results are significant: rural Alberta students will have to travel further away from home to obtain the education best suited for them; and programming at rural colleges that has educated students and future workers about the social and economic realities at a local level (realities that are often very different from those in larger, urban locales) will be lost.

Continued budget cuts and a push to reduce so-called program duplications would disproportionately harm rural post-secondary students, resulting in our province's colleges and universities being LESS able to pivot and respond to localized labour market and social developments.

We cannot cut our way to prosperity.

PSE is a major economic engine of Alberta, employing thousands of Albertans, and driving spending to local businesses (both from students and from staff/faculty). For a regional example, check out the economic impact of one of Alberta's smallest colleges: [Infographic](#)

ACIFA appreciates and supports the goals of accessibility, affordability, and quality post-secondary education. However, the impact of achieving all three goals simultaneously must be considered. For example, if affordability (through tuition freezes) is achieved at the expense of educational quality (such as program cuts and increased class sizes) or accessibility, then the intent of these goals is undermined.

The Mackinnon report contained data now out-of-date and should no longer be considered in the new, bleak economy that Alberta faces. Learn more about ACIFA's submission to [Alberta's 2030](#).

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In solidarity,

Ken Heather
ACIFA President

ACIFA (Alberta Colleges and Institutes Faculties Association) is a representative professional association that acts as the provincial voice for its member Academic Staff or Faculty Associations. It represents 13 of Alberta's colleges and technical institutes, including comprehensive community colleges, polytechnics, and Alberta University of the Arts. Through the collective action and resources of its members, ACIFA promotes the professional and economic well being of college and technical institute faculty in the interest of advancing the quality of post-secondary education in Alberta.