



Emerging and Underlying Issues, Concerns and Suggested Directions

- It should be a top priority to improve access and support for the education of aboriginal students.
- There is a need for better support for teacher education in universities, and appropriate funding of faculties of education is essential in order to provide a solid foundation in K-12 so that graduates can take advantage of post-secondary education.
- There is a need for more balance in terms of support for the arts as opposed to sciences. There seems to be a “science bias” and it is absolutely essential to support education in the arts, which are crucial to the foundation of an educated society.
- An underlying problem seems to be that the government increasingly has viewed post-secondary education as a private good and has decided to turn to “market mechanisms” as a basic approach. This approach has failed to deliver, and instead has compounded many of the problems.
- Seeing post secondary education as a “private good” has led us to undermine support for the “public interest” component, with serious negative consequences.
- Many students feel that the situation continues to worsen instead of improving, and that more barriers are being put in their paths with each year that passes.
- There are growing aspects of privatization, including contracting out, with the result that staff are increasingly unable to bargain in areas of concern.
- The combination of being a parent, carrying a full course load and working at a job is having a major negative effect on the health and well-being of some students.
- Too many of our young people are emerging from the PSE system handicapped by high debt, and the whole society pays a price.
- The Alberta government has shown a remarkable lack of imagination in its overall approach to PSE.
- Government has failed to adequately consult students and faculty in their PSE review.
- There are serious and growing “cracks in the foundation” of post secondary education, and more students are falling through those cracks.
- The government is failing to take seriously the growing problems in post secondary education.
- We seem to be experiencing a gradual, incremental privatization of public institutions through developments such as increased corporate funding. We need to examine more closely the impact of such developments.
- The government seems hostile to academic freedom and faculty autonomy.
- The government sees post secondary education purely as an economic engine, and has failed to see its possibilities as a social engine for development of society.
- The crushing debt-load of too many graduates has important broader economic and social impacts.
- PSE institutions are constantly being asked to do “more with less” which is simply not realistic.
- The increased emphasis on generating revenue and fundraising has changed the nature of the institutions, and the role of faculty.
- There is an enormous economic and social cost to turning away so many qualified students.