

University of Lethbridge, October 6 - Selected Highlights

ISSUES, CONCERNS AND SUGGESTED DIRECTIONS RAISED BY PARTICIPANTS

- We want to see the tuition policy changed to 10% of total costs. This would make it the lowest level in Canada as promised by Premier Klein. Set up five tiers for student finance based on income. (*student representative*)
- The review is long overdue. The question of student fees is almost peripheral to the debate. Getting educated is the best thing an individual can do, so people should be willing to pay even more for an education. The quality argument has been used to keep people out. (*administration representative*)
- The pressure on students has changed the climate of the university, from a place where students had time to get involved and learn from extracurricular activities. Now many students are too stressed out working and studying to participate. (*former student*)
- Cost of education is a serious barrier for my co-workers in long-term care and it keeps them from being able to upgrade to become nurses or other health professionals. (*former student*)
- 70% of undergraduate students are working. This is one of the main reasons why the government can say that student loans are not increasing. The loan board also reduces the amount they give students or disqualifies them from receiving any loans. The issue of tying loan repayment to salaries does not take into account the wage gap between men and women. (*graduate student and mother*)
- The University of Lethbridge does not provide support for childcare. There used to be a childcare centre right on campus but when the building was torn down they found a new space for the bar but not the childcare centre. The students did a survey and 97% of students are in favour of having a daycare on campus. (*student*)
- I left high school when we started a family, but would really love to be able to go on to university. The issue of the debt load is a major concern. I am currently in a trades program that allows me to be making the money for my family, but I am concerned that I may be putting my health at risk doing this job. I feel I could do a lot of good working with rebellious youth, but in order to pursue this I would first have to upgrade 8 classes. (*mother*)



- I just completed a Master's degree with a \$24,000 debt. The public student loans have remained stagnant but private loans have skyrocketed to \$5000 on average. Administration of the student loan program is costing 60 cents for every dollar they lend. (*recent graduate student*)
- My children have had to move away in order to access the program of study they are interested in. This creates a significant cost for families who live in smaller centres. If there were more programs offered at community colleges, then students would not have to move away from home, but would benefit from the smaller class sizes offered in community colleges. (*Medicine Hat College faculty representative*)
- We have a hard time providing enough support to help integrate new immigrants now, let alone deal with the expected increases. We are not looking at the educational responsibilities we have to the immigrant community. We need to internationalize and globalize our approach to how we teach. (*faculty*)
- A big part of university is being able to explore new things, rather than being expected to stick to one path that you have been told to figure out in high school. The system needs to be flexible enough to allow students to get broad education, not just train for a narrow career. (*student*)