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As staff members of the post-secondary education sector, the effects of budget cuts, tuition increases and performance-based funding metrics have, and will continue to have, a marked impact on our roles as front-line support for students and faculty. There are over 13,000 support staff in Alberta's post-secondary education system.

Government cuts have resulted in an unprecedented number of job reductions, largely on the backs of front-line staff. These are the staff that provide for the physiological safety of our post-secondary communities, such as **facility workers** who monitor the air, water and environment of our work and study spaces; the **security staff** who oversee the personal safety of our campuses as well as the health care needs that are attended to by our campus **nurses**. The importance of these areas in our provincial campuses should not be undervalued because these are not "money making" departments. Student learning is, and will continue to be, impacted by reductions in these service areas.

The drastic reduction of **administration staff** does not eliminate the workload that continues to be heavy but is compounded particularly in the middle of a current pandemic. The room for error is epic for processing applications, transcripts and assessing transfer credit from other institutions--and these errors have costing implications. Reduced staffing means that there are/will be delays in response time and service levels to students and faculty which will impact important timelines for operations.

A reduction in budget funding means that, as staff, we need to pivot to find ways to "cope" with our job responsibilities. It means we have to be reactive and not proactive or innovative as there is no time to pause and review how processes might be done more efficiently (thus at a cost savings to the institutions we work for). The long-term implications for the mental health and well-being of our staff impacted by workload and budget reductions is surfacing now, which comes at a cost for institutions in terms of disability costs.

Increasing tuition at post-secondary institutions in order to offset the financial impact of budget cuts will not only hit students and their families hard, but will have a rippling effect at the institutional level. **Student Recruiters** recognize the financial barriers for prospective students, particularly those in rural and Indigenous communities that must physically relocate to attend school. Raising tuition will only compound these barriers, restricting access to higher learning even more. This restriction to access higher learning could impact admission targets for programs and result in

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program closures. **Academic Advisors** will attest that students who are able to afford rising tuition costs will likely find themselves working to offset these fees and consequently take on more student debt and take longer to graduate because of a decreased semester course load. Increased costs to attend school will also mean less expendable money to support local distressed businesses and restart our struggling provincial economy.

Considering post-secondary funding on the "successful" attainment of performance-based metrics in the throes of a provincial economic downturn, as well as a worldwide pandemic is ludicrous. The long-term effects of the current climate of our province, country and world will be evident upon a graduation audit for all programs over the next one to eight years, considering all factors impacting attendance and successful completion/graduation timelines. Measures which assess the number of enrolled domestic, international and Indigenous learners will be weak because of several factors which include financial barriers, international travel restrictions and reduction of program availability (many institutions have cancelled programs due to low targets and graduating numbers). Funding based on high demand programs is also concerning as our shaky Alberta economy often sways what is considered "high" in demand for programming. Institutions will have no control over the outcomes of which they are being measured, such as who applies to be a student and what program they select.

And who is responsible for the cost of conducting Labour Market measures for successful outcomes? How are successful graduates being tracked for employment in a point of time after graduation? Who is tracking these graduates and what are the tools and costs associated with this outcome measurement? Is it the responsibility of the institution or the government? How are those leaving the province for better career opportunities outside of Alberta being rated/ranked? This success outcome is very questionable and concerning.

To this end, the Mount Royal Staff Association (MRSA) along with the Students Association of Mount Royal University (SAMRU) and the Mount Royal Faculty Association (MRFA), joins a coalition of organizations representing over 154,000 undergraduate and graduate students, over 11,000 faculty and instructors, and over 13,000 support staff in Alberta's post-secondary education system to demand that the government [STOP THE CUTS](#).

Sincerely,

Michelle LoGullo  
MRSA President

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