

# Advocacy FAQs

## HOW DO RESEARCH UNIVERSITIES LIKE UCALGARY FUEL ECONOMIC GROWTH AND DIVERSIFICATION?

- Research universities, through their focus on teaching and learning produce the skilled talent that meets the needs of employers, and through innovative research, develop the new knowledge and innovations needed to solve the grand challenges we face as a society. Worldwide, the most economically competitive regions have a top-ranked research university at their core.
- As one of Canada's top six leading research universities, UCalgary is a major driver of economic growth and diversification in Alberta. UCalgary benefits the Calgary region by:
  - Teaching individuals the advanced skills that innovative organizations require of their employees;
  - Enhancing the competitiveness of existing businesses by giving them access to cutting edge research and innovations;
  - Fueling and supporting the creation of new businesses through knowledge transfer and the commercialization of ideas; and,
  - Attracting significant outside investment into Alberta from industry partnerships, national and international governments and other funding partners.
  - Attract students and many other national and international visitors to Calgary to study, to partner in research and to attend university organized programs and conferences.

## HOW DOES UCALGARY CONTRIBUTE TO THE LOCAL ECONOMY?

- Two-thirds of UCalgary graduates live, work, create businesses, and drive innovation in the Calgary area.
- UCalgary has an economic impact of over \$8 billion annually on the surrounding region.
- Since 2016, UCalgary researchers have:
  - Produced 360 new inventions or innovations (ranking in the top five amongst Canadian research universities);
  - Licensed 61 new discoveries; and,
  - Produced 93 new patent applications.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> 2019 Community Report

- Since 2017, the Creative Destruction Lab-Rockies (CDL-R) has brought together promising start-ups with private sector mentors and funding. It has graduated 53 companies, raised over \$75 million in financing, created more than 115 jobs to date, and created experiential learning opportunities for 129 MBA students.
- The Life Sciences Innovation Hub (LSIH), which began operations in February 2019, is currently nurturing more than 40 start-up companies, that have created and supported more than 134 jobs.
- The Hunter Hub for Entrepreneurial Thinking provides mentorship to students and faculty who are pursuing entrepreneurial ventures. It has facilitated 90 partnerships and reached over 50,000 people since its inception.

## WHAT ARE THE EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES OF UCALGARY GRADUATES?

- UCalgary graduates have consistently strong employment outcomes. Over 94% of our graduates found work within one year of graduation and two-thirds of UCalgary graduates live and work in the Calgary area.
- Employer demand for university graduates is only expected to grow. A 2018 survey of Alberta employers by the Conference Board of Canada found the majority expect to transition to a more highly skilled workplace in the next three to five years, and a university degree was the credential in highest demand (67%).<sup>2</sup>
- Research shows that in Canada, individuals with a university education have better labour market outcomes over their lifetime than those with other types of post-secondary education, including higher average earnings and lower rates of unemployment.

## WHAT IMPACT WILL THE PROVINCIAL BUDGET REDUCTIONS ANNOUNCED IN BUDGETS 2019 AND 2020 HAVE ON UCALGARY?

- UCalgary saw its Campus Alberta Grant (provincial block grant funding) reduced by 6.9% in fiscal year 2019-20, and by a further 6% in 2020-21. In addition, UCalgary saw significant additional funding reductions in other provincial funding streams.
- These cuts add up to over \$60m, taking the Campus Alberta Grant back to 2010 levels.

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<sup>2</sup> E. Kachulis and M. McKean, *Building Skills Connections Series: Perspectives of Alberta Employers*, The Conference Board of Canada, 2019.

## HOW DOES SPENDING AT UCALGARY COMPARE TO OTHER MAJOR UNIVERSITIES?

- We spend just 4% of our operating grant on administration expenses – this is the lowest administrative expense ratio for post-secondary institutions in Alberta and our administration expenses are significantly lower than national peer institutions.
- We have exercised considerable restraint in salary growth—55% less than the U15 average, and 57% less than the average for other post-secondary institutions in Alberta.
- UCalgary has achieved savings and efficiencies in centralizing back-office services across campus, such as finance, IT, and HR.
- Our 2018-19 operating spending (provincial operating grant and tuition revenue) of \$21,397 per full-time equivalent student is in line with the U15 average of \$20,123.
- UCalgary has successfully diversified our revenue sources and reduced our reliance on our Campus Alberta Grant (provincial block funding). In 2018-19, just 33% of our revenue came from the Campus Alberta Grant, compared to 42% in 2009-2010.

## WHAT IMPACT HAS COVID-19 HAD ON UCALGARY?

- Due to COVID-19, UCalgary has incurred additional costs from ensuring a high-quality online teaching experience and from enhanced cleaning and disinfection around campus.
- Enrolment at UCalgary increased by 2.4% in fall 2020. International undergraduate enrolment increased by 8% and Indigenous undergraduate enrolment increased by 16%.
- COVID-19 has also had a significant impact on UCalgary's revenues. For example, revenue from parking, conferences, events, facilities rentals, food services, and recreational programs has been reduced, in many cases substantially.

## WHAT IS THE DEMAND FOR POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION IN THE CALGARY REGION?

- Demand for post-secondary education is increasing in Alberta and is expected to increase significantly in the near future—this increase will be particularly acute for research universities and for the Calgary region.
- Over the next 8 years, the Calgary region will experience a 31.4% increase in demand for post-secondary education—significantly higher than the province as whole<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> Government of Alberta Post-Secondary Enrolment (FLE) Projects, 2019.

- Without action to address growing demand, the Calgary region could experience a 20,000 seat deficit in 2028.<sup>4</sup>
- Already, UCalgary is experiencing extremely high demand for its programs. For example, in 2019, the acceptance rate for undergraduate applicants was 51% and for graduate applicants was 39%.

## WHAT IS WORK-INTEGRATED LEARNING AND HOW DOES IT BENEFIT UCALGARY STUDENTS?

- Work-integrated learning (WIL) allows students to apply what they have learned in the classroom in professional, “real-world” situations.
- Research has consistently shown that students who participate in WIL have better employment outcomes than those that do not, including lower unemployment rates and higher earnings.
- UCalgary has identified two aspirational targets for student participation in experiential learning (EL) activities, including WIL: by 2025, all undergraduate students will participate in at least two EL opportunities and all graduate students in a degree program will have the opportunity to participate in at least one EL opportunity.
- UCalgary continues to work to increase WIL opportunities for students, but demand for WIL exceeds capacity and opportunities in many areas.

## WHAT ARE THE DEFERRED MAINTENANCE COSTS FOR UCALGARY FACILITIES?

- UCalgary infrastructure requires constant and ongoing stewardship through our capital renewal program. As of September 20, 2020, the university has a deferred maintenance liability of \$651 million.

## WHAT IS ALBERTA 2030: BUILDING SKILLS FOR JOBS AND HOW DOES IT IMPACT UCALGARY?

- *Alberta 2030* is the Government of Alberta’s comprehensive, system-wide review of Alberta’s post-secondary system being conducted by the McKinsey consulting firm.
- UCalgary welcomes the system review and the opportunity to create a stronger and more efficient post-secondary system for all Albertans. We are providing input and encourage our stakeholders to engage in consultation activities.
- UCalgary is a fiscally prudent institution and already measures itself against key performance metrics that incorporate comparative data from peer institutions. We play a significant role in economic development for our province and we continue to look for new ways to be more efficient and effective in delivering benefits for Albertans.

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<sup>4</sup> Government of Alberta, Alberta Post-Secondary Enrolment (FLE) Projections, 2019

