

Room 110, 1 Campus Drive  
University of Saskatchewan  
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan  
S7N 5A3



Telephone: (306) 966-6960  
Fax: (306) 966-6978  
E-mail: [contactus@ussu.ca](mailto:contactus@ussu.ca)  
Website: [www.ussu.ca](http://www.ussu.ca)

---

Dear Provost and Vice President Academic Dr. Airini,

I write to you on behalf of the University of Saskatchewan Students' Union, representing all the undergraduate students of the University of Saskatchewan, regarding the 2023-2024 USask Operating Budget. In this report, you will find recommendations for a wide range of student priorities for the upcoming year in conjunction with the University Budget. This report is divided into two recommendations: University-wide and college-specific.. Additionally, you will find some recommendations are short-term and some recommendations are long-term.

At the University of Saskatchewan, students contribute \$199.8 M which is 28% (2022-2023) of the operating budget. Considering this fact University needs to integrate student priorities in the upcoming budget and also needs to create a long-term action plan to integrate the following recommendations.

- A. Safety
- B. Accessibility
- C. Affordability

I would like to express my gratitude to you for engaging with the University of Saskatchewan Students' Union and putting considerable effort into the following priorities.

- Queer Housing
- Menstrual Hygiene Products Across Campus
- Accessibility Working Group and Financial Allocation
- Tuition Consultation
- Waiving the Fee for Differential Exams
- Safety Audit in Arts and Science

- First Indigenous Councillor at the Student Wellness Centre, new AES Portal for Accommodation
- 0.5 FTS for Protective Service, USafe App and Sexual Violence Incident Reporting System

Lastly, I would like to extend my gratitude for all the support that the university has provided to students from time to time. Together we can make a difference and make university education more accessible, affordable and equitable.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Abhineet Goswami', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Abhineet Goswami  
President  
University of Saskatchewan Students' Union

University life can have a unique set of stressors throughout the year, and sometimes stress begins to affect the well-being of students. USSU stands on the mission to represent, serve and support the academic and non-academic needs of undergraduate students of the University of Saskatchewan through accountable, dynamic, and unified leadership. It also serves to protect and maintain the integrity of quality, accessible public education.

## **A. Safety**

### Recommendation:

- a. Safety audit to be conducted across campus over the next 5 years with a strategic budget allocation to address lighting, hedge heights and blindspots across campus. We want you to give specific attention to the Education exits, Agriculture exits, and Engineering exits as these buildings are a bit distant from the core campus.
- b. We would like to thank you for the 0.5 FTS increase in the protective service staff. But due to the past sexual violence case on our campus. We should investigate expanding the resources available for protective services. Some of the services that students look into expanding are cameras in tunnels specifically arts and science, and open areas towards parking.
- c. Protective service is the backbone of campus security. But as we are more towards a more inclusive and diverse environment on campus students want to see protective service staff having more diversity that can allow students to feel connected with them. Additionally, we would like protective services staff is included in USask's Anti-racism and Anti-Oppression training.

## **B. Accessibility**

### Recommendation:

- a. Budget allocation to fund Exercise equipment for students with disabilities in the physical activity centre "PAC". Currently, PAC has very limited options to address the needs of students with disabilities and this funding allocation will not only support students' physical health but will also make the space inclusive. Currently, a significant amount of students are left out due to a lack of accessible equipment.
- b. Continuous budget allocation for accessibility resources and audits on campus. Your funding of \$200,000 during 2022-2023 has laid the foundation to start the accessibility committee and some great

projects. This continuous allocation of funds in the next few years will make the campus inclusive, safe and welcoming for all students.

- c. USask is home to 13 interdisciplinary colleges, three graduate schools and six affiliated or federated colleges and with a student population of +26K. Additionally we have six library locations across campus with 1 learning space located in the engineering building. Various research has shown that collaborative spaces have a positive impact on students' education.

We want to recommend investigating more collaborative learning spaces across campus specifically in some of the bigger colleges like the college of Arts and Science. Additionally, during the investigation, we also want you to focus on neurodiverse learner's spaces.

- d. Indigenous Housing, smudging spaces in the residence:  
Indigenous Housing functions as a home away from home for Indigenous students by providing a spacious and welcoming residence for both undergraduate and graduate students (McGill, 2022). Providing indigenous students with a residence that allows them to live with other indigenous students creates a culturally sensitive and inclusive environment where students can build a strong support system rooted in common experiences. Indigenous student housing must include space and capacity for prayer and smudging. We see this model at McGill university where they offered a 10-room residence specifically for indigenous students known as The First Peoples' House. The USSU proposes that one floor of the campus quarter could be converted into indigenous student housing.

*<https://www.mcgill.ca/fph/prospective-students/residence>*

## C. Affordability

### Recommendation:

- a. Student wages across campus: creating a committee to review student wages across the campus to address the wage discrepancy.
- b. Scholarships and Bursaries: Scholarships are an incredible source of financial assistance for our university students. Unlike loans, scholarships are free money that helps students who would otherwise take out student loans, adding to their debt. Many of these student loans carry high-interest rates and create a severe financial burden for students when they graduate. In contrast, scholarship programs can help students afford post-secondary education. As a result, scholarship recipients can pay off loans more quickly and use their extra income to start saving for the future.

The University of Saskatchewan continues to experience significant budget cuts. Generally, these costs are passed along to students. The result is an increase in tuition fees and the rising cost of pursuing a post-secondary education that many students have noticed over the past few years. Increased scholarship opportunities can help fill the gap for students.

More scholarship opportunities could address the vast array of underlying financial challenges Indigenous and International students face while seeking post-secondary education. While the challenges imposed on Indigenous and International students are distinct from one another, it is still important to recognize that these challenges stem from institutional barriers to their identities.

- c. Students contribute a significant amount towards their education. And in return they expected the institution to be transparent with their money. After the conversation with several student leaders across campus, we heard “our institution needs to be more transparent with our money.” We believe this transparency will help get more trust in the institute.  
We want to recommend that the number of bursaries and scholarships given specifically to international students, indigenous students and other marginalized community needs to be transparent with the dollar value.

## **Conclusion:**

University of Saskatchewan Students' union appreciates the opportunity to give input to the University of Saskatchewan's budget for 2023-2024. We have tried to be specific as possible in an attempt to provide and consolidate student priorities up to date. I want to highlight that these priorities are in conjugation with USask's strategic priorities, mission and values. The allocation of tuition and other revenues has supported students immensely in their education. Hopefully, these suggestions can give University Leadership and Students work toward a common goal which is the "University the World Needs."

Lastly, I would like to extend my gratitude for all the support that the university has provided to students from time to time. Together we can make a difference and make university education more accessible, affordable and equitable.

Please feel free to contact me if you need any further information or clarification.

Sincerely,

Abhineet Goswami  
President  
University of Saskatchewan Students' Union

I want to thank my fellow student leaders who have contributed to this report:

President Morgan Davey, Alex Ellis & Daniel Schuepbach - College of Agriculture and Bioresources

President Zachary Digout, Maria Haneef, Kingslei Medina & Alexis Salsbury - College of Arts and Science

President Gill Phillips, Tania Alazawi - College of Dentistry

President Caet Nicholson, Sherrissa Clark & Ashley Holmes - College of Education

President Kasey Burgess, Shanleigh McKeown - College of Engineering

President Agnes Truc Nguyen, Kanika Gupta & Krunal Chavda- International Students

President Jantz Sawatsky, Kathan Choksi - College of Kinesiology

President Phoenix Howe, Levi Perrault - College of Law

President Zoher Rafid-Hamed, Moyin Onasanya - College of Medicine

Co-President Hark Pooni, Co-President Sarah Nickel, Dalia Hassan & Arriana Mclean - College of Nursing

President Abbi Cross, John Cody & Elisabeth Bauman - STM College

President Jackson, Hayley Jenkins - Western College of Veterinary Medicine

Oleksandr (Sasha) Bendasyuk - College of Pharmacy and Nutrition

Estefan Cortes-Vargas- University Students' Council Chair

Lia Storey-Gamble - VP Operations and Finance, USSU

Punya Miglani - VP Student Affairs, USSU

Sharon Jacob- VP Academic Affairs, USSU