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# Presentation to the Bargaining Committee

An overview to inform collective bargaining

#### **PRESENTATION OVERVIEW**

• This presentation provides some insight into:

• The general environment impacting post-secondary education;

 The challenges facing the University of Lethbridge in that environment; and

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• The Board's objectives in collective bargaining.

#### **OVERVIEW**

We appreciate most of this information is familiar.

Some will be new.

Providing information from the outset that is informing collective bargaining comprehensively rather than piecemeal throughout the process is helpful in our view.

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Questions are welcomed as we proceed.





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#### **GENERAL ENVIRONMENT: ENROLMENT**

- Declining domestic enrolments in AB since 2012-2013 (~6%; 2.6% domestic UG enrolment)
- Since 2019 Fall domestic enrolments have declined at most AB Institutions except U of A (+16.2%) and U of C (+8.9%)
  - University of Lethbridge: -23%
- Cost of living/other challenges mean students often take a reduced course load, which impacts revenue

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- Fall 2024 forecast is for a ~3.7% increase in undergraduate enrolments, all due to international students
- International student cap from IRCC, issues with visas and work permits



### **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE UNIVERSITY**

#### Challenges:

- Losing domestic enrolment to other Alberta institutions
- Increasing international enrolments is positive but the conditions are unstable & unreliable (e.g. issuing visas, IRCC cap etc.)
- Declining provincial funding
- Declining public interest in advanced education in Alberta and other Canadian provinces

#### Key question:

• How do we work efficiently and effectively towards the greatest degree of success within the resources that we are certain of?



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#### **GENERAL ENVIRONMENT: OPERATIONS**

- Provincial operating grant has declined 20.1% (20.2 M) since 2019
- Recent government funding has been short-term targeted funding
- Reliance on academic term appointments (short term, increased labour/frequency for hiring, unstable funding)
- Greater expectations around provincial accountability has resulted in a significant increase in administrative work
- Unprecedented demand for student support & recruitment (e.g. WIL, student services, wellness, advising etc.) requiring increased need for non-academic hiring



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#### **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE UNIVERSITY**

Challenges:

- Reliable revenue streams have declined making operations more challenging

   Impacted by both external funders and by declining and unpredictable
   enrollment
- Current conditions make innovation challenging but necessary (e.g. new programming, strategic hiring etc.)

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- Workload distribution needs to be equitable but also operationally viable
- Adaptation is necessary



#### **KEY CONSIDERATIONS IN BARGAINING**

 How do we work effectively towards the greatest degree of success within the resources that we are certain of?

Examples

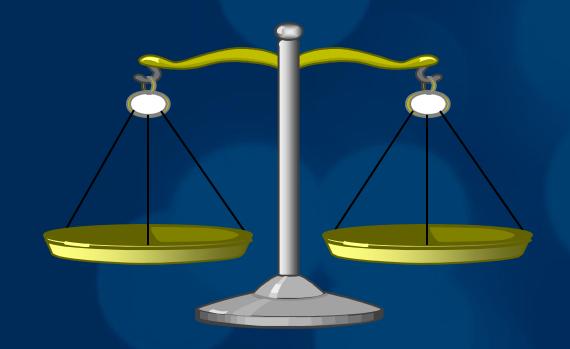
- Grievance process
- Supervision/Discipline

• PAR

 How do we create more nimble and efficient systems that serve the people and university well?



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Summary of previous discussion

- We have agreed to meeting face-to-face two to four days per month.
- We will devote additional time in caucus to prepare for our sessions.
- The Committee will be devoting up to six days a month to collective bargaining while continuing to carry out regular duties.
- This represents a serious commitment to this process.
- In addition, the Board's Negotiations Team will communicate with others in the Lethbridge organization to ensure we maintain a broad consensus on our approaches.



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- Most of our proposals are presented in a "positional format" to accommodate ULFA's stated preference.
- Some of our proposals adopt an "interest based" approach. These proposals largely concern procedural matters that have been matters of ongoing dialogue.
  - In this regard, the goal is to work collaboratively to accommodate shared interests rather than adopt positional approaches.
- After some brief dialogue, a formal proposal will be tabled.
- This will not impact the decision-making framework.
- We are committed to accommodating shared interests throughout this process and hope and trust ULFA is as well.





- Our goals include:
  - Reasonable economic adjustments inclusive of any changes to our benefit plans having regard to all of the circumstances.
    - Comparable institutions.
    - Funding challenges.
    - Domestic enrollment.
    - International uncertainty.
    - Inflation and projections.





- Our goals include:
  - Ensuring the University Administration has the flexibility it needs to utilize the workforce and address the challenges it faces and will face in the future.
    - Hope is to increase enrollment to sustainable levels.
    - Hope is to attract research funding.
    - Hope is not a plan.
    - The University must accept it might have to do less more efficiently.





• Our goals include:

• Improving the processes and procedures we use to address matters that arise in a timely and efficient way - whether that involves the grievance procedure, alleged misconduct, or performance evaluations or concerns.





• Our goals include:

• Long term labour relations stability.





#### SHARED INTERESTS AND GOALS

We all share a commitment to reasonable pay and benefits that ensures we can attract and retain a strong workforce.

Flexibility ensures the University can respond to the challenges it faces in an uncertain and evolving operating environment.

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Nimble and reasonable processes and procedures reduce time spent on unproductive activities that do not add real value, lead to quicker decisions, without any discernable impact on outcomes.

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## Long term labour stability is good for students, Academic Staff, and the community.



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## QUESTIONS





