

Faculty Call for Renewed Investment Needed for BC's Post-Secondary Future

(For Immediate Release – Port Moody, BC, 22 January 2024) – The Confederation of University Faculty Associations of British Columbia (CUFA BC) acknowledges the provincial government’s ambitious plans for post-secondary education as outlined in the [recent mandate letter](#) to the Hon. Anne Kang, Minister of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills. While the Province’s commitment is commendable to address student housing shortages, skilled worker training, and other systemic challenges, we emphasize the critical need for tangible support and renewed funding and research investments to ensure the sustainability and success of BC’s universities.

“Post-secondary education is the fabric of every solution to our society’s needs,” says President Monica Prendergast. “From housing and health care shortages to climate and economic crises, universities play a vital role in solving complex problems of today. Neglecting their funding is short-sighted and undermines the solutions British Columbians rely on.”

The Province’s mandate tasks institutions with finding cost reductions and efficiencies while addressing issues like private sector labour shortages, student housing needs, and funding challenges from federal policy changes to international students. However, the mandate fails to acknowledge comprehensive education at undergraduate and graduate levels, and is silent on important research functions of the university. Institutions are facing record budget deficits and financial uncertainty and the creative solutions to date have been off the backs of faculty, staff, and students with program cuts and layoffs. The mandate lacks both vision and necessary assurances that the Province will provide sufficient resources to help the sector. We warn that without renewed investment, the very future of post-secondary education in BC is at risk.

The provincial budget, due in March, will shed light on the Province’s commitment to operationalizing their agenda. We urge policymakers to prioritize funding for research and innovation, as well as education at the bachelor and graduate levels, which are essential to preparing the next generation of problem-solvers and innovators.

Without vision and robust funding, BC’s institutions face an uncertain future, with ripple effects on the economy and society. CUFA BC calls on the government to recognize post-secondary education as the cornerstone of BC’s future and to invest attention and resources accordingly.

For further information or comment please contact CUFA BC Executive Director Annabree Fairweather at 604-367-5856 or executive.director@cufa.bc.ca.

CUFA BC represents over 5,500 faculty members, professional librarians, lecturers, instructors, and other academics at the five research-intensive universities in British Columbia, which include University of British Columbia, Simon Fraser University, University of Victoria, Royal Roads University and University of Northern British Columbia.

CUFA BC [celebrates over fifty years](#) of working closely with the member Faculty Associations at each institution. Our purposes are to support high-quality post-secondary education and research in British Columbia and to advocate for the interests of our members.

