

SAMRU Position Statements

Preamble

For over a hundred years students have organized to effectively serve and represent the needs of their student community. We had student leaders when Mount Royal was a high school, when it was a college, and to this day where it stands as an undergraduate university. With such a long history, it is important that students are aware of the positions that their student leaders are advocating on their behalf. In the past, there was no mechanism to record the core beliefs that SAMRU's student leaders acted upon, leaving students in a position where they struggled to understand how SAMRU advocated for them. Now, as student leaders, we realize more than ever the importance of communicating SAMRU's student representation and advocacy priorities.

We hope that these Position Statements will help inform you of the type of advocacy we engage in as student leaders. These statements aren't robust nor perfect, but they are meant to be improved upon over the years as new student leaders come and go, and as you impact them with your voice. An additional purpose of this document is to communicate our positions to the entities we advocate to, such as to MRU individuals, committees, councils, and to the MRU Board of Governors, as well as to external stakeholders, such as the public, all levels of government, and to the media.

This is an invitation for you to get more involved with your Students' Association! Part of a healthy dialogue is knowing what your Representation Executives stand for, and understanding how you can impact those positions. You can do so by reaching out and having your voice heard - maybe by joining our Representation Executives Advisory Committee, sending us an email or even running to be a Representation Executive yourself.

The Representation Executives, on behalf of SAMRU, believe

MRU Budget

That students should be able to easily access and understand financial information about their university and how it impacts them as a student.

Tuition and Fees

That MRU should only increase tuition by the three-year-average inflation rate (as measured by the Alberta Consumer Price Index).

Regarding exceptional tuition increases, SAMRU advocates for a return to the 2019 changes to the Post-Secondary Learning Act, which required a joint application from both MRU and SAMRU for any exceptional increase.

That students must be meaningfully consulted in regards to any tuition and fee increases, especially exceptional increases.

Culture of Philanthropy at MRU

That students experience the benefit received from the generosity of donors. In an ideal world, there would be a culture of appreciation at MRU towards donors, faculty, staff and fellow students.

Student Services and Facilities

That MRU should engage in meaningful consultation with students regarding the development of facilities and services on campus.

That MRU communicates to students on improvements to student services and campus facilities.

Indigenous

That MRU should work to remove the barriers that Indigenous students face when accessing and completing their post-secondary education.

That MRU works towards reparations towards the Indigenous community.

That the voices of Indigenous students help direct the institution's work on Indigenization, Decolonization and Reconciliation, emphasizing "Nothing for us, without us."

That MRU maintains that it recognizes the genocide that was done to Indigenous peoples.

Dating, Domestic, & Sexual Violence

That in order to have trauma-informed decision makers, MRU must invest in educational opportunities for university leadership, as well as for students as the primary users of MRU's processes and systems.

That to uphold safe classroom practices, MRU must provide trauma informed training for all faculty and staff positions.

That DDSV-related resources should be made available for student access in classrooms.

That in order to be inclusive and culturally responsive, MRU needs to offer alternative approaches to resolving trauma incidents that are robustly and skillfully supported (ex. modified restorative justice and community healing practices).

That MRU continues to review and refresh its inclusive processes regularly, including regular feedback from individuals who are most impacted by the current policies and practices set in place.

That feedback processes must include an understanding of cultural safety, and should not require vulnerable people to educate others.

That MRU needs to continue to strengthen existing relationships with stakeholders who work in the DDSV field (Communities of Practice, all levels of government, student advocacy groups, and internal champions) in order to best inform policies with regards to DDSV.

Mental Health & Wellbeing

That MRU aids students in having a meaningful sense of belonging to their Campus Community.

That students should be meaningfully consulted on major changes made to Wellness Services when they affect students.

That students have a variety of counseling services offered to them.

That counseling staff reflects the diversity of the students in which they serve.

That all student-facing staff and faculty should undergo mental health and disclosure training and are prepared to communicate safely with students when it comes to topics of mental health.

That students from equity-deserving groups should be compensated when they provide the emotional labour of sharing their experiences as racialized students. This also should apply to students who come from marginalized populations.

That all students should receive content warnings regarding triggering content on campus and in the classroom.

That up-to-date mental health information, especially suicide prevention information, should be a communication priority to students.

That Wellness Services regularly reviews the effectiveness of their communication strategies.

That International students do not experience exceptional barriers to accessing mental health support.

That International students are supported in creating stronger support systems due to their unique situations.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

That students who have faced discrimination based upon race, national or ethnic origin, gender, sex, sexual orientation, age, ability status, or any other protected grounds according to the Alberta Human Rights Commission should be supported in amplifying their experiences.

That all ethno-cultural identities of students should be respected, recognized and celebrated, including the wide mosaic of Indigenous nations across Canada.

That the MRU campus community should regularly collaborate to strengthen diversity and inclusion with the aim of achieving equity.

That the MRU campus community will be actively accountable and action orientated in areas where it lacks Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion.

That the diversity of the MRU administration, faculty and staff reflect the student body in which they serve.

That MRU faculty, administration and staff commit to doing regular unconscious-bias training.

MRU Governance and Policy

That students have access to the information they need to understand the governance structures of MRU, and how they can meaningfully impact those structures.

That MRU policies are easily accessible and readable for students.

That students are informed of key policy changes and updates throughout the year on issues that directly impact them as students.

Student Awards

That MRU awards, scholarships and bursary applications are inclusive towards equity-deserving groups.

That students are provided adequate reminders and time for filling out scholarship applications.

That there are a wide range of criteria for MRU awards, scholarships and bursaries outside of academic achievement.

That the Student Awards Committee recognizes non-traditional experiences in the same regard as formal (traditional western) experiences when evaluating award applications.

That the Student Awards Committee should accept the experiences of students who are unable to gain typical experiences due to socioeconomic barriers, and have instead gained experiences through other avenues.

That the Student Awards Committee members reflect the diversity of the student population.

MRU Courses

That MRU markets GNEDs in a way where students understand the added value of GNED courses to their lives and to their education rather than simply as a requirement to fulfill for graduation.

That the foundation GNED courses are regularly updated/reviewed.

That students are well informed about the content themes of the course sections they are registering to.

In order for students of equity-deserving groups to be successful in their courses, MRU faculty should actively seek Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in the classroom and actively work towards reducing barriers for those students.

That Honour Degree supervisors support students from equity-deserving groups by advocating and limiting barriers for those students.

That MRU should expand their curriculum to include knowledge outside of the western scope.

That MRU should expand their assessment techniques outside of standard examinations to accommodate different learning styles.

Faculty Feedback

That students can give feedback on the course delivery of all professors, and that the feedback is used meaningfully.

Alberta Post-secondary Education System

Post-secondary institutions meet the needs of students by focusing on key outcomes like quality student experiences, program diversity, student services, retention, and graduation rates for diverse populations.

That any boards, councils or committees to the Ministry of Advanced Education which advises or makes decisions on behalf of the post-secondary system should include post-secondary institutional stakeholders, especially students.

That if provincial post-secondary education policy performance indicators are in practice, they must be relevant, attainable and have a transparent reporting framework.

That the government should provide stable, predictable, and sustainable funding for post-secondary institutions.

Student Employment and Work-Integrated Learning

That MRU supports students to feel confident in their ability to utilize the skills they learned in their programs of study.

That MRU supports students in finding gainful employment before and after graduation.

That MRU prioritizes on-campus employment positions for current students where appropriate.

That MRU protects students' safety during placements.

That MRU increases research assistant opportunities for undergraduate students.

Municipal (City) and Transportation

That the City should engage in meaningful consultation with MRU students in Municipal Planning & Development because the quality of the student experience involves the city they live in.

That MRU students should have affordable, accessible and efficient transportation options when accessing campus.

Provincial Advocacy Campaigns

That SAMRU will assist in appropriate grassroots activities in support of our members when we have considered the tried advocacy to be ineffective.

Post-Secondary Health Measures

That a healthy campus environment is a priority for students, and MRU follows the direction of best medical practices in all health-related decisions.