

# SUO OF UBC

2023/24 SUO PRIORITIES  
CADE DESJARLAIS, PRESIDENT



**SUO**

— EST. 1982 —

Students' Union  
UBC Okanagan





**The SUO of UBC**



**Action Plan 2023/24: Reducing Barriers**



**Calls to Action**



**Academic Advising & Career Development**



**Affordability: Support for Inflation**



**Investments in Infrastructure: Space Crisis**



# WHO WE ARE

The SUO of UBC provides critical services to our nearly 12,000 members.

These include but are not limited to:

- U-Pass
- Student Advocacy
- The Pantry Student Foodbank
- Strategic Investments in Student Resources
- Health and Dental
- Serving nearly 180 student clubs, course unions, and student associations.



This Action Plan showcases how we intend to remain focused on diverse events, strong advocacy, continued lobbying, sustainable leadership, accountability, service, and strong communication.

Please see the plan as attached to get a better, more comprehensive view of the SUO as we work to **remove barriers** for our students.



**SUO**

Students' Union  
UBC Okanagan

## **Reducing Barriers**

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SUO ACTION PLAN 2023/24

**CALLS TO ACTION**



# 1. ACADEMIC ADVISING AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT

- Nationally, UBCO ranks in **the bottom 25% of Colleges and Universities in Advising staff per capita.**
- In the 2022 Academic year, Advising had **31,331** points of advising contact.

Institution	Undergraduate Student population in 2022 (headcount)	Advising staff	Ratio of student to advisor
UBCO – Academic & Career Advising	9375	7.3	1,250
UBCO - Indigenous advising	648	4	162
UBCO – Applied Science	1757	4	439
UBCO - Student Athletes	250	1	250
<a href="#">UBCV Arts</a>	13,500	30	450
<a href="#">UBCV Science</a>	9,605	14	686
<a href="#">UVIC</a>	18,341	30	611
<a href="#">Thompson Rivers University</a>	14,000	35	400
<a href="#">Mount Royal University</a>	15,000	39	384
<a href="#">SFU</a>	25,595	74	345
<a href="#">Dalhousie University</a>	20,000	78	256

## 2. AFFORDABILITY: SUPPORT FOR INFLATION

- Campus Foodbanks *across Canada* are experiencing drastic increases in engagement. (CBC)
- Students, like the rest of the country, cannot find homes that are affordable. A report to Kelowna city council states:

**“Due to a vacancy rate below 1%, costs for a one-bedroom apartment average \$1,817 per month, and two-bedroom units rent for an average of \$2,580 per month”**

- Rising tuition costs continue to harm students and creates a tiered University experience.

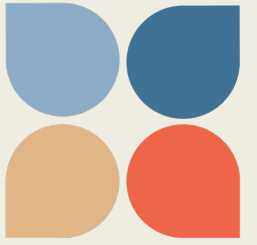


# 3. THE UBCO SPACE CRISIS

- UBCO Students have far less access to Recreation Space, and unfortunately, students are needing to bare the burden of **recreation expansion**. (Gym Referendum)
- Classes now go until 9:30pm, limiting clubs and student groups access to meeting spaces
- Study space is an ongoing issue
- Students have been relegated to **paying \$516** in a gravel parking lot, 15 minutes from campus.
- Last minute **space booking policy changes** and a lack of UBC direction have severely limited the SUO's ability to support students







**THANK YOU.**

Questions?



**SUO**

**Students' Union**  
UBC Okanagan

# **Reducing Barriers**

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SUO ACTION PLAN 2023/24

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## INTRODUCTION

The Students' Union of UBC Okanagan is deeply committed to creating an inclusive and supportive environment that reduces barriers to education for all students. Through our unwavering dedication to advocacy, good governance, campus life and essential services, we aim to empower students and foster their personal and academic growth. As an organization, we understand the importance of ensuring that every student has equal opportunities to thrive and succeed in their educational journey.

Over the past three years, the Students' Union has been actively engaged in striving for excellence and implementing sound governing practices to uphold the mission and values of our organization. Through collaborative efforts, transparency, and accountability, we have worked tirelessly to create a strong foundation that ensures the effective representation and fulfillment of our members' needs.

As we embark on a new chapter and move forward into a different era of the SUO, we recognize the significance of looking ahead and embracing the challenges and opportunities that lie before us. The world is constantly evolving, and it is essential for us to adapt and proactively address the ever-changing landscape of higher education. We are determined to shape the future of the SUO to better serve the diverse student population at UBC Okanagan.

The purpose of this action plan is to outline to our student body, clearly articulating the goals and objectives that our elected board and executive team will pursue during our one-year term in office. We believe in the power of transparency and effective communication, and we want our students to be fully informed about our vision, strategies, and the specific actions we will take to achieve tangible results.

Throughout this term, we are committed to fostering an environment that empowers students to voice their concerns, participate in decision-making processes, and contribute to shaping the future of their university experience. We will actively engage with students, seek their input, and ensure their perspectives are considered in all aspects of our work.

Our action plan encompasses a wide range of initiatives and projects that span across different areas of focus, including advocacy, Campus Life, services and governance. By addressing systemic issues, advocating for positive change, enhancing student support networks, and providing accessible resources, we aim to remove barriers and create a more inclusive and equitable educational environment for all.

In summary, the Students' Union of UBC Okanagan is wholeheartedly committed to reducing barriers to education and creating a transformative university experience for our students. Through this action plan, we aspire to fulfill our mission and deliver on the promises we have made to our student body. Together, with the collective efforts of our elected board, executive team, staff and the entire student community, we will strive to create a lasting impact and foster a vibrant and empowering campus culture.

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

### **The Students' Union's mission is to:**

- Provide accessible, high-quality services.
- Facilitate events, activities, and student clubs to enhance campus life.
- Undertake advocacy to ensure students' rights are respected, and concerns are heard by decision-makers; and,
- Practice good governance in the operations of the Students' Union

We achieve our mission by ensuring that all of our priorities fall into one of three areas of activity: **Service, Advocacy,** and **Campus Life;** all guided by strong governance practices.

## **VALUES STATEMENT**

**The Students' Union of UBC Okanagan strives to create an atmosphere that is:**

### **Dynamic**

- For and by students through governance, employment, programs, and involvement
- Entertaining, fun and high energy environment
- Able to ensure that all our membership and staff: Have their voice heard on issues that are important to them. Protect and promote their rights. Have their views and wishes genuinely considered when decisions are being made about their lives.

### **Protected**

- Welcoming, friendly, and respectful
- Clean and well-maintained facility
- Accessible to the campus community

### **Inclusive**

- Promote and practice diversity through opportunities and programs.
- Encourage comradeship and interaction.

### **Centre of Campus Life**

- Convenient and quality retail, food, services, and activities
- Safe, comfortable, and relaxing place to be.
- Numerous versatile, flexible, and well-equipped gathering spaces
- Diverse, equitable, multi-cultural events, and engagement opportunities

## PRINCIPLES

### **Community**

We continuously cultivate a community of care that ensures our members and staff feel welcomed and appreciated.

### **Integrity**

We lead with a good example by ensuring we always take responsibility for our actions and words, through ensuring our decisions are aligned with bettering the student experience.

### **Respect**

We appreciate the value of diverse opinions in developing approaches to varying situations.

### **Transparency**

We create an environment where our members and staff are encouraged to engage with us and where we are able to share openly about our business practices and actions.

### **Accountability**

We understand and accept the consequences of our actions for the areas in which we assume responsibility.

The action plan of the Students' Union of UBC Okanagan serves as a strategic roadmap outlining the board and executive's priorities for the year.

The action plan is structured around four key areas, each representing a distinct pillar of focus:

**Services:** This section outlines objectives related to enhancing and expanding the range of services provided to students. It aims to assess and improve existing services, identify gaps, and implement new initiatives to meet the evolving needs of the student community.

**Governance:** The governance pillar focuses on implementing effective and transparent governing practices within the Students' Union. Objectives in this section include, improving budgeting processes, enhancing decision-making structures, developing policies, and ensuring accountability throughout the organization.

**Advocacy:** This section emphasizes the importance of advocating for student interests and promoting positive change within the university and wider community. The action plan outlines objectives aimed at advocating for issues such as sustainability, transportation options, improved food choices, and other matters that directly impact the student body.

**Campus Life:** Within this category, the action plan addresses objectives related to fostering a vibrant and engaging campus environment. It includes initiatives to organize events, activities, and programs that promote student involvement, socialization, personal growth, and a sense of belonging within the campus community.



By organizing the action plan into these four pillars, the Students' Union ensures a comprehensive and balanced approach to addressing the needs and aspirations of the student community. It provides a clear framework for allocating resources, making informed decisions, and achieving measurable outcomes in service to the students of UBC Okanagan. Over the course of the year, the **SUO will commit to the following actions under each pillar as outlined below.**

## **SECTION A: 2023/2024 PRIORITIES**

### **SERVICES:**

1. **Assess mental health services on campus** to ensure adequate student support by conducting surveys, gathering feedback, and collaborating with relevant stakeholders to identify areas for improvement.

Objective: Enhance Mental Health Support

- A. Conduct a comprehensive assessment of mental health services on campus, including the availability, accessibility, and effectiveness of resources.
- B. Identify areas for improvement based on student feedback, surveys, and consultations with relevant stakeholders.
- C. Develop and implement strategies to address any identified gaps and enhance the overall quality and reach of mental health support services.
- D. Collaborate with campus health services, counseling centers, and external organizations to establish partnerships and expand resources available to students.

2. **Update the SUO website** to make it more user-friendly, informative, and inclusive, ensuring that students can easily access important resources, services, and announcements.

Objective: Improve Online Presence and Accessibility

- A. Revamp the SUO website to ensure it is user-friendly, visually appealing, and optimized for accessibility.
- B. Conduct user testing and gather feedback to inform website design and navigation improvements.
- C. Update and maintain accurate and up-to-date information regarding services, events, resources, and announcements.

3. **Ensure a successful referendum for the Field House** to provide students with enhanced athletic and recreational facilities, promoting their overall wellbeing and enriching their campus experiences.

Objective: Ensure a Successful Referendum for the Field House:

- A. Develop and execute a comprehensive campaign to build support for the construction of the Field House through a successful referendum.
  - B. Engage with student groups, sports teams, and relevant stakeholders to generate awareness about the benefits and importance of the Field House.
  - C. Monitor and evaluate the progress of the referendum campaign, adjusting as needed to ensure a successful outcome.
4. **Implement strategies for better management of the Student Association**, such as streamlining processes, improving communication channels, and fostering a supportive and efficient working environment.

Objective: Enhance Student Association Management

- A. Conduct a thorough review of the Student Association's existing processes and procedures.
- B. Identify areas of inefficiency, communication gaps, and areas for improvement within the Student Association's operations.
- C. Implement streamlined processes, improved communication channels, and effective project management practices to foster a supportive and efficient working environment.
- D. Provide professional development opportunities and training for Student Association members to enhance their leadership and organizational skills.

5. **Create a U-Pass subsidy program** to provide financial assistance to students for public transportation, making it more accessible and affordable for all.

Objective: Establish U-Pass Subsidy Program

- A. Advocate for the implementation of a U-Pass subsidy program through engagement with relevant stakeholders.
  - B. Conduct feasibility studies and financial analyses to determine the viability and sustainability of the U-Pass subsidy program.
  - C. Develop a comprehensive plan for the administration and distribution of U-Pass subsidies, ensuring fair and equitable access for all eligible students.
  - D. Promote and communicate the U-Pass subsidy program to increase awareness and encourage student participation in public transportation options.
6. **Provide opportunities for students to gain practical experience**, such as internship, volunteering, and student employment.

Objective: Create Student Employment and Growth Opportunities

- A. Establish partnerships with the relevant University departments to facilitate internship programs and job opportunities for students within the SUO.
  - B. Facilitate access to volunteer programs and community service opportunities that align with students' interests and career goals with the SUO.
  - C. Promote on-campus employment options and work-study programs to provide valuable work experience for students with the SUO Business.
7. **Further advance the SUO Building Capital Project.**

Objective. Conduct a thorough analysis of alternative options for the capital project.

- A. Identify and evaluate alternative solutions, such as renovating existing facilities.
- B. Assess the feasibility, cost-effectiveness, and sustainability of each alternative option.
- C. Consider the potential impact on student experience, operational efficiency, and long-term growth of the university.

## **GOVERNANCE:**

8. **Prepare detailed transitional material for the executive team**, including comprehensive documentation of policies, procedures, and decision-making processes, to ensure effective governance and seamless transitions for future executives.

Objective: Enhance Documentation and Governance Practices

- A. Prepare detailed transitional materials for the executive team, including comprehensive documentation of policies, procedures, and decision-making processes.
- B. Ensure that all relevant information is documented and readily accessible to the executive team, providing clarification on roles, responsibilities, and protocols.
- C. Review and update existing governance documents to reflect current practices and align with best practices in organizational governance.
- D. Facilitate seamless transitions for future executives by documenting key processes and providing comprehensive onboarding resources.

9. **Improve the budget presentation** by creating clear and concise visuals, providing detailed explanations of allocations, and engaging with students to increase transparency and understanding of financial matters.

Objective: Improve Budget Presentation and Transparency

- A. Enhance the budget presentation process by creating clear and concise visuals that effectively communicate financial information to students.
- B. Provide detailed explanations of budget allocations, highlighting how student fees are utilized to benefit the student community.
- C. Engage with staff, executives and other stakeholders to gather feedback on budget priorities and increase transparency in financial decision-making.
- D. Publish regular financial reports and updates to ensure ongoing transparency and accountability to the student body.

10. **Develop office procedures and manual** for the staff, outlining standardized processes, protocols, and responsibilities to enhance operational efficiency and consistency.

Objective: Develop Standardized Office Procedures and Manuals

- A. Create office procedure and manual that outline standardized processes, protocols, and responsibilities for staff members.

- B. Identify areas where operational efficiency can be improved and develop streamlined procedures to enhance productivity and consistency.
- C. Provide training and resources to staff members to ensure they are equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to carry out their roles effectively.
- D. Regularly review and update the office procedures and manuals to reflect evolving needs and changes in organizational structure.

11. **Establish an Indigenous Representative position** on the SUO board to ensure meaningful Indigenous representation and promote Indigenous voices in decision-making processes.

Objective: Establish Indigenous Representative Position on the SUO Board

- A. Advocate for the creation of an Indigenous Representative position on the SUO board to ensure meaningful Indigenous representation and promote Indigenous voices in decision-making processes.
- B. Engage with Indigenous student groups and organizations to gather input and feedback on the role and responsibilities of the Indigenous Representative.
- C. Collaborate with Indigenous communities, elders, and knowledge keepers to ensure the position respects and reflects Indigenous values, perspectives, and protocols.
- D. Develop an inclusive and supportive framework that fosters the active participation and contribution of the Indigenous Representative within the board's decision-making processes.

12. **Plan and execute a comprehensive audit of the students' health and dental plan** to ensure its effectiveness, efficiency, and alignment with the needs of students.

Objective: Comprehensive Audit of the Health and Dental Plan

- A. Conduct a thorough assessment of the current health and dental plan, examining its benefits, coverage, costs, and accessibility.
- B. Collect feedback from students regarding their satisfaction with the plan and identify any areas for improvement or adjustment.
- C. Collaborate with relevant stakeholders to gather necessary data and information for the audit.
- D. Analyze the audit findings to address any identified gaps or areas of concerns and propose recommendations for enhancing the health and dental plan,

13. **Continue to fine-tune the SUO by-laws and regulations**, ensuring compliance with all statutory laws.

Objective: Effective Policy Management

- A. Regularly review the existing by-laws and regulations to identify areas for improvement, clarification, or necessary updates.
- B. Conduct legal research and seek professional advice to ensure compliance with all relevant statutory laws and regulations.
- C. Engage with student representatives, legal experts, and stakeholders to gather input and feedback on proposed amendments or revisions.
- D. Ensure transparent communication and engagement with the SUO membership regarding any changes made to the by-laws and regulations.

14. **Create a more effective orientation and training opportunity** for student associations and course unions to enhance their leadership and organizational skills.

Objective: Engaged and Thriving Student Associations and Course Unions

- A. Design and deliver comprehensive orientation programs for student associations and course unions, providing them with the necessary tools, knowledge, and resources to fulfill their roles effectively.
- B. Offer ongoing training opportunities to enhance leadership, organizational, and interpersonal skills of student association and course union members.
- C. Foster networking and collaboration among student associations and course unions to facilitate the sharing of best practices and experiences.

## **ADVOCACY:**

15. **Promote sustainable practices** within the student community and university operation by advocating for the reintroduction of initiatives such as Green2Go and healthy food options across campus and within the SUO business.

Objective: Promote Sustainable Practices

- A. Advocate for the reintroduction and expansion of sustainable initiatives, such as Green-2-Go, to promote environmentally friendly practices within the student community and university operations.

- B. Collaborate with relevant stakeholders, including sustainability departments, student groups, and administration, to develop and implement programs that encourage sustainable behaviors and reduce the environmental footprint on campus.
- C. Raise awareness about the importance of sustainable practices through educational campaigns, workshops, and events, fostering a culture of environmental responsibility within the student community.
- D. Advocate for the availability of healthy food options across campus, working with food service providers and university administration to ensure that students have access to nutritious and sustainable food choices.

16. **Establish and sustain a subsidized, ongoing, low-cost, healthy,** and sustainable plant-based food option to address food insecurity across the campus. Objective: Develop and implement a sustainable, affordable, and nutritious plant-based food option.

Objective: Develop and implement a sustainable, affordable, and nutritious plant-based food option.

- A. Analyze the feasibility of implementing a plant-based food option, considering factors such as cost, nutritional requirements, and sustainability.
- B. Develop a comprehensive plan outlining the implementation strategy, including budgeting and identifying food service partners within the SUO businesses.
- C. Partner with food service providers to ensure consistent availability and service for the plant-based food option.
- D. Conduct taste tests and gather feedback from students to refine the menu and make necessary adjustments to meet their expectations and preferences.
- E. Secure financial support or partnerships with relevant stakeholders to subsidize the cost of the plant-based food option, making it more accessible and affordable for students facing food insecurity.

17. **Lobby the provincial government** and other key stakeholders to provide better transportation options for students, advocating for improved public transportation systems, shuttle services, and infrastructure that support student mobility.

Objective: Lobby for Better Transportation Options

- A. Engage in lobbying efforts directed towards the provincial government and key stakeholders to advocate for improved transportation options for students.
- B. Advocate for the enhancement of public transportation systems serving the university campus, including increased frequency, extended operating hours, and improved connectivity.
- C. Collaborate with transportation authorities, student organizations, and community partners to explore the feasibility of implementing shuttle services and alternative transportation initiatives that support student mobility.
- D. Promote the development of infrastructure, such as bike lanes and pedestrian-friendly pathways, to encourage active transportation and reduce reliance on single-occupancy vehicles.

18. **Continue with the "What the Park" Initiative**, which advocates for better parking arrangements for staff and faculty, ensuring that their needs are considered, and issues related to parking availability and accessibility are addressed.

Objective: Advocate for Improved Parking Arrangements

- A. Continue with the "What the Park" Initiative, advocating for better parking arrangements for student's faculty and staff.
- B. Conduct surveys and gather feedback from staff, faculty, and students to identify issues and concerns related to parking availability, accessibility, and fairness.
- C. Engage in dialogue with university administration, parking authorities, and other relevant stakeholders to address parking-related challenges and propose viable solutions.

19. **Engage in dialogue with the university administration** to address and resolve the issue of using the name "UBCO" in club names.

Objective: Resolution of Name Use Agreement with UBCO

- A. Initiate meetings with university officials to understand their concerns and expectations regarding the use of the "UBC" name.



- B. Advocate for the interests of student clubs, presenting the value and significance of using the name while respecting the university's brand guidelines.
- C. Collaborate with the university administration to establish a clear framework or agreement regarding the use of the "UBC" name in club names, ensuring transparency and fairness in the decision-making process.

## **CAMPUS LIFE**

20. **Increase student participation in campus life activities by 10%** within the academic year by providing diverse and inclusive events to cater to the interests and needs of all students.

Objective: Enhance Student Engagement

- A. Conduct surveys and collect feedback from students to identify their preferences and interests.
- B. Develop and implement marketing and promotional strategies to increase awareness of, and participation in campus life activities.
- C. Collaborate with student organizations to ensure a wide variety of engaging and inclusive events options.

21. **Establish partnerships with local businesses and community organizations** to enhance the range and quality of events and activities available to students.

Objective: Strengthen Community Partnership

- A. Identify and reach out to local businesses and community organizations that align with the interests and needs of the student population.
- B. Develop collaborative relationships to co-create and co-host events, workshops, and activities that offer unique experiences and opportunities.
- C. Seek sponsorship and support from local businesses to enhance the resources and offerings available to students.
- D. Evaluate and measure the success and impact of collaborative events and activities to continually improve and refine the partnerships.

22. **Provide resources and trainings for student organizations** to effectively plan and execute their initiatives and events.

Objective: Student Leadership and Involvement

- A. Conduct workshops and training sessions to enhance the leadership, organizational, and event management skills of student organization members.
- B. Offer guidance and support in budgeting, marketing, and logistics to help student organizations successfully plan and execute their initiatives.
- C. Foster a collaborative environment where student organizations can share experiences, ideas, and resources to learn from one another.

23. **Celebrate diversity and multiculturalism** through cultural events, festivals, and awareness campaigns.

Objective: Foster a Vibrant Campus Culture

- A. Organize cultural events and festivals that showcase the traditions, customs, and heritage of different ethnicities and cultures represented within the student body.
- B. Collaborate with student groups and organizations to raise awareness about diverse perspectives, inclusion, and equity on campus.

24. **Organize career fairs and networking events** to connect students with potential employers and industry professionals.

Objective: Enhance Career and Networking for Students

- A. Invite employers, industry experts, and alumni to participate in career fairs and networking events to facilitate connections with students.
- B. Promote internship and job opportunities through targeted communications and online platforms.

## **SECTION B: CURRENT BOARD AND STAFF**

The Board of Directors for the Students' Union is comprised of three types of positions. The elected officials for the 2023/24 year are indicated below.

Full time current staff are also noted below.

The Students' Union also employs several casual, part-time student staff who assist with provision of front-line service in the Students' Union businesses.

### ***Executive Members***

Cade Desjarlais	President
Lakshay Karnwal	Vice-President External
Osho Gnanasivam	Vice-President Finance and Administration
Shreyansh Mehendiratta	Vice-President Internal
Uday Gill	Vice-President Campus Life

### ***Faculty Representatives***

Sunish Grover	Faculty of Sciences
Georgia Mayhew	Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
Abby Newman	Faculty of Management
Rishan Pfaender	Faculty of Applied Science
Hanna Donaldson	Faculty of Creative and Critical Studies
Anjali Desai	The College of Graduate Studies
Grace Haplin	Faculty of Health and Social Development
<i>VACANT</i>	Faculty of Education Representative

### ***Directors-at-Large***

Aryan Arora	Director-at-Large
Darsh Alamchandani	Director-at-Large
Twinkle Hora	Director-at-Large
Maziar Matin Panah	Director-at-Large

### ***Ex-Officio Members***

Isabella Bravo	Board of Governors Representative
Saami Hafeez	Student Senate Caucus Representative

***Staff***

Jason Evans	General Manager
Aaron White	Project Manager
Leanne Smiles	Finance Manager
Cecily Qiu	Receptionist / Service Assistant
Bri Fedoruk	Governance Coordinator
Izzy Rusch	Membership Outreach Coordinator
Rachel Fortin	Students' Advocate
Michael Ouellet	The Well Pub and Events Manager
Clint Flamand	Kitchen Supervisor/Lead
Stephanie Patterson	Food Security Manager
Sarah Speier	Executive Coordinator
Shauna-Lee Hildred	Paper and Supply Co. Manager

## **APPENDIX 1: PROGRESS TRACKER – OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE**

Progress meetings shall be held once per semester. Tables to track progress will be inserted at those times.