

Q&A from the Minister of Advanced Education on Changes to the Funding Model

We put 5 questions to the Minister of Advanced Education, Mr. Marlin Schmidt. Here are his responses:



The Honorable Minister Marlin Schmidt – Minister of Advanced Education in Alberta

1. **Where and how do you see collaboration occurring across the system?**

I see collaboration occurring across the system every day! Whether it be two faculty members working together on a research project, institutions sharing curriculum to ensure that students have access to the best possible education, or the offering of joint degrees, collaboration occurs everywhere. That said, I continue to work with stakeholders to ensure that collaboration is enhanced across the system. Moving forward, collaboration will be key to ensure that our system is able to deliver the high quality educational outcomes Albertans expect in the most efficient way as possible.

2. **What risks do you see in deriving more revenue from fundraising activities?**

It is important to ensure that risks are well managed. Government is currently reviewing how the system is resourced and, as part of this review, we are looking at how institutions are funded and the role that self-generated revenue plays across the system. The department's goal is to ensure that fundraising endeavors are appropriate for post-secondary institutions, that they do not distract from the primary purpose of the institution and that the board has the capacity to properly manage and oversee them.

3. **Where do you see the role of academic staff associations in institutional governance as a result of the Post-Secondary Learning Act (PSLA) changes?**

The PSLA envisioned academic staff associations as an integral and legislated part of the institution's fabric. The recent changes to the PSLA were about extending constitutionally protected rights to academic staff members and does not change the integral role that academic staff members play in our system.

4. **Does the "holistic" student experience compromise funding for quality and effective teaching and scholarly activities, seeing that administrative complements in institutions have increased significantly over the years?**

It is important that we take a holistic view of the student experience to ensure students are provided with the supports that they need to succeed in their studies. I am concerned about rising administrative expenses at institutions. Government is committed to addressing executive compensation through the ABC review and the funding review will also look at administrative expenses. It is important to me that as many dollars as possible are directed toward the classrooms across our province.

5. **If the basic funding model is to be built on enrolments, what other factors could be used to supplement the funding, based on other criteria derived from institutional mandates?**

In most jurisdictions enrolment measures are influential within the funding model, but they are not the only factor considered in determining funding. The current funding model review is examining many factors that could be used to better determine funding allocations to institutions including the mandate of the institution.