

Dear Executive Council,

This is a written question regarding the conversation we had at the August 27 Council meeting about the lack of SU support of the International General Strike for climate action and awareness on September 27. As you may know, many of us were disappointed with the response we received, and would like to follow up about the decision that was taken.

Climate change is real, it is caused by humans, and it is the single biggest issue of our generation. In the same way that this problem has been caused by us, it is also within our power to solve it. Last year, the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change released a special report that warned that an increase of over 1.5°C would [significantly worsen the risk of drought, floods, extreme heat, and poverty for hundreds of millions of people around the world](#). As of October 2018, the warning noted that at current rates, this threshold would be met within 12 years.

On the week of August 28, 2019, the [City of Edmonton declared a state of climate emergency](#). In doing so, it joined Canadian cities like [Ottawa, Halifax, Hamilton, and Vancouver](#), which had previously done so. To Mayor Don Iveson, it was “a clear wake up call to take action now.”

In July of 2019, [7,000 colleges and universities around the world joined to declare a climate emergency](#), outlining plans to commit to carbon neutrality, mobilize resources for action-oriented climate change research and skills creation, as well as increasing environmental and sustainability education across a variety of programs.

Communities around the world have joined together to organize the General Strike on September 27, calling governments around the world for action on climate change. In Edmonton, youth from all backgrounds have been mobilizing to take part in this action, hoping to create a world that we can live in. At the University of Alberta, several professors have cancelled classes on this day and encouraged their students to join the strike. Several other associations have also been reached out to in hope of taking up similar actions. This is an issue that the University of Alberta Students' Union cannot ignore.

As students, we strive to better ourselves, to learn and grow so that we too can create change for the better in the world we live in. We do this for ourselves, but also for the communities that we love. However, we fear that our opportunities as professionals, the reason why we attend university, are in extreme danger if we cannot envision a future where we can live comfortably without the fear of climate catastrophe.

Climate change is a student issue. It is an issue we can either address now, or address once it's too late. We choose to address it now.

As a Students' Council, we have been elected to represent students and the issues that they face. Many of us were elected on mandates of environmentalism and sustainability, and did so with very strong mandates. We will not be silent on this issue, which is why we implore you to follow us in speaking up. Because of this, we would like to reach out again, and request for UASU action on this issue.

Here is a list of asks, including our main request. We are asking, request by request, whether the Executive will support councilors in any of the following ways. Yes or no per question is sufficient:

- Will the University of Alberta Students' Union inform students about the general strike on September 27?
- Will the University of Alberta Students' Union inform students about the general strike on September 27 through its campus-wide email lists?
- Will the University of Alberta Students' Union inform students about the general strike on September 27 through our social media platforms?
- Will the University of Alberta Students' Union advocate against attendance penalties towards students who miss class to attend the general strike on September 27?
- Will the University of Alberta Students' Union join dozens of Canadian cities and thousands of universities around the world to declare a climate emergency?
- Will the University of Alberta Students' Union executive pledge to take climate change seriously and take direct action to help University of Alberta students tackle this massive issue?
- Will the University of Alberta Students' Union have the courage to do what's right, not what's easy?
- If any of the previous requests receives a 'no' vote, will the Executive Committee of the University of Alberta Students' Union give thorough reasoning as to why this decision was made?

Sincerely, signed,

Councillor Vargas Alba

Councillor Draper

Councillor Dixon

Councillor Kidd

Councillor Beasley

Councillor Haddouche  
Councillor Sunday  
Councillor Jamaledine  
Councillor McVea  
Councillor Isaac