

BUDGET VALUES and DIRECTION

Budget Values

The University has put significant effort over the past several years into revising its budget process to ensure that we are able to adapt quickly to whatever fiscal situation is presented, that the budget supports the strategic directions of the University, and that all budget decisions are made within the context of the University's "Destination 2020" Strategic Plan: "Our strategic priorities remain priorities independent of the financial challenges our University encounters. To take us to our desired future the University will pursue its established strategic directions and identified priorities."

Although revenue sources will continue to fluctuate year-to-year and the provincial fiscal environment is in constant flux, it is important to make decisions with a long-term view, and the University remains committed to directing as many of its scarce resources as possible towards enhancing our position as a comprehensive teaching and research University. If reductions are required to achieve a balanced general operating budget, senior administration will make every effort to ensure that the quality of our academic programs and services to our students is maintained.

A framework of values was developed in 2013-14 to guide the [Budget Advisory Committee](#) (BAC) in deciding how budget allocations and any necessary reductions would be made. This framework of values continues to be used to guide the discussions on operating budget allocations. The values, reaffirmed by both the General Faculties Council and the Board of Governors, were that:

i. Our people define our University and are our greatest strength

People are the essential resource of our institution and, as such, the University will strive to preserve employment.

All University employee groups will be treated with fairness and with respect in all that lies ahead in our work to maintain our student-centred focus and to ensure the continued financial sustainability of our institution.

ii. High quality is central to all that we do

Our commitment to maintaining high quality undergraduate and graduate academic programs is key to our University mission to build a better society. High quality instruction and teaching are essential to this commitment. Research and creative activity are also key to our mission and their vitality and vibrancy serve as a differentiating feature of our institution and a central part of our culture as a comprehensive academic and research institution. High quality facilities and services support our mission and best serve our students, staff, and academic staff.

iii. Access to our University is a foundational value

As a Comprehensive Academic and Research University (CARI) dedicated to liberal education that was born out of the needs and aspirations of our local communities, we are committed to providing student access to our high quality academic programs throughout the province without creating unnecessary financial barriers. Community engagement with our University and community use of our facilities play a role in defining us as a public institution.

It is the combination of the Comprehensive Institutional Plan (CIP) goals and budget values that provide the direction to the BAC in developing the three-year budget with a long-term view. BAC does consider the optimization of restricted funds, wherever possible within the funding restrictions, to further the goals and values of the University; however, the focus of BAC is on the general operating fund and the strategic priority fund.

Budget Direction

The University's goals and initiatives for the next three-year period, along with our ongoing activities, strategically focus our advancement as a comprehensive university. We are committed to providing students with quality programming rooted in our liberal education tradition, supported by a range of services and experiential opportunities.

The following are the University's Goals as outlined in our Comprehensive Institutional Plan:

Destination Project (Phase 1) – Science and Academic Building	Provide students, faculty and the community with a supportive, innovative and safe environment that inspires transdisciplinary research, learning and creativity in the sciences.
Revitalize Liberal Education	Revitalize the University's commitment to and delivery of its founding Liberal Education principles and philosophy to enhance students' development as creative explorers and innovative thinkers.
Programming	Develop new undergraduate programs and partnerships to meet learner, society and business needs. Increase opportunities to enable learners to continue their education in southern Alberta through increased and enhanced graduate programs.
Research	To fulfill our comprehensive mandate such that our recognition and research performance clearly place us amongst Canada's most influential universities.
Improved access for underrepresented groups	Increase the enrolment and persistence to graduation of First Nations, Métis and Inuit identified students at both the undergraduate and graduate levels.
Increase/Improve Learner Pathways	Provide a range of opportunities and pathways for students to access a degree from the University of Lethbridge.
AGILITY	Enable a culture of innovation & entrepreneurial thinking at the University through AGILITY, a new program designed to enhance students' academic experience.
Internationalization	Develop, promote and advance internationalization to enable students, faculty and staff to be engaged global citizens.



BUDGET BRIEF CONTEXT FOR 2018-19 BUDGET

Support the Student Experience	Provide opportunities and supports to enable students to access academic programs and supports that match their needs and enable them to persist towards graduation.
Community Engagement	Continue to provide opportunities for members of various communities to engage and experience the many aspects of University operations.
Quality Assurance	Ensure continuous improvement in all academic programs and units, and in research centres and institutes, through a process of internal reflection and constructive, formative criticism by qualified external reviewers.