URFA Response to the 2019/20 Provincial Budget

March 21, 2019

URFA Members,

Yesterday, the Provincial Government released their budget for the 2018-19 fiscal year. The budget announced that funding for the University will remain the same as last year, when funding for the University increased by less than one per cent. While the government may have balanced its budget, it has been balanced at the cost of ignoring the need for re-investment in post secondary education.

Yesterday, the University administration applauded the government on balancing its budget, despite the fact that post secondary education has not seen funding restored since cuts were made in 2017, and institutions are seeing a zero per cent increase in funding for the second year in a row. It is difficult for URFA to see the benefit of a balanced budget if it means the University will in turn be balancing its own budget on the backs of URFA members and the students we serve.

Over the past several years, the University has made choices that have impacted URFA members, who are facing increased workloads and precarity as Academic positions have gone unfilled or have been replaced with an increasing reliance on sessional instructors. Students have been affected as well, as a decade of tuition increases has had an impact on the affordability of obtaining an education at the U of R.

When preparing their own budget for the next fiscal year, the University should look at all options that do not impact URFA members or students. URFA calls on the University to invest in the people that they rely on for the day-to-day operations of this institution, and for the government to make post secondary education a priority, restore the cuts, and make a significant re-investment in our province’s post-secondary education system.

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