

# Students' Union Discussion Paper on the Lougheed Leadership Initiative

The late Peter Lougheed is recognized as one of the greatest leaders that the province of Alberta has ever had. As Alberta's Premier, as a President of the University of Alberta Students' Union, and in other leadership roles, he advocated for each and every Albertan to take advantage of the incredible opportunities available in this great province.

We applaud the University of Alberta's efforts to create a *Leadership Initiative* in Lougheed's memory, recognizing his contributions to Alberta. The Students' Union would also like to acknowledge the gracious support of the donors towards the creation of this leadership initiative to commemorate Lougheed's work and to continue to inspire and support a new generation of undergraduate student leaders who can go on to guide Alberta, Canada, and the world through tomorrow's opportunities and challenges.

The Students' Union remains inspired and encouraged by Lougheed's vision for the broader community, especially his emphasis on the need to "think in terms of community before individual." We believe that — as a major Canadian and global center for research, teaching and learning committed to the *Uplifting of the whole people* — every University of Alberta undergraduate student should graduate with the knowledge, skills, and experiences required to become a 21<sup>st</sup> century leader. In the vein of uplifting all students by providing them with the leadership attributes essential to success in our strong economic environment, the Students' Union is submitting this discussion paper on the proposed student leadership initiative:

- The Students' Union recommends that funding for the "Lougheed Leadership initiative" — including support from donors — be focused on maximizing the leadership learning opportunities for *all* students.
- Recognizing that leadership development happens inside and outside the classroom, we recommend that the "Lougheed Leadership initiative" be guided by **the Office of the Provost** through the Office of the Dean of Students.
- A substantial portion of funds raised for the "Lougheed Leadership initiative" should be allocated for curriculum (re)development, with a specific focus on integrating leadership attributes into existing undergraduate programs. This would **empower professors and administrators** responsible for program planning to foster leadership skills that are best suited for their discipline. While acknowledging the success of the Business leadership certificate, such a fund would allow other Faculties to develop appropriate curricular leadership programs like certificates that support the professional development of students. Distributing funds across Faculties would ensure that students in all University of Alberta programs have the opportunity to be supported by the Lougheed Leadership initiative.
- The Students' Union believes that a Lougheed Leadership initiative should complement and **support our strongest existing leadership development programs**. The University of Alberta has the more student groups than any other University in Canada, with more than 450 groups registered last year. Funds from the Lougheed Leadership endowment should support existing co-curricular programs like the Student Group Leadership Summit and the Emerging Leaders

Program. With around a thousand students who identify as student group executives, mentorship and leadership training for these students would encourage a culture of leadership to develop amongst the wider student body.

- As a part of the Lougheed Leadership initiative, the University should **augment our leadership programming in existing residences**. Building off of the success of Residence Halls Association and Residence Services leadership programming, the Lougheed Leadership initiative should bring “leaders in residence” to each of our residences and provide enhanced development opportunities, like the Basecamp program, for all students living in residence.
- If the University decides to build a new building for the Lougheed Leadership initiative, the space should become a **visible hub for existing leadership learning programs** for all students looking for the experiences needed to set them apart in the Albertan economy. The space should be akin to a “food court” for the well-established leadership development programs like Community Service Learning, the Undergraduate Research Initiative, Study Abroad and Global Education, Venture Mentorship Programming, the Emerging Leaders Program, and the Green and Gold Grant.
- The Students’ Union firmly believes that now is not the time to invest in an exclusive Leadership College that doesn’t benefit the majority of the U of A’s over 32,000 students. However, if administration continues to advance plans for a 144-person College, resources must be leveraged to make it **more accessible for the other 99% of students**. This should include mature students with dependents, students unable to afford living in residence, students living with family in Edmonton, and students attending other University of Alberta campuses. A Leadership College should be an inclusive program that recognizes the diversity of the University of Alberta’s student body. The University should consider a more central location for the building, and consider allowing 36 rooms to be occupied for periods of 3 weeks. A 3-week intensive leadership program would give students a taste of living in residence, create new connections, and quintuple the reach of donor investments.

As a former leader of the Students’ Union, Peter Lougheed’s vision for an empowered student community still guides our organization today. His name brings with it the promise of enhancing our overall university experience, our employability, and augmenting the potential far-reaching impact that student leaders could have in the contributions they make to tomorrow’s society and economy.

We recognize the key role that donors play in driving the vision for a Lougheed Leadership initiative, and are deeply thankful for the support they give us and the University.

**We hope that the University administration, together with donors, will pursue a more inclusive vision for student leadership that reflects the vision of Peter Lougheed, as well as students, staff, and administrators on every University of Alberta campus.**