Campus Saint-Jean

Expiry: April 30, 2027

1. Facts

1. French was the first language to have been spoken by European settlers in Alberta. Franco-Albertans have called this province home since the 18th century.
2. Campus Saint-Jean is the only Canadian post-secondary institution west of Winnipeg to offer multiple degrees and diploma programs in French.
3. An Agreement was signed in 1976 in which Campus Saint-Jean (formerly Collège Saint-Jean) became a part of the University of Alberta.
   a. The 1976 Agreement states in Section 3 (III), point 3.2 that “The University (of Alberta) covenants and agrees to use its best efforts to operate, maintain, improve and expand the College [CSJ] program, the buildings, equipment and supplies…”
   b. The 1976 Agreement states in Section 3 (III), point 3.6 that “The Province covenants and agrees to provide to the University as and when required, funds by way of grant or otherwise… to allow the University to perform its covenants herein…”.
   c. Students at Campus Saint-Jean do not have an English language proficiency requirement when applying for admission.
   d. In August of 2020, the Association Canadienne-Française de l’Alberta (ACFA), along with all four Franco-Albertan school boards, sued the University of Alberta as well as the provincial government to allege that the 1976 agreement was not being upheld.1
4. The University of Alberta offers general and emergency communications, descriptions and applications for scholarships and bursaries, administrative interfaces, and many student services only in English.
5. In the 2017-2018 academic year, Campus Saint-Jean rented extra classroom space at La Cité Francophone because it did not have enough existing space for courses.
6. The French Policy of the Government of Alberta states that “The Government of Alberta recognizes that the continued growth and vitality of the Francophonie can be supported by continuing to foster…post secondary programming in French.”2
7. The Constitution Act, 1982 states that “English and French are the official languages of Canada”3.
8. Campus Saint-Jean receives funding from the Government of Canada through the Official Languages Support Programs. The federal funding received from this program represents around 30% of Campus Saint-Jean’s budget.[4]
9. Through a cost sharing agreement between the Federal and Provincial governments, $13.4 million in funding is expected to be disbursed to Campus Saint-Jean between 2022 and 2025. These funds will, in the short term, help alleviate some problems that Campus Saint-Jean has been facing as a result of chronic underfunding.5
10. Campus Saint-Jean receives funding from the University under the assumption that the Campus only admits 575 Full-time Learner Equivalents (FLE). Campus Saint-Jean however, is the only French-language option in Western Canada, considers itself obliged to admit as many students as possible which leads to an unfunded shortfall of over 200 students.[6]
11. Canada has an ongoing shortage of teachers able to provide quality instruction in French Immersion and Francophone schools7. Campus Saint-Jean plays an instrumental role in addressing this shortage through its Bachelor of Education program.

2. Resolutions

1. The Students’ Union shall recognize the continuing legitimacy of the 1976 Agreement and shall advocate that the University of Alberta and provincial government act in accordance with this agreement.
2. The Students’ Union shall conduct its annual survey in French and English.

3. The Students’ Union shall advocate that the University of Alberta offer general and emergency communications, descriptions and applications for scholarships and bursaries, administrative interfaces, and other student services in both French and English.
4. The Students’ Union shall advocate that Faculté Saint-Jean, the Office of the Provost and the Office of the Registrar raise the full-load equivalent (FLE) target of Campus Saint-Jean to properly reflect rising admission numbers and applicant demand.
5. The Students’ Union shall advocate that Campus Saint-Jean hire more research professors to allow for greater research opportunities in French for students and a larger variety of courses.
6. The Students’ Union shall consult with Campus Saint-Jean students and AUFSJ to advocate for access to post-secondary education in French in Alberta.
7. The Students’ Union shall consult with l’Association Canadienne-Française de l’Alberta (ACFA) to advocate for access to post-secondary education in French in Alberta.
8. The Students’ Union shall collaborate and partner with relevant francophone organizations when appropriate to provide
services for students and to advocate for the access to post-secondary education in French in Alberta.
9. The Students’ Union shall advocate that the provincial government provide funding to renovate and expand academic and student-oriented spaces at Campus Saint-Jean to meet current and future needs.
10. The Students’ Union shall advocate that the government of Alberta provide official languages equity funding to expand enrollment, support infrastructure needs, and grow the number of programs in an effort to provide greater access to quality post-secondary education in French in Alberta for students.
11. The Students’ Union shall advocate that the Government of Canada utilize a needs-based approach to Official Languages Support Programs funding and to assess the value needed to ensure quality post-secondary education in French in a minority context.
12. The Students' Union shall advocate to the Government of Canada that Article 23 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms be understood to include the right to adequate access to post secondary education in French.
13. The Students’ Union will work with the Government of Canada to realize the government’s commitment to the Modernization of the Official Languages Act to strengthen the educational continuum in minority language situations.
14. The Students’ Union shall advocate for greater collaboration between faculties at the University of Alberta to ensure that students at Campus Saint-Jean are not limited in the scope of their academic programming.
15. The Students’ Union shall collaborate with the University of Alberta and Faculté Saint-Jean to ensure that students have access to affordable and quality food for purchase on-campus in French.
16. The Students’ Union shall advocate for the creation of an Indigenous student gathering space at Campus Saint-Jean.
17. Ensure the equivalency of academic resources and student services in Campus Saint-Jean that exist on North Campus. This includes supporting La Centrale, the hub of French services for CSJ students, and working with AUFSJ to ensure that advocacy responds to students’ needs.

3. References

1. https://globalnews.ca/news/7292774/campus-saint-jean-funding-lawsuit/
2. https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/9818af69-7a54-43af-9d91-f899745d864c/resource/fbc613c8-aa52-4669-a3f9-80192a0a1283/download/french-policy-english.pdf
3. https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/Const/page-15.html#h-46
4. Presentation by Pierre-Yves Mocquais to the committee on Official Languages
5. https://ici.radio-canada.ca/nouvelle/1866445/financement-campus-saint-jean-entente-provincial-federal?fbclid=IwAR01ldSBoMz-L5mSM1yU0t7076nBpvxhhRHhAyNKp928vZUMebtzyr48JD4
6. Presentation by Pierre-Yves Mocquais to the committee on Official Languages
7. https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/canada-french-immersion-teacher-shortage-1.4423050

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