

April 9, 2025 - The Students' Association of MacEwan University (SAMU) is alarmed by reports of police presence and intimidation during a peaceful student protest at the March meeting of the university's Board of Governors. The deployment of law enforcement in response to nonviolent student action and absent any genuine threat to safety is unacceptable and deeply concerning.

We are committed to defending students' freedom of assembly and expression, as protected by the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. The presence of police during legal protests does not safeguard our campus – it criminalizes dissent, interferes with expression, and exponentially increases the risk of harm to students, as seen with encampment sweeps in May of 2024. This risk disproportionately impacts Indigenous, racialized, and 2SLGBTQIA+ students, among others. We call on the university to actively protect, not endanger, students exercising their rights.

We are also gravely concerned by reports of increased surveillance of student protestors, including surveillance cameras at protests and increased attention from campus security services. This points to a growing and unacceptable culture of institutional surveillance targeting peaceful activism.

Today, SAMU renews its call to the university, first made in May 2024 following police violence against student protestors: We call for ongoing, open, peaceful dialogue between university administrators and student protestors, including a clear commitment to not subject students to legal or academic penalties for participating in peaceful protest, both on and off campus.

SAMU remains committed to the rights and safety of our students. We expect the university to be committed to the same. SAMU reaffirms students' right to protest peacefully, free from institutional violence, harassment, or retribution by the university or law enforcement, and to free expression which is essential for the pursuit of knowledge. We encourage impacted students to reach out for further support and access the resources available to help:

- For legal supports, please visit [SAMU's MyLegalPlan page](#) (for students who have not opted out of the fee)
- For mental health supports, [please see SAMU's resource page](#)
- Contact your elected representatives at SAMU via [the contact information on our website](#).

For Media Inquiries, please contact:

Gabriel Ambutong, President

sapresident@macewan.ca

780-497-5631