

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### STUDENTS IN PERIL AS FUNDING CRISIS ENTERS FOURTH WEEK; ALBERTA STUDENTS CALL ON MINISTER OF EMPLOYMENT & IMMIGRATION TO TAKE IMMEDIATE ACTION

Edmonton, AB – More than 1500 students at NorQuest College in Edmonton and Bow Valley College in Calgary are entering the fourth week of a funding crisis that has meant they are without food, lacking transit and facing eviction.

“This crisis could have been easily averted and it’s embarrassing that this situation has been allowed to continue for four weeks, ” says Steven Kwasny, Chair of the Alberta Students Executive Council (ASEC).

The cause is a computer glitch that has held up learner assistance normally provided by the Ministry of Employment and Immigration to students in need by early September. Emergency measures promised by the government have not alleviated the crisis, and over 3300 students at colleges and technical institutes across the province will have to wait until mid-October for help from the government. Emergency measures promised by Minister Lukaszuk have fallen short.

“This is dark mark for Alberta’s post-secondary education system. It’s a really sad state when we literally have students starving” said Kwasny. “We have programs to ensure that kindergarten students don’t go without breakfast, yet we’re letting adult learners who depend on government support go hungry.”

Students associations at Bow Valley College and NorQuest College have been asked to provide relief efforts for affected students. ASEC is calling on the Ministry of Employment and Immigration to take immediate action to help out the affected students. “Ultimately, it is up to the government to coordinate efforts, not resource-strapped community food banks or students associations,” said Kwasny.

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