

HIGHER EDUCATION CORPORATE OR PUBLIC?

How the UCP is restructuring
post-secondary education
in Alberta



Laurie Adkin (lead author), with co-authors
William Carroll, David Chen, Mike Lang, and
Mark Shakespear

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About Parkland Institute

Parkland Institute is an Alberta research network that examines public policy issues. Based in the Faculty of Arts at the University of Alberta, it includes members from most of Alberta's academic institutions as well as other organizations involved in public policy research. Parkland Institute was founded in 1996 and its mandate is to:

- conduct research on economic, social, cultural and political issues facing Albertans and Canadians
- publish research and provide informed comment on current policy issues to the media and the public
- sponsor conferences and public forums on issues facing Albertans
- bring together academic and non-academic communities

All Parkland Institute reports are academically peer reviewed to ensure the integrity and accuracy of the research.

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List of Acronyms

AAFund: Alberta Advantage Fund
ACC: Alberta Chambers of Commerce
AEG: Alberta Enterprise Group
ALES: Faculty of Agricultural, Life, and Environmental Sciences (University of Alberta)
AASUA: Association of Academic Staff of the University of Alberta
APAGA: Alberta Public Agencies Governance Act
APF: Alberta Prosperity Fund
ATS: academic teaching staff (on limited term contracts)
AUArts: Alberta University of the Arts
BoG: Board of Governors
BANFF: Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity
BRI: Business-related interest group
BVC: Bow Valley College
CAG: Campus Alberta Grant
CAP: Canadian Agricultural Partnership
CAPP: Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers
CARU: Comprehensive academic and research university (four in Alberta)
CAUT: Canadian Association of University Teachers
CCC: Comprehensive community college (10 in Alberta)
COIA: Conflicts of Interest Act (Alberta)
EDI: Equity, diversity, and inclusion
FLE: Full load equivalent (the total number of enrolled course credits in a program divided by the full load equivalent of the program in question)
FRIAA: Forest Resource Improvement Association of Alberta
GFC: General Faculties Council (University of Alberta)
GMU: Grant MacEwan University
GPRC: Grande Prairie Regional College
KeyC: Keyano College
K-12: Kindergarten to grade 12
LakeC: Lakeland College
LethC: Lethbridge College
MHC: Medicine Hat College
MRU: Mount Royal University
NAIT: Northern Alberta Institute of Technology
NASA: Non-Academic Staff Association (University of Alberta)
NCCS: Non-corporate civil society
NDP: New Democratic Party
NLC: Northern Lakes College
NorQC: NorQuest College
NSERC: National Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada
OC: Order-in-council

OldsC: Olds College
PBF: Performance-based funding
PCP: Progressive Conservative Party (Alberta)
PI: Performance indicator
PortC: Portage College
PSE: Post-secondary education
PSEI: Post-secondary education institution
PSLA: Post-Secondary Learning Act (Alberta)
R&D: Research and development
RDC: Red Deer College
RDAR: Results Driven Agricultural Research Corporation
SAIT: Southern Alberta Institute of Technology
SAF: Shaping Alberta's Future
STEM: Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics
TPA: Third Party Advertiser
UATHA: Athabasca University
UCP: United Conservative Party
UofA/UAlberta: University of Alberta
UofC/UCalgary: University of Calgary
UofL/ULethbridge: University of Lethbridge
UofS: University of Saskatchewan
UU: Undergraduate university (offers undergraduate degree programs only; three in Alberta)
WAP: Wildrose Alliance Party (Alberta)

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Executive Summary

There is an expectation of a high level of accountability and transparency for post-secondary institutions as they are responsible for stewarding public resources. As a public sector agency, the role of a post-secondary institution's board is to work within the broader context of serving the public interest.

Guidelines for Board of Governors Members: an introduction to board governance at Alberta's public post-secondary institutions. Alberta Advanced Education, 2017.

Over many years, post-secondary education institutions (PSEIs) around the world have undergone a transformation toward the corporatization of education. Increasingly, these institutions are seen (and funded) less as providers of public goods (higher education and research) and more as “businesses” that should produce commodities and attract private sector investment.

In keeping with this approach to higher education, the United Conservative Party (UCP) government has, from 2018 to 2022, cut the operating support budget for Alberta's PSEIs by 18.8%, resulting in a trail of destruction across the province's universities, colleges, and technical institutes: thousands of employees laid off, increased workloads for remaining staff, teaching contracts cut, academic programs axed and, ultimately, tuition rising beyond the reach of many and growing student indebtedness.

The picture is grim. This domino effect is rooted in the political ideology of the UCP government. Enshrined in the Ministry of Advanced Education's “Vision 2030 agenda,” the UCP worldview for post-secondary education privileges “industry” needs and the commodification of teaching and research ahead of any benefit to the public interest. The UCP's funding model for PSEIs dictates which programs will survive, and which will be starved of resources. Under the UCP, politics determines what kinds of knowledge have value, what kinds of education are worthy of government support, and who will be able to access them.

The executives and boards of governors of the PSEIs might have been expected to resist the UCP's defunding and market-driven restructuring of post-secondary education, but instead, in many cases, they have collaborated. This report explains why, drawing on research into how public members of PSEI boards are appointed, who holds these appointments, and whose voices are underrepresented in decision-making about higher education and research. In this climate of cuts and corporatization, and amid increasingly overt political intervention in Alberta's post-secondary

institutions, understanding the impacts of these appointments has never been more urgent. Within the existing legislative framework, public appointees to boards of governors are empowered to subvert and supplant the role of scholars in determining how programs should develop. Governments direct higher education and research priorities via public appointees to the boards as well as the legislative and budgetary means at their disposal.

This report addresses two questions. First, we ask what the agenda and actions of the United Conservative Party government of Alberta mean for higher education and research. Second, we ask how institutional factors explain the sector's lack of autonomy and ability to resist the corporatization agendas of governments.

Methods

To reconstruct the restructuring agenda of the UCP government, we reviewed the pertinent policy documents, government budgets, and accounts of the impacts on Alberta PSEIs, along with the secondary literature on corporatization and neoliberal reform of post-secondary education in Alberta and elsewhere. We made a detailed case study of developments at the University of Alberta, as well as secondary studies of restructuring and board governance at the University of Calgary and Mount Royal University.

To answer questions about the backgrounds and political-ideological orientations of the public board members, we collected data on all the public appointees who have sat on Alberta's 21 public PSEIs boards between April 19, 2019 (date of the election of the UCP government), and March 31, 2021. In total, we collected information on 231 individuals, recording data such as gender, ethnicity, education, area of specialization, occupation, and various types of affiliations (to private sector entities, other civil society associations, the public sector, or political parties).

Since 113 individuals in our sample had been appointed initially by the NDP government, while 121 were appointed for the first time by the UCP, we were able to compare the characteristics of the two groups. This allowed us to see if the NDP and the UCP had significantly different criteria for selecting their appointees, and what such differences say about their respective approaches to post-secondary education.

Finally, we used UCINET software to visually map the networks created by the affiliations between PSEI public board members and a range of corporate, non-corporate, and governmental entities. We were able to do this for each institution, for the predominant networkers, and for the whole sample of 21 PSEIs.

UCP Appointments Reverse Representation Initiatives

Our analysis of the differences between NDP appointees and UCP appointees to PSEI boards indicates that gender, race/ethnicity and Indigenous representation do not appear to have been priorities for the UCP. The NDP appointees during the time frame were 65% female, as the NDP attempted to redress the prior under-representation of women on the boards of public agencies. This figure compares to 51% for the UCP. And the NDP appointees were 13% Indigenous, compared to 3% for the UCP. Overall, Indigenous as well as non-Indigenous racialized minorities continue to be under-represented on the PSEI boards.

What types of qualifications were of key concern to the UCP as they replaced NDP appointees and appointed new public board members? We sought to answer this question by documenting and analyzing various characteristics of the appointees: their occupations, areas of (knowledge) specialization, education, and affiliations to both corporate and non-corporate (government, non-profit, other civil society) organizations.

Since individuals with business and administration occupations accounted for the great majority of appointees for both the NDP and the UCP (71% and 75%, respectively), there appears to be a consensus among Advanced Education ministers that these occupations provide crucial experience and expertise in the governance of post-secondary education institutions. Yet these occupations account for only 28% of the province's workforce. However, while both parties disproportionately appointed individuals from business backgrounds, the NDP appointed significantly more individuals working in public or non-profit sector administration, and fewer individuals working in private sector management than the UCP. Our occupational analysis showed that PSEI boards largely exclude representation from the working class. Specializations are highly skewed toward management, corporate law, accounting and finance.

Social Diversity on Alberta's PSEI Boards

The differences between the NDP appointees' occupations and those of the UCP appointees suggest that the NDP had initiated an effort to enhance the social diversity of the boards that was bearing fruit in two ways. The first is the appointment of individuals employed in arts, culture, and media occupations, which were almost solely represented among NDP appointees. The second is the prominence of people from non-profit or public sector backgrounds. Twenty-one per cent of the NDP appointees were administrators in the public or non-profit sectors, compared to only 5% for the UCP. Moreover, 31% of all NDP appointees worked in the public or non-profit sectors, compared to only 10.5% for the UCP. Individuals working in

Indigenous business corporations or governmental bodies constituted 2.7% of the NDP appointments and 1.3% of the UCP appointments.

Forty-eight per cent of NDP appointees had expertise in areas other than business, law, accounting, finance, investment, and real estate compared to 23% of the UCP appointees. Thus, the NDP appointees were twice as “diverse” in these respects as the UCP appointees. However, there is more work to be done to improve the diversity of knowledge represented on PSEI boards, with 68% of their public members still coming exclusively from six business-related specializations.

Why are these differences significant?

The social backgrounds, political orientations, and economic interests of the appointees reveal a great deal about the government’s priorities and goals for the post-secondary education sector. These characteristics of the appointees tell us what kinds of knowledge, expertise, and connections are considered appropriate and important for governors of universities and colleges, and what “public” means to the appointing government. How this group is constituted, and what kinds of knowledge, experience, and perspectives it excludes, speak to the government’s perception of the public interest. More broadly, the processes of appointment serve to define who “the public” is, or ought to be, and who is able to claim the role of representative.

Mapping of Corporate and Political Affiliations of PSEI Boards Shows Significant Bias

Our analysis of appointees’ backgrounds indicates the heavy bias of the UCP government, in particular, in favour of candidates coming from business backgrounds and from the private sector. These appointees hold significant corporate and political ties. Our findings on corporate affiliations confirm the patterns that Albertans have observed anecdotally over the years. For the entire sample of appointees, the single largest group of affiliations is with oil and gas corporations (112), far outstripping the number of affiliations in the second largest group, consulting firms (46). Coming third are the auditing and accounting firms.

In our network analysis, we found 438 corporate affiliations and 415 non-corporate affiliations with other civil society entities. There are, however, significant differences between NDP and UCP appointees’ corporate affiliations. Among the 113 NDP appointees in our study, there were 19 affiliations to the oil and gas companies (0.17 per person), compared to 99 such affiliations for the 153 UCP appointees (0.65 per person).

At least 42 of the UCP public appointees to the PSEI boards (nearly 28%) have important links to the oil and gas sector. That number increases if we include appointees from the corporate services and construction firms that

rely on the oil and gas sector for contracts, or the banks and investment firms that finance and/or own shares in oil and gas companies. The group of 45 NDP-appointed board members whose positions were rescinded by the UCP government in 2019 had, in aggregate, only four affiliations to oil and gas companies. The UCP-appointed group of 60 that replaced them, on the other hand, had 61 such affiliations. Through its selection of the “replacement” appointees, the new UCP government may have been sending a strong, “disciplining” message to the PSEIs about their expected relationship to the fossil fuel industry, in the wake of stirrings of campus fossil fuel divestment movements.

Political Affiliations

When governments “stack” the boards of public agencies with political friends, i.e., individuals with known associations to the ruling party or organizations close to the party, the message is that the direction of the institutions will be closely aligned with the goals and priorities of the ruling party. In other words, the criteria for selecting ‘public’ board members may be predominantly politically driven.

Using data from Elections Alberta’s financial disclosure database and other sources, we assessed the partisan connections of the PSEI appointees. We also searched for contributions to political parties or candidates from the corporations and other entities (such as industry associations) with which our appointees have affiliations (in senior management positions). Overall, UCP appointees were found to be considerably more partisan than the NDP appointees, with 37% of UCP appointees contributing to the UCP or other right-wing parties, compared to only 14% of NDP appointees contributing to the NDP. Nearly 60 UCP appointees—including 10 board chairs—are affiliated to organizations that have supported right-wing parties and TPAs.

Conclusions and Recommendations

In light of the patterns we see in the governance of PSEIs, what problems do we identify and what recommendations for reform do we propose?

Rather than specific prescriptions for governance design, we propose a comprehensive deliberation about framework legislation that would allow the PSEIs more autonomy to decide upon their own governance models, while setting out general parameters regarding the representation of “internal” constituencies and the general public, gender parity, representation of racialized minorities and Indigenous communities, conflict of interest, limits to ministerial authority over institutional governance, and many other matters. Counter to accusations of Ivory Towerism, this shift would balance autonomy with accountability, and buttress the public interest mandate of PSEIs with democratic mechanisms of representation. The

governance framework for post-secondary education must be democratized to allow students, staff, and faculty a greater voice in how their institutions are managed and to safeguard the autonomy of PSEIs. Public post-secondary education must be both autonomous and accountable.

Ultimately, the choice is stark: We can permit the UCP government and neoliberal-minded higher education managers to take us further down the path of the subordination of the public interest to a narrow set of private interests, or we can organize collectively to demand a public education system that is responsive to the needs of our youth, their post-carbon future, democracy, and citizenship.

1

Introduction

The future of democracy is at risk in the absence of academic freedom and institutional autonomy, just as it is when the press, media or civil society organizations are weakened and compromised. Increasingly, these freedoms and institutions are threatened and undermined. The community of faculty, staff and students as well as higher education leaders must combine autonomy and accountability, freedom of research and teaching, and societal responsibility.

Declaration of the Global Forum on Academic Freedom, Institutional Autonomy, and the Future of Democracy, June 21, 2019¹

This report addresses two questions that are, in themselves, quite large. First, we ask what the agenda and actions of the United Conservative Party (UCP) government of Alberta mean for higher education and research. Within this large question, sub-questions include: “What is the relationship between the UCP’s agenda of reform and its selection of board governors?” and “What does the resulting socio-political composition of the boards mean for the governance of the post-secondary education institutions (PSEIs)?” Second, we ask how institutional factors explain the sector’s lack of autonomy and ability to resist the corporatization agendas of governments.

We begin by reviewing the big picture of the reforms that the UCP government has undertaken, relating these to the overarching context of the neoliberal corporatization of universities in general—in Canada and around the world—since the 1980s. This analysis encompasses the multiple ways in which governments in Alberta “govern” the post-secondary education sector, using the power of the public purse as well as the legislative framework provided by the *Post-Secondary Learning Act*. We examine in greater detail how the UCP’s policies are deepening and accelerating privatization and corporatization restructuring, focusing on the University of Alberta. Then we shift our attention to the roles of the boards of governors of the PSEIs, including how the types of individuals appointed as “public” members both reflect the reform agendas of the governments of the day, and have consequences for the ability of those governed to defend the public interest mandate of higher education and research. Although our study began with a focus on the UCP appointees to the boards of 21 PSEIs, our time frame (April 2019 to March 2021) permitted a comparison between the types of individuals appointed by the UCP government (elected April 16, 2019) and those appointed by the NDP government (2015–2019), and who sat on the boards during the April 2019–October 2021 time frame.

¹ Global Forum on Academic Freedom, Institutional Autonomy, and the Future of Democracy, June 21, 2019, <https://rm.coe.int/global-forum-declaration-global-forum-final-21-06-19-003-16809523e5>. “The Global Forum on Academic Freedom, Institutional Autonomy, and the Future of Democracy was held at Council of Europe headquarters in Strasbourg on 20–21 June 2019 and co-organized by the Council of Europe; the International Consortium for Higher Education, Civic Responsibility and Democracy; the Organization of American States; the Magna Charta Observatory; and the International Association of Universities.”

“Questions about the governance of post-secondary institutions are questions about the democratic determination of how these institutions can best represent those who work in them and the needs of society as these evolve over time.”

So long as governments fund as well as appoint the governors of universities (or other public institutions), it is inevitable that the criteria for selecting governors will be, to some extent, political, in the sense of governments seeking to direct the functions and priorities of the institutions. And, insofar as universities and colleges are publicly funded, they must be accountable to citizens for how they manage and allocate public revenue and serve public interests. Governments have, however, different approaches to university autonomy and self-governance, as well as different understandings of the public interest. These positions shape how they fund universities, regulate their operations, and constitute their governance structures. The characteristics of the NDP and UCP governments’ appointees to the boards reflect the parties’ respective visions of the functions and priorities of post-secondary education. And the constitution of the boards has significant consequences for the decisions taken at both institutional and governmental levels.

Alberta’s *Post-Secondary Learning Act* has for many years provided one framework for regulating and directing post-secondary education institutions in the province, but this is not the only conceivable framework. Our research pertains to questions about how universities may operate as semi-autonomous institutions that are publicly funded and accountable to citizens, while at the same time being “self-governed” by the academic staff who work in them and the students they teach. Fundamentally, questions about the governance of post-secondary institutions are questions about the democratic determination of how these institutions can best represent those who work in them and the needs of society as these evolve over time.

The policy initiatives announced in the UCP government’s [Alberta 2030: Building Skills for Jobs](#) (April 29, 2021) include: the “deconsolidation” of the budgets of the comprehensive academic and research universities, or CARUs, from the provincial budget; the move from a six-sector PSEI system to a two-sector PSEI system; the creation of a “central entity” to coordinate research commercialization; and changes to how the boards of governors of PSEIs are appointed.²

To date, as Part 2 explains, the overall direction of the UCP government has been to privatize post-secondary education funding—a direction that increasingly subordinates PSEIs’ research and teaching priorities to the interests of the private sector. Greater reliance on private sources of funding essentially replaces one master with others, rather than achieving funding stability and greater autonomy. Much will depend on how future legislation governing the PSEIs is written and on how future governments decide to fund higher education.

The parts of the report that focus on the boards of governors present data on the socioeconomic backgrounds, corporate and other civil society affiliations,

2 More information about the Alberta 2030 strategy paper and the UCP’s plans for the sector is provided in Harrison and Mueller 2021 and in the epilogue to this report. The UCP’s Bill 74, introduced in November 2021, made changes to the terms of board appointees.

and political orientations of the public members appointed to the boards of governors of Alberta's post-secondary education institutions (PSEIs) by the UCP and NDP governments. Constituting majorities on the PSEI boards, these public members hold a pivotal governance role, positioned between the government and its PSE agenda on the one hand, and the constituencies of the PSEIs and their agendas on the other hand. While the boards are bound by the rules of the *Post-Secondary Learning Act*,³ they may also exercise a role as the representatives of their institutions' priorities and responses to the government and to the public. Moreover, the boards appoint the senior executive members of the PSEIs and exercise directive and disciplinary authority vis-à-vis these appointees. How these boards are constituted influences how well the interests of faculty, staff, and students are represented in negotiations with governments, as well as in communications with the citizens of Alberta.

The social backgrounds, political orientations, and economic interests of the appointees reveal a great deal about the government's priorities and goals for the post-secondary education sector. For example, these characteristics of the appointees tell us what kinds of knowledge and expertise are considered appropriate and important for governors of universities and colleges, and what "public" means to the appointing government in regard to the breadth of social experiences and interests that are represented on the boards. Indeed, the affiliations of the public appointees to the boards reveal a lot about what the government of the day believes constitutes the "public interest." How this group is constituted, and what kinds of knowledge, experience, and perspectives it excludes, speak to the government's perception of the public interest. In addition to the educational and occupational backgrounds of the appointees, we are interested in their affiliations to the private, public, governmental, and non-profit sectors. Are there notable patterns regarding the sectors that are represented on the boards? Do such patterns differ for the NDP and the UCP appointees? How are governmental perceptions of the key roles or priorities of the PSEIs reflected in the representation of different economic sectors or types of expertise on the boards?

When governments "stack" the boards of public agencies with political friends, i.e., individuals with known associations to the ruling party or organizations close to the party, the message is that the direction of the institutions will be closely aligned with the goals and priorities of the ruling party. In other words, the criteria for selecting 'public' board members may be predominantly politically driven, rather than reflecting a conception of public institutions like universities as being self-governed entities with a mandate to serve the public good as determined by their own constituencies in consultation with the public.

³ For example, boards are currently not permitted to carry forward an annual budget deficit, borrow money, or sell land without governmental approval [PSLA 72.2 and 78.6]. They must submit an annual budget to the Minister of Advanced Education. Some institutions may be released from such requirements under the terms of "deconsolidation."

To answer these questions, we collected data on all the public appointees who have sat on Alberta's 21 public PSEIs between the date of the election of the UCP government (April 19, 2019) and March 31, 2021.⁴ Some of these individuals (36) were appointed by the NDP government and served out their terms or resigned before their terms were complete. A full 45 of the NDP government's appointees had their positions rescinded by the UCP government between August 15 and October 31, 2019 (most of these rescissions occurred in August). However, the UCP government later reappointed some individuals (32) who had previously been appointed by the NDP (this constitutes a group of appointees who were, evidently, acceptable to both parties). In addition, the UCP appointed a further 121 individuals to the boards during this two-year period. In total, we collected data on 231 cases for whom we found 438 corporate affiliations and 415 non-corporate affiliations with other civil society entities. A total of 81 of our cases (35%) were found to have made contributions to political parties or candidates.

We use several methods to present our findings. Tables and figures are used to describe the sample and to summarize significant relationships and highlight patterns revealed by the data. In addition, we have employed a program that allows us to "map" linkages among board members and various entities, depicting linkages and nodes in the form of diagrams. Important information about our research methodology is provided in the following section.

Research Methodology

When the UCP government abruptly rescinded dozens of appointments to the boards of the PSEIs in August 2019, replacing 10 board chairs, and then endorsed the view of the "Blue Ribbon Panel on Alberta's Finances" that the PSE sector receives too much public funding, it was evident that a major restructuring of the sector was afoot. In addition to analyzing policy documents and official statements, we thought that a study of the UCP appointees to the boards would help to identify the objectives of the government's strategy for the sector. The number of UCP appointments of public members⁵ to the PSEI boards grew to 153 by March 31st, 2021 (including reappointments), when we drew a cut-off for our investigation.

In addition, because the NDP government (2015-2019) had previously filled the PSEI board positions and had devised a new procedure for making appointments to the boards of public agencies and corporations, the comparison of the "NDP" and "UCP" appointees presents an opportunity to identify any significant differences in the kinds of qualifications, knowledge, or affiliations of their respective appointees to the PSEI boards. The NDP, for example, had expressed a goal of achieving gender parity and making the composition of the boards more reflective of social and ethnic diversity. In previous decades, the Progressive Conservative Party (PCP) had drawn

4 There are 26 PSEIs in Alberta, but the government appoints public members to the boards of only 21. We did not include the other five "independent academic institutions" in our study. These are: Ambrose University, Burman University, Concordia University of Edmonton, The King's University, and St. Mary's University. See Government of Alberta, "Types of publicly funded institutions," <https://www.alberta.ca/types-publicly-funded-post-secondary-institutions.aspx#jumplinks:3>.

5 We studied only the "public" and "additional" members appointed to the boards by orders-in-council. We did not study board members who are nominated by university constituencies and approved by ministerial orders. See Appendix 1 for further details about board appointments as mandated by the current *Post-Secondary Learning Act*.

appointees largely from business sectors, with a heavy representation of corporate lawyers and executives and individuals with backgrounds in finance and accounting. Certain industries had been predictably represented on the boards, such as oil and gas and construction. We wanted to know if there had been any change in these trends during the NDP's term in office. In addition to answering this question through a quantitative analysis of our data on the appointees, we were able to gain some insights from interviews with a number of informants who were close to the NDP's and UCP's appointments processes.⁶

We also wanted to compare the group of appointees whose positions the UCP rescinded to the group that it appointed in their places. What characteristics of the rescinded governors had drawn such negative attention of the UCP cabinet as to merit their "firing"? What characteristics of the *replacements* were deemed desirable or important by the UCP government in its first round of appointments?

We discovered that, over a nearly two-year period, the UCP *reappointed* 32 individuals who had previously been appointed by the NDP. This constituted a "common" group, or a group whose characteristics the two parties could apparently agree upon as being suitable or desirable for positions on the PSEI boards. We were curious to know what characteristics were shared by this group that allowed them to be acceptable appointees to both parties.

In summary, then, the research questions that organized the data collection are as follows:

Are there any significant differences between the NDP's board appointees and the UCP's board appointees in regard to: gender, ethnicity, Indigeneity, occupation, education, work specialization, corporate affiliations (and economic sectoral affiliations), other civil society affiliations (public, private, non-profit, and Indigenous sectoral affiliations), and partisanship?

To answer this question, we compared all the NDP-appointed individuals (ALL-NDP) to all the UCP-appointed individuals (ALL-UCP). (See the outline of comparison groups below.) However, the comparison of sub-groups allowed additional windows into the differences and similarities between NDP appointees, on the one hand, and UCP appointees, on the other hand. First, we compared the group of individuals whose appointments were rescinded by the UCP in August-October 2019 (NDP-R) to the group of individuals appointed to replace them (UCP1-ALL). We thought that such a comparison would give us additional insight into the differences between NDP and UCP preferences and priorities in the appointment of PSEI governors. Second, to get more insight into possible areas of *agreement* regarding the desirable qualities of PSEI governors, we examined the profiles of the individuals who had been appointed initially

⁶ There were no interviews of current government officials, and future research could aim to interview members of both NDP and UCP administrations to uncover more details about the appointments processes. In this study, we were contacted independently by individuals who wished to share their knowledge of board appointments in the period from 2015-2021.

by the NDP, but who were subsequently reappointed by the UCP. This is the “Common” group of appointees, mentioned above.

Closely related to the first question is a second, which focuses our attention on the occupations and affiliations of the UCP appointees. That is:

What do our findings about the backgrounds (education, occupations, specializations) and affiliations (corporate, non-corporate, and political) of the individuals who have been appointed by this government to the boards of governors of the PSEIs say about the UCP government’s priorities and vision for the post-secondary education sector?

Throughout the report we observe the connections between the kinds of knowledge and interests that the UCP-appointed public board members bring to their PSEI governance roles, and the objectives for post-secondary sector restructuring that have been advanced in UCP policy statements, legislative reforms, and budgetary decisions. We also note the appointees’ closeness to the political-ideological agenda of the UCP government as suggested by their corporate and political affiliations.

Finally, we ask:

How has the existing framework governing state-university relations and the internal governance of PSEIs served to advance the project of the neoliberal corporatization of the post-secondary education that is described in Parts 2 and 3 of the report? How could this framework be reformed in ways that would give the PSEIs greater financial stability and autonomy and democratize their internal governance?

These questions are addressed in Part 10.

Comparison groups

As we delved into the composition of the 21 boards, we realized that we would be dealing with multiple groups of appointees. As mentioned in the introduction, some individuals were appointed by the NDP, and some of these served out their terms or were reappointed by the UCP. Others were appointed by the UCP for the first time. Then there were the individuals whose NDP appointments were rescinded, and the individuals who “replaced” them or were added to the boards by the UCP during the same period. For the purposes of comparing the NDP appointees with the UCP appointees, we needed to identify which government had appointed the board member and in which time period. We ended up with 10 groups, constituted as follows:

Group (1) **NDP-C** (NDP-continuing) comprises all those appointed by the NDP and serving out terms or whose terms expired during our period of study (between April 15, 2019 and March 31, 2021).

NDP-C (n=36)

Group (2) **NDP-R** (NDP rescinded) comprises all appointed by the NDP who were rescinded by the UCP (all between August 15 and October 31, 2019).

NDP-R (n=45)

Group (3) **UCP1** consists of all appointed for the first time by the UCP between August 15 and October 31, 2019 (during the same time period as the rescission of appointments).

UCP1 (n=58)

Group (4) **UCP2** comprises all UCP appointments made between November 1, 2019 and March 31, 2021.

UCP2 (n=63)

Group (5) **NDP-UCP1** comprises individuals appointed by the NDP and reappointed by the UCP in the first period (August to October 2019).

NDP-UCP1 (n=2)

Group (6) **NDP-UCP2** comprises individuals appointed by the NDP and reappointed by the UCP in the second period (November 2019 to March 2021).

NDP-UCP2 (n=30)

Group (7) **“Common”** comprises all NDP/UCP reappointees.

NDP-UCP1 + NDP-UCP2 (n=32)

Group (8) **ALL-UCP1** is all UCP appointments (including reappointments) made during the first time period (August to October 2019), or UCP1 + NDP-UCP1 (n=60).

ALL-UCP1 is the group we compare with NDP-R.

Group (9) **ALL-UCP** includes all individuals appointed by the UCP between April 16, 2019 and March 31, 2021 (including first time and reappointed members).

UCP1 + UCP2 + NDP-UCP1 + NDP-UCP2 (n=153)

Group (10) **ALL-NDP** includes all individuals who were appointed by the NDP and who were still on the boards or whose terms expired during our period of study, those whose appointments were rescinded, and those who were reappointed between April 15, 2019 and March 31, 2021.

NDP-C + NDP-R + NDP-UCP1 + NDP-UCP2 (n=113)

(Groups (9) and (10) each contain the appointees that the two parties have in common.)

Total number of cases in spreadsheet = NDP (36) + Common (32) + UCP (121) + rescinded (45) = (n=234). However, because three individuals appear in two groups, the actual number of individuals in the study is 231. The appointments of 20 of these individuals had expired as of June 30, 2021.

Data collection

For each of these 231 individuals, we recorded the following data:

- Number and year of the order-in-council (OC) appointing (or rescinding) the appointment
- Date of the OC
- Effective start date of appointment
- Expiry date of appointment
- Date appointment rescinded (if applicable)
- Name of PSEI to which appointed
- Gender (male, female, unknown/other)
- Ethnicity/Race (Indigenous, white, racialized, unknown)
- Education (highest degree found; other qualification; unknown (21 categories, aggregated to 10 categories of degree types)
- Specialization (19 categories)
- Occupation (32 categories, aggregated to 14 categories)
- Corporate/private sector affiliations (position held and whether current or past, going back as far as data were found or to year 2000)
- Other civil society associations (current or past)
- Party affiliations (membership, candidacy, electoral position, political contributions)

The codes for these categories were developed to encompass the data we found (e.g., the types of degrees and occupations). However, we also retained codes for which we found few or no 'hits,' since the under-representation or absence of the categories (e.g., an economic sector or occupation) were also significant findings. For detailed tables of codes, see Appendix 2.

After reviewing the data that were recorded using these initial codes, we created aggregate categories for the affiliations:

Economic sector (each corporate affiliation coded by sector; 26 sectors initially, aggregated to nine)

Other civil society sector (each non-corporate civil society affiliation coded by one of 19 sectors and then by 13 aggregated categories)

We treat Indigenous government and corporate entities as separate categories in coding affiliations, as it is important to understand the degree to which the interests and knowledge of Indigenous communities and businesses are being represented (or not) on the PSEI boards.

To find these data, we used the following sources:

- *Dates of appointment and expiry of appointment*: government of Alberta orders-in-council database.
- *Composition of boards of governors*: memberships lists for board members and committee members publicly available on the websites of the PSEIs, supplemented by email correspondence with board secretaries when required.
- *Gender, ethnicity, education, occupation, specialization, corporate and other affiliations*: internet searches for biographies, CVs, LinkedIn pages, board of directors information for corporations and other entities.
- *Classification of corporations by economic sector*: internet searches for the entities' websites or other sources as needed to confirm corporate status, operations, and ownership.
- *Classification of other civil society entities*: internet searches for these entities' websites and for additional sources as needed to confirm their status (non-profit societies or corporations, public, governmental, quasi-governmental, Indigenous, lobbying organization, industry association, business association, union, religious organization, think-tank, research institute, etc.) and their activities.
- *Partisanship*: Elections Alberta and Elections Canada databases for individual and corporate contributions to political parties, candidates, constituency associations, and third party advertisers (TPAs); news reports providing information about appointees' political affiliations (candidacies for parties, fund-raising or constituency executive roles, endorsements, political appointments, advisory roles); information from online sources about involvement in lobby organizations, TPAs, or other organizations connected to political parties.

We present these data in tables and charts, and well as mapping diagrams. The latter allow us to represent the connections, or links, among individuals holding governor positions on the boards and the entities with which they have affiliations via senior management or directorship positions.

2 Reshaping the Post-Secondary Education Sector

The United Conservative Party (UCP) government in Alberta has implemented a multi-pronged strategy to remake the province's post-secondary education institutions according to its own vision of the functions they should serve. This vision is in many respects a throw-back to the Klein governments' 1990s approach to PSE and is fairly described as being driven by neoliberal economic beliefs (described below in more detail), as well as a thick vein of anti-intellectualism and contempt for the so-called liberal values of the university educated.⁷ Specific functions of PSEIs (particularly the vocational and technical colleges and the professional schools of medicine, law, business, and engineering) are, however, generally acknowledged by these same politicians as having economic value, and thus deserving of government support. But the PSEIs are most productive, in this view, when partnered with private market actors that can closely direct the kind of research undertaken and educational programs offered to students.

Under the Klein governments, PSE funding fell by 18% in 10 years. By 2003, Alberta had the second lowest spending on PSE as a percentage of GDP, following Ontario (which was similarly governed by radical neoliberals in the 1990s).⁸ Meanwhile, enrolment in PSEIs in Alberta increased by 19%. As PSEIs tried to finance their operations, tuition fees rose over the decade by 187%.

Beyond Alberta's borders, other neoliberal governments had begun to defund post-secondary education in the 1980s. Between 1985 and 2019, the percentage of university operating revenues paid for by provincial governments in Canada dropped from 81% to 47%.⁹ PSEIs have adopted similar strategies of financial and organizational restructuring in response, following the advice of managerial consultants and conforming to the "performance-based funding" criteria of neoliberal governments. The description of the transformation of universities in British Columbia in this 2012 article by Enda Brophy and Myka Tucker-Abramson captures core elements of this strategy:

Three processes in particular are at the heart of this transformation: a) the increasing importance of private capital, [corporatized] management and branding of the university in an era of decreased public funding; b) the university's expansion across the urban fabric, in a process that brings displacement and gentrification; and c) the emergence of hybrid public-private models of educational delivery that cater to global markets for tuition dollars (23).

⁷ The Klein governments' policies, in turn, have roots in the early 1980s when they were first implemented in the UK. See Shore and Wright 2000.

⁸ Figures in this paragraph are from Tittle 2005, 259.

⁹ Greenfield 2021.

“While the neoliberal corporatization of higher education has been analyzed by many scholars and is not a new phenomenon, the United Conservative Party government of Alberta seeks to deepen and accelerate this transformation.”

Further afield, we can look to the experience of Australia, where neoliberal policies implemented in the 1980s also took the form of deep cuts to universities’ operating grants and capital funding, followed by the transfer of finance decisions to the institutions in 1994. Using revenue from the influx of international students, university executives invested in financial assets and became property developers.¹⁰ Investment in university staff, on the other hand, was downsized, with permanent staff being laid off and replaced by casual academic labour. Following the 2008 financial crisis, the rising costs of tuition for international students, increasingly attractive higher learning alternatives in the erstwhile source countries for many of these students, and then the COVID-19 pandemic, made these means of revenue generation look increasingly high risk. Universities that had constructed buildings that are now “bereft of students and staff” may have to sell these to cover debts, thus liquidating the capital embodied in these assets. Similar developments are described in the United States case, where political scientist David Schultz observes that “higher education faces unprecedented challenges to its business plans,” now holding \$336 billion in long-term debt (2021, 1).

While the neoliberal corporatization of higher education has been analyzed by many scholars¹¹ and is not a new phenomenon, the United Conservative Party government of Alberta seeks to deepen and accelerate this transformation. In the following sections we describe the steps in this process.

The Blue Ribbon Panel on Alberta’s Finances

An early step in the UCP’s strategy was the appointment of an “expert panel” to review the province’s finances. The panelists accepted the terms of inquiry mandated by the government, which were to examine only the spending side of the fiscal ledger. Panel co-chair Dr. Janice MacKinnon is a former finance minister in the Government of Saskatchewan who had earlier co-authored a paper with economist Jack Mintz of the School of Public Policy at the University of Calgary (MacKinnon and Mintz 2017). These authors advised Alberta’s NDP government to reduce compensation for public sector workers, lower business taxes, cut government program spending, and reduce infrastructure spending—all in the context of a provincial recession. MacKinnon had also led a similar panel in Manitoba which advised the government to “hold the line” on spending, rein in public sector compensation, apply “Lean principles across all departments” to create “a culture of continuous improvement” and other measures commonly found in the neoliberal fiscal toolkit (MacKinnon and Angus 2017). Mintz is a well-known “fiscally conservative” tax economist who has advised conservative governments in the past, sits on the board of directors of Imperial Oil, and currently chairs Premier Kenney’s Economic Recovery Council of advisors. Bev Dahlby, another member of the UCP’s “Blue Ribbon Panel,”

10 A short but informative account of the Australian experience may be found in Kunkler 2021.

11 Many Canadian scholars have written about these processes since the 1990s. For a sampling: Fanelli and Evans 2015; Newton and Poster 2010; Woodhouse 2009. See also, Schultz 2015, 2021 for short introductions to the elements of corporatization, using the examples of universities in the United States.

is also a neoliberal economist at the Calgary School of Public Policy (where MacKinnon is also a fellow). The panel's other co-chair, Mike Percy, is a former dean of the School of Business at the University of Alberta, economic policy advisor for the Liberal Party of Alberta, and chief of staff for the Progressive Conservative Party Premier of Alberta, Jim Prentice.

The panelists shared with the ruling party a set of neoliberal assumptions about the appropriate role of government vis-a-vis economic development, the role of the private sector in driving economic growth, and the functions of the public sector.

Neoliberalism

Regarding state-economy relations, neoliberals believe that governments ought to have a minimal role in economic management, regulation, or investment, acting primarily as enablers for private sector investors to identify market opportunities and profit from these. Governments, in general, are viewed as the source of decisions subject to political bias and as institutions that are less “democratic” than the outcomes of aggregated individual “choices” with regard to employment and consumption. Unions are viewed as entities that interfere with the determination of wage rates by the aggregate demand for and supply of labour. The public sector should, in the view of neoliberals, be minimized to the greatest extent possible, given political considerations and the capacities of other sectors (charity, the family, private employers, or insurers) to provide social well-being. The private sector is always to be preferred as a provider of goods and services, on the theory that, in responding to price signals, markets allocate resources more effectively, overall, than “bureaucratically” managed entities like public corporations or government departments. Even worse, as public services expand (for example, in health care, seniors’ care, or education), they “crowd out” potential private investment in the provision of these services. Neoliberals attribute public debt to “big governments” that have overspent on ever-expanding public services and social programs. Their solution is to lower tax rates, shrink public spending (along with public services and welfare supports), re-privatize public services where possible, eliminate regulatory or tax disincentives to private investment, and wait for the private investment to flow in, creating jobs as it does.

Given the ideological orientations of the panelists and the government appointing them, the findings of the MacKinnon report, prepared in only three months and released in September 2019, were not surprising to policy observers. When it came to the post-secondary education sector, the report recommended that the operating grants for Alberta’s PSEIs should be cut to a level comparable to those in Ontario or BC (recommendation 8, 39-43), which would mean a reduction of operating grants by 10% to 18% below their current level.¹²

The government seized upon this recommendation, stating in the 2019-2020 Annual Report of the Ministry of Advanced Education and Innovation that it would reduce PSEIs’ provincial operating grants by 20% by 2023. PSEIs would be expected to make up this huge loss of revenue by generating money from “entrepreneurial and commercial ventures,”¹³ cutting their

12 The MacKinnon report’s methodology for comparing program spending in Alberta with that of other provinces was roundly criticized by other economists. For some critiques of the MacKinnon report, see: Alberta Teachers Association 2019; Alberta Union of Provincial Employees, “Report and Recommendations for Action: Plaid Ribbon Panel on Alberta’s Finances,” AUPE Submission to provincial MLAs, Premier, and Minister of Finance (AUPE, no date), draft provided to the authors; Ascah 2019; Graff-McRae and Hussey 2017; Mueller 2019; Mueller et al. 2019; Sran 2019. Most recently, Trevor Harrison and Richard Mueller (2021) have published a critical analysis of the methodology of the MacKinnon report.

13 Minister of Advanced Education, Government of Alberta, 2019-2020 Annual Report, p. 25.

operating costs, and raising tuition fees. The government subsequently removed the freeze on tuition fee increases that had been maintained by the NDP government and permitted PSEIs to raise domestic tuition fees by up to 7% per year. Tuition and education tax credits were also eliminated in the UCP's October 2019 budget.

Tuition fees will continue to rise by 7% per year (until 2023) as PSEIs try to recoup income that has been cut from their operating grants. Following strong student resistance to the tuition increases, the Minister of Advanced Education announced in late April 2021 that, following the three-year increases at 7% per annum, tuition fee increases would again be limited to the rate of inflation.¹⁴ Students' organizations say that these fee hikes, combined with the UCP government's elimination of the tuition tax credit, are causing post-secondary students to leave Alberta "in droves."¹⁵

Released at the end of April 2021, the *Alberta 2030: Building Skills for Jobs* policy paper included a commitment to spend more on student grants to help low-income individuals enroll in PSE. This policy is in line with the general neoliberal approach to the provision of health care and education. Rather than make these public goods universally accessible (e.g., early childhood development and care, post-secondary education as a citizenship entitlement), neoliberals prefer to leave these services up to the market and to provide means-tested benefits to people who cannot afford them. Unless the grants are easily obtainable and generous, education funded in this way will continue to exclude many.

The Performance-Based Funding (PBF) Model

The UCP government seeks to expand the Klein governments' use of targeted funding envelopes, used to reward PSEIs for meeting various targets that are set by the government. This funding may be offered as top-ups to the provincial operating grant, or the latter may be made, in some portion, contingent on meeting government targets. The focus of the Klein governments' "performance-based funding" was also technical job training.¹⁶ Observers of the experiment with this model in the 1990s noted that the professional faculties (law, business, engineering, medicine & dentistry) and applied sciences are better positioned to benefit both from private funding and from vocationally targeted government funding, while other sectors of the university (natural sciences, social sciences, humanities, fine arts, education, interdisciplinary programs) are typically the losers in this funding model. Titley reported, for example, that between 1992-1993 and 2002-2003, class sizes grew, on average, by 27% in the Faculties of Arts and Science at the University of Alberta because of increasing student enrolment combined with shrinking faculty numbers.

14 Jeff Labine, "Tuition cap, boosting student aid part of Alberta's 20-year strategy to overhaul post-secondary system," *Edmonton Journal*, April 29, 2021, <https://edmontonjournal.com/news/politics/minister-of-advance-education-to-provide-update-albertas-post-secondary-overhaul>.

15 Helen Pike, "Advocacy group says Alberta's tuition tax credit cut isn't a student issue—it's a provincial one," CBC News, February 6, 2021, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/calgary/alberta-tax-credit-rowan-ley-taylor-hides-university-1.5904157>.

16 Titley, op. cit.

“Given that the UCP government’s economic development goals are indistinguishable from those of large corporations, what this means, in practice, is that PSEIs will be restructured, by means of conditional funding, to expand their market-driven research and educational functions.”

Research reviewed by Mark Spooner, examining 30 years of experimentation with performance-based funding in different contexts, shows strong agreement that these models have fueled administrative bloat and have led researchers and administrators to look for ways to game the system (often with negative effects on the quality of research).¹⁷ Yet the Kenney government has chosen to ramp up PBF, initially announcing that it would tie 40% of the PSEIs’ operating grants to their performance on about 15 performance indicators (PIs).¹⁸ (This is referred to as “at risk” funding, because an institution risks not getting this money if it fails to meet the government’s target for an indicator of performance). The PIs include such measurements as: graduate employment rate, median graduate income, graduate skills and competencies, enrolment, and number of work placements or apprenticeship positions negotiated with private sector employers.

Here again, the UCP government drew support from the 2019 MacKinnon report, which took the view that the government should shape the priorities of the PSEIs according to its reading of future economic development and labour market demands. Specifically, the report’s authors claimed that: “The current funding structure doesn’t link funding to the achievement of specific goals or priorities for the province such as ensuring the required skills for the current and future labour market, expanding research and technology commercialization, or achieving broader societal and economic goals” (42). The Panel recommended that “the future funding model ensure a link between *provincial macro goals and outcomes to be achieved by post-secondary institutions*” (42, italics added). Given that the UCP government’s economic development goals are indistinguishable from those of large corporations, what this means, in practice, is that PSEIs will be restructured, by means of conditional funding, to expand their market-driven research and educational functions.

17 Spooner 2021. See also: Bruneau and Savage 2002.

18 Government of Alberta, “Transforming post-secondary funding,” January 20, 2020, <https://www.alberta.ca/release.cfm?xID=67447A51C2BC1-CBF8-78F9-C6759CE8A736486C>.

19 Janet French, “Pandemic prompts Alberta government to pare back post-secondary funding model changes,” CBC News, March 21, 2021, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/edmonton/pandemic-prompts-alberta-government-to- pare-back-post-secondary-funding-model-changes-1.5957497>.

20 Government of Alberta, “Alberta 2030: Expanding apprenticeship education,” Media Release, June 24, 2021, <https://www.alberta.ca/release.cfm?xID=79444743163C8-D64E-DBF1-5D047A3C6D66E2A8>.

21 Government of Alberta, “Alberta 2030: Building skills for jobs,” Media Release, June 24, 2021, <https://www.alberta.ca/expanding-apprenticeship-education.aspx>.

The COVID pandemic and the upheaval caused by budget cuts induced the government to push back the PBF agenda. The Minister for Advanced Education announced in March 2021 that the government would start by tying 5% of PSEIs’ operating grant funding, starting in fall 2021, to the number of “work-integrated learning” placements they negotiate with employers.¹⁹ In June 2021, the government issued a call for joint PSEI-industry proposals for the creation of certificate and diploma programs that are “responsive to the current needs of Alberta’s economy.”²⁰ The institutions whose programs are approved by the ministry will “qualify for grant funding to support program design and implementation.” Thereafter, the programs are expected to be self-funding. While the government listed a broad range of “key partner industries” to which the new programs should be “targeted,” the list appears to be rank ordered, beginning with “energy.”²¹

The government framed this initiative as a response to its Skills for Jobs Task Force, a group it appointed in September 2019 comprising heads of (six) technical colleges, skilled trades associations, businesses, and one workers' organization, the Christian Labour Association of Canada.²² Two of the task force members have also been appointed by the UCP to the board of governors of the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology (NAIT). Task force member Andrew Neigel is the CEO of a foundation, Careers, that provides career support for people wanting to work in trades, technologies, health, and other occupations. The foundation is funded principally by the provincial government (five ministries, led by Advanced Education), and secondarily by the federal government. Notably, the UCP government increased the grants for Careers from \$2.2 million in 2019 to \$3.8 million in 2020.²³ Corporate donors include EPCOR, RBC Foundation, and the Forest Resource Improvement Association of Alberta (FRIAA). Careers is further linked to the Alberta Chamber of Resources.²⁴ Neigel is also a member of the board of directors of FRIAA, a delegated administrative authority accountable to the minister responsible for forestry and charged with delivering programs under the Forests Act and the Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act.²⁵ FRIAA's membership consists of logging, pulp mill, and forest products companies. Neigel made a political contribution to a constituency association of the UCP in 2019. In April 2020, he was appointed by the UCP to the board of governors of NAIT for a three-year term.

Another member of the Skills for Jobs Task Force, Paul Verhesen, was one of the first PSEI appointments made by the UCP government, when, in August 2019, he too was appointed to the board of NAIT. He remains on the board of directors of Clark Builders, a large general contractor firm of which he was president and CEO from 2005 to 2019. In addition, Verhesen has held positions on the boards of the Canadian Construction Association and the Edmonton Construction Association. He contributed to the Progressive Conservative Party (PCP) from 2010 to 2012. What is striking about these interconnections is, first, the appointment of the same individuals to both a quasi-governmental body making policy recommendations for the PSE sector (the Skills for Jobs Task Force), and to governance positions within a PSEI. The agenda of the task force is thereby not only adopted by the Ministry of Advanced Education but is directly implanted in NAIT's governing body.

The interconnections are further interesting insofar as they reveal the close involvement of industry representatives (who are also close to the ruling party) in the making of PSE policy. Notably, the Skills for Jobs Task Force did not include representatives of unions (including in the public sector) or Indigenous organizations. Nor did it include representatives of renewable energy and energy conservation companies, or other green job sectors. It was dominated by individuals connected to the construction industry. Another

22 The association's website states that "The Christian Labour Association of Canada (CLAC) is not a member of Building Trades of Alberta, nor is it recognized as a union by the Canadian Labour Congress nor the Alberta Federation of Labour." See <https://albertacarpenters.com/home/why-we-organize/what-about-clac/>.

23 Careers: The Next Generation Foundation, Annual Financial Statements for year ended September 30, 2020, <https://www.careersnextgen.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/2020-Financial-Statements.pdf>.

24 Alberta Chamber of Commerce, "Careers: The Next Generation," <https://www.acr-alberta.com/members/careers-the-next-generation/>.

25 FRIAA, "Who is FRIAA?" <https://friaa.ab.ca/who-is-friaa/>.

of its members, Terry O’Flynn, the president and founding partner of Prism Flow Products (parts and services for the oil and gas industry), also chairs the Alberta Enterprise Group (AEG). The AEG is a lobby organization created to represent Alberta-based business interests. It opposed the Alberta NDP government’s increase to the corporate tax rate and personal income tax rates, and its website states that, “in 2019, with both a provincial and federal election looming, AEG was very active in advocating for the needs of the businessperson in Alberta,” and that it “stand[s] up for the principles of free enterprise.”²⁶

This clustering of interests and perceptions of what constitutes (and should constitute) the Alberta economy—replicated in multiple quasi-governmental bodies (panels, commissions, task forces)—is exercising an important influence over post-secondary education policy, while other interests, voices, and perspectives are being effectively excluded. This is a problem we come back to in the discussion of our data on PSEI board appointees. In the meantime, the discussion of performance-based funding (like making PSEI funding contingent on the number of work placements or apprenticeships negotiated with private companies) is not complete without at least touching upon its implications for university autonomy and academic freedom.

The PBF model effectively erodes the tradition of self-governing universities whose faculty councils and senates decide upon academic programming and whose professors determine their own research priorities. Performance indicators have been implemented in the UK and in Australia, with devastating effects on faculty morale, student experience, and the public interest mandates of universities.²⁷ A recently published review of the implementation of PBF for universities in 41 United States jurisdictions, conducted by Justin Ortagus et al., found that positive outcomes were “null or modest” while negative outcomes were significant, including “restricting access, gaming of the PBF system, and disadvantages for under-served student groups and under-resourced institution types.”²⁸

What is wrong with a government wanting to ensure the availability of job-training programs for people who want to work in the related sectors? Absolutely nothing. And not just programs for young people. Older people need affordable access to new skill-or-knowledge-building programs, too, because our economies are changing rapidly. Alberta’s technical and vocational schools should be well-funded to meet the demand for such programs, and they should be accessible to people regardless of where they live in the province. But Alberta already has nine comprehensive community colleges and two polytechnic institutes (soon to be four). Two of its universities have engineering faculties. The comprehensive academic and research universities (CARUs) and the undergraduate universities (UUs) offer degrees in applied sciences, forestry, agriculture, food processing,

26 Alberta Enterprise Group, “Outreach and Advocacy,” <https://albertaenterprisegroup.com/home/about/outreach-advocacy/>

27 For a sampling of this literature, see: Brandist 2017; Hall and Bowles 2016; Holmwood 2014; Kitto and Higgins 2010; Macintyre et al. 2017; Morrish 2017; Shore and Wright 2000; Zhou 2020.

28 This article is cited in Spooner 2021.

design, and many other fields that are oriented toward employment in businesses and industries (as well as government and education). Harrison and Mueller (2021, 39) observe that government surveys themselves found that both employers and PSE graduates are “satisfied with the current system.”

And it is by no means evident that there is growing demand from young people for the kinds of job training programs or placements that the UCP government wishes to multiply. Lakeland College in Lloydminster, for example, recently suspended programs for gasfitters, steamfitter-pipefitters, and instrumentation and control technicians after examining enrolment trends and labour-market needs.²⁹ Red Deer College, on the other hand, thought there was sufficient demand from domestic students to establish degree programs in Arts, Education, Science, and Business Administration.³⁰ The University of Calgary announced in July 2021 that it is suspending its undergraduate program in oil and gas engineering due to low enrolment.³¹ What problem is the UCP government trying to solve with its proposed performance indicators?

“PSEIs are willing to partner with employers to secure such placements, but they cannot create placements if there is no private sector demand for them.”

The availability of apprenticeship placements will be limited by the demand for labour in the sectors of primary concern to the government. PSEIs are willing to partner with employers to secure such placements, but they cannot create placements if there is no private sector demand for them. The UCP appears to be tailoring its PSE strategy—like its economic policies more generally—to serve the oil and gas companies and the manufacturing, servicing, and construction sectors allied to them, when many young people are instead seeking opportunities to work in the “post-carbon” economy. To create such jobs, governments must reorient their investment and fiscal policies.

Additional questions that should be asked about the use of PBF to determine what programs are offered by PSEIs include: Why are private employers exempted from the responsibility and the costs to train the people they hire for the specialized jobs in their industries? In other countries, employers have played the primary role in apprenticeship training. In Germany, for example, many companies participate in apprenticeship training, paying for the tuition fees of apprentices who are completing “dual education.” And is it the primary role of *every* PSEI to offer technical and vocational training?

Those who resist the reallocation of resources within an academic research university from the core disciplines of arts and natural sciences to job-training programs based in engineering or applied sciences do so not because they fail to appreciate the value of the knowledge and skills produced in these fields. They resist because they believe that universities are fundamentally about higher education and researcher-driven inquiry. Universities are neither “industries” (as they are so often called in neoliberal texts) nor mere

29 Nikita Ganovicheff, “Lakeland College cuts 35 staff positions, suspends five programs,” May 7, 2020, <https://www.mylloydminsternow.com/39431/lakeland-college-cuts-35-staff-positions-suspends-five-programs/>

30 Duane Rolheiser, “How Red Deer College is adapting to 2019 provincial budget,” *Todayville* (Red Deer), 2019 (n.d.), <https://www.todayville.com/how-red-deer-college-is-adapting-to-2019-provincial-budget/>.

31 Tony Seskus, “University of Calgary hits pause on bachelor’s program in oil and gas engineering,” CBC News, July 8, 2021, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/calgary/university-of-calgary-engineering-1.6092648>.

adjuncts to market actors. They are first and foremost *schools* where people continue their education and intellectual development. (Who decided that public education should stop at 18?) Universities are places where people might pursue—for at least a few precious years—the questions and subjects to which curiosity, imagination, and desire lead them.

Higher education should offer more than technical training; it should help individuals become informed citizens equipped with analytical skills and sound moral reasoning, capable of distinguishing between faulty and manipulative arguments and claims on the one hand, and ones rooted in credible evidence and concern for the common good on the other hand. These are “universal” abilities that serve all individuals well, regardless of the paths they take to earn a livelihood. The more complex our social and environmental problems become, and the more we are exposed to unfiltered, fragmented, and often opaque sources of information, the more citizens need higher education to develop critical media and analytical skills to grasp the scientific foundations of policy options and to develop awareness of multiple cultural perspectives on any question.

The PBF model is used not only to shape what PSEIs teach, but also what research they undertake. Government-set performance indicators typically reward research that produces commercializable outcomes (technologies, patents) and that attracts private sector funding. One result of such policies is that STEM research (research in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) is skewed in these market-driven directions, regardless of what researchers and their students may believe to be the most important research questions. This has certainly been the outcome of the “innovation” funding envelopes (from federal and provincial agencies) for energy and environment-related research at Alberta universities,³² and we have seen some of the “moral hazards” and social costs of pharmaceutical-industry-driven or agribusiness-driven research, as well. A second result is that areas of research that do not produce “commercializable” products, like the natural sciences, social sciences, humanities, and fine arts disciplines, see their funding progressively shrink, as they are penalized for not conforming to the government’s selected priorities.

What is wrong with university researchers trying to produce knowledge and technologies that are useful to the private sector, to improve productivity, for example, or environmental performance? Again, the answer is “absolutely nothing,” so long as researchers are equally supported to pursue basic research to acquire new knowledge of the underlying foundations of phenomena and observable facts, without any particular application or use in view, as well as non-commercializable knowledge, and research to develop products in response to non-market-driven interests. Many university researchers in engineering, geology, agricultural sciences, forestry, medicine, pharmacy, or other fields do work closely with private companies

32 Adkin and Cabral 2020; Adkin 2021.

“Funding decisions are, indirectly, decisions about what kinds of knowledge are valued and which are not. Academic freedom is not necessarily attacked frontally, but the conditions for it to flourish may be removed.”

and industrial associations, or form spin-off companies using their own, patented inventions. But many academic researchers have other concerns and goals, which are equally valid, such as uncovering colonial history through archival research, understanding how military industries influence national defence policies, preserving and teaching a language in danger of disappearing, monitoring the effects of global warming on the Canadian north, democratizing political institutions, writing a play that will move audiences, creating a policy framework for regenerative agriculture and local food security, or exploring basic questions in theoretical physics.

The effect of the UCP's budget cuts and PBF model is to push all of these “other” purposes and endeavours of universities to the margins. They simply do not fit in a competitive market model of the university as a business that should produce commodities and attract private sector investment. Programs in arts and natural sciences atrophy as their funding shrinks, due to faculty attrition, deleted courses, majors that can no longer be offered, research clusters that can no longer be sustained, loss of graduate student funding, and so on.

Funding decisions are, indirectly, decisions about what kinds of knowledge are valued and which are not. Academic freedom is not necessarily attacked frontally, but the conditions for it to flourish may be removed. Researchers follow the funding opportunities because their careers (and their graduate students) depend on securing grants. Likewise, the PBF model, because it privileges certain knowledges over others, erodes the conditions for interdisciplinary collaboration among researchers situated in different sectors of the university—an argument that we cannot develop here due to space limits. So, this all comes down to our fundamental beliefs about the purposes of a public university, the value of a general education in arts and sciences, and the necessity of interdisciplinary knowledge and research to solve the complex, critical problems of our times.

UCP Review of the Post-Secondary Education Sector and the Privatization of Research

The Alberta 2030: Building Skills for Jobs strategy is a transformational vision and direction for Alberta's higher education system, which will develop a highly skilled and competitive workforce, strengthen innovation and commercialization of research, and forge stronger relationships between employers and post-secondary institutions.

Government of Alberta, "Alberta 2030: Expanding apprenticeship education," June 24, 2021³³

Another piece of the UCP government's strategy for restructuring the PSE sector, mentioned in the introduction to this report, was its commissioning of a review of the PSE sector called Alberta 2030: Transforming Post-Secondary Education. The global consulting company, McKinsey & Company, was awarded a \$3.7 million contract in June 2020 to conduct this review.³⁴ The Request for Proposals stated that the government was looking for ways to implement the recommendations of the MacKinnon Report within the limits of the government's fiscal plan.

While no report from McKinsey has been made public at the time of writing, the consultancy's research and recommendations presumably informed the strategy document released by the government in April 2021, entitled *Alberta 2030: Building Skills for Jobs*, to which we have already referred several times in this overview of PSE restructuring. As the title suggests, the strategy's focus is on job training for the anticipated needs of Alberta's labour market. However, it also seeks to incentivize the *commercialization of research*, tying PSEIs ever more tightly to private sources of funding and market-driven R&D priorities. One of the initiatives proposed in the strategy document is the "adoption of faculty promotion and tenure policies to incentivize faculty to pursue entrepreneurial activities."³⁵ Any such initiative would constitute an infringement of academic freedom.

The UCP government had already begun applying a "private-public partnership" model to PSEI-based research and development as an alternative to employing in-house researchers. In February 2020, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry announced that it would lay off 277 employees—or half of its staff—in the name of cutting \$22 million from the provincial budget.³⁶ Many of these employees were research scientists who worked in the Livestock Research Branch, the Stettler Agri-Centre, or other areas of research or extension services. A former ministry employee explained these decisions as the result of the UCP minister's desire to "get [the government] out of doing research, to get out of doing extension. He wants us to move

33 Government of Alberta, "Alberta 2030: Expanding apprenticeship education," Media Release, June 24, 2021, <https://www.alberta.ca/release.cfm?ID=79444743163C8-D64E-DBF1-5D047A3C6D66E2A8>.

34 The amount awarded is given by higher education consultant, Alex Usher, in one of his blog posts on PSE in Alberta. The author says that the McKinsey & Co. estimate is highly inflated, and that McKinsey has no notable expertise on the higher education sector (and certainly not in Alberta). See "That Alberta Transformation Contract," June 15, 2020, <https://higherstrategy.com/that-alberta-transformation-contract/>.

35 Ministry of Advanced Education, *Alberta 2030: building skills for jobs* (April 2021), Goal 3, p. 26. <https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/24e31942-e84b-4298-a82c-713b0a272604/resource/b5a2072e-8872-45f9-b84d-784d0e98c732/download/ae-alberta-2030-building-skills-for-jobs-10-year-strategy-post-secondary-education-2021-04.pdf>.

36 Kara Oosterhuis, "Alberta government 'getting out of' agriculture research with latest staff cuts: former researcher," *RealAgriculture*, October 21, 2020, <https://www.realaagriculture.com/2020/10/alberta-government-getting-out-of-agriculture-research-with-latest-staff-cuts-former-researcher/>.

to the private sector. So, I think that's kind of their philosophy."³⁷ The UCP Minister of Agriculture and Forestry, Devin Dreesen, also had the idea that the research being performed by government-employed scientists was not the kind of research needed by "producers." In March 2020, he was quoted as saying that "governments shouldn't force an ideology on research priorities—research priorities should be determined by industry."³⁸ What "ideology" he was referring to is unknown.

Taking advantage of the availability of federal funding from the Canadian Agricultural Partnership (CAP),³⁹ Minister Dreesen dissolved the ministry's research and extension branches and in October 2020 announced a new, "arms-length" and "producers-led" corporation to make funding decisions about agricultural sector research.⁴⁰ The Results Driven Agriculture Research (RDAR) corporation, co-funded by the federal government and the provincial government, was mandated to provide grants for commercially driven R&D. Its initial board of directors, appointed by the Minister of Agriculture and Forestry, included representatives of the producers' associations and some university-based scientists. Its members include 20 marketing boards and commissions, 11 industry associations, and two applied research associations.⁴¹ According to early descriptions of this initiative, the aim was to transfer research that had previously been done in government agencies to PSEI-industry partnerships. Thus, facilities that used to be run under the budget of the Agriculture Ministry are being "transferred" to PSEIs, but without long-term commitments of government funding for their operation.⁴² During the term of their grants, the PSEIs are expected to find industry partners to continue to operate the facilities and pay the salaries of the associated research staff.

We see an example of how this new model of agricultural research funding will work in the case of the UAlberta. In October 2020, the Faculty of Agricultural, Life, and Environmental Sciences (ALES) was awarded \$3.7 million in RDAR funding for research programs in "beef genomics, livestock feed, dairy production, poultry innovation, and cereal agronomy."⁴³ With this funding, the university hired four former government scientists (three from the Livestock Research Branch and one from the Crop Research and Extension Division) as "research associates," in addition to three "supporting technicians." Their continued employment, however, depends on securing ongoing funding from the RDAR or private funding from industry. Administrators at the University of Alberta celebrated the "enhanced capacity" the funding would bring to the ALES Faculty but did not mention the loss of research capacity in the government sector, the contingent nature of the funding, or ALES' share of the budget cuts that are being imposed upon the University of Alberta by the same government.

37 Dr. Ross McKenzie, quoted in Oosterhuis, op. cit. In the recorded interview, also available at <https://www.realagriculture.com/2020/10/alberta-government-getting-out-of-agriculture-research-with-latest-staff-cuts-former-researcher/>, Dr. McKenzie describes a number of ways in which the loss of government outreach and information services, as well as archived historical data, will affect farmers and research work in general. He notes that farmers will have no alternatives but to seek advice about soil, chemical use, and so on, from "private agronomists" and salespersons for the agribusiness companies. He recalled hearing the minister say, in a press conference, that government should not be "doing research for the sake of research," suggesting that the minister had limited knowledge of the kind of research being conducted in his ministry.

38 Dreesen quoted in RealAgriculture News Team, "Alberta rolls out revamped ag research funding and delivery model," March 30, 2020, <https://www.realagriculture.com/2020/03/alberta-rolls-out-revamped-ag-research-funding-and-delivery-model/>.

39 Government of Canada, "Canadian Agricultural Partnership," <https://www.agr.gc.ca/eng/about-our-department/key-departmental-initiatives/canadian-agricultural-partnership/?id=1461767369849>.

40 The UCP Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry has budgeted about \$31 million per year from 2019-20 to 2023-24 as its contribution to the Partnership. See Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. *2021-2024 Business Plan*, pp. 7, 11. <https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/6f47f49d-d79e-4298-9450-08a61a6c57b2/resource/0e221581-0dbb-4d8e-9791-ee0ed1915953/download/budget-2021-ministry-business-plans-2021-24.pdf>. In a blog post on the ministry's website, November 16, 2020, Minister Dreesen announced that an agreement had been made guaranteeing RADAR \$37 million a year for 10 years. See: <https://www.alberta.ca/a-new-era-for-agriculture-research-in-alberta.aspx>.

41 RADAR, Advisory Committee Meeting, August 18, 2020, <https://rdar.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/RDAR-Presentation-for-Advisory-Committee-MASTER.pdf>.

42 Minister Dreesen, "A new era for agricultural research in Alberta," November 16, 2020, <https://www.alberta.ca/a-new-era-for-agriculture-research-in-alberta.aspx>.

43 Bev Betkowski, "U of A strengthens agricultural expertise," Folio (University of Alberta), October 19, 2020, <https://www.ualberta.ca/folio/2020/10/u-of-a-strengthens-agricultural-expertise.html#:~:text=Three%2Dyear%2C%20%243.7%2Dmillion.will%20benefit%20farmers%20and%20consumers.&text=The%20agreement%20is%20part%20of%20ranchers%20lead%20agriculture%20research%20priorities>

Effectively, decisions about what research questions should be prioritized are being taken out of the hands of researchers located in government departments or in the PSEIs and handed over to private funders (partners) and industry associations. This model parallels the NSERC's grants for PSEI-industry partnerships. While researchers in many fields are, as mentioned above, accustomed to working closely with industry partners, the growing dependence of researchers on industry funding is problematic for a number of public interest—as well as academic freedom—related reasons. While the UCP government claims to be depoliticizing research funding by handing it over to private sector direction, the same actions may be viewed as further removing decisions about research priorities from the sphere of public policy to the sphere of private interests. This approach to knowledge production is driven by neoliberal ideology insofar as it attributes innovation solely to market forces and devalues the non-market-driven ends of higher education.

The RADR model advances the government's objective of pushing the PSEIs into ever-closer collaboration with the private sector. Will this ultimately benefit Alberta's farmers? Will it respond to the need for agricultural development based on principles of regenerative agriculture, local food security, generating new employment in the food sector, watershed and water conservation, biodiversity protection, and greenhouse gas emission reductions? One might hold out greater hope for such outcomes if the decision-making bodies making the funding decisions included representatives of the civil society organizations as well as academics who strongly advocate for them.

“ Decisions about what research questions should be prioritized are being taken out of the hands of researchers located in government departments or in the PSEIs and handed over to private funders (partners) and industry associations.”

Constitution of the Boards of Governors of the PSEIs

In revitalizing our agencies, boards and commissions, we focused our recruitment efforts on those with the right skills, competencies and experience for the job . . . The former government had filled positions to further its priorities and it is appropriate for us to do the same.

*Laurie Chandler, spokesperson for Advanced Education Minister
Demetrios Nicolaides, September 11, 2019*

Three months after its election, the UCP government began replacing the members of the boards of public agencies with its own appointees, many of them conservative party insiders or supporters.⁴⁴ Among the agencies where replacements took place were 11 of the 21 PSEI boards of governors (hereafter referred to simply as “boards”) to which the government appoints “public” members (see Appendix 1 for a breakdown of member categories). Unlike the NDP government, the UCP did not feel it should allow public board members who had been appointed by the previous government to serve out their terms before replacing them. The premier’s press secretary, when questioned by media, said: “It is reasonable for a new government to align the membership of provincial ABCs [agencies, boards, and corporations] with the mandate it received from Albertans.”⁴⁵

Ten of the NDP-appointed PSEI board chairs were replaced by the UCP before their terms had expired. In total, 45 NDP-appointed board members had their positions rescinded by orders-in-council between August 15 and October 31, 2019. This purge was significant enough to garner considerable media attention. In response to accusations from the NDP and other critics that these actions were partisan, the Minister for Advanced Education’s spokesperson said: “In revitalizing our agencies, boards and commissions, we focused our recruitment efforts on those with the right skills, competencies and experience for the job . . . The former government had filled positions to further its priorities and it is appropriate for us to do the same.”⁴⁶ The Minister for Advanced Education, Demetrios Nicolaides, claimed that “competency, connection to industry and experience managing large organizations were the criteria used in choosing appointees,” and that “no partisanship [was] involved in the process.”⁴⁷

The new government’s “qualifications matrix” (selection criteria) for appointees can be seen further in the way the bio of one of the appointees, Stewart Hanlon, is constructed (Hanlon was one of the three UCP appointees who replaced three women board members removed from the board of the Alberta University of the Arts). In this description, we also find information about the UCP’s process for selecting appointees, i.e., “directly recruited.”

44 See Emma Graney, “Blindsided”: UCP blasted for mass appointments to boards, commissions,” *Edmonton Journal*, August 17, 2019, <https://edmontonjournal.com/news/politics/ucp-mass-appoints-friends-to-20-public-boards-including-wcb-aglc-and-universities>.

45 Christine Myatt, quoted in Graney, op cit.

46 Laurie Chandler, spokesperson for Advanced Education Minister Demetrios Nicolaides, quoted in Janet French, “They’ll make the rules”: critics concerned about process of post-secondary board appointments,” *Edmonton Journal* September 11, 2019, <https://edmontonjournal.com/news/local-news/theyll-make-the-rules-critics-concerned-about-process-of-post-secondary-board-appointments>.

47 Nicolaides quoted in Michelle Bellefontaine, “UCP sweeps NDP governance appointments out of post-secondary institutions,” *CBC News*, August 16, 2019, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/edmonton/ucp-sweeps-ndp-governance-appointments-out-of-post-secondary-institutions-1.5249900>.

“For UCP politicians, then, it is obvious that the people running the universities should come predominantly from the corporate sector.”

Mr. Stewart Hanlon retired from his position as president and Chief Executive Officer with Gibson Energy Inc. in 2017. In his 26-year tenure with Gibson Energy, he filled senior roles in finance, business development and operations culminating in his appointment as president and Chief Executive Officer in April 2009. He is the chair of the Board of Questor Technologies Inc. and also serves as a member on the Board of Directors of Hammerhead Resources Inc. He is a member of the Dean's Advisory Council for the Edwards School of Business with the University of Saskatchewan, as well as a member of the Chapter Advisory Board of the Children's Wish Foundation for Alberta and the Northwest Territories. He also serves as a member of the Finance Committee with the United Way of Calgary and Area.

He holds a Bachelor of Commerce degree in Finance and Accounting from the University of Saskatchewan. He is a Chartered Professional Accountant and a member of the Chartered Professional Accountants in both Saskatchewan and Alberta.

Competencies required for members of The Board of Governors of Alberta University of the Arts include: leadership, governance, finance, human resources, legal, risk management and/or strategic planning. Stewart Hanlon was directly recruited and appointed on the basis of meeting the competencies, skills and attributes as described above.⁴⁸

As noted earlier, even if the “no partisanship” claim were true (and our research shows that it is not), such claims distract from the reality that all appointments are political in a broader sense. That is, governing parties seek to “align” (to use the term of the premier's press secretary) the governance of public agencies, boards, and corporations with their own policy orientations. In the case of the UCP, its ideological beliefs in the primacy of private sector direction of the economy and its close allegiances to the fossil fuel and construction industries, and to business interests in general, mean that there is little light to be found between the agenda of the party and those of corporate leaders. Insofar as the post-secondary education sector is concerned, that agenda is revealed in the policy initiatives that we reviewed in the preceding sections. For UCP politicians, then, it is obvious that the people running the universities should come predominantly from the corporate sector (have a “connection to industry”), just as it is unquestionable that the universities should be closely aligned, in their functions, with the interests of the private sector. Such appointments are

⁴⁸ Alberta University of the Arts, Board of Governors: Members, <https://www.auarts.ca/about-auarts/governance/board-governors/members> (accessed October 2, 2021).

inherently *political* insofar as they serve to implement the political ideologies and platforms of the governing party.

In essence, we cannot understand political appointments as mere manifestations of patronage politics (although they sometimes are, especially when they are remunerated or offer another advantage to the holder of the position). Since PSEI board positions are not remunerated (apart from expenses), these are not political patronage appointments in the classical sense. They are, however, “partisan” in the broad sense of extending the policy agenda of the governing party to the governance of quasi-state institutions. But the agendas of governing parties differ, with implications for the degree of autonomy granted to the PSEIs. Moreover, it is possible to design appointments processes that are more transparent to the public, and more arm’s length from governments, than the process of “direct recruitment” employed by the UCP government.

From the point of view of the universities and the public, the importance of the UCP’s implantation of its appointees lies in their influence over institutional directions and their alignment with the government’s strategy for the sector. These appointments indicate the political direction in which the incumbent government intends to take the post-secondary education sector. The rescission and replacement of board members send strong signals to those governed (and to university administrators) about the interests and priorities that are expected to guide these institutions. Because of the current legislative framework of PSEI governance, these appointments also permit governments to exercise tight control over the management and collective bargaining positions taken by the PSEIs’ boards (acting as the employers of the institutions’ staff and faculty). Governments have no incentive to appoint board members who are likely to resist or oppose the directions in which they wish to take the PSE sector. However, these overarching partisan considerations do not preclude selection criteria such as gender parity or the representation of racialized minorities and Indigenous peoples on the boards (provided that the party in office is not ideologically opposed to such representation). That is, individuals may always be found from equity-seeking groups who share the broad political-ideological perspectives of the government.

By mid-May 2020, the UCP cabinet had made 80 appointments to the PSEI boards, and by the end of September 2020, these appointments numbered 114. The public board members of three PSEIs were completely replaced with UCP appointees: University of Alberta, Mount Royal University, and Medicine Hat College. As of March 31, 2021, 70% of 174 PSEI board members were first-time UCP appointees. With boards weighted in favour of UCP-appointed members, the government could be assured that opposition from university constituencies to restructuring plans could not impede their implementation.

In addition, in 2019 the UCP government reinforced the role of the board of governors as a proxy for the minister in bargaining with publicly funded post-secondary institutions (other than independent academic institutions).⁴⁹ With the creation of the Public Sector Employees' Act, the UCP government deepened its control over PSEI boards, protecting the secrecy of government instructions to board members in the context of collective bargaining with employee organizations. This act authorized the minister to issue directives that the boards of public agencies (acting as employers) must follow before, during, and after collective bargaining, and makes those directives secret.⁵⁰

The existing structure of PSE governance, as set out in the *PSLA*, has long functioned to shut faculty, staff, and student representatives out of university governance. Typically, the government-selected board members outnumber the representatives nominated by university constituencies (see Appendix 1). The boards, in turn, appoint the university's chief administrators. Moreover, university budgets and financial decisions have been tightly controlled by the ministry, which also has final approval authority over new degree programs. This part of the story is not new, and the *PSLA* was not reformed in these respects by the NDP government. (We return to the possibilities for reform of university governance in Part 10 of this report.) However, the UCP returned to the old practice of earlier Progressive Conservative Party (PCP) governments of stacking the boards of public agencies with party supporters, whereas the NDP government (2015-2019) had tried to reform the appointments process to make it more socially representative and publicly transparent. This approach is in line with the NDP's view of the type of governance qualifications needed on the boards, i.e., that they should include knowledge coming from the public and non-profit, as well as corporate sectors.

According to a former employee of the Ministry of Advanced Education during the NDP government, the ministry "had an aggressive EDI [equity, diversity, and inclusion] recruitment outreach strategy, coordinated by the Director of Public Appointments in the Premier's Office. All advertising for these positions included an EDI statement. Once the applications came in, the department did a matrix of competencies for everyone that applied . . . We made very significant shifts in the composition of boards. In particular, from a gender perspective, [PSEI] boards had less than 1/3 women on the boards in 2015, and by 2019 [they] had actually more than 50%."⁵¹ (Our research confirmed this, as reported in Part 4.) David Eggen, the NDP Opposition's critic for Advanced Education following the 2019 election, characterized the UCP's public appointments as a return to the cronyism of the past, and contrasted this to the NDP's process, in which "the NDP government had waited until board governors had ended their terms and took time to seek the best candidates. "These jobs were advertised on

49 See endnote 4.

50 A summary of this Act by Field Law notes: "This restriction on the employer sharing certain directives from the Minister at the bargaining table will be an interesting one to watch, as there is a chance it could be challenged by unions in light of certain other case law dealing with the propriety of withholding certain information in certain contexts of bargaining." Field Law, "Bill 21: Key aspects for Alberta employers," November 2019, <https://www.fieldlaw.com/News-Views-Events/159802/Bill-21-Key-Aspects-for-Alberta-Employers>. #:~:text=The%20Alberta%20government%20introduced%20Bill,raise%20various%20considerations%20for%20employers. In this context, it should be remembered that the UCP government was seeking cuts to public sector employees' remuneration of 3% to 4% in the negotiations ongoing in 2021. See: Alberta Union of Provincial Employees, "UCP government seeks to slash wages by 4%," Media Release, November 6, 2020, <https://www.aupe.org/news/news-and-updates/ucp-government-seeks-slash-wages-4>.

51 Email communication to Laurie Adkin, November 27, 2020; anonymity of the informant protected.

government websites based on competence, gender parity and geographical representation.”⁵² In September 2017, the minister for Service Alberta, Stephanie McLean, reported that the government was making progress in appointing women to public boards, having increased their representation from about 33% to 48% since its election.⁵³ The Minister of Finance, Joe Ceci, commented that: “In too many cases, appointments [on the boards of public agencies] were made based on political connections or with no regard to representing a broad range of viewpoints and backgrounds . . . Alberta’s agencies, boards and commissions were about who you know rather than what you know.”⁵⁴

The use of this process by the NDP was further confirmed for us by a former NDP board appointee, interviewed in July 2021.⁵⁵ According to this individual (who we identify here only as M) the opening on the board was advertised and was brought to their attention by someone who thought they would be a good candidate to be a public board member of Institution X. M saw that the NDP government was trying to “diversify the pool of board members—attempting to address the [previous] homogeneity of board membership.” M applied for the position and was then interviewed twice: once by a staff member of the Ministry of Advanced Education and once by the chair of the board of Institution X. M noted that all the board chairs at this time were PCP appointees, because the NDP government had not terminated any of the appointments made by the previous government. Thus, the board chair who interviewed M was a PCP appointee. Once on the board of Institution X, M learned that under the PCP governments, the process for recruiting public board members had been, by comparison with the NDP’s process, “very casual.” Under the NDP government, previous appointees were asked to reapply for their positions when their terms ended. “Many people were unhappy about that.”

Comparing how appointments were made by the NDP to how they were made by the UCP, M observed that, under the UCP, it was “unclear what the process was.” The UCP government did not publicly advertise the positions or use publicly transparent criteria for shortlisting candidates. Asked specifically if there were any indications that gender and racial diversity were criteria for new appointments by the UCP, M said “there was never any talk” about such concerns and noted that the rescission and replacement of positions on board X did not manifest any such concern after the UCP government was elected. By collecting data on the backgrounds of the UCP appointees, we were able to shed further light on the UCP’s criteria for the selection of public board members.

Conclusions

The radical nature of the UCP’s restructuring of post-secondary education

52 Eggen quoted in Bill Kaufmann, “UCP government’s university appointments draw cronyism accusations,” *Calgary Herald*, August 16, 2019, <https://calgaryherald.com/news/local-news/upc-governments-university-appointments-draw-cronyism-accusations>.

53 The Canadian Press, “Alberta says women reaching parity on appointment to boards, agencies,” *Edmonton Journal*, September 26, 2017. <https://edmontonjournal.com/news/politics/alberta-says-women-reaching-parity-on-appointments-to-boards-agencies>.

54 Joe Ceci quoted in Ibid.

55 The interviewee wished to remain anonymous. They were appointed by the NDP government in 2017 and were still on the board in 2019 when the UCP began to rescind and replace board appointees. They were in a position to observe the methods used by both governments to make appointments. Interview took place July 9, 2021.

has been imposed under the pretext of the government's fiscal crisis, but since this crisis is largely self-generated (in the sense that it could have been averted by different policy choices), the budgetary cuts to PSE may be viewed as being politically driven. Numerous political economists have argued that the government could pay down the debt and fund public services by raising revenue from new taxes, higher royalty rates, and eliminating subsidies and implementing polluter-pays regulations for the oil and gas sector.⁵⁶ Trevor Harrison and Richard Mueller (2021, 25) have reminded Albertans of a report from the government itself, published in 2021, which found that the province could raise an additional \$13.3 billion in revenue simply by adopting the tax rates of the next highest-taxing provinces in the country.⁵⁷ Collaboration with the federal government on means to invest in post-secondary education and other human services has also been an option. The UCP government, however, has rejected such approaches, seeking instead to reduce both public sector compensation and program spending.⁵⁸

The de-funding of post-secondary education by the UCP government has not gone without contestation. Leading the push-back campaigns have been faculty and staff associations (unions) and the Confederation of Alberta Faculty Associations (CAFA). Students' organizations, including the Council of Alberta University Students, have protested the tuition increases and the dearth of student financial aid. On the other hand, university presidents, vice-presidents, and other senior administrators—along with the UCP-appointed public members of the boards of governors—have remained silent, acquiesced to, or even endorsed the UCP's restructuring rationale without publicly questioning its wisdom or necessity.⁵⁹ It appears that the UCP has succeeded in bringing the boards and the PSEI executives into alignment with its agenda. The subordination of academic governance bodies may also be required to impose this agenda—as we see in the case of the University of Alberta, described in Part 3. The arm's length relationship that traditionally separated governments in office from the direction of universities, permitting a degree of university “autonomy” or self-governance (especially in relation to academic programs), appears here, as elsewhere, to be an impediment to the objectives of neoliberal corporatization.

Such developments highlight the problems with the governance structure for post-secondary education institutions set out in the PSLA and with the funding arrangements for the post-secondary sector. We return to these questions in the conclusions to the report. Evidently, the UCP government had to remove public board members—and particularly board chairs—who could have been expected to publicly oppose its PSE agenda. As our research shows, the “replacements” were in many cases close to the UCP not only politically, but in terms of their positions in the economy and their roles as leaders of the corporate class. Thus, many academics feel that their interests—and their conceptions of the public interest—are essentially

56 The UCP has made quite clear where its expenditure priorities lie. While 26,000 educational workers were laid off in the K-12 sector in 2020, ostensibly because the government needed to reallocate \$128 million from education to health services (in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic), and the Advanced Education budget had been cut by \$445 million in UCP budgets as of February 2021, the government found \$1.5 billion to invest in the Keystone pipeline expansion and \$6 billion for loan guarantees to the same private sector project. See C. Rockarts, “Largest layoff in Alberta history proves workers aren't Kenney's priority,” *Rank and File*, April 9, 2020, <https://www.rankandfile.ca/largest-layoff-in-alberta-history-proves-workers-arent-kenneys-priority/>.

57 The report they are referring to is Government of Alberta, Ministry of Treasury Board and Finance, “Alberta's tax advantage,” <https://www.alberta.ca/alberta-tax-advantage.aspx>.

58 The NDP government's approach was to hold PSE funding steady, and—with regard to public services in general—to sustain funding levels while only moderately increasing corporate and personal income tax rates and relying on growing public debt. This approach, too, was unsustainable in the absence of the return of oil and gas revenue, bigger changes to the fiscal regime, or the use of public finance to restructure the economy.

59 For examples of statements by President Bill Flanagan of the University of Alberta that “echo and amplify” the UCP government's discourse, see Schroeder 2021 and Adkin 2022. We return to this point in Part 3.

unrepresented by university leaders and governors. In the absence of organized resistance from university executives and boards to the UCP's agenda, faculty, staff, and students have sought ways to communicate directly with the public.

So far, we have described a set of interrelated elements of the government's strategy to restructure the PSE sector. To recap, these include:

- legitimization for its ideological agenda, in the form of policy prescriptions from neoliberal economists and contracted consultants
- deep budget cuts which are driving the “restructuring” of administrative services and academic programs at some institutions—most radically, at the University of Alberta
- shifting of university funding from public revenue to students (tuition and other fees, increased recruitment of international students), commercial activities (e.g., real estate leasing), and private endowments
- announced intentions to apply ever more performance targets as conditions for funding
- replacing research performed by the civil service or led by academics with university-private sector research partnerships
- appointing public members and chairs of PSEI boards who are aligned with the UCP's beliefs and agenda

These actions make PSEIs more subservient to the policy goals either of the incumbent government or of private sector interests more directly. They serve to privatize higher education and research, and to shrink the teaching and research capacities of the institutions most affected by the reduction of their government operating grants. Changes made to the PSLA by the UCP government in November 2021 (after the writing of this report had been completed) further the government's restructuring agenda for the PSE sector and are described in the epilogue.

The budget cuts have already resulted in the loss of thousands of jobs at the PSEIs—predominantly for non-academic employees—as well as the non-renewal of hundreds of academic teaching contracts. They have intensified pressures to reduce academic and non-academic staff salaries, and even the salaries of contract academic teaching staff. With rising tuition fees and student to teacher ratios, more Alberta students are looking at higher education options in other provinces. Academics who see the conditions for their work deteriorating are also scouting out other opportunities or taking early retirement, if these are options.

In the following case studies of the consequences of the UCP's restructuring agenda, we incorporate information about changes to the boards of governors at three Alberta universities.

3

Case Studies

In this section we review selected developments at the two largest CARUs and at Mount Royal University to illustrate and document the trends affecting the whole sector—albeit by no means identically for each institution. The University of Alberta case is treated in greatest depth because this is the case for which the most detailed information was available to the authors. Although we refer to other cases throughout the report, further research needs to be done on developments at all 21 PSEIs.

University of Alberta: From “Uplifting the Whole People”⁶⁰ to Contracting Them Out

[Our vision is] to inspire the human spirit through outstanding achievements in learning, discovery, and citizenship in a creative community, building one of the world’s great universities for the public good.

60 This phrase has been used in many university documents over the years to express the mission of the university. It is taken from a statement by the university’s first president, Henry Marshall Tory: “[K]nowledge shall not be the concern of scholars alone. The uplifting of the whole people shall be its final goal.” This statement is found, for example, on a banner on the university’s website: <https://www.ualberta.ca/about/index.html> (accessed July 16, 2021).

61 Other sources of operating revenue for the university include income from tuition fees and sales of services and products. Operating revenue (budget) in the University of Alberta’s 2019-2020 budget was given as approximately \$1.2 B (p. 3) <https://www.ualberta.ca/university-services-finance/media-library/resource-planning/university-alberta-budget/university-of-alberta-2019-20-budget.pdf>. A CAG of \$671 M thus represents 56% of the university’s operating revenue. This figure varies by year, since the amount of the CAG varies by provincial budget and the amounts of other sources of operating revenue also vary by year.

62 The \$671.3 million figure is from the University of Alberta’s 2019-22 *Comprehensive Institutional Plan*, <https://www.ualberta.ca/provost/media-library/cip/cip2019.pdf>, p. 30.

63 Bill Flanagan and Steven Dew, “Recap of July 8 Town Hall on Academic Restructuring,” The QUAD [blog], July 9, 2020, <https://www.ualberta.ca/the-quad/2020/07/recap-of-july-8-town-hall-on-academic-restructuring.html>.

64 The university’s *Service Excellence Transformation Interim Report* (November 2020, 8) reported: “In February 2020, the Government of Alberta tabled its 2020 Budget, which outlined an average reduction of 6% to the base budgets of Alberta’s post-secondary sector. These cuts were much deeper for the U of A, amounting to an 11% reduction for 2020/21 in addition to a 6.9% in-year cut in our Campus Alberta Grant in the province’s 2019/20 budget.”

65 President Flanagan, “From the President’s Desk: Budget 2021 Update,” February 26, 2021, <https://www.ualberta.ca/the-quad/2021/02/from-the-presidents-desk-budget-2021-update.html>. Some UAlberta faculty members felt that the president’s complaint was late in coming, since he had not publicly protested the previous budget cuts.

For the Public Good: University of Alberta Institutional Strategic Plan, passed unanimously by the General Faculties Council and the board of governors in June 2016, p. 4

The Cuts

As the university with the largest academic staff association and student body in the province, and thus an important battleground for the government’s privatization agenda, UAlberta has received “special treatment.” While all PSEIs are taking heavy hits, UAlberta has been targeted for the largest budget cuts to date and for a complete turnover in managerial control. Between 2019 and 2021, the university had \$170 million of its Campus Alberta Grant (CAG) taken away. The CAG constituted approximately 56% of the university’s operating revenue in 2019-2020.⁶¹ To put this into perspective, the CAG to the UAlberta for 2019/20 was budgeted at \$671.3 million (unchanged from 2018/19).⁶² This means the university had, by 2021, lost 25.3% of its CAG.⁶³

The February 2021 budget of the UCP government cut the institution’s CAG not by the “average” amount of 5% (the yearly amount needed to achieve a 20% reduction over four years, or by 2023), but by another 11%. By comparison, UCalgary’s CAG cut was estimated at 6%.⁶⁴ As the UAlberta’s president, Bill Flanagan, pointed out, this amounted to \$60.1 million, or almost half of the total cut to the province’s PSE budget. He protested that “25 percent of Alberta’s post-secondary students attend the University of Alberta, yet the province has required us to bear nearly 50 percent of the reduction in provincial funding.”⁶⁵

But there was more to come in the February 2022 budget, which took another \$52 million from the university's CAG, bringing the total loss since 2019/20 to \$222 million or 33% of the CAG and about 19% of operating revenue.⁶⁶

Why would the UCP government single out the University of Alberta for the largest share of budget cuts? The Minister of Advanced Education said, when questioned about this disparity in March 2021, "We looked at the funding levels per student for all our institutions, looked at how they compared to their competitors in other provinces."⁶⁷ But this answer does not explain what data were used to justify bigger funding cuts to the UAlberta's operating grants compared to other institutions in Alberta.⁶⁸ No formula for allocating budget cuts, based on the size of an institution's student body or the composition of the programs it offers, has been made public.⁶⁹ And, in fact, the University of Calgary's expenditures per full-time student (FLE) are higher than the University of Alberta's, although the latter has had its operating grants cut more severely.⁷⁰

Some have suggested that the UCP leadership views the UAlberta as a bastion of support for the NDP and/or other centrist opposition parties. It is located in the riding of the leader of the NDP, Rachel Notley, as well as in a city that has withheld seats in the legislature from the Wildrose and UCP parties. Other Edmonton-based PSEIs were not spared, however. Cuts to Grant MacEwan University's provincial grants amounted to 10% from 2019 and 2021.⁷¹ According to Ministry of Advanced Education figures obtained by an Edmonton CBC journalist through a freedom of information request, the reduction to the Campus Alberta Grant of the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology (NAIT), as of June 2021, had added up to a 9.4% cut.⁷² Still, the 25% cut to the UAlberta's CAG as of spring 2021 was two and a half times greater.

UCP MLAs from rural ridings may harbour animosity toward an institution associated with "urban, liberal intellectuals." Academics from the UAlberta have spoken out over the years against policies pursued by Alberta's conservative governments—perhaps more noticeably than academics from other PSEIs.⁷³ Paradoxically, while both the UCalgary and the UAlberta have been characterized as "petro-universities,"⁷⁴ the presence of even a small number of publicly vocal critics of the province's petro-state seems to be intolerable to the UCP leadership.⁷⁵ A related explanation offered for the UCP's apparent animus toward the UAlberta is that it is the home of the Parkland Institute. As one commentator observed: "Ever since its creation in 1996 it has been one of the only institutions that offered an alternative to the right-wing thinking that came out of the Fraser Institute, C. D. Howe Institute, and the School of Public Policy [at the University of Calgary]."⁷⁶

66 For details of the impacts of the February 24, 2022 budget cuts, see Adkin 2022.

67 Demetri Nicolaides quoted in Allison Bench, "University of Alberta says it bears brunt of provincial budget cuts; worries about quality, reputation," Global News, March 10, 2021, <https://globalnews.ca/news/7688799/university-of-alberta-budget-cuts/>.

68 For that matter, the data produced by the authors of the MacKinnon report to make the case that spending per "full time equivalent" student in Alberta is much higher than the averages in comparator provinces have been called into question by Harrison and Mueller's October 2021 analysis of Statistics Canada data.

69 Differences in expenditures per FLE (also called FTE in some reports) across the PSEIs are partly the result of differences in the kinds of programs they offer and their institutional overheads; medical, science, and engineering faculties, for example, require laboratories, equipment, lab instructors, and technicians for student training.

70 Harrison and Mueller 2021, 19.

71 Annette Trimbee, "From the president: Budget 2021 update," MacEwan University, February 26, 2021, https://www.macewan.ca/wcm/MacEwanNews/BUDGET_2021_UPDATE. MacEwan received a 7.9% cut in October 2019 (<https://www.scribd.com/document/432031884/Ae-Campus-Alberta-Grant-Funding>) and a 2.2% cut from 2019/20 to 2020/21 (Harrison and Mueller 2021, Appendix F).

72 Janet French, "Some Alberta post-secondary institutions left relatively unscathed while U of A funds slashed, new data shows," CBC News, June 28, 2021, <https://edmonton.ctvnews.ca/nait-set-to-cut-as-many-as-240-jobs-in-wake-of-latest-alberta-budget-1.4835203>.

73 Academics at the University of Alberta who were public critics of the neoliberal "revolution" of the Klein governments in the 1990s founded the left-leaning Parkland Institute (which is housed by the University of Alberta) and have continued to publish work and make public interventions that are critical of the government's "petro-politics" and neoliberal policies.

74 See Adkin and Cabral 2020 and Adkin 2021b.

75 Indeed, any argument that the oil sands production should be phased out due to the climate crisis, and that the province needs to make a transition to a post-carbon economy, has been treated as "anti-Albertan" by conservative governments. The UCP government's creation of the "Public inquiry into anti-Alberta energy campaigns" is one form that this intolerance has taken. See <https://albertainquiry.ca/>. For a summary of the authoritarian moves of the government during its first year in office, see Adkin and Acuña 2020.

76 David Grant, commenting on David Climenhaga, "University of Alberta faces more than half of budget's brutal post-secondary cuts—so why does UCP have it in for U of A?" Alberta Politics Blog, February 28, 2021, <https://albertapolitics.ca/2021/02/university-of-alberta-faces-more-than-half-of-budgets-brutal-post-secondary-cuts-so-why-does-ucp-have-it-in-for-u-of-a/>.

A reason for the government's treatment of the UAlberta that is frequently offered by Alberta observers is the university senate's decision to award an honorary doctorate to Dr. David Suzuki, the well-known Canadian environmentalist, in spring 2018. Because of Dr. Suzuki's views that oil sands and other oil and gas extraction should be phased out in response to the climate crisis, he is viewed with great hostility by many who work in that industry or in sectors connected to oil and gas (e.g., rig-servicing companies, corporate services, construction, investment firms). After the honour was announced, petro-turf groups (Canada Action, Rally4Resources) and others connected to the industry launched a campaign to get people to write to the chancellor and the president to demand that the decision be reversed, "or else." The "or else" was the threat to cancel planned donations to the university. Their campaign received support from the right-wing press, television, and radio outlets, including Postmedia columnists. It repeated a set of accusations about Suzuki that originated with Rebel Media's Ezra Levant in 2015⁷⁷ and were resurrected in the context of the honorary doctorate announcement. The provincial NDP government at the time was also investing heavily in campaigns to secure public support for oil pipeline development.

The leader of the UCP, Jason Kenney, by this time the leader of the opposition in the Alberta legislature, used Levant's accusations to argue in that forum that the government should tell the university to retract the offer of the degree.⁷⁸ In addition, Kenney made a video criticizing the decision, which he viewed as evidence that the university had been "politicized" by "leftists."⁷⁹ Among the businesses or business associations that wrote publicly to the University of Alberta's leaders to oppose the awarding of the doctorate to Suzuki was the Edmonton Chamber of Commerce, whose president was Janet Riopel.⁸⁰ Riopel was subsequently appointed to the board of governors of the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology (NAIT) on August 15, 2019, in the first round of PSEI board replacements by the new UCP government. Reportedly, the Suzuki affair remained a hot topic for some of the public members appointed by the UCP to the UAlberta's board of governors in August 2019, who viewed the university's refusal to rescind the honorary doctorate to Dr. Suzuki as a reason for the big budget cuts to the university.⁸¹

It is hard to know, of course, exactly what part conservatives' perceptions of the UAlberta as being overrun with leftists in the social sciences and humanities has played in the UCP government's decision to make especially draconian cuts to the university's budget and to push a funding model that favours the vocational and professional schools while putting in jeopardy the viability of social sciences, humanities, and fine arts. A larger, neoliberal ideological approach to post-secondary education is, evidently, also at work. It is otherwise hard to explain why Keyano College in Fort McMurray would have had nearly 17% of its operating budget cut by the UCP government

77 Laurie Adkin has tracked the media frames used in this campaign back to videos produced by Ezra Levant in November 2015 and April 2018. Levant attacked Suzuki in a Youtube video dated November 24, 2015, and again on Rebel Media on April 26, 2018. For the latter video, see: Ezra Levant, "University of Alberta loses donors over David Suzuki's honorary degree," <https://www.therebel.media/university-of-alberta-loses-donors-over-david-suzuki-s-honorary-degree>.

78 See Kenney's comments in *Alberta Hansard* April 30, 2018, pp. 625-26. These comments presage the UCP government's attitude toward university autonomy from government.

79 Kenney's video was posted to this Facebook page on April 24, 2018: <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=10156250559967641>. The same video has been available on Youtube, at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TFDp7q9fAA>. For a short account of the "Suzuki affair," see Adkin 2021b.

80 See an excerpt from this letter quoted in Clare Clancy, "Premier not 'big fan' of Suzuki's honorary degree, but respects choice," *Edmonton Journal*, April 25, 2018, <https://edmontonjournal.com/news/politics/premier-not-big-fan-of-suzukis-honorary-degree-but-respects-choice>.

81 This information comes from a source close to one of the members of the board in early 2020 and from two former members of the board. These sources wish to remain anonymous.

(20% expected by 2022-2023), along with the cost-of-living allowance for its staff.⁸² Likewise, Grande Prairie Regional College (GPRC) and Red Deer College (RDC), as journalist Janet French observes, have suffered very substantial budget cuts. GPRC has eliminated 85 jobs following a 13% cut in its Campus Alberta Grant.⁸³ The support staff at RDC was cut by 25% in June 2020, following a \$5.3 million budget cut.⁸⁴ Contract and casual positions were also eliminated, affecting nearly 100 persons.⁸⁵ Both GPRC and RDC had been moving toward certification as university degree-granting institutions before the UCP government was elected. In May 2021, it was announced that they would instead become polytechnic institutes. Other colleges have had to lay off staff and suspend programs, too. Lakeland College, with campuses in Lloydminster and Vermilion, cut 35 permanent positions in May 2020 and suspended multiple programs. These kinds of layoffs and program closures have big impacts in small communities. All of these colleges are located in ridings represented by UCP MLAs.

The Band Played on: Responses to the Budget Cuts

To raise revenue, the University of Alberta increased general undergraduate tuition fees by the maximum amount permitted by the government for 2020-2021 (7%), while also increasing the fees for residence accommodation and meal plans. In 2021-2022, the administration announced another 7% increase for all domestic undergraduate students, and larger fee increases in 12 programs (all in Sciences, Engineering, Business, Law, Pharmacy, Dentistry, and Medicine, including four graduate programs) ranging from 17 to 104%.⁸⁶ The university plans to increase tuition fees again in 2022-2023.⁸⁷ The Students' Union estimates that, for the average undergraduate student, this will amount to a 23.5% tuition increase over three years.⁸⁸ The students' representatives point out, moreover, that the government has not (yet) implemented new financial aid measures for students, and that the skyrocketing cost will deter many Albertans from attending university.

The administration hopes to find \$32 million in savings from changing procurement processes and shrinking the physical footprint of the campuses—possibly by selling buildings or land. An extremely unpopular plan was announced in the winter of 2021 to demolish the last four historical residences that were built for university professors and their families in the early 20th century. The administration says that the university does not have the means to pay for their repair and upkeep and did not respond to proposals from a community-based coalition to incorporate the buildings into a very imaginative design for the site.⁸⁹

82 Vincent McDermott, "Province has cut nearly 17 per cent of operational funds for Keyano since 2018," *Fairview Post*, June 30, 2021.

83 Michael Lumsden, "GPRC cuts \$8 million, eliminates 85 jobs in 2020-21 budget," *MyGrandPrairieNow.com*, May 13, 2020, <https://www.mygrandprairienow.com/70988/gprc-cuts-8-million-eliminates-85-jobs-in-2020-21-budget/>.

84 Troy Gillard, "More layoffs at Red Deer College," *rdnewsNow.com*, June 15, 2020, <https://rdnewsnow.com/2020/06/15/more-layoffs-at-red-deer-college/>.

85 Kalisha Mendonsa, "RDC facing numerous challenges, made adjustments to balance 2020/21 budget," *Lacombeonline.com*, June 25, 2020, <https://lacombeonline.com/local/rdc-facing-numerous-challenges-awaiting-tr>.

86 Joint media release from the Graduate Students' Association and the Undergraduate Students' Association at the University of Alberta, April 12, 2021, <https://www.ualberta.ca/graduate-students-association/gsa-news/2021/april/media-release-april.html>.

87 Janet French (June 28, 2021, op cit.) reported that "The universities of Alberta and Calgary and Lethbridge College have all applied to the government to instate "exceptional" tuition increases for programs like medicine and engineering in fall 2022."

88 Slav Kornik, "NDP, University of Alberta students demand freeze on post-secondary tuition hikes," *Global News*, April 13, 2021, <https://globalnews.ca/news/7755760/university-of-alberta-tuition-increase/#:~:text=The%20University%20of%20Alberta's%20students,over%20a%20three%2Dyear%20period.&text=U%20of%20A%20-engineering%20student,24.5%20per%20cent%20in%202022>.

89 The proposals of the Friends of the University of Alberta Ring Houses coalition was presented to the university's student council in June 2021, and may be viewed here: https://edmontonheritage.ca/wp-content/uploads/Reimagine-the-Ring-Houses-Proposal_June-23-2021.pdf. According to the co-chairs of the coalition, UAlberta administrators refused to do a Historical Resources Impact Assessment, under the Historical Resources Act, which would have provided detailed information about the condition of the houses, the costs of repairing and maintaining them, and their historical value. See Adkin 2021a.

Following the announcements made by the Minister of Advanced Education in April 2021, indicating that the government would cut loose the budgets of the research universities from the provincial budget accounts (or “deconsolidate” their budgets), the chair of the UAlberta board of governors, Kathryn Chisholm, suggested that, as “the biggest landowner in the province of Alberta,” the university will raise new revenue from the leasing, sale, or other commercial development of these properties.⁹⁰ Previously, decisions regarding the sale or use of university-owned property had to be approved by the provincial government. A portion of these properties are endowments with conditions attached to their use and retention by the university. Some of it is prime land within the city of Edmonton that could become a model urban farm or eco-community that houses students and staff, but may be used for more immediately lucrative housing and commercial development.⁹¹

In 2015, the University of Alberta Properties Trust was incorporated to manage these assets and transfer the revenue to the board of governors (from which it also receives its mandate). The board of directors of the Trust includes individuals connected both to large real estate development companies and to the Progressive Conservative Party of Alberta (PCP) (now merged into the United Conservative Party).⁹² The Trust’s director and board chair, Ralph Young, previously the university’s chancellor (2012–2016), has been an executive with Melcor Developments Ltd. since 1976 and the board chair of Melcor REIT since 2017. Trustee Daniel Eggert, vice-president of property development for Melcor Developments, was appointed to the board of governors of UAlberta by the UCP government on August 15, 2019. Melcor and its chief executives have a long history of political contributions to the PCP. (As we see in Part 8, some of these individuals have also contributed to the UCP.) In 2015, Melcor’s executive chairperson, Tim Melton, participated in a press conference held by businessmen to urge Albertans not to vote for the NDP in the imminent provincial election. An Edmonton Journal article on the press conference reported:

Tim Melton, executive chairman of Melcor Developments, said NDP governments “do not understand how economies work” and that Alberta’s Tories have provided “very solid government.” “I don’t understand the unhappiness and disenchantment that appears to be out there,” said Melton, who has donated \$41,812.50 to the Tories since 2010 personally and through his company, plus \$3,500 to Prentice’s campaign. “We don’t need amateurs running this province through these difficult times ... we’ve got to stay with the government that has got us to where we are today.” Melcor Developments and Melcor REIT have received \$4.3 million in government contracts since 2012, government records show. The company is also lobbying the government for help in approving commercial and residential developments.⁹³

90 Elise Stolte, “Unprecedented’ cuts at the University of Alberta make for a rapidly shrinking institution,” *Edmonton Journal*, June 15, 2021, <https://edmontonjournal.com/opinion/columnists/elise-stolte-unprecedented-cuts-at-the-university-of-alberta-make-for-a-rapidly-shrinking-institution>.

91 Paige Parsons, “U of A steps closer to developing lands near south campus,” *CBC News*, February 3, 2020, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/edmonton/u-of-a-steps-closer-to-developing-lands-near-south-campus-1.5448468>.

92 University of Alberta Properties Trust, “Board of Directors,” <https://ualbertapropertiestrustinc.ca/board-of-directors/glenn-stowkowy-bio/>.

93 K. Kleiss, “Businessmen attack NDP’s ‘amateur’ policies,” *Edmonton Journal* May 1, 2015, <https://edmontonjournal.com/news/local-news/businessmen-attack-ndps-amateur-policies>. Tim Melton contributed \$2,110 to the UCP in 2020. Also speaking at this press conference was the chair of the board of governors at UAlberta, corporate lawyer, Doug Goss. Goss, too, was identified as a PCP supporter who had donated \$7,450 to the PCP since 2010 and \$5,000 to Jim Prentice’s leadership campaign. He had also served as “a PC election campaign co-chair and a party vice-president.”

Like Tim Melton, Eggert supported the PCP in 2015, with a donation of \$500 to their Edmonton-Rutherford candidate. He donated \$4,232.90 to the UCP between 2018-2019 and \$1,500 in 2020. Ralph Young donated \$1,650 to the UCP in 2020. Also present at that May 2015 press conference was Doug Goss, a lawyer who represents Melcor and other corporate clients. At the time, Goss was the chair of the board of governors of UAlberta.

Trustee Ayaz Bhanji is an associate broker at Re/Max Excellence, specializing in commercial properties. His bio states that he is the principal director of EPC Capital, “an Edmonton-based development and asset management company, [that] owns and manages over \$95 million in real estate assets.”⁹⁴ Bhanji sits on the UAlberta board of governors as the Alumni Association representative. He has a long association with the University of Alberta, having served as president of the Alumni Association, as a senator (2016-2020), and as a member of the Presidential Search Committee that selected William Flanagan as David Turpin’s replacement, as well as the university’s Community Engagement Advisory Board.⁹⁵ He is also a supporter of the UCP, as evidenced by his \$1,050 contribution to that party in 2020.

The Chief Corporate Development Officer of Lloyd Sadd Insurance Brokers, Barry L. James, also currently sits on the both the Property Trust board of directors and the UAlberta’s board of governors’ audit and risk committee (as an external member).⁹⁶ We found a political contribution from Barry James of Edmonton of \$1,000 to the UCP in 2020.

94 This information—including the quotation—is from Mr. Bhanji’s LinkedIn page: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/ayaz-bhanji-7715584/?originalSubdomain=ca>.

95 This information is from Mr. Bhanji’s bio on the homepage of the Property Trust: <https://ualbertapropertiestrustinc.ca/board-of-directors/ayaz-bhanji-bio/>.

96 James is connected to the Edmonton and Alberta governments as well as to numerous corporate and non-corporate boards. He is currently a minister-appointed director of ATB Financial and the co-chair of the Edmonton Mayor’s Business Roundtable. See: <https://ualbertapropertiestrustinc.ca/board-of-directors/barry-l-james-bio/>.

97 Sharman quoted in Parsons, op. cit.

98 Some faculty members have suggested that some of the land be returned to the First Nations that previously occupied it. Others have raised the possibility of using land in and around Edmonton to model regenerative, biodiverse agriculture, train and employ future farmers, and supply food to the university and other communities. But these are not money-making ventures, and the purpose of the Property Trust is to maximize revenue for the university.

99 University of Alberta, Service Excellence Transformation Interim Report (November 2020), p. 9 (<https://www.ualberta.ca/uofa-tomorrow/media-library/set/set-interim-report.pdf>). For a breakdown of numbers by employee categories, see the website of the Non-Academic Staff Association at the University of Alberta, <https://www.nasa.ualberta.ca/position-disruptions-and-job-losses> (accessed February 16, 2021).

Pushed to find private sources of revenue, the UAlberta will now transfer its landholdings to the Property Trust to manage. According to the university’s vice-president of facilities and operations, Andrew Sharman, decisions about how to maximize their value will be “market-driven.”⁹⁷ With four of the 10 directors of the trust coming from real estate development and marketing firms, and the mandate they are being given by the institution’s board of governors, it is hard to see how any other criteria for the use of these properties (e.g., educational, research, heritage, conservation, or the return of land to Indigenous bands) could predominate.⁹⁸ There has not yet been any indication that the board of governors or the directors of the Property Trust intend to consult with university constituencies about the uses of university-owned land. (These constituencies have had no say in the fate of the historic Ring Houses.)

While tuition increases and the commercialization of land holdings appear to be the administration’s primary plans for raising revenue, major cost-cutting measures have been underway. The university has been undergoing a painful administrative “restructuring” process, entailing the firing of hundreds of highly qualified, non-academic employees. Approximately 400 positions were eliminated between November 2019 and March 2020,⁹⁹ and as of May 2021 it was reported that 800 positions had been cut and another 400 would

“The university has been undergoing a painful administrative “restructuring” process, entailing the firing of hundreds of highly qualified, non-academic employees.”

follow.¹⁰⁰ The university’s executive estimated that this shrinkage of the university’s technical and administrative staff by 1,200 would cut \$95 million from its budget.¹⁰¹

In mid-July 2021 the administration informed custodial staff that it would be outsourcing their jobs as of October 1st.¹⁰² Facilities and Operations claimed that the contracted company would be able to provide the services at half the current cost. Given that these approximately 60 workers, predominantly racialized, new Canadians, are the lowest-paid staff at the university, earning, on average, \$28,000/year, this announcement was met with outrage from the campus unions and many faculty members. Some connected the savings from these lay-offs to the salaries of the new executive deans and the senior managers that are being hired, asking if the administration is further immiserating low-wage workers to pay the salaries of new high echelon managers.¹⁰³

In addition, the contracts of hundreds of academic teaching staff (ATS) (non-tenured but highly qualified instructors) have not been renewed. Exactly how many ATS have lost their employment has not been revealed by the administration, but the Academic Staff Association (AASUA) reports that its ATS membership shrank by 200 between October 2019 and October 2020. Tenured faculty who leave or retire are not, for the most part, being replaced. As a result, some departments’ capacity to teach various programs or offer graduate supervision in certain fields is disappearing. This is notably the case in the Faculty of Arts, where the current complement of “active” faculty members (those not seconded to administrative positions) is now roughly equivalent to what it was in 1995, following the budget cuts of the first Klein government.¹⁰⁴

In a further effort to reduce salary costs, the administration and the board demanded wage reductions and freezes for academic staff (AASUA) and non-academic staff (NASA) in contract negotiations in 2020-21.

In November 2020, the UAlberta board’s negotiating team presented its opening collective bargaining positions to the Academic Staff Association. These included a demand for a 3% rollback of wages across the board, followed by a three-year salary freeze.¹⁰⁵ They proposed an even deeper wage cut for Academic Teaching Staff (ATS), who teach 49% of the undergraduate courses at the university, and at lower pay rates than tenured professors.¹⁰⁶ Other proposals sought to entrench greater managerial authority and to suppress wages in the long term. In addition, the board proposed to lower the threshold for declaring a “financial emergency” and to substantially reduce the president’s obligations to negotiate measures to respond to the emergency with the Academic Staff Association (which could include voluntary severance incentives or lay-offs).¹⁰⁷

100 The source for the 1200 NASA and 200 ATS staff losses is the president of AASUA, via email, April 20, 2021. The 800 figure comes from *Globe and Mail* story published May 7: <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/canada/article-u-of-a-opens-bargaining-with-proposal-that-staff-pay-back-money/?fbclid=IwAR2Ml4a5mdH3kh3WxQkp8ia3-nqLEluBVQDM9ekrNNXECNkxhv-P1YQ4f5E>.

101 President Bill Flanagan, “From the President’s desk: budget 2021 update,” The Quad (University of Alberta administration’s blog), February 26, 2021. <https://www.ualberta.ca/the-quad/2021/02/from-the-presidents-desk-budget-2021-update.html>

102 Ashley Joannou, “University of Alberta outsourcing the last of its cleaning staff,” *Edmonton Journal*, July 15, 2021, <https://edmontonjournal.com/news/local-news/university-of-alberta-outsourcing-60-cleaning-jobs>.

103 NASA (union), “Custodial outsourcing: July 13, 2021,” <https://www.nasa.ualberta.ca/custodial-outsourcing-july-13-2021>.

104 Arts Faculty numbers fell from 400 to 300 between 1990 and 1995, according to figures given by the former dean of Arts in 2012 (Pratt 2012). After rebuilding, the second high point of the Arts Faculty complement was 361, reached in 2009 before the budget cuts of the Redford Government. (Source: Faculty Evaluation Committee Report for 2014.) The 2021 figure, provided by the current interim dean of Arts, is 310.

105 Academic Staff Association, University of Alberta, “Bargaining update from the President,” November 18, 2020.

106 The 49% figure is from Chair of the ATS constituency committee of AASUA (email to Adkin).

107 The opening proposal of the UAlberta board of governors to AASUA was tabled on November 12, 2020 and provided to members of the Association by the AASUA executive. The BoG proposed to change the definition of a financial emergency from “a condition in which the continued existence of the University of Alberta is placed in jeopardy by a deficit which has occurred or is predicted and projections show continuing deficits” to “a condition in which the continued financial health of the University of Alberta is placed in jeopardy due to the reduction (or projected reduction) of operating revenues by 10% or greater in a fiscal year.”

The board's opening proposal to NASA at the beginning of May 2021 also sought a 3% across-the-board wage cut, followed by wage freezes to March 2024, and in addition asked for the *retroactive repayment* of wage increases that had been previously agreed to, on the grounds that these were "above market value."¹⁰⁸ The offer further demanded salary scale suppression for certain job categories, significant benefit reductions (including the introduction of co-pay), and elimination of joint benefits management. It should be noted that NASA members have borne the brunt of round after round of budget cuts at the university, their workloads have increased enormously since the Redford government budget cuts of 2011-2014, and they are among the lowest-paid categories of employees. The senior administrators on the board's bargaining team, on the other hand, are among the highest paid employees of the university. The administration justified these demands by saying that the alternative was further job cuts for NASA members. In other words, this came across as exploiting the fear and distress of the workers most vulnerable to layoffs. Following negative public reaction, the administration withdrew the demand for retroactive wage repayments.¹⁰⁹ In a May 10, 2021 bargaining update to AASUA members, the association's president concluded that these opening proposals to the unions were indicative of "the degree to which the Board's intention ... is not simply to reduce costs, but also to significantly increase management rights while suppressing the unions and eliminating any vestiges of collegiality, collaboration, and consultation at the University of Alberta."

Indeed, this is the overall tenor of relations not only between the unions and the board (and senior administration), but between the General Faculties Council and the board (and senior administration), as we explain in the following section. Working conditions as well as long-standing traditions of collegial governance have been pushed to the brink by the UCP's aggressive budget cuts to the UAlberta and by its installation of a set of "public" board members that is closely allied with the government's restructuring objectives for the sector.

108 The board asked for "retroactive salary range reductions in the range of 0.3 to 25.9 per cent for positions such as accounting clerk, administrative coordinator, entry, intermediate and senior administrative support, classroom lab technologist, journeyman electrician and maintenance service worker." Anna Junker, "U of A contract proposal would reduce pay retroactively, require staff to repay 'overpayments,'" *Edmonton Journal*, May 6, 2021, <https://edmontonjournal.com/news/local-news/u-of-a-contract-proposal-would-reduce-pay-retroactively-require-staff-to-repay-overpayments>.

109 Bargaining update from the president of AASUA, May 10, 2021.

“Faculty, staff, and student representation is stymied by the current structure of the *PSLA*.”

Governance Struggles at the University of Alberta

Because of the board composition set out in the *PSLA* (section 16) for universities (CARUs and UUs), the board of governors at the University of Alberta comprises 10 members who, in principle, represent the “general public.” In addition, the Minister of Advanced Education may appoint “additional persons” whose number is not specified. University constituencies are permitted only to nominate candidates for seats on the board; the nominees must be approved by the Minister of Advanced Education. The academic staff at the UAlberta have only two representatives,¹¹⁰ 30,000 undergraduate students have two, 7,600 graduate students have one, and non-academic staff¹¹¹ have one. Alumni are permitted two representatives, typically drawn from the executive of the Alumni Association.

The board committee that oversees the investment of the university’s endowment funds excludes the representatives of faculty, students, and staff on the grounds that these governors lack “independence.”¹¹² As set out unhelpfully in the bylaws adopted by the board in June 2021, lack of independence means that the governor has a “direct or indirect relationship arising from their status as a Nominated Governor or Public Governor that could, in the view of the Board, reasonably be expected to interfere with or influence the exercise of a Governor’s independent judgment.”¹¹³ The nature of the possible conflicts that a student, faculty, or staff representative might have vis-à-vis university investment decisions is not specified. As campaigns mount across the country calling on universities to divest their endowment and pension funds from fossil-fuel corporations and their bankers, the lack of representation of faculty, students, and staff on the standing committee charged with recommending investment decisions to the board could prove to be a serious obstacle to divestment.

In other ways, too, faculty, staff, and student representation is stymied by the current structure of the *PSLA* (60 [2]). The board is empowered to designate and de-designate categories of employees or individual employees as academic staff members of the institution, meaning that the board decides which employees are inside or outside of the collective bargaining association. In other sectors, such decisions would be made by the provincial Labour Relations Board.

Figure 3.1 shows the number of board seats (as of January 7, 2021) allocated to each group on the board of the University of Alberta. Note that representatives of faculty come from the General Faculties Council (one)¹¹⁴ and the Association of Academic Staff (one) and are not directly elected by faculty members.

110 In 2015, AASUA membership was approximately 4,200. As of May 2021, the count was 3,784.

111 NASA membership has fallen from about 6,000 to 5,000 members in the last few years.

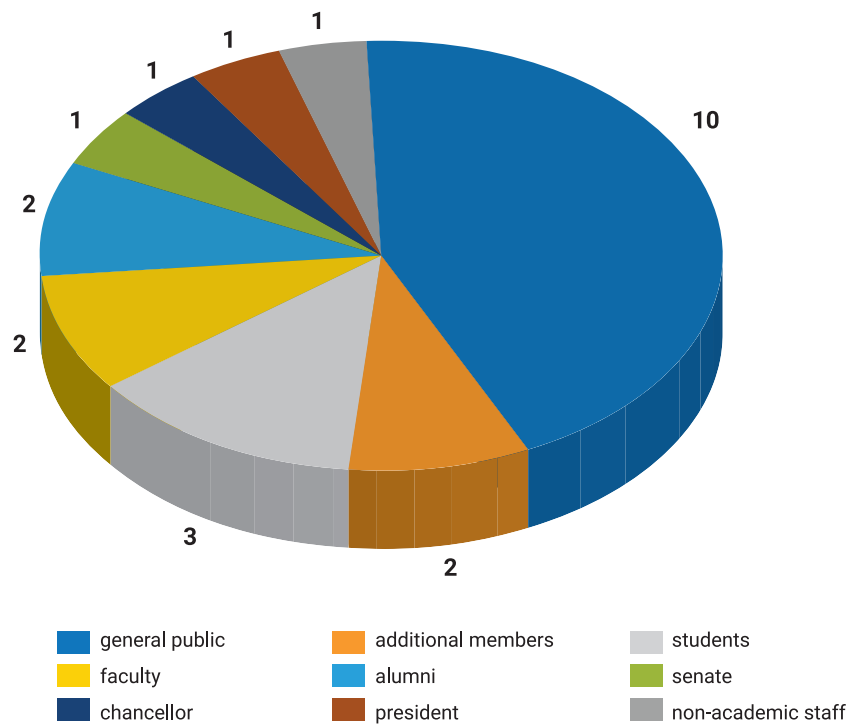
112 Board of Governors, University of Alberta, “Board Investment Committee Terms of Reference,” 1. <https://www.ualberta.ca/governance/media-library/documents/member-zone/board-standing-committees/bic-tofr.pdf>. Investment Committee membership as of November 5, 2020: <https://www.ualberta.ca/governance/member-zone/board-of-governors/board-committee-memberships.pdf>.

113 Board of Governors Bylaws, last approved March 25, 2022, p. 10, <https://www.ualberta.ca/governance/media-library/documents/member-zone/board-principle-documents/board-of-governors-bylaws-06-18-21.pdf>.

114 The General Faculties Council, or GFC, is a statutory body comprising *ex officio* and elected members, with elected members representing faculty, students, and non-academic staff. It is chaired by the president of the university, and it is the university’s senior academic governance body.

As of September 2020, a total of 14 UCP appointees had been added to the board of governors of the University of Alberta. The appointments of six NDP government appointees were rescinded before their terms had expired. Among these was the board chair, Michael Phair, who had been appointed to a second three-year term by the NDP government in January 2019, and who was replaced by Kathryn Chisholm.¹¹⁵ Two of the UCP appointees (Kaumeyer and Rajotte) resigned before long to take up government appointments. The remaining 12 UCP appointees include two “additional” members beyond the normal 10 public members and constitute a voting majority on the board, overwhelming the six representatives of students, staff, and faculty.

Figure 3.1: Distribution of Seats on the Board of Governors, University of Alberta



Source: University of Alberta, board of governors, membership list as of January 7, 2021.

Table 3.1 presents the 14 general public members of the board of governors who were appointed by the UCP cabinet by order-in-council between May 2019 and September 2020. It further shows the external members who have been appointed to standing committees by the voting members of the board. The third column in the table identifies significant business and other associations, and the fourth column reports financial contributions to political parties. Six of the UCP's 14 appointees have records of past political contributions to the party that appointed them.

¹¹⁵ Order-in-Council 142/2019 (August 15, 2019) rescinded the appointments of NDP-appointees Michael Phair, Kirk MacLeod, Zahra Somani, Sheri Somerville, Claudette Tardif, and Owen Tobert. It appointed Kathryn Chisholm (as chair), and Daniel Eggert, Larry Kaumeyer, James Rajotte, Tom Ross, and Rakesh Saraf, all with terms beginning August 15, 2019.

Table 3.1: Public and External Members of the Board of Governors of the University of Alberta, March 31, 2021

BOARD MEMBERS (general public and additional)	POSITION (board committee)	SHORT BIOS	POLITICAL DONATIONS
Bhambhani, Zarina (additional)	Audit & Risk	B.Comm. Chartered accountant and partner with KPMG's Audit Practice. Director and treasurer of the Edmonton Downtown Business Association.	
Bridgeman, Guy	Vice-chair of the board and member of the HR & Compensation Cttee.	PhD. Econ. Former EPCOR executive. Member of the advisory board for the Rohit Group of Companies.	
Butler, Charlene	Audit & Risk; Learning, Research, & Student Experience	B.Comm. and MBA (UCalgary). President of Butler Business Solutions; former regional branch manager for ING/Intact Insurance. Former senior risk analyst for the Government of Alberta. Member of the Alberta Automobile Insurance Rate Board.	
Chisholm, Kathryn	Chair of the board; ex-officio member of all standing committees	MBA, LLB. Senior VP (Legal and External Affairs) for Capital Power Corporation since July 2009. Before that she was senior VP, general counsel and corporate secretary for EPCOR Utilities Inc. from 2005-2009. Long career in regulatory and business law, advising corporations in Alberta's oil, gas, and pipeline industry.	2019: \$2,000 to UCP
Eggert, Daniel	Governance; Learning, Research & Student Experience	BA Econ. (UAlberta). VP Property Development Division at Melcor Developments Ltd. (Calgary); government relations associate, University of Alberta 2009-2010.	2020: \$1,000 donation to Edmonton riding 43 - Edmonton-Southwest - United Conservative Party of Alberta 2019: First quarter of 2019: \$750 donation to the UCP 2018: First quarter: donated \$6,000 to the UCP 2015: \$500 donation to Labossiere, Chris; \$500 donation to Progressive Conservative Association of Alberta
Hale, Mona	Audit & Risk; Finance & Property	B.Comm. Chartered accountant. Director with Fortis Alberta (gas & electricity supplier) and senior VP at Finning Intern'l. Formerly CFO of the Edmonton Economic Development Corporation, and a former director of TEC Edmonton.	
Kaumeyer, Larry (resigned Nov 19, 2019)		BA (History & Econ). Member of the board of directors of the Alberta Prosperity Fund, a third party advertiser set up in November 2015 to support right-wing parties. APF describes itself as "the conservative response to left leaning coalitions and governments whose anti-industry pro-government policies are destroying Alberta's advantage." From December 2019 to August 2020, he was a "strategic advisor" to Kenney, and in August 2020 he was appointed Kenney's principal secretary.	2020: UCP donation of \$500 2019: UCP donation of \$400

MacKinnon, Janice	Finance & Property	PhD. History. Former minister in several NDP governments in SK between 1991-2003. Appointed by the UCP government to chair panel on Alberta's Finances in 2019. It is her report that is being used as the rationale for reducing the operating grants to universities. Executive fellow at the Calgary School of Public Policy; chair of the board of directors of the Institute for Research on Public Policy; member of the board of the Canada West Foundation; advisor to the Ecofiscal Commission; chair of Canada's Economic Advisory Council from 2010 to 2015 (under the Harper Conservative government); co-chair of CD Howe Institute's fiscal and tax working group.	
Policicchio, Sett	Reputation & Public Affairs	Professional Electrical Engineer, P. Eng. Former executive of ATCO (whose CEO is Nancy S. Southern, economic advisor to the Kenney government)	
Rajotte, James (resigned April 30, 2020)		BA, PolSci, UAlberta; B.SocSci, Univ. Ottawa. Appointed by Jason Kenney as Alberta's senior representative to the United States in May 2020. Previously, he was a Conservative Party MP representing Edmonton Southwest (2000-2004) and Edmonton Leduc (2004-2008), serving with Jason Kenney in the federal Conservative caucus. From 2015 to 2020, he was VP government relations for Rogers Communications. He is a former director of the Alberta Enterprise Group, a "business advocacy" organization made of CEOs, including Murray Edwards (CNRL), Marcel Coutu (Canadian Oil Sands), and others in finance, construction, and other sectors.	2019: \$2,000 to the UCP Association (\$1,000 in Q.1, \$1,000 Q.2) 2018: \$1,700 total to UCP (\$500 to UCP for Calgary - Northwest Const. (Q.4), \$1,200 to UCP Assoc. (Q.4)) 2017: Leadership contests: \$850 to Kenney for leadership of PC, then \$2,500 to Kenney for leadership of UCP
Ross, Tom	HR & Compensation; Governance	LLB. Employer-side labour lawyer at McLennan Ross LLP. Member of the board of the libertarian Justice Centre. Co-founded Ethical Oil Institute with Ezra Levant. Director, Canadian Association of Counsel to Employers; member, Canadian Bar Association Labour Law Section; lawyer for Painted Pony Energy Ltd. (natural gas producer in NE BC), Birchcliff Energy Ltd.	2019: Donation from Thomas Ross of Calgary to UCP of \$2,000 2017: \$1,500 donation to Jason Kenney's leadership race
Saraf, Rakesh	HR & Compensation; Finance & Property	Management degree. "Senior private equity and infrastructure professional" [LinkedIn bio]. Director for POI Business Interiors and Skyline Renewables. Head of Private Investments for the Alberta Teachers' Retirement Fund (2010-2018). Senior VP, Private Equity, for AIMCo (2000-2009).	
Whittaker, Paul	Learning, Research & Student Experience; Reputation & Public Affairs	Former Deputy Minister in PC governments from 2008-2014. CEO of Alberta Forest Products Assoc. Runs Stretford Accounting. Chair of the board of directors of the Capital Region Housing Corporation. Past board member of the Edmonton Economic Development Corporation.	2019: \$375 to the UCP 2018: \$315.65 to the UCP 2015: \$350 to PCP
Zenari, Lillian (additional)	Audit & Risk Cttee.	B.Comm. Senior assistant vice-president of Canadian Western Bank (since 2014). Formerly the controller for EPCOR Water Services. Chartered accountant in the office of the Auditor General of Alberta (1991-1995).	

External members (appointed by the board of governors) as of March 31, 2021, with end-of-term date in parentheses			
Barry, James L. (June 30, 2022)	Audit & Risk	Chief corporate development officer at Lloyd Sudd Insurance brokers. Board member of Corus Entertainment, ATB Financial, AutoCanada; previously worked at PricewaterhouseCoopers.	James Lee Barry of Edmonton donated \$500 to UCP in 2020 YTD (September 30)
Brodersen, Derek (June 30, 2022)	Investment	MBA (Finance). Alberta Teachers' Retirement Fund (CIO, 2008-present, portfolio manager, 1997-2008); Pacific Pension and Investment Institute (chair, 2020-present; BoD, 2019-present); Canadian Coalition for Good Governance (chair, 2019-present, BoD, 2013-present); Crown Life Investment Management (VP, 1996-7).	
Butler, John (June 30, 2022)	Investment	Lawyer at Bryan & Co. LLP (firm associated with the PCP); former director of TELUS and other businesses. Previously appointed to the UAlberta BoG by PC governments.	
Chia, Jonathan (June 30, 2021)	Finance & Property	B.Comm. Gratum Consulting (president, May 2020-present); Consentia (president and partner, May 2020-present); Pangman Development (CFO, May 2020; president); Maclab Properties (president & CEO, September 2016-May 2019); Melcor REIT (CFO, 2013-2016); Matrikon (CFO, 2008-2011); KPMG (senior accountant, 2002-2005).	2015: Progressive Conservative Association of Alberta (\$1,000)
Danchilla, Hal (June 30, 2023)	Reputation & Public Affairs	BA, UAlberta. His page on the website of the Canadian Strategy Group, which he cofounded in 2008, claims that "almost every political event in Alberta over the last 30 years has been shaped, advised, managed, directed, or informed by Hal," that he "has managed and advised leadership and election campaigns for Ralph Klein, Stockwell Day, Jason Kenney, and Edmonton mayoral candidate Stephen Mandel," and that he is a "trusted advisor and campaign strategist for Jason Kenney." Alberta Lobby Registry shows that he acted as a lobbyist for TransCanada, Capital Power, and other corporations or associations in 2020-2021.	2020: Quarterly contributions: UCP \$3,743; riding 40 - Edmonton-Riverview UCP \$500 2019: (32 - Edmonton-Glenora - UCP \$750); (66 - Innisfail-Sylvan Lake - UCP \$558.25) 2018: UCP \$3,318.75; (42 - Edmonton-Riverview - UCP \$115.65); (32 - Edmonton-Glenora - UCP \$93.75) Numerous other annual, campaign, and senatorial contributions dating back to 2004.
Featherstone, Kelly (June 30, 2024)	Investment	External member added to the Investment Committee in 2021 for a three-year term. Actuarial analyst. B.Sc. UCalgary in Pure Mathematics and Actuarial Science. Director of Client Risk Management at the Alberta Investment Management Co. (AIMCo).	
Holowinsky, Maria (June 30, 2024)	Investment	CWB Wealth Management (director of research, 2017-present); Adriot Investment Management (president, CEO, 1996-2017); Alberta Teacher's Retirement Fund (board member, 2017-present; portfolio manager, 1989-96); Alberta/Edmonton Economic Development Corporation (board member, 2014-present); Athabasca University Faculty of Business (Investor Advisory Group member, 2013-present); Rotary Club of Edmonton Riverview (board member, 2010-2012).	

Jeraj, Shenaz (June 30, 2022)	Audit & Risk	B.Sc., Computing Science. Financial and management (administration) for companies in the banking, chemicals, forestry, oil and gas, health care, and education sectors as well as for governments.	2019: \$450 to the AB NDP in Q.2 2004: \$750 donation to Sherwood Park riding 09-Calgary-Elbow – Progressive Conservative Association of Alberta.
Kaiser, Barry (June 30, 2022)	Audit & Risk	B.Comm. RBC Dominion Securities (portfolio manager, wealth advisor, 2014-present); HSBC Private Wealth Services (regional VP, 2014, investment counsellor, 2006-14); MD Private Investment Management (investment counsellor, 2002-2006); Butterfield Asset Management (project, portfolio manager, 1995-2000).	
Kennedy, Martin (June 30, 2023)	Reputation & Public Affairs	MBA. EPCOR (director of public affairs, 2017 - present); Capital Power (VP external affairs, 2015-2017); Government of Alberta (deputy chief of staff, Public Affairs, 2014-2015); Capital Power (2009-2013); EPCOR (2003-2009). Premier's Council on Culture (public member); Results-Based Budgeting Challenge Panel (panel member); Premier's Council on Art & Culture (public member); Canadian Centre for Corporate Social Responsibility (Advisory Committee, Feb 2011 – Present); Oil Sands Program co-lead (Banff Forum, 2011).	
McPherson, Sandy (June 30, 2022)	Investment	Chartered Accountant. City of Edmonton (chief investment officer, former portfolio manager); City of Calgary (Investment Committee, external member); AIMCo/ Province of Alberta Investment Management division (former intern).	
Muzyka, Ray (June 2021)	Human Resources & Compensation	MD. Threshold Impact (founder, CEO, 2012-present); University of Alberta Venture Monitoring Service (founding chair, 2013-present); Creative Destruction Lab (fellow, 2013-present); Voyager Capital (advisory board member, 2019-present); iNovia Capital (investment committee member, Venture Advisor, 2013-present); Ioterra (advisory board member, board observer, 2020-present); Arbutus Medical (board member, 2018-present). Previously appointed to the UAlberta BoG in May 2014 and 2017.	
Parks, Robert (June 30, 2022)	Governance	MBA. RC Strategies (partner, 2008- present); EPCOR (manager, Stakeholder Consultation, 2008); Banister Research (2006-2008); Myers Norris Oenny (senior consultant (2005-2006); City of Edmonton (market planner, 2001-2005).	2018: Edmonton United Conservative Party (\$3,318.75); Edmonton 42 – Edmonton-Riverview – United Conservative Party (\$115.65); Edmonton 32 - Edmonton-Glenora - United Conservative Party (\$93.75)
Pontikes, Peter (June 30, 2022)	Investment	MBA. Executive VP at AIMCo (Public Equities); board member of the TMX Group; Barclays Global Investors (principal-portfolio manager, 1994-2001); Alberta Treasury (portfolio analyst, 1989-94); Edmonton Community Foundation (investment committee member, 2015-present)	

Puligandla, Giri (June 30, 2022)	Learning, Research & Student Experience	M.Sc. Homeward Trust Edmonton (CSO, August 2019-present); Government of Alberta (manager, Strategy Implementation, Addictions & Mental Health, 2017-2019); Homeward Trust (director, 2011-2017); Alberta Caregivers Association, Schizophrenia Association.	
Teskey, Robert (June 30, 2022)	Human Resources & Compensation	LL.B. Owner of Field Law (corporate law). Lists University of Alberta as a "major client." Board member for TEC Edmonton. Has previously been appointed to the UAlberta BoG.	2019: \$5,000 to Alberta Party Political Association (\$4,000 in Q.1, \$1,000 in Q.4) 2018: \$2,000 to Alberta Party (\$500 in Q.2, \$1,500 in Q.4); \$2,000 to Alberta Party - Edmonton Riverview Constituency (Q.4) 2012: \$1,000 to PC Assoc. of AB; \$1,000 to Steve Young PC Campaign 2011: \$1,000 to PC Assoc. of AB 2008: \$4,724.49 to PC Assoc. of AB; \$1,400 to Wendy Andrews PC Campaign 2007: \$5,037.76 to PC Assoc. of AB (\$400 was to Edmonton-Riverview Const.) 2006: \$400 to PC Assoc. of AB, Edmonton-Riverview Const. 2005: \$4,853.73 to PC Assoc. of AB
Wilsdon, Michelle (June 30, 2023)	Learning, Research & Student Experience	Member of the Enoch Cree Nation, representing ECN on the Indigenous Advisory and Monitoring Committee of the Trans Mountain Expansion Project. Former director of economic development in the Ministry of Indigenous Relations, Government of Alberta.	

Sources: Information about business and other associations was drawn from multiple web searches, including such sources as LinkedIn accounts and corporate websites. Data on political contributions come from Elections Alberta <https://efpublic.elections.ab.ca/> going back to 2004.

Board chair Kathryn Chisholm, who contributed \$2,000 to the UCP in 2019, has acted as legal counsel for a long list of corporations in the oil, gas, pipeline, and utilities sectors, and is currently a senior vice-president of Capital Power (the operator of coal plants which have been converting to natural gas). At the September 28, 2020 meeting of the General Faculties Council (GFC), where a discussion of three scenarios for the radical restructuring of the university was on the agenda, Chisholm reminded the assembled representatives that it is the board of governors that makes budget decisions for the university, and that the GFC has, under the PSLA, only an advisory role.¹¹⁶ She urged GFC representatives (who are elected by their respective constituencies) to "accept the inevitability of the cuts" and warned them not to "filibuster," but to get on with making their recommendations to the board. Notwithstanding the implications of cutting \$216 million from the university's budget over four years (the estimate at that time), Chisholm

¹¹⁶ Transcript of Chisholm's address to the GFC, made available to attendees of the Zoom meeting.

“In March 2020, the UCP cabinet added none other than Janice MacKinnon to the board of governors of the University of Alberta—author of the report that was used by the government to justify its budget cuts to the post-secondary education sector and its demands for public sector wage reductions.”

repeatedly suggested that it would be possible to do so without “irreparably damaging” the university, and while retaining its “top five” ranking (in Canada).

In response to protests from faculty members about the cuts driving restructuring at UAlberta, Chisholm tweeted on November 20, 2020: “I don’t think the UofA can get a bye [sic] on cuts to its CAG [Campus Alberta Grant] in an environment in which funding is also being cut to healthcare, K-12, policing and AISH, however we should push them hard to free us to raise alternate [sic] revenues and decrease our reliance on Gov’t funding.”¹¹⁷ In effect, she suggested that by demanding a restoration of funding, the PSE sector would be guilty of taking money away from the sick, children needing elementary education, citizens needing police protection, and disabled citizens needing income support. This framing intentionally evades the question of whether any of these cuts are necessary. Further, the statement validated the UCP government’s narrative that private sources of funding for universities are available and that it is somehow problematic for public education institutions to be “reliant” on public funding.

Chisholm’s position is shared by UAlberta President Bill Flanagan, who has also publicly urged the UCP government to untie the university’s hands to raise private revenues and who celebrated the announcement in April 2021 that the government plans to “deconsolidate” the university’s budget from that of the province.¹¹⁸ On that occasion, Ms. Chisholm enthused that: “This means we will no longer be subject to the same financial pressures that the province is and it will loosen us up to be able to raise our own revenue from alternative sources.”¹¹⁹ She viewed the Alberta 2030 strategy paper, discussed in Part 2, as pushing the university to contribute more to the province’s economic diversification “through a lot of innovation and commercialization.”¹²⁰ Questioned by an *Edmonton Journal* reporter in June 2021 about the feasibility of compensating for a 33% cut to its operating grant with property sales and leases, Ms. Chisholm insisted: “The University of Alberta will continue to be one of the world’s best universities, by gum or by golly.”¹²¹ We see in these statements by the board chair both the assertion of the authority of the board over the General Faculties Council—a point we return to below—and the echoing of the UCP government discourse about the objectives of its restructuring strategy.

As mentioned above, the board acts as the employer of the non-academic and academic staff at the university. It is therefore significant that, in March 2020, the UCP cabinet added none other than Janice MacKinnon to the board of governors of the University of Alberta—author of the report that was used by the government to justify its budget cuts to the post-secondary education sector and its demands for public sector wage reductions. Sometime between March and July 2020, MacKinnon and Mona Hale were added to the membership of the Finance and Property Committee—the

117 The tweet is found here: <https://twitter.com/KateChisholm15/status/1329801495043133440?s=20>.

118 Bill Flanagan, “Alberta 2030 Strategy: Highlights. New strategy gives U of A greater flexibility to grow and innovate,” *The Quad* (University of Alberta administration’s blog), April 29, 2021, <https://www.ualberta.ca/the-quad/2021/04/alberta-2030-strategy-highlights.html>.

119 Chisholm quoted in Khadra Ahmed, “Reactions to Alberta 2030: Student leaders, U of A unions, NDP critic, and BoG chair,” *The Gateway*, May 1, 2021, <https://thegatewayonline.ca/2021/04/reactions-to-alberta-2030-student-leaders-u-of-a-unions-ndp-critic-and-bog-chair/>.

120 Chisholm quoted in Ahmed, May 1, 2021, op cit.

121 Chisholm quoted in Stolte, June 15, 2021, op cit.

committee that deals with the institution's budget—as members above and beyond its normal composition (no more than seven). As a result, five UCP-appointed public members have since outnumbered the four faculty, staff, and student representatives on this committee. (The tenth member of this committee is a commercial real estate executive, Ayaz Bhanji, mentioned above.)¹²²

In addition to Chisholm, the board's corporate lawyers include Tom Ross, an employer-side labour relations lawyer with McLennan Ross LLP, and Robert Teskey, an external member who sits on the Human Resources and Compensation standing committee. Teskey has held previous appointments to the board. His firm, Field Law, represents the University of Alberta.

Several appointments are interesting because of the closeness of the appointees to the premier, Jason Kenney, and to business groups that have supported the UCP. Larry Kaumeyer is a member of the board of directors of the Alberta Prosperity Fund, a third-party advertiser set up in November 2015 to support the right-wing parties that were determined to defeat the NDP government. From December 2019 to August 2020, he acted as a “strategic advisor” to Premier Jason Kenney and was then appointed the premier's principal secretary. He donated \$1,400 to the UCP in 2020. Kaumeyer resigned from the board after only three months, in November 2019.

Another appointee, James Rajotte, is (like Jason Kenney) a former Member of Parliament for the Conservative Party of Canada who represented two Edmonton ridings between 2000 and 2008. In his post-MP life, he sat on the board of directors of the Alberta Enterprise Group,¹²³ a corporate lobby group, where he rubbed shoulders with oil industry and banking CEOs. Rajotte donated \$1,200 to the UCP in 2018. In May 2020, Premier Kenney appointed Rajotte as Alberta's Senior Representative to the United States. Rajotte resigned from the UAlberta board on April 30, 2020.

External (non-voting) board member Hal Danchilla, who sits on the board's Reputation and Public Affairs Committee, is a long-time PC and UCP political strategist and self-described “trusted advisor and campaign strategist for Jason Kenney.”¹²⁴ According to Press Progress, Danchilla and Preston Manning co-founded the political action committee called “Alberta Can't Wait” (whose purpose was to unite conservatives into one party), as well as the lobby firm Canadian Strategy Group.¹²⁵ Danchilla also has a long history of political contributions to conservative parties and politicians. According to Elections Canada, from 2007 to 2019 he contributed \$16,072 to the Conservative Party of Canada. According to Elections Alberta, he contributed \$2,500 to Jason Kenney's campaign for the 2017 leadership of the UCP, \$3,318.75 to the UCP in 2018, and \$3,743 to the UCP in 2020.

122 According to the membership list of the board dated February 3, 2020, the Finance and Property Committee was at that time constituted of a representative each of undergraduate students, graduate students, non-academic staff, faculty, two public members (both appointed by the UCP), and one external member. Public member Guy Bridgeman had been added as a temporary extra member needed for “succession planning purposes.” (He remained on this committee in August 2021.) Thus, the committee had eight members at that time. The UCP-appointed public members (three) and the external member were not able to outvote the four representatives of university constituencies (should either of these groups vote as blocs on an issue).

123 According to its website, the Alberta Enterprise Group was created by a group of CEOs in 2007 as a “business advocacy organization.” See: <https://albertaenterprisegroup.com/home/about/>.

124 Canadian Strategy Group, “Hal Danchilla,” <https://www.cdstrategy.com/hal-danchilla> (accessed February 16, 2021).

125 Press Progress, “Lobbyists With Ties to Jason Kenney's UCP Are Helping Private Health Companies Lobby Alberta's Ministry of Health,” November 19, 2020, <https://pressprogress.ca/lobbyists-with-ties-to-jason-kenneys-ucp-are-helping-private-health-companies-lobby-albertas-ministry-of-health/>. Alberta Can't Wait was de-registered by Elections Alberta after failing to submit its 2017 annual report.

According to the research group Desmog, Tom Ross co-founded the Ethical Oil Institute with Ezra Levant (who is also the director, since 2015, of the alt-right Rebel Media).¹²⁶ As we know, Jason Kenney and other conservatives (such as Andrew Scheer) have had long-standing connections to Rebel Media.¹²⁷ Like Chisholm, Ross contributed \$2,000 to the UCP in 2019.

Other “general public” appointees with known connections to the Progressive Conservative Party (PCP) or the UCP include Daniel Eggert, the Melcor Developments executive mentioned above, and Paul Whittaker, a former deputy minister in PCP governments from 2008–2014. Whittaker, appointed to the board in March 2020, made donations to the UCP in 2018 and 2019 amounting to \$690.65. He is also a senior associate with the lobbying and public relations firm Global Political Affairs. This association connects Whittaker to the University of Alberta’s VP External Relations, Elan MacDonald, who was appointed to this position in November 2020. MacDonald was the senior vice-president at Global Public Affairs, and a lobbyist for the doctors and developers seeking Alberta Health Services approval to build a private surgical hospital in Edmonton.¹²⁸ Before that, she was deputy chief of staff to Progressive Conservative premiers Ed Stelmach and Alison Redford, and campaign manager for Progressive Conservative MLA Gary Mar, who ran for the leadership of that party in 2011.¹²⁹ Thus, she has long-standing connections to the PCP (which merged with the Wildrose Party in 2017 to form the UCP). Global Public Affairs’ vice-chair is Pierre Alvarez, the former president of the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers (CAPP); the firm has a record of contributions to the Progressive Conservative Party of Alberta. From 2005 to 2015, Global Political Affairs contributed \$44,618.75 to the PCP. (After 2015, corporate and union donations to political parties were banned by legislation passed by the NDP government.)

A deep-rooted problem with the composition of the PSEI boards in Alberta has been their heavy weighting toward corporate lawyers and accountants as well as CEOs from construction, property development, financial, and oil and gas corporations. The UAlberta board has for many years had corporate executives from the oil, gas, coal, and property development industries on its board of directors, as described in Adkin (2021). The UCalgary, likewise, has an enduring close relationship with the oil and gas industry, which is represented on its board of governors. Citizens with other educational and societal backgrounds have been largely absent from representation on the boards—something the NDP government tried to change during its term in office. The UAlberta board lost its non-corporate public members in August 2019; its current socioeconomic composition is shown in Table 3.1.

In light of the preponderance of government appointees on the board, as well as their general alignment with the UCP’s policy objectives, faculty, student,

126 Desmog, “Ethical Oil Institute,” <https://www.desmogblog.com/ethical-oil-institute> (accessed February 16, 2021).

127 Justin Ling, “Andrew Scheer’s Ties to Rebel Media are Now Impossible to Deny,” *The Walrus*, October 20, 2017, <https://thewalrus.ca/andrew-scheers-ties-to-rebel-media-are-now-impossible-to-deny/>. A former producer for Ezra Levant’s Rebel Media was hired as Jason Kenney’s issues manager when Kenney became Premier. Kenney frequently adopts his political discourse from Levant, e.g., “ethical oil,” and the characterizations of David Suzuki as “hypocritical,” “crazy,” “anti-Albertan,” etc. See Max Fawcett, “Jason Kenney takes the words right out of Ezra Levant’s mouth,” *Maclean’s* September 17, 2019, <https://www.macleans.ca/opinion/jason-kenney-takes-the-words-right-out-of-ezra-levants-mouth/>.

128 Charles Rusnell and Jennie Russell, “Proposed \$200M private orthopedic surgical facility would be largest in Alberta’s history,” *CBC News*, August 10, 2020, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/edmonton/private-orthopedic-surgical-alberta-health-1.5678883>.

129 David Climenhaga, “Corporate lobbyist and former aide to two Conservative premiers named University of Alberta External Relations VP,” *Alberta Politics* blog, November 16, 2020, <https://albertapolitics.ca/2020/11/corporate-lobbyist-and-former-aide-to-two-conservative-premiers-named-university-of-alberta-external-relations-vp/>.

“In light of the preponderance of government appointees on the board, as well as their general alignment with the UCP’s policy objectives, faculty, student, and staff representatives on the board have found the deck stacked against them.”

and staff representatives on the board have found the deck stacked against them.¹³⁰ This imbalance of power is particularly extreme at the UAlberta because of the number of public as well as external members associated with the business sector and/or the ruling party that have been appointed both to the board and to its standing committees. As of August 2021, there were no representatives of staff, faculty, or students on three standing committees (Audit & Risk; Human Resources & Compensation; Investment). On the Investment Committee, only one of six members was a governor, and the committee was chaired by an external member. The other four committees were constituted such that internal representatives of faculty, staff, and students were outnumbered on each. In addition to there being two “additional” public members on the UAlberta board (hence 12, including the chair), there are currently 14 “external” appointees to the standing committees.¹³¹ No other PSEI board in the province is constituted like this. On a less dramatic scale, these board dynamics are being played out across the province.

Regrettably, the NDP government made no amendments to the *PSLA* to entrench diversity criteria or to democratize the governance of PSEIs by, for example, increasing the representation of university constituencies on the boards, allowing faculty to elect their deans, vice-presidents, and president directly, or clarifying the powers of the General Faculties Council in university governance. Nor was the *PSLA* amended to enhance and entrench the autonomy of university governance from governments, for example, by removing deficit-financing constraints on university administrations or circumscribing the conditions under which the boards may dismiss elected officers. (The UCP may well have reversed any such legislative changes, as it has done with other reforms implemented by the NDP government; this, however, is not an argument against implementing needed reforms.)

The budget crisis has created an opportunity for boards and executives to further centralize university governance in their own hands, marginalizing the bodies in which faculty, staff, and students have voices and votes. Notwithstanding the tight time frame for making budgetary and related restructuring decisions, the processes adopted by the UAlberta’s leadership for consultation and planning with faculty, staff, and students throughout 2020 were strongly criticized by faculty and staff for being exclusionary and pro forma. Executive management at the UAlberta appointed selected individuals to a restructuring advisory working group, but the faculty and staff associations were shut out of this process and, as the president of the Academic Staff Association, Ricardo Acuña, explained in an interview with the CAUT in March 2021, were “refused access to any of the advice, benchmark data, or financial information that formed the basis of the plans and financial projections.”¹³²

130 And remember that the chair, the president, and the chancellor are voting members of all sub-committees. If needed, any of them may attend a committee vote. See Board of Governors, University of Alberta, “University of Alberta Standing and other Committees of the Board of Governors General Terms of Reference,” Revised October 2011, Article 5, <https://www.ualberta.ca/governance/media-library/documents/member-zone/board-principle-documents/board-generaltermsofreference.pdf> (accessed August 7, 2021).

131 Board of Governors, University of Alberta, “Board non-governor committee members,” <https://www.ualberta.ca/governance/member-zone/board-of-governors/board-non-governor-committee-membership.pdf> (accessed August 7, 2021). Table 3.1 shows 17 external board members because three were active committee members when we began this study in 2020 but are no longer in those positions.

132 Acuña quoted in “Academic restructuring at the University of Alberta,” *CAUT Bulletin*, March 2021, <https://www.caut.ca/bulletin/2021/03/academic-restructuring-university-alberta>.

The executive contracted the NOUS Group to develop a restructuring model that would reduce administrative costs. NOUS is the same consultancy that was hired by the executives of the University of Sydney and other universities in Australia to “restructure” their operating models in the wake of deep budget cuts. There are numerous reports that Australian academics have experienced these rationalizations very negatively in terms of their conditions of work and employment security.¹³³ The National Tertiary Education Union estimates that only one third of people in Australian universities have “secure, ongoing work.”¹³⁴ (Already, at the University of Alberta, nearly 50% of the undergraduate teaching is done by contract academic staff.) Veterans of restructuring at the University of Sydney report “deskilling for those who retain their positions, increased class sizes, and decreased diversity of course offerings.”¹³⁵ They described the restructuring designed by NOUS as “a really massive step backwards in terms of the values of participation, democracy, collegiality that many of us are still committed to.”¹³⁶ In general, the governance structure has become more managerial and top-down.

In fall 2020, several restructuring proposals were presented to the General Faculties Council to consider. These outlined different ways of combining existing Faculties (of which there are 18) into three “Colleges.”¹³⁷ The grouped faculties would share administrative, financial, and other services, thus permitting the centralization (and automation) of these services in college-level secretariats. On the face of it, this appears to be a more efficient way of providing the services, but it has been pointed out that students and faculty will no longer have access to support staff at departmental or faculty levels, and that this will make it harder to get timely support from staff who have the kind of institutional knowledge needed. Staff from the University of Sydney, where similar changes have been implemented, say that before the centralization of student support services, students could have “a very human chat about what was going on in their life with a support staff employee situated in their department or faculty.”¹³⁸ No more.

Moreover, the provost, Dr. Steven Dew, supported the creation of an executive or college dean position for each college, whose job would include pushing the faculty deans to integrate programs and agree to other cost-driven measures that they might otherwise resist. The college deans would report directly to the provost so as to reduce his burden of interacting with 18 deans. In other words, the proposed “college” model looked very much like a further centralization of executive decision-making and reduction of faculty members to mere employees to be managed rather than citizens in a system of collegial governance. In addition, each of these college or executive deans would have to hire their staffs of executive assistants and financial managers. Non-academic staff were deeply offended by the prospect of a highly paid stratum of senior administrators being hired while hundreds of their members were losing their jobs.

133 See, e.g., Megan Lee, Dima Nasrawi, Marie Hutchinson, and Richard Lakeman, “Our uni teachers were already among the world’s most stressed,” *The Conversation*, July 19, 2021, https://theconversation.com/amp/our-uni-teachers-were-already-among-the-worlds-most-stressed-covid-and-student-feedback-have-just-made-things-worse-162612?fbclid=IwAR1C7tKgN7w0LLg6GUAB9wwh0jXALeLsbQB_3UyXqgX857RhpRjUuMZMDpl. See also: Dr. Heather Young-Leslie, “Notes from and for the frontlines of academic restructuring,” *Ethnographer/Ecographer* blog, March 23, 2021, <https://heatheryoungleslie.wordpress.com/2021/03/23/notes-from-and-for-the-frontlines-of-academic-restructuring/>.

134 Celina Ribeiro, “The role of universities as engines of innovation, cultural introspection, and scientific discovery is being imperilled by cuts to staffing and resources,” *The Guardian*, June 19, 2020, <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2020/jun/20/its-awful-for-our-intellectual-life-universities-covid-19-and-the-loss-of-expertise?fbclid=IwAR17P64caZVtwysOQHff3xhxUEziMNOBboJVqKODQxLh5gTil8JhpT8e5jo>.

135 Rachel Narvey, “USydney staff share grim experience with academic restructuring amid U of A’s similar plans,” *The Gateway*, September 22, 2020, <https://thegatewayonline.ca/2020/09/university-of-sydney-staff-share-grim-experiences-with-academic-restructuring-amidst-u-of-a-similar-plans/>.

136 Nick Reimer quoted in Narvey, September 22, 2020, op cit.

137 The model being adopted, as of July 2021, may be viewed here: <https://www.ualberta.ca/uofa-tomorrow/operating-model/index.html>.

138 Alma Torlakovic, quoted in Narvey, September 22, 2020, op cit.

Faculty representatives on the GFC, along with other faculty members, mobilized to propose an alternative to the appointment of executive, or college deans. They succeeded in getting on to the agenda of the critical December 7, 2020 GFC meeting a proposal that they called the “invisible college model,” or the “shared services model,” in which the college would be a service-sharing entity with functions and responsibilities clearly demarcated from those of the faculties.¹³⁹ The provost would continue meeting with the faculty deans, who would retain full authority over academic matters within their faculties. In this model, a services manager would report to the deans of the faculties, whereas in the “College Dean” model, the deans of faculties would report to the College Dean. During the debate, faculty members protested that insufficient evidence had been presented that the College Dean model would be less costly than the alternatives.¹⁴⁰ It was also argued by the interim dean of Arts that GFC had too little information about how academic and administration functions would be allocated in the College Model. The process of building colleges would take time and should be led by the deans of faculties; the need for a college dean could be revisited in three years’ time. Student representatives were divided. The VP Facilities and Operations, Andrew Sharman, along with the deans of the School of Business, the Faculty of ALES, and the Faculty of Science, supported the College Dean model. In the end, GFC passed, by a very large majority, a motion that adopted the shared services model, with each college to be led by a “collegial Council of Deans, in consultation with the provost.” This is the motion that subsequently went forward to the board of governors on December 11 for approval.

At the following board meeting, President Flanagan declared a conflict of interest regarding the three GFC motions and recused himself from voting on them. After presenting the GFC’s motions to the board and summarizing the debates that had taken place at the December 7th GFC meeting, he declared his own disagreement with the motion proposing the shared services model.¹⁴¹ These actions came as a shock to faculty members of GFC who were observing this meeting, and left their representative on the board to pick up the pieces. In addition, they triggered a discussion that later took place among faculty and GFC representatives about loss of confidence in the president’s leadership.

At the December 11 meeting of the board, the public appointees drafted a new motion that overrode the GFC’s decision and reinstated the college dean model supported by the president and the provost. They further authorized the board (i.e., themselves) to determine the criteria by which the performance of the college deans will be evaluated, including in areas that appear to fall within the mandate of the GFC: “clinical standards, excellence in interdisciplinary research, and [excellence in] education.” A January 2021 letter to President Flanagan, signed by 40 out of 73 department chairs

139 The proposal is summarized in “Motion 3 Proposed Secondary Amendment” (moved by professors Sale and Amaral), as recorded in the minutes of the December 7th GFC meeting: <https://www.ualberta.ca/governance/media-library/documents/member-zone/gfc/minutes/2020-12-07-gfc-minutes.pdf>. One of the authors of the “Invisible College Model” proposal, Joel Gehman, a professor in the School of Business, has since left the UAlberta and taken a position in the United States.

140 This account of the December 7 GFC meeting draws from the minutes (see note 139) and from notes taken by Laurie Adkin, who attended the meeting as an observer.

141 See the minutes of the December 11, 2020 meeting of the board of governors: <https://www.ualberta.ca/governance/member-zone/board-of-governors/boa-approved-open-session-minutes-12-11-2021.pdf>.

at the university, described the board's action in this regard as "a dramatic overreach and a violation of the established precedents of bicameral collegial governance," and noted that the board does not have "the expertise to determine metrics by which the academic performance of the new colleges should be judged."¹⁴² This letter further characterized Flanagan's actions on December 11 as "a serious breach of trust and of your responsibility as president of the university" and stated that the outcome of the meeting exposed "the three months and countless person hours of consultation and hard work to critique and improve upon the initial models" as "at best a waste of time, at worst a sham, or even a cynical manipulation."

When the president's actions were questioned at a subsequent meeting of the GFC on February 8, 2021, the provost, Dr. Steven Dew, stated: "The Board of Governors is about our accountability to our stakeholders . . . and when we get a conflict between what we feel is important and what our stakeholders feel is important I think we have to respect the fact that we are servants in this relationship. We're not the masters."¹⁴³ While this is a reasonable interpretation of the *letter* of the *PSLA* (sections 81 to 83), this public submission of university administrators to the board of governors and the board's active subordination of the authority of the GFC are unprecedented.¹⁴⁴

The University of Alberta, then, is in the throes of a corporatization process that is already more advanced or complete in the UK, the USA, and Australia. In the US case, political scientist David Schultz argues that universities are "abandoning the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) shared governance model where faculty had an equal voice in the running of the school, including over curriculum, selection of department chairs, deans, and presidents, and determination of many of the other policies affecting the Academy. The corporate university replaced the shared governance model with one more typical of a business corporation" (Schultz 2021, 1).

The NOUS restructuring model is being implemented now at the University of Alberta amidst assurances from the president and the chair of the board of governors that the university will remain a "top five" Canadian university with an international reputation, and will be able to recruit 10,000 more students in the coming years and offer them a better educational experience than before—notwithstanding a massive loss of support staff, heavy reliance on contract academic staff, and increased workloads for tenured faculty. While the executive has rolled out a new "brand" for the university, "Leading with Purpose," faculty and students are asking who is leading whom and to where? The UCP government's restructuring strategy for the post-secondary sector—assisted by global consultancy firms NOUS and McKinsey & Co. and its public appointees to the PSEIs' boards of governors—has pushed the sector in the direction of greater corporatization and privatization.

142 Letter to President Flanagan dated January 8, 2021, in the authors' possession. This view was echoed by a GFC faculty representative, who commented: "the Board has seized control of academic decision-making by giving itself the prerogative to establish, define, and enforce the 'metrics' according to which the new Colleges with their demoted Faculties will be run." Personal communication from the GFC member to Laurie Adkin (anonymity of the member protected).

143 The provost's statement, as transcribed by attendees of the February 8, 2021 meeting of the General Faculties Council and shared with the authors. A vote of non-confidence in senior leadership, in relation to the December 11, 2020 meeting of the board was on the table at this meeting. During the debate, the VP Finance and Operations, Andrew Sharman, accused GFC faculty representative, Carolyn Sale, mover of the non-confidence motion, of being motivated by an "ambition to disrupt."

144 The board of governors appoints the president of the University, vice-presidents (PSLA 81 [1] and 82 [1]), and deans (21 [1]). The board sees it as being within its purview to "approve goals and objectives for the President." "Board Human Resources and Compensation Committee Terms of Reference" (Board of Governors, University of Alberta), p. 2. <https://www.ualberta.ca/governance/media-library/documents/member-zone/board-standing-committees/bhrcc-tofr.pdf>.

“The University of Alberta is in the throes of a corporatization process that is already more advanced or complete in the UK, the USA, and Australia.”

UCalgary: From “Eyes High” to “The Entrepreneurial University”

Like the UAlberta, the University of Calgary is undergoing significant upheaval as a result of the UCP’s cuts to its operating grant and PSE policies. During a fiscal update in March of 2021, university president Ed McCauley announced that the UCalgary’s provincial grant had decreased by 18%, or approximately \$86.9 million, over the two years since the UCP government had taken office.¹⁴⁵ University officials pointed out that a budget cut of this size was equal to the funding for an entire major faculty. According to McCauley, the cost to the university had been 550 lost jobs, and 200 foregone initiatives and projects. The February 2022 provincial budget further reduced the university’s operating grant. The decline from 2018/19 to 2022/23 totals \$100 million (a 21% cut). To make up for lost revenues, the UCalgary—like other PSEIs in the province—has increased tuition fees by the maximum allowable amount of 7% per year (with higher increases for some faculties).

The University of Calgary has also been “rebranding” itself to align itself with the UCP’s discourse about the goals of PSE. Its 2011-2016 strategic plan was titled “Eyes High,” echoing the university’s Gaelic motto *Mo Shùile Togam Suas* (“I will lift up my eyes”). The plan’s core goals were to sharpen focus on research and scholarship, enrich the quality and breadth of learning, and integrate the university with the community.¹⁴⁶ In October 2020, the university’s executive rolled out a new brand: “the entrepreneurial university.”¹⁴⁷ Echoing the criticism that had been made in the MacKinnon report that Alberta’s post-secondary education system lacked “an overall direction,”¹⁴⁸ the UCalgary identified its new aim as “growth through focus.” The foundational ideas for this approach are to pursue “transdisciplinary scholarship,” “deepen community integration, and facilitate “future-focused program delivery” by focusing on “life sciences,” “energy transformations,” “city building,” and “exploring digital worlds.”¹⁴⁹ In addition, there will be greater emphasis on securing “fully integrated industry and community partnerships,” recognizing scholars for engaging in such partnerships, incentivizing the commercialization of research, and creating “microcredential” programs in cooperation with industry. These goals are aligned with the Alberta 2030 strategy paper.

Like the UAlberta, the UCalgary’s administration is planning to raise revenues by recruiting more students (4,000 more undergraduates and 3,700 more graduate students by 2030). The president’s October 2020 presentation to the university community also highlighted the goal of creating “revenue-generating partnership ventures.”

The governance of the UCalgary also underwent significant change following the election of the UCP. Three NDP-appointed public members of the board of governors had their appointment rescinded by the UCP, including the chair of the board, Jill Wyatt. Wyatt, whose appointment was rescinded

145 Hannah Kost, “U of C faces tuition hikes, job cuts and spending reductions to offset \$25M funding loss,” CBC News, March 30, 2021, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/calgary/university-calgary-budget-cuts-provincial-1.5969457>.

146 University of Calgary, “Eyes High,” <https://www.ucalgary.ca/eyeshigh/strategy>. This plan was “refreshed” in 2016-17.

147 Ed McCauley, “Unstoppable,” October 13, 2020, <https://www.ucalgary.ca/live-uc-ucalgary-site/sites/default/files/Oct%202013%20Town%20Hall%20slides.pdf>. See also, University of Calgary, “Entrepreneurial University,” <https://ucalgary.ca/entrepreneurial>.

148 “Most significantly, the Panel found that there does not appear to be an overall direction for Alberta’s post-secondary system.” MacKinnon report, op. cit., p. 42.

149 The identification of priority areas for investment in teaching and research may be akin to “program prioritisation” (PP)—an experiment initiated in some Ontario universities (including Brock, Guelph, Wilfrid Laurier, and York) and at the University of Saskatchewan about a decade ago. For some sources on PP, see: Heron 2014, Kotsopoulos et al. 2019, Steeves 2015. More research is needed to document and interpret the restructuring of academic organization and budgeting that is taking place at the University of Calgary.

on August 15, 2019 (a year and a half early), is an education specialist, a former senator at UCalgary, and the previous principal of three Alberta high schools. She holds no private sector corporate experience. She was replaced by Geeta Sankappanavar, former consultant for McKinsey & Co., founder and CEO of Akira Impact, and co-founder and former president of Grafton Asset Management—both energy investment firms based in Calgary. She is currently chair of the board of Daytona Power Corp, a newly formed renewable energy corporation based in Nevada, and sits on the board of Pipestone Energy Corp, an oil and gas exploration and production company based in Calgary. Sankappanavar is also the newly appointed chair of the board of Green Impact Partners, a company specializing in “optimizing late-stage technology to repurpose by-products into clean energy and other value-added substances.”¹⁵⁰ Sankappanavar’s connections to the investment and energy sectors align well with the university’s ambitions to build on its partnerships with the energy sector, which has long been one of its core areas of research.¹⁵¹

Along with Wyatt, NDP-appointees Colin Jackson and Hafeez Chisti were removed from their positions on UCalgary’s board. Jackson has held executive roles for a variety of organizations in the arts and entertainment sector. Chisti is an environmental scientist and consultant who specializes in site clean-ups for fossil fuel contamination. They were replaced by Heather Christie-Burns and Cody Church. Christie-Burns is a chemical engineer and corporate executive with extensive experience in the Albertan oil and gas industry. She is the director of Interface Fluidics, the former president and CEO of High Ground Energy (acquired in 2019 by Karve Energy), and former president and COO of Angle Energy (acquired by Bellatrix Resources in 2013).

Cody Church is a corporate executive specializing in finance and one of the most well-connected UCP appointees. He is now the vice-chair of UCalgary’s board, while chairing the finance and property committee, and vice-chairing the investment committee. He has served on corporate boards spanning various sectors, including real estate, construction, consulting, insurance, investment, agriculture, entertainment, transportation, travel, and fossil fuels. He is currently president and CEO of Clear North Capital and a board member of Bellatrix Resources. He co-founded Tri-West capital partners, one of Canada’s leading private equity firms, founded Venture 17, a networking organization for corporate executives, and guest-lectures on corporate finance at UCalgary. He is the former chair of the board of Source Energy Services, which services the oil and gas industry in Canada and the USA. In addition to being appointed to the UCalgary board, Church was appointed chair of the UCP government’s new crown corporation, Alberta Indigenous Opportunity Corporation (AIOC). AIOC is a vehicle of the UCP government’s efforts to involve First Nations in resource extraction projects, providing loan guarantees for Indigenous investments in such projects.

150 See <https://www.greenipi.com/>. On June 23, 2021, Green Impact announced its 50% partnership in a Calgary-based biofuel production facility, which is estimated to annually produce over 300 million litres of ethanol, up to 2.5 million Btu of renewable natural gas, and approximately 2.3 million tonnes of carbon offset credits. See <https://www.newswire.ca/news-releases/green-impact-partners-inc-announces-a-partnership-for-development-of-a-large-scale-bio-fuel-facility-843416168.html>.

151 See Adkin and Cabral 2020.

John Weissenberger is a geologist with extensive ties to the fossil fuel industry, having worked for Petro-Canada, Esso Resources, Encana, Husky Energy, Imperial Oil, and Gran Tierra Energy. He was chief of staff to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration in the Harper government, and campaign manager for both Stephen Harper and Jason Kenney. He was appointed vice-chair of Technical Science and Innovation of the Alberta Energy Regulator by the Kenney government in July 2020, and to the board of governors of the UCalgary in December 2020.

Lara Gaede was appointed to UCalgary's board in July 2020. She is a partner with Deloitte, leading the Securities Centre of Excellence. She is the former chief accountant and CFO of the Alberta Securities Commission, and a former member of the Canadian Accountant Standards Board. Previously, she held positions at Ernst & Young and PricewaterhouseCoopers.

Debby Carreau, also appointed to the board in July 2020, is the founder and CEO of a human resources consulting firm; she also sits on the advisory board of the Founders Food Group, and is an advisor to Fulmer Capital Partners, a private equity firm based in Vancouver. Carreau is a member of the advisory board of FinDev Canada¹⁵² and sits on the board of directors of the Young Presidents' Organization, a global networking hub for corporate executives.

Two NDP-appointed members of the board were reappointed by the UCP government. Elaine Wong is a partner at KPMG, where she holds leadership positions in the areas of Risk, Governance, and Assurance, with focus on the energy, financial services, and education sectors. She also serves on the board of the YWCA.

Beverley Foy was appointed to the board in December 2016; her term expired on December 12, 2019. She was then reappointed by the UCP for a one-year term only, which expired on December 12, 2020. (Foy is no longer on the board.) Foy is a director of the Calgary Airport Authority, but has a background in the arts, having served as a director of the Canadian Council for the Arts and the Lieutenant Governor of Alberta Arts Awards Foundation.

The UCP Minister of Advanced Education allowed three other NDP-appointed board members to serve out their terms. These individuals are Nancy Foster and Fauzia Lalani (both appointed in January 2019 for a three-year term) and Pam Krause (appointed in February 2018 for a three-year term). Nancy Foster was senior VP (Human and Corporate Resources) and special advisor to the CEO at Husky Energy before retiring in December 2020. She held various VP and senior management roles at Nexen and served on committees for the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers.

¹⁵² The Development Finance Institute of Canada (FinDev) is a wholly owned subsidiary of Export Development Canada (the Government of Canada's export credit agency). It was established in January 2018 with a mandate to provide financing for Canadian investors operating in Latin American, the Caribbean, and sub-Saharan Africa. Financing takes the form of direct loans, loan guarantees, equity, or "structured financing." See FinDev Canada, <https://www.findevcanada.ca/en/what-we-do/financing-and-investment>.

Fauzia Lalani is also connected to the fossil fuel industry. She is CEO of Aquila Energy and has served Suncor since 2010 as senior director of Joint Venture Governance & Commercial Agreements. Previously she was a vice-president at TELUS, and chair of the management board of Canada Revenue Agency from 2009 to 2016. Government-appointed positions she has held include director of the Calgary Stampede Foundation and chair of the Workers Compensation Board.

Another NDP appointee, Pam Krause is the president and CEO of the Calgary Sexual Health Centre.

Appointed as a public member in May 2021, and hence not included in our data analysis (whose cut-off date is March 31, 2021) is Jay Brown. His board bio describes his background as the co-founder and managing director of Arcadius Capital Partners, “a private equity investment firm providing growth equity capital to energy companies with an exclusive focus on the Canadian and U.S. markets.”¹⁵³ He is also connected to Adam Waterous, chair of the board of the Banff Centre, owing to his former position as managing director for Scotia Waterous (investment bankers specializing in oil and gas divestitures, mergers and acquisitions, private financings, and merchant banking) and its predecessor, Waterous & Co.

As was the case with the UAlberta, external members are sometimes also appointed to the standing committees of the board of governors. Typically, they are recruited by the chair of the committee and must be approved by a vote of the board. They do not vote on motions before the board, but they do influence the policy recommendations and documents that come to the board for decision. A member of the Property and Finance Committee of the board is Lesley (Conway) Hutcheson. She is the former president of Hopewell Residential, a real estate and land development company based in Calgary. She is a director on the boards of Section 23 Developments, the Triumph Real Estate Investment Fund, the Calgary Stampede, and the Calgary Health Trust. She is also a member of the Management Advisory Committee of the Haskayne School of Business at the UCalgary. Her partner, Scott Hutcheson, is currently chair of Invest Alberta, a crown corporation created by the UCP government to attract and facilitate investment in Alberta. Additionally, he is the executive chair of Aspen Properties, “a fully integrated, privately held commercial real estate company” based in Calgary.¹⁵⁴ Previously, he was an investment banker with Goldman, Sachs & Co.¹⁵⁵ (Three other directors of Invest Alberta have links to the province’s PSEI boards. In addition to Hutcheson, Ashif Mawji has served on the board of NAIT, and Janet Riopel is currently a member of NAIT’s board. Adam Waterous, chair of the board of the Banff Centre for the Arts and Creativity, served as a board member of Invest Alberta in 2020-21.)

153 “Biography—Jay Brown,” <https://www.ucalgary.ca/secretariat/sites/default/files/teams/1/board-of-governors/board-members/Brown%2C%20Jay%202021-05-17.pdf> (accessed July 20, 2021).

154 Scott Hutcheson made personal contributions to the PCP in 2014 amounting to \$10,120. He later made contributions to Doug Schweitzer’s campaign for the leadership of the UCP in 2017 and to the UCP in 2020. Hutcheson’s company, Aspen Property Management, contributed a total of \$25,060 to the PCP from 2004 to 2014, \$10,600 to Jim Prentice’s campaign for the leadership of the AB PCP in 2014, and \$4,500 to Ric McIver’s leadership campaign in the same year.

155 Source for Hutcheson’s bio: <https://investalberta.ca/about-invest-alberta/invest-alberta-board/>. Hutcheson also states in his bio that he has served on the board of governors of Shawnigan Lake School (SLS). This is a private school, with both day students and boarding students, ages 13-18, to which some of the individuals in Jason Kenney’s circle share connections. Rancher Gerry Kaumeyer sent his sons, Michael and Lawrence (Larry) to this school. (Current yearly fee for Canadian boarded students is about \$60,000.) Michael Kaumeyer, who has also been a board member of SLS, is the CEO of Grayhawk investment company and owner of the 7K Panorama Ranch in the MD of Okotoks. He made political contributions to the Wildrose Alliance Party in 2009 and 2013. His brother Larry, whose bio was summarized in the section on the UAlberta, was appointed Jason Kenney’s Principal Secretary in August 2020.

It is also notable that the UCalgary Senate chose a well-known promoter of the oil and gas industry, Postmedia and *Global and Mail* business columnist Deborah Yedlin, as the university's chancellor in April 2018. (The chancellor is also a member of the board.) While Yedlin has been involved in many philanthropic activities in Calgary (United Way, Calgary Opera, WinSport, Calgary Philharmonic), she is well connected to business circles. She has a background in corporate finance, having worked at both Burns Fry Ltd. and (like Scott Hutcheson) Goldman Sachs & Co. as an analyst earlier in her career. She has also been the head of Calgary's Chamber of Commerce since July 2021. Yedlin's partner is Martin Molyneaux, an investment banker who specializes in the oil and gas sector. He is currently president and CIO of Molyneaux Asset Management, and is the former vice-chairman of FirstEnergy Capital Corp (the firm founded by Murray Edwards, Jim Davidson, and Rick Grafton).¹⁵⁶ On the occasion of her appointment as chancellor, Yedlin commented that she was well positioned "to be a conduit between the university and the corporate world."¹⁵⁷ And that, indeed, seems to be the skill set that aligns with the UCalgary leadership's plans for the university in the context of the UCP government's restructuring of the funding model for PSE.

With the exception of NDP appointee Pam Krause (who is no longer on the board), these individuals all have backgrounds in corporate executive roles (although John Weissenberger's position is in the government sector). Weissenberger is also the only public member of this board who is not linked to one (or both) of the investment capital or oil and gas sectors, but he is nevertheless close to the premier and the UCP government. Board appointees are part of an interconnected business class crossing real estate, construction, investment, energy, corporate services, and government sectors—both on their own board and across other PSEI boards.¹⁵⁸ Three directors of Source Energy, for example, are connected to PSEI boards. The chair of the board of directors of Source Energy, Stewart Hanlon, was appointed by the UCP to the board of the Alberta University for the Arts. Director Carrie Lonardelli was appointed by the UCP to the board of Mount Royal University. And former chair of the board Cody Church was appointed to the board of the University of Calgary.

Given their backgrounds, the appointees are unlikely to view the UCP's agenda of impelling PSEIs into closer relationships with the corporate sector as problematic. Their ideological agreement with the UCP's agenda for post-secondary education is further signaled by the fact that four of the eight UCP-appointed public members of the UCalgary board of governors have links to conservative parties or third party advertisers (a category that is explained in detail in Part 8).

156 Jeffrey Jones, "FirstEnergy's Molyneaux to step down," *The Globe and Mail*, December 13, 2013. From 2004 to 2015, FirstEnergy Capital contributed \$54,920 to the PCP. From 2010-2014 it contributed \$31,250 to the Wildrose Alliance Party, and from \$2004-2008 it contributed \$6,000 to the Alberta Liberal Party.

157 Bill Kaufmann, "Calgary Herald's Deborah Yedlin named new U of C chancellor," *Calgary Herald*, April 27-29, 2018, <https://calgaryherald.com/news/local-news/calgary-heralds-deborah-yedlin-named-new-u-of-c-chancellor>.

158 Public board members are also connected through their philanthropic and non-profit board positions—something we touch on in the report but has not been our focus.

As shown in Table 3.2, three of the 10 board members appointed by the UCP (Cody Church, Nancy Foster, and John Weissenberger) have made personal contributions to conservative parties, candidates, or third party advertisers between 2005 and 2019 amounting to \$16,825.¹⁵⁹

Table 3.2: UCalgary Board Members' Contributions to Political Parties

Contributor	Amount	Year	Received by
Cody Church	\$3,000 \$4,000 \$4,000 \$1,000 \$850	2019 2018 2017 2012 2009	UCP UCP Kenney leadership campaign Wildrose PCP
Nancy Foster	\$2,500	2014	Jim Prentice leadership campaign
John Weissenberger	\$425 \$400 \$650	2017 2012 2005	Kenney leadership campaign PCP PCP Foothills constituency

Companies where four of the UCP appointees to Calgary's board (Sankappanavar, Church, Foster, and Lalani) have held senior management or executive positions contributed another \$171,299 to conservative parties or third party advertisers during the same period. They are:

Bellatrix Resources: \$50,000 to the Alberta Advantage Fund TPA
 Grafton Asset Management: \$25,000 to the Shaping Alberta's Future TPA
 Source Energy: \$5,000 to the Alberta Proud TPA
 Suncor Energy Inc.: \$29,506 to the PCP; \$17,730 to Wildrose
 Telus Communications: \$36,063 to the PCP; \$8,000 to Wildrose

Mount Royal University: Under New Management

It is difficult to describe the heavy weighting of UCP public board appointees toward representatives of the oil and gas sector without offering at least a brief account of the board transition that has taken place at Mount Royal University (MRU) in Calgary.

In August 2019, the board of governors of MRU included five NDP appointees whose positions were rescinded by the new UCP government. These individuals were: Sue Mallon (chair), Tracee Bersani Collins, Corinne Jamieson, Whitney Smithers, and Susan Swan. The NDP government had also appointed Keri Lee and Shannon Ryhorchuk (who was reappointed by the UCP in June 2021).

159 We did not find contributions by Jay Brown

Sue Mallon was, until 2020, the CEO of Carya, a Calgary non-profit corporation providing social services, and before that had been an executive

director at the City of Calgary. Bersani Collins has a background in the electricity and telecommunications sectors and is the director of strategic planning at NextEra Energy Resources, a company that provides energy transmission in the USA and Canada. Corinne Jamieson is executive director of the Court of Queen's Bench in the Calgary-based Alberta Department of Justice and Solicitor General. Whitney Smithers has been the manager of infrastructure for the City of Canmore since 2019. Susan Swann had retired in 2015, before which time she had been the manager for energy policy and planning at Imperial Oil. (The terms of Mallon, Bersani Collins, Smithers, and Lee were to expire on December 12, 2019.) Keri Lee was, from 2016-2019, the director of human resources at Odyssey House in Grande Prairie, a shelter for women and children escaping from domestic violence.¹⁶⁰ Shannon Ryhorchuk is an accountant working for PricewaterhouseCoopers in insurance services. She was permitted to serve out her term and was reappointed by the UCP in March 2021 for a three-year term. Thus, the NDP had appointed seven women as public members of this board during its term in office, one of whom came from the oil and gas sector, and one of whom came from the accounting/auditing sector and who has clients in "a variety of industries, including oil and gas, construction, and real estate."¹⁶¹

The UCP appointees (in addition to the reappointment of Ryhorchuk) include:

Alex Pourbaix (replaced Susan Mallon as chair)

Chris Lee (vice chair)

Karl Johansson

Carrie Lonardelli

Sue Riddell Rose

Brenden Hunter (appointed in September 2020)

Denise Man (appointed in September 2020)

Salimah Walji-Shivji (appointed in September 2020)

All these appointees have strong links to the oil and gas sector, with the exception of Walji-Shivji, who is a lawyer and vice-president of AgeCare Communities, a private corporation providing long-term and seniors' care in Alberta, BC, and Ontario.

Two paragraphs of Pourbaix's board bio are devoted to his background in the oil and gas industry.¹⁶² He is the president, CEO, and a director of Cenovus Energy. Prior to that, he was with TransCanada Pipelines/TC Energy for 27 years. He served on the board of Trican Well Service Ltd., was board chair for the Canadian Energy Pipeline Association, and currently acts as a director on the boards of Canadian Utilities Ltd., the Business Council of Canada, and the Business Council of Alberta. He also chairs the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers. Pourbaix was a public supporter of Jason Kenney in the lead-up to the provincial election in 2019, sharing the view that the oil and gas industry was under attack by opponents "who

160 Source: LinkedIn page for Keri Lee, <https://www.linkedin.com/in/keri-lee-6167ba131/?originalSubdomain=ca>, accessed July 21, 2021.

161 Mount Royal University, "[Board] Member Profiles," <https://www.mtroyal.ca/AboutMountRoyal/OfficesGovernance/BoardofGovernors/MemberProfiles/index.htm> (accessed July 21, 2021).

162 Ibid.

“Not only are these boards constituted in such a way as to support the UCP government’s agenda for the restructuring of the PSE sector, but one may safely predict their responses to student and faculty demands for fossil fuel divestment or other actions related to the climate crisis.”

are not constrained by the truth”¹⁶³ (as well as contributing the maximum allowable amount to the UCP in that year).

In addition to these public appointees, the chancellor of MRU, Dawn Farrell, is also drawn from the oil and gas sector, as she is the president and CEO of TransAlta¹⁶⁴ (and—along with her board chair—sits on the board of the Business Council of Canada). In 2014, Farrell donated \$9,300 to the PCP. Asked in July 2020 what she thought her role would be, she said: “I think the key thing as we really develop Mount Royal as a university is to really open up those linkages between government, the business community and the university, so we can really make sure that as we’re spending educational dollars here in Alberta, that we really are getting students to a place where they can be independent and have an income ... Because I think that’s the No. 1 thing you’re trying to do.”¹⁶⁵ This statement echoed the views of the post-secondary sector’s role that have been expressed by the UCP government.

Mount Royal has been somewhat insulated from the budget cuts to PSE brought in by the UCP and described in Part 2 of this report. MRU was the major recipient of capital funding in Budget 2021, which allocated the university \$50 million over three years for construction projects. While the UAlberta received an 11% budget cut in the February 2021 budget, Mount Royal’s cut was 2%. And MRU’s aggregate budget reduction from 2020/21 to 2021-22 was 7%, compared to UAlberta’s 20%.¹⁶⁶

While one can only speculate on the behind-doors conversations that led to the UCP cabinet’s appointments to the boards of the PSEIs (or on the appointees’ motivations for accepting the posts), the consequences of these decisions are more evident. Not only are these boards constituted in such a way as to support the UCP government’s agenda for the restructuring of the PSE sector, but one may safely predict their responses to student and faculty demands for fossil fuel divestment or other actions related to the climate crisis. (MRU does have a fossil fuel divestment group.)

In response to the May 2020 announcement that the Norwegian Wealth Fund, Norges, would be divesting from four Canadian oil sands companies, Mount Royal University board chair, Pourbaix, wrote that “Canada’s oil sands have long been the poster child for the anti-oil movement,” and repeated the “ethical oil” argument that “It’s easier to attack a country that has [high ESG performance] than it is to go after oil producing nations such as Russia and Saudi Arabia.”¹⁶⁷ Before her appointment as University of Calgary chancellor, Yedlin wrote a column in the *Calgary Herald* characterizing the fossil fuel divestment movements in Canadian universities as “misguided” and “hypocritical.” “It appears the Queen’s student body fell victim to the propaganda of organizations such as 350.org when it held a referendum on the issue earlier this year,” she wrote.¹⁶⁸

163 Pourbaix quoted in Shane McNeil, “Kenney has ‘my support’ in vow to fight for energy industry: Cenovus CEO,” BNN Bloomberg, February 14, 2019, <https://www.bnnbloomberg.ca/kenney-has-my-support-in-vow-to-fight-trudeau-cenovus-ceo-1.1213787>.

164 TransAlta has been transitioning from a coal-powered electricity supplier to natural gas and renewables.

165 Farrell quoted in Pamela Fieber, “CEO of TransAlta, Dawn Farrell, named as MRU’s 1st chancellor,” CBC News, July 7, 2020, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/calgary/ceo-transalta-dawn-farrell-named-mru-first-chancellor-1.5641012>.

166 Figures given in French, June 28, 2021, op cit.

167 Alex Pourbaix, “Canada targeted (yet again) as a scapegoat for global climate change challenge,” Cenovus Energy, “Our Views,” May 14, 2020, <https://www.cenovus.com/news/our-views.html>.

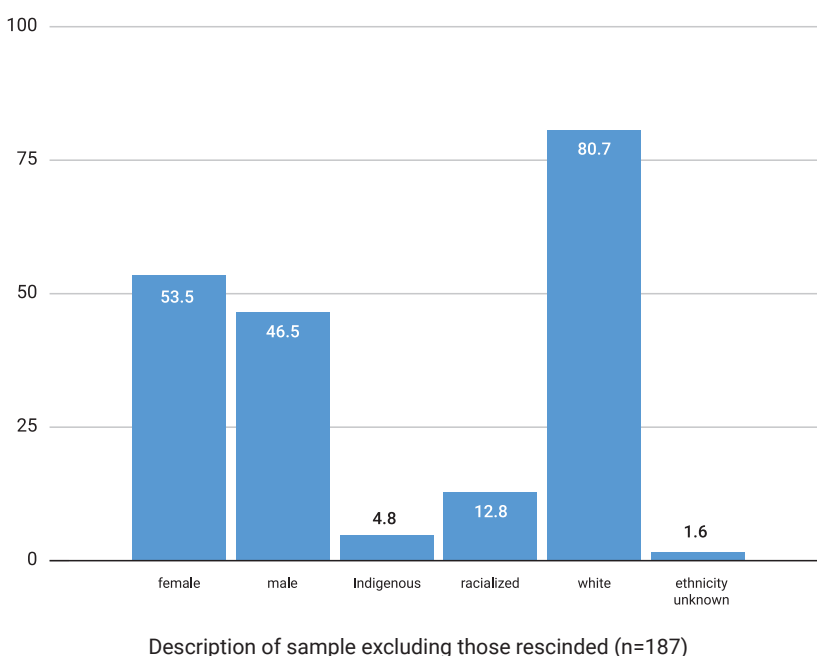
168 Deborah Yedlin, “Fossil fuel divestment movement misguided,” *Calgary Herald*, August 15, 2015, <https://calgaryherald.com/business/energy/yedlin-fossil-fuel-divestment-movement-misguided>.

4

Gender, Race/Ethnicity, and Indigeneity of Appointees

According to data from the 2016 Canadian census, 23% of Alberta's population was, at that time, from a "visible minority" group.¹⁶⁹ The largest group was of South Asian origin (5.8%), followed by persons of Filipino origin (4.2%), Chinese origin (4%), and those identifying as Black (3.3%). The "Aboriginal" census category was estimated at 6.5%. Individuals reporting as being neither from a visible minority group nor Aboriginal constituted 70.5% of the population. Against this backdrop, we can get a sense of how representative of the population's genders and ethnicities the appointments to the PSEI boards have been. Figure 4.1 shows the composition of the 187 PSEI board appointees who held positions between April 2019 and March 2021.

Figure 4.1: Race and Gender Profile of Non-Rescinded Appointees in the Study (n=187)¹⁷⁰ by Percentages



169 Statistics Canada, "Data tables, 2016 Census,"

<https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/dt-td/Rp-eng.cfm?T=ABID=2&LANG=E&APATH=3&DETAIL=0&DIM=0&FL=A&FREE=0&GC=0&GK=0&GRP=1&PID=112450&PRID=10&PTYPE=109445&S=0&SHOWALL=0&SUB=0&Temporal=2016&THFME=120-&VID=0&VNAMEF=&VNAMEF=>

170 One appointee was rescinded but later reappointed to a board, which gives us a total of 187 "non-rescinded" rather than 186 (231-45).

The gender figures show that women are slightly over-represented, since they constitute just under 50% of the population in Alberta. We discuss this finding further below, in the context of the NDP's efforts to redress previous gender inequities on the boards of public agencies and corporations. Overall, Indigenous representation is lower than the percentage of the population

constituted by the groups included in the census as “Aboriginal.”¹⁷¹ Likewise, for the group as a whole, racialized Albertans are substantially under-represented.

When we looked at gender and ethnic representation for each of the appointee groups, we found that among the group appointed by the NDP government and continuing in their appointments beyond the election of April 16, 2019 (n=36), the over-representation of women was more pronounced (Table 4.1), likely reflecting the efforts of the secretariat charged with recruiting and recommending appointees to put more women on these boards. This group also has a comparatively high representation of Indigenous appointees (11%), but the representation of racialized Albertans still falls well below 23%. It is important to note, regarding all figures for group NDP-C, that this group of 36 does not encompass all the NDP appointees to PSEI boards over the party’s 2015-2019 term in office. (We did not undertake a full study of all the NDP appointees.)

Table 4.1: Gender and Ethnic Composition of NDP-C Appointees (n=36)

NDP-C appointees (n=36)		
CATEGORY	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Female	22	61%
Male	14	39%
Indigenous	4	11%
Racialized	4	11%
White	28	78%

The group containing individuals who were originally appointed by the NDP, then later reappointed by the UCP (“Common” n=32) comes very close to being representative of racialized Albertans, while still over-representing women and maintaining the NDP’s high representation of Indigenous persons (Table 4.2).

171 While we use the term “Indigenous” in this report, encompassing First Nation, Inuit, and Métis populations, Statistics Canada uses the term “Aboriginal.”

Table 4.2: Gender and Ethnic Composition of “Common” Group (NDP-UCP1 + NDP-UCP2 = 32)

Common (NDP reappointed by UCP) (n=32)		
CATEGORY	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Female	22	68.8%
Male	10	30.2%
Indigenous	2	6.3%
Racialized	7	22%
White	23	71.9%

However, an examination of the occupations and places of residence of these appointees suggests that these factors were more important than gender, ethnicity, or Indigeneity in their selection for reappointment (although there is some carry-over from the NDP’s efforts to find people with backgrounds in education and social services, as well as Indigenous appointees). Of the 22 women who were reappointed by the UCP to seats on PSEI boards, eight worked in corporate services (law, accounting, auditing, and consulting), three in the BFII (private) sectors, four in other business sectors, three in financial administration in the government sector, one in the provision of Indigenous education services, and one in the non-profit social services sector. Two owned small businesses. The weightings of these occupations fit with our findings for the UCP’s preferences regarding the occupations and specializations of appointees.

Nor was political affiliation a predominant consideration. Among the 22 women reappointees, two had made political contributions to the PCP, two to the NDP, and one to the Liberals. In some cases, we see an alignment between the industries with which the appointees are affiliated, the places where they live, and the institutions to which they were appointed. Of the three women appointed to the board of the University of Athabasca, for example, one runs an investment firm, one is a manager with OCL Group (a general contractor and pipeline construction group), and the third has held government appointments to councils and committees (including the Northern Alberta Development Council) as a representative of the Region 10 Métis settlements.

Data for the group appointed by the UCP for the first time from the party’s election to March 31, 2021 (UCP1 + UCP2=121) tell a somewhat different

story (Table 4.3). Here we see that the percentage of women appointees falls to 46%; the Indigenous representation falls to 1.7%, and the racialized representation falls to 10.7%.

Table 4.3: Gender and Ethnic Composition of First-Time UCP Appointees (UCP1 + UCP2 = 121)

Appointed by UCP for the first time (n=121)		
CATEGORY	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Female	56	46.3%
Male	65	53.7%
Indigenous	2	1.7%
Racialized	13	10.7%
White	105	86.8%
Ethnicity unknown	1	0.8%

Given these findings, we are inclined to think that the gender and ethnicity characteristics of the “Common” group reflect predominantly the UCP’s agreement with the qualifications and affiliations of the individuals previously selected by the NDP, rather than the goals of recruiting women, Indigenous persons, and racialized Albertans to the board positions. By the same token, this means that they were not averse to the appointment of nearly 70% women, 6% Indigenous, and 22% racialized appointees for these 32 board seats.

Two further comparisons are illuminating regarding the two parties’ concerns about gender and racial equity and Indigenous representation. The group NDP-R (n=45) comprises the NDP-appointed board members whose appointments were rescinded by order-in-council by the UCP government in its first round of board appointments in August-October 2019. During the same period, the UCP government appointed 60 individuals to the PSEI boards (ALL-UCP1 n=60). In Table 4.4, we see that 62% of the appointees rescinded by the UCP were women, 11% were racialized, and 11% were Indigenous. When it came to replacing these individuals, only 45% of new appointees were women, 10% were racialized, and none were Indigenous.

Table 4.4: Composition of Groups by Gender and Ethnicity (in Rounded Percentages)

Group of Appointees	Female	Male	Racialized	White	Indigenous	Ethnicity unknown
NDP-R (n=45)	62%	38%	11%	76%	11%	2%
Common (n=32)	70%	30%	22%	69%	6%	3%
All-UCP1 (n=60)	45%	55%	10%	90%	0%	0%
All-NDP (n=113)	65%	35%	14%	69%	13%	3%
All-UCP (n=153)	51%	49%	13%	84%	3%	1%
All appointees excluding NDP-R (n=187)	53.5%	46.5%	12.8%	80.7%	4.8%	1.6%

5

Occupations, Specializations, and Educational Qualifications of Appointees

Occupations

StatsCan data from the 2016 census (in Table 5.1) provide a breakdown for the occupations of Alberta's workforce over 15 years of age ($n = 2,262,935$). While these categories do not conform precisely to the ones we used, they help to provide baselines for comparisons with our findings. We initially coded for 32 occupations, then aggregated these into 12 categories (plus "other" and "unknown"). (See Appendix 2.) "Occupation" for us means what the individual does for a living and should be distinguished from the categories of "specialization" and "economic sector" which are examined next. Thus, a person doing administrative work was coded as "administration" regardless of the sector in which they worked. (We did, however, also code for Indigenous, non-profit, public, and private sectors of employment.) A person trained as a lawyer but performing a corporate executive role would be classified, by occupation, as a corporate executive. Educational formation or training are also examined separately further below.

Notably, our sample did not include any individuals whose occupations were in *non-management* positions in manufacturing or utilities. Only one person in our sample was coded as having an occupation in the category of trades/equipment operator. Another significant finding is that, while sales and services occupations account for 22% of Alberta's workforce, there were no board governors with such occupations.

“Notably, our sample did not include any individuals whose occupations were in non-management positions in manufacturing or utilities”

Table 5.1: Occupations of Albertans Using National Occupational Classifications (NOC)
From Statistics Canada, 2016 Census Data

Total labour force population aged 15 years and over by occupation - National Occupational Classification (NOC) 2016	2,302,940	
Occupation - not applicable	40,005	
Occupations		% of all occupations
Sales and service occupations	491,495	22%
Trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations	406,495	18%
Business, finance, and administration occupations	353,965	16%
Management occupations	261,505	12%
Occupations in education, law and social, community and government services	228,325	10%
Natural and applied sciences and related occupations	175,030	8%
Health occupations	150,415	7%
Occupations in manufacturing and utilities	73,065	3.2%
Natural resources, agriculture, and related production occupations	72,465	3%
Occupations in art, culture, recreation, and sport	50,170	2%
Total	2,262,930	100%

Sources: Source: Statistics Canada, "Data Tables, 2016 Census" (Alberta), <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/dt-td/Rp-eng.cfm?TABID=2&LANG=E&APATH=3&DETAIL=0&DIM=0&FL=A&FREE=0&GC=0&GK=0&GRP=1&PID=112450&PRID=10&PTYPE=109445&S=0&SHOWALL=0&SUB=0&Temporal=2016&THEME=120&VID=0&VNAMEE=&VNAMEF=>

In this section, we compare only the groups ALL-NDP (n=113) and ALL-UCP (n=153), keeping in mind that each of these groups contains a common group constituted of individuals appointed by the NDP and reappointed by the UCP (n=32). The ALL-NDP group also contains the individuals whose positions were rescinded by the UCP in 2019.

Looking first at the *entire* sample of appointments for our April 2019-March 2021 period, Table 5.2 shows us that persons in corporate executive roles (public, private, non-profit, and Indigenous sectors combined) make up the largest group, followed by persons in management positions, and then business owners.

“ Persons in corporate executive roles (public, private, non-profit, and Indigenous sectors combined) make up the largest group, followed by persons in management positions, and then business owners.”

Table 5.2: Primary Occupations of all PSEI Appointees (Percentages)

Primary occupation	% (n=234)
Corporate executive	27%
Administrator/manager	25%
Business owner	12%
Lawyer	9%
Politician/lobbyist	4.7%
Consultant	4%
Teacher/professor	3%
Public servant	3%
Social worker	2%
Accountant	1.3%
Doctor	1.3%
Farmer/rancher	1.3%
Artist	1%
Scientist	1%
Architect	0.4%
Engineer	0.4%
Judge	0.4%
Labourer	0.4%
Police	0.4%
Union official	0%
Other/unknown	2%
Total	99.9%

In Table 5.3, we aggregate occupations into nine categories (plus other and unknown) and show the percentages for each of the two groups (NDP and UCP appointees).

Table 5.3: Primary Occupations of PSEI Appointees by Aggregated Category and Appointing Government (Rounded Percentages)

Occupation	ALL-NDP	ALL-UCP
Administration	21.2%	5%
Agriculture	0%	2%
Arts, culture, media	3.5%	0.7%
Business	50%	70%
Human services	6.2%	6.5%
Law	8.8%	9.8%
Politics	5.3%	3.3%
STEM	0%	2%
Trades	0%	0.7%
Other	3.5%	0%
Unknown	1.8%	0%
Total	100%	100%

Comparing these findings to the general breakdown of occupations for the province's workforce, we see that administration and business combined account for 71% and 75%, respectively, for the NDP and UCP appointees, whereas these occupations account for only 28% of the province's workforce. The observation made by many Alberta observers of the composition of the PSEI boards to the effect that they are heavily dominated by individuals with business backgrounds is confirmed by our data. As mentioned above, sales and service occupations were not represented at all in our sample, although they account for 22% of the workforce. There are, however, some individuals who operate and manage small businesses in this sector, as we will see in subsequent sections. As mentioned above, we found only one appointee with a background in construction work, whereas workers with trades and equipment operator skills constitute 18% of the workforce, according to StatsCan data. We therefore conclude that the PSEI boards largely exclude representatives from Alberta's working class.

In our coding, we classified all individuals employed in education, health, and social services as having "human services" occupations, whereas StatsCan separated out health professionals and included law and government services with education and social services. We can report, however, that there were only three medical doctors in our sample (one working in private practice), and no nurses or care aides. That means that only 3/231 or 1.3% of PSEI public board appointees were health professionals, compared to their 7% share of the province's workforce.¹⁷²

¹⁷² Remember that three individuals appear in two groups, so the actual number of *appointees* is 231, whereas the number of *appointments* is 234.

Our closest approximation to StatsCan's category "education, law and social, community and government services" is achieved by combining our categories:

- Administrator in the public, non-profit, or Indigenous sectors (20)
- Corporate executive in the public, non-profit, or Indigenous sectors (5)
- Lawyer (22)
- Police (1)
- Public servant (7)
- Social worker (4)
- Teacher/professor (7)

The numbers in parentheses represent the total number of appointments in each of these categories, which add up to 66, or 28% of our 234 appointments. Thus, the PSEI boards have an over-representation of individuals from that StatsCan aggregate category, which constitutes only 10% of the workforce. This is likely due to the relatively large number of administrators and lawyers in our sample.

Comparing the NDP and UCP figures in Table 5.3, the most striking differences are for the administration and business categories. The two governments appeared to agree on the importance of putting lawyers on the boards, and about half of the NDP appointees came from business occupations. However, the NDP appointed four times more public members with administrative occupations than the UCP, while the UCP appointed many more individuals with business occupations than the NDP. Coding occupations by public, private, non-profit, and Indigenous sectors shed some light on these differences. Breaking the NDP's administrative appointments down by these sectors, we found that 16 administrative appointees worked in the public sector (government or public services) and eight came from the non-profit sector. Fourteen came from the private sector. By comparison, only seven of the UCP appointees came from the public or non-profit sectors—and four of these were reappointments of NDP-recruited individuals. Thus, 21% of the NDP appointees were administrators in the public or non-profit sectors, compared to only 5% of the UCP appointees.

Classifying *all* the appointments by these sectors produced the results for the two groups that we see in Table 5.4.

Table 5.4: Appointments by Sector as Percentages of Each Group's Total Appointments (NDP=113; UCP=153)

Sector	NDP	UCP
Indigenous	2.7%	1.3%
Non-profit	10.8%	1.3%
Private	64.6%	88.2%
Public	20.4%	9.2%
Unknown	1.8%	0%
Total	100.3%	100%

Lastly, Table 5.5 will help readers to interpret the meaning of the figures for “political” occupations. In the category “political” we included persons whose careers had primarily been (or currently are) in politics as elected officials (at any level of government or elected office), as political appointees, or as lobbyists. (There are other appointees who have run as candidates for, or worked for political parties, but in our judgment, politics was not their “primary” occupation. We return to this group in the section on political affiliations.)

Table 5.5: “Political” Appointees by Appointee Group

Appointee	Group	Position	Appointment information
Floyd Thompson	NDP-C	Chairperson of the Métis Settlements Appeal Tribunal (2019-present) and chairperson of the Kikino Métis Settlement (1973-2017).	Appointed to the board of Portage College by the NDP govt. in May 2018. Term expired in April 2021.
Fern F. Welch	NDP-C	Councillor for Big Lakes County (dates unknown). Appointed to the Aboriginal Tourism Advisory Council by the PC govt. in 2005.	Appointed to the board of Northern Lakes College by the NDP govt. in May 2018. Term expired in April 2021.
Raymond Martin	NDP-R	Served four terms as an NDP MLA representing Edmonton ridings, and two terms as an Edmonton public school board trustee. Stood as a federal candidate four times.	Appointed as chair of the board of NAIT by the NDP govt. His appt. was rescinded by the UCP govt. in August 2019.
Francis Morris Flewwelling	NDP-R	Member of Red Deer City Council from 1995-2004 and mayor of Red Deer from 2004-2013.	Appointed chair of the board of Red Deer College by the NDP govt. His appt. was rescinded by the UCP govt. in September 2019.
Michael Phair	NDP-R	Edmonton city councillor from 1992 to 2007.	Appointed chair of the board of the University of Alberta by the NDP govt. in 2016 and 2019. His second appt. was rescinded by the UCP govt. in August 2019.
Claudette Tardiff	NDP-R	Canadian senator from 2005 to February 2018.	Appointed to the board of the University of Alberta by the NDP govt. Her appt. was rescinded by the UCP govt. in August 2019.

Richard Casson	UCP1	Former Conservative Party Member of Parliament for Lethbridge, 1997-2011.	Appointed to the board of the University of Lethbridge by the UCP govt. in October 2019, replacing Georgina Knitel, whose appt. was rescinded.
James Rajotte	UCP1	Former Conservative Party of Canada member of parliament, serving Edmonton ridings, from 2000 to 2008. Former director of the Alberta Enterprise Group (business lobby organization). Alberta's Senior Representative to the United States since May 2020, appointed by the UCP govt.	Appointed to the board of the University of Alberta by the UCP govt. in August 2015. Resigned this position in April 30, 2020.
Larry Kaumeyer	UCP1	Director of the Alberta Prosperity Fund (political action committee created in November 2015). "Strategic advisor" to Jason Kenney from December 2019 to August 2020. Then appointed as premier Kenney's principal secretary.	Appointed to the board of the University of Alberta by the UCP govt. in August 2015. Resigned his position in November 2019.
Paul McLauchlin	UCP2	Councillor/Reeve of Municipality of Ponoka County (2007-present) and president of Rural Municipalities of Alberta since November 2020.	Appointed to the board of Olds College by the UCP govt. in July 2020.
Lloyd Snelgrove	UCP2	Progressive Conservative Party MLA for Vermilion-Lloydminster from 2001-2012.	Appointed to the board of Lakeland College by the UCP govt. in May 2020.
Ron Young	UCP2	Served nine terms on the municipal councils of Cold Lake and Grand Centre.	Appointed to the board of Portage College by the UCP govt. in November 2020.

Specializations

While occupations and specializations are related, the categories are different and tell us different things. A corporate executive, for example, might be responsible for regulatory compliance, human resources, financial oversight, or government relations. A business owner might be a management consultant, a realtor, or the owner of an art gallery. A police department employee might be teaching criminology. We developed 22 categories for specializations but found only 18 of these among our appointees. We then aggregated the classifications into 12 categories, presented in Table 5.6. (See Appendix 2 for the codes.)

In this section, we compare the "NDP only" appointees to the "Common" group and the "UCP only" group. The first group gives us a sense of the NDP's valuation of specialized knowledges needed for the boards. The second group is constituted of NDP appointees who were reappointed by the UCP, which tells us which members, among those whose appointments expired, the UCP wanted to keep on the boards. The third group comprises appointees recruited by the UCP for board positions. Lastly, we calculated the representation of the specializations among the entire set of appointees.

The business category, which includes management, consulting (for businesses), and human resources, is once again the category most represented among appointees (32%), with twice as many appointees as the next category, law (14%). This is the case for both the NDP and the UCP groups of appointees, indicating agreement on the importance of endowing the boards with business and legal expertise. The business category was particularly favoured in the “Common” group, consisting of UCP reappointments of individuals who had been selected earlier by the NDP. This suggests that the UCP favoured individuals with business expertise. At the level of the entire set, accounting knowledge follows closely on the heels of legal knowledge.

However, we see some significant differences among the groups. The second most represented specialization category for the NDP was education (16%), whereas for the UCP it was accounting (17%). Finance and actuarial knowledge were represented more strongly in the UCP group (12%) than in the NDP group (5%). STEM and medical fields of knowledge were also more highly represented in the UCP group (11%) than in the NDP group (5%). The UCP appointees included nine persons with engineering specializations, three with science specializations, and one with a medical specialization, whereas the NDP group included three working in areas of science and one in medicine.

Table 5.6: Specializations of Appointees by Group (Percentages)

Aggregate categories for specializations	NDP (NDP-C + NDP-R) (n=81)	Common (NDP/UCP) (n=32)	UCP (UCP1 + UCP2) (n=121)	For total no. of appointments (n=234)
BUS	29.6%	40.7%	30.5%	31.6%
LAW	13.6%	12.5%	14.9%	14%
ACCT	3.7%	12.5%	16.5%	11.5%
FIN/INS	5%	9.4%	12.4%	9.4%
EDUC	16%	6.3%	5%	9%
STEM/MED	5%	3.1%	10.7%	8%
TRADES	1%	3.1%	2.5%	2%
SOC	3.7%	6.3%	0%	2%
REALTY	0%	0%	2.5%	1.7%
ARTS&CUL	5%	3%	0%	1.7%
AGR	1.2%	0%	1.7%	1.3%
Unknown	16%	3.1%	3.3%	8%
Total	99.8%	100%	100%	100.2%

Arts, humanities, and cultural specializations were represented almost solely among the NDP appointees (5%). One NDP appointee who works as an artist was reappointed by the UCP for a second term. Subsequently, there were no UCP appointments of persons working in these fields. Likewise, three individuals with expertise in social work were appointed by the NDP; two of these were reappointed by the UCP, and after that, none were appointed by the UCP.

Overall, Table 5.6 shows a clear hierarchy of preferred qualifications, with corporate knowledge (business management, finance, accounting, and areas of corporate law) constituting 67% of the appointees' areas of specialization. Expertise in education, sociology, humanities, arts, and culture combined constituted only 13% of appointees' specializations. Had it not been for the NDP's appointments in those categories, the figure would have been 2.6% of all appointments (6/234).

Educational Qualifications

The educational backgrounds of the appointees were tricky to code for two reasons. The first is that some appointees had two undergraduate degrees in different fields, or two master's degrees in different fields, and we were obliged to choose only one. In such cases, we chose the degree that was closer to the appointee's occupation and specialization. Second, the educational qualifications of 18 appointees could not be found. Table 5.7 shows the numbers of degrees or qualifications that we found in each of the categories for "ALL NDP" and "ALL UCP."

“ Expertise in education, sociology, humanities, arts, and culture combined constituted only 13% of appointees' specializations. Had it not been for the NDP's appointments in those categories, the figure would have been 2.6% of all appointments (6/234).”

Table 5.7: Appointees' Educational Qualifications by Group: ALL-NDP and ALL-UCP

Highest degree	Description	ALL NDP (no.)	Percentages (n=113)	ALL-UCP (no.)	Percentages (n=153)
MBA	Master of Business Administration	14	12.4%	22	14.4%
MA	Master of Arts	8	7.1%	19	12.4%
BA	Bachelor of Arts	11	9.7%	18	11.8%
LLB	Bachelor of Laws	8	7.1%	17	11.1%
B.Sc.	Bachelor of Sciences	6	5.3%	12	7.8%
B.Comm.	Bachelor of Commerce	6	5.3%	5	3.3%
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy (four in Arts, one in Science)	5	4.4%	5	3.3%
M.Ed.	Master of Education	7	6.2%	4	2.6%
B.Ed.	Bachelor of Education	3	2.7%	3	2%
LLM	Master of Laws	3	2.7%	3	2%
J.D.	Doctor of Laws	3	2.7%	2	1.3%
M.Sc.	Master of Science	2	1.8%	2	1.3%
MD	Medical Doctor	2	1.8%	2	1.3%
CPA	Chartered Professional Accountant	1	0.9%	2	1.3%
BFA	Bachelor of Fine Arts	1	0.9%	2	1.3%
BM	Bachelor of Management	1	0.9%	1	0.7%
BSW	Bachelor of Social Work	1	0.9%	1	0.7%
CMA	Certified Management Accounting Diploma	1	0.9%	1	0.7%
MPA	Master of Professional Accounting	1	0.9%	1	0.7%
BBA	Bachelor of Business Administration	0	0%	1	0.7%
Other	Certificates, diplomas, unspecified degrees	14	12.4%	19	12.4%
Unknown		15	13.3%	11	7.2%
	Post-secondary degrees	84	74.3%	123	80.4%

The figures in Table 5.7 allow us to calculate that 74% of the NDP appointees and 80% of the UCP appointees hold post-secondary degrees (but keeping in mind the caveats mentioned above about our missing data). Thus, the two groups are closely matched by a purely quantitative measurement of level of education. The degrees are ranked in descending numbers for the UCP group, and for this group we see that the single largest group is the MBA, followed closely by the arts degrees and law degrees. The rank order is the same for the NDP group, with the exception that the Master of Education degree is in fifth place, whereas for the UCP, fifth place is taken by Bachelor of Science.

Since 20 types of degree were found, we aggregated these by general area into a smaller number of categories (six), which are presented in Table 5.8. Given the findings regarding occupation, specialization, and (in the next section) economic sector of the appointees, we were somewhat surprised to find that *the single largest category of degrees for both the NDP and the UCP is that combining liberal and fine arts, social work, and education*. These constitute a third of all degree qualifications of the appointees.

Table 5.8: Educational Qualifications of PSEI Appointees by Six Categories for All-NDP and All-UCP (Numbers and Percentages)

Type of degree or qualification	ALL-NDP	Percentages (n=113)	ALL-UCP	Percentages (n=153)
Arts, social work, education degrees	35	31%	51	33.3%
Business, management, commerce, accounting degrees	24	21.2%	33	21.6%
Law degrees	14	12.4%	22	14.4%
Science and medicine degrees	11	9.7%	17	11.1%
Other qualifications	14	12.4%	19	12.4%
Unknown	15	13.3%	11	7.2%

The explanation for this finding lies in the backgrounds of the appointees who hold corporate executive, management, and administrative positions in the private, public, and non-profit sectors. Many of these individuals hold arts degrees, as do some owners of small businesses in the consulting sector. A smaller number of corporate executives have law degrees, and an even smaller number have degrees in engineering or science. (While we recorded only the highest qualification found for each appointee, we observed that many who hold master's degrees in law or business also have undergraduate degrees in the arts.)

6 Corporate/Private Sector Affiliations of Appointees

As explained in the methodology section, for each appointee we recorded all the affiliations to corporations that we could find through our internet searches. In this section, by “corporate” affiliations we mean private sector corporations or businesses where the individuals are employed, manage, own, or sit on the boards of directors. (In most cases, the appointees are in management, executive, owner, or director positions, but in some cases they were employees of these businesses or consultants.)¹⁷³ We then coded each affiliation by one of 26 economic sector categories. The result of this initial classification of appointees’ corporate affiliations is shown in Table 6.1. The results are shown by appointee group, as well as for the total number of appointments (234). Twenty-six categories are a lot for a sample size of only 234, but the initial breakdown allows readers to see the full set of sectors represented (and not represented) by appointees.

Table 6.1: Numbers of Corporate Affiliations † by Economic Sector and Appointee Group

Economic sector	NDP-C	NDP-R	NDP-UCP1	NDP-UCP2	ALL NDP	UCP1	UCP2	ALL UCP	All appointments (n=234)*
Auditing & accounting	1	0	1	4	6	14	14	33	34
Agriculture & agribusiness	0	1	0	0	1	2	5	7	8
Architecture/design	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	2
Arts, rec, sports	2	22	0	3	27	0	0	3	27
Banking, finance, insurance	2	5	0	1	8	7	4	12	19
Construction	2	0	0	1	3	14	2	17	19
Consulting	7	10	0	5	22	8	16	29	46
Engineering	2	1	0	1	4	2	0	3	6
Enviro services & waste management	0	4	0	0	4	4	0	4	8
Food services & hospitality	1	1	0	0	2	1	3	4	6
Health (commercial)	1	2	0	3	6	2	2	7	10
Indig-corporation	4	2	0	1	7	0	1	2	8
Investment	1	1	0	2	4	12	2	16	18
Legal	2	6	0	3	11	7	9	19	27
Manufacturing	0	1	0	2	3	5	3	10	11
Media	0	5	0	1	6	0	0	1	6
Mining	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	2
Oil and gas	9	4	0	5	19	61	33	99	112

Renewable energies	0	0	0	0	0	2	3	5	5
Other energy	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	2
Small business	3	3	0	3	9	2	1	6	12
Realty	1	0	0	0	1	7	3	10	11
Technical services	1	1	0	6	8	5	3	14	16
Telecommunications	1	1	0	0	2	2	0	2	4
Transportation	1	0	0	1	2	5	2	8	9
Utilities	0	2	0	2	4	6	2	10	12
Total affiliations	42	73	1	44	160	172	108	325	440†
Number in group	n=36	n=45	n=2	n=30	n=113	n=58	n=63	n=153	n=234

† We get 440 corporate affiliations by adding the numbers for NDP-C, NDP-R, NDP-UCP1, NDP-UCP2, UCP1, and UCP2

*Sum of NDP-C, NDP-R, NDP-UCP1, NDP-UCP2, UCP1, and UCP2

Here we see, already, that affiliations to oil and gas companies constitute by far the single largest group of affiliations (112). The second largest group is consultancy firms serving businesses (46). The latter firms are mostly Alberta-based, but also include McKinsey & Co. (international) and Global Public Affairs (offices in five Canadian provinces). Auditing and accounting firms constitute the third most frequent set of affiliations (34). While some of these firms are small local firms, 26 of the affiliations are to large corporations like KPMG, Deloitte, Ernst & Young, MNP (Meyers Norris Penny LLP), or PricewaterhouseCoopers.

We also see, comparing the NDP-R group to the ALL-UCP1 group (which is constituted by adding NDP-UCP1 and UCP1 appointments), that the first group has 73/45 or 1.6 corporate affiliations per appointee. The ALL-UCP1 group has 172/60, or 2.9 corporate affiliations per appointee—nearly twice as many as NDP-R.

To produce Table 6.2, we took the data from table 6.1 to calculate what percentage of all affiliations is accounted for by each economic sector and then compared the groups ALL-NDP and ALL-UCP. We see, for example, that ALL-NDP's six affiliations to auditing & accounting firms constitutes 3.8% of that group's total of 160 corporate affiliations, compared to the ALL-UCP group's 33 auditing & accounting affiliations, or 10.2% of its 325 corporate affiliations. The largest percentage of affiliations for the NDP group is for the arts and recreation sector (16.9%), which constitutes less than 1% for the UCP group. The second largest percentage for the NDP is consultancies (13.8%), followed by oil and gas (11.3%). Law firms, small businesses, and banking, finance, and insurance firms follow. For the UCP, the largest percentage of affiliations is found in the oil and gas sector, constituting nearly a third of all corporate affiliations.¹⁷⁴ This is followed by

173 In Part 9 of the report, only the affiliations to positions in senior management, executive, or boards of directors were selected for the network analysis.

174 The preponderance of oil and gas industry affiliations recalls the way three vacancies on the board of governors of the University of Alberta were advertised by the board in September 2013. The ad specified that the board was looking for individuals with expertise in "Alberta's energy and/or natural resource sector." At that time, the board was chaired by Doug Goss. See Sheila Pratt, "Energy recruits for the U of A board send wrong signal: NDP," *Edmonton Journal*, September 17, 2013.

auditing and accounting firms (10.2%), consultancies (9%), law firms (5.8%), and construction firms (5.2%). Appointees linked to small businesses (1.8%) rank only 11 for the UCP.

Table 6.2: Corporate Affiliations by Percentages
(Percentage of all Affiliations Accounted for by Each Economic Sector)

Economic sector	ALL NDP affiliations (n=160)	ALL UCP affiliations (n=325)
AUD/ACC	3.8%	10.2%
AG-BUS	0.6%	2.2%
ARCH-DES	0.6%	0.3%
ARTS&REC	16.9%	0.9%
BFI	5%	3.7%
CONSTR	1.9%	5.2%
CONSULT	13.8%	9%
ENG	2.5%	0.9%
ENV/W	2.5%	1.2%
FOODSERV/HOSP	1.3%	1.2%
HEALTH	3.8%	2.2%
INDIG-CORP	4.4%	0.6%
INVEST	2.5%	5%
LEGAL	6.9%	5.8%
MANF	1.9%	3.1%
MEDIA	3.8%	0.3%
MINING	0.6%	0.3%
O&G	11.3%	30.5%
RENEN	0%	1.5%
OTHER-EN	0%	0.6%
SM-BUS	5.6%	1.8%
REALTY	0.6%	3.1%
TECH-SERV	5%	4.3%
TELECOM	1.3%	0.6%
TRANSP	1.3%	2.5%
UTIL	2.5%	3.1%
Total	100%	100%

By examining corporate affiliations, the predominance of affiliations to the oil and gas sector becomes visible, as well as the significance of affiliations to the construction industry and to the sectors that finance and provide other corporate services to large corporations in the resource sector. This pattern

becomes clearer in Table 6.3, where we aggregate economic sectors. (The categories included in each economic sector are listed in Appendix 2.)

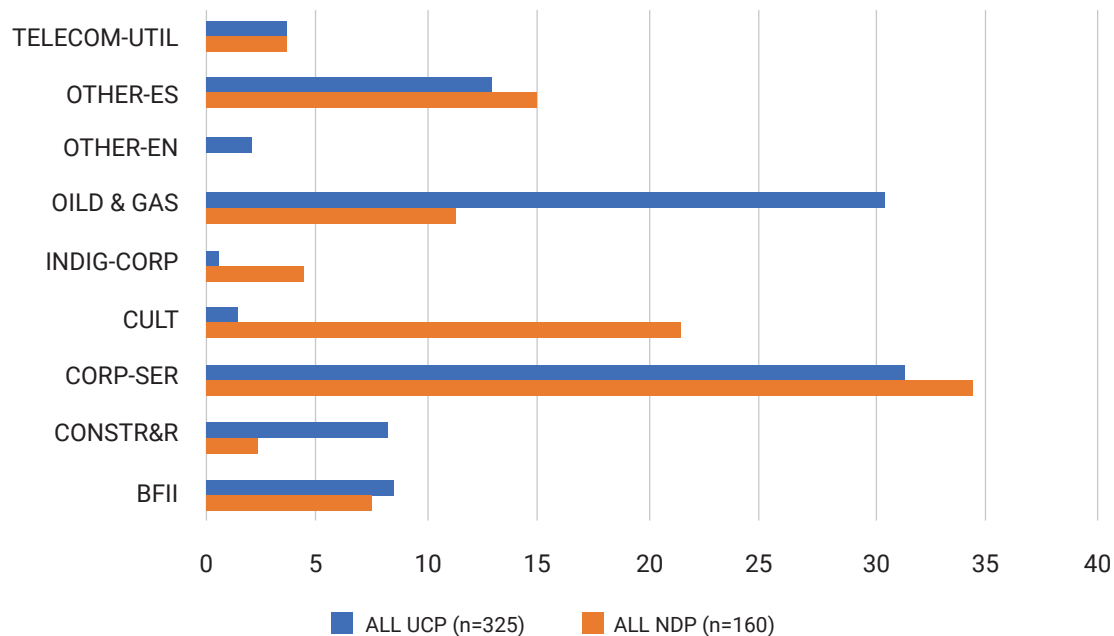
Table 6.3: Corporate Affiliations of the Two Groups—ALL NDP and ALL UCP—as Percentages of Their Total Number of Affiliations per Aggregate Economic Sector

Aggregate economic sector (9)	ALL NDP (n=160)	ALL UCP (n=325)
Banking, finance, insurance, & investment	7.5%	8.6%
Construction & realty	2.5%	8.3%
Corporate services	34.2%	31.5%
Cultural sector	21.1%	1.5%
Indigenous corporations	4.3%	0.6%
Oil and gas	11.8%	30.5%
Other energy	0%	2.2%
Other economic sectors	14.1%	13.1%
Telecommunications and utilities	3.7%	3.7%
Total	100%	100%

The UCP appointees have three times as many connections to construction, property development, and real estate firms as the NDP appointees. They are also highly connected to the oil and gas sector. The NDP appointees have about 14 times as many affiliations to the cultural industries as the UCP appointees, and most of the affiliations to Indigenous corporations. These comparisons are illustrated in Figure 6.1.

“The UCP appointees have three times as many connections to construction, property development, and real estate firms as the NDP appointees. They are also highly connected to the oil and gas sector.”

Figure 6.1: NDP and UCP Appointees' Corporate Affiliations by Economic Sector
(Percentages of all Affiliations)



7 Non-Corporate Civil Society (NCCS) Affiliations of Appointees

Non-corporate civil society (NCCS) entities are classified in the ways explained in Appendix 2. We initially coded such entities using 19 categories, to capture the affiliations we found in our searches. As with the corporate affiliations, we then aggregated these classifications into a smaller number of categories (also described in Appendix 2.) We found, in total, 415 NCCS affiliations for the 231 appointees. The average number for ALL-NDP appointments is 2 and for the ALL-UCP appointments, 1.4. Thus, one of the first findings is that the NDP appointees have considerably more NCCS affiliations than their UCP counterparts. The reverse was true for the corporate affiliations, where the ALL-UCP group had 2.1 affiliations per appointee compared to 1.4 for the ALL-NDP group.

Table 7.1 shows the numbers of affiliations to aggregated NCCS sectors for eight appointee groups (in addition to ALL-UCP1, which is calculated by adding NDP-UCP1 to UCP1). Comparing the NDP-R group to the ALL-UCP1 group, we see that the former had 148 NCCS affiliations, or 3.3 per appointee, whereas All-UCP1 had 86 NCCS affiliations, or 1.4 per person.

Table 7.1: Numbers of Affiliations by 13 Types of Non-Corporate Civil Society Entity and Appointee Group

Aggregate groupings for non-corporate civil society entities	NDP-C	NDP-R	NDP-UCP1	NDP-UCP2	UCP1	UCP2	ALL NDP	ALL UCP
BUS-C&A	6	1	0	0	17	7	7	24
BUS-LOB	0	0	0	0	4	1	0	5
GOVT	11	17	0	4	17	26	32	47
IA	2	1	3	1	11	10	7	25
INDIG-GOVT	2	2	0	0	0	2	4	1
OTHER-CS	6	70	4	8	10	10	88	31
POL	3	6	0	1	6	11	10	18
PSEI	6	26	0	2	7	16	34	26
PUBLIC	2	7	0	3	0	3	12	6
QUASI-GOVT	6	16	0	7	1	14	29	22
RES-INNOV	1	0	0	1	3	3	1	7
TT/RI	1	2	0	0	3	4	4	8
UNION	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Number of affiliations	46	148	7	27	79	108	228	221
Number in group	n=36	n=45	n=2	n=30	n=58	n=63	n=113	n=153
Affiliations per appointee	1.3	3.3	3.5	0.9	1.4	1.7	2.0	1.4

Charitable/Non-Profit Affiliations

The most salient comparison revealed by these data is that the All-NDP appointees hold 88 out of 108 of the “other civil society” (OTHER-CS) affiliations, and thus the lion’s share at 81%. The OTHER-CS category includes charitable organizations, non-profit (and non-governmental) social services, a wide range of other non-profit associations in the arts, sports, and institutional sectors, professional associations, and a small number of religious social service organizations (like Catholic Social Services and United Church Pastoral Care).

It is also striking that 77 out of 88, or 88% of the ALL-NDP group’s affiliations to “other civil society” entities were held by the group of appointees whose positions were rescinded by the UCP government in 2019 (NDP-R). This finding leads us to ask if there is something about these individuals’ NCCS affiliations that made them undesirable board members from the point of view of the UCP government. In Part 8, we see that about four of the persons whose positions were rescinded had well-known connections to the NDP, but most members of this group did not. Fourteen of the 45 had made political contributions to the NDP.

The ALL-NDP group also includes 60% of the affiliations to post-secondary education institutions (PSEI) (34 out of 57). In contrast, the ALL-NDP group holds relatively few of the affiliations to business councils and associations (BUS-C&A) and to industry associations (IA), and none to business lobby organizations (BUS-LOB).

Table 7.2 and Figure 7.1 show the NCCS affiliations of the two groups as percentages of their total numbers of affiliations (228 for the NDP and 221 for the UCP). The categories are also rank-ordered from largest to smallest for each group of appointees.

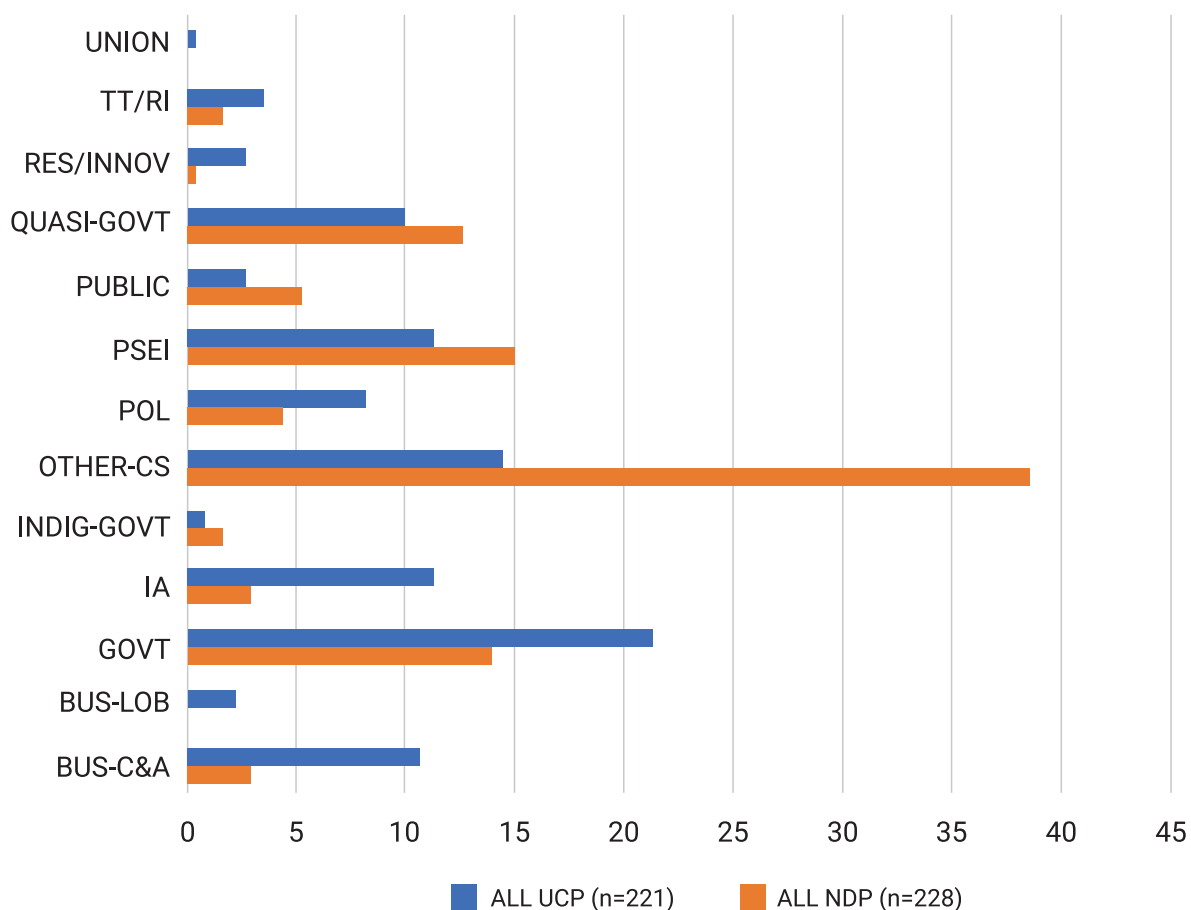
“ The most salient comparison revealed by these data is that the All-NDP appointees hold 88 out of 108 of the ‘other civil society’ (OTHER-CS) affiliations, and thus the lion’s share at 81%.”

Table 7.2: NCCS Affiliations by Aggregate Category for ALL-NDP and All-UCP

ALL-NDP non-corporate civil society affiliations ranked from most important to least important		ALL-UCP non-corporate civil society affiliations ranked from most important to least important	
Aggregate groupings for NCCS entities	ALL NDP (n=228)	Aggregate groupings for NCCS entities	ALL UCP (n=221)
OTHER-CS	38.6%	GOVT	21.7%
PSEI	14.9%	OTHER-CS	14%
GOVT	14%	PSEI	11.8%
QUASI-GOVT	12.7%	IA	11.3%
PUBLIC	5.3%	BUS-C&A	10.9%
POL	4.4%	QUASI-GOVT	10%
IA	3.1%	POL	8.1%
BUS-C&A	3%	TT/RI	3.6%
TT/RI	1.7%	RES-INNOV	3.2%
INDIG-GOVT	1.7%	PUBLIC	2.7%
RES-INNOV	0.4%	BUS-LOB	2.3%
UNION	0%	INDIG-GOVT	0.5%
BUS-LOB	0%	UNION	0.5%

Here we see, again, the significance of “other civil society” affiliations for the NDP appointees, followed by links to PSEIs. For the UCP group, the largest grouping of affiliations is to *government*, a category that includes government administration, government corporations, and government regulatory agencies, whether at municipal, provincial, or federal levels. This is likely due to the fact that individuals associated with past PCP governments (as civil servants or appointees) greatly outnumber those associated with the only NDP government to date.

Figure 7.1: Non-Corporate Civil Society Affiliations as Percentages of Each Group's Total Number of Affiliations (ALL-NDP and ALL-UCP)



Regarding quasi-governmental entities (bodies to which individuals are appointed by governments but which are meant to be relatively independent of government oversight), we found that most of these affiliations—in all appointee groups—are to economic development advisory bodies. Both the NDP-UCP2 and UCP2 groups include individuals with links to oil sands management as well as bodies appointed by the UCP government. Only the NDP appointees have affiliations to arts-related bodies.

Detailed lists of the appointees' affiliations to government and quasi-governmental bodies, broken down by appointee group, may be found in Appendix 3.

Affiliations to Industry Associations

We found 22 industry associations (bodies that bring together executive-level representatives from corporations in the same sector to develop industry-wide initiatives and policies, and that lobby governments) in the NCCS affiliations of the appointees. Thirteen of the 22 associations are based in or connected to the oil and gas sector. Both the NDP and UCP governments appointed board members with links to the oil and gas sector. There are four affiliations to the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers (CAPP) alone.¹⁷⁵ These link to board appointees Janet Annesley (former VP of CAPP) (SAIT), David Collyer (former president of CAPP) (Bow Valley College), Alex Pourbaix (current president of CAPP) (Mount Royal University), and Sue Riddell Rose (director of CAPP) (Mount Royal University). The aggregates industry (sand, gravel) supplies sand for industrial uses, including fracking operations in the US and Canada; board appointee Marlea Sleeman (NAIT) is linked to the Alberta Roadbuilders and Heavy Construction Association and the Alberta Sand and Gravel Association. All the affiliations to grain growers, beef producers, and agribusiness associations are found in the UCP2 group.

Industry association (IA) affiliations are listed below, this time by six appointee groups. The numbers in parentheses indicate the number of times the affiliation was found, when this was greater than one.

NDP-R

Canadian Propane Association

NDP-C

Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers (2)

NDP-UCP1

Canadian Association of Blue Cross Plans

Canadian Life and Health Insurance Association

Edmonton Pipe Industry Health and Welfare Trust

NDP-UCP2

Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers (1)

UCP1

Alberta Roadbuilders and Heavy Construction Association

Alberta Sand and Gravel Association

Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers (2)

Canadian Electric Association (2)

Canadian Energy Pipeline Association (2)

Canadian Gas Association

Energy Council of Canada

National Industrial Sand Association

¹⁷⁵ Nancy Foster's bio for the board position at UCalgary states that she has served on CAPP committees, but we were unable to verify positions or dates, so we have not included her as a CAPP affiliate.

UCP2

Alberta Cattle Commission
 Alberta Forest Products Association
 Canadian Agri-Food Trade Alliance
 Canadian Cattlemen's Association
 CropLife Canada
 Forest Resource Improvement Association of Alberta
 Grain Growers of Canada
 Lloydminster Heavy Oil Show
 Organic Alberta
 Western Canadian Wheat Growers Association

Affiliations to Business Councils and Associations

Of the 29 affiliations found to business councils or associations (which represent businesses across sectors), UCP appointees account for 24. Some of the UCP appointees have multiple links to such entities. Affiliations to business councils and associations are listed below by appointee group. The numbers in parentheses indicate the number of times the affiliation was found, when this was greater than one.

NDP-R

Calgary Chamber of Commerce

NDP-C

Canadian Chamber of Commerce
 Cold Lake Regional Chamber of Commerce
 Downtown Lethbridge Business Revitalization Zone
 Lloydminster Regional Business Accelerator

NDP-UCP1: none

NDP-UCP2: none

UCP1

Alberta Chamber of Resources (2)
 Business Council of Alberta (4)
 Business Council of Canada (formerly the Canadian Council of Chief Executives) (2)
 Calgary Chamber of Commerce
 Edmonton Chamber of Commerce
 Fort McMurray Chamber of Commerce (2)
 Global Business Forum
 Grande Prairie & District Chamber of Commerce
 Medicine Hat District Chamber of Commerce

“Of the 29 affiliations found to business councils or associations (which represent businesses across sectors), UCP appointees account for 24.”

“The heavy weighting of public board appointees on the side of business interests that are aligned with the policy positions of the UCP government is all the more striking when one considers the complete absence of appointees from workers’ organizations.”

Red Deer Downtown Business Association
She Leads Economic Council of Alberta

UCP2

Alberta Chambers of Commerce
Alberta Chamber of Resources
Alberta Women Entrepreneurs
Business Council of Alberta
Edmonton Downtown Business Association
Medicine Hat & District Chamber of Commerce
Young Presidents’ Organization

Twenty appointees sitting on 10 PSEI boards are affiliated to local chambers of commerce, the Alberta Chambers of Commerce, the Alberta Chamber of Resources, the Business Council of Alberta, the Canadian Chamber of Commerce, and/or the Business Council of Canada. These networked business organizations have pushed for policies very much in line with those of the Alberta Progressive Conservative Party (PCP) and the UCP. The Alberta Chambers of Commerce (ACC), for example, is an association representing dozens of local chambers of commerce as well as about 80 corporate members; it seeks to be “the leading voice on business issues” in the province.¹⁷⁶ The ACC registered as a third party advertiser (TPA) with Elections Alberta in December 2018, prior to the Alberta provincial election of April 2019. It allocated \$26,250 to its campaign called “Vote Prosperity.”¹⁷⁷

Some of the boards are heavily saturated with this business worldview. At **SAIT**, two board members, Ruhee Ismail-Teja and Lara Murphy, are directors of the Calgary Chamber of Commerce; a third, Scott Thon, is a director of the Business Council of Alberta; and a fourth, Janet Annesley, is a director of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce. Sitting on the **GRPC** board are: Bridget Hennigar, the board chair and president of the Grande Prairie & District Chamber of Commerce; Shawna Miller, the chair of the Alberta Chambers of Commerce, and; Patricia Pavlov, the executive director of the Jasper Park Chamber of Commerce. Other PSEI boards on which past or present directors of business councils sit include the Banff Centre (Adam Waterous, Joseph MacNeil), Keyano College (Kim Farwell, Staci Millard), ULeithbridge (Shilpa Stocker), Medicine Hat (Sarah MacKenzie and Kent Smith), Mount Royal University (Alex Pourbaix, Sue Riddell Rose), NAIT (Janet Riopel, Andrew Neigel), and Portage College (Susan White).

The heavy weighting of public board appointees on the side of business interests that are aligned with the policy positions of the UCP government is all the more striking when one considers the complete absence of appointees from workers’ organizations. One appointee in our sample of 231 had been a member of the Alberta Teachers Association and had held a union position.¹⁷⁸

176 Alberta Chambers of Commerce, “About us,” <http://www.abchamber.ca/about-us> (accessed July 16, 2021).

177 This policy platform is described in the ACC’s 2018 and 2019 annual reports, which may be found on its website. The \$26,250 figure is given in its report to Elections Alberta for the period December 1, 2018 to April 18, 2019: <https://efpublic.elections.ab.ca/efOFSETPACampaign.cfm?DOCSTATE=0&EVENTID=7&TPAID=50&ACQU NTID=1348>

178 This is Ron Young, who had also run for election provincially as a Liberal candidate, had been elected to municipal councils, and had been appointed to a task force on Teaching Excellence by the Conservative government. See <https://www.teachers.ab.ca/News%20Room/ata%20news/Volume-48-2013-14/Number-9/Pages/Viewpoints.aspx>. Young was appointed to the board of Portage College by the UCP government in November 2020.

Affiliations to Business Lobbies

In the category of business lobby organizations, we included only the Alberta Enterprise Group (AEG), the Alberta Prosperity Fund (APF), and the Urban Development Institute (UDI) of Edmonton (all affiliations that showed up in our searches), although we are aware that business and industry associations also engage in lobbying governments.

As we mentioned in the UAlberta case study, one of the UCP appointees to that institution's board of governors, Larry Kaumeyer, was a director of the Alberta Prosperity Fund. According to Desmog.com, the APF, created in November 2015, identified itself on its Facebook page as “the conservative response to left leaning coalitions and governments whose anti-industry pro-government policies are destroying Alberta’s advantage.”¹⁸⁰ In July 2016, the APF endorsed Jason Kenney as the leader of a united conservative party.¹⁸¹

The Alberta Enterprise Group (AEG), whose motto is “Business First,” describes itself as “the only group of its kind that puts direct action for Alberta business at its core”¹⁸² and as “Alberta’s most powerful business network.”¹⁸³ Created in 2007, AEG has among its members “business owners, senior executives, investors and entrepreneurs representing firms in every major Alberta Industry.” AEG communicates with the media and the public, as well as with policymakers. In 2015, for example, during the Alberta provincial election, the organization published a study arguing against any increase to corporate taxes and claiming that relatively low corporate tax rates were the explanation for high rates of economic growth. Its website states that it “stands up for the principles of free enterprise.”¹⁸⁴

Appointees in our study with affiliations to the AEG include James Rajotte (past board member) and Marlea Sleeman (current board member).

Corporate members of AEG that have connections to the appointees in our sample include CNRL (Adele Thomson, Keyano College; Adam Waterman, Lakeland College), CLHBid (Bridget Hennigar, GPRC), Finning Canada (Mona Hale, UAlberta), McLennan Ross LLP (Tom Ross, UAlberta; Samantha Kernahan, MacEwan), Rogers Communications (James Rajotte, UAlberta), Sureway Construction Group (Marlea Sleeman, NAIT), Syncrude (Kim Farwell, Keyano College; Christian Matte, Keyano College).¹⁸⁵

Marlea Sleeman also connects the AEG to the Urban Development Institute (UDI), an organization representing “the land development industry”¹⁸⁶ that was incorporated in 1958 and has chapters in Edmonton and other municipalities. The board of directors of the UDI-Edmonton Region includes senior executives from Brookfield Properties, Melcor Developments Ltd., IBI Group, Kinnikinnick Studio, Rohit Group of Companies, Select Engineering Consultants, TAG Developments, MLC Group, Qualico Communities, and Edgar Development Edmonton. Melcor and Rohit

180 Desmog.com, “Alberta Prosperity Fund (APF),” <https://www.desmog.com/alberta-prosperity-fund/> (accessed July 15, 2021). Most of the links to APF’s Facebook posts and website have been removed. Desmog and Daveberta.ca archived many of the pages.

181 Daveberta.ca, archived media release from the Alberta Prosperity Fund’s board of directors, dated July 5, 2016, <https://archive.is/oQyLZ>.

182 Alberta Enterprise Group, <https://albertaenterprisegroup.com/> (page accessed July 15, 2021).

183 Alberta Enterprise Group, <https://albertaenterprisegroup.com/home/about/networks/> (accessed July 15, 2021).

184 Alberta Enterprise Group, <https://albertaenterprisegroup.com/home/about/outreach-advocacy/> (accessed July 15, 2021).

185 Alberta Enterprise Group, <https://albertaenterprisegroup.com/home/about/our-members/> (accessed July 15, 2021).

186 Urban Development Institute-Edmonton Region, <https://www.udiedmonton.com/about> (accessed July 15, 2021).

corporation executives also hold appointments to the PSEI boards (Daniel Eggert, UAlberta; Guy Bridgeman, UAlberta; Carolyn Graham, MacEwan; Guy Pelletier, Red Deer College). Rohit Gupta, president of Rohit Group of Companies, sits on the Advisory Board in Real Estate of the UAlberta School of Business.

Sleeman—who was appointed to the board of NAIT in August 2019 by the UCP—is also affiliated with the Alberta Roadbuilders and Heavy Construction Association and the Alberta Sand and Gravel Association; she is the president of SIL Industrial Minerals Alberta. SIL made political contributions to the PCP in 2008, 2011, and 2015.

NAIT has a close relationship with the construction industry. Clark Builders (former CEO, Paul Verhesen) pledged \$300,000 to the School of Skilled Trades in 2009 and \$200,000 for NAIT's Centre for Applied Technology.¹⁸⁷ The company “helped build” the centre, and was also contracted to build NAIT's Productivity and Innovation Centre, described as “NAIT's first building focused specifically on meeting the needs of industry with applied research centres, productivity training and consultations, as well as acceleration services and state-of-the-art equipment and testing to support industry partners' shared drive to become more competitive.”¹⁸⁸

As mentioned in the case study of the University of Alberta (another PSEI with strong connections to the construction industry), Clark Builders, Melcor Developments, and other construction and land development companies have long been contributors to the Progressive Conservative Party. Paul Verhesen was present at the May 2015 press conference called by businessmen to warn Albertans against voting for the NDP. The Edmonton Journal reported that “Verhesen and Clark Builders have contributed \$18,150 to the Tories since 2010 and have received \$257.7 million in government contracts since 2012” (Kleiss, op cit.). In addition to Melcor and Clark Builders, our research found that Sureway Construction, Walton Development & Management, Stuart Olson Inc., and PCL Construction have made donations to the PCP or to right-wing political action committees (see Tables 8.1, 8.3, 8.4). Kevin Szakacs, president of Signature Land Corporation and a UCP appointee to the board of Grande Prairie Regional College, has donated not only to the PC party, but also to Alberta Proud, a right-wing political action committee. His other company, Hi-tech Business Systems, has donated to the PC and Wildrose parties.¹⁸⁹

187 NAIT, “Success starts with ‘in-your-face training,’” April 2, 2018, <https://www.nait.ca/giving/stories/success-starts-with-in-your-face-training>.

188 Ibid.

189 Kim Siever, “UCP appoints PC & Wildrose donors to Grande Prairie college board of governors,” October 16, 2020, <https://kimsiever.ca/2020/10/16/ucp-appoints-pc-wildrose-donors-to-grande-prairie-college-board-of-governors/>.

Why are these findings about PSEI appointees' corporate affiliations significant? While the government attempts to steer the PSEIs' priorities for teaching and research through mechanisms like performance-based funding, discretionary spending, and the granting or withholding of program approvals, the domination of the boards by like-minded emissaries brings the agenda right into the heart of PSEI governance. Individuals directing

business councils, associations, or lobby organizations formulate policy positions around which the business class can unite, and that they push forward in public policy debates. As we argued in Part 2 of the report, the UCP and business interests have a joint agenda of reform for the post-secondary sector—one that, to them, appears to be only common sense and equivalent to the public interest in youth employment, economic growth, and profitable industries. Their dominant positions on the PSEI boards render marginal other perspectives about the primary aims of higher education or the public good.¹⁹⁰

Likewise, the power of the boards over the appointed executive (president, vice-presidents of the PSEIs) compromises the autonomy of these leaders as spokespersons for faculty, staff, students, and the public interest. The current provisions of the *Post-Secondary Learning Act* subordinate elected bodies like General Faculty Councils to the ultimate authority of the boards of governors. This governance system prevents supposedly representative and public-interest-driven bodies from contesting the policy directions coming from government. Without a diversity of social interests being represented on the boards, university representatives are unable to secure outcomes that conflict with those preferred by the corporate class and neoliberal governments.

Comparing Corporate/Private Sector Affiliations to Non-Corporate Civil Society Affiliations for the ALL-NDP and ALL-UCP Groups and for the NDP-R and ALL-UCP1 Groups

Finally, combining the findings from Parts 6 and 7, we can see some significant differences between the NDP and UCP appointees regarding their connections to the private sector, on the one hand, and to non-corporate civil society organizations, on the other hand. In Figures 7.2 and 7.3, the ALL-NDP's corporate and non-corporate affiliations are the mirror opposite of the ALL-UCP group's affiliations.

“The UCP and business interests have a joint agenda of reform for the post-secondary sector—one that, to them, appears to be only common sense and equivalent to the public interest in youth employment, economic growth, and profitable industries.”

190 Even a former PCP cabinet minister and UCP government appointee was removed from a PSEI board when she resisted the “commercialization” direction being taken by the Banff Centre’s board chair and president. See Donna Kennedy-Glans, “An unwanted voice,” *Alberta Views* vol. 24, no. 9 (November 2021): 44-47.

Figure 7.2: All-NDP Affiliations by Private/Corporate Sector vs. Non-Corporate Civil Society Sector (Percentages of Total Number of Affiliations for the Group)

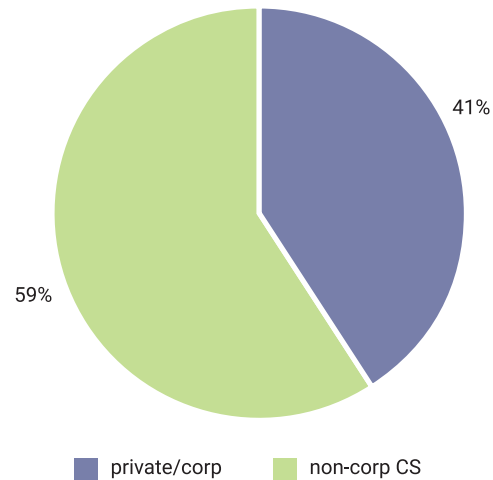
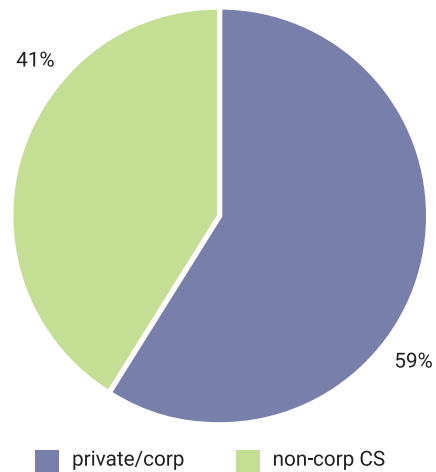


Figure 7.3: All-UCP Affiliations by Private/Corporate Sector vs. Non-Corporate Civil Society Sector (Percentages of Total Number of Affiliations for the Group)



These percentages, in turn, reflect the “opposites” nature of the NDP-R and ALL-UCP1 groups of appointees, which we see in Figures 7.4 and 7.5.

Figure 7.4: NDP-R Affiliations by Private/Corporate Sector vs. Non-Corporate Civil Society Sector (Percentages of Total Number of Affiliations for the Group)

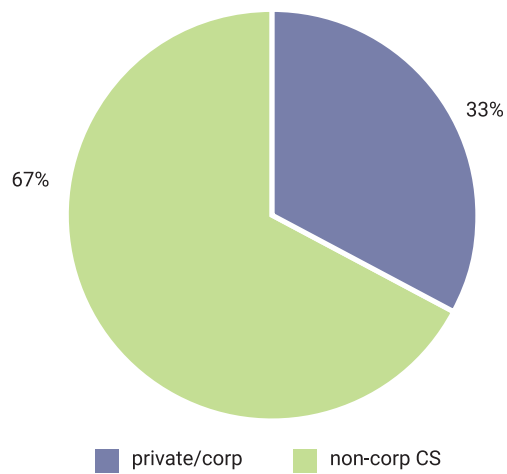
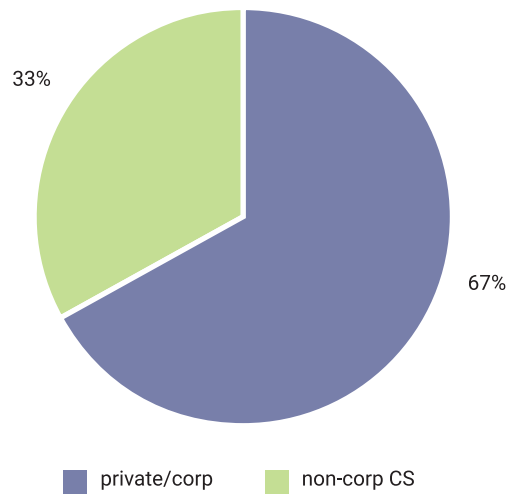


Figure 7.5: All-UCP1 Affiliations by Private/Corporate Sector vs. Non-Corporate Civil Society Sector (Percentages of Total Number of Affiliations for the Group)





Political Affiliations of Appointees

In Part 5 we reported that some of the appointees had made careers in politics, seeking elected office or holding political appointments, i.e., politics was their “occupation.” In this section, we examine the partisan affiliations of our appointees by documenting their contributions to political parties or to third party advertisers associated with political parties. We also identify appointees who have worked for politicians or stood as candidates for parties but for whom politics has not been their primary occupation.

Political contributions provide opportunities to influence policymaking or the outcomes of elections. In Alberta, political contributions were largely unregulated until 2015, when the NDP passed the *Fair Elections Financing Act*, banning corporate and union donations to political parties. The limit for individual contributions to political parties, election campaigns, and candidates (in the aggregate) was capped at \$4,000, an amount that is adjusted regularly to account for inflation. (The pre-2015 limit was \$15,000 or \$30,000 in an election year.) However, the NDP did not cap contributions to Third Party Advertisers (TPAs), which, in accordance with *The Election Finances and Contributions Disclosure Act* (EFCDA), may receive donations of any amount from individuals, corporations, or unions.¹⁹¹

Our primary source for contributions made by the PSEI appointees to Alberta political parties and to Third Party Advertisers (TPAs) is Elections Alberta’s financial disclosure database. Our discussion in this section focuses on contributions made between 2017 and 2020, a period that covers the leadership campaign for the UCP, the lead-up to the 2019 provincial election, and the UCP government’s recomposition of the PSEI boards. In addition, we reviewed earlier contributions insofar as the availability of data permitted (that is, back to 2004). These data allow us to assess the partisan connections of the PSEI appointees.¹⁹² We also searched for contributions to political parties or candidates from the corporations and other entities (such as industry associations) with which our appointees have affiliations. Organizational contributions (from corporations, unions, industry associations) to parties and candidates end after 2015, but continue to be made to the TPAs.

Individuals who are employees of organizations that make political contributions do not necessarily endorse the political leanings of the executives who make such decisions. For that reason, we have reported only the contributions of organizations in which the affiliated individuals (PSEI board appointees) held senior management or executive positions, or positions on the board of directors. In other words, we excluded organizations to which the appointees have affiliations only as current or former employees. In some cases, the appointees were not affiliated with

191 See Elections Alberta for a primer on contributing to Third Party Advertisers: <https://www.elections.ab.ca/wp-content/uploads/A-Guide-for-Contributors-to-TPAs.pdf>.

192 Unless otherwise specified, individual contributions include those made to a provincial party organization, leadership campaigns, or party constituency associations.

the organizations at the time that contributions were made to political parties or TPAs, but we include the organizations in the table because their contributions are evidence of the political orientation of the management over time.

For readers unfamiliar with the political history of Alberta, we begin with a brief chronology of developments.

- The Progressive Conservative Party (PCP) governed Alberta from 1971 to 2015.
- The Wildrose Alliance Party (WAP) was established by right-wing libertarians in 2008, receiving substantial support from oil and gas interests who opposed royalty rate increases announced by the PC government in 2007.¹⁹³
- While polling had shown that the WAP might win the 2012 provincial election, the PCP won another majority government.
- In May 2015, the social-democratic-leaning New Democratic Party (NDP), led by Rachel Notley, was elected with a majority, largely (though not entirely) due to the splitting of the conservative vote between the Wildrose¹⁹⁴ and Progressive Conservative parties led by Brian Jean and Jim Prentice, respectively.
- In March 2017, Jason Kenney, a former federal MP for the Conservative Party of Canada, was elected leader of the Alberta PCP. Subsequently, the leaders of the PCP and the Wildrose Party (Brian Jean) agreed to a process to merge the two parties and thereby “reunite the right.”
- In two separate votes held in July 2017, Wildrose and PC party members agreed to a merger of the two parties, with the new party to be named the United Conservative Party (UCP).
- A contest for who would lead the new party ensued, and Jason Kenney was elected leader of the UCP in October 2017. In December 2017, he won the seat of Calgary-Lougheed in a byelection, which allowed him to become the Official Leader of the Opposition in the Alberta Legislature.
- In the provincial election held in April 2019, the UCP won a majority of seats and formed the government, with Mr. Kenney becoming premier.
- Subsequently, there has been (re)fragmentation on the right, with the formation of the Wildrose Independence Party in June 2020 and division within the UCP.
- Along with the NDP, centrist political parties include the Alberta Liberal Party and the Alberta Party.¹⁹⁵

193 See Government of Alberta, “Premier Stelmach delivers historic, new royalty regime for Alberta,” News release, October 25, 2007, <https://www.alberta.ca/release.cfm?xID=22384D8D0CC20-9549-7D32-2CF5FDADC70214D2>. These changes were later rolled back. Judging by oil and gas industry contributions to the PCP leading up to the 2015 election, the relationship between the industry and the party (with its new leader, Jim Prentice) had been “normalized.”

194 The Wildrose Alliance Party was renamed the Wildrose Party in February 2015.

195 For the full list of registered political parties in Alberta, see Elections Alberta, <https://www.elections.ab.ca/political-participants/parties/#parties>.

Connections of Appointees to Third Party Advertisers

Under the legislation in effect during our study, a third-party advertiser was defined by Elections Alberta as “an individual person, corporation or group who advertises to promote or oppose a registered political participant, including taking a position on an issue with which a political participant is associated.”¹⁹⁶ Any individual or group that incurs, or plans to incur, political advertising expenses of \$1,000 or more must register as a third-party advertiser. Groups planning to advertise outside of an election period (the period between the day the writ is dropped and the polling day) register as “political TPAs,” and those who intend to advertise during the election period register as “Election TPAs.” Groups that plan to do both must register twice. They must maintain contribution accounts for each of these periods and submit these to Elections Alberta. Contributions over \$250 (in the aggregate) must be publicly disclosed.

Any individuals, (non-prohibited) corporations, trade unions, or employee organizations may contribute to Political TPAs. Only individuals ordinarily resident in Alberta as well as corporations, trade unions, and employee organizations operating within Alberta can make contributions to Election TPAs (organizations advertising during the election campaign period), Senate TPAs, and Referendum TPAs. *There was no limit to the amount that can be contributed to TPAs.*¹⁹⁷ However, a spending cap of \$150,000 was set for election (and political) advertising expenses of TPAs and \$3,000 for expenses to promote or oppose the election of candidates in a given electoral district.¹⁹⁸

Table 8.1 lists the corporate and non-corporate entities to which our appointees are affiliated and that have made contributions to third party advertisers (TPAs) in Alberta. In the first column are the names of the corporations and one non-corporate civil society entity (NCCS), the Alberta Chamber of Commerce. The second column lists the names of appointees affiliated with the entity in column one. The PSEI to whose board the individual was appointed is identified in parentheses. Column three describes the contributions made *by the organization in column one* to a TPA.

196 Elections Alberta, “Third Party Advertisers,” <https://www.elections.ab.ca/political-participants/third-party-advertisers/>. The *Election Act* and *Election Finances and Contributions Disclosure Act* were amended again by the UCP government through the passage of Bill 81, the *Election Statutes Amendment Act*. As of March 31, 2022, the definition of political advertising no longer includes “an advertising message that takes a position on an issue” with which a registered party, leader, MLA, candidate, leadership contestant or nomination contestant is associated.

197 As of March 31, 2022, however, the annual maximum contribution to an ETPA or PTPA is \$30,000. The total annual aggregate of ETPA and PTPA contributions for an individual cannot exceed \$30,000. See Elections Alberta, “EFCDA Amendments: Summary for Third Party Advertisers,” <https://www.elections.ab.ca/wp-content/uploads/EFCDA-Amendments-Summary-for-Third-Party-Advertisers.pdf>.

198 See the *Election Finances and Contributions Disclosure Act* Section 44.1. These limits are currently higher due to indexing to inflation. For details, see: <https://www.elections.ab.ca/wp-content/uploads/Third-Party-Advertiser-TPA-Guide.pdf>, p. 35.

Table 8.1: Contributions of Corporate and Non-Corporate Entities to Third Party Advertisers

Contributing entity	Affiliated appointees	Details of contribution or TPA expenditure
Alberta Chambers of Commerce	Shawna Miller (Grande Prairie Regional College)	2019 election: \$26,250 to the Alberta Chambers of Commerce
Bellatrix Exploration	Cody Church (UCalgary)	2018: \$50,000 to Alberta Advantage Fund
Clark Builders	Paul Verhesen (NAIT)	2014: \$750 to Merit Contractors Association
Grafton Asset Management	Geeta Sankappanavar (UCalgary)	2018: \$25,000 to Shaping Alberta's Future.
Melcor Developments	Daniel Eggert (UAlberta), Carolyn Graham (MacEwan), Guy Pelletier (Red Deer College)	2017: \$3,000 to Alberta Advantage Fund
Olson Management Ltd. (Edmonton) / Stuart Olson Inc.	Joette Decore (NorQuest College)	2018: \$2,500 to Shaping Alberta's Future
Source Energy Services	Cody Church (UCalgary), Carrie Lonardelli (Mount Royal), Stewart Hanlon (AUA)	2019 election: \$5,000 to Alberta Proud
Trican Well Services	Alex Pourbaix (Mount Royal)	2018: \$15,000 to Alberta Advantage Fund

The anti-tax policy, anti “red tape” positions of the Alberta Chambers of Commerce (ACC) are similar to those of the Alberta Enterprise Group (AEG) discussed in Part 7. The ACC registered as a TPA with Elections Alberta in December 2018, prior to the Alberta provincial election of April 2019. Shawna Miller was the chair elect of the ACC in 2018 and the chair of its executive committee from May 2019 to May 2021. She and her husband, Jason Miller, own a company with multiple holdings in the fast food, oilfield services, and property management sectors. They have both made political contributions to the PCP, and Jason Miller has donated to the UCP. Shawna Miller was appointed to the Workers Compensation Board by the UCP government in 2020 for a three-year term, representing the interests of employers.¹⁹⁹

The Alberta Advantage Fund (AAFund, registered May 10, 2017 to June 21, 2018) was founded and directed by a former executive director of the Wildrose Party, and aimed to “support candidates and political entities in favour of big-tent conservatism, free enterprise and limited government.”²⁰⁰ The AAFund supported the formation of the United Conservative Party and the candidacy of Jason Kenney for the party’s leadership. In 2017, it raised nearly \$1.1 million, with donors that included NTL Pipelines and PCL Construction.²⁰¹ In 2018, the AAFund raised “about \$916,000 . . . from donors that included oil and gas companies, developers, and automobile dealerships.”²⁰² As Table 8.1 shows, among these donors were three companies to which appointees to the PSEI boards have been affiliated.

199 Lieutenant Governor in Council, order 40/2020, https://www.gp.alberta.ca/documents/Orders/Orders_in_Council/2020/2020_040.html.

200 James Wood, “Conservative political fund raised over \$1 million in 2017,” *Calgary Herald*, April 13, 2018, <https://calgaryherald.com/news/politics/edmonton-based-pac-raised-over-1-million-in-2017>.

201 James Wood, 2018, op cit.

202 James Keller, “Third-party advocacy groups raise hundreds of thousands ahead of Alberta election,” *The Globe and Mail*, January 28, 2019, <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/canada/alberta/article-third-party-advocacy-groups-raise-hundreds-of-thousands-ahead-of/>.

Shaping Alberta's Future (SAF) was registered in July 2018 and supports the UCP and Jason Kenney. This TPA took in \$1,744,016 from donations and fundraising activities in 2018.²⁰³ Its total reported revenue for 2019 was substantially less: \$161,145.²⁰⁴ SAF reported only \$732.66 in revenue in 2020, but it was still registered in 2021. It appears that the big surge of contributions in 2018 was motivated by the impending election. During the election campaign period, the largest single donation to the SAF came from Surge Energy Inc., based in Calgary.²⁰⁵ Particularly interesting for our study of the PSEI appointees is the \$25,000 contribution of Grafton Asset Management to SAF in 2018. Geeta Sankappanavar—appointed by the UCP government as chair of the board of governors at UCalgary—is the co-founder and current COO of Grafton Asset Management. In 2017, nine-tenths of Grafton's investments were in the Canadian oil and gas sector.²⁰⁶ The firm was also partnered with Tourmaline Oil Corp. and Bellatrix Exploration Ltd. (another contributor to a conservative TPA).²⁰⁷

Merit Contractors is an “open shop” (no unions) construction industry association which registered as a TPA in November 2018 and reported \$292,568 in advertising expenditure before and during the election campaign period.²⁰⁸ It was self-funded, reporting no other sources of contributions. Merit de-registered in August 2019.

The last TPA that appears in Table 8.1 is Alberta Proud, registered as a political advertiser October 29, 2018. This group also supported Jason Kenney and the election of the UCP. Among the contributors to Alberta Proud was Source Energy, an oil company to which three of our appointees have been affiliated.²⁰⁹ Cody Church (appointed to the board of the University of Calgary) was a director on Source Energy's board from fall 2013 to February 2019. Carrie Lonardelli (appointed to the board of Mount Royal University) currently sits on its board of directors. Stewart Hanlon (appointed to the board of the Alberta University of the Arts) is the current chair of the company's board.²¹⁰ The number one contributor to this TPA, however, was Mike Rose, who is the president and CEO of Tourmaline Oil, currently the largest producer of natural gas in Canada.²¹¹ Rose was formerly the president and CEO of Berkley Petroleum Corp., and the founder of Duvernay Oil Corp. which was sold to Shell Canada in 2008. He is married to Sue Riddell Rose, the president and CEO of Perpetual Energy Inc. (another oil and gas corporation). She made generous donations to the PCP in 2014 and 2015. Another name that appears on the list of contributors is Jim Gray of Calgary. Gray is a pioneer of the oil and gas industry in Alberta and chair of the Energy Group of Brookfield Asset Management Inc.²¹² As mentioned above, Kevin Szakacs, board member at Grande Prairie Regional College, was also a contributor to Alberta Proud in the pre-election period. Other contributors to Alberta Proud include Tim Melton, chairperson of Melcor, and Ralph Young, director of Melcor (and former chancellor of the University of Alberta).²¹³

203 This figure is tallied from Shape Alberta's Future's financial statement to Elections Alberta for 2018, <https://efpublic.elections.ab.ca/ofsf/OFSFViewEFPublicFS.cfm?FID=%28%20Q%2A57UP%5FJ%2B0%20>.

204 SAF, Annual Financial Statement for 2019, <https://efpublic.elections.ab.ca/ofsf/OFSFViewEFPublicFS.cfm?FID=%28300MTV%5D0%28KH%20>.

205 SAF, Contributions report for the 2019 provincial general election advertising period, Dec. 1, 2018–April 18, 2019, <https://efpublic.elections.ab.ca/efOFSFETPACampaign.cfm?DOCSTATE=0&VENTID=7&TPAID=42&ACCOUNTID=1333>.

206 Bloomberg News, “Grafton shifts focus from oilsands to renewables,” *Calgary Herald*, January 5, 2017, <https://calgaryherald.com/business/energy/grafon-shifts-focus-from-oilsands-to-renewables>.

207 Ibid.

208 Merit Contractors Association, “Election advertising period financial statement,” October 15, 2019, <https://efpublic.elections.ab.ca/ofsf/OFSFViewEFPublicFS.cfm?FID=%28%2F%5B%3DK%25I%20%2AV%5E%24%20>.

209 Alberta Proud, “2019 PGE election advertising period contributions report—final,” <https://efpublic.elections.ab.ca/efOFSFETPACampaign.cfm?DOCSTATE=2&EVENTID=7&TPAID=41&ACCOUNTID=1332>.

210 Source Energy Services, “Source Energy Services announces changes to its Board of Directors, fourth quarter operational update, and other matters,” February 20, 2019, <https://www.sourceenergyservices.com/news/source-energy-services-announces-changes-to-its-board-of-directors-fourth-quarter-operational-update-and-other-matters/>.

211 Global Energy Show, Strategic Program Speakers, <https://www.globalenergyshow.com/2019-speakers/strategic-program-speakers/mike-rose/> (accessed July 16, 2021).

212 Gray donated \$12,587 to the PC election campaign in 2015, and \$4,000 to the UCP in 2020.

213 Doug Goss, the General Counsel for Melcor, is a former chair of the board of governors of the University of Alberta and a long-time supporter of the PCP.

Lastly, anyone who followed closely the “Suzuki Affair” (mentioned in our case study of UAlberta) will recognize the name of Robert Iverach on the list of contributors to Alberta Proud. A corporate tax lawyer, former director of Chinook Energy Inc., and former chair of PetroFrontier Corp. (all Calgary-based), Iverach is a supporter of Alberta separation from Canada, and a virulent opponent of the Liberal Party.²¹⁴ Infuriated by the UAlberta’s decision to award an honorary doctorate to environmentalist David Suzuki, Iverach urged members of his group and other Albertans to send emails to the university’s president and chancellor calling upon them to rescind the award or lose “millions of dollars” in donations.²¹⁵ Iverach’s partners in the separatist “Action Alberta” group, Ken Wilson and Rick Shannon, also contributed to Alberta Proud in the pre-election period.²¹⁶

When one considers who contributed to this pro-Kenney TPA, and Kenney’s own responses to the Suzuki honorary doctorate, the UCP’s appointments of executives from oil and gas corporations to the boards of PSEIs may be interpreted as sending the institutions a message about the government’s support for the oil and gas corporations. A similar message was conveyed by the UCP government’s creation, in July 2019, of the Allan inquiry into “anti-Alberta energy campaigns.”²¹⁷ *At least 42 of the UCP appointees to the PSEI boards (nearly 28%) have important links to the oil and gas sector.* That number increases if we include appointees whose occupations and businesses provide services or financing for the fossil fuel corporations. Eight of the 21 PSEI board chairs, as of March 2021, had held executive and/or director positions in the oil and gas industry, as we see in Table 8.2. (Collyer was appointed by the NDP government.)

“The UCP’s appointments of executives from oil and gas corporations to the boards of PSEIs may be interpreted as sending the institutions a message about the government’s support for the oil and gas corporations.”

214 See these sources on Iverach: letters to the *Calgary Herald* collated by pressreader.com, <https://www.pressreader.com/canada/calgary-herald/20180203/281822874243921>; his website “Action Alberta,” <https://actionalberta.ca>.

215 Gordon Kent, “U of A honorary doctorate for David Suzuki angers dean of engineering, donors,” *Edmonton Journal*, April 23, 2018, <https://edmontonjournal.com/news/local-news/furor-erupts-over-honorary-university-of-alberta-degree-for-environmentalist-david-suzuki>. See also: CKNW Radio (Alberta), *The Afternoon Show*, interview with Robert Iverach, April 27, 2018, <https://omny.fm/shows/steele-drex/talking-to-the-calgary-lawyer-who-began-the-letter>; Robert J. Iverach, “Stop this Suzuki nonsense,” letter to the editor, *Calgary Sun*, April 19, 2018, <https://calgarysun.com/news/provincial/letters-to-the-editor-april-20>.

216 Wilson is quoted in Bob Weber, “Environmentalist David Suzuki receives honorary degree from University of Alberta,” *The Globe and Mail*, June 7, 2018, <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/canada/alberta/article-environmentalist-david-suzuki-receives-honorary-degree-from-university/>. Wilson, Shannon, and a Neil Bowker are all signatories of the Action Alberta newsletters. See, e.g., https://img1.wsimg.com/blobby/go/db0085be-0e65-4524-b07c-3ed8e636cc85/downloads/ActionAlberta%20_121%20-%20THE%20EXISTENTIAL%20FIGHT%20FOR.pdf?ver=1610898305702.

217 Government of Alberta, “Public inquiry into anti-Alberta energy campaigns,” <https://albertainquiry.ca/>.

Table 8.2: Board Chairs Affiliated With the Oil and Gas Industry

Board chair	Institution	Affiliations with oil & gas industry
Dave Collyer (term ended June 30, 2021)	Bow Valley College	Former president of Shell Canada; former president of the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers; current chair of Emissions Reduction Alberta; current director of ARC Resources
Kathryn Chisholm	University of Alberta	Current senior VP at Capital Power
Nancy Laird	Athabasca University	Board chair of Synodon Inc.; former director of Alliance Pipeline Inc.; former director of Alter NRG Corp.; former director of Canadian Oil Sands Trust; former senior VP of Encana; former director of Keyera Corp.; former manager at Northern Canadian Oil; former manager at Norcen Energy Resources Ltd.; former senior VP at PanCanadian Energy; former manager at Shell Canada; former board member at Trinidad Drilling Ltd.
Alex Pourbaix	Mount Royal University	Current president and CEO of Cenovus Energy Inc.; current chair of the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers; former board chair of the Canadian Energy Pipeline Assoc.; former executive positions with TransCanada Pipelines/TC Energy; former director of Trican Well Services Ltd.
Geeta Sankappanavar	University of Calgary	Co-founder and current COO of Grafton Asset Management; director of Pipestone Energy Corp.
Adam Waterous	Banff Centre for the Arts and Creativity	CEO of Waterous Energy Fund (which owns Strathcona Resources Ltd.); Global Head of Investment Banking and Head of Energy and Power, North America, at Scotiabank, 2005-2016
Scott Thon	SAIT	CEO of Berkshire Hathaway Energy Canada since 2015; VP at TransAlta from 1996-2001
Shelley Powell	Keyano College	Senior VP of Oil Sands Operations for Suncor

Corporate and Non-Corporate Entities' Contributions to Political Parties

In Table 8.3, we list 20 corporations and business-related organizations whose contributions to all parties were searched for the period 2004-2015. (Corporate and union donations to political parties were banned by NDP government legislation in 2015.) For these 20 organizations, there were nine contributions to both the Liberal and Wildrose parties. *We found no contributions to the NDP or the centre-right Alberta Party.* From these 20 organizations alone, the Progressive Conservative Party obtained \$749,230 in contributions from 2004-2015. This compares to \$36,062 for Wildrose and \$49,065 for the Liberal Party. The contributors are listed in the table by the size of their contributions to the PCP, from largest to smallest.

Table 8.3: Contributions From 20 “Affiliated” Organizations to Alberta’s Political Parties, 2004-2015 (PSEI Board and Appointing Government in Parentheses)

Organization	Affiliated appointees	PCP	Wildrose	Liberal	NDP
Nexen	Shawn Cornett (UAlberta) (NDP-R)	\$108,850	\$2,750	\$20,650	0
Melcor Developments	Daniel Eggert (UAlberta), Carolyn Graham (MacEwan), Guy Pelletier (Red Deer College) (all UCP1)	\$104,438	\$10,850	\$1,500	0
Imperial Oil	Susan Swan (MRU)(NDP-R)	\$101,100	\$3,775	\$19,500	0
Canadian Western Bank	Georgina Knitel (Lethbridge College) (NDP-R)	\$75,500	\$3,850	\$1,000	0
MNP	Bridget Hennigar (GPRC), (UCP1) Chris Lavin (NorQuest) (UCP1), Janine Moch (Lethbridge College) (UCP2), Julie Oliver (Red Deer College) (UCP1), Darcy Gonci (ULethbridge) (UCP2)	\$69,336	\$3,488	\$840	0
Finning International	Mona Hale (UAlberta) (UCP2)	\$49,450	0	0	0
Global Public Affairs	Paul Whittaker (UAlberta) (UCP2)	\$44,619	0	\$1,750	0
Sureway Construction Group	Marlea Sleeman (NAIT) (UCP1)	\$44,370	0	0	0
Clark Builders	Paul Verhesen (NAIT) (UCP1)	\$37,675	\$550	0	0
Canadian Energy Pipeline Assoc.	Karl Johannson (MRU) (UCP1), Alex Pourbaix (MRU) (UCP1)	\$28,375	0	\$2,525	0
North American Construction Group	Kristina Williams (NAIT) (UCP1)	\$24,100	0	0	0
TriWest Capital Partners	Cody Church (UCalgary) (UCP1)	\$15,700	0	0	0
Manasc Isaac Architects	Vivian Manasc (UAlberta) (NDP-R)	\$10,325	0	0	0
AgeCare	Salimah Walji-Shivji (MRU) (UCP2)	\$9,248	0	0	0
McDaniel & Associates	Darcy Gonci (ULethbridge)(UCP2)	\$7,500	\$5,300	\$500	0
SIL Industrial Minerals Alberta	Marlea Sleeman (NAIT) (UCP1)	\$6,670	0	0	0
Charlton & Hill Group	Karen Reid (ULethbridge) (NDP-C)	\$5,200	0	0	0
Hi-tech Business Systems	Kevin Szakacs (GPRC) (UCP2)	\$3,900	\$500	\$800	0
Fort McMurray Chamber of Commerce	Kim Farwell (Keyano College) (UCP1)	\$1,875	0	0	0
Grafton Asset Management	Geeta Sankappanavar (UCalgary) (UCP1)	\$1,000	\$5,000	0	0
(20 entities)	(26 appointees)	\$749,230	\$36,062	\$49,065	0

Altogether, the organizations in Table 8.3 are linked to 26 appointees who sit on 13 of the 21 PSEI boards. Five of these appointees were appointed by the NDP government, and seven of them were connected to oil and gas companies. A subset of these firms, including Nexen, Melcor, and Imperial Oil, donated heavily to the PCP (all over \$100,000) before the contribution rules changed in 2015.

These conservative party allegiances (also evident in contributions to the TPAs) are not incidental for the governance of the PSEIs, especially when we see executives from the same PCP (now UCP)-allied firms being

“ We see executives from the same PCP (now UCP)-allied firms being appointed to the PSEI boards so regularly that one might think that these firms have been allocated permanent seats.”

appointed to the PSEI boards so regularly that one might think that these firms have been allocated permanent seats. Daniel Eggert and Guy Pelletier's appointments to the UAlberta board continue a long association between the university's governance bodies and Melcor Developments, touched upon earlier in our case study of the University of Alberta. The UAlberta School of Business has a program in real estate as well as a Stan Melton Chair (Executive Professor) in Real Estate (named after the company's founder) and an advisory board in Real Estate.²¹⁸ Stan Melton's sons, Tim and Andy, are respectively the chair and member of the board of directors of the firm, and both sit on the Business School's Advisory Board in Real Estate. Darin Rayburn, president and CEO of Melcor Developments and Melcor REIT, also sits on this advisory board. As mentioned earlier, the former chancellor of the university, Ralph Young, is the former CEO of Melcor and currently sits on its board. Doug Goss, former chair of the board of governors of the University of Alberta, is the general counsel for Melcor. Goss' law firm partner, R. John Butler, was appointed to the UAlberta board of governors by the PC government, as was Gordon J. Clanachan, a director of Melcor Developments at the time. The PCP-allied construction industry is also well represented on the board of NAIT, with executives from three construction companies having been appointed by the UCP government.

The PCP-allied corporation with the most *linkages* to our PSEI appointees is global accounting and business advising firm MNP, which donated nearly \$70,000 to the PCP between 2009-2015. Five PSEI appointees sitting on five different PSEI boards are (or have recently been) employed by MNP, with roles ranging from management to advising services.

Also noteworthy are those appointees who connect to more than one contributing organization. As previously mentioned, Alex Pourbaix, the CEO of Cenovus and chair of the Mount Royal University board, links to the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers (CAPP) through his role as chair (and vice-chair in 2019). He is also the former chair of the Canadian Energy Pipeline Association (CEPA). Both are prominent industry groups that benefit from the alignment of university research agendas with the needs of Alberta's extractive economy. Geeta Sankappanavar, chair of the University of Calgary board, is affiliated with two firms, Grafton Asset Management (where she is COO) and McKinsey & Company (where she was previously employed), whose combined contributions to conservative parties between 2008-2015 totaled \$14,000. (Grafton Asset Management also contributed generously to a TPA supporting the election of the UCP, as noted above.)

For another 35 organizations to which our appointees have affiliations, we searched for their contributions for a more limited four-year period which covers the election campaign periods of 2012 and 2015 as well as annual contributions in 2013 and 2014.²¹⁹ The campaign periods cast a wide net

218 Alberta School of Business, <https://www.ualberta.ca/business/programs/real-estate/people.html> (accessed July 19, 2021).

219 Our appointees have affiliations to more than 60 corporations or business associations, but these were the only ones for which we found contributions to political parties.

for contributors who feel a sense of urgency to support their parties in the lead-up to an election. This set, too, includes corporations from the oil and gas, construction, financial, and consulting sectors, as well as two industry associations, and adds entities from the forestry and telecommunications sectors (Tables 8.4 and 8.5). In 2012, some of the corporations linked to the oil and gas sector were still contributing significantly to the Wildrose Party, perhaps to continue their disciplining of the PCP on the question of oil and gas royalty rates. In 2015, the business class as a whole rallied around the PCP and its new leader, James Prentice, in the face of an unexpectedly strong challenge from the NDP. Cenovus, however, contributed over half as much to the Wildrose as it did to the PCP, and TransCanada Pipelines contributed more to the Wildrose than to the PCP in 2015. CNRL contributed equally to both parties.

In Table 8.4, we see a pattern similar to the one in Table 8.3, that is, the overwhelming support of business donors for the PCP. However, in this set, we see that the contributions to the Liberals amount to only about 19% of the sum given to the Wildrose Party. This is likely due to the larger number of corporate donors in this sample and to the time period (among other factors). In 2012-2015 there was intense competition between the PCP and the Wildrose to become (or remain) the dominant party on the right. By 2015, with the right-wing electorate divided, there was significant fear on the part of the corporate class that the NDP might win the 2015 election. These dynamics did not leave a lot of room for the Liberals or the Alberta Party to gain electoral ground or attract corporate support. Thirty-three out of 35 organizations contributed to the PCP, with the amount in these four contribution periods totalling over \$900,000. Twenty-two of the 35 also contributed to the Wildrose Party, in the amount of \$241,187. Nine of the 35 contributed to the Liberals, for a total sum of about \$45,000. There were no contributions from this group to the NDP.

Table 8.4 provides the yearly contribution figures as well as information about the links of the affiliated appointees to the organizations. Table 8.5 summarizes the total amounts contributed by each organization to each party and notes the number of appointees affiliated with each organization. The contributors in Table 8.5 are listed in column 1 by order of the size of their contributions to the PCP.

“ The campaign periods cast a wide net for contributors who feel a sense of urgency to support their parties in the lead-up to an election.”

Table 8.4: Political Contributions From 35 Appointee-Affiliated Organizations for the 2012 and 2015 Alberta Election Campaign Periods and the 2013 and 2014 Annual Contribution Periods (Year of Contribution in Parentheses)

Organization	39 affiliated appointees & relationship to organization	PCP	Wildrose	Liberals	NDP
AECON Group Inc.	Larry Kaumeyer (VP, 2012-2014) (UAlberta)	\$650 (2013) \$3,750 (2014) \$3,750 (2015)	0	0	0
Alberta Forest Products Assoc.	Paul Whittaker (president & CEO, 2014-2020) (UAlberta)	\$6,130 (2012) \$4,688 (2013)	\$300 (2014)	0	0
Alberta Pacific Forest Industries	Andrew Neigel (VP, 1992-2006) (NAIT)	\$7,000 (2012) \$2,180 (2013) \$7,000 (2015)	\$1,000 (2012) \$2,000 (2015)	0	0
AltaCorp Capital	James Cameron Bailey (managing director, 2015-2017) (SAIT)	\$9,400 (2012-2014)	\$2,500 (2011)	0	0
AltaLink LP/Management Ltd.	Dave Collyer (director) (BVC), Sue Riddell Rose (director) (MRU), Scott Thon (CEO) (SAIT)	\$15,510 (2012) \$300 (2013) \$300 (2014)	\$1,625 (2014) \$3,000 (2015)	\$420 (2014)	0
ATCO Ltd.	Sett Policicchio (managing director-Shared Services, Nov 2015-19; president, 2005 - 2015) (UAlberta), Alex Pourbaix (board member of Canadian Utilities Ltd., an ATCO company) (MRU)	\$35,130 (2012) \$8,437 (2013) \$9,200 (2014) \$10,250 (2015)	\$375 (2014) \$1,000 (2015)	\$5,000 (2012) \$4,600 (2014)	0
Baytex Energy Corp.	Adam Waterman (service rig coordinator, 2014-present) (Lakeland College)	\$1,431 (2013) \$4,600 (2014)	0	0	0
Bellatrix Exploration Ltd.	Cody Church (director, since July 2019) (UCalgary)	0	\$3,000 (2012) \$3,000 (2013) \$3,000 (2014)	0	0
Bonnetts Energy Corp.	Carrie Lonardelli (CFO, since 2014) (MRU)	\$375 (2014)	0	0	0
CANA Group	Dwayne Dubois (CFO) (Bow Valley College)	\$26,500 (2012) \$8,175 (2014) \$338 (2015)	\$15,000 (2012)	0	0
Canadian Assoc. of Petroleum Producers	Janet Annesley (former VP) (SAIT), Dave Collyer (former president) (Bow Valley College), Alex Pourbaix (chair) (MRU), Sue Riddell Rose (director) (MRU)	0	\$3,000 (2013) \$3,000 (2014)	0	0
Canadian Natural Resources Ltd.	Christopher Best (regulatory coordinator, stakeholder relations and business development, since 2015) (Portage College), Adele Thomson (manager, surface land and stakeholder relations) (Keyano College)	\$5,000 (2012) \$8,444 (2013) \$8,863 (2014) \$5,400 (2015)	\$5,000 (2012) \$3,000 (2013) \$3,750 (2014) \$5,400 (2015)	0	0
Capital Power Corp.	Kathryn Chisholm (senior VP) (UAlberta)	\$3,080 (2012) \$14,209 (2013) \$5,181 (2014) \$1,831 (2015)	\$2,175 (2014)	0	0

Cenovus Energy Inc.	Alex Pourbaix (CEO, since 2017) (MRU)	\$31,750 (2012) \$17,613 (2013) \$17,150 (2014) \$14,750 (2015)	\$25,000 (2012) \$7,783 (2013) \$6,888 (2014) \$7,500 (2015)	\$2,500 (2013) \$2,100 (2014)	0
Cleall Professional Corp.	Jennifer Cleall (owner) (NorQuest College)	\$500 (2015)	0	0	0
Enbridge Pipelines Inc.	Denise Man (former chief technology officer (MRU), Linda Palladino (VP) (NAIT)	\$17,500 (2012) \$11,838 (2013) \$14,475 (2014)	\$5,000 (2012) \$3,000 (2013) \$4,688 (2014)		
	\$3,000 (2012) \$1,500 (2013) \$2,100 (2014)	0			
Encana Corp.	Nancy Laird (senior VP, 1997-2002) (UAthabasca)	\$30,200 (2012) \$17,148 (2013) \$17,062 (2014) \$18,950 (2015)	\$25,000 (2012) \$9,800 (2013) \$5,000 (2015)	\$3,000 (2013) \$2,800 (2014)	0
Fortis Alberta Inc.	Mona Hale (director, since 2016) (UAlberta), Emeka Nwachukwu (project manager) (Red Deer College)	\$9,810 (2012) \$15,450 (2013) \$15,291 (2014) \$500 (2015)	\$3,500 (2012)	0	0
Gibson Energy Ltd.	Stewart Hanlon (CEO, 2009-2017) (AUArts)	\$47,500 (2012) \$3,750 (2014)	0		0
Husky Energy Ltd.	Janet Annesley senior VP) (SAIT), Nancy Foster (former senior VP) (UCalgary)	\$4,750 (2012) \$3,750 (2013) \$3,750 (2014)	0	\$420 (2014)	0
Inter Pipeline Ltd.	Spilios Kousinioris (VP, since 2016) (AUArts)	\$600 (2013) \$5,375 (2014)	\$3,100 (2013)	0	0
Keyera Corp.	Nancy Laird (former director) (UAthabasca)	\$4,268 (2013) \$7,293 (2014) \$3,750 (2015)	\$3,600 (2014)	0	0
NewAlta/Tervita Corp.	Sue Riddell Rose (director of NewAlta 2009-2018; director of Tervita since 2018) (MRU)	\$15,000 (2012) \$16,218 (2013) \$5,650 (2014)	\$1,500 (2013) \$1,900 (2014)	0	0
Paramount Resources Ltd.	Sue Riddell Rose (former director) (MRU)	\$4,750 (2012) \$3,750 (2013) \$3,750 (2014)	0	0	0
PCL Construction/ PCL Construction Management Inc.	Joseph MacNeil (construction manager, 2014-2016) (Keyano College)	\$9,500 (2012) \$7,500 (2013) \$6,750 (2014) \$17,000 (2015)	0	0	0
Perpetual Energy Inc.	Sue Riddell Rose (president & CEO, since 2002) (MRU)	\$3,000 (2014)	0	0	0
Rogers Communications Inc.	James Rajotte (VP, 2015-2020) (UAlberta)	\$9,975 (2012) \$3,750 (2013) \$7,800 (2014) \$3,750 (2015)	0	0	0
Rohit Group/Rohit Commercial/Rohit Communities Ltd./ Rohit Management Inc.	Guy Bridgeman (director) (UAlberta)	\$12,975 (2012) \$375 (2013) \$2,675 (2014) \$11,500 (2015)	\$950 (2014)	\$5,000 (2012) \$600 (2013)	0
Stantec Consulting Ltd.	Vi Becker (VP, 2006-2016) (NAIT)	\$10,375 (2012) \$1,750 (2013)	0	0	0

Stuart Olson Construction/Dominion Construction	Joette Decore (executive VP, 2011-2020) (NorQuest)	\$4,750 (2012) \$750 (2013) \$3,000 (2014) \$1,000 (2015)	0	0	0
Suncor Energy Inc.	Shelley Powell (senior VP) (Keyano), Fauzia Lalani (senior director) (UCalgary), Joseph MacNeil (former construction manager) (Keyano)	\$3,250 (2012) \$16,581 (2013) \$9,675 (2014)	\$7,500 (2012) \$4,755 (2013) \$5,475 (2014)	\$2,500 (2012) \$1,125 (2013)	0
Telus Communications	Fauzia Lalani (former VP) (UCalgary), Ilario Spagnolo (director, VP, and president, 1995-2010) (UAthabasca)	\$10,750 (2012) \$9,188 (2013) \$15,325 (2014) \$800 (2015)	\$5,000 (2013) \$3,000 (2014)	0	0
TransAlta Corp.	John Kousinioris (COO) (Bow Valley College), Scott Thon (VP, 1996-2001) (SAIT)	\$22,000 (2012) \$16,598 (2013) \$10,540 (2014) \$19,625 (2015)	\$12,500 (2012) \$488 (2014) \$3,000 (2015)	\$5,000 (2012) \$420 (2014) \$3,000 (2015)	0
TransCanada Pipelines/TC Energy	Karl Johannson (executive positions, 1994-2019) (MRU), Alex Pourbaix (COO & executive VP, 1998-2017) (MRU); Anny Quon (coordinator of the Power & Storage Group) (Bow Valley College)	\$12,375 (2012) \$15,900 (2013) \$14,788 (2014) \$6,500 (2015)	\$5,000 (2012) \$5,900 (2013) \$5,235 (2014) \$8,000 (2015)	0	0
Walton Development & Management	Janet Riopel (former General Manager) (NAIT)	\$6,750 (2012) \$500 (2013) \$1,875 (2014)	0	0	0

Table 8.5: Summary of Contributions of 35 Affiliated Organizations to Alberta's Political Parties for the 2012 and 2015 Election Campaign Periods and the Annual Contribution years 2013 and 2014 (Ranked by Highest to Lowest Contributor to the PCP)

Organization	Number of affiliations*	Totals			
		PCP	Wildrose	Liberals	NDP
Encana Corp.	1	\$83,360	\$39,800	\$5,800	0
Cenovus Energy Inc.	1	\$81,263	\$47,171	\$4,600	0
TransAlta Corp.	2	\$68,763	\$15,988	\$8,420	0
ATCO Ltd.	2	\$63,017	\$1,375	\$9,600	0
Gibson Energy Ltd.	1	\$51,250	0	0	0
TransCanada Pipelines/TC Energy	3	\$49,563	\$24,135	0	0
Enbridge Pipelines Inc.	2	\$43,813	\$12,688	\$6,600	0
Fortis Alberta Inc.	2	\$41,051	\$3,500	0	0
PCL Construction/ PCL Construction Management Inc.	1	\$40,750	0	0	0
NewAlta/Tervita Corp.	1	\$36,868	\$3,400	0	0

Telus Communications	2	\$36,063	\$8,000	0	0
CANA Group	1	\$35,013	\$15,000	0	0
Suncor Energy Inc.	3	\$29,506	\$17,730	\$3,625	0
Canadian Natural Resources Ltd.	2	\$27,707	\$17,150	0	0
Rohit Group/Rohit Commercial/ Rohit Communities Ltd./ Rohit Management Inc.	1	\$27,525	\$950	\$5,600	0
Rogers Communications Inc.	1	\$25,275	0	0	0
Capital Power Corp.	1	\$24,301	\$2,175	0	0
Alberta Pacific Forest Industries	1	\$16,180	\$3,000	0	0
AltaLink LP/Management Ltd.	3	\$16,110	\$4,625	\$420	0
Keyera Corp.	1	\$15,311	\$3,600	0	0
Husky Energy Ltd.	2	\$12,250	0	\$420	0
Paramount Resources Ltd.	1	\$12,250	0	0	0
Stantec Consulting Ltd.	1	\$12,125	0	0	0
Alberta Forest Products Assoc.	1	\$10,818	\$300	0	0
Stuart Olson Construction/ Dominion Construction	1	\$9,500	0	0	0
AltaCorp Capital	1	\$9,400	\$2,500	0	0
Walton Development & Management	1	\$9,125	0	0	0
AECON Group Inc.	1	\$8,150	0	0	0
Baytex Energy Corp.	1	\$6,031	0	0	0
Inter Pipeline Ltd.	1	\$5,975	\$3,100	0	0
Perpetual Energy Inc.	1	\$3,000	0	0	0
Cleall Professional Corp.	1	\$500	0	0	0
Bonnetts Energy Corp.	1	\$375	0	0	0
Bellatrix Exploration Ltd.	1	0	\$9,000	0	0
Canadian Assoc. of Petroleum Producers	4	0	\$6,000	0	0
Totals for each party	51	\$912,188	\$241,187	\$45,085	0

* These numbers represent only PSEI board members in our study holding senior management level affiliations (as opposed to employee or consultant affiliations) to the corporate entities in column 1

These political alignments are of critical importance for the governance of the PSEIs. So it is a significant finding of our research that 58 former or current members of the executive or senior management teams or boards of directors of these 55 corporate entities have been appointed to the boards of 18 of the 21 PSEIs (Table 8.6). Of these 58 public board members, only seven were appointed by the NDP government. The clustering of these appointees on four boards is also evident. They are: Keyano College, Mount Royal University, NAIT, and University of Alberta. Each of these boards has had five or more public board members since April 2019 who are affiliated (in senior management positions) to corporate donors to conservative parties. Left out of this group are the two southern agricultural PSEIs, Medicine Hat College and Olds College, and Northern Lakes College, based at Slave Lake.

Table 8.6: Board Governors Affiliated With Corporate Contributors to the PCP, UCP, and Wildrose Party (Board Chairs Bolded; NDP Appointees Identified)

Public board members affiliated with corporate contributors in Tables 8.3 and 8.4; individuals who were first appointed by the NDP government are identified by the group code in parentheses; parties or TPAs to which they have contributed personally are identified in the square brackets.	PSEI
Stewart Hanlon, Spilios Kousinioris	AUArts
Adam Waterous [NDP, UCP, Wildrose]	Banff Centre
Dave Collyer (NDP-C) [PCP], Dwayne Dubois, John Kousinioris [PC, UCP], Anny Quon	Bow Valley College
Bridget Hennigar [PCP, UCP], Kevin Szakacs [Alberta Proud]	Grande Prairie RC
Shelley Powell , Kim Farwell [UCP], Adele Thomson, Margaret Ziolecki, Joseph MacNeil	Keyano College
Adam Waterman [UCP]	Lakeland College
Georgina Knitel (NDP-R), Janine Moch	Lethbridge College
Carolyn Graham	MacEwanU
Alex Pourbaix [PCP, UCP], Susan Swan (NDP-R), Karl Johannson, Salimah Walji-Shivji, Sue Riddell Rose [PCP], Carrie Lonardelli, Denise Man	Mount Royal U
Marlea Sleeman, Paul Verhesen [PCP], Kristina Williams, Andrew Neigel [UCP], Linda Palladino, Janet Riopel [PC, NDP], Vi Becker	NAIT
Chris Lavin [PCP], Jennifer Cleall [PCP], Joette Decore	NorQuest College
Christopher Best	Portage College
Guy Pelletier , Julie Oliver, Emeka Nwachukwu	Red Deer College
Scott Thon , J. Cameron Bailey, Janet Annesley [PCP]	SAIT
Kathryn Chisholm [UCP], Daniel Eggert [PCP, UCP], Mona Hale, Paul Whittaker [UCP], Larry Kaumeyer [UCP], Sett Policicchio, James Rajotte [PCP, UCP], Guy Bridgeman	UAlberta
Nancy Laird , Shawn Cornett (NDP-R), Vivian Manasc (NDP-R) [NDP], Ilario Spagnolo [PCP, UCP]	UAthabasca
Geeta Sankappanavar , Cody Church [UCP, Wildrose], Nancy Foster (NDP-C) [PCP], Fauzia Lalani	UCalgary
Darcy Gonci, Karen Reid (NDP-C)	ULethbridge
58 board appointees (10 board chairs)	18 PSEIs

Individual Political Contributions

Extensive searches were made of the Elections Alberta financial disclosures database for contributions made by all 231 appointees in our sample, going back as far as 2004. Here, we report the findings for annual contributions to the UCP, PCP, NDP, Liberal, and Wildrose parties between 2017 and 2020 (inclusive), with occasional reference to earlier data.

Out of the 81 appointees for whom contributions were found, including from the group that was rescinded, 61 (75%) had contributed to one or more conservative parties (PCP, Wildrose, or UCP). Twenty-six (32%) were found to have contributed to the NDP. Only three had donated to the Liberal Party, and one to the Alberta Party. Of the 59 contributors whose positions were not rescinded in fall 2019 or have been appointed to PSEI boards since November 2019, only six have made contributions to the NDP and two have contributed to the Liberals. This is an indication that by October 2021 there were very few NDP-allied public members on the PSEI boards.²²⁰

Eighteen (40%) of the 45 NDP appointees whose positions were rescinded by the UCP government had made donations to the Alberta NDP between 2016 and 2019. Most of the NDP's 2017-2020 total of \$65,403 in appointee donations came from this group. Four of these individuals, however, had donated to the NDP and to other parties (Liberal Party, PCP, or UCP). One other rescinded NDP appointee, Bruce Leslie, had donated only to the UCP and Wildrose parties. Four NDP appointees who were allowed to continue or who were reappointed by the UCP had histories of contributions only to the PCP or another conservative party. Altogether, only 20/113 (17.7%) of NDP appointees had made contributions to the NDP, and of these, 16 (*or 14% of NDP appointees*) had made political contributions solely to the NDP. That does not indicate a high degree of partisanship among the NDP appointees.

As for the UCP appointees (including only UCP1 and UCP2, n=121), one had donated only to the NDP, one had donated only to the Liberals, and five had donated to the NDP or the Liberals and to a conservative party. Thirty-seven per cent (45/121) had donated solely to a conservative party (PCP, UCP, or Wildrose). Thus, overall, it appears that the UCP appointees are more partisan than the NDP appointees.

Among the PSEI appointees, a small number have made “maximum” donations (\$4,000 or the inflation-adjusted amount, since 2015), and all of these were to the UCP. Cody Church, appointed to the board of UCalgary in August 2019, donated a total of \$11,000 to the UCP between 2017-2019.²²¹ The three other individuals in this category of donors are Kris Mauthe, former president and CEO of Argus Machine Co. (2014-2019), Shawna Miller, co-owner of Smithco Enterprises Ltd. and chair of the Alberta Chambers of Commerce, and Alex Pourbaix, former COO of TransCanada

220 By our calculation, 70% of 174 PSEI board members were first-time UCP appointees by March 31, 2021.

221 Church was also appointed by the UCP government to chair the board of the Alberta Indigenous Opportunities Corporation. His remuneration for that position was reported as \$25,600 for 2020.

Corp. and current CEO of Cenovus Energy. Other big political contributors include Daniel Eggert, VP at Melcor Developments and director of the University of Alberta Properties Trust Inc., who has donated \$7,404 to the UCP since 2017, and oil and gas industry investor, Adam Waterous, who contributed \$3,000 to the UCP in 2019 (and a whopping \$20,000 to Wildrose in 2015). These six contributors account for \$34,604 or 47% of the appointees' donations to the UCP since 2017 (which total \$73,017).

Unsurprisingly, Elections Alberta data for years preceding 2017 and the formation of the UCP reveal that many UCP appointees were contributors to the party's predecessors, the PC and the Wildrose parties. This includes UCalgary board member and former campaign manager for both Stephen Harper and Jason Kenney, John Weissenberger, whose history of conservative contributions spans 2005-2017. Cody Church has donated to the PCs and the Wildrose Party. Before the NDP's legislation capping individual political contributions to parties took effect, Sue Riddell Rose, Perpetual Energy's CEO, contributed \$30,000 to the PCP (in 2015). In 2014, she donated \$10,000 to Jim Prentice's campaign for the leadership of the PCP.²²²

Lastly, some appointees have party affiliations in addition to, or apart from, political contributions. (A handful of the individuals in this list were included in Table 5.5; we have added them here because their political careers at provincial or federal level indicate their partisan affiliations.)

- Jenny Adams (NorQuest College) was campaign manager for PC candidate Katherine O'Neill in the 2015 provincial election.
- Jennifer Annesley (SAIT) is a former chief of staff to the federal [Conservative Party] Minister of Natural Resources Jim Carr.
- Shelley Beck (Medicine Hat College) worked as an assistant to UCP MLA Drew Barnes.²²³
- Susan Billington (SAIT) ran as a PCP candidate in the 2015 provincial election.
- Richard Casson (Ulethbridge) is a former Conservative Party Member of Parliament for Lethbridge (1997-2011).
- Jennifer Cleall (NorQuest) is a past board member of the Edmonton-Glenora PCP constituency association (CA).
- Susanne DiCocco (AUArts) ran for the Conservative Party of Canada nomination for the Calgary-Confederation riding in 2015.
- Kim Farwell (Keyano College) was campaign manager for Conservative MP David Yurdiga and president of the Fort McMurray-Athabasca Conservative Party of Canada CA.²²⁴
- Karri Flatla (Lethbridge College) ran as the UCP candidate in Lethbridge-West in the 2019 provincial election.
- Bob Hawkesworth (Bow Valley College) was the NDP MLA for Calgary Mountainview (1986-1993).

222 While under Riddell Rose's leadership, Perpetual Energy received a \$49.5 million bailout from the Alberta Investment Management Corporation (AIMCo). See Press Progress, *Alberta's Failed Oil and Gas Bailout* (Edmonton, AB, 2020), pp. 38-39, <https://pressprogress.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/AIMCO-report.pdf>.

223 Collin Gallant, "Lengthy vacancy for MHC chair over pending superboard," *Medicinehatnews.com*, March 12, 2021, <https://medicinehatnews.com/news/local-news/2021/03/12/lengthy-vacancy-for-mhc-chair-over-pending-superboard/>.

224 Information from Farwell's LinkedIn page, <https://www.linkedin.com/in/kim-farwell-95302118/?originalSubdomain=ca> and from Dave Courmoyer's political blog, *Alberta Politics*, August 19, 2019, <https://daveberta.ca/2019/08/jason-kenney-ramps-up-the-old-tory-patronage-machine/>.

- Bridget Hennigar (Grande Prairie Regional College) was a member of the Wildrose-PCP unification discussion team.²²⁵
- Larry Kaumeyer (UAlberta) was a director of the Alberta Prosperity Fund (political action committee created in November 2015), “strategic advisor” to Jason Kenney from Dec. 2019 to Aug. 2020, and then appointed Premier Kenney’s Principal Secretary.
- Donna Kennedy-Glans (Banff Centre) is a former PC MLA.
- Lily Le (NorQuest College) was the UCP MLA nominee for Edmonton City-Centre (2019)
- Janice MacKinnon (UAlberta) is a former Minister of Finance in the Government of Saskatchewan (NDP), as well as an advisor for multiple neoliberal governments.
- Ted Menzies (Olds College) was Conservative MP for Calgary-McLeod from 2004-2013.
- Julian Martin (MacEwanU) was director of the regional office for Conservative government Minister Rona Ambrose, 2008-2014.
- Raymond Martin served four terms as an NDP MLA representing Edmonton ridings.
- Bettina Pierre-Gilles (Bow Valley College), UCP board member, was a candidate for the UCP nomination in the riding of Calgary Currie in 2018.
- James Rajotte (UAlberta) is a former Conservative Party of Canada member of parliament, serving Edmonton ridings from 2000 to 2008; political appointee of the UCP government to a post in Washington, DC.
- Janice Sarich (MacEwanU) is a former Progressive Conservative MLA (Edmonton-Decore, 2008-2015).
- Alayne Sinclair (NAIT), was director of Public Agency Appointments, Office of the Premier of Alberta, 2015-2016.
- Lloyd Snelgrove (Lakeland College) was a Progressive Conservative Party MLA for Vermilion-Lloydminster from 2001-2012.
- Sheila Taylor (AUA) stood as a candidate for the Wildrose Party in a byelection in Calgary-West in October 2014.
- Lydell Torgerson (Grande Prairie Regional College) was the official agent for a Conservative MP.²²⁶
- Adam Waterman (Lakeland College), is VP Communications for Vermilion-Lloydminster-Wainwright UCP CA; former director of same CA; former Election Day chairman of the 2019 Garth Rowswell campaign [active UCP member].
- John Weissenberger (UCalgary), former Chief of Staff for Jason Kenney, federal Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, campaign manager for Jason Kenney in 2018.
- Ronald Young (Portage College) was the Alberta Liberal Party candidate in the Bonnyville-Cold Lake riding in 2001.

225 Stuart Thomson, “Progressive Conservative, Wildrose discussion teams set to take first steps toward unity,” *Edmonton Journal* March 24, 2017, <https://edmontonjournal.com/news/politics/pc-and-wildrose-discussion-teams-set-to-take-first-steps-toward-unity>.

226 Dave Cournoyer, Alberta Politics (blog), August 19, 2019, <https://daveberta.ca/2019/08/jason-kenney-ramps-up-the-old-tory-patronage-machine/>.

This list comprises 28 PSEI appointees, or 12% of our sample of 231. Of these 28, 24 are associated with conservative parties, three with the NDP, and one with the Alberta Liberal Party (although he has since become a UCP contributor). Also of these 28 appointees, 20 did not appear in the tables as affiliates of organizational contributors.

When we put all these findings together, we see that during the NDP government (May 2012-April 2019) there was something of a cultural shift on the boards, in the sense that, for the first time, PSEI boards included individuals with NDP leanings as well as individuals with strong connections to non-profit social service and arts organizations. However, the NDP appointees were not particularly partisan, judging by their political contribution records and their minimal presence in the above list of politically engaged appointees. Only three—Ray Martin, Alayne Sinclair, and Bob Hawkesworth—were associated with the Alberta NDP.²²⁷

Overall, UCP appointees were found to be considerably more partisan than the NDP appointees, with 37% of UCP appointees contributing to the UCP or other right-wing parties, compared to only 14% of NDP appointees contributing to the NDP. Nearly 60 UCP appointees—including 10 board chairs—are affiliated to organizations that have supported right-wing parties and TPAs, and 53 board members whose positions were not rescinded by the UCP in 2019 (most of whom remained on the boards at least into 2020) have made political contributions to the same parties.

“Overall, UCP appointees were found to be considerably more partisan than the NDP appointees.”

If we add up the board appointees who (a) are affiliated with a corporate entity that contributes to conservative parties and/or TPAs, (b) contribute personally to conservative parties and/or TPAs, and/or (c) have worked for or stood as candidates for conservative parties and lobby groups, the total comes to 104 individuals. Five of these were NDP-R, and five were NDP appointees who were allowed to continue in their positions (NDP-C). Thus 94 of the 153 public members who were appointed by the UCP government for the first time, between August 2019 and March 31, 2021, or 61%, had at least one form of affiliation to at least one conservative party. By these measures, the claim that the UCP government's appointments are not “partisan” is not credible.

Coding the individuals for affiliation (A) with an organization contributing to a conservative party, a personal donation (D) to the PCP, UCP, Wildrose or a conservative TPA, and participation (P) in a conservative political party, we found six combinations incorporating the total of 104 appointees. The groupings are shown in Table 8.7. We see that the largest group is constituted of appointees who were affiliated to contributing organizations, but 63% of these appointees were found to have more active, more direct, or multiple forms of alignment with conservative political parties.

227 Interestingly, Bob Hawkesworth's association with the NDP did not prevent the UCP from appointing him to the board of Bow Valley College in 2020.

Table 8.7: Alignment of PSEI Appointees With
Conservative Parties

Political alignments of appointees by categories (A, D, P)	Number of cases
A	39
A, D	19
A, D, P	8
D	22
D, P	8
P	8
Total number of appointees	104

9 Network Analysis of Board Members

The various organizational affiliations of the governors of Albertan PSEIs can be mapped as an elite network of interlocking directorates. Here, we present several views of the network: (1) the network of all the organizations (corporate and non-corporate) with which current PSEI governors have been affiliated in the past or currently; (2) the network of all the organizations with which the governors are currently affiliated; (3) the affiliations network comprised of individuals who have had current or past *affiliations* with six or more organizations (including PSEIs); (4) the affiliations network comprised of individuals who have *current* affiliations with four or more organizations (including PSEIs); (5) the network of PSEIs and other organizations formed through the affiliations of PSEI governors whose appointments were rescinded by the UCP government (NDP-R); and (6) the parallel network formed through the current affiliations of the persons who were appointed in their places (All-UCP1).

Our network analysis maps the affiliations of Albertan PSEI governors in depth. What we find is that Albertan PSEI boards have been and continue to be heavily laden with corporate representation, with the oil and gas (O&G) sector being the most strongly represented. Moreover, in the civil society organizations represented on PSEI boards, corporate interests have been and continue to predominate. We find that the O&G sector, the corporate services sector, and a host of business-related organizations (business councils, chambers of commerce, think-tanks, and industry associations) are particularly prominent in the network. Among the many organizations that have interlocked with Albertan PSEIs, a relatively few corporations and NCCS entities have contributed a disproportionate share of ties.

Five universities based in Alberta's two metropolises are at the core of this network: UAlberta, MRU, UCalgary, NAIT, and SAIT. The five PSEIs at the core of the network have very scant representation from civil society interests outside of the corporate sector, but this is also true of other PSEI boards. When we drill down to the level of individuals, we find a 'small world' in which a few dozen key networkers representing various corporate interests meet on the boards of these key PSEIs.

The first two views of the network give us an overall picture, with the first one showing some historical depth (through the past affiliations) and the second giving a fully contemporary snapshot. The second two views enable us to identify the key networkers who, through their multiple organizational affiliations, carry the interlocks as they participate in the governance of these organizations, whether in the past or currently. The third two views enable a comparative analysis of the changing affiliations of board members with the

transition from an NDP to a UCP government.²²⁸ The numbers of affiliations included in this part of the report differ from those reported in parts 6 and 7 because, for the network analysis, we have included only the PSEI board member affiliations for which the members hold senior management, executive, or directorship positions in the linked organizations.

The Inter-Organizational Network of Past and Current Interlocks

In mapping elite networks, it can be illuminating to include not only the interlocking directorships that currently link governance boards, but also the past affiliations of key individuals (Van Apeldoorn et al. 2017). Our starting point in this network analysis includes both the current and past organizational affiliations of the governors of Alberta's 21 PSEIs, including past affiliations as far back as 2000 and as recently as March 2021.

In Figure 9.1 (and in other figures throughout this analysis), the organizations (both corporate and civil society) that were previously affiliated to the core sample PSEIs are displayed as *small-sized nodes* in the network, while the *currently/continuingly* affiliated organizations are shown as large-sized nodes. A continuingly affiliated organization means that the organization is both currently and previously interlocked (through different individuals). Each line in the graph represents an interlocking directorship between two institutions, and the number of shared directors (including both current and past affiliations) is indicated by the thickness of the lines. Since past affiliations are included, some of the lines describe 'flows' of individuals to or from a PSEI to another organization, rather than a contemporaneous interlock, and some lines describe relationships that were no longer extant as of April 2021.

In the network of current and past interlocks (Figure 9.1), *square symbols* represent the 21 PSEIs. All other organizations are 'neighbours' to one or more of these PSEIs, that is, they currently share or have shared in the past at least one director with an Albertan PSEI. *Circle symbols* refer to companies: those *coloured in red* are the oil and gas companies (O&G); *coloured in dark orange* are firms of corporate services (legal, auditing, accounting, consulting, and technical services – CORP-SER); *coloured in yellow* are banking, financial, insurance, and investment companies (BFII); *coloured in dark green* are construction and real estate firms (CONSTR-R); in *light green*, telecommunications and utilities companies; in *olive*, Indigenous enterprises (INDIG-CORP); in purple, arts and media companies; in *white*, other energy (e.g., renewable and nuclear) firms; and coloured in pink are other types of companies.

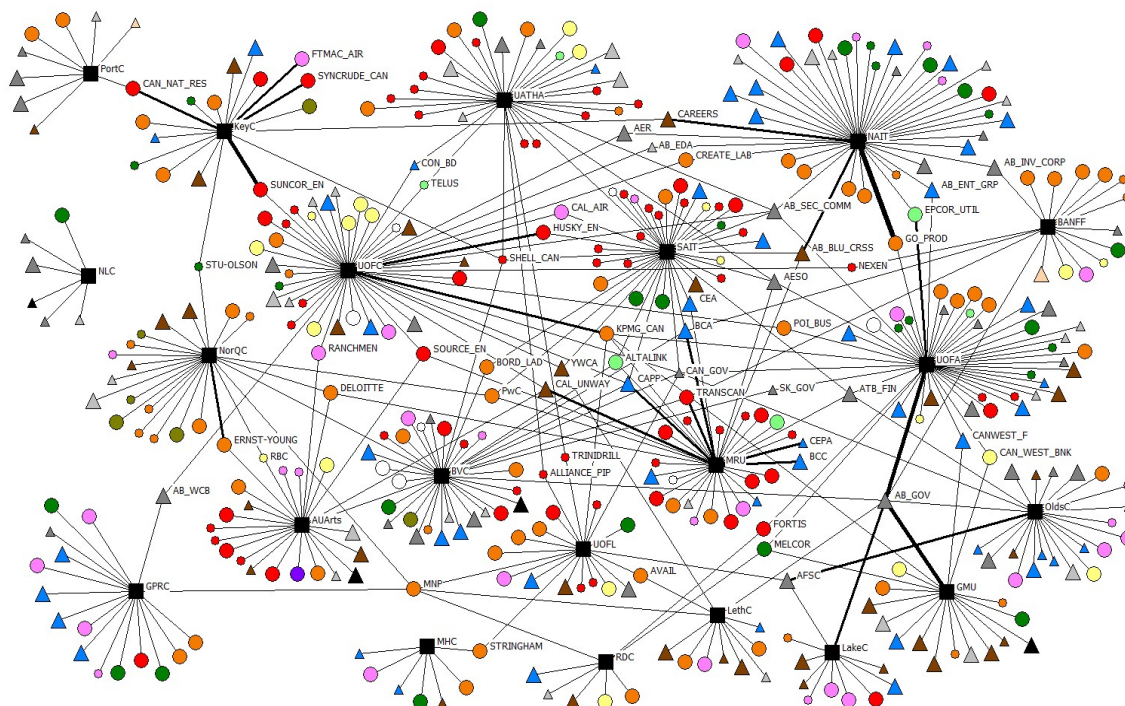
228 The data analysis and network maps in Part 9 were produced using the software UCINET.

Triangles in the network graphs refer to non-corporate civil society organizations (NCCS). The blue up triangles are business-related interest groups (business councils, chambers of commerce, think tanks, industry associations, and business lobby organizations) (BRI). Coloured in *dark gray* are government institutions (GOVT); in *light gray* are quasi-government institutions (QUASI-GOVT); in *light orange* are Indigenous government institutions (IND-GOVT); in *black* are PSEIs; and lastly, coloured in *brown* are other types of civil society organizations (OTHER-CIV). Government institutions include national, provincial, and municipal governments, as well as various government commissions and crown corporations, while quasi-government agencies include panels, task forces, and advisory councils appointed by governments. For the sake of tidiness, only neighbour organizations with two or more ties are labelled in the network.

A key to the symbols and colours is provided below for easy reference. We have aggregated corporate and non-corporate civil society categories somewhat differently than we did in Parts 6 and 7 of the report to reduce the number of categories and thereby improve the legibility of the network graphs. A table showing the categories used in Part 9 and the contents of each is provided in Appendix 2.

Figure 9.1 shows the network of current and past interlocks between 21 Albertan PSEIs and their neighbour organizations. It is a fairly dense inter-organizational network: the PSEIs and their neighbours are all directly or indirectly interlocked with one another, forming the network's main component. The only exception is Northern Lakes College (NLC), on the left of the network graph, which is isolated from the main component. The Albertan PSEIs that have the largest number of current or past interlocks with other organizations are the University of Alberta (51), the University of Calgary (50), Northern Alberta Institute of Technology (49), Mount Royal University (41), Southern Alberta Institute of Technology (40), Bow Valley College (34), and Athabasca University (34). These PSEIs tend to reside at the centre of the network.

Figure 9.1: The Network of Current and Past Interlocks Between 21 Albertan PSEIs and Their Neighbour Organizations



Key to Conventions

Squares: Alberta-based PSEIs

Circles: companies

Triangles: (non-corporate) civil-society organizations

Black (squares): Alberta-based PSEIs (AB-PSEI)

Black (triangles): non-Alberta PSEIs (OTHER-PSEI)

Blue: business-related interest groups (BRI)

Brown: other civil society organizations (OTHER-CIV)

Gray (dark): government institutions (GOVT)

Gray (light): quasi-government institutions (QUASI-GOVT)

Green (dark): construction and real estate (CONSTR-R)

Green (light): telecommunications and utilities (TELE-UT)

Olive: Indigenous enterprises (INDIG-CORP)

Orange (dark): corporate services (CORP-SER)

Orange (light): Indigenous government institutions (INDIG-GOVT)

Pink: companies from other economic sectors (OTHER-ES)

Purple: arts and media (ART-MED)

Red: oil and gas (O&G)

White: other energy (OTHER-EN)

Yellow: banking, financial, insurance, and investment (BFII)

Key to PSEIs

Alberta University of the Arts	AUArts
Athabasca University	UATHA
Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity	BANFF
Bow Valley College	BVC
Grande Prairie Regional College	GPRC
Grant MacEwan University	GMU
Keyano College	KeyC
Lakeland College	LakeC
Lethbridge College	LethC
Medicine Hat College	MHC
Mount Royal University	MRU
NorQuest College	NorQC
Northern Alberta Institute of Technology	NAIT
Northern Lakes College	NLC
Olds College	OldsC
Portage College	PortC
Red Deer College	RDC
Southern Alberta Institute of Technology	SAIT
University of Alberta	UOFA
University of Calgary	UOFC
University of Lethbridge	UOFL
University of Saskatchewan	UOFS

At the other end of the interlocking relations are the neighbour organizations to the PSEIs. Out of a total number of 527 current and past interlocking relations of the public board members of the 21 PSEIs, a remarkable 304 are corporate affiliations linking universities to different companies: 96 connections to the oil and gas companies; 92 connections to the corporate services firms; 22 connections to the banking, financial, insurance, and investment companies; 32 to the construction and real estate firms; 11 to telecommunications and utilities companies; six to Indigenous enterprises; one to arts and media companies; eight to other energy companies; and 36 to other types of companies.

The other 223 ties are directed towards non-corporate civil society organizations: 72 ties extend to government institutions; 64 to business-related interest groups (BRI); 32 to quasi-government institutions; seven to non-Alberta PSEIs; two to Indigenous government institutions; and 46 to other types of civil society organizations. The oil and gas companies, the corporate services firms, and the business-related interest groups have

the largest numbers of connections to our PSEI boards, underlining the influential position that corporate capital has in the governance of these institutions.

The neighbour organizations which have the largest numbers of current and past ties to the 21 PSEIs are listed in Table 9.1. Of the 27 prominent neighbours, six are oil and gas companies; six are corporate services firms; six are government institutions; two are telecommunications and utilities companies; one is a real estate firm; two are business-related entities in civil society; and the remaining four are other civil society organizations. The structural prominence of the oil and gas, the corporate services, and the BRI sectors is partly attributable to a few companies and NCCS entities that have interlocked extensively with the PSEIs.

Table 9.1: Neighbour Organizations With the Largest Numbers of Current and Past Ties

Industry Sector	Name of Organization	Number of Ties
O&G	Shell Canada	4
O&G	Suncor Energy	4
O&G	TransCanada (TC Energy)	4
O&G	Canadian Natural Resources Ltd.	3
O&G	Husky Energy	3
O&G	Source Energy	3
CORP-SER	KPMG Canada	6
CORP-SER	Go Productivity	5
CORP-SER	MNP LLP	5
CORP-SER	Deloitte	3
CORP-SER	Ernst & Young	3
CORP-SER	PwC Canada	3
CONSTR-R	Melcor REIT	3
TELE-UT	ALTALINK	3
TELE-UT	EPCOR Utilities	3
BRI	Business Council of Alberta	5
BRI	CAPP	5
GOVT	Government of Alberta	12
GOVT	Government of Canada	6
GOVT	Alberta Securities Commission	5
GOVT	Alberta Electric System Operator	4
GOVT	Agriculture Financial Services Corp.	4
GOVT	ATB Financial	4
OTHER-CIV	Alberta Blue Cross	4
OTHER-CIV	United Way Calgary	4
OTHER-CIV	CAREERS: The Next Generation	3
OTHER-CIV	YWCA	3

The Inter-Organizational Network of Current Interlocks

In Figure 9.2, we consider only current ties among the PSEI and other organizations, leaving aside the past relationships.²²⁹ The network shrinks in size, as organizations with no current interlocks disappear, leaving a total of 302 organizations, including all of the 21 PSEIs plus 163 corporations and 118 NCCS entities. Yet, what the network loses in size it gains in density, as we consider not only the relations that converge on the PSEIs (as in Figure 9.1) but the interlocks among all the neighbouring corporations and NCCS entities. The network is held together by 1,224 interlocks, but again, the PSEIs vary greatly in the degree to which their governance boards interlock with those of other organizations. In the network of current interlocks, the social networks of the GPRC and NLC boards (shown at the lower right) are detached from the rest of the network (which forms a connected component). Several other colleges are relatively marginal (LakeC, PortC, OldsC, KeyC, MHC, LethC), as are UofL and BANFF. In contrast, U of A, MRU, U of C, NAIT and SAIT are quite central, due to their profuse ties, often to like organizations, while BVC, AUArts, UATHA, GMU and NorQC are significantly linked into that central complex of PSEIs.

²²⁹ It is important to note here that our analysis is based exclusively on the affiliations of governors of PSEIs based in Alberta. We do not consider the many interlocks generated by the affiliations of corporate directors who are not PSEI governors. See Carroll 2021 and Carroll et al. 2021.

Figure 9.2: The Network of all Current Interlocks Among 21 PSEIs and Other Organizations With Which Their Governors are Affiliated

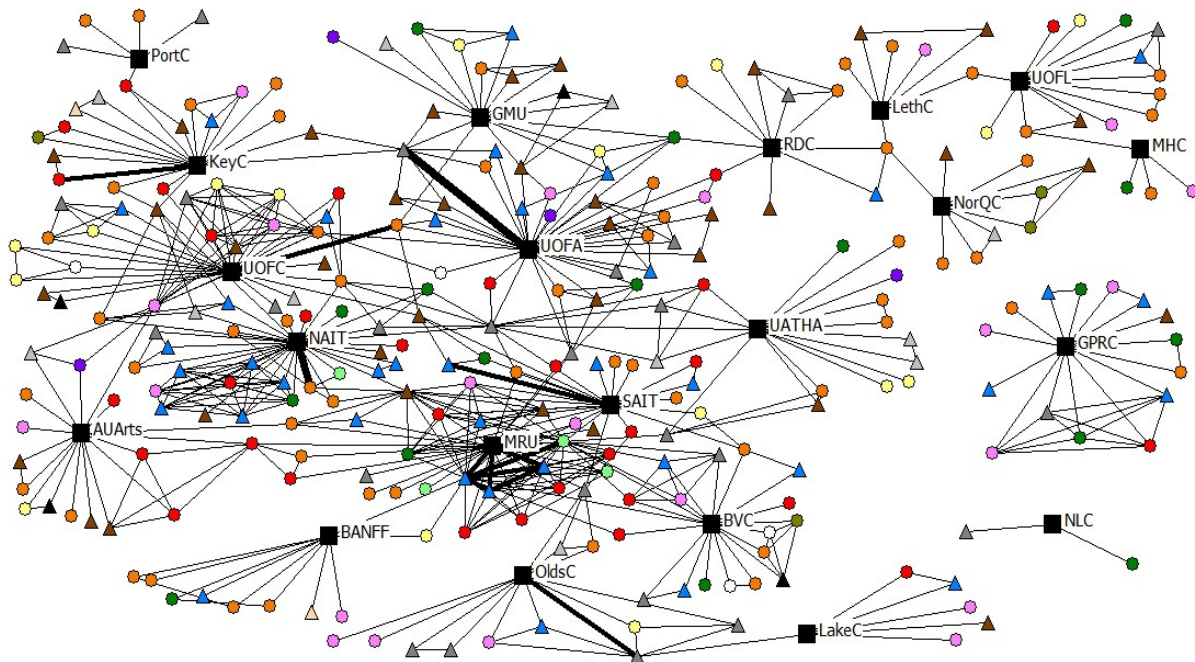
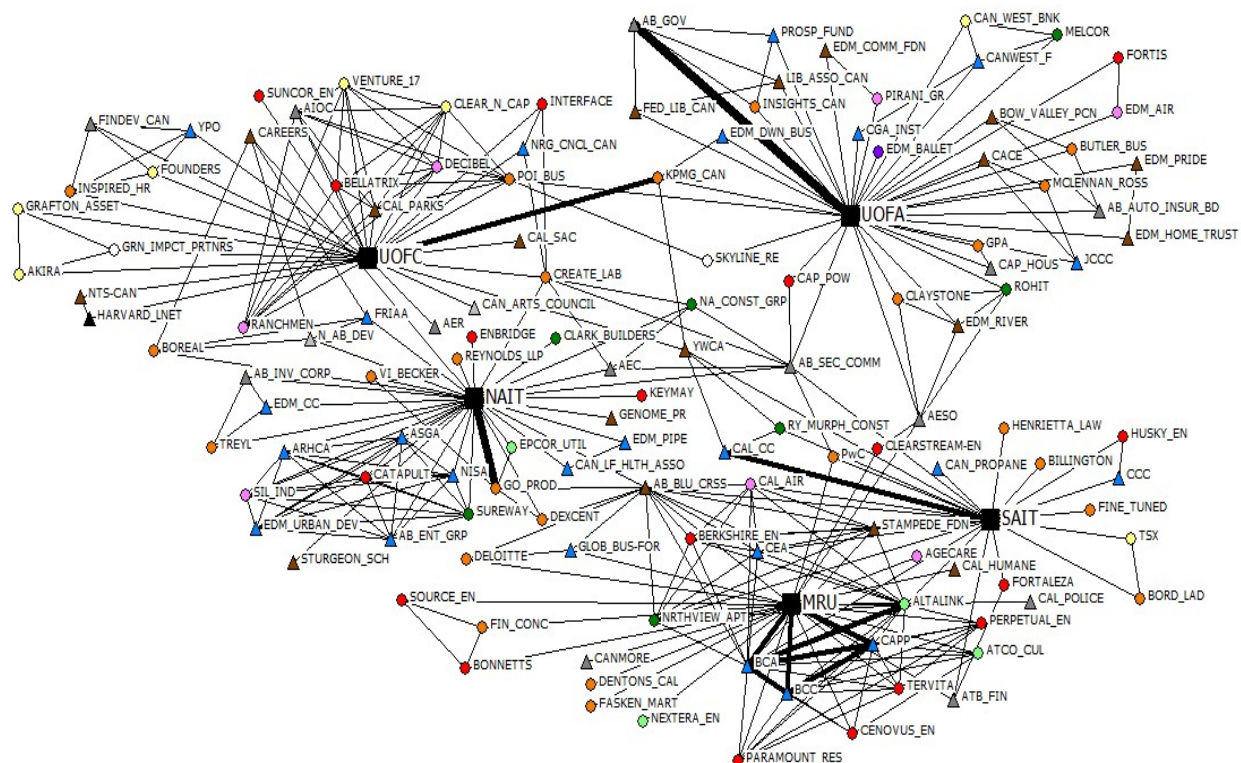


Figure 9.3 homes in on that central complex, mapping the overlapping social circles of the five core PSEIs: U of A, MRU, U of C, NAIT, and SAIT (as shown by their current interlocks). In these overlapping social circles, a total of 133 organizations knitted together by 660 interlocking directorates constitute a network core. It is remarkable that 54% of all current interlocks in the entire elite network converge upon just five university boards of governors.²³⁰

Figure 9.3: Five PSEIs at the Core of the Network and Their (Current) Overlapping Social Circles



UAlberta's board includes directors from two fossil-capital firms (Fortis and Capital Power), while UCalgary's board interlocks with three (Suncor, Bellatrix, and Interface). MRU's board is even closer to fossil-capital interests through its interlocks with seven such companies, including Cenovus. NAIT's board overlaps with three fossil boards, including Enbridge's, while SAIT has elite ties to two, including Husky Energy. The five central PSEIs interlock with four of Canada's largest fossil-capital firms (Suncor, Cenovus, Husky, and Enbridge), but also with a good number of the mid-sized fossils that form the heart of Calgary's business community (Carroll 2021).

230 The 'thick ties' in the sociogram between these three PSEIs are each reflecting two or more shared governors between each pair of PSEIs.

Figure 9.3 also reveals many interlocks between the five central PSEI boards and various business-related interest groups. MRU shares two directors each with CAPP, the Business Council of Canada, and the Business Council of Alberta; SAIT has single-director interlocks with three business-related NCCS entities (including the Canadian Chamber of Commerce) and a double-director interlock with the Calgary Chamber of Commerce. As for the two core PSEIs based in Edmonton, the provincial capital, NAIT's board interlocks with nine business-related NCCS entities, among them the lobby group Alberta Enterprise Group (AB_ENT_GRP)²³¹ and the Edmonton Chamber of Commerce, while UAlberta interlocks with five such organizations, including CanadaWest Foundation and the Alberta Prosperity Fund. UAlberta's board is particularly tied to provincial government organizations through a triple-director interlock. UCalgary's governance board has less state representation, but distinguishes itself from other PSEIs through its interlocks with five financial institutions. All five core PSEIs have governors with affiliations in the legal/ auditing/accounting/consulting sector. Perhaps most strikingly, these governance boards have very scant representation from civil society interests outside of the corporate sector.

In Figure 9.3, it is evident that the interlocks among corporations and business-related interest groups are what generate these relatively dense social circles. The Calgary-based PSEIs at the core of the network (UCalgary and MRU in particular) have appointed to their boards well-connected members of Calgary's business community. In Edmonton, in the case of NAIT, whose neighbourhood is also well integrated, the interlocks among its neighbours mostly connect business-oriented interest groups along with a few state bodies. Among the five core PSEIs, UAlberta stands out for its more sparsely integrated social circle. Its governors affiliate with a diverse array of organizations, but tend not to interlock across many of them, indicating that they make up less of an integrated 'small world'.

We can also see in Figure 9.3 that most PSEIs have governors affiliated with legal/audit/consulting firms (shown in dark orange). The NAIT board alone maintains nine interlocks with this sector. Interlocks with the financial sector (shown in yellow) are more unevenly distributed among the PSEIs, with UCalgary maintaining five such interlocks while UAlberta shows only one. Apart from the legal/audit/accounting sector, the O&G sector is by far the most heavily represented on PSEI boards, while Indigenous businesses are least represented (with four interlocks in total, all of them with colleges). Other energy companies (renewables, nuclear) also have scant representation, although the Bow Valley College board has two interlocks with such firms. As for the composition of NCCS entities represented on PSEI boards, business-oriented interest groups—business councils, industry associations, chambers of commerce, and corporate-funded think-tanks—are the most heavily represented organizations, though again the interlocks

231 AEG is described in Part 7, as is the Alberta Prosperity Fund, mentioned below.

are unevenly distributed, with UAlberta, NAIT, MRU, and SAIT accounting for 27 of the 46 interlocks with this sector. UAlberta maintains the most interlocks with state bodies (seven in all).

Table 9.2 extends this analysis of social circles to the entire set of 21 PSEIs, showing the size and composition of each PSEI's social circle, categorizing its neighbours as corporations, non-corporate civil-society entities, or other Alberta universities.

Table 9.2: Size, Composition, and Density of Albertan PSEI Social Circles, Based on Current Interlocking

PSEI	N current interlocks	N ties to corps	N ties to NCCS entities	N ties to AB PSEIs	Degree among neighbours
UOFA	34	16	20	0	1.71
NAIT	32	17	17	0	3.06
MRU	26	16	13	0	3.15
UOFC	26	16	11	0	3.23
SAIT	23	13	11	0	3.13
BVC	19	12	7	0	2.32
KeyC	18	11	8	0	1
AUArts	17	12	5	0	1.29
GMU	17	7	10	0	1.53
UATHA	16	9	7	0	1.38
GPRC	15	9	6	0	1.73
UOFL	13	10	3	0	0.77
OldsC	12	5	8	0	1.67
BANFF	10	7	3	0	0.6
RDC	10	6	4	0	0.8
NorQC	9	6	3	0	0.89
LethC	7	5	2	0	0.29
LakeC	6	3	3	0	0.33
PortC	5	3	2	0	0
MHC	4	4	0	0	0
NLC	2	1	1	0	0
Mean	15.3	9.0	6.9	0	1.38
Median	15	9	6	0	1.29
Sum	321	188	144	0	29

The tabulation takes account of multiple-director interlocks: the values refer to the total number of currently shared directors between a PSEI and its neighbours in the network. The 21 PSEIs are ordered according to the number of current interlocks. The five core PSEIs each have more than 25 interlocks. College governance boards have relatively few interlocks with other organizations, as does the University of Lethbridge.²³²

The composition of these social circles is quite revealing. Overall, the 21 PSEIs maintain 188 current overlapping directorships with corporations and 144 with NCCS entities. However, the governance boards of Alberta-based PSEIs do not interlock with each other. And the strong bias in favour of corporate representation on governance boards does not hold consistently. The Calgary-based PSEIs (including Bow Valley College and AUArts) are especially ensconced in the corporate world, as is the U of Lethbridge (although it has far fewer interlocks in total). In contrast, UAlberta's 16 ties to the corporate sector are counterbalanced by 20 interlocks with NCCS entities and state organizations; NAIT and GMU, also based in the provincial capital, show a similar pattern.

As suggested in our reading of the pattern of interlocking in Figure 9.3, the PSEIs vary in the degree to which the members of their social circles are themselves interlocked. The rightmost column in Table 9.2, labeled "Degree among neighbours," indicates the average number of interlocking directorates among members of each PSEI's social circle. The three Calgary-based PSEIs at the core of the network have particularly well-integrated social circles (or neighbourhoods), as does the Edmonton-based NAIT: on average, each of their neighbours in the network interlock with three other neighbours.

Perhaps most revealingly, our mapping of PSEI social circles shows that *representation of the vast range of social interests outside of the corporate and state sectors is virtually absent from Alberta PSEI boards of governors*. Only 42 of the 332 interlocks link the PSEIs to civil-society groups outside the corporate and state sectors.

The Core Networkers of Current or Past Affiliations

As an elite network, the interlocking directorates that converge upon the 21 PSEIs are carried by specific elite individuals. PSEI governors vary greatly in the extent to which they maintain affiliations with other organizations; hence much of the interlock network is created by a relatively small set of 'big linkers' who are affiliated with many organizations. We will now get beneath the one-mode inter-organizational network by mapping a two-mode network of the most well-connected individuals and their affiliated institutions. In Figure 9.4, we map the 22 PSEI governors affiliated currently or in the past with six or more corporate or civil society institutions (small

232 The marginality of colleges in the network is partly explained by the fact that their governance boards contain fewer 'public members' (appointed by the Alberta government)—typically seven, compared to 10 typically for university boards of governors.

“The most influential public board members of the PSEIs in Alberta tend to know one another personally by having worked at the same organizations.”

symbols represent past affiliations; large symbols are for current affiliations). Four of the individuals are public board members of the University of Calgary; four are of the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology; three are of the University of Alberta; three are of Mount Royal University; two are of the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology; and two are of Bow Valley College. Athabasca University, University of Lethbridge, NorQuest College, and Keyano College each have one big linker on their board of governors. All the big linkers in the network (except for Brian Hjlesvold) are linked to each other either directly or indirectly, forming an integrated elite network. This points to a small-world phenomenon: the most influential public board members of the PSEIs in Alberta tend to know one another personally by having worked at the same organizations.

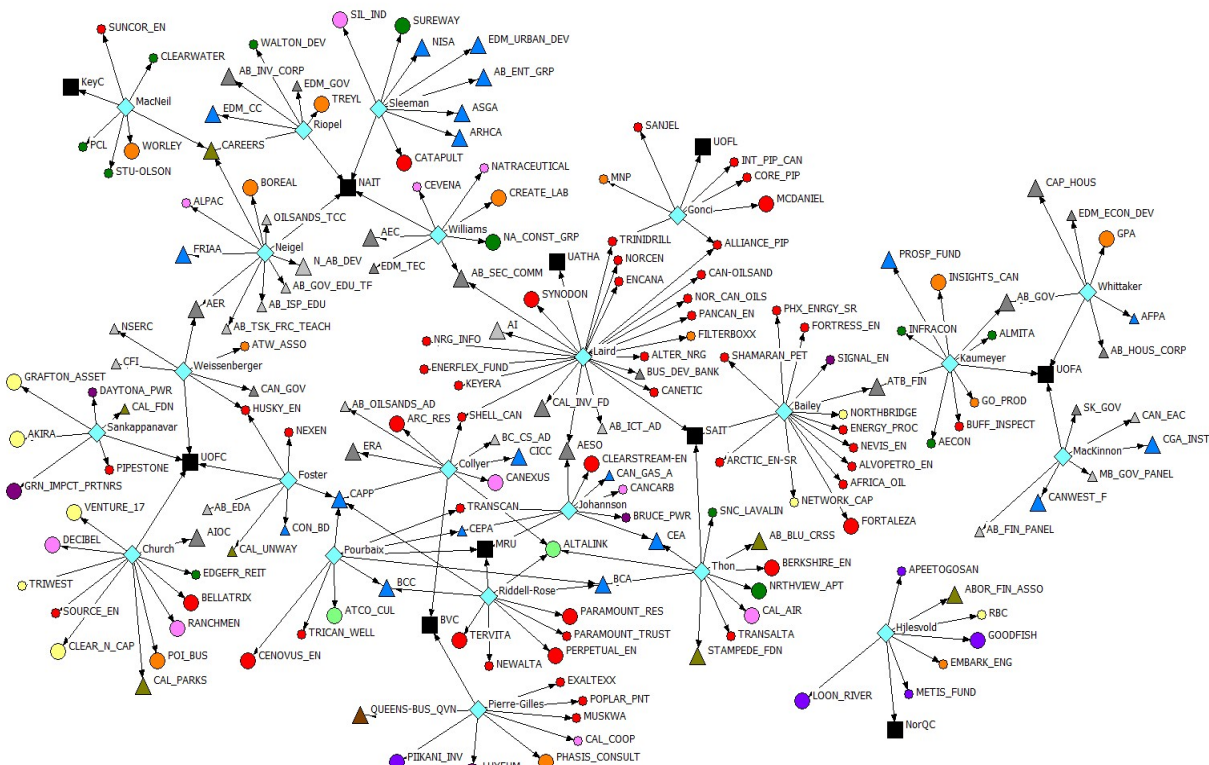
As shown in Figure 9.4, most of the well-connected individuals have had some affiliation to O&G companies (as coloured in red). The exceptions include Janet Riopel, Kristina Williams, Brian Hjlesvold, Janice MacKinnon, and Paul Whittaker. Paul Whittaker was a deputy minister at the Government of Alberta and served as deputy secretary to the Klein and Stelmach cabinets. He is currently a senior associate at Global Public Affairs, a consultancy/lobbyist firm that was discussed in Part 3. Janice MacKinnon is former Minister of Finance at the Government of Saskatchewan and has been affiliated with Canada West Foundation and Canadian Global Affairs Institute—two major corporate think-tanks in Canada. Brian Hjlesvold is former senior manager of Aboriginal Markets at the Royal Bank of Canada and has served as a director or chair at various Indigenous enterprises and NCCS entities, including Goodfish Lake Business Corp., Loon River Development Corporation, Métis Entrepreneurial Fund, and Aboriginal Financial Officers Association. Kristina Williams has worked for Alberta Enterprise Corporation (a crown corporation), TEC Edmonton, and the North American Construction Group, while Janet Riopel has also worked for a crown corporation (Invest Alberta Corporation) and served as the president of the Edmonton Chamber of Commerce. Andrew Neigel has been affiliated with various quasi-government institutions in Alberta, as well as the Alberta Chamber of Resources. He was also a member of the board of directors for the Alberta Energy Regulator from 2013-2016. He has indirect links to the oil and gas sector insofar as the CAREERS program he runs works with the oil and gas, forestry, and construction industries, among others, to establish internships for trainees.²³³

The individuals who are currently involved in the fossil fuel industry include Alex Pourbaix, CEO of Cenovus Energy; Cody Church, former board chair of Source Energy and current director of Bellatrix Resources; Dave Collyer, former president of Shell Canada and current director of ARC Resources; Sue Riddell-Rose, CEO of Perpetual Energy; James Cameron Bailey, president of Fortaleza Energy; Scott Thon, CEO of Berkshire Hathaway

233 Partners of CAREERS include CNRL, Suncor, Syncrude, TC Energy, and Imperial Oil. The chair of its board of directors is Jim Carter, former CEO of Syncrude. Executives from Suncor, Syncrude, Cenovus, and other companies in this sector have held board positions on CAREERS. See <https://careersnextgenreports.ca/>.

Energy Canada; Nancy Laird, board chair of Synodon Inc. and former director of multiple companies in the oil and gas sector; Marlea Sleeman, president of Catapult Solutions; and Karl Johannson, former senior vice-president of TC Energy and current board member of ClearStream Energy Services. Darcy Gonci is director of finance at McDaniel & Associates (an oil and gas reserves evaluation company).

Figure 9.4: Twenty-Two Key Networkers and Their Current and Past Organizational Affiliations



The network of 22 key networkers illustrates how the fossil fuel industry (red circles) has been heavily represented in the governance of Albertan PSEIs. Another group of important linkers in the network of current and past affiliations are the business-related interest (BRI) groups in civil society. For example, Sue Riddell-Rose and Alex Pourbaix are currently affiliated with CAPP, while Nancy Foster and Dave Collyer have past CAPP affiliations.²³⁴ Riddell-Rose and Pourbaix are also linked together through the Business Council of Canada (BCC) and the Business Council of Alberta (BCA), with which Scott Thon is also affiliated. In addition, Scott Thon is currently a director of the Canadian Electricity Association (CEA), while Karl Johannson is a former CEA director. Janice MacKinnon, Larry Kaumeyer, Andrew Neigel, and Marlea Sleeman have had affiliations with important

234 Nancy Foster's bio states that she has been a member of CAPP committees, but we were unable to confirm positions or dates.

BRI groups, including Alberta Enterprise Group, Alberta Prosperity Fund, Canada West Foundation, Canadian Global Affairs Institute, Alberta Roadbuilders and Heavy Construction Association, Alberta Sand and Gravel Association, and National Industrial Sand Association.

The Core Networkers of Current Affiliations

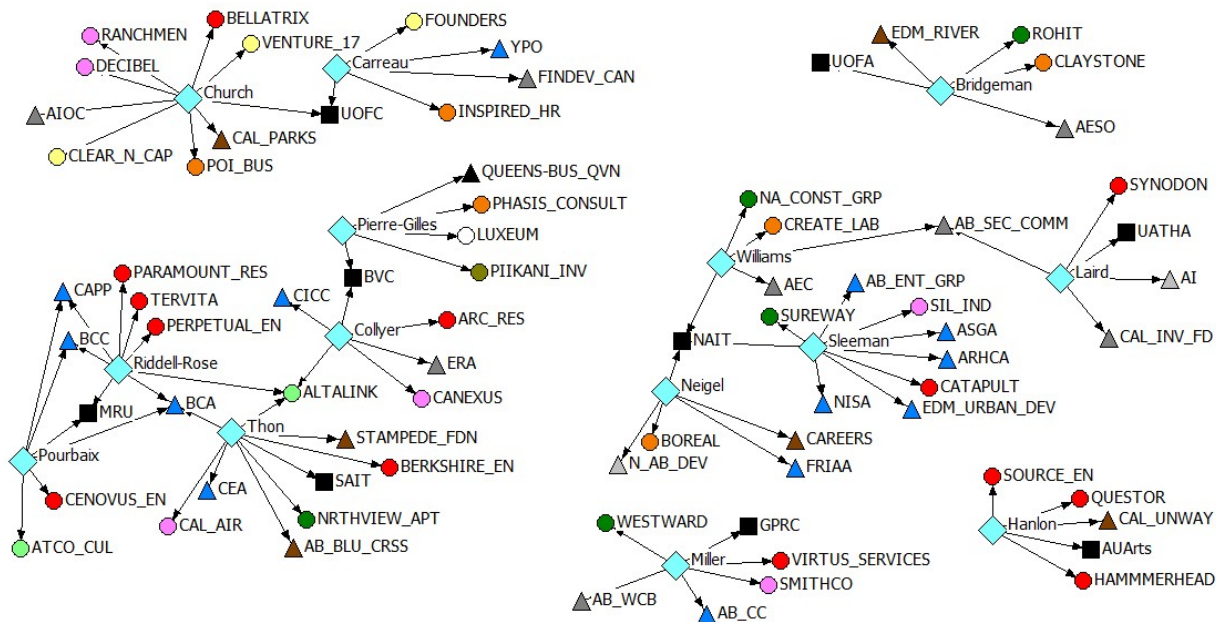
Figure 9.5 continues the analysis of key networkers but focuses only on current interlocks involving the 14 most connected PSEI directors.²³⁵ Considering only current affiliations, the network appears, predictably, less connected. Several individuals whose affiliations are not current drop out, while Shawna Miller, Debbie Carreau and A. Stewart Hanlon enter this core of current big linkers. The basic configuration remains stable, although the network fragments into six pieces, three of which involve single individuals (Guy Bridgeman, Hanlon, and Miller), each affiliated with one Alberta PSEI (UAlberta, AUArts, and GPRC respectively) and several other organizations.

Among the other individuals and organizations, a few key boards and directors play integrative roles. UCalgary, MRU, and BVC each have two of the 14 big linkers on their boards, and NAIT has three, which is one reason why their social circles are especially densely interconnected. At the same time, a few key neighbour organizations are meeting points for multiple PSEI governors. Three individuals (Dave Collier, Sue Riddell-Rose, and Scott Thon) are directors of the electricity transmitter ALTALINK (a subsidiary of Berkshire Hathaway Energy), while also sitting on one of the Calgary-based PSEIs. Berkshire CEO Scott Thon, a SAIT governor, sits on two additional corporate boards and two NCCS organization boards. Dave Collier, a Bow Valley College governor,²³⁶ sits on three additional corporate boards and four NCCS boards, including the Business Council of Alberta. Sue Riddell-Rose, an MRU governor, sits on the Business Council of Alberta board, as does fellow MRU governor Alex Pourbaix (CEO of Cenovus Energy). Both Riddell-Rose and Pourbaix also serve currently on the CAPP board and the Business Council of Canada. UCalgary's board contains two key networkers (Church and Sankapannavar) affiliated with financial/investment firms.

In the contemporary affiliations of these key networkers, we can glimpse part of the small world centred upon the governance of Alberta's post-secondary educational institutions. Every one of these core networkers sits on a corporate board, and 13 of them direct multiple corporations. The oil and gas sector is especially well represented in the affiliations of this inner circle: of the 37 corporations represented by these 14 PSEI governors, 13 are in the oil and gas sector.

235 Each of these individuals has current affiliations with at least five organizations (including PSEIs) in the network.

236 Collier's appointment as chair of the BVC board expired June 30, 2021. He was replaced by Shannon Bowen-Smed.

Figure 9.5: Fourteen Key Networkers and Their Current Organizational Affiliations

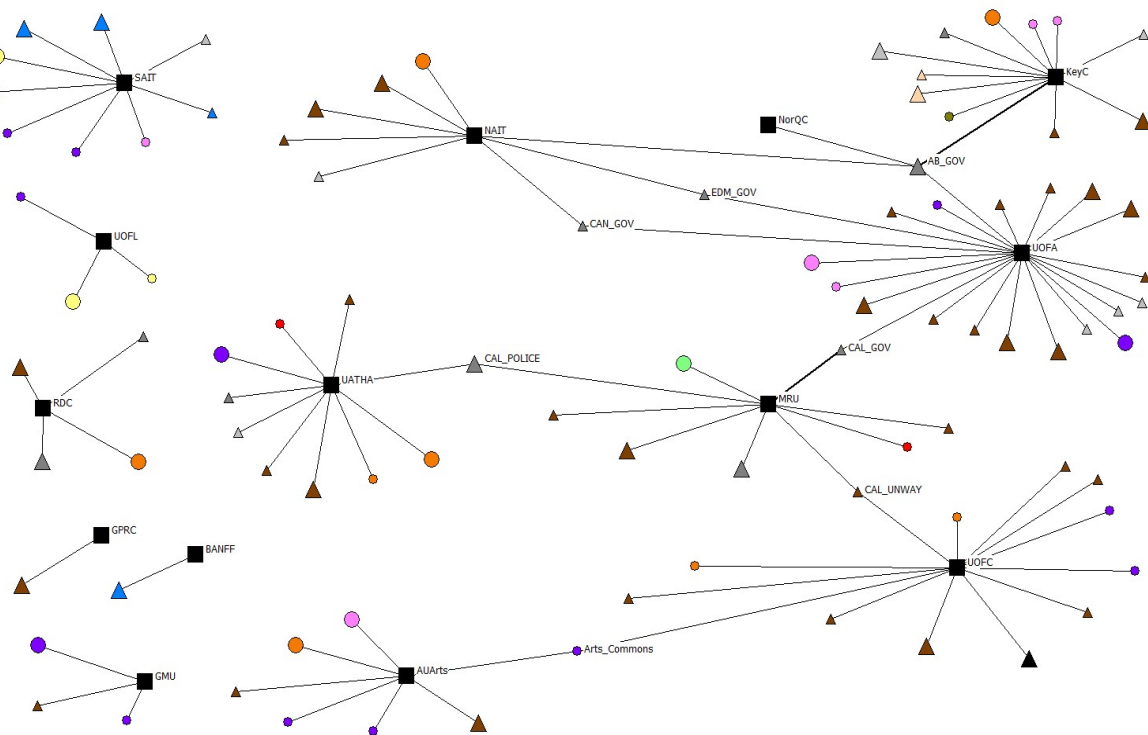
The Networks of Rescinded and New PSEI Board Appointments

Finally, in Figures 9.6 and 9.7, we have mapped two different networks: one of the affiliated institutions of the individuals whose appointments were rescinded by the UCP government (NDP-R), and one of the board members who were appointed in their place (ALL-UCP1) during the same time period. Mapping these networks enabled us to compare the associations of these respective groups and to contribute to the assessment of the political significance of the “great replacement” of August-October 2019.

We see that there are some important distinctions between the two groups of appointees. First, confirming the findings in Part 6, the rescinded individuals (appointed by the NDP) have fewer interlocking relations to the corporate world. In the cases in which they have a corporate affiliation, it is most often an affiliation to the arts or media industries (as indicated by the circle symbols in purple in Figure 9.6) or to the corporate services firms (as indicated by the circle symbols in dark orange). The UCP appointees, by contrast, are typically business leaders who are well integrated into the corporate world. They have a greater number of affiliations to a variety of industry sectors—most particularly, oil and gas companies (as indicated by red circles in Figure 9.7), but also corporate services (dark orange circles); banking, financial, insurance and investment (BFII) companies

(yellow circles); construction and real estate (CONST-R) firms (dark green); telecommunications and utilities companies (light green); as well as other types of companies (pink).

Figure 9.6: Network of NDP-R Appointees



Secondly, as noted in Part 7, the rescinded individuals are more likely to be linked to non-corporate civil society organizations, such as government (GOVT) and quasi-government (QUASI-GOVT) institutions (up triangles coloured in dark and light gray in Figure 9.6), public schools and arts associations (included in OTHER-CIV; up triangles coloured in brown). They are, however, rarely affiliated with the business-related interest (BRI) groups (up triangles in blue), which means that they are distanced not only from the corporate world but also from non-corporate business organizations, including business councils, chambers of commerce, think-tanks, and industry associations. The UCP appointees, on the other hand, are well connected to the BRI groups, as shown by the greater number of blue up triangles in Figure 9.7. Finally, and as a result of the first and second points, the rescinded individuals tend to have fewer interlocks, as indicated by the sparseness of the network in Figure 9.6 as compared to the dense network in Figure 9.7.

10

Conclusions and Recommendations

In this part of the report, we return to the core questions set out in the introduction and summarize our findings. We begin with the questions concerning differences and similarities in the NDP's and UCP's criteria for selecting PSEI governors, recapped below.

Are there any significant differences between the NDP's board appointees and the UCP's board appointees in regard to gender, ethnicity, Indigeneity, occupation, education, knowledge specialization, corporate affiliations (and economic sectoral affiliations), other civil society affiliations (public, private, non-profit, and Indigenous sectoral affiliations), and partisanship?

Related to this overarching question were two subsidiary questions:

- (a) What does a comparison of the appointees rescinded in August-October 2019 to the appointees appointed in their places tell us about the characteristics that the UCP found objectionable or desirable?
- (b) What characteristics do the individuals who have been appointed by both parties (governments) to the boards of PSEIs tell us about what the two parties agree upon, i.e., as necessary, useful, or acceptable qualifications for such governance positions?

Gender Parity

We do not have benchmark data on the gender, race, and Indigenous representation on Alberta's PSEIs prior to 2019, although clearly there was a perception on the part of the NDP government that gender parity was lacking on the PSEI and other public boards. The NDP government sought to address this by stating the goals of increasing diversity in its advertising of vacant board positions and by seeking to appoint women candidates to the boards when qualified candidates were available. As a result, the NDP succeeded in raising the ratio of women to men among its appointees to the PSEI boards to 1.8 : 1 (Table 4.4), at least among the 113 NDP appointees who were part of our study.²³⁷

Analysis of the groups reappointed and newly appointed by the UCP ("Common" and UCP1 + UCP2) indicates that gender parity was likely not a key criterion in these appointments. The women appointees' backgrounds in finance, corporate services, and business administration (located, for the most part, in the private sector) generally fit the UCP's preferences regarding specialization and occupation. When we look at the gender breakdown of the

²³⁷ Our sample did not include all NDP appointees since the party formed government in May 2015, only those who were still sitting on the boards at the time the UCP was elected in April 2019.

UCP's first-time appointees, the evidence that gender was not a determining criterion in the selection of appointees is clearer. Here, we found that women constituted only 46% of the UCP appointees. This percentage may well be higher than that found on PSEI boards in the past, but we cannot confirm this with the currently available data.²³⁸ Likely as a result of the NDP's prioritization of gender parity on the public boards, women were slightly over-represented on the PSEI boards as a percentage of appointees who held seats between April 2019 and March 2021 and whose appointments were not rescinded (n=187). The fact that women's representation on the boards slipped below gender parity for the UCP appointees indicates that a continued effort is needed to recruit qualified women candidates for these positions.

“Considering that approximately 23% of Alberta's population is classified as being constituted by ‘visible minorities,’ the representation of these groups on the PSEI boards is very unsatisfactory.”

Representation of Racialized Minorities

Considering that approximately 23% of Alberta's population is classified as being constituted by “visible minorities,” the representation of these groups on the PSEI boards is very unsatisfactory. Again, we have no historical trend or benchmark with which to compare the figures we found for the 2019-2021 period, and it is possible that these figures represent improvement over an even worse record of under-representation. The comparison of the NDP-R and All-UCP1 groups in Table 4.4 shows that they were roughly equivalent in their representation of racialized Albertans (11% and 10% respectively). This is also the case for the larger comparison groups, ALL-NDP (113) and ALL-UCP (153), where the representation of racialized minorities was 14% and 13%, respectively. This indicates the need for an active recruitment effort as part of the appointee selection process to double the number of board members from racialized groups.

Indigenous Representation

Indigenous communities remain under-represented on the PSEI boards, given that Alberta's Aboriginal²³⁹ population is estimated to be 6.5% of the total, yet Indigenous persons constituted only 4.8% of the 187 appointees who were not rescinded. We did, however, find a significant difference between NDP and UCP appointments regarding Indigenous representation. The percentage of Indigenous persons among the NDP appointees whose positions were rescinded in 2019 by the UCP government was 11%. This is a small group (36) and does not stand in for all NDP PSEI appointees during that party's term of office. However, the representation of Indigenous persons among ALL-NDP appointees (n=113) was found to be 13%—well above this group's proportion of the population and suggestive of an active recruitment effort (Table 4.4).

238 Other researchers could go back through orders-in-council for earlier years to generate data on the gender breakdown of PSEI board appointments over a longer period.

239 Statistics Canada uses the label “Aboriginal,” while we have used the label “Indigenous” to encompass these population groups.

In comparison, the removal of four Indigenous governors appointed by the NDP from their positions before their terms had expired indicates that Indigenous representation was not a key concern for the UCP. This conclusion is further supported by the finding that, of the 60 individuals appointed by the UCP during the same period (the “replacement” group), none were Indigenous. And among the group of individuals appointed for the first time by the UCP (n=121), only 2 (or 1.7%) were Indigenous (Table 4.3). For ALL-UCP appointees (n=153), Indigenous persons constituted 3% of the total (Table 4.4).

Again, we conclude that governments need to maintain an active recruitment process to ensure proportional representation of Indigenous communities on the PSEI boards.

What, if anything, differentiates the NDP appointees from the UCP appointees, apart from gender, race/ethnicity, and Indigenous identities?

Given that gender, race/ethnicity and Indigenous representation do not appear to have been priorities for the UCP, what types of qualifications were of key concern to them as they replaced NDP appointees and appointed new board members? We sought to answer this question by documenting and analyzing another set of characteristics of the appointees, namely: their occupations, areas of (knowledge) specialization, education, and affiliations to both corporate and non-corporate (government, non-profit, other civil society) organizations. We also asked if there were significant differences between the NDP and UCP governments regarding these types of qualifications. What do they appear to agree on?

Social Diversity

The PSEI constituencies, as well as the general public, are interested to know which societal perspectives and forms of expertise are privileged and which are under-represented or excluded in the governance of post-secondary education. Back in 2015, 70 faculty members from the University of Alberta published an open letter in the *Edmonton Journal* calling upon the new NDP government to seize the opportunity of the appointment of a new chair of the board of governors at their institution to “signal a shift in political vision for post-secondary education.”²⁴⁰ Their letter stated:

In past decades, the province’s Conservative governments have reduced the qualifications needed for far-sighted governance to the skills of financial management. This is unfortunate,

240 Laurie Adkin, Sourayan Mookerjee, Carolyn Sale, and 61 other faculty members from about 28 departments, “Don’t lose sight of U of A’s public interest mandate,” *Edmonton Journal*, November 23, 2015, <https://edmontonjournal.com/news/politics/opinion-dont-lose-sight-of-u-of-a-public-interest-mandate>.

241 RePublicU posts are archived at: <https://sites.google.com/a/uofalberta.ca/research-2-reclaim/home/analysis>.

as university presidents, chancellors, provosts and boards of governors must have a deep understanding of the university as a public institution whose mandate is to serve the public good.

Given this understanding of the university's *raison d'être*, individuals with experience in the non-profit sector or community organizations should be viewed as equally qualified to hold university governance posts as an accountant, business manager or lawyer. In general, we would like to see university boards reflect the demographic and occupational diversity of Alberta's society and include representatives of Aboriginal peoples.

UAlberta's working group RePublicU documented, in December 2015, that the university's board of governors' public members included three corporate lawyers, five business consultants or managers, and one former PCP MLA.²⁴¹ Only one of the nine was a woman. Of the 14 external members of board standing committees, 10 were accountants or financial analysts, one was a lawyer, one an engineer, one a business manager, and one a media relations consultant. Of the 14, two were women. Taking the group of 23 as a whole, all but three were employed in the private sector, and none were Indigenous. The entities with which these individuals were affiliated included law firms Bryan & Co., Parlee McLaws, Bennett Jones, and Field Law; private corporations Jaffer Inc., KPMG, Telus, Melcor Developments (no fewer than four), Suncor, Syncrude, Ledcor, Bird Construction, Capital Power, and Calder Bateman Consulting; three private investment firms; government corporations ATB Financial, EPCOR, and the Workers' Compensation Board. RepublicU noted: "Nowhere in this list [of board members] does one find a representative of a trade union, an NGO, an Aboriginal organization, the arts community, or a non-profit service provider, a nurse, a social worker, a day care educator, a carpenter, or a farmer."

Most long-time observers of Alberta's PSE sector would likely agree that the profile described for the UAlberta in 2015 was typical of the boards of the province's two largest universities—University of Alberta and University of Calgary—but no survey has been made of Alberta's 21 publicly appointed PSEI boards to document their social composition prior to 2019. Our data from 2019 to 2021 provide the first such study but capture only a snapshot of the boards as they were constituted during the study period. What do the data show with regard to the kinds of occupations, knowledge/expertise, and education that predominate among appointees?

Occupation

As a benchmark for assessing the social representativeness of the individuals who govern Alberta's PSEIs, we used Statistics Canada's data on Albertans' occupations (Table 5.1). The general perception that PSEI board seats are occupied predominantly by corporate executives and administrators (from various sectors) is borne out by the finding that 52% of all board appointees in our sample come from these backgrounds (Table 5.2). Business owners, corporate lawyers, and political appointees follow. There was a sprinkling of 14 other occupational categories, including some of those whose absence was lamented by the RePublicU group. However, not one governor's occupation was in retail sales, hospitality sector work, nursing, childcare, or union work, and there was only one person who worked as an equipment operator. These findings were largely at odds with the actual percentages of occupational categories in Alberta's labour force (Table 5.1). Skilled trades, manufacturing, and retail sales and services workers were practically non-existent, whereas they account for at least 40% of the provincial workforce.

Since individuals with business and administration occupations accounted for the great majority of appointees for both the NDP and the UCP (71 and 75%, respectively), there appears to be a consensus among Advanced Education ministers that these occupations provide crucial experience and expertise in the governance of post-secondary education institutions.²⁴² These are, indeed, the qualifications that we have seen on occasional public advertisements to fill vacant board positions. The UCP's list in the 2020 statement that we reproduced in Part 2 of this report was: "[competence in] leadership, governance, finance, human resources, legal, risk management and/or strategic planning." Moreover, in Table 5.3 we saw that both parties disproportionately appoint individuals from business backgrounds, although there was a significant difference between the business percentage for the NDP (50) and the UCP (70).

Reasonable people can agree that the governors of a large public institution need to be able to take financial decisions regarding budgets and investments. They need to be able to understand their fiduciary responsibilities to the institution, the government, and the public. They need to become familiar with how the board and its committees function, and how the PSEI operates. It is nevertheless necessary to interrogate the assumption that only corporate executives, corporate lawyers, financial analysts, and investment bankers have the competence to fulfill such responsibilities. It is also important to ask whether financial and legal expertise cover the gamut of knowledge required to govern a large public institution.

Arguably, a deep understanding of what post-secondary education institutions do, and why, in relation to the needs of all sectors of society,

242 The consensus is obviously broader than this, since past practice has been that competencies needed for specific boards are co-determined by the board members and the ministry.

constitutes critical knowledge for the governor of a PSEI. Equally, a commitment to serving the public good, clearly demarcated from various private sector interests, could be considered a fundamental requirement for the governor of a public institution (or the minister of a government department). A PSEI has its own “civil service” to produce data and options for budgets and investment portfolios. It has its own legal counsel and advisors on human resource management, occupational health and safety, facilities and operations, and so on. The role of governors is not, primarily, to replicate this kind of specialized knowledge, but to make policy-level decisions based on principles that are informed by consultation with the institutions’ stakeholders. This is the role performed by representatives of faculty, staff, students, and alumni, and—at least in theory—is the role of board members who represent the public.

“If the individuals elected to govern cities or countries are not required to have financial or legal expertise pertaining to the corporate world, why should the governors of post-secondary institutions be expected to come, predominantly, from these walks of life?”

If the individuals elected to govern cities or countries are not required to have financial or legal expertise pertaining to the corporate world, why should the governors of post-secondary institutions be expected to come, predominantly, from these walks of life? Arguably, there is both a misconception about the role of public representatives and a form of elitism at work in the long-standing pattern of appointments to our public boards. Regarding the latter, it seems to be inconceivable to government officials that a carpenter can think through the challenges facing a university as well as the owner of the construction firm or that a bank teller can reflect on the outcome that best serves the public good as profoundly as the bank’s director of global investments. Research on citizen deliberation shows that “average” citizens can, with educational resources, develop the requisite expertise to make informed judgements about almost any question.²⁴³ And their perspectives and life experiences should inform policy outcomes as much as (if not more than) those of the corporate class.

Elitism, however, does not fully explain the patterns we see in the data on our appointees. That is, the bias toward the selection of individuals from corporate management reflects not only the assumption that these individuals have the necessary knowledge and skills to govern PSEIs, but also assumptions about the functions that these institutions should perform. Over many years, PSEIs around the world have undergone a transformation that we have described as “corporatization,” in which these institutions are seen (and funded) less as providers of public goods (higher education and research) and more as “businesses” that compete for private sector and tuition revenue and conduct research in partnership with the private sector. Senior administrators like provosts and vice-presidents that used to come from (and sometimes rejoin) the professoriate, increasingly come from corporate backgrounds and view the professoriate as employees to be managed.

243 In their book, *Public Participation for 21st Century Democracy*, Tina Nabatchi and Matt Leighninger observe that citizen deliberations on public budgets have taken place in “over 1,500 cities on six continents” (John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2015), p. 309. In their view, “Successful participation efforts demonstrate that all kinds of people are ready for meaningful opportunities to make public decisions and solve public problems” (Ibid., p. 319). See also: Hoene, Kingsley & Leighninger 2013; Leighninger 2006; Lukensmeyer 2013; Pateman 2012.

This managerial approach to university governance is a break with the tradition of “collegial” governance, in which universities were viewed as self-governed institutions, albeit ones that remained accountable to governments and the public. The heavy weighting of PSEI boards of governors with individuals who come from corporate, private sector backgrounds is consistent with this process of corporatization. If PSEIs are to operate as businesses, then people with corporate experience are the best suited to govern them.

This conclusion about what explains the heavy presence on the boards of corporate executives, business owners, and providers of corporate services (corporate and tax law, auditing, accounting, management consulting) derives from our findings not only on the occupational profile of the board appointees but also on their specializations and affiliations, and on the differences we detect between the NDP and UCP appointee groups.

The differences between the NDP appointees’ occupations and those of the UCP appointees (Tables 5.3 and 5.4) suggest that the NDP had initiated an effort to enhance the social diversity of the boards. That effort was bearing fruit in two ways. The first is the appointment of individuals employed in arts, culture, and media occupations, although these comprised only 3.5% of ALL-NDP appointees. More striking is the NDP’s appointment of individuals who were administrators, but who worked in the public, governmental, and non-profit sectors, rather than in the private corporate sector. Twenty-one per cent of the NDP appointees were administrators in the public or non-profit sectors, compared to only 5% for the UCP. Moreover, 31% of all NDP appointees worked in the public or non-profit sectors, compared to only 10.5% for the UCP. Individuals working in Indigenous business corporations or governmental bodies constituted 2.7% of the NDP’s appointments and 1.3% of the UCP’s appointments.

“ Twenty-one per cent of the NDP appointees were administrators in the public or non-profit sectors, compared to only 5% for the UCP.”

Why are these differences significant? Persons who have chosen careers in the public (health, education, social welfare, public administration) or non-profit sectors operate in milieux where public and social service are the organizational goals. Like higher education institutions, they provide public goods. For example, directors of a mental health association or a women’s shelter are close to groups in society that struggle for recognition, rights, and access to services. Their focus is on securing policy and regulatory changes that will advance these struggles. Thus, in many ways, the societal perspectives of these individuals may differ markedly from those of individuals who work in market-driven, profit maximizing organizations. Corporate management and legal expertise may be useful on PSEI boards, but the knowledge and experience of individuals from non-corporate sectors are also important and may be better aligned with the purposes of a public university or college.

Specializations

When we looked at the appointees' primary areas of specialization (knowledge, expertise), we again found that persons with business management expertise constituted the largest group by a longshot, at 32% of all appointments, and this was the case for both the NDP and the UCP groups (Table 5.6). The second most significant specialization for the entire sample ($n=234$) was law, at 14%, and again this was roughly the same for both parties' groups of appointees. However, there were some significant differences between the UCP and NDP groups in terms of the ranking of their areas of expertise. The second-ranked specialization for the NDP appointees was education (16%), whereas for the UCP it was accounting (17%). Finance and actuarial knowledge were represented more strongly in the UCP group (12%) than in the NDP group (5%). STEM and medical fields of knowledge were more highly represented in the UCP group (11%) than in the NDP group (5%). And arts, humanities, and cultural specializations were represented almost solely among the NDP appointees (5%).

It seems appropriate to appoint persons with specialized knowledge of education, STEM fields, applied sciences, social sciences, humanities, and fine arts to the boards of PSEIs, along with persons who have expertise in management, accounting, finance, or law, given that universities produce all these kinds of knowledge and serve many societal interests. Forty-eight per cent of NDP appointees had expertise in areas other than business, law, accounting, finance, investment, and real estate, compared to 23% of the UCP appointees (Table 5.6). Thus, the NDP appointees were twice as "diverse" in these respects as the UCP appointees. However, there is more work to be done to improve the diversity of knowledge represented on PSEI boards, with 68% of their public members still coming from only six business-related specializations (Table 5.6).

Educational Qualifications

The appointees in our study were a relatively educated group, with about 77% of them holding at least one post-secondary degree (Table 5.7). This compares to the 55% of Albertans between the ages of 25 and 64 who held tertiary-level educational qualifications in 2020.²⁴⁴ Considering the weighting of the boards to appointees with business backgrounds and specializations, we were not surprised to find the single largest number of degrees for both NDP and UCP groups was the Master of Business Administration (MBA). However, not far behind was the Master of Arts, coming second for the UCP appointees and third for the NDP group. Moreover, arts degrees (including BA, MA, and Ph.D. degrees in arts) turned out to be the single largest category of educational qualification for both the NDP (21%) and the UCP (28%), well ahead of degrees in business and management (13% and 16%, respectively).

244 Statistics Canada, Table 37-10-0130-01, "Educational attainment of the population aged 25 to 64, by age group and sex, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Canada, provinces and territories," [May 2020 data], Release date March 19, 2021, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.25318/3710013001-eng>. The percentage for Canada as a whole in 2020 was 60.

Finding 20 different types of degrees among the appointees, we aggregated these into five categories. Arts, social work, and education degrees combined accounted for a third of all educational qualifications, followed by business, management, commerce, and accounting degrees. Table 5.8 shows the distribution of educational qualifications by ALL-NDP and ALL-UCP groups.

Given that 77% of the UCP appointees have primary areas of expertise in business, law, accounting, finance, investment, and real estate, we were somewhat surprised that 33% of them had their highest degrees in the arts and education category, compared to 22% in the business category (Table 5.8). Our explanation for this is that many appointees who are currently corporate executives, business owners, managers, and administrators (in the private, public, Indigenous, or non-profit sectors) have degrees in the arts. A smaller number (14%) have law degrees, which was the third largest category of qualification for the UCP appointees, and 11% have engineering or science degrees.

What do our findings about the backgrounds (education, occupations, specializations) and affiliations (corporate, non-corporate, and political) of the individuals who have been appointed by the UCP government to the boards of governors of the PSEIs say about this government's priorities and vision for the post-secondary education sector?

In the second part of this report, we reviewed the information publicly available to us about the “qualification matrices” used by the NDP and UCP governments to select board appointees. Insight into the UCP's priorities for PSEI appointments was provided by Minister Nicolaides' statement that “competency, connection to industry and experience managing large organizations were the criteria used in choosing appointees,” and that “no partisanship [was] involved in the process.”

In the preceding discussion of our findings related to occupation, specialization, and educational qualifications, we noted the heavy bias of the UCP government, in particular, in favour of candidates coming from business backgrounds and from the private sector, and having expertise in business management, finance, investment, accounting, and corporate law. In this section of the conclusions, we turn our focus to the corporate and non-corporate affiliations of the appointees, to again assess the patterns that we found and any significant differences between the NDP and UCP appointee groups. Minister Nicolaides' statement presented “connection to industry”

as one of two key criteria for the selection of public board members. What connections, then, do we see, between his ministry's appointees and various industries? We approached these questions both through the tabular analysis of our data on appointee affiliations, and through the mapping analysis that is presented in Part 9 of the report.

Corporate Affiliations

The data on corporate affiliations confirm, once again, the patterns that Albertans have observed anecdotally over the years. For the entire sample of appointments (n=234), the single largest group of affiliations is with oil and gas corporations (112), far out-stripping the number of affiliations in the second largest group, consulting firms (46) (Table 6.1). Coming third is the auditing and accounting firms. These findings concur with those for occupations and specializations, where we found that business backgrounds and expertise in management, finance, investment, auditing, accounting, and corporate law were disproportionately represented on the boards.

“The new UCP government may have been sending a strong, ‘disciplining’ message to the PSEIs about their expected relationship to the fossil fuel industry.”

There are, however, significant differences between NDP and UCP appointees' corporate affiliations. The group of NDP-appointed board members whose positions were rescinded by the UCP government in 2019 (n=45) had, in total, only four affiliations (0.09 per person) to oil and gas companies (Table 6.1). The ALL-UCP1 group of 60 that replaced them, on the other hand, had 61 such affiliations (1.02 per person). As suggested in Part 8 of the report, through its selection of the “replacement” appointees, the new UCP government may have been sending a strong, “disciplining” message to the PSEIs about their expected relationship to the fossil fuel industry, in the wake of stirrings of campus fossil fuel divestment movements and the awarding of the honorary doctorate to Dr. David Suzuki by the University of Alberta. Among the 113 NDP appointees in our study, there were 19 affiliations to the oil and gas companies (0.17 per person), compared to 99 such affiliations for the UCP's 153 appointees (0.65 per person). At least 42 of the UCP appointees to the PSEI boards (nearly 28%) have important links to the oil and gas sector. That number increases if we include appointees from the corporate services and construction firms that rely on the oil and gas sector for contracts, or the banks and investment firms that finance and/or own shares in oil and gas companies.²⁴⁵ We noted in Part 8 of the report that eight of the 21 PSEI board chairs, as of March 2021, have held executive and/or director positions in oil and gas corporations (Table 8.2).

Among the ALL-UCP1 group (n=60) there were significantly more affiliations to auditing and accounting (15), construction (14), and investment firms (12) compared to the NDP-R group, for which the numbers were zero, zero, and one, respectively. For commercial arts, recreation, and sports affiliations, on the other hand, the NDP-R group had 22 affiliations,

²⁴⁵ The Corporate Mapping research group has been documenting and illustrating the linkages among financial institutions and the fossil fuel industry for the past six years. For some of this work, see: https://www.corporatemapping.ca/category/resources/reports_and_studies/.

compared to zero for the All-UCP1 group. The number of corporate affiliations per appointee were 1.6 and 2.9 for the NDP-R and ALL- UCP1 groups, respectively. Table 6.1 shows, then, that in terms of corporate affiliations, these two groups are markedly different.

A comparison of the larger groups—ALL-NDP (113) and All-UCP (153)—also shows significant differences in their corporate affiliations. To start with, the NDP appointees had 1.4 corporate affiliations per person, whereas the UCP appointees had 2.1 (Table 6.1). When we aggregated corporate affiliations into a smaller number of economic sectors, we found that nearly a third (31%) of the UCP appointee’s affiliations were to one sector alone: oil and gas (Table 6.3). For the NDP appointees, this figure was 12%. But for both groups, affiliations with corporate services (combining law, accounting, auditing, and consulting firms) were in first place: 34% for the NDP and 32% for the UCP, marginally ahead of oil and gas. Many of these firms are Alberta-based, although some are national or international (Deloitte, Ernst & Young, KPMG, MNP, McKinsey & Co., PricewaterhouseCoopers). Firms in this sector are closely integrated with the oil and gas sector in Alberta, as well as with the Alberta government. Connections to construction and property development companies were much more frequent for the UCP than the NDP appointees, while banking, finance, insurance, and investment firms were significant for both groups. Apart from the gap between the two groups concerning oil and gas connections, the other stand-out difference concerned the cultural sector. Here, 21% of the NDP appointees’ affiliations were to companies in commercial arts, culture, or media, while for the UCP this sector accounted for only 1.5% of affiliations. Lastly, almost all the affiliations to Indigenous corporations were held by NDP appointees.

Non-Corporate Civil Society Affiliations

Our search for non-corporate civil society (NCCS) affiliations covered a large gamut of organization types, initially 19, later aggregated into 13 categories (Table 7.1. See also Appendix 2.) Several differences between NDP and UCP appointees stood out here.

First, the NDP appointees have considerably more NCCS affiliations than their UCP counterparts: 2 compared to 1.4 per appointee, respectively. This is, essentially, the inverse of the finding for corporate affiliations, where the UCP appointees dominated.

Second, this pattern was mostly explained by the large number of affiliations of NDP appointees to the category we called “other civil society” organizations. This category includes charitable organizations (e.g., United Way, foundations), non-profit social services (e.g., YWCA, Canadian Mental Health Association, women’s shelters), other non-profit organizations

(e.g., Alberta Ballet, local theatres, Calgary Stampede Society, Alberta Blue Cross, credit unions), professional associations (e.g., Association of Professional Engineers and Geologists of Alberta, Chartered Professional Accountants, Professional Librarians), and religious service organizations (e.g., Catholic Social Services, United Church Pastoral Care). The “other civil society” category is differentiated from civil society organizations that are connected to businesses (business councils, chambers of commerce, industry associations, business lobby groups, that is, the category labelled BRI in the network analysis), to governments, or to public institutions (like universities, public school boards, libraries, health centres, or other social services provided within the public sector). *For “other civil society,” NDP appointees held 75% of all the affiliations (Table 7.1).*

Third, a lot of NCCS affiliations were lost to the boards when the NDP-R group was removed from their positions, since they held, on average, 3.4 such affiliations per appointee. The group that replaced them, on the other hand, ALL-UCP1, held only 1.4 per person (and 37% of their NCCS affiliations were to business-related interest groups, whereas such affiliations were negligible for the NDP-R group). NDP appointees, overall, were well connected to post-secondary education institutions in various capacities (e.g., employment and board service; they held 60% of such affiliations).

“Thirty-one per cent of the NDP appointees worked in the non-profit or public sectors, compared to 10.5% of the UCP appointees.”

These findings concur with the differences we identified earlier concerning the occupations and specializations of NDP and UCP appointees. The NDP appointees were more heavily oriented toward public administration and arts-related occupations than the UCP appointees, who were more oriented toward business occupations than the NDP appointees. *Thirty-one per cent of the NDP appointees worked in the non-profit or public sectors, compared to 10.5% of the UCP appointees.*

We further found that *UCP appointees had more affiliations to government (government corporations, agencies, civil service positions) than the NDP appointees*, with these accounting for 22% of the UCP group’s NCCS affiliations--the largest single category (Table 7.2). We offered the explanation that this reflects the continuity of personnel from the PCP to the UCP governments and parties. That is, the PCP occupied state institutions for 44 years before 2015, giving the UCP many connections to former holders of civil service or public agency positions. Many of their appointees no longer worked in government but had moved to the private sector. The NDP, on the other hand, lacked such connections in the civil service and public corporations and agencies. Likewise, *UCP appointees have many more affiliations to BRI organizations (business councils and associations, industry associations, industry lobby groups) than the NDP appointees* (with some notable exceptions, like Dave Collyer and Janet Annesley). *Workers’ organizations, on the contrary, are strikingly absent from NCCS affiliations.*

There was only one such affiliation in the entire sample. This speaks, yet again, to the absence of representation on our PSEI boards of large sectors of society whose needs and aspirations these institutions are supposed to serve.

The tabular presentation of these affiliations shows weightings and rankings but does not capture *the interconnections that exist among appointees* who share affiliations to corporate or non-corporate entities. Network analysis, on the other hand, enables us to visualize what is, in fact, a web of relationships among appointees to the boards. The importance of the affiliations to chambers of commerce, business councils, and so on, in constructing a *network* among the public members is suggested by our numbers (e.g., 20 appointees sitting on 10 PSEI boards are part of a BRI network), but the diagrams in Part 9 of the report really make such networks visible.

Network Analysis of Board Members

The network maps in Part 9 illustrate the heavy corporate representation on Albertan PSEI boards, with the oil and gas (O&G) sector being the most strongly represented. The corporate services sector (law, accounting, auditing, and consulting) is also prominent. Corporate interests are and have been dominant, too, among the other civil society organizations (NCCS entities) represented on PSEI boards--in the form of business councils, chambers of commerce, think-tanks, and industry associations (the BRI category). Among the many organizations that have interlocked with Albertan PSEIs, a relatively few corporations and NCCS entities have contributed a disproportionate share of ties.

Analysis of *current* interlocking, including interlocks among the neighbours of the PSEIs, shows the same pattern.²⁴⁶ Five universities based in Alberta's two metropolises are at the core of this network: UAlberta, MRU, UCalgary, NAIT, and SAIT. The interlocking directorates surrounding and converging on these institutions account for more than half of all current interlocks in the entire elite network. Among those five, the Calgary-based PSEIs are especially well integrated, as their governance boards overlap and interlock with many corporations and business-related NCCS entities. Edmonton-based University of Alberta is also at the network's core, but somewhat less integrated with corporate interests, with more state representation in its governance. The five PSEIs at the core of the network of current ties have very scant representation from civil society interests outside of the corporate sector, but this is also true of other PSEI boards. Only 42 of the 332 interlocks link the PSEIs to civil-society groups outside the corporate and state sectors.

²⁴⁶ Neighbours to PSEIs are organizations which have shared at least one director with an Albertan PSEI.

“The Calgary-based PSEIs are particularly ensconced in Alberta’s well-integrated business community, which means that their neighbourhoods are themselves densely networked, creating a ‘small world’ that is more integrated than that surrounding the UAlberta governance board.”

This pattern of heavy corporate representation and very light representation from the rest of society is further confirmed as we examine the composition of the neighbourhoods (or social circles) of each PSEI, that is, the organizations with which each PSEI currently interlocks. The Calgary-based PSEIs are particularly ensconced in Alberta’s well-integrated business community, which means that their neighbourhoods are themselves densely networked, creating a “small world” that is more integrated than that surrounding the UAlberta governance board.

PSEIs vary substantially as to which sectors are represented on their governance boards. UAlberta, for instance, has few ties to the financial sector but numerous interlocks with quasi-governmental bodies. UCalgary has more ties to the financial and O&G sectors.

When we drill down to the level of people—focusing on 14 “key networkers” whose many affiliations generate the interlocking relationships across the organizations—we find a small world that is centred upon the key PSEIs we identified earlier. Certain corporations and NCCS entities are particularly integral to this configuration, including ALTALINK, CAPP, and the Business Council of Canada, with which multiple governors of Calgary-based PSEIs are affiliated, adding further integration to the small world of PSEI governance in Calgary.

Political Partisanship

Studying the lists of contributors to political parties, candidates, and third party advertisers is crucial to truly understand the network of corporate, political party, and other civil society relationships that shapes who gets elected, how public revenue is spent, and what policies prevail in Alberta. Connections between donors and government appointments, contracts, various awards and honours, and much else soon become apparent. One begins to perceive a web of individuals (and the organizations to which they belong, where they studied, or to which they donate) as constituting an elite socio-political network. Other significant webs appear at the grassroots level, where we see, in the lists of small contributors, what commonalities knit together the core electorate of a party. However, describing the entire rhizomatic network of Alberta politics is a task far beyond the scope of this report.

The web of connections among individuals, corporations, other civil society organizations, and political parties is much denser and larger than you will see in our analysis. That is because we report only the political contributions of the organizations to which our PSEI appointees are affiliated or those of the individuals themselves. Nevertheless, our research into the political contributions to parties, third party advertisers, and candidate campaigns,

as well as other political affiliations on the part of PSEI governors reveals marked political orientations.

Individuals' donations to political parties are generally interpreted as indicators of the contributors' support for the party and what it stands for (at least, relative to the alternatives, given that ours is a first-past-the-post electoral system). Reviewing the contributors' lists to the Progressive Conservative Party (PCP) prior to 2015, however, one soon grasps the nature of Alberta's one-party-dominant political party system up until that point. That is, there is hardly a business in Alberta that did not make a donation to the PCP on a regular basis. In particular, any business owner seeking government contracts or hoping to influence a regulation, tax policy, or government investment decision will be found on the list. Not only that: publicly funded institutions like universities and colleges, public corporations like EPCOR, and professional associations routinely donated to the PCP. Thus, political contributions in the pre-2015 era do not necessarily indicate strong ideological support for any PCP policy or party leader, nor do they signify that all members of the contributing organizations consent to or approve the donation. By the same token, neither do they indicate strong opposition.

It is arguable that the appearance on the political scene of the Wildrose Alliance Party (WAP) in 2008 provides a new test of political contributors' ideological orientation. Because the WAP was perceived as being an even more pro-oil-and-gas, anti-tax, populist, socially conservative (yet libertarian) party than the PCP, and as it was a riskier electoral bet than the PCP, donations to this party indicate a commitment to a policy agenda. This is not to say that the PCP did not have an ideological agenda, only that it was perceived as a permanently governing party. Thus, any organization or individual seeking to influence government decisions needed to join the party or be seen to be supporting it. It is also important to consider that some business owners and individuals routinely donate to whichever government is in office so as to position themselves to benefit from contracts or appointments or hold on to the ones they have. Typically, however, they do not go as far as supporting parties that they perceive to be threats to their core interests. Keeping all these caveats in mind, the patterns we see in the data we collected on corporate and individual contributions are very clear.

Contributions to Third Party Advertisers

Twelve of our appointees—all appointed by the UCP—were associated with eight organizations (seven corporations and the Alberta Chambers of Commerce (ACC)) that contributed to (or, in the case of the ACC, registered as) a TPA between 2014 and 2019 (Table 8.1). The five TPAs to which they contributed were all on the right of the political spectrum. Four of the five

were formed to support either the Wildrose or the UCP, and all sought to unseat the NDP government that had been elected in 2015. The list of donors to the Alberta Proud TPA (which backed Jason Kenney and the UCP) included not only well-known oil and gas sector and construction industry CEOs, but also executives from the corporate services and oil & gas services sectors who were prominent critics of the awarding of the honorary doctorate to David Suzuki by the University of Alberta in 2018. Jason Kenney appealed to these supporters in 2018, characterizing the UAlberta as having been “politicized by leftists” and calling on the NDP government to condemn the award.

Corporate and Business Association Contributions to Political Parties

The PSEI appointees in our sample have held senior positions in at least 55 corporate entities that have donated to conservative parties.²⁴⁷ We provide details for two sets of corporate contributors: one set of 20 entities whose contributions were tracked between 2004 and 2015 (10 years), and another set of 35 entities whose contributions were tracked from 2012-2015 (four years).

In the first set, shown in Table 8.3, 26 appointees are affiliated with 20 corporate entities that contributed to Alberta political parties between 2004 and 2015. These entities’ contributions went overwhelmingly to the PCP, although some contributed to the Wildrose Party (WP) or the Liberal Party. None contributed to the NDP. The second, larger set of corporate donors, shown in Tables 8.4 and 8.5, also heavily favoured the PCP, while sustaining an effective competitor on the right. The top five contributors to the WP (in this sample) were: Cenovus Energy (\$47,171), Encana (\$39,800), TransCanada Pipelines/TC Energy (\$24,135), the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers (\$21,000), and Suncor Energy (\$17,730).²⁴⁸ In the 2012-2015 period, corporate contributions to the Liberals from these entities amounted to only 19% of the amount donated to the Wildrose Party. And again, none of them donated to the NDP. While the lines may have been somewhat blurred on the right of the political spectrum, they were clearly drawn—at least for these corporate entities and their executives—between the right and the left.

247 Because some of the affiliations to banks and other financial institutions dated to periods when the individual in question was a non-managerial employee, we did not add those institutions to our list of contributors. It is worth noting, however, that almost all of the banks (especially their investment branches) and a number of credit unions donated to the PCP.

248 MEG Energy contributed \$25,350 to the WRP between 2004-2015 but does not appear in Table 8.3 because the affiliated board members did not hold senior management positions with this company.

In light of the allegiance of these 55 entities to parties on the right, it is significant that 58 former or current members of their executive or senior management teams or boards of directors now sit on the boards of governors of 18/21 PSEIs (Table 8.7). There are significant clusters of these appointees on four boards: Keyano College, Mount Royal University, NAIT, and University of Alberta. Each of these boards has included five or more public governors since April 2019 who are linked to corporate donors

“In light of the allegiance of these 55 entities to parties on the right, it is significant that 58 former or current members of their executive or senior management teams or boards of directors now sit on the boards of governors of 18/21 PSEIs.”

to conservative parties. As the analysis in Part 9 shows, these individuals constitute a network within a broader business class that is engaged in developing political strategies to achieve sectoral and class interests. Those interests include the teaching and research priorities for PSEIs and the roles of public versus market-driven education and research within our society.

Individual Political Contributions and Party Membership

The group of NDP appointees whose positions were rescinded in 2019 (n=45) likely included most of the PSEI boards' NDP partisans (18 out of the 45 made political contributions to the NDP between 2017 and 2020). The larger group of NDP appointees included in our study (n=113) were not, overall, a particularly partisan lot, judging by their political contributions to that party between 2017 and 2020. Only 14% of the 113 had contributed solely to the NDP. In contrast, 37% of the UCP appointees by March 31, 2021 (n=121)²⁴⁹ had contributed solely to one or more of the PCP, UCP, and Wildrose parties (merged, since 2017, in the UCP). *Thus, the UCP appointees appear to be considerably more partisan than the NDP's.*

Moreover, when we combined: (a) the appointees who were affiliated (at a senior management level) with an organization that made political contributions to conservative parties (in the pre-2015 period) or to third party advertisers; (b) appointees who had made personal contributions to the same parties or TPAs, and; (c) appointees who had worked for or stood as candidates for conservative parties, we arrived at a total of 104. Subtracting the 10 who had originally been appointed by the NDP, we found that 94 (61%) of the UCP's 153 appointments between August 2019 and March 2021 were of individuals who had at least one affiliation to a conservative party (Table 8.7).²⁵⁰ By the measures used in Part 8 of the report, then, the UCP's board selection criteria could not be described as non-partisan.

How has the existing framework governing state-university relations and the internal governance of PSEIs served to advance the project of the neoliberal corporatization of post-secondary education that was described in Parts 2 and 3 of the report? How could this framework be reformed in ways that would give the PSEIs greater financial stability and autonomy and democratize their internal governance?

249 This number does not include the "Common" group of appointees who were appointed by the NDP and later reappointed by the UCP government (n=32).

250 Ten of the appointments made by the NDP government and permitted to continue by the UCP (n=32) will expire in the first half of 2022. Nine expired between September and December 2021. Thirteen had expired as of August 2021.

Defunding, Corporatization

The post-secondary education system in Alberta, like its counterparts around the world, has been undergoing a decades-long transformation that has been widely documented and analyzed by many scholars. Traditions of collegial governance have been subordinated, over time, to hierarchical managerialism, giving these institutions an increasingly “corporate” system of governance. This has entailed the shifting of resources to administrative positions and away from the hiring of continuing faculty. Corporatization is in large part driven by governments’ adoption of neoliberal economic and management doctrines and their imposition of these on the public sector (Shore and McLauchlan 2012).

Neoliberal governments perceive education not as a universal public good—an entitlement of all citizens—as much as a potentially commodifiable set of services. In this view, the value of the service is assessed by the market share it can command at a competitive price, rather than by its social benefits and non-monetary values. As Shore and McLauchlan put it, “The value of teaching and research is increasingly evaluated in terms of the financial indicators and the rationality of commerce.”²⁵¹ Academics and universities are urged to become more “entrepreneurial.” The preference of neoliberals is to shrink the public sector as much as is politically possible and to let market actors move in to provide services like health care and education privately. The more unhappy citizens are with the quality of public goods, the more likely they are to turn to private ones (if they have the means).

If governments viewed higher education as a *universal* public good, it would be publicly funded at a level that met the demand for it—like high school and elementary education (which are also subject to privatization pressures).²⁵² Everyone who had the educational qualifications would be able to enroll in the programs of their choice without having to pay individual fees. If the *quality* of the public service were a principal concern, governments would fund PSEIs at a level that permitted them to hire full-time, highly qualified academics and researchers to teach students in the best possible learning conditions. Class sizes would be determined accordingly, by the teachers; the number of sections offered would depend on the demand for the subject. Instead, what were once several ranks of professors have been further stratified in multiple ways, to the point that half of undergraduate teaching is now routinely done by academics on short-term contracts who are paid less than “tenured” professors despite their typically high qualifications.²⁵³

Relationships involving care, communication, and education are impoverished when they are commodified. It can be done, of course (billable doctor’s services, online courses, different “levels” of service). Corporations are always searching for ways to turn such relationships into profitable, commodifiable bits.²⁵⁴ But to transform a public good into commodified

251 Shore and McLauchlan 2012.

252 Marc Bousquet (2008) makes the case that it is only through the casualization of academic labour that universities in the USA have been able to accommodate growing enrolments.

253 This is a good example of how a teaching relationship between professor and student is transformed into a discrete commodity—in this case, a course that is “delivered” by a teacher who may not be available outside of the classroom or beyond the end of the term. The instructor, moreover, remains outside of the community of scholars who constitute the school and its programmes of research, and has only the status of contracted labour.

254 There is an unsurpassed account of how health care and public broadcasting have been undermined as public goods and the steps in their commodification, in Colin Leys 2003.

services, its providers must first be de-professionalized and more highly stratified; their “public service” ethos needs to be transformed (hence the new performance metrics); their self-governing systems need to be replaced by executive management.

Our universities—which were never fully public—are roughly at mid-point in the privatization process. A fully public university would, like the K-12 education system, be available without tuition fees to all citizens who met the academic requirements for admission. This is not a radical idea outside of North America, although tuition-free higher education has been under siege everywhere in recent decades. Indeed, it was not a radical idea in Canada before the 1990s. Sociologist Michelle Maroto reconstructed educational funding data in a 2015 paper, demonstrating that tuition fees accounted for only 10% of university revenue in Canada and in Alberta in 1989.²⁵⁵ As the federal government reduced its social transfers to the provinces, and the latter were freed up to spend them on programs other than PSE, provincial grants to universities declined. By 2002, tuition fees made up 28% of universities’ revenues, and that figure remained about the same (at 29.4%) in 2018/19.²⁵⁶ Provincial funding in Alberta covered in the range of 47 to 50% of PSEI budgets when the UCP was elected, and this government has succeeded in reducing the Campus Alberta Grant by a further 20%. The difference has been made up largely by increases in tuition and other fees charged to students. When are institutions of higher education no longer “public”?

During the tenure of the NDP government from May 2015 to April 2019, the post-secondary education sector in Alberta was in a kind of stasis. In real terms, its funding was shrinking, but the government avoided outright budget cuts to the public sector, instead turning to increased borrowing to weather what it hoped would be a temporary recession linked to low global oil prices. Apart from minor adjustments to corporate and personal income tax rates and the implementation of a carbon tax, the NDP government did not undertake reforms to the fiscal regime, along with a public investment program, that would have made possible a more stable and generous basis for the funding of public goods.²⁵⁷

Alberta’s public sector needs a funding model that is sustainable in the absence of oil and gas royalty revenue, as this is the reality we now face. With such a funding model, and with a governmental commitment to protecting the availability of high-quality public goods, the problem of the academic precariat could be tackled. Limits could be placed on the number of contract academics that PSEIs are permitted to employ, as a percentage of their total academic workforce.²⁵⁸ Targets for the sector could include reducing the student to professor ratio to match the norm at leading global universities, moving toward the elimination of tuition fees and student debt,

255 Maroto 2015, 2.

256 Statistics Canada, <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/en/daily-quotidien/201008/dq201008b-eng.pdf?st=3hrSSI-m>.

257 The argument that alternatives existed (and still exist) to the strategy adopted by the NDP government will doubtless be rejected by many members and supporters of that government and will certainly be dismissed by neoliberal economists. Nevertheless, arguments for increased wealth taxes and corporate taxes, increased royalty rates, the elimination of subsidies to the fossil fuel industries, the use of public banks or other forms of public finance to expand public investment, public ownership of new energy sectors, cooperation with the federal government to secure green transition funds, and other elements of a “green new deal” (for Alberta and Canada) have been made by many academics, research institutes, and NGOs.

258 This is one of the proposals made by Carolyn Sale, in her notes for an open letter to the Minister of Advanced Education, November 2015 (draft here: <https://artssquared.wordpress.com/2015/11/11/notes-on-rewriting-the-post-secondary-learning-act-draft-clauses-for-open-letter-to-minister-of-advanced-education/>). Sale is the former president of AASUA, and an elected member of the General Faculty Council at the University of Alberta.

and reducing rates of sick leave among staff. In other words, it is entirely possible to reverse the trends we are seeing in the higher education sector if governments are willing to trade in their “competition” mindset for one that values education as a public good and prioritizes the well-being of both PSEI employees and students. One action a future government could take would be to write a preamble for the PSLA that strongly affirms that higher education and research are public goods, mandated to serve the public interest.

The UCP government that replaced the NDP in April 2019 introduced a revanchist 1990s program of debt elimination through the reduction of the public sector and shrinking public administration, as well as trickle-down economics in the form of lowering corporate taxes and clawing back workers’ rights, all while continuing the Albertan state’s massive subsidies to the oil and gas industry, eliminating the NDP’s carbon tax, and virulently opposing any kind of cooperation with the federal government that could advance post-carbon transition. Since the second part of this report outlines the UCP’s strategy for the PSE sector, and its consequences are detailed in the case studies, we will not revisit that ground here. Nor will we broach the questions of labour relations that were the subject of the NDP’s 2015 consultation on reforms to the *Post-Secondary Learning Act*.²⁵⁹ In these conclusions, we want to focus on the ways in which the existing governance institutions for the post-secondary sector have enabled the corporatization of post-secondary education, and how these institutions might be reformed so as to support their public mandate.

This discussion cannot, of course, address every aspect of what has been transpiring at all the PSEIs in the province—or even at one of them. The budget model at the University of Alberta, for example, was transformed between 2015 and 2020 in response to continuing budget cuts.²⁶⁰ The lack of meaningful consultation with faculty about the budgeting process which allocates resources internally has yet to be studied, but is an example of the *de facto* exclusion of faculty from important decision-making about how their institutions are run.

PSEI boards across the province have their own bylaws, and the institutions themselves have different governance structures. One model is unlikely to be optimal for all contexts. In the specific examples below, we speak mainly to the rules governing the comprehensive academic and research universities. The problem of faculty, staff, and student exclusion from high-level decision-making, however, concerns the entire sector.

259 On this subject, the brief submitted to the Ministry of Advanced Education in November 2015 by the Confederation of Alberta Faculty Associations is informative. See the text, archived by RePublicU, here: <https://sites.google.com/a/ualberta.ca/research-2-reclaim/homeupdates-announcements/cafassubmissiontothepsllaconsultationroundtableofnovember192015finallymadepubliccafassubmissiontothepsllaconsultationroundtableofnovember192015finallymadepublic>

260 This model was initially referred to as “Responsibility Centred Management.” See CAUT (2015)

“Ambition to Disrupt”: Democratizing University Governance²⁶¹

[L]arge, diverse numbers of people have the capacity and appetite for genuinely democratic experiences.

Nabatchi and Leighninger 2015, 319

Our findings confirmed that PSEI boards are disproportionately weighted toward members of the corporate class. We argued that these outcomes reflect the long process of corporatization to which the sector has been subjected, and that the worldviews and networks of these individuals serve to advance the same process. Universities, however, are not business corporations; nor are they, principally, research and training centres for the private sector. Their governance bodies must represent a broad spectrum of social interests and perspectives about the roles of PSEIs, subject to a strong public interest mandate. As mentioned previously in this report, academics at the University of Alberta have called for social diversity, as well as gender parity and the equitable representation of racialized minorities and Indigenous communities on the board of governors.

A Public Agencies Governance Framework²⁶² was adopted by the Stelmach government in 2008, along with guides such as *Alberta’s Public Agencies, Boards and Commissions Centralized Recruitment Process* (June 2020). However, neither the framework nor the many guides found on the website of the Public Agency Secretariat have been effective in preventing the lack of social diversity and conflicts of interest that our research found on the boards of Alberta’s PSEIs. The *Alberta Public Agencies Governance Act* (APAGA), which came into force in 2013, states only that an appointee must be selected based on “the extent to which the person possesses the identified skills, knowledge, experience or attributions,” and that the recruitment process must be made public “either before or after the member is appointed” (Section 13).²⁶³ There is no mention of diversity requirements. According to the Auditor General, the *policy* of the government as of *August 2019* on selection criteria was:

Government of Alberta will use transparent, non-partisan and competency-based processes for the recruitment and appointment of directors to public agencies. Within this competency-based approach, effort will be made to encourage diversity among the individuals who submit their names for consideration to ensure the boards of Alberta’s public agencies represent the diversity of Alberta’s population.²⁶⁴

261 This is a reference to the accusation described in Note 143.

262 The principles of this framework are described in the Alberta Auditor General’s report, *Public Agency Board Member Recruitment and Selection*, August 29, 2019, p. 8.

263 The *Alberta Public Agencies Governance Act* may be found here: https://www.qp.alberta.ca/1266.cfm?page=a31p5.cfm&leg_type=Acts&isbncln=9780779819980&display=html.

264 Excerpt quoted in Alberta Auditor General, *Public Agency Board Member Recruitment and Selection*, August 29, 2019, p. 3.

However, the URL provided in the Auditor General's report for this statement links to a page where, in August 2021, the statement could not be found. And this is the problem with policy "frameworks" and "guides" in lieu of regulations attached to statutes. The meaning of "social diversity" requires more careful definition, and consultation will be required to arrive at a definition that is acceptable to faculty, staff, and students, as well as the general public, Métis Settlements, and First Nations in Treaty areas 6, 7, and 8. Once achieved, this definition should be incorporated into the APAGA, ensuring its applicability to the PSEIs.

Conflict of interest is not addressed in the APAGA; however, the *Conflicts of Interest Act* (COIA)²⁶⁵ applies to public agencies that are subject to APAGA. In Part 4.3 of the COIA, which applies to senior officials, members, and employees of public agencies, we find three categories of conflict of interest: a) using one's position for self-enrichment, b) accepting gifts, and c) concurrently holding another position which might constitute a conflict of interest (or appear to do so) with the person's involvement in the public agency appointment. Each public agency is required to prepare its own code of conduct that requires its members to "conduct themselves impartially in carrying out their duties," disclose any real or apparent conflicts of interest, and avoid the kinds of conflict listed above. They must submit these documents to the Ethics Commissioner for approval and, when approved, make the code available to the public.

While the first two forms of conflict of interest listed above are closer to what we might call "corruption," the third one is closer to the kind of conflict that concerns university academics in regard to their boards of governors.²⁶⁶ Our report described instances in which PSEI boards include representatives of corporations that are also corporate *donors* to the institutions (and that may receive contracts from the institutions).

The signatories to the November 2015 open letter to the new NDP government calling for a reform of the criteria and process for appointing public members of the PSEI boards identified the commitments that must, in their view, be held by appointees to the board of a public university, and argued that individuals connected to large private donors to the universities should not be appointed to PSEI boards. They wrote:

The close connections between governance appointees (presidents, chancellors, boards of governors) and private-sector interests (particularly, in Alberta, connections to energy or construction corporations) have generated conflicts with academic freedom and integrity. When an appointee to university administration or a university board is the legal counsel, executive officer or a member of the board of directors of a firm that funds research chairs, capital projects or other

265 The *Conflicts of Interest Act* may be found here: <https://www.qp.alberta.ca/documents/Acts/C23.pdf>.

266 Likewise, in the Code of Conduct adopted by the board of governors of the University of Alberta, July 2019, it is the "financial interest" category of conflict that is closest to what we are getting at here. This is defined as: "A situation in which there is or may be perceived to be a divergence between the . . . financial interest or personal benefit of a Board member, family member, or an outside party, and that Board Member's obligations to the University, such that an impartial observer might reasonably question whether related actions to be taken or decisions made by the Board Member would be influenced by consideration of the Board Member's own interests." This definition is open to different interpretations and has not led to the affiliations of various external board members, e.g., one whose legal firm is contracted by the university, or others with property development corporations, being interpreted as conflicts with their roles as policy-makers on the board or appointments to the Properties Trust.

endowments, he or she may exercise inappropriate influence over academic (and budgetary) decisions taken within the university.²⁶⁷

“ This is a question of the board members’ ability to respect the public interest mandate of public university, notwithstanding their allegiances to private sector interests—and of their ability to differentiate between the two.”

The concern here is with a broad conflict between the interests of a corporation, an economic sector, or the business class as a whole, on the one hand, and the interests of the public as served by the university, on the other hand. What is at stake might not be immediately measurable in monetary terms, or take the form of direct benefit to an individual. Instead, board members from corporate groups might take decisions with the aim of protecting the reputation or “social licence” of a company or an industry association. The conflict might pertain to the member’s view of what is required to attract investment to the industrial sector or to the marketability of a firm’s or a sector’s commodities.

For example, many would consider it to be a conflict of interest to appoint to the board of a PSEI the president of an industry association that invests heavily in opposing campaigns for university divestment from fossil fuel corporations. Such appointments prejudice the boards against taking the actions that may be demanded of them by their own students, faculty, and staff, and that are supported by an overwhelming scientific consensus that Earth is experiencing a climate breakdown that is largely due to the burning of fossil fuels. Yet, that is precisely what the UCP government has done in appointing 42 individuals with close links to fossil fuel corporations to the boards of Alberta’s PSEIs. Regarding the fiduciary responsibility to minimize investment risks for the institution’s pension and endowment funds, too, many would argue that what is in the interest of the university conflicts with what is in the interests of the fossil fuel industry and its financiers. This is a question of the board members’ ability to respect the public interest mandate of public university, notwithstanding their allegiances to private sector interests—and of their ability to differentiate between the two.

Is this just “politics as usual,” with different interests playing out on the boards? Under the current terms of the *PSLA*, governments are not required to ensure that “different interests” will, in fact, be represented on the boards. The NDP government demonstrated a commitment to the representation of non-business interests on the boards (although these remained under-represented), but the PCP and UCP governments had no such commitment, and it is evident from our findings that the diversity criteria set out in existing policy guides leave too much room for governments to privilege particular sectors or interests when making board appointments.

The divestment example is intended to show that how the boards are constituted is a matter of great consequence for those governed. Their constitution in Alberta helps us to understand, moreover, why our PSEIs

267 Adkin et al., November 23, 2015, op. cit.

tend to be allied with the fossil fuel industry and resistant to calls to recognize the climate emergency. Beyond the divestment issue, many other such conflicts arise between the public interest mandate of the universities and the private interests that may dominate the boards of governors. This is not an argument that business interests should never have seats on PSEI boards, but rather, an argument that *the selection criteria should prevent one sector of society from constituting a majority voting bloc on a virtually permanent basis*. When this happens, we move beyond the realm of occasional conflicts of interest, and into that of university capture by private interests.²⁶⁸

This is not an easy argument to make in a province where the political culture has deeply internalized the normalcy of state institutions that make no distinction between private and public interests—and, particularly, between those of the oil and gas industry and its allied industries (construction, finance, corporate services), on the one hand, and those of Alberta's citizens, on the other hand. The CEO of an investment management firm that specializes in the oil and gas sector, appointed to a university board of governors, is likely to argue not that divestment from fossil fuels is a bad move for the oil and gas industry, but that it would be a betrayal of “the people of Alberta,” or of “the city of Calgary,” or of oil and gas sector workers. Likewise, an advanced education and innovation policy that fires scientists in the government's agricultural and forestry departments, defunds research universities, and promotes industry-university partnerships in selected areas will not be presented to farmers and ranchers (or to the general public) as a pro-agribusiness policy that essentially subsidizes private interests with public revenue. It will be presented as “support for innovation to help Alberta's agricultural sector thrive.” What we are doing, in highlighting conflict of interest on the PSEI boards, is the work of bringing back into view the boundary between public and private interests and the importance of clearly delineating this boundary in our governance institutions.

One means of addressing this problem may be the revision of the definition of conflict of interest found in the *COIA*. This would then require revisions to the codes of conduct of the public agencies, as well as to the selection process for board appointments. Another means is to institutionalize selection criteria for board appointments that prevent one societal group from routinely holding dominant positions on the boards. These, and other options to make “social diversity” a reality that alters the dynamics of governance, need to be carefully considered by a future government in consultation with university constituencies and the general public.

The NDP, if re-elected in 2023, should not miss the opportunity to ensure that appointments to the boards of public agencies, corporations, and commissions respect the democratic criteria of social diversity, gender

268 This article by Benjamin Franta and Geoffrey Supran shows us what this can look like, using examples of higher education institutions in the United States. See “The fossil fuel industry's invisible colonization of academia,” *The Guardian*, March 13, 2017.

“The boundaries between private and public interests need to be clearly delineated in the higher education sector to protect the integrity of academic research and to maintain public trust.”

parity, proportional representation of racialized minorities, Indigenous representation, and a demonstrated commitment to the public mandates of the institutions. In the case of universities, that would mean a commitment to the university’s mission of advancing knowledge and educating students. Given the inadequacy of existing policy “frameworks” or “guides” to ensure this composition of the boards, the process for the selection of appointees will have to be legislated. The review of how boards are constituted should also consider that there may be cases in which it is appropriate for sectors such as Métis Settlements and First Nations to nominate their own representatives to public boards. Lastly, the Ministry of Advanced Education should be required to report annually to the public on its success in meeting the criteria mandated by the legislation and to take additional measures if these are not met.

The *PSLA* also needs a section requiring universities to publicly disclose all external sources of funding for research, academic programs, and scholarships on a quarterly or semi-annual basis. At present, the universities are withholding information from the public about donor agreements, industry collaborative projects, and other sources of funding for research and teaching conducted by university-employed academics. The public has a right to know which organizations or individuals contribute funding to academic research carried out in public institutions. The public also has a right to know what research is being conducted in publicly funded institutions. Again, the boundaries between private and public interests need to be clearly delineated in the higher education sector to protect the integrity of academic research and to maintain public trust.

Democratization of university governance also means addressing the under-representation of the so-called “internal” representatives on the boards, the current prerogatives of the Minister to appoint “additional” public board members as well as the board Chairs, and the absence of rules governing the composition of standing committees (such rules are currently made by the boards themselves). In addition, the relationship of the board to the government, of the board to the university executive and to academic governance bodies, and the processes for selecting senior administrators should all be subject to review in a future consultation about reforms to the *PSLA*.

For PSEIs regulated under the *PSLA*, the current constitution of the boards provides inadequate representation for the constituencies who are most affected by decisions made about the institution (students, faculty, and staff), who have the deepest institutional knowledge (faculty and staff), and who often invest their entire working lives in its development (faculty and staff). The rationale for the status quo has long since been lost in the mists of time and we need to have a robust discussion about how the PSEIs should

be governed. Why, for example, should faculty members have no greater number of representatives than the Alumni Association? Why should faculty, staff, and students hold fewer than half the seats on the board?²⁶⁹ Among other objections, this means that there are never enough “internal” governors for these constituencies to be well represented on all standing committees (where policies are developed to take to the board as a whole).

This problem is not unique to Alberta. British Columbia’s *University Act*, like Alberta’s PSLA, empowers the government to appoint the majority of members of the PSEIs’ boards of governors.²⁷⁰ In 2016, the leader of the province’s Green Party, Andrew Weaver, introduced a private member’s bill, the *University Amendment Act*, with the aims of protecting academic freedom from “political interference” and respecting the right of university members “to participate in the university’s governance.”²⁷¹ The amendments would have removed the government’s majority on the boards by reducing the number of members it was allowed to appoint (from 11/21 to 9/19 in the case of UBC and from 8/15 to 6/13 for other PSEIs).²⁷² Notably, this bill was not supported by either the Liberals or the NDP and did not advance beyond first reading. Journalist Charlie Smith observed: “When the NDP formed a minority government in 2017, it retained its power over public postsecondary institutions by not amending the University Act to change the composition of their boards of governors.”²⁷³

The manner in which the representatives of internal constituencies are currently selected in Alberta’s PSE system is also problematic. Faculty and students are currently unable to elect directly any of their own board representatives. Governors nominated by the associations are not permitted to act as representatives or delegates of those associations because of the so-called impartiality rule that currently operates on the boards. That is, the internal representatives are supposed to “take off” their constituency “hats” once they are appointed to the boards. This rule neutralizes their ability to represent the constituencies of which they are supposedly representative. They cannot report back to, take direction from, or bring resolutions from these constituencies. Such “impartiality” or “objectivity” rules support the myth that there exists a singular collective interest (public or university interest) that only the government-selected board members are enlightened enough to comprehend. This myth denies the existence of real conflicts about the aims the PSEI should fulfill and how. These differences should be subject to deliberation and debate, with all governors being required to demonstrate how their preferred positions serve the public interest mandate of the institution and the interests of its constituents. The convention that only government-selected “public” members are “independent” (without conflict of interest) and that internal governors are incapable of putting the public interest above group interests (should these conflict) serves, in reality, to privilege some voices over others.

269 Under the PSLA 16 (3), their total for a CARU is six seats. Public members equal 10, including the chair, and additional public members may be appointed. In addition, the Alumni Association has two representatives, the Senate one, plus the chancellor and the president. Without “additional” members, the board of a CARU would have 21.

270 Legislative Assembly of British Columbia, *University Act* (1996 with subsequent amendments), https://www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/00_96468_01#section4.

271 “Explanatory note,” *Bill M 202-2016, University Amendment Act, 2016*, tabled by Dr. Andrew Weaver, <https://www.leg.bc.ca/parliamentary-business/legislation-debates-proceedings/40th-parliament/5th-session/bills/progress-of-bills>.

272 Bill 202 further proposed to empower the “convocation” of the university to elect the chancellor. Under the *University Act*, section 5, the convocation is composed of: the chancellor (chair), the president, the members of the senate, all faculty members, all persons who are graduates of the university.

273 See “B.C. universities are subsidiaries of the provincial cabinet—and that’s why unvaccinated students will be in classrooms,” *Georgia Straight* August 27, 2021.

“If the president, the vice-presidents, and the deans are accountable to the board, who is accountable to faculty and non-academic staff for the management of the institution?”

Under the circumstances prevailing in Alberta, moreover, it is apparent that the government-selected “public” governors have little independence from the government that appoints them. The legislation governing the powers of post-secondary education sector boards (the *PSLA*, the Public Sector Employees Act), combined with the government’s use of its budgetary power to direct PSEI teaching and research have effectively disempowered institutional governance bodies.

Currently, an equal representation of public and internal board members on standing committees is not mandated by the *PSLA*, and the number of “external” members (and the way they are recruited) is not regulated. There is nothing in the *PSLA* to prevent a board committee from being constituted entirely of external members who have been elected by no one and are accountable to no constituency. External members are exempted from “diversity” criteria on the grounds that they are selected for their expertise in such areas as finance or auditing. Why then, are they not brought in as advisors to committees constituted by governors, rather than as voting members of committees that make policy for the board? Board procedures are often not codified and not accessible to the public. These are some of the many problems that need to be addressed in reforms to the *PSLA*.

Currently, boards appoint (and may dismiss) the president, the vice-presidents, and the deans (*PSLA* Arts. 81-83). The selection processes for these appointments are secretive. The president is a kind of chief executive officer for the institution, responsible for overall administration of the institution, but accountable to the board for their performance. This arrangement creates ambiguities and problems of representation. If the president, the vice-presidents, and the deans are accountable to the board, *who is accountable to faculty and non-academic staff* for the management of the institution? How does the president find an independent voice with which to speak for the university’s constituents to the board? Or to the government? Or the public? *Who* and *what* does the president represent? Faculty, staff, and a public mandate? Or the board (which in turn, under current arrangements, is a conduit for the directives of the Minister of Advanced Education)? What we have here is *a vacuum of democratic representation for faculty and non-academic staff*, whose only means of influencing the direction of the institution under the current arrangements are through their three “representatives” on the board of governors or through an academic governance body (the General Faculty Council) that is subordinate to the board of governors.

General Faculties Councils (GFCs) are the senior academic governance bodies under the *PSLA*. As such, their composition, procedures, mandate, and powers need to be reformed in ways that facilitate participation from the constituencies they represent and reinforce a meaningful role in governance. One proposal in this regard is that the *PSLA* should provide

“Elected faculty members of the University of Alberta’s GFC, notably, have only 34% of the votes in a council of 160.”

“a fuller definition of the power given to General Faculties Councils to manage the ‘academic affairs’ of the University to ensure that this power cannot be constrained or circumvented by administrators, not even through mechanisms of delegated authority.”²⁷⁴ Another proposal is that the GFC should elect its own chair, charged with liaising with the board. This arrangement would have avoided the conflict created in the case of the University of Alberta in December 2020, by the president chairing and being charged with representing views of the GFC but being accountable to the board.

Trevor Harrison and Richard Mueller have recommended that PSE governance in Alberta be democratized by “strengthening the role of faculty, staff, and students on General Faculties Councils (GFCs) in decision-making, including budgeting” (2021, 58). Arguably, the constituency with the greatest stake in academic governance over the long term is academic faculty. Yet, in the country’s 15 largest universities (the “U15”), faculty currently constitute a voting majority on only four such bodies. Apart from Dalhousie, where faculty control 61% of the vote, these majorities are in the range of 1% to 4%.²⁷⁵ On UCalgary’s GFC this figure is 54%. Elected faculty members of the University of Alberta’s GFC, notably, have only 34% of the votes in a council of 160. Their 54 seats are outnumbered by 56 student representatives, and there are 30 *ex officio* members, along with 17 additional “affiliate” representatives (including six members of the board of governors). At the UAlberta, then, faculty have only a minority voice in decisions concerning academic affairs. Proposals to realize the goals of giving internal constituencies meaningful decision-making roles remain to be developed and should be part of a comprehensive review of ways to democratize the governance of the sector, both statutorily (through a rewritten PSLA) and at the institutional level across the six PSE sectors.

In general, internal institutional decision-making processes must be made much more transparent, with information made freely available to staff, students, and faculty so that they may contribute fully to decisions about the future of their institutions. Administrations need to develop expertise in deliberative, participatory methods of consultation and address the barriers to citizenship. Foremost among such barriers are workloads, and it has not gone unnoticed that corporatization of universities simultaneously intensifies workloads for staff and faculty while eroding the authority of academic governance bodies. Naturally, faculty and staff efforts to reverse these logics are viewed by some in senior management as “ambition to disrupt”—the charge made against one faculty representative on the GFC at the University of Alberta in February 2021 by a frustrated vice-president. Indeed, faculty and staff seek to slow, obstruct, and redesign undemocratic governance systems and norms that, in their view, both worsen working conditions and the quality of education available to Albertans.

274 Carolyn Sale, November 2015 notes, op cit.

275 The figures in this paragraph come from unpublished research by Professor Carolyn Sale at the University of Alberta on the composition of the senior academic governance bodies at the U15 as of September 2021.

The secrecy of the processes by which officers of the university are recruited and selected, in addition to their relationship to the board, are matters which should also be subject to consultation and reform. Over the last several decades, the open search process for university presidents has increasingly been transformed into a secret, board-controlled procedure that affords the university community no meaningful role. At the very least, the presidential search committee could produce a short list of candidates, all of whom are then invited to give public talks to the university community and answer questions. Following that, faculty, staff, and student constituencies could vote on their preferred choice. Vice-presidents and deans could likewise be elected.

There are endless possibilities for institutional design, and the exploration of these shows the Alberta *PSLA* to be a model which gives a comparatively heavy hand to the Minister for Advanced Education to control and direct the PSEIs. Below are just a few examples of alternative designs.

In many European universities, the professoriate, or a larger body that includes staff and students, elects the rector (chief executive). Norway's *Act relating to universities and university colleges* establishes a university board as the highest authority of the institution. The board must have eleven members, consisting of four members from academic staff, one from non-academic staff, two from students, and four external (one of whom will be chair of the board and is appointed by the Minister).²⁷⁶ Alternatively, in an institution that elects its rector, the rector chairs the board (replacing one of the four academic staff). A board may also change its own composition, provided that such a decision has the support of at least half of the board members and respects some ground rules for representation of constituencies. Section 9(3) of the Act specifies that: "The academic staff, the technical and administrative staff, the students and external members must all be satisfactorily represented on the board. None of these groups may alone have a majority." And Section 4(4) specifies: "The students must have at least 20 per cent of the representatives on all collegiate bodies that are given decision-making powers. In cases where this constitutes no more than one member, the students must have the right to an additional student representative with the right to speak and to submit proposals." *The constituencies elect their own representatives to the university board.* Section 9(4) of the Act stipulates that if temporary academic staff constitute more than 25% of the academic staff at an institution, this group is entitled to elect one board member. Further, the elected members for each group must satisfy the requirements of the *Gender Equality Act*.

276 Government of Norway, Act relating to universities and university colleges, Part 3, https://lovdata.no/dokument/NLE/lov/2005-04-01-15#KAPITTEL_3.

As mentioned above, the rector may be chosen by election if this is the method decided upon by the board (Section 10(2)). In this case, votes must be weighted within these parameters (as decided by the board):

- a) Academic staff 51%-71%
- b) Technical and administrative staff 5%-25%
- c) Students 15%-30%

At the University of Bergen, both the rector and the pro-rector are elected, and the elections are contested by teams. The voting constituencies thus have a choice among different platforms.²⁷⁷

At the University of Oxford, the Congregation—which consists of all academic staff, heads and other members of governing bodies of colleges and societies, and senior research, computing, library and administrative staff—has responsibility for approving changes to the university’s statutes and regulations; considering major policy issues submitted by Council (the university’s executive governing body) or members of Congregation; electing members to Council and other university bodies, and approving the appointment of the vice-chancellor.²⁷⁸ Fifteen of 26 members of the Council are elected by the Congregation and a further five members must be approved by the Congregation. Five members are *ex officio*. An equivalent body (Regent House) with sovereign authority exists at the University of Cambridge.²⁷⁹

Within Canada, legislation governing post-secondary education institutions also varies from province to province. The *University Act* in British Columbia leaves it to the boards of governors to establish the procedures for hiring senior academic administrators, and so there is variation across institutions. At the University of Victoria, the board has delegated its authority to make appointments of vice-presidents to the president.²⁸⁰ The vice-president academic and provost is delegated to oversee the appointment of deans. After an Appointment Committee has conducted a search for candidates for a dean’s position, interviewed the candidates who have indicated a willingness to accept the position, and decided upon a nominee, the latter is presented to the “regular faculty members of the relevant faculty.” A *ratification vote* is held, in which the proposed candidate must receive at least 60% of the votes cast to be offered the position. In this case, faculty do not have the opportunity to choose among candidates but have only a “yes/no” vote on the candidates proposed to them.²⁸¹

In this report, we make no specific recommendations for an institutional design for the governance of PSEIs in Alberta, but consider that the time is long overdue for a comprehensive deliberation about framework legislation that would allow the PSEIs more autonomy to decide upon their own governance models, while setting out general parameters regarding the

277 See this story about the contest between two teams for the “rectorate” in March 2021: <https://khrono.no/margareth-hagen-er-ny-rektor-ved-universitetet-i-bergen/566221>.

278 University of Oxford, “Governance,” <https://governance.admin.ox.ac.uk/governance>.

279 University of Cambridge, “Governance,” <https://www.cam.ac.uk/about-the-university/how-the-university-and-colleges-work/governance>.

280 See University of Victoria, “Procedures for the appointment and re-appointment of deans,” University Policy No. GV0450, effective date January 2011, <https://www.uvic.ca/universitysecretary/assets/docs/policies/GV0450.pdf>.

281 In addition to deans, this ratification procedure applies to chairs, directors, the vice president academic, the vice provost, the associate vice-president academic planning, the vice-president research and the associate VPR, and “some other academic senior appointments.” See University of Victoria Faculty Association, “Petch Procedures FAQ” (no date), p. 1.

representation of “internal” constituencies and the general public, gender parity, representation of racialized minorities and Indigenous communities, conflict of interest, limits to ministerial authority over university governance, and many other matters. In a review of the PSLA and/or the procedures of individual institutions, models from other university systems should be considered; all options should be on the table.

The Public University Must Be Both Autonomous and Accountable

The *PSLA* ensures that the government will select the majority of the members of the post-secondary institution’s board of governors (its “public” members and “additional” members). It defines the authority of the board in relation to university bodies like senates or faculty councils. It assigns financial decisions and oversight to the board and empowers the boards to appoint (with ministerial approval) the chief executives of the institution. The boards, in turn, are required to report to the provincial minister responsible for advanced education. University plans, budgets, tuition fees, and executive appointments must be approved by the minister. Even though—with the exception of Quebec—provincial governments are no longer funding more than half of the operating budgets of PSEIs, these governments continue to exercise effective budgetary control over these institutions. Declining governmental support for universities is, however, not a ground for “cutting loose” the universities from public funding or accountability, that is, for further privatizing them. On the contrary, privatization only changes the masters and worsens the insecurity of revenue. Our goal should be to protect both the autonomy of universities and the stability of their funding base so that they can best serve the public.

When defenders of the public university argue that these institutions should have greater autonomy from government interference, they do not mean that universities should not be accountable to the public for how they use public revenue. Universities are, indeed, among the most accountable of any government-funded institutions when it comes to their reporting requirements and the ongoing governmental scrutiny of their budgets and academic targets.²⁸² What defenders of the public university mean by “autonomy” is more akin to the kind of autonomy that a public broadcaster should have from the state. That is, a public mandate is established (preferably based upon citizen deliberation) about what public goods or services the institution should provide. Beyond that, governments are required not to attempt to influence the day-to-day decisions made by the broadcaster’s governance bodies. For example, they are not to require (or use their control over funding or director appointments to influence) the broadcaster to manufacture or disseminate government propaganda, censor government critics, or privilege particular interests.²⁸³

“Universities are among the most accountable of any government-funded institutions when it comes to their reporting requirements and the ongoing governmental scrutiny of their budgets and academic targets.”

282 Under the *PSLA*, the board of a university must submit a budget, a capital plan, an investment management agreement, and an annual financial report to the Minister (sections 78, 79).

283 Other examples of public sector functions that require autonomy from the state are auditor generals and public health officers. Indeed, in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, many are asking if public health officers—who are appointed by governments—have sufficient independent authority to mandate public health responses.

“No form of knowledge is irrelevant or without value.”

Academics must also be free from direction of their research by private interests, yet this direction is precisely what happens when researchers must rely on private funders. It is the funders who determine which research questions will be pursued. Like targeted government funding, private funding steers research in the direction of the funders' priorities, which may not accord with societal needs or the public interest.

University academics generally direct their research to answer the most salient questions of their times. This is as true of paleontologists, historians, and philosophers as it is for sociologists or engineers. In this sense, they are responsive to societal needs and seek to produce knowledge that serves the public good. Students have the same interests—to understand the leading problems and questions of their times, drawing upon the best research available. Often, foundational knowledge is needed to develop expertise in a subject, and this may take many forms, such as laboratory techniques, linguistics, basic chemistry, mathematics, history, or social science methodologies. An area of specialization may preserve and transmit to future generations a form of knowledge that is in danger of disappearing—like a language that is spoken by only one tribe, or a craft whose practitioners are dwindling in number. No form of knowledge is irrelevant or without value. It should therefore come as no surprise that academics resist attempts from governments to tell them what to research or what to teach. By the time they complete their advanced degrees, they have become members of a self-governing profession with its own guiding methods and principles. They are better positioned than government bureaucrats or politicians to define their research questions and decide upon the content of curricula.

This is not to say that every PSEI should offer precisely the same palette of programs as every other PSEI, that is, that there should be no specialization by institution. Nor is it to say that PSEIs should not respond to changes in student demand for different kinds of knowledge over time or that they should not engage with citizens in an ongoing, structured dialogue about the university's priorities. It is, however, important not to adopt and institutionalize a particular hierarchy of knowledge types (or disciplines) that grants some superiority over others—which is what the UCP government seeks to do in its selective funding of jobs training in specified sectors, employer-driven programming, and its preference for university-industry research partnerships. This kind of intervention in what universities do will not serve the public good if it is driven by particular (private sector) interests, limited in their vision of present and future social needs and in their understanding of the interconnected nature of knowledge. As the authors of the Declaration on Academic Freedom, Institutional Autonomy, and the Future of Democracy stated in June 2019:

“The making of higher-education agendas should never be left to governments alone to determine, as they will always have their own projects to advance.”

Administrative regulations, public and private indifference, considerations of immediate return on investment, a limited view of utility, and seeing higher education only through the lens of a narrow economic agenda also threaten academic freedom and institutional autonomy. Financial regulations and arrangements should be used to further rather than to limit institutional autonomy. More broadly, academic freedom and institutional autonomy are threatened by the absence of a vision that connects the purposes of higher education to democratic purpose (Article 11).²⁸⁴

The making of higher-education agendas should never be left to governments alone to determine, as they will always have their own projects to advance. The ability of a government to use its power over the budget to restructure or otherwise shape the research and teaching priorities of any institution should be subject to limitations. Budgets must be predictable and guaranteed in the medium term. The agenda of governing parties could be “vetted” by representative public bodies, drawing upon *all* sectors of society, and including students and academics. These bodies could undertake periodic reviews of how the higher education system is serving the public interest, and where new directions are needed. It is important that such assemblies be truly representative (to counter the influence of private sector interests) and that its members be chosen by their own constituencies and communities, rather than by governments. Institutionalized public deliberations of this kind would go a long way to democratizing the decision-making process that guides the goals set by government funding agencies.

At present, these priorities are determined in venues closed to the public, e.g., in meetings between university executives and ministry officials, politicians, and lobbyists, or of the government-appointed boards of “innovation” agencies (which are heavily influenced by industry interests). In conventional “consultation” or advisory processes, governments appoint their hand-picked panels to provide recommendations within government-determined parameters. Imagine a process in which a government of Alberta engaged citizens from all walks of life in a deliberation about the aims of post-secondary education and how the system should be funded, rather than a process like that of the “Blue Ribbon Panel,” described in Part 2 of this report. Imagine a government actually listening to the young people who are contemplating what they want to do with their lives, and what kind of future they want to build, in the context of the global climate crisis. Imagine a conversation organized around the question of how PSE can serve Albertans, Canadians, and others to build the kinds of communities we want to live in.

Another advantage of regular deliberations of this kind is that they would connect PSEIs to citizens, allowing citizens to better grasp what goes on

284 Global Forum on Academic Freedom, Institutional Autonomy, and the Future of Democracy Declaration, June 19, 2019, <https://rm.coe.int/global-forum-declaration-global-forum-final-21-06-19-003-/16809523e5>.

inside universities and colleges, and why it matters to citizens from all walks of life. Further, such collaboration gives support to researchers who value public engagement.

A Post-Secondary Governance System in Need of Change

In this report, we have provided an overview of the explanations for the profound crisis in which post-secondary education institutions find themselves today in Alberta. They include the inability of governments to adequately fund health care, education, and other public goods, so long as they refuse to undertake a major reform of the fiscal regime and to place human services at the heart of a plan for green transition. Thus, there is a structural problem, but it is simultaneously a political problem—a problem rooted in political leadership and vision (or lack thereof). In the current juncture, the party in government has deepened the fiscal crisis of the state by reducing revenue and counting on trickle-down economics to bring investment and jobs back to an extractive sector that is now in permanent decline. Its economic agenda resurrects the neoliberal policies of the 1980s (in Alberta, the 1990s), including the assault on higher education. However, the ways in which PSEIs have responded to this assault have much to do with the institutions that govern them.

In many respects, the inability of academics, support staff, and students to mount a resistance to the UCP government's devastating budget cuts, performance-based budgeting, and general anti-intellectualism stems from the governance regime established by the *PSLA* and the *Public Sector Employees Act*. We saw that in the case of the University of Alberta, the only body on which faculty have elected representatives (the General Faculties Council) is subordinated to the board of governors by the *PSLA*. On the board of governors, representatives of faculty, students, and non-academic staff are outnumbered by the government's "public" appointees. The boards, in turn, take direction from the minister on matters concerning the budget and collective bargaining. Our findings confirmed that (the policy commitments of the NDP government notwithstanding) little prevents governments from appointing these boards such that particular interests and government-aligned perspectives routinely dominate. The senior administrators empowered to speak for the institutions to the public and to governments are in fact not representatives, but appointed executive managers, accountable to the boards and to the minister. There is a real deficit of effective representation within the existing system.

Given their responsibilities for budgets, human resources, and institutional plans, it is hardly surprising that the priorities for senior administrators are their relationships with the boards and with government officials. Communication with the public is for the most part left up to the public

relations staff who publish stories to the websites and direct media inquiries. The lack of dedicated resources for building relationships with communities outside the PSEI sector is part of the explanation for the vulnerability of these institutions to repeated budget cuts from conservative governments. Universities and colleges find it hard to mobilize public support because a good part of the public does not understand what universities do or why it might matter to them. And there is little support for university-community research collaboration or other forms of public engagement that would help to build these relationships. On the contrary, there is considerable pressure from governments and funding agencies for researchers to form partnerships with corporations and industry associations.

Without stable and adequate public funding, as well as the autonomy to set their own research and teaching priorities, PSEIs are struggling to fulfill their missions of “advancing and disseminating knowledge and developing ethical and able citizens.”²⁸⁵ Far-reaching reforms of the governance systems inside the PSEIs, along with the restructuring of their relationship with the state, are required to create the conditions in which these institutions can fully achieve their potential to serve the public good.

“ Universities and colleges find it hard to mobilize public support because a good part of the public does not understand what universities do or why it might matter to them.”

²⁸⁵ Ibid.

11

Epilogue

The [Advanced Education Statutes Amendments Act \(Bill 74\)](#) brought forward by the UCP government in late November 2021 established a Minister's Advisory Council on Higher Education and Skills (MACHES) and rewrote the preamble of the *PSLA*, among other changes to that Act. In keeping with the direction of the Alberta 2030 strategy and Skills for Jobs Task Force recommendations, the UCP's preamble to the *PSLA* explicitly charges the post-secondary education system with being “highly responsive to labour market needs,” and contributing to economic diversification and a “prosperous Alberta” through “innovation” and the commercialization of research. It moreover introduces a “collaborative governance model” for the post-secondary education system which includes not only students, educators, “providers,” and government, but also “industry,” thus giving the private sector a statutorily recognized role in the governance of post-secondary education.

MACHES is mandated in Bill 74 to provide advice and recommendations to the Minister respecting:

- (a) the strategic goals and direction of post-secondary education in Alberta;
- (b) metrics for measuring the performance of public post-secondary institutions and independent academic institutions, and
- (c) any other matter requested by the minister

As Trevor Harrison and Richard Mueller (2021, 50-51) observed when the proposal to create such a council was leaked in October 2021—a Minister's Advisory Council adds “another layer of bureaucracy to a system already over-burdened with administration.” Indeed, the responsibilities of the minister to consult with PSE sector stakeholders are essentially being delegated to a third party. The government has not explained why direct consultations with the PSEI constituencies themselves (as well as academic experts in PSE) are not adequate to provide the guidance the minister needs to inform policy.

The MACHES will have nine members, to be appointed by the minister (who will also designate the chair). No criteria or qualifications for membership are listed in the Act—only the non-eligibility of anyone who has served recently on the board or executive of a PSEI or served as an executive member of an academic staff association, non-academic staff association, or student organization. The ministry has issued a [competition](#) for the chair and member positions. The description of the skills, experience, and expertise desired for “ideal candidates” strongly implies that such individuals should have high-level executive experience in the running of large organizations.

The closing date for applications for these positions was January 24, 2022; no appointments had been made by the time this report was completed.

In light of historical experience—specifically, the composition of other UCP government-appointed advisory bodies such as the Blue Ribbon Panel, the Skills for Jobs Task Force, the Premier’s Economic Recovery Council, the Fair Deal Panel, the Minimum Wage Panel, the panel to review supervised drug consumption sites, or the advisors to the minister of education on K-12 curriculum change—experts in the post-secondary education field might be forgiven for anticipating that the MACHES will serve primarily as a legitimization tool for an agenda whose directions have already been established by the UCP government and its corporate partners. That is, will the minister hand-pick ideological fellow-travellers of the UCP for these positions? In a draft plan for the Minister’s advisory council obtained by Harrison and Mueller in 2021, it was stated that the nine members would include “industry and employers, as key stakeholders in Alberta’s adult learning system.” This composition was also foreshadowed by the inclusion of “industry” in the “collaborative governance model” described in the rewritten preamble to the PSLA.

Our research supports Harrison and Mueller’s conclusion that “for too long, Alberta’s PSE system has been narrowly controlled by the government and corporate interests” (58) and adds to their recommendations for immediate reinvestment as well as reform of the governance framework for the sector. Albertans face two highly divergent paths for the future of their post-secondary education system. We can permit the UCP government and neoliberal-minded higher education managers to take us further down the path of the subordination of the public interest to a narrow set of private interests, or we can organize collectively to demand a public education system that is responsive to the needs of our youth, their post-carbon future, democracy, and citizenship.

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Appendix 1 - Constitution of the Boards of Governors of Post-Secondary Education Institutions in Alberta

As the terms used for members of the PSEI boards of governors may be unfamiliar, the box below provides the composition of board membership as set out in the province's *Post-Secondary Learning Act* (PSLA) (section 16) for three of the four CARUs (Comprehensive Academic and Research Universities): University of Alberta, University of Calgary, and University of Lethbridge.

The members of category (d) are nominated by university constituencies and appointed by ministerial order, whereas members from categories (e) and (f) are chosen by the government (Minister of Advanced Education) and appointed by an order-in-council (the cabinet).

According to the PSLA and the *Athabasca University Regulation 50/2004*, the total number of public members on PSEI boards is 172: three comprehensive academic and research universities have 10 each; Athabasca University has nine; three undergraduate universities have 10 each; the Banff Centre has six; the two Polytechnic institutions have 10 each; and the 11 comprehensive community colleges have seven each. These numbers include the board chairs. However, in addition to "general public" members, the government may appoint "additional" members to the boards, which explains why the total number of public members, as of March 31, 2021, was 174.

Very few of the boards use the terms "general public" and "additional" to differentiate between these categories of appointees. Most simply refer to all members appointed by order-in-council as "public" or "external" board members. Thus, their terminology does not consistently conform to the language used in the PSLA and can be confusing.

In this report, we use "public" or "general public" to refer to board members appointed by the cabinet through an order-in-council, and "external" to refer to members of board committees who have been recruited by the boards themselves.

In addition to the categories set out in the PSLA, the boards may appoint "external" members to their standing committees to ensure that the committees have the necessary expertise. External members, however, do not vote in board meetings.

Members of University Boards of Governors as set out in the Post-Secondary Learning Act

- (3) A board shall consist of the following members:
- (a) a chair of the board appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council;
 - (b) the chancellor of the university, if the university has a chancellor;
 - (c) the president of the university;
 - (d) the following members appointed by the Minister:
 - (i) 2 alumni of the university nominated by the alumni association, if there is an alumni association;
 - (ii) in the case of a comprehensive academic and research university, one member of the senate nominated by the other members of the senate from among the members appointed under section 11(3)(b)(viii) or elected under section 11(3)(c);
 - (iii) 2 members of the academic staff of the university, one of whom is nominated by the general faculties council and one of whom is nominated by the academic staff association;
 - (iv) 2 students nominated by the council of the students' association;
 - (v) if the university has a graduate students' association, one graduate student nominated by the council of the association;
 - (vi) one member of the non-academic staff nominated by the non-academic staff association;
 - (e) not more than 9 members representative of the general public, in addition to the chair, appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council;
 - (f) additional persons appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council on the recommendation of the Minister.

SOURCE: Province of Alberta, *Post-secondary Learning Act*, https://www.qp.alberta.ca/1266.cfm?page=P19P5.cfm&leg_type=Acts&isbncln=9780779822621.

Appendix 2 - Data Codes and Categories

Occupations/Professions (Part 5)

Classification of Occupations by Economic Sector and by Private/Non-Profit/Public/Indigenous Categories

Occupations (32)	Sectoral code (13)	Public/ private/ NP/ IND	Number found for ALL-NDP	Number found for ALL-UCP
Accountant	bus	PRIV	1	3
Administrator in non-profit sector	admin-NP	NP	8	1
Administrator in public sector	admin-public	PUB	10	5
Administrator-Indigenous org.	admin-Ind	IND	0	0
Architect	arts, design	PRIV	1	0
Artist	arts, design	PRIV	2	1
Banker	bus	PRIV	1	0
Business owner	bus	PRIV	14	19
Consultant	bus	PRIV	8	1
Corporate executive	bus	PRIV	18	51
Engineer	STEM	PRIV	0	1
Farmer/rancher	agriculture	PRIV	0	3
Health professional	human services	PUB	2	2
Journalist	media	PUB	1	0
Labourer	trades	PRIV	0	1
Lawyer	law	PRIV	10	15
Lobbyist	politics	PRIV	0	1
Manager in private sector	bus	PRIV	14	33
Police	other	PUB	1	0
Politician	politics	PUB	6	4
Public servant	admin-public	PUB	6	2
Sales	bus	PRIV	0	0
Scientist	STEM	PUB	0	2
Social worker	human services	NP	4	2
Teacher/professor	human services	PUB	1	6
Union official	other	n/a	0	0
Veterinarian	STEM	n/a	0	0
Other			5	0
Total appointees counted			113	153

Nine Aggregate Occupational Categories for Table 5.3

Aggregate categories for occupations (9 plus other and unknown)	Includes
Administration	Admin-Indig, Admin-NP, Admin-public
Agriculture	Agriculture
Arts, culture, media	Arts, design, media
Business	Business sector as coded above
Human services	Human services as coded above
Law	Law
Political	Politics as coded above (elected position, political appointee, lobbyist)
STEM	STEM as coded above (science, technology, engineering, mathematics fields)
Trades	Trades
Other	Other (police, union official)
Unknown	Unknown

Fields of Specialization (Part 5)

Codes for Table 5.6: Specializations of Appointees by Group (Percentages)

Aggregate categories of specialization (12)	Individual categories of specialization (18 plus unknown)
ACCT	Accounting
AGR	Farming/Ranching
ARTS&CUL	Humanities
ARTS&CUL	Architecture
ARTS&CUL	Arts & Culture
BUS	Business management
BUS	Consulting
BUS	Human Resources
EDUC	Education
FIN/INS	Finance
FIN/INS	Insurance
LAW	Law
STEM/MED	Medical
REALTY	Real estate
SOC	Social work
STEM/MED	Engineering
STEM/MED	Science
TRADES	Trades
UNK	unknown

Educational Qualifications (Part 5)

Aggregate Categories for Table 5.8

Highest degree (20 plus unknown)	Description	Aggregated educational category (6)
MBA	Master of Business Administration	Business, management, commerce, accounting degrees
BA	Bachelor of Arts	Arts, social work, education degrees
MA	Master of Arts	Arts, social work, education degrees
LLB	Bachelor of Laws	Law degrees
B.Sc.	Bachelor of Sciences	Science and medicine degrees
M.Ed	Master of Education	Arts, social work, education degrees
B.Comm.	Bachelor of Commerce	Business, management, commerce, accounting degrees
PhD Science	PhD Science (1)	Science and medicine degrees
PhD Arts	PhD Arts (3)	Arts, social work, education degrees
B.Ed.	Bachelor of Education	Arts, social work, education degrees
J.D.	Doctor of Laws	Law degrees
LLM	Master of Laws	Law degrees
M.Sc.	Master of Science	Science and medicine degrees
MD	Medical Doctor	Science and medicine degrees
CPA	Chartered Professional Accountant	Business, management, commerce, accounting degrees
BFA	Bachelor of Fine Arts	Arts, social work, education degrees
BM	Bachelor of Management	Business, management, commerce, accounting degrees
BSW	Bachelor of Social Work	Arts, social work, education degrees
CMA	Certified Management Accounting Diploma	Business, management, commerce, accounting degrees
MPA	Master of Professional Accounting	Business, management, commerce, accounting degrees
BBA	Bachelor of Business Administration	Business, management, commerce, accounting degrees
Other	Certificates, diplomas, unspecified degrees	Other qualifications
Unknown		

Corporate Affiliations (Part 6)

Economic Sector Codes for Table 6.2

Codes (26)	Description and examples
AUD/ACC	Auditing and accounting
AG-BUS	Agriculture (food farming, ranching, cannabis) and agribusiness firms
ARCH-DES	Architecture and interior design
ARTS&REC	Arts, sports, entertainment (commercial): ownership/management of arenas, exhibition sites, performance halls, golf clubs, film companies
BFI	Banking, finance, insurance (banks and insurance firms, mortgage brokers)
CONSTR	Construction (industrial, business, property developers)
CONSULT	Consulting (KPMG, MNP, McKinsey, PricewaterhouseCoopers, etc; smaller local businesses in the same sector)
ENG	Engineering services for diverse sectors
ENV/W	Environmental services & waste management
FOODSERV/HOSP	Food services and hospitality (restaurants, catering, food processing and distribution)
HEALTH	Health (commercial): health products, pharmaceuticals, medical equipment, diagnostic services, long-term care
INDIG-CORP	Indigenous investment and economic development corporations
INVEST	Investment (managed funds, bank investment services)
LEGAL	Legal (law practices: corporate, securities, property, regulatory)
MANF	Manufacturing (equipment, chemicals, machinery, pulp and paper)
MEDIA	Media (commercial broadcasters, networks)
MINING	Mining (not oil, gas, or coal; in our study, this included gold, diamonds, sand, and aggregates)
O&G	Oil, gas (oil and gas extraction, refining, and transportation; pipeline construction; building and retrofitting power plants for natural gas, installing and operating drilling rigs, gasification)
RENEN	Renewable energy (wind, solar, geothermal, hydro)
OTHER-EN	Other energy (nuclear, hydrogen)
SM-BUS	Small business (funeral home, garden centre, art gallery, car dealership)
REALTY	Real estate (sales and management, including rural land)
TECH-SERV	Technical services for businesses (IT, cyber-security, data management, instrumentation, supply management, temporary staffing)
TELECOM	Telecommunications (TELUS, Rogers)
TRANSP	Transportation (airport authorities, trucking, vehicle rentals, rail)
UTIL	Utilities (water and electricity) EPCOR, AltaLink, Capital Power, ATCO, TransAlta, Enmax

Aggregated Economic Sector Codes for Table 6.3 and Figure 6.1

Aggregated economic sectors (9)	Description	Includes
BFI	Banking, finance, insurance, and investment (financial)	BFI, INVEST
CONSTR&R	Construction and real estate	CONSTR, REALTY
CORP-SER	Corporate services (consulting, engineering, environmental and waste management, legal, technical)	AUD/ACC, CONSULT, ENG, ENV/W, LEGAL, TECHS-SERV
CULT	Cultural sector (architecture, design, arts, sports, recreation, entertainment, media)	ARCH-DES, ARTS&REC, MEDIA
IND-CORP	Indigenous corporation	INDIG-CORP
O&G	Oil, gas	O&G
OTHER-EN	Other energy	OTHER-EN, RENEN
OTHER-ES	Other economic sector	AG-BUS, FOODSERV/HOSP, HEALTH, MANF, MINING, SM-BUS, TRANSP
TELECOM-UTIL	Telecommunications or utilities	TELECOM, UTIL

Non-Corporate Civil Society Affiliations (Part 7)

Non-Corporate Civil Society Entity Categories for Table 7.1

Category (19)	Description (examples)
BUS-C&A	Business association (chamber of commerce, business council)
BUS-LOB	Business lobby organization (Alberta Prosperity Fund, Alberta Enterprise Group, Urban Development Institute Edmonton)
CHARITY	Charitable agency (United Way, Rotary Club, municipal community foundation)
GOVT-ADMIN	Government civil service (municipal, provincial, or federal)
GOVT-CORP	Government corporation (AIMCO, AB Enterprise Corp., Agricultural Financial Services Corp., ATB Financial, Fin/Dev Canada)
GOVT-REG	Government regulatory agency (WCB, AER, Alberta Grain Commission, Alberta Electric System Operator, Alberta Securities Commission)
IA	Industry association (CAPP, Forest Resource Improvement Association Of Alberta, Western Canadian Wheat Growers Association)
INDIG-GOVT	Indigenous governance body (band council, educational or health authority)
NP-SS	Non-profit & non-governmental social service (YWCA, CMHA, women's shelter, food bank, youth centre)
OTHER-NP	Other non-profit organization (Edmonton Ballet, local theatre, Calgary Stampede Society, Alberta Blue Cross, credit union, animal welfare, etc.)
POL	Political (elected office at any level): senator, political appointment in government e.g., chief of staff, advisor, principal secretary
PROF	Professional association (AMA, APEGA, CPA, Alberta Lawyers Indemnity Association)
PSEI	Post-secondary education institution (employed by; appointed to advisory body; fellow of school, e.g., school of public policy, school of business)
PUBLIC	Public sector position (health, education—not PSEI—, social services, CBC)
QUASI-GOVT	Quasi-governmental bodies (government-appointed panel, commission, or advisory body; Alberta Economic Development Authority, police commission, municipal housing corporation, Calgary Economic Development, landlord & tenant advisory board, Oil Sands Advisory Group, etc.)
REL	Religious organization (Catholic social services, United Church pastoral care)
RES-INNOV	Research or innovation agency (governmental): NSERC, Alberta Innovates, Creative Destruction Lab
TT/RI	Think-tank or research institute (C. D. Howe Institute, Canadian Institute for Climate Choices, Conference Board of Canada)
UNION	Union organization (Alberta Teachers Association)

Aggregated Categories for Non-Corporate Civil Society Entities for Table 7.2

Aggregated categories for non-corporate civil society entities (13)	Description	Includes
BUS-C&A	Business councils and associations	BUS-C&A
BUS-LOB	Business lobby organizations	BUS-LOB
GOVT	Government	GOVT-ADMIN, GOVT-CORP, GOVT-REG
IA	Industry association	IA
INDIG-GOVT	Indigenous government	INDIG-GOVT
OTHER-CS	Other civil society	CHARITY, NP-SS, OTHER-NP, PROF, REL
POL	Political affiliation	POL
PSEI	Post-secondary education institution	PSEI
PUBLIC	Public sector	PUBLIC
QUASI-GOVT	Quasi-governmental body	QUASI-GOVT
RES-INNOV	Research and innovation	RES-INNOV
TT/RI	Think-tank and research institute	TT/RI
UNION	Union organization	UNION

Network Analysis of Board Members (Part 9)

Sector codes	Mnemonic code	Colour/shape code
Corporate services	CORP-SER	Dark orange
Banking, finance, insurance, and investment	BFII	Yellow
Construction and real estate	CONST&RE	Dark green
Telecommunications and utilities	TELE-UT	Light green
Indigenous enterprises	IND-CORP	Olive
Oil and gas	O&G	Red
Arts and media	ARTS&MEDIA	Purple
Other energy	OTHER-EN	White
Other types of companies	OTHER-ES	Pink
Business-related interest groups	BRI	Blue
Government institutions	GOVT	Dark gray
Quasi-government	QUASI-GOVT	Light gray
Indigenous government	IND-GOVT	Light orange
Non-Alberta PSEIs	PSEI	Black triangles
Other types of civil society organizations	OTHER-CIV	Brown
Alberta-based PSEIs	Core sample PSEIs	Black (squares)
Individuals	Core networkers	Light blue (diamonds)

Appendix 3 - Appointee Affiliations to Governmental and Quasi-Governmental Bodies

Affiliations to Governmental Bodies by Appointee Group

(A number in parentheses indicates that more than one member of this group had an affiliation to the entity.)

NDP-R

None

NDP-C

None

NDP-UCP1

None

NDP-UCP2

Agriculture and Rural Development Alberta
Alberta Justice & Solicitor General
Emissions Reduction Alberta (NDP-UCP2)
National Energy Board (Canada) (NDP-UCP2)

UCP1

Agricultural Financial Services Corporation
Alberta Electric System Operator (2)
Alberta Enterprise Corporation
Alberta Health Services
Alberta Indigenous Opportunity Corporation
Alberta Investment Management Corporation
Alberta Ministry of Education
Alberta Ministry of Transportation
Altacorp Capital
ATB Financial
Business Development Bank of Canada
City of Edmonton
TEC Edmonton

UCP2

Alberta Auditor General
Alberta Capital Region Housing Corporation
Alberta Electric System Operator (2)
Alberta Energy Regulator (2)
Alberta government ministry (unspecified)
Alberta Health Services
Alberta Land Compensation Board
Alberta Ministry of Municipal Affairs
Alberta Securities Commission (2)
Alberta Social Housing Corporation
Alberta Surface Rights Board
Alberta Workers Compensation Board
ATB Financial
Citizenship and Immigration Canada
Edmonton Economic Development Corporation
FinDev Canada (Export Development Canada)
Health Canada
Indian and Northern Affairs Canada
Industry Canada
Justice Canada
Rural Municipalities of Alberta
Travel Alberta
Various departments in the Government of Saskatchewan

Affiliations to Quasi-Governmental Entities by Appointee Group

NDP-R

Alberta Judicial Advisory Committee
 Calgary Arts Development Authority
 Calgary Cultural District
 Calgary Economic Development Authority
 Calgary Police Commission (2)
 Edmonton Landlord and Tenant Advisory Board
 Financial Investment and Planning Advisory Commission, Govt. of Alberta
 Federation of Canadian Municipalities
 National Capital Commission Advisory Committee on Design and Real Property
 Wood Buffalo Housing and Development Corporation

NDP-C

Aboriginal Tourism Advisory Council
 Alberta Sexually Transmitted and Blood-Born Infections Action Plan Steering Cttee.
 Alberta Economic Development Authority
 Cold Lake Economic Development Advisory Cttee.
 Edmonton Advisory Committee on Start-ups
 Edmonton Mayor's Task Force to End Poverty
 Lethbridge Police Commission

NDP-UCP1

None

NDP-UCP2

Alberta Economic Development Authority
 Alberta's Oil Sands Advisory Group
 Alberta's Promise: Premier's Advisory Committee
 BC Climate Solutions and Clean Growth Advisory Council
 Northern Alberta Development Council
 Provincial Aboriginal Advisory Committee

UCP1

None

UCP2

2019 Canada Winter Games
 Advisory Cttee. on Policy Suite Renewal, federal Treasury Board
 Alberta Advanced Education Skills for Jobs Task Force
 Alberta Blue Ribbon Panel on Finance
 Alberta Government Inspiring Education Steering and Implementation Committee
 Athabasca Oil Sands Area Transportation Coordinating Committee
 Construction Industry Red Tape Reduction Taskforce, Govt of Alberta
 Economic Advisory Council (federal minister of finance)
 Economic Development Lethbridge
 Edmonton Business Roundtable
 Government of Alberta Family Violence & Death Review Committee
 ICT Advisory Cttee., Alberta Ministry of Science and Innovation
 Manitoba Advisory Panel on Fiscal Performance
 [Edmonton] Mayor Don Iveson's Business Advisory Committee
 Northern Alberta Development Council



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