

The BC Student Federation

How BCSF works

BCSF policies don't just come out of thin air.

Carefully researched by BCSF executive, staff and members, BCSF policies are decided by its members.

Two or three times a year student representatives from BC colleges, vocational schools and universities meet to analyze current student problems and plan action to solve those problems.

How you can work with BCSF

The provincial government is pulling support out of education and quickly letting our campuses become less useful and less available to the people of BC.

It's up to students to do something.

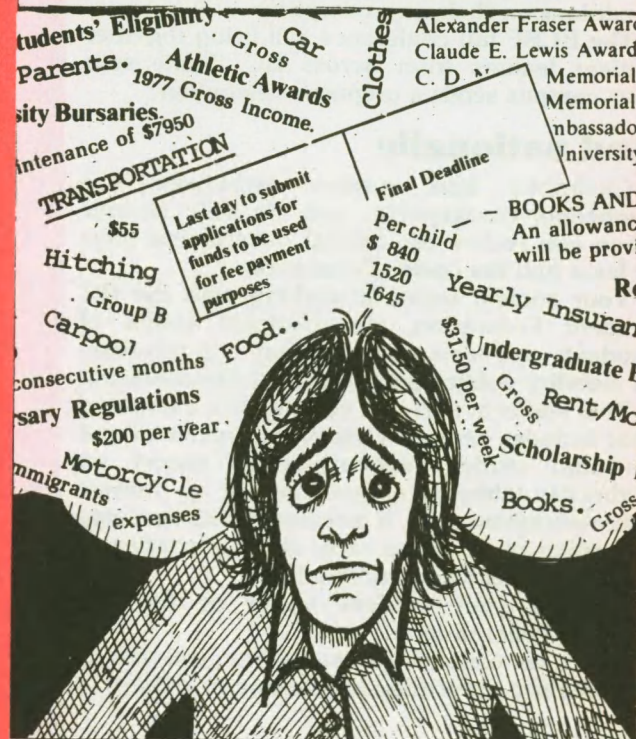
At first glance the mound of problems students face seems unbeatable.

But through unified action at the local, provincial and national levels students can have an affect.

Keep an eye out for BCSF information on your campus. Get involved in your local students' council: join a cutbacks committee: come to a BCSF conference.

**The future
of your education:
who will decide?**

The BC Student Federation



What's it to you?



Why a BC Student Federation?

The provincial government makes most of the decisions concerning education. So where does that leave students?

Nowhere. Without student representation.

When the trend towards cutbacks in post-secondary education began in the early 1970's, student leaders saw the need for a united provincial voice to safeguard students' interests.

Two years of attempts to organize without financial resources clearly demonstrated the need for a financially stable student organization.

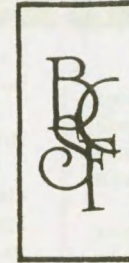
In March students from across the

province founded the B.C. Student Federation.

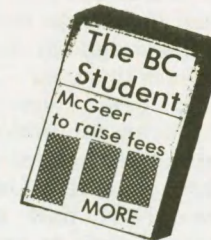
Since then BCSF has monitored provincial government policies and programs. In the summer of '75 it coordinated a successful campaign to set up housing registries at lower mainland colleges and universities.

BCSF has also coordinated ongoing work around the question of education for people outside the lower mainland, tuition fee increases, and unemployment.

This year cutbacks to colleges and universities are BCSF's number 1 priority. (More information inside.)



Students need to know



But it's not enough to fight for more student input into government policies. Part of the way governments get away with policies like cutbacks in funding and poor student aid programs is by making decisions behind closed doors.

BCSF realizes that in order to play an active, constructive role in educational planning students need access to information.

Through leaflets, pamphlets, posters and special editions of the BC Student BCSF works to keep students informed of what's happening in education — and what students are doing about it.

Student councils have access to detailed research, compiled and analyzed by students in BC and across the country and can do their own leaflets.

And student groups of all kinds can call on BCSF for information on everything from how to get organized (write a constitution, set up a budget, etc.) to how to get students out to important meetings, rallies and other major events.

A united student voice in BC



No one student, no one student union alone can ensure constant input and, where necessary, pressure on the government to work for students.

To Government

Through BCSF students from across BC come together to analyze and debate what's happening to education and what should happen.

BCSF monitors provincial government policy development, nominates students to provincial committees, and meets regularly with government to put forward student concerns.

To the Community

On issues like employment and transportation, BCSF works with community groups to develop public pressure on all levels of government.

Seeing that community involvement in education is crucial, BCSF consistently works for increased community participation in planning and using education.

What's this about cutbacks?

Cutbacks mean...

What happened when you went to register this year? Did you get all the courses you need?

Been to your first class yet? You may find you have more fellow students per class than you expected.

And have you tried talking to your instructors? You just might find they're too busy.

Cutbacks mean when you go to the library on the weekend or in the evening you may find it closed. And even if you get inside you're likely to find it can't afford to order the periodicals you need for your project.

Cutbacks often mean no money for improving existing residences, or building residences where none exist.

Science and technical students may notice equipment's a little out of date — and with it your training.

When you paid your tuition you may have thought you'd paid for this year's education. But nowadays on top of tuition fees there's lab fees, xerox fees, and, on more and more campuses, user's fees for things like health services.

And students pay more

When colleges and universities don't get enough money from the government, they turn to their other major source of income: students.

But study after study shows that as tuition fees rise, the number of students from low and middle income families drops.

Student aid allocations have remained the same over the last few years, despite increases in living costs and record unemployment.

Tuition fee increases now hit low and middle income students particularly hard.

25 per cent two years ago. Another proposed tuition increase this year.

Coupled with cutbacks higher tuition means students pay more for less. Education becomes less and less accessible to most Canadians and quality drops. Students, as the largest group of people involved in post secondary education, must have a voice in what's happening to that education.

Students fight back

Students have not ignored these changes for the worst in our educational system.

Two years ago more than 3,000 BC student organized against fee increases. The results: no increases this year.

Last year over 25,000 students across Canada fought tuition increases and cutbacks by marching against government policies.

This year the Universities Council of BC recommends that starting in 79-80 tuition increase yearly to match inflation or every two years by a fixed percentage like 15 per cent.

What are students to do?

Organize locally

The fight against cutbacks and tuition increases is in many ways a fight for a rationally planned educational system in Canada. Students must organize themselves on campus and must be prepared to go out into the community for support.

In BC students must set up local committees to pinpoint where cutbacks most affect their campus and start organizing opposition to cutbacks on campus. And they must prepare for work on the provincial level.

Provincially

BCSF can provide assistance to local committees, monitor and lobby the provincial government and co-ordinate provincial activities.

More detailed plans for BC's participation in the national anti-cutbacks campaign must be worked out by students familiar with the conditions on their own campuses.

The BCSF fall conference will bring together student leaders from across BC. Make sure your campus sends a prepared delegation.

And nationally

Cutbacks and tuition increases are happening countrywide, and it's little wonder when you realize the federal government pays at least half the costs of education.

Your student union is working with the BC Student Federation, the National Union of Students and a number of other organizations to mobilize public opinion against the cutbacks.

This leaflet is part of a countrywide campaign that includes campus visits from provincial and national student executives to report on cutbacks; lobbying of government by student representatives; and if necessary taking every Canadian student who cares about education to the politicians who underfund it.

Contact your student union or the BC Student Federation.

Don't let education become the preserve of the wealthy. Education is a democratic right.



BCSF a closer look

Student council continuity

Summer is a slow time of year. Students leave campus to find jobs, graduate, travel. Through conference workshops and with help from BCSF staff, new student councils get help where they need it. This way they can avoid old mistakes and pick up where the last council left off.

This is especially useful to students at two year colleges which suffer from a high turnover in students.

Student aid

For years students fought for representation on provincial committees.

Today students nominated by BCSF colleges and universities (one for each) sit on the provincial government's Student Services Advisory Committee. They seek regular input from BC students and report to campus representatives at BCSF conferences.

BCSF also elects a student to the provincial student aid Appeals Committee. This means students are assured a sympathetic hearing from someone with first hand knowledge of what it means to be a student when they appeal their student aid funds.

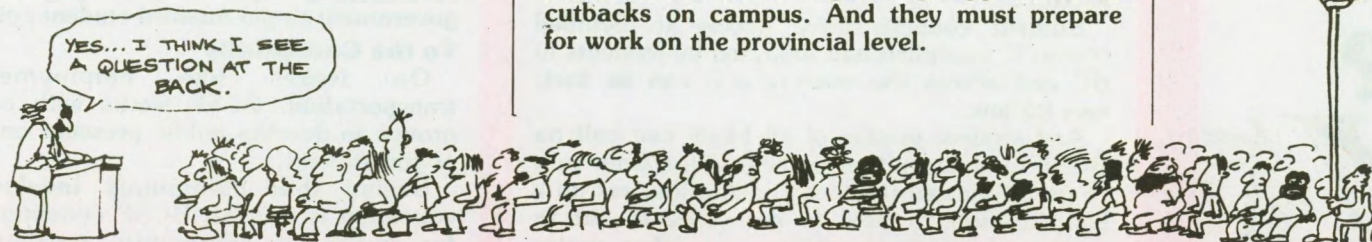
Teaching Assistanceships for international students

International students have been hard hit by cutbacks. This year the federal government would like to eliminate TAs for foreign students.

BCSF is working with the National Union of Students to prevent this move.

In mid August BCSF alerted graduates student organizations to the proposal and is co-ordinating student opposition.

BC graduate students will be kept up to date on the status of negotiations through the BC Student Federation.



For more information contact:
the BC Student Federation
care of Student Society
Simon Fraser University
Burnaby, BC.