

To Whom it May Concern,

We are writing on behalf of the Canadian University Society for Intercollegiate Debate (CUSID), the national organization that governs university debating in Canada. We sanction several official tournaments every year, including three separate regional championships, the British Parliamentary Championships, the National Championships, and the North American Championships in conjunction with the American Parliamentary Debate Association. Our membership is comprised of university debating clubs, sanctioned by their respective institutions, from across Canada. Born in the 1970s, our organization now encompasses over 30 debate clubs from British Columbia to Newfoundland & Labrador. This past year alone, we admitted a handful of new clubs and we continue to generate new interest.

As the Société Universitaire Canadienne pour le Débat Intercollegial (SUCDI), we also promote and facilitate French language debate at the university level, including hosting the Compétitions nationales françaises. Many of our newest member clubs are from French language universities in Quebec, but we're seeing growth in French debating in the West as well.

The successful operation of a university-level debate club within CUSID is not without costs. Internally, debate clubs host regular meetings, show debates, a high school tournament, and one annual CUSID-wide tournament. As such, clubs incur costs associated with booking rooms, buying food for tournament participants, and hosting social events to facilitate club cohesion. On average, such costs can range between \$500 and \$3500 annually.

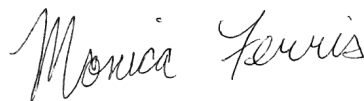
Clubs spend the bulk of their budget, however, on external costs. The average debate club will send competitors to seven Canadian tournaments a year. Most clubs also attend CUSID Nationals, the World University Debate Championships, and American tournaments. While costs depend upon the level of participation and distance from tournaments, clubs incur the costs of tournament registration (which averages \$100/two-person team), accommodation, and travel costs. Travel costs are particularly high for Western clubs because they must fly to the majority of their tournaments. In this light, the average debate club spends approximately \$25 000 on external activities. While a few clubs will generate up to \$3000 from their high school tournament, this money does not adequately cover the cost of running a successful debate club.

Debating in Western Canada has strong historical roots, with many of the debating clubs actually predating the institutions that they represent. With such a strong historical background it can come as no surprise that Western Canadian debaters have achieved a great amount of success both in Canada and internationally. Western universities and debaters have won national titles and appeared in the final round at the World University Debating Championships. Western debaters have also recently begun to increase their participation in French debate. In order to build on these successes we continue to strive to provide the competitive atmosphere that creates intelligent, articulate leaders.

Yours truly,



Jessica Prince
President



Monica Ferris
Vice-President, Western Region