



January 22, 2019

STATEMENT ON THE PROPOSED CHANGES TO POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

On January 17th, the Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities announced a set of proposed changes to come into effect for the 2019-2020 academic year that will deeply affect the accessibility, affordability and quality of post-secondary education in Ontario.

The proposed changes include the following:

1. A 10% reduction in tuition fees at all publicly-funded Ontario universities and colleges for the 2019-2020 academic year. This immediate cut will be followed by a one year tuition freeze in the 2020-2021 academic year. However, there will be no funding from the Ontario government to the institutions to offset the loss of revenue from this tuition cut.
2. A reconfiguration of OSAP which includes: reducing the “computer allowance” to a one-time eligible expense, changing the definition of an “independent student” as someone who has been out of school for six years rather than four years and the elimination of the six-month interest-free grace period for OSAP loans following graduation.
3. Requiring Ontario universities and colleges to provide an online opt-out option for student fees for “non-essential” services. The Ontario Government plans to provide an Ancillary Fee Classification Framework to institutions but it is still unclear what services will be deemed “essential”.

For over 50 years, APUS has advocated for affordable and accessible post-secondary education. We join with our fellow student voices from across the University of Toronto and across the province to express our opposition to these careless cuts that threaten the fabric of our campus life.

Following the announcement, fear, uncertainty and disappointment are reverberating throughout the province. These emotions have long been felt by part-time and mature students who have often been forgotten in the fight for an equitable system of post-secondary education. We believe strongly in lifelong learning, in multiple pathways to post-secondary education, and in the importance of services that support students along our educational trajectories.

More than just the provision of additional learning, post-secondary education also provides opportunities for research and work experience in our fields of study, mentorship and networking opportunities, as well as the ability to build communities on campus. Non-tuition based fees are returned to students in various forms, including work-study placements, food banks, student clubs, free events and programming, scholarship and bursaries, as well as health and dental insurance. When our institutions have not provided us with the services and programming we need, students have time and time again opted to create these services for ourselves in order to enrich the campus experience and support our peers.

Make no mistake, we know that the Ontario government has long since divested itself from any meaningful responsibility in funding a sustainable system of post-secondary education. We need more grants, not less. We need better financial assistance for part-time and mature students. We need increased public investment in our post-secondary education system.

Association of Part-Time Undergraduate Students
North Borden Building
563 Spadina Crescent, Suite 236
Toronto, Ontario M5S 2J7



We stand in solidarity with the student clubs, associations, unions and societies who continue to provide services and community to their members. We implore our members and our wider University of Toronto community to get organized and get involved. Current and future students deserve better.

In solidarity,

The APUS Executive Committee

If you are an APUS member and you have questions regarding these changes, or you would like to get involved, please email advocacy@apus.ca.