



Dear Dean Melanie Woodin,

I'm joining thousands of students at the University of Toronto to demand that the Faculty of Arts and Science **remove fees for deferred examinations** as recommended by the *Don't Invoice Our Illness* campaign led by the Association of Part-Time Undergraduate Students (APUS).

During the pandemic, the University publicly recognized that staying home during illness can massively reduce the spread of infectious disease, and limit the exposure of these diseases to the University of Toronto community. Yet, by charging fees to defer exams during illness, the Faculty of Arts and Science is acting in an opposite and totally irresponsible manner and ignoring the expertise of its own researchers and academics; **encouraging students to attend examinations while ill**, placing students and staff at increased risk. This is a systemic barrier to a **safer education for all students**.

Just as importantly, deferred examination fees are **inequitable and unfair**. Students shouldn't have to choose between a fee and resting to recover from illness. The policy **systematically discriminates against students with chronic illnesses or otherwise-weakened immune systems**, who are more likely to incur these fees and placed at greater risk of serious illness when attending exams alongside students who opt to attend while sick to avoid paying a fee.

Sick students should not feel **pressured to attend an exam** due to financial barriers associated with deferring. Additionally, writing an exam while ill may negatively impact their academic performance. Research has shown that **students would opt to attend an exam while sick** to avoid paying a \$70.00 fee, yet the Faculty of Arts and Science has chosen instead to double-down on its policy by increasing the fee to \$73.50 per exam. This is particularly **egregious during a cost of living crisis**, in which students are already struggling to afford the basic necessities alongside their tuition costs.

The arguments made for the fees are insufficient. Students are already required to provide medical evidence when requesting exam deferral. This additional barrier adds **nothing but a financial burden**. COVID has not disappeared, and while the university refuses to recognize this, policies that discourage students from deferring exams while sick put the whole university community at risk and denies their right to a safer education. Moreover, while we have been told that University guidance encourages faculties to charge a fee, **the other largest St. George Faculty, Applied Science and Engineering, does not charge students** a fee for a first exam deferral due to illness. If the University can afford to waive deferred exam fees for the Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering, it should be able to do the same for the Faculty of Arts and Science.

I support and echo APUS's campaign for a more **accessible and equitable education for all** students. I strongly urge you to eliminate the deferred examination fees in the Faculty of Arts and Science.

Yours sincerely,

Name: _____ Signature: _____

Student no.: _____ Email: _____