



GRADUATE STUDENTS' UNION

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
LOCAL 19, CANADIAN FEDERATION OF STUDENTS

September 18, 2009

Minister John Milloy,
Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities
900 Bay Street, 3rd Floor, Mowat Block
Toronto, Ontario M7A 1L2

Re: Access to the U of T's library and archival collections

Dear Minister Milloy:

The Graduate Students' Union at the University of Toronto is concerned by the decision of the University of Toronto to implement a fee for library borrowing privileges. The University will soon impose an unprecedented user fee that ranges from \$20 to \$200 for access to its vast collection of books and archival materials to graduate students, faculty members and staff from other universities. This fee will come into effect on October 1, 2009.

As the third ranked university behind Harvard and Yale in terms of the most extensive and high quality collection of books and archival resources, the University of Toronto has a special responsibility in allowing reasonable public access to these research materials. As a publicly-funded, public educational institution, the library is a publicly funded resource; direct borrower fees would undermine access to collections necessary in the pursuit of research.

It is clear that there is concern that the yearly \$23 million that the University of Toronto spends on acquisitions is not enough for it to carry out its public role as custodian of the most extensive research library in Canada. What also seems clear, according to the University itself, is that direct borrower fees will not actually provide a way of addressing the issue of sustaining our acquisitions budget – the reason cited for the implementation of the fee. The University of Toronto Libraries annual statistics show that visiting scholars account for just 2% of on-campus loans and that 'direct use' of St George campus libraries have declined over 50% since 2001-2002 (<http://discover.library.utoronto.ca/general-information/about-the-library/annual-statistics>, accessed September 18, 2009).

It is the position of the Graduate Students' Union that your ministry should immediately intervene so that this decision is reversed. Furthermore, we ask that you seek a meeting with the administration, the Graduate Students' Union and the faculty association at the University of Toronto to determine the financial resources that are needed to maintain the libraries annual acquisitions practise, as well as to cover the operational cost of making this publicly-funded institution accessible to graduate students, faculty members, staff from other universities and the broader public.

Sincerely,

The Graduate Students' Union

Cc: Rosario Marchese, Critic, Training, Colleges and Universities
Jim Wilson, Critic, Training, Colleges and Universities
Oliva Chow, MP for Trinity-Spadina
Bob Rae, MP for Toronto-Centre
David Naylor, President, University of Toronto
Cheryl Misak, Provost, University of Toronto