



University of Toronto Graduate Students' Union  
16 Bancroft Avenue  
Toronto, ON., M5S 1C1  
info@utgsu.ca  
www.utgsu.ca

Dear Graduate Students,

The University of Toronto Graduate Students Union' (UTGSU) Executive Committee has been advocating on behalf of the graduate students in the Medical Science Building (MSB) who have been affected by the asbestos contamination in their labs.

Students have expressed disappointment in the University of Toronto's communication efforts. Despite reassurance from administration that safety is a priority, we are appalled by what we view as complete disregard they have shown for students' safety. At this time, we feel that it is important we remain share with you, the Members, the facts as we know them.

### **The Facts**

- Students were locked out of their lab when they found a sign on the door that indicated the lab was contaminated with asbestos, and they were not allowed to re-enter. These students did not receive any email communication about the lab being shut down before showing up on the day of to do their work.
- The University of Toronto administration had knowledge that certain labs were contaminated with asbestos 3-4 weeks before communicating this with the students working out of the labs.
- After the students found out that they had been exposed to dangerous levels of asbestos, and they communicated this with the University of Toronto. The response students received was that they should, "go home and wash their clothes."
- Moving forward, the administration would send conflicting emails to the students that their labs were free of asbestos, and then a couple of days later, emails indicating that there was a re-occurrence of the dangerous dust.
- The University of Toronto organized a meeting for the students with a occupation physician. Students shared confidential information with this physician, which was then shared with the University of Toronto administration.
- The University of Toronto has not shared the true timeline of events with the media, and have made it seem like the students affected by the asbestos contamination are over exaggerating this situation.
- It is now coming up for two months that students have been left without adequate space to complete their work. This has now put their scholarships, deadlines, and visas in jeopardy.

The UTGSU Executive Committee will continue to monitor this situation, and advocate on behalf of our Members.

Sincerely,



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## **The UTGSU Executive Committee**

*Please note: The UTGSU will be providing a student rights workshop on April 19, from 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. in Grad Room (located at 66 Harbord Street in the basement). This workshop is for graduate students at the University of Toronto who are interested in hearing more about their legal rights, and how to address health and safety concerns in the workplace (specifically labs, and study space). Register here: [UTGSU Student Rights Workshop](#).*



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