



January 28, 2019.

The UTGSU Executive Committee Statement on the Ontario Provincial Announcement to Post-Secondary Education

“We stand in solidarity with students across Ontario and Canada in taking action against the provincial government’s changes to post-secondary education”

On January 17, 2019, Merrilee Fullerton (Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, Conservative Party of Ontario) under the leadership of Doug Ford, announced that their party was implementing a series of policy changes and cuts to the post-secondary education sector’s Ontario Student Assistance Plan (OSAP) and tuition fees. While details of the precise changes to OSAP and tuition fees have not been released in writing, we understand that the changes will:

- 1) **eliminate** the six-month interest-free grace period on the OSAP.
- 2) **remove** Ontario Student Grant (OSG) needs-based tuition grants for low-income families.
- 3) **increase** the number of student loans distributed by the OSAP.
- 4) **reduce** only domestic tuition fees by 10% and
- 5) **force** colleges and universities to absorb the loss and make decisions about what is deemed a “non-essential” service.

While a decrease in tuition fees is a positive step forward, the removal of tuition assistance programs create additional financial barriers to education. Furthermore, students, provincially and nationally, are very concerned about the far-reaching effects these changes will have on all students as well as underrepresented groups such as international students, students with disabilities, student parents, low-income students, Black, Indigenous, and otherwise racialized students as well as other marginalized students who are particularly vulnerable to the detrimental effects of post-secondary education cuts.

Ultimately, the UTGSU Executive Committee is concerned about what these changes will cost students, how these changes will impact students’ livelihood and academic experience, particularly graduate students, and what action we can take to strengthen our coalition efforts and minimize any potential negative repercussions. Going forward, we hope to work with administration to address the impacts these proposed changes may have on the graduate student community, and we remain strong in our commitment to work with coalition and campus partners to advocate for accessible post-secondary education for all students.

Want to support? Check out the next page to read how you can take action now.

Sincerely,

The UTGSU Executive Committee

Want to support?

(1) **Talk** about the issues and raise awareness amongst your friends, family, and community.

(2) **Share** the upcoming rallies and attend if you are available and able:

- February 4, 12-3 PM | Queen's Park: Join the Provincial March For Students
<https://m.facebook.com/events/296202404419912>

(3) **Voice** your concerns to your local Member of Provincial Parliament (MPP)

- MPP List: <https://www.ola.org/en/members/current>

Additional Information

1. Ontario Provincial Media Advisory (Live Announcement)

<https://news.ontario.ca/maesd/en/2019/01/minister-of-training-colleges-and-universities-to-make-an-announcement.html>

2. Event Links

- **February 4: Provincial March for Students**
<https://m.facebook.com/events/296202404419912>
- **January 25: March Against OSAP Cuts**
<https://www.facebook.com/events/590198821418635/>
- **January 24: U of T Banner-Making Co-Hosted by Ontario Provincial Research Interest Group (OPIRG), Association of Part-Time Undergraduate Students (APUS), and the University of Toronto Graduate Students' Union (UTGSU)**
<https://m.facebook.com/events/1112586222255644>
- **January 18: We Are The Students: Emergency Rally at Queen's Park**
<https://m.facebook.com/events/2334011076830801>