

Editorial

Banning ancillary fees only a band-aid solution

At first glance the Liberal government's ban of ancillary fees appears to be a victory for students in their fight against excessive tuition costs. But this victory will ring hollow unless concrete measures are soon taken to alleviate the chronic underfunding of Ontario universities: ancillary fees are just a symptom of this much more dangerous disease.

The Minister for Colleges and Universities, Gregory Sorbara, based his decision on the fear that compulsory tuition-related ancillary fees (unregulated surcharges that students pay) were being used as a means of generating extra revenue. Considering that York will not disclose a breakdown of its ancillary and discretionary fees, Sorbara's concern is not unjustified. Students have a right to know exactly what they're paying for.

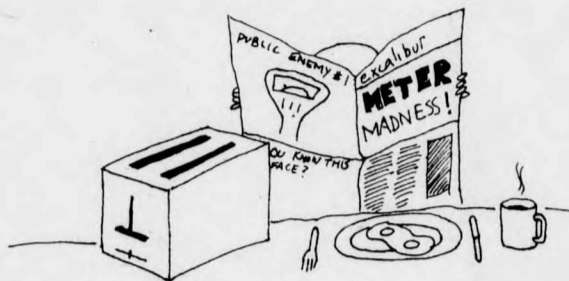
But even if students receive lowered tuition, they will still have to ask themselves at what cost to their education. The universities have used ancillary fees as a method of increasing their revenue because the previous (Conservative) government had effectively determined the price universities could charge students in tuition. Legally, universities are entitled to set their own fees. But in 1971, the government, as a matter of social policy to ensure accessibility, instituted a "formula fee" for universities. They could only charge 10 percent on top of this; any more would result in a corresponding loss in their operating grants.

The government evidently did not view post-secondary education as a priority, as they let the "formula fee" lag far behind inflation. The universities, as a result had to find an additional source of revenue if they wanted to come even close to maintaining the quality of their institutions. It has been a losing battle, and now with the ban on tuition-related ancillary fees, the quality of our education threatens to sink even lower.

Sorbara has promised an up to five percent increase in discretionary fee allowances, but many doubt that this will compensate for the banned ancillary fee revenue. The banning of ancillary fees, acting as an unofficial ceiling on tuition, would be an admirable gesture only if it was supplemented by increased government funding.

But, the Liberals, with their one-shot deals, such as their "Excellence Funds", have not addressed the disease itself. They are only treating the symptoms.

breakfast at York...



they're popping up everywhere

astellano

Letters

Proposed porn laws a threat to Freud

Editor:

The response which often came across in regard to last month's proposed laws on pornography was that although its new definition of pornography which greatly restricted sexual expression was unacceptable, its aim to protect children was widely welcomed. But unfortunately, it is with the claim to protect children that the government seeks to gain the power which will allow it to suppress all forms of sexual representations, children and adult, violent and non-violent, visual and written. Although John Crosbie said that the proposed laws would not affect the latter, nevertheless it could be censored if it encouraged, condoned or presented as normal any child sexual activity or sexual abuse. This does include a wide area of the written words which could make illegal such works as Sigmund Freud's *On Sexuality*, Margaret Laurence's *The Diviners*, Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* and Plato's *Symposium* which do present child (defined by the new definition as anyone under 18) sexual activity as normal.

We better look into our closets and drawers now to make sure we don't have books which fit such a definition as child pornography, because if the proposed laws are passed we can be jailed for six months for simply possessing them!

—Marlon Lo

Do York bureaucrats ever try to think?

Editor:

Could anyone answer the following questions for me?

1. Does anyone in the York bureaucratic hierarchy ever try to think? If so,
2. Then, why should Moon Rd. and Assiniboine residences be out of campus mailing addresses—especially for cheques from the East Office building, and not bills?
3. Why can't York enjoy cable TV reception?
3. Why should Parking office tow one's car to Armstrong's Garage, when there is the University pound?
4. Why offer summer courses, and yet close the library abnormally early?

—Kateba-Mushanga
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excalibur

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