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# excalibur

**YORK UNIVERSITY'S COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER**

## Disappointment over NDP, band-aid measures

by Jim Hoggett

The Ministry of Colleges and Universities has pencilled an eight per cent increase in tuition for next year.

The hike will raise York tuition about \$135, bringing the cost per full-time student to \$1,829, not including ancillary fees.

Ontario Treasurer Floyd Laughren also announced that funding to universities would increase from \$1.81 billion to \$1.96 billion, an increase of only 7.3 per cent.

Laughren said that although the transfers were considerably less than what was expected, they represent the minimum amounts needed for universities to meet their basic and essential program requirements given increasing costs and utilization.

"We are aware that this funding may only be adequate to permit the maintenance of current service levels and this may result in difficult service realignments," Laughren said. "I know our transfer partners will understand the economic constraints Ontario is facing and do their best to manage within allocations."

Representatives of the York Federation of Students and the York University Faculty Association expressed their disappointment and opposition to the provincial government's funding announcement.

"It is very unfortunate that the New Democrats have opted to renege on their own party policy and to raise tuition," said YFS President Jean Ghomeshi. "The increase will no doubt have adverse effects upon accessibility to post-secondary education in Ontario, which we were led to believe the NDP holds dear."

"YUFA is greatly disappointed that this government did not, in its funding decision, acknowledge the critical situation in the university sector," said YUFA Chair Brian Abner. "The transfer grant will not nearly match what is needed to cover the increases in operating costs or our equity and enrolment commitments, let alone the additional \$400 million that is necessary to recover from long-term underfunding by previous governments."

Despite the fact that the tuition hike was well under the \$550 increase proposed by the Council of Ontario Universities in December, stu-

dents and professors reacted with disappointment to the funding announcement, and called on the government to develop a long-term strategy for universities.

In a joint statement, the Ontario Federation of Students (OFS) and the Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations (OCUFA) said strategies for rebuilding the university system were urgently needed.

"We've been telling this government that we need new directions to reduce tuition, restructure student aid, deal with faculty shortages and implement employment equity," said OFS Chair Tim Jackson. "Instead, we get a huge tuition fee increase and no plans to deal with long-term problems."

According to Jackson, Ontario will remain in ninth place among Canadian provinces in per-student funding.

"The funding announced will result in dramatic cutbacks in a system that has already been cut well into the bone," said OCUFA President Bill Graham. "We need to start today figuring out how we'll provide proper funding in coming years, or we can start printing up the 'closed' signs."

Jackson said that the eight per cent fee hike would further restrict access to education.

"In these times of recession, it's already much harder for low-income people to get into universities," Jackson said. "To hit them with another tuition fee increase is to slam the door in their faces."

Given inflation and increased enrolment, OFS and OCUFA estimate that universities would have required a nine per cent funding increase just to keep pace.

They also estimated that Ontario universities need at least \$400 million extra over four years just to recover from a decade of underfunding.

"The university challenge for the 1990s is to open the doors to groups who've been shut out such as women, visible minorities, people with disabilities and native people," Graham said. "That can't happen unless universities are publicly funded and properly managed."

According to Jackson, the underfunding of education during a recession was shortsighted.

"We as a society need educated people and research capabilities to solve the recession," Jackson said. "It makes more sense now than ever to invest in universities."

## Access to York facilities for disabled students being expanded

by Steve Bergson

York University has taken a step toward eliminating some of the barriers to education based on student disability. York has become the third university in Canada to introduce an attendant care program on campus (the others are Carleton and Waterloo).

The attendant care program, started in Nov. 1990, offers non-medical assistance to the students, staff and faculty at York. Attendant care workers help people with dressing, eating, laundry and housekeeping.

The service is administered by the March of Dimes, in cooperation with York, the Office of Student Affairs, and the Office for Persons with Disabilities (OPD). There are currently seven students making use of the program.

Joseph Civitella, director of the program, said that he was quite pleased by the positive response. "The ministry of community and social services and the university have been very supportive," Civitella said.

He hopes to make the program more available by running it during the summer and by reaching out to the community.

The attendant care program at York is a result of the combined efforts of York's disabled students and the OPD during the last three years. Ilana Yuditsky, Coordinator

of OPD, hopes that the program will attract students who require attendant care at York.

"In the past, many students who needed full-time care could not get it," Yuditsky said. "Having attendant care is creating a higher level of integration and accessibility for disabled people at York, allowing them to live independent lives."

John Mossa, who uses the program, feels that it is a necessity. "It [the program] has worked out very well," Mossa said. "So far, it's been very accommodating and very flexible."

Mossa noted that many people with disability feel discouraged to attend university.

"Most disabled students don't even feel that university is an option because they associate it with physical barriers, transportation difficulties, or lack of attendant care," Mossa said. "Hopefully, they will come to places like York where the attendant care can help them into the community through education and which will help them in the workplace."

Hugh Scher of ABLE (the advocacy group for York's disabled students), was satisfied with the program at York. "ABLE is very pleased that the attendant care program is on campus, aiding the accessibility of disabled students at York."



CLIVE COHEN

## Angry words exchanged

The *Excalibur* photographer manages to get a quick shot off in the crowd of people surrounding the east bear pit. A lot of pushing and shoving started after peace protestors and pro-troop demonstrators met during a pro-troop rally.

by Brent Poland

A rally on Thursday, Feb. 7 to support Canadian troops in the Persian Gulf was disrupted when anti-war demonstrators and pro-troop demonstrators confronted each other in the middle of Central Square.

The demonstration, sponsored by the Students in Support of Canadian Troops in the Gulf, had MPs and speakers from both the Liberal and Conservative parties speak in favor of Canadian troop involvement in the Gulf.

The rally which started at noon was disrupted a half hour later when an anti-war demonstrator with a sign condemning Israel occupation of the West

Bank and the Golan Heights, inflamed emotions on both sides.

Two members of the pro-troop rally carrying a Canadian flag attempted to conceal the placard. Emotions and words soon flared up and the area surrounding the East Bear pit turned into a large pushing match between the two factions.

When some of the shouting matches turned into physical fights, security officers and George Sangera YFS vp (programs) intervened and had to separate several groups of demonstrators.

one of the speakers for the Liberal party, Peterson was at the rally to explain to students "what the war meant for Cana-

dians and to initiate a few thought about creating a stable peace in the Middle East."

Peterson thought that the disruption was "not conducive to an intellectual exchange, but in a democracy one cannot expect the other side not to interfere, especially at York."

Some of the pro-troop members accused the peace protestors of being anti-patriotic and the peace protestors called the pro-troop members "blinded" and "lackeys of the US".

The event was captured by most major news channels who were present to film the MPs and speakers, including the *Toronto Star*, *CTV News* and *City TV*.