

January 24, 2019

Office of the President

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A Message from President Lenton on the Recent Government Announcement

Many members of the York community – students, staff, and faculty alike – have questions about the Government of Ontario’s announcement last week regarding tuition fees, student fees, and OSAP. We still do not have all the details, but we are reaching out to the government and working closely with our partners across the postsecondary sector to understand the implications for our students and our university.

The announcement included three elements:

- A 10 per cent cut to tuition fees in 2019-20, followed by a tuition freeze in 2020-21.
- Changes to OSAP that will affect eligibility, the balance between grants and loans, and some aspects of repayment.
- A requirement that some student fees be made optional.
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Over the past few months, we have undertaken a successful budget consultation with our community. We received invaluable feedback on how best to align our resources with the priorities and initiatives that will continue to advance our vision as an engaged university committed to access, student success, a high-quality learning environment, and to the intensification of our scholarship, research and related creative activities for the maximum benefit of the communities we serve.

The 10 per cent reduction in tuition fees will benefit many York students. Many others may find themselves negatively affected by the changes to the OSAP program. Access is a foundational value for York, and we remain committed to ensuring that financial circumstances do not stand in the way of a qualified student entering or completing their program. In 2018-19, York awarded more than \$78M in scholarships, awards, and bursaries.

As you know, the reduction in tuition fees also comes at a cost to the university, cutting our revenue by nearly \$48 million in 2019-20 and over \$60 million in 2020-21. The government has not increased public funding to York to address this gap. We will be undertaking a comprehensive financial analysis to fully understand the impact of this loss of funding.

We will not, however, be abandoning the invaluable insights we gained through our budget consultations. Achieving our vision and supporting identified priorities may require some difficult decisions, but York’s senior leadership is committed to consulting with students, staff, and faculty to collectively identify opportunities and strategies for responding to the new funding reality.



York will continue to provide our diverse student body with innovative teaching and learning experiences to better prepare them for a dynamic world. We will conduct world-class research that advances knowledge, improves lives, and drives economic success. We will engage with local and global communities to help build social well-being and tackle complex challenges. And we will do all of this together, through meaningful conversation and collaboration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rhonda L. Lenton". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "R" and a long, sweeping underline.

Rhonda L. Lenton
President & Vice-Chancellor