



Engineering Tuition in Ontario

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1 Engineering Student Societies' Council of Ontario

Engineering Student Societies Council of Ontario (ESSCO) was formed in the late 1980's to convince the Professional Engineers of Ontario (PEO) to create a student membership program through the PEO. The purpose of this program was to accredit undergraduate work experience towards P. Eng, licence to engineer. ESSCO currently has student membership programs with both PEO and Ontario Society of Professional Engineers (OSPE). The OSPE student membership program allows ESSCO members to receive the same benefits and discounts as an engineer on matters such as car insurance and cell phones.

The current goal of ESSCO is to act as a link between the professional engineers and the engineering students. ESSCO also acts as a platform where engineering students can exchange cultural ideas with each other, and discuss issues that concern engineering students across the province.

2 Lobbying Issues and Actions Committee

The Lobbying Issues and Actions Committee is a sub-committee of ESSCO. It was started in 2002 to investigate and report on issues that are of concern to the engineering schools in Ontario. The purpose is to ensure that ESSCO is addressing issues that are important to students. The committee consists of members from five different schools and is chaired by the Vice President of Services and Development. The committee works to put together a report on a selected topic of the year for ESSCO members.

The topic for 2005-2006 is on **engineering tuition increases**.

3 Introduction

Engineering tuition fees in Ontario have been increasing exponentially for the past decade. On December 15, 1997, the provincial government made public its decision to regulate only undergraduate arts and science programs and to allow for deregulation of professional programs such as engineering [1]. Since engineering is a deregulated program, there is no cap on tuition increase, which is decided independently by each university institution as it sees fit. Since 1994, tuition has dramatically increased by an average of 261 per cent in deregulated programs and 139 per cent in regulated programs [1, 2]. From the 2003 Throne Speech, there has been a provincial-wide tuition freeze for the past two years effective from September 2004 to September 2006, as confirmed by Premier Dalton McGuinty [1, 4, 5]. The following LIAC report analyses engineering tuition across Ontario universities, investigates both students' and institutions' views on Ontario engineering tuition, discusses proposed government actions to the problem and provides an overview of sources of financial assistance.

4 Engineering Tuition across Ontario

In the tables listed below are trends of basic tuition (no ancillary fees) increase at various universities across Ontario over the past five years.

4.1 Universities with Relatively High Rates of Engineering Tuition Increase

Tuition fees and the rate of increase between a regulated program such as arts and a deregulated program like engineering at the following universities are quite substantial.

Carleton University

Academic Year	Arts tuition (\$) per 4 month semester	Arts rate of increase (%)	Engineering tuition (\$) per 4 month semester	Engineering rate of Increase (%)
2001-2002	1995		2425	
2002-2003	2035	2.01	2474	2.02
2003-2004	2076	2.01	2771	12.00
2004-2005	2076	0.00	2771	0.00
2005-2006	2076	0.00	2771	0.00

Sources:

<http://www.carleton.ca/tuition>

http://www.carleton.ca/finance/admin/reports/budget_report/income.htm

http://www.carleton.ca/finance/budget_report05income.htm

McMaster University

Academic Year	Arts tuition (\$) per 4 month semester	Arts rate of increase (%)	Engineering tuition (\$) per 4 month semester	Engineering rate of Increase (%)
2001-2002	3830.7		4555.98	
2002-2003	3931.5	2.63	4675.77	2.63
2003-2004	4032.3	2.56	4795.77	2.57
2004-2005	4133.1	2.50	5371.08	12.00
2005-2006	4133.1	0.00	5371.08	0.00

Sources:

http://www.mcmaster.ca/bms/finance/student/winter/fees_cdn.html

Dave Tyndall, VP Education of McMaster University

Queen's University

Academic Year	Arts tuition (\$) per 4 month semester	Arts rate of increase (%)	Engineering tuition (\$) per 4 month semester	Engineering rate of Increase (%)
2001-2002	2015		2707.5	
2002-2003	2055.5	2.01	3130	15.60
2003-2004	2096.5	1.99	3380	7.99
2004-2005	2096.5	0.00	3380	0.00
2005-2006	2096.5	0.00	3380	0.00

Sources:

<http://www.queensu.ca/registrar/fees/ug-dom.html>

http://www.queensu.ca/registrar/fees/archive/domestic/year/yearug_index.html

University of Waterloo

Academic Year	Arts tuition (\$) per 4 month semester	Arts rate of increase (%)	Engineering tuition (\$) per 4 month semester	Engineering rate of Increase (%)
2001-2002	2029		2643	
2002-2003	2070	2.02	3038	14.95
2003-2004	2111	1.98	3491	14.91
2004-2005	2111	0.00	3491	0.00
2005-2006	2111	0.00	3491	0.00

Sources:

<http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infoucal/0203/FEES/schedule.html>

<http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosp/Fin/students/ungradsch.html>

4.2 Universities with Relatively Lower Rates of Engineering Tuition Increase

Although there is still a difference between regulated and deregulated tuition fees at the following universities, this difference is less significant compared to the figures from Section 4.1.

University of Guelph

Academic Year	Arts tuition (\$) per 4 month semester	Arts rate of increase (%)	Engineering tuition (\$) per 4 month semester	Engineering rate of Increase (%)
2001-2002	1975		2145	
2002-2003	2014.5	2.00	2188	2.00
2003-2004	2053	1.91	2230	1.92
2004-2005	2092	1.90	2272	1.88
2005-2006	2092	0.00	2272	0.00

Sources:

http://www.uoguelph.ca/undergrad_calendar/c06/c06-university.shtml
http://www.uoguelph.ca/calendar_archives/undergrad/2004-05/c06/c06-university.shtml
http://www.uoguelph.ca/calendar_archives/undergrad/2003-04/06-university.shtml
http://www.uoguelph.ca/calendar_archives/undergrad/2002-03/06.shtml#0.2.TXZKBH.MR5FRL.5DWWMG.I6
http://www.uoguelph.ca/calendar_archives/undergrad/March2001/06.html

University of Ottawa

Academic Year	Arts tuition (\$) per 4 month semester	Arts rate of increase (%)	Engineering tuition (\$) per 4 month semester	Engineering rate of Increase (%)
2001-2002	2005		2367	
2002-2003	2042	1.85	2500	5.62
2003-2004	2081	1.91	2600	4.00
2004-2005	2081	0.00	2600	0.00
2005-2006	2081	0.00	2600	0.00

Sources:

http://www.uottawa.ca/academic/info/regist/fees/fees2005_en.htm
http://www.uottawa.ca/academic/info/regist/fees/fees_arch_en.htm

University of Toronto

Academic Year	Arts tuition (\$) per 4 month semester	Arts rate of increase (%)	Engineering tuition (\$) per 4 month semester	Engineering rate of Increase (%)
2001-2002	Not Available		2894.5	
2002-2003	1951.5		3039	4.99
2003-2004	2092.5	7.23	3125	2.83
2004-2005	2092.5	0.00	3281.5	5.01
2005-2006	2092.5	0.00	3281.5	0.00

Sources:

http://www.provost.utoronto.ca/userfiles/page_attachments/Library/6/dom_fees_2005_06_2141464.pdf

<http://www.utoronto.ca/govcncl/bac/details/ex/2002-03/exa20030421-12bii.pdf>

<http://www.utoronto.ca/govcncl/bac/details/bb2003-04/bba20040414-06c.pdf>

5 Students' Perspectives on Tuition Increases

The following information is compiled from responses of the general student population in an online survey. There were 178 participants from 10 different universities. The majority of students were from (in decreasing order) the University of Toronto, McMaster University, University of Waterloo, University of Guelph, University of Ottawa and Carleton University.

5.1 Sources of Tuition Funding

While many respondents are dependent on OSAP and school bursaries for the funding of their education, it appears that in many cases this amount is not enough. In combination with this financial assistance, many have worked tirelessly since high school, while others rely on the money they earn through co-op terms to fund their university education. One respondent comments that even with an additional job, along with access to a portion of Registered Retirement Savings Plan (RRSP) through the Lifelong Learning Plan, he is still living below the poverty line.

There are those who are fortunate enough to have parents or families to assist them, which in many cases would make them ineligible for OSAP funding and school bursaries. This often results in increasing the financial burden on the student's family or forcing the student to get a line of credit. There are also other sources of tuition funding such as using Registered Education Savings Plan (RESP) and personal savings.

Overall, it appears that for many of those who are eligible for OSAP, the government loan is not sufficient. For students who do not have high enough marks to get additional funding through scholarships, or to maintain a place in the school's co-op program, the result is additional stress. Many of these students are forced to get additional jobs and/or deplete their savings.

5.2 Coping with Tuition Increases

There are three fundamental ways through which students deal with tuition increases: scholarships, part-time work, and a lowered standard of living.

For those who have the marks required to hold scholarships and academic bursaries, their focus is on maintaining their grades. By keeping their grades high, they

can ensure that their scholarship funding continues. For those without scholarships, attempts have been made to improve one's grades to qualify.

Other students are forced to resort to part-time jobs on their off hours to find additional funding - with some taking on multiple jobs just to get by. This option tends to be mutually exclusive of the first method, as students with multiple jobs are usually not able to excel in their courses. Some students do their best to find jobs that pay better than minimum wage to make situations easier, but this is certainly easier to say than to do. Perhaps the government should consider creating well-paid part-time jobs specifically for university students.

Regardless of a student's academic standing, almost all have accepted that a lowered standard of living is necessary in order to save as much money as possible. Students look for the most economical housing, borrow textbooks from the library instead of purchasing them, buy the cheapest groceries, and are very into energy conservation to save on utilities. Of course, those who are able to live with families while going to school don't have to take these measures, but unfortunately many students simply don't have this option.

Worse still, quite a few students respond that they have no strategy whatsoever. They feel hopeless and do not know what to do, seeing no options other than going deeper into debt.

5.3 Fighting Tuition Increases

In terms of going against tuition increases, there is a range of responses from students who feel strongly about doing all they can to stop the increasing to those who feel that they should not be fighting against the increasing.

Interestingly, quite a few students have actually stepped back and looked at the bigger picture. These respondents believe that universities are doing the best they can with the funding from the government. These students acknowledge that a forced tuition reduction will affect the quality of Engineering education, which they do not want.

There are also those who feel that protests are fruitless and have little to no effect. They feel that their time would be better spent elsewhere to deal with the tuition increase such as looking for part-time work or studying to achieve better grades. There are students who are not happy with tuition increases but have no significant methods of

protesting against them. Some simply don't know how they can fight against the increases effectively.

At the institutional level, there are those who will only fight against the increases at their university, such as voting against raising student association fees. Some have also tried to openly discuss the issue of tuition increases with the university faculty and administrators. Of those who support fighting tuition increases at the government level, there are a variety of ways through which these students lobby for better government funding for post-secondary education. Some support campaigns, petitions and protests initiated by organizations such as the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) or the Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance (OUSA). For example, multiple students have been taking part in the CFS initiative whereby students are to send a CFS postcard to Premier McGuinty in opposition of tuition increases. Others focus on lobbying MPs and MPPs and on electing political parties that are sympathetic to the cause. Furthermore, it is worth noting that many students consider participating in the LIAC survey as a method of protest against tuition increases.

Finally, there are those who feel that a fight for increasing financial assistance would be even more effective than a fight against tuition increases. In addition to helping current students in need, this would make higher education more accessible to a wider general public.

5.4 Assistance and Support

There are students who are fortunate enough to come from well-off families and thus can turn to family members for financial support. For others, there is mention of the financial aid office or the food bank being places they can seek assistance. However, these students see these sources as a band-aid rather than a remedy to the problem. One student in particular comments that no matter how informational and helpful the financial councilor is at the university, the councilor cannot pay his tuition for him. Others think of their Engineering Society and LIAC-ESSCO as student groups they could look to for support.

Unfortunately, most students feel that they either don't have anyone to turn to for support, or that someone they could turn to (such as the university or MPPs) would end up not being of any help. Many feel that neither the government nor schools care about the well-being of students enough to see tuition increases as a major problem. Some

express interest in seeking support but feel that there is no information readily available to guide students to sources of assistance.

5.5 The Next Step

While many students say that they are not looking forward to potential tuition increases, most don't have any idea of what students should be doing in terms of effective action to keep tuition low. Either they don't believe the options that exist would be useful, they don't have the time to devote to fighting tuition increases, or they simply have no ideas. Some even go as far as to say that the discussion on the tuition issue should stop entirely, and that students should just accept the tuition as it comes, deal with it and move on.

Those students who support taking action seem to want to turn this into a political issue. They suggest continuing to make protests, forming new lobby groups, or getting involved in politics directly in order to push through changes. One response in particular seems to sum up the sentiment of many students:

We should not fight rising costs; only demand accountability for the rising costs. If it can be shown to me that the increased cost is justified by maintaining or improving some aspect of the education, I will happily make that sacrifice.

6 Institutions' Views on Tuition Increases

The following information is compiled from responses of administrations at different universities through in-person, phone and/or email correspondence. Each university was asked to justify tuition increases and the allocation of tuition fees. As these were not simple questions, many institute administrations did not wish to share this information and participate in this report for various reasons. The main sources for the subsequent sections were provided by the University of Waterloo, the University of Ottawa and Carleton University. Below is the issue of tuition increases from the universities' perspective.

6.1 Justification for Tuition Increases

According to the university administrators, tuition increases are necessary to follow both the rate of monetary inflation and the increased cost of providing quality education for students. Due to the fact that the government funding for post-secondary education has been cut since 1992, the result is increased pressure on student tuition.

As engineering is a professional degree that is deregulated by the government, universities are to determine tuition fees as they see fit. The justification behind the big difference between engineering tuition to that of regulated programs is that engineering students will have relatively higher earning power upon graduation. Thus, engineering students will have the capability as professionals to pay off the relatively large debts incurred from post-secondary education.

As the cost of delivering education does not remain static, tuition increases are necessary to account for professor salaries, operational expenses, material costs and equipment costs. Provost Amit Chakma of the University of Waterloo and the administration of Carleton University claim that the high rates of inflation are necessary to stay competitive on the cutting edge of research and educational quality.

6.2 Tuition Spending

As the universities explain, there is a high cost associated with the delivery of a high quality of education. The following are the allocations of tuition fees:

- Professor salaries (salary increases as well as the hiring of more professors)
- Labs
- Materials
- Equipment
- Maintenance of infrastructure
- Operating expenses

Furthermore, it is mandated by the Ontario government that all Ontario universities set aside a percentage of additional revenue from tuition fee increases for student financial aid.

6.3 Financial Assistance for Students

As there is a policy by the Ontario government that universities are to reserve at least 30% of the tuition increases for student financial assistance, universities claim that as tuition increases, so will the tuition fee set-aside budget for financial aid to students. Universities feel that they are doing the best they can to maintain the quality of education while at the same time assist students in need to fund their post-secondary education. Carleton University is proud to be ranked #1 in Canada for scholarships and bursaries offered to its students. It has over \$10.3 million in scholarships and bursaries to offer annually to over 7,000 students. The University of Waterloo is also proactive in this cause. In 2005, the University of Waterloo's Board of Governors and Senate approved a guarantee to students to fund OSAP unmet need with a bursary to fill the gap.

6.4 Projected Tuition Increase

When asked to project future tuition trends, the universities make mention of no decisions having been made. Since the Ministry of Education/Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities has not released the tuition framework for future years,

universities are reluctant to provide numbers or future plans. However, it is worth noting a fee increase was approved (but never implemented) by Carleton's Board of Governors as a symbolic protest to the freeze last year. With Premier McGuinty's announcement of lifting the tuition freeze next September, one can only make an educated guess as to the likelihood of tuition trends in future years to come.

7 The Provincial Government's Attempts to Control Tuition Increases

The following information is compiled from an interview with a county MPP conducted by LIAC committee member, Rene Marchand. From this meeting it was gathered that the provincial government is in the process of attempting to control the increase of tuition across Ontario in 2006. The tuition freeze in 2004 was their first effort in this cause. As the rising cost of tuition of higher education is a primary concern of Ontarians, the provincial government is working hard to keep post-secondary education affordable to all students. Below is a short summary of several actions taken by the government, some of which are in progress and others in the planning phase.

7.1 Limiting Tuition Increases

The provincial government has put forth a strong message to schools that current tuition should not be increased beyond a 5% rate. It has not been confirmed whether or not all schools will be abiding by this advised limit. Furthermore, in subsequent years the provincial government would like to see a ceiling on tuition rates. With this in place, universities would have a maximum tuition rate which cannot be exceeded. Also to note is the ambiguity of whether this recommended 5% increase applies to all faculties or only to those regulated by the government.

7.2 Government Re-regulation of Deregulated Programs

As it has been brought to the government's attention that rates for tuition in professional programs have grown exponentially over the recent years, the provincial government would like to take action to keep these professional programs accessible to all students. To help alleviate this tuition problem, the government would like to regain a certain level of control of deregulated programs like engineering in the province. Thus, the provincial government is proposing to have a transition period where deregulated programs would

be phased over back into regulation, allowing for more government control over tuition increases.

7.3 Rae Review Recommendations

There is an assessment of the feasibility of the Rae Review recommendations made last year. Although there is uncertainty as to what extent the recommendations will be implemented currently, the government does intend to go along with the guidelines of the Rae Review. The current concern of many government officials is that the Rae Review mainly benefits students from lower class families and neglects those from the middle class. Thus, a more elaborate review and possibly new recommendations and extensions will be made to the Rae Review in order to make higher education more accessible to all students.

8 Sources of Student Financial Assistance

As many students in the online survey have expressed interest in learning about available student support but feel that this information is not readily accessible, the following is an overview of the different forms of student financial assistance. For additional details, please refer to the links provided in the respective sections.

8.1 General Student Financial Assistance

8.1.1 The Ontario Student Assistance Program

Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP) serves to assist students with financial needs in meeting the costs of post-secondary education. The program is intended to promote equal opportunity for all students, regardless of financial background, to have access to higher education. OSAP loans accounts for both educational costs and living expenses. It is also an interest-free loan.

Upon filling out an OSAP application form, students will be considered for the Canada Ontario Integrated Student Loan, the amount of which is dependent on one's financial needs. With submission of the OSAP application, students will be automatically considered for other grants or bursaries, some of which may require additional paperwork. These grants and bursaries are awarded on the basis of financial need and other factors. Eligibility requirements range from: achieving high academic performance, having dependents such as children or spouses, attending school on a part-time basis, and having a disability. For a more extensive list of the available grants and bursaries, as well as the associated eligibility requirements, please refer to: http://osap.gov.on.ca/eng/not_secure/contents.htm

8.1.2 Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation

The Government of Canada, alongside with the provincial government, offers Millennium Scholarships to financially assist students in post-secondary education. There are three programs available: the Millennium/Ontario Access Grant, the Millennium Bursary and the Millennium Excellence Award.

8.1.2.1 Millennium/Ontario Access Grant

Automatic consideration for the Millennium/Ontario Access Grant goes hand in hand with the submission of the OSAP application. This grant is awarded upon first year university entry and on the basis of financial need. The amount awarded is the less significant of 50 per cent of one's tuition, \$3,000 or the amount of one's Ontario student loan. For further information, please refer to: http://osap.gov.on.ca/eng/not_secure/Mill_OAG.htm

8.1.2.2 Millennium Bursary

Much like the Millennium/Ontario Access Grant, automatic consideration for the Millennium Bursary goes hand in hand with the submission of the OSAP application. This bursary is of a value of \$3000 per year. Eligibility criteria require that students have completed at least 60% of one year of post secondary studies and have high financial needs as predetermined by OSAP. For more information, please visit: http://osap.gov.on.ca/eng/not_secure/cms.htm.

8.1.2.3 Millennium Excellence Award

The Millennium Excellence Award is awarded to first year students who have proven leadership and commitment to academic excellence in higher education. These awards range from a value of \$4000 to \$4800 renewable for up to three years. For more information, please visit: http://osap.gov.on.ca/eng/not_secure/cms.htm

8.1.3 Student Line of Credit

With a student line of credit, students are responsible for paying only for the interest during full-time studies. Upon graduation, students are to repay the principal amount. Loan amounts vary between banks, with many allowing students to loan up to \$10,000 per year. Unlike government student loans, obtaining a student line of credit does not necessarily have to be based on financial need. To qualify, students simply require a co-signer, in most cases being a parent or guardian. These student lines of credit are available at most major Canadian banks such as TD Canada Trust, Bank of Montreal, RBC Royal Bank and Scotiabank.

For more information, please visit:

Bank of Montreal

http://www4.bmo.com/personal/0,4344,35649_36829,00.html

RBC Royal Bank

http://www.rbcroyalbank.com/RBC:Q7XfU471A8UAAUnESiM/products/personalloans/student_line_of_credit.html

Scotiabank.

http://www.scotiabank.com/cda/content/0,1608,CID7362_LIDen,00.html

TD Canada Trust

<http://www.tdcanadatrust.com/student/stline.jsp>

8.2 Institutional Assistance for Students

The following are links to the financial and award offices of various Ontario universities. Generally, all institutes have a variety of scholarships and bursaries available based on merits or financial needs.

Carleton University

<http://www.admissions.carleton.ca/awards>

McMaster University

<http://sfas.mcmaster.ca/>

Queen's University

<http://www.queensu.ca/registrar/awards>

Ryerson University

<http://www.ryerson.ca/services/aid.html>

University of Guelph

<http://www.uoguelph.ca/studfin/>

University of Ottawa

<http://www.uottawa.ca/student/englishguide/1section/finance/>

University of Toronto

[http://www.students.utoronto.ca/Money Money Money/Loans Grants and Scholarships.htm](http://www.students.utoronto.ca/Money_Money_Money/Loans_Grants_and_Scholarships.htm)

University of Waterloo

<http://safa.uwaterloo.ca/>

University of Western Ontario

<http://www3.registrar.uwo.ca/FinancialServices/index.cfm>

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 - Mary Jane Jennings, Assistant Director of Institutional Analysis and Planning
 - Howie Bender, VP Education of the Federation of Students
- The University of Ottawa
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 - Lucie Laniel, Director of Financial Aid & Awards Service
 - Madeleine Boisvert, Executive Secretary to the Associate Vice-President
- Carleton University
 - Heather Brown, Executive Communications Adviser
- Queen's University
 - Chris Moore, Secretary of Registrar's Office
- Students for participating in the LIAC survey from:
 - University of Toronto
 - McMaster University
 - University of Waterloo
 - University of Guelph
 - University of Ottawa
 - Carleton University
 - University of Western Ontario
 - Queen's University
 - Ryerson
 - RMC

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