
ATTENTION U of W STUDENTS!

Provincial Government of MB Proposes to Raise Tuition and Remove Restrictions on Course-Related Fees

Winnipeg, Manitoba - On March, 20th 2017, the Provincial Government of Manitoba made an announcement on tuition fee increases. The proposed Bill 31, "***The Advancement Education Administration Amendment Act***" is intended to raise tuition fees 5% plus inflation increases, as well as removing all restrictions of ancillary fees allowing post-secondary institutions to charge students for course-related fees, such as labs etc.

The University of Winnipeg Students' Association is disappointed with the provincial government's Bill 31 on raising tuition fees and removing restrictions on course-related fees. This bill directly impacts thousands of students on our campus and students yet to come.

The fact is that many students are already facing an average of \$20,000 of debt and this is doubled or tripled for international students in which many are living in poverty and are accessing student support resources including food banks. Our provincial government has taken the stance of increasing the financial barriers against students.

We currently do not know how the U of W Administration will respond with this recent announcement as this specifically impacts domestic students. Currently, there is no regulation for international students' tuition fees. Indigenous students funded through the Post-Secondary Student Support Plan with the federal government is capped at 2%, therefore the amount of Indigenous students being denied their treaty right to education will only increase over the years as tuition fees and ancillary fees increase.

The recent increases to the Manitoba Scholarship and Bursary Initiative funding are not enough to address the increased student debt and lack of accessibility to post-secondary education and cannot be accepted as the only way this government can support post-secondary students. Instead, we need our provincial government to commit to increasing funds towards our post-secondary institutions; implementing non-repayable need-based grants instead of provincial loans or merit-based scholarships and bursaries; and lowering tuition costs and restricting institutions to charge students ancillary fees.

We can't just hope that the government will make the right decisions, students must push back and demand for universally accessible post-secondary education for all. The University of Winnipeg Students' Association alongside the Canadian Federation of Students-Manitoba maintains that all students, including international, graduate, college and professional programs, should be included in the act that ties tuition increases to the rate of inflation and post-secondary institutions must have strong public funding.

To get involved, please check out the Canadian Federation of Students MB website www.cfsmb.ca and check out their #Education4All campaign.

In Solidarity,

University of Winnipeg Students' Association Executive Team

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