

SCI Points

- Students will not be given proper context or information as to what they will be losing by opting out of services. The decision to opt out will not be an informed one (incoming students will have no experience with campus to be able to make an informed decision)
 - Many of the current fees and levies are already optional, the way its currently structured is that it allows students to get a better sense of what they'd lose if they want to opt out
 - Many of the levies are already optional. The bulk of the expenses for student unions are in the health and dental which people either opt out of or depend on for healthcare. The health and dental plans will continue to be managed the same way, so students aren't actually saving any more or less money than they did before. Student unions have fought and gotten repealed several fees much more costly than their own. Student unions exist to save students money → example, just last year UTMSU had the fee repealed for students re-taking exams.
- Athletics and recreation will be considered essential while other student funded services will be optional - Why are basketball teams a mandatory expense and crisis lines and food banks not? What would you actually consider the essential expense?
- It will become impossible to create annual budgets as there is no way of knowing how many students will be opting out due to the way the system will be administered
 - Administration will not be sharing the list of students who have opted out but organizations will be expected to serve all students regardless
- We are simply asking for the ability to have a reasonable chance to engage new students and inform them of our services. Students have a right to make informed choices and these groups have been voted on democratically by students. Shouldn't those votes be heard before opting out?

OSAP Points

Main Changes to OSAP:

- One time computer allowance rather than yearly
- Removal of six-month interest free grace period for recent grads
- "Independent Student" - up from 4 to now 6 years
- For professional/2nd entry students: 50/50 split on grants and loans

What does this mean?

- Family income will remain the determining factor for students under the age of 24, which does not take into that there are students who's parents either can't or won't pay for their tuition, regardless of how OSAP is structured

- Less money for students, and for students who do receive OSAP, there will be more loans than grants provided
- Professional students, who pay higher than average tuition fees, will be expected
- Low and middle-income students will pay more in the long run because they can't afford the original sticker price
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SCI - OSAP Connecting Points

- Low income students are being squeezed further when accessing post-secondary because their grants have been turned into loans and their parents income counts towards their own now until they are 24. Combined with the SCI, low income students are being forced to decide between the services created to support and advocate for them and saving a minimal amount of money.
- Students were saving \$1000's in interest thanks to the 6 month interest free grace period before this, an opt out that would save only a few hundred dollars does not compare. If the conservative government wanted to save students money they could have kept the grace period. Students that take out loans that collect interest are already paying more in the long run than students who are able to pay up front. It would not have impacted the provincial budget by much. It's simply cruel to scrap it.
- We know that larger classroom sizes and a lack of full-time, permanent jobs for professors means that student groups have also advocated on behalf of professors, TAs and GAs because we know that their work conditions are also our learning conditions and we want better for everyone.
- By discouraging students from getting involved in these groups doing political and advocacy work, it is an affront to academic freedom of both students and professors because it prevents debate and stifles people's ability to engage in free discussions.
 - Recognizing that this is an issue of academic freedom and free speech as these groups do not get funding from wealthy and corporate donors and are the independent voices of students
- We are not allowed to opt out our taxes or healthcare system even when we don't "need it", the social contract of our society means that we all have to pay into things, even things we don't support and that some people may benefit more than others - we recognize that there is a collective benefit in these things.

- By making fees optional, we discourage students from getting involved in campus life and lose opportunities to supplement their academics with additional research, volunteer and work opportunities. Getting involved in extracurriculars is something that we encourage in students from High School, especially if they are planning to go to university but the difference is, within these spaces, there are more options to choose from that can also help put in practice what students are learning. For example, OPIRG Toronto TRACX project pairs professors and students with community groups to provide experiential learning that gives back directly into communities looking for academic support.
- The government has identified mental health as essential to student success. We know from recent data that graduate students, international students, students from low income backgrounds, Indigenous, racialized, queer and trans students all have high instances of mental health issues - part of making sure students are healthy is making sure they are able to participate not only in their academics but also student life - which includes joining campus groups and volunteering. Due to the heavy demand of schoolwork, students often end up isolated and disconnected in order to complete their studies, which we know is an issue at UofT. Many groups offer space for support, active listening and culturally responsive peer counselling, including social spaces to connect students with each other.
- We know that students today are more likely to have to balance some form of paid work with school. Students union and levy groups provide both casual, contract and full time paid opportunities at a living wage to students because we understand this struggle and value their time and contribution.
- We believe that post-secondary education should be accessible to everyone and while the current model isn't great, we don't believe expecting students to pay more while receiving less in terms of services and experience is the answer - these changes dismantle the space we have to fight for everybody to have a quality education without taking on absurd amount of debt and mental strain.