



Professors and academic librarians to Premier: It's time to invest in universities

TORONTO – Ontario's 17,000 professors and academic librarians are calling on Premier Wynne to invest in the province's universities after today's budget missed an opportunity to introduce new funding for higher education institutions. The 2013 Budget continues to impose small cuts on the university sector, leading to an overall decline in per-student funding.

"Ontario already has the worst level of per-student funding in Canada, and this budget continues this trend," says Constance Adamson, President of the Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations (OCUFA). "We're pleased to see that youth and youth employment are priorities for Premier Wynne. Investing in universities is a natural way to ensure that young Ontarians will find success in the job market and in their communities."

Increasing the level of per-student funding in Ontario would bring many benefits to young people in the province. There would be more professors, improving student engagement and mentorship. Aging labs, libraries, and classrooms would be upgraded, contributing to an enhanced learning environment. Students would have greater access to the latest technology. Increased per-student funding would also help control rising tuition fees, keeping university affordable for Ontario families.

"We're worried that the narrow focus on reducing the provincial deficit is crowding out other priorities equally important to Ontarians. Investment in universities helps reduce the deficit by stimulating economic growth and building a strong society," said Adamson.

Austerity policies that seek to reduce the deficit through cuts to valuable public services like education are now widely seen as harmful to economic growth. The International Monetary Fund is now cautioning governments against aggressive deficit reduction.

"Austerity is based on sketchy research, and has failed to generate economic growth around the world," said Adamson. "We should be investing in the things that we *know* lead to economic growth and social vitality, like our universities."

Founded in 1964, OCUFA represents 17,000 professors and academic librarians in 27 faculty associations across Ontario. For more information, please visit the OCUFA website at <http://www.ocufa.on.ca>.

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