

CANADA

Ontario tuition fees highest in country

Undergraduates here pay \$6,307, compared to \$2,415 in Quebec

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STAFF REPORTER

When Stephen Pugh arrived on campus this fall, he got an unwelcome back-to-school surprise: a \$300 tuition hike.

The 29-year-old graduate student is entering his second year of education and counselling psychology at the University of Toronto. Like many of his fellow students, Pugh has to stretch his student loans to cover the bills.

Now that his tuition has hit a high of about \$9,300, he'll have to make that money go even further.

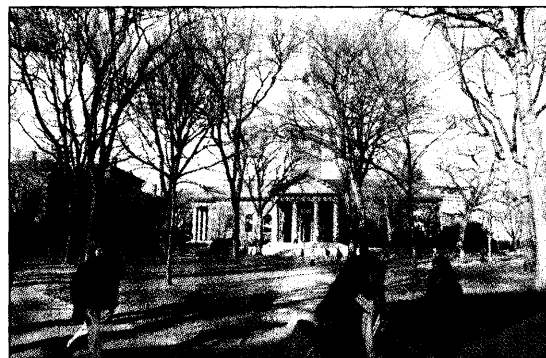
"As a grad student, you have to plan ahead of time. You don't have a lot of leeway. A couple hundred dollars is a big deal," he said.

According to a Statistics Canada report released Thursday, Ontario students face some of the highest tuition fees in Canada, with undergraduate students at the very top.

This year, Ontario undergrads paid \$6,307 — a 5.4 per cent increase over last year's fees. In Quebec, the province with the lowest fees, students pay \$2,415.

NORTH AMERICA'S TOP SCHOOLS

1. Harvard
2. California Institute of Technology
3. Massachusetts Institute of Technology
4. Stanford
5. Princeton
6. University of California Berkeley
7. Yale
8. Univ. of California Los Angeles
9. University of Chicago
10. Johns Hopkins University
11. Cornell University
12. University of Michigan
13. University of Toronto



Harvard has been ranked the world's top university.

WORLD'S TOP SCHOOLS

1. Harvard University
2. California Institute of Technology
3. Massachusetts Institute of Technology
4. Stanford University
5. Princeton University
6. University of Oxford (U.K.)
17. University of Toronto
93. McMaster University

Source: The Times Higher Education rankings

U OF T ACES UNIVERSITY RANKINGS FOR CANADA

No. 1 in Canada, and 17th in the world.

The University of Toronto snagged top marks in the influential, global Times Higher Education rankings as Canada scored the fifth-best showing of any country in the world.

A radical overhaul of the rankings, released Thursday, also

vaulted U.S. institutions into more than half of the top 50 places and the University of Toronto to the top of the Canadian pile.

"Obviously it's a nice boost for everybody," said David Naylor, president of the University of Toronto. But he noted rankings will vary from year to year and on ranking methodologies.

Nine Canadian universities placed in the top 200, with U of T at 17, University of British Columbia at 30, McGill at 35, McMaster at 93, the University of Alberta at 127, University of Victoria at 130, University of Montreal at 138, Dalhousie at 193 and Simon Fraser at 199.

Star staff

The report also shows that Ontario graduate students like Pugh saw the highest increase in tuition in Canada in the past year. Grad students paid 10.6 per cent more in fees

than last year, shelling out an average of \$6,917. That's the second-highest graduate tuition in Canada, behind students in Nova Scotia, who pay an average of \$7,350.

Toby Whitfield, president of the Ryerson Students' Union, says the report shows why students are taking on "mortgage-sized" debts to get an education.

Last week the RSU asked students to share how they are making ends meet. Whitfield says it wasn't a pretty picture.

"Many of them are talking about having to take on two or even three part-time jobs to make ends meet. They are saying, 'This isn't right. I want to be studying and I want to be learning.'"

Tuition would not be so high if the province increased its per-student funding, says Alexi White, executive director of the Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance.

"The reason we have the highest tuition is also because we have some of the lowest per-student funding. Our universities are being forced to make up this revenue through tuition," White said.

John Molloy, minister of training, colleges and universities for Ontario, said the government has made gains towards making post-secondary education more affordable, including lowering the default rates on the Ontario Student Assistance Program to the lowest on record.

The ultimate goal, he says, is ensuring post-secondary education in the province remains affordable.

"That has to be the benchmark that we look at. And I've got to tell you, in Ontario, post-secondary education is very affordable," he said.