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ASSOCIATION DES OMBUDSMANS
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ACCUO
ASSOCIATION OF CANADIAN
COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY
OMBUDSPERSONS

January 23, 2019

The Honourable Doug Ford
Premier of the Province of Ontario
Email: premier@ontario.ca

The Honourable Merrilee Fullerton
Minister of Training, Colleges, and Universities
Email: merrilee.fullerton@pc.ola.org

RE: Postsecondary Ancillary Fee Structure

Dear Premier Ford and Minister Fullerton,

I am writing to you as the Eastern Representative for the Association of College and University Ombudspersons (ACCUO) regarding proposed changes to the ancillary fee structure for postsecondary education. On behalf of ACCUO's Ontario members, we ask that ancillary fees that support campus ombuds' offices where they exist, be deemed a **mandatory** rather than **opt-out** part of the fee structure.

Given their broad mandate to promote fairness, ombuds offices benefit all students regardless of whether or how many times they visit the office. Campus ombuds offices provide accessible, independent mechanisms for addressing disputes or complaints respectfully and constructively. Through their provision of information, education, problem-solving interventions, investigations, and recommendations, an ombuds office helps to address grievances fairly, assists in resolving conflict before it escalates, and provides a feedback loop for the proactive improvement of policies, procedures, and practices on campus. For these reasons, we believe ombuds offices should be considered essential campus initiatives.

While we are aware that post-secondary students in Ontario have access to the Ontario Ombudsman's office, Ombudsman Paul Dube has recommended that all university and colleges also have internal ombuds offices because, as he puts it, "local matters are best resolved locally."

Thank you for your attention to this matter. Please feel free to contact me should you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Carolyn Brendon

Eastern Representative, Association of Canadian College and University Ombudspersons (ACCUO)

www.accuo.ca