



Public Service Alliance of Canada Local 901

The Union of Teaching Assistants, Teaching Fellows, Postdoctoral Scholars, and Research Assistants at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario

www.pvac901.org

Re: On the need for additional steps in support of international students through the Covid-19 pandemic

30/April/2020

Dear Dr. Green and Dr. Quadir,

I write to you as the Equity Officer for PSAC Local 901, and as a representative of international graduate students. Today, many of us find ourselves far from home, financially distressed and struggling with our mental wellbeing. As we move into the summer term, it is absolutely crucial that the university takes proactive measures to ensure, at the very least, that the damage caused by this crisis upon the international graduate student community is not a permanent one:

1. We would like to thank you for the International Student Bursary. While this was an appreciable gesture in recognizing our precarity, we have heard from many colleagues that they have considered ineligible for it. Since the crisis affects all of us, though in various ways, the bursary should not be selective. **We request that the bursary be administered to those who have not been able to access it yet, without requiring an application/adjudication process.**
2. As you know, International students cannot apply for the newly passed CESB. This came as a severe disappointment to us. We are disheartened by the exclusion, especially because we are often told how valuable we are. In this moment of crisis, we are made to feel this is not our home. As you know, we pay higher tuition fees, and now with our ineligibility for Federal support, the inequitable precarity we face widens. We are sure you recognize this inequity as discriminatory. **We request you to ensure that this inequity is supplemented and addressed through an additional financial support throughout the summer term.**
3. All of the above, and the most of the precarity otherwise – for domestic and international students alike, stem from us anticipating paying high tuition fees. There have been numerous conversations on tuition waiver ongoing in the university, and we are sure it is still something that is being worked out. Therefore, **we would like to once more request you to waive the tuition fees for the summer term.**

We are thankful for your kind attention. We hope to hear a positive response, whenever you are able to.

Rohit Revi
Equity Officer, PSAC Local 901.