

# OUSA

Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance

## STUDENT ADVOCACY CONFERENCE 2023

NOVEMBER 27 TO 30TH,  
A SUMMARY



Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance

## ABOUT THE ONTARIO UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT ALLIANCE

The Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance (OUSA) represents over 160,000 students in the province at nine member institutions. We are a non-profit, non-partisan advocacy group striving for accessible, accountable, affordable, and high-quality post-secondary education in Ontario.

## WHAT IS OUSA'S STUDENT ADVOCACY CONFERENCE?

Student Advocacy Conference (SAC) is OUSA's annual, week-long advocacy initiative. Students from across Ontario - delegates from OUSA's member associations - meet with legislators and staffers at Queen's Park on the most important issues in post-secondary education. At each meeting with Members of Provincial Parliament (MPPs), delegates highlight the student-written, evidence-based policy recommendations that OUSA advocates to government and ministries all year long. This year's SAC ran from November 27th to 30th, where eighteen delegates from nine university student associations across Ontario championed student advocacy to represent the concerns of over 160,000 undergraduate and professional, full- and part-time students in our province.

# OUR PRIORITIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## Housing and Transit

The provincial government should amend the Standard Form of Lease to require renewed tenancy agreements to include the previous rent amount, the approved provincial increase, the new rental rate, and the period of time a tenant has to make an application to the Landlord Tenant Board should they be concerned about the validity of the increase.

The provincial government should, in collaboration with the federal government, provide funding to build the VIA High-Frequency Rail project along the Toronto-Québec City corridor, as well as develop a concrete plan to build High-Frequency Rail along the Toronto-Windsor corridor.

The Ministry of Transportation should work with students and others in the disability community to identify and respond to gaps in Part V: Transportation Standards in Ontario Regulation 191/11 of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* that fail to address the needs of students with disabilities accessing public transit.

The provincial government should re-establish the Ontario Mortgage and Housing Corporation with a provision to allow the OMHC to lend to non-profit housing corporations and post-secondary institutions for an amount equal to the total lending value of a proposed housing project.

## Food Insecurity

The provincial government should create a food sustainability certificate for student-led food banks to highlight resources and cost-effective strategies.

The provincial government should establish a grant that student-run food banks can use to maintain the infrastructure required to provide nutritious and culturally relevant food options and food options that meet the requirements of various dietary restrictions (e.g., fridges and freezers).

# OUR PRIORITIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## Mental Health

The provincial government should develop a series of best practices that support post-secondary institutions in partnering with local healthcare providers to provide acute and long-term treatment, psychiatric treatment, counselling, health promotion, and preventative action on campus; and provide directives to triage students appropriately.

The Ministry of Colleges and Universities should provide assistance and continuous funding, under the Mental Health Worker Grant, to post-secondary institutions to recruit and hire diverse front-line campus-based mental health workers such as staff who identifies as BIPOC, and/or 2SLGBTQIA+.

The Ministry of Colleges and Universities should mandate that all institution-based mental health care providers receive training on providing accessible, trauma-informed, and culturally relevant counselling and referrals to diverse populations.

## Sector Sustainability

The provincial government should increase operating grants until students are contributing at a maximum of one-third of universities' total operating budget, in order to reduce the burden placed on universities to generate revenue through high international tuition fees.

To ensure tuition rates are predictable for international students, the Ministry of Colleges and Universities should regulate international tuition for incoming students at a maximum of 5% per year, and in-cohort increases at a maximum of 3% per year.

# WHO'S MEETING WHOM?

## OUSA Delegates

Abby Samuels (she/her)	McMaster University
Alyssa Hall (she/her)	Brock University
Angelique Dack (she/her)	Ontario Tech University
Anthony Coulter (he/him)	Trent University Durham-GTA
Carleigh Charlton (she/they)	Brock University
Emily Poirier (she/her)	Western University
Jazzlyn Abbott (she/her)	McMaster University
Julian Mollot-Hill (he/him)	Queen's University
Katie Traynor (she/her)	University of Waterloo
Maria Farooq (she/her)	Western University
Megan Spenler (she/her)	Wilfrid Laurier University
Riley Ambrose (he/him)	Trent University Durham-GTA
Rory Norris (he/him)	University of Waterloo
Sam Brown (she/her)	Ontario Tech University
Simi Olufowobi (he/him)	Laurentian University
Victoria Mills (she/her)	Queen's University
Vivian Chiem (she/her)	Wilfrid Laurier University
Zarreen Brown (she/her)	Laurentian University

## Members of Provincial Parliament and Government Staff

Assistant Deputy Minister Anna Boyden	MPP Jill Andrew
Associate Minister Michael A. Tibollo	MPP John Fraser
Associate Minister Rob Flack	MPP Karen McCrimmon
Minister David Piccini (in absentia)	MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam
MPP Adil Shamji	MPP Lise Vaugeois
MPP Andrew Dowie	MPP Lorne Coe
MPP Brian Saunderson	MPP Mike Schreiner
MPP Chandra Pasma	MPP Natalie Pierre
MPP Chris Glover	MPP Patrice Barnes
MPP David Smith	MPP Peggy Sattler
MPP Dawn Gallagher-Murphy	MPP Ric Bresee
MPP Deepak Anand	MPP Rudy Cuzzetto
MPP Ernie Hardeman	MPP Sandy Shaw
MPP France G��linas (in absentia)	MPP St��phane Sarrazin
MPP Jamie West	MPP Terence Kernaghan
MPP Jeff Burch	MPP Trevor Jones
MPP Jennifer (Jennie) Stevens	MPP Vincent Ke
MPP Jennifer French	Speaker Ted Arnott

## Queen's Park Reception

During this Student Advocacy Conference, OUSA co-hosted a reception with the College Student Alliance. Ministers, MPPs, legislative staff, stakeholders, and students gathered at Queen's Park for an early morning breakfast and conversations about post-secondary issues.

A special thank you to MPP Natalie Pierre, MPP Peggy Sattler, MPP Stephen Blais, and MPP Mike Schreiner for offering remarks at the reception.

We would like to thank all MPPs and their staffers for meeting with us during and after our Student Advocacy Conference. We appreciate your engagement and thoughtful comments, and look forward to working together to improve the post-secondary sector for students.

# OUSA

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