

June 11, 2008

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of the Canadian Federation of Students, I am writing to express our support for the New University Cooperative initiative. The Canadian Federation of Students is Canada's national students' organisation uniting more than one half million students across Canada in the fight for high-quality, accessible post-secondary education.

In the past two decades, skyrocketing tuition fees and creeping corporatisation of our campuses have compromised the accessibility and quality of Canada's post-secondary institutions. At a time when the department of Human Resources and Social Development estimates that over 70% of new jobs will require a minimum of two years of post-secondary education, high tuition fees limit educational and career opportunities for many who simply cannot afford them.

Along with the massive increases in tuition fees, government underfunding of post-secondary education has allowed corporations to fill in the funding gap. The growing corporatisation of Canadian campuses has placed an emphasis on basic skills training and preparation for the job market, rather than an individual's intellectual and personal growth, their critical thinking abilities and their potential contribution to civil society. More and more, research is being emphasised over basic teaching, with certain types of research being more highly valued and funded at the detriment of other research that cannot be readily commercialised.

The premise of the New University Cooperative, *to reclaim higher education for all people*, is one that students can stand behind. We are excited to hear that the New University Cooperative is seeking to address the current problems of accessibility and corporatisation in Canada's post-secondary education system by providing an alternative that will incorporate and respect all forms of knowledge and different styles of learning, and will be accessible to all.

We look forward to working with the New University Cooperative to ensure that education is a right, not a privilege, and helps to shape a just and ecologically sustainable society.

In solidarity,



Katherine Giroux-Bougard  
National Chairperson