



CUASA and OCUFA estimates Ford’s “performance” funding could cut Carleton University budget by \$27 million dollars

TORONTO & OTTAWA, SEPTEMBER 5, 2019 – Ontario faculty are warning that the Ford government’s so called “performance” funding model for postsecondary education is reckless, ineffective, and dangerous. The new funding model will link 60 per cent of government funding for universities (\$2.2 billion dollars) to an arbitrary set of metrics chosen with no consultation. These metrics will not actually measure “performance” but are likely to be used as an excuse to cut university budgets. At Carleton University, it is estimated that this new funding model could cut the university budget by up to \$27 million dollars and substantially distort the academic mission and mandate of the university.

The Ford government’s performance funding fantasy prioritizes politics over sound public policy. By design, performance funding rewards institutions that meet arbitrary targets while penalizing those that do not, denying vital funding to those institutions that need it most to improve their educational outcomes. This rash and drastic funding shift will create a system of winners and losers by exacerbating inequities between institutions, destabilize Ontario’s postsecondary education system, work against quality improvement, pose a serious threat to equity and diversity at Ontario’s universities, and punish students studying at institutions that have already seen their budgets reduced by the Ford government. The cuts resulting from performance funding will be especially devastating for smaller universities and will undermine access for Indigenous students and other equity seeking groups.

“At Carleton University, we are proud to support our students’ creativity and curiosity as we work with them to pursue new knowledge and understanding,” said Angelo Mingarelli, President of the Carleton University Academic Staff Association (CUASA). “A \$27 million dollar cut to Carleton University’s budget would be devastating for this work, and lead to program cuts, job losses, and even larger class sizes.”

“Performance” funding may incentivize the hiring of more precariously employed contract faculty and staff at Carleton, as financial uncertainty makes long-term planning more difficult. It may also incentivize more administration and bureaucracy at Carleton to track metrics and identify ways to manipulate internal processes to meet the criteria needed to secure more funding.

Performance metrics cannot credibly reflect the breadth and depth of a student’s education, the long-term benefits of basic research projects, or the contributions of faculty members and academic librarians. In fact, evidence shows that performance funding cannot even produce the outcomes it promises. Instead, it has been shown to have numerous negative consequences, including an increased hiring of precariously employed contract faculty, a reduction in the admission of traditionally marginalized students, shorter programs with less quality control, lower graduation

requirements, increased campus bureaucracy, and less institutional autonomy as government exercises more influence over which programs are offered.

“We don’t trust Doug Ford to measure quality at Ontario universities. Instead of putting the province’s universities at risk with this reckless and unstable funding model, the government should put students first and invest in Ontario’s universities,” said Rahul Sapra, President of OCUFA. “As it turns out, additional resources actually increase graduation rates. Unfortunately, Ontario is dead last in per-student funding in Canada. The last thing we need is Doug Ford meddling with Ontario’s universities.”

Additional, stable public funding for universities like Carleton will help students by ensuring better academic support services, lower student-to-faculty ratios, and reduced tuition fees. This additional funding will also support good jobs on campus by providing Carleton University with the resources to invest in faculty renewal and hire precariously employed contract faculty into secure full-time positions. It is time for Doug Ford to halt this reckless and destructive ideological attack on the foundations of Ontario’s postsecondary education system and start working with faculty, students, and staff to invest in the future of our universities.

Founded in 1952 and certified in 1975, CUASA represents over 900 faculty, instructors, and librarians at Carleton University. For more information, please visit www.cuasa.ca.

Founded in 1964, OCUFA represents 17,000 faculty and academic librarians in 30 faculty associations across Ontario. For more information, please visit www.ocufa.on.ca.

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