



ONTARIO CAMPUS ACTIVIST ASSEMBLY

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO - SEPTEMBER 26 & 27
CANADIAN FEDERATION OF STUDENTS-ONTARIO

Dear student, labour and community activists,

The Canadian Federation of Students is Canada's largest student organisation, representing over 500,000 college and university students who are members of more than 85 campus students' unions. The Federation's Ontario component, the Canadian Federation of Students-Ontario, is hosting a unique assembly of student and campus activists from across Ontario to build a fighting student movement.

The first-ever Ontario Campus Activist Assembly will take place on September 26 and 27, 2008 at the downtown campus of the University of Toronto. It will bring together hundreds of rank-and-file student and youth activists, campus labour activists and community activists. This assembly will feature a variety of issues-based sessions and skills training workshops aimed at providing an interactive opportunity to develop strong local and inter-campus organising capacities.

In order to promote broad-based and inclusive participation at this Assembly, there will be no registrations fees! Food will be provided, fundraising is available for transportation, and Assembly organisers are committed to helping coordinate billeting, French language interpretation, and other accommodations for all participants.

This historic gathering of students' union volunteers, campus activists, club and department representatives, and community allies is happening in a critical year. 2008 is the final year of the Ontario government's "Reaching Higher" framework that set college and university tuition fee increases between 20 and 36 percent over four years. In order to ramp up public pressure on the McGuinty government, CFS-Ontario is launching a province-wide campaign to Drop Fees as part of a comprehensive strategy to promote universal access to higher education. It is hoped that the Assembly will help activists develop the skills necessary to mobilise effectively for the campaign to Drop Fees, including the November 5 Student Day of Action and escalating actions throughout the year.

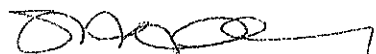
Building for change requires collaboration, commitment and creativity. This assembly will be an avenue for activists to share perspectives and experiences, gain confidence, learn new skills, and discuss different strategies and tactics. There will be exciting speakers, interactive discussions and hands-on training.

We are striving to bring together students and other campus activists who are working for a better world by challenging student debt, privatisation, sweatshop labour, military recruitment, environmental degradation, and social and economic oppression on campuses. The Assembly will also be a chance to broaden our collective understanding of the privatisation of education by looking at how larger social issues influence our lives and our campuses.

We hope that you will consider participating in the Assembly and help to build a united student movement. If you require a place to sleep or shared transportation, please ensure that you register no later than Wednesday, September 17, 2008.

I look forward to seeing you in September.

In solidarity,



Shelley Melanson
Chairperson, Canadian Federation of Students-Ontario



ONTARIO CAMPUS ACTIVIST ASSEMBLY

Travel to the Assembly

Conference organisers are committed to assisting with fundraising to ensure that travel costs are covered for Assembly participants coming from across Ontario. In order to minimise travel costs, students' unions from regions outside the Greater Toronto Area are organising buses and vans. Local labour unions, community groups, and other agencies can also be approached to help subsidise the cost of transportation from your area.

- All participants travelling from within the GTA are responsible for their own transportation. Directions to the downtown campus of the University of Toronto and annotated campus maps will be provided electronically upon registration.
- All participants travelling from outside the GTA may make travel arrangements at their own expense or may contact Assembly organisers to discuss group travel arrangements from your area or region. For more information on travel, contact: travel@dropfees.ca.

Assembly Objectives & Anti-Oppression Principles

The Ontario Campus Activist Assembly will bring together student, labour and community activists to build unity and develop strategies that use public college and university campuses as venues to fight for progressive social change. In particular, we are seeking to:

- Build a strong and united student movement and work in solidarity with other social movements;
- Oppose financial barriers to post-secondary education and other social programmes;
- Oppose the privatisation and corporatisation of campuses and public services;
- Challenge racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, colonialism and all other forms of prejudice, hate and discrimination on campus and in society.

These objectives cannot be accomplished in an environment that is poisonous or unsafe. Discrimination or harassment occurs when a comment or action is made that is known or ought to be known to be unwelcome or offensive.

Discriminatory speech or conduct is any behaviour that demeans, marginalises, rejects, threatens or harms others. It can be based on ability, experience, age, class, education, sex or sexual identity, gender identity or expression, race, ethnicity, colour, immigration status, indigenous heritage, language, nationality, religion, physical appearance or place of origin.

Sometimes, discrimination takes the form of harassment. Harassment is the expression of real or perceived power over another person to abuse, devalue or humiliate. Sexual harassment is any unwelcome sexual advance, statement or request for sexual contact, and other unwelcome verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

Harassment is not a joke. It is cruel and destructive behaviour that can have devastating effects. It creates feelings of unease, humiliation and discomfort. Solidarity is based on the principle that all people are equal and deserve mutual respect. Harassment, by fellow activists in particular, is contrary to our basic principles of solidarity and equality.

Commitment to equity

As organisers and participants of the Ontario Campus Activist Assembly, we are committed to working towards social justice and equity within an anti-oppression framework. Discrimination and harassment divide us. They reduce our capacity to work together on shared concerns such as accessible post-secondary education and justice on campus and in our movement.

As a condition of participation in this Assembly, we expect that all attendees commit to these objectives and work to uphold these anti-oppression principles.

Join the Movement





ONTARIO CAMPUS ACTIVIST ASSEMBLY

Overview of Sessions

Friday

Panel: "The Ontario Student Movement: Current Challenges and Momentum": An overview of the challenges that face the student movement in Ontario, including but not limited to tuition and ancillary fees, underfunding, corporatisation of research, privatisation of campuses, racism, and policing of campus dissent.

Panel: "The Resistance of 1968": Former leaders and student activists will speak about the importance of student power and the rise of popular resistance. This will be an opportunity to recognise and remember that 2008 is the 40th Anniversary of the "Year of the Student" – a time when students and workers around the world conducted popular teach-ins, undertook creative resistance, and engaged in massive demonstrations to protest the Vietnam War, demanded the rights for women and racialised people, and fought for a better world.

Saturday

Participants must register for the Saturday workshop sessions, as there are a limited number of spaces available. Workshop topics are subject to change without notice. Please select only one session per block:

Block #1 Issues Workshops

- 1A. Who's Turning The Screws? Understanding Who's Who in Post-Secondary Education
- 1B. Counter-Recruitment and Anti-War Organising on Campus
- 1C. History of the Pan-Canadian Student Movement
- 1D. Youth Fight Back: High School Student Organising for Social Justice
- 1E. Beyond Sustainability, Toward Environmental Justice
- 1F. Students United: Strategies for Fighting Racism, Islamophobia, and Anti-Semitism
- 1G. Addicted to Debt: How Student Loans Mortgage Our Futures
- 1H. Free or Fair? From Trade Liberalisation to Trade Justice

Block #2 Skills Workshops

- 2A. Knowing Your Audience: How to Craft Your Message to Win Public Support
- 2B. Winning Allies, Building Coalitions
- 2C. Reactionary Rhetoric: Debunking Myths/Facts about Post-Secondary Education
- 2D. Know Your Rights: An Activist Primer on Police and Lawyers
- 2E. Québec's Organising Model: General Assemblies to General Strikes
- 2F. Rules for Radicals: Lessons Learned from the 1960s
- 2G. Don't Agonise, Organise! Effective Campaign Strategies & Tactics
- 2H. Sound Bite! Mastering the Short Pitch for Tabling, Flying and Class Announcements

Block #3 Issues Workshops

- 3A. Fighting Oppression Inside and Out: Strategies for Challenging Power and Privilege
- 3B. Academia Without Borders: Undocumented and International Students
- 3C. Crunching Numbers: How the Pundits Lie With Statistics
- 3D. Out on Campus: Queer and Trans Issues & Activism
- 3E. Public Institutions, Private Interests: The Corporatisation of Universities and Colleges
- 3F. Coordinated Bargaining, Collective Action: Student-Labour Solidarity
- 3G. First Peoples, Last Rights: Why Students Should Support Indigenous Struggles in Ontario
- 3H. Education is a Right: Free Tuition in Canada and Abroad

Block #4 Skills Workshops

- 4A. Street Art: Chalking, Stencilling and Graffiti for Change
- 4B. Shifting Priorities: Alternative Budget Construction
- 4C. Creative Resistance: Making Banners, Props, Placards
- 4D. Making the News: Learning How to Play (and Win) the Spin Wars
- 4E. We Shall Not Be Moved: Non-Violent Direct Action Training
- 4F. Design for Dummies: Making Flyers and Posters that Don't Suck
- 4G. E-Resistance: New Media Creation and Online Activism
- 4H. Power to the People: Alternative Models of Grassroots Decision-Making

Open Workshops: A one-hour block of dedicated time for participants to self-organise either skills or issues-based workshops on topics or areas not covered in the planned workshop schedule. If you are interested in hosting an Open Workshop, you are encouraged to prepare a 10 - 30 minute presentation ahead of the Assembly. Contact the Ontario Office for assistance in photocopying and other resources for your presentation.

Regional breakout groups: Participants from common geographic areas will meet and discuss strategies and actions for the November 5 Day of Action and the ongoing campaign to Drop Fees.

Keynote speaker: The role of student and youth movements in global struggles against corporatism, imperialism and neo-liberalism.



ONTARIO CAMPUS ACTIVIST ASSEMBLY

ASSEMBLY DETAILS

Location: Medical-Science Building, St. George Campus of the University of Toronto (downtown Toronto, Ontario)
Date: **Friday, September 26 to Saturday, September 27, 2008**
Time: Check-in for the Assembly will commence on Friday, September 26 at 5:00 p.m. and again in the morning of Saturday, September 27 at 8:00 a.m. The Assembly will conclude at 9:30 p.m. on Saturday, September 27, 2008, and will be followed by an organised social. A detailed agenda will soon be given out to those who register for workshops.

Registration is Free

CFS-Ontario has made the Assembly free for participants to encourage the kind of broad participation, discussion and leadership in grassroots mobilising that can win change. College and university students (regardless of membership in the Canadian Federation of Students), high school students, as well as labour and community activists, are welcome.

Submitting Registration Forms

On-line registration is available at dropfees.ca and completed paper registration forms should be faxed or delivered to the Canadian Federation of Students-Ontario. The deadline to register is no later than Wednesday, September 17, 2008.

Address: Toronto Office, 180 Bloor Street West, Suite 900, Toronto, Ontario M5S 2V6
Fax: 416-925-6774
Questions: registration@dropfees.ca
If you have questions about registration, please contact: registration@dropfees.ca

Food and Materials

Meals and materials will be provided throughout the Assembly to all participants, including those participants who are from the Greater Toronto Area. Any special dietary requirements or accessibility needs must be identified prior to the registration deadline and noted on the registration form. We can not guarantee that accommodations will be met after the deadline.

Accommodation for Accessibility Needs

CFS-Ontario is committed to inclusive event organising and will attempt to meet the accessibility needs of all participants. The following accommodations have already been arranged:

- All keynote and plenary sessions will include French-language interpretation;
- Vegan, vegetarian, Halal and Kosher food options available;
- All venues are wheelchair accessible;
- Note-takers for all sessions;

Other accessibility accommodations can be made available, upon request, provided that registration is received prior to the deadline, including:

- ASL interpretation;
- Peer-to-peer French-language interpretation for small group sessions;
- Large font or electronic documents;
- Attendant care; and
- Childcare subsidies.

Assembly organisers will do their best to coordinate accommodations for other identified needs, but there is no guarantee that accommodations can be made for any need not identified prior to the deadline. This Assembly is a child-friendly event with an on-site children's activity room (parental supervision required). If you have questions about accessibility accommodation, please contact: registration@dropfees.ca

Over-Night Accommodation for Out-of-Town Participants

Participants who require over-night accommodation on Friday and Saturday can request billeting with friendly volunteers or register for accommodation at the "activist slumber party" in the graduate student gymnasium at the University of Toronto. Please bring a sleeping bag and/or blankets and a pillow. If participants choose to stay elsewhere by arranging alternative sleeping arrangements, we will request that contact information be provided for emergency purposes. If you have questions about accommodation, please contact: registration@dropfees.ca

ONTARIO CAMPUS ACTIVIST ASSEMBLY

Canadian Federation of Students-Ontario

Friday, September 26 to Saturday, September 27, 2008 - Toronto, Ontario

Please fill out
One form per PERSON

PAGE ONE

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

Students' Union/Organisation/School: _____

Participant's Name: _____

E-mail Address: _____ Cell or Telephone Number: _____

City: _____ Preferred Roommate: _____

2. ACCESSIBILITY NEEDS (Forms must be received by the registration deadline: Wednesday, September 17, 2008)

☐ Documents for visually impaired: ☐ on diskette ☐ with enlarged print

☐ Wheelchair accessible accommodation and transportation: _____

☐ Attendant care for people with disabilities: _____

☐ Interpretation: ☐ ASL ☐ Language (English to French)

☐ Meal requirements (please specify): _____

☐ Other (please specify) : _____

Assembly organisers will do their best to coordinate accommodations for other identified needs, but there is no guarantee that accommodations can be made for any need not identified prior to the deadline. This Assembly is a child-friendly event with an on-site children's activity room (parental supervision required). If you have questions about accessibility accommodation, please contact: registration@dropfees.ca

3. OVER-NIGHT ACCOMMODATION FOR OUT-OF-TOWN PARTICIPANTS

Participants who require over-night accommodation on Friday and Saturday can request billeting with friendly volunteers or register for accommodation at the "activist slumber party" in the graduate student gymnasium at the University of Toronto. Please bring a sleeping bag and/or blankets and a pillow. If participants choose to stay elsewhere by arranging alternative sleeping arrangements, we will request that contact information be provided for emergency purposes. If you have questions about accommodation, please contact: registration@dropfees.ca

☐ I require over-night accommodation on: ☐ Friday night ☐ Saturday night

I request to stay with: ☐ males ☐ females

I would like to stay: ☐ at the activist 'sleepover' ☐ with a friendly volunteer

☐ I will find my own accommodations and will be staying with:

Name : _____ Cell or Telephone Number: _____

This form must be received by the Ontario Office by no later **Wednesday, September 17, 2008.**
Mail: Canadian Federation of Students-Ontario, 180 Bloor Street West, Suite 900, Toronto, Ontario, M5V 2V6
Email: registration@dropfees.ca fax: 416-925-6774 Online: www.dropfees.ca

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PAGE TWO

4. TRANSPORTATION

Assembly organisers are committed to assisting with fundraising to ensure that travel costs are covered for participants coming from all over the province. In order to minimise travel costs, students' unions from various regions outside the Greater Toronto Area are organising buses and vans to coordinate group travel. Local labour unions, community groups, and other agencies can be approached to help subsidise the cost of transportation from your area. Please contact Assembly organisers to discuss group travel arrangements for your area or region: travel@dropfees.ca

- ☐ I will be finding my own way
- ☐ I will be finding my own way, and I have space in my vehicle for _____ people
- ☐ I wish to travel with a group from my area or with someone who has space

5. WORKSHOP REGISTRATION

Participants must register in advance for the Saturday workshop sessions, as there are a limited number of spaces available. Please consult the Ontario Campus Activist Assembly notice for a listing of skills-based and issue-themed workshops. Workshop topics are subject to change without notice. Please fill out your preferences below from the list of sessions in the Assembly registration package.

EX: SKILL WORKSHOP _____ 1A _____

1. ISSUE WORKSHOP: _____

2. SKILL WORKSHOP: _____

3. ISSUE WORKSHOP: _____

4. SKILL WORKSHOP: _____

6. LENDING A HELPING HAND

The Activist Assembly is quite an undertaking for the student organisers, and we would appreciate any volunteers for the following (please check all of the responsibilities you are interested in helping with):

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aiding in the preparation and distribution of food | <input type="checkbox"/> I can provide safe over-night accommodation: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Note-taking during workshops | <input type="checkbox"/> Friday night <input type="checkbox"/> Saturday night |
| <input type="checkbox"/> French language interpretation | The accommodation is with: <input type="checkbox"/> males <input type="checkbox"/> females |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Childminding | The accommodation is queer and trans-positive: <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I have space in my vehicle for _____ people | I can provide _____ sleeping spaces |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) : _____ | |

7. ASSEMBLY OBJECTIVES & ANTI-OPPRESSION PRINCIPLES

All Assembly participants must agree to and respect the Assembly objectives and anti-oppression principles found in the notice package.

- ☐ I have read, understand, and agree to the the Ontario Campus Activist Assesembly objectives and anti-oppression principles.

FORM SUBMITTED BY: _____

Signature

Date