

To Whom it May Concern in the Society of Graduate and Professional Students,

My name is Sebastian De Line, an incoming PhD student in the Cultural Studies program. I am writing you in a hope that you will bring up this issue during one of your monthly meetings in order to advocate on behalf of all grad students at Queen's.

I'm sure you are already aware and I am undoubtedly not the first person to raise this topic for it is an international issue and not within our university alone, annual PhD funding/salaries fall well below the full-time, annual provincial minimum wage salary. For international graduate students, the salaries appear to be quite alarming when you break down PhD funding/salaries per an hourly rate.

In 2018, the Ontario government is expected to raise the provincial minimum wage from it's current \$11.40 an hour (\$21,888 annual f/t salary) to \$14.00 p/h (\$26,880 annual f/t salary). In 2019, it is expected to be raised again to \$15.00 p/h (\$28,800 annual f/t salary).

Currently, the minimum PhD student funding/salary package at Queen's University is \$18,000 a year.

Second issue to consider is that there are no tuition waivers permitted. Domestic PhD students are expected to pay \$7,599.26 p/y and international PhD students pay \$14,724.26 annually from their funding packages.

Domestic PhD students/employees of the university are paid:

\$18,000.00  
- 7,599.26 (tuition)

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\$10,400.74 (annually) / 12 (months) = \$866.73 (a month) / 160 (hours per month) =  
**\$5.42** per hour

International PhD students/employees of the university are paid:

\$18,000.00  
- 14,724.26 (tuition)

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\$3,275.74 (annually) / 12 (months) = \$272.98 (a month) / 160 (hours per month) =  
**\$1.71** per hour

Suggested solutions for this issue are:

-Include full tuition waivers for all PhD students. (This is comparable to all competitive U.S. universities who standardly waive tuition for graduate students)

-Increase annual PhD funding packages to reflect the Provincial legal full-time minimum wage salary requirements. This equates to: \$26,880 (2018) and \$28,800 (2019) annually.

-Reduce number of admitted graduate students per year in order pay adequate salaries to students who are admitted.

Thank you very much for your time. I hope that SGPS will advocate for this issue as I believe it is an important one.

Kind regards,

Sebastian De Line

PhD Student  
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