

**Research funding cut**  
**The Canadian Council on Learning will not be renewed**  
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**The Cord - WLU**

As of March 10, 2010, federal funding for the Canadian Council on Learning (CCL) will not be renewed. As a result, research conducted to evaluate and improve government programs for post-secondary education will be cut.

According to Kory Preston, Wilfrid Laurier University Students' Union vice-president of university affairs, "It's a disappointment [and] leaves us in a very difficult situation when it comes to trying to evaluate our post-secondary education system."

In the past year, the ability to conduct research to improve and understand post-secondary education in Canada has been hit hard due to the loss of funding from the Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation (CMSF), the Canadian Policy Research Networks (CPRN) and most recently the CCL.

Arati Sharma, national director of the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations (CASA), a national lobby group, explained that the CCL and CMSF have done great research regarding the terms of understanding the issues, the effects of debt and tuition and the quality of our post-secondary education system.

"[These organizations] have been invaluable for understanding our system," she said. CASA is advocating for the Canadian government to make a commitment to post-secondary education research to evaluate, improve and ensure high-quality learning.

"Without these research organizations, student organizations like WLUSU are going to have to rely on their own research methods and quite frankly we don't have the resources in order to do the type of research these organizations need," Preston said.

Research is also important because employment opportunities are greater in Ontario for those with a post-secondary education.

In reflection of the lack of government support, Canada has fallen behind other Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries in comparing post-secondary education information.

Sharma explained, "They have the research, they know where their post-secondary education is.... In order to improve our post-secondary education system, we need to know where we stand jurisdictionally and with other countries."

Research is essential to maintaining the quality level of Canada's education in comparison to other countries.

"If the population makes post-secondary education important, the government will recognize that," said Sharma.

## **The CCL**

-Supports research initiatives regarding education in all disciplines -Collaborates with governments, school boards, the Canadian Teachers' Federation and NGOs to establish research priorities -Establishes networks and supports knowledge sharing -Develop the Composite Learning Index which measures the country's performance in lifelong learning