

Financially struggling international student resorts to a crowdfunding website to pay for her education.

Luana Saturnino is an international student at Seneca College, studying for journalism. Saturnino and her husband came from Brazil in hopes of providing a better future for their child Luke.

When her husband could not keep his work during the pandemic, Saturnino decided to open a GoFundMe page to support her education. “As long as we planned, we could see that it would be virtually impossible to maintain our basic lifestyle... with the amount of money, we have on our bank account” says Saturnino.

To date, the campaign raised \$700 out of \$15,000 goal. The fund will cover her tuition and other necessary costs such as equipment and software she will need to pursue her study in journalism.

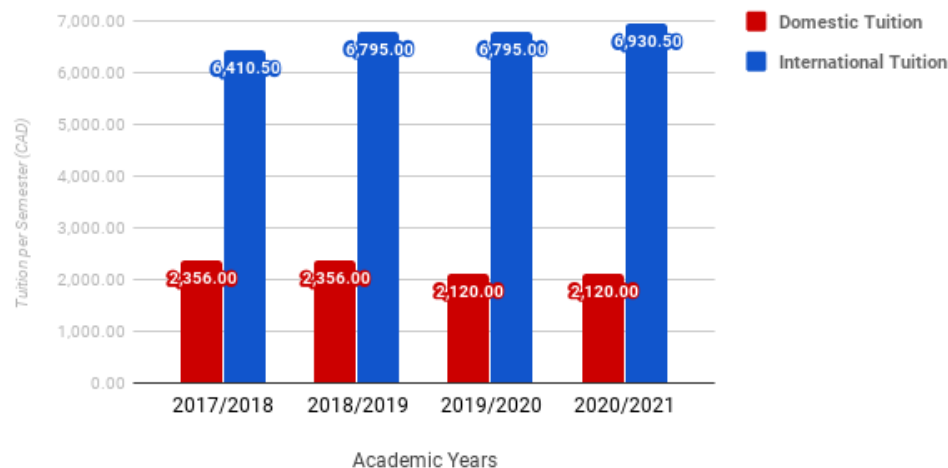


Source: The GoFundMe campaign 'Help this young immigrant mother to graduate'

Many post-secondary institutions have a huge difference between international tuition and domestic tuition.

Seneca JRN Program Tuition

Source: <https://www.senecacollege.ca/registrar/fee-details/>



For Seneca College’s Journalism program, domestic tuition gradually decreased over the four years while the international tuition has risen. On average, international students in Seneca pay three times more than domestic students. When Saturnino inquired the college for the reason behind such difference, they told her it was decided by the federal government and not by the institution.

“It’s really revolting to see the disparity of the financial treatment that the country is giving,” says Saturnino.

A drastic increase in international tuition has always been a topic for many university and college students. OneClass.com, a website dedicated to sharing study notes for university students, conducted a tuition comparison analysis based on data from 2006 to 2017. Their study found, on average, international tuition increased 2.6 times more than domestic tuition.

Many international student organizations from different institutions have come forward to express their anger toward schools. They found it unfair that only domestic tuition is under the provincial government's tuition freeze. The students are requesting their schools to freeze international tuition as well during this unprecedented time.

Most of the courses in the upcoming fall semester will be online

"To be honest, I don't think it will be a good semester," says Saturnino when asked about the online classes for the fall.

Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, most of the classes in Ontario will be offered online while the campuses stay closed. Saturnino's journalism classes will be online as well. Her classes usually require broadcasting equipment and software which is only available on campus. Some lectures that used to take place in a newsroom setting will have to be taught online over webcams.