

COUNCIL OF  
ONTARIO UNIVERSITIES  
CONSEIL DES  
UNIVERSITÉS DE L'ONTARIO

August 9, 2010

Hon. John Milloy  
Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities  
Mowat Block, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
900 Bay Street  
Toronto, ON M7A 1L2

Dear Minister Milloy:

The Ontario Online Institute was announced in the government's 2010 Speech from the Throne and the 2010 budget. The Institute's main goal is to "bring the best professors from Ontario's postsecondary institutions into the homes of those who want to pursue higher learning." Ontario's universities are committed to achieving this objective. The enclosed proposal, *The Ontario Online Institute: Achieving the Transformation*, sets out the response of the Council of Ontario Universities (COU) to the government's vision, with recommendations for the Institute's mandate, structure and first steps.

Our proposal outlines a plan that will help achieve our mutual goals of expanding access to postsecondary education for learners across the province, and improving the digital literacy skills that are critical to success in the knowledge economy. Students will have access to flexible learning options that enable them to complete higher education regardless of their geography or family responsibilities. Our institutions are ready to actively collaborate in building an Institute that will achieve these objectives, and extend the impact of existing e-learning resources and infrastructure. We are eager to begin the discussion with you on how we can move forward.

I have also enclosed a proposal from the Ontario Council of University Libraries (OCUL) to expand the Ontario Scholars Portal. A trusted online resource for Ontario students and faculty, the Portal boasts over 12 million searches a year and over 4.5 million article downloads from its digital library. The OCUL proposal, if accepted, would expand accessible research and learning services to provide capabilities in the area of mobile data, and integrate its current information content and tools to virtual classrooms. Enhanced funding to the Scholars Portal would allow OCUL to build on what is already a cornerstone of e-learning in Ontario universities and would support implementation of the Online Institute.

Thank you for your consideration of our proposal and your continued support for Ontario universities. We look forward to discussing our recommendations with you at your earliest convenience in order to make the government's vision for an Ontario Online Institute a reality.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Bonnie M. Patterson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Bonnie" being more prominent.

Bonnie M. Patterson  
President & CEO

cc: Hon. Dalton McGuinty, Premier of Ontario  
Deborah Newman, Deputy Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities

Encl. *The Ontario Online Institute: Achieving the Transformation*  
OCUL Scholar's Portal proposal