

Press Release**8 June 2010 - For Immediate Release
Attention: Education and Political reporters**

Another nail in the coffin for open entry

The government appears happy to stand by as underfunding makes it harder for Kiwis to get ahead.

Massey University recently joined Victoria University in restricting admissions for domestic students for second semester, and moving towards limited entry for all courses from 2011 onwards. Otago University has also capped admissions. Alongside this, the Government is signalling that universities should increase the number of international students as an 'economic lifeline.'

"More than half of New Zealand's university campuses have effectively closed off second semester entry and are moving towards limited entry next year. By turning away from open entry, a system that gave all suitably qualified New Zealanders a fair go, this year marks a sad turning point away from this cornerstone of our tertiary education system," says NZUSA Co-President David Do.

"Thousands of potential students nationwide have been affected by moves by these three universities in the past few weeks. The government cannot afford to stand by while more potential graduates continue to be turned away," says Do.

"The people who need education now more than ever may be turned away. Maori and Pasifika students - whom the government is specifically aiming at increasing participation rates of - as well as workers looking to upskill, are among the New Zealanders who may miss out," says NZUSA co-President Mr Pene Delaney.

"The buck stops with the government on this. Students had looked towards the Budget to address the real issues of underfunding and student debt. The Budget has failed to meaningfully address these issues. While the boost in funded places is helpful, it barely plays catch-up with current demand and won't be enough for possibly higher demand next year," says NZUSA Co-President Pene Delaney.

Given there is no tracking of what happens to people who are turned away from study, it is entirely possible that thousands of people may continue to languish in underemployment or on the unemployment benefit due to these changes.

Increasing international student enrolments will not be a silver bullet for continued underfunding either. Indeed, continued government underfunding threatens the quality education and experience that is often marketed to overseas students.

"Some will question why, when universities say there is no more capacity to enrol any more students, they plan to accept more international students rather than domestic students. Some will also question why some universities will continue to spend millions on overseas marketing and recruitment trips, when they point to underfunding putting pressure on their budgets," concludes Delaney.

NZUSA is the national representative body for tertiary students and has been advocating on student issues since 1929.

ENDS

For more information contact:

NZUSA Co-President David Do, 027 486 8677, david.do@students.org.nz



NEW ZEALAND UNION OF STUDENTS' ASSOCIATIONS (INC.)

TE RŌPŪ ĀKONGA O NGĀ WHARE WĀNANGA O AOTEAROA

NZUSA

NZUSA Federation Office~ Level 3, 354 Lambton Quay, PO Box 101-91, Wellington
Phone: 04 498 2500, Fax: 04 473 2391

NZUSA Co-President Pene Delaney, 027 486 8673, pene.delaney@students.org.nz