



Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations
Union des associations des professeurs des universités de l'Ontario

May 22, 2024

Annie Pilote, Chair of Board
Mike DeGagné, Interim Chief Administrator
Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences
200 - 141 Laurier Avenue West
Ottawa, ON
K1P 5J3

[Sent by email: contact@federationhss.ca]

Subject: Re: Recent announcement to host 2025 Congress at George Brown College

Dear Annie Pilote and Mike DeGagné,

We are writing on behalf of the Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations (OCUFA), which represents more than 18,000 full-time and contract university professors, academic librarians, and academic professionals across the province.

We are writing to express deep concern about the recent announcement by the Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences that George Brown College will host the annual Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences in 2025.

We are troubled by this significant departure from nearly 100 years of past practice for the Federation and its longstanding partnerships with Canadian universities for this mainstay research dissemination event in our Members' academic calendars. Canadian universities are critical facilitators of much of the country's academic research production and collaboration, and it is troubling to see the Federation plan to host a conference on academic research outside of that setting.

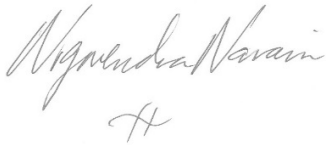
OCUFA recognizes colleges' vital role in advancing new directions in applied education and training. However, we see this as distinct from the role of the university to facilitate academic research. OCUFA supports the engagement of universities as spaces for interdisciplinary and community-based research and teaching. This work is essential to the exchange of ideas and scholarly and professional research activities that happen at Congress.

OCUFA is also concerned that this unprecedented change for Congress comes when Canadian universities—and Ontario universities in particular—face a manufactured

financial crisis following more than a decade of chronic underfunding of postsecondary education. Public universities should be given more opportunities to act as gathering places and partners for research dissemination, education, and scholarship, and they must have adequate government funding to provide those opportunities.

We urge the Federation to rethink this decision and recommit to its partnerships with Canadian universities to host its essential events, especially Congress.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Nigmendra Narain" with a small flourish below it.

Nigmendra Narain, President

Cc: Jenny Ahn, Executive Director

Cc: Evan Fox-Decent, President, McGill Law Faculty Association