**Transcription of John Tory Interview 03/10/2013**
Section with Richard Levin (RL) being interviewed by John Tory (JT)

JT: Richard Levin is the executive director of enrollment services, and university registrar at the U of T, and he’s been kind enough to join us to talk about this. Mr. Levin, how are you doing?

RL: I am well, thanks, how are you?

JT: Good, thanks, thanks for coming on. First of all, you heard the suggestion made by Ben Coleman and I realize none of these things are free to the University, but why couldn’t you, even for those that had this problem, say you’ll have some more… some altered method of them paying, so they don’t end up with this pretty understandable cash flow problem between the cheque they get in January and the payment that’s due in November, when they’re using borrowed money to pay tuition?

RL: Well, let me put a little bit of context around this, and then I will talk about what, in fact, we do for students in this position. So, the vast majority of our students do pay their fees on time, which is late August, and as has been acknowledged, the large majority even of our OSAP recipients are able to pay their fees in August, without incurring any service charges at all. So, there is a gap as Ben pointed out, between the 60% OSAP payment in September and the remaining 40% in January. As I said, this doesn’t affect most OSAP recipients, but some seem to find themselves unable to pay their tuition. So what we do for all OSAP recipients is we include the service charge for the two months between November and, by the way we are giving students the grace period from August to November already, so we pay the two months service charge, we put it in the OSAP assessment, it’s covered from November to January, and that’s when they get their second installment.

JT: Now, when you say covered, you mean you don’t charge them interest, or…

RL: We mean, I mean, it’s in the money they receive from OSAP.

JT: So I mean, it’s a wash on the interest then, that’s what you’re saying.

RL: It’s a wash, yeah.

JT: OK, well, we don’t have time today to ask why you would do it that way as opposed to just saying, charging a lower rate of interest or change the day on which they have to pay, and, look, I understand when you say that most people seem to be able to pay on time, but he did mention, I don’t know if this number is accurate, 4300 people didn’t pay on time, and did get charged this interest, and you’re saying for all of them, or most of them, they got a wash on it? They got that money back from OSAP?

RL: They do, exactly, they get it covered.

JT: Well, that’s the worst of it covered in its own way, though you have to wonder about all the administration involved in doing that.

RL: You know, in fact it’s less administrative work to have one due date for fees and one process than to have multiple processes.

JT: I get that too.

RL: As you pointed out, every organization has to have timely cash flows to cover its costs.

JT: Yeah, I get that too. Well, look, that’s very interesting, it’s always good when you can have two sides on and have a little clarification, I still am puzzled a bit by the system, but I guess, you know, I hear what you’re saying, and there may be a better way, I just hope the Minister can find a better way that doesn’t disadvantage you, but that does help those students who are finding themselves in a position of hardship. I appreciate your coming on, and explaining that, it’s very useful—Richard Levin, the executive director of enrollment services and university registrar for the University of Toronto, thank you for your time.

RL: Thank you.