

Ontario's public colleges at

50

A Better Plan

Students and faculty first

Student success depends on faculty support

For students to succeed, they need the support of faculty who are given enough time and stability to develop curriculum, teach courses, provide out-of-class support, and use what they learn in one term to improve the course for the next. Sadly, the share of faculty who are in full-time positions and able to provide that kind of support to students continues to fall.

Instead, as student enrolment rises, we see an explosive growth in contract faculty, who are given little or no prep time, paid a fraction of what full-time faculty receive, and have no ability to predict from one term to the next whether their position will be continuing.

This isn't a recipe for a successful college system – this is setting students up to fail. It doesn't have to be that way, though. As Ontario's colleges turn 50, the way to set students up for success is to protect full-time faculty jobs and improve contract faculty rights.



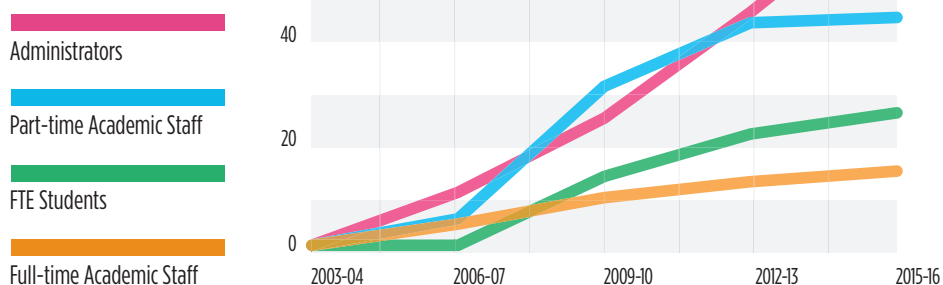
Enrolment up, faculty numbers down

Student enrolment numbers at Ontario's colleges have nearly doubled since 1989. But rather than growing alongside enrolment, full-time faculty numbers have actually dropped over that same period. Though administrators continue to use the language of austerity to justify not filling full-time positions, the facts don't match that spin. The simple truth is that today there are roughly 1,000 fewer full-time faculty to teach 100,000 more students than in 1989.

What's the result? Growing class sizes and workload for full-time faculty, as well as a significant increase in the number of contract faculty in the college system. There is also a growing number of non-teaching bodies, such as centres for entrepreneurship and advising departments, that are staffed by administrators and support staff rather than faculty.

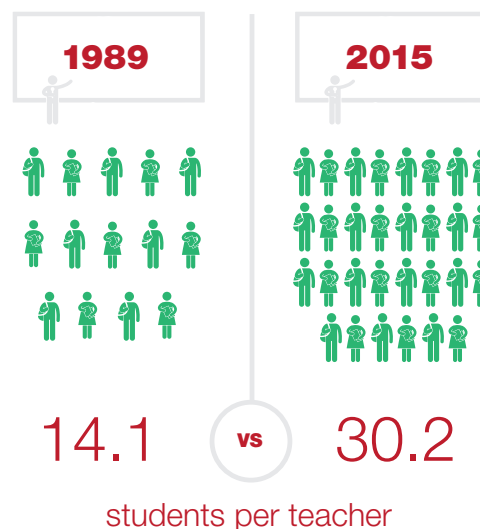
The numbers over the last decade tell a disturbing story. As the number of students continues to climb, the number of full-time faculty has failed to keep up and the number of part time staff and administrators has skyrocketed. In fact, those that have seen the most rapid growth are administrators, who have seen their numbers rise by more than 77 per cent just from 2002-03 to 2015-16.

Percentage change from 2003



A staffing crisis

The failure to hire full-time faculty has led to a staffing crisis in Ontario colleges. Part-time, partial-load, and sessional faculty (collectively known as contract faculty) now outnumber full-time faculty nearly three to one, without accounting for the large number teaching in continuing education, online and part-time studies. Meanwhile, with tuition increases raising the cost of education, students are paying more for reduced access to securely-employed and fairly-compensated faculty who can focus on students' needs in the short- and long-term.



Danielle's story: Programs without faculty

The situation has become so dire at the college I teach at that entire programs exist without a full-time faculty member in them. Instead, contract faculty are tasked with coordinating the program, taking care of administration, and providing out-of-class support for students. In many cases, these faculty aren't even given any paid time to do this work.

Worst of all, these programs are being marketed to students who sign up without ever knowing that there isn't a single full-time faculty member assigned to the program. The entire system relies on the fact that these contract faculty care too much to let their students suffer, so they end up spending significant unpaid time making sure they get the support they need. This can't continue - students are paying the price.

Names have been changed to protect confidentiality.

The plight of contract faculty

Students aren't the only ones suffering in the current context. The colleges' reliance on a growing number of contract faculty hasn't translated to better wages or working conditions for these precarious workers. Instead, they continue to earn a fraction of what full-time faculty are paid, despite being asked to do the same work.

While exact wages vary between colleges, the average contract faculty pay for the equivalent of a full-time teaching load is less than \$30,000. On top of that, most have no benefits or job security, and continue to be trapped in precarious work, year after year. These faculty are often given their course assignments at the last minute, and have little time to prepare courses or meet with students. Because their pay is so low, many have to supplement by working at multiple colleges or taking on other jobs.

Contract faculty deserve fair pay, sick days, and recognition of seniority. This seniority should also provide a clear path to bring these workers' teaching experience into full-time positions when they become available. Too often in the current context, these faculty are left trapped in an ongoing cycle of short-term contracts.

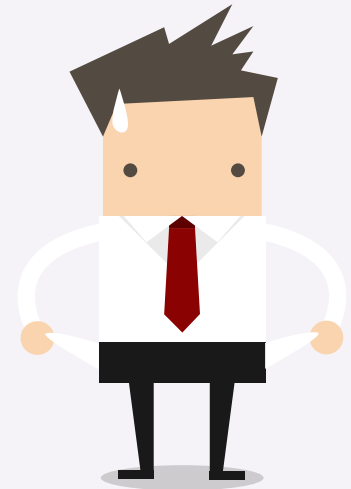
Paying for face-to-face teaching time and then stipulating that all other academic responsibilities are to be covered under this hourly rate seriously diminishes all the work that goes into successfully running courses.

Course development (some of which I have done from scratch) and maintenance (keeping up with current research) is time consuming, as is

marking of tests and assignments, student contact (whether in person or my email), upkeep of online resources, and administrative functions.

When I factor these activities in, I am likely making just over the provincial minimum wage.

Canadore College
contract faculty member



< \$30,000: average contract faculty pay for the equivalent of a full-time teaching load

LEARN MORE about the challenges facing contract faculty, and how joining a union can help improve the rights of these workers at www.contractfaculty.ca

No lack of funds for those at the top

As the number of administrators continues to climb – by more than 77 per cent since 2002-03 – so does their desire for a greater share of the limited funding pie. Just this past winter, college presidents tried to sneak massive pay increases through over the holiday break, hoping that no one would notice. Presidents, some of whom already make nearly \$500,000, wanted to award themselves pay raises of as much as 50 per cent, with significant raises to follow for other senior administrators below them.

Only quick action by the union to draw the media's attention kept this from going through unnoticed. As a result of public backlash, the government sent colleges back to the drawing board with directions to come up with a more reasonable compensation plan.

Pay hike considered for Confederation College president

The presidents of community colleges across Ontario, including Confederation, could see their pay increase between 25% and 43%.

48

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Ontario colleges could increase executive pay by more than 50%

SIMONA CHOICE - EDUCATION REPORTER
The Globe and Mail
Published Tuesday, Jan. 17, 2017 8:50PM EST
Last updated Wednesday, Jan. 18, 2017 9:08AM EST

Giant pay raises for college presidents may be blocked

Some of the colleges choose comparators 10 times their own size

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Faculty and the student experience

The difference between full-time and contract faculty goes beyond their working conditions. Full-time faculty provide important stability, and improve the quality of the student experience. Contract faculty are committed to their jobs, and often go far beyond what they're compensated for to support their students. But the precarious conditions of contract work mean that colleges are exploiting these workers, and their concern for their students, in a way that's simply not sustainable.

JESSICA'S STORY: FACULTY MATTER

One class in particular stands out to me as one of the best and most meaningful learning experiences in my time in college. The teaching style and methodologies used by the professor were engaging, focused, lively and drew out students' participation and input – you could really tell how much she cared, and how much she'd put into the course. It was clear that this professor's dedication to the issues in the course went well beyond the traditional classroom setting.

Through her participation in an event the college puts on in this area, she also encourages the learning that happens

outside the classroom through the overall college experience. Ten years after being her student, I had the opportunity to come "full circle" and attend the event as an invited speaker – and her course, and the time she put into it, is part of why I ended up in the position to pass my own knowledge on to another generation of students.

Teaching is about more than the hours that are put in at the front of the class – this professor is the perfect example of this. That's why we need faculty who are given the time and stability to develop courses – so they can leave the kind of lasting impression this professor left on me.

As a contract faculty, I don't have the opportunity for enough one-on-one feedback time or office hours with my students. I also cannot lend my experience and expertise to curriculum and program development because my contract status means that I am generally not included in meetings where these issues are discussed. I have the same qualifications and responsibilities as my full-time counterparts but I feel isolated and marginalized because of my contract status.

I have to work at three colleges to make ends meet. I never know if I will be rehired and whether I can get all of my courses scheduled so that I can get from school to school. This creates a huge amount of stress for me and my family. Job security, and for me a full time job in one school, would allow me to feel stable and put my full energy into teaching.

Humber College contract faculty member



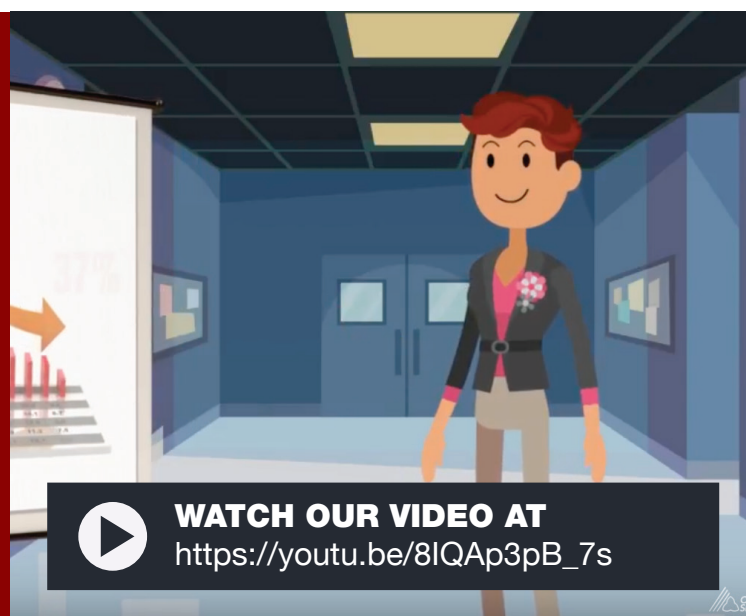
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- Learn more about this and other issues online at: www.collegefaculty.org
- Let your local executive committee know that you want to help at your college



WATCH OUR VIDEO AT
https://youtu.be/8lQAp3pB_7s