



Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations  
Union des Associations des Professeurs des Universités de l'Ontario

## **Ontario poll: Supporters of all political parties concerned about growing numbers of contract faculty**

TORONTO – According to a new poll commissioned by the Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations (OCUFA), 68 per cent of Ontarians oppose universities hiring more contract faculty on short-term contracts instead of full-time professors with better pay and access to benefits. Potential voters for all political parties disagree with the current hiring approach, including 74 per cent of Liberal supporters, 73 per cent of NDP supporters, and 58 per cent of PC supporters.

“This poll confirms that fairness for contract faculty has broad support,” said Professor Gyllian Phillips, President of OCUFA. “With the provincial election next week, it is time for all political parties to commit to fairness for contract faculty. Their supporters certainly believe in it.”

The poll of 600 Ontarians over the age of 18 shows concern that a lack of job security for professors impacts the quality of student learning experiences. When asked, 60 per cent stated that forcing professors to work contract-to-contract, with no job security, has a negative impact on education quality. Contract faculty often lack dedicated office space and their working conditions make it difficult to make time for engagement with students. Of those surveyed, 63 per cent believe less one-on-one student engagement also negatively impacts education quality.

“Ontarians understand how difficult it is to provide students with the high-quality education they deserve when we’re forced to work contract-to-contract with little or no support,” said Kimberly Ellis-Hale, Chair of OCUFA’s Contract Faculty Committee. “Faculty working conditions are student learning conditions, and that’s why it’s important we have job security, fair pay, and benefits.”

Poll participants were also asked how they feel about the current level of government investment in Ontario’s universities. The province provides the lowest per-student funding in Canada, with public funding making up less than 50 per cent of university operating revenues. When asked whether government funding should make up a higher, lower, or similar proportion of university revenues, 49 per cent said the proportion should be higher than it currently is, with only 8 per cent believing the proportion should be lower.

“It’s time to invest in a fair future for Ontario’s universities,” said Phillips. “With strong public funding for our universities, more full-time faculty hiring, and a commitment to fairness for contract faculty, we can make that future a reality.”

*The telephone survey was conducted by Innovative Research Group from May 23<sup>rd</sup> to May 29<sup>th</sup>, 2018 and included 600 randomly-selected Ontario residents, 18 years of age or older. After weighting a sample of this size, the aggregated results are considered accurate to within ±4.0 per cent, 19 times out of 20.*

*Founded in 1964, OCUFA represents 17,000 faculty and academic librarians in 29 faculty associations across Ontario. For more information and the full poll results, please visit [www.ocufa.on.ca/ontario-election-2018](http://www.ocufa.on.ca/ontario-election-2018).*

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