

# TRENDS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

## Trends in Faculty Hiring at Ontario Universities

In 2005, the report issued by the Rae review of college and university education in Ontario, *Ontario: A Leader in Learning*, re-stated an estimate that 11,000 new university faculty would be required by 2010. No source was cited, nor any of the assumptions that underlie the conclusion. OCUFA subsequently conducted an analysis that showed Ontario universities would have to hire nearly 11,000 full-time faculty between 2003 and 2010 to replace retiring professors and to reduce the student-faculty ratio to a level at comparable US institutions and at which Ontario could be a true *leader in learning*.<sup>1</sup>

Today, as enrolments continue to grow and universities increase full-time faculty numbers by a paltry 450 per year, a target of 11,000 is increasingly out of date and the possibility of improving the student-faculty ratio ever more remote.

As with previous studies that sought to outline the potential demand for professors, enrolment projections have fallen short.<sup>2</sup> OCUFA's estimated need for 11,000 new faculty over six years was based on a Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) projection of 333,000 full-time students in fall 2010 – a level attained in 2004. Despite expectations that enrolments would level off or show a modest decline after the “double cohort” graduated from its undergraduate programs, enrolments have continued to rise. The Council of Ontario Universities (COU) is currently projecting that enrolments will continue to rise through to 2021, by 27% from 2008.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> OCUFA, *Closing the Quality Gap: The Case for Hiring 11,000 Faculty by 2010*, April 2005. Price, Waterhouse, Coopers (PWC), “Will there be room for me?” March 1999; and Council of Ontario Universities (COU), *Modelling Supply and Demand for Full-Time Faculty*, March 2000. The PWC forecast a need for 10,000 new faculty between 1998 and 2010 to maintain the same student-faculty ratio and 13,100 to improve the ratio to the average in the rest of Canada. The COU estimated that 15,300 new faculty would be required between 2000 and 2010 to reach the student-faculty ratio in the rest of Canada.

<sup>2</sup> The PWC and COU reports were based on 316,000 full-time students in 2010, reached in 2003.

<sup>3</sup> COU, *Ontario Universities: Strategic Partners in Provincial Prosperity – Managing Growth in University Enrolment and Enhancing the Quality of the Student Learning Environment*, June 2008.

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When actual enrolment in fall 2005 exceeded expectations, there were 27 full-time equivalent (FTE) students for each full-time faculty member in Ontario. The spillover effect of the double cohort increased the student-faculty ratio in the rest of Canada from 19 to 20. The new reality meant that 11,300 *net new* additions to the faculty complement – over and above replacements for retiring professors – would have been required over five years for Ontario universities to match their US peers in 2010. Even the more modest objective of achieving the student-faculty ratio in the rest of Canada as of 2005 would have required 6,300 net new faculty positions.

At present rates of enrolment growth and faculty hiring, getting the student-faculty ratio to US or Canadian levels by 2010 would still require 9,800 or 5,200 net new Ontario professors over the next year. Present hiring trends make even the most minimal target of hiring 2,800 additional faculty to return Ontario's student-faculty ratio to where it was in 2000 unattainable. The following table shows the number of faculty members remaining to be recruited to improve student-faculty ratios by the fall of 2010.<sup>4</sup>

## Net new faculty required to meet target student-faculty ratios by 2010

	Student/ Faculty Target	Additional Ontario Faculty required as of fall:				
		2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
<b>Rest of Canada 2005</b>	20	6,853	6,261	6,048	5,511	5,168
<b>Rest of Canada 2000</b>	19	11,464	10,872	10,659	10,122	9,779
<b>COU US peers</b>	16	10,805	10,213	10,000	9,463	9,120
<b>Ontario 1990</b>	18	8,778	8,186	7,973	7,436	7,093
<b>Ontario 2000</b>	22	4,500	3,908	3,695	3,158	2,815

<sup>4</sup> FTE student estimates for 2009 and 2010 assume the 2008 participation rates and demographic growth forecast by the Ontario Ministry of Finance. Faculty estimates for 2008 and 2009 based on university hiring plans outlined in university Multi-Year Accountability Agreement documents. See Appendix C for an explanation.

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If it is understandable that the range of variables affecting enrolment makes it difficult to produce precise and accurate projections, the pace of hiring at Ontario universities could hardly be characterized as anything but temporizing strategies to deal with the double cohort. The current pattern would barely have returned the student-faculty ratio to the 2001 level even if the student forecasts made in 2005 were correct. Present rates of actual and planned hiring certainly do not match the ambition of *Reaching Higher*.

Shortly after the Rae report was released, Premier Dalton McGuinty's Liberal government announced *Reaching Higher* – a program to invest an additional \$6.2 billion dollars in Ontario's post-secondary sector. Of that, almost \$4.3 billion was earmarked for operating funding to colleges and universities to develop a "postsecondary education and training system ... that achieves the highest standards in teaching, research and student learning experience...." *Reaching Higher* anticipated increases in faculty numbers to "accommodate higher enrolment and improve student success" and to improve "student experience through better student/faculty interaction...."<sup>5</sup>

In addition to promising access to Ontario universities for all qualified students and improved quality, the provincial government indicated that accountability agreements would be required to ensure that universities were living up to the challenge. The Interim and Multi-Year Accountability Agreements (MYAA) signed by universities outline each institution's hiring plans for 2005-06 and 2006-07. MYAA "report-backs" report actual and planned hiring for subsequent years.

The data from these MYAAs and progress reports produce several notable observations. Initially, a significant proportion of full-time faculty hiring was of faculty with limited term contracts. Overall, 23 per cent of planned faculty hiring was for contractually limited term appointments (CLTA), well above the ten-year average of 13 per cent before the double cohort.<sup>6</sup> In addition, actual hiring for

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<sup>5</sup> Ontario Minister of Finance, *Ontario Budget Paper A: Investing in People – Managing Ontario's Finances*, May 2005, pp. 11, 13.

<sup>6</sup> Terminology for full-time faculty who are not on tenure-stream appointments varies, typically "Limited Term Appointment" or "Contractually Limited Appointment". CLTA amalgamates the two variants.

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2006-07 proved to be significantly less than planned. Planned hiring for 2007-08 was scaled back from previous plans and, even though actual hiring exceeded plans, combined hiring over 2006-07 and 2007-08 was three per cent less than planned. Finally, hiring plans for 2008-09 are 27 per cent below the previous year. (Data for each institution's planned and actual hiring are included in Appendices A and B.)

The outlook is extremely bleak for increasing the faculty complement in Ontario to levels that have a noticeable impact on student-faculty ratios. The odds of making substantive improvements in student-faculty interaction are thereby reduced as well. Prospective hiring for 2008-09 was already down from previous years, but events intervening between the time those plans were made and now make fulfillment of the hiring intentions less likely. University administrations have been using the crisis in financial markets and the economic recession to justify budget restraint.

A survey of OCUFA member associations indicates that two-thirds of Ontario universities were planning hiring freezes or slowdowns. According to respondents, beginning as early as fall 2008, at least half of the province's universities announced hiring freezes or reductions, across the university in some cases, in selected faculties or departments in others. In some cases so far, freezes or slowdowns are being implemented only in anticipation of the 2009-10 fiscal year; in other cases, no date for lifting the freezes or slowdowns were given.

It might be supposed that the elimination of mandatory retirement will address the shortfall in faculty numbers in Ontario. Relying on faculty to retire later is nothing more than a very short term and partial solution to a longer-term, structural problem. In 2007-08, there were 1,700 faculty aged 60-64 and 425 faculty who were 65 or older. The combined total is less than 200 more than in the previous year, the first full year in which professors were no longer required to retire at age 65. If the average age of retirement increases by five years, at that rate of delayed retirement, the total number of faculty across Ontario would rise by fewer than a thousand. At most, if every faculty member were to retire after 65 and by 70, the increase in faculty would be 2,000: each of the other five-year age groupings from 35-39 forward is approximately 1,900 and none more than



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2,100. Even if this increase were to materialize in the next year, it would still be insufficient to return Ontario's student-faculty ratio to its level a decade ago.

The number of faculty that is currently on limited term faculty appointments remains an unresolved problem as well. Data are not available for actual number of CLTAs that occurred over 2005-06, but they represent a significant proportion of planned faculty hiring that year. Hiring faculty to CLTAs since then has been net new appointments: that is, even if all the limited term appointments made in 2005-06 were for one or two years and now terminated, they have been replaced by other limited term appointees, and the number of CLTAs increased by further additions. Limited term appointments could account for 16 per cent of all full-time appointments in Ontario today.

Limited term appointments can represent a problem in either of two ways. If the elevated use of term contracts for full-time faculty is a temporary phenomenon, and unless they are replaced by tenure-stream appointments, the number of full-time faculty will be reduced by whatever net reduction in CLTAs occurs in the future. If 16 per cent of the full-time faculty has become the new norm, universities are seeking to gain by taking credit for the research expected of limited term faculty members even as the universities refuse to respond in kind by offering security of employment. Nor is it to students' advantage to have mentors and potential referees move on.

University commitments under the MYAAs notwithstanding, increased funding and accountability mechanisms have not yielded faculty hiring at levels that would fulfill the hopes raised by *Reaching Higher*.

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## Appendix A: Net New Faculty Positions - University Hiring Intentions - 2005-06 to 2008-09

	Full-time Tenure-Stream					Limited Term Full-time					Total Full-time Faculty				
	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	To date	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	To date	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	To date
Algoma	1	-1	6	2	8	1	3	-3	-1	-1	2	2	3	1	8
Brock	25	43	12	9	89	3	-2	-19	2	-16	28	41	-7	11	73
Carleton	1	29	19	7	56	7	9	-6	8	18	8	38	13	15	74
Guelph	6	14	51	-10	61	-20	-3	3	-2	-22	-14	11	54	-12	39
Hearst	-1	1	-1	-1	-2	2	1	2	-1	4	1	2	1	-2	2
Lakehead	9	-13	17	7	20	-1	13	16	9	37	8	0	33	16	57
Laurentian	4	18	9	3	34	22	13	-4	1	32	26	30	5	4	65
McMaster	4	10	18	58	90	34	19	17	15	85	38	29	35	73	175
Nipissing	0	9	4	1	14	14	0	0	9	23	14	9	4	10	37
OCAD	5	5	0	5	15	3	1	-4	5	5	8	6	-4	10	20
Ottawa	14	64	50	49	177	7	24	15	5	51	20	88	65	54	227
Queen's	-1	18	17	13	47	4	2	4	-9	1	3	20	21	4	48
Ryerson	28	40	19	35	122	3	8	19	-2	28	31	48	38	33	150
Toronto	26	10	20	15	71	65	-5	5	0	65	91	5	25	15	136
Trent	-4	5	7	-11	-3	1	6	0	-8	-1	-3	11	7	-19	-4
UOIT	11	20	19	27	77	4	9	11	7	31	15	29	30	34	108
Waterloo	19	16	25	20	80	1	-21	0	0	-20	20	-5	25	20	60
Western	32	37	30	23	122	13	8	5	0	26	45	45	35	23	148
WLU	9	26	8	12	55	14	9	-6	6	23	23	35	2	18	78
Windsor	6	2	31	17	56	0	9	-7	9	11	6	11	24	26	67
York	20	72	64	27	183	29	32	-3	-18	40	49	104	61	9	223

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Total	214	425	425	308	1,371	205	135	45	35	420	419	559	470	343	1,791
Yr-to-Yr change												34%	-16%	-27%	
% of total						49%	24%	10%	10%	23%					

Source: Interim and Multi-Year Accountability Agreements, and MYAA Report-Back reports.

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## Appendix B: Net New Faculty Positions – Actual Hiring and Variance from Plan – 2006-07 and 2007-08

	Full-time Tenure-Stream					Limited Term Full-time					Total Full-time Faculty				
	2006-07	2007-08	Total	Plan	+ / -	2006-07	2007-08	Total	Plan	+ / -	2006-07	2007-08	Total	Plan	+ / -
Algoma*	-1	6	5	5	0	4	-3	1	0	1	3	3	6	5	1
Brock	43	13	56	55	1	-2	4	2	-21	23	41	17	58	34	24
Carleton	26	12	38	48	-10	3	-3	0	3	-3	29	9	38	51	-13
Guelph	1	45	46	65	-19	-12	7	-5	0	-5	-11	52	41	65	-24
Hearst	1	-1	0	0	0	1	1	2	3	-1	2	0	2	3	-1
Lakehead	-9	18	9	4	5	13	12	25	29	-4	4	30	34	33	1
Laurentian	10	10	20	27	-7	9	11	20	9	11	18	21	39	35	4
McMaster	-8	-9	-17	28	-45	21	21	42	36	6	13	12	25	64	-39
Nipissing	4	2	6	13	-7	3	14	17	0	17	7	16	23	13	10
OCAD	4	0	4	5	-1	0	0	0	-3	3	4	0	4	2	2
Ottawa	58	63	121	114	7	12	30	42	39	3	70	93	163	153	10
Queen's	18	41	59	35	24	2	-2	0	6	-6	20	39	59	41	18
Ryerson	46	21	67	59	8	13	19	32	27	5	59	40	99	86	13
Toronto	60	25	85	30	55	2	6	8	0	8	62	31	93	30	63
Trent	5	10	15	12	3	0	2	2	6	-4	5	12	17	18	-1
UOIT	23	20	43	39	4	10	15	25	20	5	33	35	68	59	9
Waterloo	16	16	32	41	-9	-21	-2	-23	-21	-2	-5	14	9	20	-11
Western	22	42	64	67	-3	0	14	14	13	1	22	56	78	80	-2
WLU	28	14	42	34	8	8	-15	-7	3	-10	36	-1	35	37	-2
Windsor	2	12	14	33	-19	9	-12	-3	2	-5	11	0	11	35	-24



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York	40	74	114	136	-22	-6	-16	-22	29	-51	34	58	92	165	-73
<b>Total</b>	<b>388</b>	<b>434</b>	<b>822</b>	<b>850</b>	<b>-28</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>-8</b>	<b>457</b>	<b>537</b>	<b>994</b>	<b>1,029</b>	<b>-35</b>
<b>Variance</b>					<b>-3%</b>					<b>-4%</b>					<b>-3%</b>
<b>% of total</b>						<b>15%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>17%</b>							

\* Algoma actual hiring for 2007-08 not available; assumes actual hiring is same as planned.

Source: Interim and Multi-Year Accountability Agreements, and MYAA Report-Back reports.

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## Appendix C: Estimates and Methods

### Student and full-time faculty data and estimates

	Fall Full-time Student Headcount		Full-time equivalent students*	Full-time faculty*	Student / Faculty Ratio
	Actual	MTCU 2005 forecast			
2004	330,772	324,945	349,849	13,300	26
2005	346,673	327,194	366,263	13,557	27
2006	355,763	323,762	375,883	14,148	27
2007	359,218	322,380	379,975	14,359	26
2008	367,094	324,528	387,409	<b>14,896</b>	26
2009	<b>371,344</b>	327,598	<b>391,645</b>	<b>15,229</b>	26
2010	<b>375,558</b>	333,289	<b>395,937</b>		

\* FTE student and faculty figures exclude OCAD and Dominican, following COU method for calculating student-faculty ratio.

Sources:

1. Fall full-time and full-time equivalent (FTE) student enrolment data are from Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) and the Council of Ontario Universities (COU).
2. MTCU fall full-time student forecast supplied to OCUFA by the Ministry.
3. Full-time faculty counts are collated from Ontario university Common University Data Ontario (CUDO) reports.
4. Estimates of student enrolment 2009 and 2010 (highlighted cells and figures in bold text) are derived from 2008 Statistics Canada population estimates, by age group, and Ontario Ministry of Finance demographic projections, by age group, and 2008 participation rates.
  - a. 2008 participation rates remain static for:
    - i. full-time undergraduate students as a percentage of 18-24 age group
    - ii. part-time undergraduate students as a percentage of 25-44 age group
    - iii. full-time graduate students as a percentage of 25-44 age group
    - iv. part-time graduate students as a percentage of 25-44 age group

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- b. Ministry forecast growth rates for 18-24 and 25-44 age groups.
- 5. Estimates of faculty counts for 2008 and 2009 (highlighted cells and figures in bold text) are based on actual (2007-08) and planned (2008-09) net new full-time faculty hiring reported in university MYAA progress reports.