



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

Ontario's professors and academic librarians warn that university quality is on the decline

Survey of over 2,300 faculty reveals strong commitment to the connection between teaching and research

TORONTO –Professors and academic librarians are concerned about the quality of education at Ontario's universities, according to a new survey released today. Of those surveyed, 42 per cent believed that quality had declined at their institution.

"Ontario's universities have welcomed thousands of new students over the past five years, but public funding has just not kept pace with the enrolment increase," said Constance Adamson, President of the Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations (OCUFA). "Universities are straining to accommodate the new students with inadequate resources, and the cracks are beginning to show."

Other worrying survey findings include:

- 63 per cent of faculty believe class sizes have increased over the past five years
- 83 per cent of faculty report budget cuts in their department
- 76 per cent of faculty report an increased use of part-time faculty at their institution
- 73 per cent of faculty report an increase in workload, which for many (41 per cent) means less time to interact with students outside of class

The survey also revealed that Ontario's professors and academic librarians are deeply committed to the quality of university education and the essential link between teaching and research at the province's universities. Surveyed faculty value teaching and research equally, although they believe their commitment to teaching is not always shared by their institution.

"Ontario's professors and academic librarians believe that the connection between teaching and research –what we call 'scholarship'—is at the heart of the university," said Adamson. "When we separate teaching from research, we don't give our students the education they expect."

The OCUFA faculty survey was commissioned to assess Ontario university professors' and academic librarians' opinion on a variety of issues affecting university education. The online survey received over 2,300 responses between March 21 and April 16, 2012.

Founded in 1964, OCUFA represents 17,000 faculty and academic librarians in 27 faculty associations across Ontario. The full survey report can be accessed at <http://bit.ly/KOqUpE>.

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