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The “Other” University Teachers: Non-Full-Time Instructors at Ontario Universities

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Executive Summary

There is a growing body of research demonstrating that there have been major changes in the work and working conditions of university teachers in many countries over the last few decades. In some cases this has led to the increasing employment of non-full-time university instructors, and questions have been raised, especially in the United States, concerning the working conditions of part-time faculty and the implications of these changes on educational quality. The number of full-time faculty at Ontario universities has not increased at the same pace as the massive growth in student enrolment, raising questions about whether universities have employed non-full-time faculty in larger numbers and whether the balance between full-time and non-full-time instructors is changing. However, very little empirical research has been conducted on non-full-time instructors in Ontario. This study offers a preliminary exploration of the issue by addressing four key questions:

- a) What categories of non-full-time instructors are employed by Ontario universities?
- b) What are the conditions of employment for non-full-time instructors?
- c) Has the number of non-full-time instructors employed by Ontario universities changed over time?
- d) Has the ratio of full-time to non-full-time instructors employed by Ontario universities changed over time?

The research method focused on the collection and analysis of publicly available information through a detailed review of collective agreements and related documentation, and the analysis of institutional data on employment. Most institutions do not report data on non-full-time instructor appointments.

What categories of non-full-time instructors are employed by Ontario universities?

Each Ontario university is an autonomous corporation with the ability to make independent decisions related to employment. Faculty members at most universities are unionized, and there are major differences in employment categories and arrangements between institutions. Non-full-time instructors can be categorized into three broad groups: sessional instructors, who are usually employed on a per-course basis; graduate student instructors, who are graduate students with independent responsibility for teaching a course; and other instructors, a category that includes a wide range of quite different types of appointments where it is difficult, if not impossible, to compare across institutions. Our analysis focused on sessional instructors and graduate student instructors.

What are the conditions of employment for non-full-time instructors?

The conditions of employment for non-full-time instructors vary by institution. Salaries ranged from \$5,584 per course (half-course) at Nipissing University to \$7,665 at York University. These salaries are much higher than the average salaries for adjunct faculty reported in the United States. Sessional instructors have benefits guaranteed under collective agreements including, at some institutions, pensions, health plans, leaves, etc. Access to shared office space and technology is also guaranteed under most collective agreements. While some collective agreements provide some form of job security related to seniority or promotion, it is clear that sessional instructors do not have the same level of security associated with tenure.

Graduate student instructors have conditions of employment that roughly parallel the arrangements for sessional instructors.

Has the number of non-full-time instructors employed by Ontario universities changed over time?

Most Ontario universities do not report the number of non-full-time instructors in their employ, but relevant data are available on the websites of five institutions. Based on these limited data, it is clear that the number of sessional instructors has increased in recent years at four of the five universities. The exception is Nipissing University, where the number of sessional instructors changes annually but the data do not suggest an upward trend. The number of graduate student instructors has grown at the University of Toronto, but remained relatively stable at York University.

Has the ratio of full-time to non-full-time instructors employed by Ontario universities changed over time?

There appear to be major differences in this ratio by institution, and quite different trends. The collective agreements at four universities limit the share of courses taught by sessional instructors. This ratio of sessional instructors to full-time faculty appears to be increasing at some universities, while decreasing or remaining stable at others. Based on the limited public data available, it is impossible to discern clear trends.

Conclusions

The findings of this exploratory study suggest that there may be major differences by university in terms of the balance between full-time, tenure-stream faculty and non-full-time instructors. At one university the estimated share of courses taught by sessional instructors during the regular (fall and winter) terms was roughly 25%. The collective agreement at one university limits the number of courses taught by graduate student instructors. The collective agreements at four universities limit the ratio of courses taught by sessional instructors, with the share of courses taught by sessional instructors limited to between 15% and 35% depending on the agreement. All of these agreements provide exceptions that may lead to somewhat higher ratios.

There is clearly a need for additional research to understand these changes in detail and to understand their implications for higher education in Ontario. Areas for further research should include:

- a) A province-wide survey of sessional instructors to learn more about their background (academic and professional), employment situation and teaching load, as well as their perceptions and experiences.
- b) A more detailed study of institutional staffing patterns through the collection and analysis of data on employment trends at all Ontario universities.
- c) A detailed analysis of staffing patterns within selected academic units at different Ontario universities, and the implications of these patterns for educational quality and student success.

1. Introduction

There is a growing body of research demonstrating that there have been major changes to the work and working conditions of university teachers in many countries over the last two decades. The academic profession, a term used broadly to define the increasingly diverse range of academic workers who fulfill teaching and research functions within the university, is changing, and there is an increasing interest in understanding the implications of these changes for faculty, students and universities (Cummings, Shin & Teichler, 2014; Jones, 2007).

In some countries, such as the United States, the United Kingdom and Australia, there have been large increases in the number of faculty employed on short-term contracts and a decrease in the number of professors who hold permanent appointments. In the United States it has been estimated that only one-third of all university teachers have traditional tenure-stream appointments and that roughly half of all faculty are employed on short-term casual contracts, often paid on a course-by-course basis (Muzzin, 2009). The Coalition on the Academic Workforce (2012) has reported serious problems with the working conditions of these “adjunct” faculty, including average salaries of approximately \$2,700 per three-credit course with few benefits and little job security. These faculty members often receive little advance notice of teaching assignments, have little time to devote to course preparation and out-of-class student contact, and have little opportunity to participate in the academic life of the university. The implications of these changes for educational quality have been noted by the Council on Higher Education Accreditation (Kezar, Maxey & Eaton, 2014) and raised in a report from the House Committee on Education and the Workforce (2014).

Similar concerns have been raised in Canada, and while it is frequently assumed that the issues are roughly the same as in the United States, there has been surprisingly little recent Canadian research on university teachers who do not have traditional tenure-stream appointments. This study, focusing on public universities in Ontario, offers a preliminary exploration of this issue by addressing four key questions through a detailed analysis of publicly available documents, reports and data:

- a) What categories of non-full-time instructors are employed by Ontario universities?
- b) What are the conditions of employment for non-full-time instructors?
- c) Has the number of non-full-time instructors employed by Ontario universities changed over time?
- d) Has the ratio of full-time to non-full-time instructors employed by Ontario universities changed over time?

We begin by discussing key elements of the Canadian (and Ontario) higher education context that provide an important foundation for our analysis, as well as reviewing some of the previous research and analysis that has informed our work. We then discuss the design of the study, followed by the presentation and analysis of data related to each of the four questions. We conclude the report with a brief summary of key findings, policy implications and suggestions for further research.

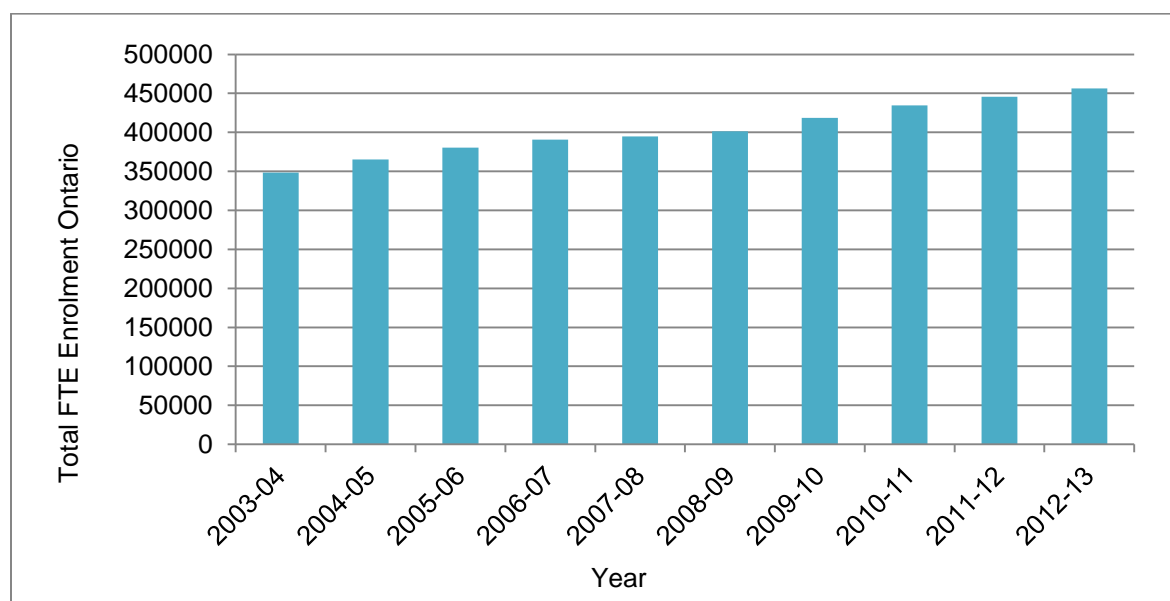
2. Context

This section discusses two contextual features of the Ontario university sector that underscore the contemporary discussion of the changing nature of academic work: enrolment expansion and the employment of full-time faculty. Following this is a review of the literature on non-full-time instructors that provided an important foundation for our work.

2.1 Increasing University Enrolment

The number of students enrolled in Canadian universities has been increasing. This is especially true in Ontario, where increasing access to higher education has been a key government priority for the last decade. According to data from the Council of Ontario Universities, undergraduate (full-time equivalent, FTE) enrolment rose from 311,660 in 2002-2003 to 400,272 in 2012-2013, an increase of 28% over the decade. Graduate enrolment rose from 36,654 to 56,118 during the same time period, an increase of 53%. Total FTE enrolment (undergraduate and graduate) increased from 348,314 to 456,460 (see Figure 1), or by 31%. Increasing student enrolment has enormous implications for university teaching.

Figure 1: University Enrolment in Ontario (FTE, Graduate and Undergraduate), 2003-04 to 2012-13



Source: Council of Ontario Universities

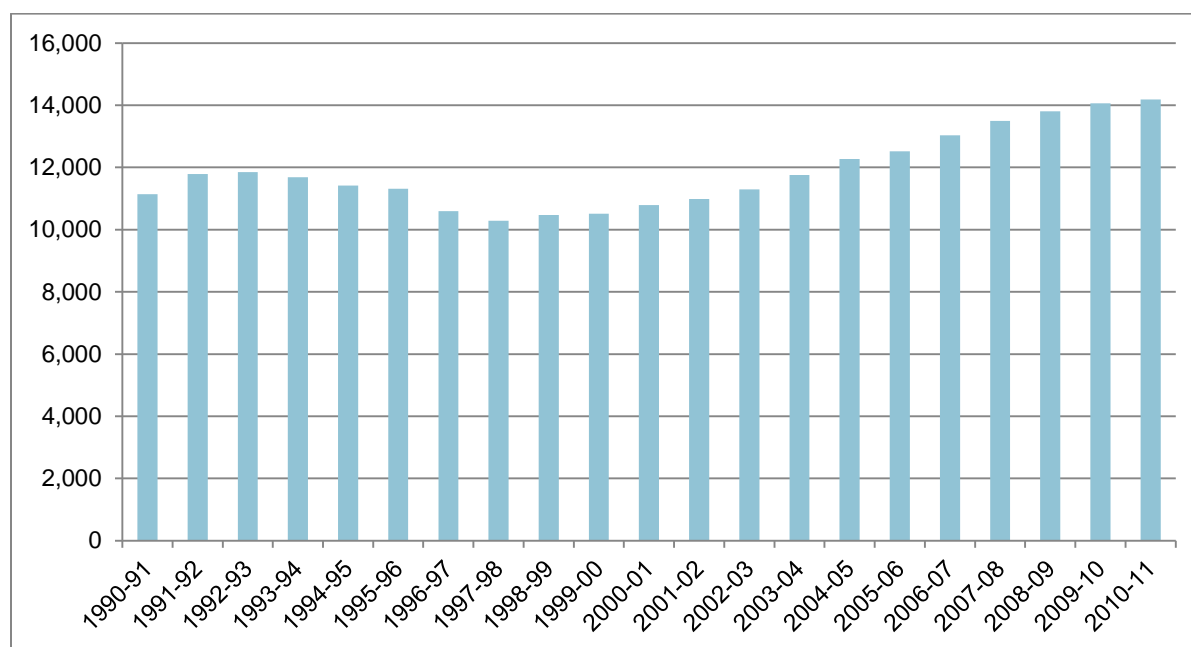
2.2 Employment of Full-Time Faculty

The traditional full-time professorial position in Canada is usually referred to as a “tenure-stream” appointment. New positions are explicitly advertised as “tenure-stream” and successful candidates begin a long probationary period that will eventually lead to a review of their teaching, research and service activities and a decision as to whether they will be granted tenure (a permanent appointment). These appointments also involve a hierarchy of ranks, with most initial appointments to the rank of Assistant Professor. Subsequent reviews of performance can lead to promotion to the rank of Associate Professor and finally Professor. Tenure-stream professors in Canada are expected to engage in some combination of research,

teaching and service (Jones, Gopaul, Weinrib, Metcalfe, Fisher, Gingras & Rubenstein, 2014). In addition to traditional tenure-stream appointments, some Ontario universities have created teaching-stream appointments, which are permanent positions where faculty members are asked to place a much greater emphasis on teaching (Vajoczki, Fenton, Menard & Pollon, 2011).

The number of tenure-stream faculty members employed by Ontario universities is presented in Figure 2. It is clear that the total number of tenure-stream faculty members has gone up and down during the 21-year period captured in the table, with increases in the faculty complement during the early 1990s and decreases in the mid-1990s. The low point during this period was the 1997-1998 academic year, when 10,290 tenure-stream faculty members were employed, but the number has increased every year since that time, reaching 14,184 in 2010-2011. The growth in the number of faculty members during this period has been slow and consistent, increasing by 29% during the ten years from 2001-2002 to 2010-2011.

Figure 2: Number of Tenure-Stream Faculty Members Employed by Ontario Universities, 1990-2011



Source: Statistics Canada, UCASS data

These data illuminate a key difference between changes in the academic profession in Ontario, where the number of tenure-stream positions has been increasing gradually for more than a decade, and some other jurisdictions, where the number of tenure-stream professors has been declining. However, the increase in full-time tenure-stream faculty in Ontario has not kept pace with the growth in enrolment. The number of full-time equivalent students in Ontario universities increased by 52% during the ten-year period from 2000-2001 to 2009-2010, while the number of full-time tenure-stream faculty increased by only 30%. In other words, even with a larger number of full-time permanent faculty members, universities are still under considerable pressure to meet the teaching needs of a rapidly expanding student population, which poses the question as to whether universities are hiring more non-full-time faculty members in order to address these needs.

2.3 Non-Full-Time Instructors

There has been surprisingly little research on non-full-time instructors employed by Canadian universities, but a number of consistent themes emerge from this small body of work. The first theme is the increasing use of part-time, contingent labour within the university sector. The second theme is that non-full-time instructors are not a homogeneous group, and that important differences exist between sub-categories of part-time academic workers. The third theme is that relatively little is known about the implications of this trend in terms of the casualization of academic labour for higher education in Canada, though there is evidence that part-time faculty are frequently marginalized and that they sometimes face important challenges in terms of providing students with a high-quality educational experience. The fourth and final theme is the need for data and research on this topic.

There is consensus within the existing literature that Canadian universities are increasingly employing casual, non-permanent academic workers, including non-full-time instructors. Studies from the late 1980s documented the increasing presence of non-full-time instructors in the academy (Tuckman & Pickerill, 1988; Warne & Lundy, 1988), in addition to contractually limited full-time employees (Baldwin, Chronister, Rivera & Bailey, 1993; Chronister, Gansneder, Baldwin & Harper, 2001). In terms of the casualization of full-time faculty, Rosenblum and Rosenblum (1997) looked at patterns of academic employment by examining the shifting cohorts of newly hired instructors at Canadian universities over the 14-year period from 1977 to 1991. Their findings suggest that contractually limited full-time appointments accounted for roughly half of all “new hires” during that period.

More recent studies have reached similar conclusions. Omiecinski’s (2003) analysis of limited data on part-time employment from 1990 to 1997 suggested that the number of non-full-time instructors rose by 10% across Canadian universities during that time period, while the number of full-time faculty members fell by 8%. The analysis excluded Quebec. Dobbie and Robinson (2008) compared incomplete data from the United States and Canada and concluded that non-full-time instructors might actually represent a larger share of academic workers at Canadian universities than at American institutions.

Table 1 presents national labour force estimates from Statistics Canada as compiled and published by the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT, 2013). Given the lack of national data on part-time faculty, these ratios should only be viewed as signalling broad trends, but they tend to point towards the casualization of both full-time and part-time university teachers. According to this analysis, the share of full-time permanent faculty has declined from 79.4% of all faculty in 1999 to 65% in 2010. The share of full-time temporary faculty, that is, individuals who have full-time appointments but for contractually limited time periods, has increased from 9.8% of all faculty in 1999 to 17% in 2010. While temporary part-time appointments represented only 6.9% of all faculty in 1999, the share of these appointments more than doubled to 15.2% in 2010.

Table 1: Labour Force Estimates of University Professors by Employment Status and Permanency

Employed Workforce	1999	2001	2003	2005	2007	2009	2010
Permanent Full-Time	79.40%	69.90%	72.00%	62.00%	69.30%	67.90%	65.00%
Temporary Full-time	9.80%	10.70%	11.70%	16.30%	14.20%	16.00%	17.00%
Permanent Part-time	4.00%	5.90%	4.00%	3.30%	3.30%	3.60%	2.90%
Temporary Part-time	6.90%	13.50%	12.90%	13.40%	13.30%	12.50%	15.20%

Source: Reproduced from Table 2.22 of the CAUT *Almanac* (2013).

Evidence of a general increase in the number of non-full-time faculty can be found in Omiecinski’s analysis of Statistics Canada data from the period of 1990 to 1998. Omiecinski (2003) used these data to analyze provincial trends and found that between 1990-1991 and 1997-1998, the number of non-full-time instructors increased in all provinces except Ontario. The largest increases in non-full-time instructor hires occurred in Nova Scotia (33%), the remaining Atlantic provinces (27%) and in British Columbia (25%). In contrast, data from Ontario suggests that both full-time and part-time faculty across the province decreased over the 1990 to 1996 time period. Despite increasing undergraduate enrolment in Ontario the number of full-time faculty decreased by 13% while part-time faculty were reduced by just over 4%, suggesting that there may have been increasing reliance on part-time faculty despite overall reductions. In summary, both CAUT data (presented in Table 1) and Omiecinski’s analyses suggest that Canadian universities are increasingly relying on instructors who do not hold permanent positions, though there may be important differences by province.

The second theme is that non-full-time instructors are not a homogeneous group. In undoubtedly the most detailed analysis of part-time faculty in Canada, Rajagopal (2002) makes an important distinction between what she terms “classic” part-time faculty and “contemporary” part-time faculty. Classic part-time faculty are individuals who have a career outside the university and who teach on a part-time basis in order to share their skills and expertise. This category includes the lawyer who teaches a specialized course for the law faculty, the senior government official who teaches a course on policy for a political science department, and the business person who teaches a course on entrepreneurship. They bring “real world” experience to the classroom. Contemporary faculty, in contrast, are individuals who aspire to full-time tenure-stream appointments. These individuals view university teaching as their career, but since they are unable to find full-time positions they take part-time teaching positions that are usually paid on a course-by-course basis. Muzzin & Shahjahan (2005) also noted the challenges facing contemporary contingent faculty in terms of the lack of job security and the risk of cancellation of contracts on short notice. In some cases, part-time faculty cannot find a sufficient number of teaching contracts to achieve a liveable income and must find other employment. Others obtain teaching contracts at multiple universities and become “freeway fliers”, traveling between institutions to teach courses (Muzzin, 2009).

There are important differences by gender to consider. While the percentage of female full-time instructors in Canada increased from 13 to 34% from 1970 to 2008, women are still disproportionately represented among junior and non-permanent positions (Baker, 2013; CAUT, 2013). A higher percentage of men still tend to occupy the senior academic ranks and leadership positions (Baker, 2012). The majority of non-full-time faculty are male (Omiecinski, 2003; Rajagopal, 2002) and the majority of “contemporary” part-time faculty are female. In other words, the majority of part-time faculty who occupy professional careers outside the university are male while the majority of part-time faculty in precarious employment situations are female.

Rajagopal (2002), Muzzin and Shahjahan (2005) and Grant (2004) found that other important differences exist between these classic and contemporary part-time faculty groups in terms of discipline. Rajagopal’s analysis suggests that academic staffing patterns may vary by program of study or university department. The staffing arrangements in professional programs, where teachers may supervise clinical practice, may be dramatically different than in music, where specialized instructors teach musical performance, or in science subjects involving laboratory training. Muzzin and Shahjahan found that two-thirds of non-tenured faculty in the pharmaceutical trades are members of minority groups in terms of gender and/or ethnicity. In summary, non-full-time faculty are not a homogenous group and have important distinctions in terms of the primary occupation, gender, and the discipline in which they teach.

The third theme is that relatively little is known about the implications of the increasing use of non-full-time faculty on higher education in Canada. There has been little research on part-time faculty or how changes in the academic workforce are impacting the quality of the student experience, the balance of teaching and research activities within the institution, or the culture of academic units (Jones, 2013; Muzzin, 2009).

The Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC) has signalled the importance of understanding how “dependent universities have become on sessional instructors’ services and how their use

may affect the life of the institution” (MacDonald, 2013, n/p). The AUCC (2011) also noted several important administrative issues in its report on the revitalization of undergraduate education. Using comments from an instructor at Brock University to illustrate the point, the report describes potential challenges experienced by part-time and contract faculty members: “I can’t access the library system at the university until the first day of my contract, which is typically six days before I start teaching. So I can’t set up my course website. I can’t figure out what I could potentially put online. I can’t activate my e-mail address” (p. 5). The AUCC urges institutions to consider how “Part time faculty need to be given value and efforts must be made to ensure they have access to the tools and support needed to deliver quality teaching” (p. 8).

Rajagopal (2002) and others have noted that part-time faculty members are often marginalized within the university community. Huberman-Arnold (1999) laments that they do not have the many advantages offered to full-time faculty members, including tenure and job security, sabbaticals, opportunities to advance, as well as library privileges, offices and access to grants. She finds the lack of recognition to be most problematic.

No one asks us what we have done during the past year, nor what we plan to do in the future. This may be because it is taken for granted that we do not do anything that matters during the year, or that no one cares whether we do or not. The university gets the benefit and credit for our professional activities, while we get no credit or benefit at all (Huberman-Arnold, 1999, p. 1).

There may also be important differences between full- and part-time faculty members in terms of work satisfaction. The University of Windsor conducted a survey of faculty work life and job satisfaction (Drakich & Maticka-Tyndale, 2012) and reported important differences in the responses from full- and part-time faculty. Approximately 70% of non-full-time instructors indicated that they would prefer to have a full-time faculty appointment. They reported working an average of 29.3 hours per week, as opposed to the 35.6 hours per week reported by full-time faculty members, though they were paid less than half the average salary of full-time faculty members. The small sample size for non-full-time instructors is an obvious limitation of this study, but it does provide some insight into the experiences and perceptions of instructors at one university.

Part-time faculty members may also have quite different experiences at different institutions. *University Affairs* (2013) published a sampling of data regarding sessional, part-time and contingent faculty, noting the broad variety of conditions of employment, teaching load, ratio of full- to non-full-time instructors, and salaries across Canada. They noted, for example, that the payment for teaching a full course at York University was approximately 50% higher than teaching a full course at the University of Prince Edward Island.

The final theme emerging from prior research is the need for the systematic collection and reporting of data on part-time faculty. There are no national data on part-time faculty in Canada, an omission that severely limits the ability of researchers to monitor and analyze trends in academic work (Bauder, 2006; Hannah, Paul & Vethamany-Globus, 2002; Jones, 2013; Muzzin & Limoges, 2008; Mysyk, 2001; Rajagopal, 2002; 2004). As we will discuss in more detail below, the lack of national statistics also means that there are no common definitions of employment categories or part-time workload, such that even comparing data on part-time faculty between two institutions can be challenging. The problem becomes even more serious when one considers that Statistics Canada has recently decided to no longer collect data on full-time faculty, essentially limiting the ability of researchers to monitor the most basic national trends in gender, employment or salaries.

In summary, previous research suggests that the number of non-full-time faculty is increasing within Canadian universities. Sessional faculty are not a homogeneous group and there are important differences in the background and experience of individuals who have a career outside the university and teach part-time, and those who teach part-time but aspire to a full-time career within the university. There may also be important differences in staffing practices by different academic programs within the university. While there is clearly a need for more research and data on part-time faculty, there is a growing belief that the shifting nature of academic staffing patterns has important implications for the university and its educational activities (Jones, 2013). In fact, Curtis (2005) contends that the increasing use of contingent instructors may be one of the most definitive changes in higher education in the past 20 years.

3. Categories of Non-Full-Time Instructors at Ontario’s Universities

The province of Ontario is home to 20 provincially funded universities, each of which offers undergraduate arts and sciences curricula combined with a distinct set of professional and graduate research programs. Each university has a distinct legislative act that establishes it as an autonomous not-for-profit corporation. As such, each institution is responsible for hiring employees and determining the conditions of their employment, subject, of course, to provincial labour laws.

The first research question in our study concerns the categories of non-full-time instructors employed by Ontario universities, and perhaps the most important factor influencing these employment categories in Ontario universities is unionization. In fact, higher education may be one of the most unionized sectors in Canada (Dobbie & Robinson, 2008). Every university has a faculty association that represents the interests of its members and almost all are recognized as certified trade unions under provincial labour laws. Even those institutions that are not unionized have negotiated agreements with their university on key terms of employment. These negotiated agreements define the bargaining unit. While some collective agreements provide an inclusive definition and therefore govern the employment relationships of all faculty (full-time and part-time; limited-term and permanent), others define the bargaining unit in such a way that excludes categories of non-full-time instructors from the agreement. At some institutions part-time faculty are represented by the same association but under a separate collective agreement. At other universities a second union represents the interests of non-full-time instructors and a separate collective bargaining agreement governs the terms of employment of these workers. In addition to faculty associations, teaching assistants at most universities are unionized. While most teaching assistants provide support to a university teacher, some graduate students have full responsibility for teaching a course, and these students therefore represent another category of non-full-time instructors.

Union arrangements are specific to each institution, meaning that employment conditions for academic personnel differ by institution. Unique arrangements have developed over time.

In order to understand the various categories of non-full-time faculty we conducted a detailed analysis of collective agreements and other relevant documentation at each of the 20 provincially funded universities in Ontario. Our focus was on categories of university workers who had independent responsibility for teaching a course but did not hold traditional, full-time tenure-stream appointments or other types of full-time appointments.¹ These categories are quite complicated at some universities since different categories of workers are represented by different associations or unions, and the respective collective agreements often create subcategories related to the performance of specific types of teaching activity. The task of analyzing these categories across all 20 universities becomes extraordinarily complex because the collective bargaining arrangements at each institution are unique and each university has developed its own categories, terminology and definitions.

Given the tremendous complexity of the landscape, clarity in the use of terminology becomes extremely important. We use the phrase “non-full-time instructors” as the umbrella term to capture the entire population of individuals who teach courses but do not hold full-time appointments. We have divided these workers into three broad categories: sessional instructors, graduate student instructors, and other instructors. We will discuss each of these three categories in turn.

¹ As already noted, there may also be important trends in terms of the appointment of other categories of full-time faculty, such as the use of teaching stream faculty or limited term, full-time faculty, but these issues are beyond the scope of this report.

3.1 Sessional Instructors

We use the term “sessional instructors” to refer to the category of workers who are employed to teach a course and are usually paid on a per-course basis. Different universities have quite different ways of defining and classifying individuals within this group. At Algoma University, for example, the main term that is used within the collective agreement to describe all non-tenured instructors is *Part-time Contract Academic Staff (PTCAS)*. However, within this category there are *Lecturers* as well as *Teaching Adjunct Professors* who have been formally reviewed and granted seniority in teaching a particular course.

Algoma is one of Ontario’s smallest universities and the complexity of how the PTCAS are defined pales in comparison to the multi-faculty or multi-campus arrangements of larger universities. For example, the collective agreement at York University for the personnel grouped as *Contract Faculty* has ten subcategories of instructors in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences alone. The largest sub-category of *Contract Faculty* includes those who are considered *Course Directors* and have full responsibility for the design and delivery of a course. Other sub-categories include visual arts, studio, writing, music and math instructors, those who work at the education faculty, as well as a provision for miscellaneous tutors hired on a case-by-case basis.

Our focus on work that involves the teaching of a course means that we are often excluding a range of employment categories that involve teaching but where the individual does not have responsibility for a course (they mark papers or run tutorials associated with a course that is led by someone else) or where the teaching activities are more narrowly defined (teaching musical performance, studio teaching within the visual arts). These are all important educational activities, but our analysis focuses on sessional lecturers who have independent responsibility for a course and are usually paid on a per-course basis.

3.2 Graduate Student Instructors

We use the term “graduate student instructors” to refer to the category of workers who are graduate students enrolled at the university and employed to teach a course. Graduate students often play an important role in university teaching and at some universities many graduate students are employed as teaching assistants. While the role of most teaching assistants is limited to providing support to the teaching function, some graduate assistants are employed to assume sole responsibility for the teaching of a course.

3.3 Other Instructors

We use the term “other instructors” to refer to a range of categories of workers employed by Ontario universities that are more idiosyncratic to each institution, or where the categories are so uniquely defined that comparisons between institutions are problematic. The largest category of “other instructors” is clinical faculty, especially those appointed by faculties of medicine. These are individuals who play a teaching role related to the clinical experience of individuals in professional programs. In fall 2011 the University of Toronto had more than 5,000 clinical faculty appointments and there were roughly twice as many clinical faculty as more traditional tenure-stream faculty. While this is an important category of university teacher, clinical faculty arrangements are quite different in each faculty of medicine in the province and it is essentially impossible to make meaningful comparisons between institutions. These appointments may also be ongoing.

A second category of “other instructor” involves individuals who have a permanent appointment at a university but where the appointment is not full-time. At the University of Toronto, for example, of the 2,304 individuals who held tenure-stream appointments in 2011, 166 were categorized as part-time, implying that a reduced arrangement had been negotiated after the individual had obtained tenure. Of the 483 teaching-stream appointments, 156 were part-time. These are individuals who are non-full-time, to use our broad definition of that term, but have quite different employment arrangements than sessional instructors. This category also includes a range of other classifications of non-full-time instructors such as visiting professors, who may teach a course while they are visiting, status-only faculty who teach, and professors who hold joint appointments at

more than one university. The unique nature of these “other instructors” appointments by university makes comparisons between institutions very difficult. With this reality in mind, the next sections of this report will focus on the conditions of employment for two of these three categories of non-full-time instructors: sessional instructors and graduate student instructors.

4. Sessional Instructors

This section addresses our second research question regarding the conditions of employment for sessional instructors. Our main source of data on conditions of employment is the relevant collective agreements and it is interesting to note that the 20 universities included in our analysis can be neatly divided in half in terms of how sessional instructors are represented (see Table 2). At ten universities the faculty association represents both full-time and part-time faculty, and therefore the conditions of employment for sessional instructors are governed by the same agreement that governs the full-time, tenure-stream professoriate. At the other ten universities sessional instructors are represented by a separate union. In the case of the University of Toronto, teaching appointments involving contracts of less than one year are covered by the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) local, while appointments of one year or more (even if they are part-time) are represented by the University of Toronto Faculty Association. Our analysis of conditions of employment focuses on the agreements with the associations identified in Table 2 (see the appendix for a detailed list of documents), as well as some supplementary materials provided to us by the Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations. These conditions are based on information for the 2012-2013 academic year, though it is important to note that employment conditions change subject to bargaining and that we can only provide a snapshot view obtained at a particular moment in time.

The following sections provide information on the conditions of employment of sessional instructors in terms of salaries, pensions, tuition options, and references in the collective agreements on access to office space and technology.

Table 2: Representation of Sessional Lecturers

University	Representation	University	Representation
Algoma	Algoma University Faculty Association	Brock	CUPE 4207
Lakehead	Lakehead University Faculty Association	Carleton	CUPE 4600
Laurentian	Laurentian University Faculty Association	Guelph	CUPE 3913
Nipissing	Nipissing University Faculty Association	McMaster	CUPE 3906
OCAD U	Ontario College of Art and Design Faculty Association	Ottawa	APTPUO – Association of Part-Time Professors of UofO
Queen’s	Queen’s University Faculty Association	Ryerson	CUPE 3904
Western	University of Western Ontario Faculty Association	Toronto	CUPE 3902 Unit 3
Wilfrid Laurier	Wilfrid Laurier Faculty Association	Trent	CUPE 3908
Windsor	University of Windsor Faculty Association	UOIT	Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC)
Waterloo*	Faculty Association of the University of Waterloo	York	CUPE 3903

*The University of Waterloo Faculty Association represents part-time faculty with appointments of 50% or greater of a full-time teaching load, who are holding definite-term positions of one year or longer.

4.1 Salaries

There is considerable variation in the salary arrangements for sessional instructors employed by Ontario universities. A summary of salary arrangements is presented in Table 3. The lowest salary for a sessional instructor is \$5,584 for teaching a three-credit course (the equivalent to one semester in length) at Nipissing University, while the highest salary for new sessional lecturers can be found at York University, which pays \$7,665 for a half-course. While it is possible to roughly compare salaries by institution, detailed comparisons become confounded by specific institutional arrangements. Some institutions pay a common rate per course (half course or full course), while others have different rates for different levels of seniority, or different categories of appointment associated with promotion. In other words, the salary may vary depending on experience or standards of performance as demonstrated by promotion to a higher rank. Salaries may be adjusted to address issues of class size or to compensate for additional work after the academic term.

Interpreting these salary levels in terms of equivalent full-time salaries is also quite difficult because there is no common definition of a full-time teaching load across universities. Ryerson University notes a full-load equivalent salary of sessional instructors ranging between \$58,090 and \$76,518. The Lakehead University agreement (Article 19.03.02) indicates a maximum teaching load of 10 half courses per year (six in regular session and two in the spring and summer sessions) suggesting a maximum salary of between \$64,000 and \$71,000 depending on level. An individual who teaches five full courses at the University of Toronto or York University will earn more than \$75,000 per year. There are certainly sessional instructors who teach more than five full courses; in fact one can find sessional instructors employed by a number of universities on the Ontario salary disclosure list with total incomes of over \$100,000. In contrast, the OCAD University memorandum specifies a maximum teaching load for sessional instructors of five studio half courses or three half courses in the liberal arts or sciences within each academic year.

However, these analyses tell us little about the salary levels of the average sessional instructor (since we do not know the average number of courses taught by sessional instructors). What is certainly clear from these data is that salary levels for sessional instructors in Ontario are roughly double the level of remuneration cited as average in the United States by the Coalition on the Academic Workforce (2012).

Table 3: Sessional Instructor Salaries at Ontario Universities

University	Salary (2012/13) including vacation pay	
Algoma	3-credit course	\$5,760
Brock	Half-course	\$6,067
Carleton	Half-course	\$6,483
Guelph	Minima	\$6,880
	Maxima	\$9,000
Lakehead	Level 1 (30 or fewer HCE ¹)	\$6,450
	Level 2 (31-60 HCE)	\$6,750
	Level 3 (more than 60 HCE)	\$7,100
Laurentian	Establishment ²	\$6,600
McMaster	3-credit course	\$6,514.75
Nipissing	Per three-credit course:	
	- Instructors	\$5,584
	- Graduate Instructors	\$5,784
	Additional \$200 on reaching right of first refusal threshold ³ or 24 credits	

University	Salary (2012/13) including vacation pay	
OCAD U	Studio:	
	- Minimum	\$3,861
	- Maximum	\$5,543
	Liberal Studies and Sciences:	
- Minimum	\$5,791	
- Maximum	\$7,720	
Ottawa	Basic rate per three-unit course:	\$7,356
Queen's	Term adjuncts ⁴ : per half-course	\$7,517
Ryerson	Full-load equivalent salary:	
	- Minimum	\$58,090
	- Maximum	\$76,518
	Half-course equivalent (est.):	
- Minimum	\$5,761	
- Maximum	\$7,589	
Toronto	Half-course:	
	Sessional Lecturer I	\$7,256
	Sessional Lecturer II	\$7,705
	Sessional Lecturer III	\$8,080
Trent	Half-course	\$6,027
UOIT	Standard rate	\$6,500
	Premium rate A	\$7,000
	Premium rate B	\$7,500
	Premium rate C	\$8,000
Western	Half-course stipend:	
	Standing appt ⁵	\$7,090
	Member and Preferred Status ⁵	\$6,740
Wilfrid-Laurier	Non-seniority undergraduate rate – (for one-term course)	\$7,063
	Non-seniority graduate rate –	\$7,346
	Seniority ⁶ undergraduate rate –	\$7,214
	Seniority graduate rate –	\$7,482
Windsor	Per half-course	\$6,615
York	Course Director – half-course	\$7,865

Source: OCUFA, 2013

Notes:

1. HCE: half-course equivalent
2. Establishment status for particular course on third appointment within six years; for retirees may include two occasions as regular full-time assignment.
3. Right of first refusal threshold: course taught three times in 72 months (not necessarily consecutively). Course count begins May 1, 2001.
4. "Adjunct" – limited-term adjunct faculty appointment of one academic term to three years duration, with appropriate rank and a limited range of academic responsibilities.
5. "Standing Appointment" – ongoing non-probationary PT appointment to teach a defined teaching load, which can only be terminated by retirement, resignation, dismissal for cause or termination.
6. "Preferred Status" has full responsibility at least equivalent to that associated with teaching a half university degree credit course in each of two of the last three fiscal years, but who is not currently under appointment.
7. "Seniority Status" achieved when member has accrued at least three seniority points in a course (or similar course) in not less than 24 months.

4.2 Health Plans

Sessional instructors employed at some Ontario universities have access to some form of supplementary health plan or health benefit, and this information is summarized in Table 4. Collective agreements governing sessional instructors at six universities do not mention health plans, though there is a negotiated Letter of Understanding appended to the University of Ontario Institute of Technology agreement indicating that this issue, and others, will be explored by a joint committee.

Table 4: Health Plan Availability for Sessional Instructors at Ontario Universities

Institution	Health Plan	No Mention
Algoma		X
Brock		X
Carleton	X	
Guelph	✓	
Lakehead	X	
Laurentian	✓	
McMaster	✓	
Nipissing		X
OCAD		
Ottawa	✓	
Queen's *	Yes/No	
Ryerson	✓	
Toronto		X
Trent	✓	
UOIT **		X
Waterloo ***	Yes/No	
Western	X	
Wilfrid Laurier	X	
Windsor	✓	
York		X

* Queen's: All members except for Term Adjuncts with appointments less than two years are entitled to benefits.

** Addendum UOIT: "Letter of Understanding #3) The parties acknowledge the mutual benefits to be derived from a joint approach to exploring health and pension benefit alternatives and agree to form a joint committee to deal specifically with benefit plan alternatives"

*** Waterloo: Health benefits are available to temporary employees with appointments of one year or more.

Some agreements exclude some sessional instructors and provide benefits to a defined group. For example, Queen's University offers dental, health, child care benefits and pensions to all members except for term adjuncts with appointments "of less than two years in duration regardless of their teaching load", as well as "part-time adjuncts" "teaching less than two full-course equivalents per year regardless of the duration of their appointments" (Article 42.6).

There are a broad range of health plans available at four institutions: Windsor, Ryerson, Trent and Ottawa. Notably, Ryerson grants full and sessional instructors the same eligibility for health care plan coverage (CUPE 3904 Unit 1). Laurentian offers full health and dental benefits at a cost borne entirely by the employer. The University of Windsor also offers non-full-time instructors and full-time sessional instructors the same benefits as full-members of the bargaining unit, provided that they have taught at least four courses in the previous teaching year.

Some institutions offer payment in lieu of benefits, including pension benefits. For example, OCAD offers seven percent pay in lieu of benefits for sessional instructors (Article 19.1.1.3). Wilfrid Laurier offers contract

academic staff instructors additional pay in lieu of health care and dental (Article 24). The McMaster agreement indicates that employees will have access to an employee-funded plan chosen by the union.

4.3 Pensions

Sessional instructors employed at some Ontario universities have access to a pension plan and this information is summarized in Table 5. Twelve universities allow sessional instructors to participate in pension plans, though there are different conditions and benefits associated with each plan. One institution limits participation to individuals who do not have access to a pension plan at another place of employment. Plans often limit participation to individuals who have been employed for a minimum, specified period of time and/or meet specific minimum workload requirements. For example, casual workers become eligible to join the pension plan at the University of Waterloo if they have worked continuously for two years and earned above a minimum threshold. Sessional instructors are not eligible to participate in pension plans at two universities. There is no mention of pension benefits for sessional instructors in the collective agreements or related documentation associated with five universities.

Table 5: Pension Plan Availability for Sessional Instructors at Ontario’s Universities

Institution	Eligible	Not Eligible	No Mention
Algoma	✓		
Brock	✓		
Carleton			X
Guelph	✓		
Lakehead		X	
Laurentian	✓		
McMaster			X
Nipissing			X
OCAD		X	
Ottawa	✓		
Queen’s	✓		
Ryerson			X
Trent	✓		
Toronto			X
UOIT	✓		
Waterloo	✓		
Western	✓		
Wilfrid Laurier	✓		
Windsor	✓		
YORK	✓		
TOTAL	13	2	5

4.4 Tuition Assistance

Tuition assistance is an employment benefit, but it also provides employees with professional development opportunities that benefit both the employee and the employer. Lakehead University notes that tuition “reimbursement and/or waiver afford employees an opportunity to improve their knowledge and skill sets and optimally advance their job performance” (2003, Article 1.0). At ten universities the conditions of employment for sessional instructors include some form of tuition assistance (see Table 6). The level of assistance varies a great deal by institution, and some universities extend some level of assistance to spouses and dependent children.

Table 6: Tuition Assistance for Sessional Instructors Explicitly Noted in Collective Agreements

Institution	Tuition Benefit	Amount (\$)	Spousal Tuition Benefit	Dependent Tuition Benefit
Algoma	✓	100%	✓	✓
Carleton	✓	\$700/12 months		
Lakehead*	✓	\$800	✓	✓
Laurentian*	✓	One course per course taught	✓	✓
McMaster	✓	-	✓	✓
Ottawa	✓	Credits earned at 7.5% of remuneration		
Ryerson*	✓	100% (limit on number of courses)	✓	✓
Wilfrid Laurier*	✓	\$500-\$1000	✓	✓

*The agreement specifies a maximum amount available as a tuition benefit, and this benefit can be used to support the tuition costs of the sessional instructor, spouse, or dependent.

Note: Institutions that are not listed either do not provide tuition assistance to sessional lecturers or there is no mention of this benefit in the collective agreement or related documentation.

Table 6, above, reflects only those collective agreements that specifically outline tuition assistance or credit for part-time and sessional faculty. Each collective agreement offers a very different approach to tuition credit. In many cases, the agreement specifies a maximum amount available as a tuition benefit, and this benefit can be used to support the tuition costs of the sessional instructor, spouse or dependent.

Ryerson offers 100% of tuition if it reflects the current annual domestic undergraduate tuition fee in non-cost recovery programs. At Lakehead, contract instructors at either Level 2 or Level 3 are eligible to receive a tuition benefit. The University of Waterloo only offers tuition support for those with appointment terms of two years or more, which therefore excludes sessional instructors. On the other hand, Ottawa has established tuition fee credits at a rate of 7.5% of remuneration. The Algoma agreement indicates that tuition waivers for courses at Algoma University are available to sessional instructors as well as their dependents (up to age 25) and spouses for any credit courses (Article 27.13). Wilfrid Laurier offers tuition assistance to sessional instructors but the level of assistance depends on the instructor’s teaching load in the previous academic year. For example, Wilfrid Laurier offers \$500 if the instructor has taught two one-term courses in previous academic year, \$750 if they have taught three courses and \$1,000 for four or more courses. McMaster offers a tuition waiver policy for both staff and dependents provided that they meet eligibility requirements. For staff members, employees must be employed by the university on a continuing basis for at least half the normal full-time hours, while those on limited contracts must be employed for at least half the normal full-time hours for a minimum of one year. To access the bursary for dependents, employees must be employed either on a continuing basis or on a contractually limited basis, must work at least one-half the normal full-time hours and must have completed at least three years of continuous service to the university by the first day of the academic session for which the bursary is awarded.

4.5 Office Space and Technology

Access to office space and/or technology is explicitly addressed in the collective agreements related to sessional instructors at 15 Ontario universities. These explicit commitments are summarized in Table 7. The fact that a collective agreement does not reference these issues explicitly does not mean that space or technology is not available to sessional instructors at that university, but it does mean that these elements are not guaranteed as a condition of employment.

Generally speaking, sessional instructors have access to shared office space and a basic level of technology related to their work. For example, sessional instructors at the University of Western Ontario may be required to share an office and a telephone. Access to technology generally means that sessional instructors will be able to use libraries, laboratories, duplicating services, office supplies, computing facilities (including Internet), audio visual equipment and other university facilities required for the performance of their work as a university teacher.

Table 7: Access to Office Space and Technology Explicitly Noted in Collective Agreements for Sessional Instructors

University	Office Space	Access to Technology
Algoma	✓	✓
Brock		✓
Carleton	✓	✓
Guelph	✓	✓
Lakehead	✓	✓
Laurentian	✓	✓
McMaster	✓	✓
Nipissing	✓	✓
OCAD		
Ottawa		✓
Queen’s	✓	✓
Ryerson		
Toronto	✓	✓
Trent	✓	
UOIT		
Waterloo		
Western	✓	✓
Wilfrid Laurier		
Windsor	✓	✓
York	✓	

* Based on the explicit information found in the collective agreements

4.6 Summary

This section has provided an overview of the conditions of employment for sessional instructors employed by Ontario universities, including salaries, health benefits, pensions, and access to office space and technology. If they can obtain contracts to teach multiple courses, sessional lecturers can earn a liveable income. Some universities provide access to health plans, pensions and tuition assistance. Most collective agreements include an explicit reference to access to office space and technology. While these arrangements vary by university, it seems clear that the conditions of employment for sessional lecturers in Ontario are much better than the rather negative working conditions for adjunct faculty documented at some universities in the United States. However, it is also clear that the conditions of employment for sessional lecturers are quite different than those for full-time, tenure-stream faculty. The salary arrangements are usually quite different and sessional instructors seldom have access to the range of benefits available to full-time, tenure-stream faculty. While sessional instructors at some universities have elements of job security associated with seniority or rank, they do not have the level of job security associated with tenure.

5. Graduate Student Instructors

Graduate students are often involved in the education of undergraduate students, and it is quite common for graduate students to be employed as teaching assistants, a position that provides the student with employment income and the university with important support for the teaching function. As we noted in reviewing collective agreements and institutional policies, some graduate students are also appointed to assume full responsibility for an undergraduate course, positions that we have termed graduate student instructors.

While the contractual arrangements governing these positions were easy to identify at some institutions, the situation at other universities was far less clear and we eventually contacted all 20 universities to inquire whether graduate students were eligible to teach courses on their own and, if so, the terms and conditions associated with these appointments. Institutional responses fell into one of three categories (see Table 8).

First, two Ontario universities do not have doctoral students and a third does not allow full-time graduate students to be solely responsible for teaching a course. Second, there are 15 universities in Ontario that allow graduate students to apply for sessional instructor positions. If the graduate student is successful, the student is employed under the collective agreement governing sessional lecturers and receives the salary and benefits described in the previous section of this report. At most of these institutions there are separate collective agreements covering teaching assistants, who are graduate students that support the teaching function, and sessional instructors, who are responsible for teaching a course. Human resource officials at a number of these universities indicated that these appointments are relatively rare, in part because graduate students are competing for appointments with individuals who may already have completed a PhD. At other universities the appointment of graduate students, especially doctoral students, to teach courses is relatively common and considered part of their doctoral experience (and a component of their graduate student funding).

Finally, three institutions allow for the appointment of graduate student instructors. The collective agreements for teaching assistants at Queen’s University, York University and the University of Toronto have clauses governing the appointment of graduate student instructors, and each institution has its own terminology and terms of employment relating to this category of university teacher. At Queen’s University graduate student instructors are called *Teaching Fellows* and are represented with the teaching assistants as part of PSAC 901. At York University graduate student instructors are referred to as *Course Directors*, the same term that is used to classify sessional instructors, though graduate student instructors and sessional instructors are covered by two different collective agreements. At the University of Toronto graduate student instructors are called *Course Instructors*, a category of appointment within the collective agreement governing teaching assistants.

Table 8: Graduate Student Teaching Arrangements by University

University	Cannot Teach Courses	Sessional Instructors	Graduate Student Instructors
Algoma	✓		
Brock		✓	
Carleton		✓	
Guelph		✓	
Lakehead		✓	
Laurentian		✓	
McMaster		✓	
Nipissing		✓	
OCAD	✓		
Ottawa		✓	
Queen’s			✓
Ryerson		✓	
Toronto			✓
Trent		✓	
UOIT		✓	
Waterloo		✓	
Western		✓	
Wilfrid Laurier		✓	
Windsor*	✓	✓	
York			✓

*Part-time graduate students can be employed as sessional instructors. Full-time graduate students can be teaching assistants but cannot assume full responsibility for teaching a course.

The following sections describe the conditions of employment for graduate student instructors employed at these three universities. As in the previous section, our analysis is based on a detailed review of the relevant collective agreements and other related documentation (see appendix).

5.1 Salaries and Benefits

The salaries for graduate student instructors are presented in Table 9 and range from approximately \$14,000 to \$16,000 for teaching a full course. These salaries are quite similar to the salaries paid to sessional instructors. Graduate student instructors at the University of Toronto are paid slightly less than the basic salary level for sessional instructors, but quite a bit less than sessional instructors who have been promoted to higher ranks on the basis of their experience and performance.

Table 9: Salaries of Graduate Student Instructors and Sessional Instructors at Queen’s University, the University of Toronto and York University

University	Graduate Student Instructor	Sessional Instructor
Queen’s	\$15,036	\$15,034
Toronto	\$14,229	\$14,510-\$16,160 (Instructor I-III)
York	\$16,046	\$15,731

Graduate student instructors employed at these three universities are eligible for a range of benefits. Each university offers a health plan. At York University graduate student instructors are eligible to enrol in a pension plan. Instructors at all three institutions also have access to sick leaves, family leaves, compassionate leaves, jury duty leaves and leaves to conduct union activities. Queen’s University offers a reservist leave for students who need time away from work to serve in the armed forces. The University of Toronto offers a leave for students who require gender reassignment surgery.

5.2 Training

Graduate student instructors at all three universities are eligible for training and/or professional development related to their teaching activities. Graduate student instructors at the University of Toronto are required to participate in six hours of paid training. It is suggested that the training address “course organization; teaching skills; supervision of teaching assistants; in-class conflict resolution & safety; procedures for addressing academic integrity; Blackboard and any other technology required for the performance of their assigned duties” (CUPE 3902, Unit 1, p. 27). There are provisions for paid training under both the York University and Queen’s University collective agreements.

5.3 Office Space and Technology

The collective agreements at York University and the University of Toronto stipulate that graduate student instructors should have access to office space and relevant technology. The office space should be adequate in terms of providing a place for the instructor to meet with students from their course and include appropriate technology including a phone and computer where available.

5.4 Teaching Assistance

Another provision for graduate student instructors at all three institutions is the support of teaching assistants to help with larger classes. At each institution student instructors are eligible to receive the same support as other instructors (including sessional instructors) in their department. At York University graduate student instructors are also eligible for marking assistance of one hour per enrolled student up to a total of 50 hours.

5.5 Intellectual Property and Academic Freedom

University policies and collective agreements include language on academic freedom for graduate student instructors at all three universities. The York University agreement provides instructors with the right to “examine, question, teach and learn and to disseminate opinion(s) on questions related to the teaching of the course, its content and organization and the larger political, cultural and philosophical context in which teaching and research take place” (CUPE 3903, Unit 1, p. 44). The University of Toronto further stipulates that “Academic freedom does not require neutrality on the part of the individual nor does it preclude commitment on the part of the individual. Rather academic freedom makes such commitment possible” (CUPE 3902, Unit 1, p. 7). The Queen’s University agreement indicates that *Teaching Fellows* have the same freedom as the rest of the community.

The Queen’s University collective agreement was the only one to include explicit language on the graduate student instructor’s right to the intellectual property that may be created in the process of instructing the course. The collective agreement states that “employees retain copyright, including but not limited to, lecture notes or course materials created exclusively by them” (PSAC 901, p. 27). However, the university does retain the “non-exclusive, non-royalty bearing” right to use the created material in other courses (PSAC 901, p. 27).

5.6 Limiting Appointments

Only one university explicitly limits the number of appointments of graduate student instructors. At York University graduate student instructors are represented by the same union as sessional instructors and the collective agreement explicitly limits the total number of graduate student instructors to 35 during a given twelve month period, not including graduate student instructor appointments where the graduate student was the only qualified candidate (see section 10.01.1 of the Local 3903 - Unit 1 Agreement).

5.7 Summary

This section has provided an overview of the conditions of employment for graduate student instructors employed by Ontario universities, including salaries and benefits. Of Ontario’s 20 provincially assisted universities, 15 employ graduate students as sessional instructors, and these individuals will receive the salary and benefits described in the previous section of this report. Three universities employ graduate student instructors under the collective agreements that cover teaching assistants. Graduate student instructors receive salaries and benefits that are roughly comparable to the sessional instructors employed at these universities. One university limits the number of graduate student instructors that are employed each year.

6. The Employment of Non-Full-Time Instructors at Ontario Universities

Two of our research questions focused on hiring patterns: Has the number of non-full-time instructors employed by Ontario universities changed over time? Has the ratio of full-time to non-full-time instructors employed by Ontario universities changed over time? Underscoring both questions is the issue of whether universities are increasingly turning towards the use of a casual, part-time academic workforce. As we noted earlier in the report, the number of full-time tenure-stream faculty has been increasing, but has the number of part-time, contingent faculty been growing at an even faster pace?

The absence of national (or provincial) data on non-full-time instructors means that a comprehensive answer to these questions is challenging if not impossible. Even if every institution provided public data on the number of sessional instructors and graduate student instructors that are hired each year, comparative analyses would be difficult since each institution has different employment categories and definitions.

However, five institutions limit the employment of non-full-time faculty and therefore control the relationship between full-time faculty and other categories of employment. For example, the York University collective agreement limits the number of graduate student instructors that can be hired. At Wilfred Laurier University, Article 34 of the collective agreement for full-time faculty indicates that no more than 35% of all intramural courses can be taught by sessional instructors. Intramural courses are defined as regular academic credit courses taught in the fall and winter terms, though there are also some specific exclusions. At OCAD University, Article 16.1.4 of the Memorandum of Agreement specifies that a maximum of 30% of the credit curriculum should normally be taught by sessional instructors, a ceiling that is “intended to ensure that Tenured faculty employment opportunities are not eroded” (Article 16.1.5). The collective agreement for full-time faculty at Nipissing University indicates that a maximum of 28% of courses (with some exceptions) can be taught by sessional instructors (Article 21.3).

Perhaps the most detailed limitations are provided in the collective agreement for full-time faculty at Brock University. Article 19.16 of the Brock agreement begins by stating:

The Parties agree that the educational mission of the University can be carried out only if most credit courses are taught by full-time continuing faculty members, because it is only under such circumstances that the University can ensure that the norm is that persons teaching courses are also actively engaged in research and scholarship; it is only under such circumstances that the University can ensure that faculty members are reasonably available to students for consultation, thesis supervisions and reading courses; it is only under such circumstances that the University can ensure the integrity of its academic programs; and it is only under such circumstances that the University can continue to rely upon faculty members to perform many of the administrative tasks that are essential to its functioning.

Except for courses taught in the Faculty of Education, the Brock agreement specifies that no more than 14% of all credit courses offered between the beginning of the spring academic term and the end of the winter academic term can be taught by individuals who are not members of the Brock University Faculty Association. In other words, no more than 14% of credit courses during this period can be taught by sessional instructors. The limit in the Faculty of Education is 48.75% (excluding specialized continuing education courses for teachers).

While there are no system-level data, a number of universities are quite transparent in terms of publicly posting data on the employment of sessional instructors and/or graduate student instructors. One important source of information is the Common University Data Ontario (CUDO) reports that are posted by each university, which include data on academic employees. Unfortunately, most Ontario universities do not report the number of non-full-time instructors in CUDO section H1 of the standardized template, instead only providing data on full-time faculty. However, some institutions do report the employment of sessional instructors and we have been able to look at some basic trends. In addition to the CUDO reports, a number of universities provided quite detailed information on employees by category within their published institutional research reports. In the sections that follow we present institutional data on the employment of non-full-time instructors at Ontario colleges where public data were available in order to address our research questions on hiring patterns.

6.1 York University

York University is located in the northwest portion of the city of Toronto and has an archive of factbooks on its institutional research website that provides the number of employees and students at the institution since 1994-1995. Employee data directly correspond to the categories created within collective agreements, allowing for the analysis of hiring practices by category of appointment. These data were used to review the hiring of non-full-time faculty from 2002-2003 to 2012-2013.

Our analysis of York University data focuses on the appointment category labelled *Course Directors*, that is, individuals who have independent responsibility for teaching a course and fit our definition of sessional instructors. York provides data on the number of Course Director assignments and it is important to recognize that a single individual can hold multiple assignments. The number of sessional instructor assignments at York University has more than doubled since 2002, from 730 to 1715 (2012-2013) (see Table 10). This represents a noteworthy increase of 135%. The steepest growth during this time occurred between 2002-2003 and 2004-2005 when the number of Course Director assignments increased 77% in two years. This corresponds with Ontario’s “double cohort” of 2003-2004 when two streams of secondary school graduates entered the higher education system at the same time.

Table 10: York University Sessional Instructor Assignments, Graduate Student Instructor Assignments, Tenure-Stream Faculty and Student Enrolment, 2002-2013

Year	Sessional Instructor Assignments	Graduate Student Instructor Assignments	Tenure-Stream Faculty	All Students
2002-2003	730	49.4	1,154	43,635
2003-2004	944.2	38.6	1,180	46,794
2004-2005	1,292.6	62.2	1,257	49,496
2005-2006	1,339.8	57.8	1,286	50,691
2006-2007	1,480.1	62.1	1,326	51,819
2007-2008	1,494.3	59.6	1,401	51,819
2008-2009	1,529.9	62.8	1,424	51,989
2009-2010	1,651.5	65.6	1,379	53,205
2010-2011	1,597.8	67.3	1,364	54,237
2011-2012	1,608.4	63	1,368	54,507
2012-2013	1,715.9	61.3	1,382	54,590

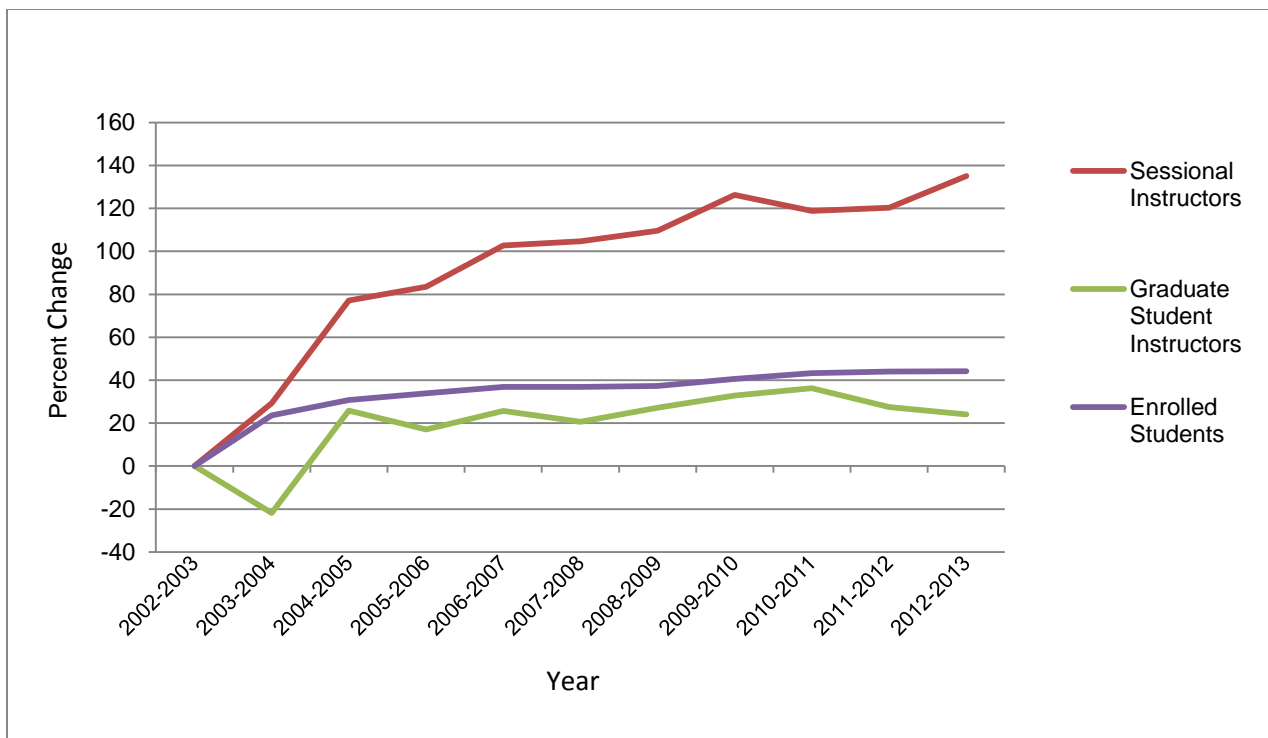
Data source: York Institutional Factbook (<http://www.yorku.ca/factbook>)

Note: Sessional and graduate student instructor data are presented as "course director assignments" and therefore are counted as percentages of a whole course, while tenure-stream faculty data are presented per headcount.

The percentage increase in sessional instructor assignments at York University far exceeded the increase in students during the same time period. Student enrolment increased by 30% between 2002-2003 and 2004-2005 and remained relatively steady in subsequent years, increasing only 1-3% yearly until 2012-2013. In contrast, the number of sessional instructor assignments grew at an annual rate of between 10 and 15% during the 2005-2013 period.

The number of graduate student instructors has remained relatively stable during this time period. As we noted above, the collective agreement at York University limits the number of graduate student instructors that are hired each year. Using 2002 as a base year, Figure 3 shows how the number of sessional instructor assignments, graduate student instructor assignments and enrolled students has changed over time.

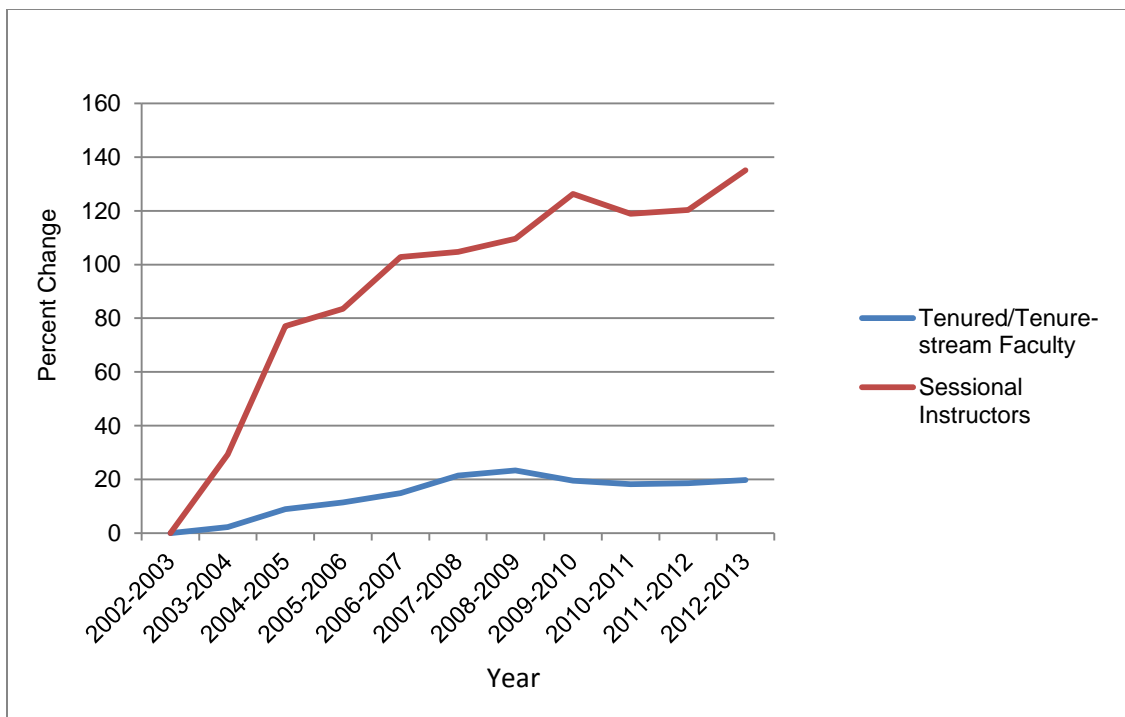
Figure 3: Percentage Change in the Number of Sessional Instructor Assignments , Graduate Student Instructor Assignments and Enrolled Students since 2002-2003



Data source: York Institutional Factbook (2013)

The number of sessional instructor assignments has also increased much faster than the number of full-time (tenure-stream) faculty employed by the university during the same time period. While the number of sessional instructor assignments increased by 135%, the number of full-time faculty increased by only 20% (see Figure 4). However, while these figures suggest that the balance between full-time and sessional instructors at the university is shifting, these data do not tell us the share of all courses taught by each of these two categories of academic workers.

Figure 4: Percentage Change of Sessional Instructor Assignments vs. Tenure-Stream Faculty Appointments, 2002-2013



Data source: York Institutional Factbook (2013)

York University also provides information on the number of course director assignments by faculty, summarized in Table 11. Over the past ten years, the largest number of sessional instructor assignments has been in what is now the Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies. It is interesting to note that there are major differences in employment trends by faculty and that the balance between full-time faculty and sessional instructors may vary tremendously by academic unit within the university.

Table 11: Course-Director Assignments of Sessional Instructors at York University by Faculty, 2002-2013

FACULTY	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
Education	61.4	65.3	72.7	73.1	70.4	76.7	76.3	67.7	72	45.8	52.6
Environmental Studies	5	7	33.4	29.1	32	30.3	28.7	23	27.8	28.8	32.1
Fine Arts	66.2	108.8	167.5	186.5	173.9	183	186.8	176.6	157.9	162.2	159.5
Glendon	121.1	189.6	172.3	175.4	185.8	187.3	209.5	212.2	204.8	195	174.7
Graduate Studies							6	3	3	5.4	0
Health					210.9	199.3	186.4	165.9	151.7	150.1	157.1
Liberal Arts & Professional Studies	418.3	502.6	784.1	806.7	726.3	814.9	726.7	881.3	890.1	924.9	903.8
Osgoode Hall Law School								2.2	1.4	0	0
Science & Engineering	53	62.9	61.6	67	77.8	98.5	105.7	70.5	78.3	87.3	84.2
Schulich School of Business	5	8	1	2	3	2.8	3.8	49.1	10.5	9	151.9
TOTAL	730	944.2	1,292.6	1,339.8	1,480.1	1,494.3	1,529.9	1,651.5	1,597.5	1,608.5	1,715.9

Data source: York Institutional Factbook (2013)

6.2 University of Toronto

The University of Toronto is the largest university in Ontario and has a complex range of employment categories for academic workers. The university frequently divides academic appointments into five main categories: tenured faculty, part-time limited-term faculty, full-time teaching-stream faculty, part-time teaching-stream faculty and sessional instructors. The *Facts and Figures Report* provides data on the number of employees in each category going back to 2006. These data are presented in Table 12.

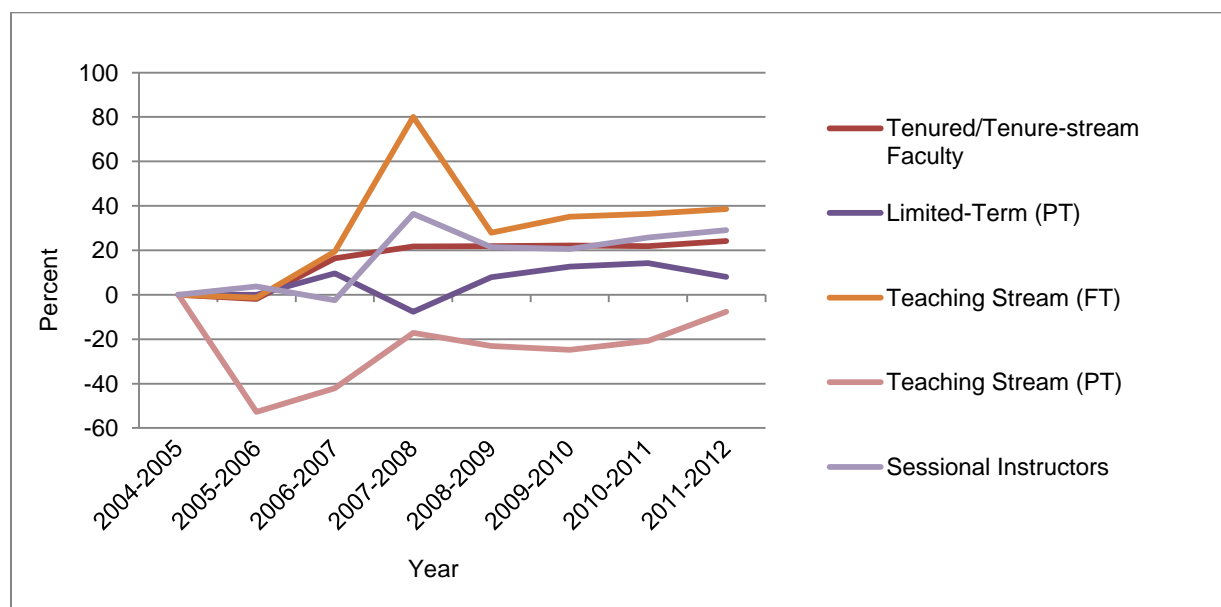
Table 12: Number of Instructors in Various Categories at the University of Toronto, 2004-2012

Year	Tenure-Stream Faculty	Term-Limited (PT)	Teaching Stream (FT)	Teaching Stream (PT)	Sessional Instructors
2004-2005	1,855		236	169	
2005-2006	1,821		233	80	674
2006-2007	2,159	1,097	282	98	634
2007-2008	2,259	924	540	140	887
2008-2009	2,260	1,079	302	130	789
2009-2010	2,267	1,126	319	127	784
2010-2011	2,260	1,142	322	134	817
2011-2012	2,304	1,081	327	156	839

*Note: A first collective agreement for sessional instructors led to a change in reporting categories, so comparable data are not available for some groups for 2004-2005.

There was a gradual increase in the number of appointments in three of these five broad categories between 2004 and 2012. The number of part-time limited-term appointments remained relatively stable, while the number of part-time teaching-stream appointments ebbed and flowed during the period. The number of teaching-stream faculty increased by 38.5% during this time period, representing the largest growth of any instructional category at the university. The number of sessional instructors increased, though only by 29%, just slightly higher than the growth of tenure-stream faculty at 24%. Figure 5 provides a graphic illustration of change in the number of appointments by category over time.

Figure 5: Percentage Change in the Number of Appointments by Category at the University of Toronto, 2004-2012



Source: Retrieved from University of Toronto Factbooks (2012, 2013)

We were also able to obtain the number of graduate student instructors who were employed at the University of Toronto as of October of each year from 2007 to 2012. There were 204 graduate student instructors employed in the 2007-2008 academic year and 252 in 2012-2013 (an increase of 24%), though it is important to note that the number of appointments has moved up and down during this period.

The number of sessional instructors and graduate student instructors employed by the University of Toronto has increased over the last decade, but this increase is roughly comparable to the increase in the number of tenure-stream faculty and less than the growth in teaching-stream appointments during this time period. Once again, it is important to note that these data count the number of sessional instructors and graduate student instructors rather than the number of courses that they teach, so the percentage of courses taught by full-time faculty (tenure-stream and teaching stream) may have actually increased during this period.

6.3 McMaster University

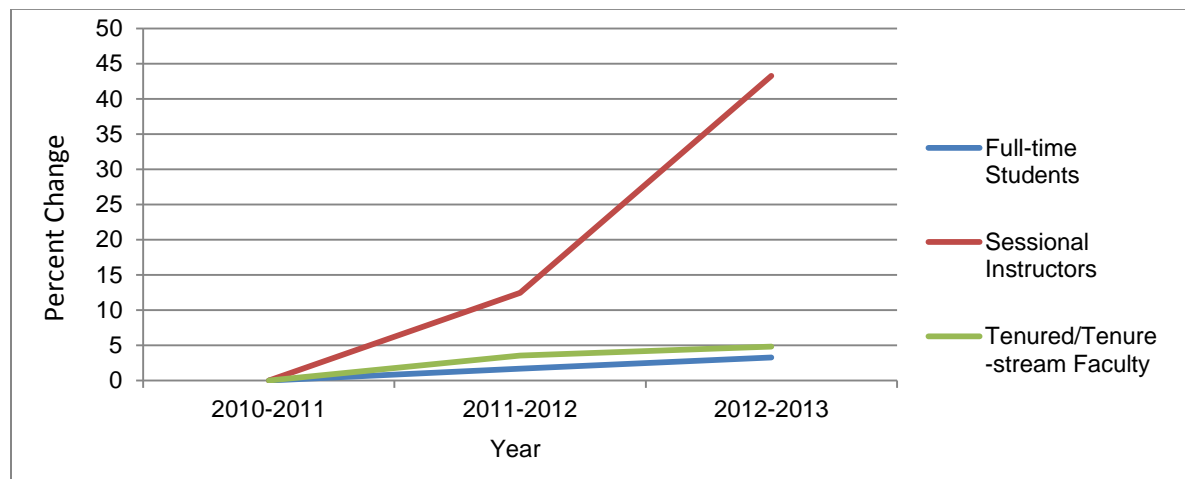
In 2010 the McMaster University Factbook began to report the number of sessional instructors. The three years of comparative data are presented in Table 13, as well as corresponding data on student enrolment and the number of tenure-stream faculty. The major differences in growth by category are illustrated in Figure 6. Over this time period the growth in the employment of sessional instructors has far outpaced the growth in tenure-stream appointments and the growth in full-time enrolment.

Table 13: Total Number of Full-Time Students, Sessional Faculty and Full-Time Faculty at McMaster University, 2010-2013

Year	Full-Time Students	Sessional Instructors	Tenure-Stream Faculty
2010-2011	28,482	185	1,330
2011-2012	28,962	208	1,377
2012-2013	29,411	265	1,394

Source: Retrieved from McMaster Factbooks (2011, 2012, 2013)

Figure 6: Percentage Change of Tenured/Tenure-Stream Faculty, Sessional Instructors and Full-Time Students at McMaster University, 2010-2013



6.4 Carleton University

The Office of Institutional Research and Planning at Carleton University provides detailed data on the number of sessional instructors and the faculties, departments and courses in which they work. Like McMaster University this information is available only as far back as 2010, but it is comprehensive in detailing where sessional instructors are being employed across the university. Table 14 presents the number of sessional instructors, tenure-stream faculty and undergraduate students over this three-year period. The number of tenure-stream faculty has remained relatively stable, while the number of students and sessional instructors increased by approximately 6% during the three-year period.

Table 14: Total Number of Sessional Faculty, Tenure/Tenure-Stream Faculty and Undergraduate Students at Carleton University, 2010-2013

Year	Sessional Instructors	Tenure-Stream Faculty	Undergraduate Students
2010-11	623	759	20,441
2011-12	661	748	21,415
2012-13	664	752	21,802

Retrieved from Carleton University Factbook (2013)

Note: The category of tenure/tenure-stream faculty includes full, associate, assistant professors and lecturers.

Like York University, Carleton reports the number of sessional instructors employed in each academic unit. Table 15 presents the number of sessional instructors and full-time faculty reported for 2012-2013. Except for Public Affairs, the number of sessional instructors is lower than the number of full-time faculty.

Table 15: Number of Sessional Instructors and Full-Time Faculty by Academic Unit in Fall/Winter 2012-2013 at Carleton University

Faculty (Unit)	Sessional Instructors	Full-Time Faculty
Arts & Science	235	303
Public Affairs	191	185
Business	46	54
Science	76	152
Engineering	116	148
Total	664	842

Source: Carleton University (2013)

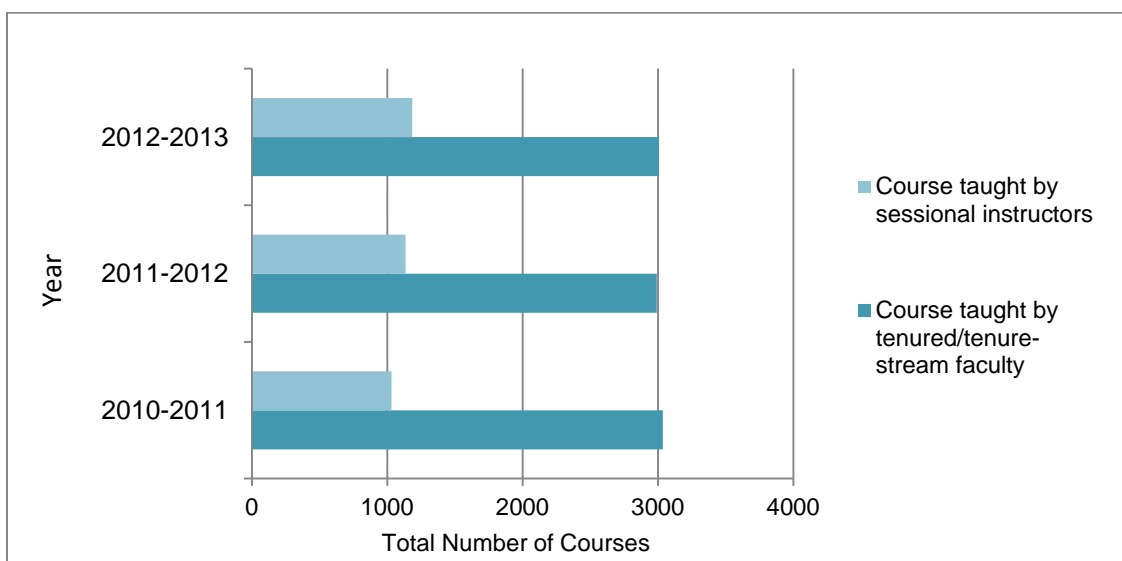
Carleton University provides public data on the number of courses taught by sessional instructors. Unfortunately, comparable information on the number of courses taught by tenure-stream faculty is not provided on the website. However, in order to provide some degree of comparison, we have estimated that each tenure-stream faculty member teaches four courses and these data are presented in Table 16. The balance of courses taught by tenure-stream faculty and sessional instructors has changed slightly during this period. If our estimate of four courses per tenure-stream faculty member is correct, then approximately 25% of all courses are taught by sessional instructors. A graphic illustration of these relationships is presented in Figure 7.

Table 16: Number of Courses Taught by Tenured/Tenure-Stream Faculty and Sessional Faculty at Carleton University, 2010-2013

	Courses taught by tenured/ tenure-stream faculty*	Courses taught by sessional instructors
2010-2011	3,036	1,030
2011-2012	2,992	1,136
2012-2013	3,008	1,184

Note: Courses taught by tenure-stream faculty is estimated, based on the assumption of a four-course workload.

Figure 7: Number of Courses Taught by Sessional Instructors vs. Tenured/Tenure-Stream Faculty at Carleton University, 2010-2013



Note: The number of courses taught by tenured/tenure-stream faculty is estimated at four times the number of individuals employed from September to April each year.

Carleton University also provides public data on the number of courses taught by sessional instructors in each academic program, as well as the number of sessional instructors. Taken together, one can estimate the average number of courses taught by sessional instructors (see Table 17). This analysis suggests that the average number of courses taught by sessional instructors is approximately 1.7. The average number of courses taught varies by academic unit.

Table 17: Average Number of Courses Taught by Sessional Instructors in Each Faculty at Carleton University, 2010-2013

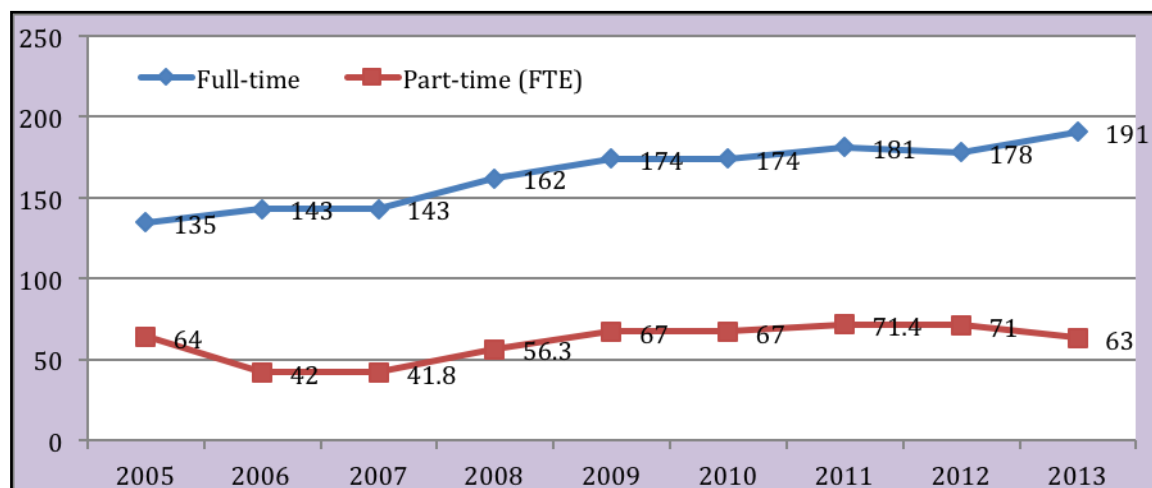
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
Arts & Social Sciences	1.9	2.1	2.1
Public Affairs	1.4	1.4	1.5
Business	1.7	1.8	2.1
Science	1.8	2.0	1.8
Engineering	1.4	1.3	1.5
University	1.7	1.7	1.8

Source: Carleton University (2013)

6.5 Nipissing University

Nipissing University (2013) reports data on sessional instructors using the Common University Data Ontario template and definitions. Data for the eight-year period from 2005 to 2013 are available and presented in Figure 8. In this case Nipissing provides the number of sessional instructors as full-time equivalents rather than reporting the number of appointments. The number of full-time faculty members has increased from 135 in 2005 to 191 in 2013, an increase of 41%. The number of FTE sessional instructors has ebbed and flowed during the time period but is roughly the same in 2013 as it was in 2005. As already noted, the collective agreement for full-time faculty indicates that a maximum of 28% of courses can be taught by sessional instructors, though some categories of courses are exempted.

Figure 8: FTE Full-Time and Sessional Instructors (Part-Time) Employed by Nipissing University, 2005-2013



6.6 Summary

In this section we have reviewed institutional policies and institutional data related to the employment of sessional instructors and graduate student instructors employed by Ontario universities. Our analysis is limited since most Ontario universities do not report publicly the number of non-full-time faculty appointments. The number of sessional instructors increased at York University, the University of Toronto, McMaster University and Carleton University, though it did not at Nipissing.

In terms of the balance between full-time tenure-stream appointments and sessional faculty, the situation seems to be quite different at different Ontario universities. The growth in the number of sessional instructor assignments at York University has far outpaced the growth in the number of full-time faculty appointments. The same appears to be true at McMaster, though data are only available for three years. The growth in sessional instructors roughly parallels the growth in tenure-stream faculty at the University of Toronto, where the growth in teaching-stream faculty has outpaced the other two categories. The number of full-time faculty at Nipissing has grown, while the number of sessional instructors has remained relatively stable. The collective agreements at four universities establish a maximum percentage of courses that can be taught by sessional instructors in an attempt to prevent a shift in the balance of teaching between full and part-time faculty.

7. Conclusions

This study provides a preliminary exploration of the employment of non-full-time instructors at Ontario universities by addressing four key questions through a detailed analysis of publicly available documents, reports and data. A summary of the findings related to each question will be presented, followed by concluding observations and suggestions for further research.

7.1 What categories of non-full-time instructors are employed by Ontario universities?

Each Ontario university is an autonomous corporation with the ability to make independent decisions related to employment. The faculty at most universities are unionized and there are major differences in employment categories and arrangements by institution. Non-full-time instructors can be categorized into three broad groups: sessional instructors, who are usually employed on a per-course basis; graduate student instructors, who are graduate students with independent responsibility for teaching a course; and other instructors, a category that includes a wide range of quite different types of appointment where it is difficult if not impossible to compare across institutions. Our analysis focused on sessional instructors and graduate student instructors.

7.2 What are the conditions of employment for non-full-time instructors?

The conditions of employment for non-full-time instructors vary by institution. At ten of the 20 universities, sessional instructors are represented by the same association as full-time, tenure-stream faculty, while at the other ten there are separate unions or associations. Salaries ranged from \$5,584 per course (half-course) at Nipissing University to \$7,665 at York University in 2012-2013. It is challenging to calculate the full-time equivalent salary since there is no agreement on a full-time load at most universities, though the collective agreements at some universities specify a maximum teaching load ranging from three half-courses in the liberal arts and sciences at OCAD University to ten half-courses at Lakehead University.

Sessional instructors have benefits guaranteed under collective agreements including, at some institutions, pensions, health plans, leaves, etc. Access to (often shared) office space and technology is also guaranteed under most collective agreements. While some collective agreements provide some form of job security related to seniority or promotion, it is very clear that sessional instructors do not have anything close to the level of security associated with tenure.

Graduate student instructors have conditions of employment that roughly parallel those of sessional instructors.

7.3 Has the number of non-full-time instructors employed by Ontario universities changed over time?

Most Ontario universities do not report the number of non-full-time instructors, but relevant data are available on the websites of five institutions. Based on these limited data, it is clear that the number of sessional instructors has increased in recent years at four of the five universities. The number of sessional instructors at Nipissing University changes annually, but the data do not suggest an upward trend. The number of graduate student instructors has grown at the University of Toronto but remained relatively stable at York University.

7.4 Has the ratio of full-time to non-full-time instructors employed by Ontario universities changed over time?

There appear to be major differences in this ratio by institution and quite different trends as a result. The collective agreements at four universities limit the share of courses taught by sessional instructors. This ratio of sessional instructors to full-time faculty appears to be increasing at some universities while decreasing or remaining stable at others. Based on the limited public data available, there are no clear trends.

7.5 Areas for Further Research

This study provides only a preliminary exploration, based on the analysis of limited public data, of the working conditions and hiring trends related to the employment of non-full-time faculty by Ontario universities. There is clearly a need for additional research to analyze these changes in detail and to understand their implications for higher education in Ontario. Areas for further research should include:

- a) A province-wide survey of sessional instructors to learn more about their background (academic and professional), employment situation and teaching load, as well as their perceptions and experiences.
- b) A more detailed study of institutional staffing patterns through the collection and analysis of data on employment trends at all Ontario universities.
- c) A detailed analysis of staffing patterns within selected academic units at different Ontario universities and the implications of these patterns for educational quality and student success.

7.6 Concluding Observations

This preliminary analysis of non-full-time faculty at Ontario universities suggests that many of the popular assumptions concerning the increasing use of part-time faculty may be incorrect, though additional research is needed. The findings of this study suggest that the employment conditions of sessional instructors employed in Ontario universities are very different from the employment conditions at many American universities. While the number of sessional instructors is increasing at some universities – a trend that is not particularly surprising given the tremendous increase in student enrolment during the past decade – it is interesting to note that it is not increasing at all universities. Perhaps more importantly, the ratio of sessional instructors to full-time, tenure-stream faculty has increased at some institutions but remained stable or decreased at others, suggesting that different universities are making very different decisions related to academic staffing. While there are limited public data on the share of courses taught by sessional instructors, our analysis of hiring patterns would suggest that these ratios vary dramatically by university. At one university the estimated share of courses taught by sessional instructors during the regular (fall and winter) terms is roughly 25%. The collective agreements at three universities limit the ratio of courses taught by sessional instructors, in one case to 35%, in a second by 30%, and in a third to 15%, though these agreements provide exceptions that may lead to somewhat higher ratios.

In addition to variations in employment practices and trends by institution, the analysis of more detailed data reported by some institutions suggests that there may be quite interesting differences in staffing arrangements by different academic units within the university. The ratio of sessional instructors to full-time, tenure-stream faculty may also vary a great deal by program.

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