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Overview

More than one million graduates have been educated at Ontario's 24 public colleges. The colleges educate and train 200,000 full-time students and 300,000 part-time students and clients each year.

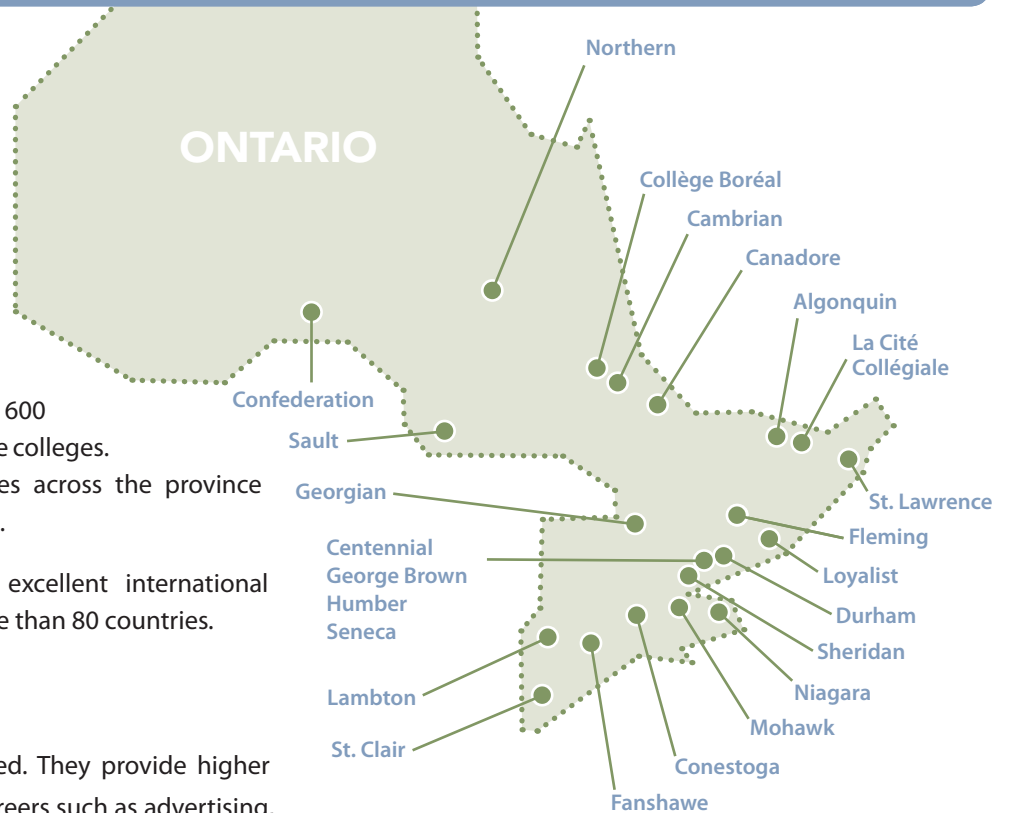
The colleges serve a diverse student population with programs in almost 600 study areas. Two are French-language colleges. There are more than 100 campuses across the province serving more than 200 communities.

Ontario's colleges also enjoy an excellent international reputation with partnerships in more than 80 countries.

**What do colleges offer?**

College programs are career focused. They provide higher education to help students enter careers such as advertising, film, health care, information technology, aviation, finance and administration, culinary arts, construction technology, tourism, and much more. About 90 per cent of college graduates who enter the labour market are employed within six months.

In addition, colleges provide in-class training for apprenticeships and training in literacy and basic skills. And for those who are unemployed or underemployed, upgrading and retraining programs are offered. For example, colleges provide retraining under the provincial Second Career program to help unemployed people find new, long-term careers.



**Learning environment**

With an average age of college applicants at 23, colleges serve a broad range of students with a broad range of needs. In 2007-2008, 44 per cent of the student body was under 21 years of age and 10 per cent was over 30.

Students receive cutting-edge, relevant training in their chosen careers from faculty who have direct industry experience. As well, students are provided a wide range of supports, including counselling, peer tutoring, services for international students and immigrants, and more. All 24 colleges have student residences.

Colleges offer the following credentials:

- Certificates (under two years in length)
- Two-year and advanced (three-year) diplomas, including co-op diplomas
- Graduate certificates for those who have already completed a postsecondary diploma or degree
- Bachelor's degrees in applied areas of study offered at more than one dozen colleges
- Joint college-university programs that allow students to earn both a college diploma and a university degree

*Apprenticeships:* Colleges deliver 85 per cent of the apprenticeship in-school training offered in Ontario.

*Literacy, ESL, upgrading, and foundation-year programs:* Students from adult upgrading programs who move on to postsecondary programming have an 83 per cent success rate.

*Distance education:* Distance education and courses offered online are important delivery methods for many colleges. Colleges participate in major consortia, including Ontario Learn and Contact North/Contact Nord, which facilitate the delivery of distance education across the province.

*Employer training:* Customized programs and training are offered on a contract basis provided to more than 1,000 major employers in Ontario each year.

*Applied research* is now part of the strategic and operational plans for the vast majority of colleges.

#### **The following are key data about Ontario college students:**

- Average age of college applicants: 23
- In 2007-08, 44 per cent of the student body was under 21 years of age, and 10 per cent was over 30
- Approximately 60 per cent of college students do not come directly from secondary school
- More than one-third of students had previous postsecondary experience before entering college; of these, 10 per cent had earned a college credential and nine per cent had a university degree

- Fifty-three per cent of students are female; 47 per cent are male
- Colleges serve a diverse population of learners – 17 per cent of college applicants were not born in Canada
- Five per cent of students are francophone
- Four per cent of registrants identified themselves as aboriginal
- Twelve per cent of Ontario college students indicated use of “Special Needs/Disability Services” – half of whom reported high usage.

#### **Size of colleges**

Colleges vary in size, with postsecondary-funded enrolments ranging from 1,200 to 19,000 students (full-time equivalent). In total, colleges in Ontario employ 15,400 full-time and 20,000 part-time faculty and staff in academic, support and administrative roles.

College enrolments in 2008-09 were about 21 per cent higher than in 1993-94.

#### **How colleges are funded**

Revenue for Ontario colleges comes from governments, companies and individuals (students).

Total Revenue in 2007-2008: \$2.9 Billion.

The sources for college revenue:

- Government grants: 51.8 per cent
- Regulated tuition: 13.3 per cent
- Unfunded and international tuition: 4.6 per cent.

Colleges continue to rank below universities and secondary schools on a funding per student basis.

#### **Our graduates and the economy**

To get past our current economic crisis, governments must ensure that Ontario has a highly skilled, flexible workforce.

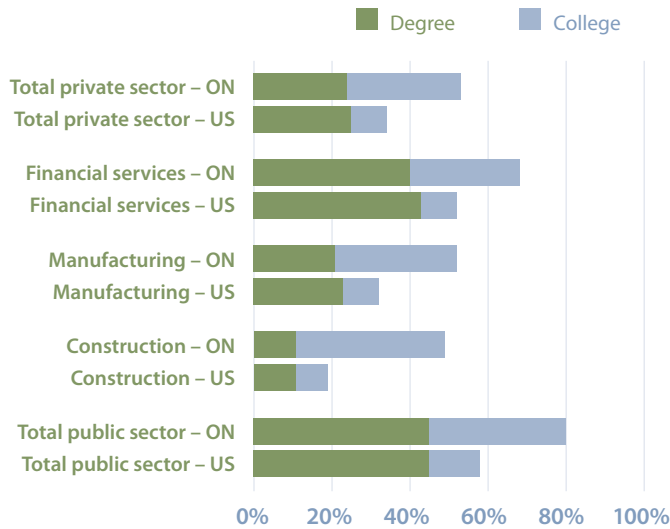
Over the past 40 years, Ontario's college graduates have become a unique advantage in terms of the province's ability to compete internationally.

College graduates have had exceptional success in the workplace, with more than 90 per cent of employers reporting satisfaction with the quality of graduates hired. Approximately 40,000 employers hire college graduates and students for co-op and field positions annually.

Ontario employers have a skills advantage over their U.S. competitors, as they have access to far more college graduates, with an education designed to meet their requirements.

**Figure 1**

**Ontario employers have same proportion of degrees, far more college graduates than U.S.**



Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 2006 Annual Social and Economic Supplement, Educational Attainment of Employed Civilians 18 to 64 Years, by Industry. Statistics Canada, special tabulation, 2006.

