

# Number of Ontario professors over 65 rises, under 45 falls, study finds

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March 5, 2018

Seventy-one is the new 65 for a growing number of professors at Ontario's universities who are staying in the classroom past the traditional retirement age, a demographic shift that is putting pressure on their institutions' budgets, and that could be limiting the hiring of younger professors, a new report being released on Tuesday has found.

Since mandatory retirement ended in Ontario in 2006, the proportion of faculty over 65 has grown to almost 9 per cent from close to zero. In 2016, there were 1,239 working professors older than 65, with septuagenarians accounting for 37 per cent of this group. The number of professors under 45 has declined by 9 per cent in that time, the report from the Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario (HEQCO) reveals.

Approximately 2,000 full-time professorial jobs would have been created over the past decade if the salary costs of the entire over-65 faculty cohort was applied toward hiring new PhD graduates into permanent positions, the report calculates.

"When mandatory retirement was abolished, everyone was walking around saying it doesn't matter because people will retire by 67," said Harvey Weingarten, the president and CEO of HEQCO, a research agency on higher education funded by the government of Ontario.

"They are not. ... As the professoriate ages, it has more of a constraining influence on the opportunity for renewal," he said.

The report comes as Ontario universities grapple with multiple pressures, from flat or declining enrolment, to government demands to demonstrate the skills students are acquiring, to questions about the career outcomes of PhD graduates. Government funding will not increase in coming years, the report points out, making it essential for universities to control their spending if they want to maintain the quality of education.

"What happens if we don't do anything is quality goes down, the student experience goes down and we don't engage in serious attempts to get at the critical issues around skills " Dr. Weingarten said. "We are totally deflected onto paying the electrical bill."

Mandatory retirement has been abolished across Canada as a result of human-rights legislation and age-discrimination lawsuits, but employers are allowed to impose "bona fide" requirements that all workers must meet to perform the job.

In addition, some public-sector employers, such as government workers or teachers, have limits on the number of workdays or pay that they are entitled to once they are receiving a pension from the same employers. But most universities did not introduce any measures to

control the upward spiral of rising salaries for professors at the top of the pay scale. In some cases, professors may be collecting both a salary and a pension.

While 85 per cent of professors in Ontario make more than \$100,000, those who are 66 and older have an average salary of \$185,000, compared with \$113,000 for the youngest cohorts, the report says.

Executive salaries are higher on average, but account for less overall spending. Academic salaries account for about 40 per cent of all expenses, with administrative salaries taking up a third of budgets, and have increased by 4.1 per cent, compared with increases of 3.4 per cent a year for administrators.

At 11 out of 17 universities in Ontario, senior executives – not including university presidents – earn less than the provincial average of \$205,000 for these jobs, the report finds.

If all faculty retired by 66, universities would have been able to hire about 2,000 younger faculty at the average starting salary, the report estimates. There is no guarantee the savings would have been destined for new professors, however.

"The [money] could have gone into scholarships, it could have gone into buildings," Dr. Weingarten said. "All we are saying is there would have been the opportunity to do that hiring."

Ontario's Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development said it is discussing how to renew the faculty ranks with higher-education institutions.

"More diversity in our faculty means more variety of perspectives – an essential part of a constructive learning environment," said Tanya Blazina, a ministry spokeswoman. "The Ministry is committed to discussing with colleges and universities issues around faculty renewal to ensure that students have the best possible learning experience," she said in a statement.

Many Canadians are working longer, with the employment rate of men and women between the ages of 65 and 69 increasing at the fastest rate, according to Statistics Canada. In 2015, nearly one in five of those aged 65 or older, worked during the year, including almost 6 per cent who worked full-time. Educated workers were far more likely to remain in the labour force: Almost 45 per cent of those with a BA under the age of 69 were working, according to [numbers in the 2016 Census](#).

Number of Ontario full-time faculty aged 66 and over

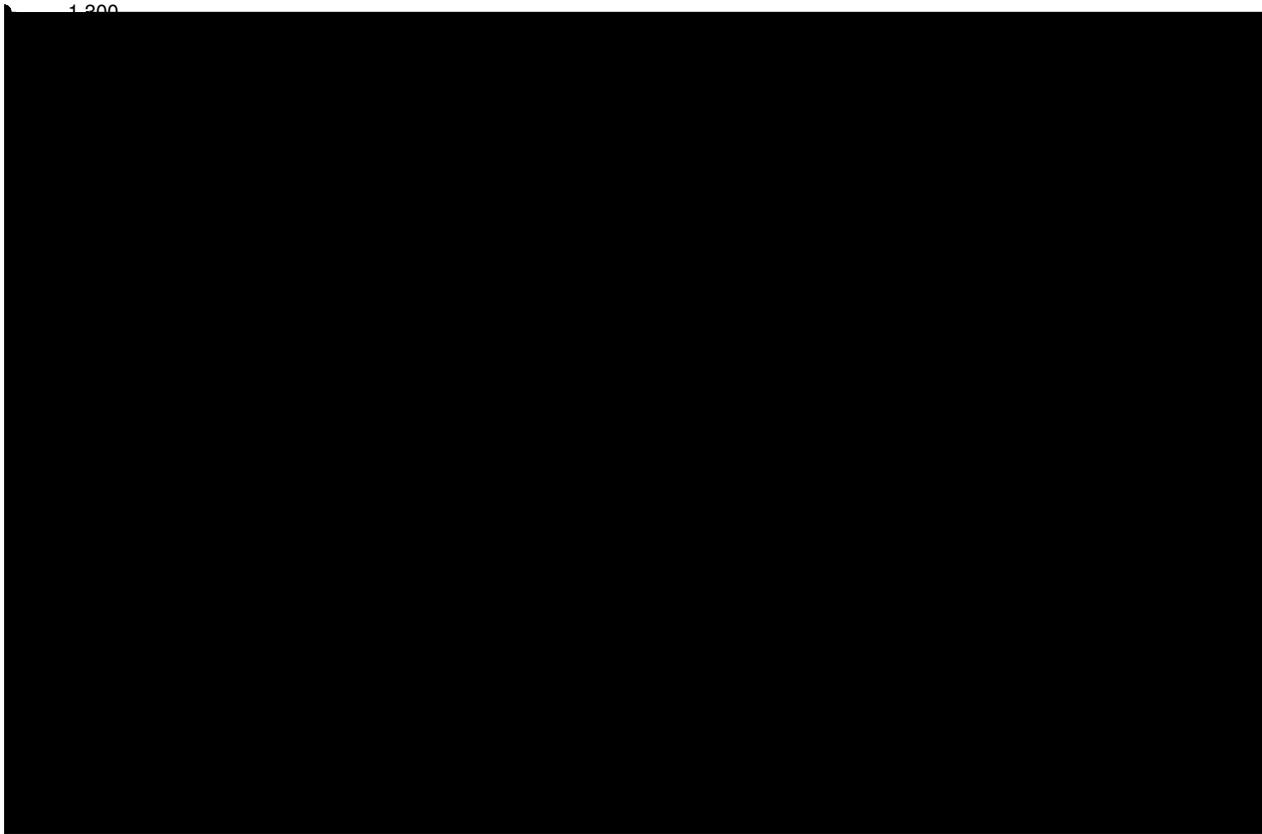
66

67

68

69

70+



THE GLOBE AND MAIL, SOURCE: National Faculty Data Pool

data

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Year	66	67	68	69	70+
2005-01-01	18	9	3	0	0
2006-01-01	18	12	3	0	0
2007-01-01	129	18	12	0	0
2008-01-01	192	120	15	9	0
2009-01-01	198	165	102	9	12
2010-01-01	183	174	141	96	18
2011-01-01	210	153	147	114	105
2012-01-01	255	183	138	123	174
2013-01-01	261	231	162	123	246
2014-01-01	240	228	198	132	315

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2015-01-01	210	201	207	174	378
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2016-01-01	219	189	183	180	468
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## Number of Ontario full-time faculty aged 66 and over

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Age distribution of Ontario full-time faculty aged 66 and over

66

67

68

69

70+

THE GLOBE AND MAIL, SOURCE: National Faculty Data Pool

data

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Year	66	67	68	69	70+
2005-01-01	60.00	30.00	10.00	0.00	0.00
2006-01-01	54.55	36.36	9.09	0.00	0.00
2007-01-01	81.13	11.32	7.55	0.00	0.00
2008-01-01	57.14	35.71	4.46	2.68	0.00
2009-01-01	40.74	33.95	20.99	1.85	2.47
2010-01-01	29.90	28.43	23.04	15.69	2.94
2011-01-01	28.81	20.99	20.16	15.64	14.40
2012-01-01	29.21	20.96	15.81	14.09	19.93
2013-01-01	25.51	22.58	15.84	12.02	24.05
2014-01-01	21.56	20.49	17.79	11.86	28.30
2015-01-01	17.95	17.18	17.69	14.87	32.31

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2016-01-01 17.68 15.25 14.77 14.53 37.77

## Age distribution of Ontario full-time faculty aged 66 and over

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