

Learning to Earning | Higher Education and the Changing Job Market Session Summary

**Civic Ballroom
Sheraton Centre Toronto
123 Queen Street West, Toronto, M5H 2M9**

Thanks to Ian Hartlen and Adrian Philp, recent graduates from the Master of Public Policy Program at the University of Toronto, for their work in summarizing the conference.

Day One | Thursday, November 1, 2012

Session 2A | Labour market outcomes for college and university students

Facilitator: Ray Gormley, Ministry of Training, Colleges & Universities

Shuping Liu, Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario

Early labour market outcomes of Ontario college and university graduates

From 1982 through 2005 Ontario PSE attainment increased dramatically. Can the labour market absorb these new graduates?

Unemployment. 2005 Ontario graduate unemployment surpassed the rest of Canada.

Overqualification. The rate of overqualification remains high, especially for graduates with advanced degrees. This is found even five years after graduation. However, compared to the rest of Canada, Ontario graduates are less likely to be overqualified.

Annual earnings. Advanced degree graduates' real earnings have increased, while the curve remains relatively flat for other PSE. Ontario graduates tend to earn more than the rest of Canada, but the expenditure is higher.

The Ontario trend has not greatly improved over time, but Ontario grads are not at a disadvantage. Results generally improve across the board between two and five years after graduation. Ontario results are mixed in comparison with the rest of Canada. The results are similar by credential, but costs should be taken into consideration.

Suggested areas for further study include socio-demographics, program characteristics, and personal experience.

Daniel Edwards, Australian Council for Educational Research

Insights from Australian graduates in the first five years after completion

Based on a single 2002 Australian government survey of over 9,000 graduates in the 1st, 3rd, and 5th years after graduation. The questions focused on work and study.

Outcomes are examined generally, in addition to special attention paid to specific disadvantaged groups. Generally, results are as expected:

- Students find value in their degrees.
- Most were working full time by the 5th year, with the number working full time increasing over time.
- Satisfaction was high and increased over time.
- Salary is higher than average.

Results for disadvantaged students are of special importance and answer important questions about the utility of the educational system in a successful equity agenda. Students who have unemployed parents, and/or grew up in low socioeconomic areas are more likely to attend part time or by distance, more likely to be non-native English speakers, and often indigenous or from remote areas. Their results are about equal to other students in satisfaction, relevance and earnings. They are slightly less likely to be employed full time at any time, and are slightly less likely to be managerial after the 5th year.

Results were gendered. Women were more highly represented in education and health related fields, less in IT or engineering. Both education and health jobs have lower median salaries. There were notable differences in labour force participation and salaries between men and women. This could be influenced both by field and by hours worked. Further study is necessary. A regression model controlling for part time, industry, age, etc. will bring finer results.

Patrick Bussière, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada
Earnings of postsecondary grads in Canada

There is a significant gender wage gap among recent postsecondary graduates. Although female postsecondary graduates have made great progress in narrowing the gender wage gap at the bottom of the distribution, there is still a ceiling which affects the high end of distribution, even with regression. It is unclear if this is a result of personal choice, or if there is something more to it.

There is also an earnings premium for science and tech graduates compared to those who studied the humanities. This science premium prevailed for both two and five years after graduation for all the cohorts in the study, especially for women. The science premium is slowly decreasing; it is unclear why.