

Flexible Futures: Reimagining Education for Part-Time Students

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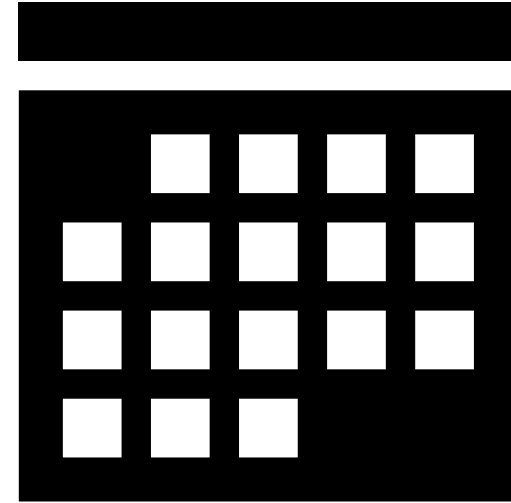
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Group Poll



Part-time Student Definition

“An applicant or participant is considered to be a part-time student if they are taking 20% to 59% of a full course load.” (Government of Ontario, 2024)



Why Part-Time?

Demand for part-time programs at Ontario's colleges is on the rise:

- Part-time learners, who are almost exclusively domestic students, account for an average of 31 per cent of college head-count enrolments (Colleges Ontario, 2025)
- Applicants' interest in part-time study has increased since 2016: the number of part-time applicants through OCAS has trended upwards, growing from 2,131 in 2016 to 9,292 in 2023 (HEQCO, 2025) and continues to increase each year

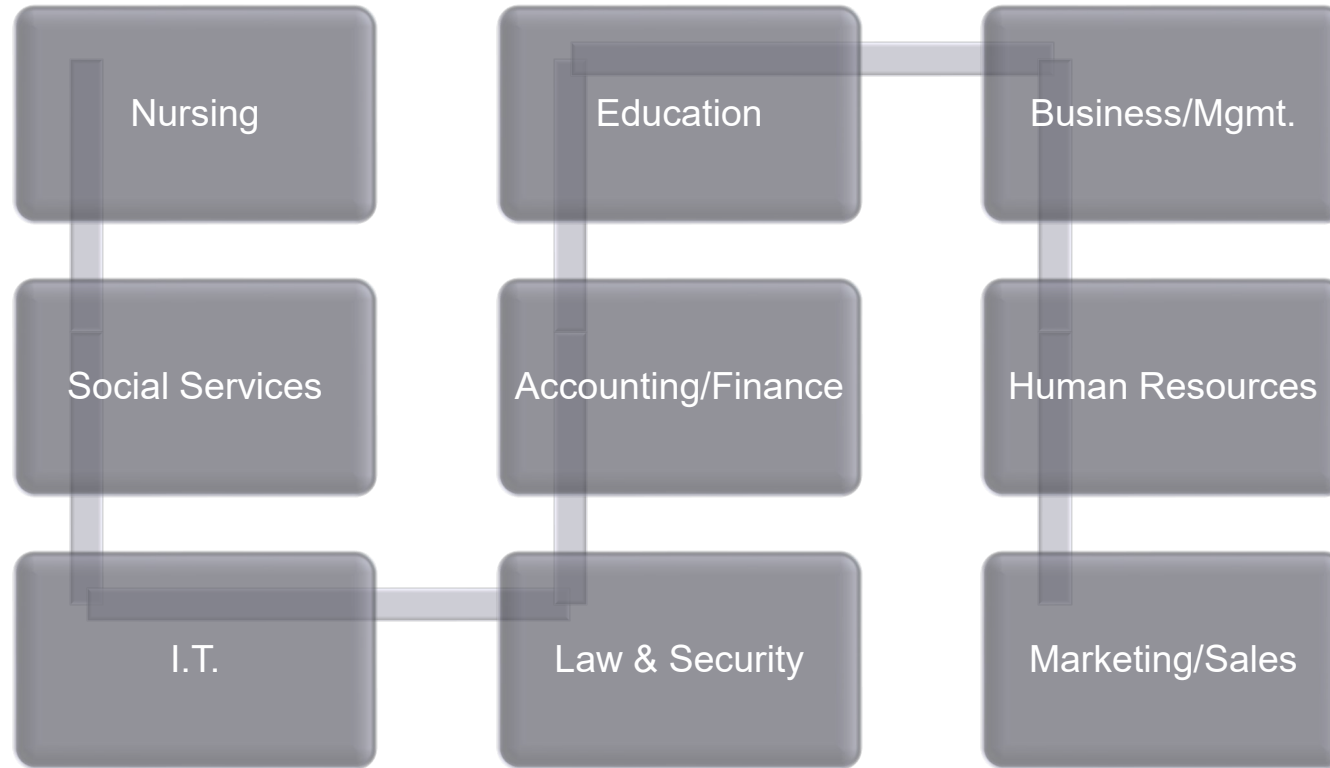
Who are part-time learners at Ontario's colleges?

- Mature students (over 30-years-old – 76%)
- Primarily non-direct (92%)
- Many have previous post-secondary experience
- High percentage of female identifying students (76%)

(OCAS, 2025 Part-Time Applicant Data)



Part-time Learner Programs Areas of Highest Applicant Interest



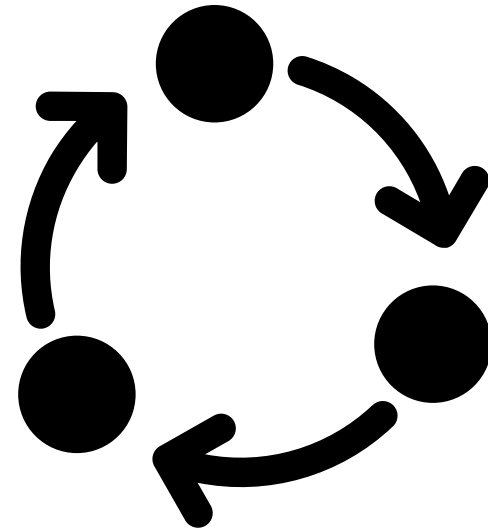


About Part-Time Students

- Face unique barriers (situational, dispositional and institutional)
- Seek cost effective, flexible learning options
- Motivated by career advancement and income improvement

Fanshawe's Approach to Serving Part-time Students

- Explore part-time learning modalities with all new program approvals
- Create seamless pathways from continuing education programs to part-time post-secondary programs
- Work through systematic barriers that disadvantage part-time learners
- Create an institutional culture that welcomes and supports all learners, including non-direct, part-time students

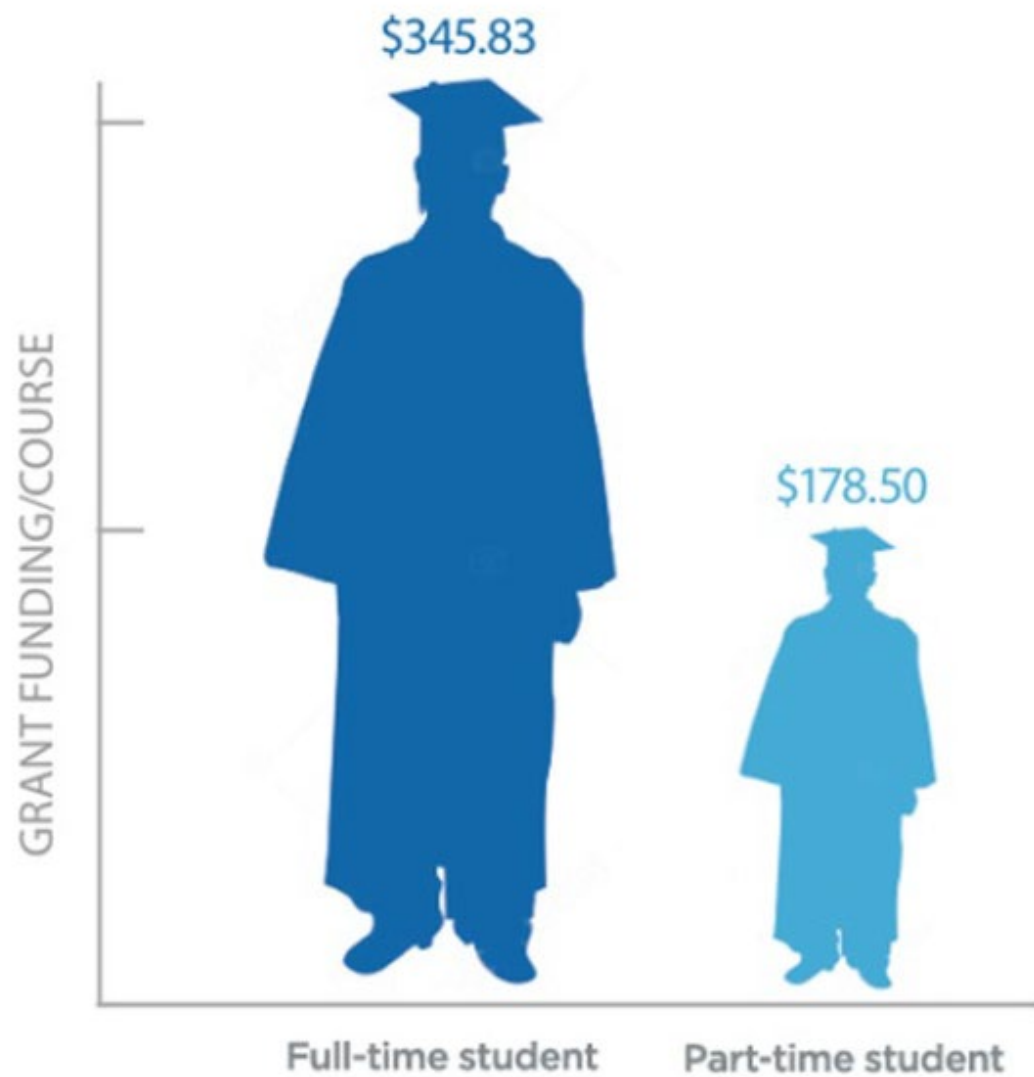


Shifting Systematic Barriers – Real Examples

- **Provide access to supports and services for part-time learners**
 - Example – at Fanshawe we advocated for access to student cards, health plan opt-in and counselling services for part-time learners
- **Include part-time learner eligibility in awards and bursaries**
 - Example – at Fanshawe, we have added a suite of awards and bursaries specifically for part-time learners after acknowledging the lack of funding opportunities available
- **Examine policies that exclude part-time learners**
 - Example – at Fanshawe, we updated the President's and Dean's Honour Roll policies to be inclusive of part-time learners

Issues that Remain

- Part-time learners at Ontario's colleges are the **lowest funded** learner type in the province
- Ontario's current funding formula for part-time students systematically **disincentives** colleges from supporting part-time learning opportunities and learners



FT/PT Student Infographic: Colleges Ontario, 2025 Pre-Budget Submission

Key Recommendations

- For those working in post-secondary, make changes where you can improve access and supports for part-time learners at your institutions – continuous small changes stack to make large impact
- From a system perspective, empower and support provincial systems to effectively track part-time learners in Ontario – what gets measured gets managed
- In terms of policy reform needed “Modernize funding models to incentivize part-time enrolment so that more students can learn and earn and to upskill our workforce.” (Colleges Ontario, 2025)



“

One aspect of leadership is communicating to others that the particular situation, the particular organizational form, is made by us and can be changed by us.

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