



Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations
Union des Associations des Professeurs des Universités de l'Ontario

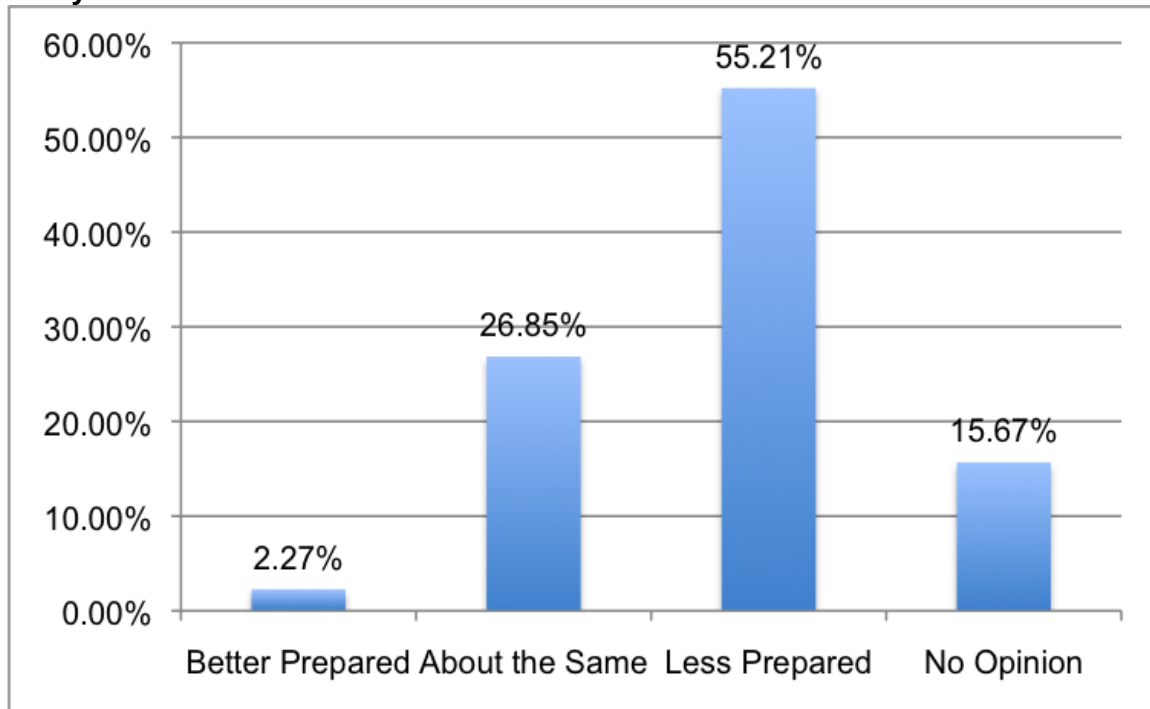
Students less prepared for university education

The Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations invited Ontario university faculty and librarians to respond to an on-line questionnaire. The questionnaire asked about a range of issues including class size, faculty hiring, research capacity, departmental budgets, student preparedness and the overall quality of education being delivered to students. Close to 2,000 responses from 22 Ontario universities were received between February 16 and March 13, 2009.

Student Preparedness

Success in university has been linked to the preparedness of students for the rigours of the university curriculum. Preparedness most often means that entering students have the requisite written, numeric and critical thinking skills along with the capacity to learn independently and be self-motivating.

Thinking about your own experience over the last three years, do you believe that first-year students are:



First-year students are less prepared for university education than students from just three years earlier, according to over fifty-five percent of respondents.

Respondents most often reported the following challenges among first-year students:

- Lower level of maturity
- Lack of required writing, mathematical and critical thinking skills
- Poor research skills as evidenced by an overreliance on Internet tools like Wikipedia as external research sources
- Expectation of success without the requisite effort
- Inability to learn independently

The McGuinty Government is applauding itself for increased graduation rates from secondary school. However, it appears that secondary students are not receiving the requisite skills that they need to be successful in university studies. Ontario's secondary schools need to be better resourced with new investments to enhance the classroom experience if students are going to thrive.