

# Ontario government should examine reliance on part-time faculty says education expert

 [cbc.ca/beta/news/canada/thunder-bay/thunder-bay-college-faculty-future-questions-1.4411225](https://www.cbc.ca/beta/news/canada/thunder-bay/thunder-bay-college-faculty-future-questions-1.4411225)



Full-time faculty at Thunder Bay's Confederation College walk a picket line at the Balmoral Street entrance to campus on Monday morning. Full-time faculty members at public colleges across Ontario went on strike Monday after talks with the College Employer Council fell through. (Kris Ketonen/CBC)

Up North

Back to class, but not necessarily business as usual



Back to class, but not necessarily business as usual 7:09

The time may have come for the Ontario government to take a closer look at the issue of part-time faculty at the province's public colleges, says Charles Pascal, a professor at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, at the University of Toronto.

- [Classes at Thunder Bay, Ontario's Confederation College resume Tuesday after legislation ends faculty strike](#)

"A college [education] is still a great bet for one's future," said Pascal, who is also a former deputy minister of education, and has served as a college president.

However, he feels there are some serious questions to be asked.

"The government needs to reflect on how can we have a system that has way too much reliance on part-timers who are not well-compensated," he said.



Charles Pascal is a professor at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto. He is an internationally respected Canadian educator who has served as deputy education minister in Ontario, as well as a college president. ([www.oise.utoronto.ca](http://www.oise.utoronto.ca))

"If the premier ever asked me my opinion, I'd probably suggest that there be a task force, and maybe an innovation fund that allows those colleges who have gone way down the pathway of far more part-timers than full-timers to be able to innovate and have some resources to rebalance that ratio."

Pascal is also advising potential college students it's a "buyer beware" situation and they should take a moment to examine that ratio.

"Once you choose the program and the college, do a little research and find out what's the percentage of part-timers to full-timers," he said.

### **Are professors there when needed?**

As well, he suggests asking "what's the climate like in terms of the relationship between the management of the college and their faculty, ask around and that will give you a little extra information regarding the program and the college in terms of issues of calmness and respect in the environment and availability of professors when you need

them."

The ratio of part-time to full-time instructors was a key sticking point in the five-week-long labour dispute between Ontario Public Service Employees Union faculty and the College Employer Council.

The Ontario government brought in back to work legislation, and stated that all outstanding issues will be negotiated in binding mediation-arbitration.

Approximately 500,000 college students return to their classrooms Tuesday.

You can here more from Charles Pascal [here](#).

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