

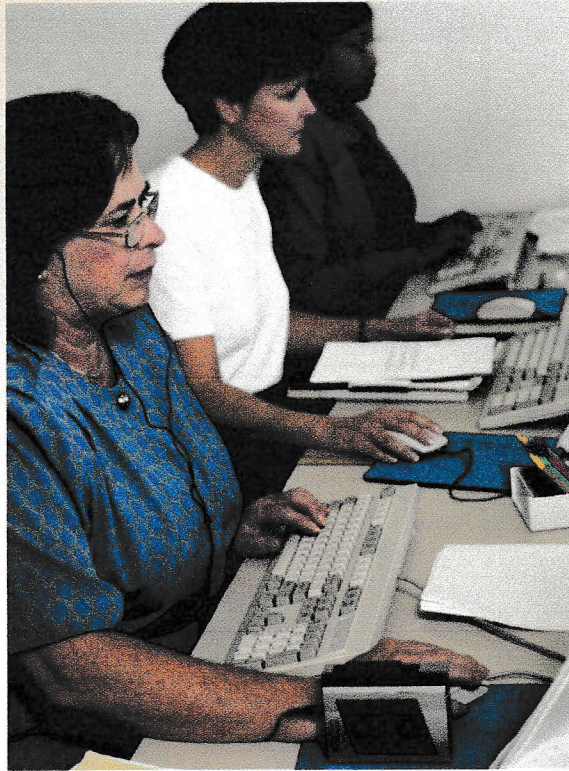
Universities and Colleges

What's the Difference?

About 50 percent of Ontario high school students go on to **university** or **community college** right out of high school. This percentage varies from region to region and from school to school.

Educational Trend: Adults Returning

More and more adults are taking college and university programs. Many of those who did not go to college or university when they finished high school, and many who did, are going back to school to retrain or to upgrade their skills.



In most high schools, the university and college options get emphasized more than others. In part, this is because of the long and complex application process. College and university representatives often visit high schools, and senior students may go on campus visits. So you will hear many announcements about this.

What are some differences between university and college? What type of educational experience do you get from each? How much does each cost? Where are the colleges and universities located?

University and College: A Comparison

	University	College
Type of educational experience	A theoretical and academic educational experience. There can be a generalist or specialist approach.	A practical, hands-on approach to education. Training is specialized for particular occupations.
What do you get?	Degree	Diploma or certificate
How long does it take?	Three or four years for an undergraduate program, considerably longer for a master's or Ph. D.	One year for a certificate; two or three years for a diploma. Generally speaking, "technician" is a two-year program and "technologist" is a three-year program.
How many are there in Ontario?	There are 18 universities in Ontario.	There are 29 colleges in Ontario.

ACTIVITY

A comparison

To compare college and university, use the various publications that these institutions create for high school students ("view books", INFO and CommuniCAAT books). Your guidance or student services office should have these. For this activity, use one college and one university publication.

1. Select one of your preferred fields of work.
2. Using the information books, find as many programs as you can that prepare students to work in that field. Do this for both the university and the college.
3. Select two college and two university programs. For each, find the following:
 - the admission requirements (high school courses and marks)
 - courses you would take in first year (you might need the institution's calendar to help you with this)
 - tuition fees for one year of study
 - the degree, diploma or certificate you would receive for successfully completing the program
4. Based upon this quick search, which program appeals to you most? Why?

Information Resources for Universities and Colleges

Guidance/Student Services: Ask your guidance counsellor about Spectrum (Ontario, Eastern Canada, Western Canada), computer/Internet programs such as Career Explorer, School Finder, and The Education Planner (which gives you an interest inventory, then connects your results directly to college and university programs that are related to your interests). Go to www.careers.nelson.com for direct links to related websites.

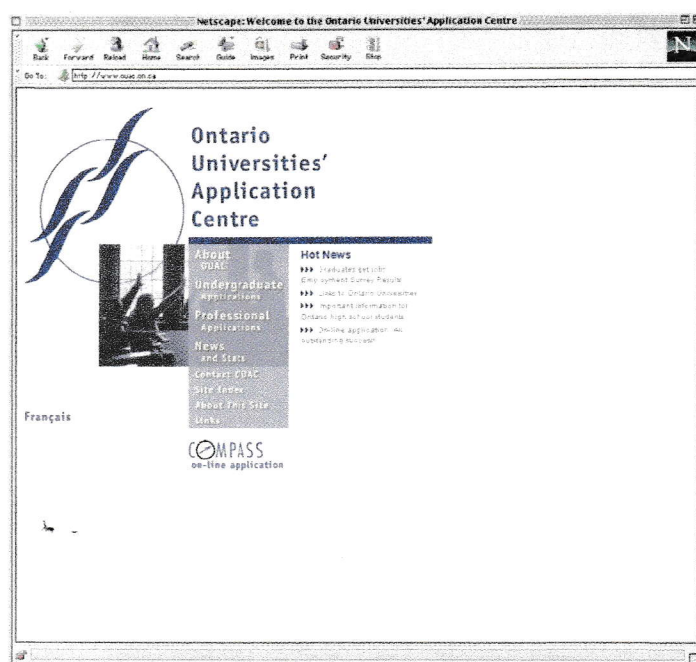
Universities: View books, calendars, University Information Programs (UIP), campus visits, INFO, Ontario University Application Centre (OUAC).

Colleges: View books, calendars, campus visits, CommuniCAAT, employment statistics for college graduates, Ontario College Application Service (OCAS).

Media: Useful articles about university and college choices appear each spring in magazines targeted at young people (like *The Edge* magazine), and *Maclean's* magazine publishes an annual survey of Canada's universities.

Internet: OUAC and OCAS have links to all universities and colleges. Most schools also have their own websites, with online application services.

You should also talk to people who have been to the colleges or universities you are interested in.



Educational Trend: Switching

Many people start at a college, and move on to a university program, sometimes before they complete their college program. The opposite is also true with university students moving to a college programs. Many are looking for a combination of theoretical background and specific work-related skills.

Something to Think About

Many post-secondary students drop out. Once you've narrowed your choices, find out the dropout rate in any program that interests you. Why do students drop out? Find out, and be prepared.