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Half (47%) Feel There Has Been a Decrease in Quality of Post-Secondary Education in Province Since 1995 . . . Province Split on Grading with 49% Giving Government Grades of ‘A’, ‘B’ or ‘C’, While 48% Give Grade of ‘D’ or Lower on Post-Secondary Education

Toronto, ONTARIO (Wednesday, June 18th, 2003) – According to a new study conducted by Ipsos-Reid on behalf of the Ontario Federation of University Faculty Associations (OCUFA), two-thirds (65%) of Ontarians say they are *very concerned* that qualified students, such as their children or other children, who choose to do so, will not be able to attend a publicly funded university in Ontario due to issues such as increased fees or the lack of available spaces. A further 26% say they are *somewhat concerned* that this might happen. In total just one in ten (9%) are *not concerned*.

Just under half (47%) of Ontarians feel that there has been a decrease in the quality of post-secondary education in Ontario since the Conservatives were first elected in 1995. This compares to one in five (22%) who feel that the quality of post-secondary education in Ontario during this time period has increased. An equal number (20%), unaided, said that quality had remained about the same.

Asked to grade the Ontario government’s performance in dealing with the funding of post-secondary education such as universities, half (49%) give the government a grade of ‘A’ (4%),

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'B' (12%), or 'C' (33%). A further 21% give them a 'D'. With one-quarter (26%) who would fail the government on this subject with a grade of 'E' (6%) or 'F' (20%).

These are the findings of an Ipsos-Reid poll conducted on behalf of the Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations between June 5th and June 11th, 2003. The poll is based on a randomly selected sample of 1,002 adult Ontarians. With a sample of this size, the results are considered accurate to within ± 3.1 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, of what they would have been had the entire adult Ontario population been polled. The margin of error will be larger within regions and for other sub-groupings of the survey population. These data were statistically weighted to ensure the sample's regional and age/sex composition reflects that of the actual Ontario population according to the 2001 Census data.

Two-thirds (65%) of Ontarians say they are *very concerned* that qualified students, such as their children or other children, who choose to do so, will not be able to attend a publicly funded university in Ontario due to issues such as increased fees or the lack of available spaces. A further 26% say they are *somewhat concerned* that this might happen. In total just one in ten (9%) are *not concerned*.

- Regionally, those most likely to say they are *very concerned* are from Northern Ontario (74%), Hamilton/Niagara (72%), the City of Toronto (69%), Southwestern Ontario (68%) and finally Eastern Ontario (59%) and the '905' Belt (57%).
- Middle aged (70%) Ontarians are more likely to say they are *very concerned* than are their younger (63%) or older (62%) counterparts.
- Women (69%) are more likely to say they are *very concerned* than are men (61%).



- Ontarians with some university or other post-secondary education (72%) are more likely than either those with a university degree (62%) or those with high school or less education (62%) to say they are *very concerned*.
- Respondents who are personally attending a post-secondary educational institution (14% of Ontarians) (74%) are more likely to be *very concerned* than are those who are not or who do not have any children (77% of Ontarians) (63%) attending a post-secondary educational institution.
- Looking at Ontarians with children in the age range (16 – 18) of the double cohort (8% of Ontarians), two-thirds (64%) say they are *very concerned*. In fact, two-thirds (67%) of Ontarians with children 18 years of age or younger living with them (34% of Ontarians) say they are *very concerned* on this subject.

Just under half (47%) of Ontarians feel that there has been a decrease in the quality of post-secondary education in Ontario since the Conservatives were first elected in 1995. This compares to one in five (22%) who feel that the quality of post-secondary education in Ontario during this time period has increased. An equal number (20%), unaided, said that quality had remained about the same.

- Statistically, there is no difference between regions as to the number that believes the quality of post-secondary education in the province has declined. However, within the GTA, there is a sharp difference of opinion between the views of those in the City of Toronto (54%) and in the '905' Belt (42%).
- Women (51%) are more likely than men (43%) to feel there has been a decrease in quality.



Asked to grade the Ontario government's performance in dealing with the funding of post-secondary education such as universities, half (49%) give the government a grade of 'A' (4%), 'B' (12%), or 'C' (33%). A further 21% give them a 'D'. With one-quarter (26%) who would fail the government on this subject with grades of 'E' (6%) or 'F' (20%).

- Ontarians 35 years of age and older (30%) are more likely than are their counterparts 18 to 34 years of age (21%) to give a failing grade to the government on this subject.
- Ontarians from lower income households (32%) are more likely than their counterparts in middle-income households (22%) to fail the government on this topic. One in four (27%) of those from upper income households also graded the government this way.
- Parents with children under 18 living with them (28%) are statistically as likely as the general public to give the government a failing grade. Looking deeper at this group, those with children up to 13 years of age (approximately up to Grade 8) (28%) are as likely as those with children who are 14 or 15 (29%) or 16 to 18 (28%) to give a failing grade to the province on dealing with post-secondary education funding in the province.

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