



News Release

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BETTER INFORMATION ON PROFESSOR TEACHING QUALITY NEEDED, AUDITOR GENERAL SAYS

(TORONTO) Neither universities nor the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities formally assess the quality of teaching that undergraduate students receive, but universities have some of the information, such as student evaluations, at hand to do it, Auditor General Jim McCarter says in his *2012 Annual Report*.

“Universities do a pretty good job at giving undergrads the opportunity to evaluate their courses and professors, but most don’t summarize the student evaluation information and make it available to students so they could refer to it when choosing their courses,” McCarter said.

Only about a quarter of Ontario’s 20 publicly assisted universities indicated that they make at least some of the summarized results of these evaluations available to students to help them select their undergraduate courses.

Following are some of the Auditor General’s other significant findings:

- Although there are no formal requirements, many universities have put processes in place to improve teaching quality, including setting up teaching centres and considering teaching performance when deciding on promotions and tenure.
- A number of faculty members told the Auditor General’s Office that their annual performance appraisals did not provide them with appropriate feedback on teaching performance. The Office found examples where student evaluations had been critical of teaching performance, but there was no evidence that specific guidance was provided or that the faculty members had sought help to improve their teaching skills.
- Ontario universities do not generally require faculty members to have formal training in teaching. Records at the teaching and learning centres of two of the universities we visited showed that faculty attendance at teaching workshops averaged less than one hour per instructor per year.

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