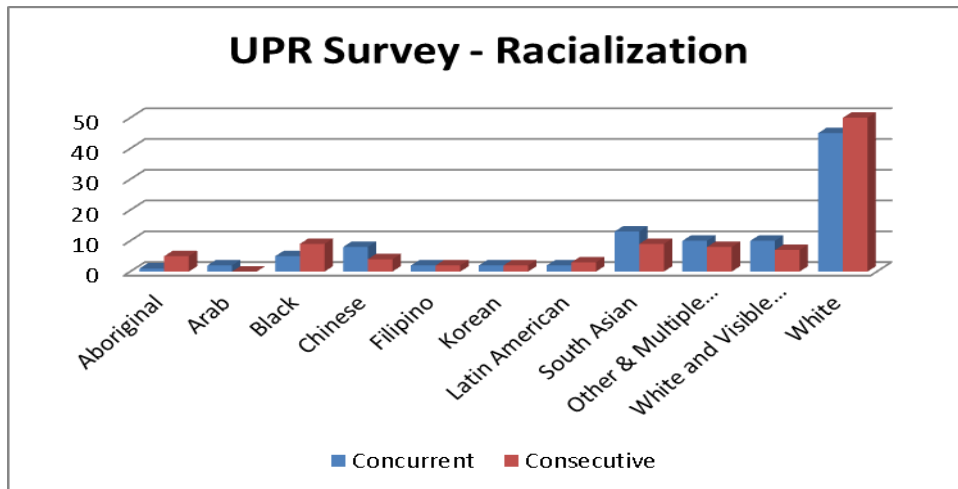


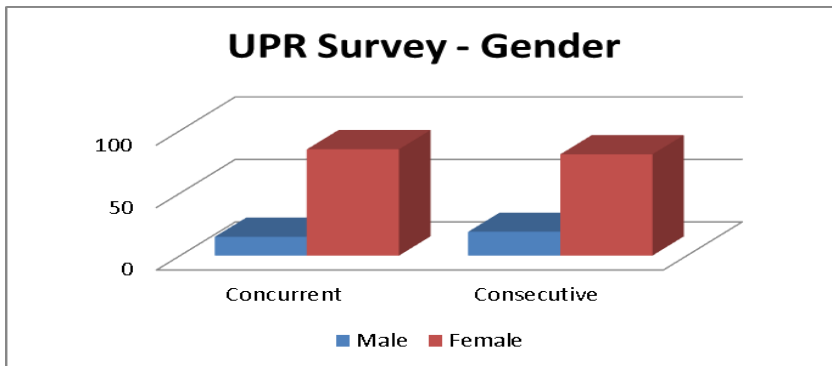
YORK UNIVERSITY - FACULTY OF EDUCATION  
 ALUMNI SURVEY REPORT  
 FALL 2011

The Faculty of Education Student Association, in collaboration with the Office of the Dean and the assistance of York University's Advancement Services, conducted a survey of Bachelor of Education alumni in September 2011. We were interested in learning more about what our graduates were doing and how the Faculty of Education might better prepare them for a challenging period in the labour market. This report summarizes the results of the survey. In addition, we have provided a snapshot of our undergraduate student body gleaned from a survey of students enrolled in 2009/2010 that was conducted by the Institute of Research Services for our Undergraduate Program Review (UPR). This was a more extensive survey that provided feedback on our undergraduate program that informs our current deliberations on recruitment, advising, and curriculum.

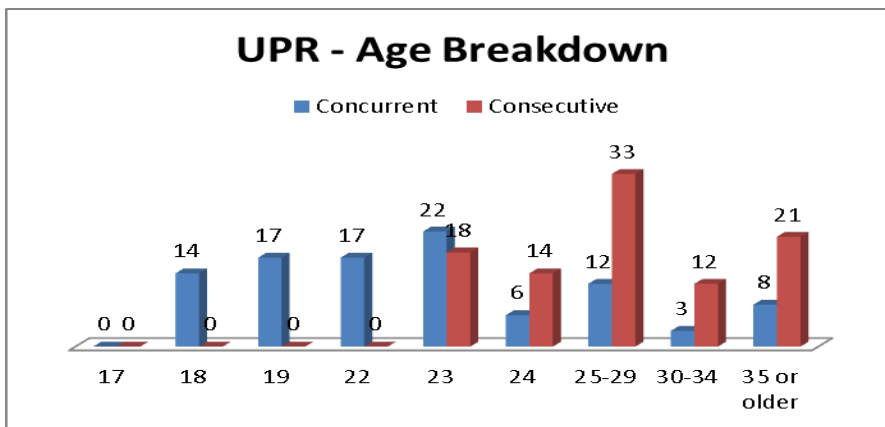
The information that was gathered from the UPR surveys (2009/2010) informed us of the racialization of our student body. Those who responded to our Concurrent program survey reported their race as 55% visible minority and 45% white. The Consecutive program response showed an equal proportion of 50% visible minority and 50% white.



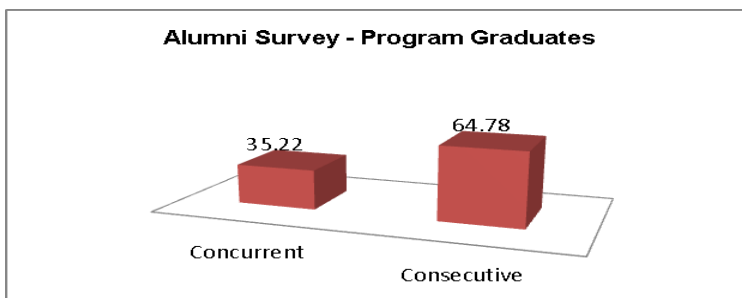
The gender breakdown was 15% male and 85% female in the Concurrent program and 19% male and 81% female in the Consecutive program.



Not surprisingly, the Concurrent respondents who take the BEd program concurrently with their undergraduate degree, had a younger median age than the Consecutive respondents who enter the BEd program after the completion of an undergraduate degree.



The Alumni Survey (Fall 2011) gave us similar data to the UPR Surveys on the respondents' gender and age breakdowns. Of the 423 respondents, 149 (35%) were from the Concurrent Program and 274 (65%) from the Consecutive Program.



All of the respondents graduated from the BEd program between 1995-2010.

<b>What year did you graduate from the Faculty of Education?</b>		
2010	131	33.16
2009	59	14.94
2008	50	12.66
2007	33	8.35
2006	23	5.82
2005	33	8.35
2004	16	4.05
2003	19	4.81
2002	10	2.53
2001	13	3.29
2000	7	1.77
1995	1	0.25
	395*	99.98

(\* Not all respondents answered this question)

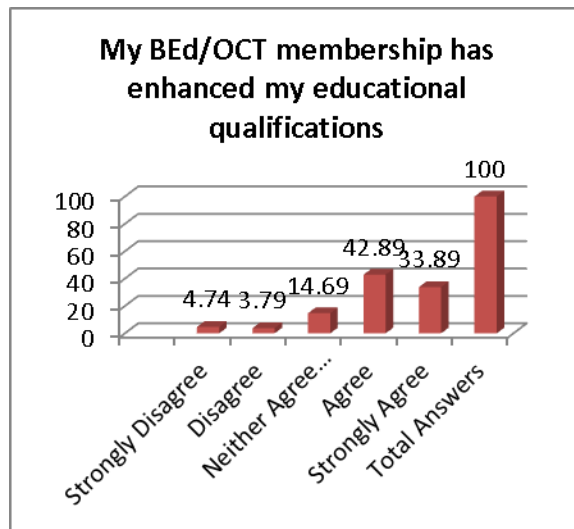
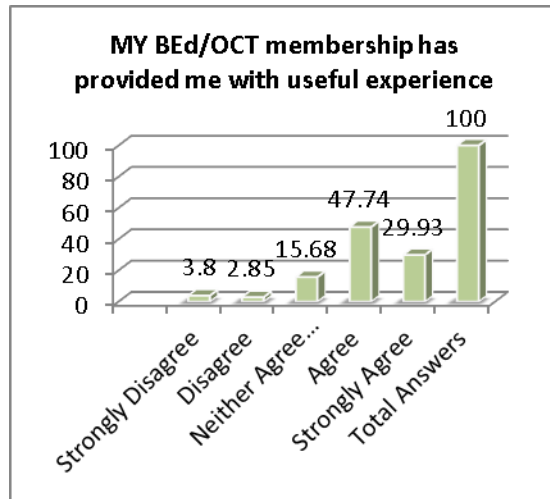
### **What We Heard**

Many of our graduates believe that employers hold York University alumni in high regard. The Bachelor of Education program at York enjoys a good reputation in the teaching field. (This belief was corroborated by participants from the profession who were interviewed for an Environmental Scan conducted by the Office of Institutional Research and Analysis.) Highlights of the survey indicate that a significant number of graduates are contemplating taking a Master's program. Graduates who have not secured full-time positions as classroom teachers are seeking a Master's degree to assist them in finding a job in the education field. The survey informs us that, overall, the students are satisfied with the BEd program at York and believe that the program has provided them with the skills they need to succeed in the teaching profession or related fields.

Throughout the survey, many students complimented the program and commented on how well the BEd program has prepared them to be teachers. The hands-on experience they received in their practicum placements has provided them with the skills they need to teach. The placement block at the end of the year has allowed them to practice what they have learned and has given them an opportunity to learn. Students also enjoyed the group discussions and seminars in the courses as they gave them opportunities to share ideas and to network and connect with other education students.

A large percentage of the respondents strongly agree or agree that their BEd/OCT membership has provided them with useful skills, useful experiences and enhanced their educational qualifications. Fifty percent (50%) agree and twenty-five percent (25%) strongly agree that their BEd/OCT membership has provided them with useful skills. Forty-eight percent (48%) agree and thirty percent (30%) strongly agree that their BEd/OCT membership has provided useful experiences. Forty-three percent (43%) agree and thirty-four percent strongly agree (34%) that their BEd/OCT membership has enhanced their educational qualifications. Overall, the majority of the respondents agreed that their BEd and

OCT membership have been beneficial to their educational experience and that the program has provided them with useful skills and information to help them in the field.



Many graduates noted that the Urban Diversity Program in particular has helped prepare them to teach.

*“Urban Diversity Program truly prepares you to teach in the public board, it is an amazing course”*

*“Glad I finished the Urban Diversity program through York. It really helped prepare me for working in the school that I’m currently teaching at”*

BEd graduates enjoyed the hands-on experience afforded by their placements. They felt that the BEd program offered a lot of placement hours and practice teaching that gave them greater experience in the field. The large amount of practicum time also gave the students opportunities to network and connect with other people.

*“Great hands on approach to learning through practicum program”*

Many graduates indicated that one of the best things offered in the program is the community placement. The students enjoyed the community placements as it gave them additional experience in the field.

*“Community placement gradually integrates students into the classroom”*

Graduates also found the workshops and conferences beneficial to their educational experience. The workshops provided them with information that was beneficial to their professional development.

*“Opportunities for professional development through workshops and conferences”*

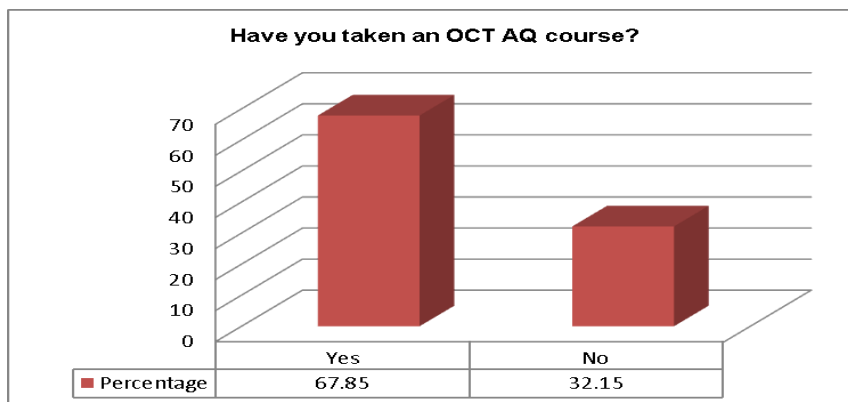
Many graduates commented on how they found the placements beneficial to their learning although some consecutive program graduates felt that the one-day a week practicum placements didn't allow them to make solid connections with the students. Some also commented on the lack of courses that focus on education beyond the classroom such as adult education and workplace education. In addition, some felt that the courses are limited and that there should be more online courses available and evening classes for part-time students.

Graduates also mentioned that there are not enough courses that teach practical skills. They would like to see more courses dedicated to special needs education, classroom management, assessment procedures, unit plan strategies, literacy, and the creation of report cards.

*“Could have more practical courses such as learning to work with IEP's or lesson plan writing”*

## Professional Development

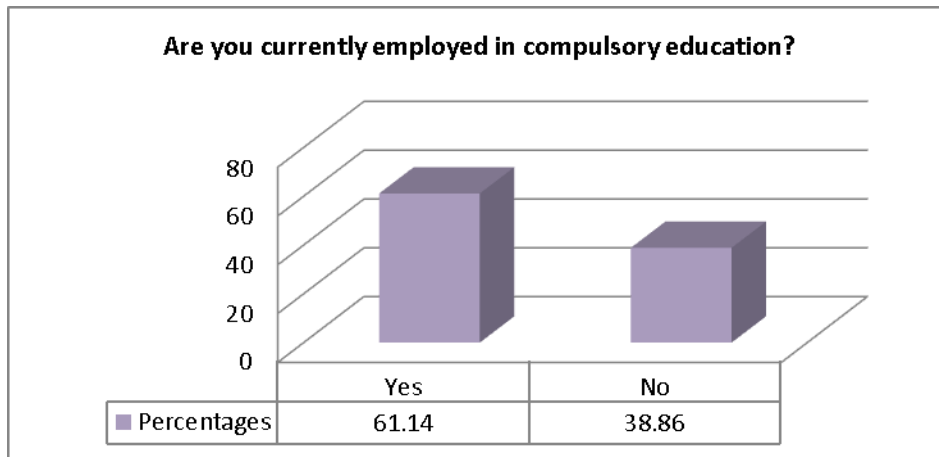
Graduates are looking for courses and ways to enhance their professional development. Many graduates have taken additional AQ courses. Sixty-Eight percent (68%) of the respondents have taken an additional qualification course and thirty-two percent (32%) have not. From the survey, the most popular Aqs are FSL, Special Education, ESL, Primary, and Intermediate qualifications.



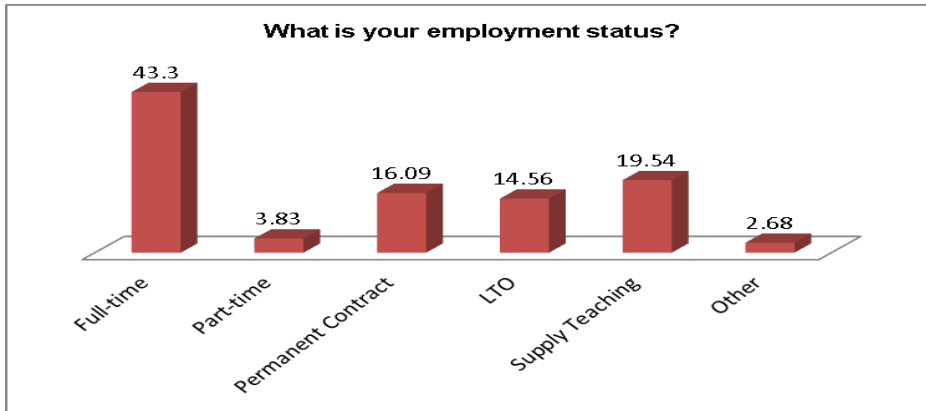
Graduates find it very difficult to obtain jobs without taking additional qualification courses. Many of them feel that AQ courses should be incorporated into their initial teacher education because they believe that, with their addition, they will be more employable. They add that AQs such as special education and ESL should be taught in the program because without that knowledge, graduates feel inexperienced when they get into the field.

## Employment Statistics

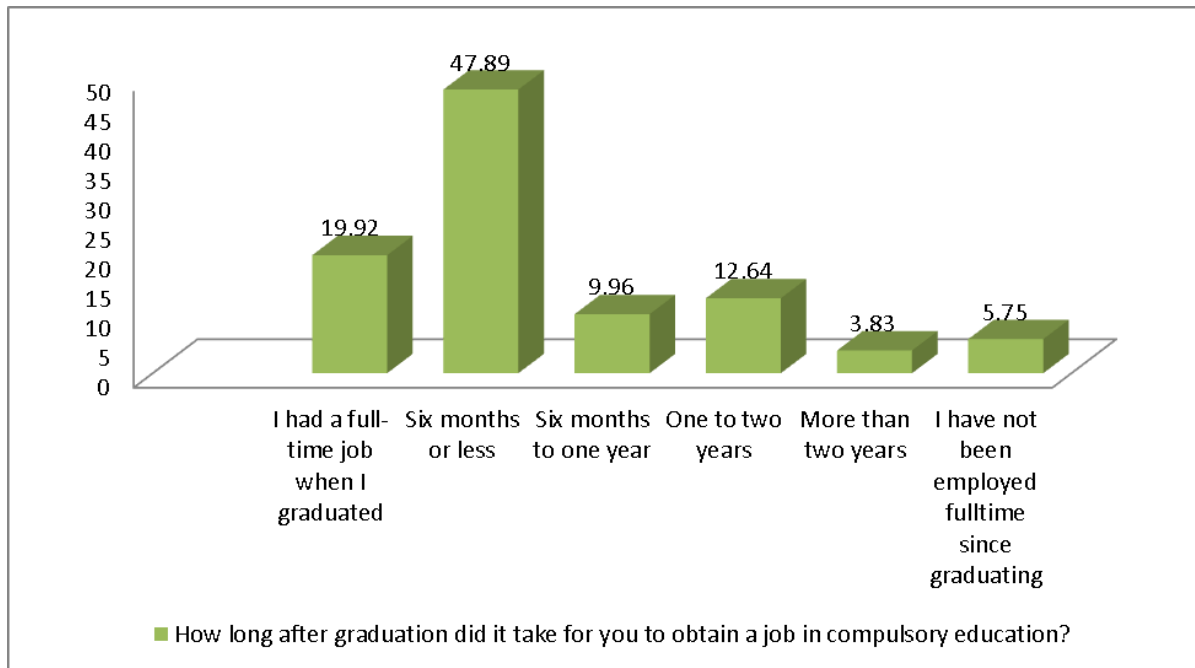
In large part, the survey was conducted to determine how many graduates are employed in compulsory education and how many are employed in other fields. Out of four hundred and twenty seven (427) respondents, sixty-one percent (61%) answered yes to being currently employed in compulsory education and thirty-nine percent (39%) are currently not employed in compulsory education.



Out of the respondents who are employed in compulsory education forty-three percent (43%) are employed full time, four percent (4%) are employed part time, sixteen percent (16%) are on permanent contracts, fifteen percent (15%) have long term occasional positions, twenty percent (20%) are supply teaching, and three percent (3%) have other types of positions in the education field. Eighty-four percent (84%) of the respondents work in a public school board, seventeen percent (17%) work in private schools, four percent (4%) work in international settings and six percent (6%) work in other systems. The other boards/systems that respondents work in are Catholic, First Nations, child care centres, faith-based schools and the Provincial Schools Branch.



Graduates were also asked how long it took them after graduation to find a job. From the respondents who found jobs in compulsory education, twenty percent (20%) had a job when they graduated, forty-eight percent (48%) found a job in 6 months or less, ten percent (10%) found a job in 6 months to a year, thirteen percent (13%) found a job within one to two years, and four percent (4%) took more than two years to find a job. Since graduating, fifteen percent (15%) have not had full time employment.



Many graduates are working in jobs that do not involve teaching in Ontario classrooms. Respondents were asked to list their current job positions. The results showed that graduates were employed in the following fields:

**Administrative:**

- Student Programs Assistant
- Centre for Students with Disabilities at OCAD University
- Elementary Teachers Federation of Toronto Office Manager
- Coordinator in Education Training Program
- Upper Canada College Information

- Academic and Social Coordinator
- Georgian College Financial Officer
- Researcher with the Ontario Literacy Coalition

**Community Organizations/NGOs:**

- City of Toronto Community Recreation Programmer
- Fitness Instructor/Instructor for a Learning Centre
- Toronto Foundation for Student Success
- Licensed to Learn Non-Profit Organization
- Toronto Foundation for Student Success- Facilitator
- Milton Community Resource Centre

**Other Teaching or Teaching-related positions:**

- Tutor (Oxford Learning)
- Teaching Abroad
- Teaching Assistant
- Ontario Early Years Program
- Preschool

**Museum/Art Gallery/Education Field Work:**

- Art Gallery of Ontario - Education Officer for Child and Youth
- Coordinator of Elementary School Programs at the Art Gallery
- Sharon Temple National Historic Site and Museum-Site Coordinator

**Other:**

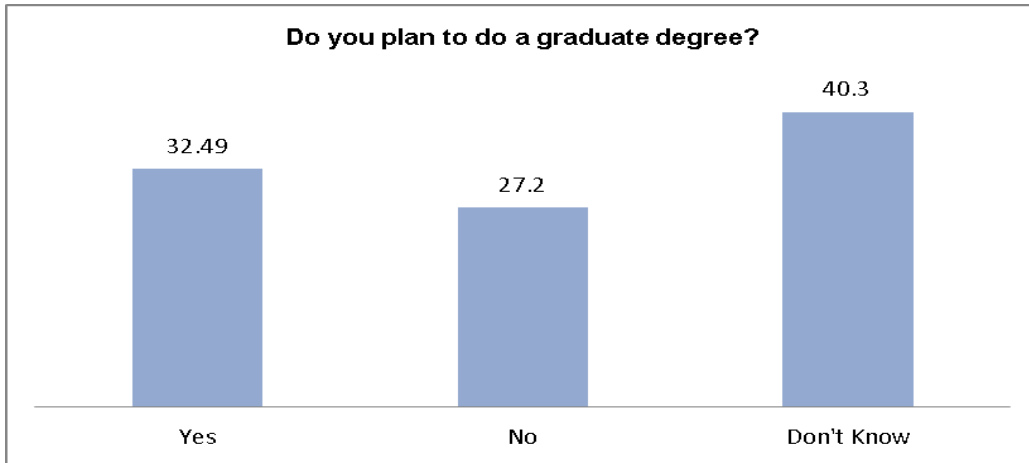
- Professor of Art History at Algonquin College
- Children Book Author
- Development Team

In reviewing the types of jobs that graduates have obtained outside of Ontario classrooms, it can be seen that most of the respondents have found jobs that are related in some way to education. Respondents suggest that the Faculty of Education should include these types of job opportunities in the teaching program because many graduates cannot find jobs as classroom teachers in the current climate. They remark that graduates should be made aware that they can find jobs working as assistants, coordinators, and facilitators at universities and in the government. They add that the BEd program should expose students to the field of education as a whole and not just to classroom settings. The BEd Program should include placements or information about organizations that focus on improving education, or allow students to conduct research in the field or work with organizations that focus on learning and development. This would allow them to see that their skills could be used outside conventional classrooms.

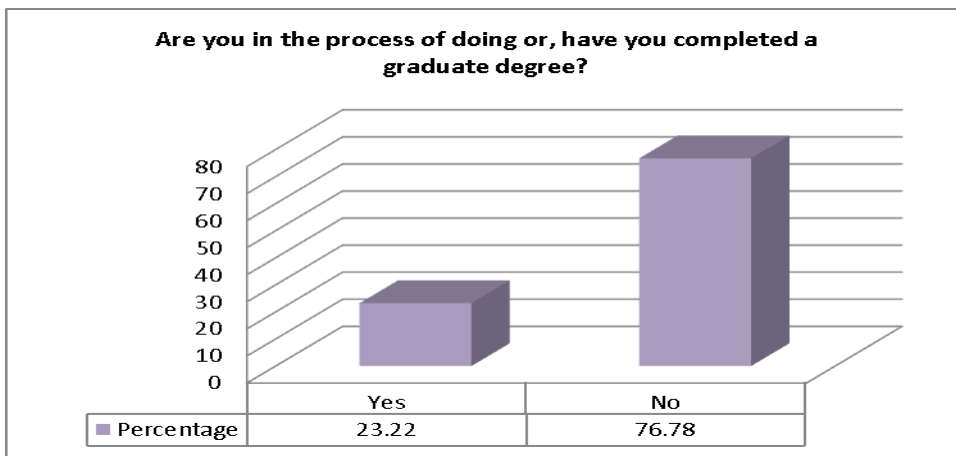
**Continuing Education**

Some of the BEd graduates are interested in continuing their education by applying to Master's programs. Out of four hundred and twenty-seven respondents (427), thirty-three percent (33%) answered that they plan to do a graduate degree. Twenty-seven percent (27%) do not plan to do a graduate degree, and forty-percent (40%) don't know.





Twenty-three percent (23%) of the respondents are enrolled in a graduate program or have completed a graduate degree.



From the results, it should be noted that many students are unsure about continuing their education. It might be important for the Faculty of Education to find ways to encourage students to enroll in graduate programs and inform graduates about how further education can assist them in finding jobs in the education field that might not necessarily be in a classroom setting. While enrolled in the BEd program, it might be possible to expose students to other fields that would welcome their teaching, research, and learning and development skills. Community placements in the concurrent program and some consecutive programs may already play that role, but this could be heightened and elaborated.

The Faculty of Education's administration is aware that there have been difficulties in keeping in touch with alumni. The Faculty is exploring different ways to communicate with their alumni such as sending greeting cards, and e-mailing graduates with information about workshops, courses, AQs, and graduate programs.

## Comments and Suggestions

The participants in the survey were given the opportunity to write additional comments about the BEd Program. One of the major concerns was the lack of classroom teaching jobs and the surplus of teachers and there were suggestions that York address the teacher surplus by accepting fewer teacher candidates into the program. The graduates commented on the need for the program to inform students about options other than classroom teaching.

*“The Faculty of Education at York needs to accept less applicants and needs to assist graduates with finding careers related to teaching that are outside of a school classroom”*

Many graduates commented on the need for more information about teaching internationally. Providing more information about teaching internationally could help address the teacher surplus as students would be able to go abroad and teach. By demonstrating a teaching abroad option, students would have the skills to teach overseas.

*“The university needs to find ways to incorporate international teaching into the program to help students find jobs overseas”*

Graduates would like to see more courses or time dedicated to provide support for resume writing, interview preparation, and the application process.

*“York should provide with more networking opportunities and support for finding teaching positions in Canada through job search help, resume help, and practice and advice for interviews”*

Some graduates suggested that the Faculty provide a career fair that could feature jobs in the education field that are not related to classroom teaching.

## Conclusion

In light of reduced job prospects for classroom teaching positions for our graduates, and in anticipation of changes to the field of teacher education in the Province of Ontario, the Faculty of Education at York University has already begun to plan new initiatives in the undergraduate, graduate, and professional development programs. An enhanced communication strategy will allow the Faculty to inform its alumni of workshops and AQ programs and will encourage them to enroll in the Faculty’s graduate programs, all of which will assist them in finding jobs in the education field. While the community placements in the Concurrent and Consecutive programs expose students in some measure to the field of education as a whole, the Alumni Survey has further encouraged the Faculty to embed more “outside the classroom” learning and development topics into its curriculum, and to develop undergraduate and graduate degrees not related to classroom teaching.

Interest in international opportunities has increased as the job market in Ontario has decreased. The Faculty’s International Education Office encourages undergraduate and graduate students to take advantage of international initiatives and exchanges. The office offers an undergraduate certificate in teaching internationally and holds an International Teaching Fair every year for graduate and undergraduate students to explore teaching opportunities outside of Canada.

The Faculty is currently exploring ways to enhance resume writing, interview preparation, and job application process workshops for its graduates and will look at holding additional job fairs that will feature careers in the field of education not related to classroom teaching.

In addition to informing ongoing planning within the Faculty of Education in the areas of undergraduate, graduate and continuing professional education, the UPR and Alumni Surveys have provided valuable information for representing our Faculty to prospective students, the profession, and the university community. We are grateful to our alumni for their input and we look forward to announcing our new initiatives as they progress.