

Adult education is designed for persons not in the regular school system. Out-of-school adults can either acquire accreditation at various education levels or advance their personal interests.

These courses are provided by local school boards, provincial departments of education, community colleges and universities. Programs are also offered by voluntary organizations, churches, unions, professional associations, government departments, business and industry.

Adult education is not centred exclusively in institutions. As well as the time-honoured correspondence courses and in-classroom night school programs, courses are available from travelling libraries and cultural institutions such as museums and art galleries, radio, television and newspapers.

A wide range of adult education programs exists. Through part-time study, a person can upgrade qualifications by taking courses towards a high school graduation certificate, a college diploma or a university degree; a person may also take non-credit programs for personal enrichment or leisure use. Instruction is available in hobby skills, fine and applied arts, recreation and social education, to name a few. Professional development and "refresher" courses are also offered.

For the past ten years adult education has been the fastest-growing sector of Canadian education. In 1983, more than 3.2 million people were taking courses on a part-time basis. Taken as a proportion of the out-of-school population 17 years of age and above, this number means that one out of every five adults in Canada was taking part-time courses.

## Financing

As Canada's university programs and facilities expanded, governments in all provinces and the federal government became more involved in financing and planning university development. Federal contributions first took the form of per capita grants based on the population of the provinces, or grants based on institutional operating expenditures. Tax transfers to the provinces for education and other social services have since replaced direct federal support.

In 1987-88, estimated operating expenditures of Canadian universities totalled \$7.8 billion, with \$4.2 billion provided by the provinces and \$680 million by the federal government. Student fees in 1987-88 amounted to \$792 million or 12.6 per cent of operating revenues (see Appendix D).

Community colleges are funded by the provinces. Some finance community colleges completely; provincial funding is extensive at all of these institutions. The amount of autonomy they enjoy also varies.