

**Can we do a good job with 160 students to support? Can we do a good job with more than a half dozen courses to prepare? What is it like to have a week where a teacher has 17 or 18 hours of class-time, six or seven hours of preparation, four or five hours of office hours to meet with students, and who, even after all of that, still has not started marking, nor prepared for nor attended any meetings, or replied to any e-mails?**

During the Winter 2009 «grand tour» of general assemblies carried out by the FNEEQ Negotiation Committee, heavy workloads were clearly the main concern of cegep teachers. This developed over the years; the causes of this overload are many and involve many facets of our work. In this Info-Négo, we focus on workload.

Over the past two years following the publication of the report on the teaching profession, we have had the opportunity to hear the comments of our local administrators, most particularly during Operation: Board. A familiar employer refrain took shape as follows: «the report shows how teacher workloads have evolved, but does not state that they have increased»; or «working as part of a team allows teachers to share their resources, allowing them to save time».

Even if one attributes no bad faith to our counterparts, the least that we can say is that there remains a lot of work to be done before they will recognize that competency-based teaching, the program approach, the decentralization of programs, information and communication technologies (ICT) as well as students with special needs have not only transformed college teaching, but have also increased significantly the workloads of all teachers!

### The History of Increasing Workloads

The increase in teacher workloads is not a new development. Since the 1983 decree, which removed 1200 teacher full-time equivalents from the cegep system, the union federations have always placed reducing workloads at the centre of their negotiation demands. With the profound changes introduced by the 1993 cegep



reforms and the zero-deficit budgets in the late 1990s, workloads have reached new heights.

During the 2002-2005 negotiations, our employers refused to accept that teacher workloads had increased over the years, admitting only that they had evolved. In this area, the only gain obtained by FNEEQ before the imposition of the decree was an agreement to create a parity committee with the mandate to outline an up-to-date portrait of the teaching profession, a committee on which FEC and then FAC also participated. The final report of this committee, which received the approval of all three union federations and our employers, was published in April 2008. This document describes, among other subjects, the complexity of the individual and collective tasks that are carried out by teachers. After the publication of this report, the committee was given an exploratory

mandate to study the parameters of the CI formula in order that it might better measure teacher workloads as described in the report. In June 2009, the three union federations proposed two corrective measures for the most important workload increases, namely the increase in marking and support for each student, and the increased load of preparations and number of different courses that can be assigned to a single teacher.

### Consequences of the Introduction of the PES Parameter

It's obvious to all teachers: evaluation now takes up a larger place than it did before in the teaching relationship. The number of evaluations has increased with the profusion of formative assessments, but evaluations also must be refined in order to measure the level of acquisition of competencies. Institutional policies on the evaluation of student achievement (IPESA) as well as

departmental policies on the evaluation of learning were elaborated to sanction this new way of doing things.

The increasing load of student support is decried by many teachers. Here are the main causes :

- the number of students assigned to each teacher has gradually increased over the years, so that each must now support from 160 to 170 students per semester ;
- the increasing role of information and communication technologies, which multiply the means available to communicate with students, has imposed new standards of availability ;
- Investigating plagiarism has also increased the time needed for marking since the advent of ICT ;
- the general increase in the need for support of students, but in particular that linked to the lowering of admission requirements in the cegep

act regulations (the RREC) in 2007 and also to the integration of students with special needs.

The scale of the workload increase associated with evaluation and student support must be fully recognized. This is why cegep teachers are demanding that the PES parameter be improved.

Since the introduction of the parameters linked to the number of preparations in 1989, the teaching reality has changed greatly.

The introduction of ICT has had a considerable impact on preparations. Immediate access to more and more information; the accelerating rhythm of technological change, the development of pedagogical materials integrating ICT and the mastery of them are current realities that did not exist when the CI parameters were set.

The competency-based approach has not just changed the way that we evaluate students; it has also transformed teaching, planning and preparation. With regard to their workload, teachers must work with a larger number of constraints, in particular course guidelines as well as the different institutional and departmental policies.

One direct consequence of the program approach was the multiplication of the number of different courses offered to students. This resulted in an across-the-board workload increase, but in particular affected those who teach in programs with low student numbers, and those in small colleges. The teachers who work in these environments must often teach four or more different courses per semester.

In order to limit the number of different courses that can be assigned per semester and to better recognize the work that they do, we ask the government to increase the parameter linked to course preparation.



## **Nursing : Recurrent Demands**

The distinctive aspects of this program, in which almost half of the hours provided in program-specific teaching are dedicated to clinical instruction, make comparisons with other disciplines hazardous. For many years, clinical teachers in Nursing have denounced the overloaded workload and insufficient resources for this type of teaching.

In addition, it should be noted that the cegep reforms, the health-care sector reforms, Law 90 (which modified the types of acts permitted), the new requirements of the professional order as well as the context of the shortage of nurses have contributed to increasing the workload of teachers of this program in a variety of ways.

There is also, of course, the need for teachers to go to the hospital the day before clinical teaching takes place and the fact that stage numbers are the same although in reality the activities carried out are different from one another. It's also clear that certain teaching conditions have changed as a result of the shift toward ambulatory care.

This unique context must not, however, allow us to avoid carrying out a rigorous analysis of the demands from the teachers of this discipline, and, in particular, maintaining the main principles of a workload calculation for all teachers across the cegep system. The individual workload formula (commonly known by its French acronym, CI) has as its main objective to

establish an equitable measure of workloads between teachers regardless of their discipline. Therefore, it does not reflect the entire workload that we accomplish and definitely does not seek to reflect precisely every one of the working hours required for college teaching. As such, the very nature of our profession, which requires an enormous amount of professional autonomy, makes it both impossible and undesirable to precisely account for all of the tasks accomplished and hours worked.

While this formula works when measuring teaching hours of lecture and lab, it appears that it has real problems when it comes to assessing the workload carried out by nurses teaching stage (fieldwork). Clinical teaching, which requires a direct supervision of students who are learning in a hospital setting which has its own needs and peculiarities, is difficult to compartmentalize into HC and HP, whatever may be the factors with which they are associated.

As a result, we have in this negotiation period formulated a demand to add to our collective agreement an appendix to take into account the reality of clinical teaching in Nursing.

In addition, we will be carrying out a similar study in other «heavy» health technology programs, which clearly experience equally serious problems in clinical teaching in a hospital setting.

# Modifying the Teaching Resources Allocation Method

Our first demand is as follows: «Link the financing formula for teaching resources to the parameters of the CI formula once again.» Through this demand, we want to change the way that the Ministry allocates teaching resources to the colleges, as the present financing formula has no link to the amount of work to be done, which causes many problems.

## Allocating Programs

To establish the resources needed to teach lecture, lab and stage (fieldwork) courses, the Ministry uses one or more linear equation(s) for each program. These only use the total PES of each program to determine the number of teachers required for teaching (*volet 1*).

Our CI uses not only the number of students enrolled for each class hour in a course, but also the number of teaching hours and the number of hours of preparation for a course, which provides a much better measure of the size of the workload to be completed.

The financing formula does not take into account the fact that in some cases, an increase in the number of students forces a new course section to be opened, while in others, it may simply mean an increase in the number of students in a class.

## The Most Important Issues

Programs with low student numbers are the hardest hit by these failings of the current financing formula. These programs do not attain the minimum PES threshold to obtain their proper financing. They receive the same allocation as all other programs that fall below their thresholds. And this financing does not provide enough teachers.

Take, for example, the financing of a course with three hours per week of instruction offered in a program with low student enrolment and compare its allocation with its CI workload calculation. The results are as follows :

- With five students enrolled, the allocation financed is 4.6% of a full-time

*“PES” means the number of student-hours per week.*

*For each course offered, the PES value is calculated by multiplying the number of students registered in the course by the number of class hours per week.*

*To find the total PES for a program, add the PES for each of the program-specific courses in the program.*

workload, while the CI assigns 17.3% of a workload. The financing formula provides just 25% of the allocation required!

- With ten students, the allocation financed is 9.3% of a workload while the CI calculation is 18.8% of a full load. Once again, the financing is inadequate. This time, the missing allocation is about 50% of what is needed.



- With fifteen students, the allocation financed is 13.9% of a workload while the CI gives 20.3% of a full load. There is still a 30% gap in teaching resources.

We can clearly see that a college will end up in a deficit in such a situation. The other programs must therefore compensate for the shortfall. As a result, all teachers across the college are overloaded. The greater the number of programs with low enrolment in a college, the more this effect grows in importance.

Another aspect that contributes to the insufficiency of financing from the Ministry is linked to the decentralization of programs to the colleges, part of the 1993 reforms. In fact, the financing formulae for each program were established before most of the programs defined by competencies were implemented in the colleges. And, since these programs were revised, there have been many changes in the cegep system. Many courses were previously offered in more than one program at the same time, in particular in «service» disciplines. Since their revision, there are very few such courses. «Service» disciplines must now offer as many different courses as there are programs. This multiplies the number of groups and of course preparations. As well, once a program decided to increase the number of teaching hours for small numbers of students (by increasing the number of lab hours, for example, or by eliminating the teaching hours in one discipline and benefiting another where class sizes are lower) this can also have as its impact to increase workloads, without financing the resources to meet the need.

As a result, we find ourselves today with far more such courses and groups across the cegep system than there were when the financing formula was established. This would equally be the case even if the number of students in each program of studies offered had remained the same. This means that workloads have increased in all colleges.

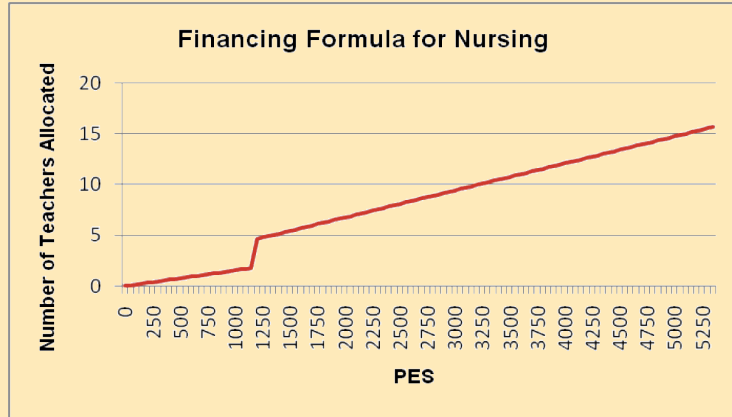
## Link the Financing Formula to the Amount of Work to be Done

The best solution to ensure that we have an adequate amount of resources is to ensure the equivalence between the measure of the workload to be accomplished in the college and the financing formula that generates

resources. This would go a long way towards resolving not only the difficult situation in colleges that are hit with low student enrolment but also the general overload in workloads created by the implementation of the 1993 reforms.

Finally, to correct the problem that was recognized by two arbitrators in different grievances who evaluated the impact of the elimination of the drop date, the reference date for student numbers in each class must be set on the 10th day of classes in each semester rather than the current dates, September 20 and February 15. It is necessary to find an across the board equilibrium between the additional work that we do at the beginning of each semester teaching and supporting students who decide to drop the course before the deadline and the fact that other students drop out of courses after the drop deadline.

To calculate the number of teachers that a program requires, use the financing formula for that program. For example, for Nursing, it is:



You can see that if a program does not have a sufficiently high PES, the allocation that it receives is quite different. In fact, this allocation is the same for all programs that does not reach their threshold.



**National Demonstration  
Montreal, March 20, 2010**  
**Gathering point : Canada Place, Peel and René-Lévesque West**  
**Departure to the Montreal office of Jean Charest at 1 p.m.**

