

## BC STUDENT OUTCOMES

# information paper

## Meeting the Challenge: How Diploma, Associate Degree, and Certificate Students Paid for Their Studies

### Introduction

Paying for a post-secondary education can be challenging, whether students study for a diploma or certificate in a specific field or plan to go on for a degree. Over time, the cost of a post-secondary education has gone up: tuition fees are higher, study materials cost more, and the cost of living has been increasing steadily.

Information from the BC Diploma, Associate Degree, and Certificate Student Outcomes (DACSO) Survey can be used to look at the impact of those increasing costs on student borrowing and the use of other funding sources. For many years, the DACSO Survey has been asking former students about how they paid for their studies: what sources of funding they used, whether they borrowed, and how much they borrowed.

The focus of the finances questions is on the program just completed by respondents, so looking at results over time should reveal the changes due to increased costs, not changes due to respondents' increased participation in post-secondary education.<sup>1</sup>

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# Sources of Funding for Education

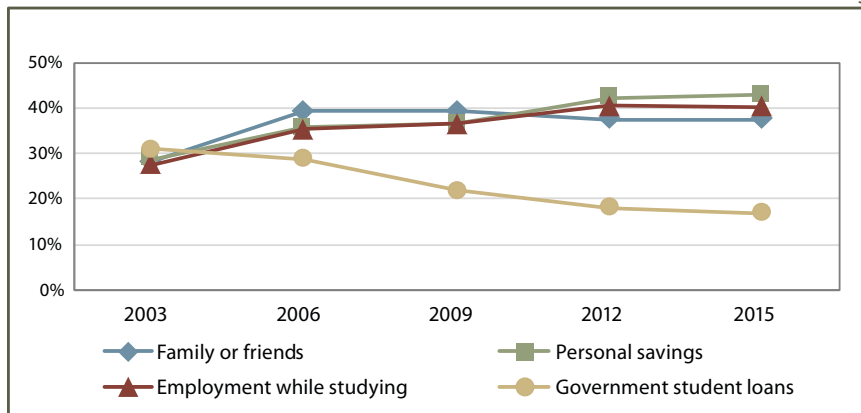
What sources of funding do students rely on for their studies? Have those sources changed over time? Has employment while studying increased?

## Top Sources of Funding

Respondents were asked to list the sources of funding they relied on to help pay for their studies. In 2003, they were allowed to record only two; in later years they could list up to three. For the following comparisons, respondents' first two choices were used to derive a list of top funding sources.

The top four funding sources have been: personal savings, employment, family or friends, and government student loans. Government loans has remained one of the top four choices, but over time, the percentage of former students choosing it as an important source has dropped significantly, declining from 31 percent in 2003 to 17 percent in 2015.<sup>2</sup> The percentages of former students choosing each of the other three sources have been remarkably similar and those sources all show a moderate increase over the same period.

Sources of Funding

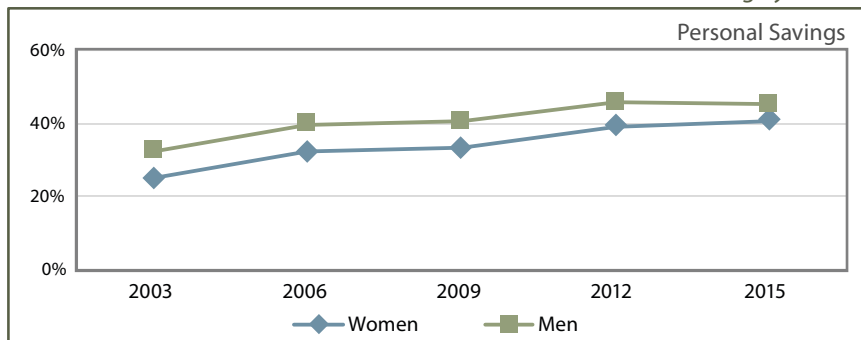


Over time, the choice of government student loans as a primary source of funding has declined.

Note: Percentages are based on all respondents who reported their most important sources of funding; the first two sources they reported were included.

The differences by gender in choosing the top four sources of funding each year were negligible. Men were slightly more likely to use personal savings than women. Both genders showed similar increases from 2003 to 2015, although the increase for women was a little greater.

Source of Funding by Gender

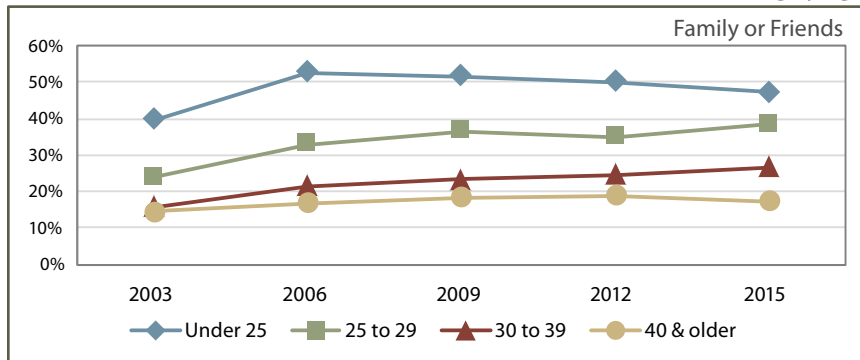


Men were marginally more likely to say personal savings was a top source of funding.

Note: Percentages for personal savings are based on all respondents who reported their most important sources of funding; the first two sources they reported were included.

There were greater differences by age, with the youngest group of former students relying most heavily on family or friends. The percentage of those under 25 citing this as a top source decreased a little from 2006, while the percentages of those 25 to 29 and 30 to 39 citing this source went up.

Source of Funding by Age

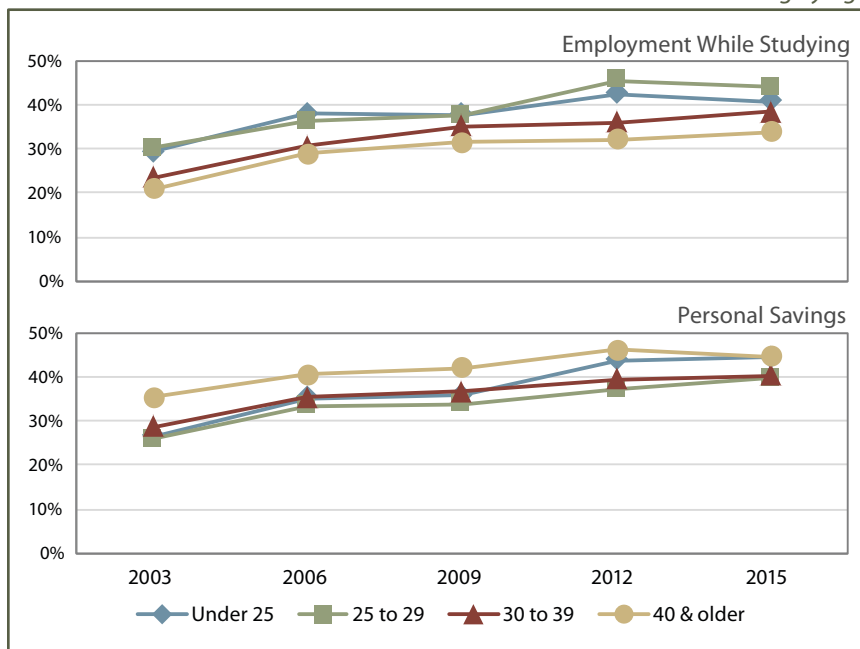


*Those under 25 were more likely than others to report financial support from family or friends.*

Notes: Percentages for funding from family or friends are based on all respondents who reported their most important sources of funding; the first two sources they reported were included. Age is at the time of the survey.

There have been increases in the use of both employment income and personal savings to fund education. In both cases, the difference between age groups is minimal, but older respondents were slightly more likely to report personal savings as a top source, while younger students were somewhat more likely to work while studying.

Sources of Funding by Age



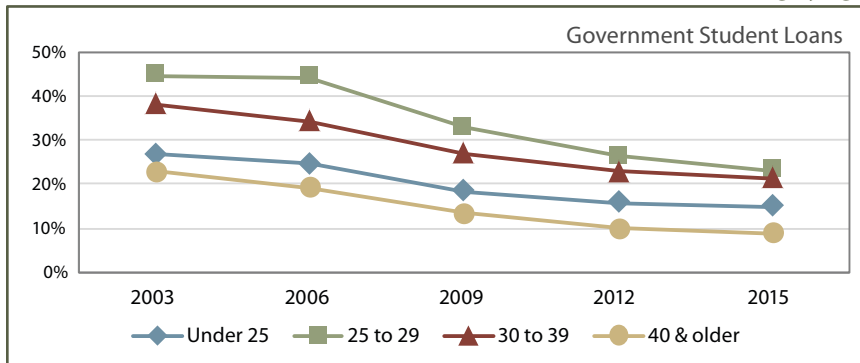
*The choice of personal savings and employment while studying as top sources have increased over time but show little difference by age group.*

Notes: Percentages for personal savings and employment while studying are based on all respondents who reported their most important sources of funding; the first two sources they reported were included. Age is at the time of the survey.

As noted earlier, the choice of government student loans as a top source of funding has dropped considerably, and the decline was consistent for all age groups. However, there were age differences in those who indicated that student loans

were a primary source of income. Respondents under 25 and over 39 were less likely than the other respondents to report government loans. This corresponds with their high rates for using employment income and personal savings, respectively. The 25 to 29 group showed the steepest decline between 2003 and 2015, from 45 percent to 23 percent.

Source of Funding by Age

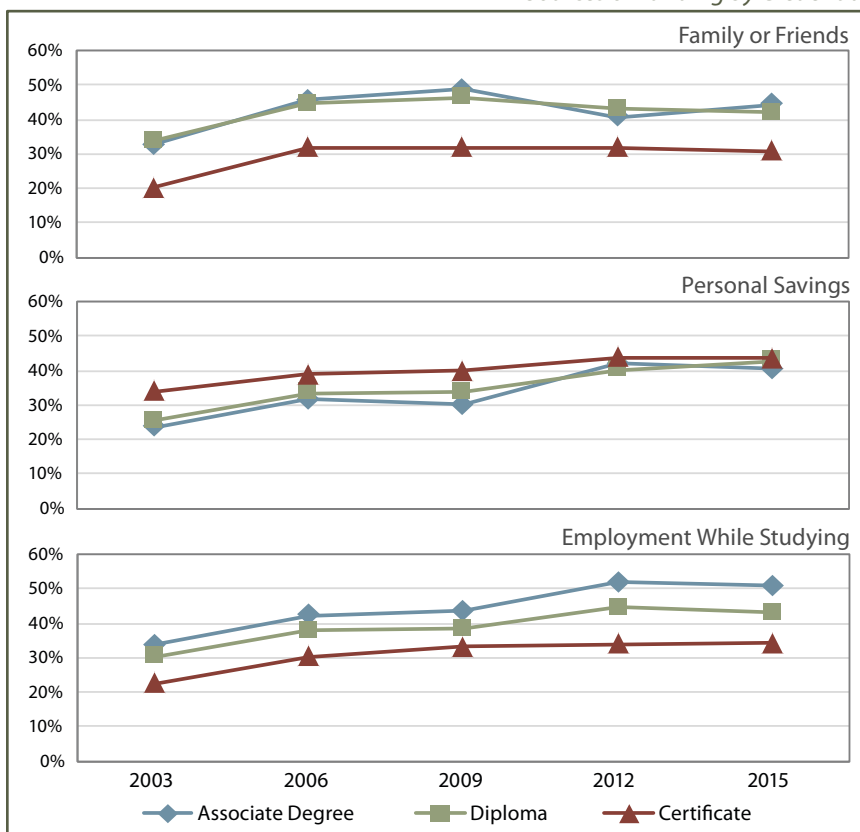


Reporting government student loans as a top source of funding declined for all age groups.

Notes: Percentages for government student loans are based on all respondents who reported their most important sources of funding; the first two sources they reported were included. Age is at the time of the survey.

Sources of funding by credential were all very close to the overall averages and have been consistent over time. Respondents from associate degree programs were somewhat more likely than others to have financial support from family or friends and from employment while studying. Certificate students were somewhat less likely to report any of the top sources except personal savings.

Sources of Funding by Credential



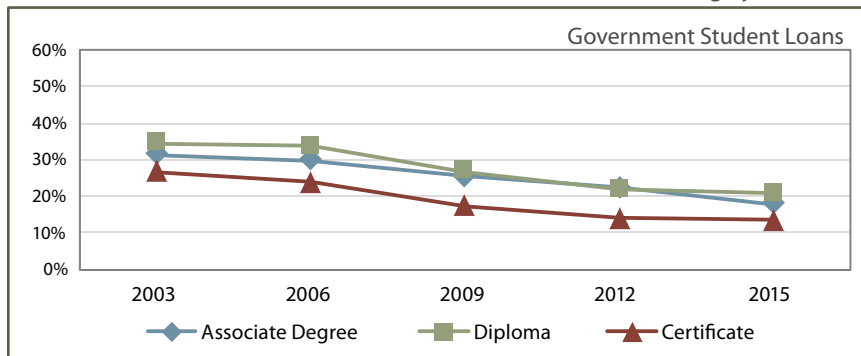
Former students from certificate programs were less likely to report financial support from family or friends and from employment while studying.

Notes: Percentages for funding from family and friends, personal savings, and employment while studying are based on all respondents who reported their most important sources of funding; the first two sources they reported were included. Associate Degree includes university transfer.

There was some association with age: respondents from associate degree programs were younger, with a median age of 22, and younger respondents were more likely to get family support. Respondents from certificate programs tend to be older (median age 28) and older respondents, especially those 40 & older, were somewhat more likely to use personal savings.

The selection of government student loans as a top source of funding dropped at about the same rate for all credential groups.

Source of Funding by Credential

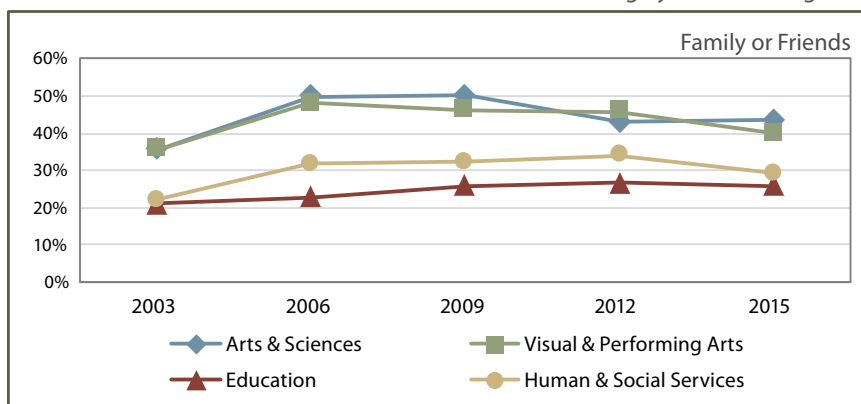


The reporting of government student loans as a top source declined at about the same rate for all credential groups.

Note: Percentages for government student loans are based on the top two sources of funding selected by respondents. Associate Degree includes university transfer.

The choice of primary sources of funding differed depending on the program the respondent took.<sup>3</sup> Those who took Arts & Sciences or Visual & Performing Arts programs were more likely to cite family or friends as a source of funding. There was some association with age, in that these groups generally have the youngest students, with a median age of 23 at the time of the survey. On the other hand, former Education and Human & Social Services students, who were among the oldest, with median ages of 39 and 27, respectively, were much less likely to report support from family or friends.

Source of Funding by Selected Programs

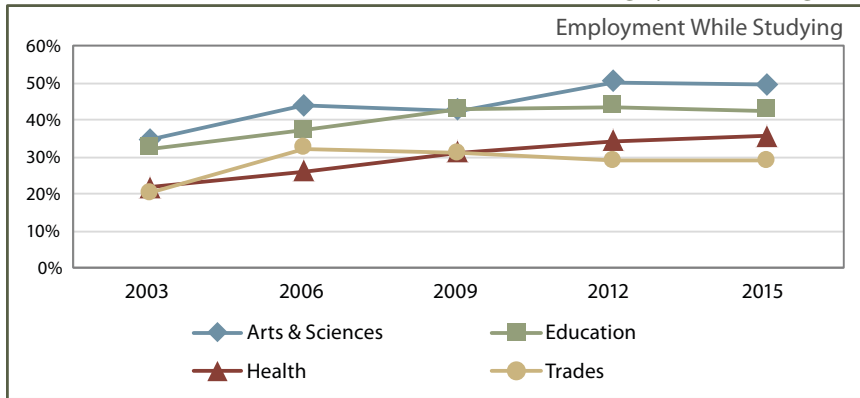


Former Education students were the least likely to report financial support from family or friends.

Notes: Percentages for funding from family and friends are based on all respondents who reported their most important sources of funding; the first two sources they reported were included. Programs are based on the BC CIP Cluster.

Former students from Arts & Sciences and Education programs were somewhat more likely than others to say employment was a primary source of educational funding while those from Health and Trades programs were less likely.

Source of Funding by Selected Programs

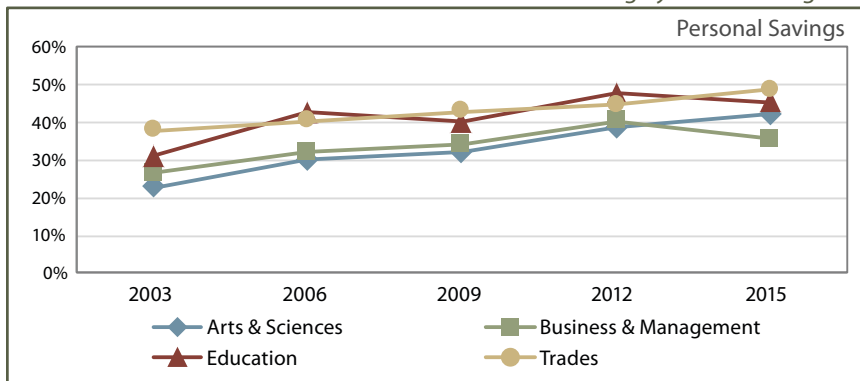


Former Arts & Sciences and Education students were the most likely to report employment while studying.

Notes: Percentages for employment while studying are based on all respondents who reported their most important sources of funding; the first two sources they reported were included. Programs are based on the BC CIP Cluster.

The choice of personal savings as a top source of funding did not differ too much between programs or over time.

Source of Funding by Selected Programs

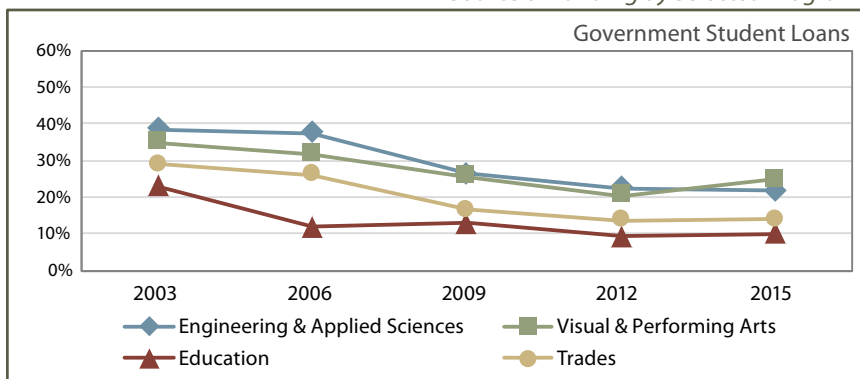


The reporting of personal savings as a top source did not differ much between programs.

Notes: Percentages for personal savings are based on the top two sources of funding selected by respondents. Program groups are based on the BC CIP Cluster.

The selection of government student loans as a top source of funding differed between programs; former Education students were the least likely to say these loans had been a top source, while those from Engineering & Applied Sciences were the most likely. The decline in use of government loans has been consistent for all groups.

Source of Funding by Selected Programs

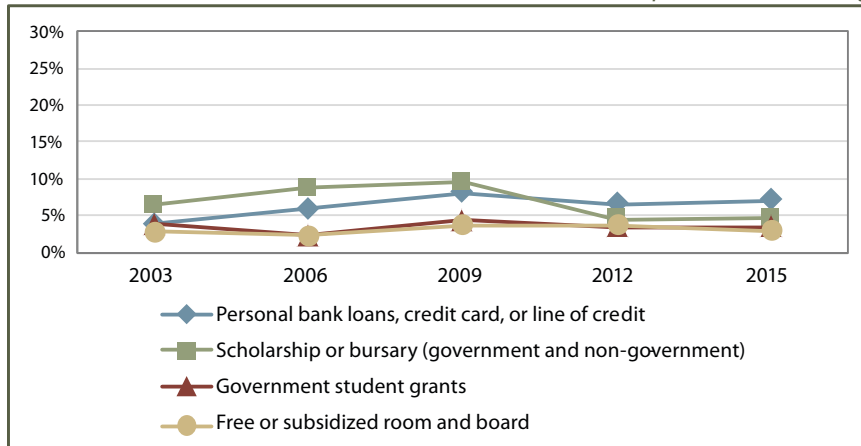


Government student loans as a top source of funding have declined for all programs.

Notes: Percentages for government student loans are based on the top two sources of funding selected by respondents. Program groups are based on the BC CIP Cluster.

Personal loans were not among the top four choices, but have gone up as an important source from 4 to 7 percent. Scholarships or bursaries had gone up, but then declined from 2009 to 2015. Government student grants have been stable at about 3 percent as has free or subsidized room and board.

*Other Top Sources of Funding*



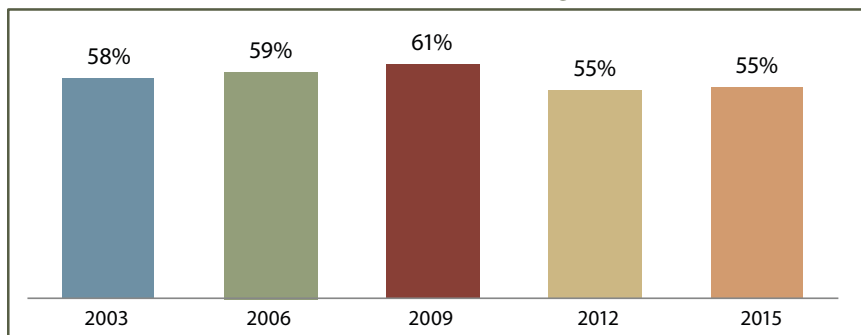
*Relatively few respondents cited sources of funding other than the top four (already reported).*

Note: Percentages are based on all respondents who reported their most important sources of funding; the first two sources they reported were included.

## **Working While Studying**

In addition to questions about borrowing and sources of funding, former students were asked if they were employed during the last semester or last four months of their program. They were also asked to estimate the hours worked per week. The percentage who worked during the last semester did not go up between 2003 and 2015, although it varied year-to-year.

*Worked During the Last Semester of Studies*

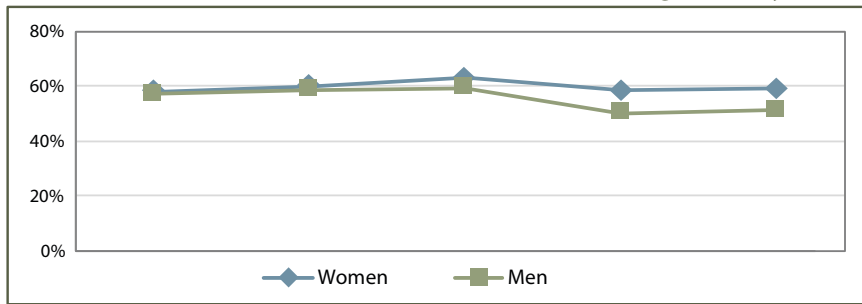


*Rates of employment during the last four months of study have varied year-to-year but not increased since 2003.*

Note: Percentages are based on respondents who gave valid answers to the finances questions.

There has been very little difference between women's and men's rates of employment over time, although in recent years, women have been a little more likely than men to report working in their last term.

*Worked During Studies by Gender*

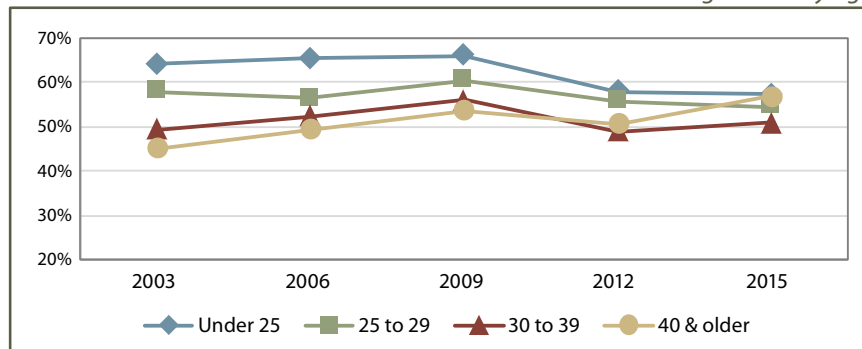


*Rates of employment during studies for men and women were similar.*

Note: Percentages are based on respondents who gave valid answers to the finances questions.

There was a different pattern by age. In 2003, rates of employment differed noticeably by age group, with those under 30 more likely than older respondents to be working in their final term. By 2015, however, the rates for all age groups were much closer.

*Worked During Studies by Age*

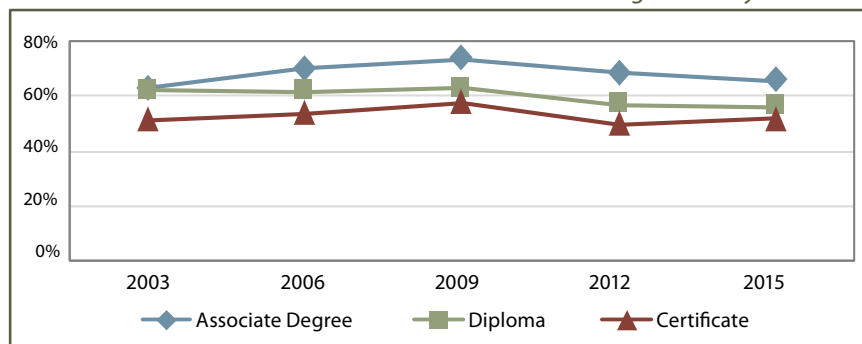


*By age group, rates of employment during studies have converged over time.*

Notes: Percentages are based on respondents who gave valid answers to the finances questions. Age is at the time of the survey.

By credential, the respondents who took associate degree programs were the most likely to be working during the last semester, while those who were in certificate programs, the least. Rates of employment varied, but the differences between credential groups persisted over time.

*Worked During Studies by Credential*



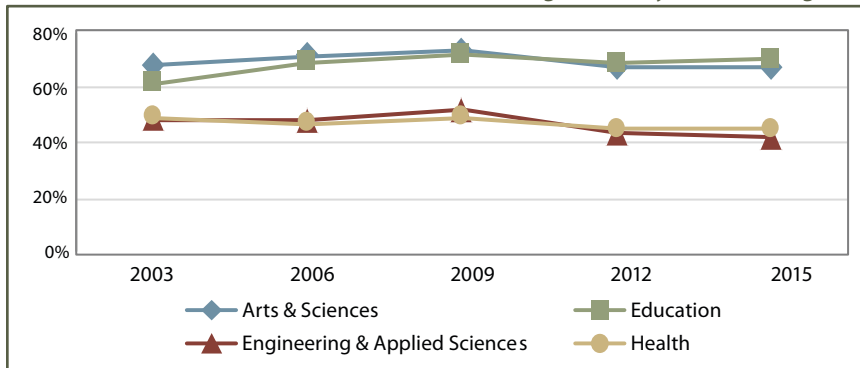
*Differences in employment rates during studies by credential persisted over time.*

Notes: Percentages are based on respondents who gave valid answers to the finances questions. Associate Degree includes university transfer.

There were differences by program, too. The highest rates of employment were reported by respondents from Arts & Sciences and Education programs, while the lowest were reported by former Engineering & Applied Sciences and Health students.



Worked During Studies by Selected Programs

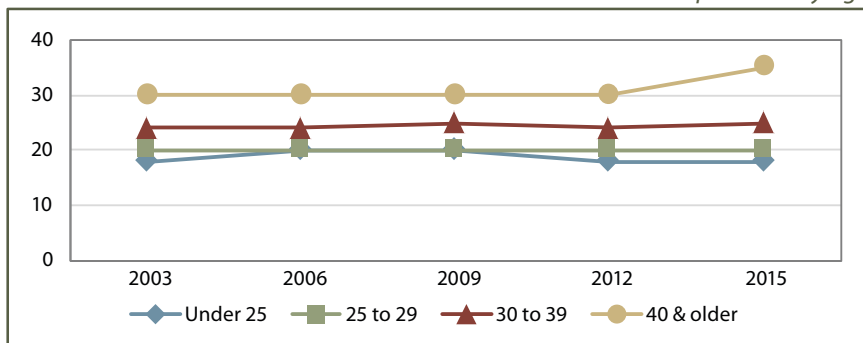


The programs shown are those with the highest and the lowest rates of employment during studies.

Notes: Percentages are based on respondents who gave valid answers to the finances questions. Program groups are based on the BC CIP Cluster.

The number of hours worked per week has not changed since 2003—the median was 20 hours per week each year. There was no difference by gender. By age, however, there were some significant differences between groups, although for the most part, not much changed over time. Respondents who were under 25 generally reported the fewest hours per week, while those 40 & older had significantly more working hours per week.

Hours Worked per Week by Age

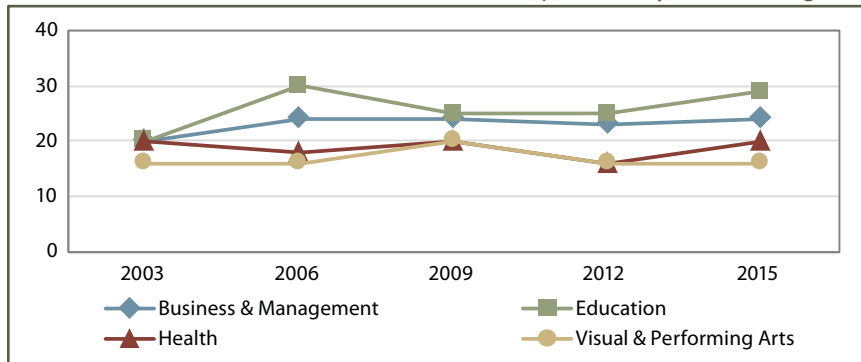


Respondents 40 & older reported working more hours per week.

Notes: Hours are medians, based on those who worked during the last four months of studies. Age is at the time of the survey.

There was virtually no difference between credential groups: they were close to the median of 20 hours each year. Likewise, the programs clustered around 20 hours per week from 2003 to 2015. Respondents from Education programs and from Business & Management programs showed some variability year to year in the hours worked per week and were over the 20 hour median. Former Health and Visual & Performing Arts students reported close to 20 hours, but generally a little under.

Hours Worked per Week by Selected Programs



Respondents from Education programs tended to work more hours per week.

Notes: Hours are medians, based on those who worked during the last four months of studies. Program groups are based on the BC CIP Cluster.

## Borrowing Over Time

*What has changed over time? Are students more likely to borrow than they were a dozen years ago? Are there differences by age, program, or other groups?*

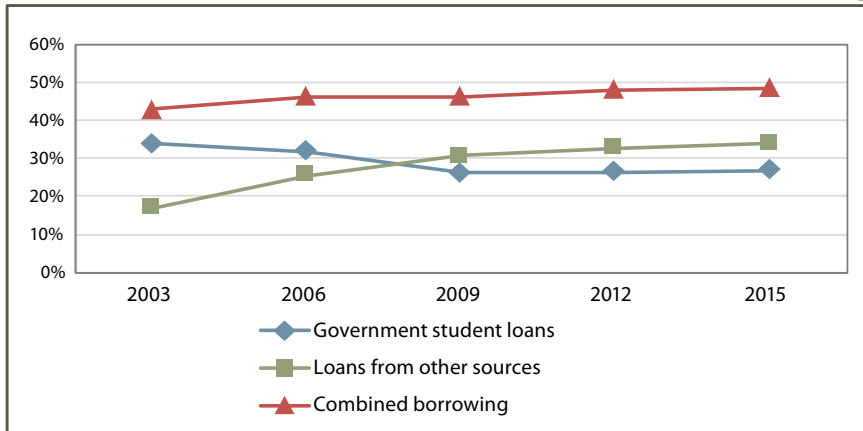
### Rates of Borrowing

Changes in borrowing rates year to year often appeared to be minimal: for example, in 2013, 26 percent of respondents to the DACSO Survey had government student loans, in 2014 it was also 26 percent, and in 2015, it was 27 percent. Trends only became evident over a longer period of time.<sup>4</sup>

The most notable changes occurred between the survey years of 2003 and 2009, when there was a significant drop in the rate of borrowing from government student loan programs and a corresponding increase in loans from other sources. There was nothing in the information collected from the Student Outcomes surveys that explained this change, which was likely due to external factors, perhaps related to the economy and availability of credit.<sup>5</sup> After 2009, the rates for both government loans and other loans were fairly steady, rising only slightly.

Since 2003, the percentage of respondents borrowing from the government loan program has decreased from 34 percent to 27 percent, while the percentage borrowing from other sources has increased, from 17 to 34 percent. Over the years, from 8 to 12 percent of respondents borrowed from both the government loan program *and* other sources. The net effect of respondents' combined borrowing<sup>6</sup> was a percentage that varied modestly between 2003 and 2015, rising from 44 to 49 percent.

### Rates of Borrowing

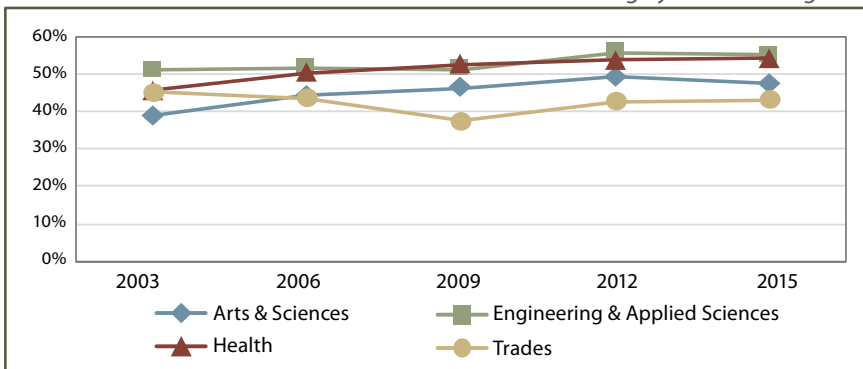


The combined borrowing rate has increased moderately over time.

Notes: Combined borrowing includes government student loans and loans from other sources. Percentages are based on respondents who gave valid answers to the finances questions.

The increase in the combined borrowing rate does not appear to be associated with age or gender or to be related to the region where respondents studied. There was no clear association with the program taken and although there were differences by program, almost all showed an increase over the period. Respondents from Arts & Sciences programs borrowed at rates close to the average over the years, while those from Engineering & Applied Sciences and Health programs borrowed at higher than average rates; the rates for former Education students varied considerably but were lower. All of those rates increased between 2003 and 2015. The rate for Trades respondents was lower than average and, although variable, did not show an increase over the period.

### Borrowing by Selected Programs

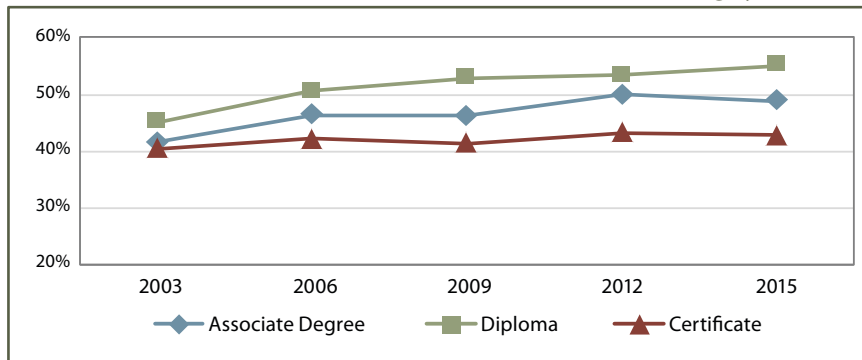


Rates of borrowing by program varied but most showed an increase over time.

Notes: Borrowing rate combines government student loans and loans from other sources. Percentages are based on respondents who gave valid answers to the finances questions. Programs are based on the BC CIP Cluster.

Arts & Sciences programs are the most likely to offer an associate degree credential.<sup>7</sup> Depending on the year, 84 to 93 percent of the respondents who were in an associate degree program were also in an Arts & Sciences program. The rates of borrowing for Arts & Sciences and associate degree program respondents were very similar over time. Former certificate program students had rates of borrowing below the average, reflecting the shorter duration of most of those programs.

*Borrowing by Credential*

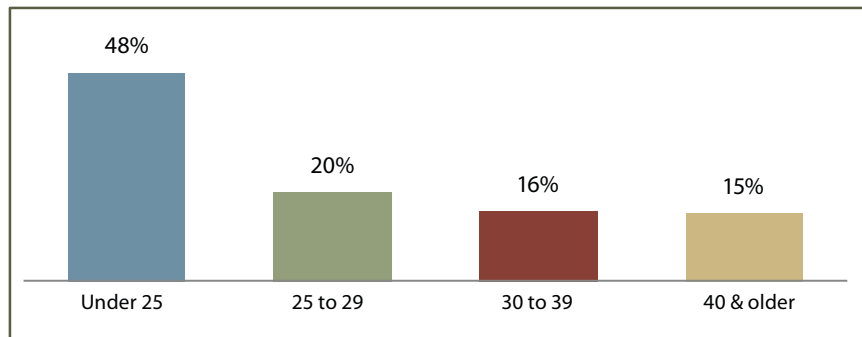


*Borrowing rates differed by credential.*

Notes: Borrowing rate combines government student loans and loans from other sources. Percentages are based on respondents who gave valid answers to the finances questions. Associate Degree includes university transfer.

There were some interesting differences in borrowing rates by age. For each of the survey years examined, the percentages in each age group are similar. Almost half of all respondents were under 25 at the time of the survey.

*Age of Respondents*

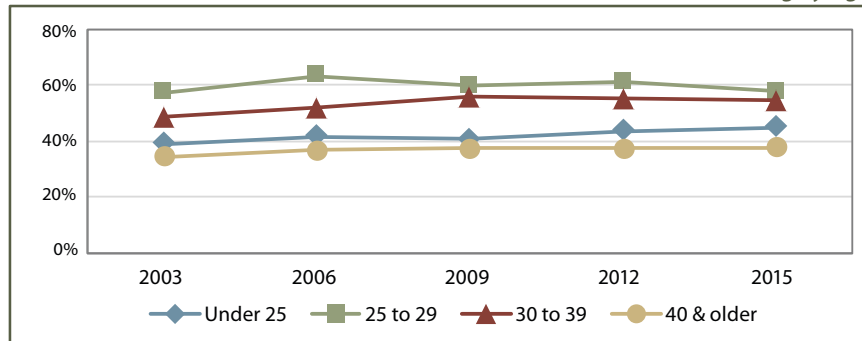


*Almost half of the respondents were under 25.*

Note: Age is at the time of the survey. Percentages are of all years combined.

Because of their numbers, the borrowing rate of the under 25 group was close to the average, although somewhat lower. The age groups 25 to 29 and 30 to 39 borrowed at higher rates, while the 40 & older group had the lowest rates.

*Borrowing by Age*



*The 25 to 29 year olds had the highest borrowing rates.*

Note: Borrowing rate combines government student loans and loans from other sources. Percentages are based on respondents who gave valid answers to the finances questions. Age is at the time of the survey.

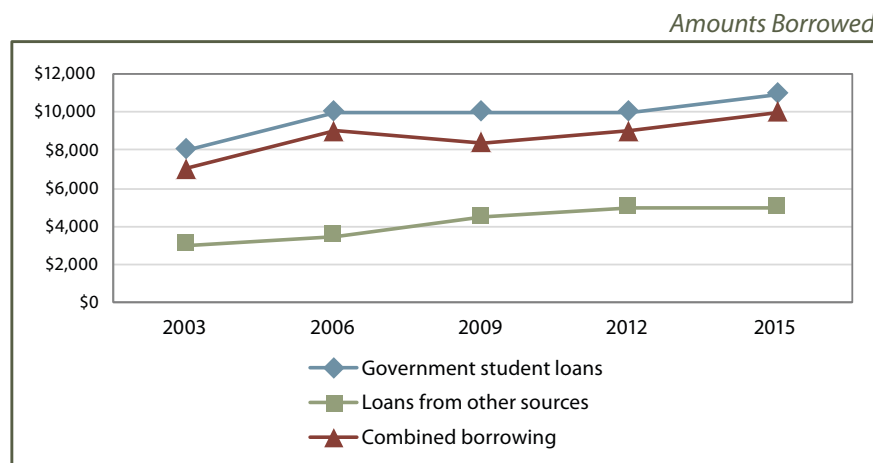
## Amounts Borrowed

The former students who responded to the finances questions gave the amounts they borrowed from the government student loan program and the amounts borrowed from other sources.

The combined median amount borrowed has risen since 2003, from \$7,000 to \$10,000 in 2015. This represents a significant increase between those years. There was a decline in the amounts reported between 2006 and 2009, but since then, the combined amount has increased steadily.

The climb in amounts borrowed could, in some part, be due to increased maximums allowed by the government student loan program. Access to loans from other sources has also increased, with banks offering lower interest rates and introducing options like student lines of credit.

The increase in amount borrowed has more than kept pace with inflation, which in B.C. has averaged approximately 1.4 percent per year—about 18 percent between 2003 and 2015.<sup>8</sup> Since 2005, tuition fees have been capped at a 2 percent increase per year, which means the 12 year increase could be higher than the overall inflation rate, but that depends on the institution attended.<sup>9</sup>

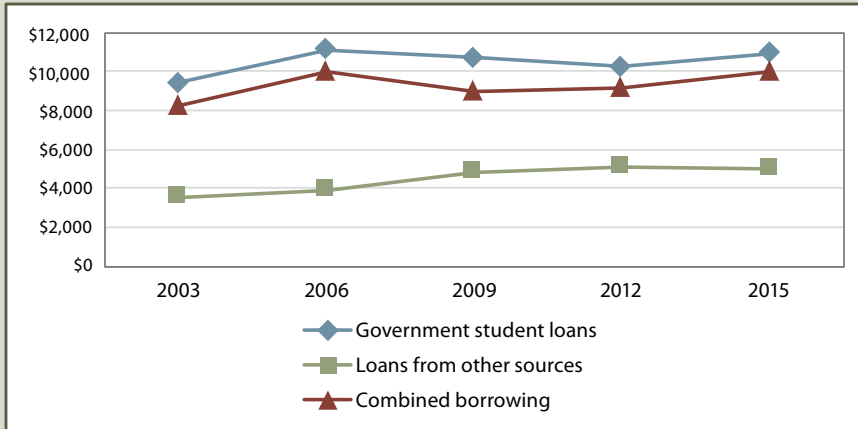


*The amounts borrowed have increased since 2003.*

Notes: Combined borrowing includes the amounts of government student loans and loans from other sources. Amounts are medians, based on those who borrowed. Dollars have not been adjusted for inflation.

When dollar amounts were adjusted to constant 2015 dollars, a similar pattern emerged: even with the amounts adjusted for inflation, borrowing increased between 2003 and 2015.

Amounts Borrowed in 2015 Dollars

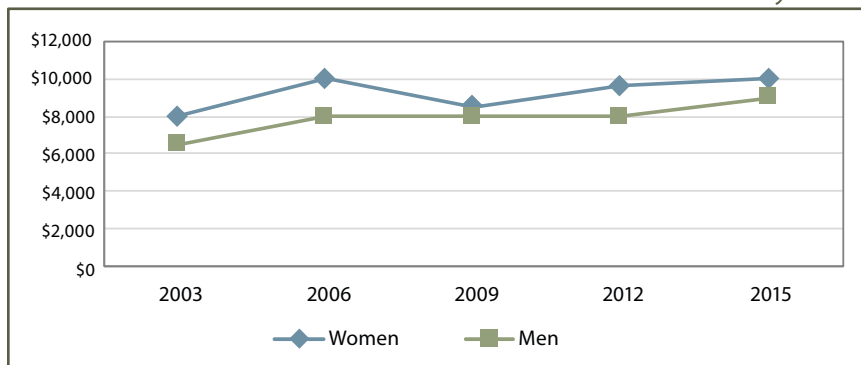


Amounts adjusted for inflation still showed an increase over time.

Notes: Combined borrowing includes the amounts of government student loans and loans from other sources. Amounts are medians, based on those who borrowed. Dollars have been adjusted for inflation and are in constant 2015 dollars

While the borrowing *rates* for men and women were virtually the same, there were some differences in the *amounts* they borrowed and how they changed over time. The amounts borrowed by men were lower than women's each year, but since 2003, there has been a larger increase for men, from a median of \$6,500 to \$9,000, while the increase for women was from \$8,000 to \$10,000.

Amounts Borrowed by Gender

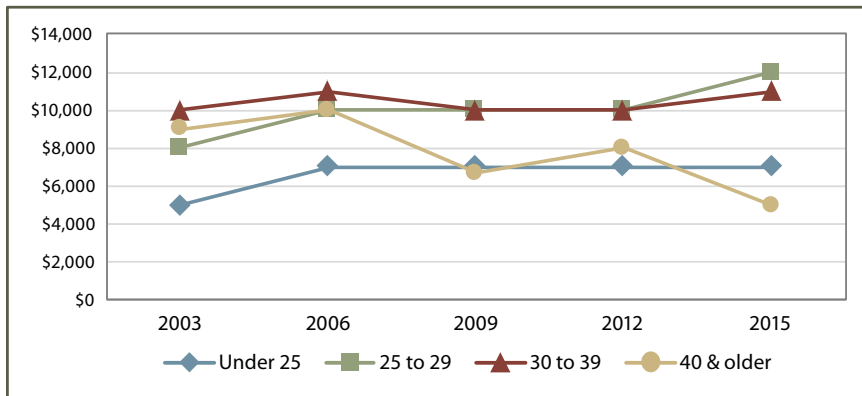


Men tended to borrow less than women, but men's amounts showed a greater increase over time.

Notes: Amounts borrowed includes the amounts of government student loans and loans from other sources. Amounts are medians, based on those who borrowed. Dollars have not been adjusted for inflation.

When it comes to age differences in the amounts borrowed, the youngest (under 25) and oldest respondents borrowed less, although the 40 & older group showed considerable variability year-to-year. Respondents in the middle (aged 25 to 39) borrowed more than the overall average.

Amounts Borrowed by Age

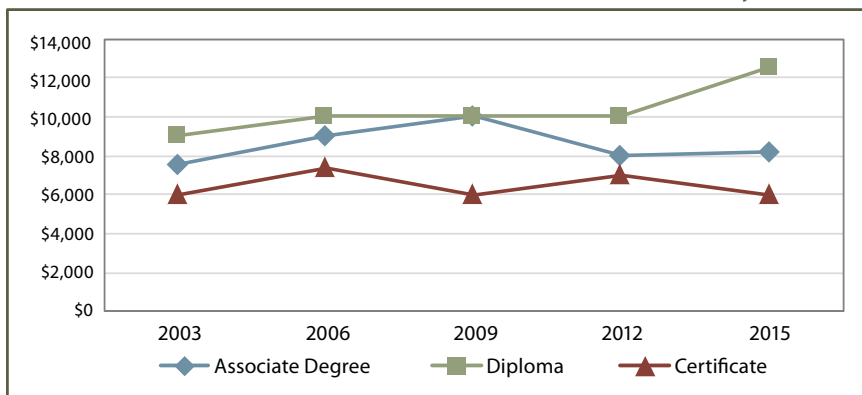


Respondents under 25 or 40 & older tended to borrow less.

Notes: Amounts borrowed include the amounts of government student loans and loans from other sources. Amounts are medians, based on those who borrowed. Dollars have not been adjusted for inflation. Age is at the time of the survey.

By credential, the differences in amounts borrowed were not surprising; the certificate students, whose programs tended to be shorter, borrowed the lowest amounts. Those who took diploma and associate degree programs generally borrowed larger amounts, on average, but there was more variability over time.

Amounts Borrowed by Credential

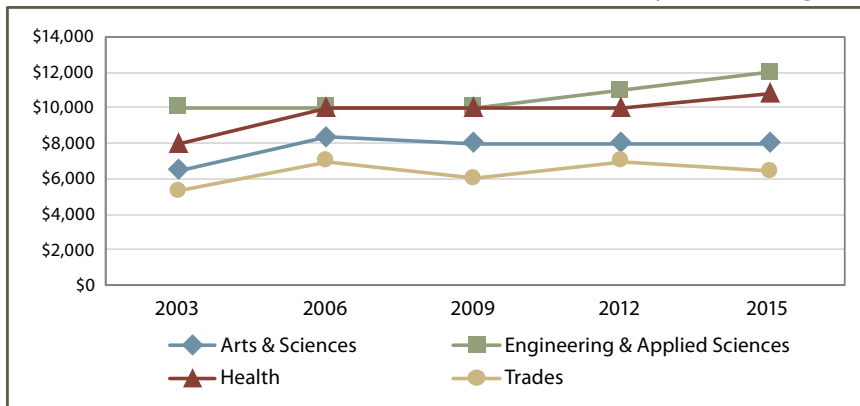


Amounts borrowed by credential group tended to differ.

Notes: Amounts borrowed includes the amounts of government student loans and loans from other sources. Amounts are medians, based on those who borrowed. Dollars have not been adjusted for inflation. Associate Degree includes university transfer.

Amounts borrowed for selected programs show the same pattern as the borrowing rates did: Arts & Sciences and Trades are below the average, while Health Programs and Engineering & Applied Sciences are above.

*Amounts Borrowed by Selected Programs*



*Trades and Arts & Sciences respondents tended to borrow less.*

Notes: Amounts borrowed includes the amounts of government student loans and loans from other sources. Amounts are medians, based on those who borrowed. Dollars have not been adjusted for inflation. Programs are based on the BC CIP Cluster.

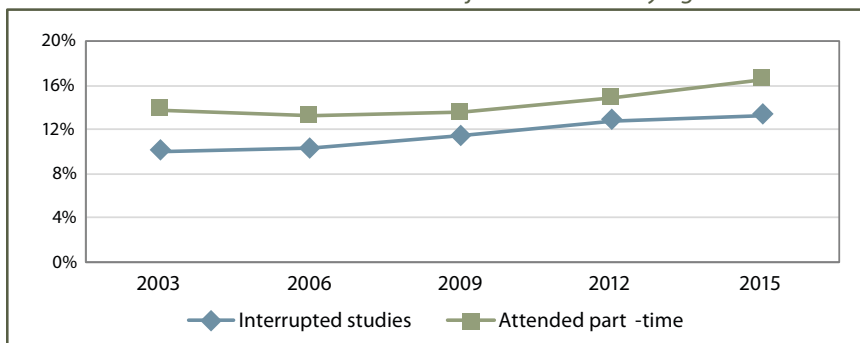
*Note About Wages*

At the same time as the amounts borrowed increased, there was a significant increase in wage. The median hourly wage went from \$15.60 in 2006 to \$19.25 in 2015, a 23 percent increase (comparable wage data for 2003 were not available). Over the same period, median amounts of combined borrowing rose 11 percent, from \$9,000 in 2006 to \$10,000 in 2015.

***Need for Additional Support***

Paralleling the moderate increase in overall borrowing, the percentages of those who interrupted their studies or studied part-time for financial reasons also showed slight increases between 2003 and 2015. Those who interrupted their studies increased from 10 percent to 13 percent and those attending part-time due to finances increased from 14 percent to 17 percent.

*Adjustments in Studying Due to Finances*



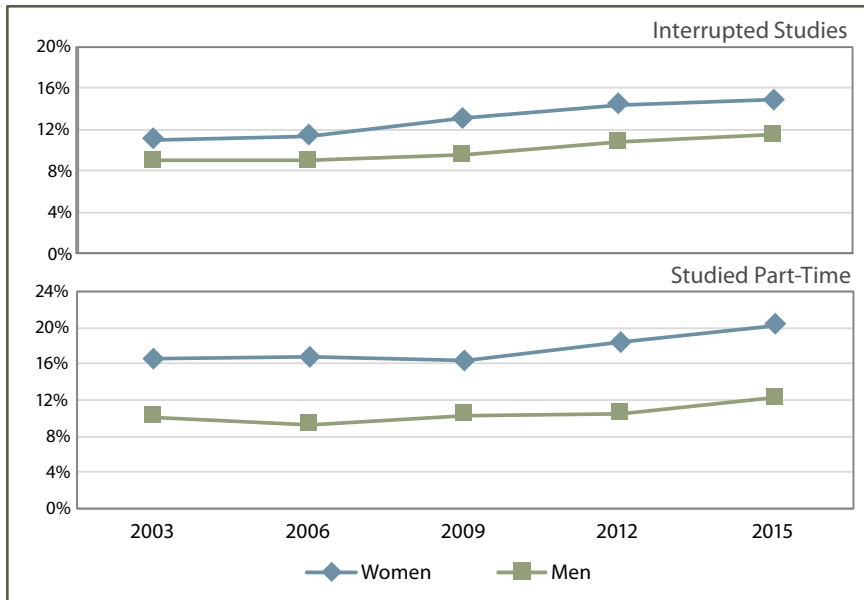
*There has been a slight increase in study interruptions and part-time attendances due to finances.*

Note: Percentages are based on respondents who gave valid answers to the finances questions.

Women have been more likely to report that they interrupted their studies or attended part time for financial reasons. Their rates of reporting these incidences have increased more than men's rates since 2003.



Adjustments in Studying Due to Finances by Gender

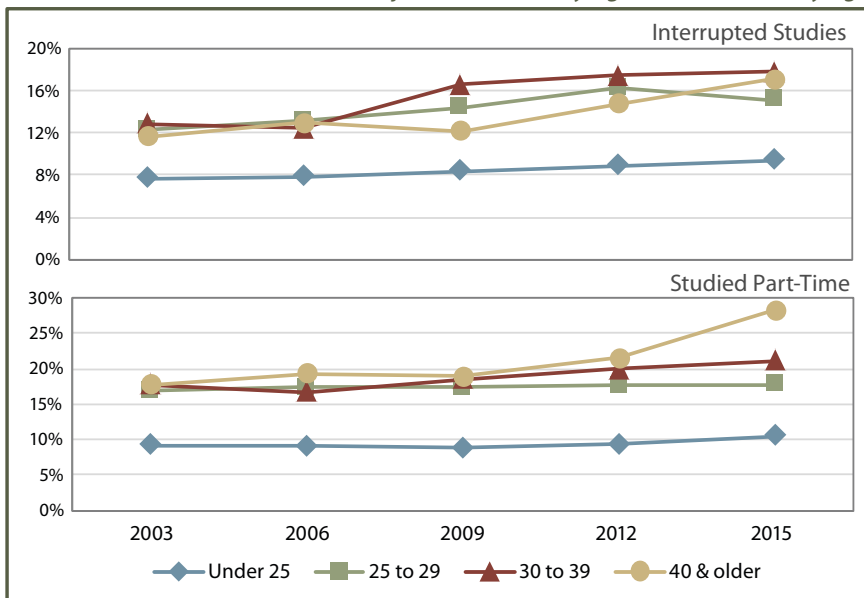


Over time, women have been more likely to report adjusting their studies for financial reasons.

Note: Percentages are based on respondents who gave valid answers to the finances questions.

The respondents who were under 30 at the time of the survey experienced only a minimal increase in interruption of studies or part-time attendance for financial reasons, although for each year, the 25 to 29 age group reported a significantly higher incidence than those under 25. The respondents who were 30 and older showed an increase in both interrupted and part-time studies between 2003 and 2015.

Adjustments in Studying Due to Finances by Age

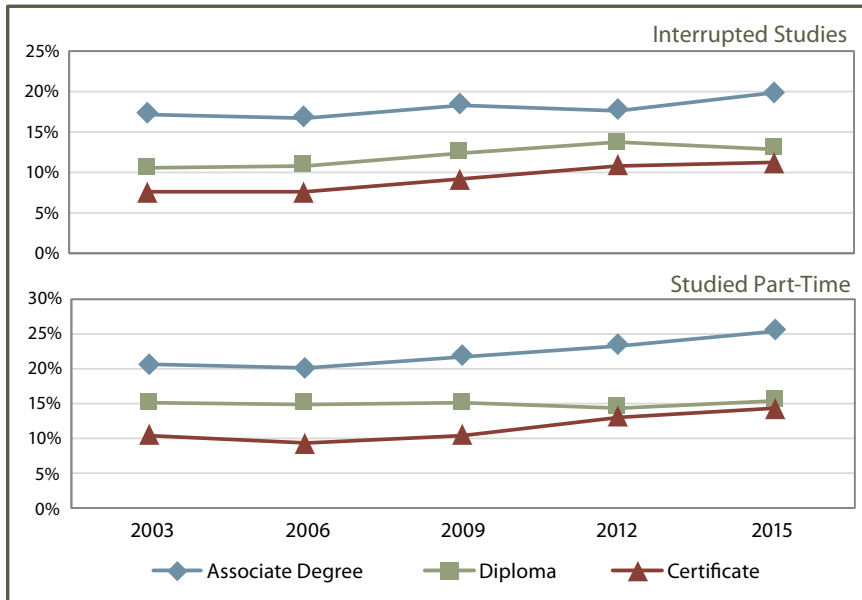


Respondents under 25 had low rates of having to adjust their studying for financial reasons.

Notes: Percentages are based on respondents who gave valid answers to the finances questions. Age is at the time of the survey.

The percentage of former diploma students who said that finances affected their attendance showed the least increase over time. The respondents from associate degree and certificate programs reported greater increases, although their rates were very different.

*Adjustments in Studying Due to Finances by Credential*

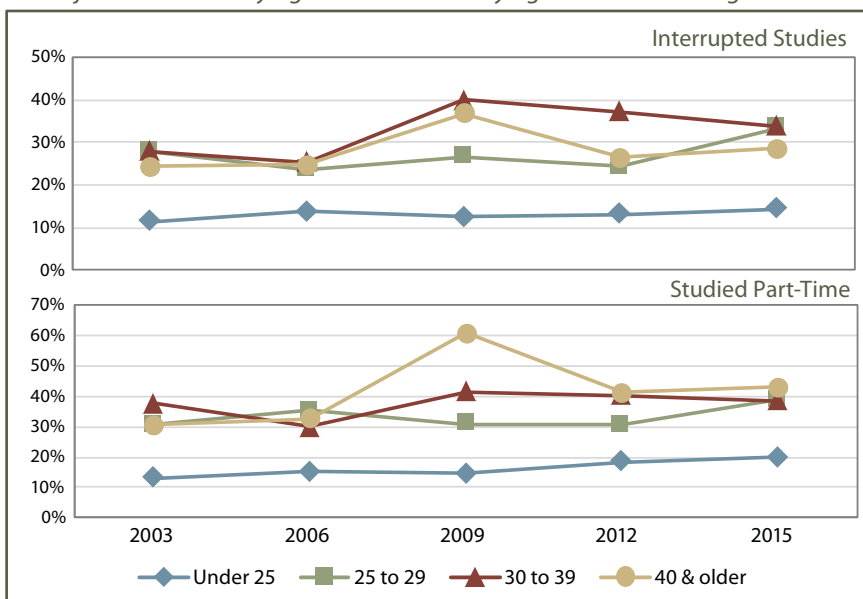


*Former associate degree students were the most likely to have interrupted studies or attended part-time.*

Note: Percentages are based on respondents who gave valid answers to the finances questions. Associate degree includes university transfer.

The finding that those who took associate degree programs reported the highest incidences of studying part-time and interrupting studies for financial reasons may seem counter to the findings by age. Younger respondents report fewer adjustments due to finances, and a majority of those who took associate degree programs were under 25 at the time of the survey. However, looking at an age breakdown of former associate degree students shows that while those under 25 have the lowest rates of incidences, their rates are higher than those of their counterparts in diploma or certificate programs. Older respondents from associate degree programs report very high rates of interruption and studying part-time.

*Adjustments in Studying Due to Finances by Age for Associate Degree Students*

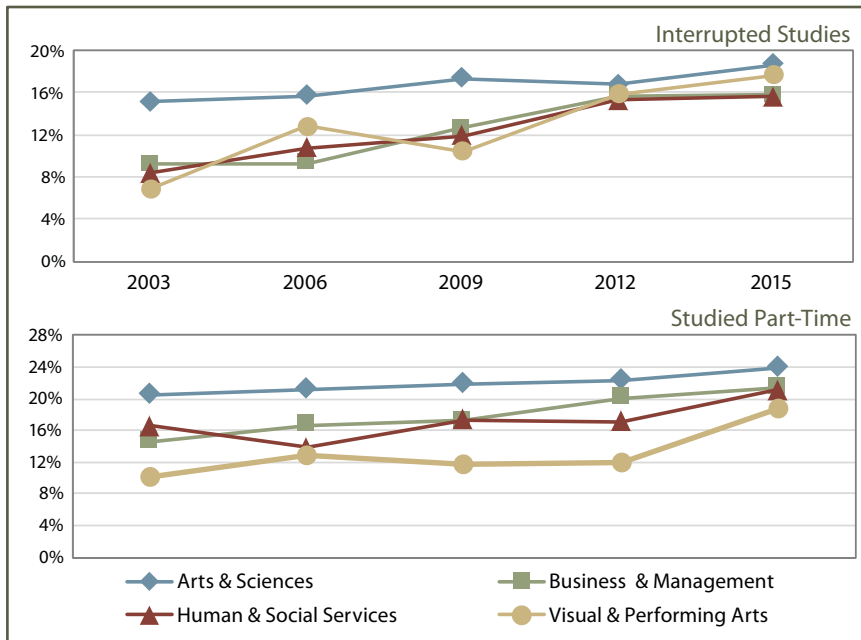


*Rates of study disruption for financial reasons were very high among older associate degree students.*

Notes: Percentages are based on respondents who gave valid answers to the finances questions. Associate degree includes university transfer. Age is at the time of the survey.

The respondents who took Arts & Sciences programs reported high incidences of studying part-time and interrupting studies; however, their rates did not increase much between 2003 and 2015. The programs showing the greatest increases over time were Visual & Performing Arts, Business & Management, and Human & Social Services.

*Adjustments in Studying Due to Finances by Selected Programs*



*Respondents from some programs showed higher than average increases in study disruptions.*

Notes: Percentages are based on respondents who gave valid answers to the finances questions. Programs are based on the BC CIP Cluster.

## Conclusion

Over the last dozen years, former diploma, associate degree, and certificate students have provided information on how they financed their studies. There are a number of sources of funding that help students pay for their education, and the former students surveyed chose the two sources most important to them.

The most important sources of funding have been consistent, with the exception of government student loans. They have declined as an important source, although remain among the top four sources reported. All age groups showed a decline, although the youngest and oldest groups of respondents were less likely than the others to report government student loans as a top source of financial support for their studies.

Personal savings, employment while studying, and support from family and friends were also among the most important sources of funding. Younger students were much more likely than older students to report that family and friends were a primary source of financial support. Other sources were not as frequently named as primary resources by any group, although the choice of personal loans showed a moderate increase over time.

Employment while studying has increased in importance over time, regardless of age group, credential, or program; however, actual employment during study does not appear to have changed much since 2003. Former students' employment rate during their last semester of study varied over the years, but has not increased. Likewise the hours worked have not changed over time and were consistent across most groups. Older respondents were less likely to be employed, but those who were, worked more hours per week.

Although not necessarily evident in recent year-to-year survey results, there have been some long-term changes in borrowing. The greatest change has been a decrease in the percentage of respondents borrowing from the government student loan program. As the rate of using government student loans decreased, there was an increase in loans from other sources. The combined borrowing rate (government student loans *and* loans from other sources) showed a moderate increase over time.

For most groups, the combined borrowing rate was consistent and increased modestly; the rate for former diploma students increased the most. The oldest and youngest respondents (under 25 and 40 & older) were less likely to borrow, and the borrowing rate for each age group did not show much change over time.

Loan amounts have increased over time, whether from the government loan program or from other sources. Even when the amounts were adjusted for inflation, the increases were evident. The combined amount borrowed by former diploma students was consistently higher and showed the greatest increase. The combined amount borrowed by the 40 & older group varied considerably, while the under 25 group reported significantly lower amounts.

In spite of increases in borrowing rates and amounts and more importance placed on personal savings, help from family or friends, and employment, there was some evidence to suggest a need for additional support. Each year, former students were asked if they had to interrupt their studies or study part-time for financial reasons. These rates increased between 2003 and 2015—for some groups more than others. Women were consistently more likely to report these kinds of study disruptions than men. Former associate degree students also reported very high rates of adjusting their studies for financial reasons. Although the rates were higher for certain groups of respondents, the overall rates were low and the increase between 2003 and 2015 was moderate.

In spite of some slight indication that more support is needed, it appears that most respondents were able to finance their education without borrowing at all or by borrowing moderate amounts. Over the last dozen years, those who borrowed relied less on the government student loan program as loans from other sources became more readily available. Regardless of the source, the amounts have increased, allowing borrowers to cover increased costs due to inflation.

## Information for this paper

The information for this paper came from the DACSO Survey, from the years 2003, 2006, 2009, 2012, and 2015. Some financial information was collected every year; however, every third year a more extensive set of questions was asked. Respondents were asked what sources of funding they used and if they borrowed for the program they just finished. The finances questions were asked of a 50-percent randomly selected sample of respondents.

There were 38,727 respondents who answered the financial questions in the years 2003, 2006, 2009, 2012, and 2015. The following table shows the numbers for the different groups that were part of the analysis.

Group	2003	2006	2009	2012	2015
Answered finances questions	7,971	8,108	7,911	7,391	7,346
Female	4,299	4,258	4,268	4,077	3,968
Male	3,499	3,841	3,638	3,311	3,376
Under 25	3,715	4,219	3,906	3,379	3,327
25 to 29	1,462	1,491	1,610	1,544	1,709
30 to 39	1,391	1,156	1,189	1,194	1,233
40 & older	1,190	1,234	1,188	1,271	1,076
Associate Degree/UT	891	1,113	906	804	1,029
Diploma	3,789	3,418	2,919	2,920	2,890
Certificate	3,256	3,542	3,999	3,605	3,368
Arts & Sciences	2,391	2,292	1,811	1,710	1,553
Business & Management	1,427	1,257	1,272	1,150	1,204
Education	257	274	323	351	359
Engineering & Applied Sciences	935	903	769	802	878
Health	1,047	1,112	1,222	1,193	1,182
Human & Social Services	467	494	529	593	677
Trades	1,170	1,449	1,646	1,304	1,219
Visual & Performing Arts	277	327	339	288	274

## Endnotes

- 1 When they are surveyed, former students are asked if they had taken any previous post-secondary education; over the past twelve years the percentage of those with previous education has increased from 50% in 2003 to 56% in 2015.
- 2 Note that the survey years quoted are one or two years after the students left their programs.
- 3 Programs shown are based on the [BC CIP Cluster](#), which is an aggregation of programs by subject.
- 4 Note that the survey years quoted are one or two years after the students left their programs.
- 5 It is very difficult to relate this change in borrowing to specific external events. Not only are the data collected one to two years after the respondent leaves studies, the information respondents give refers to periods one, two, or more years before their departure. It is likewise difficult to relate a decrease in student loans to changes in the government loan program.
- 6 The combined borrowing rate includes those who borrowed from the government loan program, from other sources, and from both.

- 7 For the purposes of this analysis, the associate degree credential category includes programs designated as university transfer.
- 8 See <http://inflationcalculator.ca/british-columbia/> or <http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/StatisticsBySubject/Economy/ConsumerPriceIndex.aspx>.
- 9 See <http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/post-secondary-education/data-research/cost-of-post-secondary-education>.

## About BC Student Outcomes

The Diploma, Associate Degree, and Certificate Student Outcomes (DACSO) Survey is one of the BC Student Outcomes annual surveys that collect information from former post-secondary students. Those who respond are asked to evaluate their educational experiences and to talk about their employment and further education. For more information, see the [BC Student Outcomes](#) website.

The BC Student Outcomes surveys are conducted with funding from the Ministry of Advanced Education, the participating British Columbia post-secondary institutions, and the Industry Training Authority.