# GRADUATING STUDENT SURVEY
# 2009

## Master Report

June 2009

Prepared for:

Canadian University Survey Consortium

# PROTOCOL FOR DATA USE

## CANADIAN UNIVERSITY SURVEY CONSORTIUM (CUSC)

Members of the consortium are bound by the following protocol for the control of survey data.

It was agreed by the participants that data are owned collectively and will be distributed only by collective agreement.

1. The purpose of the survey is to produce data that will allow participating institutions to assess their programs and services. Comparisons with other institutions are made to assist in these assessments. Ranking of institutions is not, in itself, a purpose of the survey.

2. The survey data are owned collectively by the participating institutions.

3. The report that has been prepared may be reproduced and distributed freely on the campuses of participating institutions. However, use of the institutional code key is restricted to members of the steering committee and senior administration at the various campuses on a confidential basis.

4. Institutions will receive a data package that includes data for all participating institutions along with the institutional identifiers so that appropriate institutional comparisons can be made by each institution. This must be done in a way that protects the confidentiality of the institutional identities and respects the absolute right of each institution to decide what portions of its data should be disclosed.

5. Rankings may not be used for institutional promotion, recruiting, or other public dissemination. However, an institution's mean results, the aggregate mean results, and mean results for the comparable group of institutions in the survey report may be used, although the names of other institutions may not be used.

6. Access to the aggregate data for research purposes may be granted to interested persons provided that the intended use is a legitimate, non-commercial one, and the researcher is qualified and agrees to acknowledge the ownership of the data by participating universities and provide the consortium with a copy of any report or publication that is produced. Decisions on such requests will be made by a subcommittee consisting of Michael O'Sullivan, Dan Pletzer, Tim Rahilly, and Lynn Smith in consultation with members of the full CUSC committee (all participating institutions) in the case of requests that seem problematic.

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This is the 15th cooperative study undertaken by the Canadian University Survey Consortium (CUSC). Since 1996, the survey has run in a three-year cycle, with different student populations targeted each year: all undergraduates, first-year undergraduate students, and graduating students. This year's study presents the results for students who graduated in the fall of 2008 or are graduating in 2009. The last CUSC survey of graduating students was conducted in 2006.

The 2009 survey involved 34 universities. Traditionally, the survey was a paper-based one, which universities mailed to students. This year marks the first CUSC survey that all participating institutions conducted using an online version of the questionnaire. To participate, universities provided PRA Inc. with the first name and email addresses for a random sample of up to 1,000 graduating students. PRA managed the online survey, which involved liaising with universities and the company that hosted the online survey.

Overall, the response rate for the 2009 survey was 45% and produced a sample of approximately 12,160 students. The response rate was identical to 2006 (45%), when half of participating universities conducted the survey using the paper-based version of the questionnaire.

### Profile of graduating students

In 2009, the typical graduating student is a 24-year-old single female studying in English. Two-thirds of responding students are female, the other one-third are male. Although the average age is slightly less than 24, 8 in 10 students are 24 years of age or younger. Almost 9 students in 10 are single, that is, are not married or living common-law and, in their last undergraduate year, about 6 in 10 students are living independently. The remaining 4 students in 10 live with their parents or relatives.

Even though many students are not living with their parents, they typically do not relocate great distances to attend university. Indeed, the vast majority of students report attending a university in their province of permanent residence.

Many students are majoring in generalist disciplines, such as Social Science and Arts and Humanities, although many other disciplines are represented in the survey. Most students are attending university full-time, taking a four-year degree program (but over a slightly longer period), studying in English, and graduating with a B+ average.

Although the average length of students' programs is about four years, the typical student has spent additional time at his/her current university, having attended the institution for an average of almost five years. In addition, many students report starting their post-secondary studies prior to studying at their current university. This may be partly explained by the fact that some students are part-time, but also that almost one-quarter of students interrupted their studies for one or more terms during their post-secondary studies.

Almost one-fifth of graduating students are first-generation students; that is, neither their mother nor their father had any post-secondary education.

## Experiences at university

We asked students to assess the contribution of 17 activities they may have experienced during their university studies to their personal growth and development. For the most part, students think that these experiences at their university, especially experiences with faculty, have contributed to their personal growth and development.

Of the 17 activities tested, three stand out as contributing very much to students' personal growth and development: *faculty knowledge of discipline*, *faculty enthusiasm for material*, and *classroom instruction*. In each case, at least 6 in 10 of those who provide a rating indicate that these activities contributed very much to their personal growth and development. For example, of those who rate faculty's knowledge of their discipline, 65% indicate that such programs contributed very much to their growth.

## Extracurricular activities

We asked students to rate the impact of 17 extracurricular activities on their personal growth and development. In general, most students rate most extracurricular activities as having little impact on their growth and development, with a few exceptions.

Among students who have experience with extracurricular activities, the activities that have the greatest impact are: *participating in international placements or exchanges* and *interacting with other students*. In each case, more than 6 in 10 of those who provide a rating indicate that the activity contributed very much to their personal growth and development. However, only 12% of students have experience *participating in international placements or exchanges*, whereas almost all (99%) of students have experience *interacting with other students*.

## Use of and satisfaction with facilities and services

We asked students to rate their use of and satisfaction with 17 different facilities and services at their universities. Some services, by their very nature, are used by almost all students, while others are used by students who specifically require these services.

Overall, the majority of students who used the services are satisfied with each of those tested. The services with the highest proportion of students who indicate that they are very satisfied are: services for students with disabilities; library facilities; campus medical services; services for co-op program, internship, or other program-related practical experience; and services for international students. Among those students with experience using each service, 1 in 3 or more reports that they are very satisfied with that service.

## Skill growth and development

We asked students to grade their universities in terms of contributing to their growth and development of 31 specific skills.

Students provide the highest grades to their universities for contributing to growth and development in terms of providing a broad knowledge of their major field of study and thinking critically. In each case, almost 9 students in 10 rate their university as good or excellent in this regard.

On average, universities also receive high marks from students for contributing to students' growth and development in terms of: written communications, skills for planning and completing projects, commitment to lifelong learning, interpersonal skills, working independently, and oral communications skills. In each case, among the students who provide a rating, at least 8 out of 10 rate their university as doing a good or excellent job.

Universities also receive good marks from students for contributing to students' growth and development in the following areas: accepting people from different cultures, identifying and solving problems, effective study and learning skills, ability to access information, ability to understand abstract reasoning, cooperative group interaction, persistence with difficult tasks, moral and ethical development, personal self-confidence, and personal time management. In each case, among the students who provide a rating, at least 7 in 10 rate their university as doing a good or excellent job.

Universities receive lower marks for understanding national and global issues, leadership skills, computer literacy skills, living in an international world, preparation for postgraduate study or professional school, ability to address issues in personal life, general skills and knowledge relevant for employment, analyzing quantitative problems, understanding and applying scientific principles and methods, and specific employment-related skills and knowledge. In each case, among the students who provide a rating, at least 6 in 10 rate their university as doing a good or excellent job.

Students rate their universities particularly poorly in terms of their institutions' contribution to growth and development in five areas: appreciation of the arts, mathematical skills, second or third language skills, spiritual development, and entrepreneurial skills. In each case, about half or less rate their university as doing a good or excellent job. In the cases of entrepreneurial skills and spiritual development, about 4 in 10 rate their university as doing at least a good job.

From a list of 20 factors, we asked students to identify the two most important areas for a student's growth and development. Students' priorities are diverse, and no one factor is seen as most important to more than 3 in 10 students. The top three factors in terms of importance as chosen by students are: personal self-confidence, personal time management skills, and identifying and solving problems.

## Student satisfaction

Many students credit their university with playing an important role in their growth and development. Thus, it is not surprising that, for the most part, students are satisfied with their university experiences.

Most students are very positive about their experience with their professors. In particular, students are most positive about professors *seeming knowledgeable in their fields, being reasonably accessible outside of class,* and *being well organized with their teaching*. Many students also report that some professors have a major positive influence on their academic career.

Students' generally positive assessment of their professors reflects the fact that the vast majority of students are satisfied with the quality of the teaching they received from their university (91%) and agree that their learning experience at university was intellectually stimulating (91%). According to students, the only area of weakness with some of their professors is that they are not knowledgeable of career opportunities in their field. While a majority agree with the statement, about 1 student in 5 disagrees.

As previously discussed, most students believe that interaction with other students has contributed very much to their personal growth and development. Thus, it is important to note that most (87%) also report that they are satisfied with the opportunity to develop lasting friendships. Students also are satisfied with their personal safety on campus (94%) and with their university's commitment to environmental sustainability (80%).

However, students indicate a couple of areas of concern. Many students (41%) are dissatisfied with the concern shown by their university for them as individuals, and many (43%) report that they sometimes feel they get the run-around from their university. While most (75%) feel that they are part of their university, a considerable number (25%) do not. Also, about one-third (32%) disagree that their university provides them with good value for their money.

In spite of some of these shortcomings, the vast majority of students generally report being satisfied (90%) with the overall quality of education they received at their university, and almost as many say their university has met (61%) or exceeded (24%) their expectations. Most say they are satisfied (90%) with their decision to attend their university. These positive impressions are further reflected in the fact that 89% of students would recommend their university to others.

## Education financing and debt

Almost 6 in 10 students report having some debt from financing their education, most often from student loans. Overall, the average amount of debt per student is just under $15,500. Among those reporting debt, the average amount per student is just below $26,700. Over time, the amount of debt students have accumulated at graduation from their undergraduate program appears to be increasing at a rate that exceeds inflation. On average, between 2000 and 2009, overall student debt increased 37%. During the same period, the cost of living increased 21%.

The most common source of debt is student loans, as 4 students in 10 report such debt. As well, student loans account for 56% of all reported student debt, while loans from financial institutions (21% of all debt) and loans from parents or family (18% of all debt) account for almost all of the students' remaining debt.

Thinking about their current year of studies, we asked students to indicate which of 11 sources they are using to help pay for their university education. On average, students report using between 2 and 3 different sources to fund their current year. The most commonly used sources of funding are parents or other family members (50%), although at least one-third of students report relying on earnings from summer or current employment; government loans or bursaries; or university scholarships, awards, or bursaries. On average, students' reported sources contribute just over $12,000 to their current year.

Credit cards can be another source of debt, and almost 9 students in 10 report having at least one credit card. About 3 in 4 of those who have credit cards report regularly paying off their balance each month. Among all students with at least one credit card, the average balance owing on their credit cards is $760. However, among students who report a balance, the average amount owing is four times as much, at just over $3,400.

About 6 students in 10 are currently employed, most often off-campus. Students who are employed spend an average of 18 hours a week working. Students' workload appears to affect some differently than others, as 29% say this work has a negative impact on their academic performance, while 32% say it has a positive impact. For the most part, this difference appears to be due to the number of hours students work in a week, as those who work more hours are more likely to report their employment has a negative impact on their academic performance.

## Future education and employment

As mentioned earlier, many students are dissatisfied with faculty in terms of their knowledge of career opportunities in their field. Similarly, many students report that their university as a whole is not as knowledgeable as it could be about career opportunities. While close to 2 students in 3 are satisfied with their university's knowledge of career options in their area of study, the remaining 1 in 3 are dissatisfied.

Most students are somewhat prepared for employment, as demonstrated by the fact that some 3 students in 4 have created a resume or curriculum vitae, and almost 6 in 10 have spoken to one of their professors about employment. However, many have not decided what they want to do with their lives; only 6 students in 10 report having a specific career field. For many, this decision does not yet have to be made, since half of students intend to continue their education in the first year after graduating.

About 1 graduating student in 3 has arranged for full- or part-time employment other than a summer job, including 23% who have arranged a full-time job. Slightly less than half of all students were seeking work at the time of the survey. Of those with full-time jobs, about 6 in 10 report that these jobs are permanent. Among the students who have arranged full- or part-time employment, half report that a degree in their area of study was required, while slightly more, about 6 students in 10, report that their degree helped them get their job. Two students in 3 report that their job is related to the knowledge and skills acquired from study at university. Among those with an arranged job, their university education appears to be more relevant to those who have arranged full-time, rather than part-time, jobs.

Among those with arranged jobs, almost 9 students in 10 are satisfied with them, including 4 in 10 who are very satisfied with their job. On average, students with arranged jobs anticipate earning almost $36,600 annually, although the amount is considerably lower for those with part-time (about $25,700) than full-time employment (about $40,700).

Among all students, a majority, 6 in 10, believe there are at least some jobs in Canada in their major area of study. However, about 3 students in 10 feel there are few or very few jobs in their field of study.

## Conclusion

Although the report highlights some areas for improvement, graduating students are generally satisfied with their university and have had positive experiences while attending it. As noted, the vast majority would recommend their university to others, suggesting that students typically believe that the years they spent working toward their undergraduate degree were worthwhile.

## 1.0 Introduction

This is the 15th cooperative study undertaken by the Canadian University Survey Consortium (CUSC). The surveys target three undergraduate sub-samples: first-year, graduating, and all students. This year's study surveyed undergraduate students who graduated in the fall of 2008 or were graduating in 2009.

Table 1 shows the types of students CUSC has surveyed each year.

**Table 1: Past CUSC surveys**

| Year | Sample | Number of participating universities |
|---|---|---|
| 1994 | All undergraduates | 8 |
| 1996 | All undergraduates | 10 |
| 1997 | Graduating students | 9 |
| 1998 | First-year students | 19 |
| 1999 | All undergraduates | 23 |
| 2000 | Graduating students | 22 |
| 2001 | First-year students | 26 |
| 2002 | All undergraduates | 30 |
| 2003 | Graduating students | 26 |
| 2004 | First-year students | 27 |
| 2005 | All undergraduates | 28 |
| 2006 | Graduating students | 25 |
| 2007 | First-year students | 34 |
| 2008 | All undergraduates | 31 |
| 2009 | Graduating students | 34 |

### 1.1 Methodology

As shown in the table above, the CUSC survey runs in a three-year cycle, targeting particular types of students each year. The questionnaire used for each of these populations is different.

Each year, PRA Inc. and representatives from participating universities review past questionnaires and methodology to discuss issues and possible changes. In the fall of 2008, representatives of participating universities reviewed the questionnaire last used – in this case, it was the 2006 questionnaire. The goal of this review was to identify questions that were no longer appropriate, consider questions that may be added to the survey, and review problems or issues identified the last time the survey was run. As much as possible, the intent was to leave the questionnaire unchanged to allow for comparison across time. Based on the outcome of this meeting, PRA prepared a draft and then, based on comments, produced a final questionnaire (Appendix A).

Traditionally, this has been a paper-based survey, which participating universities mailed to their students. The current survey marks the first time that all participating universities used the online version.

Each university supported the study by generating a random sample of 1,000 undergraduate students who graduated in the fall of 2008 or were graduating in 2009. Each institution provided PRA with an electronic database containing the email addresses for these students. Not all participating universities had 1,000 graduating students; in these cases, each university provided a census of its graduating students. Appendix B presents the methodology guidelines for universities participating in this survey.

PRA was responsible for managing the online survey. This involved liaising with the participating universities, providing the company contracted to host the online survey with a database of student email addresses, preparing the introductory and reminder emails to students, and responding to student questions about questionnaire content as well as technical questions about using the online survey.

PRA was also responsible for compiling the data for the online and paper surveys. This involved reviewing completed questionnaires, coding responses to a selection of open-ended questions, correcting any data errors, and programming the data tables using SPSS.

Table 2 (next page) shows the response rates by university, which ranged from 21% to 70%, with an overall response rate of 44.6%. This yielded 12,160 students who completed the survey.[1]

Compared to previous undergraduate surveys conducted, the response rate is on par with the 2006 survey (45.4%), when about half conducted the survey online, and the 2003 survey (49.0%), when all universities used the paper version of the survey.

[1] PRA defined a completed survey as any survey where a student completed at least 50% of the questions (approximately 80 questions).

| Table 2: Survey response rate | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **University** | **Surveys** | | **Response rate** |
| | **Distributed** | **Completed** | |
| Alberta | 1,000 | 508 | 50.8% |
| British Columbia (Okanagan) | 858 | 308 | 35.9% |
| British Columbia (Vancouver) | 1,000 | 345 | 34.5% |
| Brock | 967 | 437 | 45.2% |
| Calgary | 1,000 | 435 | 43.5% |
| Carleton | 1,000 | 500 | 50.0% |
| Dalhousie | 1,000 | 395 | 39.5% |
| Fraser Valley | 372 | 239 | 64.2% |
| King's | 101 | 24 | 23.8% |
| Lakehead | 1,000 | 588 | 58.8% |
| Lethbridge | 1,000 | 550 | 55.0% |
| Manitoba | 1,000 | 499 | 49.9% |
| McGill | 1,000 | 278 | 27.8% |
| Montreal | 1,000 | 366 | 36.6% |
| Mount Allison | 534 | 229 | 42.9% |
| New Brunswick (Saint John) | 367 | 157 | 42.8% |
| Nipissing | 594 | 300 | 50.5% |
| Northern British Columbia | 594 | 352 | 59.3% |
| Nova Scotia Agricultural | 151 | 87 | 57.6% |
| Ontario Institute of Technology | 1,000 | 454 | 45.4% |
| Ottawa | 986 | 207 | 21.0% |
| Redeemer | 111 | 78 | 70.3% |
| Regina | 1,000 | 557 | 55.7% |
| Ryerson | 1,000 | 316 | 31.6% |
| Saint Mary's | 833 | 322 | 38.7% |
| Saskatchewan | 1,000 | 494 | 49.4% |
| Simon Fraser | 1,000 | 647 | 64.7% |
| St. Francis Xavier | 1,000 | 491 | 49.1% |
| St. Thomas | 471 | 295 | 62.6% |
| Trent | 999 | 419 | 41.9% |
| Trinity Western | 338 | 205 | 60.7% |
| Victoria | 1,000 | 497 | 49.7% |
| Wilfrid Laurier | 1,000 | 340 | 34.0% |
| Winnipeg | 1,000 | 241 | 24.1% |
| **Total** | **27,276** | **12,160** | **44.6%** |

## 1.2 University comparisons

For comparison purposes, we have categorized the participating universities into three groups.

- Group 1 consists of universities that offer primarily undergraduate studies and that have smaller student populations.
- Group 2 consists of universities that offer both undergraduate and graduate studies and that tend to be of medium size in terms of student population.
- Group 3 consists of universities that offer both undergraduate and graduate degrees, with most having professional schools as well. These tend to be the largest institutions in terms of student populations.

Table 3 shows the institutions in each of the three groups.

**Table 3: Categories of participating universities**

| Group 1 (n=18) | Group 2 (n=7) | Group 3 (n=9) |
|---|---|---|
| University of British Columbia (Okanagan Campus) | Brock University | University of Alberta |
| University of the Fraser Valley | Carleton University | University of British Columbia (Vancouver Campus) |
| King's University College | University of Regina | University of Calgary |
| Lakehead University | Ryerson University | Dalhousie University |
| University of Lethbridge | Simon Fraser University | University of Manitoba |
| Mount Allison University | University of Victoria[2] | McGill University |
| University of New Brunswick (Saint John Campus) | Wilfrid Laurier University[3] | Université de Montréal |
| University of Northern British Columbia | | University of Ottawa |
| Nipissing University | | University of Saskatchewan |
| Nova Scotia Agricultural College | | |
| University of Ontario Institute of Technology | | |
| Redeemer University College | | |
| St. Thomas University | | |
| St. Francis Xavier University | | |
| Saint Mary's University | | |
| Trent University | | |
| Trinity Western University | | |
| University of Winnipeg | | |

Participating universities change from year to year. Five universities that participated in the 2006 survey declined to participate in the 2009 survey. However, 13 universities that did not participate in 2006 decided to join this year's survey (three of which had participated in the 2003 survey). See Table 4 for a complete listing of universities and their participation by year.

[2] In 2003, the University of Victoria was classified as a Group 1 university.
[3] In 2006, Wilfrid Laurier University was classified as a Group 1 university.

| Table 4: Changes in participating universities | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| University | Participated | | | |
| | 2009 | 2006 | 2003 | 2000 |
| Alberta | ● | | ● | |
| Bishop's | | | | ● |
| British Columbia (Okanagan Campus) | ● | ● | | |
| British Columbia (Vancouver Campus) | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Brock | ● | | | |
| Calgary | ● | ● | ● | |
| Carleton | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Concordia | | ● | ● | ● |
| Dalhousie | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Fraser Valley | ● | | | |
| King's | ● | ● | | |
| Lakehead | ● | | ● | ● |
| Lethbridge | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Manitoba | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| McGill | ● | | | |
| McMaster | | | ● | ● |
| Memorial | | | | ● |
| Montréal | ● | ● | ● | |
| Mount Allison | ● | | | |
| Mount Saint Vincent | | ● | | |
| New Brunswick (Fredericton Campus) | | ● | ● | ● |
| New Brunswick (Saint John Campus) | ● | | ● | ● |
| Nipissing | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Northern British Columbia | ● | ● | | |
| Nova Scotia Agricultural | ● | | | |
| Ontario College of Art and Design | | | ● | |
| Ontario Institute of Technology | ● | | | |
| Ottawa | ● | ● | | ● |
| Redeemer | ● | | | |
| Regina | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Ryerson | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Saint Mary's | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Saskatchewan | ● | ● | ● | |
| Simon Fraser | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| St. Thomas | ● | | | |
| St. Francis Xavier | ● | | | |
| Toronto at Scarborough | | ● | ● | |
| Trent | ● | | | ● |
| Trinity Western | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Victoria | ● | ● | ● | |
| Wilfrid Laurier | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Windsor | | | ● | ● |
| Winnipeg | ● | ● | ● | |
| York | | ● | | |
| ● indicates university participated in survey | | | | |

### 1.3 Discipline or area of study

Each university provided students' discipline or subject area of concentration based on approximately 110 subject areas developed for this survey. PRA then grouped these subject areas into nine themes.

The process for defining subject area of concentration (or major) included the following steps:

- Universities supplied a code for their students' majors based on their administrative records. If universities provided more than one major field of study, the first major listed was used for the purposes of classifying students.

- In rare instances, when a university did not know a student's major (most often because the student had not yet declared a major), PRA made the decision based on the student's response to the survey question about their major. If students provided more than one major field of study, PRA recorded all of them, but the first major listed became the primary major for purposes of classifying students. When a student's response was vague, unclear, or did not obviously fall into an existing category, they were classified as "other fields."

Table 5 shows this year's distribution of major field of study. The results in 2009 are slightly different from those in 2006 and 2003, most likely due to a decrease in the proportion of those classified as "other fields." The latter results from the fact that, for the most part, universities provided each students' major. Previously, with paper-based surveys, PRA coded students' majors into categories and many students provided responses that did not fit into the specified categories, which as a result were coded as "other fields."

**Table 5: Disciplines**

| | 2009 (n=12,160) | 2006 (n=10,464) | 2003 (n=11,224) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Social Science | 24% | 24% | 21% |
| Arts and Humanities | 18% | 18% | 17% |
| Business | 15% | 14% | 15% |
| Biological Science | 13% | 9% | 9% |
| Professional | 9% | 10% | 10% |
| Engineering | 6% | 5% | 7% |
| Physical Science | 6% | 4% | 4% |
| Education | 5% | 5% | 6% |
| Other fields | 2% | 11% | 10% |
| Don't know/no response | 1% | <1% | <1% |
| Total | 99% | 100% | 99% |

Note: Columns may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

## 1.4 Comparison with previous graduating students surveys

As mentioned, CUSC conducted similar surveys with undergraduate students in 2000, 2003, and 2006. Throughout this report, we compare the results of the current survey with results from previous ones. However, as discussed in the previous section, not all universities that participated in the previous studies participated in 2009. Conversely, some of the universities participating this year did not participate in either or both of the previous years. Therefore, any difference may result from the inclusion of different universities rather than changes over time. PRA includes these comparisons as a point of interest; further investigation may be necessary to assess true differences across time. That being said, there are a few differences in results between the three surveys.

## 1.5 Statistically significant differences

Large sample sizes may inflate measures of statistical significance and may lead to false conclusions about the strength of association. The chi-square measure of association, in particular, is susceptible to this possibility. Therefore, we increased the standards for designating whether a relationship can be termed "statistically significant." The benchmarks shown in Table 6 must be met for us to term an association "statistically significant"; the Pearson's chi-square must have probability of a type 1 error of .000 and either the Phi coefficient or Cramer's V must have a value of .150 or greater. Throughout this document, any differences reported meet these criteria, unless otherwise stated.

**Table 6: Criteria for statistical significance**

| Test | Level for significance |
|---|---|
| Pearson's chi-square | .000 |
| Phi coefficient or Cramer's V | .150 or higher |

## 1.6 Non-response

Unlike previous years, non-responses have not been included in the analysis. Therefore, throughout this report, unless explicitly stated as a subpopulation, overall results do not include those who did not respond to a particular question.

## 2.0 Profile of graduating students

In this section, we provide a profile of graduating students who participated in the survey.

### 2.1 Student profile

As shown in Table 7 (next page), in 2009, the typical graduating student is a single female who is almost 24 years of age.

- Among our sample, graduating students are twice as likely to be women (67%) as men (33%). Although the sample slightly over represents female graduating students, it reflects the fact that more women than men are attending university. It is also important to note that there are a few statistically significant differences between our female and male respondents; differences that are statistically significant are discussed throughout this report.

- While the typical graduating student is almost 24 years of age, 8 students in 10 are 24 years of age or younger. In fact, the median age is considerably younger at 22, ranging from 16 to 98 years.

- Almost half of students are single (47%). About 4 in 10 are in a relationship (40%), not including those who are married or common-law (14%).

- Given that most students are under 24 years of age, it is not surprising only 7% have children.

- Over 1 student in 20 (7%) self-reports having some type of disability, most often a mental health (2%) or learning (2%) disability.

- About 1 student in 5 (22%) self-identifies as belonging to an ethnic or cultural group. Among minority students, the largest proportion is Chinese (38%) students. Other ethnic groups with sizeable representation in the sample include South Asian (16%) and Black (9%). Group 1 universities (17%) have a lower proportion of visible minority students compared to Group 2 (30%) and Group 3 (24%) universities, although this difference is not statistically significant.

- A few students (3%) identify themselves as First Nation(s), Métis, Inuit, or Non-Status Aboriginal people.

| Table 7: Personal profile | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | All students (n=12,160) | Group | | |
| | | 1 (n=5,339) | 2 (n=3,294) | 3 (n=3,527) |
| **Gender Q50** | | | | |
| Male | 33% | 32% | 32% | 37% |
| Female | 67% | 68% | 68% | 63% |
| **Age Q51** | | | | |
| 20 or younger | 10% | 10% | 10% | 10% |
| 21 | 29% | 32% | 25% | 26% |
| 22 | 22% | 21% | 24% | 24% |
| 23 | 12% | 10% | 13% | 13% |
| 24 | 7% | 7% | 7% | 7% |
| 25 to 29 | 12% | 11% | 13% | 12% |
| 30 or over | 8% | 8% | 8% | 8% |
| Average age | 23.7 | 23.6 | 23.8 | 23.6 |
| **Marital status Q56** | | | | |
| Single, divorced, or widowed | 47% | 46% | 47% | 48% |
| In a relationship (other than married or common-law) | 40% | 39% | 41% | 38% |
| Married or in a common-law union | 14% | 14% | 13% | 14% |
| **Number of children Q60** | | | | |
| Children | 7% | 7% | 7% | 6% |
| No children | 93% | 93% | 93% | 94% |
| **Disability Q55** | | | | |
| Total self-identified | 7% | 8% | 8% | 6% |
| **Visible minority Q58*** | | | | |
| Total self-identified | 22% | 17% | 30% | 24% |
| **Aboriginal Q58**** | | | | |
| Total self-identified | 3% | 4% | 3% | 4% |

Note: Columns may not sum to 100% due to rounding.
* 'Visible minority' includes respondents that self-identified themselves as belonging to an ethnic/cultural group other than 'Aboriginal', 'Inuit', 'Métis', or 'White'.
** 'Aboriginal' includes respondents that self-identify themselves as 'Aboriginal', 'Inuit', or 'Métis'.

As shown in Table 8, while the demographic profile of graduating students appears to have changed little over the past nine years, in fact, students appear to be getting younger. The proportion of graduating students who are under 24 increased from 63% in 2000 to 73% in 2009.

**Table 8: Personal profile: Graduating students across time**

| | 2009 (n=12,160) | 2006 (n=10,464) | 2003 (n=11,224) | 2000 (n=6,388) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Gender** | | | | |
| Male | 33% | 32% | 34% | 34% |
| Female | 67% | 65% | 65% | 66% |
| **Age** | | | | |
| 20 or younger | 10% | 8% | 1% | 1% |
| 21 | 29% | 22% | 14% | 13% |
| 22 | 22% | 24% | 28% | 30% |
| 23 | 12% | 14% | 20% | 20% |
| 24 | 7% | 7% | 10% | 10% |
| 25 to 29 | 12% | 13% | 16% | 14% |
| 30 or over | 8% | 8% | 10% | 12% |
| Average age | 23.7 years | 23.8 years | 24.6 years | 25.0 years |
| **Disability** | | | | |
| Total self-identified | 7% | 6% | 4% | 5% |

Note: Non-responses were removed in 2009 and are included (but not shown) in previous years.

### 2.1.1 Living arrangements

In their last undergraduate year, about 6 students in 10 are living independently, and about 1 student in 3 lives with parents.

- Most students living independently rent their accommodations (49%), although a few live in a home they personally own (9%).
- Compared to Group 1 students, students attending Group 2 or Group 3 universities appear to be more likely to be living with their parents or relatives and less likely to be living on their own.
- Not surprisingly, the older the student, the less likely she is to live with parents or relatives and the more likely she is to live in a home she owns.

See Table 9.

**Table 9: Living arrangements Q54**

| | All students (n=12,160) | Group 1 (n=5,339) | Group 2 (n=3,294) | Group 3 (n=3,527) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Rented home/apartment/room (shared/alone) | 49% | 54% | 47% | 45% |
| With parents, guardians, or relatives | 35% | 28% | 40% | 39% |
| Personally owned home | 9% | 9% | 8% | 9% |
| On-campus residence | 5% | 7% | 2% | 5% |
| Other | 2% | 2% | 2% | 2% |

Note: Columns may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

### 2.1.2 Permanent residence

We asked students to indicate the size of the community of their permanent residence (that is, the size of the community in which they lived prior to attending university).

- About half of these graduating students (49%) report that they lived in a city with a population of 100,000 or more.
- Reflecting the location of the institutions, fewer students attending Group 1 universities are from communities with a population of 100,000 or more (39%), than Group 2 (59%) or 3 (56%) universities.

See Table 10.

**Table 10: Size of community Q53**

| | All students (n=12,160) | Group | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 (n=5,339) | 2 (n=3,294) | 3 (n=3,527) |
| Lived on a farm/ranch | 5% | 5% | 3% | 6% |
| Less than 5,000 | 11% | 14% | 7% | 9% |
| 5,000 to 9,999 | 8% | 11% | 6% | 7% |
| 10,000 to 49,999 | 15% | 17% | 15% | 13% |
| 50,000 to 99,999 | 12% | 15% | 10% | 8% |
| 100,000 to 299,999 | 17% | 18% | 22% | 11% |
| 300,000 to 499,999 | 7% | 5% | 10% | 5% |
| Over 500,000 | 26% | 16% | 26% | 39% |

Note: Columns may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Students in this study come from all provinces and territories, as well as the United States and other countries, but generally reflect the location of universities participating in the survey.

- Almost half (45%) of students report being from Western Canada, most commonly from British Columbia (19%).
- About 3 in 10 students (30%) are from Ontario.
- Slightly less than 1 student in 25 (4%) is from Québec.
- About 1 student in 10 is from the Atlantic provinces (13%), most often Nova Scotia (8%) or New Brunswick (4%).
- About 1 student in 10 reports being from outside of Canada (7%).

| Table 11: Province of permanent residence Q52 | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | All students (n=12,160) | Group | | |
| | | 1 (n=5,339) | 2 (n=3,294) | 3 (n=3,527) |
| British Columbia | 19% | 18% | 29% | 10% |
| Alberta | 13% | 10% | 2% | 26% |
| Saskatchewan | 8% | <1% | 15% | 12% |
| Manitoba | 6% | 5% | <1% | 13% |
| Ontario | 30% | 35% | 43% | 9% |
| Québec | 4% | <1% | <1% | 14% |
| Nova Scotia | 8% | 13% | <1% | 7% |
| Prince Edward Island | <1% | 1% | <1% | <1% |
| New Brunswick | 4% | 9% | <1% | <1% |
| Newfoundland and Labrador | <1% | <1% | <1% | <1% |
| Territories | <1% | <1% | <1% | <1% |
| International/USA/other | 7% | 6% | 8% | 8% |
| Note: Columns may not sum to 100% due to rounding. | | | | |

The provinces in which students are attending university are shown in Table 12. The distribution by province, as shown in Table 11, tends to reflect the universities that are participating in this year's study.

| Table 12: Province in which attending university | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | All students (n=12,160) | Group | | |
| | | 1 (n=5,339) | 2 (n=3,294) | 3 (n=3,527) |
| British Columbia | 21% | 21% | 35% | 10% |
| Alberta | 12% | 11% | - | 27% |
| Saskatchewan | 9% | - | 17% | 14% |
| Manitoba | 6% | 5% | - | 14% |
| Ontario | 30% | 34% | 48% | 6% |
| Québec | 5% | - | - | 18% |
| Nova Scotia | 11% | 17% | - | 11% |
| New Brunswick | 6% | 13% | - | - |
| Note: Columns may not sum to 100% due to rounding. | | | | |

Table 13 (next page) shows that the majority of students are attending a university located in their home province.

- Over 9 students in 10 from Saskatchewan, Manitoba, British Columbia, and Ontario are studying in their home province.
- About 8 students in 10 from Quebec, Nova Scotia, or Alberta are studying in their home province.
- About 3 students in 4 from New Brunswick are studying there.

When students go outside their home province for university (and stay in Canada), they most typically go to a neighbouring province. For example, 7% of Albertans are studying in British Columbia and 4% are studying in Saskatchewan.

| Table 13: Students attending a university in their home province | |
|---|---|
| **Students' province of residence** | **% attending in home province** |
| Saskatchewan | 95% |
| Manitoba | 92% |
| British Columbia | 91% |
| Ontario | 90% |
| Québec | 84% |
| Nova Scotia | 84% |
| Alberta | 83% |
| New Brunswick | 77% |

## 2.2 Disciplines

Institutions submitted students' program of study. These programs were grouped into nine broadly defined disciplines, as shown in Table 14. Graduating students will be receiving degrees in:

- **Generalist disciplines.** Slightly more than 2 students in 5 are graduating from generalist disciplines, which include either Social Science (24%) or Arts and Humanities (19%) programs.
- **Professional disciplines.** About 1 student in 3 will receive a degree in a professional discipline, which includes Business (16%), Professional (10%), Engineering (6%), and Education (5%) programs.
- **Science disciplines.** About 1 student in 5 will graduate with a science degree either from a Biological (13%) or Physical Science (6%) program.

Students attending Group 1 (44%) and Group 2 (48%) universities are more likely than those attending a Group 3 (36%) university to report that their major subject areas are Social Science or Arts and Humanities. In addition, few students attending a Group 1 (4%) or Group 2 (5%) university report being in an Engineering program, compared to Group 3 (12%) university students.

| Table 14: Major/subject area of concentration | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **All students (n=12,160)** | **Group** | | |
| | | **1 (n=5,339)** | **2 (n=3,294)** | **3 (n=3,527)** |
| Social Science | 24% | 23% | 28% | 21% |
| Arts and Humanities | 19% | 21% | 20% | 15% |
| Business | 16% | 16% | 17% | 14% |
| Biological Science | 13% | 14% | 9% | 15% |
| Professional | 10% | 9% | 9% | 11% |
| Engineering | 6% | 4% | 5% | 12% |
| Physical Science | 6% | 6% | 6% | 7% |
| Education | 5% | 7% | 5% | 3% |
| Other fields | 2% | 2% | 1% | 3% |
| Note: In cases where more than one major was provided, we took the first mention as the primary area of concentration. Columns may not sum to 100% due to rounding. | | | | |

In 2009 (and in past CUSC surveys), male and female students tend to select different educational paths. As Figure 1 shows, female students outnumber male students in most disciplines. In fact, male students represent the majority in only two disciplines: Physical Science and Engineering programs.

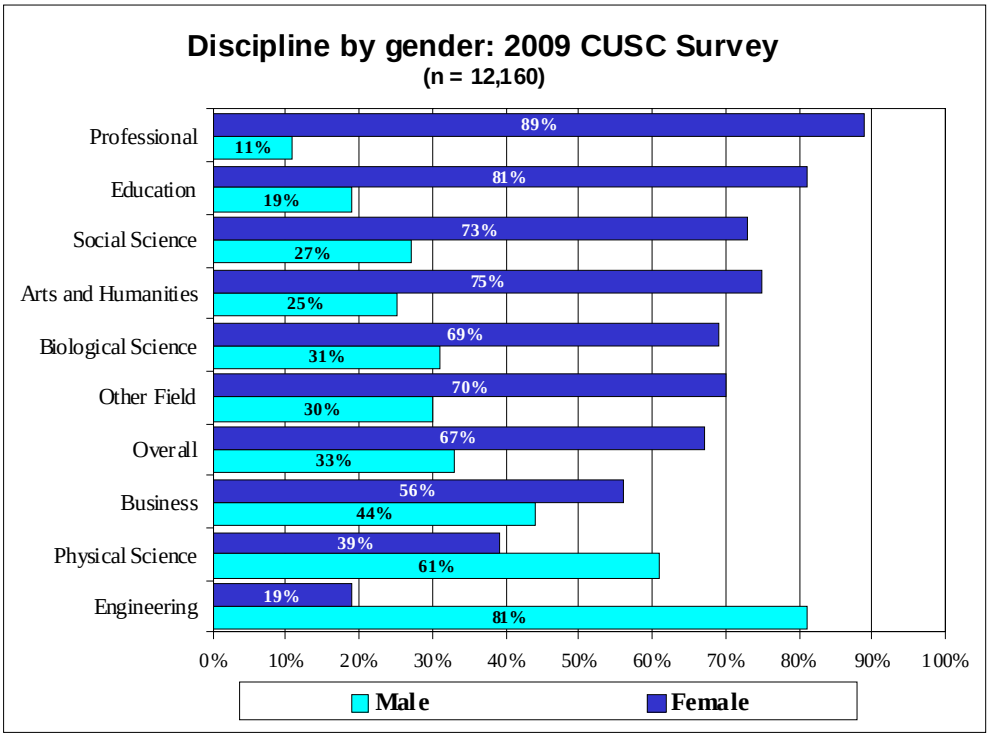


**Figure 1**

As was the case in previous years, there are differences among disciplines related to age.

- The Professional program (average age 26.5 years) is the only program with an average age of its students higher than the overall average. With the exception of Biological Science students (average age 22.6 years), the average age in all other programs is 23 years.

- Given that students in Professional programs are the oldest, it may not be surprising that they are the most likely to have children. Almost 1 in 5 students in a Professional (19%) program have at least one child, compared to 3% to 11% of students in the other eight disciplines.

As shown in Table 15, there is also a difference among disciplines and the proportion of students who identify as being a visible minority. Business, Physical Science, or Engineering programs have the highest proportion of minority students. Conversely, students in Arts and Humanities, Education, and other fields have the lowest proportion.

| Table 15: Visible minority by discipline | |
|---|---|
| | % identifying as visible minority (includes Aboriginal students) |
| Business | 37% |
| Physical Science | 34% |
| Engineering | 34% |
| Professional | 27% |
| Biological Science | 26% |
| Overall | 25% |
| Social Science | 25% |
| Arts and Humanities | 15% |
| Education | 12% |
| Other fields | 12% |

## 2.3 Academic profile

In 2009, the typical graduating student is attending full-time, taking a four-year degree program (but over a slightly longer period), and studying in English.

- The vast majority (89%) of graduating students are attending full-time, although this seems to vary by age, as the older a student is, the less likely she is to be attending university full-time.

- Graduating students are taking programs that typically require four years to complete. In fact, 3 graduates in 4 (78%) report that their program typically takes four years to complete. More students in Group 3 universities (17%) than in Group 1 or Group 2 universities (6% each) are in three-year programs.

- It appears that many students began their post-secondary education prior to attending their current university. The typical student started his/her post-secondary studies six years ago in 2003, but has only been attending his/her university for five years or from about 2004.

- Almost half of students (47%) report being in a work experience program, most commonly a practicum (19%), work experience (12%), or service learning (10%) program.

- Overall, 93% of students are studying in English, while 5% are studying in French. Language of study varies by university type, as 13% of students in Group 3 universities report that French is their primary language of study, compared to 1% or fewer in Group 1 and 2 universities. This difference likely reflects the location of participating universities in these groups, as both universities located in Quebec are in Group 3.

- About 1 student in 20 (6%) reports studying in Canada on a student authorization, study permit, or visa.

- Almost 1 student in 4 (23%) has interrupted his/her studies for one or more terms. The older students are, the more likely they are to have interrupted their studies for a term or

more.

- Almost half of students (47%) report receiving an academic scholarship from their university at some point during their studies. Among those who received a scholarship, they most often received them for academic merit (89%) or financial need (26%). The older students are, the less likely they are to have received a scholarship from their university.

These and other findings are presented in Table 16.

**Table 16: Academic profile**

| | All students (n=12,160) | Group 1 (n=5,339) | Group 2 (n=3,294) | Group 3 (n=3,527) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Student status Q2** | | | | |
| Full-time | 89% | 91% | 87% | 89% |
| Part-time | 11% | 9% | 13% | 11% |
| **Length of degree Q5** | | | | |
| One year | <1% | <1% | <1% | <1% |
| Two years | 3% | 3% | 3% | 3% |
| Three years | 9% | 6% | 6% | 17% |
| Four years | 78% | 83% | 80% | 70% |
| Five or more years | 9% | 8% | 10% | 9% |
| Average number of years* | 3.9 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 3.8 |
| **Year began post-secondary education Q3** | | | | |
| 2008 | <1% | <1% | <1% | <1% |
| 2007 | <1% | <1% | <1% | <1% |
| 2006 | 3% | 2% | 2% | 4% |
| 2005 | 35% | 42% | 31% | 28% |
| 2004/2003 | 41% | 36% | 45% | 47% |
| 2002 or earlier | 20% | 19% | 22% | 21% |
| Average year | 2003 | 2003 | 2003 | 2003 |
| **Year began at this university Q4** | | | | |
| 2008 | <1% | <1% | 1% | <1% |
| 2007 | 7% | 8% | 6% | 7% |
| 2006 | 14% | 13% | 11% | 18% |
| 2005 | 41% | 47% | 38% | 35% |
| 2004 or earlier | 37% | 31% | 43% | 40% |
| Average year | 2004 | 2005 | 2004 | 2004 |
| **Enrolled in work experience Q8** | | | | |
| Yes | 47% | 45% | 50% | 46% |
| **Language of instruction Q9** | | | | |
| English | 93% | 97% | 96% | 85% |
| French | 5% | <1% | 1% | 13% |
| Other | 2% | 2% | 3% | 2% |
| **Studying in Canada on a visa Q61** | | | | |
| Yes | 6% | 6% | 6% | 6% |
| **Interrupted studies Q7** | | | | |
| Yes | 23% | 20% | 27% | 23% |
| **Received academic scholarship from this university Q28** | | | | |
| Yes | 47% | 50% | 42% | 46% |

Note: Columns may not sum to 100% due to rounding.
*In calculating the average length of degree, five or more years was treated as five years.

As shown in Table 17, the academic profile of students in 2009 is very similar to that of students who participated in CUSC's previous graduating student surveys.

**Table 17: Academic profile by year**

| | 2009 (n=12,160) | 2006 (n=10,464) | 2003 (n=11,224) | 2000 (n=6,388) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Type of student** | | | | |
| Full-time | 89% | 85% | 84% | 80% |
| Part-time | 11% | 14% | 13% | 16% |
| **Length of degree** | | | | |
| One year | <1% | <1% | <1% | 1% |
| Two years | 3% | 3% | 4% | 4% |
| Three years | 9% | 18% | 18% | 22% |
| Four years | 78% | 70% | 66% | 63% |
| Five years or more | 9% | 8% | 9% | 7% |
| Average number of years* | 3.9 | 3.8 | 3.8 | 3.7 |
| **Years at current university** | | | | |
| One year | <1% | 1% | 1% | 2% |
| Two years | 7% | 8% | 7% | 7% |
| Three years | 14% | 16% | 16% | 17% |
| Four years | 41% | 39% | 39% | 42% |
| Five years or more | 37% | 36% | 32% | 32% |
| Average number of years | 4.5 | 4.5 | 4.4 | 4.4 |
| **Interrupted studies** | | | | |
| Yes | 23% | 22% | 18% | 19% |

Note: Non-responses were removed in 2009 and are included (but not shown) in previous years.
*In calculating the average length of degree, five or more years was treated as five years.

### 2.3.1 Academic profile by discipline

As shown in Table 18:

- Education and Engineering students are most likely to report having five-year or longer programs and have the longest programs on average (just over four years). Students in Professional degrees are least likely to report having programs that are five years in length or longer.

- Students in Education and Professional programs are most likely to have taken a work experience program while in university. Students in Social Sciences and Arts and Humanities programs are the least likely.

- Students in Business and Physical Sciences are most likely to report studying in Canada on a student authorization, student permit, or visa, which may account for why these programs reported the highest proportion of visible minority students.

**Table 18: Academic profile by discipline**

| | Discipline | % |
|---|---|---|
| Program length (five years or more) | Education | 47% |
| | Engineering | 29% |
| | Overall | 9% |
| | Other fields | 4% |
| | Professional | 2% |
| Work experience | Education | 93% |
| | Professional | 89% |
| | Overall | 47% |
| | Social Science | 35% |
| | Arts and Humanities | 31% |
| Studying in Canada on a visa | Business | 13% |
| | Physical Science | 10% |
| | Overall | 6% |
| | Education | 2% |
| | Professional | 2% |

### 2.3.2 Interruption of studies

As mentioned in the previous section, it is common for students to have interrupted their studies for one or more terms since starting their post-secondary education. In 2009, the most common reasons students interrupted their studies were for *employment* (8%), *family reasons* (7% - either to raise children or other family reasons), to *travel* (5%), or for *financial reasons* (5%). See Table 19.

**Table 19: Interrupted studies Q7**

| | All students (n=12,160) | Group 1 (n=5,339) | Group 2 (n=3,294) | Group 3 (n=3,527) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Have not interrupted studies | 77% | 80% | 73% | 77% |
| For employment | 8% | 7% | 10% | 8% |
| To travel | 5% | 4% | 7% | 5% |
| For financial reasons | 5% | 5% | 5% | 4% |
| For other family reasons | 4% | 4% | 5% | 3% |
| Due to illness | 3% | 3% | 3% | 3% |
| To have/raise children | 2% | 2% | 2% | 2% |
| Required to withdraw by the university | 2% | 1% | 2% | 2% |
| Other reasons | 4% | 4% | 4% | 4% |

Note: Respondents could provide more than one answer. Therefore, columns may not sum to 100%.

For the first time in CUSC surveys, we asked students if anything delayed their completion of their program at their university. Overall, almost 1 in 3 students (32%) say something delayed it.

- The most common reasons appear to be related to the availability of courses, as many students delayed their program due to *required* (15%) or *elective* (6%) *courses not being available*.

- About 1 student in 10 delayed their program because of their *grades* (9%) or *financial issues* (8%).

**Table 20: Delays in completion of program Q64**

| | All students (n=12,160) | Group 1 (n=5,339) | Group 2 (n=3,294) | Group 3 (n=3,527) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| None | 68% | 71% | 61% | 69% |
| Required courses not available | 15% | 13% | 21% | 12% |
| Grades | 9% | 9% | 11% | 9% |
| Financial issues | 8% | 7% | 10% | 8% |
| Elective courses not available | 6% | 5% | 8% | 5% |
| Other | 8% | 8% | 9% | 9% |

Note: Respondents could provide more than one answer. Therefore, columns may not sum to 100%.

### 2.3.3 Students' grades

We asked students to tell us their average grade for the courses they had completed at the time of the survey. We also asked students to convert their grade point to a letter grade equivalent.

- The average grade of these students is close to a B+ (an average of 4.9 out of 7; a 5 is equivalent to a B+).
- One student in 3 (33%) reports an average that is an A- or higher, while over half (55%) report an average that is a B or B+.
- Students' grades consistently decline by age while students are in their twenties, from an average of about a B+ for those 20 years of age and younger (5.0) to between a B and a B+ for those 25 to 29 (4.7); however, grades rebound for students 30 years of age and older (5.2).

**Table 21: Average grade for courses completed so far Q10**

| | All students (n=12,160) | Group 1 (n=5,339) | Group 2 (n=3,294) | Group 3 (n=3,527) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| A or A+ | 12% | 12% | 9% | 13% |
| A- | 21% | 21% | 20% | 23% |
| B+ | 26% | 24% | 27% | 26% |
| B | 29% | 28% | 32% | 27% |
| C+ | 9% | 10% | 9% | 9% |
| C or lower | 3% | 4% | 3% | 3% |
| Average | 4.9 | 4.9 | 4.8 | 5.0 |

Note: This grade scale is based on the following: A/A+=7, A-=6, B+=5, B=4, C+=3, C=2, D=1.
Columns may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Students' grades differ significantly by disciplines. On average:

- Students in Education and Professional programs tend to have higher grades, averaging over a B+ (an average of 5 or higher out of 7). About 4 in 10 students in each program have an A- average or higher.

- Students in Business and Engineering programs report slightly lower average grades than students in other programs. About 1 in 4 students report an average grade of A- or higher in each of these programs.

**Table 22: Average grade by discipline**

| | Average (1 = D and 7 = A or A+) |
|---|---|
| Education | 5.2 |
| Professional | 5.2 |
| Arts and Humanities | 5.0 |
| Biological Science | 4.9 |
| Overall | 4.9 |
| Physical Science | 4.8 |
| Social Science | 4.8 |
| Other fields | 4.7 |
| Business | 4.7 |
| Engineering | 4.5 |

## 2.4 Parents' education

We asked students what levels of education their mother and father had completed.

- About 7 students in 10 report that their father (70%) had completed had least some post-secondary. This is the same for their mother's education (70%).
- Slightly less than 1 in 5 students (17%) are first-generation students; that is, neither their father nor their mother took any post-secondary education.

See Table 23 and Table 24 for the levels of education students report their mother and father took.

**Table 23: Mother's education Q70**

| | All students (n=12,160) | Group | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 (n=5,339) | 2 (n=3,294) | 3 (n=3,527) |
| Less than high school | 10% | 10% | 10% | 9% |
| High school graduate | 41% | 43% | 41% | 38% |
| Some college/technical school/CEGEP (no certificate/diploma) | 12% | 12% | 11% | 11% |
| College/technical/CEGEP graduate | 24% | 25% | 23% | 22% |
| Some university (no degree/diploma) | 7% | 7% | 7% | 6% |
| University graduate (B.A., B.Sc.) | 27% | 24% | 27% | 30% |
| Professional degree (e.g., Medicine, Law) | 4% | 4% | 4% | 5% |
| Graduate degree (Master's, Ph.D.) | 7% | 7% | 7% | 9% |
| Other | <1% | <1% | <1% | <1% |
| Don't know | 1% | 1% | 1% | 1% |

Note: Respondents could provide more than one answer. Therefore, columns may not sum to 100%.

**Table 24: Father's education Q70**

| | All students (n=12,160) | Group | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 (n=5,339) | 2 (n=3,294) | 3 (n=3,527) |
| Less than high school | 13% | 15% | 13% | 12% |
| High school graduate | 35% | 37% | 36% | 33% |
| Some college/technical school/CEGEP (no certificate/diploma) | 10% | 11% | 10% | 9% |
| College/technical/CEGEP graduate | 22% | 24% | 21% | 20% |
| Some university (no degree/diploma) | 7% | 6% | 7% | 6% |
| University graduate (B.A., B.Sc.) | 26% | 23% | 28% | 28% |
| Professional degree (e.g., Medicine, Law) | 7% | 5% | 6% | 9% |
| Graduate degree (Master's, Ph.D.) | 11% | 10% | 11% | 14% |
| Other | <1% | 1% | <1% | <1% |
| Don't know | 2% | 2% | 2% | 2% |

Note: Respondents could provide more than one answer. Therefore, columns may not sum to 100%.

## 3.0 Experiences at university

In this section, we report on students' assessments of the contribution of a number of experiences they may have had at university to their personal growth and development. We asked students to rate 17 of these experiences for whether they contribute *none, very little, some*, or *very much* to their growth. If they did not have experience in a particular area, participants were asked to indicate that it was not applicable.

### 3.1 Class-based experiences

We asked students to rate the contribution that class-based activities have made to their personal growth and development. The percentages of students who rated these activities are shown in Table 25.

- Almost all students report experience with *classroom instruction* and *participation in classroom discussions*.
- Almost as many, about 8 students in 10 have had experience *interacting with teaching assistants* or receiving *online instruction*, while just over 7 in 10 students have had experience in the *laboratory*.

**Table 25: Percent reporting experience with in-class activities Q11**

| | All students (n=12,160) | Group | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 (n=5,339) | 2 (n=3,294) | 3 (n=3,527) |
| a. Classroom instruction | 99% | 100% | 99% | 99% |
| b. Participation in classroom discussions | 99% | 100% | 99% | 99% |
| i. Interaction with teaching assistants | 85% | 77% | 91% | 90% |
| p. Online instruction | 78% | 78% | 81% | 75% |
| c. Laboratory experiences | 72% | 72% | 70% | 74% |

Table 26 shows the proportion of students, who had experience with these in-class activities, who rate each as contributing *very much* to their personal growth and development.

- About 6 students in 10 rate *classroom instruction* as having contributed very much to their personal growth and development. Just 1% say it did not contribute to their personal growth.

- About 4 students in 10 report that *participation in classroom discussions* contributed very much to their personal growth and development. Just 2% said it did not contribute to their growth.

- About 1 in 3 students rate *laboratory experience* as contributing very much to their personal growth and development, although 8% say it did not contribute anything to their growth.

- About 1 in 5 students rate *interaction with teaching assistants* as contributing very much to their growth and development. This compares with 12% who report that teaching assistants contributed nothing to their growth.

- Among these in-class activities, students rate *online instruction* as contributing the least to their personal growth and development. About 1 in 6 students say it contributed very much to their personal growth and development. However, 12% say it contributed nothing to their personal growth.

**Table 26: In-class activities: contributed very much to personal growth and development Q11**

| | All students | Group | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| a. Classroom instruction | 60% | 64% | 57% | 55% |
| b. Participation in classroom discussions | 44% | 49% | 44% | 36% |
| c. Laboratory experiences | 35% | 36% | 33% | 34% |
| i. Interaction with teaching assistants | 19% | 20% | 21% | 16% |
| p. Online instruction | 15% | 17% | 16% | 12% |

Note: Percentages are based on those reporting experience.

### 3.1.1 Class-based experiences by discipline

Students' perceptions of a number of these class-based activities and their contributions to personal growth and development appear to vary by discipline.

- *Participation in classroom discussions* is more likely to be rated as contributing very much to students' personal growth and development among those in Arts and Humanities programs and other fields. Classroom discussions are less likely to be rated as contributing very much by students in Engineering or Physical Science programs.

- *Laboratory experiences* have more impact on students in Biological Science, Physical Science, and Professional programs, and much less impact on students in disciplines not generally associated with labs: Business and Arts and Humanities.

- *Interaction with teaching assistants* appears to have contributed more to students in Physical and Biological Science than to those in Arts and Humanities, Business, and Professional programs.

See Table 27.

**Table 27: Contribution of class-based activities by discipline**

| Activity | Discipline | % very much |
|---|---|---|
| Participation in classroom discussions | Arts and Humanities | 52% |
| | Other fields | 52% |
| | Overall | 44% |
| | Physical Science | 27% |
| | Engineering | 23% |
| Laboratory experiences | Biological Science | 59% |
| | Physical Science | 48% |
| | Professional | 47% |
| | Overall | 35% |
| | Arts and Humanities | 20% |
| | Business | 15% |
| Interaction with teaching assistants | Biological Science | 27% |
| | Physical Science | 26% |
| | Overall | 19% |
| | Arts and Humanities | 15% |
| | Business | 15% |
| | Professional | 15% |

## 3.2 Academic experiences

Almost all students had participated in many of the academic activities.

- Almost all students report experience with *required readings, written assignments and essays, examinations, use of library resources*, and *recommended readings*.

- Just over half of students have experience in a *co-op, internship, or practical experience program related to their program of studies* or *writing an undergraduate thesis or taking a self-directed study course*.

**Table 28: Percent reporting experience with academic activities Q11**

| | All students (n=12,160) | Group | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 (n=5,339) | 2 (n=3,294) | 3 (n=3,527) |
| e. Required reading | 100% | 100% | 100% | 99% |
| l. Written assignments and essays | 100% | 100% | 100% | 99% |
| d. Examinations | 99% | 100% | 99% | 99% |
| h. Use of library resources | 98% | 99% | 98% | 98% |
| f. Recommended reading | 96% | 97% | 96% | 96% |
| q. Co-op program, internship, practical experience | 55% | 54% | 58% | 55% |
| g. Undergraduate thesis, self-directed study, or senior project | 52% | 53% | 52% | 52% |

Among students who participated in these academic activities:

- Although just over half of students participated in a *co-op, internship, or practical experience program*, this activity had the highest proportion of students saying that it contributed very much to their personal growth and development. In fact, almost 6 in 10 say it contributed very much. However, 15% say it did not contribute anything to their growth and development.

- About half rate *written assignments* or *undergraduate thesis or self-directed study* as contributing very much to their growth and development. Just 1% say that *written assignments* did not contribute to their personal development, compared to 11% for *undergraduate thesis or self-directed study*.

- About 4 students in 10 rate *required readings* and *use of library resources* as contributing very much to their growth and development. Very few say *library resources* (4%) or *required readings* (2%) contributed nothing to their growth.

- About 1 in 4 students indicate *examinations* contributed very much to their growth. Just 3% rate exams as contributing nothing to their growth.

- Almost 1 in 7 students think *recommended readings* contributed very much to their growth. However, almost as many students (11%) say that *recommended readings* contributed nothing to their growth. The older students are, the more likely they are to say *recommended readings* contributed very much to their personal growth.

| Table 29: Academic activities: contributed very much to personal growth and development Q11 | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | All students | Group | | |
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| q. Co-op program, internship, practical experience | 58% | 57% | 57% | 61% |
| l. Written assignments and essays | 51% | 53% | 51% | 46% |
| g. Undergraduate thesis, self-directed study, or senior project | 48% | 51% | 45% | 48% |
| e. Required reading | 38% | 40% | 37% | 35% |
| h. Use of library resources | 37% | 38% | 40% | 33% |
| d. Examinations | 24% | 26% | 23% | 24% |
| f. Recommended reading | 14% | 17% | 13% | 12% |
| Note: Percentages are based on those reporting experience. | | | | |

As has been the case in previous CUSC surveys of graduating students, female students (64%) are more likely than male students (49%) to report that *co-op programs, internships, or practical experience* contributed very much to their personal growth and development.

### 3.2.1 Academic activities by discipline

Students' perceptions of the impact that various academic activities had on their personal growth and development appear to vary by discipline.

- *Co-op, internship program, or other practical experience*. The vast majority of Education and Professional program students who provide a rating think their co-op, internship program, or other practical experience contributed very much to their personal growth, while less than half of Social Science students think the same.

- *Written assignments and essays*. Because written work makes up much of their course work, it is not surprising that students in Arts and Humanities and Social Science programs are most likely to say that written assignments contributed very much to their personal growth. Students in Physical Science and Education programs are least likely to say that written assignments contributed very much.

- *Undergraduate thesis.* Among those who provide a rating, students in Professional, Education or Business programs are the least likely to say that a thesis contributed very much to their personal growth, while those in Biological Science are the most likely.

- *Required readings.* Students in Arts and Humanities programs are the most likely to say that required readings contributed very much to their personal growth and development. Those in Engineering, Physical Science, or Education programs are the least likely to value such readings.

- *Use of library resources.* Those in Arts and Humanities or Social Science programs are most likely to rate their use of library resources as contributing very much to their growth, while students in Physical Science and Engineering programs are least likely.

- *Examinations.* Engineering students value the contribution examinations had on their growth and development much more than students in other programs. Arts and Humanities and Education students are the least likely.

Table 30 shows these results.

| Table 30: Contribution of academic activities to growth and development by discipline | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Activity** | **Discipline** | **Very much** |
| Co-op, internship, or practical experience | Education | 86% |
| | Professional | 83% |
| | Overall | 58% |
| | Social Science | 45% |
| Written assignments and essays | Arts and Humanities | 62% |
| | Social Science | 59% |
| | Overall | 51% |
| | Education | 38% |
| | Physical Science | 36% |
| Undergraduate thesis/self-directed study | Biological Science | 59% |
| | Overall | 48% |
| | Education | 39% |
| | Professional | 38% |
| | Business | 37% |
| Required readings | Arts and Humanities | 50% |
| | Overall | 38% |
| | Engineering | 26% |
| | Physical Science | 24% |
| | Education | 24% |
| Use of library resources | Arts and Humanities | 46% |
| | Social Science | 46% |
| | Overall | 37% |
| | Physical Science | 21% |
| | Engineering | 19% |
| Examinations | Engineering | 36% |
| | Overall | 24% |
| | Arts and Humanities | 16% |
| | Education | 14% |

## 3.3 Experiences with faculty

Almost all students indicate that they had experience with university faculty, although slightly fewer report experience with *faculty research activities* (87%). See Table 31 for results.

| Table 31: Percent reporting experience with faculty Q11 | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **All students (n=12,160)** | **Group** | | |
| | | **1 (n=5,339)** | **2 (n=3,294)** | **3 (n=3,527)** |
| k. Faculty feedback on assignments or projects | 99% | 100% | 99% | 99% |
| n. Faculty enthusiasm for subject material | 99% | 100% | 99% | 99% |
| m. Faculty knowledge of their discipline | 99% | 100% | 99% | 99% |
| j. Personal interactions with faculty | 99% | 99% | 98% | 98% |
| o. Faculty research activities | 87% | 87% | 86% | 87% |

According to students, some aspects of their experiences with faculty contribute more to students' personal growth and development than others.

- About 2 students in 3 report that *faculty knowledge of their discipline* or *faculty enthusiasm for subject material* contributed very much to their personal growth and development. For each of these, just 1% say they contributed nothing to their growth. Over time, students report that the contribution of faculty enthusiasm for subject material contributed more to their personal growth and development. In 2000, 42% report that faculty enthusiasm contributed very much to their growth. The proportion of students who say the same has grown in each successive survey until, in 2009, 64% say faculty enthusiasm has contributed very much to their personal growth.

- About half of students think that *personal interactions with faculty* and *faculty feedback on assignments or projects* contributed very much to their personal growth and development. Very few students say either *personal interactions with faculty* (2%) or *feedback on assignments* (1%) did not contribute at all to their growth. Over time, students have reported that feedback on assignments is contributing more to their personal growth and development. In 2000, 29% of students say such feedback contributed very much to their personal growth, and this has grown steadily until 2009, when 48% report the same.

- About 1 in 4 students report that *faculty research activities* contributed very much to their personal growth. Whereas 9% say that this faculty activity did not contribute to their growth.

Students in Group 1 universities are more satisfied with faculty activities than those in Group 2 or Group 3 universities; however, this difference is statistically significant for two of the six activities - *personal interactions with faculty* and *faculty feedback on assignments or projects*.

**Table 32: Faculty activities: contributed very much to personal growth and development Q11**

| | All students | Group | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| m. Faculty knowledge of their discipline | 65% | 71% | 62% | 59% |
| n. Faculty enthusiasm for subject material | 64% | 69% | 62% | 59% |
| j. Personal interactions with faculty | 50% | 60% | 45% | 41% |
| k. Faculty feedback on assignments or projects | 48% | 56% | 46% | 38% |
| o. Faculty research activities | 24% | 27% | 23% | 19% |

Note: Percentages are based on those reporting experience.

### 3.3.1 Contribution of faculty by discipline

Two activities show a significant difference in students' ratings of faculty's contribution by discipline. Among these activities:

- Students in Arts and Humanities programs are typically most likely to report faculty's *enthusiasm for subject material* contributed very much to their personal growth and development, while Engineering students are least likely.

- Biological Science students are most likely to say that *faculty research activities* very much contributed to their growth. Business students are least likely to say this activity contributed very much to their growth.

**Table 33: Contribution of faculty activities to growth and development by discipline**

| Activity | Discipline | Very much |
|---|---|---|
| Faculty enthusiasm for subject material | Arts and Humanities | 74% |
| | Overall | 64% |
| | Engineering | 49% |
| Faculty research activities | Biological Science | 32% |
| | Overall | 24% |
| | Business | 16% |

## 4.0 Extracurricular activities

In this section, we report on the impact that 17 extracurricular activities had on students' personal growth and development.

### 4.1 Student services and supports

We asked students about their use of various on-campus student services and supports.

- About 6 students in 10 *participated in student clubs and organizations*, while about half *used study skills and learning support services*. *Participating in student clubs and organizations* decreases as students get older.
- Slightly more than 1 student in 10 reports *serving as a peer or residence advisor*, participating *in international placement or exchanges*, or *student government*.

See Table 34.

**Table 34: Use of on-campus student services/supports Q12**

| | All students (n=12,160) | Group | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 (n=5,339) | 2 (n=3,294) | 3 (n=3,527) |
| k. Participating in student clubs and organizations | 56% | 61% | 53% | 52% |
| a. Using study skills/learning support services | 47% | 54% | 46% | 38% |
| b. Serving as a peer or residence advisor | 12% | 15% | 10% | 10% |
| h. Participating in international study or exchanges | 12% | 12% | 11% | 13% |
| m. Participating in student government | 11% | 11% | 8% | 15% |

#### 4.1.1 Contribution of student services and supports

Table 35 (next page) shows the proportion of students who participated in these activities, and who considered them to contribute very much to their personal growth and development. As in previous years, of these supports/services, those involving the fewest students tend to have the biggest impact on students' personal growth.

- Although few students had participated in *international placements or exchanges*, 7 in 10 say that they contributed very much to their personal growth, while just 5% think they did not contribute to their growth.
- About 4 in 10 students report participating in *student government*, participating in *student clubs or organizations*, or serving as a *peer or residence advisor* contributed very much to their personal growth and development. Less than 1 in 10 students say that participating in *student government* (5%), participating in *student clubs or organizations* (4%), or serving as a *peer or residence advisor* (9%) did not contribute to their growth.

- Although about 3 in 10 students say *study skills or learning support services* contributed very much to his/her personal growth, just 3% think this did not contribute to their growth, making this the lowest proportion among the five student services tested. Over time, it appears that students are more likely to say that their universities contributed very much to their growth in terms of using study skills/learning support services. In 2000, only 16% said very much, but this has grown steadily in 2003 (20%) and 2006 (26%), reaching 30% in 2009.

**Table 35: Student services: contributed very much to personal growth and development Q12**

| | All students | Group | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| h. Participating in international study or exchanges | 68% | 62% | 68% | 75% |
| m. Participating in student government | 39% | 39% | 35% | 42% |
| k. Participating in student clubs and organizations | 38% | 41% | 35% | 37% |
| b. Serving as a peer or residence advisor | 37% | 38% | 37% | 36% |
| a. Using study skills/learning support services | 30% | 33% | 26% | 28% |

Note: Percentages are based on those reporting experience.

There are several differences among demographic groups and how much student services contributed to their growth and development.

- Female (76%) students are more likely than male (56%) students to report that *participating in international study or exchanges* contributed very much to their personal growth.

- Students 22 years of age and younger are more likely than students 23 and older to report that *participating in international study or exchanges* and *serving as a peer or residence advisor* contributed very much to their personal growth.

### 4.1.2 Contribution by discipline

Among the five student services, only *serving as a peer or residence advisor* is statistically significant by discipline. Biological Science students are most likely to report this contributed very much to their growth, while Professional and Business students are least likely.

**Table 36: Contribution of faculty activities to growth and development by discipline**

| Service | Discipline | Very much |
|---|---|---|
| Serving as a peer or residence advisor | Biological Science | 48% |
| | Overall | 37% |
| | Professional | 26% |
| | Business | 26% |

## 4.2 Non-academic campus activities

As shown in Table 37, many students report taking part in non-academic events on campus.

- Almost 7 students in 10 report attending *campus social events.*
- About 6 students in 10 report that they attended *campus lectures* or *cultural events*. The proportion of students attending such on-campus cultural events appears to be growing. In 2003, 32% of students reported attending such events. This increased to 55% in 2006, and 61% in 2009.
- Four students in 10 report attending *home games for university athletic teams* or *participating in on-campus recreational or sports programs*. Students attending Group 1 universities (51%) are more likely to attend *homes games for university athletic teams* than students attending a Group 2 or Group 3 university (34% each).
- About 1 student in 3 reports *living on campus*. It appears the likelihood of living on campus decreases as university size increases. About 4 in 10 students attending a Group 1 university (43%) live on campus compared to 1 in 3 Group 2 university students (33%) and 1 in 4 Group 3 university students (26%).
- Slightly less than 3 in 10 students are *employed on campus*, while about 1 in 10 reports *being a teaching assistant.*

**Table 37: Involved in non-academic campus activities Q12**

| | All students (n=12,160) | Group | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 (n=5,339) | 2 (n=3,294) | 3 (n=3,527) |
| o. Attending campus social events | 68% | 72% | 64% | 66% |
| e. Attending campus lectures (in addition to regular classes) | 63% | 68% | 59% | 60% |
| f. Attending campus cultural events (theatre, concerts, art exhibits) | 61% | 66% | 57% | 59% |
| p. Attending home games of university athletic teams | 41% | 51% | 34% | 34% |
| q. Participating in on-campus student recreational and sports programs | 40% | 40% | 39% | 42% |
| i. Living on campus | 35% | 43% | 33% | 26% |
| d. Having other on-campus employment | 28% | 31% | 26% | 25% |
| c. Being a teaching assistant | 10% | 13% | 9% | 7% |

There are several differences among students and involvement in non-academic campus activities.

- Male (52%) students are more likely than female (34%) to have participated in *on-campus recreational or sports programs*.
- Students in Arts and Humanities (76%) programs are most likely to *attend campus cultural events*, while students in Professional programs (47%) are the least likely.
- *Participation in student recreational and sports programs* also varies by discipline. Students in Engineering (59%) and Biological Science (53%) programs are the most likely to report such participation, while those in Professional programs (27%) are the least likely.
- Younger students are more likely to report experience with many of these non-academic activities. Typically, the older a student is, the less likely they are to report experience *attending social events, attending home games of university athletic teams, participating in on-campus student recreational and sports programs,* and *living on campus*.

### 4.2.1 Contribution of non-academic activities

Among the students who participated in these on-campus non-academic activities, about half credited two activities with contributing very much to their personal growth and development.

- Although very few students had experience *being a teaching assistant,* over half of those with such experience indicate that it contributed very much to their personal growth and development. Just 3% say that it contributed nothing to their growth.
- Over half of those who experienced *living on campus* say that it contributed very much to their personal growth, while 4% say that it contributed nothing to their growth. The proportion of students who report *living on campus* contributed very much to their personal growth decreases with the age of the students, from 57% of students 20 and younger to 20% of those 30 and older.

Fewer of those who participated in other activities report that these activities contributed very much to their growth.

- About 4 students in 10 report that *having other on-campus employment* contributed very much to their personal growth, while 6% think it contributed nothing.
- About 3 students in 10 report *participating in on-campus student recreational and sports programs* and *campus lectures* contributed very much to their personal growth. Just 5% say *participating in on-campus student recreational and sports programs* and 2% say *campus lectures* did not contribute to their growth and development.
- About 1 student in 5 reports that attending *campus cultural activities* and *social events* contributed very much to his/her growth and development. In each case, 5% think they contributed nothing to their growth.

- About 1 student in 7 says that *attending home games of university athletic teams* contributed very much to his/her growth. Almost as many (12%) say that attending such events contributed nothing to their growth and development.

**Table 38: On-campus activities: contributed very much to personal growth and development Q12**

| | All students | Group | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| c. Being a teaching assistant | 55% | 57% | 57% | 47% |
| i. Living on campus | 52% | 52% | 54% | 50% |
| d. Having other on-campus employment | 43% | 44% | 44% | 40% |
| q. Participating in on-campus student recreational and sports programs | 29% | 31% | 28% | 27% |
| e. Attending campus lectures (in addition to regular classes) | 28% | 30% | 28% | 23% |
| o. Attending campus social events | 22% | 25% | 19% | 19% |
| f. Attending campus cultural events (theatre, concerts, art exhibits) | 20% | 23% | 17% | 17% |
| p. Attending home games of university athletic teams | 16% | 17% | 15% | 11% |

Note: Percentages are based on those reporting experience.

### 4.2.2 Contribution by discipline

As shown in Table 39, there is one statistically significant difference among disciplines and the contribution on-campus activities made to students' personal growth and development.

- Students in Arts and Humanities programs are most likely to report that *attending campus cultural events* contributed very much to their personal growth, while Physical Science students are least likely.

**Table 39: On-campus activities by discipline**

| Activity | Discipline | Very much |
|---|---|---|
| Attending campus cultural events | Arts and Humanities | 28% |
| | Overall | 20% |
| | Physical Science | 12% |

## 4.3 Interactions with others

Table 40 shows the proportion of students who report interactions with other students, including involvement in community service activities.

As would be expected, almost all students report having *interactions with other students* and *exposure to students from different cultures*. Half report being involved in either *on- or off-campus community service or volunteer activities*. *Participating in on-campus community service and volunteer activities* is less likely the older a graduating student is.

**Table 40: Interaction with others Q12**

| | All students (n=12,160) | Group | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 (n=5,339) | 2 (n=3,294) | 3 (n=3,527) |
| j. Interacting with other students | 99% | 99% | 98% | 98% |
| g. Being exposed to students from different cultures | 89% | 91% | 89% | 88% |
| Any community service/volunteer activity (net) | 50% | 53% | 49% | 46% |
| s. Participating in off-campus community service/volunteer activities | 40% | 44% | 38% | 36% |
| r. Participating in on-campus community service/volunteer activities | 31% | 35% | 29% | 28% |

### 4.3.1 Contribution of interactions with others

Among those who report such interactions:

- Six students in 10 report *interacting with other students* contributed very much to their personal growth and development. Only 1% say interacting with other students did not contribute to their personal growth.
- About 4 in 10 indicate that either *off-campus* or *on-campus community service and volunteer activities* contributed very much to their personal growth. In each case, 3% report that such activities contributed nothing to their growth.
- About 3 students in 10 report that *exposure to students from different cultures* contributed very much to their personal growth and development. Just 4% say it contributed nothing to their personal growth.

**Table 41: Interaction with others: contributed very much to personal growth and development Q12**

| | All students | Group | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| j. Interacting with other students | 60% | 63% | 58% | 59% |
| s. Participating in off-campus community service/volunteer activities | 44% | 45% | 45% | 42% |
| r. Participating in on-campus community service/volunteer activities | 36% | 37% | 35% | 33% |
| g. Being exposed to students from different cultures | 31% | 31% | 31% | 32% |

Note: Percentages are based on those reporting experience.

### 4.3.2 Hours engaged in community service

As shown in Table 42, although half of students had experience with volunteering, either on or off-campus, more than 4 students in 10 (45%) devote time to volunteering on a weekly basis. On average, the typical student spends about 2 hours a week on such activities. Among those who spend time volunteering, the average number of hours doubles to about 4 hours per week.

**Table 42: Average number of hours engaged in community service/volunteer activities per week Q13**

| | All students (n=12,160) | Group | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 (n=5,339) | 2 (n=3,294) | 3 (n=3,527) |
| None | 55% | 52% | 56% | 59% |
| 1 or 2 | 19% | 22% | 17% | 18% |
| 3 to 5 | 17% | 17% | 17% | 16% |
| 6 or more | 9% | 9% | 9% | 8% |
| Average hours (all respondents) | 1.9 | 2.0 | 1.9 | 1.7 |
| Average hours (those who participate) | 3.8 | 3.7 | 4.0 | 3.6 |

Note: Columns may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

## 5.0 Use of and satisfaction with facilities and services

We asked students to rate their use of and satisfaction with 16 different facilities and services at their universities.

### 5.1 General facilities and services

We asked students who had experience using the facility or service to indicate their level of satisfaction with each of six general services.

#### 5.1.1 Use of general facilities and services

Some facilities and services are, by their very nature, used by almost all students, while the use of others is based on the students' circumstances. As Table 43 (next page) shows:

- As might be expected, virtually all students have used the *campus bookstore* and *library facilities*.
- Over 8 in 10 report using *computing services*.
- About 7 students in 10 have used campus *athletic facilities*. The use of athletic facilities appears to have grown compared to three years ago. As we have found in the past, younger students are more likely to report using these facilities. For example, 78% of students 21 years and younger report using them, compared to 40% of students age 30 and older.
- Over 4 students in 10 have used *campus medical services.* There is some indication that younger students are more likely to utilize this on-campus service. Although it falls just below the threshold for statistically significance, over half of those 21 years of age or younger have used campus medical services, compared with just 26% of those 30 years of age or older. This likely reflects the fact that older students use alternative medical service, such as their own doctor.
- About 1 student in 3 has used *university residence* at some point during their time at their institution. Students attending Group 3 universities are the least likely to report such use, while Group 1 students are the most likely. Younger students are also more likely to report using university residence at their current institution. Over half of those 21 or younger report using such facilities, and it declines steadily with just 6% of those 30 and older saying they have been in residence.

| Table 43: Use of facilities/services Q16 | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | All students (n=12,160) | Group | | |
| | | 1 (n=5,339) | 2 (n=3,294) | 3 (n=3,527) |
| g. Campus bookstores | 97% | 98% | 97% | 97% |
| h. Library facilities | 97% | 97% | 97% | 96% |
| i. Computing services | 86% | 87% | 84% | 86% |
| j. Athletic facilities | 71% | 72% | 68% | 71% |
| l. Campus medical services | 46% | 47% | 46% | 44% |
| r. University residences | 36% | 44% | 34% | 27% |

Use of the university's *athletic facilities* is more common among students in Engineering (86%) and Biological Science (80%) programs and less common among students in Professional (55%) programs.

### 5.1.2 Satisfaction with general facilities and services

As shown in Table 44, among students who used these services, some 8 in 10 or more are satisfied or very satisfied with them.

- This includes more than 1 in 3 students who are very satisfied with *library facilities* (36%), *campus medical services* (35%), or *athletic facilities* (34%).
- Slightly less than 3 in 10 students is very satisfied with *university residence* or *computer facilities* (28% each).
- About 1 in 5 is very satisfied (20%) with the *campus bookstore*.

| Table 44: Satisfaction with general facilities/services (% very satisfied/satisfied) Q16 | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | All students | Group | | |
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| h. Library facilities | 90% | 87% | 92% | 93% |
| i. Computing services | 89% | 86% | 92% | 91% |
| l. Campus medical services | 87% | 85% | 90% | 86% |
| j. Athletic facilities | 86% | 85% | 90% | 85% |
| g. Campus bookstores | 79% | 77% | 79% | 83% |
| r. University residences | 79% | 80% | 81% | 76% |
| Note: Percentages are based on those who have used the service. | | | | |

## 5.2 Special services

We asked students who had experience using the service to indicate their level of satisfaction with each of 10 special services.

### 5.2.1 Use of special services

Table 45 (next page) shows students' use of various special services.

- The most commonly used special service is *academic advising*, used by slightly more than 3 in 4 students. Students attending Group 1 universities (81%) and Group 2 universities (77%) are more likely to have used this service than those in Group 3 universities (68%). Although this is similar to the past, in 2009 this finding falls slightly below the criteria for meeting statistically significance.

- About 1 student in 3 reports having used: *services for co-op programs, internships, and other practical experiences related to their program; study skills/learning support services;* and *services for students in need of financial aid*. There appears to be more students reporting the use of study skills/learning support services than there were three years ago (when 26% reported the use of such services). This change appears to be most common at Group 1 universities, where 28% of students report use of these services in 2006 and 39% report it now.

- In 2009, students in Group 1 universities (40%) are more likely that those in Group 2 (33%) or Group 3 (23%) to say they have used *services for students in need of financial aid.*

- About 3 in 10 used *career counselling services* and *employment services*.

- About 1 student in 5 reports using *personal counselling services*.

- Approximately 1 student in 10 reports using *international student services*.

- Less than 1 student in 10 reports using services designed for specific types of students, including services for *disabled* or *First Nations* students.

| Table 45: Use of special services Q16 | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | All students (n=12,160) | Group | | |
| | | 1 (n=5,339) | 2 (n=3,294) | 3 (n=3,527) |
| a. Academic advising | 76% | 81% | 77% | 68% |
| k. Services for co-op program, internship, and other practical experiences related to your program | 35% | 34% | 37% | 34% |
| b. Study skills/learning support services | 34% | 39% | 35% | 27% |
| p. Services for students needing financial aid | 33% | 40% | 33% | 23% |
| e. Career counselling services | 31% | 29% | 34% | 31% |
| m. Employment services | 30% | 30% | 27% | 33% |
| c. Personal counselling services | 21% | 23% | 21% | 18% |
| o. International student services | 11% | 10% | 12% | 12% |
| n. Services for students with disabilities | 8% | 8% | 7% | 7% |
| q. Services for First Nations students | 4% | 5% | 4% | 4% |

For some special services, students' use varies by discipline. Special services that differ include:

- *Academic advising*. Use of academic advising appears to vary by discipline. For example, while a significant majority of students in Arts and Humanities (81%), Social Science (81%), and Education (81%) programs report using academic advising, over half of students in Professional (55%) and Engineering (57%) programs report using it.

- *Career counselling.* Students in Business (43%) and Engineering (39%) programs are the most likely to report using this service, while those in Education (21%) and Professional (16%) programs are the least.

- *Employment services*. About half of students in Engineering (51%) programs and about one-third of students in Business programs (36%) report using employment services. Less than 1 student in 5 who is in a Professional program (15%) used these services.

- *Services for co-op program, internship, and other practical experiences related to their program*. Students in Education (76%), Professional (59%), and Engineering (54%) programs are most likely to use this service, compared to students in Arts and Humanities (21%) and Social Science (24%) programs.

### 5.2.2 Satisfaction with special services

The majority of students – ranging from 66% to 86% – who have used these special services are satisfied with them (see Table 46).

- *Academic advising* is the only specialty service used by a majority of students, and while about 3 in 4 of those who used it are at least satisfied with their experience, including 24% who are very satisfied, just as many are dissatisfied with their experience (22%).

- Although 86% of students who used *study skills* or *learning support services* are satisfied, just 21% are very satisfied, which is one of the lowest proportions among all of these special services. However, only 1 in 10 is dissatisfied.

- About 8 students in 10 are satisfied with *employment services; services for co-op programs, internships, and other practical experiences related to their program*; *services for students needing financial aid;* and *services for international students.* Included in this are many who report being very satisfied with these special services. Some of the most satisfied were students who used the *co-op programs* (34% very satisfied) and *services for international students* (33%). Less often very satisfied were students who used *services for students needing financial aid* (25% very satisfied) and *employment services* (21%).

- About 3 students in 4 who had used these services report being satisfied: *personal counselling services, academic advising* (as we saw above), *services for students with disabilities,* and *career counselling.* Those who used services for students with disabilities (38%) and personal counselling services (31%) are often very satisfied. Those who used career counselling are less likely to be very satisfied (22%).

- *Services for First Nations students* were used only by a few students, but about 2 in 3 who did were satisfied, including 22% who were very satisfied. However, this does not mean the remainder were dissatisfied. While 1 in 10 was dissatisfied, 25% did not provide a rating for their satisfaction. Indeed, if these are not included in the calculation, 88% were satisfied, including 30% who were very satisfied.

**Table 46: Satisfaction with special services (% very satisfied/satisfied) Q16**

| | All students | Group | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| b. Study skills/learning support services | 86% | 88% | 86% | 82% |
| m. Employment services | 83% | 82% | 82% | 83% |
| k. Services for co-op program, internship, and other practical experiences related to your program | 83% | 85% | 84% | 80% |
| p. Services for students needing financial aid | 81% | 83% | 80% | 80% |
| o. International student services | 81% | 81% | 83% | 81% |
| c. Personal counselling services | 77% | 79% | 77% | 74% |
| a. Academic advising | 77% | 78% | 78% | 74% |
| n. Services for students with disabilities | 76% | 76% | 78% | 76% |
| e. Career counselling services | 75% | 75% | 75% | 76% |
| q. Services for First Nations students | 66% | 67% | 65% | 65% |

Note: Percentages are based on those who have used the service.

Among disciplines, there are a few differences in students' satisfaction with special services. As shown in Table 47:

- Students in other fields are the most likely to be very satisfied with their *co-op programs*, whereas students in Engineering programs (30%) are the least likely.

- Students in Arts and Humanities and Professional programs are more likely to be very satisfied with *personal counselling services*, while students in Engineering programs are less likely to be very satisfied.

**Table 47: Satisfaction with special services by discipline**

| Service | Discipline | % very satisfied |
|---|---|---|
| Services for co-op, internship, etc. | Other fields | 50% |
| | Overall | 36% |
| | Engineering | 30% |
| Personal counselling services | Arts and Humanities | 36% |
| | Professional | 36% |
| | Overall | 31% |
| | Engineering | 17% |

## 6.0 Skill growth and development

We asked students to grade their universities in terms of contributing to their growth and development of specific skills. In each case, students were asked to use a five-point grading scale:

5 = A or Excellent
4 = B or Good
3 = C or Fair
2 = D or Poor
1 = F or Fail.

In this section, we group each of 31 skills into broad themes and report the average ratings students gave to their universities for contributing to their growth and development.

### 6.1 Academic skills

We asked students to rate their university experience in terms of how it contributed to the growth and development of six academic skills.

All students rate their universities in terms of contributing to students' *broad knowledge of their major field of study*, and almost all did for *computer literacy skills* and *preparation for postgraduate study or professional school*. Most also rate their universities' contribution to their ability to *analyze quantitative problems*, *mathematical skills*, and *understanding and applying scientific principles and methods*.

Of these academic skills, only one received an average higher than a B:

- On average, students give *broad knowledge of my major field of study* a rating of almost a B+ (falling between good and excellent). Almost 9 in 10 rate their university as doing a good or excellent job. In fact, 50% of students rate their university as excellent (giving it a grade of an A) for its contribution to their growth in this area.

On average, students rate the growth and development of four of the other academic skills as a B-. This means that, for most of these, about 2 students in 3 rate their university as doing a good or excellent job.

- In each case, many students rate their university as excellent, giving them a grade of an A for contributing to their: *preparation for postgraduate study or professional school* (29%); *computer literacy skills* (25%); *understanding and applying scientific principles and methods* (23%); and *analyzing quantitative problems* (22%). On the last skill, male students (73%) are more likely than female (61%) to rate their university's contribution to their growth and development in terms of analyzing quantitative problems as good or excellent.

For one academic skill, participants rated their university a C+.

- *Mathematical skills* received the lowest ratings of this group, at 3.6. Of students who provide a rating, about as many give a rating of excellent (19%) as rate their institution as poor (11%) or fail (3%) combined. Male students (62%) are more likely to rate their university's contribution to their growth and development in this area as good or excellent than are female students (51%).

Table 48 shows the percentage of students who rate their university and the average rating out of 5 that students give to their universities for each of the six academic skills.

**Table 48: Academic skills: growth and development Q14/Q15**

| | All students (n=12,160) | Group | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 (n=5,339) | 2 (n=3,294) | 3 (n=3,527) |
| **Percent who graded the university** | | | | |
| 15o. Broad knowledge of my major field of study | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |
| 14k. Computer literacy skills | 93% | 93% | 92% | 93% |
| 15q. Preparation for postgraduate study or professional school | 92% | 92% | 92% | 91% |
| 14j. Analyzing quantitative problems | 90% | 90% | 90% | 91% |
| 14i. Mathematical skills | 84% | 85% | 82% | 86% |
| 15b. Understanding and applying scientific principles and methods | 78% | 78% | 74% | 82% |
| **Average grade (out of 5)** | | | | |
| 15o. Broad knowledge of my major field of study | 4.4 | 4.4 | 4.4 | 4.3 |
| 14k. Computer literacy skills | 3.8 | 3.9 | 3.8 | 3.7 |
| 14j. Analyzing quantitative problems | 3.8 | 3.8 | 3.8 | 3.8 |
| 15q. Preparation for postgraduate study or professional school | 3.8 | 3.9 | 3.8 | 3.7 |
| 15b. Understanding and applying scientific principles and methods | 3.8 | 3.8 | 3.7 | 3.8 |
| 14i. Mathematical skills | 3.6 | 3.6 | 3.5 | 3.6 |

Note: Those students who did not respond or claimed that it was 'not applicable' have been excluded from the calculation of the average. 5=A:Excellent, 4=B:Good, 3=C:Fair, 2=D:Poor, 1=F:Fail.

On average, ratings provided by students of their university's contribution to their growth and development in these academic areas appears to be somewhat higher than in 2006, the last time we surveyed graduates. Although these differences are not statistically significant, they do suggest that students are more positive about their experiences at university.

### 6.1.1 Growth and development of academic skills by discipline

It is not surprising that various disciplines emphasize different knowledge and skills. Depending on the discipline, students often provide significantly different ratings of their university on these academic skills.

- Students in Engineering and Physical Science programs tend to give higher grades to their universities for contributing to their growth and development of *computer literacy skills, analyzing quantitative problems, understanding and applying scientific principles and methods* (as did those in the Biological Science programs), and *mathematical skills*.

- With the exception of *computer literacy*, students in Arts and Humanities programs tend to give their universities significantly lower grades on these same items than students in other disciplines. Students in Social Science, Professional, and Business programs also give lower than average grades to some of these skills.

Table 49 presents the significant differences for academic skills.

**Table 49: Contribution to academic skills by discipline**

| Academic skill | Discipline | Average |
|---|---|---|
| Computer literacy skills | Engineering | 4.2 |
| | Physical Science | 4.2 |
| | Overall | 3.8 |
| Analyzing quantitative problems | Engineering | 4.5 |
| | Physical Science | 4.3 |
| | Overall | 3.8 |
| | Arts and Humanities | 3.4 |
| Understanding and applying scientific principles and methods | Biological Science | 4.3 |
| | Engineering | 4.2 |
| | Physical Science | 4.1 |
| | Overall | 3.8 |
| | Business | 3.5 |
| | Arts and Humanities | 3.4 |
| Mathematical skills | Engineering | 4.5 |
| | Physical Science | 4.2 |
| | Overall | 3.6 |
| | Professional | 3.3 |
| | Social Sciences | 3.3 |
| | Arts and Humanities | 3.1 |

## 6.2 Communication skills

Almost all students rate their universities in terms of contribution to communication skills, with the exception of *second or third language skills,* which just over half (52%) of students are able to rate.

For three of the four skills, students give their university an average rating of a B, which suggests that most students think their university did a good job in these areas. Indeed, about 8 in 10 of those who rate these items say their university did a good or excellent job.

- Generally, students rate their universities' contribution to their growth and development of *written communication* as either good (48%) or excellent (35%), while just a few rate it as poor (2%) or fail (1%).

- They also award their universities high grades for contributing to the growth and development of *oral communication*, giving institutions either a B (good – 48%) or an A (excellent – 31%). Just a few rate it as a D (poor – 3%) or F (fail – 1%).

- Students give similar ratings to their universities' contribution to *cooperative interaction in groups.* Most rate their institutions as either good (43%) or excellent (34%), while few say the institutions deserve a poor (4%) or failing (1%) grade.

Students give their universities little better than a C (fair) for their contributions to *second or third language skills*. In fact, while almost half rate their university as good (31%) or excellent (17%), many rate it as poor (17%) or fail (10%).

See Table 50 for students' ratings of their university's contribution to their communication skills.

**Table 50: Communication skills: growth and development Q14/Q15**

| | All students (n=12,160) | Group 1 (n=5,339) | Group 2 (n=3,294) | Group 3 (n=3,527) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Percent who graded the university** | | | | |
| 14a. Written communication skills | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |
| 14b. Oral communication skills | 100% | 100% | 100% | 99% |
| 14g. Cooperative interaction in groups | 99% | 99% | 99% | 99% |
| 15a. Second or third language skills | 52% | 47% | 54% | 56% |
| **Average grade (out of 5)** | | | | |
| 14a. Written communication skills | 4.1 | 4.2 | 4.1 | 4.1 |
| 14b. Oral communication skills | 4.1 | 4.1 | 4.0 | 3.9 |
| 14g. Cooperative interaction in groups | 4.0 | 4.1 | 4.0 | 4.0 |
| 15a. Second or third language skills | 3.3 | 3.2 | 3.3 | 3.3 |

Note: Those students who did not respond or claimed that it was 'not applicable' have been excluded from the calculation of the average. 5=A:Excellent, 4=B:Good, 3=C:Fair, 2=D:Poor, 1=F:Fail.

### 6.2.1 Growth and development of communication skills by discipline

As shown in Table 51, there are significant differences among disciplines for all communication skills tested.

- For almost all communication skills, students in Physical Science or Engineering programs give the lowest grades. Arts and Humanities and Social Science students give lower grades on average to *cooperative interactions in groups.*

- Students in Arts and Humanities programs give higher marks to their institutions in terms of developing *written communication* and *second or third language skills,* while students in Education programs give the highest marks for *cooperative interaction in groups* and *oral communication skills*. Business students also give higher marks on average to their university in terms of cooperative interaction in groups.

**Table 51: Contribution to communication skills by discipline**

| Communication skill | Discipline | Average |
|---|---|---|
| Written communication skills | Arts and Humanities | 4.4 |
| | Overall | 4.1 |
| | Physical Science | 3.8 |
| | Engineering | 3.8 |
| Oral communication skills | Education | 4.2 |
| | Overall | 4.1 |
| | Engineering | 3.8 |
| | Physical Science | 3.8 |
| Cooperative interaction in groups | Education | 4.3 |
| | Business | 4.3 |
| | Overall | 4.0 |
| | Physical Science | 3.9 |
| | Arts and Humanities | 3.9 |
| | Social Science | 3.9 |
| Second or third language skills | Arts and Humanities | 3.6 |
| | Overall | 3.3 |
| | Engineering | 2.8 |

## 6.3 Learning skills

Virtually all students are able to provide a rating of the seven items grouped as learning skills. On average, students tend to provide a rating of good – that is, a B – for each learning skill.

Almost 9 students in 10 rate their university as good or excellent in terms of contribution to students' growth and development in terms of *thinking logically and analytically.* Some 44% rate their university as good, while another 43% rate it as excellent.

About 8 students in 10 rate their university as good or excellent in terms of contributing to their:

- *Ability to access information.* Some 44% rate their university as good and 39% as excellent.
- *Skills for planning and completing projects* (45% good and 36% excellent)
- *Ability to understand abstract reasoning* (47% good and 32% excellent)
- *Commitment to lifelong learning* (39% good and 43% excellent)

About 3 students in 4 rate their university as good or excellent in terms of contributing to their growth and development in the following areas:

- *Effective study and learning skills.* Some 47% rate their university as good, while another 28% rate it as excellent.
- *Identifying and solving problems.* Some 52% rate their university as good, while 27% rate it as excellent.

See Table 52 for their ratings of analytical and learning skills.

**Table 52: Analytical/learning skills: growth and development Q14/Q15**

| | All students (n=12,160) | Group 1 (n=5,339) | Group 2 (n=3,294) | Group 3 (n=3,527) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Percent who graded the university** | | | | |
| 14c. Effective study and learning skills | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |
| 14e. Thinking logically and analytically | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |
| 14l. Ability to access information | 99% | 99% | 100% | 99% |
| 14d. Ability to understand abstract reasoning | 99% | 100% | 99% | 99% |
| 14m. Skills for planning and completing projects | 99% | 99% | 99% | 99% |
| 15p. Commitment to lifelong learning | 99% | 99% | 99% | 97% |
| 15c. Identifying and solving problems | 98% | 98% | 97% | 98% |
| **Average grade (out of 5)** | | | | |
| 14e. Thinking logically and analytically | 4.3 | 4.3 | 4.2 | 4.2 |
| 14l. Ability to access information | 4.2 | 4.2 | 4.2 | 4.2 |
| 15p. Commitment to lifelong learning | 4.2 | 4.3 | 4.2 | 4.1 |
| 14d. Ability to understand abstract reasoning | 4.1 | 4.1 | 4.1 | 4.0 |
| 14m. Skills for planning and completing projects | 4.1 | 4.2 | 4.1 | 4.0 |
| 14c. Effective study and learning skills | 4.0 | 4.1 | 4.0 | 3.9 |
| 15c. Identifying and solving problems | 4.0 | 4.1 | 4.0 | 4.0 |

Note: Those students who did not respond or claimed that it was 'not applicable' have been excluded from the calculation of the average. 5=A:Excellent, 4=B:Good, 3=C:Fair, 2=D:Poor, 1=F:Fail.

Compared to three years ago, graduating students' ratings of their university's contribution to their growth in these analytical and learning skills has increased. While most of these differences are not statistically significant and only suggest changes, one change is significant – students' perceptions of their institution's contribution to *commitment to lifelong learning* has received higher grades over time. For example, in 2003, 29% rated their university as excellent; this increased to 34% in 2006, and 43% in 2009.

### 6.3.1 Growth and development of learning skills by discipline

There were few significant differences by discipline.

- On average, students in Education programs give higher marks for *commitment to lifelong learning*, while those in Business, Engineering, or Physical Science programs give the lowest marks.
- Students in Engineering and Science programs give higher grades to their universities for contributing to their growth and development in *identifying and solving problems.* Students in other programs tend to give grades that are close to the overall average.

**Table 53: Contribution to learning skills by discipline**

| Learning skill | Discipline | Average |
|---|---|---|
| Commitment to lifelong learning | Education | 4.4 |
| | Overall | 4.2 |
| | Business | 4.0 |
| | Engineering | 4.0 |
| | Physical Science | 4.0 |
| Identifying and solving problems | Engineering | 4.3 |
| | Physical Science | 4.2 |
| | Biological Science | 4.2 |
| | Overall | 4.0 |

## 6.4 Life skills: working and knowledge skills

We grouped a number of skills that are neither academic nor learning skills, but apply throughout a student's life into two categories: working and knowledge skills, and personal and relationship skills. In this section, we report on working and knowledge skills. On average, students rate their university from a C to a B+ on seven skills.

- Among students who rate their university on the given skill, the only working and knowledge skill to receive an average rating higher than a B is *working independently.* About 9 students in 10 report their university had done a good (38%) or excellent (52%) job of contributing to their development in this area.

In three cases, the average ratings suggest that students give their universities a B. For each, about 2 students in 3 rate their university as good or excellent in its contribution to:

- *understanding national and global issues* (39% good, 30% excellent)
- *living in an international world* (38% good, 30% excellent)
- *general skills and knowledge relevant for employment* (40% good, 27% excellent)

Students give their universities a C+ in two areas, with about 6 in 10 rating their university as good or excellent for the contribution to:

- *Specific employment-related skills and knowledge*. Although many rate their university as good (36%) or excellent (24%) for its contribution to *specific employment-related skills and knowledge,* some give their university a poor (11%) or failing (5%) grade.

- *Appreciation of the arts*. Many rate their university as good (32%) or excellent (24%) in contributing to students' *appreciation of the arts.* Again, many rate their university as poor (12%) or failing (4%) in this regard.

Students give the lowest average grade, a little over a C, to *entrepreneurial skills.* About 4 students in 10 rate their university's contribution to these skills as good (28%) or excellent (12%). However, many give their university a poor (18%) or failing (8%) grade.

See Table 54 for students' ratings of working and knowledge skills.

**Table 54: Life skills: working and knowledge skills Q14/Q15**

| | All students (n=12,160) | Group 1 (n=5,339) | Group 2 (n=3,294) | Group 3 (n=3,527) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Percent who graded the university** | | | | |
| 14f. Working independently | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |
| 15r. General skills and knowledge relevant for employment | 99% | 99% | 99% | 99% |
| 15s. Specific employment-related skills and knowledge | 97% | 97% | 97% | 97% |
| 15l. Understanding national and global issues | 96% | 97% | 97% | 95% |
| 15m. Living in an international world | 93% | 93% | 93% | 92% |
| 15j. Appreciation of the arts | 89% | 91% | 89% | 88% |
| 15t. Entrepreneurial skills | 79% | 77% | 78% | 82% |
| **Average grade (out of 5)** | | | | |
| 14f. Working independently | 4.4 | 4.4 | 4.4 | 4.4 |
| 15l. Understanding national and global issues | 3.9 | 4.0 | 3.9 | 3.8 |
| 15m. Living in an international world | 3.9 | 3.9 | 3.9 | 3.8 |
| 15r. General skills and knowledge relevant for employment | 3.8 | 3.9 | 3.8 | 3.7 |
| 15s. Specific employment-related skills and knowledge | 3.6 | 3.7 | 3.6 | 3.5 |
| 15j. Appreciation of the arts | 3.6 | 3.7 | 3.6 | 3.4 |
| 15t. Entrepreneurial skills | 3.2 | 3.3 | 3.1 | 3.0 |

Note: Those students who did not respond or claimed that it was 'not applicable' have been excluded from the calculation of the average. 5=A:Excellent, 4=B:Good, 3=C:Fair, 2=D:Poor, 1=F:Fail.

Again, graduating students in 2009 appear to give their institutions higher grades than did graduating students in 2006. In all cases, the average ratings are higher in 2009 than they were three years earlier. Again, most of these changes are not statistically significant, although a couple are:

- *Understanding national and global issues.* Students' ratings of their universities as excellent has steadily increased in each year of the survey from 15% in 2000 to 30% in 2009.

- *Entrepreneurial skills.* Students' ratings of their universities have increased steadily since 2003, when 25% rated them as good or excellent, to 40% in 2009.

### 6.4.1 Growth and development of working and knowledge skills by discipline

Table 55 (next page) shows the significant differences by discipline. Five out of six of these working and knowledge skills have significantly different ratings depending on the students' disciplines. For example, on average:

- Students in Physical Science and Engineering programs give their universities lower grades for contributing to their ability to *understand national and global issues* as well as *living in an international world*. Students in Biological Science programs also give lower than average grades to their university on understanding national and global issues.

- Students in Education and Professional programs give higher ratings to their universities in terms of contributing to their *general skills and knowledge relevant for employment.*

- Students in Education and Professional programs also give the highest ratings to their universities for contributing to *specific employment-related skills and knowledge*. Students in Social Science programs give the lowest average ratings on this skill.

- Students in Arts and Humanities programs give the highest ratings for universities' contribution to their *appreciation of the arts.* Education students also give a higher than average rating on this skill. Students in Science (Biological or Physical), Business, and Engineering programs give the lowest average grade.

- As might be expected, students in Business programs give the highest grade to their universities for contributing to their *entrepreneurial skills*. Students in Social Science and Science programs give the lowest grade for this skill.

| Table 55: Contribution to working and knowledge skills by discipline | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Working and knowledge skill** | **Discipline** | **Average** |
| Understanding national and global issues | Social Sciences | 4.1 |
| | Overall | 3.9 |
| | Biological Science | 3.7 |
| | Physical Science | 3.6 |
| | Engineering | 3.6 |
| Living in an international world | Overall | 3.9 |
| | Engineering | 3.6 |
| | Physical Science | 3.6 |
| General skills and knowledge relevant for employment | Education | 4.1 |
| | Professional | 4.1 |
| | Overall | 3.8 |
| Specific employment-related skills and knowledge | Education | 4.1 |
| | Professional | 4.1 |
| | Overall | 3.6 |
| | Social Science | 3.4 |
| Appreciation of the arts | Arts and Humanities | 4.2 |
| | Education | 3.8 |
| | Overall | 3.6 |
| | Biological Science | 3.3 |
| | Business | 3.3 |
| | Physical Science | 3.1 |
| | Engineering | 2.9 |
| Entrepreneurial skills | Business | 3.6 |
| | Overall | 3.2 |
| | Social Science | 3.0 |
| | Biological Science | 3.0 |
| | Physical Science | 2.9 |

## 6.5 Life skills: personal and relationship skills

Table 56 presents the results for nine items grouped as personal and relationship skills. Other than spiritual development (74%), virtually all students rate their universities on each of the remaining personal and relationship skills.

On average, students give their university a grade of B (that is, good) for five of these skills.

- Approximately 8 students in 10 rate their university as good (40%) or excellent (39%) in terms of contributing to their growth and development in *accepting people from different cultures.*

- About 8 in 10 students also rate their university as good (49%) or excellent (32%) in terms of contributing to the growth and development of their *interpersonal skills.*

- About 3 students in 4 rate their university as good (44%) or excellent (32%) in terms of *moral and ethical development.*

- Similarly, 3 students in 4 rate their university as good (46%) or excellent (29%) in terms of contributing to their *persistence with difficult tasks.*

- Again, about 3 in 4 rate their university as good (43%) or excellent (31%) in terms of contributing to their *personal self-confidence.*

Students grade their university a B-, on average, on three skills.

- Over 7 students in 10 rate their university as good (43%) or excellent (28%) in contributing to their growth and development in terms of *personal time management skills.*

- Similarly, 7 in 10 rate their university as good (40%) or excellent (29%) in contributing to their *leadership skills.*

- About 2 in 3 rate their university as good (41%) or excellent (26%) in contributing to their *ability to address issues in personal life.*

On average, students rate their university a C, or fair, for contributing to their *spiritual development*, as approximately 4 students in 10 rate their university as good (26%) or excellent (15%) in this regard. However, almost as many students give universities a poor (19%) or failing (11%) grade. Students at Group 1 universities tend to give their universities slightly higher grades in this regard. For example, 19% of Group 1 students rate their university as excellent, compared with 13% of Group 2 and 9% of Group 3 students.

**Table 56: Life skills: personal and relationship skills Q14/Q15**

| | All students (n=12,160) | Group | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 (n=5,339) | 2 (n=3,294) | 3 (n=3,527) |
| **Percent who graded the university** | | | | |
| 15d. Personal time management skills | 99% | 99% | 99% | 99% |
| 15h. Interpersonal skills | 99% | 99% | 99% | 98% |
| 15e. Persistence with difficult tasks | 99% | 99% | 99% | 99% |
| 15g. Self-confidence | 98% | 99% | 98% | 98% |
| 15f. Leadership skills | 97% | 98% | 96% | 97% |
| 15i. Moral and ethical development | 97% | 97% | 96% | 97% |
| 15k. Accepting people from different cultures | 96% | 97% | 96% | 95% |
| 14h. Ability to address issues in personal life | 96% | 96% | 96% | 95% |
| 15n. Spiritual development | 74% | 77% | 74% | 72% |
| **Average grade (out of 5)** | | | | |
| 15k. Accepting people from different cultures | 4.1 | 4.2 | 4.1 | 4.0 |
| 15h. Interpersonal skills | 4.1 | 4.2 | 4.1 | 4.0 |
| 15e. Persistence with difficult tasks | 4.0 | 4.0 | 3.9 | 3.9 |
| 15g. Self-confidence | 4.0 | 4.1 | 4.0 | 3.8 |
| 15i. Moral and ethical development | 4.0 | 4.1 | 4.0 | 3.8 |
| 15d. Personal time management skills | 3.9 | 4.0 | 3.9 | 3.8 |
| 15f. Leadership skills | 3.9 | 4.0 | 3.8 | 3.7 |
| 14h. Ability to address issues in personal life | 3.8 | 3.9 | 3.8 | 3.6 |
| 15n. Spiritual development | 3.1 | 3.3 | 3.1 | 2.9 |

Note: Those students who did not respond or claimed that it was 'not applicable' have been excluded from the calculation of the average. 5=A:Excellent, 4=B:Good, 3=C:Fair, 2=D:Poor, 1=F:Fail.

Again, the average grades assigned by students to their universities in 2009 tend to be higher than in 2003, although these differences are not statistically significant, except in one case. The proportions of students who rate their institution as excellent in terms of contributing to their *moral and ethical development* have steadily increased: 18% in 2003, 25% in 2006, and 32% in 2009.

### 6.5.1 Growth and development of personal/relationship skills by discipline

There are only a few differences among disciplines, as shown in Table 57.

- On average, students in Professional programs give higher ratings to their universities than students in other disciplines for both *moral and ethical* and *spiritual development*. Students in Physical Science and Engineering programs give slightly lower ratings. This difference, while suggestive, is not statistically significant.

- Students in Arts and Humanities and Professional programs give their universities higher grades in terms of their *spiritual development*, while students in Physical Science and Engineering programs, on average, give lower grades.

**Table 57: Contribution to personal and relationship skills by discipline**

| Personal and relationship skill | Discipline | Average |
|---|---|---|
| Moral and ethical development | Professional | 4.2 |
| | Overall | 4.0 |
| | Engineering | 3.8 |
| | Physical Science | 3.7 |
| Spiritual development | Arts and Humanities | 3.4 |
| | Professional | 3.3 |
| | Overall | 3.1 |
| | Physical Science | 2.9 |
| | Engineering | 2.8 |

## 6.6 Most important factors

From a list of 20 factors, we asked students to identify the two most important areas for a student's growth and development.[4] As shown in Table 58, students' choices are diverse, and no single factor is seen as most important to more than 3 in 10 students.

- Students most commonly identify *self-confidence* as the area that is most important in a student's growth and development. Some 3 students in 10 (30%) identified this area as the most important for a student's growth and development.

- About 1 student in 5 selected *personal time management skills* (21%) and *identifying and solving problems* (19%) as the most important areas for a student's growth and development.

[4] Students were asked to rate 20 of the 33 areas.

- Other commonly selected areas are *commitment to lifelong learning* (15%), *broad knowledge of their field of study* (14%), *general skills and knowledge relevant for employment* (14%), and *interpersonal skills* (13%).

- The areas that students choose least often as the most important were *entrepreneurial skills* (1%) and *appreciation of the arts* (2%). These are also the areas in which students say their universities did a poorer job of contributing to their growth and development. Students gave universities a C+ for contributing to their *appreciation of the arts,* and a C for *entrepreneurial skills*.

**Table 58: Most important factor to a student's personal growth and development Q15_2**

| | All students (n=12,160) | Group 1 (n=5,339) | Group 2 (n=3,294) | Group 3 (n=3,527) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Self-confidence | 30% | 32% | 30% | 28% |
| Personal time management skills | 21% | 21% | 21% | 20% |
| Identifying and solving problems | 19% | 17% | 18% | 21% |
| Commitment to lifelong learning | 15% | 16% | 16% | 13% |
| Broad knowledge of my major field of study | 14% | 15% | 13% | 14% |
| General skills and knowledge relevant for employment | 14% | 13% | 13% | 16% |
| Interpersonal skills | 13% | 12% | 15% | 14% |
| Leadership skills | 12% | 12% | 12% | 11% |
| Specific employment-related skills and knowledge | 11% | 10% | 12% | 10% |
| Moral and ethical development | 10% | 11% | 10% | 9% |
| Persistence with difficult tasks | 8% | 8% | 9% | 9% |
| Preparation for post-graduate study or professional school | 7% | 7% | 6% | 6% |
| Understanding national and global issues | 6% | 6% | 7% | 6% |
| Understanding and applying scientific principles/methods | 5% | 5% | 5% | 7% |
| Living in an international world | 3% | 3% | 3% | 3% |
| Spiritual development | 3% | 4% | 2% | 2% |
| Accepting people from different cultures | 3% | 3% | 4% | 3% |
| Second or third language skills | 3% | 3% | 3% | 4% |
| Appreciation of the arts | 2% | 2% | 1% | 2% |
| Entrepreneurial skills | 1% | <1% | <1% | 1% |

Note: Respondents provided two responses. Totals may not sum to 100%.

## 7.0 Student satisfaction

In this section, we report on graduating students' satisfaction with their university experiences.

### 7.1 Satisfaction with faculty

We asked students to rate their level of agreement with a series of 10 statements about their professors and teaching assistants. As has been the case in previous CUSC surveys of graduating students, the vast majority of students report positive experiences, either agreeing or strongly agreeing with each statement.

At least 9 students in 10 agree or strongly agree with the following statements:

- *Most professors seemed knowledgeable in their field,* including 49% who strongly agree.
- *Most professors were reasonably accessible outside of class to help students,* including 34% who strongly agree.
- *Most professors were well organized in their teaching,* including 25% who strongly agree.

More than 8 students in 10 agree or strongly agree with the following statements:

- *Most professors communicated well in their teaching,* including 25% who strongly agree.
- *Most professors encouraged participation in class discussions,* including 31% who strongly agree.
- *Some professors have had a major positive influence on my academic career,* including 45% who strongly agree.
- *Most professors' teaching was intellectually stimulating,* including 24% who strongly agree.

About 3 students in 4 agree or strongly agree that *most professors provided useful feedback on my academic performance,* including 22% who strongly agree.

Some 2 students in 3 agree or strongly agree that:

- *Generally, I am satisfied with my experience with teaching assistants,* including 17% who strongly agree. The proportion of students who rated their agreement with this statement has increased significantly since 2006. In 2006, 71% of students agreed, compared to 81% in 2009.
- *Most professors were knowledgeable of career opportunities in my field,* including 18% who strongly agree. About 1 student in 5 disagrees and, interestingly, many simply do not know (15%), suggesting that professors have never demonstrated such knowledge to students.

Students attending Group 1 universities appear to be more positive about their professors and thus tend to be more likely to agree with some of these statements. In particular, Group 1 students are more likely than students attending a Group 2 or Group 3 university to ***strongly*** agree with these three statements: *most of my professors were reasonably accessible outside of class to help students, most of my professors encouraged students to participate in class discussions,* and *most professors provided useful feedback on my academic performance*. They are also most likely to ***strongly*** agree with the statement: *generally, I am satisfied with my experience with teaching assistants.*

**Table 59: Assessment of faculty: percent strongly agree/agree Q17**

| | All students (n=12,160) | Group | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 (n=5,339) | 2 (n=3,294) | 3 (n=3,527) |
| a. Most of my professors seemed knowledgeable in their field | 97% | 98% | 97% | 96% |
| g. Most of my professors were reasonably accessible outside of class to help students | 91% | 93% | 91% | 88% |
| b. Most of my professors were well organized in their teaching | 90% | 92% | 90% | 86% |
| c. Most of my professors communicated well in their teaching | 88% | 91% | 87% | 84% |
| e. Most of my professors encouraged students to participate in class discussions | 85% | 90% | 85% | 78% |
| i. Some professors at this university have had a major positive influence on my academic career | 85% | 88% | 83% | 82% |
| d. Most professors' teaching was intellectually stimulating | 82% | 86% | 81% | 78% |
| f. Most of my professors provided useful feedback on my academic performance | 77% | 83% | 77% | 68% |
| k. Generally, I am satisfied with my experience with teaching assistants | 66% | 63% | 70% | 68% |
| h. Most of my professors were knowledgeable of career opportunities in my field | 64% | 69% | 61% | 59% |

### 7.1.1 Rating of faculty by discipline

Students in Arts and Humanities programs tend to be more positive about their professors and are more likely to strongly agree with a number of statements about faculty. Conversely, students in Engineering programs tend to be less positive about their experiences with faculty and are generally less likely to strongly agree with many of these same statements. See Table 60 for complete results.

**Table 60: Perception of faculty by discipline**

| Assessment of faculty | Discipline | Strongly agree |
|---|---|---|
| Most of my professors seemed knowledgeable in their field | Arts and Humanities | 58% |
| | Overall | 49% |
| | Professional | 41% |
| | Business | 40% |
| Most of my teachers communicated well in their teaching | Arts and Humanities | 33% |
| | Overall | 25% |
| | Engineering | 12% |
| Most professors encouraged participation in class discussions | Arts and Humanities | 41% |
| | Overall | 31% |
| | Engineering | 14% |
| Most professors' teaching was intellectually stimulating | Arts and Humanities | 35% |
| | Overall | 24% |
| | Engineering | 12% |
| Most of my professors provided useful feedback on my academic performance | Arts and Humanities | 33% |
| | Overall | 22% |
| | Engineering | 12% |
| Generally, I am satisfied with my experience with teaching assistants | Biological Science | 23% |
| | Overall | 17% |
| | Professional | 12% |
| Most of my professors knew of career opportunities in my field | Professional | 27% |
| | Overall | 18% |
| | Physical Science | 14% |

### 7.1.2 Satisfaction with support staff

We asked students whether they agree or disagree that *most university support staff are helpful*.

- More than 8 in 10 agree with this statement, including 18% who strongly agree.
- Conversely, 1 student in 7 disagrees that support staff are helpful, including 4% who strongly disagree.

**Table 61: Most university support staff (e.g., clerks, secretaries, etc.) are helpful Q17Q**

| | All students (n=12,160) | Group 1 (n=5,339) | Group 2 (n=3,294) | Group 3 (n=3,527) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Agree strongly | 18% | 22% | 15% | 15% |
| Agree | 67% | 65% | 70% | 68% |
| Disagree | 11% | 10% | 12% | 13% |
| Disagree strongly | 4% | 3% | 3% | 4% |

Note: Columns may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

## 7.2 Overall satisfaction with quality of teaching

We asked students whether they agree or disagree with the statement: *Generally, I am satisfied with the quality of teaching I have received.*

- About 9 students in 10 agree with this statement, including 27% who strongly agree.
- Conversely, 1 student in 10 disagrees with this statement, suggesting that, for these students, the quality of teaching did not meet their expectations or needs.

Students attending Group 1 (34%) universities are more likely than students attending Group 2 (22%) or Group 3 (20%) universities to strongly agree with this statement.

**Table 62: Satisfaction with the quality of teaching Q17J**

| | All students (n=12,160) | Group | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 (n=5,339) | 2 (n=3,294) | 3 (n=3,527) |
| Agree strongly | 26% | 34% | 22% | 20% |
| Agree | 64% | 59% | 70% | 67% |
| Disagree | 8% | 6% | 7% | 11% |
| Disagree strongly | 2% | 1% | 1% | 3% |

Note: Columns may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Based on students' ratings of faculty by discipline, it is not surprising that students in Arts and Humanities are most likely to strongly agree that they are satisfied with the quality of teaching they received, while Engineering students are least likely. See Table 63.

**Table 63: Perception of faculty by discipline**

| | Discipline | Strongly agree |
|---|---|---|
| Generally, I am satisfied with the quality of teaching I have received | Arts and Humanities | 36% |
| | Overall | 26% |
| | Engineering | 17% |

## 7.3 Overall satisfaction with university

In this section, we consider students' measures of satisfaction with their university. We asked students whether they agree or disagree with a series of statements about their university experience.

### 7.3.1 Learning experience intellectually stimulating

We asked students whether they agree or disagree with the statement: *My learning experiences at this university have been intellectually stimulating.* The vast majority of students agree. As presented in Table 64:

- More than 9 students in 10 agree, including 29% who strongly agree.
- Just 1 student in 10 disagrees, including 1% who strongly disagree.

**Table 64: Academic learning experience at this university intellectually stimulating Q17L**

| | All students (n=12,160) | Group | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 (n=5,339) | 2 (n=3,294) | 3 (n=3,527) |
| Agree strongly | 29% | 34% | 25% | 24% |
| Agree | 62% | 58% | 66% | 64% |
| Disagree | 8% | 6% | 8% | 10% |
| Disagree strongly | 1% | <1% | <1% | 2% |
| Note: Columns may not sum to 100% due to rounding. | | | | |

We asked students if they agree or disagree with the statement: *My **non-academic** learning experiences at this university have been intellectually stimulating.* As Table 65 shows, fewer students found their *non-academic* learning at university stimulating than their academic learning.

- About 8 students in 10 agree, including 22% who strongly agree.
- Conversely, 1 student in 5 disagrees, including 3% who strongly disagree. This suggests that, for many students, intellectually stimulating experiences were limited to their classroom experiences.

**Table 65: Non-academic learning experience at this university intellectually stimulating Q17M**

| | All students (n=12,160) | Group | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 (n=5,339) | 2 (n=3,294) | 3 (n=3,527) |
| Agree strongly | 22% | 27% | 19% | 19% |
| Agree | 56% | 55% | 58% | 57% |
| Disagree | 18% | 16% | 20% | 21% |
| Disagree strongly | 3% | 2% | 3% | 4% |
| Note: Columns may not sum to 100% due to rounding. | | | | |

### 7.3.2 Lasting friendships

We asked students to rate their satisfaction with their *opportunity to develop lasting friendships* at their university. As shown in Table 66:

- Almost 9 students in 10 are satisfied with their opportunity to develop lasting friendships at their university, including 34% who are very satisfied.
- Slightly more than 1 student in 10 is dissatisfied with this aspect of his/her university experience, including 2% who are very dissatisfied.

Younger students appear to be more satisfied with the opportunities they had to develop lasting friendships. The proportion of students who are very satisfied with these opportunities steadily declines across age groups, from 43% of students 20 and younger to 16% of students 30 and older.

**Table 66: Satisfaction with opportunity to develop lasting friendships Q18A**

| | All students (n=12,160) | Group | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 (n=5,339) | 2 (n=3,294) | 3 (n=3,527) |
| Very satisfied | 34% | 38% | 30% | 30% |
| Satisfied | 53% | 51% | 55% | 56% |
| Dissatisfied | 11% | 9% | 14% | 12% |
| Very dissatisfied | 2% | 1% | 2% | 2% |
| Note: Columns may not sum to 100% due to rounding. | | | | |

### 7.3.3 Personal safety on campus

We asked students how satisfied they were with their personal safety on campus. As shown in Table 67:

- Overall, more than 9 students in 10 are satisfied with their safety on campus, including 36% who are very satisfied.
- About 1 in 20 students are dissatisfied their safety on campus, including 1% who are very dissatisfied.

**Table 67: Satisfaction with personal safety on campus Q18F**

| | All students (n=12,160) | Group | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 (n=5,339) | 2 (n=3,294) | 3 (n=3,527) |
| Very satisfied | 36% | 38% | 34% | 33% |
| Satisfied | 59% | 55% | 60% | 62% |
| Dissatisfied | 5% | 5% | 4% | 4% |
| Very dissatisfied | 1% | 1% | <1% | <1% |
| Note: Columns may not sum to 100% due to rounding. | | | | |

### 7.3.4 Commitment to the environment

For the first time in CUSC surveys, we asked students about their satisfaction with their university's commitment to environmental sustainability.

- About 8 students in 10 are satisfied with their university's commitment to environmental sustainability, including 18% who are very satisfied.
- About 1 in 5 students are dissatisfied with their university's commitment, including 4% who are very dissatisfied.

**Table 68: Satisfaction with university's commitment to environmental sustainability Q18G**

| | All students (n=12,160) | Group | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 (n=5,339) | 2 (n=3,294) | 3 (n=3,527) |
| Very satisfied | 18% | 24% | 16% | 13% |
| Satisfied | 62% | 60% | 64% | 64% |
| Dissatisfied | 16% | 13% | 17% | 20% |
| Very dissatisfied | 4% | 3% | 3% | 4% |

Note: Columns may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

### 7.3.5 Concern shown by university

Many students appear to be less satisfied with their university in terms of the concern shown by the institution for students as individuals.

- About 6 in 10 report being satisfied – including just 10% who are very satisfied – with the concern their university showed for them as individuals.
- Just over 4 students in 10 report being dissatisfied, including 9% who are very dissatisfied (almost equal to the number who are very satisfied).

As in past surveys, students attending smaller universities are more likely to be very satisfied with their university on this aspect. About 1 in 7 students at Group 1 (15%) universities report being very satisfied, compared to about 1 in 20 attending larger institutions, that is, Group 2 (7%) and 3 (5%) universities.

**Table 69: Satisfaction with concern shown by university for students as individuals Q18C**

| | All students (n=12,160) | Group | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 (n=5,339) | 2 (n=3,294) | 3 (n=3,527) |
| Very satisfied | 10% | 15% | 7% | 5% |
| Satisfied | 49% | 52% | 50% | 43% |
| Dissatisfied | 32% | 27% | 34% | 37% |
| Very dissatisfied | 9% | 7% | 9% | 14% |

Note: Columns may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

### 7.3.6 Getting the run-around from their university

Whether universities are concerned for students as individuals may partly be reflected in how students feel in terms of being given the run-around. We asked students whether they agree or disagree with the statement: *I sometimes feel I get the run-around at this university.*

- Approximately 6 students in 10 agree with this statement, including 16% who strongly agree.
- About 4 students in 10 disagree, including 6% who strongly disagree.

Unlike the issue of the university's concern shown to students as individuals, there appears to be no significant difference by university group. Students at small universities are just as likely as students at large institutions to feel that they at least sometimes get the run-around. See Table 70.

**Table 70: I sometimes feel I get the run-around at this university Q17N**

| | All students (n=12,160) | Group | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 (n=5,339) | 2 (n=3,294) | 3 (n=3,527) |
| Agree strongly | 16% | 16% | 14% | 18% |
| Agree | 41% | 38% | 44% | 44% |
| Disagree | 37% | 38% | 37% | 34% |
| Disagree strongly | 6% | 8% | 5% | 4% |

Note: Columns may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

### 7.3.7 Being part of their university

Although many students are dissatisfied with how their universities show concern for them and have concerns about getting the run-around, these do not appear to have a major impact on whether students feel as if they are part of that university.

- About 3 students in 4 agree with the statement: *I feel as if I am part of the university,* including 16% who strongly agree.
- About 1 student in 4 disagrees, including just 4% who strongly disagree.
- Students attending Group 1 (22%) universities are more likely than those attending Group 2 (14%) or Group 3 (10%) universities to strongly agree with this statement.

See Table 71.

**Table 71: I feel as if I am part of this university Q17O**

| | All students (n=12,160) | Group | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 (n=5,339) | 2 (n=3,294) | 3 (n=3,527) |
| Agree strongly | 16% | 22% | 14% | 10% |
| Agree | 58% | 57% | 60% | 59% |
| Disagree | 21% | 18% | 22% | 25% |
| Disagree strongly | 4% | 3% | 4% | 6% |

Note: Columns may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

### 7.3.8 Overall quality of education

Despite some negative responses about their universities, the vast majority of students report being satisfied with the overall quality of education they received.

- Nine students in 10 report being satisfied with the quality of education received, including 25% who are very satisfied.
- The remaining 1 student in 10 reports being dissatisfied, including just 2% who are very dissatisfied.

As shown in Table 72, those attending a Group 1 (31%) university appear to be more likely than students attending Group 2 (21%) or Group 3 (20%) universities to be very satisfied with the quality of education. However, this difference is not statistically significant.

**Table 72: Satisfaction with overall quality of education Q18D**

| | All students (n=12,160) | Group | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 (n=5,339) | 2 (n=3,294) | 3 (n=3,527) |
| Very satisfied | 25% | 31% | 21% | 20% |
| Satisfied | 65% | 61% | 70% | 67% |
| Dissatisfied | 8% | 6% | 8% | 11% |
| Very dissatisfied | 2% | 1% | 1% | 3% |
| Note: Columns may not sum to 100% due to rounding. | | | | |

### 7.3.9 Satisfaction with choice of university

Given that the vast majority of students are satisfied with the quality of education they received, it is not surprising that the vast majority are also satisfied with their decision to attend their particular university.

- Almost 9 students in 10 are satisfied with their decision to attend the university, including 35% who are very satisfied.
- About 1 student in 10 is dissatisfied with his/her choice of university, including 2% who are very dissatisfied.

Once again, those attending smaller universities (Group 1) are more likely to be very satisfied than those attending large institutions (that is, Group 2 or 3), but the difference is not statistically significant. See Table 73.

**Table 73: Satisfaction with decision to attend this university Q18E**

| | All students (n=12,160) | Group | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 (n=5,339) | 2 (n=3,294) | 3 (n=3,527) |
| Very satisfied | 35% | 41% | 33% | 27% |
| Satisfied | 55% | 50% | 58% | 60% |
| Dissatisfied | 8% | 7% | 7% | 10% |
| Very dissatisfied | 2% | 2% | 2% | 3% |
| Note: Columns may not sum to 100% due to rounding. | | | | |

### 7.3.10 Satisfaction by discipline

Regardless of discipline, students are as likely to be satisfied with their universities on almost all aspects tested. The only area where we find a difference by discipline is for students' ratings of whether *learning experience at their university has been intellectually stimulating*. As shown in Table 74, those in Arts and Humanities are most likely to strongly agree with this statement, while students in Engineering programs are least likely.

**Table 74: Satisfaction by discipline**

| | Discipline | Strongly agree |
|---|---|---|
| 17L. My learning experience at this university has been intellectually stimulating | Arts and Humanities | 40% |
| | Overall | 29% |
| | Engineering | 20% |

## 7.4 Meeting students' expectations

We asked students if the university had met their expectations. As shown in Table 75:

- About 6 students in 10 indicate that their university *met* their expectations.
- About 1 in 4 students says their university *exceeded* their expectations.
- About 1 in 6 students says their university *fell short* of their expectations.

**Table 75: University met students' expectations Q19**

| | All students (n=12,160) | Group | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 (n=5,339) | 2 (n=3,294) | 3 (n=3,527) |
| Exceeded | 24% | 30% | 20% | 17% |
| Met | 61% | 56% | 66% | 65% |
| Fallen short | 15% | 13% | 14% | 18% |

Note: Columns may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

## 7.5 Value for money

We asked students if they received good value for the money they paid for their education. As Table 76 shows:

- About 7 students in 10 agree that they received good value for their money, including 12% who strongly agree.
- The remaining 3 students in 10 disagree, including 7% who strongly disagree.

**Table 76: Agreement with university is good value for money Q17P**

| | All students (n=12,160) | Group | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 (n=5,339) | 2 (n=3,294) | 3 (n=3,527) |
| Agree strongly | 12% | 16% | 9% | 9% |
| Agree | 57% | 58% | 56% | 55% |
| Disagree | 25% | 21% | 27% | 28% |
| Disagree strongly | 7% | 6% | 8% | 9% |
| Note: Columns may not sum to 100% due to rounding. | | | | |

## 7.6 Students recommend their university

We asked students if they would recommend their university to others.

- Given that the vast majority of students are satisfied with their decision to attend their university, perhaps it is not surprising that almost 9 students in 10 would recommend their university to others.
- Just over 1 in 10 students would not recommend their university to others.

**Table 77: Recommend this university Q21**

| | All students (n=12,160) | Group | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 (n=5,339) | 2 (n=3,294) | 3 (n=3,527) |
| Yes | 89% | 90% | 91% | 85% |
| No | 11% | 10% | 9% | 15% |
| Note: Columns may not sum to 100% due to rounding. | | | | |

### 7.6.1 Reasons for recommending university

Among students who would recommend their university to others, the most common reasons are:

- **The program.** About 3 students in 4 who say they would recommend their university would do so because of the program of studies they took at their university.

- **The professors.** About 7 students in 10 who say they would recommend their university say they would do so because of the professors (or a particular professor). It appears this reason is more common among students attending Group 1 universities (81%) and less common among students attending either Group 2 (67%) or Group 3 (64%) universities.[5]

There were several other common reasons for recommending a university.

- **Quality of student or campus life.** Some 4 students in 10 would recommend their university because of the quality of student or campus life.

- **Relevance of program for growth and development or job opportunities.** More than 1 student in 3 would recommend his/her university because of the program's relevance for job opportunities or for growth and development.

- **Student services.** About 1 in 4 students would recommend their university because of the services offered for students.

See Table 78.

**Table 78: Reasons for recommending the university Q22**

| | All students (n=10,025) | Group | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 (n=4,487) | 2 (n=2,775) | 3 (n=2,763) |
| The program | 73% | 72% | 75% | 72% |
| The professors | 72% | 81% | 67% | 64% |
| Quality of student/campus life | 44% | 49% | 42% | 40% |
| Relevance of my program for growth and development | 36% | 37% | 35% | 35% |
| Relevance of my program for job opportunities | 34% | 32% | 34% | 37% |
| Student services | 24% | 26% | 25% | 20% |
| Other | 9% | 10% | 8% | 9% |

Note: The base reflects those students who would recommend their university to others. Respondents could provide more than one answer. Totals may not sum to 100%.

[5] Because respondents could provide multiple answers to this question, tests of statistical significance were not performed.

### 7.6.2 Reasons for *not* recommending university

Students' most common reasons for not recommending their universities typically mirror the reasons students recommend their university.

- **The program.** About half of students say their experiences in the program are the reason for not recommending it.
- **The professors and quality of student or campus life.** About 4 students in 10 say they would not recommend their university because of a poor experience with faculty. A similar proportion says it is because of the poor quality of student or campus life.
- **Student services and relevance of program for job opportunities.** Of those who would not recommend their university, about 1 in 3 say it is because of student services, which suggests that they had a poor experience or found the services unsatisfactory. A similar number say they would not recommend their university because of a lack of relevance of their program for job opportunities.
- **Lack of relevance of program for growth and development.** About 1 in 4 would not recommend their university because the program is not relevant for personal growth and development.

See Table 79 for students' reasons for not recommending their university.

**Table 79: Reasons for not recommending the university Q22**

| | All students (n=1,262) | Group 1 (n=493) | Group 2 (n=288) | Group 3 (n=481) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| The program | 47% | 47% | 43% | 51% |
| The professors | 43% | 40% | 40% | 49% |
| Quality of student/campus life | 39% | 38% | 42% | 38% |
| Student services | 35% | 39% | 30% | 34% |
| Relevance of my program for job opportunities | 32% | 32% | 32% | 32% |
| Relevance of my program for growth and development | 24% | 23% | 24% | 25% |
| Other | 23% | 24% | 23% | 23% |

Note: The base reflects those students who would not recommend their university to others. Respondents could provide more than one answer. Totals may not sum to 100%.

## 8.0 Education financing and debt

In this section, we report on how students are financing their university education and the impact it has.

### 8.1 Debt from financing education

We asked students to record the amount of repayable debt they had acquired to date to help finance their university education. We asked them to provide the amount from four sources: government student loans, loans from financial institutions, loans from parents and other family members, and debt from other sources.

As shown in Table 80, just over half of students report at least some education-related debt from these sources.

- The most common source of debt is *student loans*, as 4 students in 10 report this as a source of debt.
- About 1 student in 5 reports debt from *loans from financial institutions* or *parents or family*.
- Slightly less than 1 student in 10 reports some debt from other sources.

Debt increases as students age, up until about 30 years of age. The proportion with debt rises from 48% among students 20 and younger to 75% among students 25 to 29 before falling off to 57% for students 30 and older. Increased debt by age appears to be related to increased student loan debt. The proportion with student loan debt rises from 32% of students 20 and younger to 58% of students 25 to 29.

**Table 80: Sources of debt Q23**

| | All students (n=12,160) | Group | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 (n=5,339) | 2 (n=3,294) | 3 (n=3,527) |
| Any debt | 58% | 64% | 55% | 51% |
| Government student loans | 40% | 46% | 38% | 34% |
| Loans from financial institutions | 20% | 24% | 16% | 18% |
| Loans from parents/family | 18% | 19% | 19% | 17% |
| Debt from other sources | 7% | 9% | 7% | 6% |

Among the 58% of students who report having any repayable, education-related debt, the value of that debt ranges from $12 to one student who claims total debt of $500,000. While these outliers are extreme, they make little difference in the calculations shown below. Table 81 shows the total amount of debt graduating students accumulated from these four sources.

- Slightly less than half of graduating students report debt of $8,000 or less, while almost 1 in 3 has debt of $20,000 or more.

- The average amount of debt per student (including those without any debt) is approximately $15,466. The median amount of debt is lower, at $6,500.

- On average, debt appears to be higher among those attending Group 1 universities (about $18,100) and lower among those attending Group 2 (about $14,400) and Group 3 (about $12,400 universities. In fact, the median amount of debt for students attending Group 1 ($12,000) universities is more than double that for students attending Group 2 ($5,000) universities and 10 times greater than students at Group 3 ($1,100) universities.

- As one would expect, older students report having more debt than younger students. Among those with debt, the average debt rises across age groups from close to $21,800 for students 20 and younger to about $35,200 for students 30 and older.

**Table 81: Accumulated debt Q23**

| | All students (n=12,160) | Group | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 (n=5,339) | 2 (n=3,294) | 3 (n=3,527) |
| No debt | 42% | 36% | 45% | 49% |
| Less than $4,000 | 4% | 4% | 4% | 4% |
| $4,000 to $7,999 | 6% | 5% | 6% | 6% |
| $8,000 to $11,999 | 6% | 5% | 6% | 6% |
| $12,000 to $19,999 | 8% | 8% | 8% | 8% |
| $20,000 or more | 35% | 42% | 31% | 26% |
| Average | $15,466 | $18,114 | $14,443 | $12,371 |
| Median | $6,500 | $12,000 | $5,000 | $1,100 |

Note: Columns may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Average total debt increased in each of the four years in which this survey was conducted. In 2000, the average total debt was $11,250, whereas in 2009 it is $15,466. This represents an average increase in debt of 37%. Although these numbers have not been adjusted for inflation, it would appear the educational-related debt has grown faster than inflation (21%) for this same period.

## 8.2 Average debt by source

The source of much of this debt appears to be student loans (see Table 82). Among all students:

- *Student loans* account for the bulk of the debt at just over $9,200.
- *Loans from financial institutions* (almost $3,000) and *loans from parents or other family members* (just over $2,600) are about one-third the size of the average *student loan* debt.
- *Debt from other sources* accounts for about $600.

The difference in the debt load for Group 1 university students appears to be due to higher *government student loan* debt.

**Table 82: Average debt by source (all respondents) Q23**

| | All students (n=12,160) | Group | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 (n=5,339) | 2 (n=3,294) | 3 (n=3,527) |
| Total average debt | $15,466 | $18,114 | $14,443 | $12,371 |
| - Government student loans | $9,225 | $11,129 | $8,632 | $6,864 |
| - Loans from financial institutions | $2,980 | $3,619 | $2,270 | $2,670 |
| - Loans from parents/family | $2,646 | $2,568 | $3,031 | $2,402 |
| - Debt from other sources | $615 | $798 | $510 | $435 |

Among students reporting debt:

- The average total debt among these graduating students is approximately $26,700. The median value of total debt is only slightly lower at $23,500.
- On average, *student loans* account for approximately 56% of all debt. Among those with this type of debt, the average is $23,000. The median value is slightly lower at $20,000.
- *Loans from financial institutions* account for about 21% of the total. Among those with this type of debt, the average amount owing is almost $14,900. The median value of the debt is lower at $10,000.
- *Loans from parents or other family members* account for about 18% of the total. Among those with debt owed to family, the average amount owing is $14,400. However, the median value is about half that at $7,000.
- Other sources account for about 5% of the total. Those with debt from *other sources* report that it averages about $8,500. Again, the median value of this debt is considerably lower at $5,000.

Table 83 shows the total average and median debt for those students reporting any debt. It also shows the average and median debt for students with each source of debt.

**Table 83: Average/median debt by source for those with debt Q23**

| | All students (n=6,421) | Group 1 (n=3,145) | Group 2 (n=1,657) | Group 3 (n=1,619) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Average debt** | | | | |
| Total average debt | $26,680 | $28,141 | $26,183 | $24,352 |
| - Government student loans | $22,973 | $24,297 | $22,745 | $20,445 |
| - Loans from financial institutions | $14,862 | $15,242 | $13,860 | $14,954 |
| - Loans from parents/family | $14,436 | $13,711 | $16,199 | $13,844 |
| - Debt from other sources | $8,500 | $9,173 | $7,667 | $7,824 |
| **Median debt** | | | | |
| Total median debt | $23,500 | $26,000 | $21,000 | $20,000 |
| - Government student loans | $20,000 | $23,000 | $20,000 | $17,000 |
| - Loans from financial institutions | $10,000 | $11,000 | $10,000 | $10,000 |
| - Loans from parents/family | $7,000 | $8,000 | $6,250 | $6,000 |
| - Debt from other sources | $5,000 | $5,000 | $5,000 | $4,000 |

Total debt among graduating students with debt has increased each year from an average of $20,286 in 2000 to $26,680 in 2009; an increase on average of 32% (compared to an inflation increase of 21%).

## 8.3 Sources of funding education

We asked students to think about their current academic year and indicate which sources they are using to help pay for their university education.

- Half of students say *parents and other family members* are helping to pay for their current year of education. This was the single most common source of educational financing.
- About 4 in 10 students are financing their current year through *earnings from summer work*; *university scholarships, financial awards, or bursaries;* and *government loans or bursaries*. The proportion of students who report using *government loans or bursaries* in the current year (36%) is almost identical to the proportion of students who reported having any debt from this source (37%).
- About 1 student in 3 is using *earnings from current employment* or *personal savings* to finance their current year.
- Slightly more than 1 in 10 students use *loans from a financial institution*. The proportion that are currently using this source (12%) is slightly lower than those who report having debt from this source (20%).
- About 1 in 20 students report using income from *RESP* or *co-op programs or work terms*, while very few use *investment income* or income from a *work-study program* to finance their education.

See Table 84 for a complete list of the sources graduating students are using in the last year to fund their university education.

**Table 84: Sources of financing education Q24**

| | All students (n=12,160) | Group | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 (n=5,339) | 2 (n=3,294) | 3 (n=3,527) |
| Parents/family/spouse | 50% | 48% | 50% | 52% |
| Earnings from summer work | 41% | 47% | 36% | 38% |
| University scholarship/financial award/bursary | 37% | 42% | 33% | 34% |
| Government loan or bursary | 36% | 42% | 33% | 30% |
| Earnings from current employment | 35% | 36% | 37% | 32% |
| Personal savings | 30% | 32% | 31% | 28% |
| Loan from financial institution | 12% | 15% | 9% | 11% |
| RESP | 7% | 6% | 7% | 7% |
| Co-op program/work term | 5% | 3% | 7% | 7% |
| Investment income (bonds, dividends, etc.) | 3% | 3% | 3% | 3% |
| Work-study program | 3% | 3% | 3% | 2% |
| Other | 3% | 3% | 2% | 3% |

Note: Respondents could provide more than one answer. Therefore, columns may not sum to 100%.

### 8.3.1 Number of sources of financing

The typical graduating student uses between two and three of these sources to help pay for education during the current academic year.

- About 1 in 4 students report using only one source to finance their current year.
- About 3 in 4 students rely on multiple sources, including 25% who use four or more sources.
- Younger students report relying on more sources to finance their education than older students. The proportion using four or more sources to finance their education drops from 32% among students 20 and younger to just 9% of students 30 and older.

See Table 85 for the number of sources students use to finance their current year.

**Table 85: Number of sources of financing Q24**

| | All students (n=12,160) | Group | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 (n=5,339) | 2 (n=3,294) | 3 (n=3,527) |
| One | 24% | 20% | 27% | 27% |
| Two | 27% | 25% | 28% | 29% |
| Three | 25% | 26% | 24% | 24% |
| Four or more | 25% | 29% | 22% | 20% |
| Average | 2.6 | 2.8 | 2.5 | 2.5 |

Note: Columns may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

### 8.3.2 Average contribution by source

Overall, the typical student reports that these sources contribute over $12,000 toward paying for his/her education this academic year. Among those students who report receiving something from each source, the highest sources of funding are:

- *co-op program or work term*, with an average of about $9,200.
- *government loan or bursary*, with an average of about $8,700.
- *loan from a financial institution*, with an average of about $8,200.
- *parents or other family*, with an average of about $7,100.

Other major sources of support, each contributing an average of over $5,000, were *RESP* and *earnings from summer work*. On average, all other sources contributed less than $3,800 each among students who report using them.

Although Group 1 university students report more debt than Group 2 and Group 3 university students, the amount required to finance the current year of studies for each group is almost identical. See Table 86.

**Table 86: Average amount from each financing source Q24**

| | All students (n=12,160) | Group | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 (n=5,339) | 2 (n=3,294) | 3 (n=3,527) |
| **All respondents** | | | | |
| Overall | $12,004 | $12,722 | $11,312 | $11,565 |
| **Average among those using these sources** | | | | |
| Co-op program/work term | $9,232 | $6,668 | $9,762 | $10,220 |
| Government loan or bursary | $8,660 | $9,017 | $8,667 | $7,902 |
| Loan from financial institution | $8,157 | $8,365 | $7,576 | $8,190 |
| Parents/family/spouse | $7,086 | $7,076 | $7,121 | $7,069 |
| RESP | $5,946 | $6,075 | $5,933 | $5,793 |
| Earnings from summer work | $5,318 | $5,156 | $5,193 | $5,737 |
| Earnings from current employment | $3,775 | $3,513 | $3,695 | $4,302 |
| Investment income (bonds, dividends, etc.) | $3,764 | $4,061 | $3,279 | $3,723 |
| Personal savings | $3,502 | $3,588 | $3,377 | $3,480 |
| University scholarship/financial award/bursary | $2,815 | $2,799 | $2,765 | $2,892 |
| Work-study program | $2,615 | $2,171 | $3,193 | $2,723 |
| Multiple other | $5,614 | $5,850 | $4,665 | $5,889 |

Table 87 shows the median amounts for the same sources of financing presented in the previous table.

| Table 87: Median amount from each financing source Q24 | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | All students (n=12,160) | Group | | |
| | | 1 (n=5,339) | 2 (n=3,294) | 3 (n=3,527) |
| **All respondents** | | | | |
| Overall | $8,600 | $10,000 | $7,350 | $7,500 |
| **Median among those using these sources** | | | | |
| Government loan or bursary | $7,000 | $8,000 | $7,000 | $6,000 |
| Co-op program/work term | $7,000 | $5,000 | $8,000 | $7,000 |
| Loan from financial institution | $6,000 | $6,000 | $5,000 | $6,000 |
| Parents/family/spouse | $5,000 | $5,000 | $5,000 | $5,000 |
| RESP | $4,000 | $4,000 | $4,000 | $3,600 |
| Earnings from summer work | $4,000 | $4,000 | $4,000 | $4,000 |
| Earnings from current employment | $2,000 | $2,000 | $2,000 | $2,000 |
| Personal savings | $2,000 | $2,000 | $2,000 | $2,000 |
| Investment income (bonds, dividends, etc.) | $2,000 | $2,400 | $1,500 | $1,500 |
| Work-study program | $1,600 | $1,500 | $1,500 | $2,000 |
| University scholarship/financial award/bursary | $1,600 | $1,500 | $1,500 | $1,700 |
| Multiple other | $3,000 | $3,000 | $3,000 | $3,000 |

## 8.4 Credit cards

Credit card use among graduating students is common. Almost 9 students in 10 report having at least one credit card, and 3 students in 10 have two or more credit cards. In fact, the typical graduating student has about two credit cards.

- Among those with credit cards, most do not carry a balance from month to month, as 3 students in 4 report regularly paying off the balance on their credit cards each month.

- Almost 1 in 4 students report having a balance on their credit cards, most commonly in excess of $1,000 dollars. Among those who report a balance, 60% report that it is over $1,000. Overall, the average balance owing is nearly $775. However, among students who report a balance, the average amount owing is four times as much, at just over $3,400.

See Table 88 for students' credit card use.

**Table 88: Credit cards Q29/Q30/Q31**

| | All students (n=12,160) | Group 1 (n=5,339) | Group 2 (n=3,294) | Group 3 (n=3,527) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Number of credit cards Q29 (all respondents)** | | | | |
| None | 12% | 14% | 10% | 10% |
| One | 59% | 58% | 57% | 62% |
| Two | 21% | 19% | 23% | 21% |
| Three or more | 8% | 8% | 9% | 7% |
| Average number | 1.5 | 1.4 | 1.6 | 1.4 |
| **Regularly pay off your balance each month Q30*** | | | | |
| Yes | 76% | 73% | 76% | 79% |
| **Total credit card balance Q31*** | | | | |
| Zero | 78% | 75% | 78% | 81% |
| $500 or less | 4% | 5% | 4% | 4% |
| $501 to $1,000 | 5% | 5% | 4% | 4% |
| Over $1,000 | 13% | 15% | 13% | 11% |
| Average balance (including zero) | $764 | $839 | $735 | $684 |
| Average of those with a balance | $3,440 | $3,379 | $3,397 | $3,602 |

Note: *Total credit card balance and payment of the balance were asked of those who had at least one credit card.
Columns may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

On average, while older students are not more likely to have credit cards, they report having more credit cards than younger students. About 1 in 5 students 30 and older (20%) report having three credit cards or more, while just 1 in 25 students 20 and younger (4%) do. Given this fact, it is not surprising older students are more likely to report owing money on their credit cards and carrying a higher balance from month to month.

## 8.5 Current employment

We asked students a series of questions about their current employment situation.

- About 6 students in 10 report that they are currently employed, either off-campus (43%), on campus (13%), or both (5%).
- While almost 4 students in 10 are unemployed, only 10% are currently looking for work. In other words, most students who are not working are unemployed by choice.
- Among those who are currently employed, students spend an average of 18 hours a week at work. This ranges from 32% of employed students who work 10 hours or less a week to 13% who work full-time, that is, more than 30 hours a week.
- Among those who work, about 3 students in 10 report that their current non-co-op related employment is having a negative impact on their academic performance, including 3% who say it is having a very negative impact. Conversely, 1 in 3 say their current employment had a positive impact on their academic performance, including 12% who say it had a very positive impact.

**Table 89: Employment status Q25/Q26/Q27**

| | All students (n=12,160) | Group | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 (n=5,339) | 2 (n=3,294) | 3 (n=3,527) |
| **Currently employed Q25 (all respondents)** | | | | |
| Yes, both on and off-campus | 5% | 6% | 4% | 4% |
| Yes, on campus | 13% | 15% | 12% | 11% |
| Yes, off-campus | 43% | 39% | 47% | 46% |
| No, but seeking work | 10% | 10% | 12% | 9% |
| No, not seeking work | 28% | 29% | 25% | 30% |
| **Number of hours worked per week Q26*** | | | | |
| 10 hours or less | 32% | 34% | 30% | 31% |
| 11 to 20 hours | 38% | 38% | 37% | 40% |
| 21 to 30 hours | 16% | 16% | 18% | 15% |
| Over 30 hours | 13% | 12% | 15% | 13% |
| Average number of hours | 17.9 | 17.4 | 18.6 | 17.9 |
| **Impact of non-co-op related employment on academic performance Q27*** | | | | |
| Very positive | 12% | 13% | 13% | 11% |
| Somewhat positive | 20% | 19% | 20% | 20% |
| Neither positive nor negative | 39% | 40% | 38% | 39% |
| Somewhat negative | 26% | 25% | 26% | 27% |
| Very negative | 3% | 3% | 3% | 3% |

Note: *Only students who are currently employed were asked how many hours they work per week and whether their employment has an impact on their academic performance.
Columns may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

There are several differences for students' employment status.

- As one would expect, given that a higher proportion of older students are attending university part-time, they are more likely than younger students to report working full-time (over 30 hours a week). Almost half of students 30 and older (45%) who currently have a job report working over 30 hours a week, compared to just 5% of those age 20 and younger who have a job.

- The more hours a student works per week, the more likely he/she is to say that work has a negative impact on his/her academic performance. About 35% of those who work over 30 hours a week report that employment has a negative impact on their academic performance. This compares to about 17% of those who work 10 hours a week or less.

### 8.5.1 Employment by discipline

Engineering students are much less likely to be employed at the time of the survey than students in any other discipline. In fact, half to two-thirds of students in each discipline report working during the school year.

Although there are differences in the proportion of students working in each discipline, there is very little difference in the average number of hours students work per week. See Table 90.

**Table 90: Employment by discipline**

| | Employed on or off-campus | Average number of work hours per week |
|---|---|---|
| Social Science | 67% | 18.6 |
| Arts and Humanities | 67% | 17.8 |
| Education | 64% | 16.4 |
| Business | 61% | 19.9 |
| Overall | 61% | 17.9 |
| Professional | 61% | 17.2 |
| Biological Science | 61% | 15.2 |
| Physical Science | 58% | 16.8 |
| Other fields | 54% | 17.5 |
| Engineering | 31% | 17.1 |

## 9.0 Future education and employment

In this section, we report on students' plans after graduation.

### 9.1 Preparedness for employment

We asked students to rate their level of satisfaction with their university's knowledge of career options in their area of study. While a majority report being satisfied, a substantial minority is dissatisfied. As shown in Table 91:

- Slightly less than 2 students in 3 report that they are satisfied with their university's knowledge of career options in their area of study, including 12% who are very satisfied.
- About 1 student in 3 is dissatisfied, including 5% who are very dissatisfied.

Students in other fields (23%) and Professional (18%) programs are most likely to report being very satisfied with their university's knowledge of career options in their area of study.

**Table 91: Satisfaction with knowledge of career options in my area of study Q18B**

| | All students (n=12,160) | Group | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 (n=5,339) | 2 (n=3,294) | 3 (n=3,527) |
| Very satisfied | 12% | 13% | 10% | 11% |
| Satisfied | 52% | 51% | 54% | 52% |
| Dissatisfied | 31% | 31% | 31% | 31% |
| Very dissatisfied | 5% | 5% | 5% | 6% |

Note: Columns may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

We asked students what steps they had taken to prepare for employment after graduation.

- The most common step is *creating a resume or curriculum vitae (CV)*, as 3 in 4 students have taken this step.
- About 6 students in 10 have *chosen a career field or specific occupation* or *talked with their professors about employment after graduation.*
- About half have *worked in their chosen field of employment* or *attended an employment fair*.
- Some 4 in 10 have *volunteered in their chosen field of employment*. Female (44%) students are much more likely than male students (28%) to have done this.
- About 1 in 5 has *met with a career counsellor*.
- Least common, at about 1 in 7 students, is *having a career mentor* or *creating an e-portfolio*.

See Table 92 (next page) for the steps students had taken.

| Table 92: Steps taken to prepare for employment/career after graduation Q68 | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | All students (n=12,160) | Group | | |
| | | 1 (n=5,339) | 2 (n=3,294) | 3 (n=3,527) |
| b. Created resume or CV | 77% | 75% | 77% | 80% |
| i. Chosen a career field or specific occupation | 63% | 64% | 60% | 64% |
| a. Talked with professors about employment/career | 56% | 62% | 53% | 52% |
| f. Worked in my chosen field of employment | 51% | 48% | 52% | 55% |
| d. Attended an employment fair | 48% | 46% | 49% | 51% |
| g. Volunteered in my chosen field of employment | 39% | 42% | 41% | 31% |
| e. Met with a career counsellor | 22% | 22% | 24% | 21% |
| h. Have a career mentor | 15% | 14% | 14% | 16% |
| c. Created an e-portfolio | 14% | 13% | 15% | 15% |
| Note: Respondents could provide more than one answer. Therefore, columns will not sum to 100%. | | | | |

As Table 93 shows, students in some disciplines have taken more steps towards preparing for employment than others.

- Students in Education, Professional, or Engineering programs have taken a number of steps.
  - Students in Education programs are most likely to have *chosen a career field or specific occupation*, *volunteered in their chosen field of employment*, and *created an e-portfolio*.
  - Engineering students are most likely to have *created a resume or CV* and *attended an employment fair*.
  - Students in Professional programs are most likely to have *worked in their chosen field of study*, but are also likely to have *chosen a career field or specific occupation*.
- Students in Arts and Humanities and Social Science programs, for the most part, are the least likely to have taken steps to prepare for employment after graduation.

| Table 93: Steps taken for employment after graduation by discipline | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Step** | **Discipline** | **Taken step** |
| Created resume or CV | Engineering | 89% |
| | Overall | 77% |
| | Arts and Humanities | 70% |
| Chosen a career field or specific occupation | Education | 79% |
| | Professional | 78% |
| | Overall | 63% |
| | Social Science | 55% |
| Worked in my chosen field of employment | Professional | 77% |
| | Engineering | 74% |
| | Overall | 51% |
| | Arts and Humanities | 41% |
| | Social Science | 38% |
| Attended an employment fair | Engineering | 78% |
| | Overall | 48% |
| | Arts and Humanities | 32% |
| Volunteered in my chosen field of employment | Education | 71% |
| | Overall | 39% |
| | Business | 19% |
| | Engineering | 10% |
| Created an e-portfolio | Education | 33% |
| | Overall | 14% |
| | Social Science | 9% |

## 9.2 Immediate plans after graduation

We asked students about their intentions in the first year after their graduation. Many are planning several different activities in that first year. As shown in Table 94, students plan to do several things in their first year after graduation:

- Half of students plan to *continue their education*.
- About 4 in 10 plan to *travel*.
- About 3 in 10 plan to do some *unpaid volunteer work*.
- About 1 in 5 plan to simply *take time off*.

| Table 94: Activities in the first year after graduation Q32/Q35 | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **All students (n=12,160)** | **Group** | | |
| | | **1 (n=5,339)** | **2 (n=3,294)** | **3 (n=3,527)** |
| Continue education | 50% | 53% | 48% | 48% |
| Travel | 41% | 37% | 44% | 44% |
| Unpaid volunteer work | 28% | 29% | 31% | 25% |
| Take time off | 20% | 17% | 21% | 23% |
| None of the above | 22% | 22% | 20% | 22% |
| Note: Respondents could provide more than one answer. Totals may not sum to 100%. | | | | |

Students in Biological Science (61%) programs are the most likely to report plans for further post-secondary education within that first year after graduating, while students in Engineering (28%) and Education (35%) programs are least likely.

We asked graduating students what impact the amount of repayable debt had on their decision about whether to take further education in their first year after graduation.

- About 6 in 10 students report that debt had at least some impact on their decision, including 28% who say it had a *great* impact. This is slightly higher than the 58% who report having repayable debt.

- Slightly more than 4 in 10 say that debt did not have any impact on their decision whether or not to take further education after graduating.

- Although Group 1 university students reported more debt than students attending Group 2 or Group 3 universities, there is very little difference in students' ratings of the impact of debt on further education by group.

- As one might expect, those who have debt are much more likely to say that their repayable debt had a great impact on their decision about whether to take further education in their first year after graduation. About 44% of those with debt report their debt had a great impact, compared to just 7% without any debt.

**Table 95: Impact of repayable debt on further education in first year after graduation Q67**

| | All students (n=12,160) | Group | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 (n=5,339) | 2 (n=3,294) | 3 (n=3,527) |
| Great impact | 28% | 31% | 29% | 22% |
| Some impact | 28% | 29% | 28% | 27% |
| No impact | 44% | 39% | 43% | 51% |

Note: Columns may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

While half of students plan to continue their education in the first year after graduating, about 8 in 10 plan to further their education within the next five years. As shown in Table 96:

- Students most often plan on attending *graduate school* (55%), although many plan on attending a *professional school* or taking *further undergraduate studies* (21% each).

- About 1 student in 20 plans on attending a *community college or CEGEP* (7%) or a *technical or vocational school* (6%) in the next five years.

**Table 96: Future education plans Q32**

| | All students (n=12,160) | Group | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 (n=5,339) | 2 (n=3,294) | 3 (n=3,527) |
| None | 18% | 16% | 18% | 19% |
| Graduate school | 55% | 53% | 56% | 57% |
| Professional school (e.g., Law, Medicine) | 21% | 22% | 20% | 21% |
| Further undergraduate studies | 21% | 23% | 20% | 19% |
| Community college or CEGEP | 7% | 8% | 8% | 4% |
| Technical/vocational school | 6% | 6% | 8% | 6% |
| Other education | 24% | 26% | 25% | 20% |

Note: Respondents could provide more than one answer. Totals may not sum to 100%.

## 9.3 Future employment

We asked students about their future employment prospects. Specifically, we asked whether they have employment – other than a summer job – arranged for after graduation.

- About 1 student in 3 reports having a job arranged after graduation, including 23% who have a full-time job.
- About half report that at the time of the survey they did not have a job, but were seeking work.
- Just less than 1 in 5 reports they neither have a job nor are looking for one.

See Table 97.

**Table 97: Future employment Q39**

| | All students (n=12,160) | Group | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 (n=5,339) | 2 (n=3,294) | 3 (n=3,527) |
| Have a job (net) | 33% | 30% | 33% | 38% |
| - Yes, a full-time job | 23% | 20% | 21% | 29% |
| - Yes, one part-time job | 7% | 7% | 8% | 6% |
| - Yes, two or more part-time jobs | 2% | 2% | 3% | 2% |
| - Yes, self-employment or contract work | 3% | 2% | 3% | 3% |
| No, but I am seeking work | 49% | 52% | 51% | 43% |
| No, and I am not seeking work | 18% | 18% | 16% | 19% |

Note: Respondents could provide more than one answer. Totals may not sum to 100%.

Although it fell just below the threshold for statistical significance, we find that students in Professional (46%) and Business (41%) programs are most likely to have a job arranged after graduation, while students in Biological Science (24%) are least likely. For students in Biological Science, this is probably due to the fact that they are most likely to take further post-secondary education in the year of their graduation.

## 9.4 Job arranged

Among those who have a job arranged for after graduation, about 6 students in 10 report that it is permanent (representing just 13% of all students). The remaining 4 students in 10 report their arranged job is either temporary or they are not yet sure if it is permanent.

Among those with employment arranged for after graduation:

- About 6 students in 10 report the job is a continuation of a position they previously held, while 4 students in 10 report having found a new job. Although the proportion with a permanent job fluctuates across age groups, there is some indication that older students are more likely than younger students to have arranged for permanent jobs. About 3 in 4 students 30 years and older (78%) have arranged for a permanent job, while only half of those 20 and younger (47%) have.

- Just over half report the job they arranged requires a degree, although slightly more, 6 in 10, report their degree helped them get their job. Group 3 (64%) university students with an arranged job are more likely to report that their job required a degree than Group 1 (49%) or Group 2 (46%) university students.

- About 2 students in 3 also report their job is moderately (20%) or significantly (46%) related to the knowledge and skills they acquired from studies at university. About 1 in 5 (18%) say it is not at all related.

See Table 98.

**Table 98: Post-graduation employment**

| | All students (n=3,607) | Group 1 (n=1,447) | Group 2 (n=967) | Group 3 (n=1,193) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Is this full-time job permanent or temporary? Q41 (Full-time employment only)** | | | | |
| Permanent | 61% | 58% | 64% | 63% |
| Temporary | 24% | 27% | 24% | 22% |
| Not sure | 14% | 15% | 12% | 15% |
| **Is your job new or a continuation of a job you had previously? Q40** | | | | |
| Continuation | 63% | 62% | 72% | 57% |
| New | 37% | 38% | 28% | 43% |
| **Arranged employment requires a degree Q42** | | | | |
| Yes | 53% | 49% | 46% | 64% |
| No | 47% | 51% | 54% | 36% |
| **Degree or diploma helped get a job Q43** | | | | |
| Yes | 63% | 61% | 57% | 71% |
| No | 37% | 39% | 43% | 29% |
| **Job is related to knowledge/skills acquired from studies at university Q44** | | | | |
| Yes* | 66% | 64% | 62% | 72% |
| No | 34% | 36% | 38% | 28% |

Note: The base reflects those who have arranged employment.
*The 'yes' category includes those who said 'significantly' and 'moderately'. Columns may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

### 9.4.1 Post-graduation employment by discipline

Students' post-graduation employment is significantly related to their discipline.

- Students in Engineering and Business are most likely to report that their full-time job is permanent, while those in Biological Science and Education are least likely.
- Professional and Education program students are most likely to report that their arranged job is a new job, while those in Arts and Humanities are least likely to report a new job (but are most likely to have continued with a previous job).
- Students in Engineering or Professional programs are most likely to report that their arranged employment required a degree and that their degree helped them get the job. Conversely, students in Arts and Humanities (and to a lesser extent Social Science) programs are least likely to report their job required a degree or it helped them get a job.
- Students in Professional, Education, or Engineering programs are most likely to say that their job is *significantly* related to the knowledge and skills they acquired in their program, while Arts and Humanities students are least likely.

**Table 99: Post-graduation employment by discipline**

| | Discipline | % |
|---|---|---|
| Permanent job | Engineering | 89% |
| | Business | 79% |
| | Overall | 61% |
| | Biological Science | 43% |
| | Education | 39% |
| New job | Professional | 60% |
| | Education | 57% |
| | Overall | 37% |
| | Arts and Humanities | 24% |
| Requires a degree | Engineering | 91% |
| | Professional | 79% |
| | Overall | 53% |
| | Social Science | 37% |
| | Arts and Humanities | 27% |
| Degree helped get a job | Engineering | 92% |
| | Professional | 84% |
| | Overall | 63% |
| | Arts and Humanities | 41% |
| Job related to knowledge and skills – Significantly | Professional | 81% |
| | Education | 67% |
| | Engineering | 65% |
| | Overall | 46% |
| | Arts and Humanities | 20% |

### 9.4.2 Value of university training by full/part-time job

Perhaps not surprisingly, students' education appears to be more important in their acquiring full-time, rather than part-time, employment. As Table 100 shows:

- Of the students who have full-time employment arranged, about 3 in 4 report their job is moderately or significantly related to the knowledge and skills acquired from their university studies. This compares to about half of students with a part-time job arranged.
- About 7 students in 10 with full-time employment report their degree helped them get the job, compared to less than half of students who have part-time jobs arranged.
- Among those with full-time jobs arranged, just over 6 students in 10 report their degree was required for the job. This compares to about 3 in 10 of those with part-time jobs.
- Just over 4 students in 10 with full-time employment report that the job is new. Among those with part-time jobs, about 1 in 4 reports the same.

**Table 100: Value of university education by type of job**

| | % | |
|---|---|---|
| | **Full-time** | **Part-time** |
| Job moderately or significantly related to knowledge/skills acquired from studies Q44 | 73% | 50% |
| Degree/diploma helped get a job Q43 | 70% | 45% |
| Degree/diploma required for job Q42 | 63% | 30% |
| New job Q40 | 43% | 23% |

## 9.5 Source of job

Among those with an arranged job, almost half say they found the job through the assistance of others, most often through a family member, friend, or associate (25%), or from their work experience program (10%). Among the 4 in 10 who found it independently, most say they contacted the employer directly (20%) or found the job on the Internet (9%) or through a job ad (9%).

See Table 101 for complete results of how students found their jobs for after graduation.

**Table 101: Source of job Q46**

| | All students (n=3,607) | Group | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 (n=1,447) | 2 (n=967) | 3 (n=1,193) |
| Assisted by others (net) | 48% | 48% | 49% | 47% |
| - Referred by family, friends, associates | 25% | 27% | 27% | 21% |
| - From co-op placement | 10% | 9% | 12% | 11% |
| - Campus career/employment centre | 7% | 5% | 5% | 11% |
| - Professors | 4% | 4% | 3% | 4% |
| - Employment agency | 2% | 2% | 2% | 1% |
| Independently (net) | 42% | 43% | 42% | 42% |
| - Contacted employer directly | 20% | 20% | 19% | 21% |
| - Internet | 9% | 8% | 10% | 9% |
| - Answered a job ad | 9% | 10% | 9% | 7% |
| - Contacted previous employer | 4% | 5% | 4% | 4% |
| Other | 10% | 9% | 9% | 11% |

Note: The base reflects those who have arranged employment. Columns may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Students in Engineering (61%) programs are most likely to report that someone helped them find their job, while students in Professional (52%) programs are most likely to say they found their job on their own.

## 9.6 Satisfaction with job

Among those with a job arranged, most, 8 in 10, report being satisfied with the employment they have secured, including 40% who are very satisfied. See Table 102.

**Table 102: Satisfaction with employment you have secured Q47**

| | All students (n=3,607) | Group | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 (n=1,447) | 2 (n=967) | 3 (n=1,193) |
| Very satisfied | 40% | 41% | 36% | 43% |
| Satisfied | 48% | 48% | 50% | 46% |
| Dissatisfied | 9% | 9% | 11% | 7% |
| Very dissatisfied | 3% | 3% | 4% | 3% |

Note: The base reflects those who have arranged employment. Columns may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

When it comes to students' satisfaction with employment they secured, we find:

- Those who report having arranged a full-time job are more likely to be very satisfied with the employment they have been able to secure. Of those with full-time employment arranged, 47% report being very satisfied, compared to 24% of those with part-time employment arranged.

- Students in Engineering (58%) programs are most likely to be very satisfied with the employment they have secured. On the other hand, students in Arts and Humanities (30%) are least likely to be very satisfied.

## 9.7 Anticipated earnings

We asked students who currently have work arranged for after graduation what they anticipate their monthly earnings will be. These monthly earnings were then converted to annual amounts.

- On average, these students report gross annual earnings before taxes and other deductions of about $36,600 (the median income is almost identical at $36,000).
- About 1 student in 3 anticipates an annual income of $25,000 or less.
- About 1 student in 5 anticipates a salary of over $50,000 annually.

Group 3 (about $40,700) university students appear to anticipate having higher earnings after graduation than their Group 1 (about $34,000) and Group 2 ($35,100) counterparts. However, this difference may be due to the location of their jobs, as students' income may reflect the cost of living where they are working. Since students are most likely to find a job in the town or city in which they are attending university, those attending Group 3 universities (which are located in large, urban centres) may be working in areas with a higher cost of living.

See Table 103 for a breakdown of students' anticipated annual earnings.

**Table 103: Annual anticipated earnings Q48**

| | All students (n=3,607) | Group 1 (n=1,447) | Group 2 (n=967) | Group 3 (n=1,193) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| $15,000 or less | 13% | 16% | 15% | 10% |
| $15,001 to $20,000 | 7% | 8% | 8% | 5% |
| $20,001 to $25,000 | 14% | 15% | 15% | 11% |
| $25,001 to $30,000 | 10% | 11% | 11% | 8% |
| $30,001 to $35,000 | 4% | 4% | 3% | 5% |
| $35,001 to $40,000 | 14% | 14% | 13% | 15% |
| $40,001 to $45,000 | 7% | 6% | 6% | 9% |
| $45,001 to $50,000 | 10% | 9% | 11% | 9% |
| $50,001 to $60,000 | 13% | 11% | 11% | 16% |
| Over $60,000 | 8% | 6% | 7% | 11% |
| Mean expected yearly income | $36,561 | $34,028 | $35,082 | $40,741 |
| Median yearly income | $36,000 | $31,200 | $33,000 | $38,004 |

Note: The base reflects those who have arranged employment. Columns may not sum to 100% due to rounding.
From stated anticipated monthly earnings, we calculated anticipated yearly earnings. Respondents who had anticipated making $10,000 or more per month were assumed to be stating yearly salary.
These answers were divided by 12 to reflect monthly income. Also, respondents expecting to earn less than $150 per month were excluded from these results.

We find several differences for anticipated earnings after graduation.

- As would be expected, those students with full-time employment anticipate a higher income (an average of close to $40,700) compared to those in part-time positions (an average of almost $25,700).
- On average, male students (about $41,500) anticipate higher annual earnings compared to female students (about $33,900). In fact, 29% of male students expect to earn $50,000 or more after graduating, compared to 16% of females.
- The average annual salary increases by age from about $32,100 for students 20 and younger to $44,100 for students 30 and older.
- The annual anticipated salary of graduating students has kept up with inflation since 2000. The average annual salary has increased over time by 20% from $30,575 in 2000 to $36,561 in 2009, compared to a 21% increase in inflation over the same time period.

### 9.7.1 Anticipated earnings by discipline

Depending on students' disciplines, their average anticipated starting salary varies considerably.

- Students in Engineering programs have the highest average salary at almost $56,000 annually. This is considerably higher than the next highest discipline, Professional programs, at about $46,000.
- Students in Arts and Humanities programs have the lowest starting annual salary at around $28,300.

See Table 104.

**Table 104: Anticipated annual earnings by discipline**

| Discipline | Mean earnings | Median earnings |
|---|---|---|
| Engineering | $55,767 | $55,500 |
| Professional | $46,040 | $45,840 |
| Business | $39,596 | $38,400 |
| Physical Science | $38,471 | $36,000 |
| Other fields | $37,442 | $38,400 |
| **Overall** | **$35,561** | **$36,000** |
| Education | $32,292 | $32,800 |
| Biological Science | $30,803 | $26,400 |
| Social Science | $30,768 | $25,200 |
| Arts and Humanities | $28,255 | $24,000 |

## 9.8 Job prospects

We asked all students about their perceptions of the Canadian job market for students in their major area of study.

- About 2 students in 3 believe that there are at least some jobs for graduating students in their field of study, including 23% who think there are many jobs.
- About 3 students in 10 think there are few jobs in their field of study.
- About 1 in 25 students indicates they do not know what the job prospects are like in their area of study.

See Table 105.

**Table 105: Job prospects Q49**

| | All students (n=12,160) | Group | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 (n=5,339) | 2 (n=3,294) | 3 (n=3,527) |
| Many jobs | 23% | 24% | 19% | 26% |
| Some jobs | 42% | 43% | 42% | 39% |
| Few/very few jobs | 31% | 29% | 35% | 30% |
| Don't know/not sure | 4% | 5% | 4% | 5% |

Note: Columns may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

### 9.8.1 Job prospects by discipline

Students' confidence about job prospects within their area of study varies by their discipline.

- At 6 students in 10, students graduating from Professional programs are by far the most likely to believe that there are many jobs in their area of study.
- At just 1 in 10, students graduating from Arts and Humanities programs are the least likely to think that there are many jobs. They are also the most likely to think that there are few or very few jobs in their major area of study.

See Table 106.

**Table 106: Job prospects by discipline**

| Discipline | Many jobs | Few/very few jobs |
|---|---|---|
| Professional | 61% | 11% |
| Other fields | 29% | 22% |
| Engineering | 29% | 27% |
| Business | 26% | 25% |
| **Overall** | **23%** | **31%** |
| Physical Science | 21% | 30% |
| Biological Science | 21% | 30% |
| Education | 16% | 36% |
| Social Science | 17% | 34% |
| Arts and Humanities | 11% | 45% |

## 10.0 Conclusion

The Canadian University Survey Consortium surveys students annually to understand their opinions, attitudes, and behaviours. This year, over 12,100 graduating students from 34 universities participated in a survey gathering over 150 pieces of information. This survey is one of the most comprehensive studies conducted with students graduating from an undergraduate program in Canada, and builds on similar surveys conducted in 2000, 2003, and 2006.

This report is intended to provide an overview of the findings and is not intended to be an exhaustive analysis of the results. Indeed, as we report each year, it provides a rich source for further research.

As we found three years ago, there is remarkable consistency among students over time. This year's results, with some exceptions, are very similar to findings from the previous three CUSC surveys of graduating students. As was the case in previous years, most students who are graduating had positive experiences at their university. These experiences led almost 9 students in 10 to report they are satisfied with the overall quality of education they received and their decision to attend their university. Much of their positive impressions of their university appear to extend from their impression of faculty. The vast majority of students agree that their professors seem knowledgeable in their fields, are accessible outside of class, are well organized, communicate well, and encourage participation in class discussions.

Generally, universities also rate well for their contribution to students' personal growth and development in particular areas, although only seven out of 34 academic and non-academic activities are rated by a clear majority of students as contributing very much to their personal growth and development. All these activities involve interactions with others. Three involve the faculty: professors' knowledge of their discipline, their enthusiasm for subject material, and classroom instruction. Another involves being a teaching assistant. Two involve learning activities that take students outside the confines of the university: participating in international study or exchanges; and co-op, internship, or practical experience programs. One is non-academic: interactions with others.

In assessing their university for its contribution to their growth and development in 33 areas, students give good grades in many of them. However, they give particularly high marks in two: a broad knowledge of their major field of study, and thinking critically. In most other skill areas, students typically rate their universities as making a good, if not excellent, contribution. However, as we have found in the past, universities also receive particularly poor grades from students for contributing to their growth of entrepreneurial skills, and spiritual development. Asked to choose from a list of 20 areas they think are most important to a student's growth and development, students' results are diverse. No one area is selected by more than 3 students in 10, and the top three are general life skills: personal self-confidence, personal time management skills, and identifying and solving problems.

While students do not always rate their universities highly for contributing to specific areas of personal growth and development, the vast majority say that their university experience has been intellectually stimulating. Indeed, 9 in 10 students agree that their learning experiences at their university have been intellectually stimulating. However, fewer, 8 in 10, agree that their non-

academic learning experiences at their university have been intellectually stimulating. Further, the university experience extends beyond the intellectual, as almost 9 students in 10 report being satisfied with their opportunity to develop lasting friendships at their university.

As identified in previous research, a key area of weakness for universities as identified by students can be summed up with the word “inclusion.” Universities receive some of their lowest scores for helping students feel as if they are part of the university because they are perceived as giving students the run-around and not showing enough concern for students as individuals. These concerns also appear equally among students in all fields of study and regardless of the size of the university they attend.

While 7 students 10 agree that they have received good value for the money they paid for their education, many students do not. In part, this may result from the fact that students appear to be accumulating greater debt in paying for their education. Indeed, this research suggests that student debt-load is rising faster than the cost of living. On average, debt increased 37% between 2000 and 2009. During the same period, the cost of living rose only 21%. This increase in debt may in part make some students question the value of their education given the money necessary to complete their undergraduate program.

In spite of these weaknesses, the vast majority of students, regardless of field of study, are graduating with very positive impressions of their university experience. Most students report that their university met or exceeded their expectations (85%), they would recommend their university to others (89%), and they are satisfied with their decision to attend their university (90%). This all suggests that students typically believe that the years they spent working on their undergraduate education were worthwhile and beneficial.