

What is the CUSC survey?

The Canadian University Survey Consortium (CUSC) is a group of Canadian universities working cooperatively to gain a better understanding of the Canadian undergraduate student population. The CUSC survey runs once a year in the winter term and operates on a three year cycle, alternating between first year students, middle-years students, and graduating students. Middle-year students were last surveyed in 2014.

What is the purpose of this survey?

To collect feedback from middle-year undergraduate students at the U of S in order to better understand students' experiences, goals, development and satisfaction with their university.

Who participated in this survey?

Students from universities across Canada participated. For the U of S, a random sample of 1,500 first-year students were invited to participate. Of this sample, 362 completed the questionnaire representing a response rate of 24.1%.

For more information, please visit usask.ca/ipa or contact Institutional Planning and Assessment at: ipa_assessment@usask.ca

Canadian University Survey Consortium (CUSC) 2017: Middle-Year Student Survey

Profile of University of Saskatchewan middle-year students

- Respondents tended to be Canadian citizens (88%), female (64%), and, on average, were 24 years old. One in five identified as a member of a visible minority (22%), while 9% self-identified as Aboriginal.
- Of these students, 21% self-reported as having a disability.
- Only 10% were first-generation students (i.e., neither parent had any post-secondary education).
- Almost all of the respondents (92%) were registered in courses full-time.
- Over half (54%) of respondents rented housing off-campus, while 30% lived with parents, guardians or relatives. Roughly one in ten (9%) lived in their personally-owned home while only 4% lived in on-campus housing.

Financing education

- Most students said they relied on *parents, family or spouse* (59%) as well as *earnings from summer work* (55%) and *current employment* (55%) to fund their education. The other notable sources of financing were *government loans or bursaries* (38%) and *university scholarships, financial awards or bursaries* (36%). On average, most students relied on three sources of funding for financing their education.
- 49% of students (59% for the peer group) stated that they did not have any repayable debt. The average amount for those who did carry debt was \$33,612 which was \$6376 more than the peer group.
- Over half (55%) of respondents were employed, with 15% working on campus. An additional 17% were not working, but were seeking employment. Of the students who were employed, 83% reported working less than 20 hours per week. Among all employed students, 41% felt their employment negatively impacted their academic performance, whereas 25% felt that it positively impacted performance.
- Despite the costs of university, 78% agreed that they *have the financial resources to complete their program* and that a *university degree is worth the cost* (66%).

¹ Peer group: CUSC defines peer groups according to degree programs that are offered. Universities in the same group as the U of S included Dalhousie and McGill.

Satisfaction with facilities and services

- The top three general services used by middle-years students were: *on-campus book store* (78%), *library electronic resources* (78%) and *food services* (67%). The three least used services were: *computing services help desk* (17%) *facilities for student associations* (14%) and *university residences* (5%).
- More than 87% were satisfied or very satisfied with the general facilities and services with the exception of *on-campus bookstore* (85%) *university residences* (63%) and *parking* (39%).
- The most commonly used academic service was *academic advising* (62%) of which 85% were satisfied or very satisfied with that service.
- Use of special services ranged from 18% for *employment services* to 3% for the use of *services for international students*. The U of S has the highest participation in services for First Nations students (5% vs. 1% in peer group) and 100% reported satisfaction with these services.

Educational experiences

- Respondents agreed or strongly agreed (87%) that they were satisfied with the quality of teaching they received.
- The majority of middle-years students said their experiences have either *met* (66%) or *exceeded their expectations* (19%), while 17% said their *experiences fell short of expectations*.
- Roughly 9 in 10 students agreed that most of their *courses are interesting* (89%), that they are *in the right program* (87%) and that their *course load is manageable* (88%). The percentages in the peer group were 85%, 83% and 88% respectively.

University's contribution to students' growth and development

- **Communication skills:** The U of S contributed most to students' ability for *writing clearly and correctly* (67%) and *speaking to small groups* (65%). The least contribution was to developing *second or third language skills* (14%).
- **Analytical and learning skills:** Students indicated the U of S contributed most to their *ability to find and use information* (75%) and *thinking logically and analytically* (73%), and least to *mathematical skills* (33%).
- **Working skills:** 74% reported the U of S contributed to their ability to *work independently*, while the item with the least agreement was that the university contributed to developing *entrepreneurial skills* (25%).
- **Life skills:** 62% indicated the U of S has contributed to their *ability to interact with people from different backgrounds* and *deal successfully with obstacles to achieve an objective*. On the lower end, 15% said the university has contributed to their *spirituality*.
- Slightly more than two-thirds of students (68%) were satisfied with the *concern shown by the university for them as an individual*, of which 8% were very satisfied.

For more information, visit

www.usask.ca/ipa

Goal and Career Development

- Almost all (99%) students said they had selected their major or discipline, although nearly half (48%) have *changed their major or program of study* at some point.
- Almost two-thirds of students intended to apply to either graduate school (31%) or a professional program (32%).
- One in five of middle-years students (21%) had a specific career in mind and 30% had several possible careers in mind for when they graduate. Most students (70%) felt they know their career options either very well or fairly well.
- Students reported having taken initial steps to prepare for employment such as gathering information from talking with *parents/family* (78%) or talking with *friends* (77%). Among more concrete behaviours, 67% *have created a resumé or CV*, 37% *have worked in their chosen field of employment* and 35% *have volunteered* in their chosen field of employment.

Overall satisfaction

- Almost 9 in 10 students (88%) agreed they were *satisfied* with their decision to attend the U of S, including 19% who were *very satisfied*.
- On a whole, the students surveyed *felt as if they belong* at the U of S (86%), which was 6% higher than the peer group.
- Almost all students (92%) agreed they would recommend the U of S to others (89% for the peer group).
- Overall, 78% of respondents were satisfied with the quality of the education they received at the U of S.

For more information, visit

www.usask.ca/ipa