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. First-year students were last surveyed in 2016.

What is the purpose of this survey?
To collect feedback from first-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 1,000 first-year students were invited to participate. Of this sample, 313 completed the questionnaire representing a response rate of 31.3%.

Profile of University of Saskatchewan first-year students
- Respondents were mostly Canadian citizens (91%), female (70%), and just over 18 years of age. Roughly one in five identified as a member of a visible minority (22%), while 7% self-identified as Aboriginal.
- Of these students, 20% self-reported as having a disability.
- Just 8% were first-generation students in that neither parent had any post-secondary education.
- Almost all of the respondents (99%) were registered in courses full-time in their first year.
- A little over a third (39%) of respondents lived with parents, guardians or relatives. Almost a quarter (22%) live on-campus while 22% live in rented housing off-campus or live in personally-owned home (2%).

Financing education
- 77% of first-year students (56% for the peer group\(^1\)) reported they received a scholarship, financial award or bursary from the U of S. Of these students, 21% noted that they would not have been able to attend university without this assistance as compared to 30% in the peer group.
- 35% of first-year students reported they were employed during the academic year (39% in peer group) with another 22% looking for employment (29% in peer group).
- Of the employed students, 96% reported working less 20 or less hours per week while most (49%) worked 10 hours or less. Of these students, 45% felt that their employment negatively impacted their academic performance, whereas 12% felt that it positively impacted performance.

Decision to attend university and the U of S in particular
- Sources of information that first-year students found to be most important when making the decision to attend the U of S were: parents (54%); the university’s website (50%); and students attending the university (45%).

\(^1\)Peer group: CUSC defines peer groups according to degree programs that are offered. Universities in the same group as the U of S included: Concordia, Dalhousie, Calgary, Ottawa, and Manitoba.
35% of current U of S students had applied to more than one university. Of those that applied elsewhere, 92% reported that the U of S was their first choice.

Students indicated that the top reasons for choosing the U of S were: it had a program I wanted to take (88%); the city it’s in (66%) and the academic reputation of the university (65%).

Experience prior to classes

94% of students expressed being satisfied with being able to get in to the courses they wanted (84% in the peer group) and 84% were satisfied with the process of registering (77% in the peer group).

80% of students (60% for the peer group) reported attending a university orientation program. The highest rated outcomes of orientation were: helping understand the university's academic expectations (84%); building confidence (82%); and helping your personal and social transition to university (78%).

Educational experiences

Most students had positive perceptions of the program in which they were enrolled including the following that were rated highly: most of my courses are interesting (88%); my course load is manageable (83%) and; I am in the right program for me (78%).

At the time of the survey, the majority planned to come back to the university next year (89%) and to eventually complete their degree at the U of S (87%).

A little more than 8 in 10 students agreed that they feel as if they belong at this university (85%) including 37% who felt they belonged very much. Only about 1 in 10 disagreed (12%), including 2% who felt they did not belong at all.

In terms of general satisfaction with the quality of teaching that students received, 93% agreed that they were either satisfied or very satisfied compared to 86% in the peer group.

University experience

When asked to rate their success with transitioning to university, first-year students reported having the most success finding your way around campus (96%) and the least success in becoming involved in campus activities (46%).

There was at least 89% of students satisfied with a list of university facilities (e.g., library, computing services, residences, food services, athletic facilities, etc.) with the exception of parking facilities (50%) and university residences (50%).

For academic services students were most satisfied with study skills and learning supports (95%) and least satisfied with tutoring (88%).

The majority (74%) of students said their experience at the university met their expectations (70% in the peer group), while 15% said their expectations have been exceeded (15% in the peer group). Conversely, 10% said their experiences fell short of expectations (14% in the peer group). The area where students expressed that expectations were met least was in terms of course grades (42%).
Overall satisfaction

- The majority of first-year students said they were satisfied with the concern shown by the university for them as an individual (72%).

- Almost all respondents were satisfied with their decision to attend this university (94%), of which 24% who are very satisfied. In terms of the perceived overall quality of education, 93% were satisfied with 11% reporting being very satisfied.

- Students were asked to rate the likelihood that they would recommend their university on a scale from 0 (not at all likely) to 10 (extremely likely). Using a Net Promoter Score calculation, where detractors (rating of 0 to 6) are subtracted from promoters (rating of 9 or 10), USask has a score of 23% (36% promoters minus 13% detractors). In comparison, the peer group score was 14%.

For more information, visit

www.usask.ca/ipa