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# **SURVEY OF FIRST-YEAR UNIVERSITY STUDENTS 2001**

## **Master Report**

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Prepared for:

Canadian Undergraduate Survey Consortium ©

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## CANADIAN UNDERGRADUATE SURVEY CONSORTIUM (“CUSC”)

### PROTOCOL FOR DATA USE

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

It was agreed by the participants that data were owned collectively and would 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. For institutional promotion, recruiting, or other public dissemination, rankings may not be used. 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 that the researcher is qualified and agrees to acknowledge the ownership of the data by participating universities and to provide the consortium with a copy of any report or publication that is produced. Decisions on such requests will be made by a sub-committee consisting of Dennis Domoney, Eric McKee, and Garth Wannan with consultation with members of the full steering group in the case of requests that seem problematic.

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **Methodology**

This is the seventh co-operative study undertaken by the Canadian Undergraduate Survey Consortium (CUSC). The surveys target various undergraduate groups; three of the surveys have focused on a sample of all undergraduates, while others have targeted specific types of students. The focus of this year's research is first-year students.

In 2001, 26 universities across Canada participated in the study. Each participating university distributed a survey package consisting of a cover letter, questionnaire, and postage-paid, return envelope to about 600 first-year students (or as many first-year students as possible, if fewer than 600 were enrolled). The overall response rate was almost 48%, which is typical of a survey of this type.

### **Profile of first-year students**

- Most respondents are female (66%) and about 20 years old. Half of first-year university student respondents live at home, while 3 in 10 live in residence on-campus. Among those who do not currently live on-campus, about 19% said they would have chosen to do so if given the chance.
- The typical student entered university from high school or CEGEP with an average grade between B+ and A-. University proves challenging for many of these students, and they expect to finish their first year of university with an average mark half a grade lower—that is, between B and B+.
- About three-quarters of respondents report graduating from high school or CEGEP in 2000, and thus entered university directly from high school. Most of the remaining students have been out of school for a year or two, although some have come to attend university later in life.
- More than 8 students in 10 report having a full course load both at the time of registration and at the time of the survey. Among the youngest cohort of first-year students (i.e., 18 years of age or younger) some 6% dropped from a full load at registration to a partial load at the time of the survey. Older students tend to have picked up additional courses, going from a partial course load at registration to a full load at the time of the survey.
- Financing for students' education comes from various sources. Just over 4 students in 10 report being employed, and a similar number report receiving scholarships or other financial awards. About 1 student in 3 reports receiving a student loan or other government assistance. Almost 8 students in 10 have at least some concerns about having enough funds to complete their education, including almost 3 students in 10 who are very concerned.

## Decision to go to university

- Students report that many different reasons are important in their decision to attend university. Of the ten reasons tested by the survey, the most important are the two reasons related to future employment. Most students chose to go to university either to *prepare for a specific career* or to *get a good job*.
- A number of other reasons are considered very important in the decision to attend university. About two-thirds of the students report that *getting a general education* and *increasing knowledge in an academic field* are very important in their decision to go to university. About half the students think that *developing a broad base of skills* is also a very important reason to attend university.

## Choosing a university

- Many different reasons are important in the choice of a particular university. Of the 23 reasons tested with students, half the respondents said one of the following is most important: *specific career-related program*, *quality of the academic program*, and *wanting to live close to home*.
- Other reasons, while not considered the single most important, are rated as very important by many, including: *the university has a good reputation*, *accessibility of the campus from their home*, *the size of the university*, *offers of financial assistance*, and *tuition fees*. Each is rated as very important in the choice of university by one-fifth to half of students.
- Typically, students apply to more than one university. About 6 students in 10 report applying to more than one university, and on average, these students applied to three universities. Some 15% of students also report applying to a college. Some 8 students in 10 report they are currently attending the university that was their first choice.
- The vast majority of students report receiving brochures or pamphlets (92%), visiting the campus (81%), or receiving either a visit (77%) or a letter (66%) from a university representative. Regarding personal and media exposure to the university, the most important communication methods affecting their decision to attend a particular university are also the most common: *a campus visit*, *brochures or pamphlets*, and *a visit from a university representative*.
- Overall, over 9 students in 10 report being somewhat or very satisfied with the handling of their application for admission to their current university.

## Experience prior to classes

- About 3 students in 4 sought help or advice when deciding on a program or specific courses. The most common source of advice is other students. Overall, almost 6 in 10 first-year students sought advice from their peers to help in choosing their courses or program. About 4 students in 10 received assistance from Admissions or Registrars' staff, and the same number spoke to an academic advisor for help with choosing their program. About 3 students in 10 received assistance from faculty, and an equal number spoke to a career counsellor when choosing their program.
- According to the students who used these various sources, the most useful advice came from other students. Of those who consulted their peers, over 4 students in 10 rated their help as very useful. Slightly fewer rated the advice of faculty members and academic advisors as very useful.
- Among those students who sought help, about 8 students in 10 say they are somewhat or very satisfied with the help they received when deciding on program or course selections. This includes about 3 students in 10 who are very satisfied. Similarly, overall, 8 students in 10 are satisfied with the process of course registration, including almost 4 in 10 who are very satisfied.
- A majority of students report being able to get into most, if not all, of the courses they wanted. In fact, almost 6 students in 10 report being able to enrol in all of the courses they wanted, and another 3 in 10 were able to enrol in most of the courses they wanted.
- A majority of students, about 6 in 10, report participating in an orientation program. Of those who participated, the vast majority report that they were made to feel welcome during the orientation and were satisfied with the help provided by the orientation. While 8 students in 10 report they are satisfied that the orientation helped them understand the university's academic expectations, less than 1 in 5 is very satisfied.

## University experience

- Most students report at least some success in adjusting to various aspects of university life. Among the various academic adjustments they made, the most successful are *meeting computer literacy required for their study* and *choosing a program of studies to meet their objectives*. In both cases, over 90% who rated these items report "some success" and at least half report being "very successful". Students report the least success in *getting academic advice*. Just over 60% report "some success", including less than one-fifth who report being "very successful".
- Among the personal adjustments that we asked them to consider, students report the most success in *feeling as if they belong at university* and *making new friends with other students*. In each case, the vast majority reports at least some success, while well over 40% report being very successful in making these personal adjustments. Students report the least success in *becoming involved in campus activities*. Only about 4 students in 10

report some success, including 1 in 10 who feels very successful in becoming involved on-campus.

- A majority of students report at least some success in making a number of practical adjustments to campus life. Some three-quarters of students report being very successful in *finding their way around campus*. About 4 students in 10 report being very successful in *finding suitable, affordable housing and using the library*. Only about 2 students in 10 report being very successful in *finding useful information and resources on careers and occupations*.
- About 6 students in 10 are satisfied with the concern shown by their university for them as individuals, including 15% who are very satisfied. About 1 student in 4 is dissatisfied.
- Most students report being satisfied with academic facilities and services, general facilities and services on-campus, and special services offered to specific types of students. About 9 students in 10 report being satisfied with *average size of their classes and the instructional and library facilities*. That said, in each case, less than 1 student in 3 is very satisfied.
- Of the 29 facilities and services tested, the highest satisfaction appears to be with *athletic facilities, access to computer facilities, and campus medical services*, with almost 4 users in 10 rating themselves as very satisfied with each. The lowest satisfaction ratings are reported for *parking facilities and food services*, each receiving a "very satisfied" rating from about 15% of users.
- Some 90% of students report being satisfied or very satisfied with their personal safety on-campus. This is true of both male and female students.
- At least three-quarters of students are positive about faculty in terms of: *providing reasonable access for help outside of class, encouraging student participation in class, and treating them as individuals*. Most agree they are satisfied with the quality of the teaching they have received, including just over one-fifth of students who "strongly agree" with this statement.
- More than 9 students in 10 agree they are satisfied with the decision to attend their current university, including 4 students in 10 who strongly agree.

## 1.0 Introduction

This is the seventh co-operative study undertaken by the Canadian Undergraduate Survey Consortium (CUSC). The annual surveys target various undergraduate groups; three of the surveys have focused on a sample of all undergraduates, while others have targeted specific types of students. The focus of this year's research is first-year students.

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

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

Each past study was coordinated by Garth Wannan through the University of Manitoba Department of Housing and Student Life, and is a co-operative effort by all universities involved; this year's study is no different.

### 1.1 How this research was conducted

PRA Inc. and representatives from several participating universities reviewed past surveys to develop this year's questionnaire. The result of this meeting was a draft survey that was finalized by participating universities. A final version of the survey appears in Appendix A.

This year's methodology is the same as that used in the past. Each university was required to:

- Generate a random sample of 600 students who are undergraduate students in a first-level Bachelor's program in 2001. Only first-year students who entered university from high school or CEGEP were eligible; that is, these students were to have no prior university or college experience other than the current academic year.<sup>1</sup> Both full-time and part-time students who met the above criteria were eligible, although independent or special students were excluded. If a university did not have 600 first-year students who met the criteria, all first-year students received the survey.

<sup>1</sup> Data reveal that some students have had work/life experience prior to completing the survey.



- Mail a package to the selected students containing a cover letter, questionnaire, and a postage-paid, self-addressed return envelope.
- Mail a reminder letter to all non-respondents approximately 2 to 3 weeks after the original mailing.
- Mail a final reminder letter to all non-respondents approximately 4 to 6 weeks after the original mailing.
- Return the completed surveys to the University of Manitoba (who then forwarded them to PRA Inc. for processing).

A copy of the methodological guidelines sent to each participating university is found in Appendix B.

Once PRA Inc. received the surveys, we began the process of coding selected open-ended questions; data were then analyzed using SPSS and Quantum.

Table 2 (next page) shows the response rate by university. While ranging from about 40% to nearly 61%, the overall response rate was 47.4%. This represents a good response rate for a survey of this type.

<b>University</b>	<b>Number distributed</b>	<b>Number returned by cutoff</b>	<b>Response rate</b>
Alberta	600	294	49.0%
Brandon	364	148	40.7%
British Columbia	600	291	48.5%
Carleton	600	300	50.0%
Concordia	650	295	45.4%
Dalhousie	600	295	49.2%
Lakehead	600	273	45.5%
Lethbridge	600	341	56.8%
Manitoba	600	266	44.3%
Montreal	600	363	60.5%
New Brunswick (Saint John)	425	169	39.8%
Nipissing	368	163	44.3%
Ontario College of Art & Design	597	285	47.7%
Ottawa	600	319	53.2%
Queens	600	301	50.2%
Regina	600	302	50.3%
Ryerson Polytechnic	600	283	47.2%
Saskatchewan	600	282	47.0%
Saint Mary's	600	240	40.0%
Simon Fraser	600	251	41.8%
Trent	600	257	42.8%
Trinity Western	568	253	44.5%
Toronto (Scarborough Campus)	600	321	53.5%
Wilfrid Laurier	600	246	41.0%
Windsor	600	281	46.8%
Winnipeg	600	274	45.7%
Total	14,972	7,093	47.4%

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

- Group 1 consists of universities offering primarily undergraduate studies. These universities tend to have a relatively small student population.
- Group 2 consists of universities offering both undergraduate and graduate studies that tend to be of medium size in terms of student population.

- Group 3 consists of universities offering both undergraduate and graduate degrees, with most having professional schools as well. These tend to be the largest institutions in terms of student population.

Table 3 shows the groups into which participating universities were categorized.

<b>Group 1</b>	<b>Group 2</b>	<b>Group 3</b>
Brandon Lakehead Lethbridge Nipissing Ontario College of Art & Design Saint Mary's Trent Trinity Western UNB (Saint John) Wilfrid Laurier Winnipeg	Carleton Regina Ryerson Simon Fraser Toronto (Scarborough Campus) Windsor	Alberta Concordia Dalhousie Manitoba Montreal Ottawa Queens Saskatchewan UBC

## 1.2 Statistically significant differences

Large sample sizes tend to artificially inflate significance levels. Therefore, we use a strict definition of statistical significance. At least two of the measures shown in Table 4 need to be met in order for the result to be considered statistically significant.

<b>Test</b>	<b>Level for significance</b>
Pearson's chi square	.000
Phi coefficient	.150 or higher
Cramer's V	.150 or higher

Occasionally, the report presents results of cross-tabulations. We have found these to be statistically significant.

## 2.0 Respondent attributes

In this section, we report that:

- The typical respondent is female and about 20 years old.
- Half of these first-year university students are living at home, while 3 in 10 are living in residence on-campus.
- Typically, these students are majoring in Arts and Humanities, Social Science, or Business programs (although many other disciplines are represented), and are taking a full course load.
- The typical student entered university with an average high school or CEGEP grade of B+ or A-. However, they expect to finish their first year of university with an average mark half a grade lower – that is, between B or B+.
- About three-quarters of respondents report graduating from high school or CEGEP in 2000.
- More than 8 students in 10 report having a full course load both at the time of registration and at the time of the survey. However, this belies the fact that among the youngest cohort of first-year students (i.e., 18 years of age or younger), some 6% dropped from a full course load at registration to a partial load at the time of the survey. Meanwhile, older students have picked up additional courses, going from a partial to a full course load.
- Financing for their education comes from various sources. Just over 4 students in 10 report being employed, and a similar number report receiving scholarships or other financial awards. About 1 student in 3 reports receiving a student loan or other government assistance.
- Almost 8 students in 10 have at least some concerns about having enough funds to complete their education, including almost 3 students in 10 who are very concerned.

## 2.1 Personal profile

As shown in Table 5 (next page), two-thirds of respondents in our sample are female. Our sample tends to over-represent female students because the participating universities have large Faculties of Arts, which tend to have a higher proportion of female students, and because women tend to respond to surveys more than men.

- Over one-third of first-year students are 18 years of age (or younger); about the same number are 19 years of age. The remaining one-fifth are 20 years of age or older.
- In their first year of university, half of these students are living at home with their parents. About 3 students in 10 report living in residence on-campus.
- Students are more likely to live with their parents when attending Group 2 universities than when attending Group 1 institutions. Similarly, Group 2 students are least likely to be living in residence on-campus, while Group 1 students are most likely.
- About 1 student in 5 is living on his/her own, usually in a rented apartment or home.
- About 5% of first-year students report having a disability, the most common being a learning disability.
- Some 14% of respondents self-identify as a visual minority, the most common being Chinese (3%), South Asian (Indian or Pakistani – 2%), and Black (2%). Students who report being a visible minority are more commonly found in Group 2 universities and less commonly reported by Group 1 institutions.
- Overall, about 3% of respondents self-identify as Aboriginal, First Nations, Metis, Inuit, or non-status.

Table 5: Personal profile				
Characteristic	All students (n=7,093)	Group		
		1 (n=2,650)	2 (n=1,738)	3 (n=2,705)
<b>Gender</b>				
Male	34%	31%	38%	36%
Female	66%	69%	61%	64%
<b>Age</b>				
18 years or younger	37%	36%	31%	42%
19 years of age	41%	42%	52%	32%
20 years of age	10%	9%	8%	12%
21 years or older	11%	11%	7%	13%
Average age	19.9	20.2	19.6	19.9
<b>Living arrangements</b>				
With parents	50%	39%	64%	51%
On-campus residence	29%	38%	20%	26%
Rented home/apartment	16%	17%	11%	19%
Rented room	3%	3%	3%	2%
Personally owned home	2%	2%	2%	2%
<b>Disability</b>				
Total self-identified	5%	7%	4%	4%
<b>Visible minority</b>				
Total self-identified	14%	9%	23%	13%
<b>Aboriginal status</b>				
Total self-identified	3%	4%	3%	2%
First Nations	1%	1%	1%	1%
Metis	1%	1%	1%	1%
Inuit	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%
Non-status	1%	1%	1%	1%

- Students 18 years of age or younger are the most likely to indicate that they live with a parent or guardian (57%), although some 31% of those 21 years of age or older are also living at home.
- Those most likely to be living in residence on-campus are 19 years of age (40%). Those 18 or younger are slightly less likely (26%), as are those 20 years of age (22%). Only 6% of those 21 years of age or older report living on-campus in residence.
- Older students are more likely to live in a rented space or a home they own. In fact, 63% of first-year students 21 years of age or older live on their own.

### 2.1.1 Parents of first-year students

We asked students to identify the occupation and level of education of their parents. As Table 6 shows, one-fifth of students report that their fathers work in management, administration, or business. Other common occupation areas of the fathers of respondents are: construction trades and transportation; natural sciences, engineering, or math; and social sciences, education, or religion.

Occupation	All students (n=7,093)	Group		
		1 (n=2,650)	2 (n=1,738)	3 (n=2,705)
Management/administration/business	20%	19%	20%	21%
Construction trades and transportation	16%	18%	14%	14%
Natural sciences/engineering/math	11%	9%	12%	12%
Social sciences/education/religion	11%	11%	8%	12%
Sales and service	9%	10%	9%	8%
Self-employed	6%	7%	5%	5%
Primary industry	6%	6%	5%	6%
Medicine/health	3%	3%	3%	4%
Processing/manufacturing	3%	3%	4%	2%
Artistic/literacy/cultural/recreation/sport	2%	2%	1%	2%
Non-employed	2%	2%	2%	2%
Clerical	1%	2%	2%	1%
Homemaker	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%
Don't know/no response	14%	12%	20%	13%

Almost as many students identify their mothers as being involved in management, administration, or business as they do their fathers (see Table 7). Other common occupation areas of mothers are: social sciences, education, or religion; medicine or health; and sales and service. About 16% of students report their mothers are homemakers.

See Table 7.

Occupation	All students (n=7,093)	Group		
		1 (n=2,650)	2 (n=1,738)	3 (n=2,705)
Management/administration/business	18%	19%	17%	19%
Homemaker	16%	17%	16%	16%
Social sciences/education/religion	16%	17%	12%	16%
Medicine/health	12%	13%	12%	13%
Sales and service	11%	12%	11%	10%
Clerical	5%	6%	4%	5%
Artistic/literacy/cultural/recreation/sport	4%	3%	3%	4%
Self-employed	2%	3%	3%	2%
Processing/manufacturing	2%	1%	3%	1%
Non-employed	2%	1%	1%	2%
Natural sciences/engineering/math	2%	1%	2%	2%
Construction trades and transportation	1%	1%	1%	1%
Primary industry	1%	1%	1%	1%
Don't know/no response	12%	9%	17%	12%

Just less than one-fifth of students either did not know or offered no response to the question about their parent's education. A majority reports either or both parents as having at least some post-secondary education. See Table 8.

	All students (n=7,093)	Group		
		1 (n=2,650)	2 (n=1,738)	3 (n=2,705)
<b>Mother's education</b>				
Less than high school	6%	6%	5%	6%
High school or CEGEP	25%	26%	24%	24%
Some post-secondary	23%	27%	20%	21%
University graduate	29%	26%	28%	32%
Other/Don't know/no response	17%	14%	22%	16%
<b>Father's education</b>				
Less than high school	8%	9%	7%	7%
High school or CEGEP	19%	20%	18%	19%
Some post-secondary	20%	23%	18%	18%
University graduate	35%	31%	34%	39%
Other/Don't know/no response	19%	18%	24%	18%



### 2.1.2 Permanent residence

Table 9 shows the location of students' permanent residence.

- Almost 4 students in 10 live in Ontario.
- About 1 student in 10 lives in British Columbia, Quebec, Alberta, Saskatchewan or Manitoba.
- About 1 student in 20 is a permanent resident outside Canada.

Province	All students (n=7,093)	Group		
		1 (n=2,650)	2 (n=1,738)	3 (n=2,705)
British Columbia	10%	5%	15%	12%
Alberta	9%	12%	1%	11%
Saskatchewan	8%	1%	17%	10%
Manitoba	9%	15%	<1%	9%
Ontario	39%	44%	63%	19%
Quebec	10%	<1%	<1%	25%
Nova Scotia	6%	7%	<1%	8%
Prince Edward Island	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%
New Brunswick	3%	6%	<1%	1%
Newfoundland	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%
Nunavut	<1%	<1%	-	<1%
Northwest Territories	<1%	<1%	<1%	-
Yukon	<1%	<1%	-	-
U.S.A.	2%	4%	<1%	1%
Other country	3%	4%	4%	2%
No response	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%

The province of permanent residence is very similar to the distribution of respondents by the province in which their university is located. See Table 10.

Province	All students (n=7,093)	Group		
		1 (n=2,650)	2 (n=1,738)	3 (n=2,705)
British Columbia	11%	10%	14%	11%
Alberta	9%	13%	-	11%
Saskatchewan	8%	-	17%	10%
Manitoba	10%	16%	-	10%
Ontario	43%	46%	68%	23%
Quebec	9%	-	-	24%
Nova Scotia	8%	9%	-	11%
New Brunswick	2%	6%	-	-

As Table 11 shows, the majority of students attend university in their home province.

- Quebec and Saskatchewan have the highest correlations of permanent residence and university attendance, while British Columbia and Nova Scotia respondents report the lowest correlations.
- Over 90% of students attending participating universities in Quebec, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and New Brunswick are permanent residents of these provinces.
- Over 80% of students attending universities in Ontario and Alberta are permanent residents of these provinces.
- British Columbia and Nova Scotia have the highest number students from outside their province. Still, over 70% of students attending universities in these provinces also report being permanent residents.

Location of university	% Students from province
Quebec	96%
Saskatchewan	95%
Manitoba	93%
New Brunswick	90%
Ontario	89%
Alberta	85%
British Columbia	76%
Nova Scotia	73%

## 2.2 Academic profile

Respondents tend to be enrolled in Arts, Social Science, Business, and Biological Sciences (see Table 12). While it is likely that many of these first-year students are still deciding on their major or may switch majors, only 10% indicated they had not decided on their major at the time of the survey.

- About half the students in Group 1 universities are in Arts and Humanities or Social Science programs. In Group 2 and 3 universities, these programs account for 30% to 31% of students.
- Almost one-fifth of students in Group 2 universities are in a Business program, compared to 10% in Groups 1 and 3.
- Students in Group 3 universities more often indicate a major in Biological or Physical Science or Professional programs than those attending universities in Group 1 or Group 2.

	All students (n=7,093)	Group		
		1 (n=2,650)	2 (n=1,738)	3 (n=2,705)
Arts and Humanities	20%	29%	15%	15%
Social Science	18%	21%	15%	16%
Business	12%	10%	18%	10%
Biological Science	10%	9%	8%	12%
Professional	6%	3%	7%	9%
Engineering	5%	1%	9%	7%
Physical Science	4%	3%	4%	6%
Education	4%	2%	3%	5%
Other fields	11%	9%	15%	9%
Don't know/no response	10%	11%	6%	10%

Note: In some cases, students provided more than one major. In these cases, we took the first mention as the primary area of concentration.

With reference to Table 13, the following trends are apparent:

- Three-quarters of first-year students graduated from high school or CEGEP in 2000. One-fifth of students graduated from secondary school in 1999 or earlier. The remaining 4% did not provide this information. One first-year student reported graduating from high school in 1950.
- Older first-year university students graduated earlier, suggesting they have either been in the workforce or taken time off before going to university. For example, some 62% of students who are 21 years of age or older graduated from high school or CEPEG in 1998 or before. That said, about one-fifth of these older students graduated in 2000.
- Students attending Group 1 universities are less likely to have graduated from high school or CEGEP in 2000.
- Some 84% of first-year students report they began with a full course load at registration, and almost as many (83%) had a full course load at the time of the survey.
- Although 88% of students 18 years of age or younger had a full course load at registration, by the time of the survey, this number had dropped to 82%. In fact, in all other age groups, more students had a full course load at the time of the survey than at registration.

Characteristic	All students (n=7,093)	Group		
		1 (n=2,650)	2 (n=1,738)	3 (n=2,705)
<b>Year graduated from high school or CEGEP*</b>				
2000	75%	71%	76%	78%
1999	12%	13%	14%	11%
1998 or before	9%	12%	6%	8%
<b>Full course load at registration</b>				
Yes	84%	83%	84%	85%
<b>Full course load at time of survey</b>				
Yes	83%	82%	83%	85%
<b>Language of instruction</b>				
English	88%	97%	97%	75%
French	10%	2%	2%	24%
*Note: Those who did not provide answers to particular questions are not shown but are included in the calculation. Therefore, responses do not sum to 100%.				

- Some 88% of respondents report that the language of instruction at their university is English, while 10% report the language of instruction is French. Almost all Group 1 and 2 students report that the language of instruction at their university is English, compared to three-quarters of Group 3 students.

As mentioned above, about 3 students in 10 are living in residence on-campus. Among those not currently living in residence, some 19% would choose to live on-campus if given the chance. See Table 14.

<b>Table 14: Campus living</b>				
	<b>All students (n=7,093)</b>	<b>Group</b>		
		<b>1 (n=2,650)</b>	<b>2 (n=1,738)</b>	<b>3 (n=2,705)</b>
<b>Live on-campus</b>				
Yes	29%	38%	20%	26%
<b>Would choose to live on-campus if given a chance*</b>				
Yes	19%	19%	21%	18%

\*Note: Only students who do not live on-campus were asked if they would like to live on-campus.

### 2.2.1 Grade point

Table 15 shows the grades of students at the end of their secondary education prior to entering university and their expected grade at the end of first-year university.

- Typically, students report graduating from high school or CEGEP with a grade between B+ and A-. Those attending Group 3 universities tend to have a higher graduating grade from secondary schools. In fact, 67% of students attending Group 3 institutions claim their high school average was A- or higher.
- Typically, students expect grades at the end of first-year university to be lower than their graduating grades from high school or CEGEP. The average is about half-a-grade lower, between B and B+. This is true regardless of the university group.

	All students (n=7,093)	Group		
		1 (n=2,650)	2 (n=1,738)	3 (n=2,705)
<b>Average grade in high school or CEGEP*</b>				
A or A+	32%	25%	29%	40%
A-	26%	24%	27%	27%
B+	18%	19%	20%	16%
B	14%	18%	15%	11%
C+	4%	7%	3%	3%
C or lower	2%	3%	2%	1%
Average	5.6	5.3	5.6	5.9
<b>Average grade expected at end of first year</b>				
A or A+	9%	9%	6%	10%
A-	18%	19%	17%	18%
B+	23%	22%	22%	24%
B	30%	32%	32%	28%
C+	11%	10%	13%	11%
C or lower	7%	6%	7%	7%
Average	4.6	4.6	4.5	4.7
*Note: Those who did not provide answers to particular questions are not shown but are included in the calculation. Therefore, responses do not sum to 100%.				

- Older first-year students report lower graduating grades from high school or CEGEP. For example, 68% of first-year students who are 18 years of age or younger report having a graduating grade of A- or higher, while only 34% of students 21 years or older report an A- or higher on leaving high school.

<sup>2</sup> This grade scale is based on the following: A/A+=7, A-=6, B+=5, B=4, C+=3, C=2, and D=1.

- However, this age-related performance difference appears to be eliminated in the first year of university. Just over 27% of students who are 18 years or younger expect to end their first year with a grade of A- or higher. This compares with 32% of those 21 years of age or older.

Both secondary school grades and expected grades at the end of first-year university vary by the major area of interest, as can be seen in Table 16.

- On average, students who are majoring in Biological Science and Engineering programs report the highest grade when graduating from high school or CEGEP - an A-.
- On average, the highest expected grades at the end of first year come from students in Biological Science, Physical Science, and Arts and Humanities programs.

**Table 16: Average grade in high school or CEGEP and grade expected at end of first year by subject of major concentration**

Discipline	High school average	Average expected at end of first year (average grade 7=A/A+)
Biological Science	6.1	4.8
Engineering	6.0	4.6
Physical Science	5.9	4.8
Business	5.7	4.6
Professional	5.6	4.6
Arts and Humanities	5.5	4.8
Education	5.5	4.4
Social Science	5.4	4.4
Other fields	5.6	4.6
OVERALL	5.6	4.6

### 2.3 Financing education

We asked students a series of questions about financing their education. Many students use employment, scholarships, and loans to finance their education.

- Just over 4 students in 10 report being employed. This is most common among students at Group 2 universities, where almost half of first-year students report having jobs.

- Slightly fewer than 4 students in 10 report receiving scholarships or other financial awards. Scholarships are most common among students at Group 1 universities (46%) and least common among students at Group 3 universities (34%).
- About 1 student in 3 reports receiving a student loan or other government assistance.
- Those currently employed spend an average of 16 hours per week at work, with 19% reporting more than 20 hours of work each week. Students at Group 1 universities report the highest number of hours of employment.

As Table 17 shows, students are concerned about having sufficient funding to complete their post-secondary education. Almost 8 students in 10 report at least some concerns about having enough funds to complete their education, including almost 3 students in 10 who are very concerned. Students at Group 1 universities showed the highest concern.

<b>Table 17: Financing university education</b>				
	<b>All students (n=7,093)</b>	<b>Group</b>		
		<b>1 (n=2,650)</b>	<b>2 (n=1,738)</b>	<b>3 (n=2,705)</b>
<b>Received a student loan or other government student assistance</b>				
Yes	33%	35%	34%	31%
<b>Having difficulty fulfilling the course load needed to keep loans or bursaries*</b>				
Yes	18%	14%	20%	20%
<b>Received a scholarship or other financial award</b>				
Yes	39%	46%	37%	34%
<b>Currently employed</b>				
Yes	42%	41%	46%	41%
No, but seeking work	22%	23%	23%	20%
No, not seeking work	35%	36%	30%	38%
<b>Number of hours work per week**</b>				
10 hours or less	32%	30%	33%	32%
11 to 20 hours	47%	43%	50%	49%
21 to 30 hours	13%	15%	12%	12%
30+ hours	6%	8%	4%	5%
Average number of hours	16.0	17.0	15.4	15.6
<b>Concerned about having sufficient funding to complete education</b>				
Not concerned	22%	19%	21%	24%
Some concern	49%	48%	50%	50%
Very concerned	28%	32%	28%	25%
*Note: Only students who received a loan or other government student assistance were asked if they are having difficulty fulfilling the course load needed to keep their loans or bursaries.				
**Note: Only students who are currently employed were asked how many hours they work per week.				
Note: Those who did not provide answers to particular questions are not shown but are included in the calculation. Therefore, responses may not sum to 100%.				



### 3.0 Reasons motivating attendance and choice of university

#### 3.1 Overview

Many different reasons contribute to these students' decisions to go to university. Of the ten reasons tested, over three-quarters of students reported that *preparing for a specific career* or *getting a good job* is the reason they attend university.

Students also responded that several other reasons are very important in their decision to attend university. About two-thirds of students say that *getting a general education* and *increasing knowledge in an academic field* were “very important” in their decision to go to university. About half of students think that *developing a broad base of skills* is also a “very important” reason for attending university.

Many different reasons are important in the choice of a particular university. Of the 23 reasons tested with students, half responded that the single most important reason for their choice is one of the following: *specific career-related program*, *quality of the academic program*, and *wanting to live close to home*. Other reasons students rated as “very important” to their choice of a particular university are: *the university has a good reputation*, *accessibility of the campus from their home*, *the size of the university*, *offers of financial assistance*, and *tuition fees*.

About 62% of students applied to more than one university, and on average, they applied to three universities. The vast majority of students report receiving brochures or pamphlets (92%), visiting the campus (81%), or receiving either a visit (77%) or a letter (66%) from a university representative. The single most important factors in their decision to attend a particular university are also the most common: *a campus visit*, *brochures or pamphlets*, and *a visit from a university representative*. Overall, most students report being “somewhat satisfied” or “very satisfied” with the handling of their application for admission to their current university.

### 3.2 Decision to attend university

We asked students to rate the importance of 10 different reasons in their decision to attend university in general (see Table 18).

Students reported that many reasons motivate their decision to attend university. The most common is related to obtaining employment after graduating.

- Just over 8 students in 10 say that *getting a good job* is a very important reason for attending university.
- Almost as many, 3 students in 4, say that *preparing for a specific job or career* is a very important reason for going to university.

The pursuit of knowledge is also considered a very important reason for a majority of students.

- About 2 students in 3 rate each of *getting a good general education* and *increasing their knowledge in an academic field* as very important in their decision to go to university.
- About half of students think that *developing a broad base of skills* is a very important reason for attending university.

Other reasons are considered very important by a minority of respondents.

- About 1 student in 3 says that *preparing for graduate or professional school* and *becoming a more cultured person* are very important reasons.
- About 2 students in 10 say that *meeting parental expectations* is a very important reason.

**Table 18: Motivation to attend university**

Percent reporting “very important”	All students (n=7,093)	Group		
		1 (n=2,650)	2 (n=1,738)	3 (n=2,705)
Get a good job	81%	77%	85%	81%
Prepare for a specific job or career	75%	72%	78%	74%
Get a good general education	67%	66%	69%	68%
Increase my knowledge in an academic field	66%	64%	68%	68%
Develop a broad base of skills	51%	50%	52%	51%
Prepare for graduate/professional school	37%	34%	38%	41%
Become a more cultured person	34%	32%	29%	39%
Meet parental expectations	18%	16%	25%	15%
Meet new friends	17%	19%	16%	16%
Other reasons	7%	8%	6%	6%

Note: Students may offer multiple responses or may choose to offer relatively few responses. Therefore, totals sum to more or less than 100%.

We asked students to choose one of these reasons as the “single most important” in their decision to attend university. As expected, most students’ prime motivation to attend university is related to future employment.

- Nearly two-thirds of students chose either *preparing for a specific job or career* (36%) or *getting a good job* (29%) as the “single most important” reason for going to university.
- Each of the other reasons is reported “most important” by fewer than 10% of students.

**Table 19: What was the *single most important* reason in your decision to attend university?**

	All students (n=7,093)	Group		
		1 (n=2,650)	2 (n=1,738)	3 (n=2,705)
Prepare for a specific job or career	36%	37%	35%	35%
Get a good job	29%	25%	32%	30%
Get a good general education	9%	9%	10%	9%
Increase my knowledge in an academic field	7%	7%	6%	8%
Prepare for graduate/professional school	6%	6%	7%	5%
Develop a broad base of skills	4%	5%	3%	3%
Become a more cultured person	4%	4%	2%	4%
Meet parental expectations	2%	2%	2%	2%
Meet new friends	<1%	1%	<1%	<1%
Other reasons	2%	3%	2%	2%
Don't know/no response	1%	2%	1%	1%

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

### 3.2.1 Reasons by discipline

Table 20 shows that students in different disciplines vary in their reasons for attending university. An overall rating is provided, along with some of the highest and lowest percentages of students who report that each motivation is “very important”.

- Those in Business, Engineering, and Professional programs are more likely to say that *getting a good job* was “very important” in their decision to attend university. Those in Arts and Humanities programs are less likely to say this was a “very important” reason.
- Not surprisingly, those in Professional, Engineering, and Business programs are also more likely to say *preparing for a specific job or career* was “very important” in their decision, although those in an Education program are the most likely to report this way. Again, those in Arts and Humanities programs are slightly less likely to say this was a “very important” reason.
- *Preparing for graduate or professional school* was “very important” to students in Biological Science and Professional programs, and less likely to be “very important” to those in Education or Engineering programs.
- Those in Arts and Humanities programs were more likely to decide to attend university to become a *more cultured person*, while those in Engineering programs are less likely to say this was a very important reason in their decision.

Issue	Discipline	Percent stating “very important”
Get a good job	Business	91%
	Engineering	90%
	Professional	87%
	Arts and Humanities	68%
	All universities	81%
Prepare for a specific job or career	Education	89%
	Professional	89%
	Engineering	85%
	Business	82%
	Arts and Humanities	68%
	All universities	75%
Prepare for graduate/professional school	Biological Science	59%
	Professional	49%
	Social Science	43%
	Physical Science	42%
	Education	28%
	Engineering	27%
	All universities	37%
Become a more cultured person	Arts and Humanities	44%
	Engineering	21%
	All universities	34%

### 3.3 Reasons for choosing their university

Students rated the relative importance of 23 reasons for their decision to attend their current university. We have grouped these reasons into four broad themes: personal, university program and services, general aspects of university life, and other considerations. We review each in turn below.

#### 3.3.1 Personal reasons

The location of the chosen university is a “very important” reason for a number of students.

- For 1 student in 3, *wanting to live close to home* was “very important” in their decision for choosing their current university.
- Students at Group 2 universities show the strongest preference for being close to home (41%). They also are the least likely to want to live away from home (6%).
- Almost as many (just fewer than 3 students in 10) rate *accessibility of the campus from their home* as “very important” in their decision.
- Conversely, nearly 1 student in 10 says the desire to *live away from home* was “very important” in their decision.

Table 21 shows these and other personal reasons for attending their current university.

Percent reporting “very important”	All students (n=7,093)	Group		
		1 (n=2,650)	2 (n=1,738)	3 (n=2,705)
Wanted to live close to home	33%	29%	41%	32%
Accessibility of the campus from my home	27%	25%	34%	26%
Wanted to live away from home	10%	13%	6%	9%
Parents/relatives wanted me to enrol here	9%	7%	11%	9%
Friends attending here	8%	7%	8%	10%
Other family member(s) currently attending here	4%	3%	4%	4%

Note: Students may offer multiple responses or may choose not to respond. Therefore, totals sum to more or less than 100%.

### 3.3.2 University programs and services

Of all the reasons tested, quality of academic programs and specific career-related programs are most often rated as very important in students' choice of university.

- Almost 6 students in 10 say the *quality of academic programs* at their current university was very important in their decision to attend. This is the single most common reason rated as very important.
- Over half the students rate the *specific career-related program* offered by their current university as very important. This reason is more commonly rated as very important among those attending Group 2 universities.
- Other university programs and services rated as very important by fewer than one-fifth of students include the university's *co-op program* (16%) and the *availability of on-campus residence* (15%). Students attending Group 2 universities are more likely to rate the co-op program as very important in their choice of university (29%).

These and other reasons rated as “very important” are shown in Table 22.

Percent reporting “very important”	All students (n=7,093)	Group		
		1 (n=2,650)	2 (n=1,738)	3 (n=2,705)
Quality of academic programs	57%	53%	56%	60%
Specific career-related program	53%	52%	58%	51%
Co-op program	16%	11%	29%	14%
Availability of on-campus residence accommodations	15%	19%	13%	14%
Opportunities for international work/study abroad	14%	12%	16%	16%
Computer facilities	9%	8%	14%	8%
Special needs services	3%	2%	3%	3%

Note: Students may offer multiple responses or may choose not to respond. Therefore, totals sum to more or less than 100%.

### 3.3.3 General aspects of university life

- The *university's reputation* was “very important” for about half the students in their choice of institution. The survey did not ask about what in particular about a university’s reputation was important in their decision.
- Almost 3 students in 10 indicate that the *size of the university* was “very important” in their decision. Not surprisingly, this reason is more common among those attending smaller universities. Over 4 students in 10 attending Group 1 universities rate this reason as “very important” in their decision, compared to fewer than 2 in 10 students attending Group 2 and 3 universities.
- The fact that about 1 student in 5 rates an offer of *financial assistance or scholarship* as “very important” is not surprising. We noted earlier that a majority of students have some concerns about having sufficient funds to complete their education.

See Table 23.

Percent reporting “very important”	All students (n=7,093)	Group		
		1 (n=2,650)	2 (n=1,738)	3 (n=2,705)
University has a good reputation	49%	49%	43%	53%
Size of university	27%	44%	17%	17%
Offered financial assistance/scholarship	21%	22%	24%	19%
Tuition fees	19%	21%	19%	16%
Contact with students from the university	7%	7%	7%	7%
Note: Students may offer multiple responses or may choose to offer relatively few responses. Therefore, totals sum to more or less than 100%.				

### 3.4 Other considerations

The remaining reasons for students' choice of current university are shown in Table 24, and each was very important to less than one-fifth of students.

- The *availability of public transportation* was “very important” to 16% of students, while the *size of the city or town* in which the university is located (as opposed to the size of the university itself) was “very important” to nearly the same number (15%).
- About 1 student in 10 says a *rich social life* and *school spirit* were “very important”.
- Few say the advice from counsellors or teachers was a factor in their choice of university.

Percent reporting “very important”	All students (n=7,093)	Group		
		1 (n=2,650)	2 (n=1,738)	3 (n=2,705)
Availability of public transportation	16%	13%	19%	18%
Size of city/town	15%	16%	10%	16%
Rich social life	11%	13%	8%	12%
School spirit	10%	11%	6%	11%
Advice from counsellors or teachers	6%	7%	6%	6%
Note: Students may offer multiple responses or may choose to offer relatively few responses. Therefore, totals sum to more or less than 100%.				

#### 3.4.1 Single most important reason

We asked students to choose the one reason that was most important in their choice of current university.

Three reasons stand out, accounting for about half of all responses:

- *Specific career-related program* (20%)
- *Quality of academic programs* (17%)
- *Wanted to live close to home* (13%).

These three reasons are the most common regardless of whether the student belonged to Group 1, 2, or 3, although *quality of academic programs* is slightly more important among those attending Group 3 universities. More than 1 in 10 of those in



Group 1 mentioned *size of university* as most important. See Table 25.

**Table 25: What was the single most important reason in your decision to attend *this* university?**

	All students (n=7,093)	Group		
		1 (n=2,650)	2 (n=1,738)	3 (n=2,705)
Specific career-related program	20%	21%	22%	19%
Quality of academic programs	17%	14%	15%	22%
Wanted to live close to home	13%	11%	15%	13%
University has a good reputation	9%	8%	7%	12%
Offered financial assistance/scholarship	6%	5%	8%	5%
Accessibility of the campus from my home	5%	5%	6%	5%
Size of university	5%	11%	1%	1%
Co-op program	4%	2%	8%	3%
Tuition fees	2%	3%	2%	2%
Parents/relatives wanted me to enrol here	2%	2%	2%	2%
Wanted to live away from home	2%	2%	2%	2%
Friends attending here	1%	1%	1%	2%
Opportunities for international work/study abroad	1%	1%	1%	1%
Size of city/town	1%	1%	<1%	1%
Advice from counsellors or teachers	1%	1%	<1%	1%
Rich social life	1%	1%	<1%	1%
Other family member(s) currently attending here	1%	<1%	1%	1%
Computer facilities	<1%	<1%	1%	<1%
School spirit	<1%	1%	<1%	<1%
Availability of public transportation	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%
Availability of on-campus residence accommodations	<1%	<1%	1%	<1%
Contact with students from the university	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%
Special needs services	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%
Other reason specified	5%	6%	4%	5%
Don't know/no response	3%	3%	3%	2%

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

### 3.4.2 Reasons by discipline

Table 26 shows those reasons that were “very important” in the decision to attend a particular university by students’ area of study or discipline.

- The fact that the university has a *specific career-related program* was more often rated as “very important” by students in Engineering, Professional, Business, and Education programs and less often by those in Physical Science, Biological Science, and Social Science.
- The fact that the university is a certain *size* was less important to those in Professional and Engineering programs, partly reflecting the fact that smaller schools are less likely to have such programs.
- The availability of a co-op program was much more important in the decision of students in Engineering and Business programs, and less important to those in Arts and Humanities, Social Science, and Education.
- Students in Business programs are slightly more likely to say *opportunities for international work* were “very important” in their decision to attend a particular university.

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Discipline</b>	<b>% “Very important”</b>
Specific career-related program	Engineering	70%
	Professional	70%
	Business	63%
	Education	61%
	Physical Science	46%
	Biological Science	45%
	Social Science	44%
	All universities	53%
Size of university	Professional	19%
	Engineering	18%
	All universities	27%
Co-op program	Engineering	40%
	Business	38%
	Arts and Humanities	8%
	Social Science	8%
	Education	8%
	All universities	16%
Opportunities for international work/study	Business	21%
	All universities	14%

### 3.5 Selecting a university

We asked students about the process of selecting a university to attend.

- As shown in Table 27, about 6 students in 10 applied to more than one university. In fact, on average, they applied to three different universities before deciding which to attend. Students currently attending Group 2 institutions are slightly more likely to have applied to multiple universities than students at other institutions.
- Of those who applied to more than one university, more than 1 in 4 applied to at least one university outside their home province. Those attending Group 3 institutions are most likely to have applied to out-of-province universities.
- Some 15% of students report they applied to college as well as university.
- About 8 students in 10 report that the university they are currently attending was their first choice.

Table 27: Application process				
	All students (n=7,093)	Group		
		1 (n=2,650)	2 (n=1,738)	3 (n=2,705)
<b>Applied to more than one university</b>				
Yes	62%	60%	76%	56%
<b>Total number applied to*</b>				
One or two	29%	24%	22%	41%
Three	38%	45%	42%	26%
Four	16%	16%	19%	15%
Five or more	15%	14%	16%	16%
Average number applied to	3.33	3.35	3.44	3.23
<b>Number outside home province**</b>				
None	68%	70%	77%	58%
One	12%	12%	8%	15%
Two	7%	7%	5%	8%
Three or more	9%	7%	6%	15%
Average number outside home province	0.69	0.63	0.47	0.94
<b>Applied to college as well</b>				
Yes	15%	17%	18%	12%
<b>Currently attending first choice</b>				
Yes	82%	83%	76%	86%
*Note: Only students who had applied to more than one university were asked the total number to which they had applied.				
**Note: Only students who had applied to more than one university were asked the total number to which they had applied outside of their home province.				

### 3.6 Contact before choosing a university

We asked students about 12 different types of contact they may have had prior to choosing their current university. Most appear to have had multiple types of contact prior to their decision. This ranges from reading brochures and viewing websites to meeting with personnel (e.g., admissions officers).

#### 3.6.1 Personal contact

Table 28 (next page) shows the types of contacts students report (top half of Table 28):

- More than 9 students in 10 report *receiving brochures or pamphlets* from their current university prior to making their choice.
- Some 8 students in 10 report *visiting the university campus* prior to choosing the institution.
- Almost 8 students in 10 report a *visit from a representative* of the university at their high school or CEGEP.
- 2 students in 3 received a *letter from a university representative* while in high school or CEGEP.
- Finally, about 6 students in 10 *met with university Admission Officer on-campus, received a call from faculty, or received a call from students attending the university.*

The bottom half of Table 28 shows how important each contact was to the university decision. This shows the percentage of students that rate a contact as “very important” as a percentage of those who offered any kind of rating at all. (E.g., if 60% of students rated a type of contact, and 82% said it was “very important”, this represents 49% of students overall.)

- *Campus visit.* Of the 81% of students who rated campus visits, about 35% said that this type of contact was “very important” to their decision to attend. Students at Group 1 universities appear to value this type of contact somewhat more than those at Group 2 or Group 3 schools.
- *Brochure or pamphlet.* Of the 92% who received<sup>3</sup> printed materials, approximately 1 student in 4 rates brochures and pamphlets as “very important” in their decision.
- Very few students rated direct contact with faculty, students, or staff as “very important”. From the top half of Table 28, we see that 57% of students overall offered any rating of *calls from faculty*, and of these, only 14% said these calls were “very important”.

Table 28: Considerations when choosing current university - personal contact				
	All students (n=7,093)	Group		
		1 (n=2,650)	2 (n=1,738)	3 (n=2,705)
<b>Percent who rated type of contact</b>				
Brochures or pamphlets	92%	92%	94%	92%
Campus visit	81%	80%	85%	80%
Visit by a representative to my high school or CEGEP	77%	73%	82%	77%
Letters from university representatives to my high school or CEGEP	66%	63%	71%	66%
Meeting with university Admissions Officer on-campus	61%	62%	65%	59%
Calls from students of the university	59%	58%	62%	57%
Calls from faculty of the university	57%	58%	61%	55%
<b>Percent reporting “very important” (of those who offered a rating)</b>				
Campus visit	35%	42%	33%	30%
Brochures or pamphlets	24%	25%	24%	23%
Visit by a representative to my high school or CEGEP	16%	19%	16%	13%
Meeting with university Admissions Officer on-campus	14%	16%	16%	10%
Calls from faculty of the university	14%	14%	19%	11%
Letters from university representatives to my high school or CEGEP	12%	12%	15%	9%
Calls from students of the university	11%	12%	11%	10%

<sup>3</sup> Note that rating a contact implies receiving it. These implied relationships occur throughout the report.

### 3.6.2 Contact with media

Students rated various media sources they used while choosing their current university.

- More than 8 students in 10 report visiting the university’s website prior to deciding to attend.
- More than 7 students in 10 report reading the Maclean’s issue ranking universities.
- More than half report seeing or hearing TV or radio ads for their university, and almost as many used a CD-ROM provided by the university. Media contact is more likely to be identified as a consideration among those attending Group 2 or 3 universities.

Among those who had rated them, two media sources stand out as being very important: the university website (24%) and Maclean’s magazine (16%). To put these results in context, note that 72% rated Maclean’s magazine, and 16% of these students said it was “very important”; this is about 12% of all respondents in total.

	All students (n=7,093)	Group		
		1 (n=2,650)	2 (n=1,738)	3 (n=2,705)
<b>Percent who rated</b>				
University website	86%	84%	88%	86%
Maclean's magazine	72%	68%	78%	72%
Other media reports	65%	60%	70%	68%
TV or radio ads	56%	52%	59%	58%
CD-ROM	52%	50%	55%	51%
<b>Percent reporting “very important” (of those who offered a rating)</b>				
University website	24%	22%	27%	23%
Maclean's magazine	16%	14%	19%	16%
Other media reports	7%	6%	9%	7%
TV or radio ads	3%	2%	3%	3%
CD-ROM	3%	2%	4%	2%

### 3.6.3 Most important contact in choice of program

We asked students to consider all contacts, academic and media, and identify the single most important one. Of the pre-decision contacts, three stand out as being the single most important ones to students.

- *Campus visits* (26%). Campus visits appear to be more influential for students attending Group 1 universities and less so with students attending Group 2 universities.
- *Brochures or pamphlets* (reported by 17% of students).
- *Visit by a representative to their high school or CEGEP* (reported by 13% of students).

Other reasons are most important for fewer than 1 in 10 students and include the university website (9%) and Maclean's magazine (7%).

**Table 30: Which of these was the single most important contact for your decision to attend *this* university?**

	All students (n=7,093)	Group		
		1 (n=2,650)	2 (n=1,738)	3 (n=2,705)
Campus visit	26%	30%	23%	24%
Brochures or pamphlets	17%	15%	15%	19%
Visit by a representative to my high school or CEGEP	13%	13%	14%	11%
University website	9%	7%	9%	10%
Maclean's magazine	7%	5%	10%	7%
Meeting with university Admissions Officer on-campus	3%	4%	3%	3%
Calls from faculty of the university	2%	2%	3%	2%
Calls from students of the university	2%	3%	2%	2%
Letters from university representative to my high school or CEGEP	2%	1%	2%	2%
TV or radio ads	1%	1%	<1%	1%
Other media reports	1%	<1%	1%	1%
CD-ROM	<1%	<1%	1%	1%
Other reason	9%	10%	8%	10%
Don't know/no response	9%	10%	8%	9%

### 3.6.4 University handling of application

More than 9 students in 10 are satisfied (“very satisfied” or “somewhat satisfied”) with the handling of their application for admission, including almost 6 in 10 who are very satisfied.

About 1 student in 10 is dissatisfied with the handling of their application.

Students attending Group 3 universities are slightly less likely to be “very satisfied” with the way their application for admission was handled than those in Group 2 or Group 1.

**Table 31: Satisfaction with handling of application for admission**

Satisfaction rating	All students (n=7,093)	Group		
		1 (n=2,650)	2 (n=1,738)	3 (n=2,705)
Very satisfied	58%	63%	57%	53%
Somewhat satisfied	33%	29%	33%	36%
Somewhat dissatisfied	7%	5%	7%	8%
Very dissatisfied	3%	2%	3%	3%
Don't know/no response	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%
Average	3.5	3.5	3.4	3.4

Note: Totals may sum to more than 100% due to rounding.



## 4.0 Experience prior to classes

### 4.1 Overview

About 3 students in 4 sought help or advice when deciding on a program or specific courses. The most common source of advice is other students. Overall, almost 6 first-year students in 10 report seeking advice from their peers in choosing their courses or program. University administrators (Admissions Officers/Registrars) assisted about 4 students in 10 in choosing their program. Nearly 3 students in 10 had assistance from faculty or career counsellors in choosing their program.

According to the students who used these various sources, the most useful advice came from other students. Some 44% of those who consulted other students rate their help as “very useful”. Over 8 students in 10 say they are “somewhat satisfied” or “very satisfied” with the help they received when deciding on program or course selection. This includes about 3 students in 10 who are “very satisfied.”

Most students, 8 out of 10, are satisfied with the process of course registration, including almost 4 in 10 who are “very satisfied”. Almost 6 students in 10 report being able to enrol in all of the courses they wanted. Another 3 students in 10 were able to enrol in most of the courses they wanted.

Some 6 students in 10 report participating in an orientation program, and of those who participated, most were made to feel welcome during the orientation and were satisfied with the help provided by the orientation.

## 4.2 Help in choice of program

We asked students to identify who helped them choose their program in their first year. About 3 students in 4 sought help or advice in deciding on a program; 16% did not receive assistance from these sources.

- Overall, the most common source of assistance in choosing a program is other students. Almost 6 first-year students in 10 asked the advice of other students in choosing their program.
- Fewer than 4 students in 10 received assistance from Admissions Officers or Registrars or from an academic advisor in choosing their program. Academic advisors were less likely to be consulted by students attending Group 2 and 3 universities compared to Group 1.
- About 3 students in 10 received assistance from faculty or career counsellors in choosing their program.
- About 1 student in 5 received assistance from peer student advisors.

Among the 58% of students who consulted their peers, *other students* are most often reported to be “very useful” (by 44% of students). Other sources most often described as “very useful” by students who consulted with them are *faculty members* (42%) and *academic advisors* (39%).

Group 3 students tend to consult faculty members and academic advisors slightly less often than students at smaller campuses. They also rate this source as “very useful” less frequently.

**Table 32: Sources of assistance in choosing a program**

	All students (n=7,093)	Group		
		1 (n=2,650)	2 (n=1,738)	3 (n=2,705)
<b>Percent who rated the sources of assistance</b>				
Other student(s)	58%	56%	58%	61%
Admissions/Registrars	39%	41%	41%	37%
Academic advisor	37%	42%	34%	33%
Faculty member	30%	31%	32%	27%
Career counsellor	28%	26%	30%	29%
Peer Student Advisor	22%	20%	23%	24%
<b>Percent who offered the rating of “very useful” (of those who offered a rating)</b>				
Other student(s)	44%	43%	44%	44%
Faculty member	42%	44%	40%	41%
Academic advisor	39%	43%	39%	35%
Peer Student Advisor	32%	35%	32%	30%
Admissions/Registrars staff	29%	31%	30%	25%
Career counsellor	29%	31%	27%	30%

### 4.3 Satisfaction with help in deciding course selection

The vast majority of students who sought help or advice are satisfied with the assistance they received (see Table 33). Over 8 students in 10 report they are “very” or “somewhat satisfied” with the help they received in deciding on program and course selection, including about 30% who are “very satisfied”. Students at Group 1 schools are more likely to report being “very satisfied” compared to Groups 2 and 3.

	All students (n=5,005)	Group		
		1 (n=1,971)	2 (n=1,194)	3 (n=1,840)
Very satisfied	30%	34%	29%	27%
Somewhat satisfied	54%	50%	58%	55%
Somewhat dissatisfied	11%	11%	9%	13%
Very dissatisfied	4%	4%	3%	4%
Don't know/no response	1%	1%	1%	1%
Overall	100%	100%	100%	100%
Average out of 4	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1

### 4.4 Course registration

More than 8 students in 10 say they are “very” or “somewhat satisfied” with the process of course registration (see Table 34). More than one-third of students report being “very satisfied” with the process of course registration when they first registered; another 46% are “somewhat satisfied” with the process.

	All students (n=7,093)	Group		
		1 (n=2,650)	2 (n=1,738)	3 (n=2,705)
Very satisfied	37%	38%	38%	36%
Somewhat satisfied	46%	44%	47%	47%
Somewhat dissatisfied	11%	11%	9%	11%
Very dissatisfied	4%	5%	4%	4%
Don't know/no response	2%	2%	2%	2%
Overall	100%	100%	100%	100%
Average out of 4	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2

Note: Totals may sum to more than 100% due to rounding.

While almost 6 students in 10 were able to register in *all* the courses they wanted, the remaining students were not (see Table 35). Some 3 students in 10 say they were able to register in *most* but not all of the courses they wanted. About 1 student in 10 reports being able to register in *some* of their desired courses, while a few (2%) were not able to register in any of the courses they wanted.

**Table 35: Last fall, to what extent were you able to register in the courses you wanted?**

	All students (n=7,093)	Group		
		1 (n=2,650)	2 (n=1,738)	3 (n=2,705)
Completely	57%	54%	58%	58%
Mostly	29%	30%	28%	28%
Somewhat	10%	10%	10%	10%
Not at all	2%	3%	1%	2%
Don't know/no response	2%	3%	2%	2%
Overall	100%	100%	100%	100%
Average out of 4	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.5

Note: Totals may sum to more than 100% due to rounding.

#### 4.5 University orientation

Most first-year students participated in an orientation, and a majority of these say they were made to feel welcome, and report satisfaction with their experience (see Table 36).

- Some 6 students in 10 report participating in an orientation program.
- Those attending Group 1 or Group 2 universities are slightly more likely to report participating in an orientation, compared to those in Group 3.

Of those who attended orientation:

- About 9 students in 10 report feeling welcome.
- More than 8 students in 10 report satisfaction with the orientation in terms of:
  - providing information about *campus life* and *student services*. In each case, this includes about 3 students in 10 who are very satisfied.
  - *understanding the university's academic expectations*, including nearly 1 in 5 who are very satisfied.

- helping with *personal and social transition to university*, including 1 in 4 who are very satisfied.

<b>Table 36: Orientation</b>				
	<b>All students (n=7,093)</b>	<b>Group</b>		
		<b>1 (n=2,650)</b>	<b>2 (n=1,738)</b>	<b>3 (n=2,705)</b>
<b>Participated in an orientation program</b>				
Yes	63%	68%	65%	57%
<b>Orientation program made students feel welcome (of those who participated)</b>				
Yes	89%	89%	90%	89%
<b>Satisfaction with orientation - Very/Somewhat satisfied rating (of those who participated)</b>				
Providing information about campus life	90%	90%	89%	90%
Providing information about student services	86%	87%	85%	85%
Helping your personal and social transition to university	84%	85%	85%	83%
Helping you understand the university's academic expectations	84%	86%	85%	82%
Building your confidence	82%	83%	83%	80%

## 5.0 University experience

### 5.1 Overview

Most students report some success in adjusting to various aspects of university life. Among the various academic adjustments made by students, they report the most success in *meeting the computer literacy required for their study* and *choosing a program of studies to meet their objectives*. In both cases, over 90% who rated these items report some success, and half or more feel very successful. Students report the least success in obtaining academic advice. Just over 60% report at least some success, and less than one-fifth reports being very successful.

Among the personal adjustments they made, students report the most success in *feeling as if they belong at university* and *making new friends with other students*. In each case, the vast majority reports at least some success, and well over 4 in 10 report being very successful. Students report feeling least successful at *becoming involved in campus activities*. Only about 4 students in 10 report some success, including 1 in 10 who reports feeling very successful. A majority of students report at least some success in a number of practical adjustments. Some three-quarters of students report being very successful in *finding their way around campus*. Only about 4 in 10 report being very successful in *finding suitable, affordable housing* or *using the library*. Only about 2 in 10 report being very successful in finding *useful information and resources on careers and occupations*.

About 6 students in 10 are satisfied with the concern shown by their university for them as individuals, including 15% who are very satisfied. About 1 student in 4 is dissatisfied. Most students report being satisfied with most academic facilities and services, general facilities and services on-campus, and special services offered to specific types of students. Some 90% of students report being satisfied or very satisfied with their personal safety on-campus. At least three-quarters of students or more are generally positive about faculty in terms of providing reasonable access for help outside of class, encouraging student participation in class, and treating students as individuals. Most also agree they are satisfied with the quality of the teaching they have received. However, just over one-fifth of students strongly agree with this statement.

More than 9 students in 10 are satisfied with their decision to attend their current university, including 4 students in 10 who strongly agree.

## 5.2 Adjusting to university

We asked students to rate their success in adjusting to various aspects of university life, which we grouped into three broad categories: academic, personal, and practical. In each case, students rated whether they have been “very successful”, or have had “some success”, “little success”, or “no success” in adjusting to the particular aspect of university life.

### 5.2.1 Adjusting to academic demands of university

As Table 37 shows, we classified several items as academic issues.

In most cases, more than 9 students in 10 could offer a rating of their success. The exceptions are:

- *Getting academic advice* – about 8 students in 10 rated this item.
- *Meeting the computer literacy required for my studies* – again, about 8 students in 10 rated this item.
- *Performing adequately in courses requiring mathematical skills* – 2 students in 3 rated this item, suggesting that the other one-third did not take courses requiring mathematical skills.

Of those who could offer a rating about their success in academic adjustment:

- 94% said they had “very much” or “some success” in understanding content and information presented in courses.
- Of the 65% who required mathematical skills, 77% said they had “very much success” or “some success” in performing adequately in courses requiring mathematical skills.

<b>Table 37: Success in adjustments to university – academic</b>				
	All students (n=7,093)	Group		
		1 (n=2,650)	2 (n=1,738)	3 (n=2,705)
<b>Percent who offered a rating</b>				
Understanding content and information presented in courses	97%	97%	97%	98%
Meeting academic demands	97%	97%	97%	98%
Choosing a program of studies to meet my objectives	95%	95%	95%	96%
Finding help with questions or problems	93%	94%	93%	93%
Performing adequately in written assignments	93%	94%	92%	94%
Getting academic advice	82%	85%	79%	81%
Meeting the level of computer literacy required for my studies	82%	77%	83%	86%
Performing adequately in courses requiring mathematical skills	65%	57%	69%	69%
<b>Percent of “very much” / “some success” rating (of those who rated their academic adjustment)</b>				
Understanding content and information presented in courses	94%	96%	92%	93%
Meeting academic demands	91%	93%	88%	90%
Choosing a program of studies to meet my objectives	90%	91%	89%	90%
Performing adequately in written assignments	87%	89%	86%	85%
Finding help with questions or problems	79%	82%	75%	79%
Meeting the level of computer literacy required for my studies	90%	92%	90%	89%
Getting academic advice	62%	65%	59%	62%
Performing adequately in courses requiring mathematical skills	77%	77%	77%	78%

### 5.2.2 Personal

As shown in Table 38, almost all students were able to rate their success in *making new friends, feeling as if they belong at university, organizing their time, and becoming involved in campus activities*. However, only 6 students in 10 offered ratings of their success in *adjusting to living here*; of course, many students attend school in their home province.

Most students could rate the following aspects of personal adjustment:

- organizing my time to complete academic work
- making new friends with other students
- feeling as if I belong at university.



Of these students, most could also say that they had had “very much” or “some success” (about 8 in 10 of those offered a rating).

<b>Table 38: Success in adjustments to university – personal</b>				
	<b>All students (n=7,093)</b>	<b>Group</b>		
		<b>1 (n=2,650)</b>	<b>2 (n=1,738)</b>	<b>3 (n=2,705)</b>
<b>Percent who offered a rating</b>				
Organizing my time to complete academic work	97%	97%	97%	98%
Making new friends with other students	97%	97%	97%	97%
Feeling as if I belong at university	97%	96%	97%	97%
Becoming involved in campus activities	93%	94%	93%	91%
Adjusting to living here	60%	65%	48%	63%
<b>Percent of “very much” / “some success” rating (of those who offered a rating)</b>				
Feeling as if I belong at university	84%	87%	84%	82%
Making new friends with other students	84%	85%	83%	84%
Organizing my time to complete academic work	82%	84%	81%	82%
Adjusting to living here	87%	90%	82%	86%
Becoming involved in campus activities	39%	44%	33%	38%

### 5.2.3 Practical

Almost all students rated *finding their way around the campus* and *using the library*, while about 8 students in 10 were able to rate *finding useful information and resources on careers and occupations*. About half rated *finding suitable, affordable housing* (recall that 50% of students reported living at home). Of those who offered a rating:

- Almost all students say they are at least “somewhat successful” in *finding their way around campus*. This includes over three-quarters (76%) who feel they are “very successful”.
- About 8 students in 10 (79%) report at least “some success” in *using the library* (including 37% who feel they are “very successful”).
- Of the 48% who needed housing, 77% report at least “some success” with *finding suitable, affordable housing*, including some 40% who report being “very successful”.
- Of the 82% who rated this adjustment, about 6 students in 10 report at least “some success” in *finding useful information and resources on careers and occupations*. Only 18% of students report being “very successful” in finding such information.

Table 39: Success in adjustments to university – practical				
	All students (n=7,093)	Group		
		1 (n=2,650)	2 (n=1,738)	3 (n=2,705)
<b>Percent who offered a rating</b>				
Finding my way around the campus	97%	96%	96%	97%
Using the library	93%	93%	92%	94%
Finding useful information and resources on careers and occupations	82%	81%	83%	83%
Finding suitable, affordable housing	48%	54%	38%	48%
<b>Percent of “very much” / “some success” rating (of those who offered a rating)</b>				
Finding my way around the campus	97%	98%	96%	96%
Using the library	79%	80%	78%	78%
Finding suitable, affordable housing	77%	79%	69%	80%
Finding useful information and resources on careers and occupations	63%	64%	64%	62%

### 5.2.4 Success by discipline

Table 40 shows areas of success by discipline. There are few differences to report.

- In *choosing a program of studies to meet their objectives*, students in Engineering and Professional programs are more likely to report being “very successful”.
- In *performing adequately in courses requiring mathematical skills*, students in Physical Science and Engineering programs are more likely to report being “very successful”. Conversely, students in Arts and Humanities and Social Science programs are less likely to report being “very successful”.
- In *understanding content and information presented in courses*, more students in Arts and Humanities programs report being “very successful”, especially compared with students in Education and Engineering programs.

Issue	Discipline	% Very much success
Choosing a program of studies to meet my objectives	Engineering	64%
	Professional	58%
	All universities	50%
Performing adequately in courses requiring mathematical skills	Physical Science	48%
	Engineering	46%
	Arts and Humanities	28%
	Social Science	25%
	All universities	34%
Understanding content and information presented in courses	Arts and Humanities	58%
	Education	36%
	Engineering	31%
	All universities	44%

### 5.3 Satisfaction with various aspects of university experience

Table 41 shows students’ satisfaction with various aspects of their university experience.

- More than 6 students in 10 are “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with the concern shown by their university for them as individuals. Only 15% are “very satisfied”.
- About 1 student in 4 is “dissatisfied” with the concern shown by their university.

Since they attend some of the largest post-secondary institutions in the country, perhaps it is not surprising that students in Group 2 and Group 3 universities are more likely to be “dissatisfied” with the concern shown by their university. That said, almost 6 students in 10 are still at least “satisfied”.

Conversely, given the smaller size of their universities, 7 students in 10 attending Group 1 universities are likely to be “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with the concern shown by their university for them as individuals, compared to fewer than 6 in 10 students in other groups.

**Table 41: Concern shown by the university for you as an individual**

Satisfaction rating	All students (n=7,093)	Group		
		1 (n=2,650)	2 (n=1,738)	3 (n=2,705)
Very satisfied	15%	22%	9%	11%
Satisfied	48%	50%	49%	47%
Dissatisfied	18%	14%	19%	21%
Very dissatisfied	7%	4%	8%	9%
DK/NR	12%	10%	15%	12%
Overall	100%	100%	100%	100%
Average	2.8	3	2.7	2.7

Note: Totals may sum to more than 100% due to rounding.

### 5.3.1 Academic facilities and services

As Table 42 shows, more than 8 students in 10 could rate each of the academic facilities and services, with one exception - only 1 student in 10 offered a rating on the co-op program, since this type of program is not common.

Most students are happy with their class sizes. Nearly all (97%) students rated class size, and 88% of them are satisfied. Group 1 students are most likely to be satisfied with class size, and Group 3 students are least likely.

Some 83% rated access to computers (note that some students may not need this access), and of these, most (88%) are at least “satisfied”.

Table 42: Academic facilities/services				
	All students (n=7,093)	Group		
		1 (n=2,650)	2 (n=1,738)	3 (n=2,705)
<b>Percent of those who rated the facilities/services</b>				
Average size of your classes	97%	97%	97%	97%
Instructional facilities	96%	96%	96%	96%
Library facilities	88%	88%	86%	89%
Access to computers	83%	81%	88%	81%
Co-op services	10%	7%	13%	10%
<b>Percent “very satisfied” / “satisfied” (of those who rated the facilities/services)</b>				
Average size of your classes	88%	96%	88%	79%
Instructional facilities	88%	91%	88%	85%
Library facilities	92%	91%	92%	94%
Access to computers	88%	90%	91%	85%
Co-op services	82%	80%	82%	84%

### 5.3.2 General facilities/services

While 9 students in 10 rated their satisfaction with the campus bookstore, and 8 students in 10 rated the food services, other general facilities and services are used, and therefore rated, by fewer students.

- More than 6 students in 10 rated social activities and athletic facilities, with Group 1 students being more likely to rate social activities.
- Some 4 students in 10 rated the parking facilities, while 3 in 10 rated university residences and campus medical services.
- Fewer than 1 student in 20 rated university daycare services.

Of those who offered a rating, the vast majority of students are satisfied with these services.

- Almost 9 students in 10 are satisfied with *campus medical services* (including 37% who are “very satisfied”), *social activities* (23% are “very satisfied”), and *athletic facilities* (39% are “very satisfied”).
- Of the 34% in *university residences*, 8 students in 10 are satisfied with them, including 32% who are “very satisfied”. Some 97% of students rated the *campus bookstore*, and 8 in 10 are also satisfied with this service (including 28% who are very satisfied).

While still a majority, fewer are satisfied with:

- *Parking facilities.* Of the 44% who rated parking facilities, half are “satisfied”, and 14% are “very satisfied”. Those attending Group 3 universities are most likely to be “dissatisfied” with parking.
- *Food services.* Of the 79% who rated food services, some 7 students in 10 are “satisfied”, including 5% who are “very satisfied”.
- *University daycare facilities.* Of the 4% who rated daycare facilities, 74% are “satisfied”, including 20% who are “very satisfied”.

<b>Table 43: General facilities/services</b>				
	All students (n=7,093)	Group		
		1 (n=2,650)	2 (n=1,738)	3 (n=2,705)
<b>Percent who rated the facilities/services</b>				
Campus bookstore(s)	93%	89%	95%	95%
Food services	79%	80%	83%	74%
Social activities	66%	72%	61%	64%
Athletic facilities	61%	61%	61%	59%
Parking facilities	44%	46%	50%	39%
University residences	34%	44%	26%	30%
Campus medical services	27%	29%	25%	26%
University daycare services	4%	4%	5%	3%
<b>Percent “very satisfied” / “satisfied” (of those who rated the facilities/services)</b>				
Campus bookstore(s)	84%	87%	80%	84%
Social activities	87%	88%	83%	89%
Food services	69%	70%	70%	68%
Athletic facilities	89%	86%	92%	90%
University residences	82%	82%	79%	82%
Campus medical services	88%	86%	92%	87%
Parking facilities	51%	59%	48%	44%
University daycare services	74%	65%	84%	75%

### 5.3.3 Special services

At most, 3 students in 10 use any of these special services:

- The most commonly used special service is *study skills and learning support services*, with 30% rating their satisfaction.
- About 1 student in 5 rated *personal counselling services* or *student employment or placement services*.
- Fewer students rated *services for women students, international students, or students with disabilities*.

Again, the vast majority of students report satisfaction with these services. Of those who rated the services:

- About 9 students in 10 report being “satisfied” with *services for women students* (including 23% who are “very satisfied”) and *study skills and learning support services* (24% are “very satisfied”).
- About 8 students in 10 are “satisfied” with *services for students with disabilities* (30% are “very satisfied”), *personal counselling services for students* (26% are “very satisfied”), and *services for international students* (25% are “very satisfied”).
- About 7 students in 10 are “satisfied” with *student employment and placement services* (20% are “very satisfied”).

Table 44: Special services				
	All students (n=7,093)	Group		
		1 (n=2,650)	2 (n=1,738)	3 (n=2,705)
<b>Percent who rated special services</b>				
Study skills/learning support services	30%	33%	29%	28%
Personal counselling services for students	21%	24%	21%	18%
Student employment/placement services	18%	20%	19%	16%
Services for women students	16%	17%	14%	17%
Services for international students	7%	7%	7%	6%
Services for students with disabilities	6%	6%	6%	5%
<b>Percent “very satisfied” / “satisfied” (of those who rated special services)</b>				
Services for women students	91%	88%	92%	92%
Study skills/learning support services	87%	89%	86%	85%
Services for students with disabilities	83%	78%	84%	87%
Personal counselling services for students	81%	82%	80%	82%
Services for international students	80%	80%	78%	81%
Student employment/placement services	70%	69%	68%	74%

### 5.3.4 Satisfaction with services by discipline

There are few differences in students' satisfaction with services by discipline.

- Students in Arts and Humanities programs are more likely to be “very satisfied” with *average class sizes*, especially compared with those in Engineering programs.
- Conversely, students in Arts and Humanities programs are less likely to be “very satisfied” with *access to computers*, especially compared with students in Engineering or Physical Science programs.

Issue	Discipline	% Very satisfied
Average class size	Arts and Humanities	38%
	Engineering	14%
	All universities	28%
Access to computers	Physical Science	47%
	Engineering	46%
	Arts and Humanities	30%
	All universities	38%

### 5.4 Personal safety

Some 9 students in 10 indicate they are “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with their personal safety on-campus. Those attending Group 2 or Group 3 universities are slightly less likely to indicate they are “very satisfied”. Few report being “dissatisfied” with personal safety, and less than 1 in 10 did not respond to the question. The responses are the same for males and females.

Satisfaction rating	All students (n=7,093)	Group		
		1 (n=2,650)	2 (n=1,738)	3 (n=2,705)
Very satisfied	42%	50%	35%	38%
Satisfied	48%	41%	53%	52%
Dissatisfied	3%	2%	3%	3%
Very dissatisfied	1%	1%	1%	1%
DK/NR	7%	6%	7%	7%
Overall	100%	100%	100%	100%
Average	3.4	3.5	3.3	3.4

Note: Totals may sum to more than 100% due to rounding.



## 5.5 Satisfaction with faculty

Most students report positive experiences with faculty.

- More than 8 students in 10 agree that *most of their professors are accessible outside class to help students*, including about 1 student in 4 who strongly agrees with that statement. Students in smaller universities (Group 1) are more likely (31%) to strongly agree than those attending larger institutions (Group 2 or 3), where about 20% strongly agree.
- Over 8 students in 10 also agree (strongly agree or agree) that they are *satisfied with the quality of teaching they have received*, and just more than 1 student in 5 strongly agrees. Students attending Group 1 universities appear slightly more likely to agree.
- Close to 8 students in 10 agree that *most of their professors encourage students to participate in class discussions*, and 1 student in 5 strongly agrees. Again, there appears to be greater levels of agreement to this statement among the Group 1 schools.
- Some 3 students in 4 agree that *professors treat students as individuals*. About 1 in 4 strongly agrees. Again, students attending Group 1 universities are more likely to agree.

Strongly agree/Agree	All students (n=7,093)	Group		
		1 (n=2,650)	2 (n=1,738)	3 (n=2,705)
Most of my professors are reasonably accessible outside of class to help students	86%	88%	84%	85%
Generally, I am satisfied with the quality of teaching I have received	86%	90%	83%	84%
Most of my professors encourage students to participate in class discussion	78%	84%	73%	74%
At this university, professors treat students as individuals, not just numbers	75%	84%	68%	70%

### 5.5.1 Satisfaction with faculty by discipline

Generally, students in Arts and Humanities programs are more likely to strongly agree with these statements about faculty, while those in Engineering programs are less likely to strongly agree.

**Table 48: Satisfaction with services by discipline**

Issue	Discipline	% Strongly Agree
Most of my professors encourage students to participate in class discussions	Arts and Humanities	32%
	Biological Science	13%
	Engineering	7%
	Overall	20%
At this university, professors treat students as individuals, not just numbers	Arts and Humanities	30%
	Engineering	11%
	Overall	20%
Generally, I am satisfied with the quality of teaching I have received	Arts and Humanities	29%
	Engineering	12%
	Overall	23%

### 5.6 Satisfaction with choice of university

We asked students to rate their level of agreement with the statement: *I am satisfied with my decision to attend this university.* More than 9 students in 10 agree with this statement, including 4 in 10 who “strongly agree”.

**Table 49: I am satisfied with my decision to attend this university**

Agreement rating	All students (n=7,093)	Group		
		1 (n=2,650)	2 (n=1,738)	3 (n=2,705)
Strongly agree	40%	45%	33%	38%
Agree	51%	46%	57%	53%
Disagree	5%	5%	6%	5%
Disagree strongly	1%	2%	2%	1%
DK/NR	3%	3%	3%	2%
Overall	100%	100%	100%	100%
Average	3.3	3.4	3.2	3.3

Note: Totals may sum to more than 100% due to rounding.

## 6.0 Conclusion

Generally, students entering first-year university report a good experience in the process of choosing a university, registering at their chosen institution, selecting courses or programs, and adjusting to university life. Further, they are generally satisfied with services and facilities offered by their university and tend to have positive impressions of their professors.

For most students, the main objective in obtaining a university education is to prepare for employment. Many say that attending university is about getting a good general education or developing a broad base of skills, few cited these as the most important reasons in their decision to attend.

While the vast majority of students attend a university in their province of permanent residence, most students actively consider several institutions before deciding which to attend. Some 6 students in 10 told us they applied to more than one university. That said, about 8 students in 10 report that the university they are currently attending was their first choice.

Considering that most students apply to multiple universities, contact with students prior to making a decision is important in influencing their decision. Most students report experiencing some form of contact from universities prior to making their decision. According to students, a campus visit, brochures and pamphlets from the university, and a visit from a university representative to their secondary school are most important in helping them to decide where to attend.

A majority of students report that many different factors are very important in deciding on a university. This is demonstrated by the fact that of the 23 reasons tested with students, no one reason is seen as most important by more than one-fifth of students. For example, the top two most important reasons in choosing a university are academic: *the university had a specific career-related program*, or *the high quality of the academic programs*. However, the third most important reason in choosing a university is its *close proximity to the student's home*.

Most students report a positive experience in the registration process, selection of classes, and orientation. The vast majority of students report being satisfied with the handling of their application for admission to their current university. While most students sought help in deciding on a program, they most

commonly turned to other students for advice, rather than university staff. Interestingly, the advice of peers is as likely to be considered “very useful” as the advice given by faculty members or academic advisors.

About 6 students in 10 report participating in an orientation program. The value of such a program is shown by the fact that the vast majority of participants are satisfied with the help provided to them in orientation. The one weakness may be in communicating the university’s academic expectations. While 8 students in 10 report satisfaction with the orientation in this regard, only 1 in 5 is very satisfied.

Most students feel they have had at least some success in adjusting to various aspects of university life. However, while the vast majority feels they have had some success with all the academic adjustments tested, in most cases, far fewer than half of students feel they have been very successful. For example, just over one-third feel they have been very successful in meeting academic demands, suggesting that the others may be struggling. Interestingly, the one academic area tested that received the lowest rating of success was getting academic advice. Only 6 students in 10 feel they have had some success, including less than 1 in 5 who report feeling very successful. One wonders if the lack of academic advice contributes to their difficulties in meeting academic demands.

Further, only 6 students in 10 are satisfied with the concern shown by their university for them as individuals, including 15% who are very satisfied. While this suggests that universities have a long way to go, it also reflects the fact that generally, students have come from a high school experience wherein teachers and administration knew them and their needs.

Generally, students are satisfied with the academic services and programs offered by their university. Students are less likely to be satisfied with non-academic services such as parking or food services; most are satisfied with their class sizes and the instructional and library facilities. They hold a similar view of their professors, who are said to be easy to access, encourage participation, and treat students as individuals. Most also agree that they are satisfied with the quality of teaching. Given this largely positive attitude toward services, programs, and faculty, it is not surprising that over 9 students in 10 are satisfied with their decision to attend their current university.

## **APPENDIX A**

### **SURVEY OF FIRST-YEAR UNIVERSITY STUDENTS**

## Survey of First Year University Students

This survey is being completed by first-year university students at a number of Canadian universities so that we may learn more about our new students and help them make a more successful transition to university. Using either a pen or pencil, please take a few minutes to complete and return your survey and be sure to answer the items on both sides of the page. All of your responses are confidential.

### Your decision to attend university

1. How important were the following reasons in your decision to attend university?

	Not important	Somewhat important	Very important
a. To prepare for a specific job or career .....	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>1</sub>	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>2</sub>	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>3</sub>
b. To get a good general education .....	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>1</sub>	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>2</sub>	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>3</sub>
c. To develop a broad base of skills.....	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>1</sub>	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>2</sub>	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>3</sub>
d. To prepare for graduate/professional school.....	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>1</sub>	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>2</sub>	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>3</sub>
e. To increase my knowledge in an academic field .....	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>1</sub>	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>2</sub>	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>3</sub>
f. To get a good job .....	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>1</sub>	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>2</sub>	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>3</sub>
g. To become a more cultured person .....	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>1</sub>	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>2</sub>	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>3</sub>
h. To meet parental expectations.....	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>1</sub>	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>2</sub>	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>3</sub>
i. To meet new friends.....	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>1</sub>	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>2</sub>	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>3</sub>
j. Other (please specify) _____	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>1</sub>	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>2</sub>	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>3</sub>

2. From Question 1 above, which was the single most important reason in your decision to attend university? (Indicate the letter of the most important item)

Most important: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Did you apply for admission to more than one university?

O<sub>0</sub> No (Go to Question 4)       O<sub>1</sub> Yes

How many in total did you apply to? \_\_\_\_\_

How many outside of your home province? \_\_\_\_\_

4. Did you also apply to a College?

O<sub>0</sub> No                       O<sub>1</sub> Yes

5. Are you currently attending your first choice?

O<sub>1</sub> Yes (Go to Question 7)       O<sub>2</sub> No

6. (If 'No' to Question 5) What was your first choice?

\_\_\_\_\_

### Your decision to attend THIS university

7. How important were the following reasons in your choosing THIS university?

	Not important	Somewhat important	Very important
a. Wanted to live close to home.....	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>1</sub>	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>2</sub>	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>3</sub>
b. Wanted to live away from home.....	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>1</sub>	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>2</sub>	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>3</sub>
c. Accessibility of the campus from my home.....	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>1</sub>	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>2</sub>	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>3</sub>
d. Offered financial assistance/scholarship.....	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>1</sub>	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>2</sub>	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>3</sub>
e. Quality of academic programs .....	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>1</sub>	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>2</sub>	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>3</sub>
f. Specific career-related program.....	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>1</sub>	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>2</sub>	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>3</sub>
g. University has a good reputation .....	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>1</sub>	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>2</sub>	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>3</sub>
h. Size of university.....	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>1</sub>	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>2</sub>	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>3</sub>
i. Rich social life.....	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>1</sub>	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>2</sub>	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>3</sub>
j. School spirit .....	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>1</sub>	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>2</sub>	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>3</sub>
k. Size of city/town.....	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>1</sub>	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>2</sub>	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>3</sub>
l. Availability of on-campus residence accommodations.....	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>1</sub>	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>2</sub>	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>3</sub>
m. Tuition fees .....	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>1</sub>	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>2</sub>	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>3</sub>
n. Parents/relatives wanted me to enroll here.....	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>1</sub>	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>2</sub>	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>3</sub>
o. Other family member(s) currently attending here.....	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>1</sub>	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>2</sub>	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>3</sub>
p. Friends attending here .....	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>1</sub>	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>2</sub>	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>3</sub>
q. Advice from counsellors or teachers.....	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>1</sub>	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>2</sub>	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>3</sub>
r. Availability of public transportation.....	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>1</sub>	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>2</sub>	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>3</sub>
s. Contact with students from the university .....	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>1</sub>	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>2</sub>	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>3</sub>
t. Computer facilities .....	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>1</sub>	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>2</sub>	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>3</sub>
u. Co-op program.....	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>1</sub>	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>2</sub>	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>3</sub>
v. Opportunities for international work/study abroad .....	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>1</sub>	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>2</sub>	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>3</sub>
w. Special needs services .....	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>1</sub>	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>2</sub>	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>3</sub>
x. Other (please specify) _____	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>1</sub>	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>2</sub>	<input type="radio"/> O <sub>3</sub>

### INSTRUCTIONS:

Please read each question carefully then enter a check (**U**) in the appropriate circles, circle the appropriate number, or fill in blank lines as necessary. Return your completed questionnaire today.

8. From Question 7 above, which was the single most important reason in your decision to attend THIS university? (Indicate the letter of the most important item)

Most important: \_\_\_\_\_

9. How important were each of the following when you considered choosing this university? (Check one for each item)

	Not important	Somewhat important	Very important	Not applicable
a. Visit by a representative to my high school or CEGEP .....	O <sub>1</sub>	O <sub>2</sub>	O <sub>3</sub>	O <sub>7</sub>
b. Brochures or pamphlets .....	O <sub>1</sub>	O <sub>2</sub>	O <sub>3</sub>	O <sub>7</sub>
c. Campus visit .....	O <sub>1</sub>	O <sub>2</sub>	O <sub>3</sub>	O <sub>7</sub>
d. Letters from university representatives to my high school or CEGEP .....	O <sub>1</sub>	O <sub>2</sub>	O <sub>3</sub>	O <sub>7</sub>
e. Meeting with university admissions officer on the campus.....	O <sub>1</sub>	O <sub>2</sub>	O <sub>3</sub>	O <sub>7</sub>
f. Calls from faculty of the university .....	O <sub>1</sub>	O <sub>2</sub>	O <sub>3</sub>	O <sub>7</sub>
g. Calls from students of the university.....	O <sub>1</sub>	O <sub>2</sub>	O <sub>3</sub>	O <sub>7</sub>
h. University web site .....	O <sub>1</sub>	O <sub>2</sub>	O <sub>3</sub>	O <sub>7</sub>
i. CD Rom .....	O <sub>1</sub>	O <sub>2</sub>	O <sub>3</sub>	O <sub>7</sub>
j. TV or radio ads .....	O <sub>1</sub>	O <sub>2</sub>	O <sub>3</sub>	O <sub>7</sub>
k. Maclean's magazine .....	O <sub>1</sub>	O <sub>2</sub>	O <sub>3</sub>	O <sub>7</sub>
l. Other media reports .....	O <sub>1</sub>	O <sub>2</sub>	O <sub>3</sub>	O <sub>7</sub>
m. Other (please specify) _____ _____	O <sub>1</sub>	O <sub>2</sub>	O <sub>3</sub>	O <sub>7</sub>

10. From Question 9 above, which of these was the single most important reason in your decision to attend THIS university? (Indicate the letter of the most important item)

Most important: \_\_\_\_\_

11. How satisfied were you with the way the university handled your application for admission?

- O<sub>4</sub> Very satisfied                      O<sub>3</sub> Somewhat satisfied  
O<sub>2</sub> Somewhat dissatisfied          O<sub>1</sub> Very dissatisfied

(If 'Dissatisfied' in Question 11) Please explain.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Your choice of program**

12. Before you first registered for courses, whom did you talk to from our university about your program or courses and how useful were these discussions?

	Did not talk to	Not useful	Somewhat useful	Very useful
a. Faculty member .....	O <sub>7</sub>	O <sub>1</sub>	O <sub>2</sub>	O <sub>3</sub>
b. Career counsellor .....	O <sub>7</sub>	O <sub>1</sub>	O <sub>2</sub>	O <sub>3</sub>
c. Admissions/Registrars staff .....	O <sub>7</sub>	O <sub>1</sub>	O <sub>2</sub>	O <sub>3</sub>
d. Academic advisor .....	O <sub>7</sub>	O <sub>1</sub>	O <sub>2</sub>	O <sub>3</sub>
e. Peer Student Advisor .....	O <sub>7</sub>	O <sub>1</sub>	O <sub>2</sub>	O <sub>3</sub>
f. Other student(s).....	O <sub>7</sub>	O <sub>1</sub>	O <sub>2</sub>	O <sub>3</sub>
g. Other (please specify) _____	O <sub>7</sub>	O <sub>1</sub>	O <sub>2</sub>	O <sub>3</sub>

13. Overall, how satisfied were you with the help you received from the university in deciding on your program and course selections?

- O<sub>4</sub> Very satisfied                      O<sub>3</sub> Somewhat satisfied  
O<sub>2</sub> Somewhat dissatisfied          O<sub>1</sub> Very dissatisfied  
O<sub>7</sub> Did not seek help or advice

(If 'Dissatisfied' in Question 13) Please explain.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

Please read each question carefully then enter a check (U) in the appropriate circles, circle the appropriate number, or fill in blank lines as necessary. Return your completed questionnaire today.

**Your experience with registration**

14. How satisfied were you with the process of course registration when you first registered?

- <sub>4</sub> Very satisfied                      <sub>3</sub> Somewhat satisfied
- <sub>2</sub> Somewhat dissatisfied              <sub>1</sub> Very dissatisfied

(If 'Dissatisfied' in Question 14) Please explain.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

15. Last fall, to what extent were you able to register in the courses you wanted?

- <sub>4</sub> Completely                      <sub>3</sub> Mostly                      <sub>2</sub> Somewhat
- <sub>1</sub> Not at all

**Your experience with orientation**

16. Did you participate in an orientation program before or after arriving on campus last fall?

- <sub>1</sub> Yes                      <sub>2</sub> No (Go to Question 19)

17. Did the orientation program make you feel welcome at the university?

- <sub>1</sub> Yes                      <sub>2</sub> No

18. If you participated in an orientation program, how satisfied were you with each of the following aspects of the orientation?

	Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied	Don't know
Helping you understand the university's academic expectations .....	<input type="radio"/> <sub>1</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>2</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>3</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>4</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>8</sub>
Helping your personal and social transition to university.....	<input type="radio"/> <sub>1</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>2</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>3</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>4</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>8</sub>
Providing information about campus life .....	<input type="radio"/> <sub>1</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>2</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>3</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>4</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>8</sub>
Providing information about student services .....	<input type="radio"/> <sub>1</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>2</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>3</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>4</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>8</sub>
Building your confidence .....	<input type="radio"/> <sub>1</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>2</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>3</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>4</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>8</sub>
Other (please specify) _____	<input type="radio"/> <sub>1</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>2</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>3</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>4</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>8</sub>
_____					

**Adjusting to university**

19. How much success have you had in making the following adjustments to university? (Mark one for each item)

**Amount of success**

	None	Very little	Some	Very much	Not applicable
Meeting academic demands .....	<input type="radio"/> <sub>1</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>2</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>3</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>4</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>7</sub>
Making new friends with other students .....	<input type="radio"/> <sub>1</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>2</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>3</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>4</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>7</sub>
Becoming involved in campus activities .....	<input type="radio"/> <sub>1</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>2</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>3</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>4</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>7</sub>
Adjusting to living here .....	<input type="radio"/> <sub>1</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>2</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>3</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>4</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>7</sub>
Finding suitable, affordable housing .....	<input type="radio"/> <sub>1</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>2</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>3</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>4</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>7</sub>
Choosing a program of studies to meet my objectives .....	<input type="radio"/> <sub>1</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>2</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>3</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>4</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>7</sub>
Getting academic advice .....	<input type="radio"/> <sub>1</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>2</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>3</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>4</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>7</sub>
Performing adequately in written assignments .....	<input type="radio"/> <sub>1</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>2</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>3</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>4</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>7</sub>
Performing adequately in courses requiring mathematical skills .....	<input type="radio"/> <sub>1</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>2</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>3</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>4</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>7</sub>
Understanding content and information presented in courses .....	<input type="radio"/> <sub>1</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>2</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>3</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>4</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>7</sub>
Feeling as if I belong at university .....	<input type="radio"/> <sub>1</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>2</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>3</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>4</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>7</sub>
Finding my way around the campus .....	<input type="radio"/> <sub>1</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>2</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>3</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>4</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>7</sub>
Using the library .....	<input type="radio"/> <sub>1</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>2</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>3</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>4</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>7</sub>
Finding help with questions or problems .....	<input type="radio"/> <sub>1</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>2</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>3</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>4</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>7</sub>
Meeting the computer literacy required for my studies.....	<input type="radio"/> <sub>1</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>2</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>3</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>4</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>7</sub>
Organizing my time to complete academic work .....	<input type="radio"/> <sub>1</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>2</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>3</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>4</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>7</sub>
Finding useful information and resources on careers and occupations .....	<input type="radio"/> <sub>1</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>2</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>3</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>4</sub>	<input type="radio"/> <sub>7</sub>

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

Please read each question carefully then enter a check (**U**) in the appropriate circles, circle the appropriate number, or fill in blank lines as necessary. Return your completed questionnaire today.



**Your perception of the university**

20. How satisfied are you with each of the following aspects of the university?

	Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied	Don't know
Average size of your classes .....	O <sub>1</sub>	O <sub>2</sub>	O <sub>3</sub>	O <sub>4</sub>	O <sub>8</sub>
Instructional facilities (e.g. classrooms, labs, equipment) .....	O <sub>1</sub>	O <sub>2</sub>	O <sub>3</sub>	O <sub>4</sub>	O <sub>8</sub>
Personal safety on campus.....	O <sub>1</sub>	O <sub>2</sub>	O <sub>3</sub>	O <sub>4</sub>	O <sub>8</sub>
Concern shown by the university for you as an individual .....	O <sub>1</sub>	O <sub>2</sub>	O <sub>3</sub>	O <sub>4</sub>	O <sub>8</sub>

21. How satisfied are you with each of the following services at the university? (If you have not used the service, please select 'No experience')

	Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied	Don't know
Library facilities.....	O <sub>1</sub>	O <sub>2</sub>	O <sub>3</sub>	O <sub>4</sub>	O <sub>8</sub>
Access to computers .....	O <sub>1</sub>	O <sub>2</sub>	O <sub>3</sub>	O <sub>4</sub>	O <sub>8</sub>
Athletic facilities .....	O <sub>1</sub>	O <sub>2</sub>	O <sub>3</sub>	O <sub>4</sub>	O <sub>8</sub>
University residences.....	O <sub>1</sub>	O <sub>2</sub>	O <sub>3</sub>	O <sub>4</sub>	O <sub>8</sub>
University day care services .....	O <sub>1</sub>	O <sub>2</sub>	O <sub>3</sub>	O <sub>4</sub>	O <sub>8</sub>
Parking facilities.....	O <sub>1</sub>	O <sub>2</sub>	O <sub>3</sub>	O <sub>4</sub>	O <sub>8</sub>
Social activities .....	O <sub>1</sub>	O <sub>2</sub>	O <sub>3</sub>	O <sub>4</sub>	O <sub>8</sub>
Campus book store(s) .....	O <sub>1</sub>	O <sub>2</sub>	O <sub>3</sub>	O <sub>4</sub>	O <sub>8</sub>
Student employment/placement services .....	O <sub>1</sub>	O <sub>2</sub>	O <sub>3</sub>	O <sub>4</sub>	O <sub>8</sub>
Services for students with disabilities ....	O <sub>1</sub>	O <sub>2</sub>	O <sub>3</sub>	O <sub>4</sub>	O <sub>8</sub>
Services for women students.....	O <sub>1</sub>	O <sub>2</sub>	O <sub>3</sub>	O <sub>4</sub>	O <sub>8</sub>
Services for International students.....	O <sub>1</sub>	O <sub>2</sub>	O <sub>3</sub>	O <sub>4</sub>	O <sub>8</sub>
Personal counseling services for students .....	O <sub>1</sub>	O <sub>2</sub>	O <sub>3</sub>	O <sub>4</sub>	O <sub>8</sub>
Study skills/learning support services...	O <sub>1</sub>	O <sub>2</sub>	O <sub>3</sub>	O <sub>4</sub>	O <sub>8</sub>
Campus medical services.....	O <sub>1</sub>	O <sub>2</sub>	O <sub>3</sub>	O <sub>4</sub>	O <sub>8</sub>
Food services .....	O <sub>1</sub>	O <sub>2</sub>	O <sub>3</sub>	O <sub>4</sub>	O <sub>8</sub>
Co-op services.....	O <sub>1</sub>	O <sub>2</sub>	O <sub>3</sub>	O <sub>4</sub>	O <sub>8</sub>

22. Please indicate your level of agreement with each of these statements.

	Disagree strongly	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Most of my professors encourage students to participate in class discussions .....	O <sub>1</sub>	O <sub>2</sub>	O <sub>3</sub>	O <sub>4</sub>
At this university, professors treat students as individuals, not just numbers ...	O <sub>1</sub>	O <sub>2</sub>	O <sub>3</sub>	O <sub>4</sub>
Most of my professors are reasonably accessible outside of class to help students .....	O <sub>1</sub>	O <sub>2</sub>	O <sub>3</sub>	O <sub>4</sub>
Generally, I am satisfied with the quality of teaching I have received .....	O <sub>1</sub>	O <sub>2</sub>	O <sub>3</sub>	O <sub>4</sub>
I am satisfied with my decision to attend this university .....	O <sub>1</sub>	O <sub>2</sub>	O <sub>3</sub>	O <sub>4</sub>

**Academic profile**

23. What average grade do you expect to have at the end of your first year at university?

If your university uses a grade-point system, please select the letter grade which best reflects the letter grade equivalent of your grade point average.

If your university uses percentage grades, please use this guide to select the approximate letter grade equivalent of your percentage grade:

Percentage	Equivalent for Survey Response
85% - 100%	A or A+
80% - 84.99%	A-
76% - 79.99%	B+
70% - 75.99%	B
66% - 69.99%	C+
60% - 65.99%	C
50% - 59.99%	D

↓  
(Please check one)  
A or A+    A-    B+    B    C+    C    D  
O<sub>7</sub>    O<sub>6</sub>    O<sub>5</sub>    O<sub>4</sub>    O<sub>3</sub>    O<sub>2</sub>    O<sub>1</sub>

24. What was your overall average grade in high school (or CEGEP)?  
(Please check one)  
A or A+    A-    B+    B    C+    C    D  
O<sub>7</sub>    O<sub>6</sub>    O<sub>5</sub>    O<sub>4</sub>    O<sub>3</sub>    O<sub>2</sub>    O<sub>1</sub>

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

Please read each question carefully then enter a check (U) in the appropriate circles, circle the appropriate number, or fill in blank lines as necessary. Return your completed questionnaire today.

25. In what year did you graduate from high school or CEGEP?

YEAR: \_\_\_\_\_

Did not graduate

26. When you registered last fall, were you taking a full course load?

Yes  No

27. Are you currently taking a full course load?

Yes  No

28. In what degree program are you registered?  
(For example: B.A., B.Sc., B.S.W., B.Com, B.Ed., etc.)

\_\_\_\_\_

29. What is your major, intended major, or subject of concentration?

\_\_\_\_\_

**Financing your university education**

30. Are you receiving a student loan or other government student assistance this year?

Yes  No (Go to Question 32)

31. (If 'Yes' to Question 30) Are you having difficulty fulfilling the course load needed to keep your loans or bursaries?

Yes  No

32. When you started university, did you receive a scholarship or other financial award from the university?

Yes  No

33. Are you currently employed?

No, but I am seeking work (Go to Question 35)  
 No, and I am not seeking work (Go to Question 35)  
 Yes

34. (If 'Yes' to Question 33) Please indicate the average number of hours you work per week.

AVERAGE HOURS/WEEK: \_\_\_\_\_

35. How concerned are you about having sufficient funding to complete your university education?

Not concerned-should have sufficient funds  
 Some concern, but will probably have enough funds  
 Very concerned, may not have enough funds

**Please tell us about yourself**

36. What is your gender?

Male  Female

37. What is the year and month of your birth?

YEAR: \_\_\_\_\_ MONTH: \_\_\_\_\_

38. What was your primary language of instruction?

English  French

39. Where was your permanent home before you came to this university? (Check one)

- British Columbia
- Alberta
- Saskatchewan
- Manitoba
- Ontario
- Quebec
- Nova Scotia
- Prince Edward Island
- New Brunswick
- Newfoundland
- Nunavut
- North West Territories
- Yukon
- Other (Specify) \_\_\_\_\_

40. Where are you currently living?

- With parents, guardians/relatives
- In on-campus housing (residence hall, dormitory, apartment, etc.) ) (Go to Question 42)
- In rented home/apartment
- Rented room/rooming house
- In personally owned home

41. (If not currently living on-campus) Would you choose to live on-campus if given a chance?

Yes  No  Don't know

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

Please read each question carefully then enter a check (U) in the appropriate circles, circle the appropriate number, or fill in blank lines as necessary. Return your completed questionnaire today.

42. If known by you, what is (or was) the occupation of your parents? (For example: salaried pharmacist, physician in general practice, homemaker, salesperson in retail clothing store, business person, etc.)

Mother: \_\_\_\_\_

Don't know

Father: \_\_\_\_\_

Don't know

43. If known by you, what is (or was) the highest level of education completed by your parents?

Mother: \_\_\_\_\_

Don't know

Father: \_\_\_\_\_

Don't know

44. Do you consider yourself to be a member of a visible minority? (Note: visible minorities are those who are, because of their race or colour, in a visible minority in Canada)

Yes  No (Go to Question 46)

45. (If 'Yes' to Question 44) Please specify the visible minority with which you identify.

\_\_\_\_\_

46. Do you consider yourself to be an aboriginal person?

- No
- Yes - First Nations
- Yes - Metis
- Yes - Inuit
- Yes - Non-status

47. Do you have a disability? (Check all that apply)

None

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Mobility                  | <input type="radio"/> Hearing                |
| <input type="radio"/> Speech                    | <input type="radio"/> Partial sight or blind |
| <input type="radio"/> Learning                  | <input type="radio"/> Head Injury            |
| <input type="radio"/> Other physical disability | <input type="radio"/> Mental health          |
| <input type="radio"/> Other (Specify) _____     |  |

48. Looking back on your experiences as a first-year student, what aspects of your experience at university have been most positive? (Note: Please add pages if you need more space to write.)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

49. Looking back on your experiences as a first-year student, what aspects of your experience at university have been most negative? How could we have helped or done a better job? (Note: Please add pages if you need more space to write.)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you for your help.**

**Please return the completed questionnaire in the enclosed envelope today.**

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

Please read each question carefully then enter a check (U) in the appropriate circles, circle the appropriate number, or fill in blank lines as necessary. Return your completed questionnaire today.

## **APPENDIX B**

### **METHODOLOGY GUIDELINES FOR PARTICIPATING UNIVERSITIES**

**SURVEY OF FIRST-YEAR  
UNIVERSITY STUDENTS  
2001**

**PROCEDURES MANUAL**

**ACTIVITY TIMELINE**  
(see Manual for details)

1. Ethical review (if necessary at your university) .....now
2. Selection of random sample of students .....early December 2000
3. Preparation of cover letters, mailing lists, envelopes, etc.....early December 2000
4. First survey mailing .....January 12, 2001
5. First reminder letter to non-responders.....January 26, 2001
6. Second mailing to non-responders.....February 9, 2001
7. Mid-project return of completed surveys to U of M.....February 16, 2001
8. Final return of all completed surveys and documentation of your  
sampling procedures .....March 9, 2001
9. FINAL RETURNS MUST BE RECEIVED BY U of M .....March 12, 2001

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## Standardized Research Methodology

At the present time there are 24 universities participating in the 2001 *Survey of First-Year University Students*. To ensure the procedural uniformity necessary to make meaningful comparisons, we request that each university follow the administrative procedures outlined in this manual.

## Importance of Meeting Activity Deadlines

Your co-operation in meeting the activity schedule and timelines presented in this manual is essential to the project and will be greatly appreciated. All survey activities including data analyses and preparation of final research reports must be completed by late May 2001. This schedule leaves little time for unforeseen difficulties or delays.

It is essential to the successful completion of the project that all activities be completed on schedule. Although we will make every effort to accommodate late survey submissions, if your surveys are not received on schedule, we cannot guarantee that missing surveys can be included in the final data analyses.

For your convenience, all activity deadlines are presented on the following timeline and are also **highlighted** in paragraphs where activities are described.

## Overview of Major Project Activities and Timelines

1. Ethical review (if necessary at your university) .....now
2. Selection of random sample of students ..... early December 2000
3. Preparation of cover letters, mailing lists, envelopes, etc. .... early December 2000
4. First survey mailing ..... January 12, 2001
5. First reminder letter to non-responders ..... January 26, 2001
6. Second mailing to non-responders ..... February 9, 2001
7. Mid-project return of completed surveys to U of M ..... February 16, 2001
8. Final return of all completed surveys and documentation of your sampling procedures ..... March 9, 2001
9. FINAL RETURNS MUST BE RECEIVED BY U of M ..... March 12, 2001

## 2. SAMPLING PROCEDURES

### **Sample Size**

It has been agreed that each participating university will distribute surveys to a random sample of 600 first-year undergraduates. Unless you have made prior arrangements with us, please **DO NOT USE A SAMPLE LARGER THAN 600 STUDENTS.**

### **Restrict Sampling to First-Year Undergraduates**

Please ensure that **ONLY** first-year undergraduate students are included in your final sample. Every first-year undergraduate student (see definitions below) should have an equal chance of being selected for inclusion in your final sample of 600.

For purposes of uniformity, it was agreed that:

- a. the sample should be restricted to undergraduate students in a first-level Bachelor's program;
- b. the sample should be restricted to first-year undergraduate students who entered directly from high school or CEGEP;
- c. except for the current academic year, sampled students should have no prior university or college experience;
- d. as long as they meet the above criteria, sampled students may include both part-time and full-time students;
- e. independent or special students should be excluded from the sample.

### **Definition of "Undergraduate"**

Please include only students who are in a first level Bachelor's program. For example, in our research at the University of Manitoba, we usually define undergraduates as students enrolled in a Bachelor's degree program in the faculties/schools of: Arts, Science, Engineering, Human Ecology, Management, Agricultural & Food Sciences, Education, Environmental Design, Social Work, Nursing, Fine Arts, Dental Hygiene, Music, Physical Education/Recreational Studies, and Interior Design.

**PLEASE KEEP A RECORD OF THE FACULTIES/SCHOOLS YOU INCLUDE IN YOUR FINAL SAMPLE.** To help us understand how representative our sample is of the student population, if possible, please note the number of students sampled by faculty. We will also ask you for the total population by faculty.



## **Sampling Procedures and Requirements**

Please use simple random sampling to select your sample of 600 students. It is essential that your selection procedures ensure that each first-year undergraduate student has an equal chance of being selected for inclusion in the sample. Please make sure that the pool from which students are selected includes all first-year undergraduates including full-time and part-time students, and students from in-province, out-of-country, etc.

(Please note that it was agreed that classroom administration of the survey is NOT acceptable since it would not guarantee a representative sample and uniform sampling procedures across universities.)

As a point of information, at the University of Manitoba, sampling is conducted with the co-operation of the Student Records Office. Once we inform them of the sampling requirements, faculties/schools to be included, etc., Student Records personnel conduct the random selection and provide us with master lists of names and three sets of address labels which we then use for mailing surveys and reminders.

Please begin your sampling process in EARLY DECEMBER 2000 to ensure that labels will be available when needed.

### **3. SURVEY DISTRIBUTION AND RESPONSE TRACING PROCEDURES**

#### **All Surveys Will Be Mailed**

All surveys and reminder letters should be distributed via Canada Post. Up to two separate reminders should be mailed to non-responders. In our experience, this procedure produces an acceptable student participation rate.

#### **Initial Survey Distribution**

The initial mailing should include three things:

- a cover letter (see Appendix) which should be under the letterhead of your university and should bear the signature of a senior Student Affairs Administrator at your university;
- the *Survey of First-Year University Students*
- a postage-paid, addressed, and coded (more on this later) response envelope.

Please mail surveys on January 14, 2000.

### **First Reminder Letter**

Two weeks following the first mailing, non-responders should be sent a reminder letter (see Appendix). This mailing includes only the reminder letter and is restricted to only those students who have not yet returned a completed survey.

Mail reminder letters on January 26, 2001.

### **Final Reminder Letter**

Two weeks after the mailing of the first reminder letter, send a final mailing to non-responders. This mailing duplicates the first mailing (It should include a cover letter (see Appendix), another survey and another response envelope.) Please note that the response envelopes for the final reminder letters need not be coded.

Mail final reminder letters on February 9, 2001.

## **4. MID-PROJECT RETURN OF COMPLETED SURVEYS TO THE UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA**

Because of the tight time frame for project completion, we respectfully request that mid-way during the distribution period you return (via courier) all completed surveys to us. This will allow us to get a “head start” on response coding and computer entry and will make it considerably easier for us to meet the final research completion date.

Send the early returns to the University of Manitoba by courier by February 16, 2001.

## **5. FINAL RETURN OF ALL COMPLETED SURVEYS TO THE UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA**

March 12, 2001 is the cut-off date for accepting completed surveys for inclusion in the study. Please courier all remaining completed surveys to us no later than March 9, 2001.

In order to achieve our completion schedule it is essential that your completed student surveys are received by us no later than March 12, 2001.

Courier ALL the remaining completed surveys to the University of Manitoba by March 9, 2001.

## 6. SUBMISSION OF DOCUMENTATION

To facilitate preparation of the Methods section of the final report, please provide the following information to us when you return your surveys:

1. list of faculties/schools included in your sample, as well as the number sampled in each;
2. brief description of the procedures used to select your random sample of students;
3. dates of the initial mailing, mailing of first reminders and mailing of final reminders;
4. one copy of the three different cover letters you included in mailings.

**Include with the surveys you courier to the University of Manitoba on March 9, 2001.**

### **Please Return Materials to the U of M By Courier**

Please note that we request that all completed surveys be returned by courier to ensure their prompt delivery. (We have found parcel return via Canada Post to be slow and sometimes unpredictable.) Also please ensure that persons responsible for returning surveys are alerted to the importance of timely dispatch of all materials.

## 7. APPENDIX OF COVER LETTERS

### Cover Letter for Initial Survey Mailing

(Please use your letterhead and the signature of a senior Student Affairs administrator.)

Dear Student:

I am writing to request your participation in a confidential survey of your experiences at university. This study is being conducted at a number of Canadian universities and is directed to undergraduate students.

The survey will help us learn more about student backgrounds, expectations, and reactions to university. Survey results will allow comparison of student experiences at our university with those of first-year students from other Canadian universities.

Please participate in this important project by completing and returning the enclosed survey. Naturally, all of your survey responses will be held in strict confidence and will be used **only** to produce overall response profiles. (You will notice that your return envelope has been numbered – this has been done only to allow us to send you a reminder letter, if necessary.)

Although the survey is voluntary, we hope you will participate to help create a representative sampling of opinion and reactions from our first-year students. The survey should only take about 20 minutes, and you may find that it will give you an interesting chance to review your university experiences.

We hope you will help with this important project by completing and returning your survey within the next few days. (Please use the enclosed postage-paid envelope to return your survey.)

Thank you in advance for providing this important feedback.

Sincerely,

## **First Reminder Letter to Non-Responders**

Dear Student:

Remember receiving the *Survey of First-Year University Students*? Your input on the survey is very important to us and we are concerned that we have not yet heard from you.

If you haven't done so already, please take a few minutes now or in the next few days to complete and return your survey. As a first-year student, your responses are very important in helping provide the student feedback we need to continue working to improve the quality of undergraduate education at the university.

Please use the addressed, postage-paid envelope that came with your survey to return it. We look forward to hearing from you. If you have already returned your survey, I am sure that we will be receiving it soon. Thank you for your help.

Hoping to receive your survey soon, I offer our best wishes for your present and future activities.

Sincerely,

## **Final Reminder Letter to Non-Responders**

Dear Student:

Although the majority of students have now returned their *Survey of First-Year University Students*, we are concerned that we have not yet received your survey.

Students like yourself who were asked to participate in this survey were randomly selected to give a representative sample of our first-year undergraduate students. Because of this, your responses are very important for helping produce a true picture of student experiences in their undergraduate programs.

Please help in this important research by completing and returning your survey. Another copy is enclosed, along with a return envelope. (If you have already returned your survey, I'm sure we will be receiving it shortly – thank you.) Naturally, participation in the survey is voluntary and strictly confidential.

We know that this is probably a busy time for you, but if you haven't done so already, please complete your survey and return it to us in the enclosed pre-addressed, postage-paid envelope.

Hoping to hear from you soon, I again offer our best wishes for your present and future activities.

Sincerely,

## **THANK YOU**

We appreciate your help and co-operation in following the procedures and meeting the deadlines outlined in this Manual. Your assistance will help us meet the final project completion schedule so that survey findings can be distributed to your university as early as possible. Thank you again for your help.