

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Introduction

The 2021 *Graduating Student Survey* marks the 27<sup>th</sup> cooperative study undertaken by the Canadian University Survey Consortium/Consortium canadien de recherche sur les étudiants universitaires (CUSC-CCREU). Over 15,000 students from 32 universities across Canada participated in the survey.

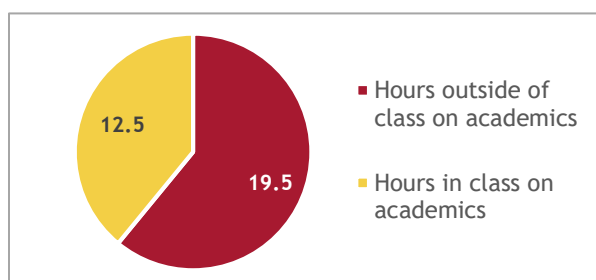
### Profile of graduating students

- The majority of graduating students tend to be studying full-time, Canadian citizens, single, female, living with their parents/family, non-visible minority, 21 - 24 years old, and have a B- to B+ average.
- About one quarter of students report having a disability, with mental health conditions being the most common.
- Just 14% of graduating students are first-generation students – that is, neither parent has had any post-secondary education.
- Half of graduating students have had some work or learning program experience.
- Two in 5 have experienced a delay completing their program, most often because required courses were not available.

### Student activities

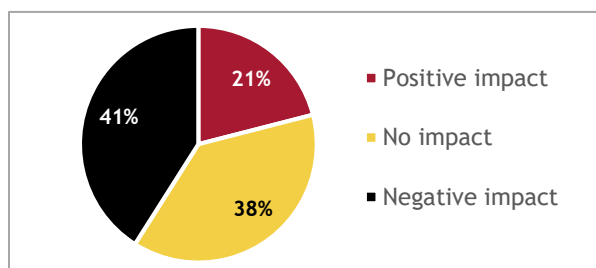
One third of students volunteer at least occasionally, on or off campus for an average of nearly five hours per week.

On average, students spend about 32 hours per week on their studies, with more hours spent outside of class than in class.



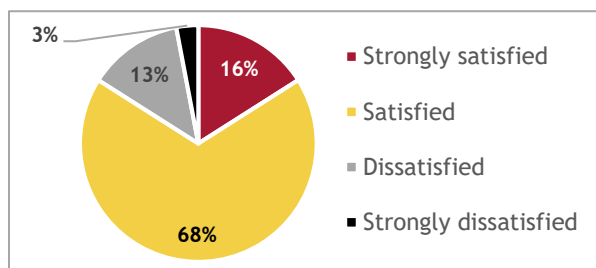
### Employment

Over half of graduating students are employed in their final year, working about 20 hours a week. Among those who are employed, about twice as many say that their employment has had a negative rather than a positive impact on their academic performance.



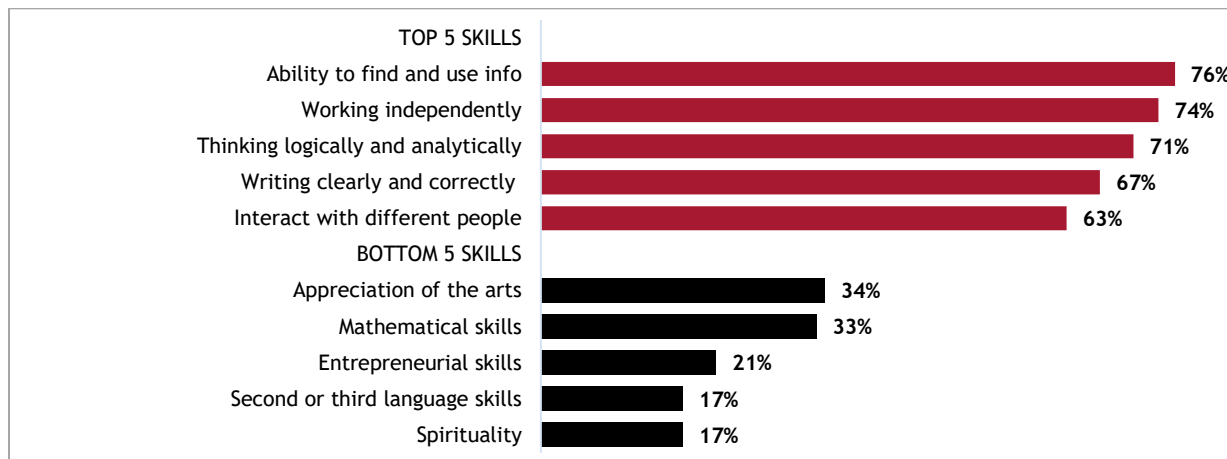
### Professors

- Students reported having had positive experiences with professors, as only two areas received less than 70% agreement – *professors provide prompt feedback on academic work* (65%) and *take a personal interest in academic progress* (64%).
- Students say it is most important for professors to *communicate well in their teaching* (42% rated as most important).
- 55% of students said they *were given the chance to evaluate the quality of teaching* in all their courses.
- Over 8 in 10 agreed that they are *generally satisfied with the quality of teaching they received*, including 16% who strongly agreed.



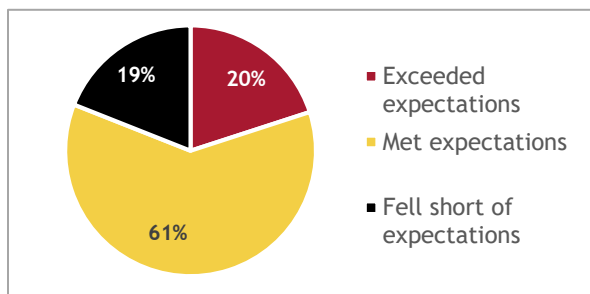
## Growth and development

Students were asked to rate the extent to which their university contributed to their growth and development in 30 areas. The top and bottom skills (contributing much or very much) according to students' ratings are shown below.



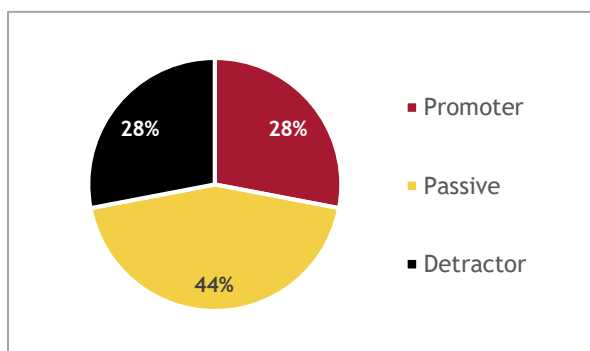
## Expectations and experience

The majority of graduating students say that their experiences *met their expectations*, while about equal numbers say their experiences *exceeded* and *fell short*.



## Overall evaluation of student experiences

- Nearly 9 in 10 are satisfied with the *overall quality of education at their university*, nearly two thirds agree they *received good value for money at their university*, and over half are satisfied with the *concern shown by the university for them as an individual*.
- Using the Net Promoter Score calculation, where detractors (rating of 0 to 6) are subtracted from promoters (rating of 9 or 10), participating universities have a score of 0 (28% promoters minus 28% detractors).

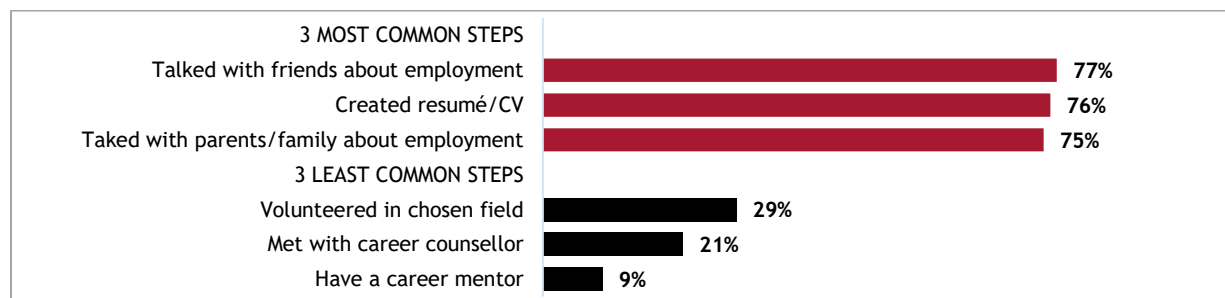


## Indigenous education experiences

- Three quarters of graduating students agree that *Indigenous course content has enriched their university experience* and about two thirds say the same about *participation in Indigenous activities or events*.

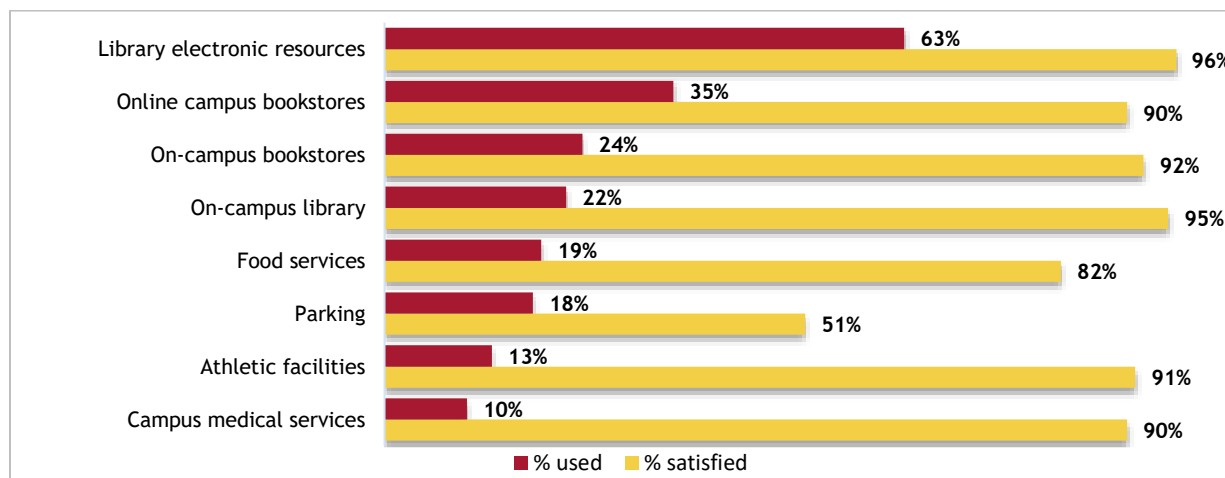
### Educational and employment goals

- One third of graduating students said they had changed their major or program of study.
- More graduating students to intend to apply to a *graduate school* (39%) than a *professional program* (24%).
- About one third of graduating students have a specific career in mind. Despite many having a career (or two) in mind, just 21% said they know their career options very well.
- Almost all graduating students have taken at least one step to prepare for employment or their career after graduation. The most and least common employment preparation steps are shown below.



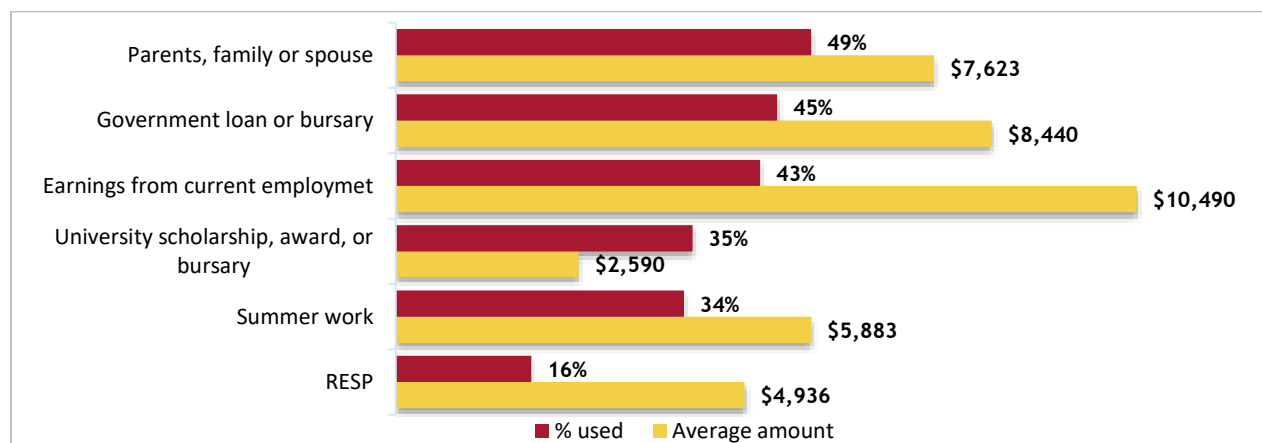
### Satisfaction with facilities and services

Satisfaction with facilities and services used by at least 10% of students are shown below.



## Finances

- Ninety-three percent of graduating students have at least one credit card, carrying a balance of just under \$800.
- Forty-six percent of graduating students report having debt, most commonly *government student loans*. The average debt among all students is just over \$13,000, but doubles to almost \$29,000 when only those reporting debt are considered.
- Students required over \$17,000 to finance their current year of education, most commonly relying on *parents, family or spouse, government loans, and current employment*.



## Post-graduation

- Just over two thirds of graduating students expect to take further education within the next five years, most often pursuing *graduate school*, with one quarter planning to continue their education at their current university.
- Nearly one third of students have post-graduation work arranged, with most expecting to work in full-time, permanent positions, earning an annual median salary of \$48,000. Over half say their desired job requires a degree, with over a third who say it requires their specific degree.
- Over 8 in 10 students who have post-graduation employment arranged are satisfied with the employment they have arranged.

## COVID impact

Graduating students were asked their satisfaction with various adaptations that their university took in regards to the COVID pandemic and how it impacted their final year of studies.

