

Examining the University of Regina Student Experience Students' employment plans

Completed in April 2012, the 2012 CUSC Survey of Graduating Students focused on undergraduate university students deemed eligible to graduate in 2012. The survey was distributed to more than 41,000 students at 36 universities across Canada. In total, 15,062 undergraduate students from across Canada completed the survey, including 430 from the University of Regina.

This report focuses on the University of Regina's students, comparing them to students nationally and to students attending institutions comparable to the University of Regina. Where possible, this report also compares results with the 2009, 2006, and 2003 CUSC surveys of graduating students. Unless stated otherwise, all differences reported are not statistically significant.

This final report in a series of six examines students' career expectations with respect to the availability of jobs in their chosen field of study. It also reports on the steps students have taken to prepare for employment, their satisfaction with the extent to which their university has provided information about career options, and explores the kinds of jobs students have arranged for after graduation.

Students' perceptions of job prospects

Table 1 shows graduating student respondents are somewhat pessimistic about their job prospects, as just 22% of University of Regina students think there are many jobs available within their field of study. Conversely, 31% think there are few or very few jobs available.

- ▶ University of Regina students are slightly more optimistic than students at comparable universities, as just 15% of students at comparable universities think there are many jobs available, while 42% think there are few or very few jobs.
- ▶ Nationally (including the University of Regina), students in Engineering (39%) and Professional (36%) programs are most likely to say there are many jobs available in their field of study. Conversely, only 7% of Arts and Humanities students believe there are many jobs available for them in their field of study.

	National (n=14,632)	Comparable universities (n=5,932)	University of Regina			
			2012 (n=430)	2009 (n=557)	2006 (n=551)	2003 (n=515)
Many jobs	20%	15%	22%	30%	26%	26%
Some jobs	40%	43%	47%	46%	44%	43%
Few/very few jobs	40%	42%	31%	24%	30%	31%

Satisfaction with information about career options

Given that students are somewhat pessimistic about the career opportunities for them in their field of study, the results in Table 2 indicate that they are not very satisfied with their universities for having information for them about what career options might be available to them in their area of study. Although

2 in 3 University of Regina students are satisfied with *the availability of information about career options in their area of study*, only 9% are very satisfied. These results are similar to those reported by students nationally and at comparable universities.

Table 2: Students' satisfaction with availability of information about career options in students' area of study

	National (n=14,632)	Comparable universities (n=5,932)	University of Regina			
			2012 (n=430)	2009 (n=557)	2006 (n=551)	2003 (n=515)
Very satisfied	11%	11%	9%	11%	11%	17%
Satisfied	51%	52%	57%	55%	52%	53%
Dissatisfied	31%	30%	27%	28%	32%	24%
Very dissatisfied	7%	6%	7%	5%	5%	6%

Steps students have taken toward gaining employment

Although students have concerns about the availability of jobs in their field of study, graduating students (at the time of the survey in April) had not taken many steps towards obtaining employment after graduation.

- ▶ At almost 9 in 10, University of Regina students have most commonly *created a resume or curriculum vitae (CV)*. Although this is high, it indicates that 1 in 10 graduating students do not have a resume or CV to distribute to potential employers once they graduate.
- ▶ Although students were preparing to graduate, only 7 in 10 students had *decided on a career field or specific occupation*.
- ▶ Compared to students nationally and at similar universities, results show that University of Regina students are much more likely to have *attended an employment fair* (65% versus 44% nationally and at comparable universities). University of Regina respondents were also more likely to have *talked with professors about employment*, and to have *worked in a chosen field of employment*.
- ▶ Since 2009, University of Regina students have stepped up their efforts to prepare for employment as evidenced by the higher proportion of 2012 students who reported having *created a resume*, *talked with professors about employment* and *attended an employment fair*.

Table 3: Students' perceptions of job prospects in their field of study

	National (n=14,632)	Comparable universities (n=5,932)	University of Regina	
			2012 (n=430)	2009 (n=557)
Created resume or CV	83%	84%	89%	78%
Decided on a career field or specific occupation	68%	66%	71%	68%
Talked with professors about employment	57%	56%	68%	59%
Attended an employment fair	44%	44%	65%	56%
Worked in chosen field of employment	54%	54%	64%	62%
Volunteered in chosen field of employment	43%	41%	47%	42%
Created an e-portfolio	22%	22%	23%	18%
Met with a career counsellor	23%	23%	21%	20%
Have a career mentor	17%	15%	19%	15%

Examining steps students have taken to prepare for employment shows the following among students nationally (including the University of Regina):

- ▶ Female (46%) students are more likely than male (30%) students to report that they have *volunteered in their chosen field of employment*.
- ▶ Students in Education programs are most likely to have *worked or volunteered in their chosen field of employment*, while Engineering students are most likely to have *attended an employment fair* and also very likely to have *worked in their chosen field of employment*, but are least likely to have *volunteered in their field*.
- ▶ Business students are most likely to have *met with a career counsellor*.

Profile of arranged employment post-graduation

Among University of Regina graduating students, 47% say (at the time of the survey in April) they have a job arranged for after graduation. Since 2003, the proportion reporting that they have arranged employment has increased each year (from 24% in 2003). In fact, this proportion is much higher than reported by students nationally (36%) and at comparable universities (34%).

Table 4 shows a profile of those students who reported having arranged employment.

- ▶ University of Regina students who have arranged for employment after graduation are more likely than students nationally and at comparable universities to report that their job is new, required a degree, their degree helped them get a job, and that they anticipate higher earnings. Almost twice as many 2012 respondents reported a “new” arranged job as compared to the 2009 respondents.
- ▶ In spite of these differences, there is virtually no difference in students’ satisfaction with their arranged employment with only 1 in 3 students from the University of Regina and other universities reporting being very satisfied with their job.

	National (n=5,205)	Comparable universities (n=1,985)	University of Regina			
			2012 (n=194)	2009 (n=159)	2006 (n=135)	2003 (n=117)
New job	33%	31%	46%	26%	22%	37%
Required a degree	46%	45%	52%	46%	47%	42%
Degree help get the job	54%	52%	65%	59%	53%	55%
Very satisfied with job	33%	33%	32%	38%	29%	37%
Anticipated earnings	\$33,473	\$34,996	\$37,411	\$41,109	\$33,801	\$34,968

Note: Anticipated earnings have been adjusted for inflation and are reported in 2012 dollars.

Nationally (including the University of Regina) students in Engineering programs anticipate the highest average salary at \$54,232 annually. This is considerably higher than the next highest discipline, Professional programs, at \$40,170. Students in Arts and Humanities programs have the lowest starting annual salary at around \$24,764.

About CUSC

The 2012 CUSC survey is the 18th cooperative study undertaken by the *Canadian University Survey Consortium / Consortium canadien de recherche sur les étudiants universitaires* (CUSC/CCREU) and the 13th study in which the University of Regina has participated. Since 1996, the survey has run in a three-year cycle, with different student populations targeted each year: all undergraduates, first-year undergraduates, or graduating students.

This study focuses on undergraduate students who will be graduating from their program of study in 2012 and compares results to previous surveys conducted in 2009, 2006, and 2003. The survey involved 37 participating universities and over 15,000 students from across Canada, yielding an overall response rate of 36.5%. Participating students from the University of Regina numbered 430, which represents a 31.5% rate of response.

University comparisons

For comparison purposes, CUSC categorizes the participating universities into three groups:

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

The University of Regina is included in Group 2. In 2012, eleven Group 2 universities participated in the survey. Along with the University of Regina, they included Brock, Carleton, Lakehead, Ryerson, Simon Fraser, Thompson Rivers, Moncton, New Brunswick (Fredericton), Waterloo and Wilfred Laurier. This reflects a higher number of participating Group 2 institutions as compared to earlier surveys of graduating students, with seven in each of the 2006 and 2003 studies.

In this report, the University of Regina is not included in either the *National* category (all three Groups) or the *Comparable Universities* category (Group 2 institutions).

Because different universities participate each year, differences in results among similar surveys from earlier years may result from the inclusion of different universities rather than changes over time.

Statistically significant differences

In order to term an association as statistically significant, the Pearson's chi-square must have probability of a type 1 error of less than .001 and either the Phi coefficient or Cramer's V must have a value of .150 or greater.

Non-response

Non-responses have not been included in the analysis. Therefore, throughout this report, unless explicitly stated as a subpopulation, overall results do not include those who did not respond to a particular question. However, for questions where "don't know" is a valid response, overall results include those who selected "don't know" to a particular question.

Note: Tables in this report might not add up to one hundred percent due to rounding errors and/or because some categories (such as "Other") are not reflected in the table.

For more information about CUSC/CCREU, visit the website at www.cusc-ccreu.ca.