

Examining the University of Regina Student Experience Students' Employment Plans

Completed in Spring 2015, the *2015 CUSC Survey of Graduating University Students* focused on undergraduate university students deemed eligible to graduate in 2015. The survey was distributed to more than 57,000 students at 36 universities across Canada. In total, 18,144 undergraduate students from across Canada completed the survey, including 461 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 2012 and 2009 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 planning, including work and learning program experiences and how well students know their career options. It also reports on the steps students have taken to prepare for employment, and explores the kinds of jobs students have arranged for after graduation.

Work and learning program experience

More than 7 in 10 University of Regina respondents say they have been involved in some type of work and learning program experience. This is higher than reported by students nationally (55%) or at comparable institutions (59%). Table 1 shows the following:

- ▶ University of Regina respondents are most likely to report *practicum* and *unpaid internships* (25% each) as their work and learning experiences, and least likely to report a *paid internship* (4%).
- ▶ Students nationally (16%) and at comparable institutions (16%) were more likely to say they had *work experience* than students at the University of Regina (9%).

Table 1: Work and learning program experiences

	2015		
	National (n=18,144)	Comparable universities (n=7,916)	University of Regina (n=461)
Any experience	55%	59%	72%
Practicum	16%	16%	25%
Internship (unpaid)	9%	9%	25%
Service learning	15%	16%	20%
Co-op	14%	20%	13%
Work experience	16%	16%	9%
Internship (paid)	7%	6%	4%

Note: Respondents could provide more than one answer. Therefore, columns will not sum to 100%

Among University of Regina respondents who say they have been involved in work and learn programs, female students (74%) were much more likely than male students (42%) to report having participated in such a program. Female students were much more likely to report taking part in a *practicum* or *unpaid internship* than their male counterparts, while male students were somewhat more likely to report experience with *co-ops* and *work experience*. The difference is likely due to female students enrolled in disciplines where they are overrepresented.

Students' career planning

Overall, 8 in 10 graduating student respondents from the University of Regina have some career prospects in mind. Almost 8 in 10 also say they know their career options at least *fairly well*.

- ▶ Over half of University of Regina respondents (52%) report that they have a *specific career in mind*, a much higher proportion than found nationally (37%) or at comparable institutions (37%).
- ▶ University of Regina students (35%) were also more likely to report they know their career options *very well* compared to students nationally (25%) or those at comparable institutions (26%).

	2015		
	National (n=18,144)	Comparable universities (n=7,916)	University of Regina (n=461)
Description of career plans			
I have a specific career in mind	37%	37%	52%
I have several possible careers in mind	38%	38%	30%
I have some general ideas	24%	24%	17%
I am not thinking about a career	2%	1%	>1%
How well students know career options			
Very well	25%	26%	35%
Fairly well	45%	46%	41%
Only a little	26%	24%	22%
Not at all	4%	4%	2%

University of Regina students (82%) who participated in some form of work and learning program experience were much more likely than students who did not (62%) to report that they *know their career options* at least *fairly well*. Those who participated in work and learning programs were twice as likely (41%) to say they know their career options *very well*, compared to students with no experiences (21%).

Steps students have taken toward gaining employment

Almost all graduating students have taken at least one step to prepare for employment or a career after graduation, most often these steps are informal such as talking to *friends*, *parents* or *professors*. Examining steps students have taken to prepare for employment shows the following:

- ▶ At 8 in 10, University of Regina students have most commonly *talked with friends* or with *parents/family* about their employment or career after graduation.
- ▶ Compared to students nationally and at similar universities, University of Regina students are much more likely to have *attended an employment fair* (57% versus 35% 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*.
- ▶ Female students (43%) are more likely than male students (23%) to report that they have *volunteered in their chosen field of employment*. Female (60%) students were also more likely than males (50%) to report they have *worked in their chosen field of employment*.

Table 3: Steps taken to prepare for employment or career after graduation					
	National (n=18,144)	Comparable universities (n=7,961)	University of Regina		
			2015 (n=461)	2012 (n=430)	2009 (n=557)
Talked with friends about employment/career	78%	78%	80%	Not asked	Not asked
Talked with parents/family about employment/career	77%	77%	80%	Not asked	Not asked
Created a resume or CV	76%	76%	78%	89%	78%
Talked with professors about employment/career	51%	51%	60%	68%	59%
Attended an employment fair	35%	35%	57%	65%	56%
Worked in chosen field of employment	45%	46%	56%	64%	62%
Volunteered in chosen field of employment	36%	37%	37%	47%	42%
Met with a career counsellor	22%	21%	19%	21%	20%

Profile of arranged employment post-graduation

Among University of Regina graduating students, 28% say (at the time of the survey in the spring) they have a job arranged for after graduation. This proportion is slightly lower but similar to that reported by students nationally (31%) and at comparable universities (31%).

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 (61%) than students nationally and at comparable universities (54% for each) to report that their job *required a degree*. This included roughly half of University of Regina students who reported that it required their *specific degree*.

- ▶ When asked if their job was at least moderately related to the skills and knowledge they acquired in university, 69% of University of Regina students agreed with the statement. This compares to 64% nationally and 63% at comparable institutions. University of Regina respondents were more likely to report that skills and knowledge learned was *strongly* related to their job than students nationally or at comparable institutions.

Table 4: Profile of post-graduation employment			
	2015		
	National (n=18,144)	Comparable universities (n=7,916)	University of Regina (n=461)
Have employment arranged			
Yes	31%	31%	28%
No, looking for work	57%	59%	64%
No, not looking for work	12%	10%	8%
Degree requirements*			
Requires specific degree	38%	36%	49%
Requires any degree	16%	18%	12%
Degrees help, but not required	21%	21%	21%
Does not require degree	25%	25%	18%
Relation to skills and knowledge learned*			
Strongly	44%	42%	51%
Moderately	20%	22%	18%
Slightly	15%	15%	17%
Not at all	21%	20%	14%

*Out of those who have employment arranged (may not total 100% due to rounding).

About CUSC

The 2015 CUSC survey is the 21st cooperative study undertaken by the *Canadian University Survey Consortium / Consortium canadien de recherche sur les étudiants universitaires* (CUSC/CCREU) and the 16th study in which the University of Regina has participated. Prior to 2014, the surveys ran in a three-year cycle, targeting first year, graduating, and all students in separate years. In 2014, the All Students survey was changed to a survey of middle-year students (i.e., students in the second or third year of a four-year program, second year of a three-year program, or second to fourth year of a five-year program).

This study focuses on undergraduate students who will be graduating from their program of study in 2015 and compares results to previous surveys conducted in 2012, 2009, and 2006. The survey involved 36 participating universities and over 18,000 students from across Canada, yielding an overall response rate of 31.5%. Participating students from the University of Regina numbered 461, which represents a 46.1% 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 2015, twelve 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), Victoria, Waterloo and Wilfred Laurier. This reflects a higher number of participating Group 2 institutions compared to earlier surveys of graduating students, with eleven in 2012 and seven in 2009.

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.