

## Examining the University of Regina First-Year Student Experience Orientation, Registration and Transition to University

Completed in Spring 2016, the *2016 CUSC First-Year Student Survey* focused on undergraduate university students who started during the 2015–2016 academic year. The survey was distributed to almost 58,000 students at 34 universities across Canada. In total, 14,886 first-year students from across Canada completed the survey, including 657 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 (see final page for a listing). Where possible, this report also compares results with the 2013, 2010, and 2007 CUSC surveys of first-year students.

This third report in a series of six examines students' experiences with registration, orientation, and transition to university.

### Registration

At the national level, students seemed to be satisfied with registration, including 84% who were very or somewhat satisfied with *getting into all the courses they wanted* and 78% very or somewhat satisfied with the *process of registering for their courses*. At the University of Regina, 89% of first-year students said that they were very or somewhat satisfied with *getting into all the courses they wanted*, and 89% said they were very or somewhat satisfied with the *process of registering for their courses*, as shown in the following table:

Satisfaction with registration (% very or somewhat satisfied)	National (n=14,886)	Comparable universities (n=6,176)	University of Regina (n=657)
Getting into all the courses you wanted	84%	84%	89%
Process of registering for courses	78%	79%	89%

### Orientation

About 68% of first-year students participated in orientation at universities across Canada compared to 82% at the University of Regina and 73% at comparable universities. The proportion of University of Regina students who participated in an orientation program before or after arriving on campus increased considerably in 2016. Results are shown in the following table:

Orientation	National (n=14,886)	Comparable universities (n=6,176)	University of Regina			
			2016 (n=657)	2013 (n=668)	2010 (n=612)	2007 (n=460)
Participated in an orientation program before or after arriving on campus	68%	73%	82%	74%	66%	70%

Among those who participated in orientation at universities across Canada and at comparable universities, most seemed to be satisfied with aspects related to orientation, being most satisfied with orientation making them *feel welcome at their university* (93%) and least satisfied with orientation *building their confidence* (77%). For University of Regina students, the most satisfying aspect of orientation was that it made them *feel welcome at their university* (94%), followed by *helping you understand the university's academic expectations* (87%). As at other universities across Canada and at comparable universities, the least satisfying aspect of orientation was *building your confidence* (75%). All results are shown in the table below:

Satisfaction with aspects of orientation (% of very or somewhat satisfied)	National (n=14,886)	Comparable universities (n=6,176)	University of Regina			
			2016 (n=657)	2013 (n=668)	2010 (n=612)	2007 (n=460)
Feeling welcome at the university	93%	93%	94%	92%	94%	94%
Helping you understand the university's academic expectations	86%	86%	87%	84%	87%	78%
Providing information about student services	86%	86%	84%	85%	85%	85%
Providing information about campus life	87%	87%	82%	83%	85%	82%
Helping your personal and social transition to university	81%	82%	81%	73%	79%	75%
Building your confidence	77%	77%	75%	75%	79%	73%

## Feel as if they belong at this University

At the national level, about 3 in 4 first-year students agreed that they *feel as if they belong at this university*, including 24% who strongly agreed. About 1 in 10 disagreed, including 3% who strongly disagreed. Of interest, 13% said they do not know if they belong at their current university, indicating that they do not have enough information to decide if they belong or are still weighing whether or not they belong at their current university. The table below shows results at the University of Regina, at comparable universities, and at the national level:

Feel as if student belongs at this university	National (n=14,886)	Comparable universities (n=6,176)	University of Regina (n=657)
Strongly agree	24%	23%	13%
Agree	51%	51%	55%
Disagree	9%	9%	11%
Strongly disagree	3%	3%	3%
Don't know	13%	13%	19%

## Transition to University

First-year students rated their success in transitioning to university through 17 aspects of university life. Students found success in many aspects, with more than 8 in 10 students saying they have had some or very much success. Nationally, the two areas where students have found less success are *finding career information* (17% very much less) and *becoming involved in campus activities* (14% very much less).

For University of Regina students and also at the national level, the three areas where they have found some or very much success are *finding your way around campus* (95%), *understanding the course material* (95%), and *finding information about academic integrity* (91%).

The table below shows the proportion that rated their success as some or very much success (top two ratings on a four-point scale), with answers from those who said ‘no basis for opinion’ removed:

Success transitioning to university (% some or very much)	National (n=14,886)	Comparable universities (n=6,176)	University of Regina (n=657)
Finding your way around campus	95%	95%	95%
Understanding the course material	95%	94%	95%
Finding information about academic integrity	91%	91%	91%
Meeting academic demands	91%	90%	90%
Choosing a program of study	91%	91%	88%
Performing well in written assignments	88%	88%	88%
Commuting to campus	85%	84%	84%
Finding suitable housing	79%	78%	80%
Dealing with new living arrangements	80%	80%	77%
Getting academic advice	74%	75%	75%
Managing your finances	77%	75%	73%
Managing your time	73%	71%	73%
Using the library	80%	77%	71%
Performing well in courses that require math	75%	73%	69%
Making friends	71%	73%	66%
Finding career information	61%	62%	63%
Becoming involved in campus activities	46%	47%	36%

Results on the national level show that as students’ grades increase, students are more likely to report having some or very much success transitioning to the following: *meeting academic demands*, *performing well in written assignments*, *performing well in courses that require math*, *understanding course material*, and *managing their time*.

### About CUSC

The 2016 CUSC survey is the 22<sup>nd</sup> cooperative study undertaken by the *Canadian University Survey Consortium / Consortium canadien de recherche sur les étudiants universitaires* (CUSC/CCREU) and the 17<sup>th</sup> 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 first-year students and compares results to previous surveys conducted in 2013, 2010, and 2007. The survey involved 34 participating universities and almost 15,000 students from across Canada, yielding an overall response rate of 25.7%. Participating students from the University of Regina numbered 657, which represents a 43.8% 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 2016, 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. 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](http://www.cusc-ccreu.ca).**