

Examining the UR Student Experience

Growth and Development

The 2020 *Middle-Years Student Survey* marks the 26th cooperative study undertaken by the Canadian University Survey Consortium/*Consortium canadien de recherche sur les étudiants universitaires* (CUSC-CCREU) and the 21st study in which the University of Regina has participated. The survey was distributed to over 71,000 students at 29 universities across Canada. In total, 20,449 middle-years university students completed the survey, including 1,158 from the University of Regina.

This report focuses on the University of Regina’s middle-years students who had earned between 25 and 101 credit hours at the time of the survey, comparing them to students nationally and to students attending institutions comparable to the University of Regina (see final page for a listing of universities and definitions of middle-years students). Where possible, this report also compares results with the 2017, 2014, and 2011 CUSC surveys of middle-years students.

This fifth report in a series of six explores the growth and development achieved by middle-years students who completed the survey.

Contribution to Life Skills

The 10 skills classified as “life skills” vary in terms of students’ perceptions of the contribution their university made to each. Nationally, at the upper end, more than half of students said their university contributed much or very much to several skills, most notably in the *ability to interact with people from backgrounds different from your own* (21% very much). On the lower end, fewer than 2 in 10 said their university contributed much or very much to their *spirituality* (5% very much).

Contribution to life skills (% much or very much)	National (n=20,449)	Comparable universities (n=5,582)	University of Regina		
			2020 (n=1,158)	2017 (n=1,065)	2014 (n=941)
Ability to interact with people from backgrounds different from your own	56%	54%	53%	58%	55%
Time management skills	54%	53%	50%	52%	50%
Persistence with difficult tasks	52%	50%	46%	48%	47%
Ability to evaluate your own strengths and weaknesses	51%	48%	50%	54%	52%
Dealing successfully with obstacles to achieve an objective	49%	47%	45%	52%	52%
Moral and ethical judgement	44%	41%	43%	50%	46%
Ability to lead a group to achieve an objective	41%	37%	38%	40%	40%
Self-confidence	37%	35%	35%	45%	46%
Appreciation of the arts	29%	28%	26%	33%	32%
Spirituality	14%	13%	15%	22%	18%

Difference by gender. At the national level, female (58%) students were more likely than male (52%) students to say that universities contributed much or very much to their development in *ability to interact with people from backgrounds different from your own*. At the University of Regina, the proportion was 55% of female students compared to 50% of male students.

Contribution to Analytical and Learning Skills

Among the eight analytical and learning skills for which students assessed their university's contribution, students nationally indicated that universities contributed most to *ability to find and use information* (22% very much) and *thinking logically and analytically* (21% very much). Students rated their university as contributing least (among the analytical and learning skills) to *mathematical skills* (11% very much).

Contribution to analytical and learning skills (% much or very much)	National (n=20,449)	Comparable universities (n=5,582)	University of Regina		
			2020 (n=1,158)	2017 (n=1,065)	2014 (n=941)
Ability to find and use information	65%	63%	61%	61%	65%
Thinking logically and analytically	64%	63%	59%	63%	62%
Listening to others to absorb information accurately	53%	51%	50%	54%	49%
Understanding abstract concepts	52%	50%	46%	53%	50%
Effective study and learning skills	52%	49%	48%	48%	45%
Reading to absorb information accurately	50%	49%	44%	50%	47%
Thinking creatively to find ways to achieve an objective	48%	46%	45%	52%	52%
Mathematical skills	31%	32%	29%	27%	26%

Difference by gender. At the national level, male (43%) students were more likely than female (25%) students to say that universities contributed much or very much to their *mathematical skills*. At the University of Regina, the proportion was 41% of male students compared to 24% of female students.

Contribution to Communication Skills

Among the four communication skills rated, the University of Regina contributed most to students' growth and development in *writing clearly and correctly* (17% very much) and *speaking to small groups* (16% very much). The U of R contributed least to the development of *second or third language skills* (6% very much).

Contribution to communication skills (% much or very much)	National (n=20,449)	Comparable universities (n=5,582)	University of Regina		
			2020 (n=1,158)	2017 (n=1,065)	2014 (n=941)
Writing clearly and correctly	55%	52%	54%	61%	60%
Speaking to small groups	49%	44%	45%	54%	51%
Speaking to a class or audience	38%	34%	35%	47%	44%
Second or third language skills	15%	16%	17%	16%	18%

Difference by gender:

Contribution to communication skills (% much or very much)	National (n=20,449)		Comparable universities (n=5,582)		University of Regina (n=1,158)	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Writing clearly and correctly	50%	57%	47%	55%	55%	54%
Speaking to small groups	47%	50%	43%	45%	44%	46%
Speaking to a class or audience	38%	38%	34%	34%	36%	35%
Second or third language skills	16%	15%	16%	17%	19%	16%

Contribution to Working Skills

At the University of Regina, students' perceptions of their university's contribution to their working skills varied greatly depending on the skills. For instance, about 6 in 10 said the U of R contributed much or very much to *working independently* (26% very much), while about 3 in 10 said the U of R contributed much or very much to *computer literacy skills* (11% very much). Just 5% said the U of R contributed very much to their development of *entrepreneurial skills*.

Contribution to work skills (% much or very much)	National (n=20,449)	Comparable universities (n=5,582)	University of Regina		
			2020 (n=1,158)	2017 (n=1,065)	2014 (n=941)
Working independently	68%	68%	65%	63%	64%
Skills for planning and completing projects	53%	50%	47%	46%	49%
Cooperative interaction in groups	49%	45%	42%	52%	51%
Skills and knowledge for employment	41%	39%	39%	40%	40%
Knowledge of career options	37%	36%	37%	41%	40%
Computer literacy skills	33%	34%	34%	32%	33%
Entrepreneurial skills	18%	17%	16%	17%	18%

Difference by gender. At the national level, male (39%) students were more likely than female (30%) students to say that universities contributed much or very much to their development in *computer literacy skills*. At the University of Regina, the proportion was 41% of male students compared to 31% of female students.

Perception of Staff

Nationally, about 9 in 10 middle-years students agreed that *most university support staff are helpful*, including 25% who strongly agreed. About 8 in 10 students agreed that *most teaching assistants are helpful*, including 21% who strongly agreed. At the University of Regina, also about 9 in 10 middle-years students agreed that *most university support staff are helpful*, including 25% who strongly agreed. About 7 in 10 students agreed that *most teaching assistants are helpful*, including 14% who strongly agreed.

Perception of staff (% agree or strongly agree)	National (n=20,449)	Comparable universities (n=5,582)	University of Regina		
			2020 (n=1,158)	2017 (n=1,065)	2014 (n=941)
Most university support staff are helpful	87%	86%	87%	88%	85%
Most teaching assistants are helpful	79%	77%	68%	68%	67%

* These questions included an option for students to say "No basis for opinion" and those responses have been removed from the calculations.

About CUSC

The 2020 CUSC survey is the 26th cooperative study undertaken by the *Canadian University Survey Consortium / Consortium canadien de recherche sur les étudiants universitaires* (CUSC/CCREU) and the 21st 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 undergraduate students in separate years. In 2014, the All Undergraduate student survey was changed to a survey of Middle-Years 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, or, as in the case of the University of Regina, students who have earned between 25 and 101 credits).

The 2020 survey was directed to middle-years students; this report compares results to the previous surveys conducted in 2017, 2014, and 2011. The 2020 survey involved 29 participating universities and over 20,000 students from across Canada, yielding an overall response rate of 28.5%. Participating students from the University of Regina numbered 1,158, which represents a 38.6% 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 2020, seven Group 2 universities participated in the survey. Along with the University of Regina, they included Carleton, Lakehead, Simon Fraser, Thompson Rivers, Victoria, and Wilfred Laurier.

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. Unless stated otherwise, all differences reported are not statistically significant.

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.