
Student Study Patterns and the Impact of Employment on Academic Performance

Conducted in March 2021, the *2021 Graduating Student Survey* marks the 27th cooperative study undertaken by the *Canadian University Survey Consortium / Consortium canadien de recherche sur les étudiants universitaires* (CUSC/CCREU) and the 22nd study in which the University of Regina has participated. The 2021 survey involved 32 universities and over 15,000 students from across Canada. Graduating students are those who are deemed eligible to graduate in 2021. The survey was sent to 1,000 University of Regina students. A total of 445 students completed the survey.

This report focuses on the U of R's students, comparing them to students nationally and those attending comparable institutions. Where possible, this report also compares results with the 2018, 2015, and 2012 CUSC surveys of graduating students. Unless stated otherwise, all differences reported are not statistically significant.

This second of six reports profiles graduating students' study patterns inside and outside of the classroom, as well as examining the impact of employment on their academic performance.

Students study patterns

Students were asked to estimate how much time they spent on academic activities during an average week in their current term both in class (including scheduled classes, labs, seminars and tutorials) and outside of class time. This question was added in 2015. Table 1 on next page shows the results:

- ▶ University of Regina respondents reported spending an average of 13.3 hours per week on *academic work in class*. This is similar to the amount of time reported by students at comparable institutions (13.3) and slightly higher than students nationally (12.5).
- ▶ University of Regina respondents were more likely to report spending fewer than 10 hours on average (52%) in *scheduled classes and labs* than their peers nationally (48%) or at comparable institutions (43%). U of R respondents, however, were also more likely to report spending more than 30 hours per week in *scheduled classes and labs* (10%) than their peers at comparable institutions (4%) or nationally (4%).
- ▶ University of Regina respondents reported spending an average of 17.5 hours per week on *academic work outside of class*. This is lower than that reported by students nationally (19.5) and at comparable institutions (19.7). University of Regina students were somewhat more likely to report 10 hours or fewer (42%) spent on *academic work outside of class* than students nationally (34%) or at comparable institutions (33%).
- ▶ Collectively, the amount of time University of Regina respondents spent doing *academic work* (either in class or outside of class) was 30.8 hours per week. This was lower than the number of hours reported by students nationally (32.0) and at comparable institutions (33.0).

Table 1: Time spent on academic work	National	Comparable universities	University of Regina		
	2021 (n=15,334)	2021 (n=6,240)	2021 (n=445)	2018 (n=372)	2015 (n=461)
Hours spent per week in scheduled classes and labs					
10 or fewer	48%	43%	52%	43%	38%
11 to 15	28%	31%	20%	27%	35%
16 to 20	13%	14%	9%	10%	11%
21 to 30	7%	7%	8%	8%	6%
More than 30	4%	4%	10%	13%	10%
Hours spent per week in on academic work outside of classes and labs					
10 or fewer	34%	33%	42%	44%	44%
11 to 15	16%	17%	11%	11%	15%
16 to 20	18%	18%	17%	13%	16%
21 to 30	18%	17%	16%	16%	14%
More than 30	15%	15%	15%	17%	11%
Hours spent per week in on academic work in and out of class					
Average number of hours	32.0	33.0	30.8	32.8	31.1

Impact of employment on academic performance

Table 2 shows that 6 in 10 U of R graduating respondents were employed during their last year of studies. Among those who were employed, results show the following:

- ▶ The first 3 rows on Table 2 show that U of R students were somewhat more likely to be currently working (60%) than students nationally (56%) and students at comparable institutions (55%). U of R respondents were more likely to report themselves currently employed off-campus (50%) than students nationally (47%) and at comparable institutions (45%). The percentage of U of R graduating students who were not working decreased slightly since 2018 from 44% to 40%.
- ▶ Of those that reported current employment, the typical University of Regina respondent worked approximately 21 hours per week, which is slightly higher than students nationally and at comparable institutions. Roughly, 6 in 10 reported working 20 hours per week or fewer which is slightly lower than their peers nationally (64%) and at comparable universities (66%).
- ▶ University of Regina respondents (21%) were more likely to report working 30 or more hours per week on average, compared to those nationally (19%) and at comparable institutions (16%). The percentage of U of R students reporting working over 30 hours per week increased since 2018 from 13% to 21%.

Table 2: Employment status and hours worked	National	Comparable universities	University of Regina			
	2021 (n=15,334)	2021 (n=6,240)	2021 (n=445)	2018 (n=372)	2015 (n=461)	2012 (n=430)
Currently employed (all respondents)						
Yes, both on and off campus	3%	4%	6%	6%	4%	6%
Yes, on campus	6%	6%	4%	6%	7%	6%
Yes, off campus	47%	45%	50%	44%	49%	56%
No, not working	43%	44%	40%	44%	40%	32%
Number of hours worked per week						
10 hours or less	26%	26%	25%	33%	27%	18%
11 to 20 hours	38%	40%	37%	39%	41%	40%
21 to 30 hours	18%	18%	17%	15%	13%	18%
Over 30 hours	19%	16%	21%	13%	19%	24%
Average hours worked per week	20.4	19.6	21.0	17.5	20.2	22.8

Table 3 displays the results of U of R respondents who reported working in their current term and were asked to self-report how their employment impacted their academic performance on a scale ranging from “very positive” to “very negative”.

- ▶ U of R respondents were more likely to say their employment had a negative (44%) impact than a positive (16%) impact on their academic performance, although 40% said their work had no impact. These results are largely similar to that of students nationally (41%) and at comparable universities (42%).
- ▶ There was an increase in the percentage of U of R students saying their employment had either a somewhat negative or very negative impact (44%) over the 2015 survey of graduating students (37%).

Table 3: Impact of employment on academic performance	National	Comparable universities	University of Regina			
	2021 (n=15,334)	2021 (n=6,240)	2021 (n=445)	2018 (n=372)	2015 (n=461)	2012 (n=430)
Very positive	6%	6%	6%	10%	9%	14%
Somewhat positive	15%	15%	10%	18%	12%	20%
No impact	38%	38%	40%	35%	33%	32%
Somewhat negative	38%	39%	42%	35%	42%	32%
Very negative	3%	3%	2%	2%	3%	2%

About CUSC

The 2021 CUSC survey is the 27th cooperative study undertaken by the *Canadian University Survey Consortium / Consortium canadien de recherche sur les étudiants universitaires* (CUSC/CCREU) and the 22nd 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 2021 survey was directed to graduating students; this report compares results to the previous surveys conducted in 2018, 2015, and 2012. The 2021 survey involved 32 participating universities and over 15,000 students from across Canada, yielding an overall response rate of 29.5%. Participating students from the University of Regina numbered 445, which represents a 44.5% 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 2021, ten Group 2 universities participated in the survey. Along with the University of Regina, they included Brock, Carleton, Lakehead, Ryerson, Simon Fraser, Thompson Rivers, New Brunswick (Fredericton), 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.

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