

Students' employment plans

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 final report examines students' career planning, including work and learning program experiences, which is only asked to graduating students. It also reports on how well students know their career options, the steps they have taken to prepare for employment, and the types of jobs students have arranged for after graduation.

Work and learning program experience

Over 65% of University of Regina respondents said they have been involved in some type of work and learning program experience. As it has been observed in past years, this proportion is higher than reported by students nationally (50%) and at comparable institutions (55%).

- ▶ U of R respondents were more likely to report *practicum* and *unpaid internships* (35% and 16% respectively), compared to students nationally (13% and 6% respectively) and at comparable universities (12% and 8% respectively).
- ▶ U of R students reported participating in *service learning* (community service or volunteer activities recognized by the university) at a similar proportion (11%) to their peers nationally (11%) and at comparable universities (12%).
- ▶ Students nationally (14%) and at comparable universities (19%) were more likely to say they had the opportunity to participate in a *Co-op* program than students at the University of Regina (11%).

Perhaps as an effect of the pandemic, the proportion of U of R graduating students who reported being involved in work and learning experiences dropped from 73% in 2018 and 72% in 2015. A similar situation can be observed nationally, where the proportion fell from 56% in 2018 and 55% in 2015. At comparable universities, the percentage dropped from 61% in 2018 and 59% in 2015.

Table 1 on next page shows the learning program experiences in which students participated:

Table 1: Working and learning program experiences	National	Comparable universities	University of Regina		
	2021 (n=15,334)	2021 (n=6,240)	2021 (n=445)	2018 (n=372)	2015 (n=461)
Any experience	50%	55%	66%	73%	72%
- Work experience	16%	17%	10%	7%	9%
- Co-op	14%	19%	11%	11%	13%
- Practicum	13%	12%	35%	36%	25%
- Service learning	11%	12%	11%	13%	20%
- Internship (paid)	11%	8%	3%	4%	4%
- Internship (unpaid)	6%	8%	16%	25%	25%

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

Students' career planning

Over 7 in 10 graduating student respondents from the University of Regina reported having some career prospects in mind. Almost 7 in 10 also said they know their career options at least *fairly well*.

- ▶ 40% of University of Regina respondents (reported that they have a *specific career in mind*, a higher proportion than found nationally (34%) or at comparable institutions (32%).
- ▶ U of R students reported to know their career options at least *fairly well* at a slightly lower proportion (68%) than their peers nationally (69%) and at comparable universities (70%).
- ▶ University of Regina students who participated in some form of **work and learning program experience** were much more likely than students who did not to report that they *know their career options* at least fairly well.

Results on students' career plans are shown in Table 2:

Table 2: Career plans	National	Comparable universities	University of Regina		
	2021 (n=15,334)	2021 (n=6,240)	2021 (n=445)	2018 (n=372)	2015 (n=461)
Description of career plans					
I have a specific career in mind	34%	32%	40%	48%	52%
I have several possible careers in mind	36%	37%	35%	34%	30%
I have some general ideas but I need to clarify them	21%	22%	16%	15%	17%
I am unsure, but I want to develop a career plan	8%	8%	7%	3%	N/A
I am not thinking about a career at this stage of my studies	1%	1%	2%	<1%	<1%
How well students know career options					
Very well	21%	20%	21%	28%	35%
Fairly well	48%	50%	47%	51%	41%
Only a little	27%	26%	27%	19%	22%
Not at all	4%	4%	5%	3%	2%

Steps taken to prepare for employment or career after graduation

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* as well as *created resume/curriculum vitae*. Examining steps students have taken to prepare for employment shows the following:

- ▶ Almost 8 in 10 University of Regina students have most commonly *talked with friends* or with *parents/family* about their employment or career after graduation.
- ▶ University of Regina students (32%) were slightly less likely to have *attended an employment fair* than students nationally (33%) and at comparable universities (34%). U of R respondents were also less likely to have *created a resume/curriculum vitae*, to have *talked with professors about employment/career*, to have *met with a career counselor*, or to have *a career mentor*.
- ▶ U of R students were more likely (51%) to have *worked in chosen field of employment* than their peers nationally (43%) and at comparable universities (45%). They were also more likely (36%) to have *volunteered in chosen field of employment* than students nationally (29%) and at comparable universities (30%).

Table 3: Steps taken to prepare for employment or career after graduation	National 2021 (n=15,334)	Comparable universities 2021 (n=6,240)	University of Regina		
			2021 (n=445)	2018 (n=372)	2015 (n=461)
Talked with friends about employment/career	77%	78%	78%	82%	80%
Created resume/curriculum vitae	76%	77%	69%	80%	78%
Talked with parents/family about employment/career	75%	75%	78%	80%	80%
Talked with professors about employment/career	44%	43%	40%	53%	60%
Worked in chosen field of employment	43%	45%	51%	59%	56%
Attended an employment fair	33%	34%	32%	44%	57%
Volunteered in chosen field of employment	29%	30%	36%	44%	37%
Met with a career counsellor	21%	22%	16%	17%	19%
I have a career mentor	9%	9%	7%	10%	10%
None	4%	4%	2%	2%	1%

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

Profile of arranged employment post-graduation

Among University of Regina graduating students, 29% said that, at the time of the survey in the spring, they had a job arranged for after graduation. This proportion is slightly lower than that reported by students nationally (31%) and at comparable universities (30%).

University of Regina students who have arranged for employment after graduation were slightly less likely (55%) than students nationally (56%) and slightly more likely than at comparable universities (54%) to report that their job *required a degree*. This included 41% of University of Regina students who reported that it required their *specific degree*, a proportion higher than students nationally (37%) and at comparable institutions (36%).

When asked if their arranged job was at least moderately related to the skills and knowledge they acquired in university, 65% of University of Regina students agreed with the statement. This compares to also 65% nationally and 63% at comparable institutions. University of Regina respondents were less likely to report that skills and knowledge learned (40%) were *strongly* related to their job than students nationally (43%) or at comparable institutions (41%).

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

Table 4: Profile of post-graduation employment	National	Comparable	University of Regina		
	2021 (n=15,334)	2021 (n=6,240)	2021 (n=445)	2018 (n=372)	2015 (n=461)
Have employment arranged					
Yes	31%	30%	29%	27%	28%
No, looking for work	60%	62%	64%	67%	64%
No, not looking for work	9%	8%	7%	6%	8%
Degree requirements*					
Requires specific degree	37%	36%	41%	48%	49%
Requires any degree	19%	18%	14%	11%	12%
Degrees help, but not required	24%	24%	23%	22%	21%
Does not require degree	21%	22%	22%	20%	18%
Relations to skills and knowledge learned*					
Strongly	43%	41%	40%	50%	51%
Moderately	22%	22%	25%	26%	18%
Slightly	17%	17%	15%	12%	17%
Not at all	18%	19%	18%	11%	14%
Not sure	1%	1%	2%	<1%	N/A

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

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.