

EXECUTIVE REPORT

This report provides an executive summary of University of Waterloo findings in the Canadian University Survey Consortium (CUSC) 2018 Graduating Student Survey of undergraduate students. A sample of 744 students from University of Waterloo participated in the survey.

This report highlights key findings and provides a comparison of University of Waterloo students against students at all 32 participating universities (n = 14,760) and those attending nine comparable universities (n = 6,238). All percentages reported on are based on those students who could provide a rating.

PROFILE OF GRADUATING STUDENTS

Demographic Profile

University of Waterloo students tend to be younger than graduates at other universities and more likely to self-identify as a member of a visible minority.

The typical University of Waterloo graduating student is a 22-year old, female (56%) and a Canadian citizen (83%). This profile is similar to the profile of students nationally and at comparable universities, although Waterloo students tend to be a bit younger and less likely to be female.

About 68% of University of Waterloo students self-identify as a member of a visible minority group, which is much higher than reported by students nationally (40%) and at comparable institutions (46%). In addition, 1% of Waterloo students self-identify as Aboriginal and 15% indicate they have a disability.

TABLE 1: Demographic profile

	All Universities (n = 14,760)	Comparable Universities (n = 6,238)	University of Waterloo (n = 744)
Female	66%	63%	56%
Average age	23.4 years	23.1 years	22.0 years
Canadian	87%	86%	83%
Visible minority	40%	46%	68%
Aboriginal	3%	3%	1%
Disability	22%	21%	15%

Despite being younger, a higher proportion of students at University of Waterloo (74%) rent accommodations off campus compared to students nationally (53%) and students at comparable universities (56%).

University of Waterloo (41%) students are more likely to report walking to campus relative to students nationally (20%) and at comparable universities (22%).

Academic Profile

Compared to other students, University of Waterloo students are more likely to be studying full time and are less likely to have experienced interruptions or delays in completing their degrees.

The typical graduating student at University of Waterloo is studying full-time (96%), has not interrupted their studies (83%), did not transfer from another institution (93%), and did not experience delays in completing their program (72%). Compared to students elsewhere, Waterloo students are more likely to be studying full-time and less likely to have transferred from other institutions or to have experienced delays in completing their program. These differences likely contribute to Waterloo students' younger age at graduation.

About 43% of University of Waterloo students have a grade of A- or higher, which is slightly higher compared to students nationally (35%) and at comparable universities (34%).

TABLE 2: Academic profile

	All Universities (n = 14,760)	Comparable Universities (n = 6,238)	University of Waterloo (n = 744)
Studying full-time	84%	81%	96%
Work experience	56%	61%	80%
Delays in completing program	37%	34%	28%
Grade of A- or higher	35%	34%	43%
Interrupted studies	21%	20%	17%
Transferred from another institution	17%	17%	7%

STUDY PATTERNS

University of Waterloo students spend more hours studying per week compared to students at other institutions. They spend about two hours more per week in class (likely explained by the higher proportion studying full-time), but spend about 3 to 4 more hours per week studying outside of class relative to other students (or about a 20% increase in hours studying). The additional hours studying may account for some of the higher grades Waterloo students reported.

TABLE 3: Study patterns

	All Universities (n = 14,760)	Comparable Universities (n = 6,238)	University of Waterloo (n = 744)
Spent in class	14.4 hours	14.6 hours	16.2 hours
Spent on work outside of class	18.1 hours	18.7 hours	22.1 hours
Total	32.4 hours	33.4 hours	38.3 hours

STUDENT STANDING: EMPLOYMENT, DEBT, AND FINANCING

Current employment

University of Waterloo students are less likely to be employed than students elsewhere.

At University of Waterloo, 33% of graduating students are employed during their final year. This is lower than students nationally (60%) and at comparable universities (56%).

Not only are University of Waterloo students less likely to be employed, those who work also work about four fewer hours a week compared to students at other universities (about 20% fewer hours per week).

TABLE 4: Current employment

	All Universities (n = 14,760)	Comparable Universities (n = 6,238)	University of Waterloo (n = 744)
Currently employed	60%	56%	33%
Average hours worked*	17.8 hours	17.5 hours	13.6 hours

* Among those working.

Student debt

University of Waterloo students report about \$14,000 of debt per student upon graduation.

About 53% of graduating University of Waterloo students report having some type of debt related to their education, which is on par with students nationally (50%) and at comparable universities (51%). This results in an average debt load of \$13,607 per student, although the average debt load for those who incurred any debt is about double that amount.

TABLE 5: Education-related debt

	All Universities (n = 14,760)	Comparable Universities (n = 6,238)	University of Waterloo (n = 744)
Any debt	50%	51%	53%
Student loan debt	43%	46%	50%
Total debt (all students)	\$13,925	\$14,413	\$13,607
Total debt (those with debt)	\$27,929	\$28,404	\$25,726

Financing current year of studies

University of Waterloo students require more to finance their current year, with more accessing funds from work experience program.

On average, University of Waterloo students require \$19,561 to finance their current year of studies, which is more than at comparable universities (\$17,838) and nationally (\$17,135). This difference may be explained by the fact that Waterloo students are more likely to be living in rented accommodations.

Part of the reason Waterloo students debt loads are not substantially higher than students elsewhere, is significantly more rely on financing from work experience programs.

TABLE 6: Financing current year

	All Universities (n = 14,760)	Comparable Universities (n = 6,238)	University of Waterloo (n = 744)
Total financing for current year	\$17,135	\$17,838	\$19,561
% using parents and family	56%	56%	53%
% using government loans	48%	52%	58%
% using current employment	47%	44%	26%
% using work experience related to program	11%	16%	48%

STUDENTS' SATISFACTION WITH FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Students were asked to rate their satisfaction with 26 different facilities and services that they used. Among services used by at least half of University of Waterloo graduating students, Waterloo students report similar satisfaction as students nationally and students at comparable universities.

Although differences in satisfaction are small, use of services is quite different, with only one noticeable difference - Waterloo students (21%) are more likely to have used *co-op offices and supports* relative to students nationally (9%) and at comparable universities (11%).

INTERACTIONS WITH PROFESSORS

Among 15 aspects of interactions with faculty, University of Waterloo students generally hold similar perceptions of faculty relative to their counterparts at other universities for aspects they rate most positive; however, at the lower end, Waterloo students tend to be slightly less positive about their experiences with professors.

TABLE 7: *Perceptions of professors*

	All Universities (n = 14,760)	Comparable Universities (n = 6,238)	University of Waterloo (n = 744)
Top 3			
Knowledgeable in their field	96%	96%	97%
Treat same by gender	94%	94%	95%
Treat same by race	94%	93%	94%
Bottom 3			
Provide useful feedback	73%	73%	64%
Provide prompt feedback	67%	68%	61%
Take personal interest in progress	65%	64%	60%

STUDENT SATISFACTION: KEY OUTCOME MEASURES

University of Waterloo students are satisfied with their decision to attend the university, but may not be actively promoting their experiences to others.

Students are, in general, very positive about their educational experiences at University of Waterloo, although not any more or less so than students nationally or at comparable universities. In turn, this results in 87% being satisfied with their decision to attend this university; however, the Net Promoter Score is -1 with 28% promoters (rating of 9 or 10 out of 10) minus 29% detractors (0 to 6 out of 10). Although not exceptionally high, it is on par with results nationally (+1) and at comparable universities (-2).

TABLE 8: *University outcomes*

	All Universities (n = 14,760)	Comparable Universities (n = 6,238)	University of Waterloo (n = 744)
Satisfied with decision to attend this university	87%	87%	87%
Satisfied with overall quality of education	85%	84%	86%
Agree that they feel they belong	77%	77%	75%
Agree that they receive good value for money	66%	64%	64%
Satisfied with concern shown for student as individual	59%	57%	42%
University exceeded expectations	22%	22%	21%
Net Promoter Score	+1	-2	-1

STUDENT GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT WHILE AT UNIVERSITY

University of Waterloo students rate 'thinking logically and analytically' as the most important area for growth and development while at university.

These sections highlight areas where University of Waterloo is performing better or worse by $\pm 10\%$ compared to students at comparable universities.

Communication skills

Among four communication skills tested, University of Waterloo students rated three much lower than students at comparable universities. These included *writing clearly and correctly* (45% versus 61%), *speaking to small groups* (47% versus 58%), and *speaking to a class or audience* (39% versus 51%).

Analytical and learning skills

Among eight analytical and learning skills, University of Waterloo students rated the contribution of their university similarly to students at comparable universities, with the exception of *mathematical skills* (45% versus 32%), which Waterloo students rated higher.

Work skills

Of the seven skills classified as work skills, University of Waterloo students provided similar ratings to students elsewhere, being most likely to say the university contributed to *working independently* (73%) and least to *entrepreneurial skills* (22%).

Life skills

Of the ten areas classified as life skills, University of Waterloo students provided similar ratings to students at other universities, with the exception of *moral or ethical judgement* (34% versus 48%), which Waterloo students rated lower than those at comparable universities.

Most important areas for contribution

Among all areas, students were asked to rank the top three areas in terms of which are most important for universities to contribute towards. Among University of Waterloo students and students at other universities, they say it is most important for universities to contribute towards *thinking logically and analytically*. Generally, results for this question were similar among University of Waterloo students and students across Canada.

TABLE 9: Most important areas for contribution

	All Universities (n = 14,760)	Comparable Universities (n = 6,238)	University of Waterloo (n = 744)
Thinking logically and analytically	36%	38%	43%
Skills and knowledge for employment	25%	25%	25%
Dealing successfully with obstacles to achieve an objective	21%	22%	25%

EDUCATIONAL GOALS

University of Waterloo students are just as likely as students nationally to expect to take additional schooling after graduating.

University of Waterloo students are as likely to expect to apply to graduate school or professional school after graduating as students attending comparable universities and nationally.

A smaller percentage expect to take additional schooling from Waterloo again, either graduate school (14%), professional school (4%), or additional undergraduate studies (3%), which is on par with results elsewhere.

TABLE 10: Post-graduation education plans

	All Universities (n = 14,760)	Comparable Universities (n = 6,238)	University of Waterloo (n = 744)
Apply to graduate school	37%	36%	38%
Apply to professional program	21%	19%	18%
Graduate school at current university	15%	15%	14%
Professional school at current university	6%	4%	4%
Further undergraduate studies at current university	5%	4%	3%

POST-GRADUATION EMPLOYMENT

University of Waterloo students with employment lined up for post-graduation report higher expected earnings compared to students elsewhere.

Overall, 27% of University of Waterloo students say they have arranged for employment after graduation, which is lower than students nationally (34%) and at comparable universities (33%).

Among those with employment arranged, University of Waterloo students were less likely to be working in Canada, more likely to be working in a full-time position, and more likely to be in a permanent position compared to students nationally and at comparable universities.

In addition, Waterloo students report significantly higher income, over \$6,000 per month (median) compared to \$4,000 per month for students elsewhere.

TABLE 11: Post-graduation employment

	All Universities	Comparable Universities	University of Waterloo
Job in Canada	96%	93%	76%
Satisfied with employment	85%	87%	92%
Full-time	69%	71%	88%
Moderately or strongly related to skills	63%	65%	71%
Permanent	58%	59%	68%
New job	30%	30%	24%
Self-employed	4%	4%	2%
Median monthly income	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$6,125

BASE: Those with employment arranged after graduation.