



# CANADIAN UNDERGRADUATE SURVEY CONSORTIUM

## 2009 RESULTS SUMMARY

Office of Institutional Research & Analysis

[www.uoit.ca/oira](http://www.uoit.ca/oira)

September 2009

## **BACKGROUND**

The Canadian University Survey Consortium (CUSC) coordinates a set of undergraduate satisfaction surveys across Canada based on a three year cycle. The three surveys include graduating students, first-year students and all undergraduates.

In 2009, 34 institutions across Canada participated in the Graduating Student Survey. The survey asks students, in their graduating year, about their level of satisfaction with various aspects of the university experience including university activities, the university's contribution to skill development and plans for future education and employment.

CUSC provides data for specific comparison groups including primarily undergraduate studies and smaller student populations (Group 1), undergraduate and graduate studies and medium student populations (Group 2) and undergraduate, graduate and professional schools and the largest student populations (Group 3). Data is also provided for all 34 institutions that participated in 2009, totalling over 12,000 students (All Students).

The following report provides an overview of UOIT's results with some results from Group 1 and from All Students.

## **RESPONDENTS**

### **Response Rate**

In the spring of 2009, students were e-mailed a survey invitation. A sample of 1,000 students who were in their graduating year was contacted. Of that, 454 students completed the survey for a response rate of 45.4%. The average response rate for participating universities in 2009 was 44.6%.

### **Characteristics**

Table 1 reflects the characteristics of the survey respondents. Although the majority of respondents that completed the survey at all other institutions were female (67%), UOIT had more males respond (56%) than females (44%). This is not entirely surprising as males outnumber females by a similar margin in the overall UOIT population.

The average age of the UOIT respondent was lower than the average for comparable institutions and for all students. This is a trend that has continued since UOIT's first year (2003), which was also the first year for the double-cohort.

One of the most significant findings in the survey was the amount of UOIT respondents that self-identified themselves as a 'visible minority'. Almost half the graduating students that responded (45%) made this indication, which was almost three times the amount found in similarly sized schools (17%) and more than double the rate found with all students (22%).

**Table 1: Personal Profile**

	UOIT (2007)	UOIT (2009)	Group 1 (2009)	All Students (2009)
Female	55%	44%	68%	67%
Male	32%	56%	32%	33%
Average Age	22.5	22.9	23.6	23.7
Self-Identified Disability	6%	6%	8%	7%
Self-Identified Visible Minority	22%	45%	17%	22%
Self-Identified Aboriginal	1%	2%	4%	3%

Table 2 looks at the living arrangements of graduating students. Over half of the UOIT students that responded to the survey (55%) live with their parents, guardians or relatives. That's double the rate for peer institutions (28%), and significantly higher than the rate for all students (35%).

**Table 2: Living Arrangements**

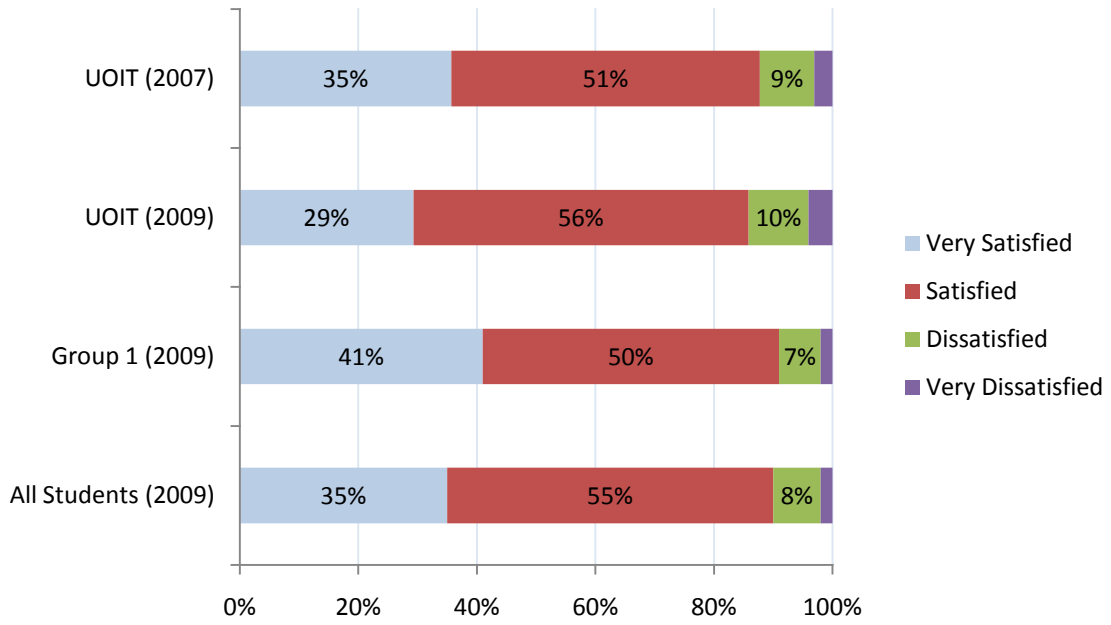
	UOIT (2007)	UOIT (2009)	Group 1 (2009)	All Students (2009)
Rented home/apartment/room	30%	34%	54%	49%
With parents, guardians, or rel.	58%	55%	28%	35%
Personally owned home	6%	5%	9%	9%
On-campus residence	2%	5%	7%	5%
Other	1%	1%	2%	2%

## STUDENT SATISFACTION

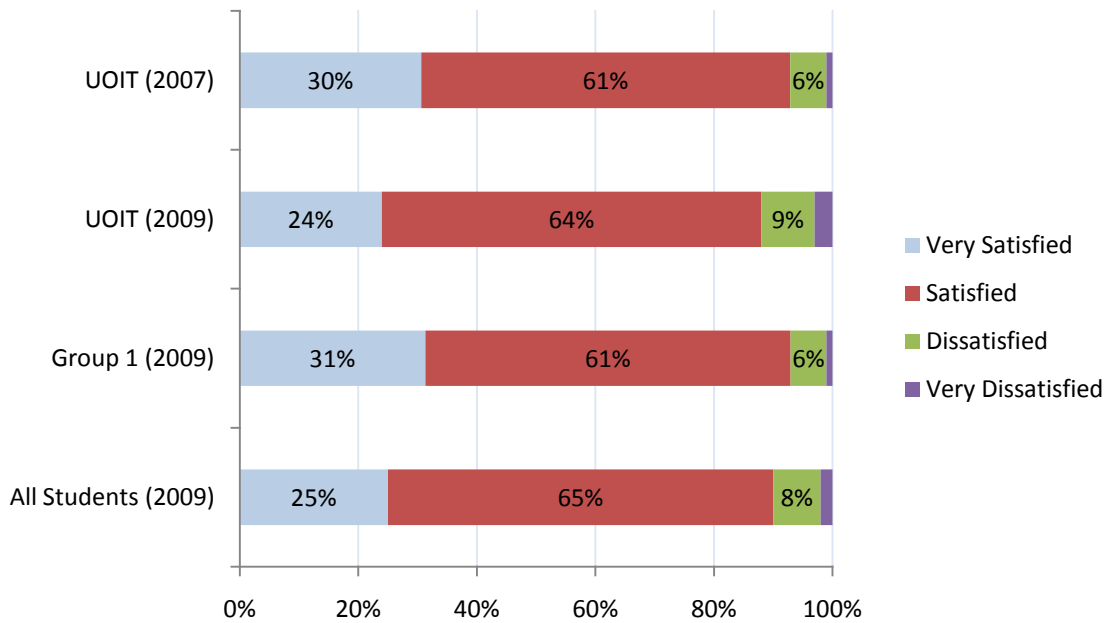
### With the University

The CUSC survey contains a number of questions pertaining to overall student satisfaction with the university. The following charts look at the different levels of satisfaction UOIT respondents had when asked about their satisfaction with the decision to attend UOIT (Figure 1), and the overall quality of education (Figure 2). In both questions, the rate that UOIT respondents reported that they were 'very satisfied' was slightly less than the rate for all students, and significantly less than the measure for respondents at comparable schools.

**Figure 1: Satisfaction with decision to attend this university**



**Figure 2: Satisfaction with overall quality of education**



## With Facilities and Services

A couple of questions were asked about student satisfaction with the different types of facilities and services. Table 3 shows student satisfaction with general facilities and services. With regard to campus medical services and athletic facilities, UOIT respondents were significantly more 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' than small size universities and all students. With the opening of the new Campus Recreation Centre on campus a few years ago, this is an encouraging result. However, UOIT graduating students were much less satisfied with UOIT's computing services. The measure for UOIT respondents that indicated that they were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' (75%) was outperformed by the measure for both peer institutions (86%) and all students (89%).

**Table 3: Satisfaction with general facilities and services (%very satisfied/satisfied)**

	UOIT (2007)	UOIT (2009)	Group 1 (2009)	All Students (2009)
Library Facilities	89%	87%	87%	90%
Computing Services	90%	75%	86%	89%
Campus Medical Services	89%	94%	85%	87%
Athletic Facilities	66%	95%	85%	86%
Campus Bookstores	80%	77%	77%	79%
University Residences	n/a	82%	80%	79%

Students were also asked about their satisfaction with special services (Table 4). 67% of UOIT respondents indicated that they were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with international student services. This measure was notably lower than the rate for comparable schools (81%) and all students (81%). Although UOIT does not have a large population of aboriginal students, those that used the services for First Nations students at UOIT were less satisfied than those at other small schools.

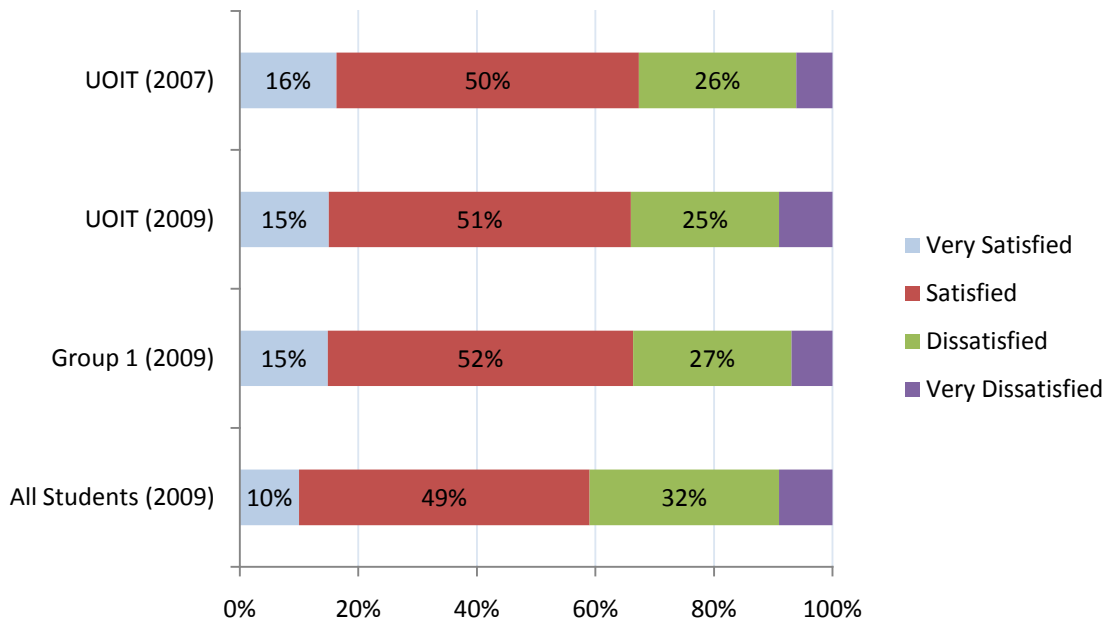
**Table 4: Satisfaction with special services (%very satisfied/satisfied)**

	UOIT (2007)	UOIT (2009)	Group 1 (2009)	All Students (2009)
Study Skills/Learning Services	84%	89%	88%	86%
Employment Services	79%	81%	82%	83%
Services for Co-op, Internship	91%	86%	85%	83%
Financial Aid Services	84%	82%	83%	81%
International Student Services	58%	67%	81%	81%
Personal Counselling Services	82%	80%	79%	77%
Academic Advising	79%	74%	78%	77%
Services for Students with Disabilities	80%	75%	76%	76%
Career Counselling Services	82%	77%	75%	75%
First Nations Student Services	57%	58%	67%	66%

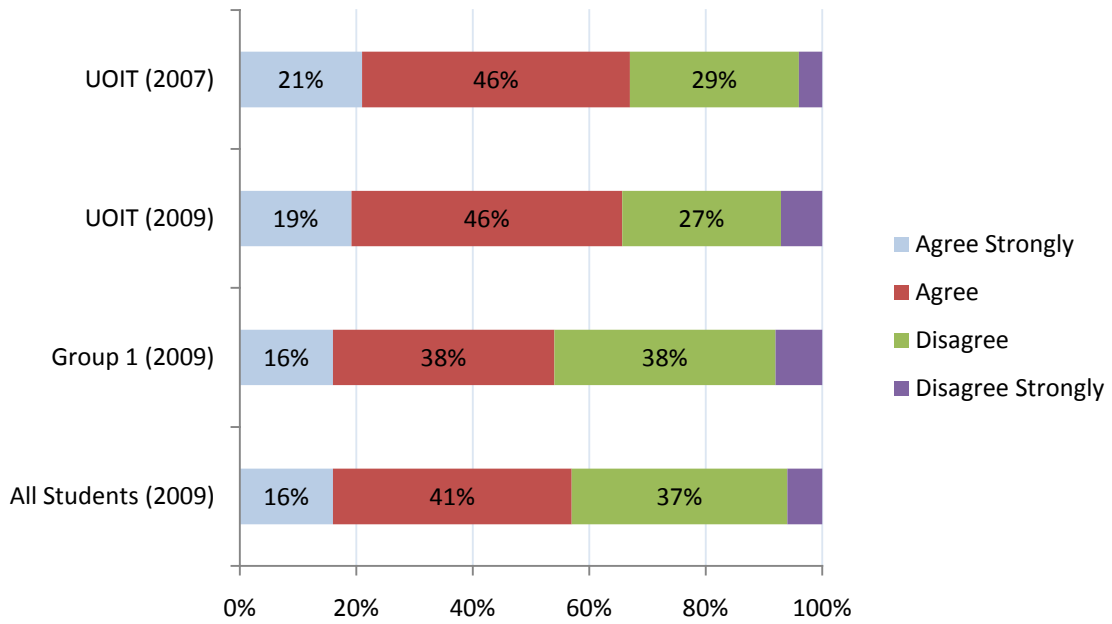
**SENSE OF CARE AND BELONGING**

The CUSC survey also provided an opportunity for students to express the degree to which they felt the university cared for them or created a sense of belonging. Figure 3 illustrates that 66% of UOIT respondents were ‘very satisfied’ or ‘satisfied’ with the concern shown by the university for them as an individual. This measure was almost identical to the mark for small schools (67%) and higher than the mark for all students (59%). However, 65% of UOIT graduating students ‘strongly agreed’ or ‘agreed’ with the statement: *I sometimes feel like I get the run-around at this university* (Figure 4). This was significantly higher than the measures for comparable institutions (54%) and all students (57%). When asked if they felt a part of their university (Figure 5), 78% of UOIT respondents ‘agreed strongly’ or ‘agreed’; which was in line with the 79% that responded similarly in the peer group and higher than the 74% mark for all students.

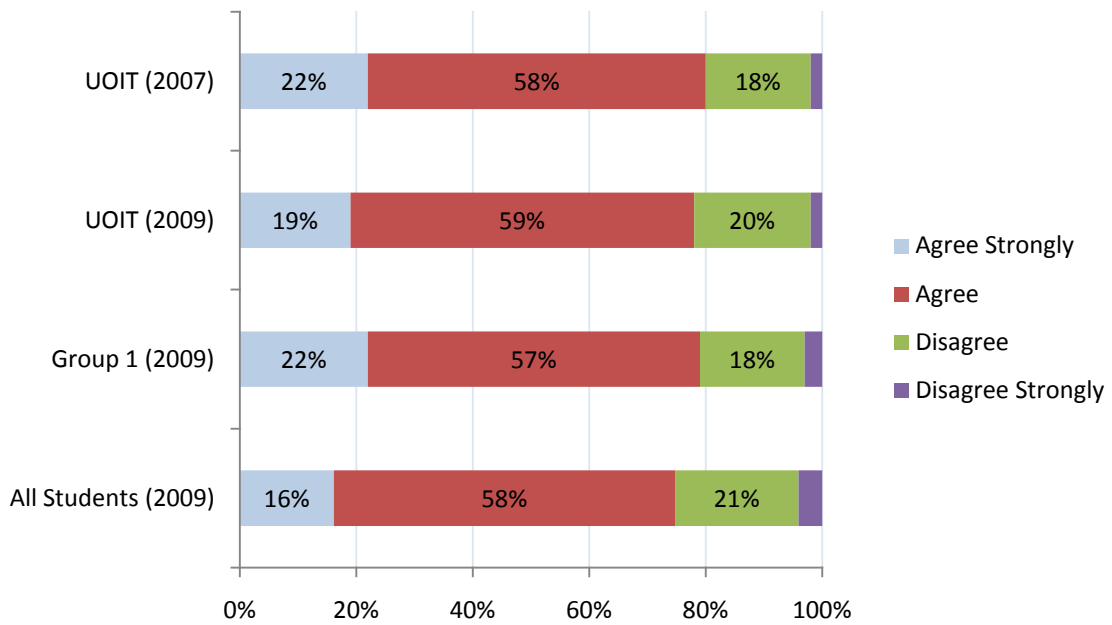
**Figure 3: Satisfaction with concern shown by university for students as individuals**



**Figure 4: I sometimes feel I get the run-around at this university**



**Figure 5: I feel as if I am a part of this university**



## RECOMMENDING THE UNIVERSITY

### Reasons *for* Recommending the University

Students were asked if they would recommend their university to others. Of those that indicated they would recommend their institution, a number of reasons were provided (Table 15). 81% of respondents reported that the program was a reason for recommendation. That mark was significantly higher than the rates for small schools (72%) and all students (73%). Along with that, almost half of those responding (47%) noted that they would recommend the university due to the relevance of the program to job opportunities. This measure topped the marks for both comparable small institutions (32%) and all students (34%).

**Table 15: Reasons for recommending the university**

	UOIT (2007)	UOIT (2009)	Group 1 (2009)	All Students (2009)
The Program	87%	81%	72%	73%
The Professors	82%	81%	81%	72%
Quality of Student/Campus Life	33%	32%	49%	44%
Relevance of Program to Growth	39%	42%	37%	36%
Relevance of Program to Job Ops	51%	47%	32%	34%
Student Services	22%	31%	26%	24%
Other	8%	6%	10%	9%

### Reasons *for Not* Recommending the University

Of those that indicated they would *not* recommend their institution, a number of reasons were also provided (Table 16). Of those that wouldn't recommend the university to others, almost half (47%) of the UOIT respondents noted it was due to student services. The similar mark for small schools (39%) and all students (35%) was not as high. 35% of UOIT graduating students indicated that there was an 'other' reason for not recommending the university. Again, this mark was significantly greater than those for like-sized schools (24%) and all students (23%).

**Table 16: Reasons for not recommending the university**

	UOIT (2007)	UOIT (2009)	Group 1 (2009)	All Students (2009)
The Program	48%	45%	47%	47%
The Professors	45%	35%	40%	43%
Quality of Student/Campus Life	38%	25%	38%	39%
Relevance of Program to Job Ops	29%	37%	32%	32%
Relevance of Program to Growth	24%	27%	23%	24%
Student Services	31%	47%	39%	35%
Other	40%	35%	24%	23%



## ACTIVITIES

Students were asked a number of questions around various university activities and specifically to rate how much they contributed to personal growth and development.

### In-Class Activities

Students were asked about several in-class activities. Table 5 shows that over one-third of UOIT respondents (36%) felt that online instruction 'very much' contributed to personal growth and development. That number was more than double the measure for small schools (17%) and all students (15%). When asked about interactions with teaching assistants and laboratory experiences, UOIT respondents again felt significantly stronger about the contributions of these in-class activities to their personal growth and development than both peer institutions and all students.

**Table 5: In-class activities: contributed 'very much' to personal growth and development**

	UOIT (2007)	UOIT (2009)	Group 1 (2009)	All Students (2009)
Classroom Instruction	63%	61%	64%	60%
Participation in Classroom Discussions	37%	39%	49%	44%
Laboratory Experiences	46%	46%	36%	35%
Interaction with Teaching Assistants	24%	33%	20%	19%
Online Instruction	55%	36%	17%	15%

### Academic Activities

When asked about academic activities, 36% of UOIT respondents indicated that examinations 'very much' contributed to their personal growth and development (Table 6). This measure outperformed the rate for similar sized schools (26%) and all students (24%). Also, 22% of UOIT graduating students felt that recommend reading 'very much' contributed to personal growth and development.

**Table 6: Academic activities: contributed 'very much' to personal growth and development**

	UOIT (2007)	UOIT (2009)	Group 1 (2009)	All Students (2009)
Co-op, Internship, Experience	58%	56%	57%	58%
Written Assignments and Essays	53%	47%	53%	51%
Thesis, Self-Directed Study	53%	51%	51%	48%
Required Reading	46%	38%	40%	38%
Use of Library Resources	35%	32%	38%	37%
Examinations	37%	36%	26%	24%
Recommended Reading	22%	22%	17%	14%

## On-Campus Activities

Students were also asked about their other on-campus activities. 62% of UOIT respondents indicated that being a teaching assistant 'very much' contributed to their personal growth and development. This rate was higher than that of peer schools (57%) and all students (55%). The percentage of UOIT respondents that felt that attending campus lectures 'very much' contributed to their personal growth and development (39%) was also notably than the mark for the peer group (30%) and all students (28%).

**Table 7: On-campus activities: contributed 'very much' to personal growth and development**

	UOIT (2007)	UOIT (2009)	Group 1 (2009)	All Students (2009)
Being a Teaching Assistant	78%	62%	57%	55%
Living on Campus	57%	51%	52%	52%
Having other On-Campus Employment	56%	55%	44%	43%
Participating in recreation/sport	25%	28%	31%	29%
Attending Campus Lectures	34%	39%	30%	28%
Attending Campus Social Events	19%	22%	25%	22%
Attending Campus Cultural Events	12%	22%	23%	20%
Attending Athletic Home Games	17%	13%	17%	16%

## EDUCATION FINANCING AND DEBT

The CUSC survey asks students to report on how they are financing their education, as well as to describe their accumulated debt load. Table 8 reveals that over half of UOIT respondents (51%) are carrying a total debt load of \$20,000 or more. That is well above the totals for small schools (42%) and all students (35%). Even more telling is the median debt load of UOIT graduating students. At \$20,000, it is almost double the amount for peer school students (\$12,000) and more than three times the amount for all students (\$6,500). The higher debt load carried by UOIT students is something that has been noted in the past. A possible explanation, also considered previously, for such a dramatic difference might be the additional cost of the mobile learning program.

**Table 8: Accumulated debt**

	UOIT (2007)	UOIT (2009)	Group 1 (2009)	All Students (2009)
No debt	33%	31%	36%	42%
Less than \$4,000	4%	3%	4%	4%
\$4,000-\$7,999	4%	4%	5%	6%
\$8,000-\$11,999	6%	3%	5%	6%
\$12,000-\$19,999	4%	8%	8%	8%
\$20,000 or more	45%	51%	42%	35%
Average	\$18,538	\$20,941	\$18,114	\$15,466
Median	\$13,000	\$20,000	\$12,000	\$6,500

Students were asked to identify the various sources used to finance their education (Table 9). Half of UOIT respondents (49%) indicated that government loans or bursaries were a source of financing. That measure is significantly more than the mark for like-sized institutions (42%) and all students (36%). Conversely, most other sources reported by UOIT respondents were lower than the other peer groups. Most notable was the rate for scholarships/awards/bursaries (30%). This rate was well below the indicator for both other comparison groups.

**Table 9: Sources of financing education**

	UOIT (2007)	UOIT (2009)	Group 1 (2009)	All Students (2009)
Parents/Family/Spouse	62%	44%	48%	50%
Earnings from Summer Work	59%	40%	47%	41%
Scholarship/Financial Award/Bursary	31%	30%	42%	37%
Government Loan/Bursary	38%	49%	42%	36%
Earnings from Current Employment	40%	29%	36%	35%
Personal Savings	59%	28%	32%	30%
Loan from Financial Institution	22%	15%	15%	12%
RESP	9%	8%	6%	7%
Co-op Program/Work Term	7%	5%	3%	5%
Investment Income (bonds, dividends)	7%	2%	3%	3%
Work-study Program	10%	4%	3%	3%
Other	2%	<1%	3%	3%

## FUTURE EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

### Future Education

Students were asked a series of questions around their plans for future education and/or employment. In recognition of the debt load that many students carry, and the possible effects of it, the survey asked students to assess the impact of their repayable debt on any further education in the first year after graduation (Table 10). More than one-third of UOIT respondents (38%) felt that their repayable debt would have a 'great impact' on their future education in the first year after graduation. This was greater than the rate for small schools (31%) and all students (28%). Considering that most respondents' future education plans include graduate studies (Table 11), the impact of debt on educational path warrants further attention. In fact, the desire for future graduate studies by UOIT respondents (71%) is significantly more than the rate for comparably sized institutions (61%) and all students (62%).

**Table 10: Impact of repayable debt on further education in first year after graduation**

	UOIT (2007)*	UOIT (2009)	Group 1 (2009)	All Students (2009)
Great Impact	n/a	38%	31%	28%
Some Impact	n/a	34%	29%	28%
No Impact	n/a	29%	39%	44%

*\*This question was not asked on the CUSC 2007 survey.*

**Table 11: Future education plans**

	UOIT (2007)*	UOIT (2009)	Group 1 (2009)	All Students (2009)
None	n/a	21%	16%	18%
Graduate School	n/a	71%	61%	62%
Professional School (e.g. Law, Med)	n/a	20%	22%	21%
Further Undergraduate Studies	n/a	18%	23%	21%
Technical/Vocational School	n/a	6%	6%	6%
Other Education	n/a	20%	26%	24%

*\*This question was asked differently on the CUSC 2007 survey.*

### Future Employment

Preparedness for employment was also explored by the survey as students were asked about the steps taken to prepare for employment/career after graduation (Table 12). 84% of UOIT graduating students reported that they had created a resume/CV, compared to 75% of the peer group and 77% of all students. A large number of UOIT respondents had attended an employment fair (64%). This measure was considerably higher than the rate for small institutions (46%) and all students (48%).

**Table 12: Steps taken to prepare for employment/career after graduation**

	UOIT (2007)*	UOIT (2009)	Group 1 (2009)	All Students (2009)
Created Resume or CV	n/a	84%	75%	77%
Chosen a Career Field or Occupation	n/a	64%	64%	63%
Talked with Professors about Career	n/a	62%	62%	56%
Worked in my Chosen Field	n/a	46%	48%	51%
Attended an Employment Fair	n/a	64%	46%	48%
Volunteered in my Chosen Field	n/a	29%	42%	39%
Met with a Career Counsellor	n/a	27%	22%	22%
Have a Career Mentor	n/a	9%	14%	15%
Created an E-portfolio	n/a	18%	13%	14%

*\*This question was asked differently on the CUSC 2007 survey.*

The survey also asked students about their future employment prospects (Table 13). About one-quarter of UOIT respondents (26%) noted that they had a job. This was lower than the measures for both small schools (30%) and all students (33%). As well, 63% of UOIT graduating students indicated they didn't have a job and were seeking work. This was significantly more than the rate for the peer group (52%) and all students (49%).

**Table 13: Future employment**

	UOIT (2007)	UOIT (2009)	Group 1 (2009)	All Students (2009)
Have a Job (net)	24%	26%	30%	33%
- Yes, a full-time job	16%	19%	20%	23%
- Yes, one part-time job	5%	6%	7%	7%
- Yes, two or more part-time jobs	3%	1%	2%	2%
- Yes, self-employment/contract work	<1%	2%	2%	3%
No, but I am seeking work	62%	63%	52%	49%
No, and I am not seeking work	10%	11%	18%	18%

Interestingly, although UOIT graduating students seemed to have a more difficult time finding work, it didn't affect their expectations on job earnings (Table 14). More than one-third of UOIT respondents (36%) anticipated yearly earnings over \$50,000. This far exceeded the rate for comparably sized universities (17%) and all students (21%).

**Table 14: Annual anticipated earnings**

	UOIT (2007)	UOIT (2009)	Group 1 (2009)	All Students (2009)
\$15,000 or less	10%	14%	16%	13%
\$15,001 to \$20,000	8%	7%	8%	7%

\$20,001 to \$25,000	3%	15%	15%	14%
\$25,001 to \$30,000	6%	6%	11%	10%
\$30,001 to \$35,000	3%	1%	4%	4%
\$35,001 to \$40,000	19%	9%	14%	14%
\$40,001 to \$45,000	15%	2%	6%	7%
\$45,001 to \$50,000	7%	10%	9%	10%
\$50,001 to \$60,000	21%	23%	11%	13%
Over \$60,000	1%	13%	6%	8%
Mean expected yearly income	\$37,893	\$39,598	\$34,028	\$36,561
Median yearly income	\$38,400	\$38,400	\$31,200	\$36,000

## OTHER FINDINGS

The CUSC survey contained a number of other questions, and responses, that are worth noting. Here is a brief summary:

- 58% of UOIT graduating students come from communities with populations over 100,000. Only 39% of students from comparably sized institutions came from similar community sizes. Although a smaller university, and similar in size to other Group 1 schools that pull from more rural areas, UOIT is clearly attracting students from larger communities.
- 15% of UOIT graduating students reported that their grades caused a delay in completing their program. Not only was this rate significantly higher than both other comparison groups, but it was also the most common reason given by UOIT students that reported a delay in the completion of their program.
- Of those that actually used UOIT's learning support services/study skills, 40% noted that it contributed 'very much' to personal growth and development. This rate was significantly higher than the rate for small schools and all students.
- 93% of UOIT students were 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied' with the university's commitment to environmental sustainability. Not only was the measure very strong, but it topped both peer groups (Group 1 & All Students). This is an encouraging finding to support the success of one of UOIT's core missions.
- 17% of UOIT respondents indicated that 'leadership skills' was the most important factor to a student's personal growth. Only 12% of like-sized schools and all students felt the same way.
- Only 9% of UOIT graduating students contacted an employer directly to find a job. This mark was less than half the amount (20%) for both peer groups.

UOIT plans to again participate in the CUSC survey for graduating students during the winter of 2012.