

2012 Canadian University Survey Consortium (CUSC): Graduating Undergraduates

Prepared by the Office of Institutional Research and Planning

October 2012

Introduction

Carleton University regularly participates in a number of surveys in order to better understand its students' needs and perceptions. In February 2012, Carleton was one of 37 institutions that participated in an undergraduate survey co-ordinated by the Canadian University Survey Consortium (CUSC)¹. This was Carleton's 14th year participating in a CUSC survey.

CUSC operates on a three-year survey cycle. Each year in the cycle a random sample is selected from a different group of undergraduates: either all undergraduates, graduating students or first-year students. In 2012, the survey focused on graduating students.

Methodology

An invitation to participate in this online survey was emailed to a random sample of 1,500 Carleton students who were deemed eligible to graduate (given their credit profile and registration status as the time the sample was taken). 608 students responded to the survey, resulting in a 40.5 percent response rate².

This report is meant to highlight selected results from the 2012 CUSC survey related to student's satisfaction with their university experience. Results for Carleton will be presented along with a comparison with similar universities. CUSC uses three institutional groupings that are based on the type of programs offered, as well as the size of the student population. Group 1 includes universities which have primarily undergraduate programs and they tend to be relatively small. Group 2 institutions are more comprehensive, offering undergraduate and graduate programs, and have a medium-sized student population. The largest institutions that participated in CUSC tend to be in group 3: they also offer a wide range of programs, including professional programs. Carleton University is conceptually situated between groups 2 and 3, and so for the purpose of this report, 'comparable universities' will be a simple average for each of the 18 institutions in groups 2 and 3³ (excluding Carleton).

¹ See Appendix A for CUSC's Protocol for Data Use and data use permissions.

² Response rate reported here is calculated using only those who completed at least half of the survey questions. Actual response rates for individual questions will vary.

³ See Appendix B for a list of universities included in this grouping for 2012.

In order to get a sense of how Carleton is doing over time, the 2012 results have been compared to the results from 2009 throughout this report. Any differences discussed in the text of this report are deemed to be statistically significant, unless otherwise noted⁴. Please note that percent totals may not add up to 100 since proportions are rounded. More detailed results for some of the information included in graphs and discussions can be found in the appendices.

Profile of Carleton Respondents

A profile of the Carleton students who responded to the 2012 CUSC graduating student survey is presented in **Table 1**. The profile of respondents at comparable institutions (groups 2 and 3) can also be found in this table, along with the range of proportions across these universities.

Table 1: Proportional Profile of Respondents				
	Carleton (n=691)	Group 2 and 3 (n=9,439)		
		Average	Low	High
Female**	58%	65%	54%	74%
Under 23 years of age**	71%	63%	47%	87%
International student status ^{#, **}	9%	5%	0%	14%
Visible minority ^{#, **}	35%	29%	6%	64%
Aboriginal [#]	2%	3%	1%	9%
Students with a disability ^{#, **}	10%	7%	3%	10%
Living in rental accommodations	53%	50%	25%	80%
Living with parents	38%	40%	16%	67%
Living in on-campus housing	3%	2%	0%	6%
Came from a community of 300,000+**	54%	36%	7%	63%
Students who work while studying	59%	59%	37%	68%
Average number of hours worked per week (all respondents who worked)	18	18	13	23
Median grade (self-reported) so far at university	B+	B+	B	B+

** denotes statistically significant difference between Carleton and the G2 and G3 average

[#] self-identified in survey

⁴ T-test, Chi-square and Somers'd statistical tests of significance (unless otherwise noted). $\alpha = 0.05$.

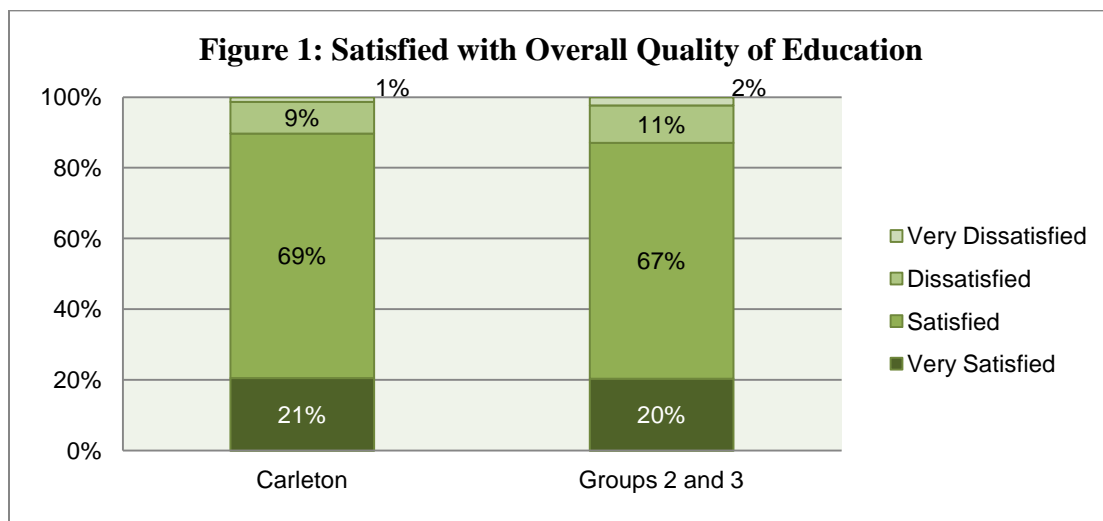
Carleton respondents were similar to the average for groups 2 and 3 in the proportion that self-identified as Aboriginal, their living arrangements, working while studying, and median self-reported grades.

In some cases, Carleton's respondent profile was statistically significantly different, from the average for groups 2 and 3. For example, Carleton respondents were less likely to be female (58% vs 65%). Additionally, graduating students who responded to the CUSC survey at Carleton tended to be younger, were more likely to self-identify as international students, as visible minorities and as having a disability, compared to groups 2 and 3. Carleton respondents were also more likely to come from a community of 300,000 or larger.

Whether there are statistically significant differences or not, it is very useful to consider the range of institutional results in order to understand the variation in student bodies across the participating group 2 and 3 institutions. These institutions are not homogenous, and in cases where Carleton is deemed statistically significantly different than the average, the implication is by no means that it has the highest or lowest proportion of that characteristic.

Satisfaction Levels and Perceptions of the University

When final-year undergrads were asked how satisfied they were with the overall quality of education, 90 percent of Carleton respondents reported being satisfied or very satisfied (**Figure 1**). The satisfaction of Carleton respondents is similar to the average of similar institutions. In addition, Carleton's 2012 respondents had similar satisfaction levels to 2009.

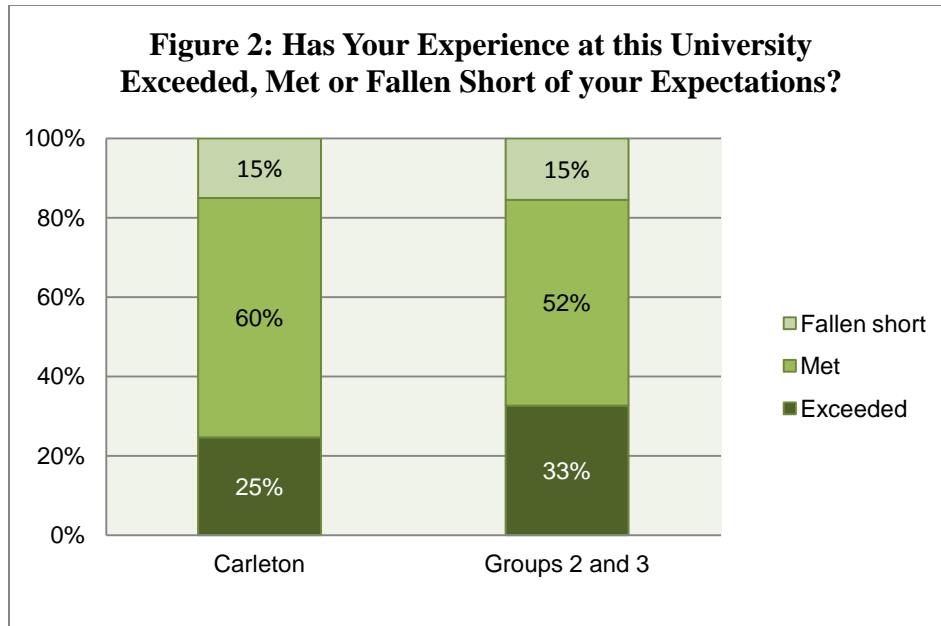


When asked if they would recommend their university to others, 90 percent of Carleton students answered ‘yes’. This is similar to 2009 Carleton results, as well as to the average of comparable institutions in 2012.

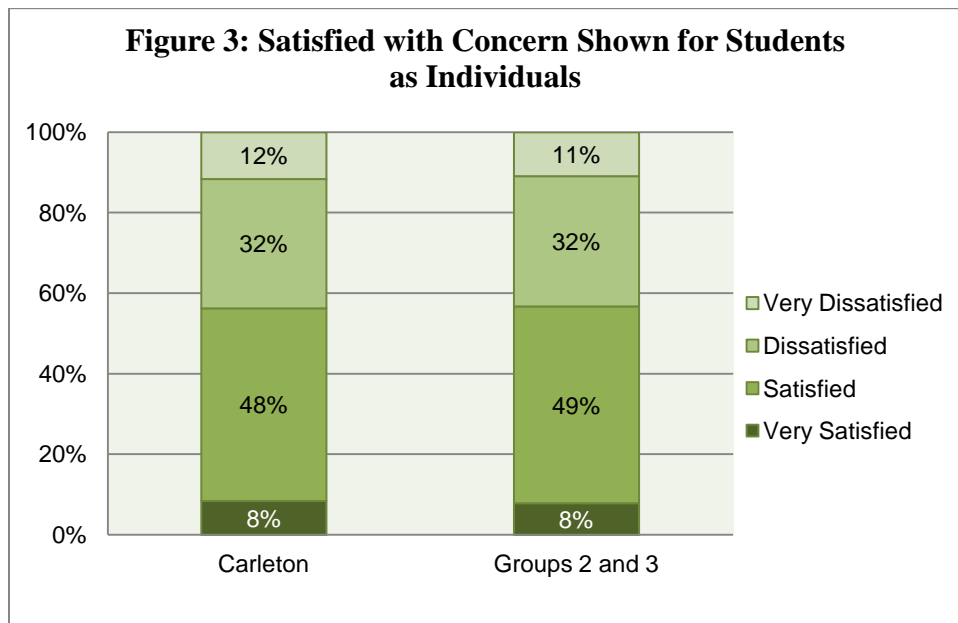
Respondents were then asked to select from a list why they responded that they would or would not recommend their university. **Table 2** shows the distribution of these responses for Carleton, as well as the average for groups 2 and 3. Please note that the responses could add up to more than 100 percent since respondents could mark all that applied. It should also be noted that since only 10 percent of Carleton respondents said that they wouldn’t recommend their university, the proportions presented in the columns to the right in Table 2 are based on a relatively small number of respondents (for example, 58 respondents in 2012 at Carleton).

Table 2: Why Would You Recommend or Not Recommend Your University to Others?				
	Would recommend their university to others		Would <u>not</u> recommend their university to others	
	Carleton 2012 (n=529)	Groups 2 and 3 (n=8,117)	Carleton 2012 (n=58)	Groups 2 and 3 (n=1,103)
The program	78%	78%	40%	53%
The professors	67%	65%	44%	50%
Quality of student/campus life	47%	44%	42%	39%
Student services	30%	26%	42%	30%
Relevance of my program for job opportunities	25%	36%	34%	34%

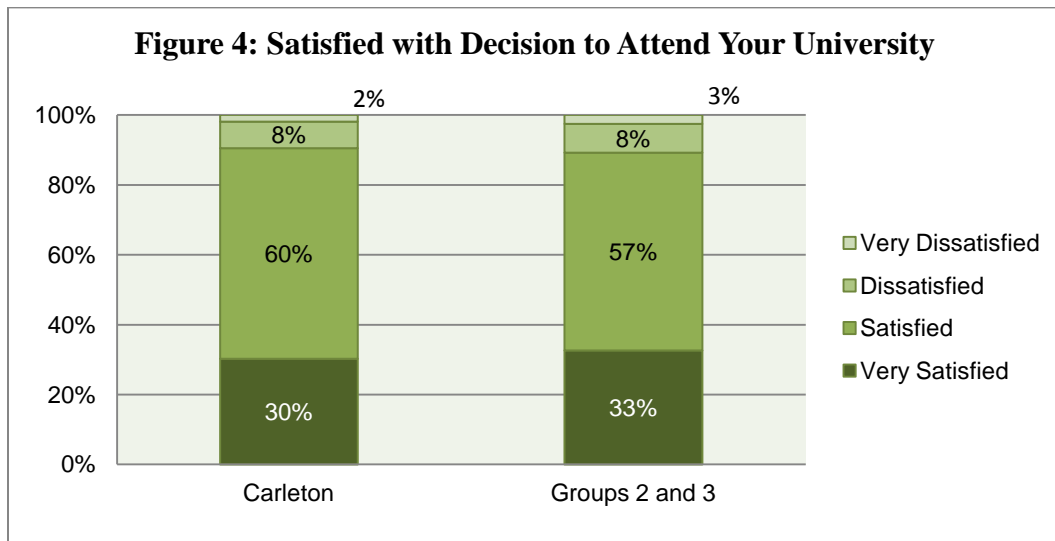
In the 2012 CUSC survey, respondents were asked: Has your experience at this university exceeded, met, or fallen short of your expectations? Eighty-five percent of respondents at Carleton reported that their experience had met or exceeded their expectations (**Figure 2**). The proportion of Carleton respondents who reported that their experience exceeded their expectations is lower compared to the average for group 2 and 3 institutions. Results are not statistically significantly different between 2012 and 2009.



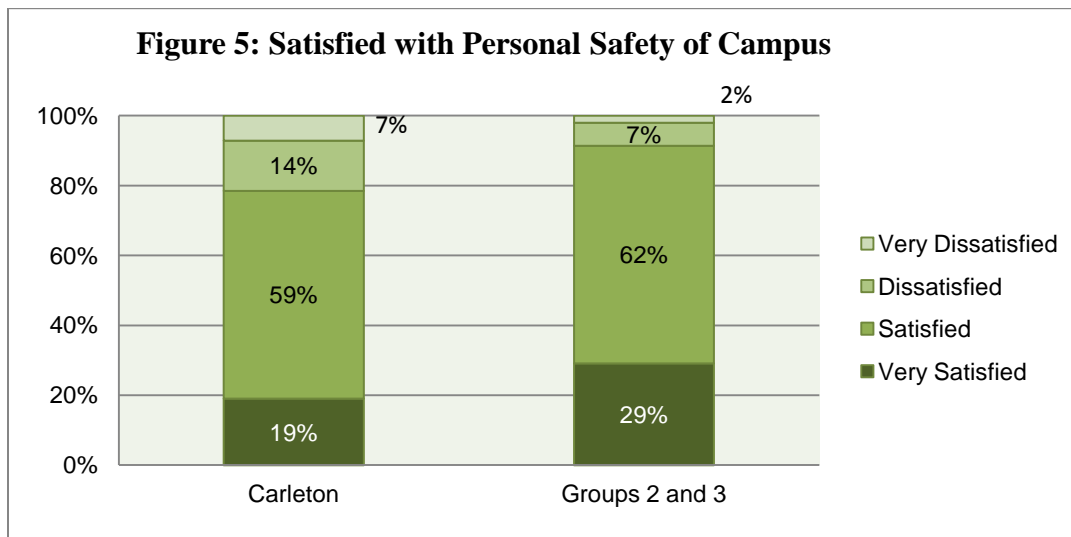
Respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction levels with the ‘concern shown for you as an individual’. In 2012, 56 percent of respondents at Carleton gave this item either a ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ rating. This proportion is similar compared to Carleton’s 2009 results, as well as to those for similar institutions (**Figure 3**).



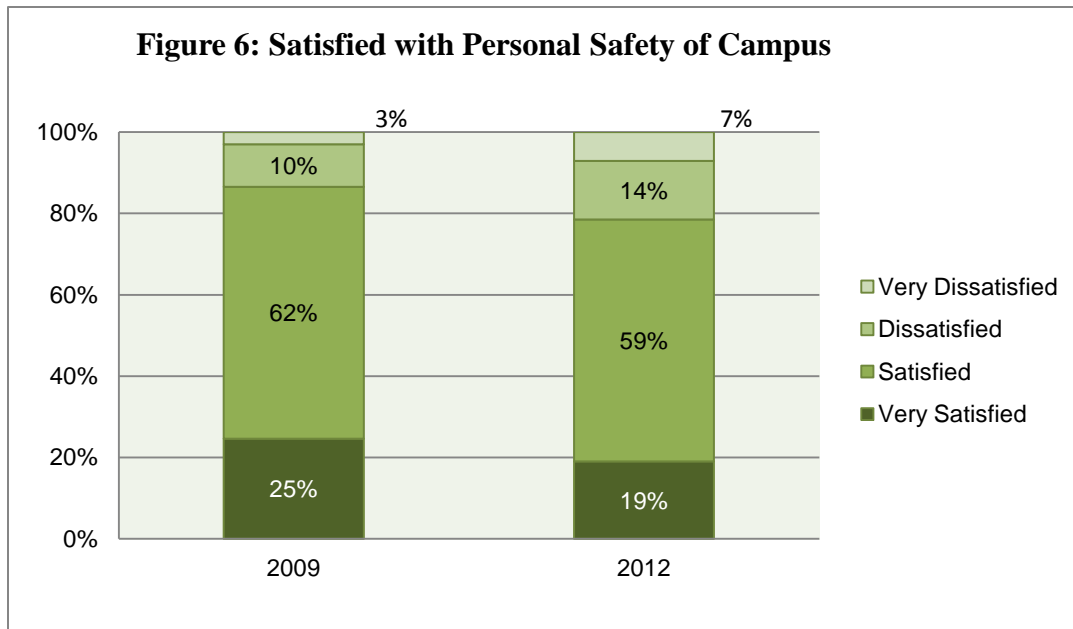
The graduating students in this survey were asked about their satisfaction with their decision to attend Carleton: 90 % reported being ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with their decision. The level of students’ satisfaction with their decision to attend their university is similar to their counterparts at group 2 and 3 institutions on average (**Figure 4**). Satisfaction levels in 2012 amongst Carleton respondents were not statistically significantly different to 2009 results.



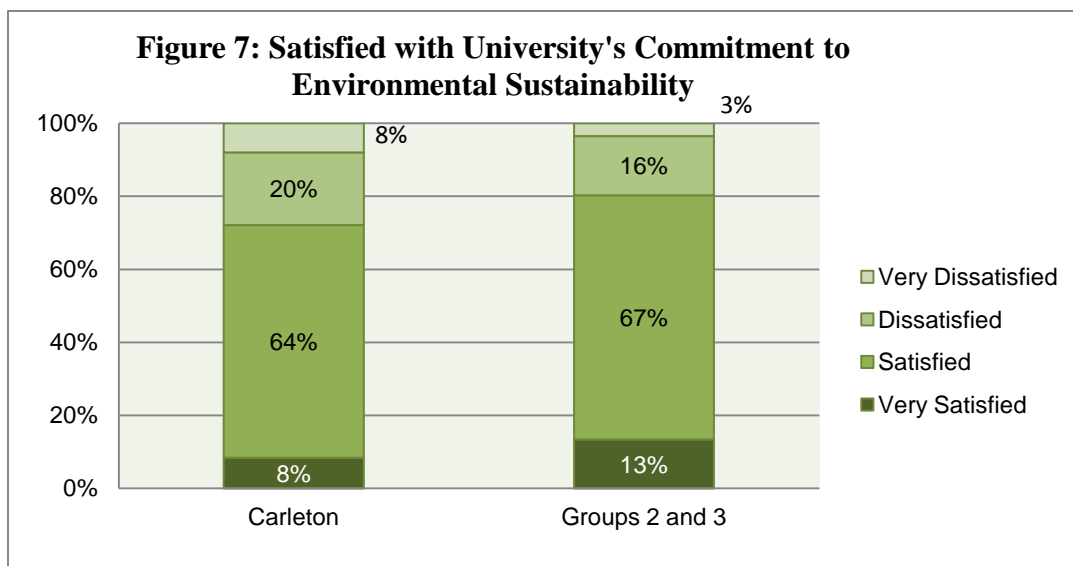
When asked about their satisfaction with personal safety on campus, Carleton respondents were less likely to report satisfaction compared to respondents in groups 2 and 3, on average: 79% vs. 91% (**Figure 5**).



The reported satisfaction with personal safety on campus has decreased since 2009 amongst Carleton respondents (**Figure 6**).



Starting in 2009, the CUSC survey began asking the graduating students how satisfied they were with their university's commitment to environmental sustainability. Carleton's 2012 results are somewhat lower compared to the group 2 and 3 average (**Figure 7**), but are similar to Carleton's 2009 results.



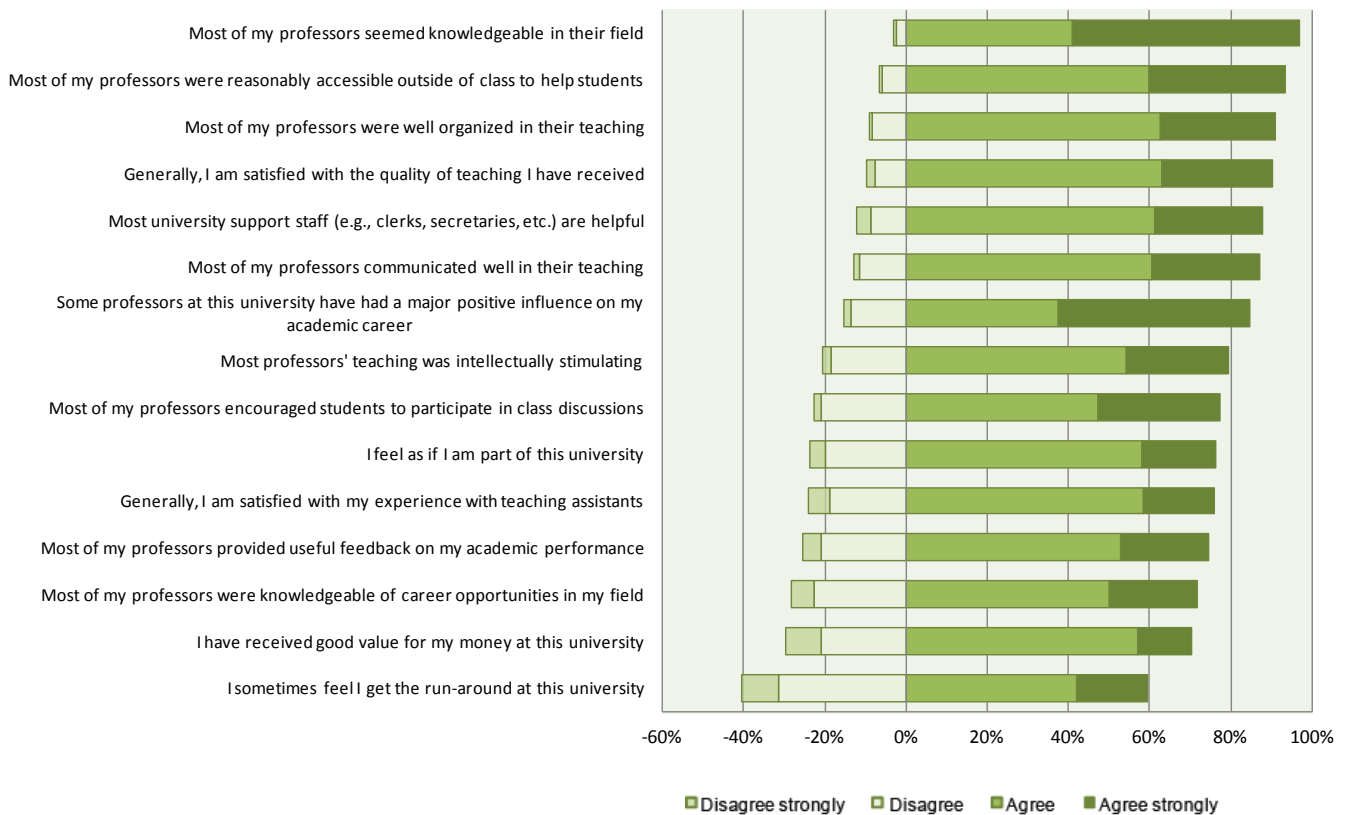
In the graduating student survey, there are a number of questions about student perceptions of teaching and other academic experiences at their university. **Figure 8** illustrates that respondents perceive that most of their professors at Carleton are knowledgeable and accessible, and are generally satisfied with the quality of teaching they have received.

The level of agreement has increased between 2009 and 2012 for a few of these statements on teaching and academic experience. No item saw a decrease in agreement. More specifically, the items in Figure 10 that saw increased levels of agreement from 2009 to 2012 were:

- Most of my professors seemed knowledgeable in their field
- Generally, I am satisfied with my experience with teaching assistants
- I feel as if I am part of the university
- Most university support staff (e.g., clerks, secretaries, etc.) are helpful

Please see **Appendix C** for a more detailed look at differences over time.

Figure 8: Perceptions of the University



In comparison to the average group 2 and group 3 results, Carleton's results were either similar, or in some cases Carleton had statistically significantly lower levels of agreement:

Lower Levels of Agreement (CU vs. G2 and G3)

- Most of my professors were knowledgeable of career opportunities in my field
- Generally, I am satisfied with my experience with teaching assistants
- Most of my professors encouraged students to participate in class

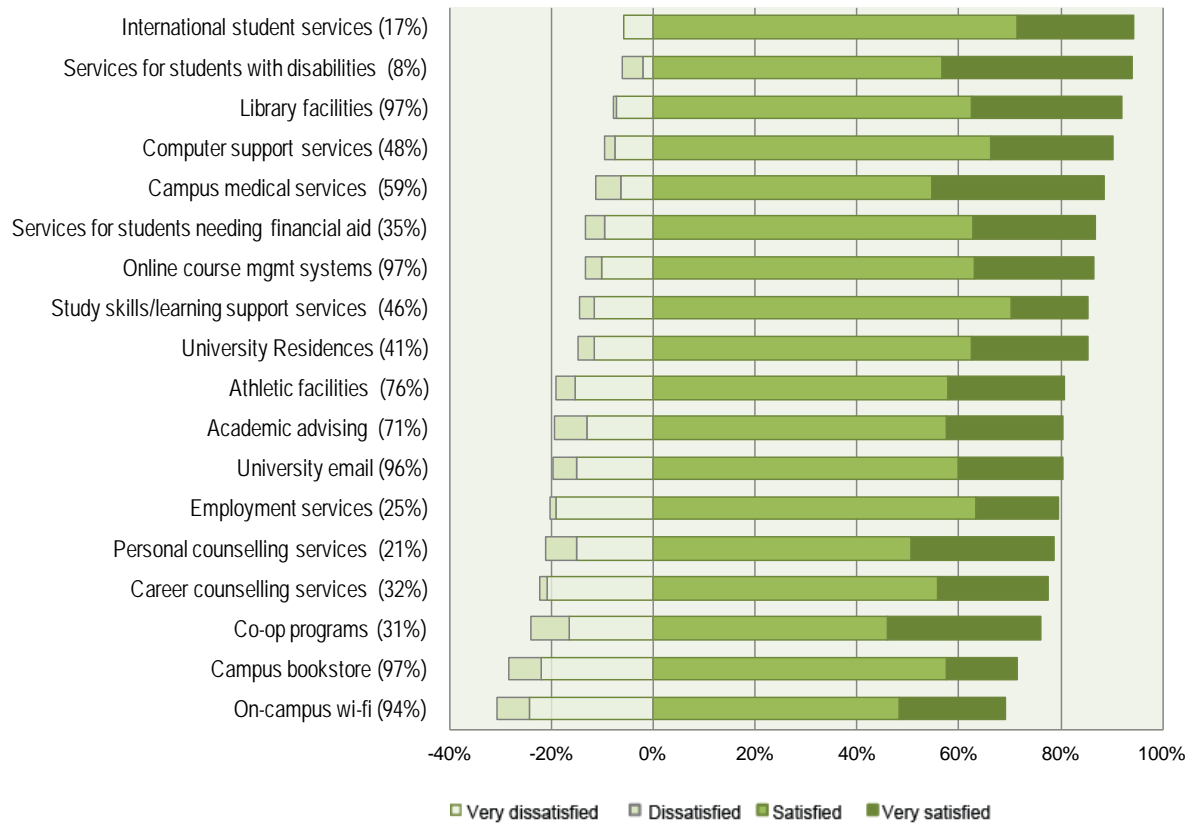
Please see **Appendix C** for a more detailed look at differences between Carleton and an aggregate of similar institutions for this set of questions.

Satisfaction with Services and Facilities

There was an opportunity on the CUSC survey for respondents to rate a number of services and facilities at the university (**Figure 9**). They were first asked if they personally used each service or facility, the proportion of users being shown in the chart in parentheses beside each item. For example, 97 percent of respondents had used library facilities, an online course management system and/or the campus bookstore. Keep in mind that the smaller the proportion of students who reported using a service or facility, the less reliable the results may be for the satisfaction rating portion of the question.

Satisfaction ratings were provided by those who had used the service or facility. The chart below is sorted in descending order based on the proportion that was satisfied or very satisfied.

Figure 9: Student Satisfaction Ratings of Services on Campus



In comparison to the average satisfaction levels at comparable institutions, Carleton’s results were lower for campus bookstore, athletic facilities, employment services, on-campus wi-fi, and university email.

Any statistically significant changes from 2009 to 2012 were decreases in satisfaction. The Carleton services or facilities that saw decreased satisfaction in 2012 were: study skills/learning support services, library facilities, athletic facilities, and campus medical services. In 2012, what had historically been ‘computing services’ was split into four more specific services, and there is no way to compare changes in satisfaction over time.

Please see **Appendix D** for a more detailed summary of results, including Carleton results over time and a comparison with similar institutions.

Conclusion

Overall, Carleton respondents are generally satisfied with their education and experiences at Carleton. In general, results are similar to comparable institutions, as well as to Carleton results in 2009.

It is worth noting that Carleton results had been steadily improving over time, with 2009 results giving us an especially ambitious benchmark to replicate (2009 was the last year this survey had been done previous to 2012). Therefore, it is encouraging that many of these increased levels persisted in 2012. In some cases, increases in satisfaction were seen, especially around their university experiences/perceptions, while some service areas as well as personal safety saw decreases in satisfaction. As is normally done, results will be shared with the greater university community, including appropriate managers and directors on campus, in order to improve our understanding of student satisfaction and improve the student experience where possible.

The next CUSC survey is scheduled for February 2013, focusing on first-year undergraduate students.

For further information on Carleton University, and the results of the surveys in which it participates, go to www.carleton.ca/oirp.

APPENDIX A

Please note that this report contains material copyrighted by the Canadian University Survey Consortium. In order to use the data from this report, permission is required from the Office of Institutional Research and Planning, Carleton University. Also note that according to the protocol below, no ranking or inter-university comparisons are permitted.

PROTOCOL FOR DATA USE

CANADIAN UNIVERSITY SURVEY CONSORTIUM (CUSC)

Members of the consortium are bound by the following protocol for the control of survey data.

It was agreed by the participants that data are owned collectively and will be distributed only by collective agreement.

1. The purpose of the survey is to produce data that will allow participating institutions to assess their programs and services. Comparisons with other institutions are made to assist in these assessments. Ranking of institutions is not, in itself, a purpose of the survey.
2. The survey data are owned collectively by the participating institutions.
3. The report that has been prepared may be reproduced and distributed freely on the campuses of participating institutions. However, use of the institutional code key is restricted to members of the steering committee and senior administration at the various campuses on a confidential basis.
4. Institutions will receive a data package that includes data for all participating institutions along with the institutional identifiers so that appropriate institutional comparisons can be made by each institution. This must be done in a way that protects the confidentiality of the institutional identities and respects the absolute right of each institution to decide what portions of its data should be disclosed.
5. Rankings may not be used for institutional promotion, recruiting, or other public dissemination. However, an institution's mean results, the aggregate mean results, and mean results for the comparable group of institutions in the survey report may be used, although the names of other institutions may not be used.
6. Access to the aggregate data for research purposes may be granted to interested persons provided that the intended use is a legitimate, non-commercial one, and the researcher is qualified and agrees to acknowledge the ownership of the data by participating universities and provide the consortium with a copy of any report or publication that is produced. Decisions on such requests will be made by a subcommittee consisting of Michael O'Sullivan, Dan Pletzer, Tim Rahilly, and Lynn Smith in consultation with members of the full CUSC committee (all participating institutions) in the case of requests that seem problematic.

List of Group 2 and Group 3 Institutions Participating in 2012 CUSC survey

- Dalhousie University
- McGill University
- Université de Montréal
- Université de Sherbrooke
- University of Manitoba
- University of Ottawa
- University of Saskatchewan
- York University
- Brock University
- Lakehead University
- University of Regina
- Ryerson University
- Simon Fraser University
- Thompson Rivers University
- Université de Moncton
- University of New Brunswick (Fredericton)
- University of Waterloo
- Wilfrid Laurier University

Detailed 2012 results for Carleton, and statistically significant differences found over time and compared to the average of comparable institutions			
	2012 Carleton	2009 Carleton	2012 Comparable Institutions
Most of my professors seemed knowledgeable in their field			
Agree Strongly	56%	45%	
Agree	41%	51%	Similar
Disagree	2%	3%	
Disagree Strongly	1%	<1%	
Most of my professors were reasonably accessible outside of class to help students			
Agree Strongly	34%		
Agree	60%		Similar
Disagree	6%	Similar	
Disagree Strongly	<1%		
Most of my professors were well organized in their teaching			
Agree Strongly	28%		
Agree	63%		Similar
Disagree	8%	Similar	
Disagree Strongly	1%		
Generally, I am satisfied with the quality of teaching I have received			
Agree Strongly	28%		
Agree	63%		Similar
Disagree	8%	Similar	
Disagree Strongly	2%		
Most university support staff (e.g., clerks, secretaries, etc.) are helpful			
Agree Strongly	26%	18%	
Agree	61%	68%	Similar
Disagree	9%	10%	
Disagree Strongly	4%	4%	
Most of my professors communicated well in their teaching			
Agree Strongly	27%		
Agree	60%		Similar
Disagree	12%	Similar	
Disagree Strongly	1%		
Some professors at this university have had a major positive influence on my academic career			
Agree Strongly	47%		
Agree	38%		Similar
Disagree	14%	Similar	
Disagree Strongly	2%		
Most professors' teaching was intellectually stimulating			
Agree Strongly	25%		
Agree	54%		Similar
Disagree	19%	Similar	
Disagree Strongly	2%		

Detailed 2012 results for Carleton, and statistically significant differences found over time and compared to the average of comparable institutions

	2012 Carleton	2009 Carleton	2012 Comparable Institutions
Most of my professors encouraged students to participate in class discussions			
Agree Strongly	30%		33%
Agree	47%	Similar	50%
Disagree	21%		15%
Disagree Strongly	2%		2%
I feel as if I am part of this university			
Agree Strongly	18%	14%	
Agree	58%	58%	Similar
Disagree	20%	24%	
Disagree Strongly	4%	4%	
Generally, I am satisfied with my experience with teaching assistants			
Agree Strongly	17%	14%	22%
Agree	59%	56%	57%
Disagree	19%	20%	16%
Disagree Strongly	5%	9%	5%
Most of my professors provided useful feedback on my academic performance			
Agree Strongly	22%		
Agree	53%	Similar	Similar
Disagree	21%		
Disagree Strongly	4%		
Most of my professors were knowledgeable of career opportunities in my field			
Agree Strongly	22%		27%
Agree	50%	Similar	50%
Disagree	23%		19%
Disagree Strongly	5%		4%
I have received good value for my money at this university			
Agree Strongly	13%		
Agree	57%	Similar	Similar
Disagree	21%		
Disagree Strongly	9%		
I sometimes feel I get the run-around at this university			
Agree Strongly	17%		
Agree	42%		
Disagree	31%	Similar	Similar
Disagree Strongly	9%		

APPENDIX D

Detailed Summary of Satisfaction with Campus Services and Facilities

** Note: number in parenthesis denotes the proportion of 2012 Carleton respondents who reported using the service or facility.

Detailed 2012 results for Carleton, and statistically significant differences found over time and compared to the average of comparable institutions			
	2012 Carleton	2009 Carleton	2012 Comparable Institutions
International student services (17%)			
Very Satisfied	23%		
Satisfied	71%		
Dissatisfied	6%	Similar	Similar
Very Dissatisfied	0%		
Services for students with disabilities (8%)			
Very Satisfied	37%		
Satisfied	57%		
Dissatisfied	2%	Similar	Similar
Very Dissatisfied	4%		
Library facilities (97%)			
Very Satisfied	30%	37%	
Satisfied	63%	54%	Similar
Dissatisfied	7%	6%	
Very Dissatisfied	1%	2%	
Computer support services (48%)			
Very Satisfied	24%		
Satisfied	66%		
Dissatisfied	8%	N/A	Similar
Very Dissatisfied	2%		
Campus medical services (59%)			
Very Satisfied	34%	41%	
Satisfied	55%	50%	
Dissatisfied	6%	7%	Similar
Very Dissatisfied	5%	2%	
Services for students needing financial aid (35%)			
Very Satisfied	24%		
Satisfied	63%		
Dissatisfied	9%	Similar	Similar
Very Dissatisfied	4%		
Online course management systems (97%)			
Very Satisfied	23%		
Satisfied	63%		
Dissatisfied	10%	N/A	Similar
Very Dissatisfied	3%		
Study skills/learning support services (46%)			
Very Satisfied	15%	24%	
Satisfied	70%	63%	
Dissatisfied	12%	9%	Similar
Very Dissatisfied	3%	4%	

Detailed 2012 results for Carleton, and statistically significant differences found over time and compared to the average of comparable institutions

	2012 Carleton	2009 Carleton	2012 Comparable Institutions
University residences (41%)			
Very Satisfied	23%		
Satisfied	63%		
Dissatisfied	11%	Similar	Similar
Very Dissatisfied	3%		
Athletic facilities (76%)			
Very Satisfied	23%	41%	27%
Satisfied	58%	50%	59%
Dissatisfied	15%	7%	11%
Very Dissatisfied	4%	2%	3%
Academic advising (71%)			
Very Satisfied	23%		
Satisfied	58%		
Dissatisfied	13%	Similar	Similar
Very Dissatisfied	7%		
University email (96%)			
Very Satisfied	21%		34%
Satisfied	60%		54%
Dissatisfied	15%	N/A	9%
Very Dissatisfied	4%		3%
Employment services (25%)			
Very Satisfied	16%		23%
Satisfied	63%		61%
Dissatisfied	19%	Similar	12%
Very Dissatisfied	1%		4%
Personal counselling services (21%)			
Very Satisfied	28%		
Satisfied	51%		
Dissatisfied	15%	Similar	Similar
Very Dissatisfied	6%		
Career counselling services (32%)			
Very Satisfied	22%		
Satisfied	56%		
Dissatisfied	21%	Similar	Similar
Very Dissatisfied	2%		
Co-op programs (31%)			
Very Satisfied	30%		
Satisfied	46%		
Dissatisfied	16%	Similar	Similar
Very Dissatisfied	8%		
Campus bookstore (97%)			
Very Satisfied	14%		20%
Satisfied	58%		61%
Dissatisfied	22%	Similar	15%
Very Dissatisfied	6%		5%
On-campus wi-fi (94%)			
Very Satisfied	21%		34%
Satisfied	48%		50%
Dissatisfied	24%	N/A	12%
Very Dissatisfied	7%		3%