

2015 Canadian University Survey Consortium (CUSC): Graduating Undergraduates

Prepared by the Office of Institutional Research and Planning

November 2015

Introduction

Carleton University regularly participates in a number of surveys in order to better understand its students' needs and perceptions. In February 2015, Carleton was one of 36 institutions that participated in an undergraduate survey co-ordinated by the Canadian University Survey Consortium (CUSC)¹. This was Carleton's 17th 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 2015, the survey focused on graduating students.

Methodology

An invitation to participate in this online survey was emailed to a random sample of 3,000 Carleton students who were deemed eligible to graduate (given their credit profile and registration status as the time the sample was taken). 1,297 students responded to the survey, resulting in a 43.2 percent response rate².

This report is meant to highlight selected results from the 2015 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 19 institutions in groups 2 and 3³ (excluding Carleton).

In order to get a sense of how Carleton is doing over time, the 2015 results have been compared to the results from 2012 throughout this report. Any differences discussed in the

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 2015.

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 2015 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=1,297)	Group 2 and 3 (n=11,502)		
		Average	Low	High
Female**	55%	65%	51%	74%
Under 23 years of age**	64%	58%	23%	86%
Visible minority#.**	36%	30%	9%	61%
Aboriginal#.**	2%	4%	1%	11%
Students with a disability#.**	21%	16%	10%	23%
Living in rental accommodations**	58%	51%	23%	70%
Living with parents	35%	38%	13%	61%
Living in on-campus housing	3%	3%	0%	9%
Students who work while studying	57%	59%	35%	68%
Average number of hours worked per week (all respondents who worked)	19	18	13	22
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

Carleton respondents were similar to the average for groups 2 and 3 in the reported proportion of living with parents, living in on-campus housing, working while studying. The reported average number of hours worked per week, and median grade were also similar to their counterparts.

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

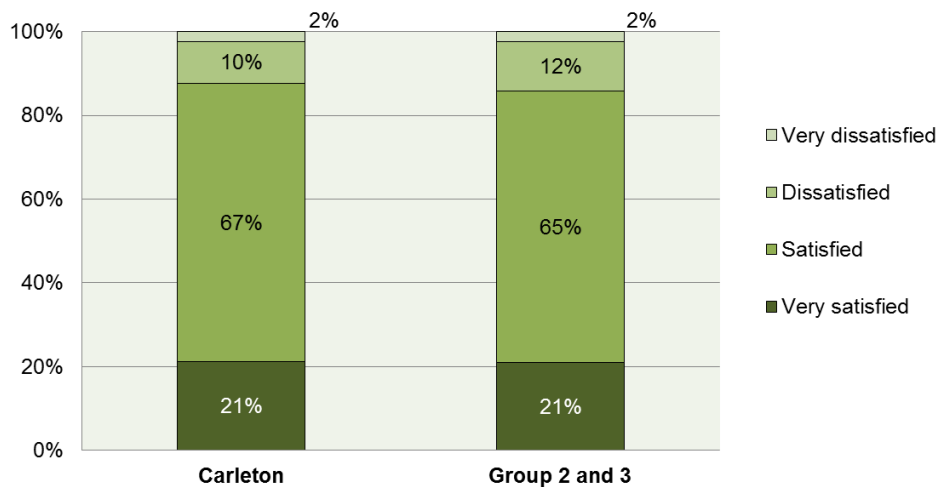
In some cases, Carleton’s respondent profile was statistically significantly different, from the average for groups 2 and 3. For example, Carleton respondents were less likely to be female (55% vs 65%). Additionally, graduating students who responded to the CUSC survey at Carleton tended to be younger, were more likely to self-identify as visible minorities, having a disability, living in rental accommodations, and were less likely to self-identify as Aboriginal, compared to the average for groups 2 and 3.

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, 88 percent of Carleton respondents reported being satisfied or very satisfied (Figure 1). The satisfaction of Carleton respondents is similar to the average of comparable institutions. In addition, Carleton’s 2015 respondents had similar satisfaction levels to 2012.

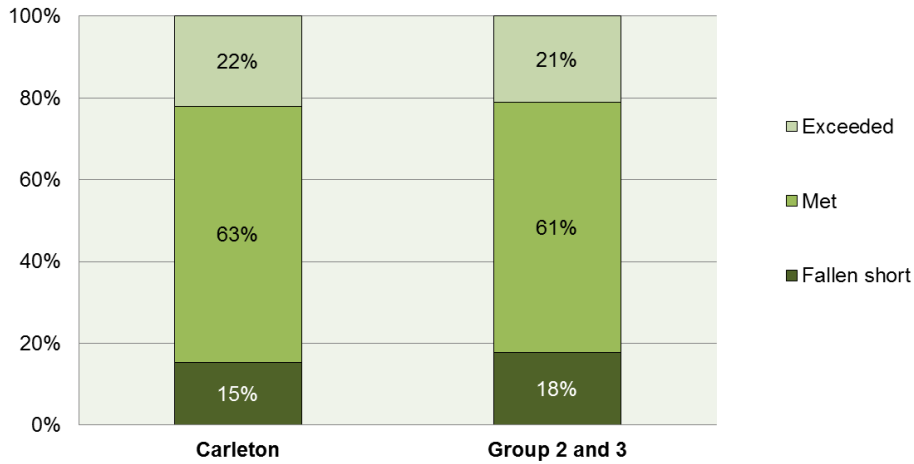
Figure 1: Satisfied with Overall Quality of Education



When asked if they would recommend their university to others, 89 percent of Carleton students answered ‘yes’. This is similar to 2012 Carleton results, as well as to the average of comparable institutions in 2015.

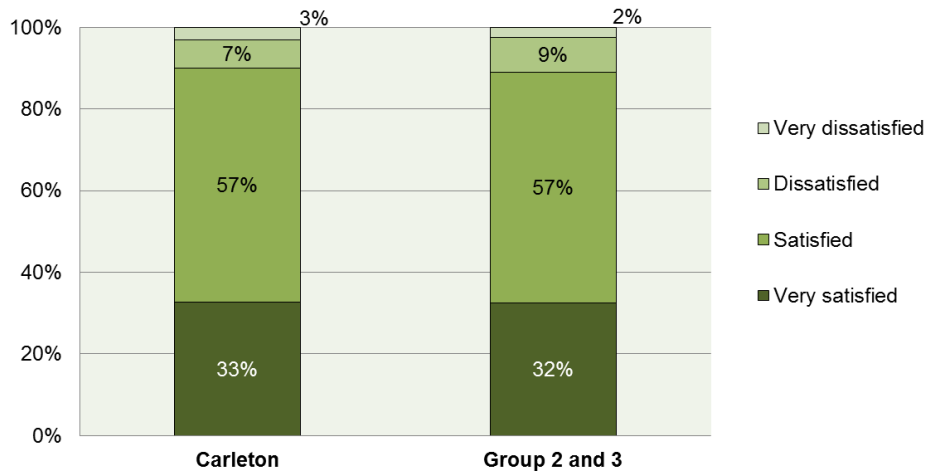
In the 2015 CUSC survey, respondents were asked: Has this university exceeded, met, or fallen short of your expectations? Eighty-five percent of respondents at Carleton reported that their experience had met or exceeded their expectations (Figure 2). This proportion is similar to the average for group 2 and 3 institutions. Results are not statistically significantly different between 2015 and 2012.

Figure 2: Has This University Exceeded, Met, or Fallen Short of Your Expectations?



The graduating students in this survey were asked about their satisfaction with their decision to attend Carleton: ninety percent of Carleton respondents reported being 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with their decision. The level of students' satisfaction with their decision to attend Carleton is similar to their counterparts at group 2 and 3 institutions on average (Figure 3). Satisfaction levels in 2015 amongst Carleton respondents were not statistically significantly different to 2012 results.

Figure 3: Decision to Attend Your University



Carleton respondents were less likely to report satisfaction/agreement compared to respondents in groups 2 and 3 in the following areas:

- Availability of information about career options in their area of study (**Figure 4**)
- Opportunities to enhance their education through activities beyond the classroom (**Figure 5**)
- University’s commitment to environmental sustainability (**Figure 6**)
- Having received good value for money at this university (**Figure 7**)

Figure 4: Availability of Information about Career Options in Your Area of Study

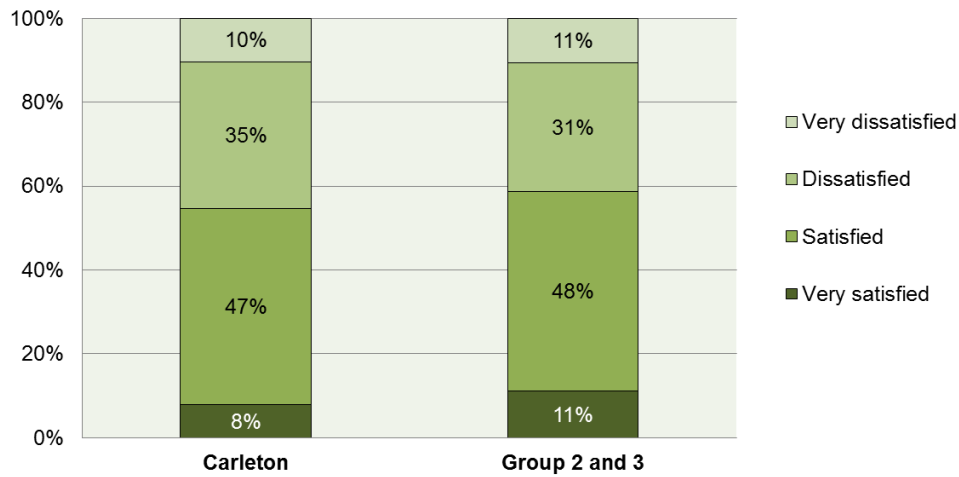


Figure 5: Opportunities to Enhance Your Education through Activities beyond the Classroom

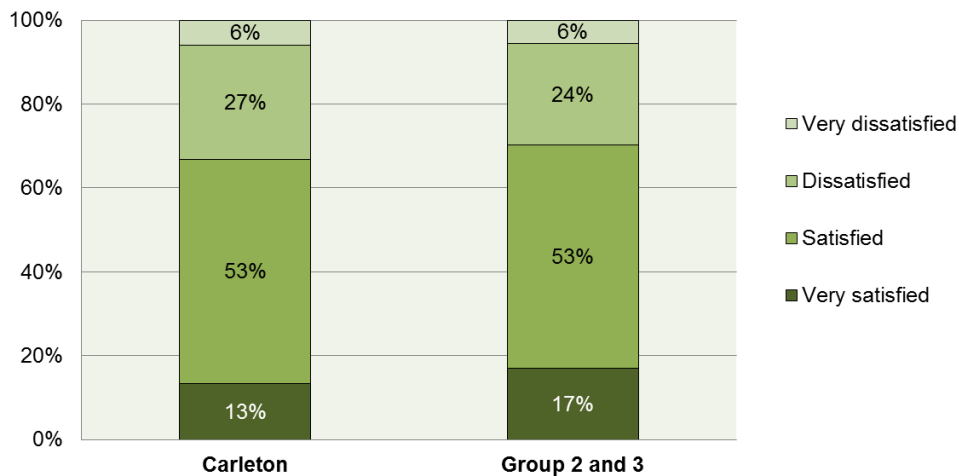


Figure 6: University's Commitment to Environmental Sustainability

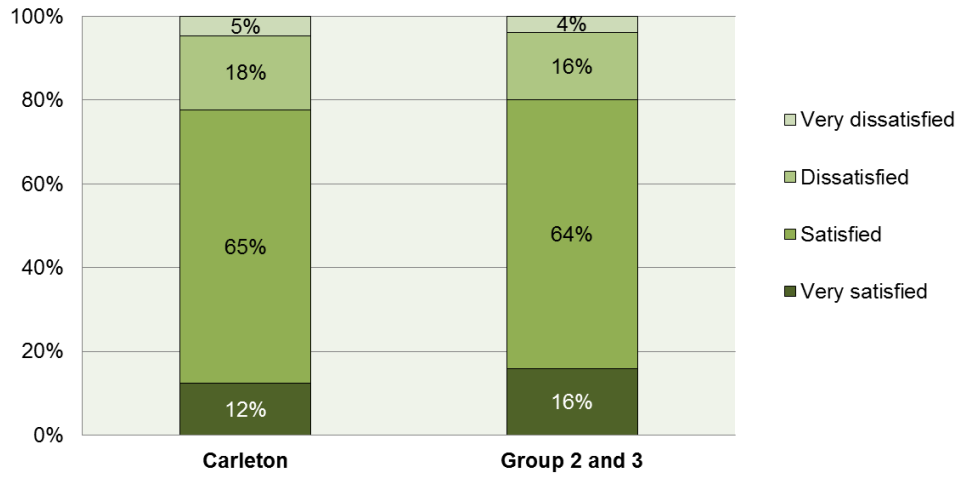
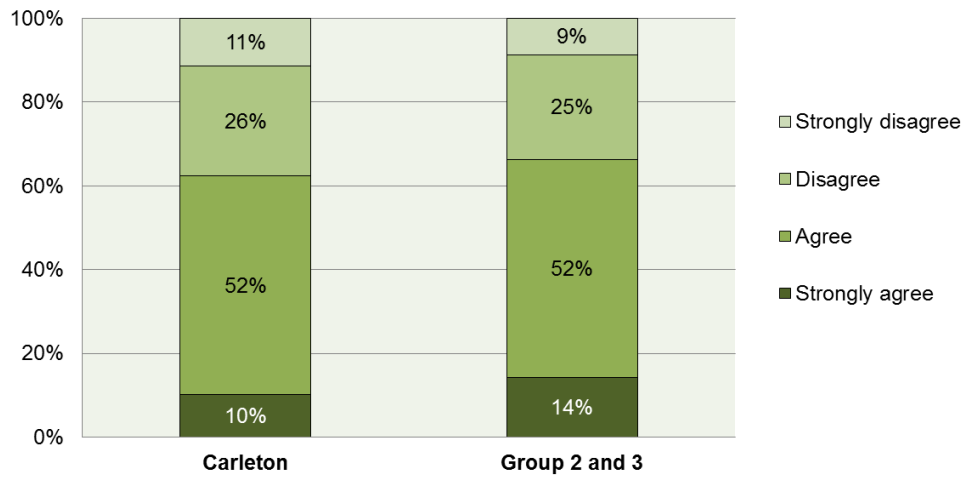


Figure 7: I have received good value for money at this university



When compared to the 2012 results, Carleton respondents of 2015 CUSC reported higher satisfaction levels in the areas of

- Personal safety on campus (**Figure 8**)
- University's commitment to environmental sustainability (**Figure 9**)

Figure 8: Personal Safety on Campus

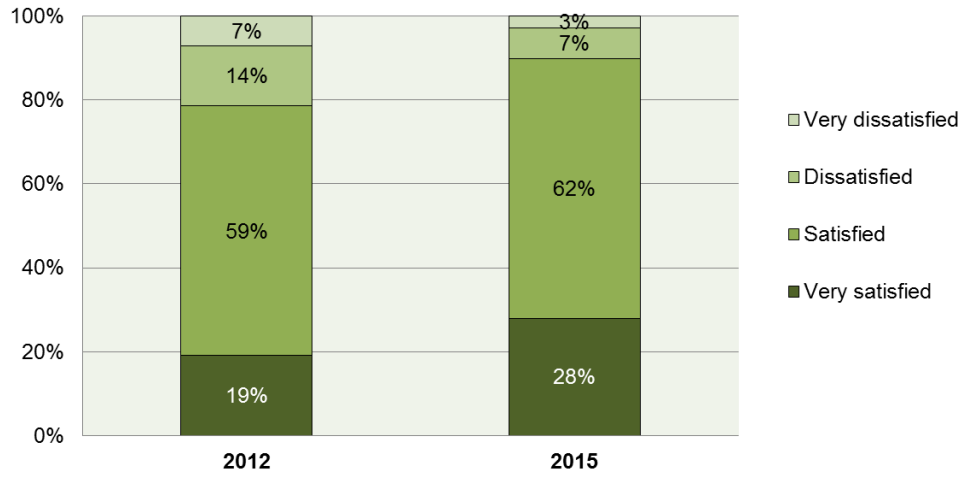
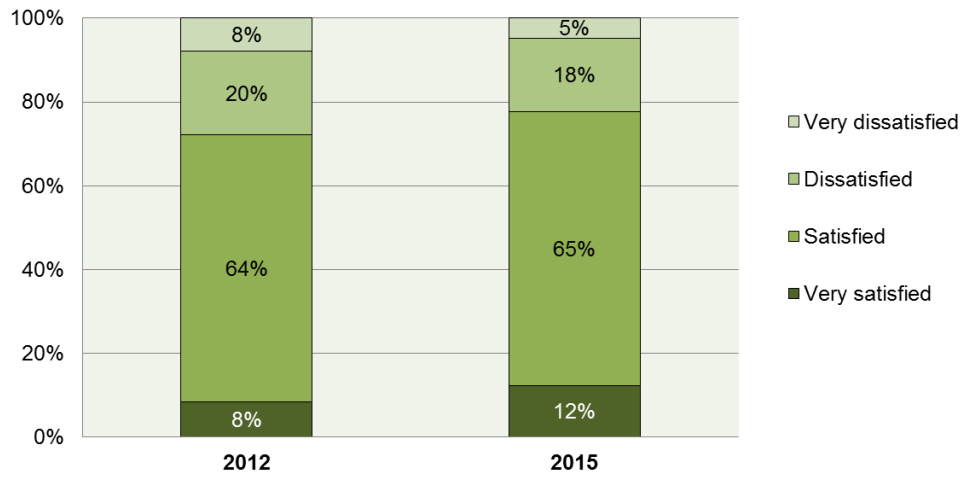


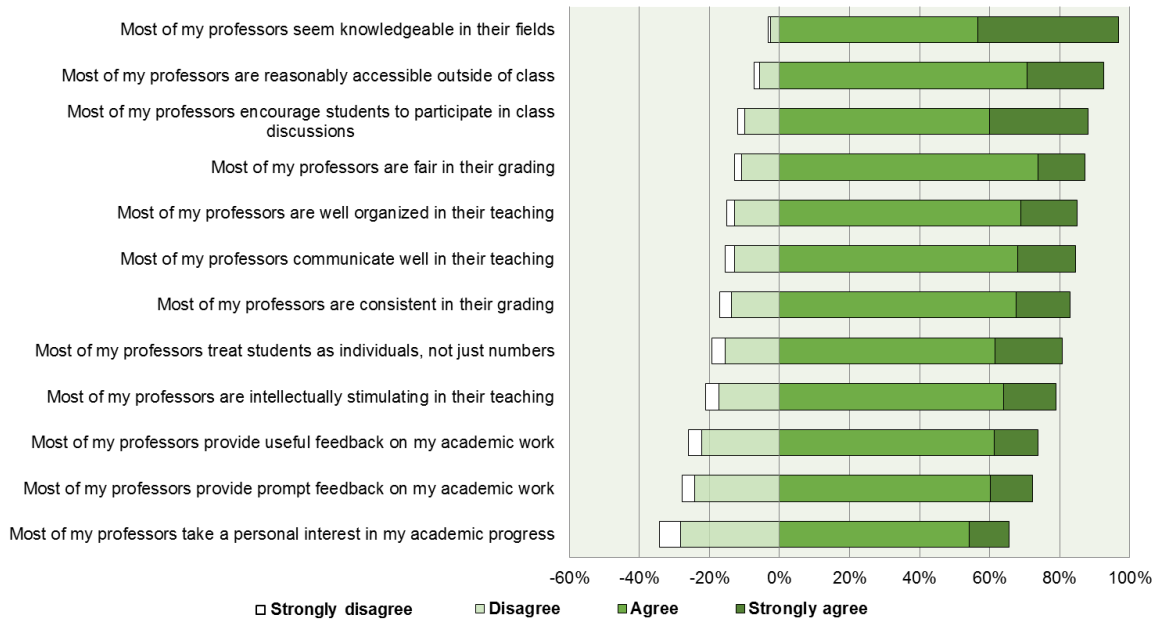
Figure 9: University's Commitment to Environmental Sustainability



Satisfaction with Teaching

Eighty-four percent of Carleton respondents agree or strongly agree that generally they were satisfied with the quality of teaching they had received. In addition, more specific questions about their perceptions of teaching and other academic experiences at their university were asked. **Figure 10** illustrates that respondents perceived that most of their professors at Carleton were knowledgeable and accessible.

Figure 10: Perceptions of the University



In comparison to the average group 2 and group 3 results, Carleton’s results were mixed.

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

- Most of my professors took a personal interest in my academic progress
- Most of my professors treated students as individuals, not just numbers
- Most of my professors encouraged students to participate in class discussions

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

- Most of my professors provided prompt feedback on my academic work

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

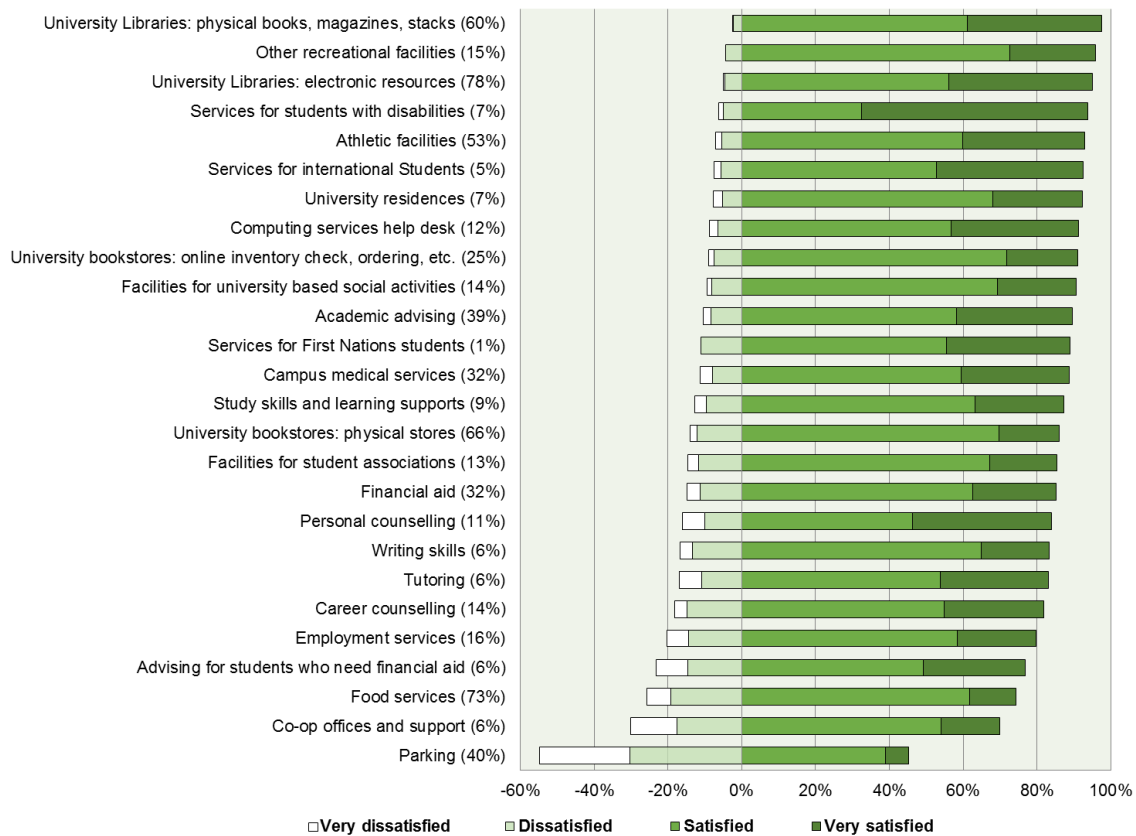
Satisfaction with Services and Facilities

There was an opportunity on the CUSC survey for respondents to rate a number of services and facilities at the university (**Figure 11**). 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, sixty percent of respondents had used the library in terms of physical books, magazines and stacks. 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 11: Student Satisfaction Ratings of Services on Campus



In comparison to the average satisfaction levels at similar institutions, Carleton’s respondents reported lower levels of satisfaction in the following areas:

- University bookstore: physical stores
- Campus medical services
- Co-op offices and supports

And higher levels of satisfaction in other areas:

- Services for students with disabilities
- University libraries: physical books, magazines and stacks
- Academic advising
- Athletic facilities

Any statistically significant changes from 2012 to 2015 were increases in satisfaction. The Carleton services or facilities that saw increased satisfaction in 2015 were: academic advising, athletic facilities and services for students with disabilities. In 2015, what had historically been 'library facilities' and 'bookstore' were split into more specific facilities, and there is no way to compare these 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 2012.

It is worth noting that Carleton results had been steadily improving over time. Positive differences were found whenever differences exist between the 2015 and 2012 results, especially around university experiences/perceptions, as well as some service areas. 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 2016, 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 2015 CUSC survey

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

Detailed 2015 results for Carleton, and statistically significant differences found compared to the average of comparable institutions		
	Carleton	Comparable Institutions
Most of my professors are reasonably accessible outside of class		
Agree Strongly	22%	
Agree	71%	
Disagree	6%	
Disagree Strongly	2%	
Most of my professors take a personal interest in my academic progress		
Agree Strongly	11%	14%
Agree	54%	56%
Disagree	28%	25%
Disagree Strongly	6%	6%
Most of my professors treat students as individuals, not just numbers		
Agree Strongly	19%	23%
Agree	62%	61%
Disagree	15%	13%
Disagree Strongly	4%	3%
Most of my professors encourage students to participate in class discussions		
Agree Strongly	28%	31%
Agree	60%	61%
Disagree	10%	7%
Disagree Strongly	2%	1%
Most of my professors are well organized in their teaching		
Agree Strongly	16%	
Agree	69%	Similar
Disagree	13%	
Disagree Strongly	2%	
Most of my professors seem knowledgeable in their fields		
Agree Strongly	40%	
Agree	57%	Similar
Disagree	2%	
Disagree Strongly	1%	
Most of my professors communicate well in their teaching		
Agree Strongly	17%	
Agree	68%	Similar
Disagree	13%	
Disagree Strongly	3%	

	Carleton	Comparable Institutions
Most of my professors are intellectually stimulating in their teaching		
Agree Strongly	15%	
Agree	64%	Similar
Disagree	17%	
Disagree Strongly	4%	
Most of my professors provide useful feedback on my academic work		
Agree Strongly	13%	
Agree	61%	Similar
Disagree	22%	
Disagree Strongly	4%	
Most of my professors provide prompt feedback on my academic work		
Agree Strongly	12%	11%
Agree	60%	56%
Disagree	24%	27%
Disagree Strongly	4%	5%
Most of my professors are fair in their grading		
Agree Strongly	13%	
Agree	74%	Similar
Disagree	11%	
Disagree Strongly	2%	
Most of my professors are consistent in their grading		
Agree Strongly	15%	
Agree	68%	Similar
Disagree	14%	
Disagree Strongly	3%	
Most of my professors treat students the same regardless of gender		
Agree Strongly	54%	
Agree	40%	Similar
Disagree	5%	
Disagree Strongly	1%	
Most of my professors treat students the same regardless of race		
Agree Strongly	55%	
Agree	39%	Similar
Disagree	5%	
Disagree Strongly	2%	
Most of my professors look out for students' interests		
Agree Strongly	26%	31%
Agree	52%	53%
Disagree	18%	13%
Disagree Strongly	4%	3%

	Carleton	Comparable Institutions
Generally, I am satisfied with the quality of teaching I have received		
Agree Strongly	18%	
Agree	67%	Similar
Disagree	12%	
Disagree Strongly	4%	
Most teaching assistants in my academic program are helpful		
Agree Strongly	15%	
Agree	56%	Similar
Disagree	23%	
Disagree Strongly	6%	
Most university support staff (e.g., clerks, secretaries, etc.) are helpful		
Agree Strongly	27%	24%
Agree	59%	60%
Disagree	10%	12%
Disagree Strongly	4%	4%

Detailed Summary of Satisfaction with Campus Services and Facilities

** Note: number in parenthesis denotes the proportion of 2015 Carleton respondents who reported using the service or facility.

Detailed 2015 results for Carleton, and statistically significant differences found over time and compared to the average of comparable institutions			
	2015 Carleton	2012 Carleton	2015 Comparable Institutions
Services for First Nations students			
Very Satisfied	33%		
Satisfied	56%	Similar	Similar
Dissatisfied	11%		
Very Dissatisfied	0%		
Services for international students			
Very Satisfied	40%		
Satisfied	53%	Similar	Similar
Dissatisfied	6%		
Very Dissatisfied	2%		
Services for students with disabilities			
Very Satisfied	61%	37%	42%
Satisfied	33%	57%	44%
Dissatisfied	5%	2%	10%
Very Dissatisfied	1%	4%	5%
University libraries (physical books, magazines, stacks)			
Very Satisfied	36%		33%
Satisfied	61%	N/A	62%
Dissatisfied	2%		4%
Very Dissatisfied	<1%		1%
University libraries (electronic resources)			
Very Satisfied	39%		
Satisfied	56%	N/A	Similar
Dissatisfied	5%		
Very Dissatisfied	<1%		
Employment services			
Very Satisfied	21%		
Satisfied	58%	Similar	Similar
Dissatisfied	14%		
Very Dissatisfied	6%		

	2015 Carleton	2012 Carleton	2015 Comparable Institutions
Career counselling			
Very Satisfied	27%		
Satisfied	55%	Similar	Similar
Dissatisfied	15%		
Very Dissatisfied	3%		
Personal counselling			
Very Satisfied	38%		
Satisfied	46%	Similar	Similar
Dissatisfied	10%		
Very Dissatisfied	6%		
Academic advising			
Very Satisfied	31%	23%	28%
Satisfied	58%	58%	52%
Dissatisfied	8%	13%	14%
Very Dissatisfied	2%	7%	6%
Tutoring			
Very Satisfied	29%		
Satisfied	54%	N/A	Similar
Dissatisfied	11%		
Very Dissatisfied	6%		
Study skills and learning supports			
Very Satisfied	24%		
Satisfied	63%	Similar	Similar
Dissatisfied	9%		
Very Dissatisfied	3%		
Writing skills			
Very Satisfied	18%		
Satisfied	65%	N/A	Similar
Dissatisfied	13%		
Very Dissatisfied	3%		
University residences			
Very Satisfied	24%		
Satisfied	68%	Similar	Similar
Dissatisfied	5%		
Very Dissatisfied	3%		

	2015 Carleton	2012 Carleton	2015 Comparable Institutions
Advising for students who need financial aid			
Very Satisfied	28%		
Satisfied	49%	Similar	Similar
Dissatisfied	14%		
Very Dissatisfied	9%		
Financial aid			
Very Satisfied	23%		
Satisfied	63%	N/A	Similar
Dissatisfied	11%		
Very Dissatisfied	3%		
Athletic facilities			
Very Satisfied	33%	23%	30%
Satisfied	60%	58%	59%
Dissatisfied	5%	15%	9%
Very Dissatisfied	2%	4%	2%
Other recreational facilities			
Very Satisfied	23%		
Satisfied	73%	N/A	Similar
Dissatisfied	4%		
Very Dissatisfied	0%		
University bookstores (physical stores)			
Very Satisfied	16%		20%
Satisfied	70%	N/A	67%
Dissatisfied	12%		10%
Very Dissatisfied	2%		2%
University bookstores (online inventory check, ordering, etc.)			
Very Satisfied	19%		
Satisfied	72%	N/A	Similar
Dissatisfied	7%		
Very Dissatisfied	1%		
Campus medical services			
Very Satisfied	29%		37%
Satisfied	60%	Similar	52%
Dissatisfied	8%		8%
Very Dissatisfied	3%		3%

	2015 Carleton	2012 Carleton	2015 Comparable Institutions
Co-op offices and support			
Very Satisfied	16%		30%
Satisfied	54%	N/A	54%
Dissatisfied	17%		11%
Very Dissatisfied	13%		6%
Facilities for university-based social activities			
Very Satisfied	21%		
Satisfied	69%	N/A	Similar
Dissatisfied	8%		
Very Dissatisfied	1%		
Facilities for student associations			
Very Satisfied	18%		
Satisfied	67%	N/A	Similar
Dissatisfied	12%		
Very Dissatisfied	3%		
Computing services help desk			
Very Satisfied	34%		
Satisfied	57%	Similar	Similar
Dissatisfied	6%		
Very Dissatisfied	2%		
Food services			
Very Satisfied	13%		
Satisfied	62%	N/A	Similar
Dissatisfied	19%		
Very Dissatisfied	6%		
Parking			
Very Satisfied	6%		
Satisfied	39%	N/A	Similar
Dissatisfied	30%		
Very Dissatisfied	24%		