



Undergraduate Experience at Canadian Universities

□ This report is the fourth in a series of six which highlight findings of the *2008 Survey of Undergraduate Students*. This report provides a profile of undergraduate students’ satisfaction with faculty and areas at their university that require improvements.

□ We present information on students who responded to the survey from across the country, from the University of Manitoba, and from universities that are comparable to the University of Manitoba in terms of size and programs offered. Where possible, we also compare results with the 2005 and 2002 surveys; unless noted, the reported differences are not statistically significant. On occasion, tables in this report will not sum to 100% because of students’ non-response to questions.

Most students are satisfied with the faculty at their university.

□ The vast majority of students are satisfied with their professors — results for students across the country, at comparable universities, and at the University of Manitoba are fairly similar. See Table 1.

▶ Students both nationally and at the University of Manitoba are most satisfied that professors *encourage class discussions and are accessible outside of class*.

▶ Over time, University of Manitoba students tend to be just as satisfied with the faculty at the University of Manitoba as they were in previous years. In fact, the University of Manitoba has seen some growth in two areas: *professors have taken a personal interest in [students’] academic progress* (up to 71% in 2008 from 60% in 2002) and *professors had a major positive influence on [students’] academic career* (up to 74% in 2008 from 64% in 2002).

UofM students continue to be satisfied with their professors.

▶ As students progress in their studies, they become more likely to strongly agree that *some of [their] professors have taken a personal interest in [their] academic progress and had a major positive influence on [their] academic career*.

▶ Perceptions about professors differ depending on the program students are in. In general, students in Arts and Humanities programs tend to have the most positive perceptions of faculty, while Engineering students tend to have the least positive perceptions.

Table 1: Satisfaction with faculty					
Professors...	Percent of students who agree/strongly agree				
	All universities (n=11,981)	Comparable universities (n=2,826)	UofM		
			2008 (n=363)	2005 (n=406)	2002 (n=413)
Encourage class discussions	92%	88%	87%	91%	89%
Are accessible outside of class	92%	88%	90%	90%	87%
Are sensitive to racial issues	89%	85%	84%	83%	83%
Are sensitive to gender issues	86%	82%	81%	76%	77%
Treat students as individuals	84%	73%	69%	70%	68%
Look out for students’ interests	84%	75%	78%	78%	75%
Have a positive influence on academic career	81%	75%	74%	71%	64%
Take a personal interest in students’ academic progress	74%	63%	71%	64%	60%

□ We asked students to consider various facilities and services and indicate if each needs very little or no improvement, some improvement, much improvement, or very much improvement. We assume that anyone who did not provide a rating has not used the service or facility and therefore has not been included in the calculation of the ratings. Table 2 provides students' ratings for three groups of facilities and services: academic services, work and study programs, and other services.

Less than one-quarter of students reported a need for improvement in academic services.

▶ Less than 1 student in 4 nationally says that either of the two academic services tested requires much or very much improvement. This is slightly higher at the University of Manitoba where 3 students in 10 say that these services need improvement.

Fewer UofM students think that the UofM's spending on financial aid needs improvement in 2008 compared to previous years.

▶ Engineering (17%) and Physical Science (13%) students are most likely to say that *emphasis on teaching excellence* needs very much improvement; Arts and Humanities and Social Science program students (6% each) are least likely.

- ▶ Nationally, about 3 students in 10 said that much improvement is needed for work and study programs. This result is similar at the University of Manitoba.
- ▶ The proportion of University of Manitoba students who report that *work opportunities on campus* needs improvement is down from 4 in 10 students in 2005 (40%) to just under 3 in 10 students (28%) in 2008.
- ▶ About 4 in 10 students reported that their university needs to improve its *spending on financial aid*. This is the same at the University of Manitoba, although it is down from almost 6 in 10 students in 2005.

□ Students were asked to rank the top three items needing improvement out of the 10 services and facilities assessed.

▶ Nationally, the items most often cited as requiring improvement are:

- *emphasis on teaching excellence* (47%),
- *university spending on financial aid* (41%), and
- *sense of community among students* (33%).

▶ At the University of Manitoba, students most often cite the following as requiring improvement:

- *emphasis on teaching excellence* (64%),
- *university spending on financial aid* (36%), and
- *emphasis on academics* (34%).

▶ Students at the University of Manitoba also identified *emphasis on teaching excellence* as the top priority, but to a much larger extent than students nationally. As shown in Figure 1, about half of students across Canada identify it as one of the top three priorities compared to almost 2 in 3 students at the University of Manitoba.

Table 2: Areas requiring improvement					
	Percent of students who say service requires much/very much improvement				
	All universities	Comparable universities	UofM		
			2008	2005	2002
Academic services					
Use of technology in the classroom	23%	26%	31%	29%	31%
Emphasis on teaching excellence	21%	31%	29%	26%	27%
Work and study programs					
Work study opportunities	32%	38%	33%	43%	35%
Student employment services	29%	32%	33%	35%	25%
Opportunities for study abroad	27%	31%	32%	29%	26%
Work opportunities on campus	27%	29%	28%	40%	32%
Other issues					
University spending on financial aid	43%	47%	42%	56%	46%
Sense of community among students	30%	37%	32%	30%	29%
Opportunities for a social life	25%	26%	23%	-	-
Emphasis on academics	18%	20%	23%	-	-

UofM students most often identified *emphasis on teaching excellence* as a priority for improvement.

Top areas requiring improvement: 2008 CUSC Survey

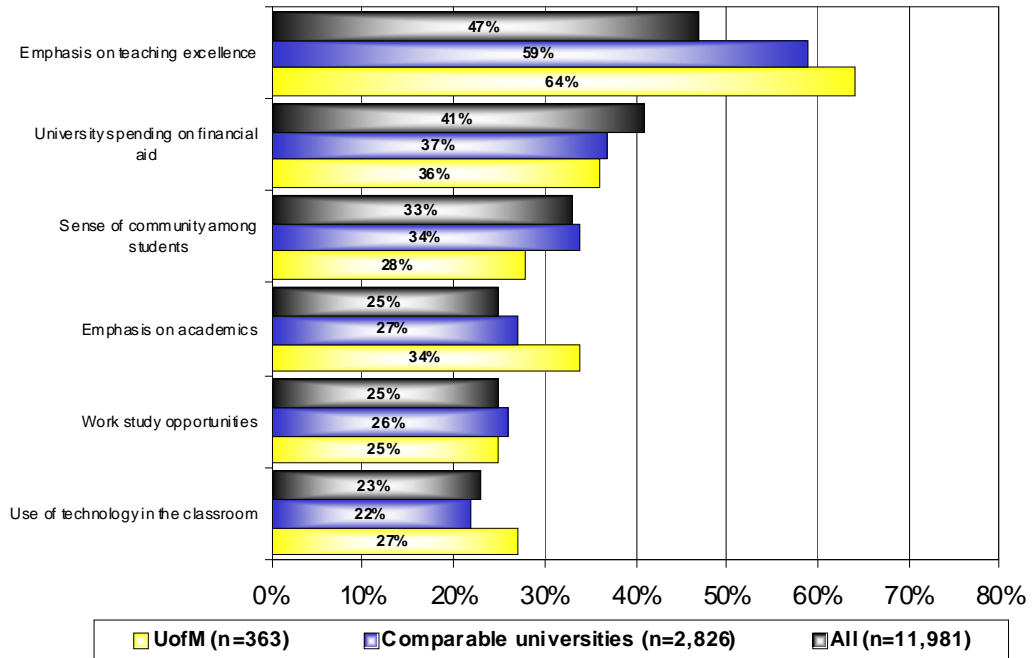


Figure 1