

# Summary of the 2005 Canadian Undergraduate Survey Consortium (CUSC): All Undergraduates

Prepared by the Office of Institutional Analysis and Government Relations

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Lakehead  
UNIVERSITY

## CANADIAN UNDERGRADUATE SURVEY CONSORTIUM (“CUSC”)

### PROTOCOL FOR DATA USE

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

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

1. The purpose of the survey is to produce data that will allow participating institutions to assess their programmes 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. For institutional promotion, recruiting or other public dissemination, rankings may not be used. 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, the researcher is qualified and agrees to acknowledge the ownership of the data by participating universities and to provide the consortium with a copy of any report or publication that is produced. Decisions on such requests will be made by a sub-committee consisting of Dennis Domoney and Garth Wannan with consultation with members of the full steering committee in the case of requests that seem problematic.

Amended May 17, 2001

## **CUSC 2005 Survey: All Undergraduate Students** (conducted from January to March 2005)

The Canadian Undergraduate Survey Consortium (CUSC) is a group of approximately 28 universities and colleges across Canada that conducts student surveys among its participating institutions. The work of the Consortium is coordinated at the University of Manitoba. This year's survey is the eleventh cooperative study undertaken by CUSC and the seventh that Lakehead has participated in. This year 10 Ontario universities were among the 28 participating institutions. Lakehead University is included in Group I comprised of universities offering primarily undergraduate studies and with smaller student populations.

The purpose of the annual survey is to target specific types of students (i.e.: graduating students, undergraduates, first-year students) in order to produce data that will allow participating institutions to assess their programs and services. In the 2004/05 academic term, in conjunction with CUSC, Lakehead University conducted the Undergraduate Student Survey, a comprehensive survey of all undergraduates (full-time and part-time students).

Each of the 22 universities participating in the paper-based survey initially distributed a survey package consisting of a cover letter, questionnaire, and a postage-paid, self-addressed return envelope to a random sampling of 1,000 undergraduate students. This was followed up two weeks later by a reminder letter to all non-respondents. Two weeks after the reminder letter, a final mailing duplicating the original mail-out was sent to all non-respondents. The overall response rate was 45.7%, typical of a survey of this type, and produced a sample of 12,783. The response rate for Lakehead University was 43.4%, our best response to date. This year six of the 28 universities participated in an on-line version of the survey as part of a pilot project.

The protocol for data use, which binds our use and distribution of the report, is inserted at the front of the report.

This year's survey questions to the undergraduates included the following categories:

- *Personal and academic profile*
- *Computer use and access*
- *Current and future employment*
- *Debt and financing of education*
- *Perceptions of university services and facilities*
- *Perceptions of faculty*
- *Greatest improvements needed*
- *University experience*
- *Overall satisfaction*

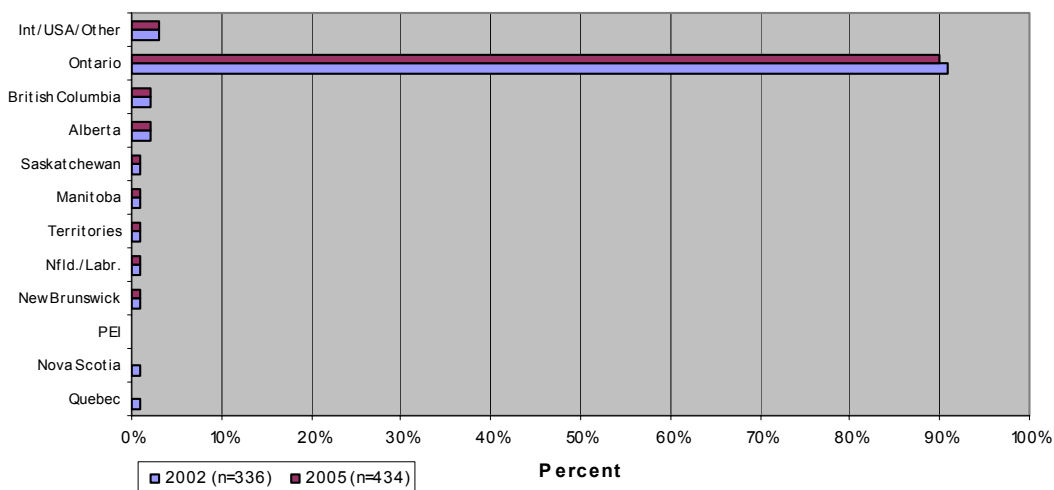
## Profile of Respondents

Lakehead's typical undergraduate respondent is female (59%) and 23 years old. This is slightly older than the overall national profile age of 22. Sixty eight percent of respondents at Lakehead are younger than age 23. Nationally, females represent 63% of all respondents. On average, Lakehead's respondents began their university studies in 2002 and at the time of the survey were registered in year 2.4 of their program. Almost 40% live with their parents while 37% live off campus in rented accommodations. Sixty-one percent live within 5 to 15 minutes walking distance from the University compared to the national average of 36%.

Table 1: Profile of Responding Students		
	Lakehead	
	2005 (n=434)	2002 (n=336)
Average age	23 yrs.	24 yrs.
Female	59%	63%
Male	41%	37%
Aboriginal	7%	8%
Living w/parents	39%	37%
On-campus	13%	18%
Rented housing	37%	35%
Single	62%	57%
Full-time student	88%	87%
Part-time student	12%	13%

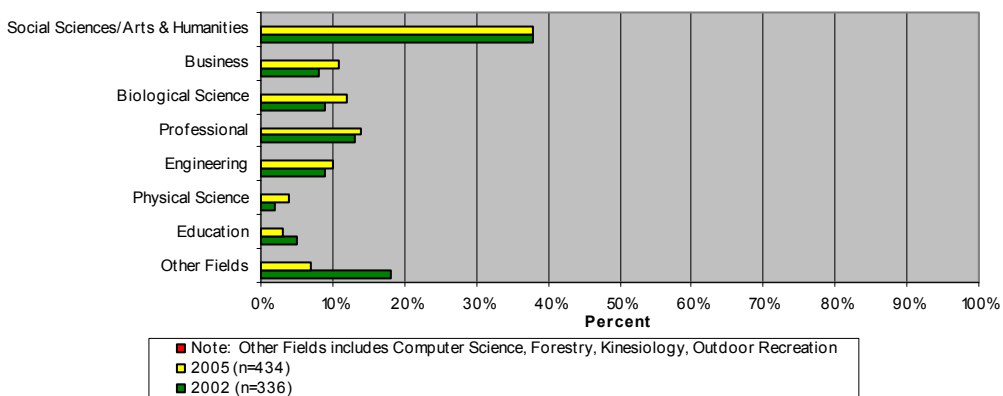
Ninety percent of Lakehead's undergraduate students are from the province of Ontario and 7% are from the rest of Canada. Three percent of Lakehead's undergraduates are International students (USA and other).

**Figure 1: Province of Permanent Residence of Lakehead Respondents**



Five out of 10 students spend an average of 33 hours per week on academic work (in and out of class) and the typical student writes an average of 13 papers/reports during the school year, compared to the national overall average of 11 papers/reports.

Seven percent self-identify as Aboriginal in 2005. In 2002, 8% of Lakehead's respondents self-identified as Aboriginal.

**Figure 2: Major/Subject Area of Concentration - Lakehead**

Eighty-eight percent of Lakehead's respondents are full-time students. Thirty-eight percent of these students are majoring in Social Science and Arts and Humanities disciplines (slightly below the national overall average of 40%), 14% (six points higher than the national overall average) in professional programs (Nursing and Social Work), 16% in Science and Environmental Studies, 10% in Engineering programs, 11% in Business, 3% in Education, and 7% in other fields (Forestry, Outdoor Recreation, Parks and Tourism, Kinesiology, Computer Science). Some 86% plan on completing their degree at Lakehead.

### Computer Use and Access

More than 8 out of 10 students (87%) have used the University's computer facilities and report a satisfaction rate of 85%, equal to the national overall average.

### Current Employment

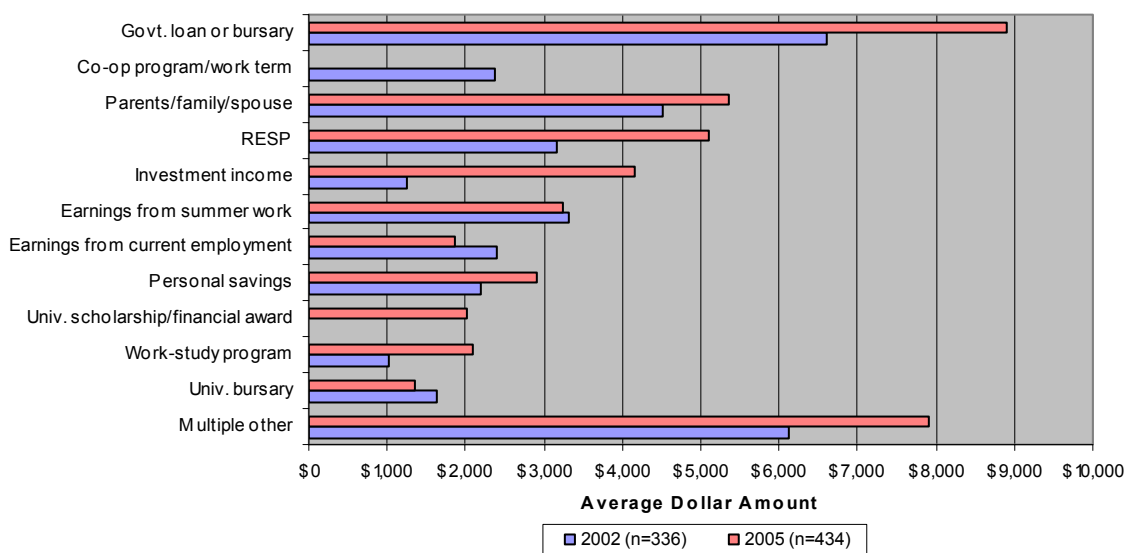
Seven out of 10 students at Lakehead work up to 20 hours per week either on- or off-campus and 29% work more than 20 hours per week. Six percent of those polled have jobs on campus and 2% are employed both on- and off-campus. Lakehead students work an average 19 hours per week compared to the national overall average of 18 hours. More than 6 students in 10 (61%) say that their employment has some negative impact on their academic performance. This compares closely to the national overall average of 64%. Nationally, part-time students (76%) are more likely to be employed than full-time students (50%). On average, these employed students devote 46 hours per week to both their academic work and their job.

Table 2: Career Considerations		
	Lakehead	
	2005 (n=434)	2002 (n=336)
<b>Decided on a Specific Career Field:</b>		
Yes	63%	64%
No	14%	12%
Maybe	24%	24%
<b>Have a current CV or resume:</b>		
Yes	68%	74%
No	30%	26%
<b>Perceived Availability of Job Opportunities:</b>		
Many jobs	33%	49%
Some jobs	41%	32%
Few/very few jobs	10%	10%

## Current Debt and Financing of Education

About one-third of Lakehead's students have debt from student loans with the average amount owing at \$13,814. This is slightly below the overall average of almost \$13,988. Thirty-nine percent of our students have loans from parents/family and financial institutions that average \$9,300. About 4 students in 10 reports having no debt, 1 student in 10 owes less than \$4,000 and 29% owe more than \$12,000. Nationally, on average, fourth-year students are more likely to report debt (59%) than those in first year (44%). Typically, the average amount of debt more than triples over the course of four or more years of study starting at an average of \$4,200 in first year to about \$13,100 for students in their fourth year. The most common sources of financing are parents, family or spouse, earnings from summer work and personal savings. Almost 1 in 3 students at Lakehead receive funding from university scholarships or government loans.

**Figure 3: Financing Sources for Lakehead Respondents**

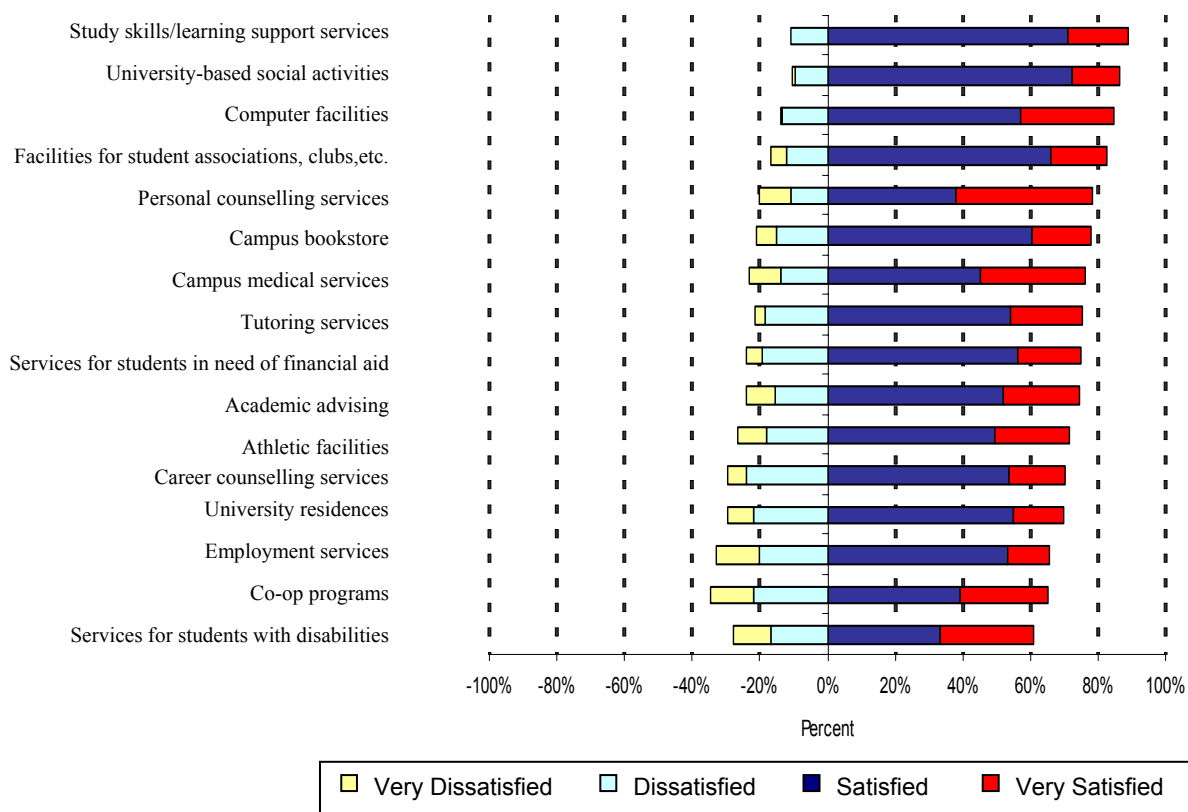


## University Services and Facilities

Students were asked about their perception of and satisfaction with a variety of services and facilities provided by the University. As can be seen in Figure 4, students are most satisfied with study skills and learning support services, computing and counseling services as well as social activities and facilities for student clubs and associations.

Sixty-three percent of Lakehead's undergraduates are satisfied with the availability of courses required for their program, including 18% who are very satisfied. This compares very closely to the national overall average of 63% and 16% respectively. Almost 8 students in 10 among Lakehead's respondents say they are satisfied with the process of registration. Eighty-five percent are satisfied with their personal safety on campus.

Academic Advising was cited as the most commonly used special service (54% of undergraduates) with a 75% satisfaction rate. This was followed by services for students in need of financial aid (used by 41% of students with a 75% satisfaction rate) and tutoring services (about 23% usage with an average 76% rate of satisfaction). Fewer than 1 student in 10 used services for international students, students with disabilities and First Nations students.

**Figure 4: Satisfaction with Lakehead University Facilities**

### Perceptions of Faculty

Almost 9 students in 10 report positive interaction with faculty in the following areas:

- *Most professors are reasonably accessible outside of class to help students.*
- *Professors show sensitivity to racial issues.*
- *Most professors encourage students to participate in class discussions.*

Eighty-one percent of Lakehead's respondents agree or strongly agree that they are satisfied with the quality of teaching that they have received. Some 18% disagree. These figures follow closely the survey's overall results. Almost 8 out of 10 (77%) feel professors treat them as individuals, not just numbers.

### University Experience

Ninety-six percent of students at Lakehead agree that the university treats them fairly, independent of their gender, and about 6 students in 10 are satisfied with the concern shown for them as individuals. Some 82% agree that their learning experience here has been intellectually stimulating and that most university support staff (clerks, secretaries, etc.) are helpful. Some three-quarters feel as if they are part of the university. About one-half of the students feel that they get the run around.

Lakehead students' other suggested improvements include:

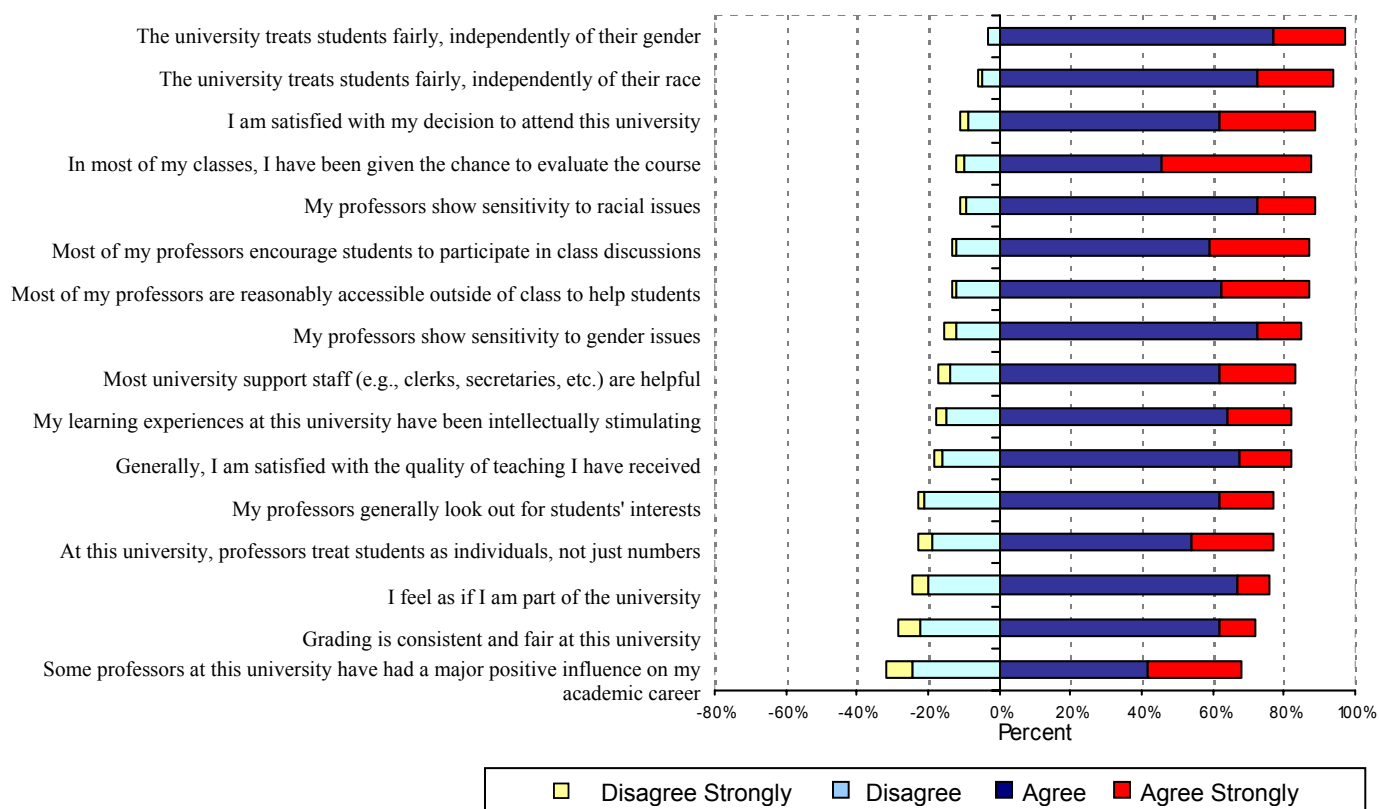
- *Emphasis on teaching ability (39%).*
- *University spending on financial aid (35%).*
- *Use of technology in the classroom (28%).*

Generally, students' involvement on campus in non-academic activities (club, lectures, social events) is limited to about 2 students in 10. Also, some 2 students in 10 at Lakehead report that they most commonly attend home games of athletic teams, which is double the national overall average. Attendance at campus social and cultural events is 20%. Lakehead's undergraduates report an average of 5 hours per week spent on community service or volunteer activities.

## Perceptions of University

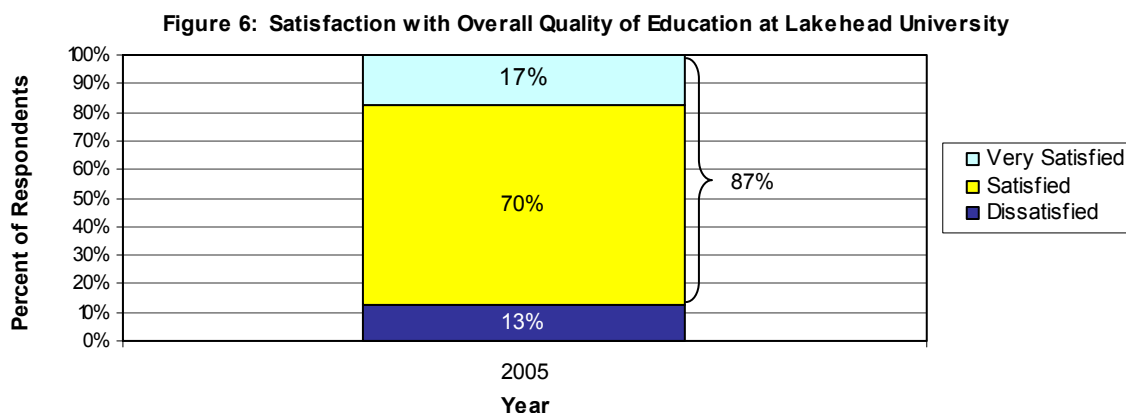
The survey shows that, generally, students at Lakehead University indicate a high level of satisfaction with their experiences at Lakehead, as seen in Figure 5. For example, 89% indicate that they are satisfied or very satisfied with their decision to attend Lakehead.

**Figure 5: Perceptions of Lakehead University**





Approximately 87% are satisfied (with two out of ten that are very satisfied) with the overall quality of education at this university.



Students indicated a higher than average level of satisfaction with:

- *Average size of classes.* Nine students out of 10.
- *Personal safety on campus.* Nine students out of 10.
- *Study skills/learning support services.* Nine students out of 10.
- *Personal counseling services.* Eight students in 10.
- *Study space.* Seven out of 10.

Five in 10 students at Lakehead report that they receive instruction that is strictly classroom-based (no online supports) in at least four of their courses. This compares to 3 in 10 students nationally. Thirty-two percent of Lakehead respondents have 2-3 courses in which instruction in classroom-based with online supports (i.e. study notes, lecture notes), 14% have had one course that is a mix of classroom and online instruction and 17% have had at least one course that was instructed completely online (as compared to only 7% nationally). Lakehead students were most satisfied (94%) with classroom instruction with online supports and reported that this is their preferred (62%) type of instruction.

<b>Table 3: Type of Instruction</b>	
	<b>Lakehead</b>
	2005 (n=434)
<b>Satisfaction Rate:</b>	
Classroom Instruction with On-Line Supports	94%
Mix of Classroom and On-Line Instruction	85%
Strictly Classroom-Based	85%
On-Line Instruction	74%
<b>Preferred Type of Instruction:</b>	
Classroom Instruction with On-Line Supports	62%
Strictly Classroom-Based	23%
Mix of Classroom and On-Line Instruction	10%
On-Line Instruction	5%

Virtually all of Lakehead's respondents said they have used the campus bookstore (97%), followed by usage of on-campus computer facilities (87%), food services (78%), parking facilities (68%) and athletic facilities (65%). However, slightly less than 8 out of 10 students (78%) are satisfied with the campus bookstore. Students are most satisfied with university-based social activities (86%), computer facilities (85%) and facilities for student associations and clubs (83%).

In general, the survey data shows that students appear to link quality of education with the concern shown by their university for them as individuals. There is a wealth of information in the report that should assist us in our interaction with students.