

# Graduating Student Survey 2021

Highlights of Survey Results

Toronto  
Metropolitan  
University



# About the Survey

- Every three years, Toronto Metropolitan University conducts a survey of graduating students as part of the Canadian University Survey Consortium.
- This student survey is conducted across the country by more than 30 universities. TMU has been a member of this group since 1997.
- Students are asked about **themselves**, their **satisfaction** with their academic and university experiences, as well as their **expectations and plans for the future**.
- In 2021, over 5,800 TMU students were contacted, and 2,418 students completed the survey, yielding a response rate of 42%.
- This survey was conducted during a year when almost all learning was taking place online, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This cohort graduated during the pandemic.
- These results will be posted online at <https://torontomu.ca/university-planning/>.

# About the Survey

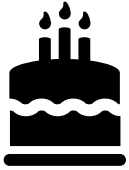
- Broadly, the survey data collected was representative of what we know about TMU students from enrolment data.
- Women and Faculty of Community Services students were overrepresented in the sample population. Part-time students and Ted Rogers School of Management students were underrepresented.

Response	2021 CUSC Results	%	2021 Institutional Data*	%
<b>Gender</b>				
Male	818	34%	5,551	45%
Female	1,583	65%	6,554	54%
Other Gender Identity/Not Reported	17	<1%	99	1%
<b>Full-Time/Part-Time</b>				
Full Time	1,622	67%	7,412	61%
Part Time	796	33%	4,792	39%
<b>Faculty</b>				
Arts	291	12%	1,351	11%
The Creative School	394	16%	1,519	12%
Community Services	670	28%	2,473	20%
Engineering and Architectural Science	342	14%	2,115	17%
Science	197	8%	1,039	9%
Ted Rogers School of Management	524	22%	3,707	30%
<b>Total Respondents</b>	<b>2,418</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>12,204</b>	<b>100%</b>

# Student Profile



# Age, Family Educational Background, Residency



**Age:** TMU graduates reported an average age of 23.2, with 80% of students under the age of 24.

21 and under: 47% | 22 to 24: 36% | 25 to 29: 10% | 30 and older: 8%



**Family Educational Background:** 66% of respondents had parents who completed a post-secondary credential.

High School or Less: 19% | Incomplete Post-Secondary: 11% | College/CEGEP: 17% | University or Professional School: 35% | Graduate Degree: 14% | Other response: 3%\*

\*Remainder of respondents said “other”, indicated that they did not know, or did not respond to the question.



**Residency:** 4% of respondents were international students.

All Participating Universities

24.2

Average age

72%

Had parents who have completed postsecondary

7%

International

# Living Arrangements, Transportation



**Living Arrangements:** 71% of respondents lived with parents, guardians, or relatives (compared to 63% in 2018). 4% had children of their own.



**Transportation:** 18% of respondents said that they did not attend campus (likely because of covid-19 pandemic – not a response option in 2018). 57% commuted using public transportation (compared to 73% in 2018).

**Public Transportation: 57% | Solo Vehicle: 11% | Carpool: 1% | Walk: 10% | Bicycle: 1% | Other: 1% | Don't attend campus: 18%**

All Participating Universities

52%

Respondents living with parents, guardians, relatives

28%

Use of public transportation

# Racial Identity

- 67% of undergraduate students graduating in 2021 self-reported belonging to a racialized group (compared to 43% across all CUSC-participating universities).
- 11% of respondents self-identified as belonging to more than one racial group.



\*Japanese, <1%

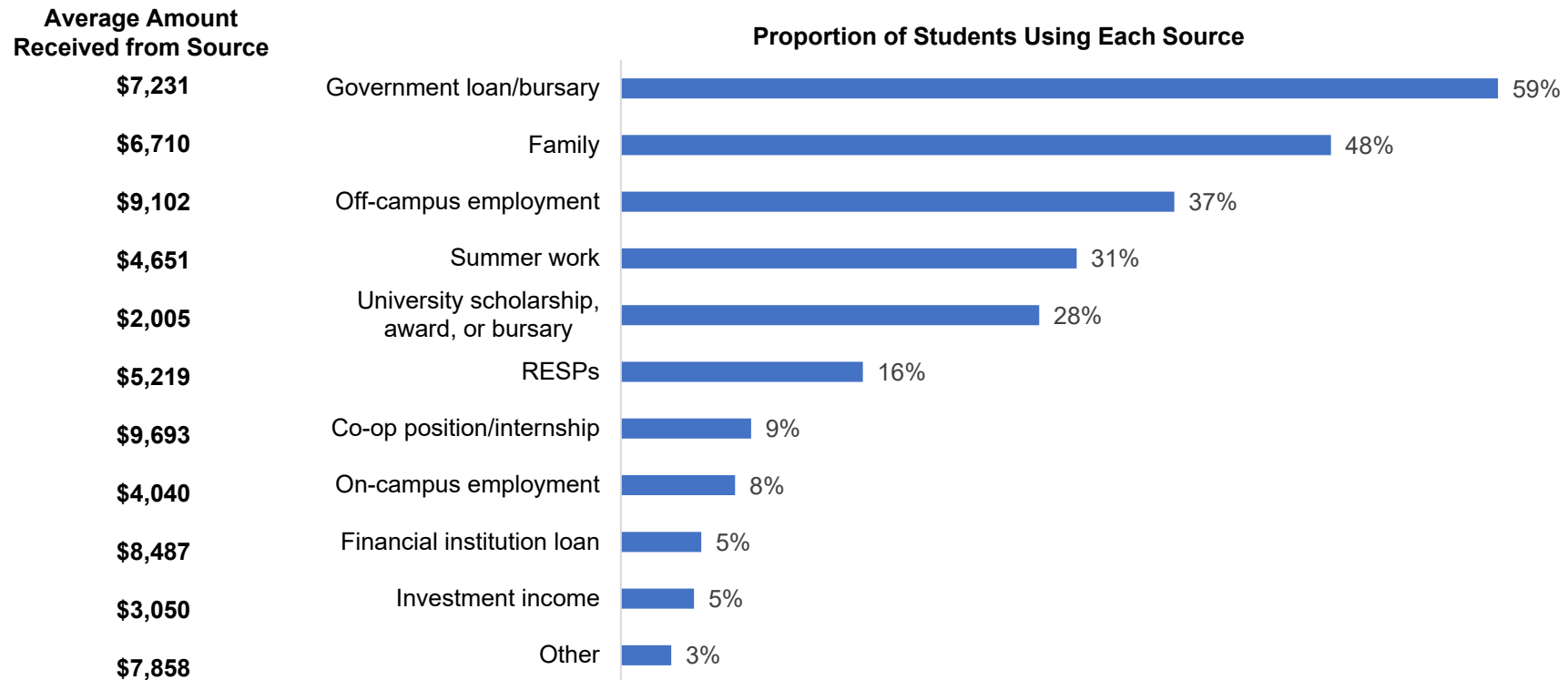
# Disability and Mental Health

- 25% of total survey respondents indicated that they had a disability (compared with 27% across all participating institutions).
- Of those respondents:
  - 63% identified a mental health condition
  - 19% identified Attention Deficit Disorder
  - 14% identified learning/memory disabilities
  - 11% identified a chronic condition
  - 7% reported more than one condition
- 28% of participants with disabilities reported significant impact on their daily activities (that is, their daily activities were always limited by their disability/impairment).



# Financing

- Students were asked to report which sources of income they were using to pay for their university education during the current academic year (note that students could report more than one source of income).
- The graph shows the proportion of students that used each source of income to pay for their studies, as well as the average amount received from that source.



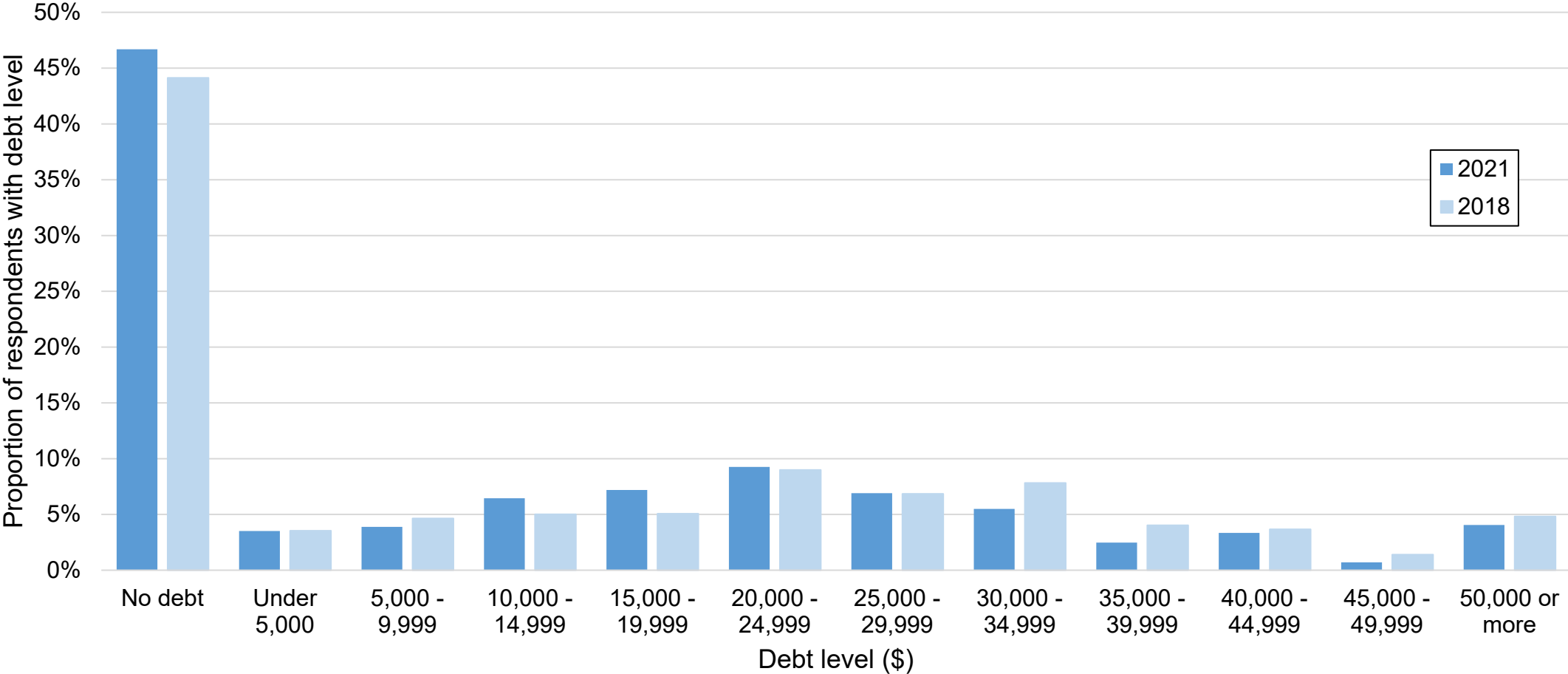
# Employment

- 59% of students reported being employed while completing their studies (down from 67% in 2018). Students who were employed worked an average of 21 hours per week (up significantly from the previous cohort of graduates and from the average across all participating institutions).
- An additional 29% indicated that they were not employed but were looking for work (up from 19% in 2018).
- Unsurprisingly, students who worked 21 hours or more per week were more likely to report a negative impact on their studies than students who worked 20 hours per week or fewer.

# Student Debt

- More than half of graduating TMU students acquired repayable loans to help finance their education.
- Average debt for all graduating students was \$13,109 (median: \$4,194) – note that this calculation includes students with no debt. This amount is significantly lower than debt of TMU respondents in 2018 (average: \$14,583) but not different from the average for all CUSC respondents.
- Average debt amongst all graduating students with debt was \$24,590 (median: \$21,500). This amount is significantly lower than the debt of TMU respondents with debt in 2018 (average: \$26,140) and \$4,000 lower than the average across all CUSC-participating institutions.

# Distribution of Student Debt (\$)



# Student Success and Skills

# TMU's Contribution to Skills and Development

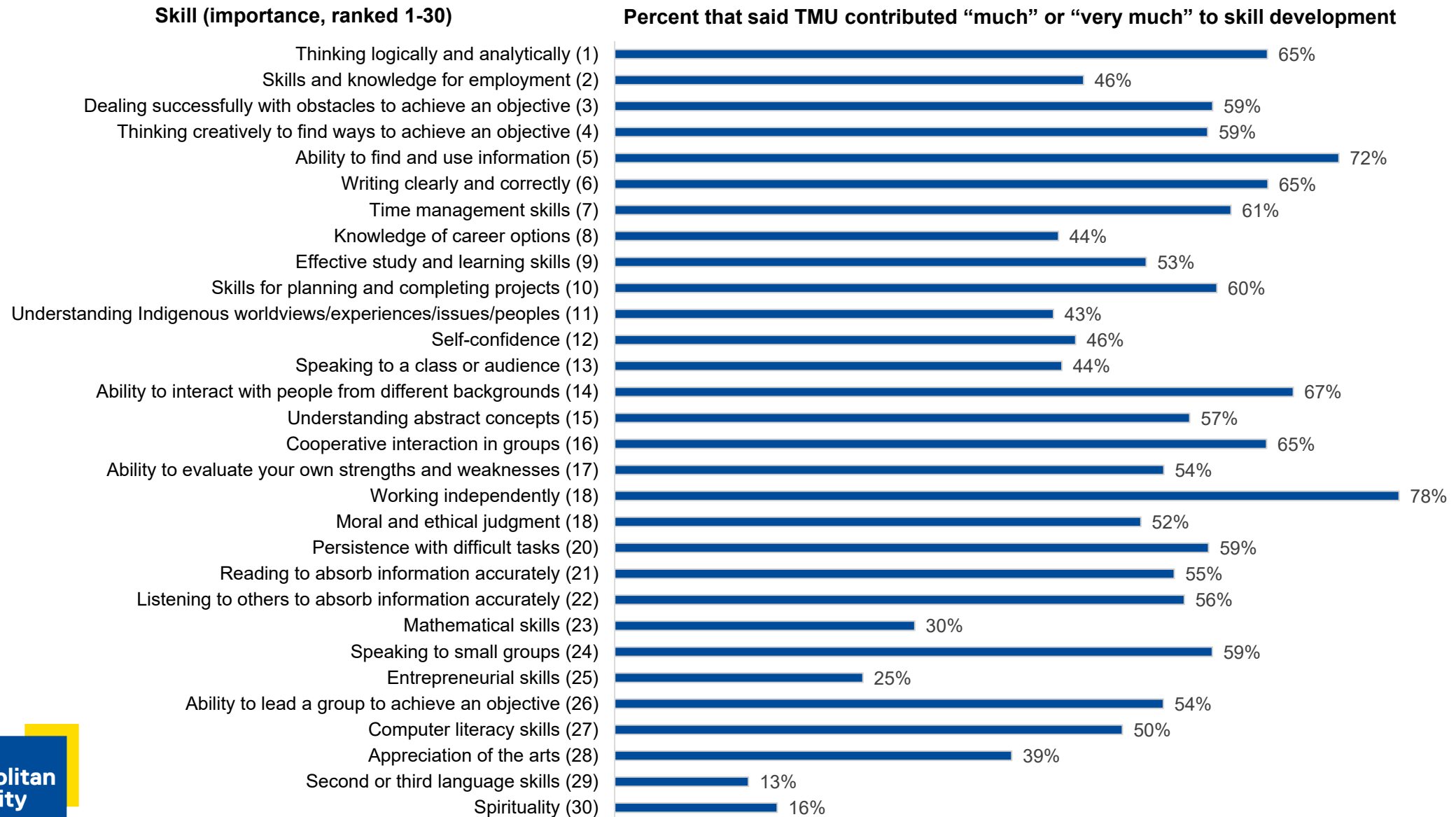
- Graduating students felt that TMU had contributed substantially to their skills and personal development in a variety of areas.
- Respondents were asked to review a series of 30 skills, select their top three in terms of importance, and rate the degree to which their experience at the university had contributed some, much, or very much to these skills.

Five most important skills as identified by TMU respondents, GSS 2021

<b>Ranking of <u>importance</u> of skill</b>	<b>Skill</b>	<b>% of students indicating that TMU had contributed to this skill</b>
1	Thinking logically and analytically	93%
2	Skills and knowledge for employment	78%
3	Dealing successfully with obstacles to achieve an objective	89%
4	Thinking creatively to find ways to achieve an objective	86%
5	Ability to find and use information	94%











# TMU's Contribution to Skills and Development



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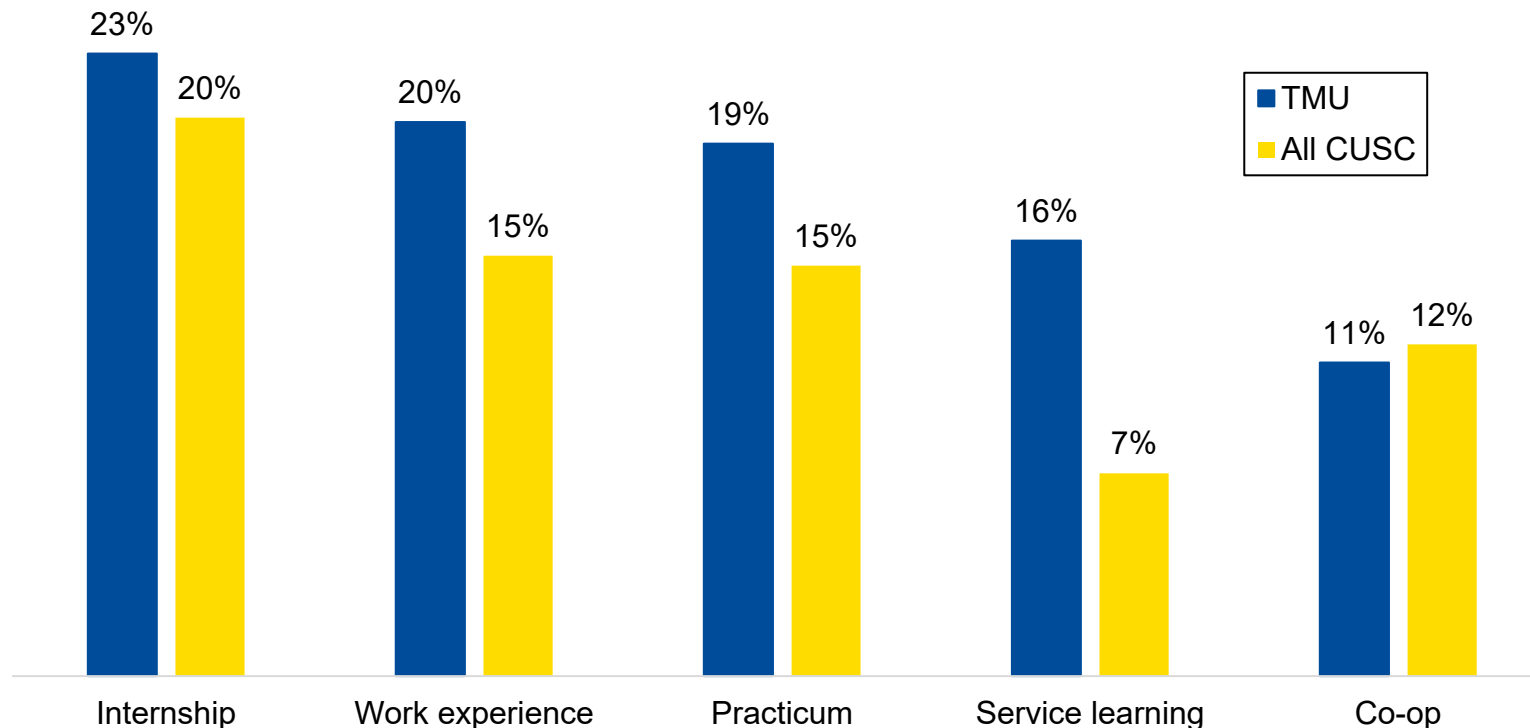
- The ratings below represent the proportion of students that said TMU had contributed “much” or “very much” to the development of their skills.
- Skills below were significantly different from the average (**higher** or **lower**) for all CUSC-participating institutions and were also among the 10 most important skills.

	Skill	TMU	CUSC
	Skills & knowledge for employment	46%	42%
	Time management skills	61%	58%
	Knowledge of career options	44%	37%

	Skill	TMU	CUSC
	Ability to find & use information	72%	76%
	Thinking logically & analytically	65%	71%
	Writing clearly & correctly	65%	68%
	Dealing successfully with obstacles to complete an objective	59%	62%
	Effective study & learning skills	53%	58%

# Experiential Learning

- 63% of students reported participating in some form of experiential learning at some point during their program, compared with 50% overall at CUSC-participating institutions.
- Internships were the most common form of experiential learning at TMU (23%), followed by work experience (20%) and practica (19%) – note that students could select multiple options.



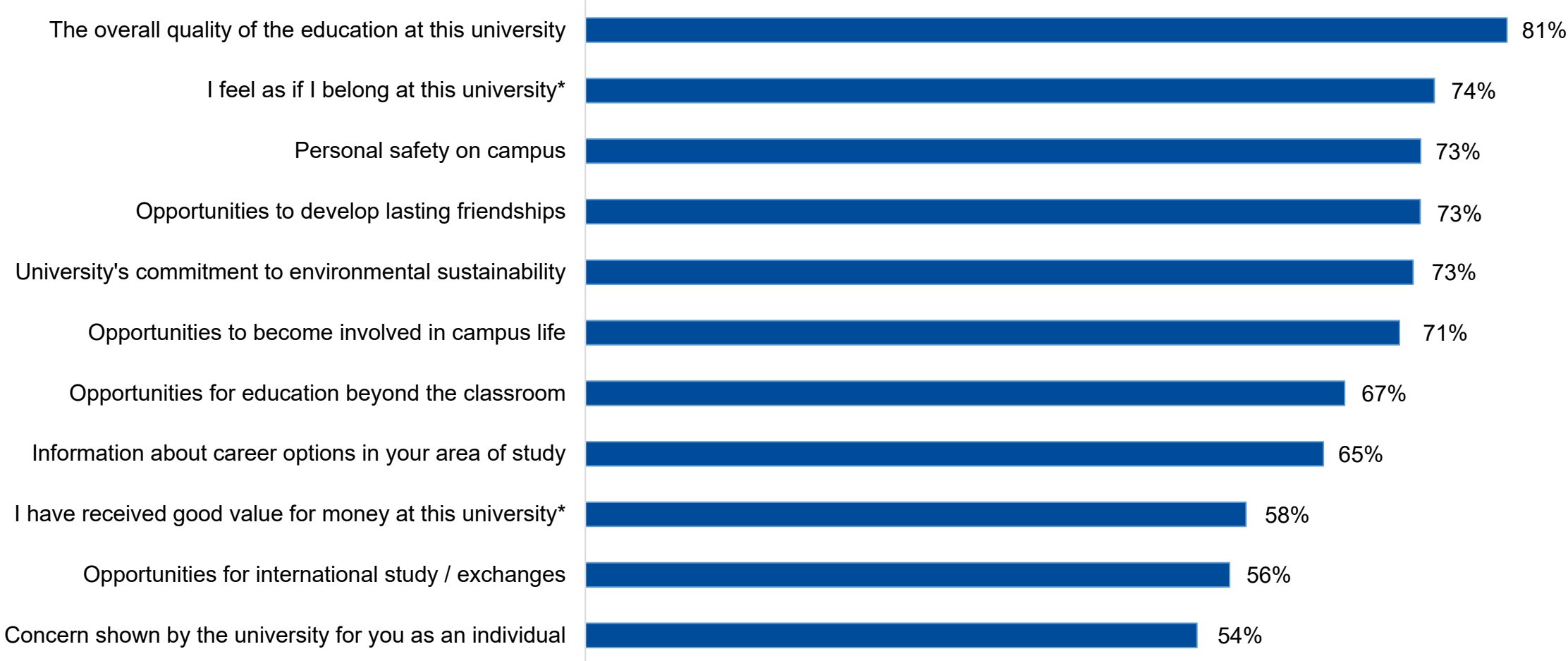
# Student Experience

# Satisfaction with University Experience

- The majority of students were satisfied with their experience at TMU.
  - 77% said that TMU met or exceeded their expectations, compared to 80% in the 2018 round of the survey.
- Students were happiest with the **quality of education** at the university (81% were satisfied or very satisfied). Students also reported a strong **sense of belonging** (74% agreed or strongly agreed that they belonged at TMU).

# Satisfaction with University Experience

Percent that were satisfied/very satisfied with their experience



Note: questions with an asterisk (\*) used different scales (agree/disagree) versus other questions in this section (satisfied/dissatisfied). Some questions were also edited slightly for brevity.



# Student Perceptions of Instructors

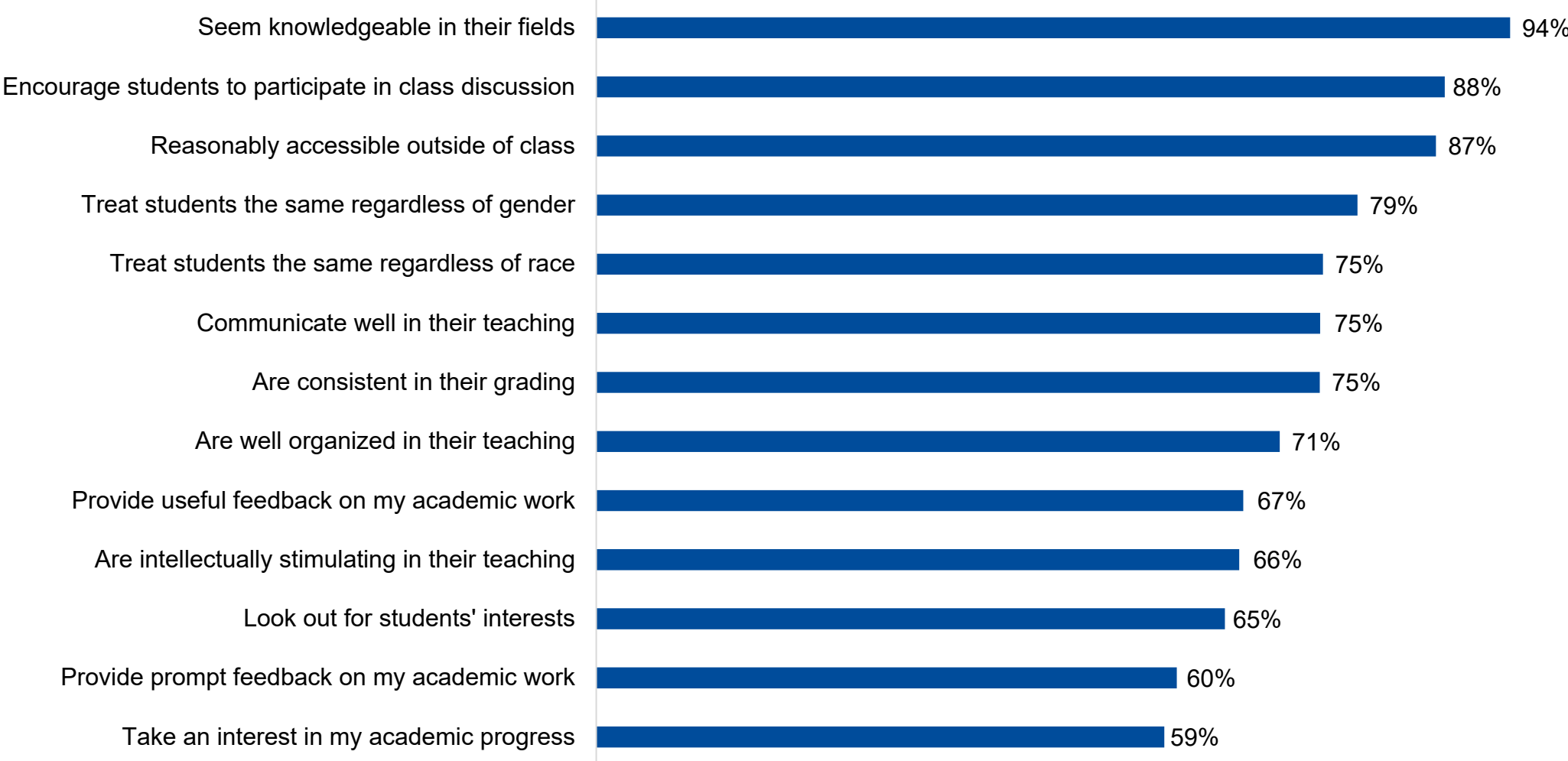
- Students were presented with a series of instructor characteristics and were asked to rank their importance and the degree to which their instructors exhibited them.
- The majority of students were satisfied with the five most important instructor characteristics, with the highest being knowledge of the field.
- While the majority of students were satisfied with all qualities of their instructors, ratings were lower than in 2018. These ratings were also lower than the average for CUSC-participating institutions.

**Five most important instructor characteristics as identified by TMU respondents, GSS 2021**

<b>Ranking of <u>importance</u> to students</b>	<b>Instructor characteristic</b>	<b>% of students agreeing that their instructors demonstrated this characteristic</b>
1	Communicate well in their teaching	75%
2	Are well organized in their teaching	71%
3	Seem knowledgeable in their field	94%
4	Provide useful feedback on my academic work	68%
5	Are intellectually stimulating in their teaching	66%

# Student Perceptions of Instructors

Percent that agreed/strongly agreed with the statement

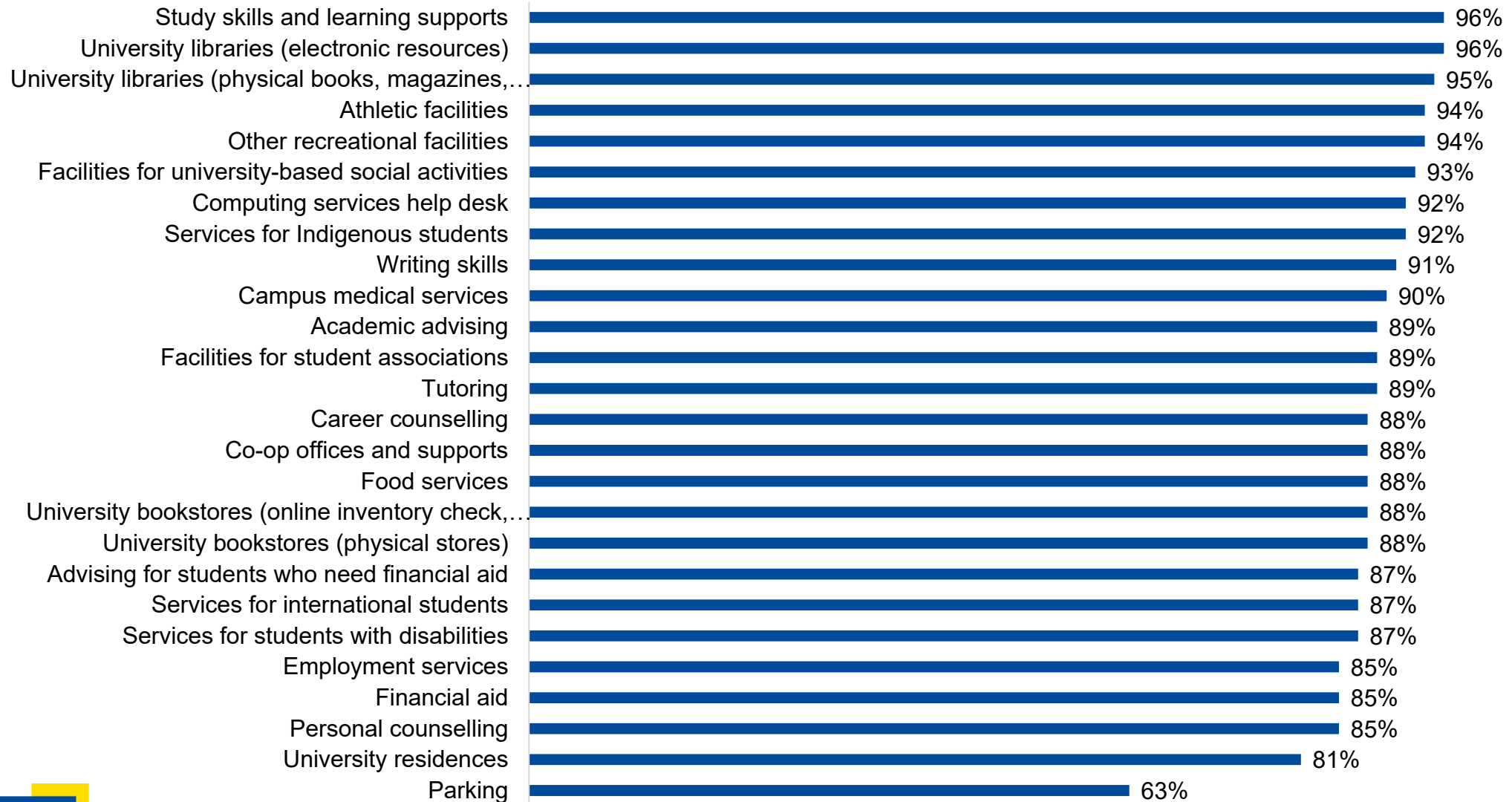


# Services for Students

- Students were asked about their use of a range of academic, student life, and other services.
  - The services or facilities used by the greatest proportion of students included university libraries (physical and online resources), university bookstores, financial aid services, and academic advising.
- When asked about satisfaction with university services they had used, students rated all services at **80% or higher** (exception: parking).
- TMU students were more satisfied with career counselling, academic advising, food services, and parking than their counterparts at other CUSC-participating universities. However, they were less satisfied with financial aid services and university bookstores than their peers.

# Satisfaction with Student Services

Percent that were satisfied/very satisfied with their experience

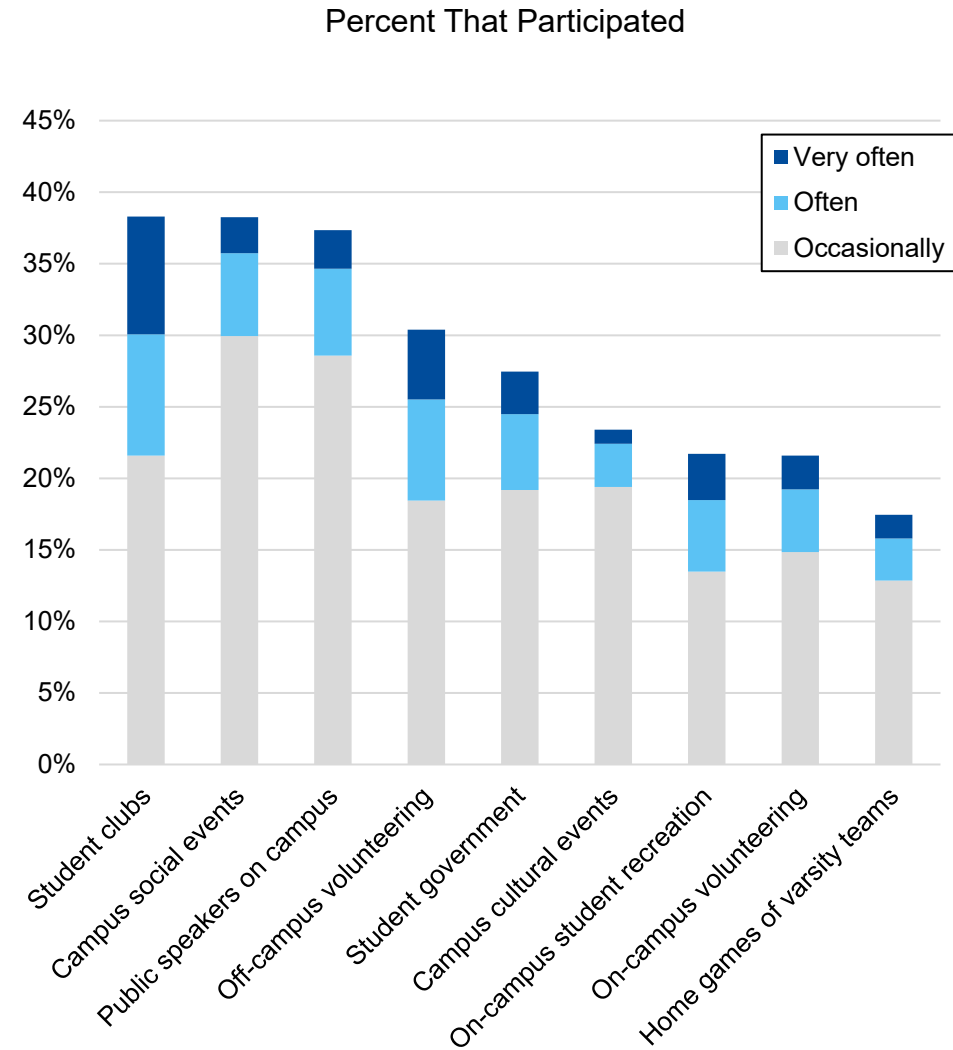


Includes satisfied and very satisfied respondents.

\*Note that responses were only included in the satisfaction ratings if students had reported using the service.

# Involvement in Co-Curricular Activities

- The majority of students (69%) participated in some form of co-curricular activity since the previous September.
- Of the campus activities that students had been involved in over the past year, student clubs, campus social events, and guest speakers were the most popular.



# Plans for the Future

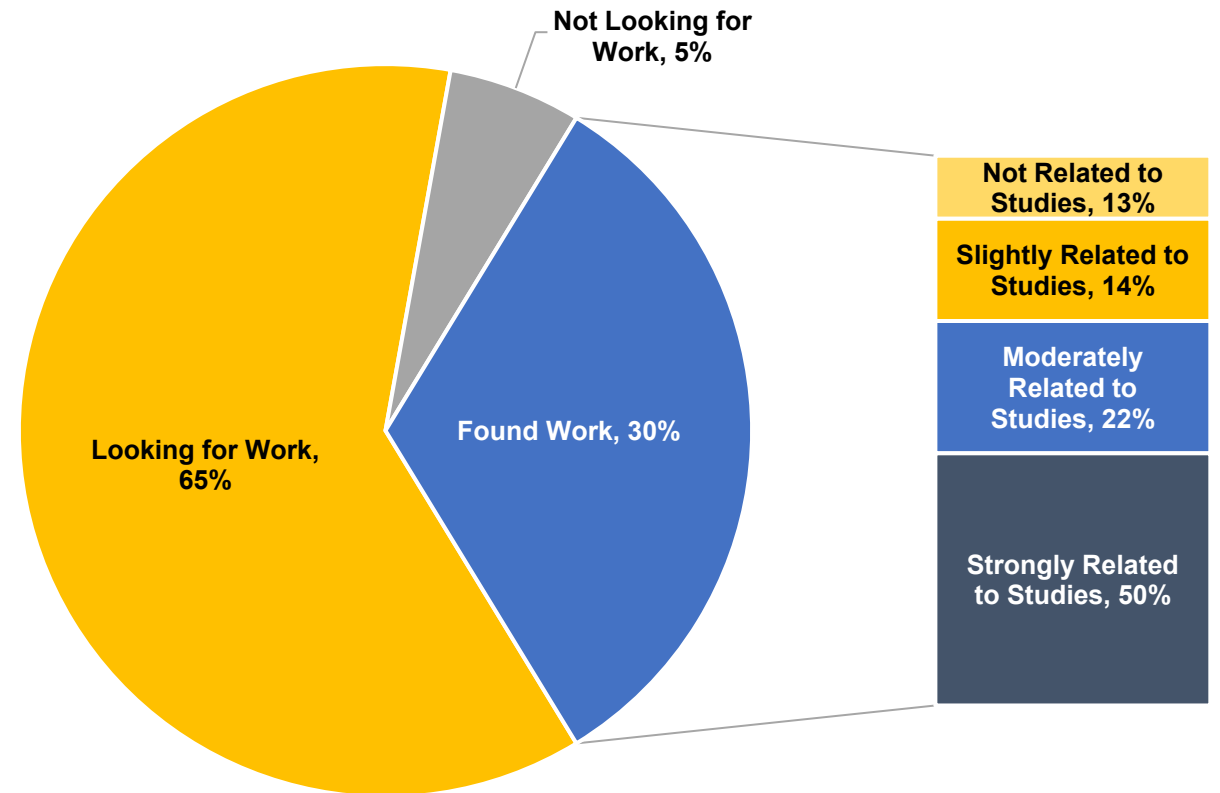


# Career Preparation

- TMU students were knowledgeable about their future career options.
  - 70% of students indicated that they either had a specific career in mind after graduation (32%) or several possible career choices (38%).
  - 73% of students indicated that they knew their career options either “very” or “fairly” well. Only 3% of students indicated that they did not know what their career options were.
- The vast majority of students undertook some form of activity to prepare for a career. Of students surveyed:
  - 83% had developed a resume.
  - 49% had worked in their chosen field of study.
  - 30% had volunteered in their chosen field of study.
  - 23% had met with a career counsellor.
  - 12% had a career mentor.
- The majority of students also talked to their friends and family about employment and career goals (consultation with professors was significantly lower than in previous surveys).

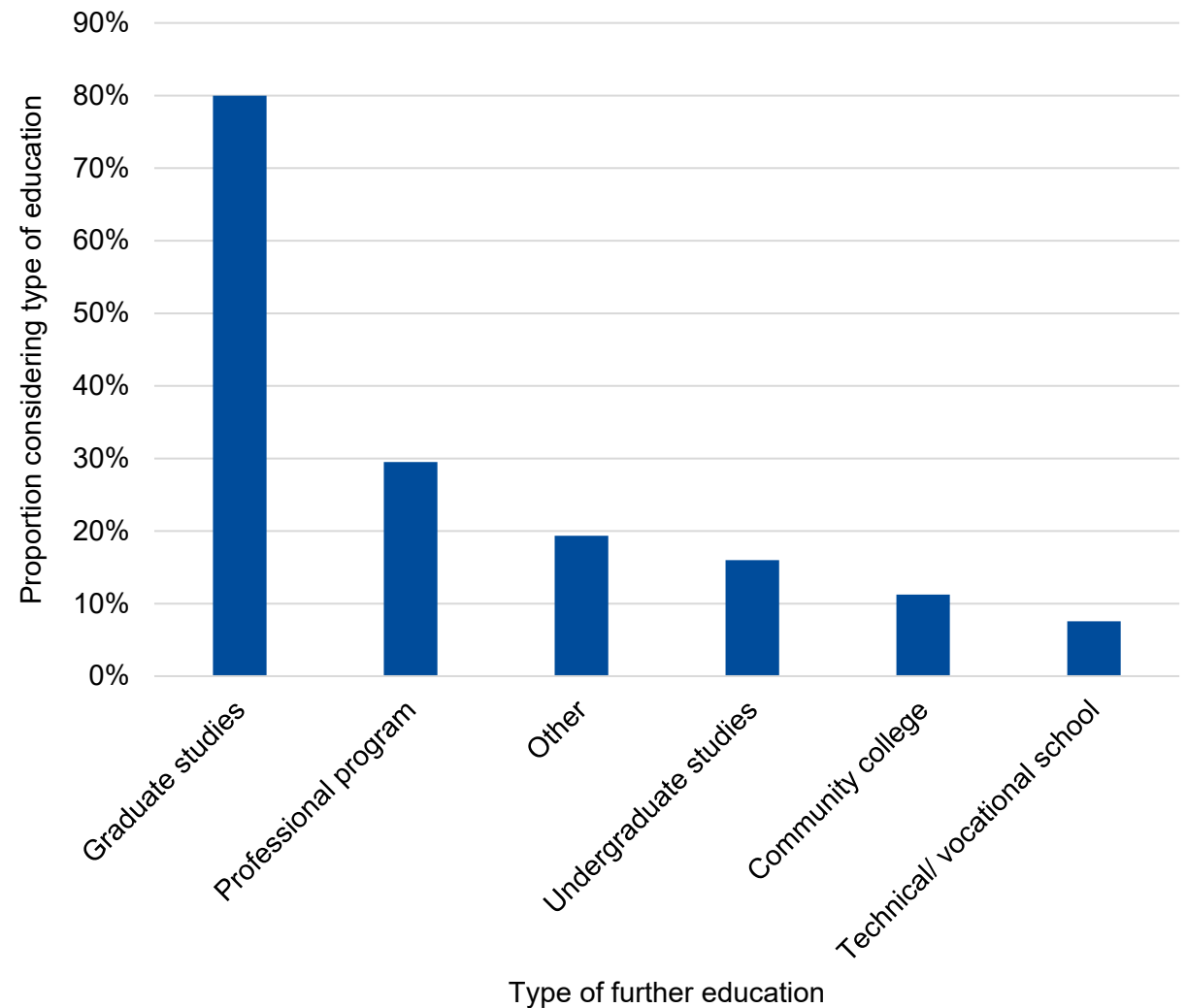
# Future Employment

- 30% of respondents indicated that they had employment arranged for after graduation at the time of the survey – down only slightly from 2018 (note that the survey was done in February/March 2021, prior to graduation).
- 72% of students who had jobs lined up indicated that their job was “strongly” or “moderately” related to the knowledge and skills they learned during their studies (bottom two boxes in the graphic on the right).
- The most common ways that students found their jobs were workplace experience in program (21%), direct contact with an employer (19%), or a jobs website (17%).



# Further Education

- 62% of TMU graduates planned to pursue further education within the next five years, most of whom were considering graduate school (80%). Full results are shown in the graph to the right.
- 32% of TMU students who intended to pursue further education planned to do so at TMU:
  - 28% in graduate school.
  - 7% in a professional program.
  - 5% in further undergraduate study.



# Conclusions

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- TMU's graduating students are a culturally and economically diverse group.
- This survey was conducted among a cohort that had been learning online and graduated at the height of the pandemic.
- Students largely had a positive impression of their time at TMU, both in terms of skills and competencies gained, and quality of student experience. However, results were lower than in previous years for many questions, perhaps due in some part to the pandemic.
- Students were happiest with the quality of education at the university and reported a strong sense of belonging.
- Students perceived their instructors as knowledgeable, were highly satisfied with the quality of the services at the university, and generally felt that the university met/exceeded their expectations.
- Many students took active steps to pursue a career or further education post-graduation, and most participated in some form of experiential learning over the course of their studies.

# Further Information

Questions and comments on these survey results can be directed to the University Planning Office:

<https://www.torontomu.ca/university-planning/>