

# CUSC-TMU First Year Student Survey

Highlights of the 2022 Survey Results

Toronto  
Metropolitan  
University



## About the Survey

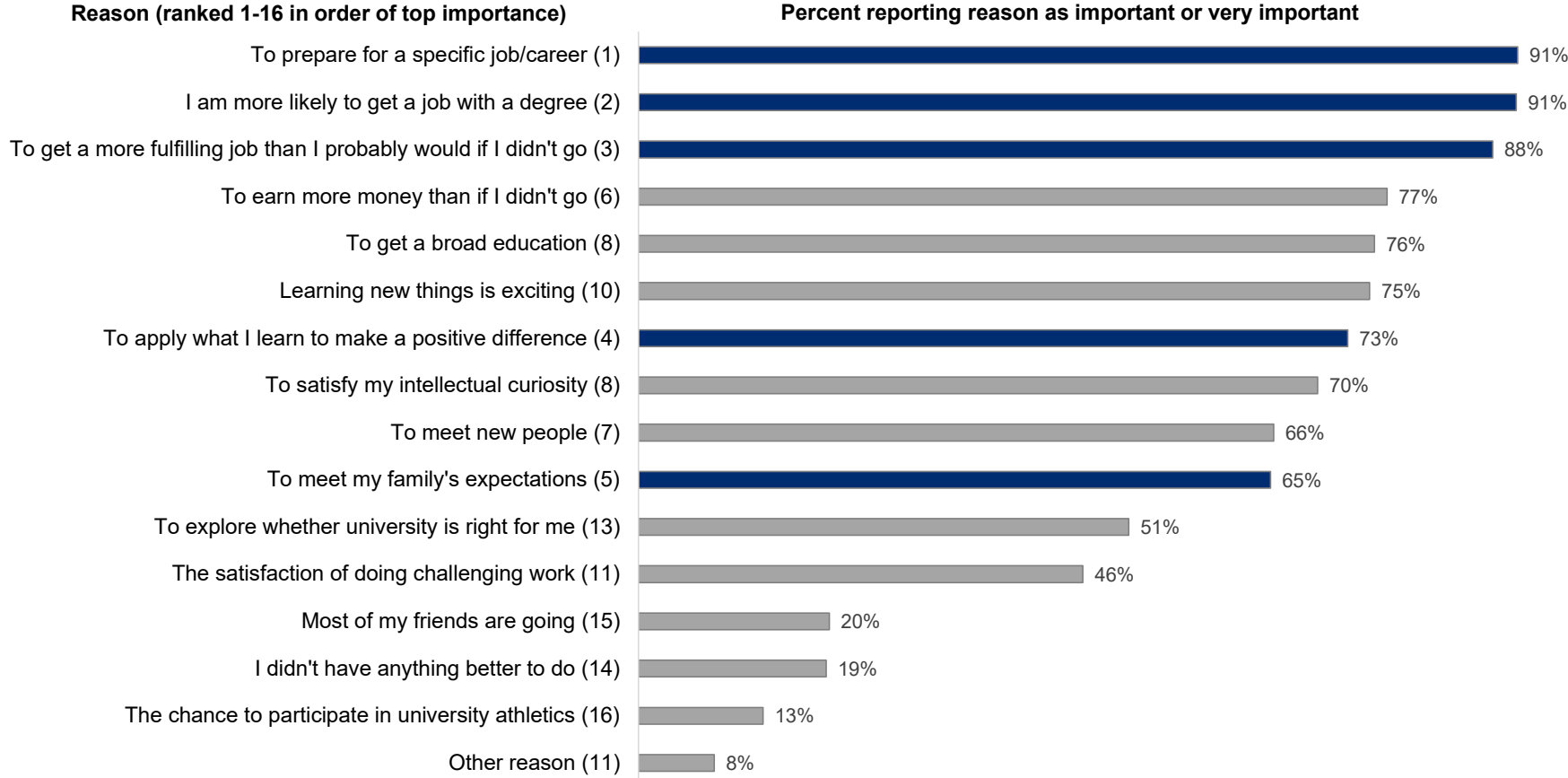
- Every three years, Toronto Metropolitan University (“TMU”) conducts a survey of first-year undergraduate students as part of the Canadian University Survey Consortium.
- The survey is conducted across the country by over 40 universities. TMU has been a member of this group for the past 20 years.
- Students are asked about their decision to attend TMU and their experience upon arriving.
- In 2022, approximately 2,000 students were contacted, and 615 students completed the survey – a response rate of 30.3%.

# Why They Decided to Attend

# Reasons for Attending University

- Students were asked to rank the importance of certain reasons that factored into their decision to attend university.
- For TMU respondents, the reasons rated as important by the highest proportion of students pertained to career or finances:
  - Preparing for a specific career;
  - To earn more money;
  - Higher likelihood of getting a job; and
  - Higher likelihood of a more fulfilling job.
- Earning money was a stronger motivator than in 2019, by approximately 6 percentage points.
- Students were also asked to identify which single reason was the most important to them:
  - As in recent years (and for all participating institutions), the top reason was to prepare for a specific career (28%).
  - The 5 reasons that were identified as most important are highlighted in blue in Figure 1.

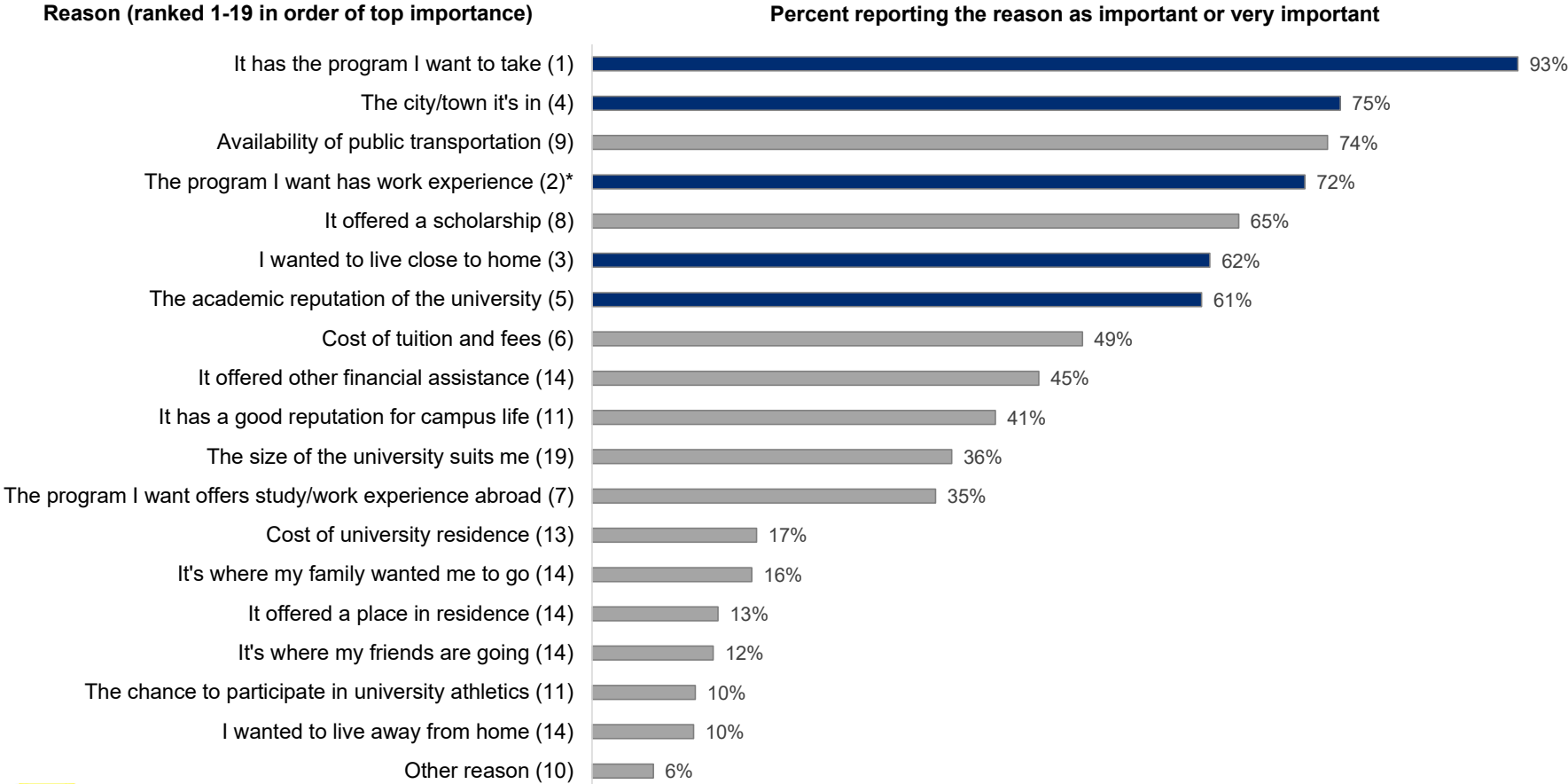
# Figure 1: Reasons for Attending University



# Reasons for Attending TMU

- Almost all the respondents at TMU applied to other universities besides TMU (compared with 70% at all CUSC-participating universities).
  - Three-quarters of TMU students reported that the university was their first choice (fewer than the CUSC average, at 80%).
- Students were asked to identify the importance of various reasons to attend TMU, as well as selecting the reason they found most important.
  - The most important reason was the availability of the program that the students wanted.
  - Other top reasons related to the city/town where the university was located, having work-integrated learning, being closer to home, and the university's academic reputation.
  - The 5 most important reasons are highlighted in blue in Figure 2.

# Figure 2: Reasons for Attending TMU



\* Edited slightly for brevity



# Top reasons for attending...

Which of the reasons listed is the most important to you?  
(from those listed in Figure 1 and Figure 2)

## University in general

1. To prepare for a specific career
2. I am more likely to get a job with a degree
3. To get a more fulfilling job than I probably would if I didn't go
4. To apply what I learn to make a positive difference
5. To meet my family's expectations

## TMU in particular

1. It has the program I want to take
2. The program I want has a co-op, practicum, or other work experience
3. I wanted to live close to home
4. The city/town it's in
5. The academic reputation of the university

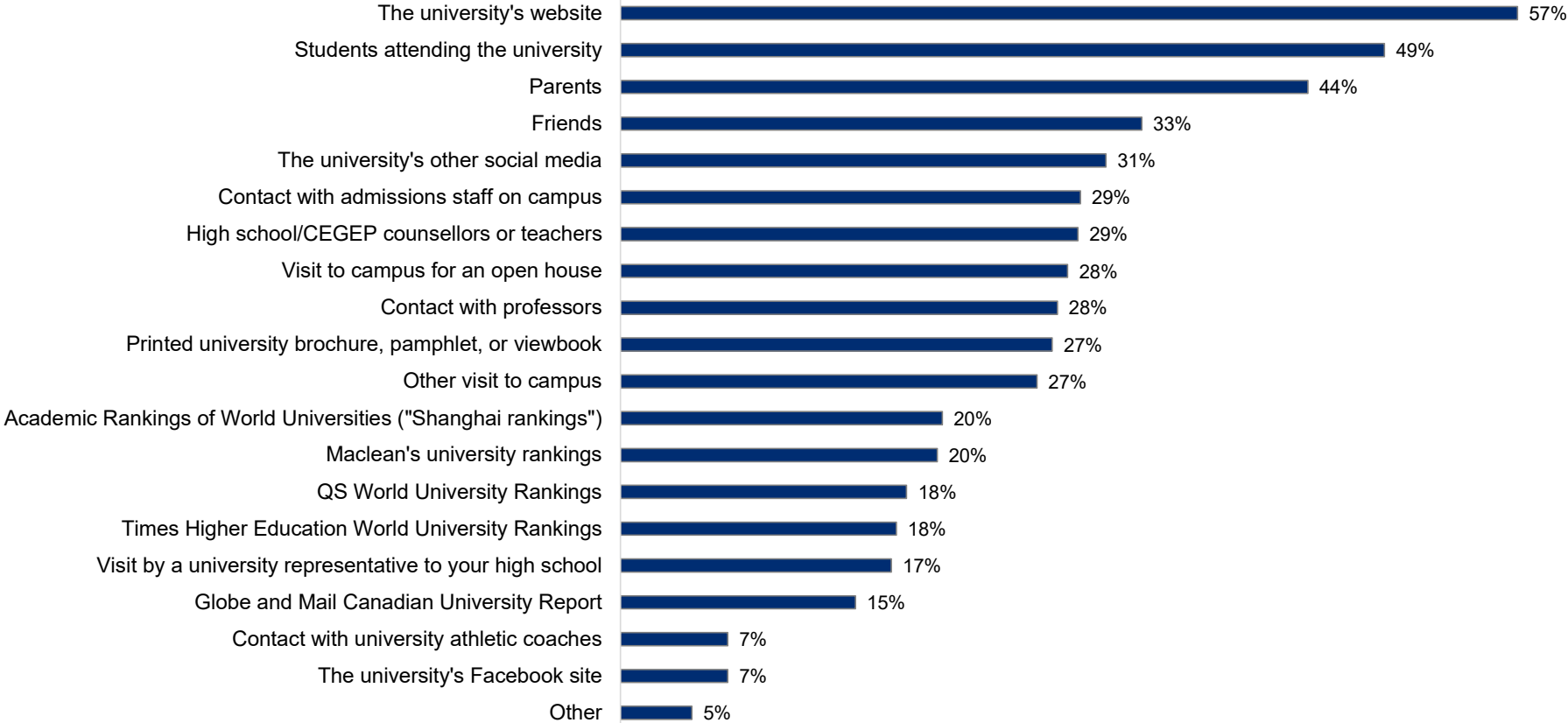


# Resources for Decision-Making

- Students were asked what resources they used when making their decision about which university to attend.
- The top influence was the university's website, with over half of students indicating that it was an important or very important resource (57%).
- Interpersonal influences, like parents, friends, and students attending the university, were also key factors.
- Activities that involved going to the campus (open houses, other campus visits) and visits from university recruiters were less important for these students who began in 2021-22 (during the pandemic) than the survey respondents in 2019.

# Figure 3: Influences in Decision-Making

Percent reporting the factor as important or very important



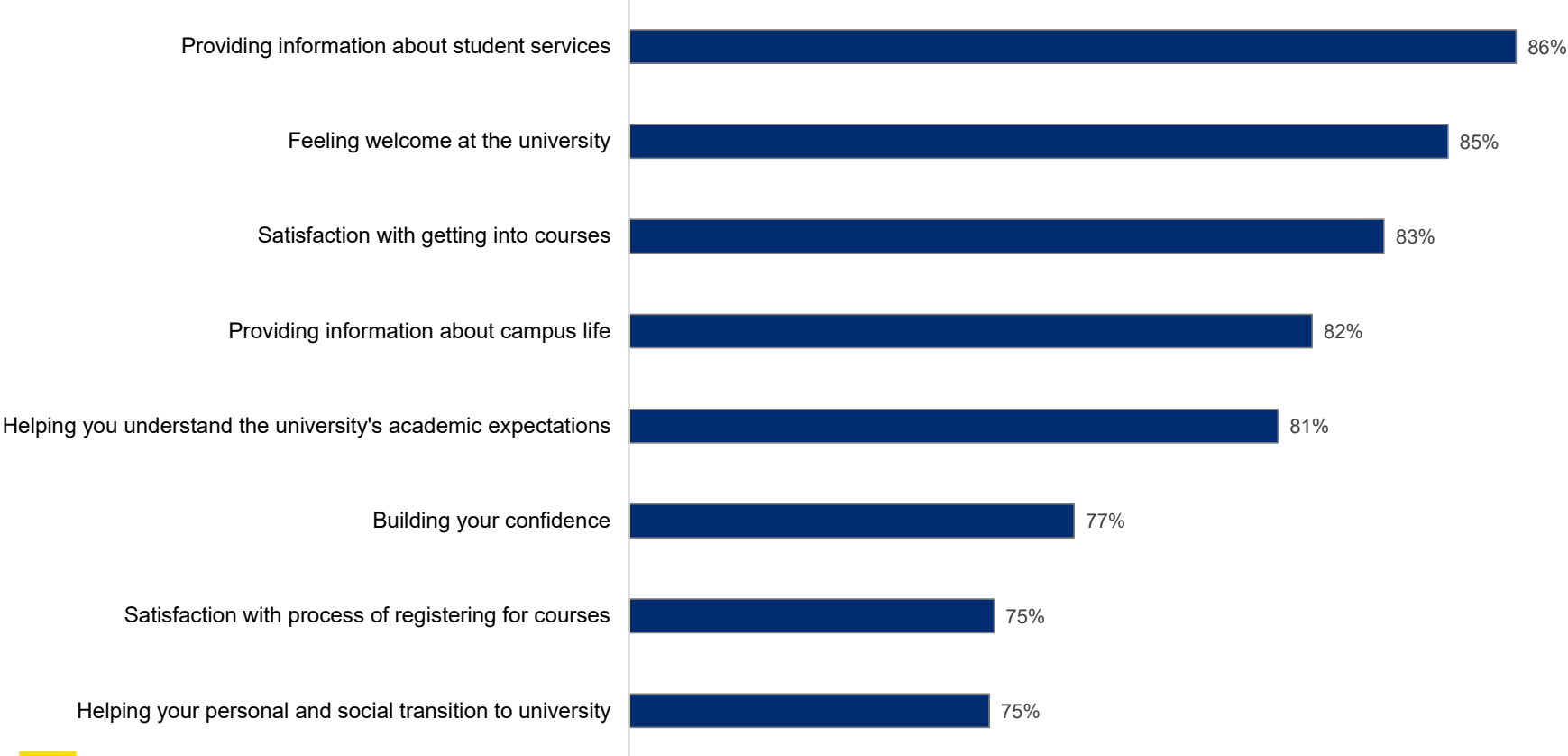
# Transition to First Year

## Transitioning to University – Orientation

- A much lower proportion of first-year students attended an orientation in this survey year (46%) compared to the previous survey in 2019 (72%). This was true broadly for CUSC-participating institutions during the pandemic.
- Students who attended orientation were generally satisfied.
- The course registration process showed notable improvements over the 2019 survey responses.

# Figure 4: Satisfaction with Orientation

Percent who were somewhat or very satisfied (among those who attended)

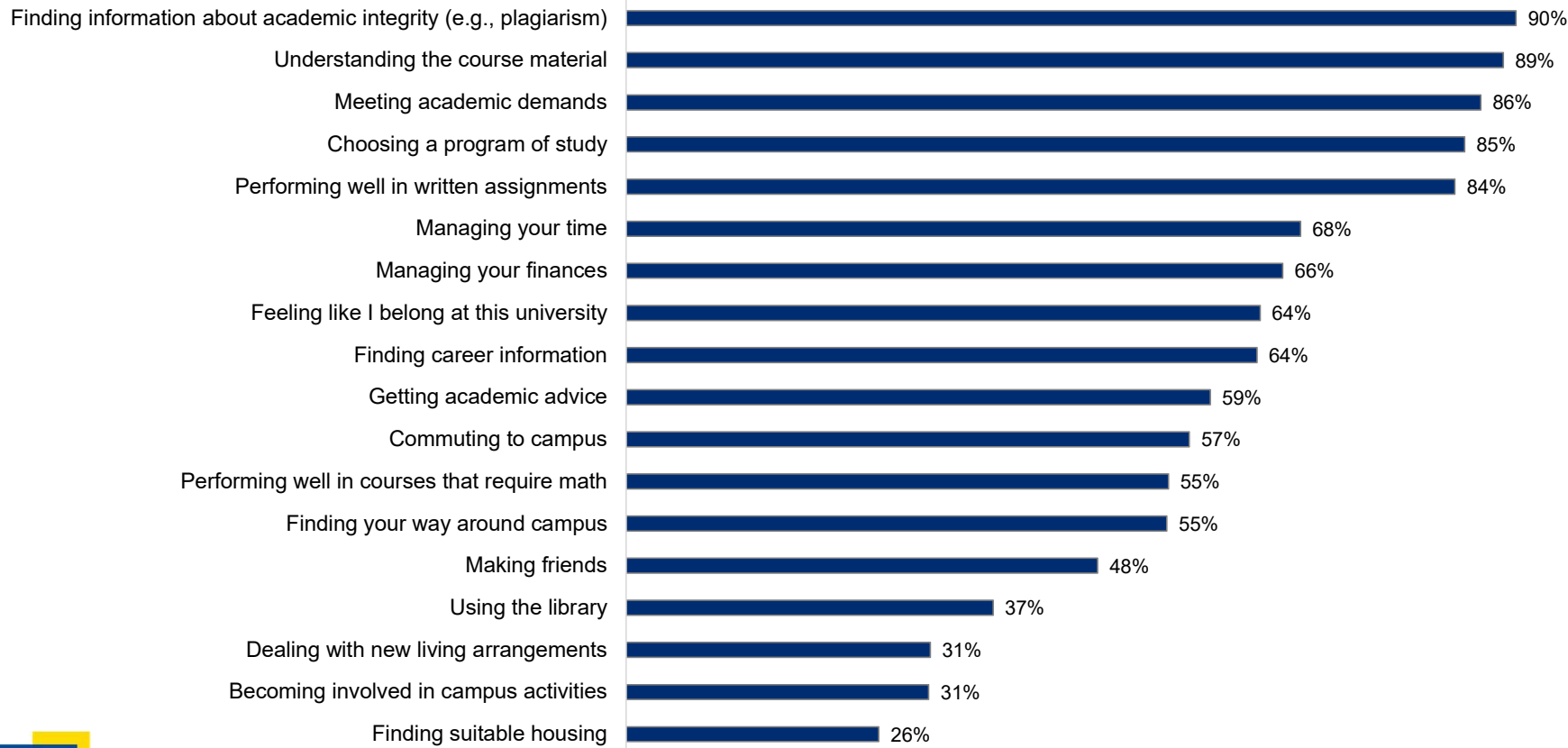


## Transitioning to University – Navigating First Year

- Many students found success in adjusting to the new academic environment, such as choosing a program, performing well on assignments, and meeting academic demands.
- However, fewer students reported success in other aspects of the transition, like navigating around campus, using various services, and managing time and finances.
- Social aspects showed lower levels of success than other areas and are lower than results reported in 2019 prior to the pandemic.
- Although relatively few students reported success with housing, approximately 40% reported “no basis for opinion” on finding suitable housing or adjusting to new housing arrangements. 81% of respondents reported living with relatives.

# Figure 5: Transitioning to University

Percent that reported some or much success



# Expectations

- Students were asked to compare their expectations of campus life to what they experienced in first year.
- Students found the academic demands of their courses, and the time they put into coursework, to be more than they expected.
- Many students found social interactions to be less than expected (ease of making friends, ease of getting involved in campus opportunities, and contact with professors inside and outside of the classroom). These results for the 2021 entering cohort are also lower than those from the 2019 round of the survey.
- Overall, approximately two-thirds of students said that the university met their expectations. About one in five said that the university fell short of their expectations (more than in 2019).

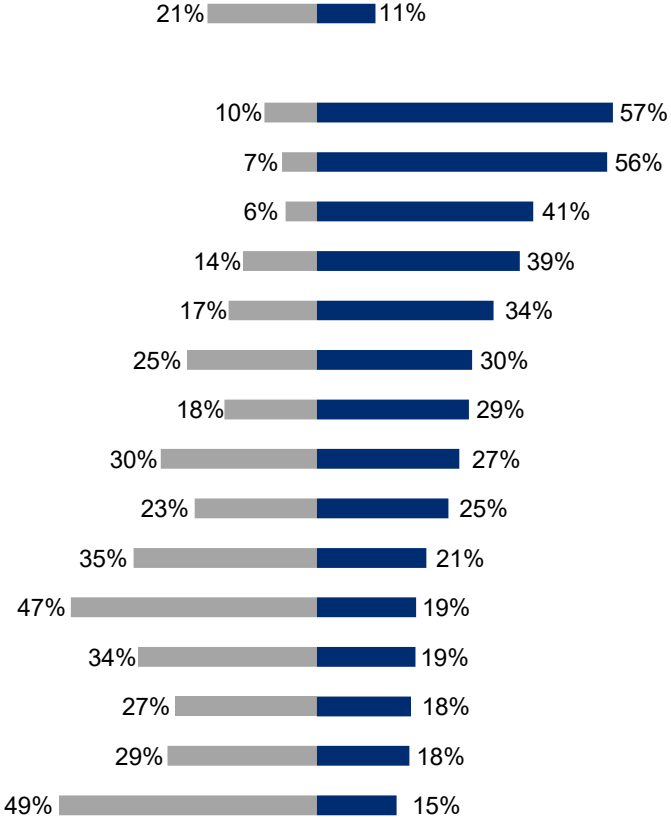


# Figure 6: Expectations

Has this university met, exceeded, or fallen short of your expectations?

- The time you have put into your coursework
- How academically demanding your courses are
- Cost of going to university
- Amount of writing in your academic work
- Debt you might have taken on to complete your program
- Using math in your academic work
- Intellectual stimulation
- Doing coursework in groups
- Availability of help and advising from the university
- Your course grades
- Ease of making friends
- Contact with your professors outside of the classroom
- Amount you participate in class discussions
- Contact with your professors in the classroom
- Ease of getting involved in campus social activities

Less/much less than expected | More/much more than expected

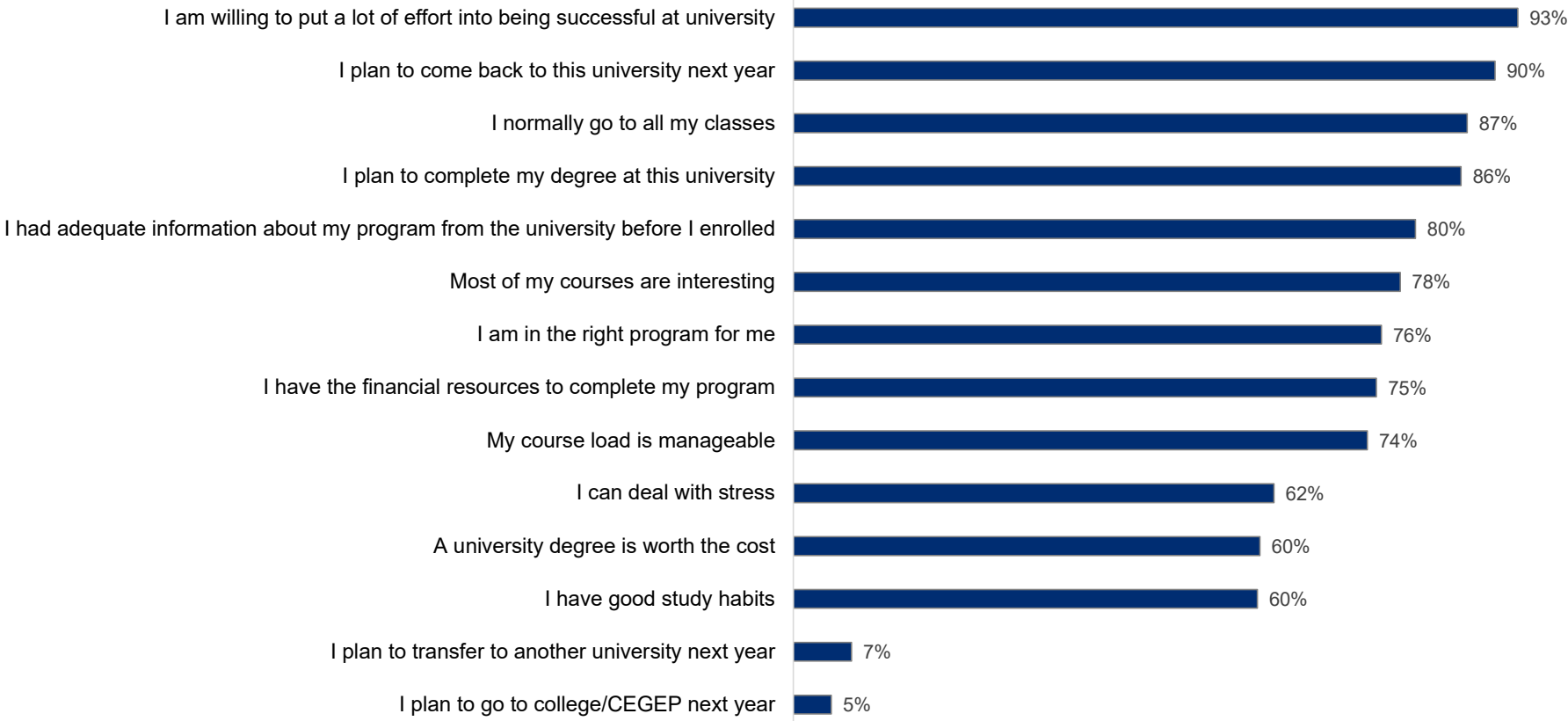


## Transitioning to University – Student Engagement

- Students reported a high level of willingness to put in the required effort to be successful. 87% reported going to all their classes.
- Students also showed high commitment to the university – 90% reported a plan to return to the university the following year, and 86% planned to complete their degree at TMU.
- However, fewer students reported success with managing stress (62%) and only 60% agreed with the statement about having good study habits.
- 60% agreed that a university degree was worth the cost.

# Figure 7: Transitioning to University – Student Engagement

Percent that agreed or agreed strongly



# Evaluation of Experience

# Evaluation of Teaching

- Students were asked to rate a series of instructor characteristics on their importance and the degree to which the professors exhibited these characteristics.
- Overall, students were very satisfied with the five most important instructor characteristics, the most important of which was communicating well in their teaching.

**Table 1: Five most important instructor characteristics as identified by TMU respondents, FYSS 2022**

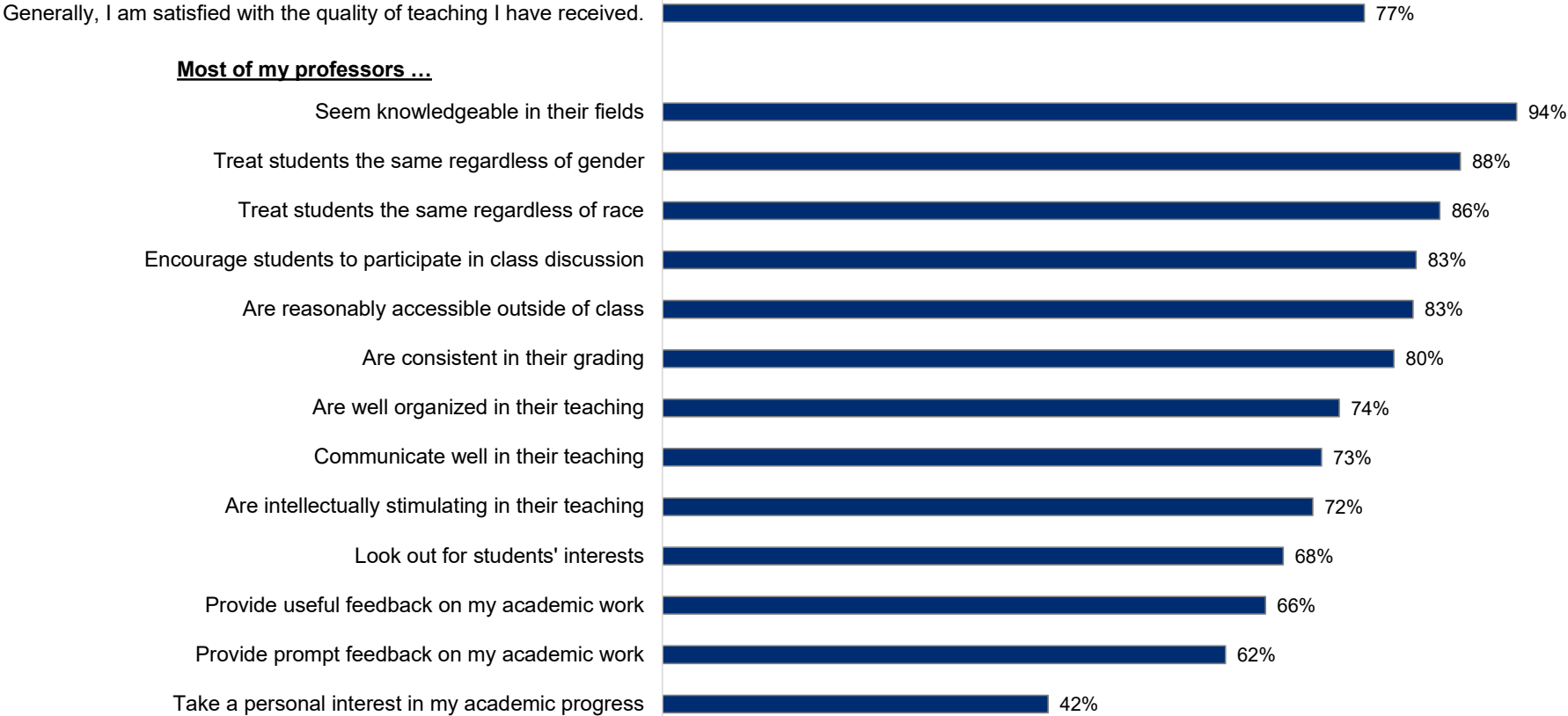
Ranking of instructor characteristic to students	Percent of students agreeing that their instructor demonstrated this characteristic
1. Communicate well in their teaching	73%
2. Are well organized in their teaching	74%
3. Seem knowledgeable in their field	94%
4. Provide useful feedback on my work	66%
5. Are intellectually stimulating in their teaching	72%

# Evaluation of Teaching

- About three-quarters of TMU students were generally satisfied with the quality of teaching they had received at the university so far (three-quarters of students reported the opportunity, in at least some of their classes, to evaluate their professors).
- Almost all students felt that their professors seemed knowledgeable in their fields and felt that professors treated all students the same regardless of race and gender.
- Fewer students were satisfied with the feedback they received (could be more prompt and more useful). Students were also less likely to report that professors showed a personal interest in their academic success.

# Figure 8: Evaluation of Teaching

Percent that agreed or agreed strongly

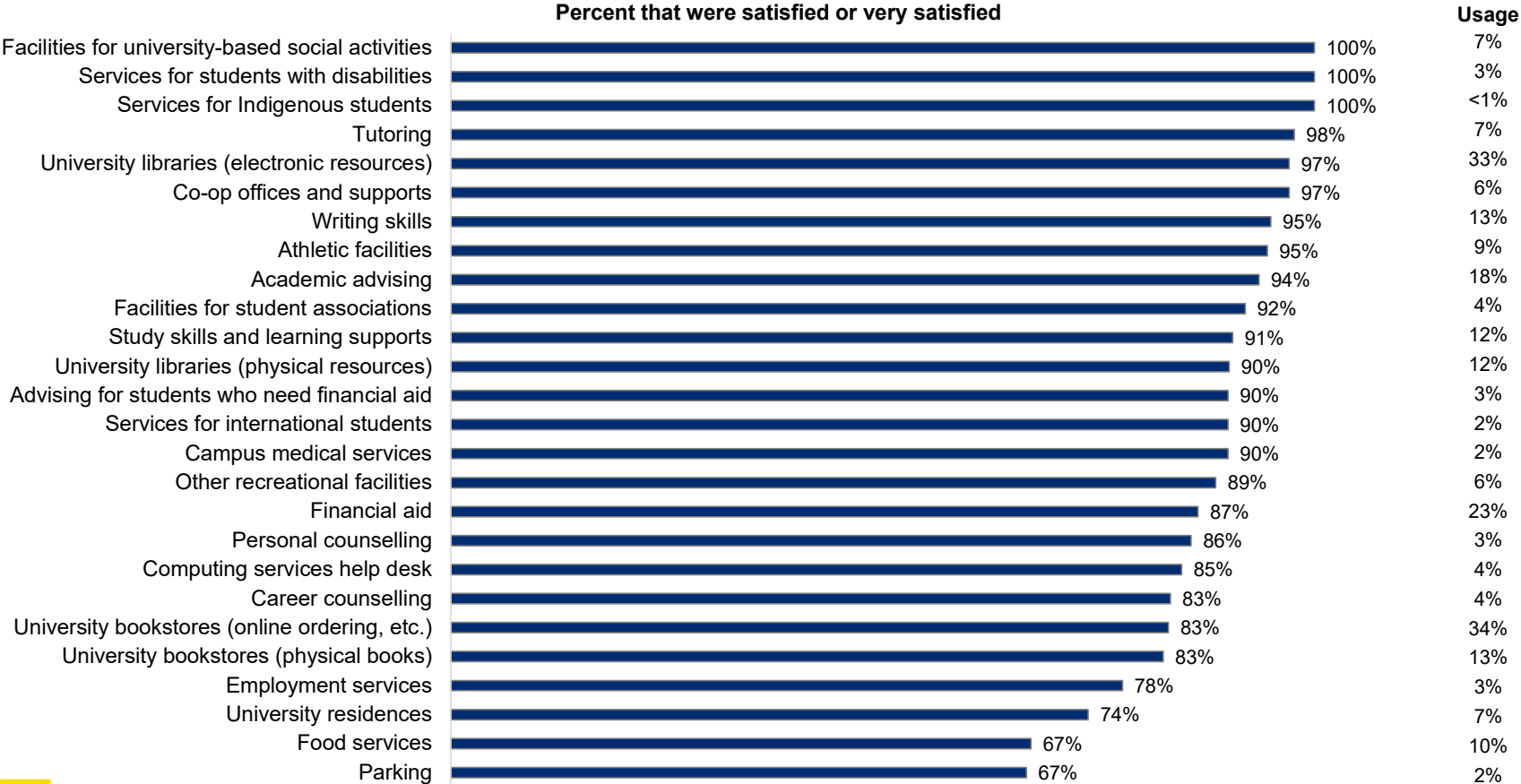


## Evaluation of Services

- Students were asked whether they had used the services and facilities at the university – and for those who did use the service or facility, how satisfied they were with their experience.
- Usage rates were similar to those reported in 2019.
- 22 out of the 26 services and facilities had satisfaction ratings (satisfied or very satisfied) of 80% or above.
- Facilities for university-based social activities, tutoring, academic advising, and university libraries (physical resources) also showed higher ratings than those at other CUSC-participating institutions.



# Figure 9: Evaluation of Services



# First Year Student Profile

# About the Survey

- Broadly, the respondent group is representative of the first-year undergraduate population.
- Female students are slightly overrepresented in the survey, as are Engineering students.
- Part-time students are underrepresented.

Category	Sub-category	Survey respondents	Survey %	First-year population	First-year population %
Gender	Male	246	40.0	3,925	44.6
	Female	367	59.7	4,750	54.1
	Another identity	2	<1	107	1.2
Load	Full-time	587	95.4	8106	92.3
	Part-time	28	4.6	676	7.7
Faculty	ARTS	88	14.3	1422	16.2
	FEAS	123	20.0	1277	14.5
	TCS	100	16.3	1472	16.8
	FCS	79	12.8	1242	14.1
	SCI	79	12.8	970	11.0
	TRSM	146	23.7	2399	27.3

# Age, Living Arrangements, Transportation



TMU respondents reported an average age of 18.3 years, older than respondents in 2019 (17.8).

17: <1% | 18: 75% | 19: 23% | 20 or older: 2%



81% of respondents reported living with relatives, significantly more than in 2019 (73%).

On-campus: 9% | With relatives: 81% | Off-campus (shared): 5% | Off-campus (solo): 2% | Own home: 2% | Other: <1%



Availability of transportation was rated as important or very important to 74% of respondents in choosing this university (unchanged from 2019).

Not important: 9% | Somewhat important: 17% | Important: 36% | Very important: 38%

# Family Educational Background, Residency



Over three-quarters of respondents had parents with some form of post-secondary education (unchanged from 2019).

High school or less: 17% | Some college or university: 9% | College graduate: 16% | University graduate: 37% | Graduate degree: 15% | Other: <1% | Don't know: 6% | No response: <1%



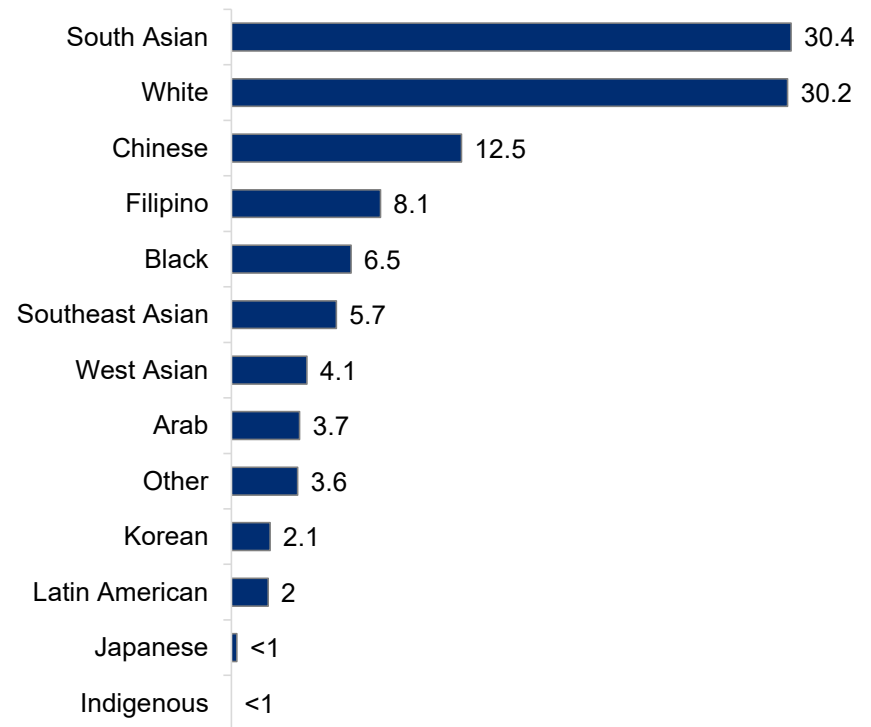
4% of respondents were international students (unchanged from 2019) compared with 10% in the TMU first-year population.

Canadian citizen: 89% | International student: 4% | Permanent resident: 7% | No response: <1%

# Ethnicity

- 74% of respondents self-identified as a racialized person (similar to 2019), significantly more than the respondents from all CUSC-participating institutions (38%).
- Respondents were further asked to self-identify as members of ethnic groups. Responses are shown in Figure 10. (Note: Respondents could select more than one option.)

Figure 10: Ethnicity as self-selected by first-year respondents (%)



# Disability and Mental Health

- 23% of participants self-identified with a disability, 7 percentage points lower than the average across all participating institutions (30%).
  - Of those reporting a disability\*:
    - 56% reported a mental health condition
    - 25% reported vision impairments
    - 20% reported neurodivergence; and,
    - 15% reported learning/memory conditions.
- \*Respondents could select more than one type of disability.
- 29% of participants with disabilities reported significant impact on their daily activities (that is, their daily activities were always limited by their disability/impairment).

## Financial Supports

- Similar to the previous survey in 2019, 37% of students were working during the term of the survey. A further 41% were looking for work.
- Students who were employed worked for 14.5 hours per week, significantly lower than the average across all participating institutions.
  - 48% of students who worked reported no impact on their academic performance.
- Just over half (56%) of the respondents had at least one credit card, similar to the national average and lower than in 2019 (63%). 92% of credit card holders paid off their balance in full each month.



# Conclusions

# Conclusions

- In 2022, TMU first-year students were a diverse group who were broadly satisfied with their experience so far.
- For TMU respondents, the reasons cited as important for attending university by the highest proportion of students related to finding a career and/or improving their financial position.
- The most important reason to attend TMU in particular was the availability of the program that the students wanted. Other top reasons included the city/town where the university was located, having work-integrated learning, being closer to home, and the university's academic reputation.
- Students had success adjusting to the new academic environment; however, some students struggled with other aspects of the transition (such as navigating around campus, managing time and finances, using services, and social factors).
- Students were generally satisfied with the teaching they had received. Students also expressed satisfaction with the services they had used, particularly with facilities for social activities, services for students with disabilities, and services for Indigenous students.
- These results will be posted online at <https://www.torontomu.ca/university-planning/>