

# Canadian Graduate and Professional Student Survey

Highlights of the  
2019 Survey Results



# About the Survey

---

- Every three years, Ryerson participates in the Canadian Graduate and Professional Student Survey (CGPSS).
- This student survey is conducted across the country by 50 universities. Ryerson has been a member of this group since 2007.
- Students are asked about their experiences in Ryerson's graduate and professional programs.
- In 2019, over 2,700 Ryerson students were contacted, and 1,285 students completed the survey – a response rate of 47.2%.
- These results will be posted online at <http://ryerson.ca/university-planning>.

# About the Survey

---

- Broadly, the survey respondent group was representative of the graduate student population at Ryerson in terms of gender, Faculty and full- or part-time enrolment.

Response	2019 CGPSS Results	%	2019 Institutional Data*	%
<b>Gender</b>				
Male	456	42.7%	1,364	46.6%
Female	573	53.7%	1,556	53.2%
Other Gender Identity/Prefer not to say	39	3.6%	6	0.2%
Missing	217	-		
<b>Full-Time/Part-Time</b>				
Full Time	1176	91.5%	2,573	87.9%
Part Time	109	8.5%	353	12.1%
<b>Faculty</b>				
Arts	167	13.0%	363	12.4%
Communication and Design	91	7.1%	206	7.0%
Community Services	202	15.7%	493	16.8%
Engineering and Architectural Science	430	33.5%	960	32.8%
Science	114	8.9%	241	8.2%
Ted Rogers School of Management	128	10.0%	313	10.7%
Multiple Selected	153	11.9%	350	12.0%
<b>Total Respondents</b>	<b>1,285</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>2,926</b>	<b>100%</b>



# Graduate & Professional Student Profile

# Age, Living and Family

---



**Age:** Graduate and professional students represent a diverse age range, with approximately two thirds below the age of 30, and one third above.

21-25: 36.4% | 26-30: 29.9% | 31-35: 15.5% | 36-40: 8.0% | 41-45: 5.2% | 45+: 5.1%



**Family:** Over half of graduate students surveyed were single, while 40.7% were married or had a domestic partner.

Single: 56.7% | Married or with Domestic Partner: 40.7% | Divorced or Separated: 2.6%



**Children:** 81.5% of survey respondents had no children, while 18.5% had one or more.

No Children: 81.5% | 1 Child: 8.1% | 2 Children: 6.7% | 3 Children: 2.7% | 4 or more: 0.9%



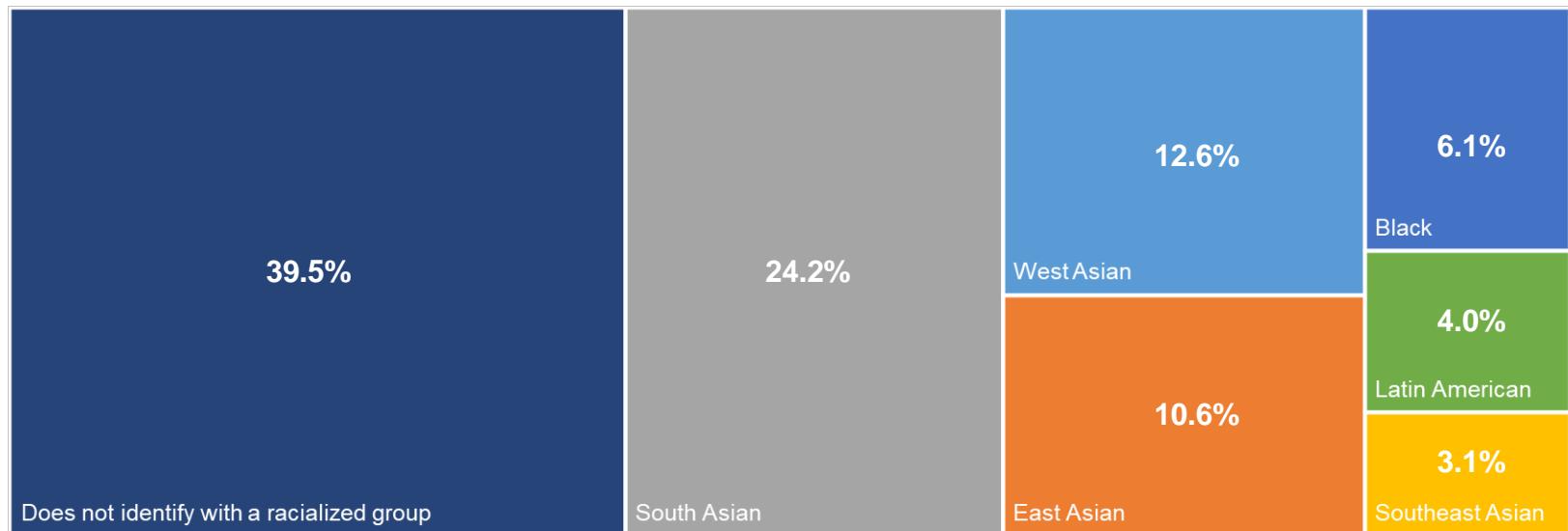
**Living:** 98.1% of professional and graduate students live in off-campus housing.

On-Campus Housing: 1.5% | Off Campus-Housing Owed by Ryerson: 0.4%  
| Off-Campus Housing Not Owned by Ryerson: 98.1%

# Diversity at Ryerson

---

- **10.9%** of survey respondents identified as LGBTQ+, or questioning.
- **13.1%** of students were citizens of another country, and **13.8%** were Canadian permanent residents.
- **2.0%** of student respondents self-identified as belonging to, or having ancestry from, a First Nations, Metis, or Inuit community.
- **60.5%** of students identified with a racialized background.



# Disability and Mental Health

---

- 7% of survey respondents indicated that they were living with a disability or impairment of some kind.
- Of these, **66.8%** indicated they had a mental health condition, **37.3%** indicated they had a learning disability, and **22.7%** indicated they had a chronic condition.\*
  - 66.8% - Mental health condition;
  - 37.3% - learning disability;
  - 22.7% - chronic condition (e.g. Chron's, Colitis, MS);
  - 13.3% - mobility;
  - 2.7% - sensory (vision or hearing); and
  - 2.7 % - other.
- For students with disabilities, the majority indicated that the university's efforts to accommodate their needs was good or excellent.

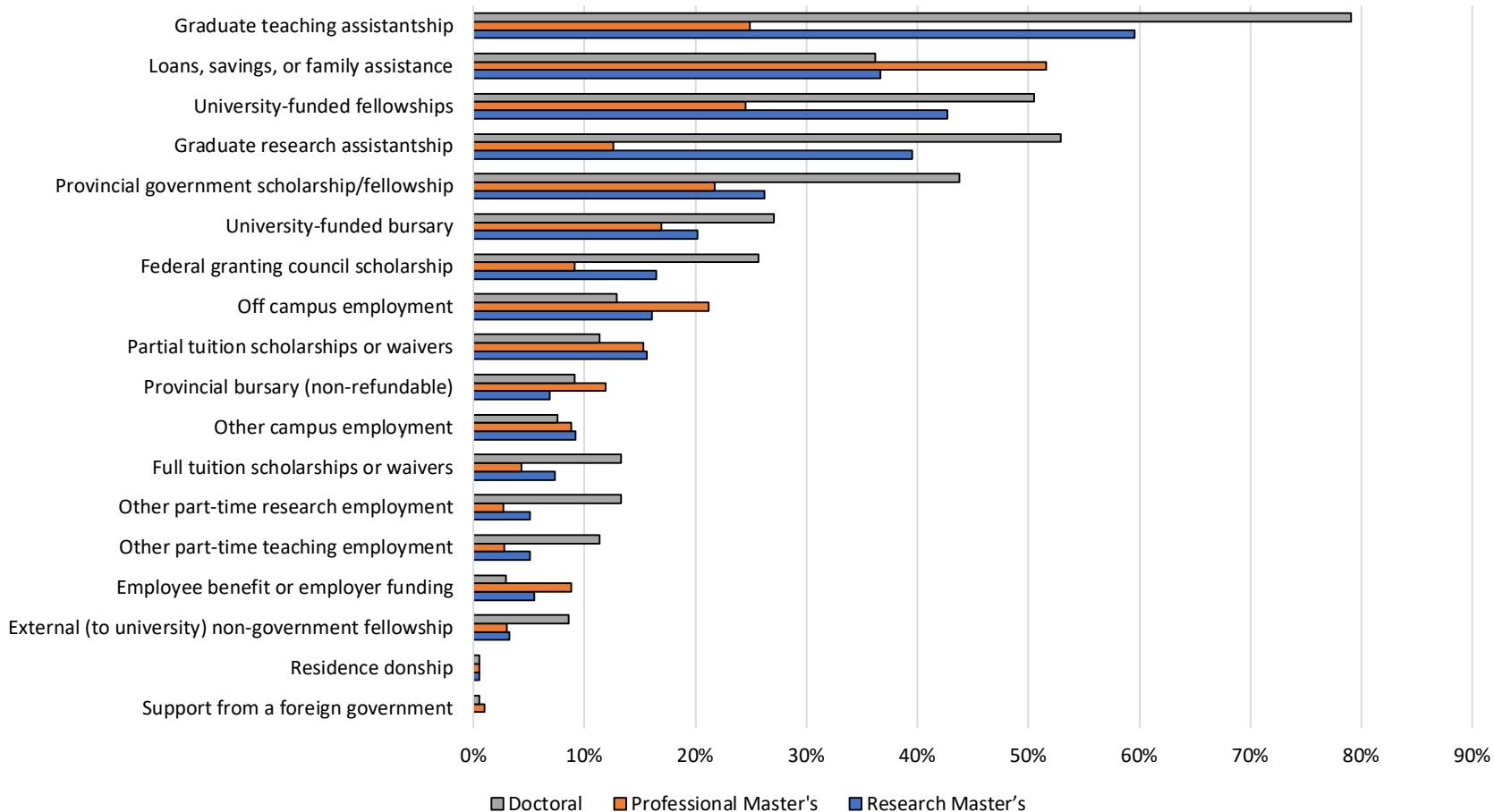
\*Responses sum to more than 100% as respondents could select multiple answers.

# Financial Resources Used

---

- Among graduate students, personal savings and graduate teaching assistant jobs were the two most common sources of income used to pay for studies.
- Doctoral students tended to use TA/RA positions and fellowships, and were less likely to rely on personal resources than Master's students.
- Ryerson graduate students were more likely than those at other Ontario universities to access provincial scholarships, and university-funded fellowships
- Students enrolled in a research-oriented master's program tended to use university supports (e.g., teaching or research assistantships) to a greater extent than was reported by those in professional master's programs, who were more likely to use loans, savings or family assistance.

# Financial Resources Used

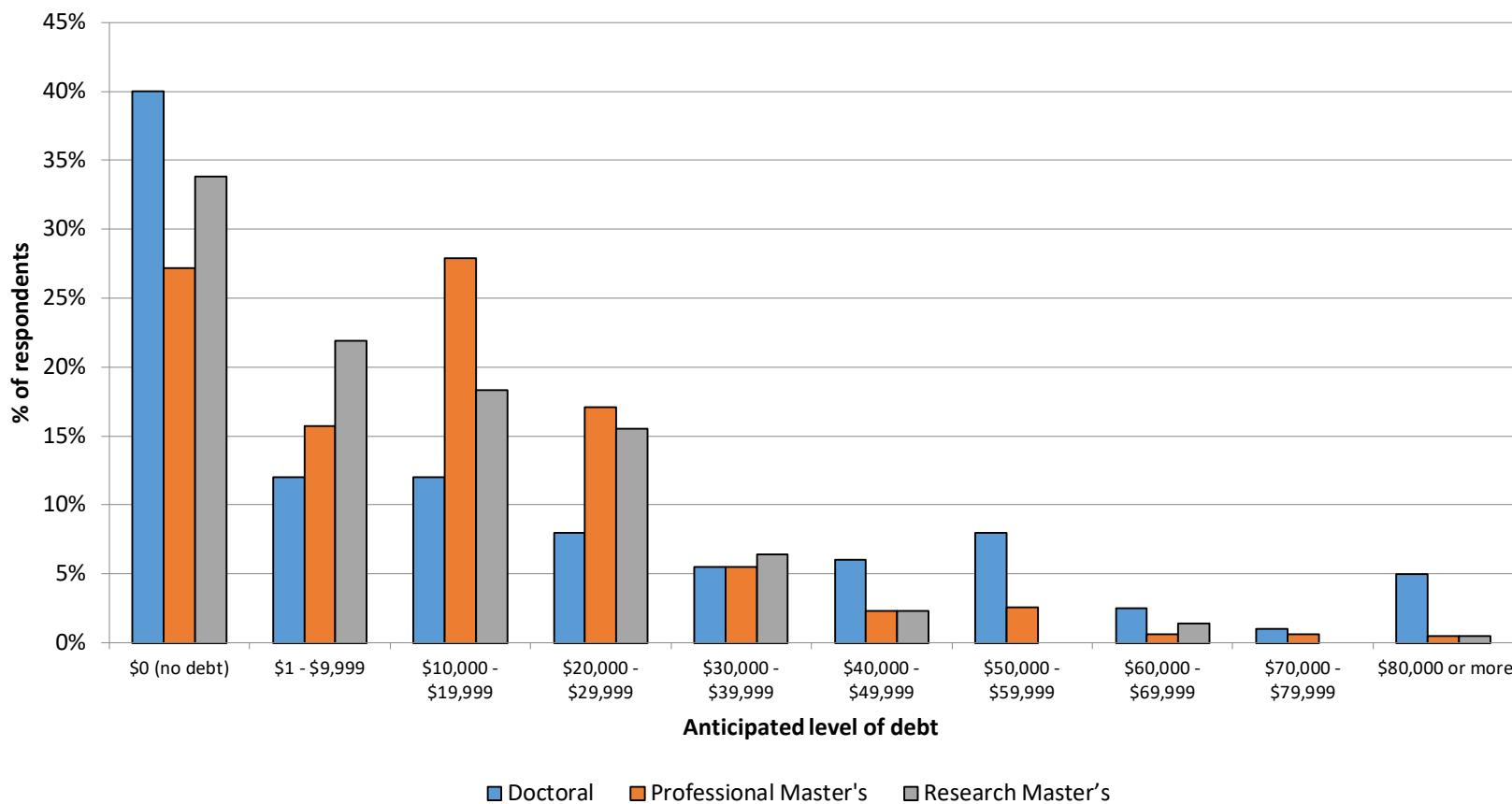


\*Responses sum to more than 100% as respondents could select multiple answers.

# Financing & Debt

---

- 69% of students believe they will accumulate debt over the course of their program.
- For students who believe they will accumulate debt, the majority believe that they will accumulate less than \$30,000.





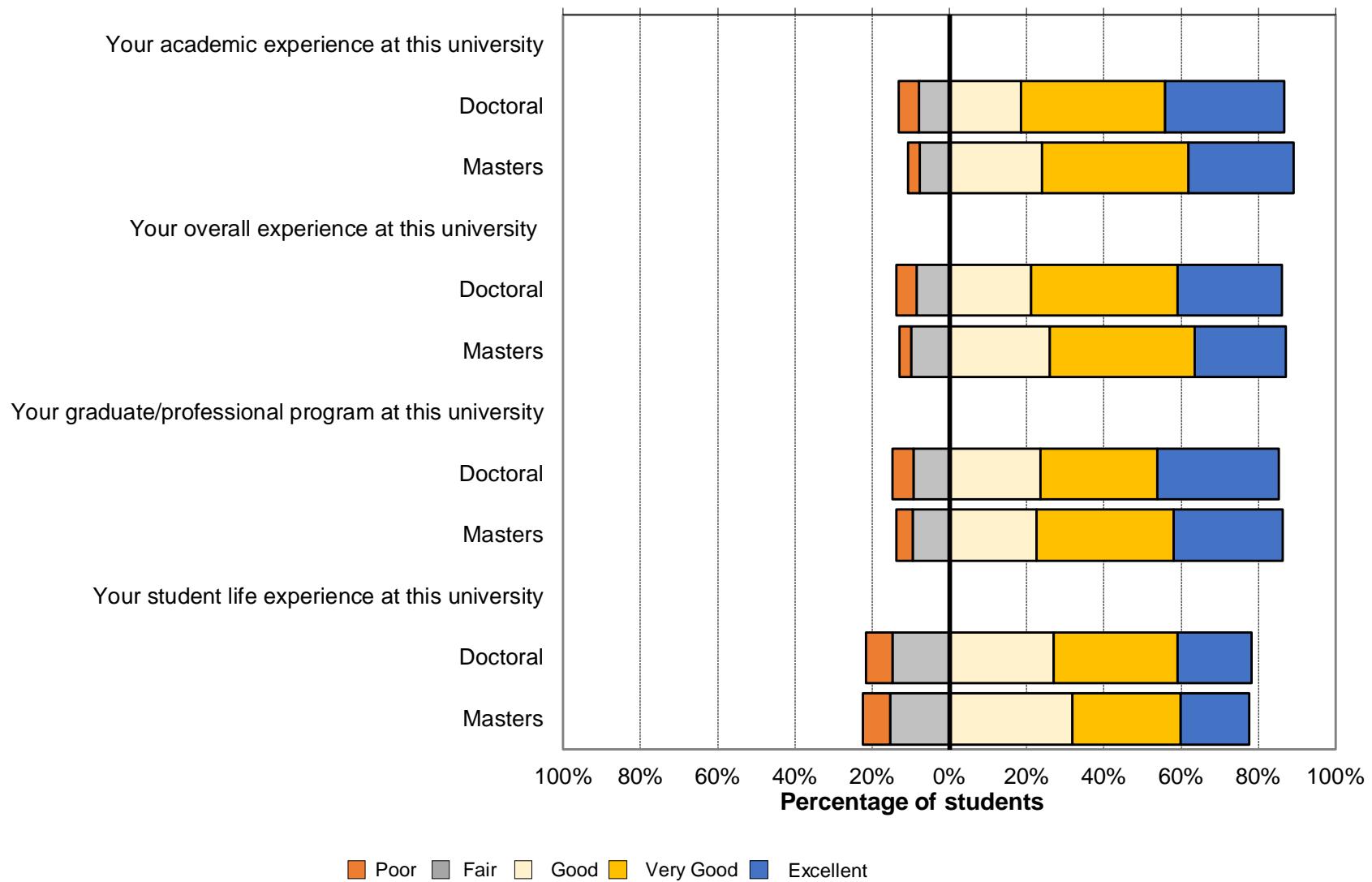
# Assessment of Experience & Support

# Overall Assessment of Experience & Program

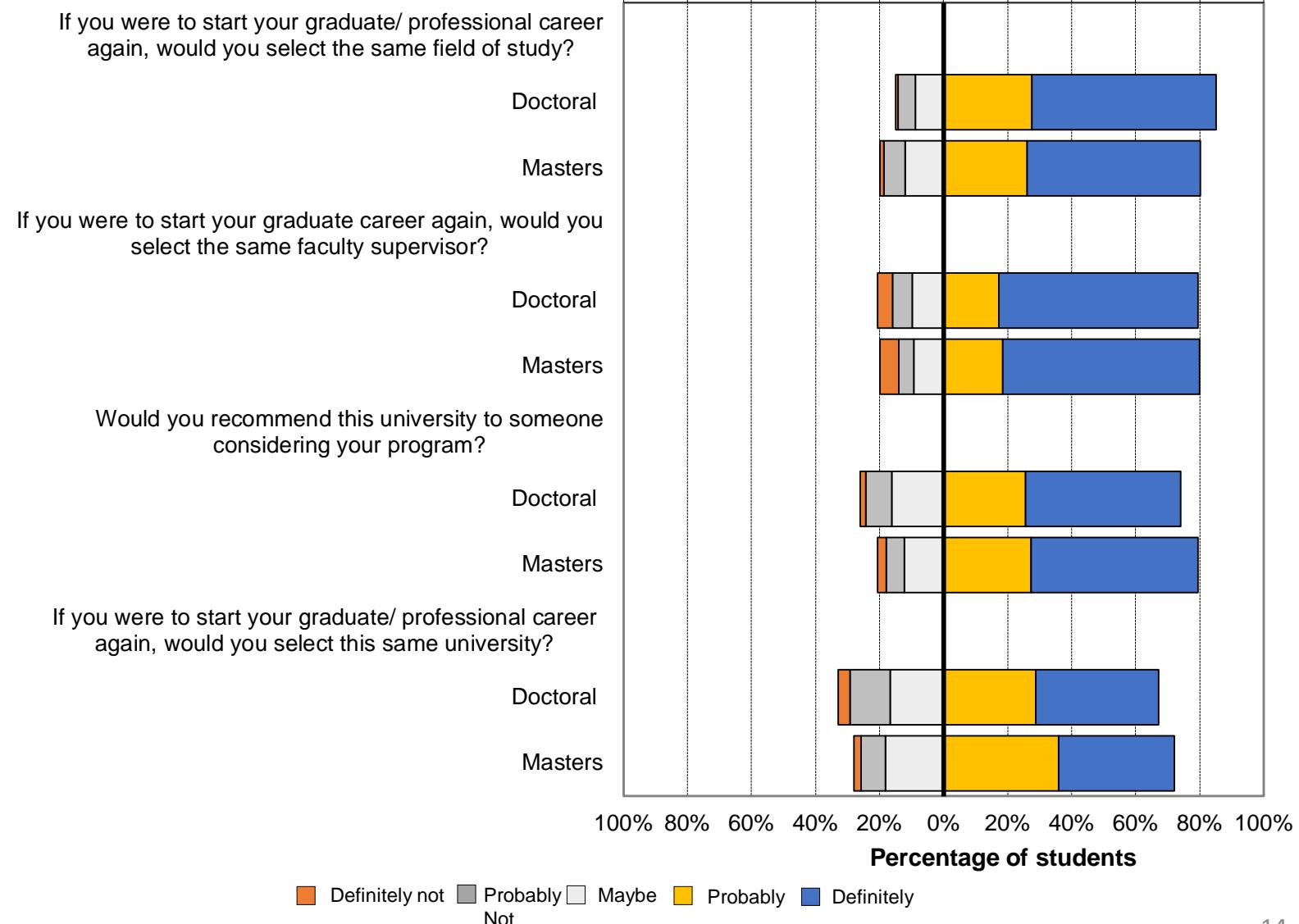
---

- Students had a predominantly positive overall assessment of their graduate experience at Ryerson.
- Students tended to identify with their program and field of study, with questions about their program, area of study, and supervisors achieving particularly high marks.
- In particular, questions involving relationships with staff, faculty, and fellow students scored well.
- Availability of courses, as well as opportunities to take courses outside the program, scored less well than other answers, but were consistent with the Ontario survey averages.
- The results, summarized in figures A, B, and C are similar to or higher than those at other universities across all of the measures.
- Overall, Ryerson maintained similar levels of performance compared to the last round of CGPSS survey, conducted in 2016.

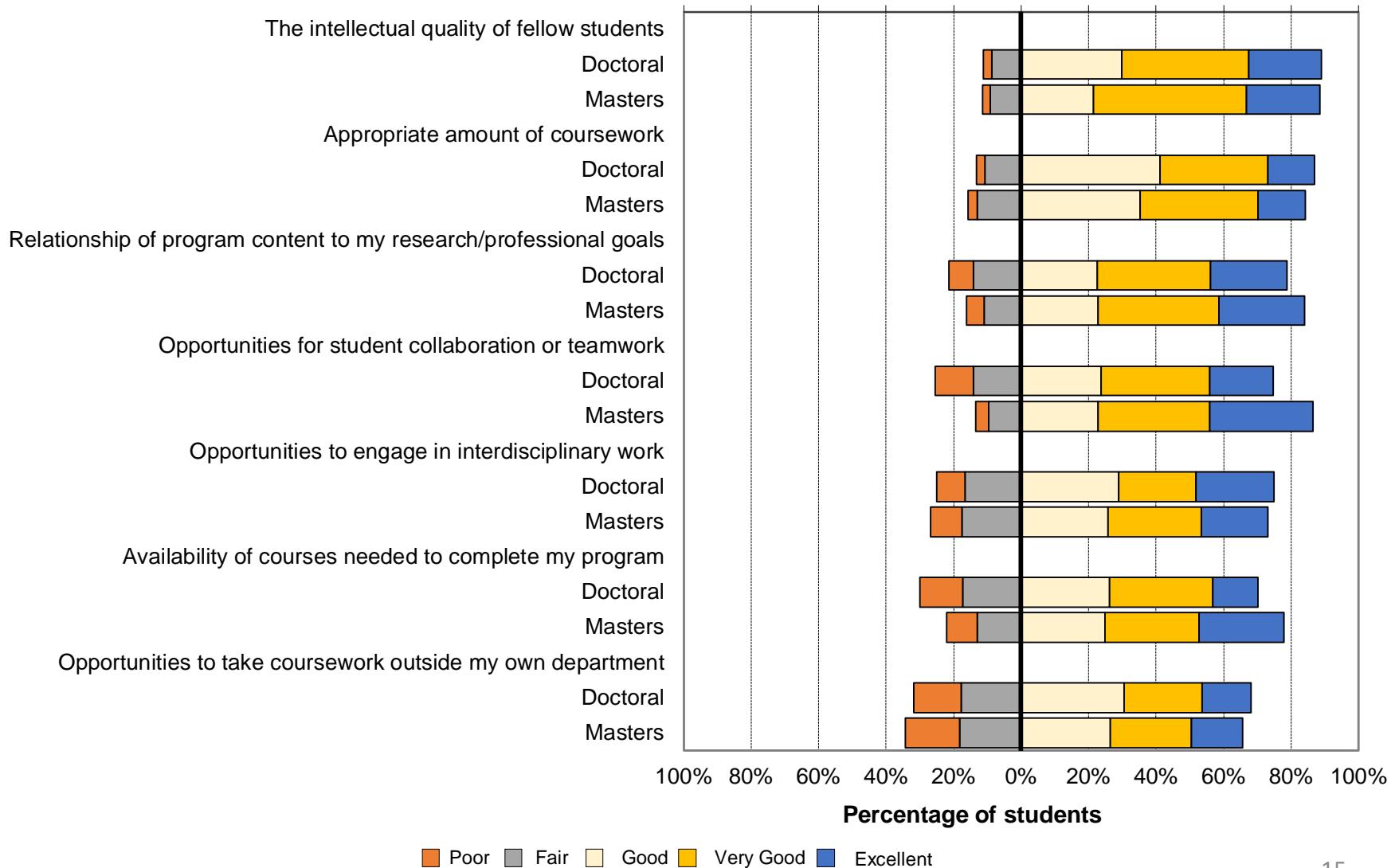
# Figure A: Overall Assessment of Graduate Student Experience



# Figure B: General Program Satisfaction



# Figure C: Assessment of Program

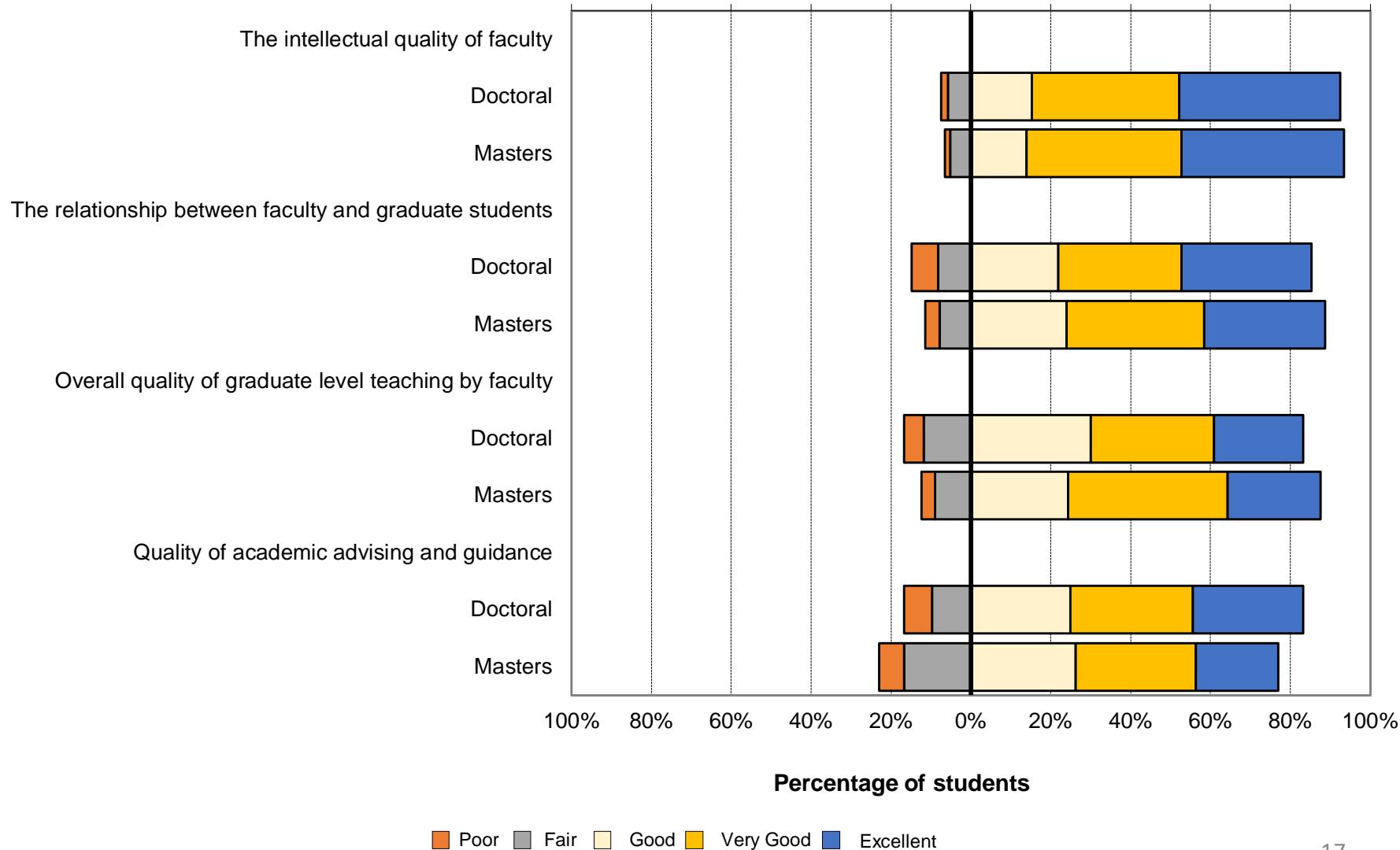


# Assessment of Faculty and Advisors

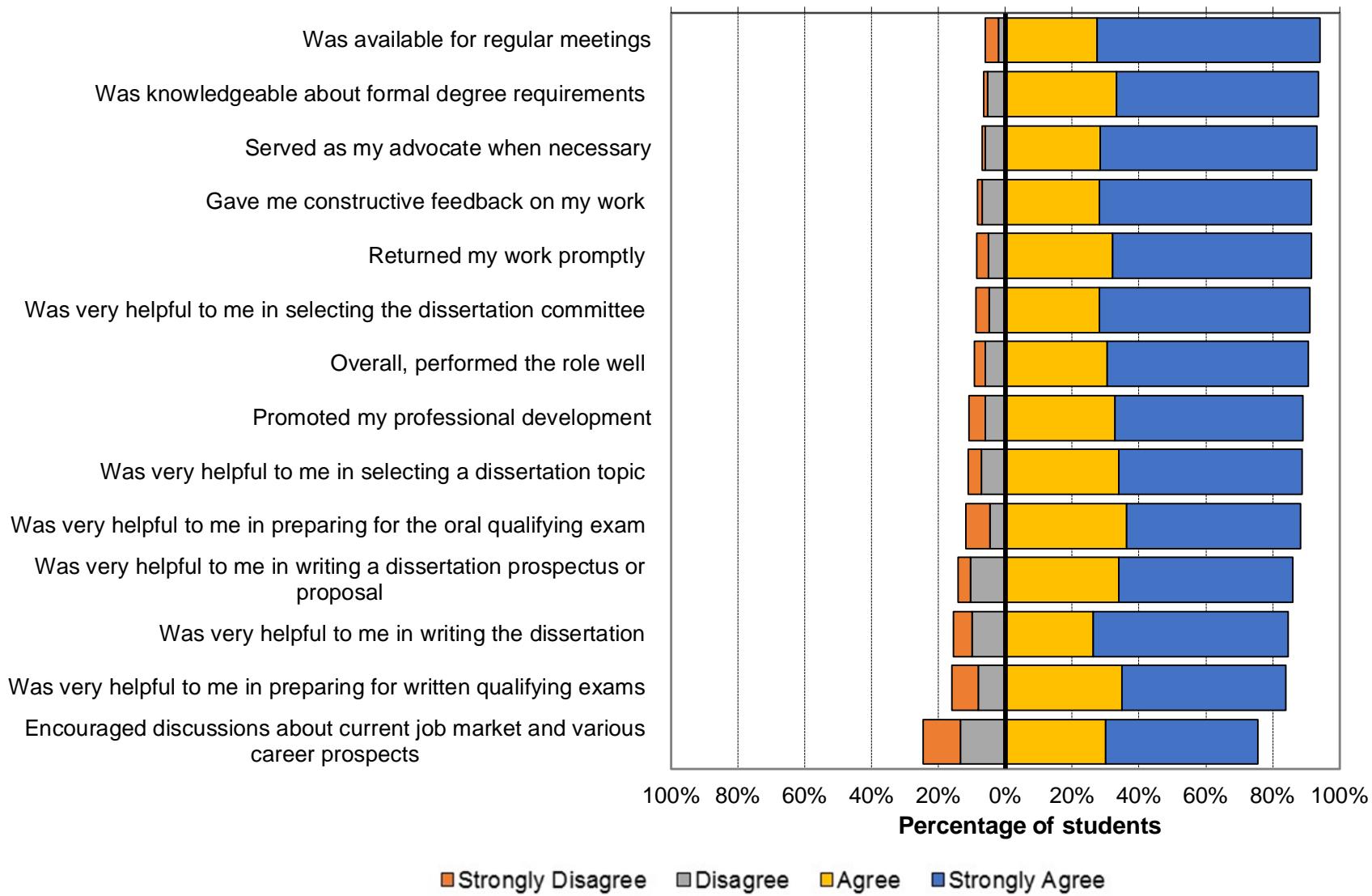
---

- Students were asked about their interactions with faculty and advisors.
- Responses were very positive, with 8 in 10 students across the Master's and Doctoral levels giving positive responses across a series of prompts.
- Students respected the intellectual and teaching abilities of faculty. A slightly smaller percentage of Master's students rated the quality of academic advising and guidance as positive, but results were in line with other universities.
- Dissertation advisors achieved extremely high satisfaction ratings from Doctoral students, with over **90%** of students indicating that they performed their role well, and over **80%** of students giving positive responses in virtually all other categories.
- While only 75% of respondents indicated that their dissertation advisors encouraged discussions about the job market and career prospects, Ryerson outperformed the Ontario average in this category by approximately **6 percentage points**.

## Figure D: Assessment of Faculty



# Figure E: Doctoral Student Assessment of Dissertation Advisors

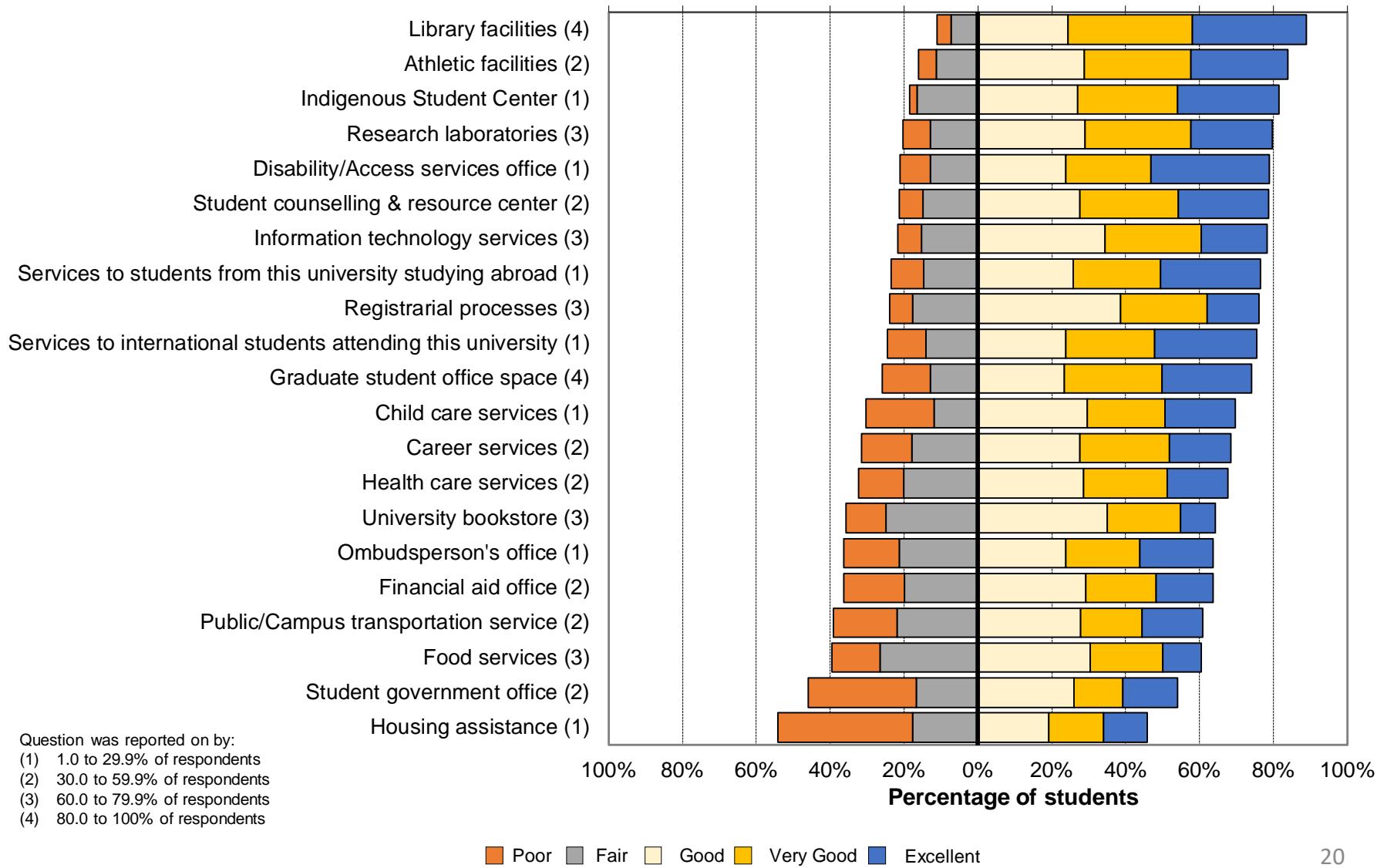


# Student Services

---

- Respondents were asked to rate their experience with services and resources. Results are summarized in Figure F with utilization ranges.
- Library and athletic facilities were rated highly, as were services for Indigenous students and students with disabilities.
- Importantly, students were also satisfied with research laboratories, student counselling and career services. These services all saw increases relative to 2016.
- Student government offices and food services demonstrated more moderate levels of satisfaction. Food services maintained consistent performance relative to 2016.
- Ryerson's downtown location posed challenges, with students rating housing assistance as a challenge. This was lower than the Ontario average. Satisfaction with the availability of transportation was also lower than the Ontario average.

# Figure F: Student Services



# Obstacles to Academic Achievement

---

- Students were asked to identify factors of campus life items which may have posed obstacles to academic progression.
- **80%** of students identified financial pressures as an obstacle, while approximately **60%** of students identified work and family obligations as obstacles.
- About **half** of students indicated that course scheduling and program structure were obstacles – with the majority indicating that these posed a minor, as opposed to a major, obstacle.
- Items that did not rate highly as obstacles to academic progress included immigration laws and regulations, and faculty availability.

# Social Life

---

- Students were also asked about attendance at on-campus social activities.
- Research group & departmental activities were the most frequently attended, while university-wide activities were the least.
  - **94%** attended social activities with their advisor or research group;
  - **88%** attended social activities within their department;
  - **78%** attended social activities within their residence; and
  - **58%** attended organized, university-wide social activities.

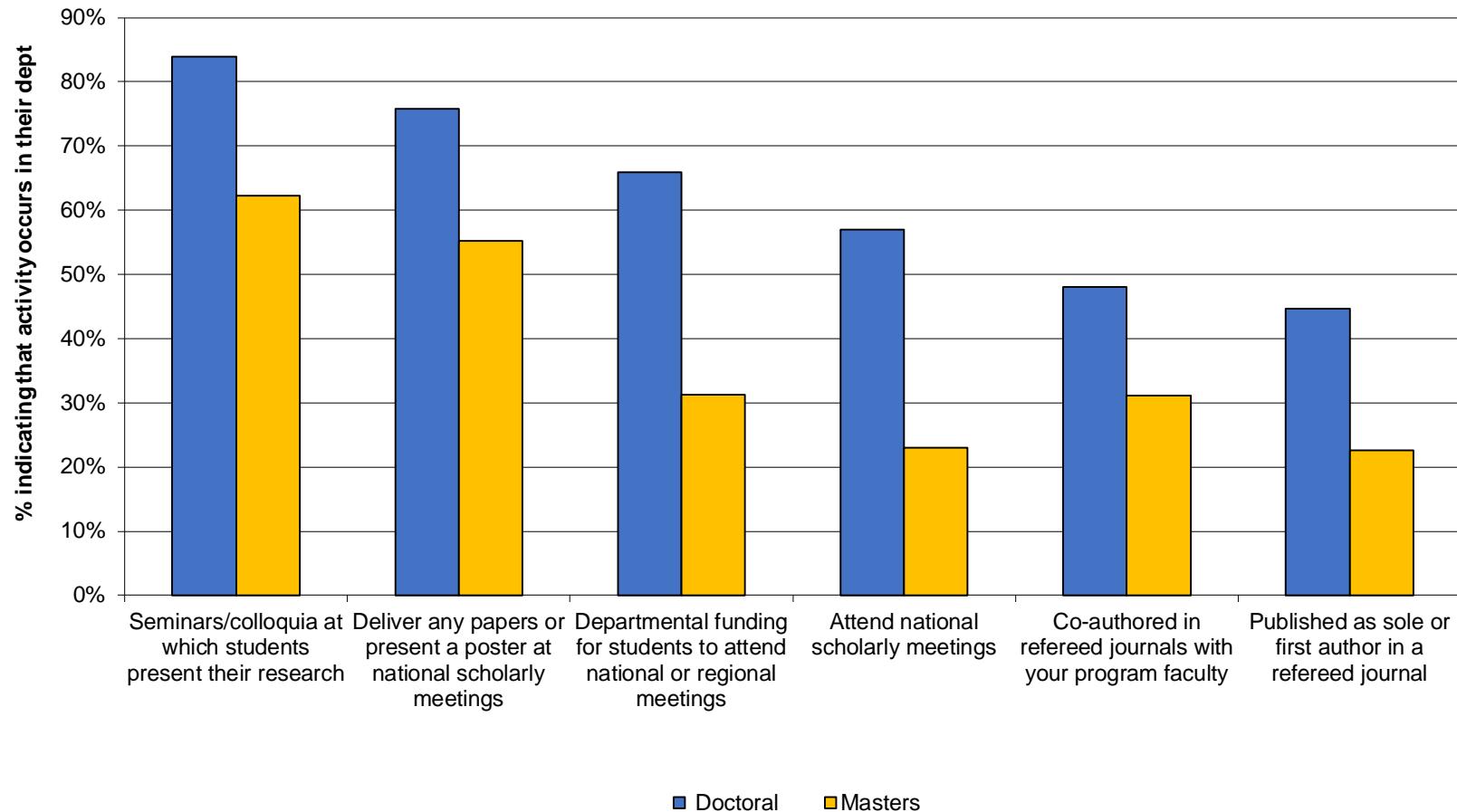
# Publications & Presentation Opportunities

---

- Respondents in Doctoral and research-focused Master's programs were asked about the prevalence of various types of activities related to publications and presentations in their department.
- Types of activities include attendance at scholarly meetings, publishing, and presentation of research. Doctoral students were more likely than Master's students to identify opportunities within their department for all activities.
- The most frequent activities for both Master's and Doctoral students were participating in seminars & colloquia. The least common type of activity reported for both groups was the opportunity to publish as a sole author in a journal.
- Responses were largely consistent with 2016 results, though there was some decline reported in 2019 in opportunities related to publish in journals as either a co-author or a sole author.

# Figure G: Publications & Presentation Opportunities

---



■ Doctoral      ■ Masters



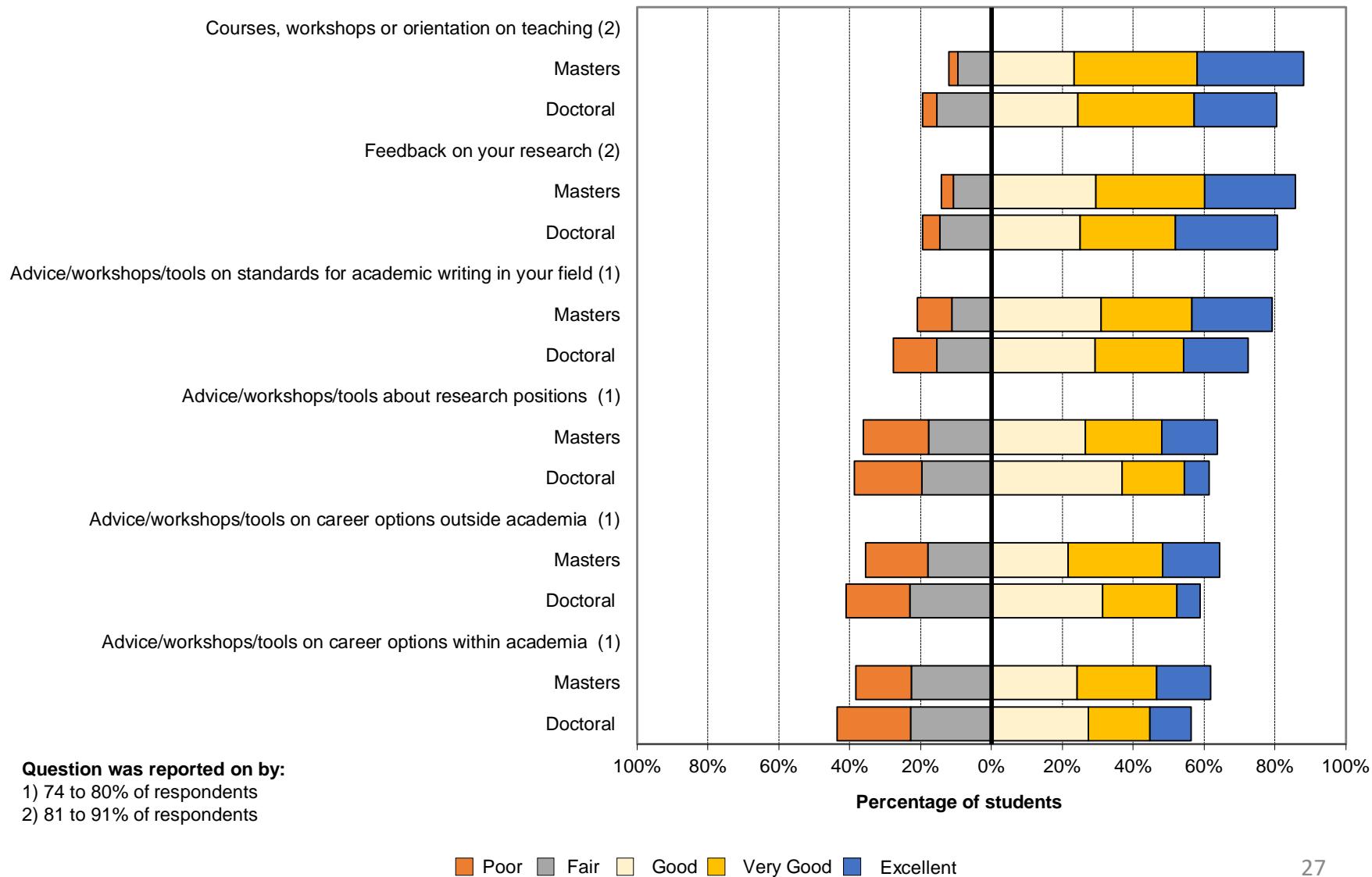
# Assessment of Skills Development

# Academic and Professional Skills

---

- The survey includes a series of questions relating to support or opportunities for the development of applied and professional skills.
- For graduate students, this can include teaching, publishing, writing grant proposals, and other preparations for academic and professional practice. Most measures held roughly the same, or improved over the 2016 survey.
- For research-focused Master's and Doctoral programs, students were the most satisfied with courses/workshops/orientation that supported teaching, as well as feedback on their research.
- For Doctoral students specifically, collaboration with faculty on independent research and selection of a topic rated highly among students.
- Over **80%** of respondents in professionally focused Master's programs reported that support for writing standards was good, very good, or excellent. Approximately **70% or more** responded positively for all other categories.

# Figure H: Academic Skills - Rating of Support Levels Received



# Figure I: Research skills for Doctoral students - Rating of Support Levels

Conducting independent research since starting your graduate program (4)

Faculty guidance in formulating a research topic (4)

Research collaboration with one or more faculty members (4)

Training in research methods before beginning your own research (4)

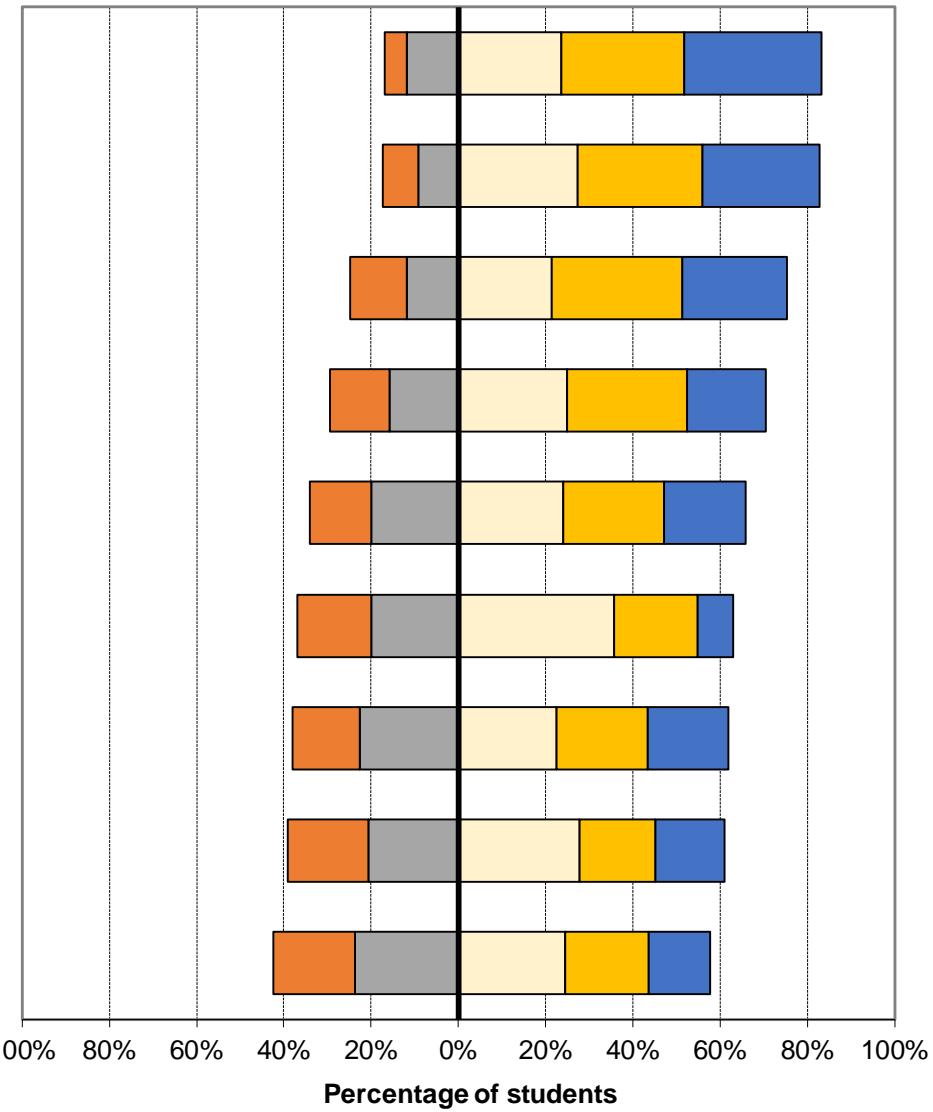
Advice/workshops/tools on writing grant proposals (3)

Advice on intellectual property issues (1)

Collaboration with faculty in writing a grant proposal (2)

Advice/workshops/tools on publishing your work (3)

Advice/workshops/tools on preparing for candidacy examinations (2)



## Item was reported on by:

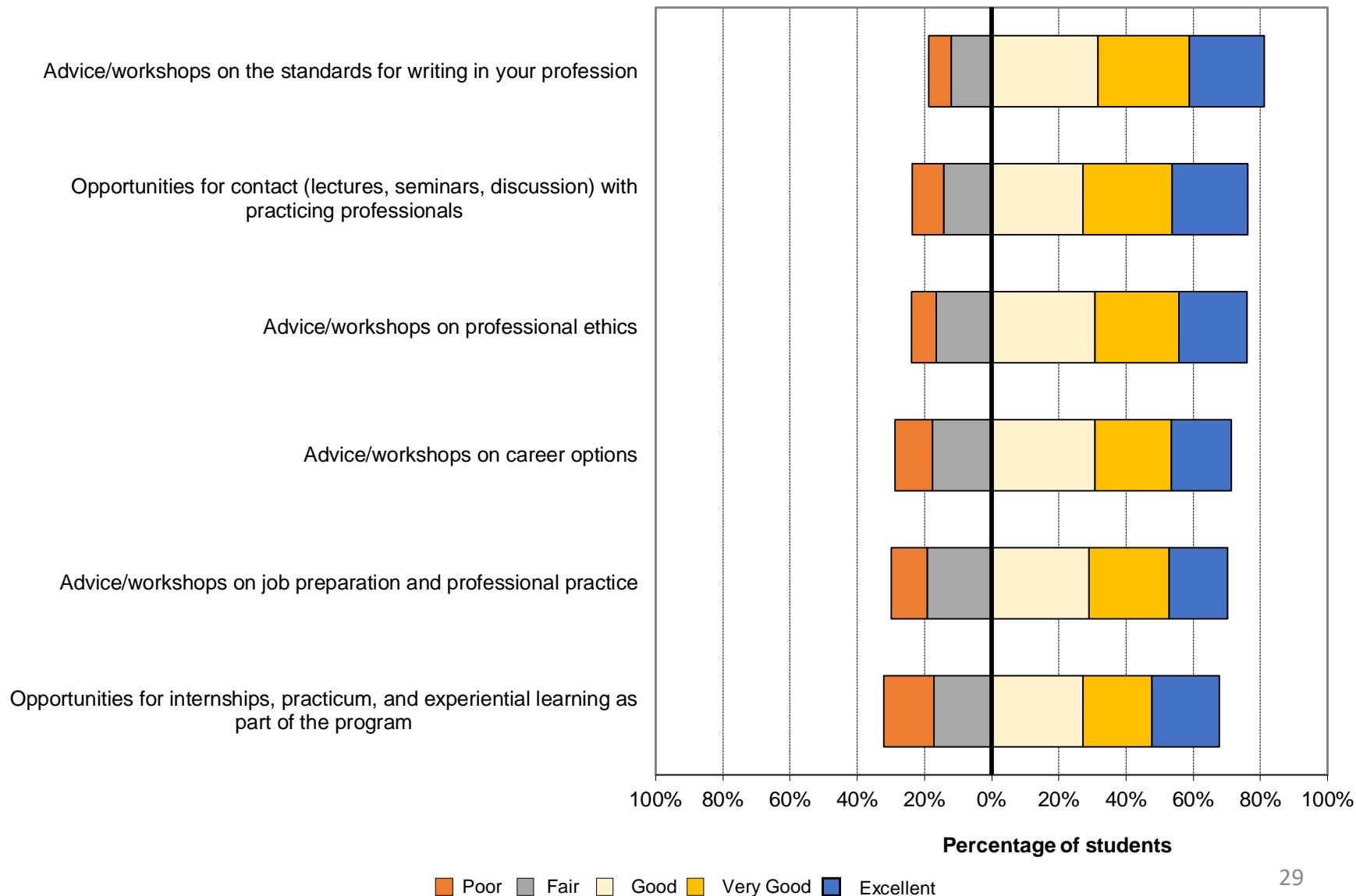
- (1) 65.0 to 69.9% of doctoral respondents
- (2) 70.0 to 79.9% of doctoral respondents
- (3) 80.0 to 89.9% of doctoral respondents
- (4) 90.0% or more doctoral respondents

100% 80% 60% 40% 20% 0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%

Percentage of students

■ Poor ■ Fair ■ Good ■ Very Good ■ Excellent

## Figure J: Applied Skills in Professionally Focused Master's Programs





# Conclusions

# Conclusions

---

- Assessments provided by Ryerson graduate students are, generally, highly positive.
  - Ryerson graduate students rated the quality of their professors, their communities, and their advisors highly. They also tended to allocate more positive responses to prompts related more closely to their home department and study group, rather than the campus as a whole.
  - Housing assistance, transportation, and student government services are areas where Ryerson students reported lower levels of satisfaction.
- Questions and comments on these survey results can be directed to the University Planning Office
  - Phone: 416-979-5033
  - Email: [upo@ryerson.ca](mailto:upo@ryerson.ca)