The Undergraduate Student Survey has been conducted at Simon Fraser University every fall semester since 1992 (except in 2002.) This annual survey provides essential feedback on the academic experiences and concerns of our undergraduate students. This year’s survey focused on course availability, student academic goals, and student satisfaction. It should be noted that a change in methodology, from in-class paper survey to online survey, was instituted in 2006. The paper surveys, administered to a random sample of classes, resulted in a “captive audience” and high response rates. In contrast, the online surveys, administered to the entire SFU undergraduate student population, resulted in larger samples but lower response rates, making the results less generalizable. Measures were taken to reduce potential biases resulting from a lower response rate.

A total of 3,355 students participated in this year’s survey, yielding an overall response rate of 15.4%. Highlights of the survey results are presented here. Statistics provided in this summary and in the full report are estimates based on survey respondents. The full report is available on the Institutional Research and Planning web-site: http://www.sfu.ca/irp/surveys/ugss/index.html

**Course Availability**

- This fall, 84% of respondents were able to register for the NUMBER of courses they wanted, a 9% improvement over last year’s results.

- 60% registered in all of the SPECIFIC courses they wanted, an 8% improvement over fall 2006.
  - Registration difficulty was due to: full classes (73%), conflicting class times (58%), and conflicting exam times (16%).

- 60% are taking LONGER than expected to complete their credential, up from 56% last year.
  - This is primarily due to students choosing to reduce their course load (15%) and entering a coop program (14%). In contrast, completion delays in 2006 were primarily due to full courses (21%) and courses not offered in the desired semester (15%).

![Trends in Course Availability and Prolonged Degree Completion](image_url)
Trends indicate that course availability has become generally more problematic over the past ten years, though there was an improvement this year over the 2006 results.

WQB Course Benefits

- Student perception of the benefits of the WQB courses has declined considerably since last year:
  - "W" coursework improves writing: 44% agree or strongly agree (2006: 63%)
  - "Q" coursework improves reasoning: 39% (2006: 73%)
  - "B" coursework improves self-examination and assessment: 37% (2006: 66%)

![Percentage of Students who Agree that WQB Courses are Beneficial, by Survey Year](image)

Student Satisfaction

- Course Availability:
  - The proportion of respondents somewhat or very satisfied with course availability decreases by course level, ranging from a high of 76% for 100-level courses to a low of 55% for 400-level courses.
  - Approximately 60% of respondents indicate satisfaction with overall course frequency and scheduling, and space in courses – this is well below the satisfaction levels of all other measures relating to courses.

- Courses (Other than Course Availability Issues):
  - Satisfaction ranged from 71% ("workload in courses", “relevance of course content to your career goals”) to 86% ("course content that is current and contemporary").

- Instruction:
  - 70-80% of respondents were satisfied with instruction.
  - Levels of satisfaction were highest for "professor/instructor teaching effectiveness" and "availability and approachability of professors/instructors".
  - Satisfaction was lowest for “clarity of expectation relating to workload and learning outcomes” and "helpfulness of teaching assistants”.

- General Experience:
  - Satisfaction was relatively low on questions regarding the general SFU experience.
  - Satisfaction ranged from 51% ("effectiveness of academic advising", “sense of belonging”) to 65% ("being treated as an individual").
**Student Academic Intentions**

- 91% of respondents came to SFU intending to complete a Bachelor’s degree.
- 11% of respondents have already achieved their original academic intention, and 81% still plan to remain at SFU long enough to achieve their initial goal.
- 87% of respondents indicated that they intend to enroll at SFU next semester.
- Among respondents who originally intended to complete a Bachelor’s degree and have changed their mind, 38% indicated that one of the factors in their decision was SFU’s failure to meet their expectations. This was the most commonly cited reason.
  - When asked to provide more details, most students cited program availability (33%), course availability (17%), and the impression that SFU is run as a business, and does not care about them (15%).

**Reasons why Students have Changed their Minds, Deciding NOT to Pursue a Bachelor's Degree**

- SFU failed to meet my expectations
- Personal reasons
- A Bachelor's degree is no longer appropriate for my new career goals
- Academic difficulty
- Financial reasons
- Found employment

**General Academic Experience**

- Students were asked to discuss any concerns they may have with regard to their academic experience at SFU. A summary, analysis, and listing of a random sample of the replies are included in the full report.
- The top concerns of respondents this year were:
  - course availability and scheduling [30%], and
  - professors, instructors, and TAs [21%].