

July 2014 Survey Results

The Transfer Student

StudentVu

“SHOULD I STAY OR SHOULD I GO NOW?” – THE CLASH

Many of us here on the StudentVu staff have transferred between programs or between institutions at some point in our academic career, so we were very interested to hear about current students' perceptions of and experiences with transferring.

DEMOGRAPHICS: WHO ARE YOU?

A total of 1,250 StudentVu panelists gave us their thoughts and opinions.

The majority of respondents were female (74%), and 18 to 24 year olds occupied the largest proportion of respondents. Our newest members to StudentVu came out in full force: Half of the respondents were heading into their 1st year of postsecondary education (52%).

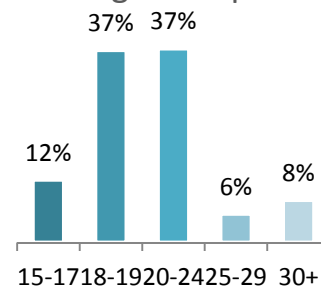
Since most first-years are new to postsecondary, they were asked about their reasoning for picking their program. Upper-years were asked about whether they had ever transferred or had considered transferring from their original program or institution.

PLAN A: THE FIRST PLACE

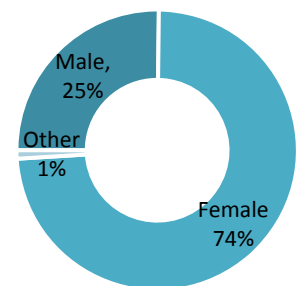
We polled our first-years about program choices to see *why* they chose *what* they chose the first time around.

Here's what we found out...

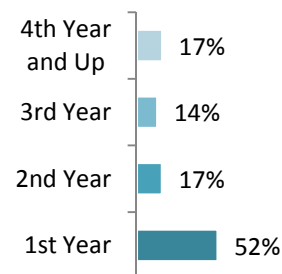
Age Group



Gender



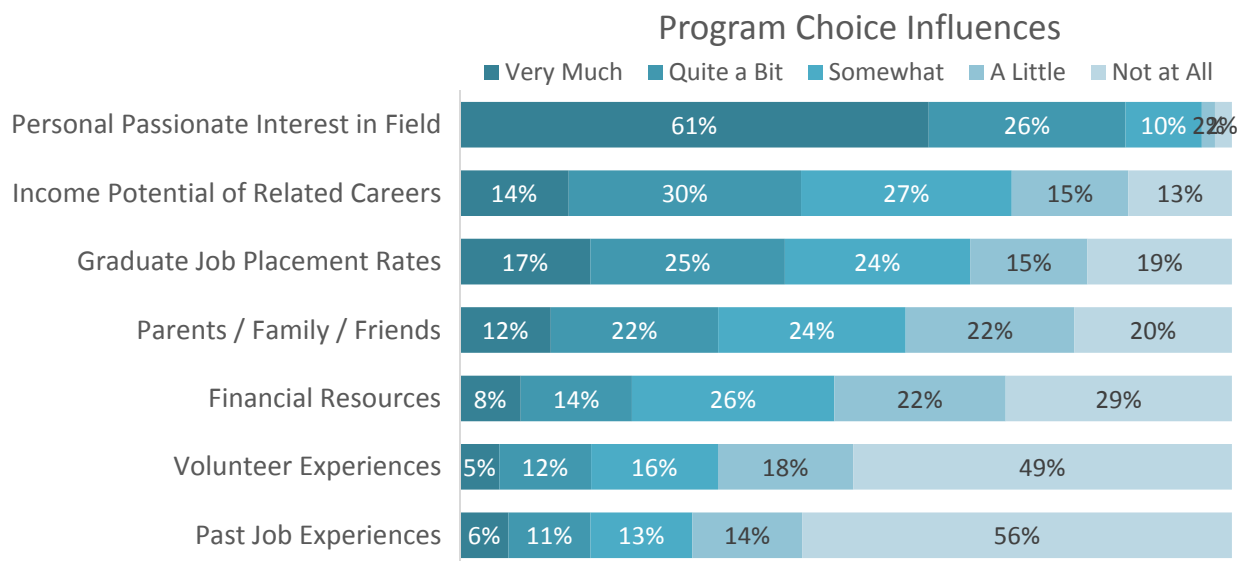
Year of PSE



87% said that a personal passionate interest in the field was very much or quite a bit of an influence in their choice.

That's twice the number of students that said income potential was a strong influence!

A personal, passionate interest in the field was very much or quite a bit of an influence twice as frequently as the income potential of related careers (44%); graduate job placement rates (42%); or the opinions of parents, family or friends (34%).



This passion did not override all practicality, however, as first-years were choosing fields with a career in mind. 20% of students were not certain what their career destination would be. Of the remaining 80%, 44% of students were enrolling in a program that would lead to their career, 20% anticipated going through multiple programs before reaching their career, and 16% believed they would graduate from multiple institutions before that goal.

PLAN B: THE MEAT OF THE MOVE

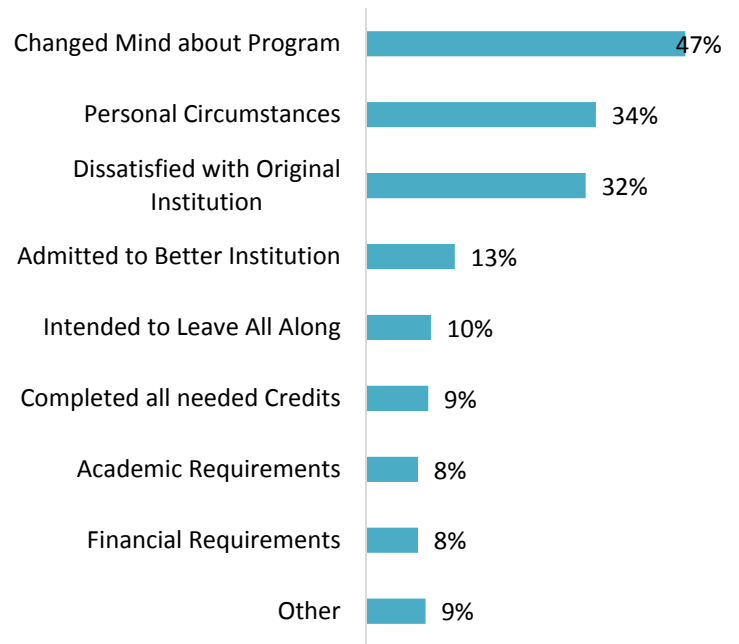
So what happens when the initial plan doesn't work? That passionate interest can fizzle out, or personal circumstances can change your life's direction. For some upper-year students, the answer to these events was to *transfer*.

Transferring created a lot of hesitation. About two-thirds of respondents felt that transferring would cost them more in the long run, half felt that it would be difficult to transfer between schools, and only 7% felt that transferring would be a simple process.

Despite these commonly held perceptions, 19% of students transferred between institutions, and 28% had changed programs at some point in their academic career. Of those who didn't transfer, 42% had considered changing schools, and 59% had considered transferring between programs.

Without knowledge of the credit transfer process, the benefits of starting over at a new institution or in a new program tend to be outweighed by the lost time and money. However, transferring any completed credits from an old program can save time, money, and sanity.

Reasons for Transferring



Of those who transferred between programs or institutions, two-thirds of students applied to transfer the credits they'd completed to their new program or institution. Students went to counsellors (35%), faculty or instructors (29%), or other students (27%) to get information about how to go through with a transfer. The most common situation among those who did not apply, was simply that their credits were not eligible for a credit transfer (47%). 13% informed us that they were unaware they could transfer their credits.

Most students (97%) had not heard of the Ontario Council on Articulation and Transfer (ONCAT), which is an organization that aims to reduce barriers for students looking to transfer among organizations. When asked to name any resources they could think of, institutional human resources such as the registrar, student services, and counselors were mentioned 45% of the time. Students also referred to other institutional resources such as websites (21%), and other provincial organizations such as the BC TransferGuide (19%).



CONCLUSION: INSPIRATION FOR THE COMING YEAR

We asked our first-years for inspiration regarding the coming year, and received an incredible variety of quotes, life mottos, and personal beliefs. We wanted to share a few of them with you before the school year starts.

“Take action! Do not regret 'not-doing' anything during your years in university or college. You now have the freedom to choose what YOU want to do with your life; be cautious with your decisions but be sure to enjoy your years as an undergrad student.”

“Never let success get to your head, and never let failure get to your heart.”

“There are far better things ahead than any we leave behind.” - C.S. Lewis

And, touching on the nervousness that many students feel about the coming years, Kelly from Mohawk College told us that “being nervous for first year is natural, it’s about finding your place and path in life. It’s a big decision, it’s okay to be nervous. It’s a big step in life.”

It is completely understandable to be nervous about the future or the number of ‘unknowns’ in the postsecondary education experience, especially when you feel pressured to commit to a career path without testing it out. **We often forget that postsecondary education can be a testing ground for yourself and your true interest level in a field.** And, as was proven by the high percentage of 30+ year old students that responded to this survey, many people end up coming back to PSE or trying it out later to pursue a new position or acquire a new set of knowledge. It is never too late to get the education you want.

Just remember to take as many of your previously earned credits with you as you can!

This survey was conducted online in English with 1250 students aged 15+. The survey was completed between July 27 and August 13, 2014.



ABOUT STUDENTVU

A membership-based research panel comprised of 5,000 university and college students from across Canada. StudentVu members are highly engaged and eager to share their opinion on a broad spectrum of youth related topics.