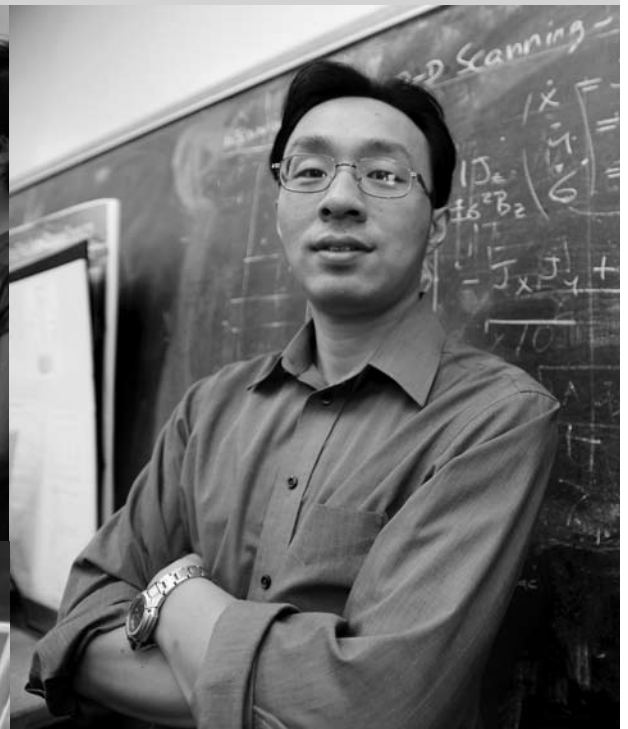


**RYERSON
UNIVERSITY**

COMPREHENSIVE STUDENT SURVEY 2008

FOR UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS IN ALL YEARS OF STUDY

**HIGHLIGHTS OF RESULTS
PREPARED BY THE UNIVERSITY PLANNING OFFICE**



Introduction

Since 1997, Ryerson has been a member of the Canadian University Survey Consortium, a group of approximately 30 universities across Canada that conducts student surveys across participating universities. In 2008, Ryerson, under the auspices of the Consortium, undertook the Comprehensive Student Survey of undergraduates in all years of study. Students were asked about their experiences at Ryerson. The survey was distributed to a sample of 1,000 undergraduate students in years one through four of their programs. The overall response rate was 29 percent.¹ The Comprehensive Student Survey was also conducted in 2002 and 2005.

Satisfaction with Ryerson

Students were asked about their perception of Ryerson and satisfaction with services provided by the University. Respondents were provided with a four-point scale to evaluate the various services: very dissatisfied, dissatisfied, satisfied, and very satisfied. (They could also indicate “not applicable.”)

Students’ perception of Ryerson is illustrated in Figure 1. Over 90 percent of respondents are satisfied with the average size of classes and with their personal safety on campus.

Compared to the previous round of the survey conducted in 2005, students in 2008 appear to be much more satisfied with the general condition of buildings and grounds. In 2005, 57 percent indicated satisfaction, while 74 percent do so in 2008. Similarly, students in 2008 report being *more* satisfied with instructional facilities (e.g., classrooms, lab equipment) than did the 2005 group. Eighty percent report being satisfied with instructional facilities in 2008, while 70 percent did so in 2005.

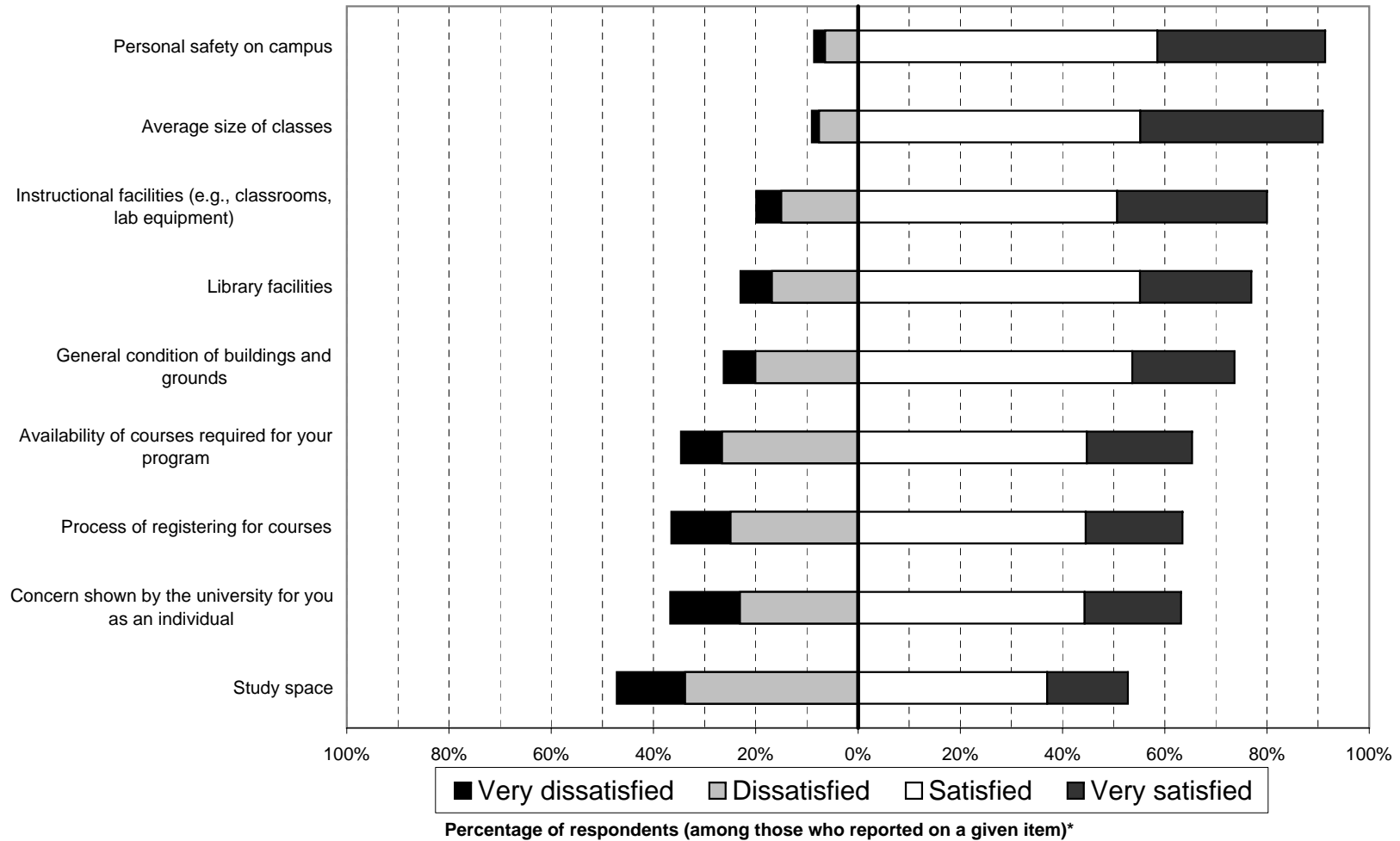
The aspect with which students appear least satisfied is study space. Fifty-three percent report being satisfied in this regard. This represents a decline from 2005, when 62 percent reported being satisfied with study space.

Figure 2 outlines satisfaction with services provided by Ryerson. Over 90 percent of respondents report being satisfied or very satisfied with computer facilities. This marks an increase over 2005, when 80 percent of students indicated satisfaction.

And, while only a small percentage of students report experience with study skills/learning support services, services for international students and personal counseling services, a wide majority (at least 85 percent) of those who do provide ratings express satisfaction with these services. Students are not as satisfied with university residences or parking facilities.

¹ Nineteen times out of twenty, the percentages shown throughout this report are estimated to be accurate within 4.85 percentage points.

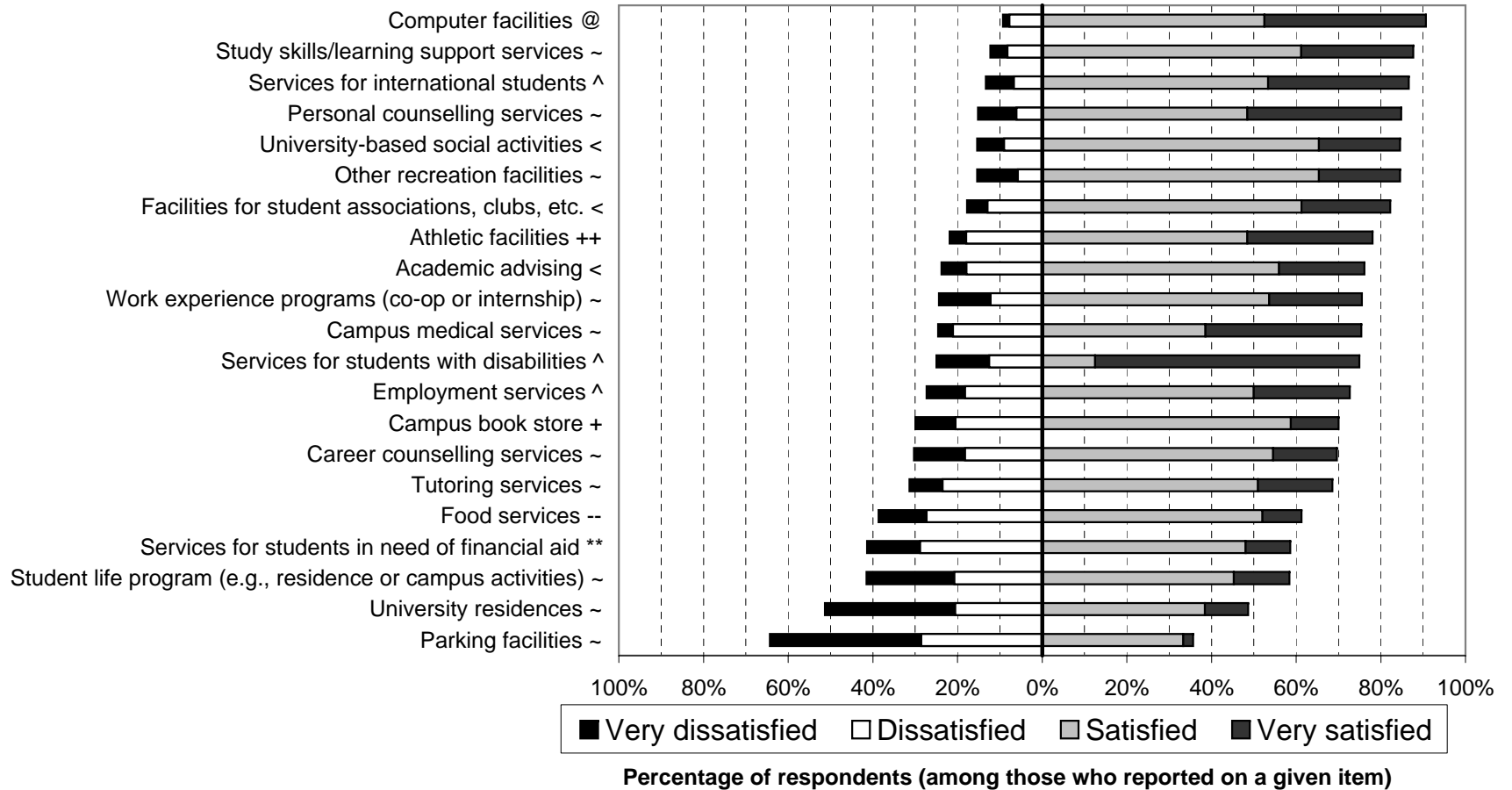
Comprehensive Student Survey 2008 (undergraduate students in all years of study): Highlights
Figure 1: Students' perception of Ryerson



*NOTE: At least 90 percent of respondents reported on each item.

Comprehensive Student Survey 2008 (undergraduate students in all years of study): Highlights

Figure 2: Satisfaction with university services



NOTES:

- + at least 90.0% of respondents reported on this item.
- @ 80.0 to 89.9% of respondents reported on this item.
- 60.0 to 69.9% of respondents reported on this item.
- ++ 40.0 to 49.9% of respondents reported on this item.

- ** 30.0 to 39.9% of respondents reported on this item.
- < 20.0 to 29.9% of respondents reported on this item.
- ~ 10.0 to 19.9% of respondents reported on this item.
- ^ 0.0 to 9.9% of respondents reported on this item.

Satisfaction with the university experience

Students provided information about their satisfaction with various aspects of the university experience with the use of a four-point scale: disagree strongly, disagree, agree, and agree strongly.

As outlined in Figure 3, over 90 percent of students are satisfied with their decision to attend Ryerson. Almost all respondents (95 percent) indicate that Ryerson treats students fairly, independently of gender; and Ryerson treats students fairly, independently of their race.

While 86 percent of respondents agree that most of their professors are reasonably accessible outside of class to help students, only 59 percent report that some professors have taken a personal interest in their academic progress. Fewer than half of respondents report that they feel free to turn to professors for advice on personal matters.

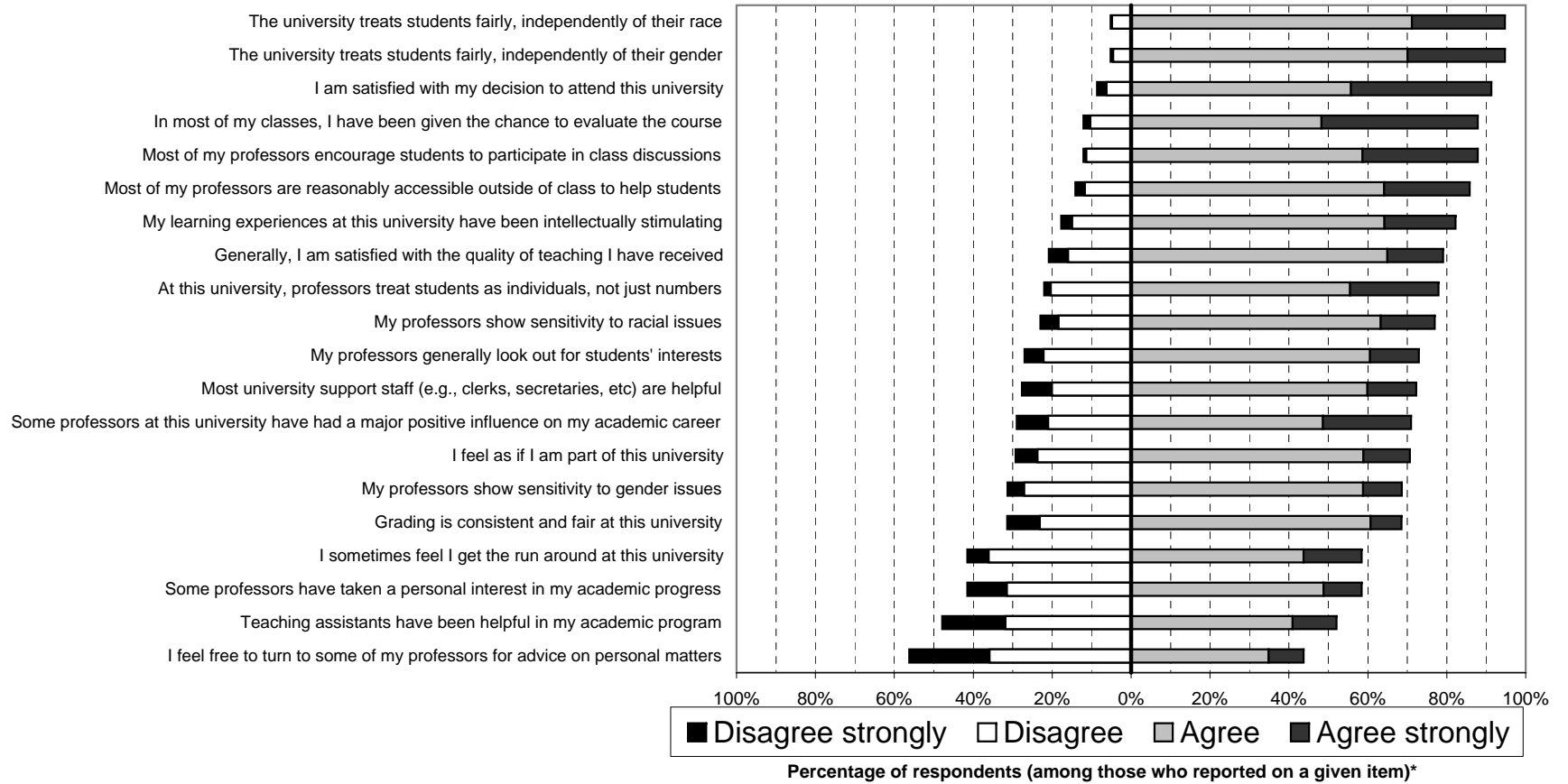
These results generally are consistent with those reported in the 2005 round of the survey.

Aspects of Ryerson that need improvement

Students were asked which aspects of Ryerson need improvement. Respondents were provided with a five-point scale to make their evaluation: none, very little, some, much, and very much.

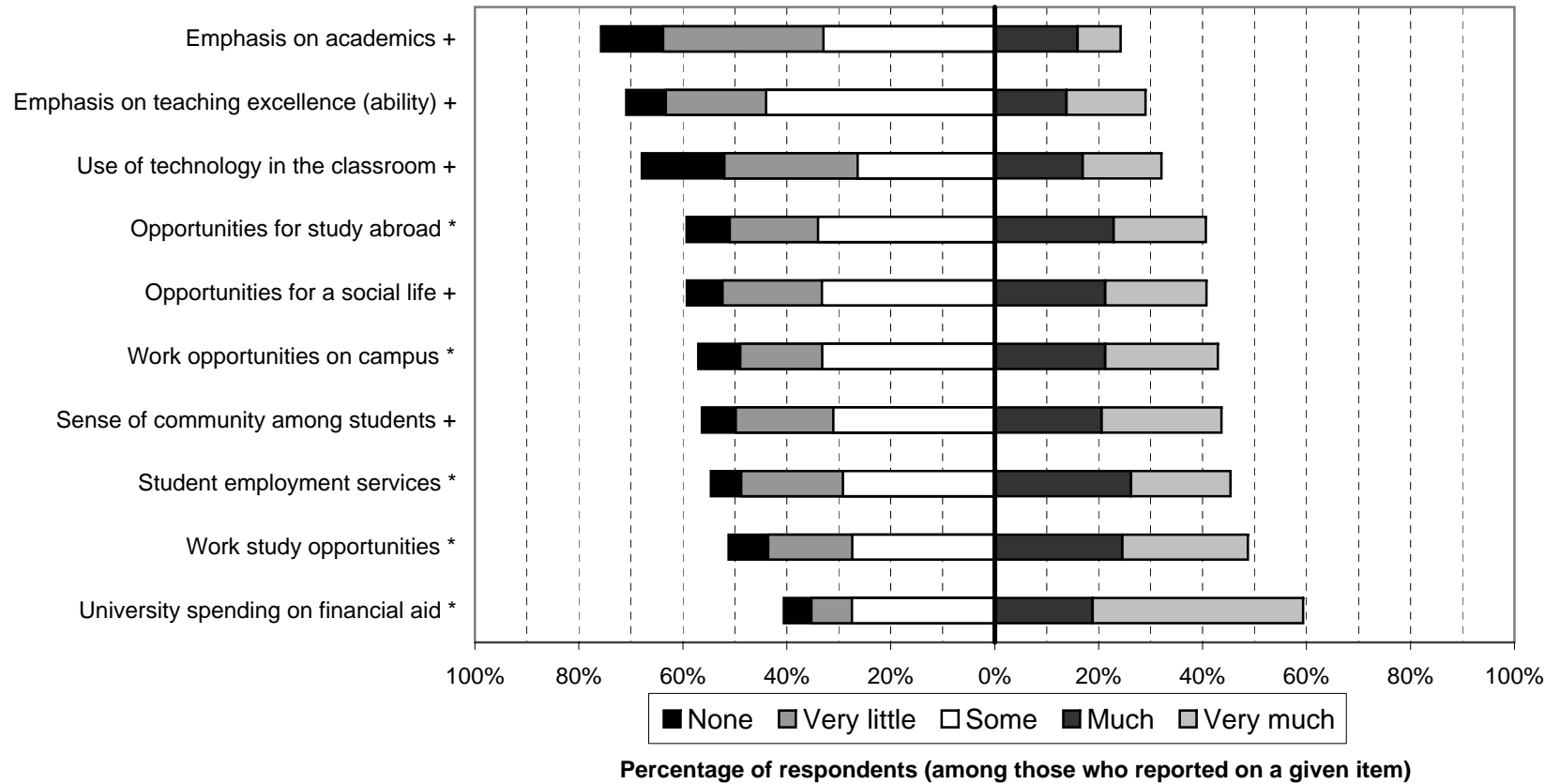
Figure 4 illustrates the degree to which respondents believe various aspects of Ryerson need improvement. Eighty-six percent indicate that university spending on financial aid needs at least some improvement, with 59 percent reporting that this area needs “much” or “very much” improvement. For most other items on the list, about three-quarters of students report that some improvement is needed, but fewer than half indicate that “much” or “very much” improvement is required. Generally, results follow the same pattern found in the 2005 round of the survey.

Comprehensive Student Survey 2008 (undergraduate students in all years of study): Highlights
Figure 3: Satisfaction with the university experience



*NOTE: At least 95 percent of respondents reported on each item.

Comprehensive Student Survey 2008 (undergraduate students in all years of study): Highlights
Figure 4: Aspects of the university that require improvement



NOTES:

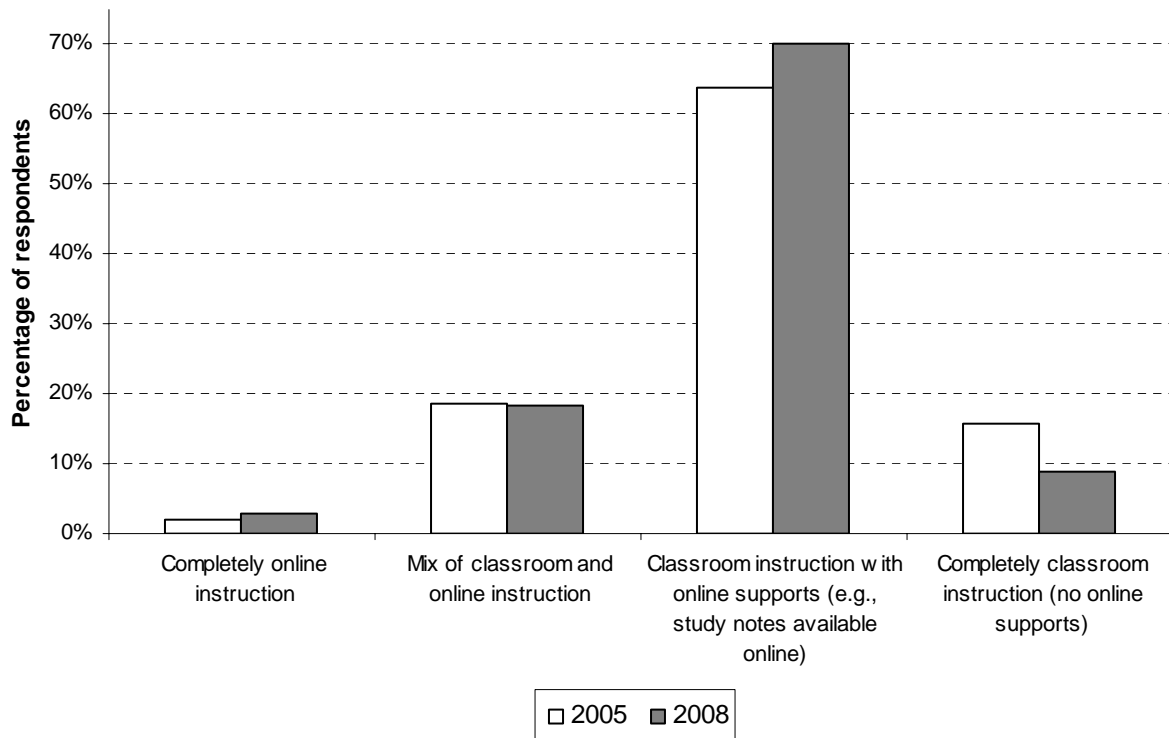
+ at least 90.0% of respondents reported on this item.

* 80.0 to 89.9% of respondents reported on this item.

Preferred type of instruction

Respondents provided information about the mode of instruction they prefer. The type most commonly cited is classroom instruction with on-line supports (preferred by over two-thirds of respondents) followed by a mix of classroom and on-line instruction (favoured by 18 percent). Fewer than one in ten (9 percent) of respondents favour exclusively classroom-based instruction, and very few students indicate a preference for exclusively on-line instruction. These results point to a slight shift from 2005 – since that round of the survey, a somewhat higher proportion now indicate a preference for classroom instruction with online supports, and a somewhat lower proportion now favour exclusively classroom-based instruction. See Figure 5.

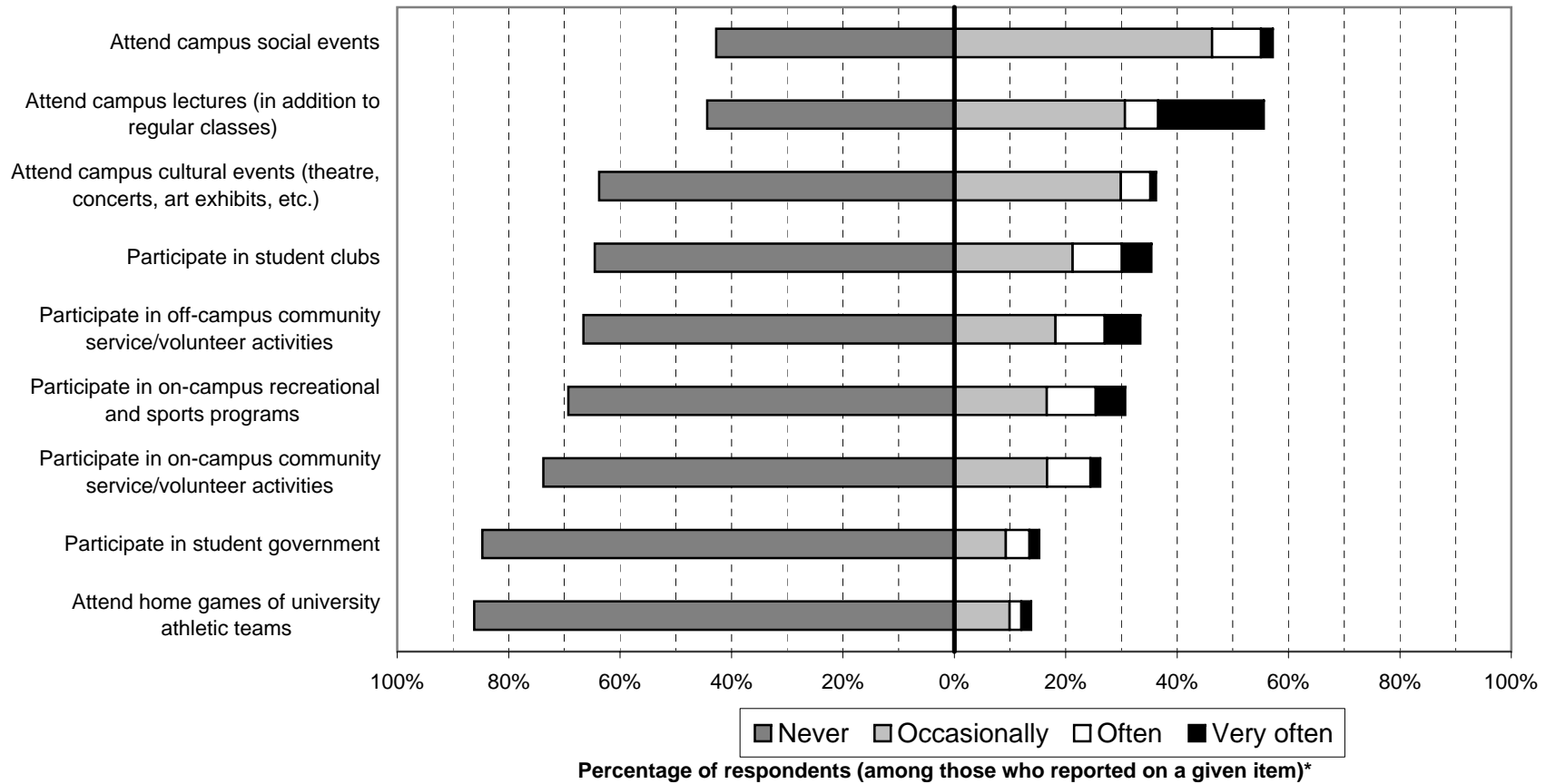
Figure 5: Students' preferred mode of instruction



Participation in activities at Ryerson and outside of university

Students were asked about their level of participation in activities at Ryerson on a four-point scale: never, occasionally, often, and very often. For most activities listed, fewer than half of respondents report that they are involved at least occasionally. As illustrated in Figure 6, 57 percent of students attend campus social events. Fewer students attend home games of university athletic teams (14 percent) or participate in student government (15 percent).

Comprehensive Student Survey 2008 (undergraduate students in all years of study): Highlights
Figure 6: Participation in activities at Ryerson University



*NOTE: At least 97 percent of respondents reported on each item.

Ryerson's contribution to the development of skills and personal traits

Students were asked how well Ryerson helped them to build skills or develop personal traits in a variety of areas. The university's contribution to the development of each skill/trait was evaluated according to the following scale: excellent, good, fair, poor/fail.

Figure 7 provides the ratings given for each skill or trait. Respondents indicate that Ryerson's greatest contribution is in developing the ability to work independently – 75 percent rate the University's contribution in this area as "excellent" or "good." The development of skills related to cooperative interaction in groups, and to thinking logically and analytically, are each rated as "excellent" or "good" by about two-thirds of respondents. Fewer respondents (less than 40 percent) indicate that Ryerson made an "excellent" or "good" contribution to their mathematical skills or their ability to address issues in their personal life.

Career plans

Over 60 percent of respondents indicate that they have decided on a career field or specific occupation, with a further 30 percent reporting that they have "maybe" decided. With respect to job opportunities, 44 percent perceive that there are *many* jobs and 35 percent perceive that there are *some* jobs in their major area of study.

Education financing and debt

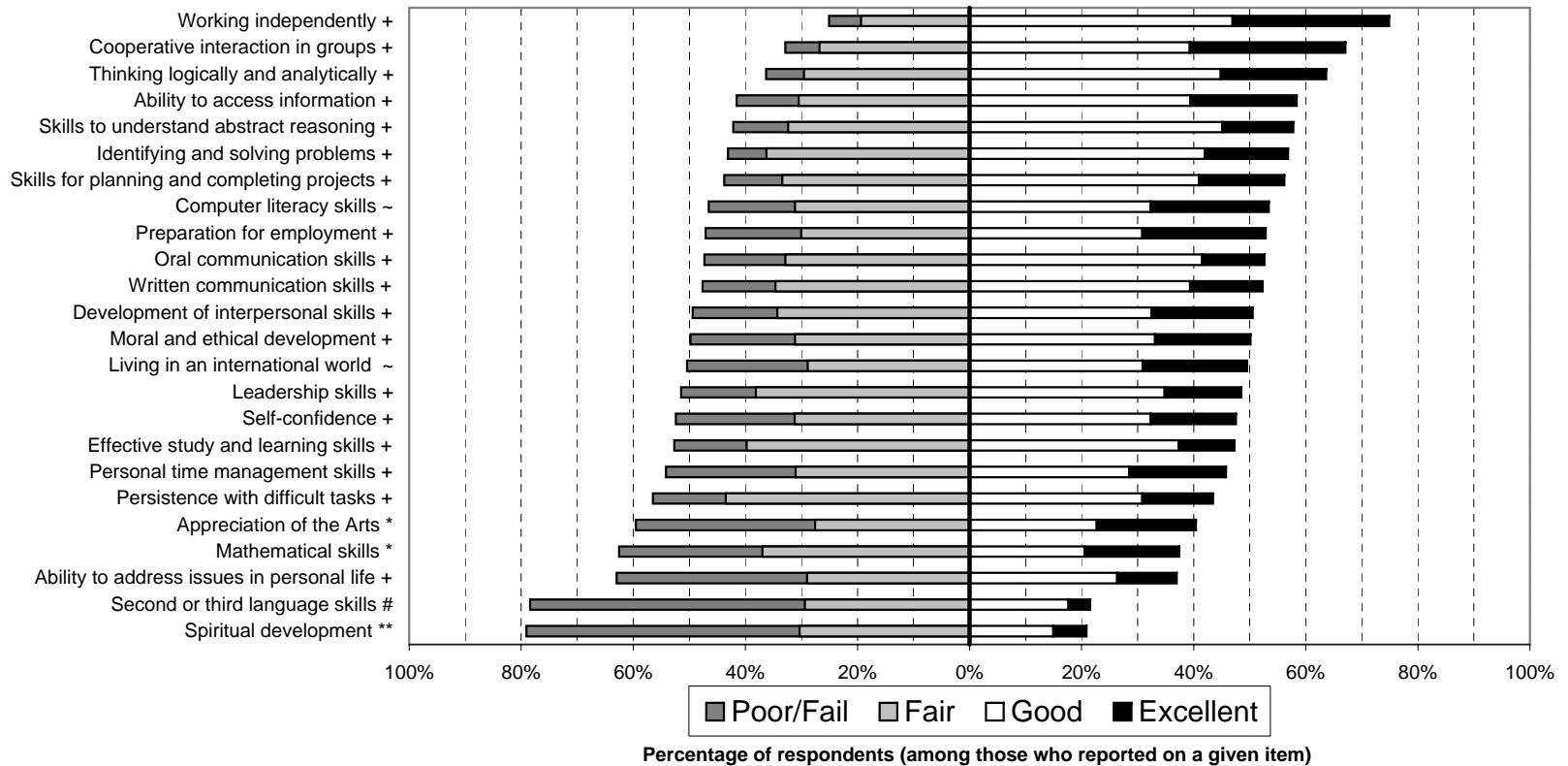
Students were asked for information about the means by which they finance their university education as well as the level of debt that they have incurred. Almost 60 percent of respondents report that they are employed during the current academic term and a further 15 percent state they are looking for work. The average amount of time that respondents who are currently employed work is 15.7 hours per week. One-third of employed respondents indicate that their work does not have a negative impact on academic performance. A quarter of employed respondents report that the negative impact of work is moderate, while 16 percent believe their work has a significant or substantial negative impact on academic performance.

Students were asked to rate their level of concern with having sufficient funding to complete their university education: 31 percent indicate that they are very concerned; 42 percent have some concern but think they will probably have enough funds, while 27 percent are not concerned.

Information about employment and concerns regarding funding are consistent with those reported in the previous round of this survey (2005).

Sources of funds for education: Among undergraduate students in all years of study, sources most commonly cited as providing funds for education include parents or family (cited by 59 percent of respondents). Over a third (36 percent) use earnings from summer work to finance their education. While few students (10 percent) use RESPs to fund their studies, this is higher than the proportion who reported using RESPs in 2005 (4 percent).

Comprehensive Student Survey 2008 (undergraduate students in all years of study): Highlights
Figure 7: Ryerson's contribution to the development of skills and personal traits



NOTES:

+ at least 90.0% of respondents reported on this item.

~ 80.0 to 89.9% of respondents reported on this item.

* 70.0 to 79.9% of respondents reported on this item.

** 60.0 to 69.9% of respondents reported on this item.

50.0 to 59.9% of respondents reported on this item.

Debt: Over half (57 percent) of respondents report that they have incurred debt from financing their university education. Not surprisingly, students in upper year levels have incurred greater debt than have those in lower year levels. The level of debt reported in this survey is not significantly different from that reported in the previous round, which was conducted in 2005. Table 1 below outlines the amount of debt incurred by students in each year level.

Table 1: Debt by year level

Year Level	Estimated average range [^]	
	From	To
All Year 1 students	\$3,358	\$6,419
Year 1 students with debt	\$7,211	\$11,898
All Year 2 students	\$6,478	\$11,128
Year 2 students with debt	\$10,813	\$16,744
All Year 3 students	\$6,550	\$13,779
Year 3 students with debt	\$12,042	\$22,059
All Year 4 students	\$8,008	\$15,804
Year 4 students with debt	\$16,076	\$25,800
All students (irrespective of year level)	\$7,110	\$9,812
Students with debt (irrespective of year level)	\$13,011	\$16,795

[^] Applicable 19 times out of 20

Profile of students

Students were asked to report on a variety of personal characteristics, including their gender, age, whether they have a disability, and their home province.

The vast majority of respondents (92 percent) report that their permanent home before coming to Ryerson was in Ontario. Seventy-one percent reside with their parents or guardians and 4 percent live in on-campus housing. Twenty-one percent of respondents live in rental accommodations.

Three-quarters of respondents indicate that they take public transportation to get to campus. Fourteen percent of all respondents report that it takes them less than 20 minutes to get to campus, while 61 percent take at least 45 minutes.

Females are somewhat over-represented among the survey's respondents: Fifty-nine percent of completed questionnaires are from females, whereas only 54 percent of the target population is female. The distribution of respondents across year levels shows that students in years 1 and 2 are somewhat over-represented and those in years 3 and 4 are somewhat under-represented in the survey sample. (Table 2 provides a comparison of the survey sample and student population data for age, gender, year level and Faculty of registration.)

Slightly more than 5 percent of respondents identified themselves as persons with a disability.

Table 2: Comparison of survey sample and population data

	Survey Sample	Population*
GENDER		
Females	171 (59.0%)	10,642 (53.5%)
Males	118 (40.7%)	9,255 (46.5%)
Not Stated	1 (0.3%)	0 (0.0%)
Total	290 (100.0%)	19,897 (100.0%)
AGE		
Mean (years)	21.3	22.1
YEAR LEVEL		
Year One	90 (31.0%)	5,621 (28.3%)
Year Two	79 (27.2%)	4,610 (23.2%)
Year Three	56 (19.3%)	4,449 (22.4%)
Year Four	60 (20.7%)	5,210 (26.2%)
Not Stated	5 (1.7%)	7 (0.0%)
Total	290 (100.0%)	19,897 (100.0%)
FACULTY		
Arts	23 (7.9%)	1,840 (9.3%)
Communication & Design	56 (19.3%)	3,668 (18.4%)
Community Services	72 (24.8%)	4,272 (21.5%)
Engineering & Applied Science	52 (17.9%)	4,327 (21.8%)
Ted Rogers School of Management	86 (29.7%)	5,790 (29.1%)
Not Stated	1 (0.3%)	0 (0.0%)
Total	290 (100.0%)	19,897 (100.0%)

*Based on the November 1, 2007 group of registrants from which survey participants were selected.

Method

Over a six-week period beginning in January 2008, questionnaires were mailed to 1,000 undergraduate students at Ryerson University in all years of study. The 29 percent response rate is considered acceptable for a mail-out format.

Limitations of the survey relate mainly to ambiguity surrounding respondents' interpretation of certain questions. Given that the questionnaire was developed for use across a number of universities, there may have been variation in respondents' understanding of questions in which terms such as "career counsellor" are used. In the case of students' evaluation of various campus services, it is possible that some respondents who rated a given activity or feature of the University positively or negatively did not in fact have any direct experience with it and thus should have indicated "don't know" or "not applicable". For further information about the Comprehensive Student Survey 2008, please contact the University Planning Office at (416) 979-5033.

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