Langara.

THE COLLEGE OF HIGHER LEARNING.

2011 CURRENT STUDENT SURVEY REPORT

Office of Institutional Research
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SURVEY SAMPLE AND METHODOLOGY

A random sample of 3,000 students enrolled in Fall 2011 term was selected to participate in this survey. The sample closely reflected the actual student population on educational goal, gender and registration status (full or part-time). Several email notifications for the online questionnaire were sent to the sample between October 12 and 26, 2011. A total of 750 valid questionnaires were returned, a final response rate of 25%. The accuracy of the survey results is estimated to be ±3.6%, 19 times out of 20.

A comparison of respondents to the student population showed that this response sample only differed marginally from the population; new Baccalaureate students were slightly under-represented. Responses were weighted by registration status and educational goal to achieve a sample representative of the student population (see Table 1).

For reporting purposes, student programs were grouped by their main educational goal (University Transfer, Career/Vocational or Baccalaureate). Although similar, this is ***not*** equivalent to previous years' grouping into the major program areas of Arts and Science, Career/Vocational and Baccalaureate. All comparisons to previous years within this report have been recalibrated. Comparisons should not be made between this report and previous years' reports.

Table 1: Characteristics of Student Population and Survey Respondents

Characteristics		Student Population	Respondents (unadjusted)	Respondents (adjusted)
Educational Goal	University Transfer	76.8%	76.5%	77.0%
	Career/Vocational	11.0%	11.2%	10.9%
	Baccalaureate	12.2%	12.3%	12.1%
Student Type	New	29.2%	30.7%	29.2%
	Returning	70.8%	69.3%	70.8%

PROFILE OF LANGARA STUDENTS

Table 2: Registration Program of Respondents

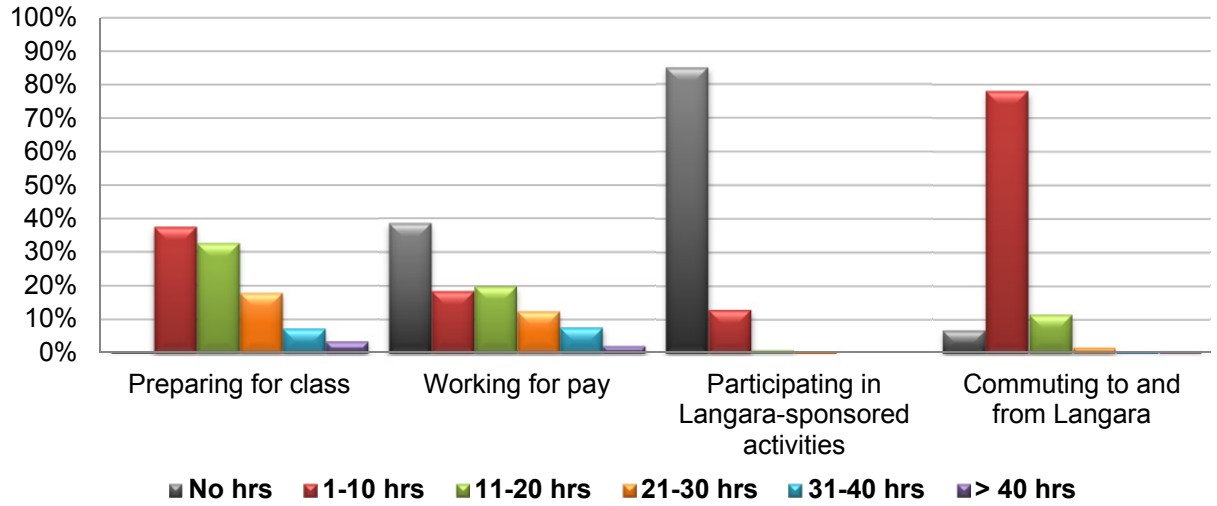
Program	%	Program	%
Arts and Science	76.8%	Education Assistant	0.1%
Aboriginal Studies	0.1%	Fine Arts	2.1%
Engineering Transfer	0.7%	Journalism	0.4%
Bachelor of Business Administration	6.1%	Library & Information Technology	2.6%
Bachelor of Science in Nursing	5.7%	Nutrition & Food Service Management	0.5%
Bachelor of Recreation Management	0.4%	Professional Photo Imaging	0.8%
Criminal Justice	1.2%	Publishing	0.1%
Computer Studies	0.1%	Recreation Leadership	0.4%
Design Formation	0.8%	Social Service Worker	0.3%
Early Childhood Education	0.3%	Theatre Arts	0.7%

Table 3: Demographic Profile of Survey Respondents

Characteristics		Percent	Characteristics		Percent
Gender	Male	37.7%	Course Load	Full-time	76.6%
	Female	62.3%		Part-time	23.4%
Age	17 or younger	5.8%	Registration Status	New	29.2%
	18-21 years	48.7%		Returning	70.8%
	22-25 years	25.7%		Domestic	91.5%
	26-30 years	10.2%		International	8.5%
	31-39 years	5.6%		Aboriginal	2.0%
	40+	4.0%			
First Language	English	75.8%	Terms at Langara	1-3 Terms	52.1%
	Mandarin	8.3%		4-6 Terms	29.1%
	Cantonese	4.9%		7-9 Terms	10.6%
	Spanish	1.5%		10-12 Terms	4.2%
	Korean	1.4%		13-15 Terms	2.5%
	Japanese	0.9%		16+ Terms	1.5%
	French	0.8%			
	Russian	0.8%			
	Filipino/Tagalog	0.7%			
	Other	4.9%			

Students spent more time studying or preparing for class than working. Among the employed, part-time work was more prevalent. Baccalaureate students were more likely to be working full-time, while Career/Vocational students were most likely to be not working at all. International students reported spending significantly more time than domestic students preparing for class. Very few students spent any time participating in Langara-sponsored activities.

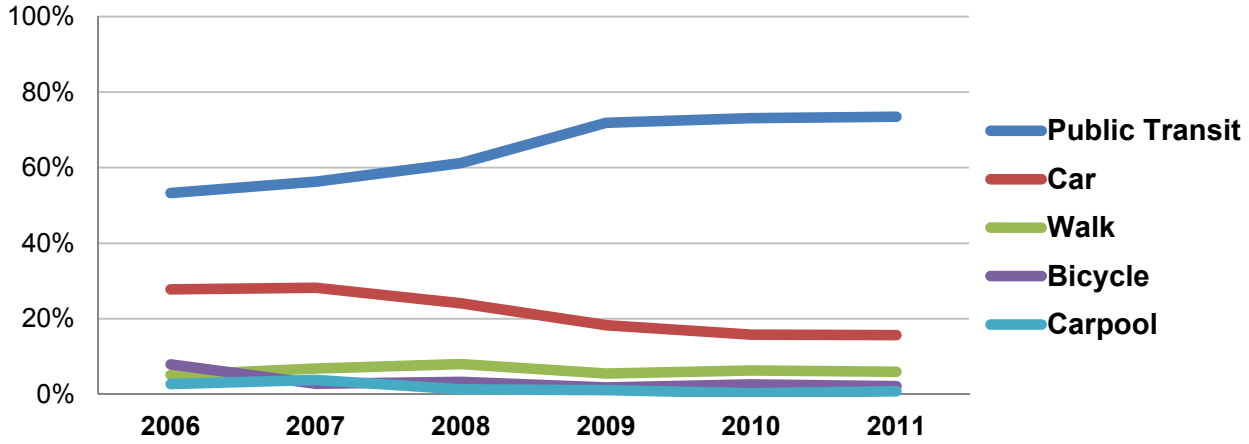
Figure 1: Hours per Week Spent in Various Activities



With most students commuting less 1-10 hours each week, public transit remained the most popular mode of transportation by far. Transit use has improved steadily since 2006; the largest increases coincided with the launch of the Langara UPass (+5 percentage points in 2008) and the

opening of the Canada Line (+10 percentage points in 2009). Commuting by single-occupant car has declined by 12 percentage points since 2006. See Figure 2 for the six year trend.

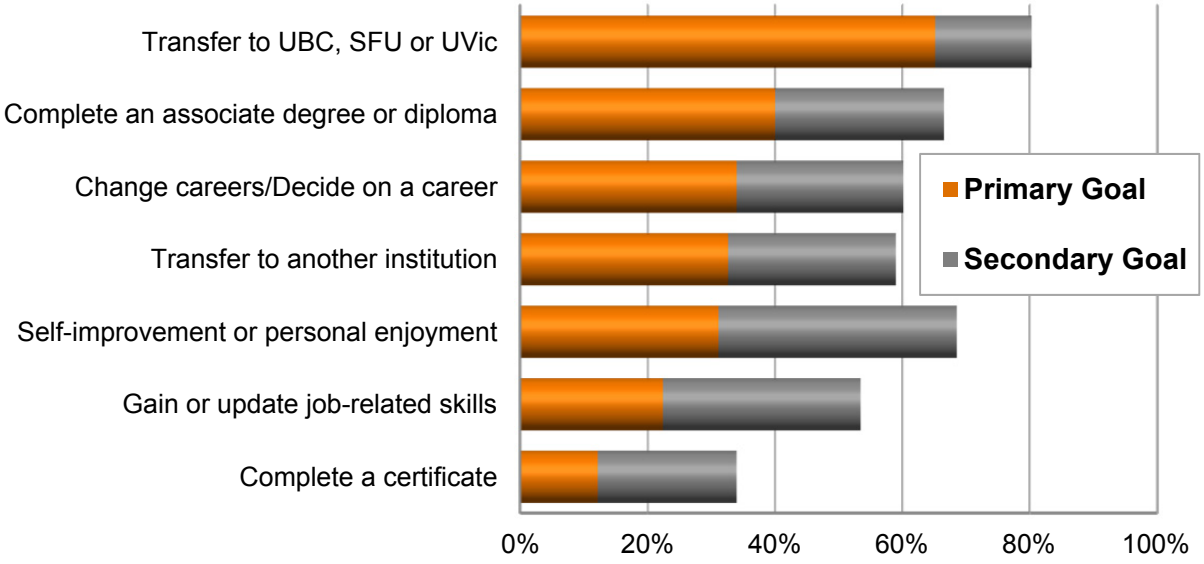
Figure 2: Primary Mode of Transportation, 2006-2011



REASONS FOR CHOOSING LANGARA

This year, students were asked to identify their main goals for attending Langara. Overall, transfer to one of the research universities was the most frequently cited primary goal, followed by completing an associate degree or diploma[1] and changing or deciding on a career.

Figure 3: Student Goals

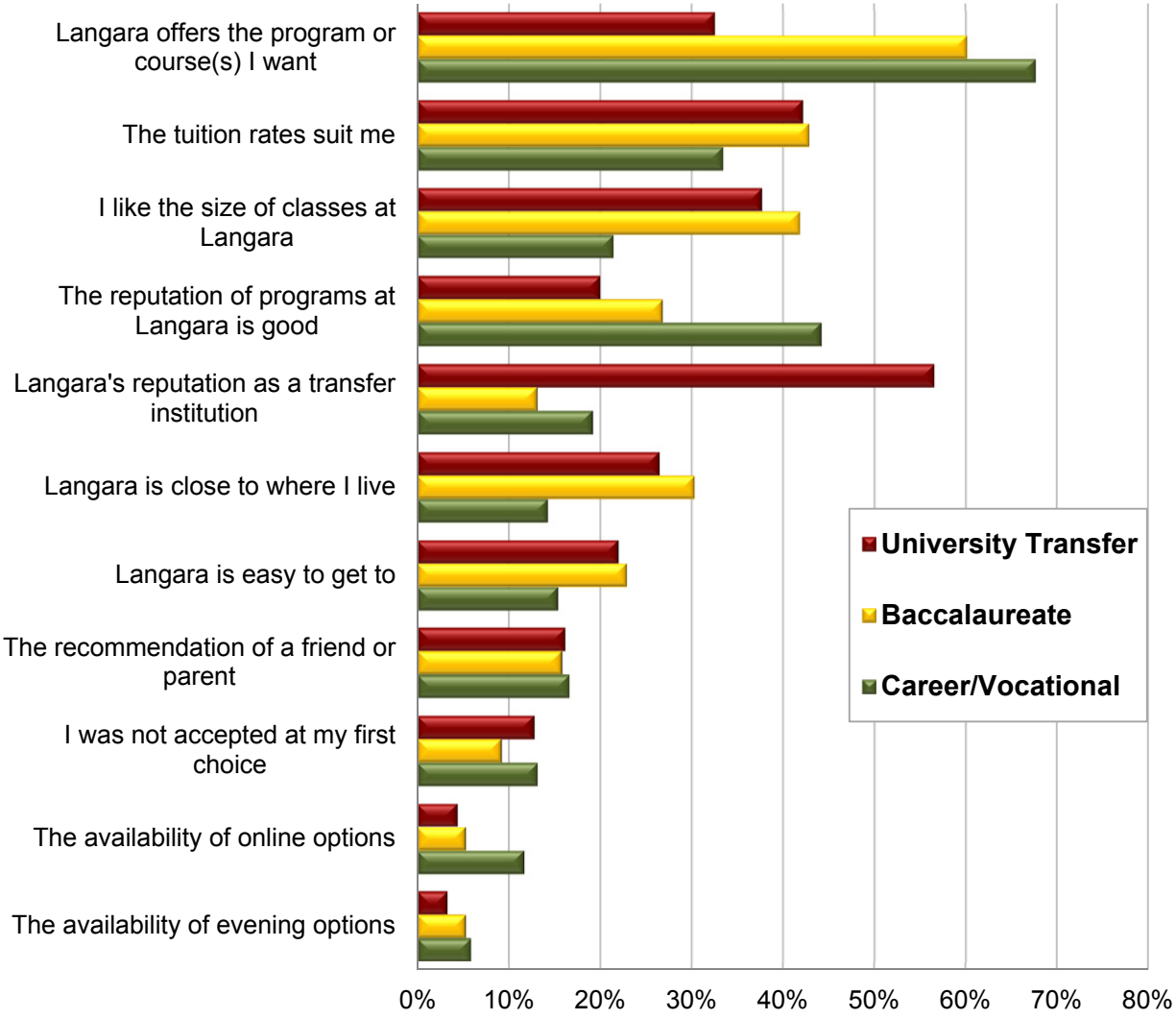


Students decided to come to Langara for a variety of reasons. Foremost were our program or course offerings, tuition rates, class size and reputation. University Transfer students, especially those under age 21, were most influenced by Langara's reputation as a transfer institution. Our program and course offerings remained the primary motivating factor for Career/Vocational and Baccalaureate students. Class size was more of a factor for Baccalaureate and University Transfer students, particularly those under 30 years of age.

[1] 'Complete a Bachelor's Degree' was not included as an option, but Baccalaureate students seem to have selected 'Complete an associate degree or diploma' as a proxy. This omission will be corrected in following surveys.

Compared to 2010, Baccalaureate students were slightly more influenced by a recommendation, and less likely to base their decision on location. However, the reasons Career/Vocational students came to Langara has changed notably since Fall 2010. This year's Career/Vocational students were noticeably less influenced by program or course offerings (-17 percentage points), and slightly more influenced by Langara's reputation (+8.6), tuition rates (+7.7), and the application decisions of their first choice institution (+7.8).

Figure 4: Reasons for Choosing Langara

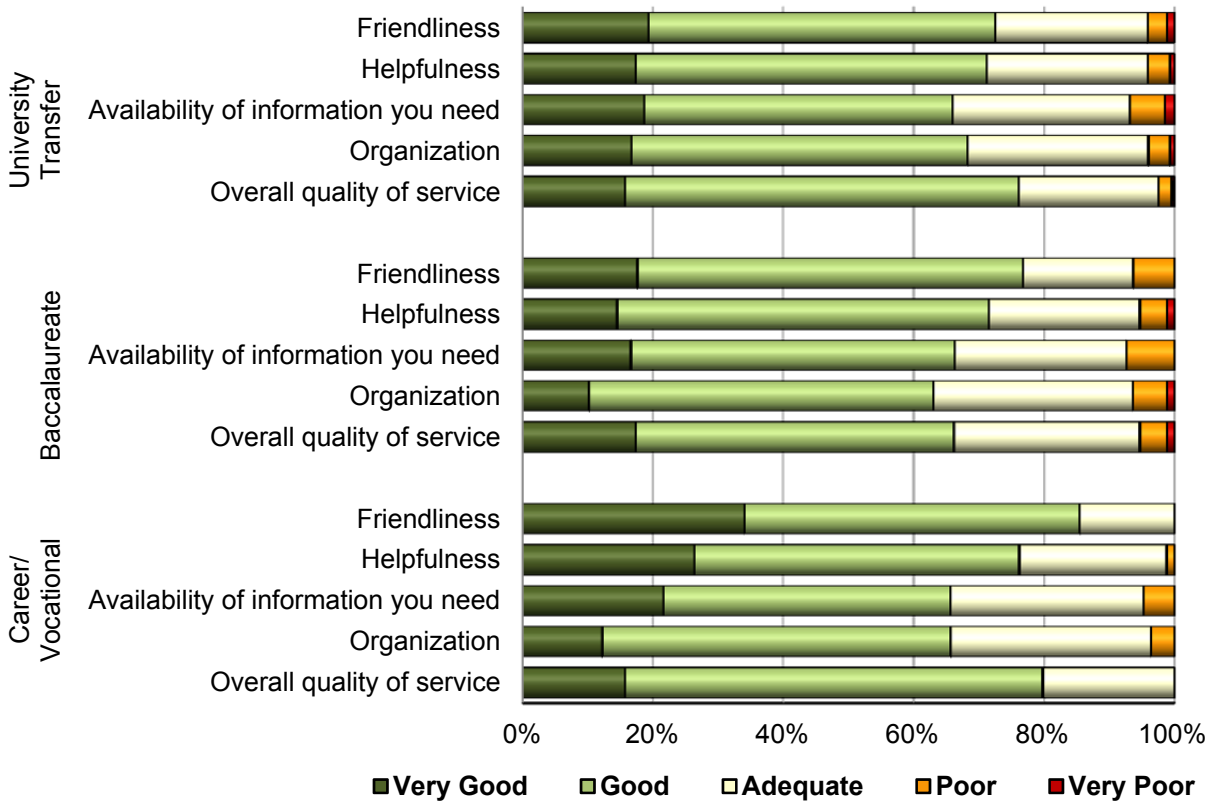


Note: Percentages do not total 100% as respondents were asked to select their top *three* reasons.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF LANGARA

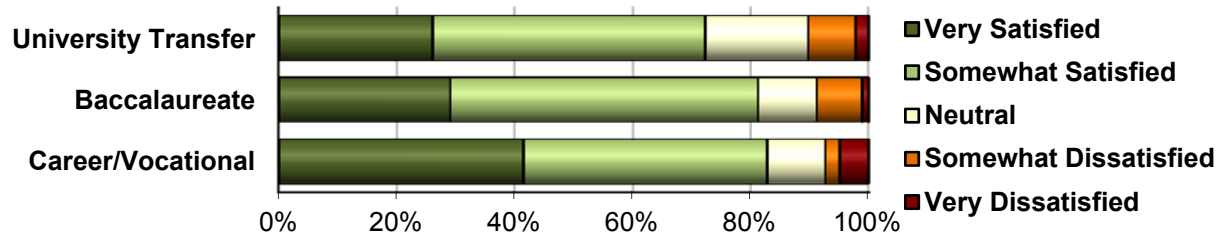
About three quarters of students had positive initial impressions of Langara's overall quality of service, friendliness and helpfulness, with Career/Vocational students providing the best ratings. Two thirds were positive about general organization and the availability of information at Langara. New students and those with higher CGPA (> 3.15) gave better ratings of overall quality of service.

Figure 5: Initial Impressions of Langara College



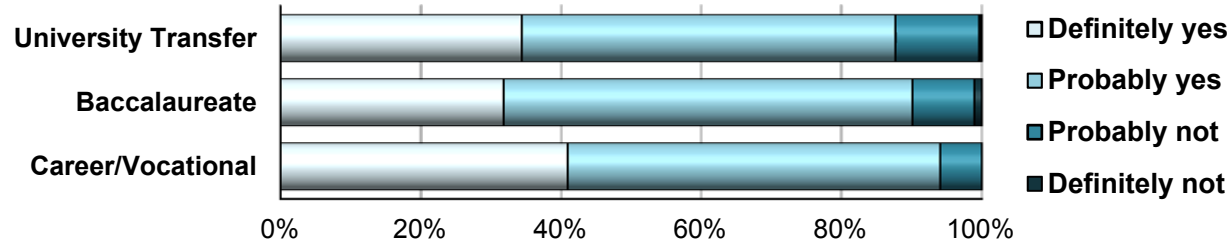
Almost 75% of respondents were 'somewhat' or 'very' satisfied with their overall experience at Langara. Students with higher CGPA were significantly more likely to be 'very satisfied'. Since 2010, almost 13% of Career/Vocational students went from 'somewhat' to 'very' satisfied.

Figure 6: Satisfaction with Langara Experience



The large majority (89%) of students would 'probably' or 'definitely' attend Langara again, given the chance to start over. Career/Vocational student ratings remained the most positive. Students under age 21 were more likely to say they would 'probably' or 'definitely' attend again.

Figure 7: If You Could Start Over Again, Would You Attend Langara?



SKILL DEVELOPMENT

This section focused on the extent to which students believed that their Langara education helped develop specific abilities. All students felt they were developing skills in critical thinking and independent learning. University Transfer and Career/Vocational students also gave good ratings to reading skills, while Baccalaureate students rated teamwork highly. University Transfer students gave significantly lower ratings than other students to all skill areas except math, critical thinking and writing (see Figure 8).

Most skill area ratings have remained fairly stable since 2008, with variation within the margin of error. There were only three notable changes since 2010: Career/Vocational students' positive ratings of reading and writing declined (by 10 and 17 percentage points, respectively), and Baccalaureate students' positive ratings of math skills increased by 20 percentage points.

Figure 8: 2011 Skill Development Ratings

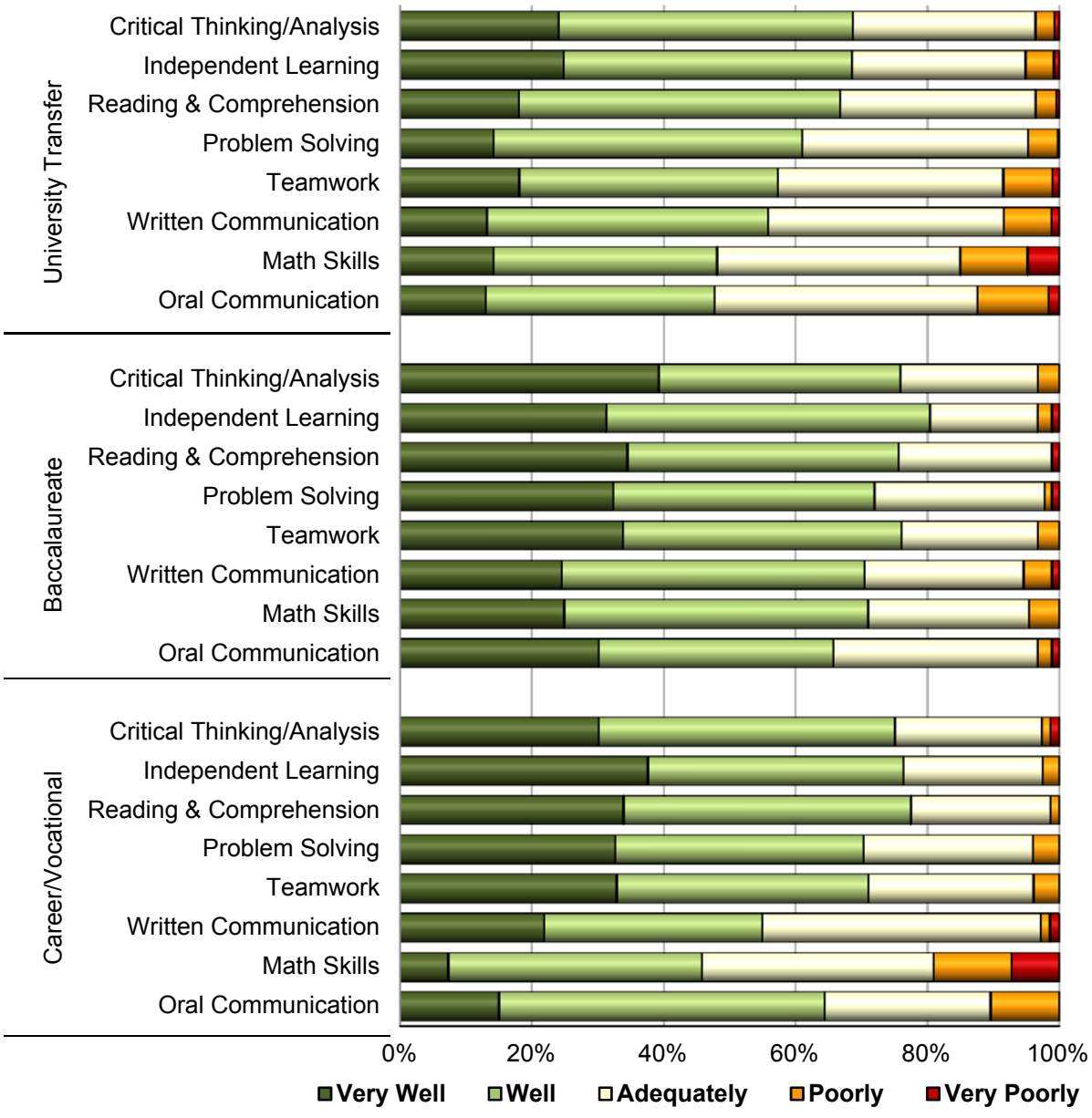
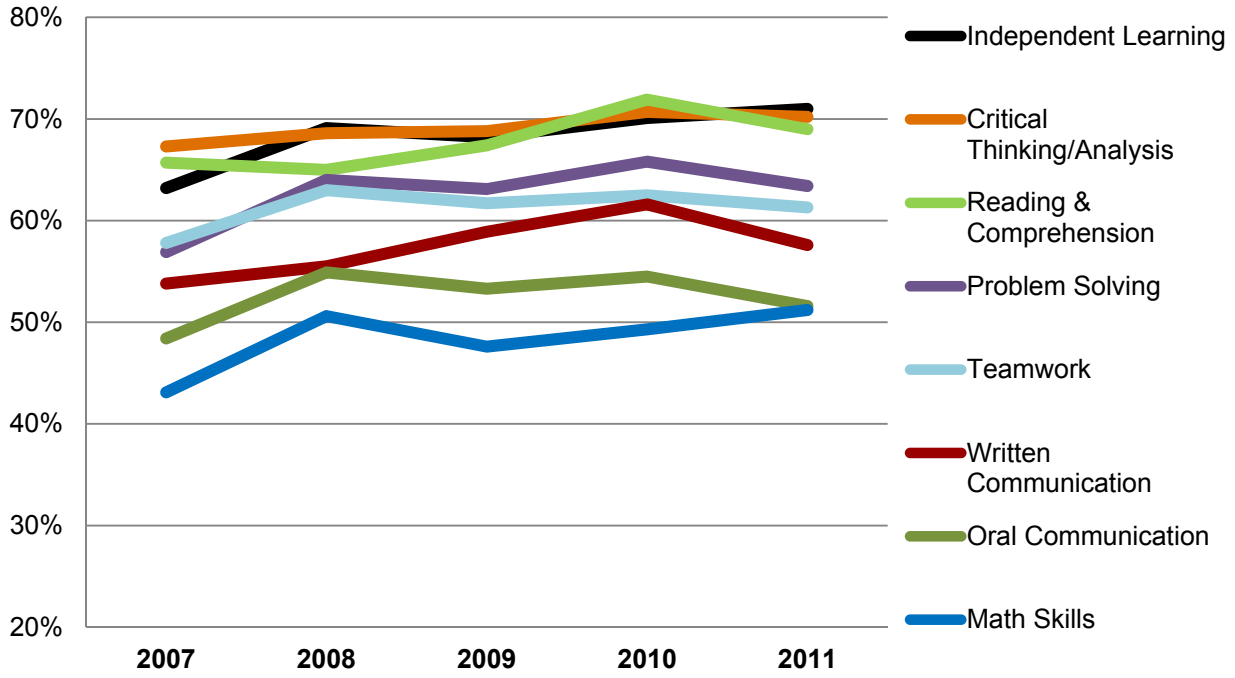


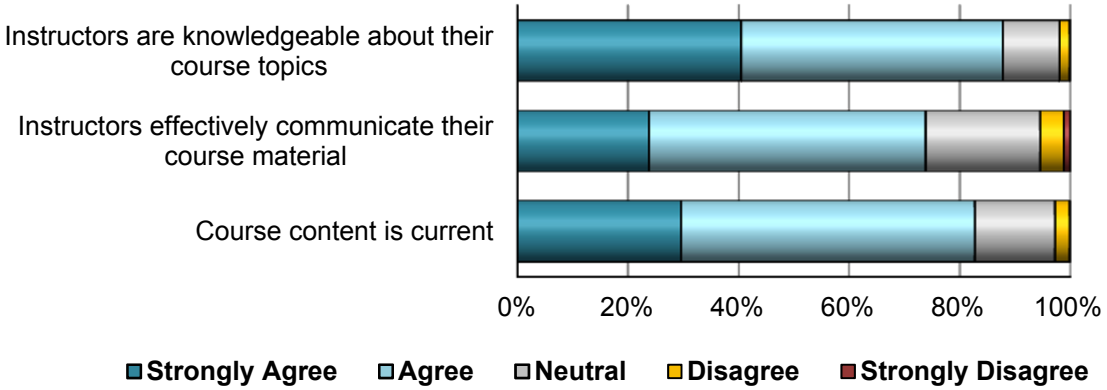
Figure 9: Positive Ratings of Skill Development, 2007-2011



INSTRUCTION

Ratings of instruction at Langara have been consistently positive, with negligible variation between types of student. The leading factors in instructional ratings were student age, status and cumulative GPA. Students over 22 years of age, and particularly those registered full-time, were more likely to strongly agree that their instructors communicated effectively. New students and those with CGPA greater than 2.95 were more likely to think that their course content was current. New students and those with a B average or better, particularly those over age 21, were much more likely to strongly agree that their instructors were knowledgeable about their course topic.

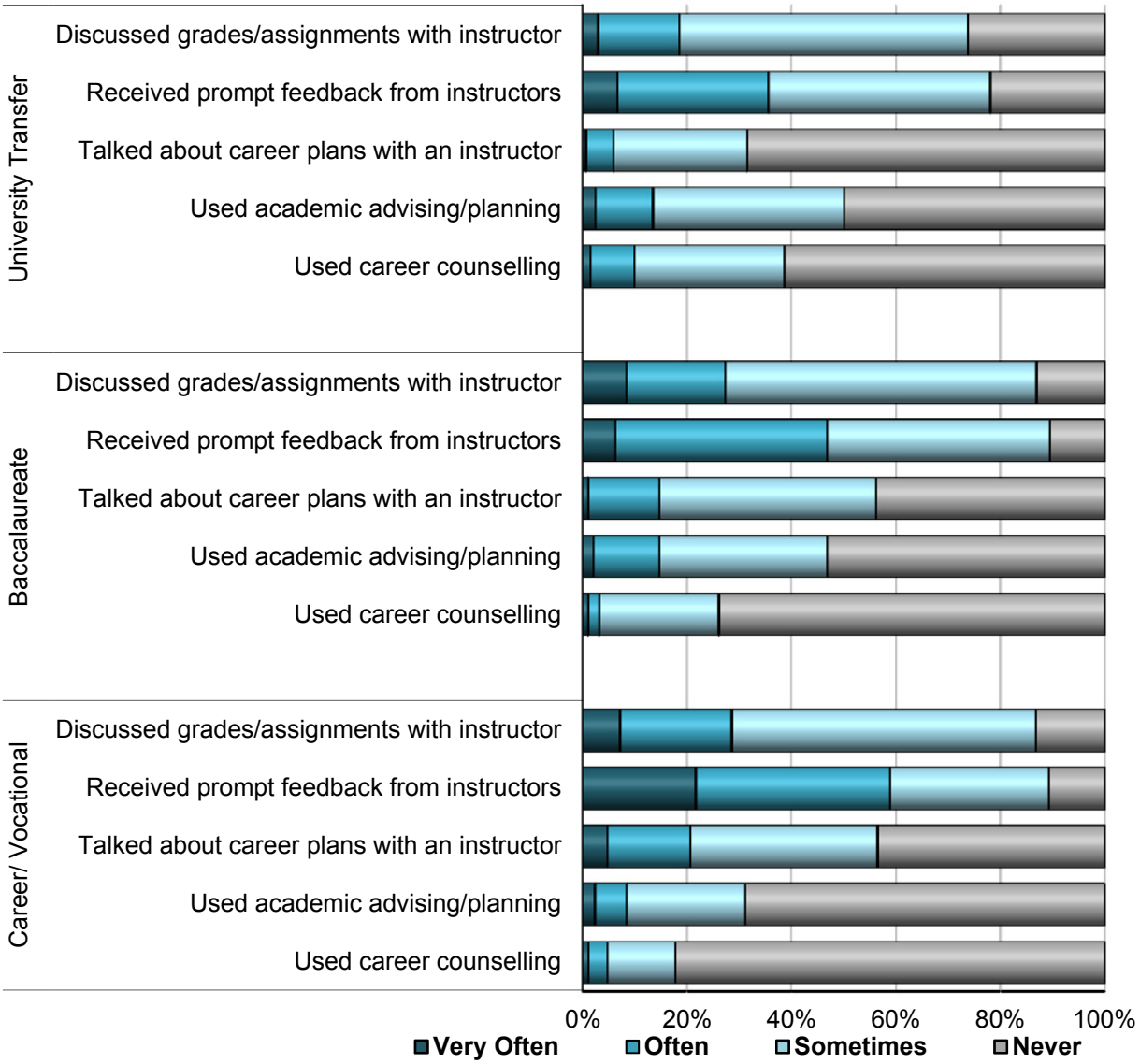
Figure 10: Evaluation of Course Instruction



To further investigate student engagement, this year's survey asked about frequency of student interactions with instructors and counsellors. Overall, 40% of students 'often' or 'very often' received prompt feedback from instructors on their performance, and 21% discussed grades or assignments with instructors. Most 'never' used academic planning (52%) or career counselling (65%), and 63% had 'never' discussed career plans with an instructor (see Figure 11).

University Transfer students, particularly those in their first or second term at Langara, were the least likely to discuss career plans with instructor and most likely to use career counselling. International students were more likely than domestic to utilize academic advising or planning. The higher a student's cumulative GPA, the more likely they were to feel that they received prompt feedback from their instructors.

Figure 11: Frequency of Student Interaction with Instructors and Counsellors



PROGRAM/COURSE OF STUDY

Asked to provide opinions on aspects of their Langara programs, students gave positive ratings to overall quality of instruction (80% 'good' or 'very good') and program organization (75%, see Figure 12). Ratings of 'very good' were significantly more likely from students over 22 for quality of instruction and students over 23 for program organization. Slightly more than 60% gave positive ratings of the amount of practical experience received, mostly from Career/Vocational and Baccalaureate students. Overall, positive ratings have been stable for instruction and organization since 2009, but declining for program or career counselling. After steady growth for several years, ratings of practical experience waned in the last year (see Figure 13).

Figure 12: Evaluation of Program/Course of Study

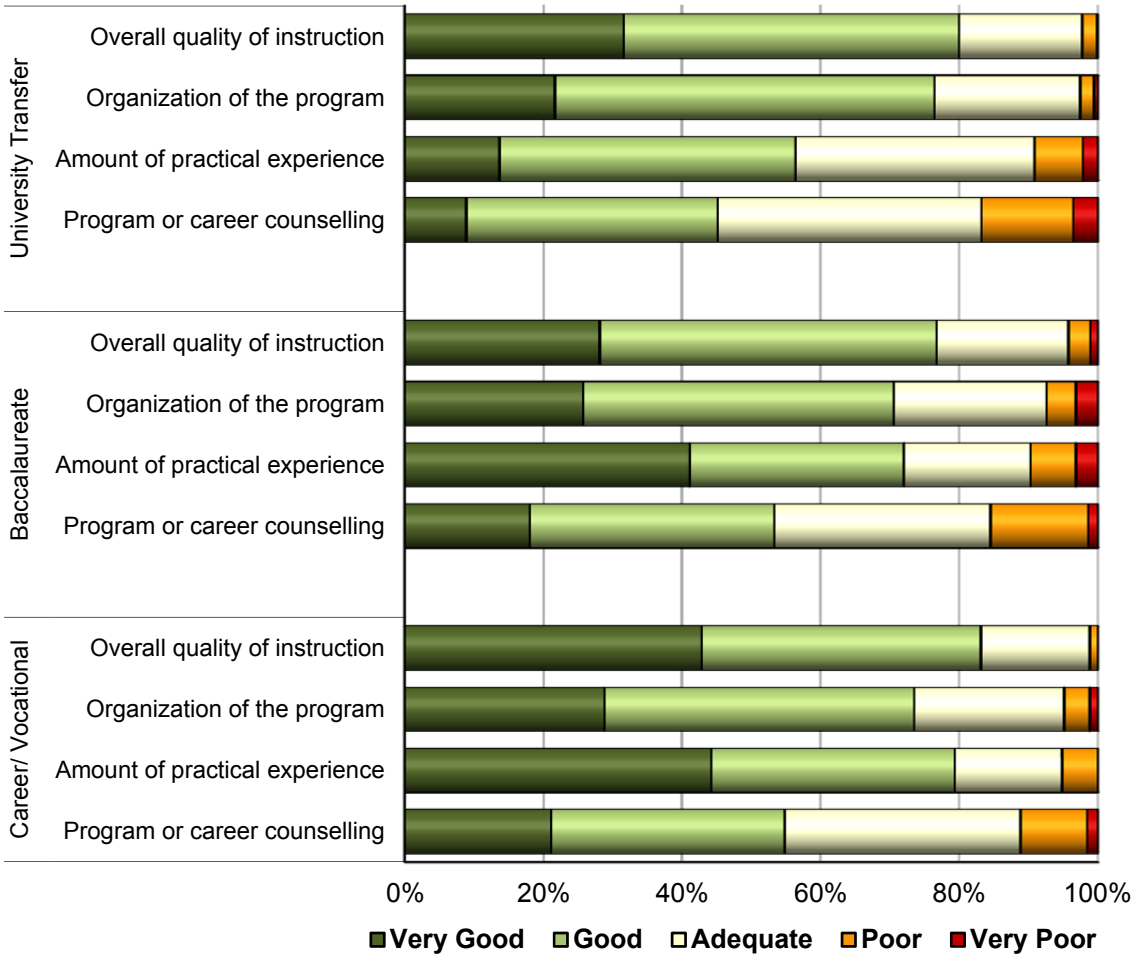
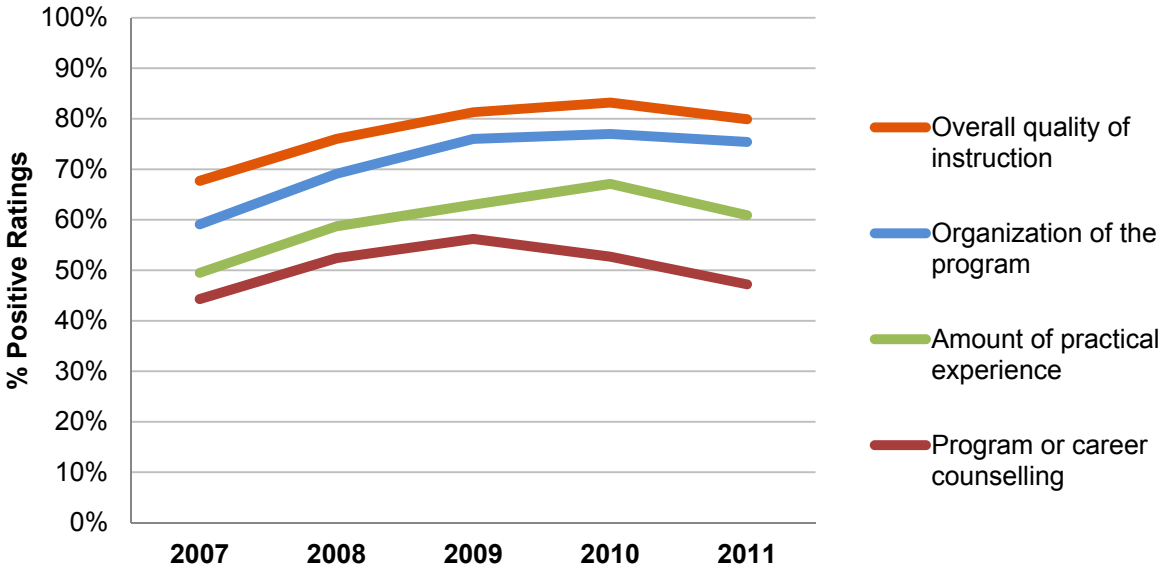


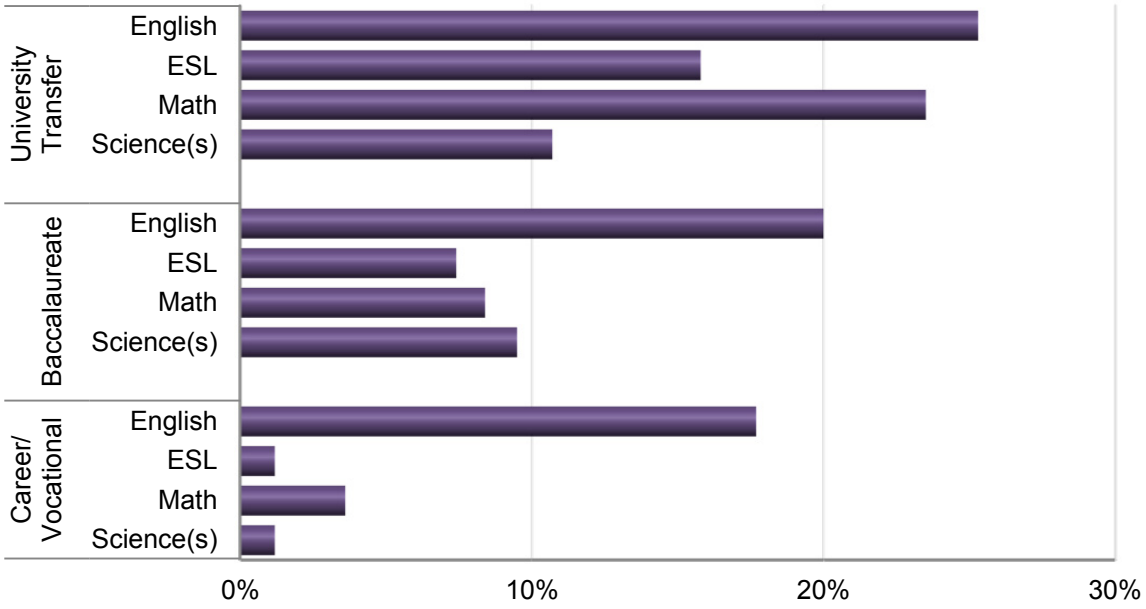
Figure 13: Positive Ratings of Program/Course of Study, 2007-2011



PROGRAM QUALIFICATION

Just over half of students entered their program with no upgrading needed. One quarter required work on their English skills, but only 13% as a second language. University Transfer students were more likely to require some upgrading, particularly in Math and ESL. Compared to 2009, more Baccalaureate and Career/Vocational students required English upgrading.

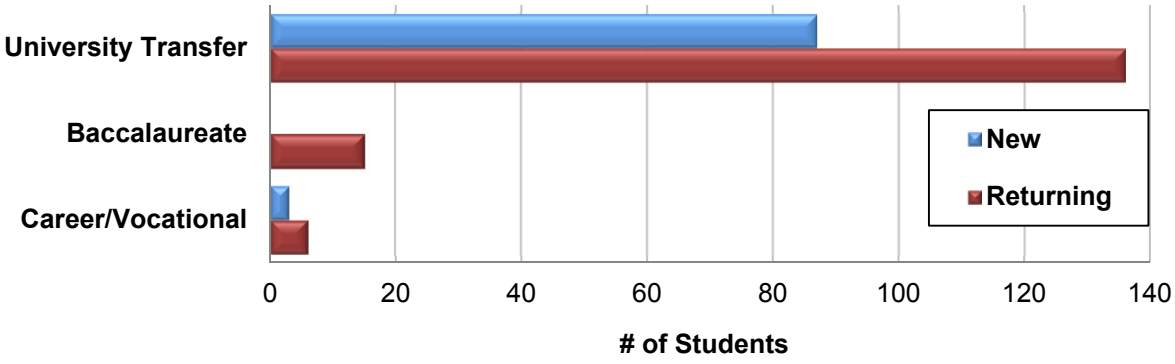
Figure 14: Skills Upgrading Required



LANGARA COURSE REGISTRATION

Two-thirds of students were able to register in all the courses they wanted this Fall. For the most part, Career/Vocational and Baccalaureate students were able to get all of their classes. The vast majority of those having difficulty were in University Transfer programs.

Figure 15: Students Not Able to Register in All Their Desired Courses



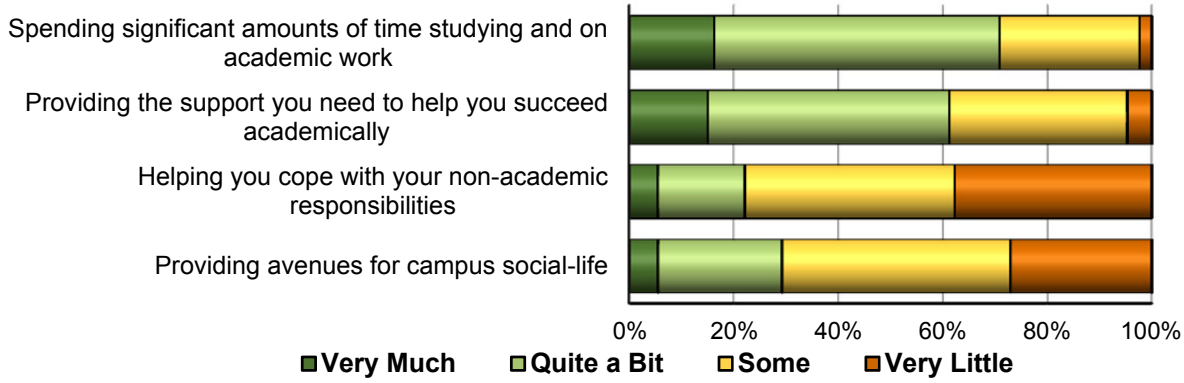
Of the 247 students who were not able to get all their courses, 27% encountered full classes, 14% suffered from scheduling conflicts and 11% could not find sections that fit their schedule. New students or those with a cumulative GPA lower than 2.31 had the most difficulty with full classes.

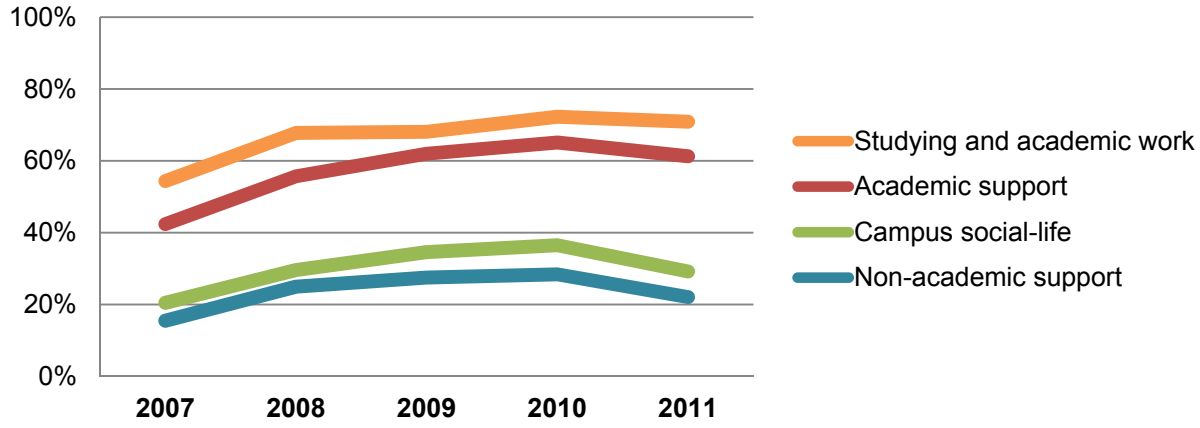
Figure 16: Why Students Could Not Register in Their Desired Courses

CAMPUS LIFE

The majority of Langara students felt that Langara emphasized time spent on academic work (71% 'very much' or 'quite a bit') and provided the necessary academic support (61%). Conversely, few students felt that Langara placed emphasis on non-academic support (22% 'very little' or 'some') or campus social life (29%). International students were more inclined to feel that Langara focused on academic work and campus social life, while students with a cumulative GPA greater than 3.15 were more positive about academic support. Over the last 5 years, the trend in these items had been increasingly positive; however, that has plateaued or reversed in 2011, particularly for ratings of non-academic support and campus social life.

Figures 17: Areas of Campus Life Emphasized by Langara College

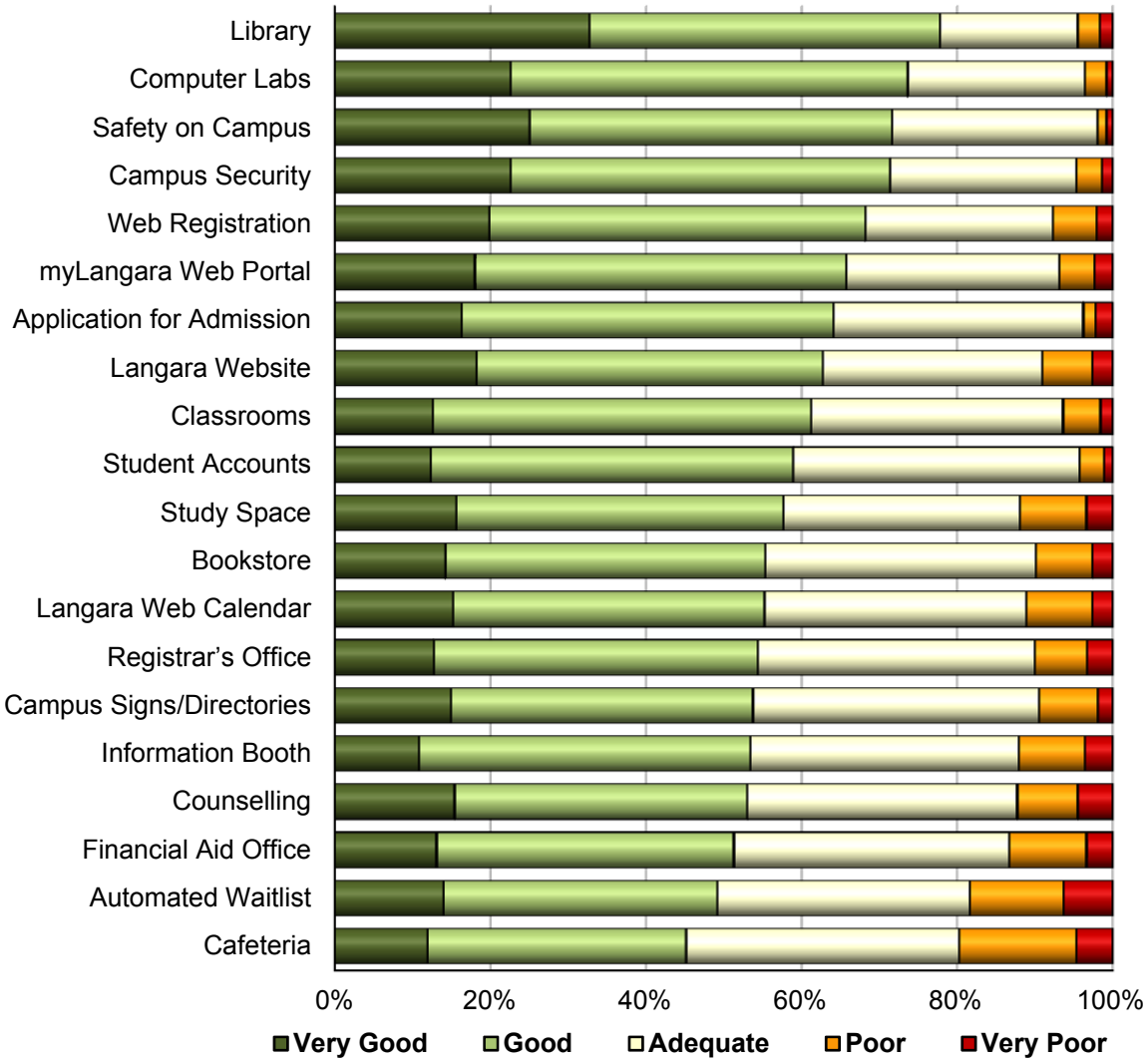




LANGARA STUDENT SERVICES

Almost all Langara services received more than 50% positive ratings. Top ratings went to the Langara Library (78% 'good' or 'very good'), computer labs (74%), safety on campus (72%) and Campus Security (71%). Financial Aid, the automated waitlist system and the cafeteria received the least positive ratings (51%, 49% and 45%, respectively).

Figure 18: Student Ratings of Langara College Services



* These services were rated as 'Have Not Used' by at least two thirds of respondents.

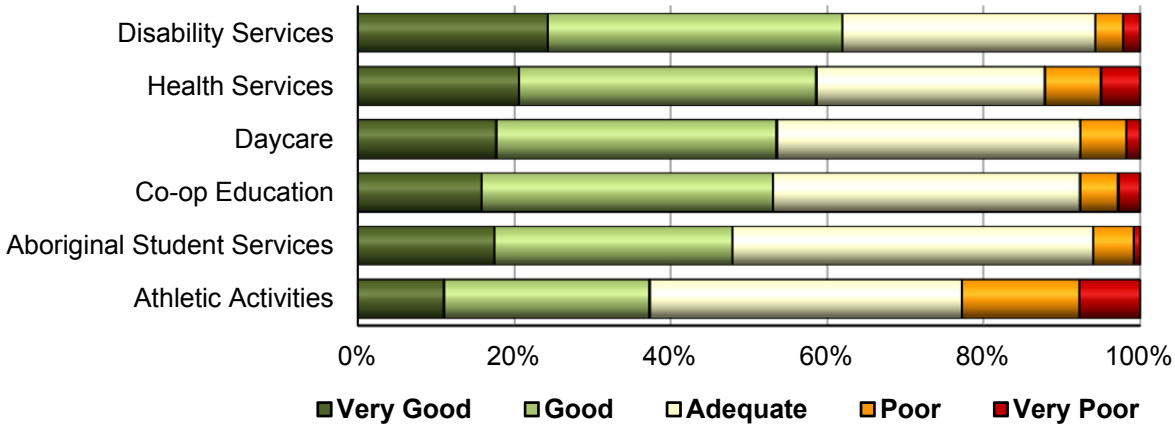
There were only a few notable differences in student ratings of Langara Services. Classrooms received more positive ratings from University Transfer and Baccalaureate than from Career/Vocational students. New students were more positive about the Bookstore and Counselling. International students gave better ratings to Campus Security. Younger students were more positive about the cafeteria (<21 years old) and Financial Aid Office (<20), while older students (>29) rated the automated waitlist much higher.

When compared to 2010, student ratings of the cafeteria have improved considerably (+13 percentage points), most likely due to the Fall 2011 renovation and increased food offerings.. Student

ratings were down notably for Campus signage and directories (-8 percentage points), the web Calendar, Langara website and the Office of the Registrar (-7 percentage points each).

Some Langara services are specialized, meeting the specific needs of smaller portions of Langara's student population. Disability Services experienced a 9.3 percentage point increase in positive ratings since 2010. Cooperative Education positive ratings have increased 4.4 percentage points since 2010 and a total of 7.7 percentage points since 2007.

Figure 19: User Ratings of Specialized Langara College Services



GENERAL COMMENTS

About a quarter of the survey respondents provided written suggestions or comments about their experience at Langara. For every five positive comments, there were seven negative comments overall (multiple comment elements per respondent allowed). The most frequent observations were about courses, the library, instructors, food services and study space. Comments on courses ranged from content to program requirements to new course suggestions. Instructors were given both praise and criticism. Comments regarding the library and study space were generally related to overcrowding and noise level. Most statements about study space focused on space shortage. Food services topics included the high prices, suggestions for healthy options and a mix of positive and negative feedback on the cafeteria renovation. Verbatim comments are available on request.