

Outline

Context

2015-2016 Study Share and Compare



CONTEXT

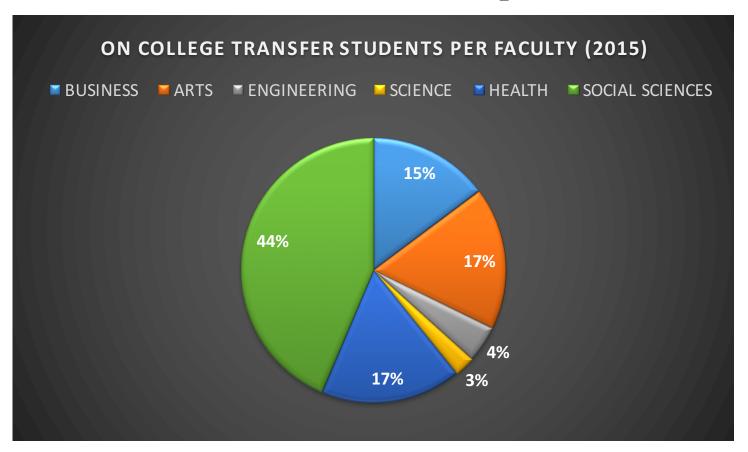


Context: University of Ottawa

- Largest bilingual university: 43,000 students, including 13,000 Francophones (2014);
- Programs offered in both French and English;
- Ontario College Transfer students represent 7% of first-entry students (CÉGEP students represent 9% and 101 students represent 57%);
- Typically: 40% from Algonquin College; 35% from La Cité and 25% from other Ontario colleges.



Context: University of Ottawa





Context: Mentoring Centre

Mentoring Centre for Transfer Students: 2015-2016

Academic Transition

- -Academic workshops (fall and winter)
- -Orientation sessions and early outreach
- -One-on-one support for students: guidance, study skills, transition, referrals
- *This year, over 38% of all transfer students participated in our programming

Social Integration

- -Meet and greets
- -Networking opportunities
- -Monthly "Coffee breaks & board games"
- -Activities on campus: Movie night, snow festival, pet therapy, yoga, trivia nights



Context: University of Ottawa

Professional Integration / Transition

New and continued collaborations with University of Ottawa services:

"Let's Talk Transfer": A series of interactive talks specifically for transfer students, given by professionals and guest speakers (NEW!)

- -Volunteering Opportunities (Presenter: The Michaelle Jean Centre for Global and Community Engagement)
- -Budgeting and Financing (Presenter: Financial Aid and Awards Service)
- -Understanding uOttawa's lingo, rules and credit transfers (Presenter: Faculty Academic Advisors)
- -Career Planning and Preparation Workshop (Presenter: The Career Development Centre)



Context: Previous Studies

Year 1: 2013-2014

Exploratory phase with 2 research components:

- Quantitative analysis of institutional data (equivalencies, admission criteria, transfer student GPA)
- Qualitative study: Focus groups with several cohorts of Transfer students



Context: Previous Studies

Year 1: 2013-2014

Key Findings

- 1) Ontario College Transfer students succeed at a **lower rate** than Ontario university and CÉGEP transfer students, despite having already experienced a transition to postsecondary studies.
- 2) Students were **frustrated by opaque credit-equivalency process**. Students felt that their **professors did not seem to know** that college transfer students were in their classes and did not build on their previous knowledge. Transfer students **did not feel compelled** to participate in orientation activities as they felt a disconnect with the majority of "firstentry" students who were at a different life stage.



Context: Previous Studies

Year 2: 2014-2015

Case Study: Improving the Transfer Student Experience at the Telfer School of Management

- Established standardised, pre-determined pathways and credit recognition for transfer students;
- Communicated adapted course sequence and program duration to students upon admission;
- Provided student support and counselling throughout the transition process.



2015-2016 STUDY



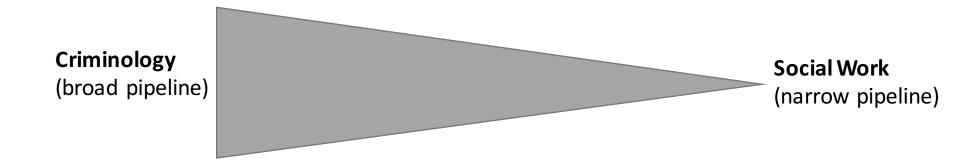
Exploratory Case Study: Faculty of Social Sciences

Reminder: FSS welcomes approximately half of incoming Transfer students at uOttawa.



Exploratory Case Study: Faculty of Social Sciences

2 departments with highest number of Transfer students were identified:





Exploratory Case Study: Faculty of Social Sciences

Phase 1 (Fall 2015) Student Voice: Survey and Interviews

Phase 2 (Winter 2016)

- Student Voice: Survey and Interviews
- Staff and Faculty Voice: Focus Groups



FSS Survey and Student Voice Findings

Survey

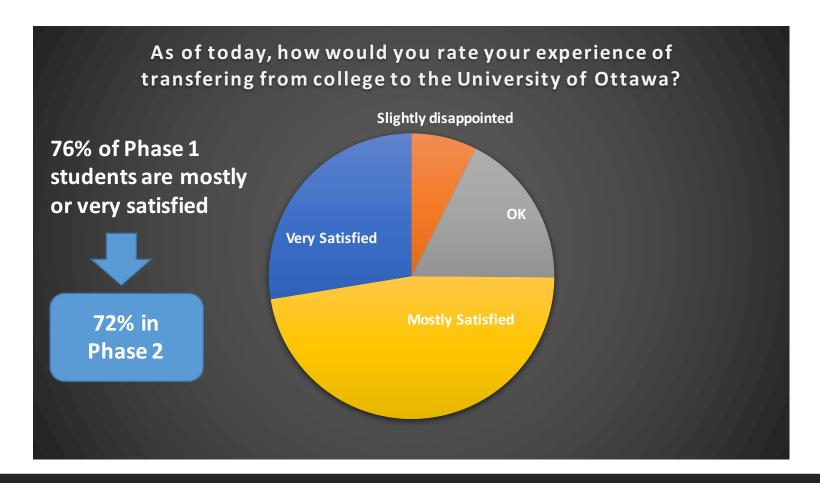
- Phase 1: 56%
 participation rate
 among Transfer
 students
- Phase 2: 45%
 participation rate
 (high rate of returning participants)

Interviews

 Phase 1 and 2: 34% participation rate among Transfer students

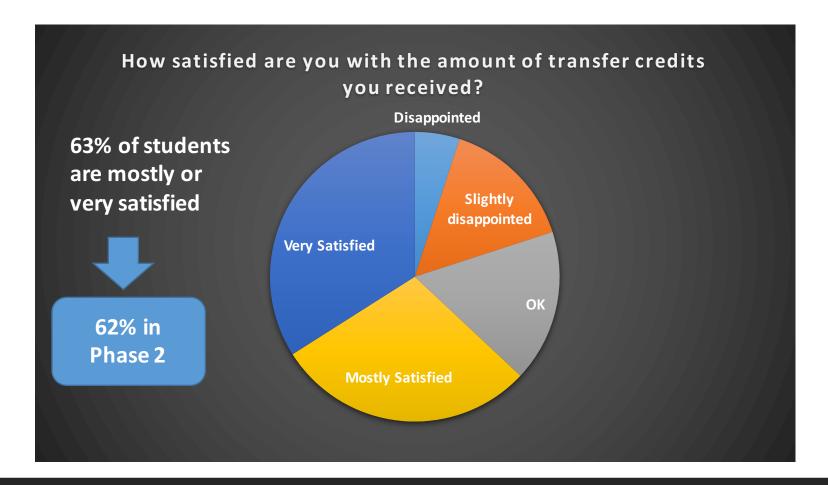


FSS Survey Findings





FSS Survey Findings





Transfer Credits:

Students generally report being very satisfied with the number of courses that are credited (typically 10 courses or 1 academic year).

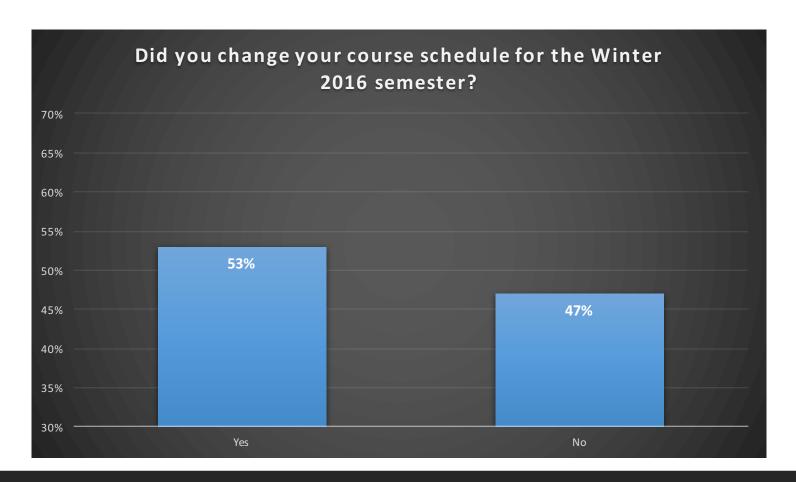
I didn't even know that was a thing so when I got my letter I saw that I got 10 courses credited and basically a year off, I was really surprised. I asked what else I can do with that, they asked me if I wanted a minor and I said yes. So now I am working towards a major and a minor.

The fact that I had to find out after applying was stressful.

For me my priority was how many credits can I transfer and also how known the program and faculty is. I went on ONtransfer and that helped a lot.



FSS Survey Findings





Transfer Credits:

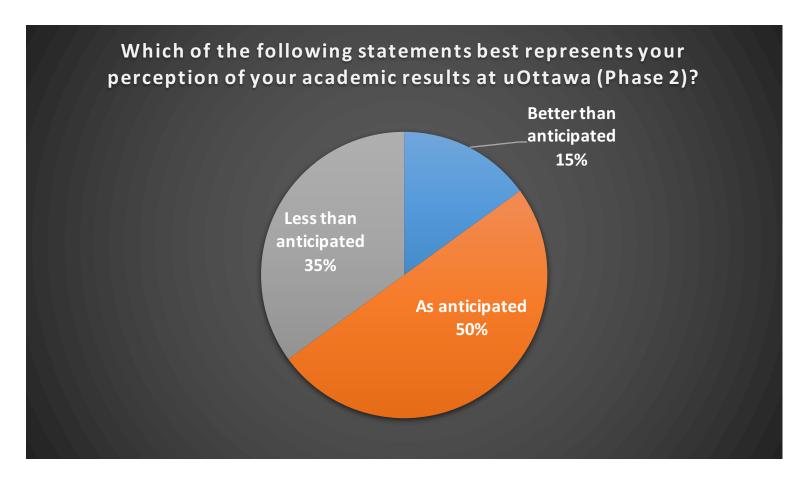
Students were critical regarding **which** courses were credited (e.g., practicum, courses in their field of studies) which means taking more optional courses that do not necessarily interest them.

I had such a hard time at the beginning, it wasn't a good experience. I arrive here, I want to do social work, and they say you don't get a practicum. You have to pick all these other courses. What am I going to do?

For my file, everything was perfect, everything was credited but then I compared with my friend and she wasn't credited. It's ridiculous. She had to send all her lesson plans to get credits.



FSS Survey Findings





Academic success

I think I was expecting a little bit of a drop but I had really, really good grades in college, so for me not getting good grades here is hurting my self-esteem, you starting doubting yourself. I am struggling so hard for air here, just not doing well.

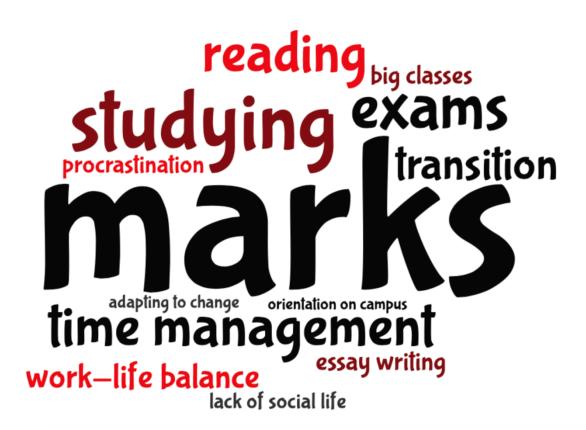
I'm doing super well in my courses. I got my first A+. I'm happy because I never thought I would get good grades like that at university in my first semester.

I was hoping they would stay around the same, 75%-80%. Right now I am more around 60%.

Some students report doing better than expected academically, but the majority are struggling with transitioning to the realities of university: large classes, reading and essay writing, and having to seek out help and services.



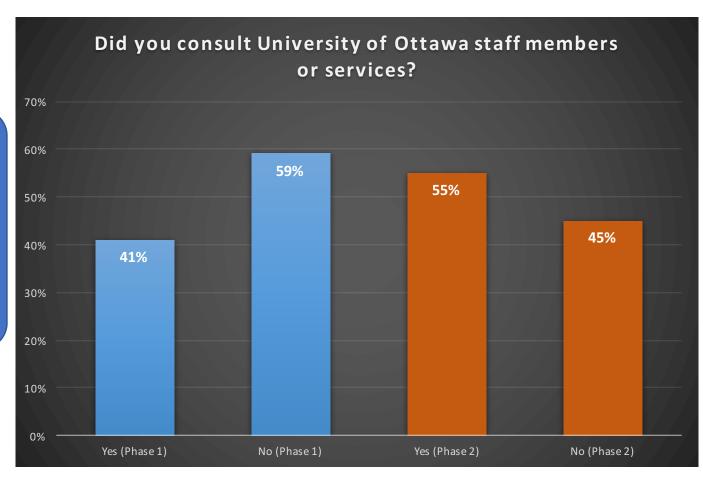
What has been your greatest challenge at uOttawa?





FSS Survey Findings

Services
were rated
"very
useful" or
"useful" by
over 80% of
students





What has been most **positive** about your experience at uOttawa?





What is the most useful thing you learned from having attended college?

Honestly, just learning to study. Number one, university exams are definitely a lot harder, but I have the foundation of note taking and study methods

Many students agreed on the importance of developing study methods and knowledge in their field before transitioning to university. They are scaffolding their instruction: progressively moving toward more specialized learning.

FSS Staff and Faculty Voice Findings

Staff	Faculty
 Preference for credit recognition bundles Broad pipelines and unique programs create complexity and confusion Focus is on admission 	 Feel removed from processes for the creation of bundles or choice of disciplinary courses recognized Are well aware that there are transfer students but unaware of cohort size or students' status. Focus is on successful student integration and retention; feel this focus is absent from credit bundling decisions



Reflection Questions

Transfer Credits:

- Students generally report being very satisfied with the number of courses that are credited (typically 10 courses or 1 academic year).
- Students were critical regarding **which** courses were credited (e.g., practicum, courses in their field of studies) which means taking more optional courses that do not necessarily interest them.
- How is this similar or different from the realities at your institution?
- How do we reconcile the tension between admission-oriented and retention-oriented processes?



Reflection Questions

Transfer Student Services:

- Approximately 40% of Transfer students consulted at least one university service in their first semester, though 80% of these students rated the service as "useful" or "very useful".
- Students report in interviews that they are struggling academically, but do not think they need academic services.
- How is this similar or different from the realities at your institution?
- How can we communicate to students the need to proactively access services in university?

THANK YOU!

Comments? Questions?

