



Student Employment and Career Centre (SECC)

**ANNUAL SUMMARY REPORT
2015-2016**

WHAT IS THE SECC AND HOW DO WE SUPPORT THE UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN COMMUNITY?

Our employment and career services professionals work with students, alumni, faculty and employers to assist the student transition from education to career. We provide uSask students and alumni with career coaching, job search assistance, networking opportunities, and specialized tools and resources that assist the career exploration process and enhance job search effectiveness.

We also work with uSask colleges and faculty to administer experiential learning programs and to bring career development and employment readiness content into the classroom. With our programs, services and resources we help improve student outcomes by educating them on the concepts that connect education and career.

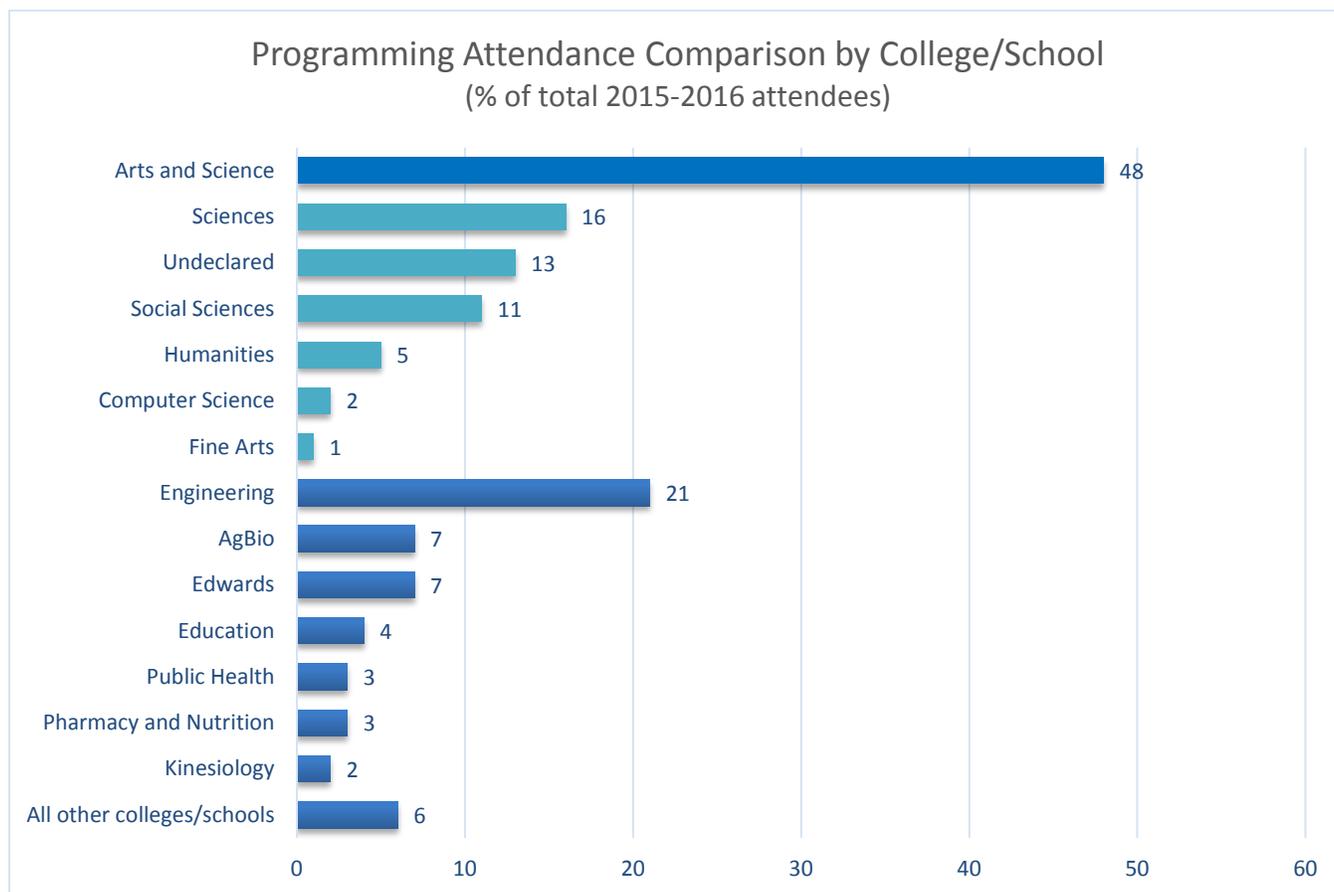
The SECC's Programs, Services and Resources:

- One-on-one [Career Coaching](#), and [Career Assessments](#)
- Resume, cover letter, CV and LinkedIn workshops ([ResumeTalks](#))
- Interviewing workshops and one-on-one practice interviews ([InterviewTalks](#) and [Mock Interviews](#))
- [5 Career Fairs](#) (Campus Career Expo, Health Sciences, Accounting, Education, Agriculture and Bioresources), **Employer** and **Graduate School Information Sessions**, and other **Networking Events**
- **Interview Rooms** and **Interview Scheduling**
- [IndustryTalks](#) panels with representatives from select industries
- Online career exploration, volunteering, and job search resources on students.usask.ca/jobs
- [Employability Guides](#) available online and in print
- Online Job Posting System ([CareerLink](#)) used by on-campus and off-campus partners to advertise employment and volunteer opportunities
- [Engineering Professional Internship Program \(EPIP\)](#)
- **Curriculum-based programming** in colleges
- Outreach presentations on various career exploration and career readiness topics ([CareerTalks](#))

SECC HIGHLIGHTS – 2015-2016

- Began allowing **newly admitted students** to attend our programming (prior to taking any classes)
- Each program and service saw its **highest ever** attendance in 2015-2016
- For the first time, over **2000** total attendance (students and alumni) in our career and employment programs
- For the first time, over **2500** total attendance (students and alumni) at our CareerTalks presentations
- Had our **largest ever** uptake with curriculum-based programming
- Most EPIP placements ever, with **90** (2015 calendar year), predominantly located within the Western Canada region
- **2/3** of Saskatchewan's Top 30 employers recruited on-campus through job postings, career fairs, info sessions, and/or interviews
- **3rd** highest viewed content (Jobs) on students.usask.ca, after Money/Tuition (1st) and Academics (2nd)
- Nearly **8100** total attendance in all of our standard, outreach, curriculum-based, and internship programming
- **9,758** unique students logged into CareerLink (avg. 14 logins per user), with an additional **878** unique alumni (avg. 19 logins per user), to search for and apply to job postings, register for SECC programming, and/or learn about employer recruitment events like career fairs and information sessions
- Over **4000** full time, part time, summer, internship, and volunteer positions were posted in CareerLink
- Approx. **311,000** CareerLink job views (an increase of 23,000 over last year)

SECC PROGRAMMING AND SERVICES HIGHLIGHTS



Standard Programming and Services

- **611** – number of **Career Coaching** sessions attended by students and alumni (a 24% increase)
- **793** – number of times students and alumni received resume, cover letter, CV, or LinkedIn help (a 17% increase)
- **252** – number of times students and alumni received interview help (a 28% increase)
- **368** – total student and alum attendance at our **6 IndustryTalks** sessions (a 37% increase)
- **782** – number of **Career Assessments** taken by students and alumni
- **98%** of students agreed or strongly agreed that the programming they attended is a valuable service
- **97%** would recommend the program/service to other students/alumni
- **92%** gained knowledge they would be able to share forward with their peers

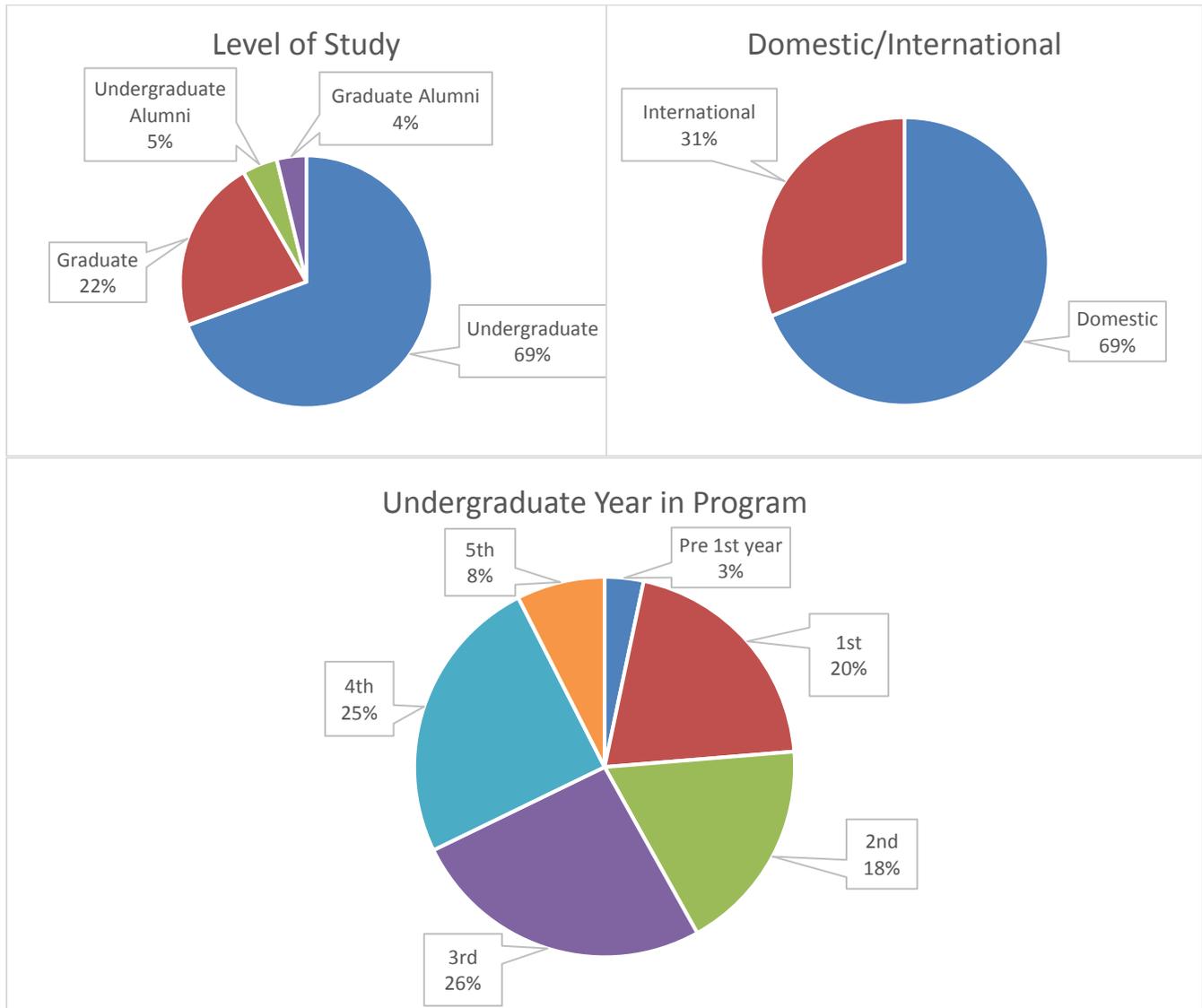
Outreach and Curriculum-Based Programming

- **69 CareerTalks** presentations delivered, with a total student attendance of **2576** (a 23% increase)
- **95%** of students agreed that CareerTalks presentations are a valuable service
- **91%** agreed they would recommend CareerTalks to other students/alumni/university groups
- Only **26%** had accessed SECC services before, but, following the presentation, **84%** said they planned to use them in the future
- **Curriculum-based career programming** incorporated into **8 courses**, reaching **390** students, and included the addition of a new **Career Readiness Workshop**



WHO USES OUR STANDARD PROGRAMMING AND SERVICES?

- **54%** are first time users of our services
- **4%** are self-declared Aboriginal



ON CAMPUS RECRUITMENT

(OCR includes job postings, career fairs, info sessions, and/or on-campus interviews)

- **45** employer and graduate school information sessions were held
- **20** of [Saskatchewan's Top 30 employers](#) recruited on campus
- **47** of [Saskatchewan's Top 100 Companies](#) recruited on campus
- **28** of [Canada's Top 100 Employers](#) recruited on campus
- **53** different employers interviewed on campus



CAREER FAIRS

- **106 exhibitors** and **1919 students** attended the **Campus Career Expo** (September). The event saw a decrease in exhibitor attendance in 2015, which was largely the result of the slowdown in the oil, gas and mining sectors.
- **20 exhibitors** and **141 students** attended the **Accounting Career Fair** (September).
- **28 Exhibitors** and **142 Students** attended the **Health Sciences Career Fair** (September). This was the first year of the Health Sciences Career Fair.
- **48 Exhibitors** and **500 Students** (estimated) attended the **Agriculture and Bioresources Career Fair** (November).
- **55 Exhibitors** and **282 Students** attended the **Education Career Fair** (January).
- **20%** of students surveyed obtained an interview as a result of attending a career fair.
- **68%** would recommend the career fair they attended to a friend
- **77%** feel the career fairs are a valuable service

TRENDS

In the career services field, through working with students, alumni, faculty, employers, and our other community partners, we often observe interesting and potentially significant trends around post-secondary education, employment and careers, in addition to the well-known trends we see within the labour market.

We are increasingly asked for data on student employment outcomes, with requests coming from current students, prospective students, parents, employers, staff and faculty. More students are also coming to us looking for information on what they can do with their specific degrees, and we frequently hear that we need to do more to connect the Natural Sciences to careers and employment.

We have seen that a large number of international students are obtaining multiple undergraduate and graduate degrees without any clear idea what they will, or can, do with them. The common thinking appears to be “The more degrees I earn, the more employable I will be.” These students lack the understanding that isn’t how the labour market works. These same students also often lack any real job experience, and seem to be relying entirely on their academic credentials to land them a career. In contrast, employers tend to seek out students who have experiential learning, volunteer and/or work experience.

Around campus we often hear discussion about our students’ lack of career preparedness, particularly in relation to certain skill sets. But, the skills gap question is controversial and complex. A 2015 *Youth in Transition* report¹ noted that “more than half of employers and the graduates themselves believe they are unprepared for employment.” What we find is that the issue is in part a result of not understanding, or not being able to articulate, existing skills, strengths, experience, and values. The increasingly outdated idea of the linear career path also creates false expectations about transitioning into the work force. Experience shows that students will meet with greater success when they are taught how to capably articulate their competencies and map them onto the evolving jobs of a rapidly changing labour market. Viewed from this perspective, addressing the skills gap may be more about educating students on these key concepts, than about fundamentally altering PSE.

TESTIMONIALS FROM STUDENTS AND ALUMNI

“Great resource even for people who convocated 3 years ago. It was very nice to have a pair of unbiased eyes go over my resume with me.”

– Arts & Science Alum



“All I can say from what I have seen is ‘Great job! Continue the wonderful work.’”
– Environment and Sustainability student

“It was a positive experience and I left the session with a clearer idea of where I'm headed.”
– 3rd year Arts & Science student (Undeclared)

“[The] SECC is a wonderful resource for students!”
– 4th year Pharmacy and Nutrition student

“Very welcoming, found resources on websites and handouts very useful.”
– 4th year Kinesiology student

“Thank you for your services! The IndustryTalks sessions are very enlightening.”
– 5th year Edwards School of Business student

“The IndustryTalks session I attended was awesome. All the speakers gave me a great insight on career opportunities for people with my type of degree. I would definitely recommend other students to attend!”
– Arts & Science graduate student

“Great centre!! The programs you offer are of great use to students and alumni!”
– Public Health student

“[The] Marketing [Your] Student Leadership workshop was especially helpful because I think a lot of students hesitate to think of themselves as leaders. Thanks for offering it!”
– 3rd year Arts & Science Student

STUDENT SUGGESTIONS TO THE SECC

“[M]ore pointed career help for arts and science students in particular would be very beneficial as I know many students entering the college have little to no idea what career path to take. Targeting first years would be helpful.”
– 3rd year Arts & Science student

“This was the first I had heard of the Centre, so I guess I would suggest just doing a little more to get your name out there and make what you have to offer a little more well-known.”
– Physical Therapy student

“Maybe that this becomes a part of academic advising especially for Arts and Science students and first year. I feel as though the two types of advising often get mixed up, although they are both important to helping students reach their goals academically and in the career world.”
– 4th year Arts & Science student

INDUSTRY SURVEYS

Twice every year we survey employers recruiting on campus and ask them about current hiring trends and about the uSask students they recruit. Most employers who responded are predicting that overall hiring in their industries will remain steady or increase over the next 3-4 years. Only 19% forecast a decrease in hiring.



When asked to rate the overall career readiness ([NACE Career Readiness Competencies](#)) of uSask students, 12% rate our students as having excellent career readiness, 58% as good, 13% as fair, 2% as poor, and 15% unsure.

All but 10% of these employers now use competency-based skill sets in their hiring process/job descriptions. When asked about the most common competencies sought in candidates, the highest rated competencies were: Communication (95%), Verbal communication (85%), Interpersonal (83%), Problem solving (82%), Ability to work in a team (82%), Strong work ethic (82%), Initiative (80%), Flexibility/adaptability (80%).

Asked how much the following attributes played in hiring decisions, 68% of employers indicated that a student's major had extreme influence or very much influence, 43% for extracurricular activities, 33% for has done volunteer work, 25% for has held a leadership position, 18% for school attended, 17% for high average (75+ % or 3.0+ GPA), 7% for fluency in a foreign language.

SUMMARY

Year after year, nearly all Canadian first-year university students identify job or career related factors as being very important in their decision to attend university, with 44% in 2016 selecting "to prepare for a specific job or career" as their number one reason (the highest percentage of all factors)². As such, at the Student Employment and Career Centre we recognize the often crucial role we play in a uSask student's university experience.

To this purpose, the SECC works to provide essential expertise to students and alumni, helping them discover the connections between their education and potential careers, and aiding them in making a successful transition to the working world. We also serve the broader campus community by being career and labour market experts, and by partnering with colleges and faculty to incorporate career and employment knowledge into classroom learning through CareerTalks and curriculum-based programming.

The SECC aims to be progressive in its work, in part by aligning our mission and vision with a broad knowledge perspective, influenced by industry trends, and essential documents such as the TRC's Calls to Action (7 and 92.ii have direct relevance to education, career and employment issues)³, the University of Saskatchewan Learning Charter, the university's Integrated Plan, and our institution's vision, mission and values statement. We take seriously the draft mission statement idea that "Through a supportive teaching and learning environment, the university prepares its students for enriching careers and fulfilling lives as engaged global citizens."

Like other post-secondary career centres across Canada, our greatest challenges remain having a lack of reliable data on graduate outcomes (an increasingly common information need for students and industry), and educating the campus community about our centre.

The growing demand for SECC programs, services, and resources, is a strong indication of our important role in the student experience, and uniquely positions us to build on our inter-campus partnerships in support of students, alumni, faculty, and our many other industry and community partners. Students, alumni and faculty consistently agree on the high value of our programming, and for the past number of years we have seen a notable and steady increase in the use of each of our services. We anticipate that the demand for employment and career information and for transition support will only accelerate as students become more career savvy, and as the labour market continues its rapid and ongoing evolution.

We encourage all of our uSask community partners to connect with us to discuss existing SECC programs, services and resources, and to explore new and innovative ways that we can enhance the university experience for students while supporting them in their education to career journey. ■



REFERENCED RESOURCES

1. McKinsey & Company report – “**Youth in transition: Bridging Canada’s path from education to employment**” (http://www.cacee.com/Library/docs/Youth_in_transition_Bridging_Canadas_path_from_education_to_employment_2_.pdf)
2. Canadian University Survey Consortium – **2016 First-Year University Student Survey, Master Report** (http://www.cusc-ccreu.ca/publications/CUSC_2016-First-Year-Report-EN.pdf)
3. **Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action** (see calls to action 7 and 92.ii for direct mention of education, career and employment issues) – (http://www.trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/File/2015/Findings/Calls_to_Action_English2.pdf)

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

1. Information and request form for **CareerTalks** presentations (<http://www.usask.ca/sesd/info-for-instructors/career-workshops.php>)
2. **CareerLink** for posting student jobs and volunteering opportunities (<https://careerlink.usask.ca/home.htm>)
3. **Information for students** on Career Planning, Resumes, Cover Letters, CVs, searching for Jobs, Interviewing, and volunteering (<https://students.usask.ca/jobs/>)
4. **On-campus recruiting** information for organizations/employers (<http://www.usask.ca/secc/employers.php>)
5. **Government of Canada Job Bank** for information on careers and employment trends (<http://www.jobbank.gc.ca/>)
6. **SaskJobs** is another important job search tool for students and alumni (<https://www.saskjobs.ca/>)
7. NACE **Career Readiness Competencies** (<http://www.naceweb.org/knowledge/career-readiness-competencies.aspx>)

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