

From the University/College Applicant Study™:

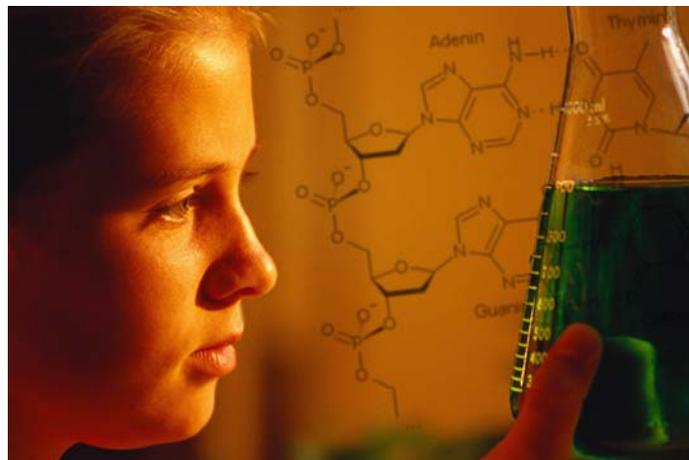
Attracting Students to the Sciences

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In spring 2009, we surveyed about 150,000 applicants to more than 40 colleges and universities across Canada, and asked them what drew them to specific institutions as their first choice for higher education. Respondents rated the impact of 50 different factors in 7 categories, on a seven-point scale from -3 to +3. In this *UCAS™ White Paper*, we look at the way applicants to university Science programs weighed those considerations on average.

Overview: On average, Canadian university applicants report that the biggest factors in their choice of institution are their perceptions of reputation, quality faculty, student experience, employment outcomes, an attractive campus, published rankings, graduate school placements, and social activities. *(See the diamonds on the Push/Pull Graph, on page 2.)*

Science applicants are attracted by high-profile research and the opportunity to participate in research, the latest technology, and merit-based scholarships. They are *less* interested in co-op placements, relevant industry, or student leadership opportunities.



Reputation Factors: Like all prospective university students, Science applicants place immense weight on the academic reputation of the institution and the program they choose – although they place slightly more emphasis than other students on the overall institutional reputation. School history and tradition is slightly less important to Science applicants than to other students.

Academic Factors: Like most university applicants, those bound for the Sciences place a great deal of stock in the perceived quality of faculty, but they place significantly more emphasis on high-profile research, undergraduate research opportunities, and investments in the latest technology on campus. Science applicants also place slightly more weight than average on library collections.

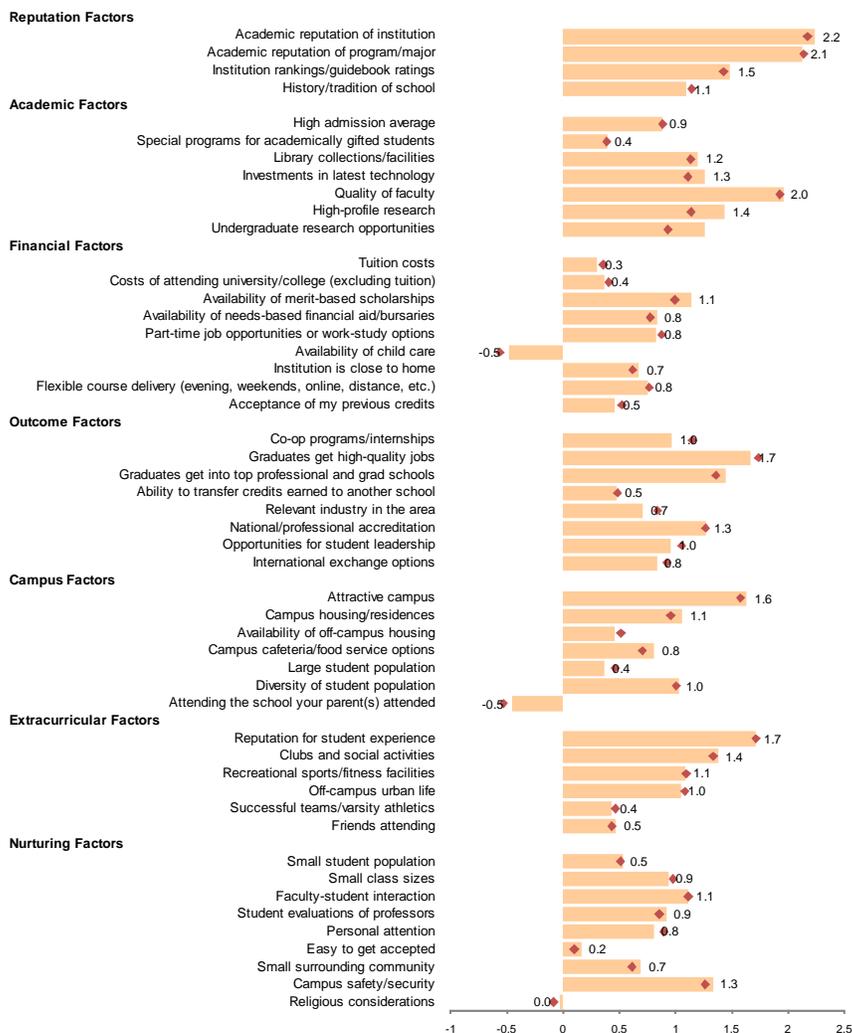
Financial Factors: Monetary considerations are not the primary decision factors for most Canadian university applicants, but Science applicants place somewhat less weight on all factors, except merit-based scholarships and needs-based financial aid.

Outcome Factors: Science applicants are academically focused. Compared to other university applicants, Science applicants place less weight on employment outcomes, co-op opportunities and relevant industry, and opportunities for international exchange or student leadership. They place slightly more emphasis, however, on grad school placement results for graduates.

Campus Factors: Science applicants are about average when it comes to campus considerations. An attractive campus is fairly important to them, as is student diversity. They place more emphasis, though, on campus housing and food services, and are less concerned with off-campus housing. They find a large student population somewhat less appealing than do other students.

Extracurricular Factors: Science applicants are precisely in line with the average university applicant when it comes to extracurricular considerations. A reputation for student life is a significant consideration, as are club and social activities, recreational facilities and off-campus urban life.

Nurturing Factors: Science applicants are fairly close to other university applicants in the way they regard nurturing factors. Campus safety and security is important, as is faculty-student interaction, but Science applicants report that they are less attracted to their first-choice university by small class sizes or personal attention – perhaps reflecting the fact that many are drawn to larger, research-intensive institutions. Compared to other applicants, Science applicants report slightly greater influence of professor evaluations, ease of acceptance, and a small surrounding community.



Push/Pull Graph: Impact of Key Decision Factors on selection of First-Choice University, all Canadian university Science applicants, 2009 UCAS™ Applicant Study. (Overall average for university applicants to all programs is indicated by the diamond.)

FOR MORE INFO:

For more information about participating in Academica Group’s research, custom analysis of our data warehouse, or other UCAS™ white papers, please contact:

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