

BRITISH COLUMBIA COUNCIL ON ADMISSIONS AND TRANSFER

Comparison of Outcomes of B.C. University College and University Baccalaureate Graduates

Prepared by the University Colleges of B.C. in collaboration with BCCAT

University colleges have occupied a unique position in the spectrum of British Columbia post-secondary institutions in that they are, for transfer purposes, both “sending” and “receiving institutions.” Many students start their degree programs at university colleges and then transfer to a university or to another university college to finish. Other students start their degree program at a college and transfer to a university college to finish. Yet another group are those students who start at a university college and who would, in the past, have transferred to a university to finish their degree, but who can now choose to stay at the university college to complete their program. Whatever the route, university colleges have provided opportunities for students who wish to complete a baccalaureate degree.

University colleges are distinctive institutions that offer a wide range of academic and applied citation, certificate, diploma and degree program choices. While their degrees were initially offered through partner universities, the five university colleges in this study have offered their own degrees for several years, and those degrees are enjoying a growing reputation.



A recent BCCAT “Research Results”¹ compared outcomes, five years after degree completion, for university degree graduates who had been admitted to the universities as either grade 12 students or transfer students. While, for the most part, outcomes for both groups were indistinguishable, some interesting differences emerged. As a corollary to that study, and given the importance of university colleges for transfer students, this paper looks at similarities and differences in outcomes of students who graduate from universities and

The Government of British Columbia recently announced changes to the status of two of these university colleges: Okanagan University College will be replaced by two institutions, UBC Okanagan and a new community college; and University College of the Cariboo will become a university and subsume the Open University and Open College, while retaining all of its current programs.

¹The Class of 1996 Five Years after Graduation: Comparing B.C. University Outcomes for Direct Entry and Transfer Students at http://www.bccat.bc.ca/pubs/rr_may03.pdf.

from university colleges. Are the outcomes for university college graduates in areas such as education satisfaction levels, employment, incomes, further education and student debt comparable to those of graduates from B.C.'s universities?

The 2000 B.C. University Baccalaureate Graduate Survey was the first to include university college graduates. Students who had graduated in 1998 were contacted by telephone in October 2000, to determine their outcomes and experiences two years after graduation.

The results, in fact, show there are few differences in the graduates' outcomes. Overall, graduates of both universities and university colleges had very positive labour market outcomes, life-long learning orientation, and satisfaction levels. Within this context of generally positive results, however, university college graduates indicated a higher level of program satisfaction and education-related employment, while university graduates were more likely to go on to further studies, and carried slightly less debt.

Who are the students?

	University Graduates	University College Graduates
Most frequent age group	25-29 yrs (65%)	25-29 yrs (51%)
Male/female respondents	39% / 61%	30% / 70%
Most frequent area of residence	Lower Mainland SW (64%)	Thompson-Okanagan (46%)

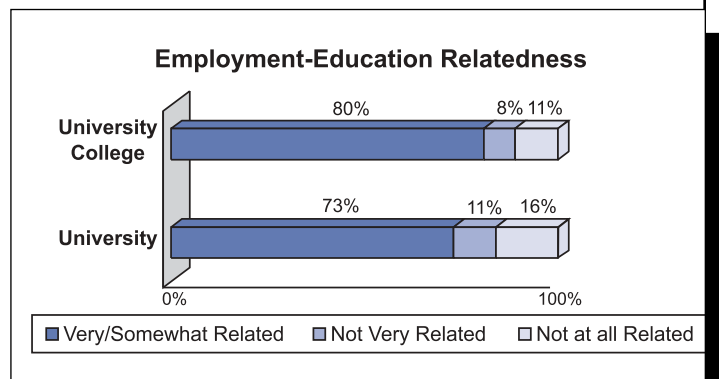
Demographic characteristics of each group demonstrate clear distinctions. The most frequent age group of all respondents at the time of the survey was 25-29 years with a higher proportion of university graduates (65%) in this age group compared to university college graduates (51%). However, 25% of university college graduates were 40 years and over; while only 9% of graduates from universities fell into this category. A higher proportion of respondents were female among both groups of graduates although university colleges had the highest proportion of female respondents (70%) in contrast to universities (61%). At the time of the survey 45% of university college graduates were living in the Thompson-

Okanagan region with most of the remainder residing in the regions of Lower Mainland Southwest (23%) and Vancouver Island-Coast (19%). However, the graduates of universities were concentrated in the Lower Mainland Southwest region (64%) with small proportions living in various other regions.

Labour Market Outcomes

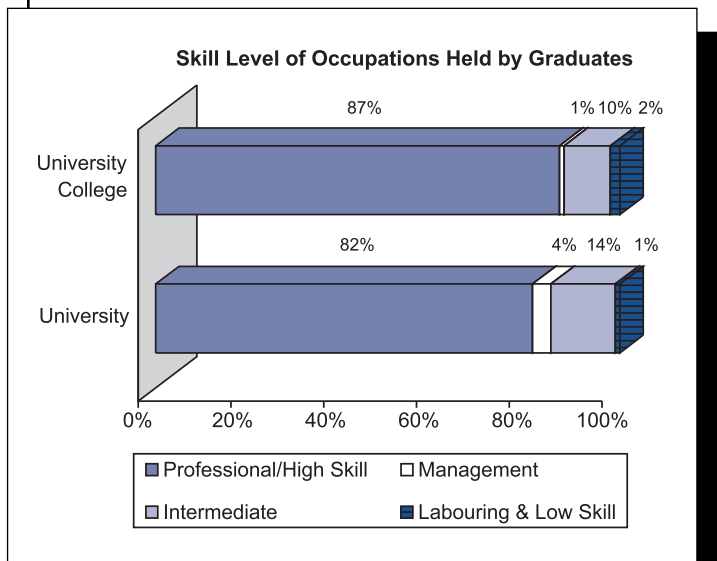
Two years after graduation 90% of university college and 88% of university graduates were working in paid employment. Among university college graduates 80% were employed full time, while for graduates of universities the proportion was 83%. A high proportion of the baccalaureate graduates were also successful in finding jobs related to their program of study. However, more university college graduates found positions that were characterized as related. A total of 80% of university college graduates indicated their work was either "somewhat" or "very related" to their employment, compared to 73% of university graduates.

FIGURE A: Employment - Education Relatedness



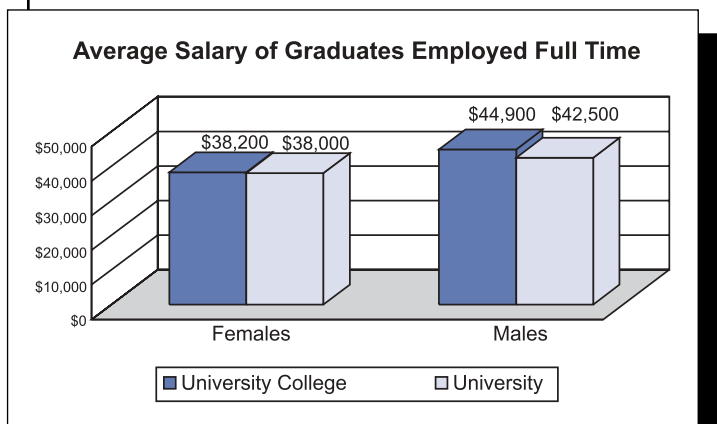
Among graduates of university colleges 87% described their positions as professional or highly skilled versus 82% of the university graduates. Further, with respect to professional employment alone, 66% of university college graduates were working in professional categories compared to 63% of university graduates.

FIGURE B: Skill Level of Occupations Held by Graduates



The average salary levels of female university college and university graduates two years after degree completion were similar at \$38,200 and \$38,000 respectively. However, male university college graduates had a higher average salary at \$44,900 compared to \$42,500 for male university graduates.

FIGURE C: Average Salary of Female and Male Graduates

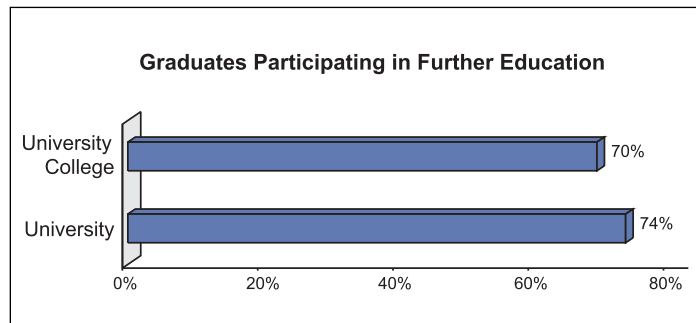


Participation in Further Education

The survey asked graduates about their participation in further education or training since graduation. Strides towards life-long learning were prevalent among all graduates. The participation level in some type of further education after completion of their baccalaureate degree was 70% for graduates of university colleges. The level was

somewhat higher for graduates from universities at 74%. About two-thirds of all the graduates participating in further education pursued college or university level studies. The most frequent reason for acquiring further education was to improve existing job skills, cited by 32% of university college graduates and 24% of university graduates.

FIGURE D: Graduates Participating in Further Education



Satisfaction with Education

The vast majority of baccalaureate graduates indicated they were satisfied with their program of study. For university colleges and universities, 97% and 94% respectively indicated they were either satisfied or very satisfied with their program. However, a significantly higher proportion of university college graduates noted that they were very satisfied (47%) compared to 36% of university graduates. Further, a higher proportion of university college graduates (80%) indicated they would take the same program again compared to university graduates (73%). Overall, graduates gave a high rating to the quality of instruction. Ninety-seven percent (97%) of university college graduates indicated the instruction they received was good or very good. This proportion was similar to that of university graduates at 94%.

A significantly higher proportion of university college graduates noted that they were very satisfied with their program of study compared to university graduates.

Education Financing

In the survey, respondents were asked to indicate if they had incurred debt to pay for their educational program. About half of all graduates indicated they had not incurred debt, with a slightly higher proportion of university graduates (53%) compared to university college graduates (50%) not incurring debt.

Conclusion

The 2000 B.C. University Baccalaureate Graduate Survey confirms that no matter where graduates obtained their degree they were well prepared to be successful in the labour market, embark on education-related careers and pursue further education. B.C.'s university colleges compare very favourably with the province's universities in providing a rewarding education.

FIGURE E: Graduates Satisfied or Very Satisfied with Program

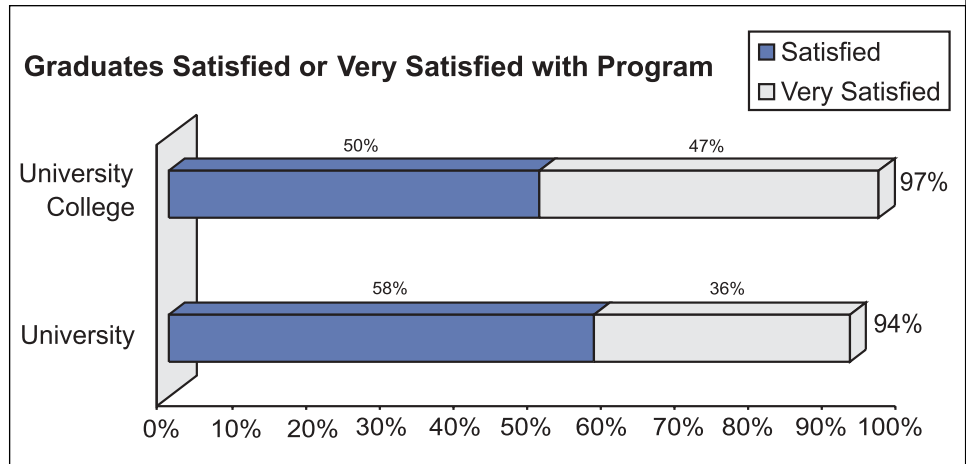
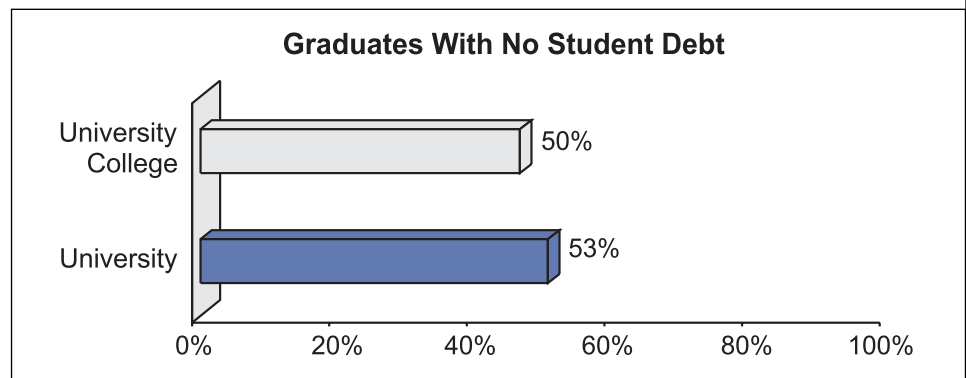


FIGURE F: Graduates With No Student Debt



The 2000 B.C. University Baccalaureate Graduate Survey was funded by the Ministry of Advanced Education in collaboration with universities, university colleges, and the University Presidents' Council (TUPC). It was managed under TUPC contract by the Centre for Education Information. A total of 717 university college graduates and 6,357 university graduates participated in the survey with respective response rates of 63% and 70%. Baccalaureate graduates of five B.C. universities as well as the university colleges of Malaspina, Fraser Valley, Cariboo and Okanagan were surveyed. As Kwantlen University College had no baccalaureate graduates in 1998 it was not included.

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SUPPORTING BC'S
EDUCATION SYSTEM

- **Address:** 709 - 555 Seymour St., Vancouver, BC V6B 3H6
- **Electronic Mail:** admin@bccat.bc.ca
- **BCCAT Online (website):** www.bccat.bc.ca
- **Telephone:** (604) 412-7700
- **Fax:** (604) 683-0576