

From the University/College Applicant Study™:

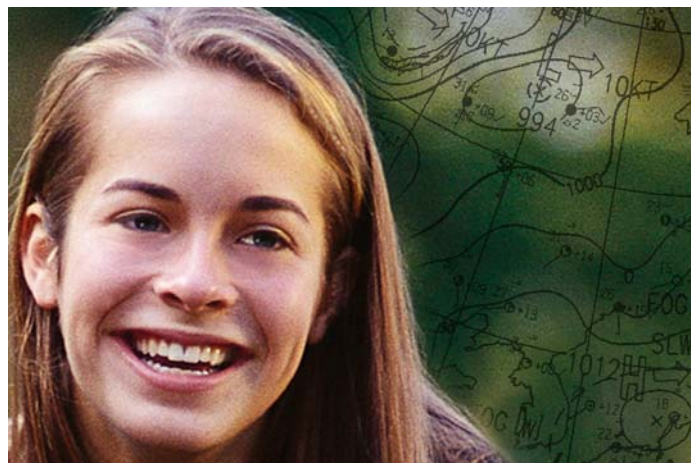
Attracting Students to Environmental Science

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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 Environmental Science programs weighed those considerations.

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.*)

EnviroSci applicants are pragmatic careerists, attracted by co-op and undergraduate research opportunities, as well as ease of admission. But they also appreciate their *own* environment – campus food services, residences, and off-campus urban life.



Reputation Factors: Applicants to EnviroSci programs place slightly less emphasis on reputational considerations in selecting a university than other students, although these are still the strongest decision factors. EnviroSci applicants pay somewhat less attention to university rankings and history than others.

Academic Factors: EnviroSci applicants place average weight on many academic factors, like library collections, the latest technology, quality faculty or high-profile research. They display what may be an anxiety about high-achieving colleagues, placing less than average weight on high admission averages and gifted programs. Notably EnviroSci applicants place significantly more emphasis on opportunities for undergraduate research.

Financial Factors: Monetary considerations are not the primary decision factors for most Canadian university applicants, but EnviroSci applicants seem to place somewhat more weight on the costs of attending a university in the decision process. Surprisingly they display less

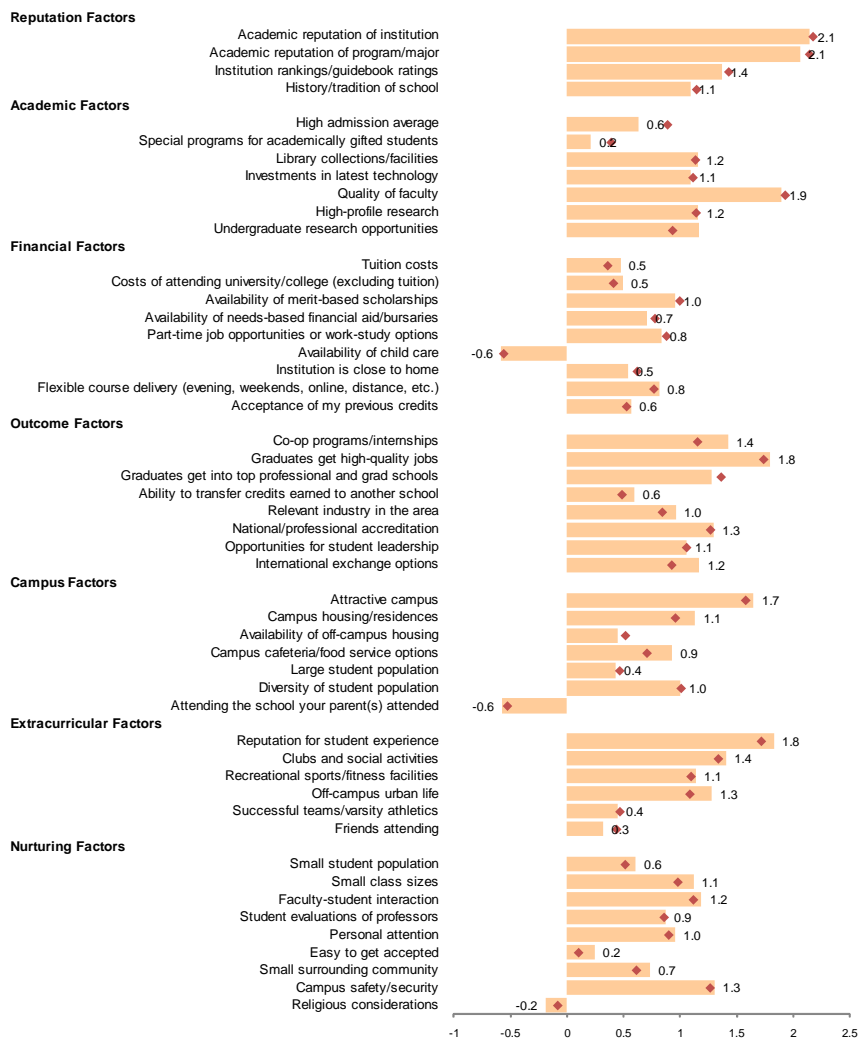
concern with proximity to home or needs-based financial aid offerings, as well as less concern with merit-based scholarships.

Outcome Factors: EnviroSci applicants place somewhat less than average weight on grad school placements, but put considerably more emphasis on co-op programs, international exchange opportunities, relevant industry near campus, and the ability to transfer credits to another institution.

Campus Factors: EnviroSci applicants place somewhat more emphasis on campus factors in selecting a university, particularly food service options, and campus housing. (Off-campus housing matters *less* to these students.) An attractive campus is the strongest campus factor, and matters somewhat more to EnviroSci applicants. These students clearly appreciate architecture and landscaping.

Extracurricular Factors: EnviroSci applicants seem to be extroverts for whom student experience, off-campus urban life, clubs and activities all matter more than average, while they have less regard for whether friends are also attending their chosen university. These applicants appear to be more individualistic than average.

Nurturing Factors: Campus security and safety is the most important of the nurturing factors to all university applicants, and EnviroSci applicants are no different. They do however place somewhat more emphasis on small class sizes, faculty interaction, small surrounding community and small student population. These students are seeking a university with a human scale. They are also more attracted by ease of admission than other applicants, and apparently more repelled by religious considerations.



Push/Pull Graph: Impact of Key Decision Factors on selection of First-Choice University, all Canadian university Environmental 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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