



GRADUATE
STUDENTS'
ASSOCIATION

UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

UCGSA

COMPREHENSIVE

ADVOCACY SURVEY

REPORT

ABSTRACT

A report on our comprehensive advocacy survey, asking UCGSA membership 114 questions about institutional, municipal, provincial, federal, and GSA-related challenges.

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Methodology:

UCGSA's *Comprehensive Advocacy Survey* was a random sample of 469 students (with response number fluctuating depending on the question) via Qualtrics, with students encouraged to use a QR code found around campus, a link available on our website, or a link included in our weekly newsletter. It ran from September 17th to October 6th, 2025. The margin of error for this sample is +/- 4%, 19 times out of 20. Totals may not add up to 100 due to rounding on questions where students could only pick one option. The responses have not been weighted; see the Survey Demographics section for more.

About the Authors:

About the GSA

The University of Calgary Graduate Students' Association (UCGSA) was first established in 1967 and further incorporated by an Order in Council in 1971. As per Sections 94(1) and 95(1-5) of the *Post-Secondary Learning Act*, and 58.4(1)(c) of the *Labour Relations Code*, we provide the administration of graduate student affairs and are the registered bargaining agent for all academically employed graduate students. In this capacity, we represent the collective voices of approximately 7,700 graduate students to the university and all levels of government, in addition to fostering a collegial graduate student community, administering vital services and programs such as the graduate student health and dental plan, advise students on how to navigate university policy, represent them in academic and employment disputes, negotiate the collective agreement, and other duties as circumscribed by legislation.

About the Elected Officials

Irtaza Sohail, President, is a MSc student in Electrical Engineering. He is the primary spokesperson for the organization and is in charge of overseeing the overall governance of UCGSA.

Sarah Kromm, Vice President—External, is an MBA student in Haskayne School of Business. She is responsible for leading UCGSA in all external relations, including with all three levels of government, the University of Calgary, and stakeholders within post-secondary education's orbit.

About the Government and External Relations Manager

The Government and External Relations Manager reports directly to the Executive Director, and is responsible for researching and writing, government and stakeholder relations, media relations, and other duties as assigned. The current Government and External Relations Manager is Andrew Kemle (M.A. in Political Science).

All errors are the authors alone.

Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge the traditional territories of the people of the Treaty 7 region in Southern Alberta, which includes the Blackfoot Confederacy (comprising the Siksika, Piikani, and Kainai First Nations), the Tsuut'ina First Nation, and the Stoney Nakoda (including the Chiniki, Bearspaw, and Wesley First Nations). The City of Calgary is also home to the Métis Nation of Alberta, Region III. The GSA is situated on land adjacent to where the Bow River meets the Elbow River; the traditional Blackfoot name of this place is "Moh'kins'tsis", which we now call the City of Calgary.

Introduction

Graduate students are closely connected to their universities and all three levels of government. Indeed, they are perhaps more closely connected to all four administrative levels than any other type of student. Unlike undergraduates and students in colleges or polytechnics, a significant portion of our funding comes from paid academic employment with the university. There are also, generally, greater expectations that graduate students will find funding opportunities from the federal government than undergraduates (college and polytechnic students will differ depending on the amount of applied research their schools produce). Like all students though, we rely heavily on provincial funding, and municipal housing policies play a substantial role in determining how much disposable income—to say nothing of mental wellness and safety—students have.

The University of Calgary Graduate Students' Association (UCGSA) assumed that funding was at the top of mind for graduate students. We also knew—from consultation with our members, our annual survey, and our own experiences as graduate students—that housing, food security, and immigration policy mattered a great deal. But we are not omniscient, and we knew there were known unknowns and unknown unknowns.

Consequently, the UCGSA Advocacy Team put together this comprehensive advocacy survey to gauge graduate student opinions on a multitude of topics, including:

- Their awareness of the GSA;
- Their feedback on the *performance* of the GSA;
- Institutional concerns;
- Municipal concerns;
- Provincial concerns;
- Federal concerns; and
- How they would like (or not like) to get involved in advocacy.

This survey was sent out between September 17th and October 6th, advertised through social media, through email, and in person, and then analyzed by the advocacy team. We received 469 responses, though the number of responses varied by question. We utilized this data to produce briefs for Corey Hogan, MP for Calgary-Confederation and the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), the Alberta Minister of Advanced Education Myles McDougall, and university administration. This report is our means of releasing all this data to the public.

We found that funding, housing, food security, and immigration were indeed top of mind for UCalgary graduate students. In fact, funding was the top concern for graduate students in every administrative category: from the Administration building on campus to Parliament Hill in Ottawa. Housing and food security transcended jurisdictional boundaries as well, though graduate students apportioned responsibility for their troubles differently. Other issues also saw similar levels of concern regardless of whether we asked about the municipal, provincial, or federal government. These were typically essential services, like access to healthcare (particularly the new pharmacare plan at the federal level) and childcare services.

Others were more specific to one level. Funding dominated at the institutional level, which suggests that most University of Calgary-specific problems are related to how much money they can give to graduate students (versus how much they charge in tuition and fees).

At the municipal level, housing dominated in the same way that funding did for the institutional level. But what also emerged as a problem was transit: not the *cost* of transit, per se, rather it's availability, particularly at night. A hot-button issue for municipal politics—safety—did not concern graduate students as much as other issues, which may reflect the relatively small proportion of students who live and work downtown.

At the provincial level, graduate students expressed concern over the rollback of EDIA programs and the lack of support for BIPOC and disabled students. Students were less concerned about a lack of free speech on campus, though that is not to say that *no* students expressed concern. Students also expressed concern over the lack of clarity around workers' rights. Graduate students are unique amongst Albertan workers: their union (UCGSA) is codified directly in the *Labour Relations Code*, their employment contracts are always temporary, and both they and the employer are exempt from the *Employment Standards Code*. This confusion is not surprising, then, given the complex legislative environment graduate students work in.

At the federal level, the next biggest concern after funding and immigration was the administrative components around Tri-Council scholarships. The Tri-Council Canadian Graduate Scholarship (CGS) is the most prestigious and lucrative scholarship a Canadian graduate scholar can receive, but the awards website is confusing and unsuccessful applicants do not receive feedback on why their proposal was rejected. These were highlighted as major concerns by graduate students.

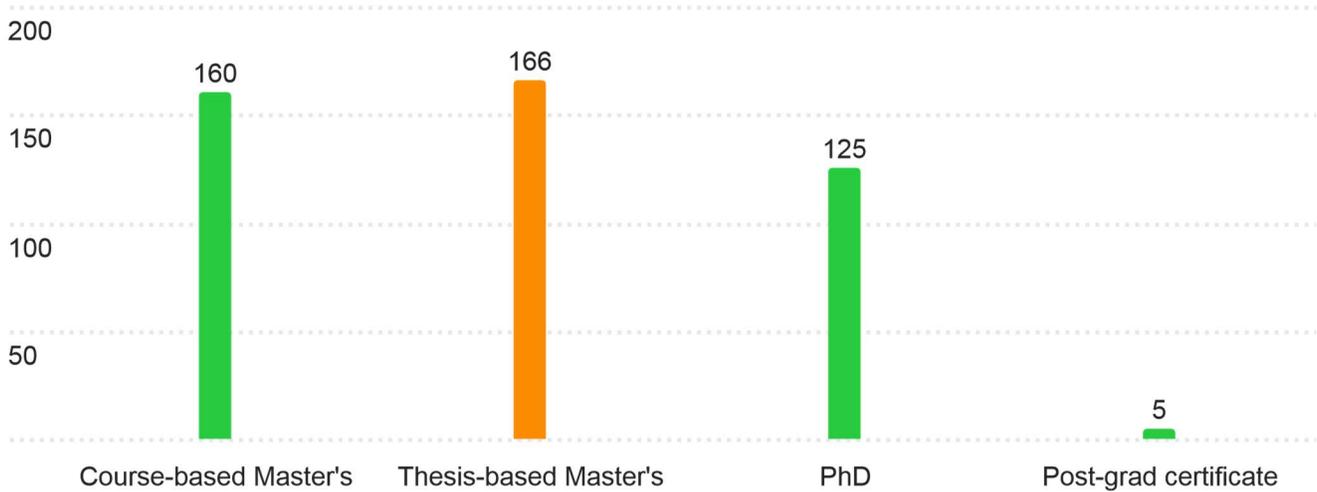
The survey asked over 100 questions, so there is substantially more to discover below. We begin with some introductory and demographic questions. The next section deals with institutional-focused questions. After that, we move to the municipal level. The provincial level is next, followed by the federal level. We end with general follow-up questions and then a conclusion, where we highlight that funding concerns disproportionately impacts course-based graduate students, who are ineligible for funding at every level (with the caveat that the municipal level lacks the authority to fund *any* graduate students). Each section starts with the data and then ends with an analysis.

Introductory Questions and Demographic Information

Data:

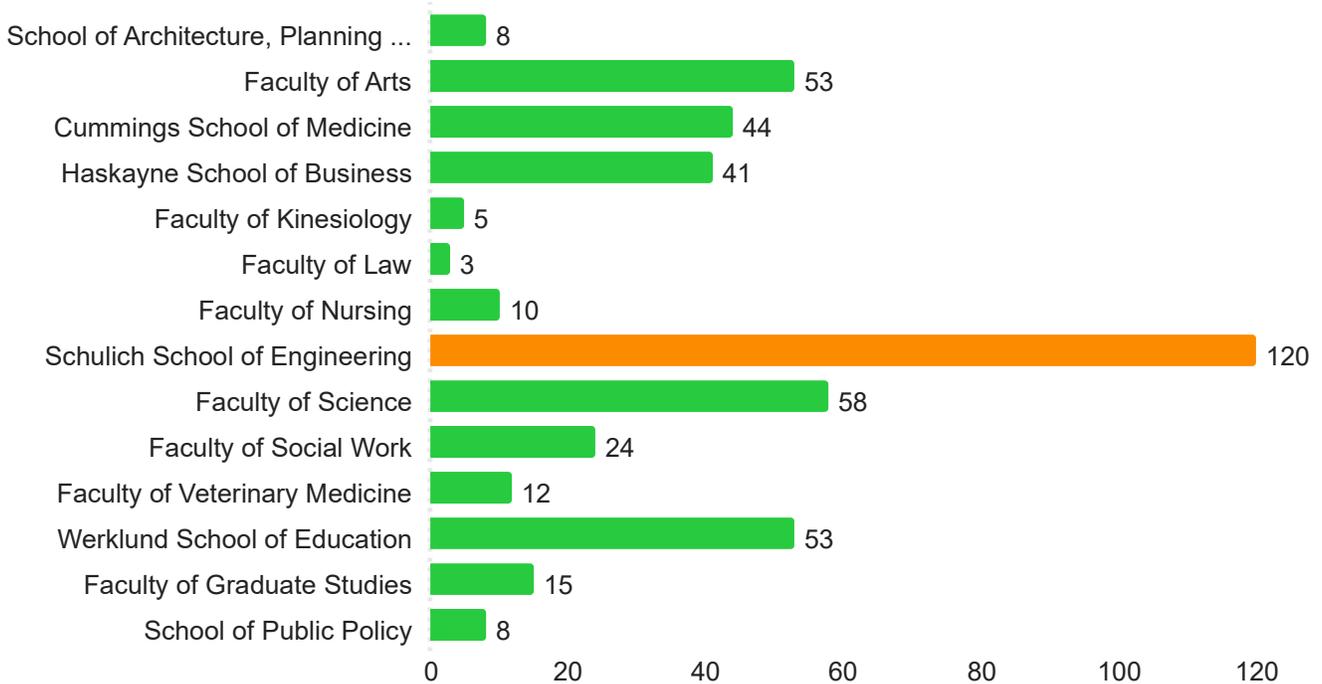
Q1 - What is your current program type?

456 Responses



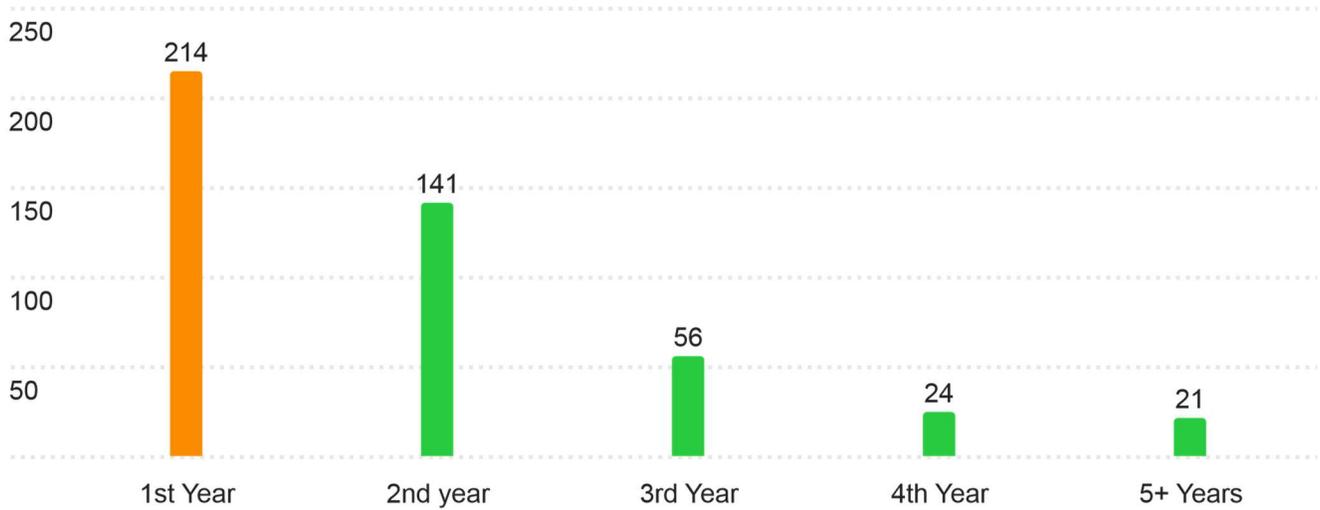
Q2 - Which faculty are you affiliated with?

454 Responses



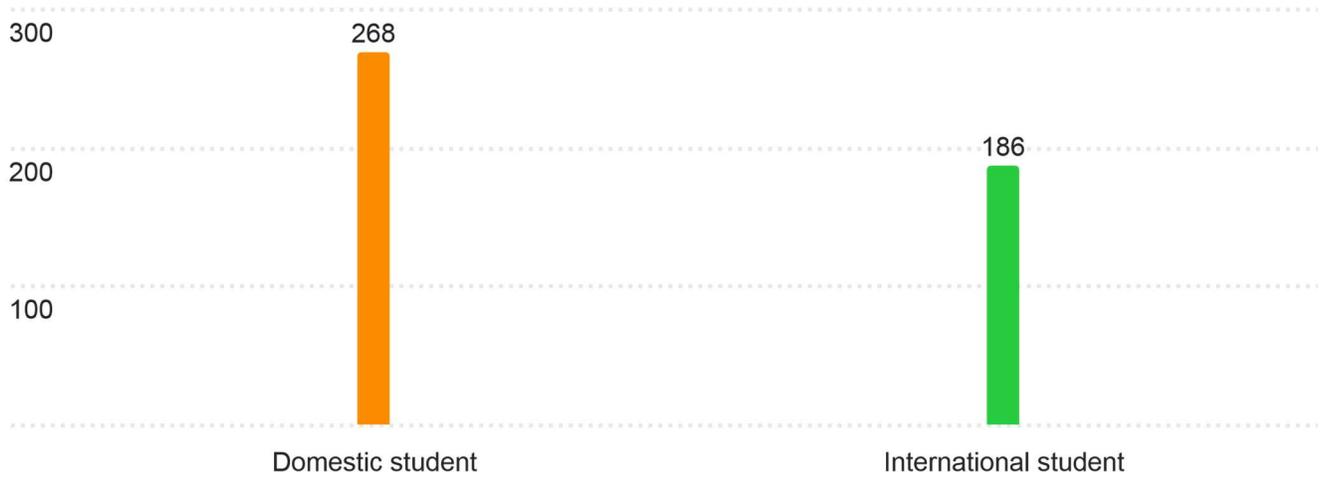
Q3 - What year of your current program are you in?

456 Responses



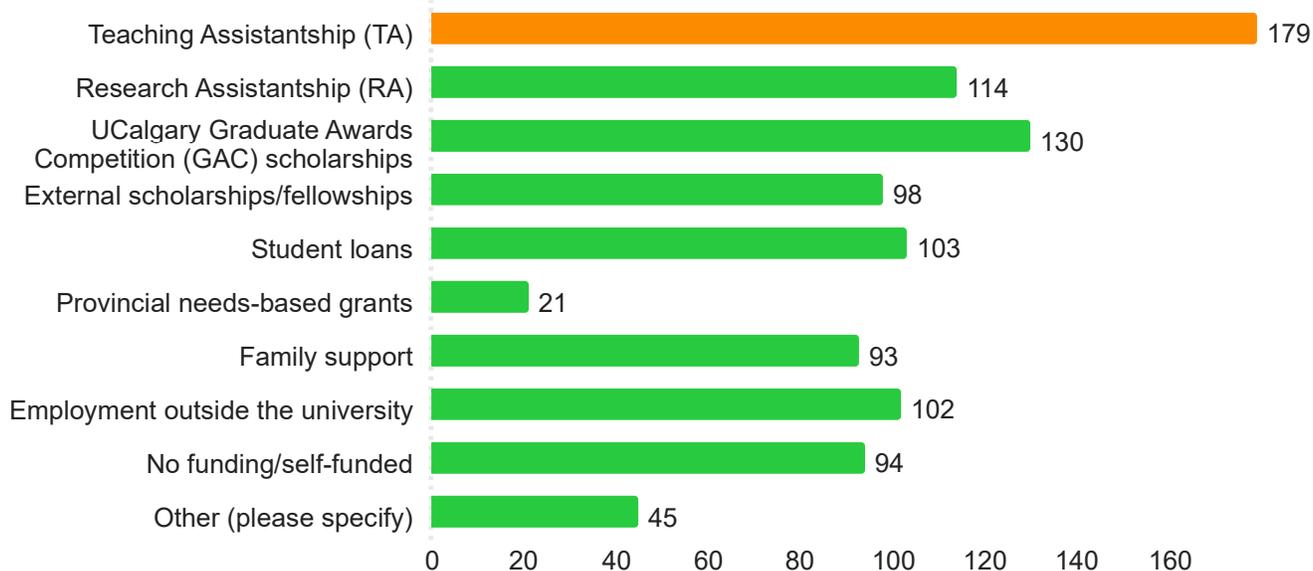
Q4 - What is your student status?

454 Responses



Q5 - Do you receive funding for your studies? (select all that apply) - Selected Choice

454 Responses



Q5_10_TEXT - Other (please specify) - Text

Stipend

Supervisor Funding

Funding through the lab I am doing my thesis in

Supervisor stipend

Werklund has student funding built-in

Employment from the University (technician)

Supervisor's funding

No support. I have to use my savings

health authority bursary (\$500)

Alberta Graduate Excellence Scholarship

Tuition Support (UCalgary employee)

program funding

lab is paying

UCalgary Employee Tuition Support

University of Calgary Entrance Award

Employment at the university but not part of my departmental funding

Taking out TFSA

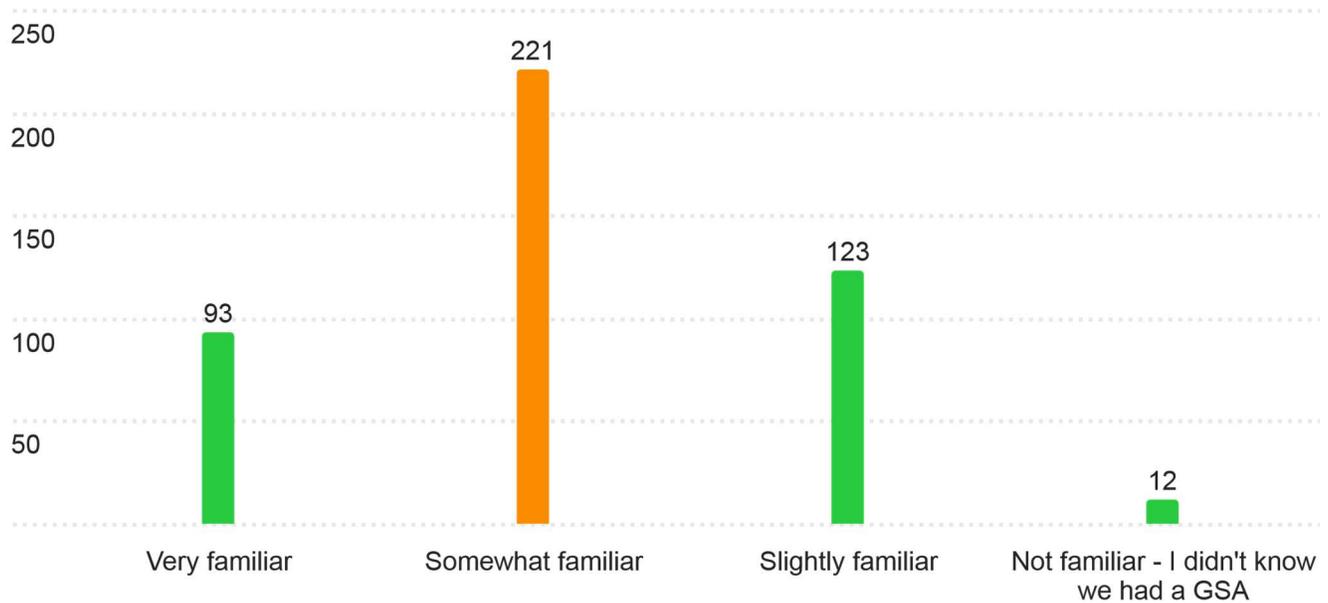
Part time very small amount as an RA. No stipend

program recommended award

Student stipend

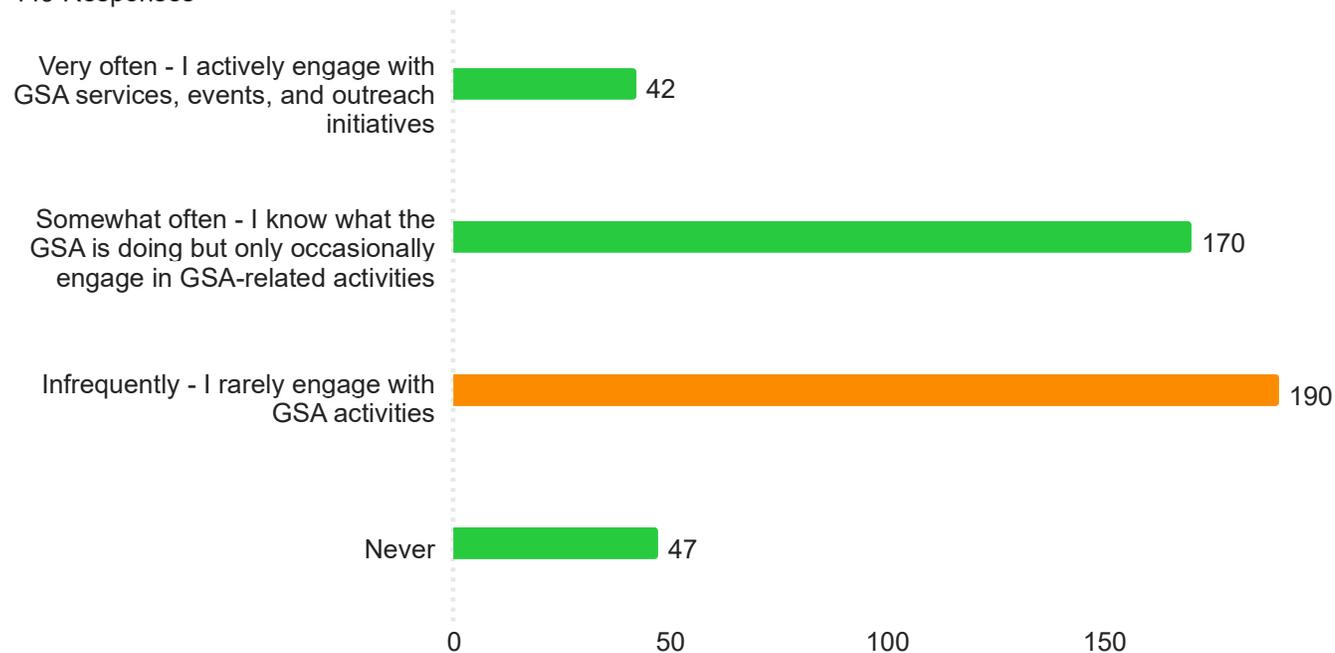
Q6 - How familiar are you with the Graduate Students' Association (GSA)?

449 Responses



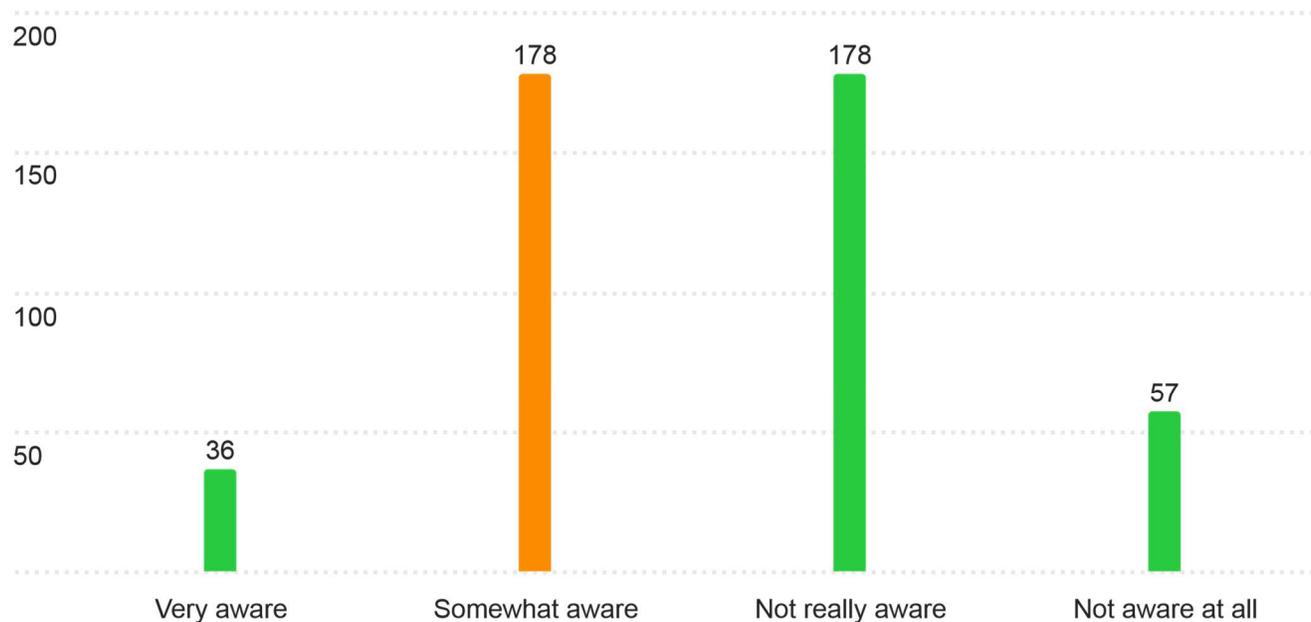
Q7 - How often do you engage with the GSA?

449 Responses



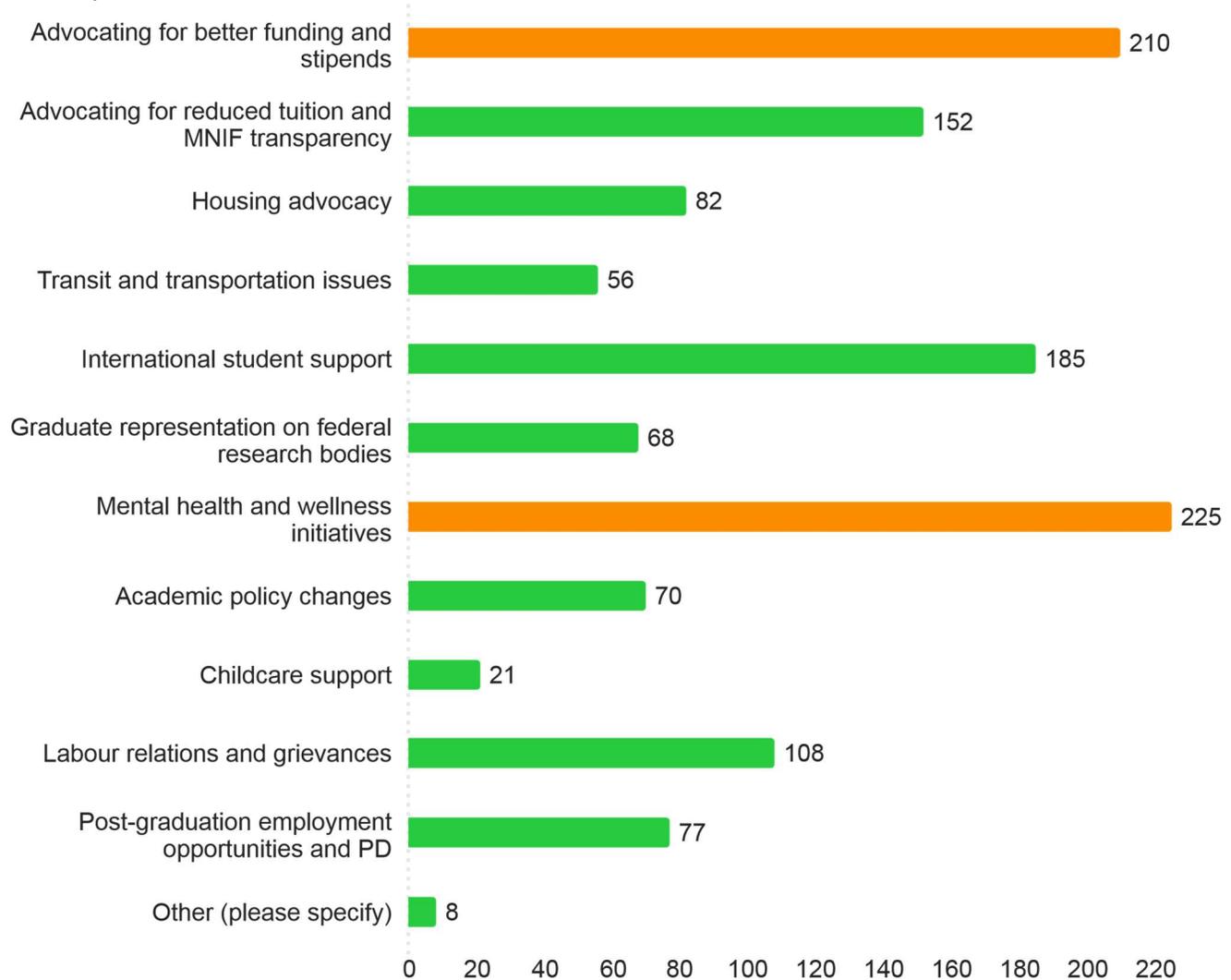
Q8 - How aware are you of the GSA's advocacy activities in particular?

449 Responses



Q9 - Which GSA advocacy activities are you aware of? (select all that apply) - Selected Choice

366 Responses



Q9_13_TEXT - Other (please specify) - Text

Discrimination, Racism, LGBTQ

I've never interacted with GSA but I'm aware that GSA offers support... just never in a specific idea

Yoga classes

Gender and sexuality advocacy

Bursary

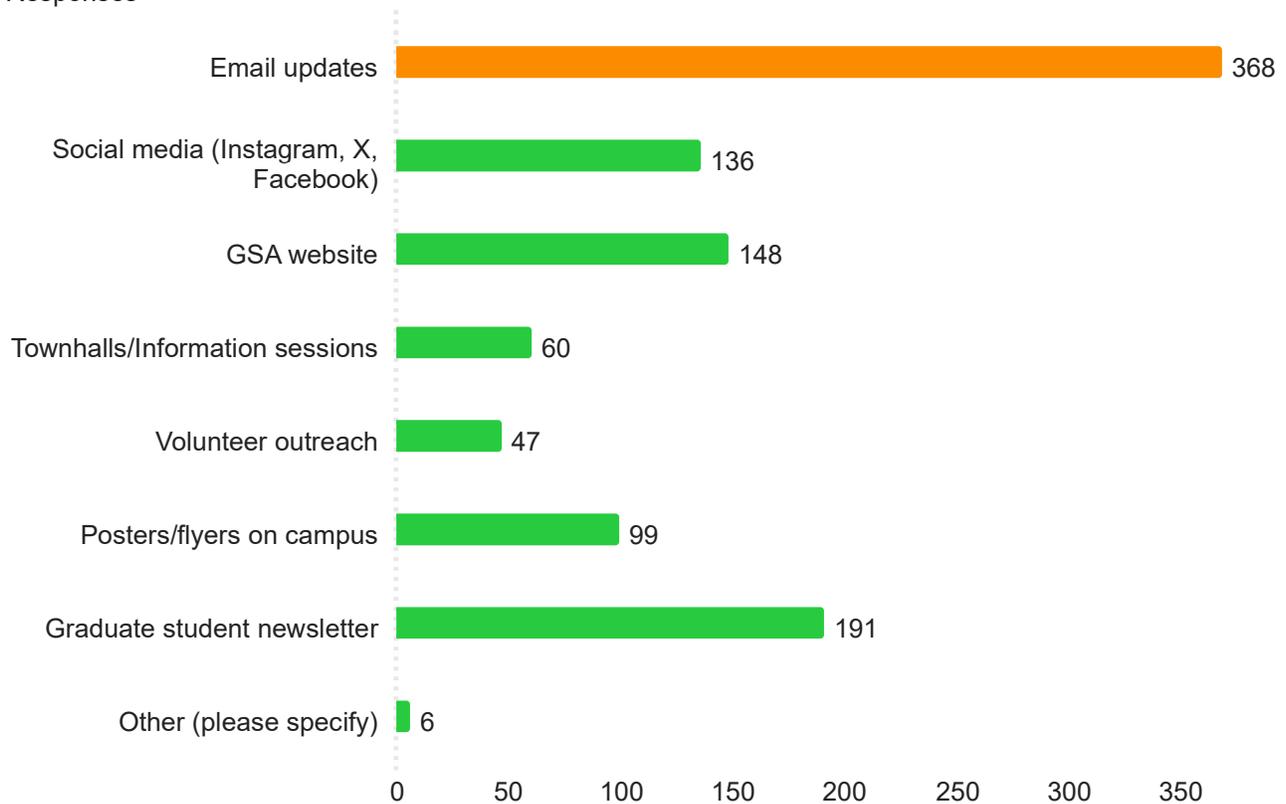
GSA^2 advocacy

2SLGBTQIA+

Graduate student health program

Q10 - How would you prefer to learn about GSA advocacy efforts? (select all that apply) - Selected Choice

442 Responses



Q10_8_TEXT - Other (please specify) - Text

word of mouth

Less emails please - as an online student who is not on campus, there are way too many GSA emails for me.

Webinars

Honestly I'm just really busy and don't read any emails that don't pertain to work. Unless someone approaches me in person, I'm probably remaining unaware.

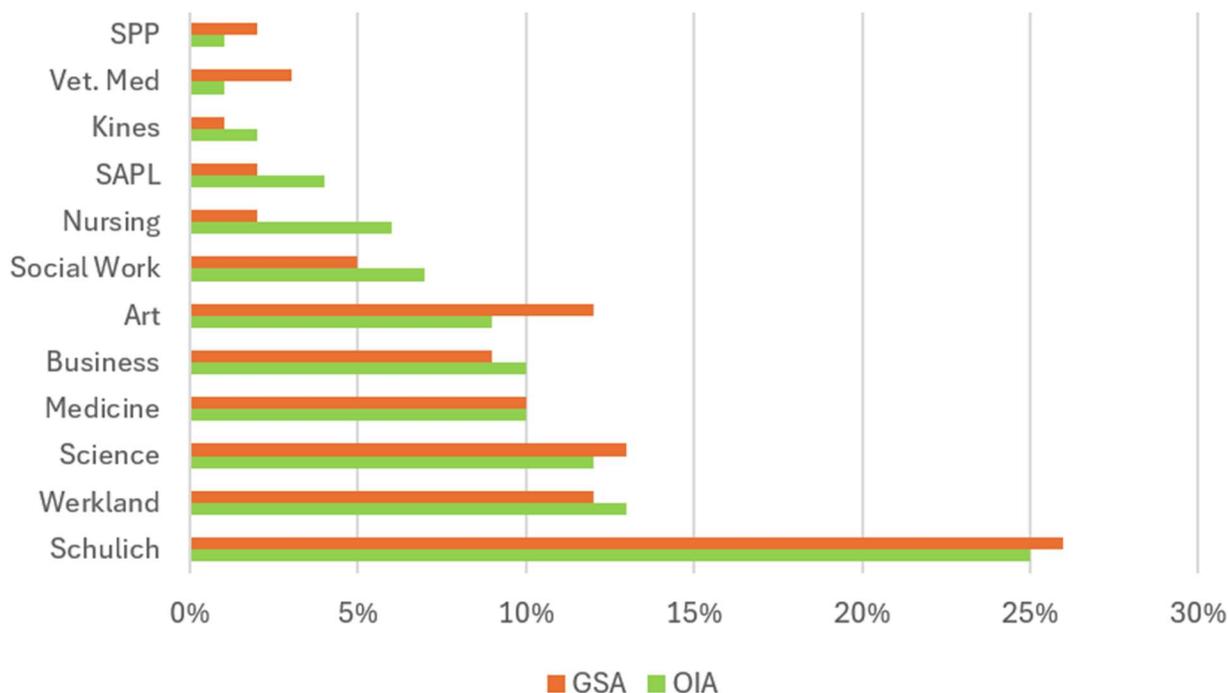
Less frequent emails that actually summarize semesterly updates; too many emails that all say the same thing over again so I don't read them

Analysis:

The main source of data for University of Calgary graduate student demographics comes from the Office of Institutional Analysis (OIA), which runs a publicly accessible factbook.¹ For graduate students, OIA only tracks enrollment by faculty, whether you are a part-time or full-time student, and whether you are an international or domestic student. As such, we could not adjust the sample to make it fully representative of the actual graduate student population.

However, the faculty distribution of our sample is quite close to the actual distribution of graduate students on campus (**Fig.1**). In all but two cases, our sample is within 1-2% of the OIA's numbers. Those two exceptions are the Faculty of Arts, where we oversampled slightly (9% OIA vs 12% in our sample) and Nursing, where we under sampled by 4% (6% vs 2%).

Fig.1. Distribution of Graduate Students by Faculty (OIA vs GSA)

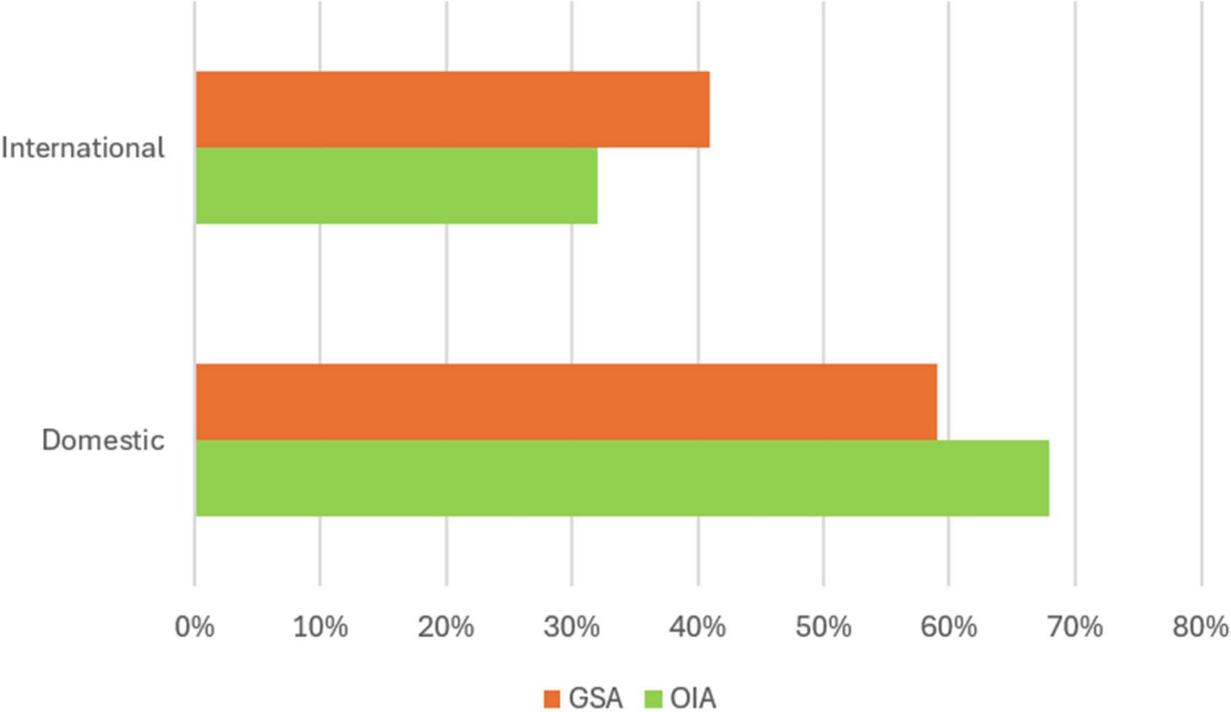


1

<https://app.powerbi.com/view?r=eyJrIjoiaNmM1Y2Q4M2YtNzlhZC00OTc5LWJhZjMtNDC3YzI0MTBiYTQxliwidCI6ImM2MDIhMGVjLWE1ZTMtNDYzMS05Njg2LTE5MjI4MGJkOTE1MSJ9>

By contrast, the difference in domestic vs international student responses is moderate-to-large. According to the OIA, approximately 68% of UCalgary students are from Canada; in our sample, that number is 59%. International students account for approximately 32% of enrolled students in the OIA database, while in our sample international students were 41% of respondents (*Fig.2.*)

Fig.2. Domestic vs International Students (OIA vs GSA)



As such, while our sample accurately captures the opinions of students at the faculty level, we have oversampled international students relative to domestic students. When interpreting our results, then, readers should be aware that some of the answers may be skewed towards “Serious” or “Major” problems, due to the higher tuition cost, greater bureaucratic burden, and lower local support networks international students face. This may partially explain why so many federally related questions saw “Serious Problem” as the most popular answer: as international students must deal with immigration law and its associate costs, federal programs likely disproportionately affect this cohort compared to domestic students.

Other important data points to note are that academic employment remains the main source of income for graduate students (through Teaching Assistantships and Research Assistantships), while almost as many graduate students seek external employment as use student loans for financial support. A small proportion (4.6%) of graduate students received needs-based funding from the province. While this could be interpreted as UCalgary graduate students having sufficiently high incomes or enough alternative sources of funding to not need non-repayable grants from the province, other data collected by UCGSA suggests otherwise. In *UCGSA.03*, our policy statement on financial aid and student loans, we noted that Albertan student financial aid is weighted more towards loans than in

other provinces.² Additionally, when adjusted for inflation, funding available for non-repayable, needs-based financial aid has declined substantially from its height in 2021, and is in fact lower in 2025 than in 2019.³ This is partially why Albertan graduate students have the highest loan debt of any province, have the highest percentage of students with “large” debt (over \$35,000 worth), and have among the lowest repayment rates in Canada.⁴ We argued to the *Expert Panel on Post-Secondary Funding and Alberta’s Competitiveness* (aka, the “Mintz Panel”) that there was insufficient funding for non-repayable, needs-based funding;⁵ the panel subsequently included *Recommendation 6* in their final report, which echoed our call for more grants instead of loans.⁶ As such, we believe this low number reflects a lack of available grants and needs-based funding for graduate students, rather than low demand.

As far as the GSA’s presence, most graduate students are aware of our advocacy around big-ticket and pressing items, namely funding and mental health initiatives. An overwhelming majority of students prefer to be informed of our advocacy efforts through email, while word-of-mouth was seen as a less effective outreach tactic. Overall, fewer students are aware of the GSA’s advocacy than they are of the GSA, suggesting that there remain communications gaps between membership and the advocacy team.

² <https://gsa.ucalgary.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/UCGSA.03-Financial-Aid-and-Student-Loans-Policy-Final-Draft-2025-26-Update.pdf>

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ <https://gsa.ucalgary.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/UCGSA-Presentation-to-the-Mintz-Panel-final-draft-1.pdf>

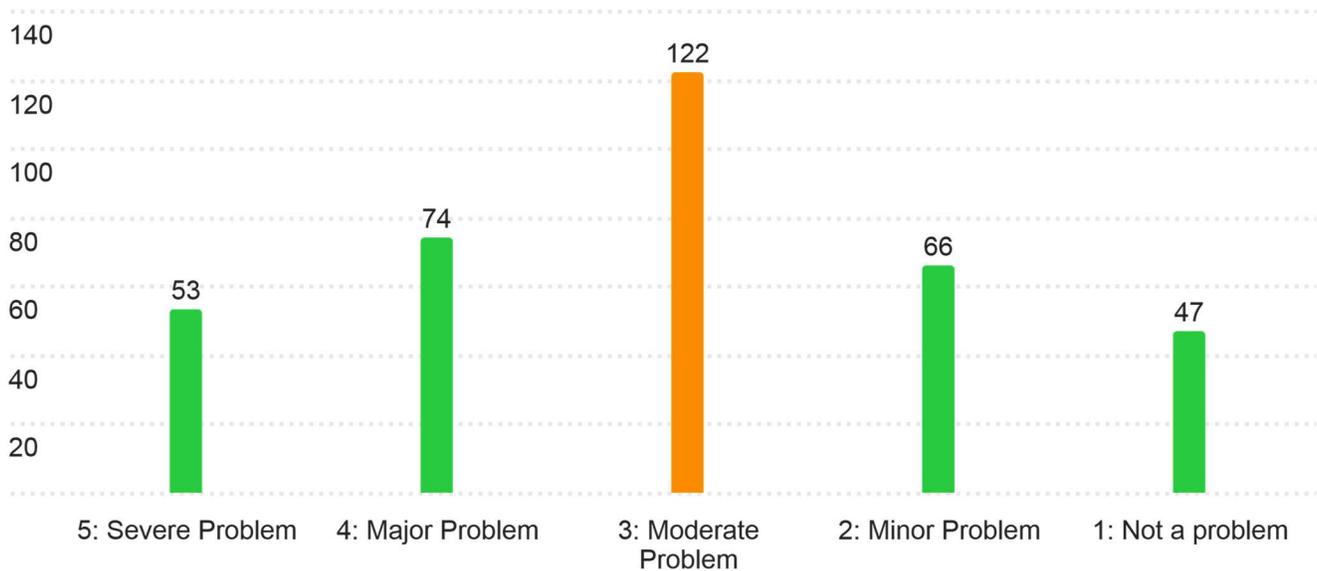
⁶ <https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/0fc4d498-dcb5-440b-930d-9600e19c39b1/resource/a5e7a93b-0208-4721-a347-24a65b2c3ce7/download/ae-expert-panel-post-secondary-institution-funding-albertas-competitiveness-report-2025.pdf>

Institution-Focused Questions

Data:

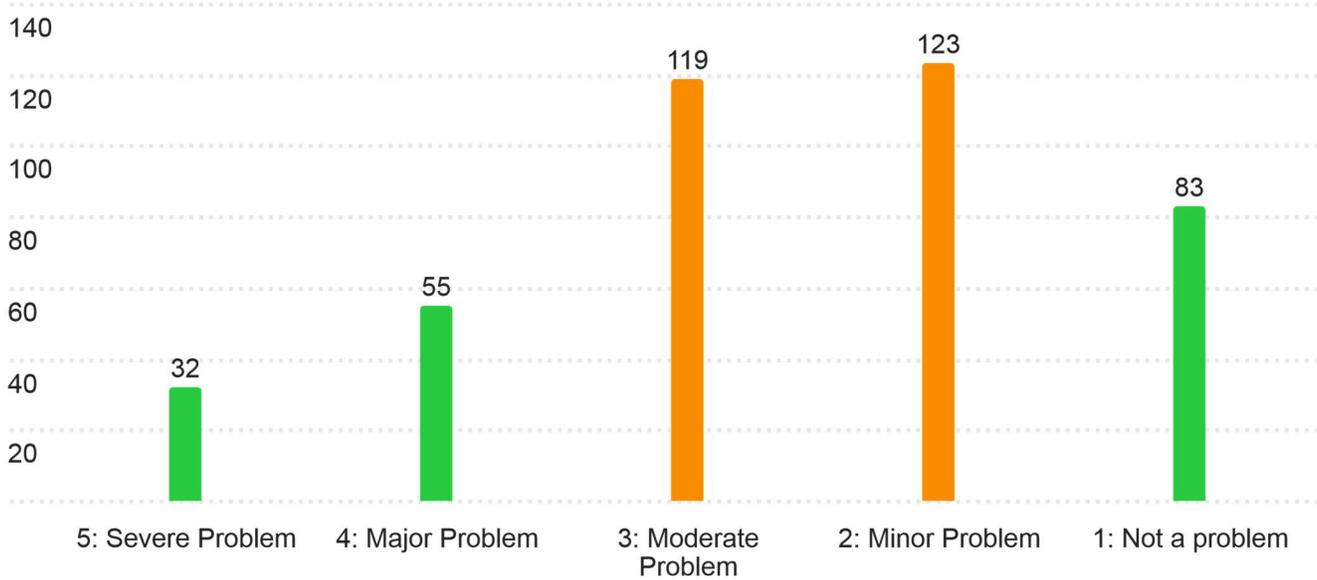
Q11 - Please rate the severity of the following challenges you may face at the University of Calgary: Inadequate research funding or resources:

362 Responses



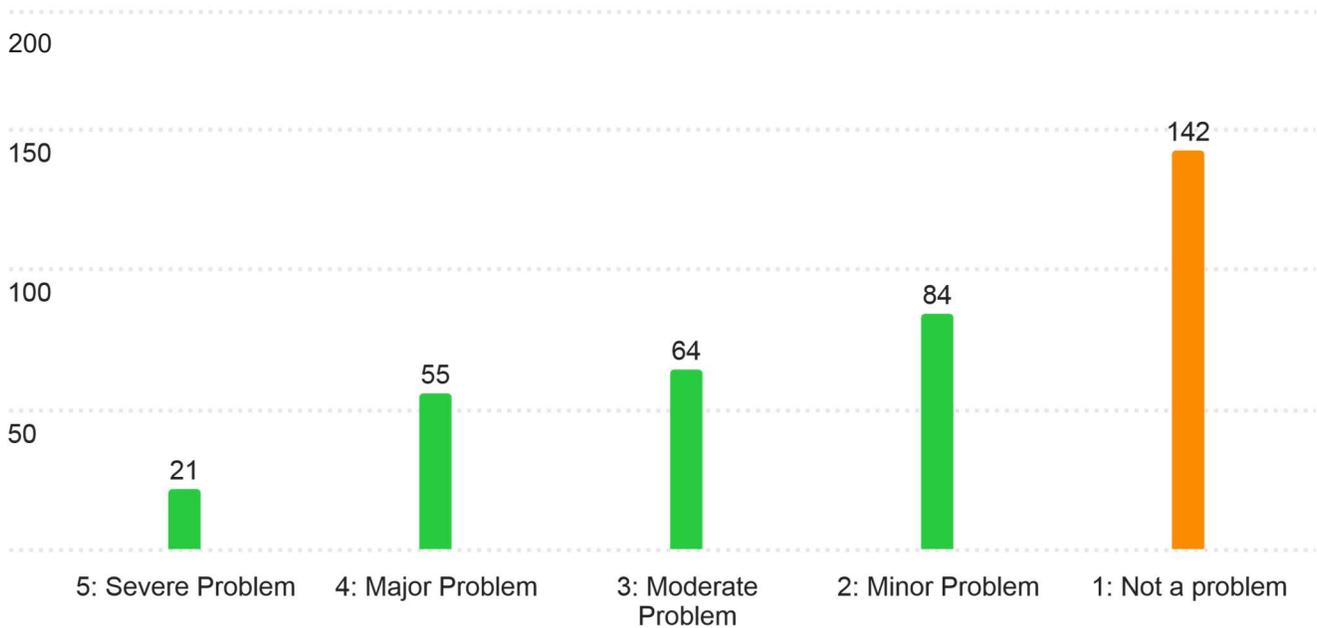
Q12 - Please rate the severity of the following challenges you may face at the University of Calgary: Limited access to required resources:

412 Responses



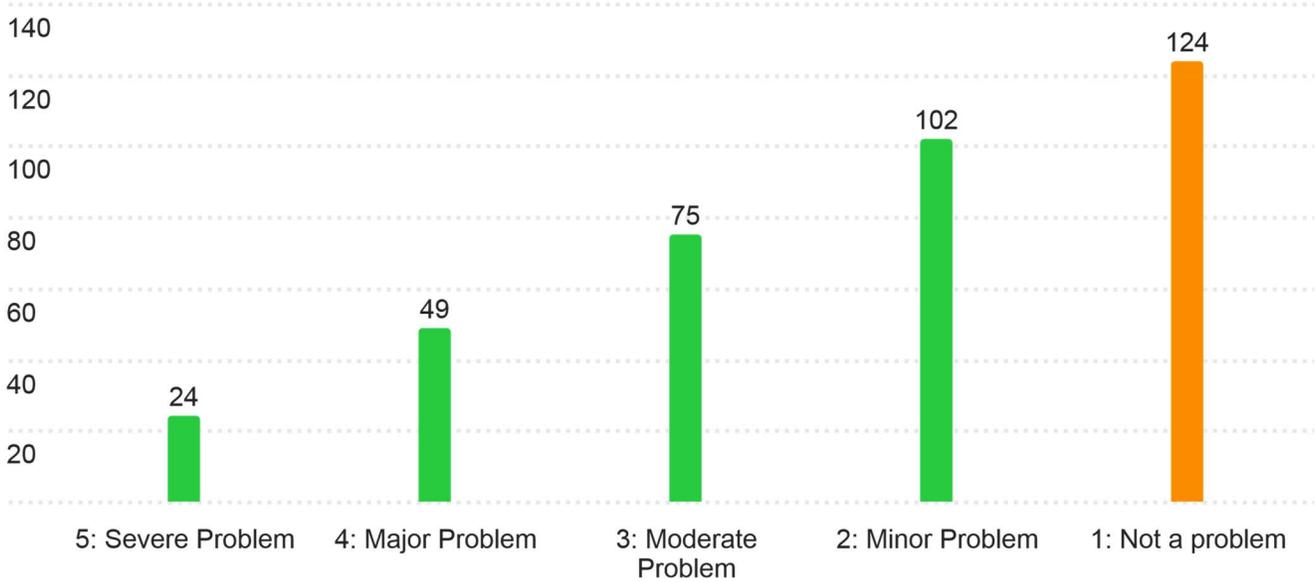
Q13 - Please rate the severity of the following challenges you may face at the University of Calgary: Insufficient laboratory/workspace:

366 Responses



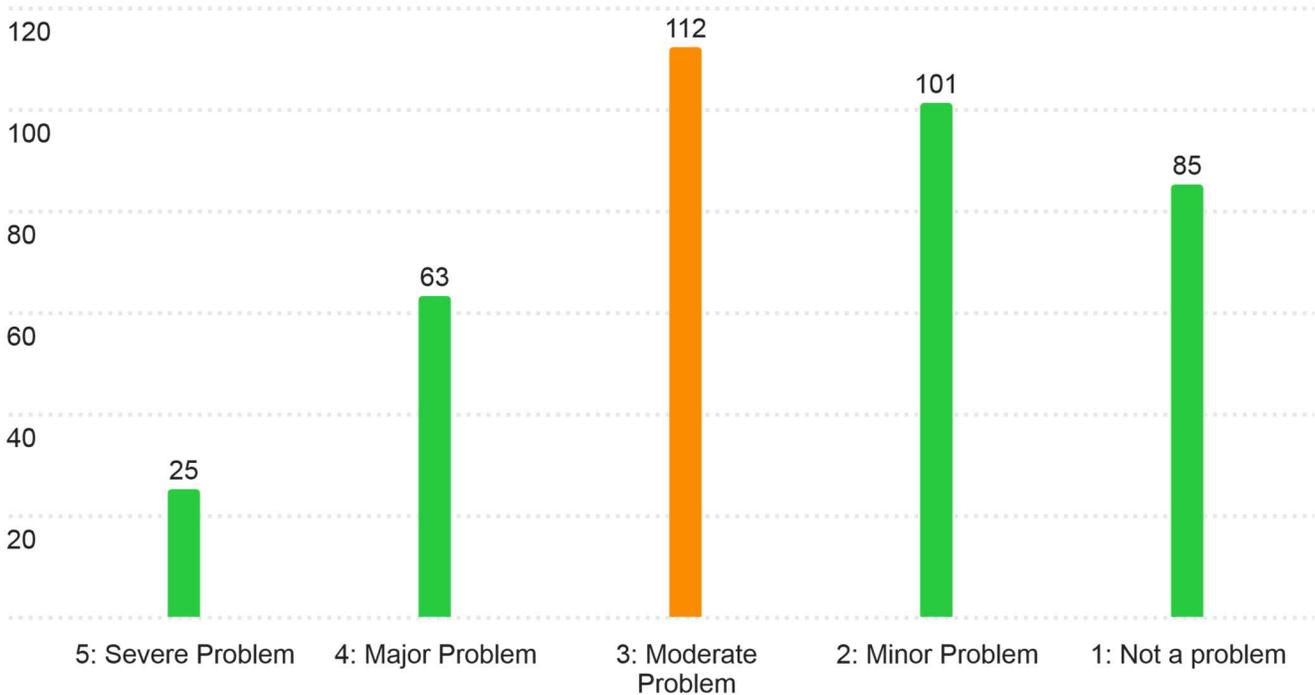
Q14 - Please rate the severity of the following challenges you may face at the University of Calgary: Outdated equipment or technology:

374 Responses



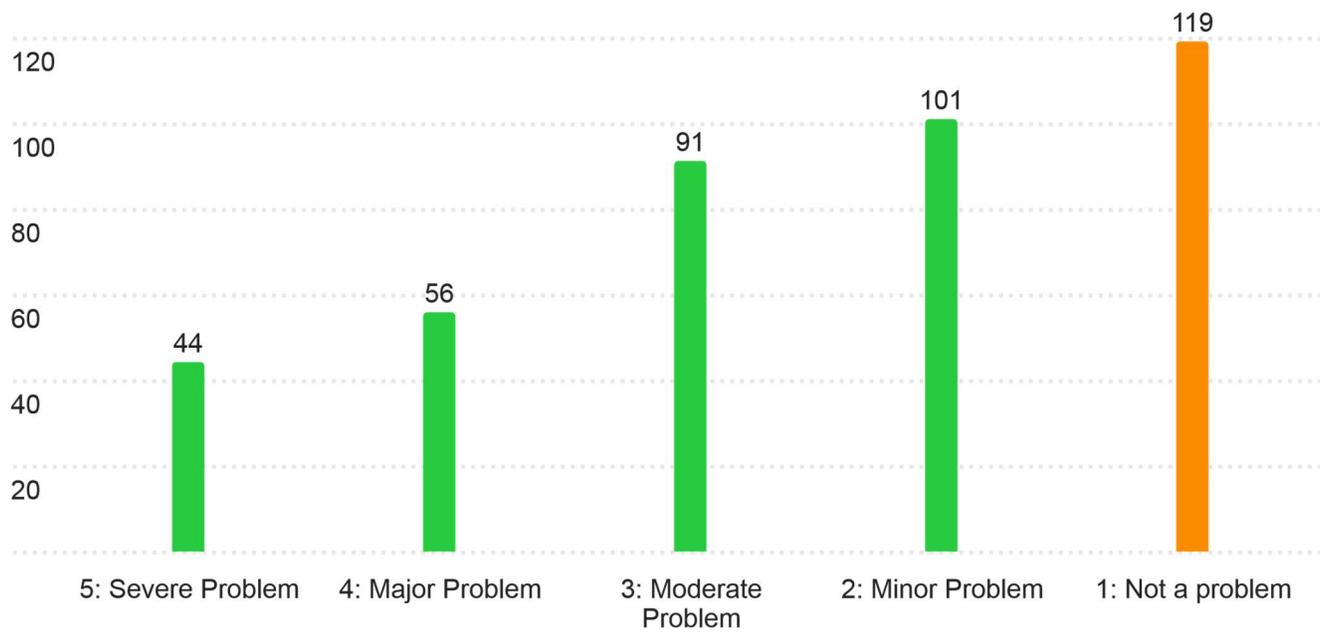
Q15 - Please rate the severity of the following challenges you may face at the University of Calgary: Lack of interdisciplinary opportunities:

386 Responses



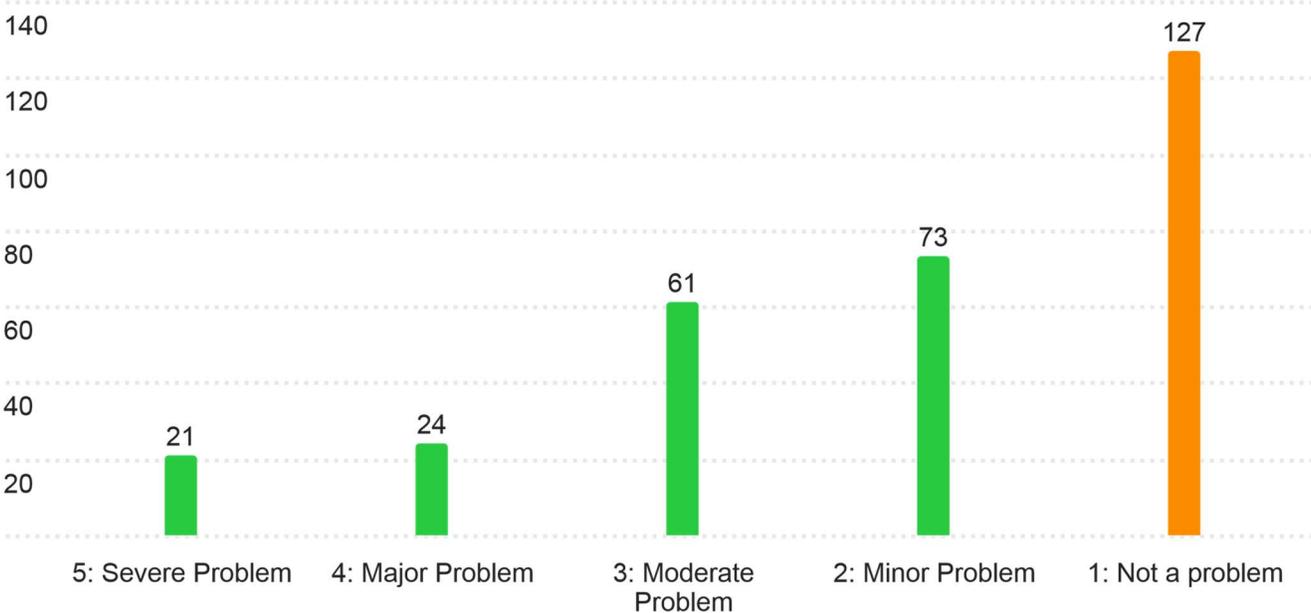
Q16 - Please rate the severity of the following challenges you may face at the University of Calgary: Unclear program requirements or timelines:

411 Responses



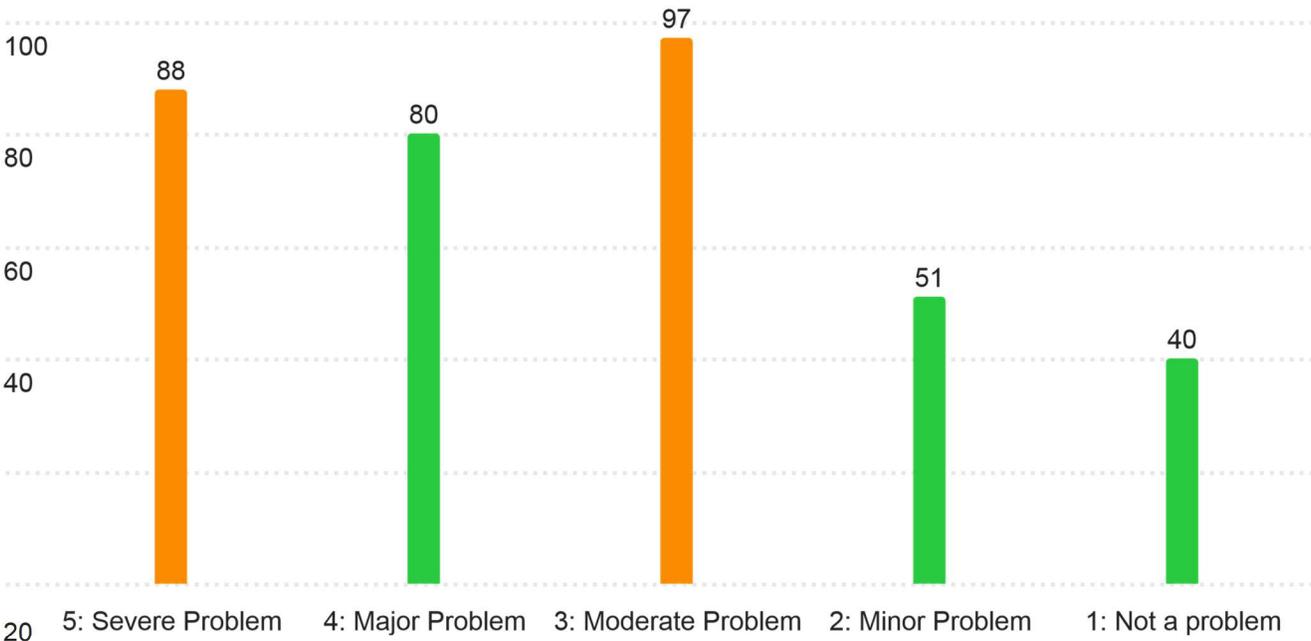
Q17 - Please rate the severity of the following challenges you may face at the University of Calgary: Insufficient support for commercialization and retention of intellectual property:

306 Responses



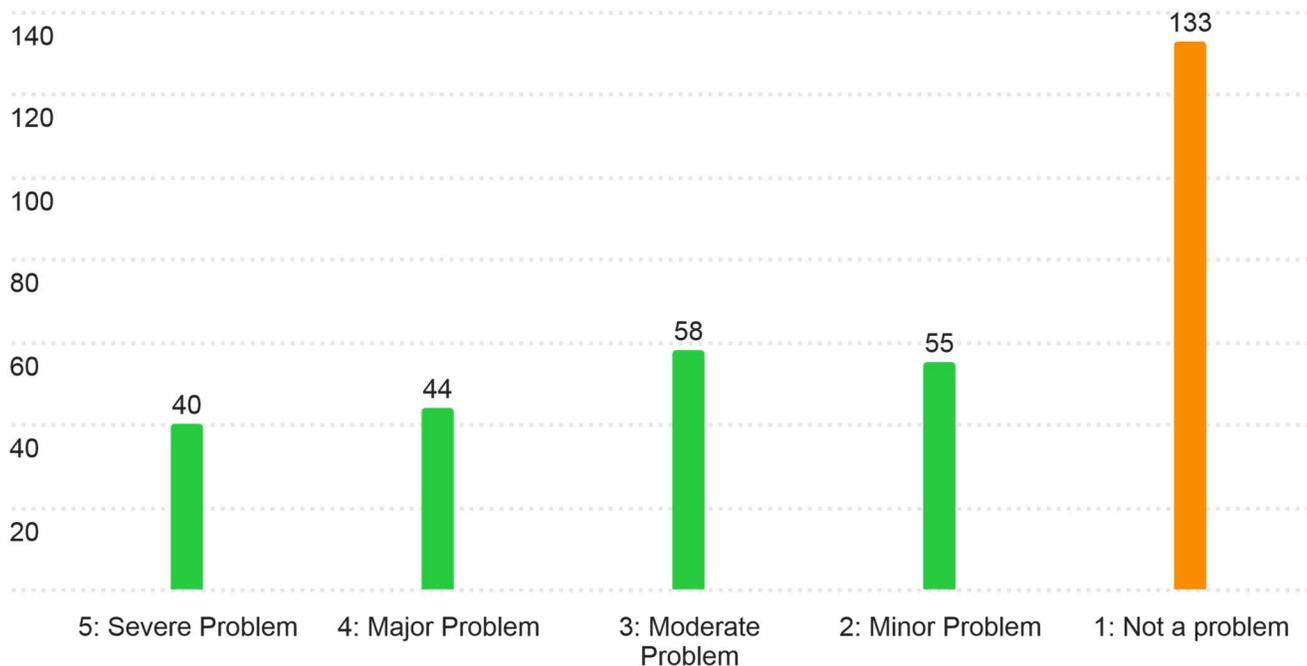
Q18 - Please rate the severity of the following challenges you may face at the University of Calgary: Inadequate stipend amounts:

356 Responses



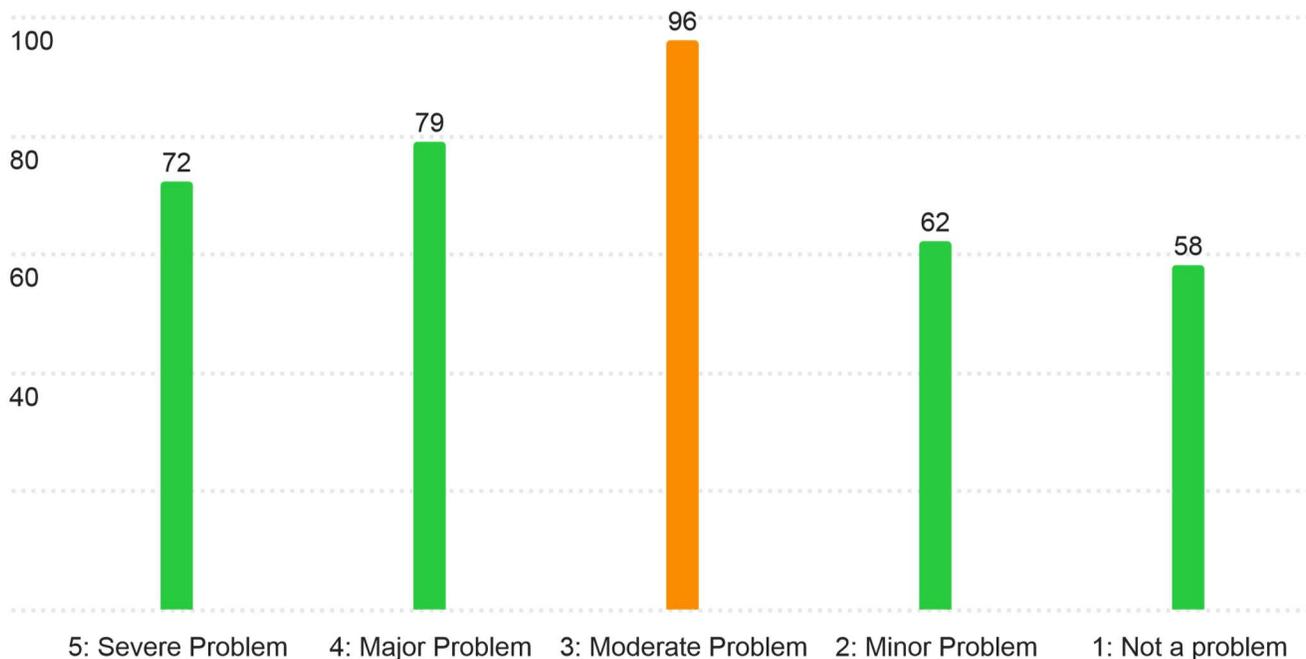
Q19 - Please rate the severity of the following challenges you may face at the University of Calgary: Delayed stipend payments:

330 Responses



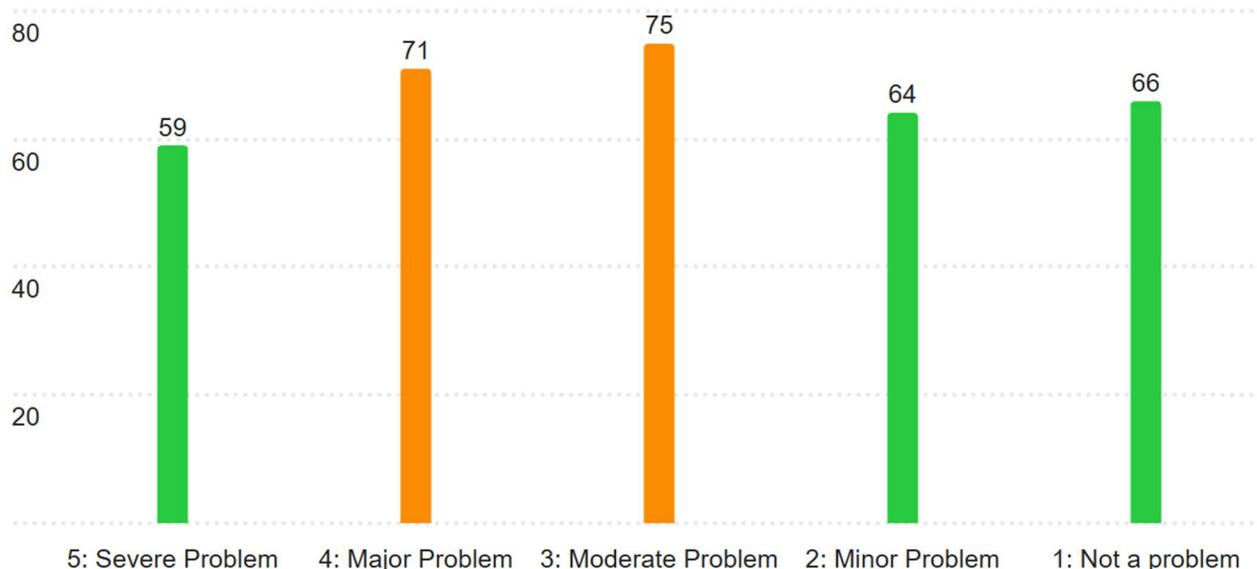
Q20 - Please rate the severity of the following challenges you may face at the University of Calgary: Limited funding for conference attendance:

367 Responses



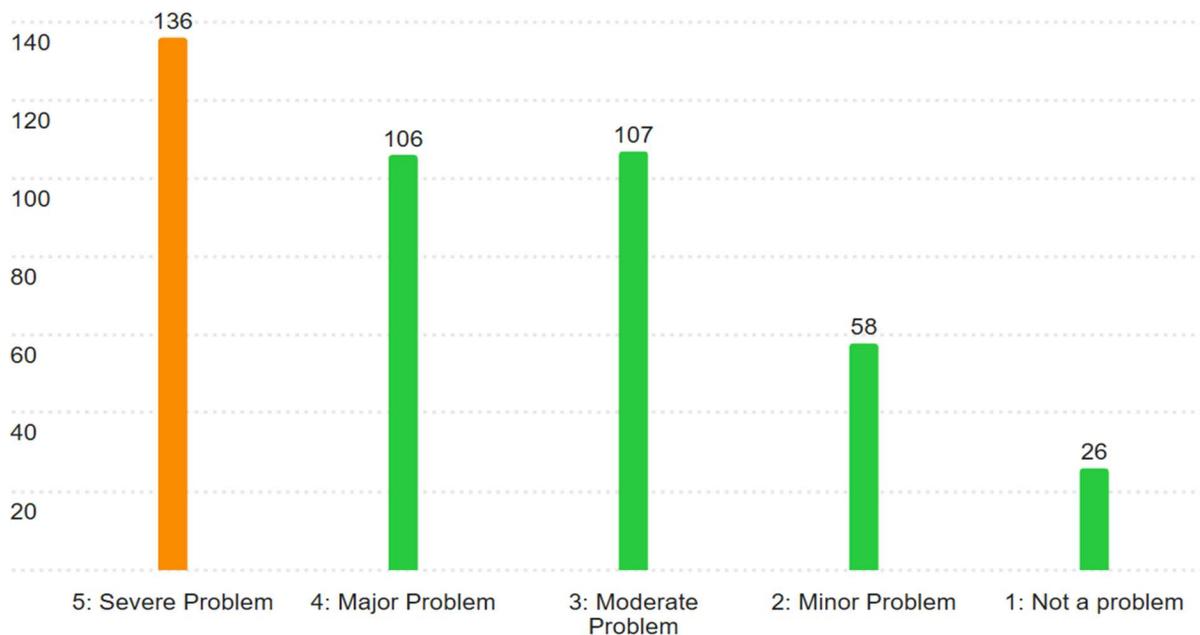
Q21 - Please rate the severity of the following challenges you may face at the University of Calgary: Lack of emergency financial support:

335 Responses



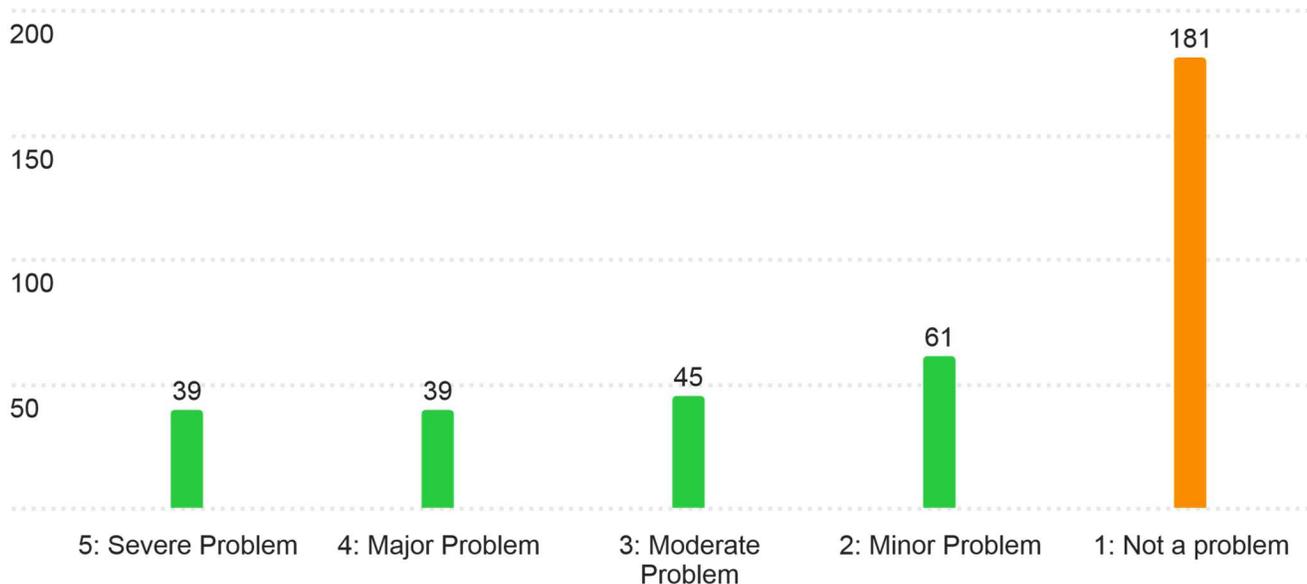
Q22 - Please rate the severity of the following challenges you may face at the University of Calgary: High tuition and fees:

433 Responses



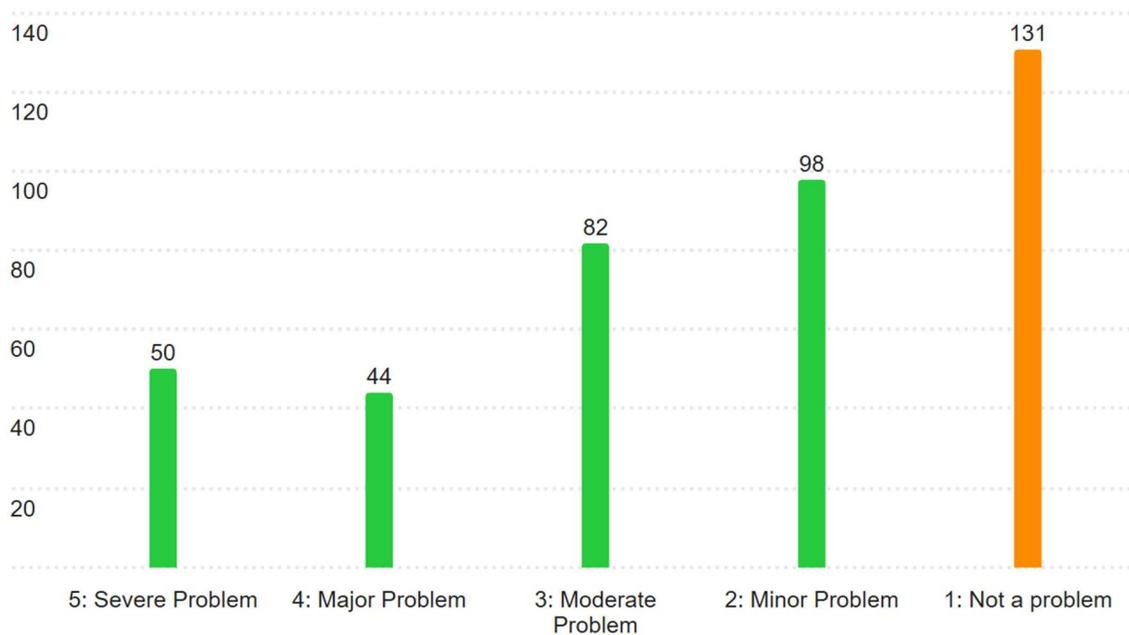
Q23 - Please rate the severity of the following challenges you may face at the University of Calgary: Poor supervisor relationships:

365 Responses



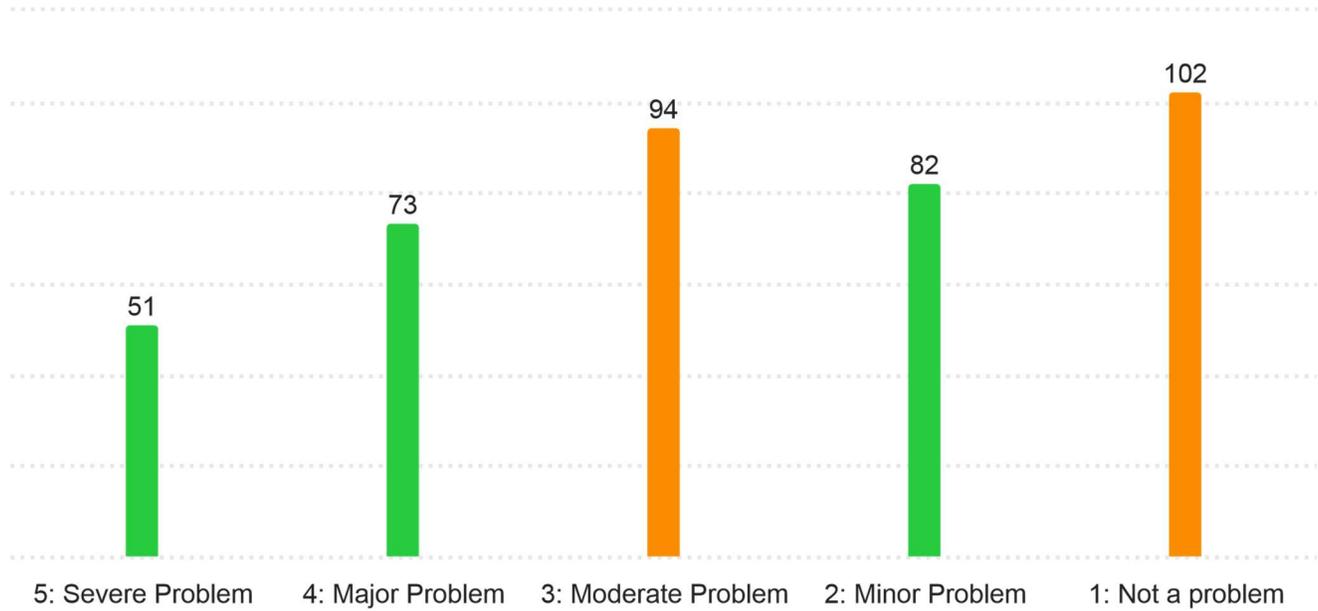
Q24 - Please rate the severity of the following challenges you may face at the University of Calgary: Inadequate academic mentoring:

405 Responses



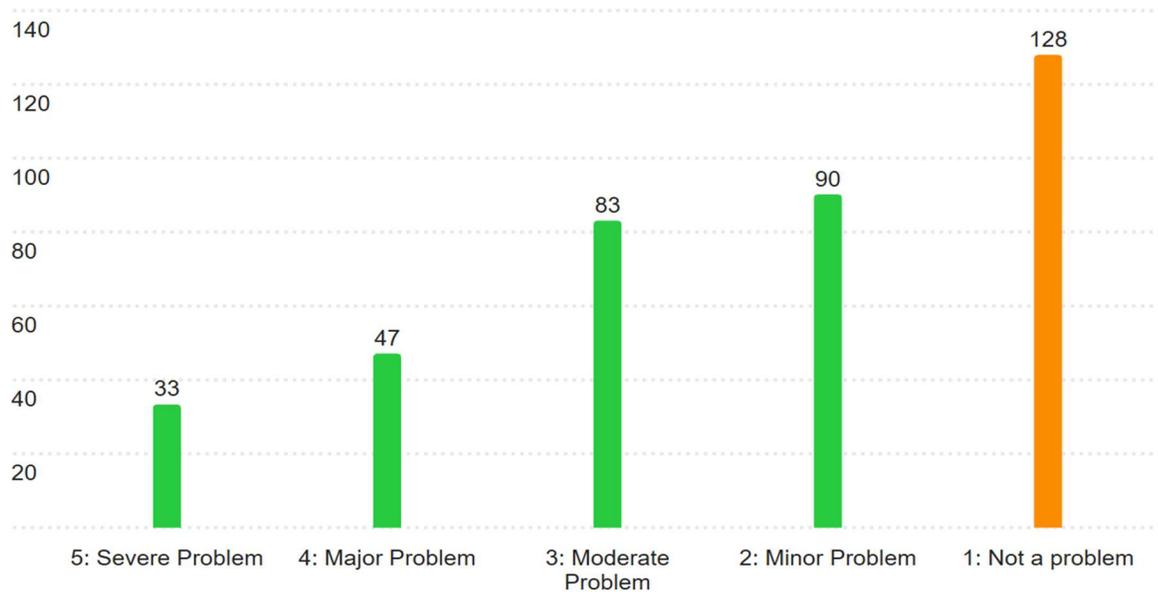
Q25 - Please rate the severity of the following challenges you may face at the University of Calgary: Lack of career development support:

402 Responses



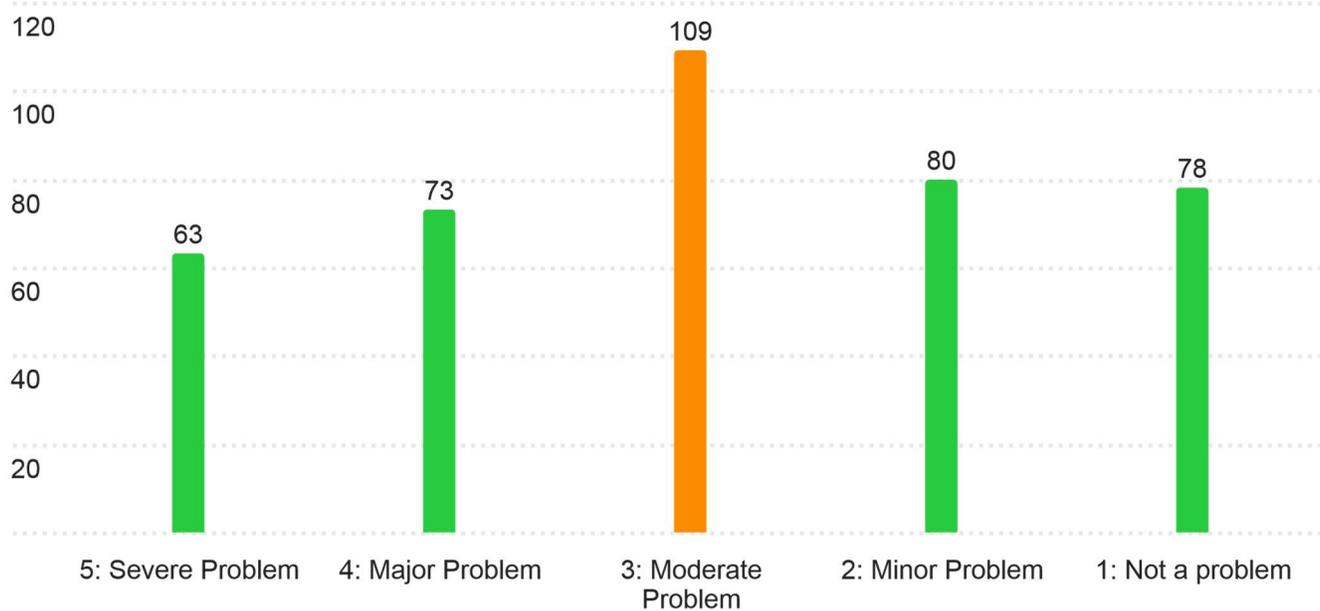
Q26 - Please rate the severity of the following challenges you may face at the University of Calgary: Limited mental health resources:

381 Responses



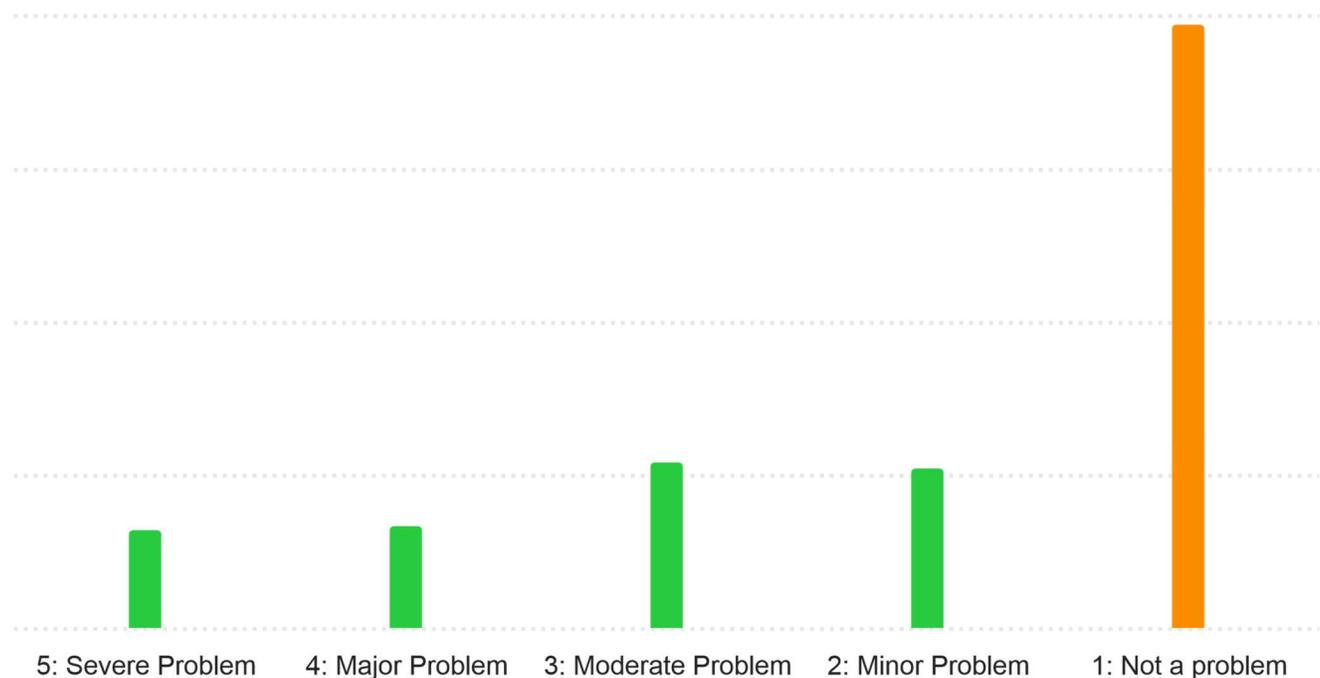
Q27 - Please rate the severity of the following challenges you may face at the University of Calgary: Insufficient support for work/life balance:

403 Responses



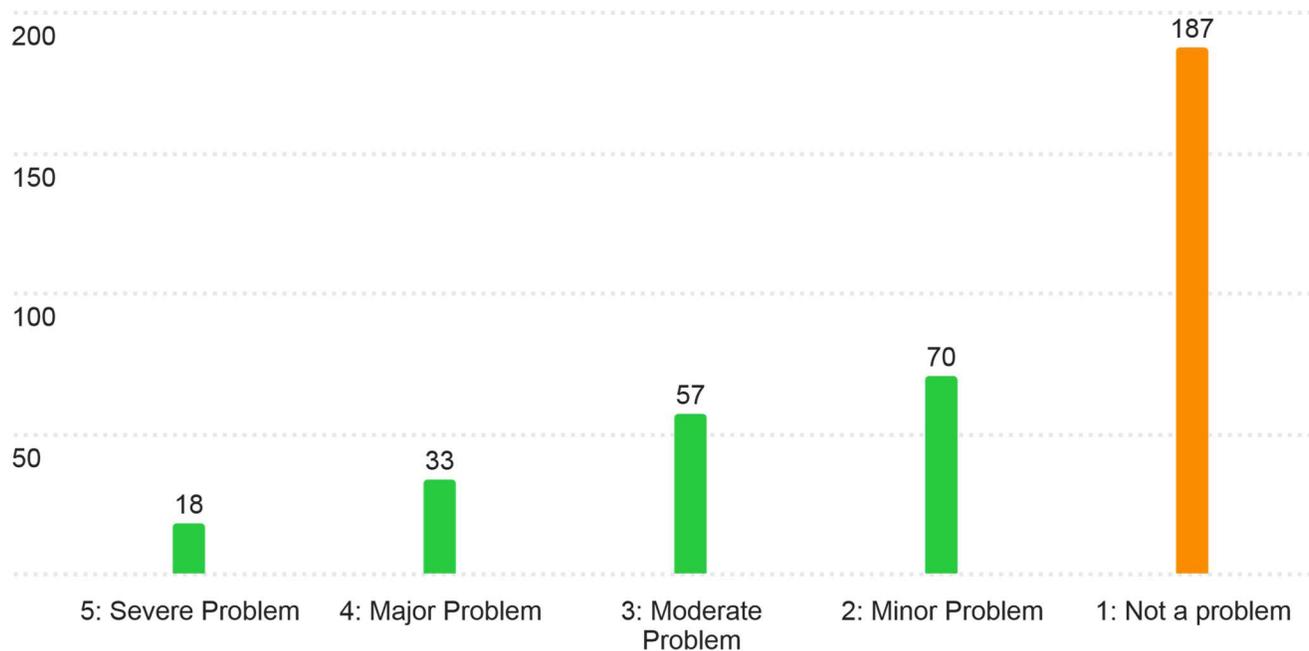
Q28 - Please rate the severity of the following challenges you may face at the University of Calgary: Experience of discrimination or bias (in your program, on campus, and/or at university-sponsored events):

368 Responses



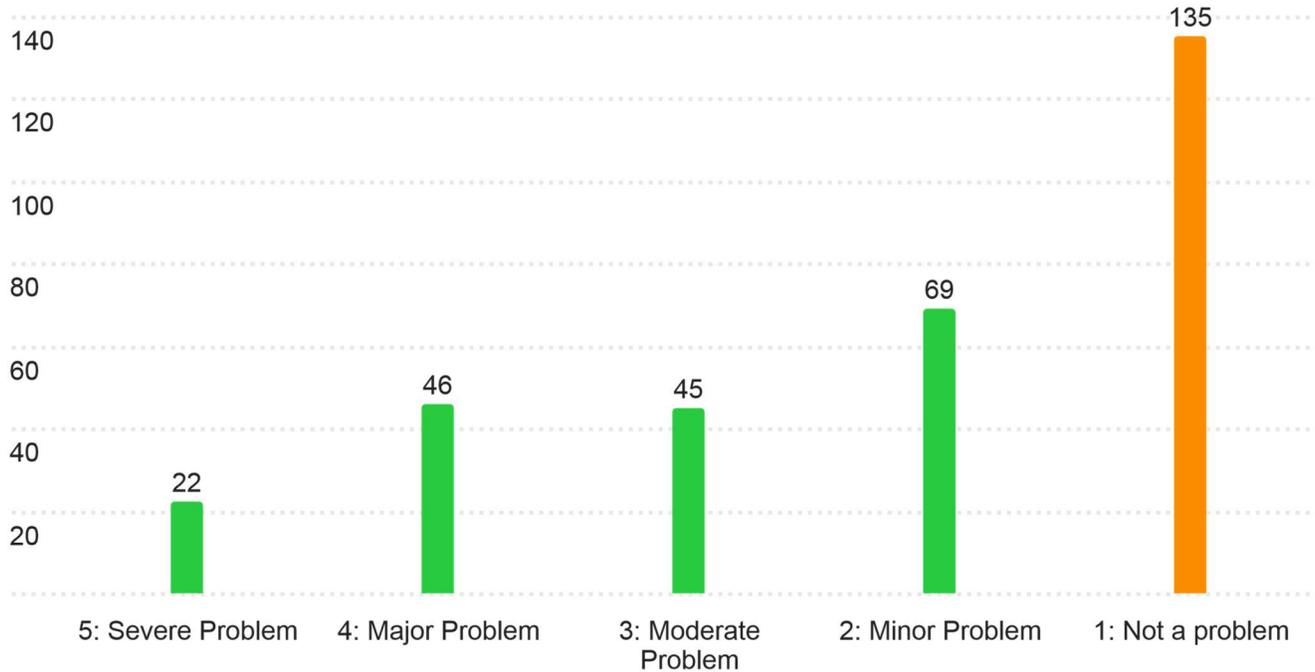
Q29 - Please rate the severity of the following challenges you may face at the University of Calgary: Lack of inclusive spaces:

365 Responses



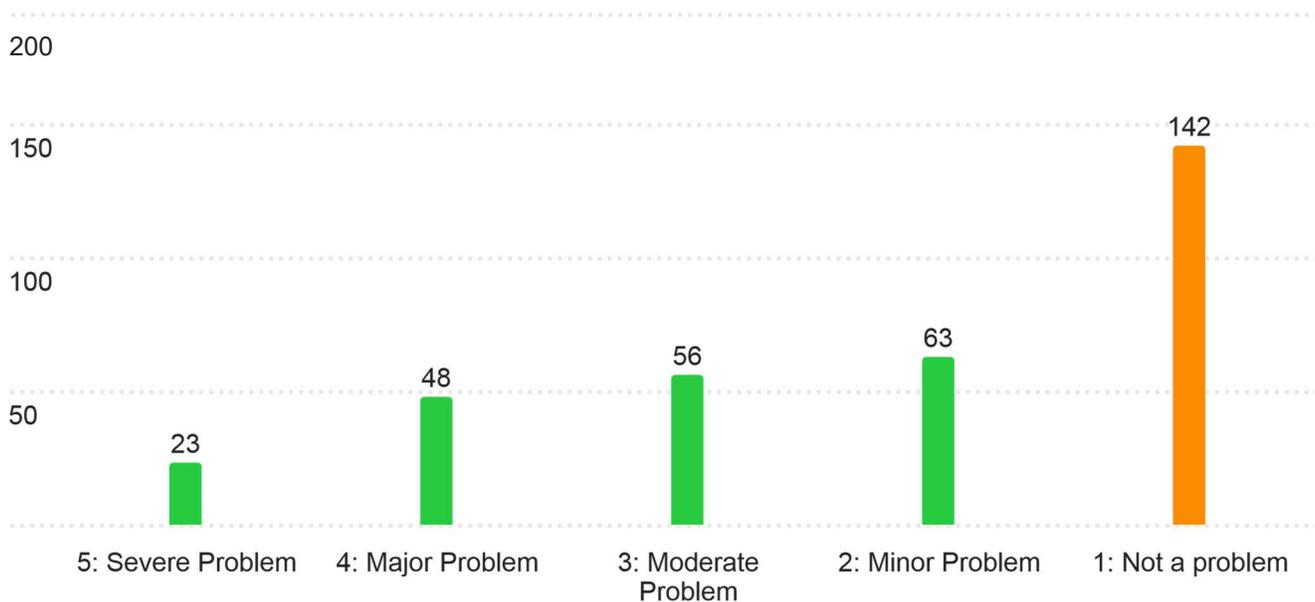
Q30 - Please rate the severity of the following challenges you may face at the University of Calgary: Limited accessibility accommodations:

317 Responses



Q31 - Please rate the severity of the following challenges you may face at the University of Calgary: Inadequate support for underrepresented groups:

332 Responses



Q32 - What specific changes would you like the GSA to advocate for at the institutional level?

I'd like the GSA to advocate for better financial support for graduate students, improved access to research resources and training opportunities, and stronger mental health and wellness services. Enhancing communication and transparency between students and the university would also help create a more supportive academic environment.

Thesis-based graduate minimum stipend, in this economy \$2,083 it's not enough to live with dignity. Specially with the housing shortage and current difficulties with tearing Varsity Courts family housing down. How do they expect high quality research when we can't afford to eat well and a reasonable diet. Also, expected to not work a lot of hours outside university because professors don't like that, they want you to focus on your research. Even though your study permit allows it and you need to get more money somehow because scholarships ended or you have never had one accepted.

Stipend funding to match costs of living

fees

Increase dental insurance coverage

Food security

Provide more professional support and opportunities for students after their graduation

n/a

Better pay, stronger mental health support, more inclusive environments for LGBTQ+ individuals, and seminars that emphasize the importance of gender and racial diversity within academia.

Increased funding and tuition automatically paid

Increase in stipend and support

More bursary

One problem I faced was not having support from my department during my fieldwork. GSA should address funding problems faced by arts students.

to follow bds boycotts; pressure university to get cops off campus;

Increase the funding and decrease the tuition

Increase guaranteed funding to match cost of living, expand mental health support, and make coursework more applicable to real industry needs.

I don't have any specific things, but you should at least allow emergency bursary without the condition of only 1 bursary per year, for example I applied for graduate support bursary and I did receive it which is greatful, but

now unlucky, my laptop stop functioning, so as my accedemics are running , i need to look fornnew one , and in between i heard this emergency bursary so i read it, bit can't able to apply

After graduation support,

None

Support for parents!

Analysis:

Overall, the answers in this section suggest that most students do not experience major challenges from institutional policies and procedures. This is not to say that students *do not* face issues with insufficient accessibility accommodations, lab resources, or mental health supports from the university, but most see these as less of a concern in their day-to-day lives. Many of the students who say that institutional challenges present a severe or major problem for them likely belong to marginalized or underrepresented groups, meaning they face unique barriers that are not experienced by other members of the student body. The university's response to these issues should therefore be more targeted.

Interestingly, significantly more students see a lack of *provincial or federal* resources for mental health to be a severe or major concern than say the same for *institutional* resources, suggesting that students assign differing levels of responsibility to the same challenges and partition their blame accordingly. This information should help both the UCGSA Advocacy Team and the UCalgary Government Relations Department, as information like this helps emphasize that universities and student groups are doing as best they can with limited resources. If we want to see better outcomes in mental health, for example, then the onus is on governments to address student concerns, not the institution.

The exceptions to the above conversation are anything involving funding, stipends, and fees, where an overwhelming majority of students say they are struggling. This includes insufficient stipends, a lack of emergency funding, and high overall tuition. This is not surprising: in conversations involving the updated minimum funding policy from the Faculty of Graduate Studies (FGS) and negotiations around the new, four-year collective bargaining agreement, UCGSA routinely mentioned that our members are struggling with high costs and low wages. On the other side of the table, the University of Calgary has lost hundreds of millions of dollars in external funding since 2019, both from public and private sources.⁷ Importantly, the university cannot completely balance this deficit through tuition increases. Even if the 2% cap on domestic tuition was repealed, if universities increase tuition too much, the number of incoming students would decrease, possibly enough to counteract the gains from higher

⁷ <https://gsa.ucalgary.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/UCGSA.01-Provincial-Funding-Policy-Final-Draft-2024-25-Update-Vol-2.pdf>

tuition. If nothing else, tuition increases push more towards needing emergency bursaries, student aid, or loans. The cost of tuition increases isn't just born by students: it eventually filters down to other taxpayers as well.

Interestingly, inadequate research funding was not as severe a problem as other funding-related questions. Indeed, more students rated a lack of funding for conferences as a severe problem than research funding. This, too, likely reflects graduate student awareness that most of the research funding comes from federal sources, and so consider this to be a federal issue rather than an institutional one.

Consequently, advocacy at the institutional level will have the largest impact if it focuses on lowering tuition and fees and/or raising stipends and emergency funding. The catch is that the university needs additional funding to meet these demands, and so the most impactful institutional advocacy may still require lobbying the provincial government for an increase to the Campus Alberta Grant. Given that graduate students understand mental health funding initiatives require provincial and federal support, and that research funding predominantly comes from the federal government, UCGSA should not have too much difficulty explaining that high tuition and low stipends are downstream effects of provincial budget cuts. The organization simply needs to pick the best communications strategy, based off the feedback our advocacy efforts have received from membership.

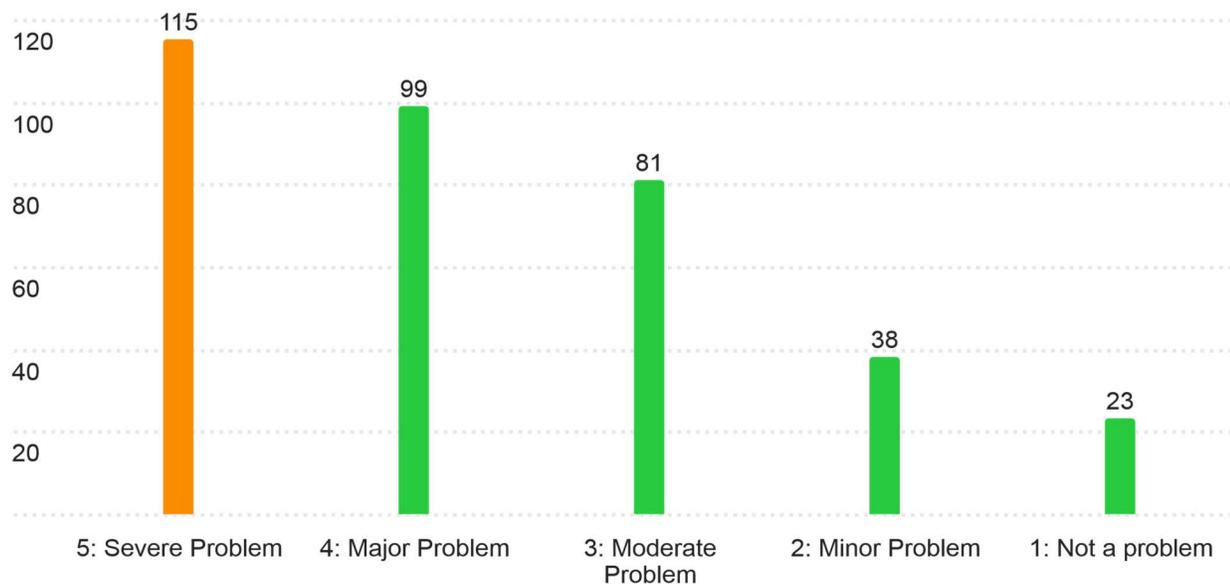
Municipally Focused Questions

Data:

Q33 - Please rate the severity of the following municipal challenges:

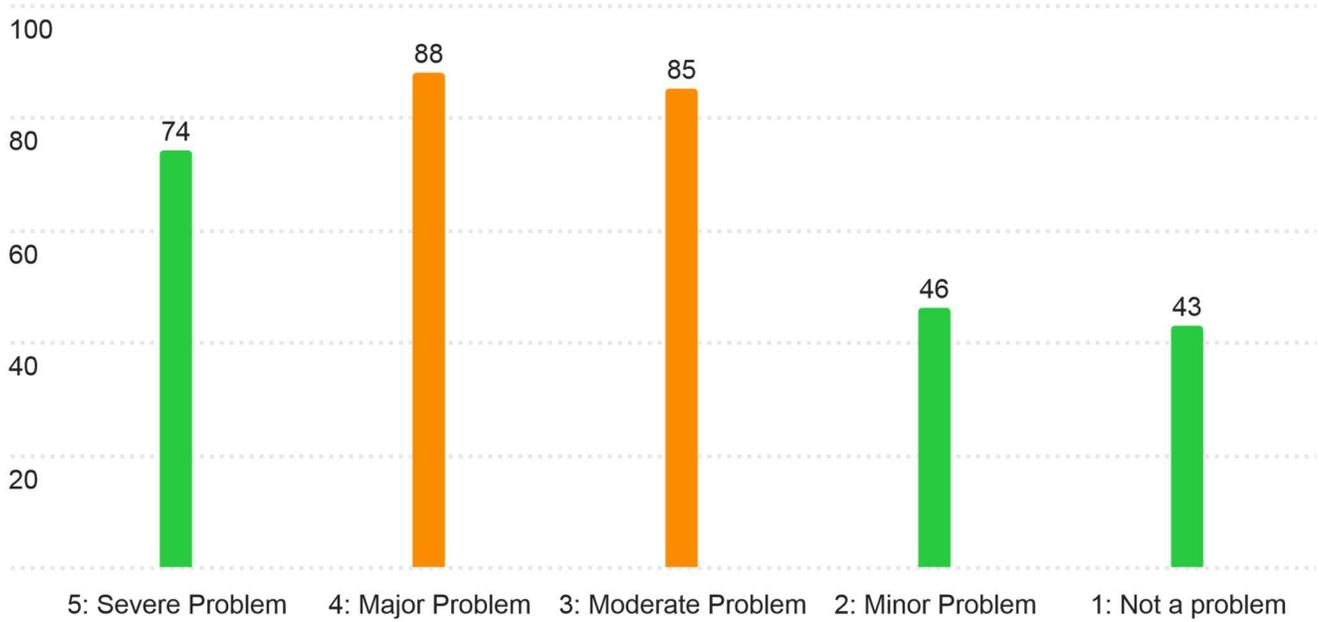
Lack of affordable rental housing:

356 Responses



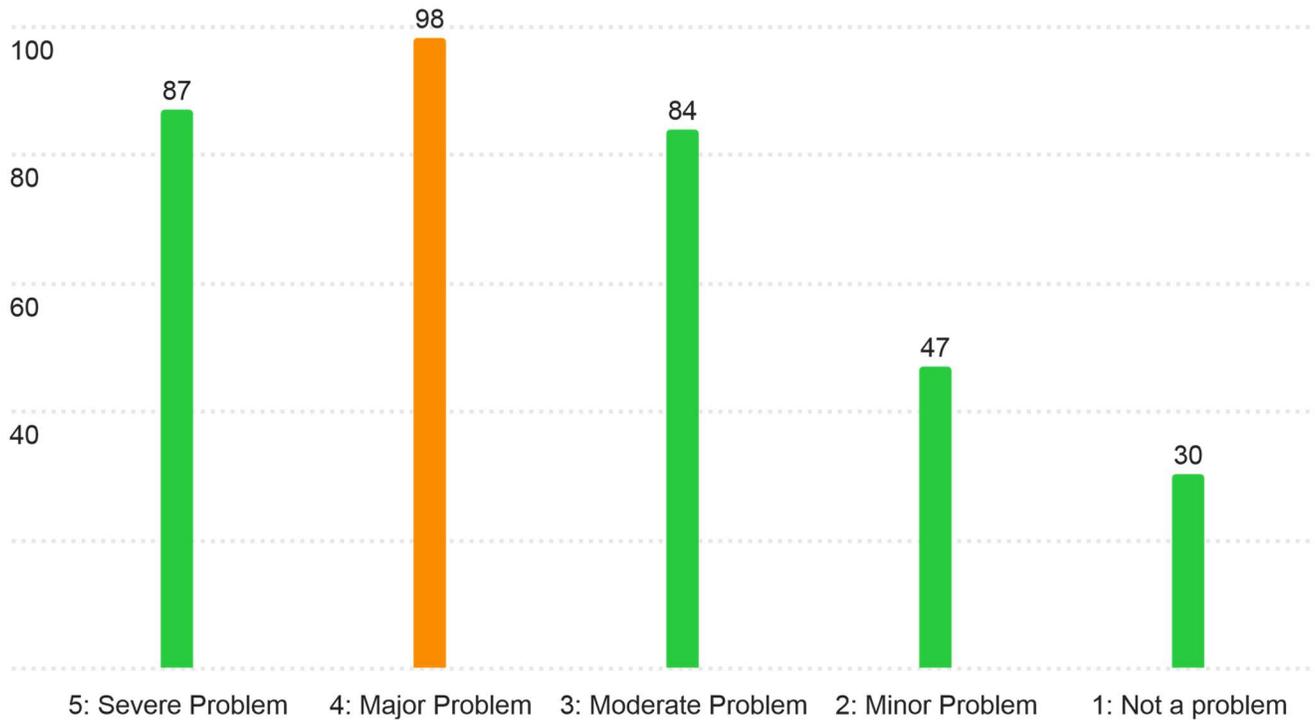
Q34 - Please rate the severity of the following municipal challenges:
Poor quality of available rental units:

336 Responses



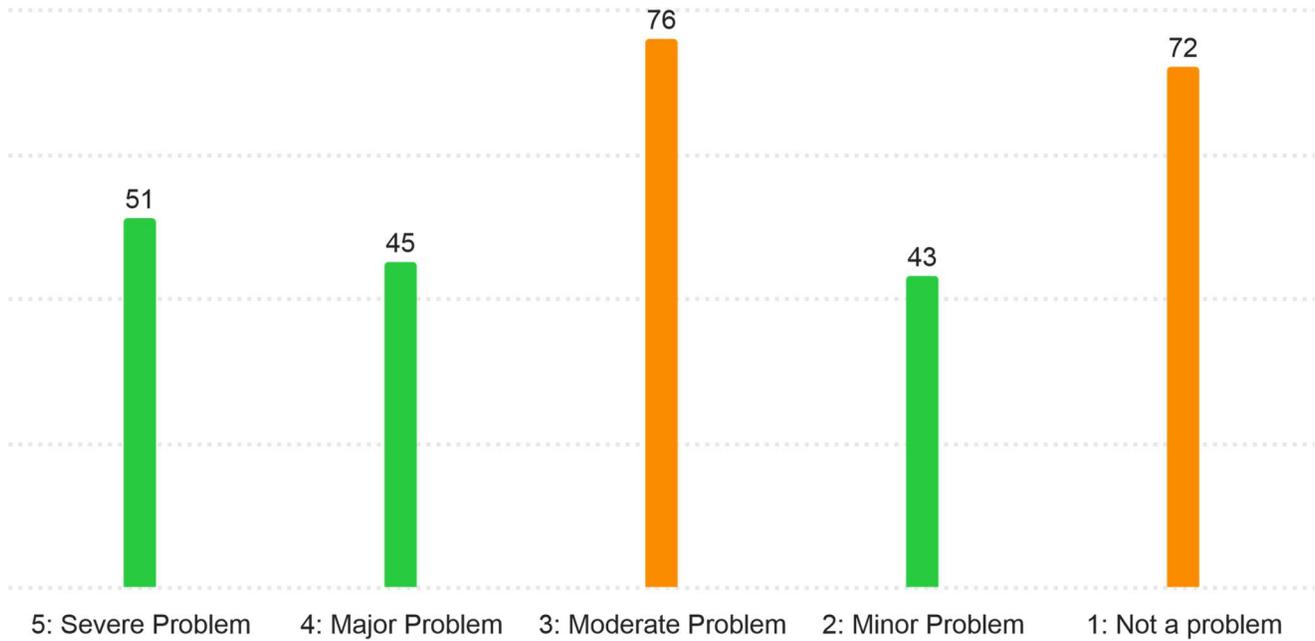
Q35 - Please rate the severity of the following municipal challenges:
Distance of affordable housing/units from campus:

346 Responses



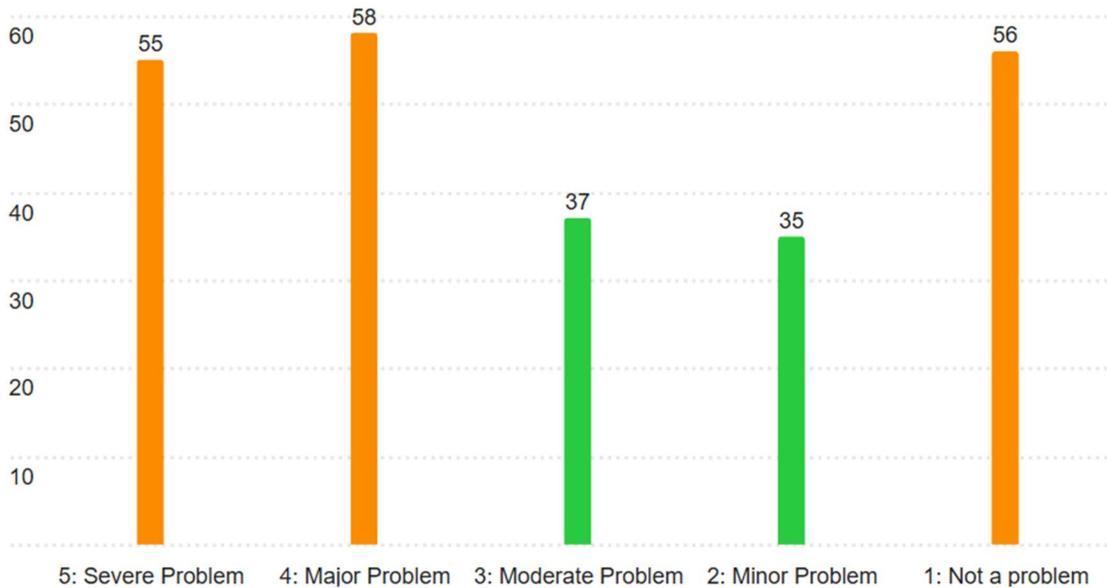
Q36 - Please rate the severity of the following municipal challenges:
Discrimination in the rental market:

287 Responses



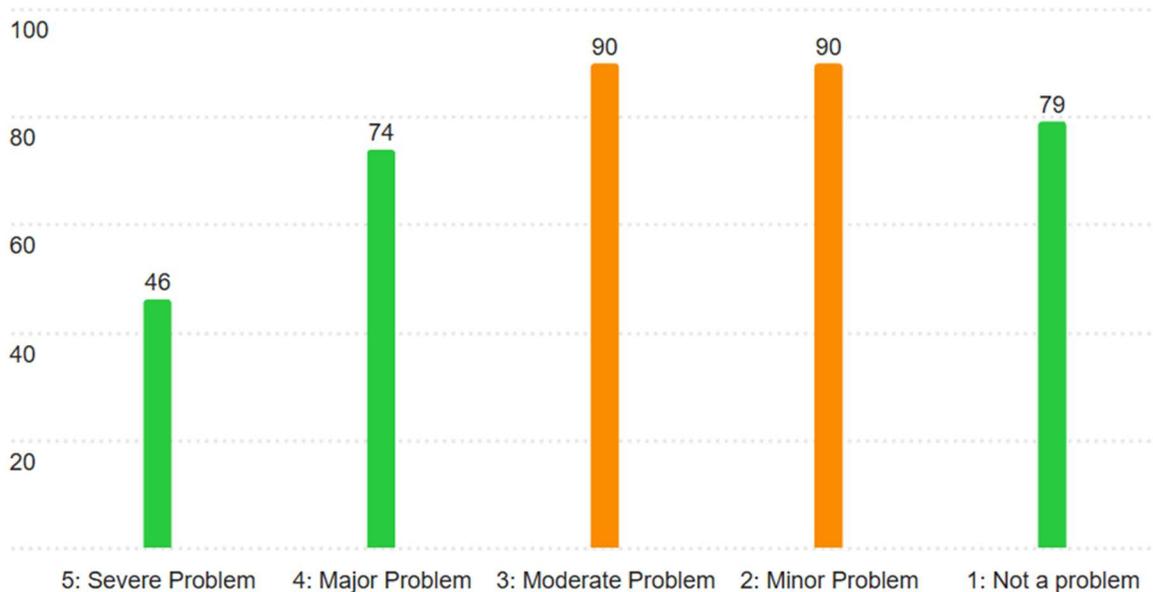
Q37 - Please rate the severity of the following municipal challenges:
Lack of family housing options:

241 Responses



Q38 - Please rate the severity of the following municipal challenges:
Transit safety concerns:

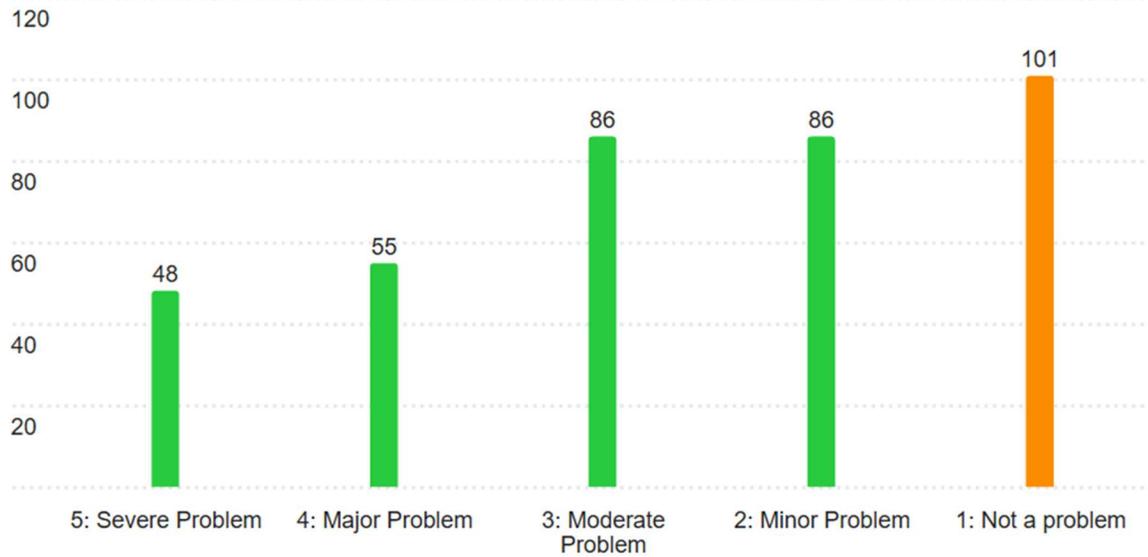
379 Responses



Q39 - Please rate the severity of the following municipal challenges:

High cost of public transit:

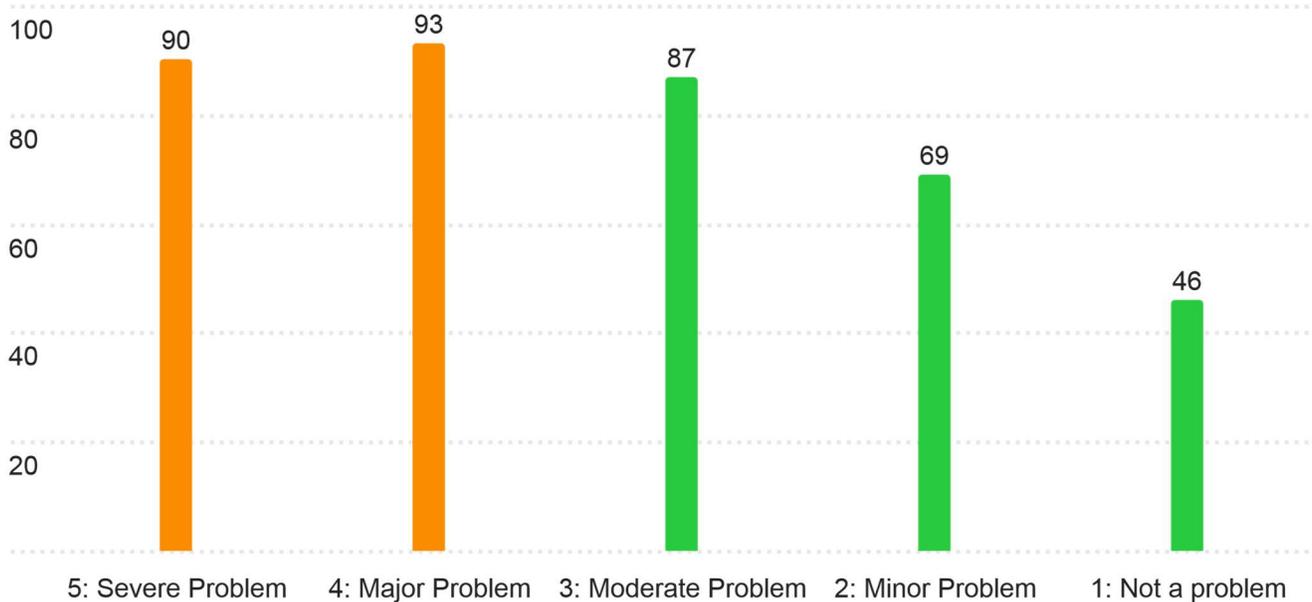
376 Responses



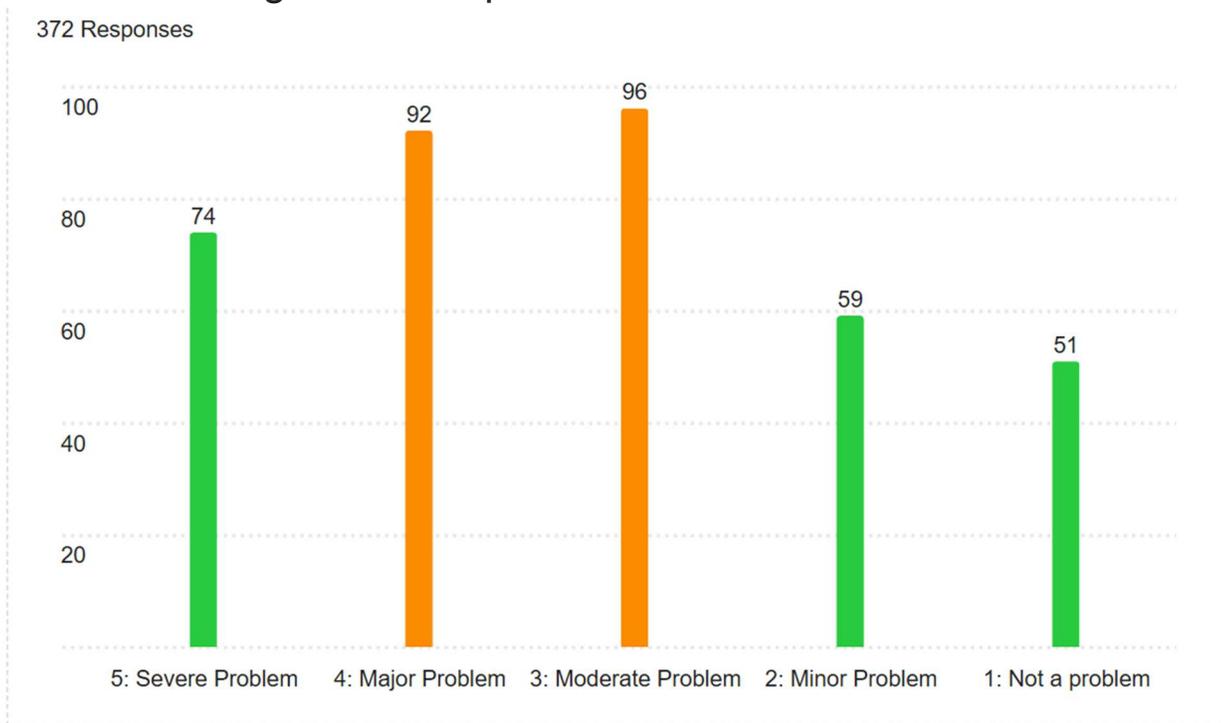
Q40 - Please rate the severity of the following municipal challenges:

Infrequent/unreliable public transportation times:

385 Responses



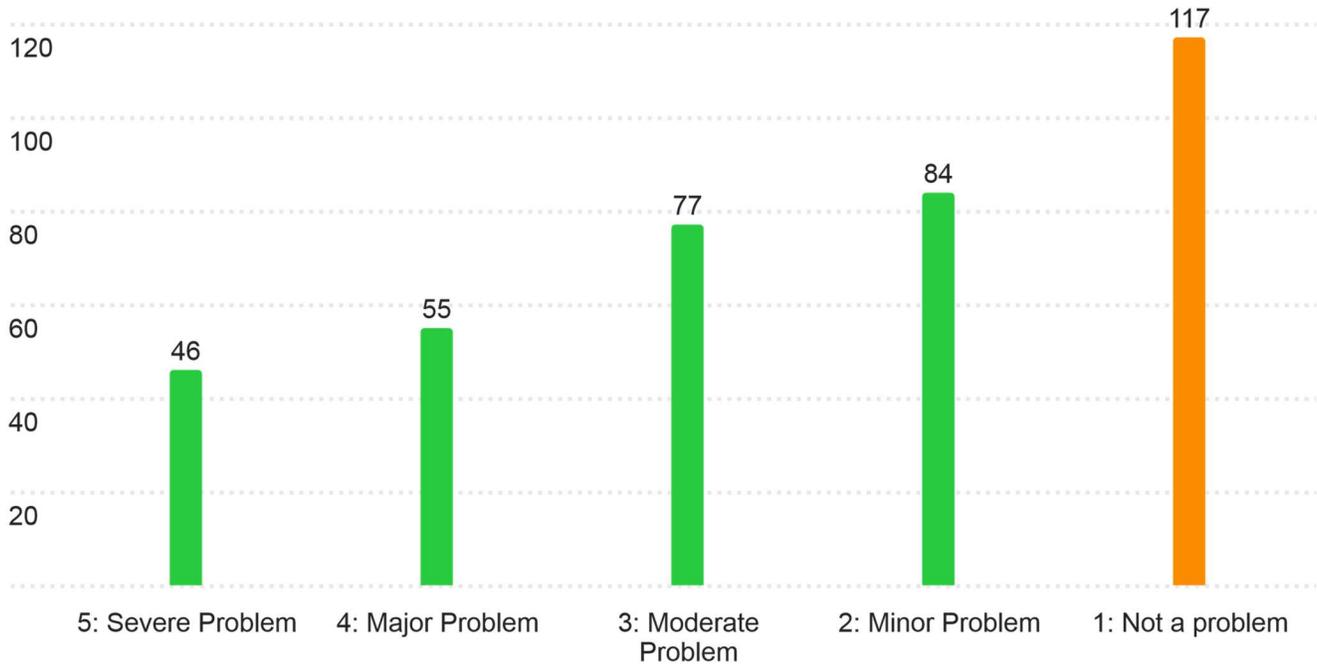
Q41 - Please rate the severity of the following municipal challenges:
Limited late-night transit options:



Q42 - Please rate the severity of the following municipal challenges:

Poor public transit access to campus:

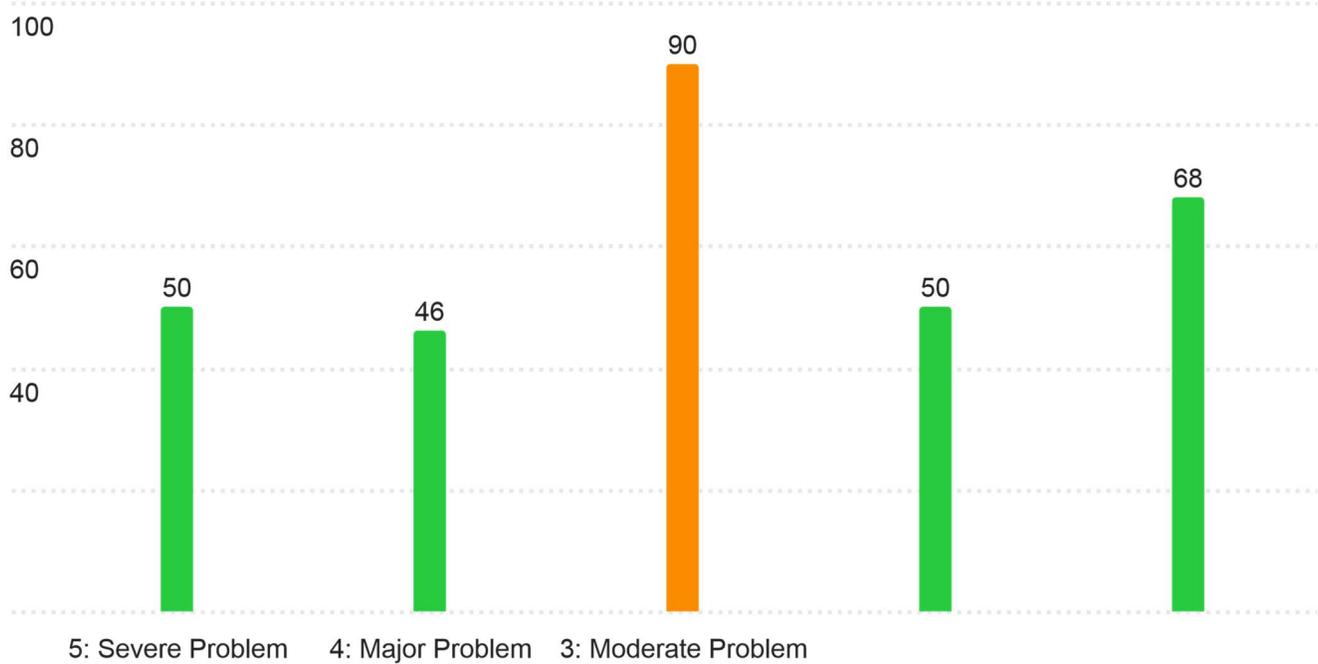
379 Responses



Q43 - Please rate the severity of the following municipal challenges:

Lack of safe cycling infrastructure:

304 Responses

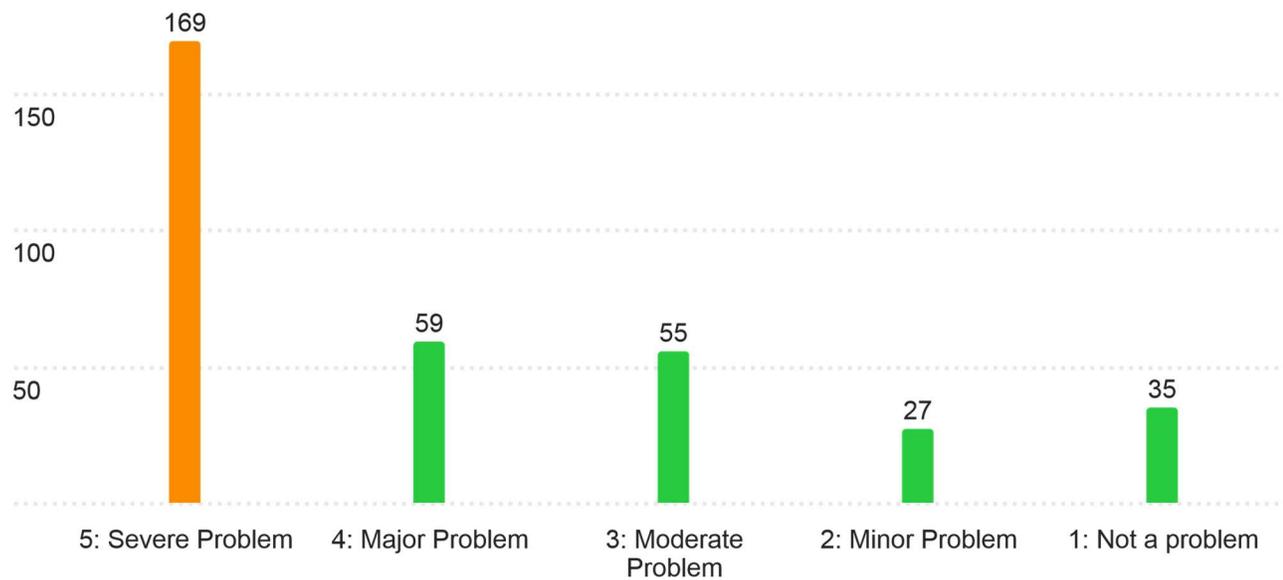


Q44 - Please rate the severity of the following municipal challenges:

Inadequate/expensive parking on campus:

345 Responses

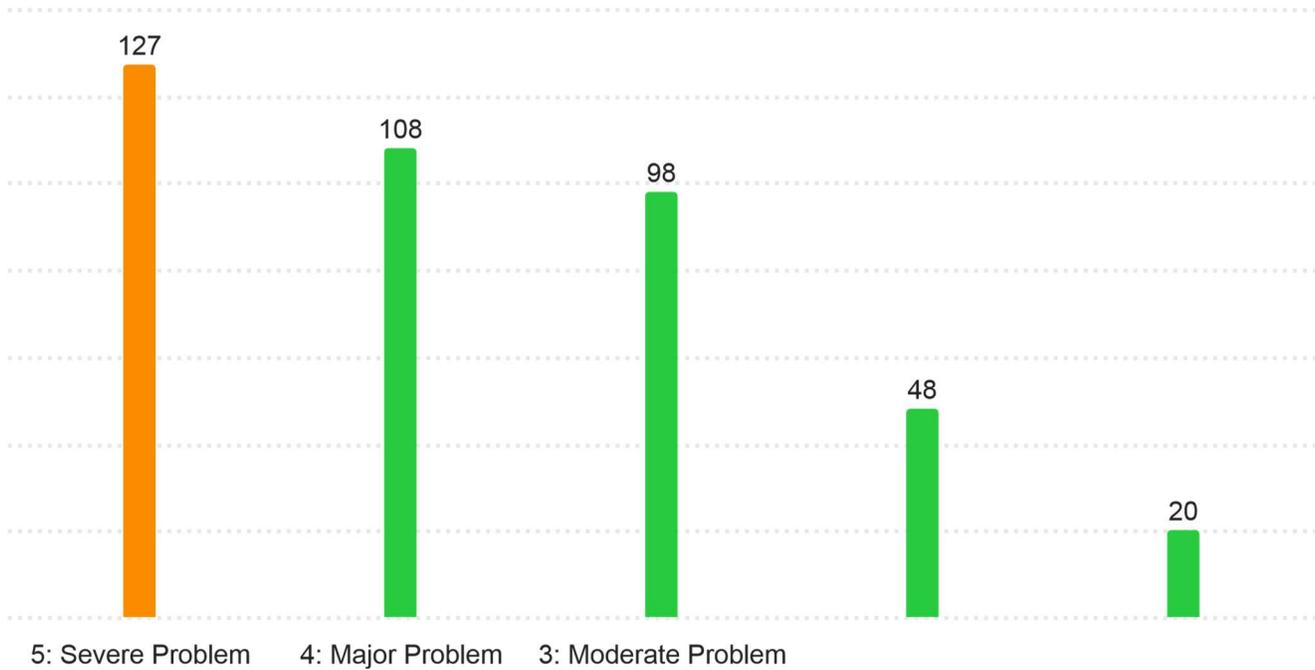
200



Q45 - Please rate the severity of the following municipal challenges:

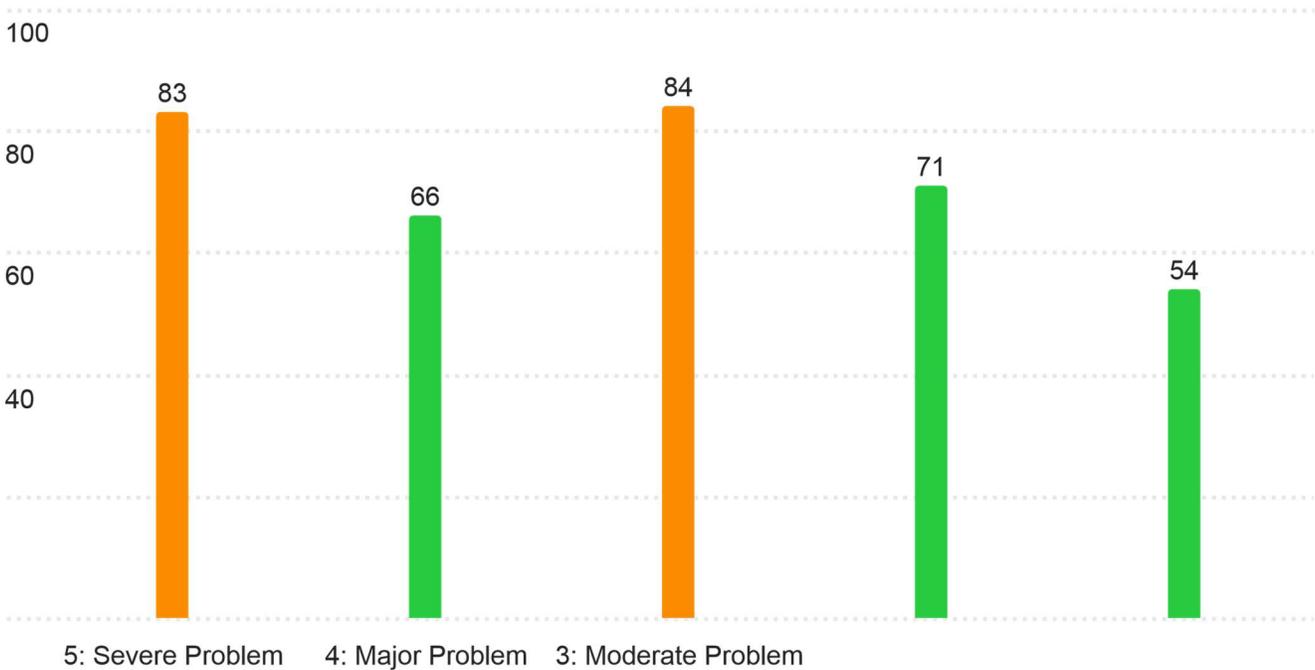
Food insecurity/high cost of groceries:

401 Responses



Q46 - Please rate the severity of the following municipal challenges:

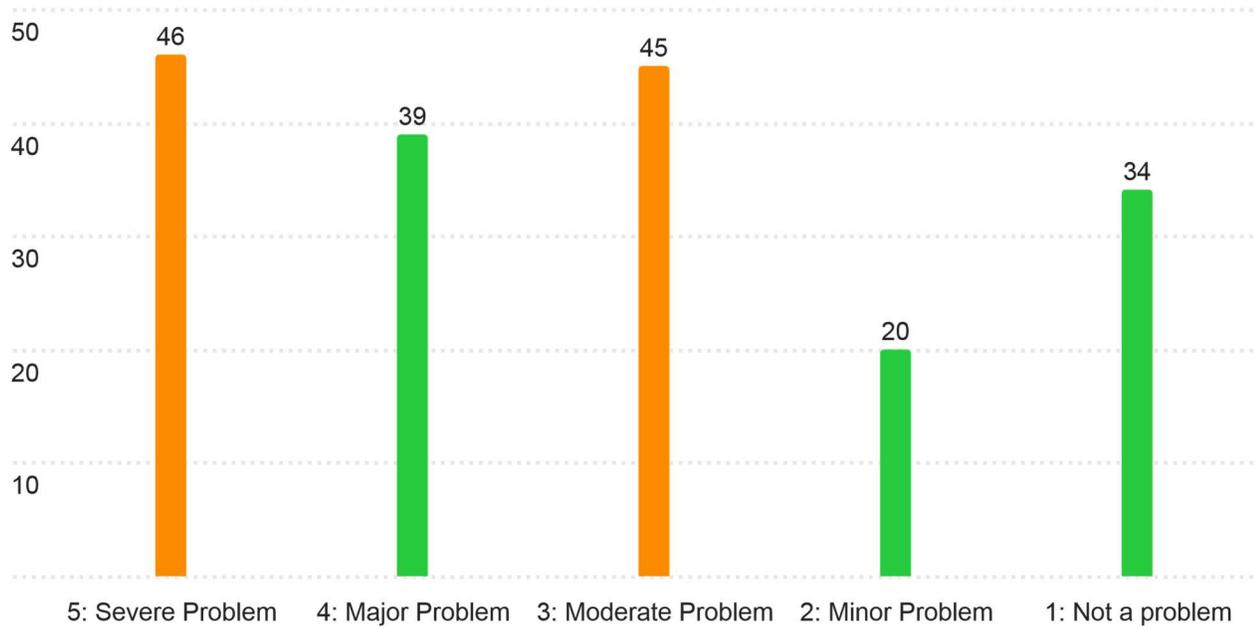
Limited access to affordable childcare:



Q47 - Please rate the severity of the following municipal challenges:

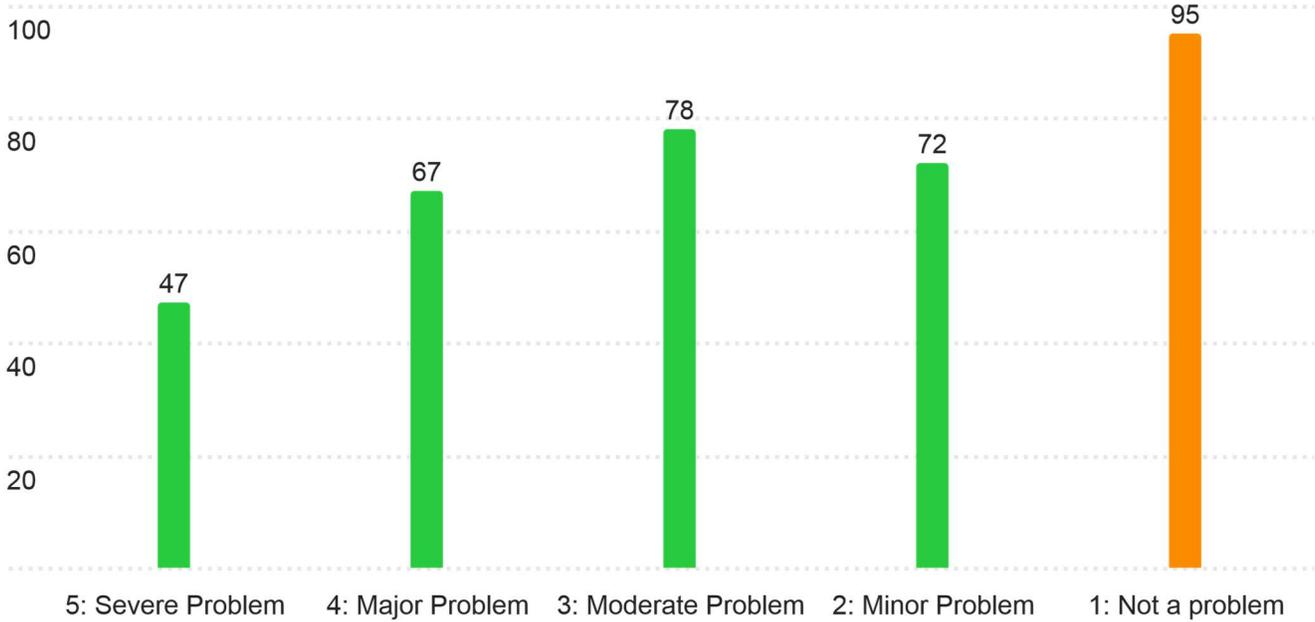
Lack of affordable healthcare options: 358 Responses

184 Responses



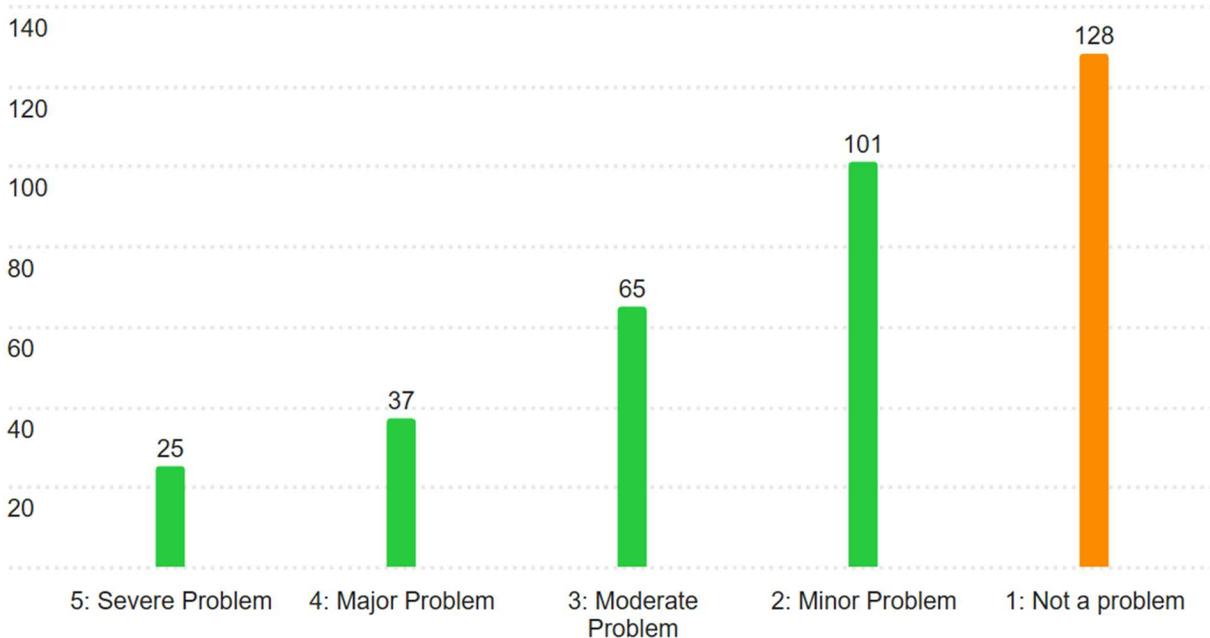
Q48 - Please rate the severity of the following municipal challenges:
Unaffordability of winter clothing:

359 Responses



Q49 - Please rate the severity of the following municipal challenges:
Neighborhood safety concerns:

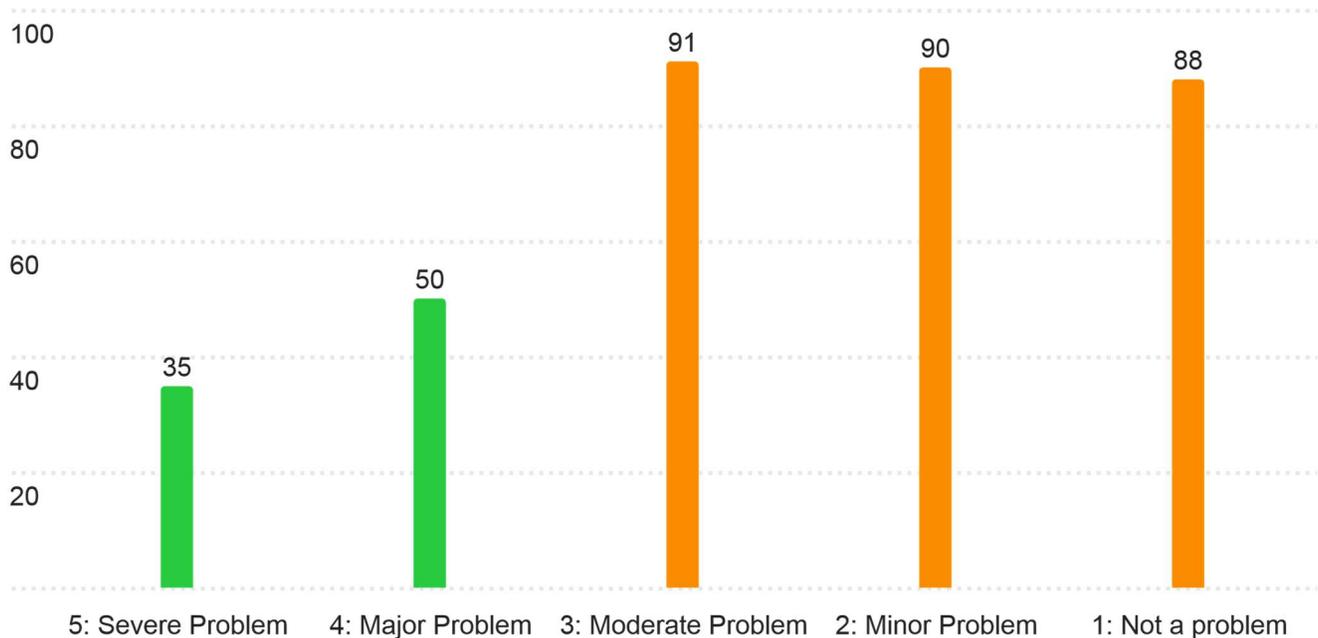
356 Responses



Q50 - Please rate the severity of the following municipal challenges:

Limited community resources for students:

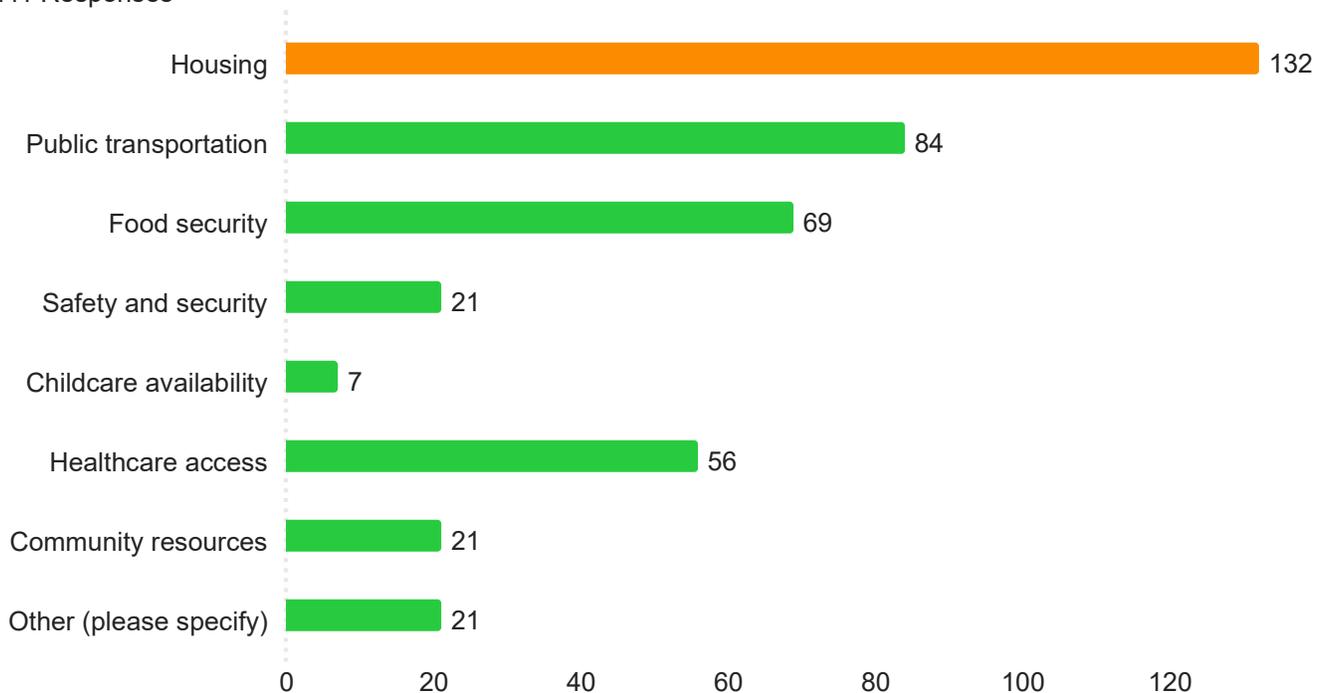
354 Responses



Q51 - Which municipal issue affects your daily life most significantly? -

Selected Choice

411 Responses



Q51 - Which municipal issue affects your daily life most significantly? - Selected Choice

Housing

Housing

Other (please specify)

Public transportation

Healthcare access

Food security

Public transportation

Community resources

Food security

Housing

Food security

Public transportation

Housing

Housing

Other (please specify)

Housing

Public transportation

Housing

Housing

Housing

Q52 - What specific changes would you like the GSA to advocate for at the municipal level?

Q51. The high cost and limited availability of housing near campus affect my daily life the most, along with challenges in public transportation reliability and frequency.

Q52. I'd like the GSA to advocate for more affordable graduate housing options, better public transit connections to the university, and improved safety measures in student neighborhoods.

Again, for the university to be more reasonable and conscious that the minimum stipend is the only thing a lot of students have, specially in the first semester, plus buying winter clothes and etc. It's not realistic in the current economy. They put themselves in precarious conditions and situations that the high directives would never dream of. And then, when they win scholarships to finally increase the salary, the university takes a cut and then they also cap the amount of funding you have, it doesn't make sense, if a student won several scholarships it's based on merits, not a gift. You shouldn't have to surrender X scholarship when you get Y scholarship, when the university encourages to constantly apply to all possible scholarships. Sometimes it makes sense, sometimes it just doesn't. It's like they don't want us to have a better quality of life sometimes.

Better transit access to the foothills campus

Housing

Housing and food security

More reliable public transportation

I dont really know if I believe that it is the role of the GSA to advocate at the municipal level. I think it is both an unproductive use of resources, and that the GSA is not well-positioned for thhem to actually evoke policy changes on these topics. I believe that the role of the GSA is to advocate for the needs of grad students to the university administration, and that the administration can advocate to the city if they choose to do so.

n/a

student housing rights

Better housing

more buses

an end to decampments of tent cities and build dignified social housing

More stations and more frequent

Advocate for more affordable, graduate-student-only housing options to reduce stress and mismatched living situations with non-student flatmates.

affordable housing, food security

None

Reduced housing rental fees and create safe environment for walking and public transport

better bus routes

Na

Student safety in housing (specifically landlords increasing rent for new leases each year)

Analysis:

For municipal issues, students unsurprisingly state that housing is the biggest daily struggle they face. Their issues with housing run the gamut from a lack of affordable options to the quality of rental units, the distance these units are from campus, and importantly, the lack of available family housing. This is unsurprising for two reasons. One is that Canada is experiencing a significant unit shortage, which drives up housing and rental prices; no major Canadian market had “affordable” housing according to a report from the Frontier Centre for Public Policy.⁸ This disproportionately impacts young Canadians,⁹ a category many graduate students fall into. However, graduate students also have family responsibilities at a higher rate than undergraduates and so face another housing squeeze from a different direction: units must support the raising of a family, and can’t be too far from schools, grocery stores, or spousal workplaces.

As the Frontier Centre report notes, much of the supply constraints that drive up unit prices are due to land use policies. In particular, zoning restrictions that limit construction to single-detached homes, rather than allowing for high-density construction, heavily restrict supply, raising prices and even causing essential city services to become more expensive.¹⁰ A recent study on the effects of more relaxed zoning regulations found that housing became significantly more affordable once land use was liberalized, and the impacts in fact increased with larger zoning reforms.¹¹ The full effects take some time to materialize, but one municipal policy that would have an immediate effect on lowering unit prices would be to maintain the “blanket rezoning” ordinance passed by the last City Council.¹²

Dedicating a portion of new housing or rental developments for students, particularly students with families, would also help ease the burden on graduate students. This is especially true if family housing:

- is close to major C-Train lines or bus routes, so spouses, children, and students could all get to work, school, and campus respectively; and
- is close together, so graduate students can build a sense of community (especially if family housing units are built off campus).

Other major municipal concerns include a lack of affordable childcare options, which intersects with the significant number of graduate students with children. Food security is another major concern, which fits with student challenges around stipends and funding levels. Food security and housing security are contemporaneous problems in many cases—students may have to choose between food and rent, as an example, and a student’s diet is tied to the cooking facilities available in student housing—so solving one requires making progress on the other. If the municipal government was to pursue a

⁸ <https://fcpp.org/2025/05/14/demographia-international-housing-affordability-2025/>

⁹ <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/241119/dq241119b-eng.htm>

¹⁰ <https://www.fraserinstitute.org/commentary/calgary-families-may-pay-more-city-services-due-restrictions-homebuilding>

¹¹ <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0094119024000597>

¹² <https://www.fraserinstitute.org/commentary/heres-why-city-hall-should-save-blanket-rezoning-calgary>

student-specific housing strategy, or a food security strategy, food and housing experts must be included in the conversation, respectively.

Public and community safety does not seem to be a major concern for students, even on public transit. The availability and cost of public transit to campus also seems to be a more minor concern. It should be noted, though, that UCGSA has heard complaints from Foothills Campus students that it is difficult to move between the main campus and the medical campus; the students who do face challenges with public transit access may disproportionately be students in the Cummings School of Medicine.

What is a concern with transit is the times when transit is available, particularly at night. This makes sense, as graduate students frequently stay late due to lab work, research, studying, or volunteer activities. It appears the UPASS provides graduate students with affordable enough public transit that priority should be to expand the hours that buses and trains operate. This would especially be true for graduate students at SAPL and the School of Public Policy, both of which are housed downtown.

Lastly, a lack of affordable healthcare options was cited by a large portion of students as being a severe concern. This likely refers to treatment options not covered by Alberta Health, such as therapists and routine dental care. While the municipal government has little authority to change health coverage or build more clinics (that would fall under the provincial government and the federal government, to the extend changes to the *Canada Health Act* are required), but certain resources—such as access to counsellors—could be impacted by municipal decisions. UCGSA should investigate options to connect students to low-cost therapy and counselling services as a result.

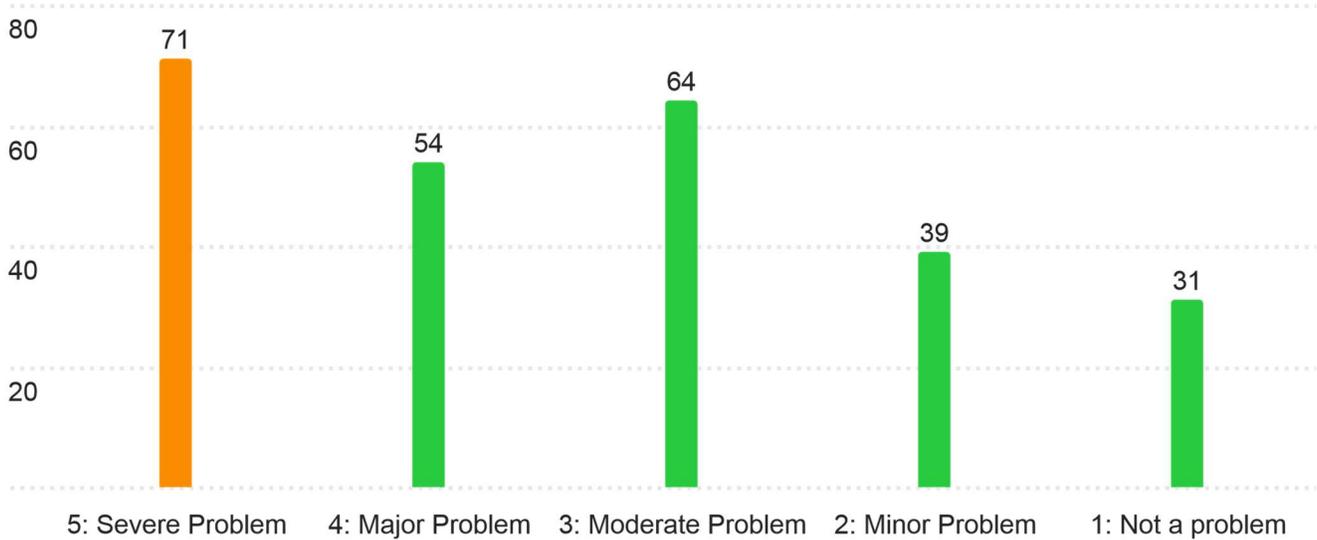
Provincially Focused Questions

Data:

Q53 - Please rate the severity of the following provincial challenges:

High student loan interest rates:

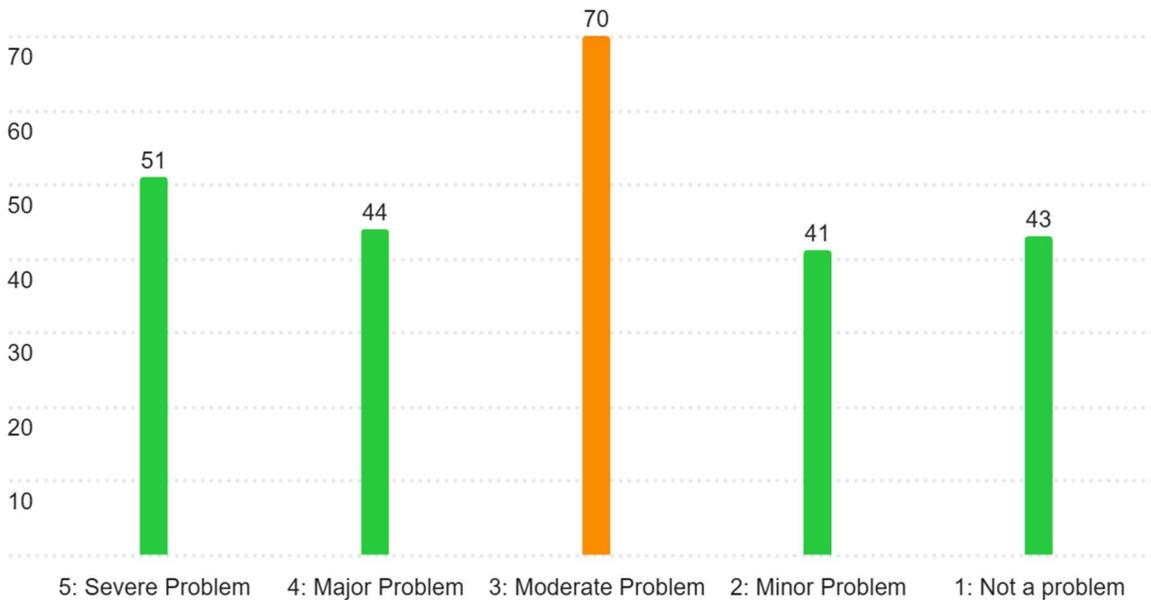
259 Responses



Q54 - Please rate the severity of the following provincial challenges:

Insufficient student loan amount:

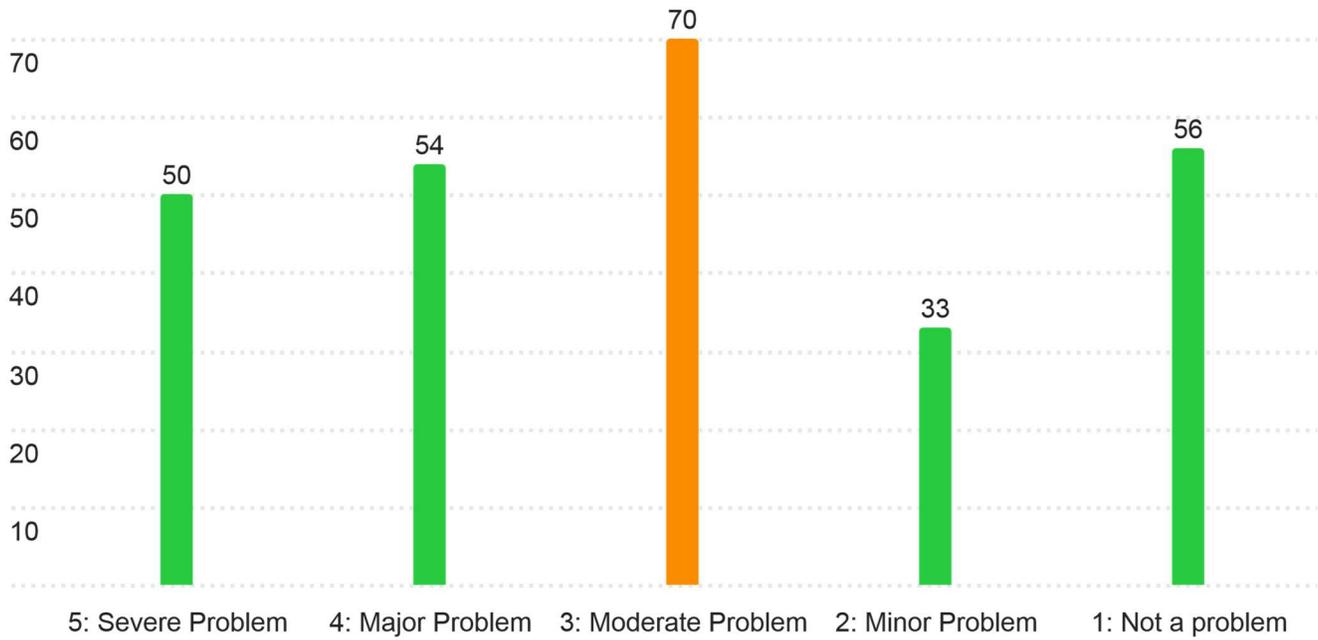
249 Responses



Q55 - Please rate the severity of the following provincial challenges:

Complex loan application process:

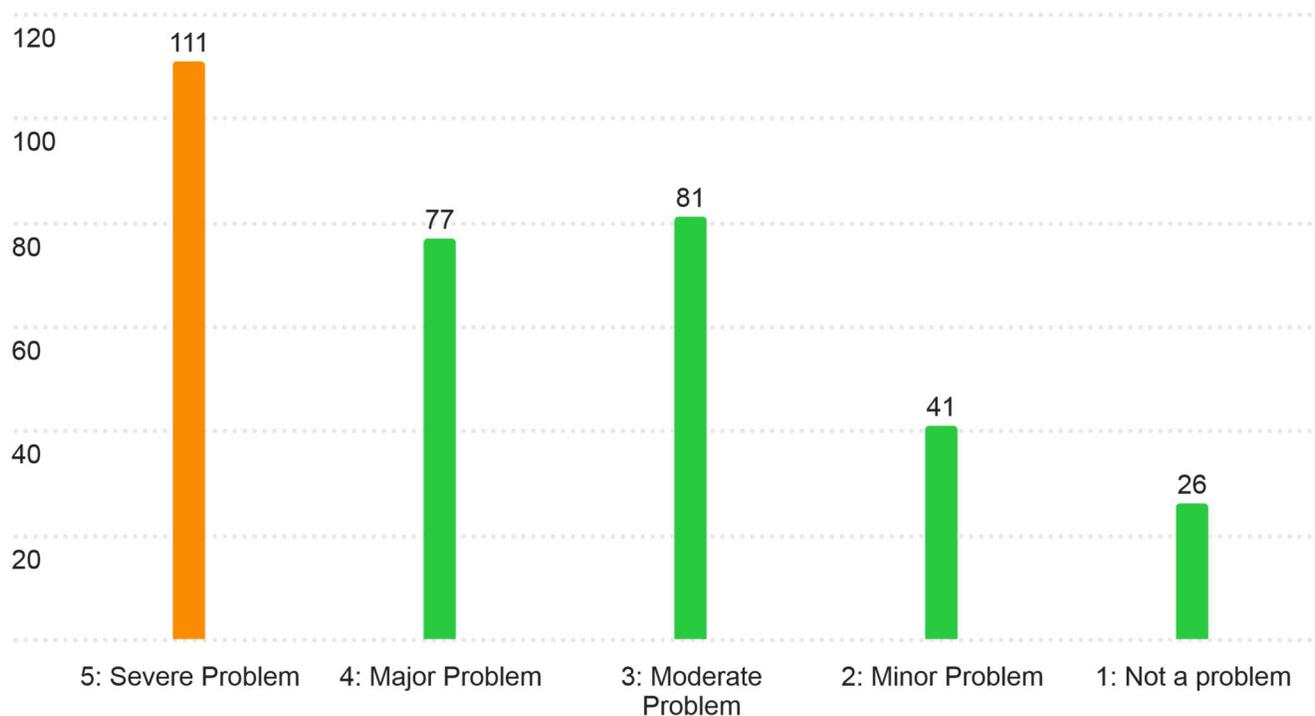
263 Responses



Q56 - Please rate the severity of the following provincial challenges:

Inadequate provincial grants and bursaries:

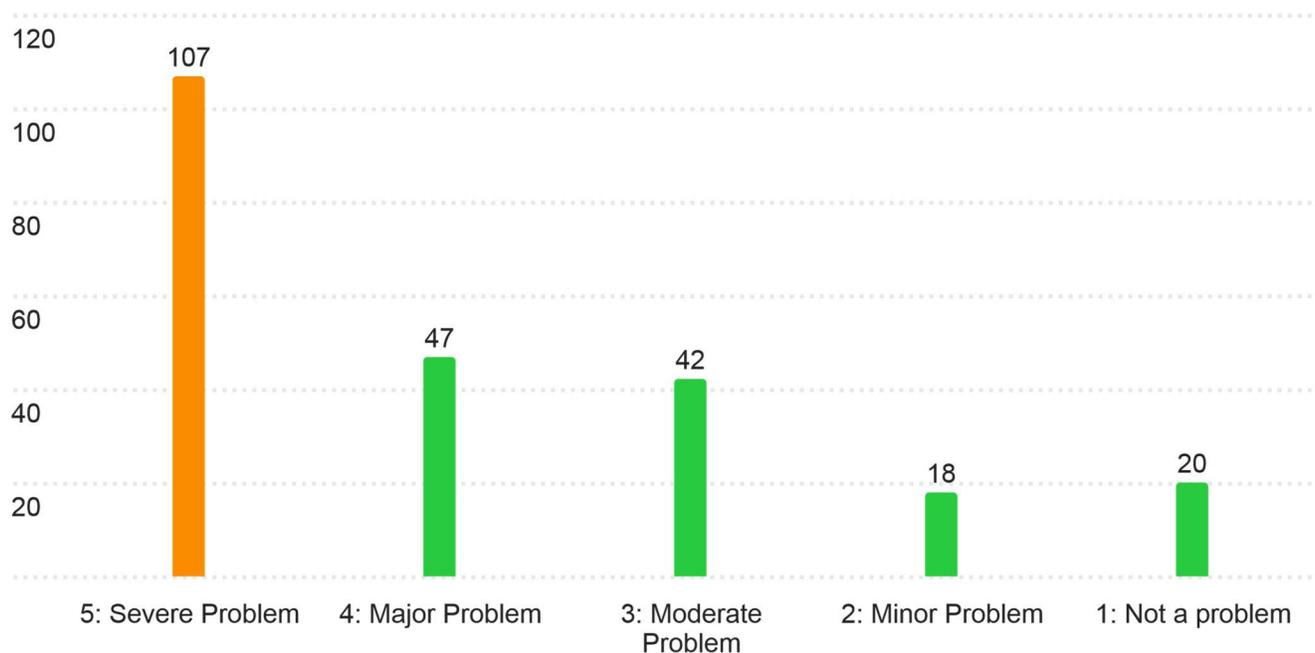
336 Responses



Q57 - Please rate the severity of the following provincial challenges:

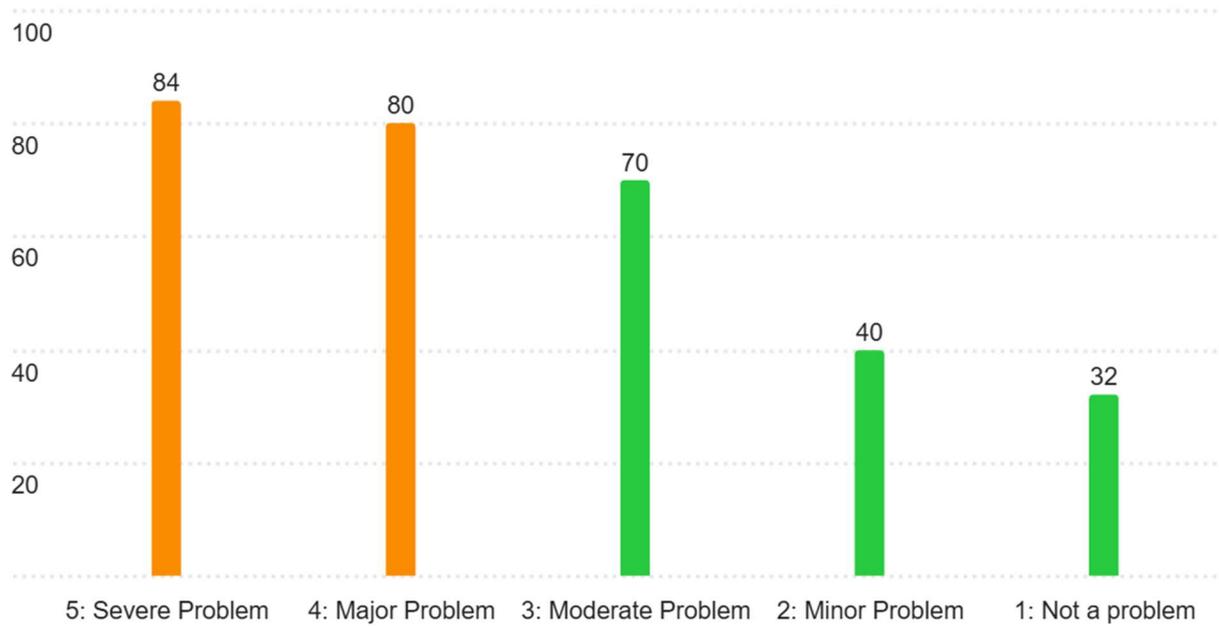
Lack of funding options for course-based students:

234 Responses



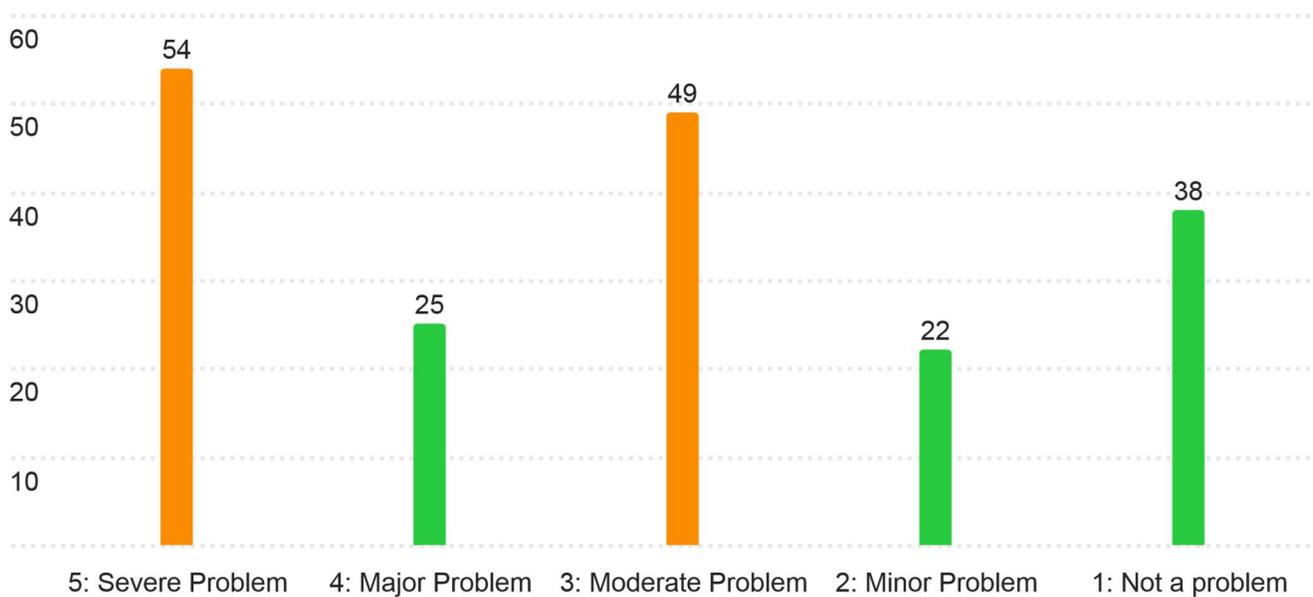
Q58 - Please rate the severity of the following provincial challenges:
Insufficient provincial research funding:

306 Responses



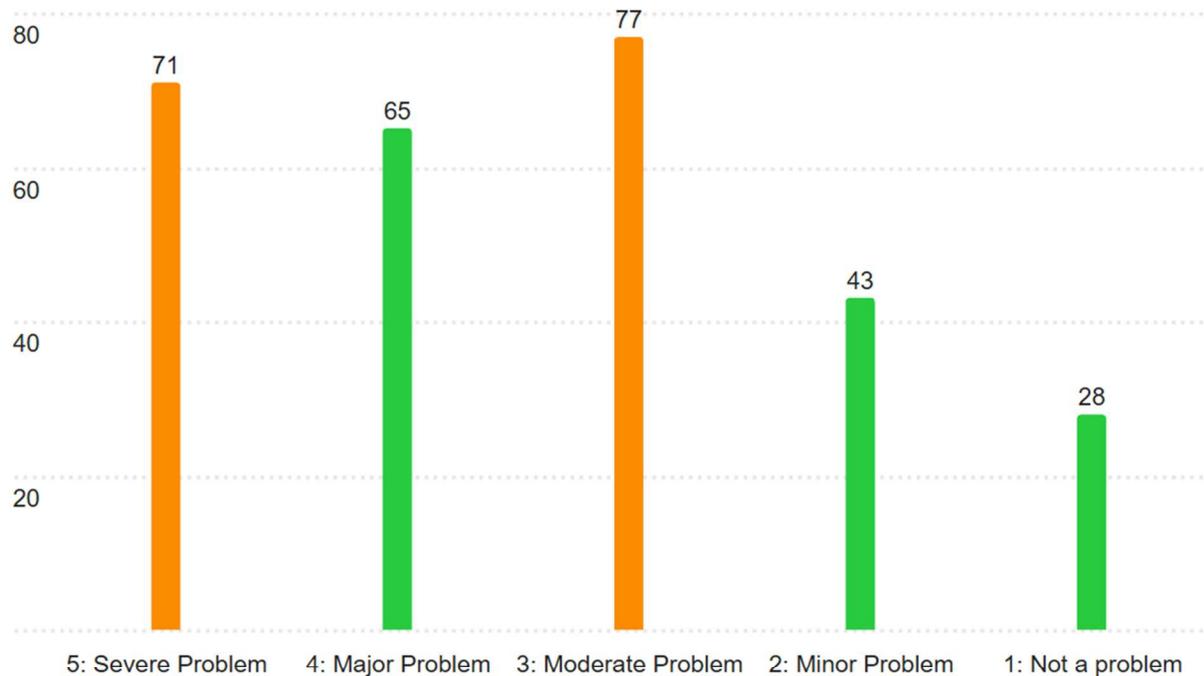
Q59 - Please rate the severity of the following provincial challenges:
Limited support for Indigenous research:

188 Responses



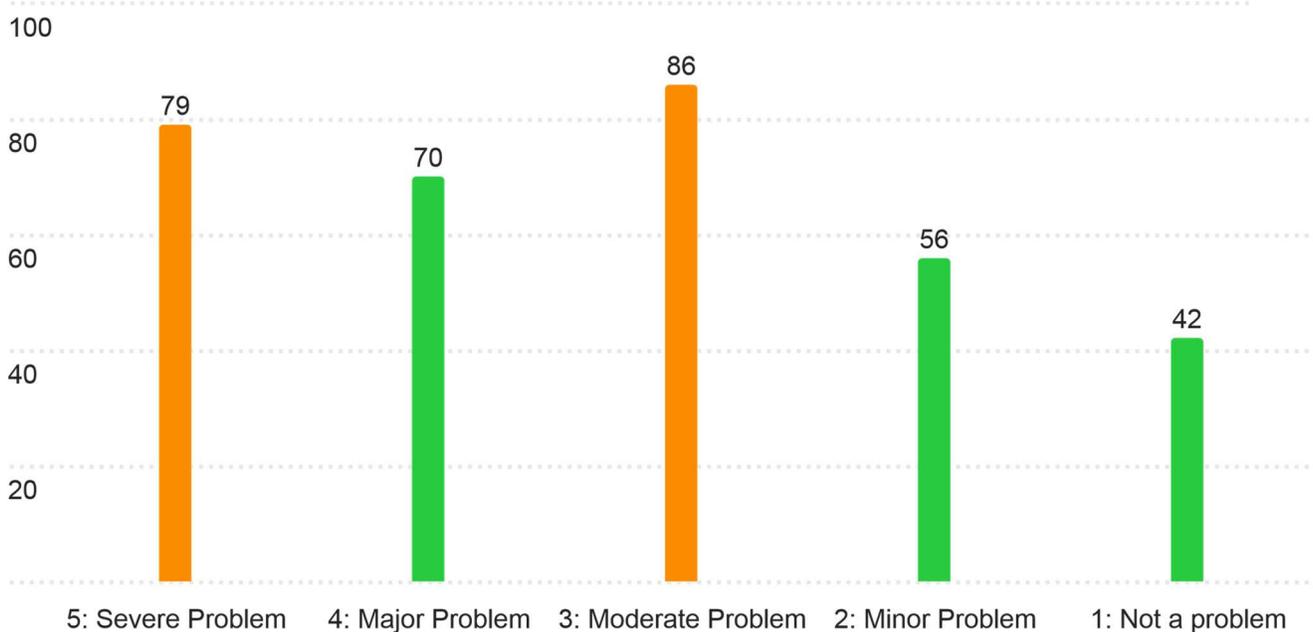
Q60 - Please rate the severity of the following provincial challenges:
Inadequate funding for fieldwork/travel:

284 Responses



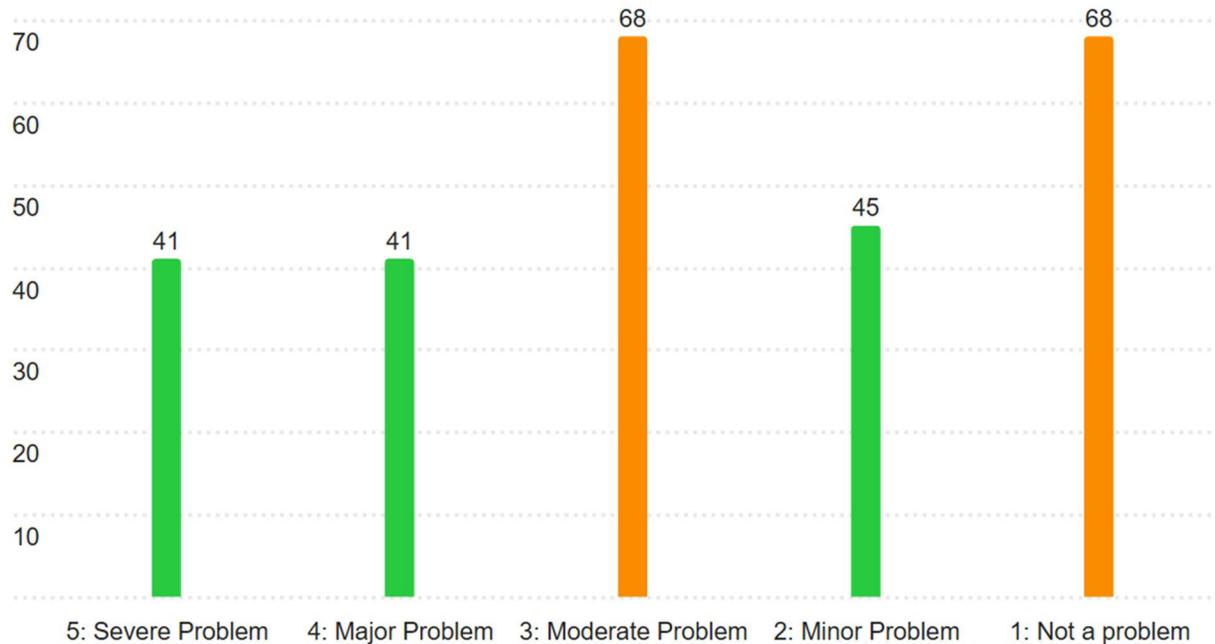
Q61 - Please rate the severity of the following provincial challenges:
Lack of industry-university partnerships:

333 Responses



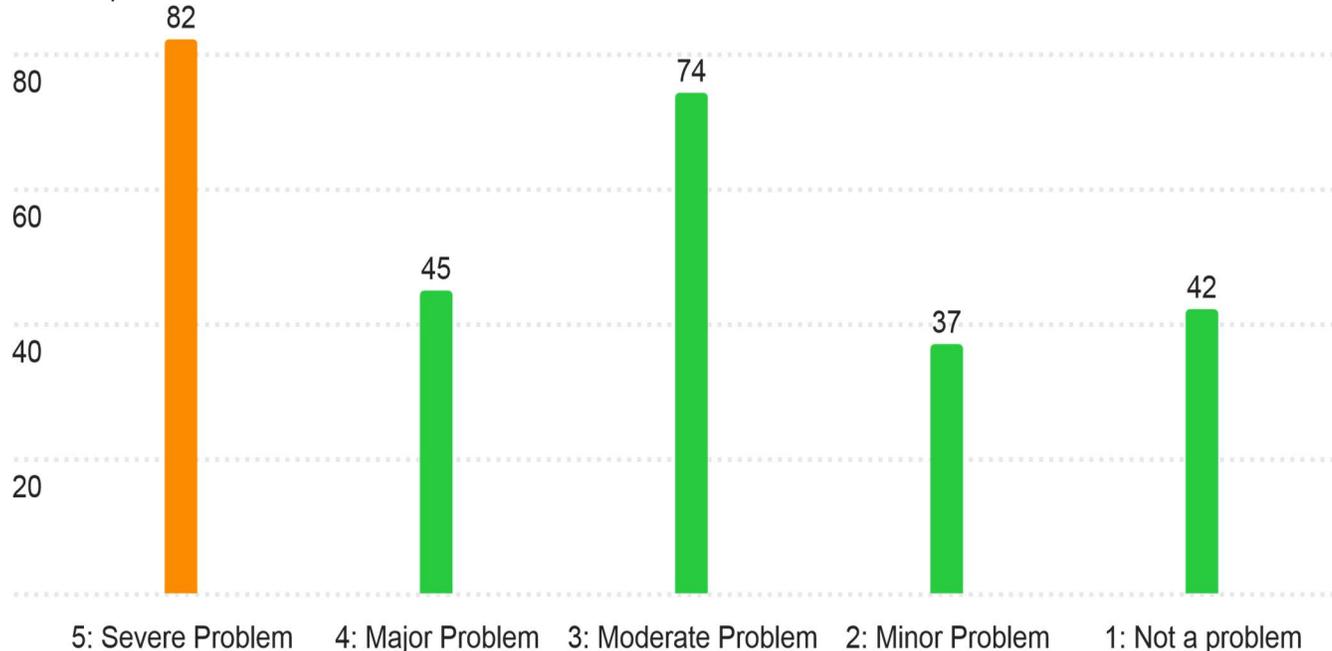
Q62 - Please rate the severity of the following provincial challenges:
Insufficient protection of student intellectual property rights:

263 Responses



Q63 - Please rate the severity of the following provincial challenges:
Rollback of EDIA initiatives:

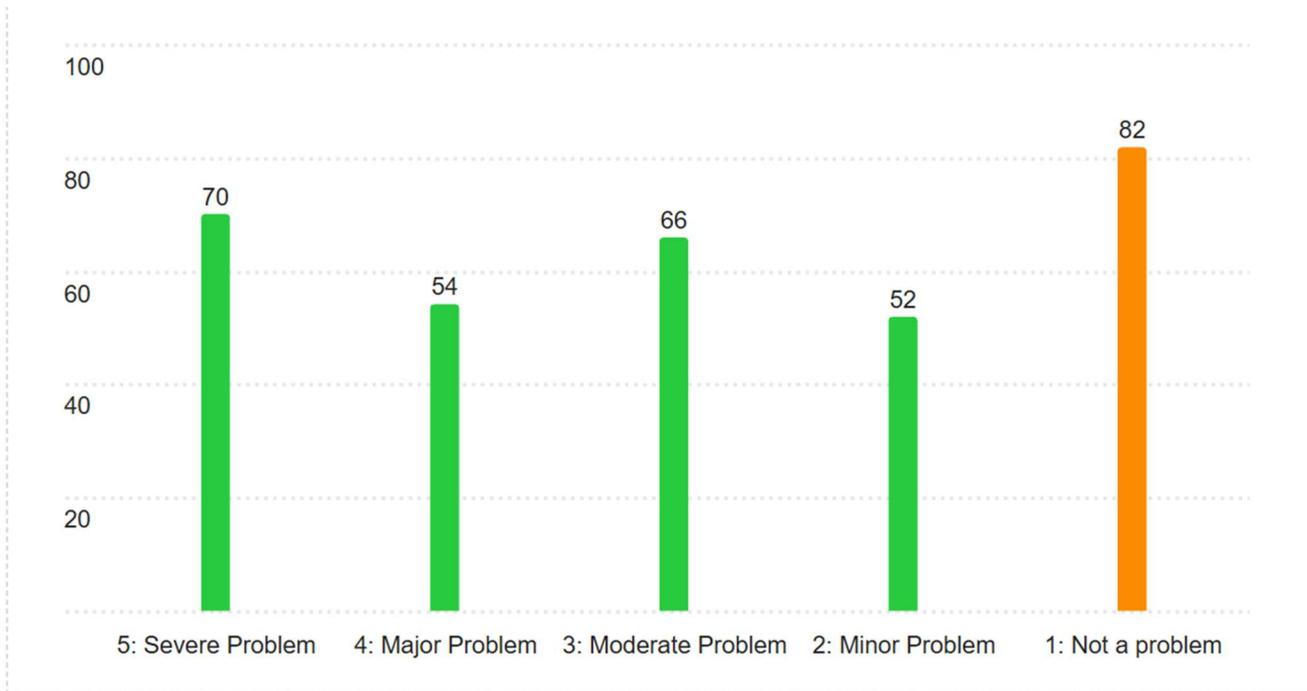
280 Responses



Q64 - Please rate the severity of the following provincial challenges:

Lack of protection for free speech:

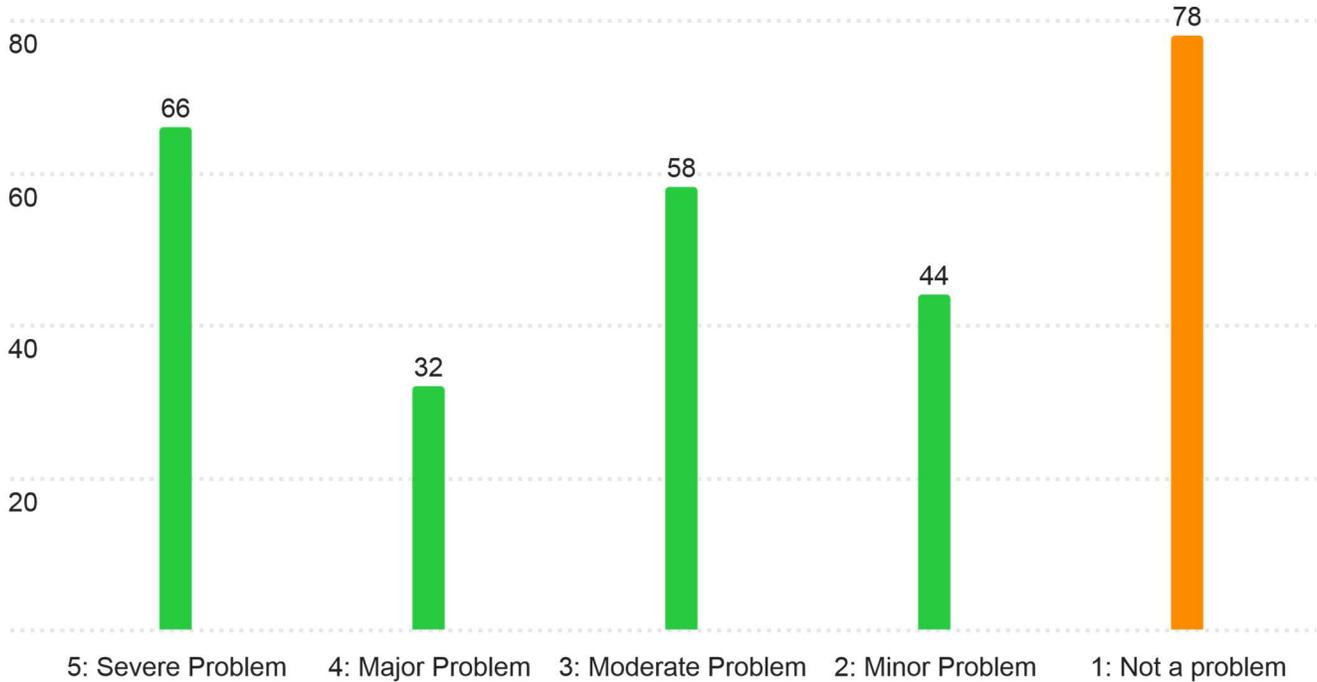
324 Responses



Q65 - Please rate the severity of the following provincial challenges:

Limited support for LGBTQIA+ students:

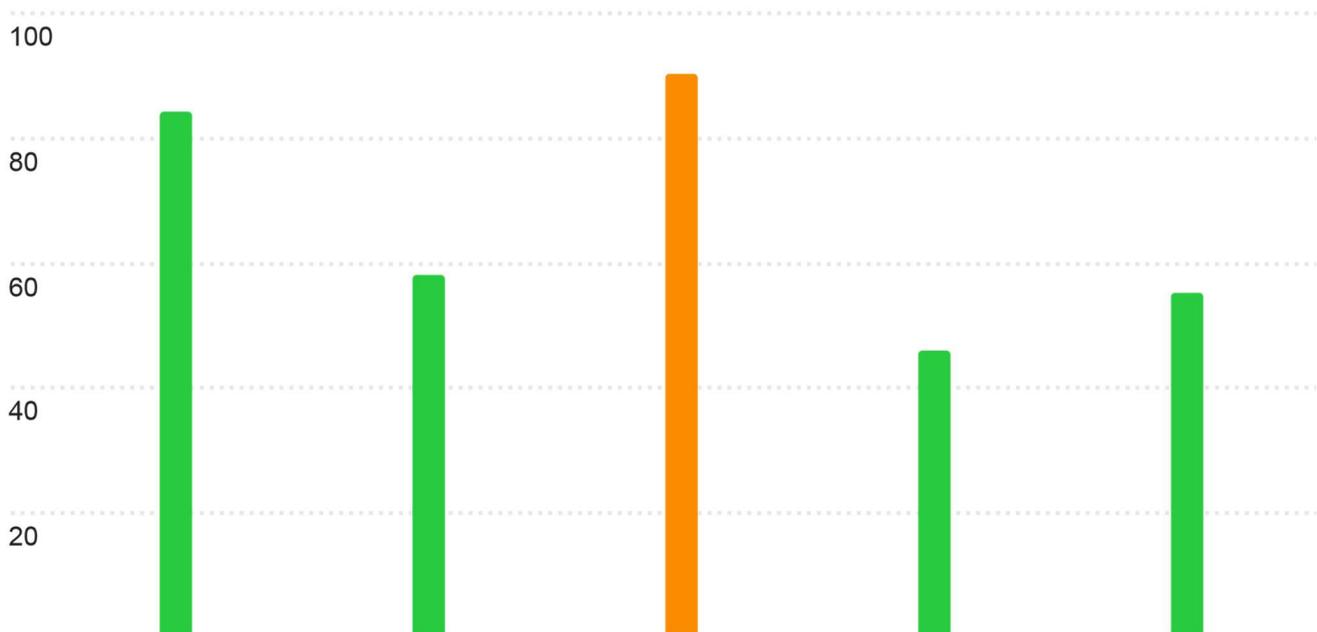
278 Responses



Q66 - Please rate the severity of the following provincial challenges:

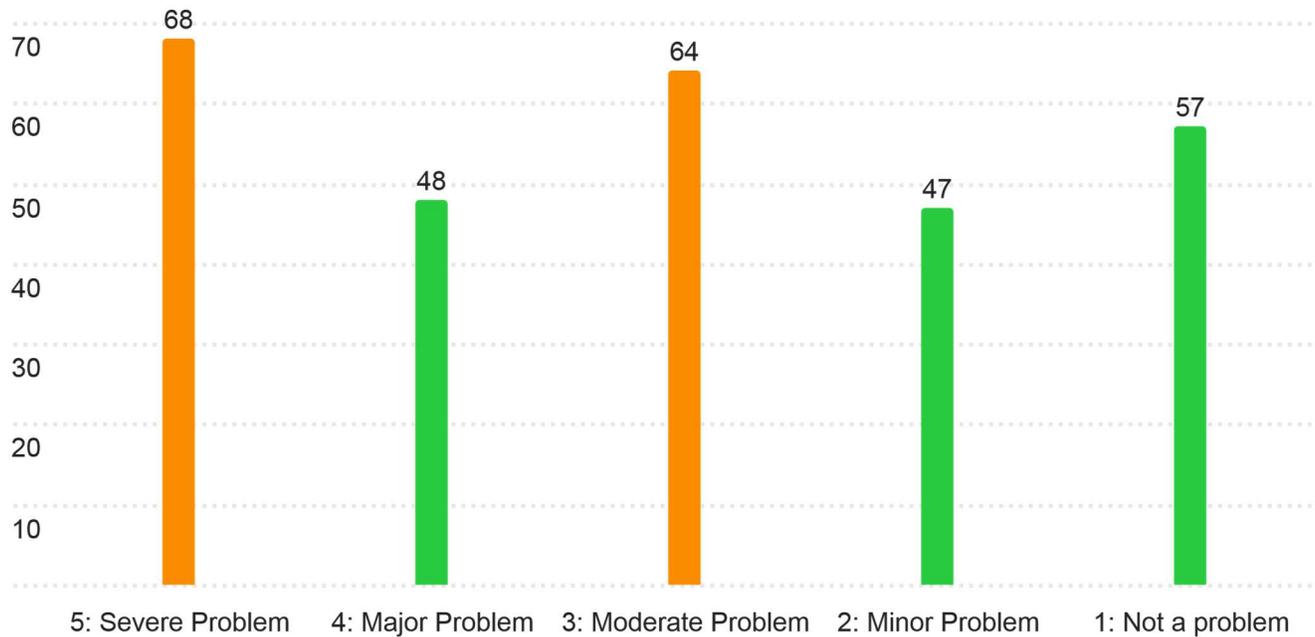
Inadequate mental health funding:

333 Responses



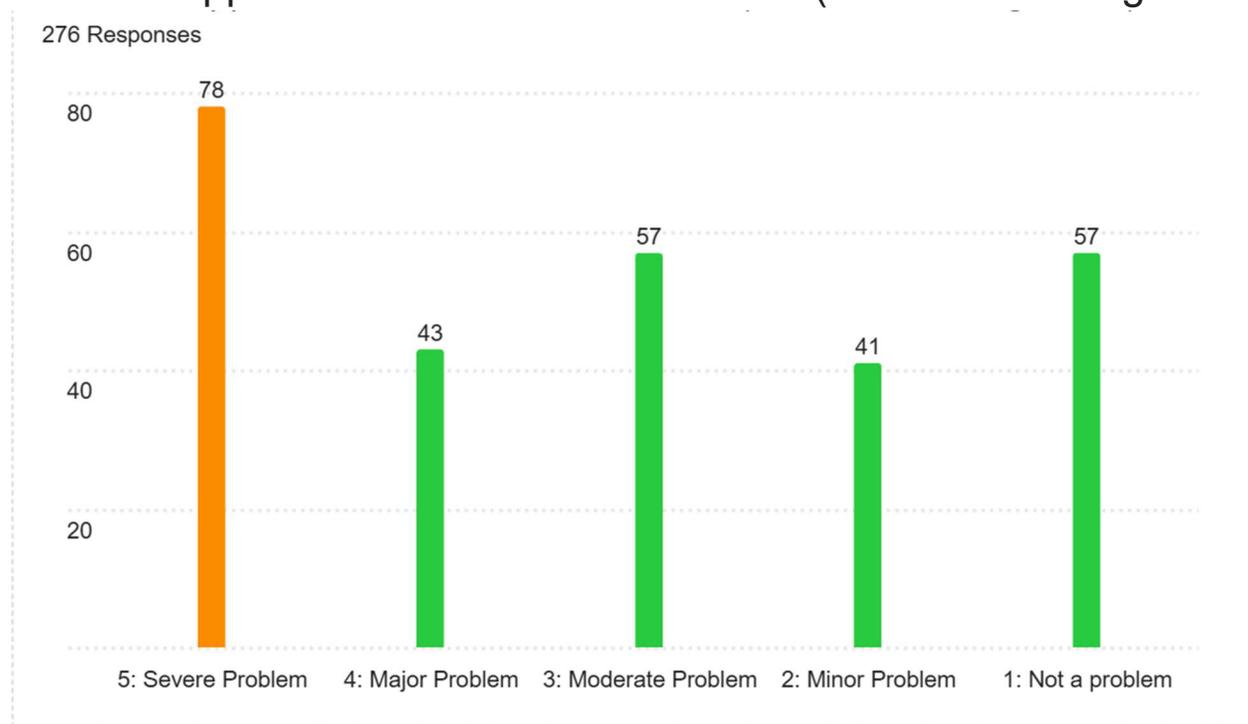
Q67 - Please rate the severity of the following provincial challenges:
Inadequate support for victims of gender-based violence:

284 Responses



Q68 - Please rate the severity of the following provincial challenges:
Lack of support for racialized communities (BIPOC and Indigenous):

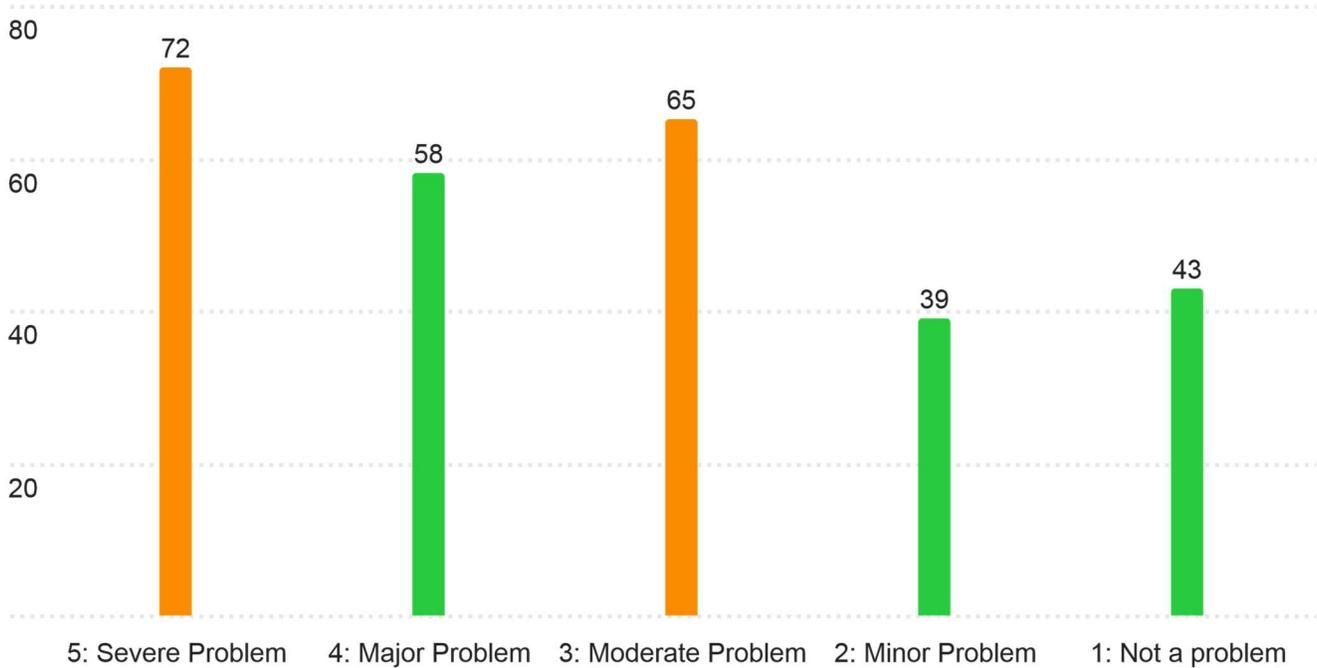
276 Responses



Q69 - Please rate the severity of the following provincial challenges:

Lack of support for students with a disability:

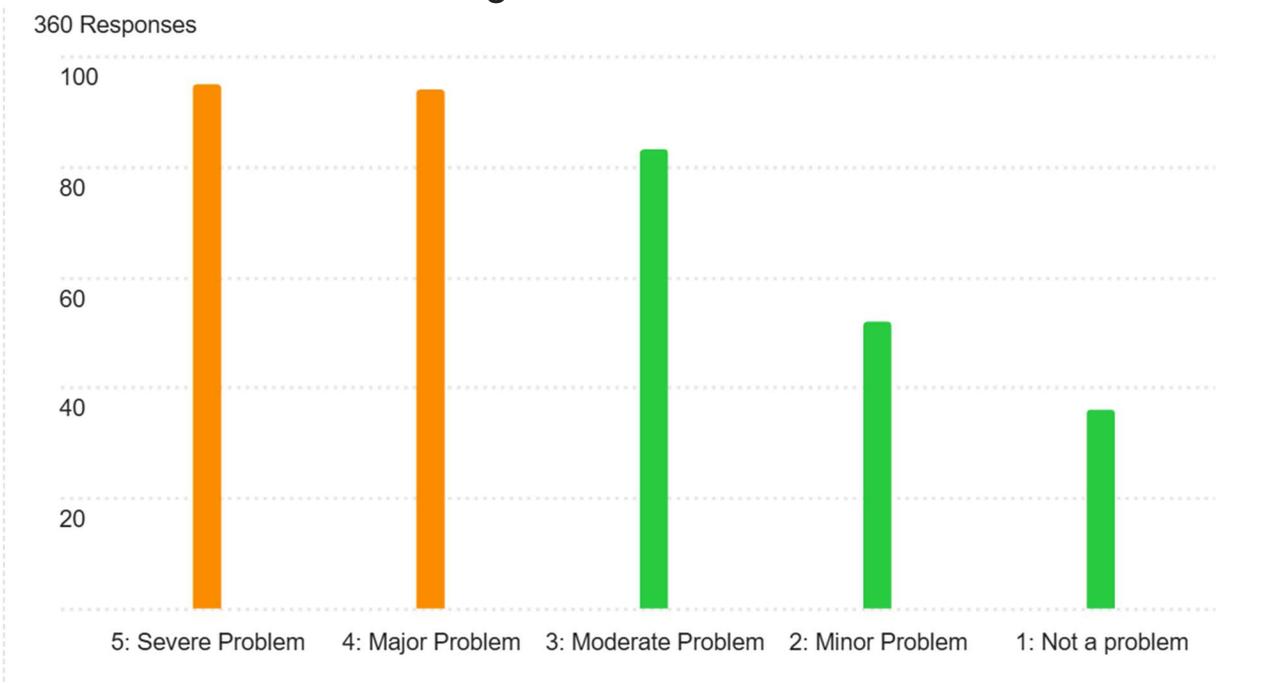
277 Responses



Q70 - Please rate the severity of the following provincial challenges:

Limited healthcare coverage for students:

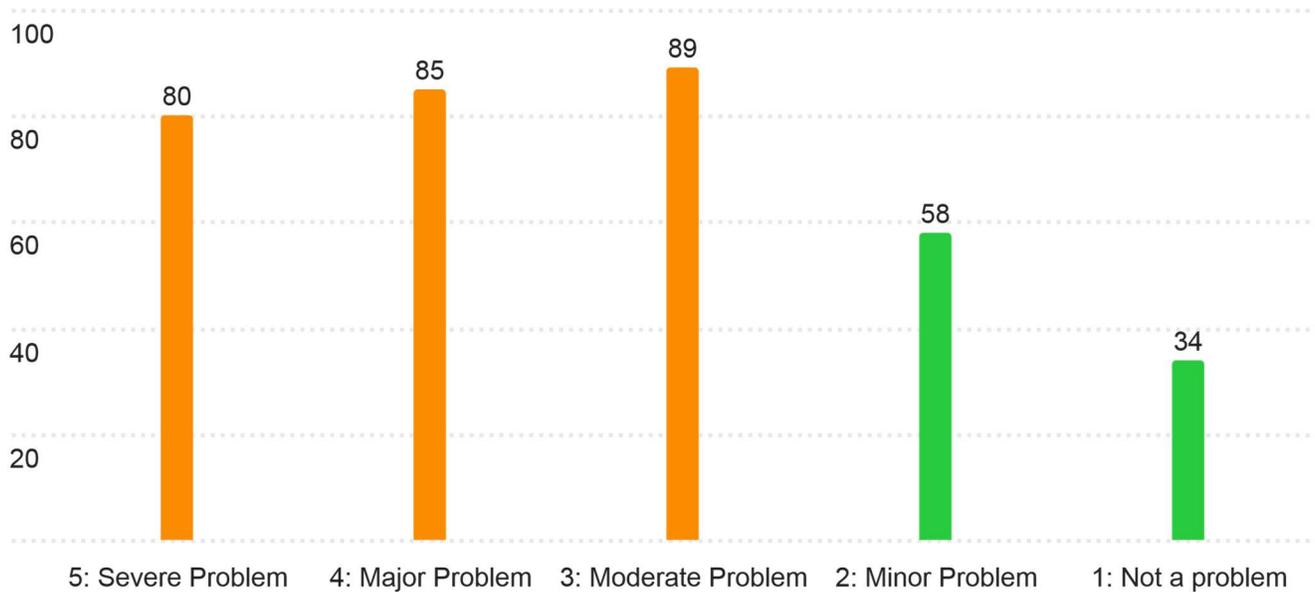
360 Responses



Q71 - Please rate the severity of the following provincial challenges:

Unclear employment rights for graduate students:

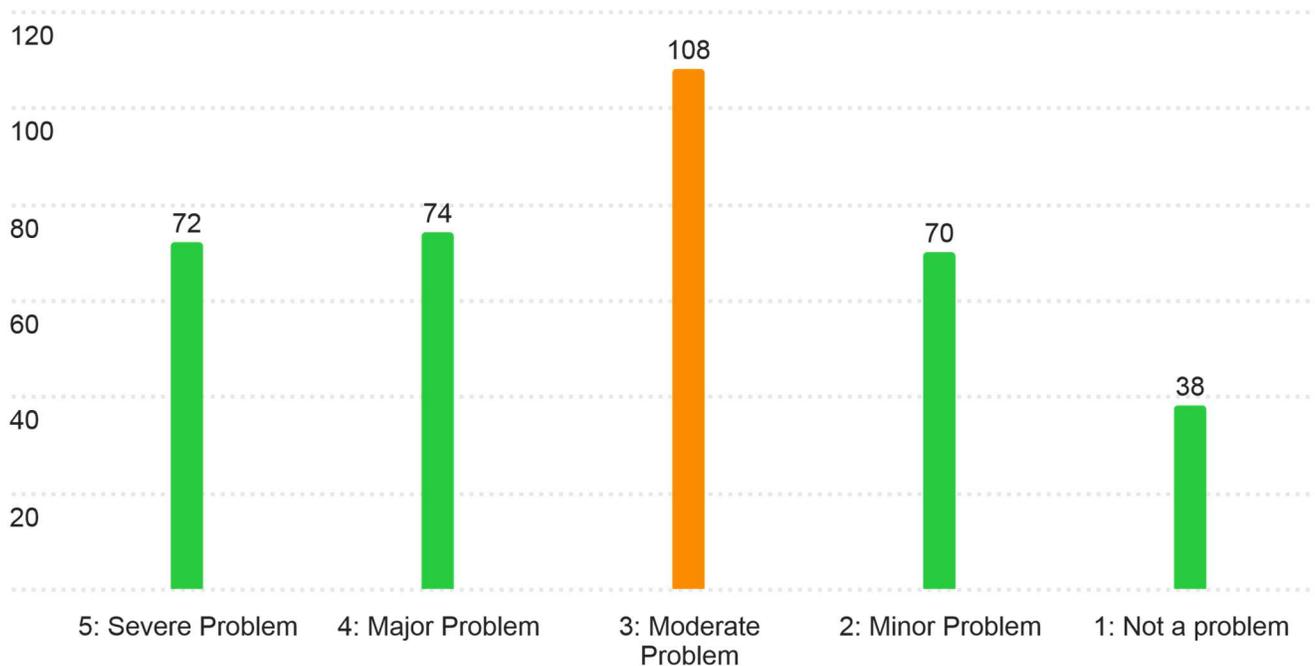
346 Responses



Q72 - Please rate the severity of the following provincial challenges:

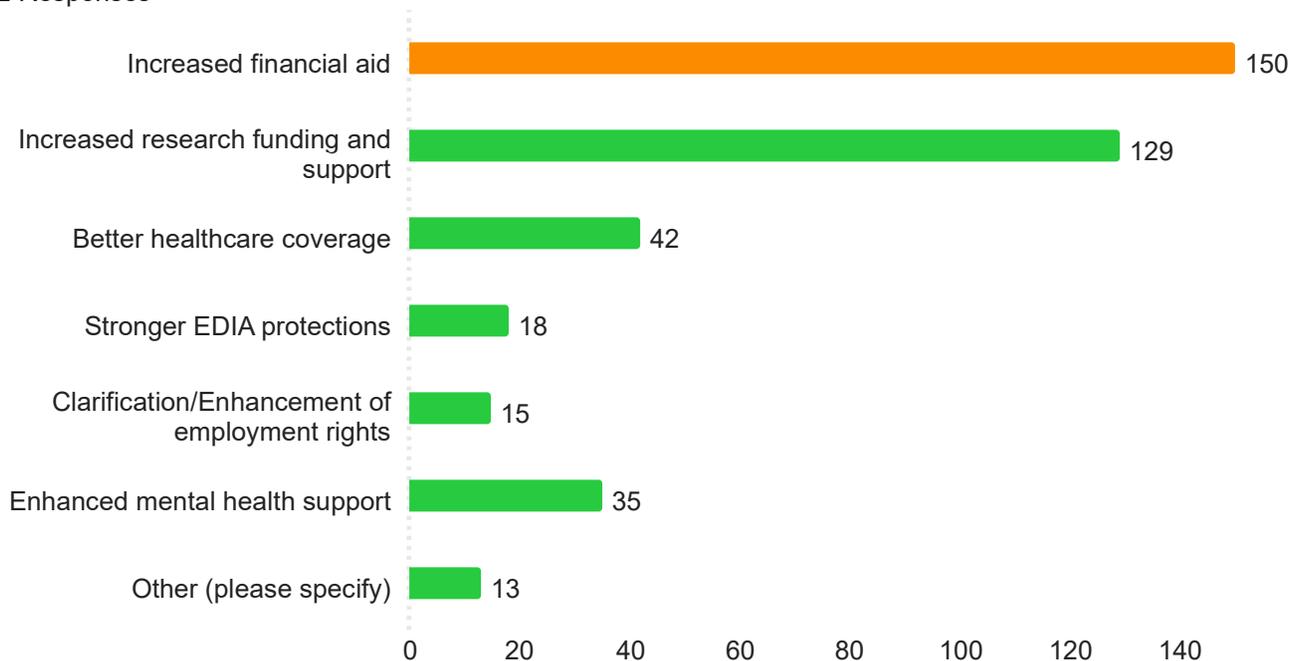
Lack of professional development and upskilling opportunities:

362 Responses



Q73 - Which provincial policy change would have the greatest positive impact on your graduate studies? - Selected Choice

402 Responses



Q73 - Which provincial policy change would have the greatest positive impact on your graduate studies? - Selected Choice

Increased financial aid (lower interest on loans, higher loan amounts, more grants and bursaries, etc) (x3)

Increased research funding and support (x10)

Clarification/Enhancement of employment rights (x2)

Better healthcare coverage (x2)

Stronger EDIA Protections (x2)

Other (please specify)

Q74 - What specific changes would you like the GSA to advocate for at the provincial level?

I'd like the GSA to advocate for expanded financial support for graduate students, improved access to affordable housing, and stronger investment in research and innovation initiatives across Alberta universities.

Research funding, healthcare coverage, mental health

Research funding

Increased research fund and support

More funding for the university as a whole

Again, I'm not sure that it is the role, or best use of resources, for the GSA to spend time on things that ultimately will take their own course based on our elected officials' decisions. If our advocacy has such a low chance of having tangible, direct impact, I'm not convinced that we should bother. I would rather focus on advocacy within the university for our interests.

n/a

Stronger EDIA protections and health care support for students seeking gender affirming treatment.

Better financial supports - my loan amount does not even cover tuition let alone fees, books, housing, food, etc bus transport

end involuntary treatment!

Increase provincial funding and scholarships to support research by international students.

Increase financial support

Not waiting that much for an appointment with an specialist doctor.

None

Offer tuition grant and scholarships for MSc course based students

Na

A left Wexit. (More seriously, more post secondary funding and interest free student loans (or student loan forgiveness) would be great for grad students)

Creation of more provincial scholarships and funding opportunities

I would like to apply for grants, scholarships and bursaries. I don't understand why I cannot

Analysis:

Graduate students are more likely to rate provincially focused concerns as posing a severe or major problem than institutional or municipally focused concerns. This is true for questions involving funding as well as accessibility.

A plurality, and sometimes majority, of students chose “severe problem” for high student loans interest rates, insufficient grants and bursaries, a lack of funding for course-based students, inadequate research funding from the provincial government, and low financial support for Indigenous research. For each of these questions, “a major problem” or “a moderate problem” were the second most frequently chosen answers. This underscores the funding-related challenges graduate students are facing at the provincial level. Unfortunately, given the heavy involvement of graduate students in the university’s core functions—research and teaching, this funding challenge translates to a reduced operational effectiveness of Alberta’s major post-secondary institutions and thus lowers the return on investment Albertans get from their universities.

An additional funding-related challenge includes a lack of travel or conference pay. While the most frequently chosen answer was not “severe problem,” a supermajority still expressed that this presented a challenge for their academic careers. As noted in *UCGSA.02*, our policy statement on the Alberta Graduate Students Travel Incentive, the ability to travel to conferences is an essential part of graduate students’ academic and professional development.¹³ For example, 45% of professors surveyed by the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) stated that an inability to attend conferences was the primary reason why they experienced research delays during COVID.¹⁴ Travel also includes field work, which for many experimental and survey-oriented programs is necessary for students to complete their thesis or dissertation. The Alberta post-secondary system spent the lowest percentage of its operating budget on financing travel in 2017/18, which was two years before the Minister of Advanced Education mandated that Albertan PSI’s further cut travel spending.¹⁵ The results of this survey reflect how Albertan graduate students are missing out on research and networking opportunities relative to graduate students in other provinces.

¹³ <https://gsa.ucalgary.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/UCGSA-02-Travel-Incentive-.pdf>

¹⁴ CAUT, “The Impacts of COVID-19 on Post-Secondary Education Staff,” retrieved from: https://www.caut.ca/sites/default/files/the_impacts_of_covid-19_on_post-secondary_education_staff.pdf.

¹⁵ <https://gsa.ucalgary.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/UCGSA-02-Travel-Incentive-.pdf>

A lack of industry-university partnerships is also a funding issue, and this too saw a supermajority of students say it represented at least a moderate problem. Grants from private for-profit or not-for-profit organizations are potentially a lucrative source of external funding for graduate students and the university. But as *UCGSA.01* notes,¹⁶ and as was re-emphasized in our white paper *A Meritorious Alberta Advantage*,¹⁷ privately funded grants and scholarships to the University of Calgary have declined since 2019. At a more granular level, in *A Meritorious Advantage* we argued that the private sector lacks the incentives to fully invest in human capital accumulation and innovation, due to the inherent risks a for-profit business must take on when funding what are effectively common pool resources or pure public goods (meaning that it is difficult to internalize the full costs and benefits of an investment in these goods).¹⁸ As such, public money is needed to “crowd in” additional private investment. This means that a lack of industry-university partnerships is, in large part, due to declining public investment in post-secondary education.

Resources for students with disabilities, a lack of mental health resources, and resources for victims of gender-based violence (GBV) are all downstream from funding issues as well. More students rated a lack of mental health resources as at least a moderate concern than they did in the section on institutional questions, which suggests that they view this as more of a provincial responsibility than an institutional one. Alternatively, more graduate students may be seeking mental health support for non-academic reasons and thus inferring that this treatment falls under Alberta Healthcare rather than on-campus wellness resources. For students with disabilities and victims of GBV, a lack of resources means a lack of equality in access to education (as well as a lack of opportunity to succeed in it) and a much more difficult road to recovery. While students with disabilities could be eligible for specialized scholarships, and this would help equalize the accessibility of post-secondary education with other students to an extent, full equal accessibility would require comprehensive investments in on-campus infrastructure. Scholarships for victims of GBV would not be viable, for obvious reasons (ex: privacy and retaliation concerns). What is instead needed for these students is *administrative* funding: i.e., funding for services on campus that help *enable* teaching and research, but which are not explicitly awarded for teaching or research activities.

Support for BIPOC students also includes financial resources, as systemic bias leads to economic inequality as much as social inequality does. But support for BIPOC students—as well as concern over the rollback of EDIA initiatives more broadly—has a substantial cultural component as well. Student concerns in these areas likely are due to policy changes made by the provincial government to oppose equity offices on campuses, rhetoric and legislation around transgender individuals, and an

¹⁶ <https://gsa.ucalgary.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/UCGSA.01-Provincial-Funding-Policy-Final-Draft-2024-25-Update-Vol-2.pdf>

¹⁷ <https://gsa.ucalgary.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/A-Meritorious-Alberta-Advantage-UCGSAs-Plan-to-Enhance-the-Competitiveness-of-Albertas-Post-Secondary-Education-System-PDF-FINAL-DRAFT.pdf>

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

increasingly polarized conversation around what types of research are conducted at universities. As noted in *UCGSA.04*, much of the conversation around EDIA and university research does not fit with available data; instead, it is a distraction that takes valuable time and resources away from one of the main drivers of innovation in Canada.¹⁹

Two questions deserve special mention. The first is the lack of affordable healthcare options for graduate students. This likely means dental, eyecare, and counselling services, though it is possible that some students assumed this question was talking about wait times and general accessibility concerns. Needless to say, the healthcare problems that Alberta is currently facing²⁰ impact graduate students just as much as Albertans outside the post-secondary sector. Second, graduate students are concerned about their rights as employees of the Board of Governors. This is understandable: the post-secondary sector is exempt from the *Employment Standards Code*, and so your rights as an academically employed graduate student depend entirely on the collective agreement between UCGSA and the Board of Governors. However, not all graduate students hold an academic employment contract, yet they still rely upon the GSA for other services. The litany of exemptions and the fluid nature of holding an academic employment contract (graduate students without one are oftentimes academically employed graduate students in waiting) make the legislative environment around graduate employment confusing. It is up to UCGSA to clearly communicate all relevant pieces of legislation and ensure that all students, not just those with a current academic contract, are aware of their rights and responsibilities as workers of the university.

Finally, there were a few issues that did not seem to be major concerns for graduate students. Students are only mildly concerned about intellectual property rights around their research. This might reflect the lack of research and external partnership opportunities afforded to graduate students in Alberta: you logically do not need to concern yourself with IP law if you do not anticipate doing research, either exclusively with the university or in conjunction with the private sector. About 60% of students state that a lack of free speech on campus is at least a moderate problem, though a plurality say it is not a problem at all. This question is not as polarized as the conversation around free speech usually is, with a fairly even number of responses for each column. This suggests that free speech on campus may be worth looking into by the provincial government, but that it is not the most impactful issue for graduate students by a significant margin. Lastly, students are concerned about a lack of professional development and upskilling resources, but plurality states that it is only a moderate problem. Funding, again, would be a much more impactful area for the provincial government to focus on. Unlike free speech, though, you can tie professional development opportunities into a strategy to increase funding. The provincial government *could* address both types of issues at once.

¹⁹ <https://gsa.ucalgary.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/UCGSA.04-Equity-Diversity-and-Inclusion-and-the-Value-of-the-Social-Sciences-and-Humanities-PDF.pdf>

²⁰ <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/calgary/hospital-overcrowding-er-waits-9.7072262>

The upshot is that it is not a surprise to see a supermajority (69%) of students pick either increased financial aid or more research funding as the most impactful change the provincial government could pursue.

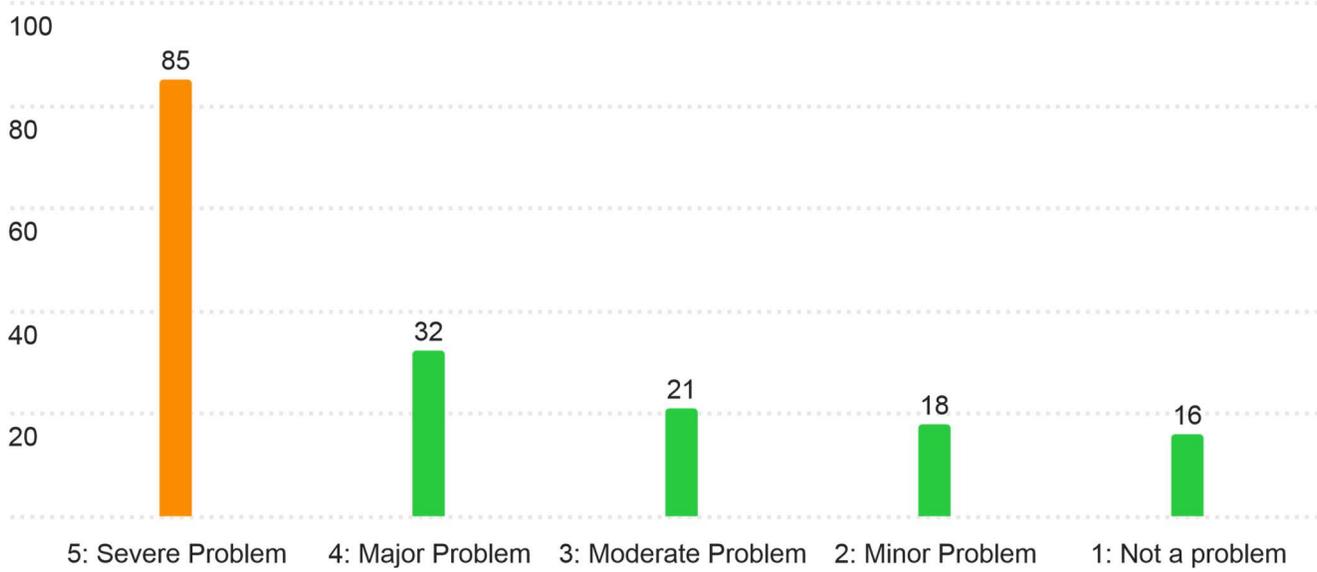
There seems to be broad recognition that Albertan PSI's need more funding, with this being reflected in the Mintz Report. UCGSA recognizes that Alberta's finances are vulnerable to both the WCS price of oil and its differential with WTI, meaning that there is little fiscal room at the moment for new funding initiatives. As such, UCGSA believes that our proposed scholarship plan outlined in *A Meritorious Alberta Advantage*, which aims to increase funding, research commercialization, and partnerships between universities and industry, would be an efficient and effect means of solving the underlying funding shortage for graduate students. For non-funding and equity-related concerns, the provincial government should ensure that post-secondary education is as open and accessible as possible while striving to prevent an American-style culture war from gumming up the province's innovation ecosystem.

Federally Focused Questions

Data:

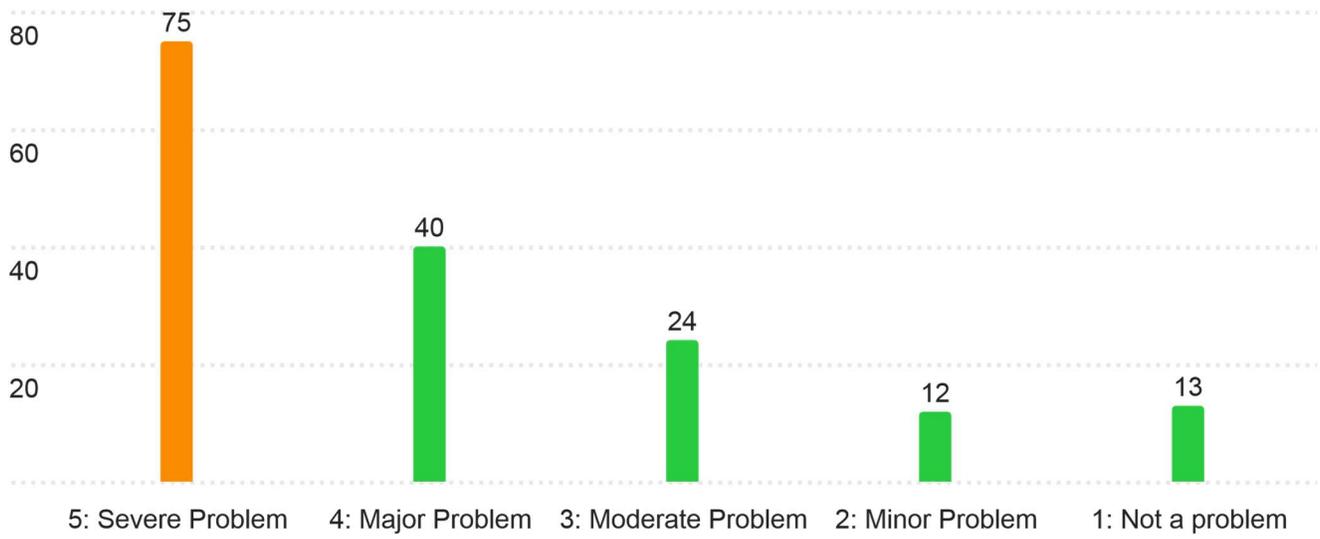
Q75 - Please rate the severity of the following federal challenges
(domestic students answer with "N/A"): Lengthy visa approval time:

172 Responses



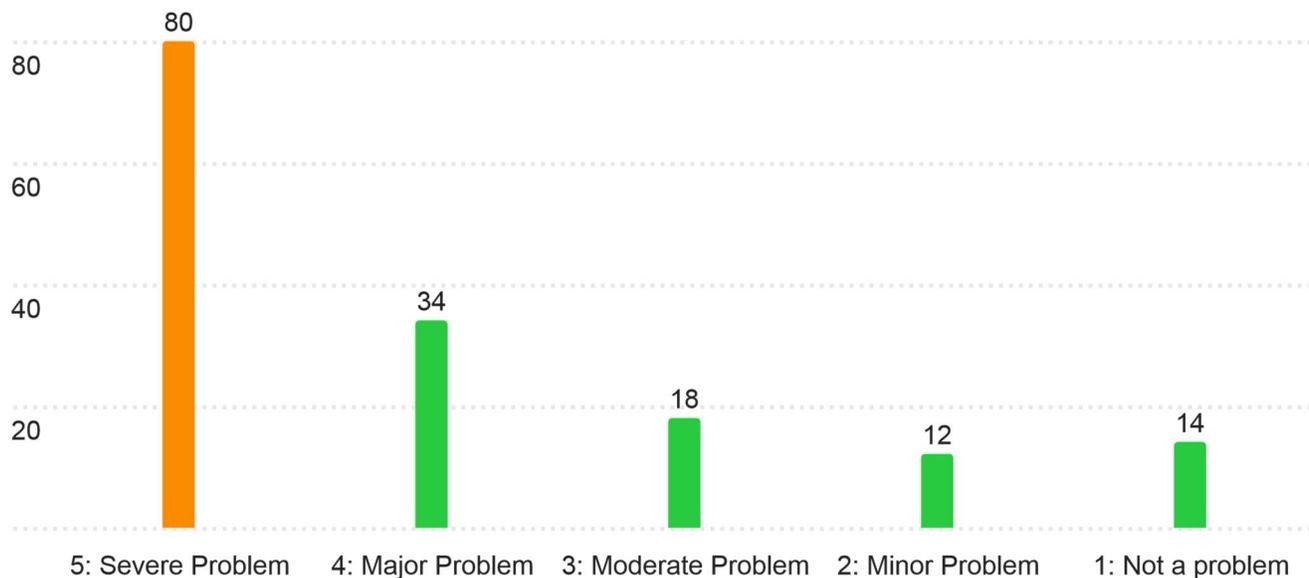
Q76 - Please rate the severity of the following federal challenges
(domestic students answer with "N/A"): Lengthy study permit extension
time:

164 Responses



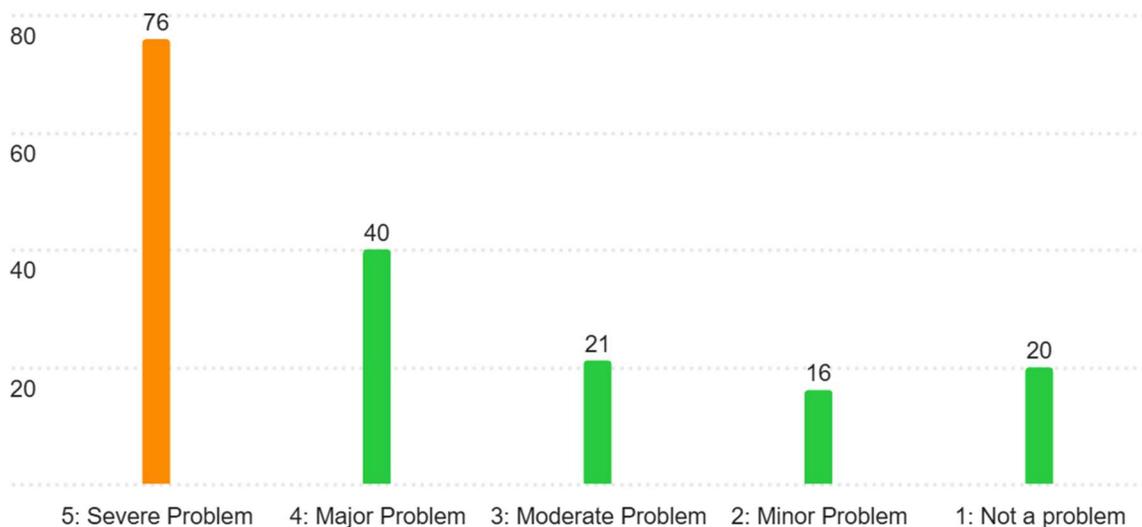
Q77 - Please rate the severity of the following federal challenges (domestic students answer with "N/A"): Lengthy post-graduate work permit processing time:

158 Responses



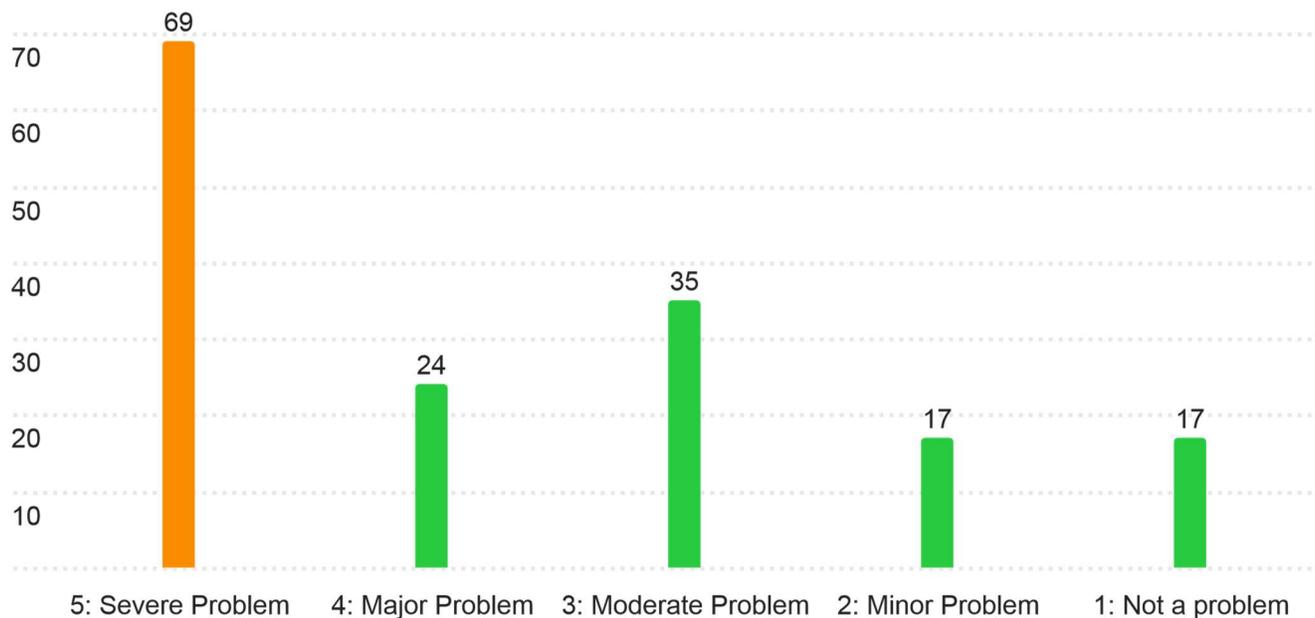
Q78 - Please rate the severity of the following federal challenges (domestic students answer with "N/A"): Lack of transparency from Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) around international student regulations:

173 Responses



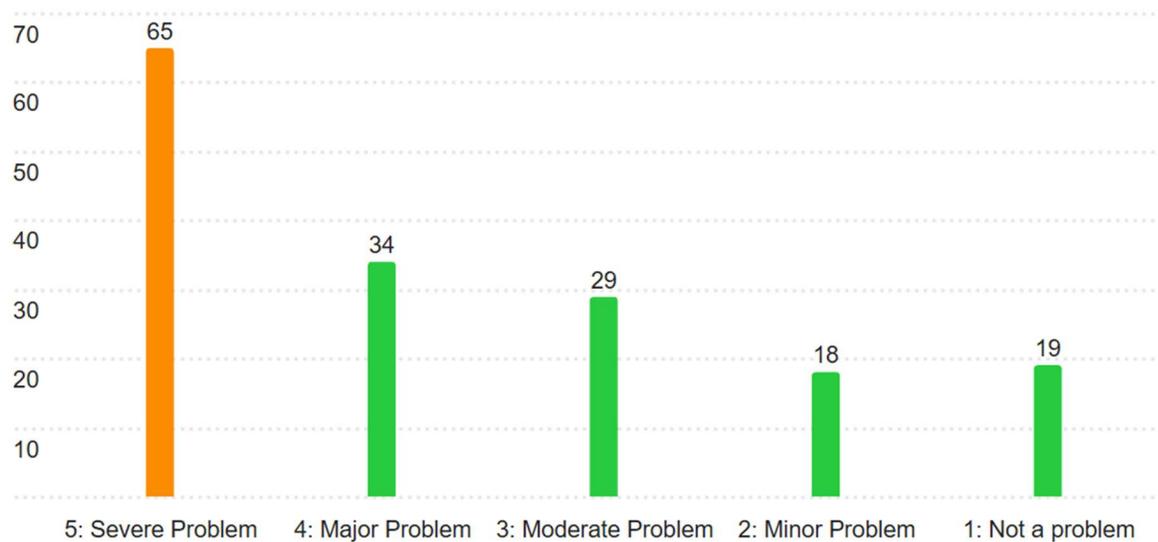
Q79 - Please rate the severity of the following federal challenges (domestic students answer with "N/A"): Complex study permit renewal process:

162 Responses



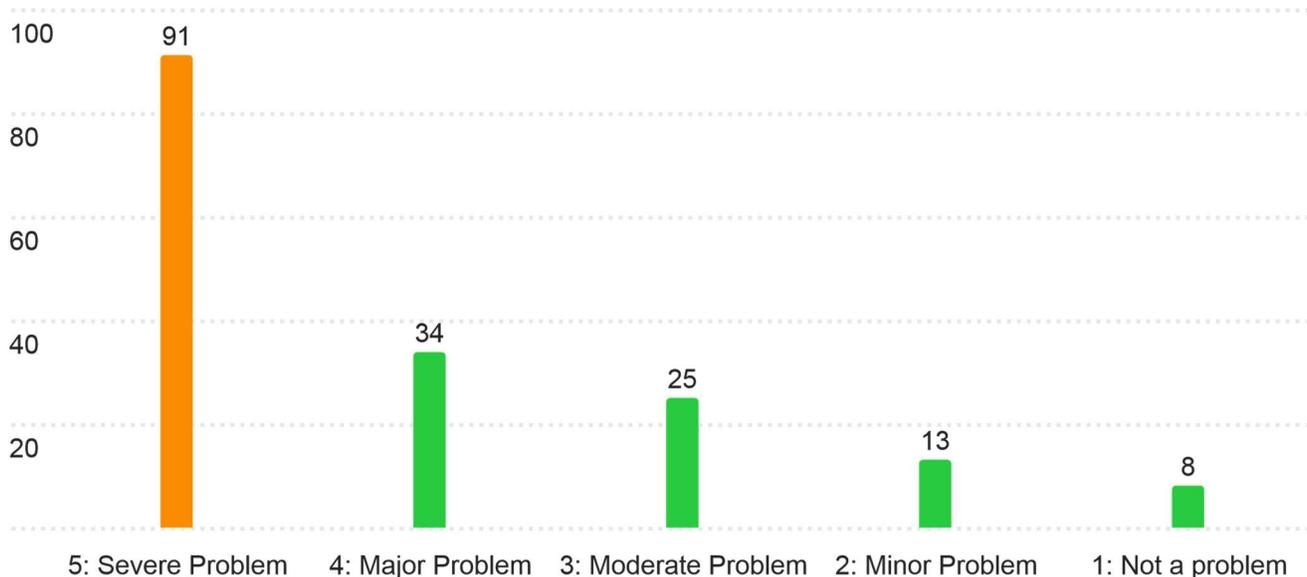
Q80 - Please rate the severity of the following federal challenges (domestic students answer with "N/A"): Unclear post-graduation work permit rules:

165 Responses



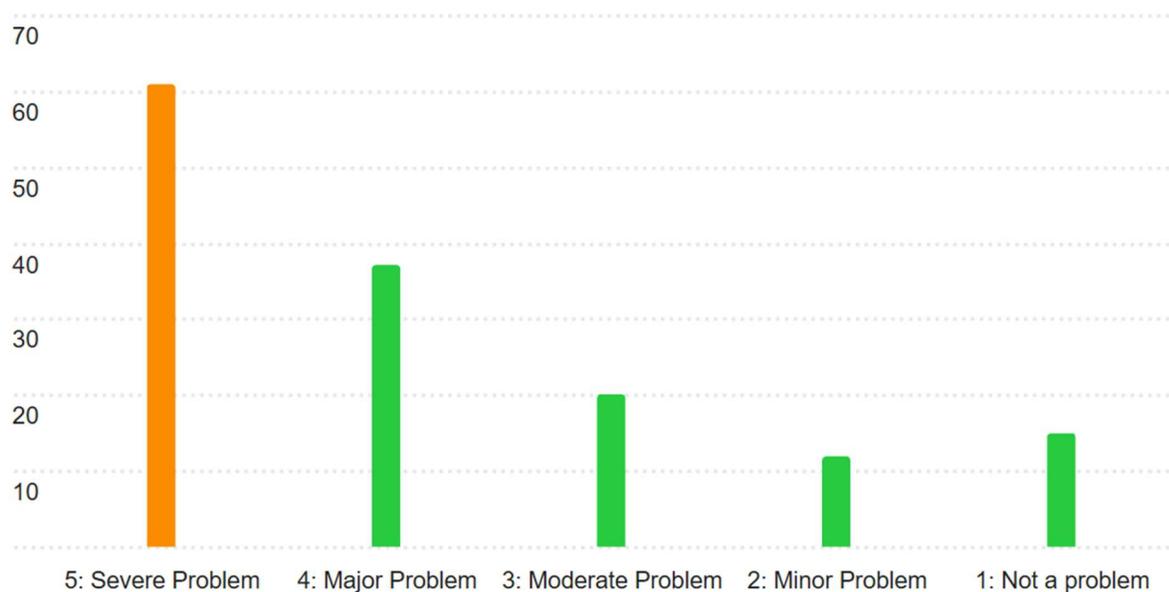
Q81 - Please rate the severity of the following federal challenges (domestic students answer with "N/A"): Limited pathway to citizenship for international students:

171 Responses



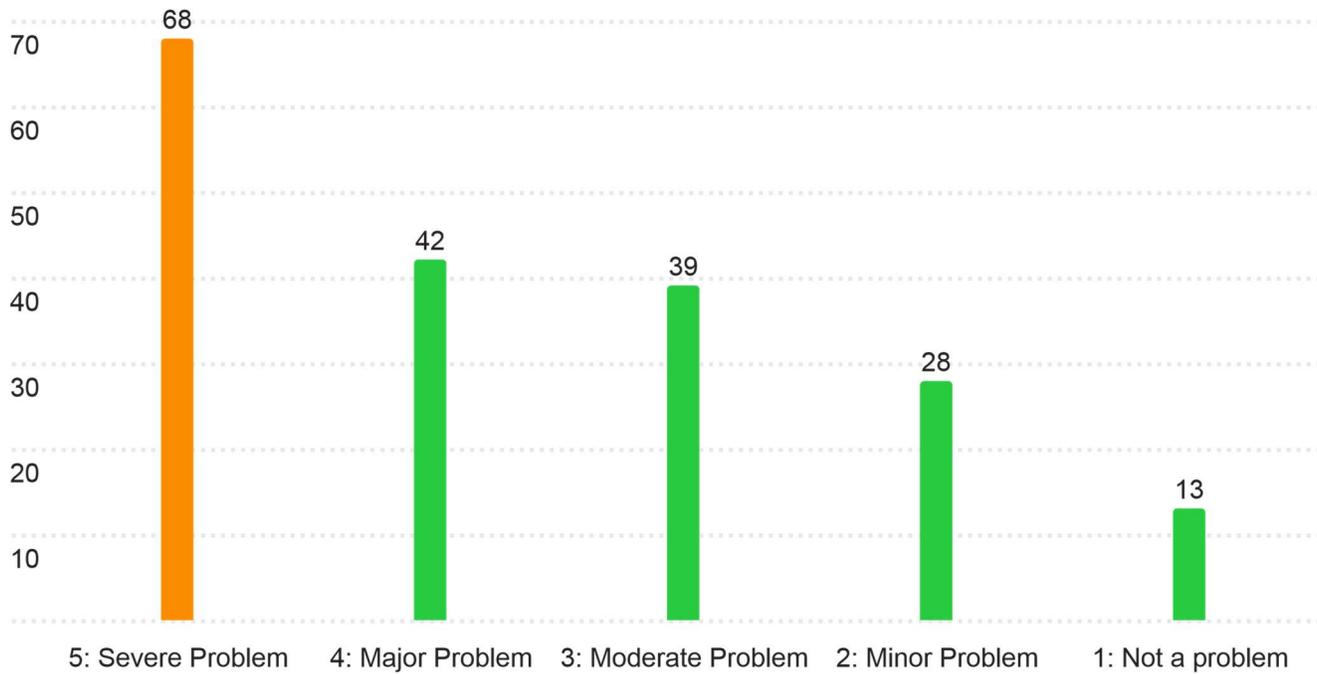
Q82 - Please rate the severity of the following federal challenges (domestic students answer with "N/A"): Restrictions on family accompaniment:

145 Responses



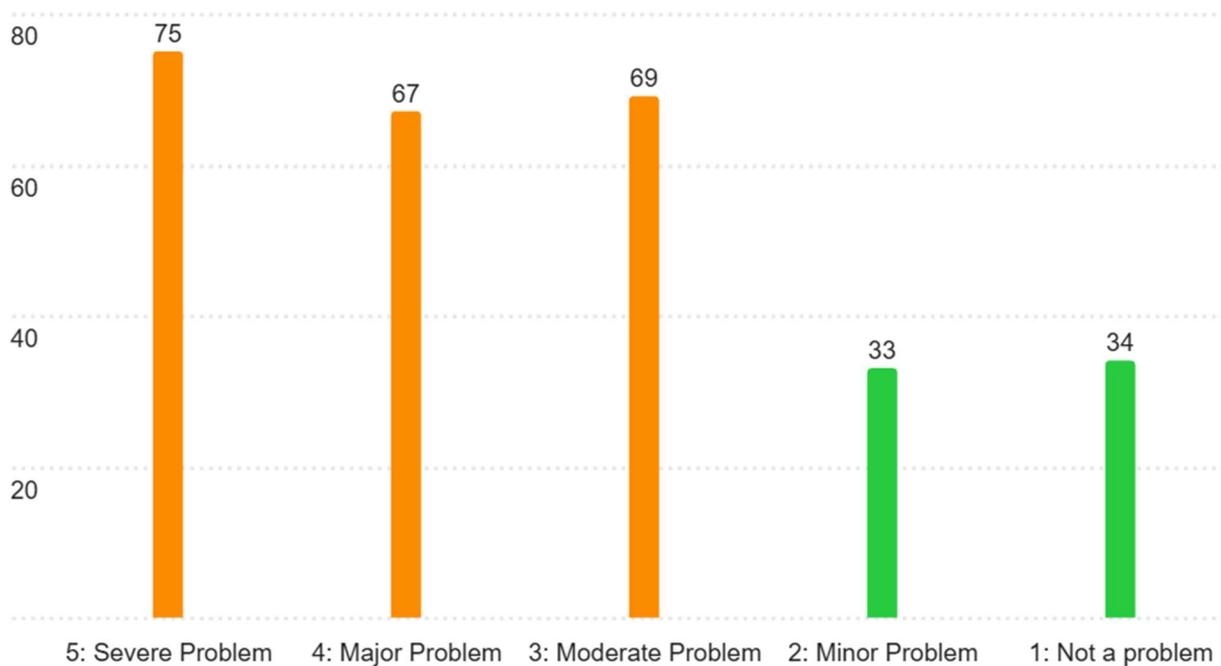
Q83 - Please rate the severity of the following federal challenges (domestic students answer with "N/A"): High application costs:

190 Responses



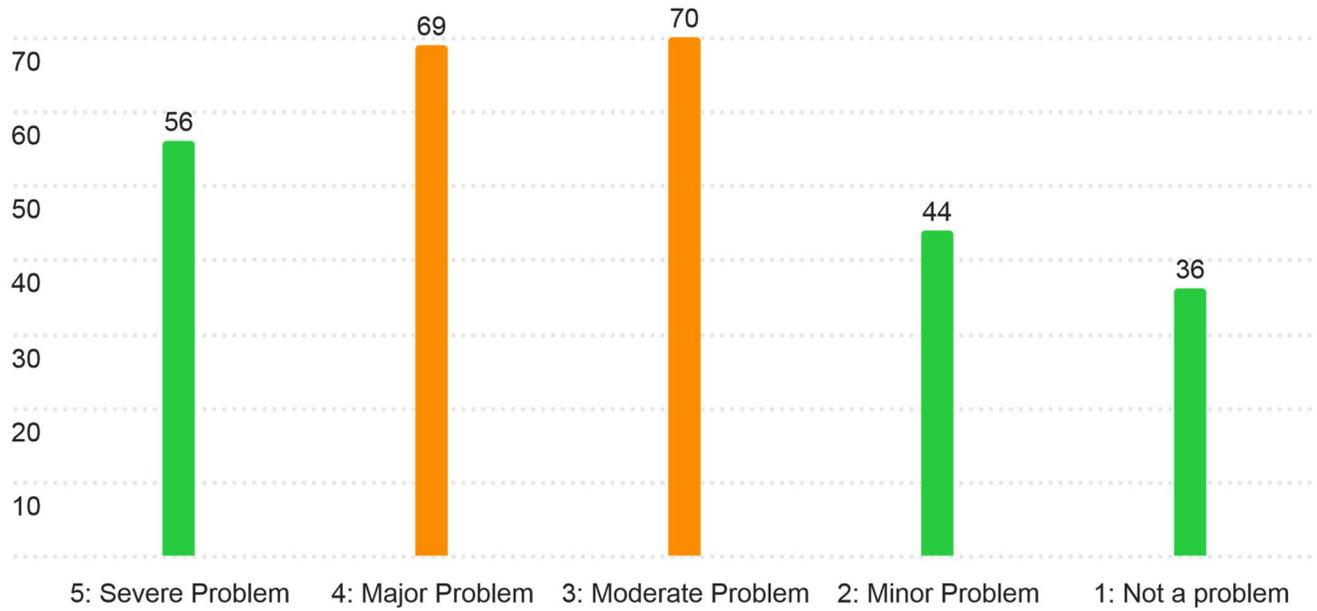
Q84 - Please rate the severity of the following federal challenges:
Insufficient Tri-Council funding (NSERC, SSHRC, CIHR):

278 Responses



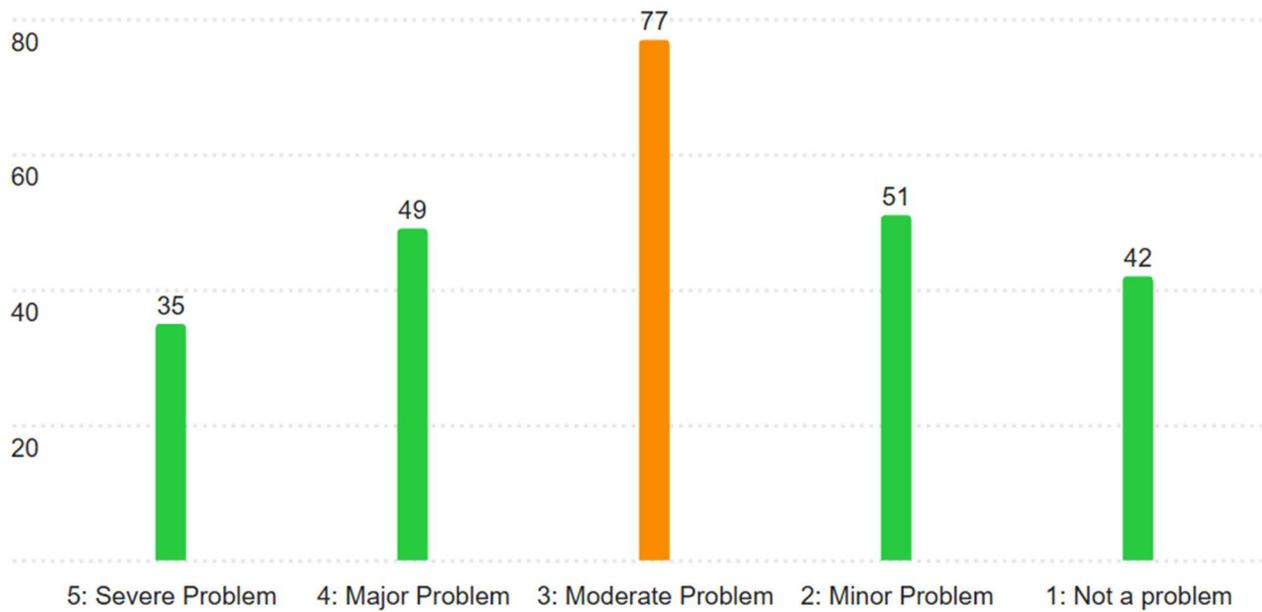
Q85 - Please rate the severity of the following federal challenges: Lack of graduate student representation on decision-making bodies of TriCouncils:

275 Responses



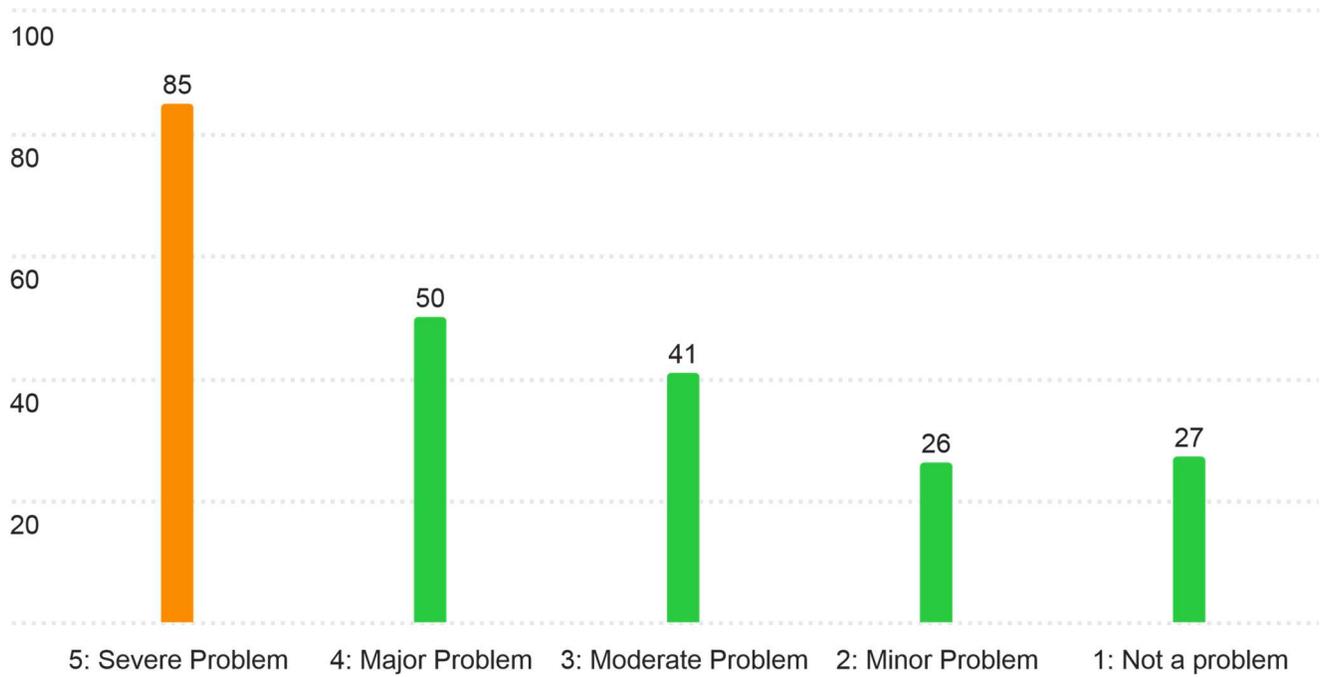
Q86 - Please rate the severity of the following federal challenges: Lack of clarity around student intellectual property rights on federally-funded projects:

254 Responses



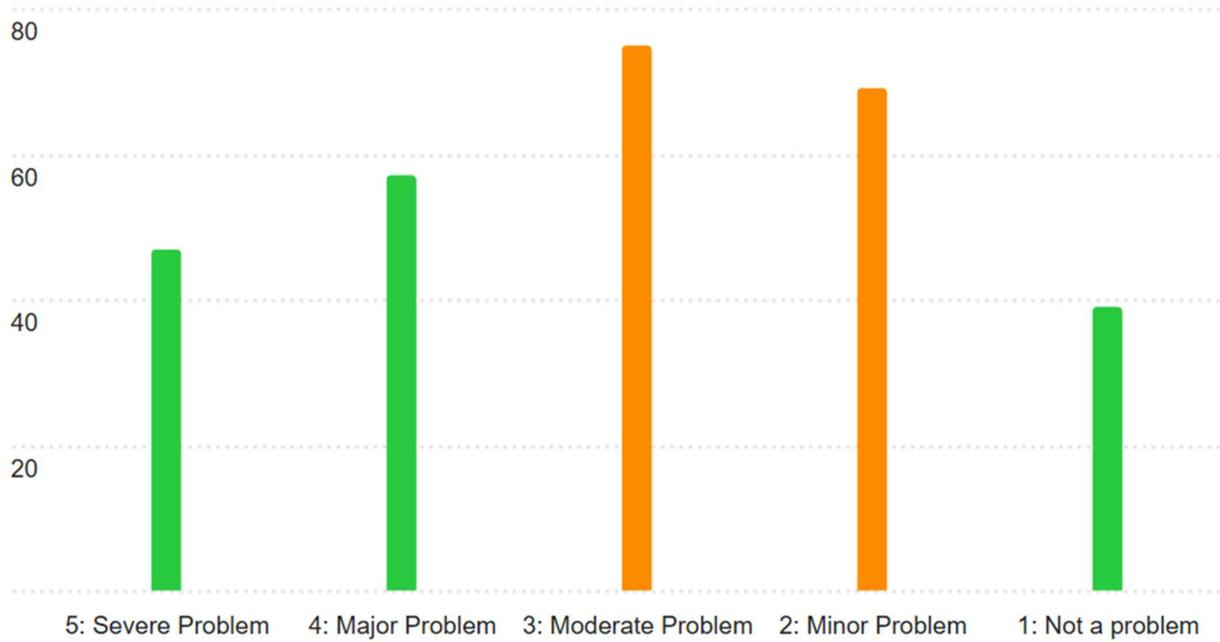
Q87 - Please rate the severity of the following federal challenges: Lack of funding opportunities for course-based students:

229 Responses



Q88 - Please rate the severity of the following federal challenges:
Limited support for interdisciplinary research:

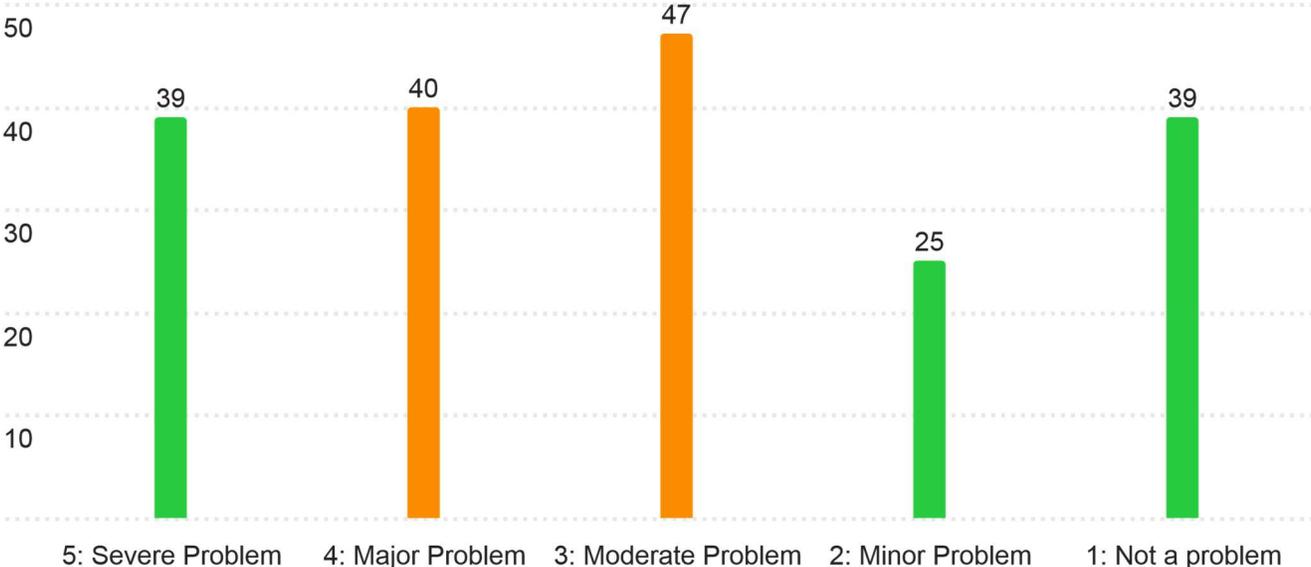
287 Responses



Q89 - Please rate the severity of the following federal challenges:

Inadequate support for Indigenous research:

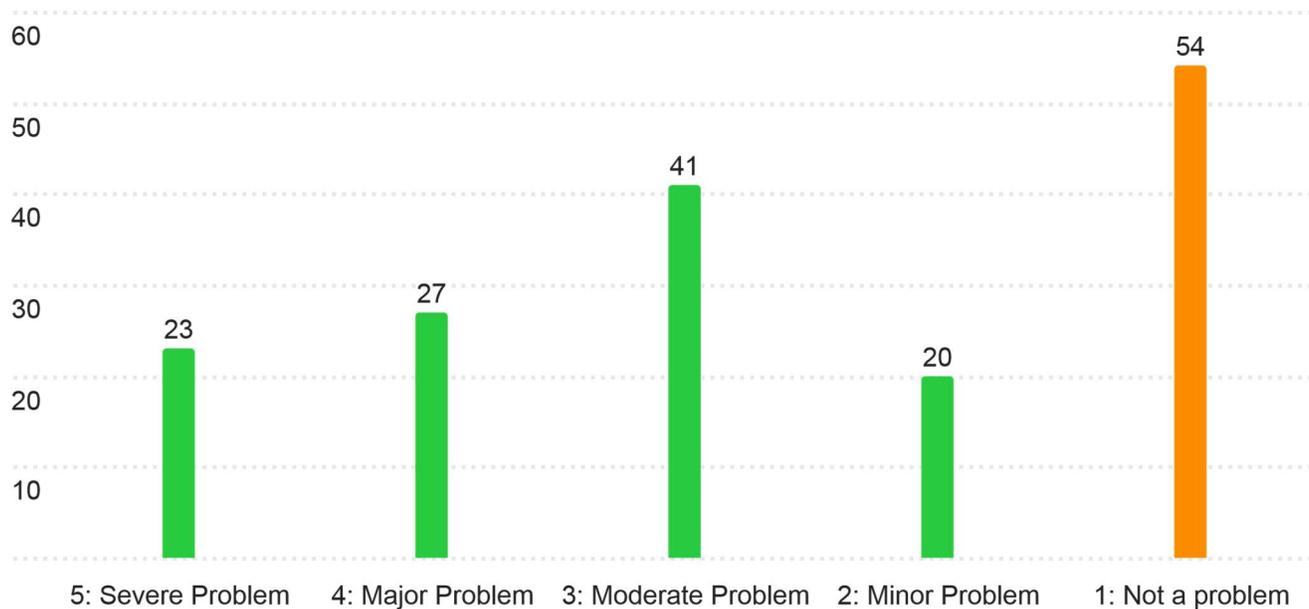
190 Responses



Q90 - Please rate the severity of the following federal challenges:

Inadequate support for Francophone research:

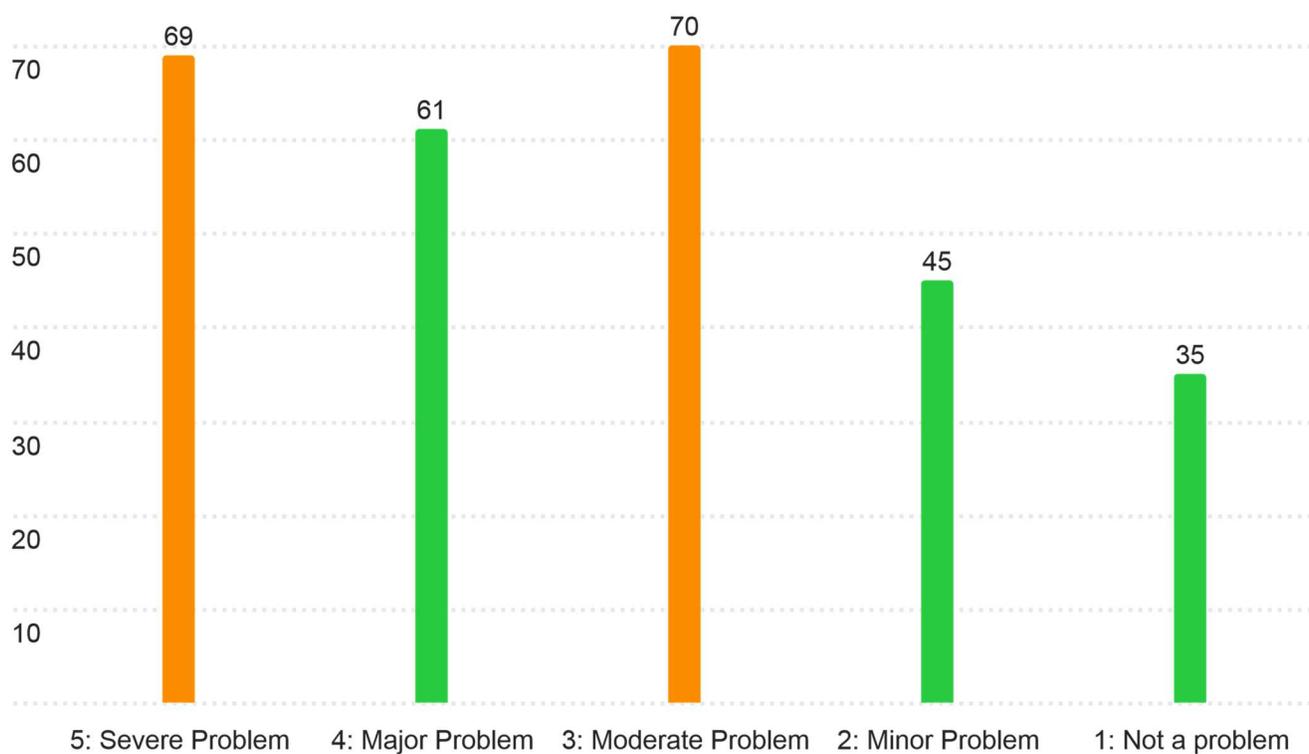
165 Responses



Q91 - Please rate the severity of the following federal challenges:

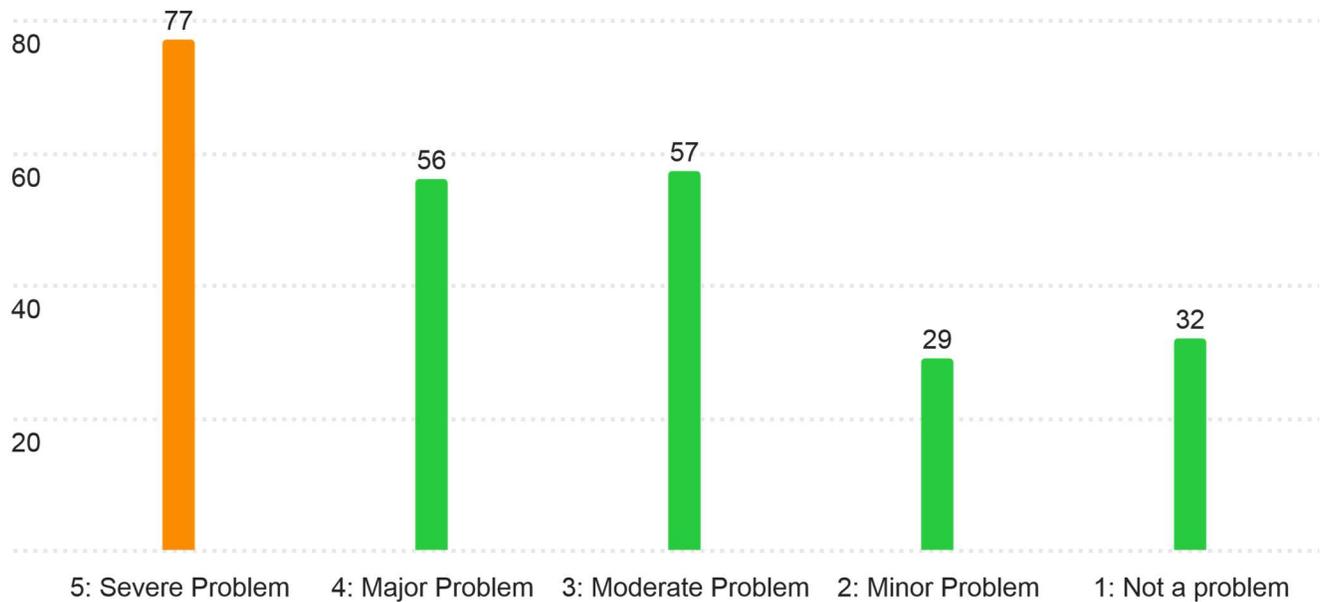
Complex Canada Graduate Scholarship (CGS) application process:

280 Responses



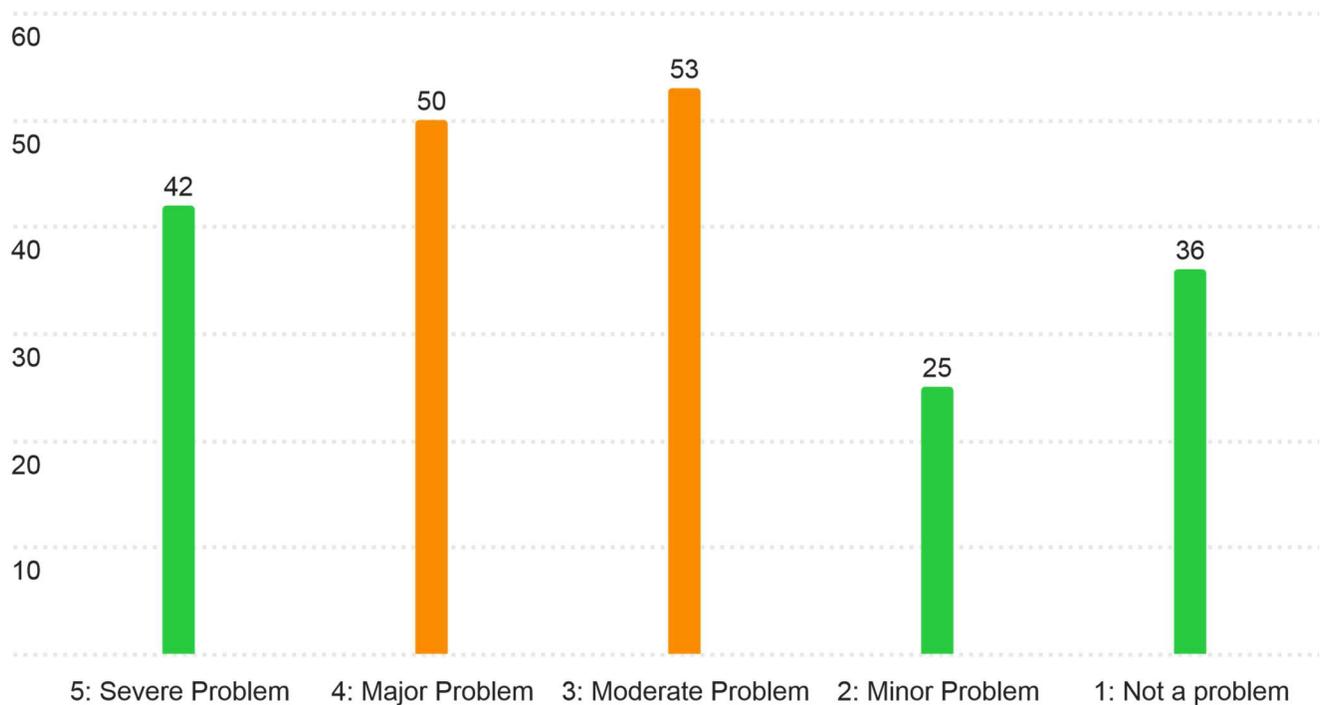
Q92 - Please rate the severity of the following federal challenges: Lack of feedback for Tri-Council scholarship submissions:

251 Responses



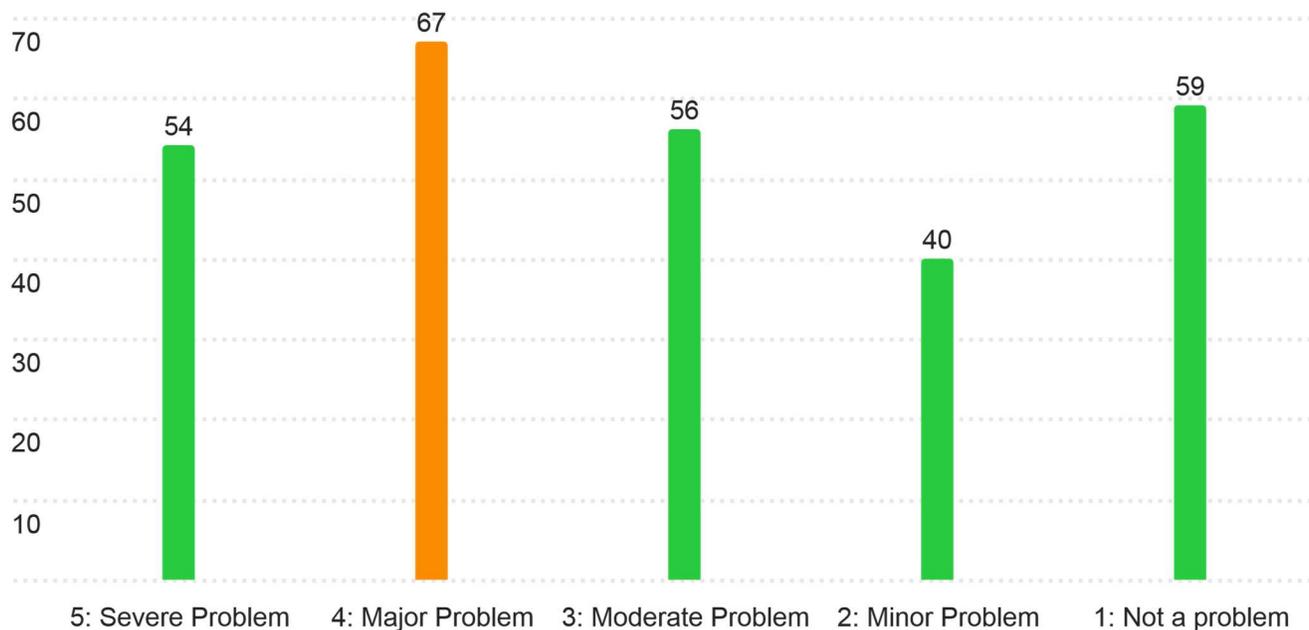
Q93 - Please rate the severity of the following federal challenges: Lack of Mitacs funding opportunities:

206 Responses



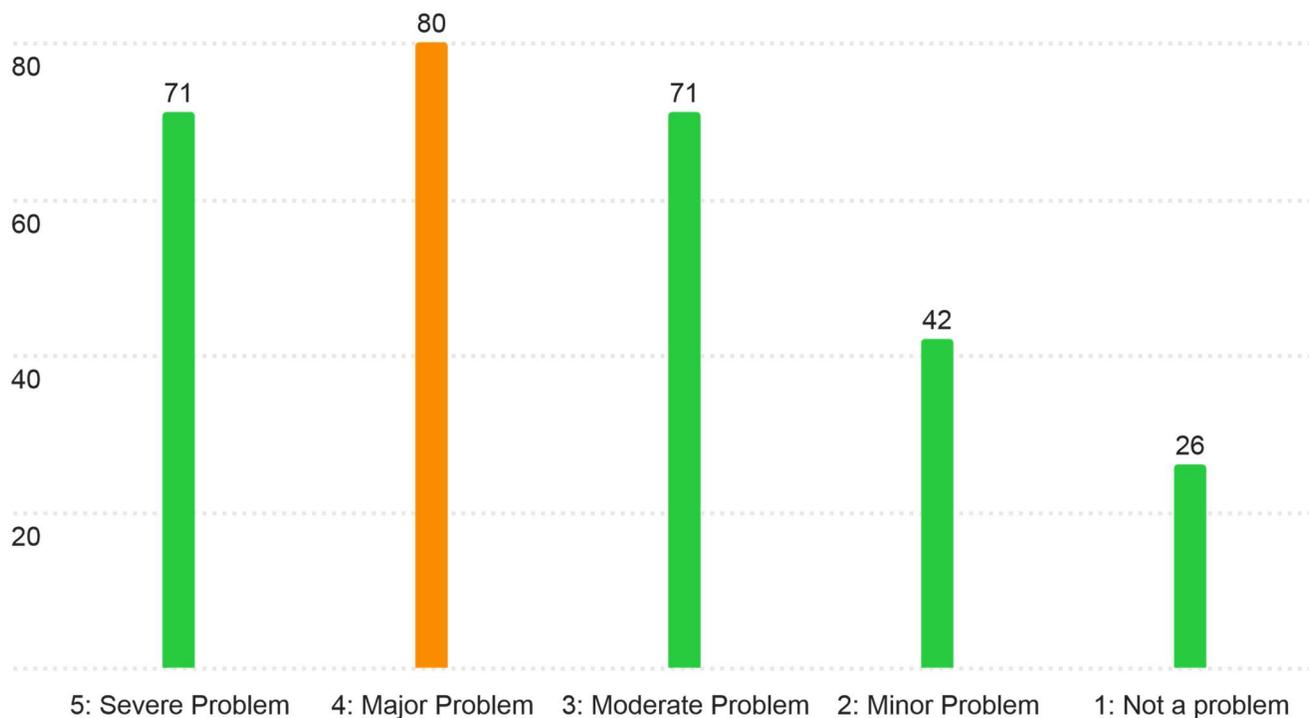
Q94 - Please rate the severity of the following federal challenges: High federal tax burden on stipends:

276 Responses



Q95 - Please rate the severity of the following federal challenges: Limited access to employment benefits/unemployment insurance:

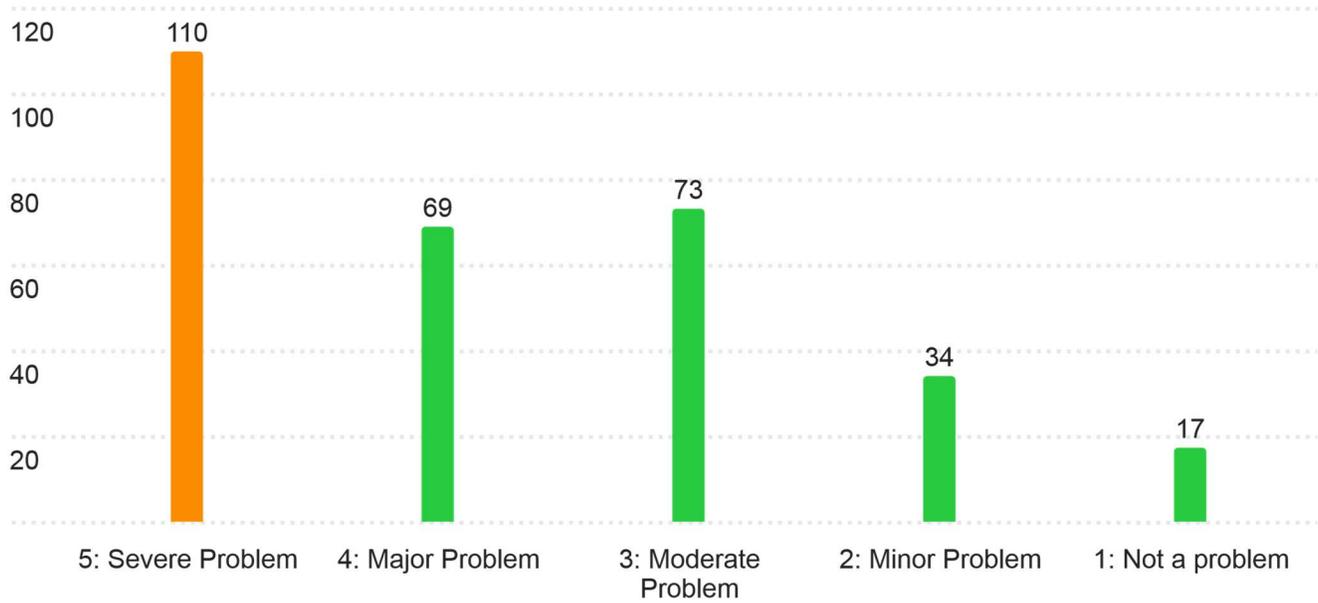
290 Responses



Q96 - Please rate the severity of the following federal challenges:

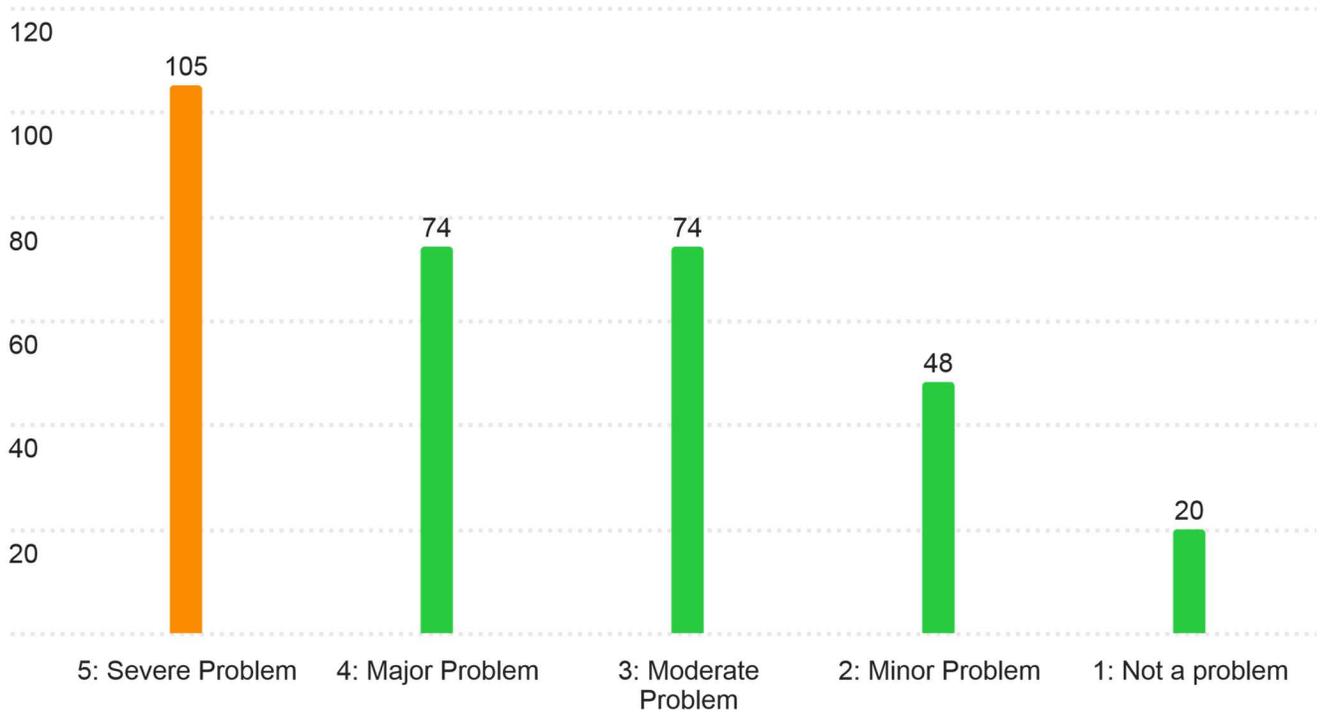
Graduate student ineligibility for Canada Student Grants:

303 Responses



Q97 - Please rate the severity of the following federal challenges: Lack of alternative graduate student-specific financial programs:

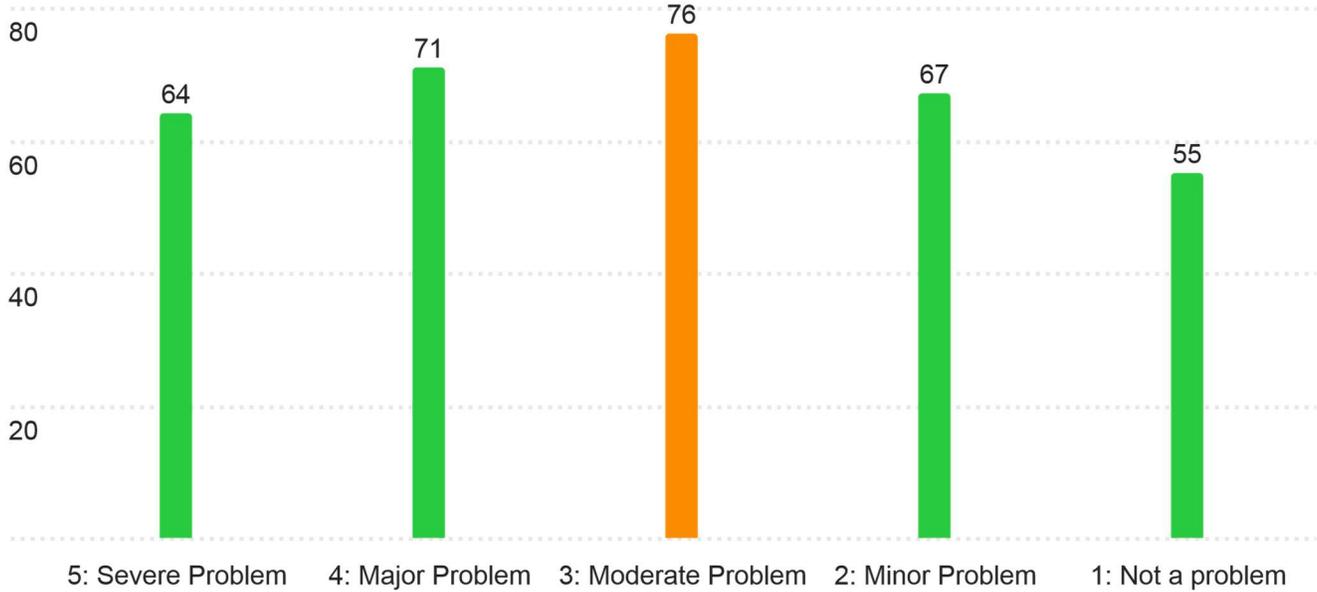
321 Responses



Q98 - Please rate the severity of the following federal challenges:

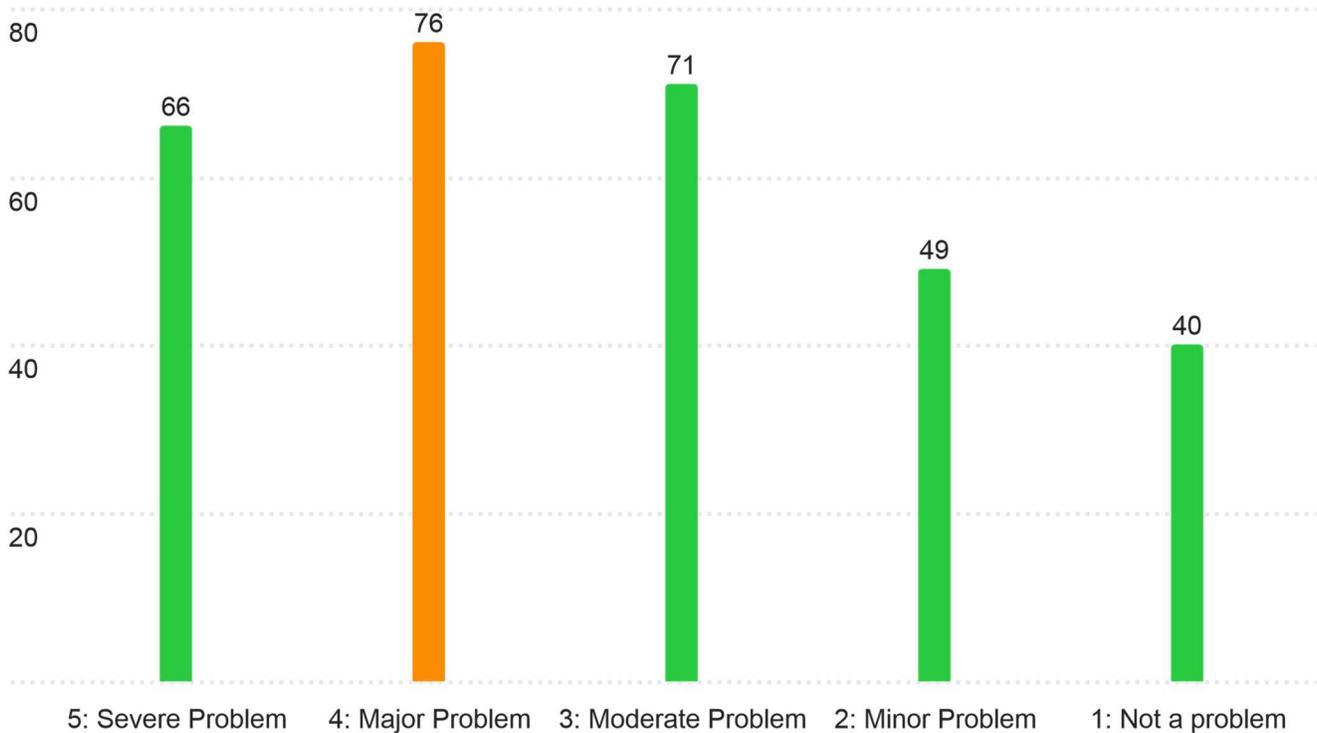
Limited mental health support:

333 Responses



Q99 - Please rate the severity of the following federal challenges: Lack of access to federal pharmacare program:

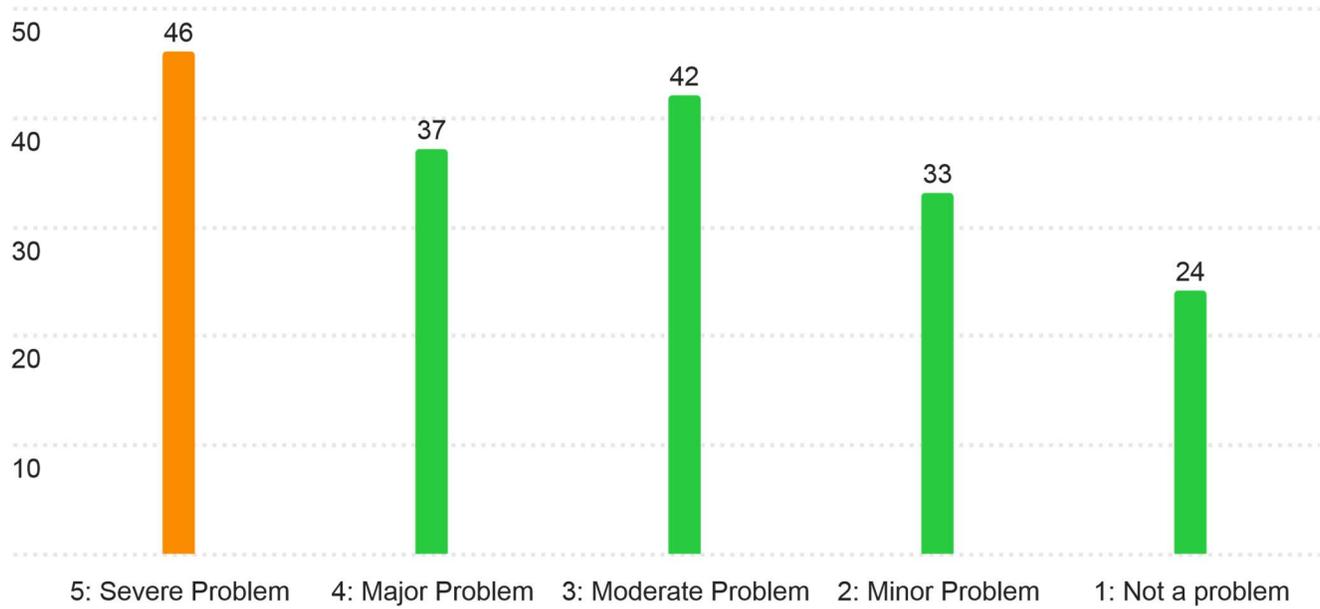
302 Responses



Q100 - Please rate the severity of the following federal challenges:

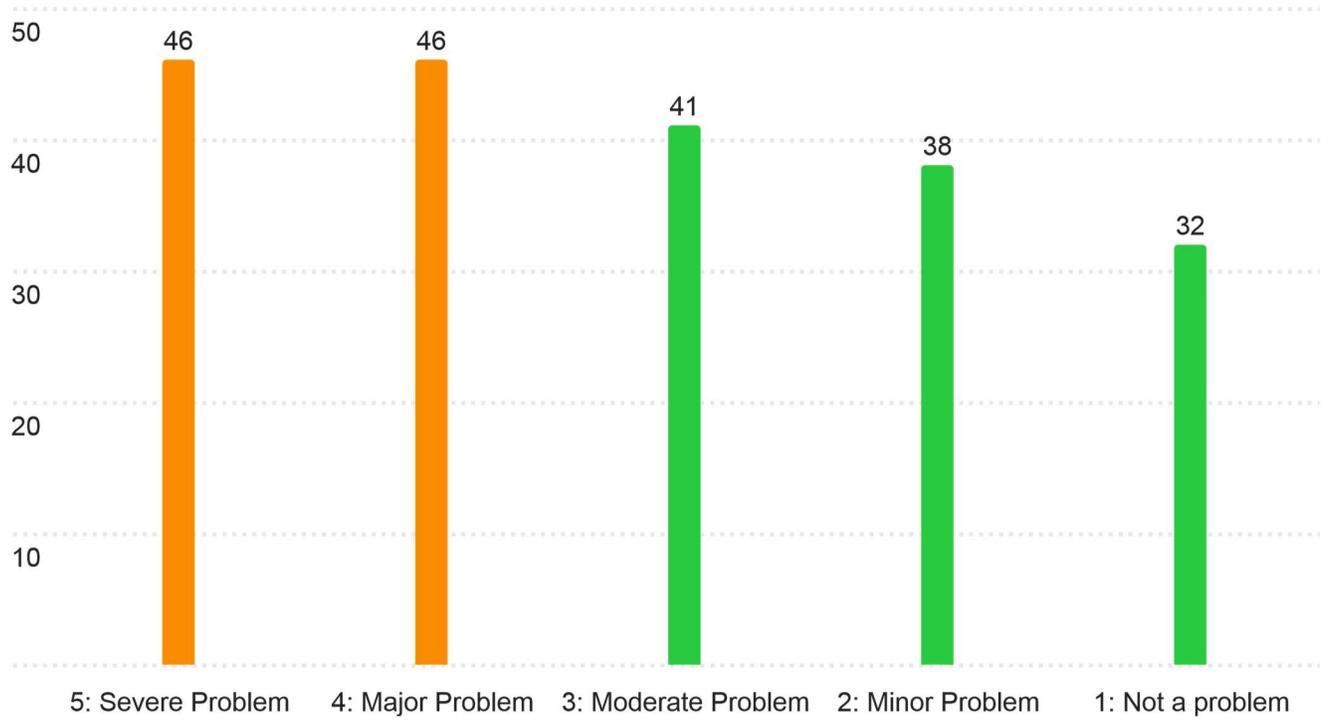
Insufficient childcare support:

182 Responses



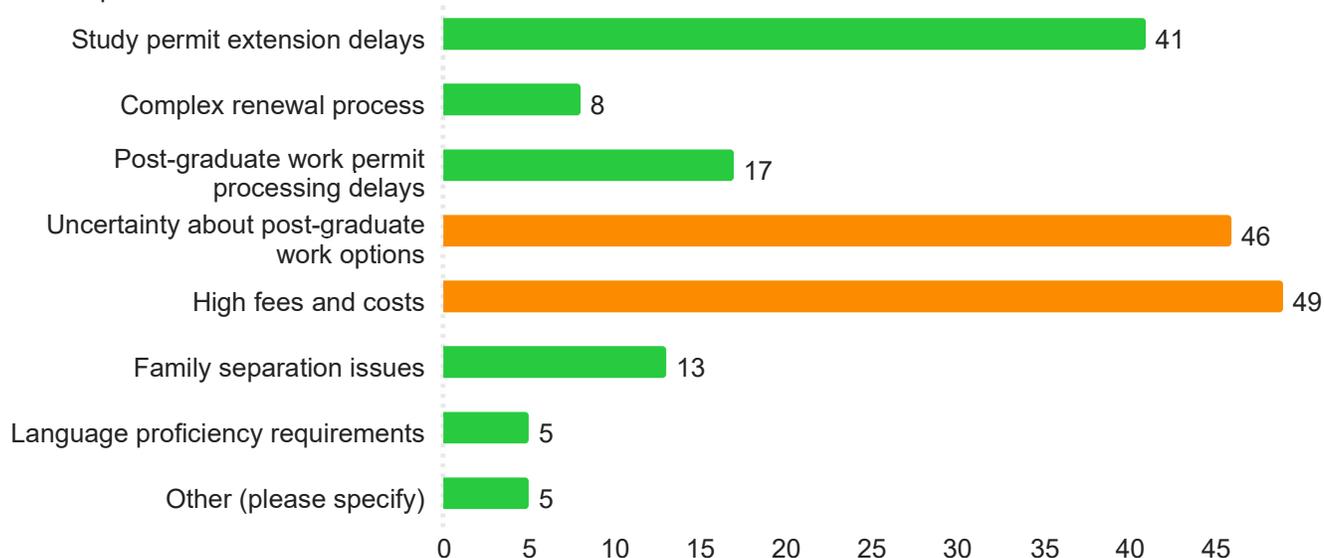
Q101 - Please rate the severity of the following federal challenges:
Limited disability support programs:

203 Responses



Q102 - For international students, which immigration-related challenge affects you the most? (domestic students answer with "N/A") - Selected Choice

184 Responses



Q102_9_TEXT - Other (please specify)

Master degree students have studied in the Canadian's university for 2 years. Needing to take English test just to apply for PGWP imposes additional stress and financial burden on graduate students.

Long processing time for study permit

Path to PR

Limited pathway to citizenship for international students:

Q103 - What changes would you like the GSA to advocate for at the federal level?

What changes would you like the GSA to advocate for at the federal level?

I'd like the GSA to advocate for reduced international tuition fees, more funding and scholarships for international students, and policies that make living and studying in Canada more affordable.

PGWP delay

Increased transparency for CGRS D

Faster application processing times

See my previous responses re: advocacy

n/a

Better protections for international students, including housing, financial aid, and healthcare, and equal tuition rates

At the federal level, you should advocate for things that are a federal government responsibility. Some of the questions in the federal section are a provincial responsibility so provincial items should be taken up at that level.

make PR easy

land back

Advocate for increased federal research grants, better immigration pathways for international graduate students, and their family.

Family separation issues

Ease requirements to obtain PGWP for Master degree students

Na

Environmental challenges facing graduate students

Allowance of family members to be with one

Graduate Student Funding & Financial Security

Increased federal scholarships and fellowships (e.g., CIHR, NSERC, SSHRC) with stipends that reflect cost of living.

Expansion of Canada Graduate Scholarships to support more students.

Tax benefits or loan forgiveness programs for graduate students.

Immigration & International Student Support

Faster, more transparent study permit and work permit processing.

Easier transition pathways from study permits to permanent residency.

Lifting work-hour restrictions during studies.

Research & Innovation Policy

Greater federal investment in research funding, especially for graduate-led projects.

Policies recognizing graduate students as part of Canada's research workforce.

Increased funding for interdisciplinary and social sciences research, not just STEM.

Healthcare & Wellbeing

Inclusion of mental health services in federal healthcare frameworks and funding.

Targeted support for international students who may not be covered under provincial health plans.

Equity, Diversity & Inclusion

Federal programs to support Indigenous graduate students.

Targeted funding and opportunities for underrepresented groups in academia.

Stronger anti-discrimination protections in academic and research institutions.

Labour Rights & Employment

Recognizing graduate students as workers under federal labour law frameworks.

Advocating for fair wages, benefits, and protections for research assistants and teaching assistants.

Federal internship and job placement programs for graduate students entering the workforce.

More PR opportunities to students for students who have completed their education in Canada. These are human resources the Government of Canada has spent money to build.

The GSA should advocate for increased federal research funding and graduate scholarships (e.g., Tri-Council awards) to better support graduate students across disciplines. Immigration processes should be streamlined by extending post-graduation work permit (PGWP) durations and creating clearer permanent residency pathways for international students and their families. At the same time, federal investment in affordable housing and expanded coverage for healthcare services, especially mental health, would ease the financial and personal pressures graduate students face.

IRCC Response Time

Analysis:

A near supermajority of federal responses had “severe problem” as their most picked answer. This reflects the impact of federal research funding and science policies, as well as immigration policy, on graduate student experience. Much like with the provincial and institutional sections, even on funding questions where a plurality of students did not pick “severe problem,” a supermajority of students still are experiencing at least a moderate problem during their studies.

This is unsurprising. As we outlined in our letter to the leaders of each major federal political party last year,²¹ and our submission to SRSR’s study on private sector investment in research and development,²² Canadian graduate stipends are among the lowest compared to other advanced economies, whether measured by raw data or adjusted for cost-of-living. Additionally, while the 2024 federal budget increased the value of Canadian Graduate Scholarships, the most prestigious research scholarships available to graduate students, only a select few ever win this award; beyond that, these increases are still below the inflation-adjusted value of the awards back in 2004.²³ Other federal research grants—namely, other research grants distributed by the Tri-Councils, or funding from the Canadian Foundation for Innovation—typically can only reach a graduate student if they are partnered with a senior academic on a research project. Mitacs, which offers internships and funding for research projects, only has a limited number of spots for students. Taken together, Canadian graduate students face limited funding opportunities from the federal government, despite the federal government playing an outsized role in funding research in Canada. Understandably, this is reflected by the number of students who say that a lack of alternative funding opportunities for graduate students—and special mention goes to course-based graduate students, who are not eligible for federal research funding—represent a “severe problem.” Compounding this is the fact that graduate students are not currently able to receive a Canada Student Grant, despite that grant being the most distributed form of direct funding between Ottawa and Canadian post-secondary students.

Concerns over the immigration process reflect both the large number of international students in the graduate student population and the uncertainty that resulted from IRCC implementing caps on the number of foreign students Canadian PSI’s can admit. International graduate students have subsequently been made exempt from the Provincial Attestation Letter caps, which UCGSA is incredibly grateful for.²⁴ But as highlighted in a brief we wrote to IRCC, international students are facing struggles around processing time delays for study permits, post-graduate work permits, and spousal open work

²¹ <https://gsa.ucalgary.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/UCGSA-Open-Letter-to-Federal-Party-Leaders-PDF.pdf>

²² <https://gsa.ucalgary.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/UCGSA-Submission-to-the-Standing-Committee-on-Science-and-Research-on-Private-Investment-in-Research-and-Development-PDF.pdf>

²³ <https://gsa.ucalgary.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/UCGSA-Open-Letter-to-Federal-Party-Leaders-PDF.pdf>

²⁴ <https://gsa.ucalgary.ca/federal-update-makes-graduate-education-more-accessible-for-international-students/>

permits.²⁵ This has directly contributed to the lower-than-average per capita rate of graduate students in Canada than other advanced economies, as processing delays turn prospective students off of applying to, or accepting admission in, Canadian universities.²⁶ This in turn lowers Canada’s innovative potential and productivity by losing out on key international talent, the recruitment of whom represent one of Prime Minister Mark Carney’s major policy initiatives.²⁷ High application costs, among other barriers to entry for international graduate students, exacerbate the problems and stresses facing these students.

Similar to the answers from the provincial section, graduate students are concerned about affordable healthcare (particularly Canada’s national pharmacare program), a lack of childcare options, mental health programs, access to disability programs, and lack of funding for Indigenous students. Students are less concerned about support for Francophone research, but this likely reflects the small Francophone population on campus; the federal government should prioritize speaking to graduate students in Quebec to gauge whether French-language research is sufficiently supported. Students also are only moderately concerned about IP rights around their research, which again might reflect the limited research opportunities given to Canadian graduate students as a result of insufficient funding.

Problems that are more specific to the federal government include taxes on stipends, which students say are too high, and lack of access to EI benefits, which reflects the transitory and complex nature of graduate employment at a university.

The administration of the Tri-Councils, and their CGS competition in particular, concerns UCalgary graduate students. Graduate students do not sit on any of the major decision-making bodies within the Tri-Councils, which means academic policy is decided upon without direct input from Canada’s graduate student population. This was identified as a problem in two of our submissions to SRSR—it’s study on the Capstone research organization²⁸ and its study on private sector investment in R&D²⁹—as well as *Investing in Innovators*, a white paper from the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations that UCGSA staff and Executives contributed to.³⁰ Students also identified a lack of feedback as being a concern. This too is unsurprising, as rejected applications for Tri-Council awards do not know how to improve their applications, or incorporate any reasons for a rejection into their research project, under the current process. Students also identified the complexity of applying for CGS awards as a major barrier. This too could be a serious accessibility concern, as without clear and easily followed instructions for uploading research proposals, transcripts, and references, highly qualified candidates could be rejected or discouraged from applying outright. The website does not filter out bad researchers, after all: it only filters out students who struggle with the current website interface.

²⁵ <https://gsa.ucalgary.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/UCGSA-Brief-on-Student-Permit-Extension-Delays-and-PGWP-Processing-Delays-PDF.pdf>

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ <https://www.pm.gc.ca/en/mandate-letters/2025/05/21/mandate-letter>

²⁸ <https://gsa.ucalgary.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/UCGSA-Brief-to-the-Standing-Committee-on-Science-and-Research-Capstone-Project-1-1.pdf>

²⁹ <https://gsa.ucalgary.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/UCGSA-Submission-to-the-Standing-Committee-on-Science-and-Research-on-Private-Investment-in-Research-and-Development-PDF.pdf>

³⁰ https://www.casa-acae.com/investing_in_innovators_publication

Much like with the provincial government, then, a focus on increasing the amount of funding available for graduate students would go a long way towards making Canada's post-secondary system more attractive, robust, and student friendly. Addressing processing times, uncertainty around post-graduate work opportunities, and the high costs of applying as an international student would also make Canada more welcoming for international talent, an important means of increasing our economic competitiveness in a time where international trade regimes and alliances are collapsing. Expanding social programs, particularly childcare and pharmacare, would also help ease the concerns of graduate students.

Of course, the Canadian government faces similar financial pressures as the Albertan government. Luckily, regulatory changes, such as placing graduate students in the decision-making bodies of the Tri-Councils, adding feedback to CGS competitions, and making awards websites less complex, would still have a noticeable impact on improving graduate student lives. Nothing can substitute for expanding funding, however, especially if it results in more downstream research from graduate students. And no regulatory changes will have as big of an impact as liberalizing, and simplifying, the immigration process for foreign talent.

General Feedback

Data:

Q104 - Please list your top 3 advocacy priorities for the year, with 1 being the most important:

Please list your top 3 advocacy priorities for the year, with 1 being the most important:

Affordable tuition and cost of living support for graduate students

Increased funding and research opportunities

Improved mental health and wellness resources

1. Housing 2. PGWP delay 3. Dental coverage

1. GAT wages
2. Food and housing security
3. CGRS D/Tri-council transparency

Get more funding for the university as a whole
More post graduate professional opportunities for students
Faster and application processing times for immigration related applications

Defunding programs and supports that students dont actually use or have measurable improvement outcomes. I have not ever seen data or evidence that the GSA is effective at these things, nor do I actually believe that the GSA is collecting data on the interests of graduate students well. This survey was structured in a very biased way that wasn't clear what was being asked in many of the questions.

1. DEI
2. Childcare affordability
3. Housing affordability

1. Increased protections for lgbtq+ students
2. Better protection for international students
3. More funding for indigenous-led research.

1. Freedom to research and receive research funds without having to first pass a provincial ideological purity test
2. Funding for administrative support for the university so that less time of researchers and grad students needs to be spent just keeping the system running
3. The that different levels work together

Increased Research Funding/stipend
Mental health
Improved pathways for permanent residents for students

1. Funding and financial support

funding

Funding support

1) land back; 2) end involuntary treatment; 3) build more dignified social housing

Increase guaranteed graduate funding to match cost of living

Fees and funding , career and study related and , employment .

Post graduation journey
housing food security

Increased financial aid, increased graduate student stipends, better/more affordable housing

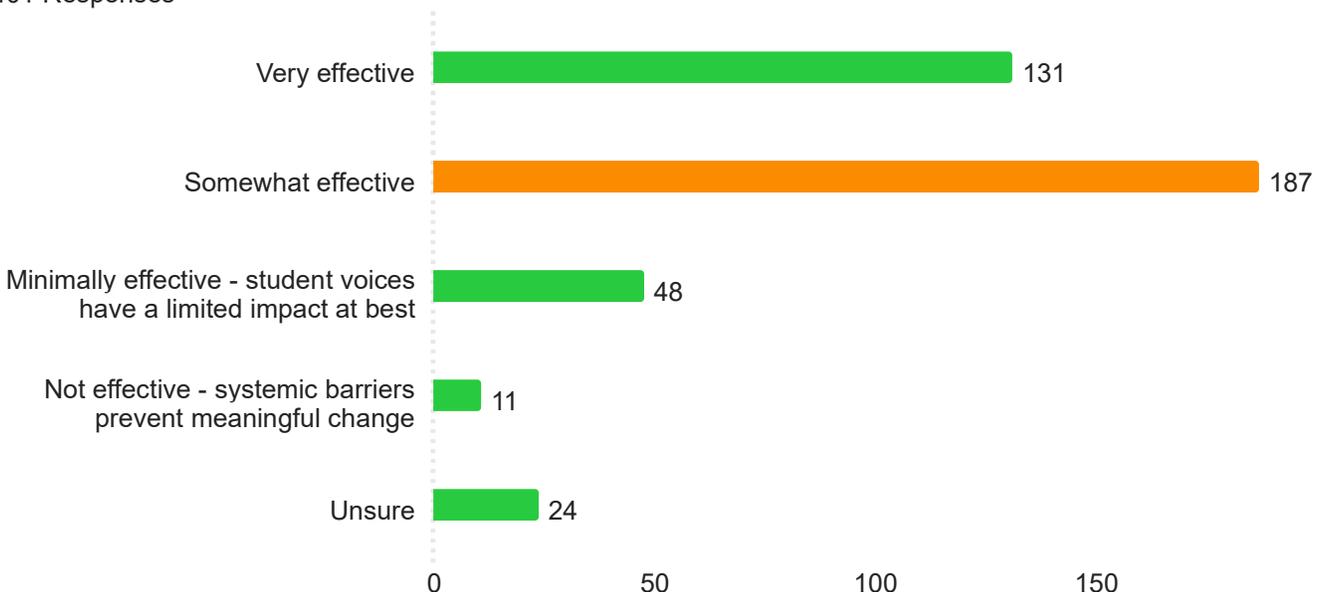
1. Federal/Provincial research and education funding
2. Provincial support of EDI programs and policies
3. Public transit and biking infrastructure support

Reduce tuition fees, reduce housing rental fees, ease requirement on obtaining PGWP for master degree students

Lower interest rates for student loans
More student scholarships for Indigenous students
Accessible mental health support

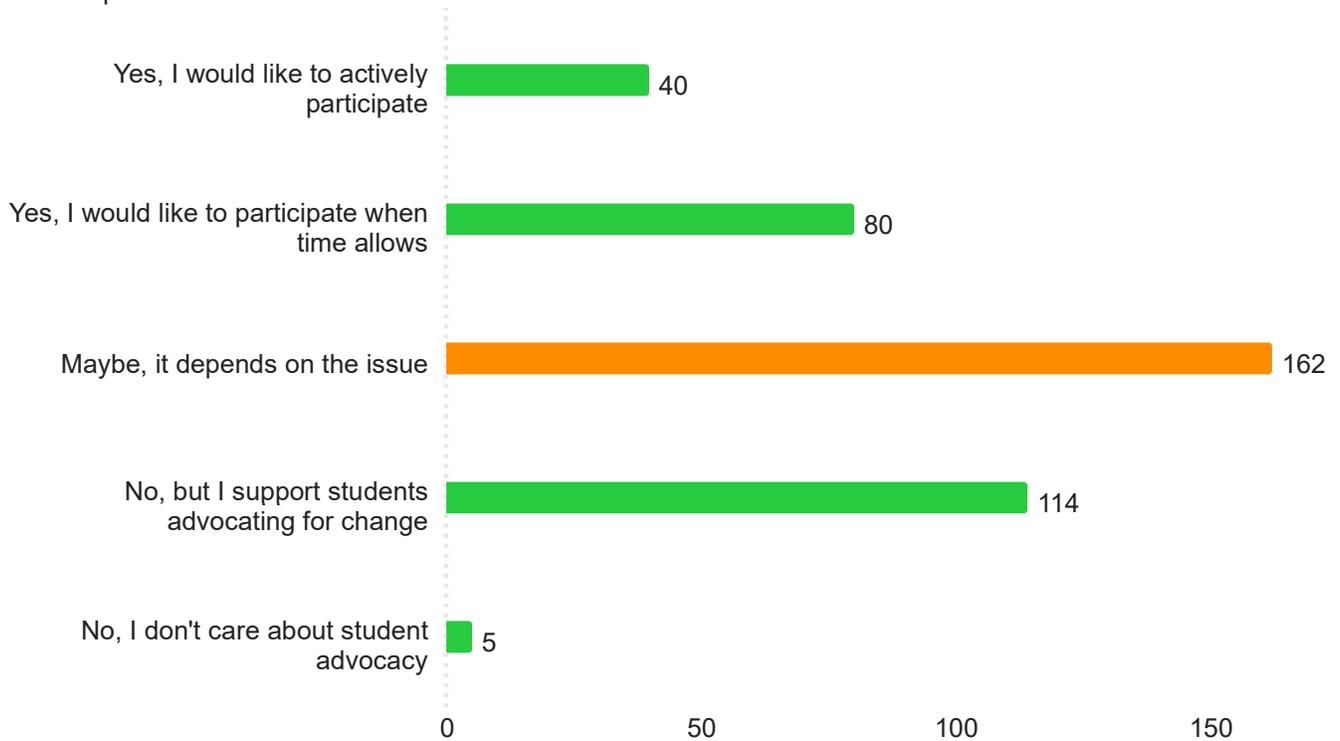
Q105 - How effective do you believe student advocacy can be to create positive change?

401 Responses

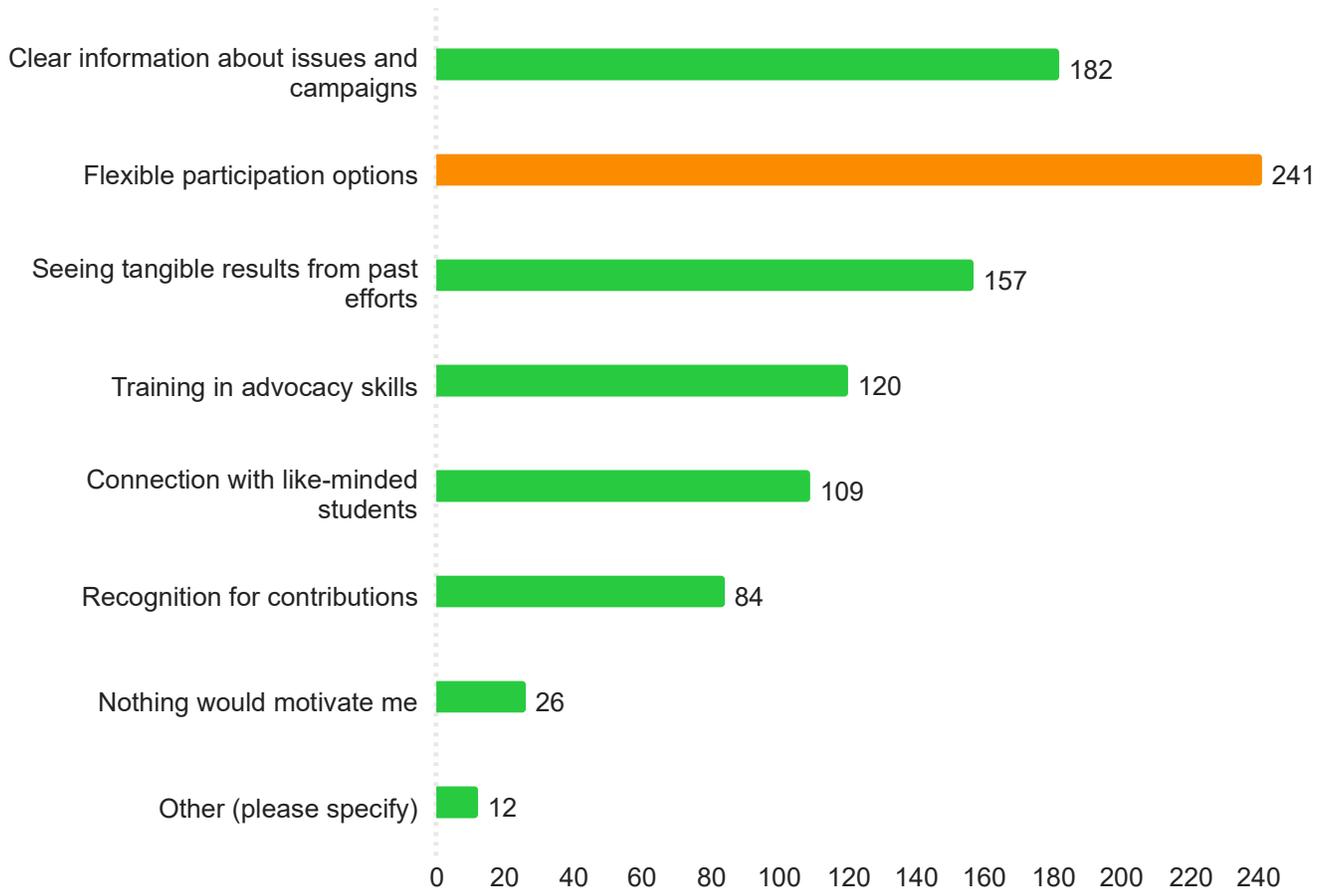


Q106 - Would you be interested in participating in GSA advocacy efforts?

401 Responses



Q107 - What would motivate you to participate more in GSA advocacy activities? (select all that apply) - Selected Choice



Q107_8_TEXT - Other (please specify) - Text

Other (please specify) - Text

If the GSA would demonstrate that it is the responsibility for students to do the actual work and not leave things up to a miniscule group of professionals to do their work for them.

I am motivated but I have no good mental health, time and energy.

I don't live in Calgary. It would be great to have off campus representation.

More efficiency in beaucratic system

I work full time, so don't have time to participate, I as well have severe anxiety among other restraints so can't advocate in person.

Online student taking courses in BC. If there were online opportunities I may get involved as lots of grad students aren't actually located in Calgary

If I had time and energy after school and work, maybe.

time- already overwhelmed with school and work

Actually solve students problems

I care about the topic but don't have a lot of time to commit. Very well defined roles so I could help in a tangible and short term way and then move out would be helpful

Focusing on areas where we actually have leverage. Or if you focused on building connections to organizations rather than padding your resumes.

Q108 - What success stories or positive changes have you witnessed in graduate student advocacy?

What success stories or positive changes have you witnessed in graduate student advocacy?

I've noticed stronger awareness and action around mental health support, more open communication between the GSA and the university, and gradual improvements in funding transparency and student representation in decision-making.

N/A

Academically-employed employees contract

The tuitions did not increase that much last year
TAs got paid some more
Grads got 1K extra dollars last year

I have not witnessed any

n/a

na

That a funding policy exists on campus at all. Alex P. should be everyone's hero.

Financial map

some schools have signed on to bds

I've seen improvements in mental health support and greater awareness of graduate student financial needs, which shows advocacy is making a real impact.

Increased minimum stipend

NA

Na

I've seen progress in areas such as increased mental health resources, greater transparency around fee structures, and improved access to professional development workshops. These changes show that graduate student voices are being heard and can lead to meaningful institutional improvements.

Minimum funding and the collective agreement.

None

Financial & Funding Wins

Introduction or expansion of graduate scholarships and bursaries.

Increases to TA/RA wages or recognition of graduate assistants as employees.

Mental Health & Wellness

Improved access to on-campus counseling and wellness programs.

Inclusion of mental health supports in student healthcare plans.

Equity, Diversity & Inclusion

Creation of EDI offices, policies, or dedicated funding for underrepresented graduate students.

More awareness and resources for Indigenous, international, and marginalized student groups.

Community & Campus Life

Strengthened partnerships with municipal services (e.g., discounted transit passes, housing advocacy).

Enhanced communication between students and university administration through town halls, forums, or direct consultation.

Policy & Structural Change

Graduate students being included in university decision-making bodies.

Success in lobbying for fairer tuition policies or limiting fee increases.

I love to see the graduate community come together during the events.

I have seen positive outcomes where graduate student advocacy led to expanded mental health services and shorter wait times for counseling on campus. The GSA has also played a role in securing more transparency around tuition increases and ensuring students are consulted before major institutional policy changes. In

addition, ongoing efforts to improve transit affordability and safety for students have shown that advocacy can result in meaningful, tangible improvements to graduate student life.

Q109 - What is the most significant challenge you face as a graduate student that hasn't been addressed in this survey?

What is the most significant challenge you face as a graduate student that hasn't been addressed in this survey?

Balancing research, coursework, and financial pressures while maintaining well-being is a major challenge. There's also limited institutional support for affordable housing and long-term career development for graduate students

N/A

I am just too busy and stressed all the time

Work and school balance

n/a

Lack of community inclusion programs for out of province students and international students.

Bus transport

lack of support for finding jobs while in school

The lack of affordable, graduate-student-only housing options — living with non-graduate students creates daily stress and affects my focus.

Leave the hometown to creat new home

no law enforcement , corruption everywhere

Study permit extension

Supervisor issues

NA

Adhd support

Na

impact financially of being a part time student

Part-time students get basically no benefit. Fees are the same (general fees are less, but tuition fees are the same), timelines are still the same and I have less access to funding.

Balancing high tuition costs with limited funding opportunities, while also managing the rising cost of living in Calgary. This financial strain creates significant stress and makes it difficult to focus fully on academic and research responsibilities.

My status as a worker and the relationship between the University of Calgary and myself as an employer/employee relationship.

Q109 - If you could communicate one message directly to university administrators, what would it be?

Put your salaries where your mouths are when our provincial institutions are democratically backsliding. uCalgary will be a conservative-leaning school, that's fine, it is what it is. But conservative doesn't have to mean antidemocratic. Be bold, don't be like what UofA is folding into.

Please prioritize affordability, mental health, and research support for graduate students. Investing in these areas directly improves student success, innovation, and the university's overall reputation.

Thank you for all your support

Try to get more funding for the university. Trying to cut the costs to adjust to the budget is a sore sight

Make the university a third space again

Continue promoting DEI initiatives

Don't forget about the students.

More funding for PhD students

do not ever brutalize your students with militarized police!

Invest in graduate students' well-being and professional development by ensuring adequate funding, mental health support, and relevant, industry-applicable training.

Please create more opportunities for course based students , hold the tech participation events in curriculum, etc.

there is people paying less fees than they must be, corruption !

Pay graduate students more or lower tuition

Reduce tuition fees

Na

Try living on a grad student stipend in this economy before you give yourself another raise.

Please prioritize affordability and accessibility for graduate students by limiting tuition increases, expanding scholarships, and ensuring timely access to mental health and career support services. These investments will directly improve student success and strengthen the university's reputation.

Eat my shorts

Improvement in stipends

Check with your graduate students - the off-site ones. We are not ok. We are students too.

Q110 - If you could communicate one message directly to City Council, what would it be?

Find some way to build AFFORDABLE housing now and figure out how to pay for it later. We can't afford necessities and Calgary is such a large and increasingly global city that we need to find a way to house everyone affordably and safely without all these private slumlords or inconsiderate conglomerates owning all the big buildings. We're too cold and above-ground to have housing be an issue.

Please work to make housing and public transit more affordable and reliable for students. Improved accessibility and safety around campus areas would greatly enhance student life and community engagement.

As international students, we need to engage with the City by implementing our research projects.

Fix the public transportations. It is unreliable and unpleasant to use

no comment

Continue the great infrastructure work

The ability to travel throughout the city WITHOUT A CAR is beneficial to all. This is what makes a world-class city. If you look at the majority of world-class cities around the planet, the majority of those that tourists want to visit are easily accessible without a car. Being car-dependent hurts the city and keeps visitors away.

bus communication increase

stop the street sweeps!

Provide more affordable, graduate-student-only housing to reduce stress and support students' academic success.

Improve transportation, and also improve the security , there are homeless people roaming all around the city

you have poor law enforcement

Transit to and from Foothills is atrocious and should have increased service times and later service times

Create more reliable public transport

Na

Please work to expand affordable housing options and improve reliable public transit, as graduate students are heavily impacted by rising living costs and transportation challenges in Calgary.

Rezoning is a good thing

Improvement in the ridiculous and exorbitant house rent

Affordable Housing

“Graduate students are vital members of the community, but the lack of affordable housing is pushing us into financial precarity — we urge City Council to prioritize inclusive housing solutions.” Transit & Mobility

“Reliable, affordable public transit — especially late-night service — is essential for graduate students balancing research, teaching, and family responsibilities.”

Community Safety & Wellbeing

“Please invest in safer, well-lit, and accessible neighborhoods around campus so graduate students and residents alike feel secure moving through the city.”

Integration of Students in Civic Life

“Graduate students contribute significantly to the local economy and culture; we ask for greater inclusion of student voices in municipal planning and decision-making.”

Students need more housing urgently!

Q111 - If you could communicate one message directly to the provincial government or official opposition, what would it be?

To the provincial government: I hate you. I hope your legacy hates you too.

To the official opposition: good luck, do your best, don't give up. You might not benefit from your sacrifices, so ensure your legacies do.

Please increase investment in post-secondary education to make graduate studies more affordable and sustainable. Expanding funding, scholarships, and research support will strengthen Alberta's innovation and talent development.

International students are looking for jobs.

Fund Universities some more!

no comment

Support teachers better

Higher education with the freedom to research issues to wherever the research leads is important for the future of the province. This fundamental research can take a considerably longer time than a single election cycle.

PR process easiness

danielle smith needs to resign

Increase funding and scholarships to support research by female engineers and women in STEM fields.

there is people getting full driver's licenses without taking any road test, or knowledge test.

Provide more funds for graduate students

Create more pathways for students to go in the workforce

Na

academic institutions need more funding, not less, if we are to keep top talent in our province.

Danielle (Marlaina), if you actually care about Albertans, step down immediately.

Invest more in post-secondary education by stabilizing tuition, increasing graduate scholarships, and funding mental health services to ensure Alberta remains competitive in attracting and retaining top talent.

Eat my shorts

Improvement in the ridiculous and exorbitant house rent

Fund education. Relying on International students to fund universities is not okay and is a bad plan.

Q112 - If you could communicate one message directly to the federal government or official opposition, what would it be?

Cut the bipartisan showmanship. It's not your lives, but it's the rest of us who have to live with your decisions. Fix the issues, come at them from different perspectives, and quit fighting like chickens.

Please improve support for international and domestic graduate students through fair tuition policies, affordable housing initiatives, and faster, more transparent immigration and work permit processes. Investing in graduate education strengthens Canada's research and innovation capacity.

We need better housing prices

Fund Universities some more!

no comment

Support Indigenous initiatives more

Basic research in all fields is essential to the vitality of the nation. STEM might help the economy, but the rest will keep us as a country.

Easy pr process

Land Back!

Increase federal research grants, improve immigration pathways for international graduate students, and make student loan programs more affordable.

fake refugees easily get everything and stay in Canada, we international students do the right thing and then we need to leave Canada.

The CGRS application process is unnecessarily difficult to complete. Also, graduate students should be eligible for the Canada Student Grant and for the federal disability grant

Ease requirement on PGWP eligibility and retain talented international students in workforce

Na

Increase funding for research grants and immigration support for international graduate students, as they play a vital role in Canada's innovation, workforce, and long-term economic growth.

Eat my shorts

Improvement in the ridiculous and exorbitant house rent

Value education. Value creativity and critical thinkers.

Research Funding & Scholarships

“Federal graduate scholarships and fellowships have not kept pace with inflation in over 20 years — increased, sustainable funding is critical to retaining top talent and advancing Canada’s research future.”

Immigration & International Students

“International graduate students strengthen Canada’s research and economy; streamline immigration pathways, ease work restrictions, and make the transition to permanent residency more accessible.”

Cost of Living & Student Debt

“Graduate students contribute to Canada’s innovation and workforce, yet many live in poverty; we need fair financial support, loan forgiveness, and cost-of-living relief to continue our studies.”

Equity & Access

“Targeted federal support for Indigenous and marginalized graduate students is essential for building a more inclusive, equitable research landscape.”

Please allow international students to work more hours. With little funding and limited work hours how shall we survive, especially during Spring and Summer semesters.

Q113 - Any additional comments or suggestions for the GSA's advocacy efforts?

Do your best, share your victories shamelessly, and be moral and ethical in your positions.

The GSA is doing great work supporting graduate students. I encourage continued focus on affordability, mental health, and research funding, along with stronger collaboration with government and industry to create more opportunities for students.

N/A

God speed!

Advocate where it makes sense to do so. Don't advocate where your efforts don't have tangible results.

Students need to be actively involved. A GSA VP meeting with a city councillor counts as 1. 100 students living in their ward and talking with them count as 100.

No

n/a

Continue prioritizing funding, mental health support, and housing for graduate students, and ensure that advocacy reflects the diverse needs of all students, including women in STEM and international students.

Shorten the survey next time... 🙏 ya please gift me the laptop , i need it so badly 🙏

thank you very much for all the work you do.

NA

Na

Thank you for your advocacy. Please continue focusing on affordability, mental health, and international student support, while improving communication of resources and industry partnerships for career development. Ensuring diverse student voices are included will make your efforts even stronger.

Y'all are doing good work. Push the envelope more.

None

Encouragement & Recognition

"The GSA has made real progress in giving graduate students a voice — please continue amplifying our concerns at every level of government."

Stronger Communication & Transparency

"More regular updates on advocacy wins and ongoing efforts would help students feel connected and engaged in the process."

Broader Collaboration

"Consider building coalitions with other student associations across the province/country to strengthen our collective bargaining power."

Inclusivity & Representation

"Ensure advocacy priorities reflect the needs of international, Indigenous, and marginalized graduate students, who often face the steepest barriers."

Long-Term Vision

"In addition to immediate concerns like funding and housing, please advocate for long-term structural changes that will make graduate education more sustainable and equitable."

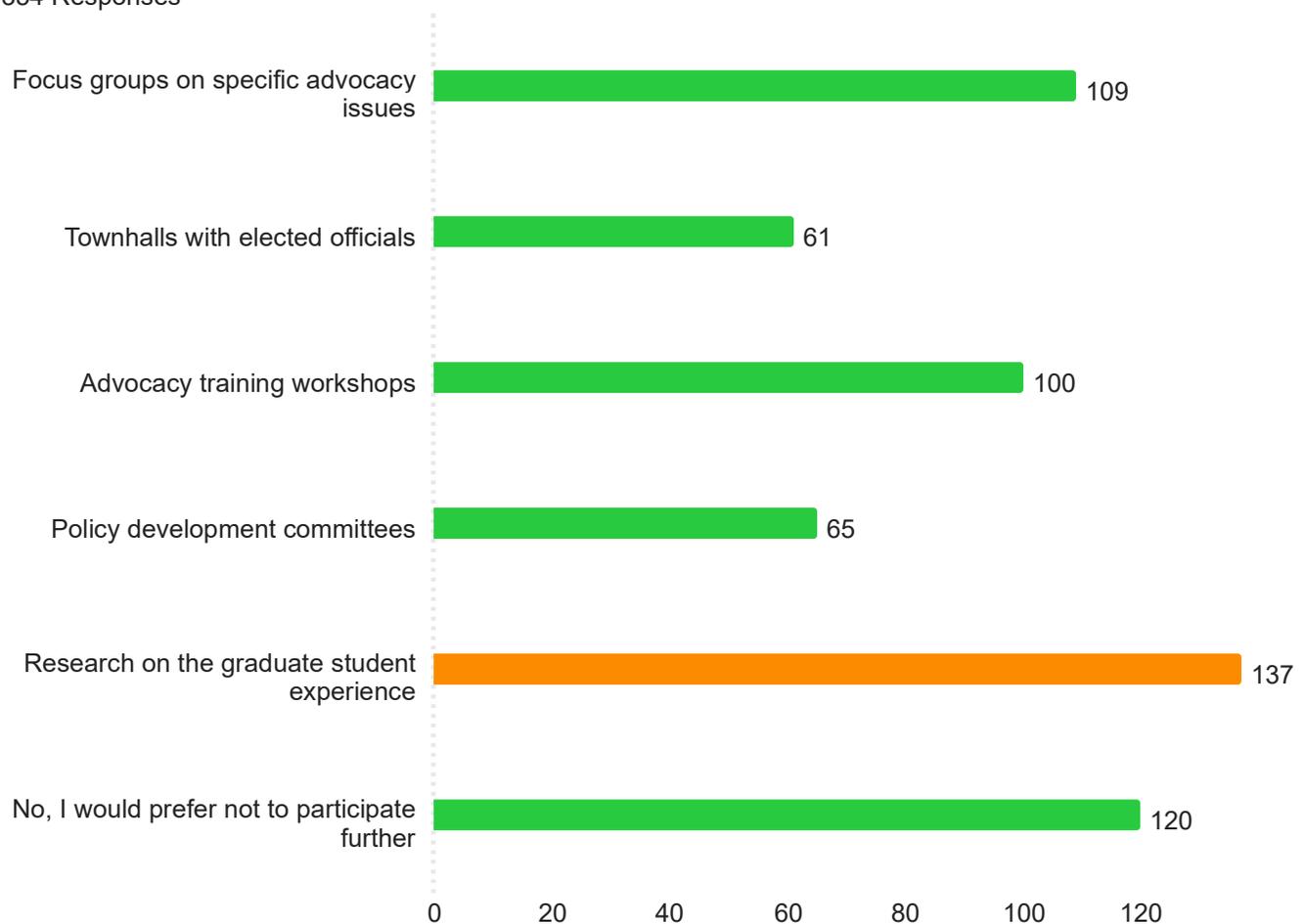
Please allow an insurance program that allows students to top up their dental or eyecare should have a medical emergency.

The GSA's advocacy is most effective when it clearly communicates graduate student concerns to all levels of decision-makers and ensures consistent follow-up on commitments. I encourage the GSA to prioritize transparency by regularly updating students on advocacy progress and outcomes, and to strengthen collaboration with other student associations across Alberta and Canada. Continued focus on affordability, healthcare access, and international student support will make a meaningful difference in graduate student life.

None, thank you for all you do!

Q114 - Would you be interested in participating in the following advocacy activities? (select all that apply)

354 Responses



Analysis:

Of the students who answered our written responses at the end of the survey, funding was again a frequently cited concern. Written responses mentioned EDIA quite frequently as well, showing that support for policies to rectify systemic and historical biases is strong among the UCalgary graduate student population. International student concerns made up the bulk of the responses involving the federal government. And much like Canadians as a whole, affordability concerns, be it housing, groceries, or services like childcare, loom large over graduate programs. Despite academia's reputation as an Ivory Tower, real-world problems have little issue impacting the graduate student population.

Feedback specific to UCGSA emphasized communicating more of our advocacy efforts and wins to students, so they are aware of what we are doing (and what their advocacy levy is being spent on). Many others also implored us to ensure that we do not gloss over the concerns of marginalized students. This is important to keep in mind when dealing with a survey of the student population. Just because an issue rates low as a priority in the survey results may reflect the problem impacting a marginalized community, either entirely or to a disproportionate extent. A problem that only affects a few students can nonetheless be lifechanging for those who are impacted by it.

Finally, students would prefer to be involved more on the periphery of UCGSA advocacy (participating in research, focus groups) or not participate at all, rather than participate in a labour-intensive way (advocacy workshops, policy development committees). This is understandable. Graduate students are full-time students with nearly half having an academic employment contract at any given time. Timely graduation can mean the difference between getting a tenure-track job or not. And unlike our undergraduate counterparts, there is currently no policy that grants graduate students a leave of absence from their studies to, say, run for an elected position. This is not because FGS does not see the value in student leadership, but because it is far too complex to make exceptions to the graduate student calendar to the extent that would be required.

Conclusion

Across the board, funding is the main concern for UCalgary graduate students, and they expect UCGSA advocacy to reflect this. Stipends and tuition fees are the major issues that are specific to the institutional level, housing is the main concern for the municipal level, EDIA rollbacks and worker rights are this for the provincial level, and immigration processing delays are the main federal-specific challenge identified by students.

As far as funding goes, special mention should be given to course-based students. Despite representing a significant portion of our population, they are not eligible for most forms of funding at the institutional, provincial, and federal level (municipalities lack the authority to directly fund graduate students). This is even though course-based students *do* produce research (particularly if their program ends in a capstone project) and the human capital they gain from their education *does* contribute to Canada's overall economic prosperity. While we have listed several funding recommendations in the analysis sections of this report, even we have struggled to find funding policies for course-based students. All of us, the GSA included, need to do better by this group.

For UCGSA, feedback suggests that we should promote our advocacy more frequently, as not enough students are aware of the government and stakeholder relations the organization does. Emails appear to be the most effective means of doing so, albeit with the caveat that some students currently believe we send *too many* emails.

Funding constraints on the institutional, provincial, and federal level will likely persist for the near future, meaning that funding challenges are unlikely to abate anytime soon. Similarly, housing and rent will remain a problem so long as rezoning is repealed at the municipal level. Food inflation remains stubbornly high, in part because of tariffs, internal trade barriers, and supply chain issues. Immigration will continue to be a hot-button issue until Canada's GDP per capita begins to increase, even though immigrants are in fact a net economic positive and, indeed, help *lessen* budget deficits for governments.³¹ The upshot of all this is that funding, housing, food security, and immigration are unlikely to disappear as major concerns for graduate students. The data collected in this report can likely be used to guide advocacy efforts beyond the 2025 collection date.

³¹ <https://www.cato.org/blog/cato-study-immigrants-reduced-deficits-145-trillion-1994>



GRADUATE
STUDENTS'
ASSOCIATION

UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY