

## **Vermonters' Opinions Concerning the University of Vermont, 2003**

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## **Introduction**

In 2003, with the start of a new University of Vermont (UVM) administration led by President Daniel Fogel, it seems an appropriate time to begin a longitudinal study to examine Vermonters' beliefs about, and attitudes towards, the University over time. Such information will serve as a useful measure for UVM, and other interested parties, to see how UVM is perceived by the residents of Vermont as it evolves under the new leadership.

## **Methodology**

The data used in this report were collected by the Center for Rural Studies at the University of Vermont as part of the annual "Vermont Poll." The polling was conducted between the hours of 4:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. beginning on February 27, 2003 and ending on March 5, 2003. The telephone polling was conducted from the University of Vermont using computer-aided telephone interviewing (CATI). The sample for the poll was drawn through random digit dialing and used all of the telephone exchanges in the state of Vermont as the sampling frame. Only Vermont residents over the age of eighteen were interviewed. The poll included questions on a variety of issues related to public policy in the state of Vermont.

There were 641 respondents to the Vermont Poll. The results based on a group of this size have a margin of error of plus or minus 4 percentage points with a confidence interval of 95 percent.

The survey results were analyzed using the statistics program SPSS 11.0.1 (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). Tables presenting the frequencies and the results are created using Word XP.

## Results

### Univariate Results

The univariate findings are presented in the following tables, which are labeled Table 1 through Table 8.

Table 1: The University of Vermont Helps Economic Development and Job Growth in Vermont.

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	94	15.2
Agree	399	64.6
Neither agree nor disagree	69	11.2
Disagree	51	8.3
Strongly disagree	5	0.8
<i>Total</i>	<i>618</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Source: Center for Rural Studies, University of Vermont, 2003 Vermonter Poll

Table 2: The University benefits areas of Vermont that are outside of Chittenden County.

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	65	10.6
Agree	410	66.6
Neither agree nor disagree	52	8.4
Disagree	82	13.3
Strongly disagree	7	1.1
<i>Total</i>	<i>616</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Source: Center for Rural Studies, University of Vermont, 2003 Vermonter Poll

Table 3: The I would encourage a child or close relative to attend the University of Vermont.

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	152	23.3
Agree	378	57.9
Neither agree nor disagree	62	9.5
Disagree	59	9.0
Strongly disagree	2	0.3
<i>Total</i>	<i>653</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Source: Center for Rural Studies, University of Vermont, 2003 Vermonter Poll

Table 4: The University of Vermont provides a good value for the educational experience it offers.

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	66	11.2
Agree	356	60.6
Neither agree nor disagree	82	14.0
Disagree	65	11.1
Strongly disagree	18	3.1
<i>Total</i>	<i>587</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Source: Center for Rural Studies, University of Vermont, 2003 Vermonter Poll

Table 5: The University of Vermont is doing a good job moving away from its old image as a "party school."

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	39	6.9
Agree	326	57.7
Neither agree nor disagree	115	20.4
Disagree	80	14.2
Strongly disagree	5	0.9
<i>Total</i>	<i>565</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Source: Center for Rural Studies, University of Vermont, 2003 Vermonter Poll

Table 6: What is your opinion of the size of the student body at UVM? Is UVM- too small, just right, or too large?

	Frequency	Percent
Too small	50	7.5
Just right	357	53.2
Too large	79	11.8
Don't know	185	27.6
<i>Total</i>	<i>671</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Source: Center for Rural Studies, University of Vermont, 2003 Vermonter Poll

Table 7: How favorably do you think the University of Vermont compares to state universities in other states?

	Frequency	Percent
Very favorably	107	18.7
Favorably	320	55.9
Neither favorably nor unfavorably	92	16.1
Unfavorably	50	8.7
Very unfavorably	3	0.5
<i>Total</i>	<i>572</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Source: Center for Rural Studies, University of Vermont, 2003 Vermonter Poll

Table 8: What is your impression of the quality of the educational experience offered by the University of Vermont?

	Frequency	Percent
Excellent	148	26.0
Good	352	61.8
Fair	64	11.2
Poor	6	1.1
<i>Total</i>	<i>570</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Source: Center for Rural Studies, University of Vermont, 2003 Vermonter Poll

### Bivariate Results

There are no significant and meaningful differences between Vermonters perceptions of UVM and the demographic characteristics sex, region, income, age, education, and whether or not they have kids- with the exception of the following:

- ◆ Fewer Vermonters whose family income is less than \$20,000 agree that UVM is a good value (71.9%) than those who make \$20,000 or greater (82.6%) (significance value = .086).
- ◆ More Vermonters with less than a Bachelors degree believe that UVM helps economic development and job growth (82.6%) than those who have a Bachelors degree or great (75.0%) (significance value = .027)