Student Background, Time-to-Degree, and Graduate Outcomes

How do student background and time-to-degree affect graduate outcomes?

**Previous research shows that many factors can affect the time it takes to complete a degree, such as switching fields of study or institutions. New research concludes that parents’ educational level influences the time it takes graduates to complete their degree - but only through the interaction with other factors:**

**Student Background**

Parents’ level of education? 
Parents one of top two funding sources? 
Worked full-time during studies?

**Time-to-Degree**

4 years or less 
5 years or more

**Graduate Outcomes**

Educational debt 
Pursuit of further study 
Employment outcomes

**Time-to-Degree**

63% of Maritime university graduates completed their bachelor’s degree in 4 years or less.

74% of graduates who:

- Had at least one university-educated parent
- Reported parents were one of their top two funding sources
- Did not work full-time during their studies

...completed their degree within 4 years

39% of graduates who:

- Did not have at least one university-educated parent
- Did not report their parents as one of their top two funding sources
- Reported working full-time during their studies

...completed their degree within 4 years

**Graduate Outcomes**

**Educational Debt**

60% of Maritime university graduates borrowed to finance their first degree, with an average debt of $31,140.

32% of graduates who:

- Had at least one university-educated parent
- Reported parents were one of their top two funding sources
- Completed degree within 4 years

...borrowed to finance their first degree, with an average debt of $25,052

89% of graduates who:

- Did not have at least one university-educated parent
- Did not report their parents as one of their top two funding sources
- Completed degree in 5 years or more

...borrowed to finance their first degree, with an average debt of $38,112

**Pursuit of Further Study**

Graduates who took five or more years to complete their degree were less likely to pursue further education (within two years of graduation), compared to those who took four years or less.

**Employment Outcomes**

Time-to-degree did not affect

- Full-time employment status
- Relatedness of employment to studies
- Earnings

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*Based on Class of 2007 and 2012 survey data linked to university administrative data; analysis of educational debt/borrowing limited to Class of 2007 linked to university data. 94% of bachelor’s programs designed to be completed within 4 years.*

Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission
Commission de l’enseignement supérieur des Provinces maritimes

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