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Students are looking for personalised digital experiences.

Does higher ed deliver?

Survey
Methodology

1,000 **U.S. college students**

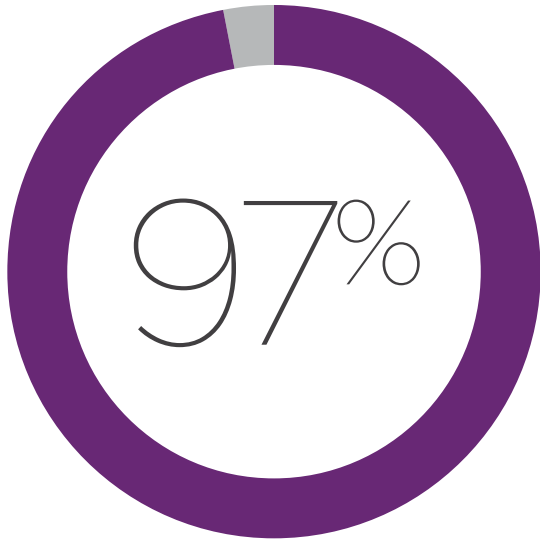| 735 four-year college students	265 two-year college students

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Data was collected between September and October 2017

Students were surveyed via email invitation and an online survey

The Ellucian Survey was conducted by Wakefield Research among 1,000 U.S. college students between September 22 and October 2, 2017, using an email invitation and an online survey. Quotas have been set to ensure representative and statistically significant numbers of students who attend four-year vs. two-year institutions, students ages 24+, and students who work full time. The margin of error for results in +/- 3.1%.

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Students today have ever-growing expectations of technology outside of the classroom. Though app use correlates with an emotional connection and positive experience, students often encounter a data disconnect between technologies used on campus.
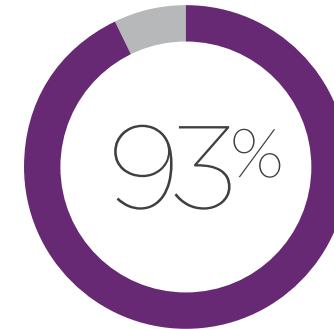
Advanced technology is important to students when picking an institution: **87% said the tech savvy of colleges is important when applying**

97%

Beyond teaching and learning technologies, students say **technologies that support them outside of class** are just as important.

95%
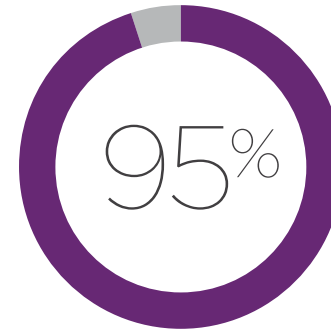
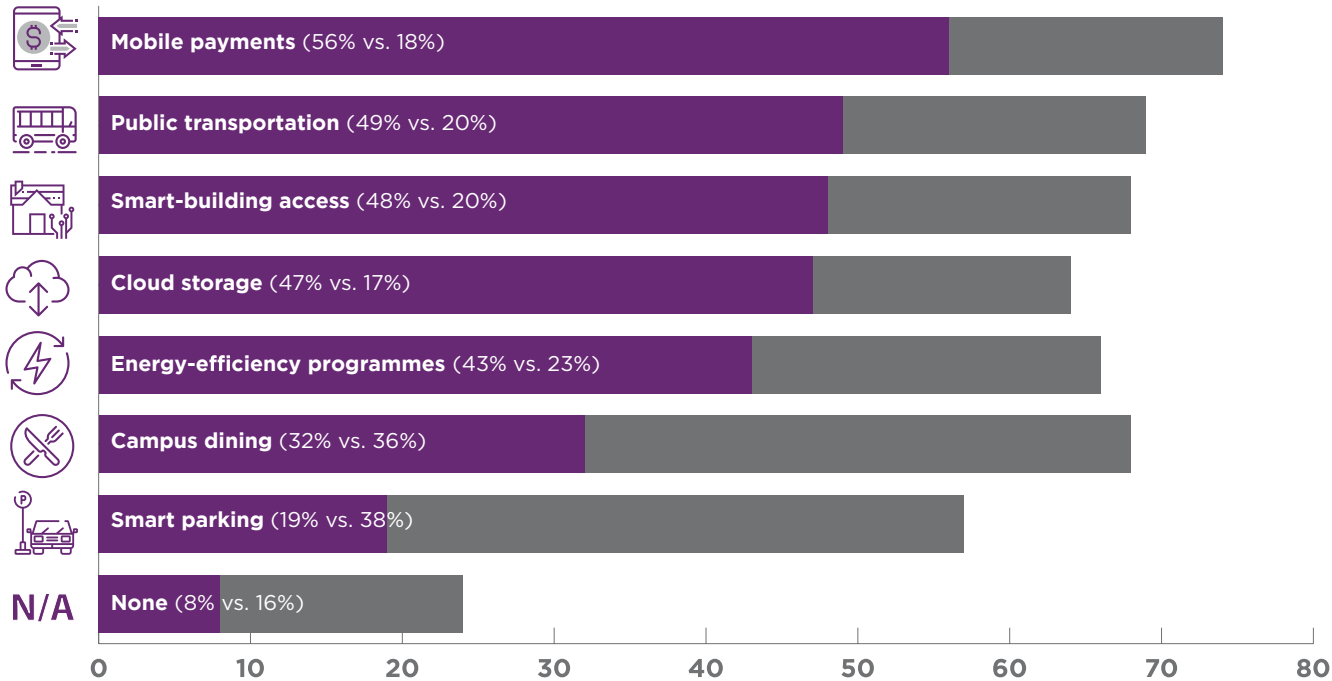Students working full time

93%

Students aged 24+

The importance of tech savviness is amplified for nontraditional students and those working full time.

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Most institutions are adopting technology to improve students' experience on and off campus, but as expectations for digital connections increase, so do demands. Most students are looking for something that makes them feel more emotionally connected to their institution.

94%
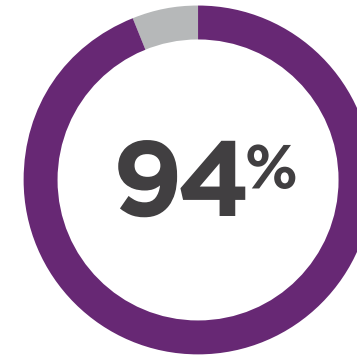
The majority of students believe that connecting with academic staff, other students, event suggestions, deadline alerts and course suggestions based on academic performance and interest would help them feel more emotionally connected to their institutions.

Advanced technologies currently offered versus wanted (if, not offered):

Mobile payments (56% vs. 18%)
Public transportation (49% vs. 20%)
Smart-building access (48% vs. 20%)
Cloud storage (47% vs. 17%)
Energy-efficiency programmes (43% vs. 23%)
Campus dining (32% vs. 36%)
Smart parking (19% vs. 38%)
N/A None (8% vs. 16%)

0   10   20   30   40   50   60   70   80

Research shows that large institutions are more likely to offer these advanced technologies

Ellucian's 2016 student survey showed that while students will provide institutions with plenty of personal data, **modern students (93%) expect that they should only have to provide it once to their institution.** Data-driven experiences are important and can only be delivered when institutions break down data silos. Equally important is making information easily accessible to students.

Almost a quarter of all students must log into five or more sites/applications to access institutional information:

12% 1 platform	**23%** 2 platforms	**42%** 3-4 platforms	**23%** 5+ platforms

0   20   40   60   80   100

85% are offered a centralised app

42% of students who have a centralised app still claim to log in to an average of 3-4 platforms
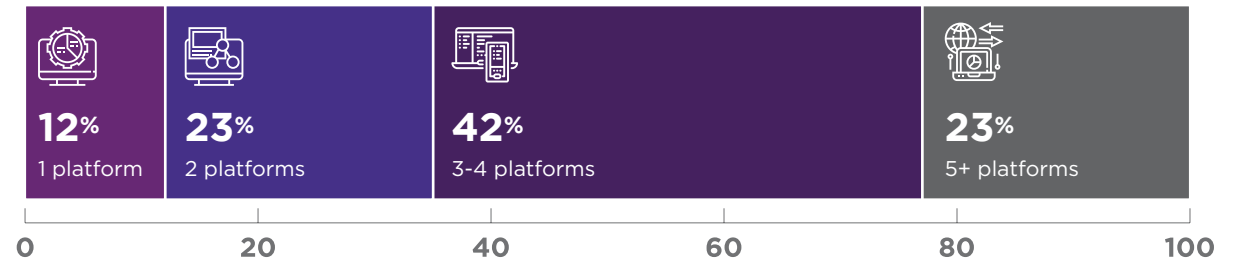
Two-thirds of students (68%) report that they receive proactive, personalised updates at least once a week

1 in 5 **STUDENTS GET DAILY UPDATES**

Students who weren't offered a centralised app believe it would have made a positive difference in their transition to university or college and in their life on campus.
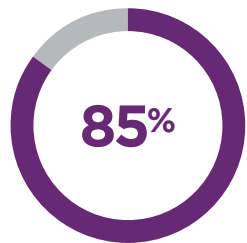
85% Easier transition to university or college
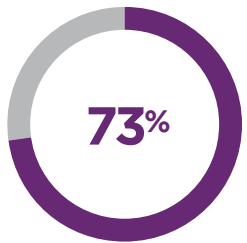
73% More involved on campus

It's not just traditional four-year college students who are looking to participate in student organisations and events through a central app: **100% of students who work full time agreed that they would be more willing to participate if they could do so through a centralised app**. Prioritising app offerings is critical for institutions that are looking to engage nontraditional students and maintain relationships after graduation.

University and college apps lag behind in creating a more personalised user experience. **Over half (58%) of students reported that of all the companies or entities they engage with, their institution is furthest behind in personalising their experience** —even more so at two-year institutions.
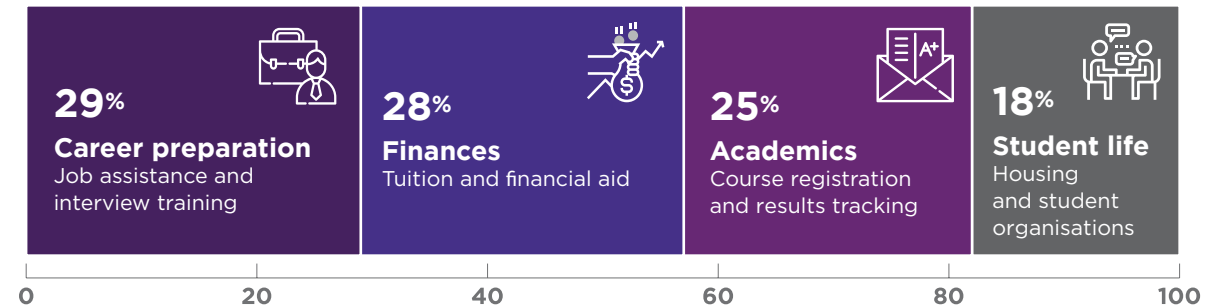
53%
Four-Year

71%
Two-Year
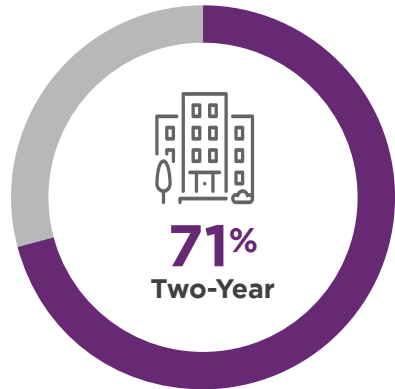
Institutions need to use the deep insights that student data can provide about their habits and preferences to customise student experiences.

Three-quarters of students want their institutions to use their personal information to customise their experience and recommendations the same way businesses do. This was true across the board: age, type of institution (two- or four-year) and gender did not impact findings.

Where do students most want to see this data-driven customisation?

29%
Career preparation
Job assistance and interview training

28%
Finances
Tuition and financial aid

25%
Academics
Course registration and results tracking

18%
Student life
Housing and student organisations

0   20   40   60   80   100

Given the amount of student data that institutions collect using data integration and analytics, including everything from course loads to social networks, it's not only possible but important to use technology to deliver personalised experiences that help students feel emotionally connected to their institutions. **Institutions can foster this connection through:**
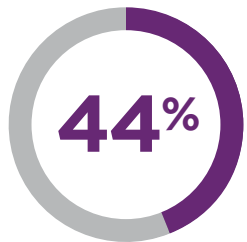
56%

Making friends and connecting with fellow students
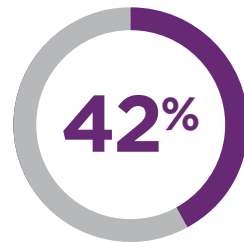
47%
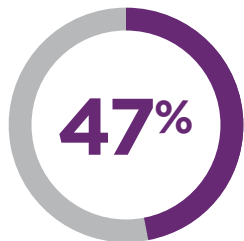
Individualised course suggestions built on academic performance and interests

45%

Customised event recommendations based on interests and past attendance
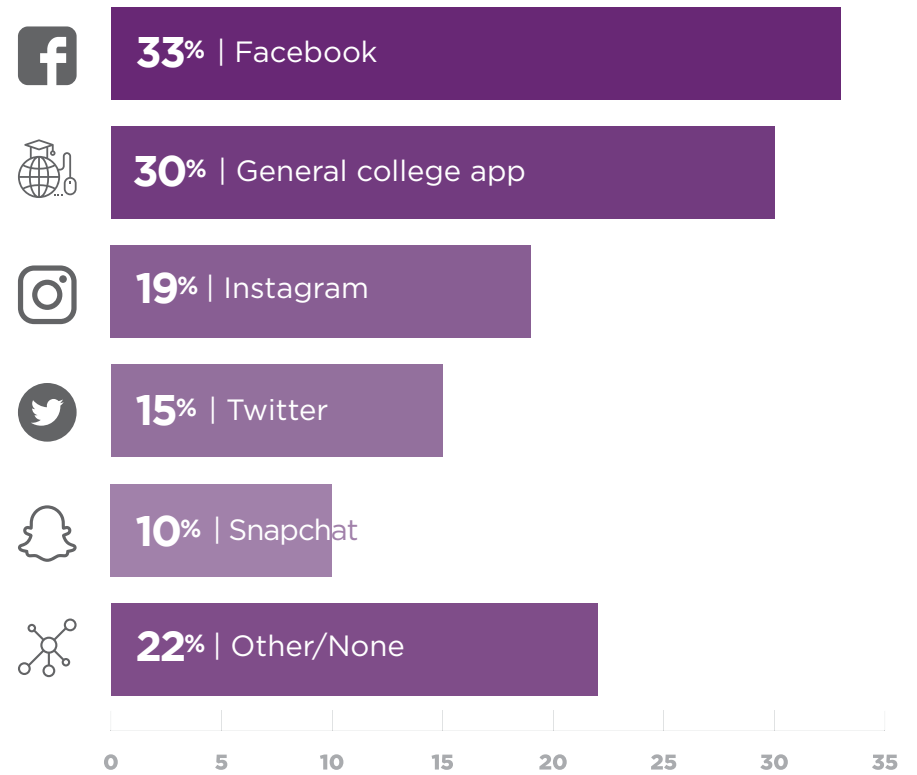
44%

Alerts for deadlines

42%

Connecting to professors

26%

Suggestions for supplemental resources or tutoring

An emotional connection to one's institution is important as it improves long-term student loyalty and future giving. Social media is essential to modern student life and fostering campus connectedness. **Students reported that these outlets made them feel most emotionally connected to their institutions:**

33% | Facebook

30% | General college app

19% | Instagram

15% | Twitter

10% | Snapchat

22% | Other/None

0   5   10   15   20   25   30   35

Students are overwhelmed by information when they start at an institution, even when they have an app to help them navigate their university or college experience.

While centralised apps are the first step, students are overwhelmed when they enter university or college—whether they're 18 years old and coming straight from school or in their mid-20s and working full time.

Of the students who were offered a centralised campus app, 68% claimed they were still overwhelmed by the volume of information their institutions provided when they first started. **Students benefit when institutions are able to tailor how they interact digitally with their students outside the classroom.**

Improving Expectations

The pace of change in higher education is rapidly accelerating. It's vital for institutions to free data from silos to deliver a more personalised and data-driven experience for students via integrated, flexible and future-ready technology that contributes to success at the institution. The delivery of a seamless technology experience has become an expectation—similar to the technology that students encounter with other modern, consumer-like experiences—and they are watching to see if higher ed can deliver.
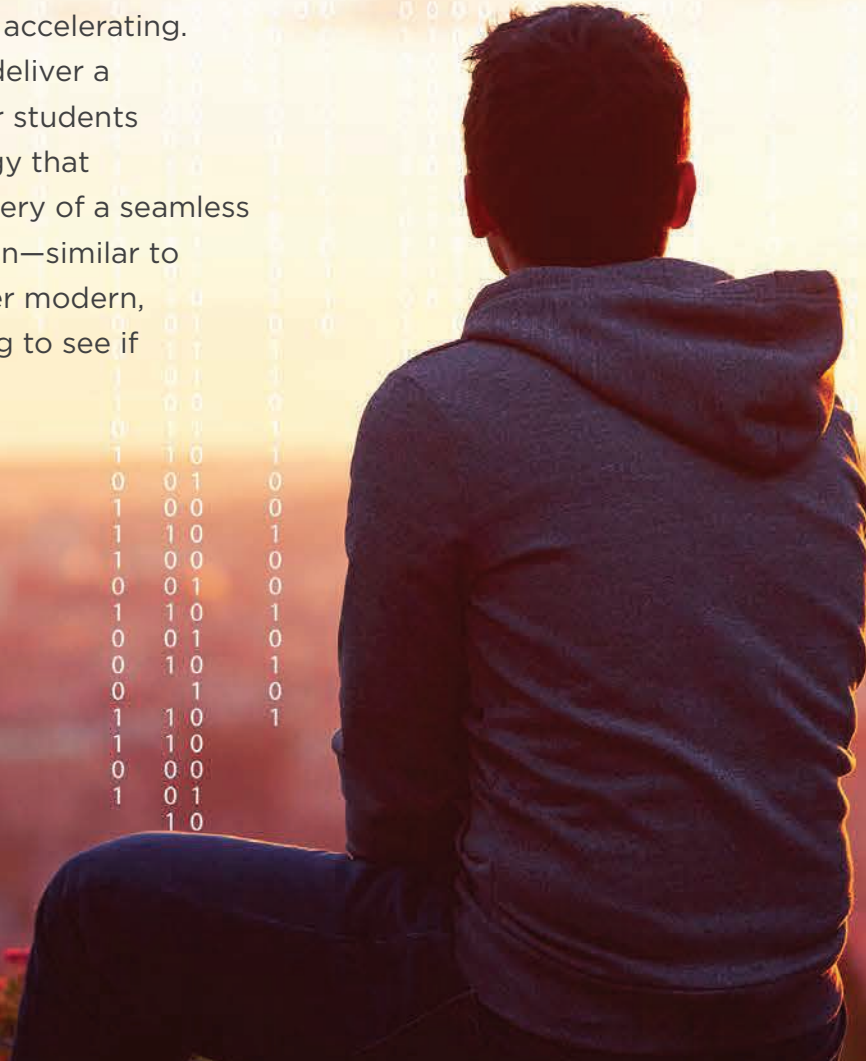
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Ellucian provides student information systems (SIS), finance and HR, recruiting, retention, analytics and advancement software solutions. With more than 1,400 institutions subscribing to

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