UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

Indigenous Student Success Survey (2021) Report
March 2022

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Executive Summary

Introduction

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA IS committed to responding to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action in meaningful and sustainable ways. Specifically, the University of Alberta seeks to increase Indigenous student enrolment, retention, and graduation success. Understanding the experiences of Indigenous students is foundational to understanding what the university is doing well and what changes are necessary. Accordingly, the Provost Office conducted a survey to explore Indigenous students' university experiences. The aim of the survey is to contribute to knowledge about Indigenous students' experiences in order to increase student success, develop new Indigenous initiatives, and contribute to the development of an Institutional Strategic Plan.

This report presents the findings of the 2021 Indigenous Student Success Survey. Based on these findings, this report provides recommendations that seek to expand what the university is doing well and address the areas in which changes are necessary. Responses to open-ended questions are being stored in the Office of the Vice-Provost (Indigenous Programming & Research) and have been edited to remove personal identifiers. Please contact indigenous.initiatives@ualberta.ca if you wish to read qualitative data.

Methodology

The 2021 Indigenous Student Success Survey builds upon the first Aboriginal Student Success Survey delivered in 2014. Working in collaboration with a group of key internal representatives, Dr. Florence Glanfield, Dr. Nathalie Kermoal, and Research Assistant Megan Parrish developed the second survey. The survey consisted of both open- and closed-ended questions pertaining to the following areas:
- Demographics
- Educational background and aspirations
- Factors of success
- Barriers to success
- Funding
- Support networks and services
- Experiences of racism, homophobia, and sexism
- COVID-19 pandemic
- Inclusion of Indigenous peoples and knowledges in the classroom and on campus

On February 3, 2021, University of Alberta students who self-identify as Indigenous received an invitation to participate in the online survey. The survey remained open until February 26, 2021, at which time 232 Indigenous students had completed the survey, representing a response rate of 15.5% percent. As a comparison, it should be noted that the response rate of the 2015 Indigenous Students Success Survey was 17%.

The recommendations in this report are guided by responses to the open-ended questions, quantitative data analysis, feedback from the participating units, and by the development of the Institutional Indigenous Strategic Plan.

Results

Demographics

- **Indigenous Identity.** Half of the students identified as First Nations (50.8%), most of whom identified as First Nations Status (40.5%), while small proportions identified as First Nations Non-Status (5.6%) and First Nations Bill C-31 (4.7%). Slightly less than half of the students identified as Métis (45.3%) and small proportions identified as Inuit (1.7%) and other (2.2%).
- **Age.** Most students (58.7%) are between the ages of 18 and 27 years old. Other students are between 28 and 37 (22.6%), between 38 and 47 (11.3%), 48 and older (7%), and less than 18 (0.4%).
- **First Language.** While English is the first language of most students (97.8%), some students' (2.2%) first language is an Indigenous language, specifically Cree or Dene.
- **Gender Identity.** Students identified as female (65.5%), male (27.2%), non-binary/gender non-conforming (3.4%), Two Spirit (3.0%), questioning (2.2%), transgender (1.3%), gender fluid (0.9%), trans man (0.4%), trans woman (0.4%), agender (0.4%), prefer not to say (0.4%), and other (0.4%).
- **Sexual Identity.** Students identified as straight (heterosexual) (66.4%), bisexual (15.5%), questioning (7.3%), queer (6.0%), asexual (4.3%), pansexual (3.9%), gay (1.3%), lesbian (1.3%), prefer not to say (4.7%), and other (0.9%).
- **Marital Status.** Most students (63.2%) are single. Others are married (22.1%), living Common Law (11.7%), divorced (2.1%), and poly relationships (0.9%).
- **Dependents and Childcare.** Most students (79.6%) do not have dependents. Other students have dependent children (19.5%) and some students have children and other dependents (0.9%).
- **Location of Residence When Not Attending the U of A.** The 223 students who specified where they live when they are not attending the U of A identified 87 locations across Canada. Most students live in Alberta – either in Edmonton (38.7%), the Greater Edmonton area (14.3%), or elsewhere in Alberta (28.6%). Other students live in British Columbia (6.0%), Saskatchewan (5.1%), the Northwest Territories (4.1%), Ontario (1.8%), and Manitoba (1.4%).
- **Location of Residence When Attending the U of A.** Most students (69.4%) live in Edmonton when they are attending the U of A. Others live in the Greater Edmonton area (14.7%), outside of the Edmonton area or Camrose – off reserve (11.6%), outside of the Edmonton area or Camrose – on reserve (3.9%), and Camrose (0.4%).
- **Relocation Distance.** Half of students (50.8%) did not need to relocate to attend the U of A. Others relocated more than 100 km (35.8%), between 51 and 100 km (5.2%), between 26 and 50 km (3.0%), between 10 and 25 km (2.6%), and less than 10 km (2.6%).
- **Housing.** Most students (60.9%) live at home (i.e., their own home, their parents' home, or another relative's home). Others are renting an apartment or house (35.9%), living in university residence (2.7%), and living in a teacherage (0.5%). Additionally, most students (69.8%) live in accommodation that they share with others.

- **Transportation.** The three most common modes of transportation that students use to commute to the university are car (62.1%), bus (40.1%), and LRT (40.1%). Other modes of transportation include walking (28.0%), carpooling (12.5%), cycling (9.9%), and other modes, such as skateboards, Lime Scooters, and Uber (2.2%). Some students (13.4%) do not use any mode of transportation to go to university, either because their program is online or because they have only experienced remote learning (i.e., they started university after the pandemic prompted the shift to remote learning).
- **Employment.** Most students (64.7%) work. The most common type of employment among students who work during the Fall and Winter is to work both Fall and Winter Terms, part-time off campus (55.3%). The most common type of employment among students who work during the Spring and Summer is full-time off campus in both Spring and Summer Terms (43.2%).

Faculty, Program, and Level of Study

- **Faculty.** While most students belong to the Faculty of Arts (25.5%), the Faculty of Education (19.0%), and the Faculty of Native Studies (12.6%), smaller proportions of students belong to 14 other faculties ranging from the Faculty of Agriculture, Life and Environmental Sciences (6.5%) to the Faculty of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences (0.4%). Additionally, small proportions of students are in Open Studies (2.2%) and the Transition Year Program (1.3%).
- **Program.** The 226 students who specified their current program are enrolled in 87 different programs, including combined degrees, honors degrees, general programs, specialization programs, Co-op programs, and certificates.
- **Level of Study.** Some Open Studies students are currently in the TYP program (3.5%), while other undergraduate students are in the first year (14.7%), second year (13.9%), third year (11.7%), fourth year (14.3%) and fifth year (5.6%) of their studies. Graduate students are currently completing their Master's course based (9.9%), Master's thesis based (9.1%), and PhD (9.5%). Some students are medical students (3.5%) and law students (1.7%), while others (2.6%) are after degree students, open studies students, and students enrolled in a certificate (without degree) program.

Pathways to the University of Alberta

- **First in Family to Attend University.** Most students (64.1%) are not the first person in their family to attend university.
- **High School Completion and Academic Preparedness.** Most students (96.6%) completed grade 12 or equivalent before coming to the U of A. When posed with the statement "My high school education prepared me academically for university," a small minority of students strongly agreed (4.7%), more than one-third agreed (38.1%), equal proportions were either neutral (22.1%) or disagreed (22.5%), and a small proportion strongly disagreed (12.6%).
- **Previous Educational Institution.** Almost half of the students (47.6%) came to the U of A from another university or college, one-third (35.1%) cited high school as their last educational institution, and a small proportion (17.3%) cited the U of A as their last educational institution, indicating that they had either transferred from another program or had previously completed a degree.
- **Transitional Programming.** Only a small proportion of students (15.2%) have

accessed transitional programming and most of these students (77.1%) accessed it at the U of A.
- **How Students Hear About the University of Alberta.** Students hear about the U of A from a variety of sources including friends, family members, community members, high school teachers, career counsellors, university representatives/recruiters, student advisors at other colleges, and career fairs.

The Decision to Attend the University of Alberta
- **First Choice.** For most students (82.6%), the University of Alberta was their first choice.
- **Reasoning for Choosing the U of A.** Two main reasons draw Indigenous students to the U of A: program of interest (41.8%) and proximity to home (39.7%). Other reasons for deciding to attend the U of A include, the university's reputation (18.1%), improved employment opportunities and associated quality of life (9.5%), supports for Indigenous students (4.7%), and the opportunity to learn from Indigenous scholars (3.4%).
- **Reasons for Coming to the U of A from Another University or College.** Students attend another university or college prior to attending the U of A to complete academic upgrading or to complete the initial requirements of a university transfer program. Additionally, students come to the U of A from another academic institution to pursue graduate studies.
- **Reasons for Choosing Current Program.** Most students (61.4%) choose their current program based on their personal interests and passions. Other reasons for choosing their current program include the opportunity to learn Indigenous content and work with Indigenous scholars (14.4%), as a pathway to future studies, such as law, medicine, or veterinary medicine (7.3%), and for the flexibility to explore a variety of topics (4.7%).

Participation in International Programs

Few students (4.3%) have participated in an international program and a small proportion (13.4%) plan to do so before they graduate. The five main reasons deterring students from participating in international programs are: work and family obligations, financial barriers, the COVID-19 pandemic, lack of compatibility with degree or research focus (e.g., specific course requirements, practicum placement, or research specific to local area), and lack of interest.

Future Studies

Most students express interest in pursuing future studies. Plans for future studies range from pursing an undergraduate degree in Native Studies, Nursing, or Science (current Transition Year Program students), to pursuing a postdoc or a professorship (current PhD students). Other plans for future studies include medical school, veterinary medicine, after degree programs, and graduate school. Across all levels of study, students expressed interest in maintaining an Indigenous focus for their future studies. The ways in which the University of Alberta can help support students' plans for future studies include providing financial support, academic support, support transitioning into new programs, mental health support, and parenting supports. Other areas in which the university can support students' future studies

include enhancing Indigenous community building on campus, expanding Indigenous programming, and creating more Indigenous course content.

Factors Contributing to Student Success

The two main factors contributing to student success are having a community of support (34.5%) and having good quality (i.e., approachable, respectful, and compassionate) professors, supervisors, and mentors (31.5%). Other factors contributing to student success include financial support (18.3%), personal attributes, such as perseverance and resilience (14.2%), access to resources (13.2%), cultural support (13.2%), and First Peoples' House (8.6%).

Barriers to Success
- **Student Identified Barriers.** The seven main barriers to student success are financial issues (25.9%), the COVID-19 pandemic (19.8%), mental health (15.7%), issues relating to professors and supervisors (15.7%), a lack of social support (15.7%), racism (6.6%), and a lack of Indigenous representation (5.6%).
- **Impact of Barriers on Student Success.** The barriers that students encounter hinder their success in a variety of ways including negatively impacting their academic performance, interfering with their ability to focus on their studies, and negatively impacting their mental health. Additionally, the identified barriers have resulted in students dropping courses, failing courses, and taking a leave of absence from their studies.
- **Reasons for Taking a Break from Studies.** Students have taken a break from their program/studies for a variety of reasons including mental illness (14.2%), financial reasons (6.0%), family reasons (6.0%), employment (6.0%), to maintain connection with their community (4.7%), due to physical illness (4.3%), for other reasons (4.3%), to have/raise children (3.4%), and the university required them to withdraw (3.0%). Most students (62.5%), however, have not taken a break from their studies.
- **Timeframe of Barriers.** Although some students have not encountered barriers at any point during their time at the University of Alberta (37.1%), other students have encountered barriers while in their program, (45.7%), while applying to their program (23.3%), before applying to their program (22.0%), and while accessing university services and/or participating in university events (19.4%).

Funding
- **Type of Financial Assistance.** Most students access a university scholarship, financial award, or bursary (68.5%). Other types of financial assistance accessed include personal savings (47.4%), government loans (41.8%), earnings from summer work (40.5%), third party sponsorship (39.2%), earnings from current work (37.5%), family member loans (15.5%), a loan from a financial institution (6.0%), and a type of financial assistance not listed (3.9%).
- **Scholarships and Bursaries Specifically for Indigenous Students.** Most students (87.0%) are aware of scholarships and bursaries specifically for Indigenous students. Students obtain this information from a range of sources including program advisors, graduate supervisors, family members, other Indigenous students, and First Peoples' House.
- **Difficulties Accessing Funding.** Most students (65.2%) have not experienced

any difficulties accessing funding. For those who have experienced difficulties, the three main types of difficulties are: eligibility issues, time consuming applications processes, and difficulty obtaining required documents.

Support Network
- **People and Organizations.** A wide range of people and organizations make up students' support networks including family (92.2%), friends (81.9%), extended family members (41.4%), university services (27.2%), community (25.9%), on campus student associations (25.0%), elders (23.7%), knowledge keepers/holders (16.4%), non-university services (10.8%), off campus Indigenous organizations (7.8%), and other sources (7.3%).
- **Supportive Environment within Networks.** Most students (91.3%) feel they are in a supportive environment. Students described, however, varying degrees of support within and across their networks. Some students, for example, only feel supported within certain networks, while others have a supportive network that does not always meet their needs.

Experiences with Support Services
- **First Peoples' House.** Slightly less than half of students (41.5%) have accessed services through First Peoples' House, such as access to Elders, Aunties Check-In, financial resources, tutoring, and the Wellness Worker. Almost all students who accessed support services through First Peoples' House were satisfied with the services (70.5% very satisfied; 25.2% moderately satisfied).
- **Other University Services.** Less than half of students (38.2%) have accessed support services outside of First Peoples' House at the U of A, such as the Academic Success Centre, Accessibility Resources, the Campus Food Bank, Counselling and Clinical Services, the Sexual Assault Centre, and the University Health Centre. Most students who accessed support services at the university were satisfied with them (37.9% very satisfied; 35.6% moderately satisfied).
- **Other Supports.** The other supports that have been most helpful to students include financial support, such as awards, bursaries, and scholarships; people, such as Elders, classmates, family, and friends; programs, such as the Aboriginal Teacher Education Program (ATEP) and the Transition Year Program (TYP); and university services, such as the Career Centre, the Centre for Writers, and the Fitness Centre.
- **Mental Health Support Services.** Most students are either satisfied with (16.4% very satisfied; 19.5% moderately satisfied) or neutral towards (43.6%) the mental health support offered at the U of A. Two in ten students expressed dissatisfaction with these services (9.8% moderately dissatisfied; 10.7% very dissatisfied). Students are dissatisfied with mental health services for the following reasons: difficulties accessing the services (e.g., long wait times), a lack of Indigenous cultural mental health support, and a lack of understanding from mental health service providers.
- **Health Services.** Most students are either satisfied with (19.7% very satisfied; 23.8% moderately satisfied) or neutral towards (51.1%) the health services offered at the U of A. A small minority of students expressed dissatisfaction with these services (3.1% moderately dissatisfied; 2.3% very dissatisfied).
- **Supports for Substance Abuse.** One third of students (37.6%) feel there

are adequate supports available for substance abuse. To improve support, student provided a range of suggestions: reduce stigma associated with substance use/abuse, improve access to supports, provide more supports specific to substance use/abuse (e.g., counselling opportunities with specialized professionals, addiction counselling, trauma therapy), provide Indigenous focused supports (e.g., Indigenous service providers), provide more education concerning binge drinking and cannabis use.

- **Supports for Bullying and/or Physical Abuse.** Half of students (51.6%) feel there are adequate supports available for bullying and/or physical abuse. To improve support, students made the following suggestions: provide more funding for the supports currently available, improve awareness of the supports available, and provide more opportunities to report bullying.
- **Supports for Sexual Harassment/Abuse.** More than half of students (55.6%) feel there are adequate supports available for sexual harassment/abuse. To improve support, students provided the following suggestions: provide more funding for the supports currently offered, improve awareness of the supports offered, follow up with reported cases, ensure that on-campus residences (e.g., Lister, Peter Lougheed Hall, fraternities) take proactive action against the culture that leads to sexual abuse.

Experiences of Racism
- **Prevalence.** Slightly less than half of students (46.5%) have heard racist, homophobic, or other negative comments about Indigenous peoples at the University of Alberta. Students have also personally experienced racism (25.0%), sexism (15.5%), another form of discrimination (7.3%), and homophobia (5.2%).
- **Source.** Other students (81.7%) are the most common source of racism and discrimination. Other sources include on campus (52.1%), University of Alberta faculty (40.8%), and University of Alberta staff (22.5%).
- **Form.** Students experience racism in a variety of forms, including microaggressions, stereotyping, racist jokes and name calling, racist poster campaigns, and vandalism to Indigenous spaces on campus. Additionally, Indigenous students have witnessed other students convey resistance towards the inclusion of Indigenous peoples and Indigenous knowledges (e.g., students not wanting to take Indigenous course requirements; not wanting to learn Indigenous topics, histories, or perspectives; and not wanting to hear land acknowledgments).
- **Location.** Students encounter racism in a wide range of locations, including the classroom, in medical school lectures, in common areas on campus, outside First Peoples' House, on the internet, on social media (e.g., the comments section of the University of Alberta's Instagram pages), in SUB (e.g., while waiting in line for food), when living in residence, during MMIWG walks, and written on the walls in the women's washroom.
- **Frequency.** For several students, hearing racist comments about Indigenous peoples is a regular occurrence. Some students, for example, used the words "all the time," "continuously," and "quite common" to describe the circumstances and contexts in which they have heard racist comments.
- **Impact on Student Well-Being.** Racism and discrimination negatively impact student well-being in variety of ways, including no longer enjoying classes, dreading class discussions, no longer wanting to participate, feeling

uncomfortable in the classroom, feeling unwelcomed, and feeling unsafe.

Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic
- **Negative Impact on Learning.** For almost half of the students (47.8%), the pandemic and the resulting shift to online classes has made learning more challenging. Barriers associated with remote learning include, a lack of motivation, difficulty maintaining focus, difficulty accessing professors for assistance, a lack of access to resources (e.g., library services and archival materials for research), an unstable internet connection, difficulty maintaining an academic-life balance, difficulty managing their course load, and a home environment that is not conducive to studying.
- **Isolated and Disconnected.** Almost half of students (46.6%) feel isolated and disconnected from the university community.
- **Positive Impact on Learning.** For some students (12.4%), certain aspects of remote learning, such as no longer having to commute to campus and a more flexible schedule, have improved their learning experience.
- **No Change.** Some students (5.6%) were completing their studies remotely prior to the pandemic and as such their university experience has not changed.

Inclusion of Indigenous Peoples and Indigenous Knowledges
- **Programs and Courses.** When describing the ways in which they have experienced the inclusion of Indigenous peoples and knowledge systems in their programs and courses, students identified two programs that center Indigenous peoples and knowledges, the Transition Year Program (TYP) and the Aboriginal Teacher Education Program (ATEP), as well as a range of Indigenous focused courses. In addition to Indigenous specific courses, students mentioned several courses that include a section on Indigenous issues and/or readings from Indigenous authors. The extent to which Indigenous students feel included in their courses varies between courses and between students. For instance, some students feel included in their Native Studies courses but do not feel included in other courses. Students also noted that the degree of inclusion of Indigenous knowledges varies across the university, ranging from foundational in the Faculty of Native Studies, to surface level or none in other programs and courses. Furthermore, students find certain approaches to the inclusion of Indigenous peoples and knowledges uncomfortable, inappropriate, and problematic, such as when instructors present colonized versions of Indigenous histories, when instructors rely on Indigenous students to teach Indigenous content through their lived experiences without their permission, or when the instructor teaching Indigenous content lacks sufficient knowledge concerning the content.
- **Support Systems.** When describing the ways in which they have experienced the inclusion of Indigenous peoples and knowledge systems in support systems at the U of A, students identified a wide range of support systems including: supports offered through **First Peoples' House**, such as Aunties Check-In and Elder support; **Events and Workshops**, such as beading workshops, Bridges Orientation, TAWOW, Round Dance, and Orange Shirt Day; **Student Associations and Committees**, such as the Aboriginal Student Council, the Indigenous Medical Students' Association, and the Indigenous

Engineering Students' Association; **Programming**, such as the Indigenous Health Initiatives Program and the Indigenous Leadership Program; and **Spaces for Indigenous Students**, such as First Peoples' House and Pembina Hall.

- **Culturally Supportive Environment.** Most students (75.3%) feel they are in a culturally supportive environment at the U of A. Several students commented, however, that while they feel culturally supported in certain spaces such as the Faculty of Native Studies and First Peoples' House, they do not feel culturally supported in many other environments on campus.

Indigenous Student Government Groups

More than one third of students (36.0%) expect Indigenous student government groups to provide meaningful representation and advocacy for Indigenous students. Students also expect such groups to foster a sense of community for Indigenous students (33.3%); cultivate a safe and welcoming space for Indigenous students, both within the group and throughout the broader university (21.6%); provide opportunities and events for Indigenous students to connect with their cultures (16.2%); and consistently provide information concerning funding and employment opportunities, group activities, and advocacy work (12.6%). Some students (9.9%) have no expectations for Indigenous student groups.

Overall Satisfaction

Overall, most students are satisfied with their university experience (34.1% very satisfied; 49.8% moderately satisfied). A small proportion of students are either dissatisfied with (6.3% moderately dissatisfied; 1.3% very dissatisfied) or neutral towards (8.5%) their experience at the U of A. Students mainly expressed satisfaction with the education that they are receiving from the U of A, whereas the reasons for students' dissatisfaction include issues with remote learning, unfair workloads, negative experiences with professors, and a lack of support for mental health.

The Truth and Reconciliation Journey

Students identified three main actions that instructors, professors, and staff need to take in order to be active participants on the Truth and Reconciliation Journey:

- **Educate Themselves.** Most students (63.7%) mentioned that instructors, professors, and staff need to educate themselves concerning the histories, cultures, and experiences of Indigenous peoples.
- **Educate Their Students.** One-third of students (33.6%) indicated that instructors, professors, and staff need to incorporate Indigenous topics and perspectives into course content. Students indicated, however, that instructors and professors need to be attentive to the way in which they discuss Indigenous topics. Specifically, instructors and professors need to be respectful of the Indigenous students in their classes and refrain from using a deficit-based approach to discuss Indigenous peoples and topics.
- **Engage with Anti-Racism.** Students (9.7%) also indicated that instructors, professors, and staff need to actively engage with anti-racism, including speaking out against racism and taking anti-racism training.

Summary of Key Findings

- **Indigenous Course Content and Indigenous Professors.** Most Indigenous students at the U of A are pursuing their passions and personal interests, which, for many of these students, entails learning more about Indigenous related topics and working with Indigenous scholars. Accordingly, many of the students' recommendations for how the university can improve, how the university can better support their future studies, and what Indigenous initiatives they would like to see relate to Indigenous course content and Indigenous professors.

- **Community of Support.** Many students attributed their success to having a community of support, which includes specific sources of support, such as family, friends, classmates, instructors, and First Peoples' House, as well as feeling a general sense of belonging. Several of the students' recommendations seek to expand this community of support.

- **Cultural Support.** Cultural support is an important element contributing to students' sense of community and belonging. Most students feel they are in a culturally supportive environment at the University of Alberta. For many of these students, however, this culturally supportive environment does not extend consistently across campus. In other words, while students feel culturally supported in certain environments, such as First Peoples' House, the Faculty of Native Studies, the TYP program, and among their Indigenous peers, they continue to feel unwelcome in other environments on campus.

- **Financial Support.** Financial support is an important factor contributing to student success, whereas financial issues are the most frequently reported barrier to success. The stress associated with financial issues negatively impacts students' academic performance. Moreover, many students experiencing financial issues have to work part-time or full-time, which further interferes with their ability to focus on their studies.

- **First Peoples' House.** First Peoples' House has been a crucial source of support and resources for many Indigenous students throughout their time at the U of A. Students called for the expansion of First Peoples' House, in terms of both physical space and programming offered.

- **Support Services Outside of First Peoples' House.** Though students are generally satisfied with the support services offered at the university, several barriers disrupt access to support services, particularly mental health support services. These barriers include difficulties accessing mental health services (e.g., long wait times), a lack of Indigenous cultural mental health support, and a lack of understanding from mental health service providers.

- **Racism.** Racism against Indigenous peoples occurs at the university in a variety of forms, in a range of locations, and for some Indigenous students, on a regular basis. Racism and other forms of discrimination negatively impact student well-being, contributing to feelings of loneliness, exclusion, and exhaustion. Notably, racism creates a hostile learning environment in which Indigenous students no longer enjoy going to class, refrain from participating, and dread class discussions.

Recommendations

Student Governance Structures (e.g., UASU, ASC, GSA, IGSA):
- Implement a zero-tolerance policy regarding racism
- Develop anti-Indigenous racism campaigns to raise awareness among all students
- Implement a yearly survey assessing Indigenous students' experiences with services, activities, and opportunities provided by student governance structures
- Encourage active participation from non-Indigenous students in the Truth and Reconciliation Journey
- Establish an Indigenous Student Mentorship and Leadership Program

Space:
- Enhance cultural safety across the University and increase culturally supported spaces
- Expand the First Peoples' House, in terms of both physical space and programming offered
- Create a physical gathering space for Indigenous students, faculty, staff, community members, Elders and Knowledge Keepers on campus

Recruitment:
- More community and high school presentations, particularly to schools on reserves
- More Indigenous representation when recruiting
- Field trips to the U of A for high school students from smaller communities
- Provide opportunities for prospective and incoming students to reach out to current Indigenous students to ask questions (e.g., an online forum)
- Support (e.g., Indigenous liaisons) for prospective and incoming students concerning application procedures, choosing a program, program planning, registering for classes, and navigating eClass and Bear Tracks
- Increase support and recruitment of Inuit students and support them to attend and engage from their home territories

Communication:
- Improve the university website, making it easier to navigate (e.g., remove broken links)
- Increase social media presence (e.g., YouTube videos, live stream Q and A's)
- Create a centralized source of information for FNMI students
- Improved access to information about scholarships and bursaries
- Highlight Indigenous student achievements and share Indigenous student success stories
- Establish a centralized communication hub (i.e., online portal) for Indigenous faculty, staff, and students
- Provide more opportunities to share information virtually, including online conferences and guest speakers with Q and A sessions
- Much like there is an International week, create an Indigenous week of events
- Showcase Indigenous art, languages, and histories on campus, particularly in high traffic areas such as Quad, SUB, CAB, and Cameron library
- Better communication around the services available at the UofA especially

around Health services.

Student support:
- Develop more funding opportunities in the form of scholarships and bursaries
- Low-cost access to entrance exams (LSAT, MSAT)
- Establish an Indigenous Student Peer Support Group
- Improve the Supporting Aboriginal Graduate Enhancement (SAGE) Program
- Improved access to mental health support (shorten the wait time), including access to sustained long-term support, support for generational trauma, and access to an Indigenous wellness team.
- Support transitioning into new programs.
- Improve access to support specific to substance use/abuse programs (e.g., counselling opportunities with specialized professionals, addiction counselling, trauma therapy), provide Indigenous focused support (e.g., Indigenous service providers), provide more education concerning binge drinking and cannabis use.
- Much like for substance use/abuse, support is needed around bullying and sexual abuse on campus. Follow up with reported cases, ensure that on-campus residences (e.g., Lister, Peter Lougheed Hall, fraternities) take proactive action against the culture that leads to bullying and/or sexual abuse
- Provide access to more traditional ceremonies and cultural events such as Butterdome powwows

Academic:
- Expand Indigenous programming, and create more Indigenous course content. More specifically, incorporate Indigenous perspectives, knowledges, and histories in curriculum across programs
- Implement a university-wide Indigenous course requirement
- Expand opportunities for land-based learning, learning in connection with local Indigenous communities, and Indigenous language courses
- Improve access to Native Studies courses
- Provide opportunities to reach out to Indigenous professors who are willing to supervise graduate students.
- Provide opportunities to connect with Indigenous mentors/alumni who value cultural safety
- Continue hiring of Indigenous faculty across colleges, faculties, and departments
- Educate faculty and staff on Indigenous issues and histories, more specifically train them on how to decolonize teaching and require work towards decolonization and Indigenization of courses
- Boost Indigenous students' participation in International programs
- Develop a zero-tolerance policy regarding racism
- Develop anti-racism seminars to train non-Indigenous faculty and staff
- Develop pathways for Indigenous students to enrol in programs / professions where there is an underrepresentation of Indigenous peoples

Institutional - The University of Alberta:
- Include Indigenous peoples in the university restructuring process
- Implement a variety of platforms to obtain feedback from Indigenous students
- Conduct the Indigenous Student Success Survey every five years
- Review the Indigenous strategic plan every five years

- Build ongoing relationships with Indigenous communities in order to respect the treaties and to improve Indigenous student attendance
- Include Indigenous staff, students, and elders in the design of program curricula and university policies that relate to, and directly impact Indigenous peoples
- Encourage active participation from non-Indigenous faculty and staff in the Truth and Reconciliation Journey
- Develop a strategy to report on the progress of the recommendations from the 2021 Indigenous Student Success Survey report

Introduction

Background

According to the 2020 Indigenous Services Canada annual report to Parliament:

> The university gap in the working age population (aged 25-64) has been widening for all Indigenous groups relative to the non-Indigenous population. Although First Nations, Inuit, and Métis all saw increases in university attainment between 2001 and 2016, none increased quickly enough to keep pace with the non-Indigenous population (Indigenous Services Canada 2020: Findings section, para. 41).

In 2016, the percentage of the non-Indigenous population with a university degree was 29%, whereas the percentage of Indigenous groups with the same level of educational attainment was 13% (Métis), 11% (First Nations), and 5% (Inuit) (Statistics Canada 2016).

These statistics demand a historical preface, for as Plains Cree and Saulteaux scholar Margaret Kovach (2009:54) writes, "Indigenous higher education is not ahistorical; it has roots borne of the imposing presence of settler society." The under-representation of Indigenous peoples in Canadian universities is a manifestation of the historical and ongoing challenges of colonialism. According to Leonie Pihama and Jenny Lee-Morgan (2018:2), "education was both a target and tool of colonialism, destroying and diminishing the validity and legitimacy of Indigenous education, while simultaneously replacing and reshaping it with an 'education' complicit with the colonial endeavour." The Canadian state used education as a colonial strategy to facilitate both the assimilation of Indigenous peoples into mainstream culture and the eradication of Indigenous cultures (Kovach 2009).

The residential school system, which operated for more than 100 years, was central to the Canadian state's efforts to "eliminate Aboriginal people as distinct peoples and to assimilate them into the Canadian mainstream against their will" (TRC 2015a:3). The Canadian government removed more than 150,000 Indigenous children from their families and placed them in residential schools, not to educate them but rather, "to break their link to their culture and identity" (TRC 2015a:2). Residential school curricula primarily focused on instructing Indigenous boys to become labourers and Indigenous girls to become domestic help (Miller 1996). As such, residential schools streamed Indigenous students into the unskilled workforce and effectively ensured low Indigenous participation in post-secondary education.

In addition to receiving a substandard education, many children experienced emotional, physical, and sexual abuse while attending residential schools (TRC 2015a). The trauma associated with residential schools has not only impacted the lives of those who attended but it has also impacted the lives of the generations who followed.

To redress the legacy of residential schools and move towards reconciliation, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) released its 94 Calls to Action in June 2015 (TRC 2015b:1). The testimony of more than 6,000 survivors of residential schools informed the TRC's 94 Calls to Action. The 94 Calls to Action aim for foundational change in the operation of governments, educational and religious institutions, and civil society. The TRC asserts that reconciliation requires the rejection of the paternalistic and racist foundations of the residential school system and a move towards commitment to mutual respect (TRC 2015a:VI). Moreover, commitment to reconciliation must be a collective endeavor that involves all members of Canadian society.

The University of Alberta is committed to responding to the TRC's Calls to Action in meaningful and sustainable ways. Specifically, the University of Alberta seeks to increase Indigenous student enrolment, retention, and graduation success. Understanding the experiences of Indigenous students is foundational to understanding what the university is doing well and what changes are necessary. Accordingly, the Provost Office co-lead the design of a survey to canvas Indigenous students' university experiences. The aim of the survey is to contribute to knowledge about Indigenous students' experiences in order to increase student success, develop new Indigenous initiatives, and contribute to the development of an Institutional Strategic Plan.

Survey Design

In the Fall of 2019, the Student Union (SU) released their Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation Committee (ARRC) report and recommended that a follow up study of the 2014 Aboriginal Student Success Survey and subsequent 2015 report be conducted. The SU recommendation was in line with one of the 2015 recommendations. The 2014 survey and 2015 report was lead by Dr. Nathalie Kermoal.

The 2021 version of the survey builds on the one delivered in 2014. To develop this second survey, Dr. Florence Glanfield, Dr. Nathalie Kermoal and Research Assistant Megan Parrish worked with a group of key internal representatives such as the Student Union, the Aboriginal Student Council, the Indigenous Graduate Student's Association, the Graduate Student's Association, the Registrar's Office, Augustana, Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, First Peoples House, and University of Alberta International to engage in a follow up study of student experiences. Each of the organizations provided extensive feedback on the formulation of the questions.

While the 2021 survey is using some of the same questions as the 2014 survey, new questions have been added around experiences of racism, homophobia, sexism and engagement with different support units at the U of A. As well, a question regarding a new reality the COVID-19 pandemic to get a sense how Indigenous students' lives were impacted was added.

Once the survey was designed, we piloted the survey with a few students. The team took their feedback into consideration and made the necessary adjustments to improve the survey before it was conducted. The last version of the survey received a final approval from the other key representatives. The development was a yearlong

collaborative process and was slowed down by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Implementation

On February 3, 2021, University of Alberta students who self-identify as Indigenous received an invitation to participate in the online survey. The consent form provided potential participants with information concerning the study purpose, procedure, risks, and benefits. Additionally, the consent form notified participants of the voluntary nature of the survey and guaranteed the anonymity of their responses. The survey consisted of 59 questions, including both open- and closed-ended questions. The survey remained open until February 26, 2021, at which time 232 Indigenous students had completed the survey. The overall participation rate for the survey was 15.5% percent.

Qualitative Data Analysis

Conventional content analysis was applied to students' responses to the open-ended survey questions. Conventional content analysis is an inductive approach to qualitative inquiry, in which the analyst derives themes directly from the data (Hsieh and Shannon 2005:1279). The analysis process began with reading and re-reading the data, before reflecting and identifying preliminary themes. Subsequent stages of data analysis entailed coding the text using preliminary themes and measuring the frequency of each theme's occurrence.

The aim of the analysis was to stay close to the text, providing a descriptive account, rather than extending the analysis to an interpretive level in which the analyst seeks to infer the underlying meaning of the text (Bengtsson 2016:10). Moreover, by maintaining direct information from survey respondents without imposing pre-existing theoretical perspectives, the knowledge generated from the analysis derives from respondents' unique perspectives (Hsieh and Shannon 2005:1279-1280). To further emphasize respondents' unique perspectives, this report presents several direct quotes obtained from students' responses to the open-ended questions. All responses to each open-ended question were included in the qualitative analysis, rather than selecting a random sample of responses. As such, the number of responses examined varies from 22 to 225 depending on the question. Responses to open-ended questions are being stored in the Office of the Vice-Provost (Indigenous Programming & Research) and have been edited to remove personal identifiers.

Please contact **indigenous.initiatives@ualberta.ca** if you wish to read qualitative data.

A Note on Terminology

The United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) proposes an understanding of the term "Indigenous" based on the following:

> Self-identification as indigenous peoples at the individual level and accepted by the community as their member; Historical continuity with pre-colonial and/or pre-settler societies; Strong link to territories and surrounding natural resources; Distinct social, economic or political systems; Distinct language, culture and beliefs; Form non-dominant groups of society; Resolve to maintain and reproduce their ancestral environments and systems as distinctive peoples and communities (UNPFII n.d.)

Canada's Constitution Act, 1982 recognizes three distinct "Aboriginal Peoples of Canada:" Indians (now termed First Nations), Inuit, and Métis. Acknowledging their shared experiences with colonization, this report uses the term "Indigenous" when referring to First Nation, Métis, and Inuit peoples. This report, however, recognizes the diversity of peoples encompassed within this term.

Demographics

Indigenous Identity

Which of the following do you identify as?

First Nations Status	40.5
First Nations Non-Status	5.6
First Nations Bill C-31	4.7
Métis	45.3
Inuit	1.7
Other	2.2
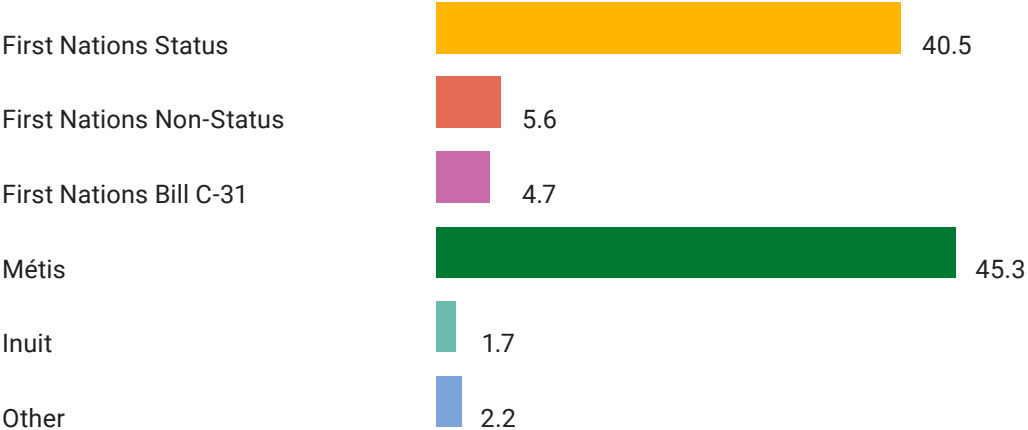
N=232

The survey asked students whether they identify as First Nations Status, First Nations Non-Status, First Nations Bill C-31, Métis, Inuit, or other. Half of the students identified as First Nations (50.8%), most of whom identified as First Nations Status (40.5%), while small proportions identified as First Nations Non-Status (5.6%) and First Nations Bill C-31 (4.7%). Slightly less than half of the students identified as Métis (45.3%) and a small proportion identified as Inuit (1.7%). The other category includes students who identified as First Nations Bill C-3, Métis and Inuit heritage, and Cree/Métis.

Age

Less than 18	0.4
Between 18-27	58.7
Between 28-37	22.6
Between 38-47	11.3
48 and older	7
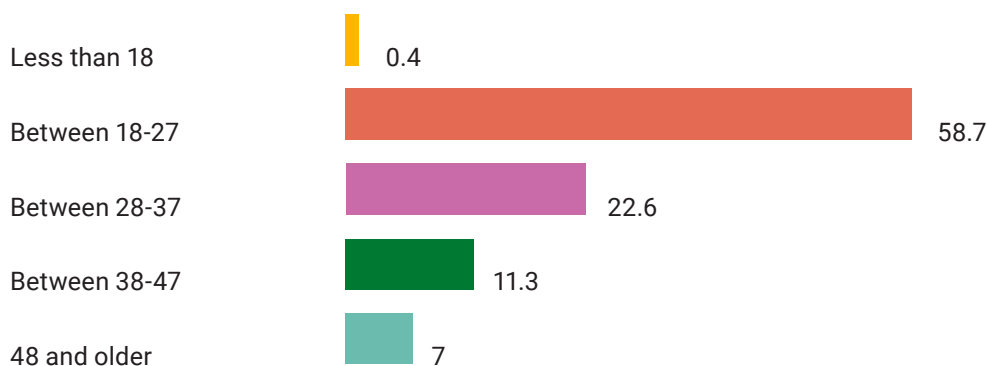
N=230

When asked their age, the majority of students (58.7%) who responded indicated that they are between 18 and 27 years old. Slightly less than one-quarter of students (22.6%) indicated that they are between the ages of 28 and 37. Smaller proportions of students are between 38 and 47 years old (11.3%) and 48 and older (7.0%). Only one student (0.4%) is less than 18.

First Language

When asked what their first language is, almost all students (97.8%) indicated that their first language is English. The remainder of students (2.2%) indicated that their first language is an Indigenous language. Specifically, four students indicated that their first language is Cree and one student's first language is Dene.

Gender Identity

When asked their gender identity, two-thirds of students (65.5%) identified as female and one-quarter (27.2%) identified as male. Small proportions of students identified as non-binary/gender non-conforming (3.4%), Two Spirit (3.0%), questioning (2.2%), transgender (1.3%), gender fluid (0.9%), trans man (0.4%), trans woman (0.4%), and agender (0.4%). Additionally, one student (0.4%) indicated that they prefer not to say and another student (0.4%) identified with a gender not included on the survey.

Sexual Identity

When asked their sexual identity, two-thirds of students (66.4%) identified as straight (heterosexual). Small proportions of students identified as bisexual (15.5%), questioning (7.3%), queer (6.0%), asexual (4.3%), pansexual (3.9%), gay (1.3%), and lesbian (1.3%). Additionally, a small proportion of students (4.7%) prefer not to say and two students (0.9%) identified with a sexual identity not included on the survey.

Marital Status

When asked their marital status, two-thirds (63.2%) of the students who responded indicated that they are single. One-quarter of students (22.1%) indicated that they are married and one in ten students (11.7%) are living Common Law. Small proportions of students indicated that they are divorced (2.1%) and poly relationships (0.9%).

Dependents and Childcare

The survey asked students whether they have dependents. More than three-quarters of students (79.6%) who responded to this question indicated that they do not have dependents, whereas two in ten students (19.5%) indicated that they have dependent children and a small proportion (0.9%) indicated that they have children and other dependents.

The survey subsequently asked students with children whether they have access to childcare. The majority of students with children (70.2%) indicated that they have access to childcare. Slightly less than one-quarter (21.3%) indicated that they do not have access to childcare and a small proportion (8.5%) indicated that they do not require childcare because their children are older.

Those who do not have childcare identified the following barriers preventing them from accessing it, finding affordable day care (50.0%), accessible childcare (30.0%), availability (30.0%), finding childcare (20.0%), reliable childcare (20.0%), child's needs (20.0%), discrimination (20.0%), health concerns related to COVID-19 (10.0%), and a lack of Indigenous programming (10.0%).

Location of Residence When Not Attending the U of A

When asked (unprompted, without response options) where they live when they are not attending the U of A, students identified 87 locations across Canada (see Figure 1). Half of the students who responded to this question indicated that they live in Edmonton (38.7%) or the Greater Edmonton area (14.3%). One quarter (28.6%) indicated that they live elsewhere in Alberta. Small proportions live in British Columbia (6.0%), Saskatchewan (5.1%), the Northwest Territories (4.1%), Ontario (1.8%), and Manitoba (1.4%).

Figure 1. Where students live when they are not attending the U of A (see Appendix A)
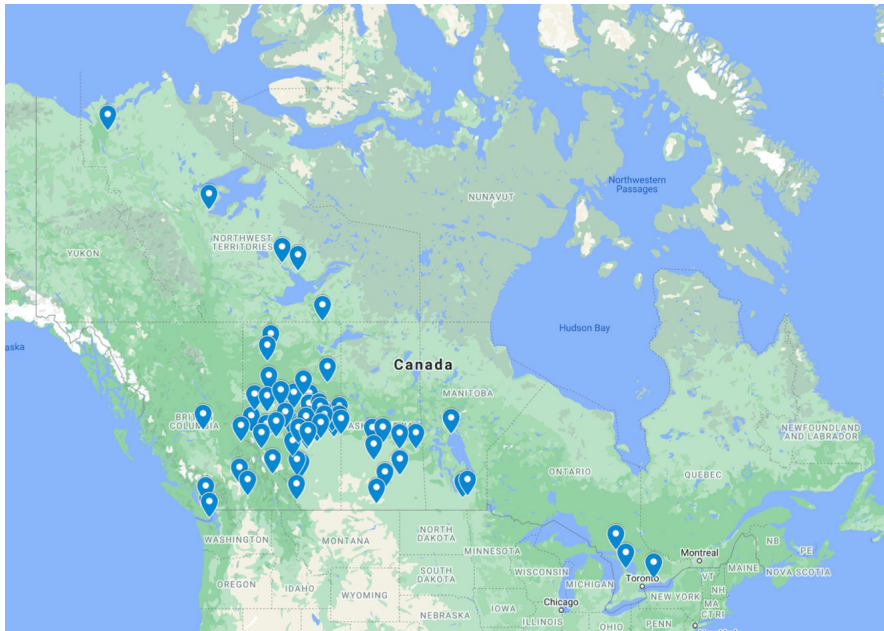
Location of Residence When Attending the U of A

When asked where they live when they are attending the U of A, the majority of students (69.4%) indicated that they live in Edmonton. Small proportions indicated that they live in the Greater Edmonton area (14.7), outside of the Edmonton area or Camrose – off reserve (11.6%), and outside of the Edmonton area or Camrose – on reserve (3.9%). Only one student (0.4%) indicated that they live in Camrose.

Relocation Distance

When asked how far they needed to relocate to come to the University of Alberta, half of students (50.8%) indicated that they did not need to relocate. One-third of students (35.8%) indicated that they relocated more than 100 km. Small proportions of students indicated that they relocated between 51 and 100 km (5.2%), between 26 and 50 km (3.0%), between 10 and 25 km (2.6%) and less than 10 km (2.6%).

Housing

When asked what type of accommodation they are living in, the majority of students (60.9%) who responded indicated that they are living at home (i.e., their own home, their parents' home, or another relative's home). One-third of students (35.9%) indicated that they are renting an apartment or house, a small proportion of students (2.7%) indicated that they are living in university residence, and one student (0.5%) indicated that they are living in a teacherage.

When asked whether they live in accommodation that they share with others, the majority of students (69.8%) indicated that they live in shared accommodation.

The survey also asked students whether they would utilize housing for families if it was available at the University of Alberta. One-quarter of students (26.4%) who

responded to this question indicated that they would utilize such housing.

Transportation

The survey asked students what modes of transportation they use to go to university. The three most commonly used modes of transportation are car (62.1%), bus (40.1%), and LRT (40.1%). One-quarter of students (28.0%) indicated that they walk to university and smaller proportions carpool (12.5%) and cycle (9.9%) to university. A small minority of students (2.2%) indicated that they use a mode of transportation not included in the survey (e.g., skateboard, Lime Scooter, and Uber). Additionally, a small proportion of students (13.4%) indicated that they do not use any mode of transportation to go to university, either because their program is online or because they have only experienced remote learning (i.e., they started university after the pandemic prompted the shift to remote learning).
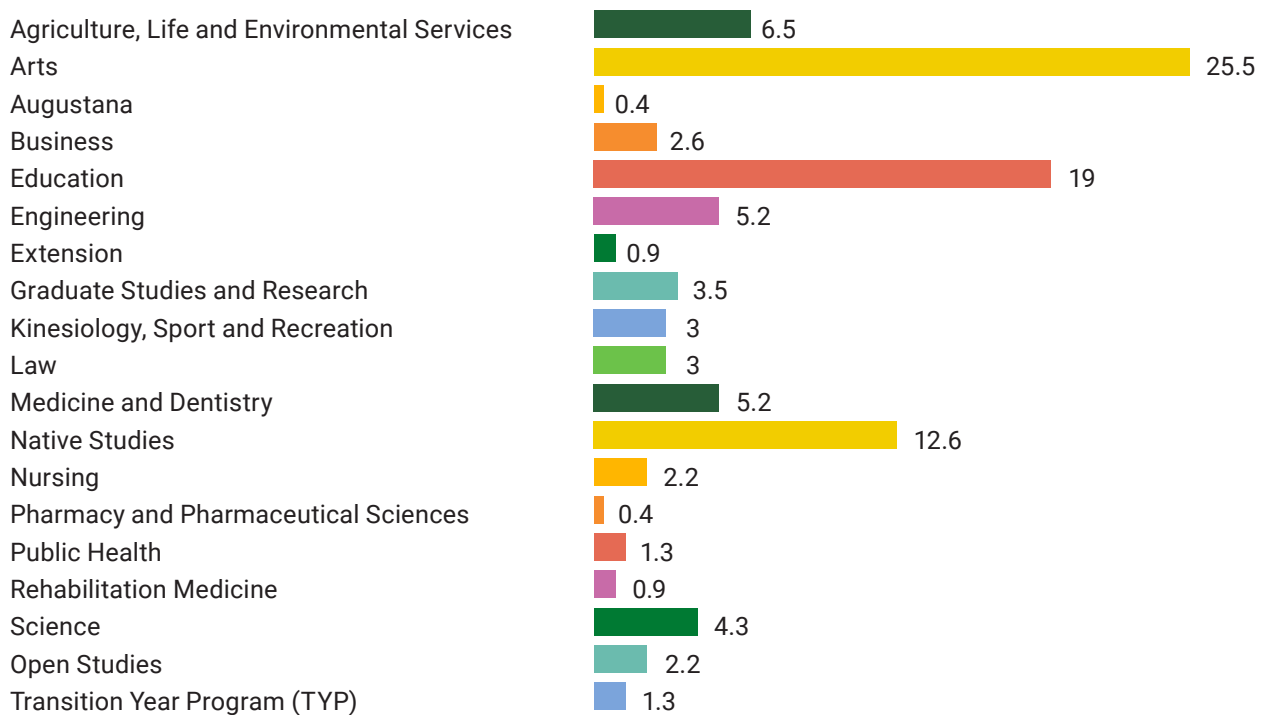
Employment

When asked whether they work, most students (64.7%) indicated that they do, one-third (33.2%) indicated that they do not, and a small proportion of students (2.1%) indicated that they are in a co-op program, completing a practicum, or volunteer.

The survey subsequently asked students who work, whether they work in both Fall and Winter Terms, whether they work full-time or part-time, and whether they work on campus or off campus. Half of the students who responded (55.3%) indicated that they work in both Fall and Winter Terms, part-time off campus. One-quarter (23.5%) indicated that they work in both Fall and Winter Terms, full-time off campus. Small proportions work both Fall and Winter Terms, on campus, either part-time (8.3%) or full-time (7.6%). A small proportion (5.3%) indicated that they do not work in both Fall and Winter Terms.

The survey asked students the same employment related question concerning the Spring and Summer Terms. The most common type of employment (43.2%) is full-time off campus in both Spring and Summer Terms. One-quarter (28.8%) indicated that they work part-time off campus in both Spring and Summer Terms. Small proportions indicated that they do not work in both Spring and Summer Terms (12.1%), work full-time on campus in both Spring and Summer Terms (11.4%), and work part-time on campus in both Spring and Summer Terms (4.5%).

Faculty, Program, and Level of Study

Faculty

Faculty	Value
Agriculture, Life and Environmental Services	6.5
Arts	25.5
Augustana	0.4
Business	2.6
Education	19
Engineering	5.2
Extension	0.9
Graduate Studies and Research	3.5
Kinesiology, Sport and Recreation	3
Law	3
Medicine and Dentistry	5.2
Native Studies	12.6
Nursing	2.2
Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences	0.4
Public Health	1.3
Rehabilitation Medicine	0.9
Science	4.3
Open Studies	2.2
Transition Year Program (TYP)	1.3

N=231

The survey asked Indigenous students which faculty they currently belong to. While the majority of students who responded to this question indicated that they belong to the Faculty of Arts (25.5%), the Faculty of Education (19.0%), and the Faculty of Native Studies (12.6%), smaller proportions of students belong to 14 other faculties ranging from the Faculty of Agriculture, Life and Environmental Sciences (6.5%) to the Faculty of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences (0.4%). Additionally, small proportions of students are in Open Studies (2.2%) and the Transition Year Program (1.3%).
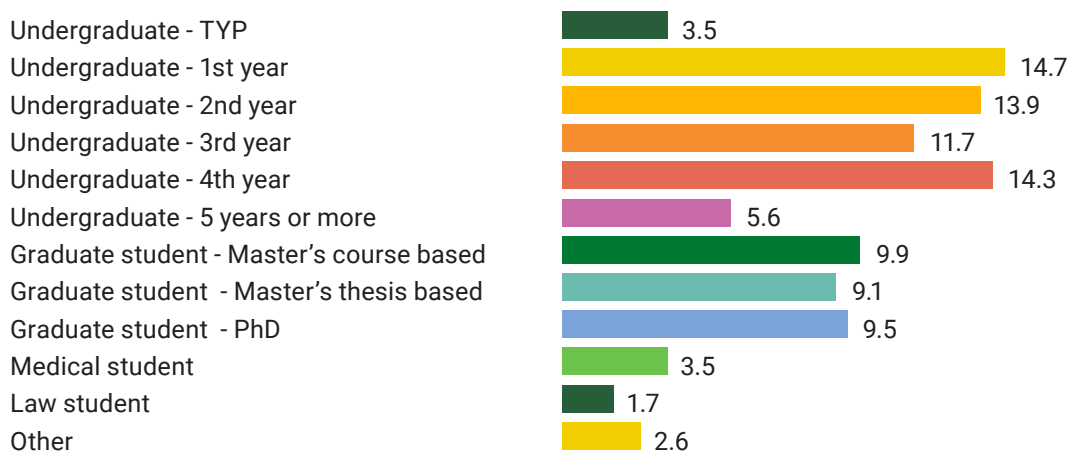
Program

When asked (unprompted, without response options) which program they are currently enrolled in, students cited a diverse range of programs at the undergraduate and graduate level. Specifically, the 226 students who responded to this question are enrolled in 87 different programs (see Table 1).

Table 1. Programs (see Appendix B for complete list)

Undergraduate	Master's	PhD
BA: Art and Design; Criminology; Drama; East Asian Studies; Economics; English; Film Studies; Environmental Studies; History of Art, Design, and Visual Culture; Human Geography; Linguistics; Native Studies; Political Science; Psychology; Recreation, Sport and Tourism; Sociology	**LLM** (Law)	**EdD/PhD:** Educational Policy Studies – Indigenous Peoples Education; Secondary Education
	MA: Anthropology; Community Engagement; History and Classics; Modern Language and Cultural Studies; Native Studies; Sociology	**PhD:** Educational Psychology; English; History and Classics; Human Ecology; Indigenous Studies; Medical Genetics; Political Science; Resource Economics and Environmental Sociology; Sociology
BA/BEd: Native Studies/Education		
BA/BSc: Native Studies/Environmental and Conservation Sciences	**MBA** (Business)	
	MEd: Educational Policy Studies – Indigenous Peoples Education; Educational Studies; Elementary Education; Secondary Education	
BCom: Accounting; Finance		
BDes (Design)	**MEng:** Civil and Environmental Engineering	
BEd: Aboriginal Teacher Education Program; Elementary; Secondary	**MFA:** Drama	
BFA (Fine Arts)	**MLIS** (Library and Information Studies)	
BKin (Kinesiology)	**MSc:** Biological Sciences; Chemical and Materials Engineering; Physical Therapy; Public Health; Rehabilitation Science	
B.Mus. (Music)		
BSc: Agriculture; Animal Health; Biological Sciences; Chemistry; Civil Engineering; Computing Science; Ecology; Electrical Engineering; Environmental and Conservation Sciences; Evolution and Environmental Biology; Dental Hygiene;		

Human Ecology; Nutrition and Food Science; Kinesiology; Pharmacy; Physics		
BScN: Collaborative; Honors		
JD (Law)		
MD (Medicine)		
Open Studies		
TYP		

Level of Study

Level	Value
Undergraduate - TYP	3.5
Undergraduate - 1st year	14.7
Undergraduate - 2nd year	13.9
Undergraduate - 3rd year	11.7
Undergraduate - 4th year	14.3
Undergraduate - 5 years or more	5.6
Graduate student - Master's course based	9.9
Graduate student - Master's thesis based	9.1
Graduate student - PhD	9.5
Medical student	3.5
Law student	1.7
Other	2.6

N=231

The survey asked students to select the level of study that best describes them from a list ranging from undergraduate student – TYP through to graduate student – PhD. Equal proportions of students selected undergraduate – first year (14.7%), undergraduate – second year (13.9%), undergraduate – third year (11.7%), and undergraduate – fourth year (14.3%). A small minority of students selected undergraduate – TYP (3.5%) and undergraduate – fifth year (5.6%).

Equal proportions of students selected graduate student – Master's course based (9.9%), graduate student – Master's thesis based (9.1%), and graduate student – PhD (9.5%). A small minority of students identified as medical students (3.5%), law students (1.7%), and other (2.6%), which includes after degree students, open studies students, and students enrolled in a certificate (without degree) program.

When asked whether Winter 2021 was their first term at the University of Alberta, only a small minority (3.4%) of students indicated that Winter 2021 was their first term.

When asked whether they are a full-time or part-time student, the large majority (88.7%) of students who responded indicated that they are a full-time student.

Pathways to the University of Alberta

## First in Family to Attend University

The survey asked students whether they are the first person in their family (immediate or extended) to attend university. The majority of students (64.1%) who responded to this question indicated that they were not the first person in their family to attend university.

High School Completion and Academic Preparedness

When asked whether they had completed grade 12 or equivalent before coming to the University of Alberta, the large majority of students (96.6%) indicated that they had indeed completed grade 12 or equivalent.

Academic Preparedness
"My high school education prepared me academically for university."

Strongly agree	4.7
Agree	38.1
Neutral	22.1
Disagree	22.5
Strongly disagree	12.6
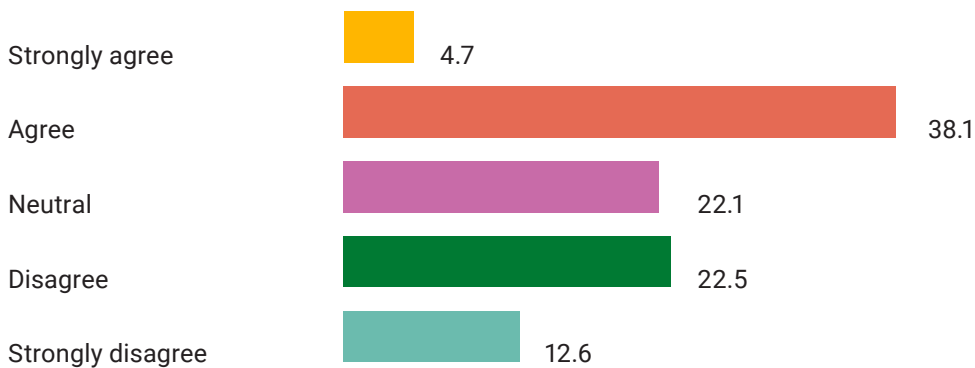
N=231

When posed with the statement "My high school education prepared me academically for university," only a small minority of students (4.7%) strongly agreed. More than one-third (38.1%) agreed, equal proportions were either neutral (22.1%) or disagreed (22.5%), and a small proportion (12.6%) strongly disagreed.

Previous Educational Institution

When asked what their last educational institution was, almost half (47.6%) of the students who responded indicated that they came to the U of A from another university or college and one-third of students (35.1%) cited high school as their last educational institution. A small proportion (17.3%) cited the University of Alberta as their last educational institution, indicating that they had either transferred from another program or had previously completed a degree.

Transitional Programming

The survey asked students whether they had accessed any kind of transitional programming. Only a small proportion (15.2%) of students who answered this question indicated that they had accessed transitional programming. Among those who had accessed transitional programming, most (77.1%) had accessed it at the U of A.

How Students Hear About the University of Alberta

When asked (unprompted, without response options) how they heard about the University of Alberta, students cited a variety of sources including friends, family members, community members, high school teachers, career counsellors, university representatives/recruiters, student advisors at other colleges, and career fairs. Other students indicated that they found the university online when searching for a specific program or as one student stated, "I googled programs for Indigenous students and then found the Native Studies faculty, and then the TYP program."

When asked (unprompted, without response options) how access to information about the University of Alberta can be improved, students provided a range of suggestions:
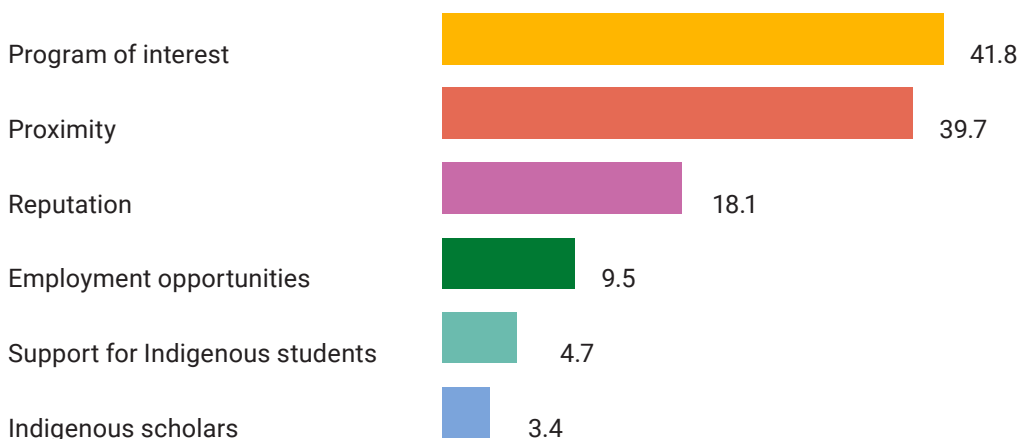- Increase social media presence (e.g., YouTube videos, live stream Q and A's)
- Improve the university website, making it easier to navigate (e.g., remove broken links)
- More community and high school presentations, particularly to schools on reserves
- More Indigenous representation when recruiting
- Field trips to the U of A for high school students from smaller communities
- Create a centralized source of information for FNMI students
- Provide opportunities for prospective and incoming students to reach out to current Indigenous students to ask questions (e.g., an online forum)
- Support (e.g., Indigenous liaisons) for prospective and incoming students concerning application procedures, choosing a program, program planning, registering for classes, and navigating eClass and Bear Tracks

The Decision to Attend the University of Alberta

First Choice

The survey asked Indigenous students whether the University of Alberta was their first choice. The large majority (82.6%) of students who responded to this question indicated that the U of A was indeed their first choice.

Reasons for Choosing the U of A

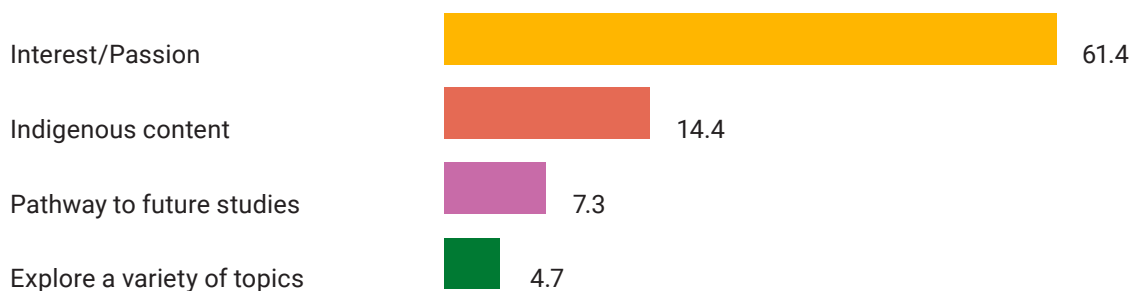| Reason	Value
Program of interest	41.8
Proximity	39.7
Reputation	18.1
Employment opportunities	9.5
Support for Indigenous students	4.7
Indigenous scholars	3.4

N=232

When asked (unprompted, without response options) why they decided to attend the University of Alberta, 41.8 percent of students stated that the university offered their program of interest. Specific programs mentioned include the Aboriginal Teacher Education Program, the Transition Year Program, and the various programs offered through the Faculty of Native Studies. A similar proportion of students (39.7%) stated that they decided to attend the U of A because of its proximity to their home and smaller proportions cited the university's reputation (18.1%), improved employment opportunities and associated quality of life (9.5%), supports for Indigenous students (4.7%), and the opportunity to learn from Indigenous scholars (3.4%).

For many students, a combination of the preceding reasons informed their decision to attend the U of A. For instance, one student indicated that they decided to attend the U of A because "it has an excellent reputation, wonderful resources for FNMI Students, and it is the only university in Canada that offers my specific program."

Reasons for Coming to the U of A from Another University or College

Students who attended another university or college prior to attending the U of A fall into three main categories: students who completed academic upgrading, students enrolled in a university transfer program, and current graduate students. Reasons for enrolling in a university transfer program, in which students complete a portion of their studies at a college before transferring to the U of A to complete their degree, include attending a college located closer to home and easing the transition to university. For instance, one student stated, the "MacEwan Engineering Transfer Program was a good way to start. It had smaller class sizes and tuition was cheaper."

Reasons for Choosing Current Program

Reason	Value
Interest/Passion	61.4
Indigenous content	14.4
Pathway to future studies	7.3
Explore a variety of topics	4.7

N=215

When asked why they chose their program (unprompted, without response options), Indigenous students were most likely to cite four main reasons:

Personal Interest and Passion. Pursuing their personal interests and passions is the most common reason (61.4%) for Indigenous students' choice of program. Students pursuing their personal interests and passions are enrolled in a diverse range of programs including, Criminology, Environmental Sciences, Psychology, Engineering, Kinesiology, and Linguistics. A student completing their Bachelor of Music stated, "I have been driven and passionate about music all my life, and when looking at what I wanted to go to school for, I could think of no other options that I would want to spend money and time on." Another student completing their Bachelor of Education stated, "I have a passion for becoming a teacher back home up north and changing education in the communities."

Indigenous Content and Indigenous Scholars. The opportunity to learn Indigenous content and work with Indigenous scholars is the second most common reason (14.4%) why Indigenous students choose their program. The majority of students (58.1%) who choose their program for this reason are enrolled in the Faculty of Native Studies. For instance, a student completing their BA in Native Studies indicated that they chose their program, "to gain a better understanding of my Indigenous culture, to use this knowledge to benefit my and other Indigenous communities, and to help me apply this knowledge to my eventual work opportunities upon my graduation." Other students seeking the opportunity to learn Indigenous content and work with Indigenous scholars are enrolled in programs such as the Aboriginal Teacher

Education Program, the Master of Laws program, and programs offered through the Faculty of Arts. A PhD student in Political Science, for instance, chose their program for "the department's strong identity as an open department that is well known for its research on gendered issues and Indigenous issues."

Pathway to Future Studies. A small proportion of students (7.3%) indicated that they chose their current program as a pathway to future studies such as law, medicine, or veterinary medicine. Students enrolled in the Transition Year Program (TYP) also chose their program as a pathway to future studies. As one TYP student indicated, "I wanted a program that could help me get into Native Studies and TYP is perfect." Another TYP student indicated that they chose the program because "I needed a way to adjust from a small school."

Explore a variety of topics. A small proportion of students (4.7%) indicated that they chose their program because it grants them the flexibility to explore a variety of topics. Students who choose their program for this reason are enrolled in combined degrees, interdisciplinary programs, or generalized programs. For instance, a Bachelor of Elementary Education student indicated that they chose their program because "it is a generalist degree rather than choosing a major/minor so I can explore all types of courses."

Like their decision to attend the University of Alberta, many Indigenous students chose their current program based on a combination of the preceding reasons. For instance, one student who chose the BSc in Environmental Conservation Sciences / BA in Native Studies Combined Degree program stated, "I wanted to learn more about Native Studies without compromising my professional and individual interest and experience in environment."

Participation in International Programs

The survey asked Indigenous students whether they have participated in an international program such as study abroad, education abroad, or an internship while a student at the University of Alberta. Only a small minority of students (4.3%) have participated in an international program and 13.4% indicated that they plan to do so before they graduate. Equal proportions of students indicated that they either have not decided (22.0%) or they do not know anything about such programs (22.0%). The largest proportion of students (38.4%) indicated that they have not participated in an international program. The five main reasons deterring students from participating in international programs are: work and family obligations, financial barriers, the COVID-19 pandemic, lack of compatibility with degree or research focus (e.g., specific course requirements, practicum placement, or research specific to local area), and lack of interest.

Future Studies

When asked (unprompted, without response options) what their plans for future studies are, some students indicated that they planned to graduate and enter the workforce. Most students, however, expressed interest in pursuing future studies:

Current Transition Year Program Students. Students currently enrolled in the Transition Year Program indicated that the planned to pursue a degree in Native Studies, Nursing, or Science.

Current Undergraduate Students. Students currently completing their undergraduate degree have a wide range of plans for future studies including, law school, medical school, veterinary medicine, after degree programs, and graduate school. Some undergraduate students are considering taking some time off to gain work experience before pursuing graduate studies while others plan to enter graduate school directly.

Current Graduate Students. Students currently completing their master's degree plan to enroll in a PhD program, while students currently completing their PhD plan to apply for a postdoc or a professorship.

Indigenous Focus. Across all levels of study, students expressed interest in maintaining an Indigenous focus for their future studies. A student currently completing their Master's in Public Health Program stated, "I want to pursue a PhD in comparative health policy specifically in Indigenous health." Similarly, a current medical student stated, "I hope to apply for a residency that has Indigenous values incorporated during my training." One Master's of Education student plans to promote reconciliation in the classroom, while another student completing their Native Studies Bachelor of Education Combined Degree plans to "educate others about Indigenous culture and continue to better educate myself about Indigenous traditions and ceremonies."

When asked (unprompted, without response options) what the University of Alberta could do to help support their future studies, students provided a range of recommendations:

Financial Support
- Provide more scholarships and bursaries
- Improve access to information about scholarships and bursaries
- Provide more opportunities to opt out of certain tuition fees

Academic Support
- Provide more online learning options
- Provide low-cost access to resources to study for entrance exams (e.g., MCAT)

Support Transitioning into New Programs
- Improve access to information concerning graduate studies
- Connect students with an Indigenous faculty representative who can provide assistance with application processes

Mental Health Support
- Improve access to mental health services
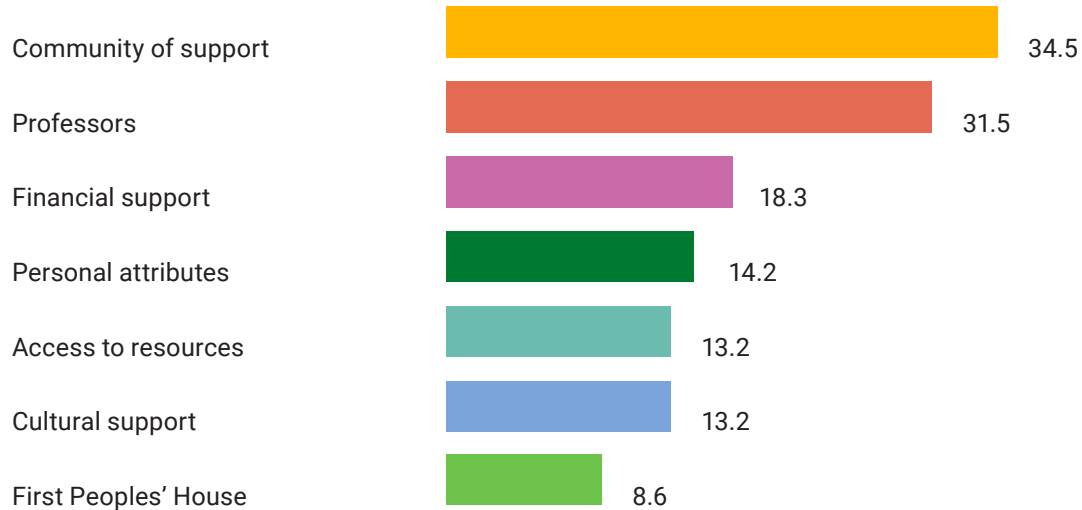- Improve awareness of trauma-based illnesses

Parenting Supports
- Provide access to lecture recordings

Indigenous Community Building, Programming, and Course Content
- Hire more Indigenous professors and Indigenous support staff
- Provide opportunities to reach out to Indigenous professors who are willing to supervise graduate students
- Provide opportunities to connect with Indigenous mentors/alumni in the medicine faculty who value cultural safety
- Provide opportunities to connect with Indigenous students from other programs
- Expand the Indigenous Health Initiatives Program to include medical sciences research
- Improve access to Indigenous language programs for Indigenous students
- Continue offering courses and programs with Indigenous content

Factors Contributing to Student Success

Community of support	34.5
Professors	31.5
Financial support	18.3
Personal attributes	14.2
Access to resources	13.2
Cultural support	13.2
First Peoples' House	8.6

N=197

When asked (unprompted, without response options) what the most significant factors to their success as students at the University of Alberta are, students identified seven main factors:

Community of Support. Indigenous students are most likely (34.5%) to mention having a community of support as a factor contributing to their success. Some students identified specific sources of support such as family, friends, classmates, colleagues, their department, the staff at First Peoples' House, and student groups (e.g., Indigenous Student Council, Indigenous Grad Student Association), while others identified a general sense of community and belonging as a factor contributing to their success. For instance, one student stated, "other students are the biggest contributors to my success! And also supports such as advisors from FPH have helped a ton! Just people to talk to, encourage you, and be with you along the journey. It's the people!!!" Another student indicated that a significant factor contributing to their success is "being connected to other students. It's comforting to meet some wonderful human beings who are walking the same path." A TYP student stated that the program "really helped me find community," while another student stated, "I have felt welcome in the Native Studies faculty and First Peoples House activities."

Professors, Supervisors, and Mentorship. The second most common (31.5%) factor contributing to student success is having good quality professors, supervisors, and mentorship. Specifically, students value having professors who are understanding, reasonable, approachable, respectful, and compassionate. One student described a success factor as "having positive, knowledgeable, and supportive instructors who truly care about your learning and will help to solve any issues or answer any questions." Additionally, students value having supervisors who are patient and supportive and provide consistent guidance and feedback. Students also indicated that developing a positive relationship with professors and supervisors is an

important factor contributing to their success.

Financial Support. The third most common (18.3%) factor contributing to student success is financial support. The various sources of financial support identified include scholarships, bursaries, and funding from the student's community, nation, or band. For instance, one student stated, "I received a scholarship for the first and second years of my education (AGES Indigenous) and without these funding revenues, I would not have been able to complete my degree." According to another student, "the amount of stress that is taken off when a student is financially stable is almost unquantifiable in words."

Personal Attributes. Indigenous students (14.2%) also cited their personal attributes as important factors contributing to their success. Personal attributes mentioned include perseverance, resiliency, hard work, dedication, time management skills, organizational skills, and self-motivation.

Access to Resources. Another important success factor is access to resources (13.2%). Students identified a wide range of resources that contribute to their success, including the Writer's Centre, tutoring, printing services, library services, accessibility resources, mental health support services, and the various resources offered through First Peoples' House.
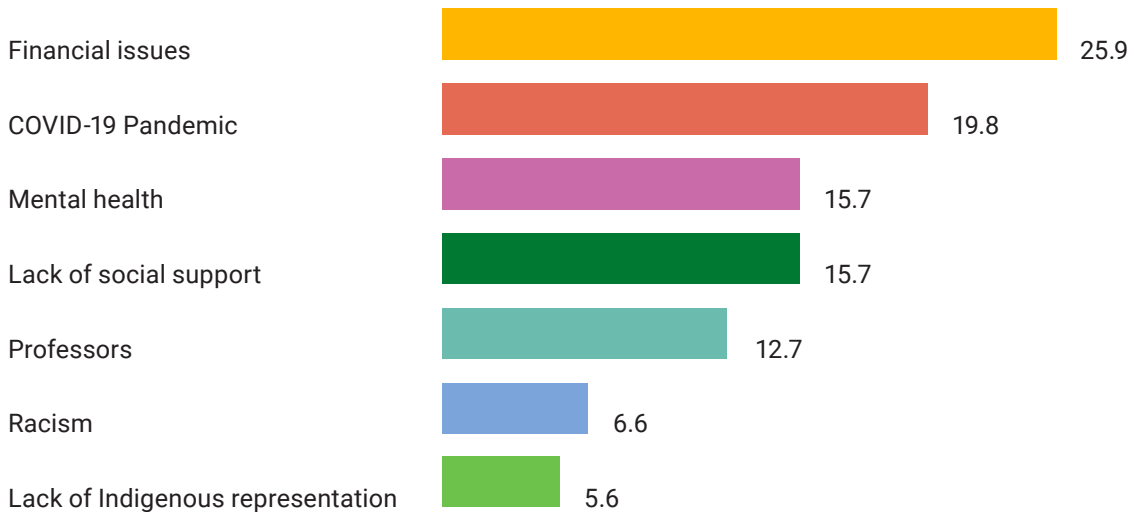
Cultural Support. An equal proportion of students (13.2%) cited cultural support as an important success factor. Sources of cultural support identified include Indigenous faculty, staff, elders, and cultural events on campus. For instance, an important success factor according to one student is "access to First Nations' cultural events held on campus that make me feel like I'm a part of this university." Another student described an important factor to their success as "being encouraged to pursue my indigenous voice within an academic setting."

First Peoples' House. First Peoples' House is a source of many of the preceding factors and 8.6% of students specifically identified it as a factor contributing to their success. The following response from one student demonstrates the ways in which First Peoples' House contributes to student success:

> **66** The First Peoples' House has been a tremendous help with my studies. First, having access to printing has taken an incredible amount of weight off my shoulders and helped mediate the stresses of school. Second, having access to my elders has been a great help as elders such as Francis Whiskeyjack had offered me great advice and guidance when I have needed it. Last, seeing other Indigenous students at first peoples house has been good for my mental stress as it can be quite intimidating not seeing other Indigenous peoples when roaming around campus or when seated in a classroom."

Barriers to Success

Student Identified Barriers

Barrier	Value
Financial issues	25.9
COVID-19 Pandemic	19.8
Mental health	15.7
Lack of social support	15.7
Professors	12.7
Racism	6.6
Lack of Indigenous representation	5.6

N=197

When asked (unprompted, without response options) what the most significant barriers to their success as students at the University of Alberta are, students identified seven main barriers:

Financial Issues. Financial issues are the most frequently (25.9%) reported barrier to success. Specific financial related concerns mentioned include, the financial burden of increased tuition and student loans, a lack of finances to cover living expenses, and "the increasing scarcity of bursaries, scholarships, awards, and funding opportunities."

COVID-19 Pandemic. The second most common (19.8%) barrier to success is the COVID-19 pandemic and the associated shift to remote learning.

Mental Health. Another student identified barrier to success is mental health (15.7%). While some students stated that their mental health in general was a barrier to success, others identified specific mental health concerns such as, generational trauma, generalized anxiety, and social anxiety related to large class sizes.

Professors and Supervisors. An equal proportion of students (15.7%) identified issues relating to professors and supervisors as barriers to their success. These issues include professors who are unwilling to help or are inaccessible (e.g., lack of office hours), professors who are uncompassionate, professors who do not care about student success, and negative student-supervisor relationships.

Lack of Social Support. An equal proportion of students (15.7%) also identified a lack of social support as a barrier to success. Some students identified specific factors contributing to reduced social support such as living far away from family and support systems, the competitive environment of their faculty, and large class sizes which make it difficult to build relationships with classmates. Others reported a general lack of community feel and engagement as a barrier to success. For instance, one student stated, "I feel exceptionally disconnected and/or supported by the U of A."

Racism. Students (6.6%) also identified racism as a barrier to their success. The sources of racism mentioned include racism from other students, racism from faculty, and "internal racism in the university structures that are not addressed."

Lack of Indigenous Representation. Another student identified barrier to success is a lack of Indigenous representation, including both a lack of Indigenous professors and a lack of Indigenous peers (5.6%). For instance, one student identified "the shortage of Indigenous people in health science research" as a barrier to success and stated, "it can be hard to feel like I belong when I'm the only Indigenous student." Similarly, another student described the barriers impeding their success as "feeling alone as an Indigenous [person] with different world views than most of my peers, and always feeling like the need to defend Indigenous people during the discussions and during my clinical rotations."

Compounding Barriers. Many students indicated that they encounter more than one of the preceding barriers. For instance, one student identified the following barriers impeding their success:

> 66 Lack of finances, lack of support, not feeling welcomed due to having a First Nations heritage, witnessing acts of cultural incompetence or blatant racism during school, transportation, access to a laptop, being out of place due to loss of culture; being singled out in class as the only First Nations student in the classroom."

Impact of Barriers on Student Success

When asked (unprompted, without response options) how these barriers hinder their success, students revealed that the barriers they encounter hinder their success in the following ways:

Financial Issues. Students who identified financial issues as a barrier to their success indicated that the stress associated with this barrier negatively impacts their academic performance. For instance, one student stated, "if I'm worried about paying rent or bills, I can't focus in class/during my practicum." Moreover, many students experiencing financial issues indicated that they have to work part-time or full-time, which further interferes with their ability to focus on their studies. For instance, another student stated, "balancing work and studies is taxing and I struggle to give my best to either." As a result, students reported having to drop courses, taking longer than expected to complete their program, or having to drop their program entirely. As one student stated, "it's hard to finish when you work full time."

COVID-19 Pandemic. Students who identified the COVID-19 pandemic as a barrier to success, indicated that the stress of the pandemic in general and the shift to remote learning in particular has negatively impacted their mental health and reduced their ability to concentrate. Additional difficulties associated with remote learning include a poor internet connection, a lack of access to academic resources, and a lack of collaboration with other students. As one student stated, "it is very hard to manage it all, it feels like so much more weight is pinned on you." Some students have dropped courses while others indicate that they are unable to perform at their desired level. For instance, one student stated, "my performance has been significantly lower than ever before, and my grades have dropped tremendously."

Mental Health. Students who identified mental health issues as a barrier to their success indicated that this barrier hinders them from performing to the best of their ability. Students experiencing mental health issues reported feeling distracted, overwhelmed, unable to focus, unable to attend class, or feeling a general lack of interest or energy. Due to mental health issues, students have dropped courses, failed courses, or taken a leave of absence from their studies.

Professors and Supervisors. Students who identified issues with their professors and supervisors as a barrier to success indicated that they have dropped courses, failed courses, and in some cases considered leaving the university. For instance, following negative interactions with their professors, one student stated, "I debated never coming back to university," while another student stated, "on the inside, I was dying and wanted to leave the university. Classism and racism still run wild in the approaches of professors." Additionally, students who identified their professors' lack of accessibility as a barrier to success report being unable to understand what they did wrong on assignments, which hindered their ability to improve in the course.

Lack of Social Support. Students who identified a lack of social support as a barrier to success, indicated that they experienced a lack of motivation, decreased performance, and mental health issues. For instance, one student stated, "it brutalized my mental health and left me jaded and bitter. My work could definitely be of a higher calibre were I to be supported with a sense of community at the university." Additionally, some students have dropped courses due to a lack of social support.

Racism. Students who identified racism as a barrier to success, indicated that they experience loneliness, exhaustion, and for some attending class is "a trauma filled event." For instance, one student stated that racism from faculty and students, "causes trauma and strong emotions that cause me to no longer want to participate. As well I feel my voice isn't heard and that I should just push through and graduate and never return to the university." One student stated, "racism creates an atmosphere of exclusion where I do not feel comfortable studying with other students," while another student who identified the racist beliefs and actions of their peers as a barrier to success stated, "I am barely passing most of my blocks. I no longer enjoy any classes. I dread all small student groups because I now expect people to treat me poorly in them and outside of them if I talk about my experiences."

Lack of Indigenous Representation. Students who identified a lack of Indigenous representation as a barrier to success, reported that they feel discouraged,

overwhelmed, misunderstood, and unprepared. For instance, one student stated, "I think sometimes it can be so overwhelming, feeling like you do not fit in or people don't understand you." Another student stated that the lack of Indigenous representation hinders their success because they have "to constantly work harder for recognition than everyone else to get the same opportunities," and as a result their "capacity is always at its limit." One student stated, "I have had to be the token Indigenous person in my classes, program and department without consent," while another stated, "the lack of Indigenous lived-experience by many professors/ instructors/TAs means that despite their qualifications and best efforts, many are unable to sufficiently prepare me for what I will be encountering and experiencing now and after graduation."

Reasons for Taking a Break from Studies

The survey asked students whether they had taken a break from their program/ studies for any of the following reasons: mental illness, physical illness, financial reasons, family reasons, required to withdraw by the university, employment, to have/ raise children, to maintain connection with their community, other, or none of the above. The majority of students (62.5%) indicated that none of the listed reasons caused them to take a break from studies. Mental illness was the most common reason (14.2%) why students had taken a break from their studies. Equal proportions of students indicated that they had taken a break for financial reasons (6.0%), for family reasons (6.0%), and for employment (6.0%). Small proportions of students indicated that they had taken a break to maintain connection with their community (4.7%), due to physical illness (4.3%), for other reasons (4.3%), and to have/raise children (3.4%). Only a small minority (3.0%) of students indicated that the university required them to withdraw.

Timeframe of Barriers

The survey asked students whether they had encountered barriers at any of the following points: before applying to the University of Alberta, while applying, while in their program, while accessing university services and/or participating in university events, or none of the above. Students were mostly likely (45.7%) to indicate that they encountered barriers while in their program. Students who indicated that they did not encounter barriers at any point represented the second most common response (37.1%). Equal proportions of students indicated that they encountered barriers while applying (23.3%) and before applying (22.0%). A slightly smaller proportion (19.4%) indicated that they encountered barriers while accessing university services and/or participating in university events.

When asked (unprompted, without response options) what the nature of the barriers were, students identified the following barriers:

Before Applying. Students indicated that they encountered three main barriers prior to applying to the U of A. These three barriers include, not meeting course and/or grade requirements, difficulty navigating the U of A website, and a lack of information concerning application process.

While Applying. Barriers encountered while applying to the U of A include, not meeting course requirements, difficulty navigating U of A website, particularly Bear Tracks, difficult/confusing application processes (including housing applications), and technological issues.

While in Their Program. Students indicated that they encountered a range of barriers while in their program. These barriers include, difficulty navigating the U of A website, a lack of information concerning application process for bursaries, confusion concerning program planning, difficulty transitioning from high school to university, being unable to access courses for learning their traditional language, racism from students and faculty, not feeling accepted, and technological issues.

While Accessing Services. The main barriers encountered while accessing services include, not knowing what services are available, difficulty accessing mental health services (long wait times), and anxiety.

Persistent Barriers. Five barriers that students encounter prior to applying to the U of A continue to exist for students while they are applying, while they are in their program, and while they access university services/events. These five barriers are financial issues, mental health issues, physical health issues, parenting responsibilities, and interpersonal and systemic racism.

Funding

The survey asked students what type of financial assistance they access. Of the nine types of financial assistance included in the survey, Indigenous students were most likely (68.5%) to indicate that they access a university scholarship, financial award, or bursary. Almost half of Indigenous students (47.4%) indicated that they access personal savings. Nearly equal proportions of students indicated that they access government loans (41.8%), earnings from summer work (40.5%), third party sponsorship (39.2%), and earnings from current work (37.5%). A smaller proportion of students (15.5%) indicated that they access a family member loan and only a small minority access a loan from a financial institution (6.0%), or a type of financial assistance not listed (3.9%).

Among students who indicated that they access government loans or bursaries, the most common type of government loans is Alberta (83.5%). Other types of government loans accessed include Saskatchewan (5.2%), Northwest Territories (5.2%), British Columbia (3.1%), Manitoba (1.0%) and Ontario (1.0%).

Among students who indicated that they access third party sponsorship, the most common type is band funding (66.3%). The second most common type of third party sponsorship accessed is Métis Funding (24.7%) and a small proportion access Freehorse Family Wellness' Society (9.0%).

Scholarships and Bursaries Specifically for Indigenous Students

The survey asked students whether they are aware of scholarships or bursaries specifically for Indigenous students. The majority of students (87%) indicated that they are aware of such scholarships and bursaries. The survey subsequently asked students who are aware of scholarships how they found the information, whereas students who are unaware of scholarships responded to the question, "What prevented you from finding the information?"

When asked (unprompted, without response options) how they found information on scholarships and bursaries, students who were aware of scholarships or bursaries identified a range of sources:

- Program advisors
- Graduate supervisors
- Family members
- Other Indigenous students
- First Peoples' House
- Transition Year Program
- Indigenous Health Initiative Program
- Emails from their department, faculty, and/or FGSR
- U of A website
- Bear Tracks

- Métis Nation of Alberta website
- Band announcements

When asked (unprompted, without response options) what prevented them from finding information on scholarships and bursaries, students cited three main reasons:
- **Didn't Know Where to Look.** The majority of students (54.5%) who responded indicated that they didn't know where to look for information.
- **Scholarship Requirements.** Students (27.3%) reported difficulty finding scholarships for which they meet the full requirements. In particular, out of province students and part-time students indicated that they don't qualify for most scholarships.
- **Time Consuming.** A small proportion of students (18.2%) indicated that finding information on scholarships was time consuming and they were too busy with their studies.
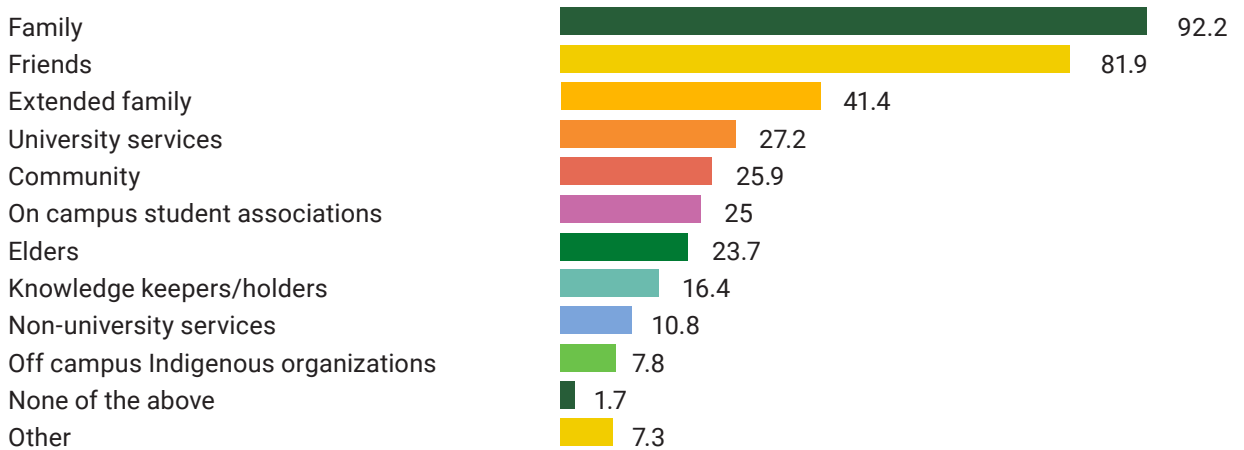
Difficulties Accessing Funding

The survey asked students whether they had experienced difficulties in accessing funding. The majority of students who responded to this question (65.2%) indicated that they had not experienced any difficulties. Those who indicated that they had experienced difficulties provided comments concerning the nature of the difficulties. Their comments revealed three main types of difficulties:
- **Eligibility Issues.** Out-of-province students, part-time students, and course-based master's students indicated that they were not eligible for certain funding. Other students indicated that they did not meet the academic requirements or were not eligible for funding due to their current year of study.
- **Time Consuming Application Process.** Students reported difficulties completing funding applications (particularly applications that require essays) due to their current workload.
- **Difficulty Obtaining Required Documents.** Students also reported difficulties obtaining the required documents (e.g., letters of support, verification documents) to access funding.

Support Network

What people/organizations make up your support network? (Check all that apply)

Category	Value
Family	92.2
Friends	81.9
Extended family	41.4
University services	27.2
Community	25.9
On campus student associations	25
Elders	23.7
Knowledge keepers/holders	16.4
Non-university services	10.8
Off campus Indigenous organizations	7.8
None of the above	1.7
Other	7.3

N=232

The survey asked students what people/organizations make up their support network. Of the 12 types of people/organizations included in the survey, students were by far most likely (92.2%) to indicate that family make up their support network. A large proportion of students (81.9%) indicated that their support network consists of friends and slightly less than half of students (41.4%) have extended family members in their support network. Approximately one quarter of students indicated that their support network consists of university services (27.2%), their community (25.9%), on campus student associations (25.0%), and elders (23.7%). Smaller proportions of students indicated that their support network includes knowledge keepers/holders (16.4%), non-university services (10.8%), off campus Indigenous organizations (7.8%) and other sources (7.3%). The other sources identified include professors, colleagues, peers, cohort members, and pets. Only a small minority of students (1.7%) indicated that none of the listed people/organizations make up their support network.

The survey asked students whether they feel they are in a supportive environment within their networks. The vast majority of students who responded to this question (91.3%) indicated that they do indeed feel they are in a supportive environment. The survey subsequently asked (unprompted, without response options) students to further specify the nature of the environment within their networks. Students described four main types of environments:

- **Supportive Environment.** Most students emphasized that their networks provide a supportive environment. For instance, one student commented, "everyone is very encouraging and rooting for me. Especially my family and grandparents and parents. They are very proud." Similarly, another student stated, "my family and my friends are very supportive of my current and future aspirations. They've proven time after time to be a useful supportive resource when needed."

- **Supportive Environment within Certain Networks.** Some students indicated that only certain networks provide a supportive environment. For instance, one student commented, "my family is there for me. I have good friends. My roommates make me feel isolated."
- **Supportive Environment with Limitations.** Some students indicated that while they have a supportive network, it does not always meet their needs. For instance, some students indicated that the people within their support networks do not understand the challenges associated with university. Other students indicated that the COVID-19 pandemic has limited their ability to access their support network.
- **Unsupportive Environment.** Some students indicated that they do not receive support from their networks. In particular, some students expressed frustration with the lack of mental health support available.

Experiences with Support Services
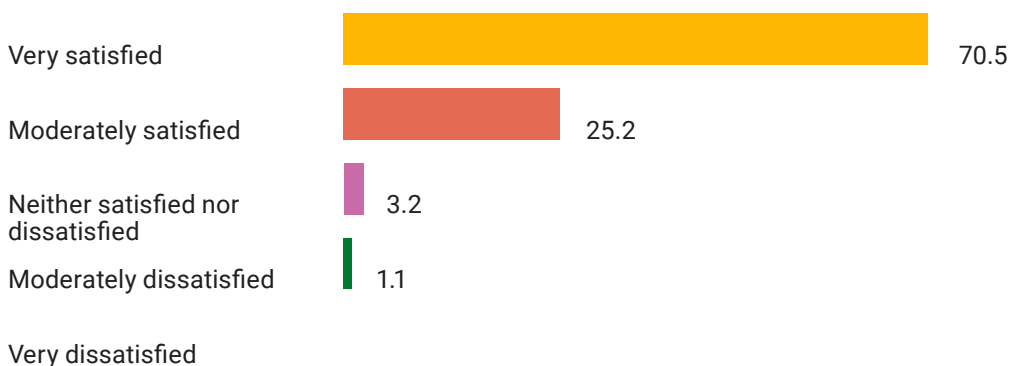
First Peoples' House Support Services

The survey asked students whether they have accessed any support services through First Peoples' House. Slightly more than half of the students (58.5%) who responded to this question indicated that they have not accessed support services. When asked why they did not access these services, students provided a range of reasons including, did not need to access any services, not sure what services are available, too nervous, had the impression that the services are for undergraduate students, did not know where to find the services or how to access them, wanted too but were too busy with school or other commitments, and a fear of not belonging.

Alternatively, those who accessed support services from First Peoples' House, indicated that they accessed the following services:
- Access to Elders
- Art Therapy
- Aunties Check-In
- Computing and Printing Services
- Cultural Projects
- Feasts
- Financial resources (including information sessions on student funding)
- Snacks
- Smudge Room
- Tutoring
- Use of Cultural Space
- Wellness Worker
- Writing Support

Level of Satisfaction
How satisfied were you with the support services available through First Peoples' House?

Very satisfied	70.5
Moderately satisfied	25.2
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	3.2
Moderately dissatisfied	1.1
Very dissatisfied	

N=95

Almost all students who accessed support services through First Peoples' House reported being satisfied with them. More than nine in ten say they are very satisfied (70.5%) or moderately satisfied (25.2%) with the support services. Only a small minority (3.2%) indicated that they are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied and one student (1.1%) reported being moderately dissatisfied.

The following student comments illustrate their satisfaction with First Peoples' House:

"Amazing. Life saver. Thank you."

"I can never say enough good things about FPH."

"First Peoples House is an amazing resource, and all of the staff are extremely kind and make me feel welcome."

"It is a great place to access because this is where you feel most at home."

When asked how they learned of the services and supports available through First Peoples' House, students mentioned the following sources:
- Emails from FPH
- FPH Website
- Social Media
- Friends
- Family
- Bridges Orientation
- TAWOW
- Transition Year Program
- Campus Tour

Other University Services

When asked whether they have accessed any support services outside of First Peoples' House at the University of Alberta, the majority of students who responded (61.8%) indicated that they have not accessed such services. Their reasons for not accessing these services include, did not need to access any services, lack of interest, not sure where to access the services, did not feel that the services would help, financial issues, unaware of available services, anxiety, did not feel welcome, and too busy.
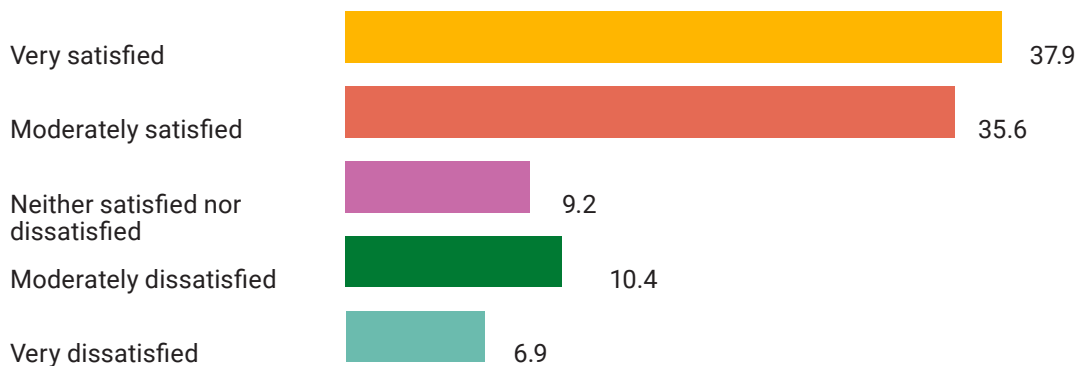
Those who accessed support services at the university, indicated that they accessed the following services:
- Academic Success Centre
- ACCESS Open Minds
- Accessibility Resources
- Campus Food Bank
- Centre for Writers
- Counselling and Clinical Services
- Indigenous Health Initiative Program
- Office of Advocacy and Wellbeing (OAW) – Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry

- Peer Support Centre
- Protective Services
- Sexual Assault Centre
- Student Connect
- Tutoring
- UniTea
- University Health Centre

Level of Satisfaction
How satisfied were you with the support services?

Level	Value
Very satisfied	37.9
Moderately satisfied	35.6
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	9.2
Moderately dissatisfied	10.4
Very dissatisfied	6.9

N=87

Most students who accessed support services at the university indicated that they were satisfied with them. Equal proportions reported being very satisfied (37.9%) and moderately satisfied (35.6%). Small proportions indicated that they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (9.2%), moderately dissatisfied (10.4%), and very dissatisfied (6.9%).

When asked (unprompted, without response options) how they learned of these services, students mentioned the following sources:
- Friends
- Family
- Instructors
- Supervisors
- Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR)
- First Peoples' House
- Transition Year Program
- Orientation
- Online
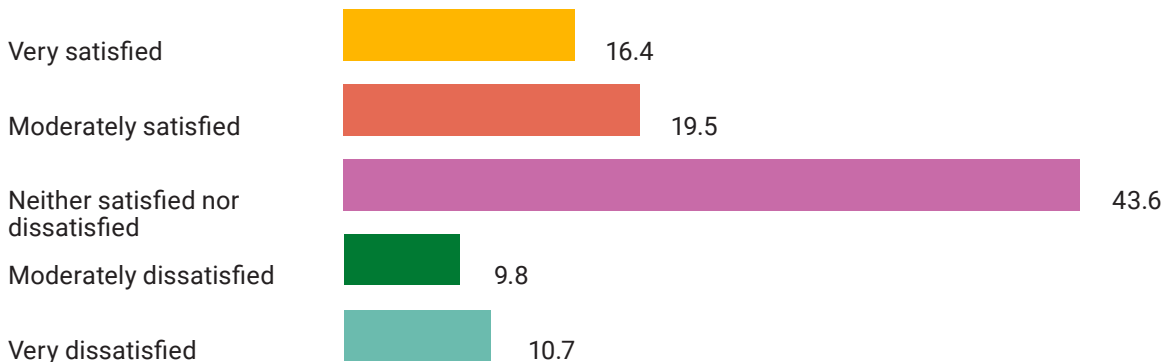- U of A Website
- Campus Posters

Other Supports

When asked (unprompted, without response options) what other supports have been most helpful to their journey at the University of Alberta, students identified a range of supports:

- Financial Support. Awards, bursaries, and scholarships.
- People. Elders, classmates, family, friends, Indigenous instructors, librarians, professors, student associations (e.g., Graduate Students' Association), and supervisors.
- Programs. The Aboriginal Teacher Education Program (ATEP) and the Transition Year Program (TYP).
- University Services. Academic Success Centre, Accessibility Resources (particularly, exam accommodations), Campus Food Bank, Career Centre, Centre for Writers, Counselling and Clinical Services, Engineering Student Success Centre, Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR), First Peoples' House. Fitness Centre, intramural sports, Office of Advocacy and Wellbeing (OAW) – Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry, printing services, and tutoring.

Mental Health Support Services

Level of Satisfaction
How satisfied are you with the mental health support offered at the University of Alberta?

Very satisfied	16.4
Moderately satisfied	19.5
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	43.6
Moderately dissatisfied	9.8
Very dissatisfied	10.7

N=225

The survey asked students how satisfied they are with the mental health support services offered at the University of Alberta. Almost half of the students who responded to this question (43.6%) indicated that they are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with these services. Approximately one-third say they are very satisfied (16.4%) or moderately satisfied (19.6%). Small proportions indicated that they are moderately dissatisfied (9.8%) and very dissatisfied (10.7%).

This question also asked students to provide comments concerning their satisfaction with the university's mental health support services. These comments revealed that students are dissatisfied with mental health services for the following reasons: difficulties accessing the services (e.g., long wait times), a lack of Indigenous cultural

mental health support, and a lack of understanding from mental health service providers.

Health Services

Level of Satisfaction
How satisfied are you with the health services offered at the University of Alberta?

Response	Value
Very satisfied	19.7
Moderately satisfied	23.8
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	51.1
Moderately dissatisfied	3.1
Very dissatisfied	2.3
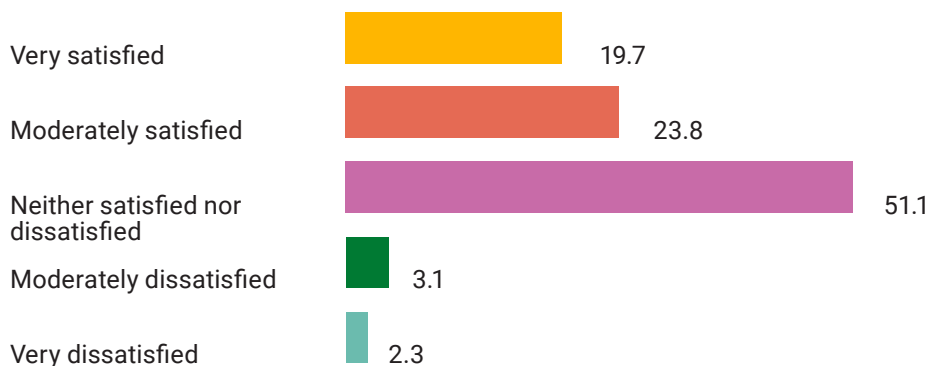
N=223

The survey asked students how satisfied they are with the health services offered at the University of Alberta. Half of the students who responded to this question (51.1%) indicated that they are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with these services. Four in ten say they are very satisfied (19.7%) or moderately satisfied (23.8%). Only a small minority of students say they are moderately dissatisfied (3.1%) and very dissatisfied (2.3%).

When asked to provide comments, some students described positive experiences with the university health services. For instance, one student stated, "my doctor at the medical clinic is very helpful, knowledgeable, and accommodating of my needs." Another student stated, "anytime I have needed health service the professionals have been great in directing me to where I need to go." A few students reported issues navigating the insurance claims and disappointment with the amount of dental coverage, while other students indicated that the fees were too expensive and consequently had to opt out of the health coverage.

Supports for Substance Abuse

The survey asked students whether they feel there are adequate supports available at the University of Alberta for substance use/abuse. Of the students who responded to this question, more than one-third (37.6%) indicated that they feel there are adequate supports available and a similar proportion (35.2%) indicated that they do not know about supports for substance use/abuse. One-quarter indicated that they do not feel there are adequate supports available.

This question also asked students whether they have suggestions for what could be offered and students provided the following comments: reduce stigma associated with substance use/abuse, improve access to supports, provide more funding for

the supports currently available, improve awareness of supports available, provide more supports specific to substance use/abuse (e.g., counselling opportunities with specialized professionals, addiction counselling, trauma therapy), provide Indigenous focused supports (e.g., Indigenous service providers), provide more education concerning binge drinking and cannabis use, provide students with the option to take a sobriety break from their studies without sacrificing their standing in the program.

Supports for Bullying and/or Physical Abuse

When asked whether they feel there are adequate supports available at the University of Alberta for bullying and/or physical abuse, half of the students who responded indicated that they feel there are adequate supports available (51.6%). Three in ten (29.1%) indicated that they do not know about such supports and two in ten (19.3%) indicated that they do not feel there are adequate supports available. Students made the following suggestions: provide more funding for the supports currently available, improve awareness of the supports available, and provide more opportunities to report bullying.

Supports for Sexual Harassment/Abuse

When asked whether they feel there are adequate supports available at the University of Alberta for sexual harassment/abuse, the majority of student who responded indicated that they feel there are adequate supports available (55.6%). Slightly less than one-quarter (23.2%) indicated that they do not feel there are adequate supports and a similar proportion (21.2%) do not know about supports for sexual harassment/ abuse. Students provided the following suggestions: provide more funding for the supports currently offered, improve awareness of the supports offered, follow up with reported cases, ensure that on-campus residences (e.g., Lister, Peter Lougheed Hall, fraternities) take proactive action against the culture that leads to sexual abuse.
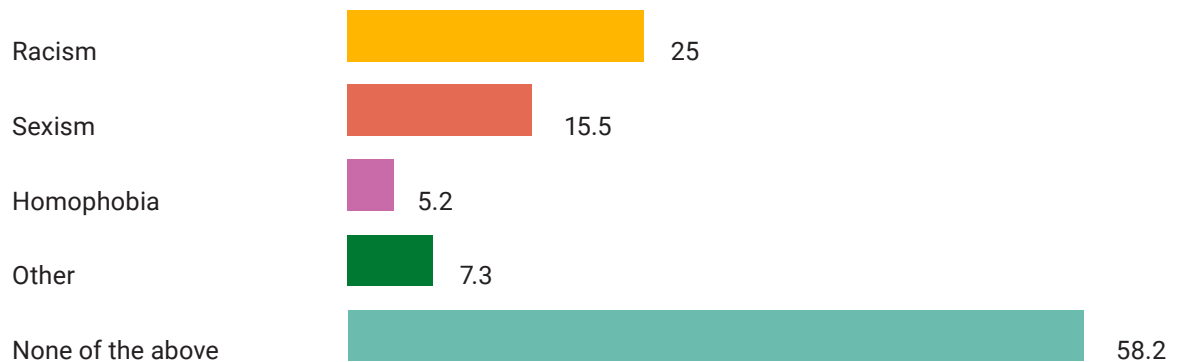
Experience of Racism

Have you heard racist, homophobic, or other negative comments about Indigenous peoples at the University of Alberta?

Yes	46.5
No	53.5

N=215

The survey asked students whether they have heard racist, homophobic, or other negative comments about Indigenous peoples at the University of Alberta. Of the students who responded to this question, the proportions indicating they have and have not heard such comments were nearly equal. Slightly less than half (46.5%) say they have heard such comments and slightly more than half (53.5%) say they have not.

Have you personally experienced any of the following while attending the University of Alberta? (Check all that apply)

Racism	25
Sexism	15.5
Homophobia	5.2
Other	7.3
None of the above	58.2

N=232

When asked whether they have personally experienced racism, homophobia, sexism, or another form of discrimination while attending the University of Alberta, most students (58.2%) indicated that they have not. One-quarter of students (25.0%) indicated that they have personally experienced racism. Smaller proportions indicated that they have personally experienced sexism (15.5%), another form of discrimination (7.3%), and homophobia (5.2%).

What was the source of the racism/homophobia/sexism or other experience(s) while attending the University of Alberta?

Source	Value
On campus	52.1
From other students	81.7
From University of Alberta faculty	40.8
From University of Alberta staff	22.5

N=71

The survey then asked students who have personally experienced racism, homophobia, sexism, or another form of discrimination, what the source of the discrimination was. Of the four types of sources included in the survey, other students are the most likely source of racism and discrimination (81.7%). The next most likely source is on campus (52.1%). Four in ten students (40.8%) identified University of Alberta faculty as a source of racism and discrimination and a smaller proportion (22.5%) identified University of Alberta staff.

When asked (unprompted, without response options) to specify the context or circumstances around their experiences of racism, the students' responses revealed that racism and discrimination at the university occurs in multiple forms, in a variety of places, and on a frequent basis:

Form. Students reported experiencing racism in a variety of forms, including microaggressions, inappropriate jokes, students and professors perpetuating negative stereotypes, racist names, racist poster campaigns, and vandalism to Indigenous spaces on campus. Indigenous students recounted experiences in which they witnessed other students convey resistance towards the inclusion of Indigenous peoples and Indigenous knowledges (e.g., students not wanting to take Indigenous course requirements; not wanting to discuss Indigenous topics, learn Indigenous histories, or hear Indigenous perspectives; and not wanting to hear land acknowledgments). One student stated, "I've heard comments from students who feel like Indigenous peoples get too much attention and support from the government and University saying that it's not fair." Another student described an encounter with non-Indigenous students in which they were "criticizing our right to be [at university]."

Students identified several instances of racism involving professors, including non-Indigenous faculty members "tokenizing and infantilizing" Indigenous faculty members, professors taking a damage-centered approach to discussions of Indigenous communities, professors making racist comments during lectures, and professors not addressing racist comments from students in the classroom. Additionally, students described experiences in which professors inappropriately addressed racism in the classroom. For instance, one student stated, "professors bring up racism as a discussion point, but do not have the capacity to actually address racism, and then say things like, 'oh this is definitely a debatable topic,' after

several students make racialized comments to move along with the class. Another student recounted an experience in which the professor had students participate in an activity that perpetuated, rather than countered, stereotypes of Indigenous people.

Location. Students identified a range of locations in which they have heard racist comments about Indigenous peoples and/or personally experienced racism. These locations include, in the classroom, in medical school lectures, in common areas on campus, outside First Peoples' House, on the internet, on social media (e.g., the comments section of the University of Alberta's Instagram pages), in SUB (e.g., while waiting in line for food), when living in residence, during MMIWG walks, and written on the walls in the women's washroom.

Frequency. For several students, hearing racist comments about Indigenous peoples is a regular occurrence. For instance, one student indicated that they hear racist comments, "all the time on campus, within classes, from students and sometimes professors," and another student stated, "it is quite common in the classroom and it is also quite common in the hallways of campus areas." One student stated that they hear racist comments "continuously in the medical field," and another medical student stated, "basically every lecture on Indigenous issues not given by an Indigenous person has at least one racist comment from the instructor. Basically every small group session on Indigenous issues has racism directed at Indigenous students by non-Indigenous students."

Impact on Student Well-Being. The responses from students demonstrate that racism and discrimination negatively impact their well-being in a variety of ways. For instance, following experiences of racism in the classroom some students indicated that they no longer enjoy their classes, dread class discussions, and no longer want to participate. Another student described taking a course with students who had racist attitudes towards Indigenous peoples as "an uncomfortable experience." After hearing about racist acts directed towards Indigenous students, one student stated, "it made me feel horrible and really unwelcomed and to be honest, a bit unsafe." Another student made the following comment, "one year Education students started a petition because they didn't want to take a mandatory EDU class on Indigenous education, that was heartbreaking because I have kids who will enter the school system very soon."

Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic

When asked (unprompted, without response options) in what ways the COVID-19 pandemic has changed or influenced their experience at the University of Alberta, most students indicated that the pandemic has negatively impacted their experience. A small proportion, however, identified positive implications of the pandemic and a few students reported no change to their university experience.

Negative Impact on Learning. Almost half (47.8%) of the students who responded indicated that the pandemic and the resulting shift to online classes has made learning more challenging. Students identified a range of barriers associated with remote learning including, a lack of motivation, difficulty maintaining focus, difficulty accessing professors for assistance, a lack of access to resources (e.g., library services and archival materials for research), an unstable internet connection, difficulty maintaining an academic-life balance, difficulty managing their course load, and a home environment that is not conducive to studying. Additionally, some students mentioned that remote learning does not align with their learning style. For instance, one student stated, "it is much more difficult to learn in a virtual atmosphere as I learn better in a collaborative one." Similarly, another student stated, "I value group discussions to understand academic content. I find that I have learned so much from fellow students and this online learning has restricted that greatly." As a result of the various challenges associated with remote learning, some students reported that their GPA has fallen while others stated that they will take longer to complete their program.

Isolated and Disconnected. Similarly, almost half (46.6%) of students reported feeling isolated and disconnected from the university community. For instance, one student stated that the pandemic "removed the relational component," which "hits Indigenous students hard." Another student stated, "I am very lonely and isolated with online learning. I can spend 12+ hours alone at my computer each day. Sometimes I only leave my house one time during the week. It sucks."

Positive Impact on Learning. A small proportion of students (12.4%) highlighted the ways in which the pandemic has improved their learning experience. For instance, remote learning has eliminated the need to commute to the university and allows for a more flexible schedule. For instance, one student stated, "in a way it is nice because I can manage things more easily by basically creating my own schedule." Another student stated that remote learning "has allowed me to watch things after the fact due to things being recorded which works very well for me."

No Change. A small group of students (5.6%) indicated that the pandemic has not changed their university experience. This group includes students enrolled in part-time programs delivered online and graduate students who primarily worked from home before the pandemic. As such their university experience during the pandemic is similar to their university experience prior to the pandemic.

Inclusion of Indigenous Peoples and Indigenous Knowledges

Inclusion of Indigenous Peoples and Indigenous Knowledges in Programs and Courses

When asked (unprompted, without response options) in what ways they have experienced the inclusion of Indigenous peoples and/or Indigenous knowledge systems in their programs and/or courses, students described the following types and degree of inclusion:

Indigenous Programs. Students identified two specific programs that center Indigenous peoples and/or Indigenous knowledges – the Transition Year Program (TYP) and the Aboriginal Teacher Education Program (ATEP). TYP students stated that the program provided cultural teachings and activities, such as learning how to bead. Moreover, one student stated, "I feel respected in the Transition Year Program."

Indigenous Courses. Students identified a range of Indigenous focused courses, including an Indigenous economics course, an Indigenous course in the Master of Library and Information Studies (MLIS) program, Indigenous research methodologies courses, Cree language courses, and various other courses offered through the Faculty of Native Studies. For some students, taking an Indigenous focused course is a requirement for their program. For instance, a nursing student stated, "one of the required courses in this program is based on Indigenous Health which made me feel very happy that Indigenous peoples were being included in nursing."

Indigenous Content. Students mentioned courses that include a section on Indigenous issues and/or included readings from Indigenous authors. Additionally, students identified instances in which their programs incorporate Indigenous knowledges and Indigenous perspectives. For instance, a student completing their MSc in Biological Sciences stated, "we discuss traditional knowledge systems and how we can benefit from including it in ecological research."

Inclusion of Indigenous Students. Some students reported that they feel personally supported or included. For instance, one student stated that they feel "well supported by other Indigenous faculty and peers." Another student stated, "I've always felt comfortable, welcomed and included in my Native Studies courses and typically enjoyed them." Students also discussed, however, instances in which the university remains unwelcoming to Indigenous students. The same student who indicated that they felt welcomed in their Native Studies courses made the following comment:

> As for my experience taking education classes for my program, I never felt quite comfortable or feel 100% inclusive in the courses or classes because there was few to none Indigenous students in my class and was always fearful to bring up Indigenous education content or knowledge or Indigenous issues. And I still feel that way in an education course.

Furthermore, another student stated, "there is still a lot of work to do, as there are many stories of Indigenous medical students not feeling safe due to microaggression, or anti-Indigenous racism experienced during rotations and small group discussions."

Degree of Inclusion. The students' responses revealed that the degree of inclusion of Indigenous peoples and Indigenous knowledges varies considerably across the university. For instance, students acknowledged that Indigenous peoples and knowledges are foundational to the Faculty of Native Studies. One Native Studies student stated, "I appreciated how Indigeneity was centred in my program, from my Indigenous profs, to the knowledges that we explored." Outside the Faculty of Native Studies, however, students described the degree of inclusion as "not in depth," "very minimal," and "none, sadly." The following student comments illustrate how the inclusion of Indigenous peoples and knowledges ranges from central to surface level:

> "As I am part of native studies it is in everything I do."

> "Aside from my native studies classes and program which do an excellent job of inclusion, I have not really experienced it."

> "Anthropology briefly talked about it."

> "To be honest I have not really experienced a true integration of FNMI perspectives within my courses. They are usually just an add-on, i.e., read this article type of inclusion."

> "Our program has N222 which explores the experience and history of Indigenous people in Canada, but it feels like it just covers the surface of the issues and just serves to satisfy a requirement of having the course. The instructor is not even of Indigenous ancestry so it still feels like being instructed on a colonized version of the history."

Approaches to Inclusion. As the previous student comment indicated, students find certain approaches to the inclusion of Indigenous knowledges uncomfortable, inappropriate, and problematic. For instance, one student stated, "I have noticed that sometimes discussions can be colonial or further colonial interests (e.g., discussing the integration of Indigenous Knowledge into western frameworks)." Another student stated that outside the Faculty of Native Studies, the inclusion of Indigenous peoples and knowledges "is always deficit based." Moreover, this student indicated that inclusion frequently relies on the unpaid labor of Indigenous students, in that professors place Indigenous students in a position to teach Indigenous content through their lived experiences. Another student indicated that faculty, staff, and students generally misunderstand Indigenous peoples and knowledges, while a nursing student stated that "when [Indigenous health] is taught, it is taught poorly by settler faculty members with no knowledge of Indigenous Health."

Inclusion of Indigenous Peoples and Indigenous Knowledges in Support Systems

When asked (unprompted, without response options) in what ways they have experienced the inclusion of Indigenous peoples and/or Indigenous knowledge systems in support systems at the University of Alberta, students identified a wide range of support systems:

- **First Peoples' House.** Students mentioned several specific supports offered through First Peoples' House including emails, Aunties Check-In, and Elders. One student stated, "the First Peoples' House student orientation made me feel included," while another student stated, "the First People's House provided me with a space that allowed me to feel safe as an Indigenous person and express my culture."
- **Events and Workshops.** Specific events and workshops mentioned include, beading workshops, Bridges Orientation, TAWOW, Round Dance, Orange T-Shirt Day, Marches for MMIWG, discussions of Indigenous peoples in ethics workshops, and an Indigenous feminisms workshop (political science).
- **Student Associations and Committees.** Students mentioned Indigenous student associations, such as the Aboriginal Student Council, the Indigenous Medical Students' Association, and the Indigenous Engineering Students' Association. One student acknowledged that the Graduate Students' Association was "inclusive and respectful of Indigenous peoples." Another student mentioned the History and Classics Students' TRC Calls to Action Committee (HCTRC). Outcomes of the HCTRC include, a bursary for an undergraduate Indigenous essay competition, a conference on Indigenous studies, and a study space to commemorate Métis scholar Olive Dickason.
- **Programming.** Students mentioned two programs for Indigenous students – the Indigenous Health Initiatives Program and the Indigenous Leadership Program.
- **Spaces for Indigenous Students.** Students identified First Peoples' House, Pembina Hall, and Wahkohtowin Lodge (Augustana) as spaces for Indigenous students to work and socialize.

Culturally Supportive Environment

Do you feel you are in a culturally supportive environment at the University of Alberta?
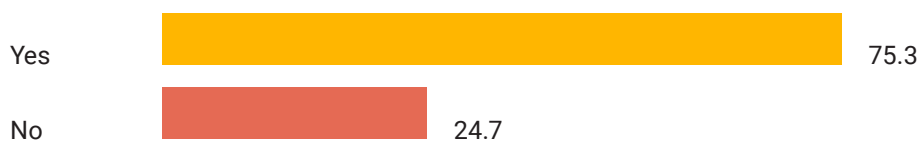
Yes	75.3
No	24.7

N=223

The survey asked students whether they feel they are in a culturally supportive environment at the University of Alberta. Three-quarters of students who responded (75.3%) indicated that they feel they are in a culturally supportive environment. This question also provided students with the opportunity to comment on the culturally supportive environment at the university. Several students commented that while they feel culturally supported in certain spaces such as the Faculty of Native Studies and First Peoples' House, they do not feel culturally supported in many other environments on campus. The following student comments illustrate that only certain environments at the university are culturally supportive:

> "Only when I'm around peers. Otherwise no I don't feel supported at the U of A."

> "Among the FPH, TYP, and Indigenous Nursing Students' Association I feel culturally supported. In all other areas of campus I feel out of place."
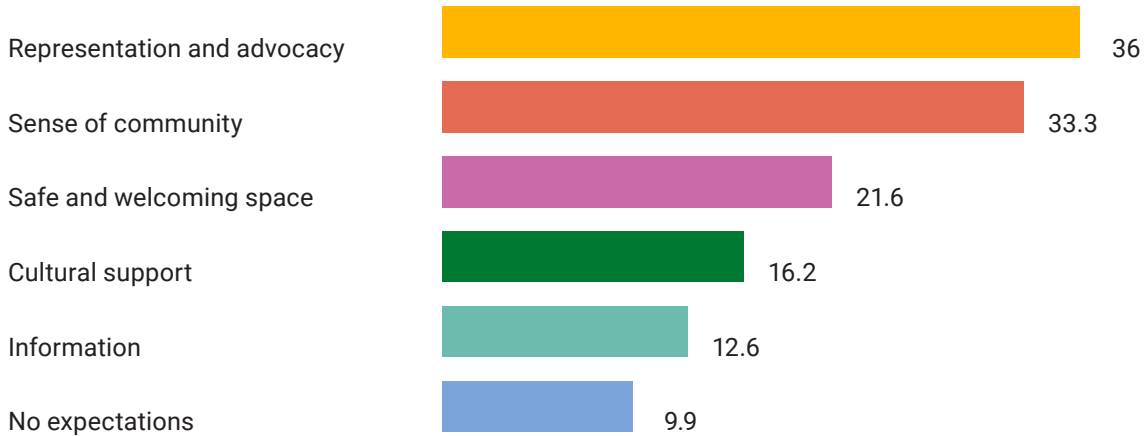
> "In my classes, no. Through FPH, yes."

> "Yes and no. The Native Studies department is incredibly supportive of native people. However, outside of my faculty I have experienced a not so supportive environment and it is often due to a lack of education some folks hold."

> "It's a bit of both – within ATEP areas it was great I would bring other Indigenous students to the ATEP lounge because it was a safe space. But within the bigger education spaces, there are often people openly saying racist things while complaining about having to learn about Indigenous experiences."

Indigenous Student Government Groups

Top Expectations for Indigenous Student Government Groups

Expectation	Value
Representation and advocacy	36
Sense of community	33.3
Safe and welcoming space	21.6
Cultural support	16.2
Information	12.6
No expectations	9.9

N=111

The survey asked (unprompted, without response options) students what they expect from Indigenous student government groups (e.g., Indigenous Graduate Student Association (IGSA), Aboriginal Student Council (ASC)) or student organizations/clubs (Indigenous or non- Indigenous) on campus. The students' responses revealed five main expectations:

Meaningful Representation and Advocacy. The most commonly (36.0%) mentioned expectation is meaningful representation and advocacy for Indigenous students. For instance, one student stated that they expect student groups "to strive to make changes, making Indigenous voices heard." Similarly, another student stated, "just continue to advocate and take up space for us. Don't let the institution and other systemic barriers erase us." Other students identified specific areas in which they expect student groups to take action, such as advocating for the inclusion of Indigenous peoples and knowledges in education and curriculum, pushing back against tuition and fee increases, and ensuring Indigenous students maintain their supports.

A Sense of Community. One-third of students (33.3%) indicated that they expect student groups to foster a sense of community for Indigenous students. For instance, students indicated that they expect these groups to provide opportunities to meet and connect with other students or as one student stated, "more events to mingle and remember we are not alone."

A Safe and Welcoming Space. Two in ten (21.6%) indicated that they expect student groups to cultivate a safe and welcoming space for Indigenous students, both within the group and throughout the broader university. Specifically, students indicated that they expect these groups to be respectful, accepting, and inclusive. One student

stated, "I expect SAFE spaces for Indigenous students to go to and be able to share their experience in confidential environments. I have found sharing each of our stories extremely valuable in knowing that I am not alone in my experiences." Similarly, another student stated, "I expect a judgment free, safe space, for all Indigenous students, no matter where they come from or what their situation is."

Cultural Support. A smaller proportion of students (16.2%) indicated that they expect student groups to provide opportunities and events for Indigenous students to connect with their cultures.
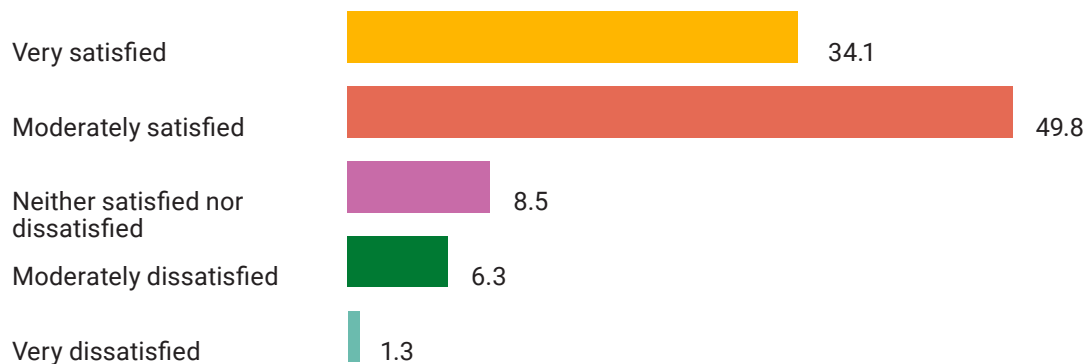
Information. Another expectation mentioned (12.6%) is that student groups will consistently provide information (e.g., a newsletter) concerning funding and employment opportunities, group activities, and advocacy work.

No Expectations. A small proportion of students (9.9%) indicated that they have no expectations for student groups. Some of these students questioned whether student groups have the capacity to enact change. As one student sated, "I honestly feel they don't have enough power to make positive change within the culture and campus at U of A through these organizations. I don't expect much from these organizations."

Overall Satisfaction

Are you satisfied with your overall experience at the University of Alberta?

Very satisfied	34.1
Moderately satisfied	49.8
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	8.5
Moderately dissatisfied	6.3
Very dissatisfied	1.3

N=223

The survey asked students whether they are satisfied with their overall experience at the University of Alberta. Most students who responded indicated that they are very satisfied (34.1%) or moderately satisfied (49.8%). Small proportions of students say they are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (8.5%), moderately dissatisfied (6.3%), and very dissatisfied (1.3%).

Some students also provided comments describing the reasons for their satisfaction or dissatisfaction. Students mainly expressed satisfaction with the education that they are receiving from the University of Alberta. For instance, one student stated, "as an academic exercise it was great," while another student stated, "my purpose for attending university was to obtain a higher level of education, and I have achieved that, so I am satisfied with my university experience." Students identified a range of reasons for their dissatisfaction, including issues with remote learning, unfair workloads, negative experiences with professors, and a lack of support for mental health.

Areas of Improvement and Indigenous Initiatives

The survey asked (unprompted, without response options) students how the University of Alberta can improve for Indigenous students and a related question concerning what initiatives they would like to see the University of Alberta embark upon. The students' responses to these two questions illustrate that they want to see meaningful reconciliation, rather than surface level changes. For instance, one student stated, "there needs to be real reconciliation made." According to this student, such reconciliation entails an acknowledgment of the university's role in colonization and substantial follow through beyond "rote land acknowledgments."

Similarly, another student stated, "there seems to be a tremendous focus on Indigenous epistemologies, pedagogies, etc...without also attending to the structural nature of discrimination and the need to redress impacts through the intentional use of legislative frameworks to advance the process of reconciliation."

Moreover, the initiatives that students identified aim to support Indigenous student success, not just in certain spaces but rather across the broader university. For instance, one student stated, "the culture and atmosphere needs to change within classes and the campuses. ...I only felt inclusive and comfortable at the Native Studies building and [First Peoples' House], nowhere else." Similarly, another student stated, "make Indigenous students feel more welcome in other faculties (not sure how)."

Students identified initiatives relating to seven main areas of improvement:

Courses. Students identified a variety of initiatives that aim to support the continued decolonization of teaching and learning. These initiatives include:
- Continue to incorporate Indigenous perspectives, knowledges, and histories in curriculum across programs (particularly health-related programs)
- Provide more training to instructors and professors on how to decolonize teaching
- Implement a university-wide Indigenous course requirement
- Provide more opportunities for land-based learning, provide more courses offered in connection with local Indigenous communities, and provide more Indigenous language courses
- Improve access to Faculty of Natives Studies courses (particularly language courses) for students outside the faculty

"I would like to see more Indigenous language classes, including Cree, Na-Dené, Blackfoot language, Nakoda, Inuit languages, etc."

Supports and Programming. Students want more financial support, mental health support, and support to improve the transition into new programs. Additionally, students want networking support to provide more opportunities to connect with Indigenous students across campus. Students proposed the following initiatives which aim to

improve the supports and programming available to Indigenous students:

- Provide more funding opportunities including scholarships and bursaries
- Improve access to mental health support, including access to sustained long-term support, supports for generational trauma, and access to an Indigenous wellness team
- Establish an Indigenous Mentorship Program
- Establish an Indigenous Student Peer Support Group
- Improve the Supporting Aboriginal Graduate Enhancement (SAGE) Program
- Expand First Peoples' House, including both its physical location (i.e., create a separate building for FPH) and its programming (e.g., create a phone-an-Elder program)

Representation. Students identified the following initiatives which aim to increase Indigenous representation on campus:

- Recruit more Indigenous peoples to all university programs
- Hire more Indigenous faculty and instructors across the university
- Highlight Indigenous student achievements and share Indigenous student success stories
- Showcase Indigenous art, languages, and histories on campus, particularly in high traffic areas such as Quad, SUB, CAB, and Cameron library

"It would be cool to have maybe a bit more indigenous history all across campus or even something that can depict the beauty and tradition of why people used to gather in what is now Edmonton."

"More visible recognition of our Indigenous peoples throughout campus. Perhaps choosing First Nations words for some of the buildings/pathways. Having a site where students and their academic achievements are shown."

"Creating an Indigenous Peoples page that highlights Indigenous students accepted into various programs, including what Nation they are from. Also those Indigenous students who have received awards or recognition. A page may also include what Indigenous focused research is being conducted past and currently, as well as all Indigenous faculty."

Racism. Students identified initiatives which aim to eliminate racism:

- Offer anti-racism seminars
- Implement a zero-tolerance for racism policy

"Maybe have actual repercussions for racist acts."

"One suggestion is a zero-tolerance policy in regards to microaggression, racism within discussions. Safer spaces are needed."

"Have consequences for students being racist."

Input from Indigenous Peoples. Students identified a variety of initiatives that aim to make space for Indigenous voices. These initiatives include:

- Include Indigenous staff, students, and elders in the design of program curricula and university policies that relate to, and directly impact Indigenous

peoples
- Include Indigenous peoples in the university restructuring process
- Implement a variety of platforms to obtain feedback from Indigenous students
- Implement a yearly survey assessing Indigenous students' experiences
- Reach out to Indigenous communities in Alberta for input concerning how the university can be more respectful as treaty people and improve Indigenous student attendance

"Listen to the Indigenous students more – follow through on what the Indigenous students feel they need for support."

Information. Students identified initiatives which aim to improve access to information:
- Establish a centralized communication hub (i.e., online portal) for Indigenous faculty, staff, and students
- Provide more opportunities to share information virtually, including online conferences and guest speakers with Q and A sessions

"I think a more centralized communication hub would be nice so I can stay up to date on things that are occurring with Indigenous UAlberta."

Indigenous Culture. Students identified the following initiatives which aim to provide more opportunities to celebrate Indigenous culture:
- Provide access to more traditional ceremonies and cultural events such as Butterdome powwows
- Provide more opportunities to educate the public concerning Indigenous culture
- Have an Indigenous Week
- Create a physical gathering space for Indigenous students, faculty, staff, community members, Elders and Knowledge Keepers on campus

"[Create] cultural events that encourage anyone to participate! Indigenous or not, to end the stigma around Indigenous culture and people and celebrate it!"

"First Peoples' House shouldn't be the only place we hear about Indigenous peoples. Those who are already Indigenous shouldn't be the only people learning about the culture."

"A Gathering Place – like a Lodge, or Longhouse (UBC) to create a place for ceremony and place for community to gather together collectively (home away from home)."

The Truth and Reconciliation Journey

Roles and Responsibilities of Instructors, Professors, and Staff
When asked (unprompted, without response options) what instructors, professors, and staff need to do in order to be active participants on the Truth and Reconciliation Journey, students identified three main actions:

Educate Themselves. Students most frequently (63.7%) mentioned that instructors, professors, and staff need to educate themselves concerning the histories, cultures, and experiences of Indigenous peoples. For instance, one student indicated that instructors, professors, and staff need to "take a mandatory Indigenous history/culture education course so that they at least have a sense of what our history has been like and how it has affected us on our journey to becoming university students." Similarly, another student stated that they need to "be more aware of current and past injustices that Indigenous peoples are facing so that our struggles are real to them. We fight everyday to be here and I hope that is noticed." Other students advised instructors, professors, and staff to become familiar with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP); attend cultural awareness training; and "explore how their discipline has benefited from/been influenced by Indigenous scholars." As one student stated, "hear the truth first, do not skip straight to reconciliation."

Educate Their Students. One-third (33.6%) of students indicated that instructors, professors, and staff need to incorporate Indigenous topics and perspectives into course content. Students indicated, however, that instructors and professors need to be attentive to the way in which they discuss Indigenous topics. For instance, one student advised instructors and professors to "remember that we're in your classrooms whether you know of it or not and that what is said about us carries weight, so be respectful." Although welcoming the perspectives of Indigenous students is important, students also indicated that instructors and staff need to refrain from relying on Indigenous students to teach Indigenous content. As one student stated, "don't expect the one Indigenous kid in your class to want to open up and teach the class when it's your job." Additionally, students indicated that instructors and professors need to refrain from using a deficit-based approach to discuss Indigenous topics. For instance, one student stated that they need to "make sure they are using proper resources, and also not just talk about Indigenous hardship (it is important to know this) but also signify the strength and beauty of our people. Once again guest speakers are the best for this."

Engage with Anti-Racism. Students (9.7%) also indicated that instructors, professors, and staff need to actively engage with anti-racism. For instance, one student stated that they need to "speak out against students or other staff that behave in discriminatory ways," while another student stated:

> I think that it is very important for the experiences of Indigenous scholars that professors speak up and against when a student offers an opinion in class that is racist or culturally offensive towards Indigenous groups. When a professor allows this to occur within the classroom it is no longer a safe space for Indigenous students.

Students also emphasized the importance of taking anti-racism training. As one student stated, "do the readings and the trainings to be able to recognize and manage racism between students."

Appendices

Appendix A: Location of Residence When Not Attending the U of A

Beaumont, AB (2)
Behchoko, NWT
British Columbia
Buffalo Lake Métis Settlement, AB (2)
Calgary, AB (7)
Calling Lake, AB
Clandonald, AB
Cochrane, AB (2)
Cold Lake, AB
Colinton, AB
Crowsnest Pass, AB
Deline, NWT
Dewberry, AB
Edmonton, AB (84)
Elk Point, AB
Enoch, AB (2)
Ermineskin Cree Nation, AB
Evansburg, AB
Fishing Lake Métis Settlement, AB
Fort McMurray, AB (5)
Fort Saskatchewan, AB
Fort Smith, NWT
Golden, BC (2)
Goodfish Lake, AB (2)
Grande Cache, AB
Grande Prairie, AB (3)
High Level, AB (2)
Hinton, AB
Hudson Bay, SK
Hobbema, AB
Hylo, AB
Inuvik, NWT
Jasper, AB
Kamloops, BC (2)
Kelowna, BC
Kikino, AB
Leduc, AB (4)
Manitoba
Manominiiking (Mississaugas of Rice Lake)/Hiawatha First Nation, ON
Maskwacis, AB (4)
Massey, ON

McBride, BC
Mill Bay, Vancouver Island, BC
Mistawasis Nehiyawak, SK
Moose Jaw, SK
Morinville, AB
Muskowekwan, SK
Neyaashiinigmiing, ON
Northern Alberta
Northwest Territories
Northwestern Ontario
Onion Lake, SK
Paddle Prairie Métis Settlement, AB
Parkland County, AB
Peace River, AB
Ponoka, AB
Prince Albert, SK (2)
Rocky Mountain House, AB
Ryley, AB
Saddle Lake, AB
Saskatoon, SK (2)
Sechelt, BC
Sherwood Park, AB (9)
Slave Lake, AB (3)
Spruce Grove, AB (3)
St. Albert, AB (4)
Starbuck, MB
Strathcona County, AB
Sturgeon County, AB
Sturgeon Lake, AB
Sucker Creek First Nation, AB
Tisdale, SK
Treaty 8 Territory (2)
Treaty 11 Territory
Vancouver, BC
Vancouver Island, BC
Vanderhoof, BC
Vegreville, AB
Victoria, BC
Wabasca, AB (2)
Warburg, AB
Wetaskiwin, AB (2)
Whitecourt, AB

Winnipeg, MB
Wood Mountain, SK
Yellowhead County, AB
Yellowknife, NWT (3)

Appendix B: Current Program

Provided below is a complete list of the programs that students identified when asked which program they are currently enrolled in:

Transition Year Program

Open Studies

Undergraduate Programs

Faculty of Agricultural, Life and Environmental Sciences
- BA in Environmental Studies
- BSc in Agriculture
- BSc in Animal Health
- BSc in Environmental and Conservation Sciences
- BSc in Human Ecology
- BSc in Nutrition and Food Science, General Program
- Combined Degree
    - ° BSc in Environmental and Conservation Sciences/BA in Native Studies
- Certificate
    - ° Certificate in Sustainability

Faculty of Arts
- Bachelor of Arts (Art and Design, Drama, East Asian Studies, Economics, English, Film Studies, Human Geography, Linguistics, Political Science, Psychology, Sociology)
- Bachelor of Arts – Criminology
- Bachelor of Arts – Honors (English, HADVC)
- Bachelor of Design
- Bachelor of Fine Arts (Stage Management)
- Bachelor of Music
- Certificate
    - ° Certificate in International Learning

Faculty of Business
- BCom
    - ° Accounting
    - ° Finance

Faculty of Education
- After Degree Program
- Degree of BEd (Elementary, Secondary)
- Aboriginal Teacher Education Program

Faculty of Engineering
- BSc in Engineering – Qualifying Year
- BSc in Civil Engineering – Environmental Engineering Option
- BSc in Civil Engineering Co-op
- BSc in Civil Engineering Co-op – Environmental Engineering Option
- BSc in Electrical Engineering

Faculty of Kinesiology, Sport, and Recreation
- BA in Recreation, Sport and Tourism Degree Program

- BKin Degree Program
- BSc in Kinesiology Degree Program

Faculty of Law
- Degree of JD

Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry
- BSc (Dental Hygiene)
- MD Degree

Faculty of Native Studies
- Bachelor of Arts in Native Studies
- Combined Degree
  - ° BA in Native Studies/BSc in Environmental and Conservation Sciences Combined Degree
  - ° Bachelor of Arts (Native Studies)/Bachelor of Education Five-Year Combined Degrees (BA NS/BEd)
- Certificate
  - ° The Certificate in Aboriginal Sport and Education
  - ° The Certificate in Indigenous Governance and Partnership (With Degree)
  - ° The Certificate in Indigenous Governance and Partnership (Certificate only)

Faculty of Nursing
- BScN – Collaborative Program
- BScN – Honors Program

Faculty of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences
- BSc in Pharmacy

Faculty of Science
- BSc General Program (Biological Sciences, Chemistry, Physics)
- BSc Specialization Program (Ecology, Evolution and Environmental Biology; Computing Science)

Graduate Programs

Anthropology
- MA

Biological Sciences
- MSc with a specialization in Ecology

Business
- MBA

Chemical and Materials Engineering
- MSc

Civil and Environmental Engineering
- Meng

Community Engagement
- MA

Drama
- MFA with a specialization in Theatre Practice

Educational Policy Studies
- MEd with a specialization in Indigenous Peoples Education
- EdD and PhD with a specialization in Indigenous Peoples Education

Educational Psychology
- PhD

Educational Studies
- Med

Elementary Education
- MEd

English and Film Studies
- PhD in English

History and Classics
- MA
- PhD

Human Ecology
- PhD

Law
- LLM

Library and Information Studies
- MLIS

Medical Genetics
- PhD

Modern Languages and Cultural Studies
- MA

Native Studies
- MA
- PhD in Indigenous Studies

Physical Therapy
- MSc

Public Health
- MSc in Public Health in Health Policy and Management
- MSc in Public Health in Health Policy Research

Political Science
- PhD

Rehabilitation Medicine
- MSc in Rehabilitation Science (Speech-Language Pathology)

Resource Economics and Environmental Sociology
- PhD

Secondary Education
- MEd
- EdD and PhD

Sociology
- MA
- PhD

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