

Overview

The UASU Equity, Diversity, and Inclusivity Taskforce (EDIT) developed a set of survey questions during Winter 2021. Paired with a slate of relevant demographic questions, EDIT's material was distributed between April 4th and 7th. It reached 224 points of contact, which is a reasonable turnout for a student survey focused on text responses.

Several equity-seeking groups were especially likely to say that students like them did not know where to find support in the University of Alberta community: gender minorities, disabled students, BIPOC students as a whole, Asian students, and Black and/or Indigenous students. The same sentiment strongly affected students from Business and Arts. Equity-seeking groups did not appear among the students who answered the most negatively - except for disabled students, who were somewhat overrepresented. The data suggests that many students from equity-seeking groups often do not know where to find support.

Demographic Questions

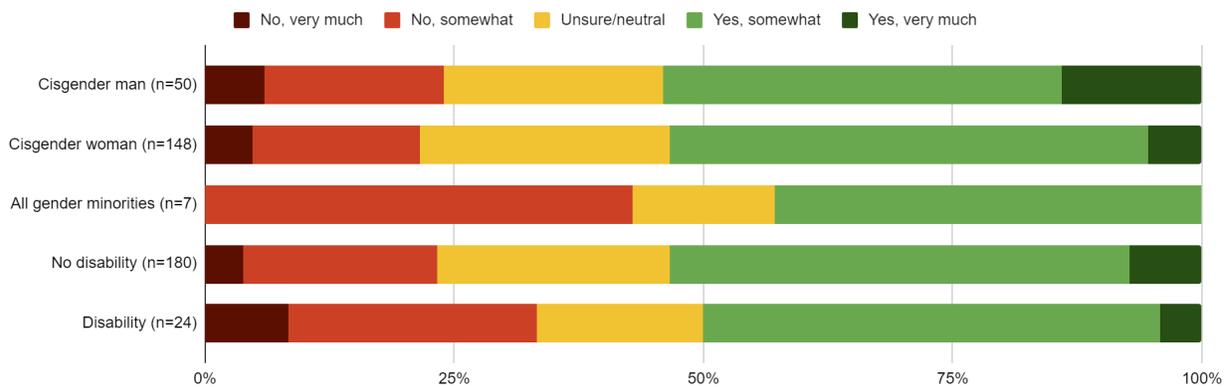
- "What is your gender?" [Woman/Man/Non-binary or other gender/Prefer not to say] followed by "Do you identify as transgender?" [Yes/No/Prefer not to say]
 - This pair of questions allowed for a precise look at the needs and priorities of gender minorities. When this survey report says 'gender minority,' that includes all students who selected 'non-binary or other gender' on the first question and all students who identified as transgender.
 - Gender-minority students made up 7 of the 224 respondents (roughly 5% of those who chose to answer the questions).
- "Do you identify as differently abled or disabled?" [Yes/No/Prefer not to say]
 - 215 respondents chose to answer this question. Of them, 11.2% said yes. (We label this as 'disabled students' throughout, for brevity and to align with a growing shift away from person-first language.)
- "What is your racial background/identity?" [Text field]
 - 162 students provided substantive responses to this question.
 - Coding and grouping the granular, individualized responses in various ways allowed for cross-tabulation of the multiple-choice questions.
 - Roughly 50% could be categorized as BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, or People of Colour); roughly 50% identified as white, Caucasian, of European descent, etc.
 - Roughly 5% identified as Black or African.
 - 7.4% identified as Chinese.

- 9.3% identified as Indian.
- Roughly 5% identified as Filipino.
- Roughly 17% identified as undifferentiated Asian, or Asian other than Chinese, Indian, or Filipino.
- Other identities of note: AfroLatin, Métis, Cree, Pacific Islander, Middle Eastern/North African
- Many students identified as mixed-race or provided multiple answers.

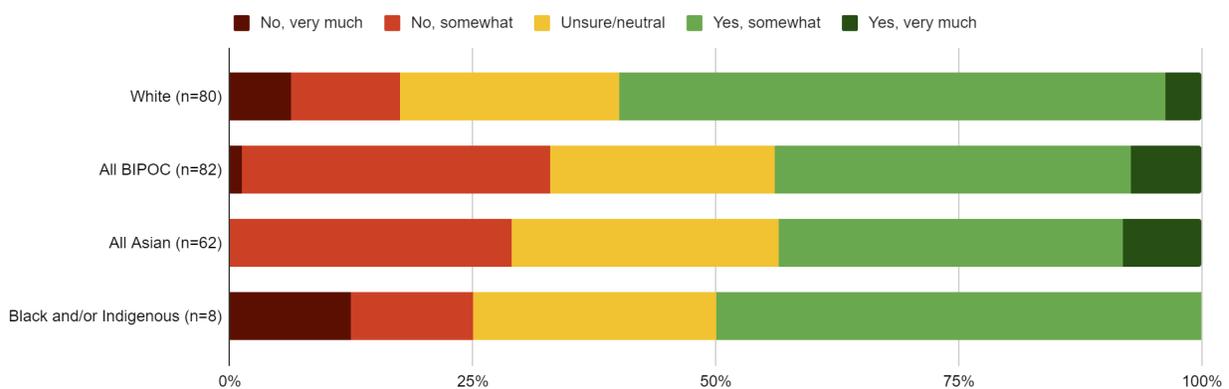
“Thinking of students who share your needs and priorities, do you feel you/they know where/how to find support in the context of the University of Alberta and its community?”

Several equity-seeking groups were more likely to answer negatively: gender minorities, disabled students, BIPOC students, Asian students, and Black or Indigenous students.

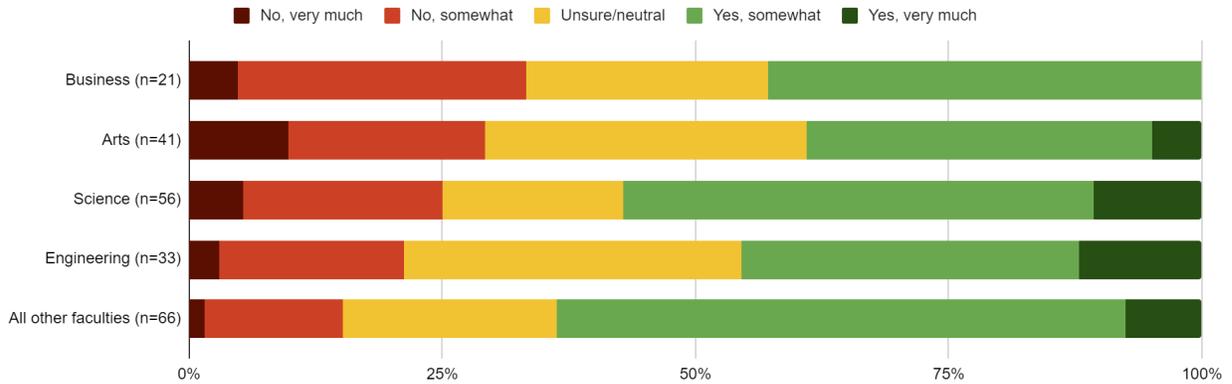
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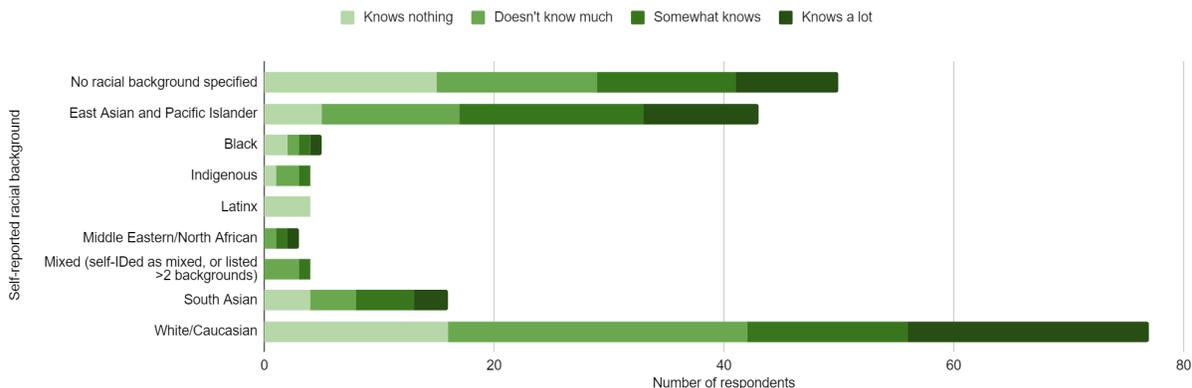
A closer look at the respondents who selected 'no, very much':

- None were gender minorities.
- One-fifth identified as disabled. (While this is twice the rate of the full sample, the variance is not statistically significant due to the small numbers involved.)
- Roughly half did not answer the race/ethnicity question; roughly half identified as white; and a small number identified as Black or Latin.

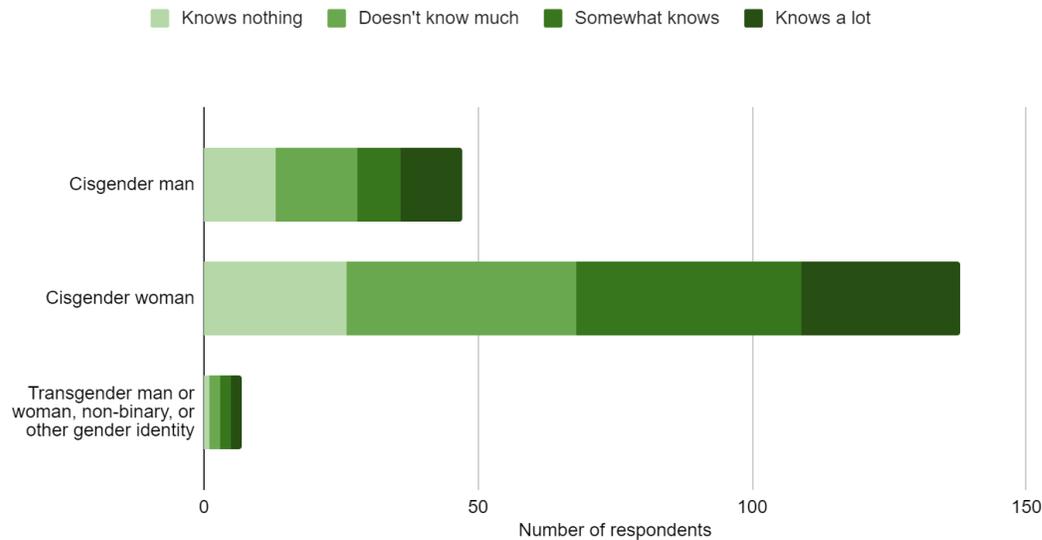
"UASU student services include: The Access Fund and other awards/financial aid; InfoLink; registries for tutors, jobs, and volunteer placements; leadership training programs; the Peer Support Centre; the Landing; and Student Group Services. What do you know about UASU services?"

Self-reported level of knowledge about UASU services

Note: Grouping is imprecise, so we prioritized apparent intent and minority background. E.g. 'Half Cree, half European ancestry' was grouped with Indigenous students.



Self-reported level of knowledge about UASU services



Cisgender women and Asian and Pacific Islander students were especially likely to know about and be familiar with UASU services.

Relatively few students expressed either positive (~10%) or negative (~5%) feelings about UASU services. However, these tended to be focused on the services, not their connection to the UASU. Some points of interest:

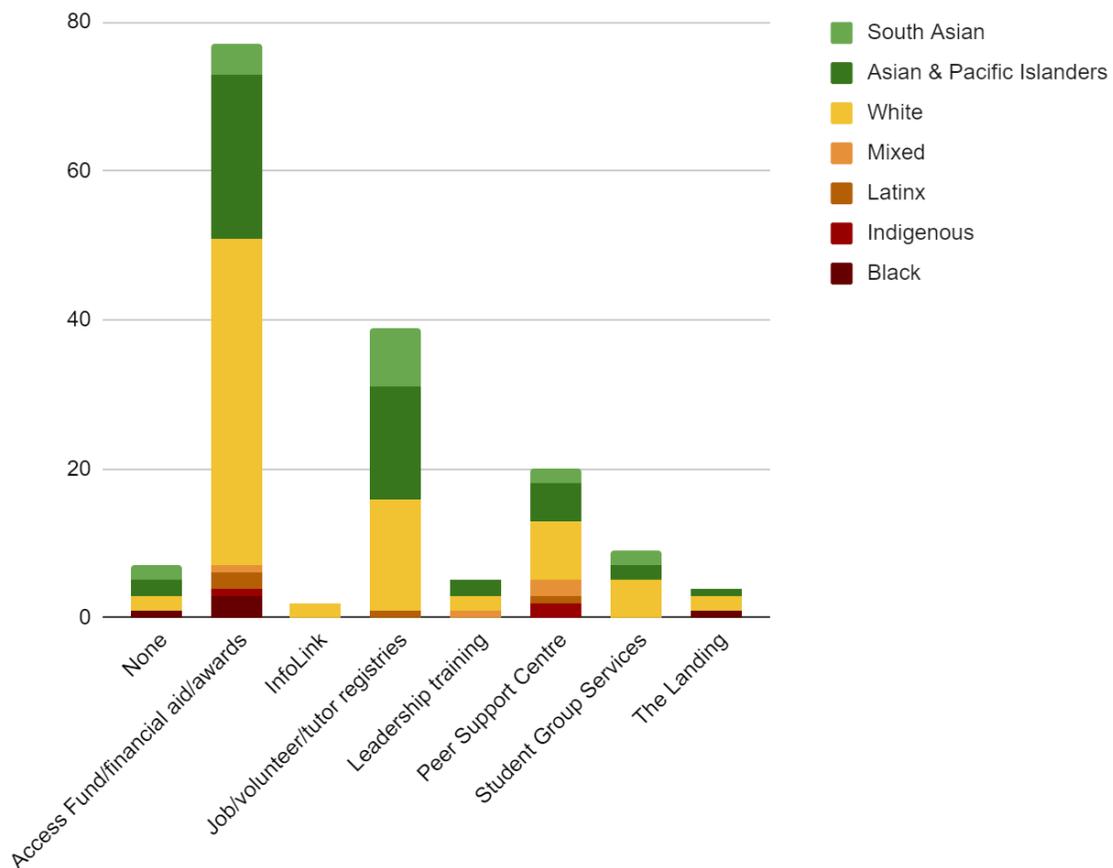
- “Although I have a basic understanding of the services that we have access to on campus, I have no clue about which are the result of UASU work. I know that for (almost) anything, there is a program/organization/aid available on campus to help me. The UASU's role in providing any of those services don't really make a difference to me.” - 4th year Engineering student, Asian woman
- “Because I was involved with groups closely associated with UASU I was able to learn a lot about them; however, prior to that I had no knowledge of them.” - Arts student, Black woman
- “I know quite a bit as someone who works within the wellness sector. However I feel that my peers are not very aware and suffer because of it.” - 4th year Science student, cisgender woman
- “Not a lot, I feel like a lot of money goes to it. Would like to see how the money is spent.” - First-year KSR student, cisgender woman
- “Not very much as a first year student. All this information gets caught up in long emails and it's hard to go through them. It would be better if profs mentioned it in class.” - First-year Arts student, Asian woman
- “Very little! I'm a first year and I've noticed there have been an overwhelming amount of emails, etc about these services, so much that I wish more so that I had just had someone simply explain what they do and how to access them. it feels like there are too many for me to want to go on my own initiative, learn what they are and how to access them in my own time.” - First-year Arts student, cisgender woman
- “I think they need more funding to better serve a larger portion of the student group.” - 5th year Arts student, cisgender woman

“If you could significantly expand one UASU service, what would it be?”

To represent the students feedback as quantitative data the responses were grouped using the following categories and examples:

- None
- Access Fund/financial aid/awards
- InfoLink
- Job/volunteer/tutor registries
- Leadership training
- Peer Support Centre
- Student Group Services
- The Landing

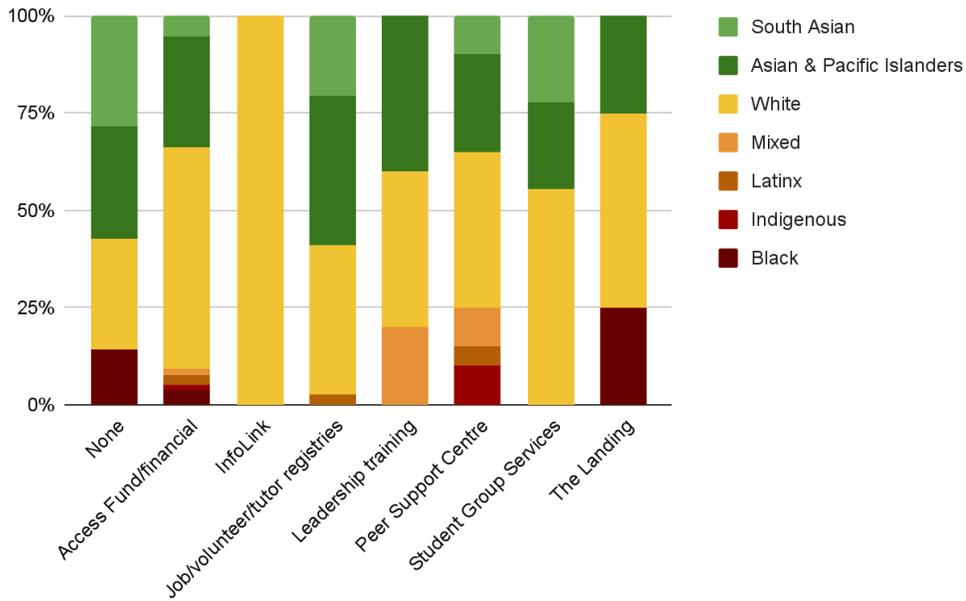
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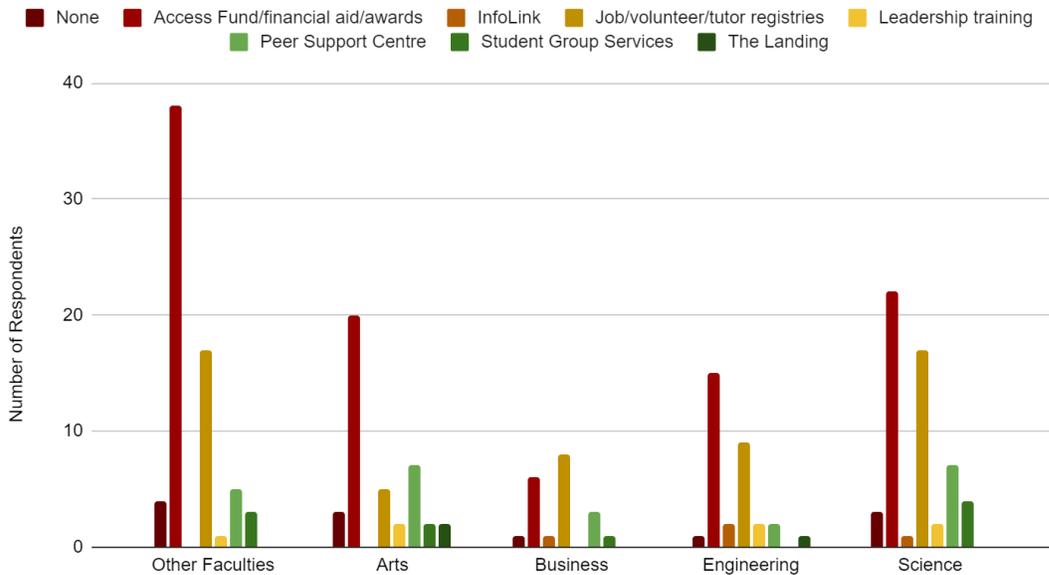
- Across all demographics, expansion to the Access Fund/financial aid/awards services was the most requested, making up 49% of all responses.
- Job/ volunteer/ tutor registries were the second most popular choice (24%).

- The least common choices (the services seen as least in need of expansion) were InfoLink and The Landing.

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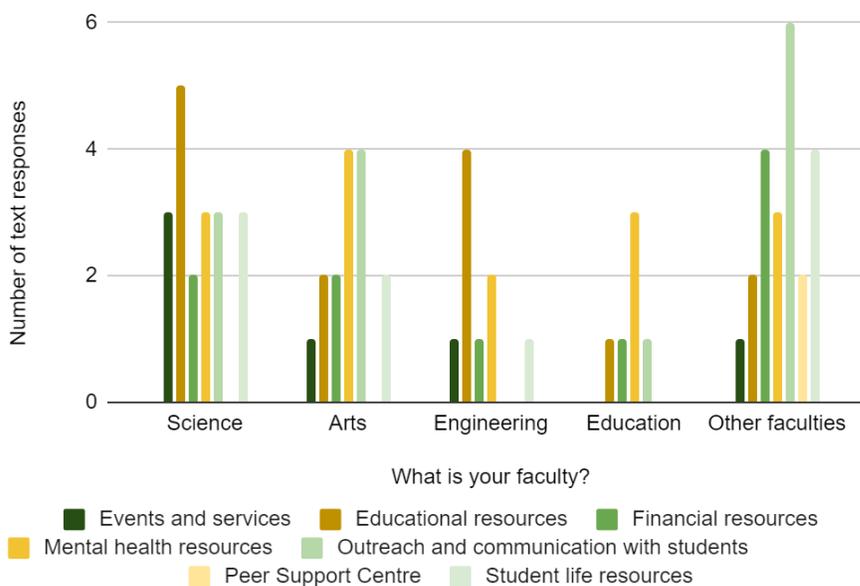


- Similarly across most faculties increased expansion to the Access Fund/financial aid/awards services was the most requested, with the exception of Business.
- Job/volunteer/tutor registries came in second, with the exception of Arts.
- The third most requested expansion was Peer Support Centre, with the exception of the faculty of Arts.

“Are there any other services you would like to see offered in the University community?”

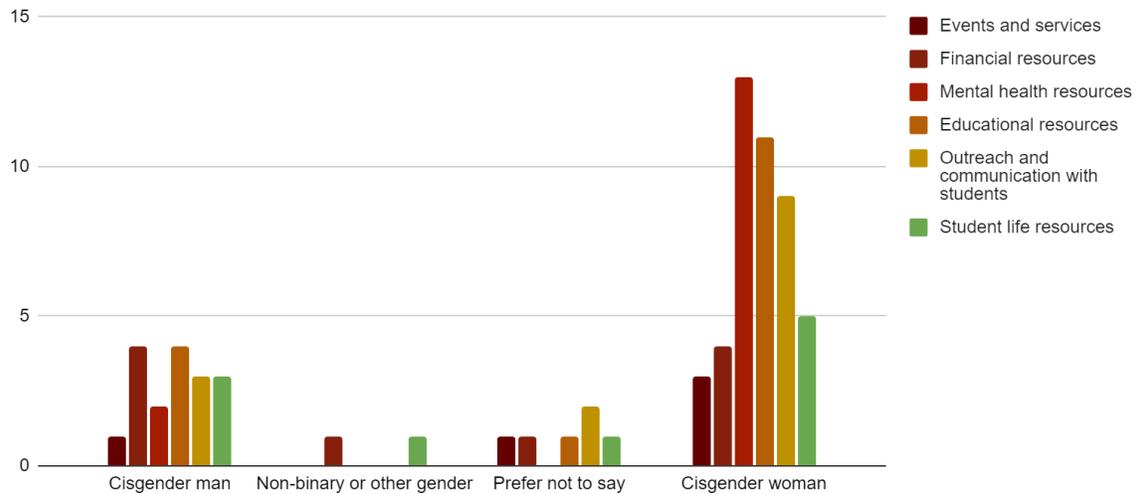
To represent the students feedback as quantitative data the responses were grouped using the following categories and examples:

- Events and services
- Educational resources
- Financial resources
- Mental health resources
- Outreach and communication with students
- Peer Support Centre
- Student life resources



Across the Science, Arts and Engineering faculties, the most requested services were educational resources, mental health resources, and outreach and communication with students. Conversely, the Peer Support Centre was only requested by other faculties.

Are there any other services you would like to see offered in the University community?



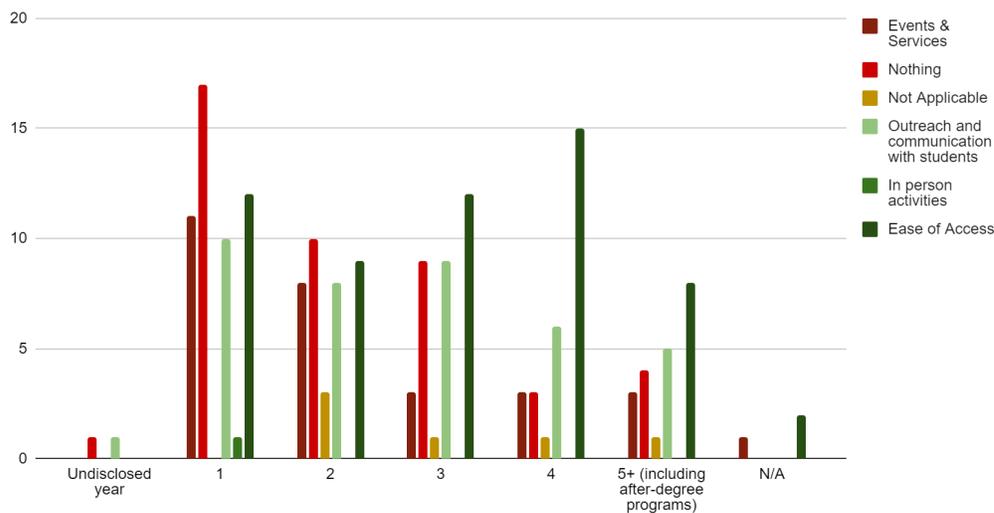
- The most requested resources were mental health and educational resources.
- 67% of respondents did not identify additional services they would like to see.

“Thinking of students who share your needs and priorities, what works well about how we (UASU) deliver our student services?” (Quantitative and Qualitative)

To represent the students feedback as quantitative data the responses were grouped using the following categories and examples:

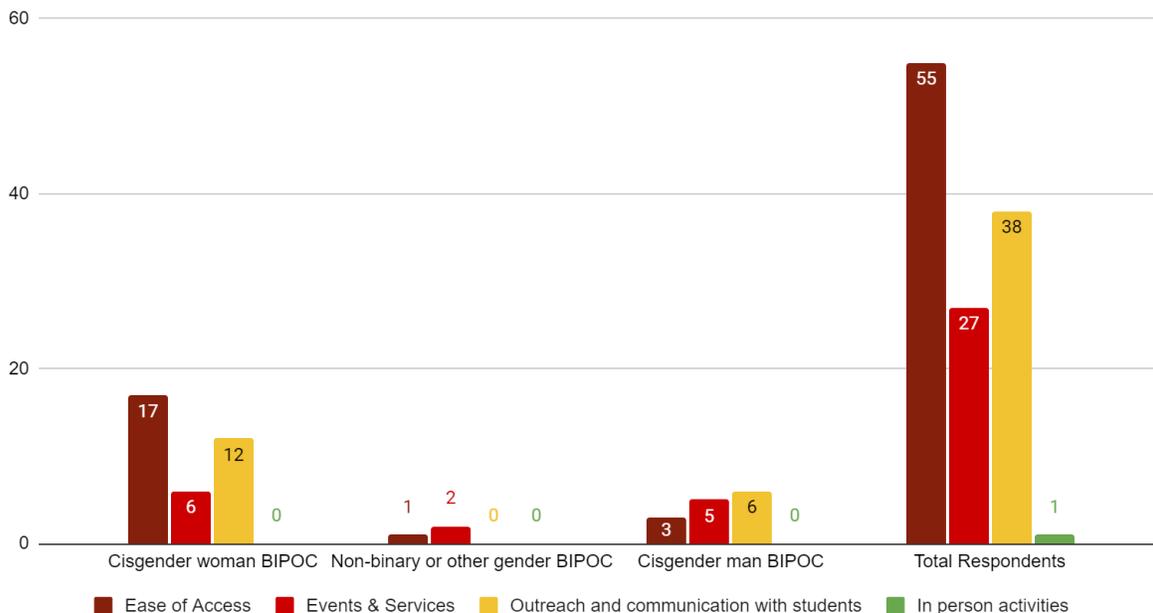
- Ease of Access
- Events & Services (i.e. praised specific events and services)
- Nothing
- Not Applicable
- Outreach and communication with students
- In person activities

Thinking of students who share your needs and priorities, what works well about how we (UASU) deliver our student services?



'Nothing works well' was the most common response among first-year students, who have only experienced a year of largely off-campus education. However, many first-year students also approved of UASU services' ease of access, and outreach and communication with students. Ease of access and outreach were dominant themes across all years of study. Ease of access was the most common response among third-year students and higher.

Thinking of students who share your needs and priorities, what works well about how we (UASU) deliver our student services?



41% of all respondents in this sample did not identify any other service that they wanted to see in the university community, or gave answers that were not applicable to the question.

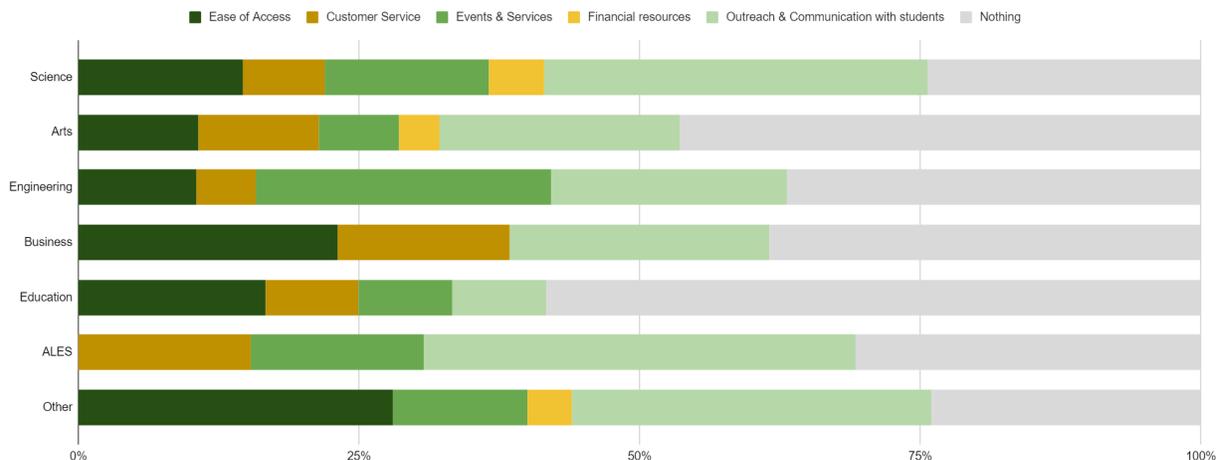
Qualitative Data:

- I don't know I have never been able to be on campus before and I don't know where to access these (services). - 3rd year student, cisgender woman, Campus Saint- Jean
- The services (are) not promoted well enough especially when you are a first year student. - Cisgender woman, Arts
- I don't think it considers disabled students as much as it could. - Non- binary person with disability/ accessibility needs.
- I rarely get any info about UASU things. I found that certain buildings got more things posted and (had more) people passing out info. - Indigenous woman
- idk dude most people I know don't like y'all. - 4th year student, cisgender man
- I don't know much about it (attends French campus). - 3rd year student, cisgender woman, Campus Saint- Jean
- I feel like lots of students don't know all the services offered by the UASU. I don't know how you would better deliver the info though. - 3rd year student, cisgender woman
- Alright, but should lower fees. - 4th year student, cisgender man

“Thinking of students who share your needs and priorities, where can we improve or make you/them feel more comfortable?”(Quantitative and Qualitative)

To represent the students feedback as quantitative data the responses were grouped using the following categories and examples:

- Ease of access
- Customer service
- Events and services
- Financial resources
- Nothing
- Outreach and communication with students



Quantitative Data:

- 27% of all respondents referred to outreach and communication with students as an area where UASU could improve or make them more comfortable.
- This was closely followed by ease of access at 15%, and events and services at 12%.
- The least mentioned categories and examples were customer service at 8%, and financial resources at 3%.

Qualitative Data:

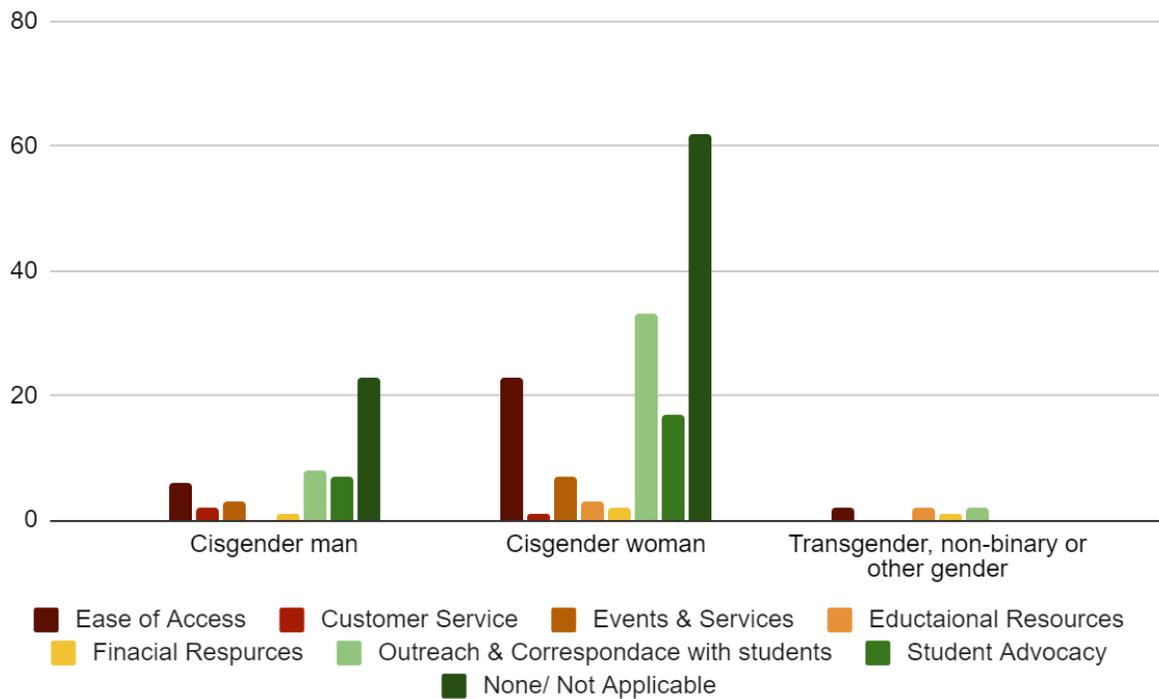
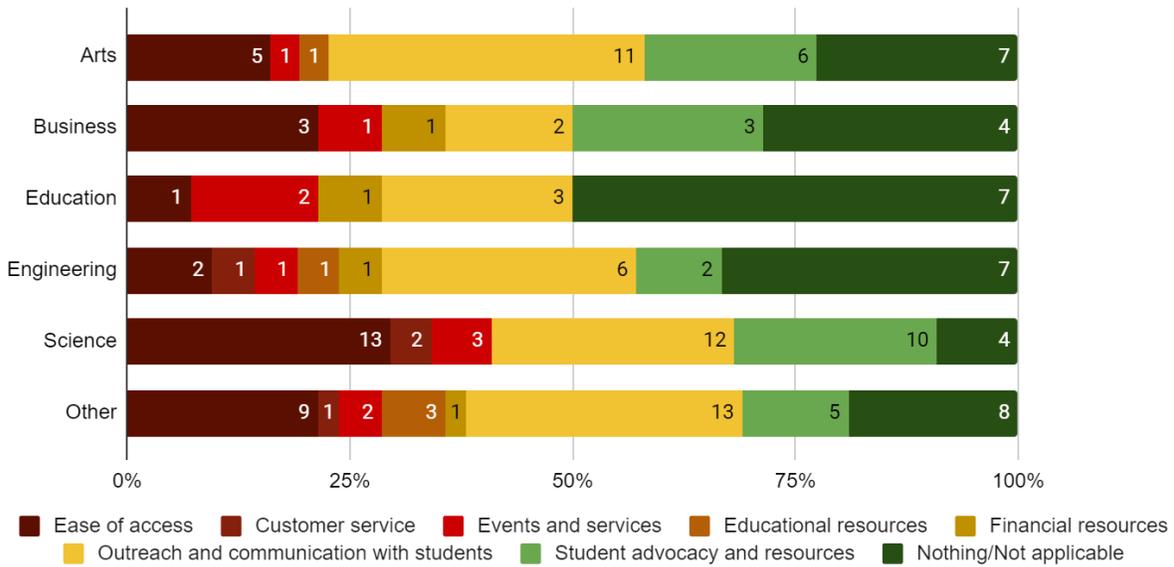
- Not fail them. - South Asian Woman.
- More support for students registered with accessibility resources. I have had countless profs refuse to accommodate despite the letters and emails I've provided. - Cisgender woman with disability/accessibility needs.
- Diversity in upper management. - Non-binary or other gender 3rd year student.
- Fight for our needs with the administration. - Cisgender man, 4th year student.
- More information? - 3rd year Campus Saint-Jean student.
- Allowing people to access resources without providing a lot of personal information. - 3rd year student, cisgender woman.
- I think just letting the students know that it is a safe environment to go to and that many students use these services will help make people feel more comfortable using these services. - 4th year Asian student.
- One improvement to The Landing could be more educational information on their section of the website. Similar to the way the Peer Support Centre has information about a variety of common stressors, it would be nice if The Landing had information about different gender and sexual identities to give an opportunity for students who want to learn more easy access. - 4th year student, cisgendered woman.
- Lower fees. Rid things that aren't of relevance to all students. - 4th year Science student.

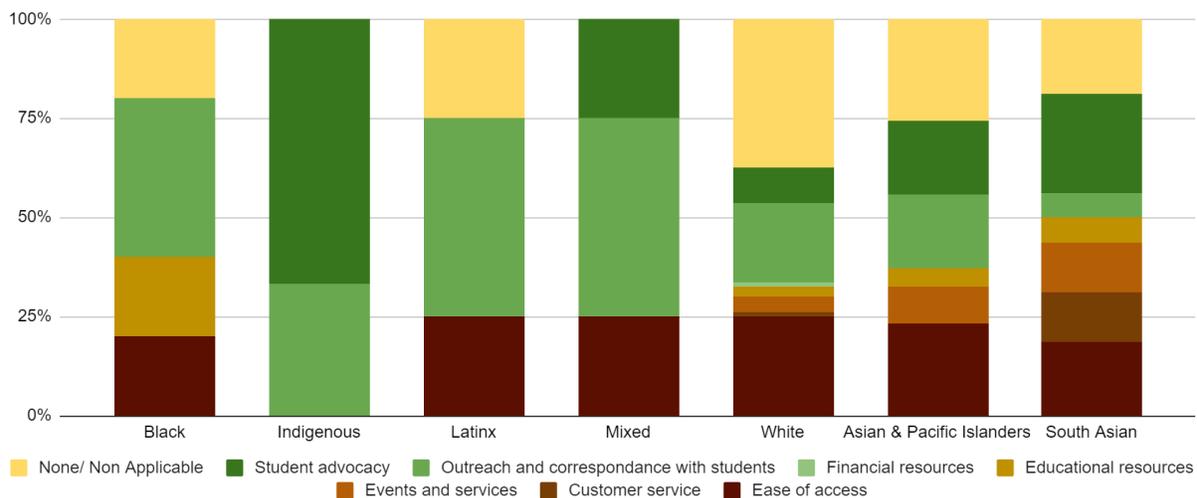
“Thinking of students who share your needs and priorities, what would make it easier for you/them to participate in the Students' Union at all levels?”

To represent the students feedback as quantitative data the responses were grouped using the following categories and examples:

- Ease of access
- Customer service
- Events and services
- Financial resources
- Nothing/non-applicable
- Outreach and communication with students
- Student advocacy and resources

Thinking of students who share your needs and priorities, what would make it easier for you/them to participate in the Students' Union at all levels?





Quantitative Data:

- Amongst the majority of the faculties, the three areas selected by the student for improvement were outreach and communication with students, ease of access, and student advocacy and resources.
- Similarly, across all gender demographics, outreach and communication with students ranked high amongst respondents' feedback.
- The trend of 'outreach and communication with students, ease of access, and student advocacy and resources' ranking high continues with the White, Asian & Pacific Islander, and South Asian respondents within this sample.

Qualitative Data:

- *shrugs* I don't know who is in charge of BearTracks now, but it looks like a five year old made it in 1992. It is terrible and weird to navigate. How it was before made way more sense. Whoever made this, or even pitched this design idea should be let go... - 3rd Year student, woman.
- I love this UASU Perks app! I think it's a great idea to keep students engaged and motivated in sharing their voice in the SU. Also it is so easy to navigate and get involved! - 2nd year student, woman.
- Promoting inclusivity and non-judgement. - 4th year student, Filipino.
- Inclusivity and being reached out to. - Cisgender woman, Campus Saint- Jean.
- Inclusivity. -Korean, cisgender woman.
- It is already quite easy to vote, as for becoming an SU member, there is nothing that would make that sound less stressful for me. - Cisgender man, Asian.
- Ways for shy students to participate in governance. - 5th (or +) student, cisgender woman.
- See more of my peers access and participate. First years can be super anxious about going to events or avoid them. - 2nd year student, Indigenous woman.
- Make the topics you discuss and meetings more easily accessible, I feel like it's something you really have to look for to find most of the time. - 2nd year Arts student.
- Easier to apply, but also if there were opportunities when classes aren't as busy/operating. - 1st year Science student, cisgender man.

- Make it appealing and not a weird business clique. - 4th year Arts student, cisgender man.
- More visible platforms to see what we can participate in. More accessible buildings and events. - Cisgender woman with disability/accessibility needs.
- Having more information about the UASU. I feel like too many people don't know what the UASU does but I do think all the information is available if people look. They need to figure out how to get people to seek out that information. - 3rd year student, cisgender woman.
- More sense of culture at the start of the year... show them these spaces right during Week of Welcome.- 5th (or +) student, cisgender man.
- Easy ways to get your voice heard and not emphasize that running for student (positions) is the only way to get your voice heard. - 3rd year Science student.
- This is a hard one, I think it depends on the person. If you are able to get them engaged and interested then you will have an easier time getting them to participate. As for gaining interest all we can do it (is) try all forms of communication whether it be digital or in person, but creating a presence and knowing that participating in SU can affect other students lives.- 4th year student, Asian.