UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA STUDENTS' UNION

2023 Annual Survey

November 14–December 4, 2023 (n=2,668)

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University of Alberta Students' Union
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Key Findings

Demographics

This year, the University's Student Diversity Census data was available for comparison for the first time. Our survey saw an extremely diverse demographic turnout, reflecting both a diverse student body and broad survey engagement.

DEMOGRAPHIC	2023 ANNUAL	*2022 ANNUAL*	COMPARE TO
Men	32.2%	*34.8%*	38.3%[1]
Women	59.9%	*58.1%*	59.1%[1]
Non-binary or another gender	5.7%	*4.3%*	~4%[1]
International students	11.5%	*8.4%*	13.0%[2]
Transgender students	3.7%	*2.1%*	0.9%[1]
LGBTQ2S+ students	23.8%	*N/A (24.0% in 2021)*	25.7%[1]
Disabled students	7.0%	*5.5%*	7.0%[1]
First Nations, Métis, or Inuit students	4.4%	*4.8%*	4.9%[1], 4.5%[2]
Black students	5.3%	*4.5%*	5.4%[1]
Visible minority students overall	~45%	*~45%*	43.1%

Notably, the chronic under-engagement of international students in UASU Annual Surveys has almost entirely disappeared; international student turnout eclipsed last year's record 8.4% turnout by a significant margin, and closed the gap with actuals to 1.5 points.

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[1] *Student Diversity Census Report: Student Diversity at the University of Alberta* (October 2022), accessed at https://infogram.com/student-diversity-census-1h7z2l8qrx8qg6o
[2] *2023/24 Annual Report on Enrolment*

Voter Turnout
- 52% of respondents had voted in the recent Alberta election. 70% of respondents who were eligible to vote did so.
- This was consistent with a previous survey about voting intention. It suggested that nearly all who intended to vote, and half of those who said 'maybe,' chose to follow through.
- There were major demographic disparities (by race/ethnicity and gender) in whether eligible voters voted. This suggests important questions about obstacles to engagement and barriers to electoral participation.
- Disabled students were extremely engaged: among eligible voters, 87% voted, compared to 68% of other students.
- Students from faculties like KSR, Business, and Medicine and Dentistry were less likely to vote.

Textbook Purchasing
- 753 respondents stated that they did not pay anything for textbook, which is tied to the increasing prevalence of Open Educational Resources, instructors' efforts to make the courses Zero Textbook Cost, the ZTC course indicator on BearTracks, and students' personal judgment regarding their individual courses.
- Average actual self-reported cost of textbooks: $174. Average actual cost of textbooks after removing the $0 responses: $252.
- First-year students reported spending more money on textbooks than any other year of study.
- Textbook costs varied by faculty, with Nursing reporting the highest average cost at $339.
- Students estimated that if they had bought all required textbooks, they would have paid an average of $431.
- Since 2018, more and more students have opted to not use a textbook at all.
- 9% of respondents stated that they used ChatGPT instead of buying a textbook.
- Gender, disability, and international student status factored into likelihood of choosing courses based on the ZTC indicator.

Student Spaces
- Input on campus accessibility (totalling 9600 words) discussed washrooms, doors, elevators, events on the Atrium stairs, signage, lighting, seating, menstrual products, halal and kosher food, lists of allergens, maps and wayfinding, and accessibility feedback mechanisms.
- Students speak at least 52 languages on campus. The 20 most commonly cited (in descending order) were English, French, Hindi, Spanish, Mandarin, Urdu, German,

Punjabi, Chinese (undifferentiated), Arabic, Cantonese, Japanese, ASL/sign, Korean, Gujarati, Russian, Tagalog, Bengali, Ukrainian, and Cree. Students were more than twice as likely to mention Cree than in 2020, when this question last ran.
- 45% of students reported feeling unsafe on campus between 7PM and 10PM.
- Transgender students were more likely to report feeling unsafe on campus during the day than cisgender students.
- Disabled students were more likely to report feeling unsafe on campus during the day than non-disabled students. Over 50% of disabled students reported feeling unsafe on campus between 7PM and 10PM.
- Indigenous, Hispanic or Latine, and Middle Eastern or North African students were more likely to feel unsafe on campus during the day than any other racial/ethnic group.
- Augustana and CSJ students were more likely to report feeling safe on campus during the day than North Campus students.
- Women and non-binary/another gender identity respondents were much more likely to report feeling unsafe on campus between 7PM and 10PM than men.

Building an Engaged Community
- Involvement on campus has increased overall since 2018, especially among specific demographic groups (disabled students, Southeast Asian students, non-binary students, Indigenous students, and Middle Eastern or North African students. On a 100-point scale, average self-reported involvement has risen from 35 to 39 since last year.
- There is now a consistent pattern of increased Indigenous student involvement in clubs and other student groups (almost doubling in two years), and a sharply reduced share of Indigenous students who would have been involved if they'd known about groups that interested them.
- Among students who self-identified as Middle Eastern or North African, compared to last year, the share of 'very involved' in student clubs/groups doubled, marginal involvement rose, and disinterest halved.
- The share of disabled students who were very involved in clubs/groups also increased sharply this year.
- A set of questions about student leadership was analyzed as part of the Identity Matters 3 report.

Advocating for Student Needs
- Compared to last year, students reported somewhat reduced difficulty balancing work and school. However, >50% still find it difficult.
- One out of four respondents skip meals at least once a week due to the cost of food, an increase from past surveys.
- Food bank usage in the past year rose from 6.5% to 7.3%.

- One out of four international respondents had visited a food bank in the past year, up from one out of five in 2022.
- Disabled students were slightly less likely to use a food bank this year.
- Black students were twice as likely to use a food bank this year.
- Transgender students were much more likely to use a food bank this year.
- 8-10% use pronouns other than, or in addition to, he or she.
- Ensuring students are comfortable using their pronouns can directly benefit 11% of respondents.
- Non-binary and/or transgender students' comfort with using their pronouns on campus was stable from 2022.
- A set of questions about work-integrated learning (WIL) was analyzed as part of the [Work-Integrated Learning Checkpoint report](#).
- Students largely agree they have good access to academic advisors, especially in KSR, MedDent, and ALES.
- However, Law, Native Studies, CSJ, and Augustana had high rates of negative ratings.
- 95% of respondents have a smartphone and/or tablet or laptop with a data plan, closely associated with their academic needs. There were significant disparities in device access: while one out of 20 students has a device with a data plan, that fell to around one out of 30 for white students and international students, and rose to around one out of ten for First Nations, Métis, or Inuit students and Hispanic or Latine students.

Sample Collection

The 2023 Annual Survey ran November 14 through December 4. The survey was built on the SurveyMonkey platform. The UASU attempted to contact the entire undergraduate student body (roughly 35,000 students), in both French and English. The survey reached 2,668 points of contact (roughly 7.5% of all undergraduate students). This was 34% lower than last year's high point, as eClass turnout decreased by 50% and Perks diversions decreased by 32%; fortunately, UASU newsletter turnout increased by 25%.

eClass deployment was virtually identical across both years in location, text, UI/UX design, and duration. The reduced eClass turnout may be tied to an overlap with Reading Week for three of the survey's 21 days, potential variations in the volume of text notices in eClass, or potential variations in the number or size of remote/online classes.
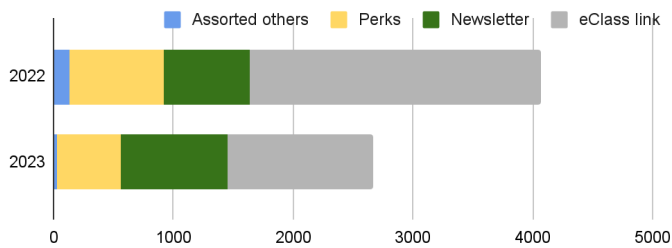
UASU Perks (perks.uasu.ca) is a gamification platform. UAlberta students earn points for activities like checking in at events, participating in a donor-backed vaccination promotion contest, or taking small surveys. Students can redeem points for real-world goods (e.g. branded socks or mugs). Students who finished the survey had the option to claim 250 Perks points (equivalent to 3-5 normal activities) and a chance to win $300 in grocery cards. 1,494 students claimed the points.

As key demographic distortions from previous years have not cropped up in the 2023 or 2022 Annual Surveys, we did not construct a Stratified Random Sample for these surveys.

> 2,668 unique respondents, representing ~7.5% of all UAlberta undergraduates.

> eClass link 50% less effective than last year for uncertain reasons.

> Newsletter 25% more effective than last year.

> 1,494 students claimed Perks points for taking the survey.

Demographics

Turnout by Faculty

These results were quite close to 2022, with an improved Business turnout and a reduced Education turnout.

> Broad turnout across faculties, with similar distortions to 2022.

- Very overrepresented: Science, Arts
- Proportionately represented: ALES, Business, CSJ, Engineering, KSR
- Somewhat underrepresented: Augustana, Education, Medicine and Dentistry, Native Studies, Nursing, Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences
- Very underrepresented: Law, Open Studies

Where valuable, results are cross-tabulated by faculty to account for these distortions. Overall, the survey represents the undergraduate student body reasonably well.

> Strong turnout from first-year students and reduced turnout from upper-year students, as in last year's survey.

Turnout by Year of Study

Consistent with the last two years of UASU Annual Surveys, and departing from previous years, this year saw high engagement from first-year students, and proportionately low engagement from upper-year students. This aligns with the UASU's efforts to engage first-year students through orientation, events, and communications. Where valuable, results are cross-tabulated by year of study.

Gender

As with the past two years, we used a two-question approach based on discussion with transgender students. See the demographic table in Key Findings for institutional data.

> Proportions generally comparable to UAlberta Student Diversity Census.

- Woman: 59.9%
- Man: 32.2%
- Non-binary or another gender: 5.7%
- Prefer not to say: 2.3%

> Men were somewhat underrepresented, as is typical for these surveys.

- Transgender: 3.7%
- Not transgender: 93.8%
- Prefer not to say: 2.5%

> The survey had a very strong response from non-binary and/or transgender students.
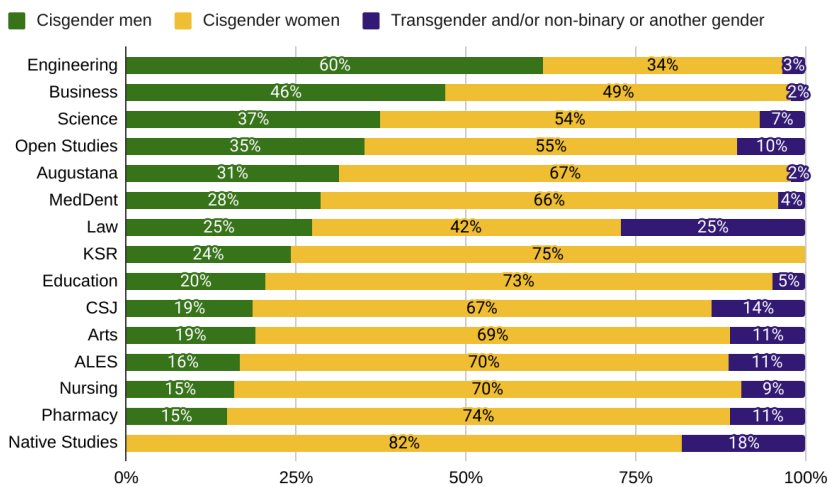
Looking specifically at the transgender students, 10% were transgender women, 21% were transgender men, and 66% were non-binary or another gender, aligning very closely with last year's proportions.

Gender by Faculty

There is significant variety in gender proportion across faculties. For instance, 60% of engineering respondents identified as cisgender men, the highest of any faculty, followed by Business with 46%. Additionally, 82% of Native Studies respondents and 75% of KSR respondents identified as cisgender women. The only faculty that did not have any transgender and/or nonbinary respondents was KSR, while the faculty with the highest proportion of transgender and/or nonbinary respondents was Law with 25%.

> Faculties had widely varying gender distributions.

> 60% of Engineering students identified as male, 82% of Native Studies students identified as female, and 25% of law students identified as a gender minority.

Legend: ■ Cisgender men ■ Cisgender women ■ Transgender and/or non-binary or another gender

Faculty	Cisgender men	Cisgender women	Transgender and/or non-binary or another gender
Engineering	60%	34%	3%
Business	46%	49%	2%
Science	37%	54%	7%
Open Studies	35%	55%	10%
Augustana	31%	67%	2%
MedDent	28%	66%	4%
Law	25%	42%	25%
KSR	24%	75%	
Education	20%	73%	5%
CSJ	19%	67%	14%
Arts	19%	69%	11%
ALES	16%	70%	11%
Nursing	15%	70%	9%
Pharmacy	15%	74%	11%
Native Studies		82%	18%

International Students

This year around 13% of UAlberta undergraduates are international students, who are typically underrepresented in surveys. The Annual Survey had a record high international turnout of 11.5%. This means that, for the first time, we can reasonably say that the survey's aggregate data plausibly represents the student population in terms of international and domestic students. We do note that Chinese international students appear to be underrepresented in this sample.

Annual Surveys that asked about international student status
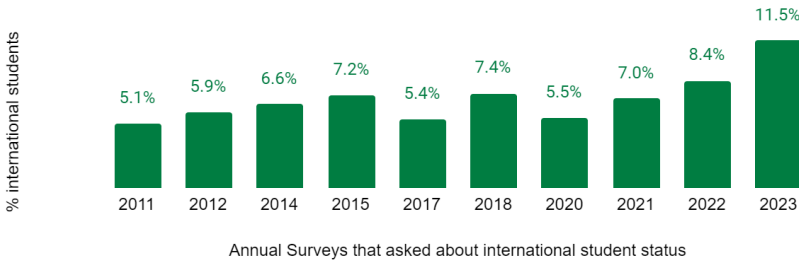
> 11.5% international students, a minimal underrepresentation and a record international turnout.

Disabled Students

7.0% of respondents are disabled students, which appears consistent with the Student Diversity Census. The use of identity-first versus person-first language (disabled students or students with disabilities, in this case) is [not a settled matter of convention](). In this survey, the question was 'Do you identify as disabled?' so the report defaults to the identity-first terminology 'disabled students.' Shifting away from person-first language may have played a role in the increased response rate from disabled students in recent Annual Surveys.

> 7.0% disabled students, a proportionate turnout.

> Results comparable with 2022 Annual Survey and UAlberta Student Diversity Census.
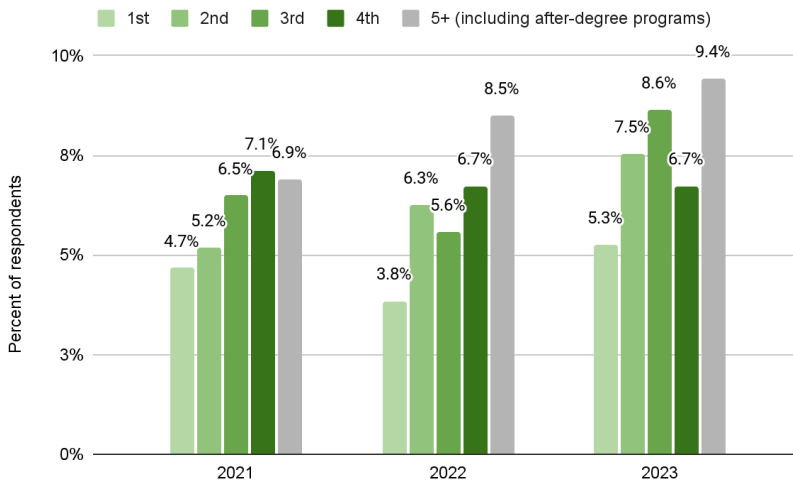
Race and Ethnicity

We repeated the 2022 Annual Survey's construction of this question, which went through several iterations based on feedback from students, and which produced no negative feedback this year. The big-picture results align relatively well with both the 2022 Annual Survey and the Student Diversity Census. As with last year, around 55% of students are white and selected no other category.

> In broadest terms, around 55% of undergraduates are white. This is consistent with the Student Diversity Census, where 43% identify as a member of a visible minority.

Looking more closely:
- Black (African, African-Canadian, Black Indigenous, etc.): 5.3%
- First Nations, Métis, and/or Inuit: 4.4%
- Middle Eastern or North African: 4.0%
- South Asian: 14.1%
- East Asian: 12.8%
- Southeast Asian: 9.1%
- White or Caucasian: 55.1%
- Hispanic or Latine: 2.2%
- Prefer not to say: 4.5%

Looking at the 2,441 students who opted to take the race/ethnicity question, 252 (10%) selected more than one category; around 1% selected three or more.

> 10% from more than one race/ethnicity.

A text field allowed students to make additional input. 43 responses were received:
- Discussion of multiple ancestries.
- Highlighting of specific countries, e.g. Finland, the Philippines, Ukraine, India, Albania.
- Highlighting of specific Indigenous Peoples, e.g. Dene, Mi'kmaq.
- Identification as Jewish, often noting Ashkenazi.These responses accounted for around 0.2% of respondents. As a point of comparison, while the 2023 Annual Survey was not set up to determine how many students are Jewish, the 2018 Annual Survey determined that 0.6% identified with Judaism, and Hillel Edmonton uses similar numbers. Roughly 200-250 UAlberta undergraduates are Jewish.

As a point of interest and potential concern, racial/ethnic diversity shifted significantly by year of study. For example, white or Caucasian students represented 49.8% of first-year students but rose consistently to 62.4% of fourth-year students. South Asian students represented 16.1% of first-year students but declined consistently to 12.2% of fourth-year students. Black students represented 8.1% of first-year students but declined consistently to 2.8% of fourth-year students.

In this chart, note how the sections corresponding to Black and South Asian students narrow by year of study, while the section corresponding to White or Caucasian students widens.

> Racial/ethnic diversity of respondents changed significantly between years of study.

Approx. racial/ethnic diversity by year of study

Adds to >100% as respondents could select multiple categories
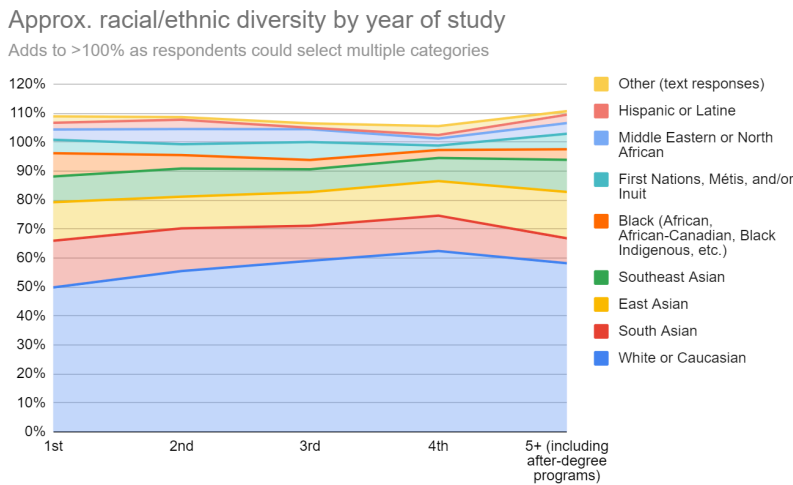
There are several potential explanations for this:

1. Potential lower engagement in UASU surveys among Black and South Asian students by year of study.
2. Potential lower retention/higher retention among Black and South Asian students, which would be very serious.
3. Recent (i.e. past two years) and significant increases in racial/ethnic diversity in the student body, perhaps reflecting recruitment priorities.

Determining whether these factors are real would be very difficult given the tools available. It is worth noting that this survey's proportions of white, Black, and South Asian students match the Student Diversity Census very closely.

LGBTQ2S+ Students

23.8% of respondents identified as LGBTQ2S+, while 72% of respondents identified as not LGBTQ2S+. Additionally, 4.6% chose 'prefer not to say.' These results are consistent with the Student Demographic Census.

> One out of four undergraduates is LGBTQ2S+, consistent with the Student Demographic Census.
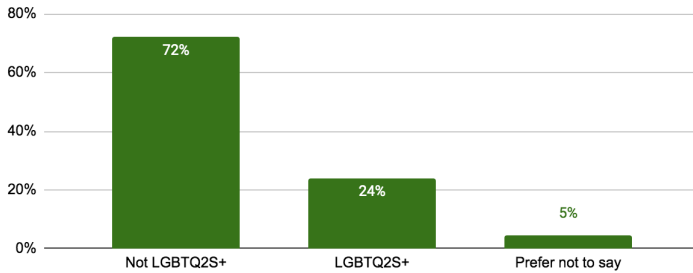
Since this result aligns so closely with the SDC, but this survey's proportions of non-binary and transgender respondents are so much higher than the SDC, there is strong reason to suspect that gender-minority students are more comfortable stating their gender on the UASU survey.

LGBTQ2S+ Students by Faculty

Assessing respondent sexual orientation by faculty, Native Studies had the highest percentage of LGBTQ2S+ students at 72%, followed by Arts at 40% and Law at 33%. Medicine and Dentistry has the lowest proportion of LGBTQ2S+ students with only 4% of respondents identifying as LGBTQ2S+, low enough to be statistically significant despite the relatively small number of MedDent students (~50) who responded to this question.

> 72% of respondents in the Faculty of Native Studies identified as LGBTQ2S+.

> Medicine and Dentistry had the smallest proportion of LGBTQ2S+ respondents at 4%.
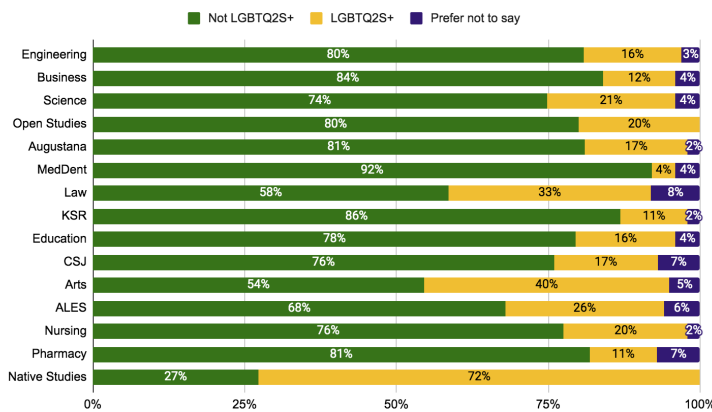
Voter Turnout

"Did you vote in the 2023 Alberta provincial election?"

- Yes: 52.4%
- No: 22.8%
- Was not eligible (too young): 10.6%
- Was not eligible (other reason): 11.4%
- Prefer not to say: 2.9%

1,837 respondents were eligible to vote in the last Alberta election. Coding 'yes' as one and 'no' as zero allowed us to calculate the average rate of voting among eligible voters in our respondent pool: 69.7% of eligible respondents voted. As a caveat, Annual Survey respondents may be more engaged than the average student and thus more likely to vote, so these numbers should be taken with a grain of salt when generalized to the student body.

In preparation for this survey, we ran a small survey on Perks in January 2023, reaching 868 respondents. Of the 758 who were eligible to vote, when asked if they were going to vote in the Alberta election, 63% said yes, 26% said maybe, and 10% said no. In other words, the actual voter turnout was consistent with a case where almost everyone who said yes, and roughly half of those who said maybe, chose to follow through.

> 52% of respondents had voted in the Alberta election.

> 70% of respondents who were eligible to vote did so.

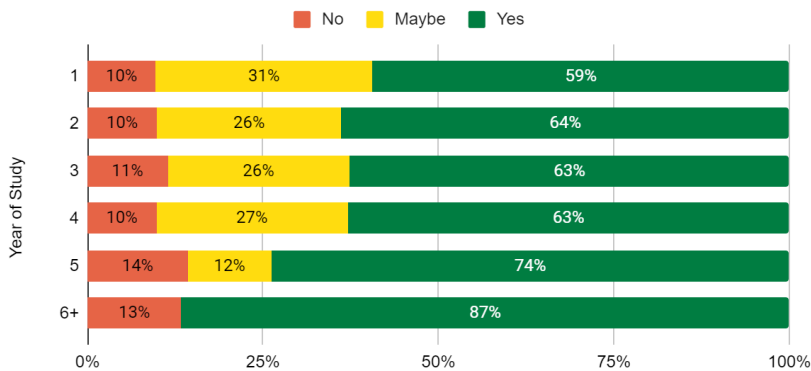> Consistent with voting intention data from January pertaining to the same election.

Are you going to vote in the Alberta election, May 29, 2023?
758 UAlberta undergrads eligible to vote (Jan 19-27, 2023)

Looking at the proportion of respondents who had been eligible to vote in the Alberta election and did so, there was significant variation by race/ethnicity in the 2023 Annual Survey:

> Major racial/ethnic disparities in whether eligible voters voted.

- Black students: 38% of eligible voters voted
- South Asian students: 49%
- Southeast Asian students: 61%
- Middle Eastern or North African students: 62%
- East Asian students: 62%
- Hispanic or Latine students: 65%
- First Nations, Métis, or Inuit students: 73%
- White or Caucasian students: 82%

Again, a grain of salt applies: most of these lines represent only a few dozen 'yes' responses versus a few dozen 'no' responses. However, the differences for Black students, South Asian students, and white or Caucasian students were all statistically significant. This suggests hard questions about obstacles to voter engagement by race and ethnicity in Alberta and in our community. For example, recent past engagement of Black student groups by Black UASU staff on the subject of the Alberta election produced a low uptake response, with students citing the impacts of many stressors.

Voting behavior was also highly gendered. Looking at eligible voters, 71% of women and 82% of non-binary students voted, compared to 64% of men.

> Men were especially unlikely to vote if eligible.

LGBT2S+ identity emerged as another major predictor of voting behavior. 79% of LGBTQ2S+ students who were eligible to vote in the 2023 provincial election did so, compared with 66% of non-LGBTQ2s+ students. The difference was even more stark when focusing on transgender students: 87% of transgender eligible voters voted, compared to 69% of cisgender eligible voters.

> LGBTQ2S+ students, particularly transgender students, were especially likely to vote if eligible.

Similar numbers emerged when looking at disability. Among eligible voters, 87% of disabled students voted, compared to 68% of other students.

> Disabled students were especially likely to vote if eligible.

The likelihood of voting trended up by year of study. Among eligible voters, 50% of first-year students had voted, which rose to 75% in second and third year, 79% in fourth year, and 82% for fifth and higher (including after-degree programs).

> Significant variation in the likelihood of voting by faculty and year of study.

The likelihood of voting among eligible voters was low in a few faculties (Open Studies, Native Studies, KSR, Business, Medicine and Dentistry), but still in the 55-65% range. Higher likelihood was noted in faculties like ALES (76%), CSJ (76%), Education (77%), and Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences (78%).

> Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences had the highest likelihood of voting.

Textbook Purchasing

"This semester (Fall 2023), how much did you actually pay for textbooks?"

This slider scale question ran from $0 to $1500. Due to a technical error, the sample size for this question is 1595. 753 respondents (47%) answered $0, which is tied to the increasing prevalence of Open Educational Resources, instructors' efforts to make the courses Zero Textbook Cost, the ZTC course indicator on BearTracks, and students' personal judgment regarding their individual courses.

> 753 respondents stated that they did not pay anything for textbooks.

- Average actual self-reported cost of textbooks: $174
    - (Average actual cost of textbooks after removing the $0 responses: $252)

> The average self-reported cost of textbooks was $174.

Histogram of student-estimated actual textbook expenses, Fall 2023
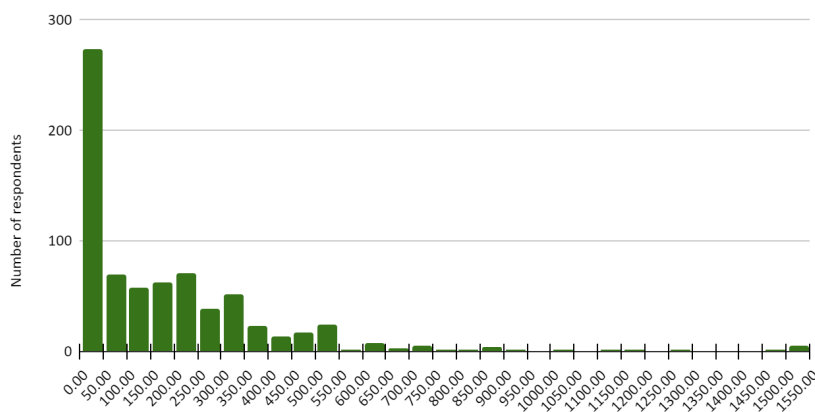
The histogram above, compared against a [September 2023 survey](#) at n=1088, shows a higher proportion of students who wound up paying $200 or more; instead of $252, the average self-reported cost in September was $106. This suggests that students continued to make decisions over the early weeks of the semester about what materials were necessary.

- Average self-reported actual cost by year of study:
    - 1: $203
        - In the recent n=1088 survey, 55% strongly or moderately agreed that they bought more textbooks in their first year than were necessary.
    - 2: $187

> First-year students reported spending more money on textbooks than any other year of study.

- 3: $143
- 4: $116
- 5+: $158
- Average self-reported actual cost by faculty:
  - ALES: $194
  - Arts: $167
  - Augustana: $126
  - Business: $217
  - CSJ: $202
  - Education: $168
  - Engineering: $120
  - KSR: $219
  - Law: $39
  - MedDent: $211
  - Native Studies: $110
  - Nursing: $339
  - Open Studies: $253
  - PharmSci: $93
  - Science: $157

> Textbook costs varied by faculty, with Nursing reporting the highest average cost at $339.

**"This semester (Fall 2023), if you had purchased all required textbooks, how much do you think you would have paid?"**
This slider scale question ran from $0 to $1500. Due to a technical error, the sample size for this question is 1595.

This question used the same slider scale as the previous one. 7.4% of respondents answered $0 — again, closely tied to ZTC/OER use. It should be emphasized that these are all self-reported numbers assessed two months after textbook purchasing decisions.

- Average estimated required cost of textbooks: $431
  - (Average required cost of textbooks after removing the $0 responses: $465)

> Students estimated that if they had bought all required textbooks, they would have paid an average of $431.

The average actually paid is 40% of the average estimated required cost. This is closely tied to students' own judgment and survival strategies.

Histogram of student-estimated costs of required textbooks, Fall 2023
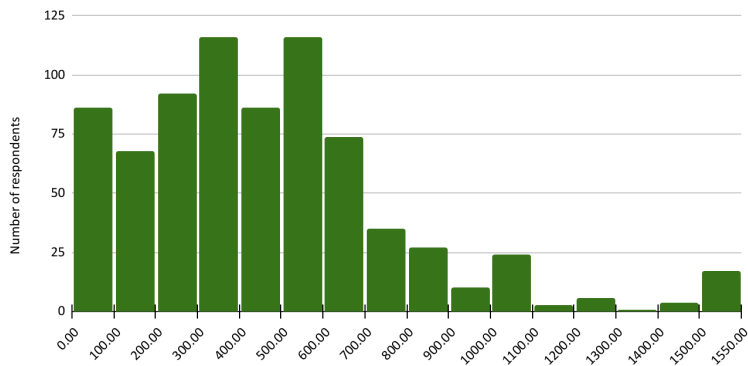
This pattern aligns well with the September survey but leans toward higher proportions in the $500-$700 categories. The average estimated required cost in September was $312, not $431. The difference suggests students reevaluating, reflecting on, and carefully considering their course material needs and course requirements after the semester begins.

- Average estimated required cost by year of study:
    - 1: $469
    - 2: $453
    - 3: $418
    - 4: $358
    - 5+: $363
- Average estimated required cost by faculty:
    - ALES: $438
    - Arts: $336
    - Augustana: $226
    - Business: $466
    - CSJ: $273
    - Education: $318
    - Engineering: $551
    - KSR: $544
    - Law: $289
    - MedDent: $429
    - Native Studies: $163
    - Nursing: $661
    - Open Studies: $464
    - PharmSci: $465
    - Science: $474

"Have you ever done the following INSTEAD of buying a textbook? (Choose all that apply.)"
This question has been asked several times in the past five years as part of the Be Book Smart campaigns. There are clear trends on display: increased willingness to not use a textbook at all and to find alternative resources online, high rates of downloading for free online, strong rates of picking courses because of ZTC indicators, and reduced incidence of using a friend's copy or the library's. Concerningly, 8.5% had used ChatGPT instead of buying a textbook, and 4.6% had used Chegg instead of buying a textbook.

> Since 2018, more and more students have opted to not use a textbook.

> 9% of respondents stated that they used ChatGPT instead of buying a textbook.
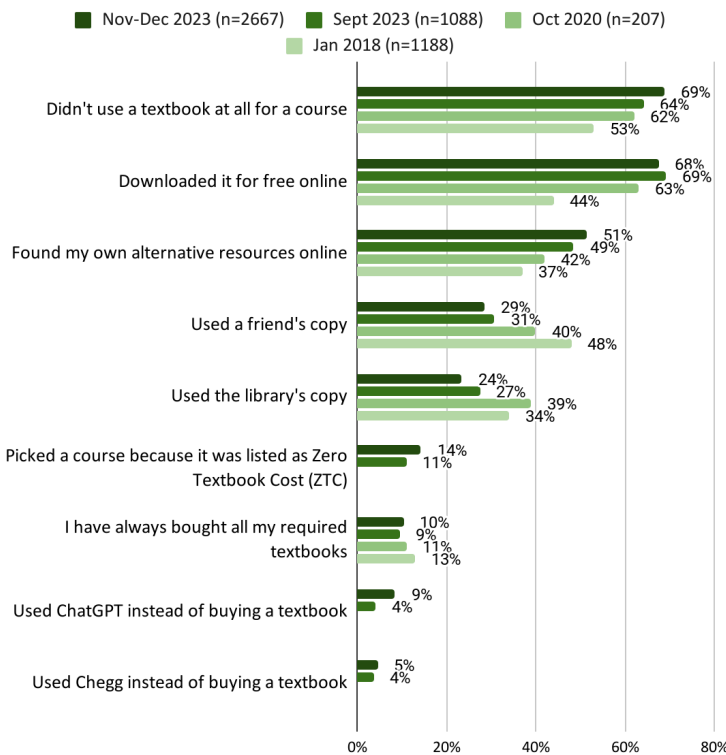
Focusing on students who picked a course because it was listed as ZTC, we noted demographic distortions. Women (15%) and non-binary students (20%) were more likely than men (13%) to have done so. Disabled students (20%) and international students (16%) were also especially likely to pick a course because of the ZTC indicator.

> Gender, disability, and international student status factored into likelihood of choosing courses based on the ZTC indicator.

Student Spaces

"How can SUB better accommodate your accessibility needs, if any?"

This text question produced 1325 responses totalling 9,600 words. While not all accessibility needs are specific to people who self-identify as disabled, partially focusing on that demographic allowed us to drill down on important responses. A total of 105 students who identified as disabled provided a text response.

> Students provided 9,600 words of accessibility-related input.

The most frequent topics (typically 10-50 mentions each) centred on features like seating, elevators, chargers, washrooms, and doors, as well as conditions like noise, crowding, and wheelchair inaccessibility.

- Suggestions to add poles in handicapped bathrooms or gender-neutral washrooms
- Complaints about heavy SUB doors that make it difficult for physically disabled people to access the building
- Issues with the small elevators make it difficult to travel to upper levels with a mobility device
- Events taking place in the Atrium, which is all stairs and thus difficult for those with physical disabilities to participate
- Suggestions for new/clearer signage for those with visual impairments
- Requests for more designated quiet spaces and a designated napping space
- Desire for better lighting in seating areas
- Suggestions for the addition of designated disability seating
- Request to add more gender-neutral washrooms in SUB and have the current one available 24/7
- Desire to reduce wait times for student services including mental health services and programs like The Landing
- Suggestions for more halal and kosher food options in the food court
- Adding menstrual products outside of all washrooms

> Washroom, door, and elevator concerns.

> Inaccessible events on the Atrium stairs.

> Signage, lighting, and seating.

> Gender-neutral washrooms and menstrual products.

> Halal and kosher food.

- Request to require lists of allergens in food in the cafeteria
- More bean bags in the Atrium (lots of students said they love them!)
- Desire for an online interactive map of SUB to make navigating the space easier
- Suggestions to extend the bookstore hours to accommodate students with early and late classes better
- Adding more treadmill desks
- Desire to increase funding for the Campus Food Bank to reduce wait times
- Suggestions to add a permanent accessibility feedback system so students may report concerns

> Lists of allergens.

> Maps and wayfinding.

> Accessibility feedback systems.

Key Quotes

"Accessible building design for vision impaired people, such as labelled rooms/other areas of significance, such as seating areas well-marked, maybe designated spots where people with disabilities can also find seats since it's quite crowded if some study rooms are in the building then they should be easy to find as well."

"When events are hosted, try to avoid putting things on the big stairs near the large windows in SUB, as those who are unable to use stairs are excluded."

"Can we have more bean bag chairs? They rock!"

"Bathroom with a pole in it. (I have arthritis and sometimes struggle to get off the toilet, a pole enables me to lift myself when I can't stand)"

"It's a bit dark and depressing in and around the food court area. maybe some more lighting and decor"

"What languages do you speak on campus, either in class or with friends?"

This text question produced 449 responses. 52 languages or groups of languages were mentioned, some of which overlap with each other:

- English: 390
- French: 118
- Hindi: 51
- Spanish: 34
- Mandarin: 31
- Urdu: 26
- German: 23
- Punjabi: 22
- Chinese: 21
- Arabic: 19
- Cantonese: 18
- Japanese: 14
- ASL/sign: 12
- Korean: 12
- Gujarati: 12
- Russian: 11
- Tagalog: 10
- Bengali: 9
- Ukrainian: 9
- Cree: 9
    - Note that, when this question ran in the 2020 Annual Survey, which had a somewhat higher sample size, only four individuals noted that they spoke Cree on campus. By proportion, students were over twice as likely to mention Cree this year.
- Italian: 8
- Norwegian: 6
- Filipino: 6
- Malayalam: 5
- Polish: 4
- Portuguese: 4
- Telugu: 4
- Farsi: 4

> Students were more likely to report speaking Cree this year than in 2020.

- Bangla: 3
- Pidgin: 3
- Vietnamese: 3
- Persian: 3
- Yoruba: 3
- Gaelic: 3
- Somali: 2
- Tamil: 2
- Serbian: 2
- Hebrew: 2
- Cebuano/Bisaya: 2
- Languages or groups that were mentioned once: Swahili, Armenian, Croatian, Swedish, Dutch, Indonesian, Czech, Danish, Arabian, Slovak, Hiligaynon, Irish, Michif

"How safe do you feel on your campus during daytime hours?" paired with "How safe do you feel on your campus between 7PM and 10PM?"

These questions ran on a centred five-point slider with a scale that ran from 'very unsafe' (-2) to 'very safe' (+2), comparable to a five-point Likert scale.
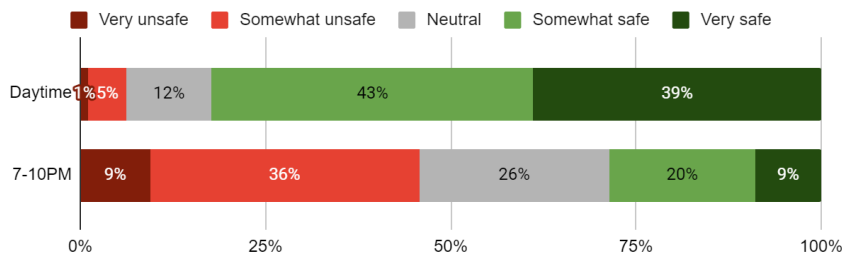
> 45% of students reported feeling unsafe on campus between 7PM and 10PM.

Looking more closely at **daytime**, we found that several demographics were associated with feeling unsafe.

Notably, disability and being transgender both doubled a student's likelihood of feeling unsafe on campus during the day:
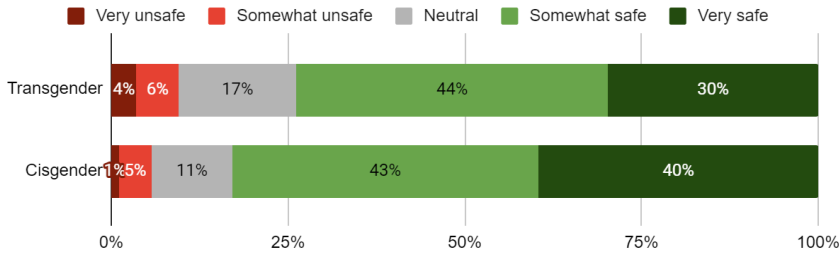
Very unsafe ■ **Somewhat unsafe** ■ **Neutral** ■ **Somewhat safe** ■ **Very safe**

	Very unsafe	Somewhat unsafe	Neutral	Somewhat safe	Very safe
Transgender	4%	6%	17%	44%	30%
Cisgender	1%	5%	11%	43%	40%

> Transgender students were more likely to report feeling unsafe on campus during the day than cisgender students.

Very unsafe ■ **Somewhat unsafe** ■ **Neutral** ■ **Somewhat safe** ■ **Very safe**

	Very unsafe	Somewhat unsafe	Neutral	Somewhat safe	Very safe
Disabled	3%	9%	15%	44%	30%
Not disabled	1%	5%	11%	44%	40%
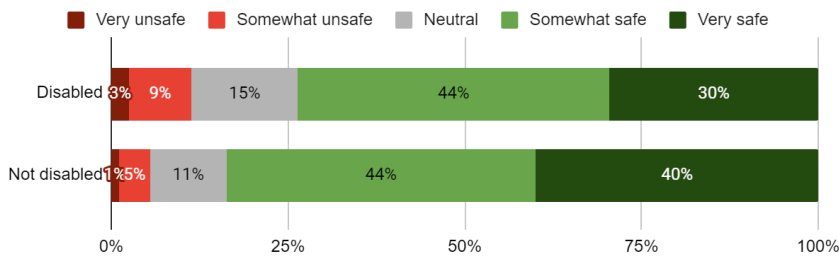
> Disabled students were more likely to report feeling unsafe on campus during the day than non-disabled students.

These factors compounded: out of 36 disabled transgender respondents, 17% felt unsafe on campus during the day.

While gender identity did not have much of an impact on rates of feeling unsafe, it did have a major impact on feeling very safe versus somewhat safe or neutral:

Very unsafe ■ **Somewhat unsafe** ■ **Neutral** ■ **Somewhat safe** ■ **Very safe**

	Very unsafe	Somewhat unsafe	Neutral	Somewhat safe	Very safe
Man	1%	4%	8%	35%	51%
Woman	1%	5%	13%	48%	34%
Non-binary/another	2%	5%	17%	50%	26%
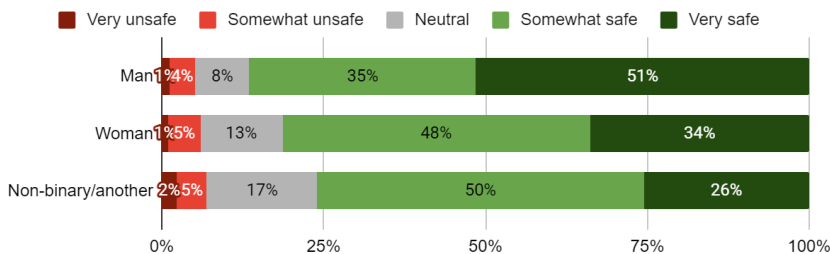
Looking at race and ethnicity, serious disparities emerged. Indigenous students, Hispanic or Latine students, and especially Middle Eastern or North African (MENA) students were far more likely to feel unsafe on campus during the day.

However, even among MENA students, 66% felt somewhat or very safe.

> Indigenous, Hispanic or Latine and Middle Eastern or North African students were more likely to feel unsafe on campus during the day than any other racial/ethnic group.

Legend: Very unsafe | Somewhat unsafe | Neutral | Somewhat safe | Very safe

Group	Very unsafe	Somewhat unsafe	Neutral	Somewhat safe	Very safe
White or Caucasian	1%	4%	11%	45%	39%
South Asian	0%	4%	11%	40%	45%
Black	2%	5%	5%	37%	51%
Southeast Asian	2%	6%	14%	39%	40%
East Asian	2%	6%	10%	47%	35%
FNMI	4%	4%	10%	39%	44%
Hispanic or Latine	6%	4%	8%	39%	43%
MENA	6%	12%	15%	38%	28%
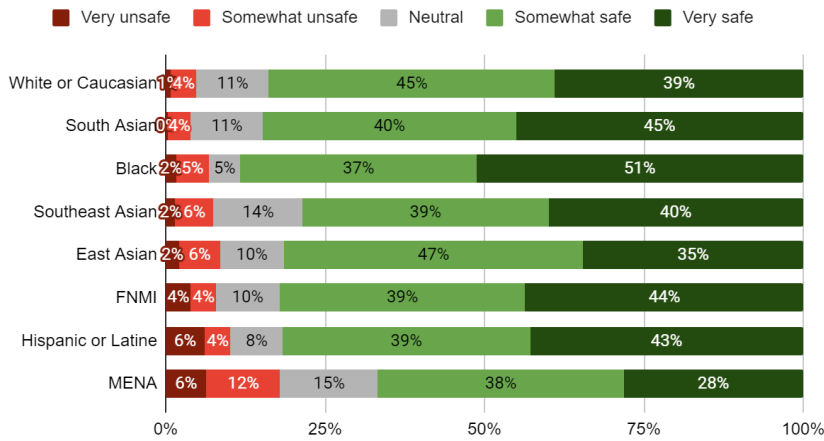
Comparing campuses, we found that CSJ students were somewhat more likely than North Campus students to feel safe during the day, and Augustana students were much more likely.

> Augustana and CSJ students were more likely to report feeling safe on campus during the day than North Campus students.

Legend: Very unsafe | Somewhat unsafe | Neutral | Somewhat safe | Very safe

Campus	Very unsafe	Somewhat unsafe	Neutral	Somewhat safe	Very safe
North Campus	1%	5%	12%	44%	38%
CSJ		3%	14%	39%	44%
Augustana		5%	5%	34%	57%
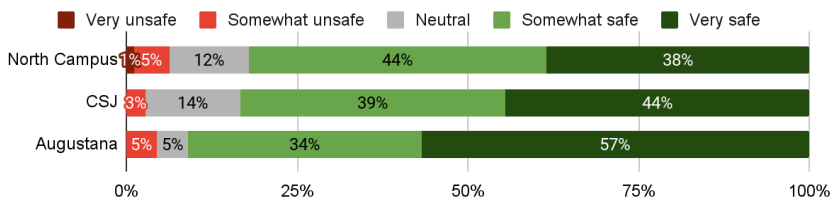
Focusing on **7PM to 10PM**, we note some disparities, including a major gender disparity, but it also seems clear that the early nighttime hours do not tend to feel safe for any students.

> Over 50% of disabled students reported feeling unsafe on campus between 7PM and 10PM.

Legend: Very unsafe | Somewhat unsafe | Neutral | Somewhat safe | Very safe

Group	Very unsafe	Somewhat unsafe	Neutral	Somewhat safe	Very safe
Disabled	12%	43%	20%	17%	8%
Not disabled	9%	36%	26%	20%	9%

Transgender / Cisgender

Legend: Very unsafe | Somewhat unsafe | Neutral | Somewhat safe | Very safe

	Very unsafe	Somewhat unsafe	Neutral	Somewhat safe	Very safe
Transgender	12%	36%	29%	19%	4%
Cisgender	9%	36%	25%	20%	9%

Gender

	Very unsafe	Somewhat unsafe	Neutral	Somewhat safe	Very safe
Man	7%	20%	25%	29%	19%
Woman	10%	44%	26%	16%	4%
Non-binary/another	11%	48%	25%	10%	6%

> Women and non-binary/another gender identity respondents were much more likely to report feeling unsafe on campus between 7PM and 10PM than men.

Race/Ethnicity

	Very unsafe	Somewhat unsafe	Neutral	Somewhat safe	Very safe
White or Caucasian	7%	35%	28%	21%	8%
Black	8%	24%	33%	21%	14%
East Asian	9%	43%	26%	15%	7%
FNMI	10%	31%	33%	22%	4%
South Asian	10%	37%	20%	20%	13%
Hispanic or Latine	13%	38%	25%	17%	8%
Southeast Asian	15%	35%	24%	21%	5%
MENA	22%	30%	22%	15%	11%

Looking at campuses, we found that CSJ students were just as likely as North Campus students to feel safe or unsafe during 7-10PM, but Augustana students felt much safer on average.

Campus

	Very unsafe	Somewhat unsafe	Neutral	Somewhat safe	Very safe
North Campus	10%	37%	26%	20%	8%
CSJ	6%	41%	16%	31%	6%
Augustana	2%	14%	26%	19%	38%
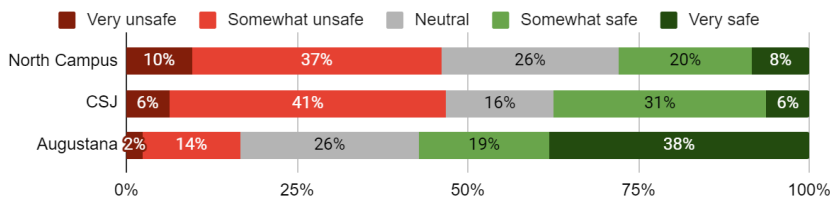
Building an Engaged Community

"How involved are you on campus this year? (Examples: campus recreation, faculty/department association, clubs, volunteering, attending events.)"
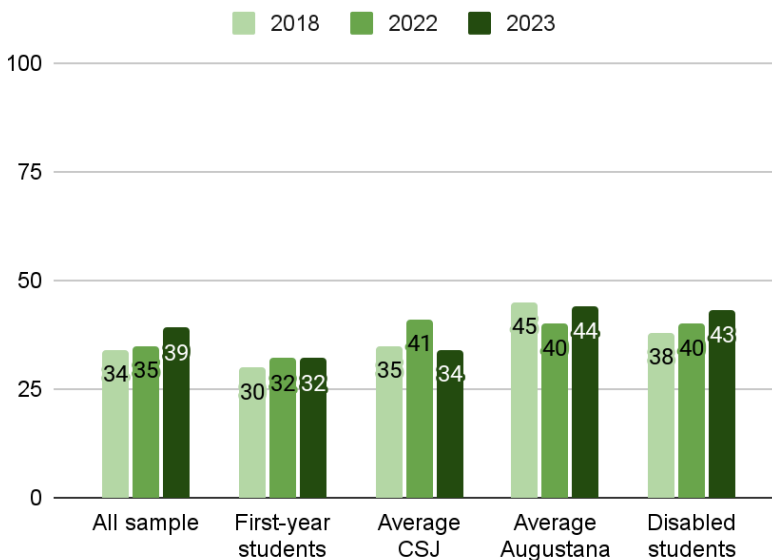
This question ran on a centered 0-100 slider, with the ends labelled 'very uninvolved' and 'very involved.' Results were comparable to the two previous years this survey ran, or somewhat better. Several demographic groups showed notably increased involvement, including second-year students and above (4-7 points higher per year of study); disabled students (3 points higher and trending consistently up); Southeast Asian students (5 points higher); non-binary students (10 points higher); First Nations, Métis, and/or Inuit students (10 points higher); and Middle Eastern or North African students (10 points higher).

> Involvement on campus has increased, on average, since 2018 and since last year.

Average self-reported involvement out of 100

Legend: 2018, 2022, 2023

Category	2018	2022	2023
All sample	34	35	39
First-year students	30	32	32
Average CSJ	35	41	34
Average Augustana	45	40	44
Disabled students	38	40	43

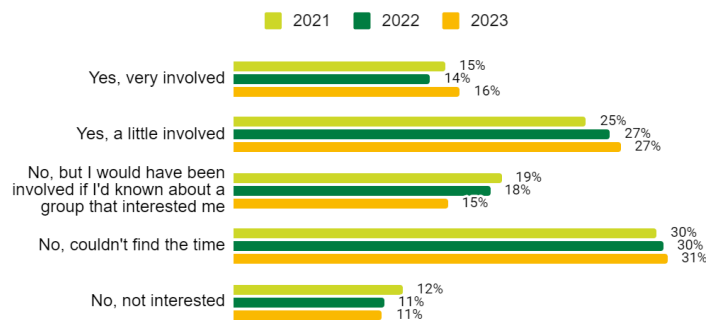Average scores compared to last year's data:
- First-year: 32 (+0 from last year)
- **Second-year: 40 (+6)**
- Third-year: 42 (+4)
- Fourth-year: 46 (+4)
- **Fifth-year and higher: 44 (+7)**

- International: 48 (+3)
- Domestic: 38 (+4)
- Disabled students: 43 (+3)
- Not disabled: 38 (+3)
- Women: 39 (+3)
- Men: 37 (+2)
- **Non-binary or another gender identity: 41 (+10)**
- Transgender: 41 (+5)
- Cisgender: 39 (+4)
- Black: 38 (+1)
- **First Nations, Métis, and/or Inuit: 42 (+10)**
- **Middle Eastern or North African: 44 (+10)**
- South Asian: 41 (+1)
- East Asian: 41 (+4)
- **Southeast Asian: 40 (+5)**
- White or Caucasian: 37 (+3)
- Hispanic or Latine: 39 (+2)

> Non-binary student campus involvement has increased since 2018.

> FNMI student campus involvement has increased since 2018.

"The UASU supports a diverse ecosystem of clubs and other student groups. BearsDen lists almost 400 of them. Have you been involved in student groups this semester?"

Legend: 2021, 2022, 2023

	2021	2022	2023
Yes, very involved	15%	14%	16%
Yes, a little involved	25%	27%	27%
No, but I would have been involved if I'd known about a group that interested me	19%	18%	15%
No, couldn't find the time	30%	30%	31%
No, not interested	12%	11%	11%

> Involvement in clubs has risen somewhat.

As a point of note, cisgender women were 3-4 percentage points less likely than other students to be very involved in clubs and other student groups. This is a contrast to 2022 (approximate parity) and 2021 (cisgender women being particularly likely to be involved).

Another point of interest that emerged was a consistent pattern of increased Indigenous student involvement in clubs and other student groups (almost doubling in two years), and a sharply reduced share of Indigenous students who would have been involved if they'd known about groups that interested them:
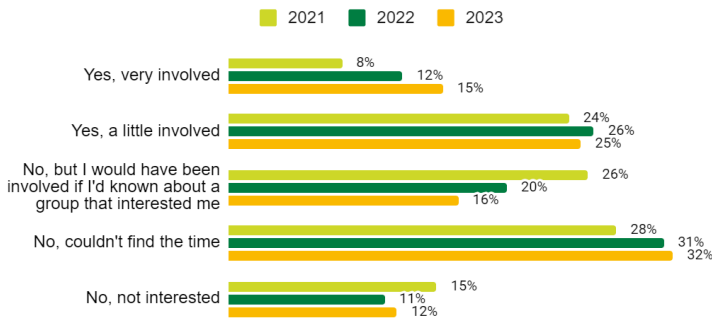
> FNMI students' rate of 'very involved' almost doubled in two years.

An even more drastic shift took place when focusing on students who self-identified as Middle Eastern or North African. The share of 'very involved' in student clubs/groups doubled, marginal involvement rose, and disinterest halved. This is certainly connected to the wave of student organizing and discourse around the Israel-Hamas war and the humanitarian crisis in Gaza during the weeks leading up to the survey.
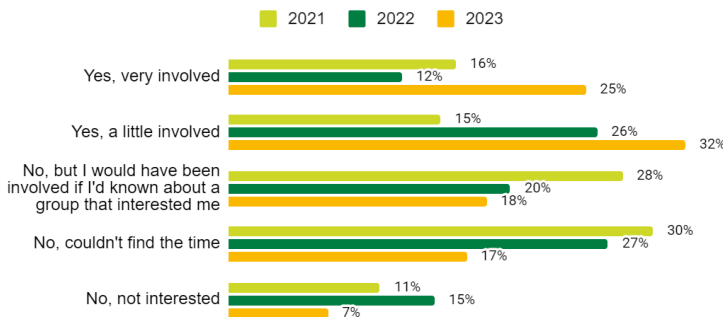

> MENA students' 'very involved' rate doubled, their 'a little involved' rate rose sharply again, and their disinterest rate halved.

Other racial/ethnic demographics did not see significant shifts of this kind.

Last year, a falloff among second- and third-year students provoked concern. In Fall 2023, the third-year rate partially rebounded. The second-year rate increased by 50%.

Rates of being 'very involved' in clubs and student groups by year of study
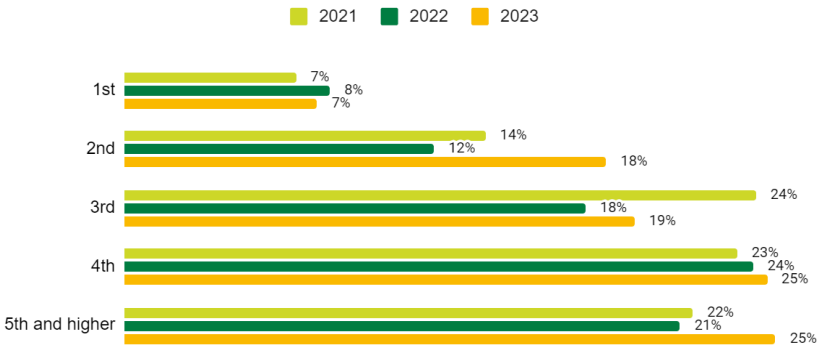
■ 2021 ■ 2022 ■ 2023

The share of disabled students who were very involved in clubs/groups also increased sharply this year.

■ 2021 ■ 2022 ■ 2023
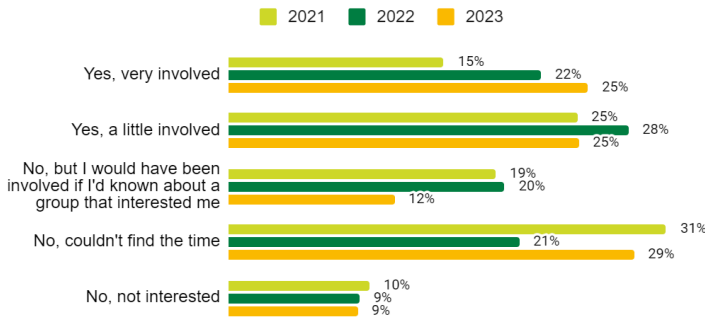
> Disabled students' club involvement increased on average.

Identity Matters 3 Questions
These questions were included in the Annual Survey for the Identity Matters 3 project. They were analyzed and compared to past years' data in Chapter Three of the report.
- "Are you interested in seeking any of these student leadership roles?"
- "If a student asked whether they should pursue the role(s) you held, what advice would you give them? (If you haven't held any of the roles listed above, just skip this question or write N/A.)"

- "What would be your main obstacles to pursuing student leadership roles? Choose all that apply."
- "Are there any experiences or opinions you'd like to share about deciding whether or not to pursue student leadership roles? If you're not interested, skip the question or just write N/A."
- "If you were going to pursue a student leadership role, what support(s) would be most useful to you? If you're not interested, skip the question or just write N/A."

Advocating for Student Needs

"During the past year, how easy or difficult has it been to balance work and school?"
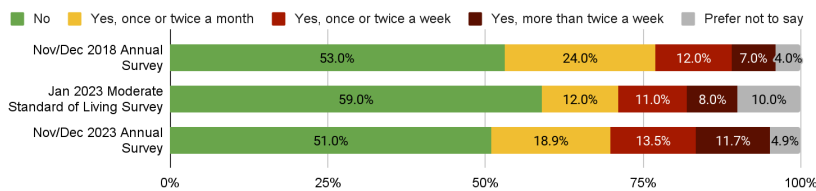Compared to the past two years, it appears that 2023 may actually have been an improvement, on average.

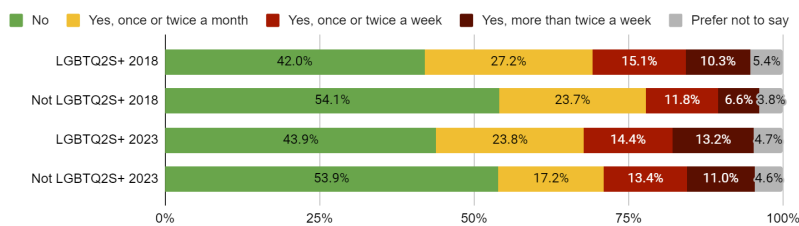> Somewhat reduced trouble balancing work and school. However, >50% still find it difficult.

	Very easy	Somewhat easy	Neither easy nor difficult	Somewhat difficult	Very difficult
2021	6.2%	15.4%	24.4%	37.2%	16.8%
2022	3.7%	12.5%	25.0%	40.0%	19.0%
2023	6.3%	18.6%	23.0%	37.1%	15.1%
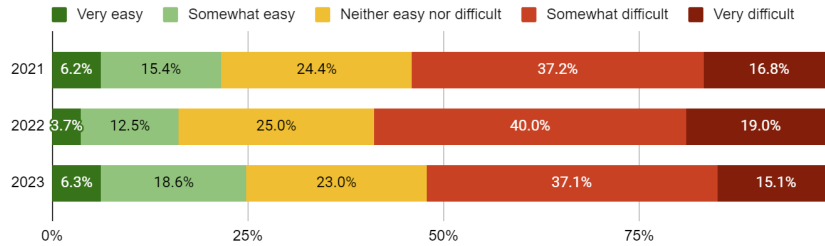
"Do you skip meals due to the cost of food? (Choose the closest answer.)"
Compared to the Moderate Standard of Living consultation survey almost a year earlier, not to mention the 2018 Annual Survey, student food insecurity appears to be increasing. This is consistent with increasing food insecurity in the 2022 Annual Survey, which used the Health Canada HFSSM module. Please see that survey for in-depth demographics.

> One out of four respondents skip meals at least once a week due to the cost of food, an increase from past surveys.

	No	Yes, once or twice a month	Yes, once or twice a week	Yes, more than twice a week	Prefer not to say
Nov/Dec 2018 Annual Survey	53.0%	24.0%	12.0%	7.0%	4.0%
Jan 2023 Moderate Standard of Living Survey	59.0%	12.0%	11.0%	8.0%	10.0%
Nov/Dec 2023 Annual Survey	51.0%	18.9%	13.5%	11.7%	4.9%

Compared to 2018, LGBTQ2S+ students' food insecurity went from bad to worse, and other students' food insecurity fell to where LGBTQ2S+ students' food insecurity had been five years earlier.

	No	Yes, once or twice a month	Yes, once or twice a week	Yes, more than twice a week	Prefer not to say
LGBTQ2S+ 2018	42.0%	27.2%	15.1%	10.3%	5.4%
Not LGBTQ2S+ 2018	54.1%	23.7%	11.8%	6.6%	3.8%
LGBTQ2S+ 2023	43.9%	23.8%	14.4%	13.2%	4.7%
Not LGBTQ2S+ 2023	53.9%	17.2%	13.4%	11.0%	4.6%

"Have you visited a food bank in the past year?"
This question repeated from 2022, and we were able to compare across several demographics. Most notably, food bank usage rose sharply among international students, Black students, and transgender students, reflecting escalating needs.

- All respondents: 7.3% yes (up from 6.5%, or an increase of +0.8 percentage points)
- International students: 26% (+6)
- Disabled students: 11% (-1)
- Black students: 15% (+7)
- Indigenous students: 10% (+1)
- Non-binary/another gender: 13% (+2)
- Transgender students: 14% (+5)

> Food bank usage in the past year rose from 6.5% to 7.3%.

> One out of four international respondents had visited a food bank in the past year, up from one out of five in 2022.

> Disabled students were slightly less likely to use a food bank this year.

> Black students were twice as likely to use a food bank this year.

> Transgender students were much more likely to use a food bank this year.

"What are your pronouns among trusted family/friends? Choose all that apply."

8-10% of all respondents used they/them or another pronoun other than (or in addition to) he or she.

> 8-10% use pronouns other than, or in addition to, he or she.

- He/him/il: 31.9%
- She/her/elle: 61.7%
- They/them/iel: 8.0%
- Prefer not to say: 3.7%
- Other (text responses, most of them substantive): 2.7%

Focusing on the students who took this question (which was near the end of the survey), and removing non-substantive responses and the 'prefer not to say' cohort, leaves us with 1,900 respondents. The combinations of the above options break down as follows, noting that there were many combinations and some aggregation of very small numbers is necessary:

- He/him/il only: 30.4%
- She/her/elle only: 59.3%
- They/them/iel only: 2.5%

- He/she: 0.6%
- He/they: 1.4%
- She/they: 3.9%
- He/she/they in varying order: 1.1%
- 'Any' or no preference: 0.3%
- They + another, they first: 0.3%
- Another combination and/or it and/or neopronouns: 0.2%

A few students noted using different pronouns in French and English.

Filtering these numbers through the transgender identity question, we can take a close look at which pronouns the 77 transgender respondents use with trusted family and friends:

- He/him/il only: 19.5%
- She/her/elle only: 6.5%
- They/them/iel only: 33.8%
- He/she/they: 9.1%
- He/they: 14.3%
- She/they: 5.2%
- 'Any' or no preference: 2.6%
- They + another, they first: 5.2%
- Another combination and/or it and/or neopronouns: 3.9%

Comparing these two sets, we see that efforts to ensure students are comfortable using their pronouns in our community theoretically benefit a total of 11.4% of respondents, equivalent to roughly 4,100 undergraduates.

> Ensuring students are comfortable using their pronouns can directly benefit 11% of respondents.

"How comfortable do you feel when using your pronouns on campus?"
In 2022, 56% of non-binary students and 66% of transgender students felt somewhat or very comfortable using their pronouns on campus. In 2023, those numbers were 57% and 63%, respectively.

> Non-binary and/or transgender students' comfort with using their pronouns on campus was stable from 2022.

Work-Integrated Learning Questions

These questions are being addressed separately, in the [2023 Work-Integrated Learning Checkpoint survey report](#):

> Work-integrated learning questions addressed in a separate report.

- "'Work-integrated learning' refers to opportunities like internships, co-ops, field experience, student teaching, or clinical placements. Can you tell us about your participation in work-integrated learning? (Choose all that apply.)"
- "By the University's standards, virtually all undergraduate programs now have work-integrated learning opportunities. Are you aware of work-integrated learning opportunities in your program?"
- "By the University's standards, virtually all undergraduate programs now have work-integrated learning (WIL) opportunities. Have you tried to access WIL opportunities in your program? (If you've tried on multiple occasions, choose all the outcomes that apply.)"

"Agree or disagree? 'In my faculty, we have good access to academic advisors.'"

Law, Native Studies, and (to a lesser extent) Augustana and CSJ wound up with the highest proportions of negative ratings. CSJ, KSR, Medicine and Dentistry, and ALES had the highest proportions of positive ratings.
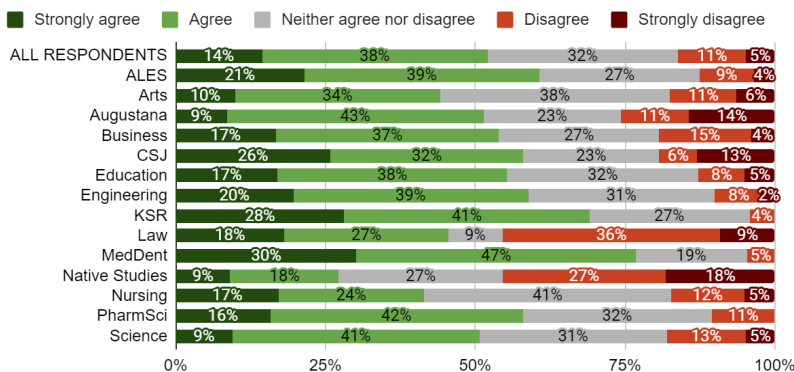
> Students largely agree they have good access to academic advisors, especially in KSR, MedDent, and ALES.
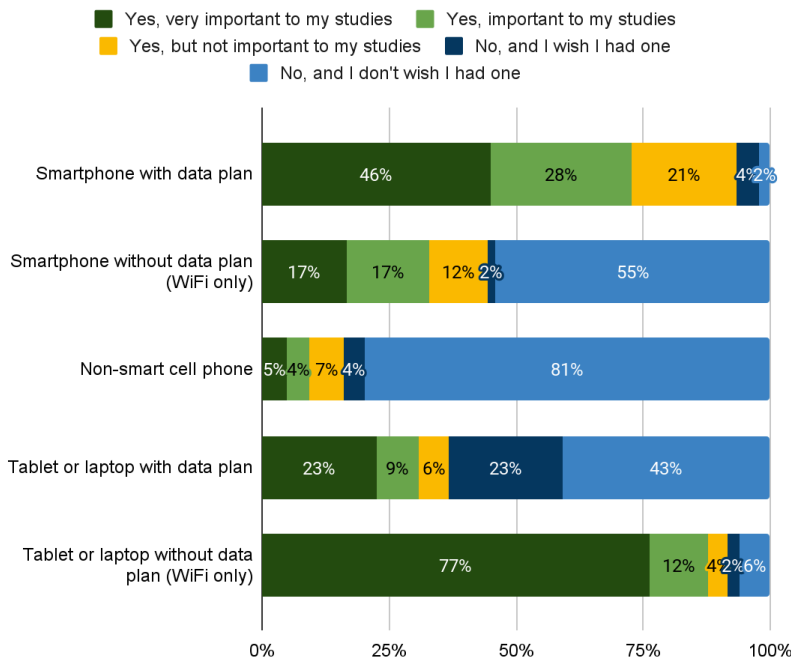
> Law, Native Studies, CSJ, and Augustana also had high rates of negative ratings.

"Around the city, some services are pivoting to virtual-only, and we're trying to understand how that might impact access for students. Do you own any of the following?"

- Smartphone with data plan: 95%
- Smartphone without data plan (WiFi only): 45%
- Non-smart cell phone: 16%
- Tablet or laptop with data plan: 38%
- Tablet or laptop without data plan (WiFi only): 93%

> 95% have a smartphone with a data plan.

> 38% have a tablet or laptop with a data plan.

Legend:
- ■ Yes, very important to my studies
- ■ Yes, important to my studies
- ■ Yes, but not important to my studies
- ■ No, and I wish I had one
- ■ No, and I don't wish I had one

	Yes, very important	Yes, important	Yes, but not important	No, and I wish I had one	No, and I don't wish I had one
Smartphone with data plan	46%	28%	21%	4%	2%
Smartphone without data plan (WiFi only)	17%	17%	12%	2%	55%
Non-smart cell phone	5%	4%	7%	4%	81%
Tablet or laptop with data plan	23%	9%	6%	23%	43%
Tablet or laptop without data plan (WiFi only)	77%	12%	4%	2%	6%

95% have at least one device with a data plan. There were some disparities:
- 97% of international students, compared to 94% of domestic students.
- 96% of white students, compared to 93% of all other students.
- 91% of First Nations, Métis, and/or Inuit students.
- 91% of Hispanic or Latine students.

> 1 out of 10 FNMI or Hispanic or Latine students does not have a device with a data plan.

These disparities could impact access to services, as well as opportunities like work-integrated learning.