

Increasing Student Diversity at U of T

Student Equity Census Recruiting Access

Presentation to the Academic Board
April 28, 2021



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An Overview of the U of T Student Equity Census

April 2021

Office of the Vice-Provost, Students



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Overview

- The U of T Student Equity Census was launched in November 2020
- This census asks all registered students to share demographic information on:
 - Gender Identity
 - Sexual Orientation
 - Disability
 - Indigenous Identity
 - Racial and/or Ethnocultural Identity
 - Educational Attainment of Parents or Guardians
- Primary purpose for this data is to advance equity across our student experience and to enable all to feel they belong and can thrive within U of T
- We expect this data to be a critical component of the University's overall efforts to provide access, recruit, and support students who have been historically underrepresented in post-secondary education

Launch & Communication

Appeal to students:

"Through participation in this census, you will be helping U of T better understand the diversity of our student population and develop programs and initiatives that support the success and inclusion of our students."

Census promoted widely via:

- Direct email
- U of T Bulletin
- Faculty/divisional newsletters and communication
- Social media, in-class slides, notifications on ACORN and Quercus

Current Update

- As of April 2021, approximately 10,000 responses have been received
 - About a 10% response rate, with a proportionate mix of undergraduate and graduate students
- Responses span all campuses and programs, with some divisions reporting higher response rates than others
- We have received feedback on both the questions and the process, which we will use to refine the census moving forward

U of T Student Equity Census Advisory Roundtable

- In January 2021 we convened an Advisory Roundtable, who's primary focus is to:
 - Review feedback on the census questions and process and recommending changes for future implementation
 - Developing a recommended framework and best practices on how the University will report, share and use this data
- Members include students, staff and faculty and the group is co-convened by 2 students, 1 faculty and 1 staff
- We welcome ongoing feedback through an online form

U of T Student Equity Census Advisory Roundtable

- The Advisory Roundtable has been meeting monthly, and discussions have focused on:
 - Clarifying the purpose and goals of this data collection to ensure the data is being used to benefit students
 - Data privacy, FIPPA and OHRC considerations
 - How and who might request this data, e.g., sample use-cases, and process for sharing the data
 - A framework for annual reporting and sharing
- Future meetings will involve a review of the feedback received thus far and changes to consider for the future
 - A final report and set of recommendations will be prepared by the end of the summer

Considerations for Fall 2021

- Embedding the census into ACORN
- Making the census automated, and not optional, as it currently is, with a “prefer not to answer” option available on each question
- Establishing a defined processes for reporting on data and reviewing and approving data requests
- Developing resources needed to adequately support this initiative moving forward (staff, software, etc.)

Innovative Approaches to Recruiting Diverse Students

Academic Board Meeting

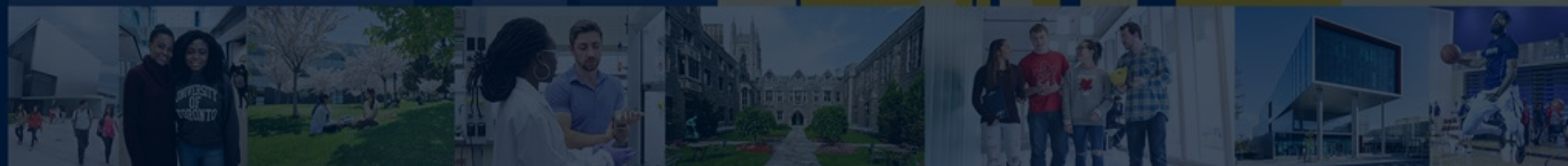
April 28th, 2021

Lydia Gill

Office of Student Recruitment – Enrolment Services



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Community Engagement

- Prioritizing schools with higher populations of BIPOC students
- On campus engagement
- Community Advisory Board
- PURSUE STEM
 - Tri-Partnership – Faculty of Arts & Science – Dept of Physics (Outreach), Leadership By Design & Office of Student Recruitment

Foundational Materials

- Central Landing Page – Dedicated to Equity Deserving Communities
- Promotional Video – Highlighting the stories of Black & Indigenous students
 - [Gold CASE Award 2019](#)
- Within Reach: How to Finance Your U of T Education
 - [Silver CASE Award 2020](#)

Pivot to Digital Recruitment

- Intentionally creating virtual spaces for Black & Indigenous students
- Digital Marketing Campaign
 - Geofencing
- Pilot: Black Student Drip Email Campaign
 - Higher engagement rates than traditional senior drip email campaign
- U of T Talks – EDI Launch Stream
 - TED Style Talks delivered by U of T faculty to High School students

Looking Forward: 2021 -2022

- Launch of the Tri-Campus Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Recruitment & Admissions Committee (EDIRAC)
 - Includes the Directors of Recruitment & Admissions – all 7 undergraduate divisions
 - Executive Director, EDI and Director, First Nations House
 - Equitable Admission Pathway
 - Demographic Data Collection – JOIN U of T Portal
 - Coordination of Tri-Campus activities
- Tri-Campus Virtual Hub: Future Black and Indigenous Students
- Provincial Equity & Outreach Recruitment Committee
 - 11 Member Institutions

Vision for Access

Students from communities that are underrepresented in Post Secondary Education see and experience the University of Toronto as a place where they can thrive.



U of T's Access Goals

- Support the development of knowledge and skills through our various outreach and service-learning programs
- Create experiences so students can see themselves belonging at U of T
- Provide intentional pathways for students to enter U of T
- Provide supports for students at U of T to ensure their success

Overview of Goals

In addition to U of T's [Vision for Access](#), this presentation is also anchored with these goals in mind:

- **Support** the University's Priorities on Access
- **Build** on the work that has been done by many faculty, staff, & students on Access at U of T over the years
- **Examine** “pipeline” programs/facilitated entry programs
- **Develop** a way for programs across the tri-campus to connect better
- **Share** learnings
- **Create** a sustainable framework

What has been achieved towards realizing these goals?

- Continuing work towards a shared understanding of Access
 - [Access on a Continuum](#)
- Undergird and ground theorizing and practice of Access in critical notions of equity – that is a decolonial, anti-oppressive lens
- Update the inventory – over 100 Access and Outreach Programs – this inventory has been further disaggregated by Nancy Bakker

- Access Connections Day
- Access Programming University Funds (APUF)
- Development of new programs & supported by APUF
- Development of Access Institutional Support Office in Vice –Provost’s portfolio

- New & Supported Programs funded by APUF
 - Support, Engage, Experience – University of Toronto (SEE U of T)
 - VILLAGE: Valuing Indigenous Learning, Leadership & Academic Growth in Education
 - Academic Bridging Program – Science Option
 - Dalla Lana School of Public Health Outreach and Access Program
 - Transitional Year Programme – University of Toronto Scarborough
 - Discovery, IBBME
 - Expanding Access Initiatives in the Faculty of Medicine
 - Enhancing Post-Secondary Access for Black, Indigenous and other marginalized youth through Embodied, Cultural and Community Learning
 - Online Tutors During COVID-19: Pilot Project, LHAE-OISE
 - Imani Academic Mentorship Program
 - Law in Action Within Schools (LAWS)

Looking Forward

- Setting up the Access Institutional Office and getting it up and running
- Conducting research to see impact of Access programs, what needs to change, where resources should be focused
- Building more connections with community and schools

Student Sharing and Learning

Tenzin Choetso

First year student - Faculty of Kinesiology &
Physical Education

SEE U of T participant - 2019

Thank you!

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