Igniting Purpose: Student Experience Action Plan

Fall Sharebacks

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UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

Territorial Acknowledgements

Where we come from
The University of Alberta, its buildings, labs, and research stations are primarily located on the traditional territory of Cree, Blackfoot, Métis, Nakota Sioux, Iroquois, Dene, and Ojibway/Saulteaux/Anishinaabe nations; lands that are now known as part of Treaties 6, 7, and 8 and homeland of the Métis.

We gratefully acknowledge the First Peoples of Canada who have stewarded these lands on which we work, learn, play, and love since time immemorial, and affirm our ongoing commitment to moving forward in ways that honor reconciliation and decolonizing our actions, norms and spaces.

Today's Plan

1. 2024 survey overview
2. What we learned: survey results
3. Shared accountability
4. Questions and wrap-up

Accessing the Survey Reports:
Google Drive

2024 Student Experience Survey Overview

Survey Goals

- **ENGAGEMENT**: Gather student perspectives and feedback on areas that are critical to positive student experiences (as summarized in the SEAP)

- **SET PERFORMANCE TARGETS**: Establish baseline data for the key performance indicators within the SEAP and corresponding targets

- **DATA INFORMED ECOSYSTEM**: Collect data to share widely among the U of A community to inform student-related strategy and planning

Survey Overview

- Conducted between between March 19 and April 19, 2024
- Survey invitations were distributed by email to a sample of 29,500 randomly selected students with oversampling from Campus Saint-Jean, the Faculty of Native Studies and Indigenous students.
- Additionally, links to the survey were shared with all students via posters and eClass.
- **The participants are closely aligned with the 2023-24 Enrolment Report and the 2021-22 EDI Student Census Report**
- 7,176 students responded to the survey with 6,288 eligible responses

★ **The overall response rate is 21% of the sample and 14.1% of total enrolment (44,738)**

What We Learned

Thematic Areas of Focus

1. Creating safe, accessible and connected campuses

2. Demonstrating transparency and affordability

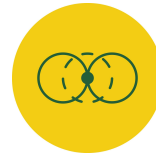3. Enabling academic agency and flexibility

4. Fostering a student-centered learning environment
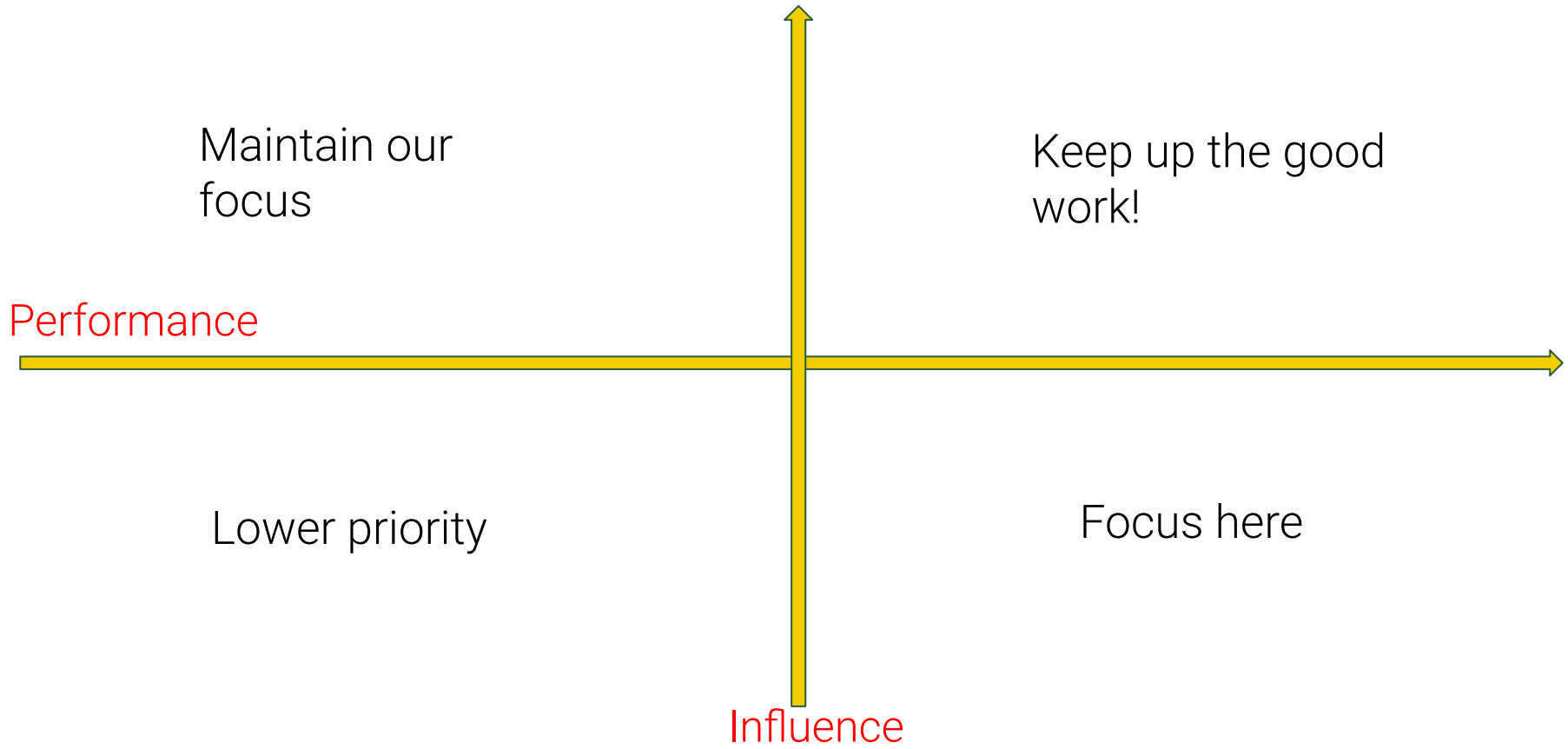
5. Prioritizing student success

6. Relationships, connection and belonging matter

7. Supporting transitions into and out of study

Survey Highlights: Key Drivers

Maintain our focus

Keep up the good work!

Performance

Lower priority

Focus here

Influence

U OF A STUDENTS: KEY DRIVER ANALYSIS

Maintain focus:
1. Security (49%)

Keep up the good work:
1. Safety (59%)

Performance

Lower priority:
1. Advising
2. Program of study
3. Transparency & affordability
4. Relationships, connection & belonging
5. Career support from Career Centre
6. Experiential learning
7. Academic supports

Focus here:
1. Student-centred
2. Academic agency and flexibility
3. Cleanliness
4. Career support from faculty
5. Safety in self-expression

Importance

Reminder: students' indication of performance and importance is relative to their overall net promotor score.

What's Important to Our Students

Top Drivers of Student Experiences: All respondents/undergrad/domestic

1. Safety
2. Student Centred Learning Environment: Navigability and Technology
3. Academic agency and flexibility
4. Cleanliness and maintenance of spaces
5. Career related support
6. Safety: self-expression

Key Drivers By Student Type

Indigenous:	International:	Graduate:
1. Safety 2. Academic support 3. Navigability of platforms	1. Navigability of platforms 2. Career support 3. Safety	1. Career support 2. Academic advising 3. Navigability of platforms

1.
Creating Safe, Accessible & Connected Campuses

"I really like going to the Sperber library because it has different zones for speaking volumes and is clean. It also is new and modern so it feels fun to be in. The plant wall and beanbags are nice to have! Makes me feel more positive."

"More private studying areas and possibly a private sleep lounge for students with long commutes or long days."

"I would choose to add a HUGE amount of single-occupant, noise-dampened, closed booths with filtered air exchange so students can safely study in private, focus on and participate in online courses."

2024 Student Experience Survey Baseline Data

Overall feelings of safety and security at the U of A

5707 Responses

Item	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Prefer Not To Answer
I feel safe (emotionally, culturally, psychologically) at the U of A	3%	7%	31%	58%	1%
I feel secure (free from physical danger or threat) when I am on campus	4%	12%	34%	49%	2%

Safety: By Student Type

Students responded to "I feel safe (emotionally, culturally, psychologically) at the U of A" as follows:

- **All respondents/undergrad/First Gen:** 58% agree/31% somewhat agree
- **International**: 57% agree/32% somewhat agree
- **Indigenous**: 55% agree/29% somewhat agree
- **Graduate**: 61% agree/26% somewhat agree

Self-Expression

Safety in self-expression:

I feel safe expressing following aspects of myself on campus

5707 Responses

Item	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Prefer Not To Answer
Disability	2%	6%	18%	51%	23%
Gender	2%	4%	15%	74%	5%
Immigration background	2%	4%	16%	61%	18%
Mental health	4%	11%	29%	50%	6%
Neurodivergence	4%	9%	23%	47%	18%
Political beliefs	11%	15%	26%	39%	9%
Religious beliefs	7%	11%	24%	46%	12%
Sexual orientation	2%	5%	20%	64%	9%
Socio-economic status	4%	10%	27%	51%	8%

Cleanliness

The following areas of campus are clean and well-maintained

624 Responses

Item	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Have Not Accessed This Area
Classrooms/lecture theatres	2%	6%	26%	62%	4%
Common spaces (e.g., CAB, SUB)	3%	12%	32%	47%	5%
Labs	1%	3%	14%	61%	20%
Libraries	2%	5%	19%	65%	8%
Multi-purpose spaces (e.g., prayer spaces, meditation spaces, lactation spaces)	1%	1%	12%	39%	47%
Outdoor spaces	1%	7%	28%	59%	6%
Physical fitness and recreational facilities	2%	4%	16%	53%	25%

2.
Fostering a Student Centered Learning Environment

"There are a lot of facilities and opportunities on campus for students, but I wish there was a more comprehensive organization system in terms of how different faculties convey information and resources to students."

"It's been hard trying to find certain information, especially on the university's website or on specific websites like the career center. I'm not sure what I'm looking at most of the time, mostly because I don't know how to navigate the websites."

"In essence, my University of Alberta experience has been profoundly positive, providing me with the tools and insights necessary for personal and intellectual growth, and instilling in me a deep-seated desire to effect positive change in the world."

Student Centred Learning Environment: All Respondents

Navigating U of A information technology (IT) platforms:

It is easy to find information I need on the following U of A platforms

5151 Responses

Response	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Prefer Not To Answer
Beartracks	7%	14%	38%	41%	1%
E-class	3%	6%	32%	57%	1%
Student Service Centre	9%	22%	35%	21%	12%
U of A website	16%	25%	34%	21%	3%

Navigability of Platforms: International Students

Navigating U of A information technology (IT) platforms:

It is easy to find information I need on the following U of A platforms

759 Responses

Response	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Prefer Not To Answer
Beartracks	5%	10%	32%	52%	1%
E-class	2%	6%	24%	67%	1%
Student Service Centre	5%	19%	38%	33%	5%
U of A website	9%	18%	34%	37%	2%

3.
Enabling Academic Agency & Flexibility

"I just need people to be more consistent in the information they are providing. The website says I cannot take more than 1 course outside my current department, my supervisor says that is a flexible rule, and one of my friends who met with academic advising says that she was told it was a hard rule."

"There is no guide to what courses are most applicable to grad school as well as easy access to info of potential careers and instead focuses on knowledge that is only useful in research. There is also a lack of internships regarding my field leading to a lack of experiment and knowledge of what the field actually is."

"Options to diversify my degree or follow a path that was different from the majority within my degree was very limited. Research opportunities in undergrad were hard to come by."

2024 Student Experience Survey: Baseline Data

Communication of Degree Requirements & Advising:

- 55% of students agreed or somewhat agreed that the requirements for completion of their current program of study had been communicated to them.
- 58% of students have tried to access academic advising within their Faculty
- 50% of students agreed that is was easy to access academic advising within their Faculty
- 48% of students agreed that they were able to access advising within a timely manner
- 75% of students agreed they were treated with respect by academic advising staff
- 25% of students agreed that they can build a course schedule optimized for their learning preference and life

4.
Supporting Transitions Into and Out of Study
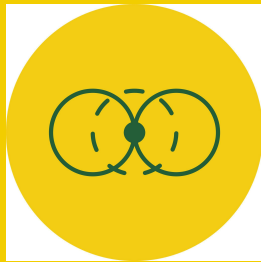
"[I appreciate] the vast amounts of research opportunities offered at the university"

"A lot of supports and events are catered to domestic students and not international students including practicums and integrated learning. Having to constantly explain my situation, what is allowed or what is not gets exhausting."

"Accessing information about furthering my education and career [has been challenging]. Information is often hard to find with little to no supports to help me achieve my goals. Specifically with applying to a masters program."

2024 Student Experience Survey: Baseline Data

What percentage of students are aware of career services within their Faculty?

- 32%*

How many students agreed that information about career services within their Faculty had been clearly communicated to them?

- 26%*

What percentage of students have tried to access career services within their Faculty and the Career Centre?

- 19% Faculty, 14% Career Centre

5.
Prioritizing Student Success

"The pressures of academic performance, social expectations, and transitioning to university life can take a toll on students' mental health. Coping with anxiety, depression, loneliness, or other mental health challenges may be a significant obstacle for some students."

"Many of my instructors have been very dedicated, professional, and knowledgeable. My advisor has mentored me well, which has been very helpful, since I'm a first-generation university student. I have received many opportunities to explore my professional interests. Scholarships have been integral to my success in my program."

"Although we have a very positive social environment, I have had a hard time connecting with other students in my department due to language barriers and mental health challenges."

Awareness: All respondents

Awareness of health and wellness-centred support services:

Information about available health and wellness-centred support services has been clearly communicated to me

5106 Responses

Field	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Prefer not to answer
Percentage	9%	20%	42%	26%	3%

Awareness: Comparison

Information of health and wellness-centred support services has been clearly communicated to me:

- **All respondents/Undergrad**: Agree/Somewhat agree: 26%/42%
- **International**: Agree/Somewhat agree: 34%/43%
- **Indigenous/Graduate**: Agree/Somewhat agree: 27%/44%
- **First Generation**: Agree/Somewhat agree: 35%/38%

Access: All respondents

Respondent has accessed a health and wellness-centred support service available to U of A students during current program of study

5111 Responses

Response	Percentage
No	63%
Yes	35%
Prefer not to answer	2%

Access: Comparison

Respondent has accessed a health and wellness-centred support service available to U of A students during program of study:
- **All respondents**: 35%
- **International**: 57%
- **Indigenous:** 37%
- **Graduate**: 45%
- **First Generation**: 38%
- **Undergraduate**: 33%

6.
Relationships, Connection and Belonging Matter
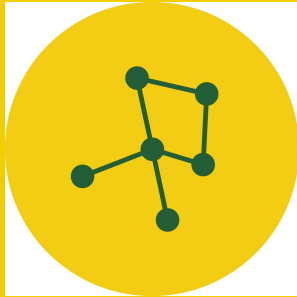
"The campus is quite inclusive and environment is good for education and extracurricular activities."

"Everyone always seems so busy, when asking for help it always feels impersonal and rushed along. Often you are told to go somewhere else, then when you get there you're told to go to another place. It makes me wonder if there is adequate staffing for the amount of students if the staff feels like they are always short on time."

"Wonderful professors and thesis supervisors. They have all been knowledgeable, have good communication, are flexible, and supportive. Option to complete program online and virtually has been extremely beneficial."

2024 Student Experience Survey: Baseline Data

Connection with other U of A students

5095 Responses

Item	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Prefer Not To Answer
I feel connected with other U of A students within my program of study	13%	17%	32%	37%	1%
I feel connected with other U of A students outside of my program of study	27%	26%	26%	19%	2%

2024 Student Experience Survey: Baseline Data

Participation in student activities:

I have participated in student groups, clubs, athletics, or extracurriculars

5089 Responses

Field	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree
Percentage	31%	12%	25%	31%

Shared Accountability

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Key Takeaways

- Enhancing our students' experiences is a mutual endeavour where we all share accountability
- We have an opportunity to improve equity and consistency in student experiences
- We must prioritize our actions to maximize impact
- Reflect on the data and consider our students' expectations and perceptions
- Reporting on Igniting Purpose will commence in the fall

Questions?

Contact us: sarah.wolgemuth@ualberta.ca or seap@ualberta.ca

Visit our website and read the full plan: www.uab.ca/seap