

# **A Report from the Committee on Aboriginal and Black/African Canadian Student Access and Retention: A Focus on Financial support**

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October 1, 2015

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## Executive Summary

This Committee report provides 23 recommendations to support Aboriginal and Black/African Canadian student access and retention. The recommendations are based on an extensive survey of 124 self-identified Aboriginal students and 184 self-identified Black/African Canadian students out of a population of about 350-400 self-identified students in each student population. Research assistants conducted focus groups for each population and carefully examined the relevant literature. An analysis of the scholarship and bursary support provided by Dalhousie since 2000 was conducted using data provided by the Registrar. An examination of recommendations included in two prior Dalhousie reports – *Breaking Barriers: Report on the Task Force on Access for Black and Native People* (Sept. 1989) and *Promoting Success for Aboriginal students: An inventory of programs and services at Dalhousie and a review of Best practices* (Feb. 2011) – was undertaken to highlight the need for immediate action. Consultations with access providers and retention facilitators who serve these student populations were quite informative. All of this background information and additional extensive research conducted by the Committee informed each of our recommendations.

Dalhousie University has experienced a significant increase (~300%) in the number of self-identified Aboriginal students (98 registered and self-identified in 2008-9 to 344 in 2012-13) and Black/African Canadian students (131 registered and self-identified in 2008-09 to 387 in 2011-12). And yet, participation in post-secondary studies at Dalhousie by students in these two populations remains significantly below their representation in Canada. Whereas 4-5% of Canadians are Aboriginal and another 4-5% are Black/African Canadian, only 2% of Dalhousie's 18,000 graduate and undergraduate students are from one or other of these populations.

Based on the committee's activities, it is clear that the current approach at Dalhousie, which often lumps these two communities together in terms of student support services and scholarships, should be replaced with programing and policies that consider the large variation both between, and within, these two diverse cultural groups. With the exception of the TYP and IB&M programs, it is recommended that the proposed scholarships and other support described herein be administered separately for each population. In addition, any unused funding originally allocated for the benefit of these populations should be protected and redistributed . Beyond the IB&M & TYP, there is the continued necessity for Dalhousie programs and initiatives to specifically target the Mi'kmaq nation and the historical African Nova Scotia community, highlighting the unique historical disadvantage that they face within Atlantic Canada. Programs/initiatives of this nature are, of course, side-by- side with the much needed --and very long overdue -- programs and initiatives for the broader Aboriginal and Black/African Canadian communities.

Consistent with the aforementioned division, it is also suggested that the current First Nations and Indigenous Black (FNIB) entrance scholarships **be split into two separate scholarships: 1) Mi'kmaq/Maliseet entrance scholarship and, 2) Historical African Nova Scotian entrance scholarship.** It is also recommended that the value increase to \$5000 per annum, and that the number of scholarships be increased to 10 for each population. Importantly, **any unused funds within the allocation envelope should be redistributed to support students with demonstrated financial need or first in family, supplement the value of the scholarship, or increase the number of scholarships in subsequent years.**

Our survey data shows that the present suite of scholarships does not support more than 50% of Aboriginal and Black/African Canadian students. In recognition of this fact, we recommend that Dalhousie create two new renewable undergraduate entrance scholarships for which all Aboriginal and Black/African Canadian students are eligible, named: 1) Aboriginal undergraduate entrance scholarships and 2) Black/African Canadian undergraduate entrance scholarships. Indeed, the student surveys revealed a diversity of cultural backgrounds within Aboriginal (e.g., non-status First Nations, Metis, Inuit) and Black/African Canadian students (those from outside of NS and from African or Caribbean backgrounds), who are also not being served by the present support systems.

In the selection of recipients, we suggest that adjudicators consider several factors, including whether the applicant is from a rural or urban area, on or off reserve, in Mi'kmaq/Maliseet territory, has financial need, is the first in their family to pursue post-secondary studies, resides in NS, has a disability, self-identifies as LGBTQ, etc. A working group should be struck to establish the specific terms of reference. It is also strongly recommended that all renewable entrance scholarships be coupled with additional support (of both a monetary and non-monetary nature) for the significant subset (~50%) of students who are the first person in their family to attend university and who demonstrates financial need.

To encourage Aboriginal and African Canadian students to pursue graduate studies, faculties should each establish two graduate scholarships, one for each of these populations. We also suggest increased funding and scholarships opportunities for students entering professional programs where there are existing gaps, such as in Pharmacy, Dentistry, Medicine and other Health Professions. Individual departments and units should be encouraged to follow a model initiated by the Department of English (Appendix A) to use small payroll deductions to create bursaries for these populations.

Aboriginal students would benefit from being served by a centre similar to the Black Student Advising Centre, with an Aboriginal student advisor position and associated funding being established. Additionally, two new positions – **Co-ordinator for Aboriginal student Access and Co-ordinator for Black/African Canadian student Access** – with responsibilities in the Registrar's Office and the respective student advising centres, should be established to support enhanced enrollment and the connection with prospective students from these groups. Further, Dalhousie should support access providers for these populations by working with and co-funding key personnel in organizations (e.g. Mi'kmaq Kina'matnewey (MK), Aboriginal support workers in schools off-reserve, Imhotep's Legacy Academy) that have been effective in serving these populations. To enhance access for youth from these groups, we strongly and urgently recommend that **Promise scholarships** be established in collaboration with access providers. The overarching goal of these recommendations is to increase the pool of students in these populations to 8% of the Dalhousie student body.

Furthermore, programs such as the recently launched Aboriginal studies minor and the proposed African Canadian studies minor need to be properly supported (in terms of financial and human resources) to help make Dalhousie a destination for students who are members of these populations (and thereby enhance enrollment in Faculties facing recent declines). Strategic hires under the Dalhousie Diversity Faculty Award program to support these program would support this recommendation.

To effectively co-ordinate these efforts, the president is asked to support the creation of an Associate/Assistant VP for each of these populations. The individuals should have budgetary control over resources destined for these populations, and report on an annual basis to relevant stakeholders. The individuals would ensure that in the realm of Teaching, Research and Administration, adequate attention is paid to the full participation of these communities as they would engage in regular dialogue with senior administrators/units, including (but not limited to),

- a. the VP- Advancement and Board of Governors, to raise financial support in aid of realizing the various recommendations related to these populations;
- b. the VP-Research, to encourage the growth of research on these populations, which informs best practices;
- c. the VP-Academic and Senate, to provide mechanisms which encourage incorporation of the experiences of these groups into courses and curricula of the academy, in aid of increased retention and (likely) recruitment.
- d. the Registrar, to enhance recruitment of these subpopulations in consultation with access providers who already have programs serving these communities.

Undertaking all these steps will ensure Dalhousie is viewed as a welcoming and supportive place for Aboriginal and Black/African Canadian students. **These recommendations are highly integrated and, as such, must be viewed as a whole rather individually. Ignoring any one of the recommendations would interfere with the desired effect of enhancing access and retention of these populations.** Together the recommendations form a bridge that collapses when any one of the supports is neglected financially or administratively, or is removed.

Many of the recommendations in this report require changes in policy that can be undertaken immediately at little or no financial cost. Important financial investments, however, are also required. An additional investment of 3% per annum (\$250,000) of the Student Assistance Program for each student population is required to match the approach taken in countries around the world with respect to apportioning funds for underrepresented populations (the double rule). The funds allocated to each student population must be protected, apportioned equally into separate accounts and reallocated (as necessary) within the respective accounts to support the relevant population, rather than being reallocated into the general pool for all students. This means that an immediate investment of \$500,000 is required, as well as an ongoing annual investment of \$600,000 for each population (\$1.2M for both) in order to realize the recommendations concerning scholarships and bursaries. Faculties should commit to investing in graduate scholarships for each of these groups as well using a portion of their FGS allocation; and departments should consider creating bursaries via the Department of English model. Through the VP – Student Services office, an additional investment of at least \$200,000 per annum for key personnel is required to provide the human resources needed to effectively support the financial resources dedicated to these populations. This funding would support establishment of the Aboriginal Student Advising Centre (\$40K), Aboriginal student advisor (\$60K), Co-ordinator for Black/African Canadian student access (\$40K), Co-ordinator for Aboriginal Student access (\$40K) and co-funded Access provider personnel (\$50K each). Finally, direction from the President’s office is needed to create the Associate/Assistant VPs (VP-\$100K) portfolios needed to ensure ongoing emphasis on these issues.

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## BACKGROUND

The current report presents recommendations aimed at improving Access and Retention of Aboriginal and Black/African Canadian Students at Dalhousie University through improved financial support. These groups have faced different histories of oppression and are exposed to unique contemporary factors that influence whether they will attend and complete post-secondary education (PSE). Despite their differences, Aboriginal and Black/African Canadian youth are less likely to graduate high school, less likely to attend University, and are more likely to drop out once registered both within Nova Scotia and across Canada (Statistics Canada, 2011). Likewise, in the United States (US), African Americans (50%) and American Indians (51%) had the lowest high school graduation rates, and American Indians earned bachelor's degrees at a lower rate than any other group (Tierney, Venegas, & Sallee, 2007).

Compounding the cumulative effects of historical trauma and contemporary barriers in contributing to the current educational disparities (Bougie & Senecal, 2010), mainstream educational institutions continue to use approaches to improve student access and retention that often do not effectively serve the groups who are in particular need of outreach and support (Fryberg et al., 2013; Guillory & Wolverton, 2008). Although significant individual variability exists between and within these groups, a large proportion of youth from these groups face significant barriers that impede access to PSE. For example, the lack of quality and culturally-safe education faced by members of cultural minority groups throughout primary and secondary school often put them at a disadvantage (Fryberg et al., 2013). Indeed, low high school grades and inadequate preparation are among the top barriers in accessing higher education. Improvements in these areas are directly linked to improved retention and success (Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada [AUCC], 2011).

Family circumstances are also among the top factors contributing to the decision to attend university, with household income and parental education being particularly influential (AUCC, 2011). Intergenerational cycles of low educational achievement are key drivers of group-based disparities, where parental adversities that prevent opportunities for higher education influence children's exposure to educational barriers through continued social disadvantages (Thoits, 2010; Wheaton & Clarke, 2003). For example, Aboriginal children living off-reserve whose parents attended Indian Residential School are more likely to grow up in larger households, in households with lower incomes, and in households that experienced food insecurity (Bougie & Senecal, 2010). In turn, the lower income among Residential School parents, which may stem from deficiencies in functioning and lower educational achievement due to their time in Residential School, partially account for the reduced school success of their children (Bougie & Senecal, 2010). The same intergenerational cycles of low socioeconomic status and limited opportunities exist and contribute to continuing disparities among African Canadians (Skuterud, 2010).

Decreasing group-based disparities in PSE attainment has significant benefits for both individuals and for society at large. Predictively, strong correlations exist between higher education, employment opportunities, job stability, earning potential, (Berger et al., 2009; Boothby & Drewes, 2006; Drolet, 2005; Ferrer & Riddell, 2002; Mudge & Higgins, 2011). Decreased jobs in the manufacturing industry and job creation in professional and managerial occupations (Statistics Canada, 2011), which demand higher educational qualifications (Bouchard & Zhao, 2000; Drewes, 2010), mean that Canada's economic

prosperity and quality of life for all are directly dependent on an increased number of individuals having access to PSE (Berger et al., 2009; Boothby & Drewes, 2006; Drewes, 2010; Drolet, 2005; Emery, 2005; Rae, 2005). Indeed, the relatively low levels of educational attainment can explain a significant portion of labour market gaps between cultural groups in Canada, suggesting that *there could be large economic gains from further investments in reducing educational disparities and improving access to PSE*. Given the very high potential benefits of improving Aboriginal and Black/African Canadian educational outcomes, in addition to the social and moral imperatives, further investments in providing opportunities for education are urgent and warranted (Calver, 2015). This is especially the case given the particularly high rates of population growth among Aboriginal and Black/African Canadian peoples in Canada, both of whom are also much younger compared to the mainstream population (Statistics Canada, 2011).

Despite consistent evidence that investments in education are a foundational component needed for improving the well-being of historically disadvantaged groups and the creation of a more equitable, financially stable, and sustainable country, educational inequalities persist. In Nova Scotia and the rest of Canada, various barriers contribute to continuing disparities in the number of Aboriginal and Black/African Canadian students that register and complete University degrees. Unfortunately, as presented in this report, this is also the case at Dalhousie University. These barriers relate to historical trauma faced by these groups, as well as to the contemporary consequences of these experiences, such as familial financial barriers, geographical distances to cultural communities, and the large proportion of students who are the first in family to attend PSE (which brings additional challenges). Our recommendations support those outlined in the recent Dalhousie “Belong” report, which underlined the need to consider the larger context in Canada and in Nova Scotia related to diversity and discrimination, including:

*“the death of Rehtaeh Parsons, the murder of Loretta Saunders, the rape chant at Saint Mary’s University, and the Facebook posts of some men in the fourth year of the Dentistry program at Dalhousie – have become part of an ongoing national conversation on sexual violence and violence against women. The stabbing attack on Scott Jones, the cross burning in Newport, and the province’s response to former residents of the Nova Scotia home for Coloured Children have prompted public discussions about homophobia and racism in Nova Scotia. The Hyde fatality inquiry has focused attention on challenges in dealing with mental health issues in the justice system. Our local context is supplemented by additional national and international engagement on these issues, sparked by sexual assault allegations against celebrities like Jian Ghomeshi and mounting pressure for a national inquiry into murdered and missing Aboriginal women.” (7-8)*

In order to explore how we might better support Aboriginal and Black/African Canadian students at Dalhousie, our committee carried out the activities listed below, which are presented in the remainder of the report. Based on our research and discussions, we have made a number of recommendations aimed at improving access and retention of students from these two minority groups. Of particular note, is that special recognition is given to the Mi’kmaq First Nations, as Dalhousie is located on their traditional territory, and they have faced various forms of oppression in this region since colonization. Likewise, the historical African Nova Scotian community, who have also faced continued marginalization and exclusion in the province, is also deserving of their own unique support strategies. In addition to the

specialized support for Mi'kmaq and African Nova Scotian's from the region, it is also recommended that students from other Aboriginal groups (i.e., other First Nations, non-status First Nations, Metis, Inuit) and from different African and/or Caribbean backgrounds from across Canada also receive targeted support, as these educational disparities are not limited to Nova Scotia or the Atlantic region.

In efforts to reduce health disparities, health research funding for Indigenous peoples in Australia and New Zealand is approximately equal to double the proportion of their population in each country (National Health and Medical Research Council). Likewise, in order to reduce educational disparities, additional resources are needed to provide support for students who are members of historically marginalized and disadvantaged groups. The working-age Aboriginal population with a university degree is 10%, less than half the proportion of the non-Aboriginal population (26%; AADNC, 2013). The proportion with a university degree are particularly low among Status Indians (8%) and among those living on-reserve (5%; AADNC, 2013). Likewise, the African Nova Scotian population have university graduation rates (18%) significantly below that of the mainstream.

Dalhousie has seen huge gains (~300%) in the number of self-identified African/Black Canadians (131 to 387 registered and self-identified in 2008-09 and 2011-12, respectively) and Aboriginal students (98 to 344 registered and self-identified in 2008-9 and 2012-13, respectively) since 2008-09. This growth is likely a combination of an actual increase in the numbers of students and increased motivation to self-identify. Of the 18,000 Dalhousie students, the proportion of each group sits at about 2%. Each of these groups represents about 4% of the Canadian population. Consistent with the approach taken by Australia and New Zealand with respect to funding for their underrepresented populations, *we recommend that Dalhousie grow targeted scholarship/bursary support to at least 16% of the total Student Assistance administered by AVP Enrolment (8% for each group). Currently, targeted funding for both these populations amounts to 10% of total student assistance (Figure 1), including all sources (Figure 2). Consequently, an increase of 6%, equivalent to about \$500,000, should be added to the existing support.* This additional investment should be distributed as described below in our series of recommendations for scholarship/bursary support.

Attainment of a funding level at 16% of overall student assistance (8% for each group) would enhance the chances of achieving a critical mass of Black/African Canadian and Aboriginal students for self-sustainability wherein Dalhousie students from these populations would themselves be agents for increased access, retention and success. It would also recognize the historical disadvantage faced by these groups (as outlined below), and provide a proportion consistent with that used by other countries which have addressed similar issues. It is the right time to give added momentum to efforts already underway in order to achieve this goal.

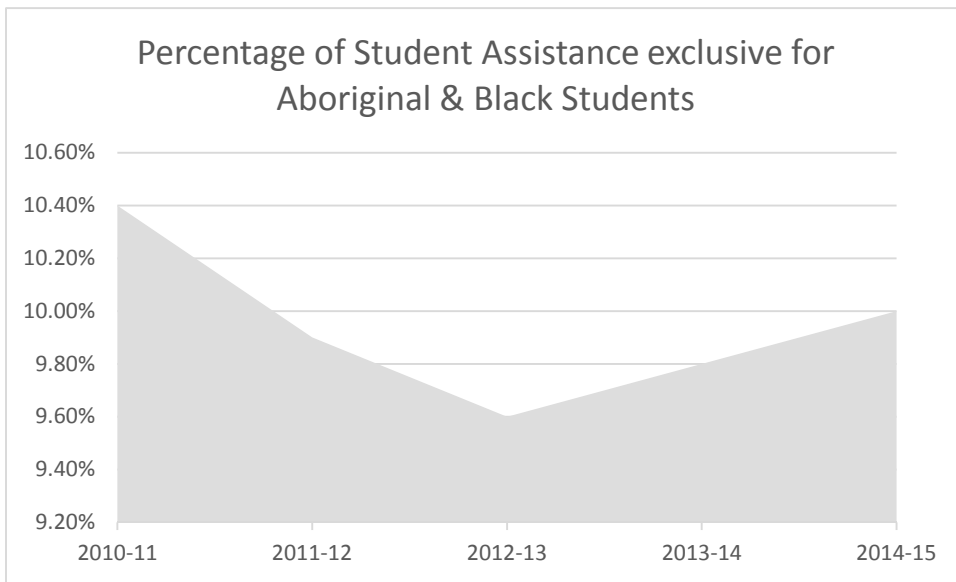


Figure 1. The portion of the Student Assistance Program (SAP) that is allocated to targeted scholarship programs for Aboriginal & Black/African Canadian Students.

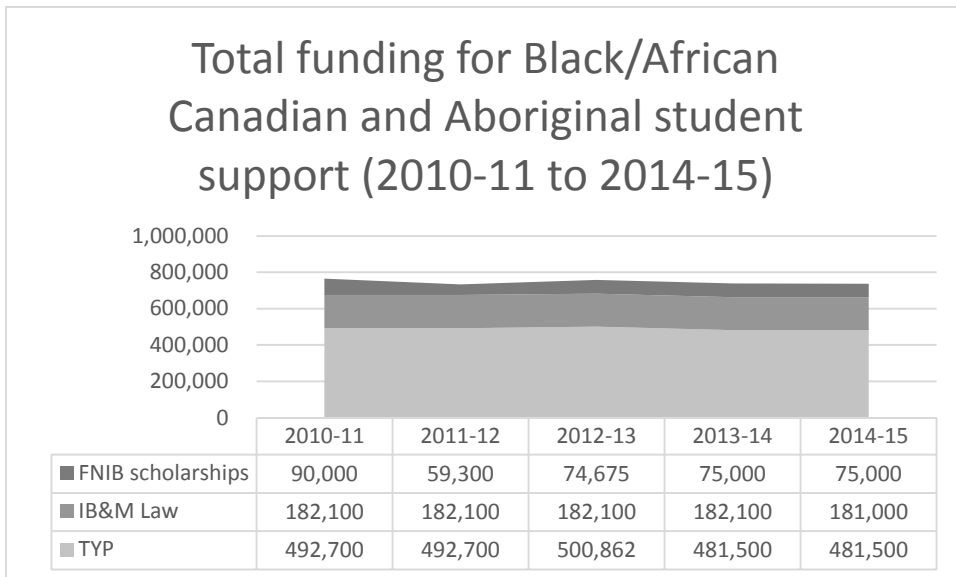


Figure 2. The annual budget for TYP bursaries, expenses and waivers for the last five years, along with the FNIB and the IB&M Law school programs.

## DESCRIPTION OF COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES:

The Vice President and Provost, Carolyn Watters, initiated the committee/working group on Feb. 25, 2014 by asking for a review of Dalhousie's current scholarships and related awards for Nova Scotia Black and Aboriginal students. The goal of the review was to offer a brief report to both the Provost and Senate regarding the following:

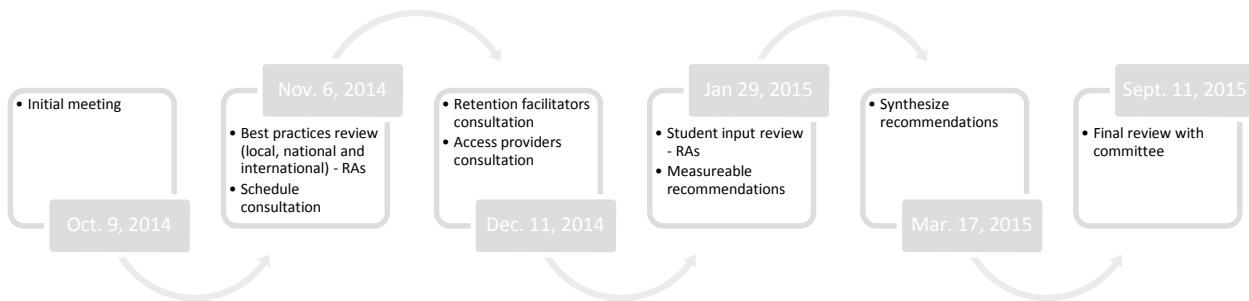
- Principles by which Dalhousie might make decisions concerning budgeting for awards in both an appropriately equitable manner
- Specific recommendations for amending (or not) the current awards
- Other elements that you deem necessary

An initial group consisting of Kevin Hewitt, Fiona Black and Lisa Delong met on four occasions over a three-month period (Mar. 5, 2014, Mar. 24, 2014, April 22, 2014, and May 30, 2014) to define the terms of reference for the committee.

The provost provided funding to hire research assistants whose task was to conduct focus groups, create and administer surveys within each subpopulation, and provide a review of best practices. A job advertisement was posted on June 9, 2014 and K-Lee Fraser was hired (July 14, 2014 – Nov. 22, 2014) as the lead Research assistant on the Black/African Canadian Student experience. A student who accepted the Aboriginal research assistant position on July 18, 2014 was unable to take up the position. Following the posting of a second advertisement on Sept. 19, 2014, Killa Atencio was hired (Oct. 7, 2014) as the lead research assistant on the Aboriginal student experience. In early December 2014, the completed surveys and focus group responses for Aboriginal and Black/African Canadian students were completed. A literature review was provided by K-Lee and is attached. Provision was made for one of our committee members (Kate Somers) to attend the 2014 National Scholarship Providers Association (NSPA) Conference in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania (October 14 – 16, 2014) to learn more about the scholarships targeting underrepresented groups (e.g. students who are the first in their family to attend university, Hispanics and African Americans). Her report is attached.

Following the summer break of 2014, the chair of the committee sought to recruit a co-chair who had experience with issues affecting the education of Aboriginal students. Amy Bombay, who had recently joined Dalhousie in the summer of 2014 as a tenure-track faculty member hired under the Dalhousie Diversity Faculty Award program, with joint appointments in the Faculty of Medicine (Psychiatry) and Health Professions (Nursing) agreed to become co-chair on Sept. 3, 2014.

The committee terms of reference (as outlined below) were defined and following a call for members in Sept. 2014 a series of meetings (5) were held over a six-month period (Oct. 9, 2014, Nov. 6, 2014, Dec. 11, 2014, Jan. 29, 2015 and Mar. 17, 2015). A final review of the recommendations occurred on Sept. 11, 2015.



Following presentation of the first survey of these populations at the first meeting, it was suggested that a follow-up survey be completed in order to increase the size of the survey group to strengthen the statistical significance of the results. It was also suggested by the committee that more details be collected with regard to the various sub-groups that exist within Aboriginal and Black/African Canadian students, as these are both diverse groups. In order to ensure adequate participation and to reduce self-selection biases as much as possible, students were provided with \$10 gift certificates from either Tim Hortons or Pete’s Frootique. This approach was successful, as 184 self-identified Black/African Canadian students participated, and 124 self-identified Aboriginal students participated out of a population of about 350-400 self-identified students in each group, in April 2015. It should be noted that students were recruited through the registrar’s office, and therefore the request may not have reached students from these groups who did not self-identify on their official Dalhousie application and/or registration forms. Nevertheless, this survey has provided very useful data that speaks to the need for policy changes within the university. We present analyses of data from the second set of surveys, while the focus group comments are from the original focus groups facilitated by the RAs. The surveys and focus group questions are provided in Appendix B and C, respectively.

In addition, the following providers of access programs (Access Providers) and facilitators of retention (Retention facilitators) targeting these groups were surveyed using the questionnaires attached in Appendix D, or by answering the questions in person:

*Access providers/Retention facilitators*

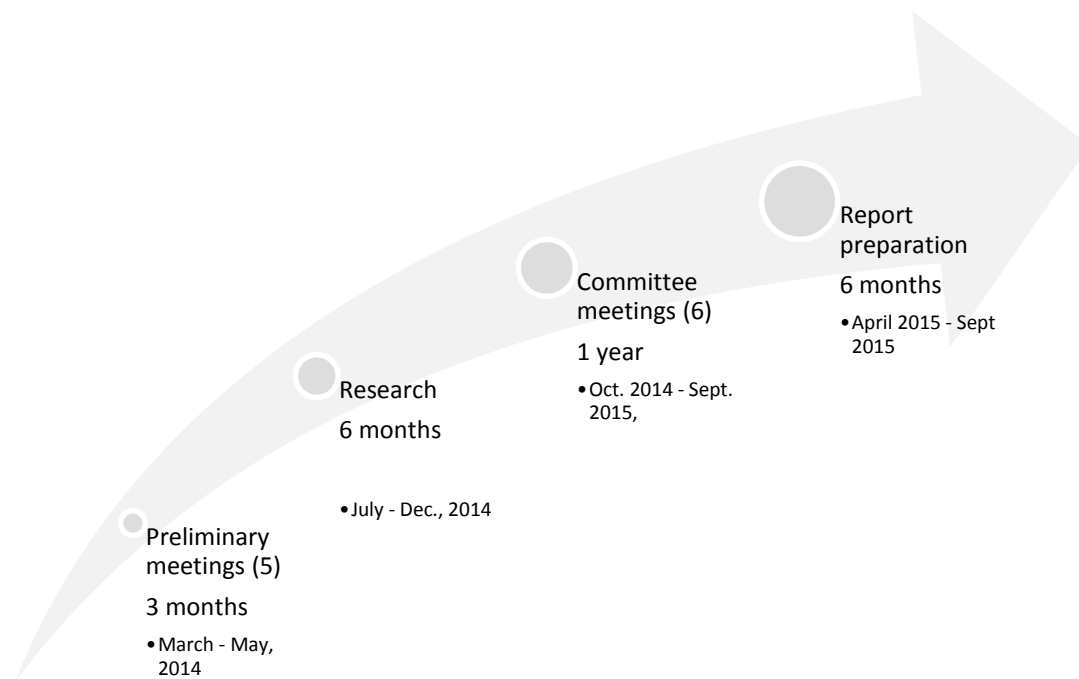
- SuperNova
- Nova Scotia Community College
- SHINE Academics
- Promoting Leadership in health for African Nova Scotians (PLANS)
- Association of Black Social Workers
- African Nova Scotian Affairs
- Black Educators Association (contacted but info not provided)
- Department of Education – African Canadian Services Division (contacted but info not provided)
- Imhotep’s Legacy Academy
- Aboriginal Health Sciences Initiative
- Black Student Advising Centre
- Mi’kmaw Kina’matnewey (MK)

The committee also examined the recommendations of the Breaking Barriers Report (Sept. 21, 1989), *Belong* (Mar. 5, 2015), *Backhouse* (June 29, 2015) and *Promoting Success for Aboriginal Students* (Allyssa Graybeal, Feb. 2011), as well as the Diversity Discussion paper of former VP Alan Shaver (Feb. 2010).

One year after the launch of the project, the final committee meeting of Mar. 17, 2015 was held, and the co-chairs finalized the report over the next few months. An additional meeting was called on Sept. 11, 2015 to discuss recommendation 2 and its implications for other areas of the report. After “navigating a difficult process” the following motion was adopted:

J.P. Cyrus moved: subject to the revision and circulation of recommendations 2, 10, 15, 19, & 26 and the addition of the Aboriginal Success Program to the recommendations, that the recommendations of the Report from the Committee on Aboriginal and Black/Africa Canadian Access and Retention: A Focus on Financial Support are approved by the committee. Seconded by I. Saney.

Next steps include presentation to the Provost and Vice President Academic and Senate (Fall 2015).



## Committee Terms of Reference

### Name

**Project to review Dalhousie funded scholarships for Aboriginal and Black Students and improve access and retention**

### Purpose

To prioritize scholarship dollars and associated support to have the greatest impact on Dalhousie’s strategic priorities: (1) To Increase retention and degree completion and (2) Focus on strategic student recruitment based on discipline, level and diversity.

### Goals for the Committee:

1. Analyse available data and suggest the most effective use of scholarships funds to have the greatest impact.
2. Establish a metric to measure success rates of current scholarships (e.g. how many students retain the minimum GPA required for continuation? do these students remain in Nova Scotia following graduation?)
3. Suggest ways to enhance funding - financial resources sought in 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary campaign
4. Recommend strategies to support maximum self-identification



5. Define the optimal distribution of funding among students in direct-entry versus second-entry programs
6. Define the optimal distribution/mix among bursaries versus scholarships
7. Establish best practices to aid students who face significant barriers to access, persistence and progression. Relate this to the current Retention project (2014).
8. Suggest ways to enhance the ability of the “First in family” to enter post-secondary studies
9. Analyse available data to correlate scholarship evaluation with student in-program performance.

### Membership (Invited)

Amy Bombay, Assistant Professor, Nursing and Psychiatry (co-chair)

Kevin Hewitt, Physics and Atmospheric Science (co-chair)

Mairead Barry, Associate Registrar, Admissions

Anne Forrestall, Assistant Vice President, Student Academic Access services

Quenta Adams, Director, Advising and Access services

Michelle Williams, Director, Indigenous Black and Mi'kmaq initiative

Debbie Martin, Assistant Professor, School of Health and Human Performance

Afua Cooper, James Robinson Johnson chair of Black Canadian studies

Andy Cochrane, Dean of the College of Continuing Education

Lisa Delong, Human Rights and Equity Advisor

Wanda Thomas-Bernard, Professor, School of Social Work

Fiona Black, Associate Vice President, Academic

Brad Wuetherick, Executive Director, Center for Learning and Teaching

Nancy MacDonald, PhD candidate, School of Social Work

Pemberton Cyrus, Associate Dean of Engineering

Emmanuel Yiridoe, Associate Professor, Faculty of Agriculture

Françoise Baylis, Tier I Canada Research Chair in Bioethics and Philosophy

Patricia Doyle-Bedwell, College of Continuing Education

Kara Paul, Program manager, Aboriginal Health Sciences

Sophia Stone, Associate Professor, Biology

Ingrid Waldron, Assistant Professor, Nursing

Isaac Saney, Director, Transition Year Program

Keltie Jones, Assistant Dean of Student Services, Faculty of Agriculture

## Process and Timeline

1. Complete an inventory of scholarships funded by central funds (May-June) [Mostly complete]
2. Consult broadly with groups holding a vested interest in these scholarships (Sept-Nov, 2014);  
Focus group for students (September), via self-identification
3. Hire researcher to investigate best practices for access and retention (by June 1, 2014)
4. Engage in analysis of available data concerning retention and persistence of scholarship and bursary holders
5. Submit report with recommendations to the VP Academic and Provost (Dec. 1, 2014)

## Meeting Schedule

Six meetings during the fall semester, 2014.

Modifications of the terms of reference led the committee to consider the following issues:

- Historical and contemporary context related to Aboriginal and African Canadian students in Canada and Nova Scotia
  - Literature review and summary of historical contexts of both groups
  - Demographic breakdown of Aboriginal and African Canadian students based on survey conducted by Committee in February 2015
- Barriers faced by Aboriginal and African Canadian students in relation to post-secondary education
  - Literature review
  - Aboriginal and African Canadian and African/Caribbean International Students at Dalhousie: Findings from Committee Student Focus Groups and Surveys
- Review/scan of existing approaches to financial support Access and Retention of Aboriginal and African Canadian students at Dalhousie
  - Analyses of Registrar's data related to scholarships/bursaries among Aboriginal and African Canadian students at Dalhousie
- Committee Recommendations related to Funding (and support for incoming and current students in accessing funding)
- Beyond Financial support: Future steps toward holistic student support to increase access and retention of Aboriginal and African Canadian students
  - Select analyses of additional data from student survey related to access, retention, and success among Aboriginal and African Canadian students at Dalhousie

# HISTORICAL & CONTEMPORARY CONTEXT RELATED TO ABORIGINAL AND BLACK/AFRICAN CANADIANS IN CANADA AND NOVA SCOTIA

It is important to highlight the significant diversity that exists across the numerous different Aboriginal cultures across Canada. There are three major Aboriginal groups, each of which is comprised of Aboriginal groups with unique historical and cultural background. In addition, more and more Aboriginal peoples are moving from traditional communities to live in cities, with more than half of all Aboriginal people in Canada living off-reserve. Diversity also exists with respect to African Canadians, with some identifying as being part of the historic African Nova Scotian community, and others who identify strongly with their Caribbean roots and/or countries of origin. Both groups have experienced collective histories reflecting trauma and racism, and continue to face contemporary forms of systemic and interpersonal discrimination that contribute to educational disparities that are accompanied by various additional health and social inequities. That being said, there have been many recent improvements, as high school graduation rates among on-reserve First Nations students continue to improve. Likewise, the numerous organizations that exist in the Halifax region aimed at supporting African Canadian and Nova-Scotian youth have contributed to improved high school and university access, retention, and success. These gains need to be recognized along with the continuing barriers and disparities – as they provide evidence that systemic changes and targeted support can help students from these groups succeed.

## Aboriginal peoples in Canada, Nova Scotia, and at Dalhousie

In Canada, the three constitutionally recognized groups of Aboriginal peoples comprise First Nations, Inuit, and Metis. In 2011, 1,400,685 people reported an Aboriginal identity, representing 4.3% of the total Canadian population, slightly higher than the proportion in Nova Scotia (3.7%) (2011 National Household Survey; NHS). The Aboriginal population in Nova Scotia is diverse in terms of Aboriginal identity, with 38.1% reporting as Status First Nations, 26.6% reporting as non-status First Nations, 29.7% reporting as Metis, 2.1% Inuit, and 3.5% reporting as ‘multiple Aboriginal identities’ or ‘identities’ not included elsewhere (NHS). In 2011, only 13.4% of the Aboriginal population in Canada had a university credential compared to 31.4% of the non-Aboriginal population. Educational attainment is lowest among Inuit, followed by First Nations living on-reserve, and then non-Status First Nations, and Metis. (Calver, 2015).

First Nations can be further broken down by tribe and First Nation band and/or community. The Mi'kmaq are the First Nations peoples of Nova Scotia, and prior to the arrival of European Settlers, they lived a relatively peaceful lifestyle of hunting, fishing, and gathering. After the arrival of the Europeans in the 15th century, much of the interaction between these groups was founded on trade and missionary activities and education that focused on saving the heathen souls of the “savages” by attempts at religious conversion (Fisher, 1992). These conversion efforts undermined existing beliefs and practices that were fundamental to their previously effective economic, familial, communal, and educational institutions. This early period of contact was also marked by community massacres and warfare, as well

as epidemics stemming from the introduction of new diseases and resulting in a significant decline of the Mi'kmaq population in Nova Scotia as well as Aboriginal populations across Canada.

Beginning in the early 1700s, the British Crown entered into treaties to encourage peaceful relations between First Nations and non-Aboriginal people, like the Peace and Friendship treaties in the Maritimes. Unlike later treaties signed in other parts of Canada, the Peace and Friendship Treaties did not involve First Nations surrendering rights to the lands and resources they had traditionally used and occupied. The Supreme Court confirmed that Mi'kmaq and Maliseet First Nations continue to have treaty rights to hunt, fish and gather towards earning a moderate livelihood, and continue to hold Aboriginal rights and title throughout their traditional territory.

In other parts of Canada, the rights of Aboriginal peoples were first asserted in the Royal Proclamation of 1763. In exchange for the use of their land and natural resources, Aboriginal peoples were to be provided with the right to self-government and access to education, amongst other things. Responsibility for providing education was assumed by the federal government the same year Canada was established in 1867. The Indian Act of 1876 provided the government with the authority to define who was "Indian" and designate areas of land to be used by Aboriginal people (Canada, 1996). Further amendments to the Indian Act made traditional cultural gatherings and ceremonies illegal, and resulted in the creation of church-run government funded Indian Residential Schools that were explicitly aimed at the assimilation of Aboriginal children (Armitage, 1995; Wotherspoon & Satzewich, 1993). Although forced to comply with such policies, First Nations were denied the right to vote, and culturally established rights for First Nations women were eliminated (Stevenson, 1999). Of course, this blatant systemic discrimination was accompanied by equally severe forms of interpersonal racism experienced by Aboriginal peoples.

Indeed, the supremacist ideologies behind early attempts to educate Aboriginal children endured and were adapted over the years leading up to Confederation (Miller, 1996; Milloy, 1999). Political leaders of the day concluded that Aboriginal peoples were "half-civilized," and that the goal of assimilating Indigenous people would be better achieved through the education of children, as they were deemed most suitable for "complete transformation" (Milloy, 2008; Miller, 1996). Residential schools were run by church missionaries and funded by the government, which was also responsible for the regulation and inspection of the schools (Milloy, 1999). Amendments were made to the Indian Act to permit the use of severe punishments to ensure that families did not try to keep their children at home. This was in response to the many Aboriginal parents and communities who resisted forced attendance at these schools.

Over the course of this policy period, at least 130 residential schools were operating in every province and territory of Canada, except New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island. At its peak in the 1930s, it was estimated that approximately 75% of First Nations children attended these schools, as did a significant number of Métis and Inuit children (Fournier & Crey, 1997). Children at these schools not only had to endure the traumatic experience of being torn from their families and communities, but most were also subjected to widespread neglect and/or abuse. It was not until the 1980s that reports of abuse within the residential schools began to surface in the media (Miller, 1996). In 1969, the Government ceased its partnership with the churches running the schools but continued its financial support. The majority of schools were closed by the 1980s, although some continued to operate until the last school closure in

1996 (Troniak, 2011). These efforts toward the *civilization* of Aboriginal peoples undermined existing beliefs and practices that were fundamental to their previous effective economic, familial, and communal institutions.

Empirical research has documented both the negative effects of residential schools on the well-being of those who attended these schools (Bombay et al., 2012; Corrado & Cohen, 2003), as well as the negative effects of these traumatic experiences as transmitted across generations (Bombay, Matheson, & Anisman, 2011; Elias et al., 2012). These effects have marked various aspects of collective well-being in communities (Bombay, Matheson, & Anisman, 2014). The long-term effects of residential schools have not only been linked with negative mental and physical outcomes, but have also been associated with negative educational outcomes. Among First Nations youth living on-reserve, those who had a parent who attended IRS were more likely to report having learning difficulties at school (48.7% of youth whose parents attended vs. 40.4% whose parents did not attend) and having had to repeat a grade (47.3% of youth whose parents attended vs. 35.2% whose parents did not attend; First Nations Centre, 2005, p.161). As noted in the introduction, Aboriginal children and youth living off-reserve tend to have lower levels of school success if their parent attended Residential School (Bougie & Senecal, 2010). It has been suggested that communities affected by Residential schools, including those in the Nova Scotia, “have been burdened with a legacy of fear, internalized racism, low feelings of competence and low expectations in regard to self, learning, schools, institutions and education generally” (Kirkness, 1992).

During the Residential School era (mid-1800s-1980s), when presented with an educational opportunity, many Aboriginal peoples did not want anything to do with mainstream education. For those who did want access to education, this was rarely possible, as First Nations peoples had to give up their status and rights in order to receive funding to attend PSE (until the 1940s). The perceived underlying message to Aboriginal people was that “education results in assimilation and loss of not only rights and privileges, but also loss of basic identity” (McFadden, 1996). Considering how recently these events took place, it is not surprising that high levels of mistrust exist in Aboriginal communities towards the government and mainstream educational institutions. Indeed, the link between mainstream education and assimilation and/or “whiteness” continues to be an impediment (Schmidt & Akande, 2011).

Not only is providing accessible education a mechanism for reducing disparities, it is a right enshrined in Canada’s Constitution as a result of a series of the treaty process. Despite Canada’s responsibility and the compelling social and economic motivation, funding for post-secondary education has remained stagnant despite the growing Aboriginal population and increasing costs. Although funding is not available to Metis and non-status First Nations, some Status First Nations and Inuit students receive assistance to attend post-secondary education through the Post-Secondary Student Support Program (PSSSP) of the Federal government. Although Aboriginal peoples are supposed to have the right to education, as described further below, not all Aboriginal peoples have this option due to limited funding.

### **First Nations – Status vs. Non-Status**

As discussed earlier, a relevant government-imposed distinction for First Nations is whether individuals are registered “Indian Status” according to the Indian Act. Not unexpectedly, this has a long history of

opposition by Aboriginal peoples and is a continuing point of contention. Most “non-status” First Nations peoples are descendants of those who did not take Treaty, or who were forced out due to various laws that purposely encouraged people to give up their status (e.g., going to college/university, receiving veterans benefits, women who married white men and their children). These individuals were usually no longer able to live on-reserve, and often became disenfranchised from their communities. Although there may be exceptions, non-status First Nations typically live off-reserve and receive the same government services/programs as Canadians, and therefore do not have access to any special form of financial support for attending PSE.

Members of First Nations who do have their Registered Status may have funding for education through the Post-Secondary Student Support Program in which AANDC distributes funds to First Nations Bands (or to Inuit organizations) to administer to their community. However, core funding for this program has not increased since 1996, leaving many Status First Nations students without funding or with only partial funding (AUCC, 2011). Funding was initially allocated based on the number of eligible students and their estimated expenses, but in 1992 this shifted from per-student funding to block funding, and increases in funding were capped in 1996 at 2% annually. As a result, funding has not kept pace with the increasing Aboriginal population and number of learners. Nor has available funding kept up with increasing living costs and increasing tuition fees (on average approximately 4% per year), not to mention inflation. It is estimated that between 2001 and 2011, over 18,500 students were denied funding, with roughly 3,000 more students denied each year thereafter.

### **First Nations living on-reserve**

Although First Nations peoples across Canada often report going back and forth between cities and their communities, approximately 50% of First Nations individuals report that their primary address is on-reserve in their communities. Those living on-reserve are generally “Registered” Status members of their community.

In Nova Scotia, there are 13 Mi’kmaq bands, and 34 reserve communities. First Nations groups also exist in New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island. When Newfoundland joined Confederation in 1949, Mi’kmaq communities were not recognized as First Nations under the *Indian Act* and their legal status was uncertain. In 2014, the Federal Government gave Indian Status recognition to nearly 24,000 for Qalipu Mi’kmaq in Newfoundland, which doubled the population of Aboriginal peoples in Atlantic Canada.

In 2011, only 45% of First Nations on-reserve graduated from high school, compared to 70% for First Nations living off-reserve. In addition to historical factors that have contributed to these poor educational outcomes, there is the problem of chronic underfunding for primary and secondary education for First Nations living on-reserve. Funding for provincial schools is more than double that of on-reserve schools. Since 1996, funding for on-reserve schools increased 19%, while funding for schools in the provincial system increased 45%. This means that on average First Nations on-reserve school get \$2000 less funding per student.

In general, across Canada, there has been no measurable improvement for on-reserve high school completion rates in the past 15 years. An exception to this is Nova Scotia. In 1997, nine of Nova Scotia's 13 First Nations and the governments of Canada and Nova Scotia signed legislation providing participating First Nations with jurisdiction over primary, elementary and secondary education on reserve. In 2014, three additional First Nations joined the Agreement, as a result of which all but one First Nation in Nova Scotia is served by Canada's only self-government agreement in education. Nearly 3,000 kindergarten to grade 12 students living on-reserve in Nova Scotia benefit from this Agreement.

Under the Agreement, Mi'kmaq First Nations and Mi'kmaq Kina'matnewey (MK) work collaboratively in the delivery of education programs and services to nine elementary and secondary schools, and four kindergartens. Since this change, high school graduation rates in MK schools continue to improve, reaching 87.7% in 2012-13. MK also manage special education services, post-secondary education programming, education capital funding, school technology services, and tuition agreements with Nova Scotia's Department of Education and Early Childhood Development for those on-reserve students who attend provincial schools (547 students in 2012 or 18%).

Although graduation rates in First Nations communities in Nova Scotia are outperforming students living on-reserve in other provinces, the rates are still significantly lower than the general population. A total of 27% of the Aboriginal population aged 25-64 did not complete high school, compared to 19% in the general population in the province. Likewise, 12% of the Aboriginal population aged 25-64 had a university degree versus 20% in the general population.

The historical factors that have impeded access and retention for Aboriginal students continue to influence current generations. Within Nova Scotia, only about 50% of First Nations students reported that PSE is important to their parents, compared to 66.6% of White and 80% of African Canadian students (Thiessen, 2009). Lack of education supports in family settings was listed as a factor affecting access and retention by First Nations communities in Nova Scotia, sentiments that are no doubt linked to the legacy of the Indian Residential school system (Sylliboy, 2014). In combination with the recent Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's call for universities to support Aboriginal students, now is the time to invest in outreach to primary and secondary students to better meet the needs of the Mi'kmaq communities in Nova Scotia.

### **First Nations living off-reserve (made of status and non-status First nations)**

Current estimates suggest that more than half of all Aboriginal people in Canada live off-reserve, with 80% of First Nations and 74% of Métis peoples living off-reserve residing inside a metropolitan area (Aboriginal Peoples Survey, 2012). Nationally, it is estimated that 64% of First Nations peoples living off-reserve are Status or Registered Indians (APS, 2012). Being the largest city in the Atlantic Provinces, Halifax has the largest number of Aboriginal peoples compared to other cities in the region. In 2011, 4.6% (17,665) of Halifax Regional Municipality's (HRM) population identified as having Aboriginal ancestry, which is higher than averages reported nationally (4.3%) and within Nova Scotia (3.7%). The Aboriginal population in the HRM is diverse, with 79.5% of Aboriginal peoples identifying as First Nations, 18.5% as Métis, and 4.0% as Inuit (NHS, 2011). Although the majority of First Nations are Mi'kmaq, individuals from various First Nations groups call Halifax their home (NHS, 2011).

First Nations living off-reserve attend provincially funded primary and secondary schools like all other Canadians, and therefore aren't subject to the underfunding characteristic of on-reserve schools. This fact demonstrates that other culture-related factors affect access and retention, as 41% of those living off-reserve do not complete their secondary school education. Significant gaps in learning outcomes are observed between Nova Scotia students with European heritage, followed by those with Acadian, and then First Nations and African Canadian heritage (Thiessen et al). Performance gaps were observed from the first data collection in grade 3 and continued through the duration of the study through to grade 9. First Nations and African Canadian students were also likely to earn below grade averages for their age, and a higher proportion of students required test adaptations, and were less likely to take university preparatory classes (Theissen). Clearly, Aboriginal students living off-reserve also require specialized support and pathways into university. Non-Status First Nations students will definitely not have access to funding from the PSSSP program, and depending on the demand and potentially the student's link to his or her community, Status First Nations living off-reserve may or may not have access to PSSSP support.

### **Métis**

Until recently, the Métis were the only Aboriginal group who did not have special Status as Aboriginal peoples, but a recent federal court decision has changed this, and they are now officially considered "Indian" according to the federal government. Still, debates regarding definitions and official recognition of Métis identity have been ongoing for years. In general, Métis people are descendants of intermarriages between European Settlers and certain First Nations groups that resulted in their own unique cultures. However, many contend that the word "Métis" refers specifically to those who can trace their roots to specific communities that resulted from the intermixing in Western Canada. Indeed, a large majority of the Métis population lives in western provinces where Métis represent 8.0% of the total population of the Northwest Territories, 6.7% of Manitoba's population, and 5.2% of Saskatchewan's population. In conflict with this definition of Métis, are groups from elsewhere who self-define as Métis including the Nova Scotian Wampanoag community. This cultural group is comprised primarily of descendants of the Wampanoag Confederacy of Massachusetts who intermixed with European settlers and settled in Nova Scotia in the mid-1700s. In 2011, about 20% of the Aboriginal population in the HRM was Métis.

### **Inuit**

There are four Inuit regions in Canada, which together are collectively known as "Inuit Nunangat". The Inuvialuit region comprises the northwestern part of the Northwest Territories, and Nunavut comprises one-fifth of Canada's landmass, where the large majority of Inuit live. Nunavik is the region in Northern Quebec where approximately 9500 Inuit live in communities along the eastern coast of Hudson's bay and Hudson Strait. Approximately 4500 Inuit live along the coast of Labrador in a region called "Nunatsiavut", primarily in 5 communities, with Nain having the largest population of 900 Inuit and serving as the administrative center. In 2011, Inuit represented about 4% of the total national Aboriginal population, and 4.0% of the total HRM Aboriginal population. Inuit students are eligible for the PSSSP support program, but again, funding is not available for all who apply.



## Aboriginal Students at Dalhousie: Findings from Committee Student Survey

Currently, Dalhousie data collection only asks students about whether they are First Nations, Metis, or Inuit. In order to get a more detailed picture of the Aboriginal student population, we asked students for more specific information about their origins and cultural background. As presented in Figure 3, mirroring the diversity of Aboriginal peoples living in the HRM and across Canada, students at Dalhousie come from a variety of backgrounds. As expected, because we are in Mi'kmaq traditional territory, 44% of Aboriginal students are Mi'kmaq, with an additional 20% coming from a variety of other First Nations groups from across Canada. In total, 15% reported being non-status First Nation (including Mi'kmaq non-status), and only 13% reported being from a First Nations reserve community (Figure 4). This suggests that targeted outreach and engagement with Mi'kmaq communities is necessary. Another significant finding was that one-third of the Aboriginal student population was Métis, with more than half reporting being from Atlantic Métis heritage. Only 4% reported being Inuit, perhaps suggesting outreach to Labrador is called for. There was an even distribution across these different cultural groups with respect to whether they were the first in family to attend university (Figure 5). As shown in Figure 6, variation also existed across groups with respect to estimated family household income while they were growing up.

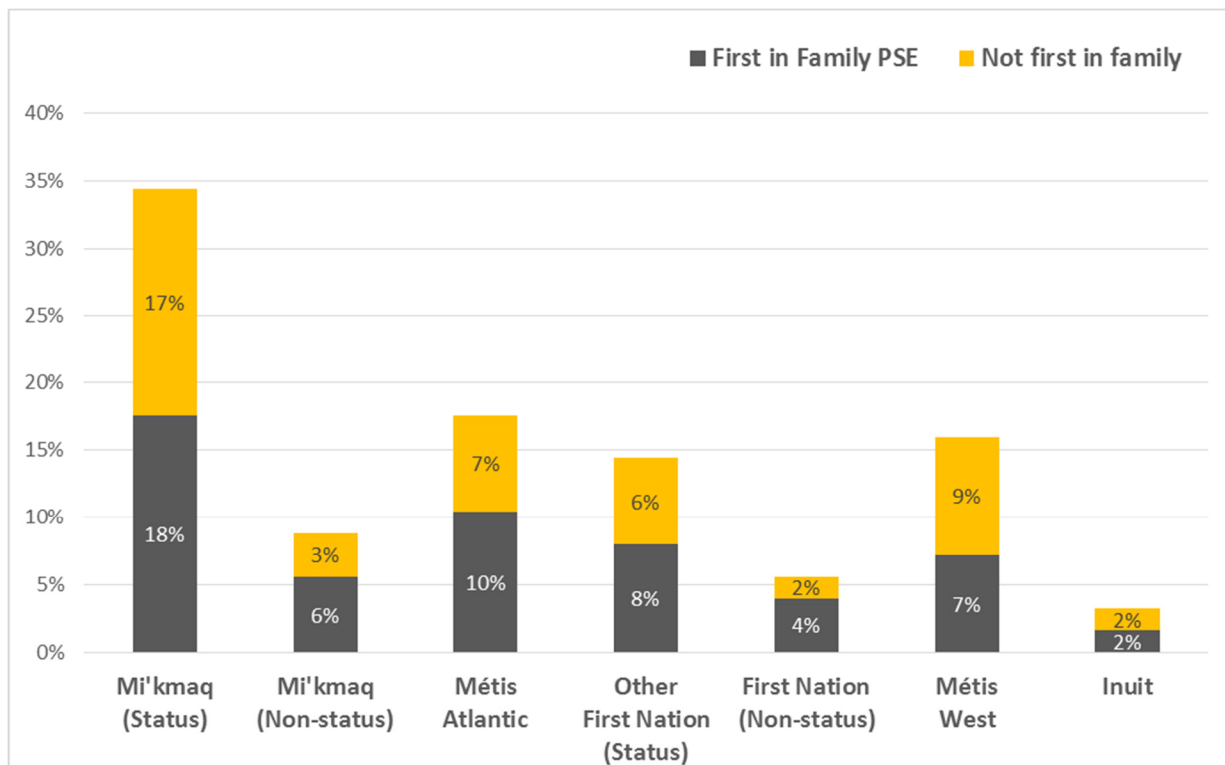


Figure 3. Proportion of Aboriginal students at Dalhousie from different cultural groups (i.e., First Nations, Inuit, Metis) and by First Nation Status, according to parental education (i.e., first in family to attend PSE) (N=124)

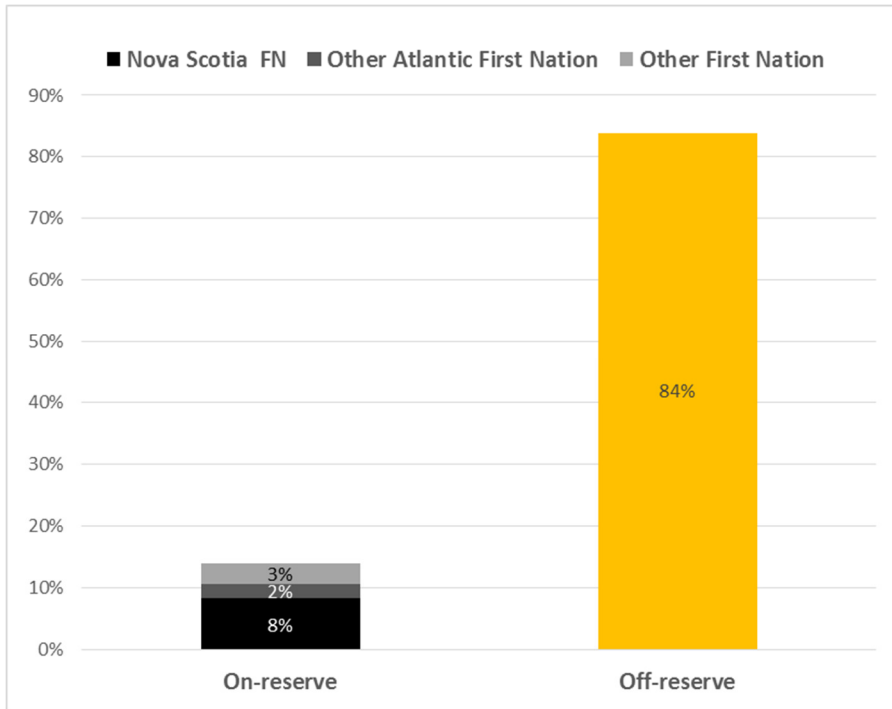


Figure 4. Proportion of First Nations students at Dalhousie who lived on-reserve or off-reserve prior to attending Dalhousie (i.e., first in family to attend PSE) (N=124)

There was an even distribution across these different cultural groups with respect to whether they were the first in family to attend university (Figure 5). As shown in Figure 6, variation also existed across groups with respect to estimated family household income while they were growing up.

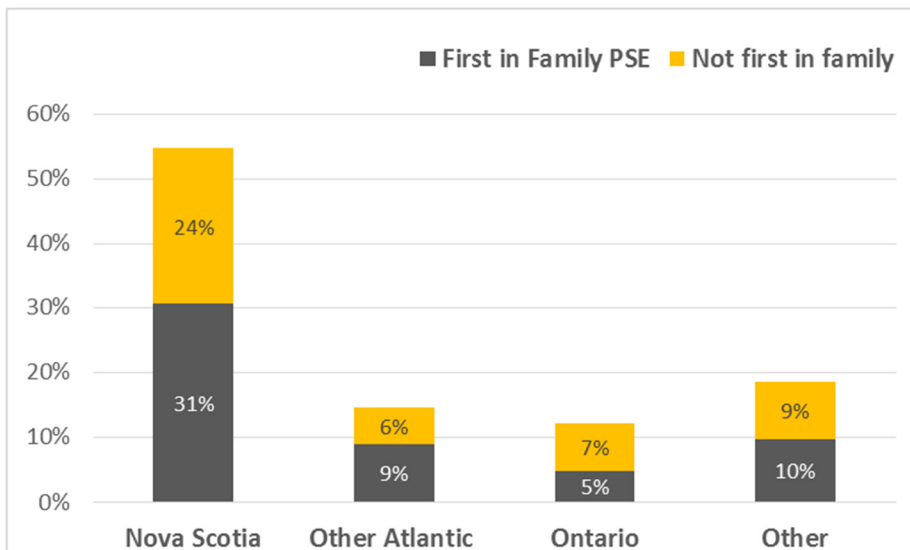


Figure 5. Proportion of Aboriginal students coming from different provinces according to parental education (i.e., first in family to attend PSE) (N=124)

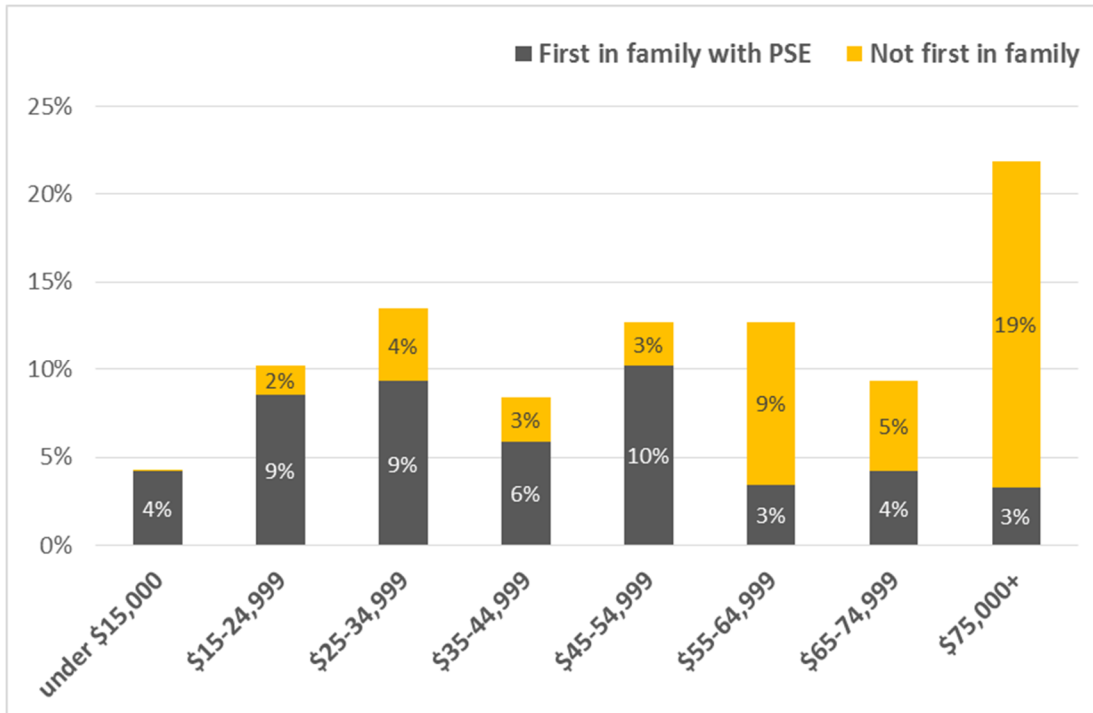


Figure 6. Proportion of Aboriginal students with different household incomes while growing up according to parental education (i.e., first in family) (N=124)

Figure 7 presents the number of Aboriginal students who self-identified on their application, the number who were admitted, and the number who registered from 2008 until 2014. Although the number of Aboriginal students who are applying has increased significantly since 2008, the number of new students enrolled each year has remained the same across years. This suggests that there is growing interest among Aboriginal students, but there are barriers preventing these students from being accepted into Dalhousie or enrolling for study at Dalhousie. These barriers need to be explored. As shown in **Error! Reference source not found.**, retention among Aboriginal students is also a continuing issue.

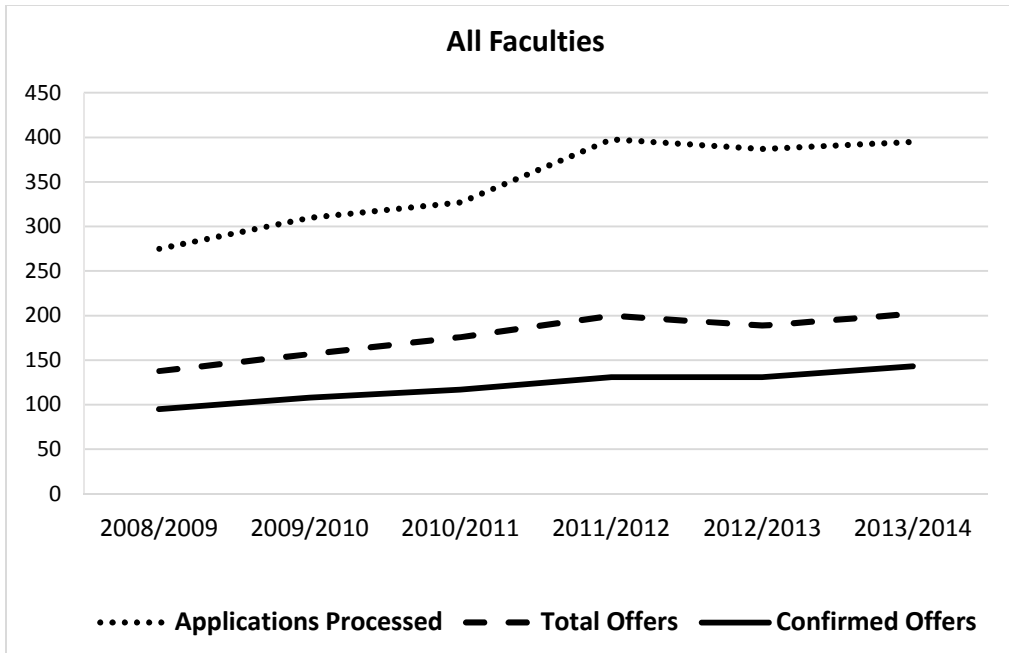


Figure 7. The number of Aboriginal students who applied to Dalhousie, who were offered enrollment, and who enrolled from 2008-2014 (based on data from the Registrar's office). Note: Enrolment stats provided by the registrar's office; includes graduate students; Registration in Agriculture are included in figures as of 2012/13 academic year

## African Canadians in Canada, Nova Scotia, and at Dalhousie University

African Canadians have a long history in Canada. From the arrival of Mathieu da Costa, a Black crewman and interpreter on de Monts' expedition who settled in Acadia in 1605, up to the present time when the vast majority of new arrivals of African descent in Canada and Québec come from Africa and the Caribbean. Today, with the exception of Nova Scotia, Ontario and Montréal, the Black community is geographically dispersed. Across Canada, it is estimated that there are over 1.3 million people who identify as Black, representing 4.2% of the Canadian population. An almost equal number identify themselves as being of recent Caribbean origin or the African continent (NHS 2011). In the case of Nova Scotia, which has the oldest Black population, 20,790 persons identify as Black, representing 2.3% of the Nova Scotia population. Therefore, after Aboriginal peoples, Black peoples (distributed across 48 historic communities) are the largest racially visible group in Nova Scotia. In spite of their historical contributions to building this country, Blacks are treated as second-class citizens and face considerable discrimination in employment, housing, education and other spheres.

The marginalization of Blacks in Canada has its historical roots in the institution of slavery. As in the case of African Americans part of the heritage of Black Nova Scotians is the institution of slavery (Cooper, 2006). While the institution of slavery never acquired the dimensions it had in the United States, the very existence and practice of slavery in Canada established the precedent of using African peoples as a readily available source of cheap labour. This dynamic shaped the experiences of the Black Loyalists and the Black Refugees, the two largest migrant groups of African descent to the Maritimes, forming the foundation of the pre-Confederation Black communities

From 1783 until 1785, 3,500 free blacks (the Black Loyalists) and 1,232 slaves were part of the wave of about 30,000 Loyalists who immigrated to Nova Scotia. In the wake 1812, another 2,000 persons of African descent (the Black Refugees) arrived in Nova Scotia from the United States. Both the Black Loyalists and the Black Refugees were lured to Nova Scotia with promises of land and economic security. Very few received land and, when they did, it was of much smaller acreage than promised. Indeed, the land granted was of inferior quality to the land given to whites: often non-arable, covered with shrubs and stones. In many cases, using delays and outright chicanery, the colonial administration legally swindled the Black migrants out of receiving grants and land. This ensured that the Black population was unable to achieve economic security, self-sufficiency and independence. The inability to acquire a viable land base maintained African Nova Scotians as a cheap and causal pool labour pool, forced into competing at the lower end of the labour market. The standard practice was to pay Black workers only one-quarter of the wage paid to white workers.

Many of the Blacks who immigrated to Nova Scotia were skilled (i.e. blacksmiths, coopers, carpenters, millwrights, sawyers, bakers, tailors, etc.). This skilled Black labour was in great demand in Nova Scotia. The demand for and the necessity for the services of Black tradesmen were clearly articulated by the provincial ruling circles in relation to the Black Loyalists and the Black Refugees. Alexander Howe, a prominent member of the legislative Assembly, described the Black Loyalists as "*the principal source of labour and improvement*" for the developing economy of Nova Scotia. Referring to the Black Refugees, T. Chamberlain, another legislature member, stated that the new Black migrants

*"would afford assistance to us towards repairing roads, but likewise furnish us with the labourers of whom we stand too much in need to make any tolerable progress in our improvement."*

Designated as a cheap pool of labour, Blacks were, consequently, relegated to an economically dependent position (i.e., sharecroppers, indentured servants or casual labourers). Entwined with this economic status was the racist ideology deployed to justify and ensure that Blacks remained at the bottom of the socio-economic order. Lord Dalhousie, Governor of Nova Scotia when the Black Refugees arrived, perhaps, best demonstrated the prevailing racist attitude in official circles toward Black people, declaring: "[T]hese people... slaves by habit as well as education, no longer live under the dread of the lash. Their idea of freedom is idleness and they are therefore quite incapable of industry."

This history has profoundly stamped the subsequent trajectory of Black Nova Scotia. The results have been marginalization and disenfranchisement, epitomized by the Africville dispossession. The disparity of wealth and political power between social groups and classes is not an accidental phenomenon. Conditions have been created and reproduced to reinforce the role of Blacks as cheap labour, ghettoizing the community within the Canadian polity. Thus, the marginalization of Blacks in Nova Scotia is deeply rooted in this history of disadvantage. The hostility and racial prejudices towards Blacks in Nova Scotia are reflected among other things, in their patterns of residence throughout the province. Over the years, Blacks have been clustered in isolated rural areas on rocky, marginal lands on the fringes of white towns and cities, or in inner city ghettos. Nova Scotia Blacks have historically been forced into a marginal socio-economic position in an economically depressed region. In fact, they have been relegated to the status of second-class citizens.

## **The Education System and Black/African Canadians**

This particular pattern finds a particular reflection in the history of education in this province. Segregated education existed in Nova Scotia for more than a century. The education afforded to the Black population amounted to separate and profoundly unequal. In 1811, the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly established severe financial barriers against Black communities attempting to organize public education. In the name of providing a single standard for "all", the 1811 Education Act provided that the government subsidize the construction of a community schoolhouse and employment of a teacher in any community able to raise between £50 and £200 a year towards the cost. Many Black communities, unable to raise these amounts, were effectively left without public education facilities. The 1811 Education Act, the first in a series of measures over the next 143 years, erected first *de facto* and later *de jure* segregation – separate and always unequal education.

The racial attitude towards educating Black people is illustrated by the reality that the only education available in the Black communities was principally through philanthropic efforts from organizations such as the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. The emphasis was on imparting only the barest essentials of reading and writing – no arithmetic or computational training. At the center of the pedagogy deployed was the inculcation of obedience and acceptance of the prevailing social order. This and subsequent legislation became the building blocks for that enormous wall of prejudice and indifference which confronted – and confronts - generations of Black youth. Subsequent iterations of the Education Act strengthened the segregationist and discriminatory provisions. In 1865, the Nova Scotia Legislative

Assembly authorized separate black and white schools, thereby introducing segregated education as a matter of law. In 1918, for example, all children near Annapolis and Digby had access to public schools, with the exception of Blacks in Fundy. Indeed, it is not until 1954 that the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly legally ended segregated schooling in the province. *It bears underscoring that Black Nova Scotians have officially been educated more than twice as long (143-years) under a segregated, separate and unequal educational regime than within an officially desegregated educational regime (61-years).*

The consequences of unequal education have been dramatic. African Nova Scotians are less likely to finish high school or attend university. In Nova Scotia in 1969, only 3 % of Black students graduated from high school and only 1 % of the graduates attended university (Pratt 1972). This legacy still persists. In 1994, 60% of Black youth in Nova Scotia aged 20–24 had not graduated Grade 11, 30% had not graduated Grade 10, and 10% had less than Grade 9 education (BLAC, 1994). In 2014, 77.7% of African Nova Scotians aged 25 to 64 years have some sort of certificate, diploma or degree compared to 85.3% of all other Nova Scotians. Only 18% of African Nova Scotians have a university degree compared to 22% of all Nova Scotians aged 25 to 64 years (ANSA, 2014).

The Black community has not remained passive but has actively fought efforts to keep it at the margins of society, especially in regard to discrimination and inequity within the education system. The community has sought to transform the education system by advocating for a series of equitable measures and reforms. For example, in 1883 the African Nova Scotia Baptist Association on behalf of the Black residents of Halifax formally challenged segregated education in the city. The Association submitted a petition to the Legislative Assembly, declaring themselves:

*“coloured citizens and ratepayers of the city of Halifax, that by a minute of the Council of Public Instruction passed on December 1876 all coloured children henceforth were excluded for common school, and separate schools were established for their use, which are of an inferior grade, and in which they do not receive equal advantages with white children attending common schools, for which and other reasons as detailed in the petition; they pray that such minutes of Council be repealed.”*

While the petition ultimately failed, it was a harbinger of other challenges to inequality, inequity and discrimination in the education system. These challenges increased in tempo and effectiveness in the second half of the 20th century, when a number of organizations and programs were initiated. In the 1960s and 1970s, Black/African Canadians undertook initiatives to increase access to post-secondary studies. For instance, in 1970, community leaders established a Transition Year Program (TYP) in both Toronto and Halifax. The objective of the Dalhousie TYP was to provide upgrading for university entrance to Black Nova Scotian and First Nations’ students (Brathwaite & James 1996). The TYP admitted African Nova Scotian and Mi’kmaq students to provide them with the academic background and financial assistance needed to successfully complete a university degree. In the year the Dalhousie TYP was started (1970), only 35 African Nova Scotian students had graduated from university (The Black Man in Nova Scotia Teach-In Report, 1969).

The University of Toronto TYP eventually expanded to also include low-income students, including whites. A similar program was established for Blacks at George Brown’s College of Applied Arts and Technology. In Montreal, the Board of Black Educators (now the Quebec Board of Black Educators), with

funding from McGill University organized the DaCosta Hall summer project to assist students in obtaining the requisite preparation for entrance to McGill University (Contrast August, 1-15, 1970 & November 1, 1970). In an effort to establish a presence in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) professions, the Imhotep's Legacy Academy (ILA) was established in 2003 at Dalhousie University. Research has shown it to be an effective means of encouraging African Nova Scotian learners to pursue post-secondary studies (Singh, 2015).

In Nova Scotia one of the most significant developments is the formation in 1989 of the Black Learners' Advisory Committee (BLAC). BLAC was created as a result of public pressure from the Black community following the "race riot" at Cole Harbour High School and trends already under way amongst Black educators, activists and retired school teachers from the segregated schools. In 1994, BLAC published a detailed study of the condition of Black Nova Scotians in the education system. A direct outcome of the study is the formation the African Canadian Services Division and the Council on African Canadian Education.

These varied efforts and programs have not been sufficient to resolve the problems of access and retention of Black students at the university level. Moreover, the failure to adequately address the lack of participation of Black/African Canadians at the university level has had – and continues to have - a profound socio-economic impact. For example, in 2011, 34.8% of African Nova Scotians lived in low-income families as opposed to 16.5% for Nova Scotia, as a whole. In 2011, the average incomes for African Nova Scotians were \$9,837 for males and \$24,929 for females. In comparison, the average income for Nova Scotian males was \$42,545 and \$ 29,460 for females (NHS, 2011). In 2011, African Nova Scotians had a rate of unemployment higher (14.5%) than the rest of Nova Scotia (9.9%) and higher than African Canadians across Canada (12.9%). This gap is greater amongst males, with a rate of 17.2% for African Nova Scotians compared to 10.7% for Nova Scotians and 12.9% for African Canadian males across Canada (Labour Force Activity 2014; see also Mensah 2002). If, to paraphrase Malcolm X, "education is the passport to the future" then a significant portion of African Canadians remain without the necessary means by which to move forward in Canadian society.

## **African Canadian and African/Caribbean International Students at Dalhousie: Findings from Committee Student Survey**

Like the Aboriginal student population at Dalhousie, the student population with African and/or Caribbean heritage is diverse (see Figure 8Error! Reference source not found.). Just over half (53%) of the total sample were from Nova Scotia, with 18% having at least one grandparent who was from the historic African Nova Scotian community (defined by having at least one grandparent of African ancestry who was born in Nova Scotia). The large majority of students from Nova Scotia are from African cultural backgrounds, whereas 50% of students from other provinces are of Caribbean heritage. Almost one-quarter (22%) of the total black population who participated were international students from either Africa or the Caribbean.



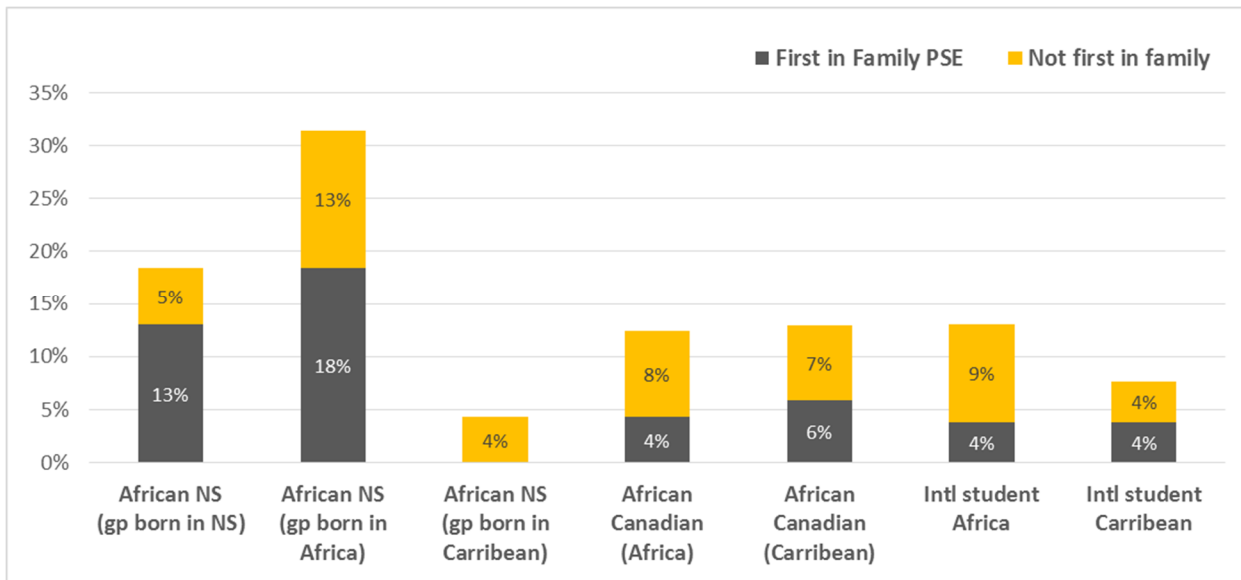


Figure 8. Proportion of African Canadian students at Dalhousie from different ethno-national groups according to parental education (i.e., first in family to attend PSE) (N=185)

Also mirroring findings from the Aboriginal students, with the exception of the few with Caribbean roots born in Nova Scotia, there is a mix of backgrounds with regard to parental education and being first in family to attend across the different groups and regions of Canada (Figure 9). As shown in Figure 10, variation also existed across groups with respect to the household income they estimated their family to have had while they were growing up. (Note that the information regarding applications, offers and enrolment had not been received from the Register's office at the time of the report).

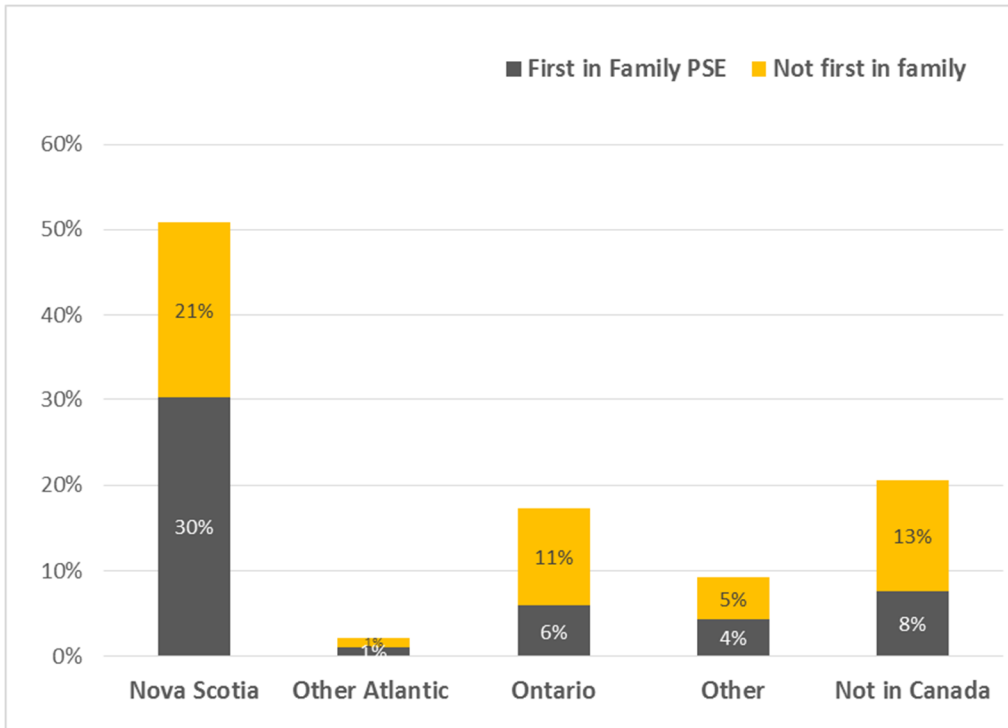


Figure 9. Proportion of African Canadian students at Dalhousie from different provinces according to parental education (i.e., first in family to attend PSE) (N=185).

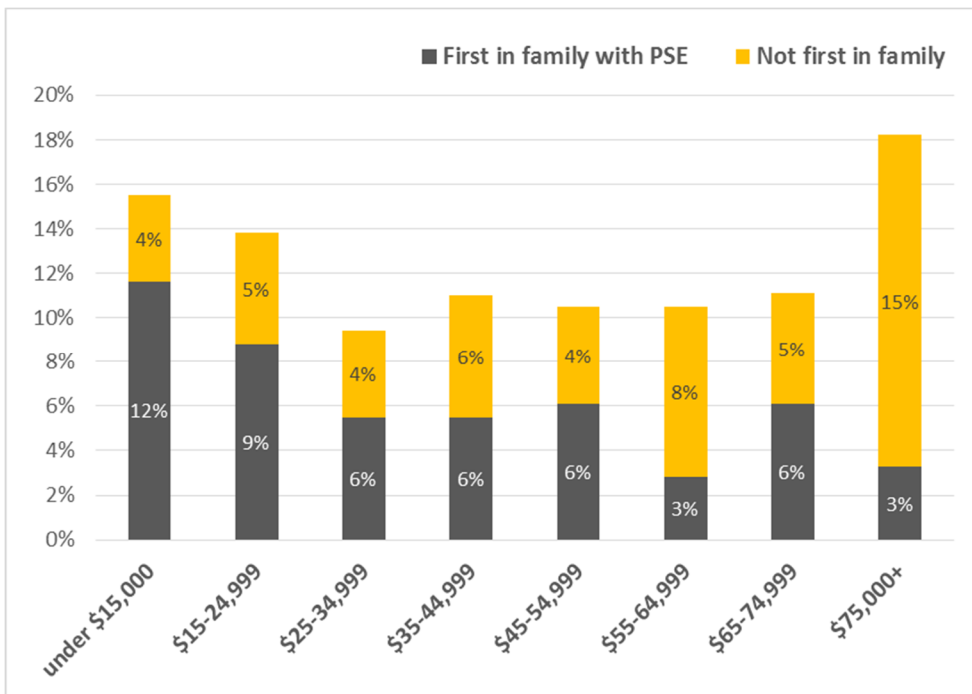


Figure 10. Proportion of African Canadian/Black students with different household incomes while growing up according to parental education (i.e., first in family).

# BARRIERS FACED BY ABORIGINAL AND AFRICAN CANADIAN STUDENTS IN CANADA, NOVA SCOTIA, AND AT DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY

During the preparation of the Belong Report, the extensive outreach carried out by Committee for Dalhousie's Strategic Initiative on Diversity and Inclusiveness revealed that "the challenges of exclusion due to hierarchies and bureaucracy are too often compounded by systemic misogyny, sexism, racism, ethnocentrism, heterosexism, colonialism, socio-economic disadvantage, ableism, ageism, sexualized violence, harassment, and discrimination." Of course, in many cases, marginalization was reported as being unintentional and a matter of unquestioned assumptions, lack of knowledge, or inadequate skills. Although there have been improvements in various respects, too many of the problems and recommendations from this recent report mirror those outlined in the 1989 Dalhousie Report entitled "Breaking Barriers: Report of the Task Force on Access for Black and Native People". This report described a complex problem of combatting systemic racism that is still relevant today:

*"...we have been forced to conclude that racism is a problem in the Nova Scotia education system.<sup>1</sup> Few of us were aware of the number and height of the barriers which face indigenous Black and Micmac [sic] students who want to pursue higher education in Nova Scotia. These barriers include racist attitudes in the larger society, low self-esteem and expectations on the part of minority students, limited financial resources and inadequate academic skills as a consequence of the pre-university educational system." (pg. 1)*

As previously described, such systemic discrimination continues to be reflected in educational disparities between Aboriginal and Black/African Canadian peoples in Canada and Nova Scotia. Aboriginal and Black/African Canadian students face numerous barriers for PSE, including being ill prepared to succeed, resulting in graduation rates well below those of non-Aboriginal and non-Black/African Canadians. Accessibility and affordability present difficulties, and students often face racism and discrimination from peers, professors and administration. Altogether too frequently, these and other factors prove to be too great a barrier to overcome and result in students dropping out (Timmons, 2009).

When high school students choose to explore their PSE options, they face many decisions before settling on an institution best suited for their career path. For many students from marginalized groups and/or who are first-generation students, the financial burdens of PSE often become the main deciding factor (Abraham & Clarke, 2006; Johnson-Bailey, 2007; St. John, Paulsen, & Faye Carter, 2005; Pluta & Penny, 2013). *Research shows that students from racialized groups are more likely to choose a PSE based on affordability, are more likely to have higher loans and grants, yet they are more likely to attend programs that are shorter and less expensive (St. John et al., 2005). Put simply, these students are in need of financial support, and even still with federal support, they are often unable to pursue four-year undergraduate degrees.*

While some First Nation and Inuit students receive federal funding to attend PSE, this funding does not meet the needs of many Aboriginal students (INDSPIRE, 2015). The costs associated with post-secondary

education have rapidly increased in recent years on a per capita basis because of increasing tuition costs and the high cost of living. Students now need computers, personal telephones and internet services, which are all added costs that funding cannot cover. (Sylliboy, 2014). Of course, these same rising costs apply to African Canadian students as well who do not even have access to targeted federal funding.

There is evidence to suggest that grants to students, which add to total assistance, are effective in increasing attendance from low-income students. This is because *low-income students have systematically different perceptions of the cost-benefit of education, and therefore require significant differential incentives as they have not experienced the benefits of education the way youth from wealthier families have*. This direct link between financial aid and cost of tuition hinders students in persisting throughout their degrees and has been linked to increased drop-out rates (Eitel & Martin, 2009; St. John et al., 2005). Indeed, *financial strains are often significant reasons for relatively higher attrition rates in students from historically oppressed and marginalized groups (Brown, Morning, & Watkins, 2005; Gibbons, Borders, Wiles, Stephan, & Davis, 2006)*. Therefore, *financial assistance in the forms of scholarships, grants, and bursaries, are extremely important to the goals of increasing access and retention of Aboriginal and African Canadian students*.

Aboriginal PSE students from across Canada and within Nova Scotia report that financial supports such as scholarships, bursaries and available housing and transportation eased the financial burdens and “stress” felt by students (INDSPIRE; Timmons). INDSPIRE, which is a national charity that provides financial support to a larger number of Aboriginal students from across Canada, has a national graduation average of 93% among the students they fund. The success of INDSPIRE students is evidence that students from marginalized cultural groups who receive financial support to attend PSE are more successful. Interestingly, despite improving rates of high school graduates in First Nations communities in Nova Scotia, students funded by INDSPIRE to attend PSE from the province had slightly lower rates compared to the national average (89%) - only higher than Nunavut, Northwest Territories, and Quebec. Note that there are no similar sources of national funding for Black/African Canadians.

In summary, evidence suggests that the following factors related to historical trauma and the history of marginalized and inadequate education in the province continue to prevent Aboriginal and Black/African Canadian students from achieving success or reaching their full potential in university:

- Financial difficulties/inadequate funding
- First in family to attend University
  - Pre-PSE education
  - Pre-PSE academic support and encouragement - lack of role models in their families and communities
- Cultural identity safety lacking and exposure to discrimination
- PSE Geographic barriers
  - personal/family issues
  - connection to community

## Aboriginal and African Canadian and African/Caribbean International Students at Dalhousie: Findings from Committee student Focus Groups and Surveys

Student surveys, student focus groups, and feedback from Access Providers and Retention facilitators at Dalhousie all suggest that funding/finances is an important determinant of access, retention and success for Aboriginal and African Canadian students. The following themes, in some cases sub-themes, were identified within the responses related to funding and financial support, and sample responses are provided:

- Unawareness of scholarships bursaries
  - “I wish I would have applied for the entrance scholarship for Aboriginal students but did not because I forgot to find out more information about the scholarship” (Aboriginal student)
  - “Not knowing about them [scholarships/bursaries], nor why I didn't receive them.” (Black/African Canadian student)
  - “lack of notifications for internal scholarships - if I knew in advance that there were so many scholarships I would have applied for them all every year but since the school did not send out any notifications about them I only knew from a friend in their final year that there was internal scholarships available (Black/African Canadian student)”
  - “I only apply for one each semester. I am not sure if there are any more than that I can apply to”. (Aboriginal student)
  - “The most significant challenge for me is finding out about them” (Black/African Canadian student)
- Process applying for scholarships/bursaries complicated/time consuming
  - Limited support prior to Dalhousie entry
    - In junior high and high school, support was very limited when trying to access information. Access to scholarship and general university information was challenging, especially for students who are the first in their family to attend post-secondary studies. University and funding information should be promoted earlier in high school so that all African Canadian students have accurate preparation for university. (paraphrased; Black/African Canadian student)
  - Complicated and time consuming
    - “With scholarships, you have to do a lot of the footwork because scholarships change so often, it's hard to keep track of them and to keep track of what changes. An updated list would be helpful.” (Aboriginal student)
    - “Applying is very confusing process and far too time consuming to balance with attending classes” (Black/African Canadian student)
    - “Contacting my band to ask for a letter of funding, then submitting it each time I applied for a scholarship/bursary is time consuming.” (Aboriginal student)
    - “The requirement to show financial need is a major hindrance.” (Black/African Canadian student)
    - “Writing a high-quality essay for a scholarship application is very time consuming and as a master's student in a very demanding program, I felt that my time was better spent with school-related work. Receiving a scholarship shouldn't be based on an essay, it should be based on the quality of students' work and the 'above and beyond' work that a student does to excel- things

that make a student too busy to write an essay about why he/she may deserve a scholarship.”  
(Aboriginal student)

- Unsure of eligibility
  - “I found that going to Dal and not being from Nova Scotia there was not many options for me to apply for scholarship-wise. The scholarship lists are so long and it’s hard to even know what you’re eligible for, so that’s why I never applied for them.” (Aboriginal student)
  - “I have to hunt for scholarship opportunities, and I am never quite sure about my grant eligibility.” (Black/African Canadian student)
  - “Because I identify as biracial, as well as appearing ethnically Caucasian, I struggle with whether to apply, vs whether funding should go to someone more integrated into FN culture/more “visible”. No logistical difficulties - scholarships and bursaries are integrated into the medical school application for scholarship funding.” (Aboriginal student)
  - “I do not qualify for all bursaries however because I am only from African Nova Scotian decent on my mother's side of the family.” (Black/African Canadian student)
  - “Not enough scholarships for Caribbean students” (Black/African Canadian student)
- Need better centralized source of information
  - “Challenging to find other funding when I was declined for a First Nations Entrance Scholarship to Dalhousie. The website for funding/grants at Dalhousie is difficult for the user and feels disorganized. It can be hard to find scholarships you actually qualify for and that are still active. I looked at over a dozen that were out of date and no longer being offered. They were still available to see on the Dalhousie site but the links were either dead or the scholarship no longer exists. Serious update necessary”. (Aboriginal student)
- Need hands-on help for scholarship applications
  - “I think it would be nice if there was some person who knew about these scholarships, and we could sit down with them, maybe through Academic Advising.” (Aboriginal student)
  - “I found them difficult to navigate and difficult to find them all in one location. I also found it difficult to find a real, live person who would be able to guide me through the process when I was entering university” (Black/African Canadian student)
  - Would like “access to bursary and loan and tutorials” (Black/African Canadian student)
- Was not eligible
  - Out of Province
    - “I have not found any options for students who originally reside outside of Nova Scotia.” (Aboriginal student)
    - “... because I am not from the east coast I get nothing with regards to being African Canadian. Despite having an extremely high GPA, it is near impossible to get adequate scholarships or bursaries to put a significant dent into school fees” (Black/African Canadian student)
    - “Providing support for Indigenous students from elsewhere, I don’t know how to approach that but perhaps all the Mi’kmaq education within Atlantic Canada should be contacted about that so that there is stronger support when you’re out of province.” (Aboriginal student)

- Grades
  - “It's hard to get funding from DAL when you're in a professional program, because it's harder to make very high grades.” (Black/African Canadian student)
- Course load
  - “Every year I have only been able to take 4 classes instead of a full course load because I cannot afford to take on more than what is required.” (Black/African Canadian student)
- Mature Students
  - “Most University Entrance Scholarships are not applicable to Mature Students, which is what I was.” (Black/African Canadian student)
- Transfer students
  - “The majority of them only count if you entered directly from high school. As a former NSAC student I did not qualify as I was in my 3rd year of study when Dal took over. They also do not provide this option if you transfer to a different program at the university.”
- Financial requirements
  - “I could not do it, I tried [to apply for scholarships/bursaries], but I worked full time to pay for school so I didn't meet their financial needs. And because they required an A, and I was making an A-, I also did not fit their academic needs.” (Aboriginal student)
- Did not want to apply for loans/accumulate debt (needed to be eligible for bursaries)
  - "The need to have student loans, I personally wish to avoid loans so that makes it hard to apply for certain scholarships/bursary" (Black/African Canadian student)
- Did not meet deadline
  - “Cut-off dates are unreasonable and rigid, the application process is very complex and there is very little help from administrators” (Aboriginal student)
  - “When I received my letter of acceptance it was already too late to apply for some bursaries once I realized that I qualify for them so I did not have the chance” (Black/African Canadian student)
  - “It is near impossible for applicants to receive scholarships or bursaries once the deadline has passed and they applied to the university late. While I completely understand the reasoning, it is also important to consider that there are sometimes unexpected circumstances that arise that force students and families to make last minute changes”. (Black/African Canadian student)
- Success with external organizations providing funding
  - “I've had a really good experience with INDSPiRE from Ontario. I'm in Law and I did the Native Personnel Program and U of S this summer and they basically paid for all of that. Because I'm not status, I'm Metis, they told me to apply anyway and because there are so few people that apply they said they'd have money for me. Then I reapplied for law school and they gave me \$4500 and I just finished the application. I also wrote a thank you donor letter for the one I got this summer, then basically just had to redo the application and send in my transcripts for regular school and it

came before school started. So I had a real good experience with them. I have a good relationship with them now, and they just walk you through it and the main thing they want is a thank you letter to the donor to show them that there are people being affected by this in a positive way. I felt so grateful for getting the money, that's why I wrote it. Many of us have applied to INDSPiRE and gotten funds from them." (Aboriginal student)

- Admission fees are high
  - "At St. FX they waive the admission fee for Aboriginal students, I think Dal could do that. Especially when you're applying to Masters programs, the price goes up. I probably won't even apply for a Masters at Dal because of that." (Aboriginal student)

#### *Aboriginal students*

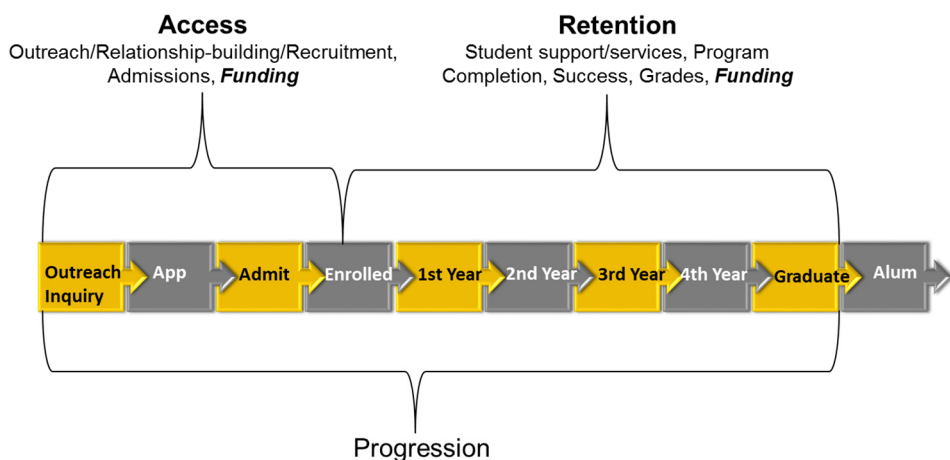
- Metis and non-Status students
  - "It was hard finding scholarships that applied to Métis that Dalhousie had available. Also even though my parents make money doesn't mean they wanted or planned on paying for my education, and since there were requirements for them to be low income for some scholarships/bursaries so I could not apply to some of the scholarships."
  - "I am not sure if I qualify for Dalhousie bursaries or scholarships because I am non-status and non-local."
- Other
  - "After I got my status card (sept. 2014) Dalhousie wouldn't let me re-apply for the scholarships offered for people of Aboriginal decent."



# REVIEW/SCAN OF EXISTING APPROACHES TO FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR ABORIGINAL AND BLACK/AFRICAN CANADIAN STUDENTS AT DALHOUSIE

In addition to financial support students may or may not be receiving from other sources (e.g., external student loans/scholarships/bursaries; family support), Dalhousie offers numerous scholarships and bursaries that are open to all prospective and current undergraduate and graduate students. As well, Dalhousie offers “targeted” funding to Aboriginal and Black/African Canadian students. Awards vary in terms of amounts and renewability, and some have specific eligibility requirements (e.g., minimum grades, from Nova Scotia, directly from high school, certain course load, faculty/program, extracurricular activities, etc.). Aboriginal and Black/African Canadian students must self-identify on their application to be considered for targeted opportunities. Certain opportunities require students to complete the “Awards Application”, or the “Dalhousie General Online Bursary Program”. Other opportunities require additional steps in the application process. Outlined below is a list of scholarships and bursaries administered by Dalhousie that are available to all students at Dalhousie, and those that are specifically for Aboriginal and Black/African Canadian students.

- **Overview of various sources of financial support/funding**
  - “Mainstream” scholarships and bursaries offered and/or administered by Dalhousie
    - For prospective undergraduate students (Access)
    - For current undergraduate students (Retention)
    - For prospective and current graduate students (Access & Retention)
  - “Targeted” scholarships and bursaries administered by Dalhousie
    - For students in targeted alternative admissions programs
    - For prospective and current undergraduate students (Entrance Awards/Access)
    - For prospective and current graduate students
  - External “Mainstream” and “Targeted” scholarships and bursaries
  - “Mainstream” External Student Loans



## **“Mainstream” scholarships and bursaries offered and/or administered by Dalhousie**

### ***For prospective undergraduate students (related to Access)***

- Entrance Awards – Registrar’s Office - Requires completion of an “Awards Application” (including all supporting documents) by March 15
  - Must be applying for admission to Dalhousie directly from high school
  - Must have a minimum 80% admissions average (regardless of citizenship; calculated based upon the five required courses for the program to which the student has applied OR 26 predicted/anticipated IB Diploma points, as of the scholarship application deadline, is required to be eligible for these scholarships)
  - Awards based on specific criteria (i.e. high school attended, program, home province, extracurricular activities etc.)
  - Ranging from \$1,000 one-time awards to \$20,000 per year
  - Some renewable (some not)
- Entrance Awards – Registrar’s Office – Requires additional application steps
  - Must have a minimum 80% admissions average (regardless of citizenship; calculated based upon the five required courses for the program to which the student has applied OR 26 predicted/anticipated IB Diploma points, as of the scholarship application deadline, is required to be eligible for these scholarships)
  - Typically geared at SPECIFIC programs and faculties
  - Some awards based on specific criteria (i.e. high school attended, program, home province, extracurricular activities etc.)
  - Some renewable some not
- Entrance Awards – Faculties/Departments/Schools - Requires separate application
  - Many faculties administer their own scholarships, awards and prizes.
- Dalhousie’s Bursary program
  - Provides funds to assist students in financial need. Bursaries are typically smaller amounts of money (from \$200-\$600), intended to supplement other funding sources.
  - May apply for bursary once per term by a specific date (Oct. 15; Jan. 2; June 15).
  - Must provide proof of financial need by filling out a bursary application through Dal Online.
  - Students expected to apply for government student loans or bank student loan programs before applying for a bursary. If not eligible for either program, must provide reasons in the bursary application.
  - Special Students are assessed on an individual basis and should attach a letter explaining what their academic goals are. Students may access the bursary program for a maximum of five years.
  - Must maintain registration at Dalhousie; be registered in a minimum of 6 credit hours of classes per term
  - Be in good standing academically
  - Students are notified approximately two weeks after the bursary deadline.

### ***For current undergraduate students (Retention)***

- Automatic Renewals to Entrance Scholarships
  - Students currently attending Dalhousie who were offered a renewable scholarship upon admission are automatically assessed for renewal of their scholarship.
  - Must complete at least 30 credit hours of for-credit coursework over two academic terms in the previous academic year (excluding transfer credits) and achieve a minimum GPA of 3.70 over the two terms being assessed.
- In-Course Scholarships
  - Mature and Transfer students considered following one year of study
  - Range from \$300 - \$3,000
  - Must complete at least 30 credit hours of for-credit coursework over two academic terms in the previous academic year (excluding transfer credits) and achieve a minimum GPA of 3.70 over the two terms being assessed.
  - Some awards based on specific criteria (i.e., program, home province, extracurricular activities, merit, GPA, full-time etc.)
  - Notice of scholarship by Dalhousie email in June/July
- Dalhousie's Bursary program
  - May apply for bursary once per term by a specific date (Oct. 15; Jan. 2; June 15).
  - See details listed above

### ***For prospective and current graduate students (Access & Retention)***

- The Faculty of Graduate Studies (FGS) administers a number of scholarships and fellowships
  - Major scholarships which require first class standing are available through federal government agencies such as the Canadian Institute for Health Research (CIHR), Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC), Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC), as well as provincial bodies such as the Nova Scotia Health Research Foundation (NSHRF). Killam scholars are selected from among the best Tri-Council (CIHR, SSHRC and NSERC) applicants.
  - Funding from the Faculty of Graduate Studies supports students who hold a first class standing upon entry. Each department is allocated funding based on a formula that rewards attracting high caliber students, using a two-step process:
    - Part A (1st round): 80% of funds are allocated using the previous year's base allocation.
    - Part B (2nd round): The remaining 20% of funds are allocated based on the number of A- or better students coming into the specific graduate program in the previous year, weighted as follows: 1 point for new Master students, 2 points for transfer from a Masters into a PhD program and 3 points for new PhDs.
    - This funding is available in the year following acceptance into the program, and varies according to the departments' ability to attract students with a first class standing. Moreover, departments are free to distribute the funding as they see fit.
    - \$3,500 per qualifying student per year.
- Dalhousie's Bursary program
  - Provides funds to assist students in financial need.

- May apply for a bursary once per academic term by a specific date (Oct. 15; Jan. 2; June 15).
- MSW and DDH Programs: Students in the Diploma in Dental Hygiene (DDH) and Masters of Social Work (MSW) apply by filling out a bursary application through Dal Online to provide proof of financial
- Students in other graduate programs – law, medicine or dentistry – need to apply for bursaries through their respective Faculty

## **“Targeted” scholarships and bursaries administered by Dalhousie**

There are scholarships and bursaries targeted to both Aboriginal and Black/African Canadian students. In some instances, the available funds come from the same pot of money; in other instances there are segregated funds targeted to each group. In some cases, these scholarships and bursaries are open to all Aboriginal and Black/African Canadian students, whereas in other cases the scholarships and bursaries target students in certain programs/faculties.

### ***For students in targeted alternative admissions programs***

- Transition Year Program (TYP)
  - Covers tuition, books, and in some cases, provides a small living allowance
  - TYP data for the last 6 years
    - Program Enrolment: 3.26 African Nova Scotian: 1 Aboriginal student (African Nova Scotian: 124; Aboriginal: 38)
    - Program Completion: 4.2 African Nova Scotian: 1 Aboriginal student (African Nova: Scotian 77; Aboriginal: 18)
- Indigenous Black & Mi’kmaq (IB&M) Initiative of the Faculty of Law
  - Partial funding for tuition, books and housing may be available on the basis of need. Students are expected to explore all financing options, including student loans, the Federal Department of Justice Legal Studies for Aboriginal People Program (LSAP), and possible Band funding, prior to the beginning of first year.
  - Students who are eligible submit a funding application to the IB&M Standing Committee. The Committee assesses each application and awards funding based on need.
- Aboriginal Health Sciences Success Program (AHSSP)
- Promoting Leadership for African Nova Scotians (PLANS)

### ***For prospective and current Undergraduate students (Entrance Awards/Access)***

- Transition Year Program (TYP) Graduates - both Aboriginal and Black/African Canadian students
  - Students who complete TYP may be eligible for a continuing tuition waiver. Bands usually cover the cost of tuition where applicable.
  - Kostman Family Bursary
  - Morris Saffron Award for student achieving the highest GPA in the TYP
- Entrance Awards - Targeted to both First Nations and Indigenous Black students (any field of study) – Administered through Registrar’s Office, Funded by Dalhousie. Requires students to complete an “Awards Application”
  - First Nations and Indigenous Black Students Entrance Scholarships

- 10 per year; \$3,000 each;
- Entrance criteria: 80% (high school) or 2.30 GPA (transfer) (same as for mainstream awards)
- Renewable for 4 years: 2.70 GPA (18 credit hours over two terms) (lower GPA and course load requirement than for mainstream awards)
- Must fill out Awards Application by March 15 every year
- One-time event held in 2014 to bring together these scholarship holders
- Targeted, privately-funded Entrance Awards to Black/African Canadian students (any field) – Administered through Registrar’s Office, funded externally. Requires students to complete Dalhousie Awards Application
  - Forsyth Family Nova Scotia Undergraduate Scholarship
    - 1 per year; up to \$20,000 per year, renewable for 4 years:
    - Entrance criteria: 80% (high school)
    - Black student from Nova Scotia; selected based on academic excellence, financial need and demonstrated participation in extra-curricular activities
  - Jeff D. and Martha Edwards Scholarship for Black Canadian and Bermudian Students
    - 2 per year; \$3,000 each, renewable for 4 years:
    - Entrance criteria: 80% (high school)
    - Entering student with preference to Canadian students of Black African descent
- Targeted Bursaries for Black/African Canadian students (any field) – Administered through the Registrar’s Office, funded externally. Requires students to apply through the Dalhousie General Online Bursary Program
  - Senator Donald Oliver Bursary for Black Atlantic Canadians
  - Charles A. Smith Memorial Bursary
  - The Rt. Honourable Robert L. Stanfield Bursary
- Targeted Scholarships for Black/African Canadian students – Specified Programs/Faculties – Administered through the Registrar’s Office, funded externally. Requires various additional steps to apply
  - Calvin Ruck Scholarship (Social Work – Undergraduate OR Masters student)
  - Imhotep’s Legacy Academy – Faculty of Medicine Summer Research Scholarship Award (\$6500)
  - Imhotep’s Legacy Academy – Faculty of Science Summer Research Scholarship Award (\$6500)
  - Imhotep’s Legacy Academy – Faculty of Engineering Summer Research Scholarship Award (\$6500)
  - Imhotep’s Legacy Academy - Faculty of Health Professions Summer Research Scholarship Award (\$6500)
  - Imhotep’s Legacy Academy – TD Bank Scholarships (STEM) (up to \$5000 per year, renewable)
  - Reverend J.W.A Nicholson Bursaries (College of Arts and Sciences)
  - Association of Black Social Workers of Canada Bursary
    - Varying amounts; some renewable some not
    - Varying eligibility criteria (i.e. high school attended, program, home province, extracurricular activities etc.)
- Targeted Scholarships for Aboriginal students – Specified Programs/Faculties – Administered through the Registrar’s Office, funded externally. Requires students to complete Dalhousie Awards Application
  - Evelyn Negus Scholarship in Nursing (Nursing)

- 1 per year; \$1000 award; Renewable for 4 years:
- Entrance criteria: 80% (high school) (same as for mainstream awards)
- Preference is given to mature students and to Aboriginal peoples (specifically members of the Mi'kmaq community)
- Targeted Bursaries for Aboriginal students – Specified Programs/Faculties – Administered through the Registrar's Office, funded externally. Requires students to apply through the Dalhousie General Online Bursary Program
  - John David and Ellen Matheson Allen Endowment Fund (College of Arts and Sciences)
    - Priority to First Nations, but where no such persons apply, the bursaries are to be given to other applicants

***For prospective and current Graduate Students***

- Targeted to both Aboriginal and Black/African Canadian students (any field of study) – Administered through the Registrar's Office, funded by Dalhousie. Requires students to complete an Awards Application
  - Nova Scotia Black and First Nations Students Graduate Entrance Scholarships
    - These scholarships are open to Indigenous Black and First Nations students, residents of Nova Scotia (first preference) or former residents returning to Nova Scotia (second preference), who have completed a Dalhousie University undergraduate program and are entering their first Dalhousie University graduate program.
    - For the purposes of this scholarship, an Indigenous Black person is one who a) is the child of birth parents at least one of whom is of African descent; b) whose parents were living in Nova Scotia at the date of birth; and, c) whose African Canadian parent(s) was (were) born in Canada.
    - In accordance with the Constitution Act, 1982, part II, Section 35(2), a First Nations applicant is an Indian, Inuit or Metis person of Canada, and a person who is accepted by one of the First Nations of Nova Scotia as a member of their community.
    - Value: \$15,000 per year, renewable for up to one year.
- Targeted Scholarships and Bursaries for Black/African Canadian students (any field) – Administered through the Registrar's Office, funded by Dalhousie. Requires students to complete an Awards Application
  - James Robinson Johnston Graduate Scholarship for African Canadians
    - Awarded to African Canadian citizens or permanent residents in Masters or Doctoral programs at Dalhousie University.
    - The Master's scholarship is valued at \$15,000 for one twelve-month academic year of full-time study. The Award is renewable, subject to an annual progress review (scholarship-class standing required). An Award can be held for a maximum of 24 months of full-time study.
    - The Doctoral scholarship is valued at \$19,000 for a twelve-month academic year. The Award is renewable, subject to an annual progress review (scholarship-class standing required). An Award can be held for a maximum of 36 months of full-time study.
  - Jack and Barbara Prince Bursary.
- Targeted Scholarships for Black/African Canadian students – Specified Programs/Faculties – Administered through the Registrar's Office, funded externally. Requires various additional steps to apply

- Calvin Ruck Scholarship (Social Work – Undergraduate OR Masters student)
- Black Business Initiative MBA Scholarship
- H. A. J. Wedderburn Scholarship in Law
- Indigenous Black & Mi'kmaq Initiative of the Faculty of Law

## External “Mainstream” and “Targeted” scholarships and bursaries

Many external scholarships and bursaries are offered to university students on behalf of outside organizations. Most are awarded annually, unless otherwise stated. Some of these awards have restrictions. The guidelines, policies, and application procedures for each award can be found on-line at the links indicated below.

- Nova Scotia, Canada: African Canadian Services Division University Entrance Scholarship
  - Applicant must be an African Nova Scotian (Black) student
  - Applicant must have successfully completed Grade 12 in the Nova Scotia school system *within the current year* having obtained an average of 75% or higher in five Grade 12 academic courses including of English 12
  - Applicant must be attending a university immediately following completion of Grade 12. Applicant must have demonstrated leadership qualities through participation in community affairs, student activities or athletics
  - Applicant must be recommended by the high school principal or guidance counsellor
  - Application Deadline: End of May
  - See <http://acs.ednet.ns.ca/content/university-entrance-scholarship>
  - Value: \$4500
- INDSPIRE
  - Applicants must be of Aboriginal heritage – available to Aboriginal students from across Canada
  - This financial assistance program includes four components: Scholarships: based on academic merit; Bursaries: based on financial need; Awards: based on both academic and financial need; and Incentives: intended to encourage students to stay in school, or to reward successful completion of each step of a program or final completion of a program. Available scholarships, awards and bursaries vary. Each application is reviewed individually, and the amount disbursed depends on the assessed financial needs of the applicant, the number of applicants, and the availability of funds.
  - Value: Historically amounts awarded have ranged from \$1,000 to \$25,000.
  - See <http://indspire.ca/for-students/bursaries-scholarships/>

### “Mainstream” External Student Loans – Need to be Repaid

There are various types of student loans available through federal, provincial and territorial governments as well as private institutions such as banks, trust companies and credit unions.

Canadian federal and provincial student loan programs were created to supplement the financial resources of students and their families and make post-secondary education accessible to as many Canadians as possible.

## Analyses of Registrar’s data related to scholarships/bursaries among Aboriginal and Black/African Canadian students

The funding data reported below from scholarships and bursaries were obtained from the Registrar’s office for the period 2000 to 2015. These data do not include student-funding support for the TYP, IB&M Faculty of Law, or Faculty administered scholarships and bursaries as these were not available to the committee.

Upon examining the data, a radical change in 2008 of funding attracted by both undergraduate and graduate students begins. As reported earlier, there is a corresponding 300% increase in the number of Black/African Canadian and Aboriginal students over the period 2008-2015. This increase still leaves Dalhousie with only 300 self-identified students in each group (i.e. 1.7% of the undergraduate population); however, the relative increase is significant. A multitude of factors may explain this trend. It is correlated with the introduction of the FNIB undergraduate scholarship program in 2008 (and that is about to expire), and may reflect a real increase in the number of students from these populations and an increase in self-identification as applicants saw the monetary value of self-identification. It would also be interesting to determine whether there is a link with outreach programs targeting these groups. We therefore recommend that **Communications and Marketing liaise with the BSAC and ABSAC to establish a public education campaign highlighting the benefits of Self-identification** in order to provide a more accurate estimate of the population. Moreover, the FNIB scholarships may have served as an attractant to students from these subpopulations; indicating the value Dalhousie placed on recruiting FNIB students.

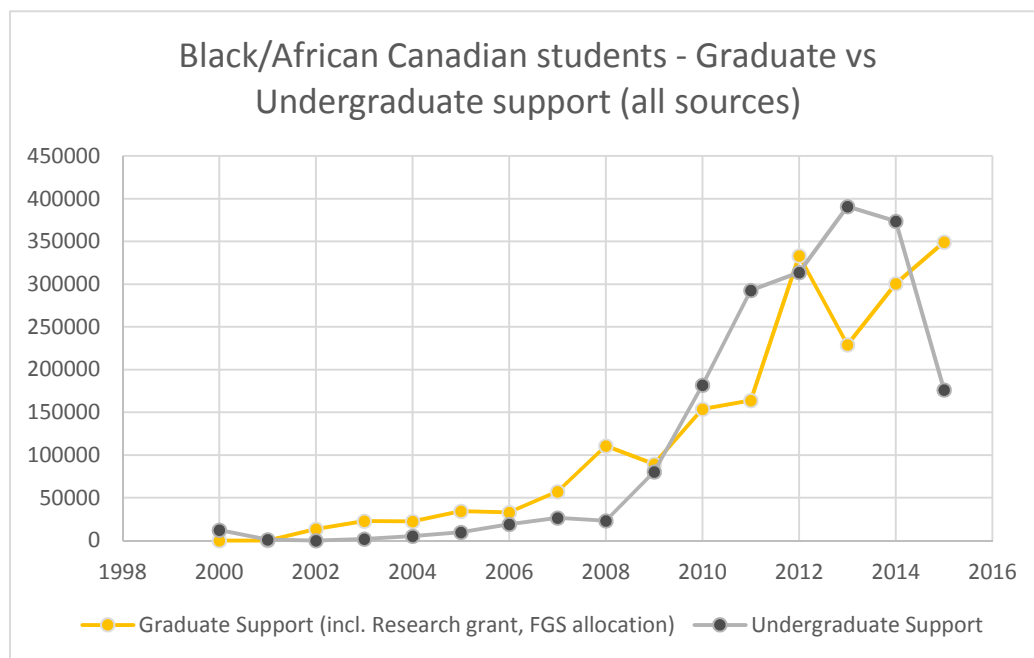


Figure 11. Graduate vs undergraduate support (excluding TYP, IB&M and Faculty administered funding) attracted by Black/African Canadian students at Dalhousie (2001-2015).



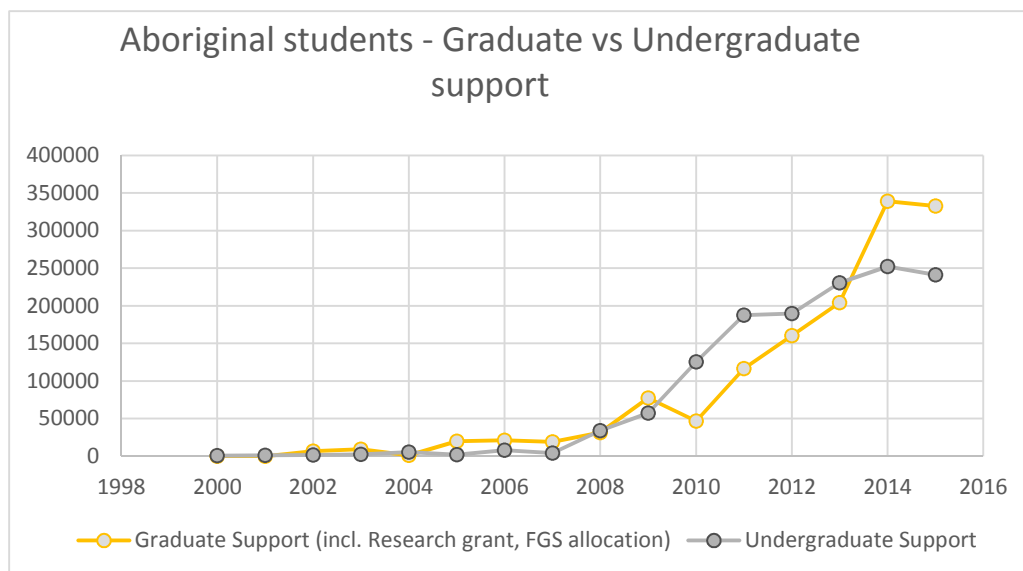


Figure 12. Graduate vs undergraduate support (excluding TYP, IB&M and Faculty administered funding) attracted by Aboriginal students at Dalhousie (2001-2015).

Funding support from all sources for both groups is about equal at the undergraduate and graduate levels. However, the value of scholarships at the graduate level is usually an order of magnitude higher, which translates to an order of magnitude fewer students supported.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Although the current report is focused on financial support for Aboriginal and Black/African Canadian students, it is important that Dalhousie also address a wide range of additional non-financial barriers. The mere provision of financial aid is not sufficient to ensure equitable access to university education for these learners (Cunningham et al., 2003; OUSA, 2010).

### General Recommendations

*Improve cultural identity safety and culturally-relevant support for prospective and current Aboriginal and Black/African Canadian students*

- 1) Create a culturally safe space for prospective and currently enrolled Aboriginal students (similar to the Black Student Advising Centre; BSAC), which will act as a source of centralized information and access to targeted support/programs aimed at improving access among Aboriginal high school students and retention among Dalhousie students. We will refer to this space as the Aboriginal Student Advising Centre (ABSAC).**

A Dalhousie specific centre for Aboriginal students is expected to have unique positive outcomes among these students (e.g., feeling more supported by Dal) – and is a key element of other proposed programming and scholarship/bursaries targeted to Aboriginal students.

The BSAC and the ABSAC should each have a dedicated section of the Dalhousie website that can collate all relevant information, carefully outlining targeted support/programs aimed at improving access and retention among Aboriginal and Black/African Canadian high school and University students. This should include a list of available internal and external funding opportunities, accompanied by an easy way to request support from their respective advisors.

- 2) Establish a new position, the ABSAC advisor (similar to BSAC advisor), who will primarily support retention of Aboriginal students at Dalhousie, including the promotion of current undergraduate students to continue on to graduate/professional degrees.** This would be a designated position for a self-identified Aboriginal person. The ABSAC advisor would act as a retention facilitator who proactively links Aboriginal students with internal and externally provided support services while at Dalhousie. This should include hands-on support in identifying and applying to internal and external (e.g., INDSPIRE) scholarships and bursaries available to Aboriginal students. The BSAC advisor should consider providing hands-on support in a similar manner.
  
- 3) Create two new positions, Co-ordinators of Aboriginal Student Access (COASA) and Black/African Canadian Student Access (COBACS), both of which would be designated positions for people who identify as Aboriginal and Black/African Canadian heritage.** Each position should be tailored to support access for Aboriginal and Black/African Canadian high school students, as significant differences exist between the two groups in terms of their histories and current contexts. Duties would include outreach, relationship building, and engagement with community organizations/schools, primarily in the Atlantic region, but also in support of national and international outreach efforts co-ordinated by the Registrar. They would provide information regarding academic programming and group-specific support services currently available to them, as well as information about academic programming available at Dalhousie. In addition, they would be knowledgeable about opportunities for internal and external scholarship and bursaries for students in middle- and high-school (including proposed Promise Scholarships), and provide hands-on help for students applying for funding (and in their applications to Dalhousie). The positions should be shared between the office of the Registrar and the BSAC/ABSAC; ratio determined by workload.  
**COBACS and COASA should act as “access brokers” to middle/high-school students by linking them with academic programming that they are eligible for.** Dalhousie should continue ongoing successful programming (e.g., Junior University for Health Professions), and consider expanding to include “access” pathways to other careers/fields they may be interested in. This could include early career advising and financial planning for university. These steps will make it clear to them that university IS possible.
  
- 4) The ABSAC and BSAC advisors should have access to the list of self-identified Aboriginal and Black/African Canadian students who indicate that they would like to receive information about**

**targeted opportunities and events.** Students could be given a choice by adding a checkbox after the question inviting them to self-identify during the application and registration process.

- 5) **Enhance data collection about diversity at Dalhousie, including periodic reports (1-2 yr. cycle) on access, success, and retention of Aboriginal and Black/African Canadian students to be provided by the COBACS and COASA.** The metrics that will be used for gauging these outcomes should be aligned with larger university led surveys that will be implemented by the Dal Analytics, in order to facilitate comparison with the larger Dalhousie student population. The data, including lists of self-identified students, should be provided to the ABSAC and BSAC to provide the opportunity for ongoing assessment of student needs and evaluation of programming, facilitating the development and implementation of services that will be effective in improving student retention and success.

The BSAC and the ABSAC should start collecting data from students regarding internally and externally provided financial support received in order to monitor concurrent and longitudinal relationships to students' success (e.g., grades, graduation rates) and retention (i.e., program completion).

- 6) **Establish additional supports/activities geared towards improving retention of first in family students from these groups (although all will be welcome), housed in the ABSAC and BSAC, including tutoring, career advising, mentoring, community-service/involvement opportunities, and hands-on support applying for external awards (as noted earlier – some of these supports will be specifically linked to renewable funding).**

Supports targeting group-specific (or sub-group specific) cultural issues related to education should be considered. For example, the Indian Residential school system has resulted in mistrust and varied perceptions of mainstream education in some communities, with many seeing it as a continued form of assimilation. For this reason, it appears that Aboriginal students may need targeted support, encouragement, and career advising from supportive adults.

Both groups will also benefit from having opportunities for interaction with peer and adult mentors and role models from their cultural group while at Dalhousie. Based on our various sources of evidence, it is anticipated that the Dalhousie Diversity Faculty Award Program will also contribute to improved cultural identity and safety among Aboriginal and African Canadian students.

**Provide services through the BSAC and ABSAC to align with our recommendation of the centralization of targeted information and support services.** The aim of this programming is to facilitate the positive effects of scholarships/bursaries by simultaneously supporting the causal pathways that link funding to retention/success. In addition to relieving stress and freeing up time for studies that would otherwise be spent working, institutional scholarships/funding are related to positive student outcomes through additional mechanisms including fostering a sense of institutional belonging, reducing stress, facilitating time for positive social interactions, as well as encouragement to take part in activities that will achieve these outcomes (lit review). By linking scholarships with programming that supports student success and retention through these additional pathways, it is expected that students will feel more at home and better supported by Dalhousie, which is expected to translate into better academic outcomes and improved retention. It is also expected that the additional supports will have a synergistic effect when combined with financial support (literature

review). By building a cohort of scholars the “Posse” effect can be realized, in which the targeted students support and encourage one another to greater achievement, reach back to help bring others into the university and are mindful of support for one another as they pursue careers following graduation. That is, **the scholars themselves can be facilitators of access, retention and success.**

*“First generation university attendees in minority groups are more likely to persist and succeed with additional supports. This could include a dedicated academic advisor assigned to them upon entrance to the university, and other mechanisms to foster a sense of belonging and engagement with the institution. Additionally, students are more likely to stay at the university if they connect early and meaningfully with a faculty member. Students who received scholarships from the university and deemed to be higher risk for not graduating (i.e., first generation post-secondary attendees, African American students, and American Indian students). These required additions included peer coaching, mentoring and financial literacy training. These students were offered regular, in-person touch points for advising. Additionally, they were paired with volunteer professionals, who acted as mentors throughout the student’s degree. Students with these mentors had a 93% retention rate from 1st to 2nd year.*

*They have found that when a student has a strong connection to someone on campus, they are more likely to be successful. Additionally, renewal requirements for awards are based on more than satisfactory academic progress. Renewal requirements included the provision of a thank-you letter to the donor, attendance at a set number of special events, and the completion of financial literacy sessions (ideally in-person) as well as regular check-ins with their academic advisor on progress and attendance. These requirements were listed for the student before they accepted the scholarship.”* (Kate Somers report from Scholarship Providers Association meeting, attached)

As well, the literature suggests increased financial literacy education for first-generation students preparing to enter university helps decrease stressors (Eitel & Martin, 2009).

- 7) Like Cape Breton University, which is perceived by Aboriginal students as more welcoming, establish **designated seats for representatives from the Aboriginal and Black/African Canadian communities to sit on the Board of Governors and Senate.**
  
- 8) **Establish two positions at the Associate/Assistant VP level to ensure that cultural safety among each of these subpopulations remains integral to all conversations at the highest levels of the university.** Again, with the exception of the TYP and IB&M, the individuals should have budgetary control over resources destined for these populations, and report on an annual basis to relevant stakeholders. They would follow a transparent process for the allocation of resources. They would liaise with groups serving these populations, and their office would act as a central repository for relevant data. The individual would ensure that in the realm of Teaching, Research and Administration, adequate attention is paid to the full participation of these communities as they would engage in regular dialogue with senior administrators/units, including (but not limited to)

- a. the VP- Advancement and Board of Governors, to raise financial support in aid of realizing the various recommendations related to these subpopulations;
- b. the VP-Research, to encourage the growth of research on these subpopulations, which informs best practices;
- c. the VP-Academic and Senate, to provide mechanisms which encourage incorporation of the experiences of these groups into courses and curricula of the academy, in aid of increased retention and (likely) recruitment.
- d. the Registrar, to enhance recruitment of these subpopulations in consultation with access providers who already have programs serving these communities.

These individuals would be ambassadors for these underserved and historically disadvantaged populations. **They would develop a Strategic plan for achieving improved access, retention and success of these populations, and we recommend the creation of community advisory boards to guide and support their efforts.**

**9) To increase the number of faculty from these populations during regular searches (as distinct from the targeted DDFA search process), each Faculty and Department or Unit should develop a roster of advocates who can actively participate on search committees.** Roster members are those who have advocated, or trained comprehensively to become an advocate, on behalf of these populations. Visible symbols of support for these groups (e.g. in the form of a sticker) can be displayed in the workspace of these advocates. These advocates would highlight the goal of enhancing diversity **during** the hiring process, to ensure proper accountability.

**10) Attract students from across Canada by supporting a unique-in-Canada minor (Appendix F) and, eventually, major in African Canadian/African studies by leveraging the DDFA, JRJ Chair position and the unique history of Black/African Canadian settlement in the region.** Such a program would likely enhance Black/African Canadian enrollment, and may also attract students from the United States where demographic increases in the African American population are ongoing. Dalhousie could take its rightful place in Canada as the destination for Black/African Canadian scholarship. **Likewise, continued support should be provided to help build and grow the newly developed Indigenous minor, and a major could be developed in the future.**

**11) Dalhousie also needs to recognize that it is located on unceded Mi'kmaq territory, and that the treaty rights of Aboriginal peoples to post-secondary education are not being fulfilled. In recognition of that fact, we recommend some formal acknowledgement by the university president on behalf of the university community.**

## Recommendations Specific to Funding

*Improve retention and success of Aboriginal and Black/African Canadian students through equitable distributions of funding and scholarships/bursaries that are linked with student support services*

**12) Scholarships for Aboriginal and Black/African Canadian groups should come from two separate pots of money and targeted to each group independently, to enhance tracking and allow for funding to be distributed in ways that meet the unique needs of each group (and subgroups within these communities).** Associated advertisement should speak the “language” of each community, which are similar in many ways but also very distinctive. The BSAC and ABSAC advisors should be a source of information on both internal and external scholarships to current students, and provide hands-on support in applying to various opportunities.

**13) Grow targeted scholarship/bursary support to at least 16% of the total Student Assistance administered by AVP Enrolment (8% for each group). Currently, targeted funding for both these populations amounts to 10% of total student assistance. Consequently, an increase of 6%, equivalent to about \$500,000, should be added to the existing support, equally divided among the subpopulations (reflecting their respective enrollment levels at Dalhousie, and population in Canada).**

**14)** From 2005-2015, the First Nations and Indigenous Black Scholarship (FNIB Scholarships) program has had 10 scholarships available per year, renewable for three years at \$3000/year. Assuming 100% retention, the total amount committed by Dalhousie to these students over the life of the program (2005-2015) was \$1,008,000. At this time, only two-thirds of the allocated funds (\$666,000) have been disbursed because of the overall retention rate of 57% (see *Figure 13*). This retention rate is significantly less than that reported in the general student population (90%) for similar renewable scholarships. Of note, the retention rate for the two groups differs significantly, with higher retention rates among First Nations students. Over time, this has meant that while more African Nova Scotian students have received these scholarships upon entry, an increased proportion of the scholarships are held by First Nations students (see *Figure 14* and *Figure 15*).

**Consistent with the separation principle outlined in recommendation 12, we recommend that:**

- i. The FNIB scholarship be split into one named 1) Mi'kmaq/Maliseet entrance scholarship (eligible to students of Mi'kmaq and Maliseet heritage) and 2) Historical African Nova Scotian entrance scholarship (eligible to students of historical African Scotian descent).**
- ii. the value of the scholarships be increased to \$5000/year;**
- iii. there be planned annual increases to the \$5,000 scholarships that align with increases in tuition fees and cost of living;**
- iv. that there be 10 scholarships established for each subpopulation**

- v. that any unused funds within the allocation envelope be redistributed to support students within each population who demonstrate additional financial need or who are “first in family”; or reallocated to increase the number of scholarships in subsequent years or the value of the scholarships in the current year.

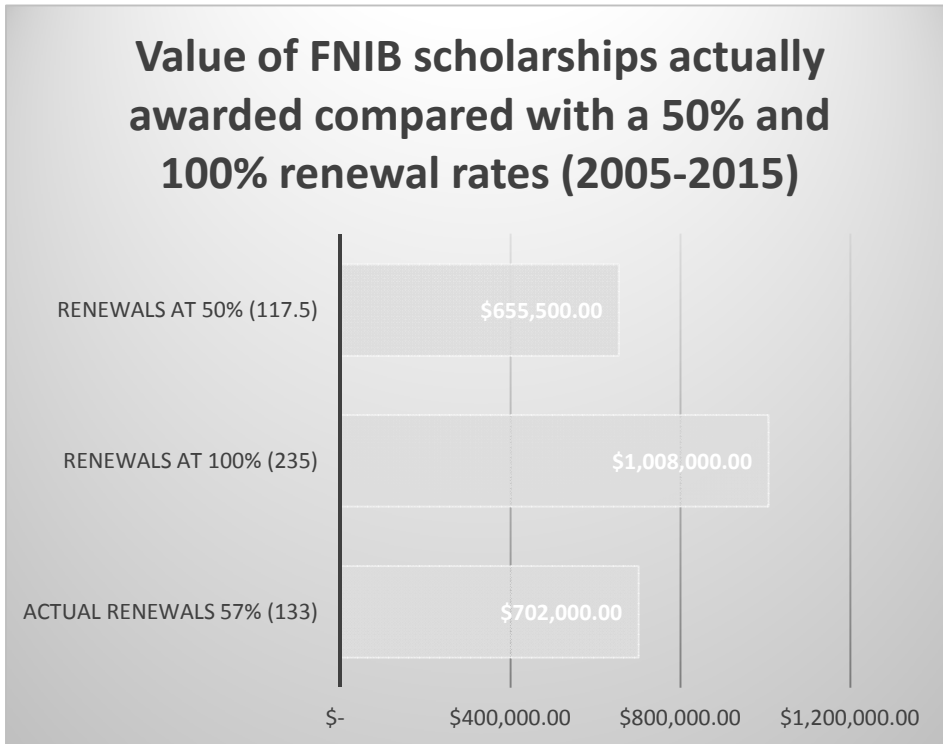


Figure 13. The value of scholarships received (including renewals) under the FNIB program since its establishment, compared with the value expected if renewed at a rate of 50% or 100%.

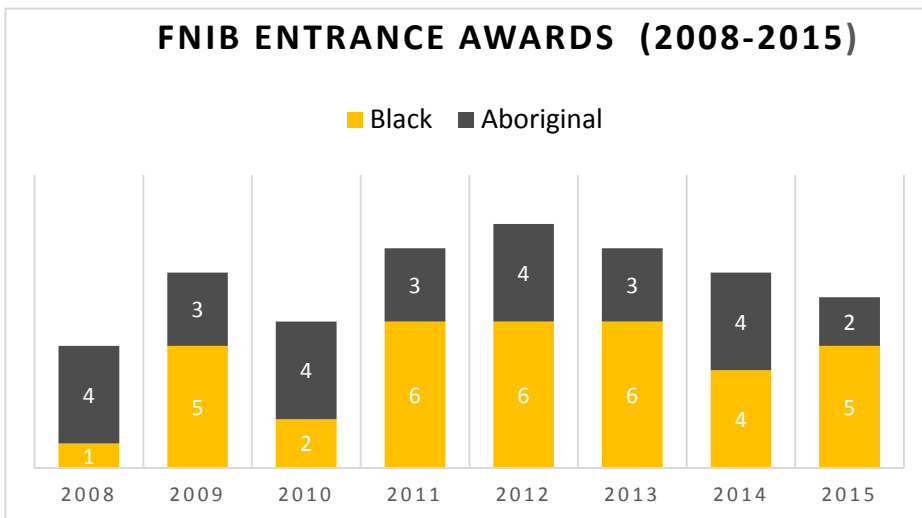


Figure 14. The number of entrance awards received by Black/African Canadians and Aboriginal students under the First Nations and Indigenous Black (FNIB) Scholarship program, since 2008.

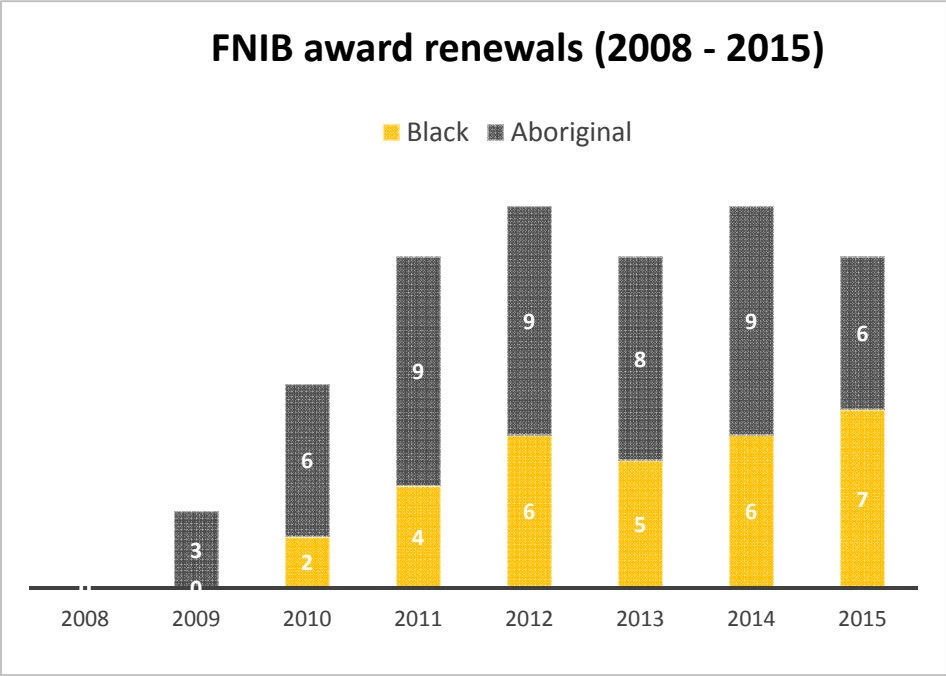


Figure 15. The number of award renewals for Aboriginal and Black/African Canadian students under the FNIB scholarship program since 2008.



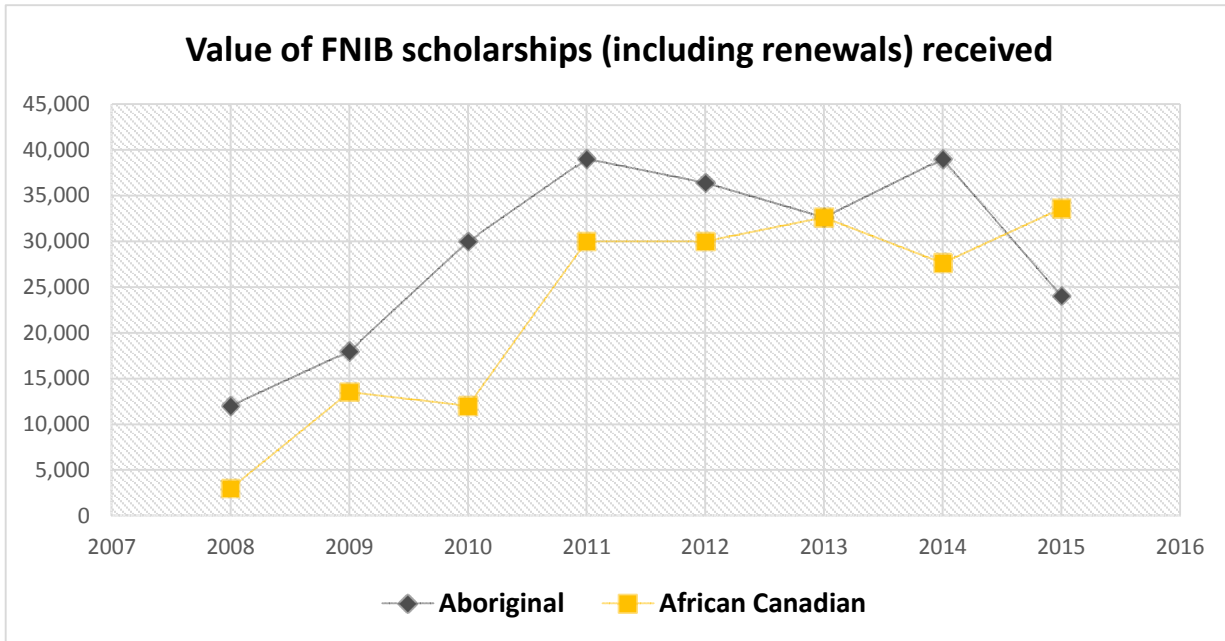


Figure 16. The value of FNIB scholarships received by Aboriginal and Black/African Canadian students since 2008.

**15) We recommend Dalhousie create two new undergraduate entrance scholarships for which all Aboriginal and Black/African Canadian students are eligible.** Students from these subpopulations come from a variety of backgrounds (see Fig. 1 and 5 for Aboriginal and Black/African Canadians) and may need differing levels of support depending on parental education and economic background.

In the selection of recipients adjudicators should consider several factors, including whether the applicant is from a rural or urban area, on or off reserve, in Mi'kmaq/Maliseet territory, has financial need, is the first in their family to pursue post-secondary studies, resides in NS. A working group should be struck to establish the specific terms of reference.

- a) **The scholarships should be named to reflect the population they target:**
  - i) **Black/African Canadian undergraduate entrance scholarship, and**
  - ii) **Aboriginal undergraduate entrance scholarship**
- b) **\$250K per annum should be set aside for each of these new scholarships**
- c) **The value of these renewable scholarships should be \$5000.**
- d) **The scholarships should be renewable for a further three years, and students who lose their scholarship should be able to regain it - through a “rebound” or “bounce-back” approach**

- e) **10 renewable scholarships should be offered each year, corresponding to a maximum of 40 scholarships at any given time( \$200K of the \$250K proposed in #13). ”; and any unused funds be reallocated to increase the number of scholarships in subsequent years or the value of the scholarships in the current year.**
- f) **Additional support for first in family and those with demonstrated financial need should be drawn from the remaining funds (\$50K of the \$250K proposed in #13)**

**16)** Unused funds should be reallocated to supplement the value of the scholarship, or increase the number of scholarships in subsequent years. Across faculties, Dalhousie has seen huge gains (~300%) in the number of self-identified African/Black Canadians (131 to 387 registered and self-identified in 2008-09 and 2011-12, respectively) and Aboriginal students (98 to 344 registered and self-identified in 2008-9 and 2012-13, respectively) since 2008-09. A corresponding growth in accessing non-targeted support at both the graduate and undergraduate levels are evident (*Figure 17*). This increase may be due to several factors, but there exists an interesting linear increase following the establishment of the FNIB scholarship program (in 2005) and growth of the number of students and/or desire to self-identify. Perhaps applicants saw the value of self-identification as having some direct benefit! **Targeted financial support for these students should be indexed to**

inflation, and as a fraction of the overall university spending on scholarships/bursaries should represent at least double their proportion in the Canadian population (i.e. 8%).

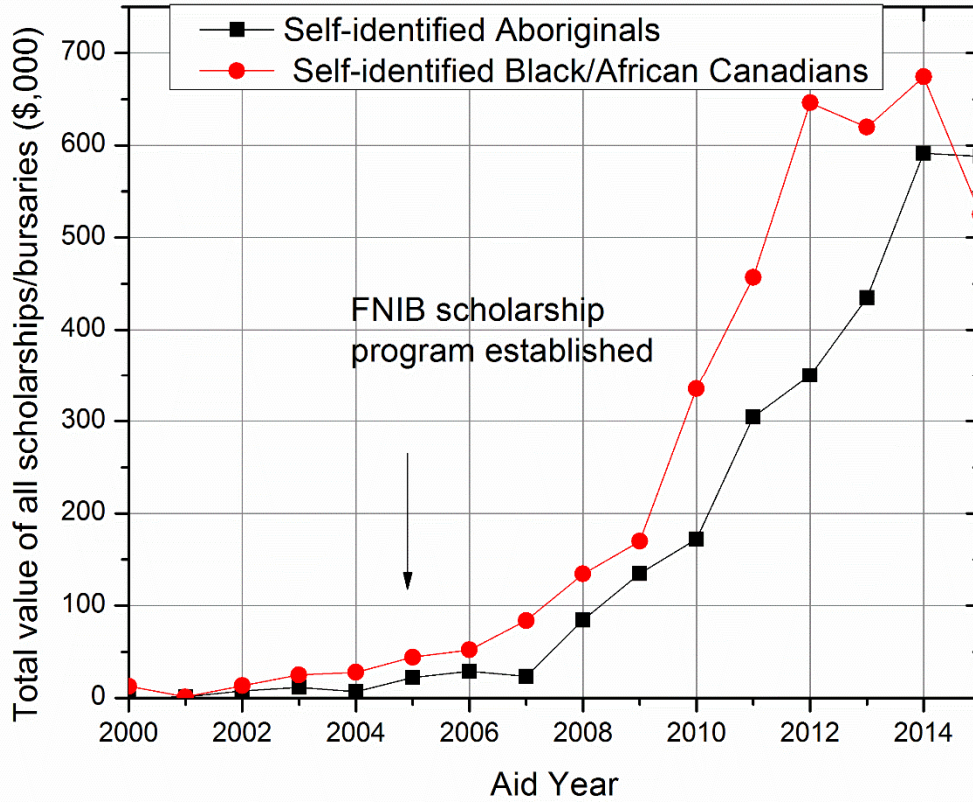


Figure 17. Total value of all scholarships/bursaries (excluding TYP, IB&M and Faculty administered funding) attracted by Aboriginal and Black/African Canadian students at Dalhousie (2000-2015).

17) Bursaries account for about half of the support received by undergraduate Aboriginal and Black/African Canadian students (Figure 18). These students qualify for financial aid at a very high level, which is a reflection of the fact that they are overrepresented in the lower rungs of the socioeconomic ladder. Moreover, because the value of each bursary is small in comparison to scholarships, the trends below point to a large number of students accessing this resource. The proportion is increasing monotonically among Aboriginal students and has been high for some time among Black/African Canadian students. A key question is related to how this fraction compares with undergraduate students from the general student population.

**We recommend linking bursary support to other supports, as these students are likely working to support their education. A survey of this subset of students would identify what supports are most effective.**

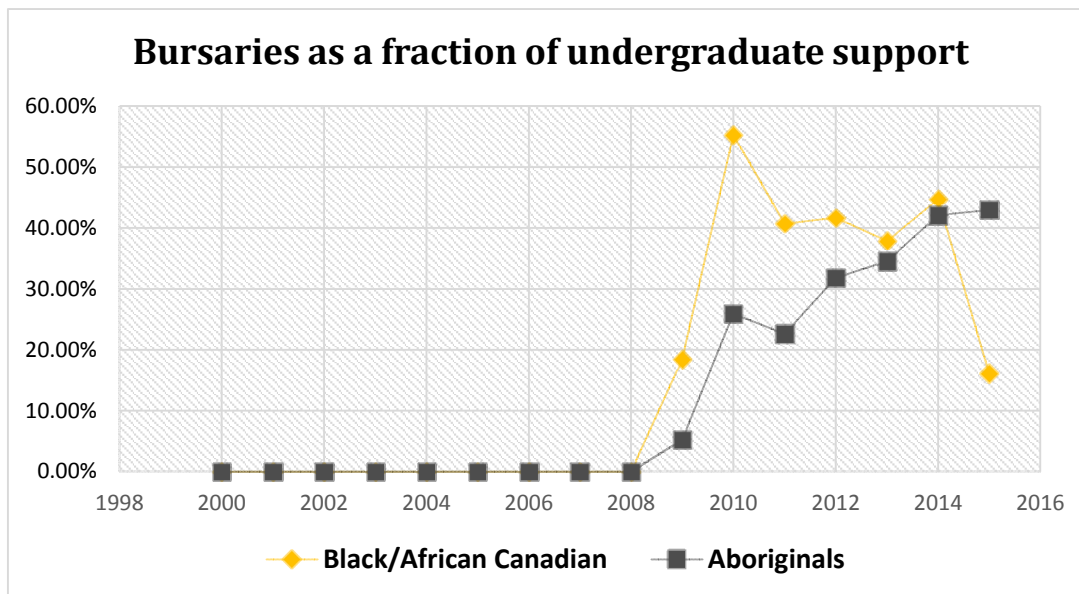


Figure 18. Bursaries as a fraction of total undergraduate support received by Black/African Canadians and Aboriginal students at Dalhousie (2000-2015).

18) Targeted funding support for graduate students from these populations is meagre ( Figure 19 and Figure 20). Most (94 %) support for graduate studies comes from non-targeted support streams. The scholarships that are available, including the NS Black and First Nations Graduate Scholarship (\$15,000 per year) and the James Robinson Johnson Graduate scholarships (\$15,000 per year) represents a decreasing proportion (presently at 6%) of funding among other external (Killam, NSERC,SSHRC,NSHRF) and internal (FGS, Research grants) sources. **The existing FNIB graduate scholarship should be revised to mirror recommendation 14, and new graduate scholarships be established in concert with recommendation 15.** These scholarships should be consistent with the generally accepted principle that graduates should gain alternative perspectives by conducting advanced studies at an institution different from their undergraduate one.

Judging by the sizeable research funding attracted by these populations, it is quite evident that they are very active in research programs across the institution; and that they are of high caliber as judged by the FGS allocation and external scholarships, which are awarded to students with a first class standing. Moreover, there appears to be a correspondingly large increase in the students from these populations.

**We recommend that each faculty establish two scholarships to target these populations based on a combination of sources. For example, a portion of the allocation granted each department from the Faculty of Graduate Studies (the so-called FGS allocation) could be designated for underrepresented groups, at say \$8-10,000 per student, and supplemented with matching funds from other sources, such as faculty Research grants in programs where this is a common practice (e.g. the Faculty of Science).**

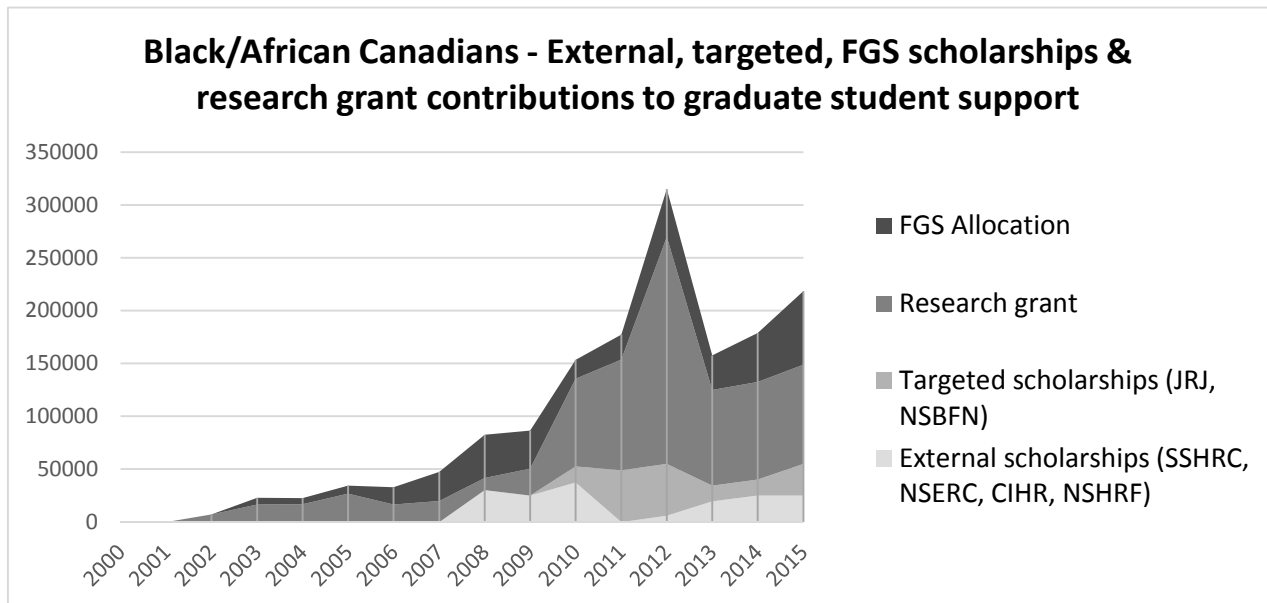


Figure 19. The value of support attracted by Black/African Canadian graduate students from targeted (JRJ, NSBFN) and non-targeted (Research grants, FGS allocation, External scholarships) sources.

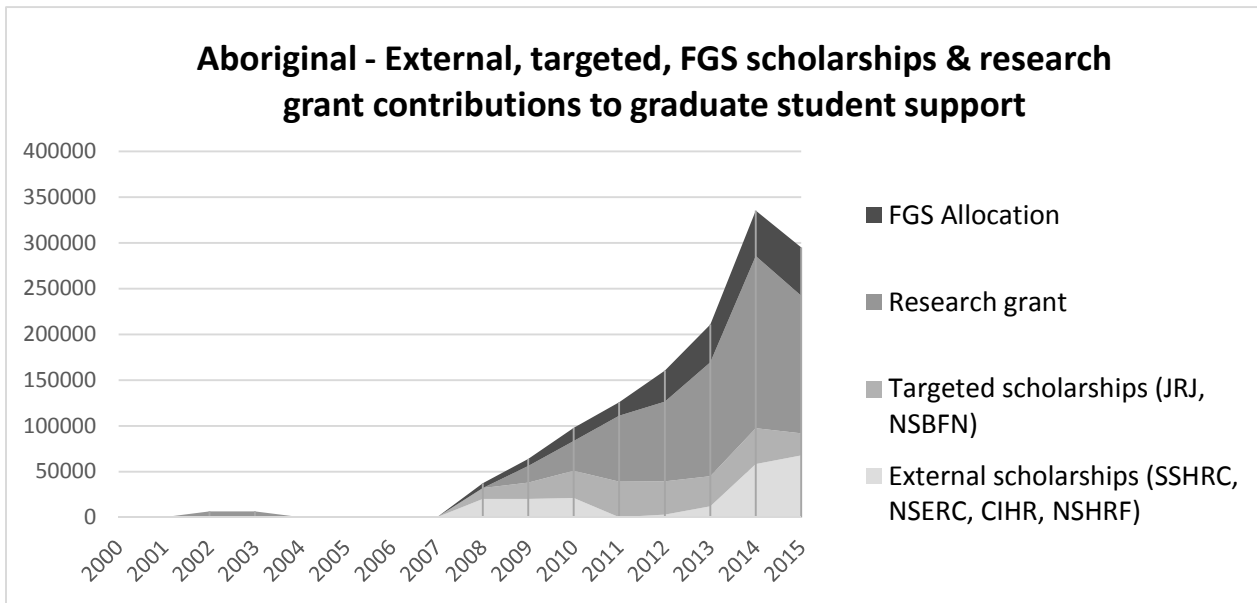


Figure 20. The value of support attracted by Aboriginal graduate students from targeted (JRJ, NSBFN) and non-targeted (Research grants, FGS allocation, External scholarships) sources.

Aboriginal students attract equal support from non-targeted vs targeted undergraduate entrance scholarships (Figure 21), whereas Black/African Canadian students have primarily attracted support from non-targeted streams (Figure 22) until very recently. There appears to be demand to expand the number of targeted scholarships for this purpose.

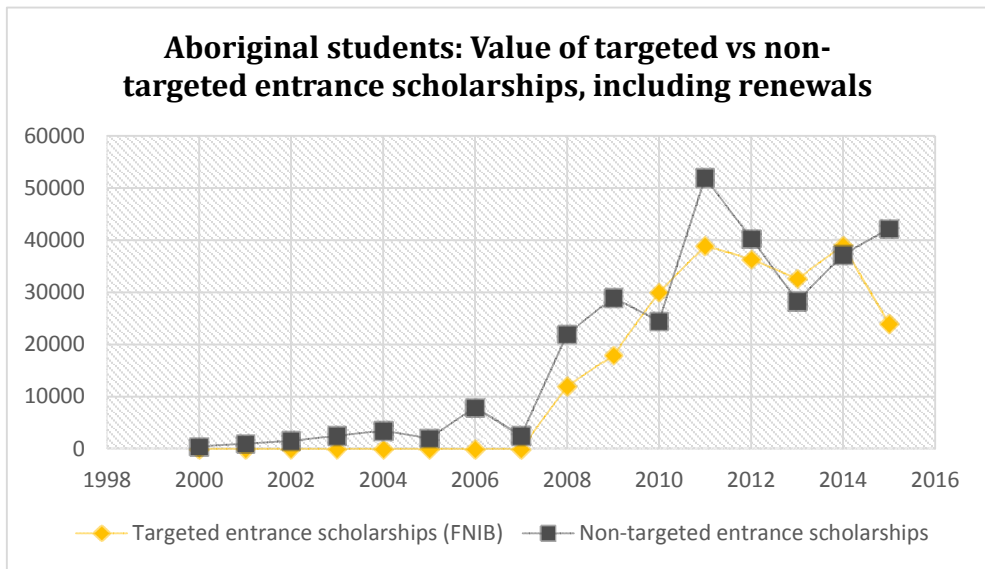


Figure 21. The value of targeted vs. Non-targeted entrance scholarships (including renewals) attracted by Aboriginal students.

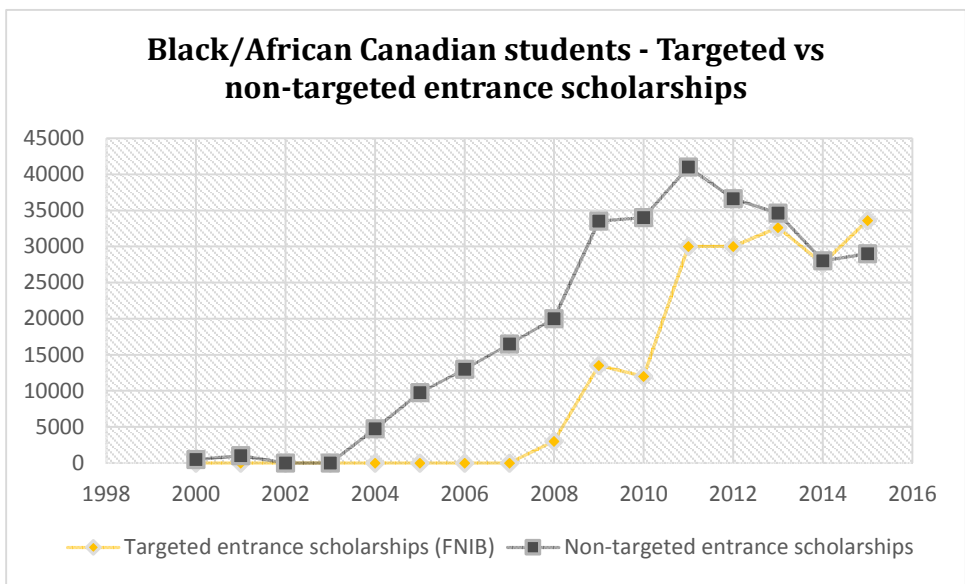


Figure 22. The value of targeted vs. Non-targeted entrance scholarships (including renewals) attracted by Black/African Canadian students.

**19)** Rural students are underrepresented in university studies, and in the context of Aboriginal students, prospective students on-reserve face formidable geographic barriers. Altogether too frequently, this separation proves to be too great a barrier to overcome and results in students dropping out (Brade, Duncan & Sokal, 2003; Ryan, 1995), or not pursuing post-secondary studies. What is the maximum distance people will travel to a post-secondary institution? All agreed that 45-60 minutes is reasonable for travel time to any institution, 2 days per week, not daily (Sylliboy, 2014). **We recommend the provision of subsidized accommodation and transportation to students who reside in distant communities and/or consider distance education options for such students.**

**20)** Dalhousie University should **continue its ongoing commitment to the Transition Year Program (TYP), the Indigenous Black and Mi'kmaq Program (IB&M), the Aboriginal Success Program (formerly Aboriginal Health Sciences Initiative), and the Promoting Leadership in Health for African Nova Scotians (PLANS) program. In particular, TYP should be supported in their ongoing efforts to increase enrollment of Aboriginal students (which have historically been relatively low), by allocating a fixed budget and student quota for each subpopulation. In the event that the quota is not achieved, unused funds should be maintained for additional outreach activities within the respective subpopulation.**

*Improve pathways for Aboriginal and African Canadian students in middle- and high school through Promise Scholarships, advanced admission, improved access to pre-university support programming and academic programs which are reflective of their experiences (e.g. Black studies, Aboriginal Studies programs)*

**21)** The COBACS and the COASA should engage with organizations serving these communities to enhance their connection to Dalhousie and develop the terms of reference for Promise scholarships. This may also include consideration of advanced admission for Aboriginal and African Canadian students in middle- and/or high-school who identify University as a future goal (see Appendix E for summary of literature review supporting success of promise scholarships). Like the impact seen in self-identification, and perhaps enrollment growth, attributed to the establishment FNIB scholarships, one may likewise expect an additional positive impact by establishing Promise scholarships (see attached list of organizations and their response to our survey). As such, we recommend Dalhousie:

- a. Establish promise scholarships by working with Aboriginal and Black/African Canadian community organizations, band councils and representatives.**
- b. Set aside protected funding in the amount of \$100K per annum for each population for this scholarship. These scholarships would be attractive to external donors who wish to “make a difference” in marginalized communities (e.g. ILA-TD Promise scholarships)**
- c. Identify student through their participation in recognized access programs**
- d. Incorporate incremental increases in the promise on the basis of continuing participation in the recognized access program**
- e. Ensure participants can build their promised amount to at least \$5000, renewable for a further three years of their undergraduate degree.**



*f. Establish a process of assessment for recognition of an access program participation, based on their demonstrated or potential ability to guide students into post-secondary studies. (Note that this is a practice used by Dalhousie in its international recruitment efforts)*

**22) Incorporate, into the university's base budget, salary support for key personnel in existing outreach programs which successfully target these populations – to enhance continuity, and attract the best candidates into these roles.** These organizations are likely to have demonstrated to external donors their effectiveness on a yearly basis. Evaluate the effectiveness of each program in attracting students to Dalhousie, and establish fixed funding to support key staff in each organization.

**23) The Advisory Committee for PLANS (Promoting Leadership in health for African Nova Scotians) recommends the inclusion of professional programs in the report's recommendation of increase funding and scholarship opportunities for graduate students.** Some of Dalhousie's professional programs do not require a completed Bachelor's degree as a prerequisite and are not considered a traditional graduate program. For example, pharmacy and dentistry, requires a minimum of one full year and two full years, respectively, of undergraduate studies to be eligible for admissions.

With the implementation of PLANS, as well as the Aboriginal Health Sciences Initiative, enrollment in the health programs – at the undergraduate, graduate, and professional levels - is changing and on the rise. Nova Scotia's Black and Aboriginal communities need to be represented in these classrooms as well as in the community as working professionals. However, tuition for the graduate and professional programs are costly and can deter students from considering a health profession. Within the Faculty of Medicine, there is a one-time bursary available for first year African Nova Scotian and Aboriginal medical student and more support is warranted. Financial assistance for students in Medicine, Dentistry and the Health Professions, would support both recruitment and retention priorities for PLANS and the university.

# SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

**In summary**, the goals of this holistic approach to supporting our Aboriginal and Black/African Canadian students, through financial, education, social, and cultural means will:

- 1) Enhance the sense of belonging at Dalhousie and perceived campus climate with respect to diversity;
- 2) reduce stress;
- 3) improve perceived social support;
- 4) develop leadership skills and perceived empowerment to effect change;
- 5) develop literacy/writing skills;
- 6) provide opportunities to serve as a role model – all of which have been linked with improved retention and success among students coming from historically disadvantaged communities. By building upon the success of Dalhousie initiatives including the FNIB scholarship program, JRJ Chair graduate scholarships, Dalhousie Diversity Faculty Award program and others, we are likely to see growth in the population of these communities from their present low levels of about 2%.

*Table 1. Summary of recommendations and relationship to Priorities set by the President’s 100 days of listening exercise.*

#	Recommendation	Person/Unit responsible	Budget	Priority
1	Create a culturally safe space for prospective and currently enrolled Aboriginal students (similar to the Black Student Advising Centre (BSAC)), which will act as a source of centralized information and access to targeted support/programs aimed at improving access among Aboriginal high school students and retention among Dalhousie students	Vice Provost – Student Affairs	TBD	1.1 5.2
2	Establish a new position, the ABSAC advisor (similar to BSAC advisor), who will primarily support retention of Aboriginal students at Dalhousie (including the promotion of current undergraduate students to continue on to graduate/professional degrees).	Vice Provost – Student affairs	\$60,000 per annum	1.1 5.2
3	Create two new positions, Co-ordinators of Aboriginal Student <u>Access</u> (COASA) and Black/African Canadian Student <u>Access</u> (COBACS), both of which would be designated positions for people who identify as Aboriginal and Black/African Canadian heritage.	Vice Provost – Student affairs and the Registrar	\$40,000 per annum (x 2)	1.2 5.2
4	Authorize the ABSAC and BSAC advisors access to the list of self-identified Aboriginal and Black/African Canadian students who indicate	Registrar; Dal Analytics	Nil	1.2 5.2

	that they would like to receive information about targeted opportunities and events			
5	Enhance data collection about diversity at Dalhousie, including periodic reports (1-2 yr cycle) on access, retention and success of Aboriginal and Black/African Canadian students.	Dal Analytics	TBD	5.2
6	Establish additional supports/activities geared towards improving retention of first in family students from these groups, housed in the ABSAC and BSAC, including tutoring, career advising, mentoring, community-service/involvement opportunities, and hands-on support applying for external awards.	Vice Provost – Student Affairs	TBD	1.1 5.2
7	Designate a representative from both the Aboriginal and Black/African Canadian communities to sit on the Board of Governors and on the Senate.	Senate chair; Board chair	Nil	5.2
8	Establish two positions at the Associate/Assistant VP level to ensure that cultural safety among each of these subpopulations remains integral to all conversations at the highest levels of the university. They would engage in regular dialogue with senior administrators/units, including (but not limited to) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. the VP- Advancement and Board of Governors, to raise financial support in aid of realizing the various recommendations related to these subpopulations;</li> <li>b. the VP-Research, to encourage the growth of research on these subpopulations, which informs best practices;</li> <li>c. the VP-Academic and Senate, to provide mechanisms which encourage incorporation of the experiences of these groups into courses and curricula of the academy, in aid of increased retention and (likely) recruitment.</li> <li>d. the Registrar, to enhance recruitment of these subpopulations in consultation</li> </ul>	President & Provost	\$100,000 per annum	5.2 5.7 4.5 2.1

	with access providers who already have programs serving these communities. They would develop a Strategic plan for achieving improved access, retention and success of these populations, and we recommend the creation of community advisory boards to guide and support their efforts.			
9	Develop a roster of advocates who can actively participate on search committees in order to increase the number of faculty from these subpopulations during regular searches (as distinct from the targeted DDFA search process)	Deans	Nil	5.1 5.2 2.2
10	Support a unique-in-Canada minor and, eventually, major in African Canadian/African studies by leveraging the DDFA, JRJ Chair position and the unique history of African Canadian settlement in the region. Likewise, in addition to the newly developed Indigenous minor, a major could be developed in the future.	Dean – Faculty of Arts and Social Science	TBD	1.5 2.2
11	Formally recognize that Dalhousie University is located on unceded Mi'kmaq territory. This should be done as a historical moment by the University president and recognized in myriad ways thereafter (e.g., welcoming at the start of conferences held on campus).	President	Nil	5.2
12	Establish <i>protected</i> funding allotments for Aboriginal and Black/African Canadian groups from two separate pots of money and targeted to each group separately, to enhance tracking and allow for funding to be distributed in ways that meet the unique needs of each group (and subgroups within these communities).	Provost	\$600,000 (Aboriginal); \$600,000 (African Canadian) i.e. \$250K increase each to existing targeted funding	2.1 5.2
13	Grow targeted scholarship/bursary support to at least 16% of the total Student Assistance administered by AVP Enrolment (8% for each group). Currently, targeted funding for both these populations amounts to 10% of total student assistance. Consequently, an increase	Provost	\$500,000/yr	1.1 1.2 5.2

	of 6%, equivalent to about \$500,000, should be added to the existing support.			
14	<p>The FNIB scholarship be split into one named i) <u>Mi'kmaq/Maliseet undergraduate entrance scholarship</u> (eligible to students of Mi'kmaq and Maliseet heritage) and ii) <u>Historical African Nova Scotian undergraduate entrance scholarship</u> (eligible to students of historical African Scotian descent).</p> <p>i. the value of the scholarships be \$5000/year;  ii. there be planned annual increases to the \$5,000 scholarships that align with increases in tuition fees and cost of living;  iii. that there be 10 scholarships established for each subpopulation;  iv. that any unused funds within the allocation envelope be redistributed to support students within each population who demonstrate additional financial need or who are "first in family"; or reallocated to increase the number of scholarships in subsequent years or the value of the scholarships in the current year.</p>	Registrar		1.2 5.2
15	<p>Create two new undergraduate entrance scholarships for which all Aboriginal and Black/African Canadian students are eligible  The scholarships should be named to reflect the population they target (i) <u>Black/African Canadian undergraduate entrance scholarship</u>, and (ii) <u>Aboriginal undergraduate entrance scholarship</u></p> <p>i) \$250K per annum should be set aside for each of these new scholarships  ii) The value of these renewable scholarships should be \$5000.  iii) The scholarships should be renewable for a further three years, and students who lose their scholarship should be able to regain it - through a "rebound" or "bounce-back" approach  iv) 10 renewable scholarships should be offered each year, corresponding to a maximum of 40 scholarships at any given time( \$200K of the \$250K</p>	Provost and Registrar		1.1 1.2 5.2

	<p>proposed in #13). ”; and any unused funds be reallocated to increase the number of scholarships in subsequent years or the value of the scholarships in the current year.</p> <p>v) Additional support for first in family and those with demonstrated financial need should be drawn from the remaining funds (\$50K of the \$250K proposed in #13) to enhance retention</p>			
16	Index the value of the scholarships to inflation, and as a fraction of the overall university spending on scholarships/bursaries should represent at least double their proportion in the Canadian population (i.e. presently 8%).	Provost and Registrar		5.3
17	Link bursary support to other supports, as these students are likely working to fund their education. A survey of this subset of students would identify what supports are most effective.	VP- Student Services		
18	Revise the existing FNIB graduate scholarship to mirror recommendation 14, and create new graduate scholarships in concert with recommendation 15. We recommend that each faculty establish two scholarships to target these populations based on a combination of sources. For example, a portion of the allocation granted each department from the Faculty of Graduate Studies (the so-called FGS allocation) could be designated for underrepresented groups	Registrar and Provost		2.3 5.2
19	Provide subsidized accommodation and transportation to students who reside in distant communities and/or consider distance education options for such students.	Provost	TBD	1.3 5.2
20	Continue its ongoing commitment to the Transition Year Program (TYP), the Indigenous Black and Mi'kmaq Program (IB&M), the Aboriginal Success Program (formerly Aboriginal Health Sciences Initiative), and the Promoting Leadership in Health for African Nova Scotians (PLANS) program. In particular, support TYP in their ongoing efforts to increase	Provost & Dean – Faculty of Continuing education	TBD	5.2

	enrollment of Aboriginal students (which have historically been relatively low).			
21	<p>We recommend Dalhousie:</p> <p>a. Establish promise scholarships by working with Aboriginal and Black/African Canadian community organizations, band councils and representatives.</p> <p>b. Set aside protected funding in the amount of \$100K per annum for each population for this scholarship. These scholarships would be attractive to external donors who wish to “make a difference” in marginalized communities (e.g. ILA-TD Promise scholarships)</p> <p>c. Identify student through their participation in recognized access programs</p> <p>d. Incorporate incremental increases in the promise on the basis of continuing participation in the recognized access program</p> <p>e. Ensure participants can build their promised amount to at least \$5000, renewable for a further three years of their undergraduate degree.</p> <p>f. Establish a process of assessment for recognition of an access program participation, based on their demonstrated or potential ability to guide students into post-secondary studies. (Note that this is a practice used by Dalhousie in its international recruitment efforts)</p>	VP- Advancement, Registrar and Provost	\$200,000	1.2 1.3 4.5 5.2
22	Incorporate, into the university’s base budget, salary support for key personnel in existing outreach programs that successfully target these populations – to enhance continuity, and attract the best candidates into these roles.	Provost	\$50,000 per annum per identified program	1.2 1.3 5.2
23	Increase funding and scholarships opportunities for Aboriginal and Black/African Canadians students entering professional programs where there are existing gaps, such as in Pharmacy, Dentistry, Medicine and other Health Professions	Provost	TBD	1.1 5.2

Table 2. Recommendations outlined in this report, and their relationship to prior recommendations of the Breaking barriers (1989) and Promoting success for Aboriginal students (2011) reports.

R	Breaking barriers report (1989)	Promoting success for Aboriginal Students (2011)
12 13 14 15 16 17 18 21 23	Establish a number of renewable scholarships for Black and Mi'kmaq students; The Awards office ensure that Black and Mi'kmaq students in financial difficult have access to bursary funds; Establish a number of graduate fellowships for Black and Mi'kmaq students	
20	The budget for TYP be increased to provide financial support for more than one "non-status" First Nations student	
1 2 3 4 5	Establish a resource centre for Black Canadian students on campus, comprising space to meeting, to study and to house the student's counsellor	Provide links to on Dalhousie's website to all available scholarships available to Aboriginal students, both from Dalhousie and from other sources; Centralize online access to information about programs and services for Aboriginal students at Dalhousie and in the wider community
2 3	Arrange the appointment of a Black counsellor to provide advice and support to Black Canadian students on campus	Train a professional counsellor in Aboriginal issues or give priority in hiring to a counsellor with this specialization; Consider implementing an Aboriginal student orientation; Offer support and encouragement for Aboriginal student initiatives on campus
3 6 21 22 17 12 19	Mount a programme of outreach and recruitment within the province's Black and Mi'kmaq communities	Continue to take the initiative to attract and retain Aboriginal students, and maximize the effectiveness of recruitment programs already in place; Explore further partnerships with bands and secondary schools, and continue to support summer programs for Aboriginal youth; Consider hiring an Aboriginal outreach person with a mandate not only to directly recruit, but also to coordinate events and outreach to communities; For students already enrolled in TYP, increase promotion of Dalhousie's programs and consider providing incentives to students who continue into the regular academic streams;



		<p>Assess current financial support mechanisms including the University's relationship with individual bands and knowledge of their funding capacities;</p> <p>When doing outreach to the Aboriginal community, and in elementary /secondary schools, advertise the federal RESP programs for families below an income threshold</p>
5		Leverage existing tools and mechanisms for tracking Aboriginal student performance and success, while maintaining protection of privacy for individual students.
1		Maintain and support the presence of the Native Education Counselling Unit and consider co-locating other services for Aboriginal students with this unit.
7	The membership of the Board of Governors include members of both the Black and Mi'kmaq communities	
20	Dalhousie commit itself to offering the TYP as a programme of access to university for Black and Mi'kmaq peoples for a period of at least ten years	
10	Offer credit courses in the history and culture of Black and Mi'kmaq peoples	
19		<p>Develop alternate methods of program delivery to Aboriginal students, utilizing distance learning delivery, and/or in person, community-based delivery;</p> <p>Prioritize family housing and childcare services for Aboriginal students</p>
8 9	<p>Senior administration provide leadership in raising funds for the measures recommended in this report which are needed to increase Black and Mi'kmaq participation;</p> <p>The University increase its financial commitment to the education of Black and Mi'kmaq and use its operating funds, to the greatest extent possible, to increase their participation in regular degree programs.</p>	Continue to build partnerships with external organizations in order to facilitate communication and to leverage resources for Aboriginal programming.
8	To develop a policy and strategic plan for educational equity, affirmative action in education, and race relations	Facilitate Dalhousie's ability to play a leadership role on Aboriginal issues by creating an Aboriginal

		Strategic Planning Committee reporting to VP Academic & Provost; Develop a strategic policy for Dalhousie University in relation to Aboriginal students.
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Table 3. Recommendations outlined in this report, and their relationship to recommendations of the *Belong (2015)* and *Backhouse (2015)* reports.

R	Belong (2015)	Backhouse (2015)	Priority (100 days)
1-23	A) Design recruitment and retention strategies focused on attracting diverse faculty, staff, students, and administrators. Accountability: Strategic Direction Charters 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 2.2, 2.3, and 5.1. (We had the opportunity to meet with the group working on Aboriginal and African Canadian Student Access and Retention Strategy to discuss their tentative recommendations. We support those recommendations.)		
1	10E. Provide an indigenous learning centre including appropriate scholarly resources and support the availability of Indigenous elders at the Centre		
23	9M. Enhance recruitment from diverse communities by including members of those communities (students, graduates, international students) in recruitment teams		
45	11C. Design a biennial equity and diversity report for each faculty and unit to be prepared by and submitted to Senate or Human Resources, as appropriate, that sets out that faculty's or units' inclusion and diversity goals for the next five years, and measures progress made against those goals; 11D. Design a biennial University equity and diversity report to be prepared by the Provost and Vice-President Academic and Human Resources for review and discussion by the board.		
8	11A. Identify an officer at the senior level responsible for coordinating the University's ongoing engagement with issues of diversity and inclusion, with clear articulation of the that responsibility in the officer's title and with significant weight given to this aspect of the officer's portfolio within the position description.		

9	<p>10A. Design recruitment and retention strategies focused on attracting diverse faculty, staff, students and administrators;</p> <p>11F. Design a plan for proactively reviewing diversity and inclusion in faculties and units....each Senate review team should include at least one expert in issues of diversity and inclusion...A more broadly applicable protocol for an “inclusion and diversity” audit should be designed that could be invoked by a faculty or unit that wanted assistance and support in better understanding diversity and inclusion.</p>	<p>10. The Faculty of Dentistry should collect data to provide information on the diversity of the student body by inviting students who wish to do so to self-identify...Aggregate data should be reported to the university Senate and released to the public annually</p> <p>11. The Faculty of Dentistry should survey faculty members and staff to build longitudinal data on the same axes of diversity as set out in Recommendation 10.</p> <p>12. The faculty of Dentistry should create an internal council or committee on inclusion and diversity.</p> <p>32. The University should recognize that expertise in equity issues is a necessary skill for faculty, central administrators, and institutional decision makers at all levels, up to and including the board of governors..</p> <p>33. ..seek ways to move towards greater inclusion of female, LGBTQ, racialized, disabled, and diverse ethnic and religious</p>	
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		communities within its student, faculty and administrative populations.	
22		34. The University should expand its linkages with community organizations such as front-line anti-violence services and others with expertise in equity.	
10	4F. Develop and hire additional faculty to support a minor in Black Studies; 4G. Add a course in Mi'kmaq language and qualify it for Dalhousie language requirements	32...and Black Canadian studies, among others, in designing appropriate training and supports. Additional resources should be provided to increase the capacity of all these organizations.	
11	7A. Commission a redesign of our ceremonial mace; 7B. Formalize an acknowledgement statement to be used at Dalhousie events recognizing Dalhousie's place on Mi'kmaq territory; 7C. Commission an official graduation regalia for Indigenous students, faculty and staff who choose to wear it.		

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# APPENDIX A: CONCEPT FOR ABORIGINAL AND BLACK/AFRICAN CANADIAN STUDENT BURSARY BY THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

We are proposing to establish a bursary designated for Black Canadian and aboriginal students who have declared themselves as English majors. The bursary is intended to alleviate financial difficulties for students attending Dalhousie, and to help retention and encourage student success in our program. And now is a good time to begin the bursary: it will build on our commitment to expanding the diversity of our program, as shown in our recent diversity hire in Creative Writing, and it addresses a long-standing lack of diversity in our student body. The bursary will provide faculty an opportunity to address issues of diversity concretely, in addition to how they address these issues in curriculum and research. Indeed, the bursary will be funded by faculty and staff, through continuing payroll deduction (a funding strategy which has been successfully implemented for other initiatives, such as the Malcolm Ross Scholarship). We have already approached many members of the department, who have all agreed to contribute on a monthly basis, providing long-term, stable funding (this will not, at least initially, be an endowed bursary program). Given the level of faculty interest, we believe we can fund the bursary at \$3000-6000 per year. If the level of contribution is high enough, we propose creating two bursaries, one for each designated group.

Len Diepeveen

Jason Haslam

Department of English

# APPENDIX B: SURVEY RESPONSES OF SELF-IDENTIFIED (I) ABORIGINAL AND (II) BLACK/AFRICAN CANADIAN DALHOUSIE STUDENTS.

See attached

# APPENDIX C: ABORIGINAL AND BLACK/AFRICAN CANADIAN FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS.

## **African Canadian/Aboriginal**

1. Are you the first in your family to attend a post-secondary institution? How is it being the first? Describe the type of support you received, and when (beginning/during/end of high school), in preparation to attend university. For example: friends, parents, peer-to-peer mentoring, mentorship with a professional, summer camps in your field, scholarship/bursary support, leadership development programs. What challenges did you face in high school and junior high, which may have prevented your from pursuing post-secondary studies?
2. Which universities did you apply to and what factors led you to your final decision to attend Dalhousie University?
3. Describe the type of support you received during your degree(s) at Dalhousie University. How useful did you find the support? For example: peer-to-peer mentoring, mentorship with a professional, summer research grants, scholarship/bursary support, leadership development programs. Also friends? Family? What specific challenges did you encounter?
4. How did Dalhousie-related programs, mentors, funding, etc. influence and/or impact the completion of your degree? Were you aware of programs offered to you by Dalhousie? What factors influenced your decision to utilize (or not) these programs?
5. How can Dalhousie University better assist African Canadian/Aboriginal students in completing their degree program?
6. Additional closing comments/feedback for access and retention.

## **Programs focusing on university preparation**

7. Describe how your program or initiative provides Aboriginal and/or African Canadian students a pathway to success in post-secondary education?
8. Describe the gaps in community-Dalhousie University programming that can be addressed to improve access and retention of Aboriginal and African Canadian students.
9. Are there innovative ways for Dalhousie University and your program to collaborate and enhance Aboriginal and African Canadian students' enrollment and retention?
10. Additional closing comments/feedback for access and retention.

## APPENDIX D: SURVEY INSTRUMENT FOR (I) ACCESS PROVIDERS AND (II) RETENTION FACILITATORS.

See attached

## APPENDIX E: INCREASING OPTIONS AND ACCESS: PROMISE SCHOLARSHIPS

Unlike other financial aid programs which have narrowly defined selection process, promise scholarships generally are offered to all junior high and high school students who complete high school requirements and gain acceptance into their university of choice (Pluhta & Penny, 2013). The rationale and support for promise scholarships in comparison to traditional aid is that earlier financial aid commitment to students reduces the barriers caused by lack of resources. Therefore, students are in a better position to prepare themselves in high school for post-secondary education (Harris, 2013). For example, the Future to Discover Canadian promise scholarship promised \$2,000/year of PSE to low-middle income students. This promise scholarship research reveals that there is an increase in university expectations for low-income families (Fowler et al. 2009, as cited in Harris, 2013). Canadian promise scholarships research is limited; however, research on promise scholarships in United States is growing larger in support of this form of financial aids.

The Washington State Achievers program is a promise program in 16 secondary schools in the state. The program hopes to increase PSE enrollment for all students through school reform, by reducing financial barriers that students face, provide support through mentoring, and enhance the diversity of college graduates in the state of Washington (O'Brien, 2007, as cited in Pharris-Courej, Herting, & Hirschman, 2012). Through this program, students are eligible to receive scholarships to cover the costs of tuition, books, living and other related needs. Gaining a scholarship requires a two-stage eligibility process involving standard letters of recommendation, letters of intent, and a one-day workshop focused on non-cognitive skills. It is emphasized that there are 500 scholarships, but all students at the high school level receive the non-financial support such as mentoring, college preparation courses, and learning communities. Pharris-Courej et al. (2012) examine evidence in two of three schools analysed that this program has influenced college access rates. In comparison to schools without the promise program, 45% of students enrolled in a four-year institution and in the third high school the last year of study shows an increase in post-secondary enrollments.

The Kalamazoo Promise is a form of scholarship that offers tuition waivers to Kalamazoo Public school graduates who enroll in Michigan state colleges. This promise scholarship is an effort to increase enrollment and retention through eliminating financial burdens common to all promise scholarships. Promise scholarships are part of a school attitude and behaviour shift towards academic success for students. Researchers demonstrate that teacher expectations and interest in student success enhanced during the implementation of the promise (Jones, Miron, & Kelaher-Young, 2012). The promise scholarship has enhanced the academic standards for teachers and students alike: "They want us to succeed a lot more since they have the Promise and because they know if we put our mind to it, we can actually succeed. Seventh-grade student at Maple Street Magnet Middle School" (Jones et al.,

2012, p. 41). A promise scholarship shifts the focus from traditionally university-bound students to preparing all students for the PSE.

In addition, Kalamazoo Promise research focuses on student changes in attitudes and behaviours (Miron, Jones, Kelaher, 2012). Students of colour who struggle within systems that are inherently racist and classist are often overcome with the reality that they are pursuing education within institutions that do not make it easy for them to succeed (Ogbu, 1992, as cited in Miron et al., 2012). After the implementation of the promise scholarship, students and their peers notice a difference in aspiration among students: “Before, my friend was in regular classes, and now she’s trying to go to advanced classes (15-year-old female student at K Central).” (Miron et al., 2012, p.16). Eighty-five% of students within this study acknowledged an increase in motivation. Students, with the guidance of their schoolteachers and councillors, are now seeking options that will prepare them for their career goals or post-secondary degree. Overall, the impacts of Kalamazoo Promise scholarships demonstrate an increased level of engagement from students, teachers, and support to access post-secondary education.

The District of Columbia Tuition Assistance Grant Program (DCTAG) offers high school graduates in-state tuition rates at universities and colleges across the country. This program is an effort to decrease out-of-state tuition costs by matching tuition costs to in-state universities and colleges. Students are eligible for up to 10,000 dollars per year and 50,000 dollars over the students’ academic tenure (Abraham & Clarke, 2006). The DCTAG does not focus on specific populations or have specific criteria based on need or merit. This grant is offered to all students of diverse backgrounds who live in the district for 12 months prior to starting their first year of university, have successfully received a GED and/or graduated high school, enrolled half-time or full-time at a university, and pursuing their first degree (Abraham & Clarke, 2006). In 1999, the first year of the program, 1,900 students used the program across the country and in 2003, the number of students using the program doubled. Abraham & Clarke (2006) investigate the effectiveness of the DCTAG on enrollment decisions and attendance at post-secondary institutions in-state and across the country. After implementing the DCTAG, the number of students taking their SAT increased from 957 in 1999 to 1,084 in 2001 (Abraham & Clarke, 2006). The DCTAG increased the number of applications to a minimum of one university by 10% (Abraham & Clarke, 2006). In addition, the DCTAG had significant impact on student choices of location. More specifically to students of African descent, DCTAG increased enrollment at Historically Black Universities and Colleges. Overall, the DCTAG had a direct impact on selectivity and enrollment for students’ transition to university.

# APPENDIX F: BLACK CANADIAN STUDIES MINOR PROPOSAL

FACULTY OF <b>ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES</b>	<b>Minors in FASS</b>	 <b>DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY</b> <i>Inspiring Minds</i>
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## A. General Description of Minors

The minor programs in FASS are designed to permit students to engage in areas of limited specialization in addition to their major degree program(s). These minors will be noted on students' transcripts. All minor programs must specify the exact number of credits, within the following range: minimum 3, maximum of 4.5 full credits (or equivalents) beyond the 1000-level. Students may declare more than one minor, but no class can count toward more than one minor (and no class can be double-counted toward both majors and minors). Some departments may have grade requirements for Honours students taking minor programs. It is assumed that a department's or program's Undergraduate Advisor will handle advising for disciplinary, program and subspecialty minors; in the case of interdisciplinary minors, an advisor must be named on the request form. Disciplinary, subspecialty, and program minors will be reviewed as part of the regular unit review process; interdisciplinary minors will be reviewed by the ADC every five years. All new minors must be approved by ADC and by the Dean of FASS. Classes for minor programs can be updated (i.e., added or deleted) on a regular basis through the normal ADC curriculum request system on Footprints.

**Wherever possible, minors will draw on existing courses and resources. Proposals requiring new resources may be approved only subject to available budgets.**

## B. Description of Specific Minor Options

### 1. Disciplinary Minors

- are general or unstructured minors within departments (e.g., HIST, SOSA, PHIL)
- cannot be combined with a major in the same department
- can be combined with other minors

### 2. Program Minors

- are minors with their own code (e.g., CANA, GWST, ARBC, CHIN), which may or may not exist within discrete departments
- can be combined with any departmental major
- cannot form subspecialty minors
- chairs of departments must specify how often each class listed as part of the minor will be offered (e.g., every year or every other year), and provide written commitment that the class will be offered consistently for a minimum of five years




### **3. Subspecialty Minors**

- are more structured or specialized minors within departments
- must have a single code for all classes (e.g., ENGL, CLAS, POLI)
- cannot be combined with a major in the same department
- all language-skills minors are subspecialty minors; nevertheless, language departments may also choose to offer a subspecialty minor in a non-language-skills field (e.g., “French culture,” offered in English)
- a clear rationale must be provided explaining the way in which a particular subspecialty comprises a discrete minor
- a clear account of the specific requirements for this minor must be provided
- chairs of departments must specify how often each class listed as part of the minor will be offered (e.g., every year or every other year); and provide written commitment that the class will be offered in this way for a minimum of five years

### **4. Interdisciplinary Minors**

- do not have their own code (e.g., Health Studies, Law and Society, Latin American Studies, Popular Culture Studies)
- require classes to be taken in more than one department or program
- may require or permit classes to be taken in more than one faculty
- no more than half of the classes for an interdisciplinary minor can be taken within a single department
- all requests for new interdisciplinary minors will require a clear rationale for the program, the approval of all participating departments, and the name of an individual willing to serve as coordinator (who will be responsible for advising students and monitoring curriculum) for a period of five years.
- chairs of departments must specify how often each class listed as part of the minor will be offered (e.g., every year or every other year); and provide written commitment that the class will be offered in this way for a minimum of five years.

FACULTY OF <b>ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES</b>	<b>Request Form for New Minor</b>		 <b>DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY</b> <i>Inspiring Minds</i>	
<b>Title of minor</b>		<i>The title of minor as you would like it to appear on the student's transcript.</i>		
Black Canadian Studies				
<b>Type of minor</b>		<i>Select one of the following four categories:</i>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Disciplinary	<input type="checkbox"/> Program	<input type="checkbox"/> Subspecialty	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Interdisciplinary	
<b>Number of credits</b>		<i>Minimum 3, maximum 4.5 full-credit equivalents.</i>		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 3.5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 4.5	
<b>Requirements</b>		<i>Does this proposal include specific requirements? If your answer is Yes, please list them (see appendix).</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Frequency of offerings</b>		<i>Annually</i>		
<b>Rationale</b>		<p>Dalhousie University has a Black Studies Chair, but there is no Black Studies Program. This paradox can be partially resolved by having a minor in Black (Canadian) Studies. This minor will augment the program of the James Robinson Johnston Chair in Black Studies, which already is involved in teaching in Sociology and Social Anthropology, public outreach and engagement, and research on Black Studies. As the Black Studies Chair is housed at Dalhousie, it is only natural that there are specific offerings of Black Studies courses. But there are other reasons. For many years, students have been inquiring about such a program. The local Black community has</p>		

stated that they believed that a Black Studies program would be part and parcel of the Johnston Chair initiative since the restarting of the Johnston Chair. There is thus a need for this kind of epistemology. In addition, such a program provides a potential income stream for the faculty and university. It can be used as a drawing card to attract students from the Maritimes and also the Greater Toronto Area of Ontario, which has a large Black population. In addition, it can also attract students from the United States.


Additionally, there is no Black studies program, especially with a focus on Canada, offered in any Canadian University. Offering such a program at Dalhousie, would situate Dalhousie as a unique site for Black Studies pedagogy, and a national leader in the field. Dalhousie would become a beacon for Black Studies knowledge. We already had hints of this when in the Summer of 2012, eleven students from Savannah State University stayed at Dalhousie in their study abroad program. Their area of study was Black Nova Scotian and African Canadian history.

Moreover, there are several Black and other faculty members at Dalhousie poised to teach Black Studies. We have Chike Jeffers of the Philosophy Department, whose speciality is Africana Philosophy. In the upcoming school year, Dr. Jeffers will be teaching a course of Africana Philosophy. Vincent Simedoh of the French Dept. teaches African Francophone literature; Dr. Raymond Mopoho of the same department can offer courses in linguistics. Isaac Saney is a sessional instructor in the History Dept. where he teaches Latin American history. In his offerings Dr. Saney devotes much of the units to the Black experience in Latin America. Further, Isaac is the deputy director of the Transition Year Program, where he is permanent faculty and teaches African Nova Scotian studies.

Afua Cooper of Sociology and Social Anthropology offers two courses that have components of Black Canadian and international Black studies. Further, professors from Sociology and Social Anthropology, history, and International Development also offer courses with specific Black Studies content. Dorota Glowacka, of King's College, has also offered

	<p>for her course on the philosophy of race to be listed as part of the Black Studies minor.</p> <p>The program will be under the leadership and guidance of the Johnston Chair in Black Canadian Studies (Sociology and Social Anthropology). At a later date, we hope to add a language component to the minor. Spanish, French, Portuguese, and Arabic are some of the languages that can easily become a part of the Black Studies program. In addition, a flagship course will be developed to serve as a mandatory course. It will be a second-year course. However, this course will be developed some time in the future as such a task requires clear and concise conceptualization, curriculum development, innovative thinking, and financial support.</p> <p>At present, how will students get the grounding in Black Canadian Studies and satisfy the requirements for a Black Canadian Studies Minor?</p> <p>Students must take a full course from List A, as each of these courses has a 50% or more Black Canadian studies content. In addition, to receive a minor, students must take courses from at least two different departments.</p>
<p><b>Resources</b></p>	<p>The Killam Library has a specific Black Studies Collection which was established as part of the richness of the Johnston Chair. There is also a vast online collection of Black Studies material.</p> <p>No additional resources will be needed. All courses already exist, and any proposed new course will be offered by existing faculty.</p>
<p><b>Advising</b></p>	<p><i>If this is an Interdisciplinary Minor, specify who will be responsible for advising students (five-year commitment).</i></p>

Student advising will be the responsibility of Dr. Afua Cooper.  
Dr. Chike Jeffers will also provide back-up support.

Participating departments	Chair's/Coordinator's signature	
<p><i>For an Interdisciplinary Minor, list all Departments that have agreed to participate in this Minor. For Disciplinary, Subspecialty, and Program Minors, enter the name of the home unit.</i></p> <p>Sociology and Social Anthropology</p> <p>History</p> <p>Philosophy</p> <p>French</p> <p>University of King's College</p>	<p><i>The signature(s) indicate(s) that each unit will respect its commitment to the Minor for a minimum of five years after the date of the Dean's approval.</i></p>	
	Signature(s):	Date:
		

ADC approval		Dean's approval	
Signature:	Date:	Signature:	Date:

## **Appendix - Requirements for a minor in Black Canadian Studies**

### Participating Courses and Departments

#### **Requirements**

Students must take three credits at or above the 2000 level. At least one of these credits must be from List A. Credits must be obtained from at least two different departments.

#### List A

##### **Sociology and Social Anthropology**

SOSA 3186: Colonialism and the Body

SOSA 3190: Social Movements

SOSA/CANA 2111: Is there an Atlantic Canada?

##### **Philosophy**

PHIL 2165: Philosophy and the Black Experience

PHIL 4700/5700 Philosophy of Race

PHIL 2450/POLI 2450 Democracy, Difference, & Citizenship

PHIL 2020 Legal Thinking

##### **King's College (Contemporary Studies)**

CTMP 2115:03: The Idea of Race in Philosophy, Literature, and Art

#### List B

SOSA 2993: Health and Illness through Cultural Time

SOSA 2402: Food Through Time and Space

SOSA 3402: Ethnicity, Race, Nation

### **French**

FREN 3150: Aspects de la Francophonie

FREN 3125.03: The French-Speaking World/Le Monde Francophone

FREN 3175.03: Topical Issues in Francophonie

FREN 3811: Introduction to African and Caribbean Francophone Literature

FREN 4811: Francophone Poetry

### **History**

HIST 2006: Atlantic World, 1450-1650

HIST 2007: Atlantic World, 1650-1800

HIST 2425: Africa Before 1900

HIST 2426: Africa Since 1900

HIST 3361: The Civil War

HIST 3380: Slavery and Freedom in the Americas

HIST 4360: Slavery and US Political Culture



# APPENDIX G: SELECT ANALYSES OF ADDITIONAL DATA FROM STUDENT SURVEY RELATED TO ACCESS, RETENTION, AND SUCCESS AMONG ABORIGINAL AND AFRICAN CANADIAN STUDENTS AT DALHOUSIE.

Additional survey data is provided below for information.

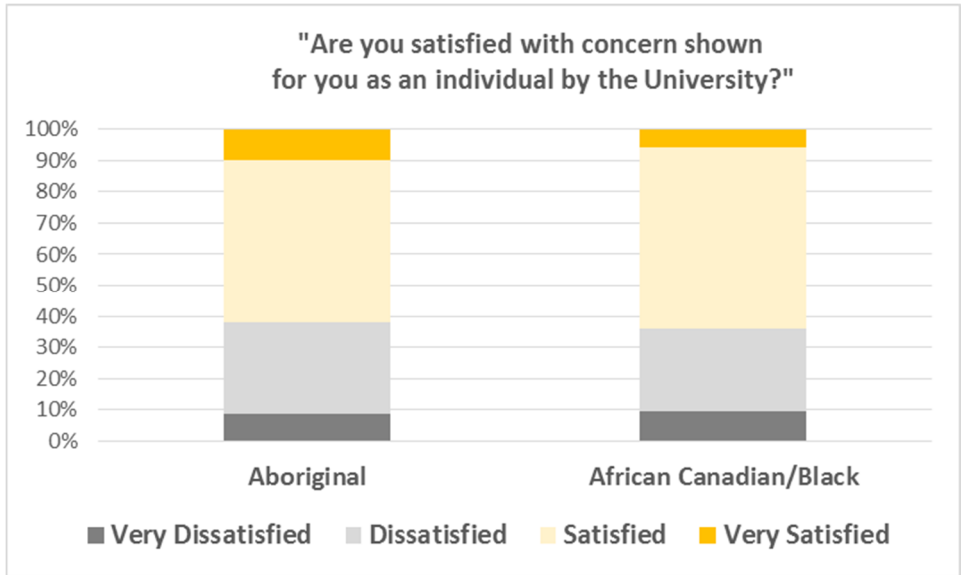


Figure 23. Likert scale rating of the level of satisfaction that Black/African Canadians and Aboriginal students feel is associated with Dalhousie.

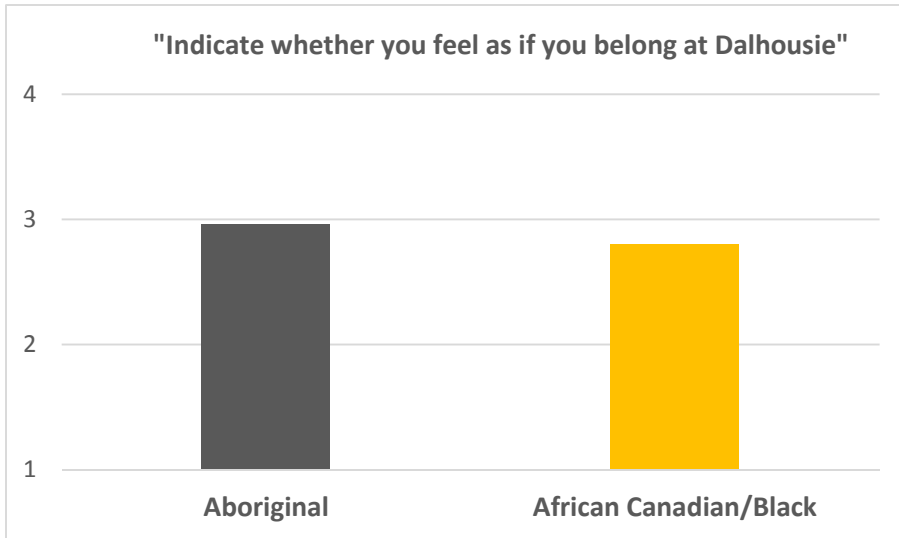


Figure 24. Likert scale rating of whether Aboriginal or Black/African Canadian students feel a sense of belonging at Dalhousie.

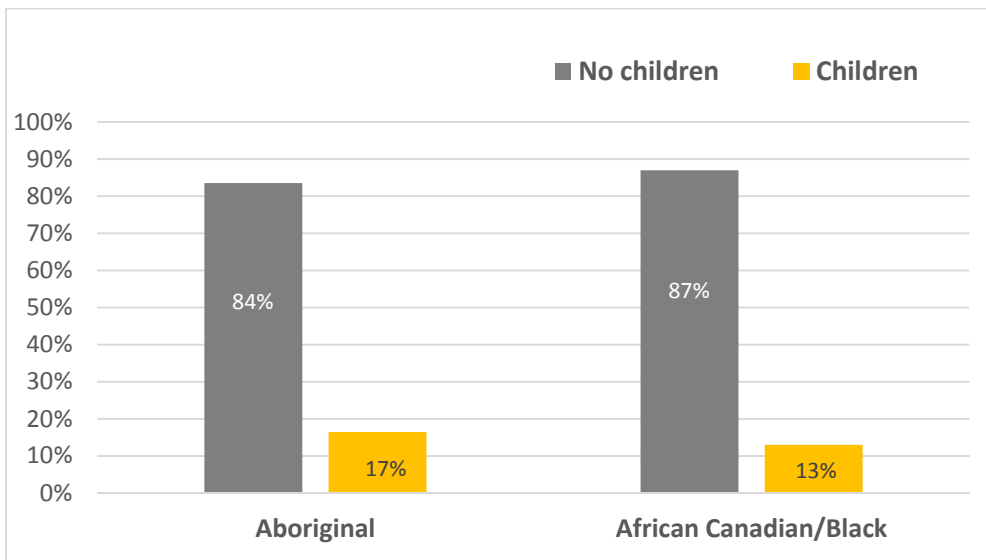


Figure 25. Proportion of Black/African Canadian and Aboriginals students who have children.

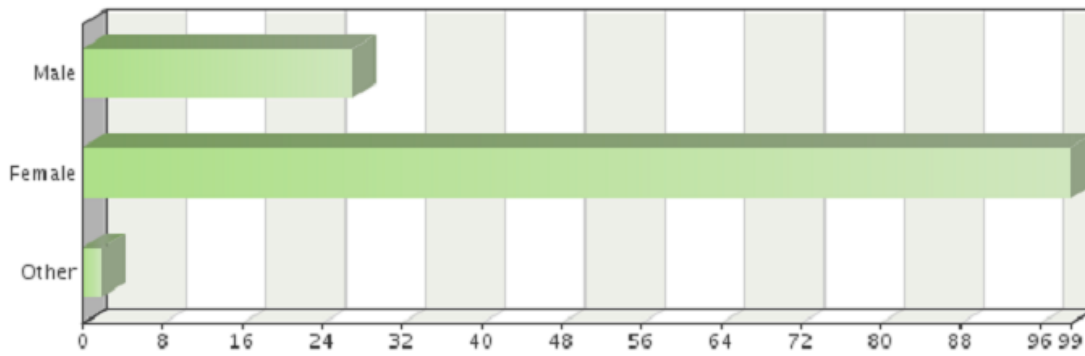


Figure 26. Gender distribution among Aboriginal student respondents, showing an adjusted relative proportion of 77% female, 21% male and 2% other.

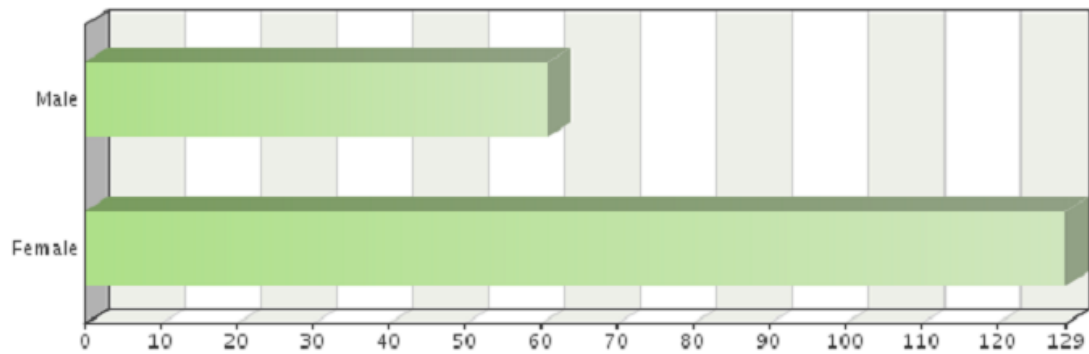


Figure 27. Gender distribution among Black/African Canadian student respondents, showing an adjusted relative proportion of 68% female and 32% male.