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ASUS Research – Financial Accessibility and the BIPOC Student Experience

DIRECTOR OF STUDENT AFFAIRS RESEARCH, 2021

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Methodology

FINANCIAL ACCESSIBILITY

- Survey filled out by 314 students

BIPOC STUDENT EXPERIENCE

- Focus groups with 20 students
- Follow up survey with 37 students
- Follow up consultations with 4 students

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Does our Current Financial Aid Help Students?

Students who use financial aid are more likely to:

- **Graduate with debt:** 73% vs 35%
- **Feel "major" financial stress:** 32% vs 15%
- **Work, and work for essential income:** 43% vs 22% working for essential income

Debt Expectations

Debt Expectation	Students using financial aid (%)	Students who are not using financial aid (%)
Less than \$10,000	~15	~10
\$10,000-\$20,000	~25	~15
\$20,000-\$30,000	~15	~5
\$30,000-\$40,000	~10	~2
\$40,000-\$50,000	~5	~1
Over \$50,000	~2	~65
No debt	~35	~1

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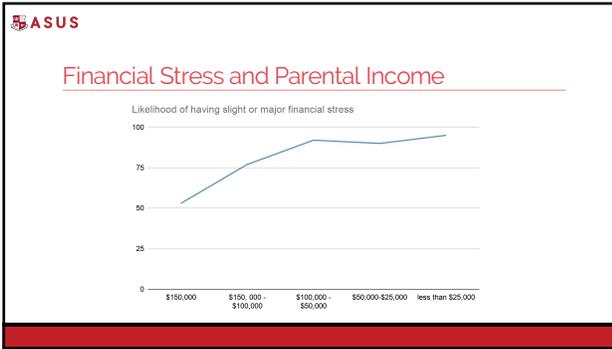
Where do Students Feel Financial Stress?

78% of all students reported having "slight" or "major" financial stress

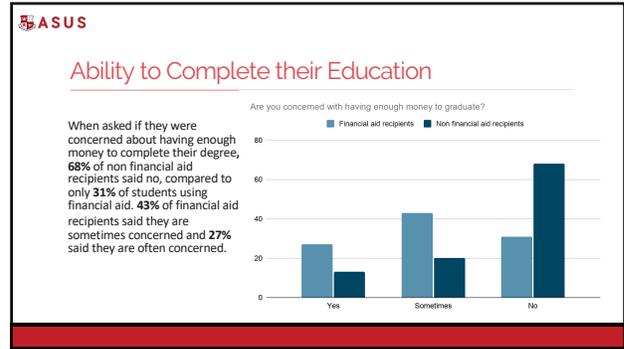
Areas of Financial Stress

Area of Financial Stress	Students using financial aid (%)	Average respondent (%)
Paying tuition	~65	~60
Paying rent	~75	~70
Affording food	~45	~45
Academic supplies and textbooks	~55	~50
Disposable income	~60	~60

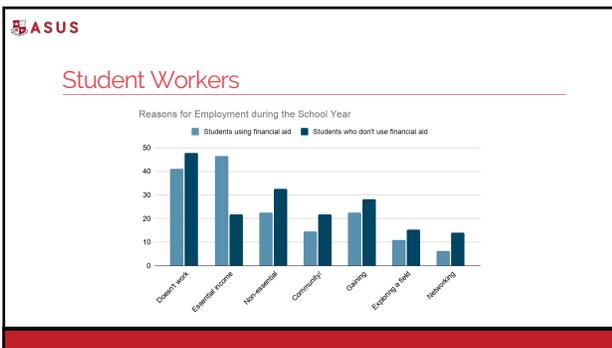
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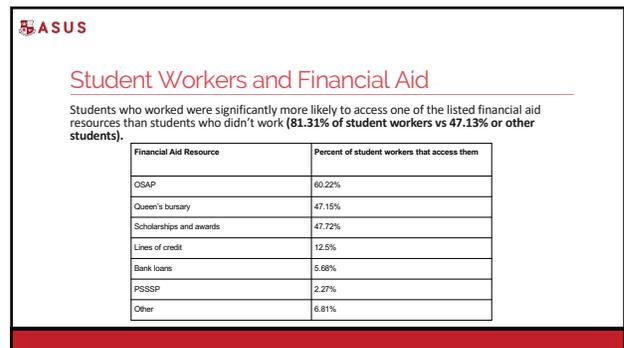
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The Effects of Working

78% of student workers said it had an impact on their academic performance, with 52% of respondents saying it had a slight but manageable effect and 26% saying it had a significant impact.

- This impact was greater for students who accessed OSAP or the Queen's bursary and students who had parental incomes lower than \$25,000.

Student workers:

- More likely to say finances are a major stressor in their life
- Greater stress paying rent, affording food and affording academic supplies and textbooks.

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Identity and other Factors

The likelihood to use financial aid resources and having financial stress was higher for first generation Canadians and BIPOC students.

The likelihood of having a parental income below \$25,000, being concerned with having enough money to graduate and not feeling comfortable in Queen's culture was higher for first generation Canadians, BIPOC and students with disabilities.

Likelihood of using financial aid resources

Group	Likelihood (%)
BIPOC students	85
Other students	75

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Recommendations

- Providing students who receive financial aid financial and budgeting advice, resources and mental health support
- Stronger work study program
 - Further developing job opportunities
- Academic recognition/compensation for employment, both as Experiential Learning and in recognizing unique burden of working for essential income
 - Non-academic transcript
 - Worker's academic credit
- Reducing costs of textbooks, academic supplies
 - Facilitating textbook exchanges
 - Moving toward accessible online resources
- Further tuition and scholarship support
 - Making entrance awards renewable
 - Targeting identity-based groups that demonstrated larger financial need

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BIPOC Student Experience

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Microaggressions

Being tokenized because of your race	74%
Feeling ostracized with your peers	67%
Students saying things you found offensive or inappropriate for the sake of academic "discussion" or "debate"	66%
You not wanting to raise your hand for fear of affirming stereotypes	60%
People looking at you or giving you side eye	49%
Not being listened to	49%
People assuming you know everything about a subject because of your race	46%
I have not felt any of these situations	3%

20% of respondents said they regularly experienced microaggressions and 51% said they occasionally experience microaggressions

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The Classroom Experience - Academics

78% of survey respondents said they did not feel their course content does a good job of providing non-white/Eurocentric perspectives.

"Content literally just doesn't exist."

"Rarely present, and always treated homogenously across cultures and time periods. The pedagogies are never explored, just the cultural products. It's always a one-off class and never a point of focus"

"Even when the courses do include BIPOC voices and perspectives, there isn't much and it only tends to be on topics about race. BIPOC are artists and scientists and we should hear about their work and perspectives about things not related to race as well"

"Professors who are most often not BIPOC do not have adequate academic experience, knowledge or understanding on non-white/Eurocentric experiences."

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The Classroom Experience - Culture

"Can be very daunting to be one person in a class of 100, because you're on classroom time you don't want to feel like you're taking time away on an issue that only affects a small part of the class"

"I didn't want to raise my hand and answer questions in case I got them wrong cause I didn't want to be the dumb black girl"

"Made sure to put an Asian kid into every group cause they are smarter"

"Work 10 times harder to feel like you belong in your program"

Would you bring up incident of oppression with a professor or TA?

Probably	12.9%
Likely	8.3%
Possibly	31.3%
Unlikely	47.4%

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Students on Equity Resources

"Too little, too late"

"At the end of the day, I feel like it would be difficult to access them and they probably wouldn't help much (how is Queen's gonna tell me how to handle racism, I've been doing it for years now). A bunch of self-righteous white people telling me that they want to learn (or "unlearn") about my experiences is not what I need, how could they possibly understand "the look" or always taking your ID when you go for a walk "just in case" or the confusion at being called "Negro" by a white friend. F--k that, I'll struggle alone so that those who come after me one day might not have to."

"I feel like I know exactly what would happen if I plagiarize an essay but have no idea what happens if I commit a hate crime"

"All they want to do is repair the damage that the incidents caused rather than fix the culture at queens through holding people accountable which allows for these things to happen"

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Recommendations

1. More equity training for students, faculty and staff.
 - Especially for TAs and Profs teaching about EDI.
2. More diverse curriculums and syllabi.
 - Non tokenistic curriculums.
3. More organizational accountability.
 - Knowledge about the rules and consequences.
4. Centralized information and resources.
 - Centralized information like an equity website.
5. Giving students doing equity work credit and compensation.
 - Student based awards, bursaries and grants.