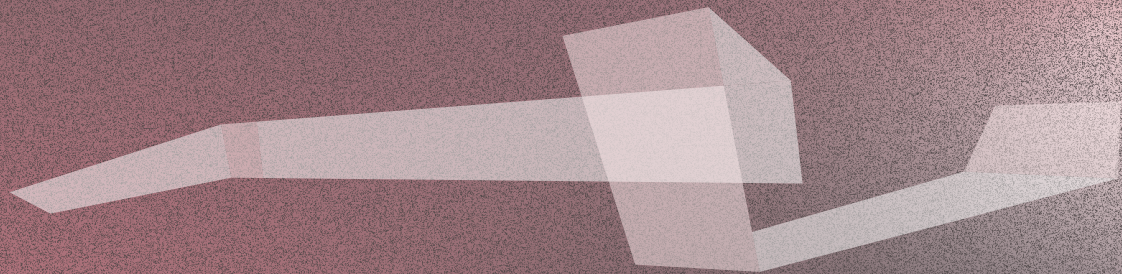# Towards Equity, Diversity and Inclusion
in
Architecture Education in Canada.

Second Edition.

a White Paper produced by

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Towards Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in Architecture Education in Canada.
Second Edition.

WHITE PAPER PRODUCED BY CASA.ACEA

NAME OF ISSUE

Toward Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in Architecture Education in Canada. 2nd Edition.

WRITERS*

Daniela Davila, Adhira Ravi and Dharshana Muhunthan.

ISSUE DESCRIPTION

The Canadian Architecture Student Association (CASA) circulated a bilingual survey on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in November 2023 and March 2024. The survey's objective was to collect student's opinions and experiences related to the aforementioned subject within their architectural education journey.

RELEVANCE:

As addressing diversity, equity and inclusion within all contexts becomes more and more apparent, it is up to us to generate urgency through transformation in architectural curriculum, accreditation processes and architecture policy. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion is an important part in unsettling the disciplinary conventions of institutions and future architectural discourse.
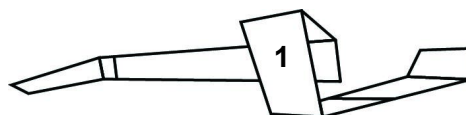
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*Note about this paper:
CASA.ACEA members are not professionally trained in E.D.I leadership. This paper is intended to outline student concerns, feelings and experiences without disrespecting any particular views or opinions. It is not a comprehensive listing of sources, but rather a starting point from which one can begin their research according to their information needs.
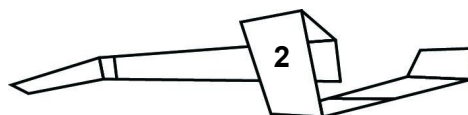
LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

CASA-ACÉA is a national organization with members representing each of the 12 accredited architecture programs across Canada. Although there are some general trends in acknowledging the traditional territories of Indigenous peoples, there is no single wording that applies to all territories. Therefore, CASA ACÉA acknowledges the territories on which each of the accredited architectural schools reside. Below is a compilation of university issued land acknowledgements for their respective establishments.

University of British Columbia (Vancouver)

*We would like to begin by acknowledging that the land on which we gather is the unceded territory of the Coast Salish Peoples, including the territories of
the xʷməθkʷəy̓ əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), Stó:lō and Səl̓ílwətaʔ/Selilwitulh (Tsleil Waututh) Nations.*
Source: https://blogs.ubc.ca/campusenvironments/land-acknowledgments/

University of Calgary (Calgary)

We recognize that the University of Calgary, located in the heart of Southern Alberta, both acknowledges and pays tribute to the traditional territories of the peoples of Treaty 7, which include the Blackfoot Confederacy (comprised of the Siksika, the Piikani, and the Kainai First Nations) as well as the Tsuut'ina First Nation, and the Stoney Nakoda (including Chiniki, Bearspaw, and Wesley First Nations). The university recognizes that the City of Calgary is also home to Region III of the Métis Nation of Alberta.
*The University of Calgary is situated on land Northwest of where the Bow River meets the Elbow River, a site traditionally known as Moh'kins'tsis to the Blackfoot, Wîchîspa to the Stoney Nakoda, and Guts'ists'i to the Tsuut'ina. On this land and in this place we strive to learn together, walk together, and grow together "in a good way."*
Source: https://sapl.ucalgary.ca/about/equity-diversity-inclusion-and-accessibility

University of Manitoba (Winnipeg)

The University of Manitoba campuses are located on original lands of Anishinaabeg, Cree, Oji-Cree, Dakota, and Dene peoples, and on the homeland of the Métis Nation.
We respect the Treaties that were made on these territories, we acknowledge the harms and mistakes of the past, and we dedicate ourselves to move forward in partnership with Indigenous communities in a spirit of reconciliation and collaboration.
Source: https://news.umanitoba.ca/acknowledging-traditional-territories/
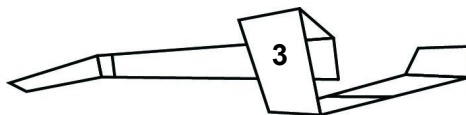
Laurentian University (Sudbury)

We would like to acknowledge the Robinson-Huron Treaty of 1850. We also further recognize that Laurentian University is located on the traditional lands of the Atikameksheng Anishnawbek and that the City of Greater Sudbury, also includes the traditional lands of the Wahnapitae First Nation. We extend our
deepest respect to Indigenous peoples - as a sign of our continued relationship we will support Laurentian University's Truth and Reconciliation Task Force Recommendations. Miigwech.
Source: https://laurentian.ca/indigenous-programs/land-acknowledgment

University of Waterloo (Waterloo)

The University of Waterloo acknowledges that much of our work takes place on the traditional territory of the Neutral, Anishinaabeg and Haudenosaunee peoples. Our main campus is situated on the Haldimand Tract, the land granted to the Six Nations that includes six miles on each side of the Grand River. Our active work toward reconciliation takes place across our campuses through research, learning, teaching, and community building, and is co-ordinated within the Office of Indigenous Relations.
Source:
https://uwaterloo.ca/indigenous/engagement-knowledge-building/territorial-acknowledgement#:~
:text=The%20University%20of%20
Waterloo%20acknowledges,side%20of%20the%20Grand%20River.

Toronto Metropolitan University (Toronto)

Toronto is in the 'Dish With One Spoon Territory'. The Dish With One Spoon is a treaty between the Anishinaabe, Mississaugas and Haudenosaunee that bound them to share the territory and protect the land. Subsequent Indigenous Nations and peoples, Europeans and all newcomers have been invited into this treaty in the spirit of peace, friendship and respect.
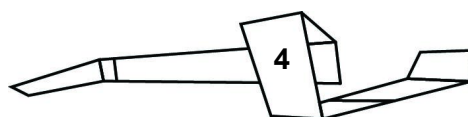Source: https://www.torontomu.ca/aec/land-acknowledgment/

University of Toronto (Toronto)

We wish to acknowledge this land on which the University of Toronto operates. For thousands of years, it has been the traditional land of the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, and the Mississaugas of the Credit. Today, this meeting place is still the home to many Indigenous peoples from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work on this land with Indigenous community members.
Source:
https://www.daniels.utoronto.ca/diversity-inclusion/equity-diversity-and-inclusion-daniels-faculty

Carleton University (Ottawa)

We/I would like to begin by acknowledging that the land on which we gather is the traditional and unceded territory of the Algonquin nation.
Source: https://carleton.ca/indigenous/policies-procedures/algonquin-territory-acknowledgment/

McGill University (Montréal)

McGill University is on land which has long served as a site of meeting and exchange amongst Indigenous peoples, including the Haudenosaunee and Anishinabeg nations. We acknowledge and thank the diverse Indigenous peoples whose presence marks this territory on which peoples of the world now gather.
Source:
https://www.mcgill.ca/equity/initiatives-education/indigenous-initiatives/land-acknowledgement

Université de Montréal (Montréal)

The University of Montreal acknowledges the Indigenous nations that, prior and even after the establishment of the French, encountered one another on the territory of the Island of Montreal. It also honours the memory of the Great Peace of 1701, a treaty that fostered peaceful relationships between
France, its Indigenous allies and the Haudenosaunee federation. The spirit of fraternity that inspired this famous treaty serves as a model for our own university community.
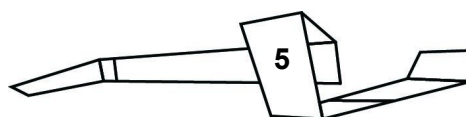Source: Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT)

Université Laval (Québec)

In the spirit of friendship and solidarity, Université Laval recognizes the First Peoples of this land. Here, at the meeting place of the Nionwentsïo territory of the Huron-Wendat people, the Ndakina territory of the Wabanaki people, the Nitassinan territory of the Innu people and the Wolastokuk territory of the Wolastoqey people, we honour our shared relationships.
Source: Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT)

Dalhousie University (Halifax)

We [I] would like to begin by acknowledging that we are in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People. This territory is covered by the "Treaties of Peace and Friendship" which Mi'kmaq Wəlastəkwiyik (Maliseet), and Passamaquoddy Peoples first signed with the British Crown in 1726. The treaties did not deal with surrender of lands and resources but in fact recognized Mi'kmaq and Wəlastəkwiyik (Maliseet) title and established the rules for what was to be an ongoing relationship between nations.

Dalhousie University sits on the Traditional Territory of the Mi'kmaq. We are all Treaty people.
Source: Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT)

We acknowledge the historical oppression of lands, cultures and the original Peoples of this country and know we have a role to play in the path to decolonization that we share together. We recognize our duty to fight for Indigenous rights to be restored and commit ourselves to the journey of healing. We thank the more than 630 First Nations, their people, and ancestors who have taken care of these lands that we share.

* * *
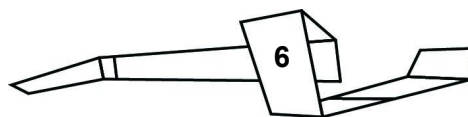
Content Layout:

"The Intent" (8)

A brief overview of the Equity, Diversity and Inclusivity Initiative through Editions 1 and 2.

"The Analysis" (9-26)

The body of the report has been prepared to follow a question(s) and answer pattern that analyze key areas of EDI interventions in the context of the Canadian architectural academic system.

"Key Findings and Challenges" (27)

"Conclusion" (30)

Summarization and takeaways at the end of the body of the paper further drive the core interpretations of the survey.

The following graphics represent a portion of the survey results.

Some questions are not represented graphically as their results were in the form of personal written responses.

We fully acknowledge that there are a mix of positive and negative feedback on EDI in the Canadian architecture education system. We do aim to highlight both sides, but more importantly the lacking and the negative experiences endured by students, to avoid them from getting lost. Experiences hold impact on students' lives and careers, this is at the forefront of this White paper.

* No responses recorded in the French Survey release.

* * *

"The Intent"

Since 2015, the Canadian Architecture Students' Association (CASA) has been established as a platform serving to unify voices of students of architecture across Canada. Starting in 2022, CASA has been initiating efforts to identify the student demographic, with Equity, Diversity and Inclusion. As part of this collective initiative, CASA has managed to start understanding the broad spectrum of perspectives of the targeted student demographic, with the intention to boost EDI awareness, paving the way for change.

This initiative manifested itself as an open call for building conversation in the form of a research survey in 2022, aiming to bring out honest accounts of real experiences through the anonymous collection of data. A significant portion of the student demographic shared their feelings and concerns towards the offered architecture education in the 12 accredited schools of architecture in Canada. Recalled experiences ranged from positive instances to cases of negative discrimination involving sexuality, age, disability, nationality and/or religion at the least. The EDI survey finds itself at the intersection of such complexity, as a way to bring these experiences to light, in hopes of permanently terminating its recurrence at any available chance.

With the first edition of the survey, the process of creation started with research on similar published resources through which a draft framework for the survey questions was developed. This draft was then sent to 5 collaborators namely - *BAIDA, Prof. Catherine Hamel, Prof. Lisa Landrum, Dalhousie Student Union Equity & Accessibility office and Dalhousie student Purvangi Patel*. With feedback from individual and joint discussions with each of these collaborators, CASA finalized the survey that was launched in the winter of 2023. The survey gathered over 40 different responses which provided insights into the present architectural education system and academics within the system. CASA_EDI Survey Summary.pdf. It is important to note that 40 responses only represent 2% of the present architecture student population - which was an aspect we wanted to improve on for this next edition.

With the second edition, the process began with us taking an internal decision to not start from scratch, but instead, build over the questions from the first edition, which entailed making relevant edits and additions, and sending them to a new set of collaborators. This has enabled the survey to take on the role of being a compounded living initiative that keeps itself informed to the current understanding of equity, diversity and inclusivity through the lens of architecture students, professors and professionals. We made sure to approach collaborators from various backgrounds to provide feedback on the new draft. Keeping in mind our goal to increase footfall on the survey, we launched it first in the fall term, then repeated the process with a revised draft and collaborators to launch it a second time in the winter term of 2024. We have also made provision for further collaborative opportunities through the draft release of the paper at the RAIC Conference 2024, live at CASA's session "The Future of Architecture: Shifting Into the Next Generation" on the 18th of May, for peer review.

We continue to intend for the following research and analysis to be presented at different opportunities, similar to last year's release that was released on our website, and presented at the RAIC Conference 2023 & the CACB Board and Committee meetings. We want to further circulate the results of this survey directly to the schools through its promotion in CASA's Newsletter.

* * *
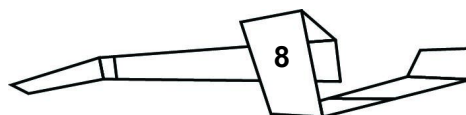
Part 1 - Student Experiences

The responses from the Canadian Architecture Student Association (CASA) Survey provide critical insights into the current status of equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) in architecture education in Canada. The survey's open-ended responses yielded both quantitative data and qualitative anecdotes, highlighting various trends and challenges prevalent within the academic environment. Students' experiences within architecture programs are influenced by an intricate interplay of educational culture, institutional practices, and interpersonal dynamics. The perception led behaviour of students by faculty, peers, and professionals in the field can have a significant influence on academic success, self-esteem, and career aspirations. This section provides a comprehensive analysis of student's experiences, focusing on their perceptions of how they are valued both as architecture students and as emerging professionals. This section also explores how aspects of their identity—such as race, gender, sexual orientation, and accessibility status—impact their experiences within academic and professional settings. This analysis aims to identify fundamental factors that influence students' sense of belonging, opportunities for development, and overall trajectory as students navigate their academic pursuits and readiness for professions in the industry.

The following section emphasizes on key findings from the 56 student respondents, focusing on students' perceptions of their value within their architecture programs, their encounters with discrimination, and the repercussions on their mental health.
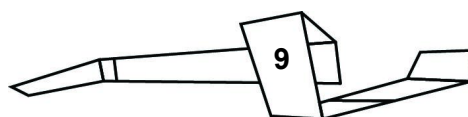
Question 6: I feel my voice and opinions are valued as an individual within my architecture program.

Students were asked to rate their agreement with this statement on a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 being "strongly disagree" and 5 being "strongly agree." The responses indicate a range of experiences regarding the value students feel in their programs.

7 students responded with 1 (strongly disagree)
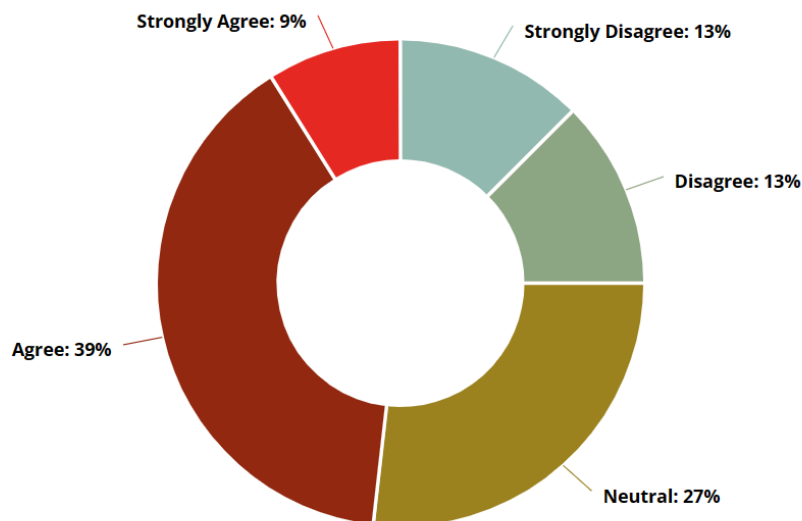
7 students responded with 2

15 students responded with 3

22 students responded with 4

5 students responded with 5 (strongly agree)

Question 6.

I feel my voice and opinions are valued as an individual within my architecture program.

56 responses

Strongly Agree: 9%
Strongly Disagree: 13%
Disagree: 13%
Agree: 39%
Neutral: 27%

The majority of the responses were selected around the middle of the scale, with 37 of 56 respondents selecting 3 or 4. This indicates a generally positive perception of inclusion and representation within architectural programs. The 14 respondents who selected 1 or 2 highlight a significant issue with valuing student opinions. The distribution of responses indicates a moderate level of satisfaction among architecture students, with a significant number of students feeling that their voices are valued to some extent. However, the presence of negative responses suggests that a considerable proportion experience a lack of acknowledgment.
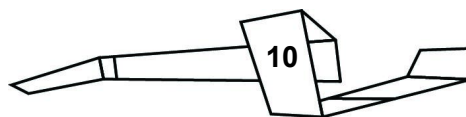
Question 7: If you feel that your voice and opinions are not being heard, how would you describe your experience? (Check all that apply.)

Students who felt that their voices were not heard were asked to describe their experiences. The results were as follows:

Ableist - 9 (16.1%)

Hostile - 3 (5.4%)

Racist - 7 (12.5%)

Homogeneous - 7 (12.5%)

Disrespectful - 6 (10.7%)
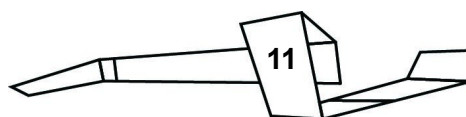
Contentious - 6 (10.7%)

Sexist - 9 (16.1%)

Competitive - 16 (28.6%)

Unsupportive - 17 (30.4%)
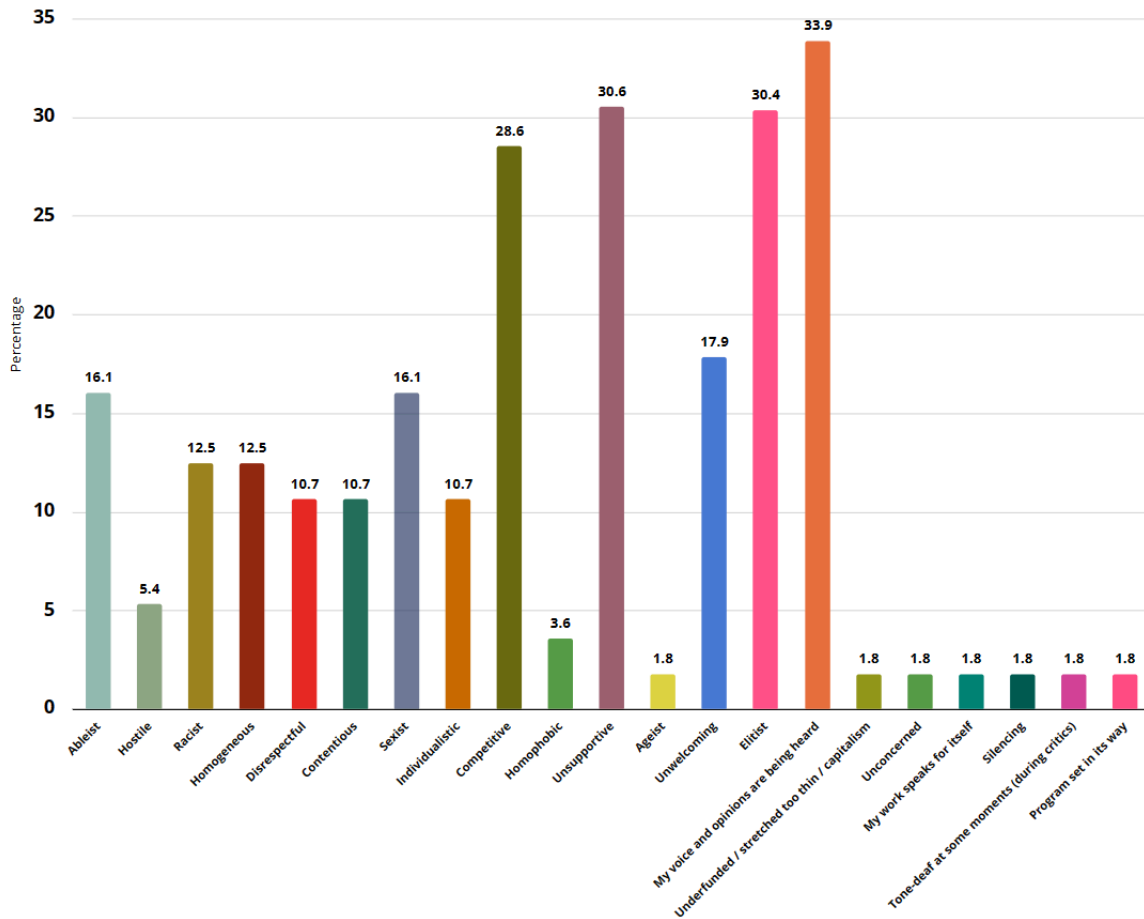
Unwelcoming - 10 (17.9%)

Elitist - 17 (30.4%)

Question 7.

If you feel that your voice and opinions are not being heard, how would you describe your experience?
56 responses

This question provided students with multiple categories to describe their experiences when feeling unheard. These results indicate that "unsupportive," "elitist," and "competitive" environments are common experiences among those who feel unheard, with high instances of environments fostering a sense of unwelcomeness and ableism. The term "elitist" indicates a culture of exclusivity, where certain voices are given more weight due to academic or professional status. This may also correlate with the prevalence of a competitive culture within architecture programs, which can create an environment where some students feel marginalized. Several students also identified ableist, racist, and sexist encounters in their programs, reflecting specific instances of discrimination.
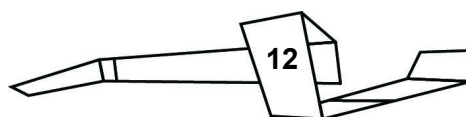
Question 8: I have had a negative experience because of how I identify, while in my architecture studies from:

Students were asked whether they had experienced negative treatment due to their identity and, if so, from whom they experienced it:

School Peers – 4 (7.1%)

Program Faculty (Professors, Administration, and Deans) – 13 (23.2%)

School Staff – 0 (0%)

The workplace (Employer, co-op, Teaching or Research Assistant Duties) – 1 (1.8%)

I have not had any negative experiences – 33 (58.9%)

Question 8.
I have had a negative experience because of how I identify, while in my architecture studies from:
56 responses

- Admin and workplace: 2%
- Other: 2%
- School Peers: 8%
- Program Faculty (Professors, Administration and Deans): 25%
- The workplace (Employer, co-op, Teaching or Research Assistant Duties): 2%
- I have not had any negative experience: 62%
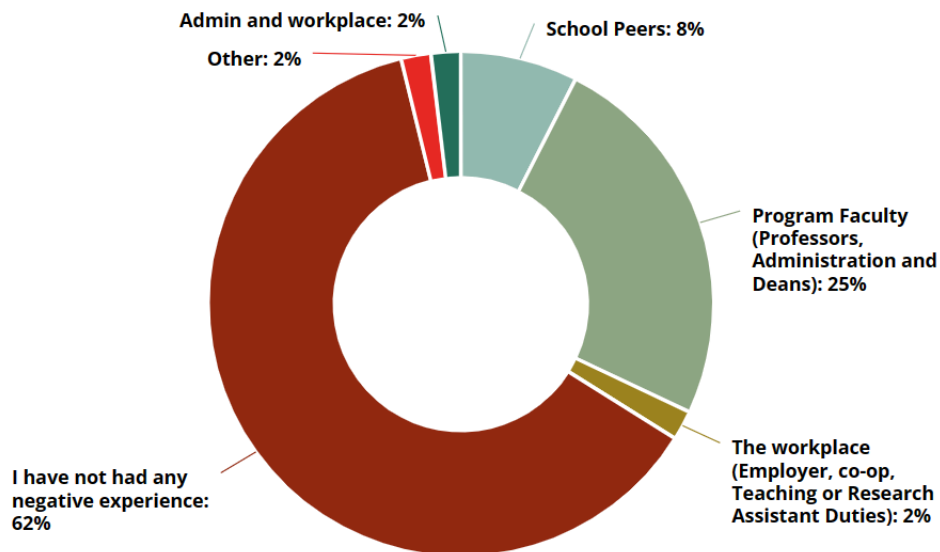
The responses indicate that program faculty were the primary source of negative experiences, with 13 respondents identifying this group. This implies that faculty members acquire a substantial impact on the development of students' educational experiences, both positively and negatively. 4 participants reported adverse encounters from school peers, indicating that peer-to-peer discrimination may be less prevalent or less frequently reported. Similarly, 1 respondent identified the workplace and school staff as a cause of negative experiences, indicating that the primary emphasis should be on program faculty and administration. A
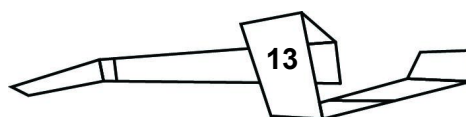
majority of respondents did not acquire any adverse encounters.

Question 9: Based on the previous question, what was your experience like?

Responses to this open-ended question varied, with students recounting particular incidents. and broader trends of discrimination or marginalization within their architecture programs. The comments exhibited significant variations, highlighting the diverse range of experiences within architecture programs.

Key themes within the responses included:

Ø   Lack of Accountability: Numerous students acknowledged that when they reported incidents or concerns, teachers or administrators responded little or not at all. This lack of accountability can cultivate an environment where discriminatory conduct remains unmonitored.

Ø Inflexibility and Rigidity: Respondents described faculty members and program policies as inflexible and rigid, particularly regarding work expectations and accommodations for disabilities. Inflexible educational environments may pose additional barriers for students with unique needs or non-traditional backgrounds.

Ø   Discrimination and Microaggressions: Several participants reported experiences of microaggressions, and discrimination based on gender, race, or ethnicity. These incidents often occurred in public settings, such as class critiques, often from faculty or school administration with a lack of intervention from faculty.

Ø Isolation and Alienation: Students expressed a feeling of isolation or alienation within their programs, often due to a lack of diversity or cultural understanding. This sense of isolation may significantly impact mental health and academic performance.

Ø   Insufficient Assistance for International Students: Student responses emphasized distinct challenges endured by international students, including difficulties with administrative processes and a lack of support from university services. These issues can exacerbate feelings of marginalization and contribute to feelings of isolation and exclusion.

These qualitative responses provide additional context for the quantitative data and illustrate the personal impact of discrimination within architectural education.
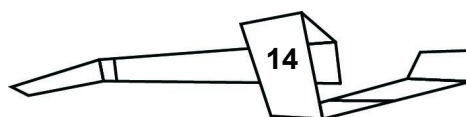
Statements from the respondents include:

"Faculty present themselves as empathetic and wanting to be helpful in the moment, but nothing ever changes. There are so many negative experiences, it's hard to pick out one. One in particular that stands out happened to a fellow student. For end-of-term reviews, a local architect who is very famous and friends with our instructor was invited to participate. He spent an hour, in front of the class and our instructor, reaming out a fellow student. This student, a young woman, is incredibly talented and had put an incredible amount of work into her design. This man brought her to near-tears. And this was after he said some borderline racist comments to another student, a woman from South Korea who speaks English as a second language."

"As women are still the primary caregivers to young children and the profession maintains the myth that school and work are the priority I've missed out on networking, job opportunities, scholarships etc."

"As for my learning disability I don't disclose it because in my previous academic and work experience I was treated negatively or passed over projects because it was assumed my struggles would negatively affect the work."

"I felt alienated due to my ethnicity. Assumptions were made about me by a professor and I was dismissed and ignored when I tried to correct them. I was pressured to share about my background but only in a way that fit my professor's exoticized expectations."

"While always knowing that the process for an international student studying architecture in Canada would differ from Canadian students' experience, and most likely include a few additional procedures or more work to be done, I was prepared for this! However, while beginning the process of finding a position to work during my Co-Op Work Term (a requirement in the architecture program of the Canadian University I attend), I faced a lot of unexpected challenges and received little to no support from the school's relevant services (i.e., offices that are present to help and support students in meeting the eligibility criteria for a Co-Op Work Term and finding a position to work in)."

"Isolating. Problems were made to be my problem, few solutions were offered, no adjustments to accommodate me were made. Instead I hear from various levels of administration and faculty that perhaps "I just couldn't cut it" and "the program was not for me", rather than making small program adjustments for accommodations."
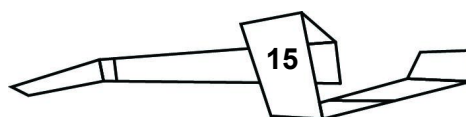
Question 10: If you answered the previous question, how has your experience affected your mental health and wellbeing?

This question aims to assess the impact of discriminatory experiences on students' mental health and well-being. However, no responses were recorded for this question, indicating that students may have been reluctant to share personal information or did not find the survey as a suitable platform to express these concerns.

Question 11: If you answered the previous question, did you report the incident? Were you supported? If so, how? If not, how?

Students were asked if they reported incidents of discrimination and whether they received support. Many respondents indicated that they did not report incidents of discrimination or negative experiences, citing a lack of clear reporting mechanisms or the perception that reporting would not result in substantial improvements with the situation. This implies that architecture programs should improve their support systems and communication to promote a culture where students feel comfortable reporting their experiences without the fear of reprisal or dismissal.

Among the respondents, the 2 students who reported an incident mentioned receiving meaningful support or achieving resolution. However, the lack of effective response further contributes to a culture of unreported incidents and silence, where students feel that their concerns will not be addressed.

Common themes from responses included:

Ø   A reluctance to report incidents due to fear of repercussions or lack of confidence in the effectiveness of the reporting process.

Ø Instances where reports were made, but no substantial measures were taken by faculty or administration.

Ø Occasionally, students indicated they did not experience incidents warranting reporting.

These responses emphasize systemic issues in addressing discrimination and the need for improved support services for students.

Statements from the respondents include:

"Who would I report an incident to? Our instructor was right there and did nothing. There is no recourse for instructors, for poorly-organized classes, for unaccessible programs."

"No. It didn't feel like it would be worth the work to report and explain it. I didn't find a direct or
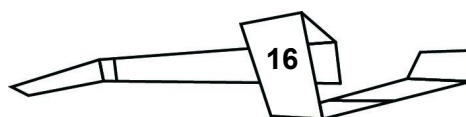
simple way to report it."

"I was thinking of several different incidents in the question above. Several were microaggressions that I did not feel would be taken seriously if I did report them. Another, more serious incident I did not formally report because a classmate who was also involved was afraid of repurcussions, so I respected their wishes and didn't report because I couldn't without risking them. I did bring the situation up in an anonymized fashion in later meeting where inclusivity and/or disability was being discussed. In yet another serious incident I was thinking of, I was supporting a classmate who did report an incident relating to another classmate. I was extremely disappointed by the response from faculty. The issue was not directly addressed. Faculty members wanted the university EDI office to get involved, which we were told would take at least 6 months to happen. In the meantime, they did not address the issue, not even to remind all students very generally about what the university and department policies were on the matter and where students could access supports. That is, a clear violation of school policy occurred, and even if faculty wasn't comfortable dealing with the specific instance themselves, the situation at a minimum warranted a policy reminder to the student body to show support for any other affected students who may not have come forward yet or who were affected bystanders."

"Yes. The chair of the department said they would consider it and nothing ever arose."

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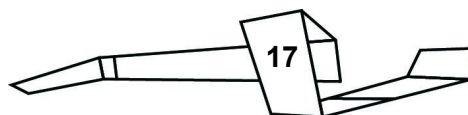
The following sections emphasize key findings from the very same 56 student respondents, focusing on their perceptions of the architecture institution and its curriculum. Picking up at Question 11 that provided an insight into the students' direct accounts of discrimination-motivated incidents, the next section starting at Question 12 moves into the scale of not only their own institution but also to the larger context of architecture education provided in Canada.

12. Has your institution created and released an action plan detailing steps forward, goals and policies towards equity?
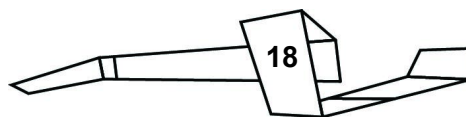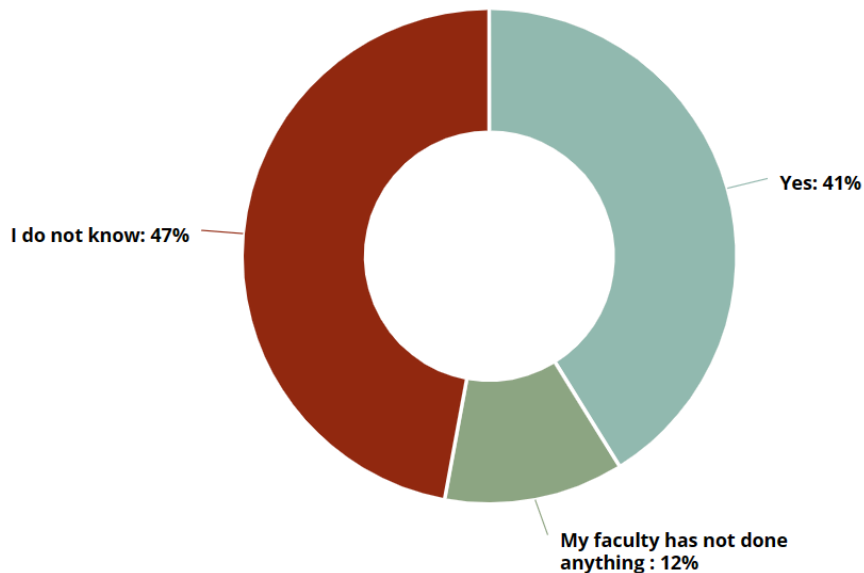
I do not know - 24 (42.9%)

Yes - 21 (37.5%)

My faculty has not done anything - 6 (10.7%)

Others - 5 (8.9%)

Question 12.

Has your institution created and released an action plan detailing steps forward, goals and policies towards equity?

56 responses

I do not know: 47%

Yes: 41%

My faculty has not done anything : 12%

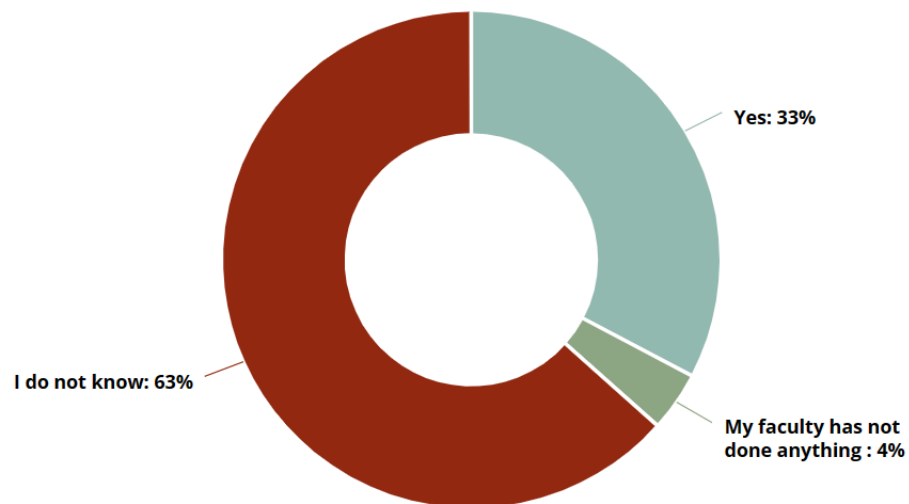**13. Do you know where to find your institution's equity plans?**

I do not know - 33 (58.9%)

Yes - 17 (30.4%)

Other - 6 (10.7%)

Question 13.

Do you know where to find your institution's equity plans?

56 responses

Yes: 33%

My faculty has not done anything : 4%

I do not know: 63%

The majority of students expressed a lack of awareness of EDI Action plans released by their respective schools. Proportionally, as captured in the following question, 58.9% did not know where to find their school's Action plan.

This indicates insufficient communication and a lack of effort put towards promoting and implementing the issued plans. One student points out that, "*The plans can easily be loopholed and have been checked off to the extent they find tolerable. But as we know tolerance is not equity, nor is it anywhere near what it is we're looking for.*" Further highlighting the discourtesy towards adopting equity. While that is still majorly the case, on the contrary 30.4% of students agree to knowing where their EDI Plans can be found, which when seen by itself indicates clear communication, but as a whole it reports partial/inadequate promotion.
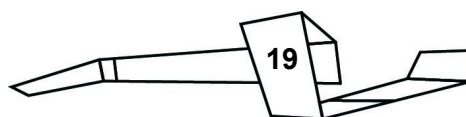
14. Since the release of your school's plan have you seen notable action from your faculty in response to EDI related discussions?

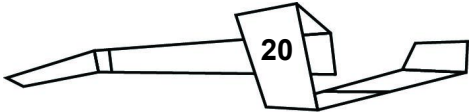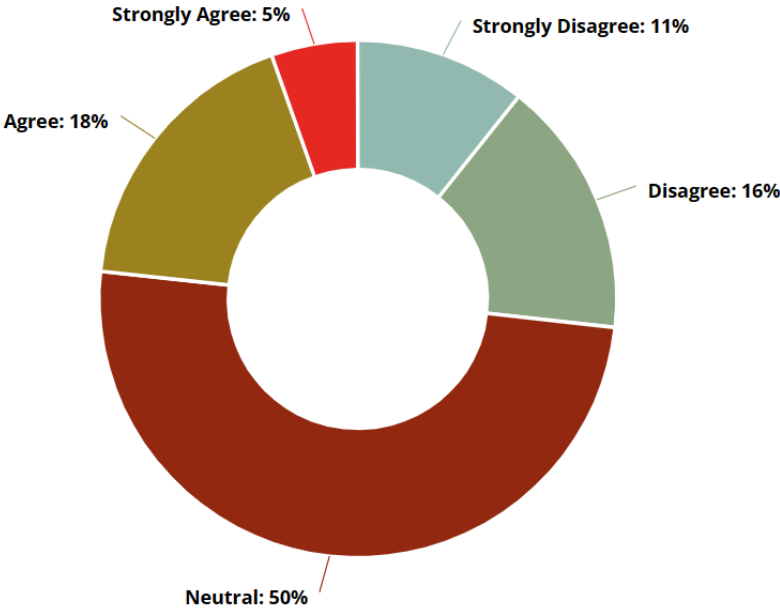Neutral - 28 (50%)

Somewhat Agree - 10 (17.9%)

Somewhat Disagree - 9 (16.1%)

Strongly Disagree - 6 (10.7%)

Strongly Agree - 3 (5.4%)

Question 14.

Since the release of your school's plan have you seen notable action from your faculty in response to EDI related discussions?

56 responses

15. I have seen actionable efforts towards fostering an inclusive and equitable learning environment from the faculty over the past few months.
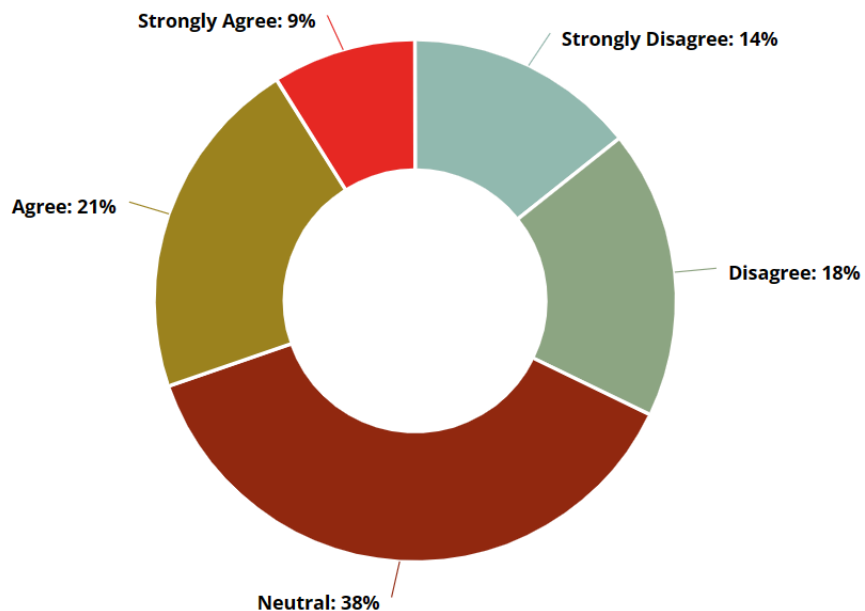
Neutral - 21 (37.5%)

Somewhat Agree - 12 (21.4%)

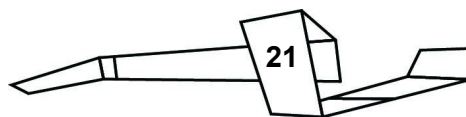Somewhat Disagree - 10 (17.9%)

Strongly Disagree - 8 (14.3%)

Strongly Agree - 5 (8.9%)

Question 15.

I have seen actionable efforts towards fostering an inclusive and equitable learning environment from the faculty over the past few months.

56 responses

Strongly Agree: 9%
Strongly Disagree: 14%
Agree: 21%
Disagree: 18%
Neutral: 38%

In support of earlier claims of not thorough promotion or implementation of the schools' EDI Action Plans, it is also recorded that 76.8% of the students have observed none to sub-par efforts taken by the faculty in response to such EDI related discussions. 23.2% of the rest have instead seen encouragement of EDI through actions and conversations initiated by the faculty. This reports an overall state of institutional indifference towards creating a safe and inclusive environment, pointing to the need to bring about a structural change for the ongoing deep-rooted systemic issues. At the very least, Action Plans and discussions over topics such as EDI generate opportunities for concerns to be voiced and conversations to be had.

16. My school employs and celebrates faculty members, and guest lecturers from diverse backgrounds (cultural, *2SLGBTQIA+*, etc.), resulting in a diverse academic approach.

Somewhat Agree - 22 (39.3%)

Strongly Agree - 12 (21.4%)
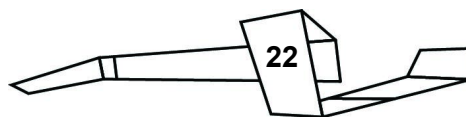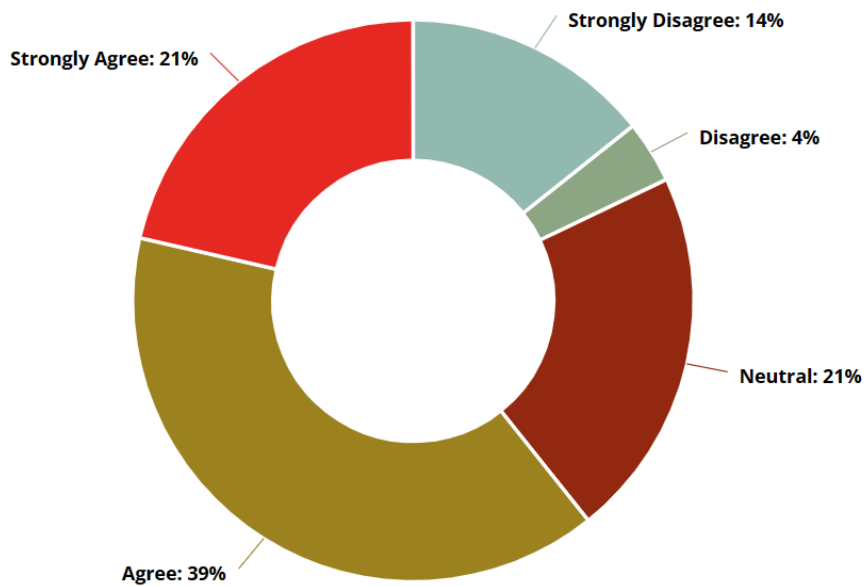
Neutral - 12 (21.4%)

Strongly Disagree - 8 (14.3%)

Somewhat Disagree - 2 (3.6%)

Question 16.

My school employs and celebrates faculty members, and guest lecturers from diverse backgrounds (cultural, 2SLGBTQIA+, etc.),
resulting in a diverse academic approach.

56 responses

Strongly Agree: 21%

Strongly Disagree: 14%

Disagree: 4%

Neutral: 21%

Agree: 39%

17. My school has integrated into the required curriculum the histories, practices, precedents by and for *BIPOC, 2SLGBTQIA+*, and other traditionally *racialized* and marginalized communities.

Neutral - 22 (39.3%)

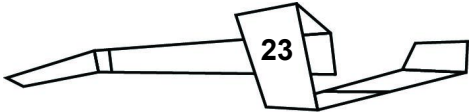Somewhat Agree - 15 (26.8%)
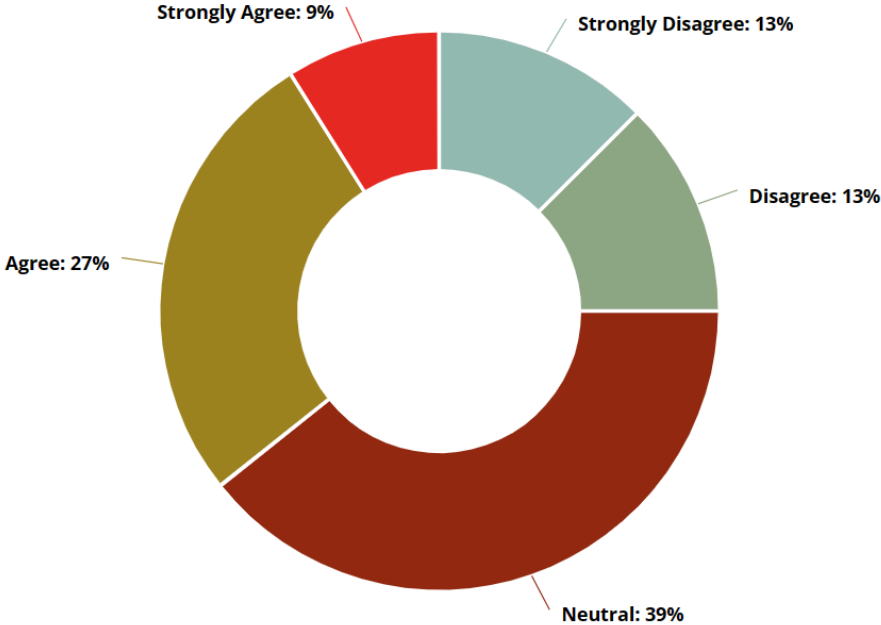
Somewhat Disagree - 7 (12.5%)

Strongly Disagree - 7 (12.5%)

Strongly Agree - 5 (8.9%)

Question 17.

My school has integrated into the required curriculum the histories, practices, precedents by and for BIPOC, 2SLGBTQIA+, and other traditionally racialized and marginalized communities.

56 responses

Strongly Agree: 9%
Strongly Disagree: 13%
Disagree: 13%
Agree: 27%
Neutral: 39%

18. My school has initiatives for community building and mentorship that are inclusive to *BIPOC, 2SLGBTQIA+*, and other traditionally *racialized* and marginalized student groups.

Neutral - 19 (33.9%)

Somewhat Agree - 16 (28.6%)
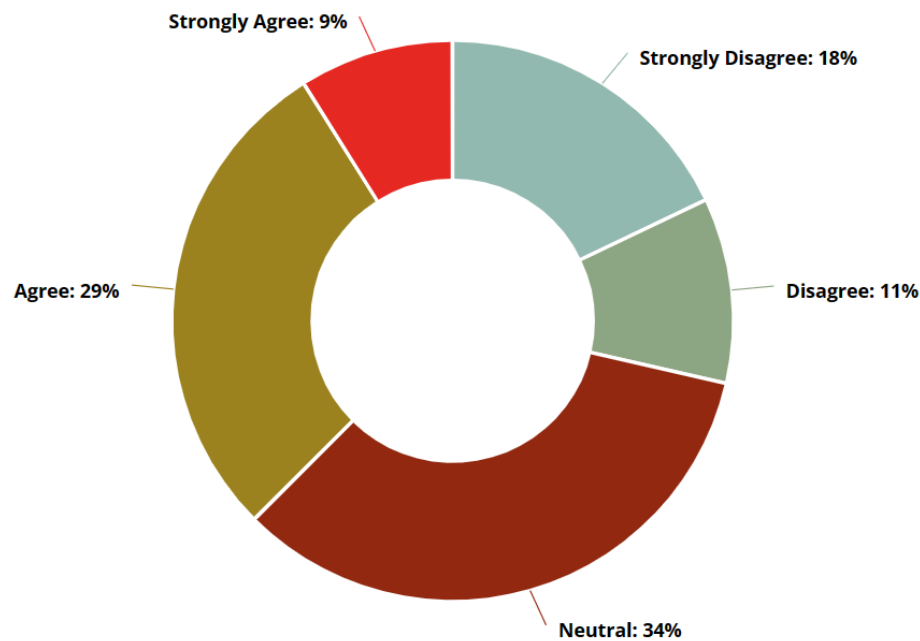
Strongly Disagree - 10 (17.9%)

Somewhat Disagree - 6 (10.7%)

Strongly Agree - 5 (8.9%)

Question 18.

My school has initiatives for community building and mentorship that are inclusive to BIPOC, 2SLGBTQIA+, and other traditionally racialized and marginalized student groups.

56 responses

Strongly Agree: 9%

Strongly Disagree: 18%

Agree: 29%

Disagree: 11%

Neutral: 34%

While the students indicate that in-house Action plans are not as successfully implemented, through the responses received for questions 16 through 18, it can be inferred that the schools do put in efforts in bringing EDI to the immediate architectural curriculum. 60% of students clearly appreciate the changes made in the architectural academic content to include faculty members and guest lecturers from diverse backgrounds. This is however only partially followed through with 35.7% of student responses indicating that content from traditionally racialized and marginalized communities are being discussed for case studies, histories and precedents.
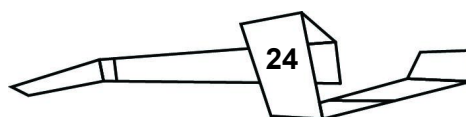
Students share that they are interested in a *"more inclusive curriculum which isn't western-focused"* with some also suggesting the need to bring optional (choice-based) programs and [...EDI] informed younger faculty. One response highlights the need for representation from less well advantaged groups, not solely based on race, gender and sexual identity but also including interrelated factors such as financial privileges.

19. How would you like to see your school and your architecture education incorporating the findings from this survey?

20. Do you have any other thoughts to share regarding the conversation on EDI within architectural education in Canada?

Students are asserting their *need* to be heard. These questions have managed to provide a qualitative measure of the overall concerns that the students have around the architectural education system. The broader themes include:

> Ø Need for a change from an "ableist" delivery to a more inclusive mode of teaching. One student expresses, *"I wish there was real progress in breaking down the rigidity of architecture education delivery. The focus on specific outcomes achieved in narrowly specific ways unnecessarily excludes many capable and valuable minds. The enormity of that loss is obscured by the existing system..."*. This further trickles to the lack of disability engagement in the broader context, part of which is physical accessibility, that some responses seemed inter-related to each other – with one of the responses reading, *"I mean even my architecture building isn't actually accessible in many ways. (the elevator doesn't even access all buildings and is often broken. Or people who need it are instructed not to use it as "its not a toy" and meant only for freight use)."*

In conjunction with inflicted ableist behaviors and inaccessible and non-inclusive facilities, students also vocalized that there seemed to be a noticeable disconnect between students and school staff over ageist sentiments, as shared by one student *"I think too often the school's plan is written by the admin/staff/profs but tangible efforts and actions are always undertaken by the students. There should be more harmony between the two, and admin/staff need to stop thinking of us as rebellious teens."* indicating a degree of prevalence of disconnect between school staff and students over issues including ageism and lack of sympathy.

> Ø Critiques on the architecture education system (away from EDI) have also been collected. One student says, *"Be more open to how architecture is practiced and designed and not being stuck in a specific way. In the case of institution, they are very hard stuck on hand drawing during the first couple of years of the degree. Even the admission portfolio asks for only hand drawn work while other university architectural*
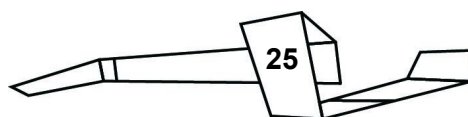
programs are more open to different mediums. Students are forced to only hand draw in their first years of the degree and then instantly expected to know architectural programs in third year when they were never taught them in the first place." While software proficiency is important, and a mandatory Student Performance Criteria (SPC) established by the CACB, in many ways harsh regulations and transitions like these act as a factor against propagating interest towards architecture, which inturn influences an individual's academic success.

Ø There is a lot of support towards the idea of terminating faculty members who do not foster an inclusive environment, and instead, diversifying the faculty and admin on grounds of architectural expertise, age range, ethnicity and cultural views. Students are keen on seeing involvement of more racialized professionals of the architecture community, "*offering* [not just] *their course* [but also participate] *during the CRITS as well*". Students also call for the need for a diversified program content with more non-Eurocentric topics and perspectives, to actually be "taught" rather than being pushed off to the student as "research." One student also speaks to the topic of student engagement - as covered in Question 18, they say, *"Incorporate more programs/clubs run by and for marginalized groups in the field. Truly take the time to listen and understand the opinions of those who are marginalized, whether it be for sharing their experiences and opinions, or sharing ideas."*

* * *
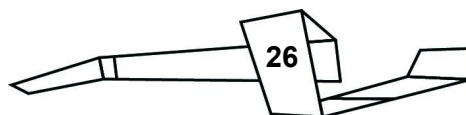
Key Findings and Challenges

The survey findings highlight several critical areas that require attention to improve Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) in Canadian Architecture education.

Key findings include:

1.   Valuing Student Voices: Many students feel their opinions and experiences are not valued within their programs. The survey revealed that a substantial proportion of respondents assessed their experience as either neutral or negative in this regard. The lack of recognition can contribute to a sense of isolation and hinder the overall educational experience.

2.   Discrimination and Marginalization: Architecture education continues to exhibit discriminatory practices, including biased grading, racism, sexism, and ableism. Students from marginalized groups, including BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour), LGBTQ+, international students and those with disabilities—reported specific challenges, highlighting systemic issues within academic environments.

3.   Support for Students with Disabilities: Multiple students expressed dissatisfaction with the inadequate accessibility accommodations and support for those with learning disabilities. This often leads to additional stress and frustration for affected students.

4.   Institutional Accountability and Transparency: The lack of clear reporting mechanisms and accountability contributes to the failure to address instances of discrimination and harassment. Students often experience feeling discouraged from reporting incidents due to the fear of facing reprisals or due to the instilled belief that their reports would not be acted upon.

5.   Representation and Curriculum Diversity: Student responses highlighted a need for more diverse representation among faculty and guest lecturers, along with the demand for the expansion of themes in the curriculum that are not only of Eurocentric culture. This is critical for fostering a more inclusive learning environment.

6.   Challenges for International Students: International students endured unique barriers regarding administrative hurdles and inadequate support services. These obstacles can further marginalize them within the broader academic community.
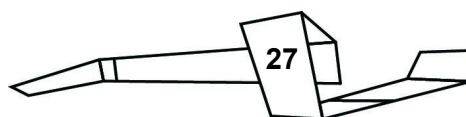
Plan Forward: Advancing Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in Canadian Architecture Education

Following a thorough analysis of the survey findings, several key challenges were identified that hinder Equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) within Canadian Architectural education. To address such challenges, a plan forward offers a set of comprehensive suggestions aimed at fostering a more inclusive academic environment for all students.

1. Enhance Student Feedback Mechanisms

The establishment of clear channels for feedback aids in the establishment of a more inclusive architecture education system. Schools should provide transparent systems that ensure students can express their opinions and raise issues without fear of retaliation. Possible strategies for enhancing student feedback mechanisms may include the implementation of anonymous surveys, the appointment of student representatives from and for different backgrounds, or the organization of open forums for discussion. Fostering consistent and transparent communication between students and faculty can aid in the development of a culture of respect and inclusion, ensuring that students feel their voices and opinions are valued.

2. Address Discrimination and Marginalization

Schools should establish robust anti-discrimination policies that outline repercussions for engaging in discriminatory behaviour. It is imperative that these policies be well-publicized and accessible to all students and faculty members. It is important for faculty and staff to undergo diversity and inclusion training to raise awareness and understanding of implicit biases and discriminatory practices. This ensures the creation of an environment that values the safety and respect of all students, irrespective of their identity.

3. Improve Support for Students with Disabilities

Schools must prioritize support for students with disabilities by strengthening accessibility accommodations. This entails ensuring the presence of physical accessibility in campus buildings and providing appropriate academic assistance for those with impairments. Establishing robust support systems, including specialized counseling services and resources for academic accommodations, would contribute to the development of a more equitable learning environment for students with learning disabilities.

4. Foster Institutional Accountability and Transparency

Institutions must develop clear, accessible reporting systems for incidents of discrimination and harassment. These methods must ensure confidentiality and protect against reprisals, therefore fostering an environment where students feel empowered to report without apprehension. To foster accountability, educational institutions should ensure that reported incidents are thoroughly investigated and appropriate measures are taken. Establishing independent regulatory committees or organizations can further enhance institutional accountability,
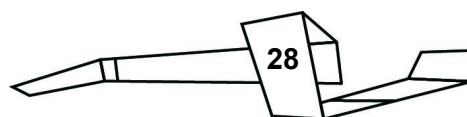
promoting trust and transparency.

5. Increase Representation and Curriculum Diversity

Increasing representation among faculty and guest lecturers are essential for fostering inclusivity and encouraging diversity. Schools should proactively engage in the recruitment of individuals from diverse backgrounds to offer varied perspectives and cultivate an inclusive learning environment. Additionally, schools should expand their curriculum to include non-Eurocentric topics, additionally focusing on the histories, practices, and precedents of traditionally marginalized communities. This method will enrich student's educational experience and more effectively equip students for a diverse and inclusive architecture profession.

6. Support International Students

Considering the unique challenges endured by international students, educational institutions must provide dedicated resources to assist students in navigating administrative processes and achieving cultural integration. This may include specialized support services, dedicated advisors, and additional scholarship & funding opportunities. Schools should establish programs and initiatives that actively embrace international students and ensure their full participation in the academic community. This can facilitate the development of a more inclusive and supportive environment, therefore assisting international students in attaining their academic and professional aspirations.
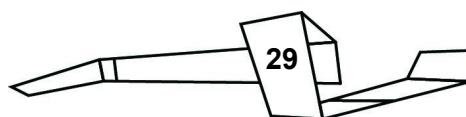
Conclusion

The CASA Survey highlights significant concerns regarding discrimination, marginalization, and inadequate support within Canadian architecture programs. Respondents frequently reported experiences of discrimination linked to their identity, including many factors such as race, gender, ethnicity, and disability. Instances of confusion and misunderstanding with individuals of similar identity, racism and sexism from both faculty and peers, sentiments of alienation based on ethnicity, and challenges with obtaining necessary accessible concessions were often discussed. Discriminatory practices are often reinforced by biased grading, dismissive attitudes, and a lack of accommodations for students with disabilities.

Underrepresented demographics such as BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour), international students, and individuals with disabilities encounter distinct challenges within architecture education. The challenges include limited access to resources and opportunities, inadequate representation among faculty and within the curriculum, and marginalization within the academic setting. These challenges highlight the significance of increased knowledge and understanding of the difficulties endured by underrepresented students, necessitating measures to address systemic issues and foster an inclusive culture within the academic community.

The students' dissatisfaction with the conditions of architecture education within their schools is indicative of broader systemic issues. Students report inconsistent feedback, delayed grading, and inadequate support for learning disabilities, highlighting an environment that's often inflexible and demanding. Criticism is directed towards intense workloads and rigid expectations, with suggestions for revising teaching methods that may appear more suitable for the student at hand, enhancing workload management, and offering more flexibility in accommodations.

The survey feedback emphasizes the need for improved student support systems, better representation, and more inclusive teaching practices. To address these concerns, architecture programs must foster a more inclusive and supportive culture, ensuring that all students, irrespective of their identity or background, can thrive within the academic environment. These initiatives are essential for constructing a more equitable education system and nurturing a new cohort of architects that embody the varied demographics of the communities they cater to.

The CASA survey highlights the pressing need to address diversity, equity, and inclusion within Canadian architecture education. Implementing the suggestions outlined in this plan forward may provide a more supportive and inclusive environment for all students, ensuring that
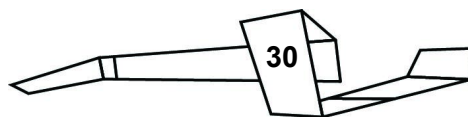
everyone has the opportunity to thrive and contribute to a diverse and equitable architecture profession. Furthermore, by adopting these suggestions, Canadian architectural education may progress towards a more inclusive and equitable future, where equity, diversity and inclusion are not just accepted but actively celebrated. This requires a collaborative effort from students, faculty, administration, and broader institutional authorities to drive meaningful change and to promote lasting transformations.