ACCESSING BUILT ENVIRONMENTS:

2012 Report on Community Members Perceptions of Accessibility at York University

IRIS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2005, the Ontario Government passed the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA). In 2010, York University approved a Statement of Commitment for accessibility for persons with disabilities in line with AODA standards. This includes a commitment to preventing, minimizing, and removing the barriers to participating by persons with disabilities (see Appendices A and B).

Barriers within the built environment impact the use of York University grounds and buildings, creating a social justice issue. Barriers decrease the usability of space, resulting in the need for future corrective measures in order to reflect current standards and to meet institutional commitments. In order to ensure a sustainable and innovative accessibility plan for the university, IRIS undertook the task of identifying barriers as well as highlighting how space is used by both disabled and nondisabled persons.

From February to March 2012, Institute for Research and Innovation in Sustainability (IRIS) staff and volunteers surveyed 759 York University community members, 14% of whom identified as a person with a disability and 7.9% who preferred not to share this information. In addition to the online survey,

IRIS conducted two semi-structured focus group interviews comprised of people with a variety of disabilities in order to gain more detailed information on the challenges of accessing and navigating the built environment of the campuses. This report describes the barriers in the built environment, as identified by participants, as well as discussing challenges arising from policies and attitudes that respondents encountered.

York University community member experiences varied based on how they used the built environment. Among those surveyed, both those who identified as nondisabled and disabled, prioritized the following as their top areas for improvement (order shown is disable ranking choices:

- classrooms
- maps and signage
- campus walkways
- washrooms
- libraries

Those who preferred not to identify as either nondisabled or disabled prioritized elevators rather than libraries among their top five choices.

Given the scope of the survey and the size of York University, including both Keele and Glendon campuses, the intricacies of access and barriers are graphically illustrated throughout this report. The information provided in optional comment sections located in each question, including *"Do you have any final thoughts about accessibility at York?"* and comments recorded from the focus group brainstorming, provide a necessary context for the listing of the barriers that emerged from the online survey. The complex nature of creating and maintaining accessibility at an institutional level is addressed in this report. Additionally, this report provides survey results, specific recommendations for improving accessibility at York University, and suggestions for further research. York University community members expressed a desire for:

- improved disability and awareness education and training for professors, teaching assistants and staff to address barriers based in personal attitudes about disabilities
- improved reporting and compliance mechanisms that will be achieved through the development of more efficient and transparent processes
- improved community consultation at key stages of planning and implementation of changes to the built environment

Classrooms

- Provide flexible furniture and layout
- Provide additional electrical outlet service
- Provide automatic door opener access to classrooms
- Enforce room capacity policies to prevent overcrowding

Maps and Signage

- Update map information
- Reformat and update accessible maps
- Provide additional and updated maps within buildings

Campus Walkways

- Improve snow removal
- Improve lighting conditions
- Assess impact of accessibility during on-campus construction, including removal of obstructive derbis

Washrooms

- Increase frequency of washroom maintenance
- Increase the number of accessible washrooms
- Provide reporting information for maintenance in washrooms

Libraries

- Assess library bookshelf for increased access
- Provide up to date accessible computer software
- Improve air circulation and ventilation
- Provide additional washroom access for disabled library patrons

Elevators

- Improve elevator location signage
- Assess library elevator use policies

Classrooms

Maps and Signage

Campus Walkways

Washrooms

Libraries

Maps and Signage

Washrooms

Campus Walkways

Classrooms

Libraries

Maps and Signage

Campus Walkways

Classrooms

Washrooms

Elevators

IRIS

INSTITUTE FOR RESEARCH AND INNOVATION IN SUSTAINABILITY

INTRODUCTION

The mandate of the Institute for Research and Innovation in Sustainability (IRIS) is to pursue interdisciplinary research focused on sustainability. We follow this mandate in our own backyard by engaging in campus sustainability projects. One of our ongoing projects is an annual campus survey on a sustainability theme. The topic for the fifth IRIS survey stemmed from 2005, when the Ontario Government passed the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA). In 2010, York University approved a Statement of Commitment to accessibility for persons with disabilities in line with AODA standards. This includes a commitment to preventing, minimizing, and removing the barriers to participating by persons with disabilities.

Barriers within the built environment impact the sustainability and use of York University grounds and buildings. It is a social justice challenge to not have the campus accessible to all community members. As a result, the creation and maintenance of barriers decreases the usability of space and results in the need for corrective measures in order to reflect current standards and institutional commitments. In order to ensure a sustainable and innovative accessibility plan, in 2011-2012, IRIS undertook the task of identifying barriers as well as highlighting how space is used by both disabled and nondisabled persons.

This report is the culmination of an online survey and focus group interviews conducted to gain information about how the York community views campus accessibility. The report reviews the community's perceived accessibility challenges at York University, while also identifying accessibility initiatives at other Ontario universities and in provincial School Boards. These reviews provided a context for conducting the survey about accessibility at York University. The survey and focus group disscussions asked respondents to reflect on their behaviours, perceptions and priorities with respect to accessibility in the built environment at York University. This report highlights the barriers in the built environment, as identified by both those surveyed online and the focus group participants, as well as policy and attitudinal barriers. The complex nature of creating and maintaining accessibility at an institutional level is addressed in this report. Additionally, this report provides survey results, specific recommendations for improving accessibility at York University, and suggestions for further research.

METHODOLOGY

IRIS staff, faculty and graduate students in Critical Disability Studies and Faculty of Environmental Studies worked in collaboration with York's Campus Services and Business Operations (CSBO) to develop the Campus Accessibility Survey. The survey was submitted to York University's Office of Research Ethics for review, and received approval.

The data collection was carried out from an online survey and from two focus groups. Following the guidelines and tutorials for accessible survey structure and formatting, we administered the survey through Survey Monkey. In order to provide data that was both quantitative and qualitative, the survey questions included both closed questions and optional, open-ended, questions. In order to reach a wide audience, IRIS promoted the survey in several ways, both electronic and in person:

- tabling at Keele and Glendon Campuses
- departmental listservs
- YFile
- IRIS website

The IRIS survey team approached accessibility from the perspective that all members of the York University community experience the environment in a multifaceted manner, and therefore many people, whether they self-identify as a person with disabilities or not, may encounter barriers in the built environment. In addition, we understood that community members might not wish to disclose a disability. The survey had a completion rate of 80.6%, with 759 of 942 respondents completing the entire survey.

After primary analysis of the survey data, the survey team hosted two 2-hour focus groups with semi-structured discussions on accessibility and barriers encountered at York University. In this instance, we actively sought input from members of the York University community who identified as having one or more disabilities. The focus groups (held on April 19th 2012 and May 17th, 2012) comprised of a mix of 19th 2012 and May 17th, 2012) were comprised of a mix of graduate and undergraduate students and staff members of York University. In each session, the first 10-15 minutes were devoted to a writing exercise. Participants were asked to write about and share their experiences of accessibility at York University, including instances where they encountered barriers. As a follow up, focal group participants were asked to describe the process of engaging with barriers and how the barriers were rectified, if at all. The final focus group exercise was to brainstorm ideas of how to improve accessibility at the institutional level.

With these two different methods of data-gathering: Survey Monkey and focus group discussions, subsequent data analysis could be both quantitative and qualitative.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

To explore and analyze the data and the respondents' comments, and to establish the foundation for interpretations, the following statistical analyses were used:

- Demographic analysis
- Chi-square test
- Graphical representation

For demographic variables, arithmetic mean and modal class were determined, except for family income where median income was also calculated. The variables analyzed were length of time of residence at the campus, weekly hours spent on campus, household income, education level and age of the respondent.

For most of the core questions, a non-parametric test, called a chi-square test, was run. The chi-square test measures whether there is a significant difference between the effects of categorical independent variables on a categorical dependent variable. This research studies the concern of the York University community about accessibility of the built environment and determines whether the type of response to the built environment is influenced by the disability status of the respondents. In this case, we wished to explore whether persons with a disability or disabilities (a categorical independent variable) have different concerns over the accessibility of the built environment (a categorical dependent variable) compared with those persons without a disability.

The responses about the built environment had a five-point scale, ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The disability status of survey respondents had three categories: without disability, disabled and prefer not to say. Because of the small number of respondents falling under disabled and prefer not to say categories, many cells had values smaller than the minimum required. The chi-square test has minimum value requirements for each cell, which means that the data collected did not meet all

to address this we used the Fisher Exact Test, which does not have the minimum value requirement. Fisher Exact tests were run for those results with a significance value around 0.5, in order to determine whether the outcome of the analysis changed. The Fisher Exact Test did give some different significance values for some relationships. For others, the initial chi-square test values were used.

In addition to chi-square test results, the cross-tabbed responses are presented graphically. Bar diagrams were used, which show disability status on the horizontal axis and percentage of respondents in each of the five possible categories of agreement on the vertical axis. Since each disability category for all respondents was normalized to a total of 100%, the readers should be mindful of the actual values associated with each category; otherwise, the graphs alone, without these numbers could lead to skewed interpretation. To relay a clear picture of the cross-tabulation, the values for each category of disability are presented in the text.

QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

Given the complex nature of accessibility and the situations that create, maintain, or eliminate barriers for disabled and nondisabled persons alike, this report combines quantitative survey data with qualitative feedback and commentary. This approach allows those who experience barriers to contextualize and describe the barriers in their own words.

While we do not provide the accounts of all respondents, the selected perspectives reflected statements concerning barriers that were repeated frequently.

Qualitative data were derived from all optional comments and focus group discussions. Each question that allowed for optional commentary was themed and coded. As with the statistical analysis, coding was divided into 'nondisabled', 'disabled', and 'prefer not to say' respondent categories. The developed themes depended on the type of option questions. Option questions included suggestions for improving accessibility in specific contexts (ie. classrooms, housing, parking, etc.) and identifying location-specific barriers (ie. *"Are there any pathways on campus that consistently hinder mobility? Please specify location using buildings or other landmarks"*). The question *"Do you have any final thoughts on accessibility at York?"* was coded and counted independently as it often fell into both location-specific and generalized barrier themes.

Each section begins with an alphabetical list of the main barriers identified by respondents.

In the beginning of each focus group, facilitators passed around consent forms, informing participants of their rights and how the data would be used. For accuracy, both focus group discussions were recorded and transcribed. In addition, participants were given pens and paper for writing exercises. At the conclusion of the focus group, all materials were collected. Themes and coding was developed through both the transcription of the discussion and participant notepads.

From these two sources, we coded and counted responses to inform our analysis of barriers within the built environment.

"This approach allows those who experience barriers to contextualize and describe the barriers in their own words."

CAVEATS, ACKNOWLEDGED BIASES AND SURVEY LIMITATIONS

All surveys contain limitations. This may include biases and constraints that inform how and what types of question are asked. For example, the province of Ontario is currently undergoing a transformation within the Ontario Building Code (OBC) to incorporate Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act's new standards within the built environment. However, these standards are currently under review and therefore the survey was constructed based on the existing standards (OBC 2006). This limited question development, resulting in the identification of physical barriers under a specific context. For instance, barriers encountered by those with visual and/or auditory disabilities/impairments may not have been surveyed in the same manner, as the OBC itself is limited when it comes to addressing these specific experiences.

IRIS focuses on sustainability research and therefore the survey includes an admitted environmental bias. The aim of the survey is to consult with the York University community in the identification of priorities and barriers, which will assit with new construction and renovation projects. With this perspective, we wish to ensure that changes within the built environment incorporate multiple disabled perspectives that will permit extended use of buildings and thus reduce the need for corrective construction. In order to demonstrate the importance of all respondent perspectives as well as to not build certain expectations, our survey preamble states: *"This survey is designed for York students, staff and faculty. This survey is to help York University develop a plan for improvements to the physical environment in order to reduce barriers and increase accessibility. Because of the age of buildings, and the size of the University, this work is expected to take*

DEFINITIONS

The following section describes key terms found throughout the accessibility survey and report.

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) – A provincial act passed in 2005 for the purpose of developing, implementing and enforcing accessibility standards. The act was legislated in response to the historical discrimination against persons with disabilities in Ontario.

Barrier – means anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of his or her disability, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an information or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy or a practice; ("obstacle") (AODA)

Built Environment – The Built environment, for the purpose of this study, refers to the person made surroundings within the university that provide settings for physical movements and activities of students, staff and faculty.

Disability – York University defines disability based on the AODA definition: "disability" means,

> (a) any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device,
> (b) a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability,
> (c) a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,
> (d) a mental disorder, or
> (e) an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997; ("handicap")

Ontario Building Code – The provincial code that details the minimum provisions (technical requirements) acceptable to maintain safety of buildings with specific regard to public health, fire protection, accessibility and structural sufficiency. It concerns construction, renovation and demolition, and does not pertain to existing buildings.

ACCESSIBILITY INITIATIVES AT OTHER UNIVERSITIES

Research conducted on the interventions of public institutions on accessibility, including universities in Southern Ontario, as well as school boards and cities in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), revealed that the level of effort aimed at addressing disability varies greatly. The research was based on a study of the institutions' websites and email communications. The research analyzed the actions taken to raise awareness about disability and the mechanisms set up by these institutions to report physical barriers.

The awareness-raising activities generally revolve around creating customer service awareness that mirrors the standards developed by AODA. Institutions, mostly universities, have posted AODA online training for customer service. However, in most of the universities, including York University, the training is password protected and not even accessible to students.

Some universities have taken an extra step in raising awareness. They have posted awareness materials on their website that includes brochures, position papers, instructors handbooks, university-produced PowerPoint and presentation videos. The University of Guelph has produced a poster series on disability, besides other initiatives, which is something no other institutions in the region have done.

School boards appear further ahead of universities and cities in developing initiatives both to raise awareness and accommodate disability. All the school boards examined have annual accessibility plans which include goals, objectives, and actions to be taken for the upcoming year. Continuous training for new and existing staff is part of the plan. The plan is prepared as per the requirement of AODA.

Cities in Ontario have also taken initiatives in this direction. Cities require their vendors to take accessibility training and have mentioned this on their website. However, some cities, such as the City of Brampton, do not have the training posted online nor do they have the link to the training. Cities' initiatives also differ. For example, the City of Mississauga has published a themed booklet, May I Help You?, the City of Brampton has a separate FAQ dedicated to accessibility and the City of Barrie has developed a training booklet for vendors and contractors.

When it comes to reporting physical barriers, the majority of the institutions do not identify specific mechanisms and follow up procedures for doing this. However, some school boards, eg, York Region District School Board have an online form for reporting barriers. Likewise, Queen's University provides an online customer service feedback form. No mechanism for the regular monitoring of physical barriers or undertaking any type of accessibility survey was identified within any of the institutions examined.
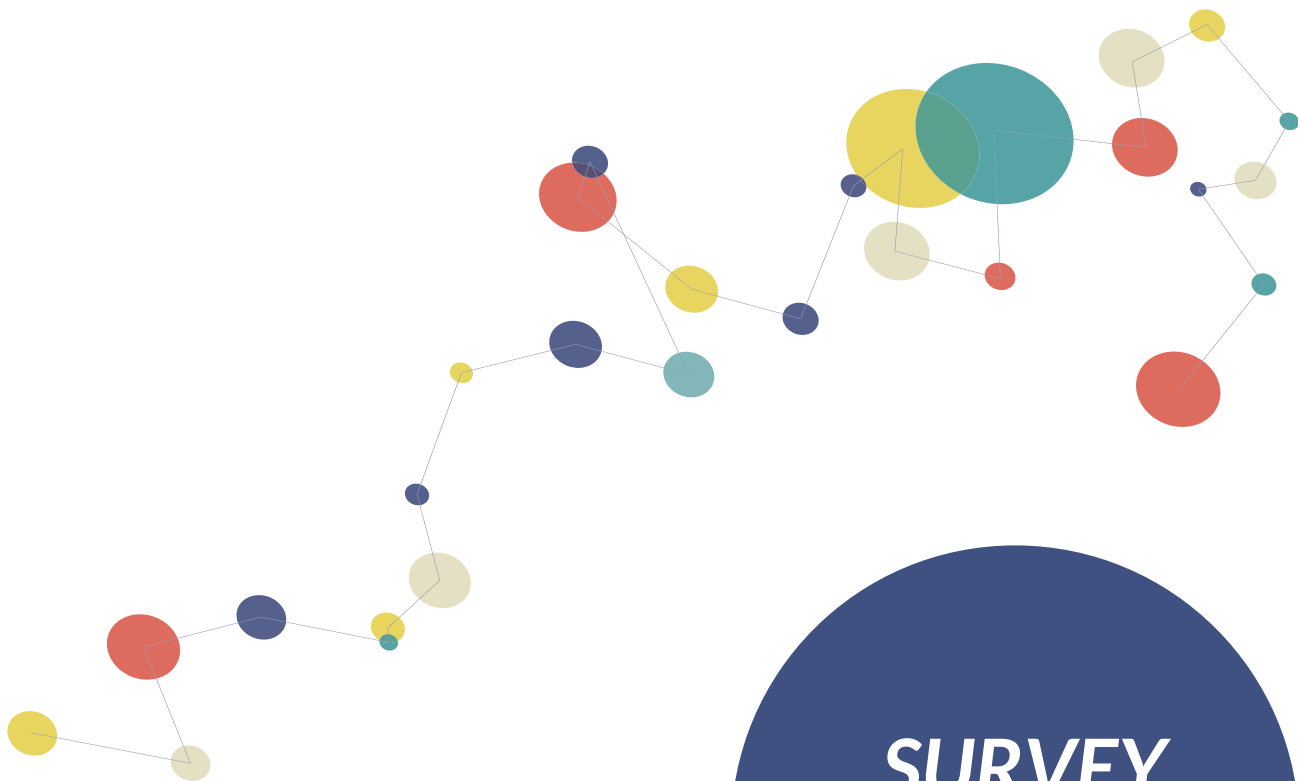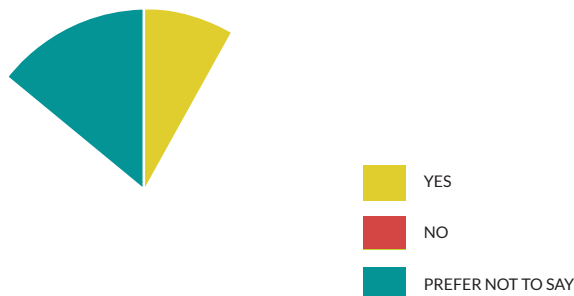
SURVEY RESULTS

SURVEY RESULTS

Respondent Profile

All of the respondents were requested to identify their disability status as non-disabled, disabled and prefer not to say. 78.1 % of the respondents identified themselves as non-disabled and 14 % as disabled, while 7.9 % preferred not to disclose their disability

Table 1: Do you view yourself as a person with a disability or disabilities?
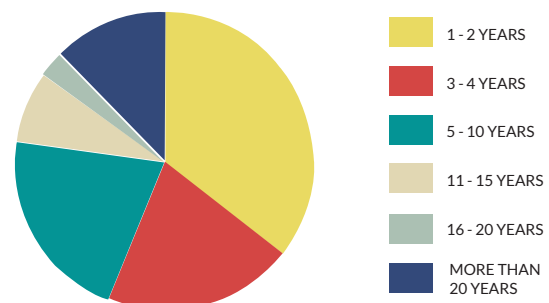

- YES
- NO
- PREFER NOT TO SAY

The household income of the respondents shows a high degree of variance. The mean income is $92,131/yr, the median $ 53,472/yr, and the modal value falls in the lower end of the income spectrum (<$25,000/yr). These respondents (23.3% of the total) fall into the low-income category. Overall, 26.5% of respondents chose not to answer this question.
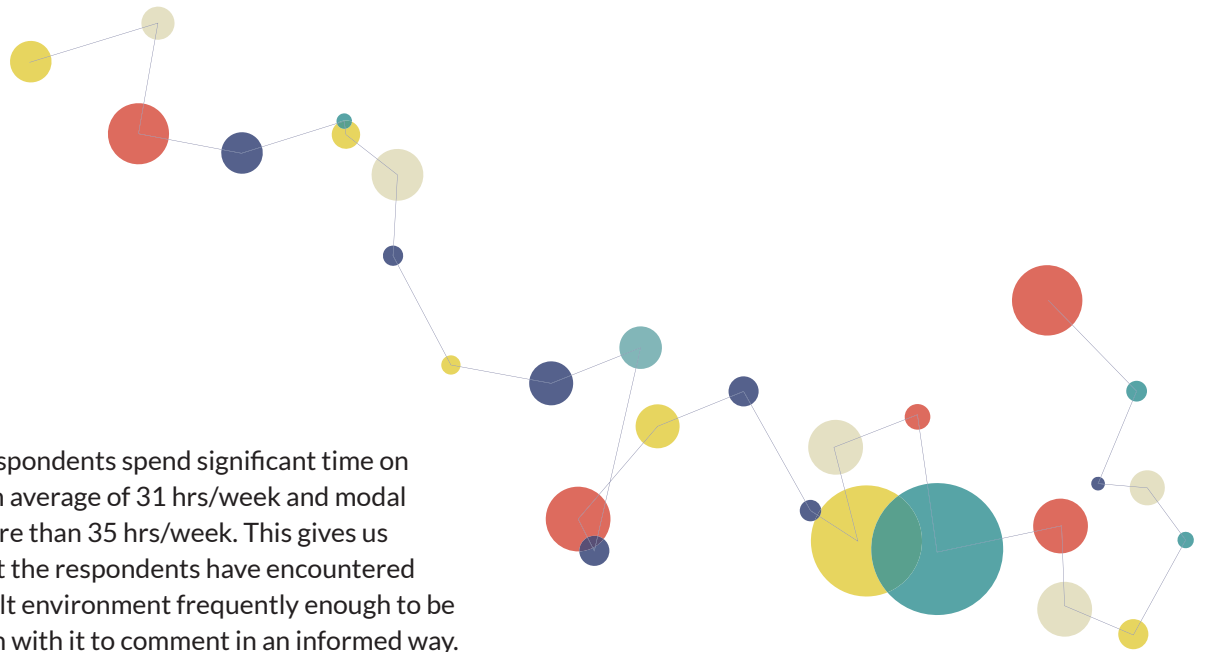
TOP 3	
Choose not to say	**26.5%**
Less than $25,000	**23.3%**
$25,000 - $49,999	**11.9%**
$50,000 - $74,999	11.3%
$100,000 - 149,999	10.6%
$75,000 - $99,999	8.4%
More than $150,000	7.9%

Almost half of the respondents in the disabled category had a physical disability.

TOP 3	
Physical	**46.8%**
Mental	**26.1%**
Learning	**24.3%**
Choose not to say	13.5%
Visual	10.8%
Audio	8.1%
Intellectual	6.3%

The average duration spent by the respondents at the University is 7.2 years with a median duration of 3.7 years and modal value falling in the class of 1-2 years (35.4%). There were 22.9% of respondents who have spent 10+ years at the University. This value signifies a strong presence of staff and faculty members among the respondents.

Table 2: For how long have you gone to school or worked at York?

- 1 - 2 YEARS
- 3 - 4 YEARS
- 5 - 10 YEARS
- 11 - 15 YEARS
- 16 - 20 YEARS
- MORE THAN 20 YEARS

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The respondents spend significant time on campus with an average of 31 hrs/week and modal value being more than 35 hrs/week. This gives us confidence that the respondents have encountered the campus built environment frequently enough to be familiar enough with it to comment in an informed way.

AGE

Mean	28.9
Modal Class	35+ Years

EDUCATION LEVEL

Mean	University / College Graduate

HOURS ON CAMPUS

Mean	31 Hours
Modal class	> 35 Hours

HOUSEHOLD INCOME

Mean	$92,131.2 / Year
Median Income	$53,472.2 / Year
Modal Class	< $25,000 / Year

AVERAGE TIME OF RESIDENCE

Mean	7.2 Years
Modal class	1 - 2 Years

The average age of respondents was 28.9 years with modal class of 35+ years. This modal class indicates that the majority of the respondents are either graduate students, staff or faculty. 4.3% of respondents chose not to disclose their age.

HOUSING

BARRIERS

Access points to and within buildings

Automatic door opener access

Community isolation

Elevator service

Snow removal and de-icing

16.9% (134) of respondents live on campus. The following diagram outlines the top 3 residences.

TOP 3 Residences

40.4% live in the Assiniboine apartment

16.7% live in Passy Gardens/ Crescent

6.4% for Atkinson and Pond Road Residence

Table 3: Is your residence easily accessible?

YES

NO

Student Housing Services, which is part of Campus Services and Business Operations, provides housing for undergraduate, graduate, and mature students. Housing options at the Keele and Glendon Campuses include nine residence buildings, five high-rise apartment buildings, and a stacked Townhouse complex. Of the respondents who identify as living on campus, 21.6% encountered barriers that created an inaccessible environment for them. When asked to describe features that make the residence areas difficult to use, respondents cited two main areas of concern: snow/ice clearing and access points to and within buildings.

For snow and ice clearing, one respondent with a disability observed: *"During winter, the pathways are not cleared so that it is easy to get around. There's always a layer of snow after the machines go over it which obscures dips in the pavement and pathways where someone could get stuck or tripped. And the curb cuts are not cleared right—it is unsafe to go over them."*

Another respondent noted that the pathways around Assiniboine apartments are inadequately de-iced, causing slippery conditions.

For access points to and within residence and apartment buildings, tenants in Keele's Assiniboine, Atkinson, and Passy Gardens, and Glendon's Hilliard residences frequently cite limited access due to the lack of automatic door openers and/or the presence of stairs without elevator service. The benefits of living on campus, as promoted by Housing Services, include community building and proximity to campus facilities. However, according to tenants, these benefits are unequally distributed, particularly around community building. As one resident in Passy Gardens noted, *"Although there are some accessible apartments the complex is not accessible overall. I cannot invite my friends who are wheelchair users to my 3rd floor apartment, as there are no elevators."*

Likewise, a Hilliard resident remarked, *"The only accessible part of the Residences is the A-Wing of Hilliard Residence. That means that approximately 90% of the residence rooms on campus, are not, at all, wheelchair accessible. A large reason people live in residence is to be able to socialize - this makes people in wheelchairs outcasts."*

GETTING AROUND

The section "Getting Around" was structured so as to gather information on means of travel to, from and around campus grounds, gauge the awareness of services available to York University community members, assess the accessibility of these services, and identify barriers that limit mobility in the context of the external built environment. The awareness questions aim to assess community members' knowledge of the availability and regulations of services provided by York University, specifically York U Shuttle, VanGo and parking.

Commuter Profile

Please indicate how you usually get to campus. Choose all that apply:

TOP 5 Selections

TTC	**43.3%**
My own motorized vehicle	**39.2%**
Walking	**20.5%**
Go Bus	**15.2%**
Viva	**11.8%**

Carpool	10.3%
Dropped off by private vehicle	10.2%
Bicycle	5.2%
Go Train	4.4%
York U Shuttle	4.2%
Brampton Transit (Zum)	3.4%
Taxi	2.1%
TTC Wheeltrans	1.4%
Car-sharing servie (Autoshare, Zipcar)	0.9%
Mobility Aids	0.4%
VanGo	0.4%
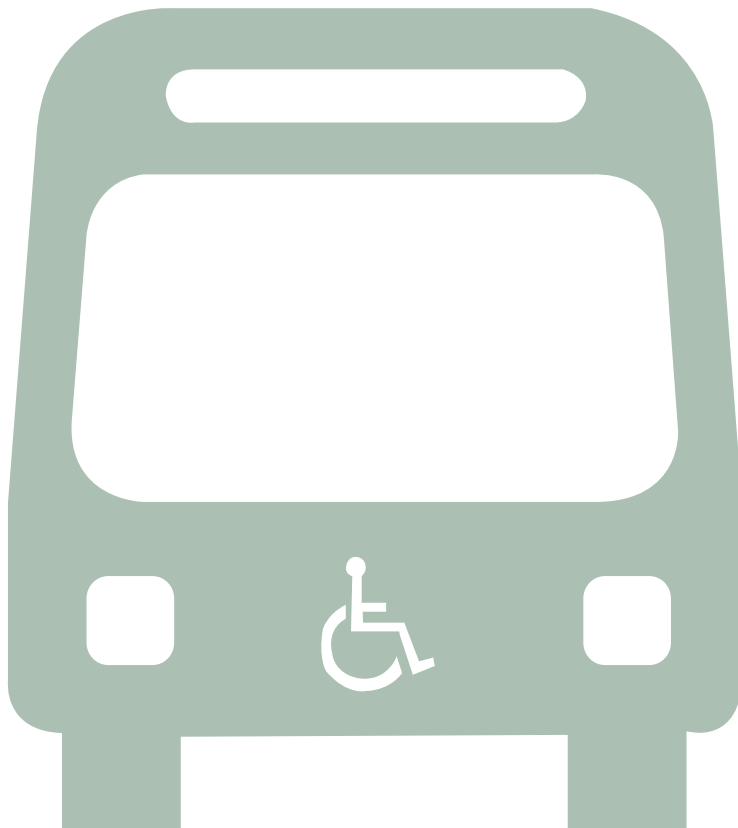
YORK U SHUTTLE

BARRIERS

Awareness of service

Driver training

Frequency of service

Insufficient route stops

The York U Shuttle, operated by Transportation Services, CSBO, provides three service routes: Keele-Glendon, York University-Go-Train, and New Campus (alternatively known as the Village Shuttle Service). The majority of respondents (86.9%) indicated an awareness of the Keele-Glendon shuttle service. However, only half of the respondents (49.5%) indicated that they are aware of the shuttle service between the Keele Campus and nearby off-campus housing.

Table 4: Are you aware that York University runs an accessible York U shuttle service between the Glendon and Keele campuses?

YES

NO
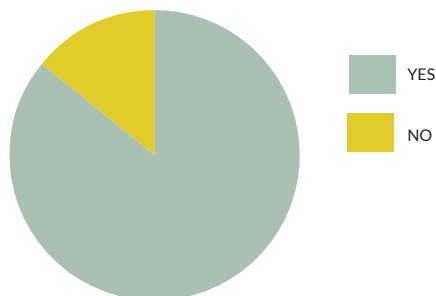
When solicited for suggestions for improving the York U Shuttle Services, respondents' recommendations fell into two main spheres: improving service frequency and increasing awareness of services. In particular, multiple community members using the Glendon-Keele shuttle service highlighted temporal barriers:

"I haven't used the shuttle since two years ago, but when I did I sometimes had to wait a full hour or more outside in the dead of winter and then fight for a place on

the bus with other students who were waiting. Bad weather conditions and reduced frequency in the evenings was a big part of this problem and made it difficult for me to get home from class."

"The Glendon shuttle schedule does not take into consideration evening class times at Glendon. As a result we have to end our 6:30-9:30 classes early. Unacceptable that a shuttle schedule should negatively impact us to this extent."

It should be noted that as of the 2012-2013 schedule, the shuttle service between Glendon and Keele campuses now offer an additional departure time for both Glendon (10:45pm) and Keele (10:15pm) to better support lecture timetables.

However, the second most cited barrier for community members using the service included overcrowding and insufficient space for safely commuting between campuses. As one undergraduate observed: *"the new shuttle buses are not very user friendly for some folks. Okay if you are in a wheelchair, but not good for those with canes and seeing eye dogs. Can't easily navigate the aisle."*

Given these circumstances, multiple respondents recommended earlier start-times and increasing frequency during peak periods of use in order to relieve congestion.

As mentioned above, only half of the suvey respondents were aware of the accessible New Campus Shuttle Service. New Campus routes include Village West, Village East and Village Express and operate between Mondays through Fridays from 6pm to 2am. Aside from increasing awareness of this service, those who use the shuttles recommend additional route stops, driver training for wheelchair lifts, and improved advertising of both the shuttle service itself and the route schedules.
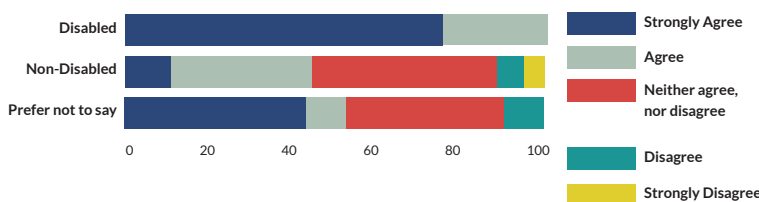
VANGO

Awareness of service

Booking policies

Service gaps for temporary disability/injury

In addition to the accessible York U Shuttles, Transportation Services offers VanGo, a mobility service designed to aid students and staff with disabilities in navigating the Keele campus, Monday through Friday from 8am to 10pm. 52.8% of persons with disabilities are unaware of this service.

Due to the structure of the survey, both those who indicated interest in VanGo but had not used the service and those who had previously used the service were directed to the same VanGo question page. The responses to options, such as *"I am satisfied with the VanGo service,"* are difficult to analyze due to an inability to separate those who have experienced the service and those who have not. Generally speaking however, respondents expressed overall satisfaction with the service (51.1%), indicating that the service was reliable (56.5%) and the hours were convenient (54.3%). One VanGo user states: *"VanGo is a gem. It has allowed me to continue working full-time at York."* However, 57.1% of disable respondents would prefer an online scheduling system.

Table 5 : I am satisfied with the VanGo service.

Do you have any suggestions for the improvement of the VanGo service?

Suggestions for improving the VanGo service fell into two categories: booking policies and procedures and awareness. While a slight majority of respondents indicated preference for semester pre-booking (51.1%), one respondent observed:

"The VanGo service is one service that really makes a difference. It is run by incredible, helpful people but pre-booking by semester isn't always the best because sometimes things change." During one of the focus group discussions, a participant likewise noted, *"It didn't work for me because you didn't know if the class would get out early… it could be running late. It's a tough situation."*

The bulk of suggestions, however, address issues around a lack of awareness of the service for both people who frequently use the Keele campus as well as those who would be considered visitors:

"I am not familiar with it, and when I was exploring transportation options for an elderly guest to the university I was unable to learn about it from staff or faculty. The guest's mobility was reduced and did not attend all meetings desired."

Another disabled person simply states: *"Let people know it exist."* The theme of awareness is also represented in focus group discussion where a York University student indicated that they would have used the service had they known of the availability, especially during icy conditions.

It should also be noted that there is an existing service gap for those who have a temporary disability, such as an injury. To be eligible for the VanGo service, users must register through Counseling and Disability Services. However, persons with permanent and/or temporary disabilities do not necessarily register with the university for a variety of reasons. This is reflected by a faculty member:

"Temporary disability is a problem. When I had to be on crutches for a term due to an injury there was no system in place to help me go between my office and my classroom to teach."

Whether there is a system in place or not, if the potential user is unaware of the services or of the process to access services, they encounter barriers arising from a lack of information.

PARKING

Financial costs of daily and permit parking

Insufficient medical parking spaces

Ticketing policies for disabled persons

York University provides approximately 10,000 parking spaces across both the Keele and Glendon campuses. Parking Services has a stated policy that all community members and visitors are required to pay for parking, whether through permits or daily fees. Respondents' experiences of campus parking barriers varied depending whether they identified as nondisabled or as a person with a disability.

Both respondents who identify as a disabled person as well as those who identify as a person without a disability, cite financial barriers to parking. Each group strongly disagrees with statements relating to whether the permit and daily parking fees are reasonably priced. As one person commented: *"Reduce the cost of parking. The school is in a remote location."* Additionally 70.1% of university staff and faculty find that the price of both daily and permit parking is excessive. One faculty member states: *"Charging faculty, at an institution that exists for the purpose of educating students, for parking is a continuing vexing issue for most--especially given that BOTH campuses are still very hard to reach by TTC (lots of buses, delays, etc). It would be good to eliminate it altogether, at least until subway links become available and functional."*

While persons with disabilities agree that that both the parking spaces are large enough (40.4%) for easy access and mobility, as well as having the accessible spaces as clearly marked (50%), only 21.4% of disabled respondents report sufficient medical parking spaces.

When asked if respondents were aware that the medical parking spaces require a permit, over half of those with disabilities (54.1%) and those without disability (58.2%) report not knowing about this York University policy. This consistency in response between the two groups was also statistically confirmed, as the test found no difference between group responses. And lastly, when asked whether medical parking spaces should be free, those with disabilities agree (60.6%). However, the differences in opinion between groups are not statistically significant. This finding was further investigated during two focus group discussions.

Focus group participants raised concerns over malfunctioning pay meters and ticketing policies as parking-related barriers. One participant with a physical impairment notes: *"There is a big problem with giving disabled people tickets who might not be able to access the machines."*

This was further elaborated on by a wheelchair users' experience: *"I park at Atkinson day parking because I don't come up enough to buy a pass. There's two meters there and one of the problems I found was that the one meter wasn't working consistently with credit cards and I couldn't get to the other one because there's another car parked in front of it."*

Specifically at the Atkinson parking lot, the second designated pay meter is accessed through a ramp. However, at the base of the ramp there is also a parking spot. Consequently, the driver above notes that in the cases where either the machine is malfunctioning or the second pay meter is obstructed by a parked vehicles, they leave a note detailing the problem for ticketing officers. Despite this, they report:

> *"Quite often I've come back and if I have got a ticket I can't reach it because it's under my windshield wiper. So I have to drive home with a ticket on my windshield, hoping it doesn't fly off."*

"Quite often I've come back and if I have got a ticket I can't reach it because it's under my windshield wiper. So I have to drive home with a ticket on my windshield, hoping it doesn't fly off."

Another focus group participant observes additional barriers during winter: *"Another problem with the meters is that in the winter times I call to complain [that they will not operate in the cold weather] and they tell me to go to another meter. I'm not running to another meter; I have trouble walking."*

Yet another Keele campus staff member at Keele observes: *"The parking lots need to be cleared of snow immediately after a snowfall. They are often just left. This makes for slippery conditions for both cars and people. Given the cost of parking on campus, this situation is unacceptable."*

PATH OF TRAVEL : GROUNDS

BARRIERS

Debris from construction

Poor lighting conditions

Snow removal

Unleveled pathways

How do you travel around the campus grounds? Check all that apply.

Walking is the most preferred method of travelling around the campus. 97.9% of the respondents said that they travel around the campus by walking. 5.4% use York Shuttle, 3.4% use GOSafe, 3.2% travel by biking, 1.9% use mobility aids, and 1.3% use VanGo.

TOP 3

Walking	**97.9%**
York Shuttle	**5.4%**
GoSAFE - foot escorts	**3.4%**
Bicycling	3.2%
Mobility Aids	1.9%
VanGo	1.3%

When asked to rate the statements regarding accessibility around campus grounds, 62% non-disabled and 42.3% disabled respondents found pathways on campus to be accessible whereas 26.9% non-disabled and 36.9% disabled either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement. The three largest issues relating to potential barriers were snow removal, poor lighting conditions and unleveled pathways.

Table 6 : Pathwas on campus are accessible.
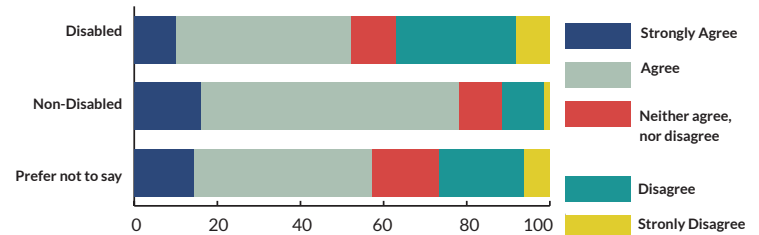
When asked to rate the statement *"There is adequate lighting on campus pathways"*, all groups disagreed. As one respondent noted: *"It's dangerous to walk around at night--I've tripped a few times due to poor [lighting]."*

In addition, 51.8% of those that identify as having a disability, report untimely and poor snow removal. The three groups of respondents perceive this issue differently, as revealed by statistically different opinions. One respondent states: *"I find that as a wheelchair user in the winter time getting around campus is difficult—ice, snow, whatever, it's really really difficult just to maneuver around the campus."*

Table 7 : After snowfall the pathways are cleared in a timely manner
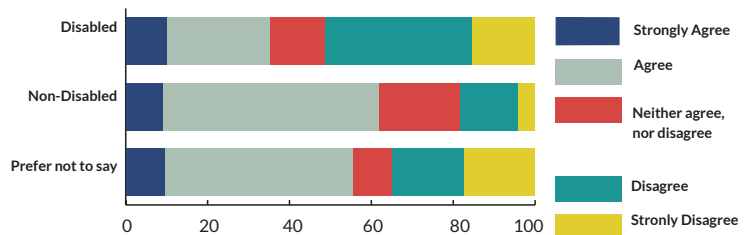
Another student comments on issues with snow removal as well as the state of the paths itself: *"Pathways need to be smoothened out (leveled) in order to allow for wheelchair access, as well as effective snow removal in winter."*

One faculty member provided a recommendation for travelling around campus during poor weather conditions: *"In an ideal world I wish we had more covered walkways like the ones on the fringes of Accolade, so it is less daunting to travel across campus in bad weather. The links among [York Lane], Vari Hall, Scott and Accolade are good but there are few covered walkways in the north part."*

Related to the maintenance of pathways, focus group participants also raised concerns regarding periods of construction and the lack of curb cuts. One student specifically notes, *"The Construction site is leaving broken paving stones all over the place."* With regard to curb cuts, both survey respondents and focus group participants state that there is a severe lack of access points on various campus walk locations, resulting in the use of the roadways despite vehicular traffic.

The responses to the final question, *"Do you have any final thoughts about accessibility at York?"*, cited lighting as a significant barrier, as well as security and safety on campus. Often, respondents linked inadequate lighting to a sense of inadequate security. As one York community member stated, *"Poor lighting around the entire campus hinders mobility, and are of great concerns for safety."* Another staff member remarks on the maintenance of lighting: *"There needs to be better lighting in the Arboretum Parking Structure. Lights are burnt our and not replaced in a timely manner. It is very difficult to park in the dark. It feels unsafe to walk to my car in the dark."*

SIGNAGE AND WAYFINDING

BARRIERS

Accuracy of map information

Map shortage

Readability of accessible maps

When asked to rate statements regarding the accessibility of signage and wayfinding, respondents agreed that the maps on campus are useful for navigation purposes (47.4%) with the map illustrations/and or print sufficiently large (42.1%) and illustration contrast and legends (41.3%), allowing for overall ease of reading. The respondents, however, indicate that there is both a shortage of maps as well as the maps themselves as being difficult to locate, including those within buildings.

Table 8 : It is easy to locate building maps and signage within buildings.
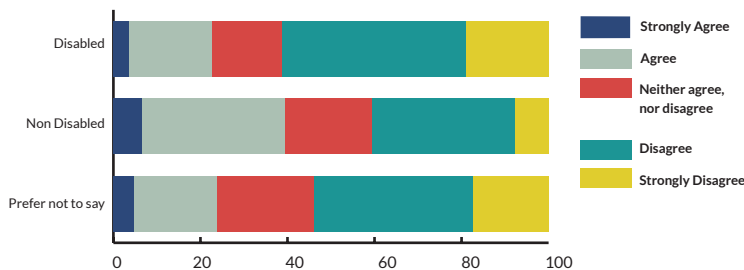
As one respondent in Glendon notes: *"In addition to maps of the campus, each building should have its own map or directory when you come in so you can find what you're looking for. This doesn't seem to exist on the Glendon campus."*

Do you have any suggestions for improving campus signage?

While there seems to be overall satisfaction with the current maps on campus, several respondents suggest the need for not only more maps but also improved accuracy of information, especially regarding washrooms. As one graduate student states:

"Washroom doors should be highlighted in a different colour than other doors for easy visibility. Also some of the signage showing the washroom location should be hanging from the ceiling so that people can easily navigate towards them."

Within the focus groups, multiple participants noted the inadequacy of the accessible map as provided on York University's website (Appendix C) as well as the lack of signage concerning construction, obstructed paths, and alternate routes.

"In addition to maps of the campus, each building should have its own map or directory when you come in so you can find what you're looking for. This doesn't seem to exist on the Glendon campus."

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BUILDINGS

Please select up to three buildings where you encounter the most barriers to access and use.

TOP 10

Scott Library	17.1%
Ross Building	16.8%
Curtis Lecture Halls	15.7%
Student Centre	11.2%
Tait McKenzie Centre	11.1%
Atkinson	10.0%
Accolade East	9.8%
Accolade West	9.2%
McLaughlin College	9.2%
Vari Hall	8.9%

Winters College	8.1%
HNES	7.9%
Calumet College	7.3%
Founders College	7.3%
Central Square	7.1%
York University Bookstore	6.0%
Behavioural Science	5.9%
Glendon Manor	5.9%
Proctor Field House	4.9%
Chemistry	4.7%
Stong College	4.7%
Norman Bethune College	4.4%
Scott Religious Centre	4.4%
Stedman Lecture Halls	4.4%
York Hall	4.3%
Lumbers	3.8%
Seymour Schulich Building	3.3%
Osgoode Hall Law School	3.2%
Farquharson Life Sciences	2.8%
Joan&Martin Goldfarb Centre for Fine Arts	2.7%
Petrie Science and Engineering	2.7%
Centre for Film and Theatre	2.5%
Leslie Frost Library	2.4%
Lassonde Building	2.2%

TOP 5 DISABLED

Scott Library	22%
Ross Building	16.7%
Vari Hall	14.6%
Student Centre	14.6%
Curtis Lecture Halls	13.5%
Accolade West	13.5%

TOP 5 NON-DISABLED

Ross building	16.1%
Scott Library	15.7%
Curtis Lecture Halls	14.3%
Tait McKenzie Centre	13%
Atkinson	10.8%

PREFER NOT TO SAY

Curtis Lecture Halls	25.5%
Ross Building	25.5%
Student Centre	21.8%
Scott Library	14.5%
HNES	14.5%

GLENDON

Glendon Manor	56.1%
Proctor Field House	51.2%
York Hall	43.9%
Leslie Frost Library	14.6%

OTHER (please Specify) : Top six other responses

York Lanes
William Small
Kaneff Tower
Kinsmen
Winters
Path from getting from upper campus to lower campus at Glendon

AUTOMATIC DOOR OPENERS

BARRIERS

Inadequate repair time from first report

Incomplete reporting information for malfunctioning ADO

Table 9: Do you use automatic door openers (ADOs)?
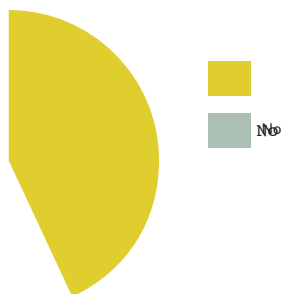
Respondents who indicated that they use ADOs (43.5%) were requested to rate ADO-specific statements ranging from *strongly agree* to *strongly disagree*. Statements were divided into two categories: ADO operation/malfunction and ADO work order/reporting of malfunction.

Respondents who identify as nondisabled as well as those who prefer not to say, indicated that ADOs were easy to access when entering a building, agreeing that the push button location does not interfere with the opening of the door. Meanwhile, those who identify as disabled are more evenly split in their experiences with ADOs: although nearly half of persons with disabilities agree that when entering a building the ADOs are easy to access (42.9%), 44.4% still report encountering barriers to ADO access.

The remaining four survey statements relate to the reporting of malfunctioning ADOs. CSBO places the extension number for maintenance above or near ADO push buttons so that users may call to report a non-working ADO. However, in both the focus groups and in the survey, participants and respondents both indicate the number is not always present.

Furthermore, focus group participants highlight the fact that simply placing the York University extension without the entire university phone number may inhibit reporting of malfunctioning ADO even if they carry a cell-phone.

Both nondisabled (49.2%) and disabled respondents (39.7%) indicated that they do not regularly report malfunctioning ADOs to maintenance. When asked to rate whether, after reporting a door as being out of order, the door is fixed in a timely manner, 41.6% of those who identify as a person with a disability indicate the time from reporting a malfunctioning ADO to the time that it is fixed as being inadequate. One disabled respondent states: *"I've called on occasion to report a door, but it never gets fixed or addressed, so I don't bother to report them any more."*

Focus group participants also identified inadequate repair times as well as remarking on the lack of ability to track work order reports in order to assess progress and completition. All respondent groups either strongly agreed or agreed that they would report malfunctioning ADOs more often if it could be done through a website. The statistical comparison confirmed the uniformity of response.

Table 10: I would report malfunctioning ADOs more often if there was a posted website.
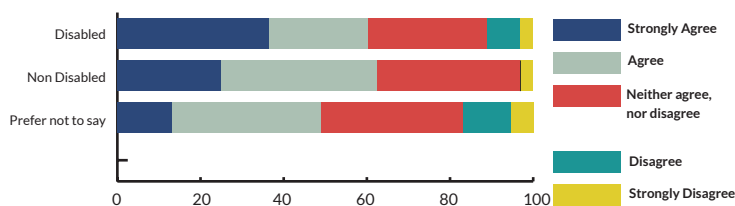
Focus group discussions and survey respondents not only identified the presence of malfunctioning of ADOs and poor response time for repair but also addressed issues of how the doors themselves are weighted, indicating they are often too heavy.

One undergraduate student observes, *"Many of the doors are extremely heavy and difficult to open so many people who do not have disabilities resort to using the ADOs. It would be beneficial for many students if this issue could be rectified."*

Optional: Please identify any building entrance or interior hallway door that does not have an ADO that you feel should have one. Please be specific (e.g. side of building, floor, room number, etc.)

TOP 3

Atkinson Housing
Chemistry Building
Stedman Lecture Hall

While this optional question requested specific information about additional potential ADO placements, some respondents chose to identify barriers to access and use. Primarily, respondents cite continual and repeated malfunctioning of particular ADOs, particularly in the York Lanes and Steacie buildings. Additionally, one faculty member comments on the process of requesting ADOs for classrooms:

"ACE 102 seats over 500 people and is one of the most important lecture halls on campus. It does not have an ADO and I have had multiple students in chairs unable to attend class because they cannot get in. It is an obstacle to learning. The administration has refused to do anything about it."

"ACE 102 seats over 500 people and is one of the most important lecture halls on campus. It does not have an ADO and I have had multiple students in chairs unable to attend class because they cannot get in. It is an obstacle to learning. The administration has refused to do anything about it."

ELEVATORS

BARRIERS

Crowding during peak times

Elevator-use policy at Scott Library

Signage

Table 11: Do you regularly use elevators?

45.3% of respondents regularly use elevators.

- Yes
- No
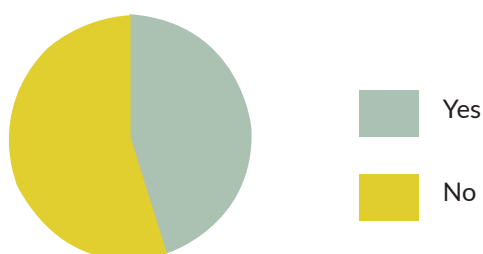
Table 12: The elevators are easy to find.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither agree, not disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
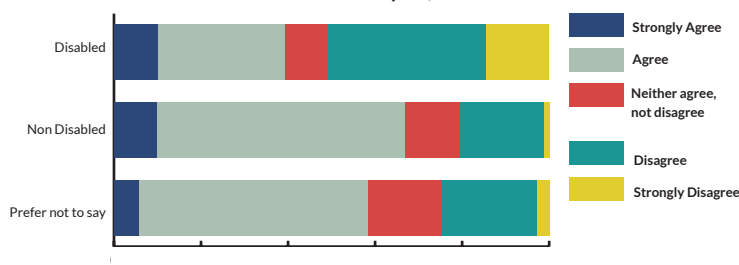
Table 13: The elevator is usually in working condition.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither agree, not disagree
- Disagree
- Stronly Disagree
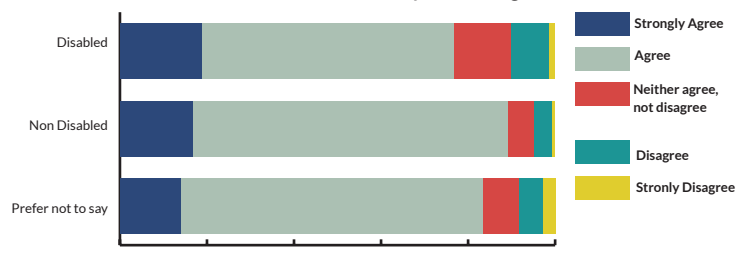
Elevator Problems in Ranking Order

TOP 5 - DISABILITY

Ross (both North & South)

Scott Library

Vari Hall

Atkinson

Student Centre

TOP 5 - PREFER NOT TO SAY

Ross

HNES

Assinaboine

Bethune

Winters

TOP 5 - NONDISABLED

Ross

Scott Library

HNES

York Hall

Atkinson

When asked whether respondents use elevators, 62.2% who identify as a person with a disability, 39.9% who identify as a person without a disability, and 57.1% who prefer not to say selected 'yes'. All groups indicated that they usually find elevators in working condition, with button placement as well as elevator size being accessible and accommodating.

Respondents were also asked to indicate whether there were any buildings that would benefit from having improved elevator service. If they selected yes, they were given an option of specifying

building(s) and potential improvement(s). 42.6% of respondents indicated yes, 60.9% of whom identified as disabled. Specific improvements that respondents suggest include increased signage, and improved service during peak times through provision of additional elevators. For improved signage, respondents noted issues in the Osgoode Building: *"Osgoode building could benefit from better directions to elevators"*

> **"Osgoode does not seem to have an elevator, at least I have no idea where it is."**

With regards to additional elevators in strategic buildings, students, faculty and staff cite overcrowding during peak periods: *"Ross building north needs more elevators!!! almost every day in the period from X:20-X:40 (after the end of the class) there is a huge line of people waiting to get in the elevator. Only two elevators are servicing Ross building north, and the stairwell is so far away from the elevator that people do not use it. This situation is unacceptable."*

"The Ross elevators are not sufficient to accommodate the increased student numbers during peak times."

The last area frequently mentioned in the optional section was the Scott Library's posted policy near all elevators: "The elevator is for use by staff and persons with a disability". Aside from its location, characterized as "one elevator, not easy to locate", "a service elevator hidden away" and "so far back and isolating," one disabled student questioned the limits placed on its use: *"The Scott Library needs to have a second elevator installed in the empty elevator shaft, and to have the service identified as available to all patrons, as many who require them who may not identify as disabled."*

But it should be noted that elevator use and prohibition is a contentious issue with regards to disability. As another respondent who identified as having a disability reported: *"[The Scott Library elevator] is used by staff who are only going up or down 2 floors. There is only 1 elevator and it is quite a journey to get to it. Staff defend their right to use elevator and this includes young, able-bodied, women and men who could just as well use escalators or stairs."*

WASHROOMS

BARRIERS

Cleanliness and maintenance

Lack of reporting mechanisms

Limited access to accessible washrooms

Wait times

Due to an error in the survey structure, those who answered negative on whether they used elevators skipped not only the elevator questions but were redirected to the questions for classroom, thereby skipping bathroom-related questions. As such, only 342 of 759 survey respondents answered washroom-related questions.

Depending on how respondents answered the question about whether they required an accessible washroom/stall, they were directed to two separate sets of questions. Those who selected "yes" (29% disabled, 5.7% non-disabled, 5.6% prefer not to say) were directed to accessible washroom questions while those who chose "no" were directed to general, multi-stall washroom questions.

MULTI-STALL WASHROOMS

For those who identify as having a disability as well as those who prefer not to say, 50% and 47%, respectively, disagree with the statement that there are no wait lines for washroom use. However, the statistical comparison found that the difference in responses between groups is not significant. Additionally, all groups disagree that hooks or shelving were present within the stall.

This opinion was further addressed in the section soliciting suggestions for improvements to the bathroom: *"It would be good to have a shelf in the bath room stall to place [our] bags instead of on the floor which is often times wet".*

However, the number one improvement survey respondents wish to see relates to the cleaning and maintenance of space. As one undergraduate suggests,

"More frequent cleaning and maintenance: toilets sometimes dispense water for minutes rather than a few seconds. Prominent contact info would be useful."

ACCESSIBLE WASHROOMS

Accessible washrooms can be divided into two categories: single-use washrooms and multi-stall washrooms. When asked to rate the statement *"There are no wait lines for washroom use"*, 60% of those who required accessible washrooms disagreed. In addition, 75% note a lack of ADOs.

Suggestions for improvements revolved around increased maintenance and cleaning, especially in high traffic areas. Additionally, one person asks: *"Who do we call if the bathroom is out of order or if [there] is [something] wrong with it? A sign in all bathrooms with this information would be helpful!"*

Multiple respondents also note an inadequate number of accessible washrooms throughout campus. As one undergraduate student wrote, *"The washrooms in Curtis Lecture Halls and Central Square are not accessible, and some can only be accessed by cutting through lecture halls or going outside. This needs to be remedied immediately."*

Another student also observes issues relating to signage: *"Assure that there are accessible washrooms for both genders in all the buildings. For example, the third floor of HNES, has two multi-stall FEMALE ONLY washrooms. The two other single unisex washrooms have limited access because the proper signage is lacking to indicate their location."*

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CLASSROOMS

BARRIERS

Access to electrical outlets
Furniture type and layout
**Insufficient ADOs**
Overcrowding

Do you regularly use classrooms?

Of the 759 persons who completed the survey, 497 responded that they frequently use classrooms. They were then asked to rate the importance of classroom features from strongly agree to strongly disagree. All groups, whether disabled, nondisabled, or those who prefer not to say, were in relative agreement.

Classroom features were divided into three main categories: physical access, auditory access, and visual access. In terms of physical access, 89% of respondents either strongly agree or agree that access to both the back and front of the classrooms and lecture halls is important, as is installation of automatic door openers (68.9%).

Table 14: Access to both the back and front of classrooms and lecture halls is important.
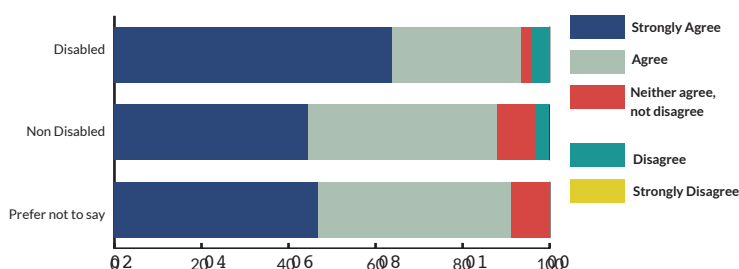
Additionally, students wish to see flexible furniture (ie. Adjustable tables/chairs). For auditory access to lectures, respondents either strongly agree or agree that both the use of a microphone, loudspeakers (84.1%) and acoustic paneling (84.3%) are important.

Table 15: Use of a microphone and loudspeakers is important.
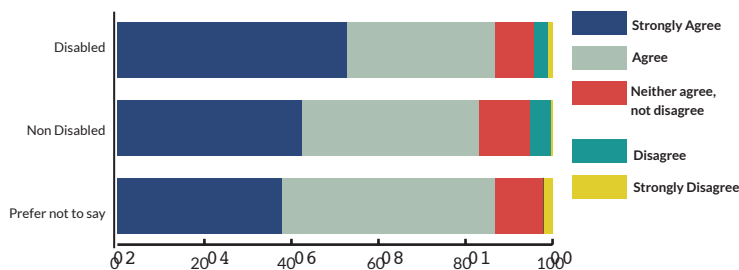
As one staff member at Glendon states, *"I'd like to see hearing assist [in] the larger classrooms and theatres."* Lastly, use of blackboard/whiteboard (83.1%), projector (90.1%), and adjustable lighting (93%) were likewise preferred.

Table 16: Adjustable lighting is important.
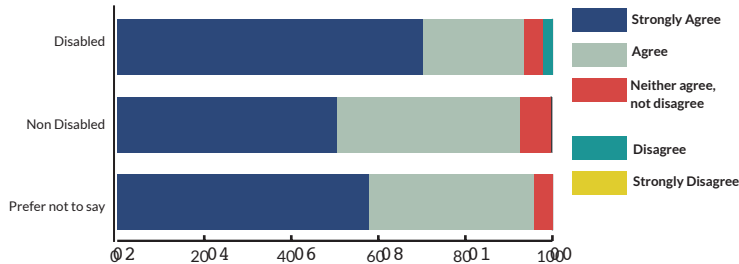
When asked to identify barriers within the classroom environment, respondents highlighted overcrowding, furniture layout, ADOs, and electrical outlets.

The number one ranked barrier is related to classroom capacity. As one student notes, *"Some classrooms for tutorials are too small and crowded. Not enough room with the size of tables and amount of chairs. Overcrowding basically."* This is, however, not limited to the smaller classrooms typically used for tutorial locations but also applies to lecture halls, as indicated by one undergraduate: *"I suppose not cramming them full of people (or desks if they aren't built in). If a classroom is at capacity, it's at capacity (and this should include room to move)."* As the student above notes, issue with over

capacity/overcrowding also affects issues relating to furniture. It is insufficient to fill a space with desks if its placement creates barriers to navigation for either nondisabled or disabled students and faculty.

Aside from spacing and placement, several respondents remarked on the inaccessibility of the furniture itself, especially with regards to seating. One graduate student noted:

> **"Every classroom should have some size-accessible seating. As a TA, I have sometimes had to make special requests to ensure that the classrooms in which I teach have suitable seating for any students of size who require them-- the 'standard' chairs-with-atached-writing-surfaces are inadequate for many people of size and expectant mothers, among others."**

During focus group discussions, furniture layout and style was a particularly vexing issue for multiple respondents. One graduate student replied at length:

"My biggest problem is seating all over campus. Anything with arms is usually restrictive because they're all one size. Particularly the stadium seating in undergrad courses… Anytime you talk about table and chair attached, it's very constricting…It is a REAL barrier. It is even a mental barrier for people who are Fat: 'I may not fit so I do not want to go.' And also, in those stadium seat classes, they normally got one or two accessible spaces and as a Fat person, you do not want to take those spaces if someone who comes in needs them. And who are you to say who's going to need them? So it's either that it's made clear that anyone who feels that they need them should use them or the professor needs to be told how many people needs this type of seating at the beginning of the course so that they can make sure that there [are sufficient] tables and chairs that are not [attached as required]."

Another undergraduate concurred, elaborating on possible improvements towards accessibility of classrooms: *"Better seats. Those little chairs with little desk part are hard to get into and humiliating for larger students."*

As highlighted in both the focus group as well as the overall survey, having uniform seating is equivalent to having restrictive seating. Instead, one participant suggests that by having a variety of chairs, such as chairs with and without armrests, it will allow multiple types of individuals to be accommodated. Yet it must be reiterated that respondents are requesting a variety of seating choices rather than solely providing chairs without armrests on the existing chairs. As one respondent states: *"having a variety of accessible chairs in the classroom is important. Most rooms have all the same chairs with or without a desk portion and rarely is there ever a chair with arms (which is what I require to get up from a seated position)".*

Lastly, it should also be noted that several survey respondents noted insufficient left-handed desks.

The third most common barrier listed by respondents (second for those who identified as non-disabled) relates to the lack of automatic door openers. As one staff member notes, *"Having ADOs installed is a must."* While this may seem to be mainly an issue in older buildings, one graduate student remarks that even newer buildings do not supply sufficient access to classrooms through automatic door openers:

"ADOs are not available for classrooms in even the latest of buildings like Schulich. This is important because there have been instances of people waiting outside of classroom waiting for someone to open the door for them. Also, sometimes the classroom doors in buildings like Schulich lock themselves up automatically from inside and hence cannot be opened from outside, and someone from within the class has to be called up to open them in the middle of the class."

The last barrier cited by survey respondents related to inadequate numbers of electrical outlets. One undergraduate student remarks that, "*Most of the electric outlets are not working, OR there is not enough of them which makes is difficult because I can't use my laptop.*" Additionally, a student with a disability also observes the effect of limited outlet accessibility as well as offering recommendations:

"More electrical outlets need to be installed. If a deaf student has a helper typing notes, quite often there needs to be a long extension cord or the helper has to move to a less convenient location. Also, non-disabled students who don't NEED the plugs regularly use them for their laptops. At U of T, there are plugs in the desks, so each seat has a plug. If you go into Curtis, there are maybe two plugs that aren't on the ceiling for a lecture hall that can hold something like 500 students. It's ridiculous."
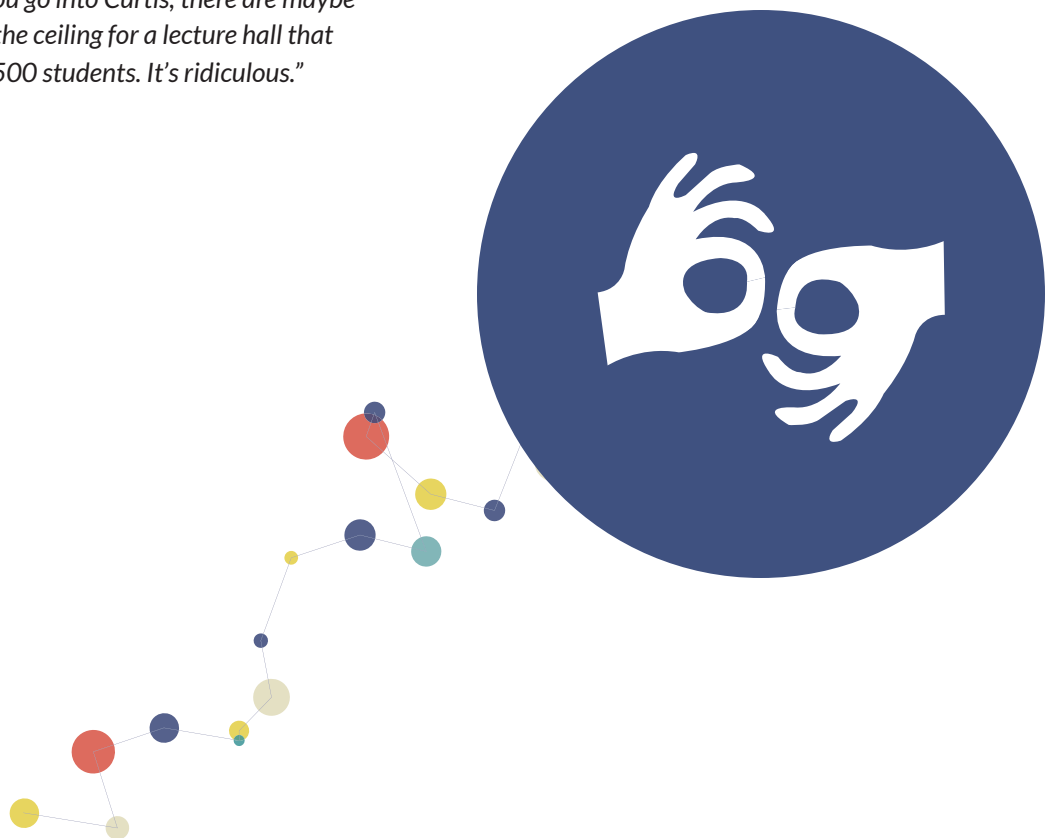
LIBRARIES

BARRIERS

Air circulation and ventilation

Bookshelf height

Elevator service

Lack of accessible washrooms

Out of date computer software

Space for private study

Width between bookshelves

67.8% of people surveyed use the York Libraries
- 85.6% disabled
- 64.6% nondisabled

TOP 5	DISABLED	OVERALL
Scott	99%	93.4%
Steacie	39.2%	40%
Osgoode	24.7%	16.6%
Bronfman	16.5%	19%
Frost (Glendon)	15.5%	13.4%

York University has six libraries: Nellie Langford Rowell, Scott, Bronfman, Leslie Frost (Glendon), Osgoode, and Steacie. For library users with disabilities, Scott library provides accessibility services Monday through Friday from 8:30am to 5pm and 7pm on Tuesdays. Their mission is to provide: *"equitable access to the full range of library services, resources and facilities for all York University students, faculty and staff. This is accomplished by recognizing individual needs in an atmosphere of dignity and respect. Self-sufficient learning is promoted in a welcoming and supportive environment equipped with assistive technologies to accommodate our diverse community."*

Of the 759 respondents who completed the survey, 67.8% (543) indicated that they use one or more of the York Libraries. Among the disabled respondents, 85.6% frequently used York Libraries. The two most-used amongst all respondents were Scott Library, followed by Science & Engineering (Steacie). When asked about barriers that may be encountered during their library experience, many disabled (65%), nondisabled (40.4%), and "prefer not to say" patrons (60.5%) found the height of the book stacks made it difficult to access books.

Table 17: The height of the book stacks makes it difficult to access books.
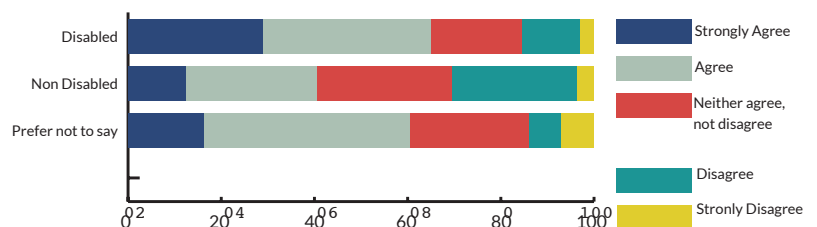
All groups, likewise, report that the stacks themselves are too narrow. While students found that the group study spaces did not limit mobility based on size and layout, 53.6% disabled, 55.5% nondisabled, and 69.9% prefer not to say respondents indicated that they experience a lack of space

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for private study and a lack of available computers at computer stations (46.6% disabled, 45.9% nondisabled, and 53.5% prefer not to say). The responses of all three groups were statistically consistent.

Regarding library washroom facilities, 61.8% of disabled library patrons disagreed with the statement that the public washrooms were easy to find or convenient to use. In addition, 47.5% disagreed that there were an adequate number of public washrooms present. As one staff member pointed out, *"There are only accessible washrooms on the first floor not on the 2nd to 5th floors [of Scott]."* This effectively limits how persons with disabilities are able to use the library.

Table 18: There are an adequate number of public washrooms present within the library.
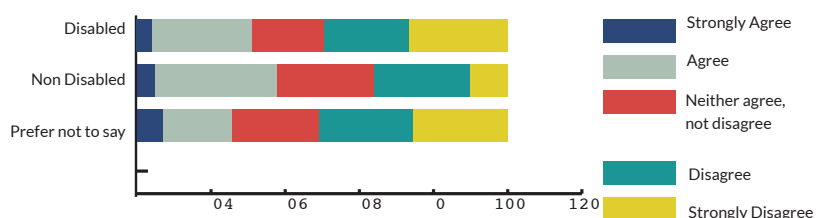
Aside from inadequate washroom facilities, other barriers highlighted by patrons included: washroom cleanliness, inadequate study space, additional elevator service, and improved air circulation and ventilation. During the focus group, multiple participants reported having encountered barriers associated with the adapted equipment laboratory in Scott. One undergraduate remarks that the lab *"doesn't hold up to its name"*. Another student elaborated on specific barriers they face: *"I use Dragon. They have version six there. The testing centre just updated to Dragon 11. So no one can use number six, it is super old. It just doesn't work because it's a twelve year [old] program."* The student further remark that the program is available in only two locations, the adapted equipment room and the TEL computer lab, preventing them from using other areas of the library with their peers.
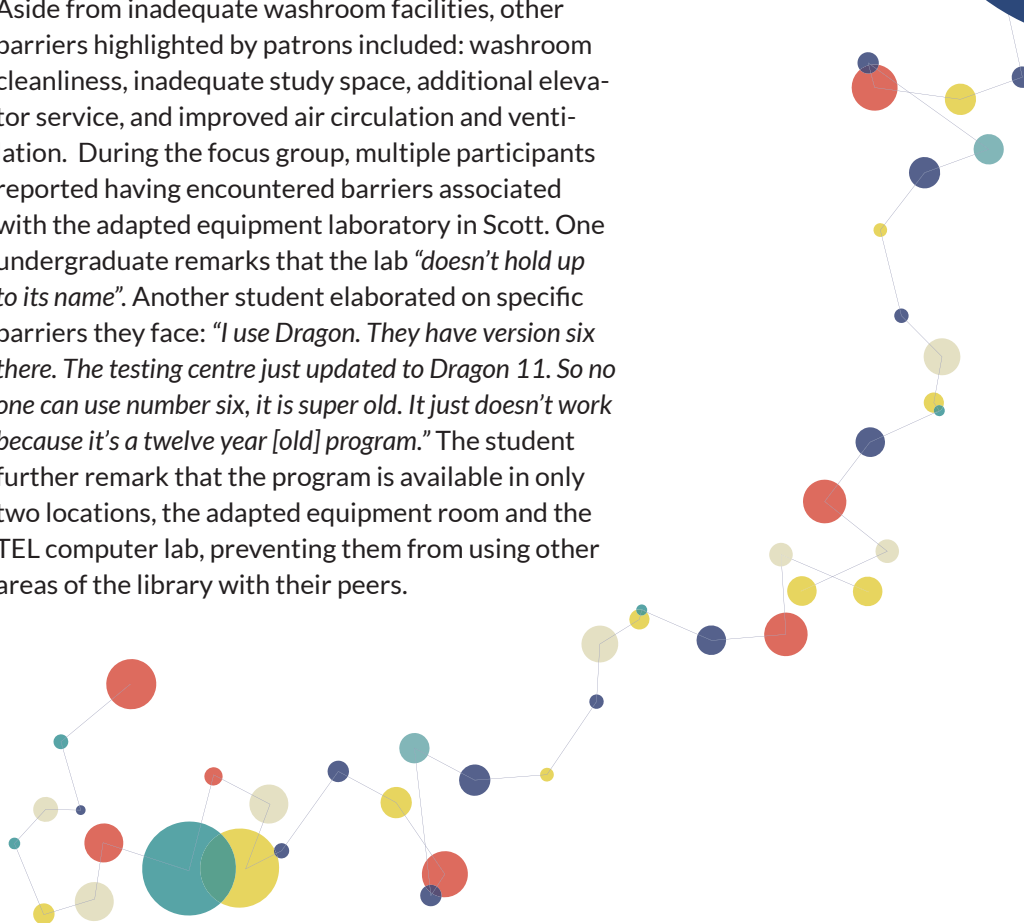
SPORT AND RECREATION FACILITIES

BARRIERS

Elevator service

Limitation in programs

Location of facilities

Parking expense

Shower and change room privacy

Table 19: Do you use, or would like to use, the Sport and Recreation facilities at York (Tait McKenzie Centre or Proctor Field House)?

- Yes
- No
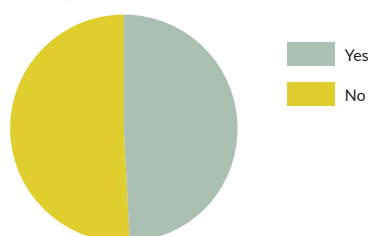
Table 20: Which Sport and Recreation Facilities do you routinely use? Please select all that apply.

Among the existing facilities 68% respondents use fitness centre, 31.2% use locker rooms, 29.7% use swimming pool and 24.1% use gymnasia.

TOP 3

Fitness Centre	**68.0%**
Locker	**31.2%**
Swimming Pool	**29.7%**
Gymnasia	24.1%
Studios	13.5%
Squash Courts	12.7%
Adapted Fitness Equipment	7.6%
Sport Injury Clinic	7.1%
Tennis Courts	4.8%

York Sport and Recreation provides diverse programming to suit the needs of York University community members. They state that *"By offering five levels of participation, you can take advantage of opportunities based on your time commitment, skills, and personal development goals."* These levels include:

- Sport York
- Recreation York
- Intramurals
- Sport Clubs

When asked whether respondents use or would like to use either Tait McKenzie (Keele Campus) or Proctor Field House (Glendon Campus) at York, 49. 6% indicated the affirmative, including 44.1% disabled respondents. Despite definitive interest in using these recreation areas, 32.7% of potential users with disabilities, 11.7% of those without disabilities, and 20% who preferred not to say indicated that they decided not to use the facilities due to accessibility issues. The top four barriers respondents cite include (in order of frequency): Location of facilities; privacy of showers and change rooms; parking expense; and a malfunctioning elevator specific to Tait.

Table 21: Which Sport and Recreation Facilities do you use?

- Tait McKenzie Centre (Keele)
- Proctor Field House (Glendon)

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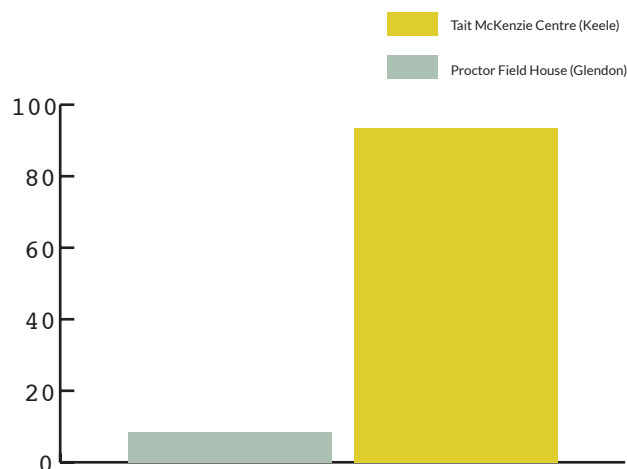
The location of facilities, at both Keele and Glendon campuses, is cited as the primary barrier to usage. Many faculty and staff note that Tait McKenzie, located at the far west corner of Keele campus, is often too far to access during break periods. In addition, if a person has an impairment, the distance itself becomes problematic, as indicated by one faculty member: *"It is too far away from my office building (Vari) for me to use because I cannot walk far."*

Another York employee similarly states: *"It is located too far from where I work and, and if I would park in front of the building the parking fee is much too expensive."*

In order to accommodate multiple persons with various abilities and schedules, several York community members suggest opening up Seneca gym for use of all York members, as well as providing additional gym locations: *"Distance from Bennett Student Centre. Insufficient time to get across campus at lunch hour - would love to have a smaller satellite exercise class facility on south east end of campus."*

At Glendon, the main issue cited was the path of travel and location of Proctor Field House. In order to access the recreation facilities, a person must climb or descend a set of stairs that has been categorized throughout the survey as unsafe and dangerous. One respondent remarked, *"the staircase to Proctor Field House is a health and safety issue"*. A Glendon staff member elaborates on this by stating,

"When I injured my knee getting from the upper campus to the lower was difficult so I didn't go. Also, I used to/sometimes still do, go to the gym after/during lunch at work and in the winter it is a challenge to get down the stairs as they are so slippery and unsafe."

The second most cited barrier revolves around privacy, especially concerning shower and change rooms. Aside from the frequent mention of insufficient lockers in private areas, one graduate respondent provides a thorough description of barriers to privacy for persons with disabilities:

"Disability is not only affective, it is also perceived: others who see someone with a disability (especially those of us with medical apparatuses) will be uncomfortable...as well, not everyone wishes to announce to all who can see our private disabilities. Therefore, a closed private shower and change room should be available for use (with handlebars and disability equipment) for people with disability. Check a hospital to see what these washrooms look like. To be clear: if you do not

provide accessible showers and change rooms, you are basically saying that you do not want disabled people to use your facilities because who wants to work out and sweat and then go to class without washing up???"

> **"A closed private shower and change room should be available for use (with handlebars and disability equipment) for people with disability"**

While all of these barriers, whether location, parking, or privacy, affect nondisabled and disabled alike, persons with disabilities and/or impairments frequently cite specific barriers that obstruct their use of the recreational areas. This includes the Tait McKenzie elevator, insufficient accessible fitness equipment and layout of fitness centre. As one graduate student illustrated, *"When the snow isn't clear, it's hard to get there. There isn't enough adapted equipment and the elevator malfunctions frequently."*

An undergraduate student likewise observed, *"The elevator is not the best. Also, the layout of the fitness centre makes it hard to move around (narrow spaces) in there if you use a wheelchair."*

Another disabled respondent suggests increased accessibility and use of facilities through additional adapted equipment: *"I hope that there will be more adaptive work-out equipment and some more equipment that is wheel-chair accessible."*

Lastly, one graduate student suggests an additional exercise program that allows persons who otherwise feel excluded: *"Tait MacKenzie is a little elite. For thin bodies, fit bodies, able bodies and I would suggest a non-elite program. They really cater to athletes. There should be a program for Fat people specifically and people who have disability, people who are not their core audience."*
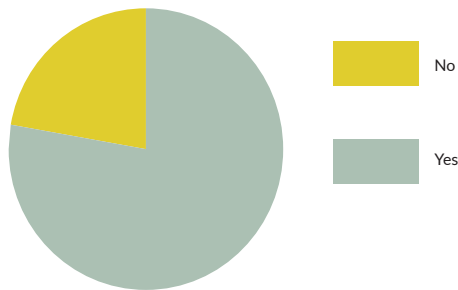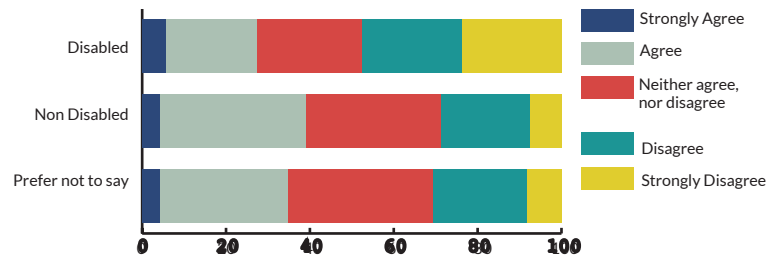
BOOKSTORES

Staircase

Table 22: Do you use the University Bookstores?

York University provides two bookstores located at Keele and Glendon campuses. When asked whether respondents used the university bookstores, the 77.9% of respondents who stated 'yes' were redirected to bookstore-specific questions.

Generally, most respondents found the bookstores accessible. The only barrier respondents with disabilities (47.8%) noted included the stairs at Keele which they found unsafe to use to move between floors. One undergraduate student describes the stairs as: *"a hazard. I don't know if the steps are too high or just uncomfortable, but I (and people that I know) trip every time."*

Table23: The stairs are safe to use to move between floors.

Respondents were also asked for suggestions for improving the bookstore. The most popular response regarded the location of the bookstore itself, several wishing for a larger space as well as that the course kits and textbooks be relocated from the basement to the main floor.

SCOTT RELIGIOUS CENTRE

BARRIERS

Insufficient washroom facilities

Location of accessible entrance

Table 24: Do you use, or would you like to use, the Scott Religious Centre?

The Scott Religious Centre, serving community members with diverse religious and spiritual affiliations, provides a quiet space for religious services, as well as mediation room for individual use. Additionally, the space may be used by faith-based student clubs.

Yes
No
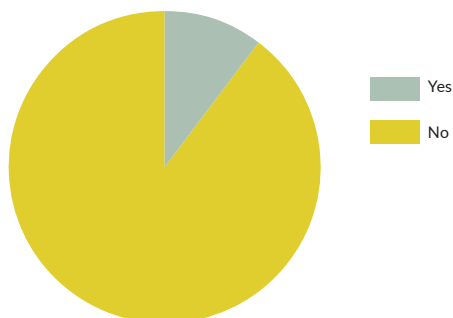
Of the 759 York community members, 14.4% with disabilities and 9.5% without disabilities state that they use or would like to use the Scott Religious Centre and were directed to questions relating to the centre itself.

While the main entrance to the Scott Religious Centre is located in Central Square, the wheelchair accessible entrance to the centre is accessed through an alternate route. When asked to rate *"I would use the Centre if the accessible entrance was more convenient,"* 62.6% of respondents with disabilities agreed.

Table 25: I would use the Centre if the accessible entrance was more convenient.

Strongly Agree
Agree
Neither agree, nor disagree
Disagree
Strongly Disagree
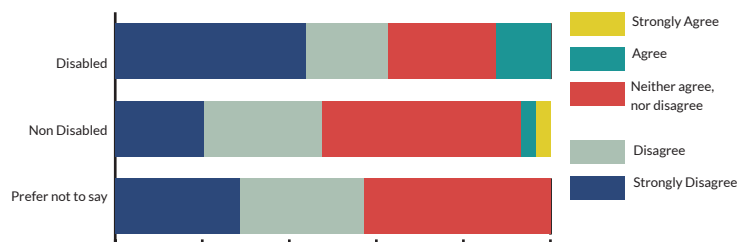
Additionally, 37.5% of those with disabilities, and 100% of those who preferred not to say, would use the Centre if it had an accessible washroom.

PRIORITIES

TOP 5 AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Classrooms

Maps and Signage

Campus Walkways

Washrooms

Libraries

TOP 5 AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT FOR PERSONS WITHOUT DISABILITIES

Maps and Signage

Washrooms

Campus Walkways

Classrooms

Libraries

TOP 5 AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT FOR THOSE WHO WISH NOT TO IDENTIFY AS DISABLED OR NONDISABLED

Maps and Signage

Campus Walkways

Classrooms

Washrooms

Elevators

Table 26 : How strongly do you agree that the following campus categories need accessibility improvements?

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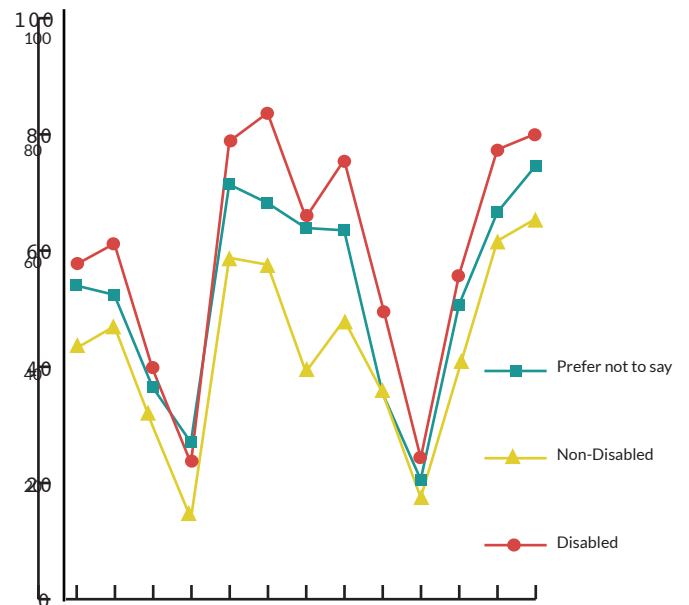
INVISIBLE DISABILITIES AND ATTITUDINAL BARRIERS:
Discussion of Focus Group and Survey Responses

The IRIS Accessibility Survey's primary goal is to consult the community members on barriers within the built environment. As such, this survey did not directly confront issues surrounding invisible disabilities, including learning or mental disabilities and/or impairments, and policy- or service

-created barriers in an in-depth or systematic method. However, focus groups discussions and the survey's qualitative responses provide preliminary feedback about a range of service and attitudinal barriers encountered by community members at York University.

COUNSELLING AND DISABILITY SERVICES: REGISTERED STUDENTS

BARRIERS

Access to services and supports

Service barriers encountered by students with disabilities range from interactions with Counseling and Disability Services (CDS) and interactions with professors. CDS provides services, such as tutoring, note takers, sign language interpreters, accommodation letters, for students with disabilities who register with their department. For those who choose to register with CDS, the main barrier involves information gaps.

The focus group participants report mixed experiences with CDS, depending on the level of their need or use of the services. Frequently, those with negative experiences related informational barriers to accessing funding for technology and/or tutors, as described by one graduate student and their attempts to navigate the processes surrounding OSAP and bursaries for students with disabilities: *"Technically it is the government, but I have been dealing with staff at York... I was not made aware of the different options available. During my undergrad, and this was years ago, I didn't even know about the bursary for student with disabilities... all these things I found out was from other*

students. It seems like you find out a lot of things by accident, from other students whereas I should have been given all this information from the disability counselor. What's the process? ...One of the challenges of those on the autism spectrum is the anxiety and the processes. And so it was the process of having to go though all of it, having to go back and deal with OSAP—it caused me a great deal of anxiety."

Another undergraduate student likewise comments on their frustrations in accessing information for funds available for disabled students:*"I've been here for four years. I go to the disability centre ever year to get my accommodation list. Has my disability counselor, whoever that is, told me about all this? No. I have to go forth with a list of questions and go to them and that's only because I'm trying to do my homework. The information is there but there is no connection."*

Overall, students with disabilities wishing to access funding for either technology or tutors felt the information to be hidden or that their counselors were unfamiliar with essential disability-related information. Specifically, one student noted that their counselor was not aware of the *"negative needs assessment"* with OSAP and thereby had to endure lengthy appeals in order to access denied funding.

PROFESSOR INTERACTIONS: SERVICE & ATTITUDINAL BARRIERS

BARRIERS

Disclosure of student disability in classroom

Dismissal of accommodation letters

Insufficient disability awareness training

Technology bans

Aside from interactions with disability counselors, both focus group participants and surveyed students report disabling attitudinal and service interactions with their professors. These barriers include dismissal of accommodation letters or instances where professors disclose student's disabilities to the entire class. One student recounts how a professor dismissed their accommodation letter: *"In my first year [my accommodation letter was rejected]. He said, 'What's this?' and I said it's an accommodation form and he told me to give it to the TA but I knew I had to give it to him too. Professors need to understand disability and most of them don't. And the ones that do either have a disability themselves or [are] in a discipline that deals with disability. It's that whole mentality where they understand one way and the need to understand more."*

In this instance, the above student remained to finish the course, not knowing to bring the issue to Counseling and Disability Services to ensure that the professor adhered to the details of the accommodation letter. This neglect of the disabled student's accommodation is not an isolated incident, and many focus group participants report similar treatment. One focus group participant who worked as a teaching assistant describes a scenario where the professor ignored the details of a student's letter that listed alternative test-taking as an accommodation: *"He said to her: 'Just try it this way and if it doesn't work out we can see what we can do.'"*

"In my first year [my accommodation letter was rejected]. He said, 'What's this?' and I said it's an accommodation form and he told me to give it to the TA but I knew I had to give it to him too. Professors need to understand disability and most of them don't. And the ones that do either have a disability themselves or [are] in a discipline that deals with disability. It's that whole mentality where they understand one way and the need to understand more."

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When the focus group participant spoke with the professor in question about not adhering to the stated accommodation, he dismissed their concern and required that the student with a disability write the exam with the class.

Students with disabilities also cite professors' policies in disclosing their disabilities to the class, creating a sense of isolation and discomfort:

"One of the biggest barriers for myself is technology ban in the classrooms. A few professors are very against any form of technology. But I don't understand why laptops have to be banned. I don't have to be registered if I can use my laptop…I can take notes but I can't write pages because that's going to put me in severe pain. But if I have a laptop I am easily accommodated. Last year there was a technology ban [and I had to register]. If there was no technology ban I could just blend in but since one of the professors was so adamant about banning technology I really stood out because I was the only one in the classroom with a laptop. And that made me feel really uncomfortable."

Aside from accommodation letters and de facto disability disclosure through individual classroom policies, disabled students report encountering discrimination and derision in the class environment from both professors and tutorial leaders. One student illustrates a time when a teaching assistant singled them out:

"It even says in my [accommodation] letter that I can doze. Ripped me off in front of the whole class… Can you imagine getting embarrassed in front of 250 kids? 'Oh I guess he's going to be snoring pretty soon over here.'"

These themes of dismissal of accommodation and disrespect relate to overall disability awareness. One survey respondent describes the attitudes towards disability as being,

"very negative at York. Confidentiality is rarely respected and everyone with whom I have spoken about accommodating my disability was more annoyed than desirous to help. Since York is an educational institution, I think that the solution is to EDUCATE staff about respect of, empathy towards and confidentiality pertaining to disabilities."

Another survey respondent likewise comments that the greatest barrier they experience as a person with a disability relate to the lack of thought of accessibility among staff and administration and that this situation must be a priority in tackling disabling barriers within the community.

UNREGISTERED PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Disabling interactions

Perceived mandatory discolsure

Given the sometimes-hostile attitudinal environment persons with disabilities sometimes encounter, students say they are not always willing to disclose their disabilities. As one graduate explains,

"The general fear of disclosing psychiatric disability to the university, that's a big problem for a lot of people."

Another focus group participant elaborates on this double-bind situation where disabilities tend not to be recognized at York unless they are registered, even though they have the right not to do so according to the Human Rights Code, yet there is a reluctance to register due to attitudinal barriers:

"I have mood disorders but I don't register them... because there's stigma around it. And I actually know quite a few friends [who] have learning disabilities, mood disorders or psychiatric orders and unless it really gets in the way they don't register them. It's like you have to admit to something on paper and take it to your professor—that's very difficult. But with professors, there were times when I was trying to tell the professor something and they said, unless it's registered it doesn't count. And I find that very difficult because even though it's not registered it doesn't mean it doesn't exist."

As demonstrated through disabled student interactions and the lack of awareness and training on part of tutorial leaders/teaching assistants and professors, as well as dismissive and derisive interactions, disclosing disabilities may be difficult. Yet this is not a situation faced by only students with disabilities, but also encountered by staff and faculty. For one staff member, these attitudinal barriers are a priority: *"Review of how mental health accessibility issues in the York workplace are dealt with needs huge improvement."*

RECOMMENDATIONS

SYSTEMIC CHANGE

Detailed recommendations for improving accessibility on both campuses were sought. Additionally, during focus group discussions, aside from highlighting barriers encountered, the group brainstormed recommendations for reducing these barriers. From these two sources of information, three main themes of fostering further accessibility developed:

- Improve reporting and compliance

mechanisms by developing more efficient and transparent processes
- Improve disability and awareness education and training for professors, teaching assistants and staff to address attitudinal barriers
- Improve community consultation at all stages of planning and implementation of changes to the built environment

Developing Reporting Mechanisms

In both the survey and focus group discussions, people state that they lack information about how to report maintenance issues. This includes, but is not limited to, malfunctioning automatic door openers and debris on pathways and thoroughfares. One survey respondent observed that *"there needs to be a way to report problems about accessibility…and to follow through to see if something is being done about it. Sort of a progress check."* A staff member likewise concurs: *"Needs to put in more financial resources to achieve the goal of making the York campuses fully accessible. Assign a number to each building exit and list this number along with the FULL phone number of the Facilities & Maintenance Dept. (not just the extension 22401) on ALL signage so that people can report the malfunctioning of any automatic/non-automatic door or other accessibility problems without spending too much time to explain the location and having to look up the full telephone number."*

The focus group discussion also highlights the importance of not only having a sound process in place for reporting barriers to accessibility but also that this process must be extensively advertised to the general public. Participants note that unless community members are aware of the procedures to report potential barriers, barriers will persist.

Education and Training Initiatives

As discussed above, persons with disabilities sometimes encounter attitudinal barriers during their time as a student or as an employee of York University. In 2005, the Government of Ontario passed the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA). The AODA is divided into three sections: customer service standard, built environment standard, and the integrated accessibility regulation. One focus group participant problematizes how York University currently enforces the customer service standard of the AODA:

"It was my understanding that when the customer service standard came in to effect that the professors had to take a course but the course was online? I find this highly problematic because they are interacting with words and their own perception of what disability is. And I think it needs to be called into play where groups of people are together to discuss this and different bodies are there to represent and talk about it rather than looking at a cold computer."

In addition, the focus groups question the effectiveness of the current training paradigm where situations continue to present various challenges. During this discussion, a teaching assistant revealed that they are not required to take the AODA training.

While both reporting mechanisms and training initiatives were highlighted for increasing accessibility, improved community consultation ranks as the top priority for persons with disabilities in both the survey and the focus groups. One participant, notes: *"There's a lack of consultation with persons with disabilities and students with disabilities, faculty, people who work here, and the groups that are in place. No one consults when [they are building or renovating], which is why there's a new part of the cafeteria that is newly inaccessible. It's that attitude: there's not need to involve disabled students when it comes to discussing accessibility."*

This theme of consulting disabled persons is repeatedly mentioned and emphasized throughout the focus group discussions as well as through the section of the survey dealing with final thoughts:

"When they upgrade, like they did the collaboratory in the second floor of Scott, they didn't take into consideration [disability]. When they do these upgrades to the campus, disability isn't figured into it from the very start."

"We need to develop a notion as well as policies and implementations around UNIVERSAL access, not parcel it out based on where we THINK disabled people are or should be. If there are no people with disability/ies wherever you live your life it's not because there are none that want to be there it's because they can't be there."

"Before you say something is accessible get a couple of people with disabilities to test it out if possible."

"There are lots of improvements to be made... and I really think it is imperative that the student's perspective be strongly considered during [decision-making]."

"This is a huge problem, and the survey is at a high level of generality which doesn't allow specific problems to be identified or suggestions made. I think that a special panel of people affected should be convened to propose solutions and priorities. The accessible gender-free washrooms in HNES tend to be highly used, often

unavailable, and sometimes vandalized; what is going on? The York Research Tower is totally inaccessible now that the construction is going on -- unacceptable! There are very few washrooms in the Student Centre and sometimes the elevator down to the Underground washrooms is not working. Power doors are sometimes broken and it seems to take days or weeks to get them fixed. I would really hate to be mobility-impaired at York!"

"If there is some sort of process of consultation with disabled students, with access york, it would save money so it would be better economically for the university because now they are having to do the work two or three times in order to make it accessible. That spends a lot of money, working hours and everything."

While each of the examples above demonstrates an overwhelming wish for consultation with community members at York University, it also demonstrates a systemic issue where changes to the environment, whether attitudinal or physical, result in disabling barriers due to a lack of consultation. As the last two comments illustrate, if there were policies and procedures in place that brought in the perspectives of persons who are affected by the changes, it would proactively minimize the barriers that may otherwise be created rather than retroactively addressing barriers after they are in place.

SITE-SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS

Housing
- Improve snow removal and deicing
- Audit access points to and within buildings
- Incorporate accessibility into community building plans
- Additional automatic door openers

York U Shuttle
- Increase promotion of available services
- Expand frequency of service
- Additional route stops
- Driving training regarding accessibility features of the shuttle

VanGo
- Increase promotion of available services
- Review and adjust booking policies
- Review policies regarding potential users of service

Parking
- Review costs of daily and permit parking
- Provide additional medical parking spaces
- Review ticketing policies for medical parking spaces
- Ensure the functioning and access to pay meters

Path of Travel: Grounds
- Improve snow removal policies
- Improve lighting conditions
- Develop standards of operation that include impact on grounds use and access

Signage and Wayfinding
- Update map information
- Reformat and update accessible maps
- Additional and updated maps within buildings

Automatic Door Openers
- Improve repair response time
- Provide complete reporting information
- Online reporting for malfunctioning ADOs

Elevators
- Improve elevator location signage
- Assess library elevator use policies

Washrooms
- Increase frequency of washroom maintenance
- Additional multi-stall and single use washrooms
- Provide reporting information for maintenance in washrooms

Classrooms
- Provide flexible furniture and layout
- Provide additional electrical outlet service
- Provide automatic door opener access to classrooms
- Enforce room capacity policies to prevent overcrowding

Libraries
- Increase private study space
- Assess library bookshelf for increased access
- Provide up to date accessible computer software
- Improve air circulation and ventilation
- Provide additional washroom access for disabled library patrons

Sport and Recreation Facilities

- Creation of Satellite recreation facilities
- Provide private, accessible shower and change room for disabled users
- Improve elevator service
- Provide additional programming targeted for a variety of bodies and abilities

Bookstore

- Assess safety of York Lanes bookstore

Scott Religious Centre

- Improved accessibility access to the Centre
- Improved access to washroom facilities

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CONCLUSION:
Final Thoughts on Accessibility

The aim of this report is to investigate, assess and identify disabling barriers encountered by both nondisabled and disabled York University community members and provide recommendations for how to address the issues that community members have raised. As one undergraduate remarks, *"I believe York has done a good job on overall accessibility in comparison to other academic organizations. However, I feel there is a long way to go to make the environment more accessible and equitable to all stakeholders of York University."* But the question remains on how exactly how we create an accessible and equitable York University?

While this survey is an important step towards answering this question, further research and consultation is clearly required. Built barriers for those with visual and/or auditory disabilities/impairments were not surveyed to the same extent as physical disabilities since we structured the survey under the existing Ontario Building Code (2006). Likewise, disabling attitudinal barriers, were not directly measured, as they did not fall within the scope of the survey.

Given the focus on the built environment, additional in-depth consultation within a more diverse disabled populations will ensure that the previously mentioned gaps in surveying accessibility can be confronted. The focus group discussions provide a starting point for this process of examining barriers outside of the strictures of the built environment and the OBC. As one staff member so aptly remarks, *"Please improve accessibility services at all levels: physical layout, classroom environment (teaching), research (libraries), food services and areas, educating the York U community at large on accessibility issues."*

> *"I believe York has done a good job on overall accessibility in comparison to other academic organizations. However, I feel there is a long way to go to make the environment more accessible and equitable to all stakeholders of York University."*

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APPENDIX A

ACCESSIBILITY FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES, STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

Description: Statement of Commitment: Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities. Has associate Guideline.
Notes: Approved by President Jan 27, 2010. Approved by Board Governance and Human Resources Committee February 10, 2010; Approved by the Board of Governors February 22, 2010.
Approval Authority: Board of Governors
Signature: "Paul Cantor"

STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

1. York University's Mission Statement commits the institution to accessibility and social justice. In advancement of the mission, the university aims to be an environment which respects the dignity and worth of all persons.
2. In recognition of their abilities and contributions to York University, the university is committed to preventing, minimizing and removing the barriers to participation by persons with disabilities in the activities of the university including employment, study or social activity.
3. While all individuals are expected to satisfy the requirements of their program of study or their employment and to aspire to do so at a level of excellence, the university recognizes that persons with disabilities may require reasonable accommodation to enable them to do so. It is the responsibility of each member of the York community, including faculty, staff, students, alumni, volunteers and their representative organizations to play a part in creating an equitable and inclusive environment, in the identification and minimizing of barriers, and in the accommodation processes.

and minimizing of barriers, and in the accommodation processes.
4. In working towards its goals to provide access to persons with disabilities, York will act conscientiously and in keeping with its own policies and with relevant legislation. For purposes of this statement, the statutory definition of the term "disability" is that provided by the Accessibility for Ontarians With Disabilities Act 2005, attached as an appendix hereto, and any amendments made thereto from time to time.

POLICY ON ACCESSIBILITY FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Definition of the Term "Disabilities"

The Accessibility For Ontarians with Disabilities ("AODA") uses the Ontario Human Rights Code definition of "disability" which is:

- any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device
- a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability
- a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language.
- a mental disorder, or
- an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997 ("handicap").

APPENDIX B

ACCESSIBILITY FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES, CUSTOMER SERVICE GUIDELINE

Description: Customer Service Guideline: Accessibility at York University (Assistive Devices, Support Persons and Support Animals).

Notes: This Guideline is in accordance with the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07, under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005. Has associated policy.

Approval Authority: Harriet Lewis, University Secretary and General Counsel

1. Customer Service

York University is committed to providing goods and services in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities. York University will use use reasonable efforts to ensure that the pro vision of goods and services to persons with disabilities will be integrated unless an alter native measure is necessary to enable a per son with disabilities to obtain, use or benefit from the goods or services.

2. Assistive Devices

a) York University welcomes persons with disabilities to use their own personal assistive devices as may be reasonably required to access the services of the University.

b) Definition: "Assistive devices" are equipment or methods which help a person with a disability to do everyday tasks and activities and can include such things as:

- hearing aids, teletypewriters (TTY) for people unable to speak or hear by telephone
- scooters, walkers or crutches to assist in mobility

- magnifiers and white canes to assist vision-impaired persons
- communication boards (used to create messages), and speech generating devices.

3. Service Animals

a) York University welcomes persons with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal onto the parts of the university premises owned or operated by the university and which are which are open to the person with a disability.

b) If the service animal is excluded by law in an area of the University campus (e.g. health or safety laws), the university will strive to use other measures to accommodate the person with a disability.

c) York University will also ensure that all staff who deal with the public are properly trained in how to interact with people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal.

4. Support Persons

a) The university welcomes onto its premises persons with disabilities who are accompanied by a support person. Persons with dis abilities will have access to their support person at all times, provided that the interaction does not compromise the university's academic standards.

b) If a fee is charged for the admission of a support person, the fee will be communicated and posted.

c) The University may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person if it is necessary to protect the health or safety of the person with a disability or the health or safety of others on the premises.

5. Notice of Temporary Disruptions

a) York University will provide notice in the event of a planned or unexpected disruption in the facilities or services normally used by persons with disabilities to participate in the activities of the university.

b) A notice regarding a temporary disruption will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available. The notice will be placed in relevant conspicuous locations on the university premises and, when appropriate, will be placed on the university's accessibility website at http://www.yorku.ca/accessibili-

6. Training

a) York University will provide training about the provision of goods and services to per sons with disabilities to every person:

    i) who deals with members of the public on its behalf;

    ii) who participates in the development of policies, practices and procedures concerning the provision of goods and services to members of the public.

b) Training will be provided on an ongoing basis and whenever there are changes to policies, practices and procedures.

c) York University will keep records of the training provided, including the dates on which training is provided and the number of individuals to whom it is provided. Further information regarding training is available at: http://www.yorku.ca/accessibilityhub/get-involved.htm

7. Feedback

a) The University welcomes feedback regarding the provision of goods and services to persons with disabilities. Feedback may be provided in person, in writing, by email or by telephone.

b) York University will review all feedback it receives and respond to such feedback where appropriate based on the nature of the feed

c) Where appropriate, York University will take feedback received into consideration as part of its ongoing policy review.

d) Information regarding the university's feedback process may be found at http://www.yorku.ca/accessibilityhub

8. Access to Customer Service Standards Documents

a) York University has posted the documents prepared in compliance with the Customer Service Standards at: http://www.yorku.ca/accessibilityhub

b) To request a copy of the documents in alternate format, please contact:
Leanne De Filippis
AODA Coordinator
Office of the University Secretary and General Counsel
York University
1050 York Research Tower
4700 Keele Street
Toronto ON M3J 1P3
416-736-5310
Email: defilip@yorku.ca

APPENDIX C

STEELES AVE WEST

IAN MACDONALD BLVD

YORK UNIVERSITY KEELE CAMPUS
4700 KEELE ST TORONTO ON M3J 1P3

LEGEND

- VISITOR PARKING
- RESERVED PARKING
- PARKING GARAGE
- BLUE LIGHT EMERGENCY PHONE
- PARKING INTERCOM
- SECURITY
- PICK-UP/DROP-OFF AREA
- TTC STOPS
- GLENDON-KEELE SHUTTLE & GO TRAIN SHUTTLE STOPS
- goSAFE/CAMPUS SHUTTLE
- BRAMPTON TRANSIT
- TTC WHEEL TRANS (TCW) YRT MOBILITY PLUS
- GO TRANSIT STOPS (GMT, REV 1 NORTH)
- VIVA TRANSIT STOPS
- YRT STOPS
- AUTOMATIC DOOR OPENERS
- MEDICAL PARKING AVAILABLE
- TRANSIT EXCLUSIVE ROADWAY
- INFORMATION
- PEDESTRIAN WALKWAY
- CONSTRUCTION ZONE
- ACCESS CLOSED
- DETOUR ROUTE

CAMPUS DIRECTORY

ACADEMIC, ADMINISTRATIVE & COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS

RESIDENCES & APARTMENTS

PARKING GARAGES - VISITORS

PARKING LOTS - VISITORS

PARKING LOTS - RESERVED

VISUAL PERFORMANCE ARTS FACILITIES

SPORT & RECREATION FACILITIES

HISTORICAL HOUSE

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