



Review of Recommendations Report

Black Student Advisory Committee of the
Presidential Implementation Committee
to Confront Anti-Black Racism

November 2021

Ryerson
University

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Letter from the co-chairs of the Black Student Advisory Committee and Student Working Group of the Presidential Implementation Committee to Confront Anti-Black Racism

Learning about the experiences of Black-identifying students on campus has been an important step in our process towards addressing anti-Black racism at the university. When the Office of the Vice-President, Equity and Community Inclusion published the [Anti-Black Racism Campus Climate Review Report](#) in July 2020, it provided the community and our leadership with an honest analysis of the barriers Black students, faculty and staff face across the university. The formation of the Black Student Advisory Committee of the Presidential Implementation Committee to Confront Anti-Black Racism is furthering these efforts, giving us an even more in-depth look at the Black student experience and the gaps we need to address in creating an equitable and inclusive campus.

Students are at the centre of the university. Their success is what makes our work meaningful and ensuring each student has an enriching and fulfilling experience during their education is a priority that drives our work. For Black-identifying students, part of this enrichment includes feeling safe in their classrooms and on campus, being supported in pursuit of their goals and education, and trusting that their educational institution has their best interests at heart.

This report is a culmination of months-long consultations and surveys where respondents were honest about their experiences in classrooms, with faculty, with peers and how these situations impacted them as a person. As a result, students and administrators gathered around a virtual roundtable to learn and listen to each other. It has furthered our understanding of and provided greater nuance to the findings of the 2020 Anti-Black Racism Campus Climate Review Report.

While the process to confront anti-Black racism continues to unfold, we're in a pivotal moment in history to create a new path going forward. At the university, we are in the midst of community-building, having new conversations to inform strategic work, and generating a new future, with Black students at the centre of it all.

Systemic change takes dedicated action to create. Co-creating with students helps to generate the required momentum to create effective change. As the university continues to evolve, we thank the countless Black students, faculty and staff for driving these changes.

We invite community members to read this report, and consider how they might take action on the recommendations and ideas offered by our 2020-2021 Black Student Advisory Committee. Looking ahead, 15 returning students will carry on with the committee in 2021-2022 to continue sharing their stories and ideas for progress. We look forward to this ongoing collaboration in building a brighter university where Black students can succeed, excel and flourish.

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Executive summary

On July 17, 2020, the Office of the Vice-President, Equity and Community Inclusion (OVPECI) published Ryerson University's [Anti-Black Racism Campus Climate Review Report](#). The report included 14 recommendations for students, faculty and staff on combating anti-Black racism and creating a more inclusive environment for all members of the university. Six recommendations were specific to Black students. To ensure that student voices were elevated in this work and to add further detail to the findings in the Anti-Black Racism Campus Climate Review Report, a Black Student Advisory Committee (BSAC) was created, composed of student leaders representing various student organizations. The BSAC was tasked with connecting students, faculty and staff to discuss their perspectives on and suggestions for how the recommendations should be brought to life.

The BSAC facilitated a total of 12 community consultations during the winter 2021 term, in which over 60 Black-identifying students participated. A survey with similar questions, including questions asking respondents to share their experiences of anti-Black racism was also distributed to reach more university members. A total of 378 Black-identifying university members responded to the survey. This report details findings from both the consultations and the survey, and provides an overview of the data collection, a summary of emergent themes from survey respondents' answers and feedback on student-focused recommendations.

Participants' and respondents' stories highlighted pervasive anti-Black racism at the university. Experiences of acts of anti-Black racism by peers and faculty, microaggressions and lack of institutional support reinforced that anti-Black racism is perpetuated by not only individual prejudice and misconduct, but also by structural inequities.

In reviewing the six student recommendations in the Anti-Black Racism Campus Climate Review Report, participants and respondents also provided suggestions on how the recommendations could be implemented. These suggestions were consolidated and listed in the [feedback on student-focused recommendations section](#) of the report. As much as possible, participants' and respondents' quotes were preserved to elevate their voices.

The survey also asked respondents to rank the six recommendations from the Anti-Black Racism Campus Climate Review Report in order of priority - as outlined below:

1. Diversifying disciplines
2. Campus-wide EDI training
3. Black faculty representation
4. Campus security training
5. Funding of events, meetings, etc.
6. Black student space on campus

Acknowledgments

The preparation of this report was supported by the [2020-21 BSAC steering group, members and Student Affairs staff](#).

Students are at the centre of the university. The formation of the Black Student Advisory Committee was pivotal in co-creating effective change on campus and generating a new future at the university, with Black students at the centre of it all.



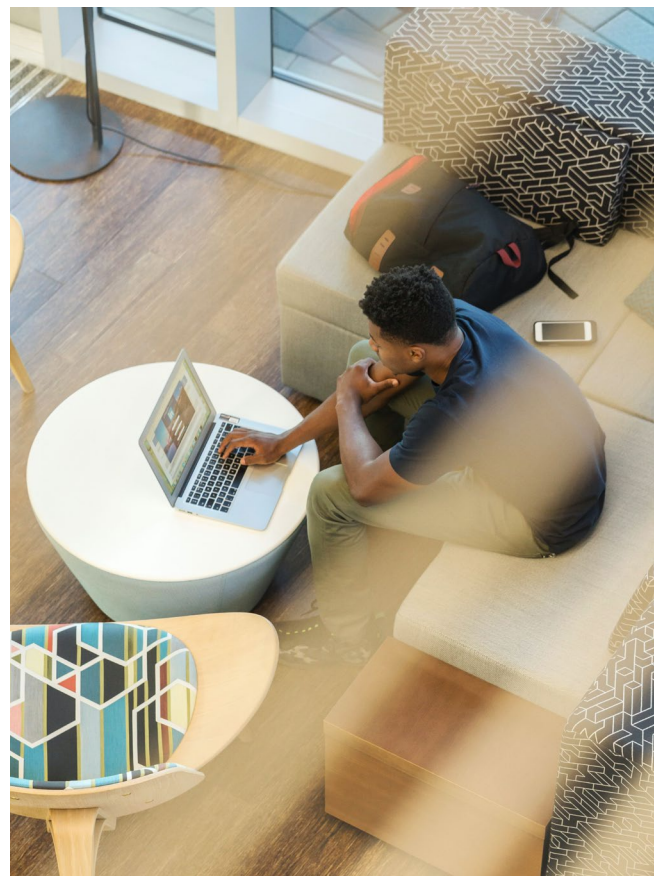
Introduction

On July 17, 2020, the Office of the Vice-President, Equity and Community Inclusion (OVPECI) published Ryerson University's [Anti-Black Racism Campus Climate Review Report](#). The report included discussions on 14 recommendations for students, faculty and staff on combating anti-Black racism and creating a more inclusive environment for all members of the university. For more information on the contexts and previous work driving this report, we encourage you to first read the Anti-Black Racism Campus Climate Review Report.

Following the release of the Anti-Black Racism Campus Review Report, three working groups were established to implement recommendations related to each of the three populations. To ensure that student voices were elevated in this work, a Black Student Advisory Committee (BSAC) was created via an application and selection process. The final BSAC was composed of student leaders representing various student organizations (e.g. Ryerson Students' Union, African Students' Association, Black Fashion Student Association, Ryerson Engineering Student Society, etc.) and passionate individuals (including mature students) from across each of the faculties.

The BSAC was tasked with connecting students, faculty and staff to discuss their perspectives on and suggestions for how the recommendations should be brought to life. This Review of Recommendations Report details the results of the BSAC's efforts over the past year, from November 2020 to May 2021, and is laid out in the following order:

- 1. Methods:** An overview of the data collection and analysis processes that took place.
- 2. Respondents' demographic information:** A summary of survey respondents' answers to the closed-ended questions regarding their year of study, faculty, etc.
- 3. Respondents' experiences:** A summary of emergent themes from survey respondents' answers to open-ended questions regarding their experiences of anti-Black racism and experiences as Black students more broadly.
- 4. Feedback on student-focused recommendations:** A consolidation of results from community consultations and survey responses on suggestions and considerations for the implementation of the Anti-Black Racism Campus Climate Review Report recommendations.



Methods

Data Collection

Participants were recruited via a snowball sampling method. The BSAC members were trained in focus group methods and facilitated a total of 12 community consultations in which over 60 Black-identifying students participated. BSAC members that were representing various student groups reached out to their respective groups to invite students to take part in a consultation. Other students were invited by word-of-mouth. These conversations centred around participants reviewing each recommendation, identifying which recommendations they would prioritize and providing suggestions on how each recommendation should be implemented. Notes were taken by facilitators during each consultation (conversations were not recorded).

The BSAC created a Qualtrics survey with three parts:

1. Demographic questions (e.g. year of study, program, etc.);
2. Closed- and open-ended questions on respondents' experiences of anti-Black racism; and
3. Closed- and open-ended questions on respondents' thoughts on the Anti-Black Racism Campus Climate Review Report recommendations.

BSAC members that were representing various student groups reached out to their respective groups to invite students to complete the survey. Respondents were asked to share the survey with other Black-identifying students, faculty and staff that they know. A total of 378 Black-identifying university members responded to the survey.

Data Analysis

Responses to closed-ended questions on the survey were summarized in descriptive statistics in the next section. Responses to two of the open-ended questions on the survey regarding respondents' experiences with anti-Black racism on campus were inductively analyzed using a three-stage qualitative data coding process (Saldaña, 2013)¹.

First, four coders read through all responses to familiarize themselves with the data and collectively code 10% of the responses using a line-by-line approach. (Two of the coders were staff members, while the other two were students; one staff coder and one student coder were members of the BSAC). This step supported coders in establishing a shared understanding of the data and its potential codes. Next, two student coders collaboratively coded the rest of the responses, which were reviewed by the two staff coders. These codes were then grouped into larger categories to identify emergent themes and shared sentiments across responses. Refer to these results in the [respondents' experiences section](#).

Responses to survey questions on the Anti-Black Racism Campus Climate Review Report recommendations, as well as notes taken during the community consultations, were consolidated and summarized to highlight participants' and respondents' suggestions and considerations. These were implemented in the [feedback on student-focused recommendations section](#) of the report.

¹Saldaña, J. (2013). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers*. London, U.K.: Sage Publications.

Respondents' demographic information

Note: Percentages are rounded to the nearest tenth.

Year of study

Year of study	N	%
First year	77	22.0%
Second year	76	21.7%
Third year	72	20.6%
Fourth year	74	21.1%
Fifth year or beyond	51	14.6%
Total	349	100.0%

Faculty enrolment

Faculty	N	%
Chang School of Continuing Education	6	5.0%
Faculty of Arts	22	18.5%
Faculty of Community Services	31	26.1%
Faculty of Engineering and Architectural Science	7	5.9%
Faculty of Science	4	3.4%
Ted Rogers School of Management	31	26.1%
The Creative School (formerly Faculty of Communication and Design)	15	12.6%
Yeates School of Graduate Studies	3	2.5%
Total	119	100.1%

Identification with other groups(s)

Total respondents: 115

Note: Some respondents identified with more than one of the listed groups.

Group	N	%
2SLGBTQ+	17	14.8%
Indigenous person	3	2.6%
International student	5	4.3%
Man	21	18.3%
Mature student	34	29.6%
Person with a disability	20	17.4%
Student athlete	5	4.3%
Woman	77	67.0%

When asked to generally “score your experience as a Black student in your faculty,” 116 students answered. Out of 100, the mean score was 58 and the median score was 60, ranging from two respondents who selected 0 to 11 respondents who selected 100. When asked to generally “score how supportive you find faculty and staff members,” 113 students answered. Out of 100, the mean score was 62 and median score was 70, ranging from two respondents who selected 0 to 13 respondents who selected 100. Overall, 113 students answered both questions. Further work is needed with future advisory councils to pose additional questions and collect more nuanced perspectives on how these scores can be interpreted.

Experience of racism from other groups

Groups that you have experienced racism from	N	%
Have not experienced racism from any of the listed groups	50	45.1%
Students	18	16.2%
Faculty	14	12.6%
University staff	9	8.1%
Other (unspecified) groups	20	18.0%
Total	111	100.0%



Respondents' experiences



This section of the report examines and summarizes the answers from respondents to the following open-ended survey questions:

1. Have you experienced anti-Black racism in your faculty? If you are comfortable, please describe your experience.
2. How has being a Black student and a member of the group(s) you previously selected impacted your experience at Ryerson?

Overall, 86 (23%) of 378 total respondents answered one or both of these questions; 58 (15%) answered both questions, while the rest answered one of the two. Respondents provided detailed descriptions of their experiences as Black students, as well as their experiences with anti-Black racism in various contexts. Some respondents' sentiments ranged from neutral to positive. However, 45 (52%) of the 86 respondents described experiencing racism in some form (from direct/overt to microaggressions) at the university.

Across all responses, five overlapping themes emerged from the codes:

- experiences of anti-Black racism within classrooms and faculties;
- experiences of microaggressions;
- lack of institutional support;
- impacts of experiences of anti-Black racism; and
- other experiences (that were positive or uncertain).

Each of these themes contains sub-themes and are expanded upon below.

Experiences of anti-Black racism within classrooms and faculties

In response to the first question (“Have you experienced anti-Black racism in your faculty? If you are comfortable, please describe your experience?”), 61% of respondents described experiencing anti-Black racism within their classrooms and/or faculties through both firsthand and observed interactions with instructors and other students, while 39% of respondents stated that they had not experienced anti-Black racism within their classrooms and/or faculties.

Acts of anti-Black racism by peers and faculty

Several respondents described experiencing direct acts of anti-Black racism. For example, one respondent wrote: “I have been called the n-word countless times by classmates.” Other respondents described peers in their class using the n-word in general and “making inappropriate remarks” during group discussions. Some respondents also described professors being racist or perpetuating anti-Black racism. For example, one respondent wrote, “A white professor once made a joke about lynching a student,” before adding that BIPOC faculty members can also perpetuate anti-Black racism.

Lack of allyship from faculty

Several responses stated that they experienced multiple instances in which non-Black professors failed to address racist comments or behaviours from students in their classroom. When one respondent reached out to a professor, they were told that it was “[their]” responsibility to call-out racism in the classroom” because it was “too heavy of a burden” for the professor to do so. Another respondent recalled watching Blackface videos and other videos of Black individuals in degrading situations in class and hearing their peers laugh, which was ignored by the professor until Black students in the class stepped forward.

In some cases, course content and/or structure perpetuated or enabled anti-Black racism by leaving out Black perspectives or experiences. One respondent described how, in a design course, sourcing from Black cultures for projects is “frowned upon,” forcing Black students to avoid sourcing from their own cultures in order to “preserve getting good grades.”

Experiences of microaggressions

34% of respondents to either or both of the open-ended survey questions explicitly described experiencing microaggressions on campus, including discriminatory treatment based on stereotypes, assumptions or expectations about their abilities, and misrepresentation.

Stereotyping

Respondents described being stereotyped because of their race. Several respondents expressed feeling perceived as “dangerous” or “aggressive” by other students, with one respondent noticing that other students would cross the street to avoid walking past them. Another respondent commented that while living in residence, they were stopped by security after hours and asked to show their ID, while their White companion was not.

Assumptions about ability

Respondents described being overlooked or underestimated during group assignments or other interactions with non-Black staff or students. For example, one respondent stated: “For class group formation, I’ve had no-one join my group willingly... or been the last one chosen/assigned.” Some respondents noted that their peers appeared to have lower expectations of them or did not expect them to be interested in pursuing further education after their undergraduate degree.

Assumptions about background

Respondents described dealing with assumptions about their background, which emerged in peers’ questions about where they are from and comments that their English is “good,” despite English being their mother tongue. One respondent described a situation in which a professor assumed that they didn’t know their father because “the Black male incarceration rate is so high.”

Misrepresentation

One respondent mentioned that in their business courses, it was common for professors to reference the exploitation of low-wage labour in Africa, which “misrepresents the country as a mere place for exploitation.” Another respondent described having a White professor make “false and laughable claims” while teaching about African-American history.

Lack of institutional support

In addition to describing experiences of anti-Black racism, respondents frequently discussed struggling to find representation on campus and to connect with resources that could adequately support their intersectional needs.

Lack of representation

Respondents commented on the lack of representation in academic and non-academic spaces. On academic spaces, respondents noted that there is only a small number of Black faculty members, with one respondent stating that supporting Black students tends to fall on these faculty members. Regarding non-academic spaces, respondents described various spaces which needed but lacked Black representation, including student committees, mentorship programs, clubs and university-affiliated social media.



Lack of resources

Several respondents discussed the challenge of finding and/or accessing resources that supported their Black and/or intersectional identities. For example, one respondent experienced difficulty accessing “equity groups or events for Black students,” finding “little to no promotion of ethnic student groups aside from flyers in Kerr Hall.” A graduate respondent asked:

“Who do we connect with in the faculty? How do we apply for funding? What kinds of funding is available for our research interests? How do we get published? Improve our writing? Develop CVs? How do we apply for jobs? How do we access the vast connections that non-Black students have access to?”

Other respondents described the unique challenges faced by Black students who are also a first-generation, queer, and/or mature student. For example, one respondent stated: “I’ve found there are spaces that cater to my general identities such as queer spaces or Black spaces but not many spaces that cater to my intersections.”

Impacts of experiences of anti-Black racism

In describing experiences of anti-Black racism, respondents also frequently shared the significant impacts of these experiences on their emotional, mental and physical well-being.

Isolation

Many respondents commonly revealed that the lack of representation and support made them feel like “the odd one out” or “an outsider,” making it difficult for them to “make close friends or even reach out to professors.” One respondent commented on the impact of these feelings on their desire to stay at the university: “I feel disconnected from my program and oftentimes considering quitting due to not being able to relate.” Another respondent also noted that lack of representation made it difficult for them to self-advocate or report instances of anti-Black racism: “Given the power of this particular faculty, I was scared to tell people.” Needing to self-advocate because of the lack of support was described by one respondent as perpetuating “violence, stress, trauma.”

Discouragement

Respondents described how experiences of anti-Black racism or lack of institutional support were “discouraging,” “depressing” and “demoralizing,” and led to “changed expectations” about what the university would look like for them moving forward. Lack of representation in one respondent’s program led them to comment: “It seems like you’re going through all this schooling not to get anywhere because you don’t see your own people in the positions you aspire to be in.” Another respondent stated that their experience as a Black student impacted their self-confidence and caused them to doubt future employment prospects.

Safety concerns

Some respondents expressed that they felt uncomfortable or unsafe as a Black student. One respondent, who also identified as trans, stated they did not feel comfortable in most spaces and that being Black “just adds to it.” In describing their experiences of anti-Black racism, another respondent wrote: “How the professor handled it . . . made me feel like I might be unsafe in that classroom.”



Other experiences

Positive Experiences

Several respondents described feeling positively about their experiences as a Black student, including one respondent who wrote:

“ I have been fortunate enough to see representation within the child and youth care faculty that allows me to feel represented, also being able to work closely with Black professors in the faculty has allowed me to feel welcomed and seeing minorities in these positions is also very motivating. ”

Another respondent commented that although “all of [their] teachers have been White, which is to be expected... The school is doing a great job at promoting diversity and inclusivity by offering a variety of events and opportunities to participate in conversations through the emails [they] receive.”

Uncertainty

Several respondents commented that the pandemic and remote learning circumstances have limited their social interactions thus far, making it difficult to determine whether being Black was impacting their school experience. For example, one respondent stated that they weren’t “conscious of [their] race because lectures are online and you don’t have to deal with people physically.” Another similarly commented on their remote experience: “As of right now, everyone seems inclusive.”



Conclusion

Respondents' stories highlighted pervasive anti-Black racism at the university and deepened our understanding of the findings in the Anti-Black Racism Campus Climate Review Report. Experiences of acts of anti-Black racism by peers and faculty, microaggressions and lack of institutional support reinforced that anti-Black racism is perpetuated by not only individual prejudice and misconduct, but also by structural inequities. In answers to both questions, respondents' discussion of faculty inaction and the lack of representation of Black voices in academic and non-academic spaces suggested that respondents are calling for accountability at both institutional and individual levels. As one respondent wrote broadly, "I believe the fix to this issue should start with the dean of my program," while another focused on the classroom: "The prof/TAs need to call out students who present hurtful or bigoted opinions during discussions or class debates."

As evidenced by students' responses in this report, and continued research on the impacts of anti-Black racism on post-secondary students (e.g., Nadal et al., 2014; Volpe et al., 2020), failure to address acts of anti-Black racism can significantly and negatively impact Black students' mental health, sense of belonging, and ability and desire to persist in their studies.

Building on this valuable student feedback, the university continues to take steps towards addressing anti-Black racism. The creation of a working group helped establish tangible changes that students recommended in the Anti-Black Racism Campus Climate Review Report. Faculty and staff across campus have committed to taking steps to address anti-Black racism. Refer to [Appendix I](#) for a full list of student-facing accomplishments to date.

Feedback the Black Student Advisory Committee offers in this report has connections to the Anti-Black Racism Campus Climate Review Report recommendations, organized as relevant to faculty and staff. Continuing to engage with students and equipping the community entrusted with mobilizing the Anti-Black Racism Campus Climate Review Report recommendations - with student voices centred - will generate the momentum required to create effective systemic change.



²Nadal, K. L., Wong, Y., Griffin, K. E., Davidoff, K., & Sriken, J. (2014). The adverse impact of racial microaggressions on college students' self-esteem. *Journal of College Student Development, 55*(5), 461-474.

³Volpe, V. V., Katsiaticas, D., Benson, G. P., & Zelaya Rivera, S. N. (2020). A mixed methods investigation of Black college-attending emerging adults' experiences with multilevel racism. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 90*(6), 687-702.

Feedback on student-focused recommendations

The survey asked respondents to rank the six student recommendations from the Anti-Black Racism Campus Climate Review Report in order of priority. Of the 378 total respondents, 121 answered this question. Respondents most frequently ranked diversifying disciplines as their first priority (36%), followed by Black faculty representation (26%) and campus-wide EDI training (12%). As their second priority, respondents most frequently ranked Black faculty representation (28%), diversifying disciplines (26%), and campus-wide EDI training (21%). A full breakdown of how each priority was ranked is below (percentages rounded to the nearest tenth):

In community consultations and survey responses, participants and respondents also discussed and provided suggestions on how the recommendations could be implemented. The results from these consultations and responses are detailed in the next section. Quotation marks are used to indicate where words or phrases came directly from a participant or respondent.

Recommendation	Ranked					
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th
Diversifying disciplines	35.5%	21.5%	19.0%	12.4%	9.1%	2.5%
Campus-wide EDI training	12.4%	20.1%	19.01%	12.4%	20.1%	14.9%
Black faculty representation	26.5%	28.1%	17.4%	20.1%	5.8%	1.7%
Campus security training	5.8%	6.6%	11.6%	21.5%	24.0%	30.6%
Funding of events, meetings, etc.	8.3%	7.4%	19.8%	17.4%	28.9%	18.2%
Black student space on campus	11.6%	15.7%	13.2%	15.7%	11.6%	32.2%

Recommendation #1

A concerted and deliberate effort to diversify disciplines and programs should be undertaken. This would include curriculum, internships, placements and other program practices that impact student success.

Participants and respondents suggested:

- Support Black students in accessing academic/career/ social resources and actively promote important information, including:
 - Advice on course enrolment and major selection processes.
 - Recommendations on courses focused on Black histories and experiences.
 - Guidance on connecting with mentors, networking, social events.
 - Direction to safe spaces to give feedback on professors, faculty, services, etc.
 - Guidance on navigating internship/ professional spaces as a Black individual.
 - Increase student diversity in programs with low Black student enrolment.
 - Support Black students in accessing/enrolling in STEM programs/opportunities.
 - Call for a review of course curriculums:
 - Discuss methods to bring in more teachings about Black history and experiences (e.g., discrimination against Black tourism).
 - Review frameworks developed by White scholars and veer away from delivering course content through a eurocentric lens.
 - Ensure curriculum examples and contexts aren't just centred around Toronto (e.g., Toronto architecture).
 - Offer SOC305 as a way for nursing students to learn more about past and present Black issues to better prepare future nurses to work with minorities within the community.
 - Bring attention to the Ryerson University Library and Archives on the lack of scholarly sources pertaining to Black issues in Canada within the school's library.
 - Ensure all suggestions and recommendations are communicated to not only professors, but also TAs and other administrative staff.
 - Increase transparency of decisions made surrounding processes such as student selection for academic opportunities, why certain courses are only offered in certain semesters, etc.
 - Ensure staff undertaking this work are given their rightfully deserved pay and consideration when it comes to sick/mental health days, accommodation, etc.
 - Reach out to employers of colour to participate in internship/co-op programs.
- A few participants stated that the recruitment processes in programs and internships should be based on merit and their skills rather than “special treatment” because of their race. Some participants were concerned that “special treatment” might further other them in the eyes of their peers.
- These sentiments should be acknowledged while considering recruitment and admissions processes that seek to address historical barriers that have existed for certain groups, including Black students - the approach is important. Accordingly, student advising and supporters of Black students should be aware of these sentiments, and centre each student's individual needs and desires as opportunities are discussed and planned.

Recommendation #2

Campus-wide training in equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) across all disciplines and programs that is sustained and reinforced by leadership.

Participants and respondents suggested:

- Revise current EDI training:
 - Work with student-nominated EDI consultants and firms to inform training processes and ensure training is led by qualified facilitators.
 - Reach out to Black faculty or speakers to facilitate events on Black issues.
 - Make it mandatory for all staff to attend EDI training every year.
 - Ensure EDI training addresses:
 - Microaggressions and racism in the workplace, on campus, etc.
 - White supremacy and the structures of oppression in the university
 - Generational trauma and how it can be re-triggered.
 - Ensure that training is rooted in transformative justice and works under a harm-reducing framework, which includes not only the ways harm is enacted towards Black students, but to professors, speakers and staff.
 - Emphasize that EDI must be embedded into course content, processes, etc.
- Promote EDI training:
 - Actively promote knowledge and resources through multiple channels on how different roles (e.g., students, faculty, etc.) can foster EDI in diverse spaces.
 - Promote and support more cultural awareness events, equity employment programs, etc.
- Assess and provide ways for students to share feedback on EDI training:
 - Identify the effectiveness of EDI training and include measures to track how professors are applying what they have learned.
 - Create an open portal for complaints concerning harassment and discrimination, expedited grievance processes.
 - Support Black students in accessing resources to report certain faculty/staff members who are not abiding by the EDI training they went through.

Support existing Black, Indigenous and People of Colour (BIPOC) and other leaders at the university in promoting equity, diversity and inclusion on campus and in the online space.



Recommendation #3

Black faculty representation needs to be addressed in programs, departments, schools and faculties.

Participants and respondents suggested:

- Support existing Black faculty in their departments and mandate non-Black professors to complete EDI training on addressing racism within their virtual/physical classrooms.
- Bring attention to university courses focused on BIPOC experience and histories that are not being taught by BIPOC professors.
 - Hire Black professors for courses that are focused on Black histories and experiences.
- Commit to adding tenured Black and other racialized professors by actively seeking out and recruiting qualified Black individuals specifically.
 - Ensure there is Black representation across all faculties.
- Ensure hiring panels are diverse.
- Provide opportunities for student groups to share their voice and feedback on recruitment and hiring processes for professors.
- Hire more Black-Canadians (rather than only or largely Black-Americans).
- Publicly recognize Black contribution to teaching, research and service at the university.
- Promote the visibility of Black faculty (with consent) so that incoming and current students are more knowledgeable about which courses they are teaching, how they can connect with Black faculty, etc.

Recommendation #4

Campus Safety and Security needs to be prioritized to positively impact Black student belonging, with security to be trained in equity, diversity and inclusion.

Participants and respondents suggested:

- Ensure Campus Security staff are appropriately trained on topics such as anti-oppression, unconscious bias, responding to individuals with addictions, etc. to help BIPOC students feel safe.
- Ensure Campus Security staff reflect diverse identities.
- Build a “Student Code” that is shared with all students and includes guidance on how students can help keep their fellow students safe.
- Invest in community-wide public safety measures; build relationships with the community so that students feel more safe both on- and off-campus.
- Provide and/or promote to students safety resources on campus (safety workshops, RyersonSafe, how to report security incidents, emergency numbers).
- Review harassment and discrimination reporting processes to ensure they are safe and accessible to diverse students.
- Facilitate positive relationships between students and Campus Security staff.
- Keep the “no cops on campus” policy (e.g., “No affiliation should exist between Ryerson Security and Toronto Police”).
- Listen and put into place recommendations made by the students of Ryerson's Black Liberation Collective.
- Consult regularly with Black students before changes in Campus Security guidelines and protocols.

Recommendation #5

Funding of events, meetings and information sessions that specifically support and centre Black students should be created and/or enhanced.

Participants and respondents suggested:

- Support students that are leading initiatives with qualified facilitators and experienced event planners and bring attention to the positive impact that these initiatives have on the success and well-being of Black students.
- Increase funding and access to funding for events that support and centre Black students:
 - Support more fundraiser events and movements across campus and online.
 - Bring attention to existing funding sources and resources for initiatives and help student leaders navigate application processes.
 - Collect special levy via tuition payments.
 - Create more opportunities for Black students without labelling them as a group who collectively need financial assistance.
- Ensure events don't "just emphasize the struggle or oppression of Black people" to reduce tokenism.
- Strongly promote more resources and equity groups to current and incoming students through multiple means, including the university's main social accounts.
- Help Black students connect with Black alumni and promote any industry connection nights with Black leaders that occur throughout the semesters (e.g., NSBE Ryerson's industry nights but for other disciplines).
- Bring attention to issues specific to academic programs with associated solutions in programs rather than campus-wide initiatives
- Support and promote Black artistry by making physical spaces available and affordable to the Black arts community during off-hours.
- Make club creation and event facilitation more accessible to students so that they aren't forced to seek out communities or opportunities at other institutions.



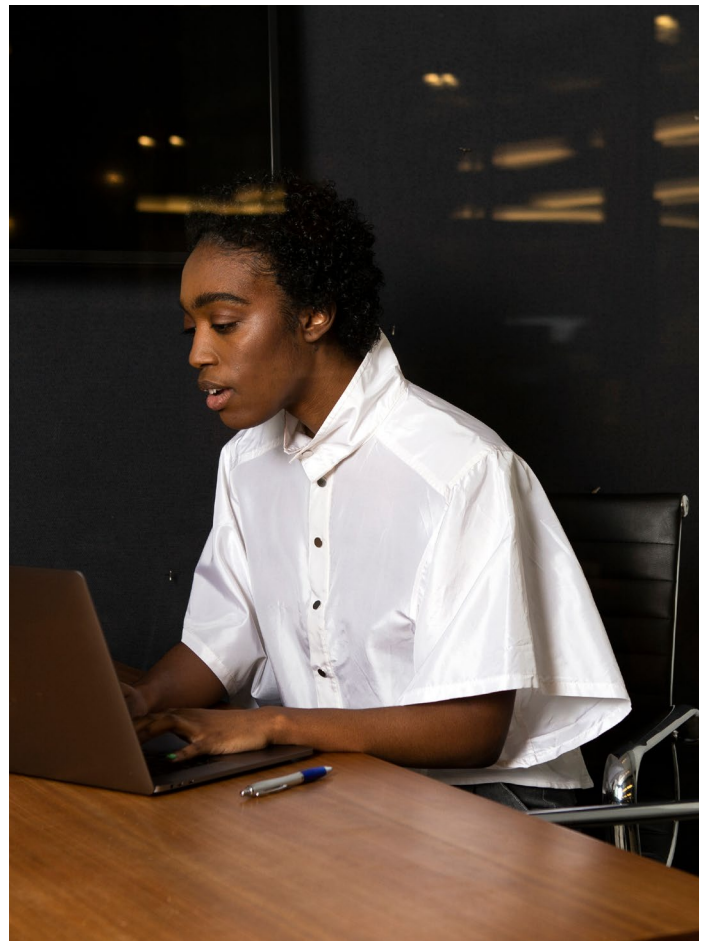
Recommendation #6

A dedicated Black student space on campus with the necessary resources allocated to it for Black students to feel safe and a sense of belonging is needed. These resources should involve funds for staffing and programming for Black students.

Conversations and survey responses about recommendation #6 revealed mixed feelings. Participants and respondents who supported the recommendation suggested:

- Create a “Black Students Centre”: an accessible hub for international and domestic students to exchange ideas on Black culture, history, aspirations and help Black students connect with one another (e.g., “Creative Industries has a student lounge in the RCC [Rogers Communications Centre]”).
- Create a space in collaboration with student groups and unions such as the African Students’ Association (ASA), East-African Students’ Association (EASA), Ghanaian Students’ Association, as well as the Indian Students’ Association and Afghanistan Students’ Association to reach more Black students.
- Ensure that this space reflects diverse Black experiences.
- Ensure that this space is promoted to first-year students during Orientation and second/third/fourth year students throughout the semester.
- Communicate to all students and staff why this space is important and necessary.
- Establish plans for addressing any potential issues that may come up from enacting this space (e.g., “vitriol, trolls, hate, or negative media attention”).

Others expressed hesitation around how such a space might be perceived or experienced by some as segregation or isolation from other students on campus. These participants commented that “all spaces should be inclusive to everyone” and that having dedicated spaces for Black students would make them feel “more weird, singled out, and victimized on campus.” Accordingly, any plans for dedicated spaces should keep these sentiments in mind and centre first and foremost the well-being of Black students.



Appendix I: Student-facing accomplishments to date

Responding to recommendations contained within this report, the following initiatives outline student-facing accomplishments to date. Included are also recommendations that are being implemented by the Presidential Implementation Committee to Confront Anti-Black Racism when the [Anti-Black Racism Campus Climate Review](#) was conducted in 2019.

Recommendation #1:

A concerted and deliberate effort to diversify disciplines and programs should be undertaken. This would include curriculum, internships, placements and other program practices that impact student success.

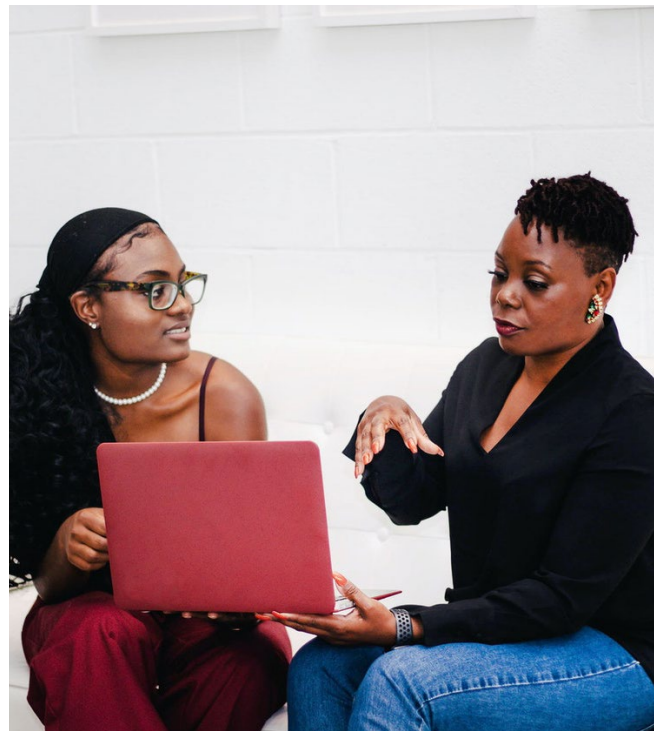
- The Registrar's Office is reviewing and further developing its recruitment and admissions practices to ensure inclusivity - through enhancing existing practices and outreach including partnering with programs, faculties and Student Affairs units.
- As named in Athletics & Recreation's new strategic plan, Raising the Bar 2021-2026, the Recreation unit is tasked with creating new physical activity-centred cultural programming to help build connections to physical activity as both a well-being and learning strategy.
- Faculty and student outcomes working group collaborated to conduct an audit to catalogue, develop a database, and establish a baseline of equity, diversity, and inclusion courses, including Afro-Black and Caribbean-centric courses taught by Black faculty across the university. The findings of the audit are being processed for wider dissemination.
- A Global Major course is currently being developed.



Recommendation #2:

Campus-wide training in equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) across all disciplines and programs that is sustained and reinforced by leadership.

- Mandatory anti-Black racism (ABR) training for all staff and management across the Registrar's Office has taken place.
- Student Wellbeing has engaged in cross-unit EDI training, including anti-Black racism, to deepen Student Wellbeing staff competency around issues such as bias, identity, power and inclusive practice.
- In pursuit of the common EDI objective for leaders at Ryerson, International Student Enrolment Education and Inclusion (ISEEI) is incorporating participation in the university's speaker series and workshops focused on anti-Black racism into the management team's performance and development process.
- Athletics & Recreation has engaged in extensive training around anti-Black racism for full-time and student-staff across the 2020-21 school year, including several multi-hour training sessions, industry-based report reading, and reflection group exercises and case-study scenario work throughout the year. An EDI-training curriculum has been developed and is underway for full-time and student-staff in 2021-22, and a long-term training and development plan for student-athletes and student-staff is actively being developed this fall.
- Student Affairs units have engaged external facilitators to provide monthly training on issues relating to EDI, including anti-Black racism, providing space for staff to reflect on learnings and incorporate these into their practice.
- The Career & Co-op Centre offered training delivered by Marcia Glasgow from the Office of the Vice-President, Equity and Community Inclusion (OVPECI) to new Co-op Faculty Advisors in the Faculty of Arts. This focus of training was awareness of unconscious bias in the co-op selection process, with a particular focus on anti-Black racism and decolonization.
- An anti-Black racism education and awareness facilitator has been hired to provide expertise to support the development and delivery of anti-Black racism, anti-racism, and anti-discrimination and anti-harassment education programs and outreach initiatives campus-wide.
- The university's senior leadership participated in educational sessions to increase their awareness and understanding of anti-Black racism in post-secondary education. The session was moderated by Wanda Thomas Bernard, researcher, community activist and member of the Senate of Canada.
- Consultations with senior leaders were conducted to design and develop an EDI foundational competency development program.



Recommendation #3:

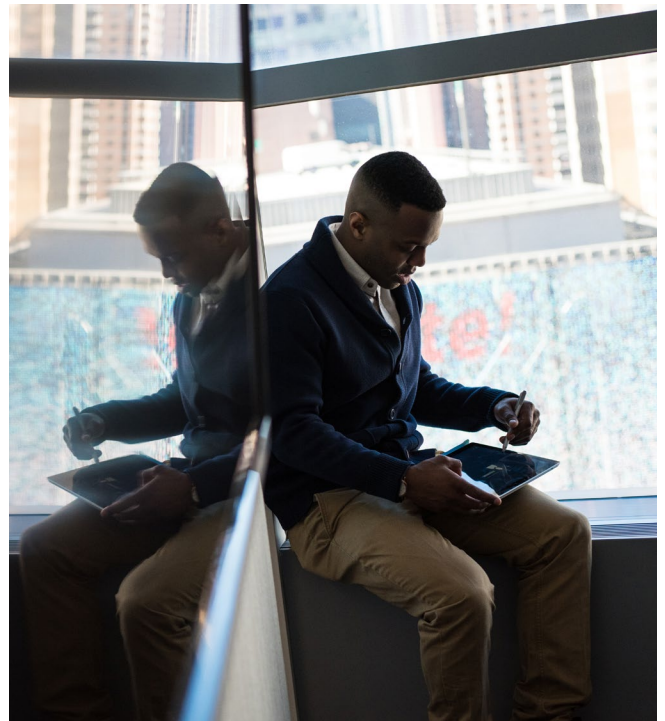
Black faculty representation needs to be addressed in programs, departments, schools and faculties.

- A collaboration with the Tri-Mentoring Program, Yeates School of Graduate Studies and the faculty outcomes group to create a mentorship program for Black graduate students with Black faculty, focused on career development and progression in academic affairs is in development.
- ISEEL is working to ensure thoughtful composition of hiring panels, ensuring balance and representation of racialized and underrepresented groups.
- Equitable hiring practices have been developed in Athletics & Recreation in consultation with OVPECI and HR, with a focus on both recruitment and the interview/evaluation process. All staff (not just hiring managers) are scheduled to participate in unconscious bias training in January 2022 as both a development opportunity and in anticipation of their participation in future hiring processes.
- In collaboration with the Office of the Vice-Provost, Faculty Affairs (OVVFA), HR and the OVPECI, language for recruitment ads has been developed to improve the recruitment and hiring process of Black faculty.
- Departmental Hiring Committee Equity Advocates are currently undergoing training.
- A voluntary diversity self-identification process has been implemented for applicants to faculty positions.
- The Provost postdoctoral fellowship program for Black scholars is being developed.
- A mentorship support program for Black faculty is being developed with the Black Faculty & Staff Community Network.

Recommendation #4:

Campus Safety and Security needs to be prioritized to positively impact Black student belonging, with security to be trained in equity, diversity and inclusion.

- EDI training is supporting the inclusion of an anti-racism, anti-oppressive lens in Athletics & Recreation's activation of Security services in response to difficult or unsafe situations unfolding in sport and active well-being facilities and programs on campus.
- Campus Safety and Security is currently developing a Strategic Outreach & Response Team (SORT) to address non-uniformed responses where support, rapport building and engagement are more appropriate mediations.
- Campus Safety and Security is currently examining and updating the complaints process to be front-facing, transparent and accessible to the community. Engaging with internal offices for feedback and participation in development.



Recommendation #5:

Funding of events, meetings and information sessions that specifically support and centre Black students should be created and/or enhanced.

- [Black Initiatives Fund](#): An addition to our Student Initiatives Fund (SIF), the Black Initiatives Fund (BIF) is dedicated funding that aims to support Black students in developing and advancing events, meetings and information sessions that specifically support and centre Black students. SIF funding provides \$9,000 in potential funding for student initiatives and the BIF adds a potential \$5,000 to initiatives that centre Black student development. Intersectional initiatives that amplify Blackness and mental health, queerness, ability, gender identity and expression are being encouraged.
- Black Student Orientation: Between August 24 and September 3, 2021, Student Life & Learning Support hosted an Orientation series specifically for Black students at RU. A total of 9 events took place, including a Black on Campus series focused on wellness, finances and community building; a panel for Black creatives; and a Back to School Caribana Bash. All programming was intentionally designed and developed to welcome Black students to Ryerson while providing information about resources and community engagement opportunities available throughout their time at the university.
- Implementation of Black student group mentoring in the Tri-Mentoring Program along with a number of workshops designed specifically for Black students at Ryerson including Let's Talk Hair 2.0, a safe space for self-identified Black students, faculty and staff to connect, explore, learn and discuss issues facing Black men & women's hairstyles, and how they are often misunderstood at school and work.
- In 2021, the Black Student Experience Award was introduced by the Office of Vice-Provost, Students (OVPS) as part of the Student Experience Awards to recognize and celebrate the contributions that Black-identified Ryerson student leaders have made outside the classroom. Recipients of this award will have shown a high level of commitment, led by example, shown initiative and made a strong contribution to their community (Ryerson & beyond).
- The Registrar's Office, in collaboration with campus colleagues, has developed a series of Breaking Barriers events for prospective students and applicants to facilitate intentional inclusivity and awareness of the university's supports and services designed to support their success.
- The Centre for Student Development and Counselling has:
 - created tailored pathways of care for Black-identified students seeking counselling support services provided by a Black-identified counsellor, with prioritization of matching for Black-identified students seeking ongoing counselling.
 - developed a therapy group to provide support around unique familial and cultural issues faced by Black-identified students.
- Specific actions to address gaps in financial support specific to equity-deserving groups have been implemented or planned in Athletics & Recreation, including the creation of 25 x \$2,000 new student-athlete awards exclusively for Black or Indigenous students. In progress is the development of a "matching funds" strategy to leverage support for Black, Indigenous and People of Colour (BIPOC) student-athletes from existing and new potential donors, and identifying and appealing to companies/foundations who have specifically created new funds and grants to support institutions committed to equity, diversity and inclusion, with a focus on education, mentorship and access to opportunity.
- Within Student Affairs, the Career & Co-op Centre and the Tri-Mentoring Program have initiated the Race Forward program, a career development and mentoring program for Black-identified students. For the 2022 iteration of the program, \$10,000 has been secured to facilitate student involvement and ensure the compensation of Black-identified professionals supporting the program as external facilitators.

- Critical support for Black students has been led by [Student Affairs](#) and the OVPECI. In the aftermath of the murder of George Floyd, a weekly Black student support group was hosted by [Student Life and Learning Support](#). In addition, [Consent Comes First](#) established spaces for vulnerability and compassion amongst Black men, and the summer 2021 [TMP-BMO Internship Program](#) was dedicated to support Black-identified students and Black-owned businesses in the community.
- Events that centre Black students have been hosted, including the Inaugural Black Students, Faculty and Staff Mixer, the Black Student Achievement Awards Ceremony and the Black Graduates Celebration.



Recommendation #6:

A dedicated Black student space on campus with the necessary resources allocated to it for Black students to feel safe and a sense of belonging is needed. These resources should involve funds for staffing and programming for Black students.

- Room KHW-077 in Kerr Hall West has been allocated as a dedicated Black Student Lounge to be used for meetings, small events, advocacy and capacity building. The accessible space offers modular furniture, presentation equipment, a computer and a full-service kitchen. Guidelines for use of the space, a booking schedule and programming are in development.
- A virtual clearinghouse [webpage](#) that outlines available supports and opportunities for Black-identified students across the university was designed and launched.
- Established by Athletics & Recreation during the COVID-19 pandemic, a recurring virtual meeting space for a BIPOC staff caucus to connect with each other and department leadership to shape and reflect on department training, issues, etc. Similarly, a paid student-staff advisory committee on equity and inclusion in the department has been developed with a focus on ensuring representation of BIPOC staff and anti-racism work, whether staff or participant facing.
- Recruitment is underway for a Black Experience Liaison and Black Student Support Facilitator who will support the recommendations from the university's 2020 [Anti-Black Racism Campus Climate Review Report](#) in developing and implementing holistic programs and services that support Black students' success and flourishing, which includes but is not limited to Black, Black Canadian, Afro-Caribbean and African students campus-wide.

Appendix II: 2020-21 BSAC members and Student Affairs staff

The preparation of this report was supported by the 2020-21 BSAC steering group, members and Student Affairs staff:

BSAC steering group

- **Dr. Denise O’Neil Green**, Vice-President, Equity and Community Inclusion, and Executive Chair, Student Working Group, Presidential Implementation Committee to Confront Anti-Black Racism
- **Jen McMillen**, Vice-Provost, Students, and Co-Chair, Student Working Group, Presidential Implementation Committee to Confront Anti-Black Racism
- **Darrell Bowden**, Executive Director, Office of the Vice-President, Equity and Community Inclusion
- **Jen Gonzales**, Executive Director, Student Affairs
- **Stephan Allen**, Black Student Advisory Committee Liaison, and Orientation and Campus Events Facilitator, Student Affairs

BSAC members

- **Amanda Offor**, Ryerson Communication and Design Society Representative, The Creative School
- **Anwar (Àjé) Knight**, Chang School & Spanning The Gaps Representative, Faculty of Community Services
- **Brooklynne Morrison**, At-Large Representative, Faculty of Arts
- **Chantel Jeremiah**, Yeates School of Graduate Studies Representative, Yeates School of Graduate Studies
- **Cheo Bannis**, Caribbean Students’ Association Representative, Faculty of Science
- **Diana Adu-Yeboah**, Ryerson Liberal Arts Society Representative, Faculty of Arts
- **Edmund Sofo**, Black Business Students’ Association Representative, Ted Rogers School of Management
- **Ezekiel Asafo-Adjei**, Ryerson Science Society Representative, Faculty of Science



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- **Hilda Oni**, At-Large Representative, Faculty of Community Services
 - **Ish Aderonmu**, Ryerson Faculty of Law Representative, Faculty of Law
 - **Jama Bin-Edward**, Athletics Representative, Faculty of Arts
 - **Joy Grant-Khan**, At-Large Representative, The Creative School
 - **Kamau Simba**, United Black Students at Ryerson Representative, Faculty of Science
 - **Lauren Jade Young**, At-Large Representative, Faculty of Community Services
 - **Michelle Owala**, At-Large Representative, Faculty of Arts
 - **Naomi Addai**, At-Large Representative, Faculty of Arts
 - **Nigeleen Nwakobi**, Ryerson Engineering Students Society Representative, Faculty of Engineering and Architectural Science
 - **Rahim Perez-Anderson**, At-Large Representative, The Creative School
 - **Sanyu Galabuzi-Kassam**, African Students' Association Representative, Faculty of Community Services
 - **Segun-Adebowale Oluwatomisin**, International Student Representative, The Creative School
 - **Trevohn Baker**, Ryerson Students' Union Representative, The Creative School
 - **Zanele Chisholm**, At-Large Representative, Faculty of Arts
 - **Zorian Smith**, Ryerson Community Services Society Representative, Faculty of Community Services

Student Affairs staff

- **Andy Ye Jun Lee**, Data Storyteller, Student Affairs, The Creative School student
- **Jen Barcelona**, Manager, Tri-Mentoring Program, Student Affairs
- **Jenny Ge**, Assessment & Research Specialist, Student Affairs
- **Rahim Perez-Anderson**, Black Student Advisory Committee Member, Orientation Events Lead, Student Affairs, The Creative School student
- **Stephan Allen**, Black Student Advisory Committee Liaison, Orientation and Campus Events Facilitator, Student Affairs



**Ryerson
University**

Renaming in process

In August 2021, the university announced that it would begin a renaming process to address the legacy of Egerton Ryerson and build a more inclusive future. Let's write the next chapter together.

ryerson.ca/next-chapter