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Purpose of Guide

The Black Student Guidebook is designed to empower, support, and connect Black students as they navigate academic, social, and cultural life at St. Francis Xavier University. It serves as a centralized resource that highlights essential campus services, community organizations, mentorship opportunities, culturally relevant events, and safe spaces. By amplifying Black voices and fostering a sense of belonging, this guidebook aims to ease the transition into university life, celebrate Black identity, and equip students with tools to thrive both personally and professionally.









St. Francis Xavier

Population and Demographics

StFX has a very diverse Black Student population. Although the Black Student population only makes up 4% of the overall student population, their presence is tangible and their impact long lasting.

Black students on campus encompass Domestic and International students. Many domestic students come from Nova Scotia and Ontario and many International students come from the Caribbean Islands, West, East and Central Africa and the United States.

Campus Life



Resources @ X

CULTURAL SUPPORTS

Advising Offices

BLACK STUDENT ADVISING OFFICE

The Black Student Advising (BSA) Office is an office under the Human Rights and Equity Office that provides supports for the Black students on campus. The Black Student Advisor's main role is to be a point of contact for Black students on campus, providing advocacy, support, guidance, and encouragement for them.

INDIGENOUS STUDENT ADVISING OFFICE

The Coordinator of Indigenous Student Affairs is committed to enhancing Indigenous student experience by providing support, guidance and encouragement in the pursuit of educational success. The Coordinator of Indigenous Student Affairs also advocates on behalf of Indigenous students at StFX and assists with many aspects of student life.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ADVISING OFFICE

The International Student Advisor's role is to offer international students a supportive and inclusive environment on campus, from personalized academic advising to cultural activities, ensuring a smooth transition to StFX.

GENDER AND SEXUAL DIVERSITY

StFX offers 2SLGBTQIA+ students the service of an advisor to encourage, guide, and advocate on their behalf in order to support them succeeding both academically and socially.

DR. AGNES CALLISTE ACADEMIC AND CULTURAL CENTRE

A dedicated space on campus supporting African Nova Scotian/Black students. The vision of the Centre is to be student-focused, representing African Nova Scotian/Black culture, excellence, artistry, and identity. On a broader scale, the Centre provides a space for African Nova Scotian/Black faculty, staff, and community members to engage with students, build community, explore academic perspectives, career opportunities, and to generally gather in a safe space.

The centre provides academic, social and cultural supports for students through the Black Student Advisor, Mental Health Counsellor, and Manager of the centre.











ACADEMIC SUPPORTS

Academic support involves anything related to a student's academic success here on campus. The supports include Academic Advising, Academic Success Centre, the Library and the Tramble Centre for Accessible Learning.

ACADEMIC ADVISING

Academic advising can assist students with program planning & course selection, declaring major/advanced/, major/honours, changing degree program, and dealing with academic difficulty.

THE ANGUS L. MACDONALD LIBRARY

The Angus L. MacDonald Library is the on-campus library. It houses the Academic Success Centre and the Tramble Centre for Accessible Learning.

ACADEMIC SUCCESS CENTRE

The Academic Success Centre is a collection of academic resources, a place for StFX students to find free academic skills instruction/coaching, help on assignments, English language help, and a place to connect with subject tutors.

TRAMBLE CENTRE FOR ACCESSIBLE LEARNING

The Tramble Centre for Accessible Learning is an academic program of support for students with diagnosed and documented permanent disabilities. Tramble Centre Staff work with students to put in place recommended accommodations that will help students to succeed at StFX. Supports include tutoring, note taking, academic strategy, testing accommodations etc.

FINANCIAL SUPPORTS

Scholarships—Entrance, In-Course & Transfer

NATIONAL ENTRANCE SCHOLARSHIPS

All applicants with a final average of 85% or higher will be considered for an entrance scholarship. No separate scholarship application is required. The final value of the entrance scholarship awarded and applied to students is based on final marks for the five Grade 12 courses used to meet admission requirements for your program.

MAJOR AND APPLICATION BASED SCHOLARSHIPS

To be eligible for the scholarships listed below, you must apply to StFX and submit a first semester Grade 12 transcript by March 1. Major scholarship eligibility is based on final marks for the five Grade 12 courses used to meet admission requirements for your program. Please note that final Grade 11 equivalent subject marks may be used in the interim to calculate the average.

TRANSFER SCHOLARSHIPS

Applicants who are enrolled in a full-time course load at another post-secondary institution in the current application year and are being accepted at StFX for the upcoming academic year with an average of 80% or higher, are eligible to apply.

JEANNINE DEVEAU EQUITY ENDOWMENT FUND

Eligible students identifying as Mi'kmaq, Wolastoqiyik or African Nova Scotian may apply for a variety of financial support programs through the Jeannine Deveau Educational Equity Endowment Fund. Indigenous Black Nova Scotian's are individuals who are Black and (a) were born and raised in Nova Scotia OR (b) who have a substantial connection with a historically Black community in Nova Scotia.

Minimum 70% average and demonstrated StFX qualities of leadership and service to community. **Deadline to apply is April 1.**





BURSARIES—GENERAL, LIMITED AND EMERGENCY

ENTRANCE BURSARIES

Entrance bursaries are available for direct-from-high-school students. Applications must be made beginning in December of their senior high school year for study beginning the following September at StFX.

IN-COURSE BURSARIES—GENERAL AND LIMITED

Provides financial assistance to students in academic programs who find themselves in unanticipated financial difficulty and unable to meet their obligations. Awards are made to those who meet the qualifications established by the university and, where applicable, by the individual donors.

Emergency Aid Programs

STFX EMERGENCY BURSARY

The StFX Student Emergency Fund provides financial assistance for StFX students to address the most urgent cases of students who have nowhere else to turn and are at risk of being prevented from achieving their goal of a StFX diploma or degree.

LAPTOP SUPPORT PROGRAM

A limited, needs-based funding available to support students who find themselves without access to a suitable laptop.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING SUPPORTS

Health and Counselling

We have mental health clinicians, nurses and physicians to help you with your health care needs.

MEDICAL HEALTH

Our Health and Counselling team includes physicians and nurses who can assist you with health needs such as prescriptions, referrals, testing and immunizations.

MENTAL HEALTH

The StFX Health and Counselling Centre offers a wide range of supports for your mental health, from group programming and activities to individual counselling.

SEXUAL HEALTH

Looking for information or support related to sexual health? Our services include STI testing, pregnancy testing, emergency contraception, and health education.

FLOURISH@X HEALTH AND WELLNESS PROGRAMS

Flourish@X is all about taking care of your mental health in proactive ways, through participation in activities and programs that help to build healthy coping skills and resilience.

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SOCIAL SUPPORTS

SOCIETIES

A group of students that come together with a common social, athletic, charitable, cultural, or academic purpose and are ratified by The Students' Union Board of Directors.

CLUBS SPORTS

The Competitive Sports Club program at StFX University is designed to provide additional opportunities for individuals interested in a specific sport to develop or improve their skills, to participate recreationally or competitively in leagues and competitions external to StFX, and establish social contacts. Sport clubs are voluntary, non-profit, student led organizations whose members assume the leadership and financial responsibilities of club activities.

Getting Involved a X

How to Get Involved

- Engage at the Society Fairs held at the start of every semester.
- Follow the social media pages of societies and campus groups for updates on meetings, events, and initiatives.
- Sign up for leadership positions such as events coordinator or volunteer at events such as coat check.
- Engage in discussions and social outings organized by Student Life to form a community.







BLACC SOCIETY

(Biracial, Latinx, African, Caribbean, Canadian Black-identifying students)

A student-run society focused on fostering a sense of belonging, advocacy, and support for Black students.

Organizes cultural events, networking opportunities, and workshops tailored to Black student experiences.

Membership: Open to all students; events are held regularly.

Instagram: @stfxblaccsociety

AFRIX

(African Society at StFX)

Focuses on celebrating African cultures through social gatherings, performances, and educational events.

Organizes cultural showcases, vibrant events, and community building opportunities.

Offers a platform for students of African descent to share their heritage and experiences.

Membership: Open to all students; events are held regularly.

Instagram: @afrix_stfx

How The BLACC and Afrix Society Can Help Support Students

- Networking Opportunities: Connections with alumni, faculty, and fellow students. Cultural Events: African Heritage Month celebrations, Afro-Caribbean Nights, and cultural showcases.
- Academic Support: Study groups, professional development workshops, and tutoring recommendations.
- **Social & Mental Health Support:** Providing a space to discuss challenges, share experiences, and organize wellness events.

XAVIER HALL

The Two T's

TIPS AND TESTIMONIALS

ON THE IMPORTANCE OF BLACK STUDENT GROUPS:

"As a new student of StFX, I am of the belief that the BLACC society holds an importance for students on campus. Being a Black Afro-Caribbean student and starting a life here in Canada, the BLACC society has been a source of comfort for myself and my friends."

ON ACADEMICS:

"Don't be afraid to ask for help. Lectures are important to attend, but sometimes you also need to seek additional resources like your professor's office **hours.**"







TIPS

- Find Your People: Join student societies, where you can connect with others who share similar experiences and values.
- Take Up Space: Don't shrink yourself. Your voice, your presence, and your identity matter. Participate in class, join initiatives, and be unapologetically you.
- **Use Campus Resources:** Whether it's academic support, mental health services, or financial aid, these resources are there for you. Make the most of them.
- Seek Mentorship: Build relationships with faculty, upper-year students, peer mentors, or community leaders who can offer guidance and encouragement.
- Document Everything: If you ever experience discrimination or microaggressions, keep a record of dates, times, and details. It is helpful if you decide to report or seek support later.
- **Celebrate Your Culture:** Attend Black cultural events, cook your favourite comfort foods, and stay connected to your roots.
- Stay Connected to Your Hometown Community: Whether it's through calls, group
 chats, or social media, keeping those roots strong can provide emotional grounding
 and support.
- Prioritize Self-Care: University can be overwhelming. Protect your peace by resting, reflecting, and making time for the things that feed your spirit.
- Be Ready to Educate, but Set Boundaries: If something feels off, speak up. You
 deserve to be heard. Advocate for change but remember, you are not responsible
 for teaching others about all aspects of Black identity. Share your truth on your
 own terms.
- Celebrate Small Wins: Whether it is a satisfactory grade result, speaking up
 in class, or just getting out of bed on a hard day, acknowledge and be proud
 of your progress.

ON PROFESSIONAL GROWTH:

"Networking is key. Attend events where professionals are present to build connections."

ON MENTAL HEALTH:

"Being one of the few Black students in a classroom can be challenging, so lean on your community and take breaks when needed. The Black Student Advising office has great resources to use."

FAQ's

Q: What should I do if I experience racism or discrimination on campus?

A: If you experience microaggressions or any form of discriminatory behaviour, you can report it to the **Manager of Human Rights & Equity and 2SLGBTQIA+ Student Inclusion** either formally or informally. You can also speak with the Black Student Advisor or a trusted faculty member. Keeping a record of the incident, including date, time, and description, can help with follow-up support or formal complaints. You are not alone, support and advocacy resources are available.

Q: Is there support for International Black students adjusting to life in Canada?

A: Absolutely! The International Student Advising Office is an excellent resource for international students. They offer tailored support to help students adjust to the academic and social landscape of StFX, as well as offering support to adjusting to life in Canada.

Q: What mental health resources are specifically for Black students?

A: The Dr. Agnes Calliste Academic and Cultural Centre offers culturally competent mental health resources, including a Mental Health Counsellor who provides culturally relevant supports for Black students.

Q: Are there opportunities to get involved in mentorship or leadership roles as a Black student?

A: Yes! Both BLACC and AFRIX offer leadership opportunities on their executive teams. Additionally, getting involved in other societies, clubs, or as a peer mentor is a great way to develop leadership skills and build a support network. There is also a partnership between StFX and the local high school for university students to connect with high school students to support them with navigating post-secondary life!

Q: What should I do if I need accommodations for my academic work or health needs?

A: The Tramble Centre for Accessible Learning is also another resource available to students with a diagnosed and documented permanent disability. For health-related concerns, including mental health or other physical accommodations, contact Health and Counselling services for guidance. The Black Student Advising Office can provide assistance navigating these resources.

Q: How do I find students from similar backgrounds or cultures to connect with?

A: Joining student societies like BLACC or AFRIX is a great way to meet others who share your background or interests. You can also look for groups or informal networks on campus that support your cultural or regional identity. Additionally, using the Dr. Agnes Calliste Academic and Cultural Centre is a great way to meet people as it is a dedicated space for Black students on campus.







Q: Can I request a mentor from the Black student community?

A: Yes, the Black Student Advising Office offers mentorship programs where you can connect with upper-year students, alumni, and faculty who can offer advice, guidance, and career mentorship. There is also a Black Alumni Chapter which will be having opportunities for mentorship with Alumni in the future.

Q: What cultural events should I look out for?

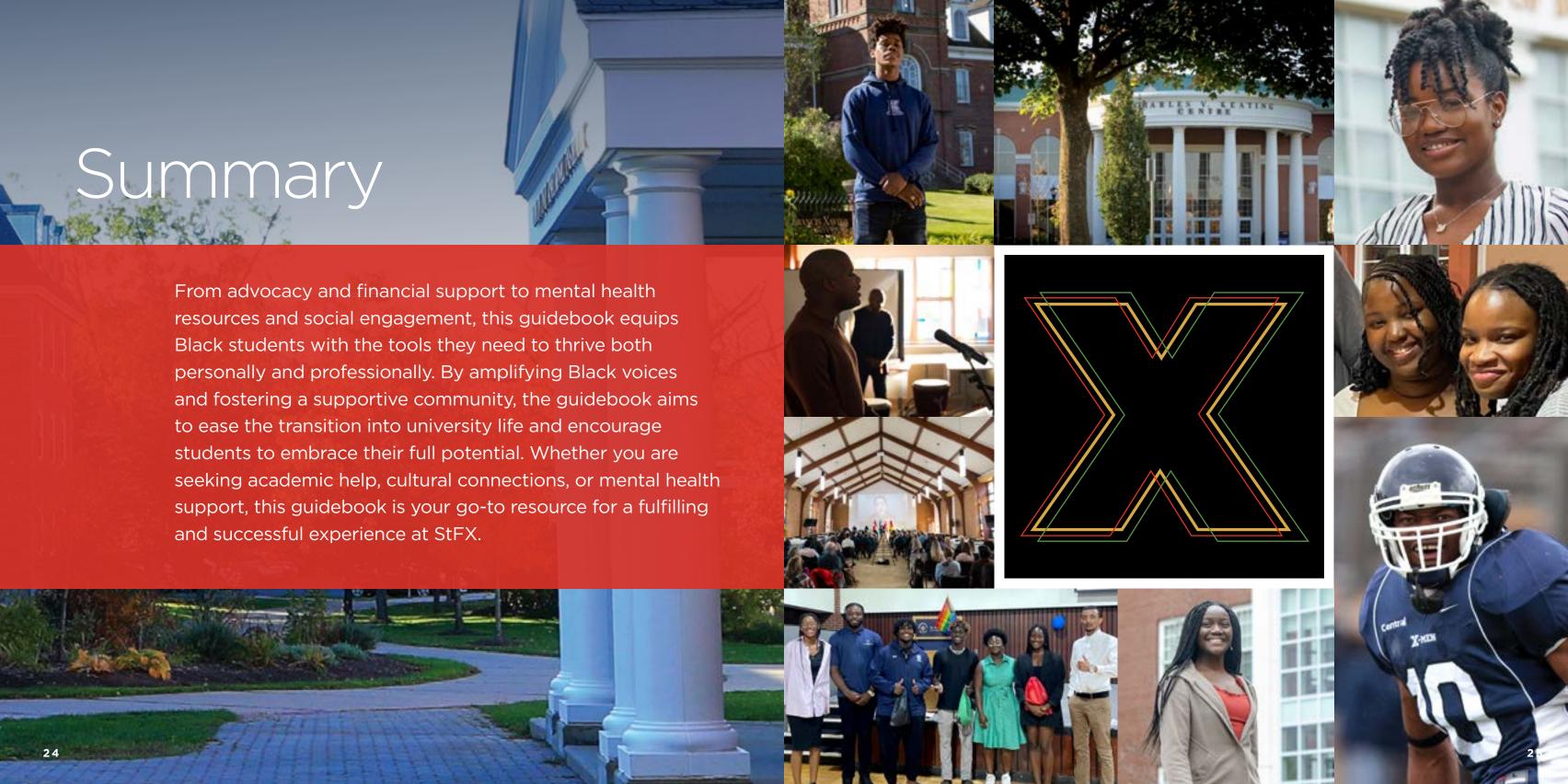
A: The Black Student Advising office hosts events throughout the year including cultural events, so keep an eye on them. Stay connected with the BLACC and AFRIX societies for events like Black History Month celebrations, Afro-Caribbean Nights, cultural showcases, game nights, and other events that celebrate Black identity. These are opportunities to connect, learn, and celebrate together.

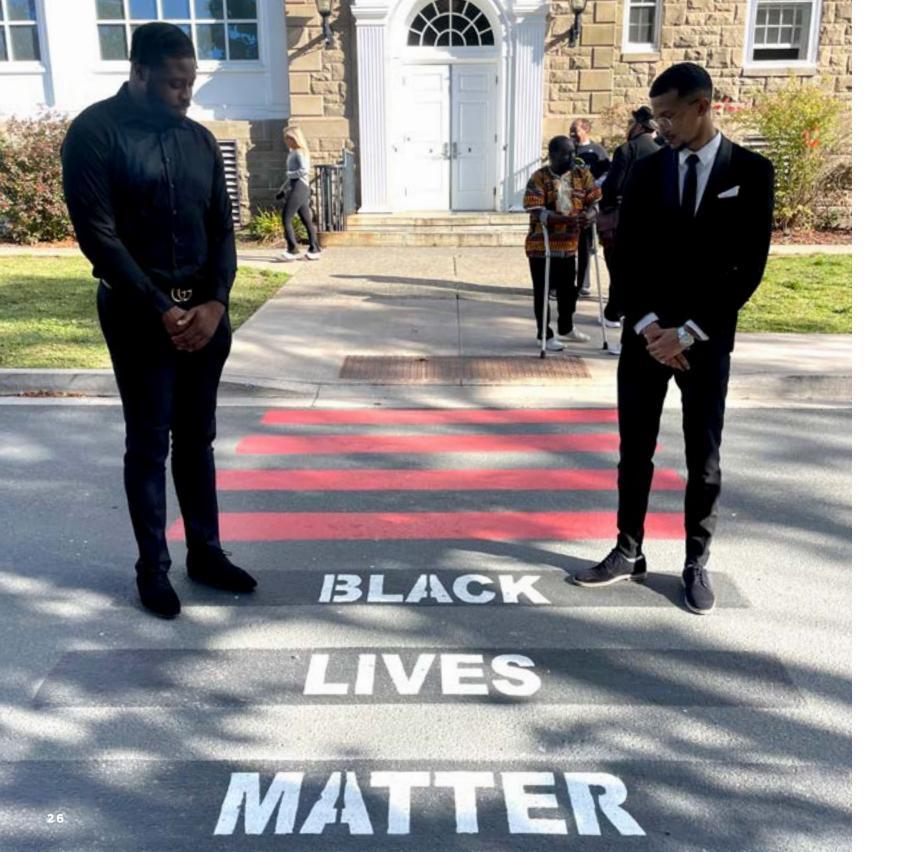
Q: How can I find out about Black-related job opportunities or internships?

A: The Black Student Advising Office often shares job postings, internships, and professional development opportunities specific to Black students. Additionally, keep an eye on career fairs, networking events hosted by BLACC, and the Career Services Office for internship listings and career opportunities.



Rankin School of Nursing Frank McKenna Centre for Leadership and SUB Brian Mulroney Institute of Nasso Family Science Centre







Contact Us

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