



Association of Atlantic Universities (AAU) 2021-22 Preliminary Survey of Enrolments

October 15, 2021

HALIFAX, N.S. – Universities in Atlantic Canada report a surge in undergraduate and graduate student enrolments this fall following release of the Association of Atlantic Universities (AAU) [2021-2022 Preliminary Survey of Enrolments](#).

Total full-time enrolments increased by 2,599 or more than 3% year-over-year (76,669 – to – **79,268**) and perhaps most noteworthy is a more than **17% year-over-year increase in full-time, first-year students** (from 12,584 – to – **14,733**).

Prof. Dawn Russell, President and Vice-Chancellor, St. Thomas University and AAU Chair, attributes the significant increase in enrolments to a strong desire among students to return to a more 'normal' on campus learning and living experience.

"After a year of mostly online learning, we know that students are eager to return to campus for in classroom learning, residential living and extra curricular activities that are core to the complete university experience," said Prof. Russell.

She noted that AAU member universities have worked hard since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure the health and safety of students, staff, faculty, and local communities by strict adherence to public health directives, implementing mandatory vaccination policies, having testing on campus, and mandatory regular testing for the unvaccinated.

Prof. Russell added that, "Ensuring our campuses are welcoming, safe and healthy is core to our collective mission of expanding student access, success and opportunity, and, promoting great teaching and fostering research that matters, economically and socially."

Atlantic Canada continues to build on its reputation as an international education destination, reflected in a close to **7% year-over-year increase in international students** (from 17,687 – to – **18,910**).

"The continued success of our universities in attracting international students makes a significant contribution to regional population growth strategies," said Prof. Russell. It is noteworthy that AAU research conducted among international students indicates that 65% would like to stay in the region following their graduation.

The region's universities also saw a more than **11% increase in new transfer students** (from 5,257 – to – **5,847**).

The Association of Atlantic Universities (AAU), www.atlanticuniversities.ca, represents the interests of universities across the region, ensuring public visibility for the important role they play in preparing future leaders of our communities, in path-breaking research and innovation, and in contributing to the economic, cultural and social prosperity of life in Atlantic Canada. Follow us on Twitter at @AAU_AUA

For more information, contact:

Peter Halpin, Executive Director
(902) 425-4238/ (902) 497-4419
phalpin@atlanticuniversities.ca