

# The BASE mentorship: Components of mentorship for Black students at Humber

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## **Abstract**

Mentorship for Black students is not only crucial for academic success, but also for social connections, and personal and professional development. Mentorship is even more crucial within Predominantly White Institutions (PWIs). The aim of this Participatory Action Research (PAR) project was to identify the need for, and to explore components of effective mentorship for Black students, to ensure success within PWIs. The project was done in partnership with The BASE (Black Academic Success and Engagement) program at Humber College. Using a mix of quantitative and qualitative methods, 30 students who identified as Black/African/Caribbean (BAC) were surveyed and interviewed. The following themes emerged: guidance and support, shared knowledge and understanding, access (or lack-there-of) to resources, representation and sense of belonging, and racial discrimination/incidents and mental health support. Concluding that mentorship is in fact a necessity for Black students attending PWIs, with particular attention to ensuring representation and relatability, to the specific needs of Black students within the institution.

**Keywords:** Black students, mentorship, guidance, support, resources, predominantly white institutions

## **Acknowledgements**

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## **Introduction**

This research project was done in partnership with The BASE (Black Academic Success and Engagement) program at Humber College. The main objective was to identify the need for and to explore components of effective mentorship for Black students, to ensure that they succeed and feel comfortable within Predominantly White Institutions (PWIs). Mentorship is significant to the work The BASE does, as well as the Community Development sector. The literature review showed that there are not enough peer-reviewed research articles in the Canadian database on mentorship for Black students. This research now contributes to literature on this topic, in the Canadian context. Students voiced the following concerns: lack of access to culturally relevant on-campus support, a disconnect from the college experience, racial discrimination, and a general lack of adequate support from the institution's higher ups, such as faculty, and others in positions of power.

## **Research Context**

The selection criteria for participation in this project was based on students attending the Humber College, Lakeshore and North Campuses in Etobicoke, Ontario. Outreach was aimed towards students who identify within the Black/African/Caribbean (BAC) community, starting with The

BASE's student database. The BASE's mission is to provide students who identify as BAC, with community, resources, and support to help fully maximize their campus experience (The BASE, n.d.). The main areas of support for students include: academic, leadership, personal and professional development, and on and off campus engagement (The BASE, n.d.).

### **Project Focus**

The focus of the project was to examine and understand the needs of Black students at Humber, in order to help The BASE create an evidence-based mentorship program in response. First, by seeking to better understand the causes of students' lack of awareness of services at The BASE. Then, to identify the value of mentorship for students and which aspects of mentorship would be most beneficial to supporting their diverse needs. In addition, exploring potential barriers to access and engagement with resources like a mentorship program, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Now, The BASE has gained some insight on how to enhance current programming delivered to Black students at Humber.

### **The overarching research question(s) were:**

1. How do we inspire Black students at Humber College through a mentorship program to complete their program and/or pursue higher education (Ph.D., MBA, Master's Degree etc.)?
2. How do we maintain an effective virtual/online program that is equally engaging and educational during the current climate of the world (Covid-19)?

### **The Research Team:**

All members of the team are current 4th year students in the Community Development Degree Program. With unique experiences relating to their identities, current and previous work, and

knowledge of The BASE program. All of which informed their choice to work with The BASE on this research project.

### **Sanjana Eswar**

Sanjana is a part of the BAC community, though she does not identify as Black. In fact, she identifies as Caribbean and South Asian, and was raised in a Caribbean household—making her somewhat of an insider within the community. Though arguably, she may also be considered an outsider, as she does not identify as a Black student. In connection to The BASE, Sanjana has visited the space on campus, although not fully aware of the available services until early 2020. Sanjana was intrigued by the community partner and focus of the project, due to prior experience with mentorship programs, as a mentee and intern at an arts organization.

### **Alyssa Austin**

Alyssa identifies within the BAC community. As a Black student at Humber, she considers herself an insider. Based on her own lived experiences, she understands the hardships and difficulties Black students have and continue to face due to the lack of culturally relevant resources at PWIs. Throughout her educational journey, she has experienced racism and struggled without support in PWIs. Though she has no experience with having a mentor, Alyssa has had opportunities to mentor BAC youth over the last 10 years. Like many students, Alyssa is aware of The BASE, however, she has yet to utilize their services. This research process has driven Alyssa to approach research from an anti-racism and anti-oppression perspective. With the opportunity to add to the discussion on diversity and inclusion for Black students in PWIs.

### **Rushann Smith**

Rushann considers himself an insider because he identifies as a member of the BAC community. In 2019, he, along with two other Humber students, created a program called Speak BLAC (Brave Lessons at College). They worked with The BASE to run an 8-month long workshop within their space. This was his first experience with mentorship; receiving mentorship style support from The BASE, as well as mentoring other students. Speak BLAC primarily served students that identified as BAC. The co-founders mentored students at The BASE and supported them in engaging with the artforms of creative writing and spoken word. Being a mentor helped Rushann realize the importance of Black peer-to-peer bonding, within PWIs. Moreover, he has experienced discrimination in the classroom from a professor. Engaging with other students who had similar experiences was his way of coping with it. Though he was always aware of The BASE and their services, he never really utilized the space until Speak BLAC.

### **Richard Laurente**

In addition to being a student at Humber, Richard is also the COO of a social enterprise called Dream City Project Inc. He identifies as Asian-Canadian and prides himself in being a youth and community advocate. Richard has worked in several non-profit organizations and places a strong focus on empowering and mentoring Black and minority youth living in underprivileged neighbourhoods within the GTA. Richard became aware of The BASE during his freshman year, but never used their services. Though technically situated as an outsider to the Black community, he spends countless hours working in the heart of the Black community to better understand their needs in order to create sustainable programming catered to youth. His ultimate goal is to build youth community centres not only in the GTA, but across every continent. Richard is no stranger to prejudice and racism as a proud Filipino, born and raised in Toronto. He uses his lived

experiences along with his formal education to make positive and impactful changes within the communities he holds dear to his heart.

### **Igho Itebu**

Igho is a writer, poet, and community educator, who identifies as African and Black. She is also a former student staff member at The BASE and has utilized their services. She co-created and facilitated some services (i.e., Speak BLAC - an 8-month creative writing and spoken word workshop series, and the Circle of Queens bi-monthly workshops, respectively) offered by the program. In addition, Igho has some experience with mentorship: as a mentor and a mentee, through arts and community based organizations that specifically cater to Black and underserved youth. Currently, her work involves utilizing an anti-oppressive framework. With an understanding of power dynamics, accommodating different abilities, the importance of continuous consent and operating from a social justice lens - all of this makes Igho situated as an insider in this research project.

### **Techan Kemp**

Techan identifies as a member of the BAC community, and therefore considers himself an insider. With similar experiences of his own, Techan empathizes with students' lack of (access to) resources, as it pertains to mentorship at their respective educational institutions. Techan has experienced racial discrimination at Humber, with no resolutions, so he is often left with no choice but to *move on*. Nevertheless, he continues to be an advocate for Black youth and students. He has worked with numerous community organizations, including the Black Youth Empowering Community Organization in Toronto, as a spiritual mentor. His tasks and duties

were to provide adequate support and resources for the youth who utilized services at the organization. Prior to this project, Techan knew of the BASE but was not clear on their mission or services. Now, after engaging in this research process he is more knowledgeable of the program and its core offerings.

### **Literature Review**

There is a range of research relevant to this project, although most of the literature is focused on the African American experience. The following common themes were evident: providing black students with support, guidance, collaboration, experience and care. More broadly, the literature explores the perceptions of Black students, athletes, and academic mentorship at PWIs. Some also analyze online learning in academia and explore advantages and disadvantages of engagement. Jackson et al (2017), examine Black male bonding at PWIs, with findings that suggest that “Black students seek social connections with other Black students as a means for negating the discomforts of racial alienation” (p.468). Black youth hesitate with building relationships because of difficulties transferring into white institutions or the stereotypes that come with it. Particularly individuals studied, were looking to bond with other Black male students because of emotional feelings after leaving their families, friends, and homes to attend colleges in a new environment. They hoped to (re)create bonds and a sense of family like relationships.

Another point that came up in the literature review, is the role of Black faculty within PWIs. There was some literature discussing the importance of peer-to-peer bonding and associations with other Black students and faculty. Brooms & Davis (2017), discuss the success of both

peer-to-peer bonding and mentoring from Black faculty members. They conclude that “these social networks and micro-communities both enhance and support...persistence in college” (Brooms & Davis, 2017, p. 305). Proving that the presence of Black faculty does support Black students’ engagement and commitment to education while attending PWIs. Seeing faculty that look like them also helps make the institution feel more welcoming and offers a sense of belonging. Furthermore, it helps shape the experiences that students have on campus, increasing the likelihood and effort towards personal and academic success.

### **Project Design**

This research was carried out through an interpretive epistemological perspective, otherwise known as subjectivism. From this perspective, the idea of mentorship was subjective and essentially constructed by individual experiences. Particularly, utilizing a narrative, storytelling approach; to document the lived experiences of Black students who have either had access to mentorship or sought mentorship. The following methods were used for data collection: surveys, focus groups and photovoice (via the online platform: flip grid). The questionnaire was intended to collect quantitative data on student demographic, awareness of services and general thoughts on mentorship. Focus groups/in-depth interviews gathered further information on lived experiences of students. Including the issue of lack of awareness and access to resources, racial discrimination, and the need for mentorship. Photovoice is a Participatory Action Research (PAR) method and form of “ethnographic engagement” (Liebenberg, 2018), in which participants share their lived experiences through a combination of photo/video and storytelling. Wang and Burris (1994) suggest empowerment, as one of the purposes of this method (as cited by Liebenberg, 2018). In this research project, the use of photo and audio only, were suggested to



answer 5 questions regarding services, experiences as a Black student at Humber, and ideas around mentorship.

Initially, participants were recruited to fill out the survey, which included an invitation for further participation. Then, they would be able to either join a focus group session or engage with the photovoice tool (flip grid). The sampling approach used was a blend of convenience sampling along with purposive sampling based on students who identified as Black. After the first stage of recruitment the snowball sampling method was also utilized to increase participation. Outreach was broadened to include Black students outside of The BASE's student database, and students were encouraged to engage in any or all of the data collection tools.

The main method of analysis was thematic analysis, using the systemic coding procedure. Thematic analysis allows a lot of flexibility when it comes to evaluating data and makes it easier to deal with large data sets by categorizing them into broad themes (Caulfield, 2020). Though most of the data analysis was done manually, some online tools were also utilized for data reduction and content analysis. Those tools include: google forms' analysis features, otter.ai for interview transcriptions and identifying keywords, and voyant-tools for labelling and identifying connections to keywords and phrases. According to The Pell Institute (2021), data reduction is the process of identifying and focusing on meaningful aspects of the data collected. Content analysis involves labeling and coding words or phrases that relate to the research question(s), then identifying patterns, and interpreting their meanings (The Pell Institute 2021). After utilizing the aforementioned tools, data was then analyzed manually, to identify specific emergent themes.

## **Ethical Considerations**

Through the project, the research team was committed to upholding the highest of standards of ethics in conducting this research with and for the BASE. Listed below are a few of the key components of the procedure manual that were consistently shared with all participants throughout the study:

**Voluntariness:** any participation from this project will be strictly voluntary. No participant will be forced or coerced to join in any part of this study without their willingness to do so. At any moment that any participant would like to withdraw their contribution from this study we will comply at all times.

**Confidentiality:** All materials including interviews, research and participant feedback will always remain secure and only accessible to this research team.

**Documentation of Consent:** No materials and data that is produced from this research will be released without formal consent forms being signed by the participants involved in this study.

**Expedited Review (1.3):** This review process is used to assess the level of risk of harm to human participants and will be done and approved by this team.

**Process (1.3.2):** As researchers it is our responsibility to follow all necessary protocols at all times. As a group we will ensure that our project will adhere to all ethical requirements and get approved consent from all parties before any submissions.

**Review for Ongoing Research (1.4):** For any research pertaining to this study after the given time frame, consent must be given from all participants, approved and then reported to the

research ethics board (REB).

### **Key Findings**

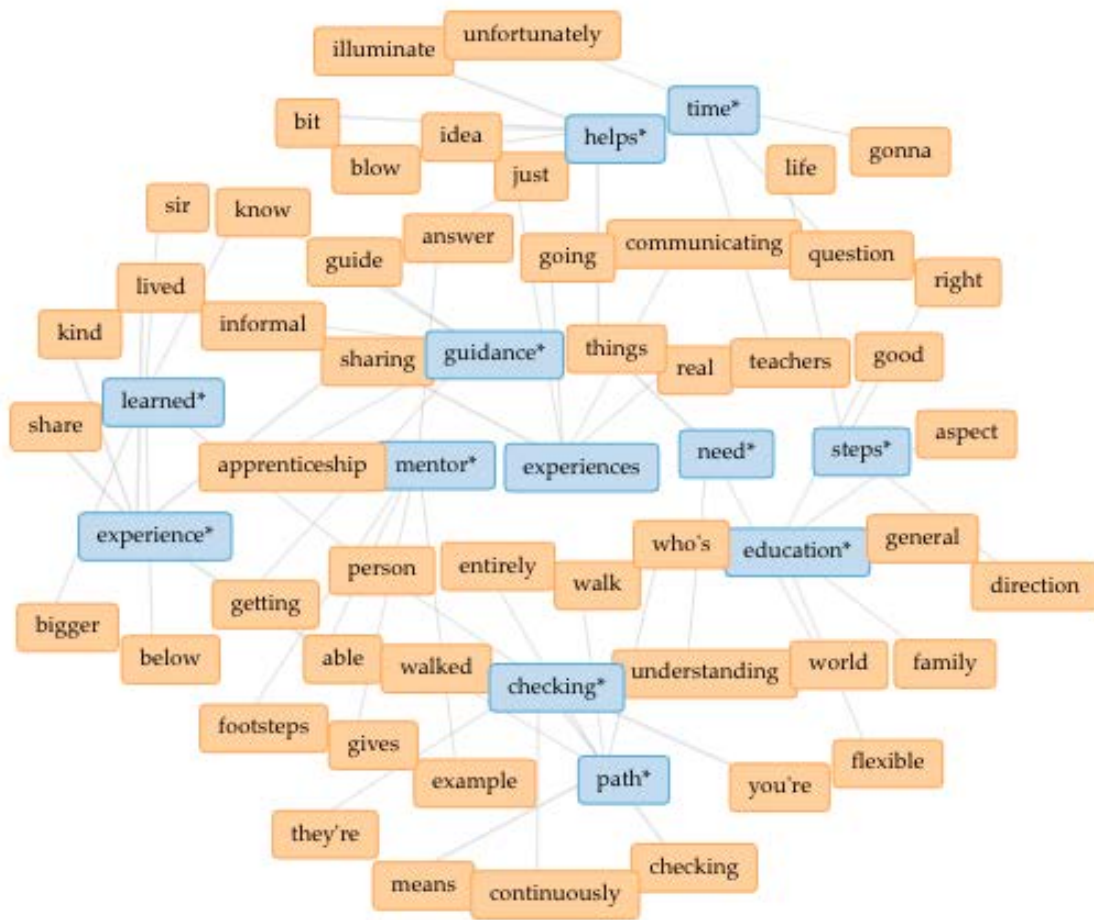
A total of 30 students participated fully in the research process. Results from the data showed that the majority of students did not have access to adequate resources due to lack of culturally relevant support in programs, services, and training at Humber. Students indicated a need for extra support in addition to the services offered by The BASE. However, only a select number of students choose to utilize current services at The BASE, while other students were not fully aware of these services. Students were more concerned with mentorship guidance through current support(s), programs, services, and training, rather than mentorship guidance to pursue higher education after graduation (Figure 2).

Data gathered from the focus groups and interview sessions showed the desire for mentorship from a young age. Participants echoed similar 1st year experiences. Including feeling like an outsider and lack of support and awareness of available resources. Some participants also voiced concerns about virtual fatigue with online learning, as well as a need for mentors that are current students, alumni, and/or business professionals, who look like them. Furthermore, participants suggested that The BASE and a (potential) mentorship program, be widely advertised throughout the school, via professors, and across all of Humber's social platforms.

When asked the question: *What does mentorship mean to you?* The overall emergent themes from participants' responses were: guidance, better and/or consistent communication (of available resources), sharing relatable experiences and knowledge, building relationships with

students and faculty who look like them, and receiving timely feedback when concerns were raised by students (Figures 1 and 3). In regard to timely feedback, all participants interviewed, had some experience with racial discrimination, including micro aggressions within the classroom from professors and other students, and even experienced multiple hate incidents, as recently as in 2020 (Figure 3). Participants expressed having no option but to deal with these issues and the negative impacts on their well being, on their own. Punctuated by variations of this sentiment: *“it is what it is...you just get used to it at this point.”* Data from the flip grid tool was omitted due to low participation with that tool. However, the few responses received correlate with the rest of participants’ responses.

**FIGURE 1:** Keywords and their links in regard to the meaning and value of mentorship for Black students at Humber.



**FIGURE 2:** The type of mentorship program Black students at Humber would like to see provided.

**15. If The BASE created a mentorship program for Black students, what type of mentorship would you like to see provided?**

17 participants responded.  
 3 participants skipped the question.  
 'N' reflects the number of times the theme was stated in the answers of the participants.

Career path (N= 3)  
 Leadership (N= 2)  
 Professionalism (N= 3)  
 Entrepreneur (N= 3)

Mentorship (N= 6)  
 Black (N= 4)  
 Support(s)(N= 9)  
 Programs,Services and Training(N= 14)

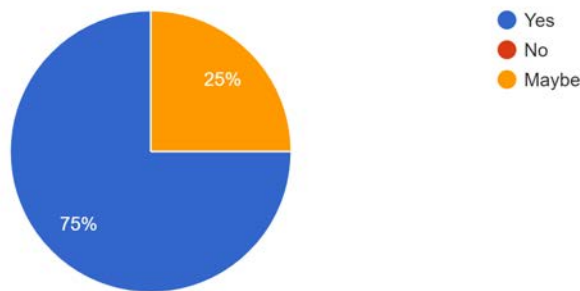
**FIGURE 3:** Emergent themes from in-depth interviews:

7 participants interviewed  
 'N' reflects the number of times the theme was stated or referenced in participants' responses.

Guidance/support (N=47)  
 Communication (N=18)  
 Relationships/Representation/Relatability (N=17)  
 Shared Knowledge & Understanding (N=32)  
 Sense of belonging/feeling out of place (N=15)  
 Resources (N=22)  
 Racial Discrimination/Incidents (N=12)  
 Mental Health & Wellness (N=7)

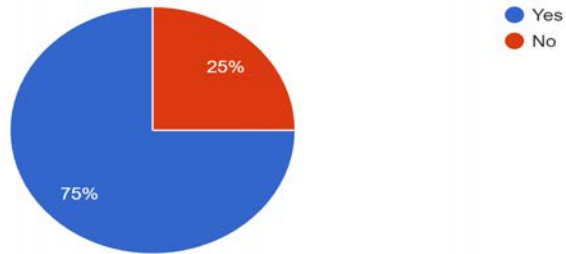
**FIGURE 4:** Recommending support/services offered at The BASE

13. Would you tell Black students about the support here at The BASE?  
 20 responses



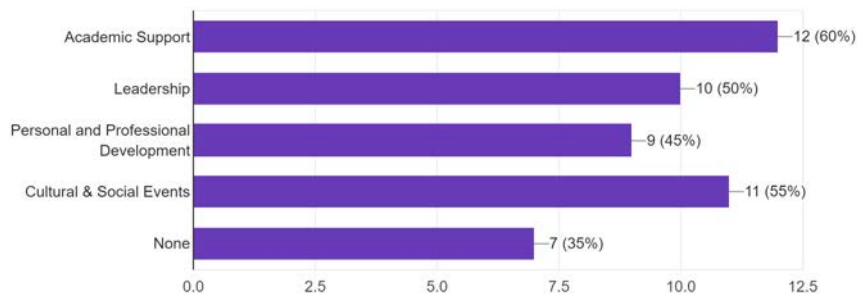
**FIGURE 5:** Participants' awareness of The BASE program.

7. Are you aware of The BASE at Humber?  
20 responses



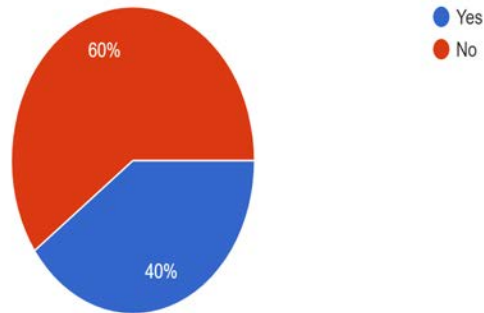
**FIGURE 6:** Programs/services offered through The BASE, that participants are (/not) familiar with.

10. These are the programs currently provided by Black Academic Success and Engagement (The BASE). Indicate which program(s) you are familiar with:  
20 responses



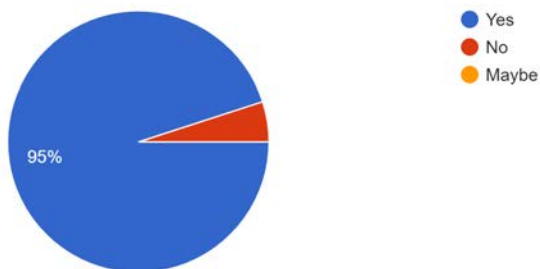
**FIGURE 7:** Humber's range of services/resources for Black students.

8. Do you think Humber provides Black students with a large range of services/resources?  
20 responses



**FIGURE 8:** The need for mentorship program(s) at Humber.

14. Do you believe it is essential for Humber College to offer mentorship programs for their Black students?  
20 responses





## **Discussion**

95% of participants agreed that Humber College should offer mentorship programs for Black students because it is essential for their academic success, personal and professional development, and overall well being. This indicates the value and importance of mentorship for Black students especially at a PWI. The following themes emerged in the analysis process: guidance and support, shared knowledge and understanding, access (or lack-there-of) to resources, representation and sense of belonging, and racial discrimination/incidents and mental health support.

### **Guidance and Support**

The overarching theme in response to the importance and value of mentorship, reveals that students are simply looking for guidance and support from people who look like them and understand their experiences. In response to survey questions, participants were specifically interested in guidance in terms of aspiring towards entrepreneurship. Students were more concerned with mentorship guidance by support(s), programs, services, and training, rather than mentorship guidance to pursue higher education after graduation (Figure 2). Moreover, of the students interviewed, each spoke to the need for specific support around transitioning into a new environment like a PWI - where they are once again the minority. Some participants also referenced needing support from professors in terms of referring them to specific resources, facilitating classroom dynamics, and suggesting potential career paths (Figure 3). For the latter, one participant shared a situation in which he was blatantly discouraged from aspiring towards a particular career aspiration because *“you can’t make money doing that”*. These types of

experiences are exactly where Black students need guidance and support, to navigate what seems to be the norm in PWIs.

As shown in figure 4, 75% of participants surveyed would recommend services offered by The BASE. Majority of the participants are familiar with The BASE's programs/services, while 35% of participants don't know of The BASE nor have they utilized said programs and services (Figure 5). Although 60% of participants utilize the academic support service, less than 11% utilize the other services available (Figure 6). There's certainly a disconnect here, as many of these services would prove helpful to students' needs voiced during in-depth interviews. As some participants suggested, broader outreach is necessary to raise awareness for these already available services.

### **Shared Knowledge and Understanding**

Almost all participants interviewed voiced a need for better understanding and knowledge of available options and resources. As one participant expressed "*the Black experience is unique*", so it only seems right that Black students would need specific and on-going support in dealing with issues that come up, especially within PWIs. Issues like not knowing where to apply for specific financial aid, not knowing their options for career paths, or who to go to when they experience racial discrimination or microaggressions on campus. Almost all participants mentioned searching for groups/communities of like minded students, in their first year. This eventually led some of them to The BASE.

## **Resources**

When it comes to resources, results from the data show there is both a lack of awareness of available resources—in which case students seek their own resources and methods of coping, as well as a need to enhance current resources to make it more culturally relevant and specific to the needs of Black students. Figure 5 shows that 25% of the participants surveyed have never heard of The BASE program, which indicates that there is some awareness of resources. However, there is clearly some disconnect as only a small percentage of students who are aware of the program actually choose to use the services. While the majority of students are either unaware of its existence or choose not to use the services.

Most interviewed participants are aware of The BASE and utilized their services. However, with the exception of 2 participants, they found out about the program in their 2nd or 3rd year. One participant on the other hand, though aware of the program, was unsure if it did in fact cater to him, as he did not identify as Black, but was in fact Egyptian. These inconsistencies in awareness and use of The BASE and its services may be due to one of two things. Either their mission is still unclear to the students the program aims to serve, or there needs to be more effective forms of outreach to broaden their student database.

## **Programs, Services, and Training**

As shown in figure 7, 60% of the participants disagreed that Humber provides Black students with a large range of services/resources. In fact one of the participants interviewed - a Humber alumnus, vividly describes having to “*scrape the bottom of the barrel*” to find and utilize the resources he needed. Others described sentiments like: “*figuring it out on my own*”, or “*it is what it is*” and “*I don’t pay attention to things like that anymore*”, in references to insensitivity

on-campus or conflicts within the classroom. Majority of participants allude to not having adequate resources because there is a lack of support catered to them in current programs, services and training at Humber. With this in mind, suggestions for mentorship support reflect career path or leadership skills, such as professionalism, communication, and conflict resolution - not only for themselves but also reflected in training for faculty and staff. For instance, some of the participants' responses to what they would like mentorship on were: *“career pathways and getting to know the services available to us”* and *“a leadership program would be very impactful for the Black students at Humber, as it will help grow the skills necessary to assume bigger positions and roles campus wide”*. This kind of support would help students gain transferable skills for their ideal field of work post graduation. In addition, faculty/staff would be better equipped to support the specific needs of Black students during their academic career.

### **Representation and Sense of Belonging**

As the literature review on the topic shows, bonding with like minded students in terms of mutual lived experiences, is important for Black students to survive and thrive within PWIs. 6 out of the 7 participants interviewed - which identified as Black, spoke to the importance of representation within any institution. Citing the uniqueness of *“the Black experience”* as one participant describes, support from someone who looks like them is extremely imperative to ensuring that their needs are met. In response to the question of the significance of having Black educators, one participant states:

*“my first day in class I go in there and I see a black guy there. It feels different...So I go in my seat, and I feel a bit more relaxed, and not just a black guy but I feel like any*

*minority basically...I feel more relaxed. I feel more comfortable in the class, I feel like more of my experiences could come to the fore..."*

Representation then, is a key component in the need for and the importance of creating a valuable and sustainable mentorship program.

### **Racial Discrimination/Incidents and Mental Health Support**

Experiences with racial discrimination seem to be par for the course within any institution or even everyday life for Black people. As the research team can attest to their own lived experiences, so too did participants have varying degrees of experiences with issues of covert or overt displays of racial discrimination in the classrooms and generally on campus. From microaggressions to hate incidents, participants spoke to this issue in recounting their overall experiences at Humber, and/or when answering the direct question of whether or not they experienced racial discrimination on campus. Although a seemingly leading question, the research team along with the community partner chose to include this question in the interview guide, because anti-Black racism is a major reason why Black students need culturally relevant resources to navigate PWIs. These instances of racial discrimination happen so often that, as previously mentioned, participants now respond with sentiments like *"figuring it out on my own"*, or *"it is what it is"* and *"I don't pay attention to things like that anymore"*. One participant did suggest however, the need for more culturally specific mental health supports for Black students like *"how to deal with trauma"* caused by the perpetuation of anti-Black racism. To improve The BASE he also mentions specifically, more mindfulness informed programming.

All of the above themes highlight the specific needs of Black students and could serve as the basis of a potential mentorship program. Should said program address the pain points voiced by participants in this research, Black students in PWI may be better equipped to finish their current academic career and/or aim to apply for higher education.

### **Contributions of this Research/Recommendations (to partner agency)**

As seen in figures 5 and figure 6, most participants reported that they are aware of The BASE program at Humber College. However, some indicated that they are not familiar with the specific programs and services The BASE provides for Black students. Moreover, as a community partner, The BASE was hands-on in assisting throughout this research project and offered meaningful input in further supporting Black students at Humber. With this in mind, collaboration with more programs is one of the recommendations The BASE should consider. Next, The BASE can share information with Black faculty members and staff at Humber, who are unaware of their programs. In which case, faculty and staff members alike are better informed and equipped to refer Black students to The BASE. Another recommendation is to reimplement outreach techniques from its former iteration (when the program was known as The Bridge), by facilitating virtual drop ins, into different programs and classes. This will help The BASE bring awareness to new students who have not had the opportunity to attend the college campuses in person, as well as current students who are still unaware or unsure of their services. All in all, this will position the program to become visible for Black students as well as the aid in making the future mentorship program successful and sustainable.

### **Limitations of research**

Many limitations became evident during the research process - most of which was due to COVID-19 pandemic. This affected the research because interactions with participants were limited to virtual platforms. Thus, participation was lower than anticipated. Outreach was initially limited to The BASE's student database and social media platforms. Eventually, outreach was broadened considering that not all Black students are aware of The BASE. Furthermore, in light of the virtual limitations, other potential reasons for low participation may have been due to lack of access to the internet, students not checking (or responding to) their emails often, or simply "zoom fatigue" - as everything is now done virtually. Another limitation was specifically low participation with the flip grid tool. Only two participants engaged with this tool, although several of them had viewed the page. The research team concluded that some reasons for low participation may include being uncomfortable with recording themselves and simply being unsure of how to navigate the app in the first place. Consequently, data from this tool was not included in the research findings.

### **Directions for future research**

For future research, questions around how to best engage with students virtually is suggested. In regard to mentorship for example, explore which method would be most engaging. That is: 1 on 1 meetings, group seminars or workshops, weekly or monthly check-ups, social media engagement and much more. Next, one of the initial goals of the project was to identify possible gender differences for mentorship in terms of needs. Though there was not enough data to adequately show differences (if any), this time around. This is something worth exploring moving forward. Other areas worth exploring include essential resources akin to mentorship

students in the meantime. For instance, training professors, student leaders and advisors, youth leaders and outside connections, to build initial mentorship aspects of The BASE. Lastly, different to outreach, in order to increase awareness of already available services for Black students.

The following questions should be considered for future research:

- In what ways can The BASE connect with different departments at Humber to help make the program a better resource for the students it serves?
- How can resources be more engaging?
- Besides social media, what other platforms are most effective in promoting the resources The BASE has to offer?

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## **Appendix A**

### **Introduction Letter/Email**

Dear BASE Community,

The BASE is working with Humber College's Community Development Degree students on a project called The BASE Mentorship. The students have created this Survey, PhotoVoice (Flip Grid and Focus Group) to learn more about what aspects of mentoring programs are successful and implement those features to the BASE programming. We are hoping you will consider participating in the study and helping us gather information that will inform our work.

You will receive follow-up information on the project from the student team. At that time, the students will answer any questions you may have and let you know the process for participating.

We want to stress that participation is strictly voluntary, you can opt out at any time and information you provide will be confidential and only reported as an aggregate.

Thanks, in advance, for considering participation. We value your ideas and input into this important area. I am attaching a copy of the project's consent form. Students will contact you this week to see if you are able to participate.

## Appendix B

### Follow up email

Hello,

I am following-up on an email sent to you by the BASE, regarding our collaboration on a new research project. We would like to invite you to participate in the research in the following ways:

- Fill out this [survey](https://forms.gle/onHvT1FzG1PgG9kb6) about services at Humber through The BASE program's. The purpose of this survey is to assess levels of access to mentorship for Black students at Humber. It takes about 10 minutes to complete and your responses will be kept anonymous. **Fill out the survey here:** <https://forms.gle/onHvT1FzG1PgG9kb6>

- Record an audio message on [FlipGrid](https://flipgrid.com) (a website/app for an accessible audio & video discussion experience). The purpose of this tool is to hear and connect to direct responses to guided questions, regarding personal experiences at Humber. To remain anonymous please use a pseudonym and refrain from mentioning any identifying characteristics of yourself or others. **Link to FlipGrid app:** <https://flipgrid.com/thebase1967>
- Sign up to join a [focus group](https://calendly.com/ighodiana/capstoneproject) session. The purpose of this tool is to get an in-depth understanding of your experiences and needs as a Black student at Humber. Sessions will take about 45-60mins. **Schedule a focus group session here:** <https://calendly.com/ighodiana/capstoneproject>

**Please note:** you do not have to engage in all three, though you are welcome to do so if you choose. You can opt out of the research at any time. There is a consent form at the start of each tool, that we ask you to review and sign, once you understand and agree to the consent material. To review the consent form before you begin, see the attachment below.

Please don't hesitate to contact me should you have any questions. We will be providing a final report on our findings to all participants who indicate they would like a copy of the results sent to them. Thanks in advance, for taking the time to share your experiences with us!

## Appendix C



### Consent Form

#### **The BASE Mentorship**

Dear Participant:

Thank-you for considering participation in this Capstone Project being undertaken by Humber College Community Development Degree students in partnership with The BASE (Black Academic Success and Engagement) Program and lead from the agency are Monique Chambers

& Efe Chehore and program contact information is 416.675.6622 ext. 5377 and [thebase@humber.ca](mailto:thebase@humber.ca).

Should you have any concerns about this research or require any information please contact one of our research supervisors.

**Research Supervisor:** Humber College, Faculty of Social and Community Services

Linda Hill, MA, RSW, Professor Community Development Degree  
416-675-6622 [Linda.Hill@humber.ca](mailto:Linda.Hill@humber.ca)

Degree Christine McKenzie, PhD., Professor Community Development

416-675-6622 [Christine.Mckenzie@humber.ca](mailto:Christine.Mckenzie@humber.ca)

This project has received approval from Humber's Research Ethics Board. Persons with broader issues related to ethical concerns can contact The Humber Review Ethics Board Chair, Dr. Lydia Boyko at: 416-675-6622 ext. 79322 or by email at: [Lydia.Boyko@humber.ca](mailto:Lydia.Boyko@humber.ca)

**Purpose of the Project:** The overall purpose of our project is to uplift and empower Black students that attend Humber College. Our goal is to assist The BASE with creating a mentorship program that gives students a safe space to explore their creativity, connect with like-minded individuals and mentors, through our research findings. By undertaking this project, our aim is to better understand the gaps in services at The BASE and use that information to enhance the programming delivered to Black youth attending Humber College. We also hope to learn more about what aspects of mentoring programs are successful and implement those features to the BASE programming.

**Before signing this consent form, please review participation criteria:**

- . Participation is completely voluntary
- You can opt out of the survey at any time if you change your mind
- You are not required to answer all the questions. You can skip questions if you are not comfortable answering them
- You will remain anonymous. Anything you share will be kept confidential by the student and not linked directly to you
- Only faculty supervisors, students and agency partner conducting the survey will have access to raw data
- Results will be reported as an aggregate – That means your responses won't be specifically identified as yours but overall feedback from the group will be shared
- All surveys collected will be securely stored in a password protected electronic file and destroyed at the end of the project (April 2021)

- Participation will take approximately 30 minutes of your time
- The benefit of participating is the opportunity to reflect. The harm in participating is you may not agree with the responses of others and could be disappointed with the findings

I \_\_\_\_\_, consent to participating in the Capstone Project. I understand the participation criteria as noted above.

Name of Participant: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix D

### STUDENT DATA DISPOSAL CONSENT FORM

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#### **Bachelor of Community Development Student Thesis: Data Disposal Consent**

I, *Alyssa Austin, Sanjana Eswar, Igho Itebu, Techan Kemp, Richard Laurente and Rushann Smith*, agree to destroy the electronic data stored on my computer and/or separate hard drive

when the thesis project, *The BASE*, has been completed and evaluated by my thesis supervisor *Linda Hill*. I have one year from the date of final approval of the project to destroy the data.

I agree to submit the USB memory file to Professor *Linda Hill* upon completion of the project. In the event that the course is on-line, I agree to zip and email all data to Professor *Linda Hill* who will then take on the risk of storage.

Data submitted either on USB or through a zip file must incorporate the following: the final thesis document in Word and PDF forms as submitted to the professor on Blackboard and in print, original data from surveys if conducted, and original tapes and transcripts from interviews/focus groups if conducted.

The professor will keep the data in a locked cabinet in C204, Lakeshore campus, for one year, and then destroy the file. If the data is electronic, it will be kept in a locked computer file and destroyed after one year.

My signature below confirms my agreement to the requirements as described in this consent form.

Alyssa Austin  
Sanjana Eswar  
Igho Itebu  
Techan Kemp  
Richard Laurente  
Rushann Smith

*Alyssa Austin*  
*Sanjana Eswar*  
*Igho Itebu*  
*Techan Kemp*  
*Richard Laurente*  
*Rushann Smith*

January 24, 2021

\_\_\_\_\_  
Investigator's Name (printed)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Investigator's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date