

In the fall of 2015, Toronto’s four universities collaborated on a massive data collection effort - **StudentMoveTO** – with the goal of collecting detailed data about where students live and travel throughout the day, as well as what factors influence how they schedule work, studies, and daily activities.

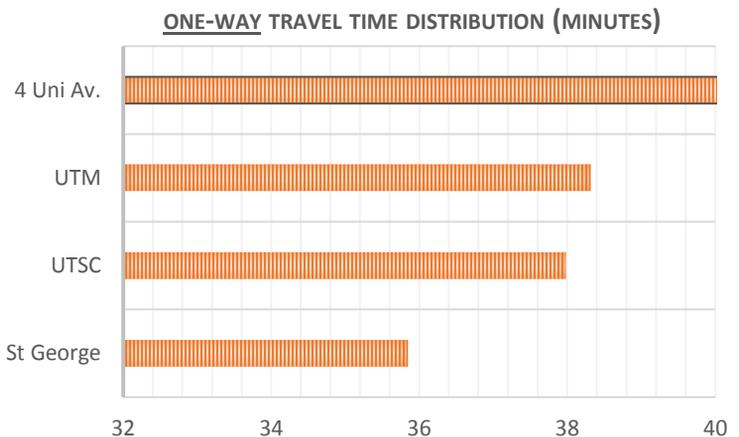
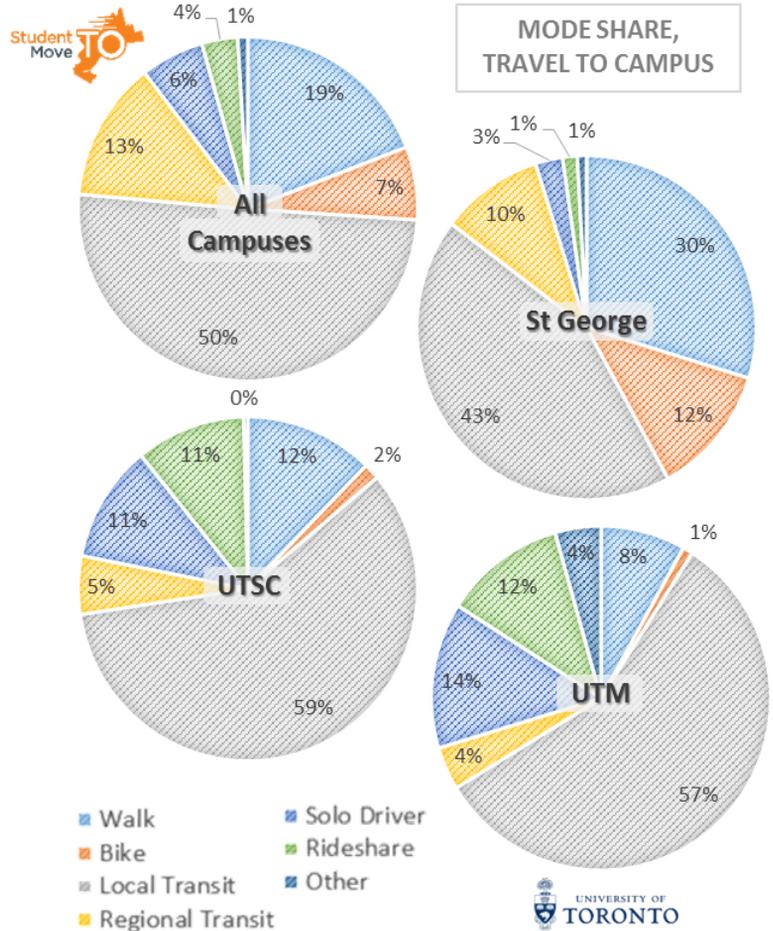
OCAD U, Ryerson U, York U and UofT account for over **184,000 post-secondary students**

The survey received **15,226 complete responses** (8,100+ from UofT students), with an overall response rate of 8.3%. Students recorded over **36,000 trips**, of which the vast majority were made on foot, on bike or using transit.

**Trips to school make up 36.8%** of all travel recorded in StudentMove. That’s a large chunk, but the other 63.2% matters too and before now, there was very little information about these trips.

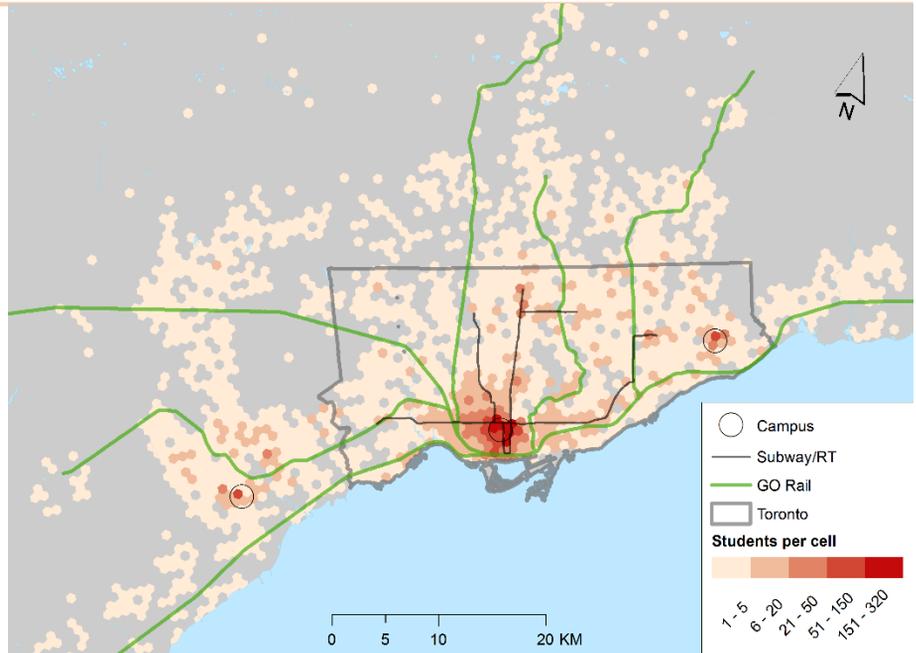
In building StudentMove, we tried to focus on including questions whose responses would allow universities, transportation agencies and students to **make better, evidence-based decisions** regarding infrastructure and programs that reduce the burden of commutes and increase accessibility.

As shown on the right, travel times vary significantly from campus to campus. Students are spending **more than an hour each day, on average, getting to and from school**, with longer commutes to access campuses away from the core. The share of students using transit is also very high, both downtown, but even more so at UTM and UTSC.



The highest density of UofT students is found near campuses, and along the Yonge subway line at Eglinton and Finch stations. Some students are commuting from quite a distance however, with over **12% of UofT students living 25 km or more from school.**

### HOME LOCATION OF U OF T RESPONDENTS



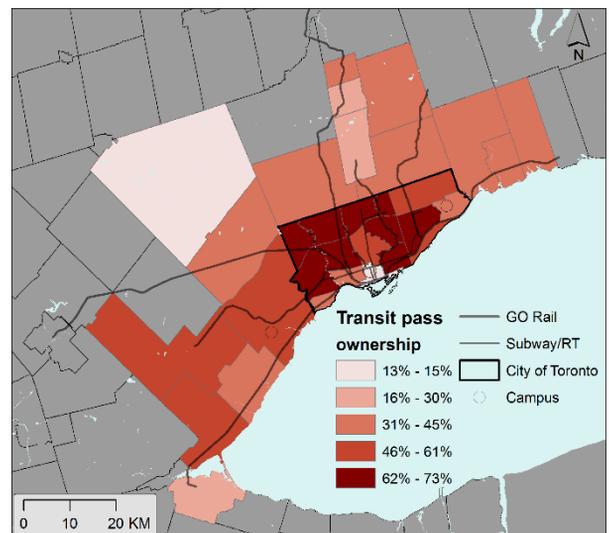
Whether students move to live near campus or stay at home however, one thing is clear from the responses: **cost of housing** is a major concern for students in Toronto.

After cost of housing, students at St. George noted that the most important factor in their last move was the **ability to commute by bike or on foot**. This factor is not reported as often among UTM and UTSC students, partly because a larger percent live with parents, but this remains the second most important factor among students playing an active role in home location choice.

It appears that **students living in the inner-suburban neighbourhoods of Toronto rely heavily on transit for their daily travel needs**, a behaviour that is supported by relatively efficient transit services. Those living in downtown Toronto neighbourhoods however are likely able to walk or cycle to their school, as well as many of their daily destinations, reducing the need for a transit pass.

**Regional fare integration** may also be an issue for students, if the significant decrease in the rate of transit pass ownership just outside the TTC-served City is any indication.

REASON FOR MOST RECENT MOVE	St George	UTM	UTSC	4Uni Av.
<b>Cost of housing</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>24%</b>
<b>The decision was out of my control</b>	14%	<b>28%</b>	<b>27%</b>	21%
<b>Ability to walk or bike to campus</b>	<b>24%</b>	11%	11%	16%
Housing qualities (space, yard, ...)	9%	10%	10%	9%
Proximity to public transit	7%	7%	9%	8%
Being near friends and family	6%	9%	9%	7%
Amenities of neighbourhood (shops, parks, houses, ...)	5%	7%	7%	6%
Other	4%	5%	4%	4%
Walkability of neighbourhood	3%	1%	2%	2%
Crime and safety	1%	1%	3%	1%



Commute distance to/from school appears to have a strong influence on whether or not students decide to come to school. Clearly, **on any day of the week, fewer students who live further travel to campus.** More generally, post-secondary school travel is more common between Tuesday and Thursday, compared to Mondays or Fridays.

Likewise, as travel time from home to school increases, so does the likelihood that a student **picks their courses based on their commute.** Students may be grouping courses together or avoiding early mornings and late nights, behaviours that reduce the burden of travel, but aren't ideal from an academic perspective.

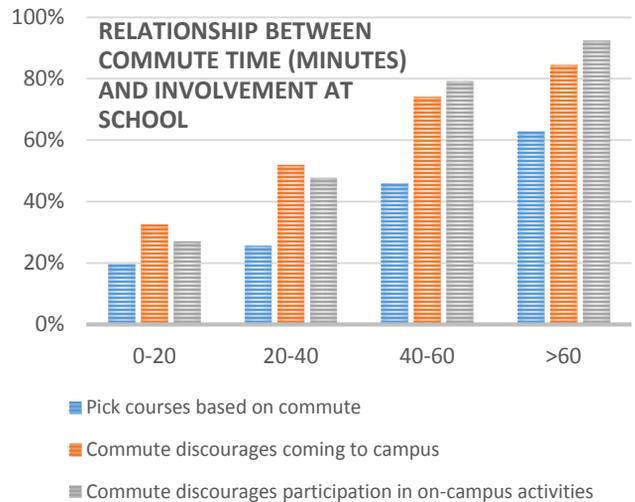
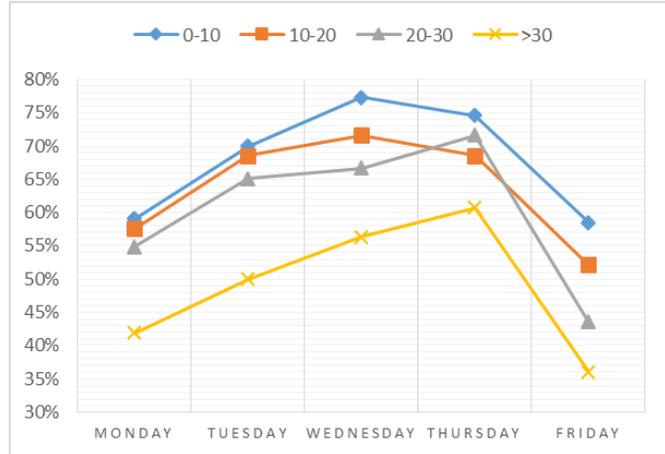
Aside from making sub-optimal decisions about scheduling and courses, commutes also have a significant effect on the likelihood of coming to campus and participating in university-organized activities.

We asked students what could motivate them to change their main mode of transportation to campus. A few takeaways:

- The most important motivator for students at all seven campuses was a **change in home location**
- Improvements to **bike lanes and bike storage** (a low-cost and simple fix when compared to transit subsidies for example) would have a particularly large impact at St George, but less so elsewhere
- Improvements to transit would have a greater influence on choosing to shift to transit than would a decrease in fares, but **students do remain very price sensitive**
- At UTSC in particular, where it was recently announced that an LRT may extend to campus, a large number of students expressed **better service was a priority**

While more detailed analysis is required before any policy can be drafted to improve the sustainability of travel to campus or decrease the effect of long commutes on university participation, StudentMoveTO data clearly shows promise in helping to better understand, and then tackle these and other issues in a targeted and evidence-based manner.

**PERCENT STUDENTS COMING TO CAMPUS DAILY, BY DISTANCE FROM HOME TO MAIN CAMPUS (KM)**



MODE CHANGE MOTIVATIONS	St George	UTM	UTSC	4Uni Av.
Change in household location	65%	52%	50%	59%
Improvements to transit	22%	30%	32%	26%
Decreased transit costs	22%	15%	24%	21%
Increased transit costs	17%	16%	24%	20%
Worse congestion	13%	19%	18%	15%
Decreased parking costs	9%	23%	21%	15%
Nothing, Will not change	13%	15%	13%	14%
Improved bike lanes	12%	5%	7%	9%
To improve health	7%	8%	8%	7%
Environmental concerns	6%	8%	8%	6%
Roadwork disruptions	6%	6%	7%	6%
Improved pedestrian environment	4%	4%	4%	4%
Increased parking costs	2%	5%	7%	3%
Added bike storage	4%	1%	2%	3%