

TO: All MUNFA Members  
FROM: The MUNFA Executive Committee  
DATE: March 25, 2021  
SUBJECT: Navitas – Private Pre-University and Pathway Program for International Students

---

On February 12, MUNFA was approached by the University Administration about a possible partnership with Navitas. Navitas is an Australia-based transnational corporation that provides for-profit pre-university and pathway programs for international students. The company aims to recruit international students and provide them with English-language training and “foundational” or “pathways” programs in various disciplinary areas. Navitas recruits students by promising a guaranteed transfer – often at a second-year standing – to the partner university upon successful completion of the program.

While MUNFA strongly supports the diversification of Memorial University’s student body and academic supports for International students, our Executive Committee has very serious misgivings about the implications of inviting Navitas into Memorial University. Since the meeting on February 12, MUNFA has been in contact with colleagues at other Canadian institutions that have had experience with Navitas, both those where Navitas partnerships exist and those where such partnerships were rejected. These discussions have raised a number of questions/concerns for the MUNFA Executive which have been flagged for the Administration.

The MUNFA Executive’s concerns include, but are not limited to, the following:

- The outsourcing of International student recruitment and support to a for-profit company whose first responsibility is to its shareholders.
- Navitas’s partnerships with private recruiters whose practices are allegedly predatory and deceptive to students and their families.
- The exploitation of International students as a source of revenue.
- The potential threat to Academic Freedom as it relates to a third-party engaging in curriculum delivery.
- Navitas’s implementation of anti-union clauses into employee contracts at other institutions.
- A loss of collegial/shared governance as it relates to Navitas at other institutions.
- A lack of inspectability in regard to Navitas profits, operations, and outcomes for students.

In response to the University’s proposal, the MUNFA Executive has suggested the Administration look into developing our own foundation-year program in accordance with our own values and standards. In particular, we encouraged the Administration to leverage funding from the Department of Immigration, Skills and Labour to support this work.

We are interested in hearing from MUNFA members who have comments/concerns/feedback on Navitas or similar private pathway programs.

Please send comments/concerns/suggestions to [membership.munfa@mun.ca](mailto:membership.munfa@mun.ca).