

Identifying Recreation Barriers for Commuter Students at UBC

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Background

75% of UBC students commute to campus to attend class

Students that commute 45 minutes or more have been identified as having consistently low participation rates in activities on campus

Why Does it Matter?

Commuter students face numerous barriers that ultimately lead to less participation in school sponsored activities. Some barriers include:

- Complex lifestyles of commuter students lead to time constraints²
- Typically organize their schedule to minimize time spent on campus²
- Developing new social networks on campus may be difficult or not as important³

Study Population

Third and fourth year commuter students who's commute to campus is a minimum of 45 minutes one way, for a total of an hour and a half each day.

Methods

10 interviews were conducted by our researchers. Each interview consisted of questions focused on...

- Identifying barriers to participating in recreational activities on campus
- How to increase student sense of belonging (SSOB)

We also gave opportunities for students to provide any additional information they felt was relevant to the study.

Findings

Time Spent On/Off Campus:

Table 1 — Range of Time

	Hours per Week	
	Minimum	Maximum
Active On Campus	0	3
Active Off Campus	2	8
Work On Campus	0	0
Work Off Campus	8	25
Additional Time Spent on Campus	0	3
Travel Time	0.75 (45 minutes)	1.5

Barriers:

What are the barriers/what makes it hard to participate in campus activities?

- Restrictions on time due to work, study schedule and commute
- Inconvenience of carrying appropriate attire/equipment needed for recreational activities to school

Motivation and Resources:

What would make it easier or motivate you to be more active on campus? What resources would you like to see?

- Lounges for students
- Subsidized storage facilities for commuters
- Activities that appeal to a wider range of students → more fitness classes and yoga

Student Sense of Belonging:

Most students indicated that they did NOT feel a strong sense of belonging outside of their faculty

Feedback

Popular recommendations given by the participants:

- Lockers
- Quiet study areas
- Social areas with recreational activities such as televisions
- Microwaves and refrigerators
- Napping pods and couches

Recommendations

- Increase promotion of current on campus resources on social media platforms
- Conduct more student surveys/interviews regarding on campus improvements

Take Home Message

With the addition of student lounges on campus, it is likely that students will be able to:

- Participate more in campus events
- Feel more comfortable on campus
- Have a personal space
- Feel an increased sense of belonging at UBC

Creating opportunities for engagement from this population can create a greater sense of belonging at UBC. In turn, this has the potential to improve student wellbeing.

“What would help you feel more connected at UBC?”

Thematic Analysis was used to identify trends in the student responses. Thematic Analysis emphasizes using pinpointing and examining themes within data.



Picture: Matt Dolf, UBC Wellbeing

References

- ¹Madden-Krasnick, H. (2017, July 14). Commuting 101 [UBCfyi Blog]. Retrieved from: <https://students.ubc.ca/ubcfyi/commuting-101>
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- ³Buote, V. M., Pancer, M. S., Pratt, M. W., Adams, G., Birnie-Lefcovitvh, S., Polivy, J., Winter, M.G. (2007). The Importance of Friends: Friendship and Adjustment Among 1st-Year University Students. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, 22(6), 665-689.