Student Organizations at UND

An overview of UND student involvement with campus clubs, groups, and organizations

Student involvement is just one way our scholars develop ties to their institution. Student organizations, including student government, allow students to build relationships with other students with similar interests, provide opportunities for leadership, as well as teach cooperation and teamwork. This summary focuses on student attitudes and goals regarding participation in student activities through responses on various institutional surveys.

In particular, over one-third (36%) are interested in finding out more about student government and student activities on campus – a number that is less than the 45% to 53% reporting such interest in prior administrations of the CSI.

According to results from the 2009 National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), freshmen and seniors are spending more time participating in co-curricular activities (Figure 1) both at UND and research universities with high activity (RU/H). UND seniors report significantly more time than their RU/H counterparts in all NSSE surveys since 2005.

Less than one-third (31%) of graduating seniors indicate becoming actively involved in student life and campus activities as a goal of their education. Less than one-fourth (23%) report increasing participation in cultural and social events as another goal. However, in the most recent survey of UND sophomores, 67% report that to become actively involved in student life and campus activities is a goal of their education with 66% reporting increasing their participation in cultural and social events.

Student Activities

Students entering UND report relatively low levels of involvement in student clubs in high school. The CIRP Freshman Survey asks incoming freshmen how much time they spent per week, in their last year involved in student clubs or groups. In 2009, half of UND incoming freshmen (50%) responded that they spent no time, with an additional 25% reporting they spent less than one hour per week involved in student clubs or groups.

Even with these results, students typically seem eager to learn about student organizations. The College Student Inventory (CSI) asks incoming freshmen if they would like to find out more information about activities on campus. In 2009, 61% of respondents stated they were interested in finding out more about the clubs and social organizations at UND.
Student Activities (con’t)

According to the responses from the Graduating Student Survey, increasing numbers of graduating seniors report they are satisfied with the overall social experience at UND as is indicated in Figure 2.

Seniors also report increasing satisfaction with the numbers of opportunities for personal involvement in campus activities (see Figure 3). Sophomores have reported somewhat similar levels of satisfaction, although their satisfaction has slightly declined from higher levels reported in 1998-1999.

Three-quarters (72%) of UND seniors report they are satisfied with the availability of campus social activities, which is less than at public universities where 77% of seniors report satisfaction.

When the student body is asked on the Student Satisfaction Inventory to rate their satisfaction with the number of weekend activities for students, UND scores a mean score of 4.93 on a 7-point scale; this is just under 5.00 which represents “somewhat satisfied” on the survey scale. This score for UND, however, is significantly higher than the score of 4.43 scored by students at public universities.

UND students are also significantly more likely to be satisfied when asked if they can easily get involved in campus organizations. UND scores a mean score of 5.50 on a 7-point scale compared to 5.18 scored by students from public universities. UND students are also significantly more likely to report satisfaction on generally knowing what is happening on campus, scoring a mean of 5.13 compared to public universities (mean = 4.88).

From 2000 to 2009, the numbers of students involved in Greek life at UND has been decreasing. Figure 4 shows that in 2009, less than one-fifth of senior respondents report having joined a fraternity or sorority.

Over one-half of UND seniors (52%) report playing in intramural or recreational sports compared to 59% of seniors at public universities. As sophomores, 59% report participation in intramural programs, with 79% of those participating being satisfied with the program. UND students are significantly more likely than public university students (mean = 5.03) to be satisfied with the variety of intramural activities offered on campus, with UND students scoring a mean of 5.47 on a 7-point scale.

When asked their level of satisfaction with the purposes for which student activity fees are used, just 31% of sophomores report being satisfied. The Student Satisfaction Inventory asks all students to report their level of satisfaction of whether student activity fees are put to good use. UND scores a mean of 4.40 on a 7-point scale, with 4.00 representing “neutral” and 5.00 representing “somewhat satisfied” on the survey scale.

For more detailed information about any of our surveys, please refer to http://www.und.edu/dept/datacol/reports/surveydesc.html

Figure 2. Percentage of UND Seniors Indicating Satisfaction with Overall Social Experience as indicated on UND's Graduating Student Survey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3. Percentage of UND Students Indicating Satisfaction Opportunities for Involvement in Campus Activities as indicated on UND's Graduating Student Survey & Soph. Satisfaction Survey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4. Percent of Seniors Joining a Social Fraternity or Sorority as indicated on the CIRP College Senior Survey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

UND

Public University
Student Government

Very few first year students entering UND indicate they plan to pursue a career in government: less than one percent of entering freshmen indicate on the CIRP Freshman Survey that their probable career is Policy-maker/Government.

More UND seniors report voting in student elections than seniors at public universities. According to the 2009 CIRP College Senior Survey, 82% of UND seniors report having voted in student elections either frequently or occasionally compared to 64% of seniors at public universities.

A relatively small number of seniors report having participated in student government, both at UND and at public universities. In 2009, 12% of UND seniors report student government participation compared to 7% of public university seniors. In 2004, numbers were slightly higher for UND participation (16%) while significantly higher for public university participation (15%).

According to the Graduating Student Survey (GSS), increasing numbers of UND seniors report satisfaction with student government (Figure 5). When sophomores are asked about their satisfaction with student government, the trend has been higher than the seniors.

Leadership

With regard to leadership ability, 62% of incoming freshmen rate themselves above average when comparing themselves against other persons their age; this compares to 63% at public institutions. As sophomores, 86% of students report that improving their leadership skill is a college-related goal. As seniors about to graduate, less than half (48%) indicate one of their college goals was to improve their leadership skills, yet 84% feel their leadership skills are stronger now compared to when they first entered college. Additionally, 72% of seniors rate themselves above average with regard to leadership skills when they compare themselves to an average person their age.

Senior survey respondents report high levels of satisfaction with leadership opportunities at UND, with 86% stating they are satisfied. At public universities, 72% of seniors report this satisfaction. From 2004 to 2009, UND saw a large increase of seniors reporting participating in leadership training (Figure 6), and more UND seniors report this participation than do public university seniors. While public universities have also seen an increase over time, the 2009 UND seniors report a much higher participation rate (37% vs. 30%).

Influencing the political structure is essential or very important to just 19% of UND seniors. Nearly one-half of UND seniors (46%) say it is essential or very important to keep up to date with political affairs.