

Memorial Student Center

Brand Awareness and Participation Survey

Spring 2017

Background

The Memorial Student Center (MSC) at Texas A&M University has been the student union on campus since 1951. It is a building, and a department in the Division of Student Affairs which provides students with academic, cultural awareness, arts programs, leadership development and services opportunities. Their mission, according to their website <http://msc.tamu.edu/>, is to promote “leadership development through campus programs and service opportunities while preparing students to engage in a global society.” Additionally, the core values for the MSC include integrity, selfless service, diversity, loyalty, respect, leadership, and excellence.

The MSC Student Programs Office (SPO) wanted to conduct an assessment to learn what Texas A&M students, faculty and staff know and understand about the MSC, especially students’ understanding that the MSC is also a programming organization, not just a building. The MSC also wanted feedback regarding students’ use of the Flag Room within MSC, and their opinions about the Flag Room’s current food, drink and meeting usage policy. The MSC has worked with Student Life Studies on numerous assessments; although this is the first time this assessment has been conducted, it contains some common questions to the 2011 Awareness and Participation survey sponsored by the MSC.

Method and Sample

Two surveys, one for students and the other for staff and faculty, were developed using Qualtrics®, survey design software that creates web-based forms and databases. The student survey contained 14 questions; 13 were quantitative and one was qualitative. Due to branching technology, not all participants saw all the questions. The faculty and staff survey contained nine questions of which eight were quantitative and one was qualitative. Again, due to branching technology, not all participants saw all questions.

Email invitations with the surveys’ links were sent on March 27th, and three additional email reminders were sent to non-respondents until the surveys closed on April 6th. The student survey was successfully sent to 3496 of the 3500 randomly selected Texas A&M University students; 140 responded to at least some part of the survey, for a 4% response rate. The faculty and staff survey was successfully sent to 1987 of the 2000 randomly selected Texas A&M University faculty and staff, with 335 responding to some part of the survey resulting in a 17% response rate.

Results

Results will be reported as means, standard deviations (sd), and frequency percentages for the number of people (n) who responded to the question. For ease of reading, frequency percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole percent, so totals may not add up to exactly 100%. Responses will be compared to 2011 survey results as applicable. Summary themes are reported

here; the entire list can be found in a separate document. This report is divided into four sections: Student Demographics, Student Survey, MSC Flag Room Student Use, and Faculty and Staff survey.

Student Demographics

The demographics for the student survey participants and sample are included in Table 1 on this page and the next; the demographic information was pulled from the University’s student information system when drawing the sample. Student respondents’ demographics were similar to those of the sample, except more juniors than seniors, females and non-first generation students responded than were represented in the sample.

Demographic Category	Survey Respondents (n=140)	Sample (n=3496)
Sex		
Female	66%	49%
Male	34%	51%
Classification		
Junior	31%	23%
Senior	24%	31%
Sophomore	21%	19%
Freshman	10%	10%
Masters	7%	10%
Doctoral	6%	7%
Postbac Undergraduate	1%	<1%
Veterinarian, First -Fourth year	--	1%
College		
College of Engineering	27%	27%
Liberal Arts	18%	14%
Mays Business School	13%	11%
Education and Human Development	12%	11%
Agriculture	12%	13%
Veterinary Medicine	5%	6%
Architecture	4%	5%
Science	4%	6%
Geosciences	2%	3%
General Studies	1%	2%
Public Health	1%	1%
Bush School of Government	1%	<1%
Nursing	--	1%
Medicine	--	<1%
Dentistry	--	<1%
Exchange	--	<1%
First Generation College Student		
No	76%	65%
Yes	16%	24%
Unknown	8%	11%

Table 1: Student Survey Respondents and Sample Demographics

Demographic Category	Survey Respondents (n=140)	Sample (n=3496)
Ethnicity		
White (Only)	59%	58%
Hispanic or Latino of any race (NEW)	22%	20%
International	7%	8%
Asian Only (NEW)	6%	6%
Black Only +2 or more/1Black (NEW)	5%	4%
2 or More/Excluding Black (NEW)	1%	2%
American Indian Only (NEW)	--	<1%
Native Hawaiian Only (NEW)	--	<1%
Unknown or Not Reported	--	<1%

Table 1: Student Survey Respondents and Sample Demographics (continued)

Student Survey

The first question asked students if they were familiar with the activities and services (entertainment, events, lectures, Lost and Found, etc.) found in the MSC. Of the 126 students who responded, 66% indicated they were somewhat familiar, 21% said they were very familiar and 14% stated they were not at all familiar with the activities and services found in the MSC. Survey participants were then informed that student organizations with the MSC provide various types of programs and were asked to select, in an all- that- apply- format, which program types they have attended. Table 2 illustrates students most frequently attended MSC Open House and perform arts programs and least frequently attended off campus leadership trips and other leadership development.

Student organizations within the MSC, referred to within the MSC as committees, provide the following types of programs. From the list below, please check all program types in which you have attended. (Examples are listed in parentheses).	2017 Frequency Percent (n=115)	2011 Frequency Percent (n=71)
MSC Open House	77%	‡
Performing Arts (MSC OPAS)	50%	51%
Visual Arts (exhibition, gallery talk)	39%	30%
Fundraising (Poster Sale, Lost and Found Sale)	34%	17%
Service and Hosting (Whoop! 4 Troops, Angel Tree, Bonfire Memorial Tour, Kyle Field Day)	24%	24%
Music	21%	30%
Film	19%	27%
National Affairs and Politics (Wiley, SCONA)	17%	10%
Spirit and Camaraderie (FLO Bowl, Mr. FLO)	16%	14%
Cultural Awareness (MLK Breakfast, Salsa Dance Night, SCOLA)	15%	15%
International Culture and Travel (Jordan internships, FLI service trips to Costa Rica, Champe Fitzhugh International Honors Leadership Seminar)	10%	6%
Off-Campus Leadership Trips (Abbott Family Leadership Conference, Spencer Leadership Conference, Stark Northeast Trip, Fall Leadership Conference)	6%	6%
Other Leadership Development (Soulful Sundays, Mi Case es Su Casa, TEDxTAMU)	4%	1%

Table 2: Student Attendance at MSC Programs

‡ not provided as a selection

Students were next asked about how many programs they attended at the MSC during the last two years. Table 3 shows that nearly three-fourths indicated they had attended one to five programs and fewer than 10% had attended more than ten programs.

Excluding MSC Open House, please estimate how many MSC programs you have attended/participated in the last two years.	Percent
1 – 5	71%
6 – 10	11%
0	9%
16 or more	5%
11 – 15	4%

Table 3: Student Attendance and Participation at MSC Programs (n=115)

When asked if they were familiar with the student organizations (MSC committees) that are sponsored by the Memorial Student Center, 43% of the 119 students who responded to the question answered yes, 34% answered no and 24% answered maybe. Those who indicated yes or maybe were then provided a list of MSC committees and asked to select all in which they were familiar. Table 4 shows their responses; MSC OPAS was selected most frequently as a MSC committee which respondents were familiar. MSC Business Associates and MSC Woodson Black Awareness Committee were committees that the fewest respondents selected as committees in which they were familiar.

From the list below, please select all the MSC committees with which you are familiar.	Frequency Percent
MSC OPAS	73%
MSC Aggie Cinema	56%
MSC Freshmen in Service and Hosting (FISH)	52%
MSC Hospitality	51%
MSC Aggie Leaders of Tomorrow (ALOT)	47%
MSC Wiley Lecture Series	47%
MSC Freshmen Leadership International (FLI)	43%
MSC Town Hall	42%
MSC Student Conference on National Affairs (SCONA)	35%
MSC Bethancourt	32%
MSC LT and JW Jordan Institute for International Awareness	28%
MSC LEAD	27%
MSC Visual Arts Committee (VAC)	24%
MSC Abbott Family Leadership Conference	19%
MSC Committee for the Awareness of Mexican-American Culture (CAMAC)	18%
MSC Fall Leadership Conference (FLC)	14%
MSC Business Associates	11%
MSC Woodson Black Awareness Committee (WBAC)	11%
I am not familiar with any of the above committees	4%

Table 4: Student Awareness of MSC Committees (n=79)

Survey takers were then asked if they were familiar with the mission of the Memorial Student Center Student Programs Office. Of the 119 who responded, 87% answered no, 8% answered yes, and 5% said maybe. Those who answered yes or maybe were asked to describe the mission of the Memorial Student Center Student Programs Office and eight provided responses. None listed the mission exactly as it is described on the MSC website (msc.tamu.edu/about-us/), however about half of the responses mentioned that the mission included promoting student leadership development or student development. Others spoke of the mission as the MSC SPO providing opportunity for student collaboration, and student awareness of diversity and preparation for global leadership.

Students were requested to select, in an all-that-apply format, the web-based resources they use the most for information on campus events and resources. Table 5 shows that Howdy Portal and Facebook were selected most often and the MSC and Student Activities web pages least often.

What web-based resource(s) do you use the most to get information on campus events and resources? (select all that apply)	Frequency Percent
Howdy Portal	71%
Facebook	53%
TAMU Calendar	29%
Twitter	22%
Maroon Link	17%
MSC Web Page	5%
StuAct Web Page	4%

Table 5: Web-based Resources (n=109)

MSC Flag Room Student Use

The next series of survey questions asked the students about their visits to the MSC and use of the MSC Flag Room. First students were asked, on average, how often had they visited the Memorial Student Center within the last two years. As shown on Table 6, slightly less than one third indicated visiting the MSC two to three times per week, and no one responding chose never as their selection.

On average, how often have you visited the Memorial Student Center within the last two years?	Percent
2 to 3 times a week	31%
Daily	22%
Once a week	19%
Once a month	18%
Once or twice a semester	10%
Never	--

Table 6: Student Visits to the MSC (n=119)

Students who indicated visiting the MSC within the last two years were also asked whether they go had gone into the MSC Flag Room. Of the 117 respondents, 83% said yes and 17% said not. Those who said they had gone or go into the MSC Flag Room were then asked how often they visit the MSC Flag Room. As shown on Table 7, about three quarters of the respondents visit monthly or less.

How often do you visited the MSC Flag Room?	Percent
Once or twice a semester	44%
Once a month	32%
Once a week	17%
2 to 3 times a week	5%
Daily	2%

Table 7: Student Visits to the MSC Flag Room (n=97)

The MSC SPO then asked the students who indicated they visited the MSC Flag room about what activities they generally engage in while in the Flag room, in a select all that apply format. As shown in Table 8, study was the most commonly selected response, followed by reflect and music. Engaging in programs/events was selected the least.

When in the Flag Room, what activities do you generally engage in? Select all that apply.	Frequency Percent
Study	81%
Reflect	29%
Music	28%
Sleep	21%
Meetings	18%
Programs/Events	6%

Table 8: Student Activities while in MSC Flag Room (n=97)

Students were asked to provide feedback regarding the MSC SPO holding programs and events in the MSC Flag Room if the events or programs would not prevent other students from entering the Flag Room. Table 9 notes that nearly half of students had no preference towards the MSC SPO holding events either monthly or weekly in the MSC Flag Room. However, more than half of the students indicated a preference, and they responded more favorably to events being held monthly than to events being held weekly in the MSC Flag Room.

If the MSC Student Programs Office sponsored events and programs in the Flag Room which would not prevent other students from entering the Flag Room during the event or program, how favorable are you toward those events being held:	Favorable	No Preference	Unfavorable
Weekly (n=115)	13%	48%	39%
Monthly (n=116)	41%	47%	13%

Table 9: Student Preference for Events/Programs Held in the MSC Flag Room

Students were also asked about their preference regarding food being offered to participants during sponsored events and programs held in the MSC Flag Room. The survey instructions informed the students that current MSC Flag Room policy asks that no food be taken into or consumed in the MSC Flag Room. Of the 116 who provided response, 37% were unfavorable towards holding events in the MSC Flag Room that may offer food, 32% indicated no preference and 31% were favorable.

Faculty/Staff Survey

Similar to the student survey, the first question asked the faculty and staff survey respondents if they were familiar with the activities and services (entertainment, events, lectures, Lost and Found, etc....) found in the MSC. Of the 291 respondents, 71% indicated they were somewhat familiar, 12% said they were very familiar and 17% stated they were not at all familiar with the activities and services found in the MSC. Survey participants were then informed that student organizations with the MSC provide various types of programs and were asked to select, in an all- that- apply- format, which program types they have attended. Table 10 illustrates faculty and staff most frequently attended performing arts and visual arts programs and least frequently attended Spirit and Camaraderie programs. The 2017 student responses to the same question are presented for easier comparison.

Student organizations within the MSC, referred to within the MSC as committees, provide the following types of programs. From the list below, please check all program types in which you have attended. (Examples are listed in parentheses).	2017 Faculty/Staff Frequency Percent (n=231)	2017 Student Frequency Percent (n=115)
Performing Arts (MSC OPAS)	82%	50%
Visual Arts (exhibition, gallery talk)	52%	39%
MSC Open House	31%	77%
Music	30%	21%
Cultural Awareness (MLK Breakfast, Salsa Dance Night, SCOLA)	20%	15%
National Affairs and Politics (Wiley, SCONA)	19%	17%
Fundraising (Poster Sale, Lost and Found Sale)	18%	34%
Service and Hosting (Whoop! 4 Troops, Angel Tree, Bonfire Memorial Tour, Kyle Field Day)	13%	24%
Film	12%	19%
Other Leadership Development (Soulful Sundays, Mi Case es Su Casa, TEDxTAMU)	8%	4%
International Culture and Travel (Jordan internships, FLI service trips to Costa Rica, Champe Fitzhugh International Honors Leadership Seminar)	5%	10%
Off-Campus Leadership Trips (Abbott Family Leadership Conference, Spencer Leadership Conference, Stark Northeast Trip, Fall Leadership Conference)	4%	6%
Spirit and Camaraderie (FLO Bowl, Mr. FLO)	2%	16%

Table 10: 2017 Respondent Attendance at MSC Programs

Next, faculty and staff were asked about how many programs they attended or participated in at the MSC during the last two years. Table 11, on the next page, shows that about two-thirds indicated they had attended one to five programs. Student responses are again provided for easier comparison; faculty and staff were nearly twice as likely as students to have reported not attending any MSC programs in the last two years.

Excluding MSC Open House, please estimate how many MSC programs you have attended/participated in in the last two years.	Faculty/Staff Percent (n=227)	Student Percent (n=115)
1 - 5	67%	71%
0	16%	9%
6 - 10	13%	11%
16 or more	2%	5%
11 - 15	2%	4%

Table 11: Student Attendance and Participation at MSC Programs

When asked if they were familiar with the student organizations (MSC committees) that are sponsored by the Memorial Student Center, 48% of the 285 faculty and staff who responded to the question answered no, 27% answered yes and 25% answered maybe. Those who indicated yes or maybe were then provided a list of MSC committees and asked to select all in which they were familiar. Table 12 shows their responses as well as the student survey responses to the same question. Like with the student survey, MSC OPAS was selected most frequently as a MSC committee which respondents were familiar. And, too, like the student survey, MSC Business Associates was one that the fewest respondents selected as a committee in which they were familiar.

From the list below, please select all the MSC committees with which you are familiar.	Faculty/Staff Frequency Percent (n=148)	Student Frequency Percent (n=79)
MSC OPAS	87%	73%
MSC Hospitality	51%	51%
MSC Town Hall	48%	42%
MSC Student Conference on National Affairs (SCONA)	39%	35%
MSC Aggie Cinema	37%	56%
MSC Visual Arts Committee (VAC)	28%	24%
MSC Freshmen in Service and Hosting (FISH)	26%	52%
MSC Committee for the Awareness of Mexican-American Culture (CAMAC)	26%	18%
MSC Fall Leadership Conference (FLC)	26%	14%
MSC Aggie Leaders of Tomorrow (ALOT)	24%	47%
MSC Woodson Black Awareness Committee (WBAC)	21%	11%
MSC LT and JW Jordan Institute for International Awareness	21%	28%
MSC Bethancourt	19%	32%
MSC Abbott Family Leadership Conference	17%	19%
MSC Freshmen Leadership International (FLI)	17%	43%
MSC LEAD	16%	27%
MSC Wiley Lecture Series	11%	47%
MSC Business Associates	3%	11%
I am not familiar with any of the above committees	3%	4%

Table 12: Campus Community Awareness of MSC Committees

Faculty and staff survey takers were then asked if they were familiar with the mission of the Memorial Student Center Student Programs Office. Of the 285 who responded, 83% answered no, 9% yes and 8% maybe; all selection response percentages were within 3% of the students' response percentages to the same query. Faculty and staff who answered yes or maybe were asked to describe the mission of the Memorial Student Center Student Programs Office and 23 provided responses. None listed the mission exactly as it is described on the MSC website (msc.tamu.edu/about-us/), however again nearly half of the responses mentioned that the mission included promoting student leadership development or student development.

Feedback regarding how often faculty and staff visited the MSC in the last two years was also requested. As noted on Table 13, nearly half the faculty and staff indicated they visited the MSC one or twice a semester, unlike the student survey in which about half indicated visiting two to three times per week or daily.

On average, how often have you visited the Memorial Student Center within the last two years?	Faculty/Staff Frequency Percent (n=284)	Student Frequency Percent (n=119)
Once or twice a semester	46%	10%
Once a month	27%	18%
Never	11%	--
Once a week	9%	19%
2 to 3 times a week	6%	31%
Daily	2%	22%

Table 13: Faculty and Staff Visits to the MSC

Faculty and staff were requested to select, in an all-that-apply format, the web-based resources they use the most for information on campus events and resources. Table 14 shows they selected TAMU calendar and Howdy Portal most often and, similar to the student survey responses, the StuAct web pages least often.

What web-based resource(s) do you use the most to get information on campus events and resources? (select all that apply)	Faculty/Staff Frequency Percent (n=214)	Student Frequency Percent (n=109)
TAMU Calendar	69%	29%
Howdy Portal	33%	71%
Facebook	27%	53%
MSC Web Page	15%	5%
Maroon Link	8%	17%
Twitter	7%	22%
StuAct Web Page	6%	4%

Table 14: Web-based Resources

Conclusions and Recommendations

Most students who responded to the survey generally reported being familiar with the programs and services offered by the MSC, and most frequently reported attending MSC Open House, music

and arts programs, and some service activities. They reported attending the civic affairs, cultural and leadership development programs sponsored by the MSC less frequently; likewise, they reported being more familiar with the committees who sponsor the more attended and familiar arts and service activity programs, and committees which involve freshmen and sophomores. The low percentage of affirmative responses regarding the students' knowledge of the MSC mission and their attempts to recite it, indicates that there could be some opportunities for the MSC to educate the student body about their mission and services to the campus. Perhaps there may be some opportunities to educate students about the overall MSC while attending some of those arts and music programs. However, due to the low four percent (4%) response rate, caution is advised regarding changes made based on only this survey's data, as well as generalizations to the Texas A&M University population as there were differences in response rate of gender and first generation in comparison to the University population.

Students who indicated using the MSC Flag room were more in favor of allowing only the more infrequent, monthly use for programs and events sponsored by the MSC Student Programs Office, and tended toward not allowing food or drink during programs and events. Again, due to the low response rate, caution is advised and the MSC may want to further assess those who routinely use the MSC Flag room prior to enabling events or programs to be held within the MSC Flag Room. Polling students in the MSC Flag room, in person, during busy use times may present a more thorough and accurate report of student opinion regarding the allowance of programs and events there, as well as whether those events should allow food or drink.

Faculty and staff responded to the survey similarly to the students regarding the MSC sponsored programs attended, as they also reported attending arts and music programs most frequently. However, faculty and staff showed more familiarity with MSC committees involved in civic/national affairs and cultural awareness than the students. As the MSC reviews its marketing campaigns of its sponsored programs and committees, their focus on web-based resources may differ depending on the intended audience. As faculty and staff and students reported using different web-based resources for information at varying levels, in some cases, MSC could consider customizing its advertising messages by web-based resource and may find that productive in attracting more of each type of audience to programs and events.

It is recommended that these results be shared with MSC committee members, executives, advisors and other interested stakeholders from outside the MSC.

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