

Facilities Customer Service Department of Recreational Sports Spring 2017

Background

The Department of Recreational Sports maintains a more than 400,000 square foot facility visited by thousands of students, faculty, staff, and family members each year. The Rec Center (or “The Rec”) includes a weight and fitness room with over 32,000 square feet after renovation, which was completed at the end of 2016. The Rec Center also includes indoor track, handball/racquetball/squash courts, an indoor climbing wall, dance/activity rooms for classes, a natatorium, an outdoor activity area, equipment check out, locker rooms, and gymnasium spaces that can be divided for basketball, volleyball, badminton, and soccer.

Staff from the Rec Center contacted Student Life Studies to assist with an assessment to gather some information from students relating to their satisfaction of the Rec Center facility spaces and equipment, and interactions with their staff. More specifically, the Rec Center staff wanted to measure the satisfaction level with facility spaces since the expansion/renovation project was completed, to learn where improvements to operations can be made to make students' experiences at the Rec Center more enjoyable. This is the third time the department has worked with Student Life Studies to concentrate on assessing the customer service, spaces and equipment within the Rec Center.

Method and Sample

The 46-question survey was developed using Qualtrics®, survey design software for creating web-based forms and databases. Seven of the questions were qualitative. Due to survey branching, not all of the respondents saw all of the questions. The data was analyzed using SPSS®, a statistical software package, and Microsoft Excel®.

For this survey, Student Life Studies pulled a random sample of 6500 students from a list 25,534 students who used the facility from January 17 through April 3, 2017. Students included in the random sample received an email invitation to take the survey on April 17th. Non-respondents were sent up to three reminders (April 20th, April 23rd, and April 25th), with a due date of April 26th, 2017. By the time of analysis, 634 people responded, a 10% response rate.

Results

Results are 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%. Tables are in descending means or frequency order of 2017 results, unless otherwise specified. Summary themes are reported in this report; the entire list can be found in a separate document. Comparisons will be made to results from the 2011 and 2013 Rec Center facilities surveys where applicable.

Respondents were asked how frequently they used the Rec Center facilities. As seen in Table 1, more than three-quarters (84%) of the respondents go at least once a week.

How frequently do you use the Student Recreation Center facilities?	Percent
3-4 times/week	37%
1-2 times/week	26%
5 or more times/week	21%
1-2 times/month	11%
1-2 times/semester	5%

Table 1: Frequency of Use (n=609)

The next question asked respondents how they rated their overall satisfaction of the newly opened and/or renovated spaces. Of the 593 who responded, 56% indicated they were satisfied, 35% were very satisfied, and 8% were neutral. Two percent (2%) of the respondents said they were dissatisfied and 1% indicated they were very dissatisfied. No one

selected the choice “I don’t know”. Those who indicated they were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied were asked for feedback as to why they made those selections. Fifteen responded, and more than half their comments mentioned that even after the renovations, those spaces were still not large enough to accommodate all those who use the spaces. Some of those comments were specific to the strength and conditioning areas. Others talked about lack of amount or quality of the equipment.

Respondents were provided a series of statements which queried their overall satisfaction with the quality, safety and cleanliness of the Rec Center and their interactions with the staff. As noted in Table 2, they were most agreeable that the facilities at the Rec Center are clean and free from hazards. Although most were still positive, respondents were least agreeable about the staff being able to answer any questions they may have.

Please rate your agreement with the following statements:	Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)	2017 Mean (sd) [n]
The facilities at the Rec Center are clean and free from hazards.	52%	42%	4%	2%	<1%	4.44 (.67) [568]
The facilities provided by the Department of Recreational Sports are important to my overall experience at Texas A&M University.	51%	37%	10%	2%	1%	4.35 (.79) [567]
The facilities provided at the Rec Center are able to meet my recreation and fitness needs.	41%	47%	7%	4%	<1%	4.25 (.76) [568]
The staff at the Rec Center are helpful.	38%	45%	15%	1%	2%	4.16 (.84) [568]
The staff at the Rec Center are able to answer any questions I have.	38%	40%	19%	3%	1%	4.09 (.89) [568]

Table 2: Overall Rec Center Satisfaction

Next, the students were provided a list of recently updated areas of the Rec Center and were asked to identify which areas they have used during their visits in an all-that-apply format. The Strength and Conditioning Areas were selected most often and very few selected none of the areas listed.

Which of the following areas of the Rec Center have you used during your visits?? (Select all that apply)	Percent
Strength & Conditioning Areas (weigh room, second and third floor cardio areas)	89%
Multi-Purpose Courts (basketball, volleyball, badminton, indoor soccer, etc.)	52%
Aquatic Facilities (pools, spas, etc.)	27%
None of the above	2%

Table 3: Rec Center Areas Visited (n=573)

For each of the areas (strength and conditioning, multi-purpose courts and aquatic facilities) that respondents indicated they used during their visits to the Rec Center, they received a set of questions regarding their experiences with each area. Those who indicated using the multi-purpose courts were asked from a select-all-that-apply list of activities which of those activities did they participate in. Of 283 responses, 59% selected basketball, 33% selected volleyball, 19% selected indoor soccer, 13% selected “other” and 11% selected badminton. Those who selected “other” were given the opportunity to provide the activity, and racquetball, dance, dodgeball, fencing and indoor climbing were listed by 34 respondents.

Those who used the multi-purpose courts were asked about how frequently they use the courts. Table 4 shows that the most frequent answer selected by nearly one-third of respondents was one to three times per month. Five times or more per week was selected least frequently.

From the statements below, which best describes how frequently you use the courts?	Percent
1-3 times/month	31%
1-3 times/semester	29%
1-2 times/week	26%
3-4 times/week	12%
5 or more times/week	3%

Table 4: Court Use (n=285)

Next, respondents who indicated using the multi-purpose courts were asked if waiting for court space ever impeded their workout. Of the 283 responses, 52% said no and 48% answered yes. Those who answered yes were then asked, on average, how long they had to wait for court space. Fifty-two percent (52%) indicated waiting 16-30 minutes, 27% said 1-15 minutes, 12% said 31-45 minutes and 9% indicated waiting more than 45 minutes.

Respondents who said they used the multi-purpose court space were then asked whether they utilized the new multi-purpose courts in the new gymnasium. Two hundred and eighty-five responded, and a majority (55%) said yes, 34% said no and 11% responded they did not know. The 156 who responded yes were asked to rate their satisfaction with the new gymnasium. Forty-seven percent (47%) indicated they were very satisfied, 39% were satisfied, 13% were neutral and 1% indicated they were dissatisfied. No one selected very dissatisfied (mean=4.32, sd=.75). Those who indicated they were dissatisfied were asked to provide comment as to why they were dissatisfied. One person chose to respond and indicated that the ceiling lights were not suitable for badminton as it blinds players when they look up during play.

All respondents who indicated they used the multi-purpose court spaces were asked about their overall satisfaction level with the Rec Center court spaces. Half (50%) of the 285 respondents indicated they were satisfied, 28% were very satisfied and 17% were neutral. Additionally, 4% indicated they were dissatisfied and 2% were very dissatisfied with the Rec Center court spaces (mean=3.98, sd=.87).

Respondents of the survey who indicated they used the aquatic facilities during their visits to the Rec Center were asked how frequently they use the pools and/or spas. As noted in Table 5 almost half of the respondents said they used the pools and/or spas one to three times per semester.

How frequently do you use the pools and/or spas?	Percent
1-3 times/semester	44%
1-2 times/week	23%
1-3 times/month	22%
3-4 times/week	8%
5 or more times/week	3%

Table 5: Frequency of Pool/Spa Use (n=153)

These respondents were also requested to select which aquatic facilities they had utilized from a select-all-that-apply list. The 50M competition pool was selected most often, and dive spa least often by the respondents, as demonstrated in Table 6 on the next page.

Which aquatic facilities have you utilized? (select all that apply)	2017 Percent n=153	2013 Percent n=86
50M Competition Pool	63%	67%
Instructional Pool	35%	31%
Diving Well	33%	47%
General Use Spa (by locker rooms)	33%	42%
Outdoor Pool	25%	59%
New Lap Pool	24%	--
Dive Spa	16%	23%

Table 6: Aquatic Facilities Use

Those who said they had used the new lap pool were asked to rate their satisfaction with it. Of the 36 who responded, 50% reported being satisfied and 47% said they were very satisfied. An additional 3% of respondents indicated they were neutral regarding their overall satisfaction with the new lap pool; no one indicated they were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied (mean=4.44, sd=.56). As no one indicated dissatisfaction, there was no response to the question regarding why they were dissatisfied.

Aquatic facilities users were also requested to provide feedback regarding their general satisfaction with the facilities. Noted in Table 7, users were generally satisfied and were most satisfied with the cleanliness, and least satisfied with the quantity of aquatic space available.

Please indicate your satisfaction with the following:	Very Satisfied (5)	Satisfied (4)	Neutral (3)	Dissatisfied (2)	Very Dissatisfied (1)	2017 Mean (sd) [n]
Cleanliness of the aquatics facilities.	46%	49%	4%	1%	--	4.41 (.62) [153]
Quality of the aquatic space available	50%	41%	8%	1%	1%	4.39 (.72) [152]
Quantity of the aquatic space available	38%	44%	13%	4%	1%	4.13 (.88) [151]

Table 7: General Satisfaction with Aquatic Facilities

Aquatic facilities users then were asked to provide their feedback regarding their experiences with the aquatic staff at the Rec Center. Responders were generally positive about the aquatics staff being helpful, knowledgeable and approachable.

Please indicate your agreement with the following statements: The Aquatic Staff are..	Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)	Mean (sd) [n]
Helpful	33%	48%	17%	1%	1%	4.11 (.80) [151]
Knowledgeable	32%	45%	19%	3%	1%	4.04 (.84) [152]
Approachable	32%	41%	25%	2%	1%	4.01 (.84) [149]

Table 8: Aquatics Staff

A follow-up question asked respondents who used the aquatic facilities about their overall satisfaction with the Rec Sports aquatics facilities. Of the 152 who responded, 53% indicated they were satisfied, 38% were very satisfied and 7% were neutral. One percent indicated they were dissatisfied and no one said they were very dissatisfied (mean=4.28, sd=.66).

Respondents who indicated they used the strength and conditioning areas were asked to define the frequency in which they used those areas. As shown in Table 9, slightly more than a third indicated using the areas three to four times per week and fewer than 10% said they use the facilities one to three times per semester.

How frequently do you use the strength and conditioning areas?	Percent
3-4 times/week	35%
1-2 times/week	22%
5 or more times/week	19%
1-3 times/month	14%
1-3 times/semester	9%

Table 9: Frequency of Use of Strength and Conditioning Areas (n=478)

Next, these responders were asked to describe their use of the strength and conditioning areas. Of the 478 respondents, 36% indicated they mostly strength train, 30% indicated performing even amounts of strength and cardio training, and 15% said they do all strength training. Another 14% of respondents indicated performing mostly cardio training and 5% said they do all cardio training. In comparison to the 2013 responses, more focus on strength training than cardio. The 2013 results were: 36% said they did even amounts of strength and cardio, 24% indicated mostly strength training, 27% said they did mostly cardio training, 9% of respondents indicated all strength training, and 3% said they did all cardio training.

Below in Table 10, shows respondents rating regarding the quality and quantity of cardio and strength equipment withing the strength and conditioning areas of Rec Sports. Overall satisfaction improved from 2013, and for most areas from the 2011 survey, except the quantity of strength equipment.

Please indicate your satisfaction with the factors listed below:	Very Satisfied (5)	Satisfied (4)	Neutral (3)	Dissatisfied (2)	Very Dissatisfied (1)	2017 Mean (sd) [n]	2013 Mean (sd) [n]	2011 Mean (sd) [n]
Quality of cardio equipment	51%	40%	8%	1%	<1%	4.41 (.69) [456]	3.94 (.96) [139]	4.22 (.73) [131]
Quality of strength equipment	51%	41%	7%	1%	<1%	4.40 (.72) [457]	4.04 (.89) [139]	4.20 (.81) [129]
Cleanliness of equipment	48%	45%	5%	2%	1%	4.37 (.72) [479]	4.16 (.74) [140]	4.24 (.70) [130]
Quantity of cardio equipment	43%	39%	11%	5%	2%	4.15 (.96) [455]	3.77 (1.02) [137]	3.76 (1.09) [131]
Quantity of strength equipment	28%	32%	16%	17%	7%	3.57 (1.25) [458]	3.54 (1.17) [137]	3.85 (1.13) [130]

Table 10: Satisfaction with Strength and Cardio Equipment

The survey then asked respondents if waiting for equipment ever impeded their workout. Of the 480 responses, 74% said yes and 26% said no. Those who answered yes were then asked how long, on average, they had to wait. Half (50%) indicated waiting 6-10 minutes, 27% said they waited less than 5 minutes and 15% said they waited 11-15 minutes. Another 6% of respondents indicated waiting 16-20 minutes and 4% said they waited more than 20 minutes.

Respondents were then requested to provide feedback regarding their experiences with the strength and conditioning staff. As shown on Table 11, on the next page, responders were generally positive about the strength and conditioning staff being helpful, and knowledgeable but were slightly less positive about the staff being described as approachable.

Please indicate your agreement with the following statements: The Strength and Conditioning staff are...	Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)	Mean (sd) [n]
Helpful	35%	41%	22%	2%	1%	4.07 (.83) [480]
Knowledgeable	29%	46%	24%	1%	--	4.02 (.76) [479]
Approachable	31%	37%	25%	5%	1%	3.93 (.92) [477]

Table 11: Strength and Conditioning Staff

Next those who said they use the strength and conditioning areas were asked whether they had used the Strength and Conditioning Room (weight room) since the opening of the renovated and expanded space January 2017. Eighty-nine percent (89%) of the 481 who responded said yes and 11% said no. Those who said yes were asked to rate their overall satisfaction of the newly opened spaces. Of the 429 who responded 48% were very satisfied, 42% were satisfied, and 5% were neutral. Four percent (4%) indicated they were dissatisfied with the renovated and expanded space and 1% were very dissatisfied (mean=4.32, sd=.82). Those respondents who were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied were asked to provide comment as to why and 20 responded with comments. Most stated that the new areas are still too small, do not have enough or the right kind of weight equipment or the equipment is in disrepair.

All survey respondents were asked if they had any comments on changes to the Student Recreation Center since new facility spaces were opened. One hundred and eighty four provided comments, including many who detailed very specific changes or lack of changes that have occurred with the renovation. Quite a few commented that they liked the new spaces, and enjoyed the results of the renovations. The majority of the comments focused on the renovated strength and cardio areas, with some indicating they liked the changes to the weight room and equipment. Others however thought there was not enough weight equipment or specifically wanted different types of weight equipment or thought it should be arranged differently for more optimum use. Some others said that even with the renovation the wait times for both the weight and cardio equipment was still too long and the spaces still too small. A few indicated there was too much cardio equipment and not enough weight and strength training equipment. Many commented that too much of the weight and cardio equipment was in disrepair and were not repaired on a timely basis.

Others commented about the renovated court and pool spaces. Most comments regarding the court spaces focused on wanting more court spaces, a better balance between types of court spaces for basketball and badminton and more space for soccer. Comments regarding the new pool and renovated pool spaces were positive, however a few recommendations were to add lockers near the pools and provide online pool use schedules.

The last survey question asked all respondents if there was anything that would make their experience at the Student Recreation Center more enjoyable. Like the responses to the previous question many of the 207 comments focused on recommended additions to the weight equipment, wanting more space for weights and lifting, wanting broken equipment fixed and wanting more cardio machines of various types. Again, they would like reduced wait times. Some expressed wanting more lockers near the weight room or pool areas, better signs for equipment use and weights (labels). Again, comments regarding the court space generally surrounded its use; some wanted more space for basketball, others more spaces for badminton and soccer.

A few respondents expressed a desire to improve staff approachability and knowledge of equipment use, or general wellness and fitness. Some commented they would like to see more free exercise classes, free racquetball court and rock climbing wall use. There were a few specific comments about wanting the couch (sitting area) returned near the rock

climbing wall. Overall, quite a few noted that the facility is too crowded and expressed concern about future use with the continued growth of the University.

Following in Table 12 are the demographics of all students who used the Rec Center between January 17th and April 4th 2017, and the respondents to the survey. Respondents are representative of all students who used the Rec Center (+/-3%), except a greater percentage of females answered the survey than used the Rec Center.

Demographic Category	Survey Respondents	All Rec Center Student Users
Sex	n=633	N=25534
Male	52%	56%
Female	49%	44%
Classification	n=630	n=25534
Senior	29%	32%
Sophomore	21%	21%
Junior	19%	20%
Masters	11%	8%
Freshman	10%	13%
Doctoral	8%	5%
Veterinarian, First –Fourth year	1%	1%
Postbac Non-degree	<1%	<1%
Medical, First –Fourth year	<1%	<1%
Pharmacy, First-Third year	--	<1%
Postbac UG	--	<1%
UG Nondegree	--	<1%
College	n=633	n=25534
College of Engineering	27%	28%
Liberal Arts	12%	14%
Mays Business School	12%	12%
Education and Human Development	12%	12%
Agriculture	11%	11%
Veterinary Medicine	7%	5%
Architecture	4%	5%
Science	4%	5%
General Studies	4%	5%
Geosciences	3%	2%
Public Health	1%	1%
Bush School of Government	1%	<1%
Nursing	1%	<1%
Exchange	<1%	<1%
Medicine	<1%	<1%
Dentistry	--	<1%
Galveston	--	<1%
Ethnicity	n=633	n=25534
White (Only)	60%	58%
Hispanic or Latino of any race (NEW)	18%	20%
International	11%	8%
Asian Only (NEW)	5%	7%
Black Only +2 or more/1Black (NEW)	3%	4%
2 or More/Excluding Black (NEW)	1%	3%
American Indian Only (NEW)	<1%	<1%
Unknown or Not Reported	<1%	<1%
Native Hawaiian Only (NEW)	--	<1%

Table 12: Demographics

Conclusions and Recommendations

Because of the small response rate, care should be taken when trying to generalize the results of this survey to all Rec members. Given the number of respondents and the population size, the overall margin of error (or confidence interval) for this survey is +/- 4 at the 95% confidence level. Overall, Rec Center users who responded to this survey were generally satisfied, as 88% agreed or strongly agreed that the facilities provided at the Rec Center were clean, met their recreation and fitness needs and were important to their overall experience at Texas A&M University. So, considering the margin of error due to the response rate, one could expect the Rec Center user population agreement to be between 92% and 84% regarding their general satisfaction. More than three-quarters also agreed or strongly agreed that the staff at the Rec Center were helpful and were able to answer members' questions, however, the survey respondents found the staff within the strength and conditioning areas and the aquatics areas less approachable than helpful and knowledgeable. The Rec Center may want to review and identify behaviors of staff in these areas that may contribute to the perception that student members find them less approachable, and provide staff training and skill practice to enhance behaviors that may increase members' comfort in approaching staff for help.

Respondents were also generally satisfied with the expansion and updates to the strength and conditioning areas, aquatic facilities and the court spaces since the renovation. However, feedback also suggested the respondents found that the expansion was not enough to keep up with the demand as the University grows. Specifically both those groups of students who regularly use strength and conditioning and court areas still found wait times frustrating and would like to see them reduced in order have lesser impediments to their workouts and decrease the time it takes to workout. And, like in 2013 and 2011, those respondents who used the weight and cardio equipment in the strength and conditioning area continued to report that too much equipment was inoperable and time to repair the equipment too long. The Rec Center should examine how much equipment meets this criteria and review and address the time it takes to repair broken equipment, which may reduce wait times in the strength and conditioning areas and improve users' satisfaction.

Similar to the response regarding the newly renovated strength and conditioning areas, the respondents generally were pleased with the addition of the new gymnasium and the new pool facilities. However, some would like to see adjustments in how the court spaces use allocation is managed (use for basketball, badminton and indoor soccer); staff may want to complete further assessments to pinpoint ways to more equitably manage the allocation of those spaces for the various activities needed. Likewise, some users of the pool areas would like to see more lockers near-by for their use specifically, and staff may again want to assess the feasibility of this request.

As noted, the response to this survey by student members using the Rec Center during the first months of the spring 2017 semester was quite low. The Rec Center staff should consider ways to address the low response rate, if staff wants to continue assessing their members' experiences with the Rec Center facilities using an electronic survey. Response rate may have been influenced by the time of year the survey was distributed, as it was sent near the end of the spring semester when students are busy and generally, receive quite a few surveys from academic and other co-curricular areas at Texas A&M. In the future, sending out similar surveys during the Fall semester, perhaps a month or so into the semester, may contribute to a better response rate, as would marketing the survey to the members while they visit the Rec Center, through signage, social media and word-of-mouth (staff promoting the survey).

While summary themes were included in this report, the Department of Recreational Sports is encouraged to read all the qualitative comments for a fuller understanding of the feedback from the student members. It is also recommended these results be shared other interested stakeholders within and outside the Rec Center.

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