

MaroonLink Student Engagement Support Grant

Department of Student Activities

2017-2018

Background

The Department of Student Activities was awarded a Division of Student Affairs' (DSA) College Completion Grant which funds the MaroonLink Student Engagement Support Graduate Assistant service and support based position within the Department of Student Activities. The position focuses on supporting University constituencies (students, student organizations, DSA departments, and faculty) in their use of MaroonLink to further the mission, vision, and goals of the University and Division of Student Affairs. Features available in MaroonLink can be used by individual students and student organizations alike. In order to take full advantage of MaroonLink, users must be introduced and oriented to its various features, have access to user-support documentation, and have a legitimate reason to utilize the online platform. The responsibilities for this Graduate Assistant position is to focus on user support and market MaroonLink, so that campus entities can maximize the software to promote and/or assess student engagement, retention, and persistence through graduation.

The MaroonLink Support Graduate Assistant contacted Student Life Studies to assist in measuring student connection, engagement, involvement and leading through their use of MaroonLink. Beginning with the fall 2016 Texas A&M Class of 2020 cohort, defined as those first time, full-time students incoming with less than 30 credit hours) and their various MaroonLink user data was to be analyzed to establish a baseline, and subsequently reviewed and compared by term and at annual intervals. This is an effort to ascertain the effects of increased user support for and marketing of MaroonLink to students, and what influence MaroonLink may have on students' connection, engagement, and leadership while at Texas A&M University. This is the second year Student Life Studies has assisted Student Activities with this assessment.

Method and Sample

Demographic data for the Class of 2020 cohort was accessed through University records, and comparisons were made to student user data accessed through user reports (all users, attendance by event, organization rosters, self-reported experiences, service hours and involved users) downloaded from MaroonLink. The data was analyzed using SPSS®, a statistical software package, Microsoft Excel® and Microsoft Word®. The following were the date time spans used for the respective terms reported: fall 2016 was August 21 through December 7th, 2016; spring 2017 was December 8, 2016 through May 17, 2017; summer 2017 was May 18 through August 18, 2017, and fall 2017 was August 19 through December 15, 2017.

Results

Results will be reported as frequency percentages for the number of people (n) represented. For ease of reading, frequency percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole percent, so totals may not add up to exactly 100%. Frequency percentages between 0.1 and 0.4 will be noted as <1%. Tables are in descending frequency order unless otherwise specified. Additional detailed demographic analysis and cross-tabbed analysis for connection, engagement and leading can be found in the attached analysis documents.

To demonstrate that the Class of 2020 cohort developed an understanding how MaroonLink can assist them in identifying engagement opportunities on campus, baseline data was developed to measure the number of those students using MaroonLink prior to beginning support and marketing efforts from fall 2016 login records in MaroonLink. Subsequent terms were also evaluated for login behavior. Table 1 shows the

number and frequency percentage of the Class of 2020 cohort who last logged into to MaroonLink during fall 2016, spring 2017, and fall 2017 terms. The first term showed the greatest percentage of the Class of 2020 cohort logging in.

Term	Term range	N	Last Logged - in	Logged %
Fall 2016*	August 21 to Dec 7, 2016	8423	3933	47%
Spring 2017	Dec 8, 2016 to May 17, 2017	8423	2848	34%
Fall 2017**	August 19 to Dec 15, 2017	7767	1947	25%

Table 1: Fall 2016 Freshmen Logged into MaroonLink

*Includes 267 UINs that logged into MaroonLink prior to fall 2016 date range

**Does not include 656 students that did not re-enroll the following fall

At the beginning of the project, Student Activities also set a program outcome that 50% of the Class of 2020 cohort would have logged in by the end of the spring 2017 semester (May 17, 2017). As shown in Table 2, 59% of the cohort logged in at least once by the end of the spring 2017 semester.

Logged into MaroonLink at least once by Unique UIN	N	%
Fall 2016	3933	47%
Fall 2016 to Spring 2017	4981	59%

Table 2: Program Outcome for Logging In

Table 3, on the next page, shows the demographic frequency percentage of the Class of 2020 cohort for those members of the cohort who logged into MaroonLink fall 2016 to spring 2017. A greater percentage of females than males, and fewer first generation and engineering majors logged in than those who never logged in. Frequencies are displayed in descending order of those who logged in. Additional demographic frequencies by term, including summer 2017 and fall 2017, can be found in the attached analysis documents.

Demographic:	Logged In % (n=4981)	Never Logged in % (n=3442)	All (n=8423)
Academic College			
Engineering	33%	37%	36%
Business	12%	10%	11%
Liberal Arts	10%	7%	8%
Education and Human Development	9%	7%	8%
General Studies	9%	9%	9%
Science	8%	9%	8%
Agriculture and Life Sciences	8%	7%	8%
Veterinary Medicine	7%	8%	7%
Geosciences	2%	1%	1%
Architecture	2%	3%	3%
Rural Public Health	1%	1%	1%
Ethnic Origin			
White Only	61%	60%	61%
Hispanic or Latino of any Race	23%	23%	23%
Asian Only	8%	9%	8%
Black Only + 2 or more/1 Black	5%	4%	4%
2 or more/excluding Black	3%	2%	3%
International	1%	2%	1%
Unknown or not reported	<1%	<1%	<1%
American Indian Only	<1%	<1%	<1%
Native Hawaiian Only	--	<1%	<1%
Sex			
Female	52%	46%	48%
Male	48%	54%	52%
First Generation Status			
Not First Generation	77%	72%	74%
First Generation	22%	26%	24%
Unknown	1%	2%	2%

Table 3: MaroonLink Login Demographics 2016-2017

A baseline for engagement was established in fall 2016 by the number and percentage of the Class of 2020 cohort attending events in which attendance was recorded through MaroonLink. The same records were tracked in subsequent terms through fall 2017 and those comparisons are shown in Table 4. Please note that fall 2017 frequency percentage event attendance was based on those within the Class of 2020 cohort who re-enrolled (n=7767). Fall 2017 shows growth in the use of MaroonLink to record members of the Class of 2020 cohort attendance at an event.

Event Attendance			
Term	Term range	Attended Event (n)	Attended Event (%)
Fall 2016*	Aug 21, 2016 to Dec 8, 2016	860	10%
Spring 2017	Dec 8, 2016 to May 17, 2017	900	11%
Fall 2017**	Aug 19, 2017 to Dec 15, 2017	1242	16%

Table 4: Class of 2020 Cohort Event Attendance Recorded in MaroonLink

*Includes 267 UINs that logged into MaroonLink out of date range

**Excludes 656 students from 2020 cohort that did not re-enroll in Fall 2017

Table 5 highlights the demographics comparison of those within the Class of 2020 cohort attending an event whose attendance was recorded through MaroonLink and those not attending an event for fall 2016/spring 2017. A higher percentage of females, Latinx, Asian and Black students and first generation students were recorded as attending events than those recorded not attending an event. Likewise, a lower percent of White students and males were recorded attending an event, than did not attend events. Frequency is displayed in descending order of attending an event.

Demographic - Event attendance	Attended event % (n=1554)	Did not Attend % (n=6869)	Total n (n=8423)
Academic College			
Engineering	32%	37%	36%
Business	12%	11%	11%
Liberal Arts	10%	8%	8%
Science	9%	8%	8%
Agriculture and Life Sciences	9%	8%	8%
Veterinary Medicine	9%	7%	7%
Education and Human Development	8%	8%	8%
General Studies	6%	10%	9%
Architecture	3%	3%	3%
Geosciences	1%	1%	1%
Rural Public Health	1%	1%	1%
Ethnic Origin			N
White	47%	64%	61%
Hispanic or Latinx of any Race	29%	22%	23%
Asian	14%	7%	8%
Black	7%	4%	4%
Multiracial	3%	3%	3%
International	1%	1%	1%
American Indian	<1%	<1%	<1%
Native Hawaiian Only	<1%	<1%	<1%
Unknown or not reported	<1%	<1%	<1%
Sex			
Female	62%	45%	48%
Male	38%	55%	52%
First Generation Status			
Not First Generation	69%	76%	6259
First Generation	30%	22%	2003
Unknown	30%	70%	161

Table 5: Event Attendance Demographics 2016-2017

Measuring student engagement continued though measuring the number of recorded approved service hours and self-reported experiences in MaroonLink. Tables 6 and 7, on the next page, show the number of approved service hours and self-reported experiences, respectively, in MaroonLink by the Class of 2020 cohort by term fall 2016 through the end of fall 2017 semester. Note that the total number of the Class of 2020 cohort is reduced in the fall 2017 term data by the number of those students who did not persist through to fall 2017. There were few approved service hours and self-reported experiences in MaroonLink for the cohort.

Service Hours	Fall 2016	Spring 2017	Fall 2017
Did not record approved service hours	100% (n=8419)	99.7% (n=8398)	99.7% (n=7744)
Recorded approved service hours	<1% (n=4)	.3% (n=25)	.3% (n=23)

Table 6: Class of 2020 Cohort Service Hours Recorded by Term

Self- Reported Experiences	Fall 2016	Spring 2017	Fall 2017
No self-reported experiences	100% (n=8423)	100% (n=8423)	100% (n=7764)
Self-reported experiences	0% (n=0)	<1% (n=0)	<1% (n=3)

Table 7: Class of 2020 Cohort Self-reported Experiences by Term

To measure student engagement and leadership, those within the Class of 2020 cohort who were recorded as involved members and/or as leaders of a registered student organization and MSC committee in MaroonLink are noted in Table 8. Students are uniquely represented within the table; if a student was a member or leader of one or more organizations, they are only represented once. Also, the fall 2017 data is based on those students within the cohort retained. Recorded involvement dropped 13% from fall 2016 to fall 2017.

	Fall 2016 Organization Involvement		Spring 2017 Organization Involvement		Fall 2017 Organization Involvement	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Organizational Involvement						
No record	6627	79%	7153	85%	7181	93%
Recorded involvement	1796	21%	1270	15%	586	8%
Total	8423	100%	8423	100%	7767	100%

Table 8: Class of 2020 Cohort Student Organization Involvement by Term

However, 37% (n=3114) of the cohort (n=8423) were involved in an organization at any time within fall 2016 through fall 2017.

On the next page, in Table 9, the demographic frequency of the Class of 2020 cohort recorded within MaroonLink as involved in an organization for fall 2016 through spring 2017 are presented in comparison to those not recorded as involved in an organization. The profiles are similar, except the percentage of females recorded as involved is higher than those not recorded within MaroonLink as involved. Also, the percentage of first generation students recorded as involved is slightly lower than those not involved. Frequency is displayed in descending order of recorded involvement.

Demographic	Recorded Involvement % (n=2706)	No Recorded Involvement % (n=5717)	All (n=8423)
Academic College			
Engineering	34%	37%	36%
Liberal Arts	11%	7%	8%
Business	11%	10%	11%
General Studies	9%	9%	9%
Education and Human Development	8%	8%	8%
Veterinary Medicine	8%	7%	7%
Agriculture and Life Sciences	8%	8%	8%
Science	7%	9%	8%
Architecture	2%	3%	3%
Geosciences	1%	1%	1%
Rural Public Health	1%	1%	1%
Ethnic Origin			
White	61%	60%	61%
Hispanic or Latinx of any Race	23%	23%	23%
Asian Only	9%	8%	8%
Black	4%	4%	4%
Multi Racial	2%	3%	3%
International	1%	1%	1%
Unknown or not reported	<1%	<1%	<1%
American Indian	<1%	<1%	<1%
Native Hawaiian	<1%	<1%	<1%
Sex			
Female	53%	46%	48%
Male	47%	54%	52%
First Generation Status			
Not First Generation	76%	73%	74%
First Generation	22%	25%	24%
Unknown	2%	2%	2%

Table 9: Demographics- Organization Involvement 2016-2017

Table 10, on the next page, highlights the different roles (positions) recorded in MaroonLink in which the Class of 2020 cohort held in their organizations by term (fall 2016 through fall 2017). Although the number of members recorded in MaroonLink fell, the number of those who held chief student leader and treasurer roles increased. Students are uniquely represented within the table by role; if a student was a member and a leader within one or more organizations, they will be represented only once per role (position).

	Fall 2016		Spring 2017		Fall 2017	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Member	1795	21%	1255	15%	561	7%
General Officer (all)	67	1%	93	1%	101	1%
MSC Committee Member	20	0%	14	0%	5	0%
Treasurer	12	0%	38	0%	34	0%
Chief Student Leader	11	0%	8	0%	20	0%

Table 10: Student Involvement – Organization Role (Position) by Term

Tables 11, below, shows student involvement cross-tabbed with event attendance recorded in MaroonLink from fall 2016 through the end of fall 2017. Of the 8423 students who began with the Class of 2020 cohort in fall 2016, 1226 (15%) of them were involved and attended at least one event recorded in MaroonLink.

		Not involved	Involved	Total
Did not attend event	N	4093	1888	5981
	%	68.4%	31.6%	100.0%
Attended at least 1 event	N	1216	1226	2442
	%	49.8%	50.2%	100.0%
Total	N	5309	3114	8423
	%	63.0%	37.0%	100.0%

Table 11: Cross-tab Student Involvement & Attended Events

The Class of 2020 cohort's persistence of those involved and attending an event as recorded in MaroonLink was also evaluated. As shown in tables 12 and 13, on the next page, those recorded in MaroonLink as involved in an organization, and those attending at least one event were retained at slightly higher rates than those whose involvement or event attendance was not recorded in MaroonLink.

**Involved/Not involved within fall 2016 to fall 2017 * Retention
from Fall 2016 to Fall 2017 Crosstabulation**

	Retention from Fall 2016 to Fall 2017		Total
	Not retained	Retained	
Not involved	527 9.9%	4782 90.1%	5309 100.0%
Involved	129 4.1%	2985 95.9%	3114 100.0%
Total	656 7.8%	7767 92.2%	8423 100.0%

Table 12: Class of 2020 Cohort Persistence: Involved

**Did not attend/Attended at least one event within fall 2016 to fall
2017 * Retention from Fall 2016 to Fall 2017 Crosstabulation**

	Retention from Fall 2016 to Fall 2017		Total
	Not retained	Retained	
Did not attend event	591 9.9%	5390 90.1%	5981 100.0%
Attended at least 1 event	65 2.7%	2377 97.3%	2442 100.0%
Total	656 7.8%	7767 92.2%	8423 100.0%

Table 13: Class of 2020 Cohort Persistence: Event Attendance

Conclusions and Recommendations

Overall the analysis provided in this report showed that the Class of 2020 cohort use of MaroonLink to record connection, engagement and leading has increased since the baseline was established in fall 2016. The marketing and support efforts of MaroonLink through the provision of a graduate student funded by the DSA College Completion grant seems to have contributed to a greater use of MaroonLink by the cohort. However, grant administrators may want continue tracking the Class of 2020 cohort use throughout their time at Texas A&M University, as well as add another cohort, perhaps the Class of 2022, for comparison of use and record continued growth of MaroonLink as a valuable tool to record connection, engagement and leadership by Texas A&M students.

In order to continue analyzing students’ use of MaroonLink, term parameters need to be agreed upon and set for ensuring timely downloading of data reports from MaroonLink, and most importantly login data reports. And as the Class of 2020 cohort leadership roles grow, other parameters may need reviewing that are more relevant indicators of the MaroonLink use by students in leadership roles.

As this data regarding this student cohort’s use of MaroonLink continues to be evaluated at annual intervals, additional assessment of those within the cohort who choose not to use MaroonLink would also provide

valuable insight. Creating a survey, focus group or other means to inquire if students who do not use MaroonLink are otherwise engaged, connected and leading their fellow students while at Texas A&M and could indicate other technological supports these students may be using to record their efforts. It may also show ways Student Activities can further reach these students to encourage MaroonLink use if these needs are not being met.

It is recommended the data presented in this report be shared with all those interested in the student connection, engagement and leading as recorded with MaroonLink use within the Division of Student Affairs, the MaroonLink Governance Committee as well as Student Activities. The attached analysis document provides more in-depth data regarding the use of the product by various demographics and may provide more insight on how the use of MaroonLink supports students of underrepresented demographics at Texas A&M University.

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