

Commuter Student Survey

The Commuter Student Survey was created to better understand issues of importance to commuter students' including transportation, housing arrangements, involvement on campus, and resources provided by Off-Campus Housing. For the purposes of this survey, a commuter student is considered to be any student who does not live in an on-campus residence hall or in Greek housing.

An online survey was administered to both undergraduate and graduate commuter students from April 28, 2010 through May 7, 2010. The full survey is appended to the end of this memo (see page 7). All commuter students (approximately 30,000) are automatically subscribed to a commuter student listserv so that listserv was used to invite students to participate in the survey. Students who completed the survey were entered into a drawing to receive one of 70 prizes (20 - \$5 Student Union meal cards and 50 - one-hour parking garage passes).

Usable survey responses totaled 1505, about 5% of the commuter student population. This response rate does not allow for generalizable statements from the data about the commuter student population as a whole, but the responses can be very useful for informing certain programmatic decisions. Table 1 contains the demographic information of the survey respondents.

Table 1. Respondent demographics

		Number	Percent*
Transferred to the UA from another institution within the past year?	Yes	123	8
	No	1382	92
Class Level	Freshman	110	7
	Sophomore	217	14
	Junior	336	22
	Senior	410	27
	Continuing education student	348	23
	Graduate student	84	6
	College	Agriculture & Life Sciences	154
Architecture and Landscape Architecture		24	2
Colleges of Letters, Arts and Sciences/Undecided		68	5
Education		72	5
Eller College of Management		157	10
Engineering		148	10
Fine Arts		89	6
Humanities		113	8
Medicine		20	1
Nursing		6	<1
Pharmacy		8	1
Public Health		55	4
Science		321	21
Social & Behavioral Sciences		270	18
Race/Ethnicity		African American/Black	36
	Asian/Pacific Islander	132	9
	Hispanic/Latino	204	14
	Multiracial	45	3
	Native American/American Indian	25	2
	White	893	59
	Other	36	2
	Prefer not to respond	134	9

Source: 2010 Commuter Student Survey

*Column percents for each demographic might not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Findings

The remainder of this report examines commuter students' modes of transportation, housing arrangements, involvement on campus, and use of Off-Campus Housing resources.

Transportation

The majority of respondents travel to campus by car (52%) followed by biking (20%), walking (11%), and public transportation (i.e., Sun Tran) (7%). Less than five percent of respondents reach campus via shuttle/van provided by their apartment complex (4%), Cat Tran (2%), motorcycle (1%), skateboard/scooter (<1%), or other means (2%) such as carpooling or getting a ride.

Respondents' commute distance and time varied widely. Students travelled the following distances to reach campus from their homes: 16% at <1 mile; 43% at 1–4.9 miles; 25% at 5–11.9 miles; and 16% at 12 or more miles. Commuting time was also varied with only 21% of respondents reaching campus under 10 minutes and the majority reaching campus in 10–29 minutes (60%). It takes 15% of respondents 30–49 minutes to get to campus and only 3% have 50+ minute commute.

Housing

Almost three-quarters of all commuter student respondents pay rent for their housing (71%) while 12% own their home and 17% live in housing where they do not pay rent. Of those who do rent their homes (N=1065), 45% live in an apartment with one or more bedrooms and 30% rent a house. Table 2 outlines all respondents' living arrangements.

Table 2. Respondent living arrangements

Which of the following are applicable to your living situation? (Check all that apply)	Percent N=1505
I live with other students.	44
I live with a husband/wife/domestic partner/significant other.	24
I live with parent(s), relative(s), or guardian(s).	18
I live alone.	15
I live with roommates who are not students.	9
I live with my child/children.	6

Source: 2010 Commuter Student Survey

Respondents with children

Of the 93 respondents who indicated living with children, most reported having one (55%), two (29%), or three (10%) children. Forty-two percent of respondents with children had moved to a new housing situation while being a UA student, but the majority indicated using resources other than Off-Campus Housing's housing locator services (59%) and 34% were unaware that these services were even available.

Respondents who have children living with them were mostly unaware of the family-friendly areas offered at the Student Union Memorial Center (82% and 83% did not know about the lactation room and Kid's Corner respectively), but 69% indicated they would be somewhat or very likely to use childcare services if they were offered at UA.

Involvement on campus

During the past semester, most respondents only participated in on-campus activities, programs, or events "a few times" (39%). Eighteen percent participated in activities "a few times a month" while 24% were involved in programming once or multiple times a week. Finally, in the last semester, 19% of respondents had never participated in any on-campus offerings.

Table 3 indicates the types of on-campus events respondents are most likely to attend during the semester with 7% indicating they would not attend any of these on-campus events. "Other" responses included art exhibits, theatre productions, career fairs, and the recreation center.

Table 3. On-campus events respondents are most likely to attend

What type of <u>on-campus events</u> are you most likely to attend during the semester? (Check all that apply)	Percent N=1505
Student clubs and organizations	44
Lectures/speakers	43
Athletics	39
Concerts	34
Movies	23
Recreational activities (e.g., intramurals, club sports)	21
Leadership development workshops	11
Dances	8
Other	7
I would not attend any of these on-campus events.	7
Student Union Game Room	6

Source: 2010 Commuter Student Survey

For the most part, commuter student respondents were not interested in participating in commuter-specific events. Respondents indicated “not likely” or “not at all likely” to attend/participate in the following activities: commuter advocacy meetings (79%); “Good morning, Commuter” breakfast (57%); “Good evening, Commuter” coffee hour (65%); and commuter-specific workshops (e.g., car/bike tips, parking on campus, managing finances, landlord negotiation) (68%). For each of these commuter-specific activities, an additional 7-13% indicated they did not know if they would be interested in attending/participating. The only commuter-specific offering that respondents indicated they would be “likely” or “very likely” to use was campus event discounts specifically for commuters (66%).

Respondents were very consistent on their availability to participate in on-campus activities. For all seven days of the week, 19-23% of respondents indicated mornings were the best time to attend activities while 39-44% responded that afternoons were the best time. Evenings were similar to afternoons with 37-45% indicating that was the best time to attend on-campus programming. The only exceptions were Saturday and Sunday evenings with fewer respondents indicating this was a good programming time (30% and 27% respectively).

Primary barriers to participation for the 1505 respondents were the following: academics (38%), work/employment (23%), inconvenient date/time (12%), family responsibilities (7%), and parking difficulties (7%).

Use of Off-Campus Housing resources

The vast majority of respondents had not used any of the resources provided by Off-Campus Housing including apartment rushes (96%), employee assistance by phone, email, or in-person (95%), roommate listings on their website (91%), annual housing fair (90%), the resource guide (83%), and the housing listing on their website (74%).

If Off-Campus Housing were to try to reach students regarding programming and resource opportunities, the majority of respondents preferred to be contacted by email (88%). Additional preferred methods include listservs (31%), on-campus posters/flyers (21%), word of mouth (21%), and Facebook groups/pages (17%).

Conclusions

The results of this survey highlight that commuter students are a difficult group to engage in co-curricular opportunities due to limited availability when on campus and conflicting priorities. While a third or more of respondents indicated interest in on-campus activities such as student organizations, lectures/speakers, athletics, and concerts, most commuter students have commute times to campus of 10-30 minutes which may limit the number of times they can travel to campus for non-class related activities. The desire to engage in campus activities also seems to be lacking due to these limitations or perhaps regardless of them. While commuter students may have to live off-campus for financial reasons, many choose to do so purposefully and for numerous reasons may elect not to engage in campus offerings.

The results of the Commuter Student Survey are not unusual for this population, but the information regarding specific Off-Campus Housing resource offerings indicates that perhaps UA commuter students are not aware of the programs and services provided. Marketing efforts of the office should be examined as well as exploring programming and support resources that commuter students might partake in. At present, there seems to be a mismatch in what students would be willing to engage in and the efforts that Off-Campus Housing is providing or considering.

Appendix: Copy of Commuter Student Survey

Page - Commuter Student Survey

Welcome to the Commuter Student Survey! Thank you for your participation in this 5-minute survey. The information you provide will help Off-Campus Housing better serve the 20,000 commuter students at the University of Arizona. For the purposes of this survey, a commuter student is any student who does not live in an on-campus residence hall or in Greek housing. All information collected through this survey will remain confidential. Those who complete the survey will be given the option to enter a drawing to receive one of the following:

- 20 - \$5 Student Union Meal Cards
- 50 one-hour parking garage passes

By clicking on the "Next" button below, you are agreeing that you have freely volunteered to complete this survey and you have the option to end the survey at any time without penalty. Should you have any questions about this survey, please contact Kharisma Montes de Oca, montesd@email.arizona.edu.

Required answers: 0 Allowed answers: 0

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Q1 Transportation

What is your primary means for getting to campus?

Drive[Code = 1]

Bike[Code = 2]

Walk[Code = 3]

Cat Tran[Code = 4]

Motorcycle/moped[Code = 5]

Public transportation (Sun Tran)[Code = 6]

Shuttle/van provided by apartment complex[Code = 7]

Skateboard/scooter[Code = 8]

Other (please specify)[Code = 9] [TextBox]

Required answers: 1 Allowed answers: 1

Q2 How far do you live from campus?

Less than 1 mile[Code = 1]

1.0 - 2.9 miles[Code = 2]

3.0 - 4.9 miles[Code = 3]

5.0 - 7.9 miles[Code = 4]

8.0 - 11.9 miles[Code = 5]

12.0 - 14.9 miles[Code = 6]

15 miles or more[Code = 7]

Required answers: 1 Allowed answers: 1

Q3 How long does it typically take you to travel to campus?

Less than 10 minutes[Code = 1]

10 - 19 minutes[Code = 2]

20 - 29 minutes[Code = 3]

30 - 39 minutes[Code = 4]

40 - 49 minutes[Code = 5]

50 or more minutes[Code = 6]

Required answers: 1

Allowed answers: 1

Q4 **Housing**

Which statement best describes your current living arrangement?

I pay rent for my housing.[Code = 1]

I own my home.[Code = 2]

I live in housing where I do not pay rent. [Code = 3]

Required answers: 1

Allowed answers: 1

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Q5 Which option best describes the type of housing you currently rent?

Apartment with one or more bedrooms[Code = 1]

Studio apartment[Code = 2]

Single room within a house[Code = 3]

Condominium[Code = 4]

Duplex[Code = 5]

Townhouse[Code = 6]

House[Code = 7]

Other (please specify)[Code = 8] [TextBox]

Required answers: 1

Allowed answers: 1

Display if Q4='I pay rent for my housing.'

Q6 Which of the following are applicable to your living situation? (Check all that apply)

I live alone.[Code = 1]

I live with other students.[Code = 2]

I live with roommates who are not students.[Code = 3]

I live with parents(s), relative(s), or guardian(s).[Code = 4]

I live with a husband/wife/domestic partner/significant other.[Code = 5]

I live with my child/children.[Code = 6]

Required answers: 1

Allowed answers: 6

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Display if Q6='I live with my child/children.'

Q7 How many children live with you?

1[Code = 1]

2[Code = 2]

3[Code = 3]
4[Code = 4]
5[Code = 5]
6[Code = 6]
<i>Required answers: 1 Allowed answers: 1</i>

Q8 Since you have been a student at UA, has your family moved to a new housing situation?
Yes[Code = 1]
No[Code = 2]
<i>Required answers: 1 Allowed answers: 1</i>

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Display if Q6='I live with my child/children.'

Q9 In your move, did you use any of the housing locator services offered by the Off-Campus Housing?
Yes [Code = 1]
No, I used other resources to find my home.[Code = 2]
No, I was unaware that these services were available.[Code = 3]
<i>Required answers: 1 Allowed answers: 1</i>

Display if Q8='Yes'

Q10 If childcare services were offered for children of UA students, how likely would you be to use these services?
Very likely[Code = 3]
Somewhat likely[Code = 2]
Not at all likely[Code = 1]
I do not know.[Code = 0]
<i>Required answers: 1 Allowed answers: 1</i>

Q11 Did you know that the Student Union Memorial Center currently has a lactation room on the 4th floor?
Yes[Code = 1]
No[Code = 2]
<i>Required answers: 1 Allowed answers: 1</i>

Q12 If offered at the Student Union Memorial Center, would you use a lactation room?
Yes[Code = 1]
No[Code = 2]
Not applicable[Code = 3]
<i>Required answers: 1 Allowed answers: 1</i>

Q13 Did you know that the Student Union Memorial Center currently has a Kid's Corner on the 4th floor?
Yes[Code = 1]
No[Code = 2]
<i>Required answers: 1 Allowed answers: 1</i>

Q14 If offered at the Student Union Memorial Center, would you use a Kid's Corner?

Yes[Code = 1]

No[Code = 2]

Required answers: 1

Allowed answers: 1

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Q15 **Campus Involvement**

In the past semester, how often have you participated in on-campus activities, programs, or events?

A few times a week[Code = 1]

Once a week[Code = 2]

A few times a month[Code = 3]

A few times a semester[Code = 4]

Never[Code = 5]

Required answers: 1

Allowed answers: 1

Q16 What type of on-campus events are you most likely to attend during the semester? (Check all that apply)

Athletics[Code = 1]

Student clubs and organizations[Code = 2]

Concerts[Code = 3]

Student Union Game Room[Code = 4]

Lectures/speakers[Code = 5]

Movies[Code = 6]

Dances[Code = 7]

Recreational activities (e.g., intramurals, club sports)[Code = 8]

Leadership development workshops[Code = 9]

Other (please specify)[Code = 10] [TextBox]

I would not attend any of these on-campus events.[Code = 11]

Required answers: 1

Allowed answers: 10

How likely are you to attend/participate in the following commuter-specific events?

Q17 Commuter advocacy meetings

Very likely[Code = 4]

Likely[Code = 3]

Not likely[Code = 2]

Not at all likely[Code = 1]

I do not know[Code = 0]

Required answers: 1

Allowed answers: 1

Q18 "Good Morning, Commuter" breakfast

Very likely[Code = 4]

Likely[Code = 3]

Not likely[Code = 2]

Not at all likely[Code = 1]

I do not know[Code = 0]

Not at all likely[Code = 1]

I do not know[Code = 0]

Required answers: 1 Allowed answers: 1

Q19 "Good evening, Commuter" coffee hour

Very likely[Code = 4]

Likely[Code = 3]

Not likely[Code = 2]

Not at all likely[Code = 1]

I do not know[Code = 0]

Required answers: 1 Allowed answers: 1

Q20 Commuter-specific workshops (e.g., car/bike tips, parking on campus, managing finances, landlord negotiation)

Very likely[Code = 4]

Likely[Code = 3]

Not likely[Code = 2]

Not at all likely[Code = 1]

I do not know[Code = 0]

Required answers: 1 Allowed answers: 1

Q21 Campus event discounts for commuters

Very likely[Code = 4]

Likely[Code = 3]

Not likely[Code = 2]

Not at all likely[Code = 1]

I do not know[Code = 0]

Required answers: 1 Allowed answers: 1

For each day of the week, please indicate the times that typically are best for you to attend on-campus activities:

Q22 Mondays

Morning[Code = 1]

Afternoon[Code = 2]

Evening[Code = 3]

Required answers: 0 Allowed answers: 3

Q23 Tuesdays

Morning[Code = 1]

Afternoon[Code = 2]

Evening[Code = 3]

Required answers: 0 Allowed answers: 3

Q24 Wednesdays

Morning[Code = 1]

Afternoon[Code = 2]

Evening[Code = 3]

Required answers: 0 Allowed answers: 3

Morning[Code = 1]

Afternoon[Code = 2]

Evening[Code = 3]

Required answers: 0 Allowed answers: 3

Q25 Thursdays

Morning[Code = 1]

Afternoon[Code = 2]

Evening[Code = 3]

Required answers: 0 Allowed answers: 3

Q26 Fridays

Morning[Code = 1]

Afternoon[Code = 2]

Evening[Code = 3]

Required answers: 0 Allowed answers: 3

Q27 Saturdays

Morning[Code = 1]

Afternoon[Code = 2]

Evening[Code = 3]

Required answers: 0 Allowed answers: 3

Q28 Sundays

Morning[Code = 1]

Afternoon[Code = 2]

Evening[Code = 3]

Required answers: 0 Allowed answers: 3

Q29 When you are unable to participate in an on-campus activity, what is typically the primary barrier to your participation?

Academics [Code = 1]

Work/employment[Code = 2]

Family responsibilities[Code = 3]

Involved in off-campus activities (not work-related)[Code = 4]

Date/time is inconvenient[Code = 5]

Location is inconvenient[Code = 6]

Parking for event is too difficult[Code = 7]

Other (please specify)[Code = 8] [TextBox]

Required answers: 1 Allowed answers: 1

Have you ever used the following resources offered by Off-Campus Housing?

Q30 5. How often do you use the following resources offered by Off-Campus Housing?

Yes[Code = 1]

No[Code = 2]

Required answers: 1 Allowed answers: 1

Q31 Resource guide

Yes[Code = 1]

No[Code = 2]

Required answers: 1 Allowed answers: 1

Q32 Website housing listing

Yes[Code = 1]

No[Code = 2]

Required answers: 1 Allowed answers: 1

Q33 Website roommate listing

Yes[Code = 1]

No[Code = 2]

Required answers: 1 Allowed answers: 1

Q34 Apartment rushes

Yes[Code = 1]

No[Code = 2]

Required answers: 1 Allowed answers: 1

Q35 Annual housing fair

Yes[Code = 1]

No[Code = 2]

Required answers: 1 Allowed answers: 1

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Q36 **Communication Preferences**

What are your preferred methods for receiving information about programs and resources? (Please select up to three)

E-mail[Code = 1]

Listservs[Code = 2]

UA department calendar of events[Code = 3]

Facebook groups/pages[Code = 4]

Twitter[Code = 5]

Four Square[Code = 6]

On-campus posters/flyers[Code = 7]

Class announcements[Code = 8]

Word of mouth[Code = 9]

Required answers: 1 Allowed answers: 3

Q37 Did you transfer to the University of Arizona from another institution within the past year?

Yes[Code = 1]

No[Code = 2]

Required answers: 1 Allowed answers: 1

Q38 Class status:

Freshman[Code = 1]

Sophomore[Code = 2]

Junior[Code = 3]

Senior[Code = 4]

Continuing education student [Code = 5]

Graduate student[Code = 6]

Required answers: 1 Allowed answers: 1

Q39 College:

Agriculture & Life Sciences [Code = 1]

Architecture and Landscape Architecture [Code = 2]

Colleges of Letters, Arts and Sciences/Undecided [Code = 3]

Education [Code = 4]

Eller College of Management [Code = 5]

Engineering [Code = 6]

Fine Arts [Code = 7]

Humanities [Code = 8]

Medicine [Code = 9]

Nursing [Code = 10]

Pharmacy[Code = 11]

Public Health [Code = 12]

Science [Code = 13]

Social & Behavioral Sciences [Code = 14]

Required answers: 1 Allowed answers: 1

Q40 Race/ethnicity:

African American/Black[Code = 1]

Asian/Pacific Islander[Code = 2]

Hispanic/Latino[Code = 3]

Multiracial[Code = 4]

Native American/American Indian[Code = 5]

White[Code = 6]

Other (please specify)[Code = 7] [TextBox]

Prefer not to respond[Code = 8]

Required answers: 1 Allowed answers: 1

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