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ASUA SafeRide

ASUA SafeRide is a free transportation service for University of Arizona affiliates. Since 1981, SafeRide has provided a nighttime alternative to walking alone on campus and in the Tucson community. It is operated entirely by the students of the Associated Students of the University of Arizona (ASUA).

SafeRide's mission is to serve those going to or from campus, while also providing a friendly and official presence on the streets at night. SafeRide is a free service sponsored by Associated Students of the University of Arizona, The University of Arizona Parents and Family Association, and the Student Services Fee. In FY16 (excluding summer 2016), SafeRide had 42,267 calls, and drove 56,332 passengers.

Summary

Passengers were given surveys concerning their affiliation with the university, their satisfactions with the ASUA SafeRide service, their frequency and usage of the service, and suggestions for improvement of the service. The purpose of the survey was to gain a better understanding of the passengers utilizing the SafeRide service in order to better target efforts in the future.

This year, (2015-2016), ASUA SafeRide conducted two surveys to evaluate the effectiveness of the program and who was using it, including both an in-person survey that passengers would take in the car, and an online survey sent out through social media, ASUA and GPSC list servs, and a random sample of 1,000 University of Arizona students. The in-car survey had 62 responses and was focused on how satisfied passengers are with SafeRide, and the online survey had 278 responses and was more focused on individuals that may not necessarily use SafeRide and finding out why. The results of these are outlined below, along with recommendations for the future assessments and management of the program.

Findings

Online survey:

Total (278)	#	%	Total (278)	#	%
University Classification			Gender		
Freshman	79	28.4%	Male	75	27.0%
Sophomore	45	16.2%	Female	200	71.9%
Junior	52	18.7%	Transgender	1	0.4%
Senior	63	22.7%	Prefer not to disclose	3	1.1%
Master's Student	15	5.4%			
Doctoral Student	15	5.4%			
Faculty/Staff	7	2.5%			

Total (278)	#	%	Total (278)	#	%
Have you heard of ASUA SafeRide before?			How interested are you in ASUA SafeRide? (included description)		
No	31	11.2%	Very interested	143	51.4%
Yes	247	88.8%	Somewhat interested	64	23.0%
			Neutral/Unsure	50	18.0%
			Somewhat disinterested	7	2.5%
			Not interested	14	5.0%

Total (278)	#	%	Total (129)	#	%
Do you use SafeRide, and if so, how often do you use SafeRide?			Overall how satisfied are you with SafeRide service?		
Once per night or more	5	1.8%	Very satisfied	50	38.8%
Several times per week	34	12.2%	Somewhat satisfied	46	35.7%
Once per week	13	4.7%	Neutral/Unsure	11	8.5%
Several times per month	24	8.6%	Somewhat dissatisfied	18	14.0%
Once per month	22	7.9%	Very dissatisfied	4	3.1%
Less than once per month	36	12.9%			
Once	35	12.6%			
I have never taken SafeRide	109	39.2%			

- From both surveys, the proportion of people who are either very satisfied or somewhat satisfied is ~75% or above, with the in-car passenger satisfaction being approximately 96%.

- When given a description of the service, the majority of all respondents noted that they were either very interested or somewhat interested in the service (74.4%).
- Most of the respondents reached by the online survey had heard of SafeRide before, and most had also used the service (60.7%).

(Respondents are able to select multiple answers on the following questions)

Questions for those that use/have used SafeRide before:

- Besides the creation of an app, what would you change about ASUA SafeRide? (129 respondents)

1. Too much time spent on hold - 116
2. Unable to get through on the phone - 70
3. Vehicle takes too long to arrive - 40
4. Service area not large enough - 30
5. Unable to transport groups larger than 4 - 22

- Where would you want SafeRide to go that it currently doesn't? (129 respondents)

1. N/A - 92
2. Malls (Tucson Mall, Foothills, Park Place) - 13
3. Downtown - 6
4. Sprouts - 3
5. Airport - 3

- For respondents that have not taken SafeRide or had taken it sparingly, many did not need the service at all.
- Other responses included not using SafeRide because of the same concerns noted by the group that does use the service: Long wait times, service areas, and hours.
- Some also did not know about the service or how to use it, or used other available nighttime services.

- Like the in-car survey, most respondents (of those that have used SafeRide before) noted the amount of time that was spent on hold, the inability to get through on the phone, the vehicle taking too long to arrive, and the service area not being large enough.
- Many also noted that SafeRide was unable to transport groups larger than 4, an answer unseen on the in-car survey.
- Similar destinations to the in-car survey were noted here as well, such as local malls and downtown.

Question for those that have not used SafeRide before/have taken it only once:

- Since you have only taken SafeRide once, or have never taken SafeRide, why do you not use the service? (141 respondents)

1. Do not need the service - 68
2. Other (breakdown below) - 57
3. Because SafeRide does not function as a designated driving service - 16
4. I am unaware of the service - 15
5. Because of the availability of other services, such as the Streetcar or the NightCat - 12

"Other" responses:

Wait time too long: 18

Have own transportation/Do not need service: 15

Live/need to go outside of boundaries: 7

Other difficulties in scheduling a ride/Unsure how to use service: 7

Hours don't work for respondent: 6

Other: 5

In-person survey:

Total (62)	#	%	Total (62)	#	%
University Classification			Gender		
Freshman	14	22.6%	Male	20	32.3%
Sophomore	19	30.6%	Female	42	67.7%
Junior	14	22.6%			
Senior	8	12.9%			
Master's Student	4	6.5%			
Doctoral Student	3	4.8%			
Faculty/Staff	0	0%			

- More women than men used the ASUA SafeRide service in the data collection period (42 out of 62)
- Most passengers identified themselves as freshmen or sophomores (53.2% of respondents).
- In addition, there are only a few instances of graduate/professional students using the service, and no Faculty/Staff members during the data collection period.

Total (62)	#	%	Total (60)	#	%
How often do you use SafeRide?			How satisfied are you with SafeRide service?		
Once per night or more	3	4.8%	Very satisfied	42	70.0%
Several times per week	34	54.8%	Somewhat satisfied	16	26.7%
Once per week	12	19.4%	Neutral/Unsure	2	3.3%
Several times per month	7	11.3%	Somewhat dissatisfied	0	
Once per month	4	6.5%	Very dissatisfied	0	
Less than once per month	2	3.2%			
This is my first time	0	0%			

- The majority of the respondents that use SafeRide note that they tend to use it often, ranging from several times per week to several times per month.

(Passengers are able to select multiple answers on the following questions)

- Where did you hear about SafeRide?

1. Word of mouth – 33
2. Orientation – 7
3. Advertising/Online – 7
4. School – 5
5. Resident Assistant/Res Life – 4

- Besides the creation of an app, what would you change about ASUA SafeRide?

1. Too much time spent on hold – 51
2. Unable to get through on the phone – 23
3. Service area not large enough – 8
4. Vehicle takes too long to arrive – 8
5. N/A – 5

- Where do you primarily use SafeRide?

1. Off-campus housing – 25
2. Residence hall – 17
3. Library – 13
4. Rec center – 11
5. Union – 7
6. Greek Life housing – 7

- Where would you want SafeRide to go that it currently does not?

1. N/A – 35
2. Malls (Tucson Mall, Foothills, Park Place) – 7
3. Downtown – 5
4. Trader Joe's – 3

- Most of the passengers use SafeRide to go to housing both on and off-campus or to university locations such as the library or Greek housing, instead of other off-campus locations such as the grocery store.

Recommendations and Conclusion

The purpose of the assessment of the ASUA SafeRide service was to evaluate the effectiveness of the program and who was using it, and this report includes the desired answer. Many of the apprehensions about SafeRide, as noted in both versions of the survey, are that it takes too long to reach someone on the phone when calling in, or that it takes too long for the vehicle to arrive after scheduling one. In addition, many respondents from the online survey who had not used SafeRide or had used the service sparingly also noted that they were unaware of the service or did not know how it worked. This information can be used in the future to change the process of how SafeRide functions.

Many current driving services use smartphone apps to conduct their business, and though SafeRide is a free service available to a large population, it may benefit from including new types of ride-requesting mechanisms in its process in order to ensure that people know when exactly they are able to request a ride or when one is arriving.

Continued research is needed in this area in order to help SafeRide to function better, and to answer questions such as: "Where else do people want SafeRide to go?", and "How can I call in and get a car from SafeRide more quickly?". Looking into these questions with focus groups or more targeted surveys, possibly to populations that did not reach by these two such as faculty/staff and graduate/professional students, would help to make up for the low response rate in the online survey and an unwillingness to take the in-car survey, and give future directors a better picture of how SafeRide can function to both include and better serve different student populations.

Additionally, for future assessments or data tracking of the service, it may also be prudent for passengers to swipe their UA-issued CatCard, which could offer a greater look at the demographic information of who is using the service. Since SafeRide passengers already have to have a CatCard in order to use the service, this could be easily implemented.