



2011 Report on Volunteerism & Engagement at York University

Authors:

Alexis Esseltine
Julien Gagnier
Cait Gascon
Salman Islam
Mojan Jianfar
Enrique Miranda
Santhosh Poobathy
Aarti Rattan
Guru Rengan
Bahareh Toghiani Rizi
Dawn Strifler

Editors:

Annette Dubreuil
Alexis Esseltine
Betty Ing
Mojan Jianfar
Helen Psathas
Bahareh Toghiani Rizi
Tracy Tanentzap
Matt Zeno

Designers:

Dylan Belyk Seymour
Victoria Henderson
Wyndym Jubis-Hameluck

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Contact us:

Institute for Research & Innovation in Sustainability
email: irisinfo@yorku.ca
tel: +1.416.736.2100 ext. 33631

York University
349 York Lanes
4700 Keele St.
Toronto, Ontario
Canada M3J 1P3

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Institute for Research and Innovation in Sustainability (IRIS) became interested in volunteerism and participation amongst the York University community from discussions held during a 2010 Earth Hour event. The idea was that people engage in initiatives that they care about. The York University community can better cater initiatives towards issues that matter most to them by exploring their values, interests, motivations and current engagement. It was from this idea that IRIS was driven to delve deeper into exploring campus volunteerism and engagement as a means of enhancing sustainability at York University.

The majority of the York University community, that was surveyed, indicated that they are interested in sustainability issues, with 91.2%, 90.4% and 78.4% being either somewhat or very interested in social, environmental and economic sustainability, respectively. Further, 56.29% of the under-engaged survey respondents are at least somewhat interested in becoming more engaged. However, 30.15% stated that there are not any groups representing what they care about and 26.13% do not know how to become more engaged. In addition, 15.06% of the engaged survey respondents are unaware of how to become more engaged.

From these findings, we recommend that York University undertake communication, education, collaboration and incentive strategies to improve overall campus knowledge about opportunities for engagement. York University can improve communication by advertising opportunities in newspapers and news magazine articles, promoting specific opportunities for engagement. For example, event planning and/or execution can be part of the recruitment strategies for on-campus organizations. Also, we can use York University's emergency digital screens to more effectively advertise opportunities for involvement, and as such information more pertinent to York University community members.

York University can conduct education in many different ways, such as supplementing York University's orientation program and packages with relevant engagement information, expanding the club fairs so that they are held every semester in highly visible locations and creating more opportunities for experiential education. York University can also facilitate opportunities for collaboration by ensuring the availability of physical spaces dedicated for student use, which encourages interaction among students and inter-organizational learning in the York University community. Additionally, incentive initiatives can further motivate engagement, including an engagement certificate program and a university-wide recognition event allowing individuals to feel valued for their achievements. These initiatives, along with the involvement of the York University community, will lead to more engagement at York University.



More than half of respondents say that they would be able to dedicate 1-5 more hours of time with York Groups.

56% of undergraduate and 59% of graduate students participate in student clubs

TOP 5 WAYS HEAR ABOUT GROUPS

58.80% - Word of mouth

32.23% - Poster

28.46% - York Websites

27.13% - Social Networking

26.14% - Events

Which **Social**, **Environmental** and **Economic** issues are most important to you?

1 64.58% Human Rights

MAJOR FINDINGS

Most respondents were very interested in social sustainability [57.89%]

Most respondents were very interested in environmental sustainability [53.81%]

Time constraints and living too far from campus were two of the top three obstacles in becoming involved or more involved with York U groups for both engaged and under engaged respondents

The most popular types of activities under-engaged respondents would be interested in participating in when involved with groups at York are event planning/execution [50%], research [49.11%], administrative activities and outreach [39.29%] and activism [37.5%]

The reasons for which engaged students participated with the groups they are involved with were because they believed in the particular cause [68.66%], wanted to be engaged in their community [59.8%], enjoyed being involved because it made them feel good [57.14%] and they got to meet new people [53.16%]

The most popular types of activities engaged students participated in when involved with their group[s] were social events [61.13%], educational events [43.52%], event planning/execution [51.61%], fundraising [50.50%] and outreach and communication [43.52%]

DEFINITIONS

The following section defines “sustainability” and “engagement” – two of the key terms found throughout the survey and report.

Sustainability

For the purposes of this survey, we draw upon the definition of sustainability published in the landmark 1987 United Nations (UN) report, *Our Common Future*. Also known as the Brundtland Report, this document refers to sustainability as “meet[ing] the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” In the UN’s 2005 World Summit Outcome report, it further defines sustainability to include social, environmental and economic components.

Engagement

The American Psychologists Association defines civic engagement as individual and collective actions designed to identify and address issues of public concern (Carpini). They explain that it can involve efforts to solve a problem, address issues and work with others in a community. It can also take many forms such as individual volunteerism and organizational involvement.

In our research, we believe engagement stretches beyond simply attending classes, going to work or being present at York University. To be engaged is to be involved in the York University community through active participation that contributes to York University as a whole, in a social, environmental and/or economic way. For example, engaged people are not those who simply pay fees or receive pay, but are individuals who also volunteer their time. Characteristics of an engaged person include focused energy and efforts that are purposeful and/or directed towards organizational goals, which are acknowledged by others (Macey *et al.* 2009).

CONNECTION BETWEEN Sustainability and Engagement

We can see the important relationship between engagement and sustainability through study of the growth of the environmentalist movement. In their book, *Civic Engagement in a Network Society*, Yan and Bergrud explain that governments that oversaw the construction of large-scale development projects over much of the twentieth century tended to consider the process a matter of technical expertise and thus would not solicit citizen opinions (Yan *et al.* 2008). The public either suffered or benefitted from these developments, but did not have many opportunities to influence the outcome or designs. By the 1960s, development projects faced public criticism mainly on the grounds of having adverse environmental impacts such as pollution (Yan *et al.* 2008).

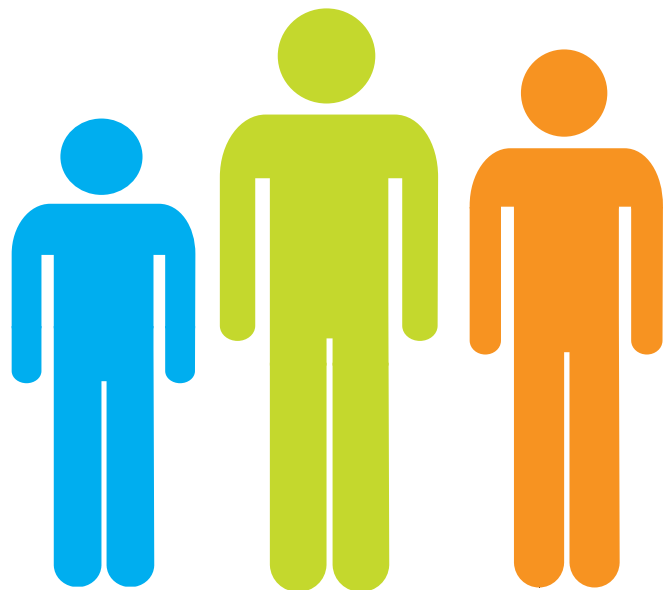
As a result of the criticism and outcry, development projects were no longer evaluated solely on economic benefit, and concerns over environmental degradation were considered. Through civic engagement, the public can influence government decisions and policies in favour of environmental sustainability. In their book, *Kitchen Table Sustainability: Recipes for Community Engagement with Sustainability*, Sarkissian *et al.* put this relationship clearly into words: “Sustainability as the overall goal, communities as the means to achieving that goal and community engagement as the ongoing, underlying process that enables the journey to continue” (Sarkissian *et al.* 2009).

INTRODUCTION

The mandate of the Institute for Research and Innovation in Sustainability (IRIS) is to pursue interdisciplinary research focused on sustainability. We follow this mandate in our own backyard by engaging in campus sustainability projects. One of our ongoing projects is an annual campus survey on a sustainability theme. The topic for the fourth IRIS survey emerged from an Earth Hour event co-hosted by IRIS on March 24, 2010. During discussions that were part of an Open Space brainstorm, many members of the York University community expressed interest in volunteerism and participation in campus activities. Following these conversations, IRIS identified student, staff and faculty engagement in organized campus groups to be an important aspect of creating more sustainability at York University. We then initiated a study that explored campus volunteerism and engagement, as well as the York University community's knowledge, behaviours and attitudes with respect to engagement with campus groups. This report is the culmination of the study and the associated campus-wide survey.

The report reviews campus engagement, facilitation and opportunities at York University, while also identifying campus engagement initiatives at North American and international universities. These reviews provided a context for conducting a survey about engagement in the York University community. The survey asked respondents to reflect on their behaviours, perceptions and priorities with respect to involvement in on-campus and off-campus groups.

The report also presents findings from this survey and provides recommendations for York University to further improve its successful efforts to encourage engagement in campus groups and to create a sustainable campus.



METHODOLOGY

IRIS staff, graduate students and volunteers, under the guidance of IRIS Director, Professor Dawn Bazely, developed the survey and submitted it to York University Office of Research Ethics who approved it.

For ease of data collection and interpretation, we administered the survey online using StudentVoice software and posed mostly closed-ended questions. The respondents chose one or more of the provided answers.

To accommodate for cases where the provided answers would not fully reflect a respondent's opinion, the option "other" was presented so that respondents could indicate any views or positions not otherwise present. Additionally, the option of selecting "n/a" (not applicable) was provided where it was possible that the question may not pertain to all respondents.

We promoted the survey and made it available to the York University community through many means:

Survey stations around Keele Campus: Monday, January 10, 2011 through Thursday, January 13, 2011 as well as Monday, January 17, 2011 and Thursday, January 20, 2011. Laptops were set up in Vari Hall, the Ross-Vari Hall Link, the Student Centre, the Seymour Schulich Building and Osgoode Hall. IRIS staff and student volunteers promoted and administered the survey during these periods.

Survey station at Glendon Campus: Tuesday, January 18, 2011 through Wednesday, January 19, 2011. Laptops were set up in the Glendon cafeteria where IRIS staff and student volunteers promoted and administered the survey.

- **LISTSERV® lists:** The online survey link was sent to numerous faculty, department, college and club LISTSERV® lists for transfer to their members.
- **E-Newsletters:** The online survey link was included in the Ylife* and YFile e-newsletters, which are sent to York University students and staff, respectively.
- **York University events website:** The online survey link was posted to the website.
- **IRIS website:** The survey was promoted on a homepage banner. Clicking on the banner took users directly to the online survey.

- **IRIS Facebook page:** The online survey link was posted to the IRIS Facebook wall.
- **IRIS Twitter feed:** The online survey link was included in IRIS Twitter messages.
- **Small handouts:** IRIS staff and volunteers near the survey stations distributed the short descriptions of the survey and the online survey link.
- **Posters:** The large pictures with tear-aways were displayed around campus to direct potential participants to the survey online.

The various survey distribution methods and promotions made the survey available to the York University community. Respondents could complete the survey in person at the survey stations or during their own time. We used two TTC-Metropass prizes to encourage people to visit the survey stations and the online link.

The survey attracted the participation of 1,214 respondents, 1,111 of whom completed the survey.

*Note: Ylife ceased in January 2012, with the introduction of the new YFile site.

CAVEATS, ACKNOWLEDGED BIASES & SURVEY LIMITATIONS

All surveys have limitations and biases embedded within their questions that influence the survey results. Our assessment of these limitations and biases are briefly discussed below.

IRIS has a mandate to carry out research related to sustainability, and thus the survey includes an admitted bias toward environmental, social and economic components. To ensure that all respondents can be confident that their opinion mattered, the survey preamble included the following note: “The input you provide through the completion of this survey will help on-campus groups better cater their activities and initiatives to the York University community’s interests and participation preferences. This survey is designed for York University students, staff, faculty, and members of the extended York community. We recognize that some people are interested in organized initiatives and other people have priorities which lie elsewhere. It is important to us to hear from everyone, so please be candid and honest with your responses.”

To counter this bias, we sought to make the survey easily accessible to as many members of the York University community as possible. By offering two TTC-Metropass prizes, valued at \$121 each, we sought to appeal to members of the community who would normally be less inclined to participate in such a study. Despite this, individuals who are interested in social engagement, volunteerism and sustainability issues are still likely to be over-represented in the data, as they would be more likely to complete the survey.

Finally, despite our aim to design the survey for ease of completion, some respondents were not able to complete all questions; only completed surveys were included in the final analysis.



ENGAGEMENT AT YORK

With a large commuter student population, engagement on campus can be challenging. York University has created several programs to help students better engage with the university, with each other, and find the services/resources they need through online initiatives and physical programming:

YUConnect:

York University created and launched in April 2011 a site, called YUConnect (yuconnect.yorku.ca), where students can connect and get involved with a diverse array of campus groups and organizations. It is an online directory and platform for students to track their extracurricular experiences and involvement. There are currently 483 recognized student organizations listed on YUConnect as well as numerous community and peer groups. YUConnect provides a host of benefits for engagement at York University; students are able to find resources on campus, find involvement opportunities that are in line with their respective interests, create personal profiles and document their involvement through a co-curricular record. Students can request to become members of different campus organizations and monitor group activities via YUConnect, such as upcoming events, news, and important dates.

YUConnect is also beneficial for student organizations as they can use the platform to communicate and promote their events with current and prospective members. Each student organization has a landing page, where members can find information about upcoming volunteer opportunities, events, photos, or documents. Organization specific pages also link to respective social media platforms and messages can be cross-posted. Furthermore, YUConnect can be used for management processes; if an organization is electing members, this information can be found on their respective pages. YUConnect is a tool created to showcase various opportunities for engagement at York University and provides a portal for students to connect with and engage with each other.

Better Work Place (BWI) Initiative:

Following a labour disruption in 2009, President and Vice-Chancellor Mamdouh Shoukri initiated a program to make York University a better workplace, one with more engagement and communication at all levels. The goal was to explore what qualities define an ideal workplace. For some people, this included a place where employees enjoy mutual respect, are recognized for their contributions, can be creative and enjoy seeing their efforts come to fruition. As a result, BWI was created. It is a multi-year, pan-university initiative to improve employee satisfaction, workplace culture and address challenging policy issues (YFile, 2011).

Phase 1 of the BWI was launched in the Summer 2010. It was a consultation phase involving various unions at York University. BWI has been building on this consultation and aims at addressing issues that contributed to the CUPE strike by looking at ways to build a better workplace, foster stronger union relations and work collectively with different employee groups to better address issues and concerns (www.yufa.org/external/BWI_PhaseI.pdf). Emerging from this consultation phase, four major themes were identified to help make York University a better place to work:

- creating a more effective and cohesive management team
- improving labour relations
- challenging policy issues, including a graduate student support and a pension plan strategy
- creating a stronger, more engaged workplace

Phase 2 of the BWI was launched in early 2011. It was a second round of consultations focusing on discussing the results of the first phase and setting concrete goals and strategic initiatives to address the four themes. Associate Vice-President Academic and Vice-Provost Rhonda Lenton and Assistant Vice-President Human Resources Sharon Hooper led this project. It was widely recognized that it will not be a quick fix, but rather require time to address the concerns and issues of York University employees regarding concerns, engagement, communication and effective management in the workplace (YFile, 2011).

RED Zone: Ready. Engage. Discover.

RED Zone is comprised of Student Ambassadors (RSAs), upper year students, who share their experiences and advice with incoming students.

RED Zone provides students access to programs, resources and services to help them transition into university life more easily and with confidence. Current students engage with new and incoming students, to provide advice and tips on what to expect and how to succeed. RED Zone provides orientation and transition programs designed especially to engage with new students. The programs run in the summer and fall/winter to welcome and orient new students and their parents, and support students with adjusting to university life. RED Zone focuses on building community, engaging students and fostering school spirit through physical and virtual means.

RED Zone is centrally located in Vari Hall and has a strong online community presence, which is important for student engagement with a large commuting population. RED Zone also provides on-going support for new students to learn about the university, about various academic programs, sports and recreation, club groups, financial services, support services, international opportunities etc. Student engagement is conducted in a peer-to-peer fashion.

Academic Innovation Fund:

The AIF was established in Fall 2010 with the investment of \$2.5 million to support change and innovation at York University. AIF focuses on advancing objectives and priorities as outlined in the Provostial White Paper and the University Academic Plan. The York University community was invited to apply for funding (up to \$200,000 per project) in support of new initiatives helping to advance York University's priorities in teaching, learning and enhanced student experience. In its first year, 99 applications were submitted and 39 projects were awarded funding, led by students, staff and faculty. AIF is continuing for a second year (2012-2013) with another \$2.5 million to support both new and continuing projects. The projects underway can be categorized into three broad themes:

- experiential education
- eLearning/technology enhanced learning
- student experience and student success

Some examples of these projects include a student-run Sustainable Business Initiative, which is a flexible program intended to promote and support student social entrepreneurship, a Social Policy Ideas Lab (SPIL), which provides an opportunity for undergraduate students to learn about empirical research on social policy outside the classroom, and a course-based peer mentorship program fostering first-year student engagement and academic success. A full list of the projects is available at the AIF site: <http://aifprojects.yorku.ca/projects/>.

President's Sustainability Council:

The President's Sustainability Council (www.yorku.ca/susweb/index.html) was formed as an advisory group to report to the President on recommendations and input regarding how to improve York University's sustainability practices, initiatives and projects. The Council provides input on actions required to meet sustainability goals. The Council also acts as "a mechanism through which to support and enable York University students, staff and faculty to participate meaningfully in the planning and implementation of York University's sustainability policies, initiatives, projects and practices."

The President's Sustainability Council (PSC) also has a sub-group through the President's Sustainability Council Student Sub-Committee (PSCSS) called Students for Sustainability. This group is comprised of York University students working as an advisory body in connection to the Sustainability Council and looking to advance student sustainability goals. Student engagement can occur through four working groups:

- Administration and Organizational Structure
- Curriculum
- Campus Operations and Development
- Social Justice & Human Rights

In 2011, PSC, with AIF funding, hired a Sustainability Coordinator and a Sustainability Engagement Coordinator. To date, they have launched a refreshed sustainability website as well as three programs: Green Office, Ambassadors and Pledges.

SUSTAINABILITY RATINGS

THE COLLEGE SUSTAINABILITY REPORT CARD:

York University maintained its overall grade of B+ through 2010 and 2011 in the College Sustainability Report Card published by the Sustainable Endowments Institute. York University achieved a B grade in student involvement.

A detailed explanation of York University's performance under each of these five base indicators, as well as a grading matrix with York University's overall grade, and specific category grades, can be found in Appendix 1, The College Sustainability Report Card.

In brief, some of York University's sustainable endeavours under the student involvement component of the report card include:

- Pond Road Residence providing a living-and-learning experience focused on sustainability
- Providing information during orientation week presentations about how students can take part in sustainable volunteer work or projects offering paid and unpaid office-based sustainability internships for students
- Having student groups that focus on different sustainability issues administering the Res Race to Zero Competition which encourages energy conservation among on campus residences.

UI Green Metric Ranking:

York University has been named the greenest university in Canada by the University Indonesia (UI) Green Metric Ranking of World Universities. York University also claimed 14th place out of 178 universities world wide. The criteria used to determine these ranking include university campus size, location, energy use, recycling, green space, and transportation services (Green Metric, 2011).

These two titles were secured by York University because of the green building practices, recycling programs and low energy consumption practised on campus, as well as many efforts of York University's Sustainability Council (Experience York, 2012).

ENGAGEMENT AT OTHER UNIVERSITIES

Many North American and international universities have undertaken innovative and successful engagement initiatives. Below is a list of various engagement initiatives that York University may consider for further improvement of on-campus participation in sustainability. Some of them build on YUConnect and on ideas explored in the Academic Innovation Fund. A more detailed description of each initiative is provided in Appendix 2, Engagement at North American and International Universities.

Opportunities for engagement and best practices at other universities include:

- Community service learning – curricular or course-based projects between educational institutions and community organizations that take students out into the community as part of the learning experience
- Hubs with information on various types of initiatives and opportunities available on campus related to sustainability
- Interactive websites that list student groups as well as award and research opportunities drawing on science and engineering faculties to develop solutions to on-campus and environmental issues
- Promoting health and well-being of student, staff and faculty as an integral component of university sustainability
- Training workshops for students to assist in raising awareness of waste and other environmental issues
- Annual sustainability awareness days on campus and “university week” promoting sustainability initiatives off-campus.

SURVEY RESULTS



This survey was conducted with the objective of analysing current behaviours, perceptions and priorities with respect to engagement of students, staff and faculty in on-campus and off-campus groups, while determining what can be done to increase the engagement of the York University community on campus.

First, we provide a description of the demographic characteristics of the survey respondents. Second, we explore their interest in sustainability and, more specifically, the social, environmental and economic issues. The survey respondents were split into either engaged or under-engaged streams depending on responses to question 17, which asked, “What types of groups at York or outside of York have you participated in recently or in the past?” Those who answered, “I have other interests or commitments that take higher priority for me” were placed in the under-engaged stream, and all others in the engaged stream. The remaining sections outline the under-engaged respondents’ involvement interests and limitations, as well as the engaged respondents’ current involvement, future interests, motivations and limitations.

Respondent Profile

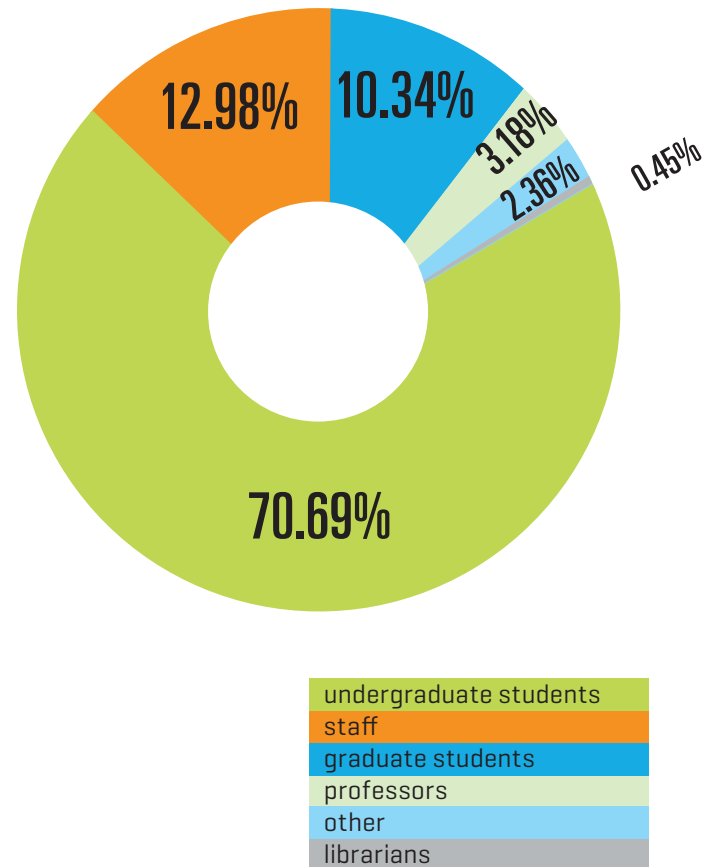
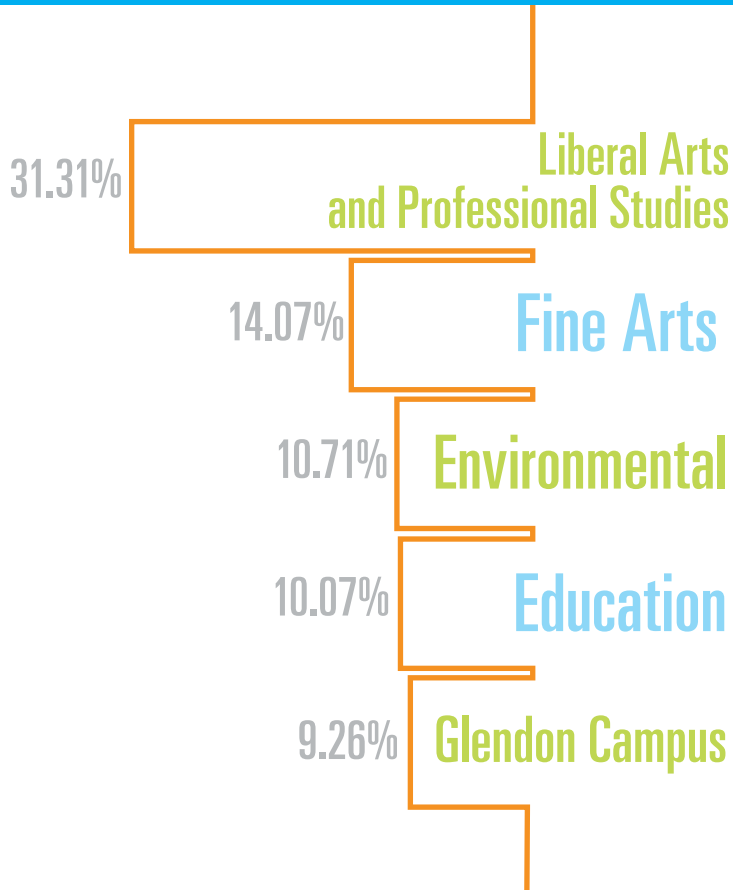
In 2010/2011, York University had a total population of approximately 59,489, including (Fact Book):

- 48,167 undergraduate students (full-time and part-time)
- 6,070 graduate students
- 1,365 support staff members
- 1,466 full-time faculty members
- 1,633 contract faculty members
- 735 confidential, professional and managerial (CPM)
- 53 librarians

The 1,101 people that completed this survey represent 1.68% of the total York University population.

- 1,204 gave consent
- 9 didn’t give consent
- 1,199 opened survey, but didn’t answer any questions

DEMOGRAPHICS



01

Faculty/ Administrative Body

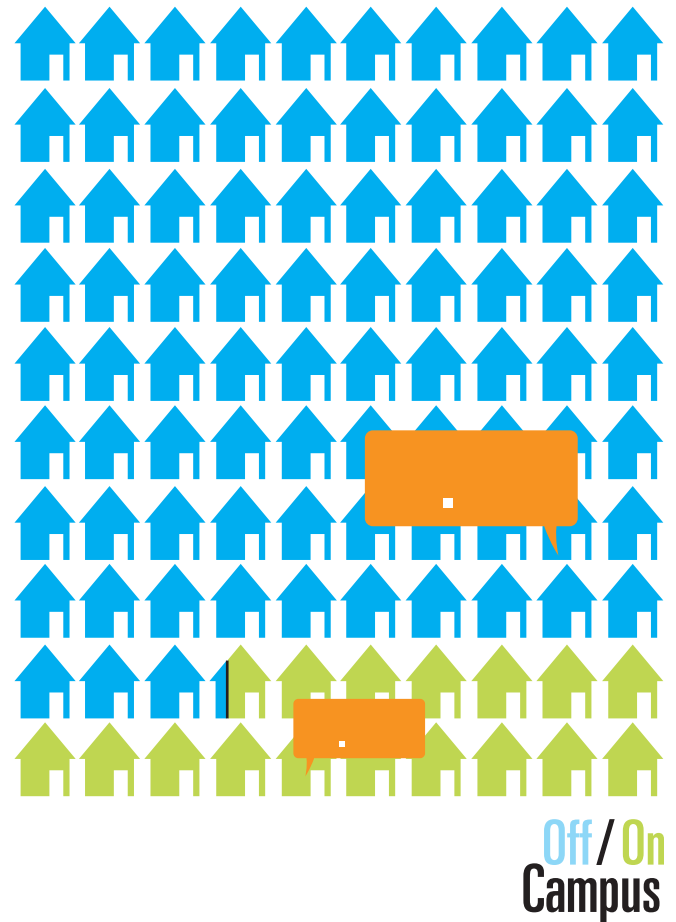
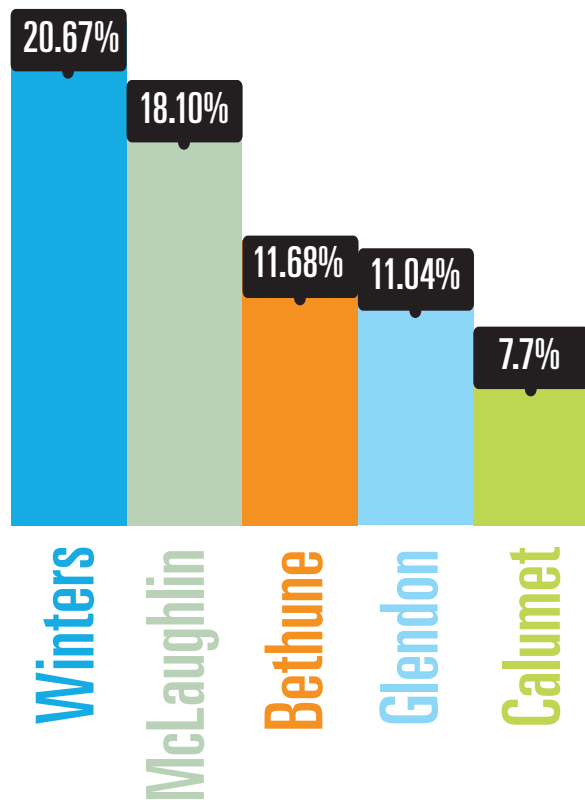
The highest percentage of respondents is in the Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies (31.31%), followed by the Faculty of Fine Arts (14.07%), the Faculty of Environmental Studies (10.71%), the Faculty of Education (10.07%) and Glendon Campus (9.26%). Other faculties include the Faculty of Health (7.89%), the Faculty of Science and Engineering (6.44%) and Schulich School of Business (4.63%).

02

Position

The highest percentage of respondents is undergraduate students (70.69%), followed by staff (12.98%), graduate students (10.34%), professors (3.18%), “other” (2.36%) and librarians (0.45%).

“Other” responses include a graduate student who is also a teaching assistance (TA) and staff of non-profit organization housed on campus.



03 College

The highest percentage of respondents is from Winters College (20.67%), followed by McLaughlin (18.10%), Bethune (11.68%), Glendon (11.04%), and Calumet (7.7%). Other colleges include New College (6.80%), Founders (6.42%), Stong (5.39%) and Vanier (5.39%).

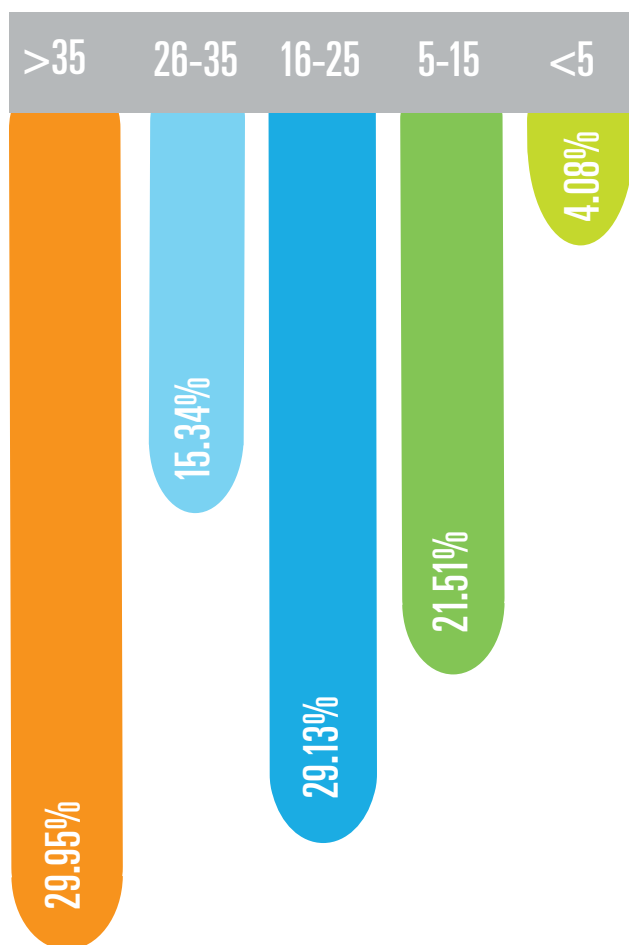
04 Housing

The highest percentage of respondents lives off campus (83.31%), while the remaining respondents live on campus (16.69%).

05

Time Spent on Campus

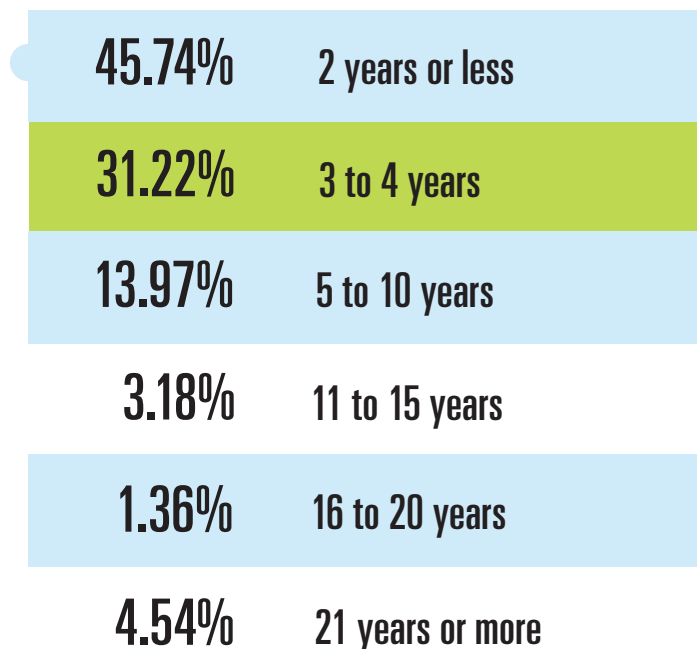
The highest percentage of respondents is on campus more than 35 hours per week (29.95%), followed by respondents who are on campus for 16-25 hours per week (29.13%), 5-15 hours per week (21.51%), 26-35 hours per week (15.34%) and less than 5 hours per week (4.08%).



06

Length of Time at York University

The highest percentage of respondents has been at York University for 2 years or less (45.74%), followed by respondents who have been there from 3 to 4 years (31.22%) and 5 or more years (13.97%). Smaller percentages of respondents have been at York University for longer periods: 11 to 15 years (3.18%), 16 to 20 years (1.36%) and more than 20 years (4.54%).



VALUES & INTERESTS



TOP 3 CHOICES

66.70%	- health and wellness
62.34%	- family
40.93%	- financial stability
32.30%	- career
24.41%	- lifelong learning
22.96%	- helping others
15.34%	- faith/ spirituality
12.89%	- community building
3.81%	- other

76.32% - reading

73.23% - movies/ television

69.87% - spending time with friends

59.62% - music

55.72% - health/ fitness/ wellbeing

48.19% - cooking

31.94% - writing

29.85% - games

27.31% - shopping

24.41% - sports

18.60% - arts/ crafts

06.17% - gardening

05.72% - other

08

Which of the following do you value most? [Check your top three]

The highest percentage of respondents values health and well-being (66.7%). Of this percentage, staff members not in a faculty value health and well-being the most. Of this percentage, from the faculties, Osgoode Hall respondents value health and well-being the most, followed by Science and Engineering and then Health. The second highest percentage of respondents values family (62.34%). The third highest percentage of respondents values financial stability (40.93%). Of this percentage, from the faculties, Health respondents value financial stability the most, followed Science and Engineering.

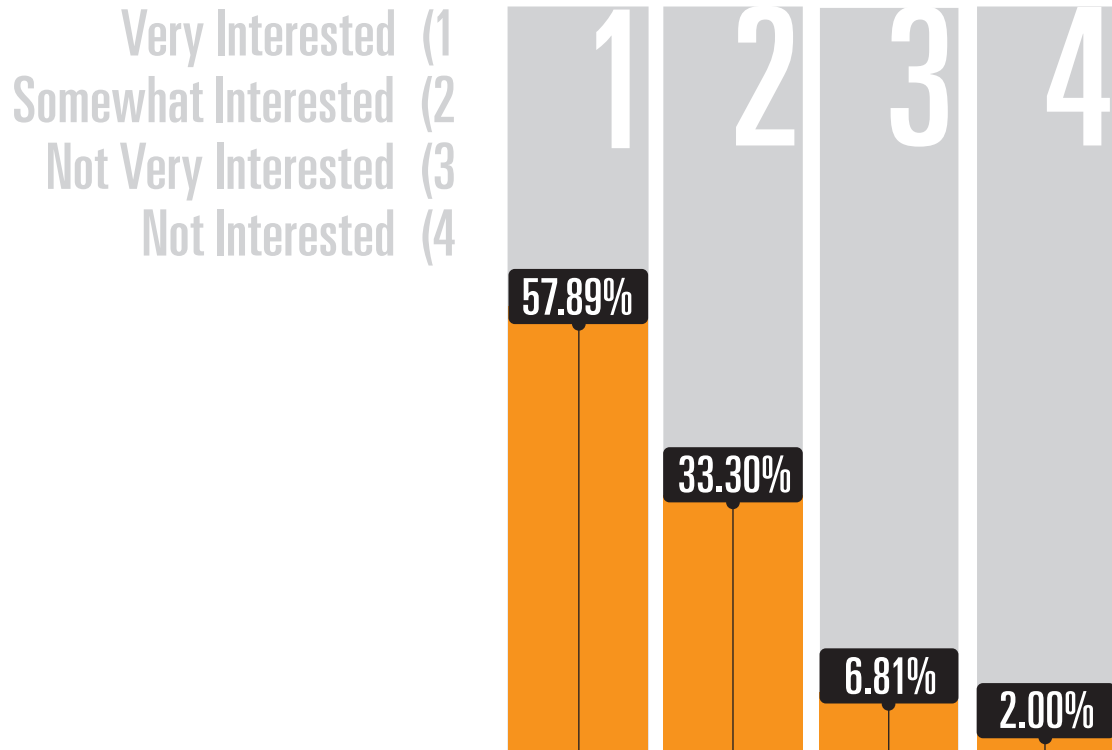
From the respondents who chose “other,” 11.9% values the environment and 9.52% values all the available choices.

09

In which of the following activities/ hobbies do you engage on at least a weekly basis? [Check all that apply]

The highest percentage of respondents is reading on at least a weekly basis (76.32%), followed by watching movies, films and television (73.23%) and spending time with friends (69.87%). It is interesting to note that only 55.72% of respondents engage in activities for health, fitness and well-being on a weekly basis, although the highest percentage of respondents value health and well-being (question 8).

From the respondents who chose “other,” (5.72%), a quarter of them chose volunteering on at least a weekly basis.

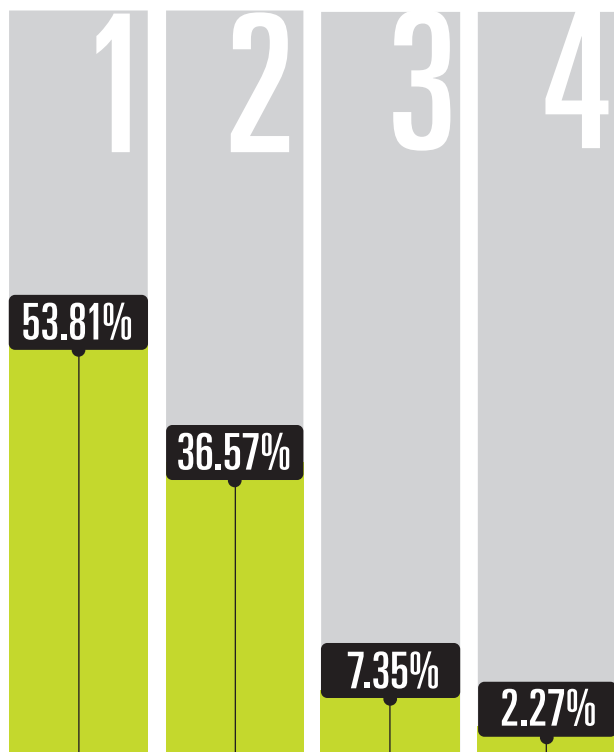


Social

10 Please indicate your level of interest in the following aspects of sustainability: – Social sustainability [e.g., human rights, poverty, and community development].

The highest percentage of respondents is very interested in social sustainability (57.89%), followed by respondents who are somewhat interested (33.30%), not very interested (6.81%) and not at all interested (2.00%), due to other interests that take higher priority.

Graduate students have the highest percentage of respondents that are very interested in social sustainability (71.05%). This analysis is obtained by cross-tabbing this question with question 2.

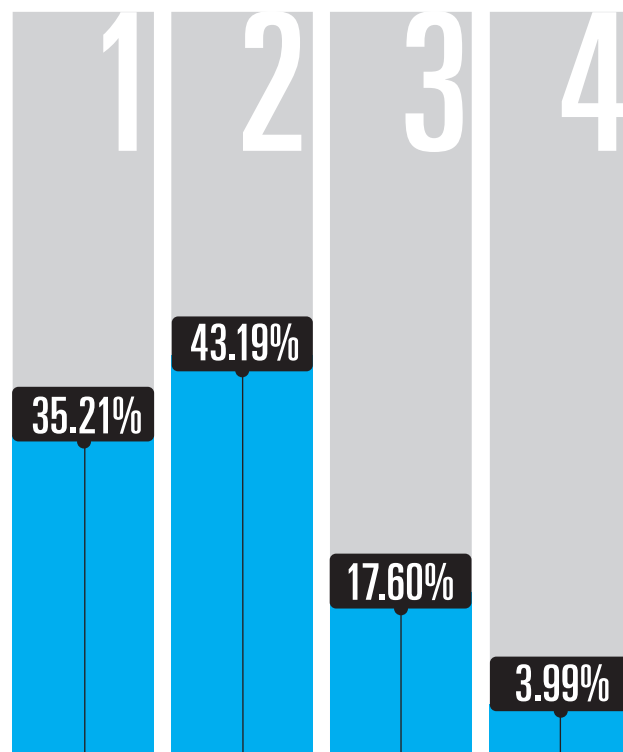


Environmental

11

Please indicate your level of interest in the following aspects of sustainability: - Environmental sustainability [e.g., climate change, deforestation, water scarcity].

The highest percentage of respondents is very interested in environmental sustainability (53.81%), followed by respondents who are somewhat interested (36.57%), not very interested (7.35%) and not at all interested (2.27%). Of this percentage, professors have the highest percentage of respondents that are very interested in environmental sustainability (80.00%), followed by graduate students (74.56%). The Faculty of Environmental Studies has the highest percentage of respondents that are very interested in environmental sustainability (87.29%).



Economic

12

Please indicate your level of interest in the following aspects of sustainability: - Economic sustainability [e.g., sustainable economic development, microfinance, local purchasing].

The highest percentage of respondents is somewhat interested (43.19%), followed by respondents who were very interested (35.21%), not very interested (17.60%) and not interested at all (3.99%).

The Schulich School of Business has the highest percentage of respondents that are very interested in economic sustainability (49.02%), followed by the Faculty of Science and Engineering (42.25%). Librarians have the highest percentage of respondents very interested in economic sustainability (80.00%)*, followed by professors (42.86%) and graduate students (38.60%).

*Note: There were 5 librarian respondents in the survey.

1 **64.58%** Human Rights

2 **59.30%** Social Equity

3 **55.42%** Health / Disease / Healthcare

4 **50.95%** Poverty

5 **43.88%** Universal Education

37.91% Personal Happiness and Wellbeing

32.24% Community Development

29.95% Domestic Violence/Abuse

29.25% War/Violence

18.31% Fair Trade

18.31% Labour Rights

16.02% Homelessness

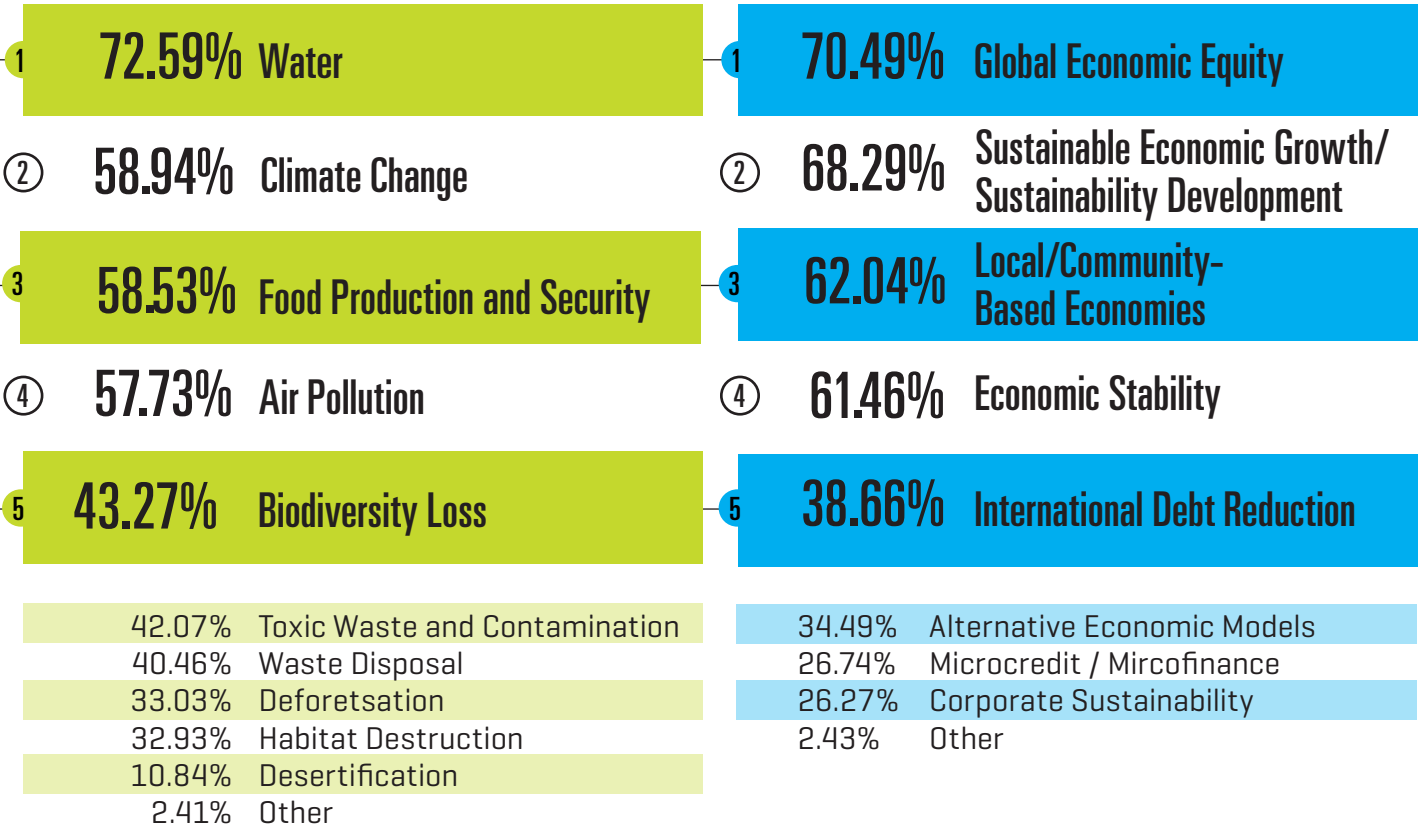
2.89% Other

Which **Social**,
Environmental
and **Economic**
issues are most
important
to you?

13

Which of the following types
of social issues are most
important to you? [Check up
to five]

Respondents who are very interested or somewhat interested in social issues chose the five issues that are most important to them: human rights (64.58%), social equity (59.30%), health/disease/universal health care (55.42%), poverty (50.95%), and universal education (43.88%). Additionally, the respondents from the Faculty of Education are “very interested” in social sustainability (91.30%). They indicate that social equity (16.67%), human rights (14.04%) and universal education (13.16%) are of most important to them.



14 Which of the following types of environmental issues are most important to you? [Check up to five]

Respondents who are very interested or somewhat interested in environmental issues chose the five issues that are most important to them: water, for example, scarcity, pollution and acidification (72.59%), climate change (58.94%) food production and security (58.53%), air pollution (57.73%), biodiversity loss, for example, loss of species and endangered species (43.27%)

The Faculty of Environmental Studies, the faculty with the highest percentage of respondents that were very interested in environmental sustainability, chose the five most important issues to them: water (15.84%), climate change (15.10%) and food production (13.81%), biodiversity loss (10.87%), and habitat destruction (9.21%).

15 Which of the following types of economic issues are most important to you? [Check up to five]

The respondents who are very interested in, or somewhat interested in, economic sustainability chose the five most important economic issues to them: global economic equity, for example, reduction of gap between wealthy and poor countries, equitable trading policies (70.49%), sustainable economic growth/sustainable development (68.29%), local/community based economies, for example, local self-reliance, supporting local businesses, sourcing products and services locally (62.04%), economic stability (61.46%) and international debt reduction (38.66%).

While more than half of respondents from the Schulich School of Business are “very interested” in economic sustainability (49.02%), they were less interested in most types of economic issues with the exception of corporate sustainability (35.29%).

The top 5 sources of information on sustainability issues are:

75.68% - Newspapers

71.42% - Television

48.55% - Books

46.28% - School Classes

41.38% - Word or Mouth

38.48% - Websites

35.21% - Magazine articles

22.87% - Radio shows

21.32% - Social networking

10.62% - York websites

10.62% - Events

4.36% - Micro-blogs

4.36% - Campus Clubs

3.63% - Listservs

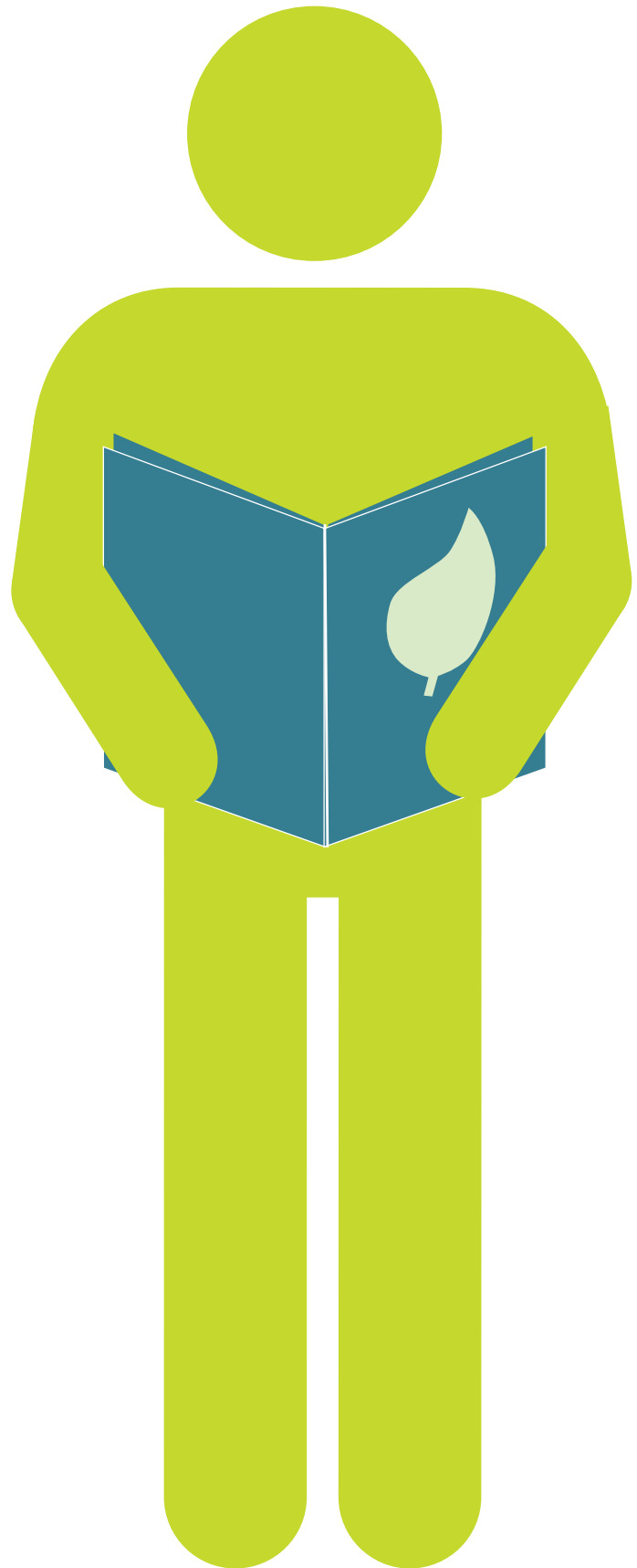
3.36% - Other

16

How did/do you learn about the sustainability issues that you are aware of? [Check your top five]

Respondents learn about sustainability issues from these five most popular sources: newspaper or news magazine articles, for example, The Economist, print or online (75.68%), television shows, documentaries and movies (71.42%), books (48.55%), school classes (46.28%) and word of mouth, for example, friends, family, peer groups and coworkers (41.38%).

Undergraduate students and librarians prefer to learn about sustainability issues from television shows, documentaries, and movies. Graduate students, professors and staff prefer to learn about sustainability issues from newspaper or news magazine articles.



17

What types of groups at York or outside of York have you participated in recently or in the past? [Check all that apply]

Respondents participate in various types of on-campus or off-campus groups: student groups (50.00%), community groups (32.03%), charities (28.31%), sports teams (23.32%), religious/faith groups (20.05%), student governmental groups (13.88%), faculty associations (10.53%), political parties (8.53%), union groups (7.62%) and “other” (7.44%)

“Other” responses include volunteer positions with particular groups or organizations, for example, hospitals, Canadian Blood Services and WWF and specific activities, for example, archery, air cadets, art and dance clubs.

Undergraduate (56.35%) and graduate (58.77%) students participate in student groups, whereas professors participate in faculty associations (68.57%) and staff (36.36%) as well as librarians participate (60.00%) in community groups.

Following this question, survey respondents are split into either an engaged or under-engaged stream of questions depending on their response to question 17. The survey respondents who answered, “I have other interests or commitments that take higher priority for me” (18.06%) are placed in the under-engaged stream, and all others are placed in the engaged stream.

Within the under-engaged group, which had 199 respondents, there are 141 undergraduate students, 38 staff, 15 graduate students, 2 librarians, 2 “other” and 1 professor.* When we asked respondents to indicate their level of interest in aspects of sustainability (social, environmental, and economic) in question 11, a high percentage said they are either very or somewhat interested in these issues. This indicates that a lack of engagement is not connected to lack of interest in or care for sustainability issues.

This 18.06% of under-engaged respondents will be analysed in questions 18 through 22. Their responses will help develop a deeper understanding of the factors that impede engagement.

*Note: The sample size for librarians and professors was too small and thus not commented on in the analysis.

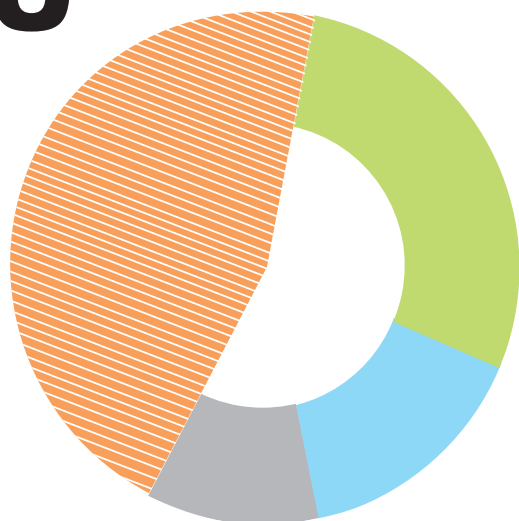
56% of undergraduate and 59% of graduate students participate in student clubs



THE UNDER-ENGAGED

18

How interested are you in becoming more involved with organized groups at York?



11.06% - Very Interested

45.23% - Somewhat Interested

28.14% - Not Very Interested

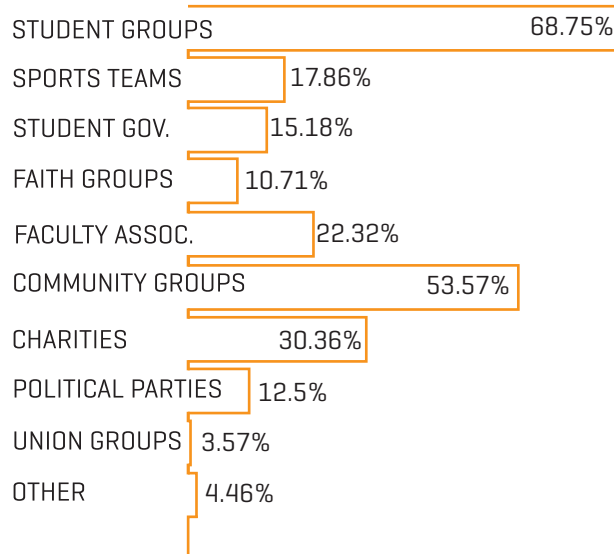
15.58% - Not at all interested

This question was developed to understand the level of interest that under-engaged survey respondents had in becoming further involved with organized groups. In total, more than half of the respondents (56.29%) are interested in becoming more involved: 45.23% of respondents are somewhat interested in becoming more involved with groups at York University and 11.06% are very interested in becoming more involved. Those who are not very interested or not at all interested represented 28.14% and 15.58% of respondents respectively.

Graduate students are most interested in becoming more involved, followed by undergraduate students and then staff. Under-engaged respondents in the Faculty of Environmental Studies are most interested in becoming more involved, followed by staff not associated with a faculty, the Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies, Glendon Campus, the Faculty of Fine Arts and the Faculty of Health.*

19

What type[s] of group[s] would you be interested in becoming involved with at York? [Check all that apply]



Most students actually want to participate in similar interest student groups hosted at York

The highest percentage of respondents is interested in becoming involved with student groups (68.75%), followed by community groups (53.57%), charities (30.36%), faculty associations (22.32%), sports teams (17.86%) and student government (15.18%).

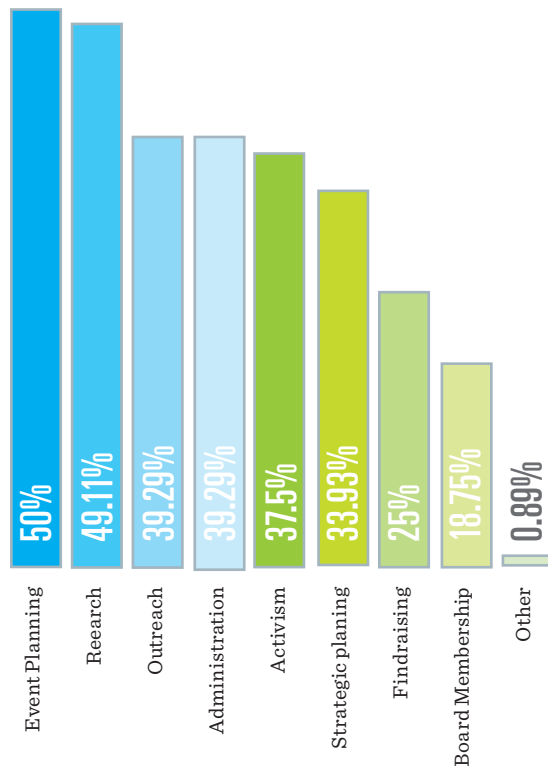
“Other” responses include cross-university staff groups, professional development groups, theatre and activism clubs.

Involvement with community groups are of particular interest to staff (31.58%) and graduate students (60.00%), while the most popular activity of interest among undergraduate respondents is student groups (49.65%). Similarly, respondents from Glendon Campus, the Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies, Faculty of Environmental Studies and Faculty of Fine Arts are most interested in becoming involved with student groups.

*Note: The sample size was too small for the Faculty of Education (0 respondents), Faculty of Science and Engineering (6 respondents), Osgoode (3 respondents), Schulich (4 respondents) and Seneca@York (0 respondents) and thus not commented on in the analysis.

20

What specific types of activities would you be interested in participating in with these York U groups? [Check all that apply]



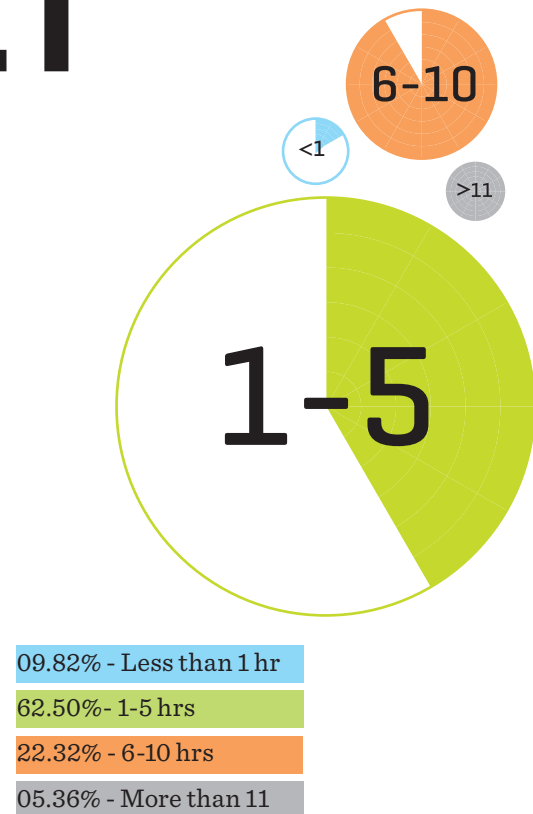
The highest percentage of respondents is interested in event planning/execution (50%), followed by research (49.11%), administrative activities and outreach (39.29%), as well as activism (37.5%). “Other” responses include art.

Graduate students (25.64%) and staff (21.21%) are particularly interested in research. Undergraduates have a wider variety of interests: event planning/execution (18.11%), research (14.57%) and outreach, communication and administration (13.78%).

Event planning/execution is also of particular interest to Glendon Campus (20%), the Faculty of Health (22.02%), the Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies (16.53%) and the Faculty of Fine Arts (19.51%). Furthermore, the Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies and the Faculty of Fine Arts also show a high interest in administration (16.53%) as well as outreach and communication (19.51%). However, the Faculty of Environmental Studies and staff not associated with a faculty are mostly interested in research.

21

How much participation time could you offer to a York U organization on a monthly basis?



Most of the Unengaged say they are able to dedicate between 1 - 5 hours to York Organizations.

When asked how much participation time they could offer to on-campus groups on a monthly basis:

- 9.82% could offer less than one hour
- 62.5% could offer 1-5 hours
- 22.32% could offer 6-10 hours
- 5.36% could offer more than 11 hours

In total, 90.18% of respondents could offer from 1 to more than 11 hours of participation time.

Interestingly, of those who said they could offer 6-10 hours: 20% were on campus 5-15 hours/week; 28.21% were on campus 16-25 hours/week; 21.43% were on campus 26-35 hours/week; and 14.81% were on campus 35+ hours/week. The majority of respondents interested in committing over 11 hours were on campus 26-35 hours/week (7.14%) and 35+ hours/week (14.81%). This may indicate that the willingness to offer participation time may relate to and increase

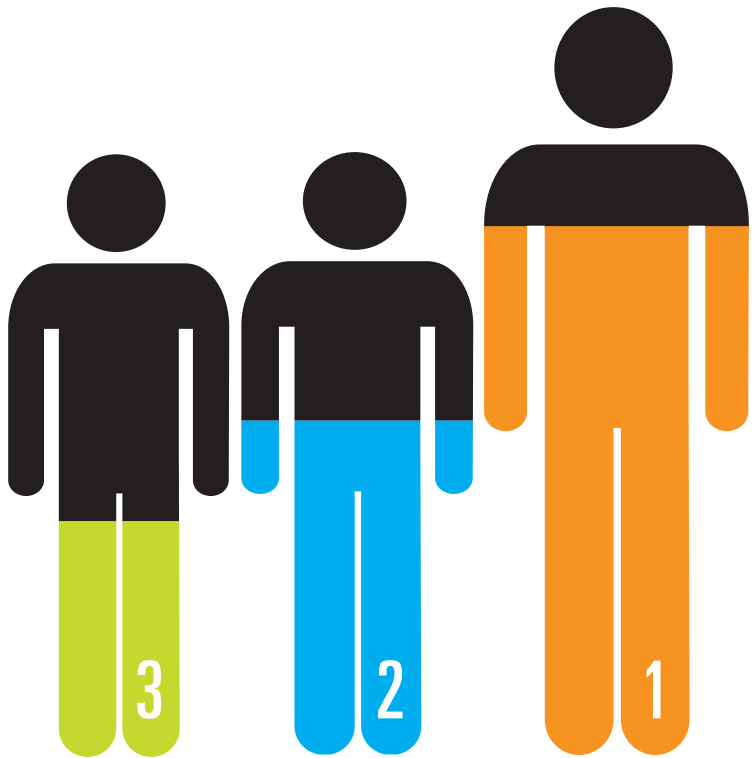
22

Some people would like to be more involved with York U groups, but are unable to for a variety of reasons, and some people have other interests or commitments that take higher priority.

Could you please share with us what limits your involvement in York U organizations.

The highest percentage of respondents ranks time as the obstacle (71.36%), followed by other interests or commitments that take higher priority (47.74%), living too far from campus (44.22%), the time of day that groups meet or initiatives occur (39.2%) and a lack of groups that represent their interests (30.15%). Other factors include money/lack of compensation (29.15%), a lack of knowledge about how to become further engaged (26.13%) and support through personal action (23.62%). “Other” responses include language barriers.

Interestingly, lack of time topped the list for those who spent a lot (35+ hours) or a little (less than 5 hours/week) amount of time on campus.



Time - I'm too busy	71.36%
I have other interest or commitments with higher priority	47.74%
I live too far from campus	44.22%
Time - of the day that group meets/ occurs	39.20%
I don't know what groups are active in the issue of interest	30.15%
Money/lack of compensation	29.15%
I don't know how to become further engaged	26.13%
I prefer to show my support through personal actions	23.62%
There aren't any groups that represent what I care about	15.08%
The group members are not my age	9.05%
Other [please specify]	9.05%
I don't agree with the approach of the group that are involved with the issue	6.53%

RESPONSE



Thank you for the information you have shared regarding your involvement in activities on campus and off. What is the most important thing we could do to help people get involved at York U?

When under-engaged respondents were asked how they thought involvement could be increased on campus, several reoccurring terms were mentioned, such as “advertising” and “awareness.” Many respondents underlined the use of email as an effective promotional tool. One student took this a step further and suggested developing a central website where clubs can clearly display their mandates and update their action portfolios, much like the since formed YUConnect (as mentioned in the Engagement at York University section above).

Generate a website like <www.meetup.com/find> that shows all York U clubs with details such as where/when they meet as well as any special events. It would be the club leader's responsibility to update their information on their own club's page. Not only would this allow students' easy access to all club information, but it could also cut down on the amount of posters around York resulting in less paper generated (therefore less waste), and less litter--therefore improving another one of York's goals: Environmentalism! Please consider this!

Several respondents called for incentives to increase involvement, with some connected to career support.

Have incentives provided. Letters of recommendation or certificates that look attractive on the resume in the future are a great attraction to students.

Many respondents pointed out a need for York University groups to bridge the gap of involvement with the commuting population. One suggestion presented by a few respondents was to expand group networks across the city so students would not become overburdened with transportation cost/time.

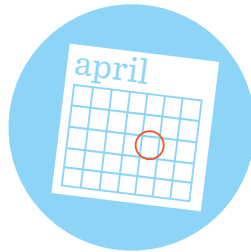
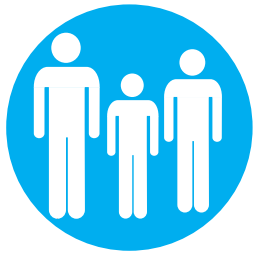
Perhaps if there were opportunities to meet with groups or take part in events closer to central neighbourhoods of Toronto.

Become a more active member of the City of Toronto. People who want to make a difference tend to do so not with student groups but with “real” activist groups downtown. Separating into smaller groups does not achieve the same result as it would if everyone was working together on an issue, and the city's core has such a strong voice already.

Some comments called for greater sensitivity on the part of York University groups to meet people's schedules.

Create an online web so students who wants to participate can fill up forms online and become members, secondly the programs should have flexible hours, so all who are interested can do something at least. For example, one of the programs I wanted to join only takes place at night, but I happen to have morning and noon classes. How do I wait that long?

THE ENGAGED



23

Which of the following statements best describe your current or past involvement with these groups?
[Check all that apply]

Engaged respondents regularly volunteer their time (50.83%), make donations (44.63%), attend the events their group(s) hosted throughout the year (44.41%) and participate in particular special/annual events (44.08%).

While most undergraduate and graduate students regularly volunteer their time, most faculty, staff and librarians make donations. Additionally, most faculties regularly volunteer their time, except for the Faculty of Fine Arts and the Schulich School of Business which mostly participate in particular special/annual events; the Faculty of Health mostly attend events that groups they are involved with hosted; and, the Faculty of Science and Engineering mostly make donations.

24

Which of the following specific types of activities have you participated in with these groups?
[Check all that apply]

Engaged respondents mostly attend social events (61.13%) and engage in event planning and execution (51.61%). Other ways they participate in groups include fundraising (50.50%), attending educational events (43.85%), administrative work (30.45%) and activism (26.14%).

Further, some respondents participate in none of the activities listed (2.99%) or the “other” option (3.54%). “Other” responses could have fit in the prescribed categories, but respondents wanted to note their membership.

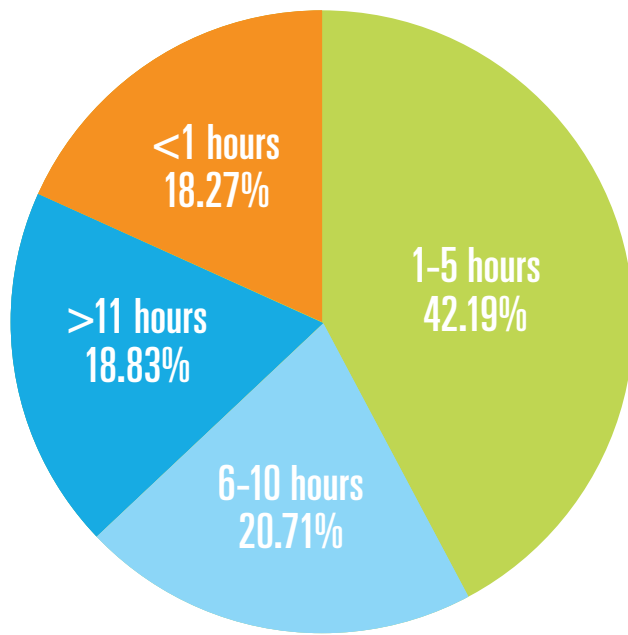
Interestingly, undergraduate students prefer social events, while graduate students prefer educational events.

Of the respondents that regularly volunteer their time in question 23, the majority revealed that this time was largely spent on event planning, followed by making donations (44.63%), attending events (44.41%), participating in specific special/annual events (44.08%) and “other” (4.32%). The “other” response includes responses that all aligned with answer options. Answers like, “I don’t attend any groups, but I do donate clothes that I don’t need or want” or “I pick events/activities to participate in whenever possible” were common.

The responses indicate that half the survey participants are involved in either an active or participatory capacity. Interestingly, no matter how often individuals volunteered, most stated that they could spend more time volunteering on a monthly basis (see question 27).

26

On average, about how many of these monthly hours do you devote to York U groups?



The largest percentage of engaged respondents spends no hours (36.66%), followed by 1-5 hours (28.9%), less than 1 hour (15.39%), 6-10 hours (9.63%) and more than 11 hours (9.41%) per month participating in activities at York University.

Respondents who have been at York University from 3 to 4 years represent the largest group who devoted more than 11 hours per month to York University groups. This suggests that student engagement may increase with their length of time at York University. Accordingly, respondents that spend less than 5 hours a week on campus had the largest percentage of respondents that devote no hours participating in on-campus groups, and respondents that spend more than 35 hours on campus had the greatest percentage of respondents that spend more than 11 hours per month participating in on-campus groups.

Staff are least likely to spend their monthly hours devoted to York University groups (53.33%) followed by graduate students (39.39%), undergraduate students (32.76%) and professors (32.35%).

The majority of engaged respondents in Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies, Faculty of Education, Faculty of Fine Arts, Faculty of Science and Engineering and staff not associated with a faculty devote no hours to on-campus groups followed by devoting 1-5 hours per month. The opposite trend was the case for Glendon Campus, the Faculty of Environmental Studies and Schulich School of Business. The majority of engaged Osgoode Hall Law School respondents, however, equally either devote 1-5 hours or 6-10 hours per month to on-campus groups. The majority of engaged respondents from the Faculty of Health also equally either devote no hours or 1-5 hours per month to on-campus groups.

25

On average, about how many hours per month do you currently spend participating in activities with all of the groups you are involved with?

The highest percentage of engaged respondents spends 1-5 hours per month (42.19%), followed by 6-10 hours per month (20.71%), more than 11 hours (18.83%) and less than 1 hour per month (18.27%).

Cross-tabbing analysis found no association between the amount of time respondents spent on campus and how much time they spent participating in activities with all of the groups they were involved with.

Osgoode Hall Law School had the highest percentage of engaged respondents that participate 11+ hours (35.29%) and 6-10 hours (29.41%) with all of the groups they are involved with per month. It should be noted that Osgoode students are required to engage in such extracurricular activities, which indicated that experiential education can elevate civic engagement among students.

43% of people who spend more than 11 hours with extra curricular groups spend them at York.

Half of respondents say that they would be able to dedicate 1-5 more hours of time with York Groups.

27

On a monthly basis, how much more time could you commit to groups at York or otherwise?

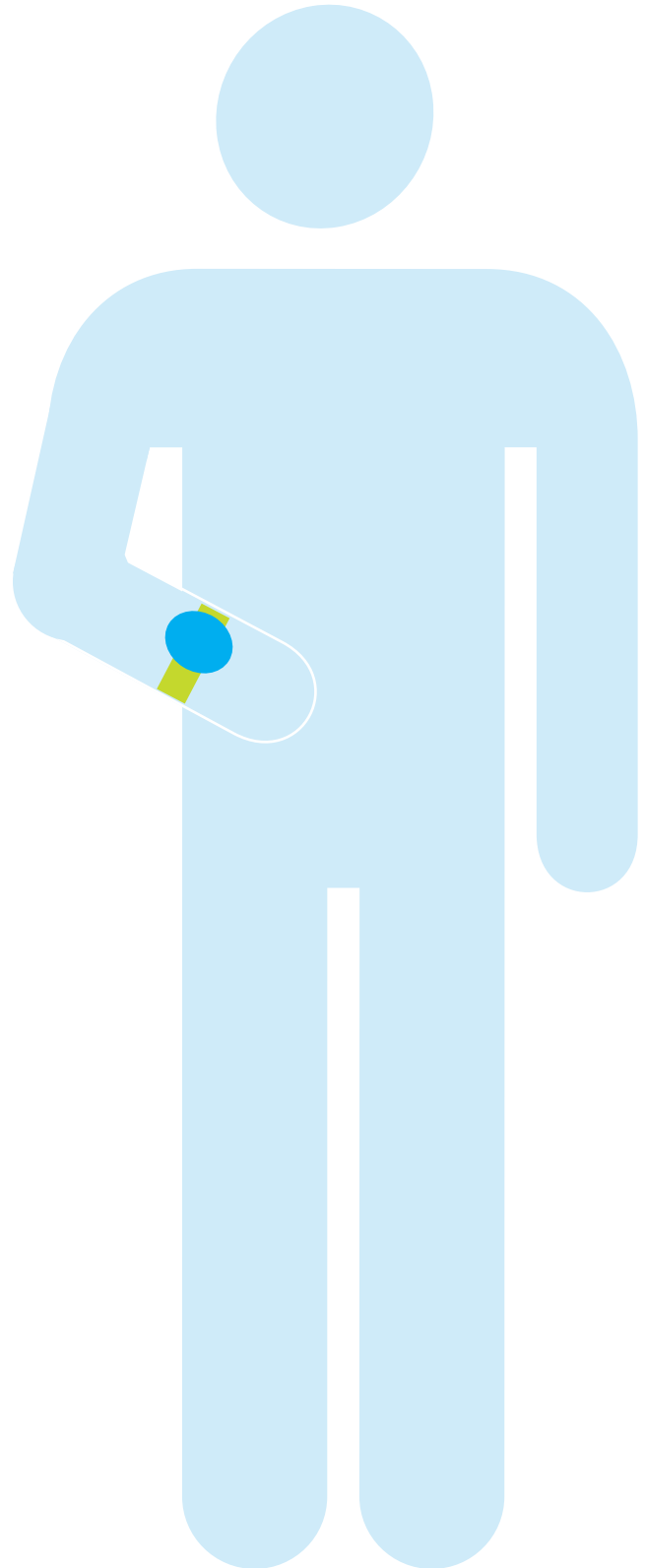
Most engaged respondents could commit 1-2 hours more (34.66%), followed by 3-5 hours more (22.48%), no more time (17.72%), more than 6 hours more (12.74%) and less than 1 hour more (12.4%).

No association was evident between the number of hours engaged respondents spend on campus and how much extra time they could commit to groups on or off campus.

Most engaged respondents spend 0 hours or less than 1 hour with York University groups. These members could not commit more than 1 hour participating in extracurricular activities at York University or elsewhere. Interestingly, most engaged respondents who currently spend 1 or more hours could commit 1 or more additional hours.

This may suggest that the individuals that are already spending time are the most willing and able to commit more time. In 2010, the City of Kitchener published a report on volunteer strategies with similar results; it indicated a trend of fewer volunteers contributing more time, a decline in number of individuals volunteering and an increase in the number of hours contributed per volunteer (City of Kitchener Community Services Department, 2010).

Most engaged respondents in Glendon Campus, all the faculties represented in the sample and staff not associated with a faculty could commit 1-2 hours more to groups at York University or otherwise. Osgoode Hall Law School respondents could not commit any more time. Professors are least likely to be able to commit more time to groups at York University (29.41%) followed by staff (23.15%), graduate students (21.00%) and undergraduate students (15.43%).



28

How did you hear about the group(s) you are or have been involved with at York or otherwise? [Check your top five]

The largest percentage of engaged respondents learned about the groups through word of mouth (58.80%), followed by posters (32.23%), the York University website or e-newsletters (28.46%), social networking (27.13%) and events (26.14%). This indicates that the best asset for clubs is their existing membership base, and that snowball techniques are likely to be at least as effective as traditional marketing.

According to the most recent report of the Canada Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating, 48% of volunteers in Canada became involved as a result of being asked to volunteer by someone (Imagine Canada. Caring Canadians Involved Canadians, 2007). This figure is greater than 45% of volunteers who became involved as a result of their own initiative. The figure of 45% was broken down into various methods by which the individuals were informed: through print advertisements (14%), through television or radio advertisements (3%) and through the Internet (3%).

Smaller percentages of engaged respondents learned about the groups through: advertisements (21.82%), flyers (20.27%), school classes (19.49%), campus clubs (19.38%), newspapers and news magazine articles (13.95%), York newspapers (13.29%), LISTSERV® lists (12.40%), other websites (10.52%), television shows/documentaries/movies (5.43%), books (4.54%), magazine articles (4.32%), radio shows (3.65%), micro-blogs (1.99%), and other (4.54%).

“Other” responses include church or religious affiliations, starting the club themselves and club fairs.

Interestingly, contrary to the overall results, a large percentage of the Faculty of Environmental Studies students learned about the groups that they were involved with through LISTSERV® lists. This indicates that faculties can play an important role in educating their students about activities that might be of interest to them. Understandably, as demonstrated in the analysis of question 11, where 87.50% of Environmental Studies respondents were “very interested” in environmental sustainability issues, there may be more alignment between the faculty and club interests in this faculty than in other faculties.

TOP 5 CHART

58.80% - Word of mouth

32.23% - Poster

28.46% - York Websites

27.13% - Social Networking

26.14% - Events

21.82% - Advertisements

20.27% - Flyers

19.49% - School Classes

19.38% - Campus Clubs

13.95% - Newspapers

13.29% - York Newspapers

12.40% - Listservs

10.52% - Other websites

05.43% - Television

04.54% - Books

04.54% - Other

04.32% - Magazines

03.65% - Radio show

01.99% - Micro blogs

29

Which of the following statements describe your motivation for being involved with the group[s] you are or have been involved with, both at York and otherwise?
[Check all that apply]

The largest percentage of respondents is motivated for being involved with groups on-campus and off-campus because they believed in the particular cause (68.58%), followed by wanting to be engaged in their community (59.73%) as well as enjoying being involved because it made them feel good (57.19%) and because they get to meet new people (53.21%). Smaller percentages of respondents wanted to learn new skills (43.25%), build their resumes (37.17%), learn about the field/topic (36.84%), and network (32.52%). Some chose to be involved because someone close to them had a personal experience with the cause (20.93%), while others wanted to receive a tax deduction (5.09%). The 3.43% who chose the “other” option, re-stated the options used in the pre-determined categories.

This question reveals that social and professional factors are of great importance to individuals when they choose what group to become involved with.

68.66%

I believe in their cause.

59.80%

I want to be engaged in my community.

57.14%

I like being involved - it makes me feel good.

53.16%

I like meeting new people.

43.30%

I want to learn new skills.

37.21%

It helps me build my resume.

36.88%

I want to learn about the field or topic.

32.56%

There are networking opportunities available.

20.93%

I or someone close to me has had a personal experience with the issue the organization represents.

5.09%

I receive a tax deduction.

3.43%

Other (please specify)

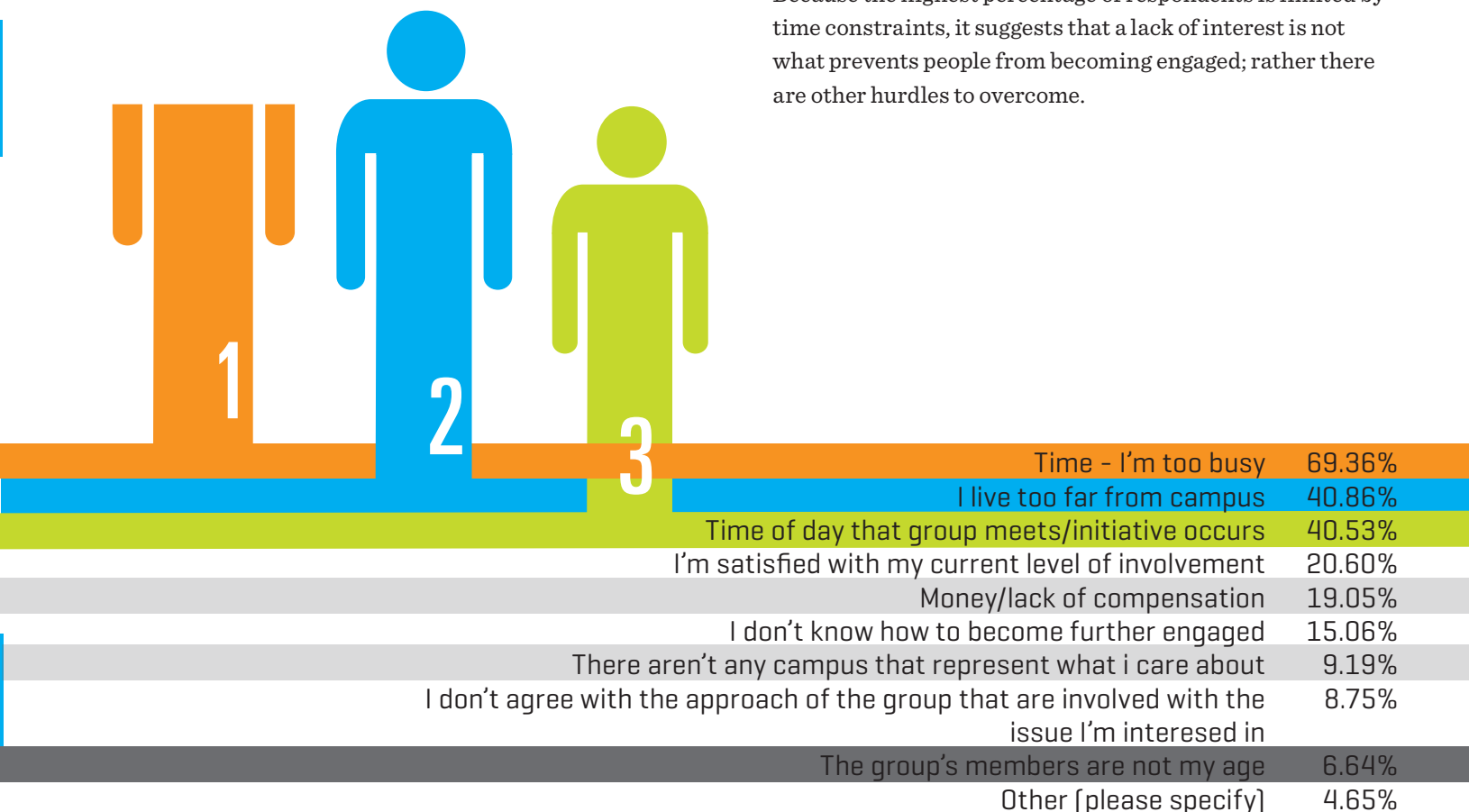
30

What do you find limits you from becoming more involved with York U groups? [Check all that apply]

The highest percentage of respondents is limited by time constraints (69.32%), followed by living too far from campus (40.86%), the time of day that groups meet or initiatives occur (40.53%) and being satisfied with their current level of involvement (20.60%). Lower percentages of respondents are limited by: lack of compensation (19.05%), not knowing how to become involved (15.06%), lack of groups that represent what they are interested in (9.19%), not agreeing with the approach a group was taking (8.75%), members not being the same age (6.64%), and other (4.65%)

“Other” responses include York University groups being too exclusive, stuck in their ways, or resistant to change.

Because the highest percentage of respondents is limited by time constraints, it suggests that a lack of interest is not what prevents people from becoming engaged; rather there are other hurdles to overcome.



RESPONSE



Thank you for the information you have shared regarding your involvement in activities on campus and off. What is the most important thing we could do to help people get involved at York U?

When we asked engaged respondents how they thought involvement could be increased on campus, some common themes emerged. The issue of a lack of a central space, or a common “hub,” was a consistent theme. This issue was usually described as a lack of community at York University due to the restrictions of student space and the difficulties that come with a commuter campus. Many respondents linked a lack of community to a resistance toward on-campus involvement. Some common themes are provided in Appendix 4, Common Themes for Involvement from Written Comments.

Dealing with commuter culture, makes York a place where people come to be part of a community, not just this in and out thing.

Comments about time and the stress of student life were also common. Suggestions on how to counter this were dominated by requests for incentives, including monetary arrangements, resume building and recognition for achievement.

Good motivators are needed. Students are stressed out enough with their regular duties. Anyway to subsidize the enormous costs a student faces (ie. the possibility of a free metropass), motivated me to fill out this survey.

Many engaged respondents mentioned that they were unaware of how to become involved or where they could obtain information on clubs. Many also commented on the lack of, or problems with, the York University website and its advertisement of opportunities for involvement.

A more streamlined approach to giving information about volunteering opportunities, such as one main website where all opportunities are listed. As it is, students are faced with information overload. Also, there is student apathy regarding social causes due to the distraction of entertainment media.

Engaged respondents also commented about how York University has not become a “pan-university” or an interdisciplinary university. Many respondents revealed concerns about divisions between faculties and the disconnect between the Keele Campus and the Glendon Campus. Respondents suggested meetings, virtual spaces and stronger collaboration between groups.

Inter-club service/volunteer projects. [We need] more networking between clubs - a skills and resource database perhaps! For example, my club can offer stress-elimination workshops. Someone else's club can teach about water conservation. Let's switch for a meeting and we can learn about each other's specialties!

Better communication among different faculties so that Schulich students, for example, are better aware of what Environmental studies, or Arts students are doing. I find we are very “siloeed” at York, and rarely know what is going on in the rest of the university.

York students don't know how to get involved. There are so many groups and it's confusing. We need better pan-university communication and the groups need to talk to one another. We need a central coordinating body where we can go to get information about all these groups, and that knows what's going on between groups so as to connect groups working on similar issues.

One comment summarized a few of the primary issues, including lack of community and communication issues. It reinforced the need for the “Better Workplace” initiative, which is currently underway.

A concerning pattern that emerged from the responses was that many students suggested options that are already available. For example, a lack of knowledge in terms of how clubs advertise themselves was rampant. Many students suggested a “clubs day” at the beginning of the year, which sounds very similar to club tabling during YorkFest.

Similarly, requests for a central hub that has information on all students clubs was suggested, even though this service was already offered by Student Community & Leadership Development, which helped students connect to the York University community, by providing a listing of more than 290 student organizations at the time the survey was launched. The new YU Connect builds on the listing of clubs, truly providing an online hub as aforementioned. In addition, the RED Zone initiative exists. It aims to connect new students (first year undergraduate students) to clubs on campus, as well as provide them with “access to services, programs and resources students need to jump into university life with confidence and comfort” (YU Student Guide, 2010).

Have a “clubs” day at the beginning of the year so students can come to one central location and meet all the clubs and sign up etc. (Maybe you already have this and I just don’t know - sorry)!

Have a central database of all campus clubs and the major projects they are involved with, so that people interested in getting involved can easily access information. If there is already such a list, it needs to be promoted...

SUMMARY

The survey results provide some interesting insights into the values, interests and engagement behaviours of the York University community. A summary of these results and a few of the most compelling findings are highlighted below:

Health and wellbeing was the most important value to respondents (66.7%)

Reading was the activity/hobby most respondents engaged in at least once a week (76.32%)

Most respondents were very interested in social sustainability (57.89%)

Most respondents were very interested in environmental sustainability (53.81%)

43.19% of respondents were somewhat interested in economic sustainability followed by a majority of respondents that were split between being very interested (35.21%), not very interested (17.60) and not interested at all (3.99%)

The five social issues of greatest importance to respondents who were very interested or somewhat interested in social issues were human rights (64.58%), social equity (59.30%), health/disease/universal healthcare (55.42%), poverty (50.95%) and universal health education (43.88%)

The five environmental issues of greatest importance to respondents who were very interested or somewhat interested in environmental issues were water (72.59%), climate change (58.94%), food production and security (58.53%), air pollution (57.7%) and biodiversity loss (43.27%)

The five economic issues of greatest importance to respondent who were very interested or somewhat interested in economic issues were global economic equity (70.49%), sustainable economic growth/sustainable development (68.29%), local/community based economies (62.04%), economic stability (61.46%) and international debt reduction (38.66%)

Newspaper or news magazine articles was the method by which most respondents learned about sustainability issues (75.68%)

Half of the respondents have participated in student groups at York or outside of York recently or in the past (50.0%)

More than half of the under-engaged respondents were somewhat (45.23%) or very interested (11.06%) in becoming more involved

The most popular types of groups under-engaged respondents would be interested in becoming involved with at York were student groups (68.75%), community groups (53.57%), charities (30.36%), faculty associations (22.32%) and sports teams (17.86%)

The most popular types of activities under-engaged respondents would be interested in participating in when involved with groups at York are event planning/execution (50%), research (49.11%), administrative activities and outreach (39.29%) and activism (37.5%)

The great majority of under-engaged respondents were willing to offer 1-11+ hours of participation time to a York U organization on a monthly basis with 1-5 hours being the most popular choice (62.5%)

The greatest obstacles limiting the involvement of under engaged respondents in York U organizations were time constraints (71.36%), other interests or commitments that take higher priority (47.74%), living too far from campus (44.22%), the time of day groups meet or initiatives occur (39.2%) and a lack of groups that represent their interests (30.15%)

The current or past involvement of engaged respondents entailed regularly volunteering (50.65%), making donations (44.66%), attending events their group(s) hosted throughout the year when they could (44.23%) and participating in special/annual events (43.90%)

The most popular types of activities engaged students participated in when involved with their group(s) were social events (61.13%), educational events (43.52%), event planning/execution (51.61%), fundraising (50.50%) and outreach and communication (43.52%)

The great majority of engaged respondents spend 1-11+ hours participating in activities with all of the groups they are involved with on a monthly basis with 1-5 hours being the most popular choice (42.19%)

Of the amount of time engaged respondents participate with their group(s), zero (36.66%), 1-5 hours (28.9%), less than 1 hour (15.39%) 6-10 hours (9.63%), and 11+ hours (9.41%) per month are devoted to York U groups

The most popular methods by which engaged respondents heard about the group(s) they have been involved with were through word of mouth (58.8%), posters (32.23%), the York website or e-newsletter (28.46%), social networking (27.12%) and events (26.14%)

The most popular reasons for which engaged students participated with the groups they are involved with were because they believed in the particular cause (68.66%), wanted to be engaged in their community (59.8%), enjoyed being involved because it made them feel good (57.14%) and they got to meet new people (53.16%)

The greatest obstacles limiting engaged respondents to becoming more involved with York U organizations were time constraints (69.32%), living too far from campus (40.86%), the time of day the groups meet or initiatives occur (40.53%) and being satisfied with their current level of involvement (20.6%)

MAJOR FINDINGS

- Professors were the highest percentage of respondents that were very interested in environmental sustainability [80.00%] followed by graduate students [74.56%]
- The Faculty of Environmental Studies had the highest percentage of respondents that were very interested in environmental sustainability [87.29%]
- Graduate students were the highest percentage of respondents that were very interested in social sustainability [71.05%]
- An overwhelming 91.30% of respondents from the Faculty of Education were very interested in social sustainability
- Time constraints and living too far from campus were two of the top three obstacles in becoming involved or more involved with York U groups for both engaged and under engaged respondents
- The most popular method by which engaged students heard about the group(s) they have been involved with was through word of mouth [58.8%], which far surpassed the other popular responses

RECOMMENDATIONS

From an examination of the results of the survey and its major findings, we propose a number of recommendations to further improve campus engagement. These recommendations centre on three main themes: communication and education, collaboration and incentives.

Communication and Education

Improved communication and education of on-campus opportunities for engagement are essential to improving the effectiveness of York University programs and campus sustainability.

The York University community is interested. Of the survey respondents, 91.2% are either somewhat interested or very interested in social sustainability, 90.4% are either somewhat interested or very interested in environmental sustainability and 78.4% are somewhat or very interested in economic sustainability.

Also, of the under-engaged survey respondents, 56.29% are at least somewhat interested in becoming more involved, but 30.15% stated that there are not any groups that represent what they care about and 26.13% did not know how to become further engaged.

Further, of the engaged survey respondents, 15.06% did not know how to be more involved with the York University community.

How do we fix this? Communication and education!

Communication

Website devoted to engagement:

Many survey respondents indicate that they find it difficult to navigate York University websites to determine how to get involved. If information is more readily available, engagement with York University's many groups and initiatives will likely improve. After the survey was launched in January 2011, the university's Student

Community Leadership Development website (yorku.ca/sclcd) added a new hub for student organizations called YUConnect (youconnect.yorku.ca) in April 2011.

YUConnect provides students looking for opportunities for engagement with a one-stop user-friendly platform. It has a directory of over 480 different on-campus organizations and allows students to match opportunities to their self-selected interests, join organizations and sign-up to participate in events and programs. It also documents their involvement and learning outside of the classroom through a co-curricular record. Student Organization Leaders can also use the website to promote events and communicate with current and prospective members, create specific pages that connect to social media and processes, as well as manage their membership.

By allowing students to not only connect with student groups, but also other on-campus organizations that are not student-led, YUConnect serves as a powerful method of engaging the student population.

Moreover, survey respondents indicate that there might be silos between the non-student population at York University and the various on-campus organizations: most professors only participated in faculty associations (21.82%) and staff (17.58%) as well as librarians (27.27%) mostly participated in community groups. YUConnect may help break these silos since professors, staff and librarians, that is, anyone with a Passport York account, can join YUConnect to learn of and become engaged with on-campus opportunities.

Advertising:

Most survey respondents indicate that the most popular method through which they learn about sustainability issues is newspaper or news magazine articles. One approach to improve communication for all York University

community members would be to increase advertisement of opportunities for engagement in York University's newspapers. The Excalibur, for example, is read by students, faculty members, staff and alumni, has an audience both on campus and in the Greater Toronto Area, and is available in print and online. Although advertising through this means is not without charge, it may be a successful method of increasing engagement for organizations that have the means.

Further, the top five methods by which engaged respondents heard about the groups they are or have been involved with at York University or otherwise, besides through word of mouth, were as follows: posters (32.23%), the York University website or e-newsletters (28.46%), social networking (27.13%), and events (26.14%). On-campus organizations could therefore try to incorporate as many of these marketing channels as they can into their recruitment strategy in order to increase the probability of engagement.

Promotion of specific opportunities:

The York University community may be more inclined to join on-campus organizations if groups advertise specific opportunities for engagement as part of their recruiting strategy. For example, the most popular activities under-engaged survey respondents indicated they would be interested in taking part in opportunities for event planning/execution (50%) and research (49.11%). If on-campus organizations therefore tried to create or increase the promotion of such positions, and/or skills they required within their organization, their membership may increase.

Emergency LCD screens:

There are currently over 70 digital screens installed in high traffic areas on the Keele and Glendon Campuses as part the emergency preparedness and security services programs. During non-emergency times, the screens display the time and weather as well as information including: safety tips on campus (general tips, earthquake emergency plan, and goSAFE), world news (top stories, local stories, and sports), York University news and upcoming events on campus. We believe that these screens should only share news and information about York. For example, by removing world news and instead promoting on-campus opportunities for engagement, the screens can become a more effective communication tool for engaging people in on-campus opportunities.

Education

Orientation:

Student respondents felt that the university's orientation program—while satisfying in its introduction to the university as an academic and social setting—featured limited exposure to student clubs, organizations and services that could provide an opportunity for further engagement.

In order to ensure new students are aware of the various on-campus opportunities for engagement, orientation packages could be supplemented to include more information: the location of student group services and what they offer, including information about student community and leadership development, student spaces, on-campus groups and how to get involved in opportunities at the Keele and Glendon campuses.

Information fairs:

Although the last day of York University's Frosh Welcome Week in the fall semester has an information fair, York Fest, which showcases student clubs, governments, associations and selected student services, expanding the fair would provide more opportunities for engagement. For example, York Fest could be held more frequently throughout the year, perhaps once every semester and for 2 to 3 consecutive days, and at both university campuses. Finally, more efforts is needed to ensure all students know about York Fest.

Experiential education:

Since over half (53.57%) of under-engaged survey respondents indicated that they would like to become more involved with community groups at York University, experiential education opportunities may be a method by which to increase involvement. This method of engagement may also help alleviate the problem of living too far from campus, which under-engaged survey respondents (44.22%) felt was a factor that limited their involvement in university organizations. A list of some experiential education programs is provided in Appendix 3, Experiential Learning Opportunities at York University.

Collaboration

Student respondents indicated that a lack of engagement and collaboration on campus was linked to a lack of student space. With little real physical space for collaboration with other students and on-campus groups, many students are unaware of how to get involved on campus. For example some survey respondents said:

“Provide a common space for groups to meet so that all or most of them can be conveniently found by people who want to get engaged. Currently, there are many organizations at York but they are not visible to most of the student body.”

“Provide space and opportunity for community building activities on campus - at present, there aren't a lot of incentives to 'stay' on campus unless you live here (and that number is dwindling).”

“When I think about where meetings are held it seems to me that there is a lack of public space that is free of a sense of obligation to buy something in order to use the space.”

One graduate student wrote:

...create more opportunities for genuine community interactions. Create more spaces for students to engage with each other in meaningful ways. As a graduate student I can go to the Grad Cafe or the Grad Lounge to engage with my peers but these locations are often busy and do not provide enough opportunity to have chance interactions with peers and colleagues.

The Student Centre is one space in particular where students should be able to engage with one another. There are some spaces on the upper floors with the club offices, but they are not obvious to others, who get the impression that the building is little more than a food court. The Student Centre should allow student groups to exhibit in the building itself. We encountered this problem first hand—our survey table had to be located outside the doors of the Student Centre since inside space was reserved for paying, often non-student-based clients. It should facilitate communication of what offices and groups reside upstairs. One survey respondent wrote:

York has a large student body and correspondingly it has numerous student groups. I think the Student Centre, while a good facility, does not provide adequate space for all said groups. Space determines our interactions with each other. If one wants to create a more active student body, it is necessary to create places where students can meet, connect and make friends. It's only once these relationships are built that people start caring and stay committed.

We suggest creating additional comfy spaces with chairs and couches for students to use so that people will feel like the space is welcoming and that it is a place where they can interact with one another. It would be beneficial if students had the opportunity to provide input on the creation of the space, especially students studying design principles.

In 2008, the University of Queensland created informal spaces on campus for students to gather, relax and socialize outside classes (Matthews *et al.*). The objectives of these designed spaces included developing an identifiable space for students; enable staff and students to belong to a community in a sense of belonging and identity; as well as to enhance student experience. The university conducted a survey to measure levels of student engagement and use of the informal spaces. The results of the study suggest that students who use the social spaces demonstrate higher levels of engagement than those who do not use these spaces (Matthews *et al.*).

In 2004, the University of Alberta published a report examining methods to enhance student engagement and identified limited availability of student space as a barrier to student engagement (www.provost.ualberta.ca). Limitations to the use of student space such as complex booking processes, costs associated with reserving space for extracurricular activities and restrictions for the use of larger social space are identified as obstacles to enhancing student engagement (www.provost.ualberta.ca).

In 2005, the University of Alberta Senate published a report recommending an increase in social space on campus as a priority for expanding opportunities for student engagement (Executive Summary Student Engagement, 2005). Social spaces facilitate the achievement of this objective as they enhance the informal learning environment and improve opportunities for students to interact with other students (Executive Summary Student Engagement, 2005). Luckily, the Student Centre is now exploring increasing its space with a new building or expansion.

The Learning Commons

The Learning Commons (YFile, 2010) is a new state-of-the-art, innovative space located within York University's Scott Library, Keele Campus. It is a flexible space where students can work collaboratively in groups, do individual work or have access to various academic resources and support, which include assistance in writing, research or learning skills. As part of its innovative design, The Learning Commons is a green retrofit with a lighter footprint as well as programming to support students.

Levitt Goodman Architects were hired to design this project, while a team of York University students, library staff and faculty worked to develop the programming and concepts for The Commons. The team conducted surveys and focus groups to engage with the students about what kind of space and library they wanted, which heavily influenced the design and structure of the space.

The Learning Commons is situated on the second floor of the Scott Library. The area features a hub to bring together programming, research and writing support into one place as well as different styles and seat configurations for different ways to use of the space. There are also digital screens available for collaborative work and various workstations.

There are several distinct areas within The Commons: The Collaboratory features modular furniture that can be easily moved and reconfigured. There is a central area with layered/stepped seating, which provides a space for students to hang out and relax. Booths also line the room for group work and meetings. There are large flat-panel screens for sharing digital media.

The Hub is also an area for academic support. This area is equipped with computer stations and instructional spaces and acts as the main node where students can seek consultation on writing and learning skills as well as research. The Salon houses the Library's reference book collection and has lounge furniture for quiet reading or studying. The Salon also contains artwork by modern Canadian artists such as David Partridge, Claude Tousignant and others.

Additionally, there are two group study rooms, accommodating up to eight people, which students can book. Also, there is an area for displaying art work by York University community.

The Library Commons is meant to act as both formal and informal space for students to engage with one another and with various aspects of academia. The space was originally created with the intention that students will develop a sense of ownership over The Commons by being able to manipulate the space for their current needs. The space is always evolving, and there are future plans to increase study areas and public areas.

Inter-Organizational Learning:

One survey respondent suggests that more networking and collaboration should occur between clubs to share knowledge and build a greater community at York University. Such collaborations could be led across organizations and faculties as well as among students, staff, faculty and librarians to draw value from the knowledge held within different groups and contribute to the campus learning environment.

Incentives

Engagement on campus has several implicit benefits for individuals. The Director of York University's Career Centre, Sarah Bramer, notes that engagement experiences can help individuals build confidence, develop team work skills, establish professionalism, master communication skills and gain technical expertise (Bramer, 2011). This corresponds with the responses of the engaged respondents in the survey, which indicated that some of their motivation for being involved included wanting to learn new skills (43.3%) and build their resumes (37.21%).

While these advantages do encourage involvement, echoing the view of 30 of the survey respondents in the comments, creating further incentives and recognition in the form of certificates or events could lead to further uptake.

Incentive initiatives to improve engagement may include:

Engagement Certificate Program:

Students, staff, faculty, and librarians would be encouraged to keep track of their volunteer hours with on campus initiatives and would be awarded with a certificate upon the completion of a specified number of hours. This initiative would create value for individual action, which is particularly important to over one-third of respondents that stated their motivation for participation was to build their resume. The volunteer hours can be tracked in the

Recognition Event:

York University currently has a number of initiatives that acknowledge the achievements of its students, staff, faculty and alumni. For example; there are a number of scholarships given to students with outstanding academic achievement as well as monetary awards based on academic excellence and financial need. One such award is the Alumni Golden GRADitude Award, which is given to two graduating students each year as an expression of gratitude for making the university a better place during their time at York University through significant leadership in campus life.

The Student & Alumni Relations Unit has honoured students, staff, faculty and alumni from York University's Atkinson Faculty of Liberal & Professional Studies for their volunteer work. In particular, five awards were given out each year during the Shining STARS Volunteer Recognition Celebration to individuals who have helped make Atkinson's programs and events a success.

The Faculty of Environmental Studies holds an Awards Gala each year to recognize and celebrate its students and faculty members who have demonstrated academic and/or research excellence. A Friend of the Faculty Awards is also awarded to recognize the contributions and outstanding support provided to the faculty in the pursuit of its vision.

Each year, York University honours five outstanding alumni leaders who have attained extraordinary achievements and made remarkable contributions to their communities with an award presented at the Bryden Alumni Awards gala.

Although these initiatives serve as motivating factors for the York University community by providing a publicly visible platform through which the university showcases the positive impact its members have on the community, there is no university-wide event that recognizes students who volunteer.

Another strategy that the university could pursue therefore is the organization of a banquet honouring those who have demonstrated a high level of involvement, both within the University and local community. The participation of high-level University officials, such as the Dean, would be essential to further solidify engagement as a pan-university core value at York University. This initiative would allow individuals to feel recognized, valued for their achievements, and part of a greater engaged and connected York University community.

CONCLUSIONS

Many opportunities for engagement already existed for the York University community before the survey was conducted, many of which were based on the theme of sustainability. They include residential housing options, communication strategies during new student orientation, internship positions and student organizations. Engagement, as provided by initiatives such as these, is relevant to the interests of the York University community since the majority of survey respondents are interested in different aspects of sustainability.

However, there is still room for improvement by creating more opportunities for engagement. In particular, more than half of the under-engaged survey respondents were at least somewhat interested in becoming more involved, but many could not identify any on-campus groups that represented what they care about. Further, a portion of both under-engaged and engaged respondents were unaware of how to become further engaged.

Many North American and international universities have successful engagement initiatives in place that may serve as best practices and activities for future consideration at York University. They include a number of different community service and involvement learning programs. The first step in encouraging initiatives such as these or other types of opportunities for engagement is by promoting communication, education, collaboration and incentive strategies. The effectiveness of implementing the recommendations in this report does not rely on York University's administration alone. The York University community, including student clubs, the Student Centre, and Faculty Associations, will need to come together and do their part in leading the way to develop a more sustainable on-campus community.



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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: The College Sustainability Report Card published by the Sustainable Endowment Institute:

Grading matrix

The following table outlines York University's overall grade as well as the grades for each of the categories it was evaluated upon. The grades of other Canadian universities are also indicated (Green Report Card, 2011).

	YEAR	OVERALL GRADES	ADMINISTRATION	CLIMATE CHANGE	FOOD & RECYCLING	STUDENT INVOLVEMENT	TRANSPORTATION	ENDOWMENT TRANSPORTATION	INVESTMENT PRIORITIES	GREEN BUILDING	SHAREHOLDER ENGAGEMENT
University of Toronto	2011	A-	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A
York University	2011	B+	A	A	A	A	B	A	A	B	F
Mc Master University	2011	B	B	A	C	A	A	A	C	C	D
University of Waterloo	2011	C+	D	C	A	C	C	A	C	C	D
University of British Columbia	2011	A-	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	D
Wilfred Laurier University	2011	B-	B	D	A	C	B	C	A	B	D

Student Involvement Base Indicators

Residential Communities [10% / 5%]

Offering sustainability-themed residential housing options

Pond Road Residence is the only residential community that fulfilled the criteria required for this category (Green Report Card. York University, 2011). With a capacity to hold four hundred and forty students, the building has been designed to provide a living-and-learning experience that is focused on sustainability. Key design highlights include the predominant use of natural light, a green roof, radiant in-floor heating and cooling, low flow shower heads, operable windows, and common areas with furniture that can be assembled in different ways to suit users. The residence also has a dedicated Environmental Ambassador whose responsibilities include facilitating the Res Race to Zero competition (a challenge for York University students living in the Keele and Glendon residences to reduce their carbon footprint), planning and implementing programming based on environmental themes, encouraging people towards sustainable actions and linking the residence with other sustainability initiatives, such as Yorkw!se (a university-wide initiative that supports sustainability and quality of life on campus by promoting best practices and encouraging engagement and support in local efforts that embrace a greener approach to life at York University).

New Student Orientation [10% / 5%]

Integrating sustainability into new student orientation

York University has taken several initiatives to incorporate sustainability into its annual orientation week. They include the following initiatives:

- incorporating sustainability information into presentations made by Resident Advisors to individual hallways
- actively engaging students in activities that raise awareness about sustainability
- highlighting how sustainability occurs on campus or how students take part in a productive activity, such as volunteer work or projects such as working in the on-campus garden
- having the Red Zone, the new student information centre, distribute Yorkw!se materials and provide information about sustainability groups on campus

However, one specific activity listed in the College Sustainability Report Card that York University currently does not incorporate into its orientation is the use of “skits, speakers or presentations that take place in large venues that most first-year students attend” (Green Report Card. York University: Campus Survey. 2011). In particular, the topics covered in these activities must include one of the following: promoting the Office of Sustainability, student campus sustainability groups or sustainability as an important campus issue. Since most students attend the new student orientation, adding a presentation about York University’s sustainability clubs and initiatives would be a great addition.

Internships/Outreach Opportunities [30% / 20%]

Offering sustainability internship opportunities for students on campus

Providing student positions through supported eco-rep programs or similar initiatives

In 2011, the University offered 13 paid and 15 unpaid office-based sustainability internship positions for students. Groups such as IRIS, which employed a number of these interns, allow students to further develop their research and communication skills while gaining experience in the field of sustainability. Students at both the undergraduate and graduate level are eligible for these positions.

Student Organizations [35% / 7.5%]

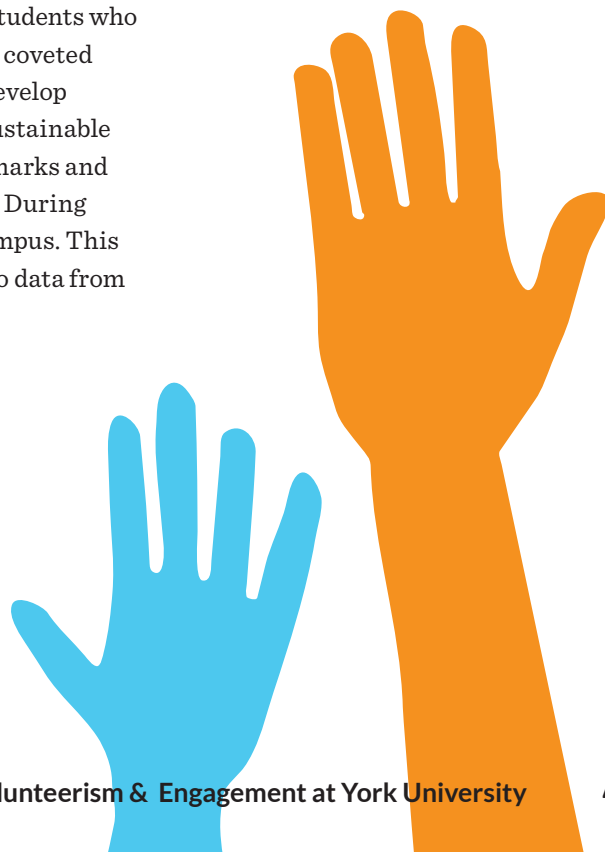
Having active student organizations that prioritize campus sustainability efforts and that achieve significant results in their efforts to advance sustainability on campus

York University has a number of student groups that focus on different sustainability issues. A complete list of student-run York University clubs and organizations can be found at "<http://yuconnect.yorku.ca>". These initiatives allow students to interact with like-minded peers, develop soft skills and further develop their knowledge of both local and international sustainability issues.

Sustainability Challenges and Competitions [15% / 7.5%]

Overseeing sustainability challenges or competitions on campus, or with other colleges at least once a year

At present, York University runs a single, annual sustainability competition, known as the Res Race to Zero. The Race was initiated in 2009 to encourage a reduction in residence hall energy usage. Students are involved in coordinating and participating in the event. While there is no monetary prize, students who are engaged in residence activities have a better chance of gaining coveted positions, such as Donships. More importantly however, it helps develop behavioural changes amongst the student body and encourages sustainable practices. The results from previous years are also used as benchmarks and students are challenged to demonstrate continuous improvement. During March 2011, 31,029 kWh were collectively conserved on Keele campus. This equates to a decrease of 5.40% or 8.89 kWh per person compared to data from March 2009.



Appendix 2: Engagement at Other Universities

<http://nsse.iub.edu/>

Community Service Learning (CSL)

Learning through community service has been used to drive university engagement while further increasing the benefits universities have in their broader communities. The Canadian Alliance for Community Service Learning defines this type of learning experience as “an educational approach that integrates service in the community with intentional learning activities. With effective CSL efforts, members of both educational institutions and community organizations work together toward outcomes that are mutually beneficial” (<http://www.communityservicelearning.ca/en/>).

In 2005, the J.W. McConnell Family Foundation, a philanthropic funding organization that supports Canadians in building more inclusive, sustainable and resilient societies, announced it would finance the CSL projects of 10 Canadian universities through its National University-Based Community Service-Learning Program. The University of British Columbia, Lakehead University, Wilfrid Laurier University, University of Ontario Institute of Technology and the University of Alberta all received funding for their CSL programs through the program. Highlights of two of these programs are as follows:

UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

<http://www.learningexchange.ubc.ca/ubc-community-learning-initiative/community-service-learning-projects-done-during-reading-week-2008/>

The UBC-Community Learning Initiative (UBC-CLI) is an initiative for the advancement of curricular or course-based CSL and community-based research. The UBC-CLI offers a range of support to course instructors who wish to integrate CSL or community-based research projects into existing or new courses. Typically, students work together in small teams on short-term projects with not-for-profit organizations, public schools or small businesses in nearby communities. These projects are designed to achieve goals set by the community organization and are intended to help students understand how their classroom learning can be applied in real life. In order to improve the efficiency of these projects, UBC also offers a Community Leadership Program for its staff and employees. Participants in this program learn how to mentor and lead CLI teams.

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

<http://www.csl.ualberta.ca/>

The University of Alberta also has a CSL program, which is intended to make learning come alive by linking academic course work with community-based

experiences. The purpose of the program is to enable active engagement with non-profit organizations and allow students to explore relationships between course concepts and the real world. By completing a certain number of courses with a CSL component, students can earn a Certificate in Community Service-Learning upon graduation. The program also provides opportunities for students to become student peer mentors or to serve as interns on local, non-profit boards. There also exists a scholarship program for third or fourth year students who demonstrate outstanding community service through involvement in the CSL program and other volunteer work.

Engagement in Action

The following subsection outlines some of the best practices and activities being employed at other universities to improve engagement.

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

The Centre for Environment

<http://www.environment.utoronto.ca/ProfessionalDevelopment.aspx>

The Centre for Environment at the University of Toronto serves as a hub to help direct students, faculty and the surrounding communities to environmental initiatives across the university's three campuses. The centre operates within the Faculty of Arts and Sciences and is closely linked to the University's environmental studies program. It is also associated with the University of Toronto Sustainability Office, Environment Canada's Adaptation and Impacts Research Section and the Jane Goodall Institute. The information provided on the Centre's website provides a holistic picture of the sustainability initiatives and opportunities available at the University of Toronto. This includes information on undergraduate/graduate programs, professional development initiatives, campus activities and events, research opportunities and regular campus news updates. The Centre for Environment serves as a highly useful resource for members of the university who are looking for an overview of all matters related to sustainability on campus.

ULife

<https://ulife.utoronto.ca/>

ULife is an interactive website that allows students to easily browse through the many student groups present across the University of Toronto's three campuses. It streamlines much of the administrative processes for student groups and serves as a vital link between student groups and members of the university. The easy-to-use format of the website facilitates fast browsing as it divides groups based on areas of interest and types of campus organizations. Another useful section on the website is its opportunities page, which provides groups the opportunity to advertise executive positions that they are looking to fill. Other opportunities listed on the website include general, award and research opportunities. The format, useful sections and rich variety of information make ULife an easy and fun website for students to browse.



UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO

Waterloo Sustainability
www.sustainability.uwaterloo.ca

Sustainability at the University of Waterloo is unique in the sense that it draws on the university's strength in science and engineering to develop creative solutions to on-campus issues. Waterloo was the first university in Canada to adopt the idea of "Greening the Campus," the philosophy that university campuses should reflect the world students seek to create.

Sustainability Student Groups & Connections to On-campus student groups at Waterloo are primarily focused on the development of solutions to environmental issues based on engineering and science. Some of these groups include: Engineers Without Borders, Midnight Sun Solar Race Car, The Solar Technology Education Program and UW Alternative Fuels Team. Some of the projects conducted by these groups have achieved notable success. One example is Waterloo's world record for the longest running, fully solar-based car. Other projects include the installation of solar panels on university roofs and research and development in alternative fuels for both on-campus and general purpose.

MCMASTER UNIVERSITY

<http://www.mcmaster.ca/sustainability/>

McMaster provides a number of resources for students, staff and faculty on how to engage in sustainable practices in their academic, campus, residence or off-campus lives. In addition to promoting practices such as recycling and reducing waste, the university also highlights health and well-being of its students, staff and faculty as an integral component in maintaining university sustainability; therefore, to ensure a high level of investment into the university's human resources, the university promotes programs, groups and departments which support all areas of personal health and well-being; and, recognizes accomplishments and achievements of its students, staff and faculty.

WEST VIRGINIA UNIVERSITY

Morgantown, West Virginia, USA
<http://cce.wvu.edu/about>

The West Virginia University Center for Civic Engagement (CCE) commits to the connection of campus and community through meaningful service and academic study. In order to achieve this goal, the CCE uses the following principles:

- develops service learning courses with faculty and community partners
- encourages and supports service opportunities in the community
- consults with units and departments on implementing discipline-based civic engagement curricula
- assesses civic engagement activities across campus
- plans ongoing engagement and service activities at local, national and global levels.

The university has a CCE webpage with details on all current and ongoing projects. Students who are enthusiastic about volunteering are offered the option to enrol online or in-person. The site also features presentations that



outline past, successful projects and implicitly communicates a clear message: any service to the community is to be recognized and applauded.

In addition, after the completion of every project, students are asked to evaluate the community partner. The feedback is used in designing and implementing future events.

The CCE is considered to have played a significant role in WVU's appointment to the - Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll, the highest federal recognition a college or university can receive for its commitment to volunteering, service learning and civic engagement. The West Virginia University was called to the Honor Roll for four consecutive years, from 2006 to 2009.

RICE UNIVERSITY

Houston, Texas, USA

<http://cic.rice.edu/ServiceStatistics/>

Rice University is another institution that has been recognized for its community services. Their Community Involvement Centre (CIC) identifies and cultivates opportunities for Rice students, staff and faculty to engage in the Houston community, and the world, through engaged scholarship, active service and meaningful leadership. The CIC supports four programs: the Center for Civic Research and Design, the Community Involvement Center, Leadership Rice, and the Office of Fellowships and Undergraduate Research.

To provide more authenticity to the community programs and induce enthusiasm among student volunteers, the CIC lists service facts on its webpage. These facts include, but are not confined to the following parameters:

- Total Students Engaged in Service (Curricular and Co-Curricular)
- Number of Students Engaged in Curricular Service
- Number of Students Engaged in Co-Curricular Service
- Number of Students Engaged in More Than 20 Hours of Service per Academic Term
- Total Number of Hours of Service
- Total Courses Including a Service Component
- Total Faculty Utilizing Service in Curriculum.

LA TROBE UNIVERSITY

Victoria, Australia

<http://www.latrobe.edu.au/student-enrichment/assets/downloads/Student%20Engagement%20Strategy%202009.pdf>

A core priority of La Trobe University's Strategic Plan is to develop skills and understanding of rounded citizens through student engagement. This is being addressed by the establishment of a unit within the portfolio of the Pro-Vice Chancellor, Equity and Student Services, which will contribute to the planning and implementation of programs, activities and strategies that provide a vibrant, formative and engaging university experience. A table outlining the University's 2009 Student Engagement Strategies are outlined below.

LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS

London, United Kingdom

<http://www2.lse.ac.uk/intranet/LSEServices/estatesDivision/sustainableLSE/home.aspx>

The London School of Economics (LSE) has behavioral programs that aim to foster more sustainable actions by students, staff, and external community members. For example, Green Impact is an environmental accreditation scheme that empowers staff and students to create positive environmental change across campus. LSE also hosts workshops to train students in assisting with initiatives such as raising awareness of waste and the environment, introducing sustainable coffee cups, extending water fountains on campus and conducting waste audits in halls. The university also has a student consulting group called 'Sustainable Future' and allows students to work with staff on the sustainability team to examine and implement initiatives towards achieving environmental policy objectives.

Objective	Strategy	Timeline	Performance Indicators
Improve La Trobe University's internal knowledge of and capabilities for enhancing student engagement	Maintain University-wide Student Engagement and Advisory Committee to develop policies and disseminate information and resources	Ongoing	Increased response rates to AUSSE, GDS/CEQ, Student Services Survey, SET
	Implement a Staff Symposium on Student Engagement featuring guest speakers and best practice	July 09	Indicators of student learning and engagement from CEQ and AUSSE show sustained improvement.
	Develop program on the 'Student Voice' and ensure relevant data is collected through student focus groups, Student Summit, AUSSE	Ongoing	

Objective	Strategy	Timeline	Performance Indicators
Enhance the University's community engagement by increasing the participation of students within the community	Implement Infinity Leadership Program across all campuses to provide a framework for student-community engagement	Semester 2 2009	Increased student participation in community engagement activities
	Prepare students through effective training and recognise their contribution as volunteers through the Student Leaders framework		New partnerships established with local schools, community and industry to support student volunteering
	Create opportunities for school students and young people within community services to participate in Infinity Leadership Program and aspects of the Student Leaders programs		

Objective	Strategy	Timeline	Performance Indicators
Develop a coherent and structured approach to maximising student engagement and enrichment.	Infinity Leadership Program implemented as a Pilot program in 2009, and extended to all campuses by 2010	Launched Feb 2009	Consolidated student engagement offerings in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> International or local voluntary /community work Student mentoring and leadership programs For credit Work Integrated Learning
	Student Leaders Program implemented across all campuses in 2009 to provide training and recognition for student participation in mentoring and volunteering	Launched July 2009	

Objective	Strategy	Timeline	Performance Indicators
Improve student retention by creating opportunities for first year students to successfully transition into University life	Audit and improve processes and procedures relating to student admission, enrolment, orientation and academic engagement	March- June 2009	Student retention exceeds 86 per cent
	Enhance staff awareness of first year transition issues with establishment of website and resources	March- June 2009	
	Launch Peer Mentoring Toolkit and Network and support the implementation of new Peer Mentoring programs within faculties	Launched Semester 1/ 09	
	Review and refine Orientation policies and programming to ensure students are better prepared and have access to a common La Trobe experience	July- Dec 09	

UNIVERSITY OF GOTHENBURG

Gothenburg, Sweden

<http://www.mls.adm.gu.se/sustainability/>

The University of Gothenburg plans to increase student involvement in activities and projects in sustainable development. Student participation is now a separate area of the campus sustainability action plan. The university views environmentally-aware students as an important contribution to society and plans on integrating sustainability into the education system. There are many projects in recycling and energy savings that students can work in. The university runs an annual sustainability awareness day that is well known amongst students.

The university recognizes that collaborating and engaging with the rest of society, off campus, is essential in developing a sustainable society. A 'university week' is hosted annually and is intended to inform, inspire and engage members of society to adopt and participate in sustainable initiatives that can be applied to their homes and workplaces.

Appendix 3: Experiential Learning Opportunities at York University

York University's Inventory of Community Engagement report highlights over 100 pan-university examples of current community-university partnerships from experiential learning to comprehensive initiatives that foster post-secondary education among community groups. Below are a few examples of programs that support experiential learning opportunities. The complete Inventory of Community Engagement can be found at <http://www.yorku.ca/uecr/images/community_images/YORK_Inventory.pdf>.

Experiential learning opportunities

Atkinson Faculty of Liberal and Professional Studies – Experiential Education Reporting to the Atkinson Dean's Office, Atkinson's Experiential Education (EE) program coordinates community engagement learning that blends theory and coursework with practical, hands-on experience. As part of their studies, Atkinson students, guided by faculty members, work in small teams and apply key course concepts to a wide variety of case studies and projects involving both profit and not-for-profit organizations. In 2011, more than 2,000 Students from Human Resources, Accounting, Marketing, Sociology, Social Work and Women's Studies worked with approximately 200 organizations to meet community needs, while fulfilling their academic course objectives. For example, 50 Atkinson students in a fourth-year market research course were involved in an EE research project with UNICEF Canada. Information gathered and assessed by Atkinson students on the volunteer and fundraising perceptions/behaviours of adolescents contributed to UNICEF's future activities to engage youth in education and advocacy.

Career Centre

The Career Centre supports students in their career self-management by delivering career development, job search and work experience programs. The Career Centre facilitates connections between York University students and employers, alumni and other members of the community through a variety of services. The Career Centre also administers the Technology Internship Program, in partnership with the Faculty of Science & Engineering and the Atkinson Faculty of Liberal & Professional Studies, for students in IT, computer, space and geomatics engineering programs.

Knowledge Mobilization Unit

York University's Knowledge Mobilization (KM) Unit provides services and funding for faculty, graduate students and community organizations seeking to maximize the impact of academic research and expertise on public policy, social programming and professional practice. York University's KM Unit is supported by grants from Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) and Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) and from the Office of the Vice-President Research & Innovation.



Appendix 4: Common Themes for Involvement from Written Comments.

Common themes	Frequency of comments
Better advertising/outreach to students & staff	138
More flexibility (Time/location, i.e. downtown)	62
More club fairs/events/booths/social events	53
More awareness	53
Offer benefits/incentives for participating	47
Have a central/common website for information	40
Create opportunities/jobs/volunteering or recognition	30
Educate people the benefits of participating or causes	28
Better advertising (posters/billboards/booklets)	26
Appealing to different people/ more diversity	23
Better advertising (in class/profs)	23
Better advertising (Email/social media)	23
Face to face interaction/proactive	23
Create a common space/hub/area	23
Better communication	22
York should provide support/funding	22
Admin is disconnected/disorganized/red-tape	21
Connect with commuters / live too far away	20
No opinion/suggestion	19
Unaware/not informed/not sure how to join	19
More accessibility	18
Build a community/School spirit	15
Make participation mandatory/requirement	13
Better internal club organization	11
Other	10
Reduce tuition/residence fees	9
Happy with how things are run	8
Better advertising (Flyers)	8
Lower parking/transportation costs	8
Reduce price on foods / better food options	8
Better advertising (TVS)	7
Other commitments outside of YorkU / no time	7
More integration with Glendon Campus	6
Not feeling welcomed/scared	6
Connect more with new students	5
Improve student government/YFS	5
Safety on campus	3
Surveys	2
Improve public transit to YorkU	2





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