

Student Groups Support Survey

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Overview

This survey ran on the UASU Perks platform, August 14-28, 2023. It reached 507 points of contact, virtually all of them undergraduate students or recent graduates.

Key findings include:

- 47% of respondents had never visited BearsDen before the survey
- 37% of respondents participated in a student group/club last year
- 49% of respondents were interested in participating in a student group/club last year but faced a barrier of some sort that prevented them from doing so
- 29% of respondents "absolutely" think they will get involved in student groups this year
- 54% of respondents think they might get involved in student groups this year if they can find one that interests them
- 23% of respondents think they will likely not get involved in student groups this year due to work and school commitments
- Respondents suggest grants and funding for groups/clubs should be focused on community engagement, university/student development and supporting new clubs
- Respondents suggest that spaces for club meetings, mentorship from the UASU and advertising/connections would be helpful supports and resources for clubs
- Respondents stated that the biggest challenges to creating and/or leading a club would likely be recruiting people and keeping them interested, figuring out the papers and application processes needed for clubs and groups and finding a space for the club to meet

"Have you been to BearsDen before today?"

The University of Alberta has over 450 unique, student-run organizations and clubs. With so much variety, there's something for everyone!

To make it easy for you to find your next adventure, we maintain BearsDen, an online portal to student involvement at UAlberta. BearsDen is software for students and student groups to act as a center for non-academic and co-curricular activities on campus! It's also what Student Group Services uses for group registration, office/locker and grant applications, and much more.

Have you been to BearsDen before today?

54% of respondents claimed they had visited BearsDen at least once before filling out the survey. Of that 54%, 14% have visited BearsDen "many times," 12% "several times" and 28% "once or twice." The remaining 47% of respondents claimed they had never visited BearsDen before.

Based on this data we may conclude that BearsDen engagement is only slightly higher than disengagement, indicating that there are caveats in either student's awareness of BearsDen or general student interest in clubs.

"Were you involved in student groups/clubs last year?"

Only 37% of respondents indicated that were involved in student groups/clubs last year. Of the 37%, 14% claimed they were "very involved" and 28% claimed they were "a little involved."

64% of respondents indicated they were not involved in student groups/clubs last year. However, 24% stated that they "would have been involved if [they'd] known about a group that interested [them]" and 25% stated that they "couldn't find the time." The remaining 15% stated that they were not interested in participating in student groups/clubs.

The results from this question show that 37% of respondents participated in a student group/club last year, while 49% were interested in participating but faced a barrier of some sort.

"Do you think you'll get involved in student groups this year? Choose ALL that apply."

29% of respondents selected "absolutely" as part of their answer to this question. The remaining options were "sure" followed by a condition and "I'm less likely to get involved in student groups/clubs because..." followed by a reason. They are as follows:

"Sure..."

- If I can find a group/club that interests me - 54% of respondents
- If it doesn't require a huge time commitment - 43% of respondents
- If it helps me build career skills - 28% of respondents
- If it helps me find/build community - 31% of respondents

"I'm less likely to get involved in student groups/clubs because..."

- My work/school commitments are too much this year - 23% of respondents
- I'm already so involved with off-campus groups - 5% of respondents
- They just don't interest me - 7% of respondents
- I have family commitments - 5% of respondents
- I'm not very interested in groups/clubs - 8% of respondents

Upon analyzing each respondent's selection, we found 88 unique combinations of answers to this question. The most common combination of answers are:

- Only the option "Absolutely" with 83 respondents
- Only the option "Sure if I can find a group/club that interests me" with 43 respondents
- All of the "Sure..." options with 32 respondents
- Both "Sure, if I can find a group/club that interests me" and "Sure, if it doesn't require a huge time commitment" options with 32 respondents

Student group funding

Student groups/clubs can apply for grants through the UASU Student Group Granting Program. These grants are given out by committee and can support events (up to 50%) and operating materials/expenses (up to \$500 every two years), for a total maximum of \$2000 per academic year. All grant recipients need to make a report on how the funds were used. More information is available in the Finance Committee Standing Orders.

Thinking about student groups/clubs, are there any different sorts of grants or funding options that you think would be beneficial?

"More opportunity for opening new clubs to support hesitant new clubs to open."

"I think it would be useful to have some infrastructure grants for technology related clubs. In some cases operating costs may not cover rudimentary computing materials for some technology clubs."

"Project-based grants for club missions that demonstrate value towards the university/students."

"It would be cool if there was grant money specifically for events hosted by more than one student group. I think it would encourage clubs to interact more with each other."

"Grants that fund professional development/ skill training for members, to help them more effectively reach the goals of the club."

"Being a club exec, I would say grants or funding for community building or between club events to foster a greater sense of community between clubs and communities."

"Thinking about student groups/clubs, are there any supports or resources (other than funding) that you think would be beneficial?"

"Make event approval faster. Hire more event approval people."

"Probably support for room booking or staff to help run their events."

"Mental health modules to prevent burnout, if they're not included in the GLO already!"

"Advertising opportunities that are more visible to be more accessible to others."

"Advising sessions with the UASU for club executives."

"Better community connections for event hosting outside of campus"

"If you were going to help start or lead a student group/club, what do you think your biggest challenges/obstacles would be?"

"Finding the space for the group to meet."

"I think the biggest challenge would be finding enough students to join who are both interested and available."

"I made a club, the biggest hurdle was figuring out which documents and such needed to be submitted. The bears den forum system is rather lacking. Especially for funding requests."

"Getting people aware that the club exists and spiking interest for people to join."

"I think I would find it difficult to help advertise the club and find new members outside of Clubs Fair, and to maintain members as the term progresses and classes get busier."

"Finding the first steps to be considered a club, the resources to become a club, space to run, attending events, and maybe a mentor to help."