

Recreational Sports Programs and Facilities Satisfaction Assessment Spring 2024

Purpose of Assessment

The Department of Recreational Sports (Rec Sports) wanted to determine students' level of satisfaction with facilities and programs, as well as understand why students do not utilize Rec Sports offerings. Student Affairs Planning, Assessment & Research has worked with Rec Sports for similar projects in the past since 2013.

Key Findings with Recommendations

Student Affairs Planning, Assessment & Research identified several key findings and developed actionable recommendations the department may take based on the results. However, Rec Sports staff may identify other findings using their knowledge and understanding of the community. Staff members in Recreational Sports are strongly encouraged to read all the results to gain a fuller understanding of students' experiences.

- Most students drove to campus via a car or motorcycle; however, about one-third of students took the bus. Approximately half of the students who took the bus felt that the bus schedules did not meet their needs to use Rec Sports facilities or programs. Additionally, students felt that crowds, issues with parking, and convenience were the main reasons why they had difficulty taking advantage of Rec Sports and its programs. Qualitative responses from students discussed wanting more equipment, classes, indoor spaces, expanded hours, room availability, and greater flexibility of buses (routes and hours).
 - Rec Sports staff may want to explore options to change equipment on a regular basis and look at expanding hours for certain facilities.
 - Rec Sports is encouraged to work with Transportation Services to see if additional bus routes could be created or the frequency of routes coming by the Rec Center.
- Approximately 80% of student respondents reported utilizing a Rec Sports Center or its programs at least once a week. Students utilized the Student Rec Center the most, followed by the Southside Rec Center, and the Polo Road Rec Center.
- Though most respondents indicated being satisfied or extremely satisfied with Rec Sports facilities, most comments had some type of suggestion or recommendation. Suggestions by students to improve all three main Rec Sports facilities were similar. These included adding new equipment, fixing current parking issues, lessening the crowds, and extending the current hours. Students gave more in-depth responses towards how to fix the overcrowding by purchasing more machines and extending the hours of operation.
 - Rec Sports is encouraged to explore creative approaches to expanding the hours of operation or other ways to reduce overcrowding.
 - If not already doing so, Rec Sports could consider a planned replacement timeline for equipment and share that timeline with students.
- Approximately three-fourths of students used Strength and Conditioning at the Rec Centers. The next most common programs were Intramural Sports (23%) and Fitness and Wellness (18%). Though most respondents indicated they were satisfied or extremely satisfied with Rec Sports programs, most comments also had some recommendation or suggestion. Some of these concerns that align between all the programs offered include problems with hours, crowds, equipment, cleanliness, machine/class availability and reserving spaces to conduct these activities.
 - Rec Sports may want to look at the current policies and procedures around replacing equipment, cleaning areas, and reserving spaces to improve these areas to meet student needs.

- Students were the most dissatisfied with the reservation process. Rec Sports staff may want to talk with students after they make a reservation to gather specific details about the process and how it might be improved.
- Finally, students had the opportunity to share any final comments, and many took the opportunity to give suggestions. These suggestions include adding more food options, building a facility on the northside of campus, adding more classes, building more indoor courts, purchasing more machines/equipment, and adjusting current room reservation regulations and processes.
 - It may be helpful for Rec Sports to determine if any of these suggestions could be implemented to improve students' experiences with Rec Sports.

Method and Sample

An electronic survey was developed in Qualtrics®, a software program that creates web-based surveys and databases. The survey contained 37 questions; 22 were quantitative and 15 were qualitative. Due to branching technology, not all respondents saw all questions. Student Affairs Planning, Assessment & Research evaluated the results using SPSS®, a statistical software program, Excel®, and Tableau®, a data visualization software.

The email invitation with the survey link was sent to a sample of 4,000 Texas A&M students on February 9, 2024. One email address was invalid, and the survey link was not delivered. Non-responders received up to three reminders before the survey closed on March 5, 2024. Of the 3,999 students who successfully received the survey link, 179 completed some part of the survey, yielding a 4% response rate.

Results

Results are reported as means, standard deviation (sd), and frequency percentages for the number of people (n) who responded to the question. For ease of reading, frequency percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole percent, so totals may not add up to exactly 100%. Tables are in descending mean or frequency order unless otherwise specified. Summary themes are contained in this report; the entire list can be found in a separate document. While the Department of Recreational Sports has conducted similar projects in the past, the questions on this survey differed and comparisons to previous years are not be made in this report.

The first question asked students how long it took them to get to campus. Table 1 shows that it takes most students between ten and twenty minutes to get to campus.

Which best describes how long it takes you to get to campus?	2024 Percent [n=166]
It takes me 10 minutes or less to get to campus	40%
It takes me 11-20 minutes to get to campus	37%
I live on campus	18%
It takes me more than 20 minutes to get to campus	6%

Table 1: Time to Get to Campus

Those who reported living off-campus were asked a follow-up question about how they get to campus using a select all that apply format. Table 2, on the following page, reveals that over half of respondents drove either a car or motorcycle to campus. Those who selected the other response option could share a comment and 17 students reported they walked to campus and one rode an electric longboard.

How do you get to campus? (Select all that apply)	2024 Percent [n=137]
Car / Motorcycle	59%
Bus	33%
Bike / E Scooter	19%
Other	13%
Carpool	4%

Table 2: Method to Get to Campus

Students who indicated that they used the bus to get to campus were asked a follow-up question about if the bus schedules met their needs to use Rec Sports facilities or programs. Of the 45 respondents, 51% said no, 29% reported yes, and 20% were unsure.

When asked if they use any of the Rec Sports facilities or participate in any of its programs, 81% of the 166 respondents said yes, they did, and 19% indicated that they did not.

Regardless of whether they utilized Rec Sports or not, respondents were asked to share what makes it difficult for them to take advantage of Rec Sports and its programs using a select all that apply format. Table 3 demonstrates the main challenge with using Rec Sports and its programs is the crowds, which affected nearly half of the respondents. Students who selected that what they wanted was not offered at Rec Sports were given the opportunity to write what they would like to see and 19 did. Students discussed wanting more equipment, more classes, and more indoor spaces for these activities. Students who selected the other response option explained what made it difficult. Their comments were similarly to previous responses, but also added wanting more hours, better room availability, and greater flexibility of buses (routes and hours).

Which of the following, if any, make it difficult for you to take advantage of Rec Sports and its programs? (Select all that apply)	2024 Percent [n=163]
It is too crowded	49%
Not enough parking	30%
I'm too busy / I do not have enough time	26%
It is not convenient	16%
I live too far away	15%
What I want is not offered at Rec Sports	12%
None	11%
Other	10%
I use another local facility or my apartment's workout facilities	6%
I do not feel welcome or comfortable at Rec Sports	4%
I do not work out or play sports	4%

Table 3: Reasons for Not Utilizing Rec Sports

Those who reported that they did not feel welcome or comfortable at Rec Sports received a follow-up question asking them to explain why they felt that way or what would make them feel welcomed or comfortable and three students provided a comment. One student shared that they felt Rec Sports did not cater to them as a graduate student. Another student reported feeling threatened and that the staff was rude. The final student stated people were rude about reserving racquetball rooms and being kicked out by other Rec Sports users and that the policy of five people per mirror room made them feel uncomfortable.

Students who indicated they did not use Rec Sports facilities or programs went to the last question on the survey. However, students who reported that they used Rec Sports facilities or participated in its programs continued with questions about their experiences with Rec Sports. Those students who used Rec Sports facilities or programs and lived off campus, were asked about the reasons they come to campus. Table 4 indicates that two-thirds of students utilize Rec Sports facilities and its programs both when they are already on campus and make a special trip to campus to utilize Rec Sports.

Which best describes why you come to campus?	2024 Percent [n=101]
I do some of both	66%
I make a special trip to campus to utilize Rec Sports or attend its programs	21%
I use Rec Sports or attend its programs when I am already on campus	13%

Table 4: Why Students Come to Campus

All students who reported utilizing Rec Sports facilities or programs whether living on or off campus, were asked how often they used the facilities or programs. Table 5 illustrates that 89% of students used it at least once a week, and more than half used the facilities every day or most every day.

How often do you use Rec Sports facilities or programs?	2024 Percent [n=128]
Every day or most every day	52%
Once or twice a week	37%
Once or twice a month	6%
Once or twice a semester	6%

Table 5: Frequency of Using Rec Sports

Respondents were asked a series of questions to know what facilities and programs they used and their level of satisfaction with those facilities and programs. Using a select all that apply question, they were asked to identify which Rec Sports facilities they used. As seen in Table 6, the vast majority used the Student Rec Center, followed by almost half using the Southside Rec Center.

Which of the following Rec Sports facilities do you use? (Select all that apply)	2024 Percent [n=130]
Student Rec Center	83%
Southside Rec Center	45%
Polo Road Rec Center	27%
Penberthy Rec Sports Complex	15%
PEAP Building	10%
Omar Smith Tennis Center	2%

Table 6: Rec Sports Facilities Used

Students were asked about their level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the facilities they reported using. Table 7, on the next page, shows that most respondents were either satisfied or extremely satisfied with all the facilities listed; however, students reported the highest level of satisfaction with the Southside Rec Center and the lowest level with the Student Rec Center.

Please rate your level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the...	Extremely Satisfied (5)	Satisfied (4)	Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied (3)	Dissatisfied (2)	Extremely Dissatisfied (1)	2024 Mean (sd) [n]
Southside Rec Center	32%	56%	9%	4%	--	4.15 (.74) [54]
Omar Smith Tennis Center	--	100%	--	--	--	4.00 (.00) [2]
Penberthy Rec Sports Complex	11%	74%	16%	--	--	3.95 (.52) [19]
PEAP Building	--	91%	9%	--	--	3.91 (.30) [11]
Polo Road Rec Center	19%	58%	13%	10%	--	3.87 (.85) [31]
Student Rec Center	12%	65%	11%	11%	1%	3.76 (.85) [105]

Table 7: Facilities Satisfaction

Respondents were also given the opportunity to share any comments about the facilities they used. Comments regarding the Student Rec Center shared concerns about outdated equipment that were consistently breaking and the need for new machines. Additional concerns included limited hours, poor parking, constant crowds, and regulations regarding room reservations. Students commented on the Polo Road Rec Center's crowds, limited equipment, lack of sports courts/track, and poor hours. Comments about the Southside Rec Center discussed needing more equipment, more outdoor spaces, more indoor court space, bad interactions with people, and parking issues. Respondents mentioned muddy fields, confusing bus routes, and issues with the turf at Penberthy Rec Sports Complex. Nobody made any comments regarding the PEAP Building or the Omar Smith Tennis Center. There were many similarities between the comments at the three Rec Centers such as adding new equipment (Smith machine, hack squat, cable machines, more dumbbells, and hip thrust machines), parking issues, overcrowding, and limited hours. Though most respondents indicated being satisfied or extremely satisfied, many comments had some sort of suggestion or request.

Using a select all that apply question, students were asked to identify which Rec Sports programs, if any, they participated in. Table 8, on the next page, indicates the majority used Strength and Conditioning, which includes self-directed training, personal training, and small group training, out of the Rec Sports programs.

Which of the following Rec Sports programs do you participate in? (Select all that apply)	2024 Percent [n=125]
Strength and Conditioning (self-directed training, personal training, and small group trainings)	71%
Intramural Sports	23%
Fitness and Wellness (fitness classes, specialty classes, and boot camps)	18%
Aquatics (rec swim, spas, learn to swim, and scuba)	14%
Sport Clubs	11%
None	9%
Outdoor Adventures (indoor climbing facility, boulder walls, rental center, and trips)	8%
Reservation Process for Multipurpose Rooms	6%

Table 8: Participation in Rec Sports Programs

Students were asked about their level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the programs they reported participating in. Table 9 demonstrates that every program offered below received a majority satisfied or extremely satisfied, except for reservation process for multipurpose rooms which only had dissatisfied and extremely dissatisfied.

Please rate your level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the...	Extremely Satisfied (5)	Satisfied (4)	Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied (3)	Dissatisfied (2)	Extremely Dissatisfied (1)	2024 Mean (sd) [n]
Outdoor Adventures	50%	50%	--	--	--	4.50 (.54) [8]
Sport Clubs	39%	62%	--	--	--	4.38 (.51) [13]
Fitness and Wellness	41%	50%	9%	--	--	4.32 (.65) [22]
Aquatics	44%	50%	--	6%	--	4.31 (.79) [16]
Strength and Conditioning	25%	63%	9%	--	2%	4.09 (.74) [87]
Intramural Sports	22%	59%	11%	7%	--	3.96 (.81) [27]
Reservation Process for Multipurpose Rooms	--	--	--	33%	67%	1.33 (.52) [6]

Table 9: Program Satisfaction

Respondents were also given the opportunity to share any comments about the facilities they used. Comments addressing Aquatics discussed the facilities being closed during the weekends and/or seasons, issues with current pool hours, and how the facility is not welcoming to those outside the A&M team. The comments regarding Strength and Conditioning were very contradictory. Some comments complained about crowds, broken equipment, lack of cleanliness, and a lack of variety of machines; meanwhile, the positive comments discussed how nice the variety was, how clean the facilities are, and other overall positive comments. More variety and safety equipment for the bouldering walls, more first aid training, and the development of the program, were suggested for Outdoor Adventures. When commenting on Fitness and Wellness, students felt it was an unneeded expense, needed more class variety, and it encouraged students in their fitness journey. Concerns about Intramural Sports included bad referees, not cleaning equipment between games, and differences in competitiveness. The only comments about Sport Clubs requested a bus route to the Polo Barn. Comments about the reservation process discussed being frustrated with the new rules, having difficulty reserving rooms for student organizations, and it overall being a terrible process. Despite most of the responses stating they are satisfied or extremely satisfied, once again most comments have at least some suggestions or negativity to them.

The final question on the survey provided students the opportunity to share any additional comments they had about any of the Rec Sports facilities or programs. All students saw this question, whether they used Rec Sports or its programs, or not. There were 24 comments made and several were positive, however the majority offered suggestions for improvement including adding more food options, facilities on the northside of campus, more classes offered, more indoor courts, more machines/equipment, and issues with room reservation regulations.

Demographics were pulled from the student information system. Table 10, below and on the following page, in decreasing order by the survey respondent column for each category, displays the results. Results include everyone the survey was sent to, those who responded to the survey, and the student body for the spring semester. The majority of those responding to the survey were males, in the College of Engineering, seniors, not first-generation students, not Top 10%, lived off campus, and White.

	TAMU Student Body [N=64,025]	Survey Population Percent [n=4,000]	Survey Respondent Percent [n=179]
Sex			
Male	54%	55%	52%
Female	46%	45%	48%
Ethnicity			
White	52%	52%	50%
Hispanic or Latino	22%	23%	19%
International	8%	7%	17%
Asian	11%	11%	9%
Black or Multi-racial with Black	3%	3%	3%
Multi-racial excluding Black	3%	2%	1%
Unknown or Not Report	1%	1%	1%
American Indian	<1%	<1%	--
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	<1%	<1%	--
Living On or Off Campus			
Off Campus	83%	82%	84%
On Campus	17%	18%	16%
Top 10 Percent			
Not Top 10 Percent	65%	65%	70%
Top 10 Percent	35%	35%	30%

	TAMU Student Body [N=64,025]	Survey Population Percent [n=4,000]	Survey Respondent Percent [n=179]
Classification			
Senior	32%	34%	31%
Junior	21%	20%	19%
Masters	10%	10%	17%
Sophomore	18%	19%	16%
Doctoral	7%	7%	11%
Freshman	10%	10%	6%
Vet School	1%	1%	--
Other (non-degree or post-bachelor)	<1%	<1%	--
College			
Engineering	32%	31%	33%
Arts and Sciences	25%	25%	20%
Agriculture	13%	14%	13%
Business	9%	9%	11%
Education	7%	7%	8%
Architecture	4%	4%	7%
General Studies	3%	3%	4%
Bush School of Government	3%	3%	2%
Other	2%	1%	1%
Veterinary Medicine	1%	1%	1%
Performance and Visualization	1%	1%	1%
Public Health	1%	<1%	--
Exchange	<1%	<1%	--
Medicine	<1%	--	--
Nursing	<1%	--	--
First-Generation Status			
Not First-Generation	68%	68%	60%
Unknown	15%	14%	27%
First-Generation	18%	18%	13%

Table 10: Student Demographics

Department Background

According to its website (<https://recsports.tamu.edu/about-us/>), the mission of Recreational Sports is “To promote activity, wellness, and development by providing high quality, inclusive experiences and facilities for the students and community of Texas A&M University.” Furthermore, Rec Sports has five goals:

- Create communities where individuals of all abilities and backgrounds feel they belong.
- Operate dynamic facilities that encourage activity and engagement.
- Manager departmental resources effectively.
- Develop an outstanding staff by providing leadership and skill development opportunities.
- Offer a variety of experiences that promote physical activity and wellness.

Project Details

One limitation for this assessment is the low response rate. Some care may be needed in using the results to make decisions. Using additional data from other sources may be helpful.

Student Affairs Planning, Assessment & Research (SAPAR) provides quality assessment services, resources, and assessment training for departments in the Texas A&M University Division of Student Affairs and student organizations. Services by Student Affairs Planning, Assessment & Research are funded, in part, by the Texas A&M University Advancement Fee. Results of this project and other assessment projects done through SAPAR can be found at <https://sapar.tamu.edu/results/>.

To work with Student Affairs Planning, Assessment & Research for future assessment projects, please fill out the Assessment Questionnaire at <https://sapar.tamu.edu/aqform/>.

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