

Recreational Sports Intramural Sports Participation Survey Fall 2023

Purpose of Assessment

Recreational Sports (Rec Sports) offers dozens of intramural activities each semester for a wide range of skill levels. Each year, more than 13,000 students participate in the intramural program. Staff members with Intramural Sports wanted to assess students who participated in the intramural program during the fall 2023 semester to understand their experiences and how to improve the program for the future. This is the second time Student Affairs Planning, Assessment & Research worked with Intramural Sports to assess their program.

Key Findings with Recommendations

Student Affairs Planning, Assessment & Research identified several key findings and developed actionable recommendations the organization may take based on the results. However, Intramural Sports staff may identify other findings using their knowledge and understanding of the participants and program.

- Students were overall positive about their experience participating in Intramural Sports with 81% rating it as excellent or good. Additionally, of the students who will be returning in the spring, 92% indicated they would likely participate in Intramural Sports in the spring semester. These results are similar to the previous semester.
- Student officials or referees were the biggest source of frustration with the Intramural Sports program, which is the same as the previous semester. Students reported that the referees did not know the rules of the sports they were officiating, were not experienced in the sports they were officiating, and were not consistent.
 - Staff in the Intramural Sports program might consider looking at the hiring and training of the referees. Rec Sports may want to recruit students with experience playing or refereeing the sports they would officiate. Additionally, Rec Sports staff could review the training the referees currently have and how it might be improved to address some of the concerns of students.
- Students provided a wide range of suggestions and feedback about the overall program and individual sports.
 - Staff members are strongly encouraged to read all the results and qualitative comments to gain a fuller understanding of students' experiences and consider what ideas could be implemented to improve the overall Intramural Sports experience.

Method and Sample

A survey was developed using Qualtrics®, a survey design software used for creating web-based forms and databases. The electronic survey consisted of 26 questions (six fewer questions than in spring 2023); 19 questions were quantitative and seven were qualitative. Due to branching technology, not all respondents received all questions. The survey link was emailed on November 28, 2023, to 9,642 students who participated in one or more intramural sports during the fall 2023 semester; however, eight email addresses were not valid. Non-respondents received up to five reminders before the survey closed on December 18, 2023. Of the 9,634 participants who received the survey invitation, 454 responded to at least one question, yielding a 5% response rate. The data were analyzed using SPSS®, a statistical software package, Tableau®, a data visualization software, and Microsoft Excel®.

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 order for the fall 2023 mean or frequency unless otherwise specified. Summary themes are contained in this report; the entire list can be found in a separate document. Comparisons to the spring 2023 results will be made where applicable. This report is divided into five sections: General Intramural Program, Intramural Staff and Officials, Overall Experience and Satisfaction, Program Feedback, and Demographics.

General Intramural Program

Using a select all that apply formatted question, respondents were initially asked how they heard about Intramural Sports. Table 1 illustrates that friends or word of mouth were the most common way students learned about Intramural Sports, which is the same as the previous semester. By contrast, flyers and presentations were the least selected. Those selecting the “other” response option were given the opportunity to write how they heard about Intramural Sports and 17 provided a comment. Approximately, three-fourths of the 17 comments indicated their student organization, with one-third specifically saying the Corps of Cadets. Other ways students heard about Intramural Sports included upperclassmen, working at the Rec Center, Rec-a-palooza, and seeing teams play at the Rec Center. Additionally, those who selected “social media” (n=28) were asked which social media platform(s) they heard about Intramural Sports through. The vast majority of the 27 respondents said Instagram (93%) and 7% reported TikTok. One respondent (4%) selected the “other” response option and wrote GroupMe as the platform they heard about Intramural Sports. Nobody selected Facebook or Twitter.

| How did you hear about Intramural Sports? (Select all that apply) | Fall 2023 Frequency [n=433] | Spring 2023 Frequency [n=387] |
|--|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Friend or word of mouth | 58% | 56% |
| Played last year | 40% | 46% |
| Rec Sports website or IMLeagues | 13% | 14% |
| Social Media | 7% | 8% |
| Flyer in the Rec Center | 5% | 8% |
| Fish Camp or similar presentation | 5% | 6% |
| Flyer around campus | 5% | 5% |
| Other | 4% | 1% |

Table 1: Intramural Sports Marketing

Participants were asked to select the sport(s) they participated in during the fall 2023 semester. As seen in Table 2, on the following page, approximately one-third of the respondents participated in flag football. The least selected sports included Wheel of Sportune, Esports Tournament, dodgeball, cornhole, spikeball, and table tennis.

| What sport(s) did you participate in for the fall 2023 semester? (Select all that apply) | Fall 2023 Frequency [n=436] |
|--|-----------------------------|
| Flag Football | 32% |
| Soccer (indoor) | 26% |
| Volleyball (sand) | 24% |
| Basketball 5v5 | 23% |
| Volleyball (indoor) | 22% |
| Soccer (outdoor) | 18% |
| Softball | 14% |
| Kickball | 13% |
| Basketball 3v3 | 12% |
| Ultimate | 9% |
| Pickleball | 6% |
| Battleship | 4% |
| Tennis | 3% |
| Cricket | 3% |
| Badminton | 2% |
| Fantasy Football Super League | 2% |
| Racquetball | 2% |
| Table Tennis | 1% |
| Spikeball | 1% |
| Cornhole | 1% |
| Dodgeball | 1% |
| Esports Tournament | 1% |
| Wheel of Sportune | 1% |

Table 2: Intramural Sports Participation

Students indicating that they participated in specific sports were asked a few follow-up questions about those sports. First, those playing flag football (n=141) were asked if they knew that there was an onside kick rule in flag football. Just over one-third (39%) reported they were aware of the onside kick rule and 61% said they were not aware of the rule. Those who were aware of the onside kick rule (n=54) were asked about their opinion of the rule. Over half (56%) reported they had a favorable view of it, 39% had no opinion, and 6% said they had an unfavorable view of the rule. Additionally, those who were aware of the onside kick rule were asked to share any additional comments regarding this rule. Most of the six students who commented either felt the rule was fine or they liked it. One student shared that it never happened in any of the games they played in, one said they were not aware of the rule until later in the season, and one indicated that the refs did not know about the onside kick rule.

Those selecting pickleball (n=25) were asked to share any suggestions they had to improve intramural pickleball. The comments shared by 13 students included that the courts and spectator seating get crowded, the new courts were nice, more courts are needed, and that the refs were not consistent and needed to supervise games more closely. Some students said that everything was great and ran smoothly.

The last sport with follow-up questions was 5v5 basketball. Players (n=98) were first informed that Intramural Sports introduced a new rule during the fall semester that included quarters (instead of halves) and a different approach to counting team fouls. When asked their opinion about this change, 67% of the 93 respondents reported having a favorable opinion, 27% had no opinion, and 7% indicated they had an unfavorable opinion about the change. The second question asked players to share any comments regarding the quarters and foul counting rules in basketball. Several of the 12 comments were positive about the quarters instead of halves and felt it provided

more rest during the game. Some students indicated that they understood the foul counting rule, and some liked it; however, several students shared that the refs did not know the rules or made questionable calls.

When asked if they were the captain of any of their teams during the fall 2023 semester, 65% of the 432 students said they were not a captain, and 35% reported that they had been a captain. This was similar to the spring 2023 semester when 60% stated that they were not a captain and 40% said that they had been a captain.

Intramural Staff and Officials

Participants were asked to rate their level of agreement or disagreement with a series of statements about the student officials. Table 3 illustrates that participants were mostly in agreement about all three statements and were slightly more positive than the previous semester.

| Please rate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following questions about student officials during your games or matches this season. | Strongly Agree (5) | Agree (4) | Neutral (3) | Disagree (2) | Strongly Disagree (1) | Fall 2023 Mean (sd) [n] | Spring 2023 Mean (sd) [n] |
|---|---------------------------|------------------|--------------------|---------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| The student officials put forward a good effort. | 31% | 48% | 13% | 6% | 4% | 3.96 (.99) [423] | 3.94 (1.04) [n=373] |
| The student officials generally knew the rules. | 25% | 49% | 10% | 11% | 5% | 3.78 (1.09) [423] | 3.70 (1.14) [n=373] |
| The student officials improved throughout the season. | 21% | 29% | 36% | 9% | 6% | 3.48 (1.09) [423] | 3.46 (1.13) [n=373] |

Table 3: Student Officials

When asked how they would rate their experience working with the supervisors or site managers, the staff members in the blue or lime green polos, 80% described their experience as excellent or good, as seen in Table 4. This is very similar to the previous semester. Students rating their experience with the supervisors or site managers as fair or poor (n=27) were asked to provide comments about their rating. Many of the 13 comments indicated that the staff were rude, disrespectful, or did not care. Several also commented about refs and staff not knowing the rules.

| | Excellent (5) | Good (4) | Average (3) | Fair (2) | Poor (1) | Fall 2023 Mean (sd) [n] | Spring 2023 Mean (sd) [n] |
|---|----------------------|-----------------|--------------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| How would you rate your experience working with our supervisors or site managers? | 37% | 43% | 14% | 3% | 4% | 4.06 (.97) [423] | 4.06 (1.00) [376] |

Table 4: Student Supervisors

Overall Experience and Satisfaction

Students were asked about the pass they purchased using a select all that apply question. A majority of the 421 students (94%) said they purchased the unlimited play pass for \$25. Additionally, 3% purchased a tournament pass for \$10, and 1% purchased single-game passes for \$5. Furthermore, 3% reported that they did not purchase a pass because it was not required, or they were in the Corps. This is similar to the results in the previous semester.

Those who purchased a single-game pass (n=6) were asked why they purchased this specific pass. Four of the six respondents (67%) said they wanted to try it before purchasing the unlimited play pass, one person (17%) indicated they only wanted to play the one time, and one person (17%) selected the "other" response option and wrote that a friend asked them to fill in.

Everyone who purchased a pass of any type (n=414) were asked about the process for purchasing their pass. Almost two-thirds of the respondents (63%) felt that the process was extremely clear, 29% stated that it was somewhat clear, 6% reported that the process was somewhat unclear, and 2% indicated that the process was extremely unclear (mean=3.54/4.00; sd=.69; n=409). This was very similar to the previous semester with a mean of 3.53/4.00 (sd=.69; n=372).

When asked about their level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the value that they received for the price they paid for their pass this semester, 37% indicated they were extremely satisfied and 37% also reported that they were somewhat satisfied. Additionally, 11% shared that they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, 11% stated they were somewhat dissatisfied, and 4% were extremely dissatisfied (mean=3.91/5.00; sd=1.14; n=414). This was slightly lower satisfaction than the spring semester when 39% were extremely satisfied, 38% were somewhat satisfied, 11% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, 10% were somewhat dissatisfied, and 3% were extremely dissatisfied (mean=3.99/5.00; sd=1.09; n=370).

Participants were asked to rate their overall experience with Intramural Sports. A majority of participants (81%) described their experience as excellent or good. Additionally, 12% said their experience was average, 6% felt that it was poor, and 1% shared that it was terrible (mean=4.11/5.00; sd=.91; n=414). This was again very similar to the spring semester when 37% said their experience was excellent, 45% stated it was good, 12% reported it as average, 3% felt that it was poor, and 2% shared that it was terrible (mean=4.12; sd=.90; n=372).

When asked if they would physically be on Texas A&M's campus for the spring 2024 semester, the majority (92%) of the 415 respondents said yes, 5% stated that they would not be on campus in the spring semester, and 2% were unsure. This was mostly similar to the results in the spring semester when 87% planned to return to campus in the fall. Students who reported that they would be on campus in the spring 2024 semester (n=383) were asked if they planned to participate in Intramural Sports during the spring semester. Almost two-thirds (64%) said definitely yes that they planned to participate in Intramural Sports and 28% reported yes that they probably would participate. Additionally, 7% were unsure if they would or would not participate, 1% shared that they probably would not participate, and 1% reported that they definitely would not participate in the spring (mean=4.52/5.00; sd=.75; n=382). This was slightly higher than in the spring when students reported if they would or would not participate in Intramural Sports for this fall semester with a mean of 4.48/5.00 (sd=.83; n=326).

Program Feedback

Participants were asked for one change they would make or suggestion they have to the Intramural Sports program and 238 students wrote a range of comments. The most common suggestion by just over one-quarter of the comments involved the referees and that they know the rules of the games they officiate, not be biased, have better training, and be more consistent. Some students indicated wanting more games as part of the regular season and for there to be more team slots available during registration. Several students talked about providing clearer information and improving the website, especially for registration. Improving how to reschedule games was also mentioned by several students. Many said there would not be any time slots to reschedule games. Comments about the cost of playing intramurals were also shared. Some students thought it should be free, but many felt it

should have stayed at \$20.00 rather than \$25.00 for the unlimited pass. Additionally, students shared comments about the championship shirts. Some would like to see them be dri-fit shirts again and several felt that both the champions of the competition league and the recreational league should receive those. Furthermore, some thought that the shirts should be more specific to the sport being played and not generic for all sports.

A variety of sports were mentioned by 164 students when they were asked about what sports, competitions, or activities they would like to see offered on the Intramural Sports calendar. Some students recommended sports that were currently offered, but other sports mentioned included 11v11 outside soccer, running competitions, golf, baseball, swimming, capture the flag, chess, handball, rugby, lacrosse, bowling, and action ball. Some students mentioned offering some sports both inside and outside or the number of players per team.

The last question asked participants to share any other general feedback or comments on the Intramural Sports program. Approximately one-third of the 118 comments were positive expressing appreciation or indicating they had a great experience. Many of the suggestions were similar to the previous question, especially about the referees and their officiating. Other comments similar to the previous question included offering more games, the unlimited pass being less expensive, and making it easy to reschedule games. New ideas or comments included having ball pumps available at the games and staff knowing how to respond during an emergency.

Students were given the option to be entered in a drawing for one of three unlimited play passes for the spring semester. The email addresses of students who wanted to be entered in the drawing can be found in a separate document.

Demographics

Student demographics were gathered from the university's student information system using students' Universal Identification Numbers (UIN) for all students who participated in Intramural Sports in the fall semester and those who responded to the survey. Additionally, demographics for the student body for the fall semester were also gathered. The results are displayed in Table 5, on the following page in descending order by each category for the survey respondent column. Intramural participants and survey respondents were largely male students, undergraduates, and not first-generation students.

| | Survey Respondents [n=442] | Intramural Participants [n=9,384] | TAMU Student Body [N=70,481] |
|---|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Sex | | | |
| Male | 64% | 75% | 53% |
| Female | 36% | 25% | 47% |
| Ethnicity | | | |
| White | 58% | 59% | 51% |
| Hispanic or Latino | 20% | 22% | 23% |
| Asian | 13% | 11% | 12% |
| International | 3% | 2% | 8% |
| Multi-Racial (excluding Black) | 3% | 3% | 3% |
| Black or Multi-Racial (including Black) | 2% | 2% | 3% |
| Unknown or Not Reported | <1% | <1% | 1% |
| American Indian | -- | <1% | <1% |
| Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander | -- | <1% | <1% |
| First Generation | | | |
| Not First Generation | 80% | 82% | 67% |
| First Generation | 11% | 13% | 18% |
| Unknown | 9% | 5% | 15% |
| Classification | | | |
| Senior | 25% | 27% | 27% |
| Junior | 22% | 23% | 19% |
| Freshman | 22% | 21% | 18% |
| Sophomore | 17% | 22% | 17% |
| Masters | 11% | 4% | 11% |
| Doctoral | 1% | 1% | 6% |
| Medical School (all years) | <1% | <1% | <1% |
| Other | <1% | <1% | 1% |
| Pharmacy (all years) | -- | <1% | <1% |
| Vet School (all years) | -- | <1% | 1% |
| Dental (all years) | -- | <1% | <1% |
| College/School | | | |
| Engineering | 33% | 34% | 31% |
| Arts and Sciences | 22% | 24% | 27% |
| Business | 16% | 14% | 9% |
| Education | 8% | 7% | 7% |
| Agriculture | 7% | 9% | 12% |
| Bush School of Government | 4% | 3% | 3% |
| Architecture | 3% | 4% | 4% |
| Other | 3% | 2% | 2% |
| Public Health | 2% | 1% | 2% |
| Medicine | 1% | <1% | 1% |
| Veterinary Medicine | <1% | <1% | 1% |
| Performance and Visualization | <1% | <1% | 1% |
| Nursing | -- | <1% | 1% |
| Pharmacy | -- | <1% | <1% |
| Exchange | -- | <1% | <1% |
| Dentistry | -- | -- | <1% |

Table 7: Demographics

Department Background

According to its website (<https://recsports.tamu.edu/>), Rec Sports' mission 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." The Rec Center consists of four indoor facilities with more than 500,000 square feet of recreation space, approximately 50 acres of outdoor space, and five swimming pools. Intramural Sports is one programmatic area within the department offering dozens of intramural activities every semester.

Project Details

The results from this assessment should be used with some caution due to the low response rate.

The Department of Student Affairs Planning, Assessment & Research 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 the department can be found at <https://sapar.tamu.edu/results/>. Additionally, anyone can follow Student Affairs Planning, Assessment & Research on Facebook.

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

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