



OFFICE of REGISTRARIAL SERVICES

One-Stop Student Service Centre Program: Student Consultation Report

1/21/2022

Introduction

- As part of a series of research reports detailing research relevant to the OSSSC Program, this report is focused exclusively on input provided by University of Guelph students, related to their service experiences, desires, and expectations.
- This report includes summaries and relevant takeaways of new (student focus groups, Prospective Student Communication Survey, Current Student ORS Service Survey) and pre-existing research (2019 Student Financial Services Survey, CCS research re. student communication preferences, 2020 Accept/Decline Survey) deemed relevant to the program.
- Student consultation related to this project hasn't concluded (upcoming meetings with representatives of BIPOC student organizations) but, as Winston Churchill said, perfection is the enemy of progress. Additional student consultation information will be provided as available.
- The report will be structured as follows:

Section	Pages
Executive Summary	1-2
New Research	
• Prospective Student Communication Survey	3
• Current Student ORS Service Survey	4-6
• Focus Groups	7-11
Existing Research	
• 2019 Student Financial Services Survey	12-14
• Student Communication Preferences (CCS)	15-17
• 2020 Accept/Decline Survey	18-19
Appendix	20-24

- Each research section will include Introduction, Summary, and Data sections.
- While there is benefit in reviewing the report in full, the summaries for each data source pull out material most relevant to the program.

Executive Summary

- Students reported being highly satisfied with the service they have received from ORS, in both the Current Student ORS Service Survey and 2019 SFS Survey. In both surveys, dissatisfaction was indicated by less than 5% of students and, specific to the SFS survey, students strongly agreed with front-line staff being courteous, helpful, and knowledgeable. When mentioned, increased timeliness was the most common improvement opportunity.

- In contrast with the survey data, focus group participants shared more stories of ORS service experiences failing to meet (vs. exceeding) their expectations. While overall perceptions of ORS service seemed neutral, participants were able to identify numerous pathways through which ORS could improve our service, including: improved information sharing; increased inquiry-related communication, increased availability, decreased wait times (particularly at peak times); improved attitudes/service orientations; more empathy; and many more.

NOTE: While the results of the surveys and focus groups appear contradictory, the results are reconcilable. Research points to students' satisfaction with service being a product of: a) the quality of service they receive, and b) their expectations for the service, heading into the experience. Students are satisfied when the level of service they receive exceeds their expectations and dissatisfied when service doesn't meet their expectations. Importantly, when considering satisfaction, the actual level of service only matters in context to their expectations. Thus, it is possible that students are satisfied with the level of service they are receiving, while also still having many suggestions for how that service could be improved.

- Students are not homogenous in their service method preferences. While email was most commonly students' preference for communication to and from the University, survey and focus group research both identified all the primary contact methods (email, phone, in-person, live chat) as preferences for certain populations of students. Interestingly, student desires for type/quality of service remained consistent (looking for speed and ease) even when their preferred method differed, indicating differing opinions as to the service method best able to meet those desires.
- Students reported being interested in live communication (phone, in-person) more the more serious/urgent the issue. So, while email may be their preferred method of contact 90% of the time, they want to be able to talk to someone in-person or on the phone when needed.
- More students reported visiting the SFS website than visiting with the department in any other way through the 2019 SFS Survey, and this was pre-pandemic! This feedback is consistent with service load data that will be presented in an upcoming research summary and is indicative of the importance of high-quality web/online resources.
- Students struggle to navigate the amount of information that is available to them. Throughout the focus groups, students often shared/showed difficulty navigating the informational landscape: blaming the University for not sharing information with them; lamenting that they struggle to find information (too many emails, can't find information online); and/or asking for information sharing improvements that already exist (e.g. short videos to help them understand how to use the new Student Planning tool).

Prospective Student Communication Survey

Intro

For the two-week period running from Monday, November 22 to Friday, December 3, prospective students visiting campus for a tour were invited to take part in a short survey to report on their communication with the University as they have been considering their post-secondary options. One hundred twenty (120) prospective students completed the survey.

Summary

- Respondents were overwhelmingly domestic, grade 12, high school students.
- While 120 students seemed to be a strong initial pool of responses, very few indicated communicating with the university, resulting in little useable data with respect to communication/service satisfaction.
 - o Of the 120 that completed the survey, only 38 students (less than 32%) indicated that they had had any questions about the University of Guelph and, of this group, only 14 indicated that they reached out to the University to ask their question.
- After removing incomplete responses, there were only 9 responses from students reflecting on their communication with the University, making it unwise to draw any inferences based on the data.
- Of the 9 students who did reach out:
 - o the majority reached out more than once (avg. 1.82 reach-outs/person)
 - o all were very pleased with the quality of service ("strongly agree" responses across the board for all communication methods).

Data

Due to the limited utility of the data, it has not been included here. For a summary of the Prospective Student Communication Survey with this section included, please see the Appendix.

Current Student ORS Service Survey

Intro

On Monday, November 29, 2021 and Wednesday, December 1, 2021 events were facilitated in the University Centre that aimed to:

- a) inform students about the renovations underway to the ORS' space on the 3rd floor of the UC,
- b) solicit student input regarding potential names for the new student service centre being constructed, and
- c) gather student feedback on their historical interactions with ORS.

In exchange for chatting with student staff members (short survey), students were provided pizza. Over the course of two events, 134 complete student responses were received.

Summary

- Based on this snapshot, it has historically been Enrolment Services-managed activities (specifically tasks related to IDs, course enrolment, and transcripts) that were, by a significant amount, the most common reasons for interacting with ORS (beyond interacting through student planning and managing their financial account).
- Data re. how students connected with ORS reflects the pre-pandemic reality of in-person being the most common medium, followed by email.
- Interestingly, students identified a combination of speed, ease, and convenience being the reason they selected the connection method they did, *regardless of how they actually connected with ORS (email, in-person, phone, etc.)*. This seemingly indicates that students want speed, ease, and convenience, though they are divided as the service method that best provides those attributes (with all mediums getting “votes” from some students).
- In addition to speed, ease, and convenience, students also reported expecting a) quality/correctness and b) getting their issues resolved (or next steps clearly identified), from their interactions with ORS staff.
- Students were VERY PLEASED with the service provided by ORS, reporting satisfaction with their interactions in 67/70 instances and having expectations met in 68/70 interactions.
- While opportunities for service improvement were limited, the areas most commonly referenced were: decreasing response time, increasing students' awareness of services/methods, focusing on helping students to feel valued, and more comprehensive email responses.

Data

Student Demographics

- 134 current students fully completed the survey (122 undergrad, 6 masters, 4 doctorate or post-doctorate)
 - o Of undergraduate students, students in years 2-4 were most represented, followed by year 1, year 5, and year 6

Year	%	Count
1	13.43%	18
2	21.64%	29
3	26.87%	36
4	26.12%	35
5	8.96%	12
6	2.99%	4
Total	100%	134

- 125 FT, 9 PT
- 107 domestic, 27 international
- 6 transfer students

Interaction with ORS

- **Number** - 70 of the respondents (53%) reported interacting with ORS beyond the Student Planning tool and/or managing their financial account, versus 63 (47%) who reported not doing so.
- **Why** - The most common purposes for interacting with ORS were related to IDs (21), course enrolment (16), and transcripts (12). Activities related to financial services (general inquiries and specific inquiries related to OSAP, bursaries and/or awards) totaled 14 interactions and those related to Admissions only totaled 3 interactions.
- **How** - Students reported that in-person and email were by far the two most common ways they connect with our office.

Answer	%	Count
Email	26.76%	19
Phone	5.63%	4
In-person	60.56%	43
Online form	5.63%	4
Other	1.41%	1
Total	100%	71

- **How, rationale** - Regarding why they chose to connect with ORS via the method they did: speed, ease, and convenience were the most common rationale provided, regardless of connection method.
 - Regarding in-person support: desire for a human connection, and complexity of issue were mentioned as rationale.
 - Regarding email: availability (beyond business hours and during pandemic) and lack of pressure were additionally mentioned.
- **Expectations** - Regarding their expectations for their interactions with ORS, students most commonly reported desiring: speed, quality/correctness, and getting their issues resolved (outcomes achieved or clarity re. next steps).

- **Performance** – Students were overwhelmingly positive when indicating the extent to which specific service standards were met:

To what extent do you agree with the following statement...	Strongly Disagree % (Count)	Somewhat Disagree % (Count)	Somewhat Agree % (Count)	Strongly Agree % (Count)	Total Count
I received a response in a timely manner.	2.90% (2)	8.70% (6)	10.14% (7)	78.26% (54)	69
The staff member communicated in a clear manner.	2.86% (2)	1.43% (1)	10.00% (7)	85.71% (60)	70
The staff member answered my questions/helped resolve my issues competently.	2.86% (2)	1.43% (1)	12.86% (9)	82.86% (58)	70
The staff member made me feel like a valued Gryphon.	2.86% (2)	5.71% (4)	12.86% (9)	78.57% (55)	70
My service expectations were met.	2.86% (2)	0.00% (0)	20.00% (14)	77.14% (54)	70
I am likely to reach out to the ORS via this communication method again if needed.	2.86% (2)	2.86% (2)	12.86% (9)	81.43% (57)	70
I would recommend this communication method to other students.	2.86% (2)	4.29% (3)	11.43% (8)	81.43% (57)	70
Overall, I was satisfied with my experience reaching out to ORS.	2.86% (2)	1.43% (1)	17.14% (12)	78.57% (55)	70

- In-person connections generated the highest levels of student satisfaction, with only small opportunities for improvement available in email, phone, and online support means.
 - Specific to email, students were looking for: improved timeliness, more information about timeframe (when can they expect to hear back), and more clarity/detail, so there was less need for back and forth.
 - Specific to online and phone, decreased wait times were identified by students as an opportunity.
- Recommendations – While most respondents didn't provide a recommendation as to how we could improve our service, those that did most commonly noted: decreasing response time, increasing students' awareness (more promotion of our services/service methods), and more comprehensive emails (as noted above).

Student Focus Groups

Intro

- Invitation to each of the Primary Student Organizations (PSOs) (all college governments, Interhall Council [residence], CSA, GSA, Off-Campus University Students, and the Student Senate Caucus) to be part of student consultation efforts.
- Able to organize focus groups with 5 of these PSOs:
 - o Lang Student Association
 - o Off-Campus University Students
 - o Graduate Student Association
 - o Central Veterinary Student Association
 - o OAC Student Federation
- Focus groups met in the Brass Taps, where groups of 6-8 students/group were provided dinner in exchange for their participation.
- Students were asked a series of questions related to their service experiences at the university and their expectations for future experiences, with specific questions digging into their communication method preferences, the ideal state for ORS service provision, and thoughts on specific service methods (self-service, live chat, virtual meetings, dedicated service professionals, etc.). For the complete Focus Group protocol, please see the Appendix.
- In the results section below, summaries of student input have been organized as follows:
 - o Student Service Experiences (University-wide and ORS-specific)
 - o Student Service Expectations
 - General
 - Specific to Various Communication Methods
 - Email
 - Self-service/website
 - Phones
 - Text
 - Chat (Live and Bot)
 - Portal
 - Face to Face (In-person and Virtual)
 - Other Mediums

Results

Student Service Experiences

- Input on service from the University (as a whole) tended to the more unsatisfactory. However, that dissatisfaction was not overwhelming, with examples of exceptional experiences also being shared alongside the more prevalent “unsatisfactory service” examples.
- Specific examples of unsatisfactory service were primarily related to issues of a) attitude/approach to service and b) communication issues.
 - o Specific to attitude/approach, students described instances that left them feeling:
 - That they receive a poorer level of service once admitted vs. when you are in the admissions process/being recruited;

- That their need was burdensome (the staff member responsible for providing a service made them feel like an inconvenience); and
 - That staff don't care about them personally.
- An interesting anecdote about a lesson learned in class was provided by a student from the Lang Student Association. The student shared that they had learned that the level of service users receive is typically based on the extent to which you can choose to "take your business elsewhere." Two examples given to illustrate this example were Starbucks and the DMV.
 - Starbucks – provides exceptional service, focused on personalization and ease of interaction, owing to the fact that there are many other coffee shops and strong service helps them to retain/gain customers.
 - DMV – the only place in town where you can renew your license, so no incentive for the organization/staff to prioritize focusing on exceptional service.
- Students noted that the university tended to operate closer to the DMV example than Starbucks.
- Specific to ORS, while more examples of unsatisfactory service interactions than exceptional were shared, the weighting was not as significant as for the university at large, with many of the positive service experiences shared being related to interactions with ORS. Overall, students seemed to view historic service from ORS as slightly better than that from the university.

Student Service Expectations

This section is broken down into takeaways related to a) general expectations students had for service, that transcend medium, and b) those related to various communication mediums.

General

- **Want "hand-holding"** – students want to get their problem resolved/fixed when engaging and they want you to do it for them/walk them through it step-by-step, rather than providing direction on how to do it.
- **Students are not homogenous** – a prevailing theme of the focus groups was that there is NOT a one-size-fits-all solution for service medium. Different students have different preferences and to provide service that meets all expectations, a network of mediums need to be employed.
- **Service/Support orientation** – Students don't want to feel burdensome. They want to feel that the staff person they are working with actually cares about helping them out and is committed to supporting their successful navigation of the system/issue. They expect staff to deviate from normal procedures when necessary to help them achieve their goal.
- **Warm referrals** – Consistent with wanting to get issues resolved, students want to be warmly connected with another university staff member if the person they are talking to can't help.
 - E.g. We aren't the ones that actually charge you for living in Residence. That comes from the Student Housing. So, let me put you in touch with your Residence Manager, Stewart, and the SHS Business Manager, Mark, so you can explain the specific situation to them and see if they can remove this charge they're putting on your account. I'll send the three of you an email, introducing you all and then you can take it over from there...
- **Empathy/Understanding** – There was significant feedback about students expecting front-line staff to appreciate that sometimes they will be very stressed/frustrated by processes and are looking for that emotion to be understood and taken into account when responding.
 - "*ORS isn't viewed like a service enough. Like it actually is. It's a service on the emotional side. A lot of, like, confused, stressed, anxious, people, particularly first years or just having transferred, like go to [ORS]. It's a very frontline thing and deals with a lot of high emotional situations.*" – OVC Student
- **Personalized/Proactive** – Want personal reach-out to let them know about an issue that is going to impact them.
 - E.g. You haven't paid your tuition yet and the deadline was yesterday. You need to pay your tuition fees or your will be removed from your classes...

- **Available on their schedule** – Having service available outside regular business hours was mentioned by most focus groups. Students want evening phone, in-person, and/or live chat options, at least a few nights a week.
- **Improved wait times during busy periods** – While students seemed to understand why service times balloon at particular times of year, they would still like it to improve. Referencing their experiences returning to retail jobs when stores staff-up for the holidays, students shared it was their expectation that ORS do the same.
- **Increased service updates** – Student in multiple focus groups spoke to wanting to know more about when they could expect to hear back/when requested actions would be completed by ORS. Similar to tracking a package, students reported wanting to receive information and updates about where something was in the process/how long to expect.
 - o E.g. When submitting a Confirmation of Enrolment request, students
 - receive an email letting them know that:
 - they have successfully submitted the form,
 - that a rep will reach out if there are any issues,
 - that they can expect to receive their CoE in X days, and
 - that if they shouldn't hear anything in X+1 days they should reach-out to check-in on the progress.
 - receive an email along with their CoE, encouraging them to reach out if everything isn't as needed/should they have any additional needs/requests.
- **Assigned service providers** – Students in multiple groups spoke to the value of having an on-going relationship with 1 person, that they are familiar with, rather than reaching out to an unknown team behind an email address. It was noted that having a dedicated service agent, who could help them navigate all administration related to their academics, could a) help them to feel more supported and b) support the more efficient transfer of information to students through students actually reading emails from their “person.”
 - o Multiple students shared sentiments that they don't read emails going out to all students, but will read an email from their particular Program Counselor, because they know the information is going to be tailored to them and is coming from someone they know.
- **Timeliness** – Students' expectations for timeliness seemed reasonable. Various focus groups volunteered 3 business days as being appropriate for most services. Matters students deemed “urgent” were the exception, where students often reported wanting same day/live service.
- **Information sharing** – A consistent theme across focus groups was students struggling to get the information they needed, when they needed it. This was particularly common for students new to the University. Issues of medium, volume, personalization, and more were discussed and recommendations generated are included for various mediums in the next section.
- **Cultural Competence** – International students shared that it would be helpful to increase front-line staff cultural competence and awareness of issues specific to international students.

Specific to Various Communication Methods

Email

- Generally acknowledged by students as the preferred method for the University to connect with them (consistent with results of CCS survey). However, students' relationships with email (love it and check regularly v. never check it) seemed largely dependent on the group of students.
 - o One instance where this preference didn't hold was for timely/negative information. Would prefer to receive a phone call if a significant matter is urgent.
- To increase student readership, suggestions included making emails shorter, simpler and personalized.
- When responding to an inquiry, students reported desiring thorough answers from staff, that attempted to answer the original question and anticipate any future needs/information, to help limit the delay that often comes with back and forth email communication.

Self-service/website

- Ideal set-up is strong online, self-service presence (appreciate 24/7 nature), with option for students to shift to person-to-person interactions when needed (e.g. issue is urgent or they are confused/worried that aren't doing something correctly.)
- Nobody seemed too pleased with the website, though it appeared that most didn't navigate the website from the landing page, instead Googling particular topics and following those leads. Many focus group participants called for the addition/organization of content in ways that already exist (e.g. put all the forms in one place, add videos, etc.)

Phones

- Competed with email as students preferred method of contact from University (more popular for urgent/timely issues) but students understanding of the logistical challenges of calling large #s of students.
- Particular frustration with not being able to reach people during COVID.
- While students noted interest in various telephony improvement features, including offering call-back options when capacity is high and collecting student-card information so agents can be better prepared to support them, they were more vocal in support of other service expectations/service improvement ideas.

Text

- Mixed responses to the University using text messages to share information with them. Some students felt text was personal and wanted to keep it that way, while others appreciated the idea of text in specific situations (just in time/urgent information or when they have opted in to receiving a text message reminder).

Chat (Live and Bot)

- Most, if not all, students were in support of adding a live chat option, though few were interested in a chat bot, with the limited interest being conditional on the bot being sufficiently advanced so that it is preferable to just searching the website for information.
- At least one student noted that chat was beneficial as it provided a more immediate response, without requiring the potentially scary situation of talking to someone in person when you aren't really sure what you are looking for/need. (still immediate but less scary).

Portal

- The idea of a communication portal was raised by multiple student groups, with the OSAP online interface used as an example.
- Students reported interest in being able to upload documents and get status updates on them in one place, while also having a history of all the forms they have ever submitted.

Face to Face (In-person and Virtual)

- In general, there was significant student appreciation for face-to-face support, as the most preferred medium for serious issues and the preferred medium for all issues for a subset of students.
- Students commonly noted appreciating the ability to communicate more effectively (read body language, tone, etc.) and more quickly/covering more ground in less time when compared to email.
- To make in-person service even stronger, students suggested:
 - o Adding in-person appointments in addition to the first-come, first-served approach traditionally employed;
 - o ensuring there is the opportunity for privacy, and
 - o making sure that people aren't waiting in long lines unnecessarily (someone triaging if there is ever a long line, to make sure everyone in the line is supposed to be there).
- The option of virtual "face-to-face" meetings was also appreciated by students and were noted as having some of the similar benefits of true in-person connections, while also being more accessible (can do from home/lab), more private, and allowing customers and agents to screen share to navigate complex issues.

- Importantly, student comfort and some of the noted benefits are tied to staff having their cameras on.

Other Mediums

- When discussing ways the University and ORS could more effectively share information with students, a number of other mediums were volunteered by students:
 - In-person communication/word of mouth
 - Students in a majority of the focus groups talked about getting at least some portion of their needed information from peers, noting that in-person communication works much better than any other approach.
 - Specifically, visiting first-year lectures at relevant times of year, to share brief messages/tutorials with first-year students was suggested more than once.
 - Social Media
 - Students noted that they were unlikely to follow ORS specific accounts but that doing takeovers of the main U of G accounts for info sessions at relevant times could be helpful. Takeover topics could include course selection, payment deadline information, etc.
 - Video
 - Students really liked when profs posted lecture content online, that they could revisit on their own schedule and watch at whatever speed worked best for them. Short instructional videos were suggested.
 - Gryphforms
 - Graduate students shared that they had all recently been switched to Gryphforms for submitting Progress Report and that it was making things much easier.
 - Counselink
 - Was suggested in two of the five focus groups as a potential location to share information with students. However, students shared that they greatly appreciate that Counselink isn't a news source and that when they have a notification, it means there is actually something there relevant for them (e.g. a mark on an assignment has been released) and that successful information sharing would need to not water down that experience.

2019 Student Financial Services Survey

Intro

In March and April of 2019 (year before the pandemic), Student Financial Services (SFS) facilitated their near annual survey to gather student feedback with respect to their experiences and level of satisfaction with various SFS services. 1600 undergrad and 500 graduate students were asked a series of questions related to different groups of service staff (front-line, financial aid counselors, tier-2 supports, etc.), service/communication mediums (in-person, phone, website) and related service topics (general communication preferences, Financial Literacy Fair, etc.) and SFS received 795 useable responses, for an impressive 38% response rate.

Selections of the survey data most relevant to this program have been captured in the Summary and Data sections below.

Summary

- Overall, students appear to be highly satisfied with service from SFS, with only 4% indicating they were dissatisfied or highly dissatisfied with service and 18-19/20 agreeing or strongly agreeing that service staff were courteous, helpful, and knowledgeable, both for in-person and on phones. Great results!
- Interesting to see that even *prior to pandemic*, the percentage of students visiting the website was greater than that visiting SFS in person (web=70% vs. in-person=54%). This reinforces the importance of a strong online presence for superior student support.
- Timeliness was the one area students felt could be improved but, even there, the vast majority of students felt the wait times were reasonable.
- Interesting to see that a total of 88% of students reported reading SFS' most recent email thoroughly (37%) or at in part, to see what applied to them (51%). Do students read emails from SFS at a much higher rate than they do emails from others at the University?
- Email was the preferred contact method for students, by a wide margin.
- Contact related to scholarship/bursaries was one of the foremost reasons students connected with SFS, both in-person and on the phone, indicating the relative importance of providing strong service in this area.

Data

In-Person Service

- 54% of students indicated that they had visited SFS in person.
- Reasons for visiting were identified as follows:
 - o 33% for OSAP/Government funding
 - o 23% for Scholarships/Bursaries
 - o 16% for payment
 - o 10% for Student Account Issues
 - o 6% for fee deferral/payment arrangement
 - o 6% for other (quite a few were related to Enrolment Services)
 - o 5% for Financial Counselling Appointment
 - o 5% for Work Study/URA
- Regarding in-person service through front-line staff, the table below shows the percentage of students that either agreed or strongly agreed with the statements indicated.

Statement about Front Service Centre	% that agree or strongly agree
The staff are courteous	95%
The staff are helpful	96%
The staff were knowledgeable	95%
My concerns were handled in a confidential manner	97%
The wait time was reasonable	85%

- Comments related to the Front Service Centre were positive, with the exception of long wait times particularly at busy times of year.

Phone Service

- **19% of students** indicated they had called the main office number (x58715) between May, 2018 and March, 2019. The following percentages indicate the reason for their call:
 - 30% for OSAP/Government funding
 - 25% for payment
 - 15% for Scholarships/Bursaries
 - 13% for Student Account Issues
 - 5% for Financial Counselling Appointment
 - 5% for other (release of information, confirm hours of information, grant, etc.)
 - 4% for fee deferral/payment arrangement
 - 4% for Work Study/URA
- Regarding phone communication with front-line staff, the chart below indicates the percentage of students that agreed or strongly agreed with each statement:

Statement about Call Centre	% that agree or strongly agree
The staff are courteous	94%
The staff are helpful	89%
The staff were knowledgeable	89%
My concerns were handled in a confidential manner	95%
The wait time was reasonable	89%

Website

- 70% of students indicated that they had visited the SFS website.
- Students were able to indicate multiple reasons why they visited the website. The stats below indicate the percentage of people that chose each option:
 - 72% for Payment deadline information
 - 54% for Scholarship and bursary information
 - 53% for Fee information
 - 52% for OSAP information
 - 45% to download a form
 - 15% for Work Study/URA information
 - 1% Out of province Aid
 - 0.2% US Aid
- Reflecting on their experience using the website:
 - 96% found the website easy to find;
 - 98% found the information they were looking for;
 - 91% found it easy to use;
 - 85% found it was well organized;
 - 92% affirmed it contained clear and accurate information, and
 - 83% indicated they were satisfied or very satisfied with the website overall.

Communication

- Students were asked how closely they read a recent SFS email and shared the following:
 - 1% Deleted it
 - 11% Glanced at it

- 51% Read parts of it to see what applied to me
 - 37% Read it thoroughly
- Students were asked to indicate their preferred way of learning about changes and updates for each of the following items.

Topic	Email	WebAdvisor	Counselink	SFS Website	Social Media
OSAP	78%	11%	4%	6%	0.8%
Deadlines	87%	6%	5%	2%	0.4%
General Information	69%	10%	14%	5%	2%
SFS Account where an action is required	85%	11%	3%	2%	0.1%

Overall Satisfaction with Service

Satisfaction Rating	%
Satisfied or very satisfied	83%
Neutral	13%
Dissatisfied or very dissatisfied	4%

Student Communication Preferences Data

Intro

Computing and Communication Services (CCS) completed a university-wide survey as part of the IT Strategy project, gathering information related to how students prefer to communicate with the University. 2163 total students completed the survey, with representation from Guelph, Ridgetown, and Guelph-Humber.

Summary

- For reaching out to the university, students first preference was overwhelming email. (4.5x more popular than in-person and 6x more popular than phone).
 - o Takeaway for ORS: Fact that actual service load numbers are not quite as heavily slanted (email volume only 4x greater than phone volume) over past year indicative of students are operating outside their preferred medium.
- Interestingly, receiving information from the university via Webadvisor and University websites were preferred by very few students (both 1%).
- Only 2% of students reported preference for sharing information with the University via online form.
- Over ¼ of students reported being comfortable using Teams. However, Zoom was students' favorite platform for web-conferencing.

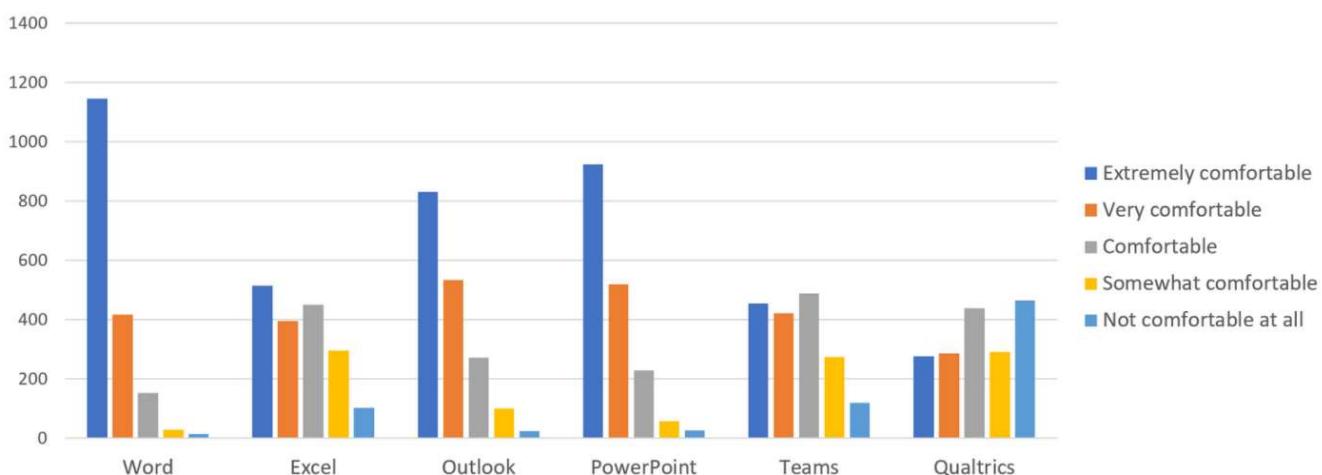
Data

- The data below was identified as most relevant to the OSSSC program. Complete survey results are available on the [IT Strategy website](#).

Survey Question:

How would you evaluate your comfort level using the following software:

Response:



Survey Question:

How do you prefer to receive information from the University AND how do you prefer to share information with the University?

Response:

Messages from the University: most student preferred to receive messages from the University by email.

- Email: 1,738 (44%)
- Text: 1,093 (27%)
- CourseLink: 607 (15%)
- Phone app notifications: 315 (8%)
- Social Media: 102 (2.58%)
- WebAdvisor: 43 (1.09%)
- University Websites: 43 (1.09%)
- Other: 6 (0.15%)

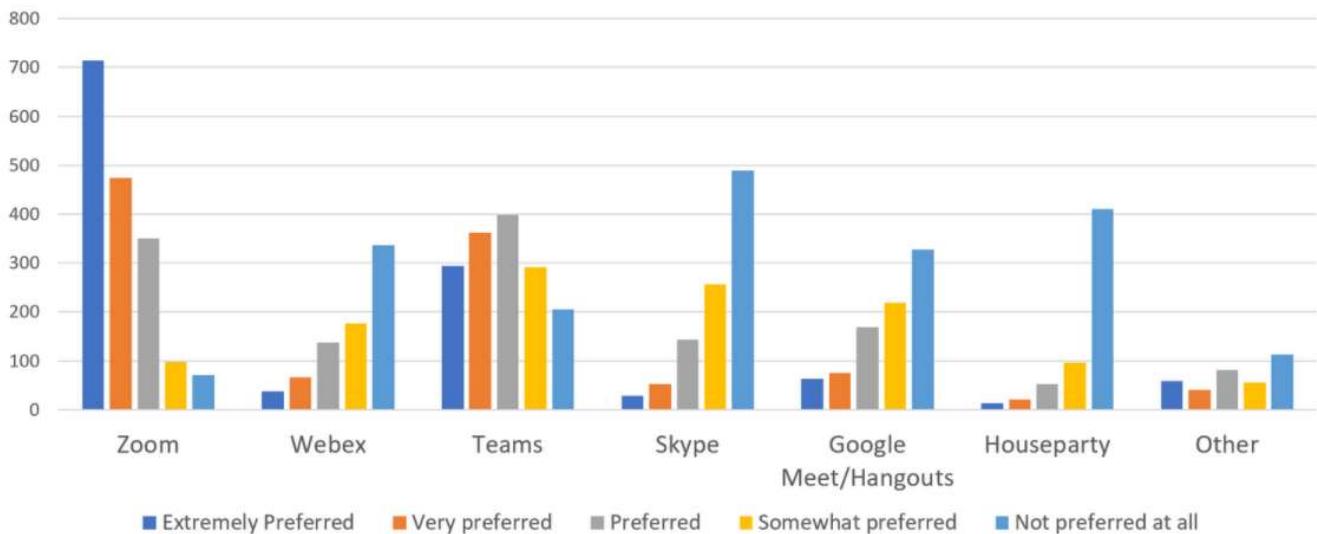
Messages to the University: most student preferred to send messages to the University by email.

- Email: 1,294 (64.38%)
- In-person, walk-up: 274 (13.82%)
- Phone call: 188 (9.46%)
- Live chat: 188 (9.46%)
- In-person, virtual: 70 (3.54%)
- Chatbot: 41 (2.10%)
- Submit a request via a website form: 41 (2.10%)
- Other: 7 (0.97%)

Survey Question:

We have three web conferencing tools at the University of Guelph: Teams, Webex and Zoom. Please rate your preference for these and other tools you may have used.

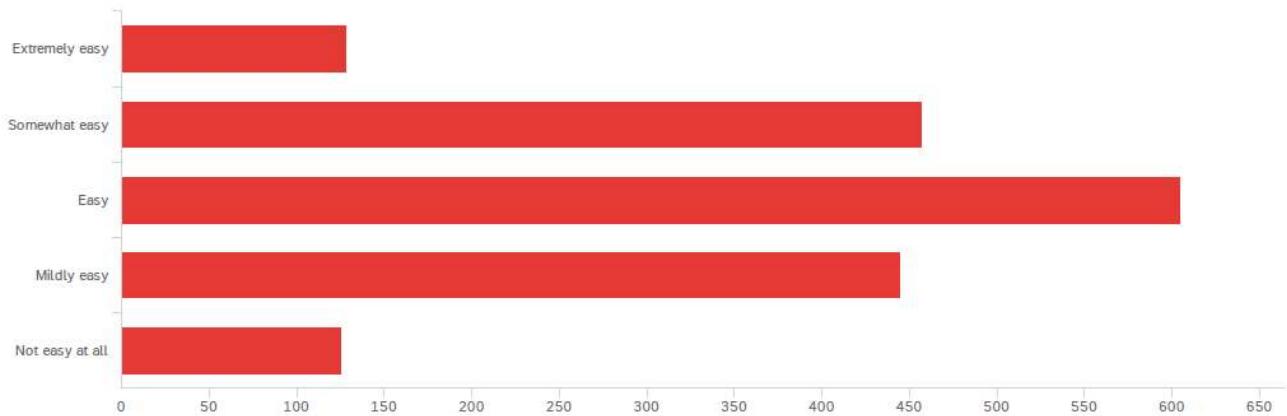
Response:



Survey Question:

How easy it is to schedule appointments at the University (wellness, counselling, academic advising, Registrar, finance, etc.)?

Response:



- Extremely easy: 128 (7.27%)
- Somewhat easy: 457 (25.97%)
- Easy: 605 (34.38%)
- Mildly easy: 445 (25.28%)
- Not easy at all: 125 (7.10%)

2020 Accept/Decline Survey

Intro:

On September 15, 2020, the annual Accept/Decline Survey was administrated to students who received an offer of admission from the University of Guelph (Guelph, Guelph-Humber, and Ridgetown) for Fall 2020 admission. A total of 4,475 responses were received to the Guelph campus survey, which translates to a 22.7% response rate. While the majority of the data is not particularly relevant to the OSSSC Program, a few nuggets may be helpful.

Summary

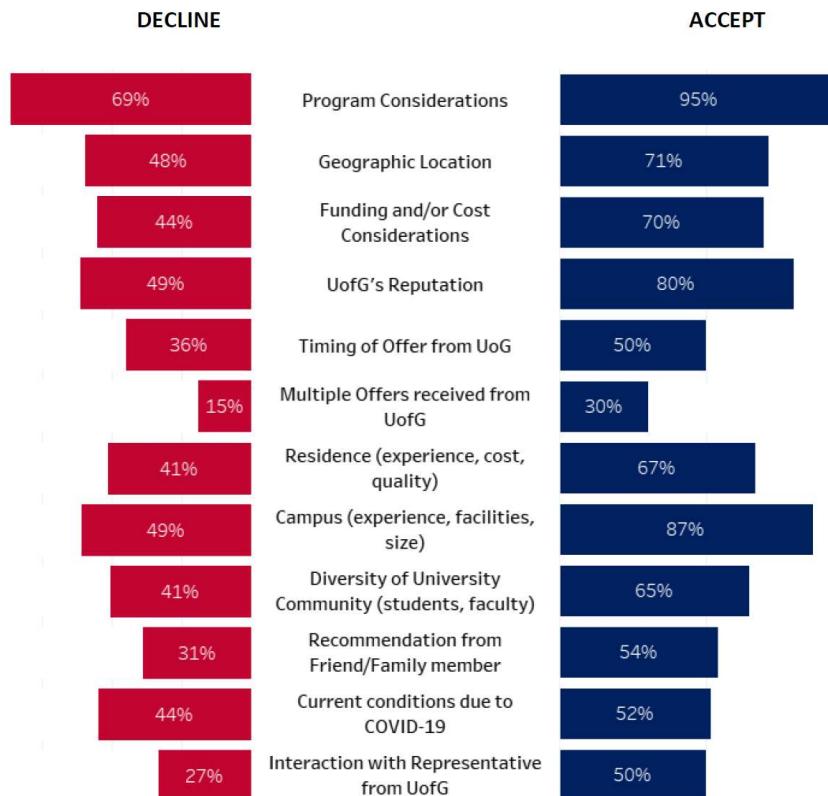
- Interestingly, “Interaction with a Representative from UofG” was identified as one of the least important factors for students for making their decision to attend (or not) the University, potentially indicating limited opportunity for improved prospective communication with the Student Service Centre to have an impact on student school selection.
- For those dissatisfied or highly dissatisfied with how UofG communicated with them during the recruitment and admissions process (11%), “very little communication” was identified more than 40x more than “too much communication” as reason for their dissatisfaction, seemingly indicating interest in increased communication. However, the survey data doesn’t include information as to whether that sentiment holds true for those who felt neutral, satisfied, or highly satisfied with the process.

Data

What are the factors that influence a student’s decision to accept or decline their offer of admission at the U of G?

Students were asked to rate the following factors on a scale from being Critically important to Not at all important in making their decision to decline or to accept their offer at U of G. The figure below shows which factors were important (Critically Important, Very Important or Important) in making their decision to accept or decline their offer at U of G.

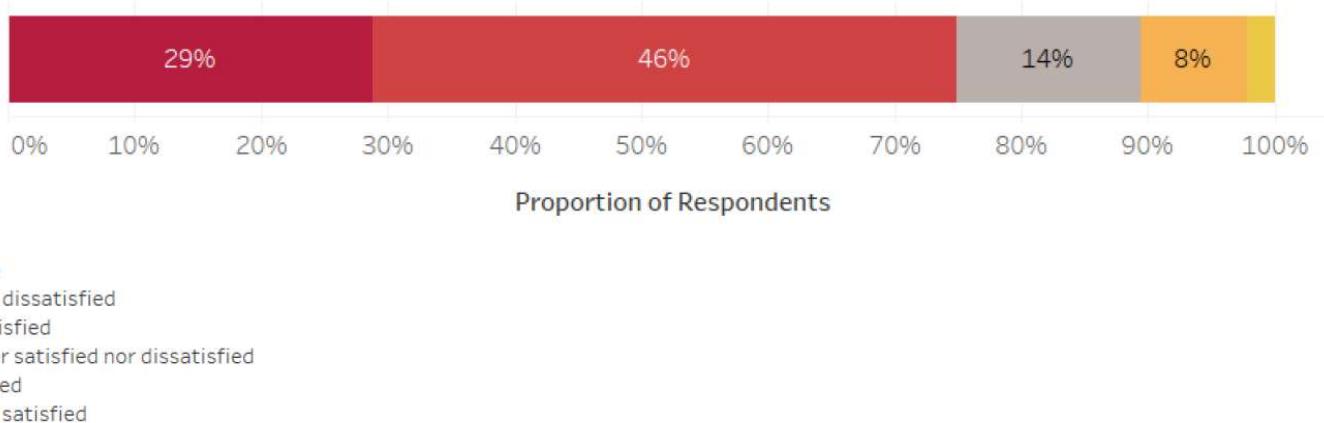
Fig 1. “Please rate the following factors in terms of how important they were in your decision [to attend or not to attend] the University of Guelph (U of G).”



How well does Admissions communicate with students both formally and informally?

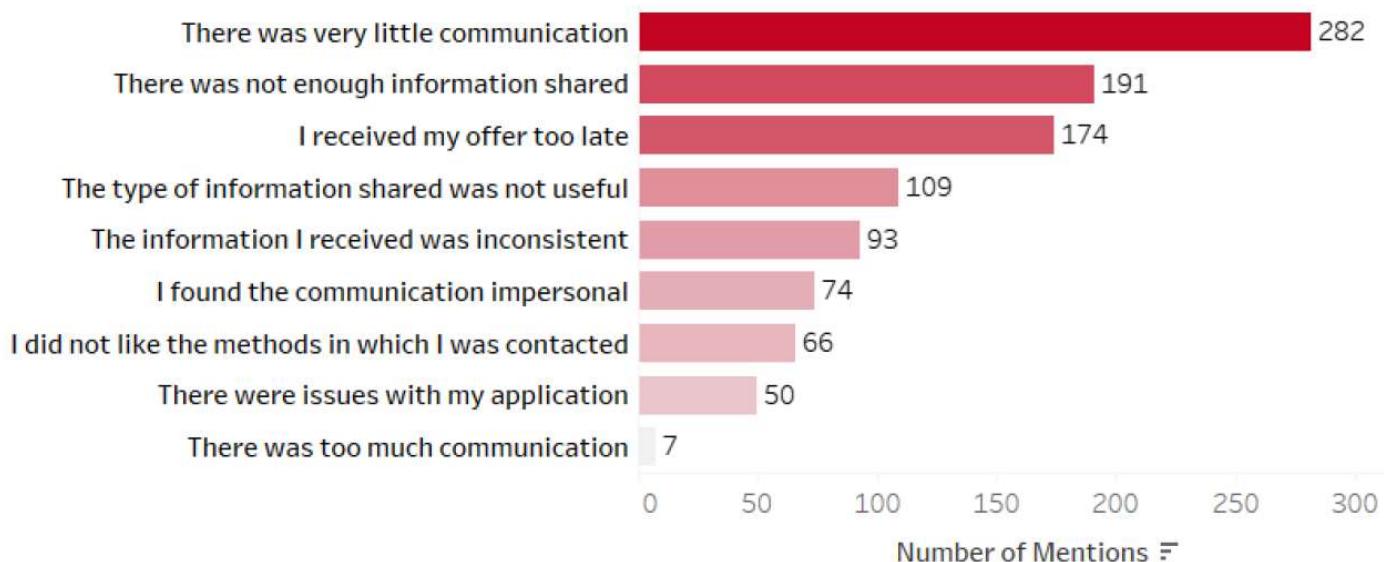
Students were asked how satisfied they were with the way U of G communicated during the recruitment and admission process. Majority (75%) of students said they were Highly satisfied or Satisfied with the way U of G communicated with them during the process. This was true for both those that accepted (79%) and declined (70%).

Fig 2. "How satisfied were you with the way the University of Guelph communicated with you during the recruitment and admission process?"



For those that indicated they were dissatisfied (Highly dissatisfied or Dissatisfied), students were asked why they were dissatisfied. Most students indicated that they had very little communication, they received their offer too late, and/or there was not enough information shared.

Fig 3. Reasons for dissatisfaction with the U of G's communication.



Appendix

Prospective Student Communication Survey

12/20/2021

Intro

For the two week period running from Monday, November 22 to Friday, December 3, prospective students visiting campus for a tour were invited to take part in a short survey to report on their communication with the University as they have been considering their post-secondary options. **120 prospective students completed the survey.**

Summary

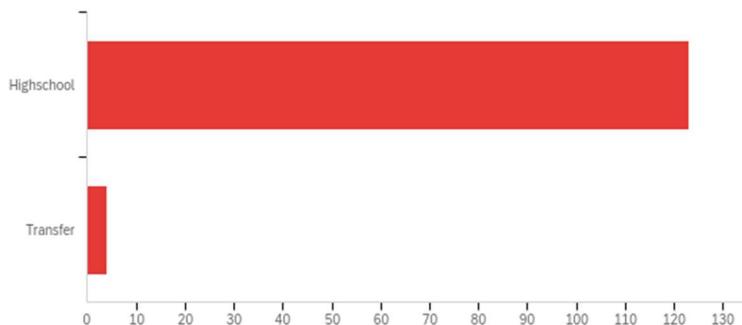
- Respondents were overwhelmingly domestic, grade 12, high school students.
- While 120 students seemed to be a strong initial pool of responses, very few indicated communicating with the university, resulting in little useable data with respect to communication/service satisfaction.
 - o Of the 120 that completed the survey, only 38 students (less than 32%) indicated that they had had any questions about the University of Guelph.
 - o Of the student who indicated they had questions, **only 37.5% indicated that they reached out** to the University to ask their question.
- After removing incomplete responses, there were 9 students who indicated reaching out, making it unwise to draw any inferences based on the data. Of this group
 - o the majority reached out more than once (avg. 1.82 reach-outs/person)
 - o all were very pleased with the quality of service ("strongly agree" responses across the board for all communication methods).

Data

Demographic Information

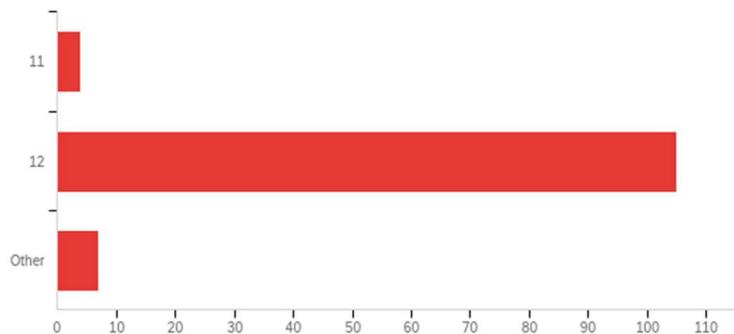
(Not all students answered all questions, resulting in different total numbers for each question)

High school or Transfer



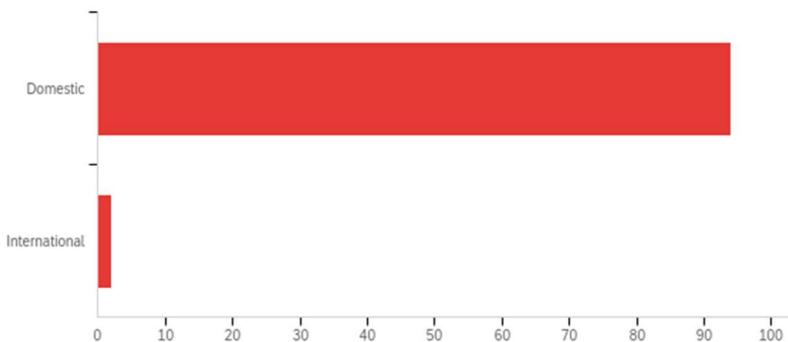
Answer	%	Count
Highschool	96.85%	123
Transfer	3.15%	4
Total	100%	127

Grade



Answer	%	Count
11	3.45%	4
12	90.52%	105
Other	6.03%	7
Total	100%	116

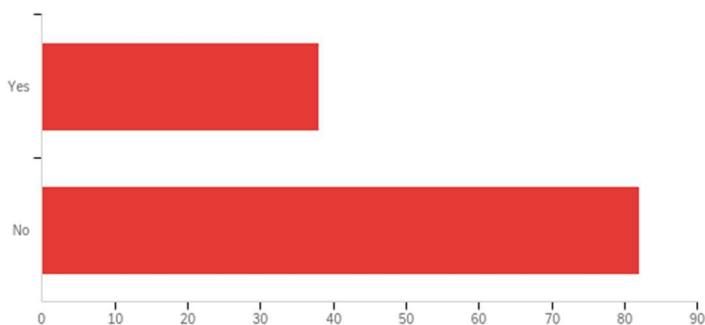
Domestic or International



Answer	%	Count
Domestic	97.92%	94
International	2.08%	2
Total	100%	96

Communication with University

As you have been exploring your post-secondary education options, have you had any questions about the University of Guelph?



Answer	%	Count
Yes	31.67%	38
No	68.33%	82
Total	100%	120

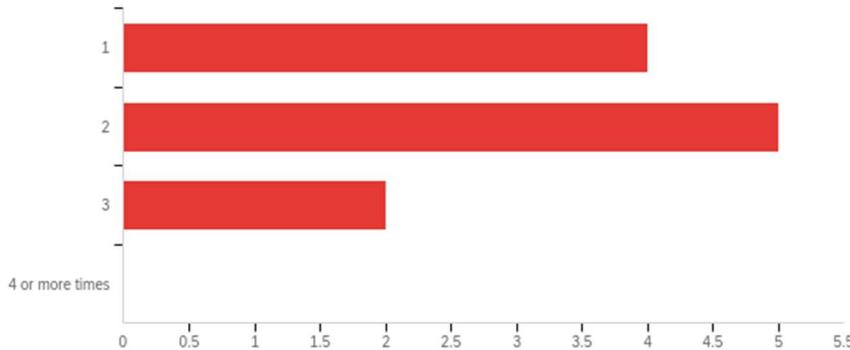
Did you reach out to the University to ask your question(s)?

Answer	%	Count
Yes	37.50%	12
No	62.50%	20
Total	100%	32

You indicated that you have not (yet) reached out to the University to ask your question. We want to help you find answers! What is your preferred resource or method of communication? And, is there anything we could do to make finding important information or communicating with us easier?

- Respondents largely shared that their preferred method of communication was email.
- No answers with respect to anything we could do to make finding information or communicating with us easier.

Since beginning your research into post-secondary options, how many times have you communicated with the University? (Your best guess is okay.)



Answer	%	Count
1	36.36%	4
2	45.45%	5
3	18.18%	2
4 or more times	0.00%	0
Total	100%	11
Average		1.82

How did you connect with the University to ask your question(s)? (Please select all that apply)

Answer	%	Count
Emailed admission@uoguelph.ca	14.2%	2
Emailed find.yourself@uoguelph.ca	7.1%	1
Emailed internat@uoguelph.ca	7.1%	1
Phoned Admission Services	7.1%	1
Asked during a University of Guelph presentation or event (e.g. Fall Preview Day, Ontario University Fair, Liaison Officers presentation, International UniBuddy presentation, etc.)	28.4%	4
Chatted with a current student via UniBuddy	21.3%	3
Other	14.2%	2
Total	100%	14

Satisfaction with Service

For each method a respondent indicated they connected with the University, they were asked to indicate they extent they agreed (4-point Likert scale, Strongly Disagree – Disagree – Agree – Strongly Agree) with the statements below:

- I received a response in a timely manner.
- The staff member communicated in a clear manner.
- The staff member answered my questions/helped resolve my issues competently.
- The staff member made me feel like a valued future Gryphon.
- My service expectations were met.
- I am likely to reach out to the University via this communication method again should I have additional questions.
- I would recommend this communication method to other prospective students.
- Overall, I was satisfied with my experience reaching out to the University.

All respondents indicated that they strongly agreed with each statement for each communication method.

Student Focus Group Protocol

Student Consultation re. OSSSC Program- Focus Group Protocol

Updated 11/17/2021

Before Students Arrival:

- Chair set-up – everyone needs to be able to see each other.
- Nametags materials prepared

Post Student Arrival:

1. Welcome, ordering food, small talk, and name tags
2. Set-up
 - a. Who am I?
 - i. Introduce myself
 - ii. Introduce ORS – what does it include? What doesn't it include?
 1. We're here to service students! Through a) providing systems for you to take actions, and b) providing information re. various actions you may want to take.
 2. Three student-facing departments
 - a. SFS
 - i. Manage your financial account
 - ii. Financial Aid (OSAP)
 - iii. Awards
 - b. Enrolment Services
 - i. Records (e.g. CoE, name change, transcripts, graduation, etc.)
 - ii. Academics (course schedule, course waivers, letter of permission, etc.)
 - c. Admission Services
 - i. Admitting students to the university! (All students on your way in, and then if you transfer programs once in)
 - iii. New to ORS - know some about the department, but definitely don't know ALL
 - b. What is this going to look like?
 - i. Open conversation → I'll ask questions and then you jump in; will attempt to stimulate conversation vs. a group interview.
 - ii. Will attempt to limit my influence
 - iii. Be respectful or each other – no cutting each other off, and be conscious of how much you are speaking
 - iv. Will have my computer with the protocol and will be making some notes.
 - v. Will use the data to help us improve the services we offer
 - c. Ask for permission to record them.
 - d. Set timer for 38 minutes and then record
 - i. <https://otter.ai/my-notes>

Questions

University Service:

1. Topic: Service Expectations

What are your expectation for customer service from the university?

2. Topic: Exceptional Service

Have you experienced exceptional customer service from the University? If yes, what did that service look like? If no, what would it look like?

- F/U – What makes service exceptional? What does very strong service look like?

3. Topic: Unsatisfactory Service

Conversely, have you ever experienced unsatisfactory customer service from the University? If yes, what did that service look like?

- F/U - What might lead to you feeling you're receiving poor customer service?

4. Topic Area: Communication

Set-up: The Computing and Communications Services team recently conducted a large student survey that included questions related to how students wanted to receive messages from, and send messages to, the University. In terms of receiving communication from the University, email and text were the two options that received the most support. (Courseslink and Phoneapp notifications were 3 and 4)

Would your preferences align with those of the students surveyed?

Specific to text messages: Have you received text messages from units within the University? If so, have you been satisfied with those experiences? And if you haven't received texts, would you be happy with receive texts from university departments? In what circumstances?

Service from ORS:

5. Topic: ORS Service Experiences

Tell me about your customer service experiences with the Office of Registrarial Services. Have you had any unsatisfactory or exceptional experiences? What about your experiences made them satisfactory or not?

6. Topic: Opportunities

What could make interacting with ORS/accessing service provided by ORS easier?

8. Topic: Service Methods

Set-up: The majority of services provided by ORS are available 24/7/365 (e.g. course registration, paying for tuition, applying to school, etc.) and can be completed without needing to connect with an ORS rep. However, some processes still require engaging with reps from ORS (complicated) and sometimes people have questions that necessitate connecting.

What about autonomous services do you like/dislike?

Ideally, how would you connect with ORS when you need to? What connection methods are the best...are the most valuable to you? and why?

9. Topic: Potential Service Methods

ORS is currently exploring live chat, chat bot service, and "virtual" desk service for students. What are your thoughts on each of these methods?

- F/U - If we were only to add 1, which should we add and why?

Post Questions

- We're done!
- Thank-you!