

Volunteer Barriers and Motivations Survey

Brief description of project:

Student motivation matters. Particularly as the public relations coordinator of the Bennion Community Service Center at the University of Utah, I care about why students do or do not volunteer. By understanding barriers and motivations to volunteering, I will be able to better recruit and retain potential volunteers. The mission of the Bennion Center is to “foster lifelong service and civic participation by engaging the university with the greater community in action, change and learning” (Bennion Center, 2013, n.p.).

This survey was meant to add to research to better understand student barriers and motivations.

Who was asked to complete survey:

Students who had previously submitted volunteer interest forms via our online form.

Response Rate: 7.6% (38 of 497)

Administration Type: Campus Labs mailing

Summary of Key Findings:

Word of mouth was the most common response on how students found out about volunteering through the Bennion Center.

Questions for barriers and motivations were asked on this survey targeted to only include reasons why students do and do not volunteer. The strongest motive as reported seems to be that students feel it is important to help others; 75 percent chose this as a reason for volunteering. Additionally, they recognize the utilitarian side as well, as more than half volunteer because they think it will help me in their future careers or graduate school. Other top reasons selected include support of the cause (50 percent); the activity sounded interesting (47 percent); and looking for leadership experiences (44 percent). 3

At various points in the survey, respondents had the opportunity to provide feedback as to how to improve accessibility to volunteerism. Of note are various comments that emphasized the desire of students to create their own service programs, and a need for support to make that happen. Also mentioned was the need for more one-time service projects to make service more accessible to busy students.

Actions Taken:

None yet. Suggestions made to improve outreach. Still working on actual implementation.

Which department and/or program goals does this project align with?

Bennion Center

Which Student Affairs goals (<http://studentaffairs.utah.edu/assessment/documents/strategic-plans/strategic-plan-brochure.pdf>) does this project align with?

Develop students as a whole through the cultivation and enrichment of the body, mind and spirit.