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Campus Groups and Organizations:
Healthy Returns for the University of Delaware

There are over 275 groups, clubs, and student organizations at UD. On average, each of these groups receives approximately 800 dollars per year for programming, with exceptions for certain organizations who receive more or less depending on the types of programs they sponsor. The Student Centers Programming Advisory Board, for instance, receives several thousand dollars each year to fund special programs that bring comedians and musical acts to UD. Religious-affiliated and political groups receive about 400 dollars per school year for programming.

These investments in student groups are well worth the cost. Our data demonstrates that organizations and clubs are extremely beneficial to students and to the University itself. More than 66 percent of UD students are involved in at least one on-campus group, including sororities and fraternities; religious-affiliated groups; political groups; service clubs; sports and intramural groups; literary, art, and study groups; and professional and academic societies.

[Table 1 about here]

Students in at least one group on campus tend to be more active in politics and in their communities. On average, students in groups are three times as likely to be involved in the community with the parameters we tested. Activities students engage in include: attending political rallies, speeches, or dinners; wearing or displaying campaign stickers, signs, and buttons; trying to convince others to vote for or against a political candidate; and taking part in protests, marches, and demonstrations.

Among students who are not involved in campus groups, only 13 percent have attended political rallies, speeches, and dinners in support of a candidate and only 5 percent have worn or displayed campaign stickers, buttons and signs. The differences in community involvement between students in groups and students who are not in groups are particularly compelling. Of those students in at least three groups, 53 percent report working within their communities to solve a common problem. Only 19 percent of students who are not in a group can say the same. In keeping with that trend, about 15 percent of students not in a campus group attended meetings to solve community or school issues, while 42 percent of students involved in three or more groups attended such meetings and 21 percent of those in one or two groups attending community meetings.

[Figure 1 about here]

Students involved in campus groups are twice as likely as those who are not to have contacted a government official to express their views on an issue in the last twelve months. Twenty-one percent of students involved in three or more groups have participated in protests or demonstrations, but only 5 percent of uninvolved students reported taking part in such events. Those students taking part in three or more groups were five times as likely as those who were in no campus groups to wear or display campaign buttons, stickers, or signs, regardless of the nature of the groups in which these students took part.

An overwhelming majority of students involved in three groups or more—97 percent—plan to vote in November. Among students in one or two groups, 89 percent will vote in the upcoming presidential election. In contrast, only 45 percent of those students who are not involved in any student groups intend to vote in November. This data covers *all* student groups and organizations on campus; this increase in likelihood to vote is not restricted solely to students involved in political clubs, but accounts for voting behavior among students in *any* student group.

Groups broaden students' horizons by extending their social networks. Students in groups are much more likely to volunteer either on campus or in the community and they interact with students of another race or ethnicity more often than those who are not members of any campus groups. All told, 53 percent of UD students have performed some type of volunteer work within the last year. Even more impressive is that 73 percent of students in three groups or more have done volunteer work in the last twelve months. Among those students who have done no volunteer work, two-thirds of them are not in any campus groups.

Our data also illustrates that ninety-two percent of students in groups report that they interact "regularly" with students of another race of ethnicity. While regular interaction with different races and ethnicities is typical among UD students, there is a significant ten-percentage-point difference between those who are in groups and those who are not.

Students in groups study, on average, more hours per week than students who have not joined any groups on campus. Forty-five percent of students in three or more groups study sixteen or more hours per week, while 23 percent study twenty-one hours or more per week. Only 30 percent of students who are not involved in campus groups study sixteen or more hours or more per week. Students who are not involved in groups on campus are also more likely to study less than ten hours per week. More than 44 percent of uninvolved students reported studying ten or fewer hours. In contrast, only 29 percent of students in three or more groups reported studying in the same range.

Not only do student groups produce beneficial behavior in students, but they are also helpful to the University, in a way such that funding for student groups may be fully justified and may even come back to the University by way of student recommendations. In general, most UD students are satisfied with the University. Approximately 90 percent of students reported being "satisfied" or "extremely satisfied" with UD. Likewise, 87 percent are "likely" or "extremely likely" to recommend UD to a friend.

[Figure 2 about here]

However, students in groups are much more likely to report "extreme" satisfaction with the University of Delaware. In total, 93 percent of students in groups report being "satisfied" or "extremely satisfied" overall with the University and 94 percent of them are "likely" or "extremely likely" to recommend UD to a friend or colleague as a place to go to college. While UD is generally popular among all students regardless of whether or not they are in any on-campus groups, a real difference can be seen among those who reported "extreme" satisfaction or and "extreme" likelihood to recommend UD.

Students in three or more groups are about twice as likely as those in no groups to report being "extremely satisfied" with the University of Delaware. Likewise, 56 percent of students in at least three groups reported that they were "extremely likely" to recommend UD to a friend or colleague; only 44 percent of students who are not in groups responded similarly.

Based on the data, it is clear that funding campus organizations for students is a positive way for UD to spend its resources. Having a variety of clubs and groups for students to choose from is worthwhile and beneficial for the campus and community. The data demonstrates that students involved in campus groups and organizations are more likely to engage in positive political and civic activities, as well as positive personal behaviors, such as studying and regularly interacting with people of different races and ethnicities.

Table 1: Group Involvement and Political/Civic Engagement Activities

Engagement Activity	0 Groups	1-2 Groups	3+ Groups
Tried to change someone's opinion about a candidate	41.6%	45.5%	56.1%
Attended political meeting, rally, speech, dinner, etc.	13.3%	11.6%	34.1%
Worn/displayed campaign button, sticker, sign, etc.	5.3%	8.0%	25.2%
Worked with others to handle a community issue	19.3%	23.5%	52.8%
Contacted a government official to express your views	10.7%	11.6%	20.3%
Attended a meeting about an issue facing community	14.9%	21.2%	41.8%
Taken part in a protest, march, or demonstration	5.4%	5.1%	21.1%

Figure 1: Groups' Impact on Participation in Pertinent Political and Civic Activities
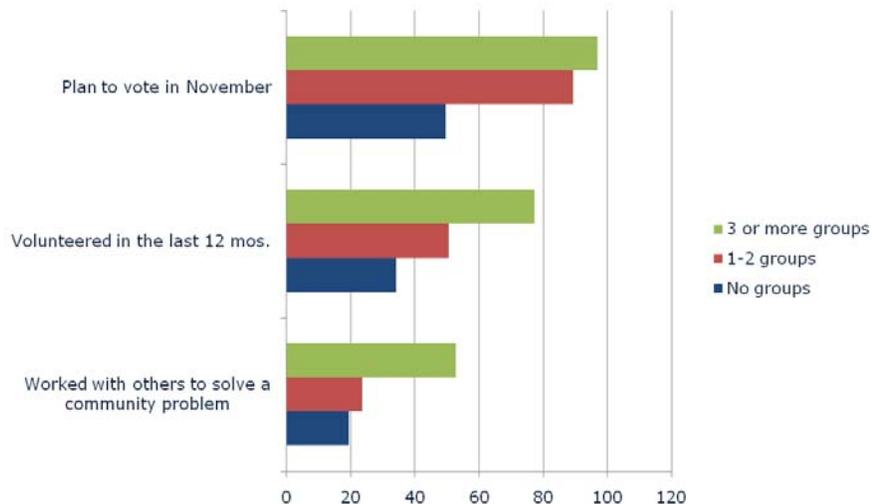
Figure 2: Satisfaction with UD and Likelihood to Recommend