

Office of the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs
Assessment Programs

Program Analysis

Project: Commuter Student Engagement FY 2009

Date: February 11, 2010

Overview:

For the 2008-2009 academic year, commuter students comprised 85% of the student population. Since research shows that student engagement with the campus impacts persistence and retention, the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs has begun to collect baseline data to assess the involvement of commuter students. Information collected is used by the respective programs and facilities to assess participation, identify program needs, and improve outreach efforts to off-campus residents. This analysis summarizes engagement of commuter and resident students in selected activities. This summary is for the entire fiscal year.

Focus Group Input:

Two focus groups held during Spring Semester 2009 confirmed issues facing commuter students that continue to surface in surveys and conversations:

- Time spent on commute
- Lack of opportunity for social life
- Traveling later at night (i.e., safety concerns)
- Carrying heavy backpacks/books
- Cost of transportation/parking

Focus group participants identified the ways they spend time on campus, including:

- Studying
- Eating
- With friends who live on campus
- Receiving tutoring
- Campus clubs/organizations
- Work
- Meeting with advisors

Students identified resources that assisted them in adapting to UIC:

- Social activities
- Involvement with other students who live on campus
- Participation in student organizations
- Online resources
- Orientation

Highlights of Commuter Student Engagement:

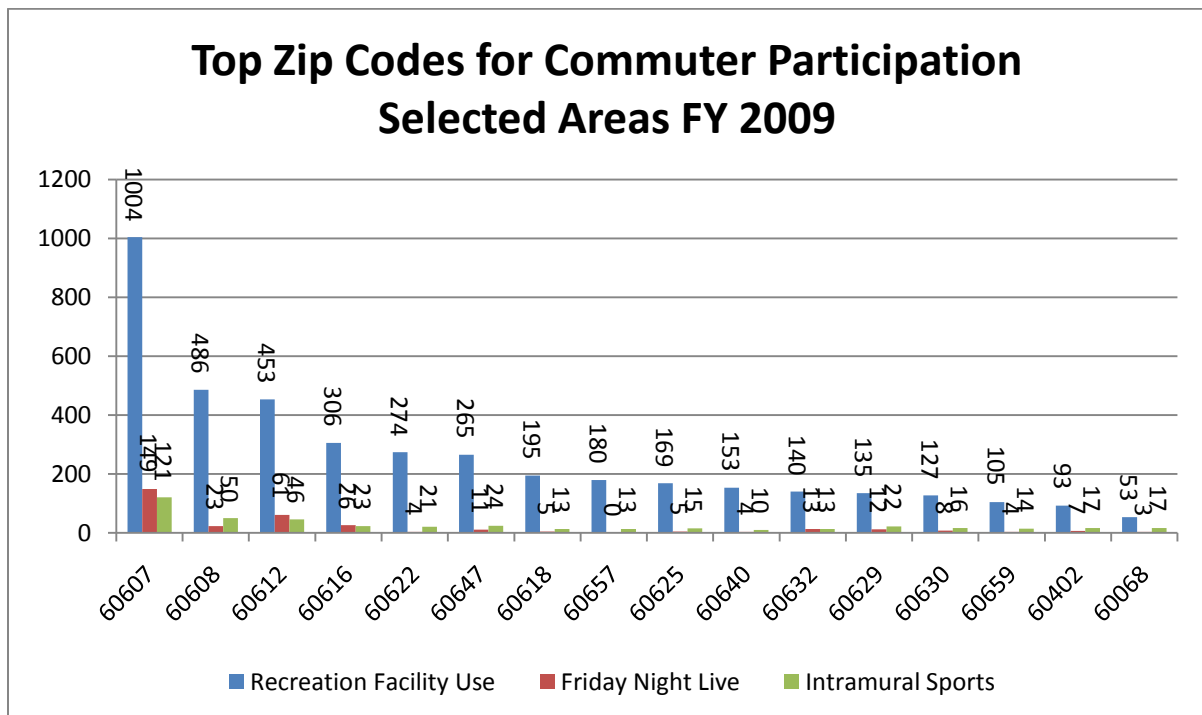
Baseline data has been gathered for students who participate in selected programs. These areas were selected due to the volume of participants and the ability to capture user data.

- Student Recreation Facility and the Sport and Fitness Center patrons generate the largest collection of data. Almost 16,000 students made 406,567 visits to one of those facilities during FY 2009.

- Intramural Sports participants represent another identifiable population of 1,998 students.
- Friday Night Live, a monthly social event sponsored by Campus Programs, offers another major opportunity to observe student engagement with more than 700 per semester in attendance.

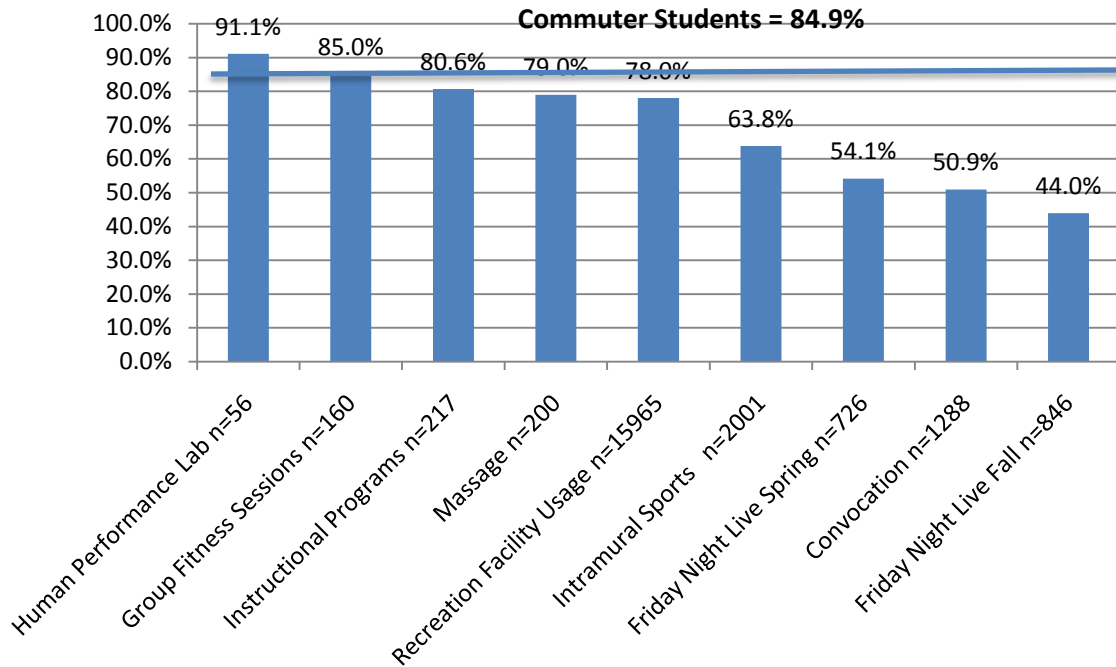
Efforts to measure commuter student engagement with other programs will be pursued. In FY 2009, 85% of the students registered for Fall Semester lived off campus.

The majority of commuter students utilizing facilities and services live near campus. The top ten zip codes for the three programs/facilities with a critical mass of off-campus residents were examined. Seven zip codes were common to all three programs. The top four for all three programs were 60607, 60608, 60612, and 60616, although not all in the same order.

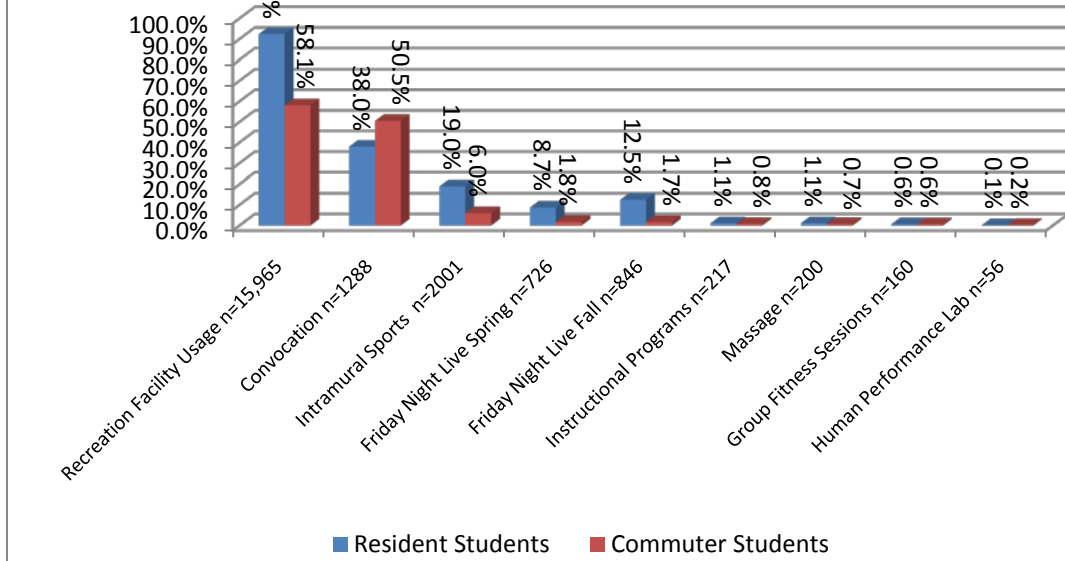


In general, the percentage of resident student population involved in selected programs is higher than the percentage of the commuter student population. Campus Recreation facilities attract the highest percentage of the commuter population, which can be attributed to the variety of activities and the availability of hours for student usage. In contrast, due to the volume of users, commuters comprise a larger percentage of the customer base for the facilities. Recreational programs and intramural sports, as well as student activities programs, attract a lower total number of participants due to specific time schedules and limited scope of the events. Commuter students often represent the largest share of the audience, but a lower percentage of the total commuter student population.

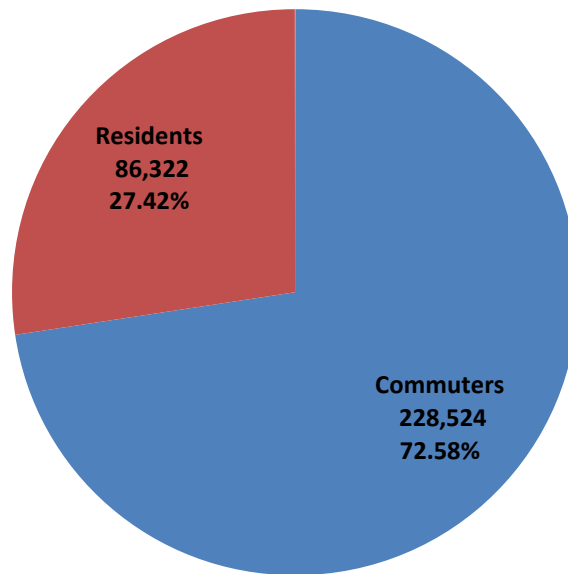
Commuter Student Engagement FY 2009 % of Student Participants Who Commuted



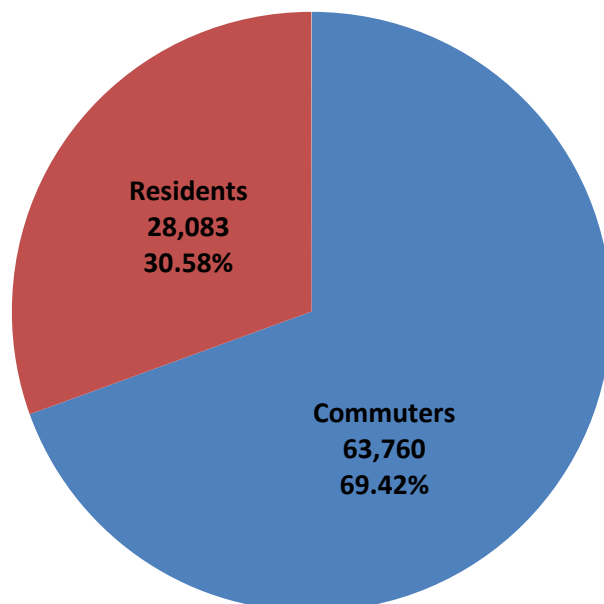
% of Resident and Commuter Student Populations Engaged in Selected Programs



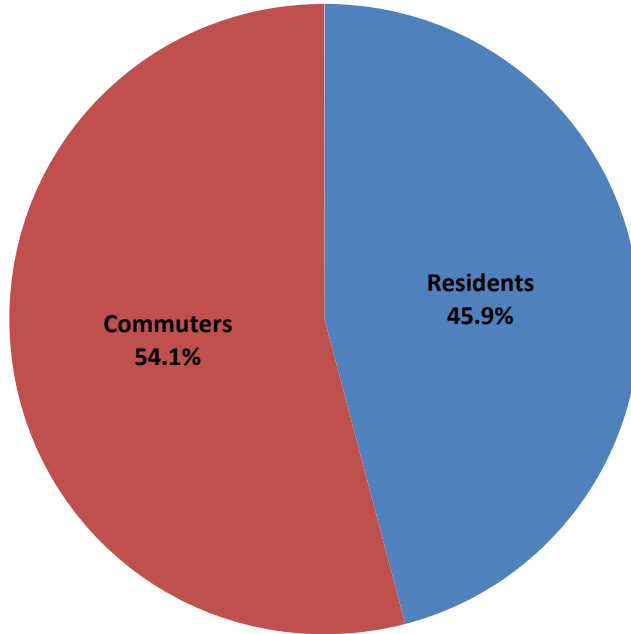
**SRF Student Usage
FY 2009
n=314,826**



**SFC Student Usage
FY 2009
n=91,721**



Friday Night Live Spring
% of Commuter and Resident Students Attending
n=726



Friday Night Live Fall n=846

