

UMSG INC

University of Maine Student Government 2023 Spring Survey Report

Compiled by Michael Delorge, President '23 - '24

Background

The University of Maine Student Government Inc. (UMSG) is a 501(c)3 Non-Profit Corporation run by UMaine students. UMSG was built to improve UMaine student life on campus. On March 2, 2023, UMSG released this survey via Qualtrics to better understand the opinions and experiences of UMaine undergraduates. The survey gathered nearly 500 responses before closing on April 20, 2023. UMSG hopes to use this feedback to better understand and advocate for the UMaine student voice.

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Survey Demographics

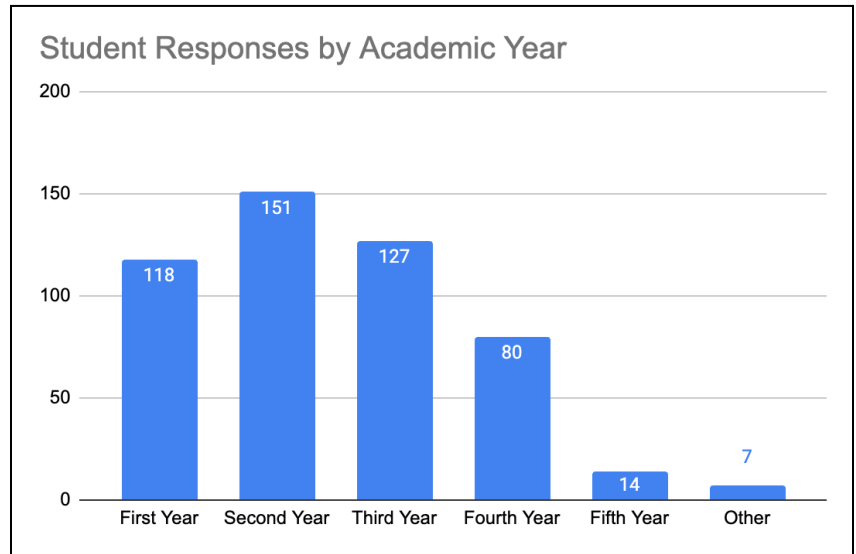
Sample Size

Four hundred ninety-seven undergraduate students (n=497) submitted complete responses, an estimated 6% of the undergraduate population. Of these, 22 (4.4%) have been involved in UMSG Inc. while at UMaine.

Academic Year

Of all respondents, 24% are underclassmen and 44.5% are upperclassmen.

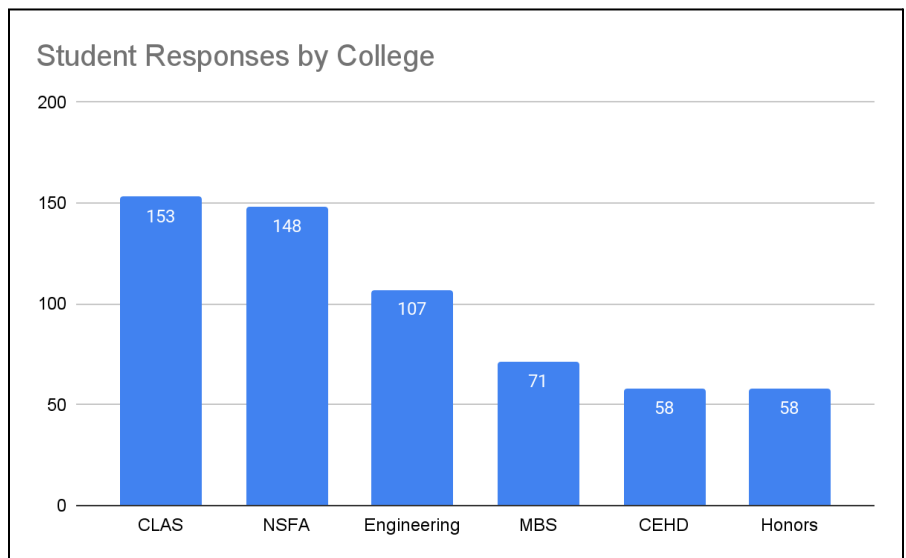
| | n | % |
|--------------------|-----|------|
| First Year | 118 | 23.7 |
| Second Year | 151 | 30.4 |
| Third Year | 127 | 25.6 |
| Fourth Year | 80 | 16.1 |
| Fifth Year | 14 | 2.8 |
| Other | 7 | 1.4 |



College Affiliation

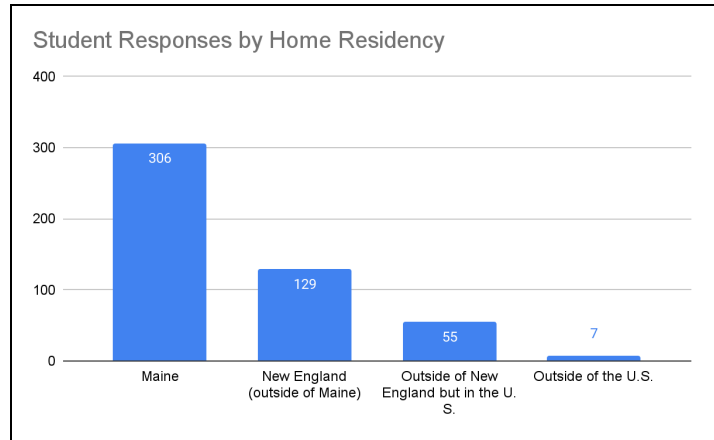
Students could be listed in more than one college (eg. Honors College and CLAS or CLAS and NSFA).

| | n | % |
|--------------------|-----|------|
| CLAS | 153 | 25.7 |
| NSFA | 148 | 24.9 |
| Engineering | 107 | 18.0 |
| MBS | 71 | 11.9 |
| CEHD | 58 | 9.7 |
| Honors | 58 | 9.7 |



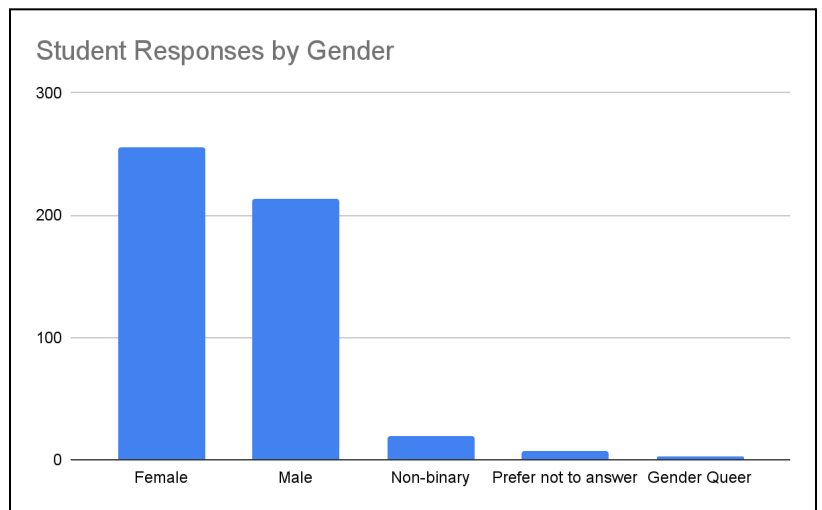
Home Residency

| | n | % |
|---|-----|------|
| Maine | 306 | 61.6 |
| New England (outside of Maine) | 129 | 26.0 |
| Outside of New England but in the U.S. | 55 | 11.1 |
| Outside of the U.S. | 7 | 1.4 |



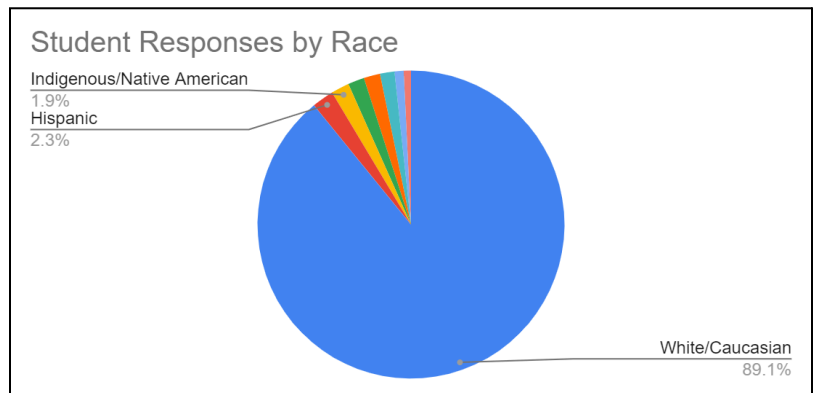
Gender

| | n | % |
|-----------------------------|-----|------|
| Female | 255 | 51.3 |
| Male | 213 | 42.9 |
| Non-binary | 19 | 3.8 |
| Prefer not to answer | 7 | 1.4 |
| Gender Queer | 3 | 0.6 |



Race

| | n | % |
|--|-----|------|
| White/Caucasian | 466 | 89.1 |
| Hispanic | 12 | 2.3 |
| Indigenous/Native American | 10 | 1.9 |
| Asian | 9 | 1.7 |
| Prefer Not to Answer | 9 | 1.7 |
| Black or African American | 8 | 1.5 |
| Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander | 5 | 1.0 |
| Other | 4 | 0.8 |



School Climate

Does anything on campus concern you?

Safety

- There is a **lack of outdoor lighting** on a campus that gets dark early and is icy during the majority of the school year (10% of responses mentioned this).
- The **Blue Light poles are sparse** around campus.
- **Poorly handled sexual assault cases** are common
- **Gender discrimination and hazing** are common.
- **Access for the disabled** is poor on campus.
- **Weather maintenance** of roads is poor and leads to dangerous conditions.
- **Response time of emergency personnel** is concerning.

Infrastructure & Services

- Campus has a **lack of available parking**.
- **Campus infrastructure** is poor, inadequate, or aging (e.g. mold in dorms and old buildings, lack of study spaces, residence halls are old, cockroaches, etc.)
- There is a need for **additional mental health services capacity**.
- There is a **lack of bike racks** and a prevalence of **bike theft**.
- **Food poisoning** is common and **dining halls are inaccessible** and have limited hours

School Culture

- **New student orientation** in the summer is challenging to attend.
- There is a general, perceived **lack of diversity** on campus.
- UMaine is becoming a **less "fun"** environment due to fewer large events, school spirit, decreased Greek life, and the removal of Maine Day.

What do you enjoy on campus or about UMaine?

Facilities

- Rec Center
- Witter Farm
- Natural beauty and weather
- Fogler Library
- Bears Den
- Ferland Center
- Campus Mall
- Bike Trails
- Esports Room
- MaineBound

School Culture

- The people
- Student Organizations
- Hockey games and sports
- Greek life
- Maine Day
- Academics and classes
- Access to outdoor gear
- Quality of education for the price
- Amount of free resources, opportunities, and events

Upperclassmen Perspectives

Upperclassmen are students in their third, fourth, or fifth years (44.5% of sample). Students in this category had their first years at the University of Maine dominated by COVID-19. As the school has grappled with and emerged from a global pandemic, so have upperclassmen. Some experienced UMaine before the pre-pandemic while third-year students experienced their first semester of college in the fall of 2020. Note: What some students may view as a positive change, others view as a negative change.

How has UMaine changed positively in your time here?

Student Wellness

- A clear focus on addressing **mental health** and **student safety**. Some students cited the school **addressing hate crimes**.
- A personal **increase in friendships** and a **sense of belonging** on campus as a result of their **involvement** in Greek life or student clubs.
- Greater attendance at sporting events and improved athletic performance (hockey).

Infrastructure & Services

- **Infrastructure improvements** that yield increased safety, more study spaces, a campus to be proud of, and providing spaces for more activities (eg. Ferland Center, Williams renovation, salting roads, and new athletic facilities).
- Addressing the **sustainability** and **quality** of food in the **dining halls**.

COVID-19

- **Lifting mask/vaccine mandates** and the campus COVID response were handled well.
- Emerging from COVID there is an increase in community engagement and events. The campus has become more "active."

Academics

- The **Business School** has added new concentrations and majors and has improved recently.
- UMaine's designation as an **R1 Research Institution**.
- Since COVID, UMaine has offered many **different types of learning formats** (online, in person, etc.), allowing for more flexible learning. **Online learning** itself has improved.
- Opportunities for **professional growth** and **networking**.
- Connections with professors have increased.

Other

- Increased focus on **diversity** in the classes and **DEI** as an institution.
- The school's **divestment from fossil fuels**.

How has UMaine changed negatively in your time here?

Events and School Culture

- Nearly one-third (29%) of upperclassmen cited the **removal of Maine Day** as a negative change. Many cited this as a contributing factor to the **decline in school culture, campus-sponsored events, and school pride**.
- UMSG's free movie tickets are more limited.

Communication

- There seems to be a **growing disconnect between students and school administrators**. Students do not feel heard or consulted on decisions that affect them.
- There are significant **challenges for publicizing events and communicating** between groups of people at UMaine.

Infrastructure & Services

- **Dining services are closing and becoming more limited** (eg. closures of Wells, Oakes Room, Union Pub, and Late Night Dining). **Decreased dining quality** since the start of Sodexo.
- Campus **infrastructure continues to age**
- **Poor road and parking conditions** both in terms of winter care and large number of potholes.
- Mismanaged financial priorities with the **construction of two new hotels** on campus.
- An **increase in littering and vandalism** on campus.
- **Physical student accessibility** to buildings and around campus in the winter.

Other

- **Increased tuition and financial hardship** due to inflation
- Many **professors have left** and the quality of academic advising on campus has decreased.

Underclassmen Perspectives

Underclassmen are in their first year at UMaine (24% of sample) and started in the fall of 2022. These students' experiences with UMaine align with the decline in COVID-19 while the campus continues to adjust to post-pandemic life. Note: What some students may view as a positive change, others view as a negative change.

Has anything surprised you in your first year at UMaine?

Events and School Culture

- The **UMaine community is kind** and is the **perfect size** where there are **opportunities to get your questions answered** and people are willing to help. Others described a **"lack" of UMaine community**.
- There is a disconnect between students and school administrators.
- **Campus diversity** was surprising for students. Some found more diversity than they had expected in terms of lived experiences while others found UMaine to be **less racially diverse** than they expected.
- There are **many opportunities to get involved**, both academically with **research** and socially with **clubs** and student organizations.

Infrastructure & Services

- There is a **lack of physical accessibility** (Wells Dining is closed, poor care for winter sidewalks, and not canceling for snow storms). Students were also surprised by Maine's winter itself.
- The quality of the food is poor.
- Prices of books and materials are high.

Has anything upset you in your first year at UMaine?

Academics

- UMaine has a **high standard for accepting transfer credits**.
- The **quality of academic advising is poor**.

Events and School Culture

- Students treat their campus poorly through **littering** and **vandalism**.
- School administration lacks lack of transparency and clear communication
- The removal of Maine Day was upsetting and took away a crucial break before finals.

Infrastructure & Services

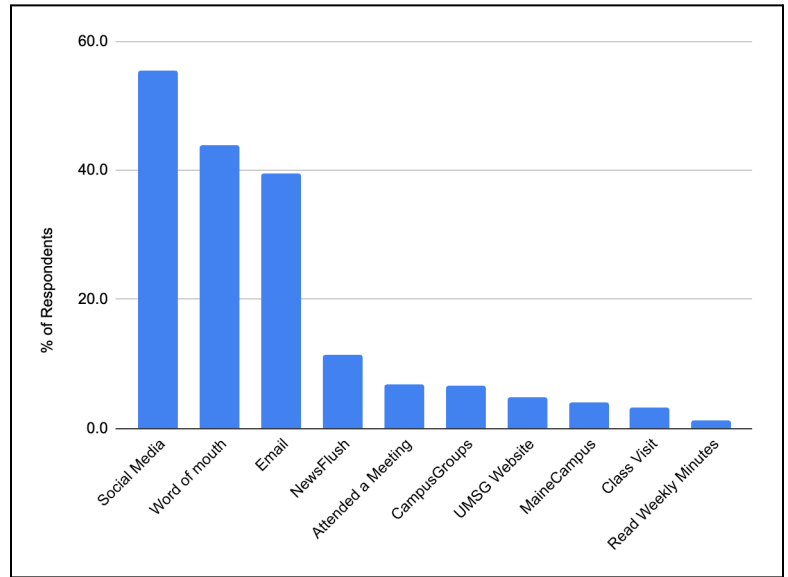
- School **technology is outdated** (eg. washing machines, classrooms, door locks, etc.). Campus infrastructure and fixtures continue to age.

- **Hotel construction.**
- The **quality of the food is poor** with students reporting food poisoning or finding raw meat and bug. Wells is closed and the dining halls are not always accommodating to diets.
- **Lack of gender-inclusive bathrooms.**

Student Exposure with UMSG Inc.

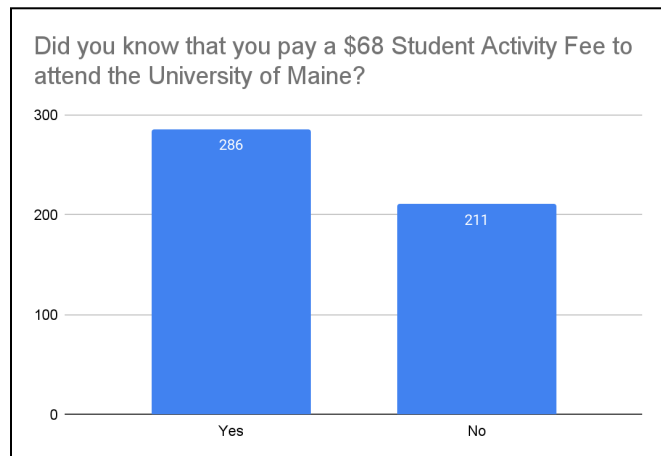
If you are familiar with UMSG, how did you learn about us?

| | n | % of Respondents |
|----------------------------|-----|------------------|
| Social Media | 276 | 55.5 |
| Word of mouth | 218 | 43.9 |
| Email | 196 | 39.4 |
| NewsFlush | 57 | 11.5 |
| Attended a Meeting | 34 | 6.8 |
| CampusGroups | 33 | 6.6 |
| UMSG Website | 24 | 4.8 |
| MaineCampus | 20 | 4.0 |
| Class Visit | 16 | 3.2 |
| Read Weekly Minutes | 6 | 1.2 |



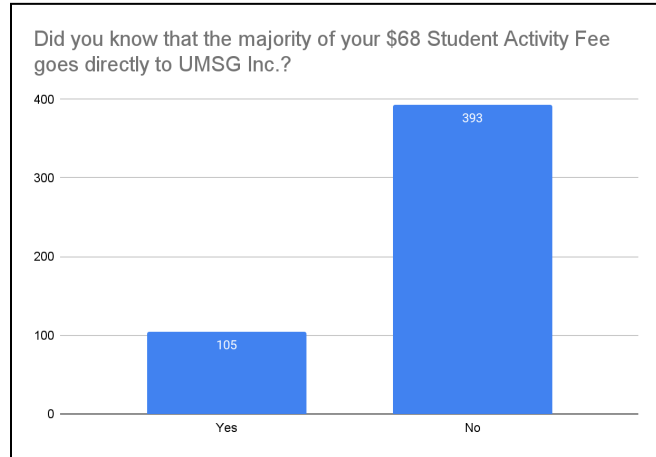
Did you know that you pay a \$68 Student Activity Fee to attend the University of Maine? (Note: \$78 as of Fall 2023 due to the passage of a Spring 2023 student referendum vote to account for inflation.)

| | n | % |
|------------|-----|------|
| Yes | 286 | 57.5 |
| No | 211 | 42.5 |



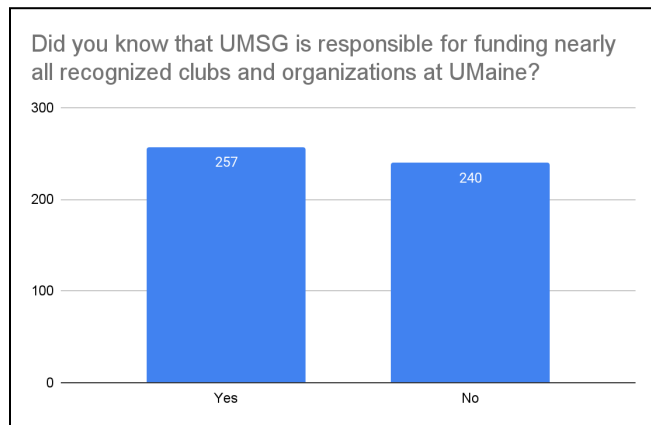
Did you know that the majority of your \$68 Student Activity Fee goes directly to UMaine Student Government Inc.? (See note pg. 7)

| | n | % |
|-----|-----|------|
| Yes | 105 | 21.1 |
| No | 393 | 79.1 |



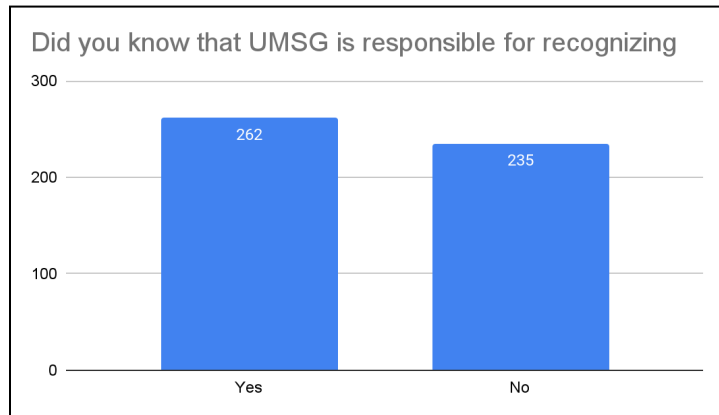
Did you know that UMSG is responsible for funding nearly all recognized clubs and organizations at UMaine?

| | n | % |
|-----|-----|------|
| Yes | 257 | 51.7 |
| No | 240 | 48.3 |



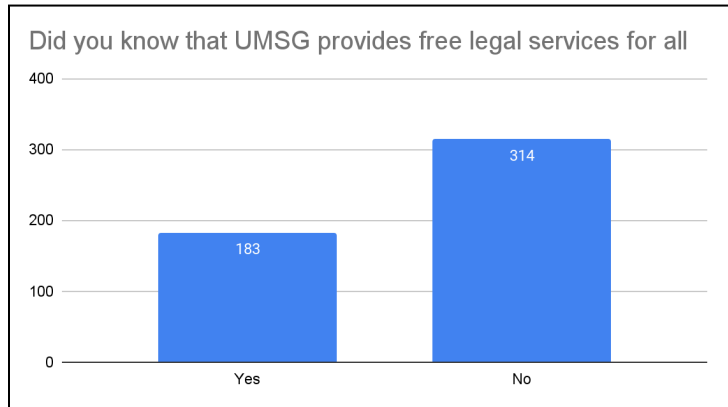
Did you know that UMSG is responsible for recognizing nearly all clubs and organizations at UMaine?

| | n | % |
|-----|-----|------|
| Yes | 262 | 52.7 |
| No | 235 | 47.3 |



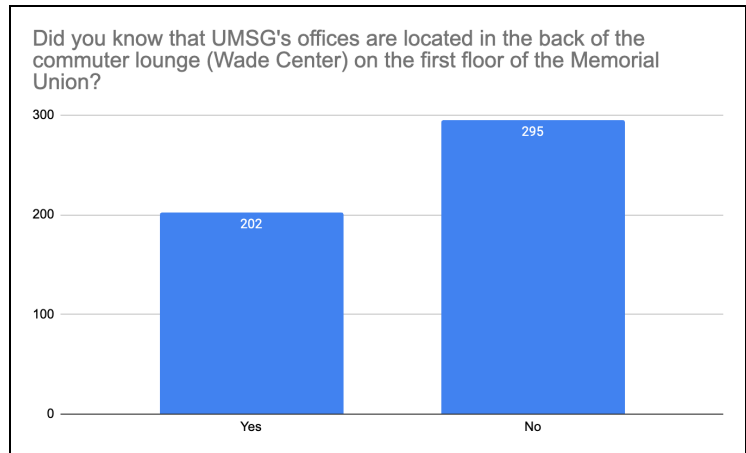
Before taking this survey, did you know that UMSG provides free legal services for all UMaine undergraduate students?

| | n | % |
|------------|-----|------|
| Yes | 183 | 36.8 |
| No | 314 | 63.2 |



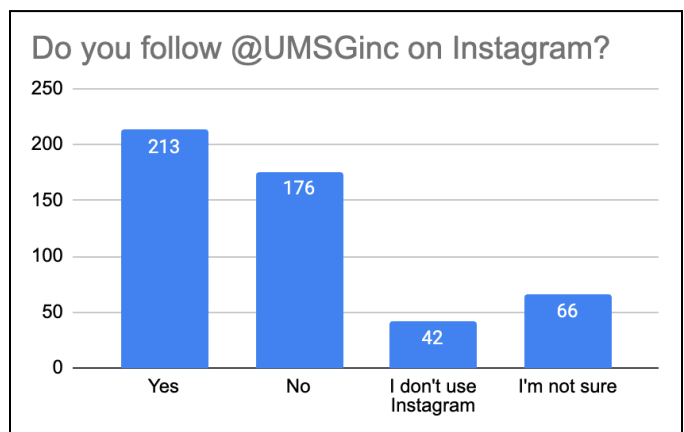
Did you know that UMSG's offices are located in the back of the Wade Center on the first floor of the Memorial Union?

| | n | % |
|------------|-----|------|
| Yes | 202 | 40.6 |
| No | 295 | 59.4 |



Do you follow @UMSGinc on Instagram?

| | n | % |
|------------------------------|-----|------|
| Yes | 213 | 42.9 |
| No | 176 | 35.4 |
| I don't use Instagram | 42 | 8.5 |
| I'm not sure | 66 | 13.3 |

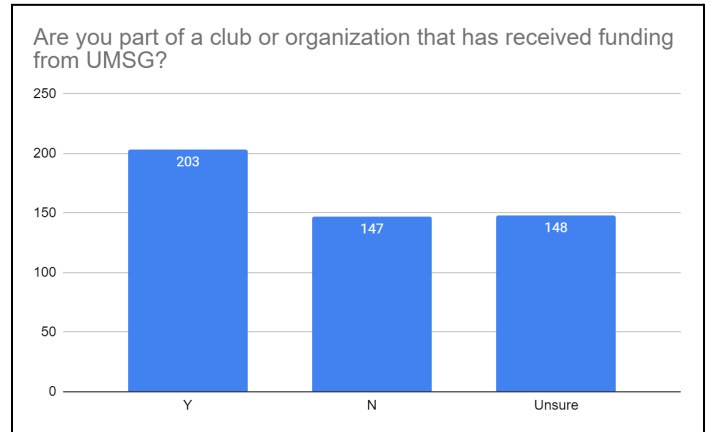


Student Opinion on UMSG Inc.

Funding

Are you part of a club or organization that has received funding from UMSG?

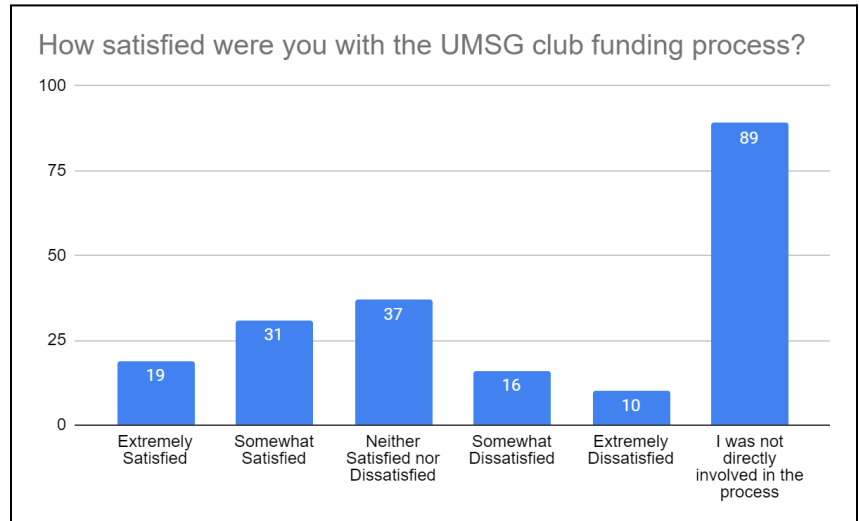
| | n | % |
|---------------|-----|------|
| Y | 203 | 40.8 |
| N | 147 | 29.6 |
| Unsure | 148 | 29.8 |



How satisfied were you with the UMSG club funding process?

The sample is the 203 students who said they are part of an organization that received funding from UMSG.

| | n | % |
|---|----|------|
| Extremely Satisfied | 19 | 9.4 |
| Somewhat Satisfied | 31 | 15.3 |
| Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied | 37 | 18.3 |
| Somewhat Dissatisfied | 16 | 7.9 |
| Extremely Dissatisfied | 10 | 5.0 |
| I was not directly involved in the process | 89 | 44.1 |



Advocacy

Please select the four most important initiatives that UMSG should continue or undertake.

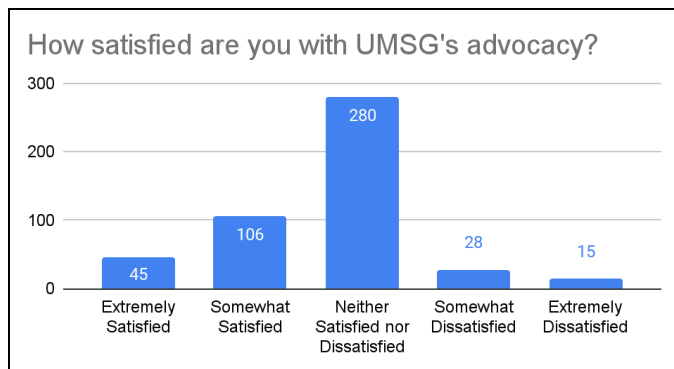
| | n | % of respondents |
|---|-----|------------------|
| Dead Week | 365 | 73.4 |
| Maine Day Week Events | 264 | 53.1 |
| Strengthening Mental Health Resources | 238 | 47.9 |
| Increased transparency of UMaine Admin | 231 | 46.5 |
| Prioritizing DEI | 125 | 25.2 |
| Increased transparency of UMSG | 113 | 22.7 |
| Increased Club Sports Funding | 92 | 18.5 |
| Off-Campus Tenants Union | 91 | 18.3 |
| More Campus Bike Racks | 70 | 14.1 |
| Leadership Development for Student Orgs | 64 | 12.9 |
| Increased Club Gear Storage | 41 | 8.2 |

Other Responses:

- Increased awareness of UMSG and web presence
- Increased presence of Blue Lights
- Maine Day
- More Parking
- More water fountains and filling stations
- Movie Tickets
- Free bus program should continue
- Address potholes
- Increase club funding
- Support Greek life
- More trash cans around campus
- More bike racks
- EV Charging Stations
- Advocate for transfer students, commuter students, and non-traditional students
- Period products in bathrooms

How satisfied are you with UMSG's advocacy?

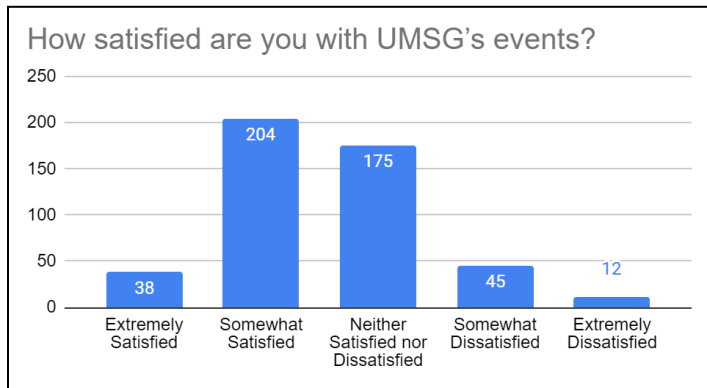
| | n | % |
|------------------------------------|-----|------|
| Extremely Satisfied | 45 | 9.5 |
| Somewhat Satisfied | 106 | 22.4 |
| Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied | 280 | 59.1 |
| Somewhat Dissatisfied | 28 | 5.9 |
| Extremely Dissatisfied | 15 | 3.2 |



Events

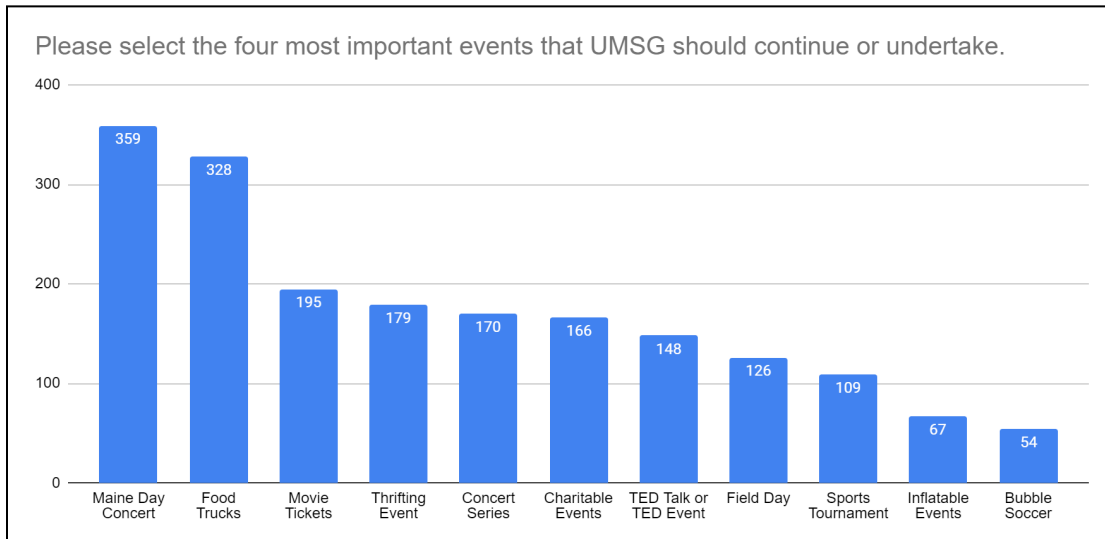
How satisfied are you with UMSG's events?

| | n | % |
|---|-----|------|
| Extremely Satisfied | 38 | 8.0 |
| Somewhat Satisfied | 204 | 43.0 |
| Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied | 175 | 36.9 |
| Somewhat Dissatisfied | 45 | 9.5 |
| Extremely Dissatisfied | 12 | 2.5 |



Please select the four most important events that UMSG should continue or undertake.

| | n | % |
|------------------------------|-----|------|
| Maine Day Concert | 359 | 72.2 |
| Food Trucks | 328 | 66.0 |
| Movie Tickets | 195 | 39.2 |
| Thrifting Event | 179 | 36.0 |
| Concert Series | 170 | 34.2 |
| Charitable Events | 166 | 33.4 |
| TED Talk or TED Event | 148 | 29.8 |
| Field Day | 126 | 25.4 |
| Sports Tournament | 109 | 21.9 |
| Inflatable Events | 67 | 13.5 |
| Bubble Soccer | 54 | 10.9 |

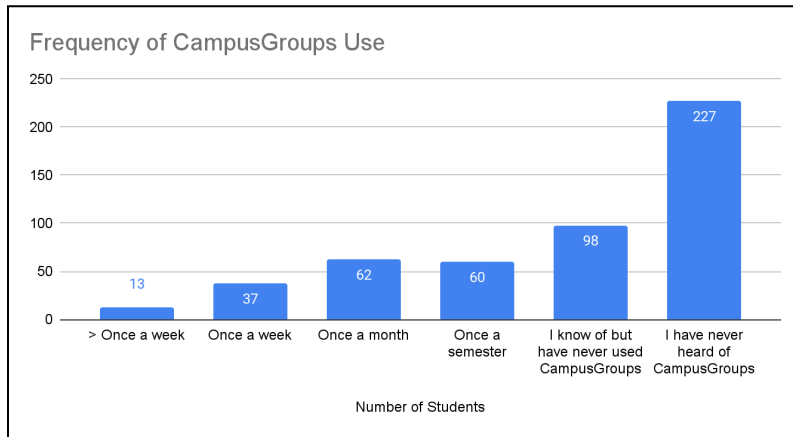
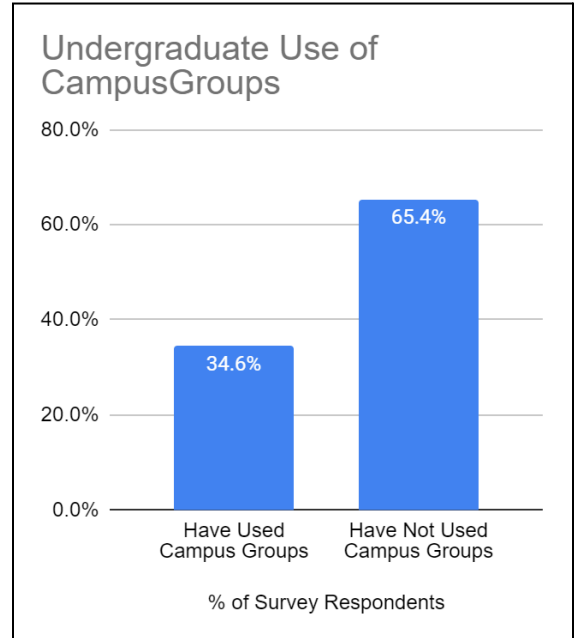


Other

Campus Groups

Campus Groups is a software platform used to connect student groups around UMaine’s campus.

| | n | % |
|---|-----|------|
| More than once a week | 14 | 2.8 |
| Once a week | 52 | 10.5 |
| Once a month | 63 | 12.7 |
| Once a semester | 61 | 12.3 |
| I know of but have never used CampusGroups | 99 | 19.9 |
| I have never heard of CampusGroups | 228 | 45.9 |



Spring Concert

Which one artist would you like to see for the Spring Concert?

Popular responses included:

- Noah Kahan
- Kid Cudi
- Taylor Swift
- Lil Uzi Vert
- Morgan Wallen
- Tyler the Creator
- Yung Gravy
- Green Day
- Ice Spice
- Doja Cat
- Zach Bryan
- Hozier
- A Country Artist
- A Local Artist
- J. Cole
- Midnight Breakfast
- Pitbull
- Sleepy Hollow
- King Princess
- Tate McRae