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Research Summaries

Background Research Summary

The central focal point of the group is to gain an understanding of nature and structure of communities, as well as the methods of discovering, joining and integration. Furthermore, Research into these topics based on literature reviews and industry reports to help clarify problems and potential difficulties.

From background research, it can be established that the use of internet based communications for social interactions has been on the rise throughout the Web 2.0 era. Amongst the rise of online interactions has come a variety of methods to join and form social bonds and communities, be it through more intimate services such as dating sites, entrepreneurial pursuits such as crowd funding, an educational approach, or simply for entertainment. With the advent of Web 2.0, a wide plethora of different environments for a variety of specialized social and communal needs has been increasing, and with the greater availability of these communities has resulted in changing social expectations and experiences from the greater exposure that the internet brings.

With the ability to potentially find a community that may suit one's needs easily, the importance of an easy to use and understand interface becomes a prevalent factor in deciding effectiveness. Furthermore, the growth and retention of a community can be aided through the use of visual cues and communal culture and attitude. Through the utilization of visual design elements, an increase in the desirability for subscription to a community can be improved. Furthermore by correctly nurturing the culture within an established community such that the members prioritizes shared benefit, as well as fostering the veteran members of a community to contribute back into the community, it can be shown that the benefits to the health and growth to communities are far greater.

In another research study that was examined by the group, it has been discovered that the method of communication is extremely important. The two typical methods of communication online are either text based, or vocal based messaging. The study found that vocal communications in a virtual environment has many benefits, which include quicker and more effective conveyance of ideas, better teamwork, and a greater degree of interaction with others within the virtual space. This however is contrasted by many detriments such as the loss of anonymity, the requirement for impression management, and a greater chance for a negative social experience. This is further compounded by design difficulties shows that the implementation of communication within a community must be carefully considered before execution.

Through further research, it was discovered that integration into a community has important barriers must be overcome to ensure proper and effective integration. Other than the obvious language barrier, both the community and the potential new member must possess a desire and correct attitude. The understanding of the skill and knowledge level of the new member should ideally be acknowledged by the community. Contribution through participation and observation is an extremely method for integration by allowing new members to garner a better affinity with the community as well as absorb communal culture and learn unspoken rules of the community. This is where the careful consideration of the design for interfaces for access to a community is extremely important.

User Research Results Summary

The group focused on the students of UofT for their research. In particular the general consensus of the students on community which includes their feelings on availability and social climate of the university, the effectiveness of visual design to generate interest, opinions of pre-established applications with a community already, opinions on the design of these applications, and methods and effectiveness of community integration. The results of these will be summarized below.

Firstly, our research found that the general student population felt that it was difficult to find a community at UofT. Reasons include difficulty finding a community that interested them, problems with integration, or a personal difficulty with meeting new people. From students who were already in a community, we found that there was a perceived benefit to them such as improved work ethic, and an overall improvement to their quality of life. From students that had not entered a community, it was found that a small percentage of students had poor experience with locating fellow students or communities. Finally the general trend of focus given when seeking a community was that shared academic interests and shared interest in similar events were the most popular. This gives further weight to our theory that finding communities is a legitimate problem at UofT.

When examining the effectiveness of a visual interfaces, we found that good visual design is a major contributing factor to allow for the effective interest and usage for an application. Easy navigation, a clean and modern appearance, and methods of identifying communities of interest prove vital to effective design. When examining a pre-established application used to manage a virtual community in a learning environment, we found that in the general consensus was that this community was considered beneficial in a limited capacity. Most interesting was that it was found that the application was not effectively used, with many students choosing to withhold asking questions and looking for solutions within this community altogether. This can be attributed to poor design, as the results show that many users feel that methods of search and overall design of the application was archaic and of little use. The problem of limited usage also stems from trust issues, as often solutions and answers they may receive comes from other students with questionable accuracy.

Finally our group also examined the integration techniques and methods of an established community within UofT. The club in question hosted an orientation event aimed at new members to the community and employed a variety of activities focused on welcoming and integrating the new members effectively. It was found that the community employed methods such as allowing new members a facet in which to interact with the established community, and activities that focused on cooperation with fellow members of the community. These methods proved to be extremely successful as they allow for the display of skill and knowledge, as well as fostering connections between members to ensure new members feel welcome and have an overall positive experience linked to the community which helped expedite the integration process greatly.

Experience Map

Stages	Entice	Enter	Engage	Exit	Extend
People	- Students of UofT	- Students of UofT	- Students of UofT	- Students of UofT	- Students of UofT
Contexts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Looking for a community to join - Looking for new friends with similar interests - Looking solutions to problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - At home online - On campus in person or online - Anywhere with an internet connection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - On campus - Online - At hosted venues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Successful integration - Lack or loss of interest - Unsuccessful integration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - As a member of the community - As an outsider to the community
Feelings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Curiosity - Loneliness - Boredom - Excited 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hesitant - Curious - Trepidation - Irritation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interest - Curiosity - Irritation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fulfilment - Disappointment - Delighted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Disgust - Pride
Thinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do I have to? - Where can I find other people who like similar things to me? - Who is this community? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Why is this so complicated? - Where do I sign up? - I hope I don't have to invest too much time - I hope this will help me somehow 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is this all about? - Do I fit in? - Do I have time to keep showing up? - This takes up a lot of time - This sucks, it's hard to use and no one is helpful 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I'm glad I joined - What a waste of time - I wish I could stay, but I'm too busy - How can I contribute? - I don't need to be here anymore 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I wonder if my friends would be interested? - How can I help my community grow? - How can I warn others not to join?
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Requirement by Course - Research Online - Ask friends for more details 	- Sign up to join	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Try to integrate into community - Passively observe community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participation and contribution to the community - Continued passive observation - Leaving Community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recommend to friends or other students - Complain to friends or other students - Send feedback
Touch points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recommendation by fellow students - Website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Through online application - In person registration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Orientations or welcome events - Online in discussion forums - Online through an application - Hosted events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Online - In person 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Online - In person

Appendix

Assignment Attribution

Ryan Young

- Individual research
- Creation of experience map
- Summarization of Group findings and Background research

Kevin Huang

- Individual research
- Creation of experience map

Markovchyn Dennis

- Individual research
- Creation of experience map

Roshan Ravishankar

- Individual research
- Creation of experience map

Utkarash Agarwal

- Individual research
- Creation of experience map

A3a: Individual Component

Research Topic: Integration into a new community, observation of a community orientation.

Observation Summary

Upon examination of the field notes taken during the observation study, we can break down the initial groups into 3 groups of new members to the community, those with a relationship with members of the community already, those that are integrating with their own sub-group already established, and the isolated individuals. Of the three groups, it should be noted that there is generally mostly isolated individuals, followed by those with a sub-group, and finally there are very few who have a prior relationship with the community. Initial observations show that the individual members show little desire to engage in social interaction, but will respond to external engagement. The other two groups show adequate levels of social interaction, however only among their pre-built groups. To encourage integration, every table has been assigned an established member of the community, all of whom attempt constant interaction with their table members.

The general structure of the orientation seems to be as follows: 4 activities all tables, with breaks in between to encourage inter-table interaction. A meal break, followed by another round of activities in the same structure as before.

Initial activities focus on introduction of new members, with a round of introductions following cues and examples by established members. This did not seem to encourage social interaction, but allowed members to learn names. The second activity was a form of trivia, with the tables set up as competing groups. The third activity was a game of themed charades, with the tables competing once again as a team. The fourth activity was a scavenger hunt around the campus. This activity seems to also have the purpose of allowing food preparations as well as encouraging new members to learn both the campus layout for first years, and inter-group interaction and communication.

By the designated meal break, every table seems to be comfortable enough that there are plenty of conversations. Following the break, There were only 2 more activities. Once again these activities seem to be focused on intergroup cooperation. Members at each table are very comfortable with engaging with interacting with each other.

By the end of the orientation, all new members appear to have integrated among their table, with the occasional interaction between tables. Integration was successful, and the social interactions between members, both new and old, is much higher than the start of the orientation. With promise of future activities, the orientation is concluded. The general trend of activities seems to favor focusing on each table as a smaller group and encouraging interaction and integration with each other through cooperation. By including an established member at each table, the new members have a interaction point with the community and it helps establish a feeling of belonging.

Background Research

From background research, integration into a new community there are important barriers that must be overcome. For both the community and the potential new member, both sides must possess a willing attitude to allow for integration. Understanding of a member's skill and knowledge level is also a must, and is ideally the new member should be acknowledged by the community. Another barrier is availability, as the community must have space available, and the potential member be available in order for any integration to occur. Ideally to allow integration, the feeling of contribution to the community is an efficient method to encourage integration of new members to the community. By participating in activities and observing established members, new members can learn unspoken rules of the community and absorb the communal culture. Patience is also another requirement for proper integration, as the rate of integration will differ from person to person, it is important to both allow for opportunity to integrate, as well as encourage participation. The greatest requirement for integration is for both parties to have the correct attitude towards integration.

Conclusions and Insights

The observed orientation does indeed meet the requirement of both parties having the correct attitude, as the hosting community clearly displays a desire to welcome new members, and the new members themselves have attended the orientation and thus show the desire to integrate. The general focus of the orientation seems to be the subdivision of new members into smaller groups, and attaching facets of the community into each subgroup to interact with. The activities are focused on integration through cooperation with the community and competition to motivate new members to display their skills and knowledge. By allowing multiple opportunities for each subgroup to interact with each other, and most importantly to interact with the community member they have been assigned, contributions feel like a communal benefit and the integration process becomes much smoother, both with other new and established members. The biggest issue with the observed methods appears to be that outside of each subgroup, communication and interactions still remain somewhat weak. A possible solution would be to allow for the reformation of groups or the shuffling of members to encourage new social connections to be made. Furthermore, total integration does not appear to have been successful, as the only facet of integration into the community was through a single community member, leaving executives and other members of the established community lacking of a strong connection to the new members. While the orientation successfully allowed for introduction and integration of new members to the community, the level of integration seems to be fairly weak for many of the new members, as the focus of all the activities were too narrow to allow for a thorough integration. This may leave some members feeling alienated and hesitant to continue their integration through future participation with the community.

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Field notes

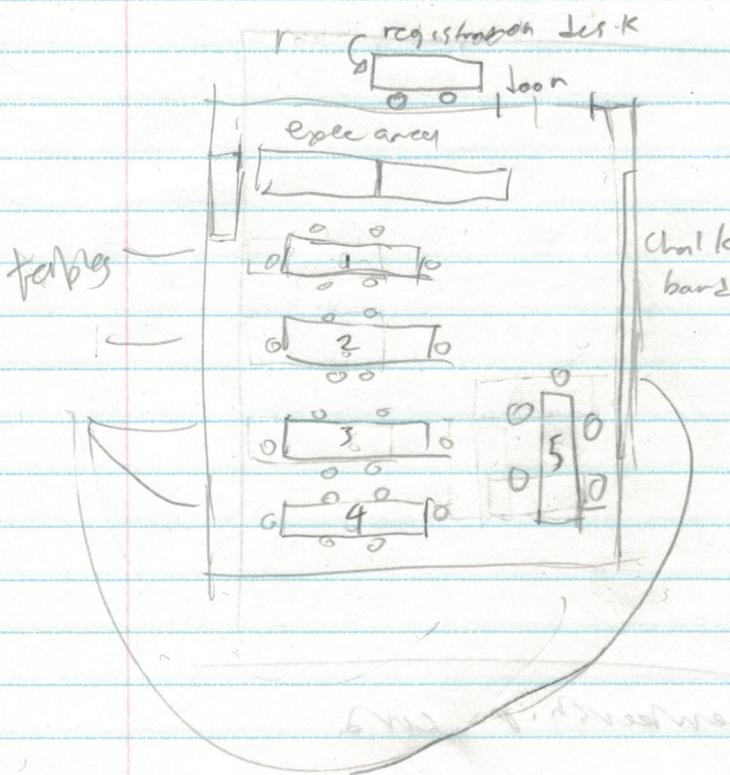
Orientation observation

1/28/2019

- 3:30 arrival. Orientation setting up. Some new members arrived as well. Registration desk is pretty friendly. Engages in conversation with others where possible. Some conversations, most likely between first-timers, based on annual election for leadership. No pre-reg'd members here. Open at 4:00.

(Spectator) wait people陆续进入会场

- 4:13 Conversation starts. Seats @ tables. 5-6 per 5 tables. Table leader is from community. mostly quiet people near execs



clashing with execs. every one else either clashing with friends from elsewhere, or with each other. Some people on phones or playing a game device. PSDs on switch really.

- Welcome speech by execs. Going to have everyone introduce themselves. format: name, year, program, favorite animal, songs.

some people giving funny answers, mostly from established community members. seems to be doing much better now, word was still

Hillary

201512511

recon start

-4:30 intro complete. 15 min break. S -

Table 9 easier trying conversations with
18k @ table. Room is a little noisier,
Introduction seems to work a little. Still
have some people on phones or such,
maybe 1/2 people still isolated, not really
talking much. Contact between tables, if any.

-4:45 First activity group trivia (opoly?)

teams from table competing, promise
of reward to winning team, extra
stamps. Stamp card for end of
semester rewards?



Stamp / membership card

way to encourage future participation
perhaps? Not a bad idea. Tables seem to
be enjoying trivia (Sitting @ table 3)
appreciate from everyone. Tables looking much
better. Team work seems to help.

5:15 activity over. Table 4 won. 13 min break before next activity. Some levels of communication, mostly inter-table only. Table 1 leaders being a little more passive. No game systems out, still some phones, but mostly to show off things. Currents table seems to be coming quite nicely; intervention seems to be working out good.

5:30 next activity is scavenger hunt go out across campus and find check points and solve next check point location. Groups (A) big table against opposite wall from where first check point (in science center, exec waiting at table in cat. Table 1 is here too. different check points for all tables? challenge is for 2nd jumping jacks. Final challenges? Executive says that this event should take 45 mins ideally, ground floor of buildings only.

Second check point in humanities wing, inside maths room. 10 pushups, met with group 4 as we left. looked like they got lost. mostly 1st years starting this semester. Good excuse in complex layout?

found 2nd check point in science wing, another in elis room. Danced for 5 mins. Quite embarrassing. Not other groups arrived with us. Only 1 more check points (according to exec at my check point)

- (1) Fourth floor from two in A2 building.

Answer was few questions to pass,
who asked mostly basic math and some trivia,
apparently we finished a bit soon,
was marching back to Orientation room,

(6:14) Back to Orientation room

- First group back. Group seems quite
close after the Scavenger Hunt. Every
still bring up in food. Nice use of
activity, looks like it's just pizza
and some drinks, looks like event
is supposed to end at 6:30. All
leaders will bring back troops regardless.
reward for finishing is Priority to get
and eat food. I am still in doubt

- 6:30 meal break. All tables have
some conversations. Not too much
cross talk between tables however. No
still some places here and there,
occasional person not engaged, but
otherwise much better. Everyone seems
too comfortable with their tables.

Cheese on pepperoni pizza only 2 slices per,

strangely some sort of candy traded between
our table and table 2. Similar
for other tables, interactions are
mostly reserved, 2 or 3 people
being most likely to try to cross table converse.

7:00 Next activity is another trivia game, "name that song" or where it comes from projector is being used. Grouped again by table. May be consider table shuffle? Activity seems decently well received much debate within tables.

7:25 Activity ends. A 10 min break, round of mostly rearranging and conversations. At least don't knock tables, Preper was mentioned, made overheard some trading of fb details.

7:35 last activity, skit acting, with table, act out given scene, then rated by peers, 10 min prep time, once per table only.

- Table 1 had to act out "a romantic confession gone wrong". Some laughs from other tables.
- Table 2 acted "a road trip to another world" Paraded Narnia, Straight forward
- Table 3 acted out "a fight scene". Imitated a fight between ninjas, was not well planned.
- Table 4 did "a family of animals at dinner" Was quite funny, laughs from other tables.
- Table 5 did "the start of a journey" Straight forward, very passionate. *Hilroy*

Concluded with Table 1 winning.

mostly still within table conversations.

Integration with community seems

fairly complete, what is happening

- 8:00 Foundation end. 2 hours

over what I expected. Except que

closing speech. Announces a club outing next month. Everyone seems eager to leave.

Generally, everyone had a good time

emphasis on teamwork based activities helped I think.

End of the observation.

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Results Summary

Kevin Huang

Introduction and Summary of Background Research

Community is something that we can all appreciate as being important to us, as human beings. As social creatures we need to be relevant to others – to be able to say and do things that are relevant to others—in order to live truly meaningful lives (Vervaeke and Ferraro, 2012, p. 29).

The Web 2.0 era has changed how it is that communities operate, making it increasingly necessary for real-world communities to have an online presence. With this in mind, I conducted my background research on online crowdfunding communities (Hui et al, 2014). Crowdfunding is a prime example of the power of Web 2.0, and of how once strictly real-world domains – commerce, education, entrepreneurship – are steadily moving online. The research I did underscored the growing importance and power of online collaboration and community, and of the importance of having effective user interfaces to support these communities.

My group set off to do our user research to gain an understanding of the nature and structure of communities at U of T, how it is that U of T students go about finding their respective communities, and what challenges they may face in doing so. Is finding a sense of community as important to them as we believe it to be? How do students identify with and integrate into their desired communities? Are there problems in this space that are crying out for HCI-based solutions? These are some of the motivating questions I had as I began to conduct my user research.

The semi-structured interviews I ended up conducting were highly illuminating. I tried to interview as diverse a group of people as I could, to try to get a sample that, while small, was as representative of the U of T student body as possible. My conversations with these students led to some interesting findings.

Summary of User Research and Insights

The students interviewed largely shared the belief that it was difficult to find a sense of community at U of T, as well as the belief that the average U of T student was too isolated. Some students said that they personally found it difficult to join and integrate into student groups, and that it was hard for them to meet new people in general. These findings squared with our initial hypothesis that Finding Communities is a legitimate problem at U of T that is very much worth looking into.

Time was a barrier that students cited as getting in the way of their involvement in student communities. This is not surprising considering that U of T is certainly a school with high academic standards and pressure, and that students lead generally busy lives with their coursework, part-time work, or other personal commitments.

I had the good fortune of interviewing some students who were involved as former or current executives of some student communities. These “community organizers” provided unique insights into the problem space, on top of what was shared by regular “community members”. I found it useful to view these “community organizers” and “community members” as two unique camps, and to then see what problems each camp experienced, and what issues overlapped. I identify two such issues: the U of T Clubs Fair, and online community presences.

The U of T Clubs Fair was a subject that was brought up repeatedly by both camps—students expressed a general dissatisfaction with the Clubs Fair. Member-hopefuls who had gone to past Clubs Fairs in search of clubs expressed that they found it too disorganized, that it was simply too large and crowded for them to find what they were looking for. Community organizers agreed that the Clubs Fair was too disorganized, and also brought up the issue of the high cost of renting a table at the Fair. One organizer brought up the fact that a table at the Clubs Fair took up half of their club’s budget. Both camps noted that this made it hard for smaller clubs to participate, as they had to contend with both the financial cost as well as the difficulty of standing out in such a vast ocean of participating clubs and student groups.

Both camps of students complained about what I termed the “online presences” of student communities. Organizers brought up the difficulties involved with maintaining and updating their club’s online presence. One organizer mentioned that it was difficult for them to maintain and update their club website, as they had limited experience with web design. Another struggled to find someone who could design their website. Members and organizers alike complained about ULife, U of T’s existing online interface for finding student clubs and organizations. ULife is supposed to cleanly centralize each community’s online presence, but it is extremely awkward to navigate. ULife has no “search” feature – students must instead manually scroll through long lists of campus communities. One student complained about the site being slow and prone to timing-out.

Conclusion

The top-level theme that has emerged from my interviews is that of the difficulty in bringing together community organizers and members. This could be viewed as an interface problem – the existing real-world and online interfaces that are supposed to bring organizers and members together are clunky, unwieldy, and uncoordinated. Times have changed, and with the new Web 2.0 tools available to us, something can and should be done about this.

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Raw Data

Table 1.1 – Breakdown of Students Interviewed

	Gender	Domestic/International	Year of Study	Program of Study
Student 1	Male	Domestic	4 th	Rotman Commerce
Student 2	Female	Domestic	4 th	English and Political Science
Student 3	Male	International	4 th	Financial Economics
Student 4	Female	Domestic	2 nd	Computer Science and Physics
Student 5	Male	Domestic	3 rd	Mathematical Applications in Economics and Finance

Student 1:

Part 1: General Questions

- 4th year student in Rotman Commerce
- Domestic student

Part 2: Questions about club/group involvement and feelings of community

- the student is not currently involved in any student clubs or groups
- reasons cited for their lack of involvement:

Time constraints since they are enrolled in 6 courses, no express interest in existing clubs, difficulty of talking to new people and integrating into clubs

- student said that they once tried to start a Foosball club with friends, but had trouble getting approval from the Rotman Commerce department (Rotman did not respond to their email request, and the students did not follow up with the department)
- student found the U of T Clubs Fair to be too large and disorganized, expressed feeling that it was difficult to “find what they were looking for”
- however, the student could not think of a better alternative to the existing system

- student expressed general feelings of difficulty in getting to know people and integrating into groups

Part 3: Club/group involvement motivating other personal projects

- none shared

Student 2:Part 1: General Questions

-4th year student studying English and Political Science

-domestic student

-currently abroad on exchange for a semester, but was at U of T for the most recent semester (Fall 2018)

Part 2: Questions about club/group involvement and feelings of community

-the student was involved with a Mahjong club, they were one of the execs who was involved since the conception of the club

-student was therefore familiar with/had experience with the process of starting a club: writing emails to get approval, drafting a constitution, etc.

-the student once tried to start a Running Club on their own, but was rejected since a Running Club already existed. The student was aware of this club, but did not want to join since they did not like the some of the people involved in that club

-the student shared belief that there are problems with student involvement at U of T: that many students seem isolated and that it is difficult to get involved

-the student brought up the fact that clubs need to pay to get a table at the Clubs Fair as an issue... this makes it hard for smaller clubs to participate

-the student contrasted this to the similarly-sized university they are currently at on exchange, where they reported that students seem much more involved

-the student proposed that this could be due to how the student body is divided at their exchange school: students can become members of student-run “nations” which host events and socials consistently throughout the year... students can even get jobs at their respective nations

-nation membership is not compulsory but the vast majority of students belong to nations

-the student brought up the “clunkiness” of ULife

Part 3: Club/group involvement motivating other personal projects

-none shared

Student 3:Part 1: General Questions

-4th year student studying Financial Economics

-International

Part 2: Questions about club/group involvement and feelings of community

-the student founded the Behavioural Economics Student Group (BESG)

-the student said this club was very important to them, since they started it and they want to be successful and not fail

-the student was motivated to start this group because they wanted to create a community of likeminded people to hangout and talk about behavioural economics, a subject that the student is interested in

- the student believes that they are a mentor to others in their club
- when starting BESG, the student scouted out people to do website design, without success – the BESG does not yet have a website
- the student would like to become involved with more clubs/groups on campus, but cites time is a barrier getting in their way
- having started their own club, the student is very familiar with the process of starting a club and believes that they have had plenty of opportunities to join different clubs on campus
- the student identifies with the following communities on campus: Middle Eastern students, Victoria College students, Economics Students

Part 3: Club/group involvement motivating other personal projects

- the student felt that their involvement with BESG motivated them to manage their time better in general

Student 4:

Part 1: General Questions

- 2nd year student studying Computer Science and Physics
- Domestic student

Part 2: Questions about club/group involvement and feelings of community

- the student is involved with a Neurotech club and the Computer Science Second Year Learning Community (SLC)
 - they were motivated to join these clubs because they wanted to get involved in campus, and those two clubs seemed “pretty cool”
 - the student believes the SLC to be the more important of the two clubs, as they feel more involved in the SLC than with the Neurotech club
- the student noted that there was a prof and 2 mentors in the SLC, who had those roles in an official capacity
- the student listed the president of the Neurotech club as a mentor

Part 3:

No

Student 5:Part 1: General Questions

-3rd year student studying Mathematical Applications in Economics and Finance

-Domestic

Part 2: Questions about club/group involvement and feelings of community

-the student is highly involved: they are co-president of the Math Club, the marketing director of the Stats Union, and a member of DECA

-the student brought up the technological difficulties facing them as an executive of those clubs:

- they were responsible for updating a club website, and they found it difficult to do this

- they found it hard to navigate between the online interfaces of the different clubs

- the student suggested an idea: that there might be a separate Dashboard on Quercus for clubs instead of courses, with clicking on a club taking you to the club's page

-student also brought up displeasure with Clubs Fair: cited that the fee to have a table at the Fair took up 50% of club budget

- the student suggested having multiple clubs fairs separated by "theme" as an alternative to having one large Clubs Fair

- the student dislikes ULife, complained about it timing out on them and crashing

- student believed that there was space for "some kind of app" that would make it easier for them to manage their responsibilities for different clubs

Part 3: Club/group involvement motivating other personal projects

-None

W X

Consent Form: A Study of Student Communities at U of T

I hereby consent to participate in a research study conducted by Kevin Huang, Dennis Markovchyn, Roshan Ravishankar, Ryan Young, and Utkarsh Agarwal for an assignment in the University of Toronto Computer Science course *CSC318 The Design of Interactive Computation Media*.

I agree to participate in this study, the purpose of which is to better understand student involvement in clubs and groups at the U of T St. George and Scarborough campuses, and to shed light on the nature of student communities at U of T.

I understand that:

- The procedure to be used is a semi-structured interview.
- I will receive no compensation for my participation.
- I am free to withdraw before or any time during the study without the need to give any explanation.
- All materials and results will be kept confidential, and, in particular, that my name and any identifying or identified information will not be associated with the data.

PARTICIPANT

Name (please print) Kyle Tran

Signature Kyle Tran

Date wed. Jan 23rd 2019

INVESTIGATOR(s)

Name Kevin Huang Signature K. Huang

Kevin Huang
Formative Research Instruments

Kevin Huang
Study Results

Consent Form: A Study of Student Communities at U of T

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I agree to participate in this study, the purpose of which is to better understand student involvement in clubs and groups at the U of T St. George and Scarborough campuses, and to shed light on the nature of student communities at U of T.

I understand that:

- The procedure to be used is a semi-structured interview.
- I will receive no compensation for my participation.
- I am free to withdraw before or any time during the study without the need to give any explanation.
- All materials and results will be kept confidential, and, in particular, that my name and any identifying or identified information will not be associated with the data.

PARTICIPANT

Name (please print) Aslesha Pokhrel

Signature Aslesha

Date 2019-01-23

INVESTIGATOR(s)

Name Kevin Huang Signature Kevin

Kevin Huang
Formative Research Instruments

4

Kevin Huang
Study Results

9

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PARTICIPANT

Name (please print) Tan Ho

Signature Tan Ho

Date Sun 23-d, 2014

INVESTIGATOR(s)

Name Kevin Huang Signature Kevin Huang

Kevin Huang
Formative Research Instruments

4

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PARTICIPANT

Name (please print) MARK KHALIL

Signature Mark Khalil

Date 23rd Jan

INVESTIGATOR(s)

Name Kevin Huang Signature K. Huang

Kevin Huang
Formative Research Instruments

4

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PARTICIPANT

Name (please print) Joyce Yang

Signature 

Date 2019 - January - 23

INVESTIGATOR(s)

Name Kevin Huang Signature 

Kevin Huang
Formative Research Instruments

4

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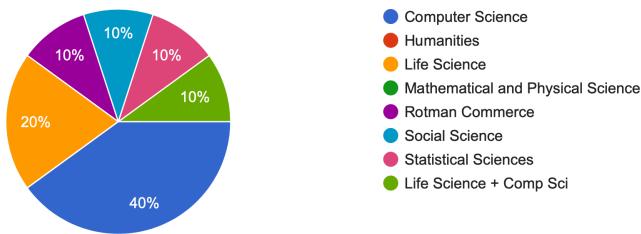
Summary of data collected.....	2
Insight learned.....	3
Raw data.....	4-21

Summary of data collected:

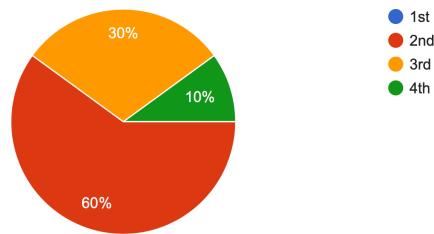
1. Students that participated in a survey: Meirbek Zeinulla, Ribhav Kapur, Winnie Xu, Janet Wang, Stella Leo, Brandon Tiu, Jackie Huang, Dora Szarics, Jamal Vaninov, Andy Chan

2. Gender distribution – equal distribution among gender (5 females and 5 males).

3. Program of study distribution

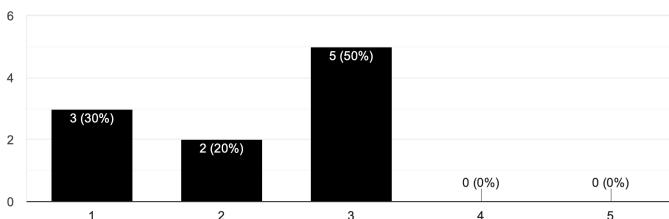


4. Year of study distribution

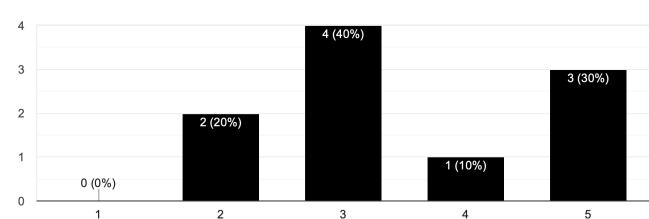


5. Interaction preferences – 3 for infinite scroll and 7 for pagination.

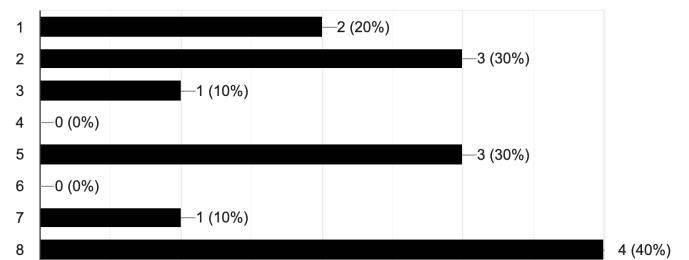
6. How useful students find virtual assistances
(1 Not at all useful – 5 Extremely useful)



7. How important to have landscape view
(1 Not at all important – 5 Extremely important)

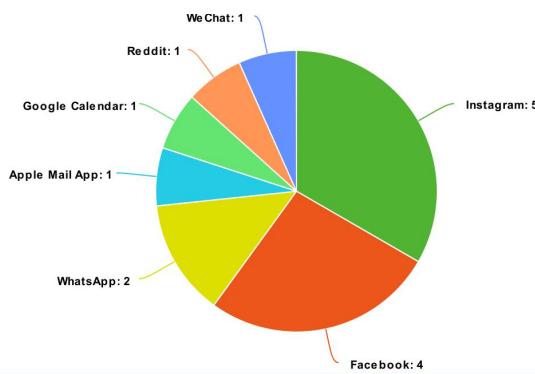


8. Colour scheme preferences



9. The applications participants use the most and what they like about them:

- Ability to connect with people (Instagram, FB, WhatsApp);
- Clean and utilitarian design (Google Calendar);
- Sharing media files (WhatsApp);



- Night mode (Reddit);
- Endless scroll (FB, Instagram);
- Easy navigation (Instagram).

10. The applications participant do not like and what they do not like about them:

- Anything that is slow;
- Apps that have an out of date look;
- Apps that use a lot of data (Snapchat);
- No infinite scroll style (Libby app to borrow ebooks).

11. Features participants would want to see in our application:

- Personal profile page with links to social media;
- Chat or community forum;
- Ability to find common programs and courses being taken among students;
- Snapchat's idea of location sharing;

12. 3 people out of 10 are members of student communities.

13. Communities participants are in:

- Robotics for Space Exploration;
- University of Toronto Consulting Association;
- University of Toronto Machine Intelligence Student Team;
- Cognitive Science and Artificial Intelligence Students Association.

14. Reasons why participants are not engaged in communities:

- Not much time because of commuting or generally short on time;
- Introversion, social awkwardness.

Insight learned:

As the results showed – the problem of isolation among University of Toronto students is present – most students do not belong to communities due to the lack of time, social awkwardness or both. In order to reach out to students with social anxiety or shyness, in our app we will use good visual design and emphasis on a stronger sense of connection among members to enforce students become closer to their peers. From the data collected, we can see that the ability to communicate with people, easy navigation, clean and modern look are the main requirements for a good social media application nowadays. Using them as a base, we will add other features like the ability to find common programs and courses being taken among students, to help our peers find the people to hang out with, study and simply enjoy the time together.

Help us build an app that you will enjoy using to find communities.

By continuing with the survey, you consent to be a participant in the survey, agree to the following terms and will be equivalent to your signature.

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What is your first and last name? *

Meirbek zeinulla

What is your gender? *

- Female
- Male
- Prefer not to say
- Other: _____

What program are you in? *

- Computer Science
- Humanities
- Life Science
- Mathematical and Physical Science
- Rotman Commerce
- Social Science
- Other: _____

What year are you in? *

- 1st
- 2nd
- 3rd
- 4th
- Other: _____

Do you prefer infinite scroll or pagination? *

Pagination is a user interface pattern that divides content into separate pages.



- Infinite scroll
- Pagination

What is your opinion on virtual assistants in applications? *



1 2 3 4 5

Not at all useful Extremely useful

How important is landscape view in social media applications? *



1 2 3 4 5

Not at all important Extremely important

Which color scheme(s) would you prefer to see in our application? *



1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

The below pictures show the survey from the Sexual Health forum. Such forums and support groups depend on participant self-disclosure for their success, but the sensitive nature of personal health concerns raises privacy concerns that may constrain what users are willing to reveal. If you were to visit this site which web page would you be more likely to engage with? *



- Left
- Middle
- Right
- Does not matter

Please tell us the application(s) you use the most and what you like about it(them).

If you have some examples of apps that you do not like please tell us about them and state what you do not like about them?

Apple Music, terrible android activity lifecycle

We are designing an application that will help university students to discover more communities and connect with more people within and beyond their program of study. Are there any features and functions you would want to have in our app?

Are you a member of a student community? *

- Yes
- No

If you answered "yes" to a previous question please state what organization(s)?

If you answered "no" to a previous question, is there a specific reason why?

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What is your first and last name? *

Ribhav Kapur

What is your gender? *

- Female
- Male
- Prefer not to say
- Other: _____

What program are you in? *

- Computer Science
 - Humanities
 - Life Science
 - Mathematical and Physical Science
 - Rotman Commerce
 - Social Science
 - Other: _____
-

What year are you in? *

- 1st
 - 2nd
 - 3rd
 - 4th
 - Other: _____
-

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1 2 3 4 5

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How important is landscape view in social media applications? *



1 2 3 4 5

Not at all important Extremely important

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 Does not matter

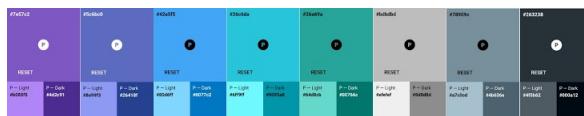
Please tell us the application(s) you use the most and what you like about it(them).

Instagram FB WhatsApp. Just connectivity honestly

If you have some examples of apps that you do not like please tell us about them and state what you do not like about them?

Twitter. Just dislike the concept itself. From a design perspective, apps that look like they haven't been updated in a while and have the "iOS 6" look are not nice to look at

Which color scheme(s) would you prefer to see in our application? *



1

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5

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7

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We are designing an application that will help university students to discover more communities and connect with more people within and beyond their program of study. Are there any features and functions you would want to have in our app?

As long as you have a proper personal profile page with links to social media it should be fine

Are you a member of a student community? *

- Yes
 No

If you answered "yes" to a previous question please state what organization(s)?

RSX

If you answered "no" to a previous question, is there a specific reason why?

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What is your opinion on virtual assistants in applications? *



1 2 3 4 5

Not at all useful Extremely useful

How important is landscape view in social media applications? *



1 2 3 4 5

Not at all important Extremely important

What is your first and last name? *

Winnie Xu

What is your gender? *

Female

Male

Prefer not to say

Other: _____

What program are you in? *

Computer Science

Humanities

Life Science

Mathematical and Physical Science

Rotman Commerce

Social Science

Other: _____

Which color scheme(s) would you prefer to see in our application? *



1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

What year are you in? *

1st

2nd

3rd

4th

Other: _____

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Infinite scroll

Pagination

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What is your first and last name? *

Winnie Xu

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1 2 3 4 5

Not at all useful Extremely useful

How important is landscape view in social media applications? *



1 2 3 4 5

Not at all important Extremely important

What is your gender? *

Female

Male

Prefer not to say

Other: _____

What program are you in? *

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Humanities

Life Science

Mathematical and Physical Science

Rotman Commerce

Social Science

Other: _____

Which color scheme(s) would you prefer to see in our application? *



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Infinite scroll

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- Left
- Middle
- Right
- Does not matter

Please tell us the application(s) you use the most and what you like about it(them).

Mail app, aggregates all my email data in one place. Messenger, allows me to go on the web without exiting the app.

If you have some examples of apps that you do not like please tell us about them and state what you do not like about them?

Quercus app, it doesn't cache and reloads every time my phone shuts off.

We are designing an application that will help university students to discover more communities and connect with more people within and beyond their program of study. Are there any features and functions you would want to have in our app?

Are you a member of a student community? *

- Yes
- No

If you answered "yes" to a previous question please state what organization(s)?

UTCA, UTMIST

If you answered "no" to a previous question, is there a specific reason why?

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What is your first and last name? *

Janet Wang

What is your gender? *

- Female
- Male
- Prefer not to say
- Other:

What program are you in? *

- Computer Science
- Humanities
- Life Science
- Mathematical and Physical Science
- Rotman Commerce
- Social Science
- Other: Statistical Sciences

What year are you in? *

- 1st
- 2nd
- 3rd
- 4th
- Other:

Do you prefer infinite scroll or pagination? *

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Quercus app, it doesn't cache and reloads every time my phone shuts off.

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Are you a member of a student community? *

- Yes
- No

If you answered "yes" to a previous question please state what organization(s)?

UTCA, UTMIST

If you answered "no" to a previous question, is there a specific reason why?

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What is your first and last name? *

Janet Wang

What is your gender? *

- Female
- Male
- Prefer not to say
- Other:

What program are you in? *

- Computer Science
- Humanities
- Life Science
- Mathematical and Physical Science
- Rotman Commerce
- Social Science
- Other: Statistical Sciences

What year are you in? *

- 1st
- 2nd
- 3rd
- 4th
- Other:

Do you prefer infinite scroll or pagination? *

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- Infinite scroll
- Pagination

What is your opinion on virtual assistants in applications? *



1 2 3 4 5

Not at all useful Extremely useful

How important is landscape view in social media applications? *



1 2 3 4 5

Not at all important Extremely important

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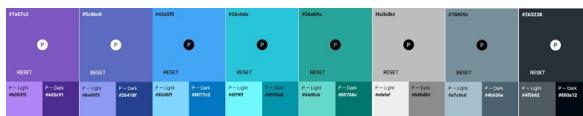


- Left
- Middle
- Right
- Does not matter

Please tell us the application(s) you use the most and what you like about it(them).

I use Google Calendar a lot! It's beyond the obvious utility as a time management app, it is extremely useful with a clean and utilitarian design.

Which color scheme(s) would you prefer to see in our application? *



- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8

If you have some examples of apps that you do not like please tell us about them and state what you do not like about them?

I use Libby to borrow ebooks from the library, which doesn't offer an infinite scroll style of reading books, which is weirdly annoying to me. I also don't like that the margins for reading are very wide (i.e. doesn't use up all the screen real estate, leaving a lot of white space.)

We are designing an application that will help university students to discover more communities and connect with more people within and beyond their program of study. Are there any features and functions you would want to have in our app?

Chat function! Or community forum style of posting!

Are you a member of a student community? *

- Yes
- No

If you answered "yes" to a previous question please state what organization(s)?

Cognitive science and artificial intelligence students' association (CASA)

If you answered "no" to a previous question, is there a specific reason why?

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Google Forms

What program are you in? *

- Computer Science
- Humanities
- Life Science
- Mathematical and Physical Science
- Rotman Commerce
- Social Science
- Other: Life Science + Comp Sci

What year are you in? *

- 1st
- 2nd
- 3rd
- 4th
- Other: _____

Do you prefer infinite scroll or pagination? *

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- Infinite scroll
- Pagination

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What is your first and last name? *

Stella Leo

What is your opinion on virtual assistants in applications? *



- 1
 - 2
 - 3
 - 4
 - 5
- Not at all useful Somewhat useful Extremely useful

How important is landscape view in social media applications? *



- 1
 - 2
 - 3
 - 4
 - 5
- Not at all important Somewhat important Extremely important

What is your gender? *

- Female
- Male
- Prefer not to say
- Other: _____

Which color scheme(s) would you prefer to see in our application? *



- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8

We are designing an application that will help university students to discover more communities and connect with more people within and beyond their program of study. Are there any features and functions you would want to have in our app?

Find common programs and courses being taken

Are you a member of a student community? *

- Yes
- No

If you answered "yes" to a previous question please state what organization(s)?

If you answered "no" to a previous question, is there a specific reason why?

Commuter, not much time

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- Left
- Middle
- Right
- Does not matter

Please tell us the application(s) you use the most and what you like about it(them).

Instagram - photos!, Facebook - everyone has it so it acts as an address book, WhatsApp - easy to share large media files

If you have some examples of apps that you do not like please tell us about them and state what you do not like about them?

Snapchat - uses a lot of data, browsers that don't reformat pages to a phone screen properly

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What is your first and last name? *

Brandon Tiu

What is your gender? *

- Female
- Male
- Prefer not to say
- Other:

What program are you in? *

- Computer Science
 Humanities
 Life Science
 Mathematical and Physical Science
 Rotman Commerce
 Social Science
 Other: _____

What year are you in? *

- 1st
 2nd
 3rd
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 Other: _____

Do you prefer infinite scroll or pagination? *

Pagination is a user interface pattern that divides content into separate pages.



- Infinite scroll
 Pagination

What is your opinion on virtual assistants in applications? *



1 2 3 4 5

Not at all useful Extremely useful

How important is landscape view in social media applications? *



1 2 3 4 5

Not at all important Extremely important

Which color scheme(s) would you prefer to see in our application? *



- 1
 2
 3
 4
 5
 6
 7
 8

The below pictures show the survey from the Sexual Health forum. Such forums and support groups depend on participant self-disclosure for their success, but the sensitive nature of personal health concerns raises privacy concerns that may constrain what users are willing to reveal. If you were to visit this site which web page would you be more likely to engage with? *



- Left
 Middle
 Right
 Does not matter

Please tell us the application(s) you use the most and what you like about it(them).

Reddit, night mode

If you have some examples of apps that you do not like please tell us about them and state what you do not like about them?

Fucking top hat, having to pay for access

We are designing an application that will help university students to discover more communities and connect with more people within and beyond their program of study. Are there any features and functions you would want to have in our app?

Dating feature

Are you a member of a student community? *

- Yes
 No

If you answered "yes" to a previous question please state what organization(s)?

If you answered "no" to a previous question, is there a specific reason why?

Introverted

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What program are you in? *

- Computer Science
 Humanities
 Life Science
 Mathematical and Physical Science
 Rotman Commerce
 Social Science
 Other:

What year are you in? *

- 1st
 2nd
 3rd
 4th
 Other:

Do you prefer infinite scroll or pagination? *

Pagination is a user interface pattern that divides content into separate pages.



- Infinite scroll
 Pagination

Help us build an app that you will enjoy using to find communities.

By continuing with the survey, you consent to be a participant in the survey, agree to the following terms and will be equivalent to your signature.

I hereby consent to participate in a research study conducted by Dennis Markovchyn, Utkarsh Agarwal, Kevin Huang, Roshan Ravishankar and Ryan Young for an assignment in University of Toronto Computer Science course CSC318 The Design of Interactive Computational Media.

I agree to participate in this study the purpose of which is to find the relationship between increased visitor engagement by good experience design and a heightened sense of community.
I understand that:

The procedures to be used is a questionnaire form.
I will receive no compensation for my participation.
I am free to withdraw before or any time during the study without the need to give any explanation.
All materials and results will be kept confidential, and, in particular, that my name and any identifying or identified information will not be associated with the data.

What is your first and last name? *

Jackie Huang

What is your gender? *

- Female
 Male
 Prefer not to say
 Other:

What is your opinion on virtual assistants in applications? *



- 1 2 3 4 5
Not at all useful Extremely useful

How important is landscape view in social media applications? *



- 1 2 3 4 5
Not at all important Extremely important

Which color scheme(s) would you prefer to see in our application? *



- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8

We are designing an application that will help university students to discover more communities and connect with more people within and beyond their program of study. Are there any features and functions you would want to have in our app?

Are you a member of a student community? *

- Yes
- No

If you answered "yes" to a previous question please state what organization(s)?

If you answered "no" to a previous question, is there a specific reason why?

This content is neither created nor endorsed by Google.

Google Forms

The below pictures show the survey from the Sexual Health forum. Such forums and support groups depend on participant self-disclosure for their success, but the sensitive nature of personal health concerns raises privacy concerns that may constrain what users are willing to reveal. If you were to visit this site which web page would you be more likely to engage with? *



- Left
- Middle
- Right
- Does not matter

Please tell us the application(s) you use the most and what you like about it(them).

I like Instagram's use of infinite scroll for photos and pagination for categories of photos and features.

If you have some examples of apps that you do not like please tell us about them and state what you do not like about them?

Help us build an app that you will enjoy using to find communities.

By continuing with the survey, you consent to be a participant in the survey, agree to the following terms and will be equivalent to your signature.

I hereby consent to participate in a research study conducted by Dennis Markovchyn, Utkarsh Agarwal, Kevin Huang, Roshan Ravishankar and Ryan Young for an assignment in University of Toronto Computer Science course CSC318 The Design of Interactive Computational Media.

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I am free withdraw before or any time during the study without the need to give any explanation.
All materials and results will be kept confidential, and, in particular, that my name and any identifying or identified information will not be associated with the data.

What is your first and last name? *

Dora Szarics

What is your gender? *

- Female
- Male
- Prefer not to say
- Other:

What program are you in? *

- Computer Science
 Humanities
 Life Science
 Mathematical and Physical Science
 Rotman Commerce
 Social Science
 Other: _____

What year are you in? *

- 1st
 2nd
 3rd
 4th
 Other: _____

Do you prefer infinite scroll or pagination? *

Pagination is a user interface pattern that divides content into separate pages.



- Infinite scroll
 Pagination

What is your opinion on virtual assistants in applications? *



1 2 3 4 5

Not at all useful Extremely useful

Which color scheme(s) would you prefer to see in our application? *



1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

How important is landscape view in social media applications? *



1 2 3 4 5

Not at all important Extremely important

The below pictures show the survey from the Sexual Health forum. Such forums and support groups depend on participant self-disclosure for their success, but the sensitive nature of personal health concerns raises privacy concerns that may constrain what users are willing to reveal. If you were to visit this site which web page would you be more likely to engage with? *



- Left
 Middle
 Right
 Does not matter

Please tell us the application(s) you use the most and what you like about it(them).

Facebook because can scroll endlessly and see many different things

If you have some examples of apps that you do not like please tell us about them and state what you do not like about them?

Pretty much anything that is slow

We are designing an application that will help university students to discover more communities and connect with more people within and beyond their program of study. Are there any features and functions you would want to have in our app?

Be able to access multiple aspects at once

Are you a member of a student community? *

- Yes
 No

If you answered "yes" to a previous question please state what organization(s)?

If you answered "no" to a previous question, is there a specific reason why?

Involved elsewhere

This content is neither created nor endorsed by Google.

Google Forms

What program are you in? *

- Computer Science
 Humanities
 Life Science
 Mathematical and Physical Science
 Rotman Commerce
 Social Science
 Other:

What year are you in? *

- 1st
 2nd
 3rd
 4th
 Other:

Do you prefer infinite scroll or pagination? *

Pagination is a user interface pattern that divides content into separate pages.



- Infinite scroll
 Pagination

Help us build an app that you will enjoy using to find communities.

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I understand that:

The procedures to be used is a questionnaire form.

I will receive no compensation for my participation.

I am free to withdraw before or any time during the study without the need to give any explanation.

All materials and results will be kept confidential, and, in particular, that my name and any identifying or identified information will not be associated with the data.

What is your first and last name? *

Jamal Vaninov

What is your gender? *

- Female
 Male
 Prefer not to say
 Other:

What is your opinion on virtual assistants in applications? *



1 2 3 4 5

Not at all useful Extremely useful

How important is landscape view in social media applications? *



1 2 3 4 5

Not at all important Extremely important

Which color scheme(s) would you prefer to see in our application? *



- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8

We are designing an application that will help university students to discover more communities and connect with more people within and beyond their program of study. Are there any features and functions you would want to have in our app?

Messenger

Are you a member of a student community? *

- Yes
- No

If you answered "yes" to a previous question please state what organization(s)?

If you answered "no" to a previous question, is there a specific reason why?

Short on time

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Google Forms

The below pictures show the survey from the Sexual Health forum. Such forums and support groups depend on participant self-disclosure for their success, but the sensitive nature of personal health concerns raises privacy concerns that may constrain what users are willing to reveal. If you were to visit this site which web page would you be more likely to engage with? *



- Left
- Middle
- Right
- Does not matter

Please tell us the application(s) you use the most and what you like about it(them).

Instagram - very easy to navigate

If you have some examples of apps that you do not like please tell us about them and state what you do not like about them?

Help us build an app that you will enjoy using to find communities.

By continuing with the survey, you consent to be a participant in the survey, agree to the following terms and will be equivalent to your signature.

I hereby consent to participate in a research study conducted by Dennis Markovchyn, Utkarsh Agarwal, Kevin Huang, Roshan Ravishankar and Ryan Young for an assignment in University of Toronto Computer Science course CSC318 The Design of Interactive Computational Media.

I agree to participate in this study the purpose of which is to find the relationship between increased visitor engagement by good experience design and a heightened sense of community.
I understand that:

The procedures to be used is a questionnaire form.
I will receive no compensation for my participation.
I am free withdraw before or any time during the study without the need to give any explanation.
All materials and results will be kept confidential, and, in particular, that my name and any identifying or identified information will not be associated with the data.

What is your first and last name? *

Andy Chan

What is your gender? *

- Female
- Male
- Prefer not to say
- Other:

What program are you in? *

- Computer Science
- Humanities
- Life Science
- Mathematical and Physical Science
- Rotman Commerce
- Social Science
- Other: _____

What year are you in? *

- 1st
- 2nd
- 3rd
- 4th
- Other: _____

Do you prefer infinite scroll or pagination? *

Pagination is a user interface pattern that divides content into separate pages.



- Infinite scroll
- Pagination

What is your opinion on virtual assistants in applications? *



1 2 3 4 5

Not at all useful Somewhat useful Extremely useful

How important is landscape view in social media applications? *



1 2 3 4 5

Not at all important Somewhat important Extremely important

Which color scheme(s) would you prefer to see in our application? *



- 1
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- 7
- 8

The below pictures show the survey from the Sexual Health forum. Such forums and support groups depend on participant self-disclosure for their success, but the sensitive nature of personal health concerns raises privacy concerns that may constrain what users are willing to reveal. If you were to visit this site which web page would you be more likely to engage with? *



- Left
- Middle
- Right
- Does not matter

Please tell us the application(s) you use the most and what you like about it(them).

Wechat, magical app with almost everything I need. You can subscribe to cool articles, talk to your friends, post stuffs(sth like fb), pay for stuffs, even invest. All in one app _____

If you have some examples of apps that you do not like please tell us about them and state what you do not like about them?

Facebook messenger, app only exist to talk to people, useless, why can't I just use my phone message? _____

We are designing an application that will help university students to discover more communities and connect with more people within and beyond their program of study. Are there any features and functions you would want to have in our app?

Location sharing (like in snapchat)

Are you a member of a student community? *

- Yes
 No

If you answered "yes" to a previous question please state what organization(s)?

If you answered "no" to a previous question, is there a specific reason why?

Socially awkward, lazy

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Google Forms

NAME: RAVISHANKAR, ROSHAN

One literature review and two questionnaires were used to collect data test the research question explained in A2 (the user experience of online knowledge-sharing communities). The participants for the first questionnaire were 13 UofT students and the participants for the second questionnaire were 5 professors/TAs. Hence, a total of 18 valid responses were received. For both the student sample and the professor/TA sample, the participants were asked questions based on Piazza, because it is a very popular knowledge-sharing website among UofT students and staff. The article that was reviewed was also based on knowledge-sharing communities. For the rest of this document, I will call the student questionnaire “Questionnaire A” and the professor/TA questionnaire “Questionnaire B.”

Sample Statistics for Questionnaire A:

In the student sample, there were a mix of computer science specialists/majors/minors, math specialists/minors, statistics specialists/minors or a combination of the programs mentioned. All of the participants use or have used Piazza. 61.5 percent of the participants are aged between 17 to 20 and 38.5 percent of the participants are aged between 21 and 30. 61.5 percent of the participants are male and 38.5 percent are female. 8 out of 13 participants spoke English as their first language, 2 spoke Mandarin, 1 spoke German, 1 spoke Hindi and 1 spoke Cantonese. 69.2 percent of the participants considered themselves to be “quite good” at using technology and the rest considered themselves “extremely advanced” at using technology.

Note: More demographic information was received, but those are used mainly to correlate types of persons to their Piazza experience and issues.

Sample Statistics for Questionnaire B:

In the professor/teaching assistant sample, all participants use or have used Piazza. 3 out of the 5 participants are aged between 21 and 40 and the rest are aged between 41 and 60. 3 out of the 5 participants are male and the rest are female. 3 out of 5 participants spoke English as their first language, 1 spoke Mandarin, 1 spoke Korean, and 1 spoke Tamil. 3 out of the participants considered themselves to be “quite good” at using technology and the rest considered themselves “extremely advanced.”

Discussion for Questionnaire A:

All students found Piazza to be either “extremely helpful” or “helpful.” The majority of students (69.2%) said they only use before an exam or when an assignment is due. More interestingly, when starting an assignment, a significant portion of the students (23.1%) use Piazza to browse posts about the assignment, even before looking at the assignment itself. Of course, a majority (46.2%) look at the assignment first and 23.1% look at the assignment and Piazza at the same time. Also alarmingly, 66.7% of the participants said they have had questions they could ask on

Piazza but hesitated. Another interesting statistic is that 53.8% of the participants post and answer questions anonymously, and 46.2% do it publicly. We also collected interesting information about the attitudes of our participants: 53.9% of the participants trusted the competence of the students who might answer their questions and the rest do not trust their competence as much. Moreover, 30.8% of the participants said that competition prevented them to answer questions on Piazza (this is only among students who are doing computer science.) The problems that were reported were consistent among all participants. Of all 13 participants, the major theme of the problems they have with Piazza is time consumption. All 13 participants either said that the search bar was inefficient, the posts are cluttered and disorganized or the notifications are not designed to be helpful. Everyone felt that Piazza was user-friendly.

Some interesting correlations are to be noted. As expected, the students who used Piazza the least often were less likely to trust the integrity, benevolence and competence of other users. All participants who post publicly to the platform also said that their contribution to Piazza benefits them socially. Also, language constrained some participants (who do not speak English as their first language) to use Piazza.

Discussion for Questionnaire B:

Among the professors and TAs, only information about the problems were received. They also reported similar problems. They said that the search bar was inaccurate and the posts were too disorderly. One TA reported that the forum statistics could be more useful. Everyone felt that Piazza was very user-friendly.

Implications:

Since many students lack trust in the competence in their peers, a points system could be designed to build trust and prove competence. For students who were constrained by language, a translation software could be built in or there could be an option for students to ask for translation to other students who speak their language. Most people reported that the search bar was inefficient. To combat this, we could develop a better way to sort through and categorize the posts/threads or we could better the search algorithm. Many even found it uncomfortable to browse through posts since the post listing is too cluttered and disorganized. Clearly, we need to make the posts more organized, and even more visually clear and pleasing. Some participants found that the notifications were done poorly, so we must the notification system more organized and designed to be more helpful than annoying.

Limitations:

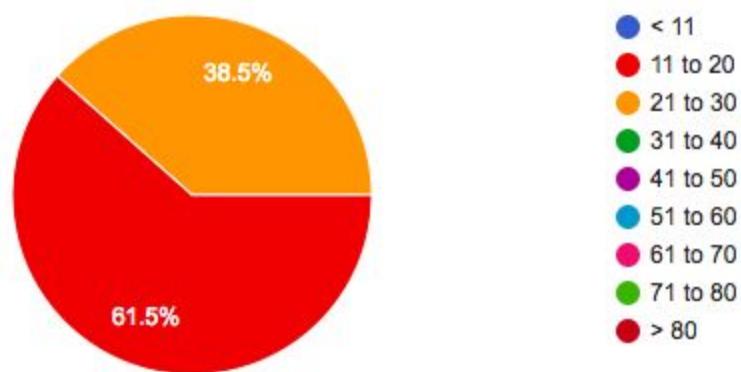
Since all participants are studying something science-related, the results of this study are bound to be biased. To solidify the findings of this study, more responses need to be recorded.

Appendix

(all figures are labeled by the question asked and number of responses)

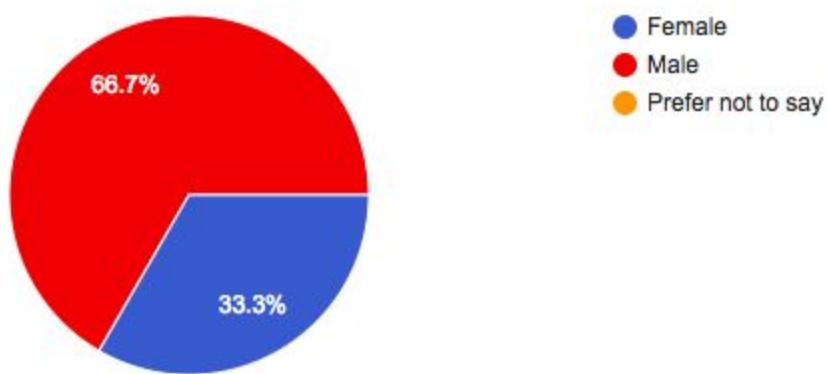
What is your age?

13 responses



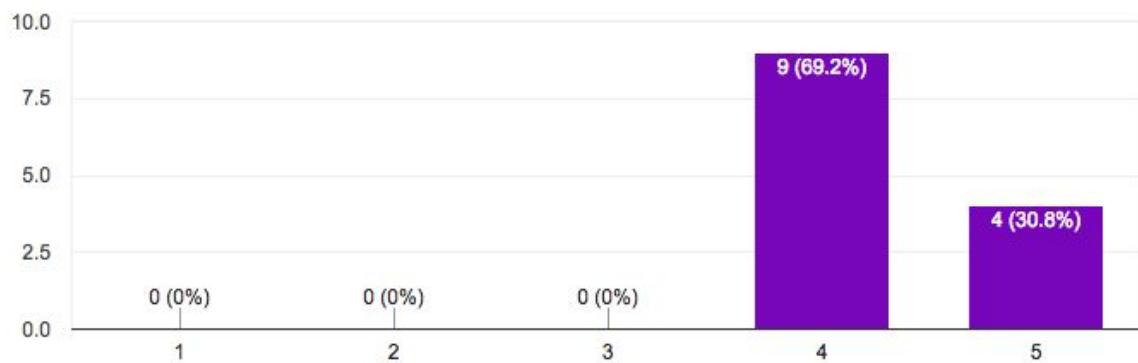
Sex:

12 responses



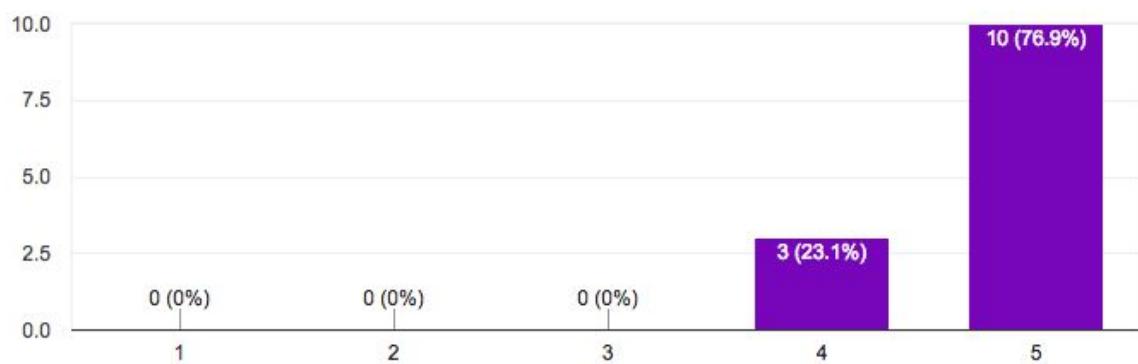
How proficient are you at using technology?

13 responses



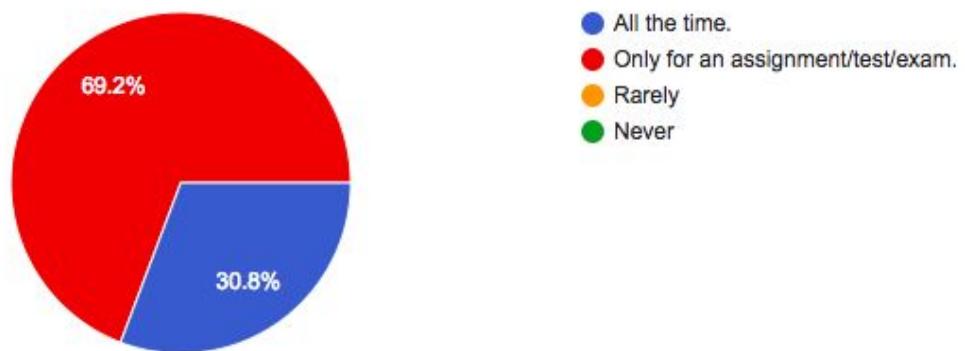
How useful is Piazza to you?

13 responses



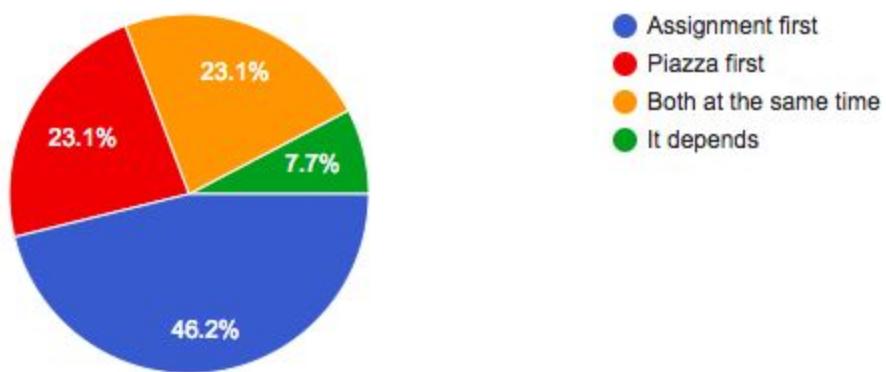
How often do you use Piazza?

13 responses



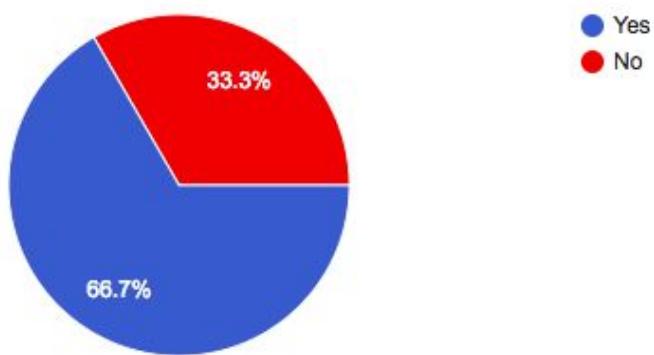
If you have an assignment due soon, do you start work on the assignment first or do you look at Piazza first?

13 responses



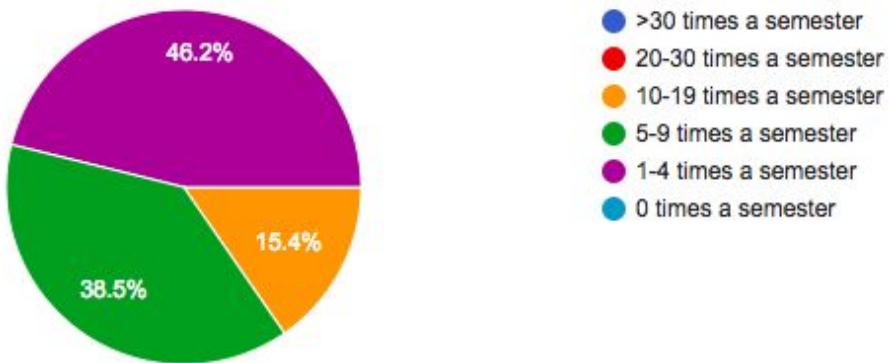
Have you ever had a question you could put on Piazza, but hesitated to ask?

12 responses



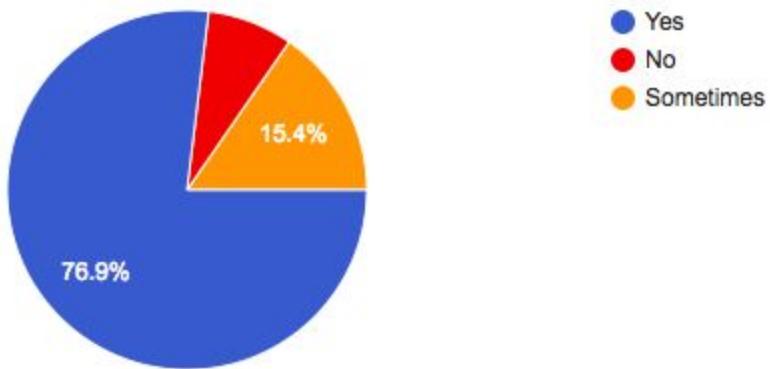
How often do you post questions?

13 responses



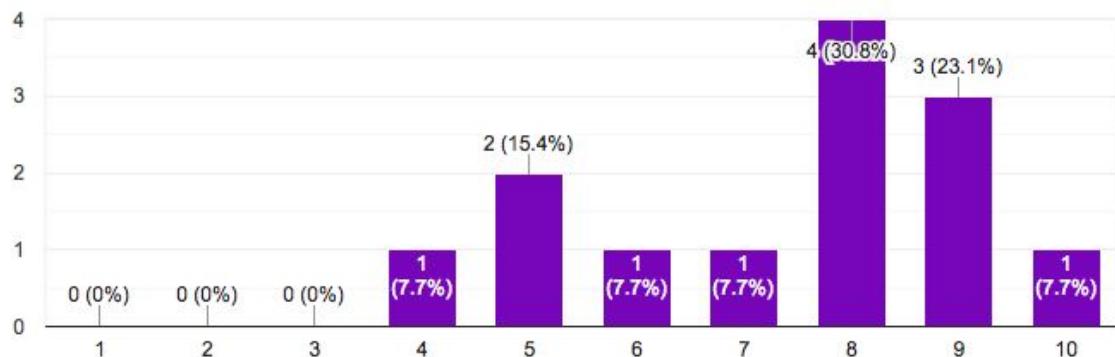
Do you assist other Piazza members without the expectation of reciprocation or them returning the favour?

13 responses



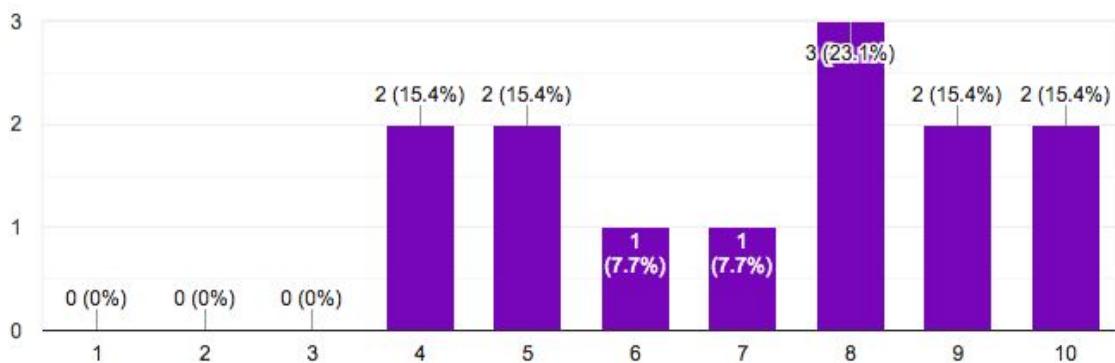
If you are posting a question to Piazza, how much do you trust the integrity of students who can answer your question?

13 responses



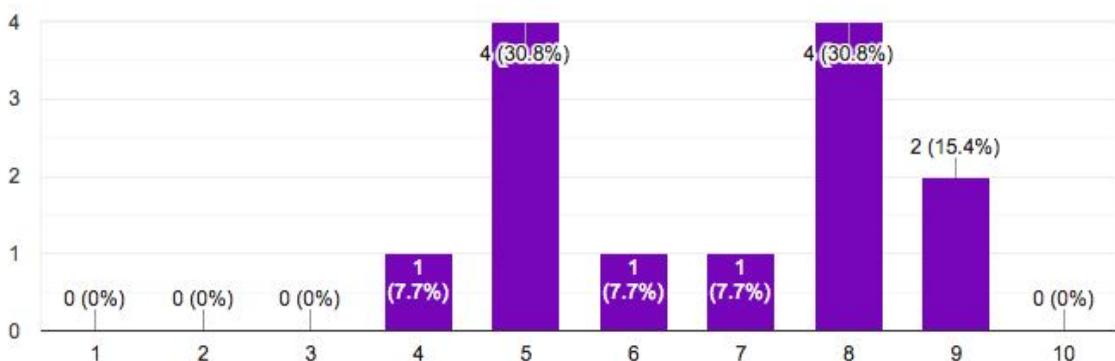
If you are posting a question to Piazza, how much do you trust the benevolence of students who can answer your question?

13 responses



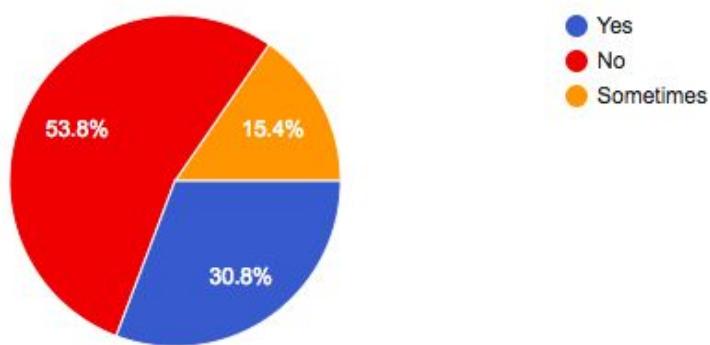
If you are posting a question to Piazza, how much do you trust the competence of students who can answer your question?

13 responses



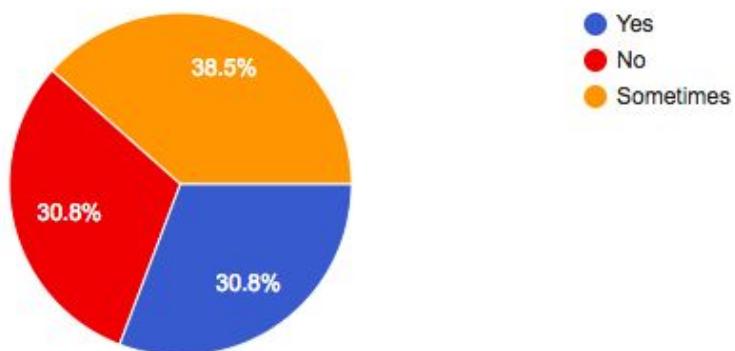
Do you believe that asking or answering questions on Piazza benefits you socially?

13 responses



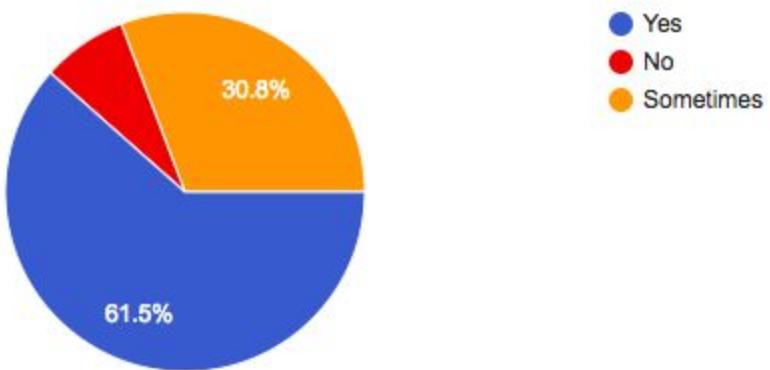
Does competition prevent you from asking or answering questions on Piazza?

13 responses



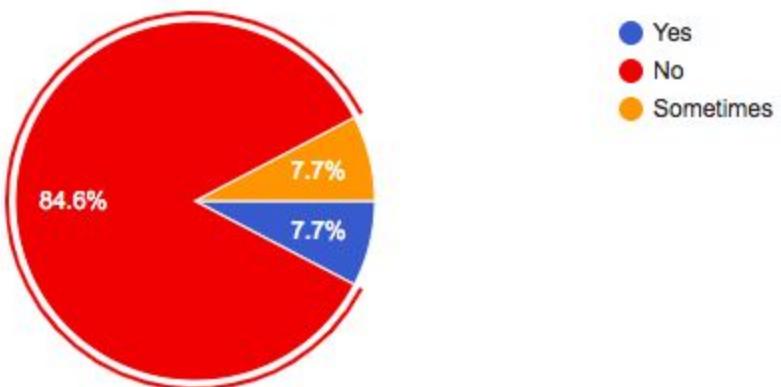
Do time constraints prevent you from using Piazza?

13 responses



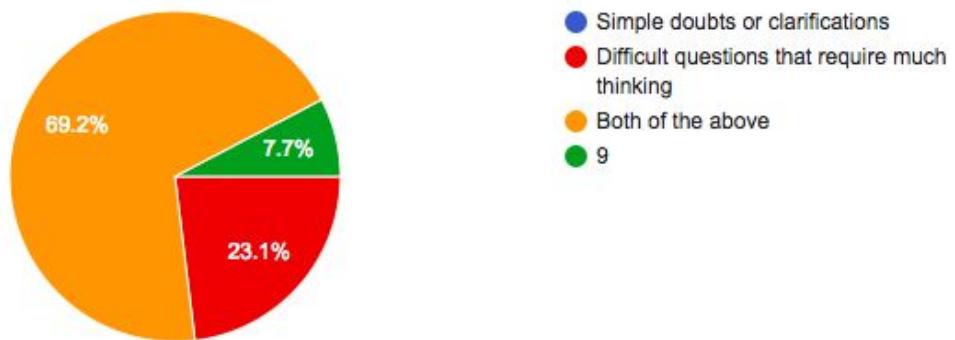
Do language/communication constraints prevent you from using Piazza?

13 responses



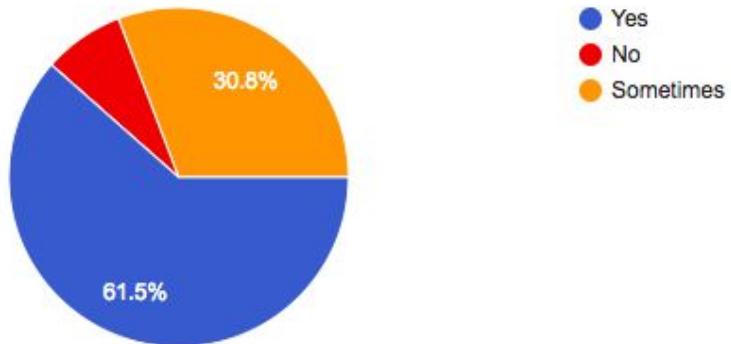
What types of questions do you usually post on Piazza?

13 responses



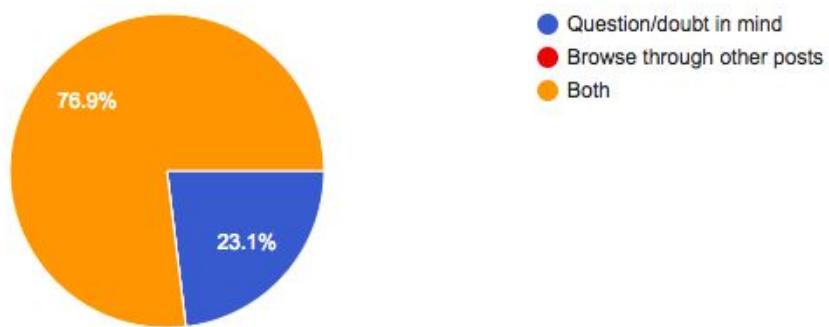
Normally, do you use the search bar to search for similar questions before you post your own?

13 responses



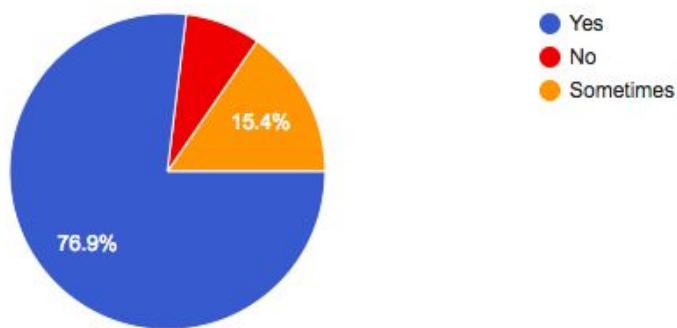
When you login to Piazza, do you often have a question/doubt in mind or do you just want to browse through other posts?

13 responses



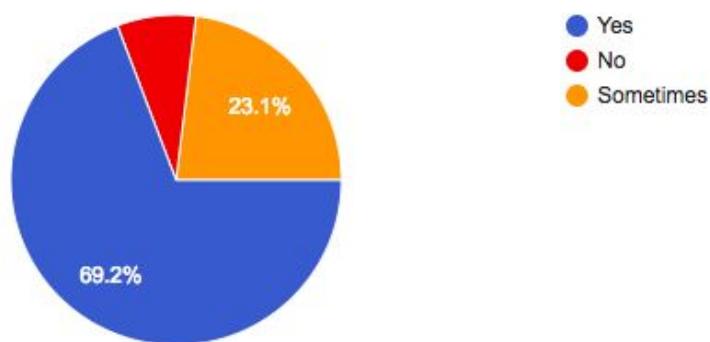
Do you willingly give your time to help other Piazza members who have problems?

13 responses



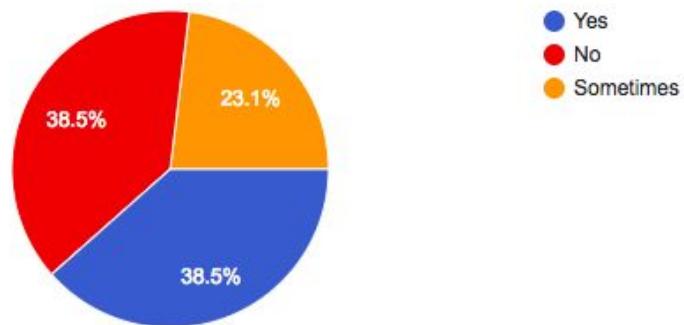
Do you share personal experiences to other Piazza members to help them?

13 responses



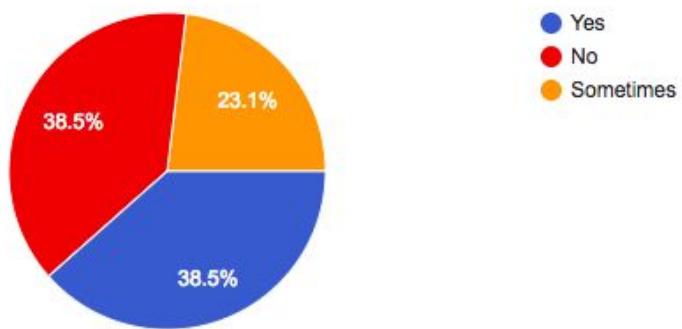
Do you attend to questions that are not required to answer but help the Piazza community image?

13 responses



Do you attend to questions that are not required to answer but help the Piazza community image?

13 responses



How would you rate Piazza's user-friendliness?

12 responses

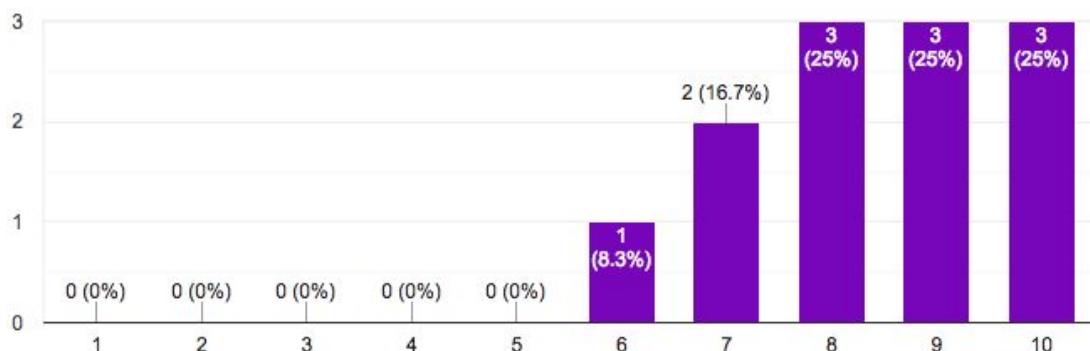


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Procedure of Formative Study

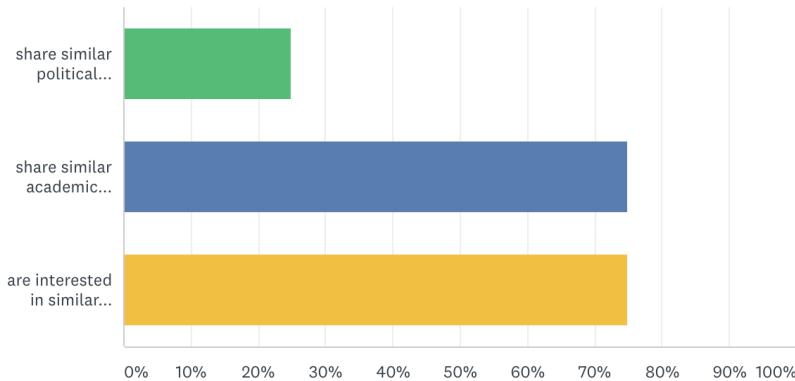
The survey was posted in various University of Toronto student groups across Facebook including, but not limited to groups such as University of Toronto Computer Science (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/utm.cs/>) and Accepted University of Toronto Class of 2021 (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1501663553473497/>). The consent form preceded the survey (<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/8C6LSBL>).

Results from My Formative Study

8 responses were collected. All participants were current students from the University of Toronto. Of the 8 participants, only 3 were part of a student club at U of T. Of these, only 2 answered the question pertaining to their clubs. Both responded that they became involved in their respective communities at least partially because of the clubs fair held by UTSU at the start of an academic year as part of the student orientation program.

Both participants responded saying they felt positive effects from being involved in their respective communities with one reporting a positive impact on work ethic and the other, an overall improvement in their quality of life. In hindsight though, the question may have been worded incorrectly and warranted these kind of responses from the participants.

When asked about how they felt about their experience of being able to find student they identify with at the University of Toronto, most participants responded with having a great experience. Out of the 7 participants who responded to this question, only 2 felt they've had a terrible time finding other students. At an initial glance, while this may appear to say that there is no need for a solution in the problem space, 75% of the total participants responded saying that they would be interested in finding people who either share similar courses\academic interests or are interested in the same local events as them. Also, all participants always had either their mobile device or their laptop at almost all times.



2 participants brought up concerns they have with the current system: One strongly felt that finding communities at the University of Toronto was a cumbersome task and another felt that there was a strong racial disparity in the number of African Canadians in communities at the university.

Results from Industry Reports

Because of the massive growth in the dating industry in the recent years, the industry reports available for the online dating industry were extensive. The industry's growth especially among young adults (18-24) is an undisputable fact, such as claims by this report from the Pew Research Centre that claims there has been an almost threefold increase in the number of young adults using on line dating since 2013 and claimed "41% of Americans know someone who uses online dating; 29% know someone who has met a spouse or long-term partner via online dating"¹

And while other community making application exist such as Platook(<https://patook.com/>) for making platonic friends, because they are more novel, not much data in terms of industry reports can be found on them.

Synthesizing Results from user research, formative study and industry reports

From my User Research, I found out about opportunistic Mobile Social Networks. I wanted to look at whether they could be applied to my problem space.

From the research study I conducted, I found out that while participants seemed relatively happy with their experience with finding communities at the university (with the exception of one outlier), participants did report positive effects that their involvement has had and 75% of participants were interested in finding communities of people with who they shared academic interests or communities of people with who they shared an interest in similar kind of local events. This was one of the key applications presented in the research article I analysed, Enhancing spontaneous interaction in opportunistic mobile social networks².

My Industry reports backed my assumption that people are actively trying to find communities and are increasingly using tools such as apps to find them.

Limitations and criticism of formative study

If given the chance, I would modify the question, "How do you think your involvement has impacted your life?" because it may have been a leading question and may have lead to responses describing positive impacts where the participant may have instead given a response of 'no impact' if given the choice. The survey was posted in various groups across Facebook, and so the audience it reached was the sub-group of university students already in these groups and willing to fill out this survey. Moreover, the total number of participants was very limited due to the time constraints of this research. Any conclusions reached from this study may not be generalizable to a much larger degree.

¹ [1]"15% of American adults use online dating sites or mobile apps", *Pew Research Center: Internet, Science & Tech*, 2019. [Online]. Available: <http://www.pewinternet.org/2016/02/11/15-percent-of-american-adults-have-used-online-dating-sites-or-mobile-dating-apps/>. [Accessed: 26- Jan- 2019].

² B. Guo, D. Zhang, Z. Yu, X. Zhou and Z. Zhou, "Enhancing spontaneous interaction in opportunistic mobile social networks", *Communications in Mobile Computing*, vol. 1, no. 1, p. 6, 2012. Available: <https://mujournal.springeropen.com/articles/10.1186/2192-1121-1-6>. [Accessed 19 January 2019].

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Communities at University of Toronto

[Comment 0](#)

SUMMARY → DESIGN SURVEY → PREVIEW & SCORE → COLLECT RESPONSES → **ANALYZE RESULTS** → PRESENT RESULTS NEW!

CURRENT VIEW [?](#) [^](#)

+ FILTER + COMPARE + SHOW

No rules applied [?](#)

Rules allow you to **FILTER**, **COMPARE** and **SHOW** results to see trends and patterns.

[Learn more »](#)

SAVED VIEWS (1) [?](#) [▼](#)

EXPORTS [?](#) [^](#)

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SHARED DATA [?](#) [▼](#)

RESPONDENTS: 8 of 8 [SAVE AS ▾](#)

QUESTION SUMMARIES **DATA TRENDS** **INDIVIDUAL RESPONSES**

All Pages ▾

Page 1: Welcome to My Survey.

Q1 [Customize](#) [Save As ▾](#)

Do you agree with the conditions as laid out on this page?

Answered: 8 Skipped: 0

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Agree	100.00% 8

Total Respondents: 8

Page 2

Q2 [Customize](#) [Save As ▾](#)

Before you continue, have you been through the consent form

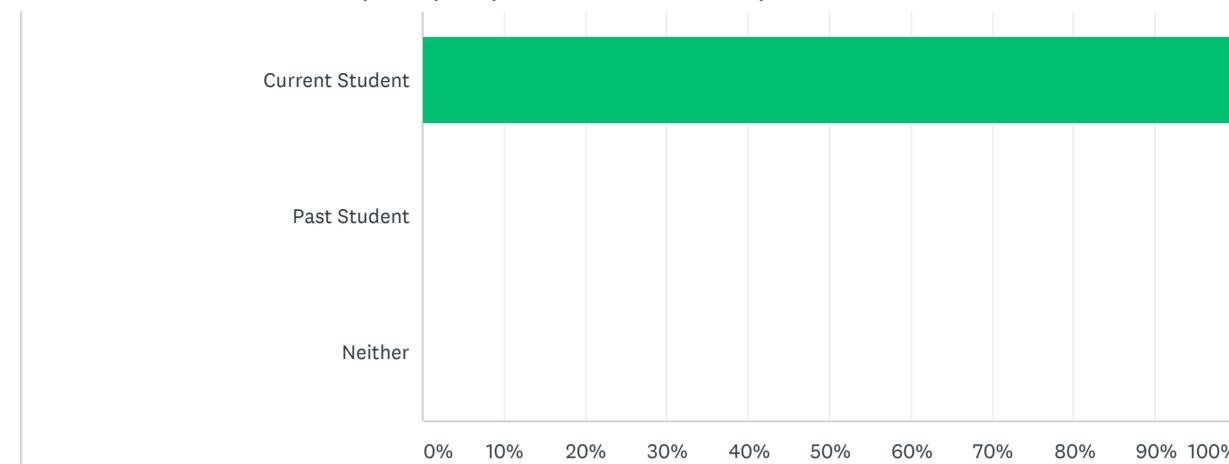
Answered: 8 Skipped: 0

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	100.00% 8

Q3 [Customize](#) [Save As ▾](#)

Are you a current or past student at the University of Toronto

Answered: 8 Skipped: 0

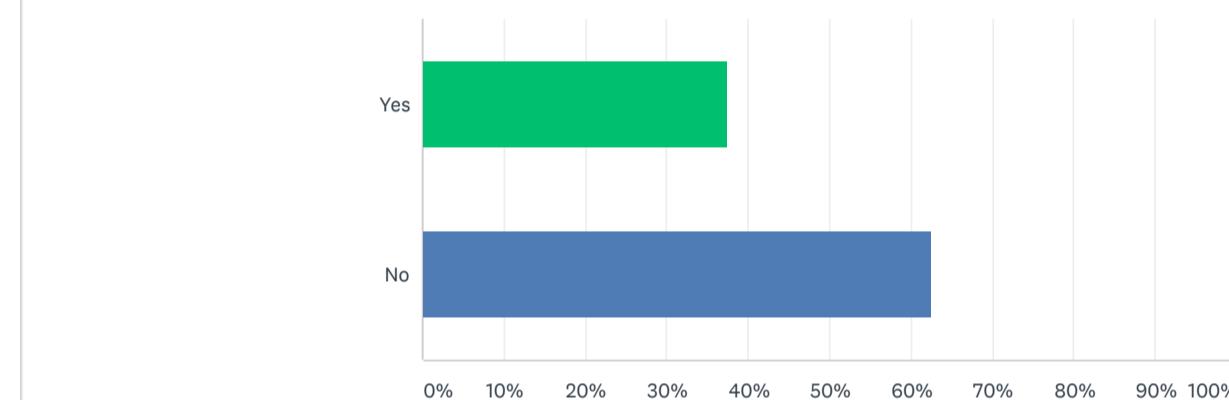


ANSWER CHOICES	▼	RESPONSES	▼
▼ Current Student		100.00%	8
▼ Past Student		0.00%	0
▼ Neither		0.00%	0
TOTAL			8

Q4**Customize****Save As ▾**

Are you part of any student club\orgainzation at U of T

Answered: 8 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	▼	RESPONSES	▼
▼ Yes		37.50%	3
▼ No		62.50%	5
TOTAL			8

Q5**Export▼**

If answered yes to Q3

Answered: 3 Skipped: 5

ANSWER CHOICES	▼	RESPONSES	▼
What student communities are you a part of?		Responses	100.00%

ANSWER CHOICES
RESPONSES (3) WORD CLOUD TAGS**PAID FEATURE**

Text Analysis lets you search and tag comments and see word clouds of frequent words and phrases. To get this feature, upgrade to a paid plan.

UPGRADE[Learn more »](#)[Add tags ▾](#) [Filter by tag ▾](#)[Search responses](#)

Showing 3 responses



n/a

1/25/2019 7:48 PM

[View respondent's answers](#)

USMC Mentorship, Women's Health Collective, Cards 4 Humanity

1/25/2019 10:05 AM

[View respondent's answers](#)

HOSA

1/25/2019 8:50 AM

[View respondent's answers](#)

How did you get involved with these communities?

Responses

66.67%

2

RESPONSES (2) WORD CLOUD TAGS**PAID FEATURE**

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Showing 2 responses



I signed up at the clubs fair.

1/25/2019 10:05 AM

[View respondent's answers](#)

Career Fair and a Friend

1/25/2019 8:50 AM

[View respondent's answers](#)

How do you think your involvement has impacted your life?

Responses

66.67%

2



[RESPONSES \(2\)](#) WORD CLOUD TAGS

PAID FEATURE

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Showing 2 responses

 I have gained new skills, made new friends, and learned a lot about myself.

1/25/2019 10:05 AM

[View respondent's answers](#) Good work eithic

1/25/2019 8:50 AM

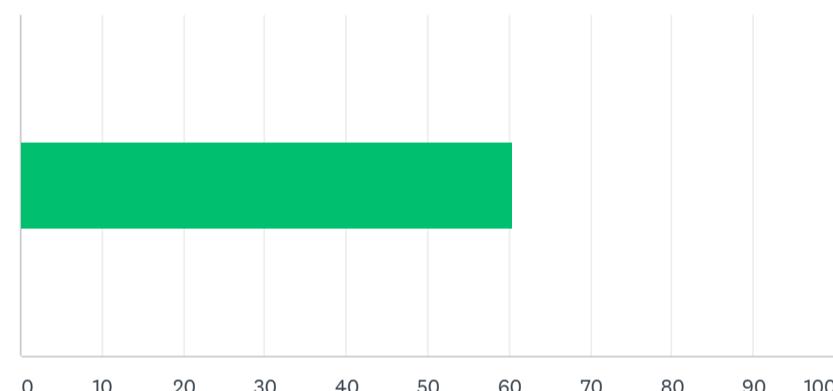
[View respondent's answers](#)

Q6

[Customize](#)[Save As ▾](#)

How would you rate your overall experience finding people at university you identify with in a certain way?

Answered: 7 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES

▼ AVERAGE NUMBER

▼ TOTAL NUMBER

▼ RESPONSES

[Responses](#)

60

423

7

Total Respondents: 7

ANSWER CHOICES ▾ **AVERAGE NUMBER** ▾ **TOTAL NUMBER** ▾ **RESPONSES** ▾

RESPONSES (7) TAGS ✖

PAID FEATURE
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Add tags ▾ Filter by tag ▾ Search responses ?

Showing 7 responses

73
1/25/2019 11:18 PM [View respondent's answers](#)

37
1/25/2019 8:01 PM [View respondent's answers](#)

12
1/25/2019 7:48 PM [View respondent's answers](#)

70
1/25/2019 7:46 PM [View respondent's answers](#)

Total Respondents: 7

Q7 [Customize](#) [Save As ▾](#)

Would you be interested in finding people near you who

Answered: 8 Skipped: 0

Response	Percentage	Count
share similar political...	25.00%	2
share similar academic...	75.00%	6
are interested in similar...	75.00%	6

ANSWER CHOICES ▾ **RESPONSES** ▾

- ▼ share similar political affiliations 25.00% 2
- ▼ share similar academic interests eg. courses, programs 75.00% 6
- ▼ are interested in similar events being held around you 75.00% 6

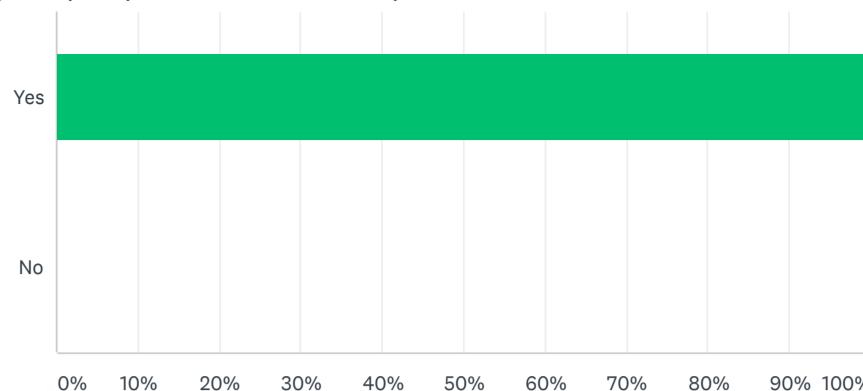
Total Respondents: 8

Q8 [Customize](#) [Save As ▾](#)

Do you almost always have some sort of electronic device on you such as your mobile phone or your laptop?

Answered: 8 Skipped: 0

^



ANSWER CHOICES

RESPONSES

▼ Yes

100.00%

8

▼ No

0.00%

0

TOTAL

8

Q9

Save As ▾

Are there any problems/solutions related to finding communities that you would personally like to highlight? Feel free to use this space for any comments about this survey.

Answered: 3 Skipped: 5

RESPONSES (3) WORD CLOUD TAGS

PAID FEATURE

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Apply to Selected ▾

Filter by tag ▾

Search responses



Showing 3 responses

Not a lot of black students on campus. It makes people feel uncomfortable, or even sometimes the odd one out.

1/25/2019 7:48 PM

[View respondent's answers](#)

You have to actively search to find communities at UofT. The university will not make connections for you. Without putting in the effort, it is very easy to feel isolated at this school.

1/25/2019 10:05 AM

[View respondent's answers](#)

Not really

1/25/2019 8:50 AM

[View respondent's answers](#)

ENGLISH



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