

Abstract

The priority point system at Marist College assigns points to students based on their academic average, involvement with extra-curricular activities, disciplinary history and condition of their residence area. The system is used by the Office of Housing and Residential Life to place students in housing after their first year at Marist. However, this system is confusing for incoming freshman. My priority point calculator prompts users to input Club / Intercollegiate Sport, Intramural / Fitness & Leisure, Community Service, GPA, Discipline, and Room Condition then displays their results. Once the calculator is available to students, it will relieve stress and allow students to focus on their studies.

Introduction

Marist College uses the “priority point” system to decide housing. As a second semester freshman I now understand how the system works but did not have a tool to help me first semester. When I came into college, the complicated priority point system was never fully explained. Many of my fellow classmates were stressed due to the fact that priority points will even affect junior year housing. The purpose of my project is for Marist students to be able to easily calculate their points.

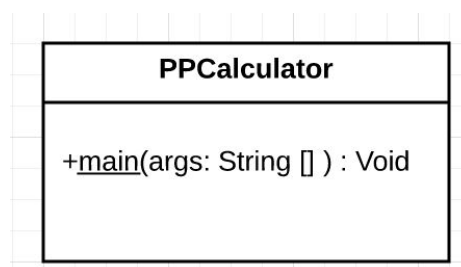
In the priority point system there are four categories in which one can earn points: GPA, room condition, discipline, and activity. The GPA section is where most of the points reside; as one’s GPA increases so does the number of respective priority points. The maximum points one can get from GPA is 12, while the lowest amount is 0. Points determined by room condition are calculated for both fall and spring semesters, but the purpose of this project I will only be calculating fall. The maximum points awarded for room condition in one semester is 4. Additionally, this category includes disciplinary points which allots a maximum of 6 priority points. However, the activity category is more complicated than the other categories.

Activity is split up into three sections: clubs / intercollegiate sports, intramurals / fitness & leisure, and service. Individually clubs/intercollegiate sports allow one or two points (which is predetermined by each club.) The maximum points one can receive for clubs/intercollegiate sports category is three. The second category, intramurals / fitness & leisure, only allows two points. Finally the last category, service, which is counted in hours, distributes a maximum of two points to students. For example, 0-7 hours will result in a total of zero points, 8-15 hours equals one point, and 16+ hours is the full two points.

Out of all of those activities, a student is only allowed a total of four points for the activity category. Once all of categories are filled out they are added and a final number is given. For freshmen the priority point system is out of 26 points. A higher priority point total results in better housing for the student. Each semester priority points are calculated and used to decide housing for the next year.

System Description

To complete my code I used many a series of if and ifelse statements. First the user will input a club. If the user inputs the word 'none' the code will be broken and move onto the next category. Else it will ask the user to input the number of meetings they attended. For the priority point calculator, it is best to use a HashMap. A HashMap is likened to an arraylist but instead of having an index as a number, it is a string. This allows a number to be associated to the name of the club, which can then be used later. Once the number of meetings is put into the system, the name of the club will be associated with it, making it easy to keep track of. Next the system will check how many points the user will get based on their input. If the user attends eight or more meetings, they will receive one point. Else if the user attends sixteen or more meetings they will have two points. This process is repeated three times for each of the club categories. After the code is broken for the activity category it will move onto the GPA category. After the GPA is entered it will be checked by an if statements and stored. Next the user will enter the disciplinary point and it would be stored. Finally, fall room condition points will be input and stored for later. After all of the categories are filled, the code will check to make sure that each category does not exceed the maximum. Once all of the categories are checked, the numbers will add and print the total priority point.



Requirements

This project does not call for many physical requirements, although a laptop is required for the code to work. My hope for the future is that I can develop this into a website or even a mobile app, making it easier for students to access it. However, as of now my code is only available through the use of a laptop.

Literature Survey

After a quick google search, I found that another college uses the priority point system as well. Seton Hall University (SHU) located in South Orange, New Jersey is the only other college that uses a point system similar to ours. Upon taking a closer look, SHU's priority point system has slight differences from ours. Marist's system is out of 12 points while SHU's is only out of 10. SHU places less emphasis on GPA and more on community involvement, which is a concept that Marist should consider.

SHU has different categories for earning points but are very similar to Marist. The first category is Judicial Status. Judicial Status is based on the student's current disciplinary record as of the time points are being calculated; behavior consistent with those of policies and procedures will result in good judicial standing, and in turn the ability to earn credit toward more priority points. Residence Hall Citizenship, the second category, takes place on the floor and building in which the student lives. Every resident has a responsibility to the residence hall community, and those who are most involved in fulfilling that responsibility will benefit the most. Not only will those students enjoy the residence halls more, they will be rewarded with more priority points in the category. The last category, Active Participation, involves participation in a university club, Greek letter organization, honor society, varsity or intramural team, campus volunteer experience, or a campus job as well as regular attendance at on-campus athletic events will enable students to earn priority points in this category. The maximum number of points awarded in this category is 10 and participation in the activities must be continuous throughout the academic year. Both systems evoke the same idea, but SHU promotes more community involvement. In comparison to SHU, Marist places a higher emphasis on academics.

User Manual

The user is prompted with a series of questions in order to properly calculate their priority point. The first prompt asks the user to enter the name of a Club / Intercollegiate Sport, then in parenthesis it states (enter ONE at a time, or type 'none' to continue). The user will enter the one word name of the club then asked how many meetings they have attended. Attending eight meetings will result in one point and sixteen meetings give two points. Once the user has entered the name of the club and meetings attended, they will type 'none' which will break the code and continue onto the next category. Once the user breaks from the last club category they will be prompted to enter their GPA in the form of a double. Next the user will enter how many discipline points they will have. If the user has not been written up for disciplinary infractions, they will receive the full six points. When testing the code put in the full six points in order to get an accurate priority point total. For the purpose of this tracker the user will enter the fall room condition as zero, and the spring semester as four. After all these points are added up, the total will be printed.

Conclusion

The priority point system at Marist College assigns points to students based on their academic average, involvement with extra-curricular activities, disciplinary history and condition of their residence area. The system is used by the Office of Housing and Residential Life to place students in housing after their first year at Marist. However, this system is confusing for incoming freshman. My calculator can be used for students who do not want to wait for the results to officially come out. For example, if a student cannot make a club meeting, they can use the calculator to see how it would affect their points. Hopefully in the future freshman will be well informed and not intimidated by this process.

References

<https://www13.shu.edu/offices/housing-residence-life/priority-points.cfm>

<https://www.marist.edu/studentlife/studentconduct/handbook/prioritypoints.html>