

Quantitative Research Project

Arts & Sciences Group 1

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Client Objective:

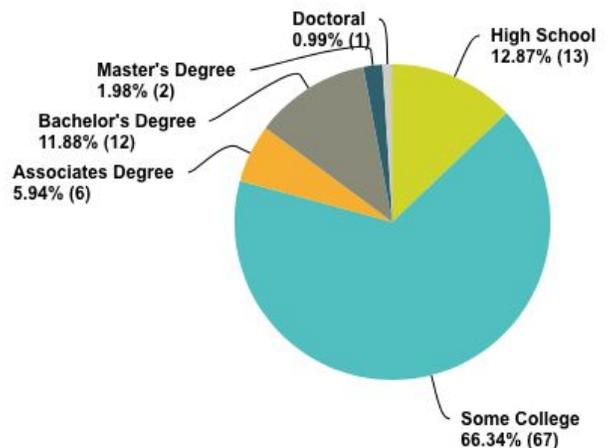
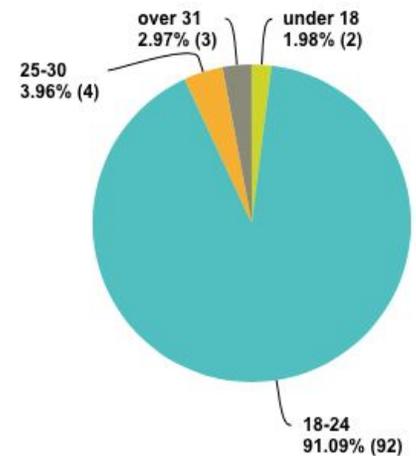
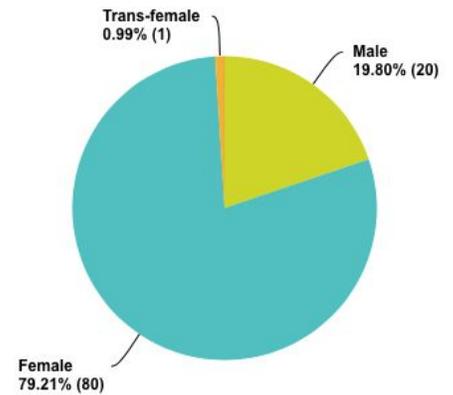
The goal from our research is to gain a better understanding of the target audience of OSU's College of Arts & Sciences and to better communicate with them through its website, social media and marketing materials. We also want to develop a new brand identity for A&S externally and internally as well as determine how to better communicate with freshmen to improve retention rates. In order to identify the target audience's current opinions of the College of Arts & Sciences, we decided surveys and focus groups would be the best means to achieve this information.

Method:

An internet survey titled O1 College Study was conducted to get more information for the branding campaign. It consisted of 21 questions and resulted in a total of 101 responses between the dates of April 14 - April 25, 2017. The survey was administered to multiple class lists from the College of Arts & Sciences, relevant friend and family groups, and school organizations. Our team posted the survey link on social media accounts like Instagram, Facebook and Snapchat, as well as contacted people individually by the use of personal phones. We directly targeted current and incoming students in the College of Arts & Sciences. Every respondent received the same survey, which provided consistency and avoided bias in our research by ensuring every participant answered the same questions. After the sample was collected, results were placed into various charts for easier analysis. The survey questions and statistics can be viewed at the end of this report.

Respondent profile:

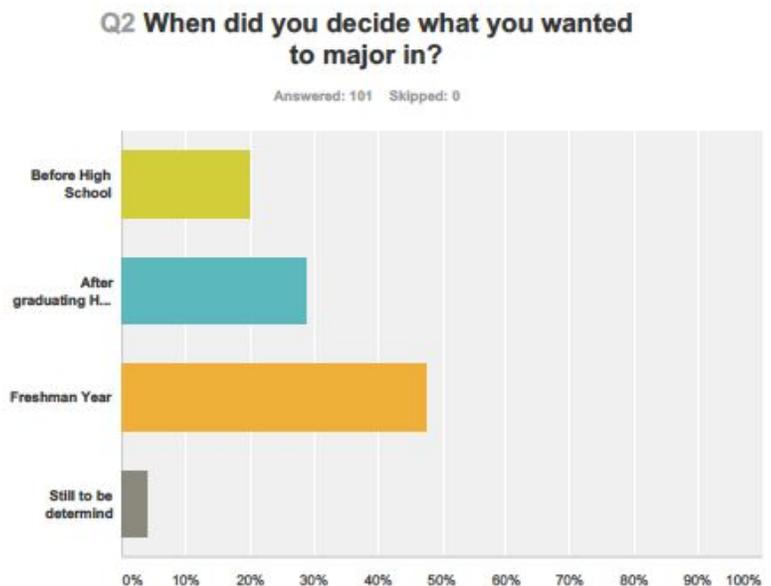
- Students: 87 current students, four incoming students, one graduate student and nine college graduates.
- Gender: 20 males, 80 females and one trans-female.
- Age: Two respondents under the age of 18, 92 respondents between the ages 18 and 24 years, four respondents between ages 25 and 30, and three respondents over the age of 31.
- Ethnicity: 90 respondents were Caucasian, two respondents were Hispanic, three respondents were African American, two respondents were Asian/Pacific Islander, two respondents were Native American/American Indian, and two respondents chose not to specify and were placed in the “other” category.
- Level of Education: 13 respondents completed high school, 67 completed some college, six completed associate’s degrees, 12 completed bachelor’s degrees, two completed master’s degrees, and one had a doctoral degree.



Findings:

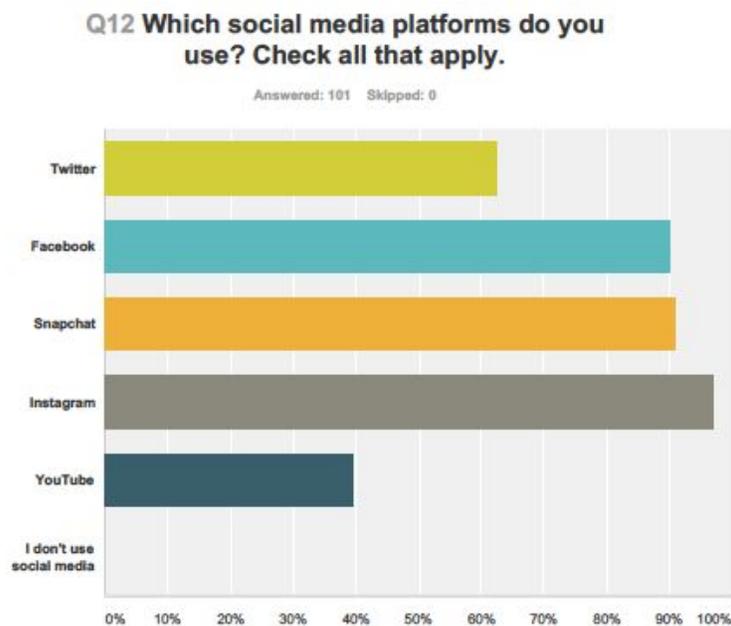
Through analysis, we discovered 48 percent of respondents decided their major during their first year of college, whereas only 20 percent decided before high school. This is important because it shows how critical it is for colleges to maintain and support strong and consistent recruiting efforts for current college students, since almost half of the respondents decided their major after coming to college. Most respondents chose their college as the most appealing college, which seems logical but also reinforces the idea that students are loyal and prideful to their respective colleges. It also introduces the idea of possible bias.

Another important finding we discovered is a majority of respondents described A&S as being broad, diverse and too big. This correlates with similar ideas our team believed before conducting this survey because our focus group described A&S almost identically. Additionally, respondents



described A&S as almost five times more feminine than it is masculine. This statistic is crucial for A&S to take into consideration when recruiting students because students typically correlate A&S with females. We discovered A&S is viewed as more feminine. This idea is supported with the staggering difference of female and male respondents; 79 percent of the respondents were female.

Question 12 led us to discover all respondents use some kind of social media in their day-to-day life. Statistics showed 97 percent of respondents use Instagram, 91 percent use Snapchat and 89 percent use Facebook. We found 84 percent of the respondents follow professional social media accounts.



Conclusions:

This survey confirmed A&S is not only seen as a more feminine college, but it also attracts more females than males due to this stereotype. In our focus group, we found most respondents described A&S as too broad and diverse. This description remained consistent

throughout our survey with most respondents choosing the adjectives “broad” and “diverse” to describe A&S. Nearly 73 percent of respondents chose the adjective “broad.” This emphasizes how beneficial it is for A&S to individualize its departments or consider implementing sub-colleges. We discovered all respondents use a form of social media as well as follow various professional social media accounts. This is important because our team initially assumed that few students follow professional accounts. Almost half of our respondents decided their major during their freshmen year of college. This is critical for A&S to take into consideration when recruiting students because it shows the value of consistent advertising to current OSU students. Findings from our focus group; however, showed how important it is for A&S to recruit to incoming OSU students, as well.

In order to better communicate with our target audience, A&S should advertise to students through email services as well as social media accounts, such as Instagram. A&S could also implement a more user-friendly website to attract more students and improve retention rates. Our respondents also showed a preference toward the A&S website being easy to navigate. After analyzing how our respondents described the college, we think it is best for A&S to identify and express its brand as more versatile as well as equally representative of all genders. A&S would benefit from implementing an advertising plan that targets its male students. Not only will this increase the college’s retention rates, but it will also improve the students’ opinion of the college.

Our team was limited by our method of distribution of the survey. It wasn’t a random sample because our team members have similar friend, family and school groups. A main limitation concerning respondent profiles resulted from our team reaching out to more female than male students; therefore, we had more female respondents. Our team also administered the

survey to more current college students than incoming college students. This made it hard for us to gather a better sample of respondents. We targeted incoming and current college students and found many of the students we sent our survey to didn't respond. Our team considered the possibility that our target audience may not have responded due to lack of interest or busy schedules. Another limitation in conducting this survey was the time we had to gather respondents. We felt rushed. The main approach we took to contacting people was online through mass emails and social media posts. This limited us because we didn't have the option to send the survey through direct mail or by telephone calls. These limitations may have resulted in an unforeseen bias and skewed statistics.

For future research, our team would conduct more focus groups because people seem to be more willing to talk face-to-face than click on a survey link. Specifically, we would conduct a focus group with only incoming college students and a stronger male to female ratio, since both our focus group and survey respondents consisted of more current female college students. This would also be of value to our client because conducting focus groups that narrow our target audience would allow the respondents to feel more comfortable and allow us to gather new specific insight.