REPORT ON THE 2010

STUDENT LIFE SURVEY

Developed by the Department of Student Governance and Development and the Department of Educational Administration (MSU)

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SECTION 1

1.   INTRODUCTION: OVERVIEW OF STUDENT LIFE SURVEY

This is the second year the Department of Student Governance and Development (SGD) has engaged in the Student Life Survey. The objectives of the study were to

- assist in identifying possible causes in the lack of interest in student life;
- develop possible strategies to revive student interest; and
- analyse participation in student life with regards to race and nationality.

The survey is an assessment of the student experience in an effort to both understand the issues and challenges of students. It provided NMMU students with an opportunity to give their input and contribute to improving the overall student life experience at the NMMU.

The results of the 2009 survey highlighted areas of concern. Continuation of the survey in 2010 should indicate if changes occurred.

Results of the survey have at least three specific benefits to the NMMU. First, it provides information to student affairs departments regarding the perceptions of students' views on student life with specific analysis given to the different cultural and gender attitudes. Second, it will clarify if the issue of transport with regards to student life participation is as severe a challenge as previously thought. Third, it will indicate the best possible communication strategies and tools to consider with regards to campus wide communication to the general student body.

The total number of respondents to the Student Life Survey comprised 1726 students. This represents 7.8 % of the 22056 students who met the criteria for inclusion in the study. The estimated sampling error based on the survey sample size, the total number of respondents, and the overall response rate is 2.27.

Registered NMMU students on the North, South, 2nd Avenue and Missionvale campuses were offered the opportunity to participate in the study. George campus students were not included. Bird Street campus deals with mature students and the focus was specifically aimed at the student life offered on the North, South, 2nd Avenue and Missionvale campuses.

1.1 Structure of the report

The report is comprised of four sections. Section one discusses the design and data collection, section two contains an interpretation of the data results and section three discusses the areas of concern and recommendations and conclusions. Section four provides the appendix, which includes a copy of the survey.

1.2 Questionnaire design and data collection process

A two-pronged approach to data collection was employed. First, we used a census approach and posted a notice informing students about the Student Life Survey (SLS) and the relevant URL address on the University Portal System. Our rationale for choosing such an approach was that all NMMU students have access to the portal. The second means of recruitment used convenience sampling by placing student volunteers strategically around campus (e.g., taxi stops and public transportation areas) to ask students to complete a paper and pencil version of the SLS if they did not complete the on-line version. The second method of recruiting students was used because students *may* not be willing to deplete their web account by accessing and completing the survey on-line, may not have easy access to computers, or by completing a hardcopy may feel less threatened with regards to their own computer literacy. The respondents were assured anonymity in the on-line and paper versions of the consent form.

Chi-square tests for independence were used to determine if differences existed between the paper and pencil version and the on-line version respondents and also

the survey responses for the two versions of the survey. No statistically significant differences were found except in the following question: *Participating in campus life activities helps me acquire more skills that I can use after university.* More participants disagreed on the paper and pencil version than the online version.

The Student Life Survey was developed through a consultative process with the members of the Co-curricular Forum. Stakeholders included representatives from the Sport department, Arts and Culture and Residences. Associate Professor Matthew Wawrzynski from Michigan State University assisted with the design of a draft version of the Student Life Survey. The draft survey was distributed at the Co-curricular Forum and further suggestions and recommendations were incorporated into the final version. The Student Life Survey was submitted to the NMMU Research Ethics Committee (Human) for final approval.

 The final version of the Student Life Survey comprised of the following sections (see Appendix A):

1. Perceptions of student life at NMMU (A Likert type scale was used).
2. Hours per week spent on student life activities
3. Events most likely to attend
4. For students participating: Students' satisfaction with their participation. (A Likert scale was used.)
5. For students not participating: Students' satisfaction with their participation. (A Likert scale was used.)
6. Interferences with involvement in student life activities
7. Communication
8. Biographical information

SECTION TWO

2. INTERPRETATION AND PRESENTATION OF THE RESULTS

A Likert-type rating scale with an unequal 1-5 agreement format was selected. There is an argument against having a mid-point being that people usually hold opinions or judgements one way or the other. The support for the idea of neutrality is that it represents a genuine alternative judgement and so does not express their opinions if they have no genuine position.

The responses for individual items are presented in tabular form as mean scores. The number of respondents who answered each question (n) is indicated in a separate column after the mean scores in the tables.

The mean scores represent the aggregate of the responses on the range from "strongly disagree" (1) to "strongly agree" (5). In the interpretation of the individual items, mean scores are interpreted in the following manner:

- A score of 4.2 and more indicates a high level of satisfaction
- A score of between 3.4 and 4.2 indicates an acceptable level of satisfaction;
- A score of between 2.6 and 3.4 indicates room for improvement
- A score of 2.6 and less signals a problem that is in need of urgent attention.

The data were coded and analysed with the assistance of a statistician. The statistical techniques used in the analysis, based on the relevance to the research questions is frequency analysis; cross-tabulation analysis and correlation analyses. Frequency analysis produces frequency counts and percentages for the value of an individual variable. Cross-tabulation enabled researchers to see if there is a relationship between two variables, while correlation analysis was used to test the existence of relationships between the variables beings studied. Descriptive and inferential statistics such as frequencies, tables, percentages and correlation tests were used in the data analysis and summaries. Relationships between variables

were identified, using frequencies, chi-square tests for independence, independent sample t-test, analysis of variance (ANOVA) and multiple analysis of variance (MANOVA) tests.

2.1 Demographic trends with respect to the survey

In this section, respondents will be described according to specific biographical variables including gender, age, race, year of study, faculty campus base, and on campus vs. off campus.

2.1.1 Gender

Graph 1: Registered students vs. respondents according to gender
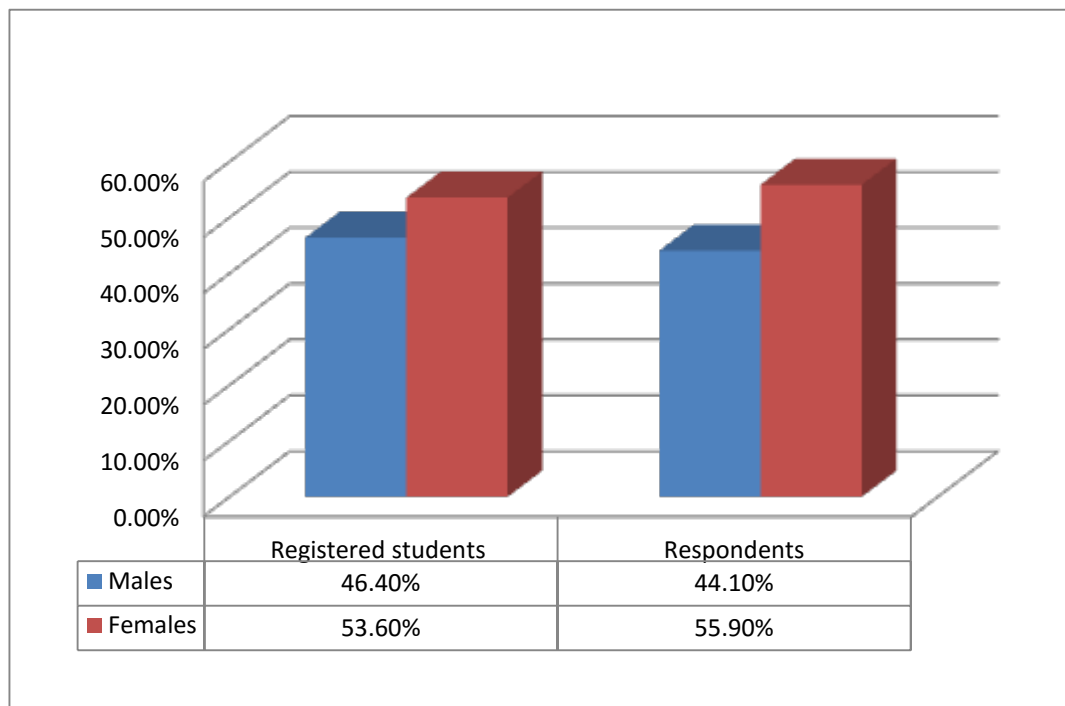
The gender breakdown of the respondents compared to the NMMU general student population is very similar. Graph 1 demonstrates that 44.1% of the respondents are male, and 46.4% of NMMU population is male. 53.6 % of the student population is female and 55.9% of the respondents are female. In general, students responding to

the survey were proportionally representative of the general student population with reference to gender.

2.1.2 Age

The average age of respondents to the survey is 21.44 years of age (SD = 3.17). The average age of the general student population is 22.

2.1.3 Race

Graph 2: Registered students vs. respondents according to race
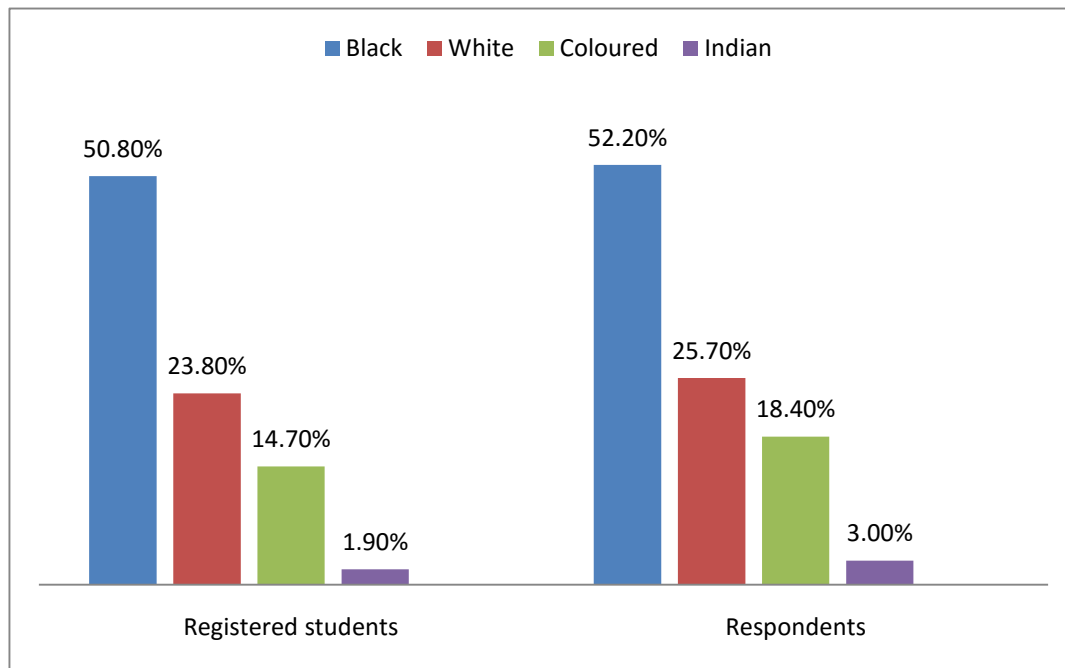
Graph 2 reflects that the race classification of the participants is relatively proportionate to the race classification of NMMU students. The highest percentage of registered students (50.8%) is Black and in direct correlation the majority of the respondents of the survey (52.2%) were Black. The lowest percentage of respondents (3%) was Indian which is relatively proportionate to the percentage of registered Indians (1.9%).

Respondents were also asked if they were South African or International students. 10.5 % of respondents were International students. NMMU has a compliment of 8.8% International students.

2.1.4   Year of study

Graph 3: Registered students vs. respondents according to year of study

	Registered students	Respondents
1st year	32.90%	36.40%
2nd year	24.30%	29.20%
3rd year	22.90%	22.40%
4th year	8.10%	6.90%
Post Grad	11.80%	5.00%
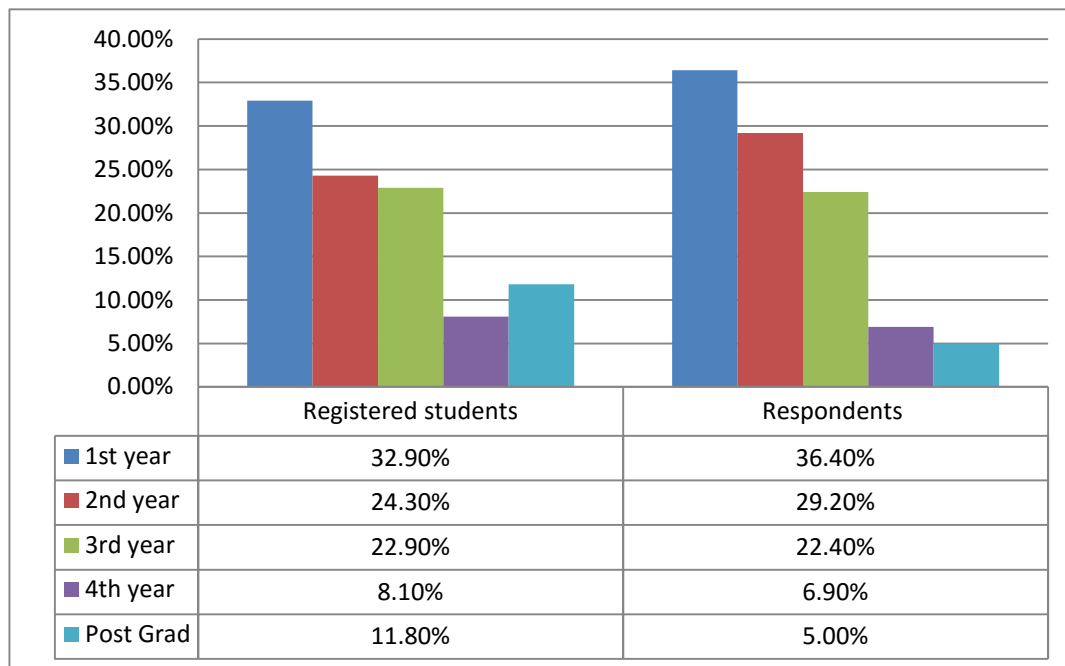
Graph 3 reflects the breakdown of the sample size into the year of study. When compared to the statistics of the registered students, it was found to be relatively proportionate. The highest response rate of the survey was amongst the first year students (36.4%) and the lowest response rate amongst the Post Graduate students (5.0%).

2.1.5 Faculty representation

Graph 4: Respondents according to faculty.
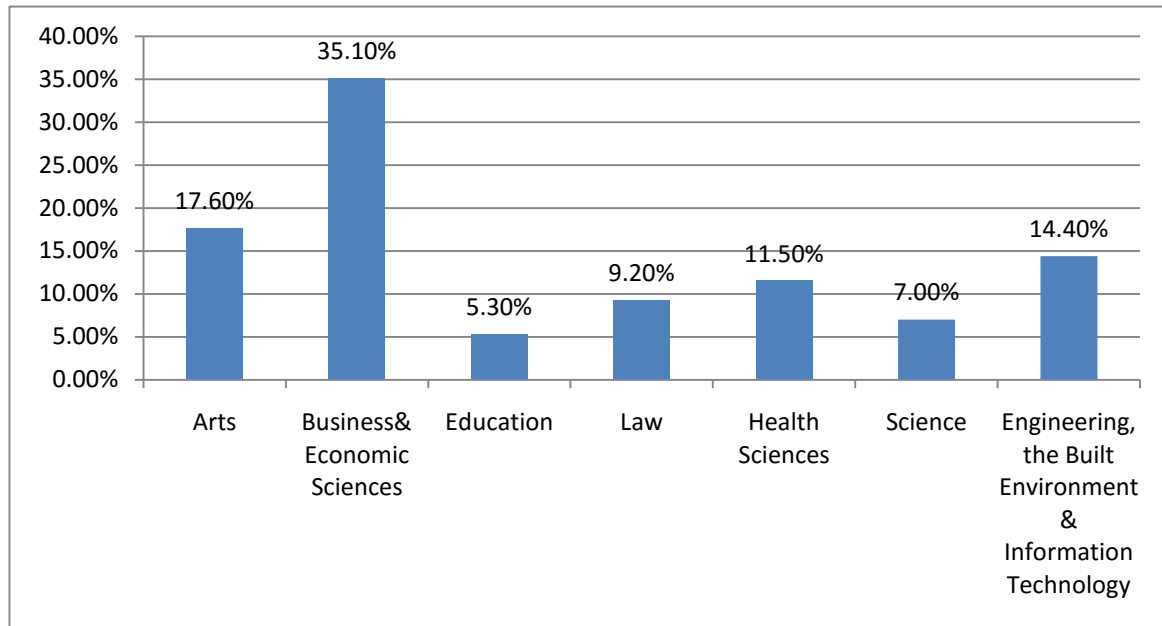
Graph 4 reflects the breakdown of the respondents according to the faculties.

The biggest compliment of respondents (35.10%) was from the Business & Economic Sciences Faculty, which is the largest faculty at NMMU.

2.1.6 Campus base

Graph 5: Participation according to campus

	Registered students	Respondents
■ North	26.40%	17.80%
■ South	47.60%	60.30%
■ 2nd Ave	19.60%	16.50%
■ Missionvale	6.40%	5.40%
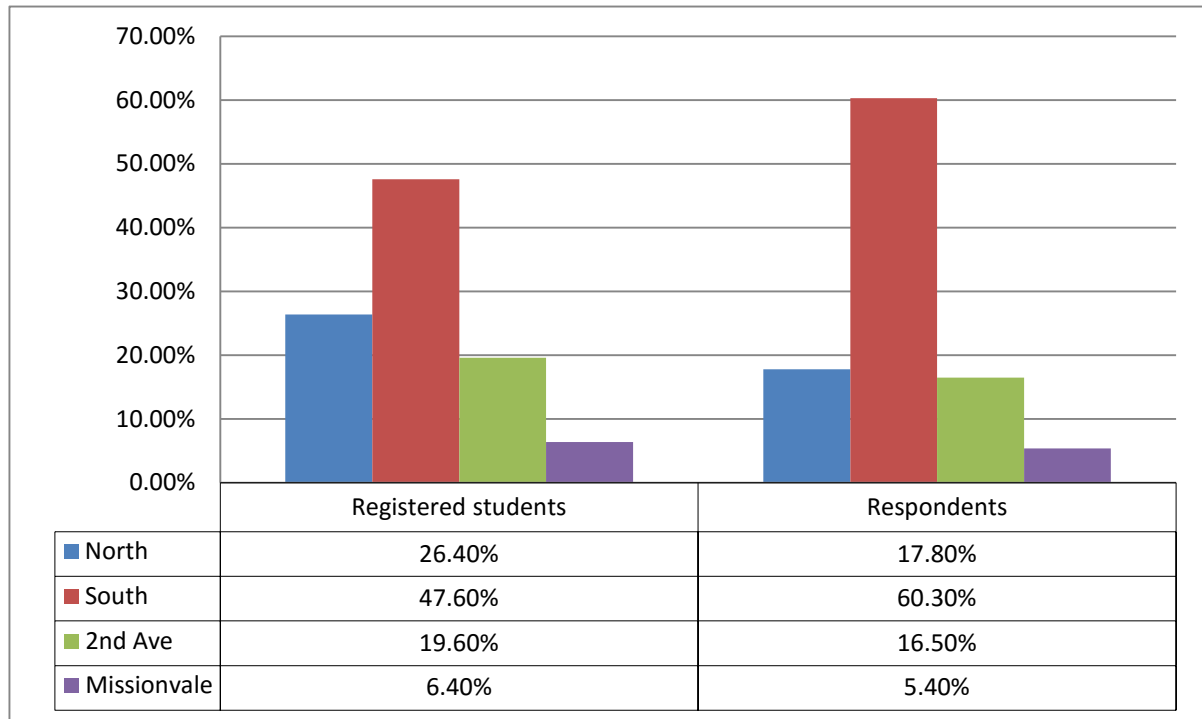
The respondents according to campus base were found to be relatively proportionate when compared to the number of registered students. The highest proportion of respondents (60.3%) was from South Campus which has the highest proportion of registered students (47.6%).

2.1.7 On campus vs. Off campus

Graph 6: On vs. off campus breakdown

On Campus
23.90%
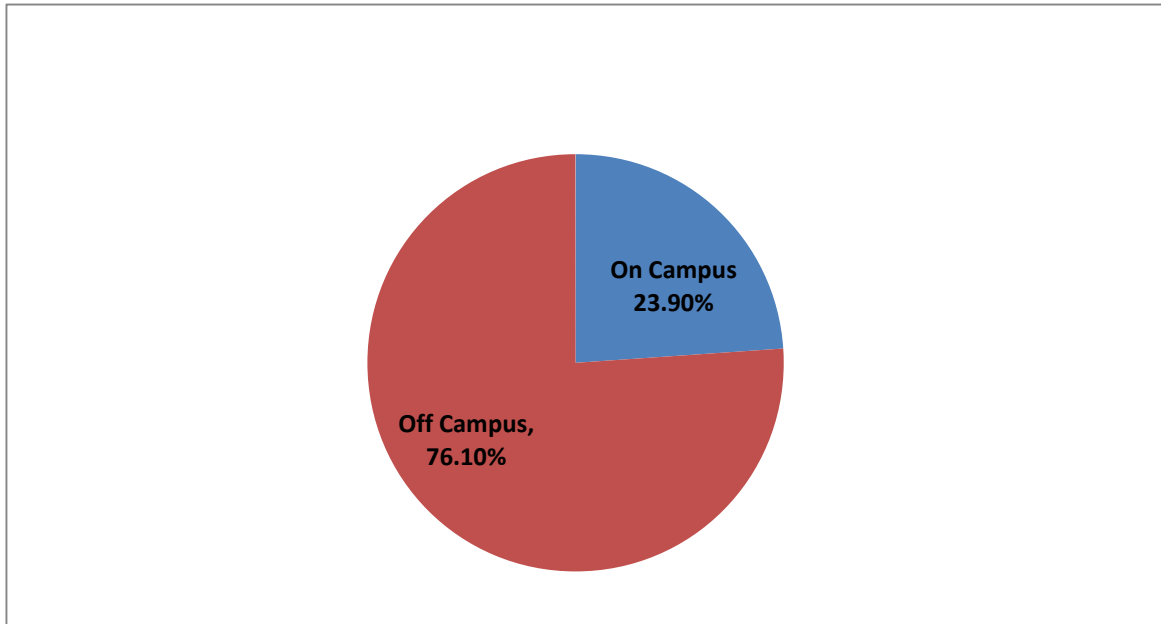
Off Campus,
76.10%

Graph 6 reflects the breakdown between on campus and off campus students. The majority of the respondents (76.1%) live off campus, which is in proportion with NMMU students. 87.9% of students live off-campus.

2.2 Perceptions of student life at NMMU

Section 1 of the survey was completed by all respondents to get an idea of their perceptions of student life at NMMU.

Table 1: Perceptions of student life

Please answer the following statements using the scale to the right.	Mean	Number (n)	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
My family encourages me to continue with my university education	4.59	1696	75.7	15.2	4,5	1.2	3.4
I feel a sense of connection with NMMU.	3.54	1690	15.1	39.8	33.6	7.6	3.9
I am meeting people with different backgrounds to me at NMMU.	4.26	1686	48.0	37.5	9.8	1.7	2.9
I am proud to be going to NMMU	4.11	1686	41.3	36.5	17.1	2.3	2.7
I feel like NMMU is a community	3.58	1685	20.5	35.7	29.7	9.6	4.5

Students have similar views on student life on campus. Mean scores indicate a general congruence towards a positive perception. The statements "*I feel a sense of connection with NMMU"* and *"I feel like NMMU is a community*" received a lower rating than the rest. Respondents tended to waver between agreeing and being neutral.

The results were further analysed. T-tests were conducted on student views using the following variables:

- Gender
- On vs. Off Campus

The results indicate that the differences among scores are not statistically or practically significant. Both sets of student groupings indicated an acceptable to high level of satisfaction with student life.

Multiple analysis of variance tests (MANOVAS) were then used to determine the differences between the race groups in terms of satisfaction with regards to student life. See table 2

Table 2: Differences in perceptions according to race.

	Black n=573	Coloured n=203	Indian n=32	White n=286	Effect
My family encourages me to continue my university education.	4.58	4.61	4.52	4.62	No effect
I feel a sense of connection with NMMU.	3.56	3.54	3.19	3.31	small effect
I am meeting people with different backgrounds to me at NMMU	4.31	4.24	4.13	4.06	small effect
I am proud to be going to NMMU	4.20	4.15	3.75	3.84	small effect
I feel like NMMU is a community	3.72	3.61	3.47	3.06	medium effect

$F_{(15, 3264)} = 6.32$, $p \le .001$; Pillai's Trace = .085; partial eta squared = .03

Generally students from all race groupings felt the same. The exception was the statement "*I feel like NMMU is a community*". Black, Coloured and Indian students tended to agree more with the statement than White students who tended to be neutral in their response.

2.3 General overview of student life activities

Although residence events are reflected in the graphs below (the residences makeup is predominantly Black) a more detailed graph is included at the end of the student life activities section. Also, despite the fact that 196 non-residents attended residence events, residence events must be viewed in the light that generally only residence students participate in residence life and make up a very smaller percentage of the respondent total.

Graph 7: Participation in student life activities
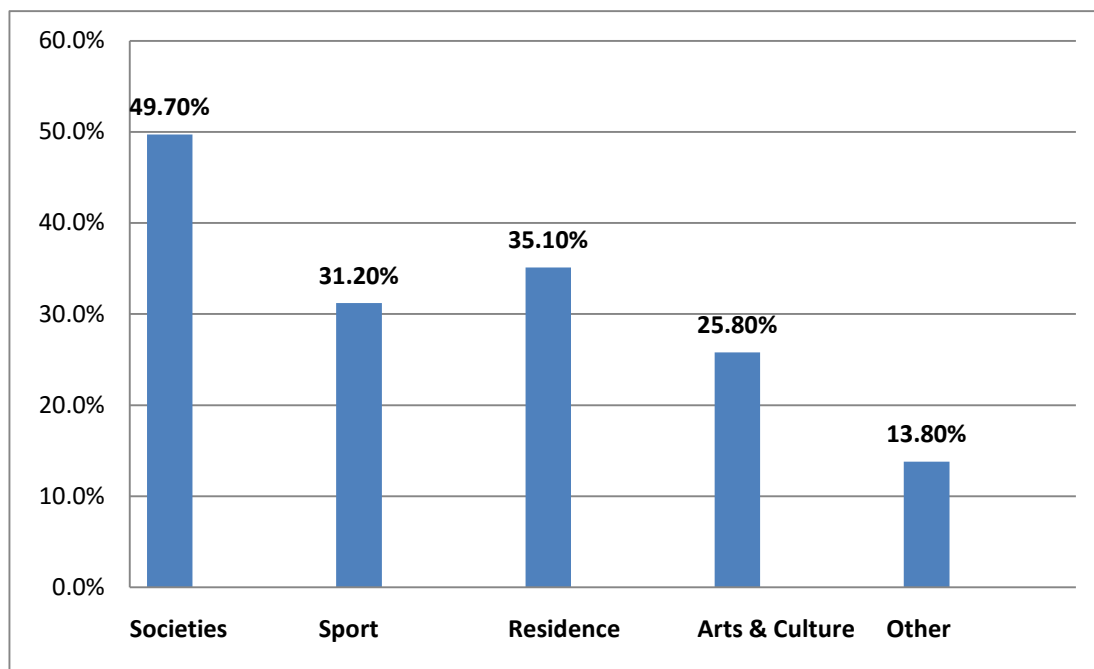
Graph 7 reflects the percentage of participation in student life activities. The majority of the respondents (49.7%) participate in Societies. 13.8% of respondents were involved in other activities on campus. Other activities were varied and ranged from academic work to attending the gym and jogging. Personal development scored high and included "*mentoring sessions*" to "attending *seminars"*. Two other areas clearly indicated were, attending religious/spiritual activity and socialising.

2.4 Activity according to race

Graph 8: Participation according to race

	Societies	Sport	Residence events	Arts &Culture
Black	27.60%	15.20%	19%	13.80%
Coloured	6.40%	4.20%	3%	3.40%
Indian	1.50%	0.50%	0.50%	0.60%
White	8.20%	7.10%	1.50%	4.20%
Other	0.30%	0.20%	0.20%	0.0
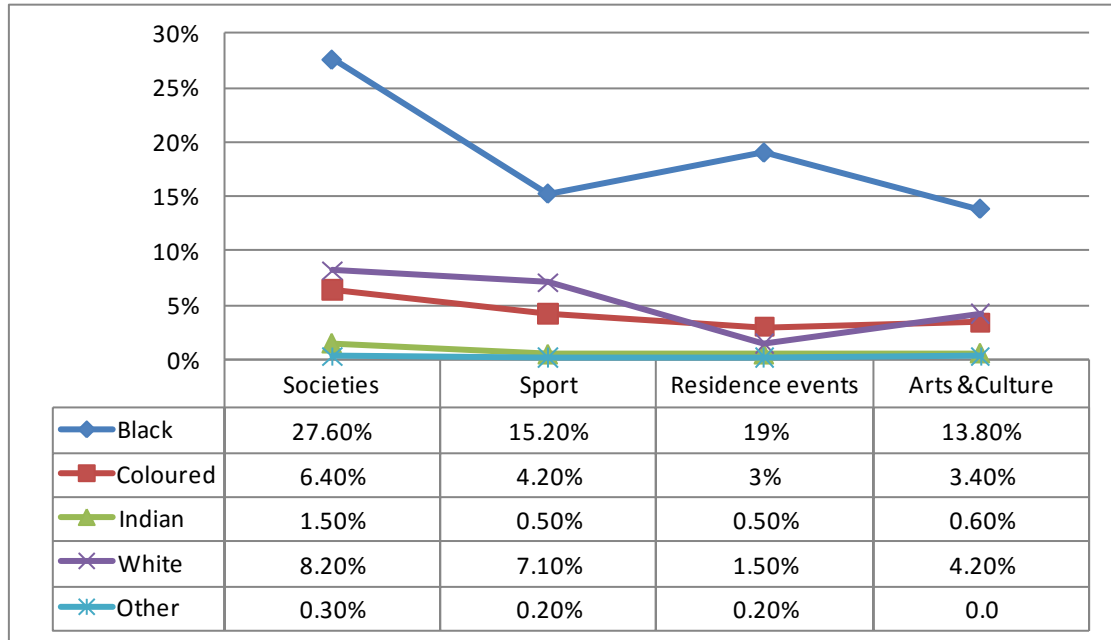
As reflected in the graph, the majority of the respondents who participate in all the different student life activities are Black students. Indian students do not tend to participate in student life activities.

3. Time spent on student life activities

The data were further analysed to determine the time spent on student life activities according to race. Graphs 9-12 illustrate the differences in time according to the race groupings.

Graph 9: Society participation per race group

	1-10 hrs	11-20 hrs	21-30+ hours
Black	41.20%	7.60%	4.20%
Coloured	27.30%	4.90%	2.50%
Indian	19.40%	6.10%	3%
White	27.10%	1.10%	2%
Other	33.30%	0%	0%
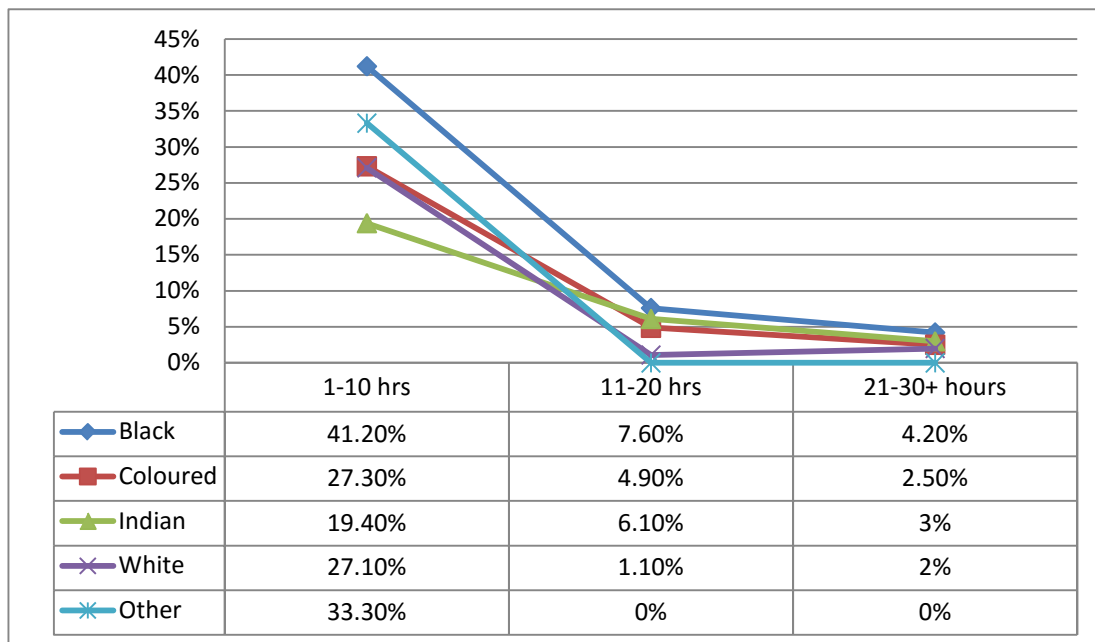
Graph 10: Sport participation per race group

	1-10 hrs	11-20 hrs	21-30+ hrs
Black	21.50%	4.80%	2.90%
Coloured	15.10%	3.90%	3.50%
Indian	9.40%	6.20%	0%
White	21.60%	3.40%	2%
Other	22.20%	0%	0
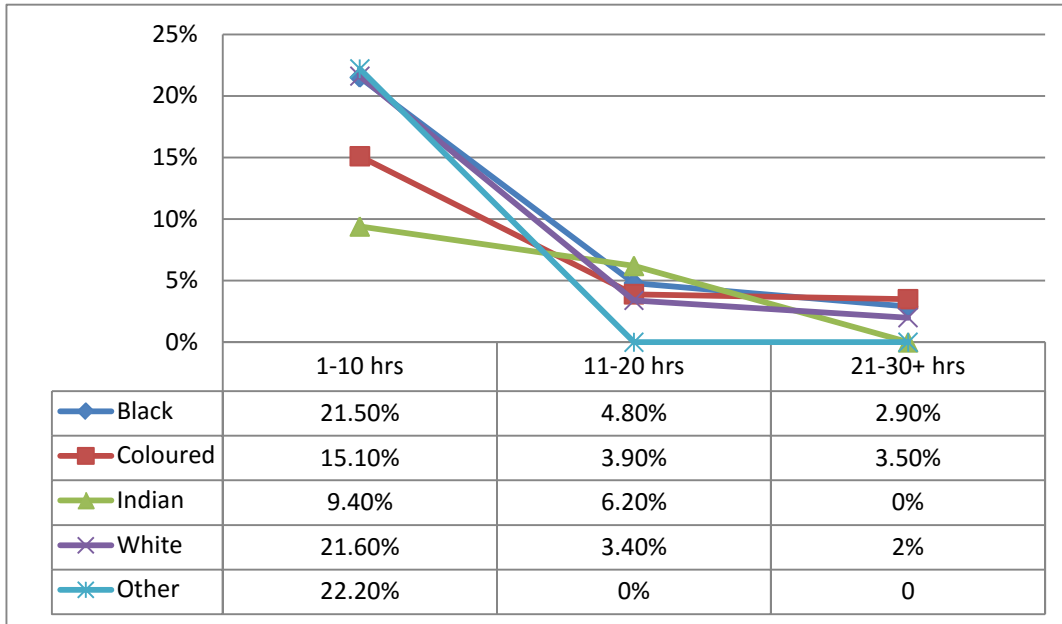
Graph 11: Residence event participation per race group

	1-10 hrs	11-20 hrs	21-30+ hrs
Black	24.60%	7.40%	5.10%
Coloured	12%	3.50%	0.50%
Indian	9.40%	6.30%	0.00%
White	4.60%	0.80%	0.40%
Other	22.20%	0.00%	0.00%
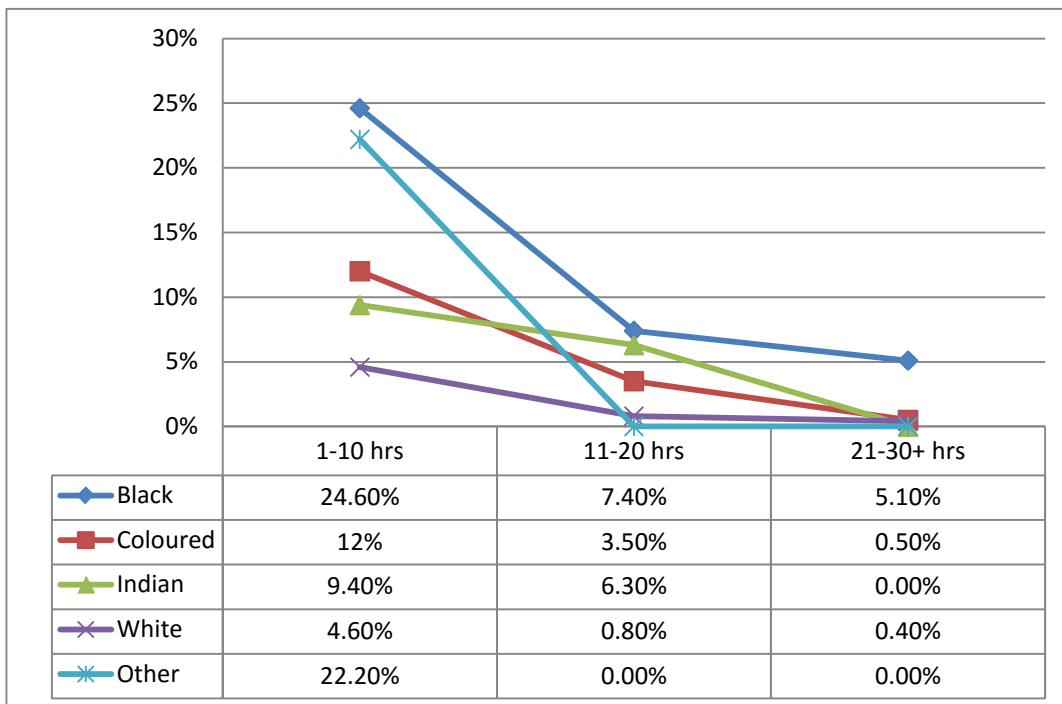
Graph 12: Arts & Culture participation per race group

	1-10 hrs	11-20 hrs	21-30+ hrs
Black	20.30%	4.40%	1.90%
Coloured	15.10%	1.50%	1.50%
Indian	0.50%	6.30%	0.00%
White	4.10%	0.00%	0.30%
Other	0.40%	0.00%	0.00%
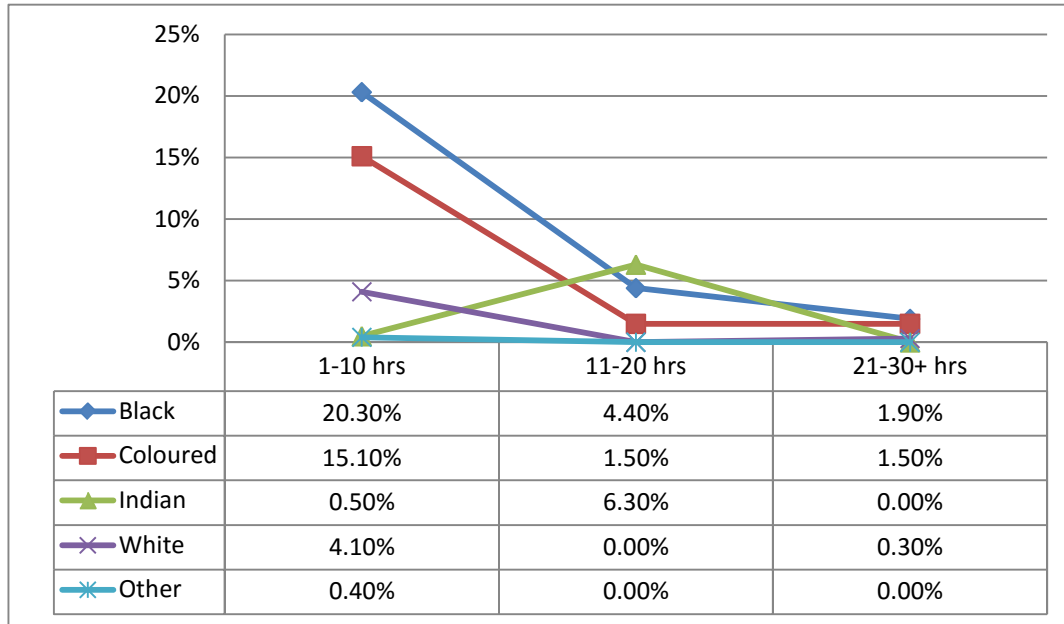
The graphs above – with the exception of sport – indicate that student life activities are predominantly attended by Black students and that the Black students spend between 1-10 hours per week on these activities. White, Black and International students spent an average of 1-10 hours per week on sport activities.

4. On vs. Off campus participation

Participation in student life was also analysed according to students living on campus versus those living off campus.

Graph 13: On vs. Off campus participation per student life activity
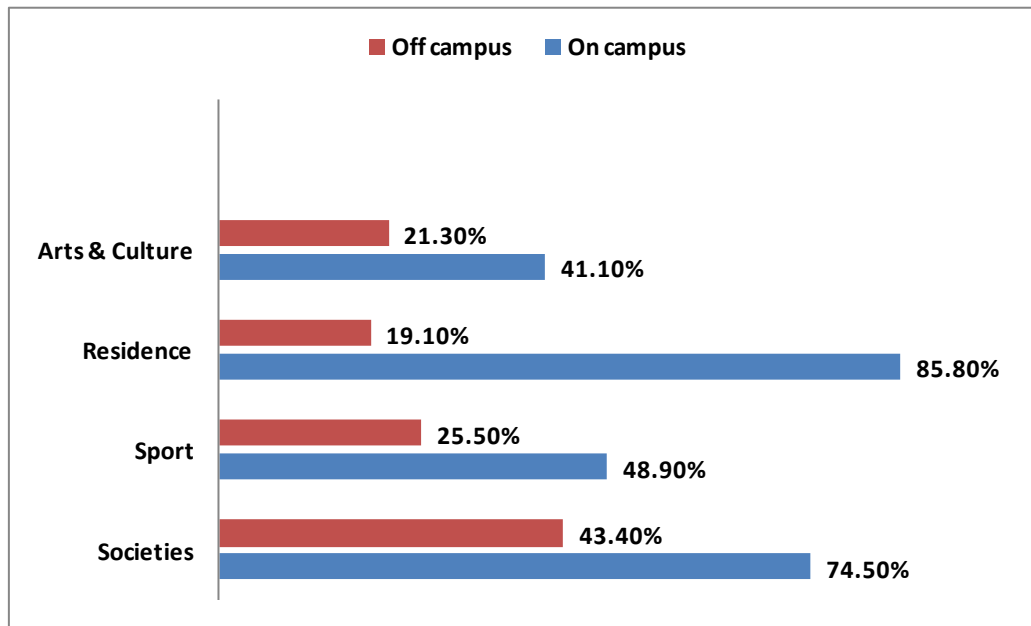
As illustrated in graph 13, the majority of student life activities are predominantly attended by students who reside on campus.

This information was further analysed according to the different student life activities. Graphs 14-17 reflect the findings.

Graph 14: On vs. Off campus society participation

	1-10 hrs	11-20 hrs	21-30+ hrs
On campus	57.40%	12.20%	5.00%
Off campus	35.50%	4.50%	3.40%
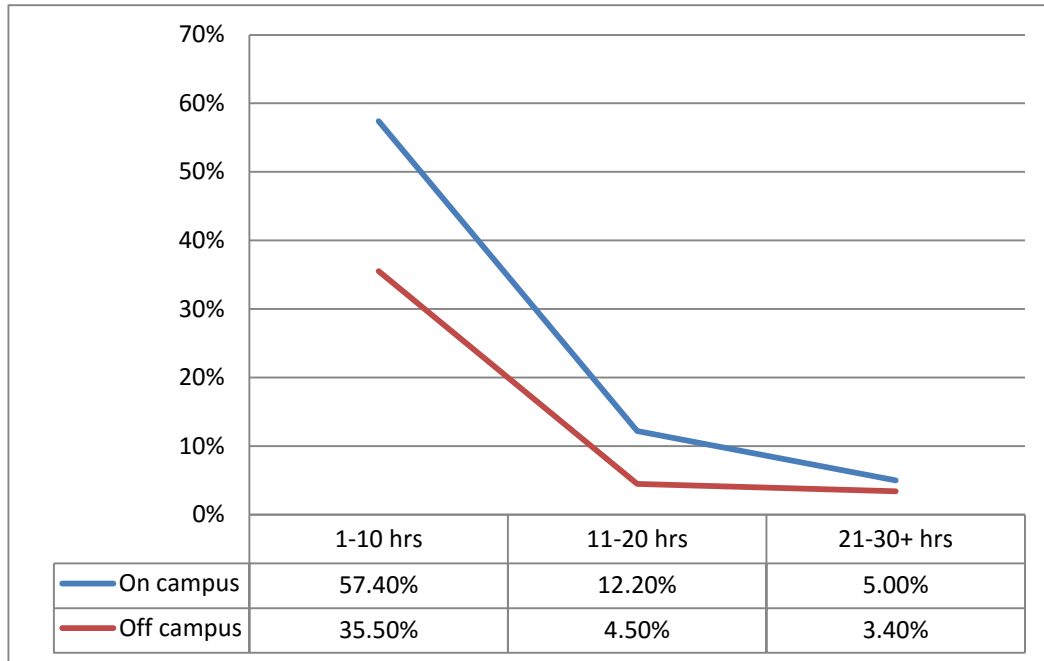
Graph 15: On vs. Off Campus sport participation

	1-10 hrs	11-20 hrs	20-30+ hrs
On campus	36.90%	6.10%	5.80%
Off campus	19.30%	3.70%	2.50%
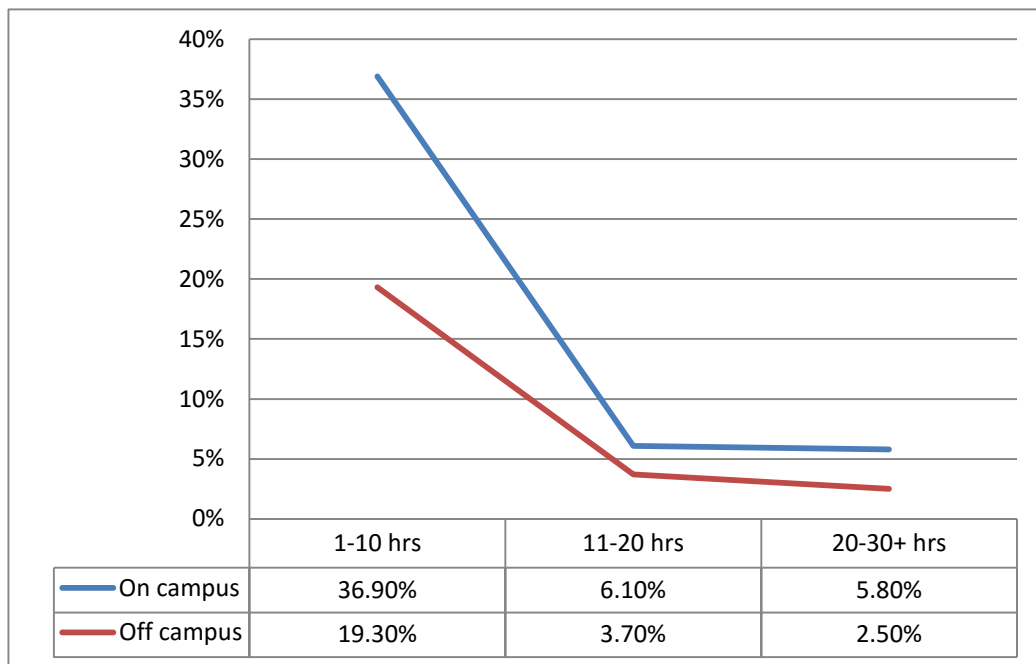
Graph 16: On vs. Off campus residence events participation

	1-10 hrs	11-20 hrs	21-30+hrs
On campus	57.60%	15.90%	12.40%
Off campus	14.00%	3.20%	1.90%
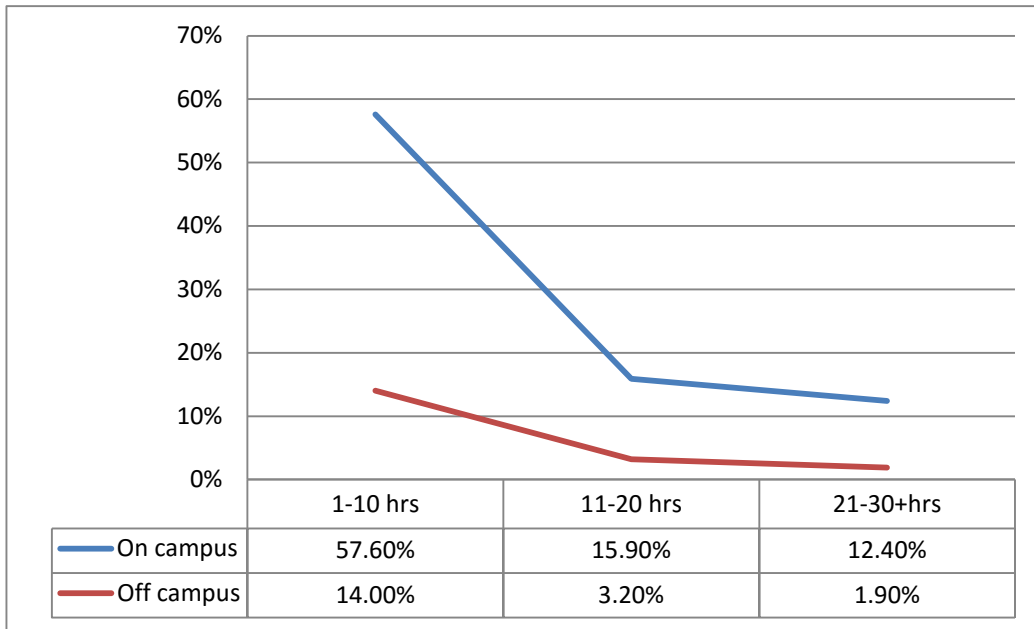
Graph 17: On vs. Off campus arts and culture participation

	1-10 hrs	11-20 hrs	21-30+hrs
On campus	31.40%	5.60%	4.10%
Off campus	17.40%	2.60%	1.30%
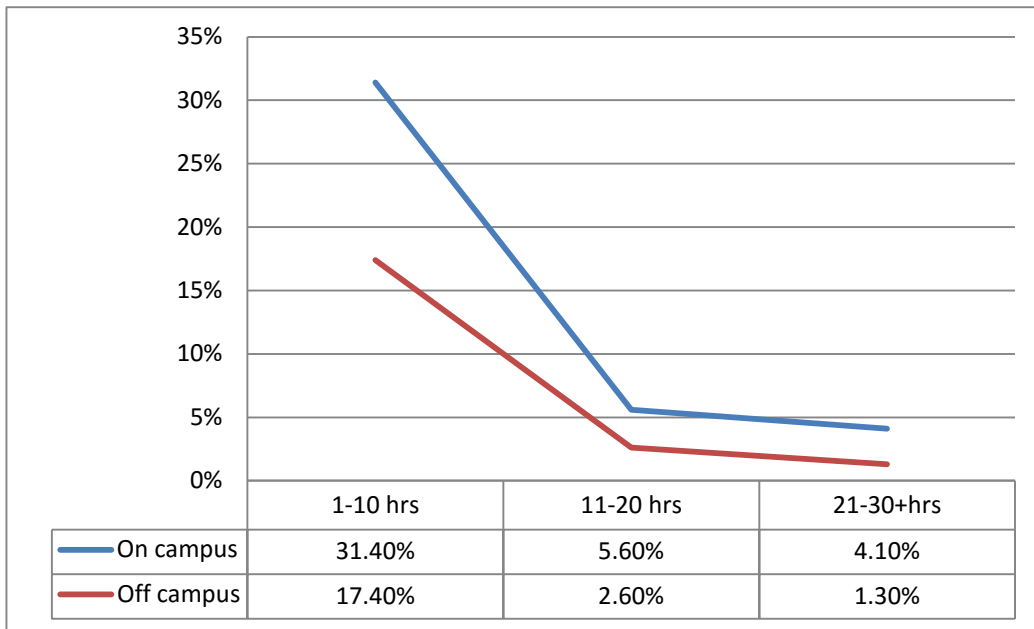
5. Events students are most likely to attend

According to the survey in order of preference the following NMMU co-curricular events that students are most likely to attend are:
(Students could select any number of preferences.)

Table 3: Events most likely to attend.

Event	Percent
1. Entertainment events (e.g. parties, pageants)	49.6%
2. Spectator at sport events	44.9%
3. Personal development workshops (e.g. academics success, leadership, employability)	40.2%
4. Bands/ live music	33%
5. Society events	31.7%
6. Cultural events	28%
7. Religious / Spiritual events	27.8%
8. Film screening	18.3%
9. Talk shops	14.0%

The next section of the survey was only completed by respondents who participated in student life activities. It enabled the researchers to gauge students' satisfaction with their participation.

6. Students' satisfaction with student life activity participation

6.1 General overview of student satisfaction

Table 4: General overview of student satisfaction for students who participated in student life activities

Please answer the following statements using the scale to the right.	Mean	Number (n)	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Overall, I am satisfied with my level of involvement in campus life activities at NMMU.	3.42	690	13.0	35.9	35.5	10.9	4.6
Participating in campus life activities enhances my academic work.	3.33	690	11.2	31.9	39.7	13.2	4.1
Participating in campus life activities helps me develop leadership skills.	3.85	685	24.5	45.8	22.3	4.8	2.5
Participating in campus life activities helps me acquire skills that I can use after university.	3.97	679	30.8	43.9	19.3	3.4	2.7
Participating in campus life activities helps me decide on the type of work I may want to do after university.	3.51	671	16.7	34.6	35.5	9.7	3.6
Participating in campus life helps me to enhance my CV so that I look more attractive to future employers.	3.82	668	28.7	39.7	19.9	7.8	3.9
Being involved in campus life activities at NMMU is a good use of my time	3.75	661	19.4	44.6	29.2	5.3	1.5
Participating in campus life activities helps me increase my self-confidence.	4.02	647	31.1	46.4	17.5	3.2	1.9
Participating in campus life activities helps me relieve stress.	3.80	654	26.0	39.6	25.7	5.7	3.1
Participating in campus life activities helps me give back to the campus community.	3.77	657	19.6	46.6	27.4	4.3	2.1
Participating in campus life is a good way for me to meet people.	4.28	656	45.9	40.5	10.4	1.7	1.5
Participating in campus life activities is a good way for me to help others.	4.95	659	27.2	46.4	22.3	2.3	1.8

Mean scores indicate that students have similar views on student life activities and are generally satisfied with their participation. The highest mean ratings show high levels of satisfaction. "Participating *in campus life activities is a good way for me to help others*" (M=4.95), and "*Participating in campus life activities is a good way for me to meet people"* (M=4.28).

6.2   Students' satisfaction according to gender

Table 5: Satisfaction of student life activity participants by gender.

Please answer the following statements using the scale to the right.	Sex	Mean	Number (n)
Overall, I am satisfied with my level of involvement in campus life activities at NMMU.	Female	3.32	235
	Male	3.34	204
Participating in campus life activities enhance my academic work.	Female	3.85	233
	Male	3.78	204
Participating in campus life activities helps me develop leadership skills.	Female	3.85	233
	Male	3.78	204
Participating in campus life activities helps me acquire skills that I can use after university.	Female	3.94	229
	Male	3.83	203
Participating in campus activities helps me to decide on the type of work I may want to do after university.	Female	3.54	226
	Male	3.45	200
Participating in campus life activities helps me to enhance my CV so that I look more attractive to future employers.	Female	3.82	226
	Male	3.69	200
Being involved in campus like activities is a good use of my time	Female	3.71	224
	Male	3.68	194
Participating in campus life activities helps me increase my self-confidence.	Female	4.03	221
	Male	3.90	192
Participating in campus life activities helps me relieve stress.	Female	3.75	220
	Male	3.77	192
Participating in campus life activities helps me give back to the campus community.	Female	3.73	221
	Male	3.68	193
Participating in campus life activities is a good way for me to meet people.	Female	4.24	221
	Male	4.25	194
Participating in campus life activities is a good way for me to help others.	Female	3.93	221
	Male	3.84	195

Table 5 reflects the differences in perceptions between male and female respondents. No statically significant differences were found amongst gender. Interesting to note: Female respondents scored benefits like "*enhancing their CV*" and "*increasing self confidence*" higher than male respondents.

6.3 Students' satisfaction according to race

Table 6: Satisfaction of participants according to race.

Please answer the following statements using the scale left to right	Black	Coloured	Indian	White	Effect
Being involved in student life activities at NMMU is a good use of my time.	3.78	3.76	3.27	3.44	small
Overall, I am satisfied with my level of involvement in student life activities at NMMU.	3.42	3.22	3.64	3.25	no
Student life activities I participate in at NMMU enhance my academic work.	3.33	3.47	3.18	3.17	no
Student life activities I participate in at NMMU help me develop leadership skills.	3.86	3.88	3.73	3.51	small
Student life activities I participate in at NMMU help me acquire skills that I can use after leaving the university.	3.92	4.12	3.73	3.57	small
Student life activities I participate in at NMMU help me decide on the type of work I may want to do after university.	3.59	3.57	3.36	3.12	small
Student life activities I participate in at NMMU help me to enhance my CV so that I look more attractive to future employers.	3.85	3.98	3.73	3.41	small
Being involved in student life activities at NMMU help me to meet people with different backgrounds.	4.30	4.23	4.13	4.06	small
Student life activities I participate in at NMMU help me increase my self-confidence.	4.09	4.00	3.55	3.67	small
Student life activities I participate in at NMMU help me relieve stress.	3.81	3.70	3.55	3.55	no
Student life activities I participate in at NMMU help me give back to the campus community.	3.76	3.72	3.45	3.48	no
Being involved in student life activities at NMMU is the best way for me to meet people.	4.32	4.21	4.09	4.03	no
Student life activities I participate in at NMMU are a good way for me to help others.	3.88	4.05	3.82	3.66	no

Table 6 reflects the students' perceptions according to race. Although there were some statistically significant differences among the race groupings, the effect that race has on the results is small or non-existent.

Interesting to note is the statement "*Student life activities I participate in at NMMU help me increase my self-confidence*" Black and Coloured students tended to agree with the statement while the Indian and White students tended to be neutral.

6.4 Students' satisfaction On vs. Off campus students

Results were analysed according to students who live on campus and those who do not.

Table 7: Satisfaction of participants according to on vs. off campus students

Please answer the following statements using the scale to the right.	On / Off campus	Mean	Number
Overall, I am satisfied with my level of student life involvement activities at NMMU	On Campus	3.57	268
	Off Campus	3.32	392
Participating in student life activities enhances my academic work.	On Campus	3.35	268
	Off Campus	3.32	393
Participating in student life activities helps me develop leadership skills.	On Campus	3.88	266
	Off Campus	3.85	390
Participating in student life activities helps me acquire skills that I can use after university.	On Campus	4.06	263
	Off Campus	3.92	387
Participating in student life activities helps me decide on the type of work I may want to do after university.	On Campus	3.49	262
	Off Campus	3.52	382

Participating in student life activities helps me to enhance my CV so that I look more attractive to future employers.	On Campus	3.88	260
	Off Campus	3.78	381
Being involved in campus life activities at NMMU is a good use of my time.	On Campus	3.84	261
	Off Campus	3.71	373
Participating in student life activities helps me increase my self-confidence.	On Campus	4.10	253
	Off Campus	3.97	369
Participating in student life activities helps me relieve stress.	On Campus	3.91	262
	Off Campus	3.74	368
Participating in student life activities helps me give back to the campus community.	On Campus	3.89	262
	Off Campus	3.72	370
Participating in student life activities is a good way for me to meet people.	On Campus	4.28	261
	Off Campus	4.28	371
Participating in student life activities is a good way for me to help others.	On Campus	4.05	261
	Off Campus	3.89	372

The average means scores reflect no statistically significant differences between the two groups. Scores indicate students have an acceptable level of satisfaction. Interesting to note is that both groups feel that "*Participating in student life activities is a good way for me to meet people*", as the mean score (M=4.28) indicate a high level of satisfaction.

7. Perceived benefits of participating in student life activities by students who currently do not participate in student life activities

This section was completed by students who did not participate in student life activities.   This was included to determine their perceptions about the benefits associated with participation in student life activities. Results indicate a general congruence regarding the benefits attached to participating in student life activities.

Table 8: Benefits associated with participating in student life activities by non-participants

Please answer the following statements using the scale to the right I think that participating in campus life activities would be beneficial in helping me to:	Mean	Number (n)	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
acquire skills that I can use after university.	3.79	895	22.3	44.5	25.7	5.1	2.3
meet new people.	4.27	897	41.2	47.6	9.0	1.1	1.0
develop leadership skills	3.86	881	25.4	42.7	25.9	4.2	1.8
enhance my academic work.	3.43	889	16.9	28.8	38.1	12.6	3.6
decide on the type of work I may want to do after university	3.50	889	17.9	35.2	30.4	12.0	4.5
increase my self-confidence.	3.92	887	28.3	44.5	20.2	4.8	2.1
relieve stress.	3.66	883	23.6	35.3	28.2	9.2	3.7
enhance my CV so that I look more attractive to future employers.	3.91	889	33.3	36.3	21.5	6.2	2.7

The table reflects a general consensus regarding participation in campus life activities. Respondents agree that participation will be beneficial in "*helping them to meet new people* (M = 4.27), "*increase their self confidence"* (M = 3.92) and "e*nhance their CV to look more attractive to future employers*" (M= 3.91).

The results were further analysed according to gender, race and on campus vs. off campus students.

Table 9: Benefits of participation by non-participants according to gender

Please answer the following statements using the scale to the right I think that participating in campus life activities would be beneficial in helping me to:	Sex	Mean	Number (n)
acquire skills that I can use after university.	Female	3.85	452
	Male	3.67	340
meet new people.	Female	4.28	455
	Male	4.22	340
develop leadership skills	Female	3.92	450
	Male	3.74	332
enhance my academic work.	Female	3.50	452
	Male	3.31	336
decide on the type of work I may want to do after university	Female	3.57	451
	Male	3.38	339
increase my self-confidence.	Female	3.98	449
	Male	3.77	336
relieve stress.	Female	3.70	451
	Male	3.52	3.34
enhance my CV so that I look more attractive to future employers.	Female	3.99	451
	Male	3.76	338

No statistically significant differences were found between male and female respondents. However both respondents thought that participating in student life activities would be beneficial in helping them to "*meet new people*". The mean scores are higher than 4.2 which indicate that respondents tended to strongly agree with the statement.

Table 10: Benefits of participation by non-participants according to race:

Please answer the following statements using the scale left to right I think that participating in campus life activities would be beneficial in helping me to	Black	Coloured	Indian	White	Effect
acquire skills that I can use after university?	3.92	3.92	3.67	3.45	medium
meet new people?	4.31	4.34	3.95	4.15	small
develop leadership skills?	4.00	3.99	3.86	3.54	small
enhance my academic work.	3.52	3.67	3.33	3.1	small
decide on the type of work I may want to do after university.	3.57	3.69	3.38	3.26	small
increase my self-confidence.	3.99	4.05	3.68	3.64	small
relieve stress.	3.75	3.72	3.36	3.38	small
enhance my CV so that I look more attractive to future employers.	3.96	4.08	3.76	3.72	small

The only practically significant differences occurred between Black and Coloured respondents when compared to White respondents. White respondents are neutral, while the Black and Coloured respondents tended to agree with the statement *"Participating in campus life activities would be beneficial in helping you to acquire skills that I can use after university".*

Table 11: Benefits of participation by non-participants on campus vs. off campus

Please answer the following statements using the scale to the right I think that participating in campus life activities would be beneficial in helping me to:	On/ off Campus	Mean	Number (n)
acquire skills that I can use after university.	On campus	3.89	95
	Off campus	3.78	772
meet new people.	On campus	4.35	94
	Off campus	4.26	775
develop leadership skills	On campus	4.06	93
	Off campus	3.84	763
enhance my academic work.	On campus	3.55	94
	Off campus	3.41	768
decide on the type of work I may want to do after university.	On campus	3.59	93
	Off campus	3.49	769
increase my self-confidence.	On campus	4.18	95
	Off campus	3.88	765
relieve stress.	On campus	3.97	88
	Off campus	3.62	768
enhance my CV so that I look more attractive to future employers.	On campus	4.00	94
	Off campus	3.91	769

Both groups of respondents thought that participating in student life activities would be beneficial in helping them to "*meet new people*". The mean scores are higher

than 4.2 which indicate that respondents tended to agree strongly with the statement.

Interesting to note that on campus students rated benefits such as "*develop leadership skills"*,   "*relieve stress*", " *increase my self confidence"* and "*enhancing my CV*" higher than the off campus students.

8. Interference with involvement in student life activities

Respondents were asked to rate the top 3 reasons for interference with student life activities. The top three reasons were:

1. Transport (difficulty getting to activities)
2. Time(involvement in other activities)
3. Day/ time that the activity is held

9. Communication

Students were asked to choose **the single** best way to inform them about campus events and information.

Table 12: Single best way to communicate with students about events and activities

1. NMMU Email	43.7%
2. SMS	25.0%
3. NMMU Communiqué	6.9%
4. Facebook	6.5%
5. Student Portal	4.9%
6. Fliers	2.8%
7. Posters on notice boards	2.7%
8. Word of mouth	2.6%
9. Banners at campus entrance	2.2%

10. Promotional display	1.8%
11. Electronic notice boards	0.7%
12. Other	0.1%

The highest ratings in this section of the questionnaire were namely: (1) NMMU Email as the source of information about events, (43.7%) and (2) SMS as the second most popular method of communicating (25.0%).
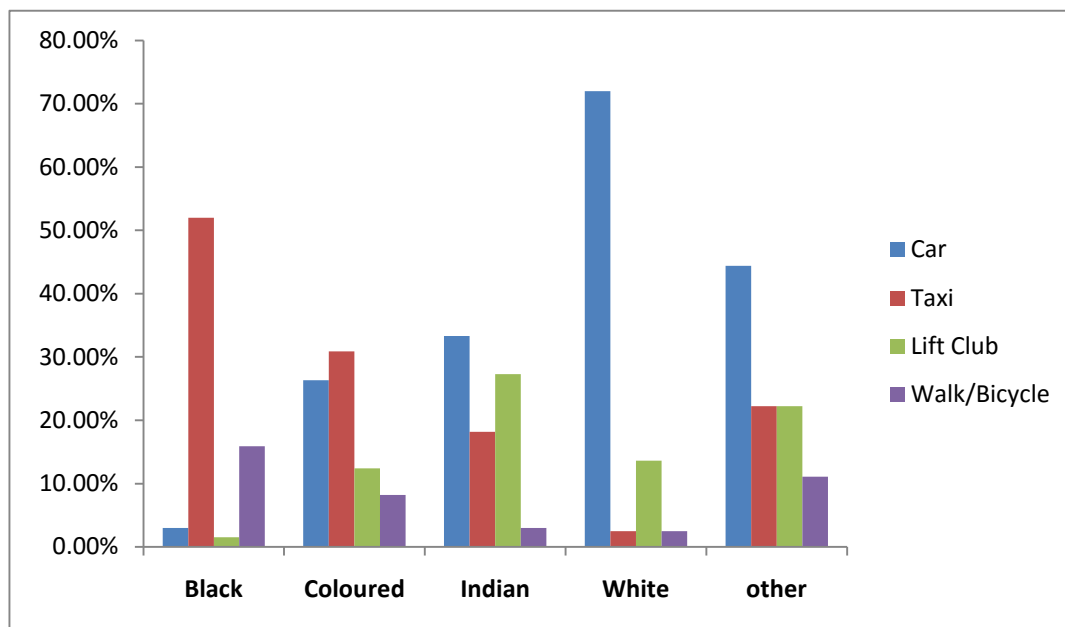
10. Oppidani Council

78.7 % of the students answered negative to the question "*Are you aware of the Oppidani Council?"*

11. Transport

76.1 % of respondents live off campus and take an average of *32 minutes* to travel to campus (one way).

Graph 18: Mode of transport according to race

Graph 18 reflects the way respondents commute to campus. The majority of the Black (52%) and Coloured (30.9%) students use the taxi system. White (72%) Indian (33.3%) and Other (44.4%) students arrive by car.

SECTION THREE

12. Areas of concern

Transport, time and financial constraints were identified as the major interferences with student participation in student life activities. In terms of the quantitative results no areas scored in the "urgent need of attention" category (i.e., very few items had mean ratings of below 2.6).

Although all students realise the benefits attached to participating in campus life activities, these activities are still predominantly supported by Black students and the students who live in the residences.

NMMU E-mail is still the preferred method of communication, SMS was ranked second, NMMU Communiqué third and Facebook fourth.

It must be noted that the outcomes of this study support the findings from the previous study- the 2009 NMMU Student Life Survey.

13. Recommendations and conclusion

It is recommended that the issues receive consideration as a follow-up to the survey and to:
- Communicate the findings of the student life survey with relevant staff.
- Use the results of the survey to enhance the current offerings and inform the development of future programmes to best meet the needs of our students.

14. Acknowledgements

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- Professor Matthew Wawrzynski, Michigan State University for his continued support, motivation and expertise in the design, collation and interpretation of the data.

15. Reference

Elliott, K., Pillay, R. & Potgieter, D. (2010). **NMMU Student Life Survey**

APPENDIX A

NMMU STUDENT LIFE SURVEY

This survey is to identify strategies to revive student interest in campus life at NMMU. We need your help to obtain the best possible information about your experiences. Your honest and thoughtful responses are very important, much appreciated, and are anonymous. If you have completed the survey <u>this year</u>, please do not complete it again.

SECTION 1. Please answer the following statements using the scale to the right.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. My family encourages me to continue my university education.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I feel a sense of connection with NMMU.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I am meeting people with different backgrounds than me at NMMU.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I am proud to be going to NMMU.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I feel like NMMU is a community.	1	2	3	4	5

SECTION 2. On average, how many hours per week do you participate in the following:	I do not participate	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21-25	More than 25
1. Student Societies (Religious, academic, political, developmental, etc.)	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. Organised sport at NMMU (campus league, league sport)	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. Residence events	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. NMMU Arts and Culture Societies (Jazz, Choir, Film, Creative arts, etc)	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. Other (please specify) _____	0	1	2	3	4	5	6

SECTION 3. What type of NMMU student life events are you most likely to attend (select all that apply):

○ 1.Cultural Events (plays, poetry readings) ○ 2. Spectator at NMMU sports games ○ 3. Society Events ○ 4. Talk shops

○ 5. Bands/Live music ○ 6. Film Screening ○ 7. Entertainment events (parties, pageants) ○ 8. Religious/Spiritual Events

○ 9. Personal development workshops (Academic success, leadership, employability) ○ 10. Other_____

SECTION 4. _COMPLETE THIS SECTION ONLY IF YOU PARTICPATE IN CAMPUS LIFE ACTIVITIES AT NMMU._ (IF YOU DO NOT PARTICIPATE IN STUDENT LIFE ACTIVITIES GO TO SECTION 5.) **Please answer the following statements using the scale to the right.**	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Overall, I am satisfied with my level of involvement in campus life activities at NMMU.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Participating in campus life activities enhances my academic work.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Participating in campus life activities helps me develop leadership skills.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Participating in campus life activities helps me acquire skills that I can use after university.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Participating in campus life activities helps me to decide on the type of work I may want to do after university.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Participating in campus life activities help me to enhance my CV so that I look more attractive to future employers.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Being involved in campus life activities at NMMU is a good use of my time.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Participating in campus life activities helps me to increase my self-confidence.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Participating in campus life activities helps me relieve stress.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Participating in campus life activities helps me give back to the campus community.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Participating in campus life activities is a good way for me to meet people.	1	2	3	4	5
12. Participating in campus life activities is a good way for me to help others.	1	2	3	4	5

(Please complete the other side)

SECTION 5. *COMPLETE THIS SECTION ONLY IF YOU DO NOT PARTICPATE IN CAMPUS LIFE ACTIVITIES AT NMMU.* **Please answer the following statements using the scale to the right** I think that participating in campus life activities would be beneficial in helping me to:	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. acquire skills that I can use after university.	1	2	3	4	5
2. meet new people.	1	2	3	4	5
3. develop leadership skills	1	2	3	4	5
4. enhance my academic work.	1	2	3	4	5
5. decide on the type of work I may want to do after university.	1	2	3	4	5
6. increase my self-confidence.	1	2	3	4	5
7. relieve stress.	1	2	3	4	5
8. enhance my CV so that I look more attractive to future employers.	1	2	3	4	5

Section 6. What are the top three reasons likely to interfere with your participation in campus life activities? (Please select only 3 and rank them with 1 for the most likely to 3 for the least likely)

1. Transport (difficulty getting to activities)		6. Lectures/class	
2. Time (involvement in other activities)		7. Day/Time that the activity is held	
3. Finances, lack of money		8. Family commitments	
4. Lack of knowledge of activities		9. Job/work	
5. Limited interest		10. Feeling isolated/not fitting in	

Section 7. The single best way to inform me about campus events and information is (choose only one):

○1. NMMU student e-mail ○2. NMMU Communiqué (mass emails) ○3. Fliers   ○4. Student Portal   ○5. Electronic notice board   ○6. Word of Mouth/another student   ○7. SMS ○8. Posters on notice boards   ○9. Banners at Campus entrance   ○10. Facebook   ○11. Promotional display ○12. Other – please specify

_____

2. Are you aware of the Oppidani Council? ○ yes ○ no

Section 8. Tell us about you

1. I live: ○on-campus ○off-campus
2. If you live off-campus, on an average day, how many minutes does it take you to commute to campus (one way), if you live on-campus please leave blank _____

3. If you live off-campus, what is the primary way that you commute to campus?

○1. I live on campus   ○2. Drive my own car ○3. Taxi ○4. Lift club ○5. Walk or bike ○6. Metro bus ○7. Relative drives me   ○8. Motorbike   ○9. Train and then other form of transport

○10. Other (please specify) _____

4. If you live <u>on campus</u>, which residence do you live in? ○1. I don't live on-campus ○2. Letaba ○3. Lebombo ○4. Xanadu ○5. Unitas ○6. Veritas ○7. Melodi ○8. Renaissance Postgraduate Student Village ○9. Oceana ○10. South Point ○11. Sanlam Student Village ○12.Laboria

5. Which campus are you based on? ○1. North ○2. South ○3. 2nd Avenue ○4. Missionvale

6. Age _____ **7. Gender** ○ female ○ male **8. Are you an international student?** ○ yes ○ no

9. If you are South African, what race group do you belong to: ○1. Black ○2. Coloured ○3 Indian ○4. White ○5. Other

10. What year are you in: ○ 1st year ○ 2nd year ○ 3rd year ○ 4th year ○ post-graduate

11. What faculty are you in: ○1. Arts ○2.Business and Economic Sciences ○3. Education ○4. Law ○5. Health Sciences ○6. Science ○7. Engineering, the Built Environment & Information Technology

12. What course are you studying: _____