

Unified Calendar: SGA Sponsored Club Scheduling at SUNY Potsdam

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Abstract

This research which was conducted in order to assess the means in which SGA sponsored clubs communicated information among each of the clubs, as well as distributed information to first year freshmen students. This research took place at the State University of New York at Potsdam. A review of relevant research indicated that online calendaring systems have a tremendous up-side. In several articles it was found that institutions that choose to use online calendaring systems found communicating much easier between faculty and students, students and students, and students with alumni. The survey was completed by 53 SUNY Potsdam e-board members and completed via Google Forms by 112 SUNY Potsdam Freshmen over the age of 18. Among e-board members was found that the means of communicating meeting times and places was done in a very non efficient way. “Word of mouth” was the most popular way of communicating information among clubs and among members. Over half the e-board members who took the survey believed that an online calendar would help promote club meetings and of this data, increase membership attendance. In addition, very few first year freshmen students knew the location on campus in which they could find a listing of all SGA sponsored clubs, meeting times, and places. On the other hand, a majority of freshmen believed an online calendaring system would help them find important information regarding clubs. Based on the results of this study, our recommendation is that SUNY Potsdam’s SGA sponsored clubs consistently utilize an online calendaring system, preferably SOGo, as it is supported by the campus. This will improve communication among clubs and increase awareness of club activities with SUNY Potsdam students.

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Introduction

When looking at the SUNY Potsdam website, under the section “Why Choose Potsdam,” it states, “We want our students to not only be well educated, but also socially well-rounded citizens.” As a whole, SUNY Potsdam has countless opportunities for students to get involved, make friends and develop their leadership skills. There are many chances for students to keep busy outside of the classroom, such as Student Ambassadors in the Office of Admissions, Resident Assistants in the Department of Residence Life, and various departments that offer the chance for students to become peer tutors, researchers, instructors, teaching assistants, and employees. On top of that, there are roughly 100 clubs and organizations tailored to a wide variety of interests that students can get involved with. Many of these clubs are sponsored by the Student Government Association (SGA) and receive funding for events such as mixers, guest speakers, travel to conferences, etc. Students have the opportunity to join these organizations to become members or in time, can be elected for executive board (e-board) positions such as the president, vice president, secretary, treasurer or others. For most clubs, a student is considered a ‘member’ of club after he/she attends two consecutive meetings. After this, they have the opportunity to participate in any trips or events that the club may attend or sponsor.

That being said, with so many different clubs and organizations, and only seven days in the week, it is hard to manage all the meeting times and find out when a specific club that might spark a students’ interest meets. The only location on campus where all meeting times are located is at the SGA office in the student union, and this service is not greatly advertised. At other times, students may stumble across a club that they are interested in in a wide variety of ways, such as through a friend, in their student planner, by seeing a flier, or many other ways.

However, there is one resource that none of these clubs or SGA are tapping into: a year ago, SUNY Potsdam established its own calendaring system (named SOGo) where students, faculty and staff could create their own personal calendar, schedule meetings/events, and even invite others to join. Since this generation of college students has more access to computers, smart phones and technology in general, we wanted to see if an online calendaring system would help students find out the meeting times and places of clubs on campus. We also were curious to see if something like SOGo would help reduce the communication gap among e-board members within their own organizations, as well as increase communication from club to club, when planning things such as mixers, events, and even their meeting time.

This paper seeks to understand how student leaders currently advertise and promote their on-campus organization(s) at SUNY Potsdam. It looks at how current students (specifically freshmen) find information about the different clubs offered on campus and what gets them involved. It also explores whether or not an online calendar such as SOGo would be useful and helpful to students, not only when they are searching for clubs to join and ways to get involved, but also for e-board members when they are planning events and trying to contact and collaborate with other clubs and organizations.

Literature Review

As college students across the country return to their respective campuses, many resume their roles in on-campus and off-campus extracurricular activities. Some prefer to join clubs, become a part of Greek life, join a sports team, or even get a job. It only seems right that a student should pursue something that they are truly interested in, whether it is the comradery gained through joining Greek life or a club that matches their interests. Students across the

country face the often difficult challenge of balancing their priorities as a student, as well as scheduling them accordingly.

If a student finds a gap in their time and wishes to pursue one of their various interests by joining a club, how would they do it? It then becomes an issue of how does a student find out when and where a club meets. The student could look to online sources in their search for information, or trying to find a person wearing a t-shirt for the club and ask them for information.

Clubs play an integral role in campus infrastructure; they are able to advertise for the college, attract potential students, allow current students to network and make new friends, explore new opportunities, and create a sense of belonging (Case, 2011). Case (2011) also found that “in addition to academic involvement, social involvement has been found to contribute to the intellectual development of students,” (Case, 2011). Case (2011) continues by arguing that students who are involved in organizations tend to make more meaningful relationships and have a higher retention rate than those who do not become involved. She also furthers her own argument by explaining that the students who had aspirations of receiving a degree further than a bachelor’s degree are more likely to be involved with clubs and various organizations than those who do not wish to continue their education.

Alexander Astin created the Theory of Involvement which further reiterates the purpose of student involvement in clubs by stating “students learn more the more they are involved in both the academic and social aspects of the collegiate experience... the quality and quantity of the students’ involvement will influence the amount of student learning and development,”

(Astin, 1984). This encourages students to get more from their own education than simply just going to a class and taking a test at the end of the semester.

The benefits of joining clubs are evident, but the question becomes: how do clubs recruit students? New club members are great; they bring a fresh face to an organization, new ideas, volunteers, and provide growth (Salo, 2010). Some may argue that explaining the benefits of a club is enough to recruit students, but sometimes that is not enough. Clubs need to also appeal to a student's interest, which can sometimes be difficult especially if the College Republicans are trying to recruit a student who identifies themselves as a democrat. In addition to recruiting students based on interest, club members also need to be retained; which some argue is just as important as recruitment. Salo expands upon her argument by stating that "the key pieces of member acquisition include awareness, attraction, affiliation and retention," (Salo 2010). Recruitment and retention are key parts of maintaining healthy clubs, and spotty information about clubs and club events is problematic.

For clubs to recruit new students, information about the clubs meeting times and locations must be readily available, as such the idea of a unified calendar for clubs creates the possibility of this information as a reality. In 2009, the University of Portsmouth gave thirty-thousand students their very own Google account through the relatively new "Google Apps Education Edition." (M2 Presswire, 2009). These accounts serve a variety of functions for students including but not limited to: a unified calendar, email, instant messaging, document sharing, and basic web page creation. It was also suggested that the more the students who use the new Google system, the more it would benefit them as students because it would allow for the creation of their own person timetable made up of classes, clubs and study group information

(M2 Presswire, 2009). In addition to the many uses that the University of Portsmouth described in their use of the Google unified calendar, Sara Davidson points out another use of the Google Calendar: the option of who to share your calendars with (Davidson, 2007). Davidson explains how there are two different options for sharing a calendar in Google: public and limited. Each use of the calendar has their own separate drawbacks, but they both provide the option for people to see if they are included in the share.

The use of a unified calendar serves the purpose of displaying what meeting is going on in which room and, by extension, shows which rooms are available if students wish to sign out the use of a room (Sherman, 2003). Sherman furthers his argument that it would not just be clubs that would benefit from a unified calendar system, but the campus as a whole. Sherman explains how the calendar is integrated into a campus portal site, the calendar can serve to help with course scheduling (Sherman, 2003).

Calendars are an incredible resource for college clubs. However, they are also one of the most undervalued resources in a college society which focuses heavily on texting and social media. But in the day and age when technology runs rampant, providing an option for additional services can be useful to students who are looking to join a club or organization on a college campus, or to simply organize their schedule.

There are a variety of methods that students on the SUNY Potsdam campus can find information about a club. One is by simply going to the Student Government Association's (SGA) office where there is a board posted with all seventy-eight meeting times and locations posted for clubs. However, this is a board is relatively unknown on the SUNY Potsdam campus. Another easily accessible resource is the SUNY Potsdam Weekly (SPW) table fliers that are

displayed on each table at the beginning of each week. These fliers usually contain some information about one club or another's upcoming event that people may be interested in. On the downside, not every club has an event every week, so the information on the fliers would not be applicable if there is no event planned.

A little known fact about the SUNY Potsdam campus is that it shares a service similar to the University of Portsmouth, not Google, but SOGo. SOGo serves as a unified calendar, email client, and many other features, all of which are accessible to Potsdam students at any time. The calendar contained in SOGo has the option to be shared with whomever an individual would like. This calendar could be used by the SGA to post club times and locations, then simply share it with the campus community as whole. This would create a readily accessible method for students to find information about clubs, all while seeing what clubs may interfere or overlap with another club. Again, this feature is still relatively new and not many students are aware of it, though it is gaining traction as a service.

The students of SUNY Potsdam are highly involved, have a variety of resources to help them develop academically and socially, both in and out of the classroom. For clubs, the use of an online calendar could help them better advertise and stay organized, thereby increasing the number of students that they recruit and retain as members. For students, they are given the opportunity to join a club that they are genuinely interested in, make friendships, and develop as student leaders that benefit not only SUNY Potsdam, but the community as well.

Purpose and Research Questions

The purpose of our research was to find the current methods of how e-board members of various SGA sponsored clubs and organizations currently promote the meeting time and place of

their club, as well as special events such as game or movie nights, faculty presentations, and others. We also wanted to find out how current students find out meeting times and place of clubs they were interested in, specifically first year students who were just starting to meet people and get involved on campus. Based on this research, we wanted to see if using an online calendar system (specifically SOGo, which is SUNY Potsdam's own calendaring system) would be beneficial and convenient to students in both of these aspects. SOGo can be used on any computer, has an app for smartphones, and is accessible for all SUNY Potsdam students by logging in with their current email username and password. First year students looking for a way to be involved would not have to independently ask around or search for clubs they might be interested in, and e-board members would be able to prevent time scheduling conflicts when planning meetings and events through the use of SOGo.

During our research, we asked two primary questions, which were further broken down into various sub questions. Our rationale for asking our first primary question was to find out *how* students were currently getting information about SGA sponsored clubs and organizations on the SUNY Potsdam campus. For example, if a student was interested in psychology, were they independently searching for a club that would tailor to this interest, or did they find out through another resource that SUNY Potsdam has a psychology club? Secondly, *where* did they find this information? Did they see it at an on-campus event such as the Welcome Weekend Carnival, did the club contact the student via email or a letter in their campus mailbox, or did he/she go to the SGA office to find out this information? After finding out the methods in which students discovered the existence of SGA clubs and organizations, and if an online calendar such as SOGo would have made their search for a club easier and more convenient. Our second

primary question focused on finding out how SGA sponsored clubs and organizations are currently promoting their club meeting time and place, as well as special events. We also wanted to find out if clubs were communicating with each other in order to prevent time conflicts, in order to maximize attendance and involvement in their respective club. We hoped to find out if SOGo would help them better advertise the events that they plan for their club, increase membership attendance, and better communicate with other club e-boards, overall decreasing the amount of scheduling conflicts that arise throughout the semester.

Ultimately, we asked the following questions:

1. How informed are first semester freshmen at SUNY Potsdam about SGA sponsored clubs and organizations?
 - a. Where are students currently getting their information about club meetings and times for all SGA sponsored clubs?
 - b. Are there additional methods for informing students about club meetings other than those currently used?
 - c. Would an online calendaring system that all students have access to help recruit students to SGA clubs?
2. How do SGA sponsored clubs on campus communicate when coordinating their meeting times and events?
 - a. What are the current tools that SGA clubs are using to communicate and coordinate their meeting times and events?
 - b. Are there conflicts between overlapping meetings?

- c. Would a calendaring tool be useful in helping SGA clubs to communicate and coordinate their meeting times and events while avoiding conflicts?

Methodology

Interviews

Before we began to collect data, we had to obtain information from various groups of people involved with SGA sponsored clubs and organizations across campus. In order to start our research, we wanted to get a better understanding of how SGA sponsored clubs currently advertise and schedule their meetings, as well as how students currently find out about these clubs. In order to do this, we conducted interviews with various parties involved in this aspect, including SGA officers, e-boards of SGA sponsored clubs, and SUNY Potsdam students. We spoke with Sara Behuniak (SGA President), Erin Barr (President of History Association), Liz LaBarge (President of Colleges Against Cancer), Hans Butler (former President of Circle K), Mikey Defresne (first year student), and Brittany Saladino (transfer student). Each of these interviews provided a different perspective as to how SGA sponsored clubs and organizations are currently promoted, how students can find out the meeting time and place for a specific club, and the scheduling conflicts that currently arise. The interview questions asked can be found in Appendix A, and a summary of each interview is in Appendix B.

Each e-board had different ways in which they promoted their meeting time and events. Some of the more common advertisement methods included Facebook, paper fliers, the SUNY Potsdam Weekly (abbreviated SPW), word of mouth, and even paper invitations in the mail (done by History Association). Many of these e-board members had never heard of SOGo or that it was available to all SUNY Potsdam students. In particular, when SOGo was mentioned to

History Association President Erin Barr, she stated that this would be “fantastic,” though it may not totally prevent overlap, because there are only so many hours in the day to hold meetings and events, and we are a very involved campus. However, a unified calendar that would allow people to put in events and announce things such as room changes would be beneficial. She even mentioned a ton of ways to advertise it, such as using BearPAWS, the SUNY Potsdam planner, table tents, and the Welcome Weekend Carnival. Although she stated not everyone would use it, she mentioned that it would be very beneficial for club e-boards and highly involved students here, such as herself. Colleges Against Cancer President Liz LaBarge stated that “more often than not, I have students coming into my club meetings looking for another club meeting at the same time”, so she also agreed that something like SOGo would benefit her club attendance greatly.

Overall, the results from our interviews were very informative, and we saw some things that we expected to see. We learned how a wide variety of clubs (academic, service, etc.) promoted their meeting place and events, using everything from word of mouth to mailed out invitations. We also saw the view of SOGo by these e-board members, which were mostly positive and receptive. They stated that an online calendar would be “helpful” to help them promote events and stay organized. On the other hand, we saw the existence of students whose feelings towards joining a club are apathetic and do not have an interest in becoming involved, much like freshmen Mikey Defresne. We also saw that many students just coming to SUNY Potsdam are unaware of how many clubs there are on campus, and once they do find a club they are interested in, they need to be lucky like transfer student Brittany Saladino, who had a friend tell her where and when her current club meets. These interviews solidified our research

questions and encouraged us to continue creating surveys that would allow us to ask these questions to a larger body, more specifically the e-boards of all SGA sponsored clubs, and all freshmen students over the age of 18.

Survey pretest

Guided by the information gathered in the interviews, we created two surveys: one survey for all first year students and another for the e-board members of all SGA sponsored clubs. Each survey was 9 questions, and asked a mix of closed and open ended questions, relating to awareness about SGA sponsored clubs, timing/scheduling conflicts, how clubs advertise their meeting time, and knowledge about SOGo. We first pretested these surveys with some club e-board members and freshmen students, receiving beneficial feedback to add to our survey. For example, one club president suggested that Open Forum at SGA Senate was a place that he always promoted events that his club was putting on. When we added this question to the survey, 23 e-board members (about 1/3 of the total responses) responded that they use Open Forum to do the same thing. The feedback we received by pretesting was very helpful and allowed our surveys to collect the best information possible regarding SGA sponsored club scheduling, promotion, and awareness.

Survey distribution

After our surveys were pretested, we created a final survey for the e-boards of all SGA sponsored clubs and organizations (Appendix C). These surveys asked questions that dealt with how they currently advertised their meeting time and place, how they communicated amongst their e-board, if they saw scheduling conflicts, and whether or not a unified calendar such as SOGo would help with these conflicts. 200 paper surveys were distributed to all SGA club

treasurers at the weekly SGA Senate on Wednesday, October 23rd. The treasurers were asked to bring the surveys to their next meeting, have the e-board complete the survey, and return them the on-campus address listed on the envelope provided. Each survey also contained a letter of consent (Appendix D). 53 surveys were returned, making the response rate roughly 25%.

Finally, we created another survey in order to obtain information from all first year students 18 or over. A copy of this survey can be found in Appendix E. We created the survey using Google Forms. We contacted David Brower, Technology Support Professional through the Computing and Technology Services at SUNY Potsdam. He was able to help us distribute the survey through Bearmail for all year freshmen students to take. The survey mainly asked how these students found out about the existence of SGA sponsored clubs, if they were currently a member of any of these clubs (and how they find out the meeting place/time for that specific club), and if they ran into any timing conflicts when choosing a club that SOGo may have prevented. The survey was sent out twice, and overall, we received 112 responses.

Results

The results of our survey were distributed to the freshman students who were above 18 years of age and e-board members of SGA sponsored clubs on October 30th, 2013 and collected on November 11th, 2013. These results included answers to survey questions from 112 freshman and 53 e-board members. From the data collected there was a consensus among the freshman and the e-board members that there is a communication problem when trying to relay and advertise information regarding SGA sponsored club meeting times and dates. Figure 1 shows how club e-boards currently advertise the meeting time and place for their club. 2 of the most popular

methods of meeting time and place promotion by the clubs were social networking sites (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) and email, both electronically based like SOGo.

Figure 1: How does your e-board advertise for meeting times and places?

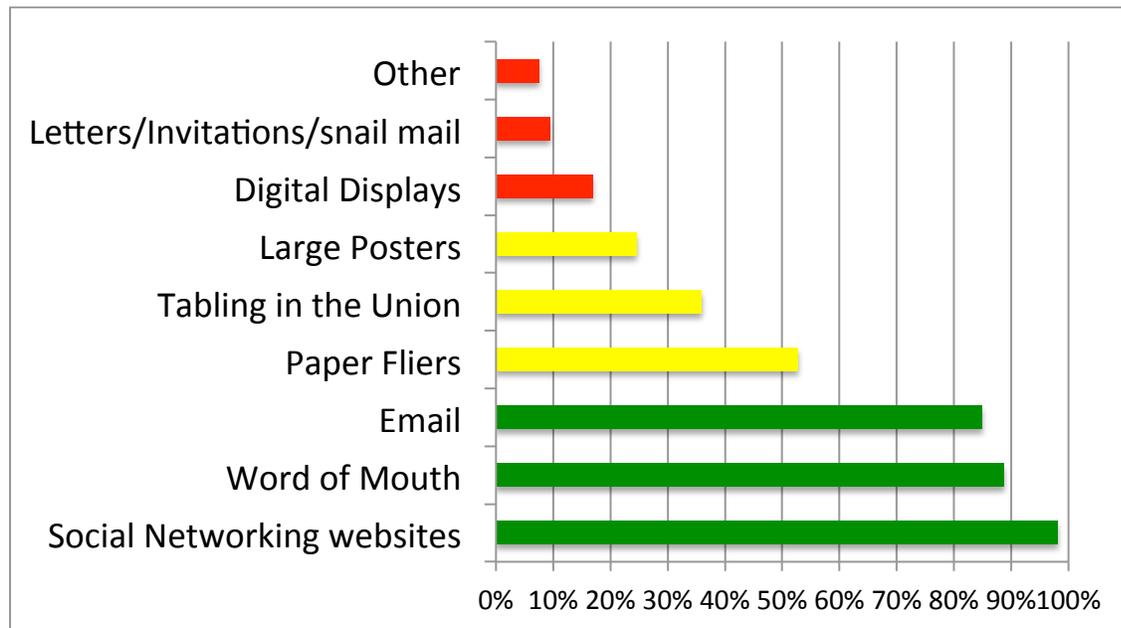
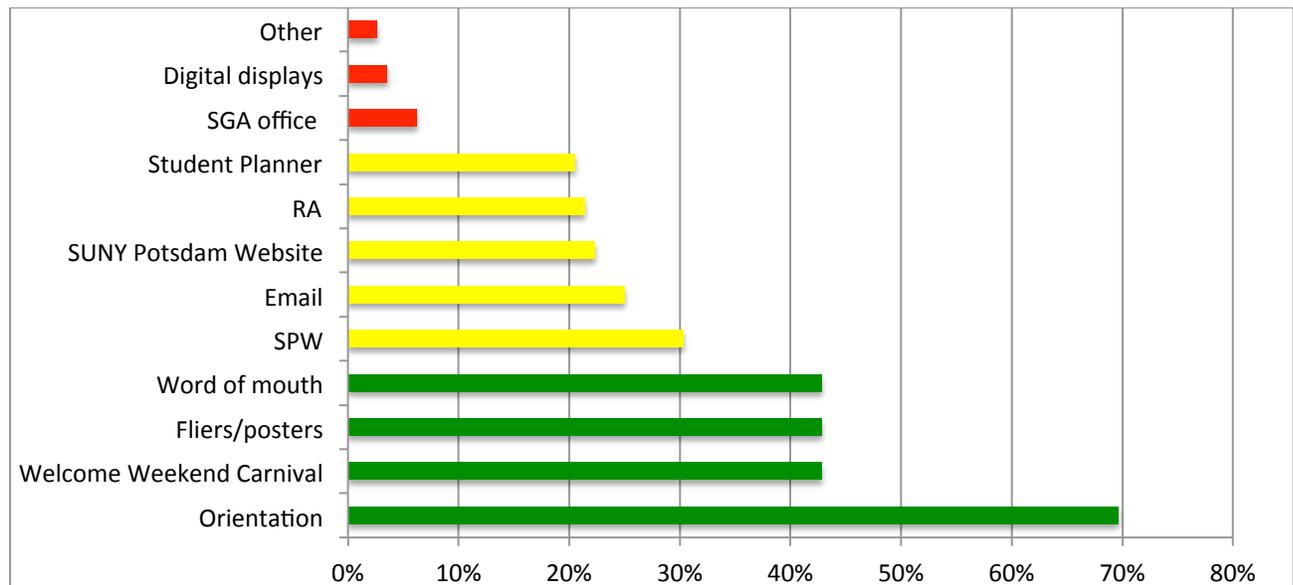


Figure 2 shows how freshmen students are currently finding out about SGA sponsored clubs and organizations that they might be interested in attending. Notice that while email is a popular method of advertising for club e-boards, it does not seem like a very effective way of recruiting freshmen students to become members. The two largest sources of information for freshmen are Orientation and the Welcome Weekend Carnival, both of which occur before classes even start for the fall semester. This could perhaps create a correlation between students disinterest in joining a

club and academics; students are more likely to be interested in joining and getting information about a club when they do not have classes or assignments to worry about. This poses the question of whether or not e-boards should be trying to reach out more to prospective students or students before they start attending classes, either electronically (through email, SOGo, or social networking) or non-electronically (through invitations, newsletters, or word of mouth).

Figure 2: How did you find out about SGA sponsored clubs and organizations?



The information shown by both Figure 1 and Figure 2, is very much related to our second research question, “*How do SGA sponsored clubs on campus communicate when coordinating their meeting times and events?*” Notice here that “Word of Mouth” seems to be a means in which information is communicated, and may not be the most appropriate and illuminating method. As one can assume the troubles that come from spreading information via “Word of Mouth,” just look to the childhood game, “Telephone.”

With this lack of easily accessible information readily available, many freshmen were led to answer that they did not know where they could find the information regarding all of the SGA's sponsored clubs meeting times and places. In fact, less than half (40%) of freshmen knew where they could find this information (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Do you know where the meeting time and place for every SGA sponsored club on campus is located?



This information very closely aligns with the first research question, which was "*How informed are first semester freshmen at SUNY Potsdam about SGA sponsored clubs and organizations?*" Notice that a majority (60%) of freshman are unaware as to where they can find information about SGA sponsored clubs. While we are able to see that students are sporadically

finding out about clubs through word of mouth or random fliers they see, there is no place that they can go to where they can see and inquire information about every club in order to find one to join that really tailors their interests.

While some students were able to find the meeting times and places for clubs that they wished to join, there is still scheduling conflicts due to meetings times of clubs overlapping (Figure 4), thus causing students to be forced to pick and choose between clubs to attend. Almost half of all freshman students who took our survey had run into conflicts when trying to pick a club to attend.

Figure 4: Have freshmen ever run into conflicts when choosing which clubs to attend?

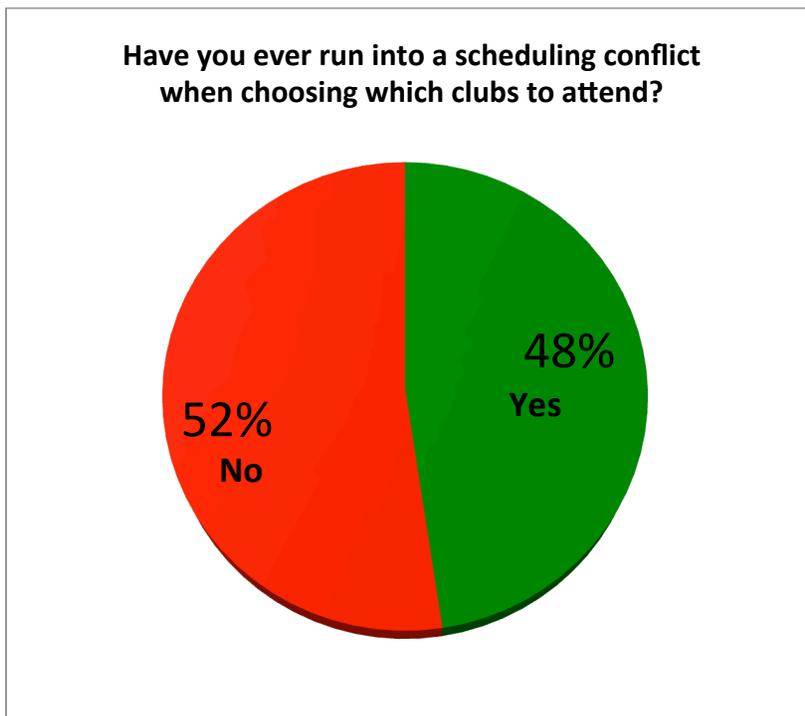
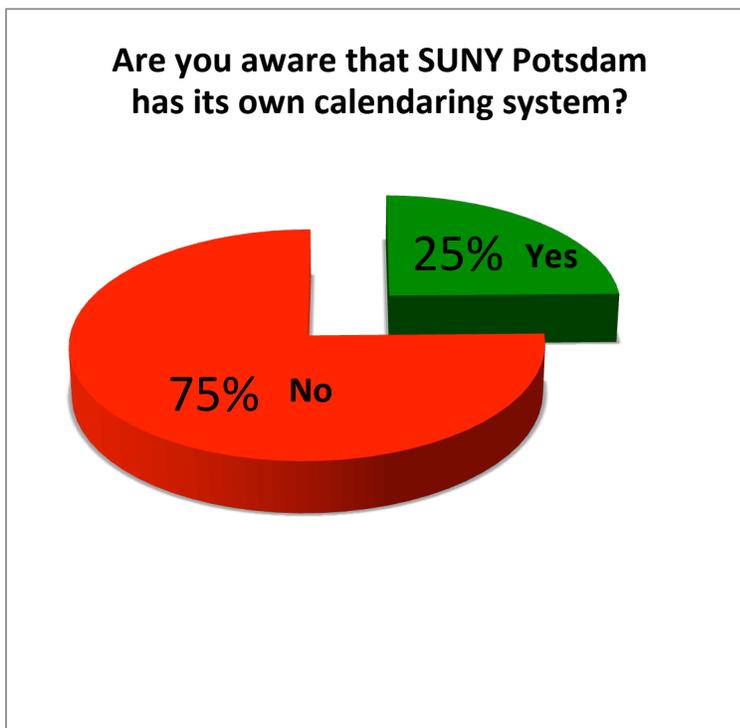


Figure 5 shows that only 25% of freshmen students are aware of SOGo, even though every SUNY Potsdam student has access to it by using the login information that they use for

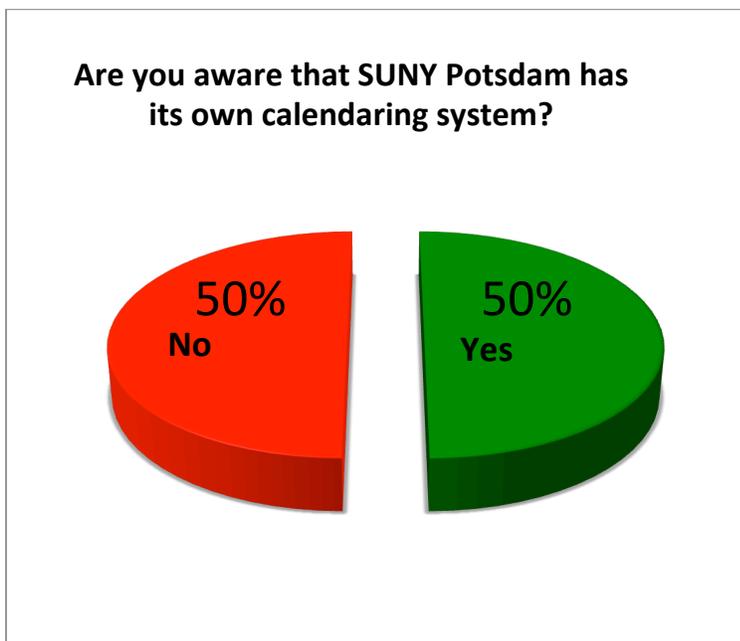
their Bearmail. This poses the question of whether or not introducing SOGo at Orientation might be helpful, because it introduces students to a time management tool before classes even start. We have already seen that the place where most students found out about SGA sponsored clubs was at Orientation, so it is possible an introduction to SOGo during this time might increase awareness as well.

Figure 5: Are SUNY Potsdam freshmen aware of SOGo?



When e-board members were asked if they had ever heard of SOGo, the percentage of students that said 'yes' was double the amount of freshmen (Figure 6). This could be due to the fact that e-board members are not only mainly upperclassmen (juniors and seniors) who have been on the SUNY Potsdam campus longer, but are also student leaders who are highly involved and seek out ways to manage their time and keep organized.

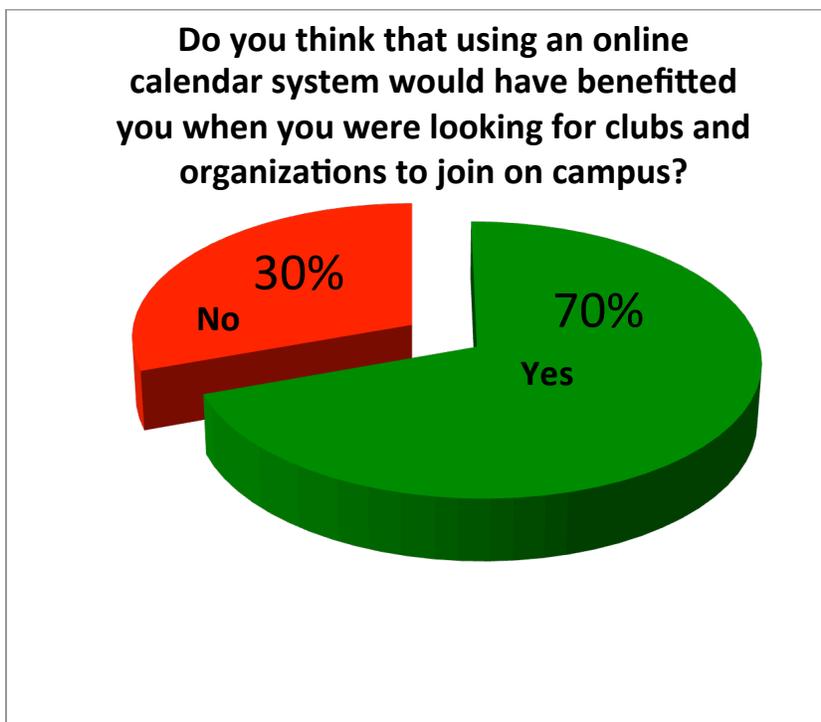
Figure 6: Are club e-board members at SUNY Potsdam aware of SOGo?



Even though there is a lack of knowledge of this online calendar it was unanimous that a majority of both freshman (70%) and E-Board members (69%) believe that an online calendar as a means of communicating club information and posting dates would be beneficial. For freshmen, it was to better increase the awareness of the large number of clubs that are available for them to join on campus (see Figure 7). By having all clubs listed in one place, they can better

find a club that ‘fits’ their personality and what they are interested in, rather than having to seek it out themselves through peers or advertisements around the campus.

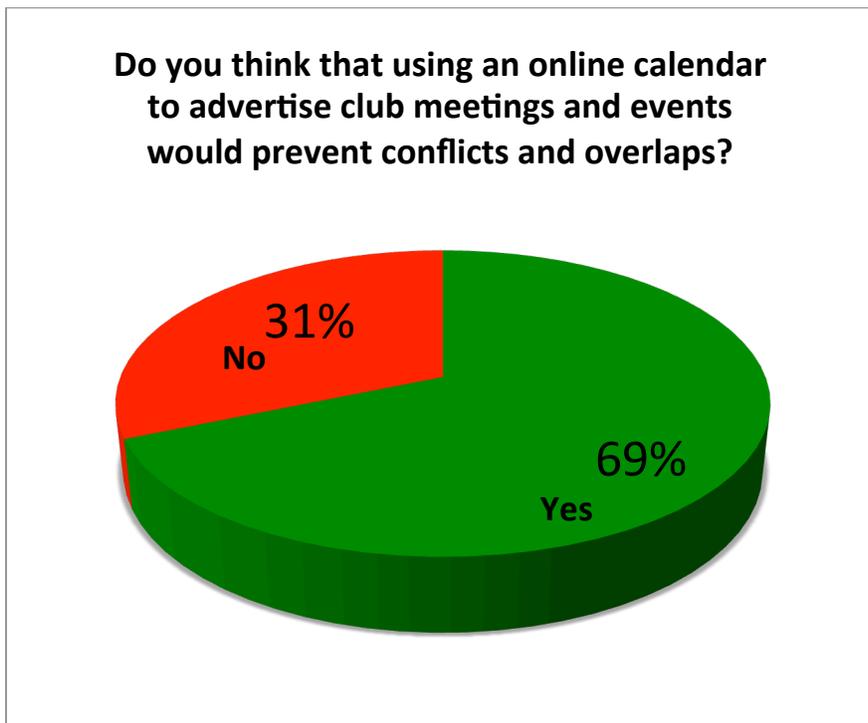
Figure 7: Do SUNY Potsdam freshmen think that using an online calendar system would have benefitted them when they were looking for clubs and organizations to join on campus?



For club e-board members, the purpose of the unified calendar would be to both advertise meeting times and places and prevent overlapping of meetings. Some clubs may benefit from coordinating their meeting times, because they are similar enough that they might attract the same group of students (for example, having French club and Spanish club choose different

meeting times would allow language lovers to attend both meetings). Timing conflicts can be minimized by placing all meeting days and times in one centralized location, such as an online calendar. Figure 8 shows that 69% of e-board members believe that this would be beneficial.

Figure 8: Do SUNY Potsdam E-board members think that using an online calendar to advertise club meetings and events would prevent conflicts and overlaps?



One cannot help but notice the overwhelming evidence that both SGA sponsored clubs and freshmen would greatly prosper from an online calendaring system. Numbers do not lie, and the data which was collected from these two surveys is clear proof of a problem that can be easily avoided.

Conclusion

From the results gathered, one can easily see how a unified calendar would be beneficial to not just incoming students but to clubs as a whole as well. A unified calendar listing all the clubs times, locations and frequency of meetings would be beneficial for a variety of reasons such as preventing similar club overlap and by extension increasing member levels, solving the problem of students walking into the wrong room looking for another club, and providing alternative methods to advertising. Simply listing all the clubs on the calendar would allow for easy retrieval of pertinent club information would allow for students to view this at their own leisure and find a club that can fit into their schedule

The results demonstrate how uninformed students are about general club information on campus. By responding to the survey, freshmen have demonstrated that the general information surrounding clubs is severely lacking. Though students did answer they are aware of the clubs on campus, they also claimed that they had no knowledge of where to find out more information about these clubs on campus. Aside from the various activities sponsored mostly in the beginning of the year, students are unaware of where and when clubs meet, the activities the clubs offer, and basic information about the respective club.

Those that do seek out information about specific clubs may find necessary information, may join a club, and then may in turn seek out additional clubs to join. However, due to the lack of communication between similar interest clubs, meeting times may coincide with each other and scheduling conflicts arise, which would prevent a student from partaking in clubs to the fullest benefit of the student. This lack of communication between clubs hinders member attendance, as Figure 4 demonstrated, as 48% of students claimed that when seeking a secondary or tertiary club to join, the meeting times conflicted with another club. It is obvious that SUNY

Potsdam's SGA sponsored clubs are in need of a way of efficient communication that will not only inform students in an easy way regarding meeting times and places, but also increase the overall awareness of clubs. This is where SOGo would be very useful, yet a minority of freshman (25%), along with only half of the e-board members surveyed were aware of this. If SUNY Potsdam were to use such a calendar system then the college, like many other businesses and universities before it have done, would be able to provide more information to more people in a much easier manner than previously available.

Ultimately, it seemed that many freshmen students were indifferent about the use of SOGo due to the fact that they already use their own personal online or offline calendaring system, and are comfortable doing so. The e-boards of many SGA sponsored clubs were hesitant to use an online calendar, for the sole fact that it would be difficult to update and hold those clubs with outdated information accountable. A solution for this might be that clubs and organizations update their meetings and events, then have this information filtered and presented online on a webpage that is advertised through a SUNY Potsdam outlet such as the Computing and Technology Services. The webpage is not directly stated on SOGo, but regularly updated based on SOGo information. This holds e-board members responsible for making sure that their club information is up-to-date, but they are not in charge of the website as a whole. This website would also be more accessible to all students due to the fact that unlike SOGo, it would not require log-in information. This solution would be beneficial to all parties and diminish some of the negative views of using SOGo to promote SGA sponsored club events, such as unawareness of SOGo, its confusing layout, and that many students already use their own calendaring system.

Unfortunately for some students who wish to participate in as many clubs as they can to diversify their interests, there are only so many hours in the day. The student must be attentive to their academics, health, and family before searching for extracurricular activities to participate in. Those that do wish to participate in extracurricular activities would benefit for a unified online calendar that lists club meeting times and locations because they can see what is available, when, and if it will fit into their own schedule.

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APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. As a club member, how do you advertise and promote the meeting time and place for your club?

2. As a club member, how do you internally communicate with your e-board and club members? What electronic services do you use? For example, do you use social media, email, phones, etc. How well do they work for you?

3. What non-electronic services is your club currently using, both for internal communications and promotion of meetings and events?

4. How does SGA advertise and promote meeting times and places for SGA sponsored clubs on campus. If a student was curious about a certain club, how would they find out information about that club?

5. How does SGA communicate with members and e-boards of SGA sponsored clubs? (treasurers, presidents, vice presidents, etc.) Do they use any services? If so, how well do they work? (email, fb, twitter, snail mail, phone calls, texting, etc...)

6. How aware are your club members about campus resources that benefit their club. For example: renting out space on campus, submitting events to the SPW, putting events in the SUNY Potsdam planner?

7. Do you find it difficult to communicate from one club to another, and collaborate on an event or program?

8. Do you feel that there is overlap of meeting times among clubs due to lack of communication about scheduling? Do you think a unified calendar for all SGA sponsored clubs would prevent scheduling conflicts between clubs (ie. student wants to attend 2 club meetings, but they both meet at the same time)?

9. How likely would it be for students to use something like a unified calendar, if it were available? How could we make this calendar well known to the student population of SUNY Potsdam?

APPENDIX B: SUMMARY OF INTERVIEWS

Interview #1 – Sara Behuniak, SGA president

My interview with Sara was very interesting. Sara is not only the current president of SGA, but she has been on the e-board of a club before, so I was able to inquire how she promoted her club and communicated with the members. She seemed to use a mix of electronic and non-electronic services to do this, depending on the situation (her club used Facebook to recruit new members, email to communicate to current members, and posters to advertise big events and mixers). Among her own e-board, she set up meetings with them via email, then would use texting to follow up and remind people if they were running late, because she said these services were very quick. After this, I started asking her questions that pertained more specifically to SGA, such as how SGA advertised the meeting time/place for all clubs. Sara informed me that information is available on the SUNY Potsdam website (each club has its own link), through a piece of paper that can be picked up at the SGA office, or on a bulletin board right outside the SGA office, which is on the 2nd floor of the union. When needing to communicate with e-board members, Sara said that she was able to use Moodle for the treasurers (which also links to their email address), email for Presidents when planning events such as President's Council, or making announcements at Senate or Assembly meetings that would trickle back to clubs. She said that most of the e-board members here are good at seeking out information and being knowledgeable of campus resources (she said that she feels very 'spoiled' sometimes), and said that if e-board members have questions, they will usually ask them at Senate or Assembly. Interviewing Sara was interesting because as one of the figureheads of SGA, she is really only dealing with the e-boards of clubs, and not the members/students. Therefore, it seems that the communication between SGA and club e-boards is clear, but once it needs to trickle down to the students, there is something missing. When I mentioned the online calendaring system, Sara said that she had heard of other schools that used online calendars, but the SGA here had never really looked into it. She said that it would definitely help clubs plan events (such as mixers, because sometimes there will be 3 different mixers occurring at the same time), but it would not benefit the entire student body, because it would be too large. As a whole, I liked seeing the perspective of SGA and having their support in this matter. I'm glad that they think the calendar and using online resources would be helpful to their clubs and organizations.

Interview #2 – Liz Labarge, President of Colleges against Cancer

My interview with Liz was very interesting. I found that for advertisement and communication internally in her club, Liz mostly uses word of mouth or advertise (as well as the SPW for big events) and Facebook. She also uses a Facebook message to keep communication with her e-board, because 'it's nice to have all the interactions in one organized thread'. The club also has an email in which they use to inform their club members about upcoming meetings. What I found very interesting about my interview with Liz was that when I asked her how SGA advertised their clubs, she was not sure. She said 'I believe there is a poster of some sort that has information on it? I've never seen it but I remember someone mentioning it to me.' She also mentioned that a student could surf on Facebook if they were interested in a club, or try the SUNY Potsdam website, although it is outdated. Liz's

answer was one of the problems I saw with SGA's advertisement of clubs and meeting times. While people are aware that all SGA club meeting times/places are jointly located somewhere, they're not exactly sure where that location is. In terms of collaborating with other clubs, Liz also said that she found it difficult to communicate between clubs, because she was never sure who to contact (she usually relied on mutual friends to find the person). Finally, when I started to hint at the use of an online calendar because of overlapping club times, Liz mentioned that 'more often than not, I have students coming into my club meetings looking for another club meeting at the same time', so when I brought up the use of an online calendar, she thought that would be very helpful. She also gave suggestions to advertise the calendar to all the students of Potsdam, such as an initial email explaining the calendar system, or putting on the table tents. Overall, my interview with Liz went very well, and I think that what we are trying to accomplish would definitely benefit her organization.

Interview #3 – Erin Barr, President of History Association

Erin was very thorough and informative when I interviewed her. My first question to her was how she advertised and promoted meeting time/place for her club, in which she had a number of resources – such as the SPW, a Facebook page for the club, the History Department webpage (on the Potsdam website) and simple paper advertising that used eye-catching historical facts. When communicating with her club members, she stated that their Facebook page worked very well to let club members know what to expect at the meeting, as well as the structure of their meetings (there are lots of opportunities for reminders). For the e-board, she stated that there is a private Facebook page that they use, which is nice because it allows her to see which e-board members have seen a post, which Erin stated allows her to keep tabs on everyone. What really interested me was that Erin was one of the only clubs I knew that used snail mail to promote and recruit new members. Every year, each club receives a list of interested first year students that is compiled at orientation, and History Association takes this list and creates typed letters to these students and puts them in their Barrington mailboxes, inviting them to join History Association and giving them information about their annual upcoming fall mixer.

When asked how SGA advertises and promotes meeting times and places for all the clubs, I first asked Erin how she found out about History Association, in which she stated 'word of mouth'. She mentioned that SGA doesn't really actively advertise, and that she thinks of SPW when thinking of advertisement for meetings and events. However, she said that the SGA office is always open and will answer questions about anything (club meeting/times, campus resources, getting communication info of other club) if you have them, although you have to seek them out which she stated can be 'daunting' for freshmen. She also said that she gets a lot of information from SGA relayed to her from her Treasurer, because he sees SGA every week at Senate. The Senate meetings are also good to reach out to other clubs and communicate with another treasurer. She also stated she has never found it difficult to communicate with other clubs, because there is a lot of networking done between clubs and you meet a lot of e-boards when you are a president. When an online calendar was brought up, Erin stated that this would be 'fantastic', although it may not totally prevent overlap, because there are only so many hours in the day to hold meetings and events, and we are a very involved campus. She said that usually students pick and choose one or two clubs that they feel at home at. However, a unified calendar that would allow people to put in events and announce things such as

room changes would be beneficial. She even mentioned a ton of ways to advertise it, such as using BearPAWS, the SUNY Potsdam planner, table tents, and the welcome Weekend Carnival. Although she stated not everyone would use it, she mentioned that it would be very beneficial for club e-boards and highly involved students here, such as herself.

Interview #4 – Hans Butler, Former President of Circle K

Hans stated that he advertised his club through email and fliers, although he stated that the Facebook was ‘a huge way for us to promote upcoming and meetings’. For his e-board meetings, he stated that his e-board meetings met every week because he preferred using face-to-face communication between them, but he would use email if necessary. Hans was also the only person that mentioned tabling in the Union as a non-electronic way of promoting events. He also only mentioned the SPW when talking about how all club meeting time/places were organized, which I found interesting.

Hans stated that there is definitely an overlap of club meetings due to busy schedules and that a calendar would help, although the Sogo program that we used was very confusing. He said that unless students were in an e-board position, they probably would not use the calendar. He said that the e-board would find it useful to create meetings with each other, plan events, and prevent overlap, but when I asked if the general student population as a whole would use it, he answered ‘not very likely’.

Interview #5 – Mikey Defresne, first year student

I did not ask Mikey all the questions, since he is not on the e-board member of any club, and it is only his first year here. My main interest in interviewing Mikey was to see if he knew where to find out information about all clubs and organizations through SGA. Mikey stated that the only way he knew about clubs and organizations on campus was through the SPW, posted mainly in the residence halls and on the table tents. He said that if a unified online calendar were available, he wouldn’t care very much and probably wouldn’t use it.

Interview #6 – Brittany Saladino, transfer student

Brittany’s view of the situation and project was different from Mikey, which I found interesting. When I asked Brittany if she was aware of all the meeting times/places of every SGA clubs, she said that she had no idea where to find out that information. She said that she knew the clubs existed (because of the banners in the union and seeing the club names on t-shirts sponsored by SGA) but she had no idea how she could actively seek out information on how to join a club. She said the only reason she knew about the club she was currently in (History Association) was because one of her friends was on the e-board. When I mentioned an online calendar, she said that she would definitely use it, and said that if she had the information about all clubs readily available to her, maybe work

her class/dinner schedule around those meeting times so that she could make them, which I found very refreshing, since this is one of our goals that we'd like to accomplish with our research.

APPENDIX C: EXECUTIVE BOARD SURVEY

1. How does your e-board advertise the meeting time and place for your club? (Check all that apply)

- Paper fliers
- Large posters
- Word of mouth
- Social networking websites (Facebook, twitter, etc.)
- Email
- Tabling in the Union
- Letters/invitations/snail mail
- Digital displays
- Other: _____

2. How does your e-board advertise special events for your club, such as mixers, guest speakers, etc.? (Check all that apply)

- Paper fliers
- Large posters
- Word of mouth
- Social networking websites (Facebook, twitter, etc.)
- Email
- Tabling in the Union
- Letters/invitations/snail mail
- Digital displays
- Open forum at SGA Senate
- Other: _____

Circle one:

YES

NO

7. Are you aware that SUNY Potsdam has its own calendaring system (nicknamed SOGo)?

Circle one:

YES

NO

8. Do you think that using an online calendar (such as SOGo) to advertise club meetings and events would prevent conflicts and overlaps?

Circle one:

YES

NO

Please explain:

9. Do you think that using an online calendar (such as SOGo) to promote your club meetings and events increase membership attendance?

Circle one:

YES

NO

Please explain:

APPENDIX D: LETTER OF CONSENT FOR E-BOARD SURVEY

CONSENT FORM - Unified Calendar

You are invited to be in a research study of SGA sponsored clubs. You were selected as a possible participant because you are currently enrolled at SUNY Potsdam. We ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

This study is being conducted by Dr. Anthony Betrus, Autumn Carey, Ed Smith, and Nate Turcotte, Business Administration of SUNY Potsdam.

Background Information

The purpose of this study is to better understand how clubs interact in terms of time management and promotion of events.

Procedures: If you agree to be in this study, we would ask you to do the following things: Complete the survey

Risks and Benefits of being in the Study: There are only minimal risks associated with this study.

The benefits to participation are to help SGA have more productive and organized club management.

Confidentiality: The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report we might publish, we will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely and only researchers will have access to the records.

Voluntary Nature of the Study: Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with SUNY Potsdam, and the Student Government Association (SGA). If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or to withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

Contacts and Questions:

The researcher(s) conducting this study is/are Dr. Anthony Betrus, Autumn Carey, Ed Smith, and Nate Turcotte. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you are encouraged to contact them at

Dr. Anthony Betrus, Dunn 393, betrusak@potsdam.edu
Autumn Carey, Draime Hall 121, Careyab@potsdam.edu
Ed Smith, SUNY Potsdam, smithem192@potsdam.edu
Nate Turcotte, SUNY Potsdam, turcotn194@potsdam.edu

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher(s), you are encouraged to contact Johanne Sullivan, Chair of the SUNY Potsdam Institutional Review Board by mail (203 Raymond Hall, 44 Pierrepont Avenue, Potsdam, NY, 13676), telephone (315-267-2688) or email (SUNYPotsdamIRB@potsdam.edu).

Approval by the Provost of SUNY Potsdam and the Institutional Review Board attests only that appropriate safeguards have been included in the research design to protect human participants. This approval does not imply that the College endorses the content of the research or the conclusions drawn from the results of the research.

You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records.

Statement of Consent:

I have read the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Signature of Investigator: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX E: SURVEY FOR FRESHMEN STUDENTS**Survey**

Survey for first year students

1. Are you aware that there are clubs on campus that are sponsored by Student Government Association (SGA)?

Yes

No

2. How did you find out about these clubs? (Check all that apply)

Orientation

RA

Welcome Weekend Carnival

SUNY Potsdam Weekly (SPW)

Student Planner

Fliers/posters

Word of mouth

Email

SUNY Potsdam Website

SGA office

Digital displays

Other:

3. Are you currently involved in any SGA sponsored clubs/organizations?

- Yes
- No

4. How did you find out the meeting time and place for that club or clubs? (Check all that apply)

- Orientation
- RA
- Welcome Weekend Carnival
- SUNY Potsdam Weekly (SPW)
- Student Planner
- Fliers/posters
- Word of mouth
- Social networking websites (Facebook, Twitter, etc.)
- Email
- SUNY Potsdam website
- SGA office
- Digital displays
- Other:

5. Do you know where the meeting time and place for every SGA sponsored club on campus is located?

- Yes
- No

6. Are you involved in more than one club on campus?

Yes

No

7. If you answer yes to the previous question, have you ever run into a scheduling conflict when choosing which clubs to attend (ie, two clubs meeting at the same time)?

Yes

No

8. Are you aware that SUNY Potsdam has its own calendaring system (nicknamed SOGo)?

Yes

No

9. Do you think that using an online calendar system (such as SOGo) would have benefitted you when you were looking for clubs and organizations to join on campus?

Please answer yes or no, and then explain your reasoning.