

Desserts After Dark
Spring 2016

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BACKGROUND

This survey was conducted by the Barnard College Student Government Association (SGA) Campus Life Committee, and was intended to gather student body opinion on a variety of topics predetermined by the SGA. Participation in the survey was optional. However, those who chose to take the survey were required to answer most questions.

Students who completed the survey had Magnolia cupcakes delivered to their dorm by members of SGA at a pre-determined date and time. Students who live in non-Barnard housing or commute to campus were eligible to complete the survey, and were able to pick up their dessert in the SLC before the residence hall dessert distribution. SGA provided alternative desserts to students who requested dietary accommodations.

DEMOGRAPHICS

A total of 780 responses were collected in this study. Of these responses, 223 were from the senior class, 146 were from the junior class, 195 were from the sophomore class, and 216 were from the first-year class.

Responses were collected from the following residence halls: 110, 600, 616, 620, Brooks Hall, Cathedral Gardens, Elliot Hall, Hewitt Hall, Plimpton, Reid Hall, Sulz Tower, Sulz/Reid, and Sulzberger. The least number of responses were collected from Elliot Hall (29), and the most were collected from Plimpton (90). Six responses were collected from commuter students, and seventeen responses were collected from students who live off-campus.

CONTENT

The survey collected three different categories of data: personal information, demographic information, and opinion data. Table 1 (p. 8) contains a breakdown of the questions asked in each of these three categories, and Table 2 (p. 8) contains each question with the response options.

Note: Personal information was collected in order to ensure delivery of the dessert. Personal information was removed before conducting analyses in order to maintain confidentiality.

RESULTS

When conducting analyses, results were grouped into one of 5 categories: SGA Engagement, Pass/D/Fail Policy, Barnard Course Evaluations, Columbia University Orgo Night, and Campus Ombudsman. The results of each subgroup are expressed below in text summaries with supporting graphics as needed.

Weekly SGA email: Response Breakdown

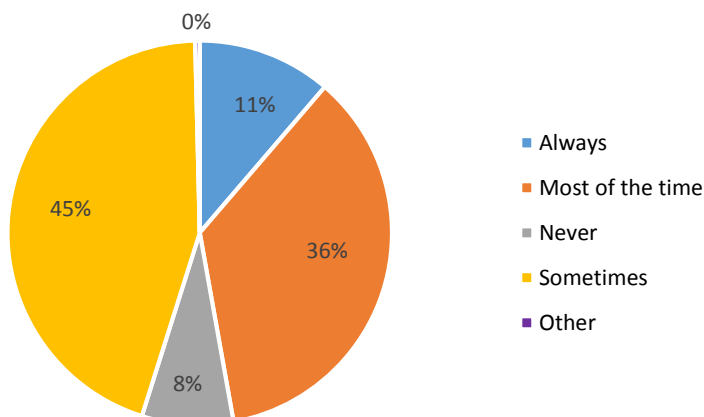


Figure 1. Breakdown of responses to the question of “Do you read the weekly SGA email?” Most respondents indicated that they read the emails at least sometimes, and only a small percent of students indicating that they never read the emails.

SGA Engagement

The following questions fall under the category of SGA Engagement:

“Do you read the weekly SGA email?”

“What is an issue you would like to see SGA address this semester?”

SGA asked students to indicate how frequently they read the weekly SGA student body wide email. This question was required, and the question received all 780 responses. Figure 1 (above) displays a summary of these results in a pie chart. The majority of students indicated that they either read the emails sometimes or most of the time. Only 8% indicated that they never read the emails. Percentages for each response option remained relatively consistent across the class years, suggesting that none of the individual class distributions differed significantly from the group responses.

In a separate question, SGA asked students to express an issue they would like to see SGA address during the current semester. This was not a required question, and 396 students chose to respond to the question. Responses varied, though major trends included winter housing, dining options, food insecurity, the P/D/F policy, divestment, and commencement speakers.

Pass/D/Fail Policy

SGA provided a brief description of the current P/D/F policy to preface the questions asked to students. The questions asked students to indicate if they have ever “P/D/F’ed” a course and to list the benefits and limitations of the current policy.

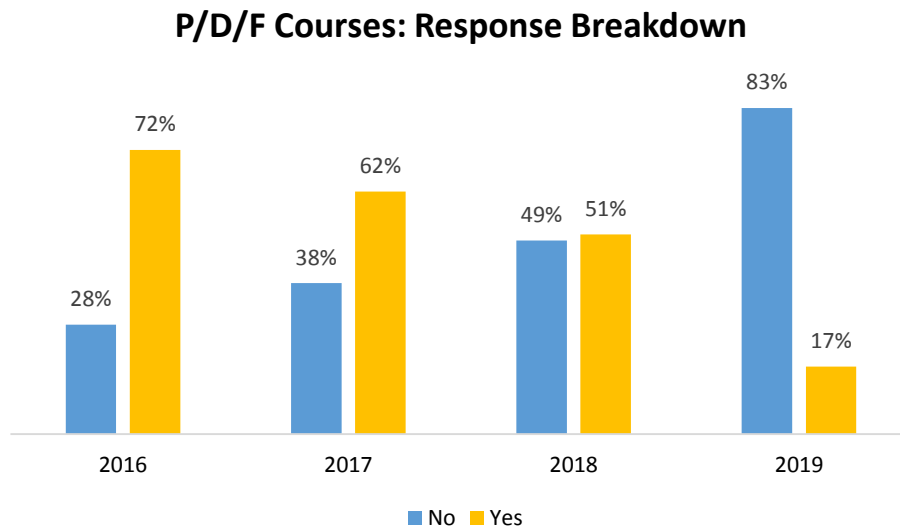


Figure 2. Breakdown of responses to the question of “Have you ever P/D/F’ed a course?” As class year increases, the percent of sampled students who have taken a course P/D/F also increases.

Figure 2 (above) shows the percent of responses in each class that have taken a course P/D/F. When grouped together, the data show that 50% of respondents have taken a course P/D/F. However, when separated by class year, the data show variation by grade. For example, only 17% of first-years in our sample have taken a course P/D/F while 72% of seniors have.

SGA also asked students to list the benefits of the current P/D/F policy. This question allowed respondents to select multiple responses, and it gave the option of “other” where respondents could fill in their own benefit. Table 3 (p. 10) provides a count of the total number of times each response option was selected. The two most popular responses among sampled students were “It allows me to protect my GPA” and “It reduces my stress levels.”

Similarly, SGA asked students to list the limitations of the current P/D/F policy. This question also allowed respondents to select multiple responses, and it gave the option of “other” where respondents could fill in their own imitation. Table 4 (p. 11) provides a count of the total number of times each response option was selected. The two most popular responses among sampled students were “It doesn’t allow me to see the letter grade I received in the course (Uncover)” and “It doesn’t let me retract my decision to P/D/F after November (Fall Semester)/April (Spring Semester).”

Barnard Course Evaluations

SGA provided a brief description of what a course evaluation is, and how student feedback is used by the school. There was one question in this section. Students were asked to indicate what they would like to change about the current course evaluations process. Multiple selections were allowed, and students were also given the option of “other” where they could fill in their own response. Table 5 (p. 11) provides a count of

Preference for CU Marching Band on Barnard's Campus: Response Breakdown

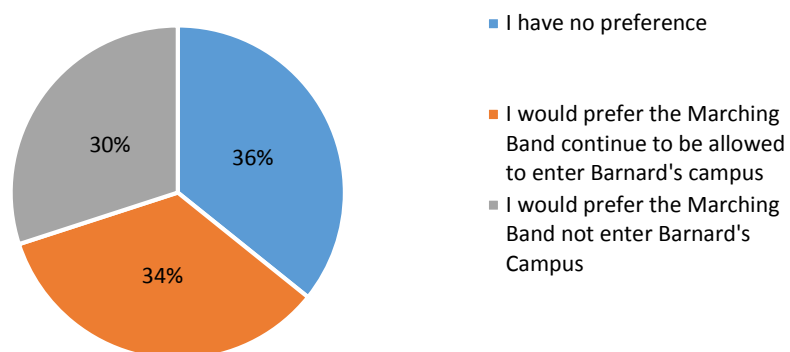


Figure 3. Breakdown of responses to the question of “Traditionally after Orgo Night the CU Marching Band travels around Columbia University and plays music on Barnard's campus. Which of the following options would you prefer?” Responses were split evenly between the three options.

the total number of times each response option was selected. The two most popular responses among sampled students were “The deadline to submit evaluations should be later” and “No repercussions for incomplete evaluations (i.e. No delay in receiving grades).”

Columbia University Orgo Night

For this section, SGA provided students a brief description of Orgo Night before asking three questions. The questions asked students if they had previously attended Orgo Night, if they prefer for the CU Marching Band to enter Barnard’s campus or not, and if the Marching Band enters Barnard’s campus where they would prefer the band to play music.

About 28% of students who participated in the survey indicated that they had previously attended Orgo Night. About 68% indicated that they had never attended Orgo Night, and about 4% indicated that this was their first semester at Barnard (meaning they did not have the opportunity to attend before this survey was conducted). The percent of juniors and seniors who had attended was slightly higher than the group total of 28%, and the percent of sophomores and first-years who had attended was slightly lower than the group total.

Figure 3 (above) displays the results of whether students prefer for the CU Marching Band to enter Barnard’s campus on Orgo Night or not. Responses were split relatively evenly across the three response options, with only a small percent of students selecting the option of “I have no preference” more than the other options of “I would prefer the Marching Band continue to be allowed to enter Barnard’s campus” and “I would prefer the Marching Band not enter Barnard’s campus.”

Benefit from use of an Ombudsman: Response Breakdown

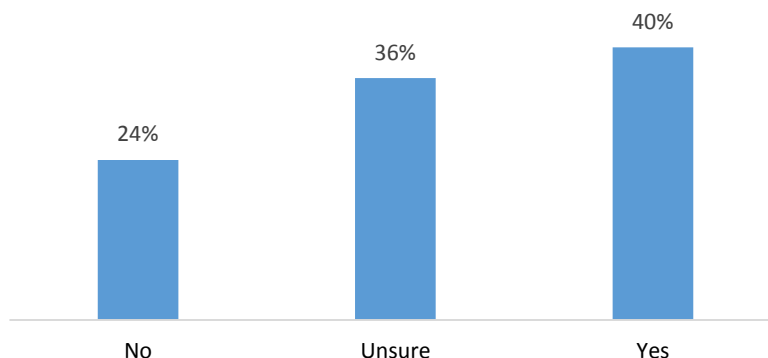


Figure 4. Breakdown of responses to the question of “During your time at Barnard, have you or someone you know ever experienced a situation where it may have been beneficial to use an Ombudsman?” About 40% of students indicated that they or a friend would have benefitted from the use of an Ombudsman.

Table 6 (p. 11) provides data from the question “If the Marching Band were to enter Barnard’s Campus, where would you prefer they play music?” The options that were available to students were “The Quad,” “Between Diana and Altshcul,” “In front of Milbank,” and “In front of Barnard Hall.” Responses were split relatively evenly between the options, with a small percent of students selecting the option of “In front of Barnard Hall” more than the other choices. Responses were analyzed across class years and whether the student had previously attended Orgo Night—no significant patterns emerged that were worth reporting.

Campus Ombudsman

SGA provided a definition of an Ombudsman for students before stating the two questions in this category. The first question was mandatory and asked students to identify whether they could see themselves or a friend using this resource if it were available on campus. About 42% of students responded “Yes,” 15% responded “No,” and 43% responded “Unsure.” Responses remained relatively consistent across class years. The second question was optional, and asked students to indicate whether they or someone they know had ever been in a situation where they would have benefitted from the use of an Ombudsman. Figure 4 above displays the results. About 40% of students responded with “Yes,” and 24% responded with “No.” Responses varied slightly across class years, with junior respondents selecting “Yes” in slightly higher numbers than the other grades and first-years selecting “Yes” in slightly lower numbers than the other grades. Table 7 (p. 11) contains a breakdown of these percentages by reported class year.

CONCLUSION

This is the largest survey that SGA conducts to gather student opinion on a variety of topics. The survey will be conducted again in the spring semester to collect current campus opinion. For questions or concerns about any of the data in this survey, please contact the SGA Executive Board at sga@barnard.edu.

SGA would like to thank all students who participated in the survey. This data is critical for SGA to accurately represent and advocate for students. We appreciate you taking the time to complete the survey, and we hope you enjoyed your desserts!

TABLE 1

Category	Questions
Personal Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Name - Barnard email address - Dorm number - Food allergies
Demographic Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Class year - Residence Hall
Opinion Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SGA engagement with the study body - Preferred types of events - Issues that SGA should address - Ideal meal plan - Campus accessibility - Support for transfer students - Title IX and Equity policy changes - Barnard's efforts to prevent discrimination and harassment on campus

TABLE 2

Question	Type of Response	Response Options	Required? (Y/N)
Name	Text box	Open	Y
Barnard Email Address	Text box	Open	Y
Class Year	Multiple Choice	-2016 -2017 -2018 -2019	Y
Suite AND Room Number	Text box	Open	Y
Which residence hall do you live in?	Multiple Choice	-110 -600 -616 -620 -Brooks Hall -Cathedral Gardens -Elliot Hall -Hewitt Hall -Plimpton -Reid Hall -Sulz Tower -Sulz/Reid -Sulzberger -I am a commuter student -I live off-campus	Y

Any food allergies we should be aware of?	Text box	Open	N
Do you read the weekly SGA email?	Multiple Choice	-Always -Most of the time -Sometimes -Never -Other (open text box)	Y
What is an issue that you would like to see SGA address this semester?	Text box	Open	N
Have you ever P/D/F'ed a course?	Multiple Choice	-Yes -No	Y
In your opinion, what are the benefits of Barnard's current P/D/F policy?	Multiple Choice, multiple selections allowed	-It allows me to explore courses outside of my comfort zone -It reduces my stress levels -It allows me to protect my GPA -It allows me to focus on my work in other classes -There are no benefits -Other (open text box)	Y
In your opinion, what are the limitations of Barnard's current P/D/F policy?	Multiple Choice, multiple selections allowed	-It doesn't allow me to see the letter grade I receive in the course (Uncover) -It doesn't let me retract my decision to P/D/F after November (Fall Semester)/April (Spring Semester) -The deadline to choose P/D/F (November in the fall, April in the spring) is too early -Students who choose to P/D/F are less dedicated in group projects/discussions -There are no limitations -Other (open text box)	Y
What, if anything, would you like to change about the current Course Evaluations process?	Multiple Choice, multiple selections allowed	-The deadline to submit evaluations should be later -No repercussions for incomplete evaluations (i.e. No delay in receiving grades) -Fewer email reminders -More email reminders	Y

		-I would not make any changes -Other (open text box)	
Have you ever attended Orgo Night?	Multiple Choice	-Yes -No -This is my first semester at Barnard	Y
Traditionally after Orgo Night the CU Marching Band travels around Columbia University and plays music on Barnard's campus. Which of the following options would you prefer?	Multiple Choice	-I would prefer the Marching Band not enter Barnard's Campus -I would prefer the Marching Band continue to be allowed to enter Barnard's campus -I have no preference	Y
If the Marching Band were to enter Barnard's Campus, where would you prefer they play music?	Multiple Choice	-The Quad -Between the Diana and Altschul -In front of Milbank -In front of Barnard Hall -Other (open text box)	Y
If this resource (campus ombudsman) was available on campus, could you see either yourself or someone you know using it?	Multiple Choice	-Yes -No -Unsure	Y
During your time at Barnard, have you or someone you know ever experienced a situation where it may have been beneficial to use an Ombudsman?	Multiple Choice	-Yes -No -Unsure	N

TABLE 3

Response Option	Total Times Selected
It allows me to explore courses outside of my comfort zone	437
It reduces my stress levels	589
It allows me to protect my GPA	590
It allows me to focus on my work in other courses	500
There are no benefits	4
Other	52

TABLE 4

Response Option	Total Times Selected
It doesn't allow me to see the letter grade I received in the course (Uncover)	604
It doesn't let me retract my decision to P/D/F after November (Fall Semester)/April (Spring Semester)	510
The deadline to choose P/D/F (November in the fall, April in the spring) is too early	347
Students who choose to P/D/F are less dedicated in group projects/discussion	139
There are no limitations	29
Other	41

TABLE 5

Response Option	Total Times Selected
The deadline to submit evaluations should be later	396
No repercussions for incomplete evaluations (i.e. No delay in receiving grades)	367
Fewer email reminders	194
More email reminders	82
I would not make any changes	147
Other	16

TABLE 6

Response Option	% of Total Responses
The Quad	24%
Between the Diana and Altschul	19%
In front of Milbank	20%
In front of Barnard Hall	29%
Other	8%

TABLE 7

Response Option	2016	2017	2018	2019	Group
Yes	42%	49%	42%	30%	40%
No	21%	23%	21%	29%	23%
Unsure	36%	27%	35%	41%	35%