

FACTORS INFLUENCING UNDERGRADUATE MUSIC MAJORS' COLLEGIATE DECISIONS

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Research Question #1:

What recruitment activities are most influential in prospective undergraduate music majors' collegiate decisions?

Research Question #2

What forms of personal communication and social media interaction are the most influential in prospective undergraduate music majors' collegiate decisions?

Research Question #3

Are recruiting practices viewed similarly across academic majors?

DEMOGRAPHICS/ACADEMIC MAJOR

Potential participants

- Freshman/first-year undergraduate transfer students
- 258 surveys emailed from Fall 2020-Fall 2023
- $N = 180$; 69.7% response rate yield

Gender Identify	<i>N</i>	Percentage
Male	87	48.3
Female	87	48.3
Nonbinary	4	0.2
Gender-fluid	2	0.1

Year in School

Freshman	165	91.7
Transfer	15	8.3

Academic Major/Minor

Music Education	99	55.0
Music Performance	67	37.2
Music Therapy	21	11.7
Theory/Composition	10	5.6
Music Minor	2	0.1

No significant differences between Music Education/Music Therapy and Music Performance majors regarding influence of attending events ($p > .80$)

EVENTS/ACTIVITIES ATTENDED PRIOR TO ENROLLING

Which of the following events did you attend prior to enrolling?

All-District Band	33.9%	Marching Band Day	6.1%
Student for a Day	30.0%	Four Seasons Next Generation	4.4%
Summer Music Camps	27.2%	Eastern Youth Orchestra	2.2%
Honors Chorus Preparation	7.8%	Young Artist Piano Competition	0.1%

Influenced your decision to attend the University (1 = *not important at all* to 5 = *extremely important*)

Four Seasons Next Generation	$M = 4.50$	$SD = .76$
Summer Music Camps	$M = 4.10$	$SD = 1.07$
Student for a Day	$M = 4.02$	$SD = .94$
Marching Band Day	$M = 3.54$	$SD = 1.12$
Eastern Youth Orchestra	$M = 3.50$	$SD = 1.29$
Honors Chorus Preparation Day	$M = 3.14$	$SD = 1.41$
All-District Band	$M = 2.90$	$SD = 1.19$
Young Artist Piano Competition	$M = 1.00$	$SD = 0.00$

*($p < .001$)

Private Lesson participation w/faculty member (Yes – 58.3%)

- 90% indicated “very important/extremely important” ($M = 4.51$, $SD = .73$) in decision
- “In-person lessons” ($M = 4.61$, $SD = .68$) > “virtual lessons” ($M = 4.32$, $SD = .77$) *($p > 0.06$)

Attend a University Ensemble Performance prior to enrolling (Yes – 42.8%)

- 68.9% indicated “very important/extremely important” ($M = 3.92$, $SD = .92$) in decision

FORMS OF COMMUNICATION

Communication engaged in with faculty/staff members prior to enrolling

Email	88.4%	Facebook	8.3%
In-person Meeting	62.8%	Instagram	6.7%
Text Messaging	46.7%	Twitter	0.0%
Phone Call	43.9%		
Virtual Meeting	33.9%		

Influenced your decision to attend the University (1 = *not important at all* to 5 = *extremely important*)

In-person Meeting	$M = 4.47$	$SD = .76$
Virtual Meeting	$M = 3.85$	$SD = 1.07$
Phone Call	$M = 3.73$	$SD = .94$
Email	$M = 3.70$	$SD = 1.12$
Text Messaging	$M = 3.56$	$SD = 1.29$
Facebook	$M = 3.00$	$SD = 1.41$
Instagram	$M = 2.54$	$SD = 1.19$

*($p < 0.01$)

OPEN-ENDED RESPONSES (MUSICAL/NON-MUSICAL FACTORS)

FACULTY/STAFF ($n = 27$)

“I was aware of the caliber of musicians that were produced through [faculty member’s] teaching.”

RECOMMENDATIONS OF K-12 MUSIC TEACHERS ($n = 19$)

“My high school choir director spoke highly of the staff here.”

LEGACY ($n = 14$)

“My brother also just graduated from [University] and enjoyed his time here.”

CAMPUS ($n = 11$)

“I love the campus, and how it felt like home as soon as I got here.”

OVERALL ENVIRONMENT/ATMOSPHERE ($n = 10$)

“I felt very welcomed here.”

REPUTATION ($n = 10$)

“The music program is amazing.”

CAREER GOALS ($n = 3$)

“I felt like I would be given the resources needed to succeed in my career path.”

STUDENT LIFE ($n = 3$)

“The mascot.”

CONCLUSIONS

1. Respondents demonstrated a clear preference for events/activities that allow for interaction with University faculty members, rather than simply attending on-campus events.

2. Private lessons were the most influential activity respondents participate in, with both “in-person” and “virtual” formats rated high in terms of influencing their decision.

3. Personal communication is the preferred method of interacting with faculty, and engagement on social media has little to no influence on students’ decision to enroll.

4. No significant differences were found between academic majors and recruitment activities or forms of communication.