

Comparing On-Campus, Off-Campus, and Commuter Students

Center for the Study of Student Life

March 2015

INTRODUCTION

This report explores how the location of students' residences influences their involvement and experiences at Ohio State. The results are from the 2015 Student Life Survey which was administered to a random sample of 5,000 undergraduate students and 1,000 graduate and professional students. A total of 1,039 undergraduate students (20.8% response rate) and 282 graduate/professional students (28.2% response rate) completed the survey. Throughout the report students are compared based on their self-reported residence location: on-campus, off-campus within the 43201 area (off-campus), and off-campus outside the 43201 area (commuter).

DEMOGRAPHICS

Gender	%
Female	54.0%
Genderqueer/Gender Non-conforming	0.2%
Male	44.2%
Transgender Male/Transgender Man	0.2%
Transgender Female/Transgender Woman	0.1%
Preferred identity (in addition to or not listed above)	0.4%
Prefer not to state	0.9%

Race/Ethnicity	%
African American/Black or African descent	4.4%
Asian American/Asian (East, South, Southeast)	12.6%
Latino(a)/Hispanic American	1.5%
Middle Eastern/Arab American	1.1%
White/European American	71.1%
Other	0.6%
Prefer not to answer	3.2%
Multiple Races/Ethnicities	5.5%

Rank	%
First-year undergraduate	11.1%
Second-year undergraduate	17.1%
Third-year undergraduate	17.5%
Fourth-year undergraduate	32.9%
Graduate	15.5%
Professional	5.8%

Residence Type	%
On-Campus	23.4%
Off-Campus	38.1%
Commuter	38.5%

HIGHLIGHTS

- While 63% of on-campus and off-campus students report involvement in a student organization, only 33% of commuter students report involvement in one.
- Off-campus students are most likely to participate in one-day service events (46%) and on-going service programs (35%).
- Commuter students are more likely to report that they don't join student organizations because they don't have enough time (68%), have family commitments (33%), have work commitments (53%), or it's not convenient because they commute (46%).
- The vast majority of students reported having relationships with other Ohio State students, with slightly higher rates for off-campus (93%) and on-campus students (87%) compared to commuter students (81%).
- On- and off-campus students are more likely to *agree* or *strongly agree* than commuter students with items related to feeling connected to the Ohio State community.
- Overall, students are satisfied with Ohio State across residence type; off-campus students (93%) are most likely to report having grown as a result of their experiences at Ohio State.

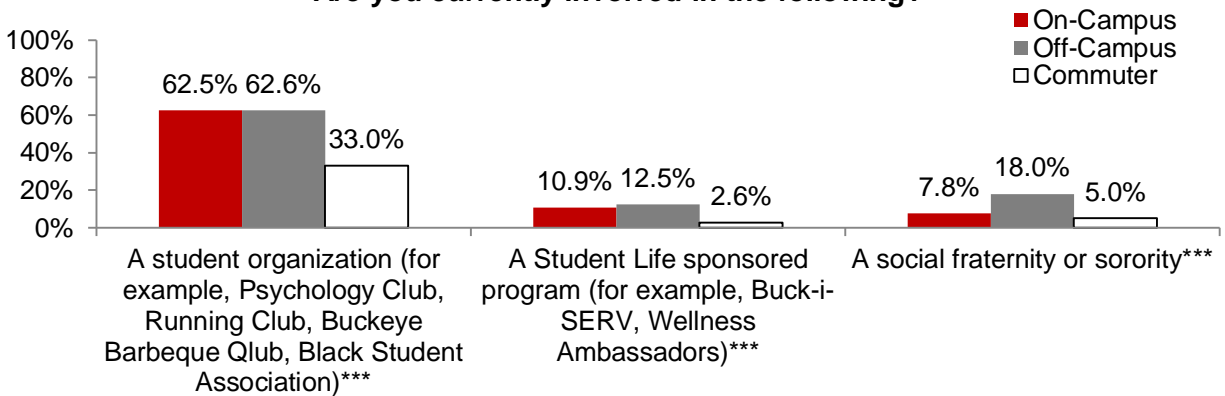
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FINDINGS

CAMPUS INVOLVEMENT

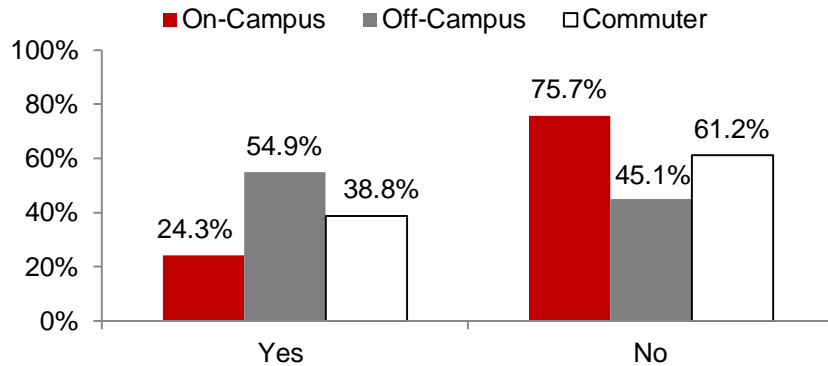
Students who live on- and off-campus are more involved in student organizations than commuter students. Off-campus students are most likely to be involved in a social fraternity or sorority. Commuter students are least likely to be involved in a Student Life sponsored program.

Are you currently involved in the following?

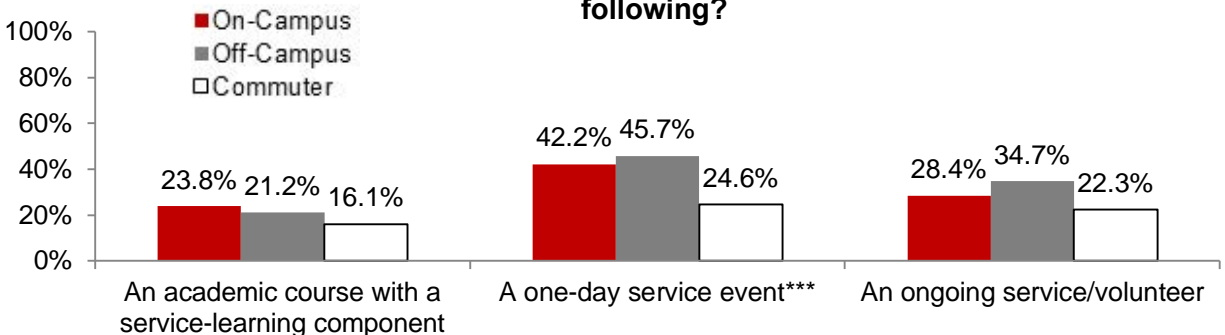


Students who live off-campus are more likely to hold a leadership position in a student organization, Student Life sponsored program or social fraternity or sorority organization. On-campus students are least likely to report they hold a leadership position, which could in part be due to their rank.

Do you hold a leadership position in a student organization, Student Life sponsored program, or social fraternity or sorority organization?***



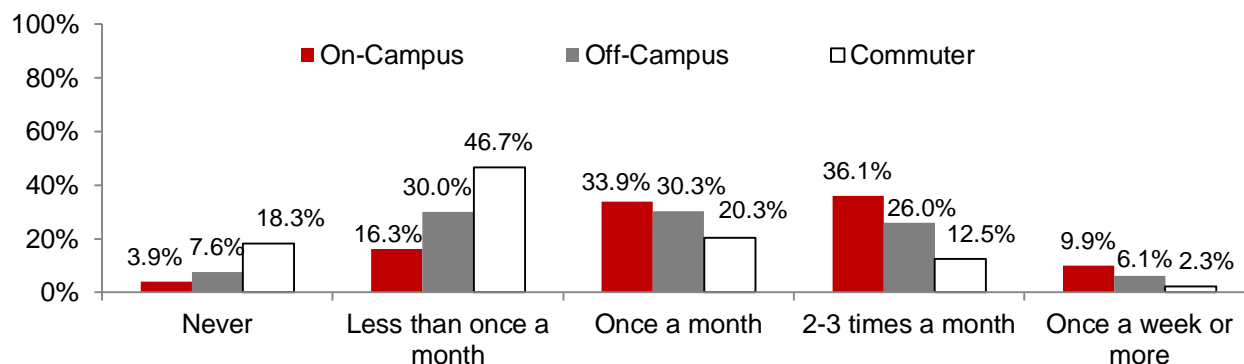
In the current academic year, have you participated in any of the following?



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On-campus students participate in campus events more often than off-campus and commuter students.

How often do you participate in campus events?***



Type of Organizations Students Join

The types of organizations students choose to become involved in differ by type of residence for several categories.

What type of student organizations are you involved in?	On-Campus	Off-Campus	Commuter	Statistically Significant
Academic/Departmental/Professional Organizations	64.1%	77.3%	86.1%	***
Awareness/Activism	32.5%	25.3%	26.7%	
Community Service	59.4%	62.4%	48.9%	
Creative and Performing Arts	21.4%	13.2%	9.6%	*
Ethnic/Cultural	18.2%	19.9%	24.4%	
Governance Bodies (e.g. Undergraduate Student Government)	4.6%	7.4%	7.1%	
Honoraries/Honor Societies	29.7%	28.7%	16.7%	
Media, Journalism, and Creative Writing	6.5%	6.3%	6.0%	
Religious/Spiritual	27.7%	27.1%	14.8%	
Residence Hall Programs	22.7%	5.2%	2.4%	***
Social Fraternities/Sororities	11.8%	28.6%	7.3%	***
Special Interest (e.g. Chess Club)	34.8%	31.5%	33.0%	
Sports and Recreation (e.g. Skydiving – Sport Club)	35.0%	33.3%	22.1%	
Technology (e.g. Information Systems Association)	7.3%	5.2%	6.0%	

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Benefits of Joining a Student Organization

Students' perceived benefits of joining a student organization do not differ by residence type.

Reflecting on your experience with student organizations at The Ohio State University, please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements:	On-Campus	Off-Campus	Commuter	Statistically Significant
Participation in a student organization(s) taught me problem solving skills				
Strongly Disagree/Disagree	9.7%	5.3%	6.1%	
Neither Agree nor Disagree	27.6%	20.6%	22.8%	
Strongly Agree/Agree	62.8%	74.1%	71.1%	
Being in a student organization has made me more confident				
Strongly Disagree/Disagree	3.4%	4.5%	6.1%	
Neither Agree nor Disagree	17.9%	12.8%	20.2%	
Strongly Agree/Agree	78.6%	82.7%	73.7%	
Participation in a student organization has made me feel more connected to the university				
Strongly Disagree/Disagree	3.5%	4.5%	6.1%	
Neither Agree nor Disagree	8.3%	11.5%	13.2%	
Strongly Agree/Agree	88.2%	84.0%	80.7%	
Being in a student organization helps me manage stress				
Strongly Disagree/Disagree	16.6%	22.2%	18.4%	
Neither Agree nor Disagree	29.7%	27.2%	39.5%	
Strongly Agree/Agree	53.8%	50.6%	42.1%	

Reasons for Joining Student Organizations

Students report varying reasons for joining student organizations and these reasons differ significantly by type or residence.

Why have you chosen to join a student organization?	On-Campus	Off-Campus	Commuter	Statistically Significant
To make Ohio State seem smaller	44.5%	46.1%	24.6%	***
To make new friends	82.2%	75.3%	62.3%	**
A friend encouraged me to join	37.0%	35.0%	27.2%	
A faculty member encourage me to join	8.9%	9.9%	20.0%	**
A parent/guardian encouraged me to join	18.5%	10.7%	5.3%	**
To gain leadership skills and abilities	54.8%	72.4%	59.6%	**
To build a resume	67.8%	70.8%	59.6%	
I was encouraged by University staff (for example, hall director, orientation leader, academic advisers)	13.0%	10.3%	14.9%	
It matched my interests	87.7%	88.9%	78.9%	*
I had nothing to do/was bored	12.3%	7.0%	5.3%	
Academic reasons	29.5%	35.4%	33.3%	
Professional networking	32.2%	47.3%	51.8%	**

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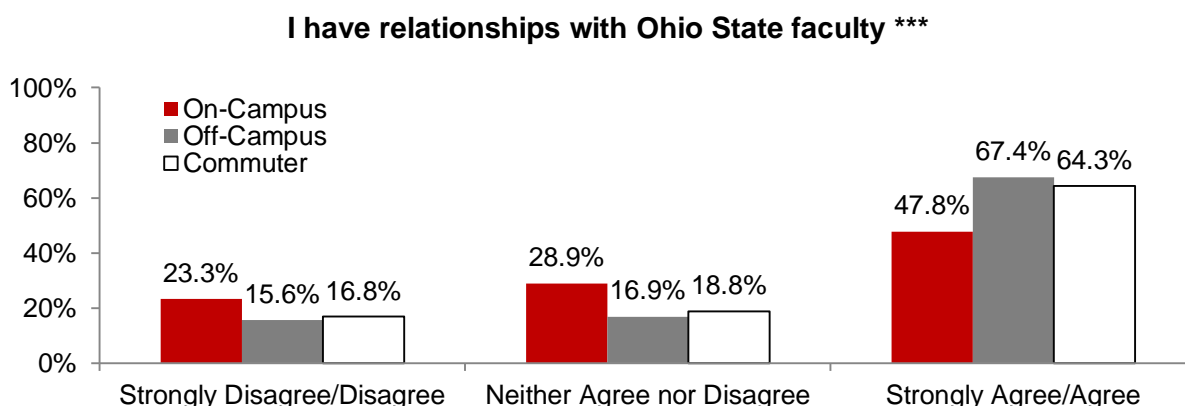
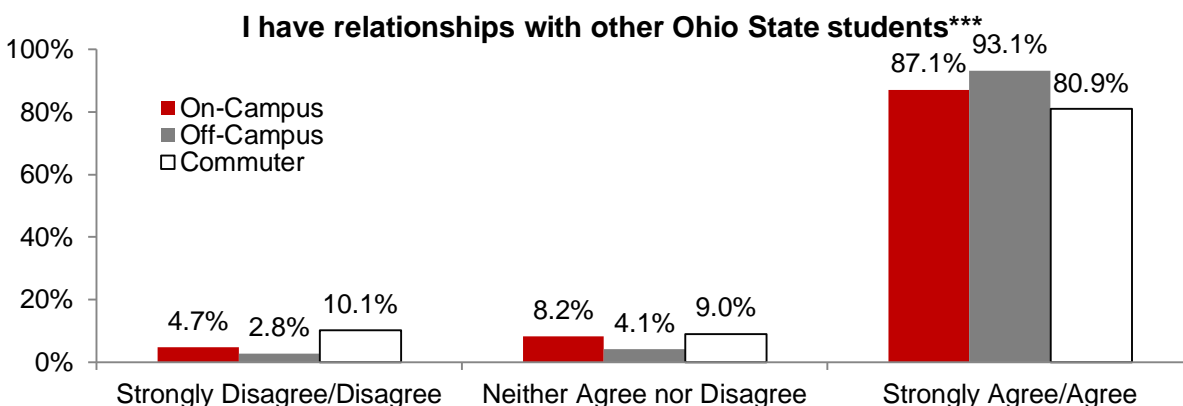
Reasons for Not Joining Student Organizations

Commuter students are more likely to report that they don't join student organizations because they don't have enough time, have family commitments, have work commitments, or it's not convenient because they commute.

Why have you chosen not to join a student organization?	On-Campus	Off-Campus	Commuter	Statistically Significant
I don't have enough time	51.7%	59.3%	67.5%	*
I am involved in too many other activities	11.5%	10.3%	6.5%	
I am too focused on academics	55.2%	51.0%	46.3%	
I have family commitments	9.2%	11.0%	32.9%	***
I have work commitments	28.7%	44.1%	53.2%	***
I don't have the money	25.3%	29.0%	19.9%	
I do not feel connected to campus	10.3%	10.3%	17.7%	
I commute, so it's not convenient	1.1%	4.8%	45.9%	***
I don't know about the groups or how to join	23.0%	17.9%	13.4%	
Not interested	11.5%	17.2%	10.8%	
Other	10.3%	9.7%	6.9%	

RELATIONSHIPS WITH FACULTY AND STUDENTS

Off-campus students were most likely to report having relationships with other Ohio State students and faculty. Students across residence type reported similar rates of interaction with people who different than themselves.

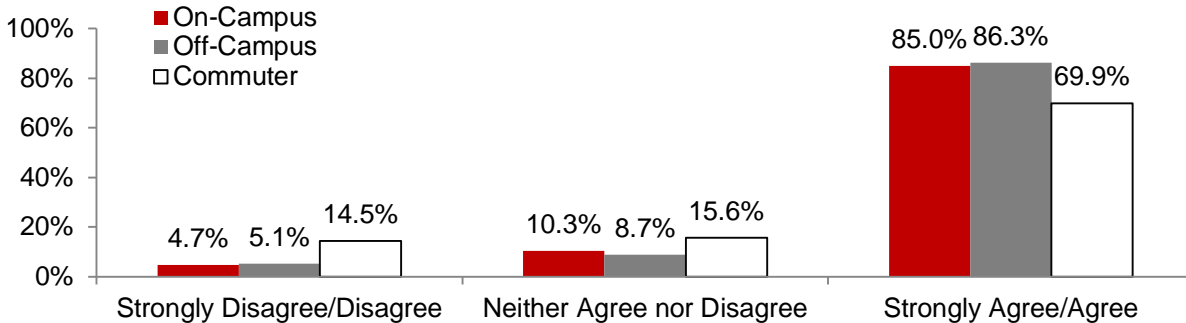


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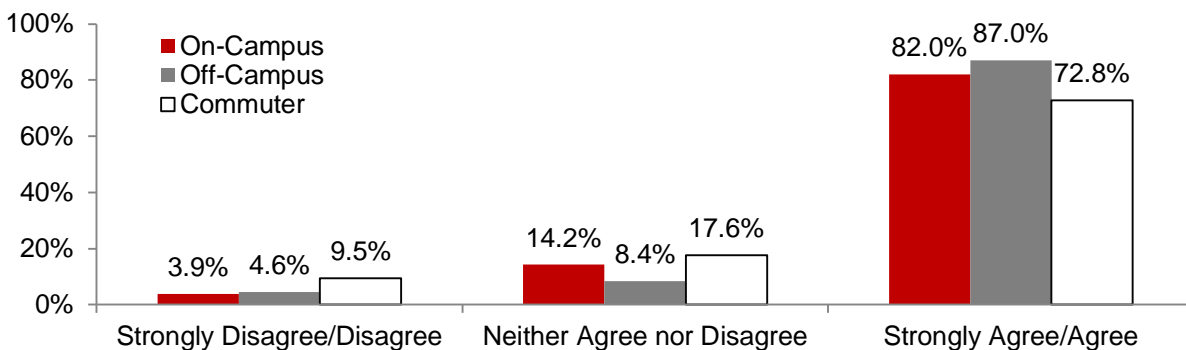
CONNECTION TO OHIO STATE COMMUNITY

Commuter students were least likely to report that they recognized people on campus while off-campus students were the most likely to report this. When students were asked whether they feel like a member of the Ohio State community, off-campus students were most likely to agree, and commuter students were the least likely to agree. Commuter students were less likely to report that they feel involved with others at the university.

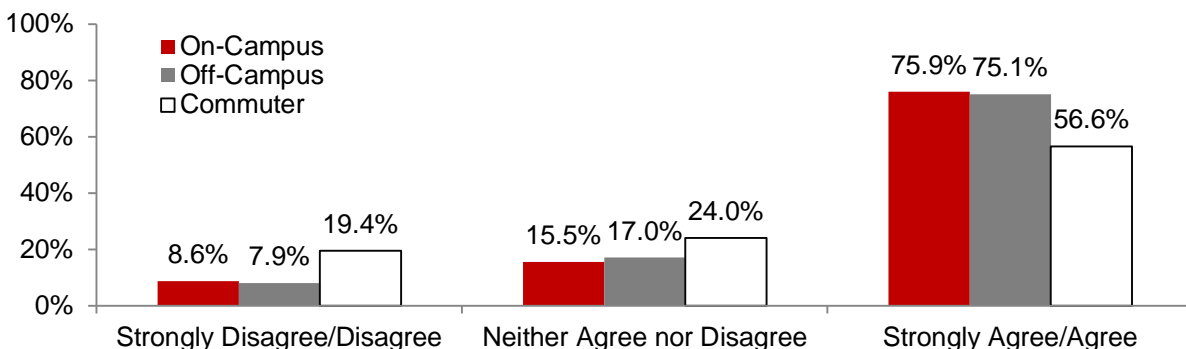
I recognize people on campus (for example, in my classes, walking on campus, attending events) ***



I feel that I am a member of the Ohio State community ***



I feel involved with others at the university ***

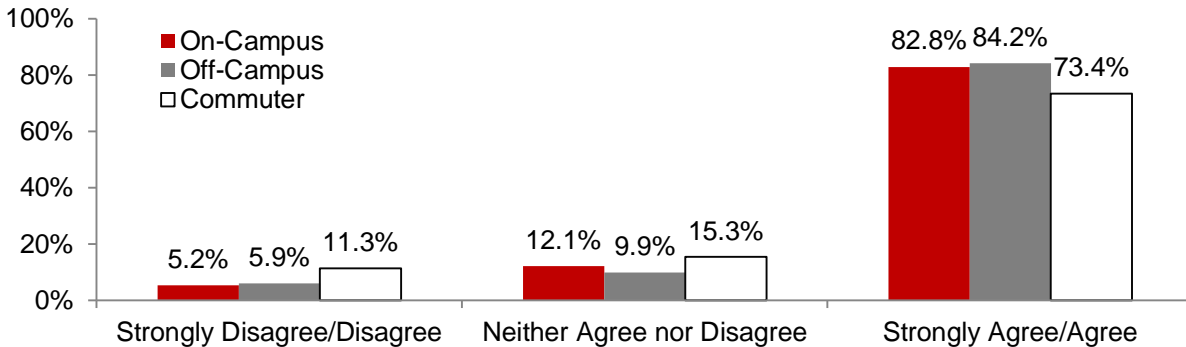


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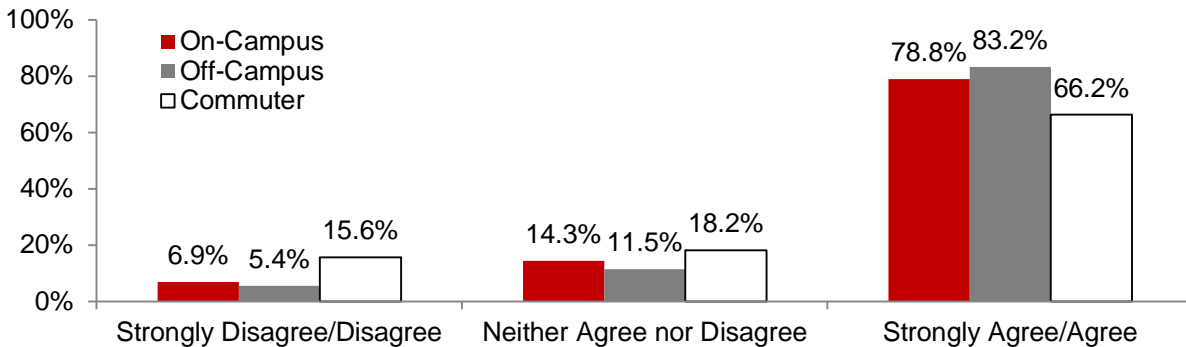
SENSE OF BELONGING TO OHIO STATE

Off-campus students were more likely to *agree* or *strongly agree* with the following statements “I know Ohio State traditions” and “I take part or participate in Ohio State traditions” while commuter students were least likely to report this. Being happy at Ohio State and being able to see themselves as part of Ohio State did not differ by students’ type of residence.

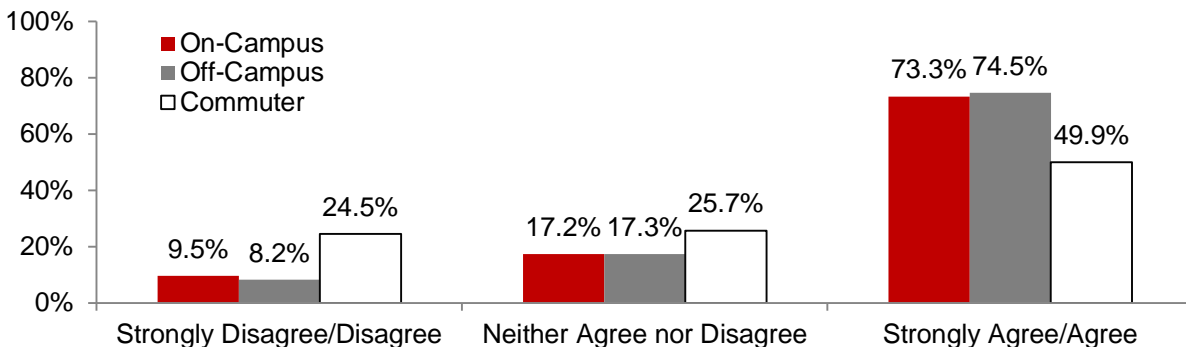
I feel a sense of belonging to Ohio State **



I know Ohio State traditions ***

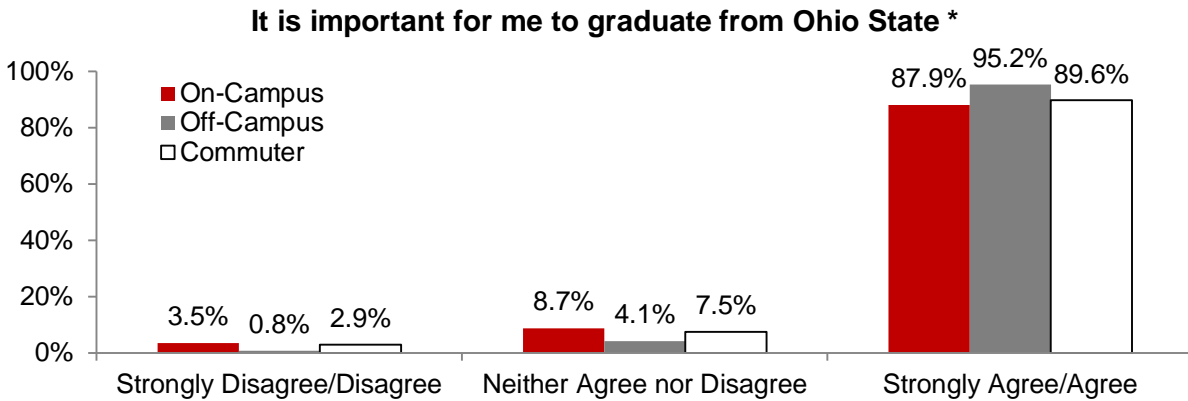


I take part in Ohio State traditions ***



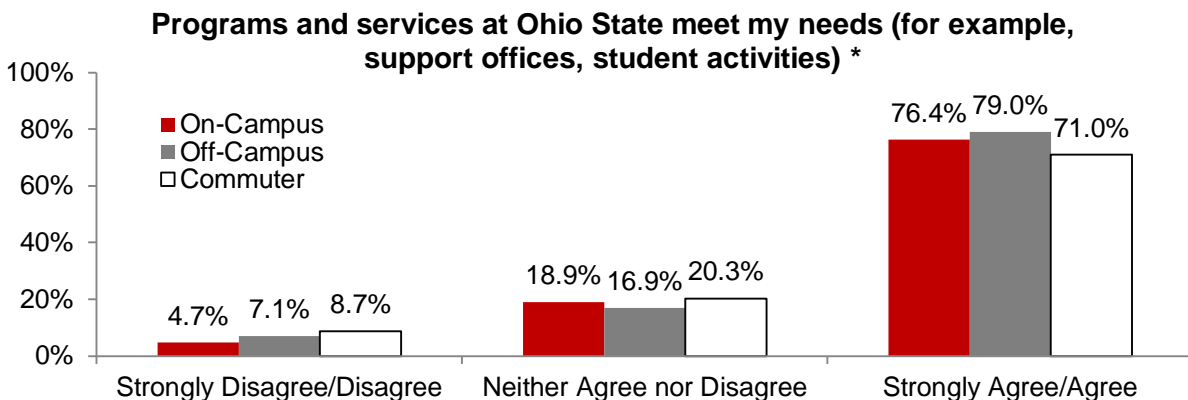
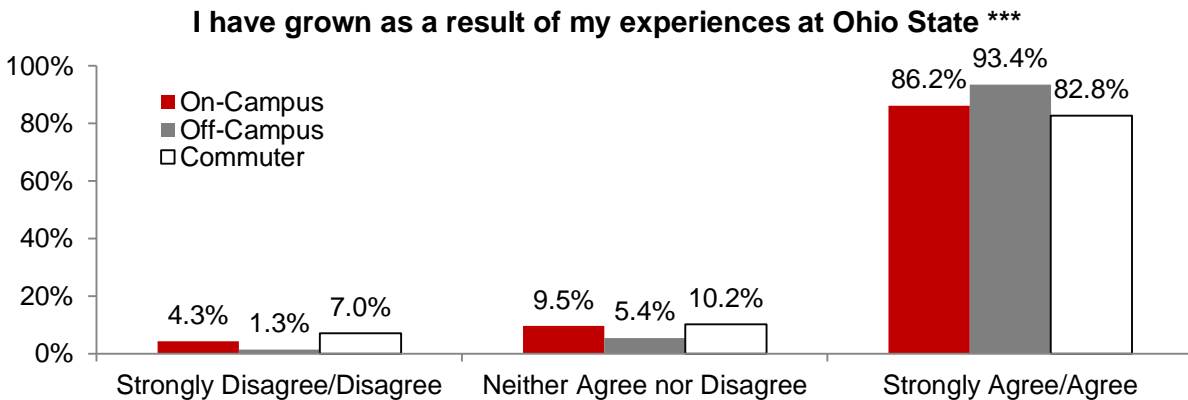
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A higher percentage of students who live off-campus reported it is important for them to graduate from Ohio State than those who live on-campus; however, there were no statistically significant differences in students' intention to complete their degree at Ohio State by residence type.



SATISFACTION WITH OHIO STATE

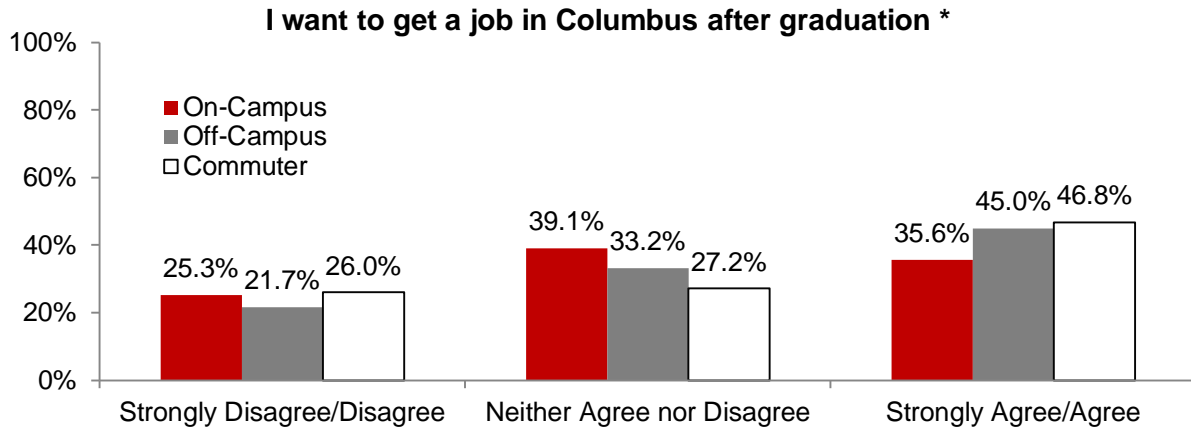
Overall, students are satisfied with Ohio State across residence type. There were no statistically significant difference by residence type for overall satisfaction with experiences at Ohio State, satisfaction with academic programs, feeling attending Ohio State was the right choice, and recommending Ohio State to other students. Off-campus students were most likely to report that they have grown as a result of their experiences at Ohio State while commuter students were least likely to report this.



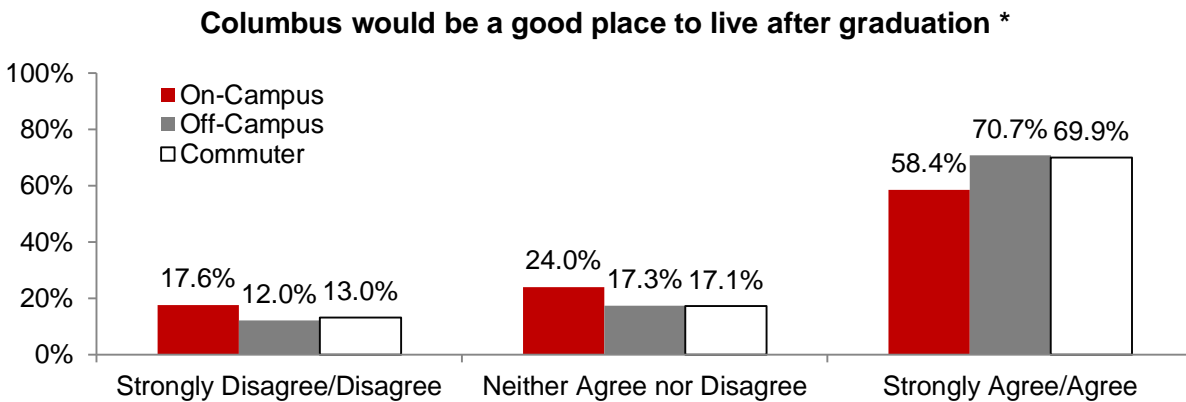
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SENSE OF BELONGING TO COLUMBUS

Students who live on-campus were least likely to want a job in Columbus after graduation. Commuters were most likely to want a job in Columbus after graduation.



Students who live off-campus were most likely to report that Columbus would be a good place to live after graduation while on-campus students were least likely to report this.



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