



Student Philanthropy

Results from the 2015 and
2019 Student Life Survey

Center for the Study of Student Life

February 2019



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
OFFICE OF STUDENT LIFE

INTRODUCTION

This brief explores students' beliefs about philanthropy and their participation in philanthropic activities. Engaging in philanthropy is an important way that students explore who they are, identify their values and develop as global citizens. Student philanthropy is "an experiential learning approach that provides students with the opportunity to study social problems...and make decisions about investing funds in them" (Olberding, 2009). Student philanthropy programs teach students about civic engagement, increase awareness of social problems and increase knowledge about philanthropic issues (Olberding, 2009).

There is an emerging body of research that demonstrates the benefits of student philanthropy for student's growth and development. Engaging in student philanthropy is associated with increased awareness of social problems and knowledge of philanthropic processes (Ahmed & Olberding, 2007; Palka, 2007). Student philanthropy also influences student attitudes, beliefs and behaviors related to social responsibility and civic engagement (Markus, Howard, & King, 1993). A long-term study of the effects of student philanthropy after college found that alumni who engaged in student philanthropy during college demonstrated greater awareness, learning and intentions around philanthropy, as well as increased instances of making charitable contributions and volunteering, compared to national averages (Olberding, 2011).

The Office of Student Life at The Ohio State University began studying student philanthropy in 2015 on the annual Student Life Survey. A series of questions related to students' participation in and beliefs about philanthropy were developed. The student philanthropy questions were readministered during the 2019 Student Life Survey. This report compares the results from the 2015 and 2019 administrations for undergraduate, graduate and professional students to determine whether students' beliefs about or participation in philanthropy has changed over time.

METHODS

The Student Life Survey is administered annually by the Center for the Study of Student Life to examine trends in student engagement and sense of belonging, as well as to improve institutional practices and to address current issues affecting students at Ohio State.

The 2015 Student Life Survey was administered to a random sample of 5,000 undergraduate students during January 2015. A total of 1,039 undergraduate students (20.8% response rate) completed the survey. Data for this report were restricted to Columbus campus undergraduate students ($n = 933$).

The 2019 Student Life Survey was administered to a random sample of 4,000 undergraduate students on the Columbus campus during January 2019. A total of 747 undergraduate students (18.7% response rate) completed the survey.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Gender Identity ¹	2015 (n = 749)	2019 (n = 726)
Man	46.1%	36.2%
Woman	52.2%	62.3%
Trans Man	0.3%	0.1%
Trans Woman	0.1%	0.0%
Genderqueer or Gender fluid	0.3%	0.3%
Other preferred identity	0.4%	0.1%
More than 1 identity	0.0%	0.3%
Prefer not to answer	0.7%	0.7%

¹Data are self-reported

Race/Ethnicity ¹	2015 (n = 749)	2019 (n = 727)
African American/Black or African descent	3.7%	5.3%
Asian American/Asian (East, South, Southeast)	11.8%	10.5%
Latinx/Hispanic American	1.2%	2.6%
Middle Eastern/Arab American	0.5%	0.8%
White/European American	74.0%	74.6%
Other	0.8%	0.1%
Prefer not to answer	2.5%	1.0%
Multiple Races/Ethnicities	5.5%	5.2%

¹Data are self-reported

Class Rank ²	2015 (n = 749)	2019 (n = 727)
1	8.7%	7.3%
2	20.3%	24.4%
3	23.4%	27.5%
4	47.7%	40.9%

²Data are from the Student Information System

FINDINGS

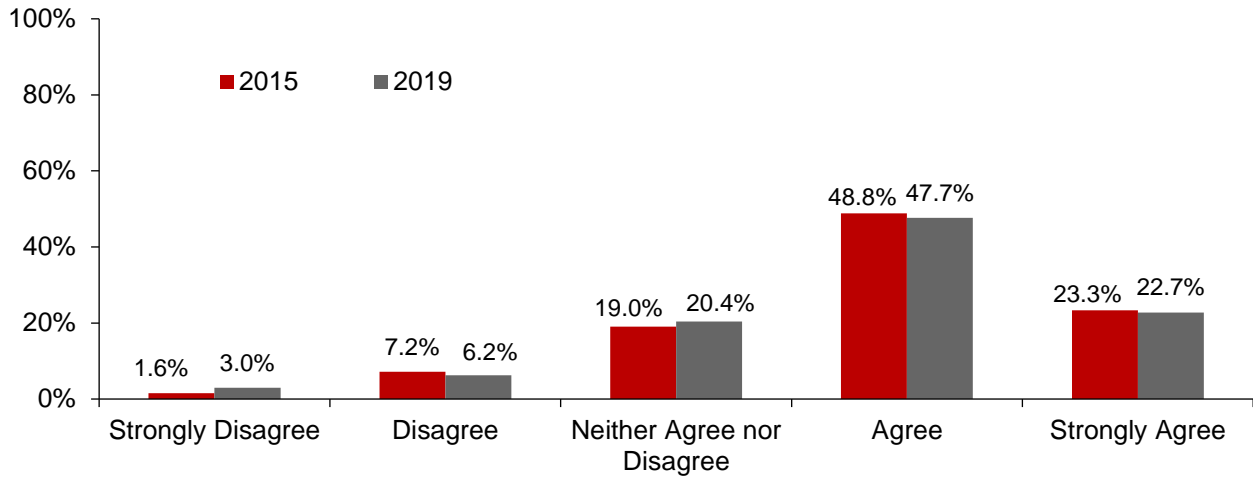
Philanthropic Participation

Which of the following do you or have you participated in during the last year? Please check all that apply.	2015 (n = 749)	2019 (n = 643)	Statistically Significant Change
Donated money to a charity or nonprofit organization on a regular basis (e.g. annually, monthly)	19.5%	11.7%	***
Donated money to a charity or nonprofit organization one-time	52.9%	54.0%	
Donated items to a charity or nonprofit (e.g. food, clothing)	56.9%	51.9%	*
Volunteered one-time for a charity or nonprofit organization	51.0%	45.7%	
Volunteered regularly for a charity or nonprofit organization	27.2%	24.0%	
Helped raise money for a charitable organization	39.7%	35.6%	
Walked, ran or cycled for a charitable cause	29.8%	17.9%	***
Promoted a cause or charity online (e.g. Twitter, Facebook)	40.7%	38.7%	
Promoted a cause or charity in person (e.g. wearing a t-shirt, talking to someone)	39.5%	32.4%	**
Encouraged friends or family to give or volunteer to a charity or nonprofit organization	41.3%	41.4%	

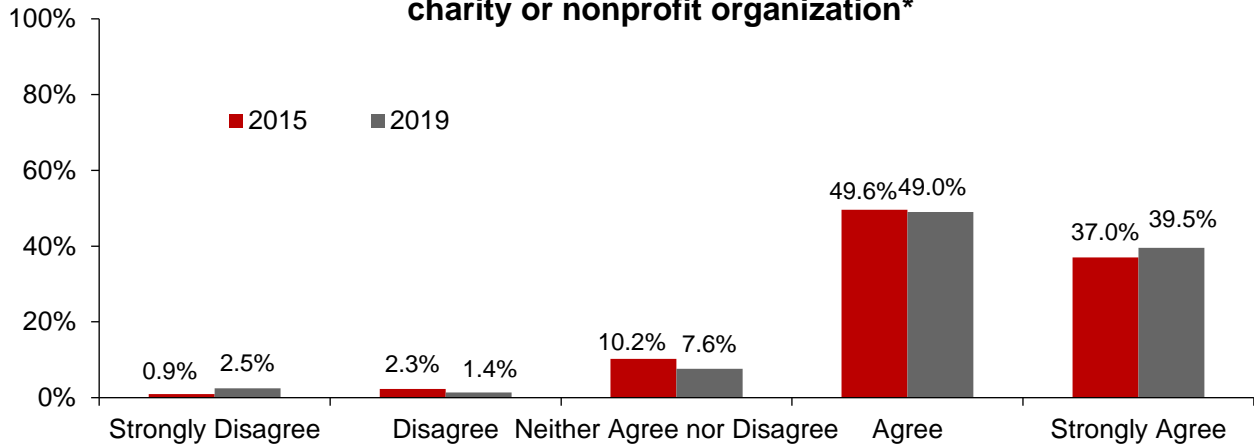
Philanthropic Beliefs and Attitudes

I believe philanthropy includes: (Check all that apply)	2015 (n = 744)	2019 (n = 646)	Statistically Significant Change
Donating money	69.4%	80.8%	***
Donating items (e.g. food, clothing)	71.5%	83.6%	***
Volunteering time	85.9%	90.7%	**
Helping to raise money for a charitable cause	70.3%	83.3%	***
Walking, running, or cycling for a charitable cause	55.5%	66.3%	***
Promoting a cause or charity online (e.g. Twitter, Facebook)	50.9%	62.4%	***
Promoting a cause or charity in person (e.g. wearing a t-shirt, talking to someone)	56.3%	66.7%	***
Encouraging friends or family to give or volunteer to a charity or nonprofit organization	59.7%	73.4%	***
None of the above	2.0%	0.8%	

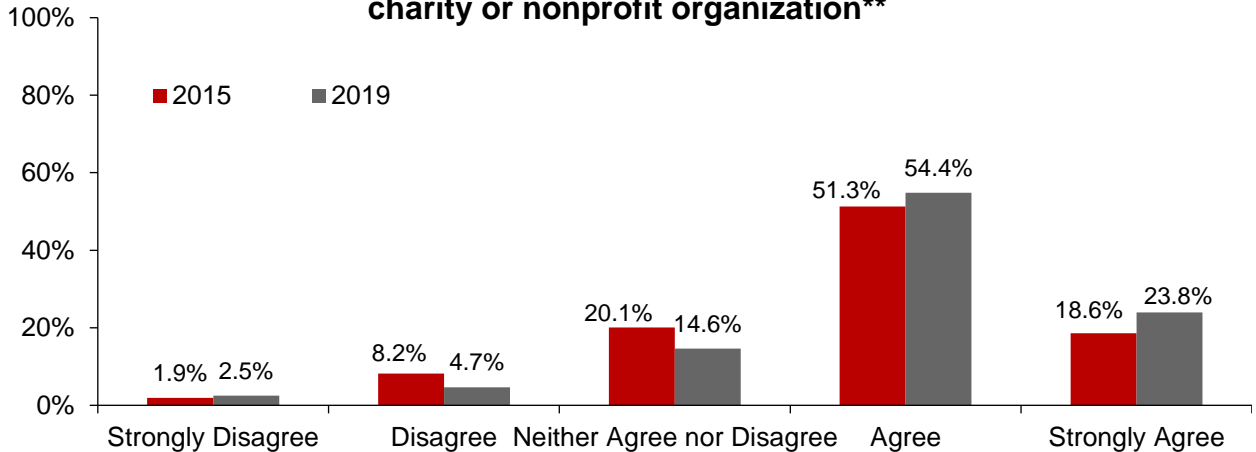
I am able to define what philanthropy means to me



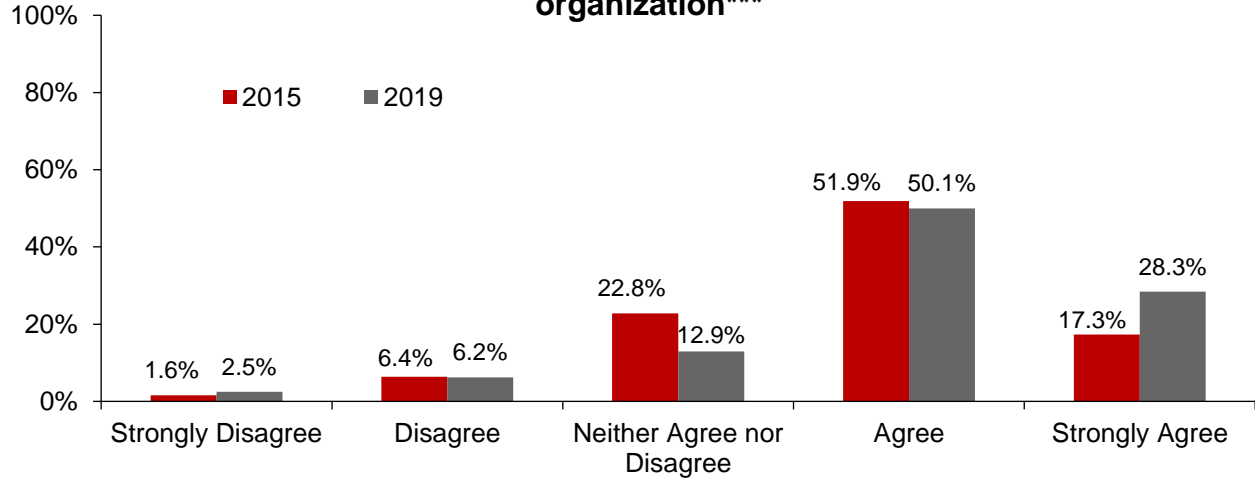
I can make a difference in the world by volunteering my time to a charity or nonprofit organization*



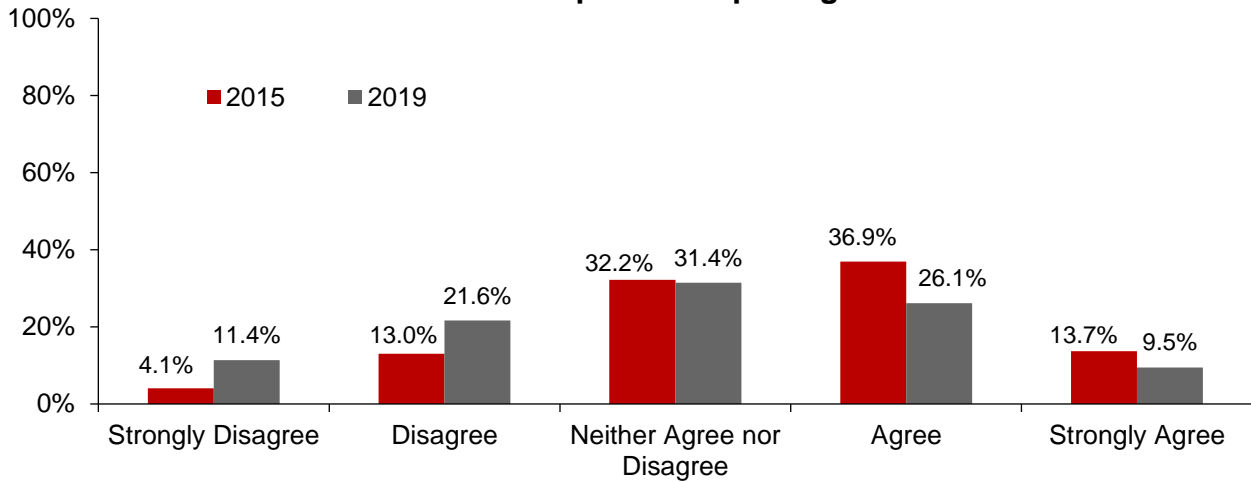
I can make a difference in the world by donating money to a charity or nonprofit organization**



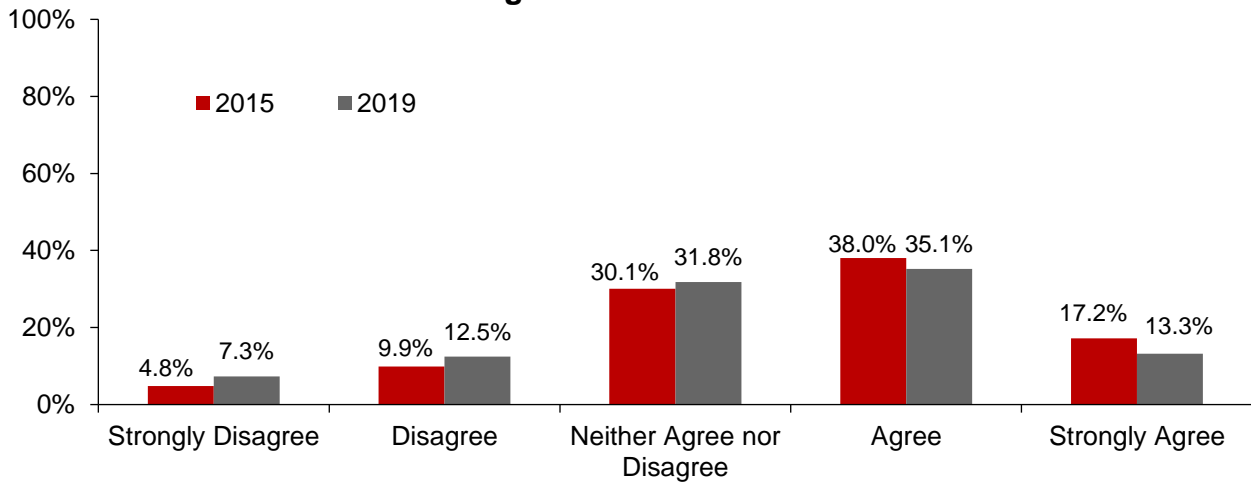
A donation of \$5 can make a difference to a charity or nonprofit organization***



I view Ohio State as a philanthropic organization***



I would give back to Ohio State*



Demographic Differences in Philanthropic Participation

The following section examines demographic differences in philanthropic participation for the 2019 data. Ninety percent of undergraduate students participated in philanthropic activities in the last year.

Demographic Background	% Engaged in Philanthropy	Statistically Significant Difference
Gender Identity		***
Female	95.2%	
Male	82.1%	
Other gender identities	90.0%	
International Student Status		***
International	70.6%	
Domestic	91.3%	
Racial/Ethnic Identity		***
African American/Black or African descent	92.9%	
Asian American/Asian (East, South, Southeast)	75.8%	
Latinx/Hispanic American	88.2%	
White/European American	92.2%	
Two or more races	93.8%	
First-Generation Status		
First-Generation	88.5%	
Non-First-Generation	90.6%	
Transfer or Campus Change		
Ohio State-Columbus	91.5%	
Ohio State Campus Change	89.7%	
Transfer Student	84.8%	
Class Rank		
1	78.1%	
2	91.0%	
3	90.3%	
4	91.5%	

Note: Respondents identifying as Middle Eastern/Arab American removed from demographic table due to small sample sizes. These respondents are included in all other analyses.

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