

Creating Connections

Getting Involved & Making Relationships at Parkland

Questions

- When students first reach Parkland College or have been enrolled for a semester or two, how is it that students **create relationships** with others and **get involved** in the school?
- Is it difficult to get involved at Parkland College?
- Is it difficult to make friends?

Hypothesis

- Students would find it difficult to get involved because Parkland is a commuter campus
- Students come to get the instruction they need, then leave
- Students would feel that they know people, but have not made many close relationships

Method

- A series of recorded conversation based interviews were conducted to hear directly from real Parkland College students on their experiences in meeting people and getting involved

Are students involved?

- The majority of students interviewed were not actively involved in Parkland College

Why not?

- *"My motivation just isn't there"*
- *"For me personally, trying a new thing, getting into a new group of people that I don't know, that's kind of a big jump for me"*
- *"I don't hear about it a lot"*
- Some feel they are too busy
- *"It's go to class, go to work, go home, do homework, repeat"*
- *"It's a trip, you've got to make it worth it to come"*

Are students making friends at Parkland?

Most students interviewed estimated that they have met under 25 people they would call friends at Parkland College (Included acquaintances from classes)



Results

What kind of friends do students have? (In general)

Students from Parkland?-----Yes

- Are they close friends?-----No

People from before Parkland? ---Yes

- Are they close friends?-----Yes

"More so (friends) before...It's a mix, but... it's more people from before than from Parkland"

"I think I have formed good friendships with people that I've met at Parkland, but maybe not as important, long-lasting..."

"(Some) are going to be long lasting, but (others) I'm developing"

Do students make an effort to make friends?

Yes

- *"I'm just one of those open people... Those are connections that you never know you may need"*

No

- Most don't approach people and try to make friendships
- Most students let friendships happen on their own

Some are willing to make friends, but appear to be unwilling

- Some sit alone or in a guarded, closed off manor
- Some wear headphones: *"Kind of a turn off for people"*

Conclusion

Students are hesitant to get involved

Further research:

- Asking more students for their personal accounts
- Sending out a paper survey to gather more data about
- Asking organization coordinators about their experiences with students getting involved in organizations
- Ask U of I and Parkland Online students about their experiences with friendships and getting involved in their schools/programs



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