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THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
Office of the Dean of Students
Student Life Studies
and
University Episcopal Center

THE RELIGIOUS FOUNDATION AND
THE UNIVERSITY STUDENT

Cooperative Research Report 1

Donald A. Biggs
Student Life Studies
Office of the Dean of Students

and

Nancy Frishe
University Episcopal Center
University of Minnesota

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THE RELIGIOUS FOUNDATION AND
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The state University has had a long and mutually profitable relationship with organized campus religious foundations and centers. Most previous attempts to describe and delineate this partnership have relied on legal and political rather than educational constructs. The present study is a partial response to the need for descriptive information concerning the educational needs of students using various religious foundations. The Office of the Dean of Students (ODS) and the staff of the University Episcopal Center (UEC) at the University of Minnesota decided to try and describe the reasons why students use the facilities of the Center. A brief questionnaire was cooperatively developed. (Appendix A) Primarily, the respondents were to indicate the UEC facilities or services which they use, the UEC programs which they attend, and their general perceptions of the environment at the Episcopal Center. The staff of the Center indicated that the students who visit the facilities on any particular Wednesday might be considered fairly representative of the total population of students who use the Center's facilities. Thus, on Wednesday, April 10, 1968, a total of 215 persons who entered the Episcopal Center were asked to complete a questionnaire which provided general information concerning the reasons for visiting the Center. Of this number, 196 completed the facilities questionnaire. Sixty-one percent of the sample or 120 students were male while thirty-nine percent or 67 students were female.

TABLE 1

Chronological ages of the students using the University Episcopal Center on April 10, 1968.

Age	number	per cent of total
16 years	1	.51%
18 years	21	10.71%
19 years	32	16.32%
20 years	56	28.57%
21 years	40	20.40%
22 years	9	4.59%
23 years	8	4.08%
24 years	7	3.57%
25 years	5	2.55%
26 years	1	.51%
28 years	1	.51%
31 years	1	.51%
34 years	1	.51%
35 years	1	.51%
44 years	1	.51%
Blank	10	5.10%

The information in table 1 suggests that the sample of students using the Center were generally older college students. The diverse ages of the students give some indication of the heterogeneous nature of the population. Indeed, the percentage of students over 21 indicates that the Episcopal Center may function both as an undergraduate and graduate student facility.

TABLE 2

Religious denominations of the students using the University Episcopal Center on April 10, 1968.

Denomination	number	per cent of total
Roman Catholic	61	31.12%
Lutheran	50	25.51%
Episcopal	28	14.28%
None	20	10.20%
Methodist	8	4.08%
Presbyterian	8	4.08%
Atheist	5	2.55%

TABLE 2 (continued)

Denomination	number	per cent of total
Baptist	4	2.04%
Protestant	2	1.02%
Congregational	2	1.02%
Jewish	2	1.02%
Church of Christ	1	.51%
Evangelical	1	.51%
Alliance	1	.51%
Eastern Orthodox	1	.51%
Agnostic	1	.51%
??	1	.51%

The data presented in table 2 indicates that most of the students visiting the Center were members of the Roman Catholic and Lutheran Churches. In order to interpret the results meaningfully the following additional data seems relevant.

The Office of the Coordinator of Student Religious Activities reports that approximately 21,000 students completed a religious preference card in September, 1967. Of this group 7,420 listed Roman Catholic as their religious preference, 7,054 listed Lutheran, and 766 listed the Episcopal Church. Thus the information in table 2 may be interpreted by referring to the differences in the relative size of the student denominational groups within the University.

TABLE 3

City and High School from which students graduated -- using the University Episcopal Center on April 10, 1968.

City and High School	number	per cent of total
Minneapolis and suburbs		
Moundsview	11	5.61%
Fridley	9	4.59%
Holy Angels	9	4.59%
Washburn	9	4.59%
Hopkins	6	3.06%
Richfield	5	2.55%
St. Louis Park	5	2.55%
Roosevelt	4	2.04%
Southwest	4	2.04%
De La Salle	3	1.53%
Edison	3	1.53%
Robbinsdale	3	1.53%
West	3	1.53%
Breck	2	1.02%
South	2	1.02%
Bloomington	1	.51%
Cooper	1	.51%
Edina	1	.51%
Golden Valley	1	.51%
Patrick Henry	1	.51%
Regina	1	.51%
St. Anthony Village	1	.51%
St. Paul and suburbs		
So. St. Paul	28	14.28%
Central	9	4.59%
Cretin	8	4.08%
Harding	6	3.06%
Our Lady of Peace	6	3.06%
No. St. Paul	4	2.04%
Johnson	3	1.53%
Highland Park	2	1.02%
St. Joseph's Academy	2	1.02%
Sibley	2	1.02%
Murray	1	.51%
Nasareth Hall	1	.51%
St. Agnes	1	.51%
St. Paul Academy	1	.51%
St. Thomas	1	.51%
Washington	1	.51%
Wilson	1	.51%
Outside Twin Cities Area	9	4.59%
Out of State	18	9.18%
No information	1	.51%

The information shown in table 3 concerns the high schools from which the sample of students graduated. The highest percentage of students came from St. Paul and the suburbs. But the difference in the size of the contingents from St. Paul and Minneapolis is relatively small. In general, the students do not come from any specific high school, for South St. Paul High School with the highest number of students using the Center has only 28.

Student Purposes for Using Episcopal Center

Tables 4 and 5 suggest that students come to the Episcopal Center for utilitarian social purposes. For the most part these individuals plan to utilize the cafeteria, the lounge, and the library in that order. As might be expected, the sample also indicates that they planned to eat, study and find companionship at the Center. The relatively small number of students who list worship as a reason for coming to the Center may be due to the fact that there is no formal liturgy conducted on Wednesday.

TABLE 4

Estimates of facilities used on April 10, 1968, in the University Episcopal Center.

Facilities	number	per cent of total
Cafeteria	171	87.24%
Lounge	77	39.28%
Library	71	36.22%
Typing room	15	7.65%
Chapel	9	4.59%
Other		
unspecified	9	4.59%
lavatory	13	6.63%
Phone	7	3.57%
No reply	5	2.55%

TABLE 5

Estimates for purposes of using the University Episcopal Center facilities on April 10, 1968.

Purpose	number	per cent of total
Eat	158	80.61%
Study	149	76.61%
Companionship	111	56.63%
Carpool	67	34.18%
Sleep	47	23.97%
Card playing	38	19.38%
Other		
unspecified	12	6.12%
organ practice	1	.51%
Worship	11	5.61%
Meeting	1	.51%
No reply	1	.51%

Generally, the students indicate that few of them have attended any of the planned programs conducted at the Episcopal Center. Only twelve percent of the students had gone to a UEC dance. Most of the students report no particular identification with the organized activities conducted at the Center. Eighty-two percent or 155 respondents indicate that they had not attended any of the programs listed.

TABLE 6

The student estimate of the attendance at events held in the Episcopal Center during the school year 1967-68.

Event	number	per cent of total
Dances	24	12.24%
Folk Mass	18	9.18%
New Guinea Night	14	7.14%
Sunday Services	14	7.14%
E. S. A. Meetings	11	5.61%
Weekday Services	11	5.61%
Twin City E.Y.C. Conference	10	5.10%
Welcome Dinner and dance	9	4.59%

TABLE 6 (continued)

Event	number	per cent of total
Fr. Kirby Liturgy Weekend	8	4.08%
Sunday Black Power Discussions	8	4.08%
Sunday Political and Peace Discussions	8	4.08%
Weekly Classes	7	3.57%
Club Meetings	7	3.57%
Sunday Student Power Discussions	6	3.06%

Twenty-four percent take advantage of the Newman facility and approximately ten percent use the Luther Hall and ten percent use the UCCF facility. Approximately fifty-nine percent or 116 students report that they do not use any other religious center.

TABLE 7

Estimates of usage of other Campus Religious Centers.

Campus Religious Foundation	number	per cent of total
Newman	47	23.97%
U.C.C.F.	22	11.22%
Luther Hall	19	9.69%
YMCA	10	5.10%
Lutheran (Mo. Synod)	6	3.06%
B'nai B'rith Hillel	3	1.53%
Wesley	3	1.53%
Baptist	2	1.02%
Other	1	.51%
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Student Attitudes Toward the University Episcopal Center

Information described in table 7 through 16 reflect student perceptions of the environment at the Center. Most of them indicate that the Episcopal Center provided them with assistance in some part of their student life. Indeed eighty-eight percent approved the way the Center was being operated. Yet many of them were unsure if the UEC officers were representative of the students who used the Center. Similarly seventy-two percent of the students indicated that they are undecided about the "helpfulness" of the planned programs at UEC. Forty percent of the sample did "not" think that the Center contributed little to the personal development of students. Thirty-seven percent were undecided about this matter. Indeed most of the students were uncertain about the availability of counseling at the Center. Although thirty-five percent of them did indicate that such service is available.

TABLE 8

Student response to the question: AS A STUDENT, DOES THE UNIVERSITY EPISCOPAL CENTER PROVIDE YOU WITH ASSISTANCE IN ANY PART OF YOUR STUDENT LIFE?

Response	number	per cent of total
yes	150	76.53%
no	31	15.81%
Blank	15	7.65%

TABLE 9

Student response to the statement: IN GENERAL, I APPROVE OF THE WAY THE CENTER IS OPERATED.

Response	number	per cent of total
yes	174	88.77%
no	12	6.12%
Blank	9	4.59%
??	1	.51%

TABLE 10

Student response to the statement: THE OFFICERS OF THE EPISCOPAL STUDENT ASSOCIATION ARE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE STUDENTS WHO USE THE CENTER.

Response	number	per cent of total
Strongly agree	1	.51%
Agree	36	18.36%
Undecided	121	61.73%
Disagree	12	6.12%
Strongly disagree	14	7.14%
No answer	12	6.12%

TABLE 11

Student response to the statement: THE PLANNED PROGRAMS ARE VERY HELPFUL TO THE STUDENTS.

Response	number	per cent of total
Strongly agree	5	2.55%
Agree	25	12.75%
Undecided	142	72.44%
Disagree	10	5.10%
Strongly disagree	5	2.55%
No answer	9	4.59%

TABLE 12

Student response to the statement: THE CENTER CONTRIBUTES VERY LITTLE TO THE PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT OF STUDENTS.

Response	number	per cent of total
Strongly agree	5	2.55%
Agree	13	6.63%
Undecided	74	37.75%
Disagree	80	40.81%
Strongly disagree	16	8.16%
No answer	8	4.08%

TABLE 13

Student response to the statement: COUNSELING IS AVAILABLE IN THE CENTER.

Response	number	per cent of total
Strongly agree	22	11.22%
Agree	47	23.97%
Undecided	108	55.10%
Disagree	7	3.57%
Strongly disagree	2	1.02%
No answer	10	5.10%

For the most part, students agree or strongly agree that the people at the Center act spontaneously and sincerely. Only four percent of the sample think that people at the Center spend a great deal of time discussing religious issues. While, the majority of the individuals sampled indicate that a student has a very good chance to discuss social issues at the University Episcopal Center. Approximately fifty-five percent of the sample agreed or strongly agreed that the Center facilitates meeting and getting to know persons of the opposite sex. Twenty-eight percent of them were undecided about this matter.

TABLE 14

Student response to the statement: THE PEOPLE AT THE CENTER SEEM TO ACT SPONTANEOUSLY AND WITH A GREAT DEAL OF SINCERITY.

Response	number	per cent of total
Strongly agree	16	8.16%
Agree	76	38.77%
Undecided	67	34.18%
Disagree	23	11.73%
Strongly disagree	6	3.06%
No answer	8	4.08%

TABLE 15

Student response to the statement: IN THE CENTER PEOPLE SPEND A GREAT DEAL OF THE TIME DISCUSSING RELIGIOUS ISSUES.

Response	number	per cent of total
Strongly agree	2	1.02%
Agree	6	3.06%
Undecided	89	45.40%
Disagree	76	38.77%
Strongly disagree	16	8.16%
No answer	7	3.57%

TABLE 16

Student response to the statement: IN THE UNIVERSITY EPISCOPAL CENTER, ONE HAS A VERY GOOD CHANCE TO DISCUSS SOCIAL ISSUES.

Response	number	per cent of total
Strongly agree	37	18.87%
Agree	88	44.89%
Undecided	58	29.59%
Disagree	4	2.04%
Strongly disagree	1	.51%
No answer	8	4.08%

TABLE 17

Student response to the statement: THE CENTER FACILITATES MEETING AND GETTING TO KNOW PERSONS OF THE OPPOSITE SEX.

Response	number	per cent of total
Strongly agree	26	13.26%
Agree	83	42.34%
Undecided	56	28.57%
Disagree	16	8.16%
Strongly disagree	6	3.06%
No answer	9	4.59%

Summary and Conclusions

The objective of the study was to describe the ways in which students use a campus religious foundation at the University of Minnesota. On April 10, 1968, a representative sample of students were asked to complete a questionnaire and indicate their reasons for visiting the University Episcopal Center. The results of the survey suggest that most students use the Center as a place to eat, study, and socialize.

The students in the sample seem to represent very heterogeneous backgrounds. Indeed, they vary in ages, religious preferences and high schools attended. Consequently, the religious foundation, in this case (UEC) may serve two rather different student populations, those who use and those who identify with the Center. To treat the campus religious foundation as a singly homogeneous program or student population is probably to err. That is, the campus religious foundation may be serving a number of student populations who have different needs, one of which is the need for a small place, or a living-learning center, or a mini-union.

Irrespective of theological mission, the University Episcopal Center seems to be providing for the University of Minnesota students a small union facility. Those who may think that this facility is primarily for the Episcopalians or even the "religious" student may need to question their assumptions. The limited information presented in this study seems to suggest that the religious foundation has developed a cooperative liaison in the attack upon the "alienation" symptoms of a large metropolitan university. The evolution of this "union" quality to the religious foundation is a matter of speculation. But the need for more information may be one of the most obvious implications of the present survey.

The members of the university community may wish to re-examine certain assumptions they make about organizations and services which have particular labels that were previously appropriate. That is, the Episcopal Center is not the Episcopal Center of 1950 in the sense that, even though the label has remained the same the referents have obviously changed.

Appendix A

EPISCOPAL STUDENT ASSOCIATION STUDY OF FACILITIES

UNIVERSITY EPISCOPAL CENTER

In order to assist the students of the University of Minnesota who use the University Episcopal Center, it is necessary for the Episcopal Student Association to gain some idea of the kinds of students who use the facilities and why they do so. No individual student will be identified. This information is being gathered for the E.S.A. We would appreciate your cooperation.

DATE _____ RELIGIOUS DENOMINATION _____

NAME _____ AGE _____

HIGH SCHOOL FROM WHICH GRADUATED _____

YEAR OF GRADUATION _____ SEX: M _____ F _____

1. As a student, does the Episcopal Center provide you with assistance in any part of your student life? yes ___ no ___

2. In general, I approve of the way the Center is operated, yes ___ no ___

3. Check the facilities you will be using today.
 ___ cafeteria _____ typing room
 ___ lounge _____ chapel
 ___ library _____ other _____

4. Students have many ways of using the center facilities. Check any of the following ways in which you may use the Center today.
 ___ study _____ worship
 ___ eat _____ companionship
 ___ card playing _____ meet carpool
 ___ sleep _____ other _____
 ___ meeting for committee as part of University classes

5. Many events are held in the Center during the year. Please place a check beside the events you have attended.

___ weekday services	___ Fr. Kirby liturgy weekend
___ Sunday services	___ club/organization meetings
___ folk mass	___ Sunday student power discussions
___ weekly classes	___ Sunday black power discussions
___ dances	___ Sunday politics and power and
___ welcome dinner and dance	___ peace discussions
___ New Guinea night	___ Twin City E.Y.C. Conference
___ E.S.A. meetings	

6. Do you use any other religious center?

___ Newman	___ Lutheran (Mo. Synod)	___ Baptist
___ Luther Hall	___ B'nai B'rith Hillel	___ Y.M.C.A.
___ U.C.C.F.	___ Wesley	___ other

Below are several statements pertaining to the University Episcopal Center. Please consider each statement on the basis of your own experience and knowledge, and decide whether you strongly agree (SA), agree (A), are undecided or do not know (U), disagree (D), or strongly disagree (SD). Use your best judgment regardless of the number of times you have used the Center.

1. In the University Episcopal Center, one has a very good chance to discuss social issues.
SA _____ A _____ U _____ D _____ SD _____
2. The Center facilitates meeting and getting to know persons of the opposite sex.
SA _____ A _____ U _____ D _____ SD _____
3. The people at the Center seem to act spontaneously and with a great deal of sincerity.
SA _____ A _____ U _____ D _____ SD _____
4. Counseling is available in the Center.
SA _____ A _____ U _____ D _____ SD _____
5. The Center contributes very little to the personal development of students.
SA _____ A _____ U _____ D _____ SD _____
6. In the Center people spend a great deal of time discussing religious issues.
SA _____ A _____ U _____ D _____ SD _____
7. The planned programs of the Center are very helpful to the students.
SA _____ A _____ U _____ D _____ SD _____
8. The officers of the Episcopal Student Association are representative of the students who use the Center.
SA _____ A _____ U _____ D _____ SD _____