

**Charitable Giving Among University Students:
New Generation of Donors; Old School Preferences for Communication**

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August 1, 2017

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About the Author

Caley Conney holds a B.A. in English from the University of St. Thomas and works in alumni relations and fundraising at the University of Minnesota's Twin Cities campus. The focus of this study came from her personal experiences being asked to make gifts to her school as an undergraduate student and her academic curiosity about how to create effective fundraising communications strategies targeting current students. Caley completed this study as the capstone project for the Strategic Communication M.A. program in the School of Journalism and Mass Communications at the University of Minnesota.

Executive Summary

Universities rely on financial support from individual donors, but giving from this segment has been declining. Looking to students as potential donors could create a new generation of philanthropists, but very few programs exist to engage current students in charitable giving and even fewer studies have been done measuring the most effective way to do so. This study explored how the traits of students, such as financial aid status and past giving history, may make them more or less likely to give. It also examined students' preferred senders and channels when receiving gift solicitations or general information about charitable giving.

A survey distributed from April 28, 2017 through May 5, 2017 to the School of Journalism and Mass Communication's student subject pool was completed by 168 students at the University of Minnesota. Interviews were conducted with four students between July 15 and July 21, 2017.

Analysis of the collected data showed that overall, students would be unlikely to make a gift if asked while enrolled but that their likelihood increases when given information about why the money is needed and how the gift will be spent. Increasing students' awareness of the charitable giving process by sharing data from the University of Minnesota Foundation's annual reports is one tactic to move them toward becoming donors. Gender does not impact students' likelihood to give. Additionally, financial aid status does not impact likelihood to give, based on the statistical analysis that was performed. This new generation of potential donors strongly prefers being asked to give in person. They would also prefer to be asked for donations by their peers due to the relatability of fellow students, or by fundraising professionals because of their high source credibility.

Introduction

The business sales adage “a returning customer is the best customer” holds true in the fundraising industry as well, where a history of giving is the strongest indicator that a donor will make a donation when asked (Lindahl and Winship, 1992 p. 46). It seems logical then, to start identifying prospects and donors as soon as possible to get them started on an ongoing cycle of philanthropy. At institutions of higher education this would mean not waiting until students have graduated to approach them for gifts, however, most schools do not have fundraising campaigns targeting current students (Lindahl and Winship, 1992).

Another reason to consider looking at students as potential donors is the decline in financial support at colleges and universities from individuals. According to the Voluntary Support of Education survey conducted annually by the Council for Aid to Education (CAE), individual donors contributed \$17.45 billion to colleges and universities in 2016, which is a decline of 14.5% compared to the preceding year (2017, n.p.). Students are an untapped pool of prospective donors, and even if they did not give at high dollar amounts initially, they would become a pipeline for future major gift donors.

But if universities asked their students to make donations, would they say yes? Very few researchers have looked at what motivates or prevents current students from making donations to their schools. Some have, however, examined giving practices among young alumni and recent graduates. One of the reasons this group has been closely studied is because encouraging young alumni to give can set a precedent and pattern early on that “may have significant lifetime giving effects” (Monks, 2003, p. 124). This alumni group is similar to current students in their demographics, and will be used here to inform a survey based study at the University of Minnesota looking at the factors that influence likelihood of students to make a gift to their school.

Fundraising efforts are often “ad hoc and intuitive” but studying and analyzing the motivations and barriers involved with students making donations to their institutions will allow the researcher to make informed recommendations about who should approach them for gifts using their preferred methods of contact (Lindahl & Winship, 1992 p. 43).

Research Questions

This research study seeks to understand why college students would or would not make a gift to their current university when asked to donate, and how they should be asked in order to increase their likelihood of saying yes. The results will be used to discuss insights about student charitable giving practices, and the implications for fundraisers.

Research question 1:

What is the relationship between students’ traits and their likelihood to make donation to their higher education institution?

Research question 2:

What is the relationship between the sender and channel message factors and students’ likelihood to make a donation to their higher education institution?

Definitions of Terms and Theories

For the purpose of this analysis, charitable giving and donations will be defined solely as cash gifts or pledges, not gifts in kind, products or services donated to a charity (Minnesota Council on Nonprofits, 2016). The term development will refer to the practice of fundraising done by professionals who build relationships with donors to create a “continuous, powerful and life-long connection between a donor and the organization or cause” (Anderson, 2012). When students are discussed, the term will include individuals enrolled as undergraduates or graduate students at institutions of higher education, including but not limited to technical and community colleges, private and public universities.

According to the Pew Research Center, most students currently enrolled in college are considered Millennials, with a few in the younger classes who are part of Generation Y (Fry, 2015). Generation Y is just starting to reach adulthood and has not been studied to the same extent as Millennials yet, so this discussion will focus on the Millennial generation's traits and characteristics as they relate to charitable giving. The traits referred to in the first research question will be considered characteristics of students such as their past history of charitable giving, financial aid status, and some demographic information including gender and home location.

Carl Hovland's Sender Message Channel Receiver transmission model of communication, or SMCR, examines the relationship between the source of information, how the message is formed, in what way it is shared, and who receives it (Perloff, 2014). Hovland's experimental research found that the credibility of sources influences the attitudes of the message receiver (Hovland, 1953). The channel, or medium by which a message is sent, can also impact the effectiveness of a message and the ability of the receiver to understand it (Hovland, 1953). In this study, the students will always be considered the receiver.

A theory that delves deeper into the characteristics of channels is the Media Richness Theory which was developed by Richard L. Daft and Robert H. Lengel in 1986 as an extension of their study on the processing of information by organizations. Daft and Lengel set out to discover how organizations could "reduce uncertainty and resolve equivocality" and from that research were able to draw conclusions about which channels of communication are best suited to messages of varying import (Daft, 1986, p. 554). Some of the factors most relevant to this study that determine the richness level of a medium are its ability to convey a message clearly and form a connection with the receiver (Daft, 1986). Face to face conversations are considered the richest medium, as they allow the sender to use body language, vocal intonations and social

cues to effectively communicate with the receiver. Phone calls would be slightly less rich, and the different forms of written communication are considered less rich, or leaner, to varying degrees. Many modern communication mediums, such as email, social media and text messaging, did not exist when Daft and Lengel first developed Media Richness Theory but can be incorporated into current application of the principles. For example, text messages would be leaner than phone call conversations because they do not allow for expressiveness through vocal tones and cadence while speaking. Another example is emails, which do not have a limit for the length or number of characters used, as a richer medium than comments shared on social media platforms which have to stay within certain parameters of format and length.

Literature Review

Overview

Fundraisers constantly look for new donors to support the operation, growth and success of their nonprofits. More and more universities are investing in campaigns targeting young alumni as prospective donors to varying degrees of success (Underwood, 2014). Current students could be the next promising audience, but neither the advancement community nor communicators have done much research to determine the best way to approach them.

As previously mentioned, the practice of soliciting current students for gifts at institutions of higher education is relatively new and not widespread. It is happening in pockets but due to privacy concerns regarding donor data and proprietary knowledge around schools' fundraising techniques, there is a lack of data regarding best practices. A few isolated examples include programs at The Ohio State University and The University of St. Thomas. The Ohio State University has created a network pairing alumni with current students to educate students on the importance of supporting the institution (Paradise, 2014). A private university located in the same community as the University of Minnesota, the University of St. Thomas solicits its

students while enrolled to support scholarships and has an annual campaign that asks graduating seniors to make donations to support a class gift. The lack of analysis on these programs across the country means that schools may have to try several different approaches when it comes to connecting students to philanthropy before finding one that works. This trial and error approach could be time consuming and expensive.

There is in-depth research on charitable giving generally among Millennials but very few studies examine the most effective ways to conduct fundraising campaigns targeting students. One researcher described studies related to student charitable giving and higher education as “scanty” (Ade, 1994, p.75). Peter Fischer, president and CEO of the fundraising and communications consulting firm Campbell and Company, points out that “Not enough emphasis has been placed on the value—and potential value—of student philanthropy programs” (Paradise, 2014). His firm conducted a survey asking fundraising professionals at 211 institutions across the United States about their practices when it comes to student philanthropy programs. The results showed that “most institutions invest little in student philanthropy” (Paradise, 2014). Fischer’s research benchmarks the existence and effectiveness of student philanthropy efforts from the development and alumni relations officers’ perspective, but does not directly ask students about their likelihood to give and preference for who should be asking them or through what channel.

Financial Aid

Financial aid received as a student can greatly influence an individual’s likelihood to give as a recent grad (Dugan, 2000; Monks, 2003; Meer, 2012). Focusing on recent graduates from Vanderbilt University, Dugan, Mullin and Siegfried (2000) found that those who received loans that required repayment were 13% less likely to give, whereas those who received grants or scholarship were 12% more likely to make a gift. However, the dollar value of financial support

received had no significant impact on the probability of giving and did not change the dollar amount contributed (Dugan, Mullin, Siegfried, 2000). Looking at a broader sample that included 28 private institutions, James Monks' study in 2003 supported the findings on financial aid type, especially the fact that student "loans have a dampening effect on alumni giving" (p. 126). Monks postulates that this could be due to alumni with loans having to make regular payments and not wanting to have to make an "additional donation directly to their alma mater" (2003, p. 126). Work study jobs, which are available through a federally assisted program to help students pay for college, are a form of aid that "does not have a strong effect on donative behavior" (Meer, 2012, p. 890).

Student loan debt causes significant distress in those burdened with it, impacting everything from interpersonal relationships to the ability to make large purchases such as homes or cars (Austin, 2013). It is easy to see why making charitable gifts would be financially difficult while attempting to pay back student loans. Additionally, it could be seen as insensitive of a university to ask for gifts from a graduate still attempting to pay for the degree conferred by that same institution.

Gender

A lack of consensus exists on the point of gender and giving practices. Monks (2002) and Clotfelter (2003) found there to be no statistical difference in giving across gender. On the other hand, according to the Millennial Impact Report "91% of females donated to charities, compared to 84% of males" (2014, n.p.). The methods vary greatly between studies that produced the conflicting data, making it difficult to compare them in order to predict the relationship between gender and likelihood to give among students.

Millennial Giving Trends

Millennials are a group that generally has a desire to give back and serve their communities (Fleming, 2006). The rate at which this generation makes gifts to nonprofits has been reported as anywhere from 56% (Newlon, 2013) to 93% (Millennial Impact Report, 2011). However, while it appears they are inclined to make gifts to charities, they may be less likely to give to their own educational institution (Fleming, 2006). The strongest motivations that drive them to give are feeling that the organization has a compelling mission or having a history of volunteering there (Millennial Impact Report, 2015). Most give gifts of less than \$200 and distribute their total giving over the year to three or more nonprofits (Millennial Impact Report, 2015), but have also indicated they have “strong intent to give more” when they are able to financially (Camber Collective, 2015, n.p.). This overall trend in acting philanthropically through making donations and volunteering at nonprofits is a positive sign for institutions of higher education that hope to engage current students.

Channel

Choosing the most effective channels for contacting donors can increase the cost efficiency of a fundraising campaign by focusing on the various forms of media that people are most likely to respond to by making a gift. Direct mail campaigns have traditionally been a popular way to contact a large group of prospective donors (Lindahl & Winship, 1992), but the cost of printing and postage can be prohibitive and may not be the best way to appeal to younger generations (Millennial Impact Report, 2011).

A new wave of smartphone applications, or apps, is attempting to take advantage of Millennials’ philanthropic tendencies by creating digital fundraising appeals. Developers argue that smartphone users are doing everything on their phones, from buying products and ordering food delivery to dating and consuming entertainment, so why wouldn’t they also want to make donations the same way (Camber Collective, 2015)? Overall, studies agree that Millennials

prefer to make their charitable gifts online (Newlon, 2013; Millennial Impact Report, 2011; Camber Collective, 2015) but they do not necessarily prefer to be asked to give online (Millennial Impact Report, 2015). For example, one survey showed that “though [millennials] appreciated and were highly involved with technology, made their philanthropic decisions based more on personal connections than virtual ones” (Millennial Impact Report, 2011, n.p.). The follow-up study by the same research team several years later also found that 59% made their gifts in response to personal asks, but that 84% actually completed the financial transaction itself online through the organization’s website (Millennial Impact Report, 2015).

Sender

The few studies that have looked directly at student fundraising campaigns have concluded that peer-to-peer fundraising approaches seem to be the most successful (Heaton, 2013; Paradise 2014). One community college created a student-led fundraising program to start asking undergraduates for donations as early as their first year of attendance. This peer to peer fundraising effort resulted in about seven percent of the student body making a donation (Heaton, 2013). Paradise’s survey of 211 institutions found that schools that used peer networking “were associated with a donor participation rate that was 2.7% higher than institutions that did not take this approach” (2014, n.p.). The Millennial Impact Report supports these findings as 52% of their respondents gave charitably because of a friend or peer endorsement (2015.) Interestingly, only 2% would make a gift based on a celebrity endorsement (Millennial Impact Report, 2011). This suggests that using high profile advocates for the university, such as a former student athlete or the mascot, would not be the most effective way to solicit gifts from current students.

Literature Review Summary and Predicted Outcomes

Most of the referenced studies looking at giving in higher education institutions used gift and donor data collected by institutions, not information gathered first hand by researchers directly studying donors. Additionally, the donor data was collected at private institutions and community colleges, not large public universities. The few that did look directly at donors studied them in the context of philanthropy and nonprofits in general, not specifically at students likelihood to give to their school while enrolled. This gap in the research left room to create a study at the University of Minnesota to examine student likelihood to give based on several message factors, and general awareness of philanthropy at the University. Another characteristic of this study that will set it apart from existing research is that it uniquely connects the academic field of communications to the industry of fundraising.

Based on existing research, there are several predicted outcomes of the study that fall under RQ1, which is: What is the relationship between students' traits and their likelihood to make donations to their higher education institution? Based on conclusions from existing research, gender will not impact students' likelihood to make a gift to the University of Minnesota. Looking at financial aid status as another trait, having loans will make students less likely to give, while receiving scholarships will make them more likely. Generally, past giving history only makes donors more likely to give again at the same institution, so having given to other nonprofits will not make students more likely to give to the University. Lack of awareness will be a barrier to giving, as very few programs exist to educate students about the importance of philanthropy. In terms of motivations to give, connection to the University through activities and clubs will make students more likely to give.

Sender and channel are the two main factors to address when hypothesizing about the outcomes related to RQ2, which is: What is the relationship between the sender and channel

message factors and students' likelihood to make a donation to their higher education institutions? The preferred sender, based on general studies on Millennials giving preferences, will be peers. In this case, peers will constitute other currently enrolled students and will exclude recent graduates. Additionally, the channels that will make students most likely to make a gift are the tech-based or online channels of email or social media.

Method

The ideal way to discover students' likelihood to give would be conducting an experiment testing the actual behavior of current students when asked to make a gift. However, planning and implementing an actual fundraising campaign was not a practical option for the purpose of this project due to the time that would be needed to gain the necessary permissions and funds to execute it. Given the time and financial constraints of the researcher, this study relied on self reported data by conducting a survey of University of Minnesota students (N = 168) at the Twin Cities campus and follow-up interviews to take a more in-depth look at preferred senders and channels (N = 4).

Survey

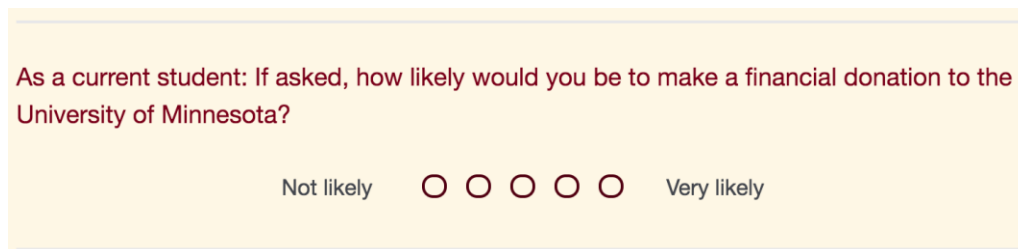
Before being made available to the sample pool, the survey was tested in pilot form by graduate students studying with the researcher in the University of Minnesota's SJMC Strategic Communication M.A. program. Feedback on maximizing user experience was used to modify the format and wording of some of the questions before distributing the survey in its final form.

All of the survey study participants were volunteers who are part of the School of Journalism and Mass Communications (SJMC) student subject pool, which is active throughout the academic year and exclusively made up of students enrolled in journalism classes. The student subject pool is available to SJMC students, faculty and staff conducting research at the College of Liberal Arts. Participants signed up for the pool through an internal cloud based

research software system, Sonos, and were granted one point of extra credit for a course of their choosing as compensation for participating in this study. Participation was tracked through Sonos to eliminate individuals from completing the survey more than once. The survey was made available through the University's Qualtrics system for one week from April 28, 2017 through May 5, 2017. Analysis of data was completed through Qualtrics and Microsoft Excel.

All participants were students currently enrolled during the 2017 spring semester at the University of Minnesota's Twin Cities campus. Participants were asked questions about their charitable giving practices as students, preferences for after they graduate, and general demographic information. The survey included 31 questions, took approximately ten minutes to complete, was available for one week, and had a total of 168 respondents. The questions asking how likely the students would be to make a donation to the University under varying conditions used a five-point interval scale with 1 as "not likely" and 5 as "very likely."

Example question:



As a current student: If asked, how likely would you be to make a financial donation to the University of Minnesota?

Not likely ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Very likely

Some questions were modeled after questions used in similar studies that looked at the likelihood of young alumni to make donations to their university. For example, Monk identified the level of involvement that alumni reported having as students with extracurricular activities using a five point ordinal scale to measure the frequency of participation (2003). A question about frequency of participation and type of extracurriculars in which students participate will be used to see if there is a connection between involvement with campus activities and likelihood to make a gift when asked.

Interviews

Four in-person interviews were conducted between July 15 and 21, 2017 and focused on two topics: preferred senders and channels. Some of the questions asked were “Why did you select (fill in respondent’s answer)? Why did you not choose one of the other options?” The full interview guide and transcripts of all four interviews can be found in Appendix C. The goal of the interviews was to gain additional insight into results found from the survey and provide some explanations about why students prefer certain senders and channels when it comes to fundraising messages.

The Institutional Review Board and Human Subjects Committee at the University of Minnesota determined that this study is exempt from full board review under federal guidelines and gave approval for the study to be conducted by the researcher. The researcher was trained on conducting research involving human subjects through the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative for Social/Behavioral Research. The study was completed under the guidance of faculty advisor Stacey Kanihan, Ph.D., in the SJMC at the University of Minnesota.

Description of Sample & Demographics

Survey

The demographics of the survey sample generally reflected the demographics of the University of Minnesota according to the Office of Institutional Research’s report for the spring academic semester of 2017. For example, the breakdown of students who reported a home location in the United States versus a foreign locale was nearly identical when comparing this study to the overall U of M population (*fig 1*).

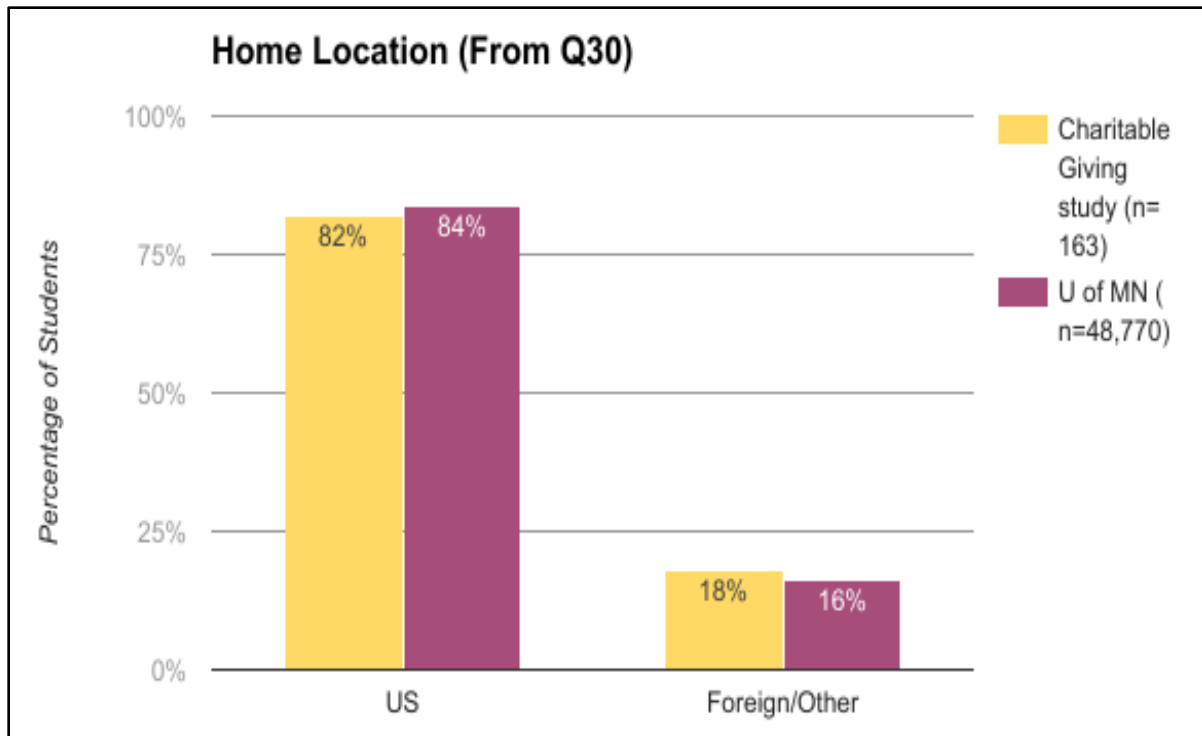


Figure 1 - Home Location comparison of study sample and the University of Minnesota

While all of the respondents are SJMC students in the College of Liberal Arts, they also indicated secondary enrollment in nine of the 16 total colleges at the University. This representation of multiple colleges and areas of study strengthens the quality of the sample. Additionally, all classes or years of study from freshman to seniors were represented with a good distribution across the categories (*fig 2*). The “other” category includes students with an anticipated graduation year beyond the traditional four years and those who did not know when they plan to graduate.

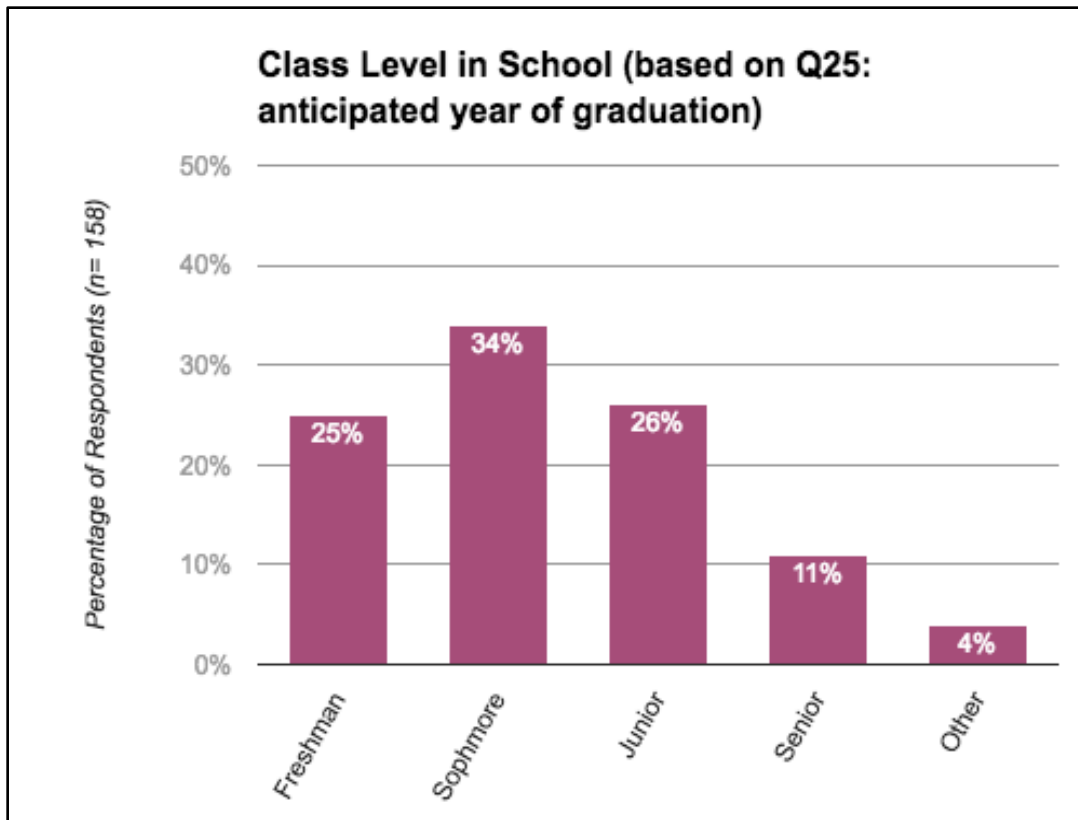


Figure 2 - Class level comparison of study sample and the University of Minnesota

The age of study participants ranged from 18 to 67 years old, although only seven students were 25+ years old and the median age was 21 years old. Respondents were primarily (97%) undergraduate students. The survey sample was 78% female ($n = 164$); this is higher than the College of Liberal Arts student population, which is 58% female ($n = 32,298$).

Interviews

All of the interview subjects were also SJMC students and had additional areas of study in two other colleges: education and human development, and biological sciences. The students represented the sophomore, junior, and senior class levels. At 75% female ($n = 3$) the interview sample closely lined up with the survey sample's gender breakdown, which was 78% female ($n = 164$). All of the interviewees reported a home location in the United States and were between 18 and 22 years old.

Limitations

The study sample was a convenience sample not a random sample, as the survey was solely distributed to students SJMC student subject pool. It was a quality sample based on the variant responses of the participants which will be discussed in the data analysis section. Another limitation to the study is that the data is self-reported and does not test the actual behavior of the subjects. This is especially true for the questions addressing what students plan to do after they graduate, as their self-predicted behavior could change based on factors such as employment, the economy, ability to pay back student loans, or other major life events. To comply with the requirements of the SJMC student subject pool, respondents were allowed to skip questions in the survey, so the number of responses varies slightly from question to question. Additionally, the students selected for follow-up interviews from the SJMC population were not the same students who took the initial survey, as contact information was not provided by those respondents to maintain confidentiality. The interview subjects were also a convenience sample and not a random sample.

This study focused solely on current University of Minnesota students at the Twin Cities campus, which is the flagship location of the state's land-grant university. It is a large, public, urban school with 48,770 students enrolled at the time of the study (University of Minnesota's Office of Institutional Research, 2017). These characteristics of the University of Minnesota may influence the results of the study and prohibit them from being applied to other public institutions, private universities, or trade schools.

Results

Survey results and corresponding interview quotes have been split out between the data relevant to research question 1 and that which addresses research question 2.

Data Addressing Research Question 1: What is the relationship between students’ traits and their likelihood to make donation to their higher education institution?

Awareness

Overall, the study found that most students are not likely to make a financial donation to the University of Minnesota while enrolled, and that they have very little awareness about philanthropy at the University. When asked how likely they would be to make a financial donation to the University of Minnesota while enrolled as a student, 92.6% of respondents chose 1, 2 or 3 on a five point rating scale with 1 being “not likely” and 5 as “very likely” (*fig 3*).

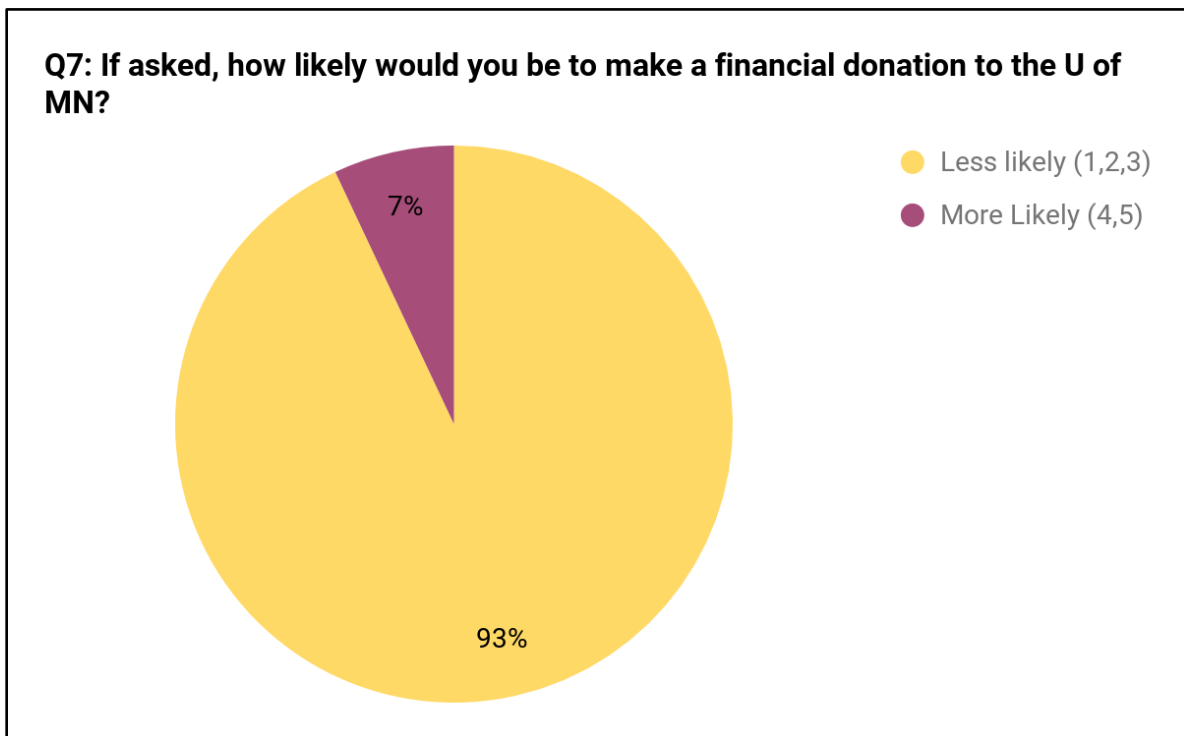


Figure 3 - Likelihood of current University of Minnesota students to make a gift

The largest apparent barrier to giving is an overall lack of awareness regarding making donations to the University of Minnesota. Most respondents (77%) indicated they know very little about giving to the University, and less than 4% said they know a lot about the process (*fig 4*).

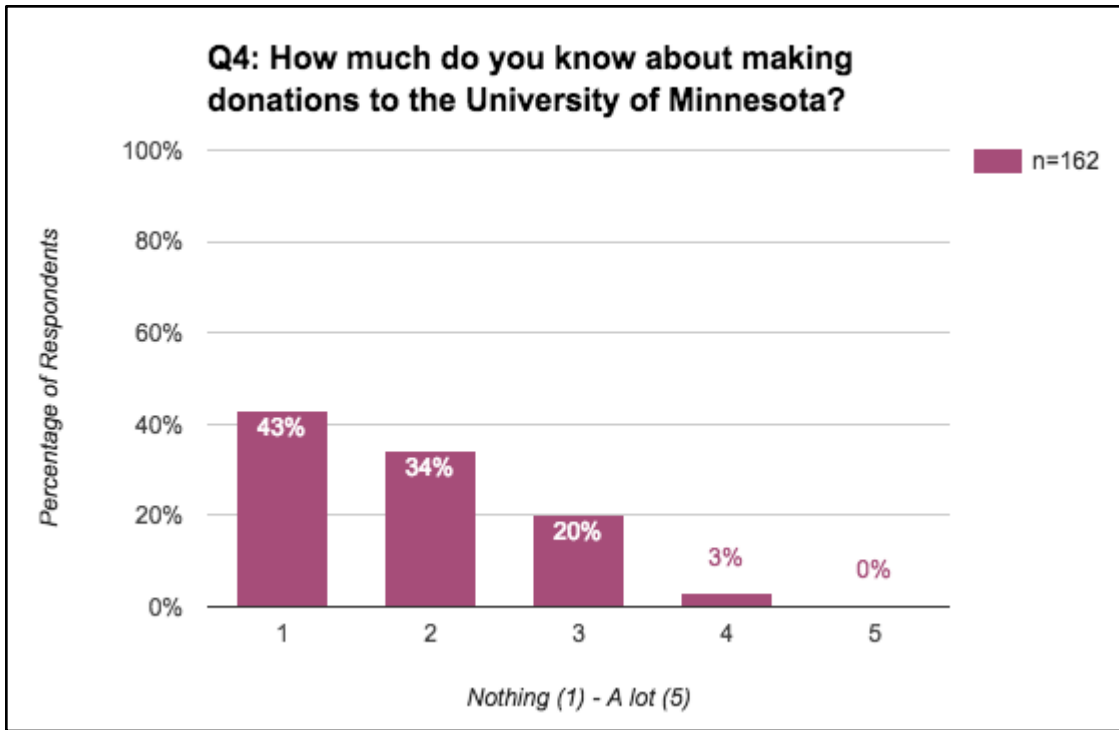


Figure 4 - Students' awareness of philanthropy

Respondents indicated they would be significantly more likely to make a gift if they knew exactly how their money would be used. Figure 5 compares students' general likelihood to give, versus how much more likely they would be to make a gift if they knew how their donation would be spent. There is an apparent shift to being more likely to give when given supplemental information how money from charitable gifts is put to use at the University, which points back to how an overall lack of awareness and knowledge could be keeping students from being willing to make a gift if asked.

Q7: General likelihood to give (vs) Q9: Likelihood to give when given info about how donations are used

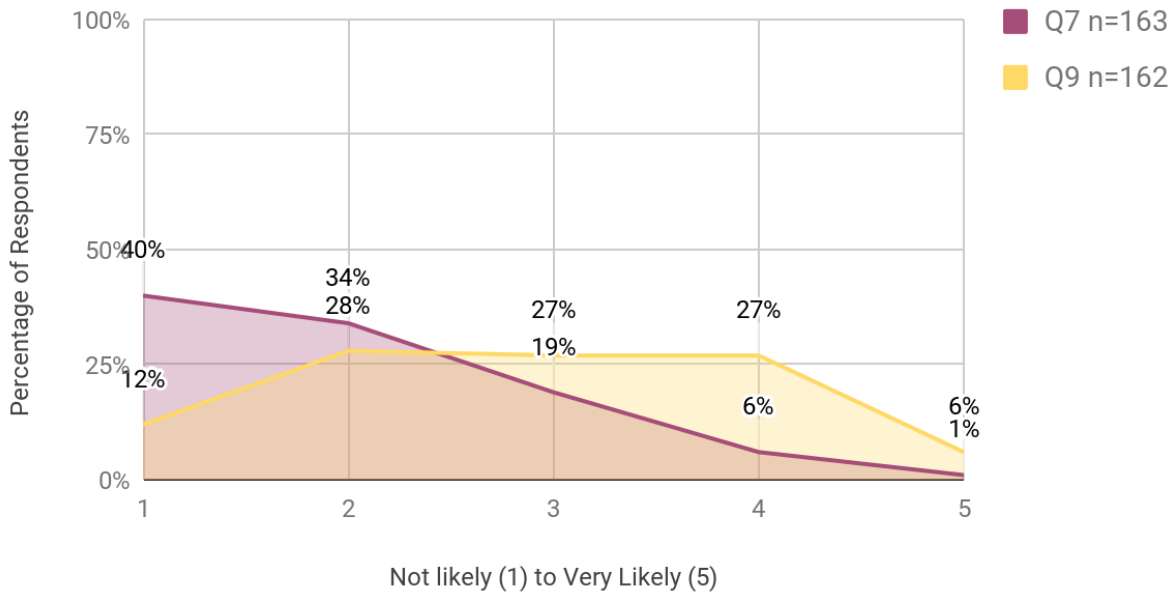


Figure 5 - How likelihood to give changes when given information about how donations are used

Past Giving, Barriers, and Motivations

While the Millennial Impact Report found that 75% of Millennials make at least one gift a year to a non-profit (2015), only 46% of respondents to this study indicated that they made a gift to a charity at some point. Very few indicated they were motivated to give for financial reasons such as having extra money in the budget (7%), or wanting a tax deduction (3%). Instead, they gave because they felt connected to the nonprofit or the community in some way (85%). The top three motivations were belief in the mission of the organization, wanting to give back to the community, and having a history of volunteering there (*fig 6*). This lines up with the Millennial Impact Report, which found that 85% of Millennials who made donations “gave due to a compelling mission” statement or because of a history of volunteer work with the organization (2015).

One specific connection that came up several times in write-in answers on the survey was students' affinity toward Greek fraternities and sororities as a motivation to give to charity. For example, a respondent stated "one of my recipients was a charity supported by my Fraternity" and another indicated she gives to "Greek life philanthropies."

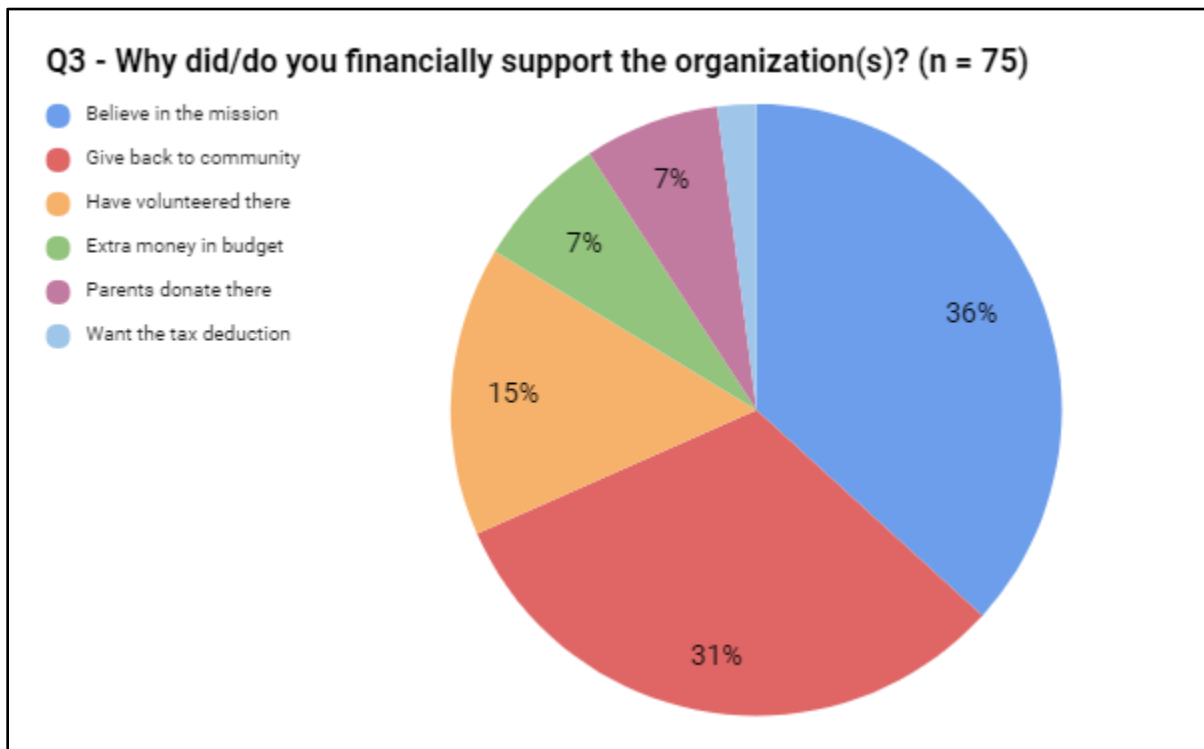


Figure 6 - Motivations for past giving to other nonprofit organizations

Study participants were asked when considering making a gift to the University of Minnesota, what would motivate them to give and what would keep them from giving. The top three reasons that students would want to give were: wanting to help others go to school, having a good educational experience, and feeling connected through extracurriculars (*fig 7*). These top motivators can be categorized as emotional reasons, or reasons based on having a connection to and positive feelings toward the University of Minnesota. "We need more scholarships," was written by one student, emphasizing a desire to help fellow students gain access to higher education.

**Q12: For what reasons would you make a financial donation to the University?
(n=161)**

- Want to help others go to school (n=104)
- Positive edu. experience (n=82)
- Extracurriculars (n=66)
- Have money the budget (n=50)
- Want/need the tax deduction (n=18)
- Other (n=4)

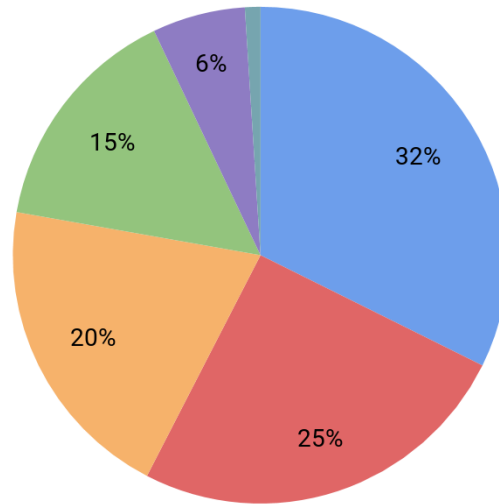


Figure 7 – Motivations to give to the University of Minnesota (survey allowed for more than one category to be selected)

Q13: What reasons would keep you from making a financial donation to the University? (n=163)

- No the money in the budget (n=134)
- Already paying tuition (n=101)
- Extracurricular(s) (n=40)
- Already making gifts elsewhere (n=32)
- Don't want/need tax deduction (n=15)
- Other (n=28)

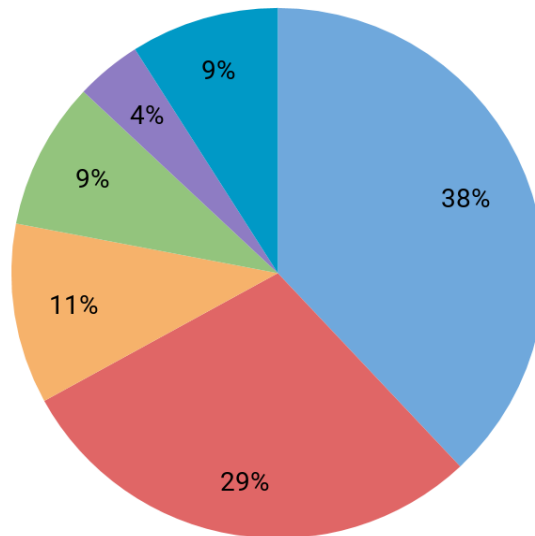


Figure 8 – Barriers to give to the University of Minnesota (survey allowed for more than one category to be selected)

On the other hand, more practical and financial based reasons were the top deterrents that would keep students from making a gift. These included the fact that they are already paying

tuition and do not want to give the University more money as well as simply not having enough money in their budget (*fig 8*).

Respondents identified other reasons they would not want to give to the University through write in answers that addressed topics from recent athletics scandals on campus to the high cost to attend school. One said, “I won’t give anything, I pay a...load to go here” and another simply stated, “I already pay too much!” For a frame of reference regarding the cost to attend, the University of Minnesota’s Office of Admissions reports that tuition for new students in the 2016-2017 academic year was \$14,224 for Minnesota residents and \$23,888 for non-residents (2017).

The athletics department was a theme that came up several times as well. One student said he would not give because the University “does not help ordinary students and offers too many luxuries to student athletes.” One student gave a longer explanation about why he wouldn’t give and his problems with the athletics department:

I feel like asking current students could be unfair because one of the problems at the University is that they have the money but they aren’t allocating it well. For example, the Athletic Village construction - I understand they’re trying to recruit using the new facility but that is a lot of money to spend on a non-academic project. The money could be used for scholarships, research, or outreach in the community and enrich the University in general instead of just letting a select group of people - student athletes - enjoy it. (Interview Respondent 2)

Another student’s reason for not giving was “because our school doesn’t care about programs like the Aurora Center, but spends millions to protect sports team sex offenders.” The Aurora Center is an advocacy service for students, faculty, staff, or anyone affiliated with the University of Minnesota who are victims of any kind of sexual assault or violence. In the quote above, the student is likely referencing a football scandal that took place at the University of Minnesota in the same academic year that this study was conducted. The scandal involved rape

accusations against several active members of the football team which resulted in protests on campus after four of the ten accused were cleared of charges by the University (Lerner, 2017).

Student Financial Aid Status

Overall, the survey results indicated that almost all students (96%) were unlikely to give, which made it more difficult to determine which factors, such as loans or scholarships, were influencing them. Therefore, additional analysis was conducted using Pearson's chi square tests. Respondents ($n = 163$) were coded into two groups: “less likely to give” ($n = 151$), which included those who indicated a 1, 2 or 3 on the likelihood scale with 1 being “unlikely, or as “more likely to give,” which included those who indicated 4 or 5 with 5 being “likely” ($n = 12$). Respondents who did not answer both the likelihood to give question (Q7) and the scholarship (Q20) or loan (Q21) questions were eliminated from the analysis examining the relationship between likelihood to give and financial aid status.

Evaluation of the relationship between likelihood to give and both scholarship and loan recipients was done using Pearson's chi square tests with Yates' continuity correction using SPSS statistical software. These tests found that neither scholarship ($p\text{-value} = 0.6175$) nor loans ($p\text{-value} = 0.8843$) are related to students' likelihood to give (*Appendix A*). This finding varies from previous studies that examined young alumni and found that receiving scholarships or taking out student loans did influence likelihood to make a donation after graduating (Dugan, 2000; Monks, 2003; Meer, 2012).

One possible explanation for this finding is that current students face different financial concerns than alumni do, so financial aid status may not make a difference in likelihood to give until after graduation. Interview Respondent 4 addressed the financial pressures of being a student when asked if she would consider making a gift as a student:

I don't have extra money to even get myself a new outfit, much less make a donation. That's just not where I am yet. It stems from my financial situation. I know as a student how beneficial it can be to have donors support us by getting us new equipment or help us do research but I'm just not at a place where I can do that at this time.

Respondent 2 indicated she may consider giving as an alumna, but not as a student saying, "I need my money to get through school right now, I can't give it away. Maybe once I don't have college debt but not right now." Their responses illustrate that while students may understand the importance of individual donors supporting their school and want to give at some point, they are simply not able to make a gift while enrolled due to budgetary constraints.

Extracurricular Participation

Students who are more likely to give participate in extracurriculars at the highest frequency rating of 5 on a scale of 1 to 5 more than those who are less likely to give, but other than that one point on the scale there do not appear to be any connections between likelihood to give and frequency of participation (*fig 9*). Additionally, there does not seem to be a major difference in likelihood to give based on the types of activity or group in which students participate (*figures 9 & 10*).

Q27: How often do you participate in extracurricular activities?

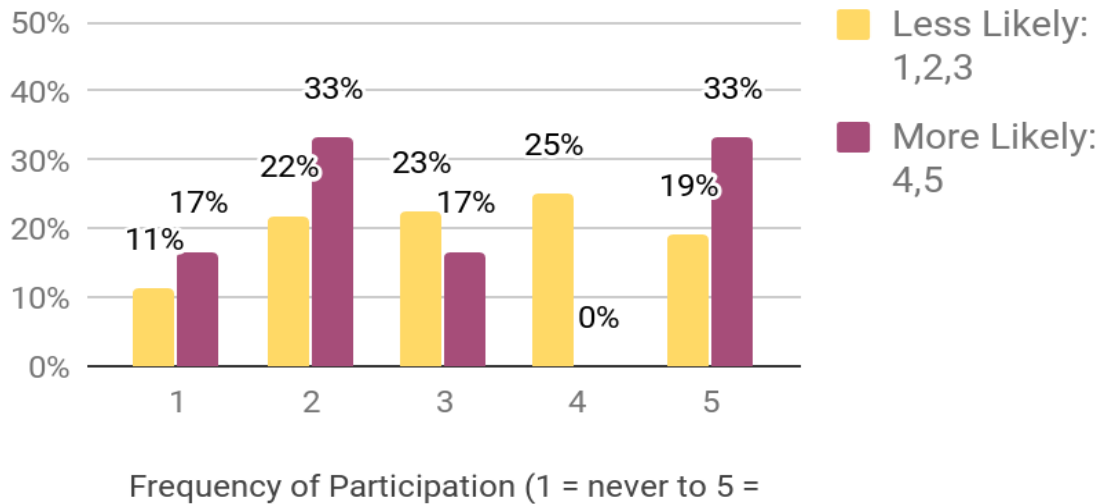


Figure 9 - Frequency of participation

Q28: In which extracurricular(s) do you participate?

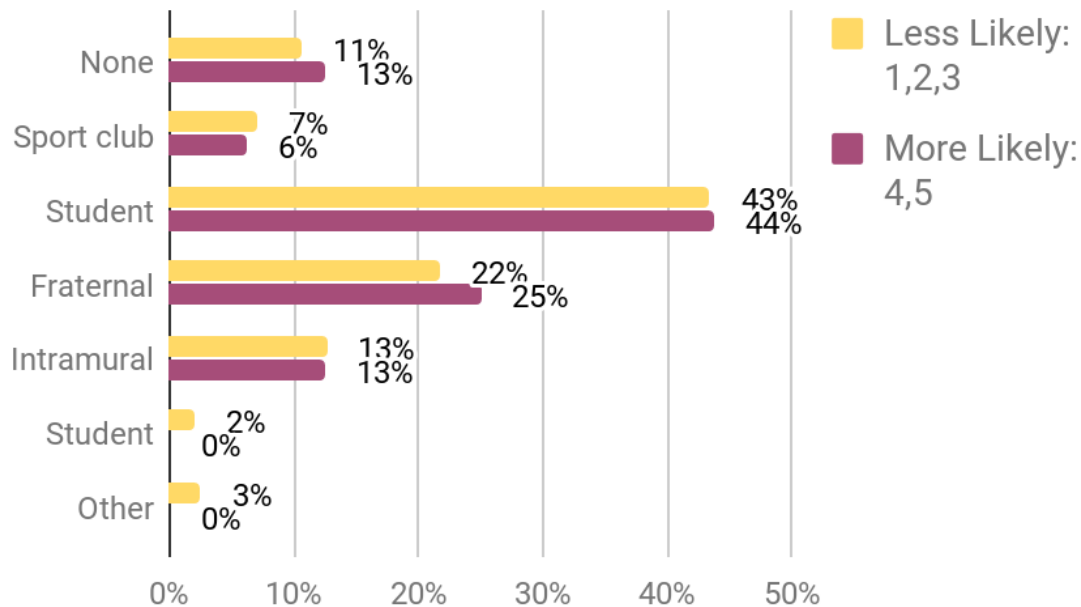


Figure 10 - Types of extracurriculars

Gender & Home Location

Gender does not appear to have an impact on likelihood to give among students, but due to the imbalanced split of the sample (males $n = 34$, females $n = 127$) it is difficult to draw conclusions from these results. When looking at percentages of the respondents, there is a similar distribution between the two genders over the five points of likelihood on the scale (fig 10). This fairly even distribution remains when looking at the genders in the coded segments of “more likely” and “less likely” to give.

Gender (Q31) and Likelihood to Give (Q6)

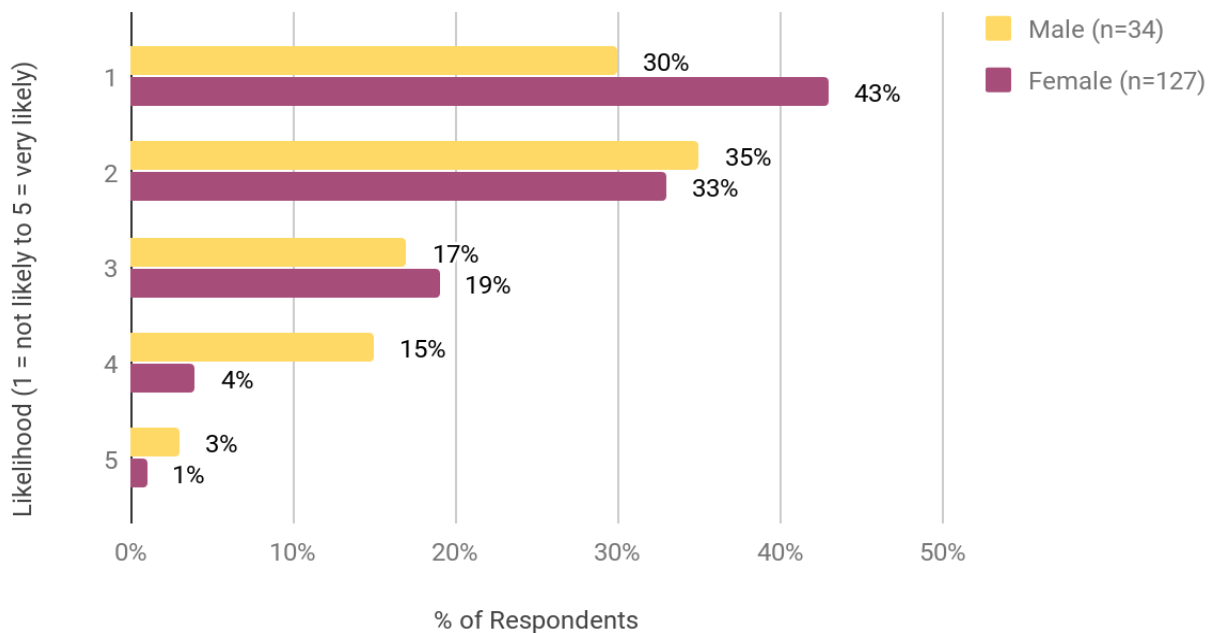


Figure 11 - Comparison of males versus females in likelihood to give

One measured variable that seems to make students more likely to give is having a home location outside of the United States. Using the same calculations as were applied in the student financial aid section, the average likelihood to give among those who with a home location outside of the US ($n = 29$) was 2.66, which is 48.9% higher than the 1.80 average likelihood of those with a US based home location ($n = 134$).

Demographic information gathered in this study was somewhat limited, so it is possible that other factors such as ethnicity, marital status, or socioeconomic indicators like individual and house income, could have a greater impact on likelihood than gender or home location do. Future research, ideally using a larger sample size, would be needed to gather this information in order to do additional comparisons and determine if statistically significant relationships exist between each of the traits and likelihood to give.

Data Addressing Research Question 2: What is the relationship between the sender and channel message factors and students' likelihood to make a donation to their higher education institutions?

Sender

Respondents were asked to indicate who they would be most likely to say yes to when being asked to make a gift. The top two they would be most likely to say yes to were a fellow student ($n = 65$) or a professional fundraiser ($n = 43$). They were least likely to say yes ($n = 9$) to the University's mascot, Goldy the Gopher, with only 6% of respondents choosing him. Goldy, which is a cartoonish representation of a gopher, was included as an option for preferred sender because the University of Minnesota has used its mascot as the face of fundraising campaigns to rally alumni and friends to make donations. However, none of the interview respondents indicated they would be likely to say yes to him either. Respondent 2 said, "Goldy seems like a joke. If he asked me I'd roll my eyes and just say, 'Uh, what?'" while Respondent 4 explained, "I love Goldy, but that doesn't mean he should be asking me for money." Additionally, Respondent 3 indicated Goldy has a limited role on campus pointing out, "I feel like Goldy is just a mascot so there's no reason for him to be asking for money." This unlikelihood to say yes to the campus mascot lines up closely with the Millennial Impact Report, which found that Millennials are most

likely to give when asked by peers and that very few, only 4% would give based on a celebrity endorsement (2011).

Some alternative senders were identified by the study respondents as individuals or groups to whom students may respond well. One student wrote in on the survey that she would say yes to “someone in need whose ability (she) believed.” Another mentioned that he would be likely to give if “the sport club team (he is) on reached out to (him) personally.”

Q6: If you were asked to make a financial donation to the University, who would you be most likely to say yes to?

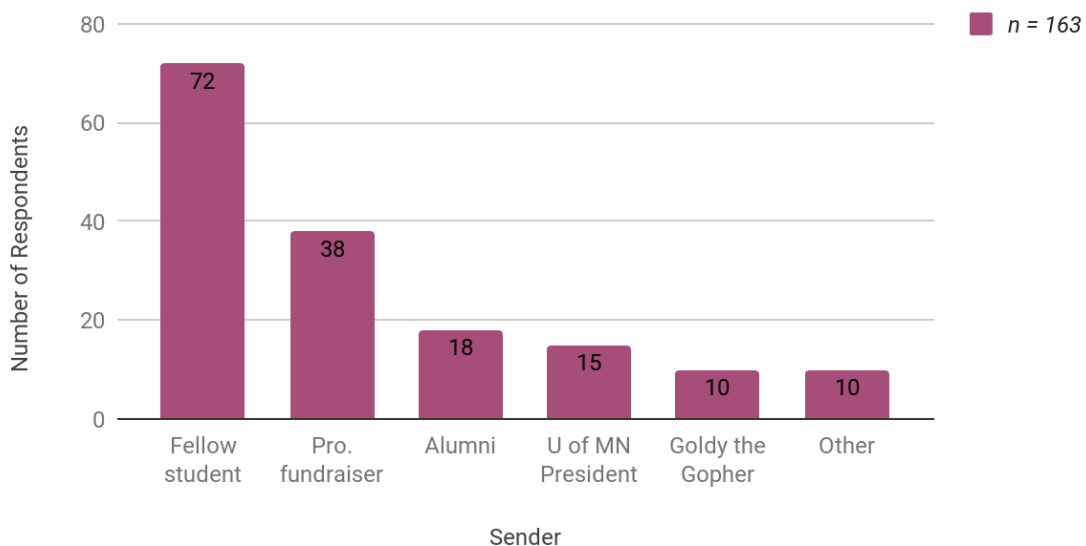


Figure 12 - Preferred senders

When it comes to receiving general information about philanthropy at the University of Minnesota, the distribution across preferred senders remained almost the same with respondents indicating their top two preferred senders as fellow students ($n = 65$) and fundraising professionals ($n = 43$) (fig 12).

Gen. Philanthropy Info and Donation Request

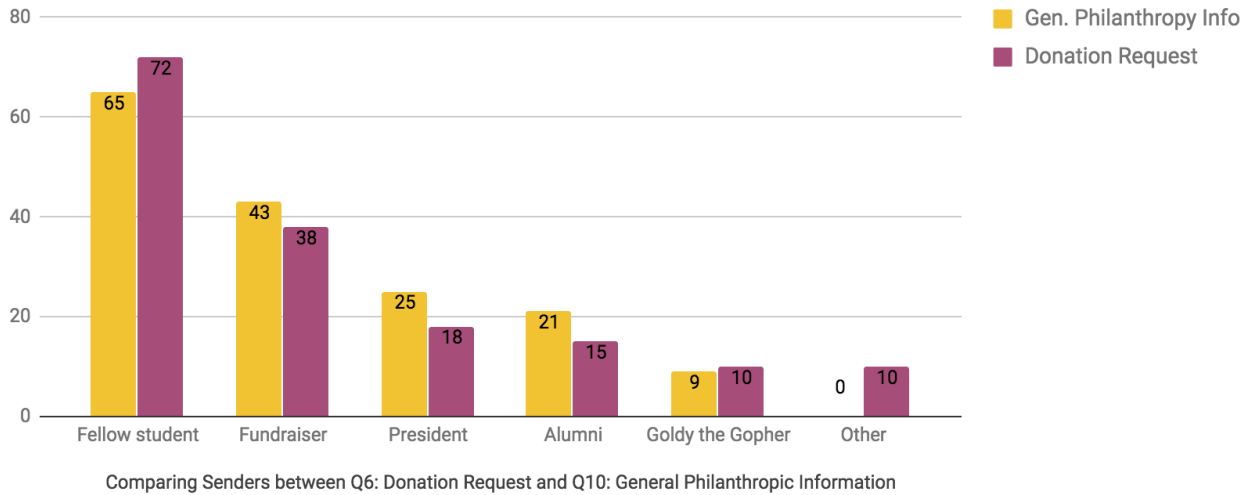


Figure 13 - Preferred senders in solicitations versus general information

Channel

When it comes to channel, respondents indicated they would be more likely to make a gift when contacted in person ($n = 82$) or via email ($n = 57$) (fig 12). These two channels were clear leaders above the options of social media, mail, phone call, or text which; combined those four categories were only preferred by a total of 28 respondents (fig 14). This also lines up with previous research that indicated Millennials prefer to be asked in person to make gifts, even though most of the actual giving occurs through digital channels (Camber Collective, 2015).

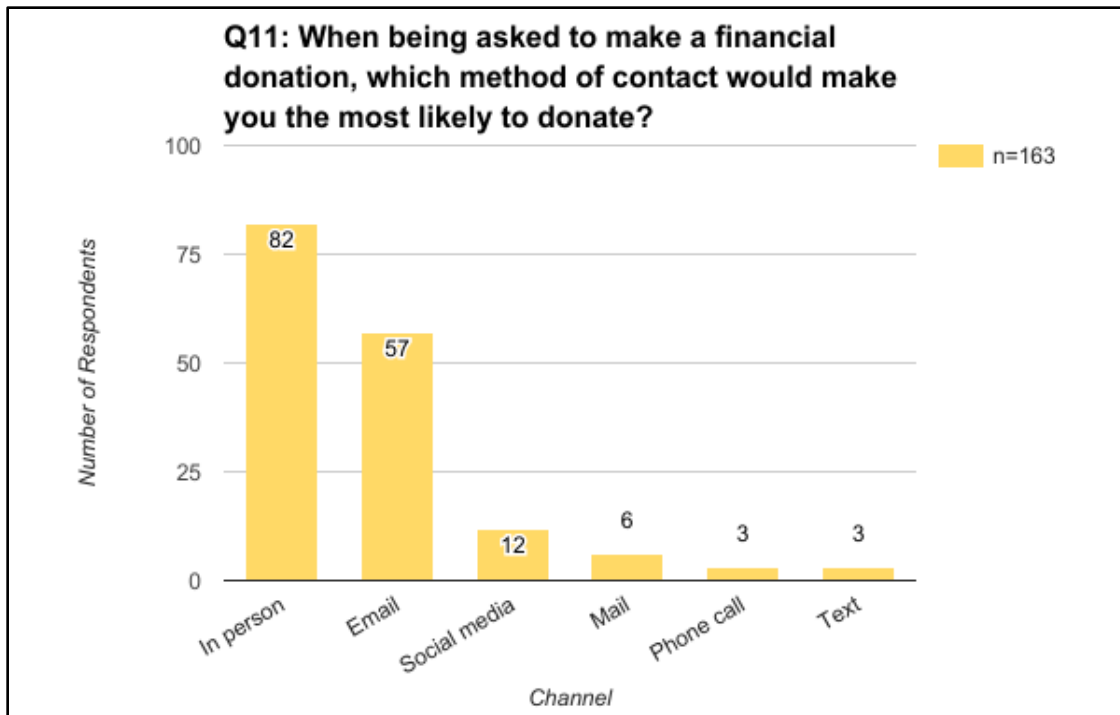


Figure 14 - Preferred Channel

Discussion and Recommendations

Awareness

Discovering that there is an overall lack of awareness of philanthropy among students at the University of Minnesota could actually be great news for communicators who have an opportunity to make a change that could influence a new group of potential donors to make gifts. The survey data indicated that if students knew exactly how their money was going to be spent as well as why they were being asked to make a gift, their likelihood to give would increase (*fig 5*).

To answer students' questions about why they are being asked to give, messaging will need to explain the general funding model of the University. This is especially important since the survey respondents indicated that their biggest barriers to giving are financially based (*fig 8*),

such as the cost of tuition (38%, $n = 134$) . Funds from tuition and allocations from the state of Minnesota account for most of the University's budget, but there is usually a gap between them that private donors are called upon to help fill. It is possible, due to changes in the appropriation from the state legislature, that tuition costs will rise during the years students are enrolled, which makes it a difficult and complicated topic to address with them, but still an important one.

Creating clear messages that help students understand the funding model and how important private donors are to the success of the University would increase their awareness of the need for philanthropy and, in turn, their likelihood to give.

Another topic to tie to the strategy of increasing awareness is the University's mission statement, which is:

The University of Minnesota, founded in the belief that all people are enriched by understanding, is dedicated to the advancement of learning and the search for truth; to the sharing of this knowledge through education for a diverse community; and to the application of this knowledge to benefit the people of the state, the nation, and the world.

This study's results lined up with other research that indicates Millennials are very mission driven when it comes to making gifts to nonprofits; 36% of students have given to nonprofits in the past because of a belief in the organization's mission ($n = 134$, *fig 6*). Showing students how their financial support could help the University make strides with its mission would appeal to this group's desire to support causes with compelling missions (Millennial Impact Report, 2015).

One student wrote in an answer on the survey that she believes donations to the University go toward "the ridiculous money President Kaler is paid" (Q5). Her perception seems to be that not only does the University's president make too much money, but that he is paid directly through donations. This brings up the issue of needing to communicate how financial gifts are spent and show exactly where the money goes. Information should be shared showing the breakdown of how a dollar is spent when it is given to the University. The University of

Minnesota Foundation reports that their three year average cost to raise a dollar was \$.13 (2016), which is well below the national average of \$.20 (SupportingAdvancement, 2017). This data could help students have confidence that their money is being spent responsibly and is actually going to the causes they wish to support. Information like this is shared regularly with donors through the annual report and a philanthropy magazine called Legacy, but students are not one of their targeted audiences. Reworking the material they use to target alumni, donors, and friends could be used for current students in the effort toward increasing their awareness of how philanthropy at the University works and why it is so important.

Engagement and Connection

As indicated by students top motivations to potentially make a gift, they will need to feel connected to the school through engagement in student groups ($n = 66$) and having a positive educational experience ($n = 82$) in order to be more likely to say yes when solicited for donations (*fig 7*). Engagement at this level cannot be accomplished solely by communicators, nor should it be. Efforts would have to involve cross-departmental collaboration between areas such as Student Unions and Activities, Residence Life, Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, University Recreation and Wellness, Boyton Health Services, and many others. This kind of broad coordination can be cumbersome, timely, and expensive at a large land grant institution such as the University of Minnesota, but is not impossible.

One opportunity to connect students to volunteer work is the annual “Day of Service,” an event put on by the University of Minnesota’s Alumni Association. While initially created to bring together alumni and friends of the University, this event has also been opened up to students. Growing the student participation in this event, which connects volunteers to community partner organizations in need of volunteers, could increase students’ likelihood to give since the study indicated that 15% of the respondents who have given to nonprofits ($n = 77$)

did so because they have volunteered there (*fig 6*). Currently, the alumni and others who participate in this event are tracked in a donor management system maintained by the University of Minnesota, but student participation is not fully tracked. Tracking participation would be key in the future to determine if there is a link between these volunteer events and students' likelihood to give, or even rate of giving if they are solicited for gifts. Volunteers could be tracked over several years and then participation rates would be compared with actual giving data.

When it comes to determining which causes students should be approached to support, scholarships and student affinity groups stand out as the best choices. As discussed in the data analysis (*fig 7*), wanting to help others get the chance to go to school ($n = 104$) and supporting a group where they feel connected ($n = 66$) are two of the top reasons students would consider making a gift to the University of Minnesota. Millennials usually give smaller gifts when donating to nonprofits (Millennial Impact Report, 2011), so it would be important to share data with them showing the impact that even a small donation can make in helping give more students access to education or in contributing to the success of student groups. The goal should not be to move students toward making large gifts, but simply getting them to become donors at any level they can afford. It is also easy to share strong impact stories about scholarships, as there are individuals who are directly benefitting from the gifts being given. This tactic would also reinforce the strategy discussed earlier of showing students how their support helps the University with its mission, which focuses on “research and discovery, teaching and learning, outreach and public service” (University of Minnesota, 2008).

Other characteristics

The data analysis determined that there is no relationship between students' financial aid status and their likelihood to give (*Appendix A*), but this area still has the potential to assist

fundraisers with laying the groundwork with students as future donors. The University of Minnesota Foundation currently shares information with scholarship recipients about their donor and why a gift was made to support scholarships, which is solid groundwork for increasing students awareness of the impact individual donors can make. Scholarship recipients may also be a good starting point when looking for a peer group to share information with other students about the need for fundraising, which will be discussed in the subsequent section.

Another interesting insight that came out of the survey data that had not been mentioned in any of the supporting research about student giving, is the fact that non-US student seem to be more likely to give than those who reported a US home location. More research will need to be done to verify this initial finding, but it could have significant implications in communication and fundraising strategies. It would be interesting to take a deeper dive through focus groups or interviews in order to determine what exactly it is about international students that may make them more likely to give. Additionally, messaging to specifically target this group would need to take various cultural ideas of charitable giving into account, as well as potential language barriers.

Sender

Students in this study preferred to be asked for donations by peers ($n = 82$) which lines up with past research (Heaton, 2013; Paradise 2014). Several themes explaining why peers are the top choice came out of the interviews. Respondents found peers relatable and felt like they were best suited to talk about causes that directly benefit the student. Students should be the ones fundraising because “they have a handle on the student experience; they are living it.” Interview Respondent 4 echoed this sentiment saying, “I think students can speak to where the money would be going...hearing from them what we need and why we need it and what we’re being asking for would be more meaningful to me.” The importance of students fundraising for student

causes also came up in Interview 2 when the respondent said, “I’m more likely to say yes if the person who needs it is the one asking rather than it coming from someone like the president.”

Peer to peer interactions would provide a common ground between the students being asked to give and the students doing the fundraising, which Interview Respondent 3 brought up as an important factor for him. He said, “I’d be more likely to say yes to students because of the relatability factor. For me to donate money I would need to be able to trust (the person asking), so if it was another student...then I’d be more likely to say yes to them.” He also pointed out that he would be more likely to say yes to a friend or another student that he knows because “there would be an emotional pull.”

It was surprising to discover that in the survey, students indicated their second choice for preferred sender is a fundraising professional ($n = 57$) (*fig 14*). Hovland’s examination of senders within the SMCR model can help explain this as he found that source credibility can influence the reception of a message by the audience, receiver. If the sender is considered to have high credibility, the audience is more likely to react positively to the message being received. In this case fundraising professionals are perceived by students as being a high credibility source, since they work in philanthropy asking for gifts is part of their job.

Most interview respondents chose peers as their preferred sender, but provided interesting insights when asked about fundraising professionals addressing student audiences. Interview Respondent 3 supported the assertion that fundraisers are high credibility sources by saying, “They earned their title as a fundraiser so I would trust them since it’s their job” and again later in the interview when he said, “they have that job for a reason so they must know what they’re doing.” Sharing a similar view, Interview Respondent 1 said she would consider giving to a fundraising professional explaining, “It would give me comfort that this person does it as a full time job and that they’re passionate about it and the University.” However, she also had concerns

about professionals interacting with students. “I would wonder why they’re targeting students though. Aren’t I giving them enough of my money?”

While other students may be more relatable, fundraising professionals may be seen as a better source of facts and important information about philanthropy in general. Interview Respondent 2 said “If a fundraising professional answered the questions I might have about where the money is going to go and how it’s going to help, I would be more likely to give. They are more knowledgeable about all of that information than students would be.”

Another potential sender that was identified by a respondent through a write-in answer on the survey was student affinity groups such as “the Women’s Center, multicultural or LGBTQ” groups (Q6). These groups would make sense to use especially when messaging to their own members. Students already feel connected through their participation in extracurricular activities such as intramural sports, student government, or fraternal organizations, so using those groups to continue building awareness around philanthropy would be an effective sender of messages. The relationships students have with these groups could also be beneficial when directly soliciting for gifts, since they are peer based which increases the likelihood that students will give through them. Additionally, Interview Respondent 3 brought up another potential category of senders; “Another option I would be more likely to say yes to would be professors or other people who work for the department, like someone who works in the Rec(reation and Wellness Center). If (a professor) asked for something for the class then I might be willing to donate.”

Overall, survey participants and interview respondents alike did not think that the university president should be fundraising among current students. Only 15 out of 163 said that they would be most likely to say yes to the U of M president, making it one of the bottom three choices (figure 12). Interview Respondents 1 and 3 both mentioned a personal aversion to the current president, Eric Kaler, so it is possible they would say yes to a different person in that

position. Interview Respondent 1 said, “I’m not a huge fan of President Kaler so I wouldn’t want to contribute to him” and Interview Respondent 3 elaborated:

President Kaler has a lot of pull on campus depending on who you talk to, but not as much with me personally. Going back to when he first started I would have been more likely to give to him but not as much anymore because of everything that has happened while he has been in charge.

It is also possible that the frequency and content of messages already coming from the president’s office would dilute the effectiveness of him as a fundraiser in their eyes. For example, Interview Respondent 4 said “We hear from President Kaler a lot already and I know are all mass media blasts and so they don’t seem personal.” If the president was going to be positioned as a messenger for fundraising campaigns targeting students, then the rest of his communication strategy would need to be reevaluated to make sure he is not contacting them so frequently that they start to ignore him.

Channel

Often communicators seem to assume that the best way to reach this new generation of donors is through technology, apps, and social media but that does not appear to be the case when it comes to fundraising. These students seem to have more old school communication preferences when it comes to receiving fundraising requests and information, wanting face-to-face interactions more than technological ones.

The study data analysis found that 50% of students prefer being asked to make donations and given information about philanthropy in person and 35% prefer email (*fig 17*). The preference for in-person communication ties back to students’ need to feel connected to the organization in order to consider supporting it financially (*fig 6*). Looking to Media Richness Theory, it has been shown that it is easier to build a relationship and affinity face to face, which

is the richest medium of communication, than by using less rich forms of media such as text messages (Daft, 1986).

Looking deeper into this preferred channel, it makes sense that students would be more likely to say yes to making a gift when approached in person because they are being asked to do something personal and important. Asking someone to give financial support is much more serious than asking them to follow the organization on a social media platform. This personal request requires the more personal and richer channel of face-to-face interaction (Daft, 1986). Affirming the need for a richer channel, Interview Respondent 1 said the following about in person requests:

It's obviously the most personal form of communication out of the list and that's important when you're talking about donations... I think the method or platform you're going with has to match the cause you're marketing for or the message you're trying to send. If you're sending a weather alert, sure send me a text from the University, but not if you're asking me for money. Do that in person.

Interview Respondent 2 said that "the person to person contact...provides more of a connection" than the other options, including phone calls or digital communication media. Interview Respondent 3 also pointed out that an in person request "seems more genuine." Explaining why she prefers face to face requests for donations, Interview Respondent 4 said, "I chose 'in person' because I think that's more personal and you're seeing the people and you know where your money is going and who has it." Interview Respondent 1 also addressed the need to be able to ask questions about the fundraising that is taking place and get on the spot answers:

That dialogue piece is huge, too. Having a person who is able to elaborate on what they're asking me and able to have a personal conversation would make me feel validated and make me feel like they spent enough time and they care enough to send a person out to talk about what they're trying to raise funds for.

Overall students were less likely to say yes to making a gift when asked via text message, Interview Respondent 4 indicated she preferred this channel because “Texts are also very convenient and people are constantly on their phone so responding ‘yes’ for however much money is really simple.” She also pointed out that “as a student I want things to be easy and quick.” So in some cases, fundraising via text message may be a way to provide students with a convenient one step way to make a gift. Many phone app developers agree with her that millennials want “one click” options for everything in their lives, including charitable giving (Camber Collective, 2015). Interview Respondent 4 also explained that social media posts that redirect followers to another page in order give can be clunky and inconvenient; “On social media ...there are more steps involved. You have to go to the website...so it’s more work for you.” It is important to note that the students were asked in the survey about text messages as a whole, but there are different ways that texts may be used. These different uses could change students’ receptiveness to the messages themselves. For example, a generic mass produced text message with no personalization would be leaner than a text sent directly from a peer or a fundraising professional that the student knows personally. The latter would likely yield more donations than the former.

There are several large events each year on campus that have high rates of participation from students where there could be an opportunity to share information about philanthropy in person. These include freshman orientation during welcome week, which all new students are required to attend, Homecoming activities, Spring Jam, and graduation. Even orientation would be a platform where students could be introduced to the important role that donors play at the University. Many orientation activities are led by other current students through the Office of Admissions, so there is a built-in opportunity to use peer based communication. It may also be possible to create a presence of fundraising professionals at summer orientation fairs or during

“Welcome Week” in the fall, which new students are required to attend before classes begin. Using these existing events that already have high attendance instead of relying on creating new fundraising based in person events would allow communicators to access large numbers of students more easily.

Email was the second choice of students for preferred channel but since Millennials receive many messages via email each day it could be more difficult to get students attention via email. Interview Respondent 2 addressed a general aversion to receiving fundraising messages via email saying, “There are so many emails that it’s easy to forget them and not pay attention to them.” She went on to explain, “Most people check their email all the time so it’s an easy way to contact a lot of people but I don’t personally like email.” One way to avoid emails being ignored would be by tying emails to the previously mentioned events that students have attended as a follow-up. This could be an effective way to contact them via both of their preferred channels. Email could also be used to reach an audience of students that may not typically attend events on campus.

Deploying emails would also help bridge the gap in awareness among students about the philanthropic needs of the university without submitting them to the peer pressure involved with in person interactions. Interview Respondent 3 explained, “Emails allow people to be more anonymous or donate on the down low without being hassled. You might also be able to get more information in an email rather than social media.”

Using digital channels such as email, mass texts, or social media campaigns to inexpensively message to large groups of people may reach a larger audience but will not necessarily bring in more gifts or higher dollar amounts from students. Creating effective messaging to get students to make donations will take an investment of time and money from

universities but given the charitable tendencies of the younger generation, it will likely pay off in the long run.

Future Research Recommendations

This study could be replicated in other colleges at the University of Minnesota and at different types of higher education schools such as private colleges or universities, other public schools, or trade schools in order to see if student charitable giving practices are different in other settings. There are other research components that could be conducted that would give a broader view of the topic. One would be expert interviews with fundraising professionals at other institutions that are currently running fundraising campaigns targeting current students. Another would be to conduct several focus groups to continue asking additional questions about the motivations and barriers of student giving, how to best engage students in order to increase likelihood to give, and what kind of information students would like to receive about the importance of philanthropy at the University.

Another approach to further research would be to test the data through an experiment implementing a fundraising campaign. Two different measures of success could be examined: number of donations and total dollar amount given (Paradise, 2014). Targeting a random sample of students, the campaign would be crafted using the findings from the survey in this study. Different variables could be manipulated and measured. For example, to determine the best channel of communication a group of students could be asked in person to make a gift and another group via email to see which of their top two preferred methods of contact resulted in a more successful campaign. To determine the most successful sender, or contact person, two different versions of a gift solicitation email could be sent to students with a fellow student signing one set and a fundraising professional signing the other. Then, the rate of giving, average gift size, and total amount given would be measured and compared between the two groups.

Strategy Recap

Recommendations for increasing students' likelihood to give to their institutions of higher education

- Increase awareness of the need for philanthropy
 - Messaging around why donations are needed and how gifts are spent.
 - Emphasize importance of philanthropy in successfully pursuing the University's mission.
- Engagement
 - Encourage extracurricular participation and use those groups as senders of fundraising messages.
 - Track student volunteer participation as a gateway into becoming donors.
- Sender
 - Use existing peer-to-peer relationships through extracurricular activities to continue increasing awareness and to solicit for gifts.
 - Rely on the credibility of fundraising professionals when disseminating philanthropic information to students and during the solicitation process.
- Channel
 - Students are more likely to give when asked in person, so create a fundraising presence at existing events such as Homecoming.
 - Use email based campaigns in place of social media, phone calls, or text messages to increase likelihood to give.

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Appendix A Statistical Analysis

Contingency Tables

| Loans | | |
|---|--------------------|------------------|
| Student Loan Status | Likelihood to Give | |
| | More likely | Less likely |
| Loan | 5 | 73 |
| No Loan | 7 | 78 |
| Pearson's chi square test with Yates' continuity correction | | p-value = 0.8843 |

| Scholarship | | |
|---|--------------------|------------------|
| Scholarship Status | Likelihood to Give | |
| | More likely | Less likely |
| Scholarship | 5 | 81 |
| No Scholarship | 7 | 70 |
| Pearson's chi square test with Yates' continuity correction | | p-value = 0.6175 |

Appendix B Survey Questions

Consent Information

You are invited to be in a research study about charitable giving practices among students at the University of Minnesota. Please read this form and contact the researcher with any questions you may have before beginning this study. This study is being conducted by: Caley Conney, Strategic Communication Master's Candidate, School of Journalism and Mass Communication, University of Minnesota, cconney@umn.edu You can also contact the academic advisor, Dr. Stacey Kanihan at skanihan@umn.edu If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher(s), you are encouraged to contact the Research Subjects' Advocate Line, D528 Mayo, 420 Delaware St. Southeast, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455; (612) 625-1650. Procedure: If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to complete a survey questionnaire about your charitable giving practices. You will also be asked to provide some demographic information. The survey will take about 10-15 minutes to complete. Risks and benefits of being in this study: There is no particular risk associated with this study. Confidentiality: The information you provide in this survey will be kept private. Only the researcher will have access to the records. Data included in the final report will not include any information that would make it possible to identify a study subject. Voluntary nature of the study: Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision not to participate will not impact your standing with the University of Minnesota. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or to withdraw from the study at any time.

Questions

Q1 Are you currently a student at the University of Minnesota? (Even if you are graduating in Spring 2017, you are still considered a current student for the purposes of this survey.)

- Yes
- No

(Note: If "No" was selected, respondent was not allowed to complete the survey.)

Q2 Have you made financial donations to charities or nonprofits other than the University of Minnesota? (examples: American Red Cross, ACLU, animal rescues)

- Yes
- No

Q3 Why did/do you financially support the organization(s)? (Select all that apply)

- I believe in the organization's mission.
- I think it is important to give back to the community.
- I had extra money in my budget.
- My parents make donations there.
- I have volunteered there and know the financial support is needed.
- I want/need the tax deduction.
- Other _____

Q4 How much do you know about making donations to support the University of Minnesota?

| | | | | | | |
|---------|---|---|---|---|---|-------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| Nothing | | | | | | A lot |

Q5 What do you think financial donations to the University of Minnesota fund? (Choose all that apply)

- Scholarships
- Building and renovating facilities
- Research projects
- Athletics
- Operational costs
- Other _____

Q6 As a current student: If you were asked to make a financial donation to the University, who would you be most likely to say yes to?

- A fellow student
- Alumni
- Goldy the Gopher
- U of M President
- A U of M fundraising professional
- Other _____

Q7 As a current student: If asked, how likely would you be to make a financial donation to the University of Minnesota?

| | | | | | | |
|------------|---|---|---|---|---|-------------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| Not likely | | | | | | Very likely |

Q8 As a current student: If you had more information about why you were being asked to give now, how much more likely would you be to make a financial donation?

| | | | | | | |
|------------|---|---|---|---|---|-------------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| Not likely | | | | | | Very likely |

Q9 As a current student: If you had more information about how your financial donation would be used, how much more likely would you be to make a gift?

| | | | | | | |
|------------|---|---|---|---|---|-------------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| Not likely | | | | | | Very likely |

Q10 As a current student: From whom would you prefer to learn general information about philanthropy and why the University needs financial support?

- A fellow student
- Alumni
- Goldy the Gopher
- U of M President
- A U of M fundraising professional
- Other _____

Q11 As a current student: When being asked to make a financial donation, which method of contact would make you the most likely to donate?

- Email
- Social media
- Phone - call
- Phone - text
- In person
- Mail

Q12 As a current student: For what reasons would you make a financial donation to the University? (Choose all that apply)

- I am having a positive educational experience.
- I feel connected through a non-academic activity or club that I want to support.
- I want to help others have the chance to go to school.
- I have the money in my budget to make a gift.
- I want/need the tax deduction.
- Other _____

Q13 As a current student: What reasons would keep you from making a financial donation to the University? (Choose all that apply)

- I am not having a positive educational experience.
- I do not feel connected through a non-academic activity or club that I want to support.
- I am already paying tuition and do not want to give any more money to the U.
- I do not have the money in my budget to make a gift.
- I do not want/need the tax deduction.
- I am already making charitable gifts to another organization.
- Other _____

Q33 NOTE: The next set of questions is about what you plan to do after you graduate.

Q14 After you graduate: From whom would you prefer to learn general information about philanthropy and why the University needs financial support?

- A current student
- Alumni
- Goldy the Gopher
- U of M President
- A U of M fundraising professional
- Other _____

Q15 After you graduate: If you were asked to make a financial donation to the University, who would you be most likely to say yes to?

- A current student
- Alumni
- Goldy the Gopher
- U of M President
- A U of M fundraising professional
- Other _____

Q16 After you graduate: When being asked to make a financial donation, which method of contact would make you the most likely to donate?

- Email
- Social media
- Phone - call
- Phone - text
- In person
- Mail

Q17 After you graduate: For what reasons would you make a financial donation to the University? (Choose all that apply)

- I had a positive educational experience.
- I feel connected through a non-academic activity or club that I want to support.
- I want to help others have the chance to go to school.
- I have the money in my budget to make a gift.
- I want/need the tax deduction.
- Other _____

Q18 After you graduate: What reasons would keep you from making a financial to the University? (Choose all that apply)

- I am not having a positive educational experience.
- I do not feel connected through a non-academic activity or club that I want to support.
- I am already paying off student loans and do not want to give any more money to my education.
- I do not have the money in my budget to make a gift.
- I do not want/need the tax deduction.
- I am already making charitable gifts to another organization.
- Other _____

Q19 After you graduate: If asked, how likely would you be to make a financial donation to the University of Minnesota?

| | | | | | | |
|------------|---|---|---|---|---|-------------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| Not likely | | | | | | Very likely |

Q20 As what type of student are you currently enrolled?

- PSEO
- Non-degree seeking
- Undergraduate program
- Graduate program
- Professional school
- Other _____

Q21 Do you have student loans that help you pay for tuition?

- Yes
- No

Q22 Do you receive scholarships to help pay for tuition?

- Yes
- No

Q23 Do you have a job to help pay for tuition?

- Yes
- No

Condition: No Is Selected. Skip To: What is your anticipated year of grad....

Q24 Is it a work study job at the U of M?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know.

Q25 What is your anticipated year of graduation?

- 2017
- 2018
- 2019
- 2020
- 2021
- 2022
- 2023
- 2024
- 2025
- I don't know
- None of the above

Q26 In which college(s) are you enrolled at the University of Minnesota? Choose all that apply.

- Biological Sciences
- Continuing Education
- Dentistry
- Design
- Education and Human Development
- Food, Agricultural and Natural Resource Sciences
- Law School
- Liberal Arts
- Carlson School of Management
- Medicine
- Nursing
- Pharmacy
- Public Affairs
- Public Health
- Science and Engineering
- Veterinary medicine
- I don't know.

Q27 How often do you participate in extracurricular clubs, sports, or student groups?

| | | | | | | |
|-------|---|---|---|---|---|------------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| Never | | | | | | Frequently |

Q28 What type of extracurricular(s) do you participate in? Choose all that apply.

- None
- Sport club
- Student group
- Fraternity or Sorority
- Intramural sport
- Student government
- Other _____

Q29 What year were you born? (i.e. 1996)

Q30 What US state or non-US country are you from?

- Write answer here _____

Q31 With which gender do you identify?

- Male
- Female
- Not listed (fill in answer) _____
- Prefer not to indicate

Appendix C

Interview Guide and Transcripts

Interview Guide

Note: Some follow-up questions vary from interview to interview depending on the answers given.

Interview Consent Information

You are invited to be in a research study about charitable giving practices among students at the University of Minnesota. Please read this form and contact the researcher with any questions you may have before beginning this study. This study is being conducted by: Caley Conney, Strategic Communication Master's Candidate, School of Journalism and Mass Communication, University of Minnesota, cconney@umn.edu You can also contact the academic advisor, Dr. Stacey Kanihan at skanihan@umn.edu If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher(s), you are encouraged to contact the Research Subjects' Advocate Line, D528 Mayo, 420 Delaware St. Southeast, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455; (612) 625-1650. Procedure: If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to complete a brief interview about your charitable giving practices. You will also be asked to provide some demographic information. The interview will take about 10 minutes to complete. Risks and benefits of being in this study: There is no particular risk associated with this study. Confidentiality: The information you provide in this survey will be kept private. Only the researcher will have access to the records. Data included in the final report will not include any information that would make it possible to identify a study subject. Voluntary nature of the study: Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision not to participate will not impact your standing with the University of Minnesota. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or to withdraw from the study at any time.

Charitable Giving

Q: As a current student: If you were asked to make a financial donation to the University, who would you be most likely to say yes to:

- A fellow student
- Alumni
- Goldy the Gopher
- U of M President
- A U of M fundraising professional
- Other

Q: Tell me more about why you chose _____.

Q: Why did you not choose one of the other options?

Q: As a current student: When being asked to make a financial donation, which method of contact would make you the most likely to donate:

- Email
- Social media
- Phone - call
- Phone - text

- In person
- Mail

Q: Tell me about why you chose _____.

Q: Why do you think you would be less likely to say yes to the other options?

Q: Would you consider making a gift to the University as a student?

Demographics

Q: What is your anticipated year of graduation?

Q: In which college(s) are you enrolled at the University of Minnesota?

- Biological Sciences
- Continuing Education
- Dentistry
- Design
- Education and Human Development
- Food, Agricultural and Natural Resource Sciences
- Law School
- Liberal Arts
- Carlson School of Management
- Medicine
- Nursing
- Pharmacy
- Public Affairs
- Public Health
- Science and Engineering
- Veterinary medicine
- I don't know.

Q: What year were you born?

Q: Are you from the US or another country?

Q: With which gender do you identify?

- Male
- Female
- Not listed (fill in answer) _____
- Prefer not to indicate

Respondent 1 Transcript

11:00am

Saturday July 15, 2017

Charitable Giving

Q: As a current student: If you were asked to make a financial donation to the University, who would you be most likely to say yes to:

- A fellow student
- Alumni
- Goldy the Gopher
- U of M President
- A U of M fundraising professional
- Other

A: Fellow students. I think as a student it would be comforting to know I would be contributing to the welfare of fellow Gophers' causes. It would make me feel good supporting classmates. I mean, students have a handle on the student experience because they are living it! Any giving that I have done as a Gopher has been toward a student organization led by a student. And I might say yes to fundraising professionals. It would give me comfort that this person does it as a full time job and that they're passionate about it and the University. I would wonder why they're targeting students though. Aren't I giving them enough of my money?

Q: Why did you not choose one of the other options?

A: I'm not a huge fan of President Kaler so I wouldn't want to contribute to him. Goldy is synonymous to athletics and I don't love the athletics program. I think it has enough funding as is so it doesn't need my help. I know too much about athletics and I know people who have been Goldy so I'm not really into that. Alumni would make me question them, because they are out of college so I would be wondering why they would be asking me as a student. I just wouldn't relate to them.

Q: As a current student: When being asked to make a financial donation, which method of contact would make you the most likely to donate:

- Email
- Social media
- Phone - call
- Phone - text
- In person
- Mail

A: In person. That way there is more of a dialogue.

Q: Tell me about why you chose in-person.

A: Part of it in person is the pressure. I'm a people pleaser and not good at saying no. I'd be talking to a human being and it's not as easy to ignore a request when you're talking to a human. That dialogue piece is huge, too. Having a person who is able to elaborate on what they're asking me and able to have a personal conversation would make me feel validated and make me feel like they spent enough time and they care enough to send a person out to talk about what they're

trying to raise funds for. It's obviously the most personal form of communication out of the list and that's important when you're talking about donations.

Q: Why do you think you would be less likely to say yes to the other options?

A: I think that text or phone call would feel invasive to me. Email I would quickly hit delete, but direct mail could be a good option. It's a little more personalized and suitable but texting seems impersonal when you're talking about money. Snail mail seems more appropriate because you know someone is spending time and money distributing materials.

Q: You mentioned that texting seems impersonal when talking about money. Can you elaborate on what you mean by that?

A: I think the method or platform you're going with has to match the cause you're marketing for or the message you're trying to send. If you're sending a weather alert, sure send me a text from the University, but not if you're asking me for money. Do that in person.

Demographics

Q: What is your anticipated year of graduation?

A: 2018

Q: In which college(s) are you enrolled at the University of Minnesota?

A: Liberal Arts

Q: What year were you born?

A: 1995

Q: Are you from the US or another country?

A: US

Q: With which gender do you identify?

A: Female

Respondent 2 Transcript

12:30pm

Monday July 17, 2017

Charitable Giving

Q: As a current student: If you were asked to make a financial donation to the University, who would you be most likely to say yes to:

- A fellow student
- Alumni
- Goldy the Gopher
- U of M President
- A U of M fundraising professional
- Other

A: A student.

Q: Tell me more about why you chose student or why you may say yes to some of the others:

A: Students because they're probably who the gift would be benefitting so I would be more likely to say yes to them. If a fundraising professional answered the questions I might have about where the money is going to go and how it's going to help, I would be more likely to give. They are more knowledgeable about all of that information.

Q: Why did you not choose one of the other options?

A: Goldy seems like a joke. If he asked me I'd roll my eyes and just say, "Uh, what?" The president, well I just don't see it being likely that he would or should be asking me in the first place because he should have better things to do with his time. I'm more likely to say yes if the person who needs it is the one asking rather than it coming from someone like the president.

Q: As a current student: When being asked to make a financial donation, which method of contact would make you the most likely to donate:

- Email
- Social media
- Phone - call
- Phone - text
- In person
- Mail

A: Probably in person. It's more memorable.

Q: Tell me about why you chose in-person.

A: The person to person contact. It provides more of a connection than over the phone. Email may be able to do that too, but it could be a mass email which isn't personal. In person someone is taking the time to address why they need more funds.

Q: Why do you think you would be less likely to say yes to the other options?

A: There are so many emails that it's easy to forget them and not pay attention to them. I don't like getting phone calls. I feel like that's how most of these fundraising drives happen but I just send them right to voicemail and ignore the message. Most people check their email all the time so it's an easy way to contact a lot of people but I don't personally like email.

Q: Would you consider making a gift to the University as a student?

A: I need my money to get through school right now, I can't give it away. Maybe once I don't have college debt but not right now.

Demographics

Q: What is your anticipated year of graduation?

A: 2020

Q: In which college(s) are you enrolled at the University of Minnesota?

A: Education and Human Development; Liberal Arts

Q: What year were you born?

A: 1998

Q: Are you from the US or another country?

A: US

Q: With which gender do you identify?

A: Female

Respondent 3 Transcript

3:30pm

Wednesday July 19, 2017

Charitable Giving

Q: As a current student: If you were asked to make a financial donation to the University, who would you be most likely to say yes to:

- A fellow student
- Alumni
- Goldy the Gopher
- U of M President
- A U of M fundraising professional
- Other

A: Another student. It depends on if they're my friend or not, because if they are then there would be an emotional pull. But the other options - I feel like - the president already gets funding from other people and can have other sources to get what they need.

Q: Tell me more about why you chose students and fundraisers.

A: I'd be more likely to say yes to students because of the relatability factor. For me to donate money I would need to be able to trust them so if it was another student, or someone I knew, or a friend then I'd be more likely to say yes to them. I would know that they're being genuine.

Q: Fundraising professional was a top choice among other students. Do you think you would be likely to say yes to them if asked?

A: Maybe, because it's their job and they have that job for a reason so they must know what they're doing. They earned their title as a fundraiser so I would trust them since it's their job. Another option I would be more likely to say yes to would be professors or other people who work for the department, like someone who works in the rec. If they asked for something for the class then I might be willing to donate.

Q: Why did you not choose one of the other options?

A: President Kaler has a lot of pull on campus depending on who you talk to, but not as much with me personally. Going back to when he first started I would have been more likely to give to him but not as much anymore because of everything that has happened while he has been in charge. I feel like Goldy is just a mascot so there's no reason for him to be asking for money.

Q: As a current student: When being asked to make a financial donation, which method of contact would make you the most likely to donate:

- Email
- Social media
- Phone - call
- Phone - text
- In person
- Mail

A: It would need to be in person and probably at an event. In person it would be like you know them. It seems more genuine and you can get a read on the person. If someone is talking to you,

you can make a decision on if it's worth it or not or if the cause is worthy or deserving but over the phone you only have half the picture because you can't see them. My second choice would probably be either a phone call or social media. It would have to be a good phone call though! My next choice would be email because I feel like that's what I've been trained to see as more professional, just from experiences with other organizations. Emails allow people to be more anonymous or donate on the down low without being hassled. You might also be able to get more information in an email rather than social media.

Q: Would you consider making a gift to the University as a student?

A: Not really, because of tuition and all the costs of attending that I'm already paying to the University. I feel like asking current students could be unfair because one of the problems at the University is that they have the money but they aren't allocating it well. For example, the Athletic Village construction - I understand they're trying to recruit using the new facility but that is a lot of money to spend on a non-academic project. The money could be used for scholarships, research, or outreach in the community and enrich the University in general instead of just letting a select group of people - student athletes - enjoy it.

Demographics

Q: What is your anticipated year of graduation?

A: 2018

Q: In which college(s) are you enrolled at the University of Minnesota?

A: Biological Sciences; Liberal Arts

Q: What year were you born?

A: 1996

Q: Are you from the US or another country?

A: US

Q: With which gender do you identify?

A: Male

Respondent 4
4:00pm
Thursday July 20, 2017

Charitable Giving

Q: As a current student: If you were asked to make a financial donation to the University, who would you be most likely to say yes to:

- A fellow student
- Alumni
- Goldy the Gopher
- U of M President
- A U of M fundraising professional
- Other

A: A student but it would probably depend on where the donation would be going and what it would be going for. I would think most donations at the U would go to student activities and classes so hearing from them what we need and why we need it and what we're asking for would be more meaningful to me.

Q: Tell me more about why you chose students and fundraisers.

A: Again, I think students can speak to where the money would be going. My second choice, fundraising professionals, is because it would seem like them asking them for a donation would be really well researched. They would know what the University needs and they'd do it fairly rather than an alumni who might be biased about what cause they'd want raise money for. Fundraising professionals are more invested in the donation process.

Q: Why did you not choose one of the other options?

A: I love Goldy, but that doesn't mean he should be asking me for money. The President or alumni would feel more generic or general. We hear from President Kaler a lot already and I know are all mass media blasts and so they don't seem personal. The students and fundraising professionals would feel like they're seeking me out personally so that would be better.

Q: As a current student: When being asked to make a financial donation, which method of contact would make you the most likely to donate:

- Email
- Social media
- Phone - call
- Phone - text
- In person
- Mail

A: I would say maybe text message because I think that's the easiest way to be contacted, or in person.

Q: Tell me about why you chose in-person and texts.

A: I chose in person because I think that's more personal and you're seeing the people and you know where your money is going and who has it. Texts are also very convenient and people are constantly on their phone so responding "yes" for however much money is really simple.

Q: Why do you think you would be less likely to say yes to the other options?

A: I think it's more work if it's the other options - like on social media you first have to see that they need something but then there are more steps involved. You have to go to the website or send something back in if it's through the mail so it's more work for you, which I get is part of the donation - you're putting something into it, money or time, but as a student I want things to be easy and quick.

Q: Would you consider making a gift to the University as a student?

A: I don't have extra money to even get myself a new outfit, much less make a donation. That's just not where I am yet. It stems from my financial situation. I know as a student how beneficial it can be to have donors support us by getting us new equipment or help us do research but I'm just not at a place where I can do that at this time.

Demographics

Q: What is your anticipated year of graduation?

A: 2019

Q: In which college(s) are you enrolled at the University of Minnesota?

A: Education and Human Development; Liberal Arts

Q: What year were you born?

A: 1996

Q: Are you from the US or another country?

A: US

Q: With which gender do you identify?

A: Female