Stride Interest Survey Report

October 10, 2024
Prepared for Department of Governance by
Department of Research and Advocacy

Overview

This survey ran on the UASU Perks platform from September 11 to October 7, 2024, and reached 1,794 respondents. It was intended to funnel some portion of participants toward registering for the Stride Campaign School. It ran with the following front matter:

> *Despite major progress in the last five or six years, women and gender-minority students have always tended to be underrepresented in student leadership at UAlberta. The UASU runs the Stride Campaign School, a cohort program aimed at encouraging greater participation/involvement of marginalized genders from all backgrounds — race, ethnicity, Indigeneity, sexuality, and ability — in student governance.*
>
> *The program equips participants with the knowledge, skills, and network to run for a variety of student government positions and make meaningful change on campus. It will address challenges and opportunities that individuals from under-represented groups in student governance face, while giving participants the tools and resources necessary to overcome them.*
>
> *Applications for Stride will close on October 7th, 2024 at 11:59pm. CLICK HERE for the application link.*

Points of note:

- Around 1/10 of Stride-eligible respondents were definitely interested in Stride.

- Around 1/10 of all respondents were interested in running for student leadership roles.

  - Interest was relatively high in the first three years and then fell sharply in fourth year and above.

  - Based on the intersection between this and the previous question, it seems that many students view Stride as part of their decision-making in whether they're actually interested in running for office, and others may view Stride's skill development as important for opportunities other than student leadership.

- Around 1/10 of all respondents had been invited to run for office. There was a very strong correlation between interest in running and whether they had been invited.

"Is Stride something that interests you?"

- Yes: 7% (9% with 'not eligible' removed)
- Maybe: 22%
- Not right now: 42%
- Not ever: 9%
- Not eligible but thanks for the points: 21%

Interest was highest in second year (11%, after removing 'not eligible' responses), but was also high in first year (9%) and fourth year (8%). Interest was quite low in KSR, Education, and Nursing (4-6%), but very high in Law, Native Studies, Business, and Arts (12%+)

"Do you think you would be able to attend most or all of these?"

This question ran with a list of Stride sessions, session topics, and dates, but did not list times.

- Yes: 5%
- Maybe: 38%
- No: 32%
- Stride isn't applicable to me: 24%

Are you interested in running for student leadership roles (e.g. UASU Executives, Students' Council, General Faculties Council, Faculty/Department/Residence Associations, Indigenous Students' Union, International Students' Association)?

- Yes: 9%
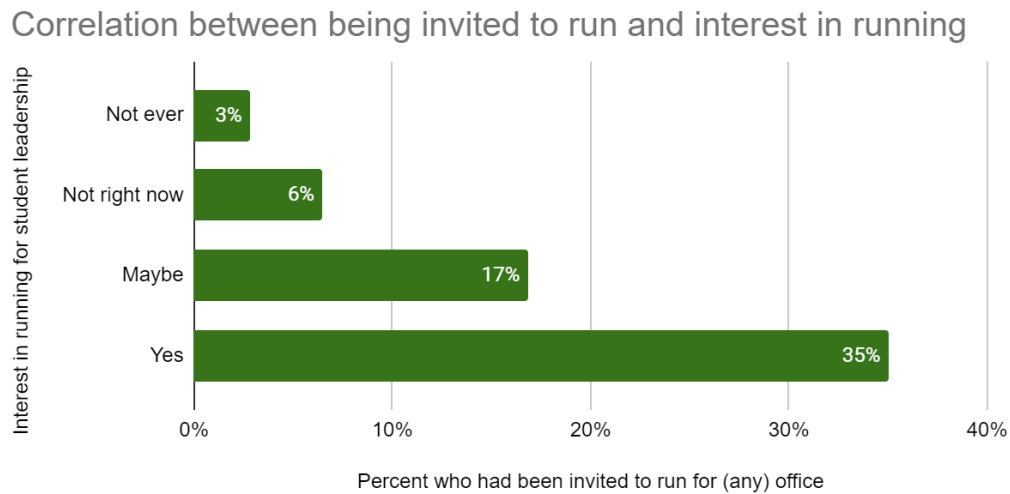- Maybe: 20%
- Not right now: 46%
- Not ever: 26%

Interest varied sharply by year of study. 'Yes' responses were around 9-11% in the first three years, then fell to around 4% for fourth, fifth, and sixth year. Interest was high in Augustana, Business, Law, Native Studies, and Nursing (12%+), but low in Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, Medicine and Dentistry, KSR, and Education (5-6%).

Out of the respondents who were definitely interested in participating in Stride, only 44% were definitely interested in running for student leadership; the rest were mostly undecided or picked 'not right now.' This suggests that many students may view Stride as a part of their decision-making, and others may view Stride's skill development as important for opportunities other than student leadership.

"Getting invited to run is a major predictor of whether people interested in running actually run for office. Have you ever been invited to run for office? (Also, you should run for office. You, personally, probably have the skills and unique perspectives to do a good job, even if you don't feel like you do. Just thought you should know. And if you're eligible, here's that Stride link again.)"

- Yes: 10%
- No: 90%

There was a strong correlation between interest in running for student leadership and whether they had been invited to run for office. This was expected based on academic research.[1]

Correlation between being invited to run and interest in running

It appeared that the most likely students to have been invited were in Business (13%). Several faculties saw a low likelihood of having been invited (<8%): ALES, Arts, Education, CSJ, Native Studies, and Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences.

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[1] Examples can be found here and here.

"Studies show that how you think and talk about your motivation for running for office makes a huge difference in whether you actually run. (For example, if you're interested in specific roles/opportunities, or if you're using language that focuses on your agency, ambition, drive.) If you were to run for student leadership roles or other elected offices, why would you want to? If that's not something that interests you right now, just put N/A or leave it blank. Thanks for coming by!"

These responses are categorized by answers to the question "Are you interested in running for student leadership roles…?"

Responses from students who answered 'Yes':

- Desire to contribute some fun and memorable experiences for students. Would like to make students come to Uni and be filled with goodness and happiness. Provide them opportunities to interact, learn and appreciate other human beings and multicultures like holding a global food fair on campus, talent show or music show etc.

- I believe that student governance is a key aspect of all post-secondary institutions. Not only does it align with my major, but it is one of the most important ways to become involved with your institution. I have been fortunate to see a little bit about how some aspects of student governance operate and I believe that it is much more accessible than people think. If I were to run for elected office it would be on the basis of advocating for myself and my peers, so that everybody is getting the most out of the education they're paying for as well as opening the door for others who might not share a similar level of experience but are equally as passionate.

- I cannot expect what I want to get done to be done by someone else.

- I feel like it would get me to participate more in my school. As well, it would look good on my resume. Joining school groups would allow me to get to know new people from my school and develop my leadership and cooperation skills - a valuable skill in working in psychology.

- I think I could do a lot for [my] faculty :) I'm currently VP [of a department association] so I'd love to continue being involved in student governance.

- I want to advocate for my fellow students' well being and education.

- I want to be a voice for people who may feel underrepresented. I want to be someone that people can come to, a face that appears everywhere I can and talks to as many groups as I can.

- I want to help people have a voice in their government. I believe everyone's voice matters.

- I want to offer a unique perspective, as a minority, on how student governments should provide services for students as I want it to focus more on personalized services for a diverse group of students.

- I was elected to be part of student leadership multiple times during secondary school, and I would hate for my experience to go to waste.

- I would love to be more involved in the campus community and making campus a better place for all. If I were to pick a specific position to run for, it would likely be leadership positions in science (ex. WISEST) or event planning. I have volunteered for both in the past and I believe that I could successfully facilitate and even improve aspects of event planning and science leadership if I obtain a position in those areas.

- I would want to change the current landscape for the better, but feel dismayed by some of the elections offerings as I personally feel that many of the groups listed above which I am personally eligible for don't necessarily move the needle or act in ways that align with my values or beliefs and benefit students from my faculty.

- I would want to make student more accessible and easier for students.

- I'd change the way a lot of the events are organized and promoted because as school has started most of the people i know have become focused only on their school work so the involvement of students within the school community has decreased from my perspective

- It would look juicy on my resume to go into Med school.

- Make students' life more accessible, affordable and livable.

- Running for student office interests me greatly since I would love to learn how campaigning works and even a little about governing bodies.

- The ability to create something physical and impose an idea, rather than simply think of an idea. To leave a mark, get involved and speak rather than be spoken for.

- To be a role model for minorities, to increase inclusivity, and to build up my resume .

- To be better equipped for the future and my job prospects.

- To gain more experience and make more friends.

- To give my peers a voice.

- To provide a perspective to decision makers on campus that is unique and different from most students. Most students are fresh out of high school and living with parents, whereas I'm a mature student paying my own bills, cooking

and cleaning and doing my own laundry. My needs are different and underrepresented.

Responses from students who answered 'Maybe':

- Because gender and sexual minority folks have been actively persecuted on campus and that's fucked. We need better supports and education.

- Enforce improved structure.

- For my resume.

- Grad school applications honestly.

- Help people.

- Honestly I'd love to hold any type of leadership position really, I just don't think I have the time and availability to commit to such a large and important role.

- I think it would be a good way to network and the experience to a resume.

- I wanna help my Indigenous community and offer to be a mouthpiece for those who might not have one.

- I want to be a part of change and growth on campus!

- I would only do it if I had a clear plan for what I would want to implement/carry out in my new role.

- I would want to enhance people's experience at the U of A and have a positive impact on those struggling to keep up.

- I would want to foster positive change in the university community. I would want to encourage success and working towards a better future, for ourselves and for the future of the University of Alberta.

- I would want to run Christianity club or something related to my culture.

- I'm in KSR, and representation for my faculty is seriously lacking. I'd love to run just so our voices are heard campus-wide, but I'm toooo busy this year! Plus, it's my last year before graduating :,)

- It seems like good responsibility to stay active in my community, be known, learn some important management skills, etc.

- Look good on my resume.

- Not right now, but maybe later (90%).

- To fix specific issues that I don't otherwise believe would be fixed or addressed in a manner that is most efficient and direct.

- To help contribute to making the school better

- To make changes for the better if I see issues and to represent people from my community

- To make friends and be a part of a team <3

Responses from students who answered 'Not right now':

- Because i would like to learn more leadership skills for my future career use.

- Bring issues that young care people about to a wider audience.

- Community, sense of belonging, to do something important .

- Do give everyone new opportunities.

- Fame glory networking.

- For gender equality.

- For the clout.

- Free food.

- I enjoy being involved in student government. I am quite busy with classes this semester but making a difference within my school community is very important to me.

- I think I'd run to be a voice for others while also having my own input. I think it's important to know about the behind the scenes portion of change and being involved is truly the best way to do that.

- I think it would be really great to learn more about leadership and also help my resume. I also would love to join a U of A community and help others find theirs.

- I want to be a leader of the students I represent and achieve positive outcomes.

- I want to gain experience and develop skills that I never had before and learn to get out of my comfort zone.

- I was VP Finance for a student association. It was a way for me to connect with other students in my program and not feel so alone.

- I would advocate for less cost for students, make text and programs like achieve affordable for students.

- I would want to be the first (if not, of the few) Cree woman student leader.

- I would want to have the chance to be an active advocate in establishing safe spaces, but especially in integrating minorities into spaces in which they are

underrepresented in a more subtle way (as to avoid feeling like a part of your identity has to become most of your identity to get an equal chance, etc.).

- I would want to run for office in order to push boycott, disinvestment and sanctions (bds) into uni policy.

- I would want to run for president or be a part of that group if I didn't like something that they were doing wrong or not the way the community wants it. Remember the people is what you want to please not yourselves!!

- I'm not to clear on the power the SU actually holds to change things, and not familiar enough with student governance to know what I would be doing in each of those roles. But with my studies I am too busy currently to take on any role.

- I've always been interesting in bettering the services I use, would be nice to have the ability to do so hands on.

- If I were to run it would most likely be for a faculty (engineering) related student leadership position, to promote more visibility of LGBTQ2S+ students like myself in engineering.

- If I were to run, I'd want to do so in order to make sure things run more efficiently, improve day to day life for people, gain leadership experience, and make a positive impact on the community.

- If there were issues that I deemed important to change, I would want to become the change I want to see.

- Improve second language study requirements for Canadian Students who only speak English. People are more empathetic towards others who are learning English as a non-mother tongue if they've ever had to learn a language that is not their own.

- In order to represent those who feel overlooked and unseen by others. It is important to hear the voices and opinions of all individuals.

- It would be great to have a voice in how things are done, but this year I am too busy to pursue leadership.

- Lower tuition.

- Make a change that helps others.

- More food.

- N/A. Hope whoever's reviewing these has a good day. [We did, thank you.]

- Probably striving for something I want to change.

- Providing a voice and perspective of chronically ill and disabled students.

- Representation and change.

- Resume booster.

- Resume purposes.

- There seems to be little that students actually have an impact in where major decisions and impacts are of a concern, slowing tuition hikes has forever been a part of any campaign by students at the U of A it would be interesting to run in any position just to see the actual extent of decision making students have a say in.

- To be the change that I want to see.

- To get a say in the decision making process.

- To get experience in leadership and advocacy. It could help in a future career and I'd be helping my fellow students.

- To get involved in the school community and try to make it better.

- To get more involved on campus.

- to give myself and others a better experience.

- To learn leadership skills in a semi low pressure environment before going into my leadership heavy field.

- To make a change and be a voice for people with similar issues and mindsets.

- To make a difference in the lives of students.

- Try to foster an improved sense of community and comfort and safety for those who attend campus, bring people with all backgrounds into the conversation.

Responses from students who answered 'Not ever':

- Because u can meet new people

- Cheaper parking

- For references and experience

- For the experience

- I love leading groups and connecting with many individuals

- I would if I actually cared about it. I have been an exec two years in a row for my club on campus, because it's something I'm passionate about. I'm not that interested in student governance and stuff. Or politics in general. I tend to try to avoid it.

- I would want to mediate between students and faculty to stand up for student rights.

- I wouldn't.

- I wouldn't want to as I am not very confident in my persuasion or public speaking abilities.

- If it was a stepping stone towards a job opportunity I wanted, maybe.

- Looks good on CV, bored, want to be involved.

- To help advocate for the students' best interests in the face of changing policies or legislation by the government or university.

Note that one response in this category expressed transphobic sentiments in relation to Stride's mandate and is not reflected here.