

UBC Social Ecological Economic Development Studies (SEEDS) Sustainability Program

Student Research Report

**Situating Arts and Culture with the UBC Student Body**

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**University of British Columbia**

**SOCI 380**

**Themes: Buildings, Community, Wellbeing**

**Date: Dec 9, 2019**

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SOCI380— Sociological Methods: Survey Research with Professor Kerry Greer

December 9, 2019

### **Project Information**

Project title: Situating Arts and Culture with the UBC Student Body

Key words: social sustainability, Arts and Culture District

This project will involve none of the following:

- Chemicals or Pollutants
- Children (under the age of 18)
- Animals

Other ethical considerations:

- Privacy: data will be hosted on a Canadian server and personal information will be kept confidential

## **Project Summary**

In this project we will seek to determine UBC students' attitudes toward arts and culture programming and facilities on campus. The goal of this project is to gather information to be used in a strategic plan for building and promoting the Arts & Culture District at UBC, with the aim of garnering increased investment into the district. We will gather information that can be used to determine attitudes toward arts and culture on campus and therefore the role that the Arts and Culture District may play overall, and subsequently determine more specific attitudes towards arts and culture that can be used to determine how best to invest in the District.

## **Relation to Sustainability**

One goal outlined by UBC's 20-year Sustainability Strategy is to have "Innovative engagement programs strengthen linkages across the campus to generate a sense of place and support the creation of a vibrant, animated, and sustainable live-work-learn community"(7). Through procuring the information necessary to tactfully develop the Arts and Culture District to best meet the needs of UBC students, we are providing for opportunities to increase the social sustainability of the UBC Campus. Within the goals of the Arts and Culture District is the aim to connect students with each other and with art; in this sense, gathering data to determine how best to develop the Arts and Culture District contributes to achieving UBC's goals of social sustainability.

## **Project Description**

### **Study Design and Data Collection**

This study will be conducted by performing a cross-sectional survey of UBC undergraduates. Considering the Arts and Culture District's association with Campus and Community Planning, we will be in contact with them to obtain the emails of currently registered UBC undergraduate students, of which there are approximately 50 000. From this will select potential survey participants using systematic random sampling. In order to ensure we have enough responses we will sample approximately 3000 students. Since response rates for surveys administered to UBC students hover around 30%, this would give us 900 responses to analyze which can be adequate for performing statistical analysis. In more detail, this would give us a sampling interval of approximately 17. So, we would start at a random number between 1 and 17, and from there select every 17th unit within our sampling frame to obtain our sample.

Benefits of using a cross sectional study design with systematic random sampling are that this sampling method allows us to generalize the analysis of our results to UBC undergraduate students, and

unlike simple random sampling, does not violate any assumptions of probability theory. The cross-sectional design is also beneficial in this instance because we do not need information on how attitudes have changed for the purposes of our current research, and thus using a cross-sectional design is an efficient use of resources that does not result in unnecessary costs. Potential drawbacks from using this sampling method is that response rates among UBC students tend to vary by various characteristics, such as year-level, with upper-year students having lower response rates, or student status, as international students at times have lower response rates. As such, we will experience a certain degree of sampling bias using a systematic random sample.

We will administer the survey by email, as email surveys allow students to answer the questions on their own time. Additionally, students' home addresses and phone numbers are likely to change more frequently without being updated, so contacting students by mail or telephone would be considerably more difficult and less reliable than contacting them by email. Doing this survey by email also allows for repeat surveys, reminders, and thank you messages to be sent out easily and at a minimal cost.

An initial email will be sent out with the survey link embedded, informing all participants of the survey purpose and the incentive of the chance to win one of fifty gift cards for an on-campus coffee shop, valued at twenty dollars each. This incentive tends to be effective for students as they are more likely to respond to raffle-type incentives, and there is a seemingly high probability of getting a gift card compared to most UBC email surveys, where there are normally only one or two prizes to be won per survey completed. In this email, we will indicate a deadline for responding two weeks after the initial distribution of the survey. We will then send a follow-up email after one week to those who have not yet completed the survey requesting they respond before the completion deadline. Finally, we will send out a thank you email to all respondents who had completed the survey and let them know we would inform them of who won the gift card as soon as possible. In order to be able to send out follow up reminders and conduct the raffle, we would assign anonymized case IDs to each email that would allow us to track survey completion without breaching confidentiality.

### Survey Instrument Development

In order to ensure the validity of our survey, we have performed four separate pilot tests using retrospective interview and think aloud interview methodologies in order to receive feedback on the survey instruments. For retrospective interview testing, we provided volunteers with a copy of the survey instrument, allowing them to complete it, and then subsequently talking through the survey with them and questioning why they answered the way they did and how they felt while answering certain

questions. For think aloud interview testing, we provided volunteers with the survey instrument and sat with them while they completed it, requesting they verbally express their thought process to us while completing the survey and ask for clarification when needed.

Based on feedback from the pilot-testing we revised the race category by adding more categories and giving respondents the option to select more than one category to ensure that they do not feel limited by the choices given. We have also included a definition of arts and culture in the preamble and attenuated some of the language in the attitude indices so as not to bias answers towards certain results. Additionally, based on feedback from faculty and graduate students in the Department of Sociology at UBC, we have included numbers associated with each answer for matrices measuring attitudes and satisfaction on the paper-based survey. Finally, we have altered the time frames for select questions when appropriate.

To address formatting issues, we have included question numbers and skip-to prompts in the paper-based survey, making it easier for respondents who now do not have to answer questions not applicable to them. We have also reordered the questions about specific Arts and Culture District locations and events to intersperse the matrices with other forms of questions. We retained matrix formatting for questions about these locations and events to save space and reduce the perceived length of the survey, we have altered the questions so that individuals are only required to answer questions about the locations they visited to further reduce redundancy.

By performing pilot-testing to receive feedback we have ensured that the survey instrument is appropriate for collecting information about the general UBC population. Additionally, we have a basis from which we can perform further testing to ensure that our revisions have adequately addressed concerns already brought up. As such, the survey instrument developed and the results garnered from its use can be used with confidence.

#### Key Variables to be Measured

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Operationalization</b>
Attitudes (DV)	This variable will be operationalized by creating an index with 7 statements about arts and culture on campus, with each statement having an associated Likert scale with responses ranging from 1-6. The result would be a score ranging between 7 and 42 for each respondent.

Interest	This variable will be operationalized by proposing a series of potential events and services asking respondents to rate how frequently they would attend each one.
Awareness	This variable will be operationalized using series of questions measuring aspects of awareness of the Arts and Culture District, such as exposure to content about the District on social media or in student publications.
Participation	This variable will be operationalized using series of questions measuring aspects of participation with the Arts and Culture District, for example, frequency of visiting parts of the district and attendance of Arts and Culture District events.
Engagement	This will be operationalized by creating an index composed of questions regarding various aspects of engagement measured on a scale, for example how frequently students visit arts and culture events outside of campus. Considering there are 7 items with values for each item ranging between 1 and 6, values for engagement could range between 7 and 42
Faculty	This will be operationalized by asking students to select which faculty they are currently enrolled in, based on the official names of the faculties at UBC.
Free time	This variable will be operationalized by creating a survey question that will ask students how many hours per day they have for leisure time by reported hours not spent doing essential activities such as working, commuting, or sleeping.
Year level	Measured based on which year the respondent reports they are currently enrolled in
Student Status	Measured based on the reported status of the respondent as an international, domestic, or exchange student.
Ethnicity	Measured based on the self-reported race of the respondent

### Cost

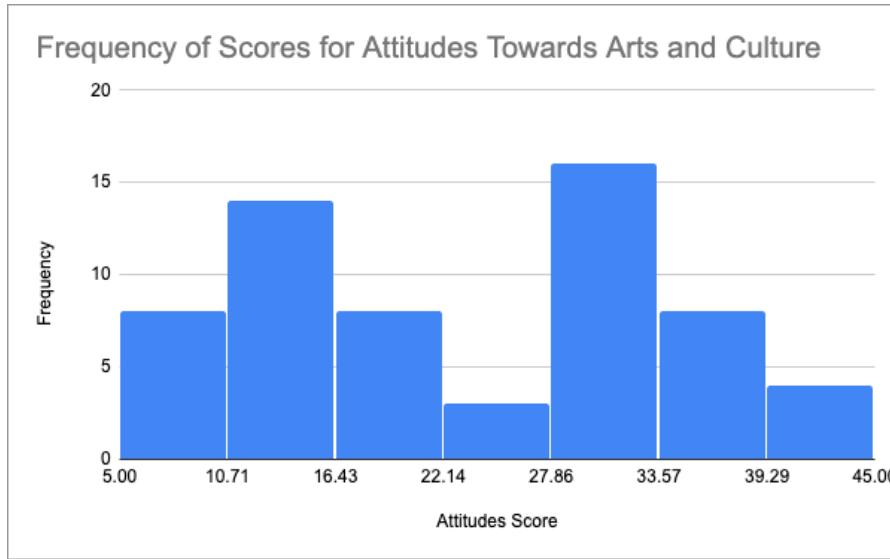
One of our main expenses will be the cost of our gift-card incentives, which for 50 units at \$20 each totals to 1000 dollars. Another cost for administering this survey would be the wages for the

student tasked with sorting and analyzing the data. We estimate this would take approximately 30 hours. Assuming the student is paid \$18 an hour, as is similar to other research positions, the cost of the student's labour would come to \$540. Given the Arts and Culture district's association with the Dean of Arts, we would already have access to Qualtrics for administering the survey and to Stata for analyzing the results, and as such do not have to budget for software costs. We will also budget \$20 for the final report to be printed and bound. To ensure that we are not unexpectedly over budget, we will also budget \$150 in incidentals to cover potential costs that may arise, such as additional software we did not foresee using, or additional student hours. This brings our total budget to \$1710.

### **Project Goals and Outcomes**

The primary question to be answered by this survey project is discerning students' attitudes toward arts and culture on campus. To answer this, we would use values gathered from the index used to measure attitudes towards arts and culture on campus. Higher values would indicate more positive attitudes toward arts and culture on campus. We would plot frequency histograms for the summation of the indices, an example of which can be seen below.

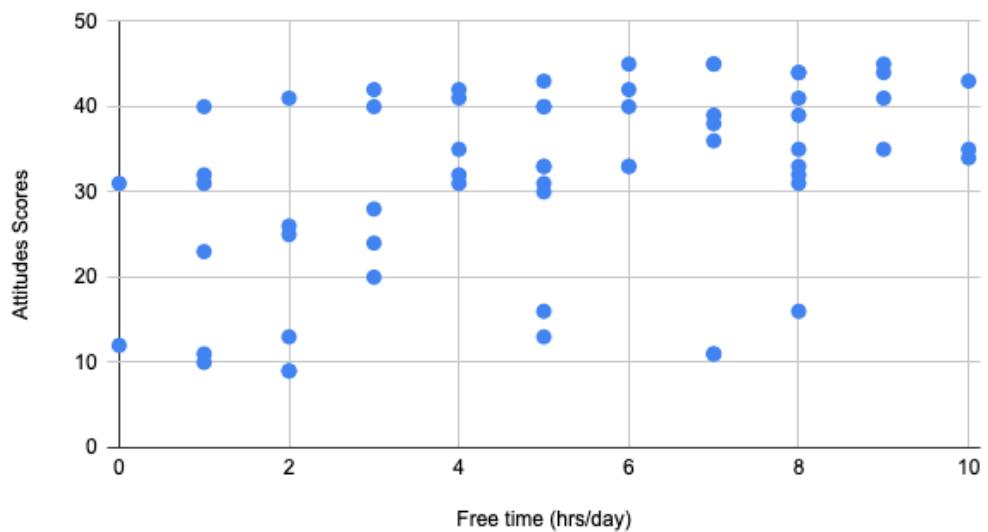
In order to gain a more robust understanding of students' attitudes toward arts and culture on



campus, we would also test the following three hypotheses.

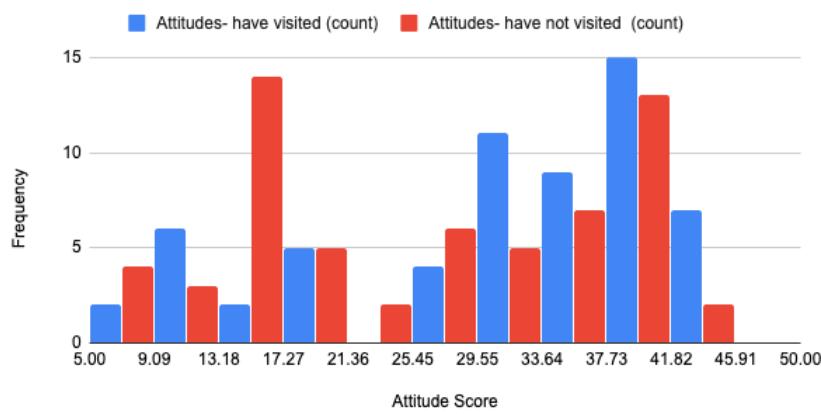
Our first hypothesis to be tested is that students who report fewer hours of free time per day will have more negative attitudes toward arts and culture, as they do not associate university with leisure activities and wouldn't have time to attend them themselves. To test this hypothesis, we would produce a bivariate plot with the independent variable, free time, on the x axis and the dependent variable, attitudes, on the y axis. An example of this is seen below.

### Reported Free time vs. Attitudes Scores



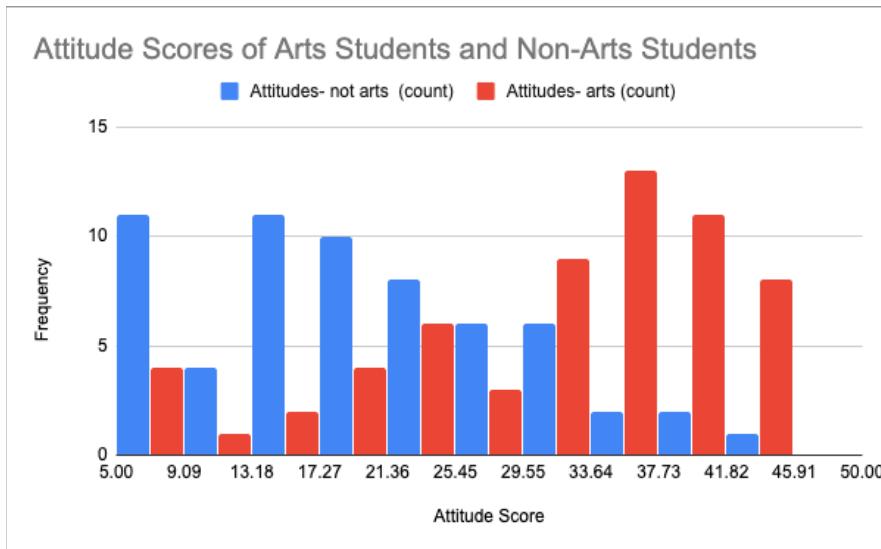
Our second hypothesis to be tested is that students who have highly positive attitudes toward arts and culture are likely already participating in the Arts and Culture District. To test this hypothesis, we would subdivide responses into two categories, have attended an Arts and Culture district event or Facility and have not, and then produce frequency tables of their attitudes. While a crosstab could also be appropriate, the large number of possible values for attitudes would make these difficult to interpret. An example of the proposed frequency tables can be seen below.

### Attitude Score differences between Arts and Culture District Visitors and Non-Visitors



Our third hypothesis to be tested is that students who are in the Faculty of Arts are likely to have more positive attitudes toward arts and culture on campus. To test this hypothesis, we would once again subdivide responses into two categories, those who are in the Faculty of Arts and those who are not and produce frequency histograms of respondents attitudes towards arts and culture on campus.

Again, crosstabs would be difficult to interpret given the high number of possible values. An example of the proposed frequency tables can be seen below.



We aim to have the survey instrument prepared for distribution and be able to contact our sample by January 31<sup>st</sup>, on which date we would distribute the survey. We would aim to have all survey responses collected and the survey will close on February 14<sup>th</sup>. Upon collection of the survey results, we would aim to have a final report and presentation with notable results from the survey ready by March 6<sup>th</sup>, at which time we would be able to provide the individuals responsible for preparing the strategic plan the necessary information.

These dates have been chosen to avoid giving students additional tasks during times where there are higher frequencies of evaluations, but to also have it done before reading break where students may be less fastidious in checking and responding to their emails. By giving students two weeks to respond, they are able to complete the survey without feeling rushed and provide opportunity for a reminder about the survey to be sent out without being too irritating. Considering our plan for analyzing data is unlikely to involve high-level statistical analyses, we believe that three weeks is an appropriate time frame for completing the analysis and would give those responsible for the strategic plan adequate time to prepare the plan in advance of the next academic year.