

Queen City Conundrum

Students seek more ways to visit Davidson's urban neighbor

STEFFANEY WOOD
Senior Staff Writer

Davidson's campus is only 19 miles away from uptown Charlotte, providing students with access to the largest city in North Carolina and one of the largest in the southeastern United States. Yet students find they aren't able to take advantage of it as much as they would like.

According to a survey administered to the student body by the Davidsonian last week, many students make a trip to Charlotte one to three times per semester, but a large majority wish they went more frequently. Barriers to visiting Charlotte include lack of transportation, cost, time to travel there, and lack of awareness about events and activities.

According to the survey, which received 406 anonymous responses, most students go into Charlotte for dining purposes, a concert, or sporting event, with over 80% doing so using a personal car. Many students claimed that the amount of school work, the "Davidson pressure to always be working," and rigorous academic environment leaves them with minimal time to plan a trip to Charlotte.

"People don't go into Charlotte because we have 48 hours of work to do each week. There's also a general lack of awareness of attractions in Charlotte, but I would consider going if I had a car or a date," said Benson Klingler '18.

Respondents to the survey explained that transportation difficulties hold them back from visiting Charlotte more often. "It would be nice if Davidson had more economical ways or opportunities to go into Charlotte more" and "Zipcar is too expensive" were two responses.

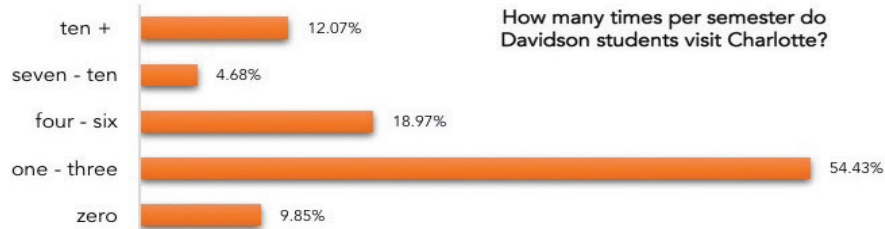
"If there was a commuter rail I would go more often, but also there is nothing to do in Charlotte. It is a lame and desolate city. In the downtown area there are no storefronts and hardly any restaurants or bars. I'm from New York, and honestly I think Charlotte is pathetic," answered another student.

Others expressed the difficulty of finding convenient modes of transportation. "I feel like I have so much to do here on campus that it is hard to set aside time to take an outing to Charlotte. Also, now that I'm 21 and can drink, it is a hassle to either find a [designated driver] or pay for an Uber," said one respondent.

"I could definitely use the bus," explained another. "However, I really need to get to Charlotte on the weekends from time to time, but the I-77 bus route is closed on the weekends. Thus, I have

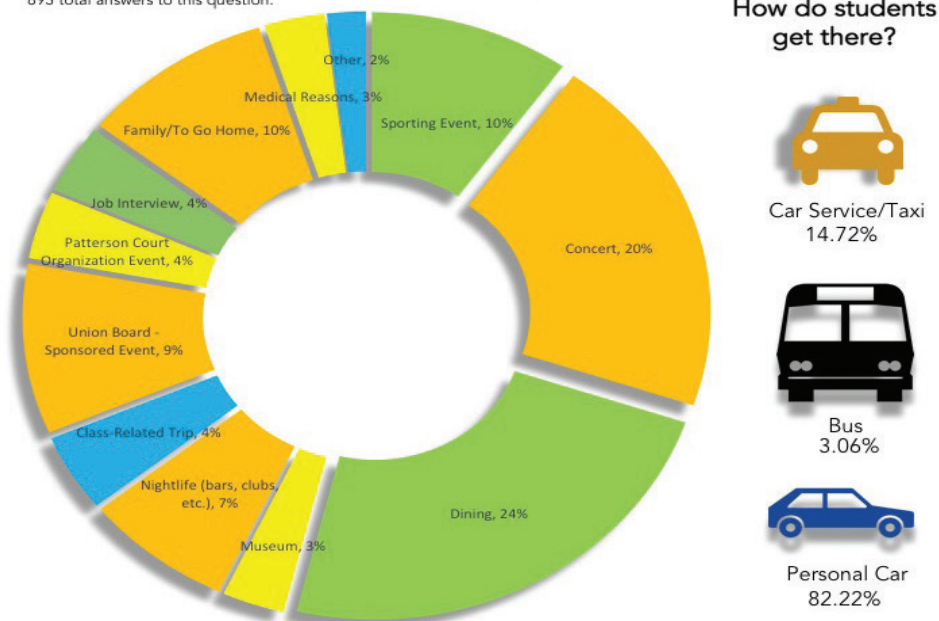


Over 70% of respondents said they wish they went to Charlotte more often



Why do students go to Charlotte?

Respondents could choose multiple answers. The statistics below are percentages of the 893 total answers to this question.



Data from the Davidsonian's Davidson Students in Charlotte survey with 406 respondents.

Graphic by Sophia Smith.

to rely on others to take me there, and that is not always a possibility depending on their schedule. I don't have car or a driver's license. Hopefully, I'll get a driver's license next semester, but I still would not have car, so transportation will still be a problem regardless."

Students are interested in having greater access to Charlotte, with roughly 70% of survey respondents wishing they went more often. One student commented, "I'd totally go on some day

trips to Charlotte if the [Union Board] offered them!"

Jack Owens '18 expressed a similar opinion. "Because I would prefer to go to a concert in downtown Charlotte or try out a new restaurant, I hope the college will provide additional aware-

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Thank you for reading the Davidsonian

Davidson Outdoors trip fosters conversation about race

SIDNEY FOX
Staff Writer

During the weekend of Oct. 23, seven students went on a Davidson Outdoors trip that focused on engaging in a dialogue about race in America and at Davidson. The three leaders and four participants backpacked and camped in the mountains of western North Carolina. They structured their conversations on a Intergroup Dialogue Model.

Brian Parker '15, the Davidson Outdoors Intern this semester, had the original idea to add an extra element to a Davidson Outdoors weekend trip. "I was interested in the idea of taking what I love about outdoor trips in general and adding this activist element to it," Parker explained. "And this made sense because the climate around race on college campuses in America so often feels stifled and compressed, sometimes it helps to first get people out of their routines and comfort zones."

As a student at Davidson, Parker was a founding member of the student initiate for academic diversity and was involved with Davidson Outdoors.

The group is quick to express its gratitude for the help they received from the Multicultural Affairs Office, who made the trip possible. Dr. Tae-Sun Kim, Director of Multicultural Affairs, provided resources to prepare for the dialogue. The trip is one of several collaborative projects that have occurred between Davidson Outdoors and her office this semester.

Parker, Aly Dove '16 and Meron Fessehaye '16, the trip leaders, all agreed that this trip accomplished a lot of what they had hoped. Fessehaye described some of the achieved goals as, "bridging the gap in finding the space for real and deep dialogue on race. Also making room for the people of color in the very white space that is not necessarily just Davidson

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Three leaders and four participants backpacked and camped in the North Carolina mountains. Photo by Aly Dove.