

Music Programs Interests Questionnaire

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Music Program Interests Questionnaire

I am writing this questionnaire for use in a Leisure Service programming setting. In order to serve the maximum amount of students, it is important to know exactly which types of classes are needed/wanted by the potential participants. This questionnaire would be completed and returned before programming decision are made. The questionnaire will be available to the public as a downloadable document on web sites, pre-printed for pickup at community gatherings or festivals, and sent out to a pre-existing mailing list. It will be completed at home and either emailed, mailed, or delivered to a given address. There is both a phone number and an email address for people to ask questions related to an unclear question.

My questionnaire is designed to answer six specific questions:

- ⊙ General interest in music programs
- ⊙ Specific types of musical instruments on which to focus classes
- ⊙ Specific types of music styles and/or techniques to teach in the classes
- ⊙ Level of classes to teach
- ⊙ Age level of participant
- ⊙ Approximate level of financial participation participant is prepared to make

I began my questionnaire with 3 questions in a Likert scale format. The first question will measure the current interest a potential participant has in the offering of music classes. I will assume that if they have no interest in the music classes, they will probably not continue or complete the survey. The second question will tell me not only how much the participant likes playing his instrument, but when compared to the answer the participant gave for the first question, will tell me how comfortable they are with their level of playing.

Example: if a participant is very interested in music classes being offered, but does not enjoy playing their instrument, it could mean that they feel that music classes would be a way for them to gain more enjoyment from their instrument.

The third question will tell me the participant's interest level in playing with a group of people in a band situation. (A potential class could be how to play in a group. If there were no interest by any of the survey takers, it would not be a class we would schedule.)

The next set of questions is in a modified closed format design. They are designed to get a more specific answer than the general interest questions. The first question will tell me what specific instrument the potential participant is interested in learning. The second question will tell me the specific style of music that the potential participant is interested in learning. It is a deliberate decision not to include traditional "orchestra" instruments. These potential classes will focus on teaching folk instruments due to the relative ease of initial learning and the chance that the participants will either already own an instrument or will have access to one. In addition, these instruments are generally designed to play either solo or with a group whereas brass instruments are typically played in a large band.

The last answer option in this group of questions is an open-ended response. I want to find out if there is no interest in the folk types of instruments. It is possible that the majority of people will want to play brass instruments in an orchestra type situation. These types of programs will need to be set up and run differently and will require more than a room with chairs in which to administer the program. Orchestras also need conductors and other functionaries often either beyond the budget for a leisure services department or within a different department altogether.

The third section is another type of closed format response questions. The first four questions are designed to ascertain the approximate level of musicianship of the potential participants. Musical instruments, like tattoos and other collections, are often addicting. It is not uncommon for a guitar player to own several guitars. Generally a beginner will only own one. Also, if we know that people are very interested in taking classes, but a majority of them do not own or have access to any instruments at all, we will need to set up programs with loaner instruments accessible. It is not unheard of to receive a grant with which to buy instruments for use in low-income areas, but as with all grants, they must be applied for ahead of time.

It is important for the programmers to know the level of music to be taught. Even if it is only to offer a beginning class and an intermediate class. Every class scheduled needs to be needed by as many people as possible. Further, if you can get a core group of beginning students, often they will take the intermediate classes the next time classes are offered. If there is no need for a class to be offered, it is important to know.

The last 2 questions in this section attempt to find out both how much a person would spend on an instrument and how much they would pay for classes. If people say that they "strongly agree" (from question 1) that they are interested in music programs but that they would only spend \$10 on an instrument (not a reasonable figure in any case) and that they would pay nothing for the class, it could mean that while they see the value of the classes, and might LIKE to participate, they do not have the financial resources to participate. We would

also to find out how much the average participant feels the classes should cost. This will help us to formulate a budget with which to pay instructors.

The last questions are presented at the end of the survey. I have attempted to gain the trust of the survey taker before asking questions that are of a personal nature. I have also attempted to give a rationale as to why we need this information. It is not imperative that we know the age of a participant, but it is nice information to have when asked about the populations that our programs serve.

I feel that the addition of any comments is a valuable part of any survey. If my attempt (as stated) is to gather information as to the types of programs people would/could be interested in, it is important for me to know if my questions are way off of the mark. One way for me to gather this information is by providing the open-ended questions within the questionnaire and by providing the space for other comments. While this may make this questionnaire harder to evaluate, it will be easier to identify any common themes in the comments.