

2014 Associated Students

Outdoor Center Equipment & Bike Shop

Proposed Recommendations

Areas for Improvements/ Recommendations:

The following are the Equipment and Bike Shop Coordinator's recommendations for strategic goals over the next four years:

1. Work with the AS and the Viking Union Finance Office to learn what is required to implement the use of Student ID cards as a purchasing process for customers.

Currently the Outdoor Center only completes transactions in cash (or department transfer of funds). This not only is an inconvenience for customers, but has a higher risk of transaction error. The current Point of Sale system is already incorporated with all of the technology needed to design a Student ID card purchasing process - in fact, through our testing process, it could be implemented, at any point right now. All it needs is Associated Students approval. The positives of this implementation would be vast: quicker and smoother transactions, billing to student accounts, and less chance of a cash transaction error to mess with the register. Our customers frequently ask if we have this set up, like the Bookstore does, and it is an opportune time the Outdoor Center moves beyond a "cash-only" system that inconveniences customers.

2. Continue to expand the size and diversity of the population which the Equipment and Bike Shop serves through yearly realistic goal setting, intentional collaboration with Associated Students' offices like the ESC and ROP, strategic planning with the OC Marketing Staff, and inclusivity training for staff.

The market base for the Outdoor Center has always been skewed toward non-marginalized populations, same as with the trend in the overall industry. But the Outdoor Center will make efforts to combat this trend and fulfill the Associated Students' goal of inclusivity.

The OC Bike and Equipment Shop will continue to work with the Assessment Coordinator to create assessment tools for data collection with easy-to-use analysis. Along with creation of a set of quantitative and qualitative information to collect which will help guide the goal setting and marketing planning for fulfilling the objective of 'expanding the size and diversity of the population they serve'.

Tactics for achieving this objective are:

- Intentional collaboration with AS offices such as ROP
- Strategic planning with the OC marketing staff
- Staff training for creating a Safe Space

3. Expand relationship with the campus community through clubs and offices outside of the Associated Students.

Since the initiation of the Alternative Transportation Fee there has been a growing emphasis on bicycling to campus. By exploring partnerships with the Office of Sustainability, Campus Community Coalition and other offices at Western, the Bike Shop may be able to increase the awareness level of the services offered by the Bike Shop on

campus. There is a potential idea of a “Free Bike Rental” process in the works that would connect to the campus community as well as encourage sustainability.

4. Offer both advanced/novice bike clinics

Offering a wider variety of bike clinics for novice and advanced members alike will help tailor the Bike Shop programs to the specific knowledge that each student user brings. This may help alleviate student’s initial fears that one needs to be an expert to use the Bike Shop. Perhaps having a stand and station up in red Square for a day, with Bike Techs staffing the tent throughout the day, would be a good way to involve a friendly and free instruction.

5. Revise and update current statement of purpose from Program Standards to create a subordinate mission statement for the Bike and Equipment Shop from the Outdoor Center. Start the process of Management Council in time to have statement voted on by the Board by the end of the 2013-2014 school year.

The current statement of purpose is for the Outdoor Center as a whole. The Outdoor Center is made up of different programs which need their own statement of purpose to represent what they uniquely offer to the student body.

6. Develop a fleet of Splitboards in the Outdoor Center

We recommend investing in splitboards when the current fleet of snowboards has exhausted its lifespan. Our snowboard rentals have dropped in the past two years because of the increase in splitboard demand - splitboards are snowboards that can split apart and go into the backcountry with skins, like our AT Ski fleet. They ride the exact same as snowboards going down, but have the advantage of being “backcountry compatible.” They work in bounds and out of bounds. Many customers come in inquiring about splitboards. They would be a very popular item within the Outdoor Center, increase our legitimacy and marketing power as a real outdoors shop, increase our snowboard rentals, and increase our customer satisfaction. This would come from the Amortization budget (FXOAM) because it is the replacement of rental snowboards with new snowboards.

7. Expand Gear Grab

Expanding Gear grab into a community wide event would bring more customers. Try and involve local rental shops and outdoors shops, invite them to have a table and market their stores at Gear Grab for a very small (minimal) cost, similar to how students pay their fees to sell their gear. This increase of complementing vendors would supply more opportunity for students without undermining the Outdoor Center’s sale potential.

8. Incorporate a demographics assessment process relevant to the Outdoor Center and Associated Students.

The Outdoor Center has no record of customer demographics. It is recommended that a process of demographic collections be implemented to collect both relevant and important data. It is important to consider the Outdoor Center in its own context within the Associated Students - the Outdoor Center Equipment and Bike Shop is a service-based office, as opposed to a more program-based office. Its customers also vary depending on the season and time of year. Any collection of demographics should be taken over the entirety of one calendar year to prevent the

demographics being collected from being skewed towards any one season. The AS Provides a Central Demographics Menu for the utilization of offices and programs. It is recommended that the Shop Coordinator continue discussions with the Outdoor Center Director and SPAC Coordinator about which demographics help inform the Outdoor Center, which demographics need to be added to enhance the usefulness of the information gathered, and which demographics are not relevant and necessary questions in the outdoor industry. This is an ongoing and open discussion that should be picked up early in the new Shop Coordinator's term so that a demographic collection process can be instilled in time to gather data for a full year.