



Penn State Student Tickets Research, Guidelines, and Survey

University Park Undergraduate Association – Governmental Affairs Committee

Nature of the Problem:

The allocation of student football tickets at Penn State has been an issue for years, especially as enrollment across all campuses increases. This issue is unique to Penn State for a variety of reasons, ranging from our nearly thirty commonwealth campuses to our extensive alumni network. Because of the demand for football tickets, particularly those in the student section, the prices paid for tickets on the “Black Market” have been stunning, to say the least.

The UPUA has been working on these issues and more. Outlined within this document are the findings from our research of other schools, the results of our online survey, and key takeaways that we feel are central to the problems surrounding season football ticket distribution. To highlight our survey results, our committee recorded 716 responses to our request for input. While not statistically significant, we believe that these figures can help guide the discussion toward a more fair and equitable ticket distribution system for all parties involved.

Research:

In general, the Governmental Affairs Committee figured out how Penn State compared to other universities, and sports, in the following categories:

	Ohio State University	University of Michigan
Total Seats	102,329	107,501
Student Seats	32,000	24,000
Alumni Seats	70,329	83,501
% Student	31.3%	22.3%
Total Student Population	60,347	40,025
% Access to Seats	53.03%	59.96%
Student Season Tickets	\$150 - 5 Games	\$194 - 8 Games
	Louisiana State University	Indiana Basketball
Total Seats	92,400	17,000
Student Seats	15,000	7,500
Alumni Seats	77,400	9,500
% Student	16.2%	44.1%
Total Student Population	33,587	98,543
% Access to Seats	44.66%	7.61%
Student Season Tickets	\$81 - 7 Games	

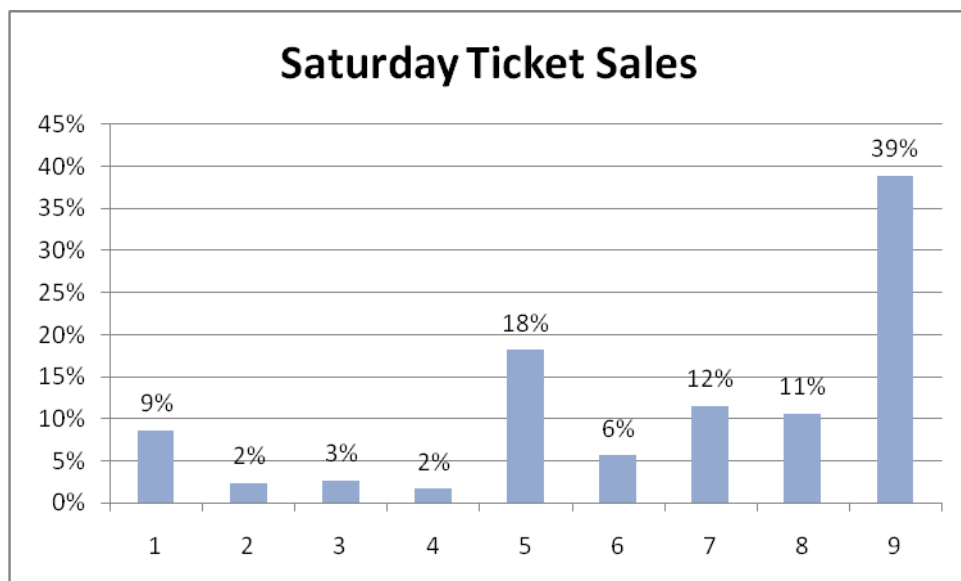


	University of Southern California	University of Tennessee
Total Seats	92,500	102,037
Student Seats	9,000	14,000
Alumni Seats	83,500	88,037
% Student	9.7%	13.7%
Total Student Population	33,389	26,400
% Access to Seats	26.95%	53.03%
Student Season Tickets	\$135 - 6 Games	\$296 - 7 Games
Penn State University		
Total Seats	107,282	
Student Seats	21,000	
Alumni Seats	86,282	
% Student	19.6%	
Total Student Population	83,721	
% Access to Seats	25.08%	
Student Season Tickets	\$190 - 7 Games	

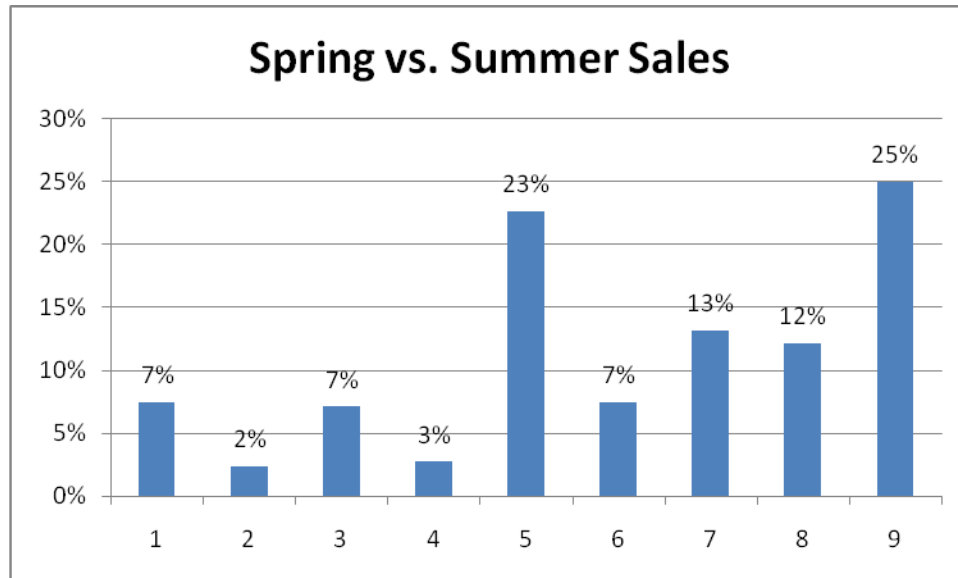
Survey Findings:

The following suggestions were pooled from other schools and from our own students who expressed concerns to our committee and provided us with input. It is important to realize that all of these are independent of each other:

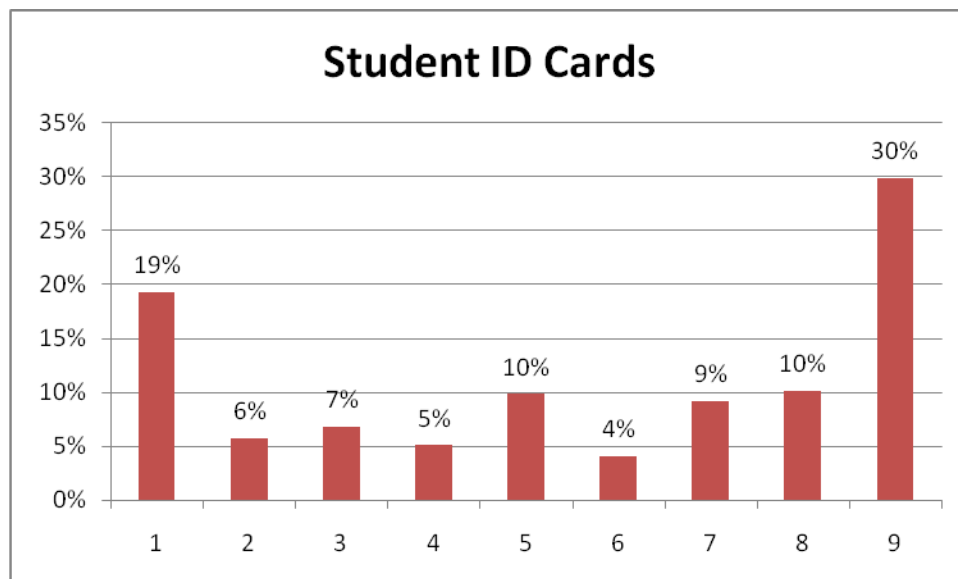
- 1) Saturday Ticket Sales: Ticket sales begin at 9 AM Saturday as opposed to 9 AM Thursday. (Average Rating: 6.68).



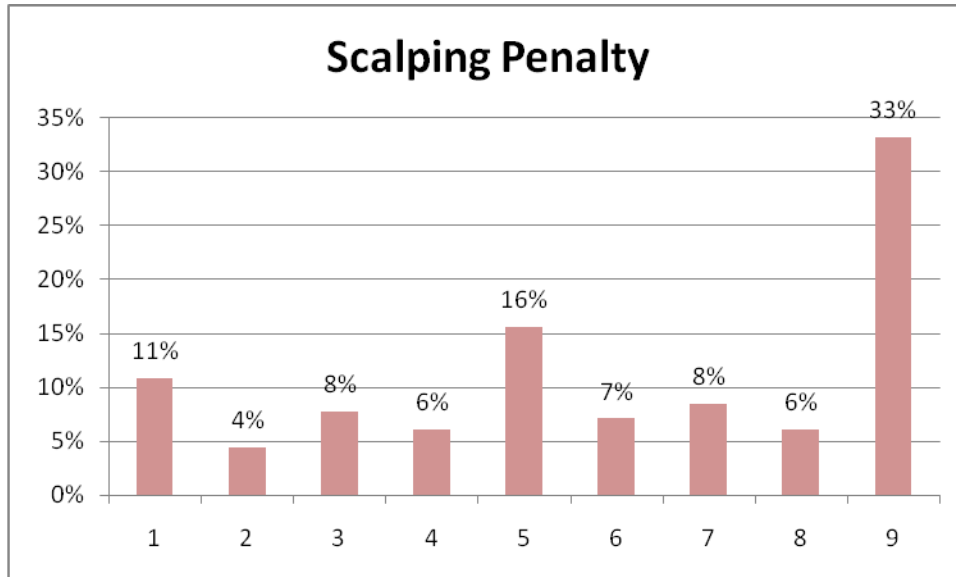
- 2) Spring vs. Summer Sales: Tickets will go on sale between spring break and before finals week. This will attempt to alleviate many of the issues with time zone differences. Also, seniors should have a clearer picture as to whether or not they are returning in the fall. (Average Rating: 6.17).



- 3) Student ID Cards: Student ID cards will possess electronic access to tickets. ID cards will be swiped, verified, and then a ticket will be distributed indicating the ticketholder's assigned section. (Average Rating: 5.59).



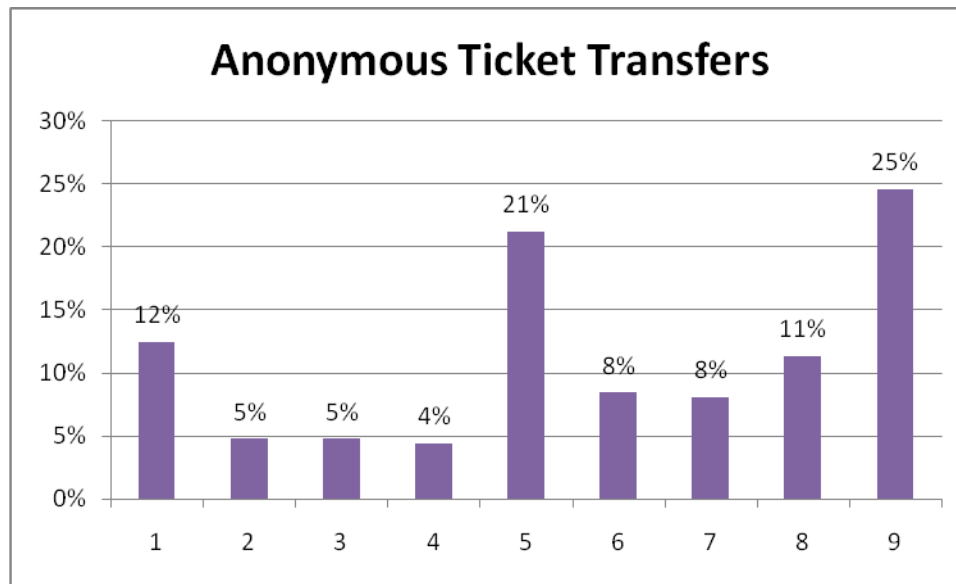
- 4) Scalping Penalty: Some schools (like OSU and Michigan) will ban ticketholders from purchasing season tickets if caught scalping tickets. (*Average Rating: 5.97*).



- 5) Selling Maximum: This allows ticketholders to only re-sell a certain number of games. Our recommendation is three. This system registers all tickets under the original season ticketholder's account. Doing so would combat the ability of a person to re-sell an entire season ticket package for a profit. (*Average Rating: 6.23*).

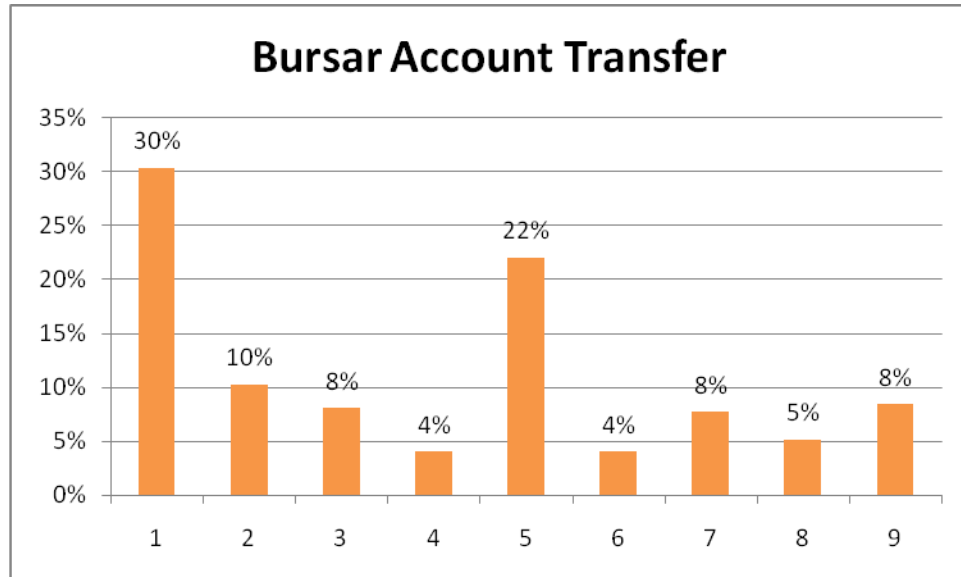


- 6) Anonymous Ticket Transfers: This process operates on the understanding that ticket ownership is electronically linked to a particular individual. If I, Joe Student, own season tickets, I own one package of student tickets whose ownership exists virtually like money in a checking account (the money exists, I can view it online, and I can transfer it through pre-approved mediums). In order for a student to transfer the ownership of a ticket, that student must post it for sale on a message board where a buyer can search for available student tickets. The ownership will then be transferred between parties without either participant knowing the identity of the person on the other side of the transaction. This comes very close to eliminating the ability of ticket profiteering. (*Average Rating: 5.79*).

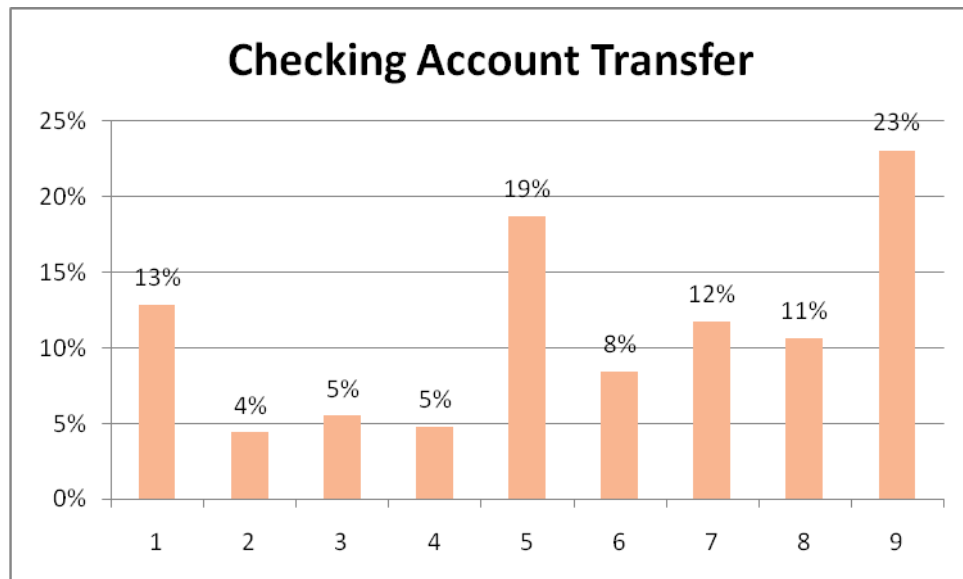


Money will then be transferred between accounts in one of the following ways, found on the next page:

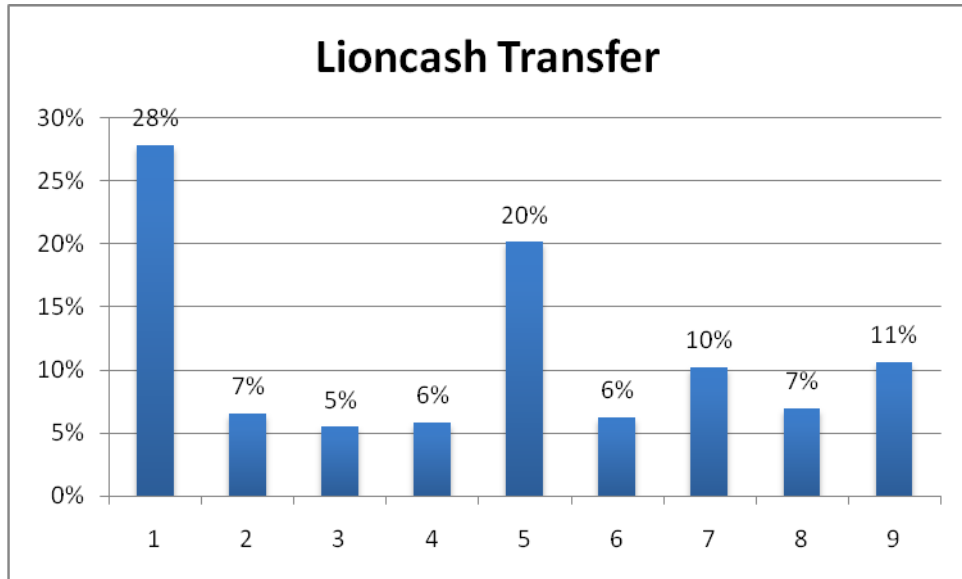
- Bursar Credit: The money will be transferred to the student's bursar account. (Average Rating: 3.96).



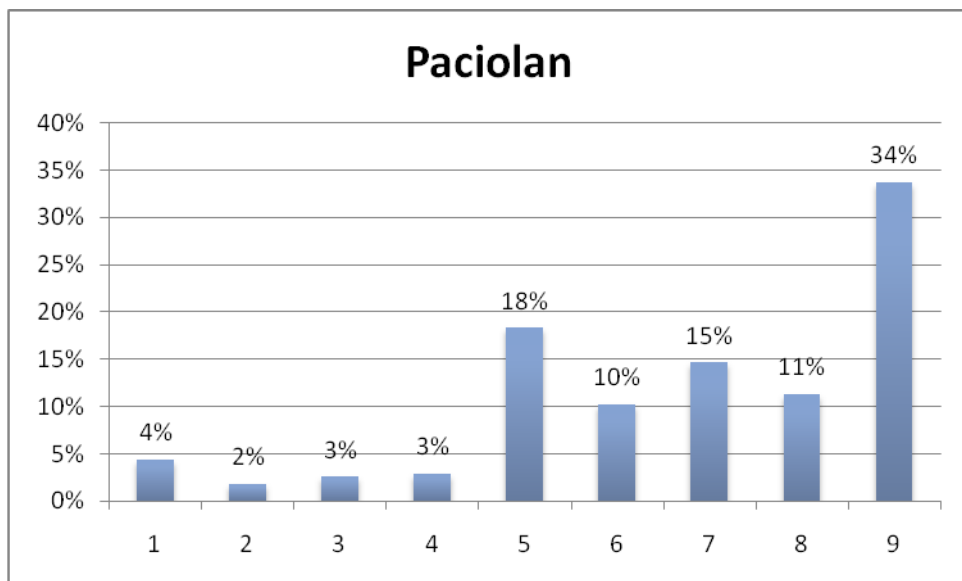
- Checking Account Transfer: Money will be transferred from one account to another. (Average Rating: 5.76).



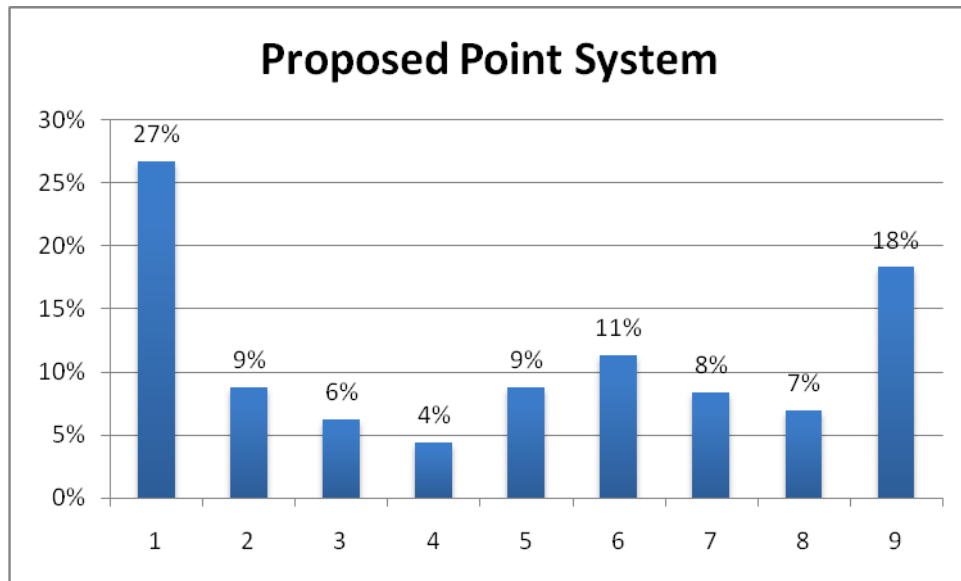
- Lioncash: Payment will be placed into the student’s Lioncash account for use anywhere Lioncash is accepted. (Average Rating: 4.42).



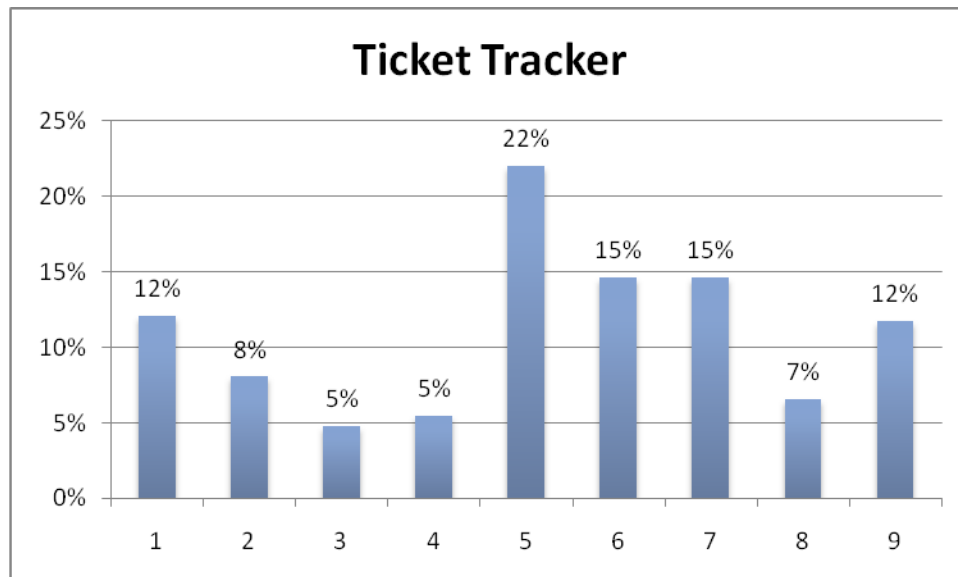
- 7) Paciolan: (Pronounced “pack – ellen”) is a software company that specializes in ticket sales and works with more than 80 universities and colleges, facilitating their athletic ticket sales. Customers include Michigan, Ohio State, LSU, USC, Texas, Illinois, and many more. They provide a wholly integrated ticketing, marketing, and development infrastructure. Working with Paciolan would enable Penn State to develop a custom, electronic distribution system for student tickets, and would allow a fair, point-based tiered ticket allocation system. (Average Rating: 6.77).



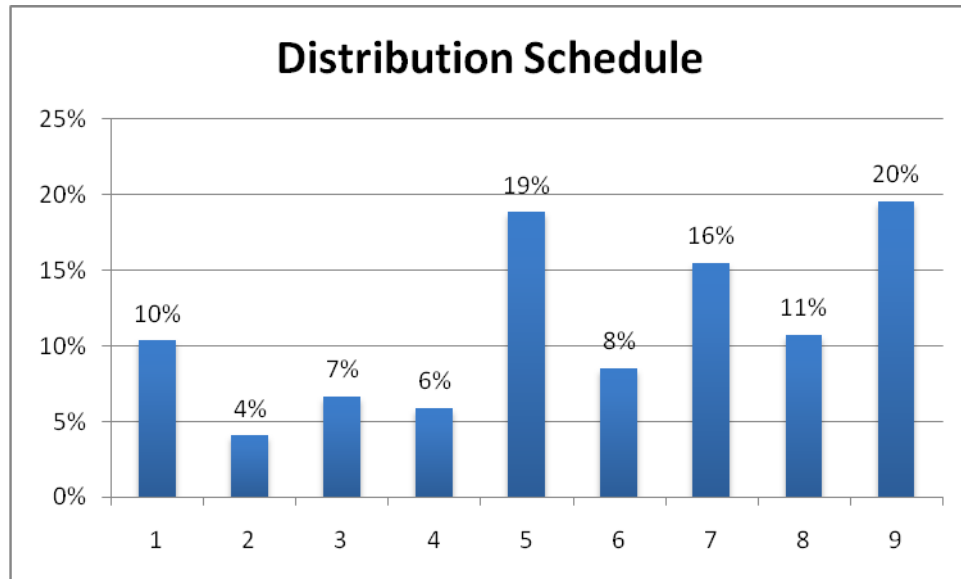
- 8) Proposed Point System: $(\text{Cumulative Credits} + \text{Current}) \times \text{Cumulative GPA} = \text{Priority}$. We believe that this formula will enable a fair priority system, while at the same time provide another incentive for a better GPA. (*Average Rating: 4.72*).



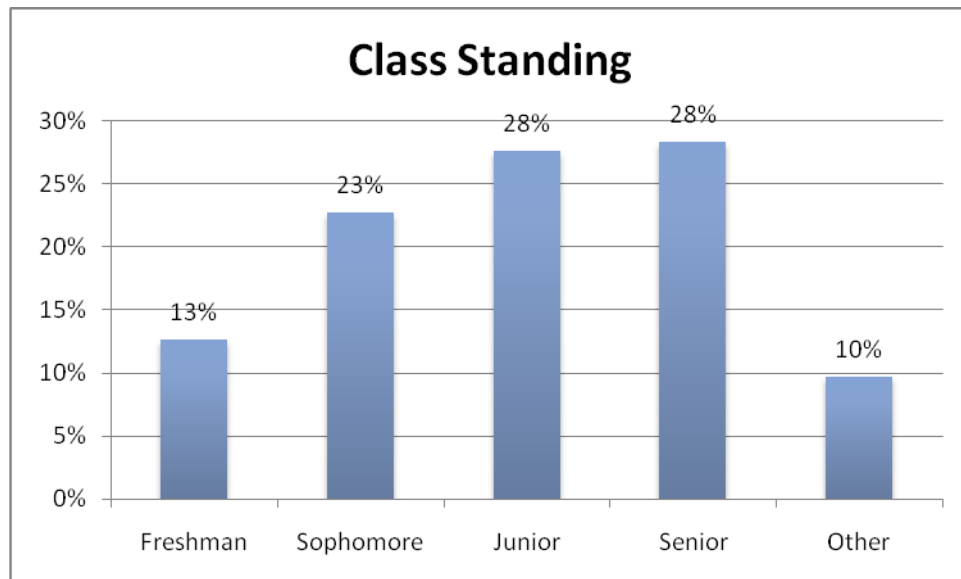
- 9) Ticket Tracker: Keep track of tickets and total points via eLion. The ticket exchange will be located at one central website. Students will only be able to purchase tickets from their own class or lower. (*Average Rating: 5.23*).



10) Distribution Schedule: Tickets would become available to the different classes one week at a time, making available only a certain percentage of the total student tickets to each class. Preferably, this would happen during the spring semester and in the summer for freshman. (*Average Rating: 5.77*).



Demographic Information:





Key Takeaways:

- 1) **The “Black Market”**: As students, we are all supposed to be a part of the same Penn State family. Even though there really is not enough supply to meet demand, the argument could be made that students who participate in price gouging their peers really aren’t actors in a free market (they had no intention of ever going to the games); such students merely served to take advantage of their peers. Also, since Penn State Athletics does not profit from the sale of tickets on the “Black Market”, there is little justification for enabling it to persist.
- 2) **Reevaluate Ticketmaster**: Students have expressed a severe dissatisfaction with Ticketmaster and the way in which sales were conducted through its servers this past summer.
- 3) **Prevent Weekday Ticket Sales**: Although no day of the week could ever cater to all students, most agree that the weekend would be a better time for tickets to go on sale than any day during the business week.
- 4) **Reexamine Student Section Size**: With the understanding that at a university of Penn State’s size that there is no way that every student can be accommodated, in performing our research we discovered that perhaps this issue deserves some revisiting. With regard to the percentage of students who have access to the student section system-wide, Penn State is actually not inline with its peers at other institutions, including Big 10 sister schools. Even though this was not the primary focus of our research, we feel strongly based upon student sentiment and anecdotal evidence that this is a student concern.

Acknowledgments:

The UPUA Governmental Affairs Committee would like to thank Penn State Athletics, the Penn State Alumni Association, the Board of Trustees, our information sources, the diligent workers of the UPUA Governmental Affairs Committee, and the Penn State student body – it is in your interests we serve. Please direct any questions and/or comments to gac.upua@gmail.com.

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