



The Erb Memorial Union: A Space for All Students

The EMU is a space for all students. In addition to housing affinity spaces, the EMU is a programming unit that specializes in student engagement and belonging.

EMU Student Engagement Programs	Programs in the EMU
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Center for Student Involvement• Craft Center• Club Sports• E-Sports• KWVA Radio Station• Moss Street Children's Center• Outdoor Program• Student Sustainability Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Holden Center for Leadership and Community Engagement• LGBTQIA• Men's Center• Mills International Center• Multicultural Center• Nontraditional Student Union• Veteran's Center• Women's Center

Belonging and Inclusivity

- Students report that the EMU is the most inclusive space on campus.
- Students report that they feel a sense of belonging in the EMU at rates higher than anywhere else on campus.
- Students who took part in EMU Student Engagement Programs reported lower senses of loneliness and higher senses of belonging.
- Senses of belonging and inclusivity reduce students' "stereotype threat," which is itself associated with higher drop-out rates, feelings of isolation, and feelings of loneliness.

ERB MEMORIAL UNION

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Belonging, Inclusivity and Student Success in the EMU

Staff work hard to ensure that our students have a high sense of belonging through EMU programming and facilities. Together, the EMU programs, the building, and the affinity group spaces housed in the EMU lead students to reporting a higher sense of belonging and inclusivity than any other place on campus (Clark 2021).

We found “significant and substantial” differences between students who take part in EMU student engagement programs compared to those who do not. They also reported higher senses of belonging and lower sense of loneliness, all of which have documented evidence of higher retention and graduation rates, especially in minoritized students (Office of Assessment and Research 2020).

Importantly, this sense of belonging and inclusivity extends beyond affinity spaces. Feelings of inclusiveness and belonging are high in spaces like the Women’s Center and Multicultural Center, for example. Students report higher senses of belonging in EMU programs (like the Craft Center) and EMU common areas (such as the O lounge and Fishbowl).

This held true during the pandemic: 55.7% of undergraduates participated in an EMU activity. Students who participated in remote and distanced activities at the Craft Center, Student Sustainability Center, and Center for Student Involvement experienced lower feelings of “belonging uncertainty” compared to students who did not (Clark 2021).

In all, the EMU, its programs, and the affinity space programs housed in the EMU are leading students to greater senses of belonging and inclusiveness, and lower senses of loneliness. This is a well-documented driver of student success.

References:

- Clark, B. A. M., & Bou Malham, P. (2019). *Place-Based Belonging*.
Clark, B. A. M., Chong, M., Heldreth, T., & Woodward, L. (2021). *Undergraduate belonging and Erb Memorial Union participation 2020-2021*. Office of Assessment and Research, Division of Student Life, University of Oregon.
Office of Assessment and Research (2020). *Belongingness Matters: Places Matter*.