Purpose – The purpose behind this study is to explore the diverse demographics of individuals utilizing the WIU Donald Spencer Campus Recreation Center and to see if this affects their physical activity choices. The investigators observed people based on their perceived gender, perceived ethnicity, perceived age, and actual activities they were participating in at the Recreation Center. Activities included weight training, basketball, volleyball, table tennis, racket ball, aquatics, cardio (track, treadmill, elliptical), soccer, pickle ball, fitness classes.

Background - The purpose of this study was to find out the diversity in demographics at WIU recreation center. Using information from other studies regarding demographics of recreation centers, we wanted to compare how similar the demographics were for students participating in recreational activities. Many of the studies found that White Caucasians made up the highest percentage of people who participated in recreational activity. African Americans were the second largest population that made up the recreation centers. Hispanics and Asians were very similar in comparison making up the third largest group in terms of demographics. Pacific Islanders made up a very small percentage along with American Indians. The purpose of our study wasn’t to find as a whole what the total demographics of a recreation center were, but of the activities in the recreation center that each race/ethnicity, age, and gender participated in most. This allows for data to be shown for what activities certain races/ethnicities, age, and gender perceive as fun perhaps based on culture and past experience. While many of the studies in the past used survey data to assess race/ethnicity, our data assessed race/ethnicity, age, and gender based off the observers’ perception. There are both pros and cons to this method in that it gives a better idea of people who actually use the recreation center, but may not wish to complete a survey which could skew the data. A setback however is that our recordings were based off our perceptions of the individual and may have not always been accurate in identifying race, age, and gender.

Procedures – Before conducting the study the investigators gathered background research. The student investigators submitted an IRB and received IRB approval to conduct the study. The investigators collected public observational data.

The investigators collected public observational data from various locations in the Donald Spencer Student Recreation Center and at various times during the day. They observed participants and their physical activities of choice.

The goal was to observe a minimum of 150 people. Investigators were in pairs and spaced throughout various locations inside the Campus Recreation Center. Each pair had a notebook containing a data collection sheet. Investigators did not verbally engage the participants during their exercise. Investigators did not interfere with exercise or activities. Investigators observed from a distance of 10-20 feet. Investigators walked around their designated location observing participants and their activities.

Results – (Results will be reported in chart form on the poster)

Basketball – during the times that the group members went to observe, it was found that 207 people were involved with playing basketball, 134 of those 207 people were African American with 124 being males and 10 being female. 64 of those 207 people were White Caucasian with 60 being males and 4 being females, 7 of those 207 people were Hispanic with 6 being males and 1 being a female, 2 of those 207 people were Asian with both people being males.

Weight / Resistance Training- during the times that the group members went to observe, it was found that 248
people were involved with weight / resistance training, 36 out of the 248 being African American with being 31 males and 5 being females. 170 out of the 248 being White Caucasian, with 118 being males and 52 being females. 27 out of the 248 being Hispanic with 15 being males and 12 being females. 4 out of the 248 being Asian with 3 being males and 1 being a female. 11 out of the 248 being Pacific Islander with 6 being males and 5 being females.

Cardio – during the times that the group members went to observe, it was found that 175 people were involved in some type of cardio. 28 of those 175 people were African American and 18 being males and 10 being females. 73 out of the 175 people were White Caucasian, with 32 being males and 41 being females. 15 out of the 175 people were Hispanic and 5 of the people were males and the other 10 people were females. 7 of the 175 people that were involved in cardio were of Asian descent with 2 being males and 5 being females. 7 of the 175 people were also Pacific Islander and 2 of the people being males and 5 being females.

Racquetball – during the times that the group members went to observe, it was found that 20 people were involved in racquetball. 3 of those 20 people were African American and 2 being males and 1 being a female. 9 of those 20 people were White Caucasian and 6 being males and 3 being females. 2 out of the 20 people involved in racquetball were Hispanic and both people were females. There were 8 out of the 20 people being Asian with 4 being males and 4 being females. There were no people from the pacific Islands that were involved in racquetball during the times of our observations.

Fitness classes – during the times that the group members went to observe, it was found that 77 people were involved in fitness classes. 14 of those 77 people being African American with 4 being males and 10 being females. 42 of those 77 people being White Caucasian with 4 being males and 38 being females. 6 of the 77 people being Hispanic with 1 being a male and 5 being females. There were no Pacific Islanders during the times of our observations.

Volleyball- during the times that the group members went to observe, it was found that 36 people were involved in volleyball. 2 out of the 36 people being African American and both people being males. 20 out of the 36 were White Caucasian with 5 being males and 15 being females. There were 2 Hispanic females that were involved in volleyball out of the 36 people, no males. 12 out of the 36 people were Asian with 10 being males and 2 being females. During the times of our observations, there were no Pacific Islanders involved in volleyball.

Badminton – during the times that the group members went to observe, it was found that 12 people were involved in badminton. Also during the times of our observations, there were no African American, White Caucasian, Hispanic, or Pacific Islanders that were involved in badminton. The 12 people involved were Asian and out of the 12, 5 were males and 7 were females.

Aquatics / Swimming – during the times that the group members went to observe, it was found that 59 people used the aquatics facilities. 16 of those 59 people were African American with 10 being males and 6 being females. 27 out of the 59 people were White Caucasian with 22 being males and 5 being females. 7 of the 59 people were Hispanic with 5 being males and 2 being females. 9 of the 59 people were Asian with 6 being males and 3 being females. During the times of our observations, there were no Pacific Islanders using the aquatics center.

Soccer- during the times that group members went to observe, it was found that 21 people were involved in soccer. 5 of those 21 people were African American with all 5 being males. 3 of those 21 people were White Caucasian with 2 being males and 1 being a female. 13 of the 21 people were Hispanic and 10 of those 13 being males and 3 being females. During the times of our observations, there were no Asian or Pacific Islanders being involved in soccer.

Practical Application – Knowledge about demographics could help the Campus Recreation staff to designate certain times and specific spaces to be utilized by students who are not currently engaged in some of the physical activities. Thus making the environment more inclusive and social integrated and welcoming.