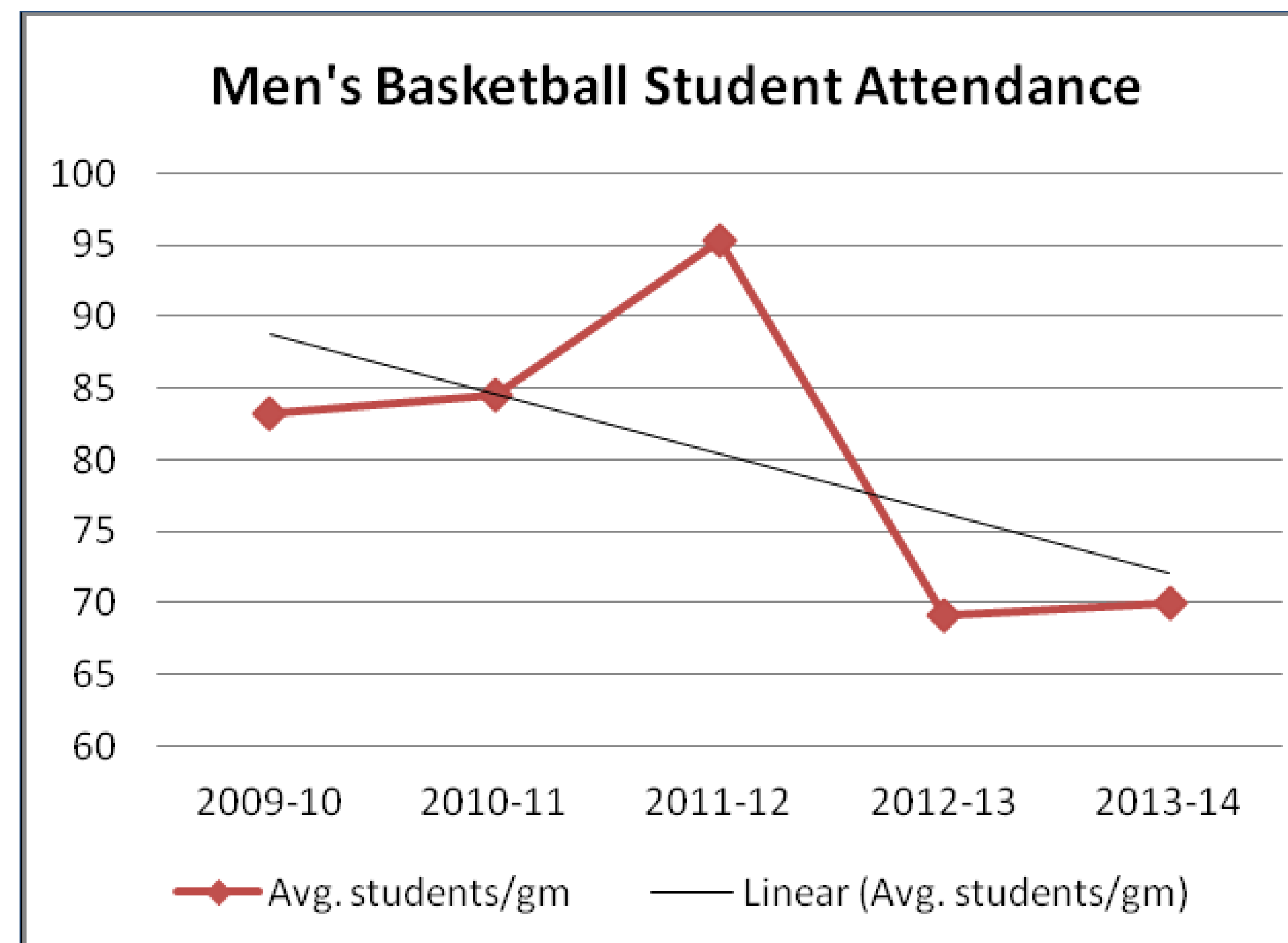
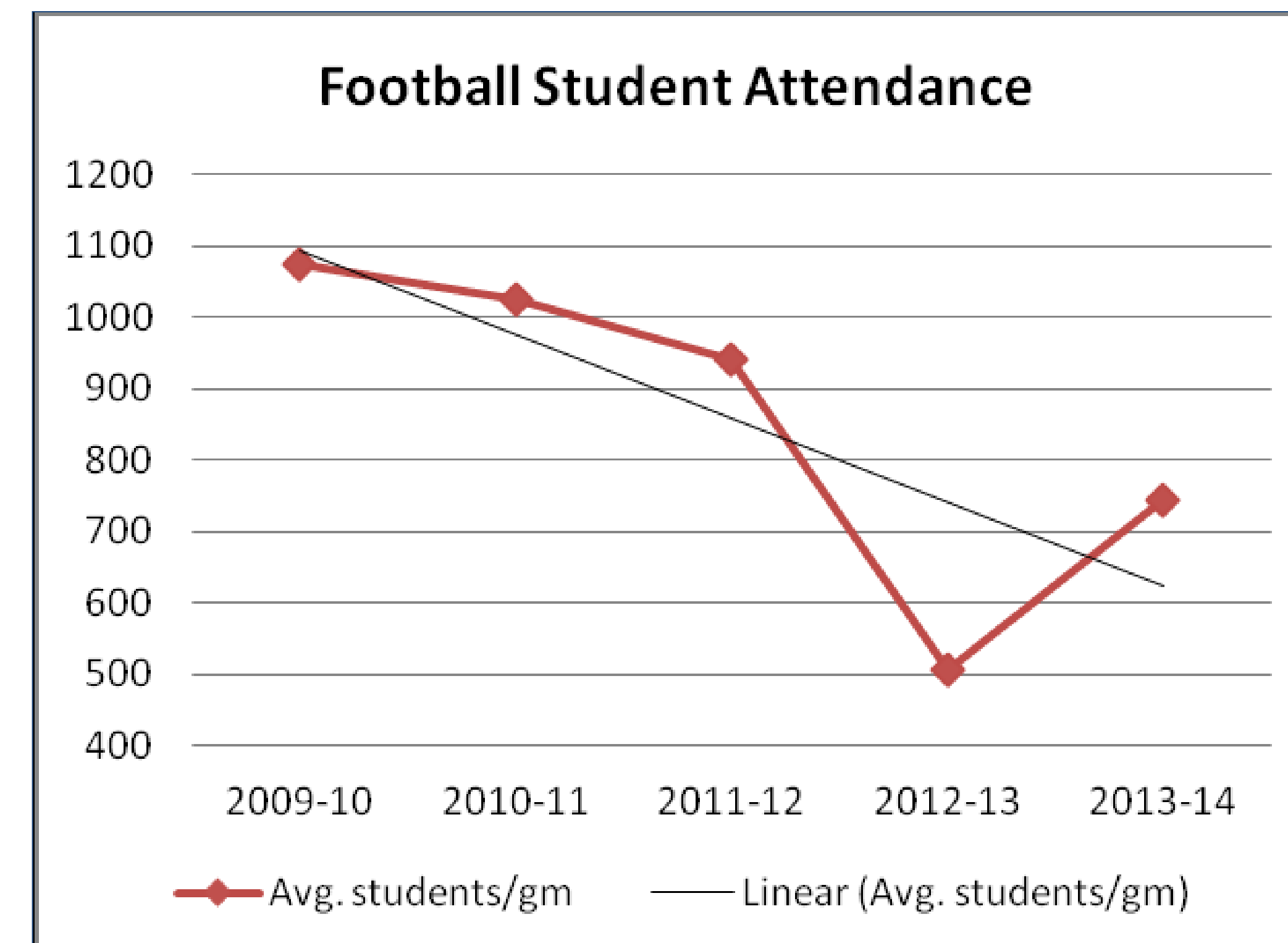


Finding Ways to get More Students in the Stands

An Analysis of Students' Knowledge, Attitudes, and Behaviors Surrounding Blugold Athletics Event Attendance
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Problem

The University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire Blugold athletics program has been seeing a negative decline in student attendance at athletics events during the past five seasons. Students who are uninterested in school spirit-related activities, like sports, become disinterested alumni who are less likely to be future donors. This is why it is important to find ways to increase student attendance at athletic events. The first step in finding ways to increase student attendance is performing formative research on the target audience to determine their motivations for attending and the best ways to distribute promotional materials to them.



Key Results

Information Deficiencies

- We measured how informed students are about when and where athletics events take place, and when promotions occur, on seven-point Likert scales (1=strongly disagree, 7=strongly agree).
 - They are uninformed about when football games take place.
 - They are uninformed about when men's basketball games take place.
 - They are uninformed about when there are promotions at games.
 - They are uninformed about where athletics events are taking place.

See table below for results from these analyses.

Impact of Athlete or Coach Interactions

- Those who had previously met an athlete ($M=4.94$, $SD=1.28$) have a more positive attitude toward Blugold athletics than students who indicated they had never met an athlete ($M=4.34$, $SD=1.33$); $t(588) = 2.88$, $p=.004$.
- Those who indicated they had met an athletic coach ($M=5.16$, $SD=1.29$) have more positive attitudes toward Blugold athletics than those who have never met a coach ($M=4.75$, $SD=1.31$); $t(589) = 3.50$, $p=.001$.

Game Attendance Motivations

- The top reason students said they attend football games was because of social influence (i.e., they go because their friends go). The top reason they attend men's basketball games is because they know someone on the team.
- Students said they would attend more games if there were frequent promotions and more entertainment at games, and if student athletes were more approachable. See the table below for complete results.

Students' information deficiencies regarding Blugold athletics

	M	SD	t	df	p-value
I am well informed about when football games are taking place	3.83	1.93	-2.21	617	.027*
I am well informed about when men's basketball games are taking place	2.82	1.61	-18.21	617	<.001*
I am well informed about when there are promotions at UWEC athletic events	2.81	1.57	-18.84	618	<.001*
I am well informed about where athletic events on-campus take place	3.72	1.83	-3.81	617	<.001*

Note: Attitudes were measured on a scale of 1 to 7 where 1=strongly disagree and 7=strongly agree. An * indicates a significant difference at $p<.05$ from 4, the midpoint of the scale.

Students' Information Deficiencies about Athletics

Categories that emerged from the question: What would get you to attend more games?

Research Questions

- How informed are students about Blugold athletic events?
- How would students like to receive information about Blugold athletics?
- Why do students attend Blugold football and men's basketball games?
- Why don't students attend Blugold football and men's basketball games?
- What would make students attend more games?

Why Do You Attend Football & Basketball Games?



Students' Preferences for Receiving Information

Source / Channel	Percent who indicated	Frequency (n)
Posters	49.2%	305
Friends	43.7%	271
Emails	43.2%	268
Facebook	39.8%	247
Athletes	32.3%	200
Websites	26.5%	164
Professors / instructors	23.7%	147
Twitter	22.3%	138
Staff members	20.2%	125
Resident assistants	15.6%	97
Table tents	12.9%	80
Television	7.1%	44
Radio	5.8%	36
Family members	1.6%	10
Other	1.5%	9

Reason	Football		Basketball	
	Percentage	n	Percentage	n
Team Success	35.67%	193	9.4%	47
Social Influence	21.81%	118	24.0%	120
Greater Spirit	11.83%	64	6.4%	32
Promotions to attend	9.8%	53	8.8%	44
Entertainment	9.8%	53	4.8%	24
Better team member relations	7.95%	43	10.2%	51
Greater knowledge / awareness	4.44%	24	9.6%	48
More Advertising	3.51%	19	7.0%	35
Better Location / Transportation	8.87%	48	1.2%	6
If had more time	4.62%	25	5.0%	25
Nicer Facilities	4.44%	24	3.2%	16
Nicer Weather	3.51%	19	0.2%	1
Greater interest in sport	2.22%	12	8.8%	44
If Alcohol was sold	2.03%	11	0.2%	1
Tailgating	1.29%	7	0.2%	1
Better Opponent Strength	1.11%	6	1.2%	6
Better Time/Day of games	0.55%	3	0.2%	1
Nothing	7.21%	39	19.6%	98
Other	2.03%	11	2.6%	13

Methods

Survey Instrument

Students in CJ 374 (Public Relations Campaign Planning) surveyed 620 students via an online survey about their attendance at Blugold athletic events. The survey consisted of questions based on the Theory of Planned Behavior, which assessed students' knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors surrounding Blugold athletics. Questions also assessed students' information preferences. A series of open-ended questions assessed their motivations behind their attendance at football and men's basketball games, and what would make them more likely to attend.

Analysis

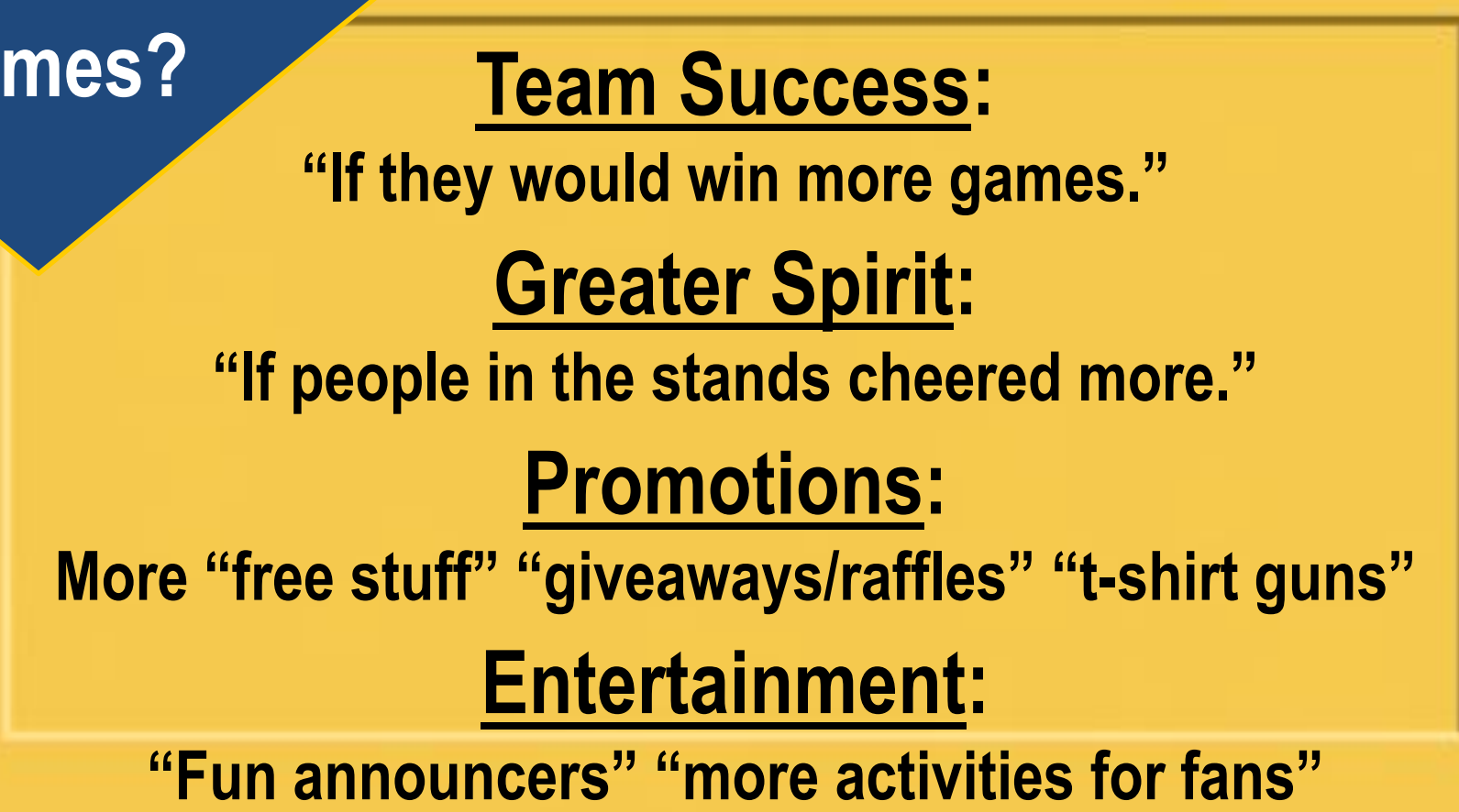
Closed-ended data were analyzed using SPSS.

To analyze open-ended data, the research team first open-coded the responses, creating preliminary coding categories. Then, the team developed a formal coding scheme. Research assistants were trained on this coding scheme, and pairs of research assistants coded all responses into categories based on the reasons given in the open-ended responses. Inter-coder agreement ranged from about 95-100% between the coders on all coding categories. The pairs then resolved any disagreements, resulting in 100% agreement across categories.

Why Don't You Attend Football and Basketball Games?



What Would Make You Attend More Games?



Our Sample (n=620)

Year in School:	Percentage
15.3% Freshmen	
20.5% Sophomores	
25.8% Juniors	
38.1% Seniors	

- 70% female
 - 30% male

Athletic-related Behaviors

- Personally met a Blugold athlete: 88.7%
- Has met a Blugold athletic coach: 28.2%
- Actively searched for the time and location of when a Blugold athletic event was taking place: 46.1%
- Follows Blugold athletics on social media: 15.8%
- Has attended a Blugold football game: 68.6%
- Has attended a Blugold men's basketball game: 16.9%



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University of Wisconsin Eau Claire

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