



IOWA

**THE NATIONAL COLLEGE
HEALTH ASSESSMENT III**
GRADUATE STUDENT SUMMARY REPORT
THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA
SPRING 2021



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ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION, CONSIDERATIONS & LIMITATIONS

The National College Health Assessment (NCHA) survey was conducted between late February to mid-March of 2021, a period in which the COVID-19 pandemic was causing significant disruption and impacting the health and behaviors of the student body.

Four thousand four hundred thirty-eight University of Iowa (UI) graduate students were invited to take part in the anonymous online survey. Eight hundred sixty-one students completed the survey for a response rate of 19.4%.

Important considerations should be taken into account:

- Student Wellness administered a new NCHA-III survey for the first time this year. The 2019 graduate student NCHA administration used the NCHA-II survey, which is quite different. This limits the ability to make comparisons.
- At the time of survey, most classes at the University of Iowa were online, and many students lived out of the area with family members.

This report and reports from previous years can be viewed at <https://studentwellness.uiowa.edu/ui-health-data>. Questions can be directed to Trish Welter at trisha-welter@uiowa.edu.

COMPARISON TO NATIONAL SAMPLE*

UI graduate students are...



- more likely to feel a sense of belonging at their college/university
- more likely to report food security
- less likely to experience violence
- more likely to report feeling safe in the surrounding community



- less likely to feel that student health and well-being is a priority on campus
- more likely to report high-risk alcohol use
- more likely to experience negative consequences from alcohol use

**compared to spring 2021 national data of graduate & professional students (24,252 students from 112 schools)*

COMPARISON TO UI UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

UI graduate students are...



- less likely to report high-risk alcohol use
- more likely to wear a helmet on a bicycle, scooter, or motorcycle
- less likely to report psychological distress, self-injury and suicide attempts
- more likely to report feeling safe on campus and in the community
- more likely to maintain social distancing and wear a mask to prevent the spread of COVID-19



- less likely to report a sense of belonging at their college/university
- more likely to drive after drinking
- more likely to struggle with alcohol or other drug abuse/addiction disorders
- less likely to get the recommended amount of sleep

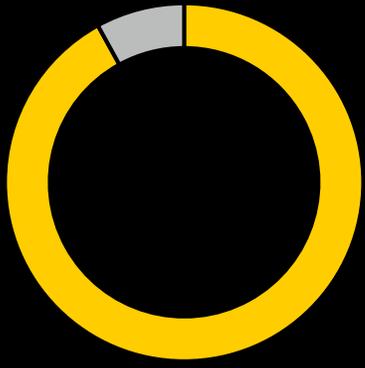


ACADEMIC IMPEDIMENTS*

1. Procrastination: 37.5%
2. Stress: 36.1%
3. Anxiety: 31.8%
4. Chronic health condition: 25.9%
5. Depression: 20.7%
6. Sleep difficulties: 18.8%
7. Career: 14.5%
8. Finances: 11.4%
9. Health of someone close: 10.2%
10. Headaches/migraines: 10.0%

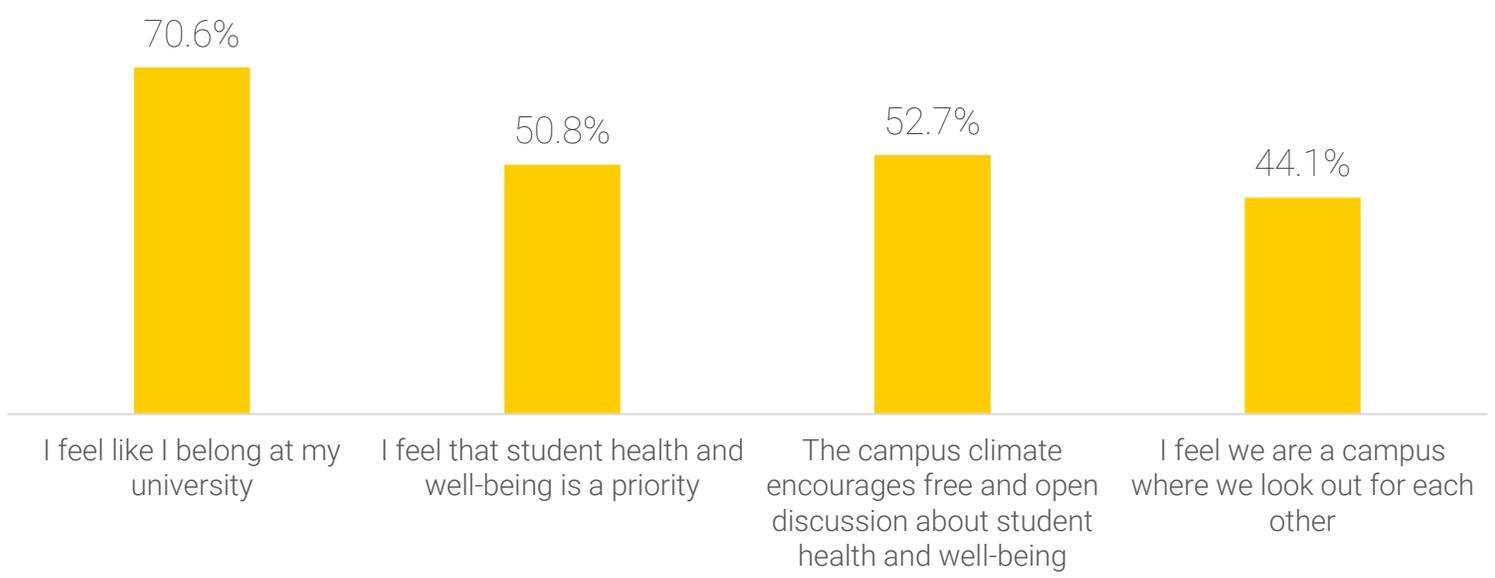
**Top ten of 49 items that negatively impacted academic performance in the last 12 months*

GENERAL HEALTH



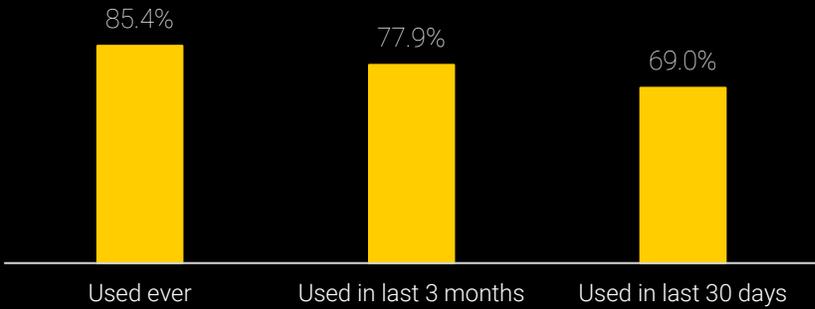
92.0% of UI graduate students report being in good, very good or excellent health.

CAMPUS CULTURE*



**percent of students who responded "agree" or "strongly agree"*

ALCOHOL USE



High-risk Drinking

22.1% of all graduate respondents and 35.6% of graduate students who report alcohol use in the last two weeks have had at least one instance of high-risk drinking in that time frame (females: 4+ drinks / males: 5+ drinks).

Number of Drinks*

2.7: average number of drinks the last time they drank alcohol in a social setting

85.4% of students drank 4 or fewer drinks the last time they drank alcohol in a social setting

**of those who used alcohol in the last 3 months*

Blood Alcohol Concentration**

0.02: average blood alcohol concentration (BAC)

92.4% of students had an average BAC of <0.08

***of those who used alcohol in the last 3 months*

ASSIST Scores

7.0: average alcohol score on the Alcohol, Smoking & Substance Involvement Screening Test (ASSIST)

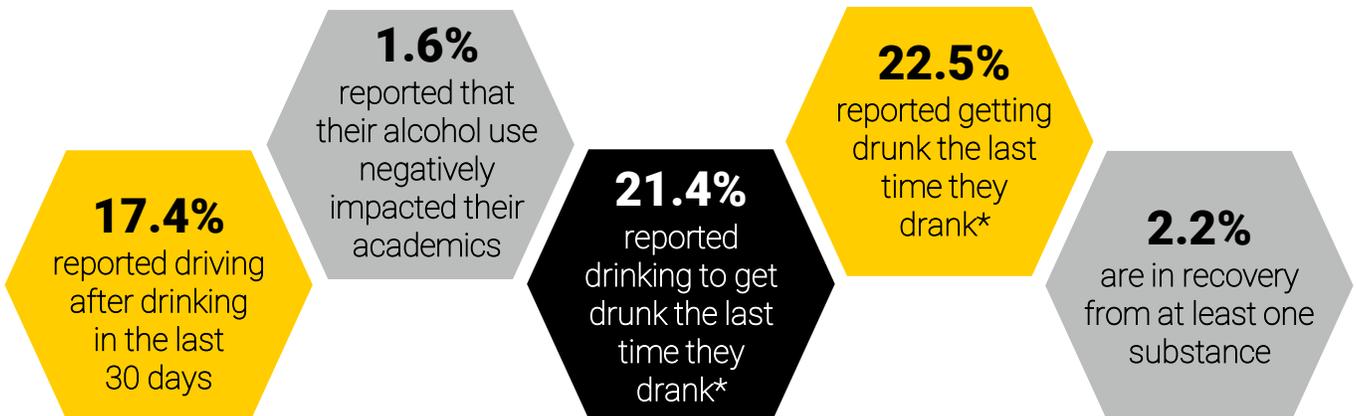
13.5% of students had a moderate-risk ASSIST score

1.7% of students had a high-risk ASSIST score

Negative Consequences

28.8% of graduate students who used alcohol in the last 12 months experienced at least one negative consequence from their use.

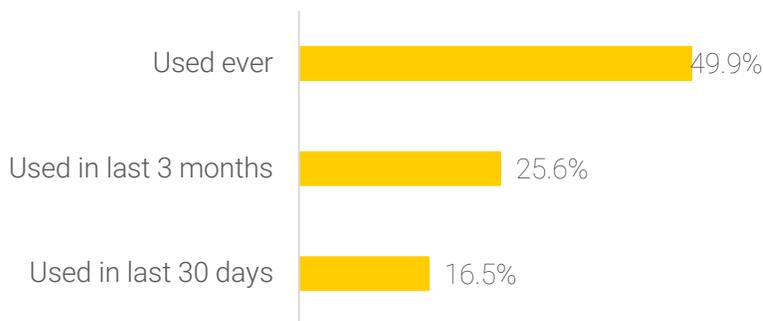
1. Brownout: 16.5%
2. Did something I regretted: 14.3%
3. Unprotected sex: 7.5%
4. Blackout: 6.5%
5. Physically injured myself: 3.4%
6. Seriously considered suicide: 2.3%
7. Someone had sex with me without my consent: 0.5%
8. Had sex with someone without their consent: 0.1%



**of those who have used alcohol in the last 3 months*

OTHER SUBSTANCE USE

Cannabis



28.1% of graduate students reporting cannabis use in the last 30 days have driven within 6 hours of use at least once.

0.8% of all graduate respondents reported that cannabis had negatively impacted their academics in the last 12 months.

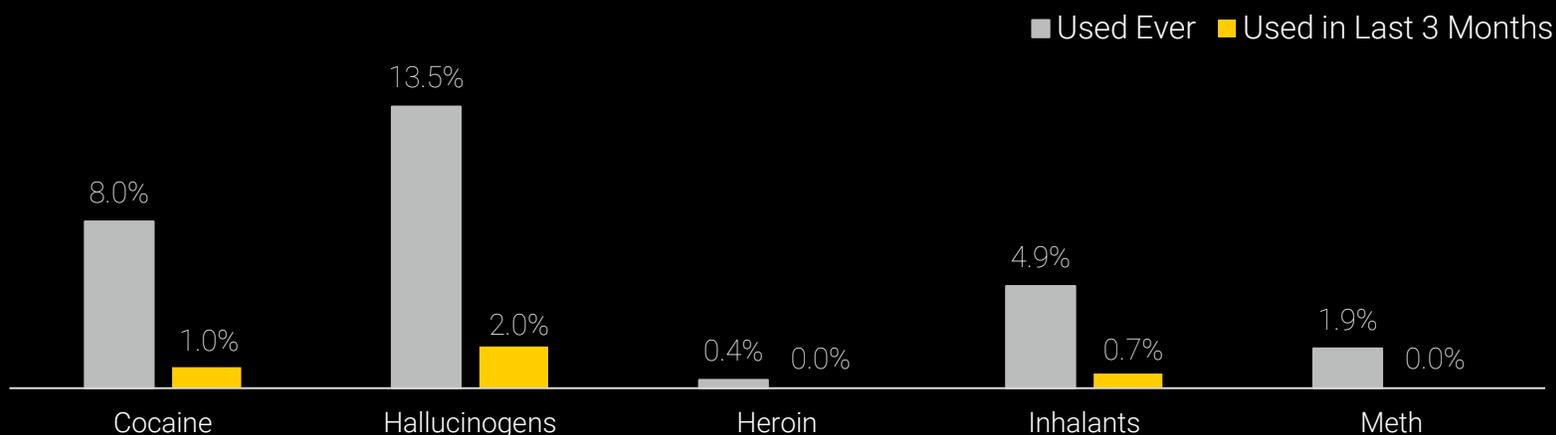
Cannabis ASSIST Scores

3.8 average score

15.3% moderate-risk

0.7% high-risk

Other Illicit Drugs

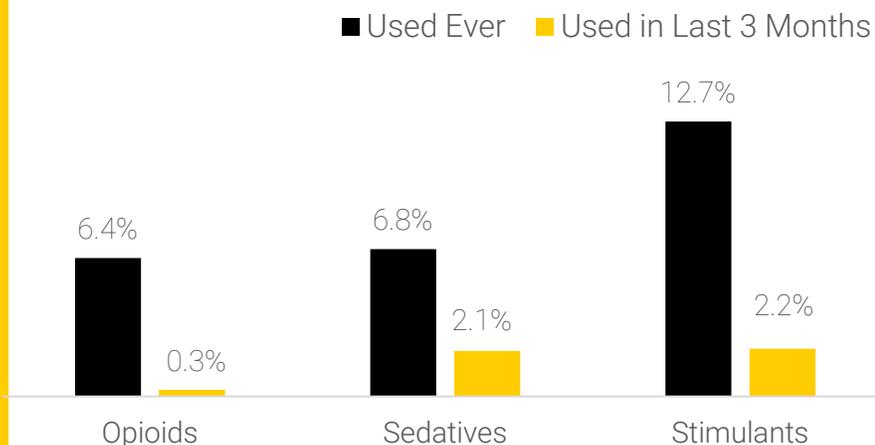


Nicotine

35.7% have ever used nicotine. 12.0% have used at least one nicotine product in the last 3 months:

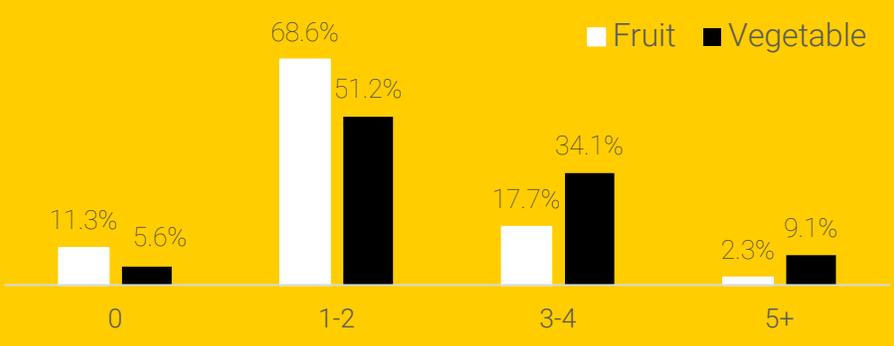
1. E-cigarettes or other vape products: 5.7%
2. Cigarettes: 4.6%
3. Cigars: 1.4%
4. Hookah: 0.9%
5. Chewing/Smokeless Tobacco: 0.6%

Illegal Use of Prescription Drugs

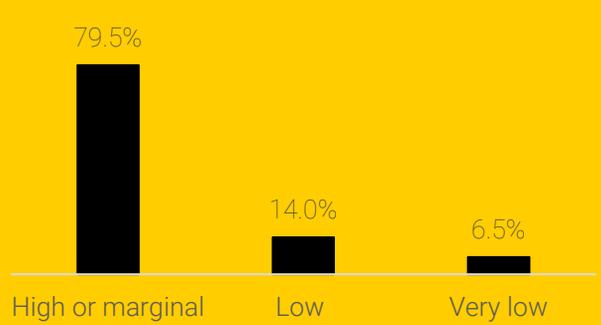


NUTRITION & FOOD SECURITY

Average Daily Fruit & Vegetable Intake**



Food Security* (USDA Food Security Index)



**last 7 days
*last 30 days

49.9%
drink 1+
sweetened
beverage
per day**

6.0%
have had energy
drinks/shots at
least 5 days in
the last month

Average USDA
Food Security
Index Score*
0.85

25.0%
were unable to
afford to eat
balanced
meals*

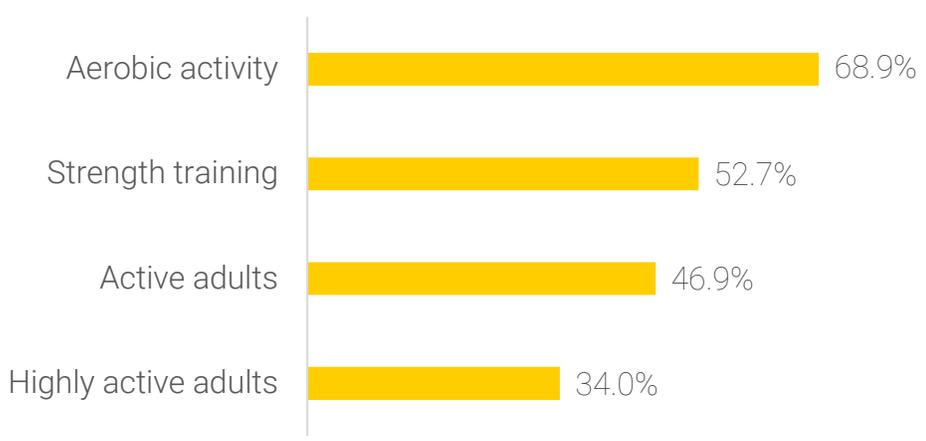
15.0%
cut the size of or
skipped meals*

6.5%
reported going
hungry*

10.8%
reported eating
less*

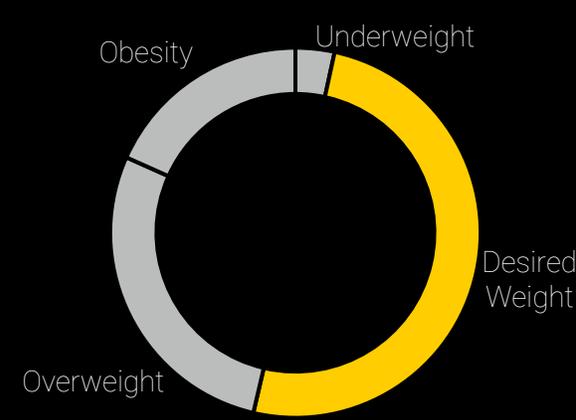
PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Percent of Students Meeting Recommendations*



*Aerobic activity: 75+ min of vigorous intensity activity, 150+ min of moderate intensity activity or a combination of the two per week
 Strength training: 2+ days per week of moderate or greater intensity activities for all major muscle groups
 Active adults: meeting both the aerobic & strength training recommendations
 Highly active adults: meeting the strength training recommendation and attaining more than double the recommended amount of aerobic activity

WEIGHT



50.2% of UI graduate students are in the desired weight range (BMI of 18.5-24.9), with an average BMI of 26.1. Despite that, 52.9% are trying to lose weight.

STRESS

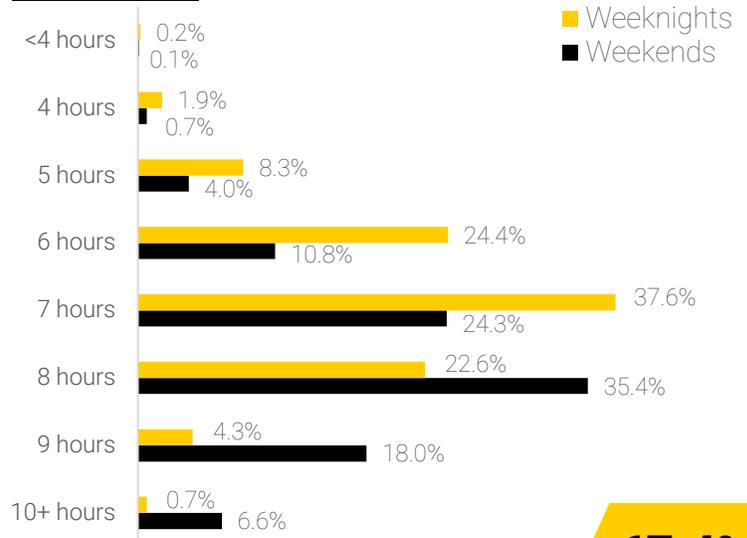
80.7% of UI graduate students reported a moderate or high stress level in the last year.

Top Stressors (last 12 mos)

1. Procrastination: 70.4%
2. Personal appearance: 42.2%
3. Health of someone close: 41.6%
4. Finances: 37.3%
5. Academics: 37.1%
6. Career: 36.9%
7. Family: 34.1%
8. Intimate relationships: 32.0%
9. Death of someone close: 25.3%
10. Microaggression: 18.7%

92.7% reported at least one thing (of 18) to be difficult or challenging, with the average graduate student reporting experiencing 4.4 challenges/stressors in the last 12 months.

SLEEP



64.5% of graduate students get the recommended 7-9 hours of sleep on weeknights, compared to 77.8% on weekends.

67.4% feel tired or sleepy 3+ days/week

52.2% nap at least once a week

MENTAL HEALTH

Psychological Distress



On the Kessler-6, 22.6% of graduate students reported moderate psychological distress and 17.3% reported serious psychological distress.

Self-Harm

5.7% of graduate students have attempted self-injury and 0.8% have attempted suicide in the last 12 months.

Conditions

14.4% of UI graduate students reported having one mental health condition, and 31.7% reported having two or more.

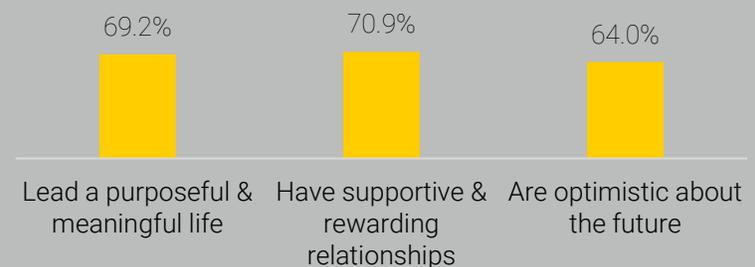
Top conditions ever diagnosed include:

1. Anxiety: 35.6%
2. Depression: 28.1%
3. ADD/ADHD: 11.6%

Services

61.3% of UI graduate students reported receiving psychological or mental health services in their lifetime, and 38.3% reported using them in the last 12 months. Of those who have received services in the last 12 months, 33.3% reported receiving on campus services.

Flourishing*



*percent of students who agree or strongly agree

SEXUAL HEALTH

	Had Sex in Last 30 Days	Mostly/Always Use Barrier*
Vaginal Sex	51.6%	32.9%
Oral Sex	43.9%	1.1%
Anal Sex	4.1%	17.1%

*among sexually active students

Average number of sexual partners in the last 12 months*
1.5

84.6% used pregnancy prevention the last time they had vaginal intercourse*

0.7% experienced unintentional pregnancy in the last 12 months*

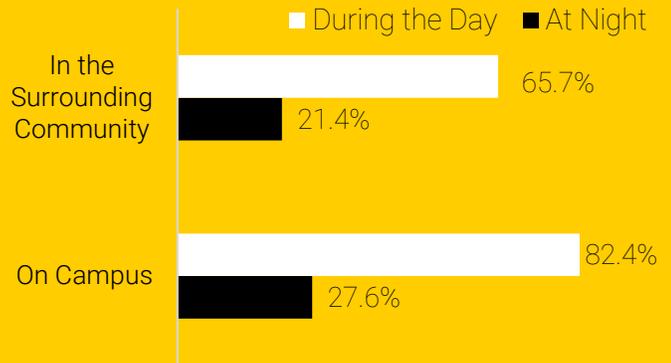
5.9% have used emergency contraception in the last 12 months*

34.0% have ever been tested for HIV

Top pregnancy preventions*:
External condoms: 39.8%
Birth control pills: 36.0%

SAFETY

Feelings of Safety



Behaviors

Mostly or Always Wear a Helmet*:

Motorcycle or scooter: 70.8%

Bicycle: 69.5%

*last 12 months; of those who have ridden

Driving:

While texting/emailing/using apps**: 51.5%

Had an accident***: 3.9%

**last 2 weeks; of those who have driven

***last 12 months; of those who have driven

VIOLENCE*

Intimate Partner Violence

10.0% were called names, insulted or put down
2.1% had partner(s) who insisted on knowing who they were with and where they were or who tried to limit contact with family/friends

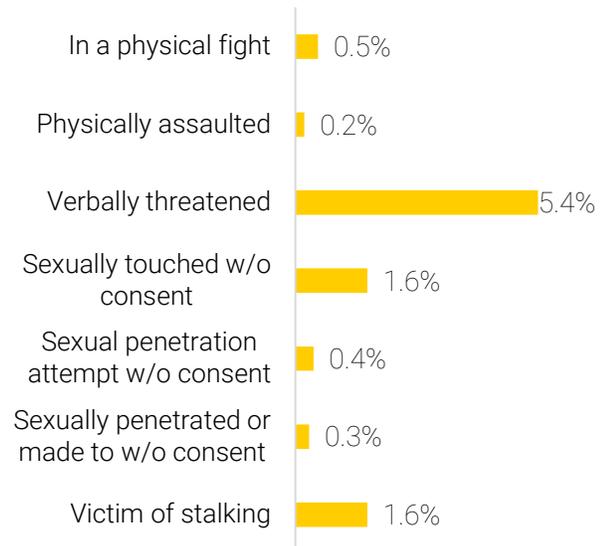
2.0% were pushed, grabbed, shoved, slapped, kicked, bit, choked or hit without consent

0.5% were forced into unwanted sexual contact by being held down or hurt in some way

0.9% were pressured into unwanted sexual contact by threats, coercion, alcohol or other drugs

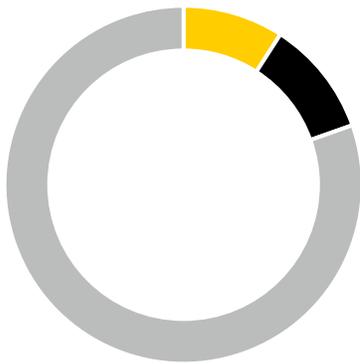
*last 12 months

Violence Outside Intimate Relationships



COVID-19

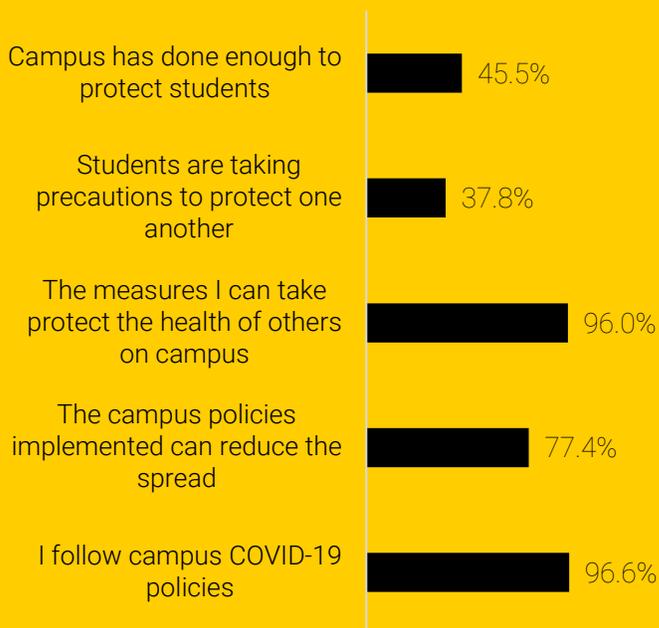
Experience



9.1% of UI graduate students reported that they had COVID-19 (confirmed by a healthcare provider) and another **10.5%** suspected they had COVID-19. Of those who had confirmed or suspected COVID-19, 43.5% reported moderate and 7.7% reported severe symptoms, and 1.2% reported that they had been hospitalized from COVID-19.

24.7% of graduate students had a loved one who had long-term effects and **11.8%** had a loved one who died from COVID-19.

Perceptions



Protective Behaviors*



*often/frequently

78.0% said they would be likely to get the COVID-19 vaccine once available, and another **16.2%** had already been vaccinated before taking the survey (Feb-Mar 2021).

Pandemic Impact

79.0% of UI graduate students reported that their professors were supportive.

35.7% reported that as a result of the pandemic, they had witnessed discriminatory or hostile behavior towards others based on race/ethnicity, and **4.1%** said they experienced discrimination or hostile behavior because of their race/ethnicity. **26.1%** of Asian or Pacific Islander students reported experiencing this kind of behavior as a result of the pandemic.

34.5% of those who have received counseling or therapy thought access to mental health services became more difficult during the pandemic.

44.4% had more financial stress and **89.5%** had more overall stress due to the pandemic.