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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.

Five hundred forty-five professional students completed the survey for a response rate of 17.7%.

Important considerations should be taken into account:

• This was the first time the NCHA survey has been administered to professional students at the University of Iowa. It has been administered to graduate students once before (2019) and undergraduate students for many years.

• Student Wellness administered a new NCHA-III survey for the first time this year. Past undergraduate and graduate administrations used the NCHA-II survey, which is quite different.

• 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 on graduate and undergraduate students 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 GRADUATE & PROFESSIONAL STUDENT SAMPLE***

UI professional students are...

- more likely to report feelings of belonging at their college/university
- less likely to report increased financial stress due to COVID-19
- more likely to report feeling safe on campus and in the surrounding community
- more likely to use alcohol and report high-risk drinking
- more likely to experience negative consequences as a result of alcohol use
- more likely to drive while distracted (text, email, apps, etc.)

*compared to spring 2021 national sample of graduate & professional students (n=24,252)

**COMPARISON TO UI UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS**

UI professional students are...

- more likely to report being in good health
- more likely to wear a helmet on a bike, scooter or motorcycle
- more likely to report resilience and flourishing
- more likely to report feeling safe on campus and in the surrounding community
- more likely to report that academics were negatively impacted by discrimination or microaggressions
- more likely to use alcohol and drive after use
- less likely to report meeting aerobic physical activity recommendation
**GENERAL HEALTH**

93.9% of UI professional students report being in good, very good or excellent health.

**ACADEMIC IMPEDIMENTS***

1. Procrastination: 31.2%
2. Stress: 28.3%
3. Anxiety: 22.9%
4. Chronic health conditions: 22.8%
5. Depression: 16.1%
6. Sleep difficulties: 14.3%
7. Headaches/migraines: 8.3%
8. Career: 7.9%
9. ADHD: 7.3%
10. Finances: 6.4%

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

**CAMPUS CULTURE***

- I feel like I belong at my university: 75.4%
- I feel that student health and well-being is a priority: 59.4%
- The campus climate encourages free and open discussion about student health and well-being: 61.6%
- I feel we are a campus where we look out for each other: 56.6%

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

Number of Drinks*
3.1: average number of drinks last time professional students drank alcohol in a social setting
77.8% 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**
0.03: average blood alcohol concentration (BAC)
87.5% of students had an average BAC of <0.08
**of those who used alcohol in the last 3 months

ASSIST Scores
6.9: average alcohol score on the Alcohol, Smoking & Substance Involvement Screening Test (ASSIST)
14.9% of students had a moderate-risk ASSIST score
0.2% of students had a high-risk ASSIST score

High-risk Drinking
30.5% of all professional student respondents and 41.3% of professional students who reported 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).

Negative Consequences
36.2% of professional students who used alcohol in the last 12 months experienced at least one negative consequence from their use.
1. Brownout: 24.1%
2. Did something I regretted: 19.5%
3. Unprotected sex: 12.7%
4. Blackout: 9.1%
5. Physically injured myself: 4.0%
6. Seriously considered suicide: 1.8%
7. Someone had sex with me without my consent: 1.4%
8. Trouble with police: 0.8%
9. Physically injured another person: 0.6%
10. Trouble with university: 0.4%
11. Needed medical help: 0.4%
12. Had sex with someone without their consent: 0.4%

20.2% reported driving after drinking in the last 30 days
1.5% reported that their alcohol use negatively impacted their academics
25.9% reported drinking to get drunk the last time they drank*
26.4% reported getting drunk the last time they drank*
1.7% are in recovery from at least one substance

*of those who have used alcohol in the last 3 months
31.6% of professional students reporting cannabis use in the last 30 days have driven within 6 hours of use at least once.

1.5% of all professional student respondents reported that cannabis had negatively impacted their academics in the last 12 months.

**Other Illicit Drugs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Substance</th>
<th>Used Ever</th>
<th>Used in Last 3 Months</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cocaine</td>
<td>8.9%</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hallucinogens</td>
<td>11.3%</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heroin</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inhalants</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meth</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Nicotine**

34.8% have ever used nicotine. 15.2% have used at least one nicotine product in the last 3 months:

1. E-cigarettes or other vape products: 6.6%
2. Cigarettes: 4.2%
3. Cigars: 3.1%
4. Chewing/Smokeless Tobacco: 2.4%
5. Hookah: 0.6%

**Illegal Use of Prescription Drugs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Substance</th>
<th>Used Ever</th>
<th>Used in Last 3 Months</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Opioids</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sedatives</td>
<td>7.4%</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stimulants</td>
<td>15.2%</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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

**Average Daily Fruit & Vegetable Intake**

- **Fruit**:
  - 0 servings: 12.7%
  - 1-2 servings: 64.9%
  - 3-4 servings: 19.7%
  - 5+ servings: 2.8%

- **Vegetables**:
  - 0 servings: 5.9%
  - 1-2 servings: 54.4%
  - 3-4 servings: 31.1%
  - 5+ servings: 8.6%

Food Security* (USDA Food Security Index)

- **High or marginal**
  - 81.9%
- **Low**
  - 12.3%
- **Very low**
  - 5.8%

**Nutrition & Food Security**

- **59.7%** of UI professional students are in the desired weight range (BMI of 18.5-24.9), with an average BMI of 24.8. Despite that, 48.0% are trying to lose weight.

- **6.6%** have had energy drinks/shots at least 5 days in the last month
- **22.6%** were unable to afford to eat balanced meals*
- **14.1%** cut the size of or skipped meals*
- **6.3%** reported going hungry*
- **9.9%** reported eating less*

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**Average USDA Food Security Index Score**

- **0.77**

**Weight**

- **59.7%** of UI professional students are in the desired weight range (BMI of 18.5-24.9), with an average BMI of 24.8. Despite that, 48.0% are trying to lose weight.
MENTAL HEALTH

Psychological Distress

On the Kessler-6, 15.6% and 10.4% of professional students reported moderate and serious psychological distress, respectively.

Self-Harm

2.6% of professional students have attempted self-injury and 0.4% have attempted suicide in the last 12 months.

Conditions

15.9% of UI professional students reported having one mental health condition, and 22.6% reported having two or more.

Top conditions ever diagnosed include:
1. Anxiety: 27.5%
2. Depression: 22.4%
3. ADD/ADHD: 10.6%

Services

57.3% of UI professional students reported receiving psychological or mental health services in their lifetime, and 34.1% reported using them in the last 12 months. Of those who have received services in the last 12 months, 60.6% reported receiving on campus services.

Flourishing*

77.5% Lead a purposeful & meaningful life
76.9% Have supportive & rewarding relationships
78.0% Are optimistic about the future

*percent of students who agree or strongly agree

STRESS

72.6% of UI professional students reported a moderate or high stress level in the last year.

Top Stressors (last 12 mos)

1. Procrastination: 65.1%
2. Personal appearance: 32.4%
3. Health of someone close: 30.5%
4. Academics: 30.4%
5. Intimate relationships: 29.2%
6. Finances: 28.5%
7. Family: 25.6%
8. Career: 21.7%
9. Death of someone close: 16.1%
10. Roommate/housemate: 14.9%

84.8% reported at least one thing (of 18) to be difficult or challenging, with the average professional student reporting experiencing 3.5 challenges/stressors in the last 12 months.

SLEEP

66.3% of professional students get the recommended 7-9 hours of sleep on weeknights, compared to 83.1% on weekends.

53.6% nap at least once a week

66.0% feel tired or sleepy 3+ days/week

72.6% of UI professional students reported a moderate or high stress level in the last year.

Top Stressors (last 12 mos)

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3. Health of someone close: 30.5%
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**SEXUAL HEALTH**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Had Sex in Last 30 Days</th>
<th>Mostly/Always Use Barrier*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vaginal Sex</td>
<td>60.5%</td>
<td>25.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral Sex</td>
<td>54.7%</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anal Sex</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*among sexually active students

**VIOLENCE***

**Intimate Partner Violence**

- 6.9% were called names, insulted or put down
- 2.2% had partner(s) who insisted on knowing who they were with and where they were or who tried to limit contact with family/friends
- 1.5% were pushed, grabbed, shoved, slapped, kicked, bit, choked or hit without consent
- 0.4% were forced into unwanted sexual contact by being held down or hurt in some way
- 1.1% were pressured into unwanted sexual contact by threats, coercion, alcohol or other drugs

*last 12 months

**SAFETY**

**Feelings of Safety**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In the Surrounding Community</th>
<th>During the Day</th>
<th>At Night</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30.6%</td>
<td>73.6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>On Campus</th>
<th>During the Day</th>
<th>At Night</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>37.6%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Behaviors**

**Mostly or Always Wear a Helmet***:
- Motorcycle or scooter: 73.3%
- Bicycle: 72.4%

*last 12 months; of those who have ridden

**Driving**

- While texting/emailing/using apps**: 59.9%
- Had an accident***: 5.2%

**Top pregnancy preventions***:
- Birth control pills: 44.7%
- Intrauterine device (IUD): 33.4%

*among sexually active students

**Violence Outside Intimate Relationships**

- In a physical fight: 0.2%
- Physically assaulted: 0.7%
- Verbally threatened: 4.4%
- Sexually touched w/o consent: 2.2%
- Sexual penetration attempt w/o consent: 0.7%
- Sexually penetrated or made to w/o consent: 0.9%
- Victim of stalking: 2.2%

*last 2 weeks; of those who have driven

***last 12 months; of those who have driven
11.2% of UI professional students reported that they had COVID-19 (confirmed by a healthcare provider) and another 7.0% suspected they had COVID-19. Of those who had confirmed or suspected COVID-19, 37.4% reported moderate and 4.0% reported severe symptoms, and 0.0% reported that they had been hospitalized from COVID-19.

16.7% of professional students had a loved one who had long-term effects and 8.4% had a loved one who died from COVID-19.

Perceptions

- Campus has done enough to protect students: 61.5%
- Students are taking precautions to protect one another: 47.8%
- The measures I can take protect the health of others on campus: 93.6%
- The campus policies implemented can reduce the spread: 80.0%
- I follow campus COVID-19 policies: 93.8%

Protective Behaviors*

- Disinfect hands & avoid touching face: 87.5%
- Maintain 6 feet distance: 85.3%
- Wear mask when can't maintain distance: 96.1%

*often/frequently

51.6% had already been vaccinated before taking the survey (Feb-Mar 2021), and another 42.9% said they would be likely to get the COVID-19 vaccine once available.

Pandemic Impact

76.5% of UI professional students reported that their professors were supportive.

36.5% reported that as a result of the pandemic, they had witnessed discriminatory or hostile behavior towards others based on race/ethnicity, and 5.0% said they experienced discrimination or hostile behavior because of their race/ethnicity. 35.8% of Asian or Pacific Islander students reported experiencing this kind of behavior as a result of the pandemic.

38.5% of those who have received counseling or therapy thought access to mental health services became more difficult during the pandemic.

36.2% had more financial stress and 82.5% had more overall stress due to the pandemic.