

The background of the top half of the page is a silhouette of a large, classical-style building with a central dome and a flag flying from a tall pole on top. The building is set against a dramatic sky at sunset or sunrise, with warm orange and yellow light near the horizon and a deep blue sky above with scattered clouds. The overall mood is serene and institutional.

**IOWA**

# **THE NATIONAL COLLEGE HEALTH ASSESSMENT III**

**PROFESSIONAL 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.

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](mailto: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

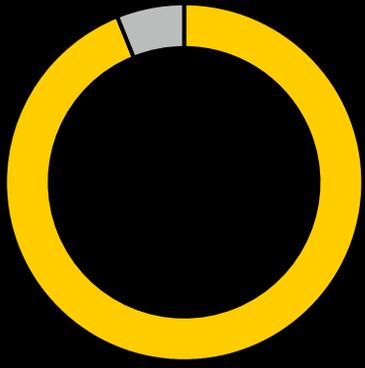


# ACADEMIC IMPEDIMENTS\*

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%

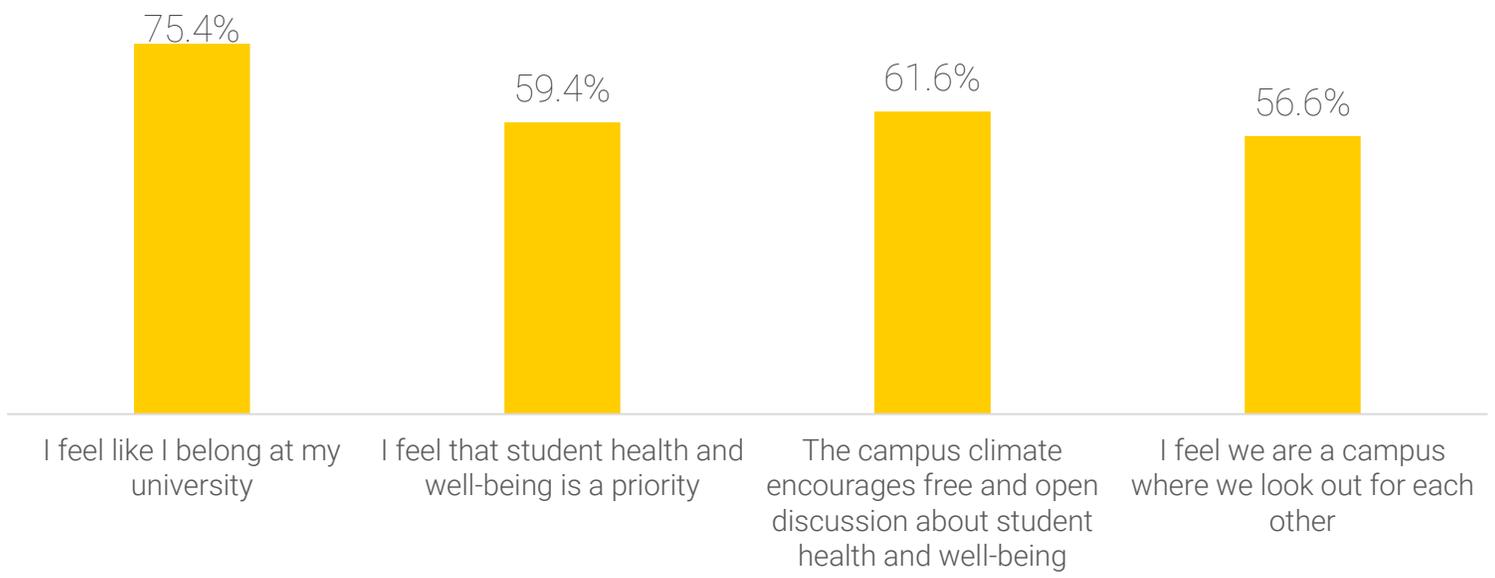
*\*Top ten of 49 items that negatively impacted academic performance in the last 12 months*

# GENERAL HEALTH



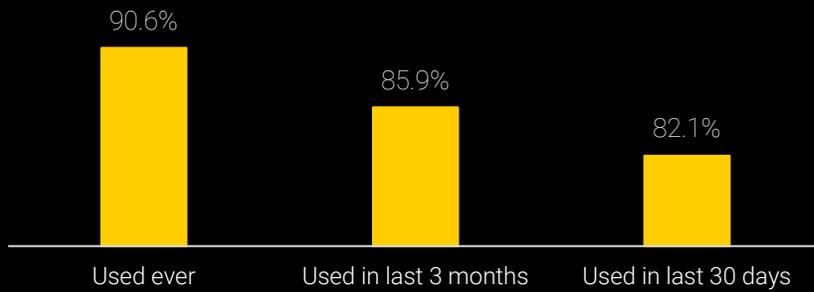
**93.9%** of UI professional students report being in good, very good or excellent health.

# CAMPUS CULTURE\*



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

# ALCOHOL USE



## High-risk Drinking

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).

### 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

### 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\*

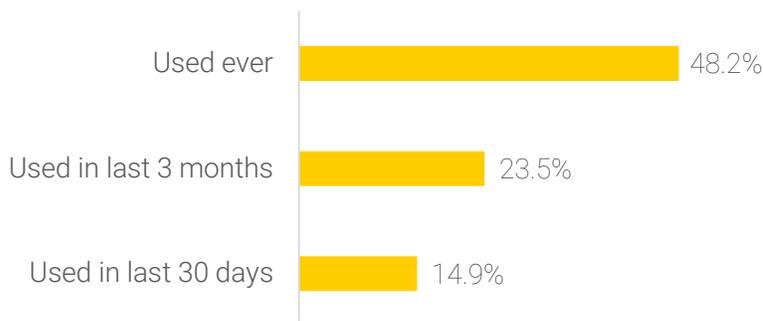
**1.7%**

are in recovery from at least one substance

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

# OTHER SUBSTANCE USE

## Cannabis



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.

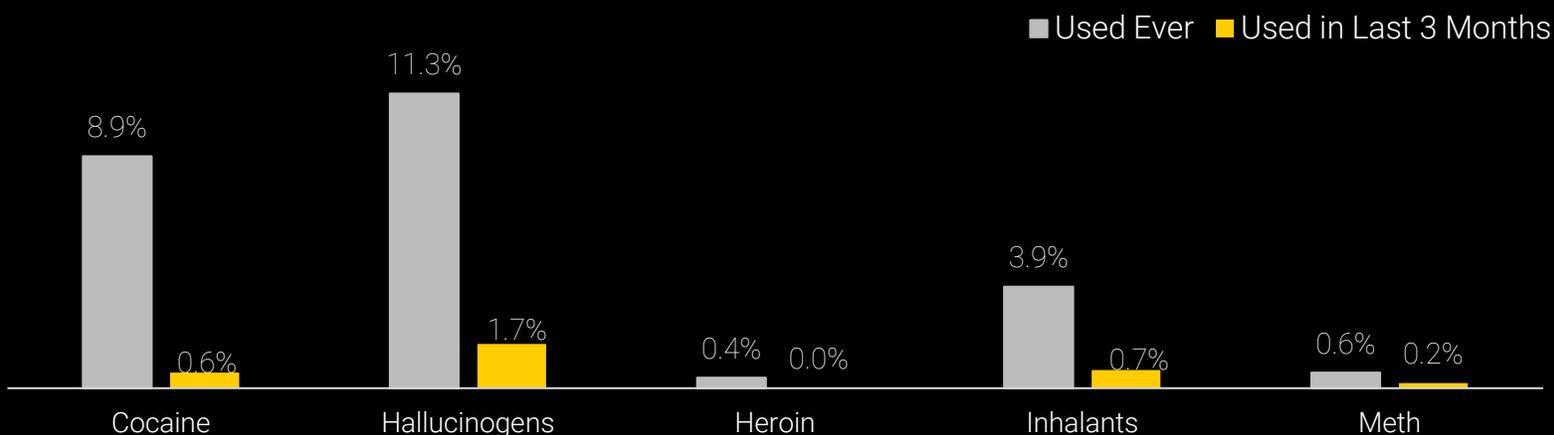
### *Cannabis ASSIST Scores*

**3.1** average score

**10.6%** moderate-risk

**0.6%** high-risk

## Other Illicit Drugs

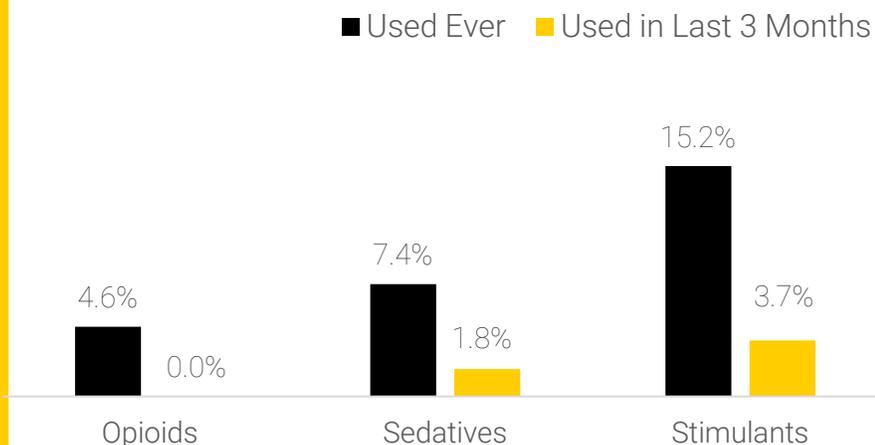


## Nicotine

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

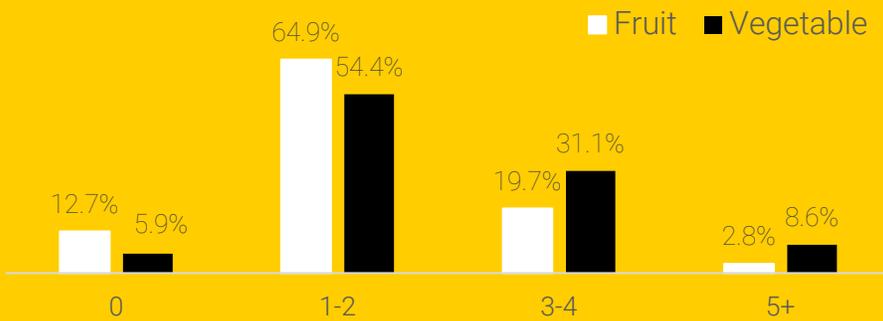
1. E-cigarettes or other vape products: 6.6%
2. Cigarettes: 4.2%
3. Cigars: 3.1%
4. Chewing/Smokeless Tobacco: 2.4%
5. Hookah: 0.6%

## Illegal Use of Prescription Drugs

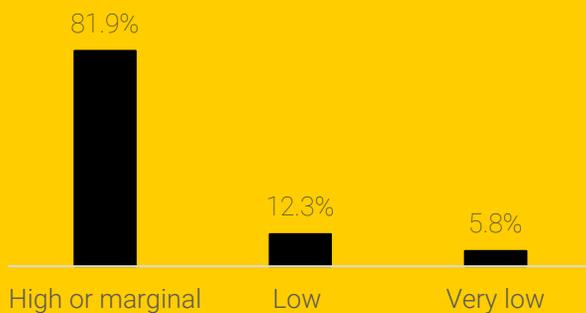


# NUTRITION & FOOD SECURITY

## Average Daily Fruit & Vegetable Intake\*\*



## Food Security\* (USDA Food Security Index)



\*\*last 7 days  
\*last 30 days

**45.7%**  
drink 1+  
sweetened  
beverage  
per day\*\*

Average USDA  
Food Security  
Index Score\*  
**0.77**

**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\*

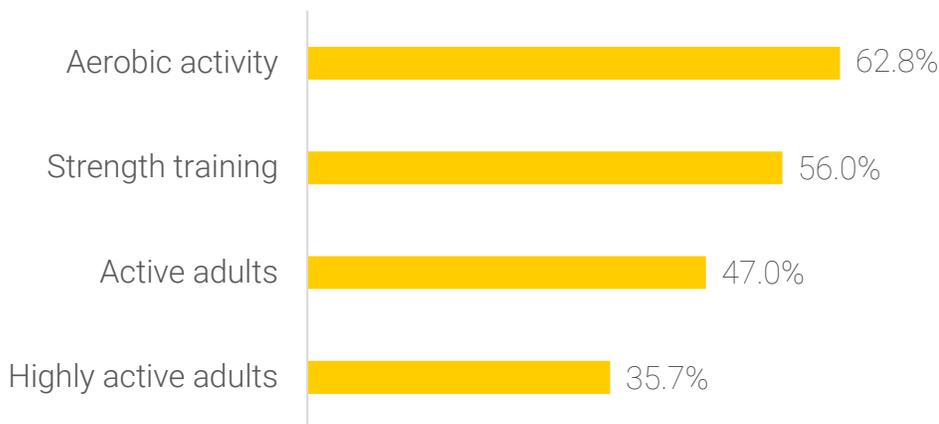
**14.1%**  
cut the size of or  
skipped meals\*

**6.3%**  
reported going  
hungry\*

**9.9%**  
reported eating  
less\*

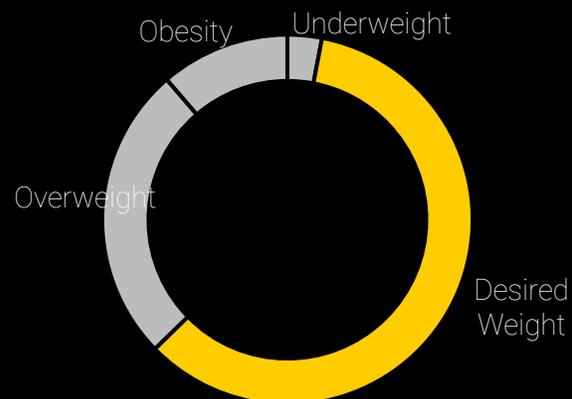
# PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

## 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



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.

## STRESS

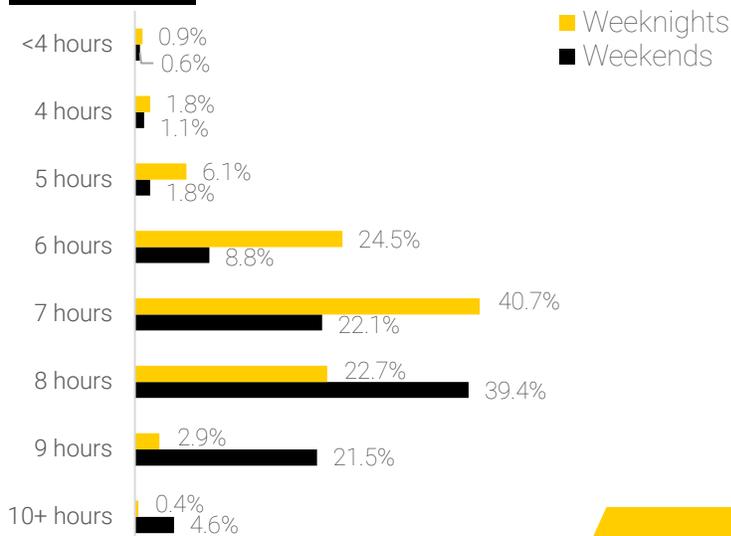
72.6% of UI professional students reported a moderate or high stress level in the last month.

### 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



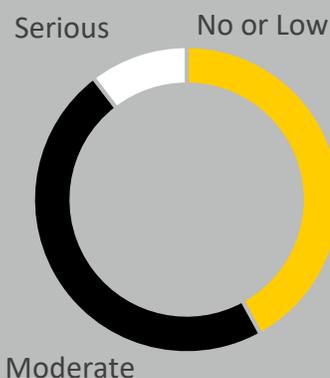
66.3% of professional students get the recommended 7-9 hours of sleep on weeknights, compared to 83.1% on weekends.

**53.9%**  
nap at least once a week

**66.0%**  
feel tired or sleepy 3+ days/week

## MENTAL HEALTH

### Psychological Distress



On the Kessler-6, 47.6% 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.

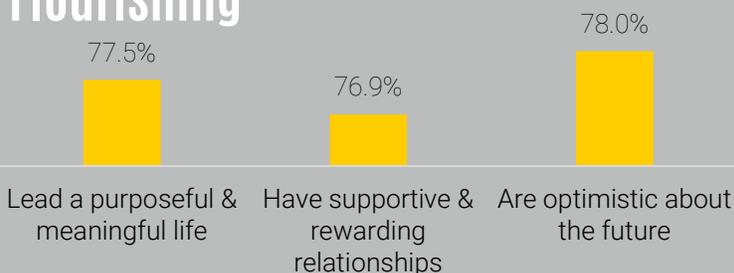
Top conditions ever diagnosed include:

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\*



\*percent of students who agree or strongly agree

# SEXUAL HEALTH

	Had Sex in Last 30 Days	Mostly/Always Use Barrier*
Vaginal Sex	60.5%	25.3%
Oral Sex	54.7%	1.7%
Anal Sex	4.1%	9.1%

\*among sexually active students

Average number of sexual partners in the last 12 months\*  
**1.7**

**89.0%** used pregnancy prevention the last time they had vaginal intercourse\*

**0.0%** experienced unintentional pregnancy in the last 12 months\*

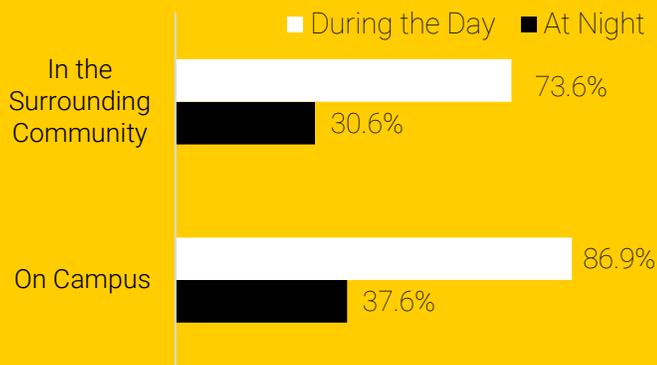
Top pregnancy preventions\*:  
Birth control pills: 44.7%  
Intrauterine device (IUD): 33.4%

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

**37.5%** have ever been tested for HIV

# SAFETY

## Feelings of Safety



## 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%

\*\*last 2 weeks; of those who have driven

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

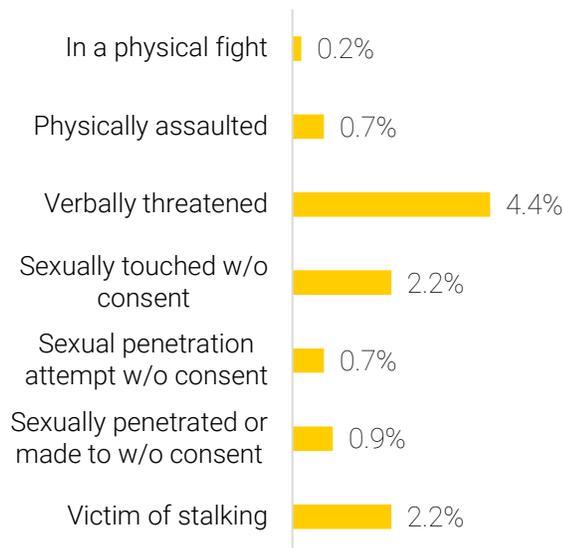
# VIOLENCE\*

## 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

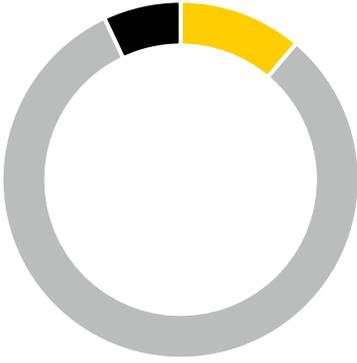
\*last 12 months

## Violence Outside Intimate Relationships



# COVID-19

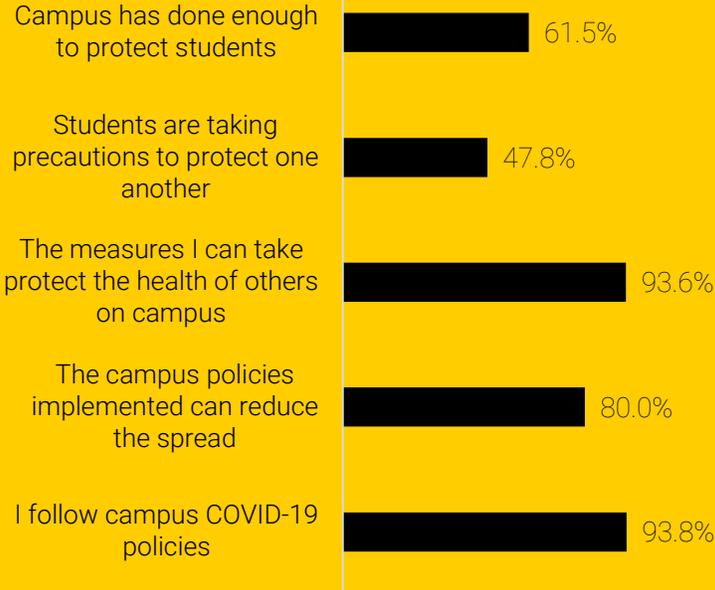
## Experience



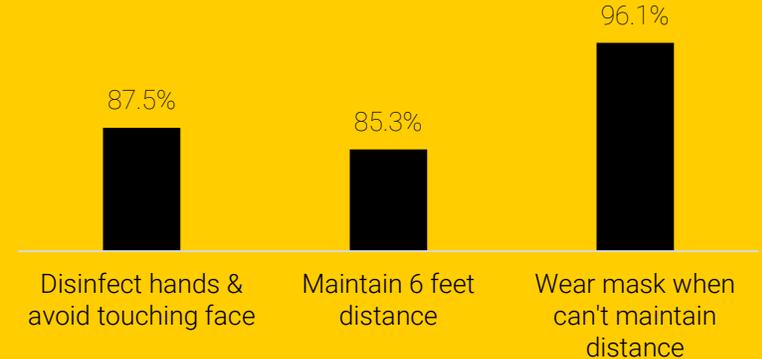
**11.2%** of UI professional students reported that they had COVID-19 (confirmed by a healthcare provider) and another **7.0%** suspected they had COVID-19. Of those who had confirmed or suspected COVID-19, 37.4% reported moderate and 4.0% reported severe symptoms, and 0.0% reported that they had been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



## Protective Behaviors\*



\*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.