

# AMERICAN COLLEGE HEALTH ASSOCIATION/ NATIONAL COLLEGE HEALTH ASSESSMENT III

SPRING DATA 2023 |

## ACHA/NCHA III SURVEY

The ACHA/NCHA III Survey supports the health of the campus community by fulfilling the academic mission, supporting short- and long-term health behaviors, and gaining a current profile of health trends within the campus community.

## REPORT FOCUS

The Wellness team met in early Fall 2023 to discuss areas of focus for the ACHA/NCHA III survey. The team selected seven areas of focus:



Mental Health



Campus Safety



Food Insecurity



HIV Testing



Sleep



Sense of  
Belonging



Loneliness

## METHODS

Initially, the data team from ACHA compiled results for UNT using aggregate percentages for each question by gender. Because the Wellness team wanted to see how the questions varied by other demographic areas, the Division of Student Affairs (DSA) Student Services Assessment department disaggregated the data first to check if the survey demographics were representative of the UNT overall population. Then the DSA Student Services Assessment team met with the Wellness team to narrow our focus for the report.

All areas were disaggregated by demographic data of interest to the group (undergraduate vs. graduate; FTICs; ethnicity; gender; international). Descriptive statistics were collected for each of the areas of focus. Then the research team took a rough look at the percentages and ran crosstabs for variables of interest to the Wellness team and to test certain hypotheses speculated from the descriptive statistics to look for statistical significance.

### NCHA SURVEY STATS

- **777 total variables** collected in the survey
- **N=608 respondents**
- **5.8% response rate** from a sample of **11,000 students**



## NCHA SURVEY REPRESENTATION

We first explored the survey to look for representation. We split by classification (undergraduates v. graduate students), gender, and ethnicity to see if the survey responses are representative of the larger UNT population. We found that the survey was:

- Representative by classification
- Not representative by gender
- Not fully representative by race

## Counseling and Mental Health

The following recommendations take into consideration that the UNT Student Counseling Center closely mirrors national percentages of intake for psychological symptoms. Although several areas of the UNT NCHA data are elevated higher than our national peers in this report, counseling centers across the nation, including UNT Student Counseling, are not experiencing drastic changes to the numbers or percentages of students they serve for psychological symptoms.

### 1) Counseling Center Usage

- a) UNT graduate students report lower usage of the counseling center than their peers nationally. Recommendation: Increase promotion of mental health services to graduate students. Collaborate with graduate school to offer monthly mental health education workshops and promotion of mental health services.
- b) UNT female students report higher usage of the counseling center than their male UNT peers. For context, female students report more acute symptoms than their male peers, therefore, will and do use UNT Student Counseling at higher rates than their male peers. Recommendation: Continue to provide programming geared towards male identified students. Establish partnership with Fraternity Life to increase promotion of services to male identified students.

### 2) Depression

- a) Undergraduate female students (38%) were statistically significantly (Pearson Chi-Square 17.464; p-value, <.001) more likely to report that depression negatively impacted their performance in a class compared to their male peers (19%). Recommendation: this data aligns with national data that show females report higher rates of depression than their male peers. Females experience 1.5-3 times higher rates of depression than males beginning in adolescence. For generalized anxiety disorder, females are twice as likely to experience than males. Student Counseling will continue to provide care for female students who seek out mental health services for depression and continue to educate male students about mental health services available.

### 3) Stress

- a) Undergraduate Asian students were statistically significant (Pearson Chi-Square 13.194; p-value, .004) in reporting that stress either negatively impacted their academic performance (25%) or delayed their progress towards their degree (11.4%). Although not statistically significant, 42.2% of undergraduate Hispanic students reported high levels of stress negatively impacting their academics. Recommendation: Student Counseling will continue to provide targeted programming to all students, especially students of color including identity-based workshops, groups, and mental health resources. The center will also continue to promote Togetherall, a safe, anonymous, online peer community to support students' mental health.

### 4) Anxiety

- a) Both undergraduate (45%) and graduate (25%) females report higher rates of anxiety diagnoses than their UNT male peers. In addition, undergraduate females report higher rates of diagnosed anxiety than their national peers. Recommendation: this data aligns with national data that show females report higher rates of anxiety than their male peers. Student Counseling will continue to provide care for female students who seek out mental health services for anxiety and continue to educate male students about mental health services available.

## Campus Safety

The campus safety findings show us that there are groups of students who feel less safe than their peers on and off campus at varying times of the day, including:

- On-Campus During the Day and Night
  - Undergraduate females feel less safe than their male peers
  - Non-Straight students feel less safe than their Straight peers
- Surrounding Community Day

- Multiracial students feel less safe than their White peers
- White students feel less safe than their Black peers
- Undergraduate women feel less safe than their male peers
- Non-Straight students feel less safe than their Straight peers
- Surrounding Community at Night
  - Younger students feel less safe than their older peers
  - White students feel less safe than their Black peers
  - Undergraduate females feel less safe than their male peers
  - Non-Straight students feel less safe than their Straight peers

The consequences of students not feeling safe—psychological distress, suicide attempts, feelings of anger and hopelessness<sup>1</sup>--are far too great to ignore. Campus safety is an essential component to student sense of belonging and is essential in reducing physical and psychological distress in college students.

## CONCLUSIONS

Consistently, undergraduate females and non-straight students feel less safe than their peers everywhere as a UNT student, but what we do not know is precisely *what* makes them feel unsafe. There are many types of safety that go into an overall safety score or perceptions of feeling safe, including safety around health (allergies, illness, disease, etc.), physical (safe roads, lights at night, protection from violence or assault), emotional (access to mental health resources and strengths-based communication with faculty and staff), just to name a few. The Assessment Department will continue to administer health surveys, participate in UNT safety walks, track surveys that collect safety data, including the campus climate survey, and collaborate with UNT offices to share information so staff and faculty can make data-informed decisions for student safety at UNT.

## Food Insecurity

Food insecurity is a well-documented phenomenon in higher education. With college students suffering more from food insecurity than the general population,<sup>2</sup> addressing food insecurity on college campuses continues to be a growing need and concern. Only 2 of the 4 food insecurity questions showed statistical significance:

*Did you ever cut the size of your meals or skip meals because there wasn't enough money for food?*

Findings:

1. Graduate international students are far more likely than non-international students to be food insecure [diff. 0.88; CI= 0.40, 1.36; p<0.000].
2. Younger students are more likely to be food insecure than older students [diff. -0.03; CI= -0.06, -0.01; p<0.011]
3. Non-straight students are more likely to be food insecure than their straight peers [diff. -0.41; CI= -0.81, -0.01; p<0.04]
4. Students with lower GPAs are more likely than students with higher GPAs to be food insecure [diff. 0.12; CI= 0.03, 0.21; p<0.006]

*Did you ever eat less than you felt you should because there wasn't enough money for food?*

Findings:

1. Graduate international students are far more likely than non-international students to be food insecure [diff. 0.46; CI= -0.01, 0.93; p<0.05].

<sup>1</sup> Maffini, C. S., & Dillard, K. C. (2022). Safe & sound? perceptions of campus safety for black college students. *Race, Ethnicity and Education*, 25(1), 2-17. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13613324.2021.1997972>

<sup>2</sup> Kendrick, A., Fantasia, H. C., Morse, B., & Willis, D. E. (2022). Food insecurity in college students: A concept analysis. *Nursing Forum (Hillsdale)*, 57(5), 898-904. <https://doi.org/10.1111/nuf.12737>

2. Younger students are more likely to be food insecure than older students [diff. -0.03; CI= -0.06, -0.01; p<0.004]
3. Students with lower GPAs are more likely than students with higher GPAs to be food insecure [diff. 0.13; CI= 0.04, 0.22; p<0.004]

## Conclusion

Students nationwide report high levels of food insecurity, but UNT students are experiencing higher rates of food insecurity than their national peers. Among UNT students, graduate international students show the biggest need for food insecurity based on the NCHA data analysis. Moreover, international students are more vulnerable than non-international students to food insecurity in higher education.<sup>3</sup> In addition to graduate students, young students, non-straight students, and students with low GPAs also report statistically significant levels of food insecurity. We don't know the direction of the relationship between low GPA and food insecurity, but we speculate that being food insecure might affect a student's ability to be successful in the classroom.

UNT provides a variety of resources and programs that address food insecurity, including the UNT food pantry, mobile food pantry, Student Money Management resources and grants, multiple scholarships and emergency funds that address other basic needs, and wellness education about nutrition and healthy diets. We do all of this, and yet, UNT students still report higher levels of food insecurity than their national peers. In addition to these resources and services, the Division of Student Affairs (DSA) Assessment partners with faculty, staff, and administrators at UNT to assess and research food insecurity, especially as it relates to graduate international students and their susceptibility to food insecurity. What UNT offers to reduce food insecurity matters, and we should continue to invest resources, education, and time to find solutions to this pressing problem.

## HIV Testing

The overwhelming message in the HIV testing data is that our students are not getting tested! Figure 1 data show that most of our students (males slightly more than females) have not been tested for HIV. We are using this data to justify why campus wide initiatives to get UNT students tested in warranted.

Figure 1.

	Have you ever been tested for HIV?									
	UNDERGRADUATE				GRADUATE				REFERENCE OVERALL	
	FEMALE	MALE	CAMPUS OVERALL	REFERENCE UNDERGRADUATE	FEMALE	MALE	CAMPUS OVERALL	REFERENCE GRADUATE		
Yes, within the last 12 months	9.49%	4.84%	8.04%	10.69%	12.84%	6.94%	10.44%	16.06%	12.21%	
Yes, more than 12 months ago	11.31%	7.26%	10.05%	6.51%	16.51%	9.72%	13.74%	19.66%	10.28%	
No	69.34%	84.68%	74.12%	74.97%	67.89%	79.17%	71.98%	58.87%	70.35%	
Unsure	9.85%	3.23%	7.79%	7.83%	2.75%	4.17%	3.85%	5.41%	7.16%	
	<i>n</i>									
Yes, within the last 12 months	26	6	32	5889	14	5	19	3363	9427	
Yes, more than 12 months ago	31	9	40	3587	18	7	25	4118	7934	
No	190	105	295	41297	74	57	131	12330	54302	
Unsure	27	4	31	4313	3	3	7	1134	5523	
	274	124	398	55086	109	72	182	20945	77186	

## Sense of Belonging

When conducting regression analysis on the sample, we found two important statistically significant findings:

1. Black students report feeling they belong more than their White peers [diff. 0.37; CI= 0.093, 0.646; p<0.009].
2. The less you feel like you belong, the lower your GPA [diff. -0.06; CI= -0.104, -0.006; p<0.027].

## IMPLICATIONS

<sup>3</sup> Shi, Y., Lukomskyj, N., & Allman-Farinelli, M. (2021). Food access, dietary acculturation, and food insecurity among international tertiary education students: A scoping review. *Nutrition (Burbank, Los Angeles County, Calif.)*, 85, 111100-111100. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.nut.2020.111100>

All students should feel like they belong on a college campus. Cultural context matters to whether a student feels like they belong on a college campus.<sup>4</sup> Traditionally students from marginalized populations have a weaker sense of belonging than their non-marginalized peers.<sup>5</sup> However, with intentional programs like the Counseling Diverse Populations Workshops from UNT Student Counseling, and intentional efforts UNT Black students are reporting significantly higher percentages of belonging than their White peers. Findings in this assessment project and research shows a relationship between low GPA and sense of belonging.<sup>6</sup> We do not have causal inferences from research on what affects the variables. For example, we do not know whether low GPA causes a student not to feel like they belong or if not feeling like you belong causes you to do poorly academically.

## Loneliness

Students were asked how often they feel like the questions below describe them on a (1) Hardly ever, (2) Some of the time, and (3) Often scale:

How often do you feel:

1. that you lack companionship?
2. Left out?
3. Isolate from others?

Figure 1 below show the descriptive statistic results of the scale.<sup>7</sup> The data show that both undergraduate and graduate students at UNT score higher than the national average as positive for loneliness and do not score as high as the national average on scoring negative for loneliness.

Figure 1. Loneliness Scale Questions

RULS3 Recoded UCLA Loneliness Scale									
	UNDERGRADUATE				GRADUATE				REFERENCE OVERALL
	FEMALE	MALE	CAMPUS OVERALL	REFERENCE UNDERGRADUATE	FEMALE	MALE	CAMPUS OVERALL	REFERENCE GRADUATE	
NEGATIVE FOR LONELINESS (3-5)	36.26%	41.60%	37.84%	46.72%	50.46%	41.67%	46.96%	55.48%	49.21%
POSITIVE FOR LONELINESS (6-9)	63.74%	58.40%	62.16%	53.28%	49.54%	58.33%	53.04%	44.52%	50.79%
NEGATIVE FOR LONELINESS (3-5)	99	52	151	25720	55	30	85	11619	38011
POSITIVE FOR LONELINESS (6-9)	174	73	248	29336	54	42	96	9322	39226
	273	125	399	55056	109	72	181	20941	77237

However, when performing a regression analysis on the data, the loneliness scale did not test statistically significant for gender or student status. There were significant correlations in the data with the follow variables:

1. Older are less lonely than their younger peers [df: -0.05; CI: -0.067, -0.031; p<0.000]
2. Straight students less lonely than their non-straight peers [df: 0.116; CI: 0.049, 0.183; p<0.001]
3. The lonelier you report feeling, the lower your GPA [df: -0.568; CI: -0.907, -0.227; p<0.001]

<sup>4</sup> Carter, J., Hollinsworth, D., Raciti, M., & Gilbey, K. (2018). Academic 'place-making': Fostering attachment, belonging and identity for indigenous students in Australian universities. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 23(2), 243-260. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13562517.2017.1379485>

<sup>5</sup> Harper, S., and S. Hurtado. 2007. "Nine Themes in Campus Racial Climates and Implications for Institutional Transformation." *New Directions for Student Services* 2007: 7–24.

<sup>6</sup> Weber, S., Kronberger, N., & Appel, M. (2018). Immigrant students' educational trajectories: The influence of cultural identity and stereotype threat. *Self and Identity*, 17(2), 211-235. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15298868.2017.1380696>

<sup>7</sup> UCLA Three-Item Loneliness Scale (Hughes, et. al. 2004)