

Chapter 9: STUDENT AFFAIRS ASSESSMENT

Important information about the student experience is collected through the Office of Student Affairs. Measures such as the American College Health Association's National College Health Assessment (NCHA), the Missouri College Health Behavior Survey (MCHBS), and College and University Housing Resident Study, and the Student Activities Assessment from Educational Benchmarking Inc. (EBI) are part of student affairs assessment. Rather than attempting to capture all of assessment within student affairs, this chapter highlights some of those findings that are most directly related to student learning outcomes.

In Spring 2011, 770 Truman Students participated in the NCHA. Students were surveyed about various factors that affect academic performance: behaviors or situations that lead to lower exam grades, course grades, dropped courses, disruption in research or practicum work, etc. The overall response rate was 24.1%, higher than in the previous administration. Once again, the factor most highly endorsed by Truman State University students was stress. Thirty-four percent of Truman respondents reported this as a significant factor disrupting academic performance. Within the last 12 months, 0.7% reported having experienced no stress, 7.0% reported experiencing less than average stress, 36.2% reported average stress, 46.7% more than average stress, and 9.5% reported tremendous stress.

Academic Impacts

Alcohol Use	4.6%	Gambling	0.1%
Allergies	2.2%	Homesickness	5.7%
Anxiety	23.0%	Injury	1.6%
Assault (physical)	0.4%	Internet use/ computer games	15.9%
Assault (sexual)	0.4%	Learning disability	2.1%
Attention Deficit/ Hyperactivity Disorder	5.5%	Participation in extracurricular activities	14.5%
Cold/Flu/Sore throat	19.0%	Pregnancy (yours or partner's)	0.5%
Concern for a troubled friend or family member	21.2%	Relationship difficulties	11.1%
Chronic health problem or serious illness	3.4%	Roommate difficulties	7.4%
Chronic pain	3.2%	Sexually transmitted disease/infection	0.0%
Death of a friend or family member	5.3%	Sinus infection/ Ear infection/ Bronchitis/ Strep throat	7.0%
Depression	13.4%	Sleep difficulties	18.73%
Drug use	1.3%	Stress	34.3%
Eating disorder/problem	0.5%	Work	8.8%
Finances	4.5%	Other	1.8%

Three hundred thirty-nine Truman students participated in the 2011 MCHBS. Of those, several reported holding leadership positions. For example, 16.2% reported holding a leadership position in a Fraternity or Sorority, 13.6% reported holding leadership positions in

Honors/Academic/Professional Clubs, and 9.7% reported holding leadership positions in Service or Volunteer groups. Over 52% reported not currently holding a leadership position in any campus organization.

Students also report alcohol use on the MCHBS. Nearly 12% of students reporting too many academic responsibilities as a reason for not choosing to drink. Similarly 53.7% of student reported that on one or more occasions they were motivated to drink less or not to drink because they had academic obligations the following day. Because of alcohol use, 9.5% of students suggested they had performed poorly on a test or assignment, and 16.2% reported missing class. 24.8% reported having had their study interrupted by someone else’s alcohol use.

Truman students report high levels of stress on the MCHBS. The following shows the percentage of students reporting various levels of stress.

	Truman Students	Comparison
I have experienced no stress	0.3	1.7
Minimal	4.5	10.5
A little stressed	13.4	18.8
Stressed, but managing	49.0	47.2
Overwhelmed	29.9	19.5
Unbearable stress	2.9	2.3

Nearly 27% of students reported that stress had impacted their academic lives considerable or a great deal, while only 11.8% reported that stress had not impacted their academic life. Furthermore, 90.6% of students said that academics was one of the main sources of stress. Eighty-two percent reported having felt stressed during the past two weeks. Students report managing their stress by smiling and laughing, talking with friends, taking naps, exercising, and eating junk food.

The ACUI/EBI Student Leadership Assessment includes items about leadership in student organizations. Compared to all institutions participating, Truman students were significantly higher on the issues below. They were not significantly lower than all institutions on any items.

- Consistency between actions and deeply held values/beliefs
- Collaboration – respect for other group members
- Degree to which leaders of the organization trust each other
- Agreement upon what goals the organization should accomplish
- Degree to which organization’s achieve goals in a cost-effective manner
- Degree to which student leaders work effectively together
- Degree to which the leaders of organization clearly articulate member responsibilities.
- Degree to which leaders of the organization communicate well together
- Degree to which the student organization agrees on how to accomplish their goals
- Degree to which the organization completes its goals in a timely manner
- Degree to which members understand their responsibilities to the organizations
- Degree to which leaders distribute responsibilities across all members of an organization
- Degree to which the members understand responsibilities of other members

One thousand three hundred and sixty-eight Truman students responded to the ACUHO-I Resident Assessment survey. Students were asked how many hours they studied per week: 10.2% reported 1-5 hours, 26% reported 6-10 hours, 22.4% reported 11-15 hours, 21.7% reported 16-20 hours, 11.9% reported 21-25 hours, 4.4% reported 26-30 hours, and 3.5% reported 31 or more hours. Seventeen percent of students said that they were very to slightly dissatisfied with their ability to study in their rooms, while nearly 60% said that that were moderately or very satisfied. Similarly, 58.3% of students felt that their fellow residents had high levels of respect for their study time. Thirty seven percent of students reported that living in on-campus housing has highly enhanced their ability to study more effectively, and 40.9% reporting that on-campus housing had very positive impacts on their ability of manage time effectively. Most students reported that living on campus had moderately enhanced opportunities to improve leadership skills.

Citations:

American College Health Association. American College Health Association – National College Health Assessment II: Truman State University Executive Summary Spring 2011. Linthicum, MD: American College Health Association; 2011