

Chapter XV: STUDENT AFFAIRS ASSESSMENT

A wealth of information about the student experience is collected through Student Affairs. Each organizational unit regularly collects data about need for and satisfaction with services. Instruments 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 important tools for this endeavor. This chapter summarizes the data from these instruments most directly related to student learning outcomes.

Among other health-related items, the NCHA asks student about 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. Three hundred fifteen Truman students participated in 2009, 11.5% of those invited to participate. As the survey was given to over 87,000 students nationwide, it also allows some comparisons across institution. In spring 2009, the factor most highly endorsed by Truman State University students was stress. 32% of Truman respondents reported this as a significant factor disrupting academic performance, compared to 26.9% nationwide. Specifically, 27% reported not having experienced stress, 46.1% reported experiencing stress that did not affect their academic performance, 13.8% reported receiving a lower exam grade because of stress, 4.0% a lower course grade, 0.5% an incomplete or dropped course, and 1.0% significant disruption in completion of a thesis. Other factors of concern at Truman included Sleep difficulties, Anxiety, Internet use/computer games, Depression, Participation in extracurricular activities, Relationship difficulties, Cold/Flu/Sore throat, and Concern for a troubled friend or family member.

Academic Impacts

(national comparison data %)

Alcohol Use	6.1% (5.2)	Gambling	0.3% (0.4)
Allergies	2.3% (2.6)	Homesickness	5.2% (3.9)
Anxiety	21.4% (18.5)	Injury	2.0% (2.3)
Assault (physical)	0.3% (0.7)	Internet use/ computer games	17.7% (11.7)
Assault (sexual)	0.3% (0.7)	Learning disability	2.0% (0.4)
Attention Deficit/ Hyperactivity Disorder	2.6% (4.5)	Participation in extracurricular activities	15.5% (9.3)
Cold/Flu/Sore throat	14.8% (17.4)	Pregnancy (yours or partner's)	0.6% (1.0)
Concern for a troubled friend or family member	10.0% (11.2)	Relationship difficulties	15.5% (11.1)
Chronic health problem or serious illness	3.9% (3.5)	Roommate difficulties	5.8% (6.3)
Chronic pain	3.6% (2.7)	Sexually transmitted disease/infection	0.0% (0.5)
Death of a friend or family member	5.2% (5.7)	Sinus infection/ Ear infection/ Bronchitis/ Strep throat	7.8% (6.1)
Depression	15.6% (11.6)	Sleep difficulties	23.3% (19.4)
Drug use	1.3% (1.9)	Stress	32.0% (26.9)
Eating disorder/problem	0.6% (1.2)	Work	8.8% (13.0)
Finances	4.5% (6.4)	Other	1.3% (2.1)

Of the 296 Truman students who participated in the 2010 MCHBS, 82.4% reported having felt stressed during the past two weeks. This is similar to the 80.5% of the 6543 total students taking the survey. However, 96.5 % of Truman students reported School as one area of the highest stress, compared to 86.8% statewide. Slightly over 33% of Truman students reported having their studying interrupted by someone else's use of alcohol.

The College and University Housing (ACUHO-I) Resident Study from EBI includes items about how on-campus living affects student learning goals. In 2010, over 1000 students responded. Compared to select peer institutions, Truman students are less likely to claim that on-campus housing enhanced their ability to study more effectively, to enhance the learning experience, and to improve communication skills. However, from 2009 to 2010, Truman students showed statistically significant gains in satisfaction with the extent to which fellow students respected people of different political view and with their ability to study in their room .

The Student Activities Assessment by EBI investigates learning outcomes related to Personal and Relationship Skills, Appreciation of Diversity, and similar factors. Six hundred and seventy-four Truman students participated in 2010. Student overall evaluation of the university was high. Truman Students were above goal levels in their satisfaction with the degree to which attending this university enhanced their ability to think critically and to understand educational goals. They were below goal-levels in satisfaction with learning objectives associated with participation in student activities. Items related to these learning goals includes to what extent participating in student activities expands understanding of individuals from diverse backgrounds, exposed them to new ideas, provided leadership training , enhanced appreciation of the arts, and expanded cultural activities.