

Chapter VIII: STUDENT AFFAIRS

Every year the Office of Student Affairs collects information from a variety of surveys given to students. The data obtained by this office are very thorough, covering many aspects of students' lives. The surveys reported in this chapter include the Missouri College Health Behavior Survey (MCHBS), the American College Health Association College Health Assessment II, the EBI Resident Assessment, the EBI Fraternity/Sorority Assessment and the EBI Student Leadership Assessment. The information collected is too comprehensive to report completely here; therefore, this chapter will highlight information on topics of particular interest to Truman from these assessments.

Health Behaviors – Missouri College Health Behaviors Survey and American College Health Association College Health Assessment II

The health of Truman students has been of particular interest to Truman, as demonstrated by our identification of this area as a focus for the Higher Learning Commission Pathway Projects. In the spring of 2014, 480 Truman students participated in the Missouri College Health Behavior Survey (MCHBS), which allows comparisons between Truman students and students at 21 Missouri public and private colleges and universities. These 21 institutions comprise the Missouri Partners in Prevention coalition, referred to hereafter as PIP 21. The MCHBS collects a variety of information regarding areas such as drug and alcohol abuse, mental health, relationships, gambling and attitudes towards Truman's policies.

In response to “how stressed have you felt in the past two weeks?” Truman students were more likely than PIP 21 college students to report feeling overwhelmed (Truman = 22.7%, PIP 21 = 21.1%) or a little stressed (Truman = 20%, PIP 21 = 16.9%). The modal response for Truman and PIP 21 students fell into the “stressed but managing” category (44.3% and 48.8%, respectively). Truman students’ responses also indicated that this stress had a larger impact on their academic and personal lives than it did for PIP 21 college students. Only 14.9% of Truman students reported that stress had no impact on their academic life compared to 16.3% of PIP 21 students.

In order to cope, many Truman students felt that they could confide about their personal issues to family, friends, the counseling center, religious advisors, residence life staff, the health center, an academic advisor or a professor. Approximately 88% of students thought that they could go to on-campus peers or friends, and 84% said they could turn to off-campus friends for support. Truman students were less likely to approach law enforcement or campus security than were PIP 21 students (3.8% and 4.4% respectively).

More than three quarter of Truman (79.4%) and PIP 21 students (76.3%) reported having consumed alcohol in the past year. When asked about reasons for not drinking, Truman students (35.5%) were more likely than PIP 21 students (24.2%) to refrain from drinking because their friends don’t drink. Truman students were also more likely than PIP 21 students to refrain from drinking so that they would not have to worry about the negative consequences (Truman = 65.6%; PIP 21 = 62%) and because of too many academic responsibilities (Truman = 54.8%; PIP 21 = 53.4%). Truman students were

much more likely than were PIP 21 students to avoid drinking because of personal beliefs/values (Truman = 80.6%; PIP 21 = 38.2%) and because drinking is against the law/policy (Truman = 68.8%; PIP 21 = 46.4%).

Wanting to have fun with friends (79.6%), wanting to relax (52.7%), liking the taste [of alcohol] (36.3%), and liking how [drinking alcohol] makes them feel (33.2%) were the top reasons Truman students reported as contributing to their decision to drink alcohol.

In the past year, students were asked about the frequency with which they used marijuana. The majority of Truman (75.8%) and PIP 21 students (75.9%) reported that they had not used marijuana in the past year, while 13.5% of Truman students and 11.7% of PIP 21 students reported that they had used marijuana 1-6 times over the last year. Very few students (Truman = 1.6%, PIP 21 = 2.9%) reported daily marijuana use over the past year.

Additionally, students were asked about their use of prescription drugs without a doctor's prescription. The majority of Truman (87.6%) and PIP 21 students (86.1%) reported not having used any of the drugs listed without a doctor's prescription. Stimulants (Truman = 8.4%; PIP 21 = 7.5%) were the drugs students reported using most often without a doctor's prescription, followed by pain medications (Truman = 3.5%; PIP 21 = 7.4%), sedatives/anxiety medications (Truman = 1.6%, PIP 21 = 3.1%), and sleeping medications (Truman = 0.8%, PIP 21 = 1.8%).

In the spring of 2013, 672 Truman students participated in the American College Health Association-National College Health Assessment II. This survey allows comparisons between Truman students and a reference group of students from 153

college and universities from across the country. This assessment, which is administered to Truman students once every two years, collects data about students' habits, behaviors, and perceptions on a wide range of health topics.

Students were asked about their engagement in healthy behaviors, including nutrition and physical activity. When asked about the number of servings of fruits and vegetables they eat per day, Truman students (55.8%) were slightly less likely to eat 1-2 servings of fruits and vegetables per day compared to students in the reference group (58.7%); however, Truman students (31.6%) were more likely to eat 3-4 servings of fruit or vegetables per day than students in the reference group (28.9%). Few Truman students (5.4%) or reference group students (6.1%) reported eating zero servings of fruits and vegetables per day.

Turning to physical activity, within the past 7 days more Truman students (61.7%) had engaged in moderate-intensity cardio or aerobic exercise for at least 30 minutes for 1-4 days than had reference group students (56.6%). Likewise, more Truman students (31.6%) had engaged in vigorous-intensity cardio or aerobic exercise for at least 30 minutes for 1-2 days than had reference group students (30.2%). Truman (31.9%) and reference group students (31.4%) were similar in their involvement in vigorous-intensity cardio or aerobic exercise for at least 30 minutes for 3-7 days.

Student Residential Experiences – EBI Assessment

The Office of Student Affairs routinely surveys students to evaluate their residential experience. As a higher education institution that focuses on the educational experiences of traditional-aged college students and has a requirement for first-year

students to live on campus, our residential experience is of critical importance to the University. We utilize instruments published by Education Benchmarking, Inc. (EBI). The EBI assessments allow Truman to compare our performance on a number of factors against that of three comparison groups. These comparison groups include six institutions that we are allowed to select, all of the institutions participating in the assessment that are included in our Carnegie Classification, and all of the institutions participating in the assessment regardless of Carnegie Classification.

Last year, the EBI Resident Assessment was sent to 2,220 students living in the residence halls. From this sample, 1,047 students responded (47% response rate). The instrument utilizes a seven-point scale. The following chart summarizes our means on each factor. A green arrow indicates that we exceeded the mean of the comparison group. A red arrow indicates we are below the mean of that comparison group. No arrow indicates statistically similar means.

Factor Description	Truman Mean	Select 6	Carnegie Class	All Institutions
Factor 1. Satisfaction: Hall/Apt Student Staff	6.04	↑	↑	↑
Factor 2. Satisfaction: Hall/Apt Programming	5.29	↑	↑	↑
Factor 3. Satisfaction: Room/Floor Environment	5.68	↑	↑	↑
Factor 4. Satisfaction: Facilities	5.90	↑	↑	↑
Factor 5. Satisfaction: Services Provided	5.68	↑	↑	↑
Factor 6. Satisfaction: Room Assignment or Change Process	5.71	↑	↑	↑
Factor 7. Satisfaction: Safety and Security	6.36	↑	↑	↑
Factor 8. Satisfaction: Roommates	6.08	↑	↑	↑
Factor 9. Satisfaction: Dining Services	5.22	↑	↑	↑

Factor 10. Learning: Personal Interactions	5.37		↑	↑
Factor 11. Learning: Faculty/Staff Interactions	4.83	↓		
Factor 12. Learning: Diversity and Social Justice	5.20			
Factor 13. Learning: Intrapersonal Development	5.01	↓	↓	↓
Factor 14. Learning: Life Skills	4.99	↓	↓	↓
Factor 15. Learning: Risk Behaviors	4.88	↓	↓	↓
Factor 16. Learning: Stewardship	4.75	↓	↓	
Factor 17. Learning: LLC Connections and Support	5.15			
Factor 18. On-Campus Living Improved Integration to College	5.62	↑	↑	↑
Factor 19. On-Campus Living Enhanced Retention and Graduation	5.48			
Factor 20. Overall Satisfaction	5.78	↑	↑	↑
Factor 21. Overall Learning	4.86	↓	↓	
Factor 22. Overall Program Effectiveness	5.35	↑	↑	↑

Student Organization Impact – EBI Greek Assessment

Out-of-classroom experiences are critical to the educational experience Truman provides for students. During the last academic year, 573 members of Greek organizations participated in an EBI survey designed to evaluate the experiences of students participating in social Greek organizations at Truman. This represented a 53.5% response rate. The chart below shows the Truman sample mean compared with the select six, Carnegie Class and all institutions on the 18 factors assessed.

Factor Description	Truman Mean	Select 6	Carnegie Class	All Institutions
Factor 1. Satisfaction: Housing	5.32	↑		↑
Factor 2. Satisfaction: Safety and Security	5.99	↑	↑	↑
Factor 3. Satisfaction: Fraternity/Sorority Programming	5.57		↑	↑
Factor 4. Learning: Sense of Belonging	6.29	↑	↑	↑
Factor 5. Learning: Diverse Interactions	6.06			↑
Factor 6. Learning: Interpersonal Relationship Skills	6.42	↑	↑	↑
Factor 7. Learning: Interpersonal Competence	5.95			↑
Factor 8. Learning: Leadership Skills	5.79			↑
Factor 9. Learning: Personal Development Skills	5.83			↑
Factor 10. Learning: Healthy Behaviors	5.84	↓		
Factor 11. Learning: Self-Worth	6.17			↑
Factor 12. Learning: Intrapersonal Competence	6.00			↑
Factor 13. Learning: Principled Dissent	5.70			
Factor 14. Learning: Collaboration	5.90		↑	↑
Factor 15. Learning: Effective Chapter Leadership	5.96			↑
Factor 16. Overall Satisfaction	6.30	↑	↑	↑
Factor 17. Overall Learning	5.99			↑
Factor 18. Overall Program Effectiveness	6.12			↑

Student Organizations – Student Leadership EBI

We also utilized an EBI instrument last year to look at the experience of students participating in any student organization. The response rate of 19.4% was disappointing. Below is the Truman mean of the 679 participants and a visual comparison with the other three groups.

Factor Description	Truman Mean	Select 6	Carnegie Class	All Institutions
Factor 1. Organization Advisor	4.49	↓	↓	↓
Factor 2. Leadership Training	4.14	↓	↓	↓
Factor 3. Interpersonal Competence	5.60	↓	↓	↓
Factor 4. Intrapersonal Competence	5.55		↓	↓
Factor 5. Collaboration Among Leaders	5.76			
Factor 6. Collaboration Among Members	5.63			
Factor 7. Effective Leadership	5.41			
Factor 8. Self-Knowledge	5.85			
Factor 9. Diverse Populations	5.46	↓		↓
Factor 10. Practical Competencies: Contracts and Budgets	4.26	↓		↓
Factor 11. Practical Competencies: Management	5.14	↓	↓	↓
Factor 12. Principled Dissent	5.46	↓		↓
Factor 13. Cognitive Complexity	5.42	↓	↓	↓
Factor 14. Outcome	5.34	↓		↓
Factor 15. Overall Program Effectiveness	5.82			

Conclusions:

Truman students continue to report elevated stress levels when compared with other student populations. Our students also report negative consequences of stress on their academic performance at a higher rate than comparison groups. EBI assessments indicate that Truman has an opportunity to impact learning in more significant ways through our residential experiences. Opportunities exist for improving health-related behaviors and for improving our comparative performance in a number of areas for our

students involved in social Greek organizations. Although most means are relatively high, clearly there are many areas in which we can improve the positive impact that student organization participation has on students in comparison with other institutions. Advisor and leadership training as well as practical competencies may be promising places to start.