



IOWA

THE NATIONAL COLLEGE HEALTH ASSESSMENT III

**UNDERGRADUATE INTERNATIONAL 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. Eight hundred seventy-two undergraduates completed the survey. Of those, 30 students (or 3.4% of respondents) reported that they were international students.

Important considerations should be taken into account:

- The findings from this study are impossible to compare to pre-pandemic NCHA survey results. For instance, 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.
- Other limitations that hamper our ability to comparatively analyze this cycle's findings include significant changes in:
 1. NCHA survey questions and format - Student Wellness administered the new version of the National College Health Assessment (NCHA-III) for the first time this year, after administering an older survey version (NCHA-II) for several years. Many questions on NCHA-III survey were not the same as in previous years, which limited the ability to examine health behavior trends over time.
 2. Survey administration – The administration methods were very different from past years. In previous years, surveys took place in physical classrooms with students over a period of a few days, but in 2021, the survey moved online, and students answered over a three-week period.
 3. Response rate – The pandemic and the survey changes likely contributed to far lower response rates compared to previous years (e.g., 9.7% in 2021 compared to 99% in 2019). The low response rates also make it difficult to know if those who responded were a good reflection of the entire student body.

Student Wellness plans to administer the NCHA-III again in spring of 2023.

This report & NCHA-II reports 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.

COMPARISON TO UI DOMESTIC UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

UI international students are...



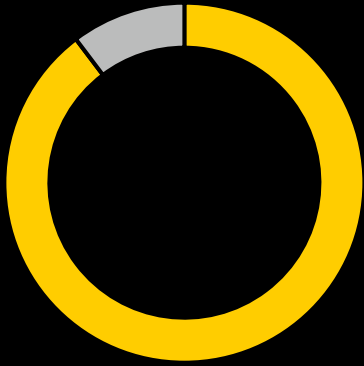
- less likely to use alcohol, e-cigarettes, and cannabis
- more likely to meet recommendations for physical activity
- more likely to report feeling safe on campus and in the surrounding community
- less likely to report having gotten COVID-19



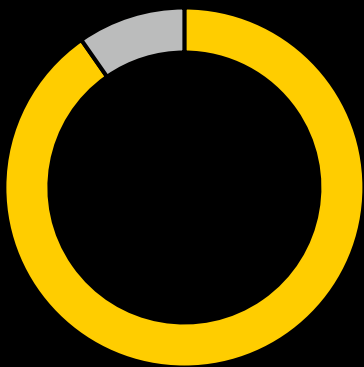
- less likely to report a sense of belonging on campus
- more likely to report a loved one dying from COVID-19
- more likely to attempt suicide
- less likely to report having supportive and rewarding relationships



GENERAL HEALTH



International



UI Undergraduate

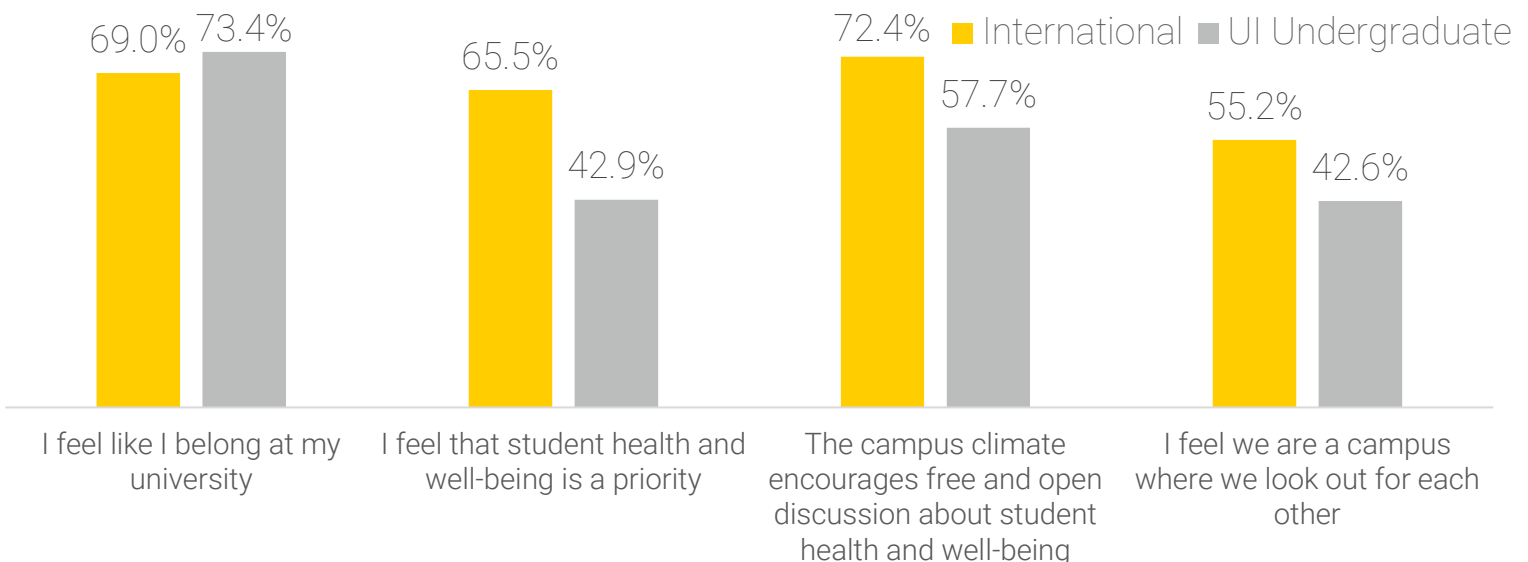
89.7% of UI international undergraduate students reported their health as good, very good, or excellent, compared to 90.3% of UI undergraduate students.

ACADEMIC IMPEDIMENTS*

1. Procrastination: 46.7%
2. Stress: 30.0%
3. Anxiety: 20.0%
4. Chronic health conditions: 16.7%
 - Cold/Virus or other respiratory illness: 16.7%
 - Death of someone close: 16.7%
 - Depression: 16.7%
8. Headaches/migraines: 13.3%
 - Health of someone close: 13.3%
10. ADHD: 10.0%

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

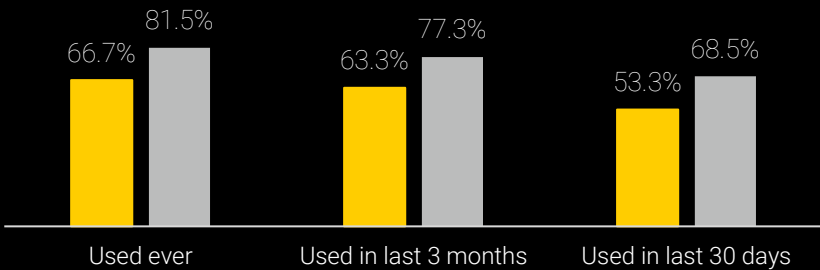
CAMPUS CULTURE*



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

ALCOHOL USE

■ International ■ UI Undergraduate



High-risk Drinking

23.3% of UI undergraduate international students had at least one instance of high-risk drinking in the last two weeks (females: 4+ drinks / males: 5+ drinks), compared to 33.0% of UI undergraduates.

Number of Drinks*

3.2 average number of drinks last time they drank alcohol in a social setting
UI undergraduate: **3.9**

73.7% of students drank 4 or fewer drinks the last time they drank alcohol in a social setting
UI undergraduate: **67.8%**

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

Blood Alcohol Concentration*

0.04 average blood alcohol concentration (BAC)
UI undergraduate: **0.06**

75.0% of students had an average BAC of <0.08
UI undergraduate: **73.4%**

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

ASSIST Scores

5.6 average alcohol score on the Alcohol, Smoking & Substance Involvement Screening Test (ASSIST)
UI undergraduate: **7.1**

10.0% of students had a moderate-risk ASSIST score
UI undergraduate: **14.8%**

0.0% of students had a high-risk ASSIST score
UI undergraduate: **0.9%**

Negative Consequences

42.9% of UI international undergraduate students who used alcohol in the last 12 months experienced at least one negative consequence from their use.

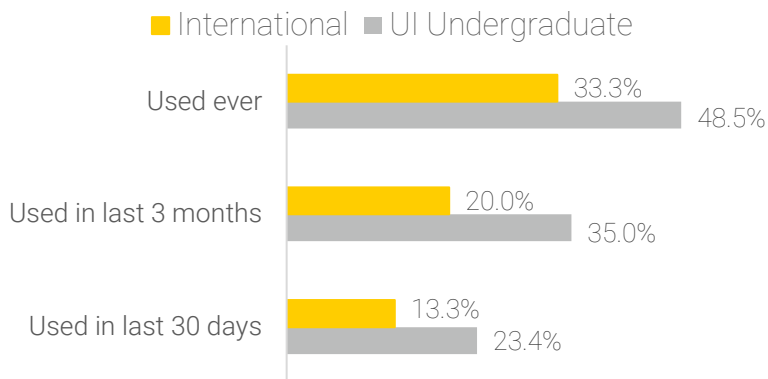
1. Did something I regretted: 23.8%
2. Unprotected sex: 20.0%
3. Brownout: 19.0%
4. Blackout: 9.5%
5. Physically injured myself: 4.8%
6. Trouble with university: 4.8%



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

OTHER SUBSTANCE USE

Cannabis



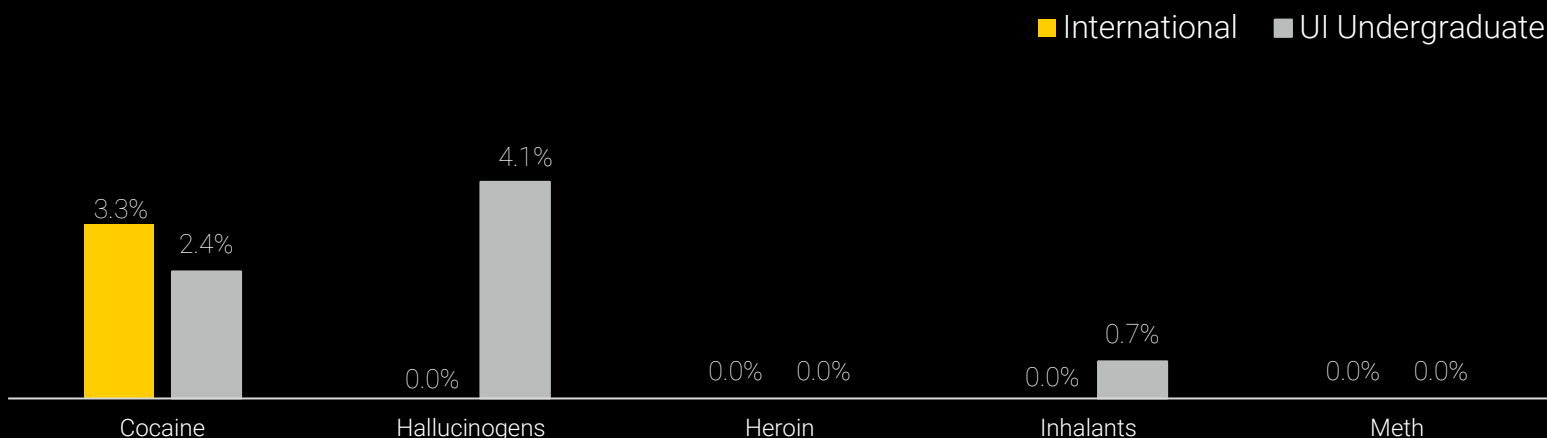
50.0% of UI international undergraduate students reporting cannabis use in the last 30 days have driven within 6 hours of use at least once, compared to 35.5% of UI undergraduates who have used cannabis.

0.0% of UI international undergraduate students reported that cannabis had negatively impacted their academics in the last 12 months, compared to 2.6% of UI undergraduates.

Cannabis ASSIST Scores

International Students:	3.8 average	6.7% moderate-risk	0.0% high-risk
Undergraduate Students:	5.9 average	20.6% moderate-risk	1.1% high-risk

Other Illicit Drugs (last 3 mo)

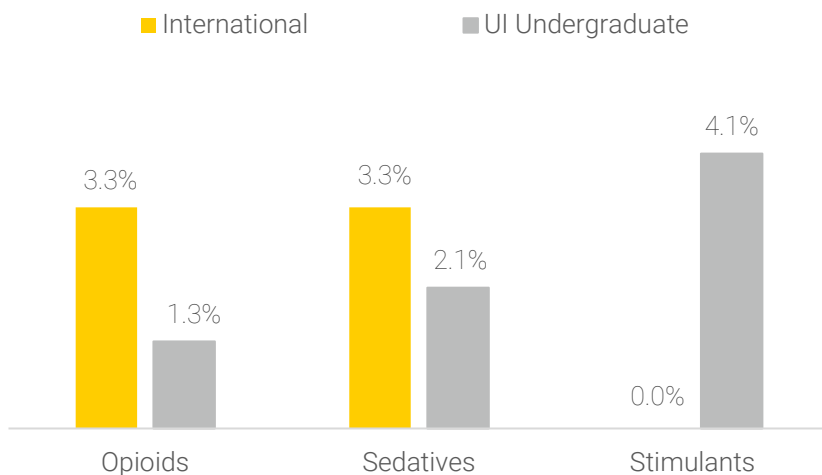


Nicotine

20.0% of UI international undergraduates have used at least one nicotine product in the last 3 months, compared to 25.6% of undergraduates:

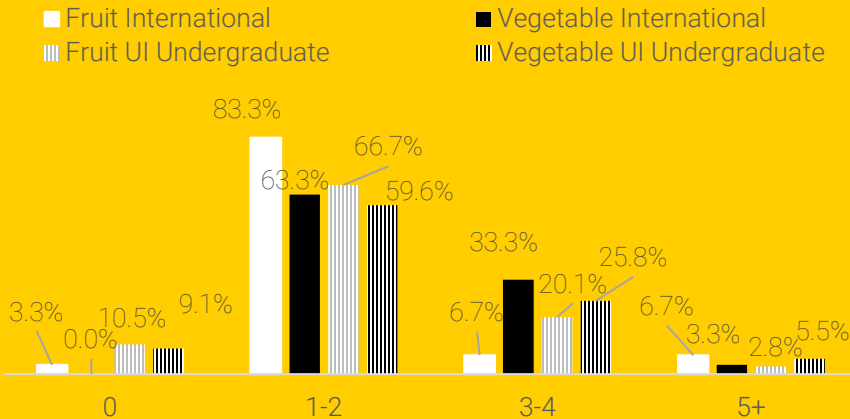
- | | |
|---|--------------|
| 1. E-cigarettes or other vape products: 16.7% | 1. UI: 21.9% |
| 2. Cigarettes: 6.7% | 2. UI: 8.3% |
| Chewing/Smokeless Tobacco: 6.7% | 4. UI: 1.9% |
| 4. Cigars: 3.3% | 3. UI: 3.2% |
| 5. Hookah: 0.0% | 5. UI: 1.5% |

Illegal Use of Prescription Drugs (last 3 mo)

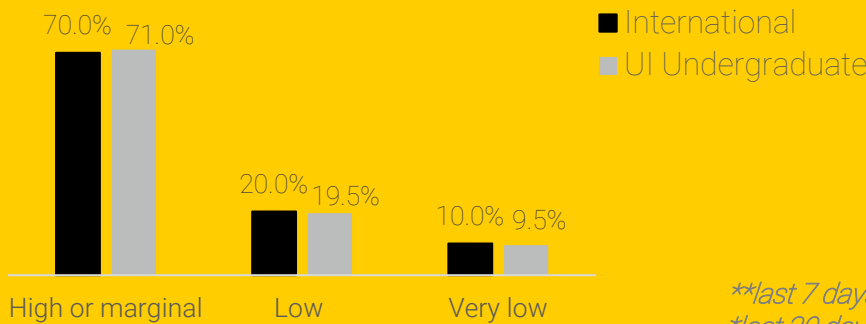


NUTRITION & FOOD SECURITY

Average Daily Fruit & Vegetable Intake**



Food Security* (USDA Food Security Index)



**last 7 days
*last 30 days

60.0%
drink 1+ sweetened
beverage per day**
UI: **64.2%**

3.3%
have had energy
drinks/shots at
least 5 days in
the last month
UI: **9.0%**

Average USDA
Food Security
Index Score*
1.43
UI: **1.19**

43.3%
were unable to
afford to eat
balanced
meals*
UI: **32.2%**

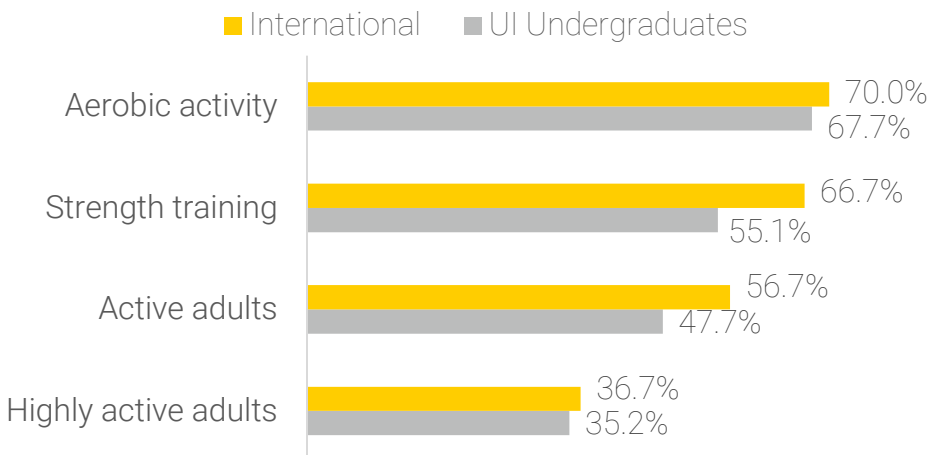
33.3%
cut the size of or
skipped meals*
UI: **22.3%**

10.0%
reported going
hungry*
UI: **9.3%**

13.3%
reported eating
less*
UI: **14.5%**

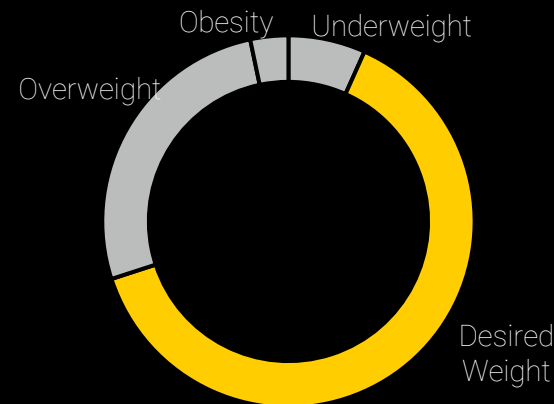
PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

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



63.3% of UI international undergraduate students are in the desired weight range (BMI of 18.5-24.9), with an average BMI of 23.0. Despite that, 46.7% are trying to lose weight.

Average UI undergraduate BMI: 24.5

STRESS

76.7% of UI international undergraduates & 78.8% of UI undergraduate students reported a moderate or high stress level in the last year.

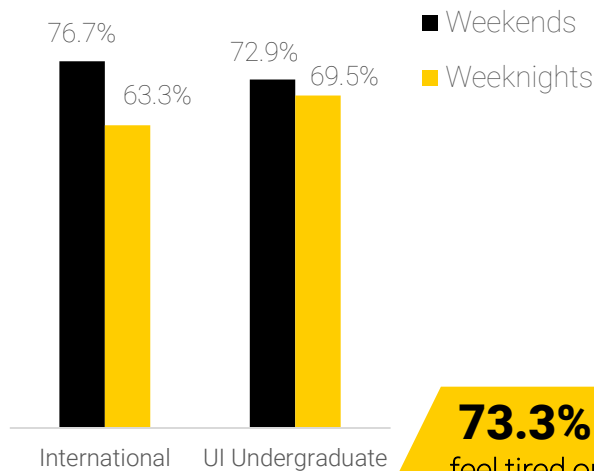
Top Stressors (last 12 mo)

1. Procrastination: 63.3%
2. Academics: 56.7%
3. Personal appearance: 44.8%
4. Health of someone close: 40.0%
5. Finances: 33.3%
6. Career: 31.0%
7. Death of family or friend: 30.0%
8. Intimate relationships: 30.0%
9. Faculty: 16.7%
10. Family: 16.7%

90.0% of UI international undergraduates & 92.7% UI undergrads reported at least one thing (of 18) to be difficult or challenging, with the average UI international student reporting experiencing 4.1 challenges/stressors in the last year.

SLEEP

63.3% of international students get the recommended 7-9 hours of sleep on weeknights, compared to 76.7% on weekends.

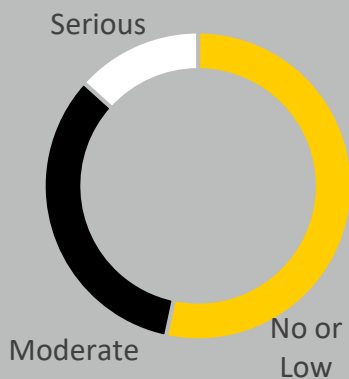


73.3% feel tired or sleepy 3+ days/week
UI: **73.0%**

70.0% nap at least once a week
UI: **57.7%**

MENTAL HEALTH

Psychological Distress



On the Kessler-6, 33.3% and 13.3% of UI international undergraduate students reported moderate and serious psychological distress, respectively, compared to 24.9% & 21.7% of UI undergraduate students.

Conditions

20.0% of UI international undergraduate students reported having one mental health condition, and 13.3% reported having two or more, compared to 13.0% and 29.1% of UI undergraduate students.

Top conditions ever diagnosed include:

1. Anxiety: 16.7% International & 33.8% UI
2. Depression: 13.3% International & 26.6% UI
- ADD/ADHD: 13.3% International & 10.5% UI

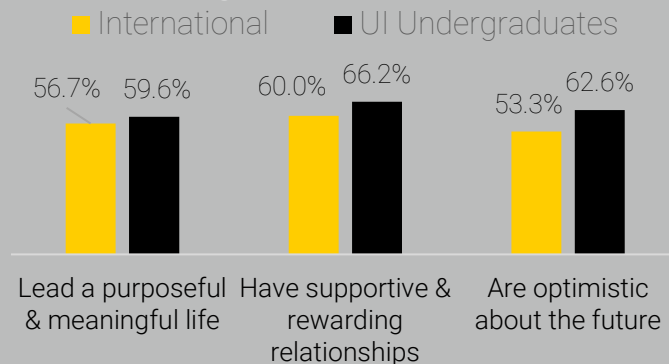
Self-Harm

10.0% of UI international undergraduates have attempted self-injury and 6.7% have attempted suicide in the last 12 months compared to 10.6% & 2.0% of UI undergraduate students.

Services

40.0% of UI international undergraduates reported receiving psychological or mental health services in their lifetime, and 30.0% reported using them in the last 12 months, compared to 50.1% & 33.1% of UI undergraduate students.

Flourishing



*percent of students who agree or strongly agree

SEXUAL HEALTH

	Had Sex in Last 30 Days		Mostly/Always Use Barrier*	
	Int'l	UI	Int'l	UI
Vaginal Sex	50.0%	42.0%	53.3%	43.6%
Oral Sex	43.3%	41.3%	0.0%	4.5%
Anal Sex	0.0%	3.7%	0.0%	21.9%

*among sexually active students

Average number of sexual partners in the last 12 months*

1.5
UI: 2.0

100.0% used pregnancy prevention the last time they had vaginal intercourse*
UI: 92.2%

0.0% experienced unintentional pregnancy in the last 12 months*

Top pregnancy preventions*:
Birth control pills: 42.1%
External condoms: 36.8%

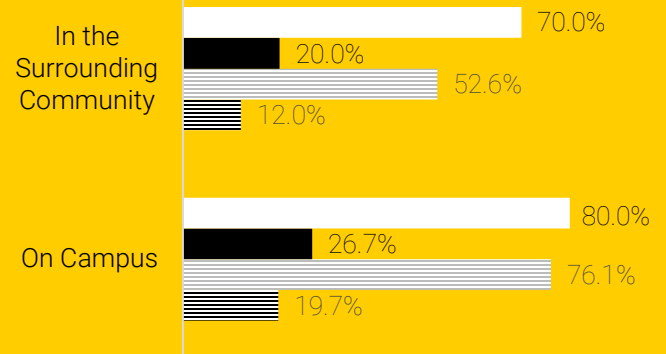
21.1% have used emergency contraception in the last 12 months*

10.0% have ever been tested for HIV

SAFETY

Feelings of Safety

■ During the Day- International ■ At Night - International
▨ During the Day - UI Undergraduate ▨ At Night - UI Undergraduate



Behaviors

Mostly or Always Wear a Helmet*:

Motorcycle or scooter: 40.0%, UI: 45.0%
Bicycle: 35.7%, UI: 39.3%

*last 12 months; of those who have ridden

Driving:

While texting/emailing/using apps**: 63.6%, UI: 60.0%

Had an accident***: 4.5%, UI: 6.3%

**last 2 weeks; of those who have driven

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

VIOLENCE*

Intimate Partner Violence

3.3% were called names, insulted or put down, UI: 9.0%

3.3% had partner(s) who insisted on knowing who they were with and where they were or who tried to limit contact with family/friends, UI: 5.0%

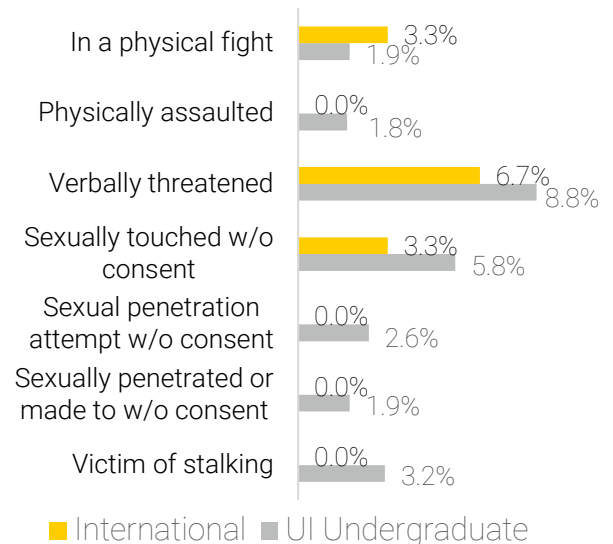
0.0% were pushed, grabbed, shoved, slapped, kicked, bit, choked or hit without consent, UI: 2.4%

0.0% were forced into unwanted sexual contact by being held down or hurt in some way, UI: 1.3%

0.0% were pressured into unwanted sexual contact by threats, coercion, alcohol or other drugs, UI: 2.8%

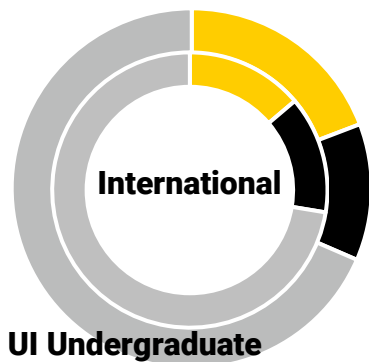
*last 12 months

Violence Outside Intimate Relationships



COVID-19

Experience

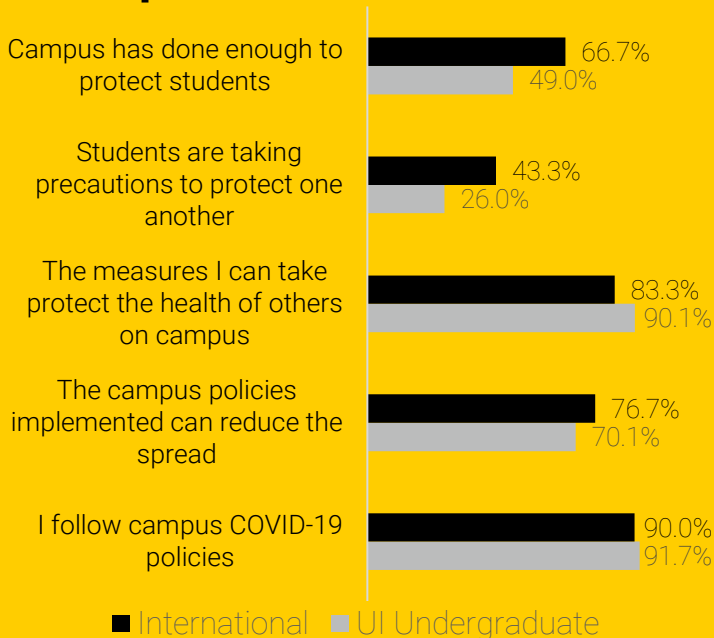


13.8% of UI international undergraduates reported that they had COVID-19 (confirmed by a healthcare provider; gold) and another **13.8%** suspected they had COVID-19 (black). Of those who had confirmed or suspected COVID-19, 37.5% of international undergraduates reported moderate and 0.0% reported severe symptoms, and 0.0% reported that they had been hospitalized from COVID-19.

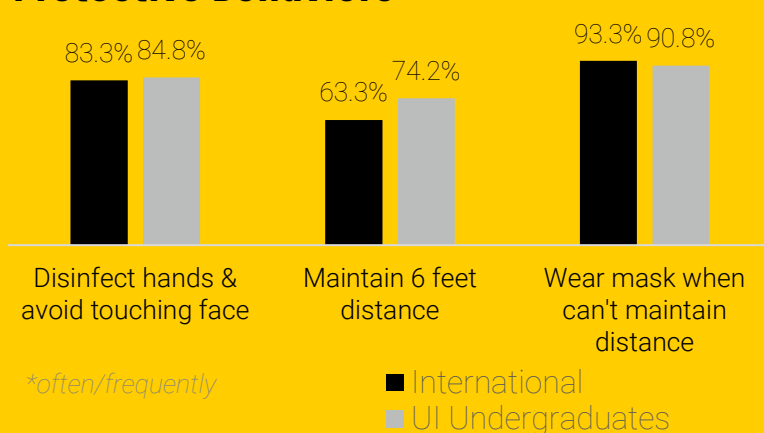
20.7% of UI international undergraduates had a loved one who had long-term effects from COVID-19, compared to 24.9% of UI undergraduates.

24.1% of UI international undergraduates had a loved one who died from COVID-19, compared to 10.6% of UI undergraduates.

Perceptions



Protective Behaviors*



83.3% said they would be likely to get the COVID-19 vaccine once available (UI undergraduates: 74.8%), and an additional **6.7%** had already been vaccinated before taking the survey (Feb-Mar 2021; UI undergraduates: 13.9%).

Pandemic Impact

72.4% of UI international undergraduates & 70.6% of UI undergraduates reported that their professors were supportive.

26.7% of UI international undergraduates & 36.8% of UI undergraduates reported that as a result of the pandemic, they had witnessed discriminatory or hostile behavior towards others based on race/ethnicity.

13.3% of UI international undergraduates & 3.3% of UI undergraduates said they experienced discrimination or hostile behavior because of their race/ethnicity.

66.7% of UI international undergraduates & 52.0% of UI undergraduates who have received counseling or therapy thought access to mental health services became more difficult during the pandemic.

53.3% of UI international undergraduates & 55.5% of UI undergraduates had more financial stress and **80.0%** of UI international undergraduates & 88.6% of UI undergraduates had more overall stress due to the pandemic.