

Overview

This snapshot covers preliminary high-level findings from three ongoing surveys conducted on the UASU Perks platform.

- Pandemic Pain: \$\$\$ (n=338, open August 13-31)
- Pandemic Pain: Mental Health (n=305, open August 16-31)
- Pandemic Pain: Physical Health (n=210, open August 18-31)

The main limitation of these surveys is their simplicity: each has a handful of questions, mostly multiple choice, with very limited demographic information.

Financial Impact - Summary

- Significant financial impact on family. (73% of respondents have been financially dependent on their family to some degree during the pandemic.)
- Delayed financial independence for upper-level students.
- Two out of five respondents reported that the pandemic harmed their financial situation.
- One out of three respondents anticipates serious financial strain this semester; 4% think they may need to drop out this semester for financial reasons.
- Some faculties reported above-average rates of financial impact: Law, ALES, Nursing, Augustana, Education, and Open Studies.
- Financial impact was especially pronounced among students who reported that they and their partner supported each other. We suggest that a cohort of young families have been facing disproportionate challenges.
- Two out of five respondents feel like they do not have access to emergency financial support/aid if they need it.
- Two out of three respondents are not aware of on-campus resources that can provide information on financial aid.

Mental Health Impact - Summary

- 55% of respondents said the pandemic had negatively impacted their mental health 'a lot' or 'more than anything I've ever been through.'
- 29% definitely or probably expect to need additional assistance to sustain a healthy mental state.
- 24% definitely or probably feel like they do not have access to on-campus services that support mental health, if needed.
- Several respondents reported suicide attempts or suicidal ideation; others reported developing eating disorders.

- When asked whether they had access to resources that sustained their mental health during the pandemic, over $\frac{1}{3}$ of respondents answered with some form of 'no.' (The proportion for some form of 'yes' was 1/13.)
- One out of seven respondents had sought counseling or therapy, with mixed results. Several students noted cost and wait times as barriers.

Physical Health Impact - Summary

- Compared to their health before the pandemic, 52% felt somewhat or much less healthy now, on a 5-point Likert scale.
- 4% have had COVID-19.
- 91% have had at least one COVID-19 vaccination shot; 4% plan to get vaccinated; 3% don't plan to get vaccinated.
- Consistent with previous food insecurity surveys, $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{3}$ of respondents are food insecure.
 - "Do you feel like you're able to consistently afford and get access to the food you need?" On a 5-point Likert scale, 29% chose the lowest three options ('more or less,' 'not really,' and 'never').
 - "During the pandemic, have you skipped meals due to the cost of food?"
 - Yes, once or twice a month: 15%
 - Yes, once or twice a week: 6%
 - Yes, more than twice a week: 5%
- Roughly half of respondents expressed concern about elevated risk of catching COVID-19. Associated concerns included immunocompromised status and other preexisting conditions, density/crowding, the added threat of the delta variant, a strong desire for mandatory vaccination, mental health issues, and worries about needing to return to lockdown.