

Student Financial Wellness Survey Fall 2023 Supplemental Report on Mental Health

Alamo Colleges District

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Trellis Strategies is a leading strategic research and consulting firm focused on advancing postsecondary education and strengthening the workforce. Our commitment is to provide unparalleled insights into the modern learner experience, spanning from application through graduation. Leveraging over four decades of experience in serving higher education institutions and assisting students in navigating intricate processes, Trellis Strategies' dedicated team possesses the knowledge, insight, and expertise to empower organizations to turn data into impactful action and tangible results.

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Guided by our mission, we navigate the non-linear landscape of postsecondary education, assisting institutions in adapting policies and programs to accommodate diverse learner journeys. By dismantling barriers in policy and processes, we aim to enhance learner outcomes and rebuilding trust in the credentialing process. We are dedicated to the belief that education serves as the cornerstone for unlocking new opportunities, fostering individual economic mobility, and growing community prosperity. For more information, visit our website: www.trellisstrategies.org/about-us/

**Trellis research supports data-driven decision making
at institutions. Our studies have included:**

495

Reports in 2023

3.4+

Million students surveyed
since 2018

30+

Three decades of
organizational research
experience

About the Student Financial Wellness Survey

The Student Financial Wellness Survey (SFWS) is a self-reported, online survey that documents the financial wellbeing and success indicators of postsecondary students across the nation. The SFWS was designed and implemented by Trellis Strategies, starting in 2018. Since then, 3.1 million students have been surveyed at 263 institutions in 34 states.

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Want to participate in the Fall 2024 implementation of SFWS? Contact us at research@trellisstrategies.org.

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Executive Summary

The SFWS provides a snapshot of student wellbeing during the fall of 2023. This section highlights key metrics and select survey findings related to mental health to help Alamo Colleges District better understand students’ experiences and provide them the support needed to reach their academic potential. Comments and requests for additional information regarding this report are welcome.

Table 1. Survey Metrics for Alamo Colleges District	
Survey Population	27,244 students
Responses	1,611 students
Response Rate	5.9%
Completion Rate	82%
Median Time Spent	16 minutes

Key Findings: Student Mental Wellbeing at Alamo Colleges District

College students are particularly vulnerable to mental health challenges that can significantly impede their academic performance, social lives, and cognitive abilities. Some students, including students of color and LGBTQIA+ students, are at higher risk of experiencing poor mental health in recent years.

In the 14 days leading up to the survey, 36 percent of students at Alamo Colleges District had experienced symptoms of depression, while 45 percent reported generalized anxiety disorder. These findings underscore the widespread prevalence of mental health concerns among college students. Q72-Q75

- With such high percentages of students facing mental health crises—especially among vulnerable populations that are less likely to seek assistance on their own—institutions like Alamo Colleges District are making quick interventions to keep these students in school, including offering targeted mental health supports, access to free or reduced-cost services, medical counseling, support groups, and more. However, 35 percent of respondents either did not know (33 percent) or indicated, incorrectly, that Alamo Colleges District did not have mental health or counseling services available to students (2 percent). Q76

Survey Frequencies

Q72- Q73: Patient Health Questionnaire-2 (PHQ-2)		Northeast Lakeview College	Northwest Vista College	Palo Alto College	St. Philip's College	Alamo College District	2-year Schools	4-year Schools	All Undergrads
Major Depressive Disorder - Likely	40%	36%	37%	32%	36%	34%	32%	33%	
Major Depressive Disorder - Negative	60%	64%	63%	68%	64%	66%	68%	67%	
	<i>n=191</i>	<i>n=354</i>	<i>n=398</i>	<i>n=418</i>	<i>n=1361</i>	<i>n=27766</i>	<i>n=24862</i>	<i>n=52628</i>	
Q74- Q75: Generalized Anxiety Disorder 2-item Scale (GAD-2)		Northeast Lakeview College	Northwest Vista College	Palo Alto College	St. Philip's College	Alamo College District	2-year Schools	4-year Schools	All Undergrads
Generalized Anxiety Disorder - Likely	56%	47%	44%	38%	45%	45%	45%	45%	
Generalized Anxiety Disorder - Negative	44%	53%	56%	62%	55%	55%	55%	55%	
	<i>n=190</i>	<i>n=354</i>	<i>n=398</i>	<i>n=418</i>	<i>n=1360</i>	<i>n=27730</i>	<i>n=24844</i>	<i>n=52574</i>	
Q76: Does your school have mental health or counseling services available for students?		Northeast Lakeview College	Northwest Vista College	Palo Alto College	St. Philip's College	Alamo College District	2-year Schools	4-year Schools	All Undergrads
Yes	66%	69%	66%	61%	65%	58%	81%	69%	
No	4%	2%	2%	3%	2%	2%	2%	2%	
I don't know	31%	30%	33%	36%	33%	40%	17%	29%	
	<i>n=190</i>	<i>n=354</i>	<i>n=399</i>	<i>n=420</i>	<i>n=1363</i>	<i>n=27803</i>	<i>n=24897</i>	<i>n=52700</i>	

Appendix A: Methodology

The Student Financial Wellness Survey seeks to document the financial well-being and student success outcomes of post-secondary students across the nation. Trellis hosted and delivered the web-based survey in an attempt to understand more about the financial challenges/barriers facing students, how students view their institutions' awareness of those challenges/barriers, and how the challenges/barriers alter how students view/attend college. All participating institutions receive a school-level report of findings with comparison response groups from their sector.

In order to host and deliver the survey to students, participating institutions provide Trellis with the contact information and select demographics (to allow assessment of representativeness) of study participants. Participants in the SFWS are asked to consent to having additional select student-level records (e.g., number of credit hours, gender, age) released by their institution for matching with their survey responses. Participating institutions with enrollments above 10,000 students could choose to randomly sample 5,000 of their students or provide their entire population. Institutions with enrollments lower than 10,000 included all students in the survey population.

To maximize student responses, Trellis contributed fifty, \$50 Amazon gift cards which were randomly awarded to 50 study participants. Institutions were encouraged to supplement the survey-wide incentive offered by Trellis with their own incentives where possible. For survey-wide incentives provided by Trellis, Trellis randomly chose incentive winners, contacted the incentive winners, and disbursed the incentives. For institutional incentives, Trellis randomly chose incentive winners and provided institutions with contact information to disburse the incentives. If a participant withdrew from the survey before completion, they were still eligible for the incentive drawing.

Data were de-identified in order to create a dataset for analysis. In most instances, reports primarily consist of descriptive statistics; however, additional exploratory data analysis was conducted in order to identify trends among groups of respondents and answer the research questions. Analyses conducted include chi-square tests and reliability tests to construct and validate indexes contained within the survey instrument. All data are reported in aggregate form only and reported data do not identify individual institutions outside of confidential institution-level reports.

Appendix B: Scales

Scales: Patient Health Questionnaire-2 (Q72-73) and Generalized Anxiety Disorder-2 (Q74-75)

To assess potential mental health challenges among respondents, two validated scales were used—the Patient Health Questionnaire-2 (PHQ-2) and the Generalized Anxiety Disorder 2-item (GAD-2).

Patient Health Questionnaire-2 (PHQ-2) (Q72-73)

This survey used a modified, short-form scale first used by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) that measures the frequency of depressed mood and the inability to feel pleasure over the past seven days.⁷

- The purpose of the PHQ-2 is to act as a screener for depression in a “first-step” approach. Respondents are asked: Over the last 14 days, how often have you been bothered by...
 - Having little interest or pleasure in doing things?
 - Feeling down, depressed, or hopeless?
- The scale includes the following answer options: “Not at all” (score of 0); “Several days” (score of 1); “More than half the days” (score of 2); and “Nearly every day” (score of 3).
- A PHQ-2 score ranges from 0-6, with a score of 3 acting as the optimal cut point when screening for depression. If a respondent scores 3 or greater, a diagnosis of major depressive disorder is likely.⁷

Generalized Anxiety Disorder 2-item Scale (GAD-2) (Q74-75)

This survey also incorporates a modified, short-form instrument used to screen for generalized anxiety disorder (GAD) by the CDC.⁸

- Similar to the PHQ-2, respondents are asked: Over the last 14 days, how often have you been bothered by...
 - Feeling nervous, anxious or on edge?
 - Not being able to stop or control worrying?
- The scale includes the following options: “Not at all” (score of 0); “Several days” (score of 1); “More than half the days” (score of 2); and “Nearly every day” (score of 3).
- A GAD-2 score ranges from 0-6, with a score of 3 acting as the optimal cut point when screening for generalized anxiety disorder. If a respondent scores 3 or greater, a diagnosis of generalized anxiety disorder is likely. Using this cut-off of 3 points, the GAD-2 has a sensitivity of 86% and specificity of 83%.

Appendix C: Participating Institutions

Participating Institutions in the Fall 2023 SFWS

The Fall 2023 implementation of the Student Financial Wellness Survey captures the attitudes, perspectives, and self-reported financial behaviors of over 63,000 students from 142 colleges and universities in 25 states. Student respondents attended public universities, private colleges, and community colleges that range in size from over 64,000 students to fewer than 600. Student responses from all schools were aggregated to provide a comparison group for individual institutional findings by school sector.

Four-Year Public Institutions (35)

Alabama State University (AL)
Alcorn State University (MS)
Central Washington University (WA)
Florida Atlantic University (FL)
Florida International University (FL)
Indiana University – Bloomington (IN)
Indiana University – Columbus (IN)
Indiana University – East (IN)
Indiana University – Fort Wayne (IN)
Indiana University – Indianapolis (IN)
Indiana University – Kokomo (IN)
Indiana University – Northwest (IN)
Indiana University – South Bend (IN)
Indiana University – Southeast (IN)
Mississippi State University (MS)
Mississippi University for Women (MS)
Purdue University (IN)
Sam Houston State University (TX)
State University of New York Oneonta (NY)
Sul Ross State University (TX)
Tarleton State University (TX)
Texas A&M University – College Station (TX)
Texas A&M University – Commerce (TX)
Texas A&M University – Kingsville (TX)
Texas A&M University – San Antonio (TX)
Texas Tech University (TX)
Texas Woman’s University (TX)
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (NC)
University of Oklahoma (OK)
University of Science and Arts at Oklahoma (OK)
University of Southern Mississippi (MS)
University of Texas at Austin (TX)
University of Texas at El Paso (TX)
University of West Alabama (AL)
University of Wyoming (WY)

Four-Year Private Institutions (12)

Concordia University Texas (TX)
Herzing University (WI)
Houston Christian University (TX)
Lafayette College (PA)
Lubbock Christian University (TX)
Martin Luther College (MN)
Midway University (KY)
Our Lady of the Lake University (TX)
Peirce College (PA)
Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine (PA)
South Texas College of Law Houston (TX)
University of New Haven (CT)

Two-Year Institutions* (95)

- Alvin Community College (TX)
- Amarillo College (TX)
- Angelina College (TX)
- Ashland Community and Technical College (KY)
- Atlanta Technical College (GA)
- Austin Community College (TX)
- Bay de Noc Community College (MI)
- Belmont College (OH)
- Big Sandy Community and Technical College (KY)
- Bluegrass Community and Technical College (KY)
- Brazosport College (TX)
- Cape Fear Community College (NC)
- Carteret Community College (NC)
- Catawba Valley Community College (NC)
- Central Ohio Technical College (OH)
- Central Texas College (TX)
- Chattanooga State Community College (TN)
- Cincinnati State Technical and Community College (OH)
- Clarendon College (TX)
- Clark State College (OH)
- Coastal Bend College (TX)
- College of the Mainland (TX)
- Cuyahoga Community College (OH)
- Dallas College (TX)
- Delgado Community College (LA)
- Edison State Community College (OH)
- El Paso Community College (TX)
- Elizabethtown Community and Technical College (KY)
- Fayetteville Technical Community College (NC)
- Galveston College (TX)
- Gateway Community and Technical College (KY)
- Glen Oaks Community College (MI)
- Grayson College (TX)
- Harcum College (PA)
- Harper College (IL)
- Hazard Community and Technical College (KY)
- Henderson Community College (KY)
- Henry Ford College (MI)
- Hill College (TX)
- Hopkinsville Community College (KY)
- Houston Community College (TX)
- Jefferson Community and Technical College (KY)
- John Wood Community College (IL)
- Kalamazoo Valley Community College (MI)
- Kilgore College (TX)
- Madisonville Community College (KY)
- Marion Technical College (OH)
- Maysville Community and Technical College (KY)
- McLennan Community College (TX)
- Mid Michigan College (MI)
- Midland College (TX)
- Monroe County Community College (MI)
- Mott Community College (MI)
- Navarro College (TX)
- North Central State College (OH)
- Northampton Community College (PA)
- Northeast Iowa Community College (IA)
- Northeast Lakeview College (TX)
- Northeast Texas Community College (TX)
- Northwest State Community College (OH)
- Northwest Vista College (TX)
- Northwestern Michigan College (MI)
- Odessa College (TX)
- Owens State Community College (OH)
- Owensboro Community and Technical College (KY)
- Palo Alto College (TX)
- Panola College (TX)
- Paris Junior College (TX)
- Ranger College (TX)
- Rhodes State College (OH)
- Roanoke-Chowan Community College (NC)
- Rowan-Cabarrus Community College (NC)
- Somerset Community College (KY)
- Southcentral Kentucky Community and Technical College (KY)
- Southeast Kentucky Community and Technical College (KY)
- Southeastern Community College (NC)
- Southern Maine Community College (ME)
- Southwest Texas Junior College (TX)
- St. Philip's College (TX)
- Stanly Community College (NC)
- Stark State College (OH)
- Surry Community College (NC)
- Temple College (TX)
- Texarkana College (TX)
- Texas Southmost College (TX)
- Trident Technical College (SC)
- Tyler Junior College (TX)
- Washington State Community College (OH)
- Waubonsee Community College (IL)
- West Kentucky Community and Technical College (KY)
- West Texas A&M University (TX)
- Western Texas College (TX)
- Wharton County Junior College (TX)
- Yakima Valley College (WA)
- Zane State College (OH)

*All colleges listed under “Two-Year Institutions” are public colleges with the exception of Harcum College, which is a private nonprofit two-year college.

Endnotes

¹ Schuette, A. (2024). More than miles: Bridging gaps in student transportation for academic success. Trellis Strategies. <https://www.trellisstrategies.org/student-transportation/>

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⁸ Centers for Disease Control. (2021). Anxiety and depression: Household Pulse Survey. Retrieved from: <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/covid19/pulse/mental-health.htm>

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