

Sleep:

Details from the National College Health Assessment II

Student Life Research & Assessment

July 2010

INTRODUCTION

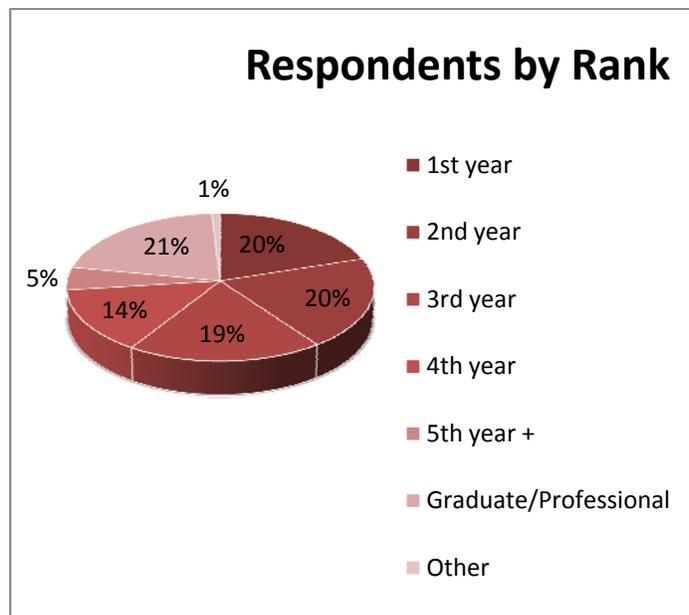
The lack of sleep among the college student population is becoming an increasingly prevalent issue and can be attributed to a number of different factors. Social engagements, academic pressures, and a virtually endless array of personal and environmental stressors can wear on a student at any given time, and in a variety of combinations. And, if not managed appropriately can often result in sleep deprivation. The lack of sleep among students on campus is widespread, yet the dissemination of information regarding its negative effects is not. Student Life offers a number of services that can help a student deal with issues *related* to sleep deprivation, such as Counseling and Consultation Service, Student Advocacy Center, the Student Wellness Center and Student Health Services. Still, information and services targeted at the issue of sleep itself are fewer and less publicized on campus. While efforts have been made to better understand the issue of sleep deprivation of our students, there is work to be done. The National College Health Assessment is one survey that assesses sleep among college students. The information collected in this survey provides a superficial look at the sleep habits of Ohio State students.

The American College Health Association’s National College Health Assessment II was administered in Spring 2009 to 10,000 randomly selected Ohio State students on the Columbus campus; 2,124 students responded, yielding a 21.4% response rate. This was a voluntary web-based survey and assessed topics of general health, mental health, alcohol and other drug use, impacts on academic performance, relationships, sexual wellness, nutrition and exercise.

DEMOGRAPHICS

The average respondent age was 22 years old. Approximately 60% of respondents identified as female and 40% as male. Almost all (94%) of the respondents were full time students and approximately 10% of respondents identified as International students.

Ethnicity	Percent of Total
African American/Black	5.6%
American Indian/Alaska Native	0.8%
Asian/Pacific Islander	9.5%
Caucasian/White	80.2%
Hispanic/Latino(a)	2.5%
Biracial/Multiracial	2.9%
Other	1.8%



HIGHLIGHTS

- Only **11%** of respondents reported that they felt rested on 6 or 7 days of the past week.
- Almost **9%** of respondents do not get enough sleep to feel rested on *any* day of the week.
- Approximately **15%** report a “big” or “very big problem” with sleepiness during daytime activities.
- Approximately **21%** of respondents reported their academics to be negatively affected due to sleep difficulties.
- Over **60%** of respondents reported feeling tired, dragged out or sleepy during the day on at least 3 of the past 7 days.
- Over **20%** of students report that their sleep difficulties have been traumatic or very difficult to handle over the past 12 months.
- Over **54%** of domestic students reported feeling tired, dragged out, or sleepy for more than 2 days in the past week, whereas **61%** of international students reported feeling this way.

FINDINGS

The following questions will provide a more detailed look at the issues surrounding students and their sleep patterns.

In the past 7 days, have you had enough sleep to feel rested in the morning?

Over **56%** of overall respondents felt rested **3 days or fewer** in the past week. Only 31.5% of males and 23.1% of females reported feeling rested on 5 days of the week or more, as shown in the table below.

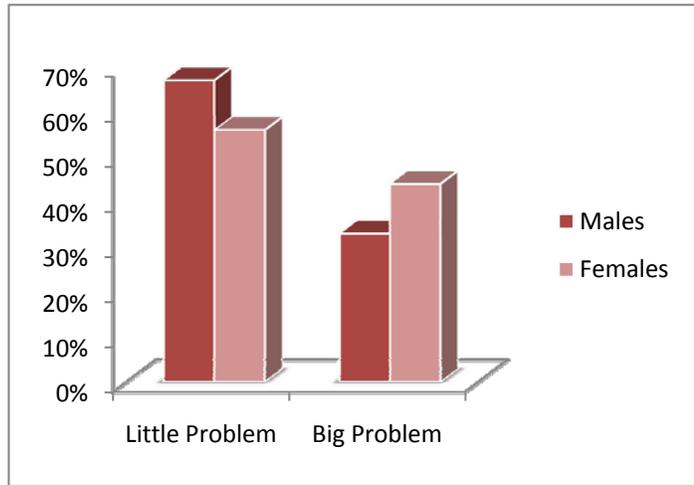
Last 7days: Enough sleep to feel rested	Males	Females
5 days	17.4%	14.5%
6 days	9.3%	5.8%
7days	4.8%	2.8%

Around **30%** of “A” students feel rested on at least 5 days per week, but only **23%** of “B” students and **24%** of “C or lower” students reported feeling rested this many days per week. Just over one **quarter** of freshmen feel rested at least 5 days of the week, whereas almost one **third** of graduate or professional students feel rested this amount of time.

In the past 7 days, how much of a problem with sleepiness have you had during daytime activities?

Most students (**60.2%**) reported they had no problem or only a little problem with feeling sleepy during daytime activities. Females were more likely to report having a moderate, big, or very big problem with daytime sleepiness than males (**43.8%** and **33.4%**, respectively).

Fewer graduate students (**35.8%**) reported a moderate, big, or very big problem with sleepiness, as opposed to **41.3%** of undergraduate students.



Slight Problem= No problem; Little problem

**Big Problem = Moderate problem; Big problem; Very big problem*

In the past 7 days, how often have you felt tired, dragged out, or sleepy during the day?

A **third** of all females reported feeling tired, dragged out, or sleepy during at least 5 of the past 7 days. In contrast, only **21%** of males reported feeling this way during at least 5 of the past 7 days.

More graduate and professional students felt tired, dragged out, or sleepy on 5 or more days in the past week compared to undergraduate students.

Felt tired/sleepy during the day	Undergraduate	Graduate/Professional
0-2 days	39%	43%
3-4 days	33%	27%
5-7 days	28%	31%

Within the last 12 months, has your academic performance been affected by sleep difficulties?

International students experienced more academic impacts as a result of sleep difficulties than domestic students, with **20%** reporting a lower grade on an exam, project, or course compared to only **12%** of domestic students.

A noticeably higher number of students who identify as gay, lesbian, or bisexual, reported a negative impact on their academic performance due to sleep difficulties. Over **31%** of GLBT students had academic impacts compared with **20%** of heterosexual students.

DISCUSSION

In summary, a large majority of Ohio State students are not getting the sleep they need to feel rested on a regular basis. Many students struggle with daytime sleepiness and most do not get enough sleep to feel rested more than 3 days out of the week. Over **20%** of students report having suffered a negative academic impact as a result of sleep difficulties.

Sleep is undeniably an important factor for student success. From the data, it is evident that a lack of adequate sleep can have a profound effect on not only the individual and his/her physical well-being, but on academic success as well. As students, it is important that they be educated regarding the effects of sleep on the mind and body and the way in which it can affect so many other dimensions of wellness.

As Student Life strives to ensure student success and promote wellness, it is helpful to remember that sleep is rarely at the top of students' priorities and it is often overlooked as a crucial aspect of overall health and well-being. With so many services that promote multiple dimensions of wellness, Student Life has the ability to raise awareness around the importance of sleep in a variety of ways. Through collaborative efforts, we can educate students on this topic while continuing to provide services that aid in stress reduction, crisis management, personal development, health and wellness.