



Alcohol and Cannabis Use among Ohio State Students

2021 ACHA-NCHA III Results

Center for the Study of Student Life

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THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
OFFICE OF STUDENT LIFE

INTRODUCTION

The following data are from the American College Health Association's (ACHA) National College Health Assessment III (NCHA), a voluntary, web-based survey that assesses topics of general health and wellness among college students. Ohio State participates in this national survey every few years, most recently in spring 2021. As part of the 2021 survey, student respondents were asked a variety of questions related to their alcohol and cannabis use. Results are highlighted below and include 1,378 student respondents, though not all respondents answered every question. The response rate was 13.8%. Significant changes were made to the NCHA survey instrument for the 2021 survey compared to previous years.

Sample sizes per question differ slightly because students were not required to answer every question and some questions were only displayed based on a student's response to other survey questions. Due to low response rates, results should be interpreted with caution and should not be assumed to be generalizable. Please contact the Center for the Study of Student Life with any questions.

HIGHLIGHTS

- **80.3%** of Ohio State students chose NOT to binge drink¹ the last time they drank in a social setting
- A majority of Ohio State students reported that they have NOT driven after consuming any amount of alcohol in the past 30 days (87.8%)
- **17.5%** of Ohio State students reported never drinking alcohol
- **More than half** of Ohio State students reported that they have never used cannabis for non-medical reasons (58.9%)

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

- **77.0%** of undergraduate students chose NOT to binge drink the last time they drank in a social setting
- **89.6%** of undergraduate students reported that they have NOT driven after consuming any amount of alcohol in the past 30 days
- **19.4%** of undergraduate students reported never drinking alcohol
- A majority (**58.5%**) of undergraduate students reported that they have never used cannabis for non-medical reasons

GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL STUDENTS

- **91.0%** of graduate/professional students chose NOT to binge drink the last time they drank in a social setting
- **82.7%** of graduate/professional students reported that they have NOT driven after consuming any amount of alcohol in the past 30 days
- Only **11.7%** of graduate/professional students reported never drinking alcohol
- A majority (**60.4%**) of graduate/professional students reported that they have never used cannabis for non-medical reasons

¹ Binge drinking is defined as having five or more drinks in one sitting.

RESULTS FOR UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

FREQUENCY OF DRINKING – UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

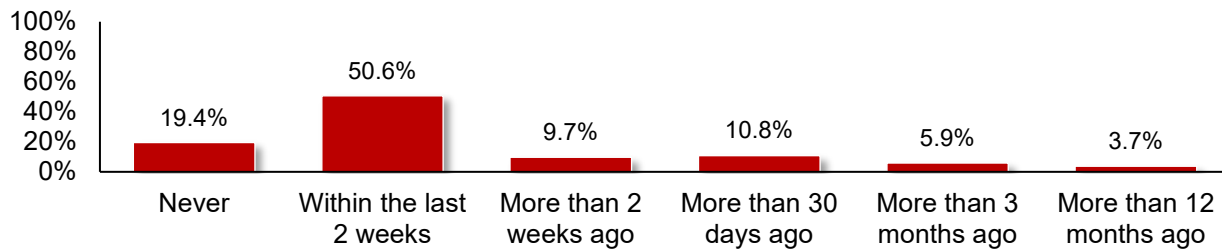
As shown in the table below, a large majority of all Ohio State undergraduate survey respondents chose not to binge drink in the past three months. Of undergraduate students that reported drinking over the past three months, just under 70% had fewer than five drinks the last time they drank in a social setting. When asked how many drinks they consumed the last time they drank alcohol socially, undergraduate students most commonly reported that they had only one to two drinks.

Binge drinking over the last 3 months	Undergraduate (n = 1,040)	All Students (n = 1,370)
Did NOT binge drink	77.0%	80.3%
Did binge drink	23.0%	19.7%

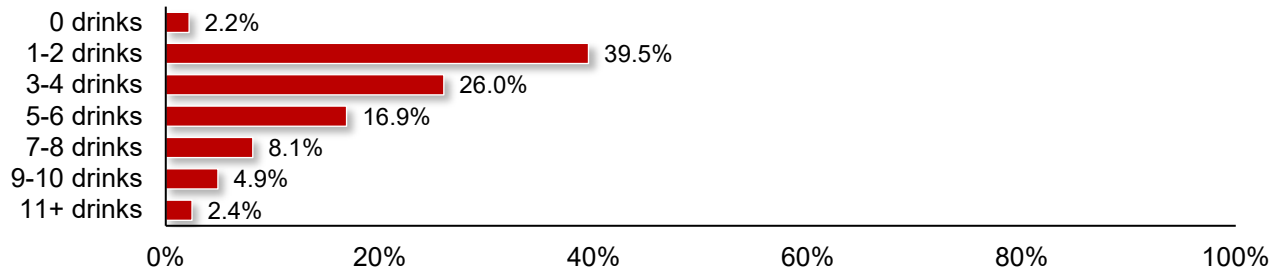
Note. This table and calculation for binge drinking includes students who reported they did not drink alcohol to more fully capture the range of student drinking behaviors.

When asked about the last time they consumed alcohol, 19.4% of undergraduate students at Ohio State reported that they had never consumed alcohol while 9.6% reported that it had been more than three months since their last drink. About half (50.6%) of undergraduates reported that they had consumed alcohol within the last two weeks. Additionally, 89.6% of undergraduate students reported that they do not drive after consuming alcohol.

**When, if ever, was the last time you drank alcohol?
(Undergraduate, n = 1,041)**

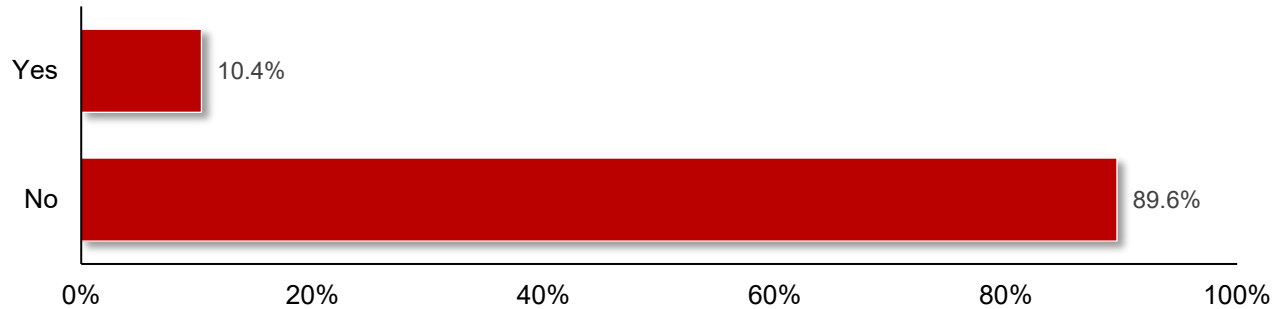


The last time you drank in a social setting, how many drinks of alcohol did you have? (Undergraduate, n = 739)

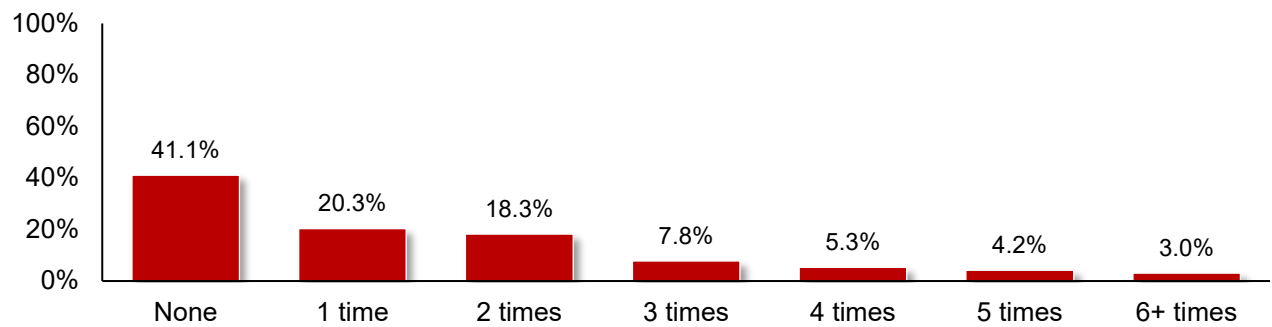


Note. These percentages only include students who reported drinking alcohol within the last three months.

**Within the last 30 days, did you: Drive after drinking any alcohol?
(Undergraduate, n = 531)**

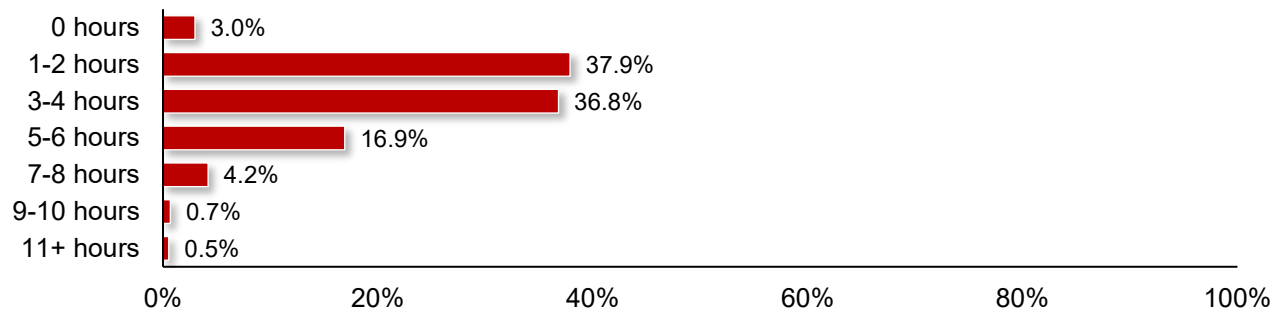


Over the last two weeks, how many times have you had five or more drinks of alcohol in one sitting? (Undergraduate, n = 526)



Note. These percentages only include students who reported drinking alcohol within the last two weeks.

The last time you drank in a social setting, over how many hours did you drink alcohol? (Undergraduate, n = 739)



CANNABIS USE – UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

The NCHA survey instrument asks when, if ever, a respondent used cannabis medically or non-medically. More than half (55.3%) of undergraduates reported that they have never used cannabis for any reason. Of students that have used cannabis for any reason, only 14.5% reported use within the past two weeks. Further, almost 20% of students reported that their last cannabis use occurred at least three months ago. When asked specifically about lifetime non-medical use, 41.6% of undergraduate students reported non-medical cannabis use.

When, if ever, was the last time you used cannabis/marijuana?

	Undergraduate (n = 1,043)
Never	55.3%
Within the last 2 weeks	14.5%
More than 2 weeks ago	4.7%
More than 30 days ago	7.0%
More than 3 months ago	9.4%
More than 12 months ago	9.1%

Note. This table includes medical and non-medical cannabis use.

In your life, which of the following substances have you ever used?

Cannabis	Undergraduate (n = 1,042)
No	58.5%
Yes	41.6%

Note. This table includes non-medical cannabis use only.



RESULTS FOR GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL STUDENTS

FREQUENCY OF DRINKING – GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL STUDENTS

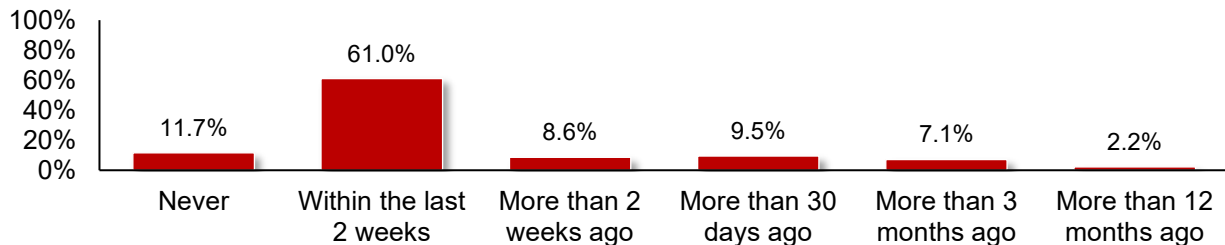
Over 90% of all graduate/professional Ohio State survey respondents chose not to binge drink in the past three months. Among graduate/professional students that reported drinking in the last three months, just over 11% reported consuming five or more drinks in one sitting. Further, when asked how many drinks they had the last time they drank alcohol socially, graduate/professional students most commonly reported that they only consumed one to two drinks.

Binge drinking over the last 3 months	Graduate/Professional (n = 324)	All Students (n = 1,370)
Did NOT binge drink	91.0%	80.3%
Did binge drink	9.0%	19.7%

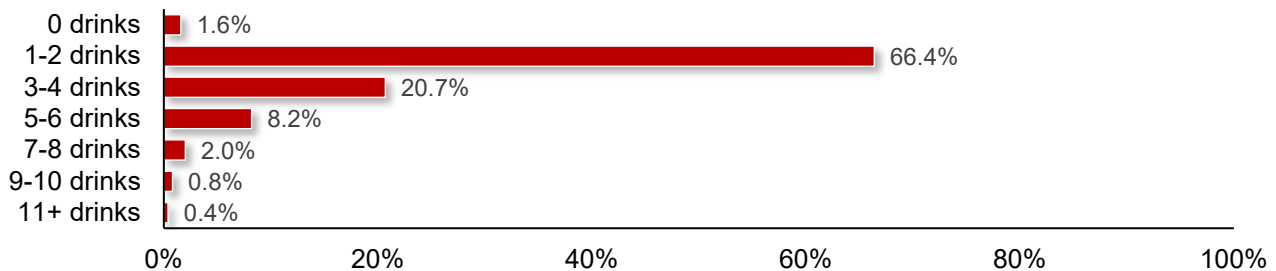
Note. This table and calculation for binge drinking includes students who reported they did not drink alcohol to more fully capture the range of student drinking behaviors.

Only 11.7% of graduate/professional students at Ohio State reported that they have never consumed alcohol while 7.1% reported that it has been more than three months since their last drink. Of graduate/professional students that had consumed alcohol, 74.4% reported that they had not consumed five or more drinks of alcohol in one sitting within the past two weeks. Additionally, 82.7% of graduate/professional students reported that they do not drive after consuming any amount of alcohol.

**When, if ever, was the last time you drank alcohol?
(Graduate/Professional, n = 326)**

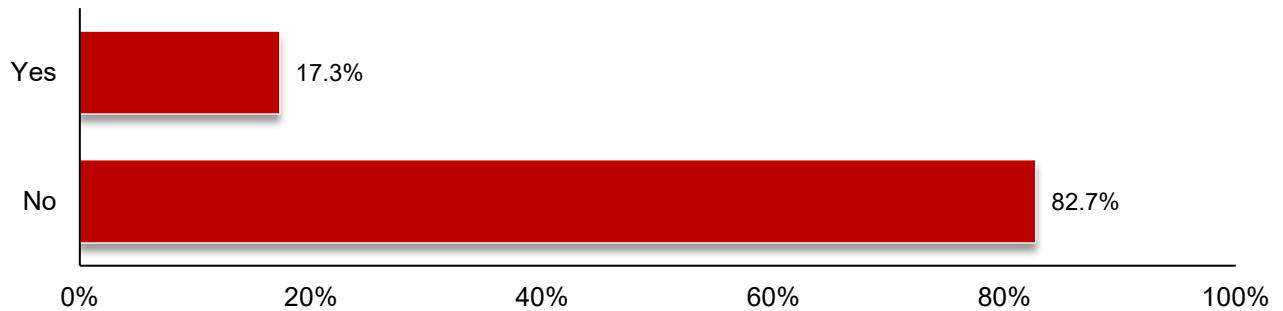


The last time you drank in a social setting, how many drinks of alcohol did you have? (Graduate/Professional, n = 256)

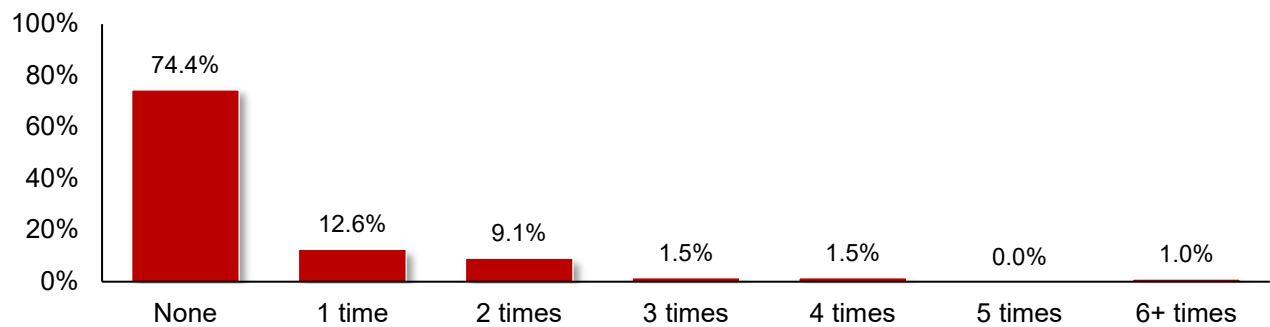


Note. These percentages only include students who reported drinking alcohol within the last three months.

**Within the last 30 days, did you: Drive after drinking any alcohol at all?
(Graduate/Professional, $n = 208$)**

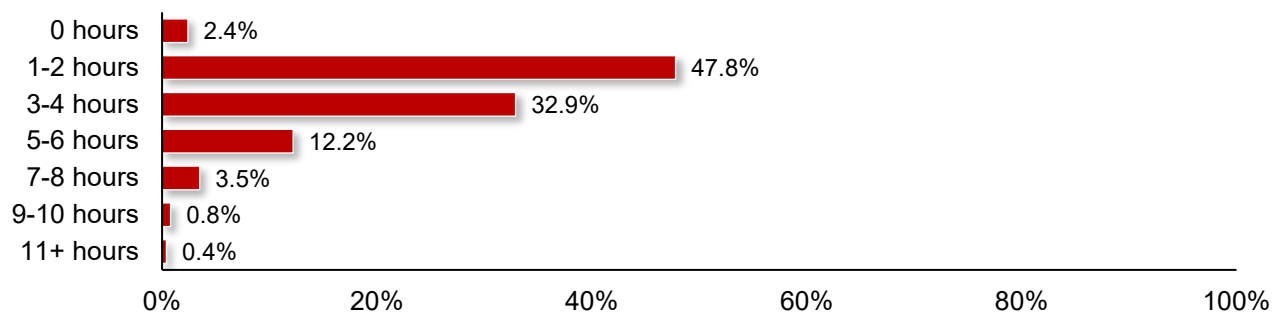


Over the last two weeks, how many times have you had five or more drinks of alcohol in one sitting? (Graduate/Professional, $n = 199$)



Note. These percentages only include students who reported drinking alcohol within the last two weeks.

The last time you drank in a social setting, over how many hours did you drink alcohol? (Graduate/Professional, $n = 255$)



CANNABIS USE – GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL STUDENTS

The NCHA survey instrument asks when, if ever, a respondent used cannabis medically or non-medically. Just over 57% of graduate and professional students reported that they have never used cannabis for any reason. Of students that have used cannabis for any reason, only 8.3% reported use within the past two weeks. Additionally, 20.6% noted that their last use was more than one year ago. When asked specifically about lifetime non-medical use, 39.6% of graduate and professional students reported non-medical cannabis use.

When, if ever, was the last time you used cannabis/marijuana?

Graduate/Professional (n = 326)	
Never	57.1%
Within the last 2 weeks	8.3%
More than 2 weeks ago	2.5%
More than 30 days ago	5.2%
More than 3 months ago	6.4%
More than 12 months ago	20.6%

Note. This table includes medical and non-medical cannabis use.

In your life, which of the following substances have you ever used?

Cannabis	Graduate/Professional (n = 326)
No	60.4%
Yes	39.6%

Note. This table includes non-medical cannabis use only.

CONCLUSION

Alcohol use, substance use and binge drinking among college students is a continuing concern for student wellness administrators and practitioners. This report examines alcohol and cannabis use among undergraduate and graduate/professional students at The Ohio State University in 2021 through an analysis of data from the ACHA-NCHA III. In total, 80.3% of Ohio State students choose not to binge drink. Additionally, a large majority of both undergraduate (77%) and graduate/professional (91%) students do not binge drink.

APPENDIX A: COMPARISON OF UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE/PROFESSIONAL STUDENTS

The tables below provide results by educational level and for all Ohio State students that responded to the ACHA-NCHA III.

Binge drinking over the last 3 months

	Undergraduate (n = 1,040)	Graduate/Professional (n = 324)	All Students (n = 1,370)
Did NOT binge drink	77.0%	91.0%	80.3%
Did binge drink	23.0%	9.0%	19.7%

Note. This table and calculation for binge drinking includes students who reported they did not drink alcohol to more fully capture the range of student drinking behaviors.

When, if ever, was the last time you drank alcohol?

	Undergraduate (n = 1,041)	Graduate/Professional (n = 326)	All Students (n = 1,374)
Never	19.4%	11.7%	17.5%
Within the last 2 weeks	50.6%	61.0%	53.2%
More than 2 weeks ago	9.7%	8.6%	9.5%
More than 30 days ago	10.8%	9.5%	10.5%
More than 3 months ago	5.9%	7.1%	6.1%
More than 12 months ago	3.7%	2.2%	3.3%

The last time you drank alcohol in a social setting, how many drinks of alcohol did you have?

	Undergraduate (n = 739)	Graduate/Professional (n = 256)	All Students (n = 1,001)
0 drinks	2.2%	1.6%	2.0%
1-2 drinks	39.5%	66.4%	46.5%
3-4 drinks	26.0%	20.7%	24.6%
5-6 drinks	16.9%	8.2%	14.7%
7-8 drinks	8.1%	2.0%	6.5%
9-10 drinks	4.9%	0.8%	3.9%
11+ drinks	2.4%	0.4%	1.9%

Note. These percentages only include students who reported drinking alcohol within the last three months.

Within the last thirty days, did you: Drive after drinking any alcohol at all?

	Undergraduate (n = 531)	Graduate/Professional (n = 208)	All Students (n = 743)
No	89.6%	82.7%	87.8%
Yes	10.4%	17.3%	12.3%

Over the last two weeks, how many times have you had five or more drinks at a sitting?

	Undergraduate (n = 526)	Graduate/Professional (n = 199)	All Students (n = 730)
None	41.1%	74.4%	50.1%
1 time	20.3%	12.6%	18.2%
2 times	18.3%	9.1%	15.8%
3 times	7.8%	1.5%	6.2%
4 times	5.3%	1.5%	4.3%
5 times	4.2%	0.0%	3.0%
6 times	3.0%	1.0%	2.5%

Note. These percentages only include students who reported drinking alcohol within the last two weeks.

The last time you drank alcohol in a social setting, over how many hours did you drink alcohol?

	Undergraduate (n = 739)	Graduate/Professional (n = 255)	All Students (n = 1,000)
0 hours	3.0%	2.4%	2.8%
1-2 hours	37.9%	47.8%	40.4%
3-4 hours	36.8%	32.9%	35.9%
5-6 hours	16.9%	12.2%	15.6%
7-8 hours	4.2%	3.5%	4.0%
9-10 hours	0.7%	0.8%	0.7%
11+ hours	0.5%	0.4%	0.6%

When, if ever, was the last time you used cannabis/marijuana?

	Undergraduate (n = 1,043)	Graduate/Professional (n = 326)	All Students (n = 1,375)
Never	55.3%	57.1%	55.6%
Within the last 2 weeks	14.5%	8.3%	13.0%
More than 2 weeks ago	4.7%	2.5%	4.2%
More than 30 days ago	7.0%	5.2%	6.6%
More than 3 months ago	9.4%	6.4%	8.7%
More than 12 months ago	9.1%	20.6%	12.0%

Note. This table includes medical and non-medical cannabis use.

In your life, which of the following substances have you ever used?

Cannabis	Undergraduate (n = 1,042)	Graduate/Professional (n = 326)	All Students (n = 1,375)
No	58.5%	60.4%	58.9%
Yes	41.6%	39.6%	41.1%

Note. This table includes non-medical cannabis use only.

APPENDIX B: PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS

The table below provides participant demographics by educational level and for all Ohio State students that responded to the ACHA-NCHA III.

	Undergraduate		Graduate/Professional		All Students	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Total	1,044	76.2%	326	23.8%	1,378	100.0%
Gender						
Female	641	61.4%	208	63.8%	854	62.0%
Male	373	35.7%	112	34.4%	486	35.3%
Transgender/Gender Non-conforming	26	2.5%	5	1.5%	31	2.2%
Race/Ethnicity						
American Indian or Native Alaskan	9	0.9%	-	-	9	0.7%
Asian or Asian American	142	13.6%	52	16.0%	195	14.2%
Black or African American	67	6.4%	21	6.4%	88	6.4%
Hispanic or Latino/a/x	50	4.8%	27	8.3%	77	5.6%
Middle Eastern/North African or Arab origin	17	1.6%	11	3.4%	28	2.0%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander Native	3	0.3%	-	-	3	0.2%
White	813	77.9%	217	66.6%	1,033	75.0%
Biracial or Multiracial	47	4.5%	9	2.8%	56	4.1%
Other	8	0.8%	5	1.5%	13	0.9%
Sexual Orientation						
Straight/Heterosexual	794	76.4%	272	83.4%	1,072	78.1%
Asexual	11	1.1%	1	0.3%	12	0.9%
Bisexual	119	11.4%	33	10.1%	152	11.1%
Gay	27	2.6%	9	2.8%	36	2.6%
Lesbian	24	2.3%	6	1.8%	30	2.2%
Pansexual	19	1.8%	-	-	19	1.4%
Queer	12	1.2%	3	0.9%	15	1.1%
Questioning	30	2.9%	2	0.6%	32	2.3%
Other	4	0.4%	-	-	4	0.3%
Year in School						
First-year undergraduate	303	29.0%	-	-	303	22.1%
Second-year undergraduate	203	19.4%	-	-	203	14.8%
Third-year undergraduate	270	25.9%	-	-	270	19.7%
Fourth-year undergraduate	202	19.4%	-	-	202	14.7%
Fifth-year + undergraduate	62	5.9%	-	-	62	4.5%
Master's (MA, MS, MFA, MBA, etc.)	-	-	118	36.2%	118	8.6%
Doctorate (PhD, EdD, MD, JD, etc.)	-	-	202	62.0%	202	14.7%
Not seeking a degree	-	-	-	-	4	0.3%
Other	4	0.4%	6	1.8%	10	0.7%