

Wellness Assessment 2017-2018: Comparing Random Sample vs. Self-Selected Students

Center for the Study of Student Life

February 2018

INTRODUCTION

Student wellness is an essential component of academic success in higher education and subsequent opportunities in the labor market. Yet wellness itself has many facets. The Ohio State University Office of Student Life's Student Wellness Center uses a model that includes nine key dimensions of wellness: career, creative, emotional, environmental, financial, intellectual, physical, social and spiritual.

The Wellness Assessment was designed to measure these nine dimensions of wellness in order to give students a better understanding of their own wellness and provide them with resources that they can utilize at Ohio State to improve their wellness. The Wellness Assessment survey is open year-round to all students. Additionally, in October 2017, an invitation to participate in the assessment was emailed to a random sample of 4,989 undergraduate, graduate and professional students. Of the 4,989 students recruited, 631 responded for a 12.6% response rate. This report documents differences in demographic characteristics and each dimension of wellness between the random sample of students recruited to take the assessment and students who self-selected into taking the assessment during October 2017 ($n = 1,486$).

METHODOLOGY

Each wellness dimension contains items to assess a range of attitudes and behaviors. Scores were calculated by adding the values of each component within a given dimension, then dividing by the total number of components, which produced an average wellness score for each dimension. The scores for respondents who did not answer all of the components of a dimension were calculated by summing the scores for the answered items and dividing by the total number of items answered. Students who failed to provide several responses for a dimension were excluded from the analysis, since creating wellness scores based on too few elements would not be an accurate representation of the overall dimension.

Attitudes and beliefs were measured using Likert scales; respondents indicated their level of agreement with various statements on 5-point scale. When asked about behaviors, students reported the frequency of the occurrence, also on a 5-point scale. Wellness scores range from 1 to 5, with higher scores indicating more positive attitudes and behaviors. Negative items were reverse coded so that unhealthy responses were associated with a lower score.

KEY FINDINGS

- Students who self-selected to take the assessment did not score differently than the random sample of students on any of the nine dimensions of wellness.
- Statistically significant differences between the self-selected sample and the random sample were detected based on demographic items, such as gender, citizenship, class rank, age and residence.
- A higher percentage of women, domestic students, traditional age students (18-24), and students living either on-campus or off-campus within walking distance self-selected to take the assessment compared to the random sample.
- Statistically significant differences were not detected between the random sample and the self-selected sample based on sexual orientation, first generation status, athlete status, military status, employment status, or Greek affiliation.

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

DIMENSIONS OF THE WELLNESS ASSESSMENT

EMOTIONAL

- I use alcohol/nicotine/other substances to manage stress.
- I am able to appropriately manage my feelings.
- I use relaxation techniques to manage stress.
- I am able to appropriately express my feelings.
- I would be willing to seek help from others when I am having a difficult time.
- I feel that I am able to cope with my daily stress.
- I have a positive image of my body.

CREATIVE

- I express myself through creative activities.
- I attend arts-related events or programs.
- I think of myself as a creative person.
- I value multiple perspectives when thinking about complex topics.
- The arts help me appreciate other perspectives and cultures.

SPIRITUAL

- I consider myself to be a spiritual person.
- I engage in self-reflection.
- I engage in spiritual practices.
- I feel a connection to something larger than myself.
- I seek out meaning in my life.

INTELLECTUAL

- I am able to resolve conflicts peacefully.
- I am confident about my academic major decisions.
- I am confident in my ability to find solutions to my problems.
- I am confident that I can learn new skills.
- I am interested in learning new things.
- I engage in intellectually engaging activities.
- I feel that my education is a priority.
- I felt challenged by my academics during my most recent academic term.
- I was able to manage my academic workload during my most recent academic term.

CAREER

- I am confident about my career decisions.
- I envision my future career as a means to contribute to society.
- I feel that my current studies will be helpful to my future career.
- I feel that my major/career decision is an appropriate expression of my abilities and personal strengths.
- I feel that I work in a positive environment.
- I feel that I work in a stressful environment.
- I feel that my current job interferes with other aspects of my life.
- I am able to balance my current job with the rest of my life.

PHYSICAL

- I am confident that I can exercise regularly.
- I am confident that I can maintain a nutritious diet.
- I use illicit drugs (e.g. marijuana, cocaine, ecstasy).
- I use tobacco products.
- I use prescription medication that is not prescribed to me (e.g. Adderall, Xanax, Valium).
- I eat a nutritious diet.
- I engage in cardiovascular exercise 3-5 times per week for at least 30 minutes.
- I engage in flexibility exercise/stretching.
- I engage in strength training/resistance exercise 2-3 times per week.
- I get at least 8 hours of sleep per night.
- Do you get an annual flu vaccine?
- Do you maintain annual physical exams(s)?
- How often do you binge drink? (Males: 5+ drinks in about 2 hours, Females: 4+ drinks in about 2 hours)
- How often, in general, do you consume alcohol?

FINANCIAL

- I am comfortable leaving a balance on my credit card(s).
- I think it is important to spend less than I earn.
- I am confident that I can plan a financial budget.
- I pay off the entire balance of my credit card(s) each month.
- I have enough money saved to handle financial emergencies.
- I track my spending to stay within my budget.
- I feel stressed by the amount of money I owe (credit cards, student loans, etc.).
- I stress about my finances.

ENVIRONMENTAL

- I engage in environmentally friendly behaviors (turn off lights/faucets, walk or bike).
- I feel safe in my living environment.
- I feel that I live in a stressful environment.
- I often feel that I have little control over my safety.
- I take time to appreciate my surroundings.
- I take time to appreciate nature.
- I think it is important to conserve natural resources.
- If given the opportunity, I recycle.

SOCIAL

- I feel a sense of belonging in a community.
- I feel supported by my family.
- I feel that I am a person who other people like to be around.
- I have a strong social network.
- I have at least one close friend whom I trust and can confide in.
- I feel comfortable communicating face-to-face with others.
- I rarely feel lonely.

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$



DEMOGRAPHICS

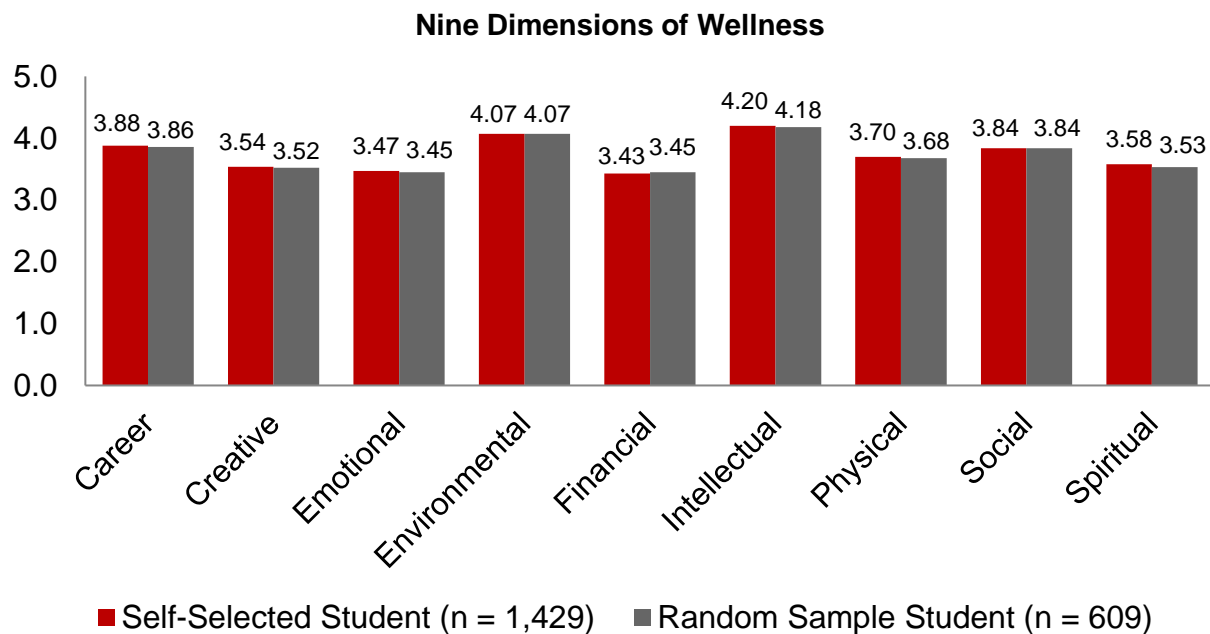
		Self-Selected Sample (<i>n</i> = 1,486)	Random Sample (<i>n</i> = 631)
Gender	Male	26.9%	36.5%
	Female	73.1%	63.5%
Sexual Orientation	Heterosexual	85.3%	83.7%
	Bisexual, Gay/Lesbian, Questioning	14.7%	13.3%
First Generation	First generation student	21.9%	23.3%
	Non-first generation student	78.1%	76.7%
Citizenship	International student	5.7%	10.6%
	Domestic student	94.4%	89.4%
Race/ Ethnicity	White/Caucasian	76.1%	71.2%
	African American/Black	2.7%	3.9%
	Asian American	10.3%	13.7%
	Latino(a)/Hispanic	3.1%	2.3%
	Other Race/Ethnicity	2.1%	3.2%
Varsity Athletes	Athlete	4.1%	2.8%
	Non-athlete	95.9%	97.2%
Military Status	Ever been in US military	1.8%	2.5%
	Never been in US military	98.3%	97.5%
Self-Reported Class Rank	First-year undergraduate	21.5%	18.4%
	Second-year undergraduate	24.2%	17.1%
	Third-year undergraduate	18.3%	15.3%
	Fourth-year undergraduate	13.8%	14.0%
	Fifth-year+ undergraduate	3.5%	6.7%
	Graduate- Master's	6.5%	11.4%
	Graduate- Professional	4.3%	5.9%
	Graduate- Doctoral	8.0%	11.2%
Age	Traditional age (under 24)	86.9%	80.3%
	Nontraditional age (24 or older)	13.1%	19.7%
Employment Status	Not employed	20.6%	22.8%
	Currently employed	79.4%	77.2%
Employment Hours	Work less than 20 hours a week	66.3%	61.2%
	Work more than 20 hours a week	33.7%	38.8%
Residence	Lives on-campus	39.8%	30.0%
	Lives off-campus, within walking distance	35.9%	31.4%
	Lives off-campus, within driving distance	24.2%	38.7%
Greek Status	Affiliated with fraternity or sorority	9.6%	10.7%
	Not Affiliated with fraternity or sorority	90.4%	89.3%

p* < .05, *p* < .01, ****p* < .001

FINDINGS

AVERAGE WELLNESS SCORES ACROSS DIMENSIONS

The following chart compares the scores for the nine dimensions of wellness for both the random sample and the self-selected sample of students in 2017. T-tests were conducted to investigate whether differences between these two groups of students were statistically significant. Asterisks denote statistically significant differences between the two groups' average scores. Overall, statistically significant differences were not detected between the random sample of students and the self-selected sample of students on any of the nine dimensions of wellness.



CONCLUSION

The Wellness Assessment offers insight into differences between the random sample and the self-selected sample of both undergraduates and graduate/professional students on Ohio State's campus. This report shows no statistically significant differences between the 2017 random sample and the self-selected sample of students on any of the nine dimensions of wellness. The two samples only differed on demographic items. Specifically, statistically significant differences were detected based on gender, citizenship, class rank, age and residence between the self-selected sample and the random sample. A higher percentage of women, domestic students, traditional age students (18-24), and students living either on-campus or off-campus within walking distance self-selected to take the assessment compared to the random sample. Additionally, statistically significant differences were not detected between the random sample and the self-selected sample based on sexual orientation, first generation status, athlete status, military status, employment status, or Greek affiliation. These results contribute to our understanding of trends and differences in wellness among students at Ohio State.

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