



First Time in College (FTIC) Aggie Experience Survey 2018 Health and Wellbeing

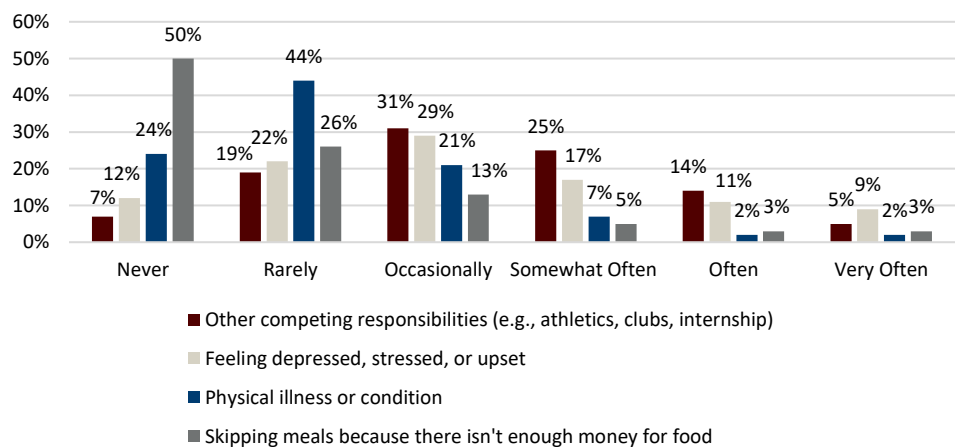
In early September 2018, all First Time in College (FTIC) students were invited to complete the “Class of 2022” Aggie Experience Survey. The survey included Bryan-College Station, Galveston, Qatar, McAllen, and online students. Of the 11,300 FTIC students invited to take it, 3,098 students responded, for a 27% response rate. Female respondents were overrepresented in the survey compared to the fall 2018 FTIC population. First Generation (First Gen), Regents’ Scholars, ethnicity, Freshmen (U1), and Top 10% demographics were similar for the survey respondents and the FTIC population. The survey gathered feedback regarding factors in choosing Texas A&M; academic goals; time allocation; sense of belonging; academic self-efficacy and current level of proficiency; concerns, potential obstacles, and challenges; awareness of university resources; living situation; satisfaction; admissions information and process; and recruitment program. This report will address issues regarding health and wellbeing.

When asked about participation in physical exercise, recreational sports, or physically active hobbies, 47% of the respondents indicated they expected to be physically active 1-5 hours per week, while another 35% said 6-10 hours. In addition, 12% expected to participate 11-15 hours, and 6% thought they would be physically active for 16 or more hours per week. Male students expected to spend more time in physical activities than female students; Top 10% students anticipated spending less time in exercise than non-Top 10%.

Incoming students were asked about their ability to manage stress. Close to one-third (29%) rated themselves as excellent or very good, while 28% rated themselves as good, and 26% rated themselves as fair. Another 17% thought they had poor or very poor stress management skills. Female and Top 10% students felt less proficient in managing their stress than males and non-Top 10% students.

Students may face several obstacles regarding schoolwork or academic success. Table 1 indicates that competing co-curricular obligations and emotional concerns may be important issues for FTIC students. Female students anticipated all of these obstacles more than males. First Gen students anticipated more stress/depression and skipping meals, although less other competing responsibilities than non-First Gen students. Underrepresented minority (URM) students were more likely than their non-URM peers to anticipate depression/stress and skipping meals, but less other competing responsibilities.

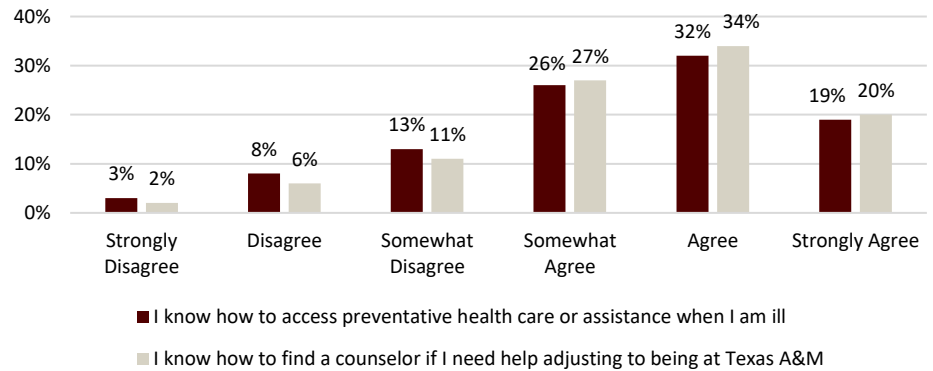
Table 1: Obstacles to Academic Success





To overcome some of the obstacles, First Time in College students may need to access campus resources. Table 2 indicates that three-fourths of the students feel confident in their knowledge of accessing health care and counseling resources. Female, Top 10%, and First Gen students were more confident about how to access preventative health care than their peers. Underrepresented minority students were less confident about finding a counselor than counterparts.

Table 2: Knowledge of Resources



Conclusion

First Time in College (FTIC) students expressed some confidence in participating in exercise, recreational sports, and physically active hobbies regularly and some ability to manage stress. Although a few students indicated they anticipated skipping meals and being physically ill, more students anticipated depression/stress/upset as factors negatively affecting their academic success. On a positive note, most students indicated knowledge of accessing resources related to physical and mental health. Texas A&M, and the Division of Student Affairs in particular, should continue to actively promote health and wellbeing resources such as the Student Recreation Center, Student Counseling Service, Student Health Services and the Offices of the Dean of Student Life's Health Promotion area to ensure that students are aware of, and take advantage of, important dimensions of their development.

FOR MORE INFORMATION



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