

University of South Dakota

USD RED

---

Honors Thesis

Theses, Dissertations, and Student Projects

---

Fall 4-19-2022

## AN ANALYSIS OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON THE STUDENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH DAKOTA

Alexandra J. Buss

*University of South Dakota*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://red.library.usd.edu/honors-thesis>



Part of the [Economic Policy Commons](#), [Models and Methods Commons](#), [Other Social and Behavioral Sciences Commons](#), and the [Social Psychology Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Buss, Alexandra J., "AN ANALYSIS OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON THE STUDENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH DAKOTA" (2022). *Honors Thesis*. 266.

<https://red.library.usd.edu/honors-thesis/266>

This Honors Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Theses, Dissertations, and Student Projects at USD RED. It has been accepted for inclusion in Honors Thesis by an authorized administrator of USD RED. For more information, please contact [dloftus@usd.edu](mailto:dloftus@usd.edu).

AN ANALYSIS OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

AN ANALYSIS OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON THE STUDENTS AT THE  
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH DAKOTA

By

Alex Buss

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment  
Of the Requirements for the  
University Honors Program

---

Department of Political Science

The University of South Dakota

May 2022

# AN ANALYSIS OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The members of the Honors Thesis Committee appointed  
to examine the thesis of Alexandra Buss  
find it satisfactory and recommend that it be accepted.

---

Dr. Shane Nordyke

Professor of Political Science

Director of Committee

---

Dr. Julia Hellwege

Assistant Professor of Political Science

---

Dr. Kathryn Birkeland

Assistant Professor of Economics

# AN ANALYSIS OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

## ABSTRACT

An Analysis of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Students at

The University of South Dakota

Alexandra Buss

Director: Shane Nordyke Ph.D.

The COVID-19 pandemic rapidly took over the United States (US) in the beginning of 2020. Nationally, damages to finances, housing, and mental health have impacted many. Despite being one of the least densely populated states, South Dakota quickly rose to some of the highest rates in the nation and was identified as a national hotspot. While there have been significant reports on the effects of COVID-19 on certain communities (healthcare workers, small business owners, parents), more research is needed on the effects on university students. In this report, I aim to assess damages based on financial status of students, mental health, and academic status. To investigate these effects, I created a survey to assess the academic, financial, and mental health impacts the pandemic had on students at the University of South Dakota (USD). While the respondents' experiences varied, the results show that the COVID-19 pandemic did have an impact on the mental health, financial status, and/or academic status of USD students. Further, many students believe that USD could have done more to have better responded to the needs of the students.

**KEYWORDS:** COVID-19, Pandemic, Mental Health, Finance, Academics, South Dakota

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION ..... 1

LITERATURE REVIEW ..... 4

    MENTAL HEALTH EFFECTS ..... 4

    ACADEMIC EFFECTS..... 6

    FINANCIAL EFFECTS ..... 8

CONCLUSION..... 11

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY..... 12

    RESEARCH STRATEGY AND DESIGN..... 12

    DATA COLLECTION AND DATA ANALYSIS ..... 13

    LIMITATIONS..... 13

FINDINGS ..... 14

    SURVEY ..... 14

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS..... 28

APPENDICES ..... 31

    APPENDIX A..... 32

WORKS CITED ..... 41

LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES

Figures

**Figure 1 – Academic Year**

**Figure 2 – Gender Identity**

**Figure 3 – School of Studies**

**Figure 4 – Positive COVID-19 Tests**

**Figure 5 – Positive COVID-19 Family Tests**

**Figure 6 – Campus Action**

**Figure 7 – USD CARES Act**

**Figure 8 – CARES Act Benefits**

**Figure 9 – Stimulus Check**

Tables

**Table 1 – Mental Status**

**Table 2 – Significant Loss**

**Table 3 – Significant Loss for Family Member**

**Table 4 – Campus Action Response**

**Table 5 – Online Education**

**Table 6 – Online Learning Obstacles**

**Table 7 – CARES Act Support**

**Table 8 – Stimulus Check Support**

**Table 9 – Stimulus Check Response**

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is a highly infectious virus introduced to the United States on January 21, 2020 (World Health Organization). According to many scientists, COVID-19 originated as an epidemic in Wuhan, China from contaminated animal product sold at a market (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2020). Chinese physician, Zhong Nanshan, confirmed that the disease was transmitted from person to person on January 21, 2020. Within two days of this announcement, 300 Chinese citizens contracted the disease and 13 citizens had died. By January 31, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) issued a global health emergency, as the disease had been spread to the United States, Germany, Japan, Vietnam, and Taiwan (World Health Organization; AJMC Staff, 2021). Within the next three days, the United States would declare another public health emergency, closing many sources of air travel, to help combat the spread of the epidemic. The influx of cases along a global scale pushed COVID-19 from being an epidemic to a pandemic on March 11, 2020 (World Health Organization; AJMC Staff, 2021).

COVID-19 is a respiratory illness that impacts people on a mild to moderate level (World Health Organization). In rare cases, those infected will become severely ill, resulting in hospitalization or even death. Fever or chills, difficulty breathing, cough, fatigue, body pains, headache, loss of taste and/or smell, and congestion are just a few of the most reported COVID-19 symptoms (Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 2022). Symptoms appear within a 2–14-day window from contracting the disease. In the pandemic’s early days, a 14-day isolation

## AN ANALYSIS OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

period was recommended to help contain the spread of the disease. While many may be asymptomatic to the disease, others will experience ongoing health issues (Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 2021). Older generations or those with underlying conditions, such as cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes, and respiratory disease have a higher likelihood of experiencing the severe impacts of the disease. While these factors increase the likelihood of severity, people of all health statuses and ages can become severely ill and potentially die (World Health Organization). As of March 2022, the United States has experienced 79.6 million cases of COVID-19, and of those cases, 968,839, or 1.2%, resulted in death (Elflein, 2022).

The South Dakota Department of Health recorded its first case of COVID-19 in South Dakota on March 30, 2020 (Haskins, 2020). Despite having one of the smallest population sizes, approximately 11 people per square mile, SD quickly gained attention for being a national hotspot, meaning South Dakota had the highest numbers of cases reported per 100,000 residents. Cases peaked in late 2020 with an average of 1,425 positive tests per day. Again, in early 2021, cases peaked at 2,281 positive tests per day. South Dakota was seeing a 230% increase of cases in two-week periods (Todd, A., 2021; The New York Times, 2022.). As of March 2022, South Dakota has experienced 236,955 confirmed cases, and of those 2,880, or 1.2%, have resulted in death (South Dakota Department of Health, 2022).

Preventative measures, such as mask mandates, stay at home orders, or shutdowns, were used nationwide to stop the spread of Covid. The state of South Dakota did not move to mandate any preventative measures to help combat the pandemic. Rather, Governor Kristie Noem stated that SD residents were free to take preventative measures at their discretion (Todd, A.; States that did not issue stay-at-home orders in response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, 2020). Despite this statement, USD proceeded with their own preventative measures. Like many



## AN ANALYSIS OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

campuses in 2020, USD chose to shut down campus for the spring semester. Return-to-campus procedures were then put in place for the following fall semester. These procedures included mask mandates for students and faculty, limited seating in common areas, free Covid testing, and hybrid learning (USD, 2020).

This report will consider the impacts that the COVID-19 pandemic had on the college-aged population of South Dakota, will discuss what has been implemented to help aid this population, and will provide evidence from one survey to examine the full impact on the students at the University of South Dakota. Research has demonstrated that COVID-19 had varying impacts on the financial status, academic status, and mental health of many. My research aims to take this one step further and apply it to the undergraduate students of USD. With this, I hope to determine the overall impact of Covid in order to provide insight into the needed remedies for students at USD. I plan to focus on the areas of academic status, financial need, and mental health. My assessment of the results uses both positive and negative reactions to further understand the overall impact on the students. At the end, I provided an initial assessment of Covid effects on campus with some recommendations for the future.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

**Mental Health Effects**

Background

With the progression of the COVID-19 pandemic, citizens experienced many negative psychological effects, effectively raising concerns for the mental health of many. These effects were brought along by changes in daily routines, heightened levels of uncertainty and insecurity, financial struggles, and social isolation (Mayo Clinic Staff, 2021; World Health Organization, 2022; Hamel, L., Kearney, A.; Brodie, M., 2022). U.S. adults were more likely to report symptoms of insomnia, stress, anxiety, and depression during the pandemic. Further, some turned to substance abuse to cope with stress about the pandemic (World Health Organization, 2022; American Psychological Association, 2020). As the national prevalence of mental illness rose, professionals pushed to meet the growing needs of many communities. Remedies, such as healthy eating habits, healthy sleeping habits, and increased physical exercise were recommended to help combat mental strain. While this was effective for some, gaps in care remained as many experiencing severe effects could not get the professional help needed (World Health Organization, 2022; Mayo Clinic Staff, 2021).

Stressors of the pandemic impacted young, college-level adults more prominently than other individuals (Mayo Clinic Staff, 2021; World Health Organization, 2022; Hamel, L., Kearney, A., & Brodie, M., 2022). In recent studies, young adults have been identified as being at the highest risk for psychological issues, including the increased risk of self-harming

behaviors and suicides (World Health Organization, 2022; Liyanage, S., et al., 2021). In April of 2020, a study was conducted on 2,086 college students to determine the impact of COVID-19 on their mental health. Studies have shown that 80% of college students reported that their mental health has been impacted by COVID-19, while 20% of students have reported that their mental health has seen significant declines (Active Minds, 2020; Giuntell, G., et al., 2021). Further, 29% of parents report seeing a decline in their children's mental health since social distancing and closures. With this, college directors and counseling services have reported a significant increase in student need for counseling services (National Alliance on Mental Illness, 2020; Abdu-Glass, E., Scholzman, S., & Beresin, G., n.d.).

### Anxiety

Heightened levels of stress due to the uncertainties of the pandemic caused an increase in the prevalence of anxiety among many college students (Quattrocchi, 2022; Li, Y., Wang, A., Wu, Y., Han, N., & Huang, H., 2021; Sahu, 2020). Many studies have been performed on domestic college students to determine the lasting impacts of the pandemic. Data collected from 27 studies of domestic college students showed that anxiety levels among college students rose to approximately 36% (Li, Y., Wang, A., Wu, Y., Han, N., & Huang, H., 2021). Stressors for college include the fear of adapting, fear for the health of loved ones, fear of social isolation, and the need to care for families (Lee, J., et al., 2021; UNC Research, 2021).

### Depression

Depressive symptoms among college students rose as the pandemic continued to surge through the US. Depression and anxiety are often concurrent illnesses, which only exacerbates the symptoms. Stressors causing depression among college students include worrying about personal health and the health of loved ones, difficulty concentrating, and insomnia (Son, C., et

al., 2020; Bai, W., Cai, H., et al., 2021). Rates of depression among college students increased significantly after the pandemic. One study found that the rate of depression among students rose from approximately 13.8% to approximately 30.4% (Haikalis, M., et al., 2021). As rates of depression skyrocketed, suicidal tendencies also rose. The University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill (UNC) experienced two suicides and two suicide attempts in October 2021. Students were given a single day to mourn the loss of their peers, leaving many feeling confused and unheard (Quattrocchi, A., 2022; Tebor, C., 2021). UNC was only one of the universities to experience great loss.

### Remedies

The sudden decline in students' mental health called for immediate college response. Remedies varied between campuses but often included advising for employees before students return, mental health days, creating remote access to mental health services, and partnering with local suicide prevention agencies to better inform students about services and strengthen mental health policies on campus (Quattrocchi, A., 2022; Capozzi, L., 2020).

### **Academic Effects**

#### Remote Learning

As COVID-19 surged in spring 2020, universities turned to remote learning. After sending students home, universities relied on resources, such as Zoom, to continue classes remotely. While this ensured that classes could remain in session, it exposed the vulnerability of the higher education system. Neither college students, nor many faculty members, were prepared for the dramatic change in dynamics. Professors were forced to abruptly shift their lectures and coursework online. With this came the concern about academic misconduct, student motivation, and continued quality of education (McDaniel, C., Suffern, C., Joo, J., & Alamuddin, R., 2020;

Ezarik, M., 2021). Further, courses now relied on students having access to technology, Wi-Fi, and study spaces at home. Students struggled to adapt as some now faced difficulties accessing technology, concentrating on coursework, and balancing the responsibilities of their home lives (Gallagher, S., & Palmer, J., 2020; Weldon, R., 2021).

### Social Isolation

Remote learning took away the socialization aspect of college for many students. With the lack of peer interactions and communication, many students experienced the effects of social isolation. Social isolation has shown both direct and indirect effects on one's ability to learn. Studies have concluded that social isolation directly leads to learning difficulties, such as difficulty concentrating and completing assignments. Indirectly, social isolation leads to life disruptions, which effectively impacts students learning abilities (Filho, W. L., et al., 2021; Ivanec, T. P., 2022; US Department of Education, n.d.). The impacts of remote learning appeared to be detrimental to many students' well-being and ability to learn.

### Quality of Education

With the introduction of remote learning came concerns for quality of education at universities. In person class allows for interaction with professors and learning management systems (LMS), which provide students with resources to complete coursework. Studies have shown that the majority of students prefer face-to-face instruction. For example, a study conducted to determine undergraduate students preferred teaching methods found that 54% of students prefer in-person instruction (Murphy, L., Eduliee, N. B., & Croteau, K., 2020). Online learning deprived students of necessary student-teacher instruction, interaction, and support. Without the motivation of in-person interaction, students are reported to have lower standards for

their coursework and to receive lower course grades when taking online courses (Cellini, S. R. R., 2022; Murphy, L., Eduliee, N. B., & Croteau, K., 2020).

As students returned to campus, they were met with another new form of learning. Hybrid classes, a mix of in-person and online courses, allowed students to return to campus, while keeping numbers low to prevent mass Covid outbreaks. Students who chose to return to campus in the fall experienced mixed reactions to the new form of education. Inside Higher Ed and College pulse conducted a Student Voice survey to assess students' satisfaction for the 2020-21 academic year. In this study, Insider Higher Ed and College pulse found that 34% of returning students felt dissatisfied with their education when returning to campus (Ezarik, M., 2021). Increased anxiety towards coursework, increased anxiety towards both social integration and isolation, and an increase in the demands of professors caused students to have a more stressful semester, rather than the laid-back experience they were looking for (Ezarik, M., 2021; Cellini, S. R., 2021)

## **Financial Effects**

### Background

The COVID-19 pandemic greatly impacted the global economic system. Due to this, difficulties relating to healthcare coverage, household finances, jobs, and well-being have disrupted the lives of many. With the loss of jobs, many families have struggled to continue normal routines. Many financial difficulties are concentrated among households with incomes below \$100,000 (The President and Fellows of Harvard College, 2020). As of 2019, only 30.7% (100.8 million) of the US population earned \$100,000+. This means the other 69.3% (227.1 million) citizens felt the full financial impact of the pandemic. Within these criteria, 46% of households reported an adult household member either losing their job, getting furloughed, or

losing wages. Further, two-thirds (68%) reported experiencing serious financial burdens. Finally, 48% of families reported using up all, or the majority of, their saving during the pandemic (The President and Fellows of Harvard College, 2020; Kopestinsky, A., 2022). With the loss of essential wages, many families were unable to obtain beneficial resources. In the United States, 1 in 5 household members were not able to afford necessary healthcare. Of these members, 57% reported negative health consequences as a result (Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, 2021; The President and Fellows of Harvard College, 2020). Without the necessary financial resources, many families were put in positions with no financial freedom, impacting both adult household members and their children.

### Stimulus Check

To aid citizens through their economic hardships, the United States government allocated funds towards Economic Impact Payments, better known as stimulus checks. These funds were distributed in three rounds, \$1,200 in April 2020, \$600 in December 2020, and \$1,400 in March 2021. Eligibility was based upon citizenship, financial status, and dependency (Internal Revenue Service, 2022; Advance Child Tax Credit and economic impact payments – stimulus checks, 2022; U.S. Department of the Treasury, 2021). Parents are allowed to claim children ages 19 to 24 as dependents on their taxes. Students that are enrolled in college full-time, receive 50% of their financial support from their parents, and reside in their parents' house for at least half the year, all qualify for dependency status. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, more undergraduate students are filed as dependents (Adamczyk, A., 2021; Gaffney, S., & Tretina, K., 2022). While the stimulus checks provided financial assistance to many adults, it left out a significant portion of vulnerable college students.

### Student Debt

## AN ANALYSIS OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

As a vulnerable population, college students faced many financial obstacles due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Public institutions have repeatedly had many tuition spikes after economic turndowns. The cost of attending college is moving in a negative direction for the average American household. In the 2010-2022 school year period, tuition rose by 14% for public institutions. According to the College Board, student borrowing declined by 5%, or \$324, after the pandemic. This is directly correlated with the decline in student enrollment (PEW Research Center, 2021; DePietro, A., 2021). Key barriers to college enrollment were listed as financial need and uncertainty of the pandemic. Enrollment for the fall 2019 semester was approximately 2.6 million students. Of those first-year students, 26.1% did not return for the next year. Rather than returning to campus for the fall 2021 semester, many students opted to continue their education later (PEW Research Center, 2021; Krupnick, M., 2022).

### CARES ACT

To help offset the rise in tuition and cost-of-living, many institutions opt to allocate more grant aid to students in need. In past recessions, the Federal Pell Grant has increased to help counter financial difficulties. However, this was not the case following the pandemic. The Pell Grant increased at the same rate (\$150) as it had the year prior (PEW Research Center, 2021; Federal Student Aid, 2019). Despite the lack of increase for the Pell Grant, the Education Stabilization Fund allowed South Dakota officials to allocate funds towards K-12 and higher education. Part of this fund went into supporting the USD CARES Act, an emergency grant program that allowed USD to alleviate financial stress for students experiencing difficulties. Funds were allocated to students who could provide evidence of expenses related to the pandemic, good academic standing with the University, and those who filled out a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form. Depending on financial need of both the



students and their families, students could be granted anywhere from \$1,500 to \$750 (USD Cares Act).

### **Conclusion**

The pandemic created many negative effects for vulnerable college students. Rises in anxiety and depression can be attributed to various factors, such as social isolation and risk of infection, brought on by the pandemic. While kids were able to continue their education, they lost necessary interaction with both peers and faculty. Amidst declining mental health and academic status, many faced new financial burdens. Many researchers have worked to assess impacts of the pandemic; however, it is necessary to conduct more research about how college students were specifically impacted. To answer questions regarding the COVID-19 pandemic and its impacts on the students at the University of South Dakota, this report will assess individuals to fill in gaps in the existing literature.

## CHAPTER THREE

### Research Methodology

#### **Research Strategy and Design**

To investigate the impact of Covid on university students, I created a survey that assessed if students or their loved ones had Covid, their financial status, and their mental health. The survey was sent to undergraduate students in each school at the USD to collect and compare data from various groups of individuals. It was then assessed in relation to generalized news and CDC reports within the state. It contained 19 questions, including four open ended responses, and took approximately ten minutes to complete. The questions covered topics such as whether the students or their families had been infected and impacted by Covid, whether students felt as though their academic needs were met returning to campus, and whether they had received Covid funding to help offset any setbacks from the pandemic. The survey also included questions on student demographics in order to assess how experiences might vary depending on personal characteristics. Due to the necessary anonymity, no students will be identified in the assessment and conclusion of the survey.

An online survey was the chosen method to collect data, as it was the easiest method to distribute the survey across campus. Qualtrics was used to construct, collect, and analyze the data. I received IRB approval before the implementation of my study. The intent of this study was to show the full impact the pandemic had on the students in various areas of their lives.

Further, it was meant to be used as a tool for any implemented change to help students in the future. The full text of the survey can be found in the Appendix.

### **Data Collection and Data Analysis**

The survey was created using software titled Qualtrics. It was then emailed to six professors on campus - each of which were deans of their respective schools. The respective schools were as follows: the School of Arts and Sciences, the School of Fine Arts, the School of Health Sciences, the Beacom School of Business, and the School of Education. These email addresses were obtained using the USD webpage and personal email. They were asked to distribute the survey to their students through their own databases. This survey was distributed to students in September 2021. Due to my chosen distribution method, there is no way to identify how many students received the survey. A copy of this survey can be found in Appendix A.

As the purpose of the study is to describe the effects of Covid on this population, the data will be analyzed using figures, tables, and descriptive statistics. There were no specific hypotheses being tested with this study. At the end of this analysis, I will provide implications for the continued needs of USD students.

### **Limitations**

The results do not reflect the impacts and needs of college students at other universities in South Dakota, as the survey was only administered to those who currently attend USD. It also does not analyze undergraduate students at universities outside of the state. Further, it does not include the experiences of graduate students. The experiences of students who chose to respond to the survey may vary from the broader selection of those who did not. Since the survey was administered online, those who do not have access to necessary resources, such as electronics or internet, were not able to participate in the survey.

CHAPTER FOUR

Findings

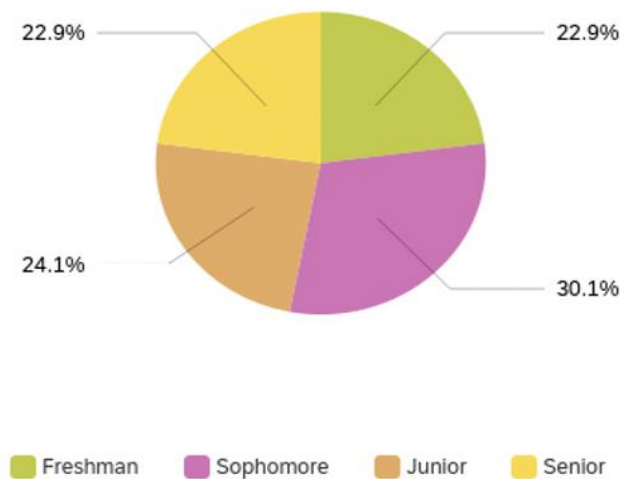
**Survey**

93 USD students electronically responded to the survey. Of those who responded, 80 or 86% completed the survey in its entirety. Of the respondents, 27 or 29% left detailed responses of further resources needed on campus. All respondents were undergraduate students at USD.

Student Demographics

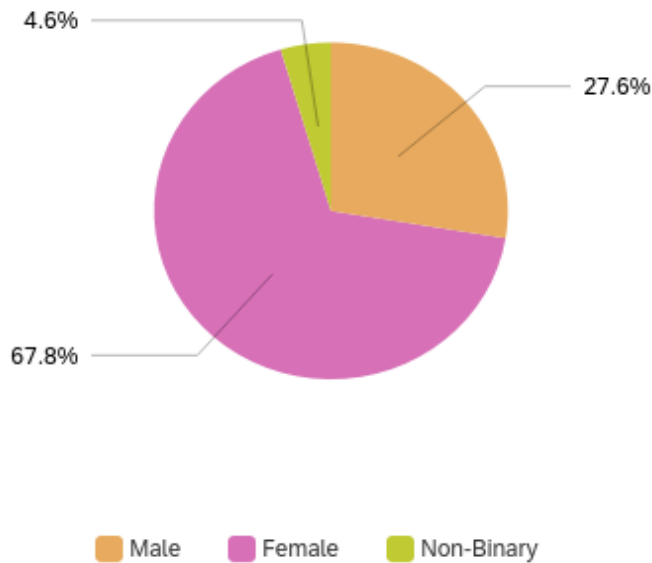
I began my assessments based on demographics of the respondents. These demographics included academic year, gender, and what school they are in on campus. My further assessments will show breakdowns of responses based on these specific demographics. The responses were fairly equally split between years with slightly more sophomores than other years, as seen in Figure 1.

**Figure 1 – Academic Year**



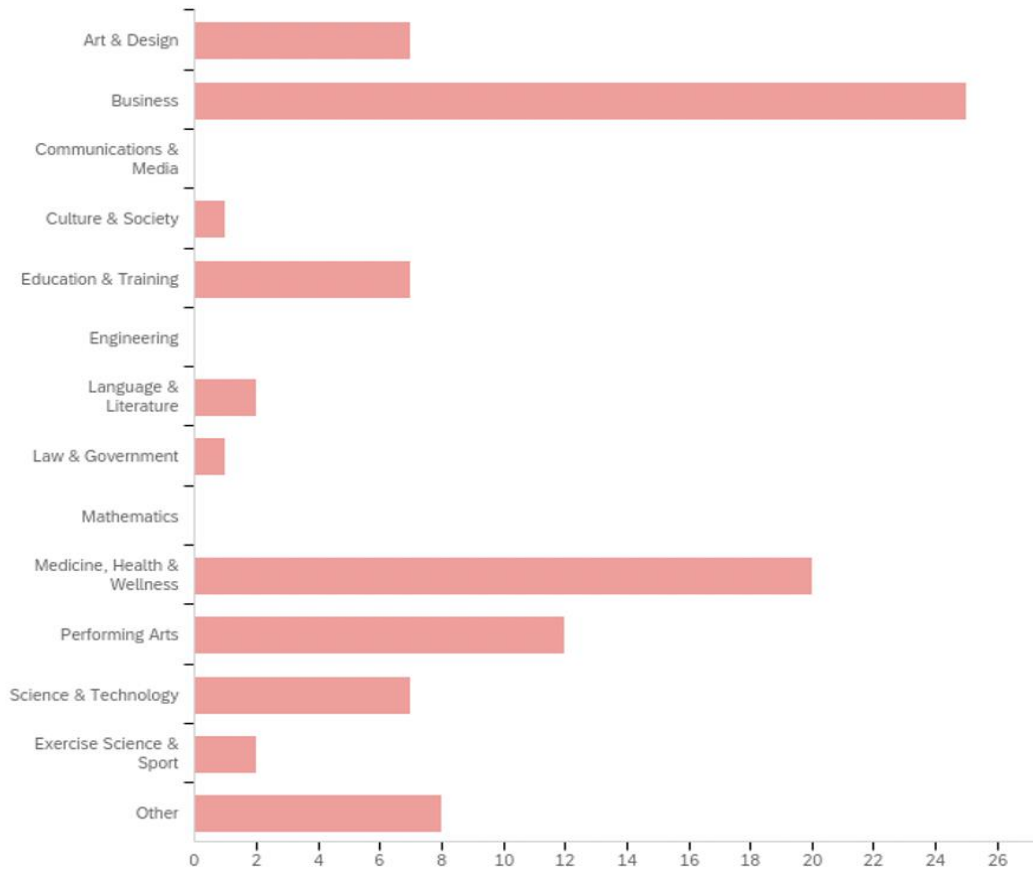
Female students were more likely to engage with the survey they were provided as seen in Figure 2. Due to this, results of the survey may be skewed towards the perspective of women rather than men.

**Figure 2 – Gender Identity**



Of the colleges the survey was sent to, the College of Business and College of Health Sciences displayed the highest response rate of 27.2%, or 25 total responses each. The College of Arts and Sciences had 4 (4.3%) respondents, the College of Education had 9 (9.6%) respondents, the College of Fine Arts had 19 (20.4%) respondents, and the “other” option had 8 (8.6%) respondents, as seen in Figure 3.

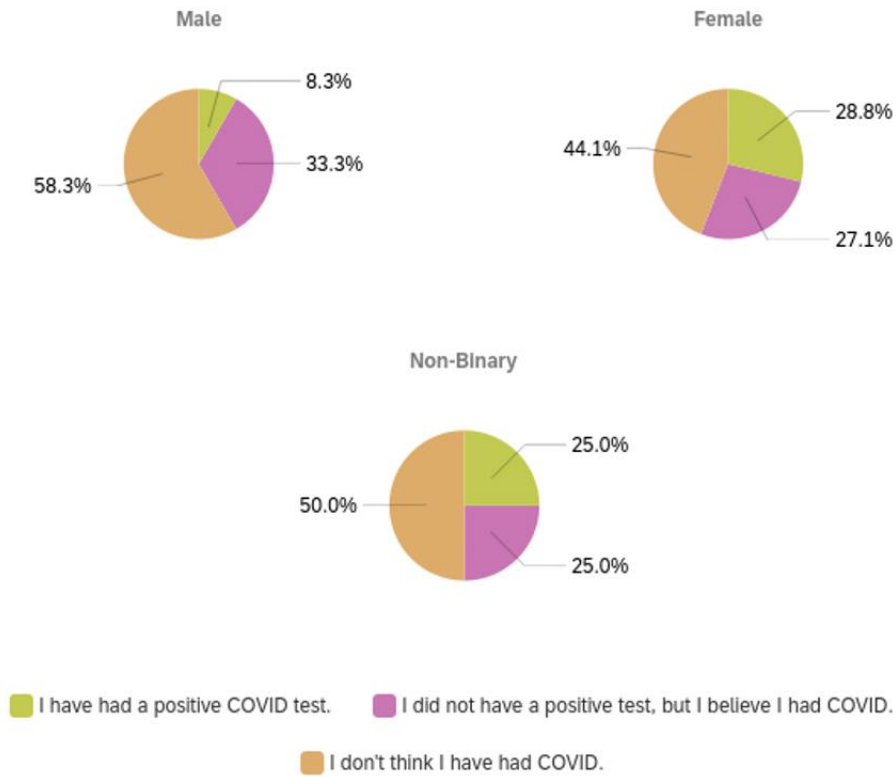
**Figure 3 – School of Studies**



COVID-19 Assessments

I asked all respondents questions related to contracting COVID-19. This data was broken down by gender, male, female, and non-binary, to further assess the pandemic. The majority of males (58.3%) believed that they did not have a positive COVID-19 test. A plurality of females (44.1%) believed that they did not have COVID-19, as seen in Figure 4.

**Figure 4 – Positive COVID-19 Tests**

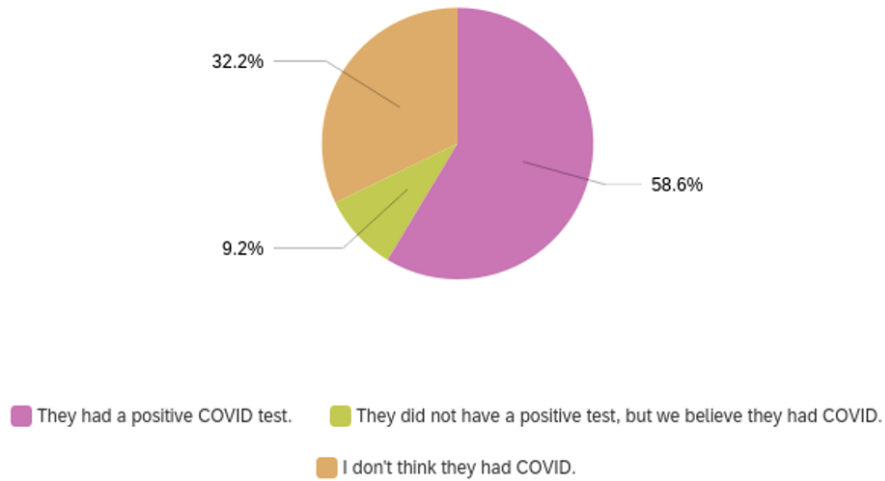


Of the 93 respondents, a small sample (4.6%) identify as non-binary. With a small sample size, there is not enough evidence to form a sufficient analysis for this group. Due to this, I have chosen to exclude results from this analysis.

To better understand the impacts of COVID-19, I asked respondents to identify whether a loved one had COVID-19. The majority of respondents (58.65) stated that a family member had received a positive COVID test, as seen in Figure 5.

**Figure 5 – Positive COVID-19 Family Test**

## AN ANALYSIS OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC



### Mental Health Impact

In relation to COVID-19, I asked all respondents to identify any lasting mental impacts they may have been experiencing. The questions were framed as a scale model, as seen in Table

1.

**Table 1 – Mental Status**

<b>Question</b>	<b>Definitely Not</b>	<b>Probably Not</b>	<b>Might or might not have</b>	<b>Probably yes</b>	<b>Definitely yes</b>
The stress of COVID-19 has had an impact on my academic performance	4.8%	18.1%	20.5%	25.3%	31.3%
The stress of COVID-19 has had an impact on my daily life	4.9%	12.2%	34.1%	34.1%	30.5%
COVID-19 has impacted my mental health	4.8%	6.0%	48.2%	48.2%	25.3%
I have had lingering health issues because of COVID-19	43.9%	28.0%	4.9%	4.9%	8.5%
I have had a lingering brain fog because of COVID-19	43.3%	30.1%	12.0%	12.0%	6.0%



## AN ANALYSIS OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

As founded in previous research, many students felt the impacts of stress brought on by the pandemic. The majority of students were fairly certain that the stress of COVID-19 had impacted their academic performance (31.3%) and their daily lives (34.1%). Further, a majority of students (48.2%) felt as though their mental health had been impacted. Many USD students did not experience health declines or lingering impacts of the pandemic.

I next asked respondents to identify whether they had personally experienced any lasting effects of the pandemic. Respondents were allowed to select each answer that applied to them. The majority (81.2%) of respondents stated that they did not personally experience any of the serious effects, as seen in Table 2.

**Table 2 – Significant Loss**

<b>Answer:</b>	<b>Percent:</b>	<b>Choice Count:</b>
Losing a Job	4.7%	4
Losing housing	1.2%	1
Death of a loved one	8.2%	7
Long-term health	4.7%	4
No	81.2%	69
<b>Total:</b>	100%	85

To further understand the impact, I asked if a loved one had experienced any serious effects of COVID-19. Respondents were allowed to select each answer that applied. The majority of respondents (58.2%) still responded that no serious effects were seen. However, 17.6% of loved ones experienced long-term health issues, and 18.7% experienced the death of a loved one, as seen in Table 3.

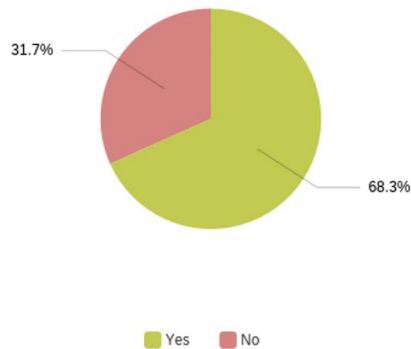
**Table 3 - Significant Loss for Family Member**

<b>Field:</b>	<b>Percent:</b>	<b>Choice Count:</b>
Losing a Job	4.4%	4
Losing housing	1.1%	1
Death of a loved one	18.7%	17
Long-term health	17.6%	16
No	58.2%	53
<b>Total:</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>91</b>

Understanding loss felt by the students and their families helps to better understand why many did not see any lasting mental or physical health impacts. If many did not suffer great loss or death, they would be at a lower risk for developing negative psychological issues. Further, if many did not experience COVID-19, they would be at a lower risk for developing any long-term health issues due to the pandemic. Assessing the way USD responded to the pandemic will also provide insight into full impact the pandemic had on students.

To gauge campus response, I asked respondents to identify whether they felt their needs were met coming back to campus, or if they do not. A large population of students (68.3%) felt the campus response supported their needs, as seen in Figure 6.

**Figure 6 – Campus Action**



While the majority of students thought their needs were met by USD, further reducing the risk of negative psychological impacts, some students believed that the campus could have done more.

To assess the further needs of students, I provided a space for respondents answering “no” to briefly identify the shortfalls in campus response. Of those that responded “no,” 22 students provided feedback. I’ve created a table that identifies the most commonly recorded responses, as seen in Table 4.

**Table 4 – Campus Action Responses**

<b>Responses</b>	<b>Response Count</b>	<b>Illustration Quote</b>
Suffered from online learning and feared returning to remote education.	2	“Online only was very stressful for me. When we came back to campus, there was the ever-lingering threat that we would go back to that, and we still had hybrid classes which made things much harder for me.”
Felt the impacts of anxiety and depression.	3	“When discussing my mental health on campus, I was told I have too much going on for me to be sad. My feelings were made to feel irrelevant by the university.”
Lacked the counseling services needed to fully support students.	6	“There aren’t enough good health counselors or mental health counselors on campus to meet the needs of the students.”
Students felt as though professors increased the workload and paid less attention to the needs of their students.	6	“I feel as though professors piled on more workload through hybrid courses rather than using them to allow us time to adapt back to some in-person form of learning. This impacted my mental health.”

The greatest shortfalls to campus actions were primarily counseling services, professor reactions, and academic strain. A primary consensus was that, even with the shortfalls, response was effective, just in need of further reforms.

Virtual Learning Environment

## AN ANALYSIS OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

When the pandemic first arrived at the United States, many campuses responded through the means of virtual learning. Many students returning for the fall semester were greeted by hybrid learning – a type of education that involved both in-person classes and virtual. I asked respondents to identify their feelings towards their online education, as well as the challenges it brought. The statements were framed as a scale model, as seen in Table 5.

**Table 5 – Online Education**

Question	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
Taking online courses reduced the quality of my education	1.3%	10.1%	17.7%	21.5%	49.4%
Taking online courses increased my anxiety towards completing coursework	6.3%	13.9%	22.8%	25.3%	31.6%
Taking online courses made me more socially isolated	1.3%	6.3%	17.7%	38.0%	36.7%
My relationship with my professors was strained due to online courses	1.3%	7.6%	13.9%	41.8%	35.4%
I was offered the support I needed to complete my courses (I.e. tech support and professor assistance)	3.8%	17.7%	40.5%	31.6%	6.3%

Obtaining support to complete coursework online was not an issue for the students at USD. However, much like previous studies, nearly half of the students (49.4%) felt as though the quality of their education suffered due to online learning. Further, many students experienced an increase in anxiety (31.6%) towards the completion of their coursework. With the lack of peer interaction, 38% of students felt that taking online courses socially isolated them and 41.8% of students felt as though their relationships with their professors suffered.

To better understand the needs of students, I asked respondents to identify the obstacles they faced with online learning, seen in Table 6. Respondents were able to select all that applied.

**Table 6 – Online Learning Obstacles**

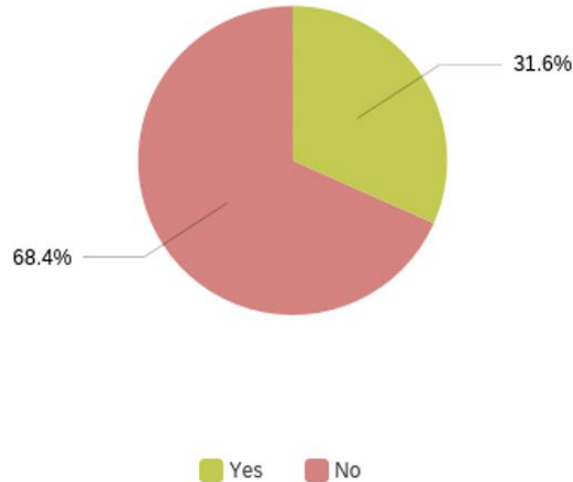
<b>Field:</b>	<b>Percent:</b>	<b>Choice Count:</b>
Poor access to Wi-Fi	18.3%	23
Poor access to a reliable computer	6.3%	8
No location to study at home	27.8%	35
Poor communication with professors	34.9%	44
I had no obstacles with online learning	12.7%	16
<b>Total:</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>126</b>

Poor communication with professors was founded to be the largest struggle for 34.9% of respondents. While remote learning allowed students to continue their coursework, no location to study at home (27.8%) and poor access to Wi-Fi (18.3%) hindered some student’s abilities to access and complete their work. As stated in previous studies, these three factors appeared to be the biggest obstacles for students across the country. With this, students faced a bigger risk of academic struggles and loss of motivation.

### Financial Status

Many students suffered greatly due to the financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The final questions assessed the various federal and institutional interventions meant to aid students. I began my research by asking students if they received the CARES Act offered through USD. The majority of students (68.4%) of students did not receive funding through the Act, as seen in Figure 7.

**Figure 7 – USD CARES Act**



Respondents who received funding were asked to respond to an additional statement. This statement was used to identify the efficacy of the funding and posed as follows: “The Cares Act helped some of my financial needs as a student,” as seen in Table 7.

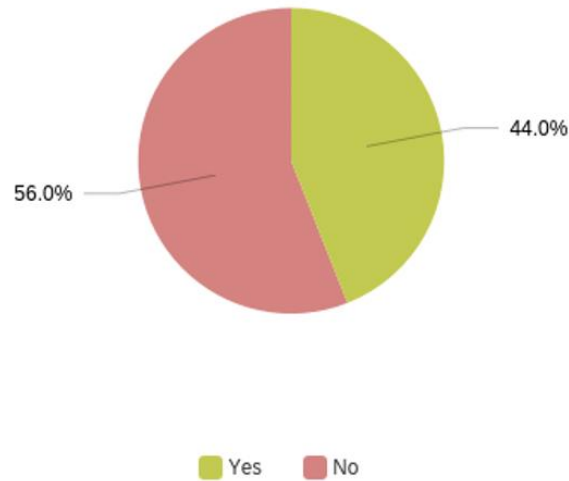
**Table 7 – CARES Act Support**

<b>Question</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Somewhat disagree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Somewhat agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>
The Cares Act helped some of my financial need as a student	4.0%	4.0%	8.0%	36.0%	48.0%

While reactions to the USD CARES Act show that most respondents found the financial support to be beneficial, I furthered moved to assess individuals’ opinions on the efficacy of the Act.

For respondents who received funding, I asked if there were ways in which the Act could have better suited their needs. The majority of students (56%) were satisfied with the aid they received responding that there was no need for further reforms, as seen in Figure 8.

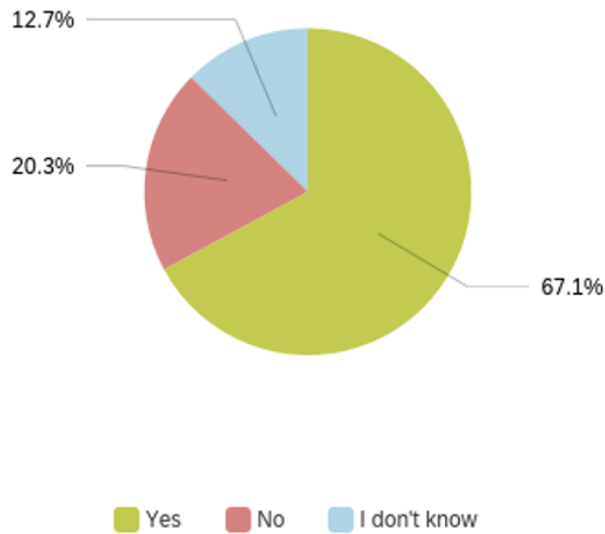
**Figure 8 – Cares Act Benefits**



Respondents who believed there could have been ways to better the Act were provided a location to place commentary on needed reforms. Of the six responses received, five (83.3%) respondents identified the need for more money. One other respondent identified the need for more benefits included within the Act.

My next set of questions draws on federal stimulus checks. I initially asked students if their parents had received a stimulus check. Due to most college students being dependents, I framed this question around their parents. 67.1% of students had a parent that received stimulus check, as seen in Figure 9.

**Figure 9 – Stimulus Check**



Respondents with parents who received funding were asked to respond to an additional statement. This statement was used to identify the efficacy of the funding. This statement was framed as a scale model and posed as follows: “The stimulus check helped some of my financial needs as a student.” In contrast to the Cares Act, there was an almost even split, with 31.1% of students responding that the check did not support them and 37.7% responding that the check did support them, as seen in Table 8.

**Table 8 – Stimulus Check Support**

<b>Question</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Somewhat disagree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Somewhat agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>
The stimulus check helped some of my financial need as a student	14.8%	16.4%	31.2%	23.0%	14.8%



## AN ANALYSIS OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

For those who did not find the stimulus check to be beneficial, I provided a location to place commentary. I received 15 responses, which I then analyzed and broke down by key elements, as seen in Table 9.

**Table 9 – Stimulus Check Responses**

Responses	Response Count	Illustration Quote
The stimulus check did not provide enough support for those struggling.	3	"Again, the "stimulus" check really was not enough to make a difference for anyone truly struggling."
Many did not receive any of the money from the stimulus check	8	"I didn't receive a stimulus check so I couldn't use it for my financial needs."
Many believed that a check should have been provided to students who financially supported themselves	3	"As college students we were the main group left out during the first stimulus check and personally I feel as though we were a large portion of the people who needed it most."
A few found the stimulus check to be beneficial for them	2	"My parents got the stimulus check and put it towards my tuition."
The stimulus check was not intended to assist with student financial need	1	"The stimulus check did not go toward student financial needs, it went towards paying other bills."

While the stimulus check was beneficial for adults, efficacy for students was reliant on external factors, such as sufficient government funding for dependents and/or parents' decision to allocate funds to their children. Of the 15 responses, most students did not receive any funds from the stimulus check, many believed that more could have been done for students – especially those who support themselves, a couple found the check to be beneficial, and one student responded that the check was not designed to help eradicate student financial needs.

CHAPTER FIVE

Conclusions and Implications

This report provided an overview of the impact the COVID-19 pandemic had on college students at the University of South Dakota. Based on the data and analysis listed above, there are a few implications for the impact of the Covid, as well as remedies applied. The COVID-19 survey revealed:

- 51.7% of students had, or believed that they had, COVID-19
- 67.8% of student's families had, or were believed to have had, COVID-19
- 18.8% of students experienced some serious effects of COVID-19

These results demonstrate the even split between students who contracted COVID-19 versus the students who did not. Further, it depicts that COVID-19 had an impact on many of the families of students at the University. It is possible that some respondents did contract the disease but did not receive a positive test. In contrast, it is possible that some students reported having the disease did experience a false positive.

- 41.8% of students had family members experience some serious effects of COVID-19
- 68.3% of students felt as though their mental health needs were met coming back to campus
- 87.3% of students experienced obstacles with online learning

Understanding the ways in which the pandemic impacted students attending the University provides insight into the needs of students. The University is better able to create reform programs that help aid students to reacclimate themselves back to normal campus life. It also

allows for the creation of better support reforms to better aid students with their personal and mental needs.

- 31.6% of students received funding through the Cares Act
- 56% of students felt as though the Cares Act benefited them
- 67.1% of students had a parent receive a stimulus check
- 37.% of students felt as though the stimulus check benefited them

COVID-19 had a great impact on the lives of many college students. Job closure and uncertainty created an increased burden for college students to handle. While many remedies were created at the federal level to aid with these burdens, University allocated funds can be remedied to bridge the remaining gap between student and financing.

This report can offer the University of South Dakota, as well as many other universities, valuable data to inform further remedial actions considering the COVID-19 pandemic.

Specifically, the University should consider reviewing students' reactions to on-campus resources regarding mental health, academics, and financial status, to reduce the impact of further pandemic waves and lingering needs of students.

This survey can be used as a resource to implement more on-campus counseling resources, as many students have identified the lingering need for the support. These resources should include more counselors to meet with students. The Cook House, one of the biggest counseling resources on campus, currently has a wait time before students can receive help. This should never be the case when it comes to something as important as mental health. USD does not necessarily need to open more counseling centers, rather they need to hire more mental health professionals. Even if most students do not utilize these resources, the benefits of having them for outweigh the current downfall of going without.

## AN ANALYSIS OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Further, consideration of the data and commentary can help to better inform others of what is needed for students to continue to grow and thrive academically. Working with students to better design a curriculum for students would help to create the most effective system of education. Simply listening as students express their needs would be the most effective method when reforming classes and classwork. While classes have a set standard of coursework they must include facts, such as simplifying or reducing extra work, may be beneficial as students continue to readjust to campus life. This will also help to create better relationships between students and their professors. In addition, considering the downfalls of the last wave, such as technological issues, will help to better create a system designed to withstand any future waves.

Assessing the financial needs of students is important when determining where to allocate funds. While many funding sources are guided by the federal government, those in the control of the University should consider the data provided to allocate funds towards the specified needs of students. These needs can be gathered in multiple ways, such as using student surveys on campus. Instead of allocating funds specifically towards tuition, USD could better their practices by increasing funding for external bills students may experience, such as the many bills that come with the cost of living. Working collectively with this data and commentary will hopefully reduce the impact of COVID-19 on students at the University for years to come.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

COVID Impacts, MentalHealth Needs, and Financial Status

---

Informed Consent Do you wish to proceed?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

End of Block: Informed Consent

---

Start of Block: Demographics Block

Q1 What year are you academically?

- Freshman (1)
  - Sophomore (2)
  - Junior (3)
  - Senior (4)
- 

Q2 What gender do you identify as?

- Male (1)
  - Female (2)
  - Non-Binary (3)
-

Q3 What school is your major in? (Select all that apply)

- Art & Design (1)
  - Business (2)
  - Communications & Media (3)
  - Culture & Society (4)
  - Education & Training (5)
  - Engineering (6)
  - Language & Literature (7)
  - Law & Government (8)
  - Mathematics (9)
  - Medicine, Health & Wellness (10)
  - Performing Arts (11)
  - Science & Technology (12)
  - Exercise Science & Sport (13)
  - Other (14)
- 

Q4 Did you have COVID-19?

- I have had a positive COVID test. (1)
  - I did not have a positive test, but I believe I had COVID. (2)
  - I don't think I have had COVID. (3)
-

Q5 Has a family member had COVID-19?

- They had a positive COVID test. (1)
- They did not have a positive test, but we believe they had COVID. (2)
- I don't think they had COVID. (3)

**End of Block: Demographics Block**

---

**Start of Block: Mental Health Questions**



AN ANALYSIS OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Q6 Please respond to the questions below.

	Definitely not (1)	Probably not (2)	Might or might not (3)	Probably yes (4)	Definitely yes (5)
COVID-19 has impacted my mental health (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The stress of COVID-19 has had an impact on my daily life (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The stress of COVID-19 has had an impact on my academic performance (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have had lingering health issues because of COVID-19 (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have has a lingering brain fog because of COVID-19 (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q7 Did you experience any serious effects of COVID? (select all that apply)

- Losing a job (1)
  - Losing housing (2)
  - Death of a loved one (3)
  - Long-term health issues (4)
  - No (5)
- 

Q8 Did a loved one experience any serious effects of COVID? (Select all that apply)

- Losing a job (1)
  - Losing housing (2)
  - Death of a loved one (3)
  - Long-term health issues (4)
  - No (5)
- 

Q9 Do you feel as though your mental needs were met coming back to campus? (I.E. Campus resources being available)

- Yes (1)
  - No (2)
- 

Q10 If no, without identifying yourself or others, please briefly explain below.

---

**End of Block: Mental Health Questions**

---

Start of Block: Online Learning

Q11 Please respond to the questions below.

	Strongly disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
Taking online courses reduced the quality of my education (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Taking online courses increased my anxiety towards completing coursework (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Taking online courses made me more socially isolated (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My relationship with my professors was strained due to online courses (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I was offered the support I needed to complete my courses (i.e. tech support and professor assistance) (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q12 Did you experience any obstacles with online learning? (Select all that apply)

- Poor access to Wi-Fi (1)
- Poor access to a reliable computer (2)
- No location to study at home (3)
- Poor communication with professors (4)
- I had no obstacles with online learning (5)

End of Block: Online Learning

---

Start of Block: Cares Act and Stimulus Funds

Q13 Did you receive and funding from the Cares Act through USD?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

*Skip To: Q17 If Did you receive and funding from the Cares Act through USD? = No*

---

Q14 Please respond to the question below.

	Strongly disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
The Cares Act helped some of my financial needs as a student. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

---

Q15 Are there ways that funding from the Act could have better suited your needs?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

*Skip To: Q17 If Are there ways that funding from the Act could have better suited your needs? = No*

Q16 If yes, without identifying yourself or others, please briefly explain below.

---

Q17 Did you or a parent receive a stimulus check?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- I don't know (3)

*Skip To: End of Block If Did you or a parent receive a stimulus check? = No*

Q18 Please respond to the question below.

	Strongly disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
The stimulus checked helped some of my financial needs as a student. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q19 If no, without identifying yourself or others, please briefly explain.

---

**End of Block: Cares Act and Stimulus Funds**

---

WORKS CITED

- Abdu-Glass, E., Schlozman, S., & Beresin, G. (n.d.). *The College Mental Health Crisis: A call for cultural ... Parenting Concerns*. Retrieved April 6, 2022, from <https://www.mghclaycenter.org/parenting-concerns/college-mental-health-crisis-call-cultural-change-part-2/>
- Adamczyk, A. (2021, January 12). *Many college students and other adult dependents are not eligible to receive a stimulus relief check*. CNBC. Retrieved April 5, 2022, from <https://www.cnbc.com/2020/03/30/many-college-students-are-ineligible-for-a-stimulus-relief-check.html>
- Advance Child Tax Credit and economic impact payments - stimulus checks*. USA Gov. (2022, March 10). Retrieved April 5, 2022, from <https://www.usa.gov/covid-stimulus-checks#:~:text=The%20IRS%20issued%20three%20Economic,%241%2C400%20in%20March%202021>
- Active Minds . (2020). *Student survey - active Minds*. COVID-19 IMPACT ON COLLEGE STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH. Retrieved February 2, 2022, from <https://www.activeminds.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Student-Survey-Infographic.pdf>
- American Psychological Association. (2020, April 16). *Psychological impact of covid-19*. American Psychological Association. Retrieved April 4, 2022, from <https://www.apa.org/topics/covid-19/psychological-impact>
- Bai, W., Cai, H., Liu, S., Chen, X., Sha, S., Cheung, T., Lin, J. J., Cui, X., Ng, C. H., & Xiang, Y.-T. (2021). Anxiety and depressive symptoms in college students during the late stage of the covid-19 outbreak: A network approach. *Translational Psychiatry, 11*(1). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41398-021-01738-4>
- Capozzi, L. (2020, November 2). *Preparing for mental health needs of college students amid covid-19*. Preparing for Mental Health Needs of College Students Amid COVID-19. Retrieved April 4, 2022, from <https://policylab.chop.edu/blog/preparing-mental-health-needs-college-students-amid-covid-19>
- Cellini, S. R. R. (2022, March 9). *How does virtual learning impact students in higher education?* Brookings. Retrieved April 5, 2022, from <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/brown-center-chalkboard/2021/08/13/how-does-virtual-learning-impact-students-in-higher-education/>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2021, September 16). *Post-covid conditions*. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Retrieved February 2, 2022, from <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/long-term-effects/index.html>

## AN ANALYSIS OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2022, March 22). *Symptoms of COVID-19*. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Retrieved March 23, 2022, from <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>
- DePietro, A. (2021, December 10). *Impact of coronavirus (COVID-19) on college tuition and finances*. Forbes. Retrieved February 2, 2022, from <https://www.forbes.com/sites/andrewdepietro/2020/06/02/impact-covid-19-tuition-finance/?sh=218284204b88>
- Elflein, J. (2022, March 21). *U.S. covid-19 cases and deaths*. Statista. Retrieved March 23, 2022, from <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1101932/coronavirus-covid19-cases-and-deaths-number-us-americans/>
- Ezarik, M. (2021, March 24). Student experiences during COVID and campus reopening concerns. Retrieved April 5, 2022, from <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2021/03/24/student-experiences-during-covid-and-campus-reopening-concerns>
- Federal Student Aid. (2019, February 12). *(grants) subject: Operational implementation guidance – federal student aid's implementation of 2019–20 federal Pell Grant payment and disbursement schedules*. (Grants) Subject: Operational Implementation Guidance – Federal Student Aid's Implementation of 2019–20 Federal Pell Grant Payment and Disbursement Schedules | Knowledge Center. Retrieved April 4, 2022, from <https://fsapartners.ed.gov/knowledge-center/library/electronic-announcements/2019-02-12/grants-subject-operational-implementation-guidance-federal-student-aids-implementation-2019-20-federal-pell-grant-payment-and-disbursement-schedules>
- Filho, W. L., Wall, T., Rayman-Bacchus, L., Mifsud, M., Pritchard, D. J., Lovren, V. O., Farinha, C., Petrovic, D. S., & Balogun, A.-L. (2021). Impacts of covid-19 and social isolation on academic staff and students at universities: A cross-sectional study. *BMC Public Health*, 21(1). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-021-11040-z>
- Gaffney, S. (2022, April 5). *Can I claim my college student as a dependent?: BestColleges*. BestColleges.com. Retrieved April 5, 2022, from <https://www.bestcolleges.com/blog/claim-college-student-as-dependent/>
- Gallagher, S., & Palmer, J. (2020, September 29). *The pandemic pushed universities online. the change was long overdue*. Harvard Business Review. Retrieved April 5, 2022, from <https://hbr.org/2020/09/the-pandemic-pushed-universities-online-the-change-was-long-overdue>
- Giuntella, G., Hyde, K., Saccardo, S., & Sadoff, S. (2021). Lifestyle and mental health disruptions during COVID-19. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America*. <https://doi.org/10.31235/osf.io/y4xn3>
- Haikalis, M., Doucette, H., Meisel, M. K., Birch, K., & Barnett, N. P. (2021). Changes in college student anxiety and depression from pre- to during-covid-19: Perceived stress, academic challenges, loneliness, and positive perceptions. *Emerging Adulthood*, 10(2), 534–545. <https://doi.org/10.1177/21676968211058516>



- Hamel, L., Kearney, A., & Brodie, M. (2022, March 4). *Mental health impact of the COVID-19 pandemic: An update*. KFF. Retrieved April 4, 2022, from <https://www.kff.org/coronavirus-covid-19/poll-finding/mental-health-impact-of-the-covid-19-pandemic/>
- Haskins, D. (2020, March 30). *Potential covid-19 exposure in Deadwood*. South Dakota State News. Retrieved February 2, 2022, from <https://news.sd.gov/newsitem.aspx?id=26579>
- Internal Revenue Service. (2022, February 14). *Third economic impact payment*. Internal Revenue Service. Retrieved April 5, 2022, from <https://www.irs.gov/coronavirus/third-economic-impact-payment>
- Ivanec, T. P. (2022). The lack of academic social interactions and students' learning difficulties during COVID-19 faculty lockdowns in Croatia: The mediating role of the perceived sense of life disruption caused by the pandemic and the adjustment to online studying. *Social Sciences, 11*(2), 42. <https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci11020042>
- Kopestinsky, A. (2022, March 12). *What is the average American income in 2021?* PolicyAdvice. Retrieved April 4, 2022, from <https://policyadvice.net/insurance/insights/average-american-income/#:~:text=What%20percentage%20of%20Americans%20makes,the%20population%20earned%20over%20%24200%2C000.>
- Krupnick, M. (2022, February 11). *More students are dropping out of college during covid - and it could get worse*. The Hechinger Report. Retrieved April 4, 2022, from <https://hechingerreport.org/more-students-are-dropping-out-of-college-during-covid-and-it-could-get-worse/>
- Lee, J., Solomon, M., Stead, T., Kwon, B., & Ganti, L. (2021). Impact of covid-19 on the mental health of US college students. *BMC Psychology, 9*(1). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40359-021-00598-3>
- Li, Y., Wang, A., Wu, Y., Han, N., & Huang, H. (2021). Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Mental Health of college students: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *Frontiers in Psychology, 12*. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.669119>
- Liyanage, S., Saqib, K., Khan, A. F., Thobani, T. R., Tang, W.-C., Chiarot, C. B., AlShurman, B. A., & Butt, Z. A. (2021). Prevalence of anxiety in university students during the COVID-19 pandemic: A systematic review. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, 19*(1), 62. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph19010062>
- Mayo Clinic Staff. (2021, November 23). *Covid-19: How to manage your mental health during the pandemic*. Mayo Clinic. Retrieved April 4, 2022, from <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/coronavirus/in-depth/mental-health-covid-19/art-20482731>
- McDaniel, C., Suffern, C., Joo, J., & Alamuddin, R. (2020, October 22). *Student and Faculty Experiences with Emergency Remote Learning in Spring 2020*. <https://doi.org/10.18665/sr.314276>
- Murphy, L., Eduljee, N. B., & Croteau, K. (2020). College student transition to synchronous virtual classes during the COVID-19 pandemic in Northeastern United States. *Pedagogical Research, 5*(4). <https://doi.org/10.29333/pr/8485>

- National Alliance on Mental Illness. (2020, September 17). *School during the pandemic: Mental health impacts on students*. NAMI California. Retrieved February 2, 2022, from <https://namica.org/blog/impact-on-the-mental-health-of-students-during-covid-19/>
- PEW Research Center . (2021, December 22). *How the pandemic could affect the rise in student debt*. The Pew Charitable Trusts. Retrieved April 4, 2022, from <https://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/issue-briefs/2021/12/how-the-pandemic-could-affect-the-rise-in-student-debt#:~:text=The%20economic%20crisis%20spawned%20by,%2420.7%20billion%20in%201990%2D91.>
- The President and Fellows of Harvard College. (2020, September 23). *Poll: 46% of U.S. households report facing serious financial problems during the coronavirus outbreak*. HARVARD T.H. CHAN - School of Public Health. Retrieved April 4, 2022, from <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/news/press-releases/poll-46-of-u-s-households-report-facing-serious-financial-problems-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/>
- Quattrocchi, A. (2022, January 5). *Perspective: Covid-19 sparks mental health crisis on college campuses nationwide*. EducationNC. Retrieved March 25, 2022, from <https://www.ednc.org/perspective-covid-19-sparks-mental-health-crisis-on-college-campuses-nationwide/>
- Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. (2021, October 8). *The impact of coronavirus on households across America*. RWJF. Retrieved April 4, 2022, from <https://www.rwjf.org/en/library/research/2020/09/the-impact-of-coronavirus-on-households-across-america.html>
- Sahu P (April 04, 2020) Closure of Universities Due to Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19): Impact on Education and Mental Health of Students and Academic Staff. *Cureus* 12(4): e7541. doi:10.7759/cureus.7541
- Son, C., Hegde, S., Smith, A., Wang, X., & Sasangohar, F. (2020). Effects of COVID-19 on college students' mental health in the United States: Interview survey study. *Journal of Medical Internet Research*, 22(9). <https://doi.org/10.2196/21279>
- South Dakota Department of Health. (2022, March 23). *South Dakota COVID-19 DASHBOARD*. Covid-19 South Dakota case updates. Retrieved March 23, 2022, from <https://doh.sd.gov/COVID/Dashboard.aspx>
- Staff , A. J. M. C. (2021, January 1). *A timeline of covid-19 developments in 2020*. AJMC. Retrieved February 2, 2022, from <https://www.ajmc.com/view/a-timeline-of-covid19-developments-in-2020>
- States that did not issue stay-at-home orders in response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, 2020*. Ballotpedia. (n.d.). Retrieved April 5, 2022, from [https://ballotpedia.org/States\\_that\\_did\\_not\\_issue\\_stay-at-home\\_orders\\_in\\_response\\_to\\_the\\_coronavirus\\_\(COVID-19\)\\_pandemic,\\_2020](https://ballotpedia.org/States_that_did_not_issue_stay-at-home_orders_in_response_to_the_coronavirus_(COVID-19)_pandemic,_2020)
- Tebor, C. (2021, October 12). *'remember that you come first': University of North Carolina canceled Tuesday classes amid suicide investigations*. USA Today. Retrieved April 4, 2022, from <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/education/2021/10/11/university-north-carolina-chapel-hill-wellness-day-suicide-investigations/6099439001/>

- Todd, A. (2021, July 27). *Gov. Noem says South Dakota will not have a mask mandate following CDC reversal*. Argus Leader. Retrieved April 5, 2022, from <https://www.argusleader.com/story/news/politics/2021/07/27/south-dakota-governor-kristi-noem-no-mask-mandate-following-cdc-reversal-covid-19-vaccinated-delta/5395068001/>
- Todd, A. (2021, August 20). *South Dakota leads nation in new COVID-19 case increases per 100,000 residents*. Argus Leader. Retrieved February 2, 2022, from <https://www.argusleader.com/story/news/2021/08/19/new-york-times-says-covid-case-rate-south-dakota-most-in-united-states/8204546002/>
- Tretina, K. (2022, March 1). *Independent vs. dependent student: Which are you?* Credible. Retrieved April 5, 2022, from <https://www.credible.com/blog/student-loans/independent-vs-dependent-status/>
- US Department of Education. (n.d.). *Supporting students during the COVID-19 pandemic: Maximizing in-person learning and implementing effective practices for students in quarantine and isolation*. Supporting Students During the COVID-19 Pandemic: Maximizing In-Person Learning and Implementing Effective Practices for Students in Quarantine and Isolation | U.S. Department of Education. Retrieved April 5, 2022, from <https://www.ed.gov/coronavirus/supporting-students-during-covid-19-pandemic>
- U.S. Department of the Treasury. (2021, June 17). *Economic impact payments*. U.S. Department of the Treasury. Retrieved April 5, 2022, from <https://home.treasury.gov/policy-issues/coronavirus/assistance-for-american-families-and-workers/economic-impact-payments>
- UNC Research. (2021, March 4). *Pandemic worsens depression, anxiety among first-year college students*. UNC Research. Retrieved April 4, 2022, from <https://research.unc.edu/2021/03/04/pandemic-worsens-depression-anxiety-among-first-year-college-students/>
- USD cares act*. USD Cares Act | University of South Dakota. (n.d.). Retrieved April 4, 2022, from <https://www.usd.edu/Student-Life/Student-Resources-and-Wellness/USD-Cares-Act>
- USD. (2020, March 12). *University of South Dakota responds to Covid 19*. USD Home. Retrieved April 5, 2022, from <https://www.usd.edu/the-south-dakotan/university-of-south-dakota-responds-to-covid-19>
- Wang, X., Hegde, S., Son, C., Keller, B., Smith, A., & Sasangohar, F. (2020). Investigating mental health of US college students during the COVID-19 pandemic: Cross-sectional Survey Study. *Journal of Medical Internet Research*, 22(9). <https://doi.org/10.2196/22817>
- Weldon, R. (2021, October 10). *College students report issues with Distance Learning*. Healio. Retrieved April 5, 2022, from <https://www.healio.com/news/primary-care/20211010/college-students-report-issues-with-distance-learning>
- World Health Organization. (2022, March 2). *Covid-19 pandemic triggers 25% increase in prevalence of anxiety and depression worldwide*. World Health Organization. Retrieved April 4, 2022, from <https://www.who.int/news/item/02-03-2022-covid-19-pandemic-triggers-25-increase-in-prevalence-of-anxiety-and-depression-worldwide>

