

Aggie Wellbeing Assessment

Overall Student Wellbeing

The Wellbeing Improvement Survey for Higher Education Settings (WISHES) has been administered to the Texas A&M University student body in College Station since the 2021-2022 academic year. Texas A&M University surveyed the student body to better understand students’ overall well-being, intermediate outcomes, educational outcomes, and student experiences that influence wellbeing. The survey covered topics such as overall health, psychological distress, suffering or struggling, flourishing, belonging at Texas A&M, resilience, binge drinking, health and academic risks, engagement in extracurricular activities, having a friend, mentor, or professor who makes them excited about learning and cares for them. The WISHES survey is administered in October, November, February, March, and April of each academic year. In the 2021-2022 academic year, the survey was also administered in September to students living on campus. However, the March and April surveys scheduled for spring 2023 were not administered. Since the 2021-2022 academic year, 23,216 students responded to at least one question, yielding an overall response rate of 12%. This report focuses on students’ overall wellbeing, including health, psychological distress, financial wellbeing, and alcohol use.

Figure 1 illustrates the percentage of students who reported having poor or fair overall health. Graduate students had better overall health than undergraduate students. First-generation students were more likely to report having poor/fair health than non-first-generation students. Similarly, females were more likely to report poor/fair health than males. Students reporting poor or fair health were more likely to experience psychological distress and experience loneliness and less likely to feel that they belong at Texas A&M.

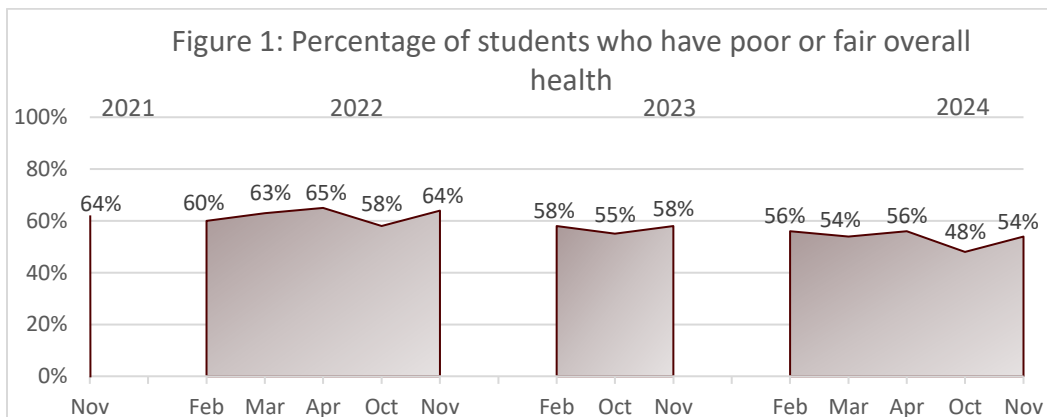
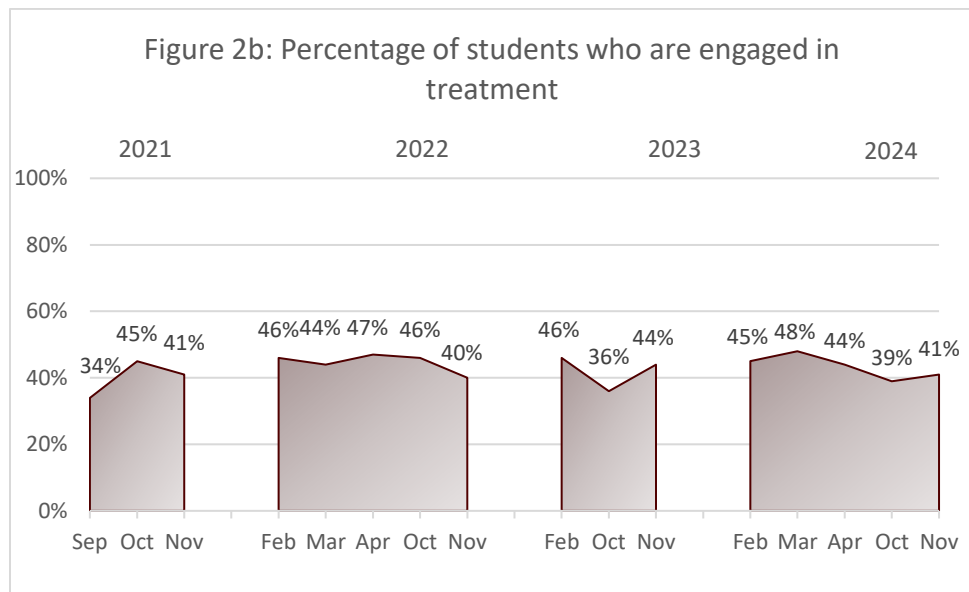
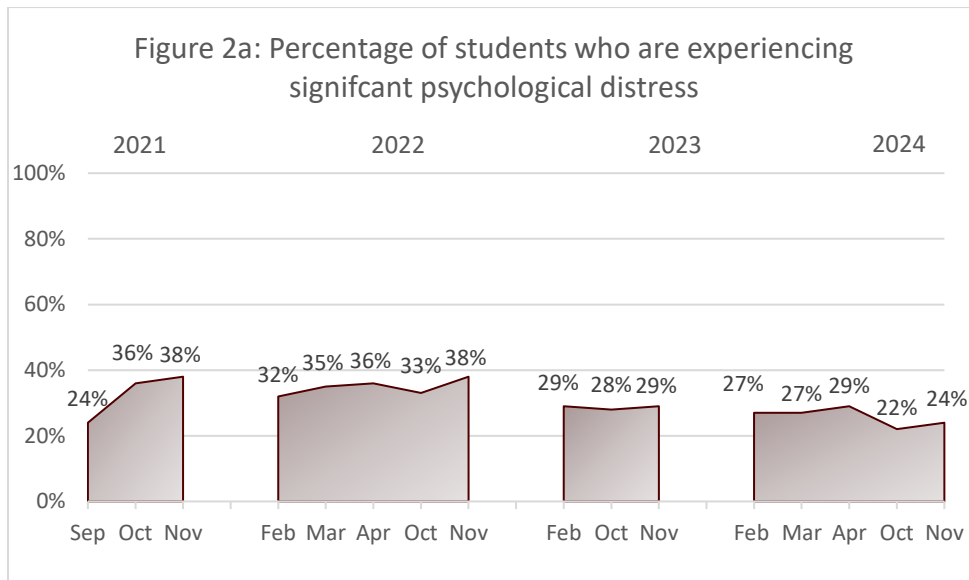


Figure 2a represents students who reported experiencing significant psychological distress; Figure 2b illustrates whether those who were experiencing significant psychological distress were engaged in mental health treatment. First-generation students were more likely to experience significant psychological distress compared to non-first-generation students; however, they were less likely to seek treatment. Females were more likely to be experiencing significant psychological distress compared to males. Additionally, distressed females were also more likely to be engaged in mental health treatment than distressed males. International and White students were less likely to be in distress than the other ethnic groups; however, distressed International students were much less likely to be engaged in mental health treatment.



The next measure asks students about their financial situations and determined whether or not students are suffering financially. The results shown in Figure 3 illustrates the percentage of students who were suffering financially. First-generation students had a higher likelihood of suffering financially when compared to non-first generations students. Freshmen students were less likely to struggle financially than any other classification. Black/multi-racial with Black students were the ethnic group most likely to be suffering financially. Male students were less likely than female students to suffer financially.

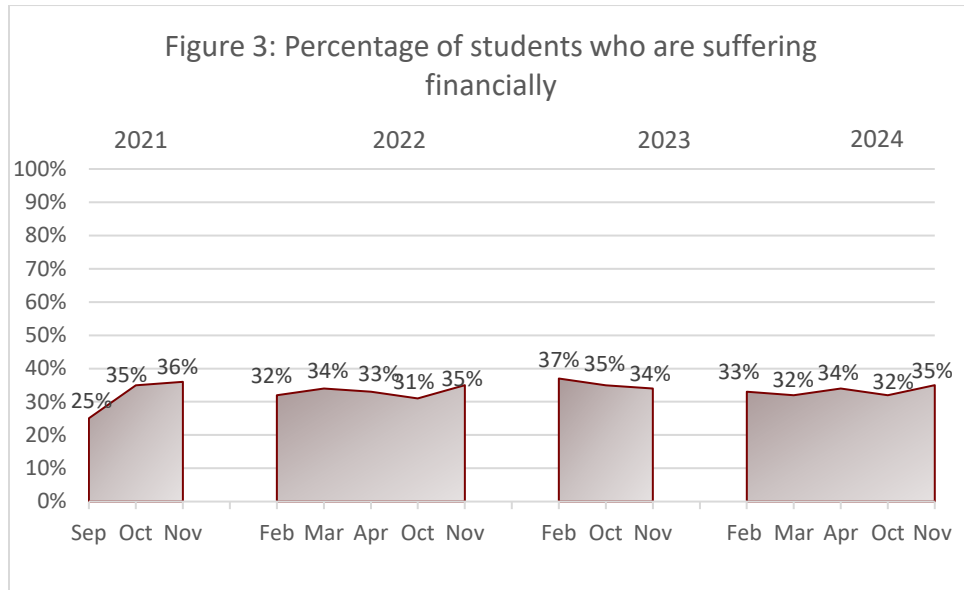
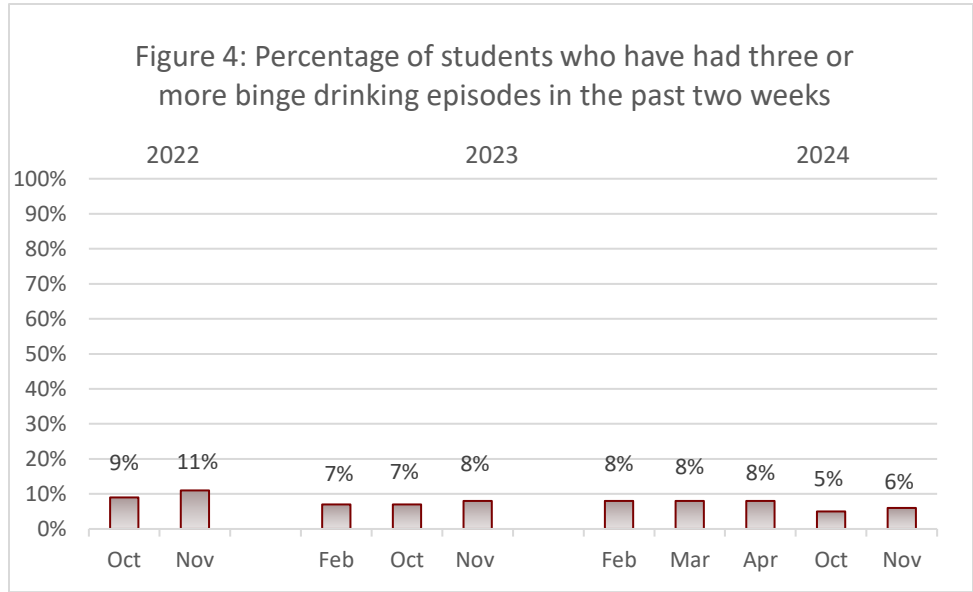


Figure 4, on the next page, conveys the percentage of students who had at least three or more binge drinking episodes in the past two weeks. For males, binge drinking constitutes five or more drinks in a day, while for females, it is four or more drinks in a day. Females reported fewer binge drinking episodes than their male counterparts. The binge drinking reported mostly increased each undergraduate year, meaning freshmen were binge drinking less than sophomores and juniors; seniors reported the highest binge drinking episodes of all the undergraduate classifications. However, graduate students reported binge drinking less than undergraduate students overall.



Conclusion

There has been a gradual decreasing number of students who have reported having poor or fair overall health when comparing Spring 2022 to Fall 2024. While approximately one-third of students were experiencing psychological distress, less than half of those students were engaged in treatment. The likelihood of engaging in mental health treatment among distressed individual varied notably across demographic lines.

This executive summary is updated at the conclusion of each semester and was last updated at the end of the fall 2024 semester.

For more information, please contact wishes@tamu.edu.