

California Student Aid Commission

COVID-19 Student Survey Technical Appendix

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CALIFORNIA
STUDENT AID
COMMISSION



UC DAVIS SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

The California Student Aid Commission in partnership with the California Education Lab at University of California, Davis surveyed current college students and high school seniors about their experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic crisis of Spring 2020, and their perceptions and concerns related to college attendance in Summer and Fall of 2020. This technical appendix describes the survey methodology and provides tabulations of responses for each question in the survey.

Population and Sample

For the *COVID-19 Student Survey*, two survey samples were drawn from the population of students who filed and completed the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or the California Dream Act Application (CADAA) in the 2020-2021 filing cycle. Before determining samples, we excluded students enrolled in graduate programs or already earning a bachelor's degree (or higher), students over the age of 60, and students who are not California residents.

The two sample populations include:

1. High school seniors graduating in 2020 who applied for financial aid to attend a California college in 2020-21. In May 2020, 279,315 high school seniors (that met the basic exclusion criteria) submitted FAFSA/CADAA applications, from which we drew a random sample of 149,314 high school seniors to survey.¹
2. Continuing college students who applied for financial aid to attend a California college in 2020-21.² In May 2020, 1,113,604 continuing college students (that met the basic exclusion criteria) submitted FAFSA/CADAA applications, from which we drew a random sample of 497,165 students to survey.³

Survey Construction and Administration

The *COVID-19 Student Survey* consists of two instruments aligned to the two samples. The first instrument targeted high school seniors and focused on students' plans for and concerns about attending college in Fall 2020. The second instrument targeted continuing college students and focused on disruptions to college attendance in Spring 2020 and plans for and concerns about college enrollment in both Summer 2020 and Fall 2020.

The survey questions in both instruments asked students to consider how COVID-19 *changed* their plans. The survey combined Likert-scale, selected response, and open-ended questions. The electronic survey was administered May 14, 2020 through June 1, 2020. The survey was emailed to a sample of the two respective groups: high school seniors and continuing college students who applied for financial aid for 2020-21. Two follow-up emails were sent about one week apart to non-respondents. Respondents provided active consent for participation through the electronic instrument, as approved by the UC Davis Institutional Review Board (Case #1600635-1).

¹ This number is slightly lower than the target of 150,000 high school students due to other missing identifying information or duplicates.

² The sample of "continuing college students" may include those enrolled in college during the time of the survey or those returning to college after some time away from school.

³ This number is slightly lower than the target of 500,000 continuing students due to other missing identifying information or duplicates.

Respondents

A total of 16,441 high school seniors and 61,346 continuing college students completed the survey, resulting in response rates of 11.0% and 12.3% respectively. Table 1 compares key characteristics of the respondents to the full sample and the population.

For both surveys, respondents closely matched the sample and population for average student age, but had higher representation of female students. Students who filed for CADAA were slightly overrepresented in the respondent group compared to the samples and general population. Respondents also tended to have lower average income and lower *Estimated Family Contribution* than students in the full samples and general population.

When considering intended college of enrollment, respondents differed slightly from the samples and population. For high school seniors, respondents were underrepresented among those who intend to enroll in CCC or out-of-state and overrepresented in planned attendance at a CSU or UC than the overall population of FAFSA filers and the random sample of students invited to participate in the survey. For continuing college students, respondents were slightly overrepresented in planned attendance at a CSU and CCC and underrepresented among those who intend to enroll in UC or an out-of-state institution.

Table 1: Characteristics of Respondents

Panel A: High School Seniors			
	Population	Sample	Respondents
College of Intended Enrollment for 2020-21			
CCC	36.47%	36.50%	29.13%
CSU	25.33%	25.30%	30.01%
UC	14.58%	14.56%	19.38%
Non-Profit	7.17%	7.23%	7.31%
For-Profit	0.78%	0.79%	0.73%
Out-of-State	15.66%	15.61%	13.43%
Year in School for 2020-21			
Freshmen	99.43%	99.44%	99.49%
Sophomore	0.39%	0.38%	0.35%
Junior	0.05%	0.05%	0.05%
Senior +	0.13%	0.13%	0.11%
Financial Aid Filing Status Indicators			
CADAA	2.87%	2.87%	4.17%
FAFSA Renewal	6.10%	6.11%	8.09%
Independent	3.75%	3.74%	3.47%
Students w/ Dependent Children	0.53%	0.54%	0.35%
Average Income	\$102,928.70	\$103,135.22	\$85,113.71
Average EFC	\$23,377.17	\$23,369.69	\$17,627.08
Demographic Characteristics			
Female	55.41%	55.34%	67.26%
Average Age	18.22	18.22	18.21
Panel B: Continuing College Students			
	Population	Sample	Respondents
College of Intended Enrollment for 2020-21			
CCC	37.62%	37.64%	41.83%
CSU	25.92%	25.91%	29.68%
UC	10.71%	10.69%	8.70%
Non-Profit	5.49%	5.48%	4.98%
For-Profit	2.86%	2.86%	2.39%
Out-of-State	17.39%	17.40%	12.40%
Year in School for 2020-21			
Freshmen	24.48%	24.42%	21.17%
Sophomore	26.58%	26.59%	28.26%
Junior	26.65%	26.71%	30.30%
Senior +	22.29%	22.28%	20.26%
Financial Aid Filing Status Indicators			
CADAA	2.29%	2.28%	3.82%
FAFSA Renewal	89.79%	89.79%	92.76%
Independent	44.05%	44.04%	47.95%
Students w/ Dependent Children	16.84%	16.81%	20.04%
Average Income	\$56,811.48	\$56,828.46	\$46,584.43
Average EFC	\$9,511.16	\$9,516.95	\$6,847.85
Demographic Characteristics			
Female	61.38%	61.45%	70.68%
Average Age	24.91	24.91	25.86

Note: The intended college of enrollment included in this table is based on students' FAFSA and CADAA applications; survey responses and actual college enrollment may differ.

Survey Responses

The tables that follow provide the frequency and percentage of responses for each question in the survey. The first set (Tables 2 – 6) provide responses from the survey of high school seniors and the second set (Tables 7 – 23) present responses from the continuing college student instrument.

New Student Survey

Table 2: Are you currently a high school senior?

	Frequency	Pct
No	432	2.64
Yes	15,922	97.36
Total	16,354	100.00

Table 3a: Think about your plans for college in Fall 2020. Where did you plan to go before COVID-19 and now, where do you plan to go?

	Before COVID-19		After COVID-19	
	Frequency	Pct	Frequency	Pct
CCC	4,757	30.79	3,458	31.97
CSU	4,418	28.60	2,819	26.06
Outside CA	1,446	9.36	743	6.87
Don't Know	591	3.83	854	7.89
Don't plan to	32	0.21	71	0.66
Private in CA	988	6.40	587	5.43
UC	3,020	19.55	2,188	20.23
Vocational/Technical	196	1.27	97	0.90
Total	15,448	100.00	10,817	100.00

Note: All respondents.

Table 3b: Think about your plans for college in Fall 2020. Where did you plan to go before COVID-19 and now, where do you plan to go?

	Before COVID-19		After COVID-19	
	Frequency	Pct	Frequency	Pct
CCC	2,677	25.18	3,363	31.63
CSU	3,108	29.24	2,776	26.11
Outside CA	1,062	9.99	734	6.90
Don't Know	489	4.60	845	7.95
Don't plan to	20	0.19	69	0.65
Private in CA	730	6.87	575	5.41
UC	2,440	22.95	2,175	20.46
Vocational/Technical	105	0.99	94	0.88
Total	10,631	100.00	10,631	100.00

Note: Responses only for individuals who answered both questions.

Table 4: Why do you not plan to attend college in Fall 2020?

	Frequency	Pct
I want to stay closer to home/family	2	2.82
I cannot afford college	21	29.58
I don't want to take classes online	45	63.38
I need to work more	24	33.80
Other	21	29.58
Observations	71	

Notes: Question only displayed to respondents answering "Don't plan to" for After COVID-19 in Table 3a above. Answer options are not mutually exclusive. Therefore, columns do not sum.

Table 5: Rate your agreement with the following statements about your plans for college in Fall 2020.

Table 5a: Because of COVID-19, I now plan to delay my college enrollment.

	Frequency	Pct
Strongly Agree	390	2.50
Agree	1,079	6.93
Neither agree nor disagree	3,153	20.24
Disagree	5,505	35.34
Strongly disagree	5,449	34.98
Total	15,576	100.00

Table 5b: Because of COVID-19, I don't know where I want to attend college.

	Frequency	Pct
Strongly Agree	474	3.07
Agree	1,251	8.09
Neither agree nor disagree	1,389	8.98
Disagree	5,707	36.91
Strongly disagree	6,640	42.95
Total	15,461	100.00

Table 5c: Because of COVID-19, I am concerned about going to college far from home.

	Frequency	Pct
Strongly Agree	1,647	10.63
Agree	3,516	22.70
Neither agree nor disagree	2,842	18.35
Disagree	3,863	24.94
Strongly disagree	3,620	23.37
Total	15,488	100.00

Table 5d: Because of COVID-19, I am now concerned about having to take college classes online.

	Frequency	Pct
Strongly Agree	7,441	47.91
Agree	5,267	33.92
Neither agree nor disagree	1,437	9.25
Disagree	812	5.23
Strongly disagree	573	3.69
Total	15,530	100.00

Table 5e: Because of COVID-19, I am now concerned about my financial situation.

	Frequency	Pct
Strongly Agree	5,810	37.40
Agree	5,485	35.31
Neither agree nor disagree	2,438	15.69
Disagree	1,199	7.72
Strongly disagree	602	3.88
Total	15,534	100.00

Table 5f: Because of COVID-19, I am now concerned about my family's financial hardship.

	Frequency	Pct
Strongly Agree	5,737	36.93
Agree	5,364	34.53
Neither agree nor disagree	2,562	16.49
Disagree	1,293	8.32
Strongly disagree	580	3.73
Total	15,536	100.00

Table 6a: How worried were you/are you about the following?

	Before COVID-19				After COVID-19			
	A lot	A little	Not at all	Total	A lot	A little	Not at all	Total
Paying for tuition and fees	3,832	8,701	2,507	15,040	9,229	4,169	1,440	14,838
Paying for housing and food	3,239	6,908	4,867	15,014	7,158	4,365	3,307	14,830
Paying for transportation	2,336	6,800	5,877	15,013	5,143	5,345	4,326	14,814
Paying for tech/internet	1,819	5,771	7,417	15,007	4,709	4,909	5,191	14,809
Paying for healthcare	2,206	5,671	7,117	14,994	5,173	4,654	4,972	14,799
Caring for family members	2,728	5,927	6,344	14,999	7,230	4,247	3,351	14,828
Taking full load of classes	3,457	7,587	3,966	15,010	8,531	4,593	1,722	14,846
Personal health/well-being	2,587	6,957	5,455	14,999	8,620	4,712	1,534	14,866

Note: Frequencies are reported

Table 6b: How worried were/are you about the following?

	Before COVID-19				After COVID-19			
	A lot	A little	Not at all	Total	A lot	A little	Not at all	Total
Paying for tuition and fees	25.48	57.85	16.67	15,040	62.20	28.10	9.70	14,838
Paying for housing and food	21.57	46.01	32.42	15,014	48.27	29.43	22.30	14,830
Paying for transportation	15.56	45.29	39.15	15,013	34.72	36.08	29.20	14,814
Paying for tech/internet	12.12	38.46	49.42	15,007	31.80	33.15	35.05	14,809
Paying for healthcare	14.71	37.82	47.47	14,994	34.96	31.45	33.60	14,799
Caring for family members	18.19	39.52	42.30	14,999	48.76	28.64	22.60	14,828
Taking full load of classes	23.03	50.55	26.42	15,010	57.46	30.94	11.60	14,846
Personal health/well-being	17.25	46.38	36.37	14,999	57.98	31.70	10.32	14,866

Note: Percentages are reported

Continuing College Student Survey

Table 7: Are you/were you enrolled in college this Spring 2020 term?

	Frequency	Pct
No	6,418	10.55
Yes	54,407	89.45
Total	60,825	100.00

Table 8: Rate your agreement with the following statements about this Spring 2020 college term.

Table 8a: Because of COVID-19, I dropped one or more courses mid-term.

	Frequency	Pct
Agree	12,512	24.41
Disagree	38,755	75.59
Total	51,267	100.00

Note: Question only displayed to respondents who reported being enrolled in Spring 2020 (“Yes” in Table 7).

Table 8b: Because of COVID-19, I lost some or all of my income.

	Frequency	Pct
Agree	37,555	71.02
Disagree	15,324	28.98
Total	52,879	100.00

Note: Question only displayed to respondents who reported being enrolled in Spring 2020 (“Yes” in Table 7).

Table 8c: Because of COVID-19, my living arrangements changed.

	Frequency	Pct
Agree	23,863	45.79
Disagree	28,253	54.21
Total	52,116	100.00

Note: Question only displayed to respondents who reported being enrolled in Spring 2020 (“Yes” in Table 7).

Table 9: Because of COVID-19, how worried are/were you about the following things during this Spring 2020 college term.

Table 9a: Paying for tuition and fees.

	Frequency	Pct
A little	20,275	38.44
A lot	18,729	35.51
Not at all	13,739	26.05
Total	52,743	100.00

Note: Question only displayed to respondents who reported being enrolled in Spring 2020 (“Yes” in Table 7).

Table 9b: Paying for housing and food.

	Frequency	Pct
A little	16,856	31.79
A lot	27,004	50.93
Not at all	9,162	17.28
Total	53,022	100.00

Note: Question only displayed to respondents who reported being enrolled in Spring 2020 (“Yes” in Table 7).

Table 9c: Taking courses online.

	Frequency	Pct
A little	11,248	21.15
A lot	36,744	69.10
Not at all	5,183	9.75
Total	53,175	100.00

Note: Question only displayed to respondents who reported being enrolled in Spring 2020 (“Yes” in Table 7).

Table 10: Are you aware if your college has emergency aid for living expenses?

	Frequency	Pct
No	30,509	57.34
Yes	22,697	42.66
Total	53,206	100.00

Table 11: Have you applied for emergency aid for living expenses?

	Frequency	Pct
No	13,764	61.19
Yes	8,729	38.81
Total	22,493	100.00

Note: Question only displayed to respondents aware of emergency aid (“Yes” in Table 10).

Table 12: Have you received emergency aid for living expenses?

	Frequency	Pct
No	3,963	45.92
Yes	4,668	54.08
Total	8,631	100.00

Note: Question only displayed to respondents who applied for emergency aid (“Yes” in Table 11).

Table 13: Are you aware if your college provides laptops/chromebooks to students in need of technology during COVID-19?

	Frequency	Pct
No	22,920	43.52
Yes	29,747	56.48
Total	52,667	100.00

Table 14: Have you asked for a free (or loaner) laptop/chromebook from your college?

	Frequency	Pct
No	26,198	88.41
Yes	3,434	11.59
Total	29,632	100.00

Note: Question only displayed to respondents aware that laptops/chromebooks available for students in need (“Yes” in Table 13).

Table 15: Have you received a free (or loaner) laptop/chromebook from your college?

	Frequency	Pct
No	832	24.51
Yes	2,563	75.49
Total	3,395	100.00

Note: Question only displayed to respondents who asked for free (or loaner) laptops/chromebooks (“Yes” in Table 14).

Table 16: Do you plan to take college courses this summer?

	Frequency	Pct
No	17,778	30.04
Not sure yet	11,695	19.76
Yes	29,699	50.19
Total	59,172	100.00

Table 17: To what degree have your plans for Summer 2020 enrollment changed due to COVID-19?

	Frequency	Pct
I am not sure yet	7,889	13.37
Not at all	14,993	25.41
Quite a bit	17,953	30.43
Somewhat	18,164	30.79
Total	58,999	100.00

Table 18: Where do you plan to take college classes this summer?

	Frequency	Pct
Same college as spring 2020	5,537	13.49
Different college as spring 2020	5,742	13.99
I am not sure yet	29,778	72.53
Total	41,057	100.00

Note: Question only displayed to respondents planning to enroll or considering enrollment in Summer 2020 (any response other than “Not at all” in Table 17).

Table 19: To what degree have your plans for college enrollment in Fall 2020 changed due to the COVID-19 pandemic?

	Frequency	Pct
I am not sure yet	12,932	22.12
Not at all	10,226	17.49
Quite a bit	19,383	33.15
Somewhat	15,923	27.24
Total	58,464	100.00

Table 20a: Think about your plans for college in Fall 2020. Where did you plan to go before COVID-19 and now, where do you plan to go?

	Before COVID-19		After COVID-19	
	Frequency	Pct	Frequency	Pct
CCC	18,414	34.20	10,907	28.59
CSU	17,952	33.35	11,176	29.30
Outside CA	3,031	5.63	1,692	4.44
Don't Know	2,135	3.97	5,949	15.59
Don't plan to	429	0.80	936	2.45
Private in CA	3,675	6.83	2,037	5.34
UC	6,110	11.35	4,171	10.93
Vocational/Technical	2,091	3.88	1,279	3.35
Total	53,837	100.00	38,147	100.00

Note: All respondents.

Table 20b: Think about your plans for college in Fall 2020.
Where did you plan to go before COVID-19 and now, where do you plan to go?

	Before COVID-19		After COVID-19	
	Frequency	Pct	Frequency	Pct
CCC	10,855	29.81	10,497	28.83
CSU	12,982	35.65	10,664	29.29
Outside CA	2,129	5.85	1,629	4.47
Don't Know	1,202	3.30	5,559	15.27
Don't plan to	280	0.77	888	2.44
Private in CA	2,671	7.34	1,953	5.36
UC	5,120	14.06	4,044	11.11
Vocational/Technical	1,172	3.22	1,177	3.23
Total	36,411	100.00	36,411	100.00

Note: Responses only for individuals who answered both questions.

Table 21: Why did your plans change for Fall 2020?

	Frequency	Pct
I want to stay closer to home/family	11,181	25.44
I need to attend less expensive college	9,206	20.95
I don't want to take classes online	9,780	22.26
I want to take a break because of COVID-19	6,653	15.14
I need to work more	14,947	34.01
Other	4,812	10.95
Observations	43,943	

Note: Answer options are not mutually exclusive. Therefore, columns do not sum.

Table 22: Why do you not plan to attend college in Fall 2020?

	Frequency	Pct
I'm graduating before fall 2020	309	33.77
I want to stay closer to home/family	88	9.62
I cannot afford college	271	29.62
I don't want to take classes online	496	54.21
I want to take a break from classes during COVID-19	261	28.52
I need to work more	353	38.58
Other	89	9.73
Observations	915	

Note: Answer options are not mutually exclusive. Therefore, columns do not sum.

Table 23a: How worried were you/are you about the following?

	Before COVID-19				After COVID-19			
	A lot	A little	Not at all	Total	A lot	A little	Not at all	Total
Paying for tuition and fees	7,105	25,975	21,459	54,539	28,674	16,645	7,984	53,303
Paying for housing and food	7,436	23,690	23,300	54,426	29,801	15,341	8,359	53,501
Paying for transportation	6,952	19,659	27,764	54,375	18,726	15,980	18,659	53,365
Paying for tech/internet	5,053	17,834	31,488	54,375	20,356	16,289	16,764	53,409
Paying for healthcare	6,692	15,846	31,772	54,310	19,819	12,860	20,587	53,266
Caring for family members	7,772	20,255	26,305	54,332	30,373	13,213	9,862	53,448
Taking full load of classes	10,943	24,205	19,242	54,390	36,576	11,777	5,170	53,523
Personal health/well-being	9,424	23,673	21,230	54,327	36,597	12,758	4,121	53,476

Note: Frequencies are reported

Table 23b: How worried were you/are you about the following?

	Before COVID-19				After COVID-19			
	A lot	A little	Not at all	Total	A lot	A little	Not at all	Total
Paying for tuition and fees	13.03	47.63	39.35	54,539	53.79	31.23	14.98	53,303
Paying for housing and food	13.66	43.53	42.81	54,426	55.70	28.67	15.62	53,501
Paying for transportation	12.79	36.15	51.06	54,375	35.09	29.94	34.96	53,365
Paying for tech/internet	9.29	32.80	57.91	54,375	38.11	30.50	31.39	53,409
Paying for healthcare	12.32	29.18	58.50	54,310	37.21	24.14	38.65	53,266
Caring for family members	14.30	37.28	48.42	54,332	56.83	24.72	18.45	53,448
Taking full load of classes	20.12	44.50	35.38	54,390	68.34	22.00	9.66	53,523
Personal health/well-being	17.35	43.58	39.08	54,327	68.44	23.86	7.71	53,476

Note: Percentages are reported