



# #REALCOLLEGE DURING THE PANDEMIC SURVEY RESULTS

Institution Report

July 2020



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## INSTITUTION REPORT FOR WALLA WALLA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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July 2020

### #REALCOLLEGE DURING THE PANDEMIC SURVEY

In March 2020, the coronavirus pandemic struck American higher education. Across the nation, colleges closed campuses, students and staff lost jobs, and emergency resources failed to meet the demands caused by the crisis. To assess the pandemic's impact on students, the Hope Center for College, Community, and Justice fielded a multi-institutional survey exploring basic needs security and related challenges.

In order to capture students' experiences during and due to the pandemic, a few adjustments were made to the usual #RealCollege survey. For instance, to assess basic needs insecurity and anxiety level, we used fewer questions or asked students to reflect over a shorter period of time than previous #RealCollege surveys.

Given these key differences, we discourage comparisons to previous reports. For more detail on the research methodology and survey participants, please refer to the web appendices for #RealCollege During the Pandemic Survey (available at [www.hope4college.com](http://www.hope4college.com)).

### RESPONSES FROM WALLA WALLA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Invitations to complete the survey were emailed to approximately 2,480 students from Walla Walla Community College and 166 students responded, corresponding to a 6.7% response rate. Overall, more than 38,600 students from 54 institutions in 26 states completed the survey.

The findings below are also compared to overall estimates and the results at peer institutions (e.g., two- or four-year colleges).

## RESULTS FOR WALLA WALLA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

As shown in Table 1, 53% of your students experienced at least one of the following measures of basic needs insecurity:

- 38% were food insecure in the prior 30 days. This percentage is lower than that at peer institutions and lower than the percentage for the overall student sample.
- 37% were housing insecure at the time of the survey. This percentage is higher than that at peer institutions and similar to the percentage for the overall student sample.
- 15% were homeless due to the pandemic. This percentage is higher than that at peer institutions and higher than the percentage for the overall student sample.

Your students faced other challenges besides their basic needs (Table 2). Our survey also revealed that:

- Among students who held at least one job prior to the pandemic, 33% lost their job(s) and 29% saw reduced hours and/or pay.
- 47% are experiencing at least moderate anxiety.

Examples of disruptions to student learning and program completion at your college include:

- 48% could no longer concentrate on their education;
- 14% did not have a functional laptop or a reliable internet connection; and
- 16% had no time for school, with 41% of your students saying they were also taking care of a family member as a result of the pandemic.

Among those experiencing basic needs insecurity, accessing financial supports was uneven. For example,

- 54% applied for unemployment, SNAP, and/or emergency aid at your institution, which is higher than at peer institutions and higher than the percentage for the overall sample.
- However among those who did not apply for any of these financial supports, 74% stated that these supports were either not available to them or they considered themselves ineligible. This estimate is higher than that at peer institutions and higher than the percentage for the overall sample.
- 30% of your students said they did not know about such supports, which is lower than at peer institutions and lower than the percentage for the overall sample.
- Lastly, 30% of your students did not know how to apply. This percentage is higher than that at peer institutions and higher than the percentage for the overall sample.

**Table 1. Percentage of Students with Basic Needs Insecurity During the Pandemic**

	Walla Walla Community College	Peer institutions	Overall
<b>Types of basic needs insecurity</b>			
Any basic needs insecurity	53	58	58
Food insecurity	38	44	42
Housing insecurity	37	36	37
Homelessness	15	11	12

Source: 2020 #RealCollege During the Pandemic Survey

Notes: Some measures were changed from previous #RealCollege surveys and are not directly comparable. Results from any category with fewer than 10 respondents are not shown in the table.

**Table 2. Percentage of Students Who Faced Other Challenges During the Pandemic**

	Walla Walla Community College	Peer institutions	Overall
<b>Job status among pre-pandemic job holders</b>			
Lost job	33	33	35
Reduction in hours or pay	29	32	31
<b>Mental health</b>			
At least moderate anxiety	47	49	50
<b>Academic challenges</b>			
Cannot concentrate	48	50	53
Non-functional laptop or reliable internet	14	20	20
No time for school	16	14	15
Taking care of family	41	41	40
<b>Accessing financial supports among students who are basic needs insecure</b>			
Applied for financial supports	54	40	38
Not available or ineligible for supports	74	70	72
Did not know about supports	30	38	37
Did not know how to apply for supports	30	28	28

Source: 2020 #RealCollege During the Pandemic Survey

Notes: Some measures were changed from previous #RealCollege surveys and are not directly comparable. Results from any category with fewer than 10 respondents are not shown in the table.

## CONCLUSION

The #RealCollege During the Pandemic Survey offered a glimpse into how Walla Walla Community College students dealt with the sudden and unexpected impact of the pandemic. The results from the survey confirm what students nationwide have been telling their institutions over the past several months--their health and well-being have been adversely affected by the coronavirus pandemic. Our survey revealed that:

- Nearly three in five students experienced basic needs insecurity during the pandemic, so it is understandable that at least half of them also said they had difficulty concentrating on coursework.
- A majority of students who were working prior to the pandemic experienced reduced hours or pay or, worse, lost at least one of their jobs.
- Even among students who were basic needs insecure, there was low utilization of available financial supports, especially unemployment and SNAP.
- And although not reported above, there are stark racial/ethnic disparities that, if not remedied, will further drive inequities in college attainment.

## JOIN THE #REALCOLLEGE MOVEMENT

Colleges and universities that wish to obtain up-to-date information on how their students are affected by the pandemic may register for the fall 2020 #RealCollege survey online until July 17, 2020.

For more information, visit [www.hope4college.com/realcollege-survey-2020/](http://www.hope4college.com/realcollege-survey-2020/).

## ABOUT US

The Hope Center for College, Community, and Justice is redefining what it means to be a student-ready college with a national movement centered on #RealCollege students' basic needs.

In order to advance the necessary systemic changes to support those needs, our work includes four pillars: action research, engagement and communication, advocacy, and sustainability.