

Beyond the Distance: An In-depth Analysis Understanding Commuting Time and its Influence of Student Wellness

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Introduction

- ❖ Student wellness is essential for academic performance and overall quality of life.
- ❖ Commute time is a potential but understudied factor that may influence wellness.
- ❖ Students at the University of Arizona for Tucson and Phoenix campuses have varying daily drive times.
- ❖ Longer commute times may impact physical activity levels, sleep, stress, and time management.
- ❖ Understanding this relationship may help guide wellness support services and campus policy decisions.

Objectives

- ❖ To compare the relation of student well-being and the amount of time spent driving to campus.
- ❖ To provide insight into the impact that having a longer or shorter drive time can have on student wellness.
- ❖ To determine if there is a difference in well-being between each campus regardless of drive time.

Aims

- ❖ To assess whether average daily commute time to campus is associated with students' perception of their physical and mental wellness.

Methods

- ❖ **Study Design:** Cross-sectional, anonymous survey administered via email to PharmD classes of 2025 to 2028 at both Tucson and Phoenix campuses.
- ❖ **Process:**
 - **Instrument:** 10-minute wellness questionnaire adapted from a validated survey developed by JUPH Health and Wellness Promotion.
 - **Variables Collected:** commute time, physical and mental wellness perception, and basic demographic information.
 - **Commute Time Categories:**
 - <15 minutes
 - 15-29 minutes
 - 30-44 minutes
 - >45 minutes
 - **Analysis:** An ANOVA single factor test was run to determine if there was a significant difference between wellness scores and drive time. Then a single factor T test was further used to determine if there was a difference in wellness scores between campuses.

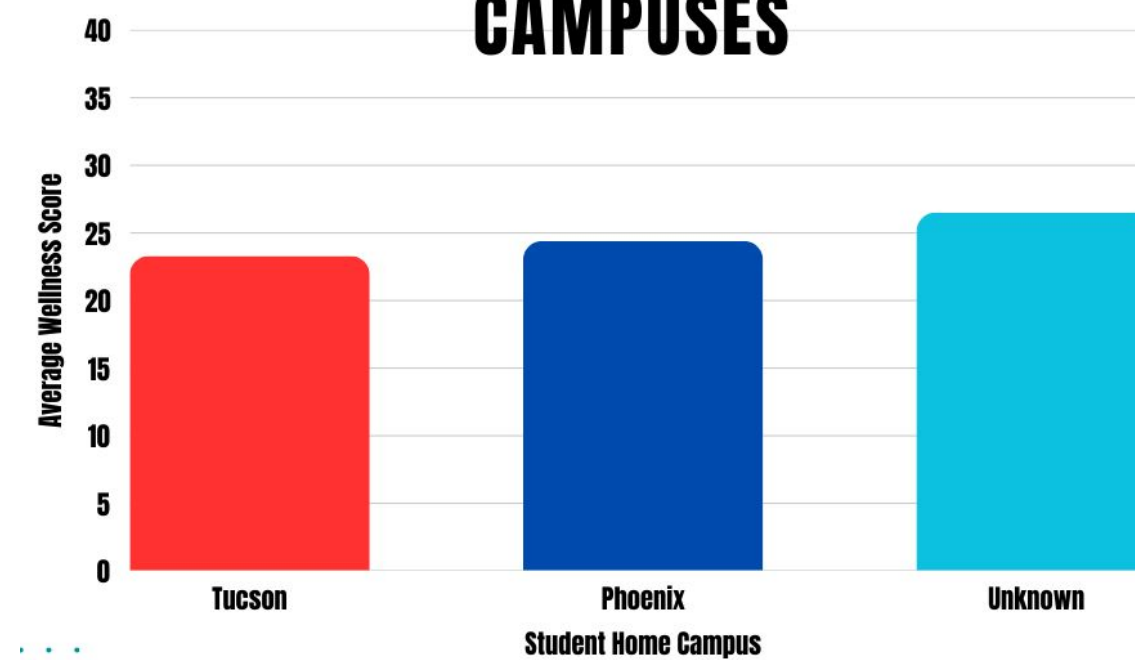
Results

IMPACT OF DRIVE TIME ON STUDENT WELLNESS



| Average Wellness Scores Based on Drive Time | | | | | |
|---|-------------|---------------|---------------|-------------|----------|
| | <15 Minutes | 15-29 Minutes | 30-44 Minutes | >45 Minutes | Variable |
| Average Wellness Score | 23.5 | 23.9 | 23.7 | 25.6 | 22.4 |

STUDENT WELLNESS SCORES COMPARED BETWEEN CAMPUSES



| Student Wellness Scores Based on Campus | | | |
|---|--------|---------|---------|
| | Tucson | Phoenix | Unknown |
| Average Wellness Score | 23.3 | 24.4 | 26.5 |

Discussion

- ❖ Low survey response rate (n=89) suggests potential barriers to participation or survey fatigue among students.
- ❖ A small number of respondents (n=2) did not indicate which campus they were commuting to and from.
- ❖ Some participants (n=7) entered different commute times for driving to vs. from campus, which may reflect actual differences in traffic patterns.
- ❖ A single question asking overall daily commute time could have potentially provided more clear and reliable data.

Limitations

- ❖ Survey responses are self-reported data and may introduce bias or inaccuracies.
- ❖ Commute time was split into 2 separate questions (to vs from campus) led to some inconsistencies in responses.
- ❖ Data does not account for confounding variables that may also affect mental wellness, such as academic workload, physical health, or socioeconomic status.
- ❖ Variability in the frequency of in-person class requirements for different class years may influence students' perception of commute burden and lead to inconsistencies in data.

Conclusion

- ❖ The data shows that there is no significant difference in wellness scores between the different drive times. $P=0.53$.
- ❖ The data also shows that there is no significant difference in wellness scores between campuses $P=0.2$.
- ❖ Ultimately this study failed to reject the null hypothesis, so it cannot be said that there is an impact from drive time on student wellness.
- ❖ The Average student wellness score for all students was 23.8 out of a total score of 40, so future studies could look into other impacts on student wellness as it seems that student wellness is on the lower side.

References

- ❖ IUPUI Health and Wellness Promotion, Division of Student Affairs. (2020). *Wellness questionnaire: 10-minute version* [Survey instrument]. <http://go.iu.edu/wellness8>
- ❖ Christie, S., Theodor, N., Torres, E., Torres, P., Tran, S., (2024). *Impact of drive time on student wellness* [Adapted survey]. https://redcap.uahs.arizona.edu/surveys/?s=K8N_W9TCAYAF74KJ