

National Panhellenic Conference Sorority Member Experiences During COVID-19

May 2021



About the Survey

This report summarizes the outcomes of the National Panhellenic Conference (NPC) survey on sorority member experiences during the COVID-19 academic year, completed in April 2021 by the Postsecondary Education Research Center at the University of Tennessee.

The survey was designed to gather student perceptions on their experiences during COVID-19.

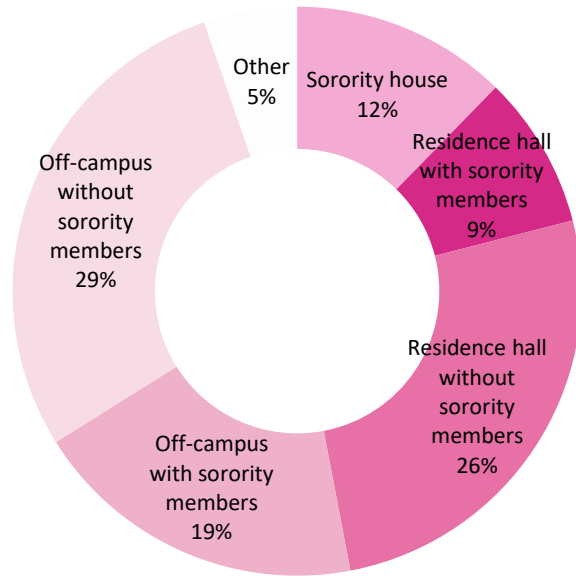
It is important to note that the survey was deployed during a time when virtual learning was in place at some institutions as a result of COVID-19.

Areas of Focus

- Sorority Support
- School Support
- Mental Health and Wellbeing
- Satisfaction and Engagement

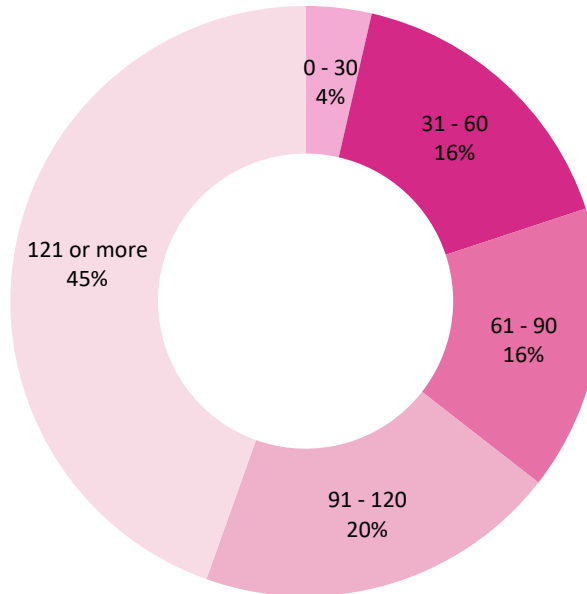
Survey Participants

1,611
Respondents



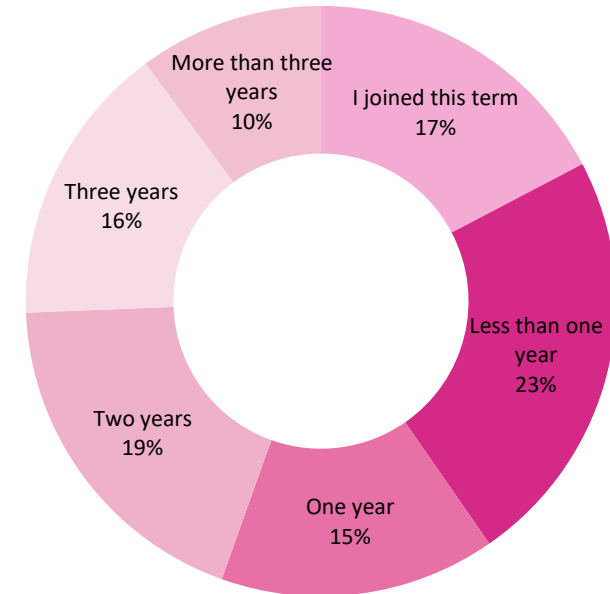
Live with Sorority Members

87
Colleges and Universities



Chapter Size

15
Inter/National Sororities



Membership Status

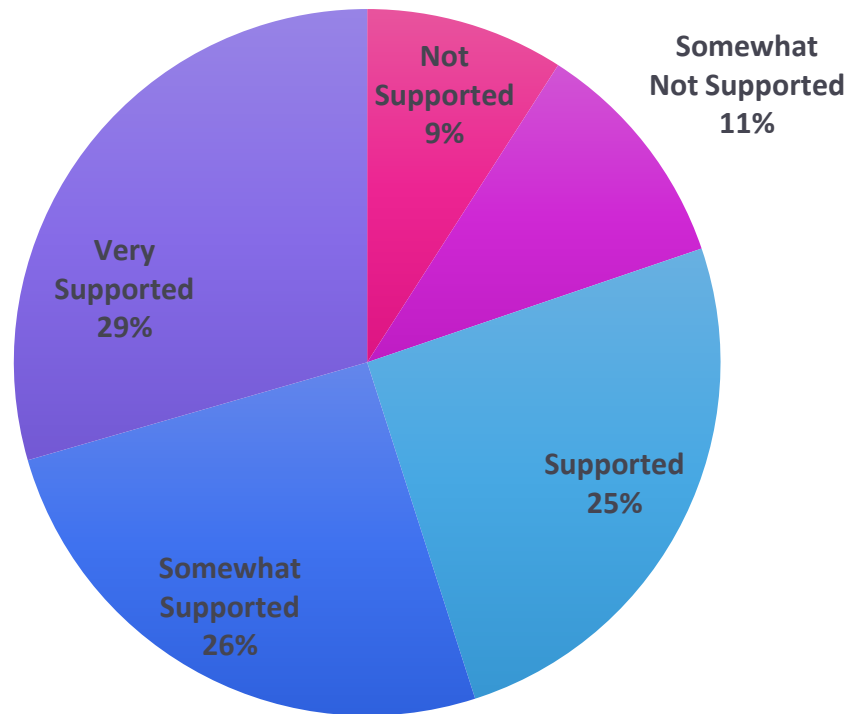
Major Findings

- **Sorority members felt supported overall by their chapter.**
 - 80% felt supported academically
 - 84% felt supported socially
 - 80% felt supported personally
 - 70% felt supported professionally
 - 79% felt supported regarding their health and wellness
- **While sorority member stress levels were higher than other years, the majority of members described their overall health as very good or excellent.**
 - 86% of responding members indicated their general health was either good, very good, or excellent.
 - Only 14% indicated their general health was either poor or fair.
 - 72% of responding members indicated they experienced more than average stress or tremendous stress since enrolling this term.
- **Members reported high levels of satisfaction with their sorority engagement**
 - 84% felt connected to their sorority peers
 - 79% felt that they were a part of their sorority community
 - 84% were satisfied with their overall sorority experience

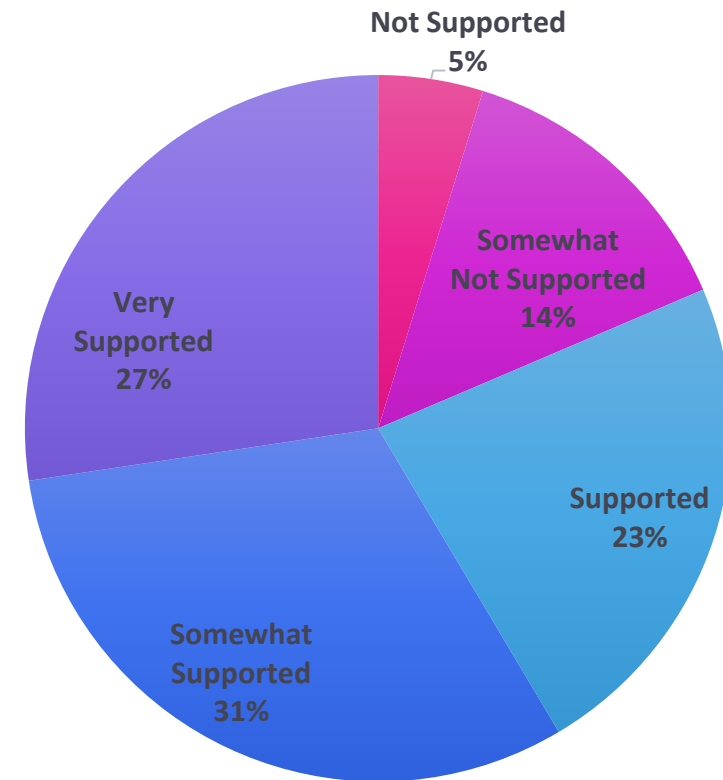
Sorority and School Support

Academic Support

Level of academic support I have received from my sorority.



Level of academic support I have received from my school.

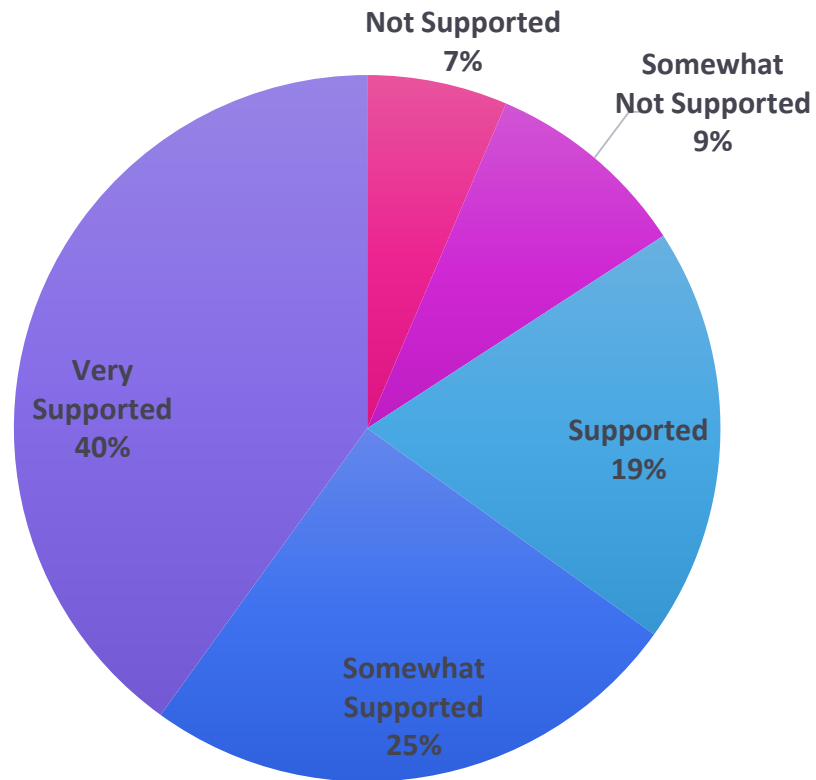


Academic Support

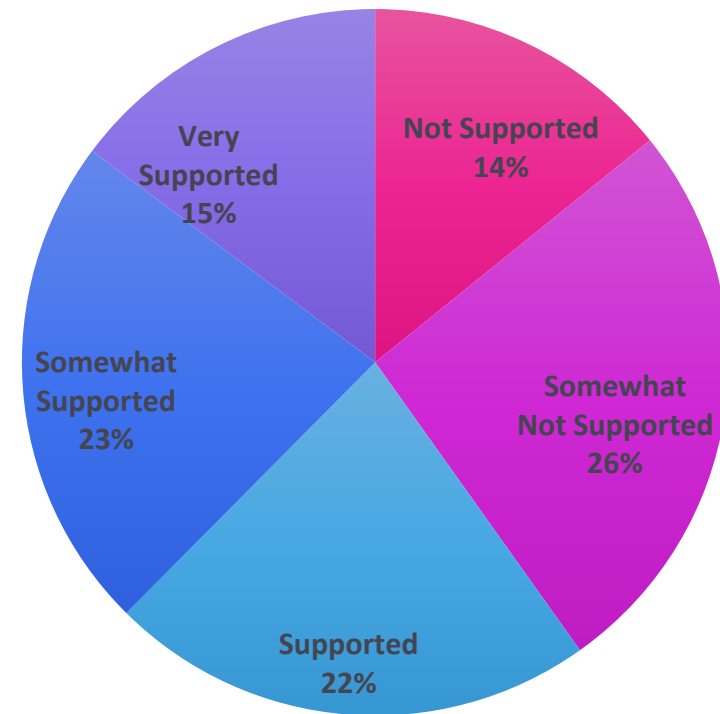
“Joining a sorority has helped me both academically and mentally, I have gained such wonderful community. It has honestly been one of the best things I’ve ever done and has changed my life for the better by giving me the support and tools I need to reach my full potential.”

Social Support

Level of social support I have received from my sorority.



Level of social support I have received from my school.

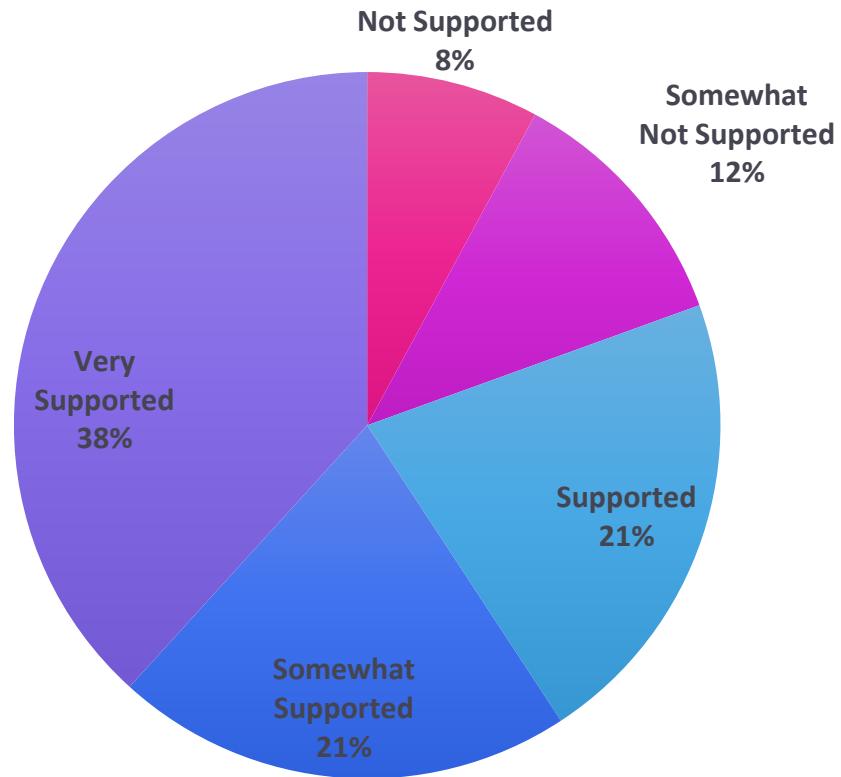


Social Support

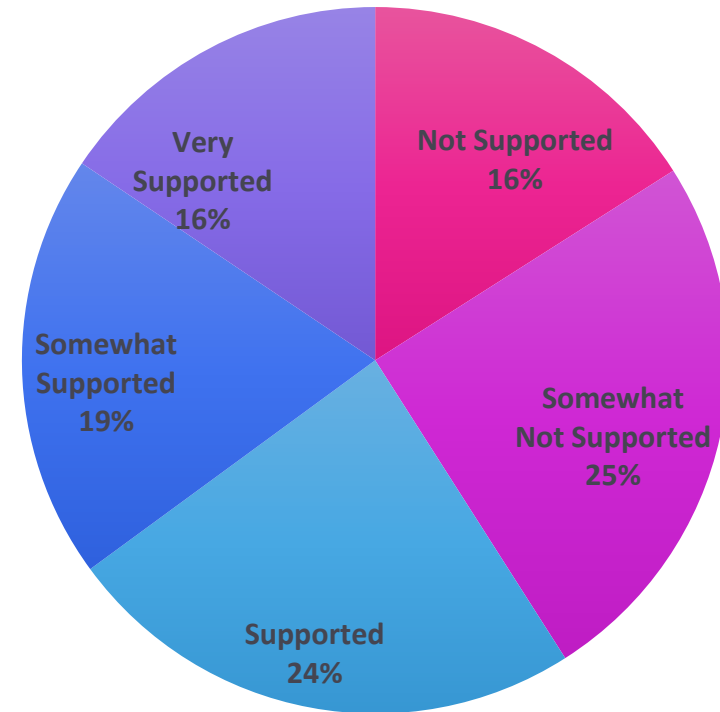
“Joining the sorority has given me the best friends and has created for me a support system at school that I can always rely on and I know I'll always have someone to hang out with if I need/want to. It has made all the difference in my college experience and I don't know how I would've made it through the past year of college without them.”

Personal Support

Level of personal support I have received from my sorority.



Level of personal support I have received from my school.

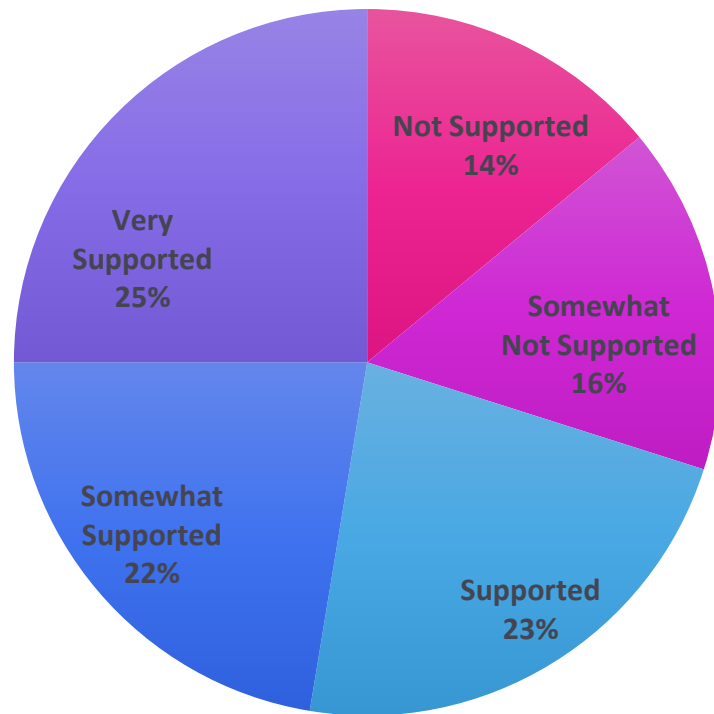


Personal Support

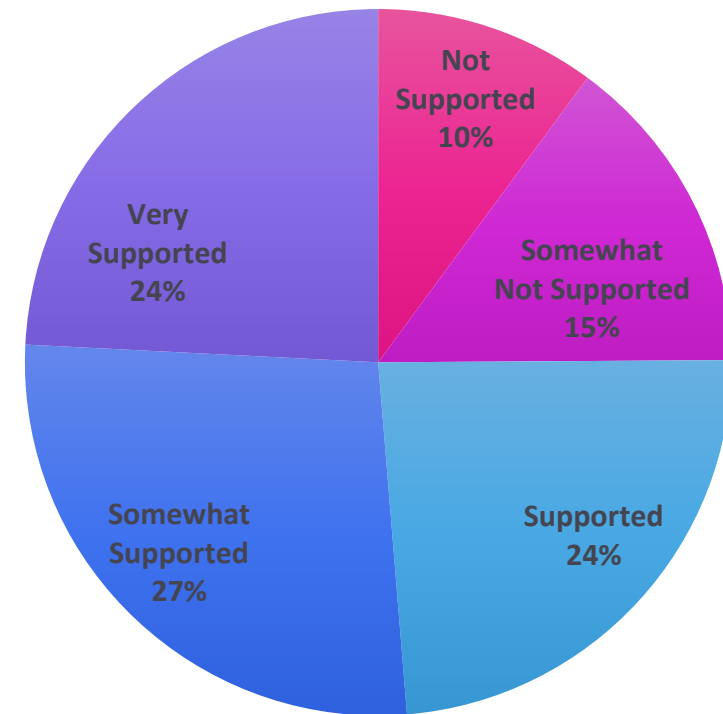
“I would be so lonely without these women. Living in the house during COVID has kept me connected to my friends in a way that I couldn't experience anywhere else. I think my mental health and therefore my grades as well would've been so poor this year if I didn't have this social interaction as well as their smiling (through a mask) faces to look forward to seeing everyday.”

Professional Support

Level of professional support I have received from my sorority.



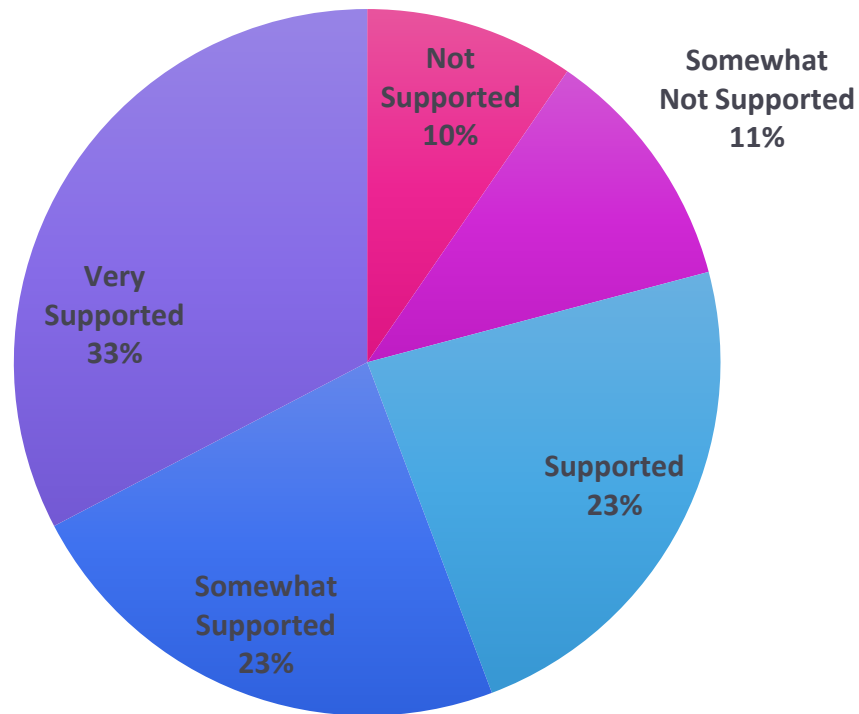
Level of professional support I have received from my school.



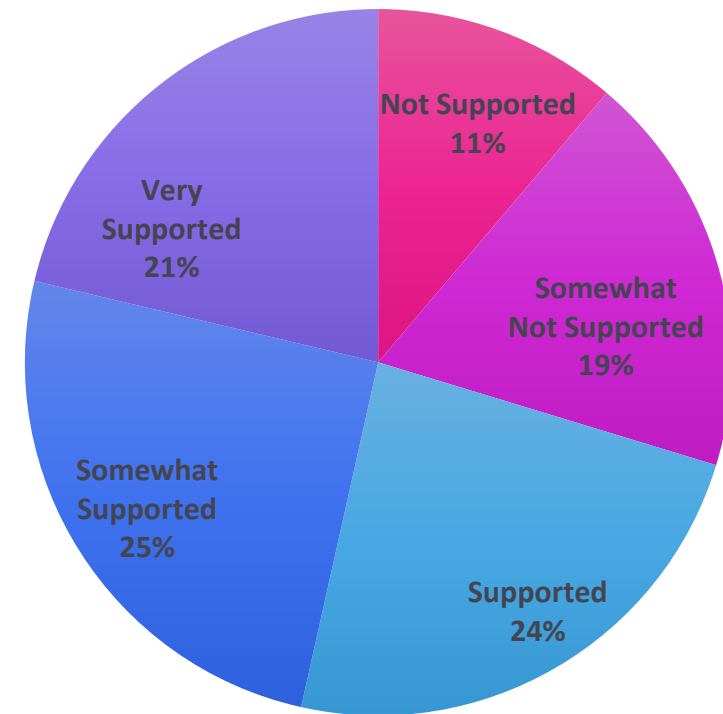
Sorority COVID-19 Experiences Survey

Health and Wellness Support

Level of health and wellness support I have received from my sorority.



Level of health and wellness support I have received from my school.



Health and Wellness Support

“I lived on my sorority hall this semester and it is entirely the reason I did not drop out. I went through multiple personal tragedies at the beginning of the semester and it was the support of the people living around me, and honestly, the chapter as a whole that kept me in school.”

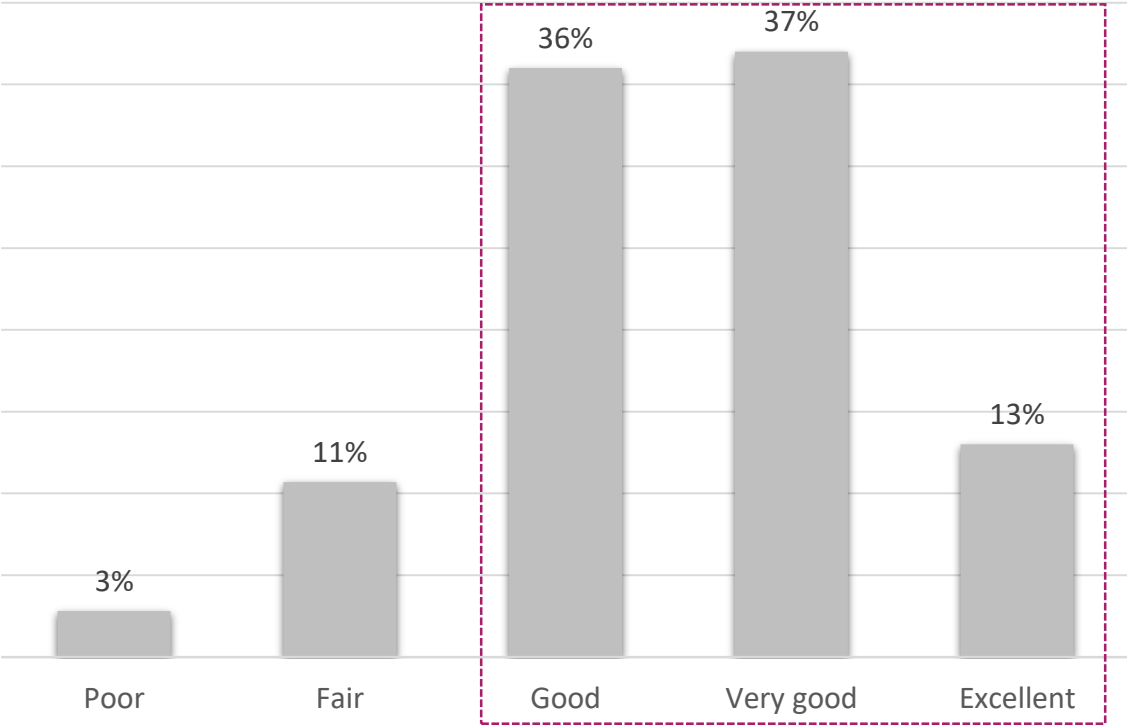
Sorority Member Health and Wellness

General Health

86% of responding members indicated their general health was either good, very good, or excellent.

- 14% indicated their general health was either poor or fair.

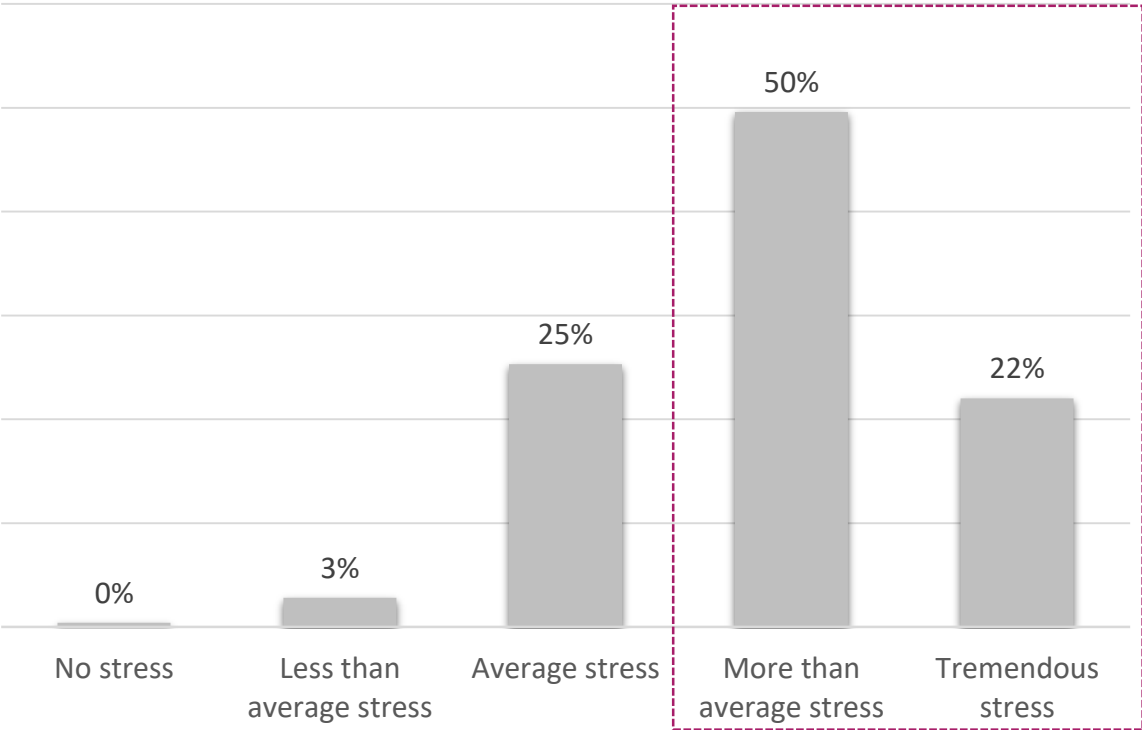
How would you describe your general health?



Stress

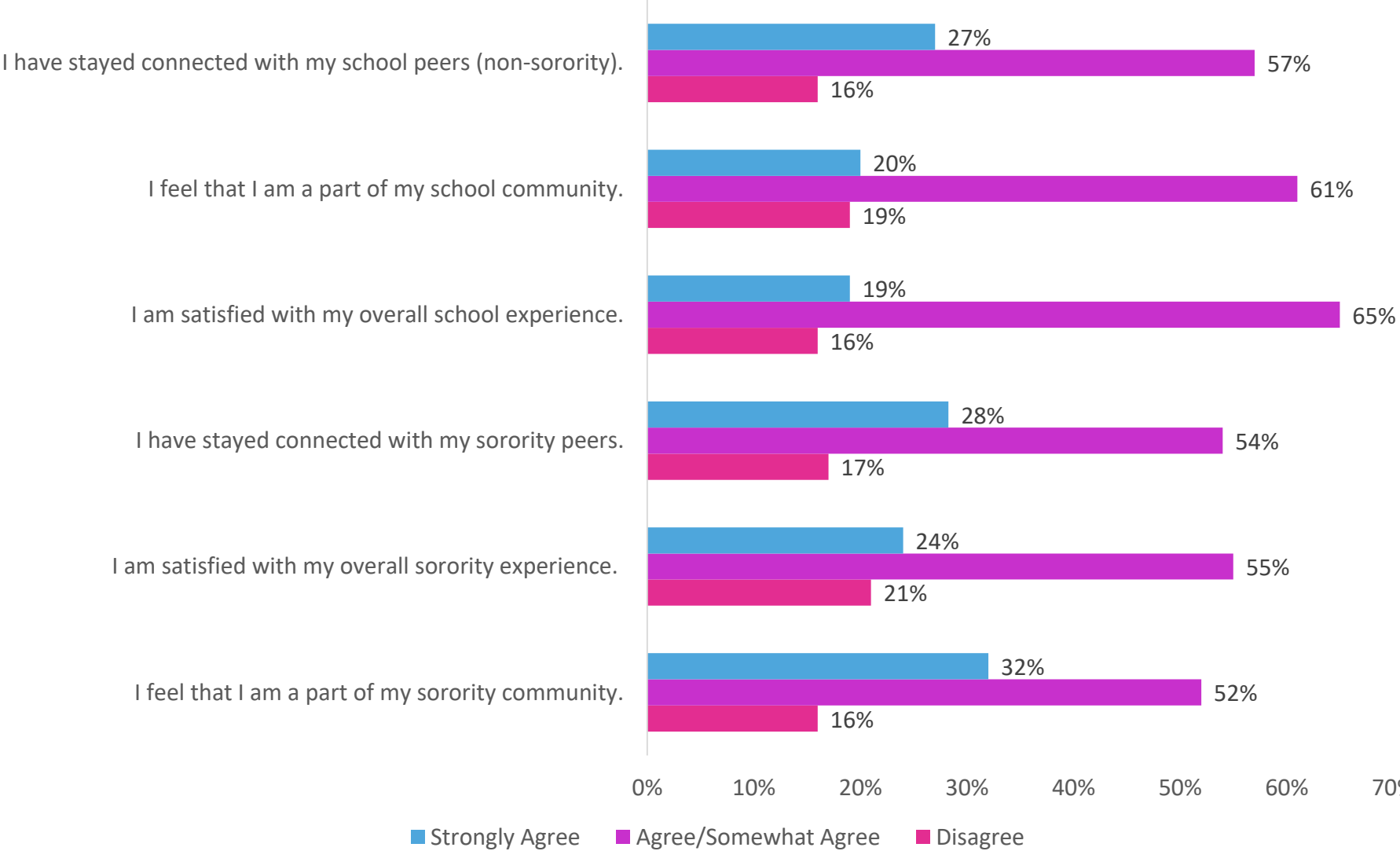
72% of responding members indicated they experienced more than average stress or tremendous stress since enrolling this term.

Please rate your overall stress level since enrolling at your school this term.



Satisfaction and Engagement

Sorority Member Satisfaction and Engagement



Sorority COVID-19 Experiences Survey

Sorority Member Qualitative Themes (Positive)

Wellness/Support from Sorority

- Although it's hard with the COVID-19 pandemic, my sorority has done everything and anything they can to allow us to become closer sisters. I felt incredibly supported by my chapter when I lost my grandfather to COVID-19
- [my sorority] is the best thing I have decided to do this semester. I am upset with myself that I didn't join sooner! I love all the connections I am making and new siblings to help me with my college journey.

Positive Feelings

- I feel that the pandemic has made us more appreciative of each other and what we are able to do.
- My sorority experience has been the best part during the pandemic. If it wasn't for the support I would have through my sorority, I'm not completely sure I would still be in college.

Limited Social Engagement and Friendships

- Due to COVID, it has been extremely difficult to get to know sisters and really be a sisterhood since we are unable to have sisterhood events in person. If our sorority house was open that wouldn't have been the case.
- Everything has been virtual so finding the connection lately has been hard. Especially being a senior and about to graduate, I am super sad because we didn't get to have anything in person or any fun events for our last time.

Sorority Member Qualitative Themes (Negative)

Financial Challenges

- The chapter faced a lot of difficulties with respecting sisters financial funds in a time of distress when a lot of people were not working and this could have been handled a little differently.
- Its been hard to rationalize paying so much money for something that has consisted for me of just zoom meetings, and I wish there was more financial support during the pandemic especially when we're not paying for the same experience as it would have been in person.

Negative Feelings and Challenges

- COVID has changed people or has just shown their true colors. This semester I realized, as a junior, that being in a sorority is performative, and change to Greek life will never truly happen because no one wants it to happen on a national level.
- Felt like it was a hit or Miss. While I did feel robbed of my senior year, I felt that online communication has helped me flourish some friendships with younger girls.

Lack of Support and Safety in Sororities

- Bullying has increased a lot and has really taken away from my overall experience in Greek life. It was a very positive thing for me until COVID, and now I feel it drags me down, does not support me, and takes away from my life rather than add to it.
- Exec in my sorority is not doing their job to properly represent how we should be responding to COVID, like partying and going to clubs yet telling members that COVID guidelines at our school are important, hence us getting suspended last semester. My sisters are generally unsupportive and are quite mean.

Participating Sororities

Alpha Chi Omega

Alpha Delta Pi

Alpha Epsilon Phi

Alpha Omicron Pi

Alpha Sigma Alpha

Alpha Xi Delta

Chi Omega

Delta Gamma

Gamma Phi Beta

Kappa Delta

Phi Mu

Pi Beta Phi

Sigma Delta Tau

Sigma Kappa

Sigma Sigma Sigma

Survey Methodology

The survey was conducted from March 17, 2021 to April 15, 2021.

1,611 students participated in the survey,

Additional information on methodology available upon request.

Postsecondary Research Center (PERC)

The Postsecondary Research Center at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville was established in 2018 as research center in the College of Education, Health, and Human Service.

The mission of the Postsecondary Education Research Center (PERC) is to identify, conduct, and coordinate research on initiatives and ideas designed to enhance higher education at the institutional, state, and national levels to enhance policy and practice.

Contact:

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