What does the NCHA data* tell us, what are students saying, and why does it matter?

*UM National College Health Assessment 2020  N=1010
*UM National College Health Assessment 2021  N=1320

**Literature strongly demonstrates that student well-being contributes to academic achievement, learning, and student retention.**¹

For UM students, the top 4 impediments to academic achievement are mental health related: procrastination, stress, anxiety, and depression. UM students increasingly reported these challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic.

- **48.7%** report **procrastination** impeding academic achievement, procrastination is rooted in psychological issues such as fear of failure and inability to cope with overwhelm.
- **44.5%** report **stress** impeding academic achievement
- **37%** report **anxiety** impeding academic achievement, a **12.5% increase since March 2020**
- **28.2%** report **depression** impeding academic achievement

**High levels of stress can negatively impact student experience and satisfaction leading to withdrawal or disengagement and there is significant evidence that high levels of stress can negatively impact academic success.**²

- **83%** report **moderate to high levels of stress** during the past year, a **2.5% increase since March 2020**
- **47.3%** report **moderate to serious levels of psychological distress** during the past year, an **8% increase since March 2020**
- **34%** report **feeling nervous** most or all of the time, a **15% increase since March 2020**
- **38.2%** report **feeling hopeless** most or all of the time, a **15% increase since March 2020**
- The overall **mental well-being** score of UM students has **declined by 6% since March 2020**

**Social Connection is critical to physical and mental well-being and in an educational context has a profound effect on learning.**³

- **62%** of UM students feel they **lack companionship, feel left out and isolated from others**

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What UM students are saying about how stress affects them...

“When I’m stressed out I tend to shut down.”

“I take it out on myself and I beat myself up because, you know, you’re not doing what you’re supposed to be doing, you don’t have any energy.”

“I feel like I freeze, I’ll think about it and list out what I have to do, but I won’t do it.”

“When I’m stressed I don’t have any energy – I’m usually an up person, really outgoing, but I isolate when I’m stressed.”

“Feeling overwhelmed is definitely a symptom of stress, there’s so much to do, there’s just not enough time, so you just shut down.”

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¹ Cohen, 2006; California Education Supports Project, 2009; Deberrard et al., 2004; Hoffman, 2002; Morrison & Kirby, 2010; Shochet et al., 2006

² Cotton et al., 2002; Whitman, Spendlove & Clark, 1986; Misra, 2002; Robotham & Julian, 2006