



**A Statistical Analysis: Mental Health Disparities
Between Hunter College Students on the Basis of
Honors Status and Housing Arrangements**

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Introduction: Definitions

- **Loneliness:** emotional state characterized by the distress of being alone and separated; leads to feelings of isolation; contributes to symptoms of social anxiety and depression
- **Social anxiety:** persistent fear of being watched, or judged by others during menial activities such as answering questions in class, or having to talk with a cashier
- **Depression:** characterized by a loss of interest in daily activities; persistent feelings of sadness and hopelessness; includes both physical and cognitive symptoms, such as changes in appetite, sleep deprivation, and trouble focusing

Past Research

- Significant rise in anxiety disorders and clinical depression over the last five years
- Study states that not all students are able to make meaningful connections, leading to a sense of loneliness
 - Peplau and Perlman's (1982) cognitive discrepancy model → loneliness is a gap between desired and actual social relationships
 - Emphasizes that it's the quality, not quantity, of social interactions that influences loneliness

Methods: *Survey-Based Approach*

- **29-item Online Survey**
- **8 Demographics Questions**
- **3 established mental health surveys:**
 - **Severity Measure for Social Anxiety Disorder (Social Phobia) –Adult**
 - **Patient Health Questionnaire depression scale (PHQ-8)**
 - **3-item UCLA Loneliness Scale (Version 3)**

Methods: *Demographics Questions*

1. Are you a Macaulay Honors student at Hunter?
2. Are you in a Scholars or Honors program (other than Macaulay Honors)?
3. Where do you live during most of the academic year?
4. Which Hunter College housing location do you reside at?
5. Do you have roommates?
6. How often do you visit home?
7. How much time do you spend in-person at Hunter College?
8. How often are you involved in any clubs, sports, teams, organizations, or extracurricular groups in which you interact with other people?

Methods: *Social Anxiety*

During the past 7 days, I have...

1. felt moments of sudden terror, fear, or fright in social situations
2. felt anxious, worried, or nervous about social situations
3. had thoughts of being rejected, humiliated, embarrassed, ridiculed, or offending others
4. felt a racing heart, sweaty, trouble breathing, faint, or shaky in social situations
5. felt tense muscles, felt on edge or restless, or had trouble relaxing in social situations
6. avoided, or did not approach or enter, social situations
7. left social situations early or participated only minimally (e.g., said little, avoided eye contact)
8. spent a lot of time preparing what to say or how to act in social situations
9. distracted myself to avoid thinking about social situations
10. needed help to cope with social situations (e.g., alcohol or medications, superstitious objects)

Methods: *Depression*

Over the last 2 weeks, how often have you been bothered by the following problem?

1. Little interest or pleasure in doing things
2. Feeling down, depressed, or hopeless
3. Trouble falling or staying asleep, or sleeping too much
4. Feeling tired or having little energy
5. Poor appetite or overeating
6. Feeling bad about yourself – or that you are a failure or have let yourself or your family down
7. Trouble concentrating on things, such as reading the newspaper or watching television
8. Moving or speaking so slowly that other people could have noticed. Or the opposite – being so fidgety or restless that you have been moving around a lot more than usual

Methods: *Loneliness*

- 1. How often do you feel that you lack companionship?**
- 2. How often do you feel left out?**
- 3. How often do you feel isolated from others?**

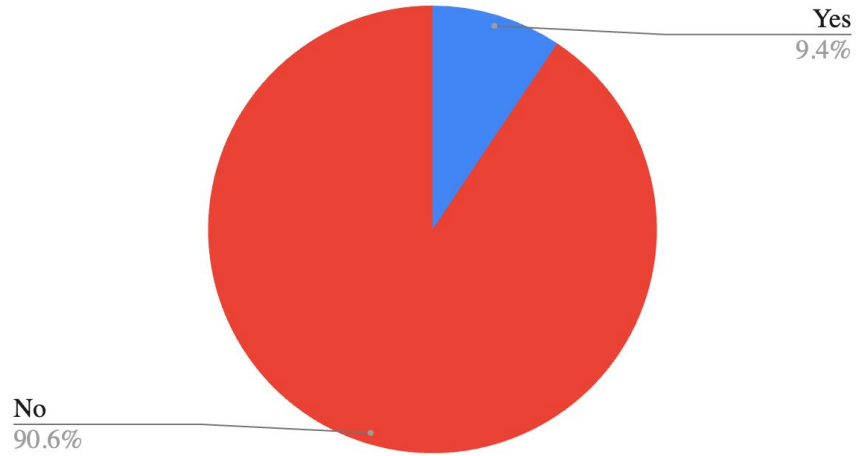
Methods: *Participant Demographics*

<i>Participant Characteristics</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Macaulay Honors	27	50
Other Honors/Scholars Program	9	16.67
No Program	19	33.33
Total Honors/Scholars	35	64.81
Total	54	100

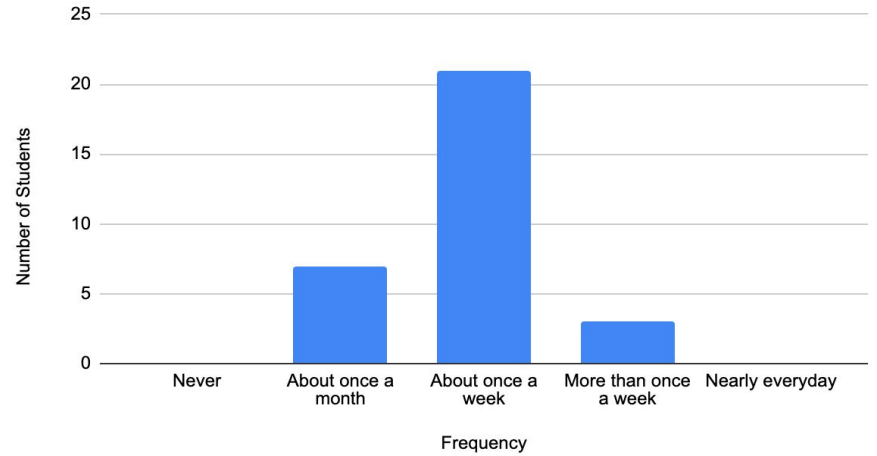
Methods: *Participant Demographics*

<i>Place of Living During the Academic Year</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Hunter Dorm/Apartment	30	55.56
Brookdale (25th Street)	29	53.70
Midtown East (51st Street)	1	1.85
Hunter Apartments (79th Street) 0	0	0
Non-Hunter Dorm/Apartment	2	3.70
Total Dorm/Apartment	32	59.26
Home	22	40.74

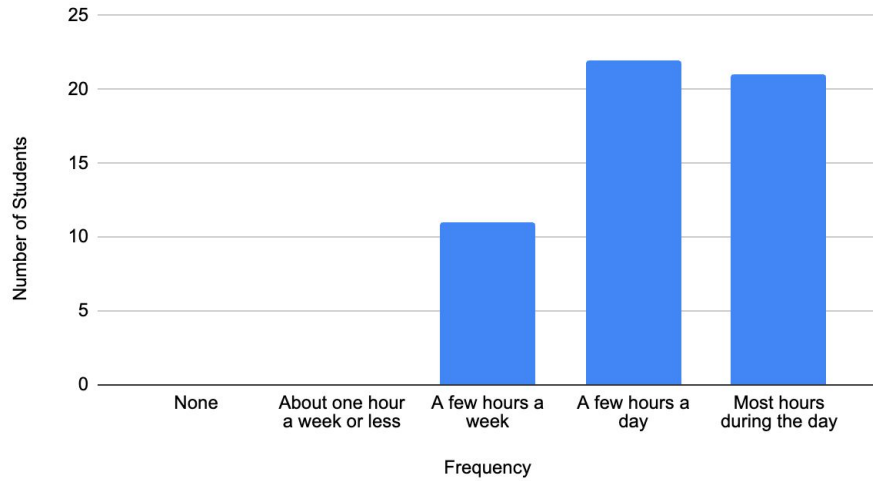
Do you have roommates?



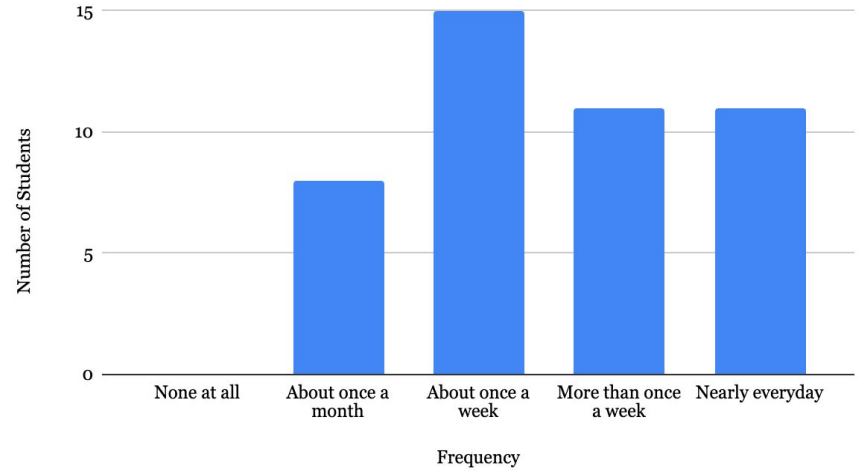
How often do you visit home?



How much time do you spend in-person at Hunter College?



Involvement with school/other students





Results: Dormers vs. Commuters

Loneliness: p-value = 0.678


→ no statistically significant difference in loneliness between students who dorm vs. students who commute from home

Depression: p-value = 0.714

→ no statistically significant difference in depression between students who dorm vs. students who commute from home

Social Anxiety: p-value = 0.992

→ no statistically significant difference in social anxiety students who dorm vs. students who commute from home



Results: Honors/Scholars vs Non-Honors/Scholars

Loneliness: $p\text{-value} = 0.684$

→ no statistically significant difference in loneliness between Honors/Scholars students and non-Honors/Scholars students

Depression: $p\text{-value} = 0.440$

→ no statistically significant difference in depression between Honors/Scholars students and non-Honors/Scholars students

Social Anxiety: $p\text{-value} = 0.579$

→ no statistical significant difference in social anxiety between Honors/Scholars students and non-Honors/Scholars students



Results: MHC vs. Honors/Scholars vs. Non-Honors/Scholars

Loneliness: p-value = 0.79484

→ no statistically significant difference in loneliness between MHC students vs. Honors/Scholars students vs. non-Honors/Scholars students

Depression: p-value = 0.20808

→ no statistically significant difference in depression between MHC students vs. Honors/Scholars students vs. non-Honors/Scholars students

Social Anxiety: p-value = 0.92481

→ no statistical significant difference in social anxiety between MHC students vs. Honors/Scholars students vs. non-Honors/Scholars students

CONCLUSION

- **Our Main Goal:** We wanted to be able to research if there was a disparity in many of the mental health issues between honors and non-honors students while also testing the disparity between dormers and commuters
- **With our data,** we were able to run multiple two-tailed T-tests and ANOVA tests that helped us determine the significance level of the data set.
- **We have determined that we have faced a sampling error with the small sample size.** This error does promote the fact that there should be further research given to this topic. We also could have potentially had bias in our data set.



Conclusion Continued

- Our research promotes future research to get a larger sample size to work towards creating solutions to the problem.

Possible solutions: We believe advertising the mental health departments and faculty is a major way to help students communicate with somebody about what they are going through.

- No student or person should be alone in fighting a mental health challenge. Creating social events for students throughout the school year can help create friendships for many of the students who are feeling alone.

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THANK YOU!