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The Student Information Project: Linking Student Well Being with Academic Engagement

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SIP Goals

- Between 2016-2019, to develop a system for measuring and communicating on the student experience - university 'report card', 'dashboard'
- Data that is of interest to multiple stakeholders – academics, schools / units, support services, management
- Prompt actions that will enhance well being and student completion

SIP Surveys

- Each year we are surveying students about:
 1. Demographics – College, year, accommodation, status such as Access, Disability
 2. Academic preparedness and experiences
 3. Health and well being
 4. Risk behaviours
 5. Outcomes such as commitment to studies, belonging

2016-2018 Online Surveys

- **Year 1, Semester 1:** 702 (2016), 515 (2017); Semester 2: 264 (2017), 220 (2018)
- **Year 2, Semester 2:** 325 (2017), 367 (2018)
- **Year 3+, Semester 2:** 548 (2017), 572 (2018)
- **PG Taught, Semester 2:** 459 (2017)
- **PhD, Semester 2:** 241 (2017)

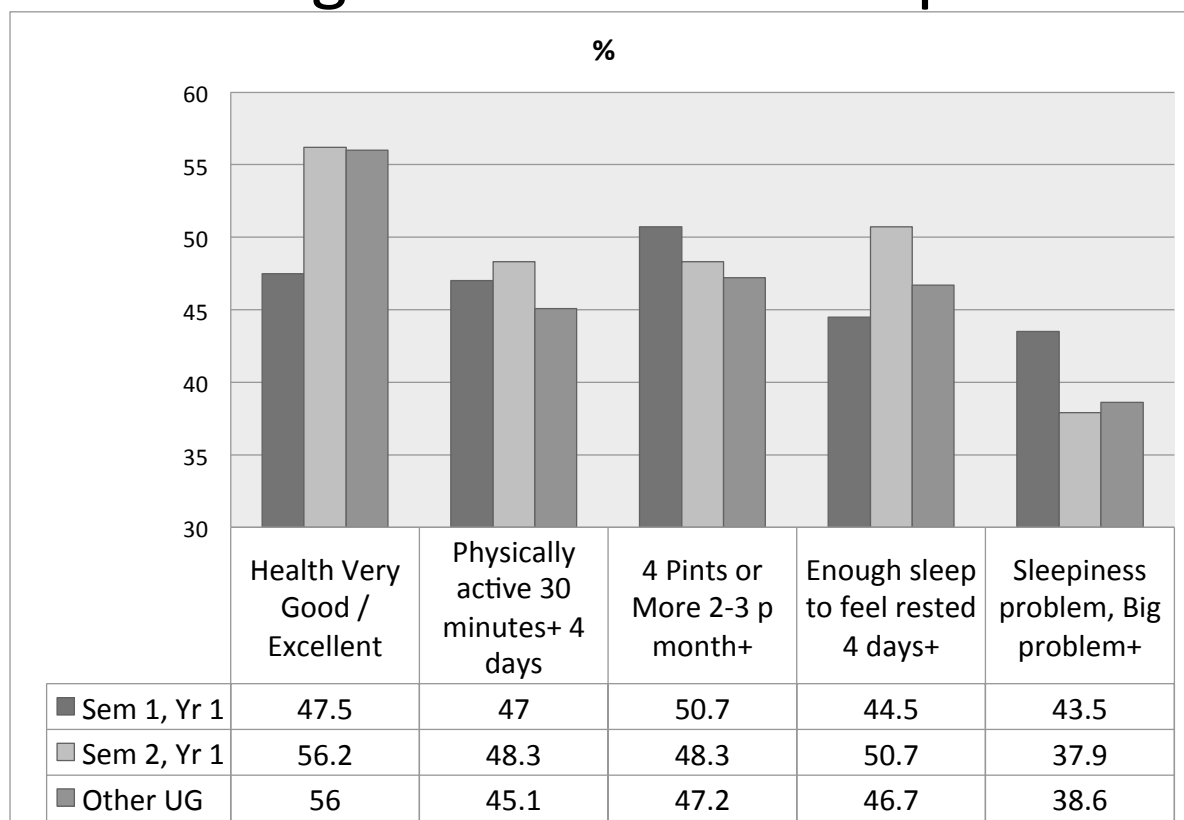
Academic Preparedness / Experiences

- Key variables
 - Academic behaviours – e.g., attending class, participates in class
 - Academic self-efficacy – confidence in doing well in modules and on projects
 - Academic self-assessment – e.g., type of person who shows up on time, planning time, balancing time
 - Academic environment – perception of e.g., quality of teaching, class size, lectures
 - Habits of mind – e.g., seek feedback, accept mistakes, explore topics independently

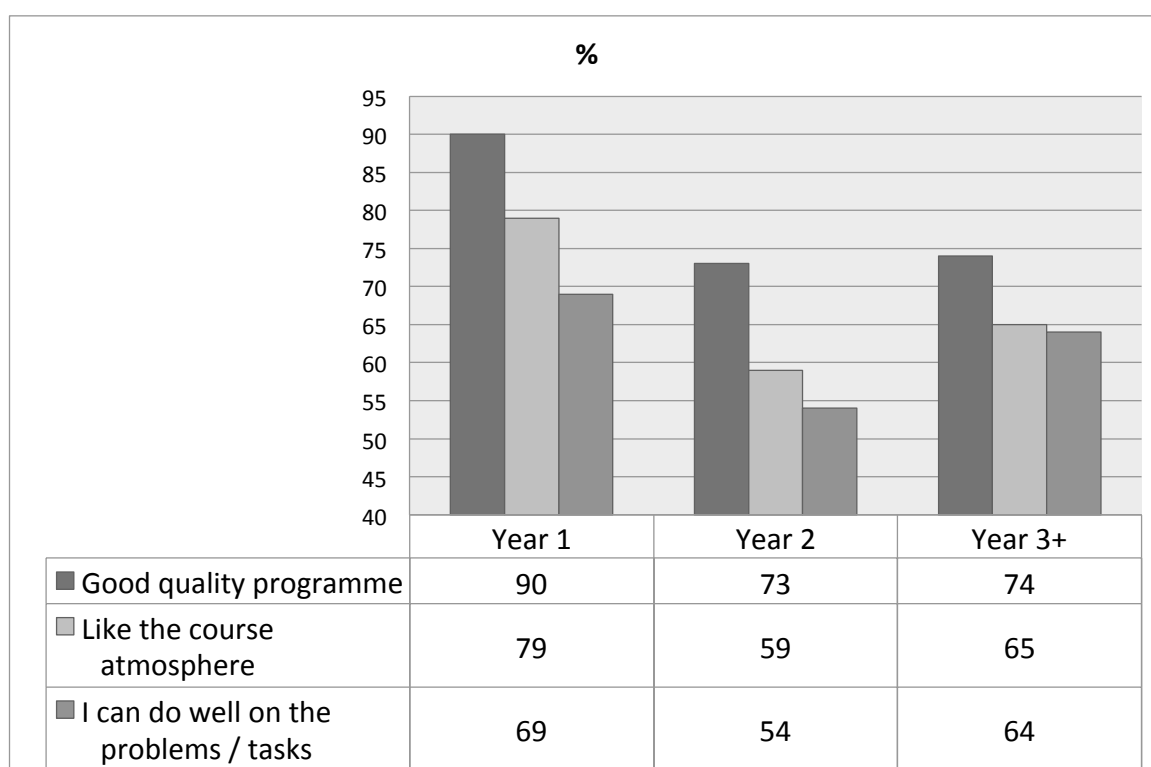
Key Outcomes

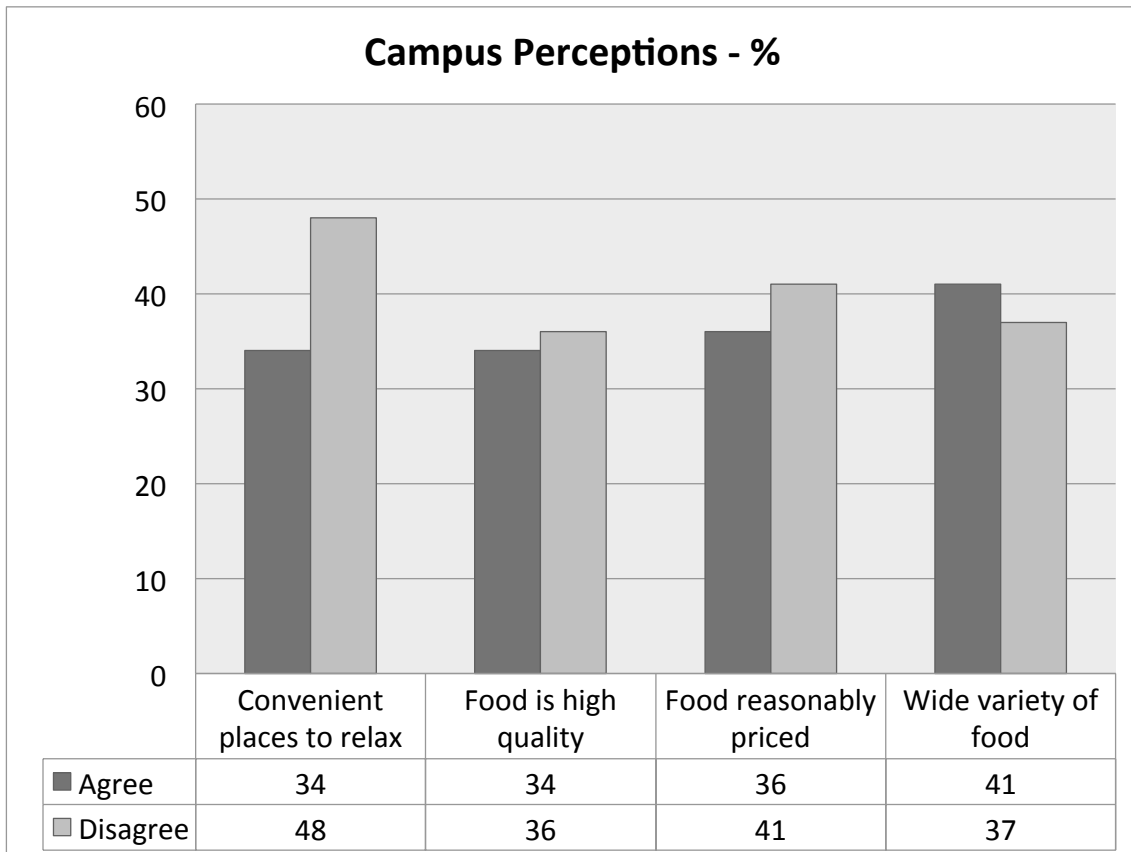
- Goal commitment
- Institutional commitment
- Belonging
- Diversity / openness
- Critical thinking

Undergrad Students - Snapshot



Undergrad Students - Snapshot





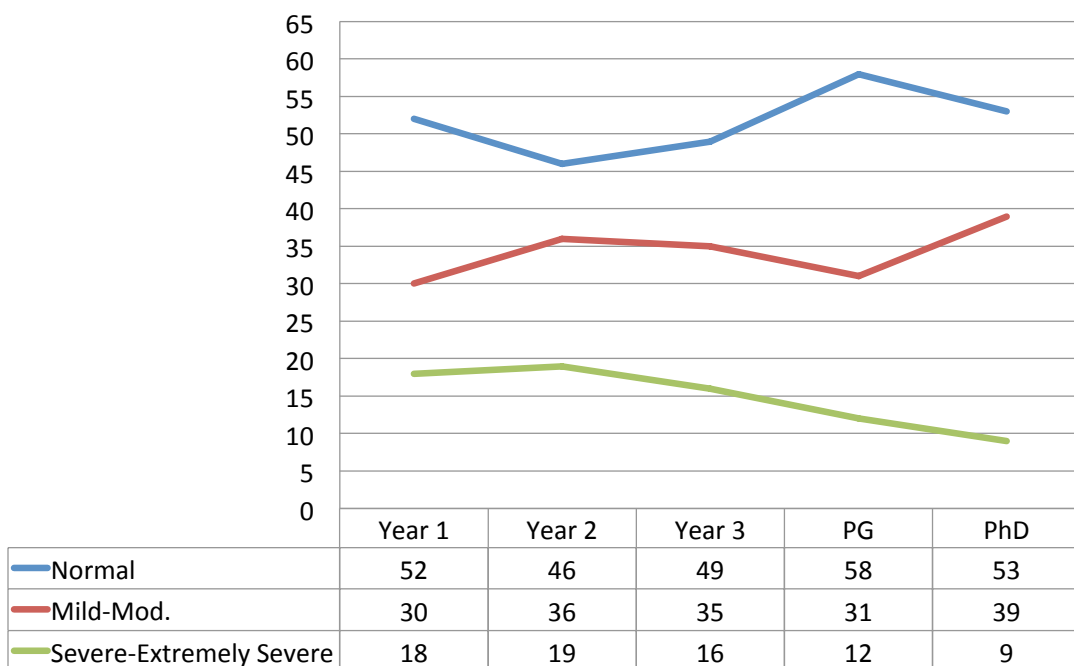
CORE-10

- Clinical Outcomes in Routine Evaluation (Connell & Barkham, 2007) – Measure used in counselling settings to assess distress
- Anxiety, depression, relationships, trauma, functioning, risk of harm to self
- 677 UG students surveyed in 2017 (McCaffrey)
- **Healthy / low distress** – 62%
- **Mild** – 16.5%
- **Moderate (15-19)** – 10%
- **Moderate-Severe** – 7.3%
- **Severe (25+)** – 4.4%

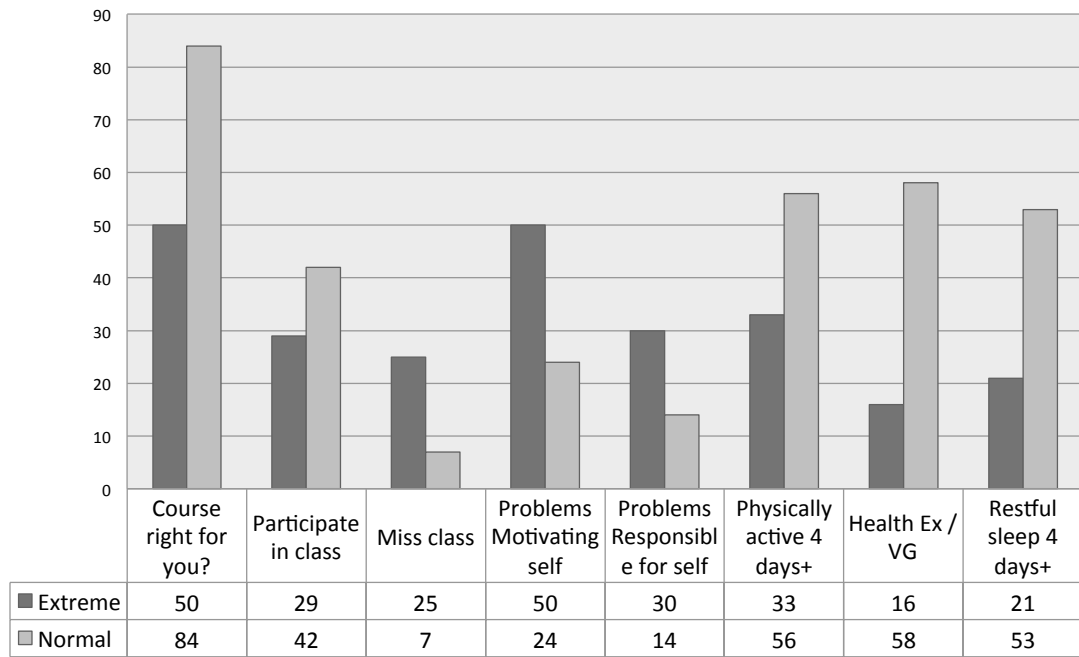
DASS (Lovibond & Lovibond, 1995)

- Measure of depression, anxiety, and stress for use in non-clinical samples
- 5-6% of community sample in severe / very severe category
- Student samples tend to be higher –
- Severe / Very severe: Depression: 14%; Anxiety 14%; Stress: 10% (Dooley & Fitzgerald, 2012)

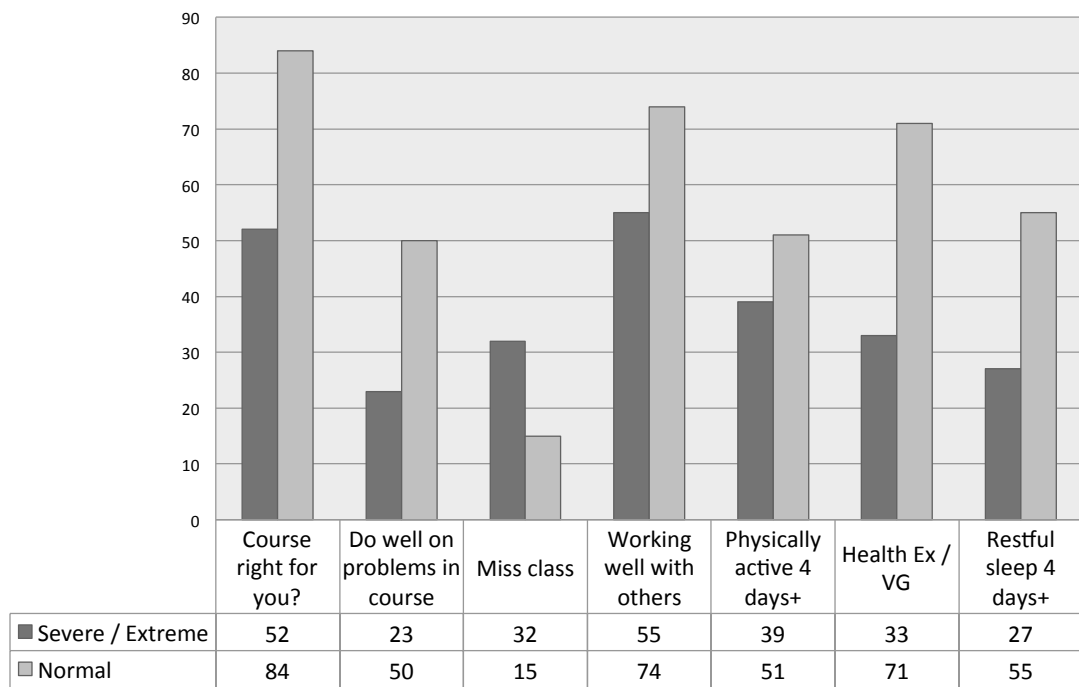
DASS Depression (% of Students)



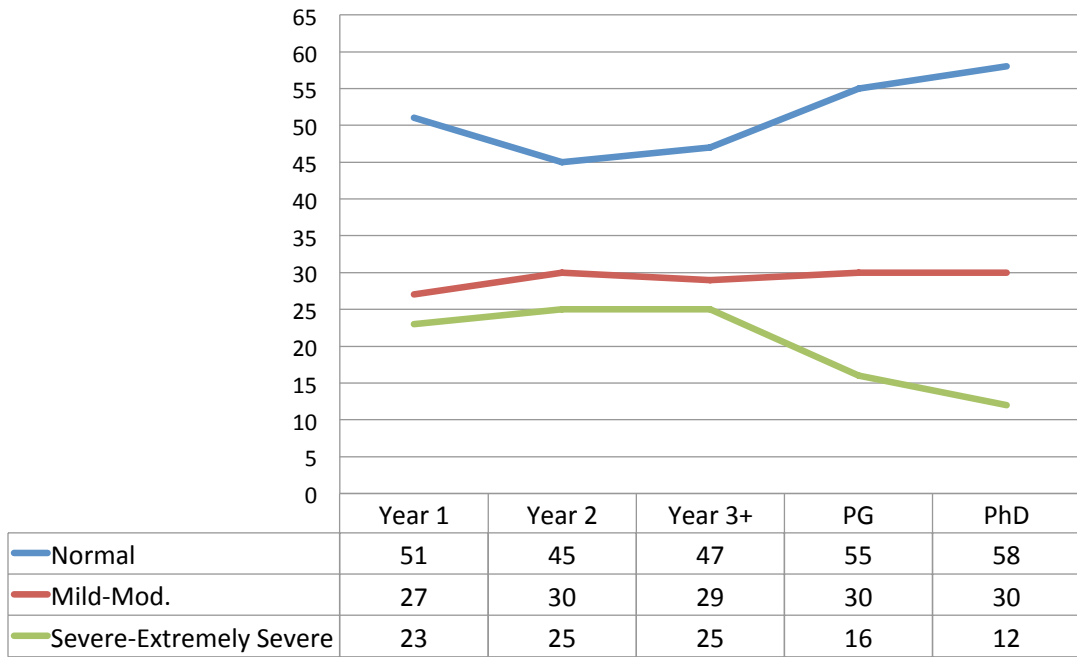
DASS Depression - First Year Comparing 'Extremely Severe' with 'Normal' (n=127, 629)



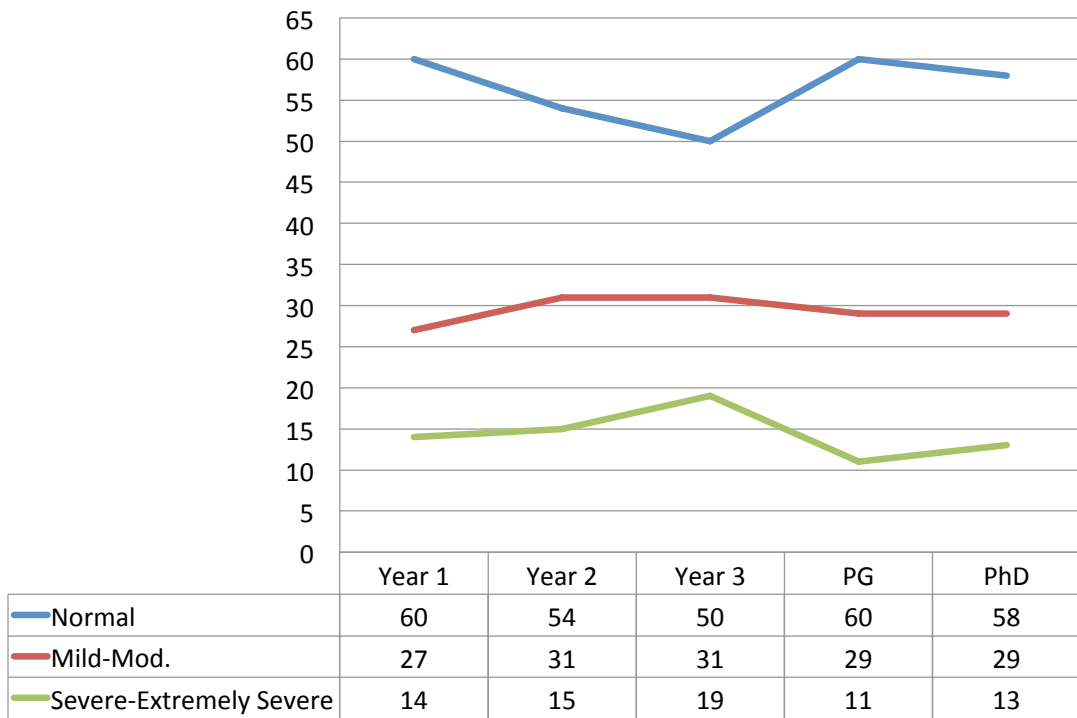
DASS Depression – 2nd Year+ Comparing 'Severe/ Extremely Severe' with 'Normal' (n=310, 864)



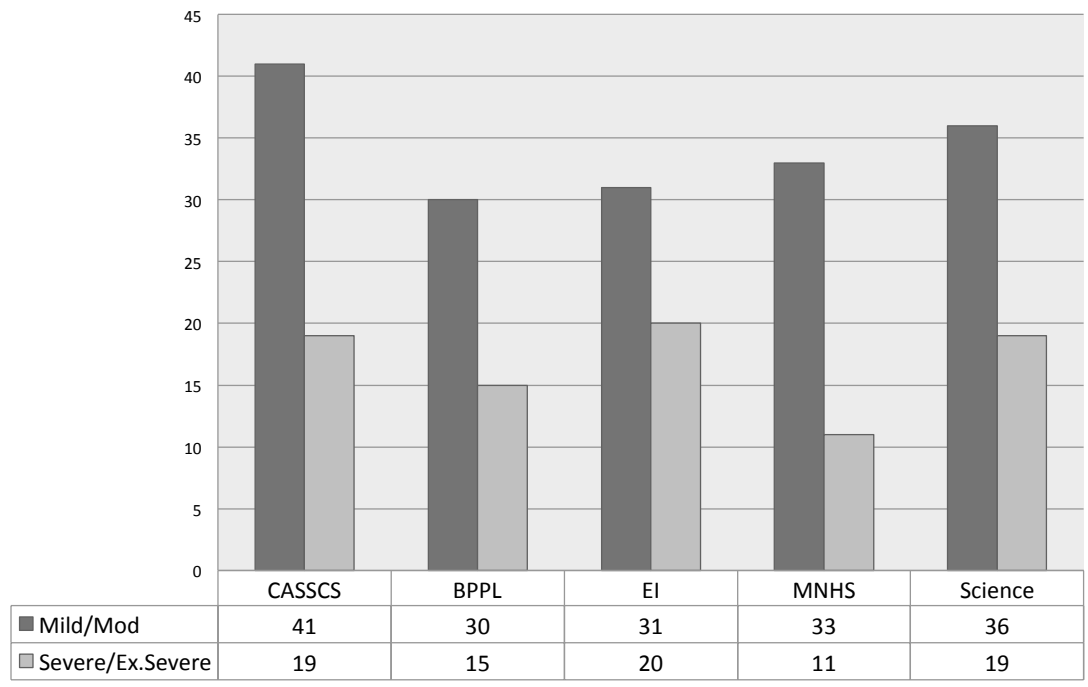
DASS Anxiety (% of Students)



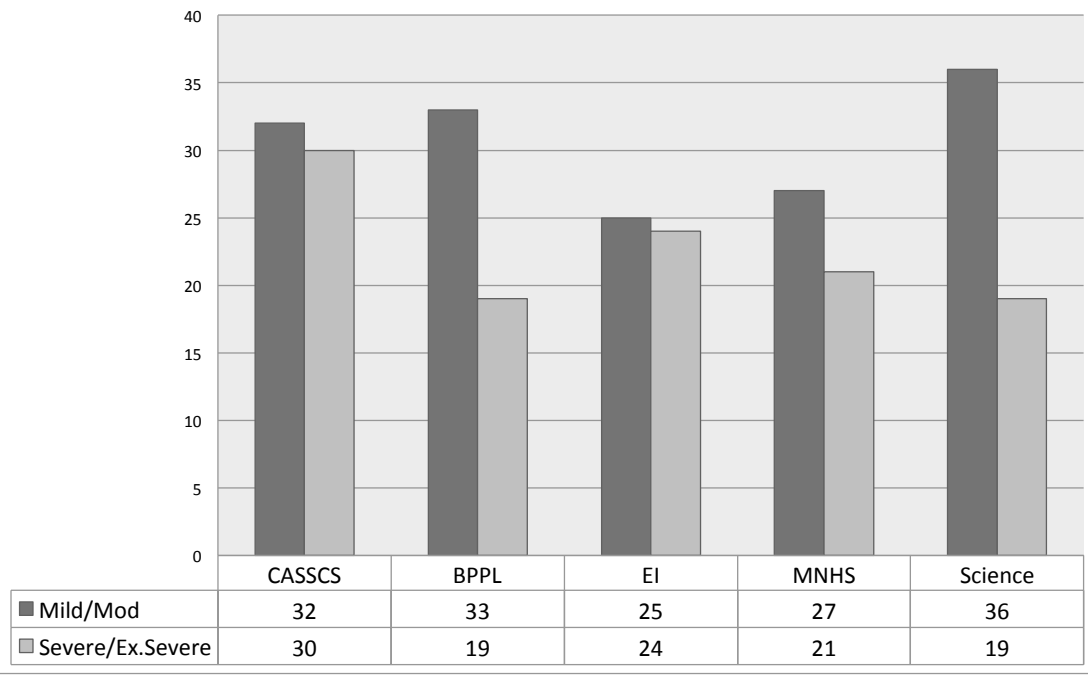
DASS Stress (% of Students)



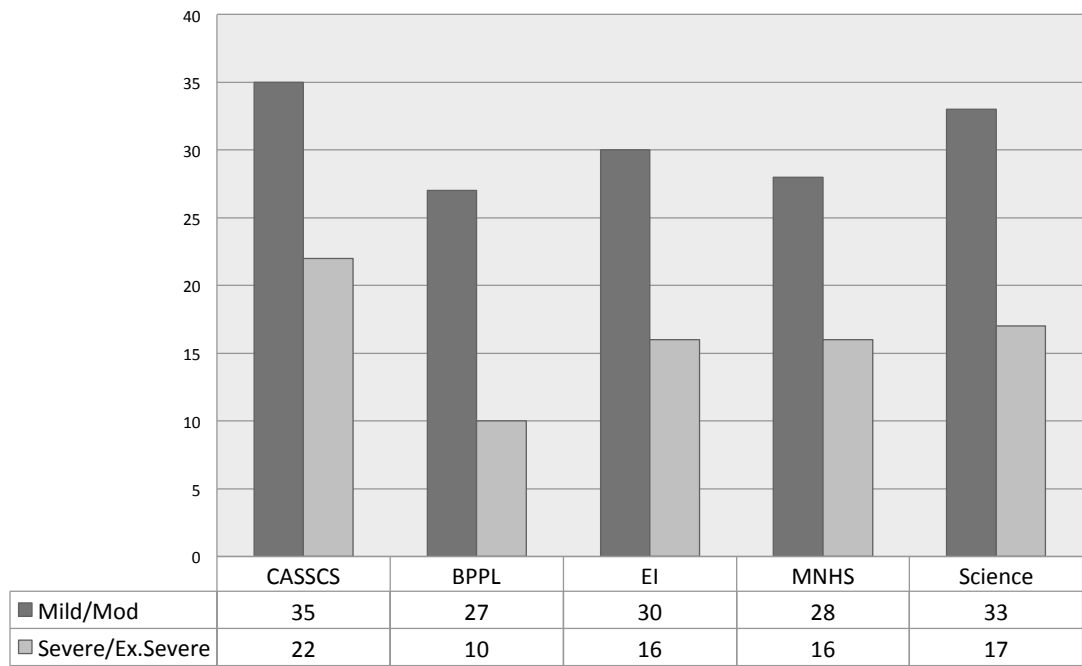
'Mild/Moderate' and 'Severe/Extremely Severe' Depression - 2nd Yr+ by College (n=512-213)



'Mild/Moderate' and 'Severe/Extremely Severe' Anxiety - 2nd Yr+ by College (n=512-213)



**'Mild/Moderate' and 'Severe/Extremely Severe'
Stress - 2nd Yr+ by College (n=512-213)**



**% of Students Reporting 'Severe / Very Severe'
Status in More than One DASS Measure**

- 90% of Low Anxiety students are low in the two other scales
- 65% of Severe / Very Severe anxiety students have very high levels of Depression and Stress as well

Some Applied Questions ...

Workshops – Embedded or Voluntary?

Semester 2, Year 1 (n=264)

- 2017 Question: *'How likely are you to attend optional training / workshops / seminars'* on:
- **Academic skills:** 9% would definitely attend, 64% would consider attending
- **Personal health and well being:** 5% would definitely attend, 61% would consider attending
- **Why not?** *Too busy, clash with lectures, not very useful, lack of knowledge about them, I don't need them, too shy*

Do you agree with introducing information / skills sessions on these topics in First Year Experience?

Semester 2, Year 1 (n=220), 2018

	Agree	Strongly Agree
Mental health / wellbeing	43	47
Sexual health / consent	37	49
Finances	40	45
Managing stress	41	47
Healthy eating on a budget	37	44
Presentation skills	39	40
Academic writing / exam success	39	40

Disability

- **First Year (n=114 with a Disability)**
- **DASS Depression:** 16.4 (Disability) / 11.0 (Others) – mean scores; **Meaning:** 33% Severe or V. Severe / 17% Severe or V. Severe
- E.g., *'Couldn't experience any positive feelings'* – 34% agree vs. 19%
- **DASS Anxiety:** 14.2 / 8.9 – mean scores; **Meaning:** 41% Severe or V. Severe / 21% Severe or V. Severe
- **DASS Stress:** 18.4 / 13.4 mean scores; **Meaning:** 30% Severe or V. Severe / 12% Severe or V. Severe

Disability

- **2nd Year+ (n=122 with a Disability)**
- **DASS Depression:** 16.4 (Disability) / 11.3 (Others) – mean scores; 30% Severe or V. Severe / 16%
- E.g., *'Couldn't experience any positive feelings'* – 29% agree vs. 15%
- **DASS Anxiety:** 14.4 / 9.5; 42% Severe or V. Severe / 21%
- **DASS Stress:** 20.0 / 15.1; 30% Severe or V. Severe / 16%

- By comparison, students who came through Access had a profile similar to other students
- Female students similar to males on depression, but more women anxious (29.5% vs. 17.8% Severe / Very Severe) and stressed (20.7% vs. 10.9% Severe / Very Severe).

Cross-Referencing DASS Depression among 2nd Year+ UGs with Use of Counselling Service

- Not depressed: 14% report having used Counselling service
- Mild / Moderate depression: 22%
- Severe / Very Severe depression: 38%

Cross-Referencing DASS Anxiety among 2nd Year + UGs with Use of Counselling Service

- Not anxious: 14% report having used Counselling service
- Mild / Moderate anxiety: 21%
- Severe / Very Severe anxiety: 34%

Self-Reported Impact of Ecological Factors on Staying in College

- % of First Years Reporting High Impact (among those who state it's relevant to them):
- Health Unit: 37%
- Lecturers: 30%
- Counselling Service: 57%
- Sports / Gym: 39%
- **Friends: 72%**

Self-Reported Impact of Ecological Factors on Staying in College

- % of Other Undergrads Reporting High Impact (among those who state it's relevant to them):
- Health Unit: 38%
- Lecturers: 35%
- Counselling Service: 56%
- Sports / Gym: 27%
- **Friends: 78%**

Open-Ended Comments: First Year Semester 1

At times it feels like secondary school, clique-wise, ...to outsiders. It's very disheartening when trying to make new friends.

Big classes in first year make it hard to make a solid close knit group of friends

I feel very isolated and alone in NUIG. I don't feel at ease or wanted.

clique-y af

First Year Semester 1

It would be helpful if there were more places to find information about starting your first assignment/essay, using turnitin etc.

Coming from LC I do find the transition to continuous assessment difficult

There aren't enough places ...like 'The Hub' in Áras na Mac Léinn to chill out ... between lectures or at the end of the day. In ... Smokeys/Sult/The Bialann/Friars etc, you are expected to purchase something ... atmosphere is not as relaxed.

Sometime it feels like there isn't enough places to sit down and chill out.

Qualitative Responses: 2nd Year+

food should be served later in college, I have days where I'm in from 9am to 6pm and can't even get anything to eat afterwards. I end up eating biscuits from the SU shop instead of real meals

Smaller class sizes, ... I felt no real integration with my class ... just too big to feel like a "community." No interaction with the School of X, barely felt like I was "part of it"

Encourage volunteering more (it's changed my life to be honest)
Enhance interest in societies, maybe even make it compulsory to join a society for at least one semester? I'm sorry I only got involved in one during my final year of college

Another location similar to the hub, where people can chill and relax, our only other options at the minute are food locations like the bialann, smokeys etc.

Examples of Top 3 Priorities: 2nd Year+

- 1. Accommodation. 2. Making sure students know that it is okay to talk to people and try and reduce the taboo around mental health. 3. Advocate the importance of getting involved in things in college.
- *1. More interaction between lecturers and students 2. Better pricing on food on campus. 3. Promote student services.*
- 1) Health and Wellbeing: make sure each and every student is looked after and doesn't feel overwhelmed at all times. 2) Workload: ensure work is fair and just and not too many assignments at once. 3) More space to relax and unwind.
- *1: ... Make the counselling service more available to students, ... more counselors on staff could really help. 2: Sexual education and informing people on issues such as consent. BIG ISSUE. 3: Student/ lecturer interactions need work. Most people intimidated by the thought of going to a lecturer if having issues with their course or struggling.*

Top 3 Priorities: % of 2nd Yr+ Student Responses (n=820) Featuring Key Words

- Events (5%)
- Microwave / Plugs (6%)
- Friends (6%)
- Exams (8%)
- Support (9%)
- Counselling (9%)
- Accommodation (10%)
- Money / Finance / cost / expense (10%)
- Lecturer (12%)
- Class (12%)
- Seat / Sit (13%)
- Mental health (14%)
- Gym / Kingfisher (14%)
- Library (15%)
- Food (19%)
- Relax / Chill / Stress (25%)

Top 3 Priorities: % of 1st Year Students (n=150) Mentioning Key Words

- Events (8%)
- Microwave / Plugs (2%)
- Friends (10%)
- Exams (15%)
- Support (8%)
- Counselling (12%)
- Accommodation (20%)
- Money / Finance / cost / expense (9%)
- Lecturer (3%)
- Class (19%)
- Seat / Sit (16%)
- Mental health (21%)
- Gym / Kingfisher (7%)
- Library (11%)
- Food (4%)
- Relax / Chill / Stress (11%)

Interconnection of Well Being, Academic Workload, and Spaces

- “1) Health and Wellbeing: make sure each and every student is looked after and doesn't feel overwhelmed at all times. 2) Workload: ensure work is fair and just and not too many assignments at once. 3) More space to relax and unwind.”
- “Places to relax/calm down, especially after a busy and stressful week full of assignments”

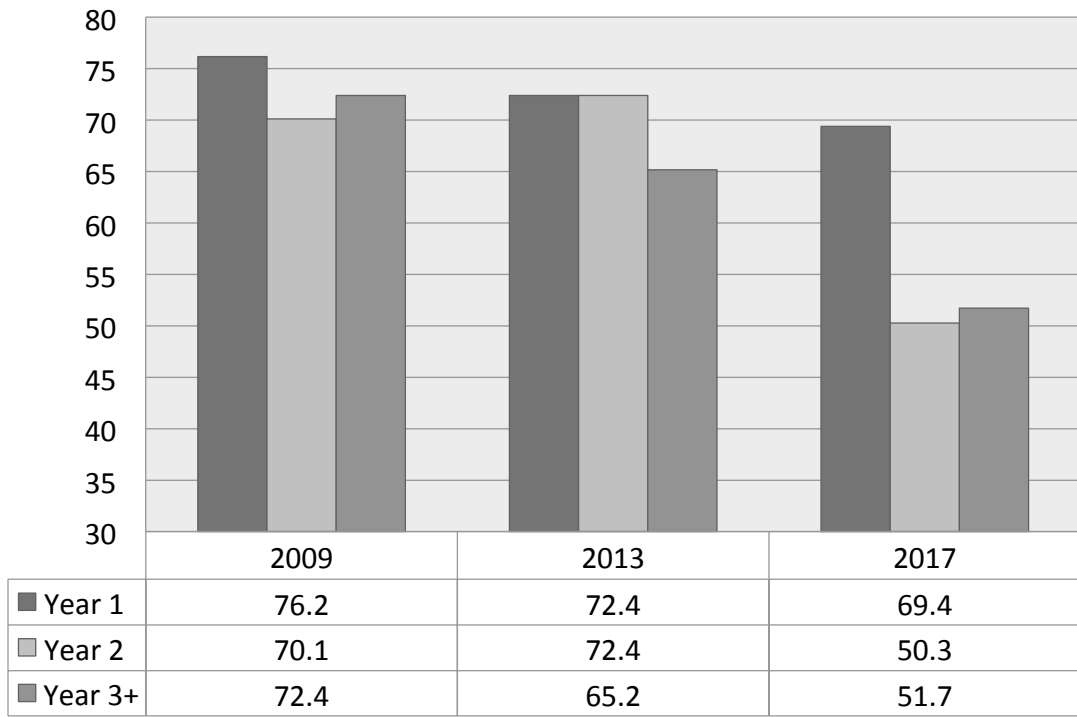
Risk Behaviours and Well Being Are Important Predictors of Outcomes

- **Predictors of Attachment to College, 1st Years, Semester 2**
- Semester 1 DASS Depression, academic environment, academic self-efficacy are the strongest predictors of Attachment to College in Semester 2
- **Predictors of Missing Class Frequently / Most of Time (First Year):**
- Academic environment, Cannabis use, AUDIT C, DASS Anxiety
- **Predictors of Missing Class among Other UG**
- AUDIT C, Cannabis use, Academic environment, Habits of Mind, DASS Depression

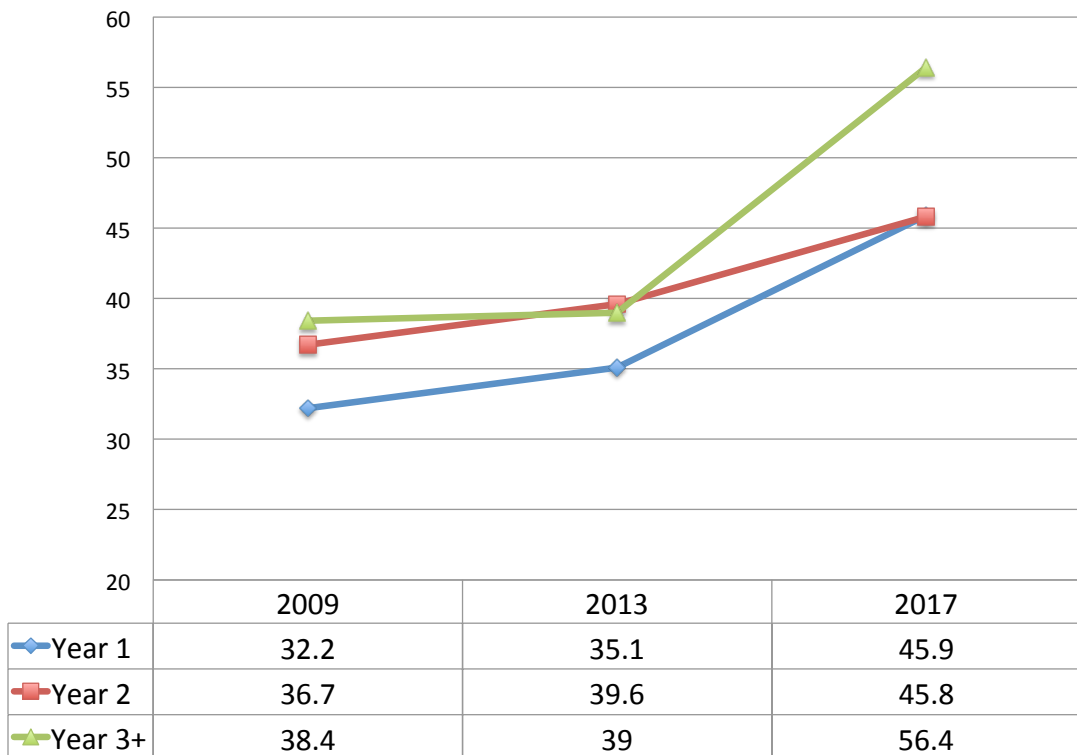
... More Complex than a Snapshot - Predicting Class Non-Attendance

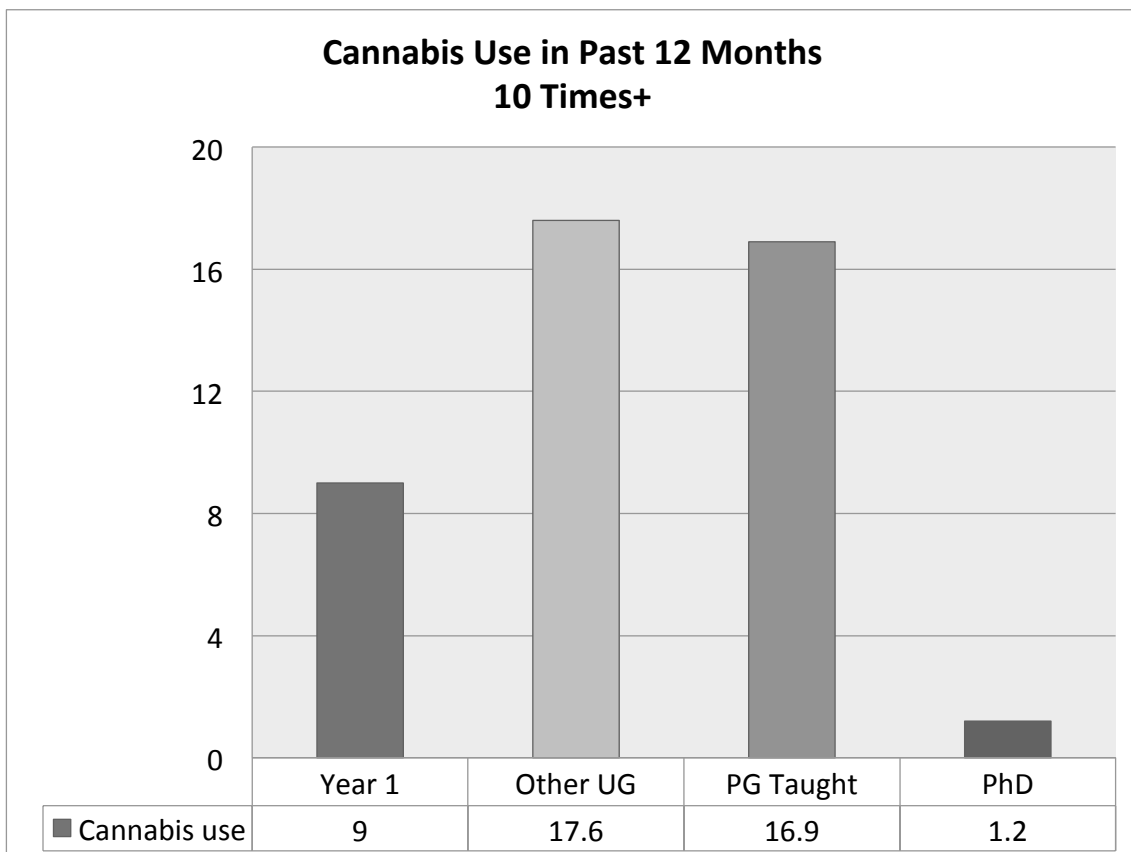
- **CASSCS** – Frequent First Year non-attendance went from **12.7%** (Semester 1) to **29.5%** (Semester 2) (n=71)
- **Science** – **8.5%** (S1) to **27.1%** (S2) (n=49)
- Frequent Year 1 Sem 2 non-attenders: Sign. different ratings on Sem 1 variables – *Depression, academic behaviours, college attachment, academic self-efficacy, peer connections*
 - 26% of First Year frequent non-attenders in Sem 2 report use of cannabis 10+ times in past year (0.6% of other students)
 - 45% have AUDIT C score of 10 or more (16% of other students)

% Students Reporting 'Binge Drinking' 2-3 Times Per Month or More



% Students Reporting Taking Cannabis in Past Year





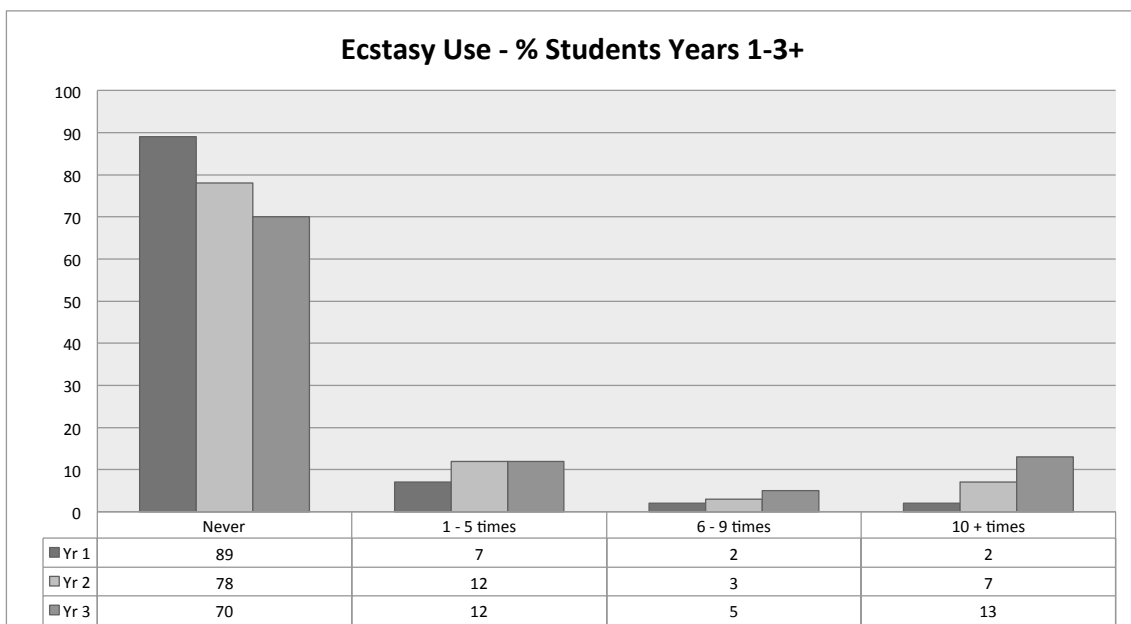
**Marijuana Decisional Balance Scale (Elliott et al., 2011)
– Pros & Cons (McCaffrey, 2013)**

- *‘How important are the following reasons in your decision to use / not use cannabis ...’*
- **% who think these are important:**
- **It’s illegal and I could get caught** (51% of non-users, 20% of frequent users)
- **It could give me a bad image** (56% non-users, 18% frequent users)
- **It could impair my judgement** (75% non-users, 23% frequent users)
- **It could reduce my ability to pay attention or remember things** (75% non-users, 39% frequent users)
- **It could impair my performance on my daily activities** (71% non-users, 38% frequent users)

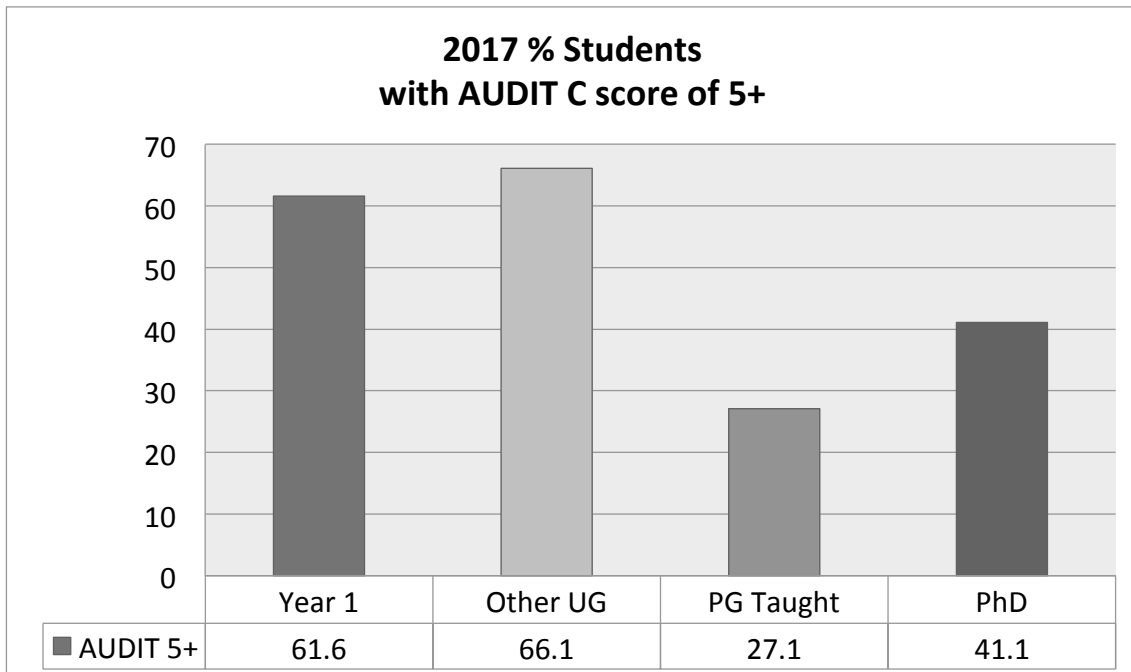
Marijuana Decisional Balance Scale (Elliott et al., 2011) – Pros & Cons

- *‘How important are the following reasons in your decision to use / not use cannabis ...’*
- **% who think these are important:**
- **It would relieve stress, anxiety, or worry** (26% non-users, 70% frequent users)
- **Everyday activities more enjoyable** (TV, video games etc.) (15% non-users, 69% frequent users)
- **I would feel happy** (17% non-users, 59% frequent users)
- **It would help me sleep** (13% non-users, 60% frequent users)

Risk Behaviours - Ecstasy

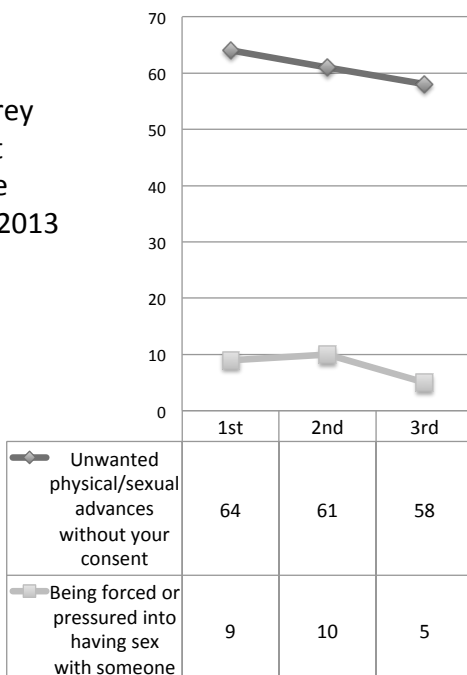


Binge drinking (AUDIT-C)

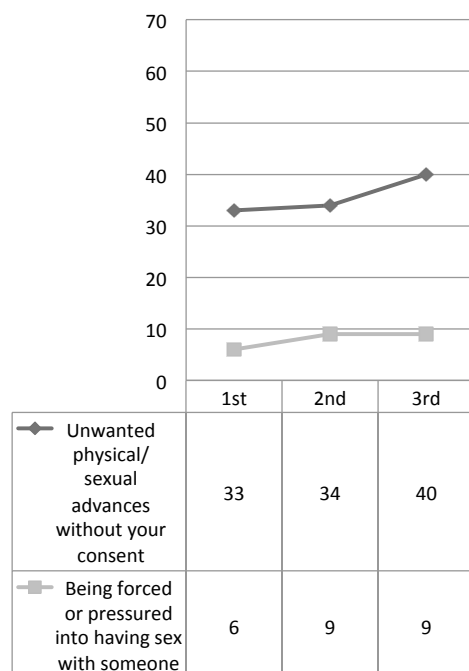


Negative Consequences of Another Person's Drinking in Past 12 Months: % Women 1st, 2nd, 3rd Year+

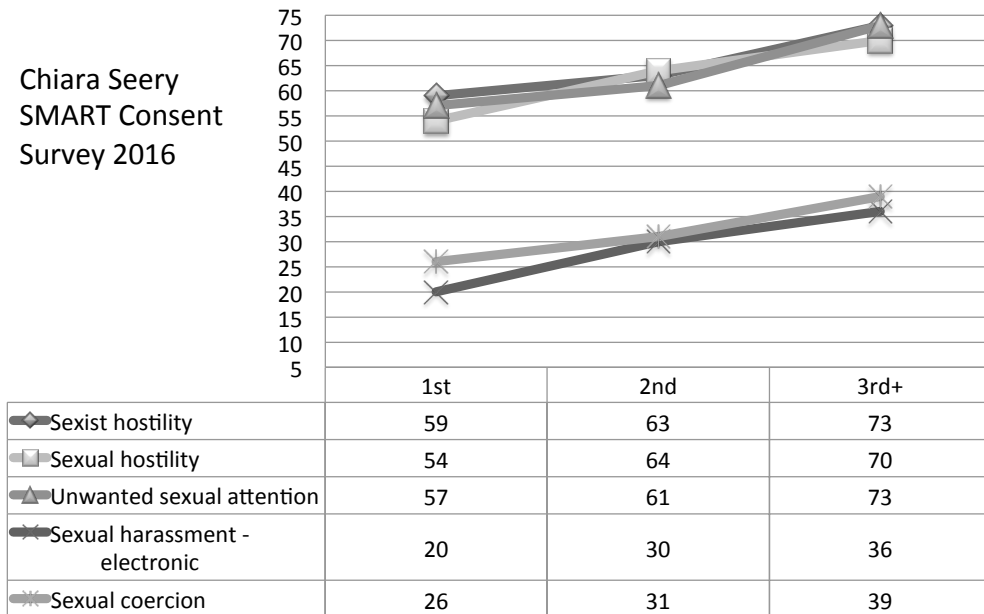
John McCaffrey
Student Lifestyle Survey 2013



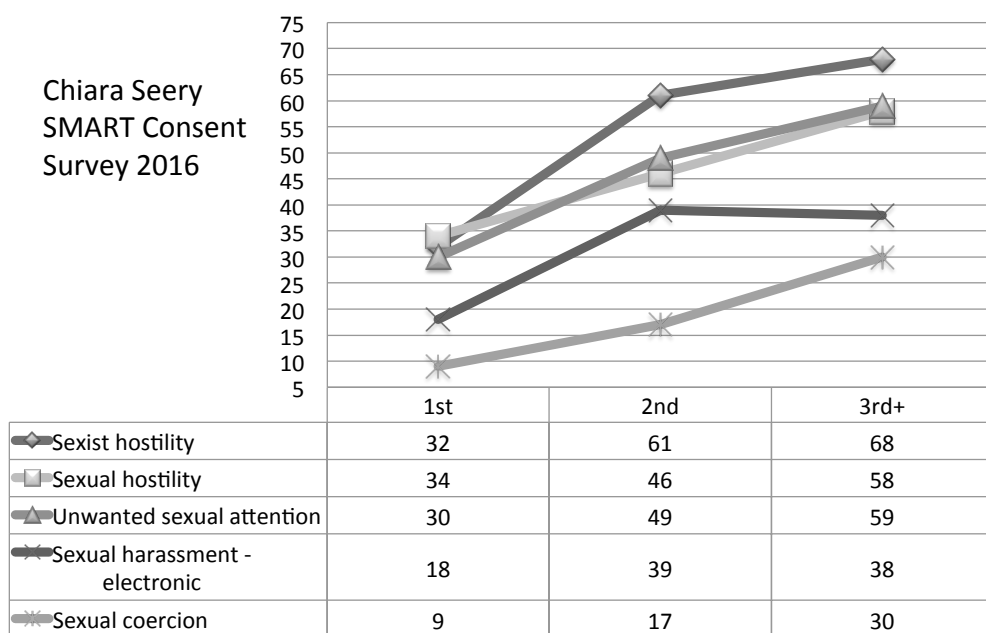
Negative Consequences of Another Person's Drinking in Past 12 Months: % of Men 1st, 2nd, 3rd Year+



% Female Students: Harassment Experiences by College Year

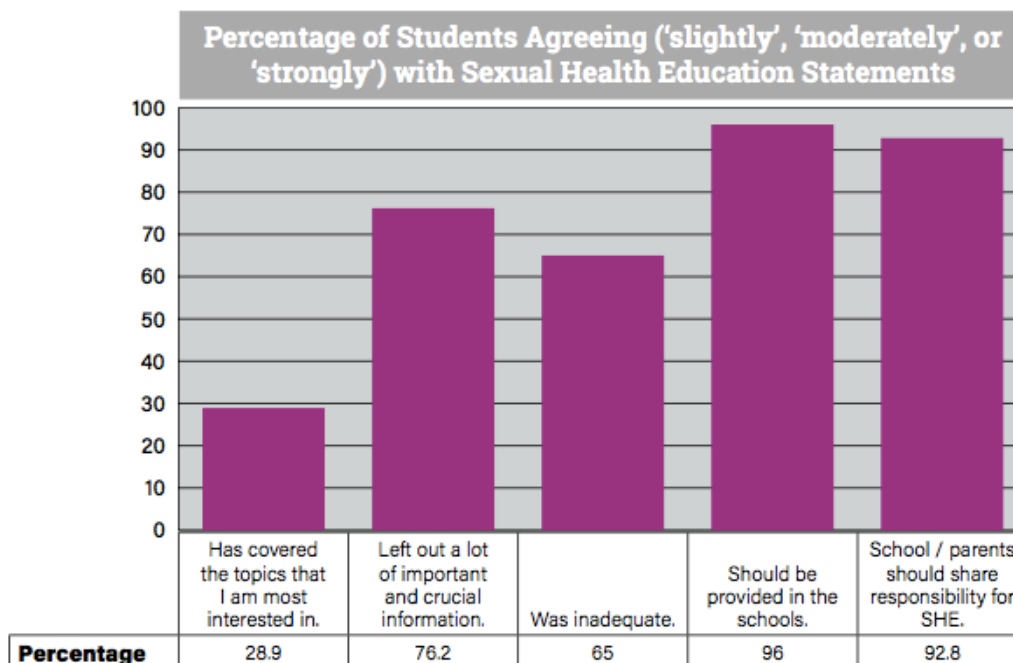


% Male Students: Experience of Harassment by College Year



General Satisfaction with Sexual Health Education Scale (Meaney, 2009)

NUI Galway Students Reflecting on School SHE



SMART Consent Project

- Interactive workshop supporting students to:
 - Establish agreement on key principles for sexual consent
 - Raise awareness of contextual factors – ‘grey area’
 - Be confident in expressing verbal / non-verbal consent
- Peer / staff facilitator training, manualised approach
- 2,000 students have taken part – NUIG, QUB, DCU, NCAD, GMIT, IT Tralee, Athlone IT, TCD, UL
- 100 people trained as facilitators this year
- Evidence: Workshop(s) successfully evaluated; Survey stats from 3,000 other students are used in workshop materials
 - including evaluations of vignettes

Future Possibilities

- Building on SMART Consent example – use a social norms approach to destigmatise mental health and distress using a workshop approach; Use survey / qualitative data to raise awareness about incidence of depression, anxiety, and stress; Connect to self-care skills and knowledge of services
- Link with emerging institutional data warehouse – link student measures to objective student records
- Protocols for receiving enquiries from services, publishing regular updates, ensuring data is used for maximum number of purposes