How is COVID-19 Impacting
Student Mental Health and
Academic Outcomes
A Year Later: A Follow up Study

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Spring Semester 2020 A Global Crisis!

- A sudden shifts to online instruction
- Health and financial concerns
- Social distancing and shutdowns

Spring Semester 2021 A New Normal?

- Returned to in-person or hybrid
- Health and financial concerns
- Social and political divide



Two Surveys: One Year Apart

How is the pandemic impacting college and university students in the U.S.?



- National online survey in April-May 2020 and 2021
 - 2020 (*n* = 197)
 - 2021 (*n* = 142)
- Recruited via social media, faculty email or listserv

The Questions We Asked

Demographics and financial concerns

Mental health and focus

Self-report class
GPA currently
and in February

Social isolation and polarization due to COVID-19 (only in 2021)

Having COVID-19 or High-risk for complications

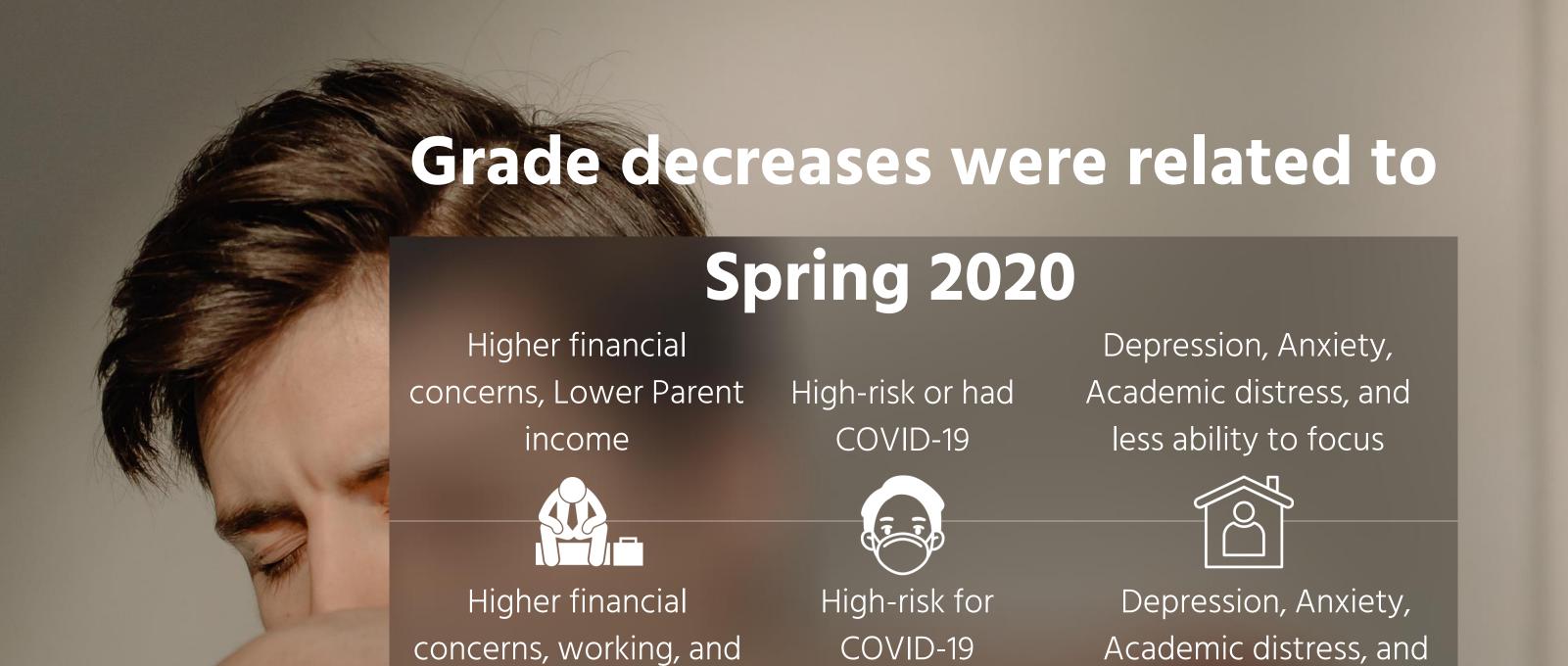












complications

Spring 2021

working more hours

less ability to focus

Pandemic Mental Health

2020 2021

11% Elevated Depression

35%

39% Elevated Anxiety

29%

47% Academic Distress

36%



2021 Social Isolation and Polarization

58%

Felt loss of closeness with family or friends due to differing safety beliefs during pandemic



Felt isolated from others at least half of the time spring 2021





- Students who are high risk for COVID-19 complications (or have family that are) have a greater risk for academic challenges
- Students that work or have higher financial concerns are at greater risk for academic and mental health challenges
- Grades decreased by 1 letter grade in 2020, and by .64 of a letter grade in 2021
- There are extremely high levels of mental health distress social isolation and loss of closeness with friends and loved ones.
- Mental health counseling, awareness, and outreach is still essential and nationwide waitlists, especially in college counseling centers, need to be addressed.