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# Our Campus, Our Health: Implementing a Student-Led Health Assessment

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## Introduction

Engaging undergraduate students in meaningful research is critical to grow the next generation of researchers and leaders. Borrowing from the Community-Based Participatory Research paradigm, a group of undergraduate students, under the advisement of a faculty member developed and implemented a comprehensive health assessment to the student population.

As with individuals, college campuses are diverse and health education programs should be planned to meet the unique needs of the student body. A thorough health assessment needs to be administered annually to monitor risk behaviors.

*Our Campus, Our Health: A Student-led Campus Health Assessment* is a model to engage students in basic research methodology while offering a valuable resource to the entire campus. This is particularly valuable for universities that don't allocate funding for the National College Health Assessment.

## Methodology

A research team of student volunteers were recruited from the undergraduate Health Education program. Lead researchers were identified and planned weekly meetings to develop the survey covering the following health dimensions and indicators:



Students received research ethics training, Institutional Review Board directions and were instructed in online survey software.

After pilot testing, IRB approval and review by content-area experts, the voluntary and confidential web-based survey was delivered to all undergraduate and graduate students over a four week period.

## Results

During the first year of implementation, 1,531 students responded (10% of student body). Respondents were representative of existing student demographic information. The data was analyzed using SPSS Version 16.0 and the findings were compared with the National College Health Assessment data.

## Discussion

The research team delivered a **STATE OF THE STUDENT HEALTH** address to share the results with students, faculty, administrators, staff and community partners.

Although it is not easy to involve undergraduate students in research, it can be a transformative experience when students take ownership.

The project is currently in year two and has received institutional funding for student conference travel, administrative costs and data management assistance.