

As we approach the return to campus after over a year of masks, quarantine, social distancing, and virtual classes, we need to prepare ourselves, our staff, and our students to navigate what is likely to be new - and in some cases heightened- challenges. This three-part Tip of the Week will focus on:

1. Part One: The impact of COVID-19
2. Part Two: What to expect given this impact
3. Part Three: How administrators can prepare to mitigate, or respond to the impact

There is not a member of our community - no matter where they lie on the political spectrum, their beliefs on masks, or their understanding of COVID-19 – that hasn't experienced some impact from the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic. Colleges and university administrators across the nation have felt the impact of COVID-19 on their enrollment, graduation rates, and overall student health. Over half of college students had to relocate due to the pandemic, 40% lost a job or internship, and 13% delayed their graduation (Acuejo, French, Paola Ugalde Araya, & Zafar, 2020). The impact of the pandemic was felt even more profoundly by our already marginalized students as lower income students were 55% more likely than their higher-income peers to have delayed graduation and students of color were 70% more likely to change majors due to the pandemic than their white peers (Acuejo, French, Paola Ugalde Araya, & Zafar, 2020).



The impact of COVID-19 reaches beyond students' ability to attend class or secure a job. The pandemic has increased students' feelings of loneliness, isolation, and stress with 1 in 5 college students reporting that their mental health has significantly worsened during COVID-19 and 8% reporting that the pandemic has led to suicidal thoughts (Active Minds, 2020).

These challenges leave students and administrators wondering what our new normal will look like and how their campuses might be different as they anticipate a return to classes in the fall semester. Join us in Part Two and Three of this series to explore what to expect and how to prepare for the impact of COVID-19 as we navigate the return to campus.

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Active Minds (2020). COVID-19 Impact on College Student Mental Health. *Spring 2020 Student Survey Infographic*.

Acuejo, E.M., French, J., Paola Ugalde Araya, M., Zafar, B., (2020). The impact of COVID-19 on student experiences and expectations: Evidence from a survey. *Journal of Public Economics*, 191.