AIHEC Research Survey on the Impact of COVID-19 on TCU Student Experiences
February 2021

In fall 2020, nearly 500 Tribal College and University (TCU) students participated in a study on the impact of the COVID-19 on their coursework and their daily lives. The survey results, published here for the first time, provide a valuable needs assessment tool and data to assist the TCUs and AIHEC in better meeting the needs of their students. The first study of its kind, the survey posed an array of questions focusing on persistence, online learning, and physical and mental well-being. The results underscore the far-reaching effects of the pandemic on TCUs, Native students, and their communities.

The AIHEC survey is based on a survey published in June 2020, by Arizona State University (ASU): "The Impact of COVID-19 on Student Experiences and Expectations: Evidence from a Survey," conducted in spring 2020. Like the ASU survey results, AIHEC's findings give a clear picture of what students are experiencing in these pandemic times. AIHEC requested permission from ASU's team of researchers to adapt their questionnaire for its own use, to make the questions relevant to TCU students and the tribal communities TCUs serve. The ASU research team graciously granted permission. AIHEC wishes to acknowledge and thank Esteban M. Aucejo, Jacob F. French, Maria Paola Ugalde Araya, and Basit Zafar of Arizona State University.

During the fall 2020 term, the TCUs recruited returning students to participate in the survey; 486 students provided valid responses.

**Respondent Demographics (N=486)**

**Ethnicity**
- 86% American Indian/Alaska Native; 14% non-Native
- Overall TCU population: 87% AI/AN; 13% non-Native

**Gender**
- 81% female, 17% male; 2% other/prefer not to say
- Overall TCU population: 69% female; 31% male; 0.05% other/prefer not to say

**Age**

Overall TCU population:
- 32% 18-21
- 16% 22-24
- 13% 25-34
- 16% 35-49
- 7% 50-64
- 1% 65+

- 25%
- 10%
- 16%
- 13%
- 34%
For TCU Participation, N=483. Three respondents did not identify their college.
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Other included:
- Graduate students
- Returning for another degree
- Non-degree/credential-seeking
- 5th year and beyond
- Returning after stop-out

How are you paying for college (including tuition, room and board, living expenses, books, etc.)?  N=485

**Paying for College**

- Federal financial aid: 69%
- Scholarship(s): 61%
- My own income or savings: 37%
- Grant(s): 31%
- Loan(s): 7%
- Parents: 2%
Before the COVID-19 outbreak, where did you live? Where do you live now? (N=455)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Residence</th>
<th>Pre-Pandemic Residence</th>
<th>Current Residence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>On-campus housing</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With my parents</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Off-campus (not with my parents)</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, did you have any experience with online classes? (N=482)

- Yes, had taken some classes that were fully-online: 45%
- Yes, had taken some hybrid (partially online, partially in-person) classes: 37%
- No, had not taken online or hybrid classes: 18%
Has the COVID-19 pandemic affected your graduation plan? (N=482)

**Pandemic Effects on Graduation Plans**

- 31% Plan to graduate later than previously expected
- 60% I plan to graduate earlier than previously expected
- 4% My graduation plan has not been affected
- 5% Not applicable (Not taking classes for credential/degree)

How likely is it that you will graduate with your intended credential/degree from this institution? (N=482)

**Likelihood of Graduating with Intended Credential**

- 33% Very unlikely
- 57% Unlikely
- 2% Likely
- 5% Very likely
- 3% N/A
How likely is it that you will take a break from college in the next term starting in winter/spring 2021? (N=481)

![Likelihood of Taking a Break from College in Winter/Spring 2021]

- Very unlikely: 41%
- Unlikely: 35%
- Likely: 11%
- Very likely: 6%
- N/A: 7%

Do you know anyone who has contracted COVID-19? (N=438)
91% responded that they knew someone who had contracted the virus.

In your opinion, how likely are you to be late on any of your bills or other payments in the next 90 days? (N=483)
Taking into account all sources of income, how likely are you to be able to cover the cost of attending this institution if you enroll in the next term (winter/spring)? (N=484)

![Likelihood of Covering Costs]

- Very unlikely: 10%, 9%
- Unlikely: 30%, 22%
- Likely: 38%, 55%
- Very likely: 23%, 14%
Which of the following applied to you during summer 2020? (N=485)

### Summer 2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situation</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I worked at a job.</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I worked at a paid internship.</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I worked at an unpaid internship.</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I had a paid internship lined up, but it was cancelled.</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I had an unpaid internship lined up, but it was...</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I took classes during the summer.</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I took time off from work and school.</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please specify)</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other responses included:
- Work closed due to COVID
- Job lost due to COVID
- Resigned
- Difficulty finding employment due to COVID
- High-risk, so unable to work
- Furloughed
- Self-employed (including in-home child care)
- In mourning
- Illness
- Quarantine

Have you lost a job or had a reduction in hours/pay since March 2020? (N=486)

### Job Loss or Pay Reduction Since March 2020

- Yes: 45%
- No: 42%
- Not applicable: 14%
Which of the following applies to you? (N=483)

![Employment Pie Chart]

- Worked for pay before the COVID-19 pandemic and still working now: 49%
- Worked for pay before the COVID-19 pandemic but no longer working: 7%
- Began working for pay after the COVID-19 outbreak and am still working now: 7%
- Began working for pay after the COVID-19 outbreak but am no longer working: 18%

How many hours did you work for pay per week in the last month? (N=484)
If the COVID-19 pandemic had not happened, how many hours per week would you have worked for pay in the last month? (N=480)

![Hours Worked Bar Chart]

- 0 - 10 hours: 18%, 11 - 20 hours: 12%, 21 - 30 hours: 10%, 31 - 40 hours: 37%
- 41+ hours: 30%, N/A: 11%

- How many hours did you work for pay per week in the last month?
- If the COVID-19 pandemic had not happened, how many hours per week would you have worked for pay in the last month?
What do you plan to do after your finish your studies at this institution? (N=486)

Other responses included:
- Unsure
- Already working
- Continue my education
- Look for a different job
- Work in my community
- Finish and sell art work
- Move home to be closer to family
- Internship
- Artist-in-residence
- Start my own business
In your opinion, how likely do you think it is that you will be able to find a job before you graduate? (N=473)
In your opinion, if the COVID-19 pandemic had not happened, how likely is it that you would have been able to find a job before you graduate? (N=470)

**Finding Employment Before Graduation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Finding Employment Before Graduation</th>
<th>If the pandemic had not happened, likelihood of finding a job before graduation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very unlikely</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unlikely</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likely</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very likely</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How far are you willing to commute or move away from your home community/reservation for employment? (N=474)

**Distance Willing to Commute / Move Away from Home Community / Reservation for Employment**

- 0 - 10 miles: 39%
- 11 - 25 miles: 19%
- 26 - 35 miles: 19%
- 36 - 49 miles: 9%
- 50+ miles: 14%
Below are some reasons that may be important when choosing a career. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, has the importance of these factors to you changed? (N=474)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Decreased</th>
<th>Stayed the Same</th>
<th>Increased</th>
<th>N/A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Live near home or another Native community</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be a leader in my line of work</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoy my line of work</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have family-life balance</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have job security</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have opportunities to help my community</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make a lot of money</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have opportunities to work with other people</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do my part to make the world a better place</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Legend: Decreased, Stayed the Same, Increased, N/A
What is your major? Please choose the one that fits most closely. (N=475)

### Respondent Majors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accounting</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian/Alaska Native Languages</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian/Alaska Native Studies</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Automotive Technology</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biology</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building Trades</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Science/Technology</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corrections/Law Enforcement</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Science/Natural Resources</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geography</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Careers</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Services</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individualized Program</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberal Arts/General Studies</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Science</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Administration/Technology</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paralegal</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Engineering/Engineering</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Veterinary Science</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Science</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocational/Career Programs</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am not in college for a degree or other credential.</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do not know yet.</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Has your choice of major been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic? (N=474)

### Choice of Major was Affected by Pandemic

- Yes: 28%
- No: 72%
Please compare your online learning experiences with in-person classes. (N=460)

Online Learning Experiences Compared With In-Person Classes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experience</th>
<th>0%</th>
<th>10%</th>
<th>20%</th>
<th>30%</th>
<th>40%</th>
<th>50%</th>
<th>60%</th>
<th>70%</th>
<th>80%</th>
<th>90%</th>
<th>100%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall experience</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to understand the material</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to ask questions during class</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning from peers through discussions and questions</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interacting with the instructor in class</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interacting with the instructor during office hours</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interacting with classmates</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructor’s ability to convey concepts</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My level of engagement in the course</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interruptions by other students</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to computer resources</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to tutoring</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having a quiet place to study</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interference by factors outside of class on my ability to focus</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount of homework</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulty of homework</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pace of the class</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meets my learning needs.</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
If you were given the choice, would you rather take a course online/remote or in-person? (N=461)

**Given the choice, students would rather attend class ...**

- Online/remote: 43%
- In-person: 57%

Did you withdraw from any classes because of the COVID-19 pandemic? (N=461)

**Withdrawn from Any Classes Due to Pandemic**

- Yes: 20%
- No: 80%
How many hours did you study per week in the last two weeks? (N=461)
If the COVID-19 pandemic had not happened, how many hours would you have studied per week in the last two weeks? (N=460)

Study Hours

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hours spent studying in the last week</th>
<th>If the pandemic had not happened, estimated usual study hours per week</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 - 5 hours</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 - 10 hours</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 - 15 hours</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 - 20 hours</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21+ hours</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please provide your best estimate: (N=463)

Activity Participation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity Participation</th>
<th>Student activities attended per week over past two weeks</th>
<th>If no pandemic, estimated student activities attended per week over two weeks</th>
<th>Cultural activities attended per week over past two weeks</th>
<th>If no pandemic, estimated cultural activities attended per week over two weeks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
How has the time you spend on the following activities changed due to the COVID-19 pandemic? (N=463)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Less than before</th>
<th>Same as before</th>
<th>More than before</th>
<th>N/A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Volunteering in the community</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sleeping</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working for pay</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commuting</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports and exercise</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online entertainment</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watching/reading the news</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online browsing</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social media</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working, relaxing, or playing outdoors</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housekeeping</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time with family</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pursuing hobbies</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading for enjoyment</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studying with others</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studying by myself</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completing class assignments</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Have you been able to meet your needs since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic? (N=462)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Need</th>
<th>No, and I was not able to before the pandemic</th>
<th>No, but I was able to before the pandemic</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>N/A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clean water</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
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<td>3%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothing</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child care</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental health</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Internet access</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>82%</td>
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</table>