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# Anxiety in college students: Implications from the CCMH database

Payton Jones

Brigham Young University - Provo, [paytonjjones@gmail.com](mailto:paytonjjones@gmail.com)

G. Tyler Lefevor

University of Miami, [tyler\\_lefevor@byu.edu](mailto:tyler_lefevor@byu.edu)

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# Anxiety in college students: Implications from the CCMH database



Payton Jones and Tyler Lefevor

## Introduction

- Center for Collegiate Mental Health (CCMH) 2014 database<sup>1\*</sup>
- Includes standard intake information and outcomes for more than 140 university counseling centers around the nation
- Anxiety is the most common concern for university students<sup>1\*</sup>
- 12.9% of university students were diagnosed or treated for an anxiety disorder in 2013<sup>2\*</sup>
- Anxiety concerns in college students have steadily increased in the past two decades<sup>2\*</sup>
- What is causing this anxiety?

## Theories of Anxiety

- Anxiety Expectation: will something bad happen?<sup>3\*</sup>
- Anxiety Sensitivity: how bad will that something be?<sup>3\*</sup>
- Possibility of academic and future career failure is a source of anxiety



## What exacerbates anxiety?

- Academic stress
  - $r = 0.430^{**}$
  - Anxiety has a bi-directional relationship with academic failure; anxiety causes failure and failure causes anxiety<sup>4\*</sup>
  - Is academic success in college more important to students than it was 20 years ago?
- Financial burdens
  - $r = 0.189^{**}$
  - Financial burdens have steadily increased in students<sup>5\*</sup>
  - May help explain increasing rates of anxiety
- Recent hospitalization
  - $r = 0.142^{**}$

## What protects against anxiety?

- Family support
  - $r = -0.160^{**}$
- Social support
  - $r = -0.167^{**}$
- Therapy was effective for students with anxiety
- How can counseling centers improve?

	Anxiety	Academic Concern	Financial Concern	Recent Hospital	Family Support	Social Support
Anxiety	x					
Academic Concern	0.430**	x				
Financial Concern	0.189**	-0.210**	x			
Recent Hospital	0.142**	0.062**	0.129**	x		
Family Support	-0.160**	-0.184**	-0.263**	-0.123**	x	
Social Support	-0.167**	-0.179**	-0.178**	-0.106**	0.399**	x

## Conclusion

- Anxiety has a bi-directional relationship with academic failure
- Students today are more anxious than ever before
  - Increased pressure to succeed
  - Financial stress
- What can be done?
  - Increase support services
  - Decrease academic and financial burden on students

\*citations available upon request  
 \*\*significant at <0.001 level