

## Analysis of Current Student Survey

April 20, 2022

*This analysis was produced by OPEIR in response to a specific data request. Results are not necessarily generalizable and attempts to use results outside the scope of this project should be avoided.*

### Key Findings

- Almost half of respondents indicated UTC was their first-choice university. The top three reasons they chose UTC were related to living close to home, living in Tennessee, and receiving in-state tuition rates.
- Respondents felt very welcomed at UTC, particularly by other students, and are committed to completing their degree here.
- Students reported feeling very safe inside UTC. However, they do not feel as safe outside of UTC's campus in the city of Chattanooga.
- Mental health issues, especially anxiety and stress, were the most impactful impediments to academic success for Fall 2021.

### Introduction and Demographics

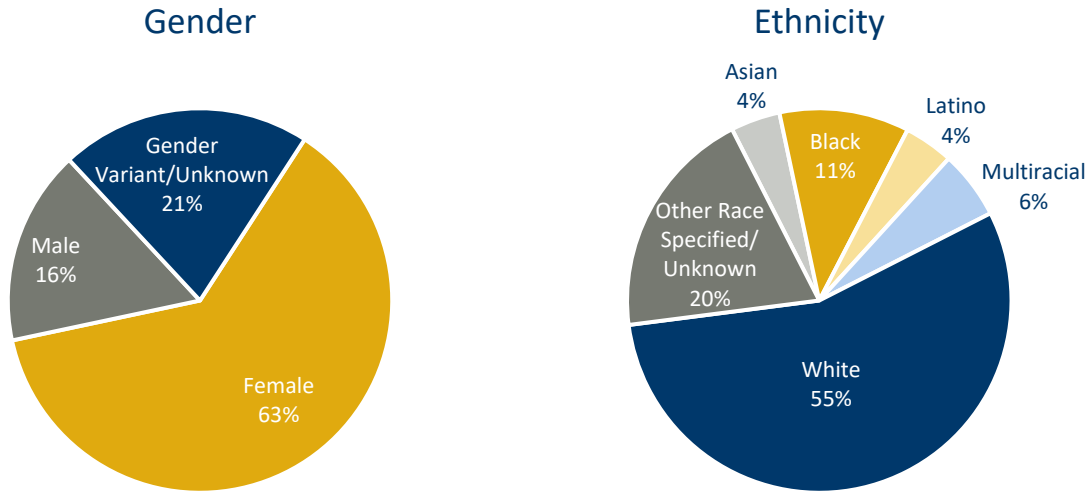
The UTC Student Survey was sent to 403 undergraduates in January 2022. Ninety-five percent (n = 384) began the survey; 70 percent fully completed it (n = 283). Out of the 384 partial responses, over half were female, and students of color made up 26 percent of the sample (Figures 1 and 2). More than three-fourths of all respondents were in their sophomore year and nearly half are on-campus residents (Table 1).

Most respondents are Tennessee residents (n = 269). Twenty-eight percent live in Hamilton County. Prior to attending UTC, seven students were homeschooled and 63 attended high school in Hamilton County. The top Hamilton County high schools were Ooltewah High (n = 6), Soddy Daisy High, Central High, and East Ridge High (n = 5 each).

Forty-eight percent reported that UTC was their first-choice university. The reasons why respondents chose to apply for UTC are centered around UTC's location in relation to their home and costs for in-state attendance. Specifically, the top five options chosen were:

1. Location in Tennessee (55%)
2. In-state tuition (50%)
3. Proximity to home (47%)
4. Financial aid package (28%)
5. Small class size (24%)

**Figures 1 and 2: Demographic Breakdown by Gender and Ethnicity**



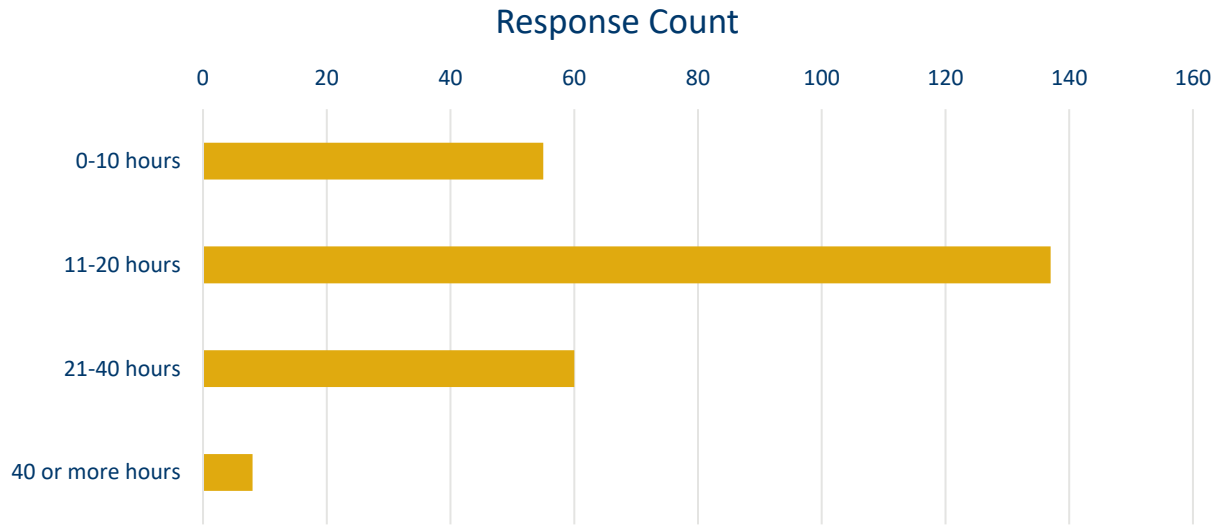
**Table 1: Additional Student Characteristics**

| Student Characteristics                            |       |
|--|-------|
| Freshman   | 24.2% |
| First Generation                                   | 28.9% |
| On-Campus Resident                                 | 48.7% |
| UTC was my First-Choice University                 | 48.2% |
| ≥3.0 Overall GPA                                   | 71.7% |
| Enrolled with 15+ credits                          | 54.6% |
| ≥3 hours daily spent studying outside of classroom | 77.5% |

As in-state tuition and financial aid packages were among the top reasons to attend UTC, most students also reported receiving financial aid as well as an intent to work. Sixty-five percent of respondents received at least one type of financial aid (n = 248); 68 percent are working or plan on working with most looking to work between 11 to 20 hours weekly (Figure 2). The most frequently reported types of aid received were:

1. Federal Aid (71%)
2. School Scholarships (59%)
3. Grants (44%)
4. Loans (39%)
5. UT Promise (27%)

**Figure 2: Hours per Week Students Work or Plan on Working**



In review of academic characteristics (i.e., Overall GPA, credit hours enrolled, and time spent studying), two common traits were found for a third of respondents. Most students reported having a GPA between 3.0 and 3.99 and spending between 3 to 5 hours studying per day outside of the classroom (Table 2). These students are taking between 10 to 18 credit hours.

**Table 2: Reported GPA and Credits Enrolled by Hours Spent Studying Daily**

| GPA/Credits Enrolled | 0 - 2 hours | 3 - 5 hours | 6 - 8 hours | 9+ hours  | Row Total  |
|----------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-----------|------------|
| <b>4.00</b>          | <b>4</b>    | <b>23</b>   | <b>5</b>    | <b>3</b>  | <b>35</b>  |
| 10 - 14 credits      | 3           | 7           | 1           | 1         | 12         |
| 15 - 18 credits      | 1           | 15          | 4           | 2         | 22         |
| 19+ credits          | 0           | 1           | 0           | 0         | 1          |
| <b>3.00 - 3.99</b>   | <b>40</b>   | <b>101</b>  | <b>31</b>   | <b>12</b> | <b>184</b> |
| 4 - 9 credits        | 1           | 4           | 1           | 0         | 6          |
| 10 - 14 credits      | 15          | 38          | 9           | 3         | 65         |
| 15 - 18 credits      | 24          | 55          | 21          | 8         | 108        |
| 19+ credits          | 0           | 4           | 0           | 1         | 5          |
| <b>2.00 - 2.99</b>   | <b>21</b>   | <b>39</b>   | <b>7</b>    | <b>3</b>  | <b>70</b>  |
| 1 - 3 credits        | 1           | 0           | 0           | 0         | 1          |
| 4 - 9 credits        | 1           | 9           | 1           | 0         | 11         |
| 10 - 14 credits      | 10          | 18          | 3           | 1         | 32         |
| 15 - 18 credits      | 9           | 11          | 3           | 2         | 25         |
| 19+ credits          | 0           | 1           | 0           | 0         | 1          |
| <b>1.00 - 1.99</b>   | <b>3</b>    | <b>9</b>    | <b>1</b>    | <b>0</b>  | <b>13</b>  |
| 4 - 9 credits        | 0           | 0           | 1           | 0         | 1          |
| 10 - 14 credits      | 3           | 6           | 0           | 0         | 9          |
| 15 - 18 credits      | 0           | 3           | 0           | 0         | 3          |
| <b>Column Total</b>  | <b>68</b>   | <b>172</b>  | <b>44</b>   | <b>18</b> | <b>302</b> |

## Survey Description

Respondents answered survey questions related to several topics such as attitudes towards UTC, connection to UTC and students, perspectives on UTC campus life, feelings of safety at UTC, and impacts on academic success. Students selected an applicable response ranging from *Strongly Disagree* (1) to *Neither Disagree nor Agree* (3) to *Strongly Agree* (5). Questions regarding safety at UTC utilized the same scaling values but was worded as *Very Unsafe* (1) to *Very Safe* (5). Lastly, responses for impacts to academic success ranged from *None at all* (1) to *A great deal* (5).

## Perspectives of UTC

Most students reported feeling welcomed at UTC with a desire to stay and complete their degree. Responses for staying and completing their degree at UTC were moderately high between *Somewhat Agree* and *Strongly Agree* (Table 3). The lowest score was regarding beliefs of UTC faculty/staff showing concern about student well-being.

**Table 3: Attitudes Towards UTC**

| Which of the following best describes your attitude towards UTC?         | n   | Mean Score |
|--|-----|------------|
| I find UTC to be an academically rigorous institution.                   | 295 | 3.80       |
| I am satisfied with instructions and lectures received from UTC faculty. |     | 3.78       |
| I feel I belong at UTC.  |     | 3.84       |
| I feel welcomed at UTC as I am.  |     | 4.04       |
| UTC faculty/staff are concerned about my well-being.                     |     | 3.62       |
| I am committed to completing my degree at UTC.                           |     | 4.55       |

Although students feel a somewhat strong sense of acceptance at UTC, it does not relate to a similar degree of connection. Most responses averaged less than *Somewhat Agree*. Overall connection to UTC is expressed with a moderate agreement (Table 4). However, responses show a greater connection to the city of Chattanooga than to UTC. There are only slight agreements for specific connections to UTC outside of relating with fellow students. The lowest scores were for connections to one's residence hall floor and inclusion in lots of activities at UTC. In contrast, responses to campus life suggest there is a generally positive student community in UTC (Table 5).

**Table 4: Connection to UTC and Fellow Students**

| How connected do you feel to UTC and fellow students? | n   | Mean Score |
|---|-----|------------|
| Overall, I feel connected to UTC.                     | 291 | 3.66       |
| I feel connected to other students.                   |     | 3.55       |
| I feel connected to my instructors.                   |     | 3.36       |
| I feel a part of campus life.                         |     | 3.26       |
| I feel connected to my residence hall floor.          | 173 | 3.05       |
| I feel connected to the city of Chattanooga.          | 291 | 3.81       |
| I am included in a lot of activities at UTC.          |     | 3.04       |

**Table 5: Perspectives on UTC Campus Life**

| How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about UTC? | n   | Mean Score |
|--|-----|------------|
| I worry about crime and violence at UTC.                                   | 283 | 2.85       |
| Students at UTC are often bullied or picked on.                            |     | 2.18       |
| Students at UTC help each other learn.                                     |     | 3.73       |
| Students at UTC don't get along very well.                                 |     | 2.12       |
| Students at UTC treat each other with respect.                             |     | 3.70       |
| I feel like a real part of UTC.  |     | 3.50       |

Together with feeling welcomed at UTC, students also feel safe on campus. Overall, students frequently reported feeling safe in all areas of UTC. Areas outside of UTC hold significantly lower scores in comparison (Table 6). Specifically, students reported feel neither safe nor unsafe in Chattanooga.

**Table 6: Safety at UTC**

| How safe do you feel...         | n   | Mean Score |
|---------------------------------|-----|------------|
| In the hallways of UTC          | 283 | 4.50       |
| in the bathrooms of UTC         |     | 4.49       |
| Outside UTC                     |     | 3.62       |
| In Chattanooga                  |     | 3.17       |
| Travelling between home and UTC |     | 4.00       |
| In your classes                 |     | 4.64       |

Mental health issues, especially anxiety and stress, were the most frequent and impactful impediments to academic success for Fall 2021 (Table 7). Respondents scored these issues as a moderate impact on average. External issues, such as family and work responsibilities and financial problems, were reported with less than moderate impacts.

**Table 7: Impacts on Academic Success**

| To what extent did the following impact your academic success this semester? | n   | Mean Score |
|--|-----|------------|
| Family Responsibilities  | 285 | 2.68       |
| Work Responsibilities  |     | 2.69       |
| Financial Problems   |     | 2.80       |
| Physical Health Issues   |     | 2.10       |
| Mental Health Issues   |     | 3.11       |
| Anxiety/Stress   |     | 3.53       |
| Other Responsibilities   |     | 1.92       |

## Conclusion

Overall, UTC is shown to be a welcoming and safe campus for students. Based on scores reported, this seems to be due to students can connecting with and supporting each other. The lower scores for connections to one’s residence hall floor suggests that the overall feelings of student connection may be more related to other students within one’s degree program. Further research is recommended to determine which residence hall(s) are most impacted by this and what can be done to encourage inclusivity.

Secondly, there were several lower scores in relation to feeling like a part of campus life. Students, on average, neither agreed nor disagreed on being included in UTC activities and less than somewhat agreed that they felt like a part of UTC. More feedback would be useful to find the cause of disengagement and what can be done so all students can feel like an integral part of our campus.