

Mapping UCSD Zones

Exploring the Impact of Campus Environment on Student Health

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Introduction

- “Blue zones” are regions around the world where residents have a better overall health status depending on their surrounding environment.
- Recognizing the significant influence of campus environments on student health, we notice that each college campus has unique factors that may either facilitate or impede the establishment of a health-promoting environment.
- Campus environments impact health through factors like location and available resources such as dining halls, markets, and physical facilities.

Objective

- This study aims to dissect how different zones on campus influence students’ self-identifying health through dietary and physical habits.

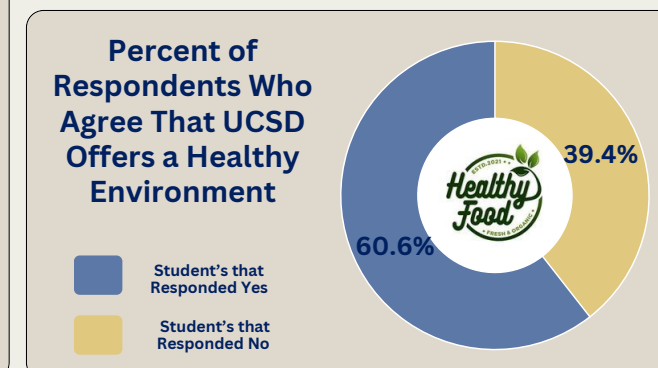
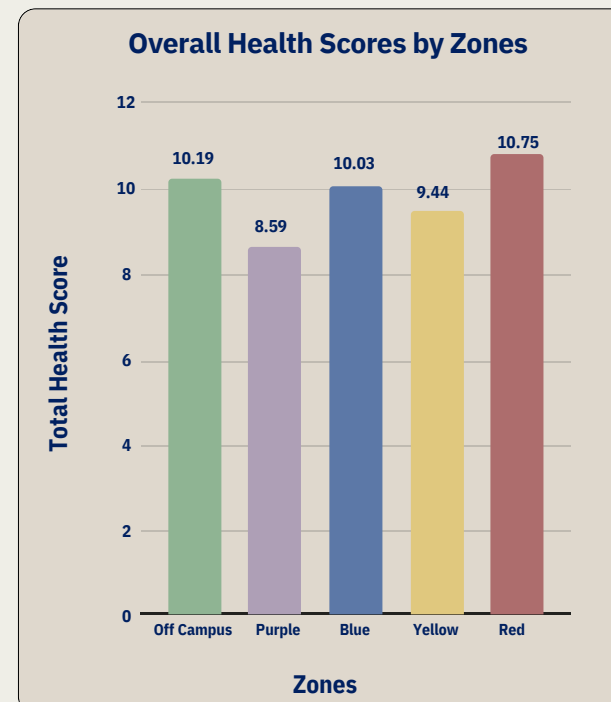
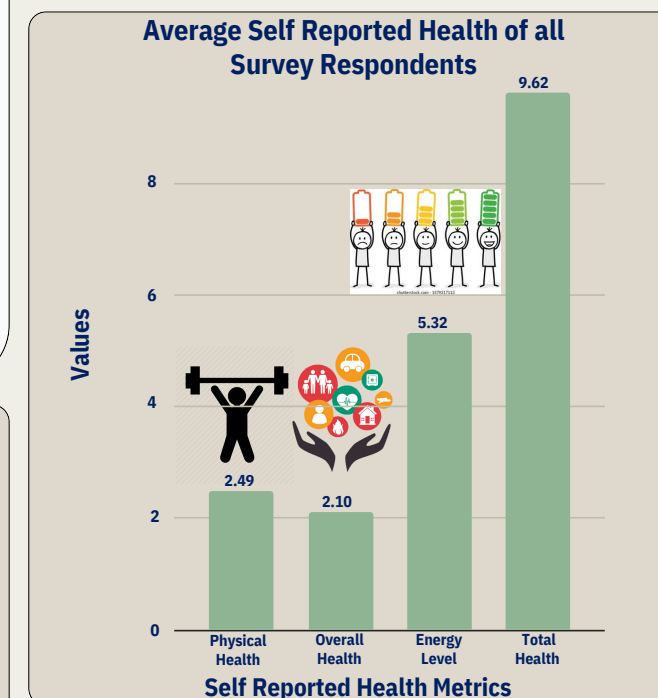
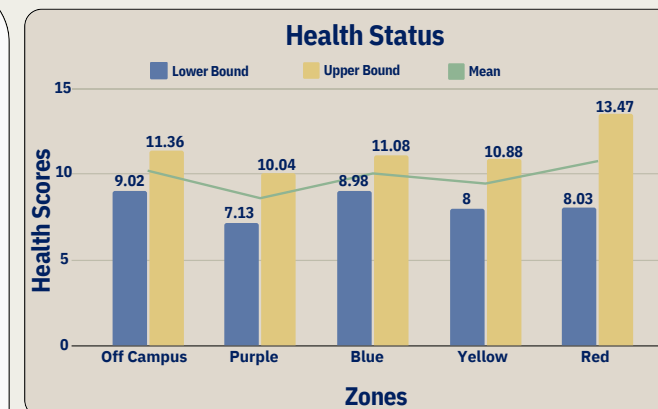
Methods

- We conducted an anonymous online survey using Qualtrics, reaching students via email, social media, and campus flyers, gathering data from 115 participants.
- The survey comprised three sections: demographics, exposures, and outcomes, aiming to identify associations between the environment and students.
- We utilized statistical analyses, to explore associations between campus environment and students’ self-perceived health.

Survey Details

- Total Respondents: N = 73 (students living on campus)
- Average Total Health Score: 9.62 (range: 1-18)
- Minimum Score: 3
- Maximum Score: 17

Results



Limitations

- Limited number of responses resulted in a lack of accurate representation of the school’s population.
- Most students don’t spend time or eat on campus, which led to a skew in our data.
- Majority of the respondents did not eat or spend time on campus, so were excluded from analysis.

Policy Implications

UCSD's food policy falls short of student health priorities. We suggest that the university:

- Implement policies that enforce nutritional guidelines for campus food vendors.
- Implement a “healthy meal” program to subsidize the cost of healthier options by making it more affordable and accessible.
- Mandate school certifications for nutritious, diverse, and balanced campus meals.

Conclusion

- No statistical significance was found in health scores based on student activity zones.
- Lack of significant difference observed in physical health or overall energy levels amongst students.
- Association between food consumed at UCSD and self-perceived health suggested, more students prefer off-campus or self-prepared food over on-campus options.
- Further research needed to accurately reflect the student body’s eating habits and their impact on perceived health.