

Coronavirus Higher Education Industry Briefing: April 3

Provided by Campus Sonar—a higher education social listening agency

Overview

Social Listening Is

The process of finding and analyzing publicly available online conversation. Common sources include social media, forums, blogs, and news sites.

Coronavirus + Higher Education

This analysis draws from 438,000 online conversations in the United States and on Reddit and YouTube (which span beyond the U.S.) about the coronavirus and the higher education industry. We're not searching for conversations about specific campuses.

Analysis Period

We analyzed three days of conversation:
March 31–April 2 (based on EDT).

This analysis does not include Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, or private social profiles.

Online Conversation Summary

How We Categorize Conversation

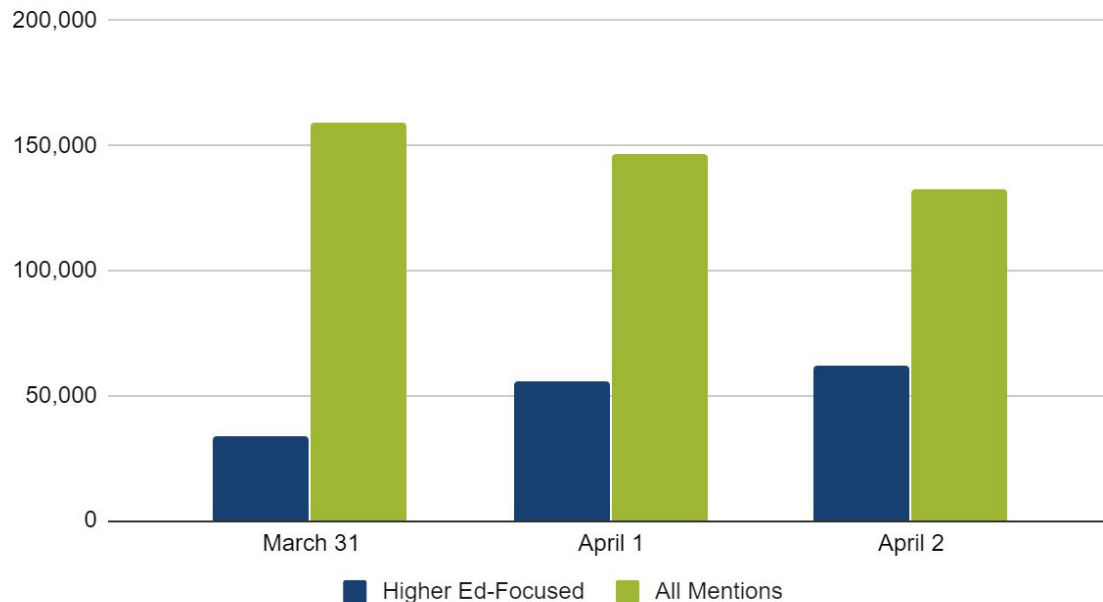
All Mentions

Captures every online mention that includes terms related to coronavirus AND the higher education industry. Higher ed may be just a small part of the mention (e.g., a news story discussing the impact of the coronavirus in a metro area with a mention of campuses that closed).

Higher Ed-Focused Mentions

A subset of All Mentions. It captures when a campus or the industry is the focus of a mention about coronavirus (e.g., a headline of a news article or in a social media post).

Conversation By Higher Ed Focus



Volume Continued Slight Decrease

There were ~438,000 mentions during the three-day period of March 31–April 2.

Conversation decreased 9% compared to the March 24–26 Briefing, one week earlier.

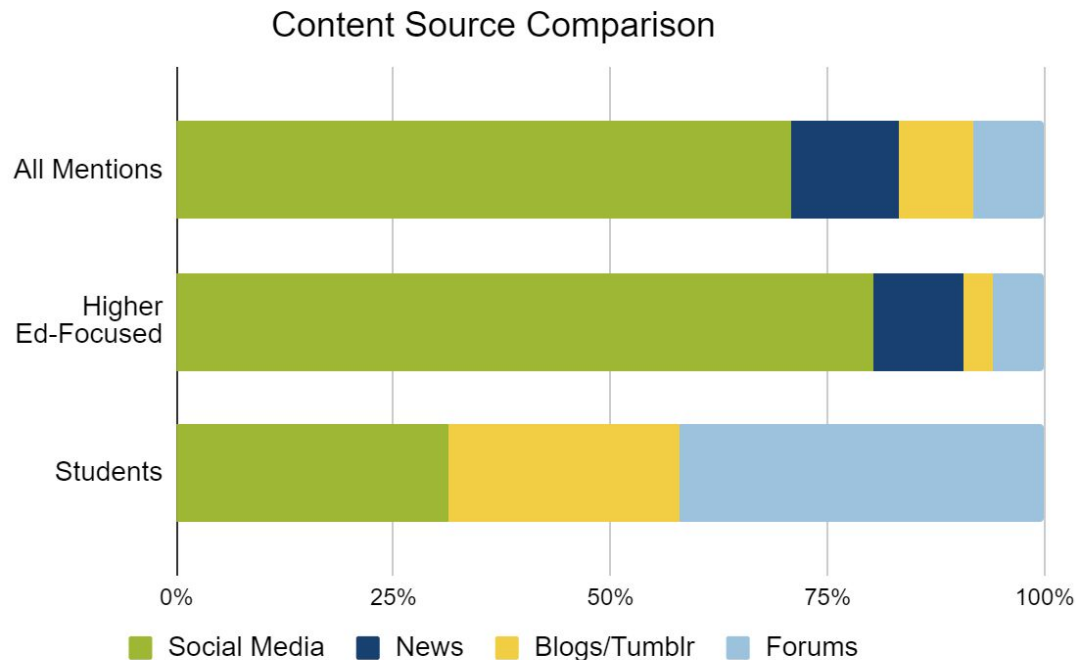
35% of all mentions were higher ed-focused.

Higher Ed-Focused News Coverage Increased

80% of higher ed-focused conversation was on social media.

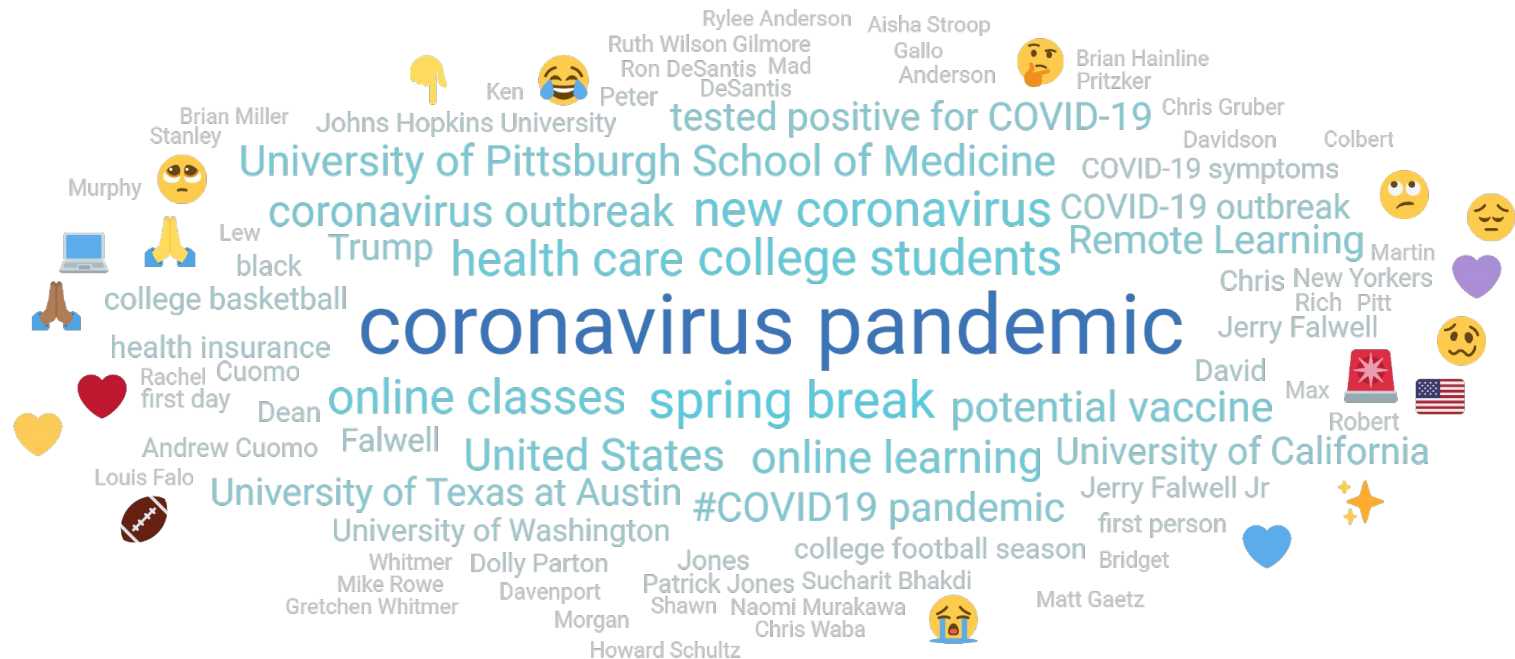
10% of higher ed-focused conversation was in the news—the highest it's been since our first Briefing.

42% of student conversation is on forums, followed by social media (mostly Twitter), and Tumblr.



*Due to data access restrictions in this analysis, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, and TikTok aren't included. Your campus social media manager is the best source of information regarding conversation on those networks.

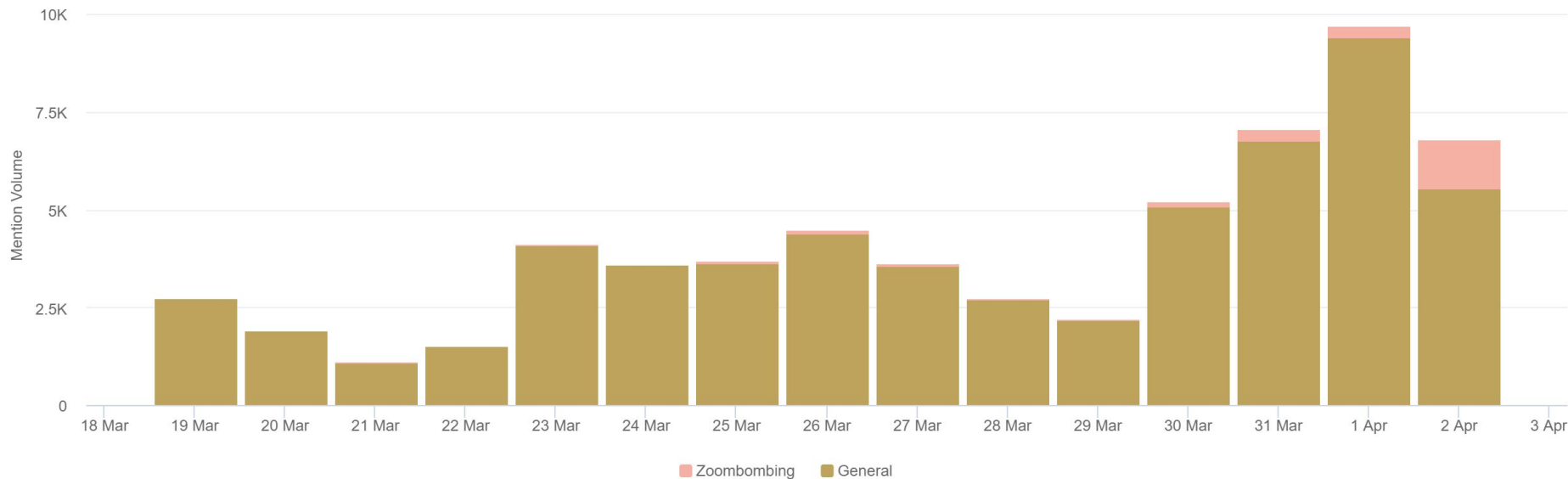
Institutions Appear in Higher Ed-Focused Topic Trends



0 2088 4175 6263 8350

Total mentions

Discussion of Zoombombing Begins

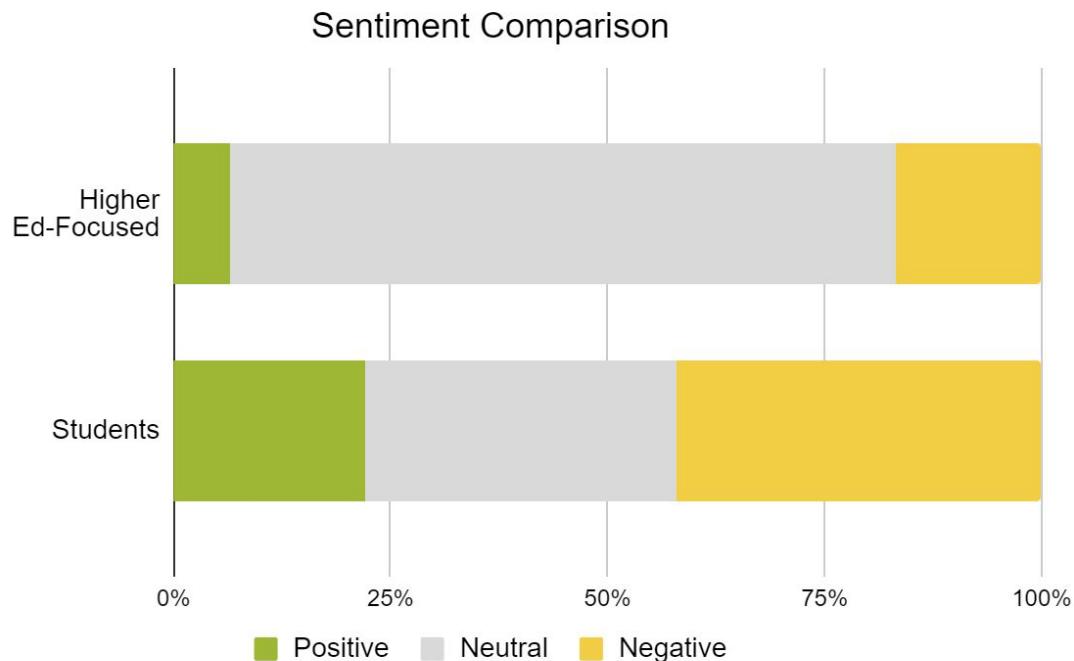


Neutral Sentiment Increased

17% of higher ed-focused conversation was negative. 77% was neutral. This is much more neutral conversation than we've seen in prior Briefings.

42% of student conversation is negative. 22% is positive.

Students were more likely to have either negative or positive conversation (fewer neutral).



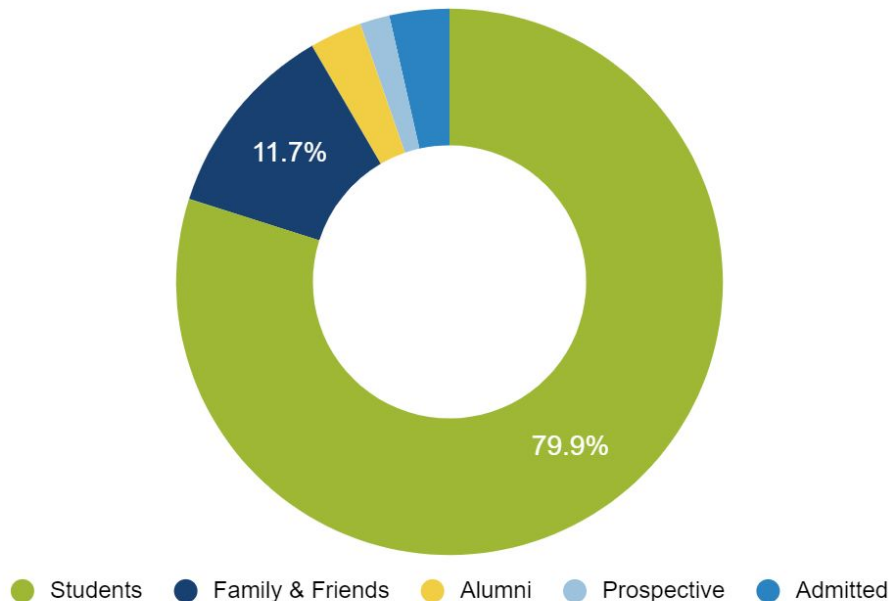
Audience Segmentation

What Current and Admitted Students Are Saying

Hidden Voices

- A small portion of the online conversation about the coronavirus and higher education is first-person accounts from individuals who reveal an affiliation with the campus community in their message (students, family/friends, prospects, admits, alumni).
- Without proper segmentation, these lived experiences can be missed amongst news headlines and commentary.
- We analyzed the mentions from this audience (3% of higher ed-focused conversation March 31–April 2) to identify themes that provide insight into the thoughts and feelings of campus community members. Use this analysis to inform your communication and service delivery.

First-Person Conversation By Audience



Admitted Students Start to Speak Up

80% of the first-person conversation we identified was from students and 3.5% was from admitted students

In addition to common admitted student themes, questions specific to the pandemic started to surface.

n=4,520

Admitted Student Questions

In addition to standard admitted student questions, we also saw:

- How to choose between very different offers if they've only visited one campus.
- How to choose between multiple offers from elite programs without visiting any of them.
- If orientation will be canceled, and how that will affect their ability to find roommates or register for classes.
- If international students who applied to “need aware” U.S. institutions could consider applying for aid now that COVID-19 changed their family's ability to pay.
- If acceptances will be rescinded because of unexpected changes to senior year grades.
- If accepted students should defer enrollment to ensure they won't have to take online courses.

Summary

- Conversation continued to decrease slightly compared to last week.
- Higher ed-focused news was more common than it was the last two weeks. Social media remained the largest conversation source, although students were more likely to share personal experiences on Reddit.
- Specific campuses rose to the top topics of higher ed-focused conversation.
- Student conversation themes mirrored what we've seen in prior weeks.
- Admitted students started to ask for input on admissions decisions, considering factors that weren't an issue before the pandemic.

Who is Campus Sonar?

We're a social listening agency dedicated to higher education.

We find and analyze online conversation, providing insights

that you can use to better understand your brand, audience, or a topic of conversation

So that you can manage your reputation, build *meaningful* relationships, and work more strategically.

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