

Coronavirus Higher Education Industry Briefing: March 17

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 almost 984,000 online conversations in the United States and on Reddit (which spans 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 four days of conversation: March 13–16 (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 (i.e., a headline of a news article or in a social media post).

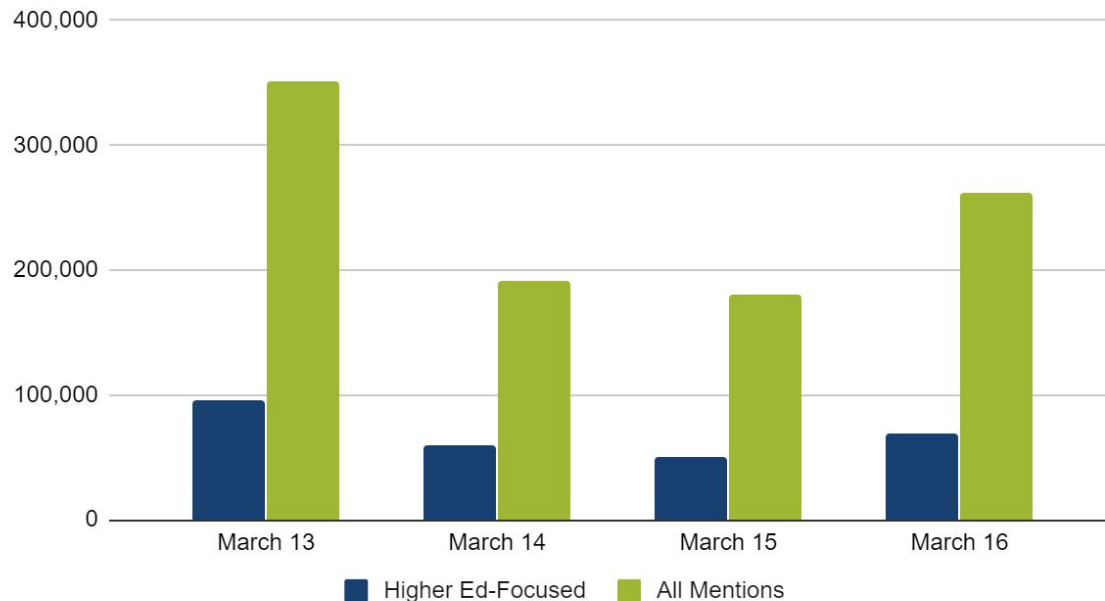
Conversation Volume Settles

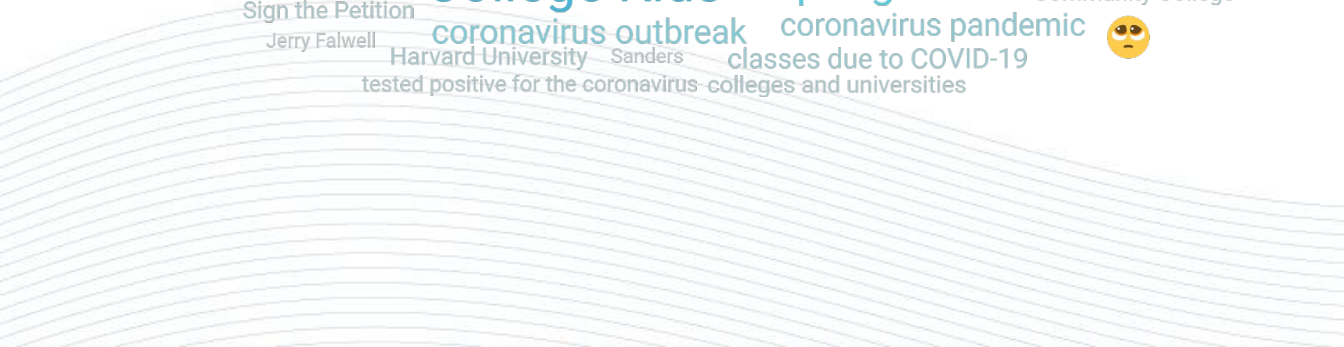
While overall volume was lower than the week when closing announcements were made, there were still close to a million online mentions in the last four days.

We expect to be able to identify more conversation in the next Briefing as we alter our query to capture emerging slang.

28% of all mentions are higher ed-focused.

Conversation By Higher Ed Focus

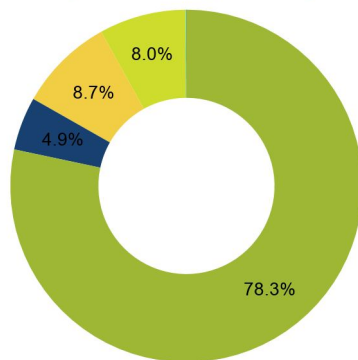




People were also talking about social distancing practices on campus and with students who've left campus.

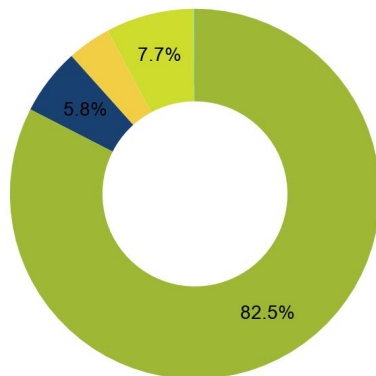
Content Sources: All Mentions

● Social Media ● News ● Blogs/Tumblr ● Forums ● Reviews ● 4Chan/8Chan



Content Sources: Higher Ed-Focused

● Social Media ● News ● Blogs/Tumblr ● Forums ● Reviews ● 4Chan/8Chan



Social Dominated All Conversation

There was very little difference between content sources in All Mentions and Higher Ed-Focused.

33.5% of all news mentioning the coronavirus and higher education was higher ed-focused.

Audience Segmentation

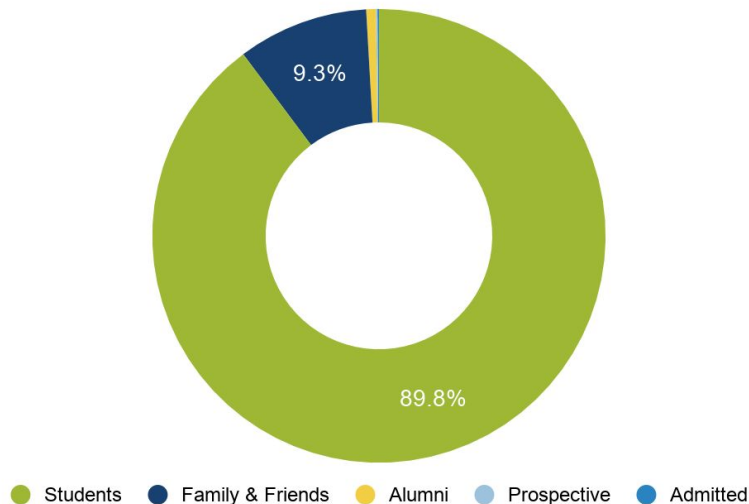
What are high-priority higher education audiences saying?

Hidden Voices

- A small portion of the online conversation about 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 (9% of higher ed-focused conversation March 13–16) 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.

Students Had the Most to Say

First-Person Conversation By Audience

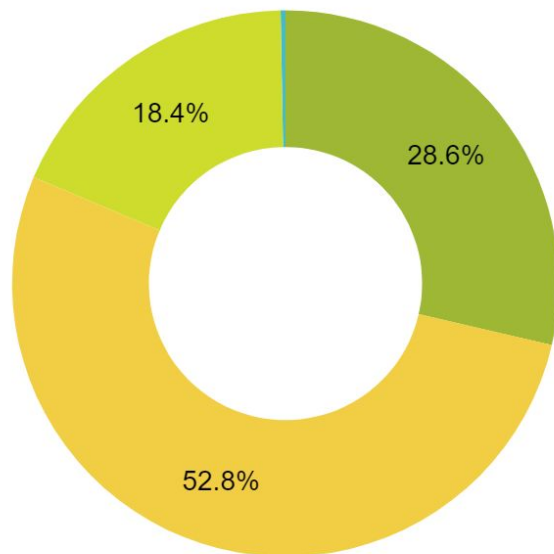


n=24,576

*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.

Content Sources: Student Conversation

● Social Media ● Blogs/Tumblr ● Forums ● 4Chan/8Chan



Students Took to Tumblr

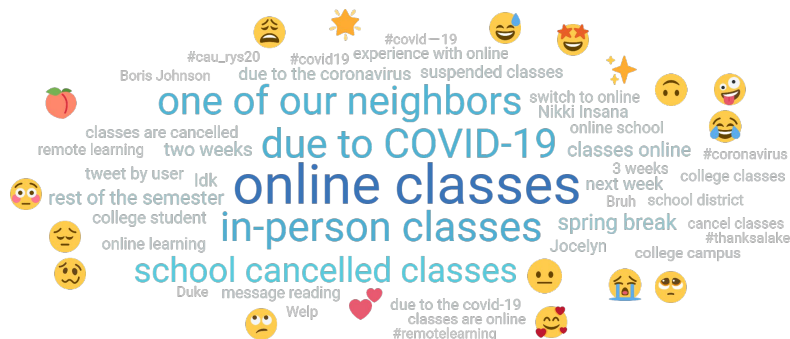
Students shared quick thoughts to Tumblr that were liked and reblogged quickly, spreading information, misinformation, and first-person experiences.

Of tweets, 40% were original posts, 44% were retweets, and 16% were replies.

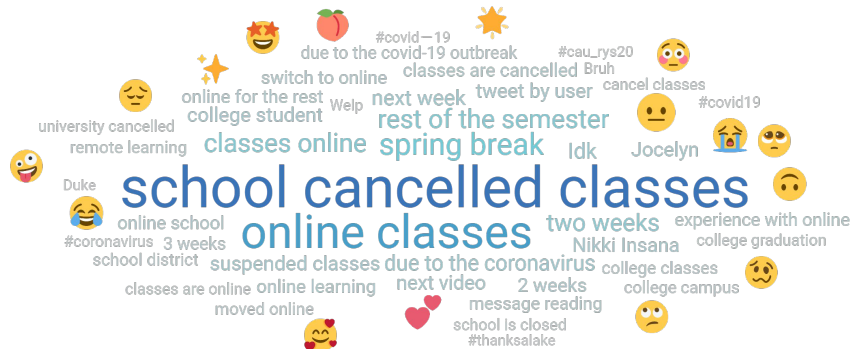
n = 22,064

Students Expressed a Variety of Emotions, Spread Information and Misinformation

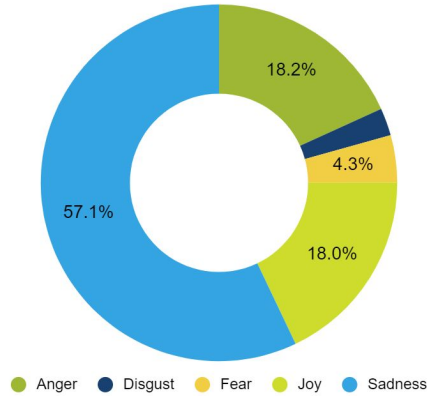
All Students



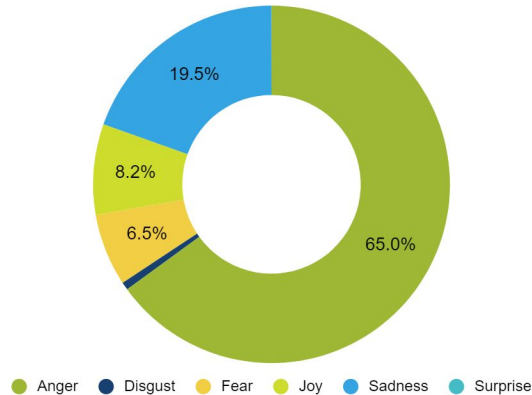
Excluding F1 Visa Tumblr Post



Family and Friend Emotions



Student Emotions



Family Grieved Lost Milestones

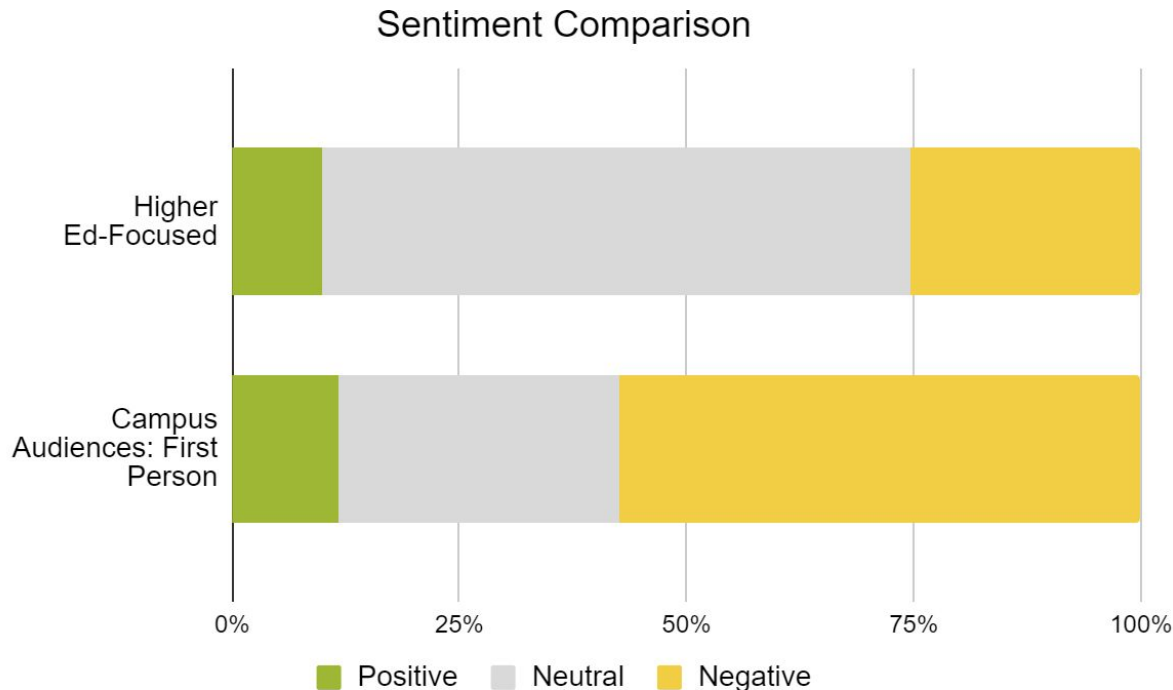
Anger and sadness remained predominant emotions for students and their family/friends.

Students became more angry while family members expressed grief for their children missing milestone moments.

Admitted Students Worried About Making Decisions Without College Visits

- While we're not finding nearly as much conversation from admitted students as current students, the theme is clear: how will they know what college is right for them?
- Some of the advice they're receiving online from peers:
 - Just use college guides and campus websites to make your decision; the "feeling" you have on a campus visit doesn't matter.
 - Rely on online forums dedicated to those colleges.
 - Watch the "day in the life" videos from YouTubers on the campuses you've been admitted to.
 - Choose the campus that responds best to the coronavirus.

People with Campus Connections Were More Negative than General Higher Ed Conversation



Summary

- Conversation volume may be stabilizing, but it's a “new normal” of increased conversation about the coronavirus and related operational changes.
- Social media remains a dominant conversation source, with online learning and coronavirus testing as popular topics. Social distancing also emerged as a conversation topic.
- Students spread information (and misinformation) through their social networks, including on Tumblr.
- Admitted students worried about how to make decisions without campus visits.
- Parents grieved the loss of their children's milestone experiences.

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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