

Coronavirus Higher Education Industry Briefing: March 20

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 610,000 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 17-19 (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 Remained Elevated

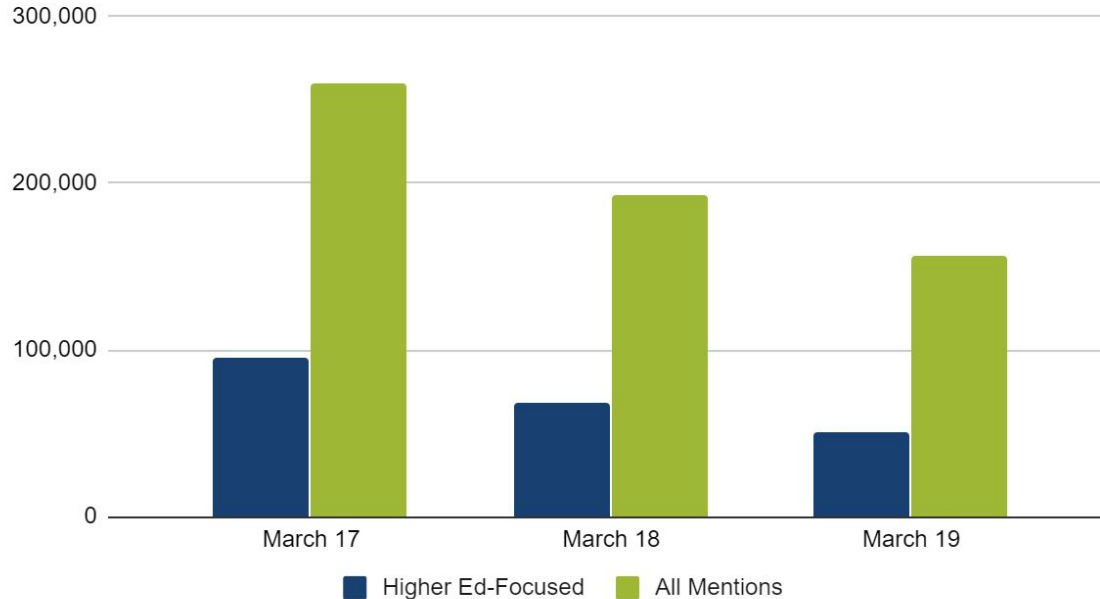
There were ~610,000 mentions during the three-day period of March 17–19.

Daily conversation volume is similar to March 13–16.

Tuesday was the peak; this could change as more commencement decisions are announced Friday.

35% of all mentions were higher ed-focused.

Conversation By Higher Ed Focus

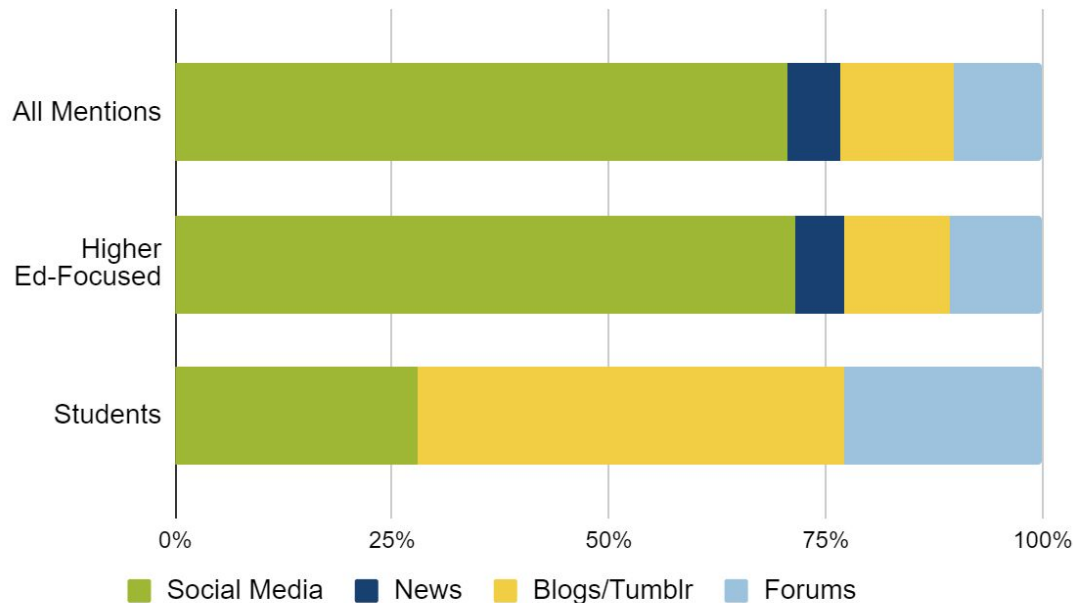


Conversation Sources Have Shifted

General conversation has shifted slightly from social media to blogs/Tumblr and forums (including Reddit).

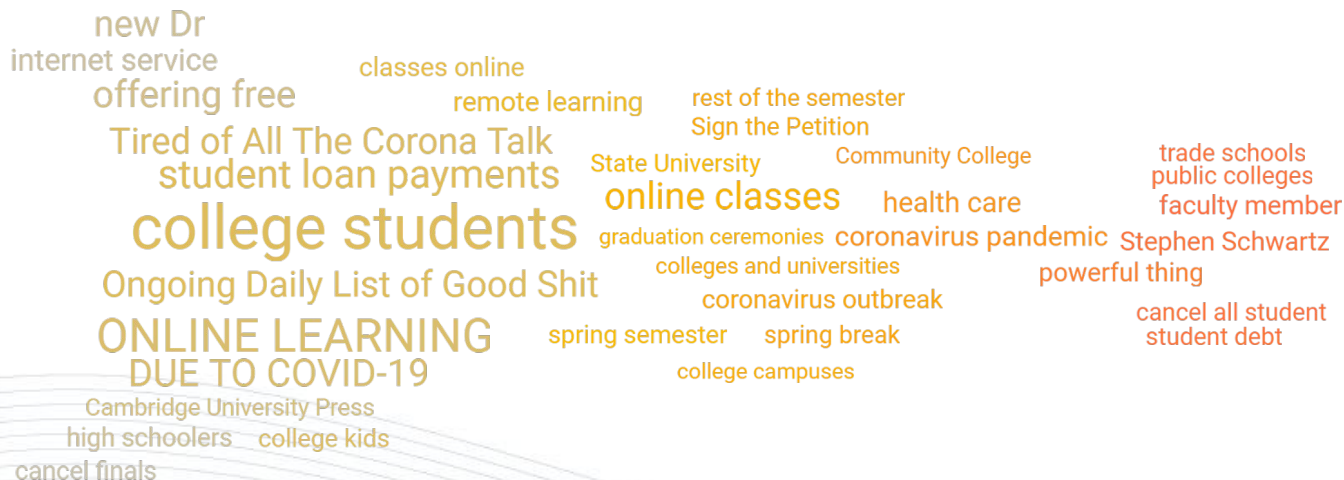
The shift for students was more pronounced. 49% of student mentions were on blogs/Tumblr, 28% were on social media, and 23% were on forums.

Content Source Comparison



*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.

Topics Evolved Throughout the Week



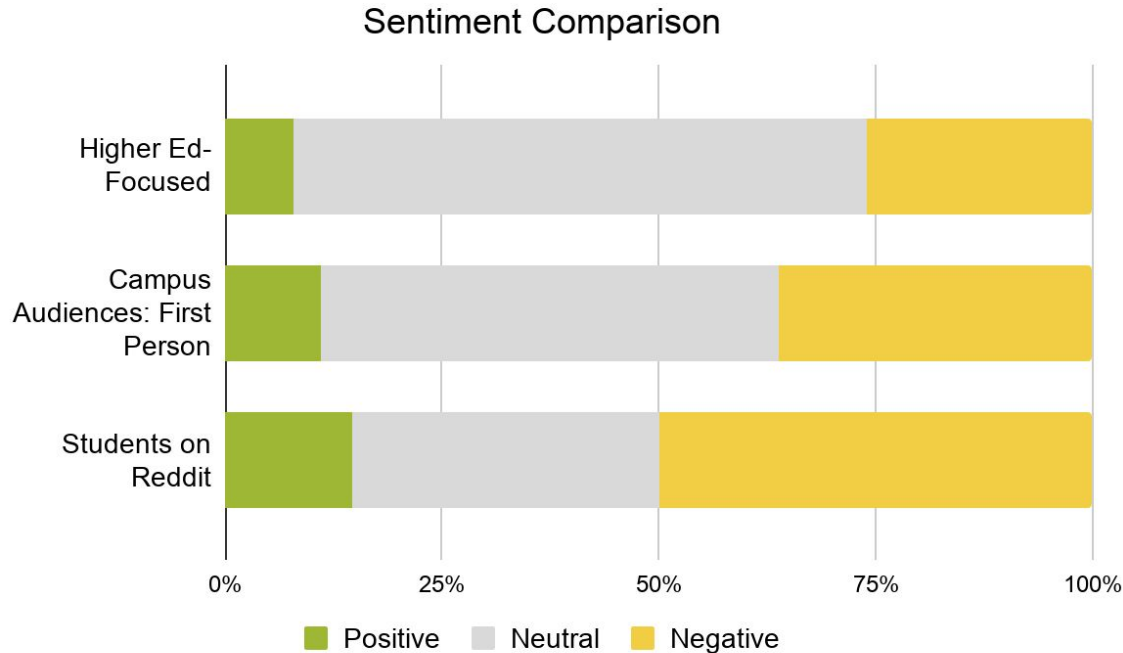
Fading

Trending

*Topics are for Higher Ed-Focused conversation

[@campussonar](https://campussonar.com) • 7

Personal Mentions More Negative



Negative sentiment increases as mentions are more personal in nature.

Higher ed-focused mentions are 26% negative.

First-person mentions from campus audiences are 36% negative.

Student mentions on Reddit are 50% negative.

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 student mentions (6.4% of higher ed-focused conversation March 17–19) 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.

EDUCATION

I'm a Senior at Howard University Leaving Campus Because of the Coronavirus. Here's What That Looks Like



Brianna N

Tuesday 12:30PM • Filed to: CORONAVIRUS

College Students Reflect on COVID-19

March 19, 2020 // by Kimberly Hurd // Leave a Comment



34 SHARES

One week ago, college students started [getting word that COVID-19](#) may not just hit you like a "glorified flu." What on the surface looked like an extended spring break abruptly turned into us all not knowing when we get the chance to return to our universities next.

WE INTERVIEWED COLLEGE STUDENTS NATIONWIDE TO SEE HOW THEY COPE WITH ALL OF THE CHANGES.

March 17, 2020 8:00 AM

COVID-19 Cut Short My Senior Year

One Rhodes College student's reflections on this moment — and what comes next.

by Matthew Harris

Media Published First-Person Narratives

The disruption students are experiencing in their college experience is unprecedented, and the media is interested in publishing their stories.

They've appeared in both local and national news outlets.

The New York Times called for a senior to write an Op Ed.

Student Insights from Reddit

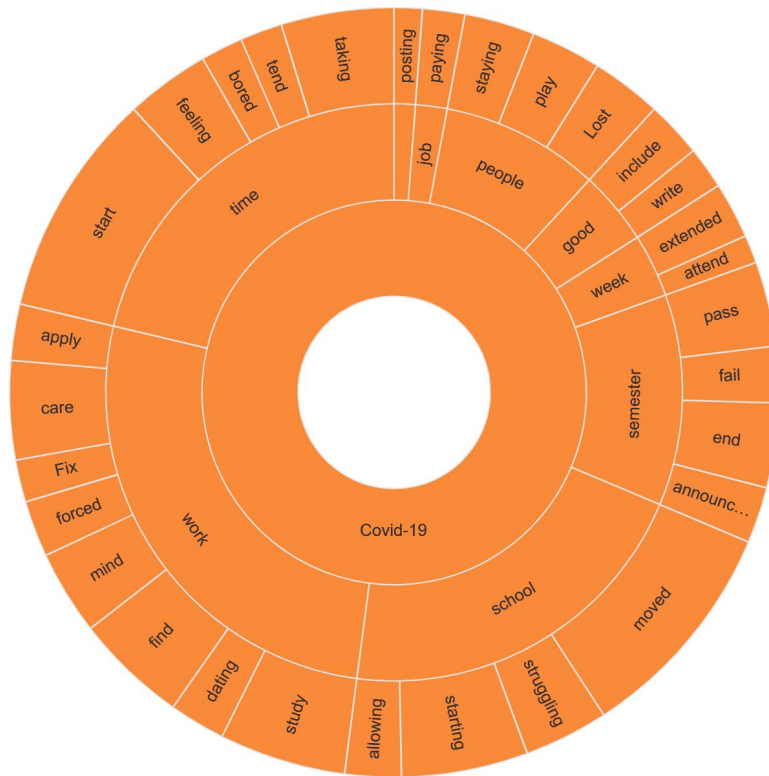
Almost 3,000 student Reddit posts March 17–19.

Students discussed the impact the pandemic response has had on their entire lives, mentioning time, school, work, and people—in that order.

Students struggled with important decisions they're being asked to make right now.

n = 2,860

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Students Had Questions About Online Classes

Many students will be starting online classes in the next week or two after an extended spring break. Some questions they're asking on Reddit:

- How will I be able to focus since my environment drastically changed?
- Should I still ask my professors questions?
- How will I take my next sequence of courses? What if I don't do well in the prerequisite courses I'm in now?
- Should I switch my classes to pass/fail? Will that hurt my chances of grad school admission?
- Should I just withdraw from my classes?

Students used social media to share medical information or seek advice

20F - my roommate came home from a road trip.. with COVID? **Suspected Case** (self.COVID19_Testimonials)

submitted 21 hours ago by natxnat

My college roommate went on a road trip this weekend and just came home yesterday. She was on the couch all day sleeping and complaining that her body hurt. She also felt a little hotter than me, but we didn't have a thermometer so we didn't know her exact temperature.

Last night she was all wrapped up in multiple blankets with the heater on saying she was experiencing chills.

This morning I woke up and she coughed once.

I am really scared I have it too now. Should we not leave the house or does it just sound like a cold/the normal flu? Should I self-quarantine?

6 comments share save hide report



Julia
@JuliaBuscaglia

I am a 20-year old who has tested positive for COVID-19.

I was not going to share my story, but now that I see others are reporting very different symptoms than mine I feel it's important to tell everyone my experience.

11:53 AM · Mar 19, 2020 · [Twitter for iPhone](#)

25.9K Retweets 50K Likes

Summary

- Conversation continued at an elevated level. Some shifted to blogs/Tumblr and forums—especially when students were posting. Social media remained dominant.
- Topics are varied and include remote learning/online courses, cancellation of events like commencement, an early COVID19-caused death of a faculty member, and political responses.
- Negative sentiment is about as expected for a crisis at the industry level (26%). Negativity increases as mentions become more personal.
- Student voices started to be amplified in both traditional and social media; as they spend more time at home and react to graduation announcements, that may increase.

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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