

Coronavirus Higher Education Industry Briefing: May 12

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 409,000 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 seven days of conversation:
May 4–10 (based on EDT).

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

Online Conversation Summary

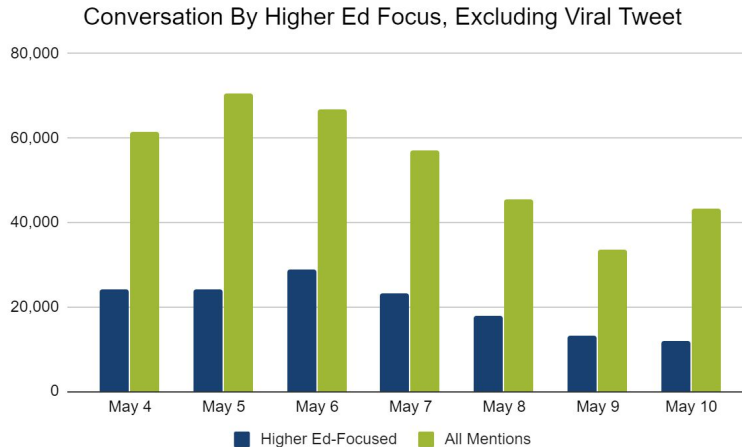
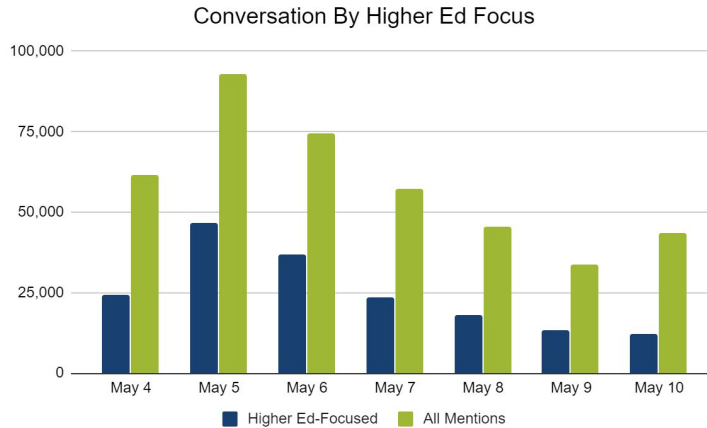
How We Categorize Conversation

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).



Volume Slightly Higher Because of Viral Tweet

There were ~409,000 mentions during the seven-day period of May 4-10.

Volume was overall about 9% higher than one week earlier (April 27-May 3), but just 1% higher when excluding the viral tweet (detailed on slide 8).

43% of all mentions were higher ed-focused.

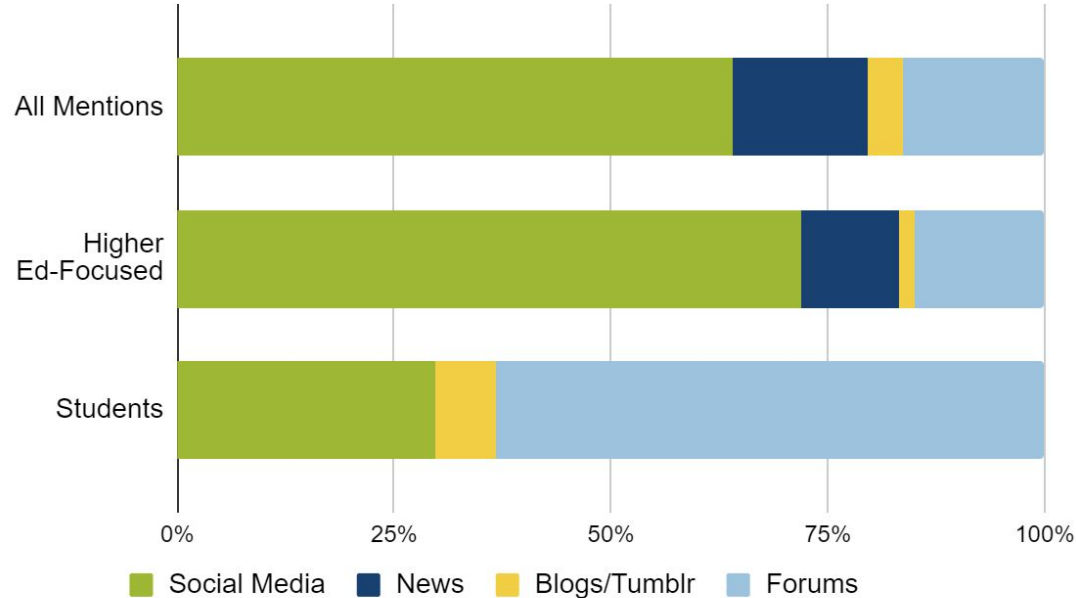
Content Sources Remained Consistent

Content source distribution for all mentions, higher ed-focused, and student conversation was similar to last week.

While social media dominated the sources for all mentions (64%) and higher ed-focused mentions (72%) followed by forums and news, student conversation was identified most frequently on forums (63%) followed by social media and blogs/Tumblr.

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Content Source Comparison

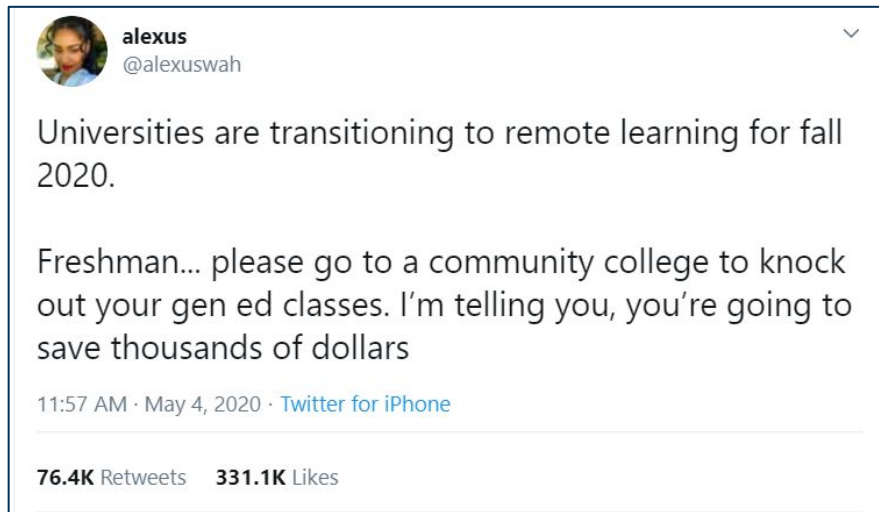


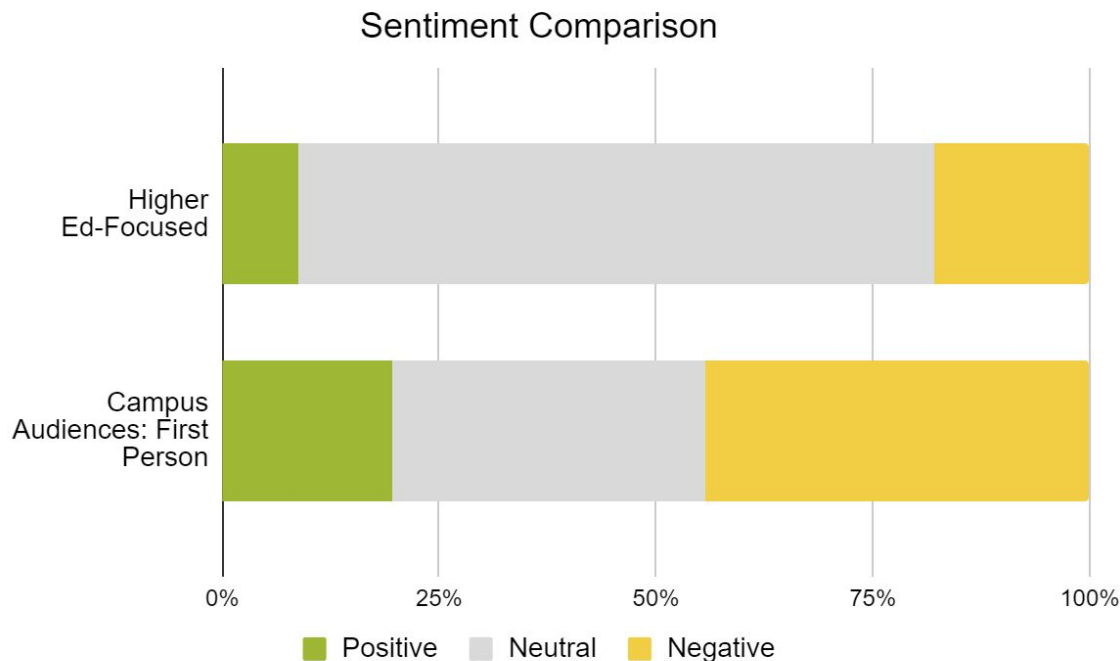
*Due to data access restrictions in this analysis, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, and TikTok aren't included. Your campus social media manager is the best source of information regarding conversation on those networks.



Viral Tweet Promoting Community College

- For the second week in a row, a viral tweet put “community college” in our top topics.
- With over 400,000 engagements, this tweet was responsible for 30,750 mentions in our dataset.
- Without it, “community college” wouldn’t be on the top ten topics.





Sentiment Shifted Slightly More Negative

Higher Ed-Focused

- 9% Positive
- 73% Neutral
- 18% Negative

Campus Audiences

- 20% Positive
- 36% Neutral
- 44% Negative

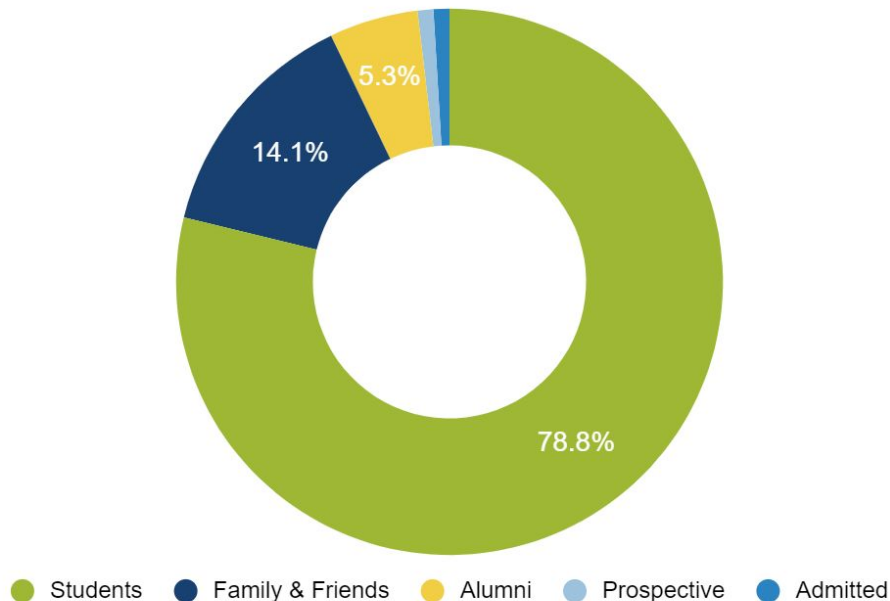
Audience Segmentation

What High-Priority Higher Education Audiences 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 May 4–10) 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



Students Were the Dominant Voice

79% of all first-person conversation we identified was from students, followed by 14% from parents.

5% was from alumni; many of these were new alumni who graduated last week.

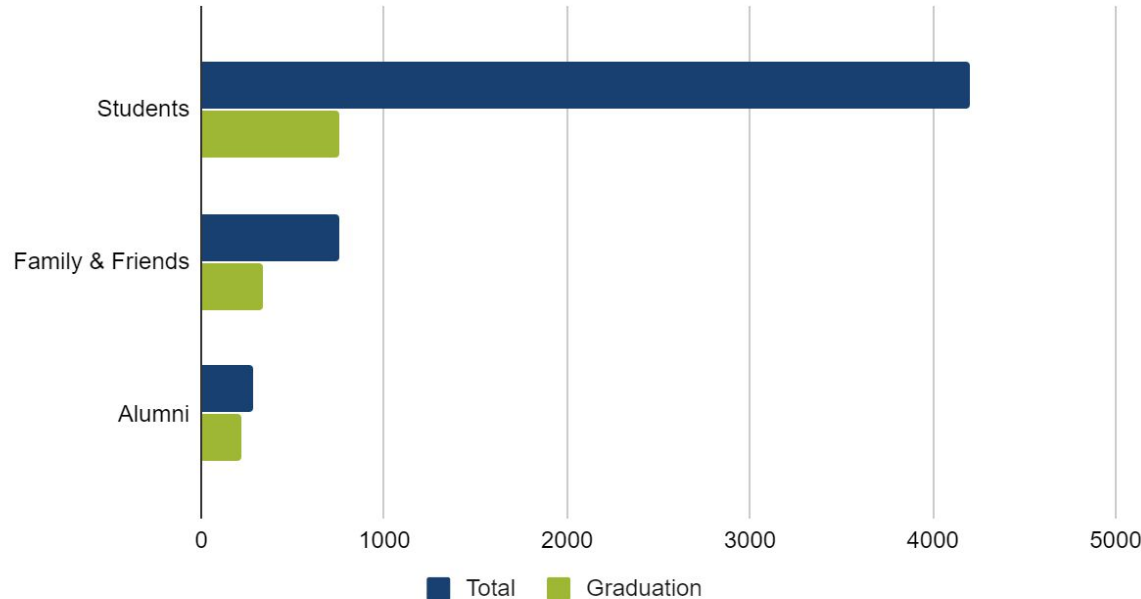
Online Graduation Celebrations

Alumni were the most likely to talk about graduation (79%) followed by family and friends (45%) and students (18%).

Students were more likely to discuss other topics, including conflicts at home, mental health, classes, and jobs.

When alumni and family and friends discussed graduation, 49% of posts expressed sadness; 42% expressed joy. [sonar • 13](#)

First-Person Conversation by Topic



Summary

- Conversation increased 9% compared to last week, although only 1% after excluding a viral tweet. 43% of all mentions were higher ed-focused (38% after excluding the viral tweet).
- Compared to last week, where the conversation happens online remained remarkably consistent for all mentions, higher ed-focused mentions, and student mentions.
- Community college was once again a top topic of higher ed-focused mentions thanks to a viral tweet. Other unique, popular topics included “New York” and references to Arizona State University and the state’s public health department.
- Graduation was discussed more often by alumni (including graduates) and family and friends. Mentions from both groups were slightly more sad than joyful.

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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