

Southwest Texas Junior College

Student Financial Wellness Survey

Preview Report for Texas Pathways Institute Participants Fall 2018 Semester

The Student Financial Wellness Survey (SFWS) was designed and implemented by Trellis Research, a department within Trellis Company (formerly TG, trelliscompany.org). Trellis Company (Trellis) is a nonprofit organization that supports students, families, institutions, and communities through research, outreach, student loan administration, and philanthropy programs. The SFWS is a self-reported, online survey that seeks to document the financial well-being and student success indicators of post-secondary students across the nation. All participating institutions receive a school-level report of findings with comparison response groups from their sector.

Southwest Texas Junior College participated in the Fall 2018 implementation of Trellis' Student Financial Wellness Survey (SFWS). The survey was open beginning September 24, 2018 and closed on October 15, 2018. This short report previews findings and presents response frequencies for the Fall 2018 question set in time for the Texas Success Center's Texas Pathways Institute convening. A full report with analysis of survey responses and cross tabulations – that includes graphs, charts, and implications of findings – will be provided in January 2019. All comparison groups come from aggregate data from all Texas Community Colleges participating in the Fall 2018 SFWS. Values presented in this report are rounded, and the sum of response frequencies from rounded figures may not equal one hundred percent.

Comments and requests for additional information regarding this report or any of Trellis' other publications are welcome. Please direct questions to:

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Survey Metrics for Southwest Texas Junior College	
Survey Population	4,009 students
Responses	299 students
Response Rate	7.5%
Completion Rate	86%
Median Time Spent	15 minutes

Executive Summary

There is growing recognition that the interplay of student collegiate finances and academic performance influences key student outcomes like retention and graduation. Students experiencing high levels of stress related to finances and meeting basic needs may struggle to reach their academic potential. More and more colleges want to better understand the state of financial wellness of their students to pin a baseline for comparison after implementing various initiatives such as providing financial education, emergency grants, and referring students to public assistance programs, food pantries and coordinated carpools. The following are key findings from the Fall 2018 SFWS implementation at Southwest Texas Junior College to accompany this preview report. A full report of findings from the Fall 2018 semester will be provided in January 2019.

Key Findings: Student Financial Security

- Many students worry about paying for college. More than half of respondents (61 percent) agreed or strongly agreed that they worry about having enough money to pay for school. **Q52**
- Many students lacked a plan for paying for their next semester. Nineteen percent of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that they knew how they would pay for college next semester. **Q53**
- Students' finances appear precarious, susceptible to unexpected expenses. Three-quarters of respondents indicated they would have trouble getting \$500 in cash or credit in case of an emergency. **Q45**
- Students worry about on-going expenses. More than half of respondents (54 percent) worry to some degree about paying for their current monthly expenses. **Q51**
- More than three-quarters of respondents (83 percent) reported running out of money at least once in the past 12 months. More ominously, 46 percent reported running out of money five or more times. **Q46**
- Half of respondents reported that it is important that they support their family financially while in college. More than a quarter of respondents (28 percent) provide financial support for a child or children while in school, and 23 percent provide financial support for their parent(s) or guardian(s). **Q54, Q42, Q43**

Key Findings: Student Perceptions of Institutional Support

- Faculty level of empathy towards students' financial challenges ranges across a spectrum. Almost half of respondents (49 percent) agreed or strongly agreed that their school's faculty understand their financial situation, 19 percent disagreed or strongly disagreed. **Q4**
- More than a third of respondents (46 percent) agreed or strongly agreed their school actively works to reduce the financial challenges they face, 18 percent disagreed or strongly disagreed. **Q5**
- Almost two-thirds of respondents (65 percent) believe their institution works to make tuition more affordable for them. Many believe they make required class supplies (48 percent), food (41 percent), and transportation (34 percent) more affordable. **Q7, Q12, Q9, Q10**
- Textbooks are common items that students feel are too expensive. More than a third of respondents (47 percent) disagreed or strongly disagreed that their school works to make textbooks more affordable. **Q11**

Key Findings: Student Basic Needs Security

- Food insecurity is quite common among students. According to U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) methodology, more than half of respondents showed signs of either low food security (27 percent) or very low food security (29 percent) within 30 days prior to the survey. **Q77-82**
- More than a third of respondents (44 percent) showed signs of being housing insecure within the 12 months prior to the survey. **Q83-88**
- Eight percent of respondents indicated being homeless within the 12 months prior to the survey, and 16 percent were homeless and/or without a home temporarily staying with a relative, friend, or couch surfing. **Q89-98**

Key Findings: Paying for College and Student Debt

- More than half of respondents (56 percent) who reported having student loan debt agreed or strongly agreed that they had more student loan debt than they expected at this point. **Q69**
- More than half of respondents who reported having student loan debt were not at all confident (20 percent) or only somewhat confident (35 percent) that they would be able to pay off the debt acquired while they were a student. **Q70**
- Ten percent of respondents indicated borrowing a pay day loan at least once within the 12 months prior to the survey. Seven percent borrowed an auto title loan at least once within the 12 months prior to the survey. **Q61, Q62**

Response Frequencies

Q2: My school has the support services to help me address my financial situation.

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Strongly Agree	38%	31%
Agree	39%	40%
Neutral	14%	18%
Disagree	5%	6%
Strongly Disagree	3%	4%
	<i>n=299</i>	<i>n=10344</i>

Q3: My school is aware of the financial challenges I face.

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Strongly Agree	18%	15%
Agree	31%	27%
Neutral	30%	29%
Disagree	15%	19%
Strongly Disagree	7%	10%
	<i>n=298</i>	<i>n=10334</i>

Q4: The faculty at my school understands my financial situation.

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Strongly Agree	18%	14%
Agree	31%	26%
Neutral	32%	33%
Disagree	13%	18%
Strongly Disagree	6%	9%
	<i>n=297</i>	<i>n=10312</i>

Q5: My school actively works to reduce the financial challenges I face.

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Strongly Agree	17%	15%
Agree	29%	27%
Neutral	37%	34%
Disagree	12%	16%
Strongly Disagree	6%	8%
	<i>n=296</i>	<i>n=10285</i>

Q6: I would use financial support services (such as one-on-one coaching from a trained expert) if offered by my school.

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Strongly Agree	31%	29%
Agree	44%	41%
Neutral	18%	21%
Disagree	6%	6%
Strongly Disagree	1%	2%
	<i>n=298</i>	<i>n=10288</i>

Q7: Tuition - To what extent do you agree or disagree that your school makes the following items more affordable?

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Strongly Agree	23%	28%
Agree	42%	39%
Neutral	19%	20%
Disagree	11%	9%
Strongly Disagree	5%	4%
	<i>n=299</i>	<i>n=10331</i>

Q8: Housing - To what extent do you agree or disagree that your school makes the following items more affordable?

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Strongly Agree	10%	8%
Agree	21%	13%
Neutral	53%	63%
Disagree	10%	9%
Strongly Disagree	6%	6%
	<i>n=297</i>	<i>n=10273</i>

Q9: Food - To what extent do you agree or disagree that your school makes the following items more affordable?

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Strongly Agree	12%	12%
Agree	29%	25%
Neutral	41%	47%
Disagree	13%	11%
Strongly Disagree	5%	5%
	<i>n=297</i>	<i>n=10271</i>

Q10: Transportation - To what extent do you agree or disagree that your school makes the following items more affordable?

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Strongly Agree	10%	13%
Agree	24%	22%
Neutral	48%	52%
Disagree	10%	9%
Strongly Disagree	7%	5%
	<i>n=298</i>	<i>n=10246</i>

Q11: Textbooks - To what extent do you agree or disagree that your school makes the following items more affordable?

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Strongly Agree	14%	14%
Agree	20%	24%
Neutral	19%	20%
Disagree	28%	26%
Strongly Disagree	19%	16%
	<i>n=298</i>	<i>n=10304</i>

Q12: Required Class Supplies - To what extent do you agree or disagree that your school makes the following items more affordable?

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Strongly Agree	15%	16%
Agree	33%	33%
Neutral	31%	30%
Disagree	14%	14%
Strongly Disagree	8%	7%
	<i>n=296</i>	<i>n=10286</i>

Q13-Q18: During my time at school, I have spoken with the following individuals about my financial struggles. (Check all that apply)*

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Financial Aid Advisor	67%	55%
Academic Advisor	41%	38%
Financial Coach	3%	4%
Faculty Member	28%	22%
Student Affairs Staff	9%	6%
I Have Not Spoken With Any of These Individuals	24%	33%

**Percentage indicate respondents who chose at least one of the above choices*

Q19: My Parents - I am comfortable discussing my financial situation with the following people.

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Strongly Agree	58%	47%
Agree	25%	27%
Neutral	11%	13%
Disagree	3%	7%
Strongly Disagree	4%	7%
	<i>n=285</i>	<i>n=9953</i>

Q20: Other Family - I am comfortable discussing my financial situation with the following people.

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Strongly Agree	21%	20%
Agree	25%	28%
Neutral	29%	24%
Disagree	16%	18%
Strongly Disagree	9%	10%
	<i>n=285</i>	<i>n=9902</i>

Q21: Friends - I am comfortable discussing my financial situation with the following people.

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Strongly Agree	19%	17%
Agree	29%	32%
Neutral	30%	25%
Disagree	14%	17%
Strongly Disagree	9%	9%
	<i>n=286</i>	<i>n=9912</i>

Q22: School Staff - I am comfortable discussing my financial situation with the following people.

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Strongly Agree	14%	13%
Agree	29%	32%
Neutral	35%	32%
Disagree	16%	15%
Strongly Disagree	6%	7%
	<i>n=282</i>	<i>n=9903</i>

Q23: Faculty - I am comfortable discussing my financial situation with the following people.

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Strongly Agree	16%	12%
Agree	27%	30%
Neutral	33%	33%
Disagree	18%	17%
Strongly Disagree	7%	8%
	<i>n=283</i>	<i>n=9871</i>

Q24: Other Students (not friends) - I am comfortable discussing my financial situation with the following people.

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Strongly Agree	6%	6%
Agree	11%	11%
Neutral	29%	26%
Disagree	28%	30%
Strongly Disagree	27%	26%
	<i>n=283</i>	<i>n=9800</i>

Q25: How likely is it that you would recommend your school to a friend or family member?

	SWTJC	Texas CC
0 (Not at All Likely)	0%	1%
1	0%	0%
2	1%	0%
3	0%	1%
4	3%	2%
5	6%	6%
6	5%	6%
7	16%	12%
8	18%	18%
9	10%	12%
10 (Very Likely)	40%	42%
	<i>n=288</i>	<i>n=10010</i>

Q25: Net Promoter Score (NPS)* How likely is it that you would recommend your school to a friend or family member?

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Promoters (Score 9-10)	51%	54%
Passives (Score 7-8)	34%	29%
Detractors (Score 0-6)	15%	17%
Net Promoter Score (NPS)*	35.42	37.61
	<i>n=288</i>	<i>n=10010</i>

* A Net Promoter Score (NPS) is a research-based method to benchmark and compare customer satisfaction ratings across different services, businesses, and products. NPS uses a 0-10 scale. Those who score 9-10 are promoters, 7-8 are passives, and 0-6 are detractors. %Promoters - %Detractors = NPS. A positive NPS (>0) is generally considered good, with highest performers usually between 50 and 80.

Q26: Compared with others at my school, I would describe my financial situation as _____.

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Better	27%	24%
Worse	35%	28%
The Same	12%	15%
I Don't Know	27%	32%
	<i>n=281</i>	<i>n=9789</i>

Q27: My friends at school and I tell each other about our financial problems.

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Strongly Agree	9%	6%
Agree	24%	20%
Neutral	30%	25%
Disagree	20%	30%
Strongly Disagree	16%	20%
	<i>n=279</i>	<i>n=9830</i>

Q28: I feel that on average I work at my job more than my peers.

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Strongly Agree	10%	17%
Agree	19%	21%
Neutral	44%	36%
Disagree	19%	17%
Strongly Disagree	8%	8%
	<i>n=281</i>	<i>n=9815</i>

Q29: I feel that I have more financial challenges than my peers.

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Strongly Agree	11%	15%
Agree	23%	26%
Neutral	37%	34%
Disagree	22%	19%
Strongly Disagree	7%	6%
	<i>n=281</i>	<i>n=9826</i>

Q30: Do you work for pay?

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Yes	58%	66%
No	35%	29%
I Don't Know	7%	4%
	<i>n=275</i>	<i>n=9635</i>

Q31: Student Loan(s) I Have Taken Out for Myself - Do you use any of the following methods to pay for college?

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Yes	21%	34%
No	74%	63%
I Don't Know	5%	2%
	<i>n=268</i>	<i>n=9481</i>

Q32: Student Loan(s) My Parents Took Out - Do you use any of the following methods to pay for college?

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Yes	5%	4%
No	90%	93%
I Don't Know	5%	3%
	<i>n=264</i>	<i>n=9314</i>

Q33: Pell Grant and/or Other Grants - Do you use any of the following methods to pay for college?

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Yes	62%	63%
No	34%	34%
I Don't Know	4%	3%
	<i>n=271</i>	<i>n=9585</i>

Q34: Scholarships - Do you use any of the following methods to pay for college?

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Yes	31%	29%
No	64%	68%
I Don't Know	6%	3%
	<i>n=268</i>	<i>n=9417</i>

Q35: Current Employment - Do you use any of the following methods to pay for college?

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Yes	47%	56%
No	51%	42%
I Don't Know	2%	2%
	<i>n=269</i>	<i>n=9486</i>

Q36: Personal Savings - Do you use any of the following methods to pay for college?

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Yes	41%	48%
No	56%	50%
I Don't Know	3%	2%
	<i>n=267</i>	<i>n=9469</i>

Q37: Credit Cards - Do you use any of the following methods to pay for college?

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Yes	22%	30%
No	75%	68%
I Don't Know	3%	2%
	<i>n=265</i>	<i>n=9394</i>

Q38: Support From My Parents and/or Family - Do you use any of the following methods to pay for college?

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Yes	58%	43%
No	39%	56%
I Don't Know	3%	1%
	<i>n=269</i>	<i>n=9435</i>

Q39: Veteran's Benefits - Do you use any of the following methods to pay for college?

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Yes	5%	5%
No	93%	94%
I Don't Know	2%	1%
	<i>n=264</i>	<i>n=9333</i>

Q40: In the past 12 months, did you or someone on your behalf complete the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid)?

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Yes	88%	80%
No	10%	18%
I Don't Know	1%	2%
	<i>n=274</i>	<i>n=9683</i>

Q41: Your Spouse - Do you provide financial support for any of the following individuals?

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Yes	15%	17%
No	82%	81%
I Don't Know	3%	2%
	<i>n=268</i>	<i>n=9559</i>

Q42: A Child or Children - Do you provide financial support for any of the following individuals?

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Yes	28%	35%
No	70%	64%
I Don't Know	2%	1%
	<i>n=271</i>	<i>n=9617</i>

Q43: Your Parent(s) or Guardian(s) - Do you provide financial support for any of the following individuals?

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Yes	23%	18%
No	74%	80%
I Don't Know	3%	2%
	<i>n=265</i>	<i>n=9520</i>

Q44: Other Family Members - Do you provide financial support for any of the following individuals?

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Yes	11%	13%
No	88%	86%
I Don't Know	1%	1%
	<i>n=266</i>	<i>n=9506</i>

Q45: Would you have trouble getting \$500 in cash or credit in order to meet an unexpected need within the next month?

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Yes	75%	67%
No	16%	23%
I Don't Know	9%	10%
	<i>n=270</i>	<i>n=9462</i>

Q46: In the past 12 months, how many times did you run out of money?

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Never	16%	19%
One time	7%	8%
Two Times	10%	12%
Three Times	13%	14%
Four Times	7%	9%
Five or More Times	46%	38%
	<i>n=268</i>	<i>n=9446</i>

Q47: In the past 12 months, how many times did you borrow money from your family and/or friends?

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Never	21%	31%
One time	12%	12%
Two Times	16%	15%
Three Times	12%	13%
Four Times	7%	7%
Five or More Times	32%	22%
	<i>n=270</i>	<i>n=9447</i>

Q48: I always pay my bills on time.

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Strongly Agree	26%	30%
Agree	30%	33%
Neutral	28%	21%
Disagree	9%	12%
Strongly Disagree	6%	4%
	<i>n=268</i>	<i>n=9440</i>

Q49: I follow a weekly or monthly budget.

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Strongly Agree	14%	19%
Agree	31%	34%
Neutral	35%	26%
Disagree	15%	16%
Strongly Disagree	6%	5%
	<i>n=267</i>	<i>n=9440</i>

Q50: I have the ability to manage my finances well.

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Strongly Agree	14%	17%
Agree	38%	38%
Neutral	31%	30%
Disagree	10%	12%
Strongly Disagree	6%	4%
	<i>n=266</i>	<i>n=9420</i>

Q51: I worry about being able to pay my current monthly expenses.

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Strongly Agree	19%	21%
Agree	35%	32%
Neutral	27%	24%
Disagree	14%	17%
Strongly Disagree	5%	6%
	<i>n=269</i>	<i>n=9428</i>

Q52: I worry about having enough money to pay for school.

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Strongly Agree	30%	32%
Agree	31%	31%
Neutral	21%	17%
Disagree	12%	13%
Strongly Disagree	6%	6%
	<i>n=266</i>	<i>n=9425</i>

Q53: I know how I will pay for college next semester.

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Strongly Agree	17%	17%
Agree	36%	37%
Neutral	28%	23%
Disagree	11%	15%
Strongly Disagree	8%	9%
	<i>n=267</i>	<i>n=9415</i>

Q54: It is important that I support my family financially while in college.

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Strongly Agree	24%	30%
Agree	26%	27%
Neutral	32%	26%
Disagree	13%	12%
Strongly Disagree	4%	6%
	<i>n=268</i>	<i>n=9408</i>

Q55: Food Assistance - In the past 12 months, have you used public assistance in the following areas?

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Yes	19%	22%
No	77%	76%
I Don't Know	4%	2%
	<i>n=265</i>	<i>n=9375</i>

Q56: Housing Assistance - In the past 12 months, have you used public assistance in the following areas?

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Yes	6%	6%
No	91%	93%
I Don't Know	2%	2%
	<i>n=265</i>	<i>n=9349</i>

Q57: Utility Assistance - In the past 12 months, have you used public assistance in the following areas?

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Yes	7%	5%
No	91%	93%
I Don't Know	2%	2%
	<i>n=264</i>	<i>n=9339</i>

Q58: Medical Assistance - In the past 12 months, have you used public assistance in the following areas?

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Yes	22%	19%
No	74%	79%
I Don't Know	4%	3%
	<i>n=265</i>	<i>n=9348</i>

Q59: Child Care Assistance - In the past 12 months, have you used public assistance in the following areas?

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Yes	5%	6%
No	92%	93%
I Don't Know	3%	1%
	<i>n=264</i>	<i>n=9298</i>

Q60: Credit Card - In the past 12 months, have you used the following borrowing sources?

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Yes	30%	42%
No	69%	56%
I Don't Know	1%	1%
	<i>n=264</i>	<i>n=9372</i>

Q61: Pay Day Loan - In the past 12 months, have you used the following borrowing sources?

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Yes	10%	10%
No	89%	89%
I Don't Know	1%	2%
	<i>n=264</i>	<i>n=9333</i>

Q62: Auto Title Loan - In the past 12 months, have you used the following borrowing sources?

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Yes	7%	6%
No	92%	93%
I Don't Know	0%	1%
	<i>n=262</i>	<i>n=9310</i>

Q63: In the past 12 months, how many times did you use a credit card for something you didn't have money for?*

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Never	8%	11%
One time	6%	8%
Two Times	15%	15%
Three Times	27%	14%
Four Times	10%	9%
Five or More Times	33%	43%
	<i>n=78</i>	<i>n=3953</i>

**Of respondents who answered 'yes' to Q60*

Q64: I always pay my credit card bill on time.*

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Strongly Agree	32%	40%
Agree	37%	34%
Neutral	17%	14%
Disagree	12%	9%
Strongly Disagree	3%	4%
	<i>n=78</i>	<i>n=3948</i>

**Of respondents who answered 'yes' to Q60*

Q65: I fully pay off my credit card balance each month.*

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Strongly Agree	10%	12%
Agree	14%	11%
Neutral	18%	16%
Disagree	33%	31%
Strongly Disagree	24%	30%
	<i>n=78</i>	<i>n=3945</i>

**Of respondents who answered 'yes' to Q60*

Q66: In the past 12 months, how many times did you borrow a pay day loan?*

	SWTJC	Texas CC
One time	50%	37%
Two Times	19%	30%
Three Times	19%	17%
Four Times	4%	6%
Five or More Times	8%	10%
	<i>n=26</i>	<i>n=909</i>

**Of respondents who answered 'yes' to Q61*

Q67: In the past 12 months, how many times did you borrow an auto title loan?*

	SWTJC	Texas CC
One time	74%	76%
Two Times	11%	13%
Three Times	5%	6%
Four Times	5%	2%
Five or More Times	5%	3%
	<i>n=19</i>	<i>n=520</i>

**Of respondents who answered 'yes' to Q62*

Q68: How much student loan money have you borrowed up to this point in time? Please include the entire amount you have borrowed, from all the institutions you have attended.*

	SWTJC	Texas CC
\$0 - \$500	15%	10%
\$501 - \$2,000	0%	1%
\$2,001 - \$5,000	0%	2%
\$5,001 - \$10,000	0%	2%
\$10,001 - \$25,000	25%	38%
\$25,001 - \$50,000	33%	29%
\$50,001 or above	28%	18%
	<i>n=40</i>	<i>n=2415</i>

**Of respondents who indicated having a student loan they took out for themselves ('yes' to Q31)*

Q69: I have more student loan debt than I expected to have at this point.*

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Strongly Agree	29%	29%
Agree	27%	29%
Neutral	24%	19%
Disagree	11%	17%
Strongly Disagree	9%	6%
	n=55	n=3043

*Of respondents who indicated having a student loan they took out for themselves ('yes' to Q31)

Q70: How confident are you that you will be able to pay off the debt acquired while you were a student?*

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Very Confident	15%	12%
Confident	30%	23%
Somewhat Confident	35%	36%
Not At All Confident	20%	28%
	n=54	n=3044

*Of respondents who indicated having a student loan they took out for themselves ('yes' to Q31)

Q71: When you first received your student loan, did you receive any in-person or online counseling that informed you about your student loans?*

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Yes	67%	64%
No	28%	29%
I Don't Know	6%	7%
	n=54	n=3045

*Of respondents who indicated having a student loan they took out for themselves ('yes' to Q31)

Q72: The amount of total debt (e.g. credit card debt, car loan debt, or money owed to family or friends) I have right now is overwhelming.

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Strongly Agree	16%	22%
Agree	17%	21%
Neutral	21%	20%
Disagree	18%	17%
Strongly Disagree	11%	11%
I Do Not Have Other Debt	16%	9%
	n=263	n=9249

Q73-Q76: Debt Aversion Scale*

	SWTJC	Texas CC
No Indication of Debt Aversion	87%	86%
Debt Aversion	3%	3%
General Debt Aversion, No Education Debt Aversion	6%	5%
Education Debt Aversion, No General Debt Aversion	5%	6%
	n=263	n=9119

*A full description of scales used and how they are calculated can be found in the methodology section

Q73: You should always save up first before buying something.

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Strongly Agree	46%	40%
Agree	42%	46%
Neutral	11%	11%
Disagree	1%	2%
Strongly Disagree	1%	1%
	n=264	n=9188

Q74: Owing money is basically wrong.	SWTJC	Texas CC
Strongly Agree	16%	12%
Agree	25%	23%
Neutral	33%	32%
Disagree	20%	27%
Strongly Disagree	7%	6%
	<i>n=264</i>	<i>n=9180</i>

Q75: There is no excuse for borrowing money.	SWTJC	Texas CC
Strongly Agree	3%	4%
Agree	9%	8%
Neutral	37%	28%
Disagree	39%	45%
Strongly Disagree	12%	16%
	<i>n=264</i>	<i>n=9163</i>

Q76: I think it is ok to borrow money to pay for education.	SWTJC	Texas CC
Strongly Agree	26%	20%
Agree	41%	47%
Neutral	25%	24%
Disagree	5%	6%
Strongly Disagree	3%	3%
	<i>n=263</i>	<i>n=9178</i>

Q77-Q82: Six-Question USDA Food Security Scale (30-Day)*	SWTJC	Texas CC
High or Marginal Food Security	44%	45%
Low Food Security	27%	25%
Very Low Food Security	29%	30%
	<i>n=260</i>	<i>n=8981</i>

*A full description of scales used and how they are calculated can be found in the methodology section

Q77: The food that I bought just didn't last and I didn't have money to get more (in the last 30 days).	SWTJC	Texas CC
Often	14%	14%
Sometimes	40%	40%
Never True	46%	46%
	<i>n=263</i>	<i>n=9083</i>

Q78: I couldn't afford to eat balanced meals (in the last 30 days).	SWTJC	Texas CC
Often	21%	21%
Sometimes	37%	35%
Never True	42%	44%
	<i>n=262</i>	<i>n=9041</i>

Q79: In the last 30 days, did you ever cut the size of your meals or skip meals because there wasn't enough money for food?	SWTJC	Texas CC
Yes	43%	40%
No	57%	60%
	<i>n=263</i>	<i>n=9102</i>

Q80: How many days did this happen? (Skipped or cut size of meals due to money)*	SWTJC	Texas CC
Fewer than 3 days	21%	15%
Three or more days	79%	85%
	<i>n=96</i>	<i>n=3327</i>

*Of respondents who answered 'yes' to Q79

Q81: In the last 30 days, did you ever eat less than you felt you should because there wasn't enough money for food?	SWTJC	Texas CC
Yes	44%	41%
No	56%	59%
	<i>n=264</i>	<i>n=9085</i>

Q82: In the last 30 days, were you ever hungry but didn't eat because there wasn't enough food?

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Yes	29%	31%
No	71%	69%
	n=263	n=9094

Q83-Q88: Housing Security Scale (Prior 12 Months)*

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Housing Secure	56%	46%
Housing Insecure	44%	54%
	n=263	n=9031

*A full description of scales used and how they are calculated can be found in the methodology section

Q83: I had difficulty paying for my rent (past 12 months).

	SWTJC	Texas CC
True	23%	30%
False	66%	62%
I Don't Know	10%	9%
	n=262	n=9016

Q84: I didn't pay the full amount of my rent (past 12 months).

	SWTJC	Texas CC
True	11%	14%
False	81%	79%
I Don't Know	8%	7%
	n=259	n=8993

Q85: I had difficulty paying the full amount of a gas, oil, or electricity bill (past 12 months).

	SWTJC	Texas CC
True	33%	35%
False	59%	59%
I Don't Know	8%	6%
	n=262	n=9000

Q86: I moved 2 or more times (past 12 months).

	SWTJC	Texas CC
True	10%	9%
False	85%	88%
I Don't Know	6%	3%
	n=262	n=8997

Q87: I lived with others beyond the expected capacity of my house or apartment (past 12 months).

	SWTJC	Texas CC
True	10%	14%
False	86%	82%
I Don't Know	4%	4%
	n=262	n=8998

Q88: I moved in with other people due to financial problems (past 12 months).

	SWTJC	Texas CC
True	15%	20%
False	83%	78%
I Don't Know	3%	3%
	n=259	n=8976

Q89-Q98: Homelessness Scale*

	SWTJC	Texas CC
No Indication of Homelessness	84%	82%
Homeless	8%	11%
Homeless and/or Couch Surfing	16%	18%
	n=262	n=9043

*A full description of scales used and how they are calculated can be found in the methodology section

Q89: Since starting college, have you ever been homeless?

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Yes	2%	5%
No	97%	94%
I Don't Know	0%	1%
	n=262	n=9021

Q90:	I was thrown out of my home (in past 12 months).	
	SWTJC	Texas CC
True	3%	4%
False	97%	95%
I Don't Know	0%	1%
	<i>n=261</i>	<i>n=9026</i>

Q91:	I was evicted from my home (in past 12 months).	
	SWTJC	Texas CC
True	1%	3%
False	98%	96%
I Don't Know	0%	1%
	<i>n=260</i>	<i>n=9018</i>

Q92:	I stayed in a shelter (in past 12 months).	
	SWTJC	Texas CC
True	2%	2%
False	98%	98%
I Don't Know	0%	1%
	<i>n=260</i>	<i>n=9013</i>

Q93:	I stayed in an abandoned building (in past 12 months).	
	SWTJC	Texas CC
True	0%	1%
False	99%	99%
I Don't Know	1%	1%
	<i>n=260</i>	<i>n=9004</i>

Q94:	I didn't know where I would sleep at night (in past 12 months).	
	SWTJC	Texas CC
True	3%	3%
False	97%	96%
I Don't Know	0%	1%
	<i>n=259</i>	<i>n=9009</i>

Q95:	I didn't have a home (in past 12 months).	
	SWTJC	Texas CC
True	5%	5%
False	95%	94%
I Don't Know	0%	1%
	<i>n=259</i>	<i>n=8997</i>

Q96:	I temporarily stayed with a relative, friend, or couch surfed while I looked for housing (in past 12 months).	
	SWTJC	Texas CC
True	11%	14%
False	88%	85%
I Don't Know	1%	1%
	<i>n=257</i>	<i>n=8994</i>

Q97:	I slept in an outdoor location such as a street, sidewalk, or alley, bus or train stop (in past 12 months).	
	SWTJC	Texas CC
True	0%	1%
False	99%	98%
I Don't Know	1%	1%
	<i>n=260</i>	<i>n=8989</i>

Q98:	I slept in a closed area/space not meant for human habitation such as a car or truck, van, RV, or camper, encampment or tent, or unconverted garage, attic, or basement (in past 12 months).	
	SWTJC	Texas CC
True	2%	4%
False	98%	96%
I Don't Know	1%	1%
	<i>n=260</i>	<i>n=8975</i>

Q99:	How many hours do you spend in a typical 7-day week commuting to and from campus?	
	SWTJC	Texas CC
Less Than 1 Hour	29%	26%
1-3 Hours	28%	29%
3-6 Hours	13%	18%
6-9 Hours	8%	9%
More Than 9 Hours	8%	6%
I Do Not Have A Commute	14%	13%
	<i>n=261</i>	<i>n=8996</i>

Q100: Do you have a car?	SWTJC	Texas CC
Yes	62%	79%
No	31%	16%
Sometimes	7%	4%
	<i>n=261</i>	<i>n=9001</i>

Q101: How reliable would you say your car is?*	SWTJC	Texas CC
Very Reliable	26%	34%
Reliable	53%	41%
I Don't Know	1%	3%
Somewhat Reliable	20%	20%
Not At All Reliable	0%	2%
	<i>n=163</i>	<i>n=7138</i>

*Of respondents who answered 'yes' to Q100

Q102: Do you routinely use public transportation to get to school?	SWTJC	Texas CC
Yes	3%	8%
No	94%	87%
Sometimes	3%	5%
	<i>n=262</i>	<i>n=9005</i>

Q103- Q105: Financial Knowledge Questions*	SWTJC	Texas CC
Zero Questions Correct	23%	19%
One Question Correct	31%	27%
Two Questions Correct	34%	35%
Three Questions Correct	12%	19%
	<i>n=254</i>	<i>n=8860</i>

*A full description of scales used and how they are calculated can be found in the methodology section

Q103: Imagine that the interest rate on your savings account is 1% per year and inflation is 2% per year. After 1 year, would you be able to buy more than today, exactly the same as today, or less than today with the money in this account?	SWTJC	Texas CC
More Than Today	11%	13%
Exactly The Same As Today	20%	18%
Less Than Today (correct answer)	27%	32%
I Don't Know	41%	37%
	<i>n=255</i>	<i>n=8887</i>

Q104: Suppose you have \$100 in a savings account and the interest rate was 2% per year. After 5 years, how much would you have in the account if you left the money to grow?	SWTJC	Texas CC
More Than \$102 (correct answer)	52%	59%
Exactly \$102	9%	8%
Less Than \$102	7%	7%
I Don't Know	31%	27%
	<i>n=256</i>	<i>n=8890</i>

Q105: Suppose you borrowed \$5,000 to help cover college expenses for the coming year. You can choose to repay this loan over 10 years, 20 years, or 30 years. Which of these repayments options will cost you the least amount of money over the length of the repayment period?	SWTJC	Texas CC
10-Year (correct answer)	55%	62%
20-Year	5%	5%
30-Year	17%	14%
I Don't Know	23%	19%
	<i>n=256</i>	<i>n=8897</i>

Q106: Which gender do you identify as?	SWTJC	Texas CC
Male	23%	24%
Female	77%	76%
Self-Identify	0%	1%
	<i>n=255</i>	<i>n=8884</i>

Q116: What is your age?	SWTJC	Texas CC
Under 25 years of age	75%	52%
25 years of age or older	25%	48%
	<i>n=253</i>	<i>n=8814</i>

Q117: Are you the first person in your immediate family to attend college?	SWTJC	Texas CC
Yes	44%	43%
No	55%	56%
I Don't Know	1%	1%
	<i>n=255</i>	<i>n=8884</i>

Q118: Are you a current or former member of the U.S. Armed Forces, Reserves, or National Guard?	SWTJC	Texas CC
Yes	4%	4%
No	96%	96%
	<i>n=254</i>	<i>n=8881</i>

Q119: Are you a citizen of the United States of America?	SWTJC	Texas CC
Yes	95%	91%
No	5%	9%
	<i>n=255</i>	<i>n=8846</i>

Q121: At any time since you turned 13, were you in foster care or were you a dependent of the court?	SWTJC	Texas CC
Yes	0%	2%
No	99%	97%
I Don't Know	1%	1%
	<i>n=255</i>	<i>n=8874</i>

Q122: Did you indicate on the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) that you were previously in foster care or a ward of the state?*	SWTJC	Texas CC
Yes	0%	65%
No	0%	29%
I Don't Know	0%	6%
	<i>n=0</i>	<i>n=130</i>

**Of respondents who answered 'yes' to Q121*

Q123: Did you receive increased funding/support as a result of identifying yourself as a former foster youth on the FAFSA?*	SWTJC	Texas CC
Yes	0%	26%
No	0%	33%
I Don't Know	0%	40%
	<i>n=0</i>	<i>n=84</i>

**Of respondents who answered 'yes' to Q121 AND Q40*

Q124: Does your state have a state-level, foster youth-specific financial aid program or policy for college?*	SWTJC	Texas CC
Yes	0%	27%
No	0%	13%
I Don't Know	0%	60%
	<i>n=0</i>	<i>n=167</i>

**Of respondents who answered 'yes' to Q121*

Q125: Have you participated in the state-level, foster youth-specific financial aid program or policy for college?*	SWTJC	Texas CC
Yes	0%	44%
No	0%	47%
I Don't Know	0%	9%
	<i>n=0</i>	<i>n=45</i>

**Of respondents who answered 'yes' to Q121 AND Q124*

Q126: Does your institution have a foster youth-specific financial aid, scholarship, or outreach program?*

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Yes	0%	12%
No	0%	13%
I Don't Know	0%	75%
	n=0	n=167

*Of respondents who answered 'yes' to Q121

Q127: Have you participated in your institution's foster youth-specific financial aid, scholarship, or outreach program?*

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Yes	0%	60%
No	0%	35%
I Don't Know	0%	5%
	n=0	n=20

*Of respondents who answered 'yes' to Q121 AND Q126

Q128: Based on your course load, which of the following would describe you as a student?

	SWTJC	Texas CC
I Am a Part-Time Student	27%	33%
I Am a Full-Time Student	71%	65%
I Don't Know	2%	2%
	n=252	n=8845

Q129: What is the highest level of education you expect to complete?

	SWTJC	Texas CC
High School Diploma or GED	16%	17%
Associate's Degree or Certificate	21%	24%
Bachelor's Degree	34%	33%
Master's Degree	17%	16%
Doctoral or Professional Degree	12%	9%
	n=252	n=8850

Q130: Is this your first college?

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Yes	69%	59%
No	30%	40%
I Don't Know	1%	0%
	n=254	n=8836

Q131: Do you plan on transferring from your school to another institution in the future?

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Yes	62%	69%
No	23%	19%
I Don't Know	15%	12%
	n=255	n=8827

Q132: During the school year, about how many hours do you spend in a typical 7-day week working for pay?

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Less than 20 hours	46%	31%
20-40 hours	47%	54%
Over 40 hours	7%	15%
	n=137	n=5503

Q133-Q136: If your work hours have changed in the past year, what was the main reason? (Check all that apply)*

	SWTJC	Texas CC
To Accommodate Change in My Course Requirements	45%	49%
To Make More Money to Pay My Expenses	42%	48%
My Employer Changed My Work Schedule	29%	25%
My Work Schedule Has Not Changed	33%	37%
	n=162	n=7088

*Percentage indicate respondents who chose at least one of the above choices

Q137: Compared with others, I would describe my family's financial situation as _____.

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Better	15%	19%
The Same	40%	34%
Worse	22%	22%
I Don't Know	23%	24%
	<i>n=255</i>	<i>n=8839</i>

Q138: Are you a dependent or independent student?

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Dependent	47%	34%
Independent	41%	57%
I Don't Know	11%	9%
	<i>n=255</i>	<i>n=8832</i>

Q139: About how many hours do you spend in a typical 7-day week providing care for dependents (children, parents, etc)?*

	SWTJC	Texas CC
Less than 20 hours	46%	43%
20-40 hours	22%	19%
Over 40 hours	32%	38%
	<i>n=102</i>	<i>n=4136</i>

**Of respondents who indicated supporting family members financially ('yes' to any of Q41-Q44)*

Sample Characteristics, Methodology, and Scales

Southwest Texas Junior College participated in the Fall 2018 implementation of Trellis Company's Student Financial Wellness Survey (SFWS). The survey was open beginning September 24, 2018 and closed on October 15, 2018. The SFWS is a self-reported, online survey that seeks to document the financial well-being and student success indicators of post-secondary students at Southwest Texas Junior College and across the nation. This section provides a limited analysis of sample characteristics and abbreviated description of study methodology and scales used. A detailed analysis and full descriptions will be provided in the full Fall 2018 SFWS report.

Sample Characteristics – Southwest Texas Junior College		
Characteristic	Population (N=4,009)	Respondents (n=299)
Race/Ethnicity		
American Indian/Alaskan Native	1%	0%
Asian, Hawaiian, or Other Pacific Islander	1%	0%
Black/African American	1%	0%
Hispanic/Latino	88%	91%
International	0%	0%
White	8%	8%
Multiple	0%	0%
Other	0%	0%
Not Reported	1%	1%
Gender		
Female	55%	70%
Male	36%	22%
Not-Reported or Self-Identify	9%	8%
Enrollment Intensity		
Full-time	44%	56%
Part-time	56%	44%
Class Year		
1st (<30 credits earned)	54%	48%
2nd (30-59 credits earned)	25%	38%
3rd (60-89 credits earned)	9%	11%
4th (90-120 credits earned)	2%	3%
5th (>120 credits earned)	1%	1%
Age		
Average Age	23.45	23.66

Methodology

In order to host and deliver the survey to students, participating institutions provide Trellis with the contact information and select demographics (to allow assessment of representativeness) of study participants. Participants in the SFWS are asked to consent to having additional select student-level records (e.g., enrollment patterns, major, student loan receipt) released by their institution for matching with their survey responses. Non-consent to records release does not result in expulsion from the study. For those students who consent to a records match, their institution provides the data match after the survey implementation period ends. Participating institutions with enrollments above 10,000 students could choose to randomly sample 5,000 of their students or provide their entire population. Institutions with enrollments lower than 10,000 included all students in the survey population.

To maximize student responses, Trellis contributed twenty-five, \$100 Amazon gift cards which were randomly awarded to 25 study participants. Institutions were encouraged to supplement the survey-wide incentive offered by Trellis with their own incentives where possible. For survey-wide incentives provided by Trellis, Trellis randomly chose incentive winners, contacted the incentive winners, and disbursed the incentives. For institutional incentives, Trellis randomly chose incentive winners and provided institutions with contact information to disburse the incentives. If a participant withdrew from the survey before completion, they were still eligible for the incentive drawing.

Survey response data and student-level records are located on Trellis servers, are password protected, and are accessible only from computers connected to Trellis' internal network. Only authorized Trellis researchers have access to the data. At no time does anyone from the participating institution have access to the student-level responses. This survey excludes individuals who are vulnerable or susceptible to coercion or undue influence. This study excludes the following special populations of subjects: prisoners, minors (infants, children, or teenagers under the age of 18), and adults unable to consent. Data were de-identified in order to create a dataset for analysis. The SFWS does not include attention checks, as recent research has pointed to unforeseen effects to data quality, including demographic bias and cognitive overload.¹ During the Analysis Phase, those participants with extreme patterns of response were considered for removal from the data set.

Scales: Net Promoter Score (Q25)

Trellis' Student Financial Wellness Survey includes a customer satisfaction rating for institutions to benchmark future work and to better understand how students perceive their institution. Trellis collected the information with a scale that allows a Net Promoter Score (NPS) to be calculated. NPS is a method, based in research, to benchmark customer satisfaction ratings across different services, businesses, and products.² NPS uses a 0-10 scale. Those respondents who score 9-10 are promoters, 7-8 are passives, and 0-6 are detractors. %Promoters - %Detractors = NPS. A positive NPS (>0) is generally considered good, with highest performers usually between 50 and 80.

¹ Berinsky, Adam J, Michele F Margolis, and Michael W Sances. (2014). *Separating the Shirkers From the Workers? Making Sure Respondents Pay Attention on Self-Administered Surveys*. American Journal of Political Science 58(3): 739–53.

² Hyken, Shep. *How Effective Is Net Promoter Score (NPS)?* Forbes Magazine. Published on December 3, 2016. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/shephyken/2016/12/03/how-effective-is-net-promoter-score-nps/#253a33123e4c>. Retrieved on 1/31/2018.

Scales: Debt Aversion (Q73-76)

Trellis' Student Financial Wellness Survey includes a four-question scale informed by previous research and calculated from the questions detailed in the previous section (Q73-76).³ By grouping respondents into the below categories, the findings represent a conservative estimate of those respondents who clearly indicated signs of general and education debt aversion.

Only those respondents who indicated general debt aversion on each of questions 73, 74, and 75 were categorized as having general debt aversion. Only those respondents who indicated education debt aversion on question 76 were categorized as having education debt aversion.

- No Indication of Debt Aversion = No indication of general or education debt aversion
- Debt Aversion = All responses indicate general and education debt aversion
- General Debt Aversion, No Education Debt Aversion = Responses indicate general debt aversion, but no education debt aversion
- Education Debt Aversion, No General Debt Aversion = Responses indicate education debt aversion, but no general debt aversion

Scales: United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) 30-Day Food Security (Q77-82)

Trellis' Student Financial Wellness Survey uses a six-question scale designed by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) that measures food security within the prior 30 days.⁴ Many researchers of food security amongst college students use a more robust twelve-question USDA scale. The six-question scale was chosen to reduce cognitive overload within a survey that seeks to measure many financial wellness topics in other ways.

Things to know about food insecurity:

- USDA methodology assigns levels of food security to individuals based on how many affirmative responses they give to certain questions. Under the short-form survey, individuals who give 2-4 affirmative responses have "low food security" and individuals who give 5-6 affirmative responses have "very low food security".⁴
- While categorical labels are helpful, food insecurity exists on a spectrum, and even the underlying responses to the survey questions cannot definitively locate individuals on that spectrum. Rather, more affirmative responses indicate higher odds that an individual is experiencing greater difficulty maintaining an adequate diet.

³ Boatman, Angela, Evans, Brent J., & Soliz, Adela. (January 2017). Understanding Loan Aversion in Education: Evidence from High School Seniors, Community College Students, and Adults. AERA Open. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2332858416683649>. Retrieved 7/25/2018.

⁴ United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). (2017). *Definitions of food security*. <https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-us/definitions-of-food-security/>. Retrieved 9/28/2017.

Scales: Housing Security (Q83-88) and Homelessness (Q89-98)

The Student Financial Wellness Survey incorporates standard housing security and homelessness measurements commonly used by other researchers studying basic needs security in order to ensure data validity and facilitate comparisons with findings in prior research.⁵

Things to know about housing security and homelessness:

- The Wisconsin HOPE lab and other leading researchers in this field define a homeless person as “a person without a place to live, often residing in a shelter, an automobile, an abandoned building or outside,” and housing insecurity as, “broader set[s] of challenges such as the inability to pay rent or utilities or the need to move frequently.”⁵
- Respondents are categorized as ‘Housing Insecure’ if they answered “True” to any of the six housing insecurity questions (Q83-88).
- Respondents are categorized as ‘Homeless’ if they answered ‘Yes’ and/or ‘True’ to Q89-95 and/or Q97-98 (excludes Q96).
- Respondents are categorized as ‘Homeless and/or Couch Surfing’ if they answered ‘Yes’ and/or ‘True’ to any of the ten homelessness questions (Q89-98).

Scales: Financial Knowledge (Q103-105)

The financial knowledge scale used in this survey is a version of the Lusardi three-question scale, augmented to be more relevant to students in higher education.⁶ Respondents who provided an answer for all items on the financial knowledge scale were included for analysis. Correct answers for each question are totaled for the scale value.

⁵ Goldrick-Rab, S., Richardson, J., & Kinsley, P. (2017). *Guide to Assessing Basic Needs Insecurity in Higher Education*. Wisconsin HOPE Lab. <http://wihopelab.com/publications/Basic-Needs-Insecurity-College-Students.pdf>. Retrieved on 5/9/18.

⁶ Lusardi, Annamaria. (2008). *Financial Literacy: An Essential Tool for Informed Consumer Choice*. Dartmouth College, Harvard Business School, and NBER. http://www.dartmouth.edu/~alusardi/Papers/Lusardi_Informed_Consumer.pdf. Retrieved on 5/6/2018.

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