

# STUDENT HOUSING COMPLEX DESIGN

## Creating a Sense of Community and Improving Student Wellbeing to Enhance Academic Success

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### ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study aims to understand how the interior design of a student housing complex influences the personal and academic success of students. The goal of this study was to determine how common spaces affect a student's wellbeing, preferences on amenities within apartment units, and how a sense of community can be created within a student housing complex. This research was used to confirm that students prefer common spaces with natural light, a variety of study areas, and social spaces that foster a sense of community.

### METHODOLOGY

To better understand the needs of students, a survey was distributed to the NDSU students, faculty, and anyone who had lived in a student housing complex to collect information about lifestyle preferences, common spaces, and the frequency of use. The survey included open- and close-ended questions, some of which were Likert Scale questions.

### PARTICIPANTS

An online survey was distributed through North Dakota State University's (NDSU) email list serve and the researchers' social media outlets which included Instagram, Facebook, and Snapchat. Anyone who had lived in a student housing complex before and was 18 years or older were encouraged to participate.



325 | TOTAL  
89 | MALE  
231 | FEMALE  
5 | OTHER

88% OF PARTICIPANTS WERE BETWEEN AGES 18 TO 23.

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

#### SENSE OF COMMUNITY

"Moreover, students who are more satisfied with their residence hall are more likely to become involved with others, which in turn can help them academically and socially (Arboleda et al., 2003)" (Ballesteros, Garcia-Gonzalez, & Samura, 2021, p. 86).

"...two dimensions of a sense of community in residence halls – identity and interaction – also wield a positive influence on the student's level of psychosocial engagement" (Erb, Sinclair, & Braxton, 2015, p. 5).

#### STUDENT WELL-BEING

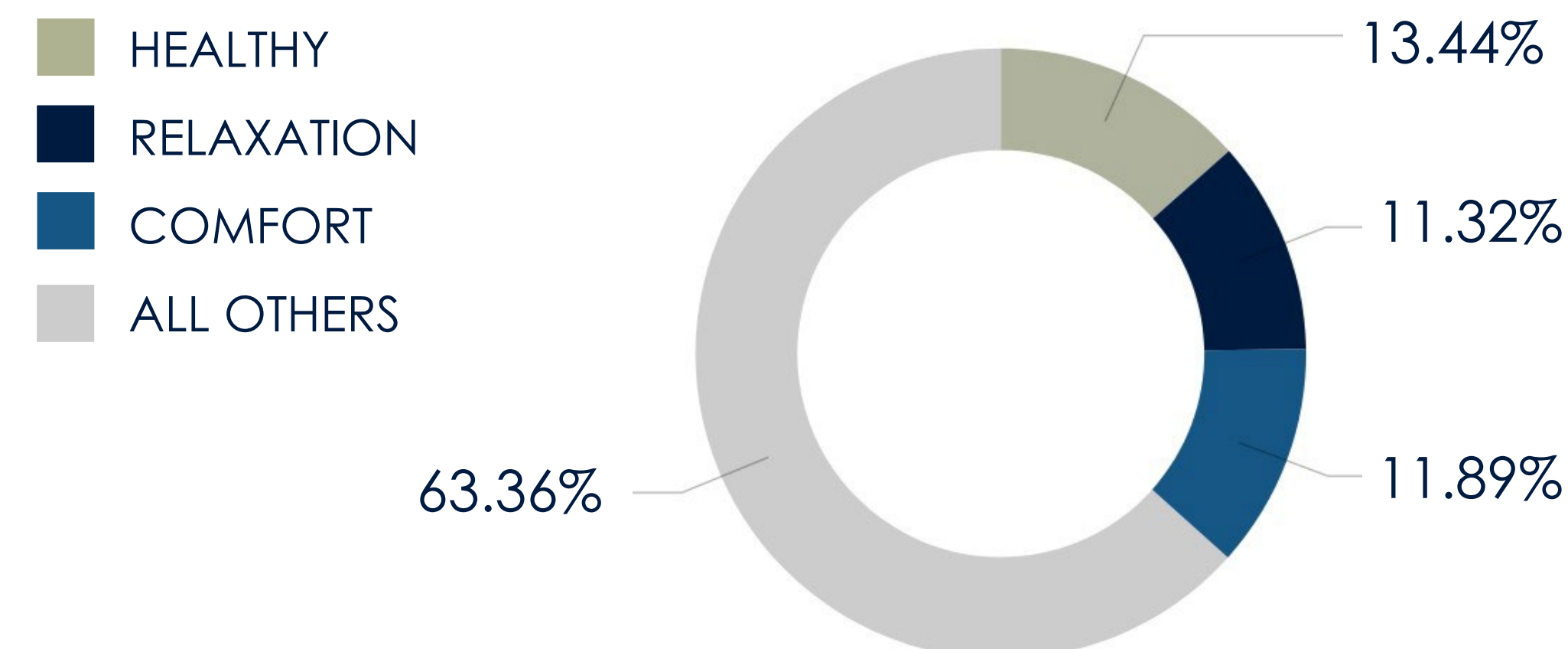
"...students who live on campus are also more likely to demonstrate greater gains in various areas of psychological development" (Soria & Taylor, 2016, p. 61).

"Residence halls should be designed to encourage positive student interaction, promote learning, and foster student development" (Rutledge, 2012, p. 12).

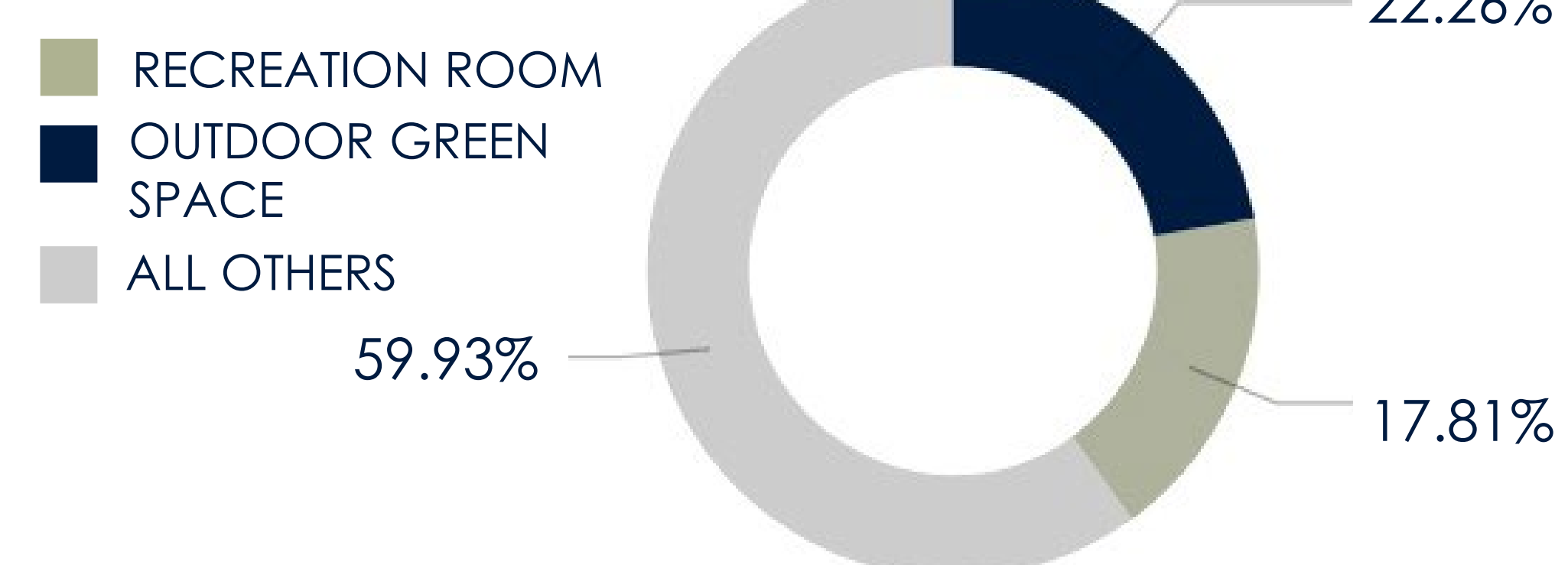


### RESULTS

#### HOW PARTICIPANTS DEFINE WELLNESS



#### AREAS THAT CREATE A STRONG SENSE OF COMMUNITY



### DISCUSSION

Results from the survey show that 44% of our survey participants were 20-21 years of age. Out of the valid 288 participants, 67.38% have/had a grade point average of 3.5-4.0. The overwhelming majority (56.02%) of students who lived on campus resided in a dormitory or housing complex for 1-2 semesters during the academic year.

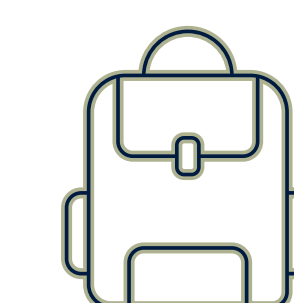
When participants were asked what amenities are currently offered at their student housing complex, responses showed that lounges and study rooms are most frequently included within the interior design of their student housing complex.

### FUTURE DIRECTION

If we were to conduct another study, one area of improvement would be to send the survey out to students who only attend NDSU. This would give us an even greater grasp on what students at this specific university would desire in a new housing complex since the building would be situated on NDSU's campus.

"Developing social relationships and having a sense of community improve students' overall satisfaction with campus housing (Chow & Healey, 2008), and this sense of community can often be found in residence halls" (Sickler & Roskos, 2013, p. 13).

### TOP AMENITIES THAT AID IN ACADEMIC SUCCESS



- 1 | COMPUTER & PRINTING LOUNGES (19.88%)
- 2 | STUDY ROOMS (18.55%)
- 3 | FITNESS CENTER (11.28%)

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