

*An Examination of Sedentary Behavior and Stress in Undergraduate Students at Western Michigan University* was a project laced with passion and the intent to support current undergraduates at Western Michigan University. Though my degree was in Strategic Communication, I decided to branch out within my interests of helping others through communicating health-related information. Using my communications background helped me see sedentary behavior and stress from another angle, which is why my main research questions were: How much sedentary behavior are undergraduate students engaging in? How much perceived stress are undergraduate students experiencing? And how do undergraduate students like to receive health-related information?

I was able to answer these questions through a quantitative survey containing two widely used data collection tools (e.g., International Physical Activity Questionnaire and Perceived Stress Scale) and through my recruitment efforts, 380 students participated in my survey. From the survey results, I used my thesis to provide a snapshot of current sedentary behavior and stress trends in undergraduate students at my university. In addition, I was then able to create an infographic containing relevant resources for students to manage sedentary behavior and stress.

Another unique aspect of my thesis is my interest in learning about student preferences toward receiving health related information. As a communications major, I am an avid believer in getting the right information to the right people at the right time. For example, knowing that my sample has a preference toward in-person events and digital materials, I created a digital infographic containing a variety of resources students could find online or attend in person.

A year ago, if you would have told me I would have finished a research project like this, I would have thought you were crazy, which is why I am beyond appreciative for the continued support of my thesis advisor, Dr. Michele McGrady; committee chairs Dr. Horneffer-Ginter and Dr. Robert Bensley; and the Lee Honors College Staff, Dean Irma Lopez, Jennifer Townsend, Anthony Helms, and Kerrie Harvey. Furthermore, receiving the Lee Honors College Creative Studies Award helped take my thesis to the next level and provide a tangible resource that will be used in Dr. McGrady's class sections for Fall 2022.