



# Vaping Prevalence on College Campuses



## Significance of Problem

- The college-aged demographic is especially at risk for adverse effects surrounding the usage of electronic vaping devices given the deficit in published research regarding the use of vaping products (Kenne, Fishbein, Tan, & Banks, 2017).
- Vaping rates in college students have more than doubled between 2017 – 2018 (vaping nicotine from 6% to 16%; and marijuana 5% to 11%); the greatest one-year increase for any substance since 1975 (Monitoring the Future, 2019).
- Many users do not understand the extent of potential harm they are exposed to through vaping usage, given that many perceive it as less risky because of the product's original role as a cessation product (Katz, Erkinen, Lindgren, Hatuskami, 2019).

## Purpose

The main objectives of this study were to:

- Assess the attitudes and beliefs related to the use of electronic vaping devices held by college students at a private university
- Better understand the use of vaping devices on college campuses
- Compare findings with those reported in the literature



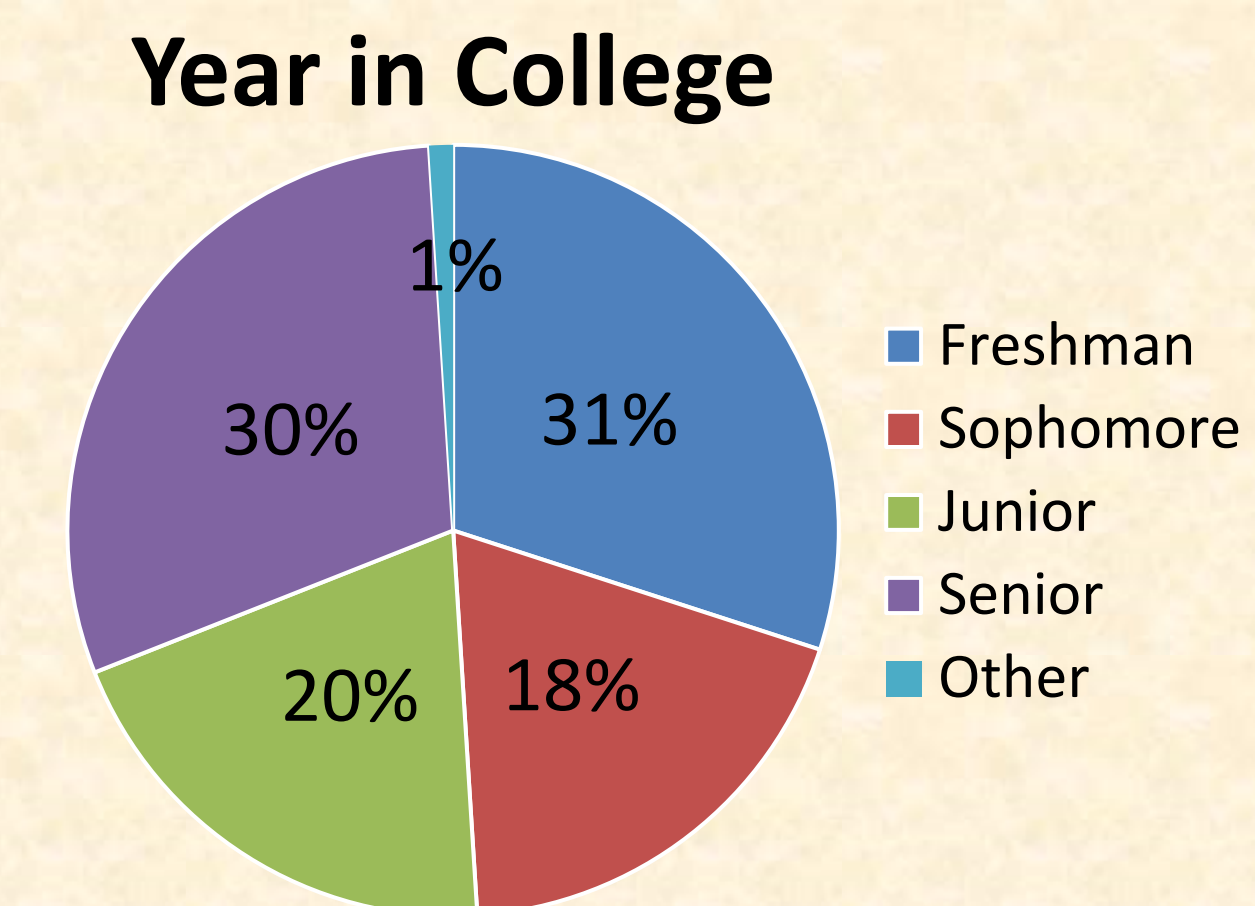
## Methods

**Approval:** University IRB  
**Setting:** Private, faith-based, Midwestern university  
**Design:** Cross-sectional, descriptive  
**Sample:** Undergraduate students  
 Fall 2019: *N* = 489, response rate 61%  
**Quantitative:** Online investigator-developed survey via SurveyMonkey®  
**Analysis:** Survey data were analyzed using SPSS 25 for statistical testing

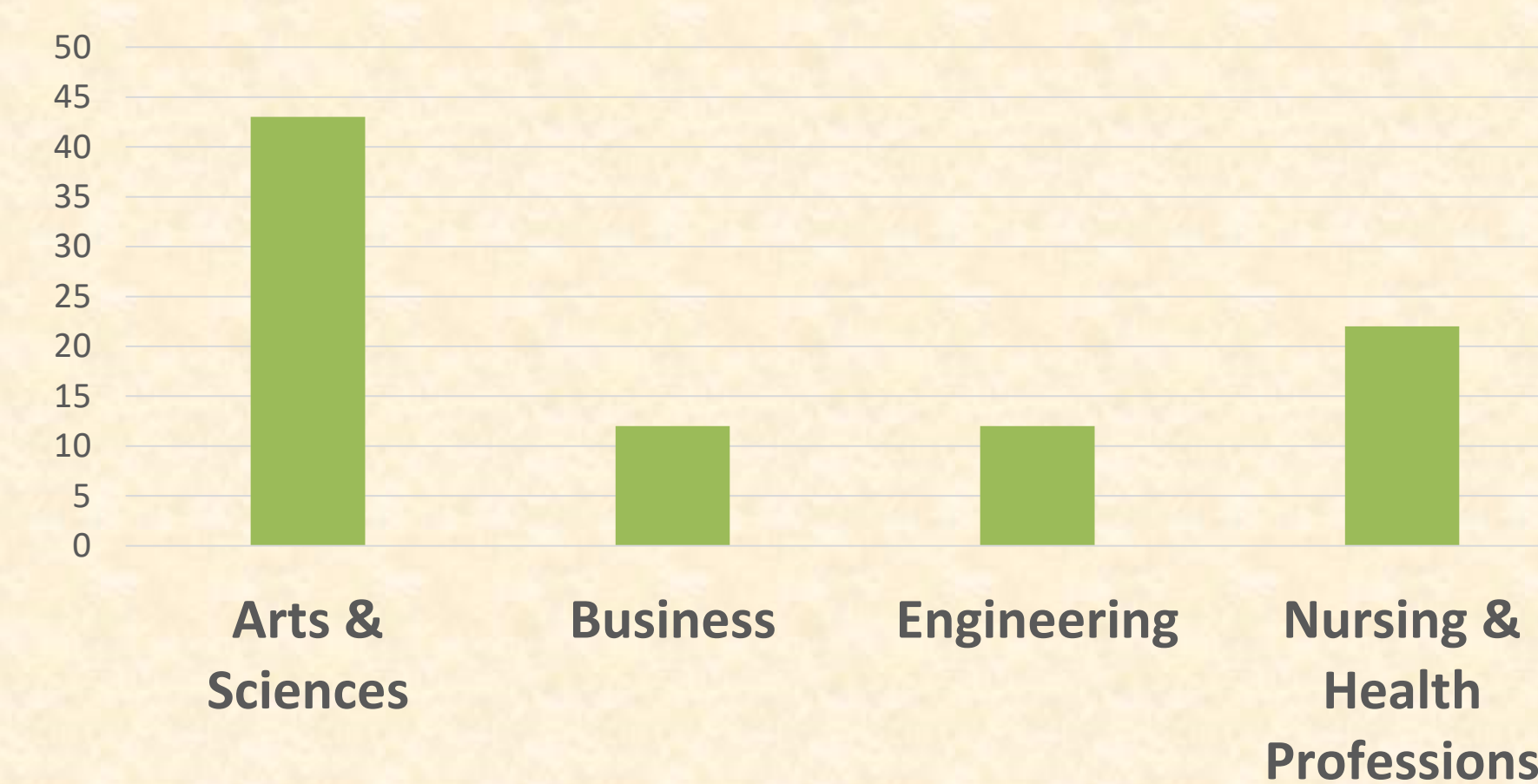
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## Sample Characteristics (n = 489)

**Female:** 66%  
**White:** 82%  
**Greek-affiliated:** 23%  
**Student athlete:** 23%  
**Vaped: (Last 30 days)** 18%



## Percent of Vaping Use by College



**Campus Policy:**  
 - 63% of students saw vaping on campus  
 - 79% reported receiving information about the tobacco free policy (includes vaping)

## Description of Vaping Use

Social Aspect		Most Common Places of Use	
Alone & with others	48%	Social gatherings	72%
With others	45%	Friend's residence	60%
Alone	8%	At home	46%

## Characteristics of Those Who Reported Ever Using Vaping Devices

- Year in school provided differences in vaping use  
 Freshmen – 39%, Sophomore – 53%, Junior – 61%, Senior – 52%,  $\chi^2 = 8.523, p = .074$
- GPA demonstrated significant differences in vaping use  
 GPA < 2.49 = 64%, 2.5 – 2.99 = 66%, 3.0 – 3.49 = 61%, 3.5 – 3.99 = 35%, 4.0 = 30%,  $\chi^2 = 23.586, p < .000$
- 30% of those in Greek life, fraternity or sorority, used significantly more vaping devices than those not in Greek life (18%),  $\chi^2 = 6.344, p = .012$

## Stages of Change

Already quit – 21%	Think of cutting back – 12%
Quitting in 30 days – 14%	Do not want to stop – 19%
Have plan to quit in 6 months – 12%	Not a problem, not quitting – 12%
Think of quitting, no plan – 10%	

## Vaping Behaviors

### Reasons for Use

- “Relax and enjoy” 41%
- “Curiosity” 20%
- “Cigarette cessation” 16%

### Vaping Perceptions

- “I will feel more relaxed” 71%
- “I will become less healthy” 69%
- “I will lose friends” 8%
- “I am disappointed if a friend vapes” 65%

### Usage in last 30 days

- Used daily 41%
- Used between 6 – 29 days 25%
- Used only between 1 – 5 days 27%

## Vaping Exposure

- 63% of students reported they were exposed to someone who uses an electronic vaping device
- Most prevalent vaping exposures:
  - Friends 86%
  - Students on campus 64%
  - Peers 62%
- Location of exposure:
  - Social settings 84%
  - Someone else's home 59%
  - Outside campus buildings 52%

## Conclusions

- Those in Greek life reported higher rates of vaping use
- Students with a lower GPA reported more vaping use than those with a higher GPA
- Half of the participants in the survey have tried a vaping device
- Vaping use differed significantly by college
- Students used vaping devices due to curiosity and to feel more relaxed
- 41% were unaware of the university's vaping policy
- 31% of current vapers do not want to quit or do not see vaping as harmful

## Recommendations

- Putting an emphasis on university smoking and vaping policies may help to spread awareness about vaping use
- More research is needed about the long-term effects of vaping use
- Nurses are well-suited to provide health promotion and education about vaping use