

Life

Stress washes over computer science and engineering students

JERRY DON BURTON
SPECIAL TO THE HERALD

Students in the College of Computer Science and Engineering are experiencing high stress. Following midterm week, students from varying ranks and majors are attributing their stress to several causes aside from midterms. One of these students is Michael O'Neal, a sophomore civil engineering major from Marion, Arkansas.

Academic Stress

"If you aren't struggling in engineering, you are honestly not human," O'Neal said. "I am constantly doing homework and studying, never having time to relax and hang out with my friends. I am just burnt out and drained of energy."

Nihal Rahman, a sophomore computer science major from Bangladesh, said most of his stress comes from one class: Object-Oriented Programming. He said the class is supposed to be one of the toughest in his major. "It is taking quite a toll," he said.

Another sophomore computer science major, Taishi Fujisaki, from Japan, is taking Object-Oriented Programming next year. Fujisaki said he's worrying about the class even though he's not taking it yet.

A course Fujisaki is currently taking, Computer Ethics and Society, is also causing him stress. Fujisaki is taking the course online, which he said is causing him difficulties and adding to his stress.

Financial Stress

Rahman said tuition also causes stress. "As an international student, the tuition is pretty high," Rahman said. "I have to always reorganize how much funding I already have and how I'm going to pay for the rest of the major."

Rahman said being an

international student presents other challenges. He said when he gets emails for paid research opportunities, they often exclude participants who are not United States permanent residents.

"That's like, the first requirement if you want to go into research," Rahman said.

Mental Stress O'Neal said she puts herself under too much pressure trying to be perfect. "Yes, engineers need to be accurate," she said, "But we are also just kids and young adults figuring life out."

O'Neal said since she's experiencing so much stress near the beginning of her college career, she's not looking forward to progressing into more complex courses.

Mohammad Almashkab, a senior mechanical engineering major from Saudi Arabia, said the stress he experiences from having many assignments due at the same time causes him to feel nervous, absent-minded and moody.

Campus and Nationwide Stress Pat Glascock, associate director of the Wilson Counseling Center and a licensed professional counselor, said she estimates in the first half of the Spring 2023 semester alone, the Wilson Counseling Center has counseled almost 300 students.

During midterms and finals, when stress is typically higher, the demand for counseling services increases, Glascock said.

Glascock said both freshmen and seniors experience transitional stressors. Glascock said seniors stress about graduation and finding a job after college. Glascock said freshmen, on the other hand, stress about making the adjustment from high school to college. Sophomores and juniors

experience stress as well. Glascock said sophomores and juniors may encounter stress as they start taking more demanding classes.

"Stress is a physiological response. It's not always what something is, it's what it represents," Glascock said.

Glascock said in courses requiring a lot of math, science or detail—like programming classes—there may be a greater sense of feeling overwhelmed. She said this does vary depending on a student's background.

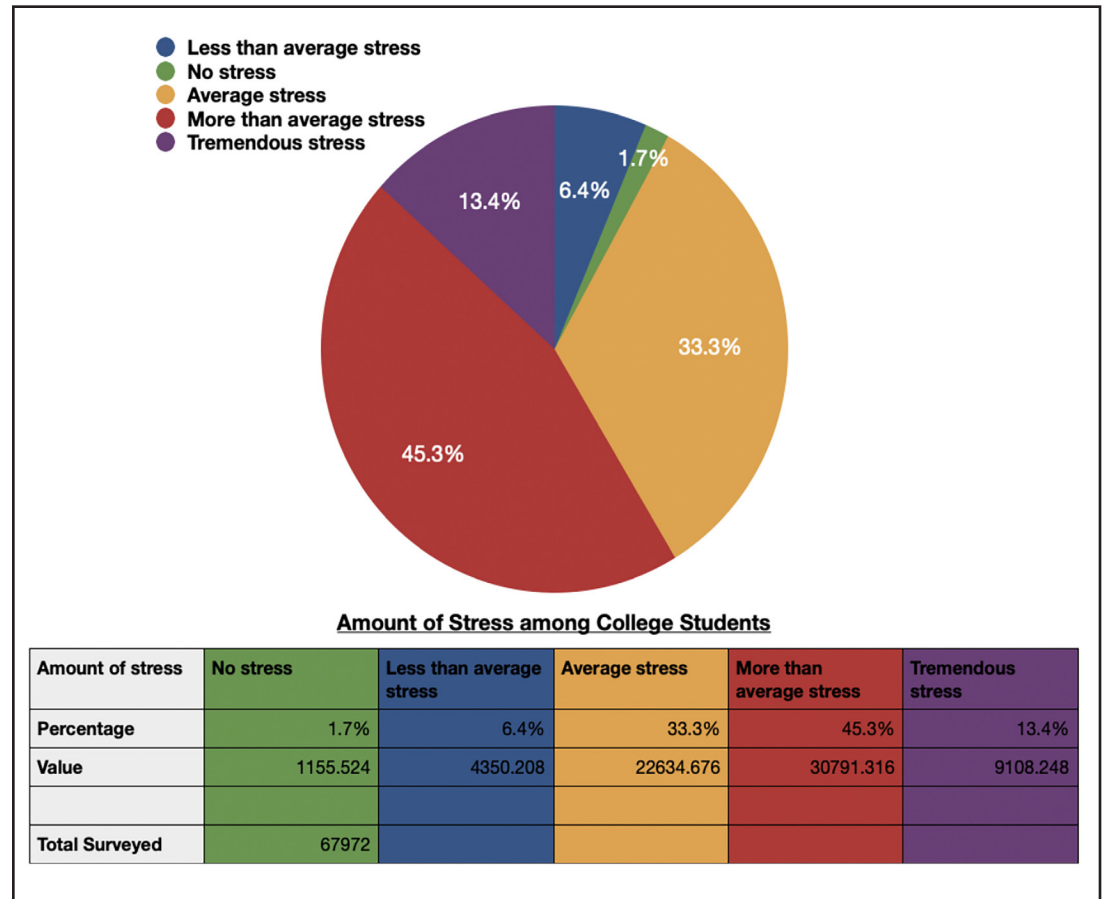
In 2019, the National College Health Assessment from the American College Health Association found of 67,972 students, 45.3% reported experiencing more than average stress within the previous 12 months. The ACHA also found 13.4% of students surveyed reported feeling tremendous stress in the previous 12 months.

Stress in students can be caused by several factors. The American Institute of Stress attributes managing heavy loads of coursework, choosing a career and holding a job as factors that can increase stress in students.

An Advisers Perspective Andrew Bearden, an A-State alumnus and academic adviser for all programs within the College of Computer Science and Engineering, said he functions like a coach and tries to challenge students. Bearden said he sometimes must guide against relieving student stress.

"What I may want to do is for you to use positive anxiety," Bearden said.

He said he allows students to voice whatever situation they're going through, but cannot professionally help with any emotional stress. Bearden said he instead connects students with resources like the Wilson Counseling Center.



GRAPHIC COURTESY OF JERRY DON BURTON

Bearden said he often hears students saying they're not having any fun in the program. "Because of the nature of engineering and computer science, I have to remind students this is not a program of fun," Bearden said. "It is a very stressful, very serious program."

Bearden said as an A-state alumni, he understands student stress from the perspective of a student and an adviser. He said he has navigated some of the same struggles that students have, such as finding themselves and networking. As an adviser, he said he sees the faculty angle and resources that A-state pours into students.

Bearden said he still has the same point of view about stress, but he sees it from a more professional, learned perspective.

Managing Stress Fujisaki said he deals with his stress by looking

forward to his off-campus trips. He said looking for new things, eating good food and experiencing new cultures help him manage his stress.

O'Neal and Rahman said they go to the gym to manage their stress. O'Neal said working out has been effective and the muscle mass she has gained is a plus.

Almashkab said he manages stress by convincing himself he's not the only one struggling. "I think about the good things in my life to forget about the bad ones," he said.

Almashkab said going out sometimes also helps him forget about his stress. **Resources** All currently enrolled A-State Jonesboro students pay for counseling from the Wilson Counseling Center. The center is located at 107 N. Caraway Road, across from the post office.

The Wilson Counseling offers counseling services in-person or via video call, as long as a student is within Arkansas at the time of service.

Glascock said the Wilson Counseling Center provides support groups for students and targeted skill groups to help students manage specific types of stress. Glascock said the anxiety management, acceptance, relaxation techniques and general stress management groups provide examples of the targeted skill groups offered.

The Wilson Counseling center holds a drum to de-stress group every Monday from 5 p.m. to 5:30 p.m., Glascock said.

Glascock said that practicing healthy sleep habits, mindfulness and deep breathing techniques can help students start their journey toward alleviating stress.

Non-drivers at A-State

LAILA CASIANO

STAFF WRITER

Generation Z or "Gen Z" has been the leading documentation of people not getting their driver's license.

The Washington Post shared reasons from their own research to answer the question of why Gen Z members are not driving, those reasons being either environmental or financial concerns.

However, the predominant reason for Gen Z not driving is simply driving anxiety. Many reports of the members of Gen Z are in fear of getting into an accident or just the means of driving itself.

Ann Long, junior political science and history major from Cape Girardeau, Missouri, was always being driven around to where she needed to go and often carools. Even with the vehicle at hand, her two-door Volkswagen Beetle, she always felt safe driving in her hometown but



Karyn Floyd, sophomore biology pre-professional major from Cotton Plant, AR.

when driving in Jonesboro, it made her uncomfortable.

"I need to know the route, the stop lights, traffic, everything," Long said.

However, other Arkansas State University non-drivers overcame their driving anxiety for the necessity to be a designated driver for their friends.

Cailee Williams, sophomore political science major from

Trumann Arkansas, got her license recently, overcoming her road anxiety from a previous ATV accident when she was 16. The accident caused her to break her hand, curating a fear to drive any vehicle afterwards.

"I drive because of convenience, in case of an emergency for my friends," Williams said. "If I am with my friends and something happens to them or I am in their car, I can drive for them."

Even without the stress of having driving anxiety, some do not drive due to the lack of education.

Heidy Bulbarena-Hernandez, sophomore graphic design major from Stuttgart, Arkansas, has their driver's permit, but not a license.

"There has been a pressure from my family to learn how to drive. I have motivation to start driving for myself but I am limited in access to be taught," Bulbarena-Hernandez said.

With living in Arkansas, driving is an expectation for



(Left to right) Heidy Bulbarena-Hernandez a sophomore graphic design major from Stuttgart, AR, Ann Long a junior political science major from Cape Girardeau, Missouri, and Cailee Williams a sophomore political science major from Trumann, AR.

many since there is a lack of other modes of public transportation.

Karyn Floyd, sophomore biology pre-professional major from Cotton Plant, Arkansas, has a car waiting for her but until she gets her license, she is a non-driver.

"In places like Arkansas,

you're expected to drive. With carpooling, I hate it. I dislike the fact that I have to go places on other people's time and that I constantly have to ask for rides,"

Floyd said. There is little infrastructure in the United States for adequate walkable cities, as "walk-

ability has proven challenging" (according to a report from The Institute for Transportation and Development Policy).

"Here in Jonesboro, you have to drive but in walkable cities, like Fayetteville, less people will want to drive because they won't have to," Williams said.

Life

Meet the members

Alpha Kappa Alpha



Dakia Pope, a junior elementary education major with an emphasis in child advocacy from Chicago. Pope is the South-Central region spokesperson for Alpha Kappa Alpha.

“Stay yourself and enjoy it,” Pope said. As going through the intake process is stressful but it is better to not lose yourself because of it.

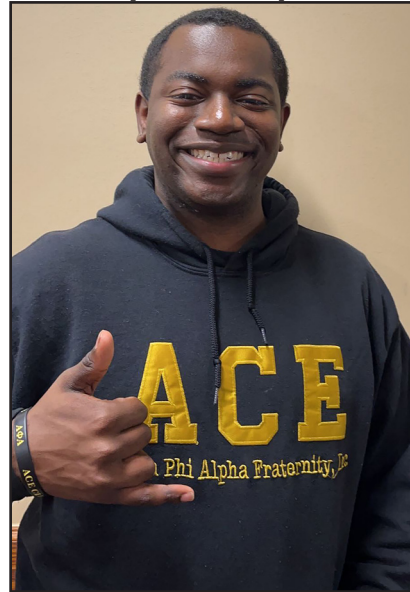
When asked why she chose the sorority, Pope said “I chose AKA because their mission statement lined up with everything that I believe in. Another thing that just stuck out to me was all of the founders are educators. And with me going into the education field is just very inspiring to see like, you know, we have something in common.”

For students wishing to go through intake, Pope said “I would just say stay grounded and just like, know who you are before and don’t let Greek life take over your whole personality.”

March 9-15 Alpha Kappa Alpha and Alpha Phi Alpha will be hosting Skee Week. The events will be mean girls themed.

Instagram: @etaupsilonakas

Alpha Phi Alpha



Jamal Rome, a junior psychology major with a minor in sociology from Little Rock.

Rome’s personal motto is “Do your best and be your best,” which extends into his Greek life journey.

His whole life Rome was surrounded by “Alpha Men,” “growing up, I would see how he (Rome’s Godfather) would interact with other fraternity members. He would not see them in like 20 years, but like, as soon as they see each other it’s like they just saw each other yesterday.”

Apart from research, Rome said that for a student looking to go through intake they should “Definitely just try to find yourself beforehand. Just be yourself always.”

Check Alpha Phi Alpha’s social media for all of their upcoming events.

Instagram: @tu_alphas1973

Omega Psi Phi



Allen Coleman, a senior computer science major with a minor in electrical engineering and mathematics from Earle, Arkansas, is the Basileus, or president, of Omega Psi Phi.

Coleman has been working on projects in his chapter to “Focus more on mental health” and “Just to give brothers the opportunity to share how they feel.”

Coleman grew up in a family full of “Omega Men,” “So I saw a lot of them growing up, obviously other fraternities and stuff but they didn’t really do, they didn’t really have an impact like Omegas did.”

“One, I would suggest being active and engaged in the community. I like to see people who can help other people who can commit to community service” Coleman said when talking about the intake process. “Also, just discretion is a really big one. Because nobody’s supposed to know you are going through your intake process.”

Coleman also talked about taking care of oneself during the intake process, “But more importantly, take care of yourself. I think one thing about the intake process is it can be stressful because it’s a lot of information you have to retain.”

Omega Psi Phi will be hosting Q Week **April 10-16**. Many different events, meetings and celebrations will take place during the week.

Instagram: @az_ques

Delta Sigma Theta



Elise Brazile, a junior biology pre-med major with a minor in general business from West Memphis, is the president of Delta Sigma Theta.

Brazile, who is very proud of her organization, said “We are a certain type of woman, you know, we are those women of high standard of crimson and cream.”

Brazile said “I joined delta because delta means change.” Brazile also felt the draw because of the history of Delta Sigma Theta, “But one of the biggest things that my sorority was known for, one of the first things we did was march in the Women’s suffrage march. I’ve learned that we are women of color so we had to march in the back.”

She added “I thought that the delta woman and what they stood for, that was the ideal woman.”

For advice to first years who are wishing to go through the intake process, Brazile said, “Also research yourself. What do you align with, what are your values? Who do you want to be?”

“We don’t bite,” Brazile said “If you aren’t sure, ask. Delta means changing, for change you have to ask those questions, you have to be inquisitive.”

On **March 13** Delta Sigma Theta will host “Divalingo”. It is an event that will hopefully involve people of many different cultural backgrounds to come together and be able to tell others about their culture.

Instagram: @kappaxideltas

Club spotlight: Model UN

CAROLINE AVERITT

STAFF WRITER

In Saint Louis, six Arkansas State University students embodied the spirit of South Africa as they represented the country in one of the most heated collegiate experiences: The Midwest Model United Nations.

The A-State Model UN club headed to Missouri Feb. 22 to meet with other college students to work through proposed problems. The team warmed up for this competition back in November at the Arkansas Collegiate Model United Nations Conference.

Cameron Wimpy, the interim department chair of the political science department and the adviser for A-State Model UN, said in Model UN, “Students simulate the United Nations, debate topics and try to pass resolutions.”

The A-State Model UN club attended two conferences over the course of this school year: the Arkansas Collegiate Model United Nations and the Midwest Model United Nations. From these conferences, the participating students learned about international affairs and the process of the United Nations, but also skills that

can be used in their daily lives.

The club started out the year at a one-day conference Nov. 4 hosted by Northwest Arkansas Community College. Many members of the team began their Model UN journey there, making the team largely inexperienced. This conference gave them a taste of how Model UN works.

Ann Long, a junior political science and history major from Cape Girardeau, Missouri, joined Model UN this academic year. Her first Model UN experiences came from ACMUN. “The (conference) in Arkansas was a great learning experience and I definitely would have felt very lost if I hadn’t gone to that one first,” Long said.

At the conference, the team received honorable mentions on the economic and social council and in the plenary. That conference gave the club experience and confidence to take on the challenges presented at the Midwest Model United Nations.

At MMUN, which took place Feb. 22-25, students from many different universities participated in committee and plenary sessions. Committee sessions split the students into groups while

plenary sessions brought all the students together.

Ellie Foote uses her experience in Model UN to expand her knowledge in her double major in political science and world languages and cultures. The senior from Jackson, Missouri and president of A-State Model UN, has been participating in Model UN for four years. She said she loves the club and it makes her want to go into the real United Nations in the future. She said she enjoyed seeing her peers who were newer to the club shine at MMUN.

“Getting to see all of my other delegates from A-State who had not done this before and getting to defend the policies that they had been working on for the past couple days was really incredible,” Foote said.

In preparation for MMUN, the club researched South Africa so they could accurately represent the country. They also sharpened their international affairs skills through their involvement in the conferences.

Kaleb Webb, is working on a double major in political science and world languages and cultures. The senior from Cabot, Arkansas participates in Model UN to further his study in those areas. “We all covered different



PHOTO COURTESY OF MODEL UN

(Left to right) Ellie Foote, Ann Long, Elizabeth England, Hyesun Choi, and William Partain.

topics that would actually be covered in the United Nations and we got some different resolutions passed,” Webb said.

Elizabeth England, a sophomore political science and economics major from Piedmont, Missouri, said she learned how to act professionally, write resolutions and talk to new people.

“You just really learn a lot on how to present yourself and be really diplomatic with other people,” England said.

Not only did the team learn skills to use at Model UN conferences, but they also acquired skills they can apply to other aspects of life.

Wimpy said participating in Model UN can sharpen cooperation, speaking and writing skills. He also said the club teaches students to think about things from other people’s perspectives.

“I think the biggest misconception’s that it’s just kind of a big nerd fest for people who care about international

affairs, but really there’s more to learn there,” Wimpy said.

Foote said beyond international affairs, Model UN teaches public speaking, debating and teamwork. These skills can be used beyond the world of Model UN.

“I think Model UN has given me some experience on how to come to a compromise or some sort of understanding with, not only countries in Model UN that have different goals than you, but also people in everyday life,” Webb said.