

Loneliness is an aversive and distressing emotion resulting from personal dissatisfaction with the number or quality of one's personal relationships. Its psychological impact has become a growing concern across the United States, especially among college students experiencing times of rapid transition and emotional vulnerability that often result from adjusting to new surroundings, peers, and demands. Responses to the National College Health Assessment consistently indicate that Pepperdine exhibits a higher rate of student loneliness than the national average, which has been a cause of concern for university officials for years. The present study utilizes three focus group discussions to investigate the language Pepperdine students use when talking about loneliness in order to provide an elementary foundation both for future researchers and for Pepperdine administrators charged with combatting this issue. Our findings indicate that many key perceptions about loneliness are reflected in campus demographics and involvement, student image, and depth of interpersonal connectedness. We also explore how other personal factors such as social media use, personality, and expectations relate to student perceptions of loneliness at Pepperdine.