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COVID-19: Coronavirus Cases at Colleges and Universities in the Mountain West

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COVID-19:

Coronavirus Cases at Colleges and Universities in the Mountain West

Health Fact Sheet No. 6 | August 2020

Prepared by: Madison Frazee-Bench, Kristian Thymianos, Caitlin J. Saladino, and William E. Brown, Jr.

PURPOSE:

This fact sheet highlights coronavirus cases at colleges and universities in the Mountain West region. The *New York Times*¹ recently published, “Tracking Coronavirus Cases at U.S. Colleges and Universities” which maps out the reported number of COVID-19 cases at higher education institutions in the U.S. at the start of the Fall 2020 semester.

ABOUT THE DATA:

The *New York Times* compiled this tracker by using survey data from over 1,500 colleges and universities in the United States. Nationally, there have been over 26,000 COVID-19 cases in colleges and universities since the start of the pandemic.² It is important to note that the COVID-19 cases included in this dataset are cumulative totals from the start of the pandemic until August 26, 2020, not active cases on campuses today.

Additionally, some colleges did not reply to requests for COVID-19 information, while others removed cases from their counts after students recovered from the virus. There is no formal tracking system for colleges and universities to report COVID-19 cases and these numbers may reflect an underrepresentation of the actual total number of cases.

KEY FINDINGS:

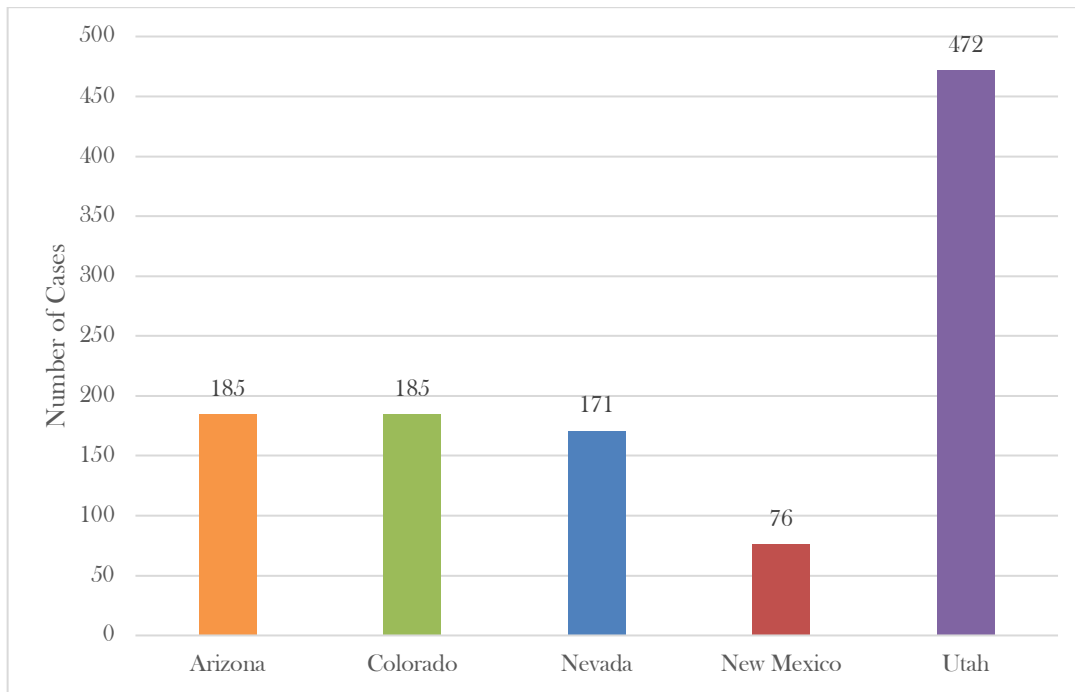
1. By August 26, 2020, colleges and universities in Utah reported the largest number of coronavirus cases in the Mountain West, accounting for almost half of all cases in the Mountain West region (472 of 1,089 cases).
2. Within the Mountain West, colleges and universities in New Mexico reported the lowest number of coronavirus cases (76 cases).
3. Brigham Young University reported the highest number of coronavirus cases of any single higher education institution in the Mountain West, with 168 cases.

Figure 1 depicts the number of reported coronavirus cases at colleges and universities in the Mountain West states since the beginning of the pandemic. Utah has the highest number of recorded cases in the region (472 cases) while New Mexico has the lowest number of cases (76 cases). Overall, colleges and universities in the Mountain West reported 1,089 coronavirus cases.

¹“Tracking Coronavirus Cases at U.S. Colleges and Universities.” (August, 2020) *New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/covid-college-cases-tracker.html>

² Ibid.

Figure 1: Cumulative Total of Coronavirus Cases at Mountain West Colleges and Universities, by State



*Adapted from “Tracking Coronavirus Cases at U.S. Colleges and Universities.” (August, 2020) *New York Times*.

Table 1 shows reported data on coronavirus cases at higher education institutions in Arizona. The University of Arizona, located in Tucson, leads in coronavirus cases with a total of 78 cases. One of Arizona’s largest public universities, Arizona State University, did not provide data to the original *New York Times* report.

Table 1: Reported Coronavirus Cases at Colleges and Universities in Arizona, as of August 26, 2020

College / University	Number of Cases
University of Arizona	78
Midwestern University at Glendale	54
Grand Canyon University	42
Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University at Prescott	11
Total	185

*Adapted from “Tracking Coronavirus Cases at U.S. Colleges and Universities.” (August, 2020) *New York Times*.

Table 2 reveals reported data on coronavirus cases at higher education institutions in Colorado. Colorado State University in Fort Collins leads the state with 82 cases. Colorado has the highest number of colleges and universities reporting cases but has the same cumulative total as Arizona (185 cases).

Table 2: Reported Coronavirus Cases at Colleges and Universities in Colorado, as of August 26, 2020

School	Number of Cases
Colorado State University	82
University of Colorado Boulder	53
Colorado Mesa University	13
Colorado School of Mines	10
University of Northern Colorado	10
Western Colorado University	4
Arapahoe Community College	3
Pikes Peak Community College	2
Colorado College	2
Fort Lewis College	1
University of Colorado, Colorado Springs	1
Metropolitan State University of Denver	1
Colorado Christian University	1
University of Colorado Denver-Anschutz Medical Campus	1
Front Range Community College	1
Total	185

*Adapted from “Tracking Coronavirus Cases at U.S. Colleges and Universities.” (August, 2020) New York Times.

Table 3 displays reported coronavirus cases at higher education institutions in Nevada. The University of Nevada, Las Vegas leads with 75 cumulative cases. Although having the second lowest population of Mountain West states, Nevada leads the region with the number of cases per capita as of August 26, 2020; with 117 cases per 100,000.³ Even with its smaller population, Nevada’s case total is similar to states with larger populations like Arizona or Colorado.

Table 3: Reported Coronavirus Cases at Colleges and Universities in Nevada, as of August 26, 2020

School	Number of Cases
University of Nevada, Las Vegas	75
University of Nevada, Reno	48
College of Southern Nevada	39
Nevada State College	9
Total	171

*Adapted from “Tracking Coronavirus Cases at U.S. Colleges and Universities.” (August, 2020) New York Times.

³ “Nevada Coronavirus Map and Case Count.” (August, 2020) New York Times. <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/nevada-coronavirus-cases.html>

Table 4 shows reported coronavirus cases at higher education institutions in New Mexico. New Mexico State University in Las Cruces reports the highest number of coronavirus cases (41 cases). New Mexico reports significantly less coronavirus cases at colleges and universities, when compared to other Mountain West states.

Table 4: Reported Coronavirus Cases at Colleges and Universities in New Mexico, as of August 26, 2020

School	Number of Cases
New Mexico State University	41
University of New Mexico	25
New Mexico Highlands University	8
Western New Mexico University	2
Total	76

*Adapted from “Tracking Coronavirus Cases at U.S. Colleges and Universities.” (August, 2020) *New York Times*.

Table 5 highlights reported coronavirus cases at higher education institutions in Utah. Utah leads the Mountain West states with the most coronavirus cases at colleges and universities by a significant margin. Brigham Young University in Provo reports the highest number of cases at a single college or university in the Mountain West with 168 cases.

Table 5: Reported Coronavirus Cases at Colleges and Universities in Utah, as of August 26, 2020

School	Number of Cases
Brigham Young University	168
University of Utah	155
Utah State University	97
Weber State University	32
Dixie State University	15
Westminster College	2
Snow College	2
Southern Utah University	1
Total	472

*Adapted from “Tracking Coronavirus Cases at U.S. Colleges and Universities.” (August, 2020) *New York Times*.