INTRODUCTION
The non-medical use of prescription drugs by college students raises numerous concerns relating to academic, social, legal and overall health-related consequences. Previous research has estimated that the highest rate of prescription drug misuse among 18-25 year olds is among the college student population (SAMHSA, 2014; Zullig and Divin, 2012).

The College Prescription Drug Study (CPDS) is a multi-institutional survey of undergraduate, graduate and professional students that examines students’ non-medical prescription drug use, including the reasons for and consequences of use, access to prescription drugs and perceptions of use among college students.

METHOD
The CPDS investigates the following questions:
• What types of prescription or illicit drugs do students misuse and/or abuse?
• Why do students misuse and/or abuse prescription drugs?
• What are students’ attitudes toward the misuse and/or abuse of prescription drugs?

In spring 2018, the CPDS was administered via an online anonymous survey to random samples of undergraduate, graduate and professional students attending 26 institutions across the United States (U.S.).

Specifically, eighteen 4-year public institutions, seven 4-year private institutions and one 2-year public institution participated.

Of the 113,999 students emailed, 19,539 responded for a response rate of 17.1%.

Institutions were recruited to participate in the 2018 CPDS through emails sent to health promotion and wellness staff members at institutions across the U.S.

REFERENCES

DISCUSSION
Figure 1. All students who participated in the CPDS were asked if they had ever used pain medications, sedatives and/or stimulants for non-medical reasons.

Figure 2. Only students who had reported ever using pain medications, sedatives and/or stimulants for non-medical reasons were asked to report consequences of use. (1) Response option was “experienced a positive impact on your academics as a result of your use,” and (2) response option was “experienced emotional or psychological problems.”

Figure 3. Only students who had reported ever using pain medications, sedatives and/or stimulants for non-medical reasons were asked to report reasons why.

Figure 4. Only students who had reported ever using pain medications, sedatives and/or stimulants for non-medical reasons were asked when they started this behavior. Students who responded “prefer not to say” are not presented in this chart, but are included in the percentage calculation.

The present findings suggest that college students in the U.S. misuse prescription stimulants more than pain medications and sedatives. Most students start to misuse prescription drugs during college. Students who reported ever misusing pain medications reported doing so to get high, but also report being depressed as a result of their use. Students who reported ever misusing sedatives reported doing so to sleep, but also report experiencing memory loss as a result of their use. Students who reported ever misusing stimulants reported doing so to study or improve grades. These students also reported experiencing a positive impact on their academics as a result of their use.

By investigating the depth and scope of the non-medical use of prescription drugs among college students, prevention initiatives can be better informed to ensure student safety and success. Future research should investigate and evaluate the effectiveness of social norming campaigns and/or permanent drug take-back boxes on campuses.