

# The Student Army Training Corps (SATC) at MU During the 1918 Influenza Pandemic

Erin Walton

Department of Health Sciences, Research Mentor: Dr. Carolyn Orbann

## Introduction

This research project examines hospitalizations of students in the SATC at MU in the fall of 1918 during the influenza pandemic. The SATC was a national program started by the War Department in 1918 as a way for young men to train for the military while they attended college classes. MU was one chapter out of many across the nation.

While we have an estimate of the loss of life during the pandemic, we do not have data for the total case number in order to get an idea of the mortality rate. The SATC data in this case study allows us to better understand the pandemic's impact at MU.

**SATC:** The Student Army Training Corp

**Census:** Total number of patients admitted to the hospital on a given day

**Re-Admission:** Admitted a second time to continue care for the same condition

**Sequela:** A condition resulting from influenza

Parker Hill was known as Parker Memorial Hospital during the 1918 pandemic. SATC recruits were admitted here during their time at MU.

## Methodology

- Primary data collected from records of payments to Parker Memorial Hospital from the war department for SATC recruits who were admitted while in the SATC program. [1]
- Organized data by admission date, discharge date, length of stay, condition
- Discarded admissions that were not influenza related.
- Compared data to death certificates on the Missouri Digital Heritage government site death certificates collection. [2]

## Key Findings

- 501 total hospital admissions
- 467 total influenza admissions
- 2.6% re-admissions rate for influenza or sequela of influenza
- 1.6% fatality rate in admissions

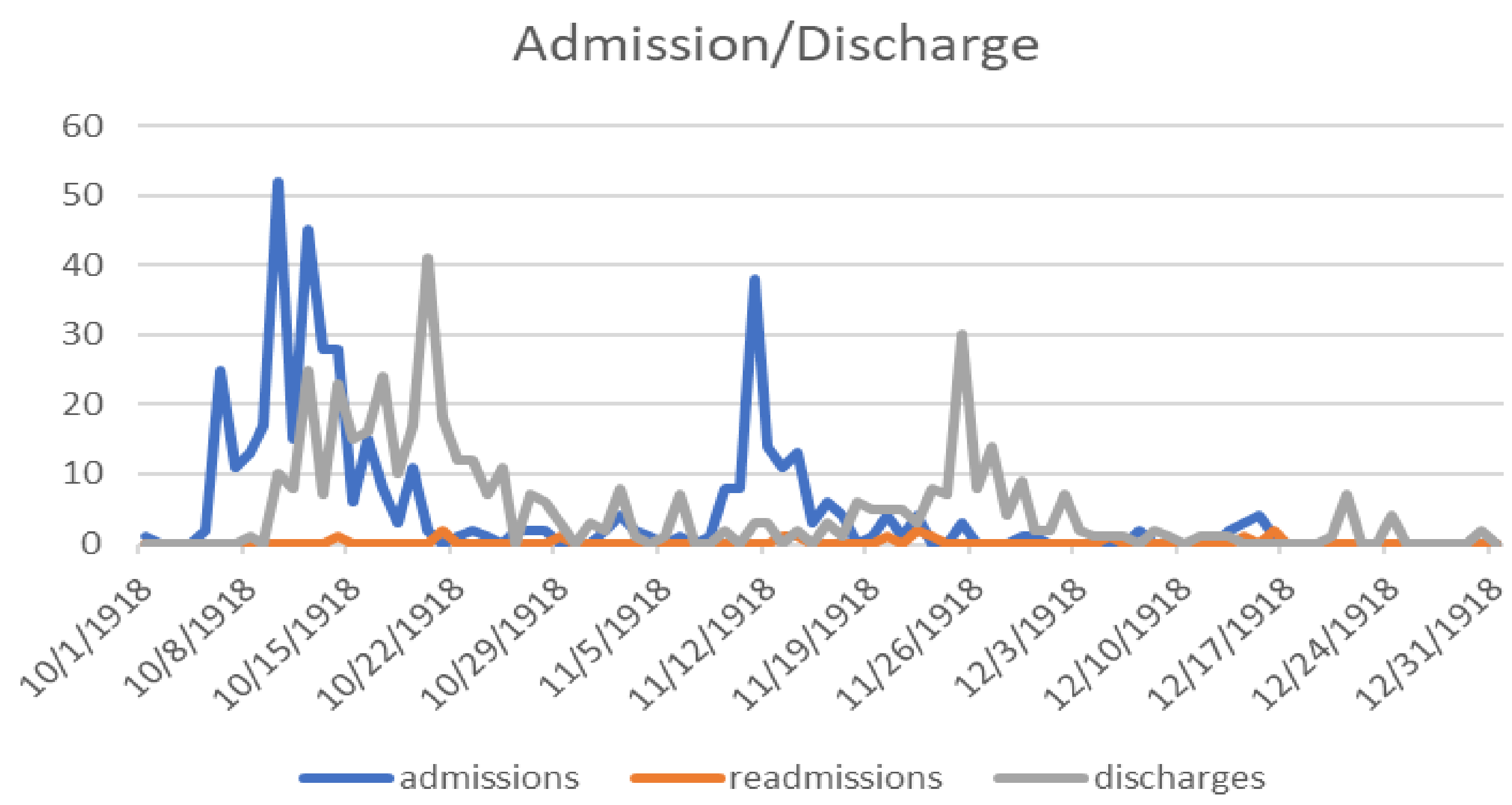


## References

- [1] C 3651 University of Missouri, School of Medicine, Records, c. 1902-1959, Folder 11.  
[2] Missouri office of the Secretary of State. (2020). Missouri Digital Heritage. <https://s1.sos.mo.gov/records/Archives/ArchivesMvc/DeathCertificates/>

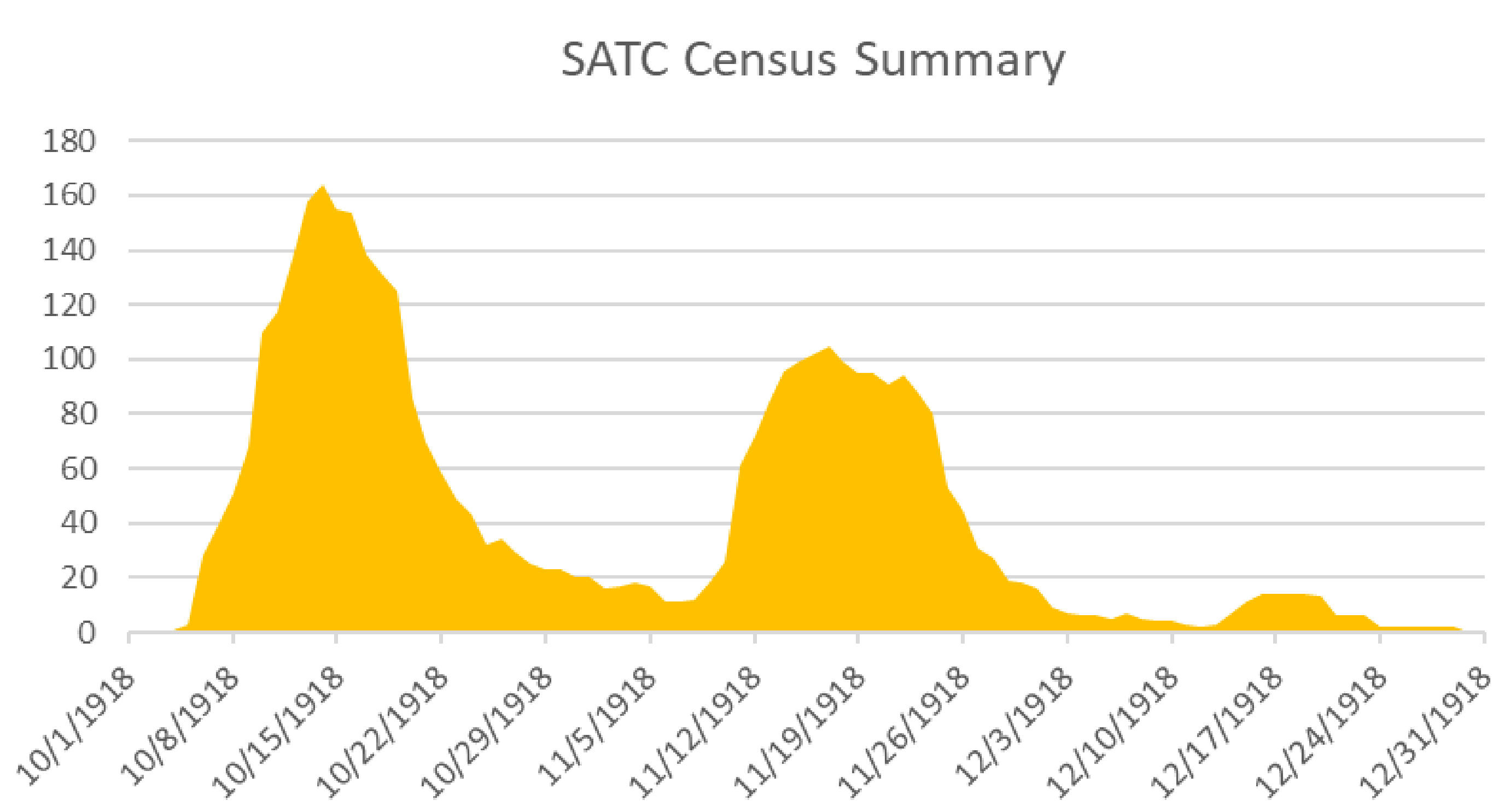
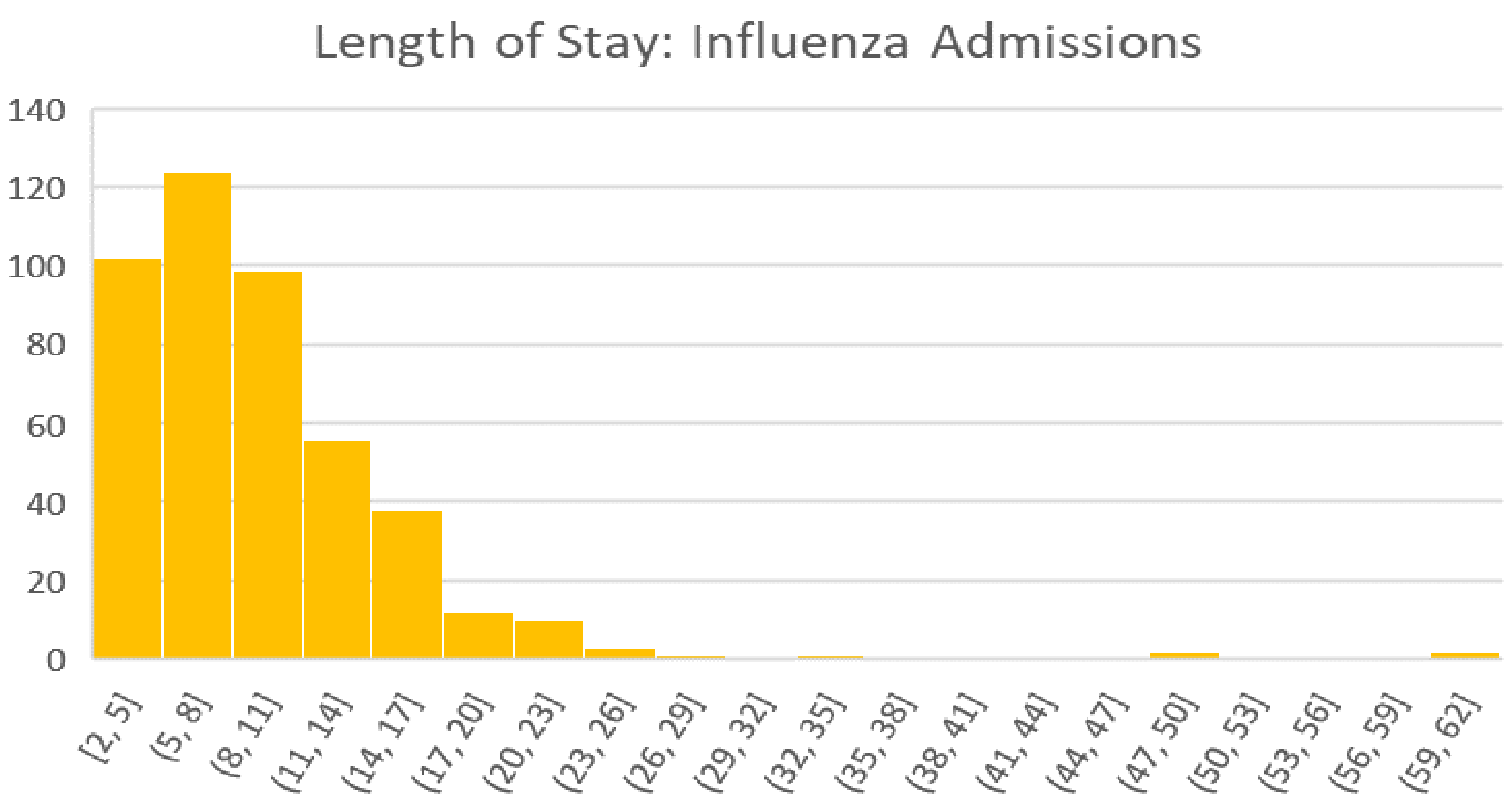
## Data Analysis

The Admission/Discharge chart shows the rate of new admissions of SATC recruits in October-December 1918. At the highest point there were 52 new influenza admissions in one day.



The Length of Stay chart shows how many days the SATC recruit influenza patients were hospitalized.

Most patients were admitted for 11 days or less, but a few patients had very long stays. The longest recorded stay among the recruits was 61 days.



The SATC Census Summary chart shows how many SATC recruits were in the hospital on each date October-December 1918.

This gives an idea of the volume of flu cases in the hospital during the pandemic. At the highest point there were 164 recruits hospitalized on the same day.

## Conclusion

- The SATC group on the MU campus in 1918 is an example of the way the pandemic affected the student population during the pandemic.
- This group displayed a 1.6% fatality rate among influenza admissions. There is little information available for accurate influenza fatality rates in the 1918 pandemic, and this data set gives an idea of what the fatality rate may have been.



Health Sciences  
University of Missouri