Higher Education and COVID-19
National Student Survey
Remote learning experiences

April 2020
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Introduction

► **Population:** EY-Parthenon surveyed 3,675 current college students (freshman through juniors) across four- and two-year public and private nonprofit institutions

► **Timing:** April 6–20, 2020

► **Key questions:** The survey assessed the impact of COVID-19 on higher education delivery and student expectations:
  
  ► The experiences of current college students who transitioned into remote learning due to COVID-19 after originally enrolling in all or mostly in-person courses
  
  ► How expectations for higher education participation may be changing for current college students due to COVID-19

► **Purpose:** Provide insight to colleges and universities to help them improve remote engagement and learning for students
Key findings related to delivery of education

► Over 40% of respondents are taking their classes in a synchronous manner, and **over 25% have their courses delivered mostly asynchronously.** The rest are experiencing a fairly even split.

► Of the respondents, **70% report using an incremental third-party solution** (e.g., Zoom, Webex, RingCentral) to participate in remote classes.

► Given a pass/fail grade option, **between 37% and 73% of respondents selected pass/fail**, with the highest percentages at two-year institutions, perhaps reflecting other life demands on students.

► Approximately **14% of respondents remained on campus while learning remotely**, though this varies by income level.
Overall satisfaction with remote learning

Overall, student satisfaction is relatively polarized but uncorrelated with school size or selectivity, underscoring the impact of individual learning preferences.

**Overall satisfaction with remote learning, by school type**

Q: What is your overall satisfaction with your remote learning experience?

*Please rate on a scale of 1 to 7, where 1 = “Not at all satisfied” and 7 = “Extremely satisfied”*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Type</th>
<th>% Satisfied</th>
<th>% Dissatisfied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All respondents</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-year private</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-year public</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-year public</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-year private</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: EY-Parthenon general population survey (n=3,675), IPEDS
## Satisfaction with remote learning

### Top likes and dislikes

#### Likes
- Schedule flexibility and autonomy (~35%)
- Comfort of being at home (29%)
- More productive/easier (11%)

#### Dislikes
- Lower quality/less engaging teaching experience (~23%)
- More challenging workload/subject is more difficult online (14%)
- Lack of social interaction (13%)
- Lack of access to instructor help (10%)
- Technical difficulties (10%)

Source: EY-Parthenon general population survey (n=3,675)
**Satisfaction with remote learning: academic**

In terms of course quality in remote format, satisfaction is lowest for courses with lab or fieldwork.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality of:</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Dissatisfied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interaction and collaboration with classmates</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction and collaboration with professors</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remote learning experience for classes with required fieldwork</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remote learning experience for lab classes</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remote learning experience for large lecture format classes</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remote learning experience for smaller, seminar-style classes</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Excludes "N/A" responses
Source: EY-Parthenon general population survey (n=3,675)
Satisfaction with remote learning: supports
In terms of access, advising and tutoring fair relatively well compared to health and mental health support, and other admin supports

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Access to:</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Dissatisfied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic advising</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tutoring and office hours</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admin supports (e.g., registrar, financial aid)</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career planning services</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health services</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental health services</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remote methods/video communications</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology support staff</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wi-Fi (i.e., did not have at home)</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Excludes "N/A" responses
Source: EY-Parthenon general population survey (n=3,675)
Satisfaction with remote learning

Academic improvements: If there was one learning improvement you could suggest, what would it be?

～18%

Share of respondents who believe enhanced technology and training would be the best possible improvement

“Remote learning could be made better if everyone had had more knowledge and guidance on how to use it, on how to effectively use the platforms and make the most of virtual, from the professors to the students.”

– College freshman

“We should have classes that were designed for remote learning going in. It would also very much help to use platforms the professors are actually comfortable with, or train them, and platforms that are equipped for the amount of server traffic.”

– College sophomore

～11%

Share of respondents seeking changes to class structure, split evenly between requests for synchronicity and asynchronicity

“I think prerecorded lessons would be more helpful than the real-time lectures. For my online classes that I was already taking, we used that method, and I find it easier to work with on my own terms. It’s less hurtful to my limited Wi-Fi data as well!”

– College sophomore

“Having more live lectures. I know it may inconvenience professors, but I found I was much more motivated to follow through with my course work when I had to connect with my professor at the regular class time. Recorded lectures don’t work well for me.”

– College freshman

Source: EY-Parthenon general population survey (n=3,675)
Satisfaction with remote learning
Social/engagement improvement: What changes could be made to better provide you access to extracurriculars?

~20%
Share of respondents who desire greater interaction with professors and classmates as a part of remote learning

“One improvement to remote learning would be for professors to continue offering their normal office hour times. Since moving online, professors haven't had any office hours and aren't replying to emails, making it difficult to engage with them.”
– College junior

“I want more student engagement—asking material comprehension questions during class via polls and making more breakout rooms or small groups to facilitate discussion where everyone can turn their mics on.”
– College freshman

~40%
Share of respondents seeking to use technology to continue clubs and create new virtual events and activities

“I think clubs could host meetings over Zoom or another video chat service. Also, doing team-bonding activities over Zoom, like a workout class, movie night or discussion, could help students feel more connected to the clubs, other activities and each other.”
– College junior

“I would like to still be connected to my clubs and activities, at least over Zoom or some other method, but the college has not offered that to us.”
– College freshman

Source: EY-Parthenon general population survey (n=3,675)
Expectations for fall term
Students who believe course delivery will remain remote are the most likely to withdraw; educational quality is cited as a major drawback

Likelihood to remain enrolled at current institution in fall 2020, by fall 2020 delivery expectation

Q: What are your enrollment expectations for the coming fall term at your current college/university?

Dissatisfaction with the quality of online learning may drive students to explore other options.

► “We didn’t have classes. There was almost no further learning after we went to remote learning, only assignments.”
  – College junior

► “It is disorganized, all of my classes are dropping assignments, and I am learning nothing while paying full tuition.”
  – College freshman

► “I do not like remote learning because it is not ideal for my learning style. I like attending a lecture and feeling immersed in the learning environment and interacting with my fellow classmates, professors and TAs.”
  – College freshman

Source: EY-Parthenon general population survey (n=3,675)
Expectations for fall term
Approximately 50% to 70% of respondents, depending on institution type, expect tuition and fees to be reduced if courses remain remote

Cost expectations if fall 2020 is remote
Q: How do you anticipate overall cost (tuition and fees) to change if courses remain remote at your current college/university?

Source: EY-Parthenon general population survey (n=3,675)
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