



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

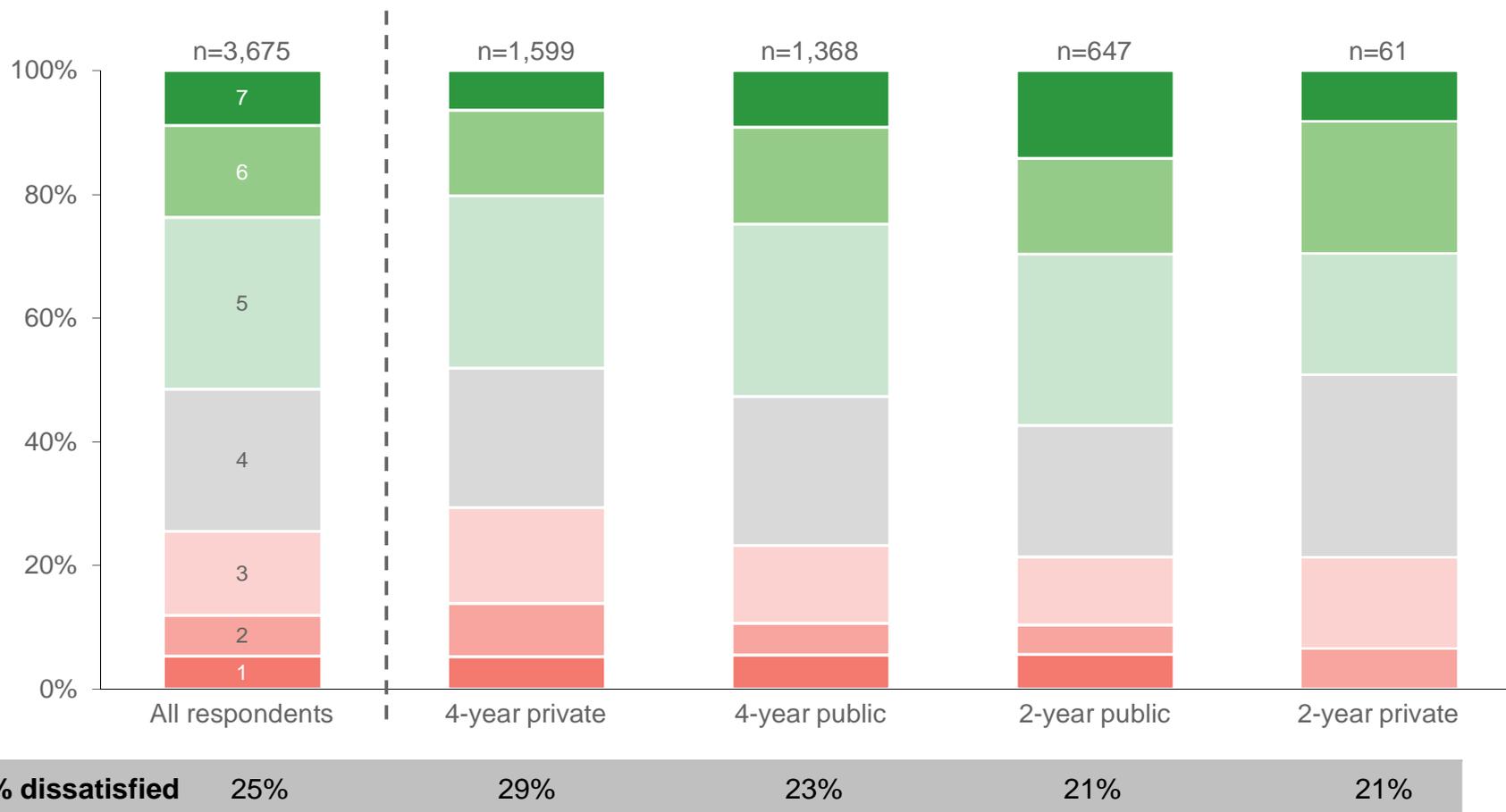
Overall, student satisfaction is relatively polarized but uncorrelated with school size or selectivity, underscoring the impact of individual learning preferences

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"



Satisfaction with remote learning

Top likes and dislikes

Likes

~35%

Schedule flexibility and autonomy

29%

Comfort of being at home

11%

More productive/easier

Dislikes

~23%

Lower quality/less engaging teaching experience

14%

More challenging workload/subject is more difficult online

13%

Lack of social interaction

10%

Lack of access to instructor help

10%

Technical difficulties

Satisfaction with remote learning: academic

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

	Quality of:	Satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied
Interactions	Interaction and collaboration with classmates	49%	18%	33%
	Interaction and collaboration with professors	54%	20%	26%
Class types	Remote learning experience for classes with required fieldwork	43%	19%	38%
	Remote learning experience for lab classes	40%	18%	42%
	Remote learning experience for large lecture format classes	51%	22%	27%
	Remote learning experience for smaller, seminar-style classes	56%	20%	24%

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

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

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

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.”*

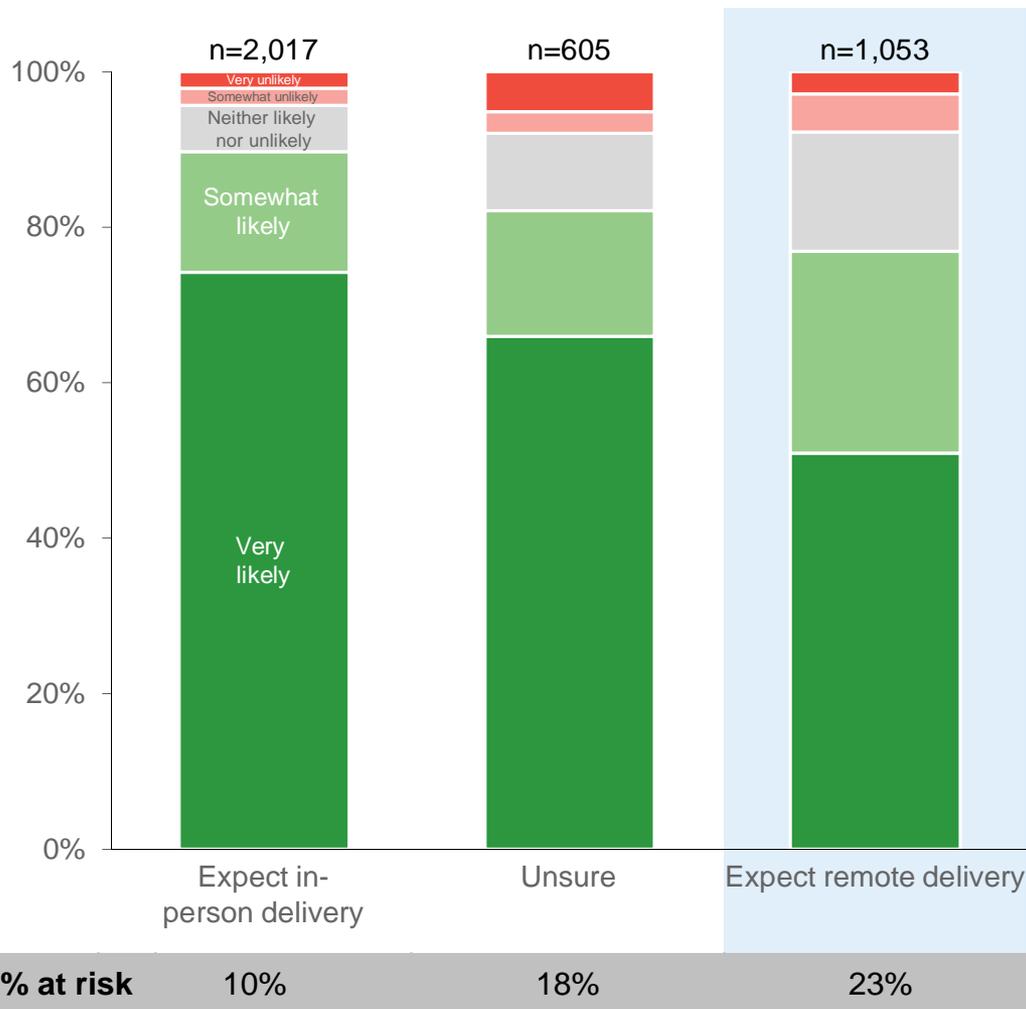
– College freshman

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.

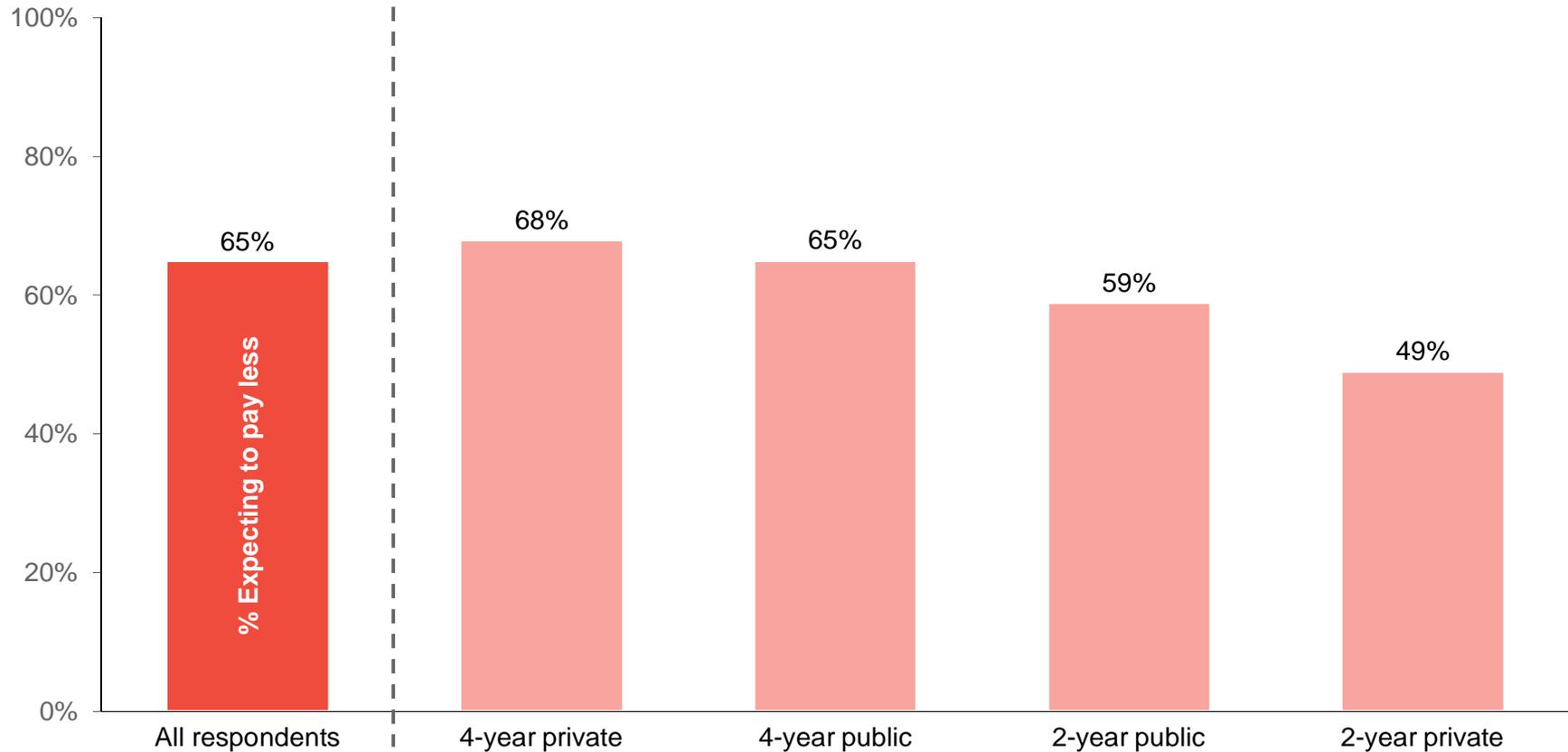
- ▶ *“We didn’t have classes. There was almost no further learning after we went to remote learning, only assignments.”*
– College junior
- ▶ *“It is disorganized, all of my classes are dropping assignments, and I am learning nothing while paying full tuition.”*
– College freshman
- ▶ *“I do not like 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

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?



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US SCORE no. 09122-201US

2004-3483911

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