



Return to Campus Survey

DRAFT

May 1, 2021

This report summarizes responses and findings from a survey conducted for the purpose of informing planning around a reopening of campus.

Sample Description

On April 23, an email containing a link to an online survey was sent, via HubSpot using preferred email addresses, to all students enrolled at Merritt fall 2020 or spring 2021. Out of 6,761 students who received the email, 449 filled out the survey; a response rate of 6.6%.

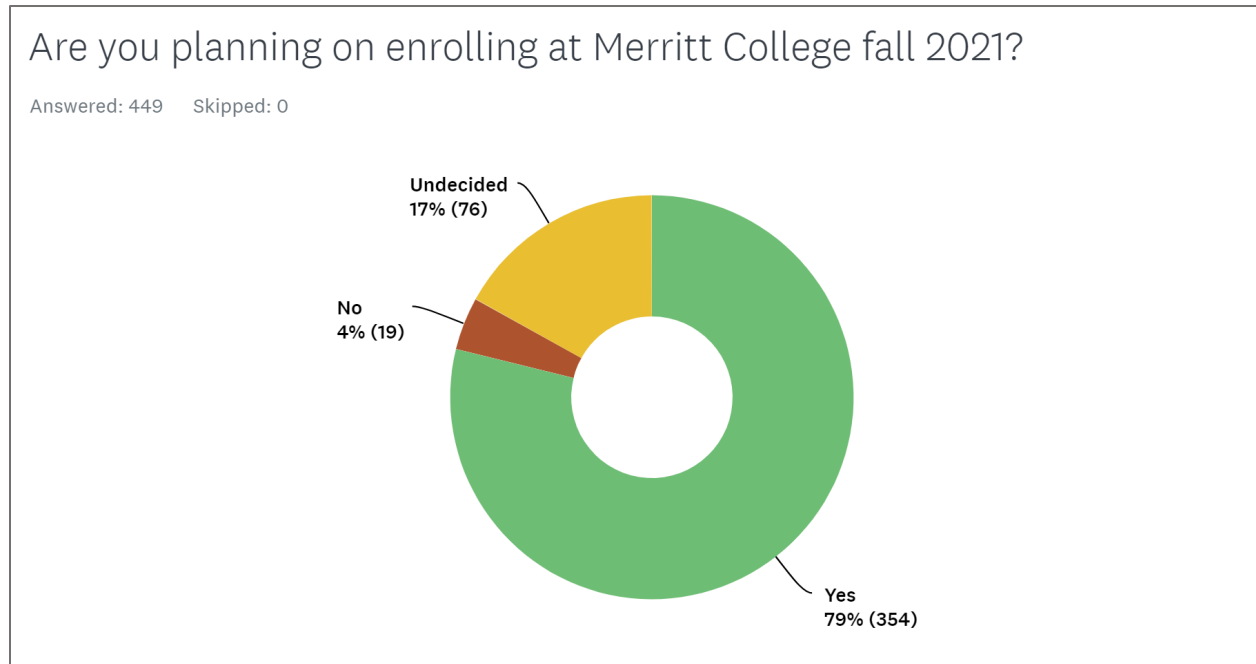
Naturally, recipients of the survey link represent a population who chose to enroll at a time when almost all classes were online. A second source of sample bias is suggested by the high proportion of respondents who indicated they will be enrolling classes fall 2021. Whereas 79% reported an intention to enroll fall 2021, the historical persistence rate from spring to fall has averaged 52% over the last three spring terms (53% in spring 2018; 52% in spring 2019; 51% in spring 2020). Both of these features of the sample limit the extent to which findings can be generalized to populations of interest, particularly regarding those who would be more likely to enroll once campus reopens.

Highlights

- When asked to choose between online and face-to-face classes, twice as many students preferred online to face-to-face; 56% versus 28% (figure 2). However, this result should be considered in the context of the sample.
- Concerns over safety from COVID-19 continues to be a major concern among students; it is a prominent theme in each collection of comments.
- Fifty-two percent (52%) reported limitations on their ability to participate in face-to-face learning, compared to 13% who reported limitations with respect to online learning (figures 4 and 7).
- Face-to-face labs, student services and classes were the top three most looked forward to aspects of a reopened campus (figure 10).
- Nearly all respondents rated the following aspects of online classes as highly valued: recordings of lectures, online access to course materials, the ability to send messages to classmates and instructor, being able to attend class without having to go to campus, and online access to student services (figure 11).



Figure 1. Survey Item 1



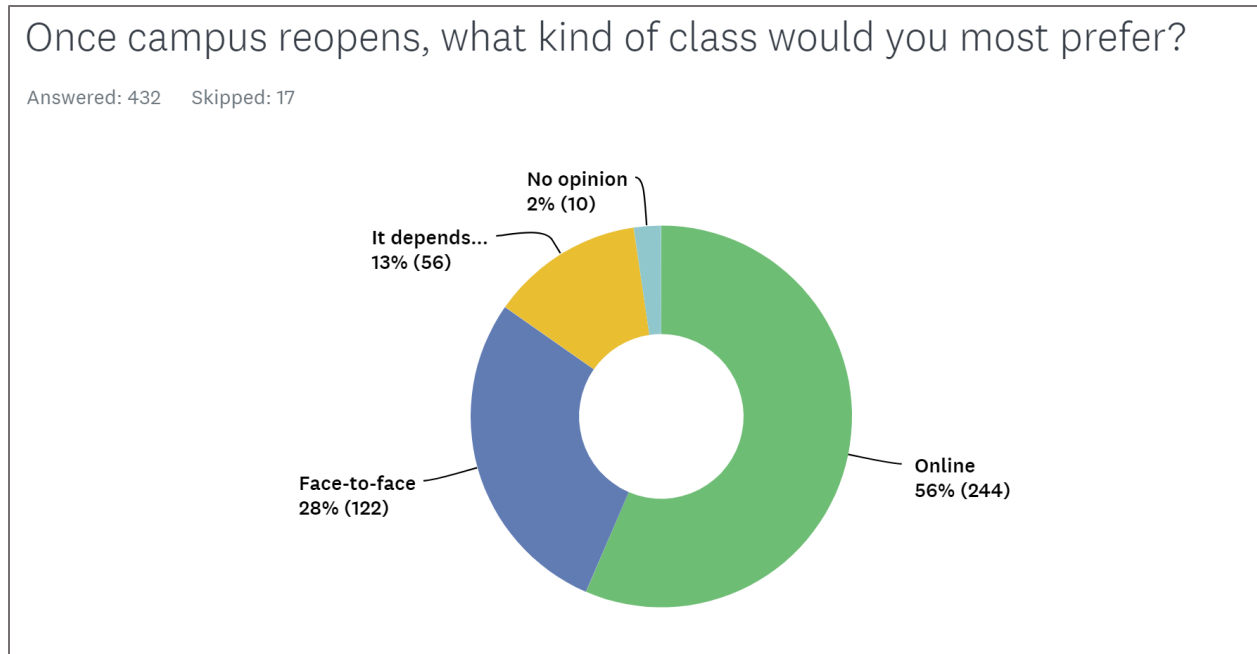
Of the 19 respondents saying they do not plan on enrolling at Merritt fall 2021, the following reasons were specified in follow-up questions:

Table 1. Survey Item 1 Follow-up

Reason for not enrolling Merritt fall 2021	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
Completion of certificate or degree program	6	35%
Transferring to four-year college/university	4	24%
Done with classes taken for personal enrichment	3	18%
Taking classes at a different community college	3	18%
Loss of financial aid	1	6%

Those reporting that they will not be enrolling in college fall 2021 were advanced to the end of the survey. All other respondents were asked additional questions.

Figure 2. Survey Item 2



This survey item was designed to extract information on which modality, online or face-to-face is most preferred. A response option for classes which are hybrids of these modalities was not provided in order to lead to a decision between the two basic types.

Figure 3. Frequency of Tags assigned to comments submitted with response option 'It depends...' for survey item 2

Childcare	1.79%	1	Face-to-face preferred	26.79%	15
Class size	5.36%	3	Hybrid preferred	32.14%	18
Commute	1.79%	1	Lecture online pref	3.57%	2
COVID concern	26.79%	15	Online preferred	32.14%	18
COVID Safety Meas	5.36%	3	Schedule	7.14%	4
F-to-F lab preferred	30.36%	17	Synchronous	3.57%	2

Students who chose response option 'It depends...' for item 2 were also asked to please explain their choice. Submitted comments were tagged according to the reasons given. Three dominant themes emerged. The most frequent reason given placed dependency on the type of class (with labs most often cited as a type of class needing face-to-face), followed by degree of concern of COVID-19. A third theme is that many describe some type of hybrid class as preferred. In figure 3, the number of comments tagged as "Hybrid preferred" includes subsets of comments which also mention a preference based on class type. To see individual comments see appendix.



Figure 4. Survey Item 3a

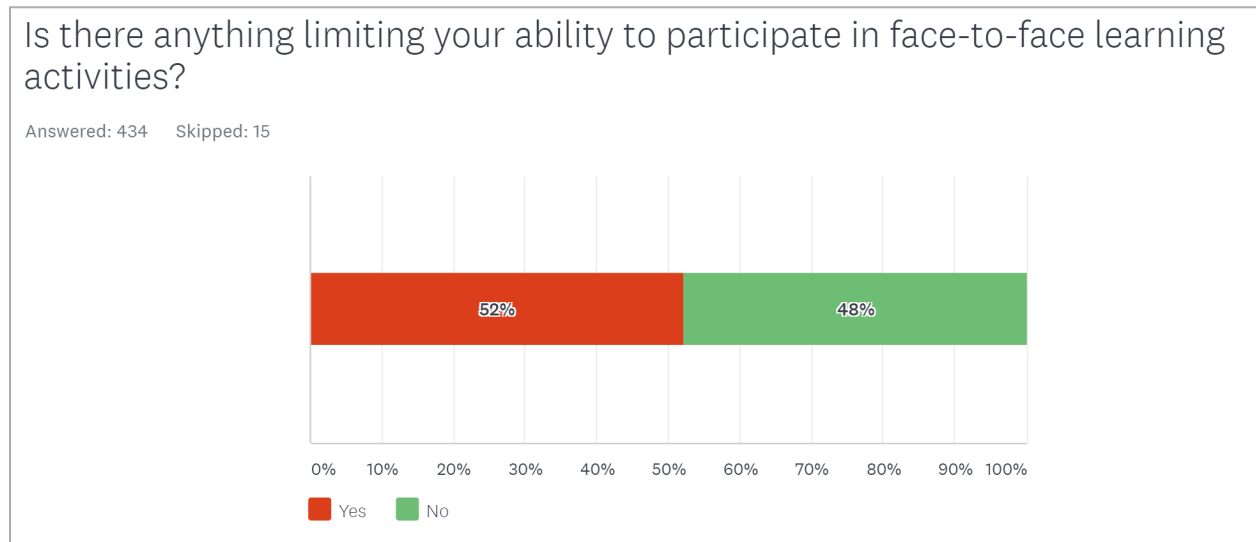


Figure 5. Survey Item 3b

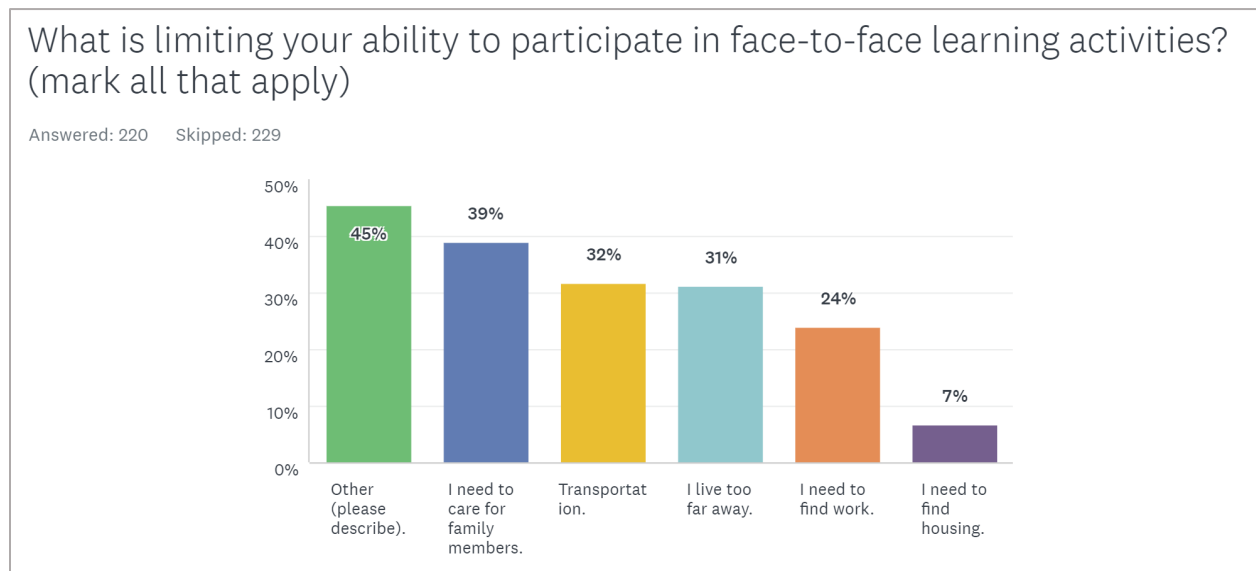


Figure 6. Frequency of tags assigned to comments submitted for survey item 3b.

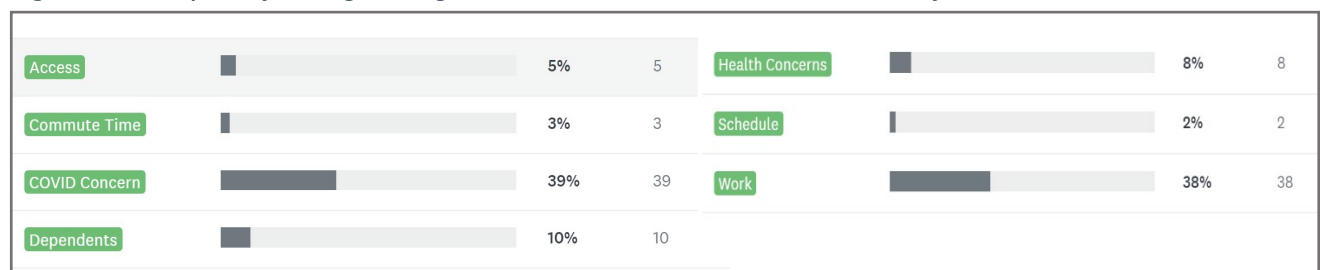




Figure 7. Survey Item 4a

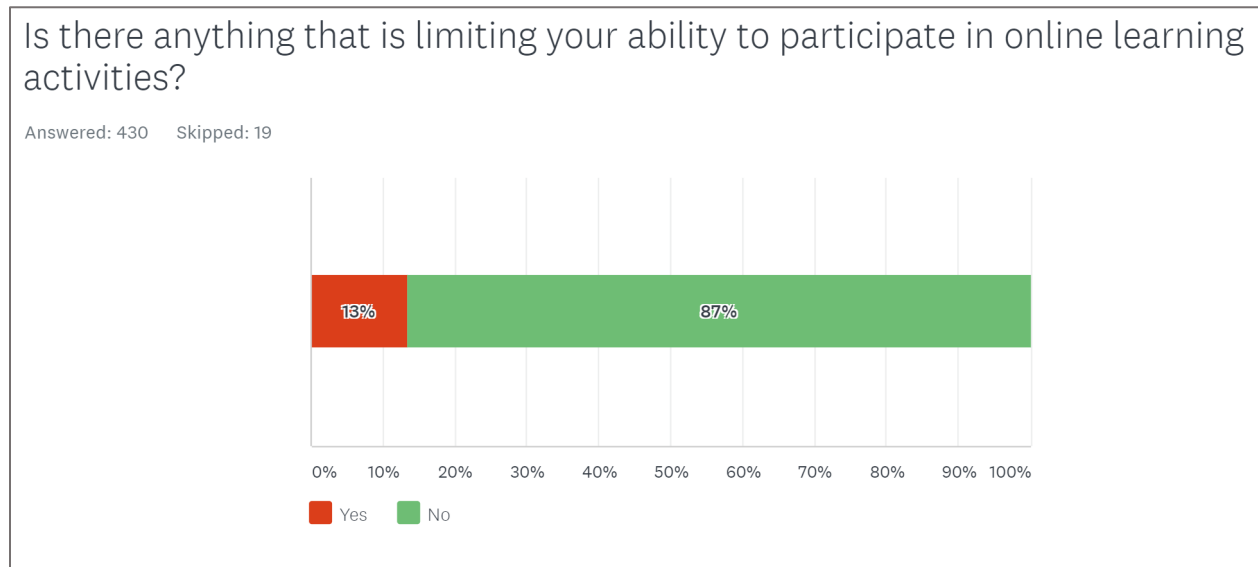


Figure 8. Survey Item 4b

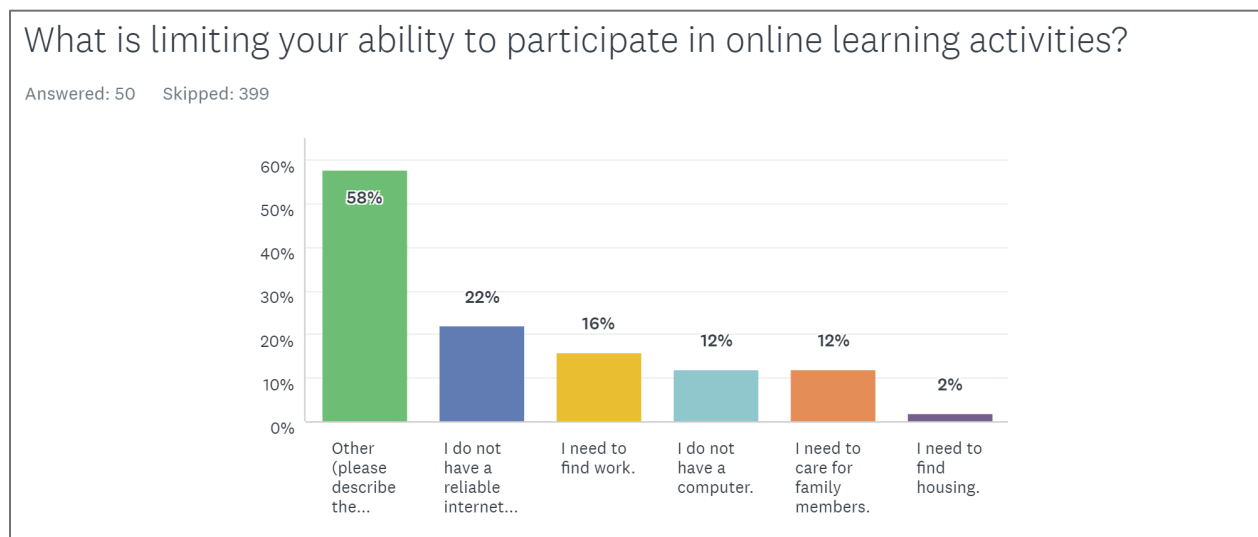
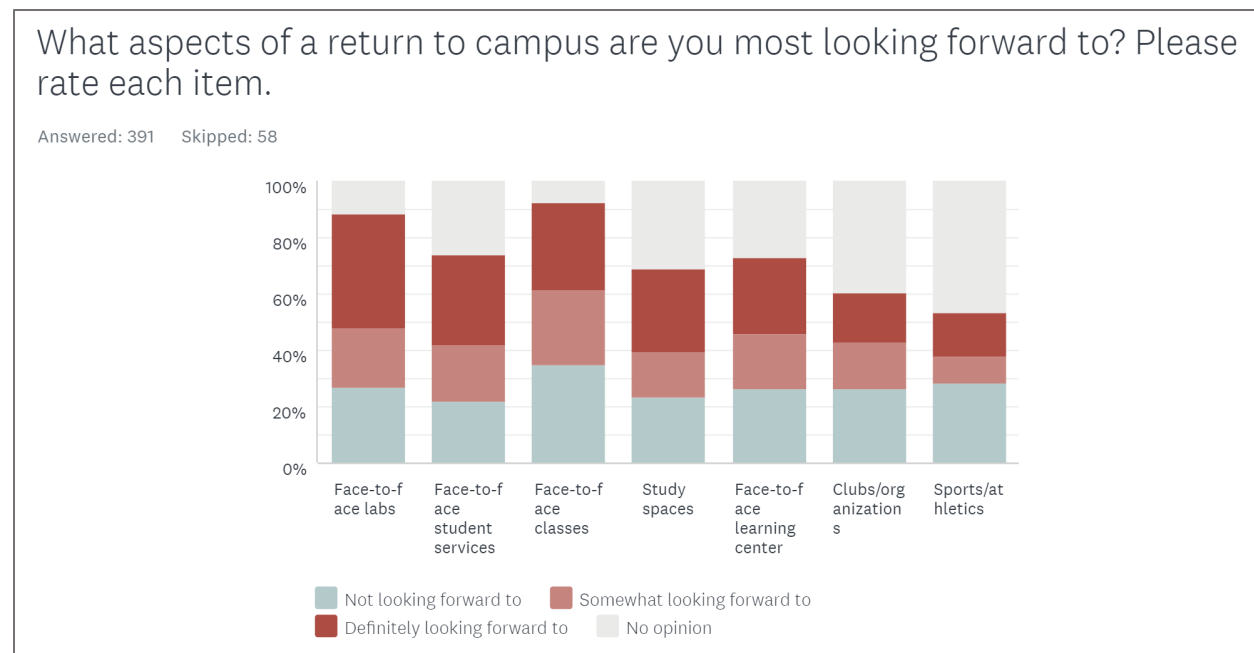


Figure 9. Frequency of tags assigned to comments submitted for survey item 4b.

Disability	<div></div>	3.45%	1	Required f-to-f	<div></div>	6.90%	2
Financial aid	<div></div>	6.90%	2	Tech issues	<div></div>	3.45%	1
Learn better f-to-f	<div></div>	31.03%	9	Work/Schedule	<div></div>	13.79%	4
Need f-to-f support	<div></div>	17.24%	5	zoom fatigue	<div></div>	10.34%	3

Figure 10. Survey Item 5

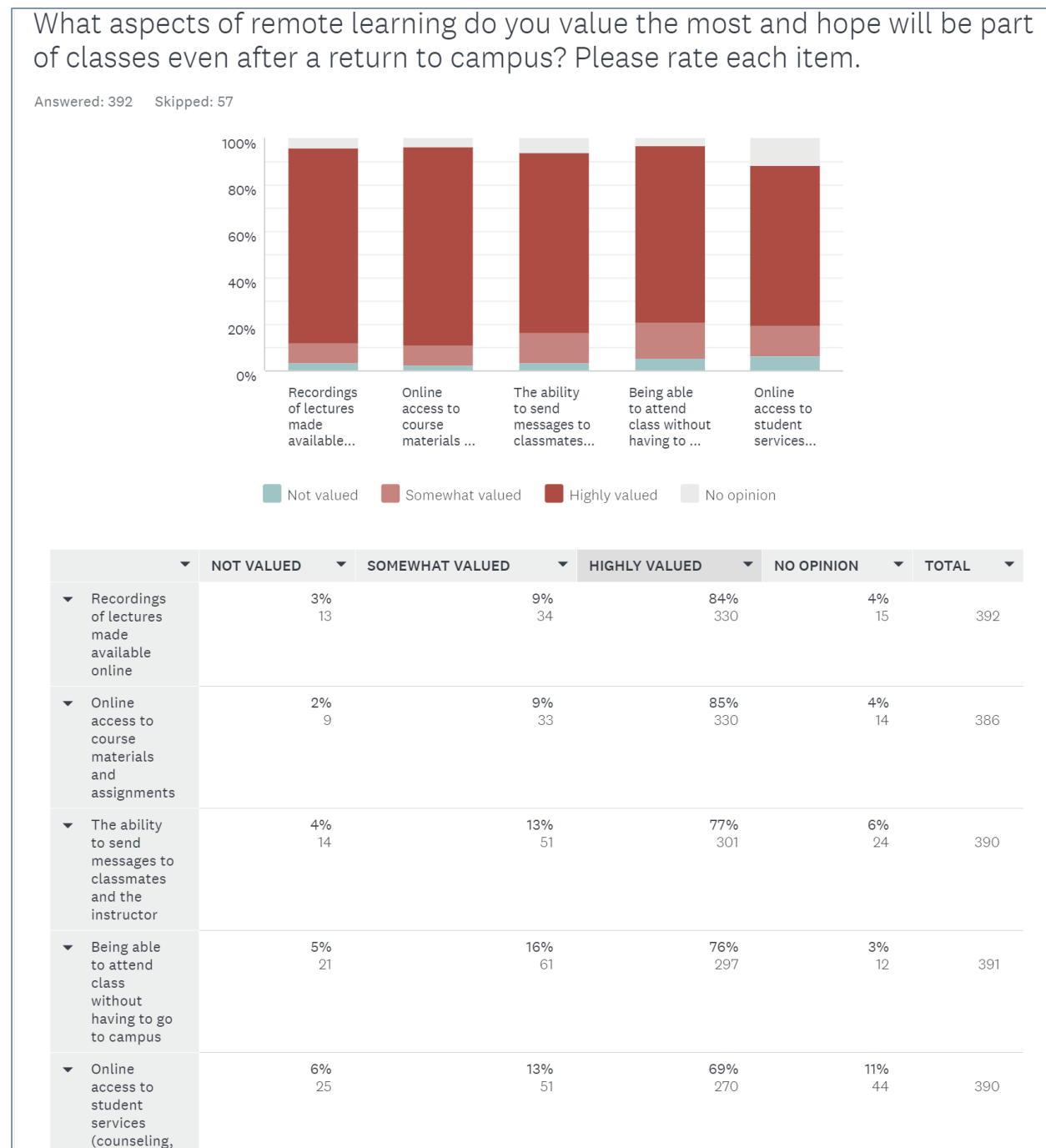


	NOT LOOKING FORWARD TO	SOMEWHAT LOOKING FORWARD TO	DEFINITELY LOOKING FORWARD TO	NO OPINION	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Face-to-face labs	27.20% 105	20.98% 81	40.16% 155	11.66% 45	386	0.74
Face-to-face student services	22.08% 85	19.74% 76	32.21% 124	25.97% 100	385	0.62
Face-to-face classes	34.79% 135	26.80% 104	30.67% 119	7.73% 30	388	0.53
Study spaces	23.64% 91	15.84% 61	29.61% 114	30.91% 119	385	0.51
Face-to-face learning center	26.51% 101	19.42% 74	27.03% 103	27.03% 103	381	0.47
Clubs/organizations	26.63% 102	16.45% 63	17.49% 67	39.43% 151	383	0.25
Sports/athletics	28.57% 108	9.26% 35	15.87% 60	46.30% 175	378	0.12

Summary of comments submitted by respondents selecting 'Other' for survey item 6.

Twenty-three (22) comments were submitted for this item. Aside from 5 comments which reflected one or more of the aspects listed in the question, 4 comments expressed a preference for online classes. Other aspects which were mentioned as being looked forward to include in-person classes, specifically, art (3 comments), ceramics and arboriculture (1 comment each). Two (2) comments mention the beautiful campus as reason to look forward to its reopening. Another 2 comment on looking forward to class field trips.

Figure 11. Survey Item 6



Summary of comments submitted by respondents selecting 'Other' for survey item 6.

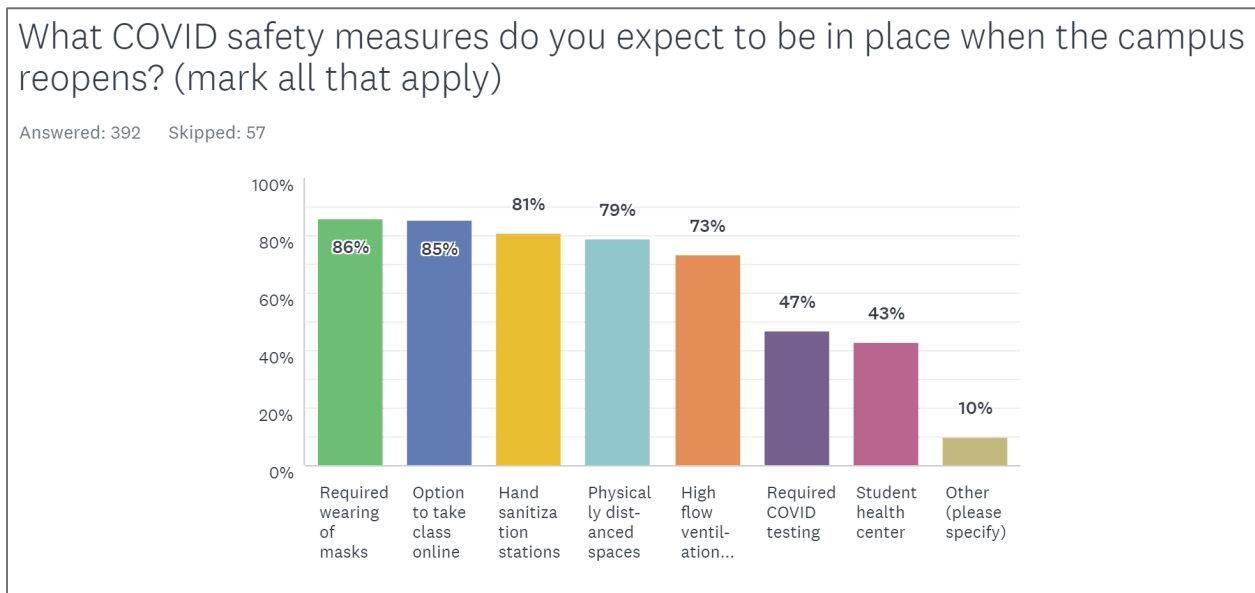
Twenty-three (23) comments were submitted for this item, the majority of which emphasized the value placed on one or more of the aspects included in the question. Other valued aspects described in comments include fitting with complicated personal schedules (4 comments), convenience of not having to commute (4 comments), improved learning in online classes (3

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comments), instructors more willing to work with disabilities (1 comment), videos embedded in homework assignments (1 comment), seeing grades and comments on assignments (2 comments), and virtual drop in hours for financial aid (1 comment).

Figure 12. Survey Item7



Summary of comments submitted by respondents selecting 'Other' for survey item 7.

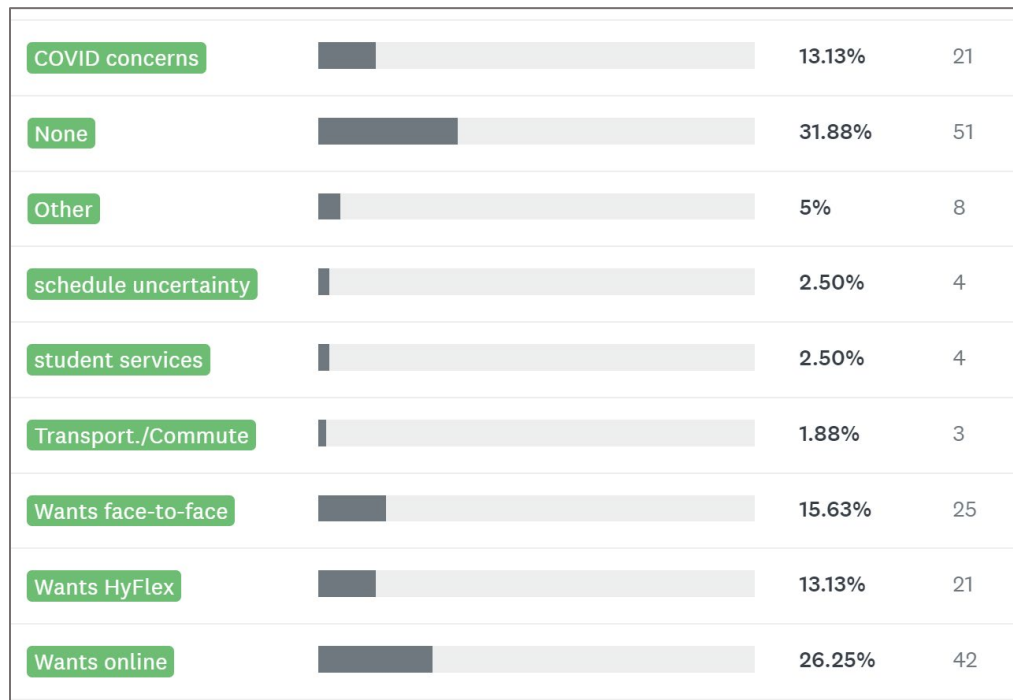
Out of 39 comments submitted, 21 suggest that vaccinations should be required and/or that persons should provide proof of vaccination. Other recommended or expected safety measures include filtration of air (3 comments), sanitation of classrooms between classes (2 comments), the use of gloves, holding classes outdoors, and temperature checks (1 comment each).



Is there anything else you would like to share regarding a return to campus?

Answered: 160 Skipped: 289

Figure 13. Summary of comments on survey item 8



Comments offered by students in response to the last item were assigned one or more tags based on common themes. To view individual comments see appendix.