

College of Marin Fall 2020 Student Survey

Introduction

In March 2020, College of Marin moved all face-to-face courses to a remote instructional format to comply with statewide emergency shelter-in-place measures due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Students were surveyed about their experience transitioning to online learning in April 2020; those survey results are available [here](#).

Most courses in the Fall 2020 semester continued to be offered in a remote learning format only. In October 2020, another online survey was administered to all students enrolled in at least one distance learning course. The purpose of the survey was to gauge students' perceptions of remote instructional methods, compare their learning experiences to those described in the April 2020 survey, and give students the opportunity to provide feedback on their online learning experience and suggestions for improving remote instruction going forward.

Methodology and Response Rate

Data collection took place between October 15 and November 8, 2020. The survey was sent via COM email and SMS (text) message of 5,261 students enrolled in at least one credit or noncredit distance learning course as of October 5, 2020. 939 students completed the survey, and another 92 partially completed, a total of 1,031. The response rate for completed surveys is 18%.

The survey was offered in both English and Spanish; 964 (94%) completed the survey in English, and 67 (7%) completed the Spanish version. Response rates were lower among students under age 25, males, and noncredit students. Due to the low response rate among ESL students, the overall response rate among students identifying as Hispanic/Latino was 18%. However, among credit students only, the response rate among Hispanic/Latino students was 21%.

Key Findings

Improvement from Spring 2020 Remote Instruction

Sixty-two percent of the 578 respondents returning from spring 2020 said their fall 2020 online course experience was either “much” or “somewhat” improved. Compared to the spring 2020 survey, students' open-ended comments about their learning experience in fall 2020 were largely positive, citing COM's support for students and their instructors' efforts to maintain instructional quality online, though most also expressed a clear preference for in-person learning.

Course Experience Ratings

For each course enrollment, students were asked to describe the quality of their online learning experience. A total of 2,869 course ratings were recorded. 78% of course enrollments were rated “Excellent” or “Good.” Ninety percent of respondents rated at least on course positively. Students were least likely to provide positive ratings for Life/Earth Sciences, Math, and English Skills courses (61% - 64%).

Experience with Instructional Strategies/Tools

A majority of students were enrolled in courses using live-streamed course meetings (94%); quizzes/exams (93%); online discussion boards (88%); instructor recorded lectures (81%); online

discussion forums (88%), and Zoom breakout rooms (79%). Students were most likely to rate as “Very effective” instructor recorded lectures (64%), live-streamed classes (56%) and virtual office hours (56-58%). Many students would like lectures in synchronous courses to be recorded.

Class Organization and Overall Experience

The large majority of students “strongly” or “somewhat” agreed that their courses are well organized in Canvas (89%) and that there are clear expectations for class assignments and due dates (87%), an improvement from the spring 2020 survey. 84% agreed they feel satisfied with what they’re learning in their classes. Student engagement remains a challenge; 77% agreed they feel engaged in their classes, though it is an improvement from the spring 2020 survey.

Student Needs for Participation in Online Learning

Most students “strongly” or “somewhat” agreed they have the technology and equipment they need for their online courses (93%), that they are comfortable using Zoom and other technology required for class participation (90%), and that they have an adequate internet connection for classes or studying (90%); 78% agreed they have a quiet place for classes and schoolwork.

Experiences with Course Instructors

Overall, students described instructors as available and responsive; 91% of students “strongly” or “somewhat” agreed their instructors are regularly available for office hours outside of class, and 90% agreed their instructors respond to questions or concerns in a timely manner and provide clear answers. Most also agreed that their instructors provide feedback on their coursework (86%) and are understanding of students’ unique experiences and challenges in their class (85%). 84% said their instructors seem comfortable using Zoom or other technology, an improvement from the spring 2020 survey. Most students’ comments about their experience with instructors were positive; concerns included asynchronous courses with unresponsive instructors and struggles with course workload/expectations.

Pre-Pandemic Enrollment Plans

Among first-time freshman who graduated high school in spring 2020, 60% said they already intended to attend COM prior to the pandemic; 22% intended to attend a different college (19% to a 4-year college and 3% to another community college); 13% had not decided yet, and the remaining 4% intended to take a gap year or had a different plan.

Intent to Reenroll in Spring 2021

At the time they were surveyed, 80% of respondents said they “definitely” or “probably” would return to COM in spring 2021; 7% said they “probably” or “definitely” would not return; and 9% remained unsure. Students identifying as White were the least likely to say they would reenroll, significantly less likely than Hispanic/Latinx students. Higher course experience ratings were significantly related to intent to reenroll. Students experiencing a financial hardship due to the COVID-19 pandemic and those responsible for caring for others on a routine basis were slightly less likely to say they intend to reenroll.

COM Resources

Students used several COM resources at higher rates in fall 2020 than they reported having used in the spring 2020 survey, including academic counseling (53%), online library services (40%),

the online writing center (28%), the virtual reading and writing lab (22%) and online Math Lab (19%). In addition, one in four students reported using COM Care, and one in three having used Student Accessibility Services. Between 90% and 95% of those using these resources described them as “very” or “somewhat” helpful. White students were significantly less likely than Hispanic/Latinx students to use the resources described, with the exception of library services and academic counseling.

Students were asked which COM resources they would first turn to if they needed particular kinds of academic or personal support. Students were most likely to say they would look for help at COM for academic support (registration, help with coursework, and their academic plans). least likely to need help with accommodations for disabilities or learning differences, and basic needs such as housing, food insecurity or child care. White students were significantly more likely than those identifying as Hispanic/Latinx to say they don’t need help with accommodations, basic needs, computers, or mental health support. In general students said they’d seek support from instructors or the COM website for academic assistance, but were more likely to seek external support for nonacademic needs. For assistance with basic needs, students were most likely to seek help from somewhere outside of COM (29%) or look on the COM website (22%).

Students’ Living Situation

The majority of respondents reported living with either their parents (44%) or a spouse/partner (32%). 42% reported they are responsible for caring for family members or others on a routine basis while attending COM. White students were significantly less likely than those identifying as Hispanic/Latinx to say they are living with parents, living with siblings, or responsible for caring for others while attending COM, and significantly more likely to say they’re living with a spouse/partner.

Economic Hardships Due to COVID-19 Pandemic

A majority of students surveyed have suffered an economic hardship this semester due to the COVID-19 pandemic. About half of students had a reduction in employment or earnings; 20% lived in a situation where the person responsible had difficulty covering the cost of their housing; 19% had trouble paying basic bills; 10% had run out of food without money to buy more, and 1% had been homeless at some time during the fall 2020 semester. Overall, 58% of students said they were financially impacted in at least one category. Respondents identifying as White were significantly less likely than Hispanic/Latinx students to report experiencing at least one of the financial hardships described.

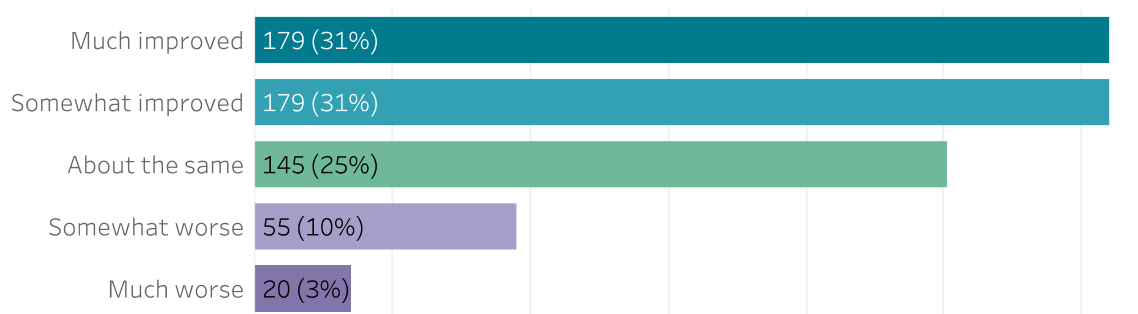
The majority of students said they at least sometimes experience stress or anxiety about their employment, food, living situation or overall financial situation; of all respondents, 39% said they “very often” or “often” do, one-third said they do sometimes, and 28% said “almost never” or “never.” Students identifying as African-American/Black and Hispanic/Latinx reported experiencing stress or anxiety at higher rates and frequency than White, Multiracial, or Asian students, though only the difference between White and Hispanic/Latinx students is statistically significant.

Survey Results

“How would you describe your online learning experience in your Fall 2020 COM classes compared to online learning in Spring 2020?”

Fifty-six percent of respondents (n=578) had attended COM in spring 2020. The majority (62%) described their online course experiences in fall 2020 as either much improved (31%) or somewhat improved (31%); one quarter said it was about the same; and 13% said their experience was somewhat worse (10%) or much worse (3%). Students’ answers to this question did not differ significantly by race/ethnicity.

Figure Q3-1: Quality of Online Learning Experience in Fall 2020 COM Classes Compared to Spring 2020



“For each of your Fall 2020 classes, please describe the overall quality of your online learning experience.”

Students were asked to describe their online learning experience in each of their enrolled courses as “excellent,” “good,” “fair,” “poor,” or “not applicable.” Of the 1,031 survey respondents, 1,022 provided a rating for at least one course (excluding “not applicable” responses). A total of 2,869 course enrollment ratings were recorded, comprising 23% of all 12,920 fall 2020 course enrollments.

The majority of course enrollments were rated positively (78%); students said the overall quality of their online learning experience was “excellent” in 46% of course enrollments, and “good” in 32% (Figure Q2-1).

Almost all students (90%) had at least one positive course experience, though a substantial proportion (38%) also rated at least one course as “fair” or “poor” (Figure Q2-2).

There were no statistically significant differences in average course ratings or having a positive/negative course experience by race/ethnicity.

The proportion of course enrollments rated ranged from 11% (Noncredit ESL) to 36% (Nursing). The majority of enrollment ratings in all departments were positive, though students seemed to struggle more than average with online learning in Life/Earth Sciences, Math, and English Skills, which had positive course ratings between 61% and 64%. (Figure Q2-3).

Figure Q2-1: Ratings of Overall Quality of Online Learning Experience for All Respondents and by Race/Ethnicity

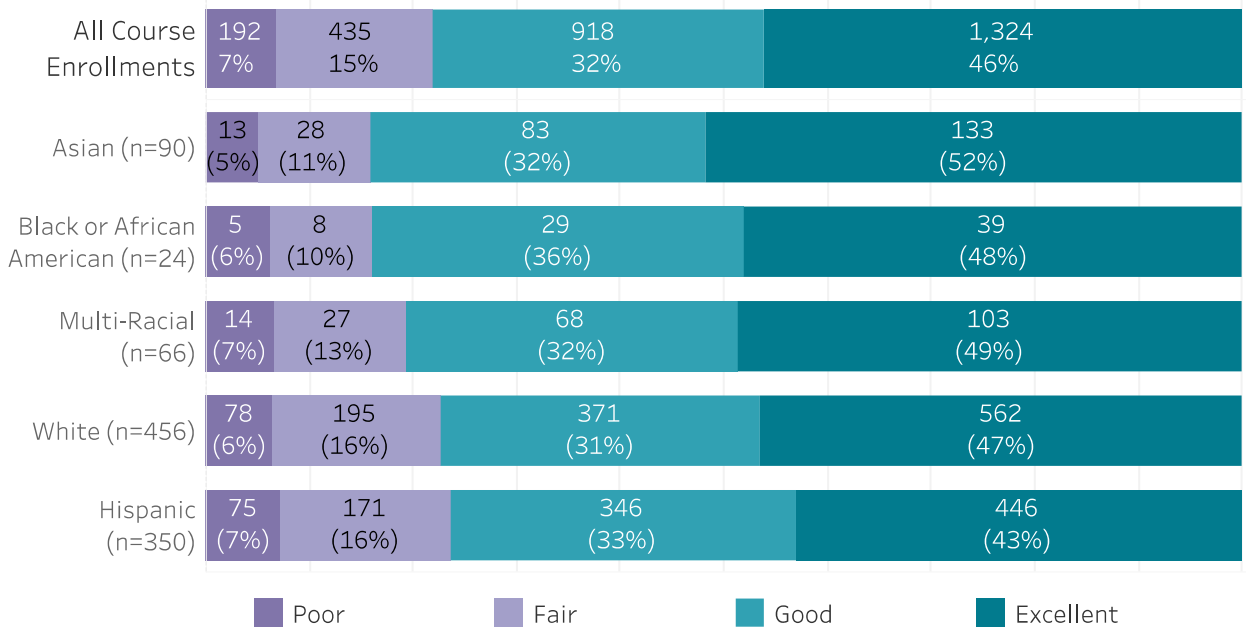
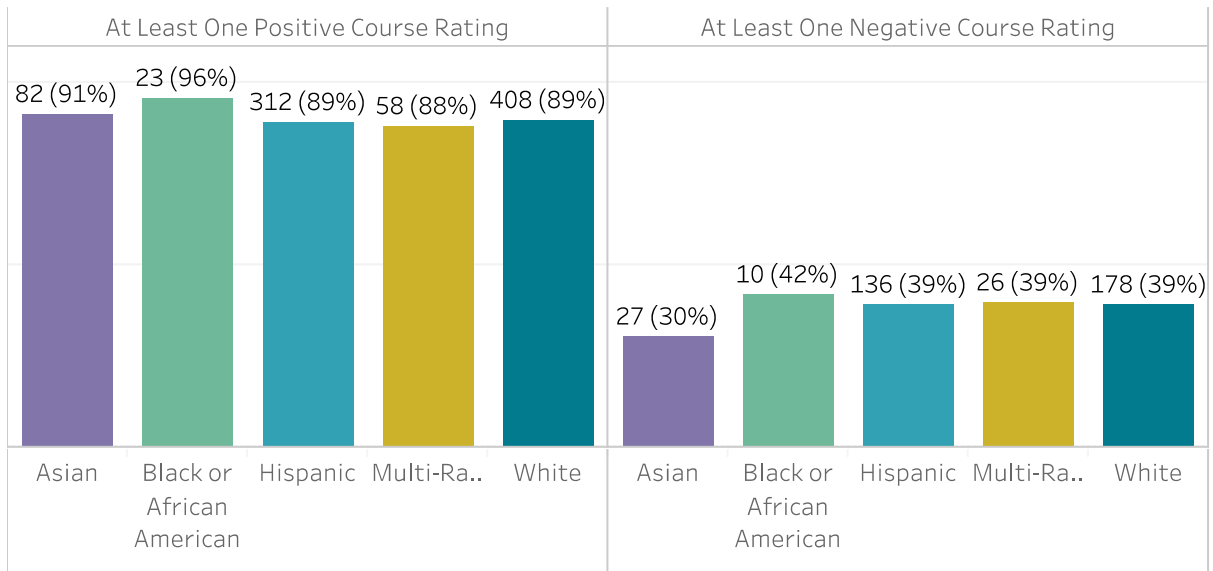


Figure Q2-2: Respondents with At Least One Positive and At Least One Negative Course Rating by Race/Ethnicity



Q2-3: Proportion of All Fall 2020 Course Enrollments Rated and Percent Rated “Excellent” or “Good” by Academic Department

Department	Total Enrollments	# of Enrollments Rated	% of Enrollments Rated	% of Enrollments Rated “Excellent” or “Good”
Behavioral Science	1,312	320	24%	86%
Business & Information Systems	875	138	17%	78%
Career Education	544	112	21%	72%
Communication/Film/Speech	458	95	21%	78%
Counseling	279	59	22%	83%
Counseling/Student Accessibility Services	36	3	8%	
Dental Assisting	110	39	35%	100%
Early Childhood Education	218	56	26%	80%
Emergency Medical / Fire Tech	31	6	19%	
English as a Second Language	921	109	14%	87%
English Skills	181	36	20%	61%
English/Humanities	1,051	232	22%	82%
Fine & Visual Arts	481	104	22%	83%
Kin, Health Ed and Athletics	780	139	19%	90%
Life & Earth Sciences	1,021	285	28%	64%
Mathematics	1,237	291	25%	64%
Medical Assisting	329	79	26%	73%
Noncredit ESL	103	11	17%	100%
Nursing	638	178	36%	84%
Performing Arts	493	116	24%	87%
Physical Sciences	554	137	25%	74%
Social Science	821	171	21%	75%
World Languages & Cultures	447	115	26%	83%
Total	12,920	2,831	23%	78%

Note: For departments with fewer than 10 course enrollment ratings, the percent positive ratings is excluded to ensure faculty confidentiality.

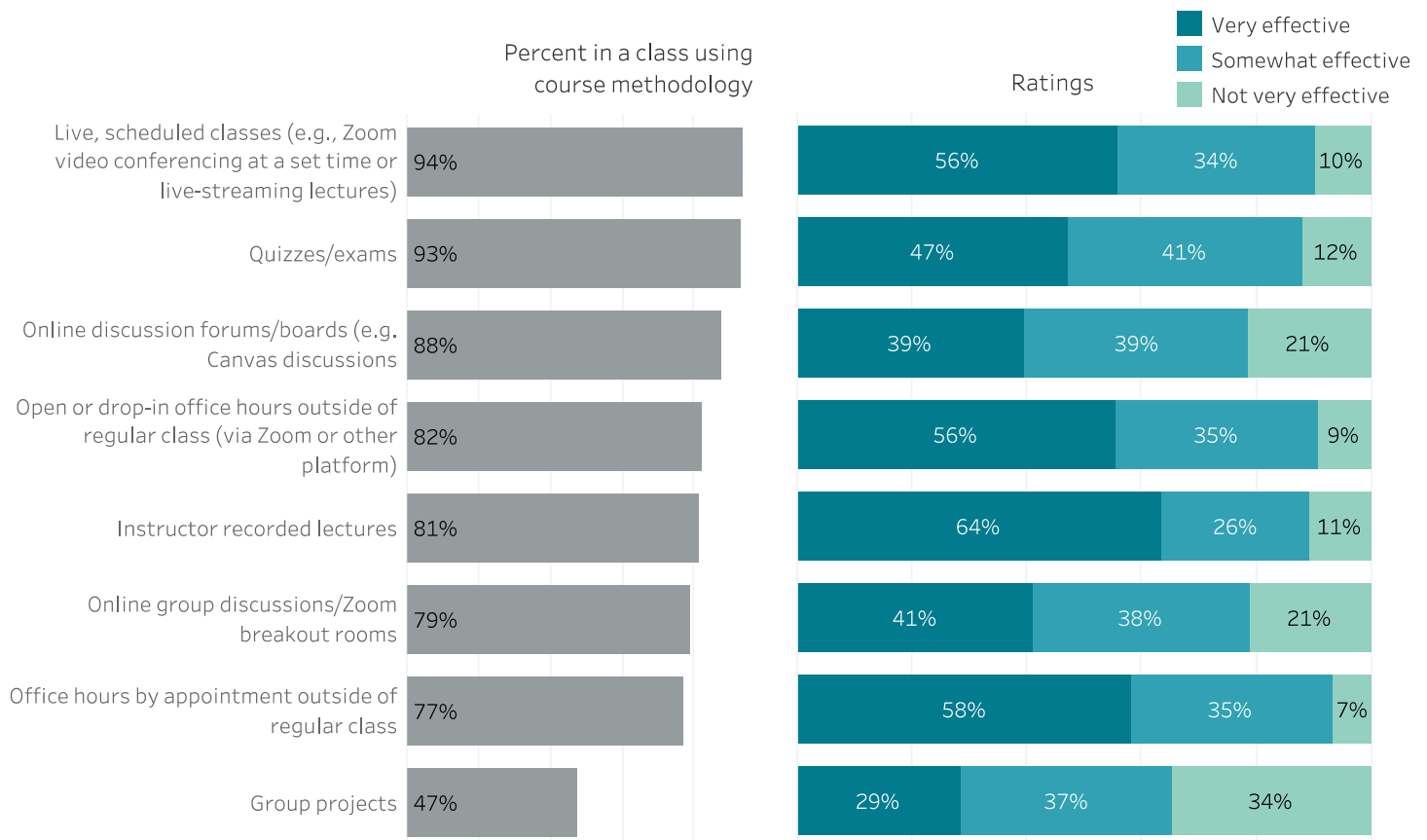
“If your instructors used the following strategies or tools for online instruction during this semester, how effective have they been for your learning?”

Almost all respondents (94%) were in at least one course using synchronous class meetings; fewer were in courses using instructor pre-recorded lectures (81%). Though about 90% rated both course formats as “very” or “somewhat” effective, students were more likely to rate pre-recorded lectures as “very effective.”

Most students were also in a course using quizzes/exams (93%), and 88% found them at least somewhat effective. Though feeling engaged in their online courses is a challenge many students are facing (see Figure Q5-1, next page), they were least likely to rate experiences in which they have to interact with other students (online discussion boards, Zoom breakout rooms and group projects) as effective, particularly group projects.

Most students were in a class where the instructor offered open office hours outside of regular class (82%) or by appointment (77%). Both arrangements were rated “very effective” by a majority of students.

Figure Q4-1: Percent of Students in Courses Using Specific Instructional Strategies/Technologies and Ratings of Effectiveness



“Thinking about your classes in the Fall 2020 semester, how much do you agree with the following statements?”

Class Organization and Overall Experience

The large majority of students “strongly” or “somewhat” agreed that their courses are well organized in Canvas (89%) and that there are clear expectations for class assignments and due dates (87%). Though the survey questions were worded differently and results are not directly comparable, these findings suggest an improvement from spring 2020, when half of students surveyed described unclear expectations around course assignments and requirements as a “major challenge,” and 31% as a “minor challenge.”

Responses were somewhat less enthusiastic in terms of satisfaction with course learning; half of the students “strongly” agree they’re satisfied with what they’re learning in their courses, while another 32% “somewhat” agree, and the remaining 18% “somewhat” or “strongly” disagree.

Student engagement in classes remains a challenge, though that too seems to have improved since students were surveyed in the spring. In fall 2020, 77% “strongly” or “somewhat” agree they feel engaged in their classes. In the spring 2020 survey, 59% described feeling bored or disengaged with course content as a major challenge and 28% as a “minor challenge.”

Students identifying as African-American or Black were least likely to agree with these items, but the subgroup size was small (n=24); differences by race/ethnicity were not statistically significant for any of these items. (Figure Q5-2).

Figure Q5-1: Class Organization and Experience Items

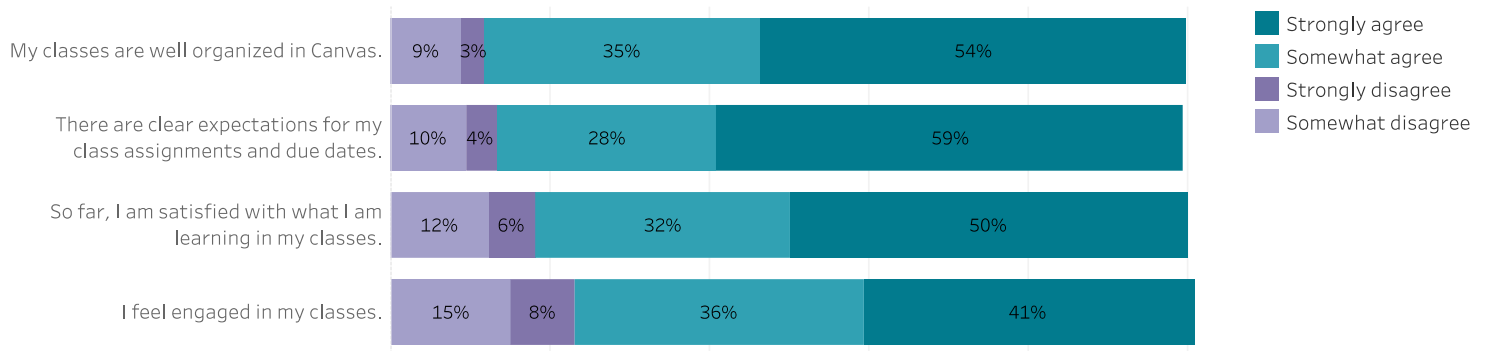


Figure Q5-2: Percent “Strongly” or Somewhat Agree” with Class Organization and Experience Items by Race/Ethnicity

	Asian	Black	Hispanic	Multi	White
My classes are well organized in Canvas.	94%	74%	89%	92%	86%
There are clear expectations for my class assignments and due dates.	80%	67%	82%	81%	79%
I feel engaged in my classes.	78%	63%	74%	69%	70%
So far, I am satisfied with what I am learning in my classes.	80%	67%	76%	80%	75%

Student Needs for Participation in Online Learning

Most students “strongly” or “somewhat” agreed they have the technology and equipment they need for their online courses (93%); that they are comfortable using Zoom and other technology required for class participation (90%); and that they have an adequate internet connection for classes or studying (90%). Internet connection issues, described as a “major challenge” by 21% in spring 2020 survey, seem less of an issue this semester, but 10% of students still “somewhat” or “strongly” disagree they have an adequate connection when needed. Students were most likely to lack a quiet place to study and do coursework; while the majority at least “somewhat” agreed they had such a place (78%), 21% disagreed.

Students identifying as African-American or Black were least likely to agree they have the technology they need, and Hispanic/Latinx and African-American/Black students were least likely to agree they have a quiet space to study and do homework; however, the differences between groups were not statistically significant (Figure Q5-4).

Figure Q5-3: Student Needs for Participation in Online Instruction Items

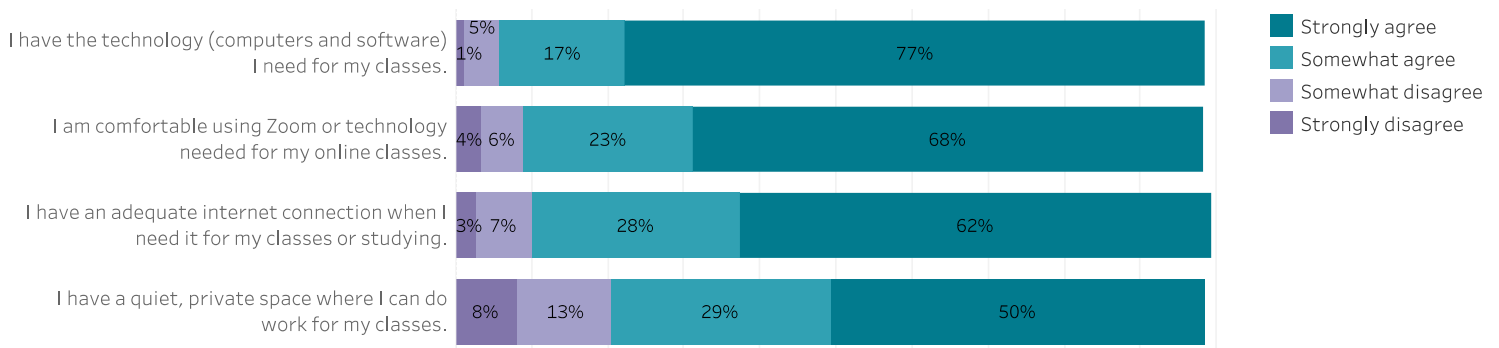


Figure Q5-4: Percent “Strongly” or Somewhat Agree” with Student Needs for Participation in Online Instruction Items by Race/Ethnicity

	Asian	Black	Hispanic	Multi	White
I am comfortable using Zoom or technology needed for my online classes.	84%	88%	81%	87%	87%
I have the technology (computers and software) I need for my classes.	89%	79%	86%	86%	88%
I have an adequate internet connection when I need it for my classes or studying.	87%	88%	82%	83%	84%
I have a quiet, private space where I can do work for my classes.	81%	67%	69%	77%	74%

Experiences with Course Instructors

Overall, students described instructors as available and responsive; 91% of students “strongly” or “somewhat” agreed their instructors are regularly available for office hours outside of class, and 90% agreed their instructors respond to questions or concerns in a timely manner and provide clear answers. Most also agreed that their instructors provide feedback on their coursework (86%) and are understanding of students’ unique experiences and challenges in their class (85%).

About half of students “strongly” agreed and 34% “somewhat” agreed that their instructors seem comfortable using Zoom and other online instruction technology, and 15% disagreed; this appears to be an improvement from the spring 2020 survey, where 38% described instructor lack of familiarity with required technology or applications as a “major challenge” in their courses.

Students identifying as African-American or Black agreed at higher rates that their instructors respond in a timely manner, and at lower rates that their instructors seem comfortable using Zoom or other technology, provide clear answers to questions or concerns, or are understanding of their unique experiences; however, differences between groups were not statistically significant (Figure Q5-6).

Figure Q5-5: Student Experiences with Course Instructors

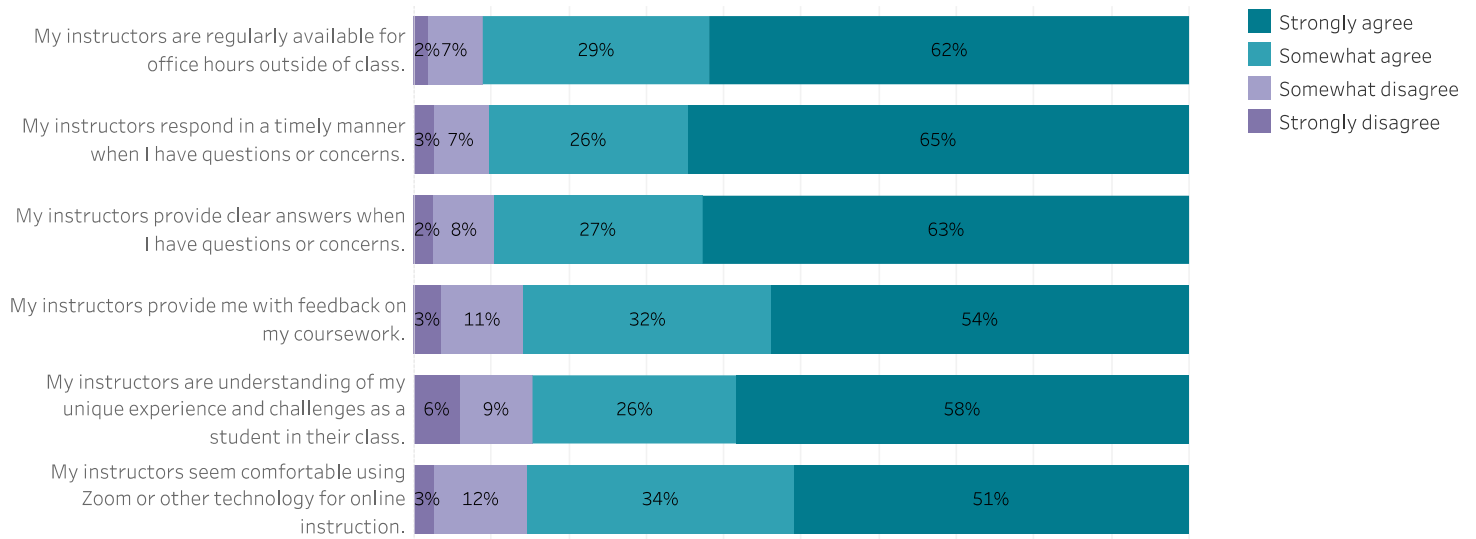
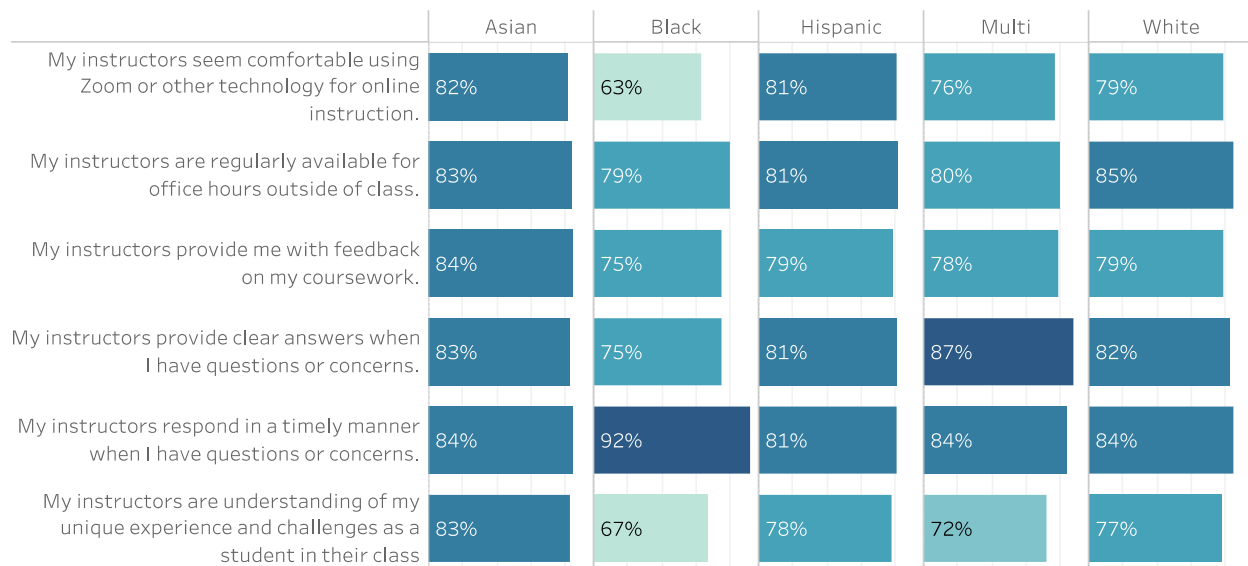


Figure Q5-6: Percent “Strongly” or Somewhat Agree” with Experiences with Course Instructors Items by Race/Ethnicity



“Please describe anything else you’d like COM to know about your online learning experience this semester.”

The largest number of comments were positive, indicating that students were either doing fine in their courses, have found it difficult but were adjusting, or acknowledging the difficulty of the current situation and that COM staff and faculty and students are all doing their best. Several applauded COM for putting students’ safety first.

Nevertheless, the large majority of students who commented expressed a preference for in-person learning. Many complained that their courses requiring labs or other hands-on learning (welding, ceramics, biology labs, etc.) either did not provide enough in-person time, or that online adaptations were insufficient for learning. Some, for schedule challenges, health issues, or other reasons, preferred the convenience of distance learning.

In terms of class format, responses were mixed. There were many complaints about asynchronous courses in which students felt their instructors weren’t available and wanted more interaction with instructors and other students. Others preferred the asynchronous format so they could complete work on their own time. Many students wished synchronous lectures would be recorded to access on their own time. Students who preferred synchronous courses cited being able to interact with classmates, understanding the material better, and ask questions in real time. Regardless of format, feeling motivated, focused and engaged with coursework was a challenge for many.

The large majority of comments about instructors were favorable. Many students commented generally about how hard their teachers have worked to bring their courses online, and many mentioned specific instructors. Specifically, they cited instructors who took the time to make sure all students understood course material; organized course content clearly in Canvas; maintained consistent course meeting schedules and office hours; and finally, were patient,

caring and understanding. Several students mentioned inconsistency in instructional quality, having both outstanding and subpar experiences.

Three areas stood out in terms of negative instructor comments. The first was course preparation and organization. Many students had at least one instructor who needed more training on Zoom and other technology, but comments about course material, modules, and assignments being disorganized on Canvas were most prevalent. A more serious problem, mentioned by 23 students, regarded instructors who post asynchronous course material, often from a textbook or external source, some of whom are unresponsive and have never interacted directly with their students; several described signing up for these courses as a “waste of time.” The third area was a feeling that some instructors are rigid in expectations and not understanding of students’ circumstances, such as lack of quiet space at home and interference by other household members.

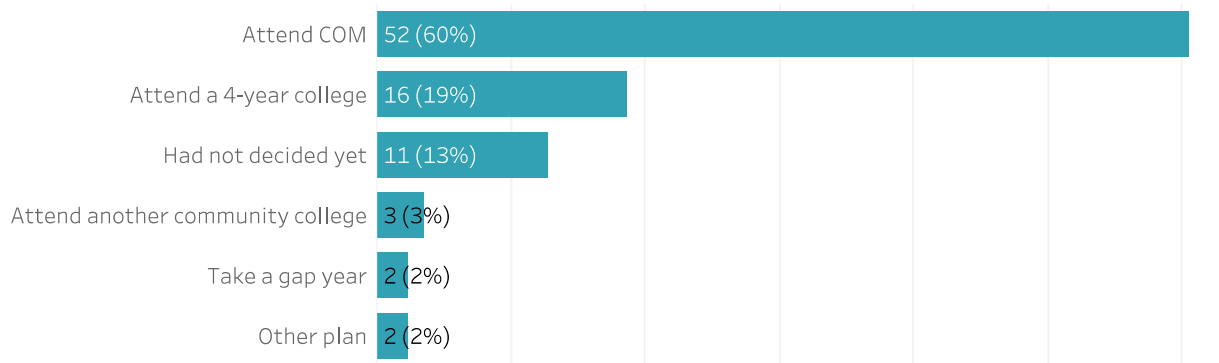
Similarly, many students expressed the feeling that online work takes more of their time and is more difficult than in-person learning. Some felt that their instructors add more coursework to compensate for not having an in-person experience, and were feeling overwhelmed by the workload.

Finally, several students offered comments about various student support services. Most were positive, expressing gratitude for COM Care, free textbooks, and tutoring. Several others were frustrated about lack of access to in-person academic counseling, getting ahold of enrollment services or other student services, and finding where to order and receive their course textbooks.

Selected verbatim quotes for each of these areas can be found in Appendix B at the end of this report.

“Prior to the COVID 19 pandemic, what were your plans for the Fall 2020 semester?”

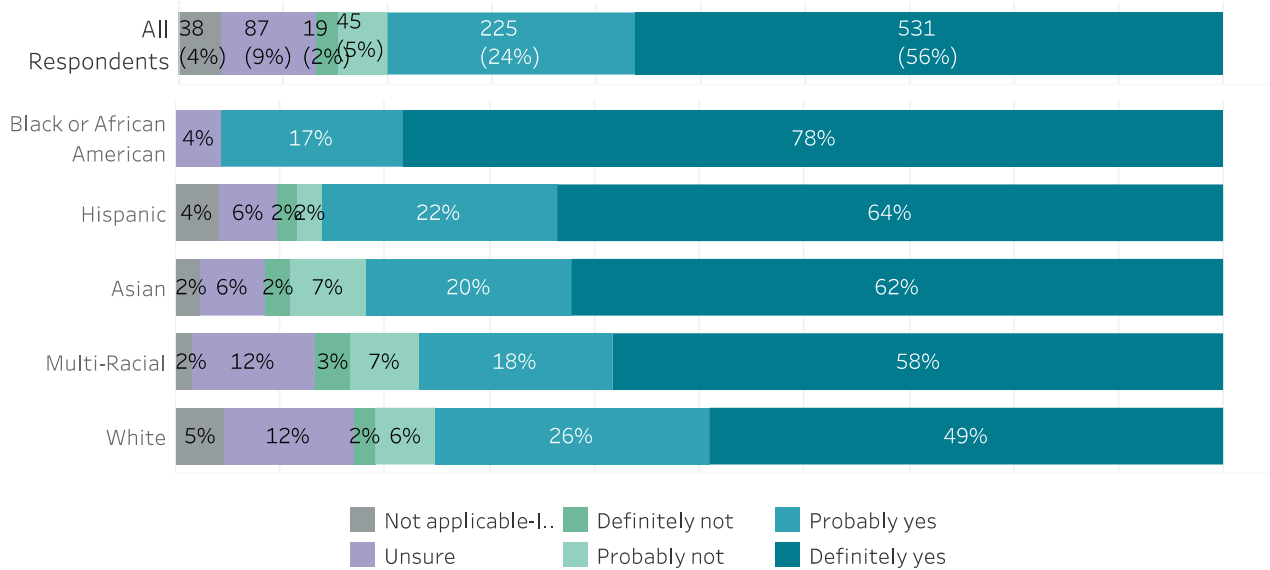
Among first-time freshman who graduated high school in spring 2020, 60% said they already intended to attend COM prior to the pandemic; 22% intended to attend a different college (19% to a 4-year college and 3% to another community college); 13% had not decided yet, and the remaining 4% intended to take a gap year or had a different plan.



“In Spring 2021, most COM classes will continue to be conducted via remote instruction. Do you intend to return to COM in Spring 2021?”

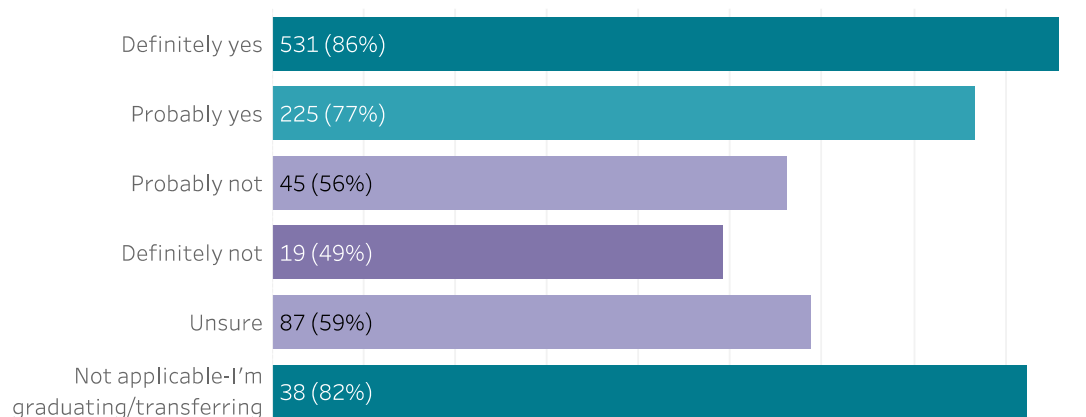
At the time they were surveyed, 80% of respondents said they “definitely” or “probably” would return to COM in spring 2021; 7% said they “probably” or “definitely” would not return; and 9% remained unsure. Students identifying as White were the least likely to say they would reenroll, significantly less likely than Hispanic/Latinx students.

Figure Q8-1: Intent to Reenroll at COM in Spring 2021, All Respondents and by Race/Ethnicity



The quality of students’ online course experiences in fall 2020 is significantly related to their intent to reenroll in the spring. Figure Q8-2 shows the average proportion of courses rated as “excellent” or “good” by responses for intent to enroll in spring 2021. Those who said they would definitely or probably enroll rated 86% and 77% of their courses positively, compared to a 56% positive rating among those who said they probably not reenroll and 49% for those who said they’d definitely not reenroll. Similarly, those who were unsure whether they’d reenroll rated an average of 59% of their courses positively.

Figure Q8-2: Average Percent Positive Course Ratings by Intent to Reenroll at COM in Spring 2021



“If you have used any of the following COM resources in the Fall 2020 semester, how helpful have they been?”

Students used several COM resources at higher rates in fall 2020 than they reported having used in the spring 2020 survey, including academic counseling (53%), online library services (40%), the online writing center (28%), the virtual reading and writing lab (22%) and online Math Lab (19%). In addition, one in four students reported using COM Care, and one in three having used Student Accessibility Services. Between 90% and 95% of those using these resources described them as “very” or “somewhat” helpful. (Figure Q6-1).

White students were significantly less likely than those identifying as Hispanic/Latinx to use all of the services on the list, with the exception of online library services and academic counseling. Asian and Black/African-American students also used these services at much higher rates, but differences were not statistically significant due to small subgroup size (Figure Q6-2).

Figure Q6-1: Percent of Students Using COM Resources in Fall 2020 and Helpfulness Ratings

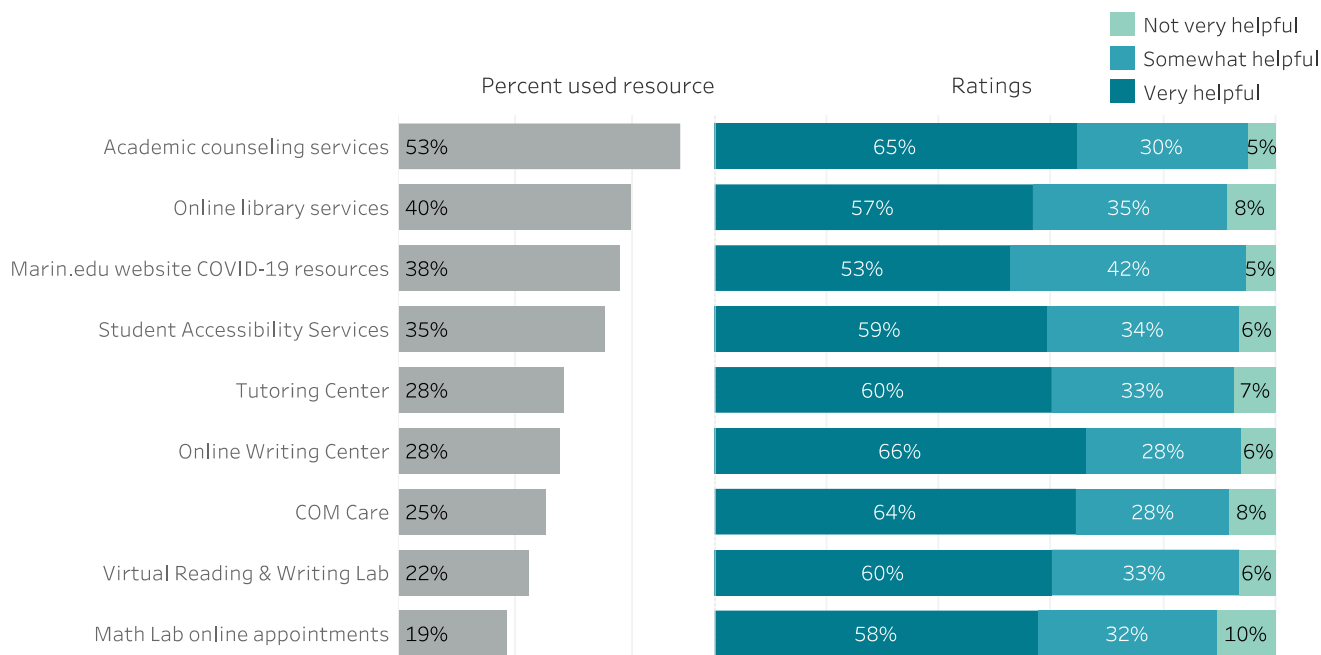


Figure Q6-2: Use of Various COM Resources in Fall 2020 by Race/Ethnicity

Resource	Asian	Black	Hispanic	Multi	White
Academic counseling services	62%	68%	65%	47%	40%
Online library services	43%	40%	49%	37%	31%
Marin.edu website COVID-19 resources	44%	64%	50%	33%	28%
Student Accessibility Services	41%	55%	48%	36%	23%
Tutoring Center	33%	48%	36%	20%	21%
Online Writing Center	35%	48%	39%	27%	17%
COM Care	26%	50%	38%	22%	14%
Virtual Reading & Writing Lab	29%	50%	33%	22%	11%
Math Lab online appointments	26%	27%	28%	15%	10%

“Where would you go first at COM if you had a question or needed help with the following?”

Students were asked which COM resources they would first turn to if they needed particular kinds of academic or personal support. They question also provided an option for them to select “I don’t need this kind of help.” Students were most likely to say they would look for help at COM for academic support (registration, help with coursework, and their academic plans). Students were most likely to respond that they *don’t* need help with accommodations for disabilities or learning differences, and for basic needs such as housing, food insecurity or child care (44%). (Figure Q9-1).

White students were significantly more likely than those identifying as Hispanic/Latinx to say they don’t need help with accommodations, basic needs, computers, or mental health support. Asian students answered similarly to White students on these items, but due to small subgroup sizes the differences aren’t statistically significant. (Figure Q9-2).

In general students said they’d seek support from instructors or the COM website for academic assistance, but were more likely to seek external support for nonacademic needs. Students were most likely to turn to an instructor (52%) or a friend/classmate (20%) for extra help with coursework. For enrollment registration assistance, 71% would visit the COM website. For help or advice with educational plans, 55% would visit the COM website, followed by 19% who would ask an instructor. If they needed mental health support, the largest proportion (36%) would look somewhere outside of COM, and 22% would look for resources on the COM website. Responses varied for help with computers or technology; 32% said they would look for help on the COM website, and 15% somewhere outside of COM. For learning accommodations, 33% would visit the COM website and 15% would ask an instructor. For assistance with basic needs, students were most likely to seek help from somewhere outside of COM (29%) or look on the COM website (22%). (Figure Q9-1).

Figure Q9-1: First Place Students Would Seek Help if Needing Various Types of Academic and Nonacademic Assistance

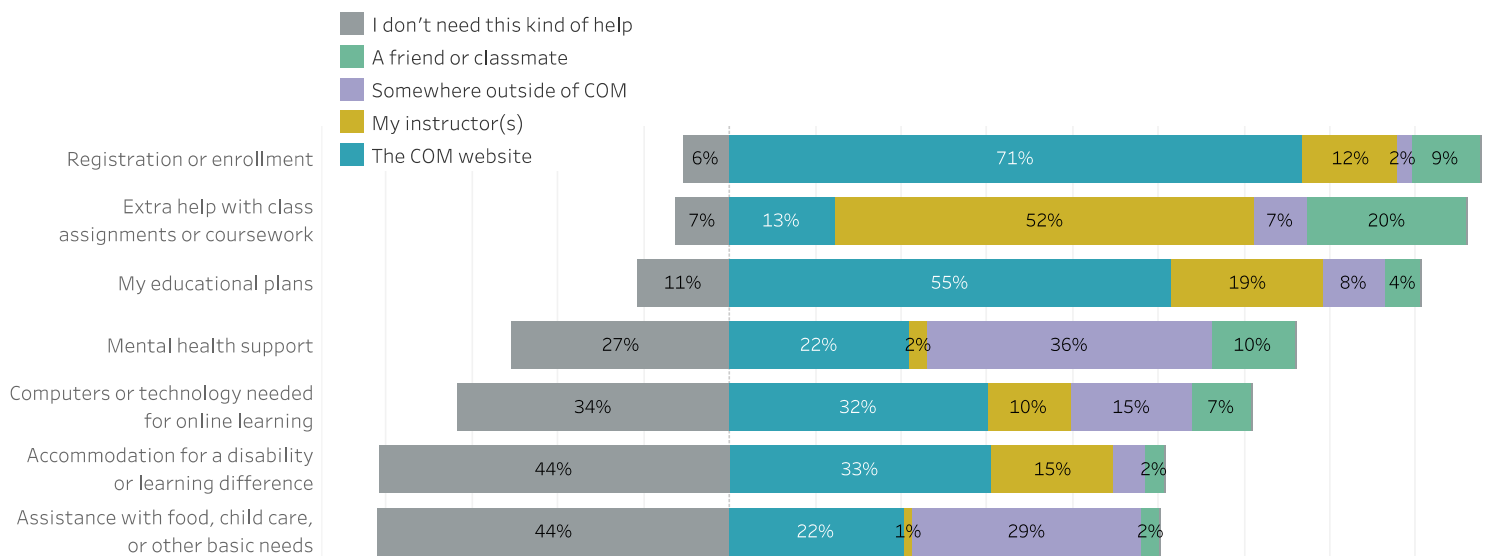
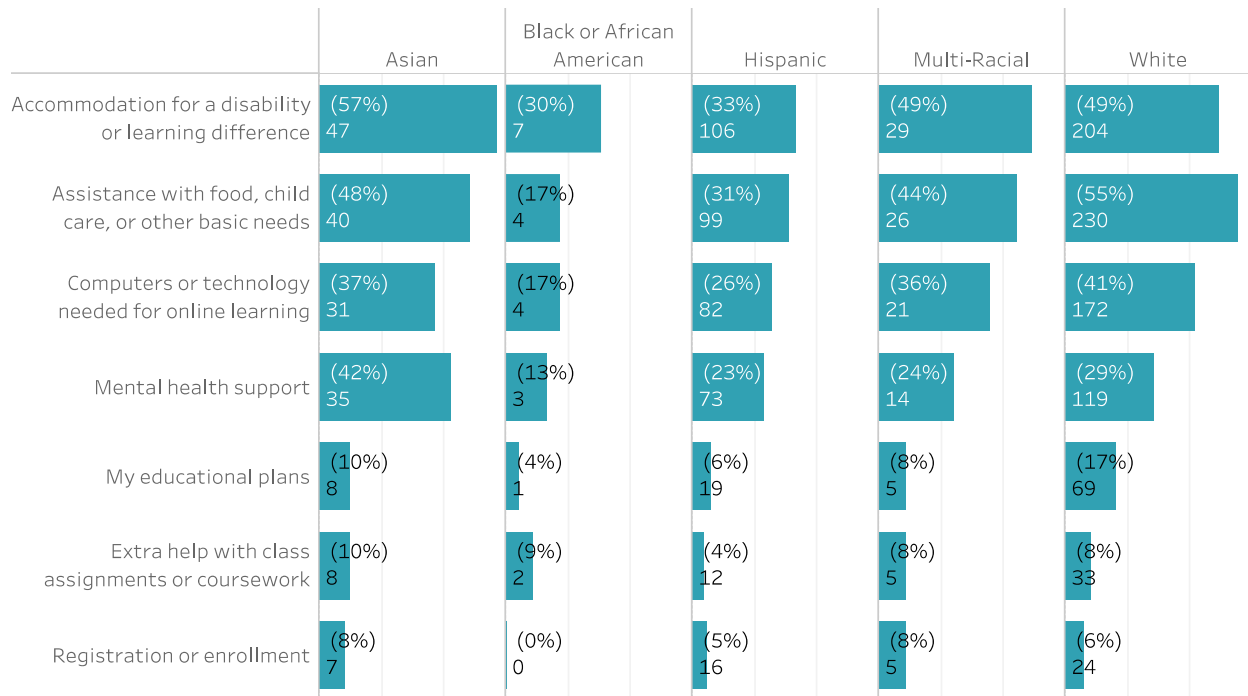


Figure Q9-2: Percent Answering "Don't Need Help" by Type of Assistance and Race/Ethnicity

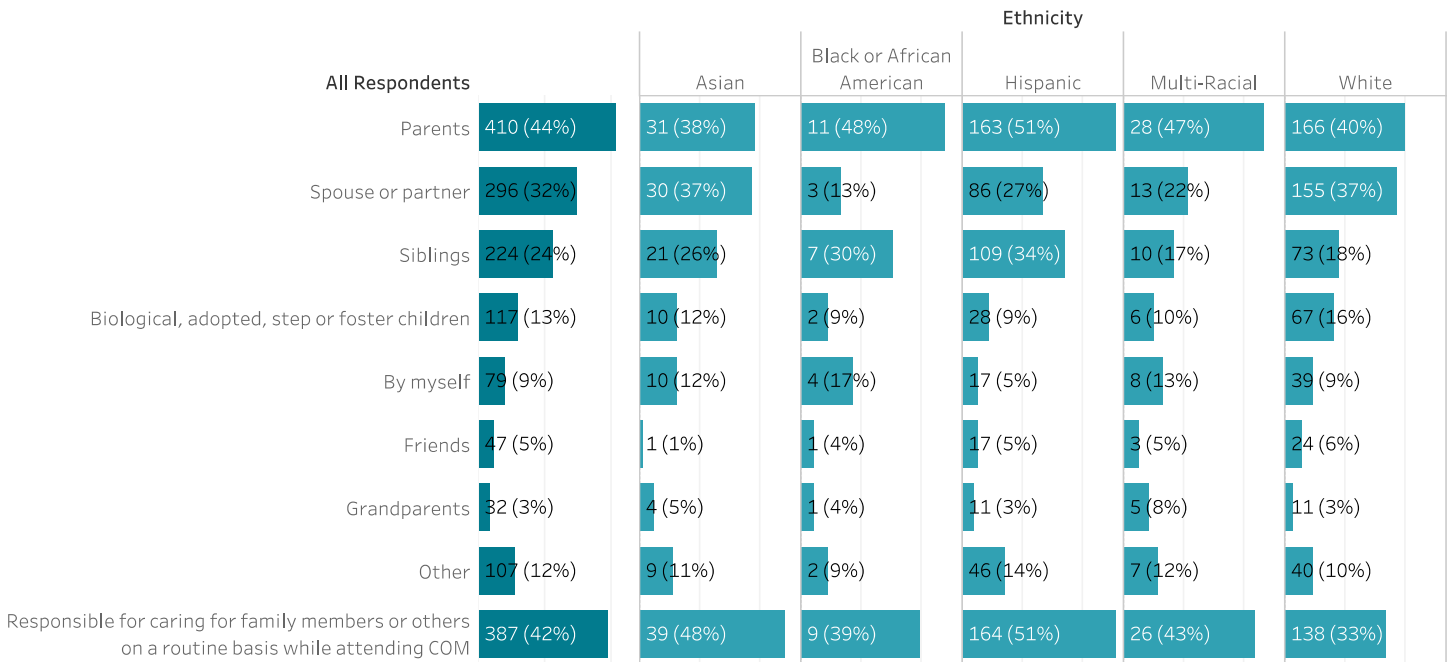


“Which of the following other people do you live with?”

“Are you responsible for caring for family members or others on a routine basis while you are attending COM?”

The majority of respondents reported living with either their parents (44%) or a spouse/partner (32%). Just 13% said they live with children, suggesting that student parents may have been less likely to respond to the survey. Nevertheless, 42% reported they are responsible for caring for family members or others on a routine basis while attending COM. (Figure Q10/Q11-1). White students were significantly less likely than those identifying as Hispanic/Latinx to say they are living with parents, living with siblings, or responsible for caring for others while attending COM, and significantly more likely to say they’re living with a spouse/partner.

Figure Q10/Q11-2: Members Living in Students' Households, All Respondents and by Race/Ethnicity

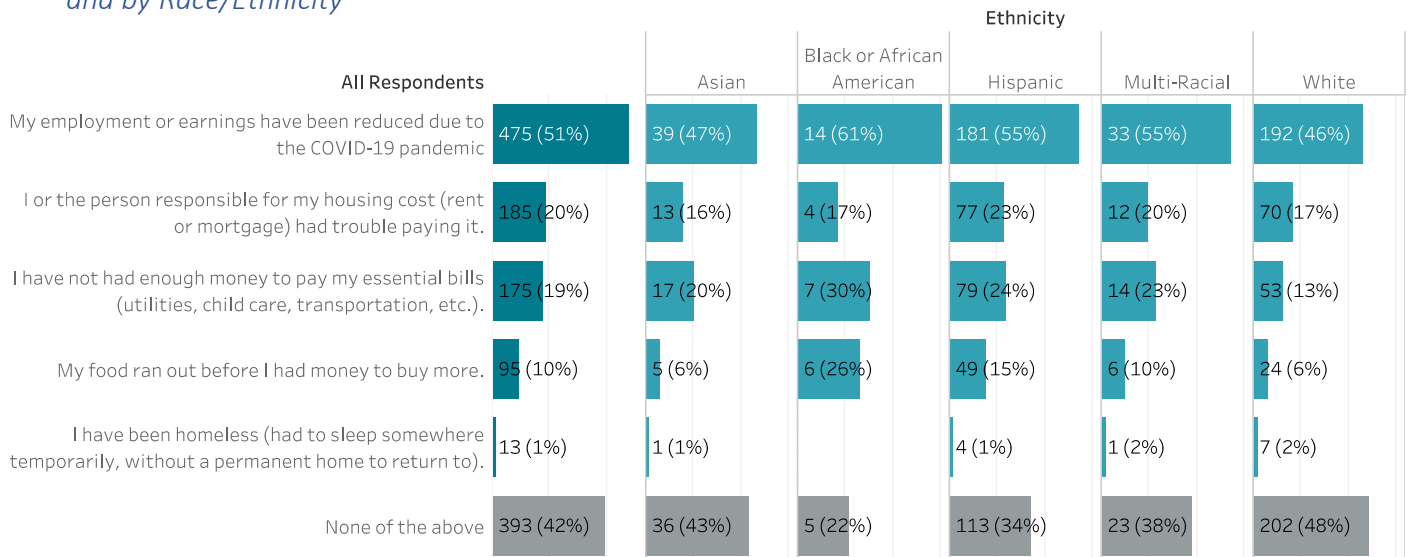


“During this semester, have you experienced any of the following challenges?”

A majority of students surveyed have suffered an economic hardship this semester due to the COVID-19 pandemic. About half of students had a reduction in employment or earnings; 20% lived in a situation where the person responsible had difficulty covering the cost of their housing; 19% had trouble paying basic bills; 10% had run out of food without money to buy more, and 1% had been homeless at some time during the fall 2020 semester. Overall, 58% of students said they were financially impacted in at least one category.

Respondents identifying as White were significantly less likely than Hispanic/Latinx students to report experiencing at least one of the financial hardships listed.

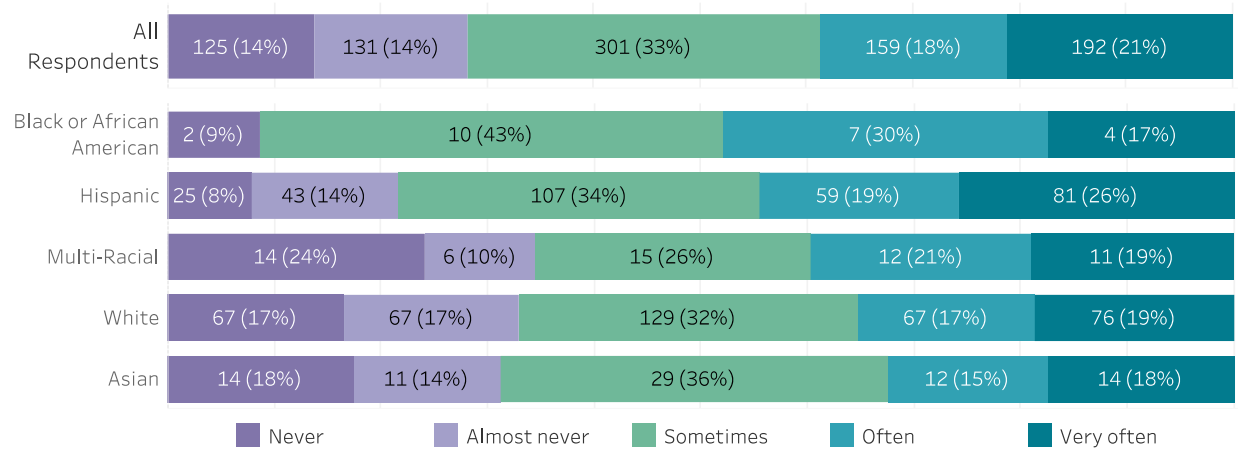
Figure Q12-1: Financial Challenges Experienced by Students due to COVID-19, All Respondents and by Race/Ethnicity



“During this semester, how often do you experience stress or anxiety about employment, food, your living situation, or your overall financial situation?”

The majority of students said they at least sometimes experience stress or anxiety about their employment, food, living situation or overall financial situation; of all respondents, 39% said they “very often” or “often” do, one-third said they do sometimes, and 28% said “almost never” or “never.” Students identifying as African-American/Black and Hispanic/Latinx reported experiencing stress or anxiety at higher rates and frequency than White, Multiracial, or Asian students, though only the difference between White and Hispanic/Latinx students is statistically significant. (Figure Q13-1).

Figure Q13-1: Frequency of Experiencing Stress or Anxiety about Living and Financial Situation, All Respondents and Race/Ethnicity



Appendix A. Disaggregated Survey Response Rates

Ethnicity	# in Sample	% Completed
American Indian or Alaska..	10	10%
Asian	377	24%
Black or African American	155	15%
Hispanic	1,954	18%
Multi-Racial	280	24%
Native Hawaiian or Other ..	12	8%
None/Unknown	220	14%
White	2,236	21%
Total	5,265	20%

Gender	# in Sample	% Completed
F	3,135	23%
M	2,029	15%
N	79	20%
Total	5,265	20%

ESL Enrolled	# in Sample	% Completed
Not ESL	4,480	21%
Enrolled in ESL	785	12%
Total	5,265	20%

Age group	# in Sample	% Completed
Under 20	1,421	18%
20-24	1,348	17%
25-34	1,123	21%
35-49	719	23%
50 or older	638	22%
Total	5,265	20%

Appendix B. Selected Student Comments by Topic (verbatim)

General comments

You guys have been dealing with this semester great, thank you for keeping COM learning the same quality as before!

Overall this semester has been better than I could of ever expected. The dental staff at college of Marin at the IVC campus has done so amazing keeping us safe and I have learned so much so far.

The experience has not been perfect, but I have enjoyed it and am engaged.

It has been a very rewarding experience, and one that saves me time commuting and makes me feel safe. I will be more willing to take courses via Zoom and remotely going forward. And the quality of learning has not been diminished.

I have felt that COM has done a great job at adapting to the current situation that we are going through. I was scared to start this semester thinking that it would be terrible and difficult to learn. Now being in school I was glad that it was not as bad as I had thought it was going to be and I can continue going to school to get a higher education. Thank you

Preference for in-person learning

HandsDown there is nothing like being in class and experiencing the energy in class also my classes are heavily lab that I have not been able to participate in lab and do the projects that I had I know you're doing the best with what you're doing but for my money I'll take in person classes any day of the week thank you

It's Ok, but more challenging than in person (Environment:eg.Noise & distractions)

Online school sucks but my teachers are at least doing their best

I personally feel that we can go back to regular classes, having to get tested every day to see if you have symptoms. Because I don't feel that I am learning too much from online classes

I miss physical classes. Going to classes gives me motivation to pay attention but online classes are making me lose motivation.

Doing classes online has changed my life. I struggle with chronic illness and fatigue and have unfortunately been absent many times in the past because of this. Now that everything is online and set at my own pace, I am thriving in my classes and can do lectures and work on my own time when I am not sleeping. I really hope I can continue online work to earn my degree. I love my teachers, they are awesome.

Need for lab/studio/study space on campus

I was in a hybrid ceramics class (that I have since dropped) but it was very difficult to only meet once every other week and even harder to work on the projects at home without the proper equipment that we need for it

I don't mind having zoom and working all through canvas, but LAB CLASSES need to be in person it is not fair to be doing labs on your own with no true instruction beside the textbook.

I need a place to work with a table and shade. Power and water and internet access are definite bonuses. So I study on campus and move as the sun and shade move and avoid biting insects. I think that more tables should be available on both campuses with shade! An open restroom would be wonderful.

I am a biological major and I am currently two labs that are not meeting in person. I wish some plan was created during the summer break where professors could conduct the labs themselves and record them to show to the class (especially with the dissections labs).

Student Interaction/Engagement

My online learning experience at COM is going well, however, I feel I'm missing out on important social interaction with fellow students and teachers. I am someone who is very understanding of the circumstances and am trying to make the best of it. Maybe if some teachers were encouraged to create student Zoom meetings, so that students could ask each other questions and help each other.

Teachers need to be very fluent with Zoom in order to answer questions about its use. Very hard to be connected with other students using Zoom.

Listening and Speaking class is great! I'm learning a lot and having a lot of opportunities to talk to others even if during pandemic. And teacher is very nice. I'm glad that I chose this class.

asynchronous learning feels so disconnected and is very hard to motivate myself to complete.

In some of my classes we still have group projects. Covid style group projects are hard! In the zoom classes that we have we aren't allotted any extra time to communicate with our classmates, we have to engage outside of class. It's really hard to communicate with other students when we don't have a platform to do so; some group chats don't work, some people are slow at replying while other students I can't even get in contact with. If COM were to employ something like Microsoft teams or Slack and make it accessible to every student that would be really helpful. I don't like not being able to communicate with my classmates, and especially when my grade is dependent on it.

Positive comments about instructors

I think the Drama Department has really stepped up their knowledge of technology to make Zoom learning possible and engaging and creating theatre a possibility we couldn't have imagined. I'm taking my first writing course and enjoying it.

Professor is compassionate and caring of the students during this very strange time. Thank you!

The teachers (while sometimes at odds with the technology) are clearly trying their best. It is clear that they don't like this format for learning either. However, in particular, my Math 105 [*instructor*] has utilized an online format for assignments that links questions to short, relevant video-lessons on that teach me the material. He deserves a shout-out, because of this, but also being available via email, office hours, or Zoom classes. Online learning certainly stinks in many ways (most notably the lack of social interaction). And some courses simply seem like they aren't meant to be online. However, these teachers are clearly trying their best and maintaining a can-do attitude.

I know it is hard but I think professors need to work on what material is the most important to teach for the semester. I think my sociology teacher has done a great job. He uploads the

lectures, has a word of the day and just would like us to take notes and go to tutoring 3 times for the semester and of course take a midterm and final. Out of all 4 classes I feel like his I am understanding things way more than reading a chapter and doing an assignment based off of it or having to post a discussion and have to reply to someone's post. I'm sure teachers are trying to figure things out as things go on but I think [*instructor*] is pretty close to perfecting his online teaching and other professors should follow as well. I'm not constantly stress with his class as I have to be with my other classes (mostly [*course*] if I'm being honest).

I think Professor [*instructor*] is doing an excellent job in bringing a lab course online. He's managed to make it feel almost like a real lab, and incorporates small group work, which is really helpful. Both of my professors (the other one being Professor [*instructor*]) are quick to respond to emails. They are both understanding and helpful, and you can tell that they are invested in their student's learning.

The teachers (while sometimes at odds with the technology) are clearly trying their best. It is clear that they don't like this format for learning either. However, in particular, my Math105, [*instructor*], has utilized an online format for assignments that links questions to short, relevant video-lessons on that teach me the material. He deserves a shout-out, because of this, but also being available via email, office hours, or Zoom classes. Online learning certainly stinks in many ways (most notably the lack of social interaction). And some courses simply seem like they aren't meant to be online. However, these teachers are clearly trying their best and maintaining a can-do attitude.

Inconsistent experience with instructors

Very instructor-specific. Some instructors were super prepared and organized, some were obviously just winging it.

This survey is difficult to answer because the two courses that I am taking are organized very differently. One class is working out well while the instructor in the other one is really struggling. I know from the dropout rate it's not just me!

Online learning has been a totally mixed bag. It works well when it works and makes you feel completely disconnected when it doesn't. Some teachers try to make it work some don't even attempt. A lot of this is growing pains and learning how to adapt. I get the feeling some of my teachers really resent having to teach online and that translates to policies and attitude in class.

Unresponsive instructors

The main takeaway is that it seems like there is more homework than ever since the instructors rely on third-party platforms that essentially dump assignments on us.

The professor seems unengaged. Weekly checklists are often posted later (for example, we are more than halfway through week 8 of his course and as of last night, Wednesday, I still could not access the week 8 module). He has a google doc for questions and takes a very long time to respond. It's also not ideal to use a google doc as there is no notification system for either party- you just have to keep checking back to see if your question has been answered. The course has basically been 100% self taught, which is not what I expected or was looking for when I enrolled.

All low scores are due to [*course*]. It is a completely self-guided course. He does not teach any of the material. We have not met once. All assignments are through the online book. I feel like I

was duped and thought this class would meet 2x a week since it is on the schedule for MW. Wrong, we have literally not met once.

My [subject] class is impossible. It is quite a bold assumption made by the teacher that students can learn by reading from a textbook alone. There should at least be online lecture videos if she is not going to do zoom lecture classes. I know I am not the only one who feels this way about the class. Almost all of her students are struggling and we feel neglected by the teacher as she does not respond to our questions or concerns through email or canvas.

Instructors using ONLY prerecorded lectures and having ZERO interaction with students is unacceptable. We take two quizzes remotely proctored every week, but only receive our score, we never get to see what you got wrong or go over results with the instructor. We have nothing to reference to study going into the big tests. Its very disconnected and making a hard class even harder.

Canvas/Class organization/Instructor use of technology

It's stressful trying to figure out what each teachers canvas set up is. I also feel that this whole experience is very impersonal.

Feel like organization by instructors on canvas is lacking, often assignments and other important instructions are hidden in different documents and different modules, you have to be a detective to know where to look for all the different required things. Feel like general requirements should be clearly labeled and centralized. Also, I just want to clarify that my feelings about lectures/instruction quality this semester might reflect the organizational and teaching style of the instructors and might have nothing to do with the zoom learning environment. I have a feeling I would probably have problems with the teaching style/structure of my classes even if they were in person, I just think the lectures are poorly organized and ramble on.

Overall, my semester has been wonderful. I am very impressed. My one criticism has to do with the finding due dates. It has become a very common occurrence in my classes that many people are surprised to discover that something was due that they did not know about. This happens because there is no standard followed by all teachers. The canvas calendar is not used by all my teachers, and I don't think I can add anything myself, so it cannot function as my master calendar. I have to make my own list of due dates which I draw from the Canvas calendar, if they're posted, or from the individual class pages. And every teacher puts them somewhere else. I don't see why there can't be a menu item at the top of every class just called "due dates." It would help me deal with this feeling that there is always something I'm forgetting.

I really appreciate all of the hard work my professors have put into this semester, it really shows. However, I have found for some classes there is so much material posted on Canvas that it can get quite busy there and I have trouble sorting through and keeping track on work. I find myself sometimes forgetting to submit or missing a deadline because so many things are constantly being posted to my Canvas page that I am having trouble keeping up.

The quality of online learning is quite variable depending upon the professor. In some of my classes the prof has made an effort to change the instruction methods while other seem to be trying to fit their previous instruction method on to Zoom. I believe additional Zoom training as well as specific guidelines for professors would be helpful. I like having all of the assignments including class material and due dates clearly presented on Canvas. Only one of my teachers

does this. In the other classes I have to rely on classmates of emails to the Prof to confirm assignments and due dates.

Still wish instructors would use Canvas uniformly so that everything is easier to follow. All deadlines should be in the dashboard at the very least.

It would be helpful if professors put all the work for each week in a separate module. Some professors will keep adding to a single module every week and it gets really confusing bc I don't know what work I need to do and what work i've already done. if each week is it's own module, i'll know exactly what I need to get done for that week. I find that short quizzes are helpful too, and just while we are online i would prefer to do a quiz each week rather than a big final.

Classes that require more technical maneuvering such as the shared viewing on zoom during math or language classes are a challenge for instructors as opposed to classes like Eng 151 that do not require much except discussion or breakout rooms. Perhaps providing further training would be beneficial for those who aren't as technical.

Half of my instructors do not feel comfortable using zoom. There have been multiple instances where something has gone wrong with grading and modules being visible on time.

Since this is the first full semester online I feel like it's going great. Although there are things that need to be worked out I feel like more teachers training with technology/class programs would work them out.

Expectations, workload, and flexibility

Even though some students are sheltering in place or have lost their jobs due to the pandemic, those like myself are continuing to work full time or need to provide for children and families and struggle to meet the expectations of the coursework. I feel as though some instructors don't take that in consideration during the pandemic and pike the coursework as if it were normal times and move at a fast pace through the course

The workload is too intense for sitting in front of a computer. There seems to be too much pressure on instructors to perform in an environment that most of them did not sign on to perform in, and the same can be said about students. Taking one or two classes for a student seems to be okay, above that many students are struggling to stay engaged. I myself have physical discomfort from sitting in front of a computer for hours on end. Each week I regularly spend 8 to 12 hours in a chair looking at a screen between work and school. I miss and I need the learning environment that I came to COM for.

It's difficult to keep up with a curriculum that's designed for in person classes. Though I understand the material probably can't be changed, it would be helpful if there was a way to not get penalized for this. We're still expected to learn the same amount of material in a given time, even though we're under unprecedented circumstances. With my classes being all STEM based, I personally feel like I am rushing through material in order to keep up with exams. During a regular semester this wouldn't be an issue, as I would normally go to the library and study for hours straight. I can't do that at home since it isn't a great environment to study. Since I'm pulled away from what I'm doing every 20-30 minutes it takes much longer to complete assignments than what it normally would. If what's being taught can't be changed, it would be great if what we were assessed on was reduced. Meeting the assessment standards of regular schooling while in a pandemic is tiring. Also, a course I am in derives all material from the textbook. Lectures are

extremely similar if not the same from what's covered in the (very brief and lacking examples) textbook, same goes for canvas modules, as well as homework assignments. I feel as if I am teaching myself, and I am not getting anything additional from the course. I might as well have just bought the textbook and taught myself. Of course this wouldn't be as much of a problem in person as it's easier to engage, but taking classes virtually makes this situation a nightmare. As of now assessments cater to pre-covid19 standards (amount of material), it's difficult to keep up with this under current conditions and absence of somewhere to study. Teaching the same amount of the material but assessing/penalizing less of it would be helpful. Courses taught with material largely based on the same as the textbook are difficult to follow and feel like a waste of time. Non-textbook based lecture examples, homework problems, etc. would be helpful. - Sincerely, a STEM major with three exams on wednesday:/

Student challenges with technology, internet or work space

Definitely need more technology report as many students aren't as tech savvy and need support or equipment, but may not know what equipment they need or where to get support

Online school has been very hard for me, I don't have the space at my house or the technology that all my other students have and it feels like I'm already at a disadvantage in comparison to my classmates.

Proctorio is challenging because I don't have a private/silent space to take exams or quizzes.

I think zoom lectures should be recorded for students to go back and listen to, it is more challenging to concentrate in online environments than it is for in-person classes

I very much appreciate having the ability to watch a missed class or review topics covered in class via Zoom recordings. This has been especially helpful with distance learning. It would be great if classes can continue to be recorded post Covid.

I prefer prerecorded lecture because we can rewatch the lecture videos, change the speed to 2x, etc.

Because wifi can be a bit unpredictable, i wish instructors would be more understanding and less inclined to mark down grades due to absences in the zoom meetings. Its a bit unfair.

It can be quite a challenge. At home I'm surrounded by siblings, nieces and nephews. There's no quiet space close enough to the router where I can work smoothly without interruption. Normally I'm trying to get a good WiFi connection and be involved in class while doing a million other tasks. But I am sure myself and many others are working through the same issues together.

Taking online classes on zoom it's very frustrating and difficult for me because I don't have good internet connection and anytime I have an exam or quiz it makes me so anxious because my computer takes long time to download images or open questions.

Student support

Thank you for the free textbook! It was so helpful as a single mom who has lost my job from COVID-19.

I think COM bends over backwards for their students. I've graduated from a four-year university and have attended classes from 6 colleges outside of COM for prerequisite courses. COM has

impressed me the most with how much you care about the success of the students over anything else. Thank you. You are doing an outstanding job. Just keep the pulse on your students and when students are back on campus, don't forget the fight that was in you during these times. We can improve so much!

This online format has been difficult for me especially because I have struggled with my learning style and have used school space to keep me motivated, accountable and focused. This has been a learning situation for me but I'm so impressed with how well set up college of Marin was for this change. Thank you for all your hard work. I have had really positive experiences with my teachers and also all the tutoring support as well.