



Online/Remote Learning Needs Survey

Executive Summary

April 29, 2020

Background and Purpose

The Online/Remote Learning Needs Survey was the second of two surveys sent to students to determine their needs and understand their experiences during the transition to online and remote learning necessitated by the COVID-19 Pandemic. The first survey explored student readiness for online/remote learning prior to classes restarting on April 6 (results reported [separately](#)). The second survey, summarized here, was conducted nine days after the start of classes and explored student experiences and concerns during the early days of the transition to online/remote learning.

Methodology

Surveys were emailed to 6571 students taking online, in-person and hybrid courses at Scottsdale Community College. The survey excluded dual enrollment students. It was sent out on Wednesday, April 15, 2020. Reminders were sent on April 17 and April 19 and the survey was closed on the morning of April 20. There were **1090** responses with an overall response rate of **16.5%**. This response rate was lower than the 28% response rate for the first survey.

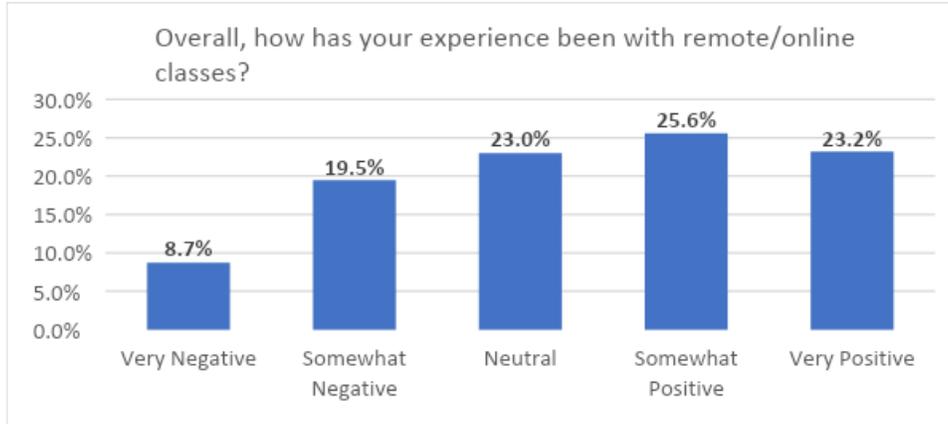
Survey Responses

Types of Courses Enrolled

The majority of students (59%) were taking only in-person or hybrid courses prior to spring break. Thirty percent were taking both in-person/hybrid and online classes. About 10 percent were taking online classes, exclusively. One percent enrolled in classes only after Spring Break.

Overall Experience with Online/Remote Classes

As seen below, about half of respondents indicated that their experience was somewhat or very positive. About 28 percent indicated that it was very or somewhat negative.



Difficulties During Transition to Online/Remote Learning

As shown below, 42 percent of respondents reported difficulties due to changing work schedules. About 16 percent had difficulties accessing reliable internet and about 15 percent reported difficulties due to competing needs for technology in their households.

| Item | Total N | % Very or Somewhat Difficult |
|---|---------|------------------------------|
| Accessing Reliable Internet | 1024 | 16.1% |
| Accessing Reliable Digital Devices | 1003 | 11.2% |
| Accessing technology in your household due to competing needs | 979 | 14.9% |
| Changing Work Schedules | 831 | 41.9% |

Difficulties Associated with the Online Course Experience

Among all the areas we addressed, students reported the most difficulty in **collaborating with other students**. The second highest level of difficulty was associated with **attending live online classes**. About 30 percent reported difficulties in knowing when their assignments are due. Less than a quarter reported difficulty with accessing course materials, using remote learning applications, and consulting with faculty remotely.

| Item | Total N | % Very or Somewhat Difficult |
|--|---------|------------------------------|
| Consulting with Faculty Remotely | 951 | 24.3% |
| Collaborating with Other Students Remotely | 748 | 47.9% |
| Attending Live Online Classes | 734 | 38.0% |
| Using Remote Learning Applications such as Zoom, Webex, etc. | 920 | 24.2% |
| Accessing Course Materials | 865 | 19.9% |
| Knowing when assignments are due | 985 | 29.8% |

Self-Efficacy and Quality of Instruction

The items in this section address topics about which students were concerned in the initial online/remote readiness survey. They highlight issues including time management, focus, learning, quality of instruction, and overall course success.

Just under a quarter of students thought they would learn as much as they would have in their original in-person or hybrid courses. This perception is likely based on both concerns about taking online classes and other changes in their lives due to the Covid-19 Pandemic. However, despite this, the majority (60%) believed that faculty were maintaining the quality of instruction. Just over half agreed or strongly agreed that they would be successful. Focus and time-management were issues for many students with only 38% agreeing that they were able to focus on their coursework and 44% agreeing that they are able to effectively manage their time.

| Item | Total N | % Agree or Strongly Agree |
|---|---------|---------------------------|
| Able to focus on completing coursework | 1017 | 37.5% |
| Able to effectively manage time | 1016 | 44.0% |
| Learn as much as I would have in in-person/hybrid | 1018 | 22.6% |
| Faculty maintaining quality of instruction | 1015 | 60.3% |
| I believe I will be successful this semester | 1015 | 53.8% |

Accessing SCC Services

With SCC employees working remotely, we wanted to know if students had any difficulty accessing needed services. Anyone selecting “not applicable” was excluded from this analysis. As shown in the table below, 35 percent or more of students indicated difficulties accessing tutoring as well as career and academic advisement. The smallest percentage of students had difficulty accessing help desk/technical support.

| SCC Service | Total N | % Difficult or Very Difficult |
|--------------------------------|---------|-------------------------------|
| Admissions and Records | 400 | 28.5% |
| Financial Aid | 295 | 31.9% |
| Academic Advisement | 410 | 34.9% |
| Career Advisement | 290 | 35.9% |
| Counseling | 294 | 34.3% |
| Tutoring | 375 | 37.3% |
| Library Services and Resources | 353 | 30.3% |
| Disability Resources | 147 | 28.6% |
| Veteran’s Services | 113 | 23.9% |
| Help Desk/Tech Support | 251 | 23.1% |

Students Descriptions of Difficulties accessing SCC's institutional services during transition

An open-ended question asked students to describe any difficulties accessing services. Among the categories of responses, the following were the most commonly mentioned:

Technology: Students mentioned technology glitches in online applications used by faculty, such as Zoom and Webex. Some discussed difficulties accessing the internet, and others had computers that were outdated, inadequate, or needed to be shared by multiple people in a household. Some students also mentioned that they needed printers.

Instruction: Difficulties related to instruction included students’ access to instructors and timeliness and clarity of communication. Some students reported that they had selected a face-to-face class because it is more suited to their learning style and worried about struggling in an online/remote modality. Students acknowledged that some classes were very difficult to transition to online and that they would not learn as much as they would have had the COVID-19 virus not forced instruction to move to online.

Specific Services: Some students were not aware of how to access certain services remotely or experienced difficulty when trying to contact services by phone. The most commonly mentioned of these services included Tutoring, Admissions and Records, and Advisement. Some also mentioned general difficulties in reaching services by phone or email.

No problems or need for services: A large number of students responded that they had either no problems accessing services or were not in need of any services. Several also mentioned positive experiences during the transition to online learning, identifying faculty and staff members who helped them.

Number One Concern about Completing Courses this Semester

A final open-ended question asked students to tell us their top concern about completing their courses this semester. These responses often revealed a belief that they would not learn as much in these remote classes, whether due to lack of focus and motivation, competing demands on their time, stress due to the Covid-19 pandemic, or discomfort with the online modality. Students were also fearful that their grades would suffer, that they would not succeed in upcoming classes, and that they might not graduate on time. Another common concern was time management. That is, they worried about keeping up with assignments and also juggling other demands such as work and family responsibilities. A large number of students reported no concerns and indicated that they were adjusting well to online/remote learning.

The table below shows the top concerns and the number of times each was mentioned by students.

| Category of Concern | # of Students |
|--|---------------|
| Learning/Understanding Course Material | 113 |
| No Concerns | 112 |
| Grades/Succeeding in Class | 101 |
| Time Management | 97 |
| Lack of Hands on Experience/Class not Suited to Online | 75 |
| High Workload | 32 |
| Competing Demands on Time - Family, Work, etc. | 31 |
| Lack of Interaction with Students and Instructors | 30 |
| Learning Style more suited to Face-to-Face | 29 |
| Pass/Fail Grading | 28 |
| Difficulty Focusing | 28 |
| Lack of Motivation | 28 |
| Inadequate Communication from Faculty/Staff | 25 |
| Access to Technology | 19 |
| Performance of Technology | 18 |

How are we using the results of this survey?

Providing Results to Faculty Members

Because student needs may vary based on course, we are providing each faculty member with the survey responses of students in their classes. That is, each faculty member will get a class-by-class breakdown of results, along with student comments. Although faculty members are not being asked to address all students' individual needs, we are asking them to look at the data to have a better idea of their students' adjustment to remote/online instruction. Because summer classes will also be offered exclusively online, this information can be used to make improvements while transitioning summer classes to online/remote.

Providing Results to Program Directors, Department, and Division Chairs

Chairs and Program Directors will receive a report summarizing results for prefixes (disciplines) in their areas. They will also receive a list of all open-ended responses for those prefixes. This information is provided so that they can understand the themes in their areas and identify the greatest needs for their students.

Providing Support

We used results of the first survey to connect students with needed services, including counseling, tutoring, disability resources, as well as a computer lending program. For this survey, when students mentioned specific resource needs, we will share the information with those services to allow for outreach to students.