

A decorative graphic on the left side of the slide, consisting of a network of white lines and circles on a blue gradient background, resembling a circuit board or a neural network.

# UNDERGRAD STUDENT SURVEY FOR FALL 2020 PLANNING

SCHOOL OF COMPUTER SCIENCE

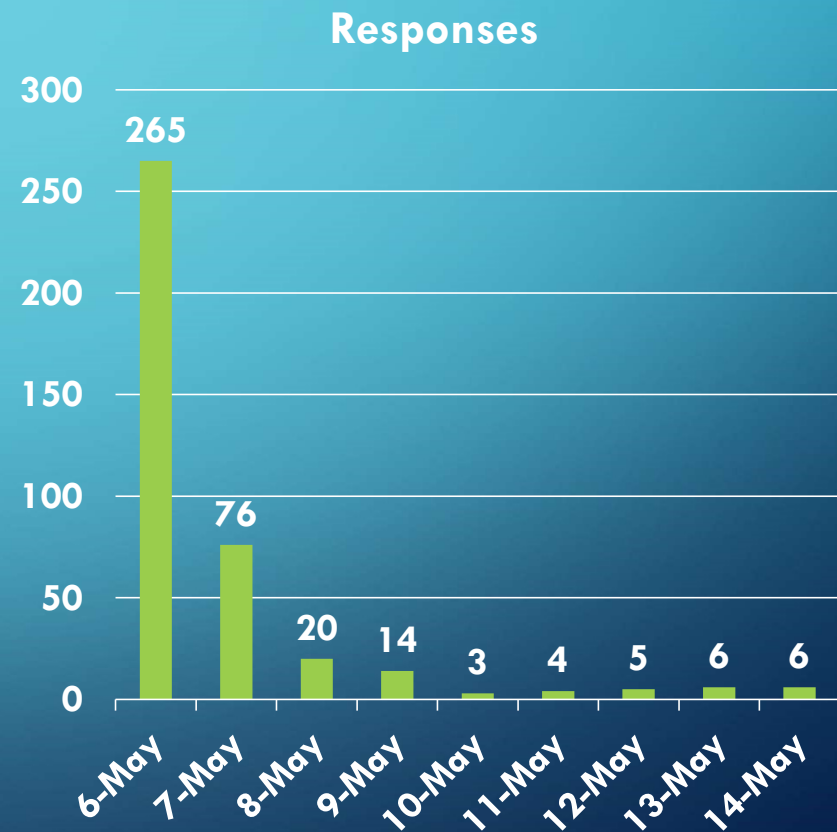
MAY 2020

# MOTIVATION

- **Limitations of existing published surveys:**
  - Focused mostly on students' concerns for online course delivery
    - E.g.: <https://forum.academica.ca/forum/current-students-covid19>
  - Not targeted to students with online learning experiences
- **SoCS undergrad student representative, Keefer Rourke, suggested at SoCS council that:**
  - Our students are equally (if not more) concerned about safety for in-person delivery
  - They likely have taken online courses and hence more adapted to online delivery

# QUESTIONNAIRE

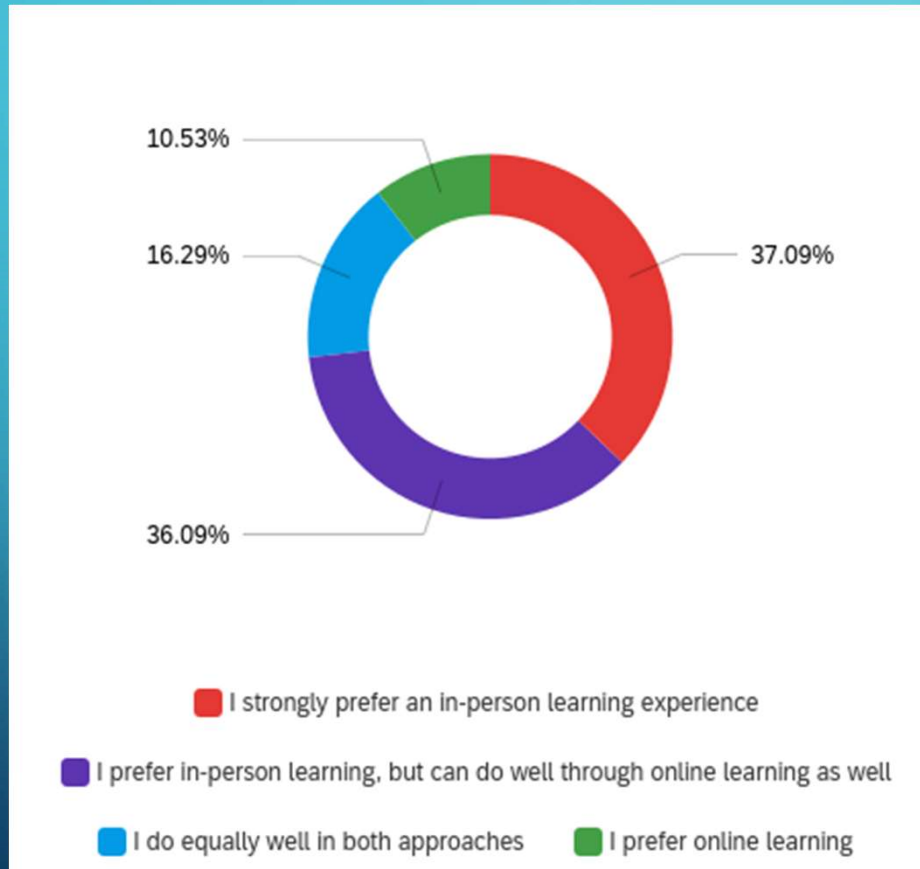
- Designed based on inputs from Dave, Greg, Karen, and Keefer.
- Conducted through Qualtrics:
  - Started May 6<sup>th</sup> & closed on May 14<sup>th</sup>.
  - Each student received a unique links and can only submit response once.
- Went out to 794 students:
  - 463 clicked the link & 399 completed surveys
  - 87% completion rate & 50% overall response rate



## QUESTION #1:

- **What is your preference on online learning vs in-person experience:**
  - I strongly prefer an in-person learning experience
  - I prefer in-person learning, but can do well through online learning as well
  - I do equally well in both approaches
  - I prefer online learning

# STUDENTS PREFERENCES

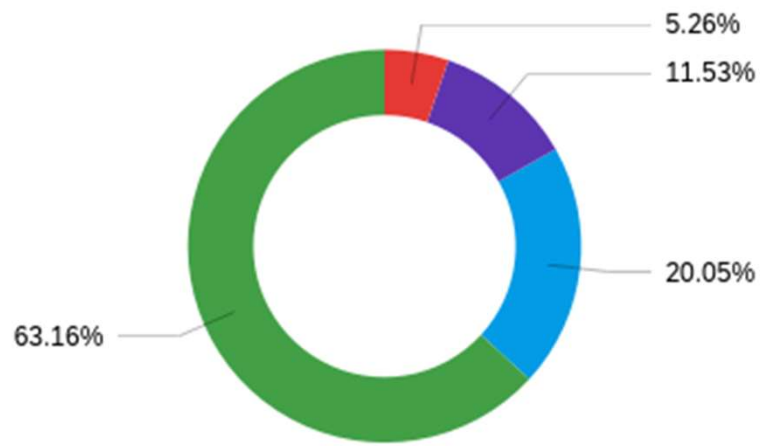


- **37% strongly prefer in-person learning**
- **10% prefer online learning**
- **63% can do well through online learning**

## QUESTION #2

- **If social distancing is still required in the Fall and SoCS is required to offer all courses online, how many courses will you likely take?**
  - Zero (I will take a gap year)
  - Only a couple of courses (highly reduced course load)
  - A slightly reduced course load
  - The normal course load (full time study)

# PLAN FOR ONLINE DELIVERY



- Zero (I will take a gap year)
- Only a couple of courses (highly reduced course load)
- A slightly reduced course load
- The normal course load (full time study)

- 5% - take a gap year
- 63% - full time study
- Course enrollments are estimated to drop by 15~20%



## QUESTION #3

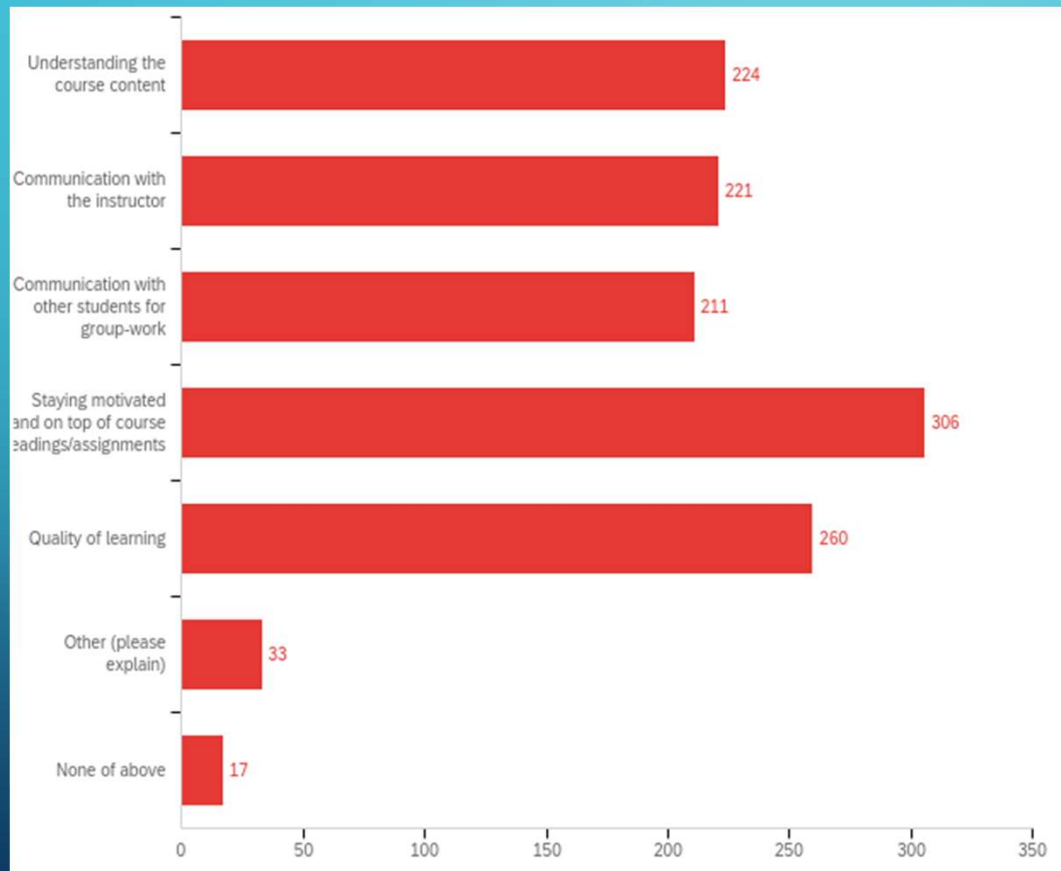
- **What are your concerns on online learning, based on your past experience?**

**Select all that apply:**

- Understanding the course content
- Communication with the instructor
- Communication with other students for group-work
- Staying motivated and on top of course readings/assignments
- Quality of learning
- Other (please explain)



# CONCERNS ON ONLINE LEARNING

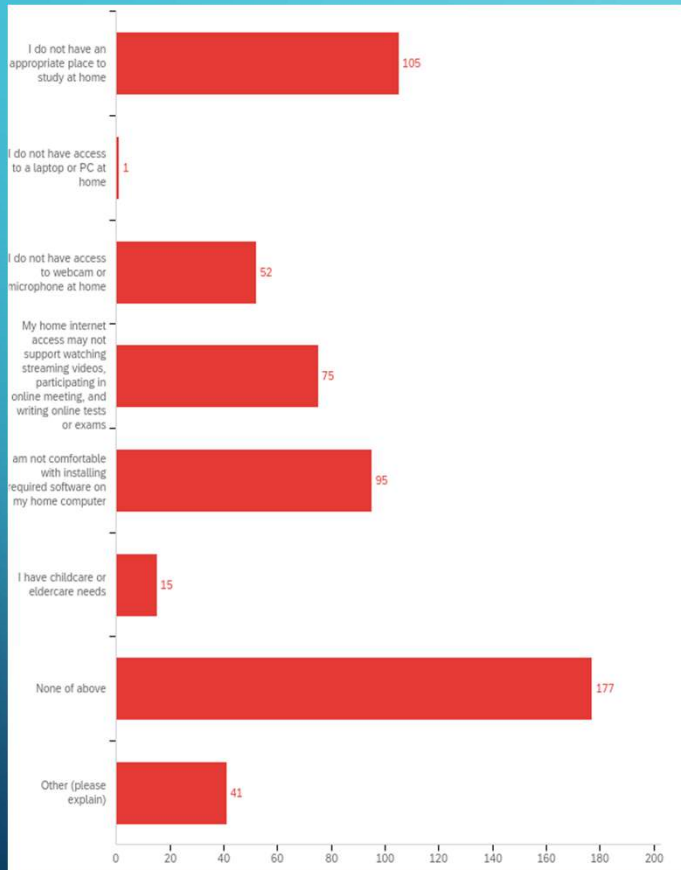


- **77% - stay motivated**
- **65% - quality of learning**
- **>50%:**
  - **Understand course content**
  - **Communicate with instructor**
  - **Communicate with other students for group work**

## QUESTION #4

- **What are your concerns about studying from home? Select all that apply:**
  - I do not have an appropriate place to study at home
  - I do not have access to a laptop or PC at home
  - I do not have access to webcam or microphone at home
  - My home internet access may not support watching streaming videos, participating in online meeting, and writing online tests or exams
  - I am not comfortable with installing required software on my home computer
  - I have childcare or eldercare needs
  - No concerns
  - Other (please explain)

# CONCERNS ON STUDY AT HOME



- 44% - no concerns
- 26% - appropriate place to study
- 24% - software installation
- 19% - insufficient internet
- 13% - lack of webcam

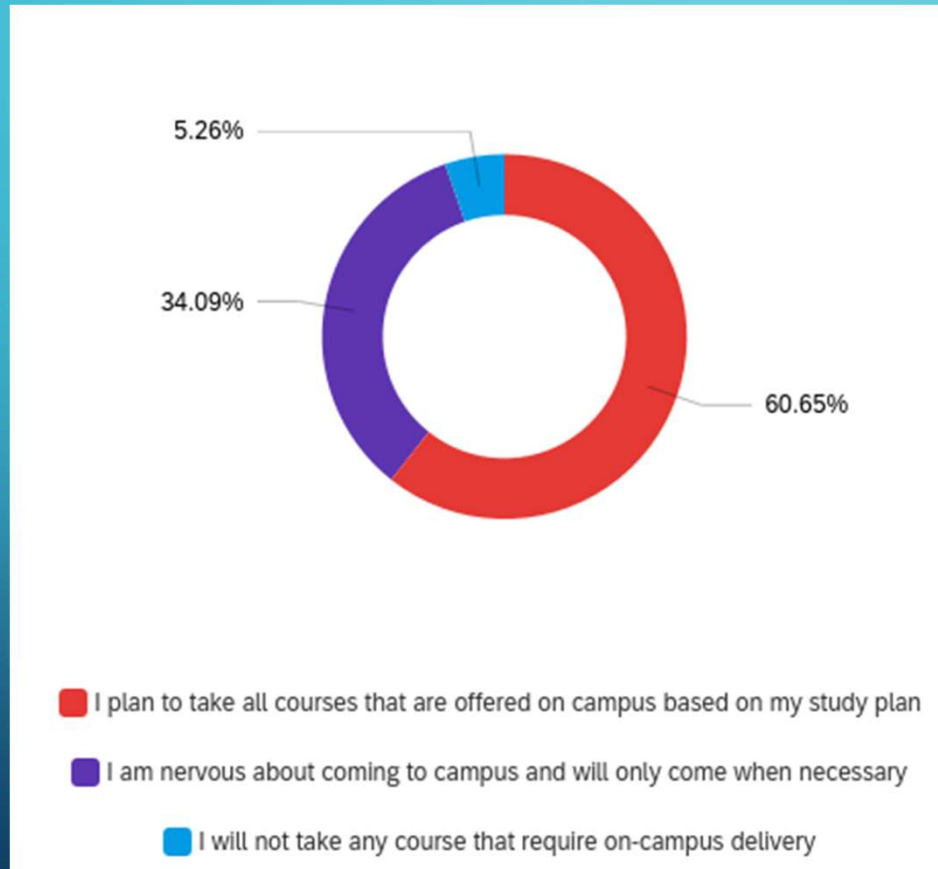
## COMMENTS ON STUDY AT HOME

- Too much distraction at home
- Less incentive to get work done when I'm at home
- Unable to focus, I usually go to the Library quite often
- I have trouble self-motivating when I don't have a separate place to work
- It is very difficult to associate being home with doing hard work
- Proctored exams feels invasive and I much prefer in-person exams
- I will not install any software on my computer that views the display or locks down features
- Some software like ProctorU are incredibly invasive and I would not feel comfortable installing it... worried every single time I look away from the screen they would think I'm cheating (as I look around a lot when thinking)

## QUESTION #5

- **If SoCS was able to offer on-campus courses that meet all guidelines from federal and provincial governments, what would be your plan?**
  - I plan to take all courses that are offered on campus based on my study plan
  - I am nervous about coming to campus and will only come when necessary
  - I will not take any course that require on-campus delivery

# PLAN FOR IN-PERSON DELIVERY



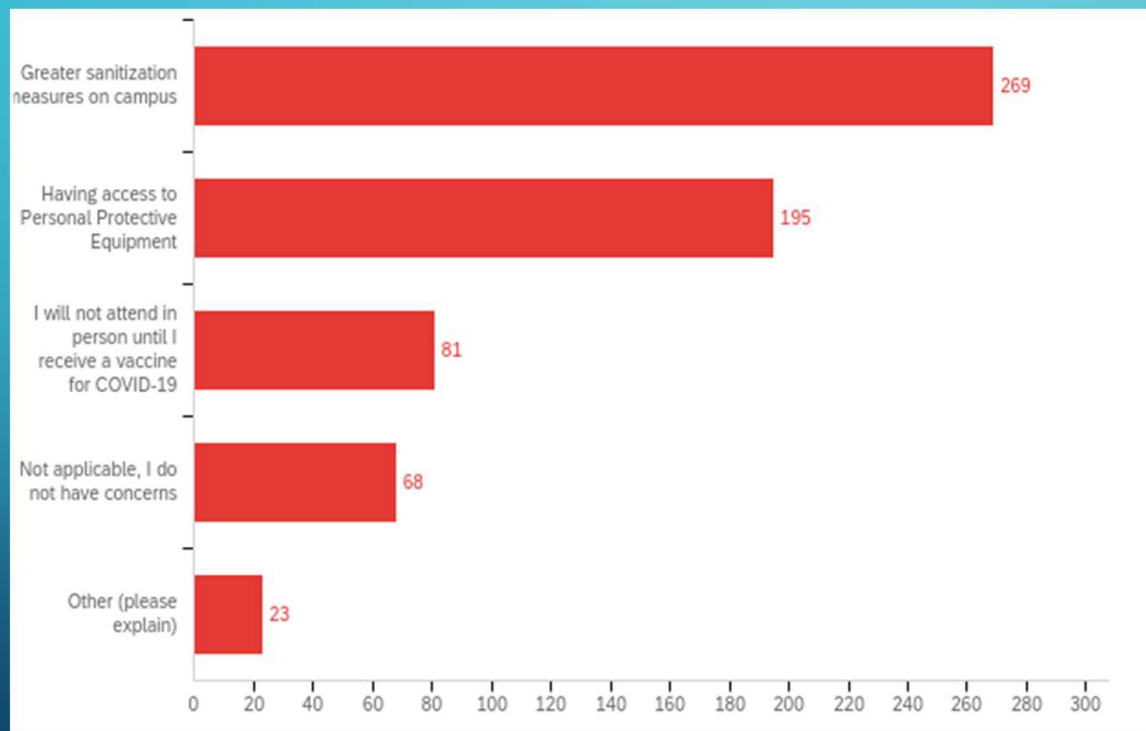
- **60% - full time study**
- **34% has concerns and only come to campus when necessary**
- **5% won't take on-campus course**

## QUESTION #6

- **If you have concerns about studying on campus, what measures could help to address your concerns? Select all that apply:**
  - Greater sanitization measures on campus
  - Having access to Personal Protective Equipment
  - I will not attend in person until I receive a vaccine for COVID-19
  - Not applicable, I do not have concerns
  - Other (please explain)



# ADDRESS CONCERNS FOR STUDYING ON CAMPUS



- 17% - do not have any concerns
- 67% - sanitization
- 49% - PPE
- 20% - wait for vaccine

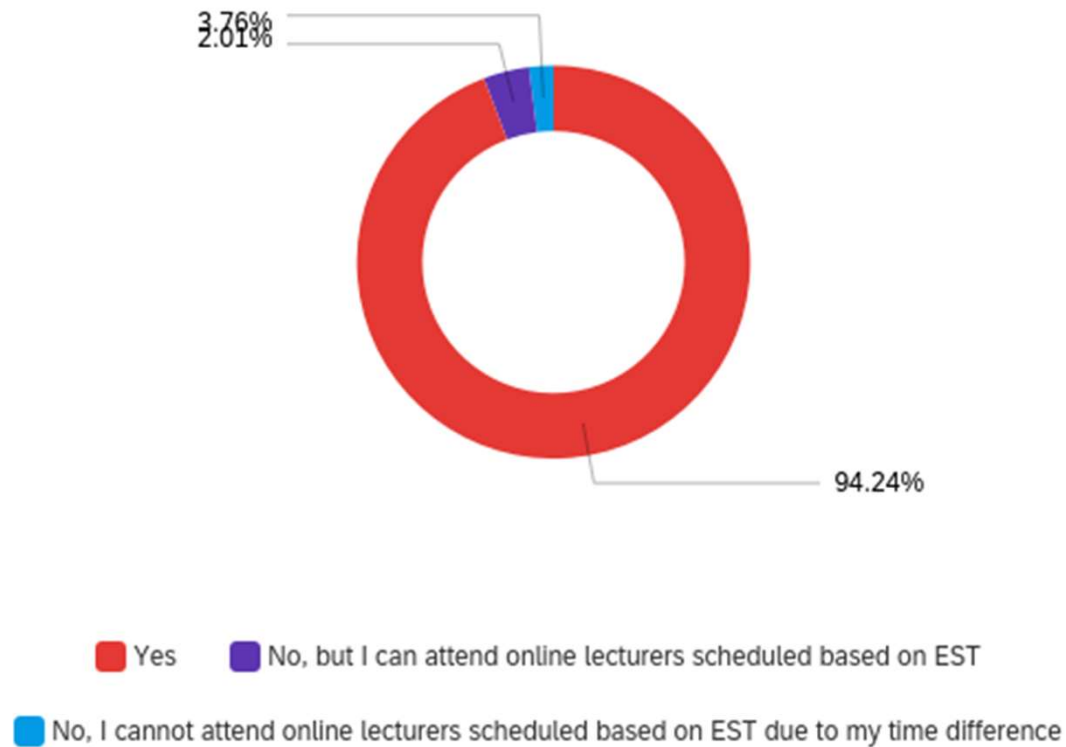
# COMMENTS FOR STUDYING ON CAMPUS

- **Smaller Class Sizes**
- **Maybe reduce the number of people in a single lecture while still being in the same room, giving people room to distance a bit while in class**
- **Forced distancing in lectures, smaller lecture sizes, better accommodation for students who are sick so they don't force themselves to come to school when they are coughing**
- **Physical distancing in common places like the UC and sanitization of shared equipment (ie. lab computers etc.)**
- **Structured and disciplined system at the food courts to avoid too much crowd**

## QUESTION #7

- **Are you living in the EST time zone (Eastern Standard Time)?**
  - Yes
  - No, but I can attend online lectures scheduled based on EST
  - No, I cannot attend online lectures scheduled based on EST due to my time difference

## EST TIME ZONE

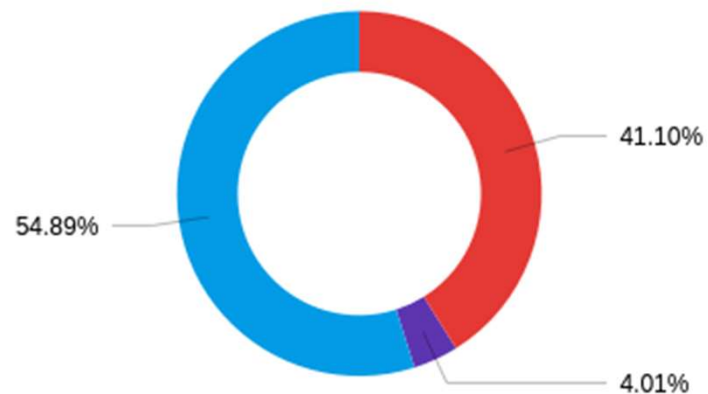


- **94% - Yes**
- **3.8% - No problem with online lecture scheduled for EST**
- **2% - cannot attend online lectures**

## QUESTION #8

- **Will your ability to live in residence or to rent in the community affect your ability to come to campus in the Fall?**
  - I don't need to live in residence or rent in the community
  - I cannot return to University without living in a residence
  - I need a place to stay in Guelph, which can be either the residence or a rental home

# HOUSING NEEDS



■ I don't need to live in residence or rent in the community

■ I cannot return to University without living in a residence

■ I need a place to stay in Guelph, which can be either the residence or a rental home

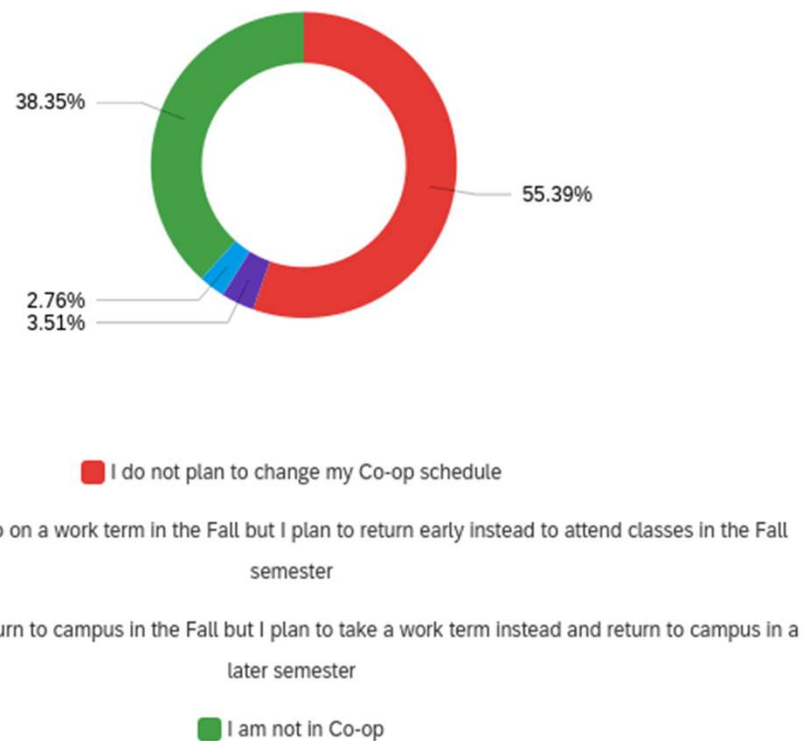
- **41% - already have place to stay**
- **55% - need either residence or rental**
- **4% - require residence access**

## QUESTION #9

- **Co-op Students: Has your plan to pursue the Co-op option changed due to the pandemic? Will this cause you to change your schedule of study?**
  - I do not plan to change my Co-op schedule
  - I would normally go on a work term in the Fall but I plan to return early instead to attend classes in the Fall semester
  - I would normally return to campus in the Fall but I plan to take a work term instead and return to campus in a later semester
  - I am not in Co-op



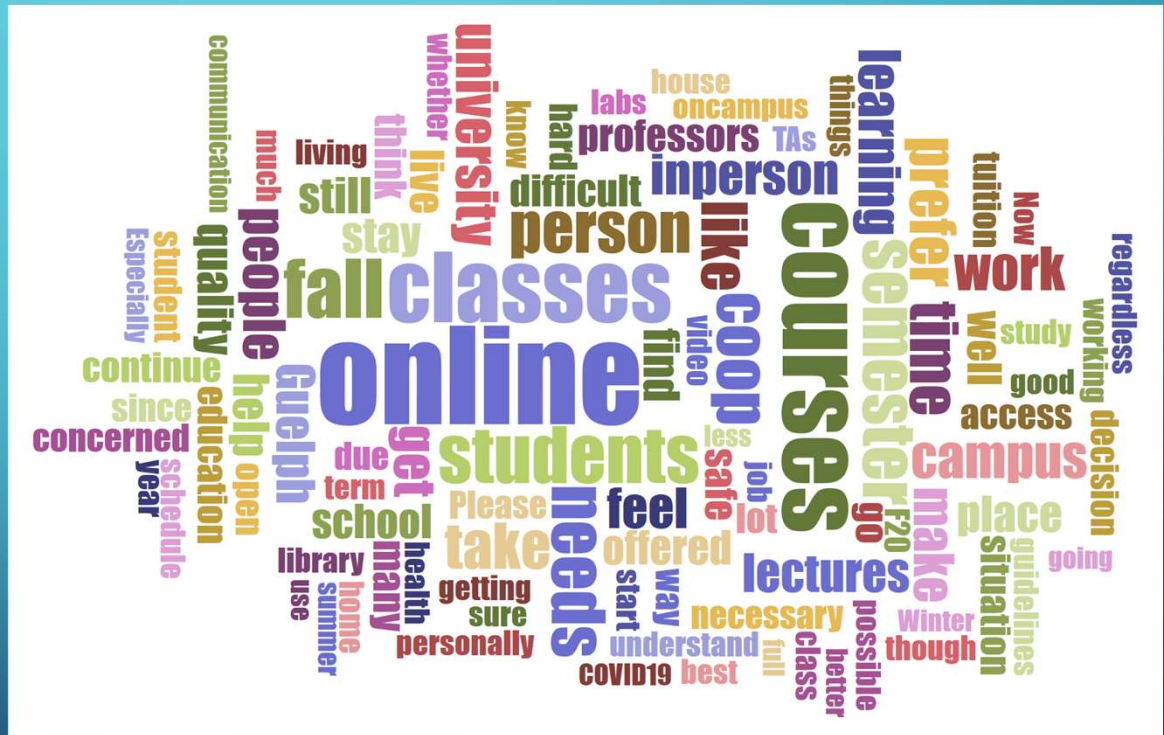
# PLAN FOR COOP TERM



- **38% - not in co-op**
- **Among the coop students:**
  - **90% - no change to coop plan**
  - **10% - change plan to either directions**

## QUESTION #10

- Please share any other thoughts on the fall semester:
  - Received 86 comments



## COMMENTS – CONCERNS FOR ONLINE DELIVERY

- I do not find any value in online courses. I need the school support to effectively complete my courses. I use all of the on-campus supports, such as office hours, 3rd floor of the library, the library and clubs such as GCC. If all classes were to go online, then I would most likely take the semester off to work.
- I find that while I can maintain grades in online courses, my level of retention of course content drops significantly, as well as my motivation and overall satisfaction with the learning experience. For this reason, I would strongly prefer to take in-person classes, if at all possible. I would also be open to a hybrid approach with less frequent lectures and more online content.

## COMMENTS – CONCERNS FOR IN-PERSON DELIVERY

- I am very reluctant about returning to campus while COVID is still an active risk, regardless of whether or not quarantine has been lifted/ other nonessential businesses are open.
- As things currently look, I don't think in-person learning would be a good idea in any magnitude. But a lot can change between now and then.
- I am concerned about housing and living on my own during a pandemic. It will be difficult to stay safe, attending classes and take care of my needs if classes resume. Although I dislike online classes, and do not feel that they are adequate, based on the current situation they are far preferable.

## COMMENTS — SUPPORT FOR MIXED MODEL

- Perhaps as a happy medium, having lectures online and labs in person implementing proper sanitation guidelines would be a good solution to limit mass gatherings on campus.
- You should offer both online and in person. I am sure there are many people that would love to have an online term... But for someone like me who can't focus as well on online material, I feel like my grades will suffer without in person classes.
- Please keep the needs of high-risk students in mind if the decision is made to re-open campus in the fall. More online classes offered along side their regular on-campus options (or "flexible" on-campus classes, where attending in-person is not mandatory, and lectures are either recorded or can be attended virtually) would go a long way.



## COMMENTS – COMMIT TO FULL TIME STUDY

- **Regardless of whether or not the semester is online, i will still take a full course load as well as move to my rental in Guelph. But. I would much prefer if in person lectures can be offered even if not necessary for all students. Online learning is not as effective and my tuition should go to towards the most effective teaching capabilities.**
- **I will continue my studies regardless of what happens... If teaching can remain in person and meet federal regulations, that'd benefit me the most. If courses must be presented through an online fashion, I will still take the full course load and hope to get solid knowledge and grades in each course. I am renting and will be living in Guelph for fall and winter semesters either way.**

## COMMENTS — PLAN FOR A GAP YEAR

- Even though I require a place to stay in Guelph to be able to work effectively the current situation makes me unable to find a place to stay, and residence is prohibitively expensive for me, making me unsure of my ability to continue study for the foreseeable future
- ... I'd much prefer the university postpone the semester until a vaccine is available for COVID-19. If announced promptly, I'd be able to start looking for full-time work and wouldn't have to sacrifice the quality of my education to keep up with my cohort...



## COMMENTS - SUGGESTIONS

- Although I prefer in-person classes, I think I would be willing to do online classes, if lectures were live-streamed. So lectures would still take place as a class setting, but people could just watch it at home, and ask questions through a chat box or something similar. My biggest issue with online classes is when there are no live student/professor interactions, where questions can be answered immediately/verbally.
- Personally, I think if classes were to be forced online again adding additional TAs would be a great way to address communication issues and to help students who need extra help. Additionally, this will help address financial issues people may have with paying full price for distance learning.

## COMMENTS – ONLINE DELIVERY FORMAT

- Having online video lectures (video on demand which can be replayed anytime like what Carleton University uses, and not live streaming videos that can only be viewed once) Is my greatest preference for the fall semester
- Is there any way that if lectures in person cannot continue, they can be in a video format? I feel like having a video of my professor would make things a lot more engaging. Any prof that already did so I found I absorbed material much better.

## COMMENTS - COMMUNICATION

- I guess the main concern I have is being able to connect to students. Physically being around people has reassured me that I can remain confident in continuing my studies and try my best... Communication with TAs is also the major issue because I have personally experienced many issues with the lack of open ended and responsive communication with the TAs unless they are actually in the labs. Thank you.
- Mental health services aren't very good now that I can't see a therapist face to face, so online learning became very hard the last months of school. I'm really not excited about having to go to online school in the fall. It's difficult to wake up on time and have motivation to do the work.

## COMMENTS – ISSUES IDENTIFIED FOR W2020

- **The problems I had for the short online study period:**
  - There were courses that simply sent out lecture notes: I come to university for explanation and communication on subjects, not dry theories I can get online or textbooks
  - Abstract and logical problems don't get explained very well through emails and discussion boards.
  - Delay waiting for response from a problem really affect motivation to solve the problem; and sometimes I lost track as I might have more problems from other courses that also waited for responses.
- **If the university has to do online classes, please make it a video stream or at least voice over lecture notes; and also provide TAs with platforms where they can explain verbally. Thank you.**

## COMMENTS — ACCESS TO W2020 COURSES

- I feel like some courses that were held in W20 could/should be redone in F20, as some of us have had awful experiences moving purely to online in late W20.
- As long as instructors provide thorough notes online it should be manageable. Since all content is online it would be useful to have Winter semester courses online in the fall too - for people whose study was interrupted with COVID-19.

## COMMENTS – HOUSING/DECISION NEEDED

- As someone who has previously struggled with finding accommodations in Guelph between co-op terms, I'm very concerned with finding a place to live in Guelph if on-campus classes resume for the fall... I feel as though the university needs to make a decision as soon as possible about the reopening of campus to allow adequate time for students to find accommodations.
- I'm worried about housing for the next year. If I were to start renting a house now and the school turns out to be online I would lose out on a lot of money but if I do not find a house soon I may be out of luck in finding someplace to live. I feel that it would be best if the university announced their plans regarding an online semester sooner rather than later.



## COMMENTS – TUITION FEE

- If the tuition costs will be the same and/or higher next semester, I would want classes to be in person so that I can get the quality education I'm paying for. I would not mind having to follow precautions and guidelines to attend class in person.
- If I wanted to take online courses I could do them somewhere else and pay less.
- The University's policy on pricing in the case of online only classes will impact my decisions greatly. Less resources from the University should be reflected by a lower tuition
- If classes are online e fees should be reduced.