

Loyola Student Fall Experiences Survey

Office of Institutional Effectiveness Research Report, October 2020

November 3, 2020

In March 2020, in response to the worldwide public health crisis around the COVID-19 pandemic, the Loyola community moved all classes to an online format and all students off campus. This environment continued for the remainder of the spring 2020 semester, summer 2020 sessions, and fall 2020 semester. On October 6, 2020, all Loyola undergraduate and graduate students were invited to participate in the *Fall 2020 Loyola Student Experiences Survey*.

The survey asked questions related to students' experiences in their fall 2020 online classes, opportunities for engagement, overall well-being, and preferences for returning to campus in the spring. First-year students were also asked about their desire to live in residence halls. The purpose of this survey was two-fold. First, to learn more about Loyola students' fall curricular and co-curricular experiences, and second, to gain more insight for spring planning. Over 4500 students participated in the survey providing important information.

This report summarizes some of the candid and rich information they shared in their survey responses. Specifically, it documents:

- Participant response information
- Fall curricular experiences related to online synchronous and asynchronous classes
- Co-curricular engagement
- Spring classes

Participant Response Information

Approximately 4601 Loyola students participated in the survey, a 27.24 percent response rate. Nearly three-fourths of respondents were undergraduate students (75.7%) with 24 percent being graduate students, and less than one percent indicating that they were non-degree seeking students. Each academic college, school, and institute was represented among the respondents. The largest number of responses identified as students in the College of Arts and Sciences (45.7%). See Table 1 for the full breakdown of student responses by school/college/institute.

Table 1. Respondent school or college of primary major or program of study

	N	%
College of Arts and Sciences	1936	45.7
Arrupe College	44	1
Quinlan School of Business	634	15
School of Communication	216	5.1
School of Continuing and Professional Studies	33	0.8
School of Education	204	4.8
School of Environmental Sustainability	165	3.9

Parkinson School of Health Sciences and Public Health	113	2.7
School of Law	232	5.5
Stritch School of Medicine	131	3.1
Marcella Niehoff School of Nursing	303	7.2
School of Social Work	187	4.4
Institute of Pastoral Studies	38	0.9

Among undergraduate students, there was balanced representation among students across their years in school. Roughly one-fourth of respondents identified as each of the following freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors or above.

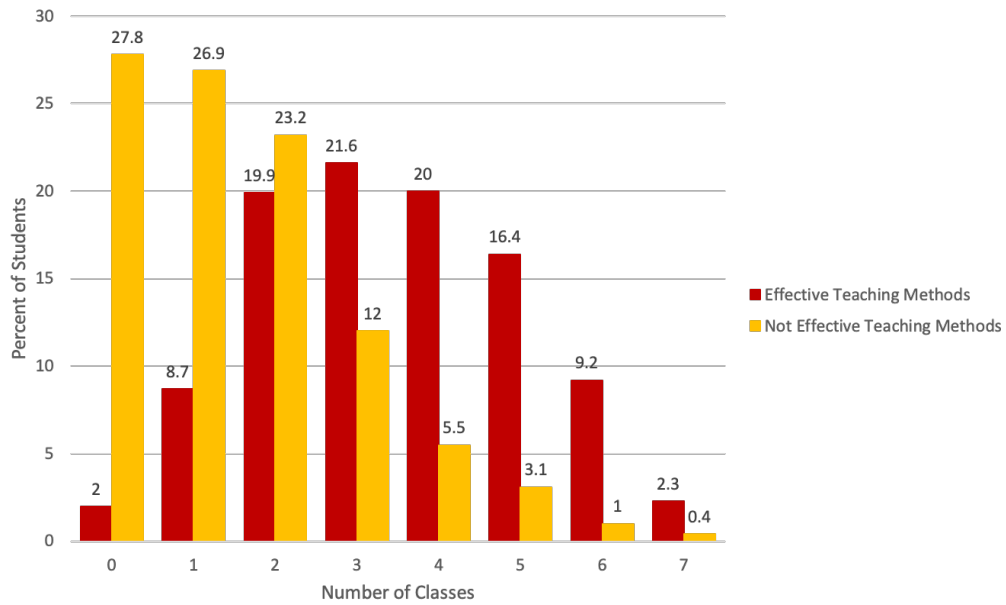
Students were also asked to share which ZIP code they were currently living in. A vast majority of students who participated in the survey indicated that they were living in the Chicago area. For the purposes of this report, Chicago area is defined as any ZIP code beginning with 600 through ZIP codes beginning with 608. Over 80 percent of student respondents are living in the Chicago area ZIP codes while taking classes online this fall.

Fall 2020 Classes

Most students reported taking a mixture of online synchronous and asynchronous classes. Roughly half of student respondents report that in both types of classes the workload this fall is greater than what they expected. Fifty-three percent of student respondents in synchronous classes found the workload to be more than expected, and about 48 percent of students in asynchronous classes found the workload to be more than expected. Students were also asked if they had a preference in online course formats. A little less than half (45.7 percent) of students said they preferred a mix of asynchronous and synchronous courses, and about one-third (33.9 percent) of students preferred synchronous classes.

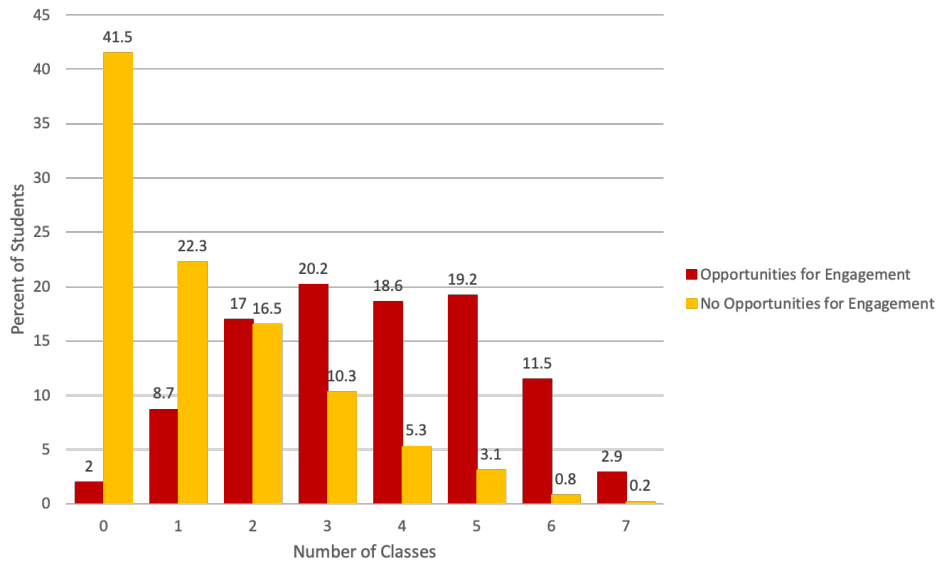
On the survey, students were asked to identify the number of classes in which their instructors were and were not using effective teaching methods for the online environment, providing opportunities for online engagement, and responsive and flexible to student needs.

Figure 1. Number of Classes with Effective and Not Effective Teaching Methods Online

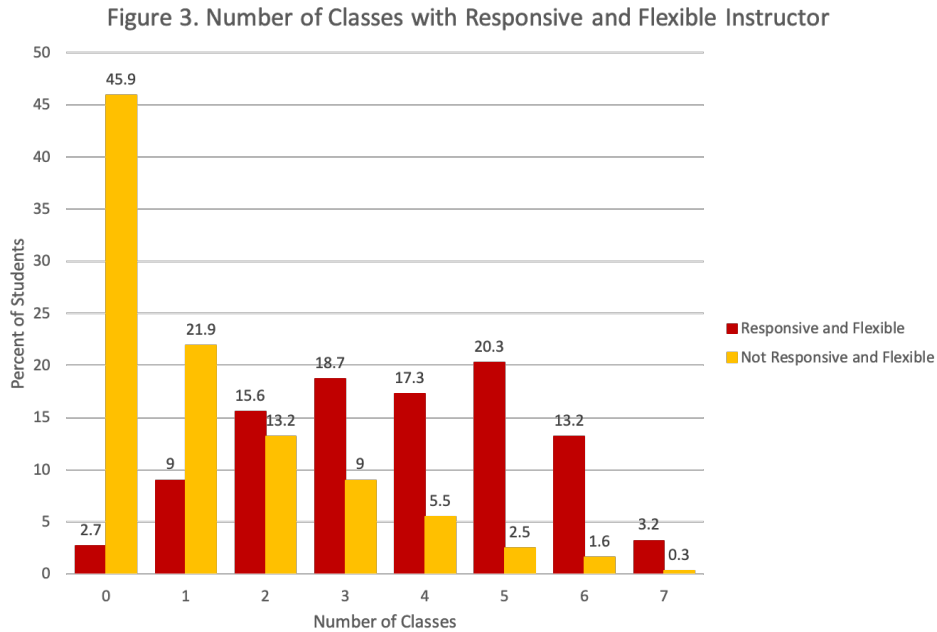


Overall, the majority of student respondents reported that their instructors were using effective teaching methods for the online environment in three or more of their classes. However, a little over 70 percent of students indicated that they have at least one class in which the professor does not use effective teaching methods in the online environment. See Figure 1 above for additional details.

Figure 2. Number of Classes with Opportunities for Online Engagement



Approximately 72 percent of student respondents indicated that in at least three of their classes, instructors provided opportunities for engagement in the online environment. Roughly 58.5 percent of students indicated that they have at least one class in which the instructor does not provide opportunities for online engagement. Figure 2 above provides more detail on student responses.



Roughly 72 percent of student respondents indicated that they have instructors who are responsive and flexible in three or more of their classes. Additionally, 54.1 percent of students said that they have one or more classes in which the instructor is not responsive or flexible. Figure 3 above provides more details.

Survey responses indicate that most students are satisfied with communication, availability, response to email, and flexibility of their instructors. However, as Table 2 shows, only 36.9 percent of students are satisfied with their engagement with other Loyola students.

Table 2. Student Satisfaction, Very/Somewhat Satisfied, Fall 2020

	Very or somewhat satisfied
Communication from your instructors	71.7
Availability of your instructors to answer questions and/or provide feedback	78.3
Instructor response to email	81.9
Instructor willingness to be flexible given individual student needs	67.0
Engagement with other Loyola students	36.9

Students are also experiencing challenges to online engagement in their classes due to external factors impacted by COVID-19. Over a one-fourth of student respondents (26.6%) indicated that housing instability due to COVID-19 has impacted their ability to engage in their online classes. In April 2020/spring semester 2020, the Office of Institutional Effectiveness administered a student survey which asked these same questions. Students respondents from fall 2020 report a slight increase in housing instability over student respondents in the spring 2020 semester after Loyola had transitioned all operations online due to the COVID pandemic. A larger percentage of student respondents this fall (30.5%) are also having difficulty engaging online due to loss of employment or income as a result of COVID-19 in comparison to the spring (28.4%). The full report from the spring survey on student experiences and well-being can be found [here](#). Table 3 details more information about external factors impacting student online engagement in fall 2020 compared to earlier in spring 2020.

Table 3. Interference with ability to engage in online learning, by semester (A great deal/somewhat), Fall 2020 and earlier in Spring 2020

	Fall 2020	Spring 2020
	%	%
Housing instability as a result of COVID-19	26.6	19.4
Loss of employment or income as a result of COVID-19	30.5	28.4
Current living situation impacting your ability to meet class obligations (e.g., synchronous meetings; space for quiet study)	44.3	43.9
Additional familial, care-taking, or household responsibilities in light of the COVID-19 crisis	34.9	35.6

Respondent’s feelings of support in the online environment have also shifted in a negative direction since spring 2020. Slightly more than half (56.3 percent) of students who responded to the fall 2020 survey agreed/strongly agreed that they were receiving the support that they needed to learn in the online environment. In April 2020, 73.7 percent of students felt that they were receiving the support that they needed which is a difference of roughly 17 percent. See Table 4.

Table 4. Receiving support needed to learn in online environment Fall 2020 and earlier in Spring 2020

	Fall 2020	Spring 2020
	%	%
Strongly agree/Agree	56.3	73.7
Strongly disagree/Disagree	43.7	26.3

Based on those who responded to the survey, Loyola students’ sense of belonging has shifted negatively and significantly since we last asked them in spring 2020. Last spring, roughly 60 percent of respondents agreed/strongly agreed that they felt a sense of belonging to the Loyola community despite the online environment. This fall, approximately 46 percent of student respondents agreed/strongly that they feel a sense of belonging. There is a 14 percent difference in student sense of belonging between the fall 2020 students and the spring 2020. See Table 5 for details.

Table 5. Student Sense of Belonging, Fall 2020 and earlier in Spring 2020

	During Fall 2020	During Spring 2020

	N	%	N	%
Strongly agree	260	7.1	524	12.2
Agree	1439	39.5	2071	48.2
Disagree	1263	34.7	1283	29.8
Strongly disagree	681	18.7	423	9.8

Co-curricular Engagement, Fall 2020

On the survey, students were asked about their involvement and interest in several co-curricular activities and programs. Students expressed interest in engaging in various student life activities. Some are active already, but there is a large group who are interested in being involved, but not yet involved. Still others are unsure, not interested, or not eligible for various activities. Table 6 below shows student responses to questions related to student involvement opportunities. Orange and red shaded areas include activities where there are many (over 500 or over 1000) interested student survey respondents who could be engaged or who may need additional information about the opportunities. Green shading marks areas where over 500 student respondents are already actively involved.

Table 6. Student interest and involvement in Student Development Activities during fall 2020

	Interested and already involved		Interested but not involved		Uncertain whether or not I am interested in being involved		Uninterested in being involved		Unable/ ineligible to be involved	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Fitness: on-campus in the Halas Recreation Center	376	10.4	1467	40.4	414	11.4	670	18.5	703	19.4
Fitness: online classes offered by Campus Recreation	65	1.8	1050	29	641	17.7	1553	42.8	316	8.7
Mentorship programs offered by SDMA	126	3.5	785	21.7	821	22.7	1349	37.3	531	14.7
Programs and events planned by student organizations (supported by Student Activities & Greek Affairs)	506	14	923	25.6	691	19.1	1143	31.7	346	9.6
Loyola 360 - Retreat for new undergraduate students offered by Campus Ministry	125	3.5	334	9.3	468	13	1720	47.7	958	26.6
Retreats offered by Campus Ministry other than Loyola 360	95	2.6	486	13.5	607	16.8	1917	53.2	501	13.9
Sorority & Fraternity Life (supported by Student Activities & Greek Affairs)	388	10.8	363	10.1	342	9.5	1904	52.9	603	16.8
Student organizations (supported by Student Activities & Greek Affairs)	781	21.7	887	24.6	557	15.5	973	27	403	11.2

Student employment and/or student leadership roles with a campus department	456	12.7	1557	43.3	468	13	708	19.7	404	11.2
Trainings offered by Student Diversity & Multicultural Affairs (e.g., Safe Space, Share the Dream, etc.)	160	4.5	943	26.3	864	24.1	1245	34.7	379	10.6

Spring 2021 Classes

The feelings about taking their future spring 2021 classes online or on-campus remained mixed across the student body. One of the more notable differences in course format preferences was between graduate/professional students and undergraduate students. Overall, graduate/professional students seem to be more committed to enrolling in the spring 2021 regardless of course format options. Graduate/professional students seem the least committed to enrolling if up to two of their classes are in-person. The majority (69.2%) of graduate/professional student respondents indicated that they would definitely enroll in online classes in the spring 2021 while only 38.5 percent of undergraduate students felt that way. A little over half (53.9%) of undergraduate students indicated that they would definitely enroll in classes if up to two of their classes were offered in-person during spring 2021. See Table 7 below.

Table 7. Student course format preferences for spring 2021, by undergraduate and graduate/professional student

	All or almost all classes online		The majority of your classes are online		Up to two of your classes are offered on campus, in-person and the remainder are online	
	% Graduate or Professional Student	% UG Student	% Graduate or Professional Student	% UG Student	% Graduate or Professional Student	% UG Student
I would definitely enroll in classes	69.2	38.5	59.1	36.5	49.1	53.9
I would probably enroll in classes	17.6	28.6	25.2	35.3	18.1	24.9
I am unsure if I would	6.4	18.3	8.6	16.5	15.9	12.4

enroll in classes						
I would probably not enroll in classes	3.2	7.7	3.1	7	6.8	4.9
I would definitely not enroll in classes	3.6	6.9	4	4.7	10.1	3.9

Freshman/first-year students were also asked about whether they would be interested in living in single-occupancy residence hall rooms and how that would potentially impact their decision to enroll in the spring 2021. Roughly 69.3 percent of freshman/first-year students indicated that they would be interested in living in the residence halls in spring 2021, and over half of freshman/first-year students (56.8%) said that would make them much more likely to enroll in the spring. Tables 8 and 9 provide more details on student responses to these questions.

Table 8. Freshman/first-year desire to live in residence halls in spring 2021

	N	%
Yes	444	69.3
No	104	16.2
Unsure	93	14.5

Table 9. Freshman/first-year influence of living on decision to enroll in spring 2021

	N	%
Much more likely to enroll this spring	364	56.8
Slightly more likely to enroll this spring	72	11.2
Much less likely to enroll this spring	20	3.1
Not impact my decision	185	28.9

In addition to navigating the COVID-19 global pandemic, people in our nation are also experiencing a time of unrest related to issues of anti-Black racism, that disproportionately impacts racially and ethnically minoritized students, faculty, and staff. As a result, Loyolans are working to navigate issues of

white supremacy and settler colonialism in various ways through reflection, dialogue, protests, practices, and policies. We asked students about their satisfaction with Loyola’s institutional response to racism and racial justice and the impact of their satisfaction on their plans for spring enrollment. Student respondents were divided in terms of their satisfaction with how Loyola has responded to issues of racial injustice. Roughly one third of students indicated that they are not at all satisfied with another third of students reporting that they are somewhat satisfied. See Table 10 for more details.

Table 10. Respondent satisfaction with Loyola’s response to racial injustice, Fall 2020

	N	%
Extremely satisfied	387	11.0
Very satisfied	735	20.8
Somewhat satisfied	1226	34.8
Not at all satisfied	1179	33.4

Student respondents were also divided in their feelings about the impact of Loyola’s response to racial justice on their decision to enroll in the spring 2021. Table 11 below provides details on their responses. Roughly 41 percent of students indicated that Loyola’s responses as of October 2020 somewhat impacted their spring 2021 enrollment, and 39 percent of students indicated that it did not impact their decision. However, almost one-fifth of students said that Loyola’s institutional response to racial injustice impacted their spring 2021 enrollment decision a great deal.

Table 11. Student reported impact of Loyola’s response to racial injustice on plans for spring 2021

	N	%
A great deal	670	19.0
Somewhat	1453	41.1
Not at all	1412	39.9

Please contact oie@luc.edu for additional information about this and related Office of Institutional Effectiveness studies.