# Survey of CU Political Science Undergraduate Students
# Pandemic Teaching Modalities and Pedagogical Choices

Report Completed October 15, 2020
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This survey was conducted via Qualtrics and distributed to all political science majors via the department's Canvas page for undergraduate students. We received 112 total responses before the deadline. The survey was conducted from October 5-13. This first went out while the campus was under temporary remote instruction, and the return to in-person instruction was announced during the survey period. The first two pages here serve as a summary and detailed results follow. Thank you to Audrey Wilson, Undergraduate Program Coordinator, for her assistance with the survey and the report.

**Section 1: General Assessment of the Current Semester**

Conclusions: On both the question of how things are going so far at CU in general and in political science in particular, the general feeling is close to neutral. In political science, the mean is slightly more in the positive direction than for CU as a whole (with 3 being neutral, 1 being excellent and 5 being poor). Given the circumstances, this is a good sign. However, given that nearly one-third of the respondents believe their semester overall is going poorly or terribly and close to 20 percent believe that their political science classes are going poorly or terribly we have reason to be concerned about our students' academic success this year and their willingness to enroll in classes in the spring semester. The findings also raise concerns about retention of majors and retention of students in general.

**Section 2: Preferences for Next Semester**

Conclusions: Students are very clear that they would like more in-person options for next semester. Of the respondents, 42 percent strongly agree that they would like more in-person classes next semester and another 19 percent agree. Of the course modality options given, students' first choice (around one-third of students) was hybrid in-person/online courses, their second choice was synchronous Zoom courses and third choice was hybrid in-person/remote course. Combined, the hybrid in-person types of courses are preferred by 52 percent of the respondents. Respondents would least like to see asynchronous online classes.

**Section 3: Assessment of Pedagogical Tools and Technologies in PSCI Classes this Semester**

Conclusions: The overall feeling thermometers on both the balance of synchronous and asynchronous coursework and the balance of in-person vs. online/remote instruction are close to neutral. However, in both cases around one-third of students are dissatisfied or extremely dissatisfied. Students are generally satisfied with the use of synchronous Zoom sessions, recorded lectures, and their access to course instructors and TAs. However, in all of these areas, around one-quarter of students express some level of dissatisfaction. Students were divided and falling close to neutral or in the direction of being dissatisfied with the use of Zoom breakout rooms (this one was especially polarized), online discussion boards and group activities. Of these three, online discussion boards were the only one with a slightly positive mean on the feeling thermometer. While students were generally positive or neutral about exams so far this semester, of the few students reporting being in a class using Proctorio, the responses were universally negative or neutral.

**Section 4: Selected Qualitative Responses**

Conclusions: A selection of qualitative responses are included here for two reasons. First, I think these comments are helpful in understanding that our students have varying perspectives, and it is important to remember the items that stand out most to an individual student are sometimes at odds with overall student sentiments. Also, I wanted people to really get a feeling for how students are experiencing this semester. There are a lot of frustrations articulated, but also some positive insights.

**Overall Conclusions**

On almost every measure in the survey, one-quarter to one-third of the students are unhappy with their experience this semester in our department. In terms of planning for next semester:

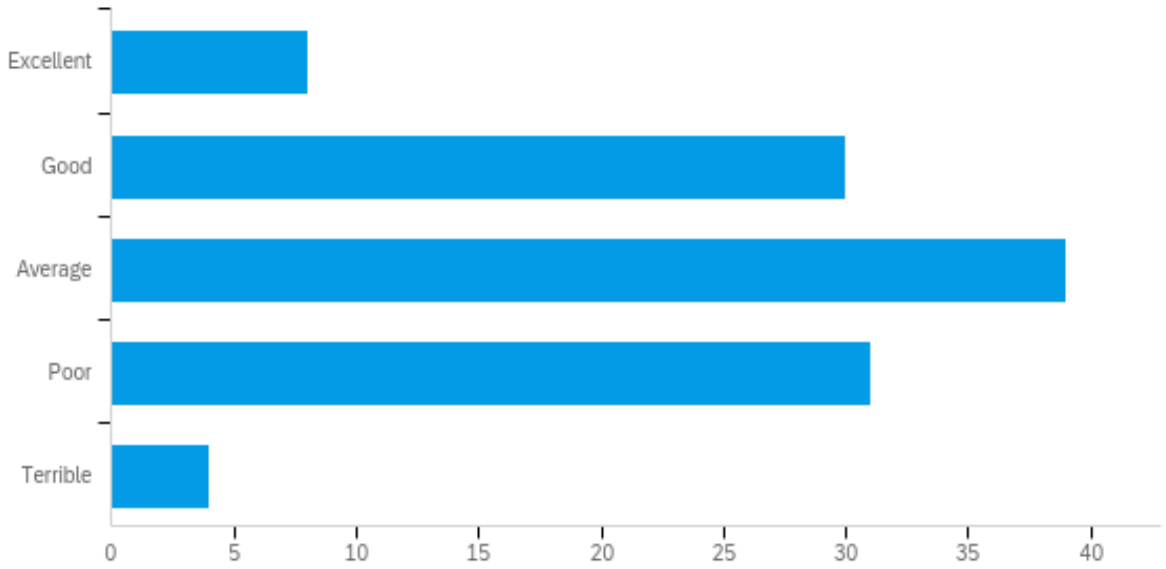
1) Over half of respondents would like to see more hybrid in-person classes next semester. Although we will offer all the course modalities included in the survey, the department is not currently slated to teach enough classes with an in-person component to meet student demand beyond the option of in-person recitations at the lower division.
2) The department needs to work to help students sort themselves into classes that will be using their preferred modalities in the spring. In order to do so, faculty need to be ready to communicate information about the modalities of their courses to students by early November when registration begins.

In terms of pedagogy, some of these issues may be solved by sorting students into the right classes in the spring. But, a few recommendations stand out as being helpful to consider:

1) Although both recorded lectures and live Zoom lectures have overall positive results, a substantial group of students dislikes each of these, with both of these pedagogical tools having positive and negative mentions in the qualitative comments. A potential solution to this problem is giving lectures synchronously and recording them at the same time.
2) Students don't love the available means of having smaller group discussions and group activities. But, some students really like and dislike each of the options. Of the choices, online discussion boards have the best overall reception, but still a lukewarm one. A potential solution is providing multiple means of achieving the goals of these tools. For example, allowing students to earn participation points by either participating in online discussion boards *or* Zoom breakout discussions.
3) Faculty using Proctorio should be aware of the negative feelings about the tool (although the responding number of students is very small).
4) For the rest of the fall semester and into the spring semester, being flexible will be necessary. Students want to be able to come to in-person classes, but we cannot in any way encourage them to come to campus when ill. Many students have a difficult time managing their time and attending synchronous meetings. Given our inability to ask for documentation, we need to have flexible means of allowing students to make up missed material and attendance. Having multiple classes with different modalities and schedules is difficult for students; they are going to need more reminders and guidance than they usually do.

## Section 1: General Assessment of the Current Semester

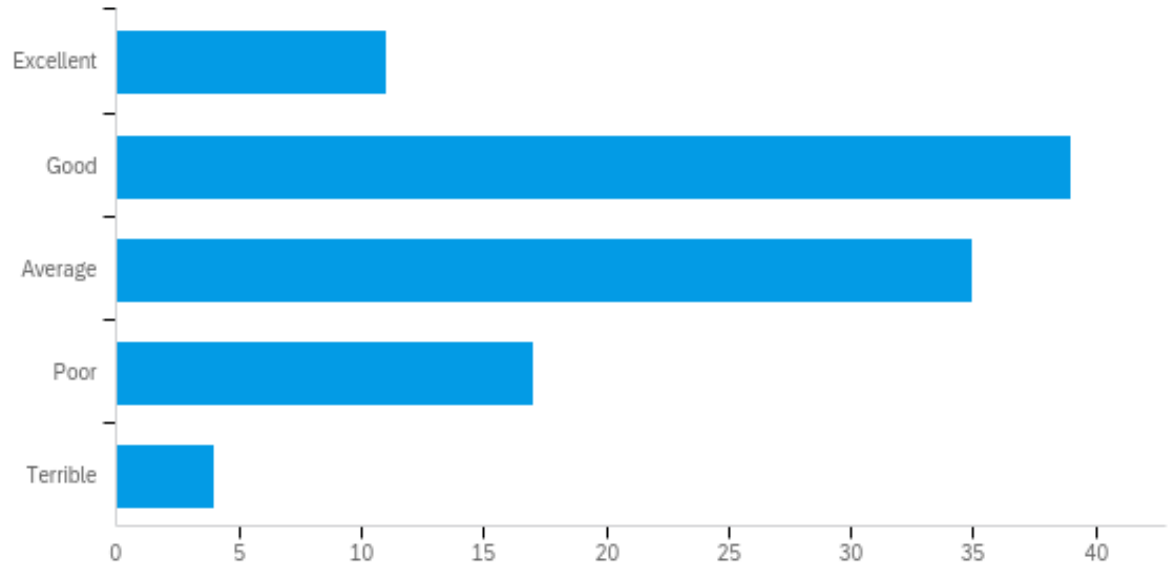
Thinking of all of your classes at CU, how do you think the semester is going so far?




| # | Field | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std Deviation | Variance | Count |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Thinking of all of your classes at CU, how do you think the semester is going so far? | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.94 | 0.98 | 0.97 | 112 |

| # | Answer | % | Count |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Excellent | 7.14% | 8 |
| 2 | Good | 26.79% | 30 |
| 3 | Average | 34.82% | 39 |
| 4 | Poor | 27.68% | 31 |
| 5 | Terrible | 3.57% | 4 |
| | Total | 100% | 112 |

Thinking specifically of your classes in the PSCI department, how do you think the semester is going so far?

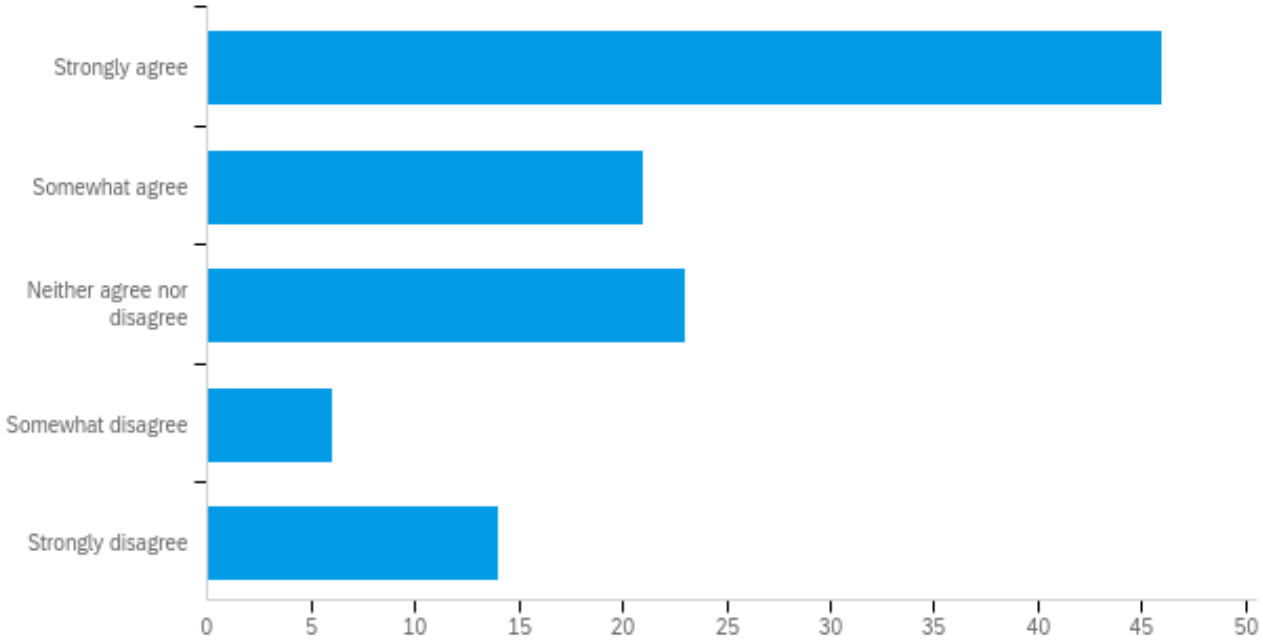



| # | Field | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std Deviation | Variance | Count |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Thinking specifically of your classes in the PSCI department, how do you think the semester is going so far? | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.66 | 0.99 | 0.98 | 106 |

| # | Answer | % | Count |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Excellent | 10.38% | 11 |
| 2 | Good | 36.79% | 39 |
| 3 | Average | 33.02% | 35 |
| 4 | Poor | 16.04% | 17 |
| 5 | Terrible | 3.77% | 4 |
| | Total | 100% | 106 |

## Section 2: Preferences for Next Semester

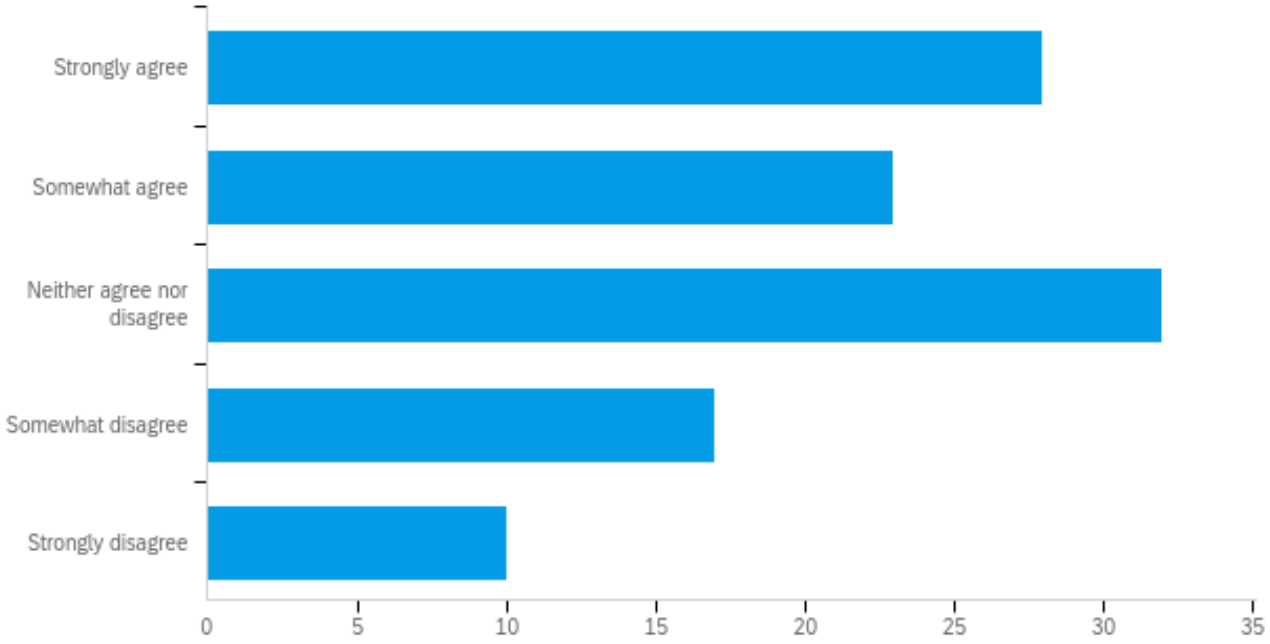
How much do you agree with the following statement? I would like to see more in-person instruction next semester.




| # | Field | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std Deviation | Variance | Count |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | How much do you agree with the following statement? I would like to see more in-person instruction next semester. | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.28 | 1.38 | 1.91 | 110 |

| # | Answer | % | Count |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Strongly agree | 41.82% | 46 |
| 2 | Somewhat agree | 19.09% | 21 |
| 3 | Neither agree nor disagree | 20.91% | 23 |
| 4 | Somewhat disagree | 5.45% | 6 |
| 5 | Strongly disagree | 12.73% | 14 |
| | Total | 100% | 110 |

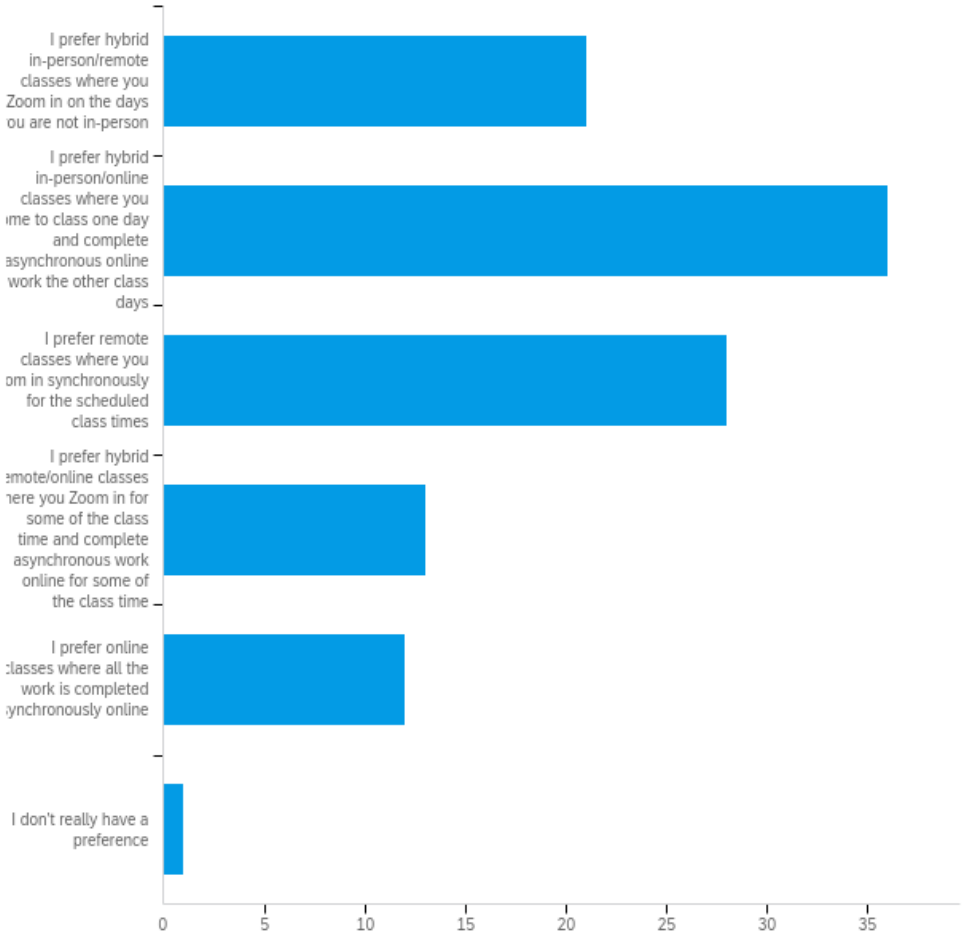
How much do you agree with the following statement? I would like to see more synchronous and less asynchronous instruction next semester.




| # | Field | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std Deviation | Variance | Count |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | How much do you agree with the following statement? I would like to see more synchronous and less asynchronous instruction next semester. | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.62 | 1.26 | 1.60 | 110 |

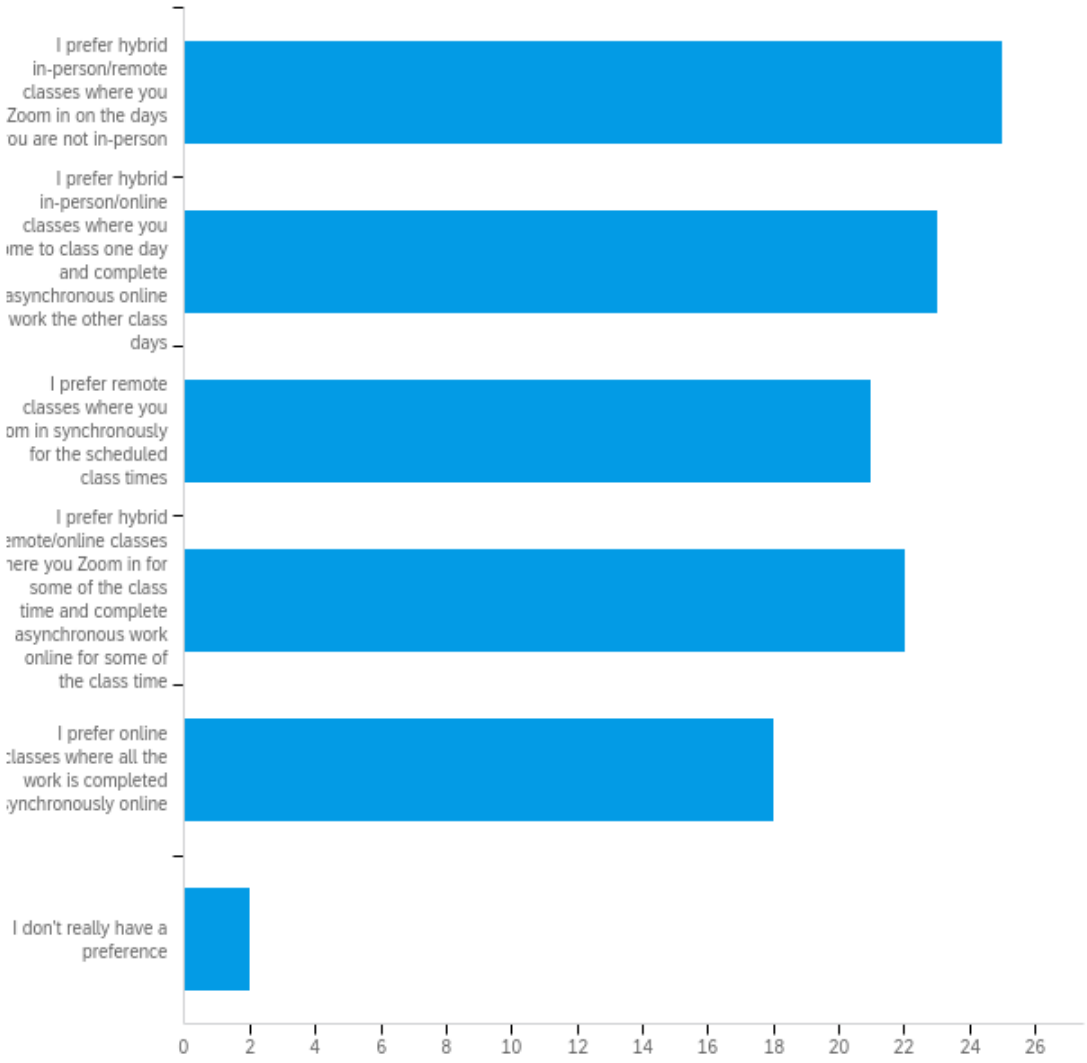
| # | Answer | % | Count |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Strongly agree | 25.45% | 28 |
| 2 | Somewhat agree | 20.91% | 23 |
| 3 | Neither agree nor disagree | 29.09% | 32 |
| 4 | Somewhat disagree | 15.45% | 17 |
| 5 | Strongly disagree | 9.09% | 10 |
| | Total | 100% | 110 |

We will most likely have the same class modalities in the spring that we have this fall, with a very limited ability to have fully in-person classes. Of these options, which modality would you MOST like to see in the spring? Keep in mind, all of these modalities will likely be available.



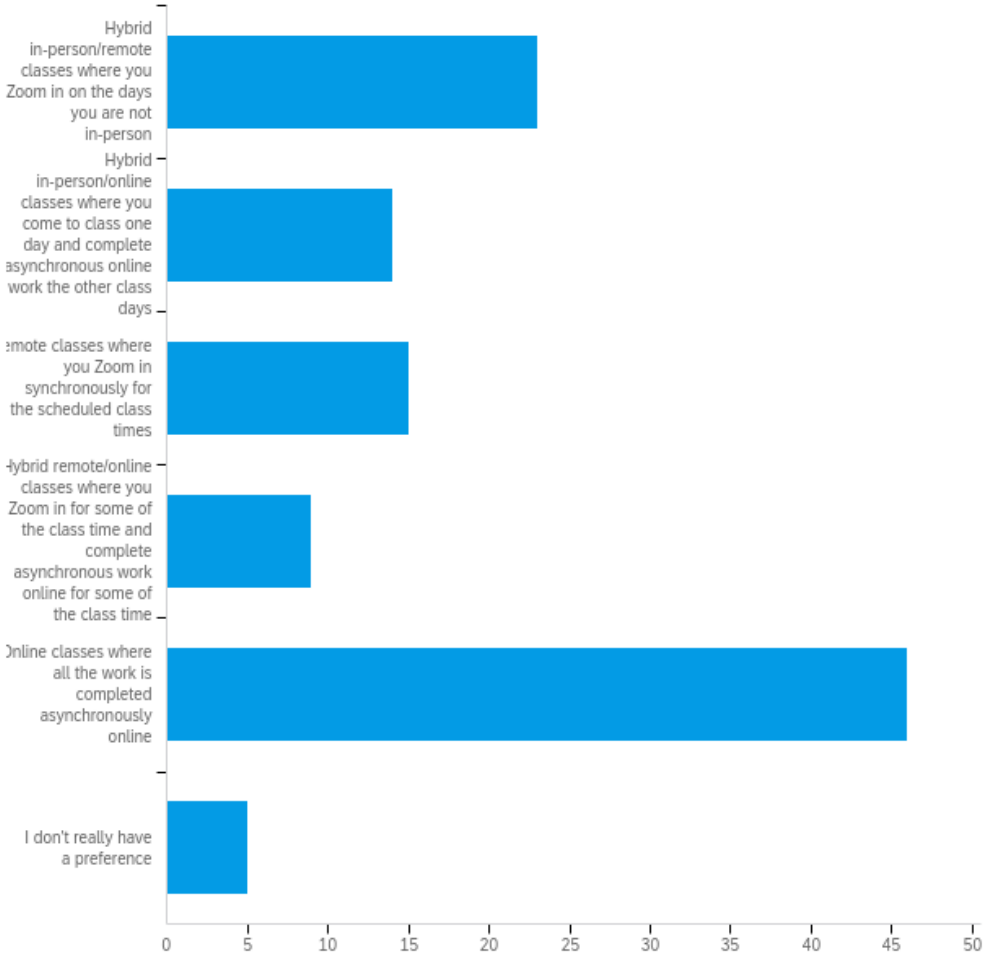

| # | Answer | % | Count |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | I prefer hybrid in-person/remote classes where you Zoom in on the days you are not in-person | 18.92% | 21 |
| 2 | I prefer hybrid in-person/online classes where you come to class one day and complete asynchronous online work the other class days | 32.43% | 36 |
| 3 | I prefer remote classes where you Zoom in synchronously for the scheduled class times | 25.23% | 28 |
| 4 | I prefer hybrid remote/online classes where you Zoom in for some of the class time and complete asynchronous work online for some of the class time | 11.71% | 13 |
| 5 | I prefer online classes where all the work is completed asynchronously online | 10.81% | 12 |
| 6 | I don't really have a preference | 0.90% | 1 |
| | Total | 100% | 111 |

Thinking of the same set of options, which of these would be your SECOND preference for courses you would like to see in the spring?




| # | Answer | % | Count |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | I prefer hybrid in-person/remote classes where you Zoom in on the days you are not in-person | 22.52% | 25 |
| 2 | I prefer hybrid in-person/online classes where you come to class one day and complete asynchronous online work the other class days | 20.72% | 23 |
| 3 | I prefer remote classes where you Zoom in synchronously for the scheduled class times | 18.92% | 21 |
| 4 | I prefer hybrid remote/online classes where you Zoom in for some of the class time and complete asynchronous work online for some of the class time | 19.82% | 22 |
| 5 | I prefer online classes where all the work is completed asynchronously online | 16.22% | 18 |
| 6 | I don't really have a preference | 1.80% | 2 |
| | Total | 100% | 111 |

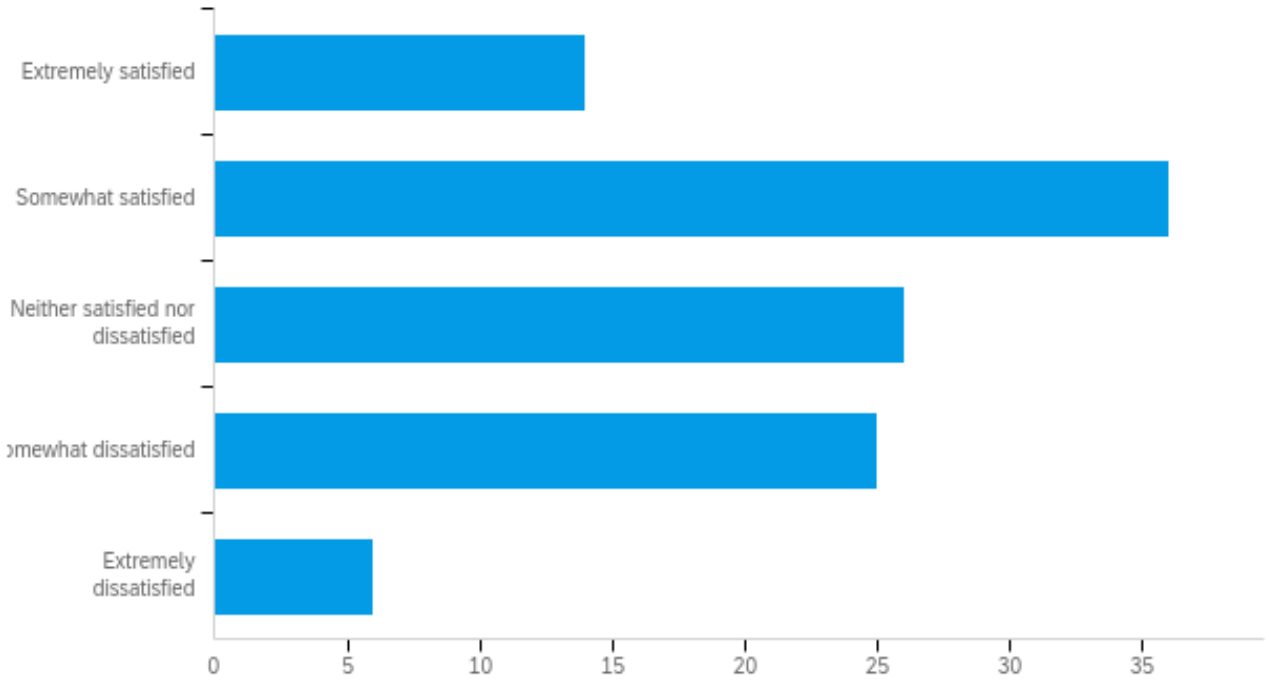
Again, thinking of the same options, which of these would you LEAST like to see in the spring?




| # | Answer | % | Count |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Hybrid in-person/remote classes where you Zoom in on the days you are not in-person | 20.54% | 23 |
| 2 | Hybrid in-person/online classes where you come to class one day and complete asynchronous online work the other class days | 12.50% | 14 |
| 3 | Remote classes where you Zoom in synchronously for the scheduled class times | 13.39% | 15 |
| 4 | Hybrid remote/online classes where you Zoom in for some of the class time and complete asynchronous work online for some of the class time | 8.04% | 9 |
| 5 | Online classes where all the work is completed asynchronously online | 41.07% | 46 |
| 6 | I don't really have a preference | 4.46% | 5 |
| | Total | 100% | 112 |

## Section 3: Assessment of Pedagogical Tools and Technologies in PSCI Classes this Semester

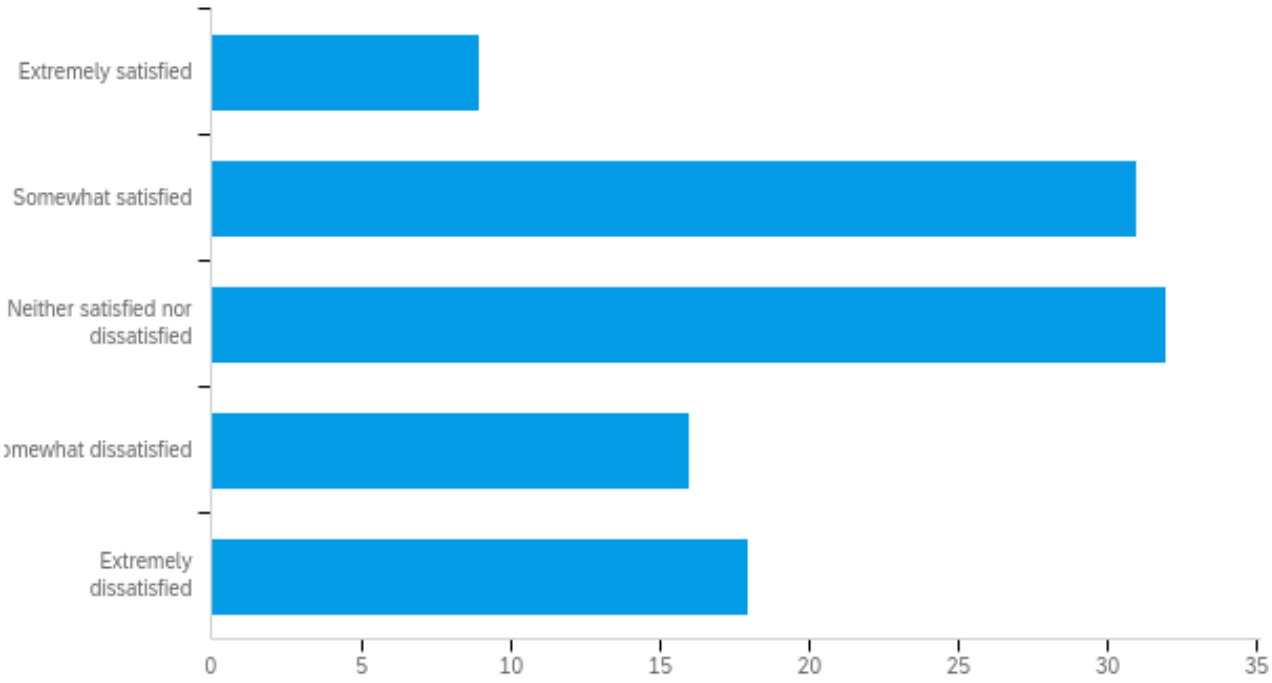
What do you think of the balance between synchronous and asynchronous instruction in your PSCI classes this semester?




| # | Field | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std Deviation | Variance | Count |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | What do you think of the balance between synchronous and asynchronous instruction in your PSCI classes this semester? | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.75 | 1.12 | 1.25 | 107 |

| # | Answer | % | Count |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Extremely satisfied | 13.08% | 14 |
| 2 | Somewhat satisfied | 33.64% | 36 |
| 3 | Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied | 24.30% | 26 |
| 4 | Somewhat dissatisfied | 23.36% | 25 |
| 5 | Extremely dissatisfied | 5.61% | 6 |
| | Total | 100% | 107 |

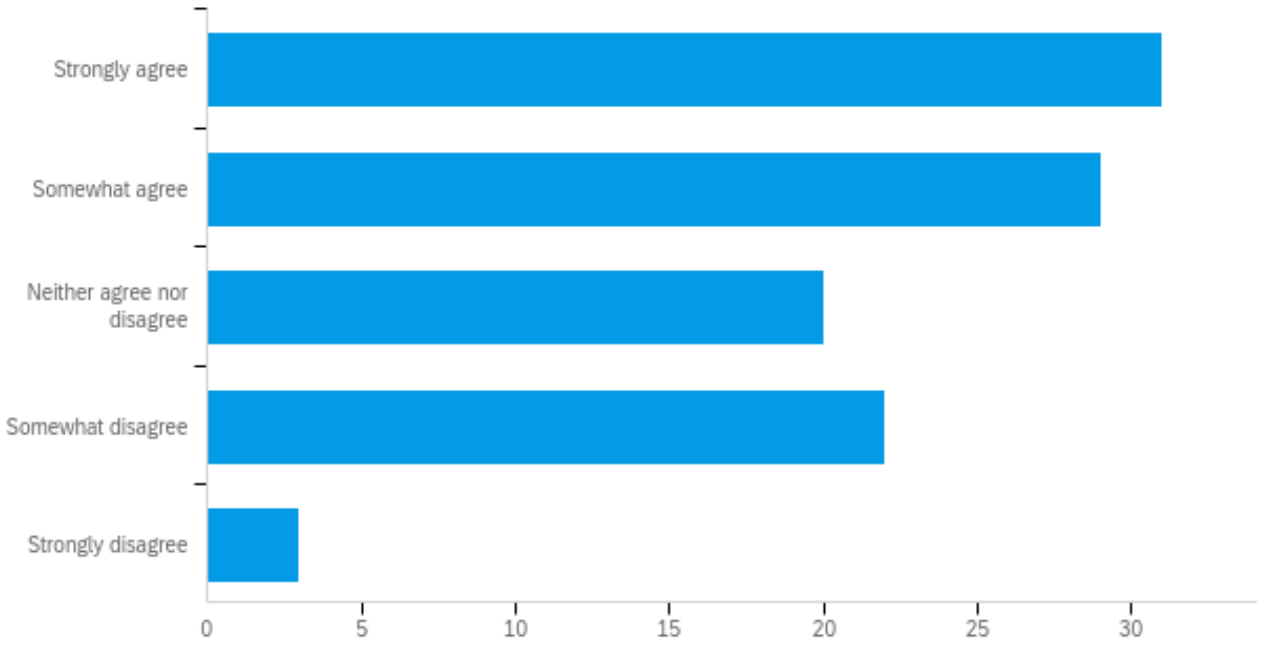
What do you think of the balance between in-person and remote/online instruction in PSCI classes this semester?




| # | Field | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std Deviation | Variance | Count |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | What do you think of the balance between in-person and remote/online instruction in PSCI classes this semester? | 1.00 | 5.00 | 3.03 | 1.21 | 1.46 | 106 |

| # | Answer | % | Count |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Extremely satisfied | 8.49% | 9 |
| 2 | Somewhat satisfied | 29.25% | 31 |
| 3 | Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied | 30.19% | 32 |
| 4 | Somewhat dissatisfied | 15.09% | 16 |
| 5 | Extremely dissatisfied | 16.98% | 18 |
| | Total | 100% | 106 |

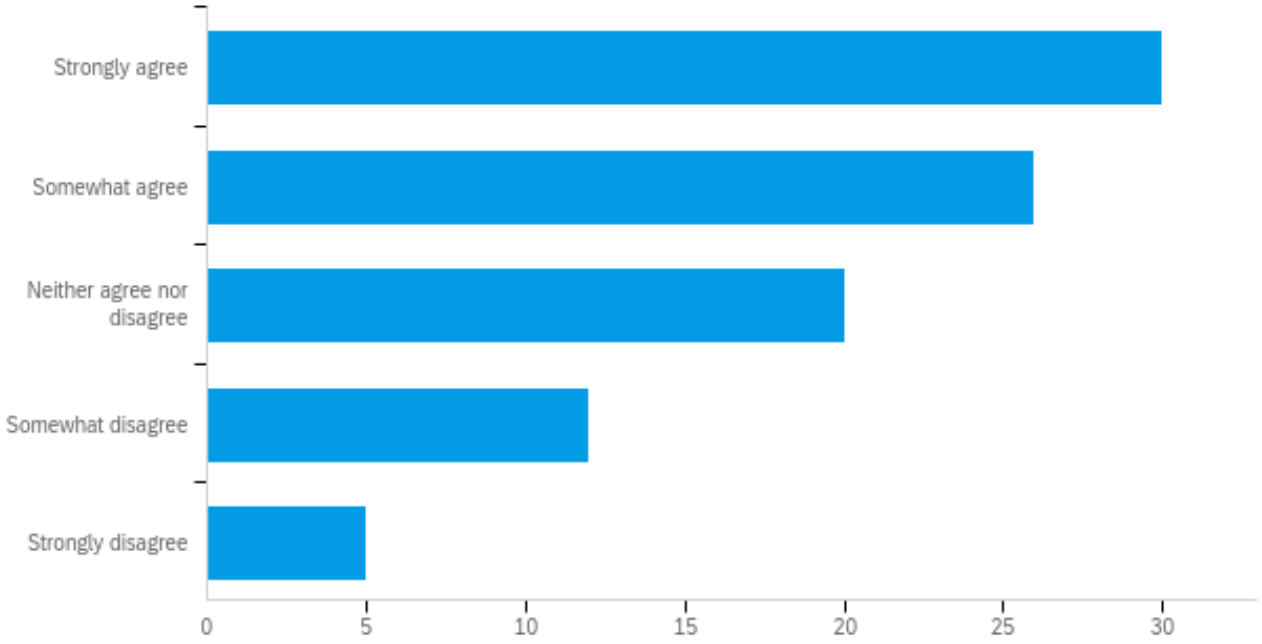
I feel like I have adequate access to my course instructors in PSCI




| # | Field | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std Deviation | Variance | Count |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | I feel like I have adequate access to my course instructors in PSCI | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.40 | 1.19 | 1.42 | 105 |

| # | Answer | % | Count |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Strongly agree | 29.52% | 31 |
| 2 | Somewhat agree | 27.62% | 29 |
| 3 | Neither agree nor disagree | 19.05% | 20 |
| 4 | Somewhat disagree | 20.95% | 22 |
| 5 | Strongly disagree | 2.86% | 3 |
| | Total | 100% | 105 |

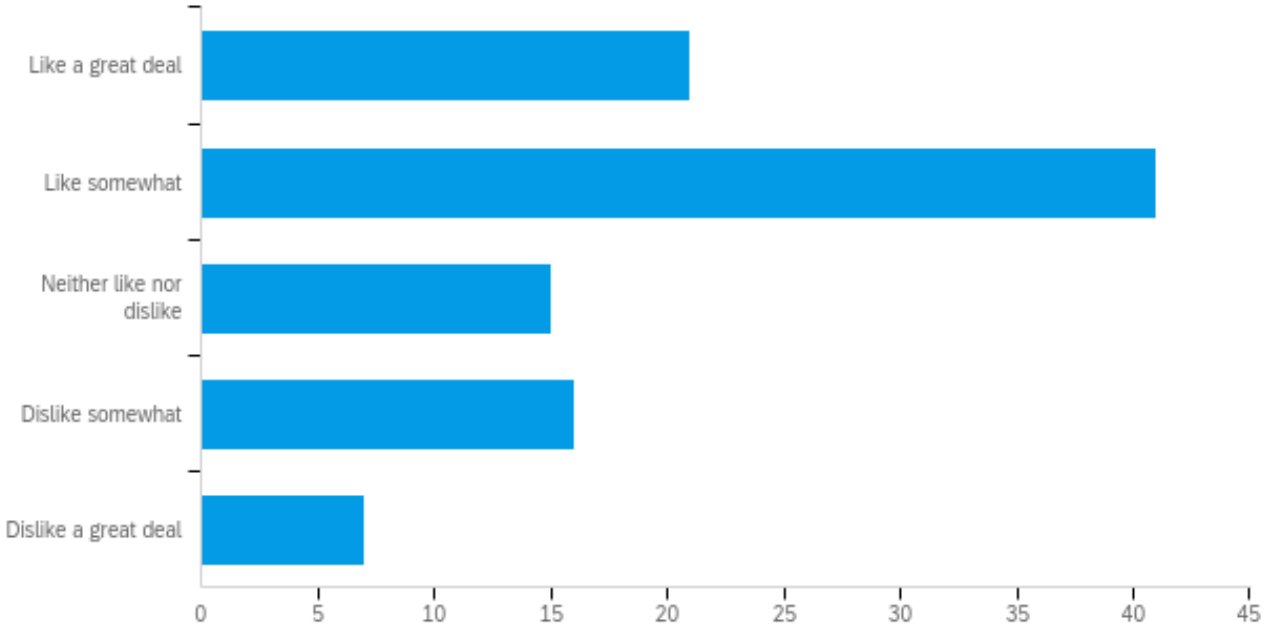
I feel like I have adequate access to my course TA's in PSCI (please answer only if you have at least one PSCI class with a TA this semester)




| # | Field | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std Deviation | Variance | Count |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | I feel like I have adequate access to my course TA's in PSCI (please answer only if you have at least one PSCI class with a TA this semester) | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.31 | 1.20 | 1.44 | 93 |

| # | Answer | % | Count |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Strongly agree | 32.26% | 30 |
| 2 | Somewhat agree | 27.96% | 26 |
| 3 | Neither agree nor disagree | 21.51% | 20 |
| 4 | Somewhat disagree | 12.90% | 12 |
| 5 | Strongly disagree | 5.38% | 5 |
| | Total | 100% | 93 |

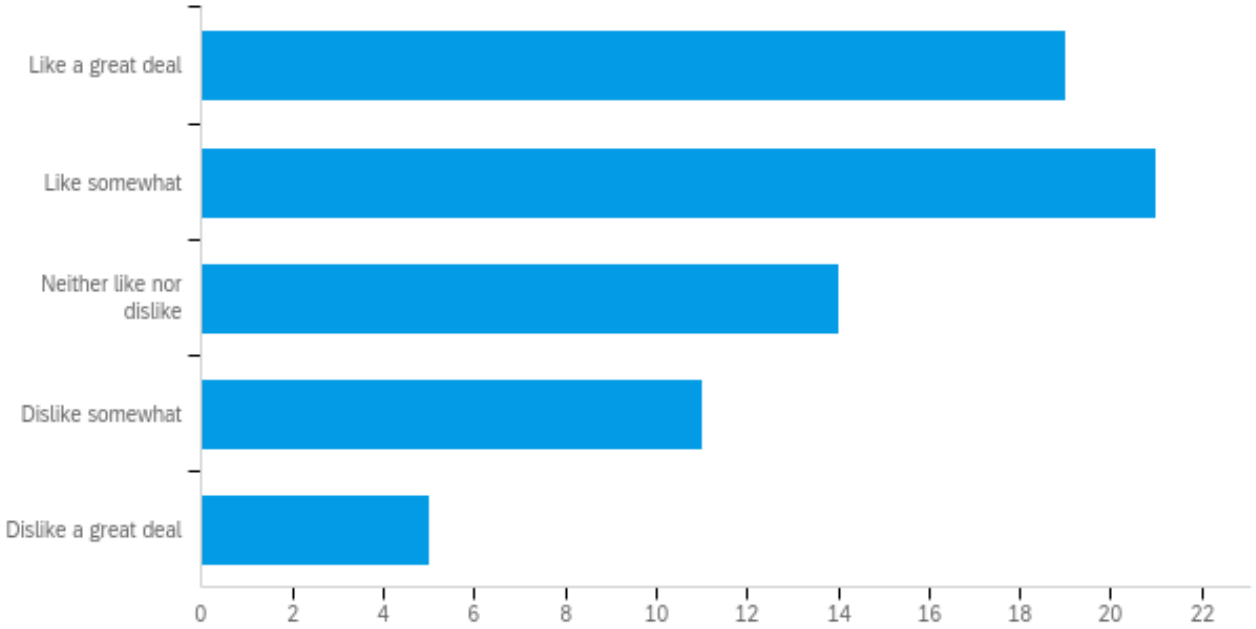
How do you feel about the use of synchronous Zoom sessions in PSCI courses? (Students were asked a filtering question of whether they have at least one PSCI class with synchronous Zoom sessions this semester)




| # | Field | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std Deviation | Variance | Count |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | How do you feel about the use of synchronous Zoom sessions in PSCI courses? | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.47 | 1.19 | 1.41 | 100 |

| # | Answer | % | Count |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Like a great deal | 21.00% | 21 |
| 2 | Like somewhat | 41.00% | 41 |
| 3 | Neither like nor dislike | 15.00% | 15 |
| 4 | Dislike somewhat | 16.00% | 16 |
| 5 | Dislike a great deal | 7.00% | 7 |
| | Total | 100% | 100 |

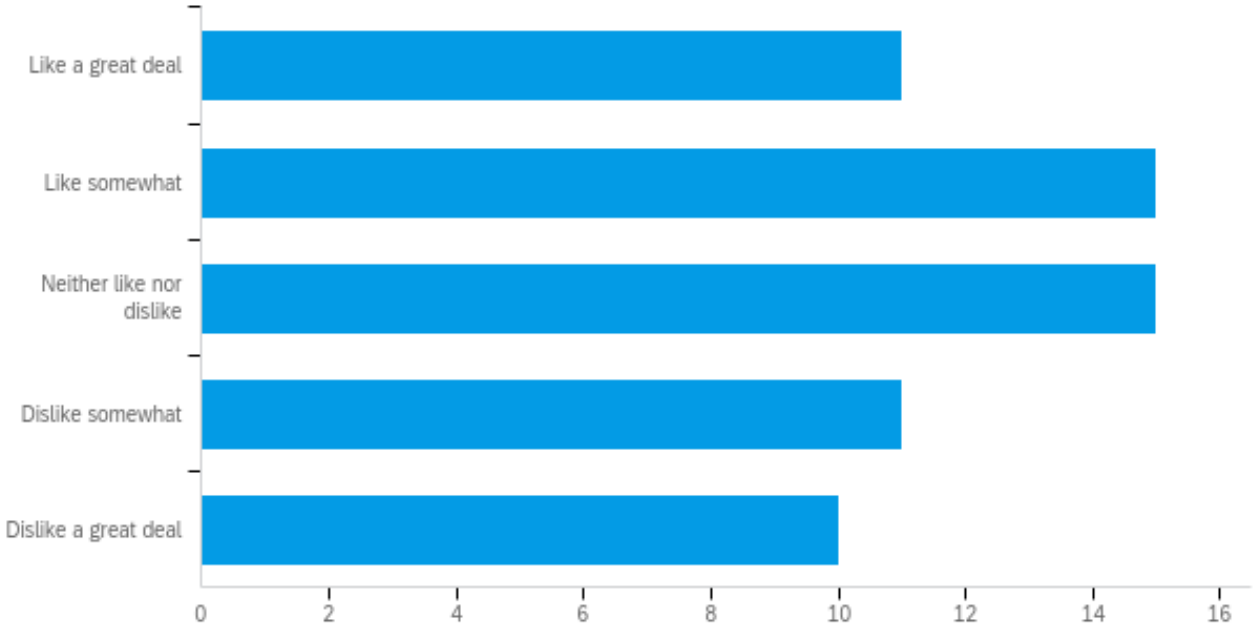
How do you feel about the use of recorded lectures in PSCI courses? (Students were asked a filtering question of whether they have at least one PSCI class with recorded lectures this semester)




| # | Field | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std Deviation | Variance | Count |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | How do you feel about the use of recorded lectures in PSCI courses? | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.46 | 1.24 | 1.53 | 70 |

| # | Answer | % | Count |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Like a great deal | 27.14% | 19 |
| 2 | Like somewhat | 30.00% | 21 |
| 3 | Neither like nor dislike | 20.00% | 14 |
| 4 | Dislike somewhat | 15.71% | 11 |
| 5 | Dislike a great deal | 7.14% | 5 |
| | Total | 100% | 70 |

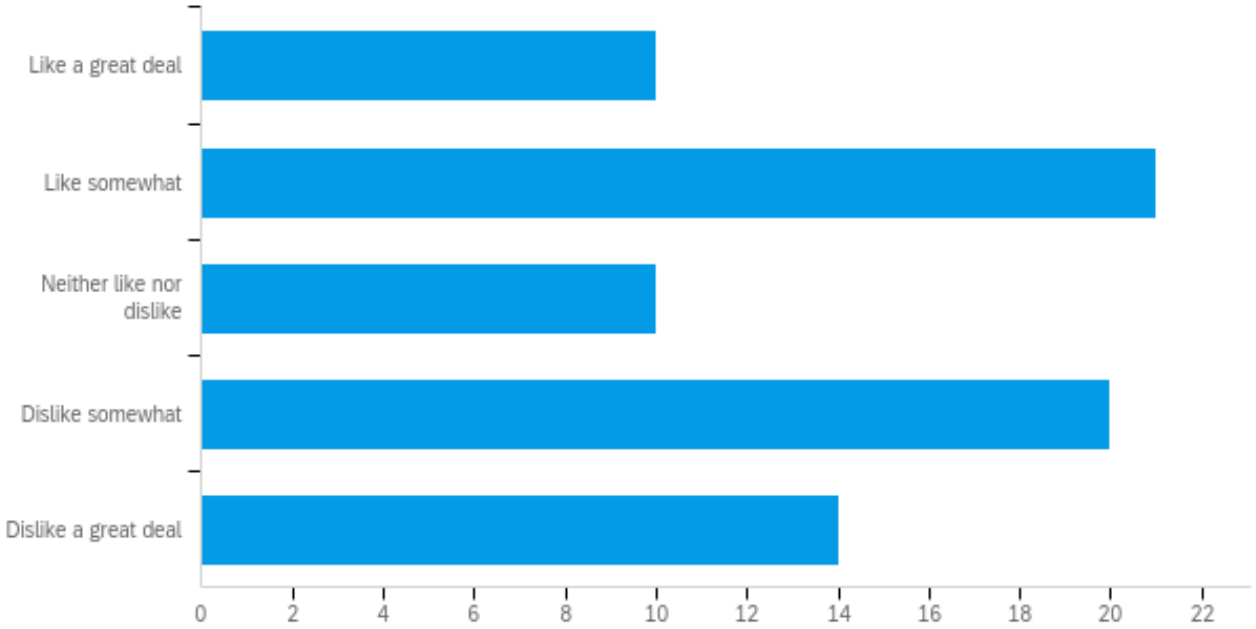
How do you feel about the use of online discussion forums in PSCI courses? (Students were asked a filtering question of whether they have at least one PSCI class with online discussion forums this semester)




| # | Field | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std Deviation | Variance | Count |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | How do you feel about the use of online discussion forums in PSCI courses? | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.90 | 1.33 | 1.76 | 62 |

| # | Answer | % | Count |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Like a great deal | 17.74% | 11 |
| 2 | Like somewhat | 24.19% | 15 |
| 3 | Neither like nor dislike | 24.19% | 15 |
| 4 | Dislike somewhat | 17.74% | 11 |
| 5 | Dislike a great deal | 16.13% | 10 |
| | Total | 100% | 62 |

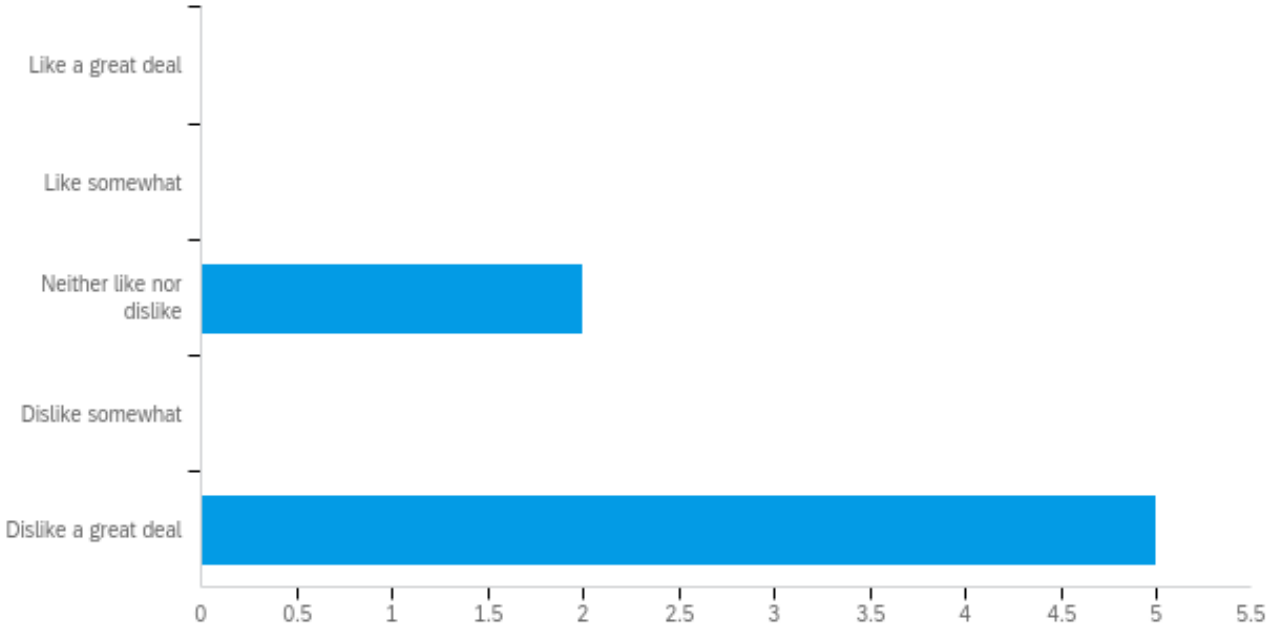
How do you feel about the use of Zoom breakout rooms in PSCI courses? (Students were asked a filtering question of whether they have at least one PSCI class with Zoom breakout sessions this semester)




| # | Field | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std Deviation | Variance | Count |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | How do you feel about the use of Zoom breakout rooms in PSCI courses? | 1.00 | 5.00 | 3.09 | 1.35 | 1.82 | 75 |

| # | Answer | % | Count |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Like a great deal | 13.33% | 10 |
| 2 | Like somewhat | 28.00% | 21 |
| 3 | Neither like nor dislike | 13.33% | 10 |
| 4 | Dislike somewhat | 26.67% | 20 |
| 5 | Dislike a great deal | 18.67% | 14 |
| | Total | 100% | 75 |

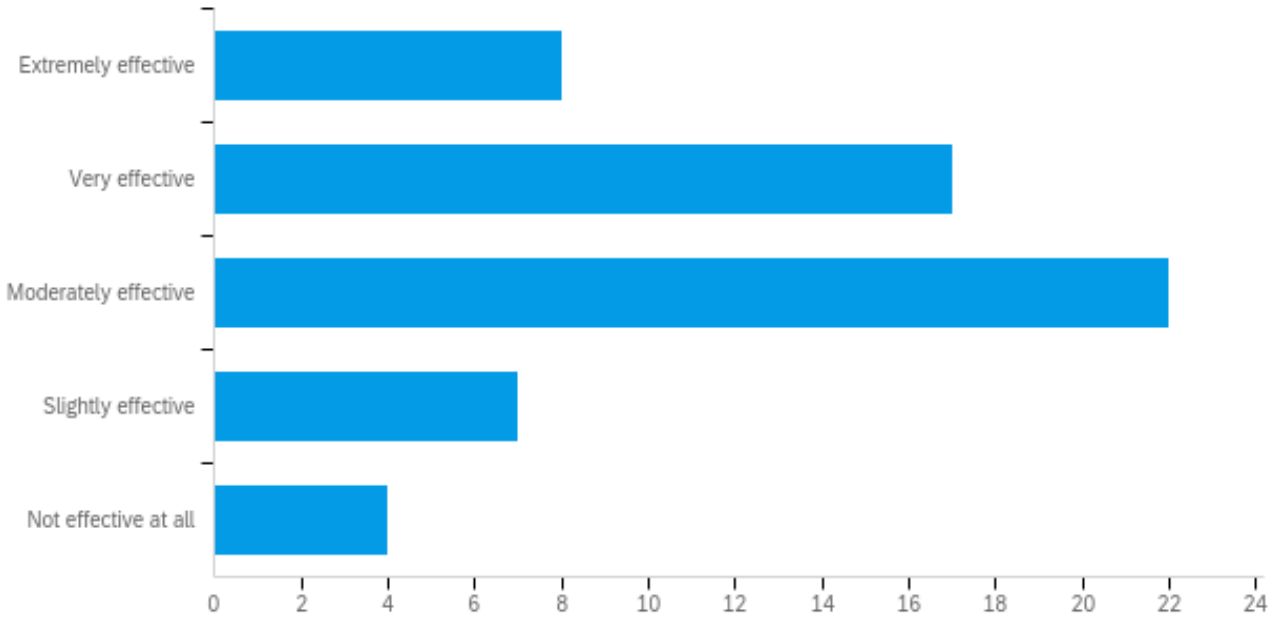
How do you feel about the use of Proctorio in PSCI courses? (Students were asked a filtering question of whether they have at least one PSCI class using Proctorio this semester)




| # | Field | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std Deviation | Variance | Count |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | How do you feel about the use of Proctorio in PSCI courses? | 3.00 | 5.00 | 4.43 | 0.90 | 0.82 | 7 |

| # | Answer | % | Count |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Like a great deal | 0.00% | 0 |
| 2 | Like somewhat | 0.00% | 0 |
| 3 | Neither like nor dislike | 28.57% | 2 |
| 4 | Dislike somewhat | 0.00% | 0 |
| 5 | Dislike a great deal | 71.43% | 5 |
| | Total | 100% | 7 |

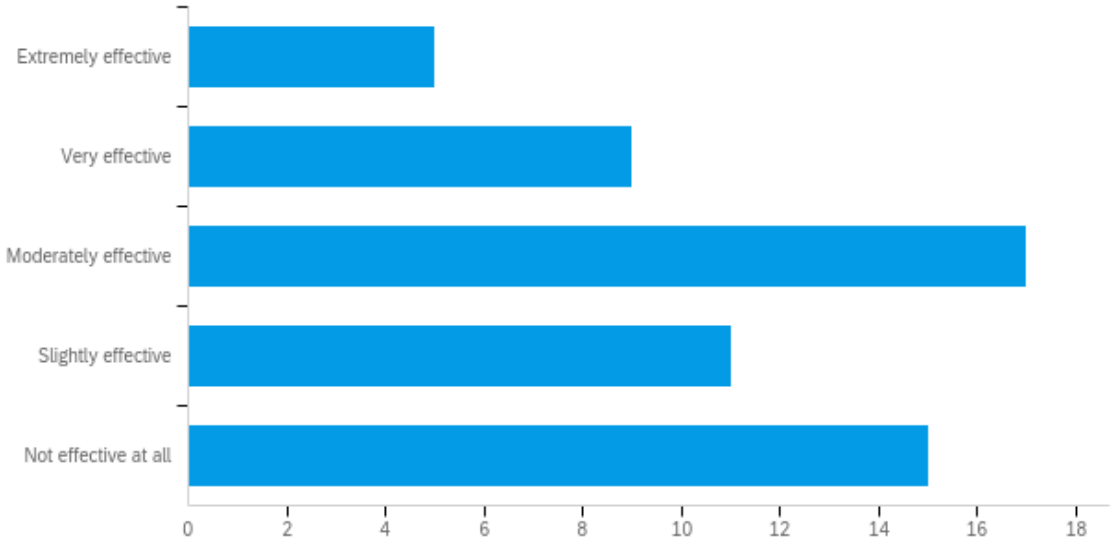
Different classes in PSCI are administering exams in different ways, but they are all being done online/remotely. If you have had an exam this semester in PSCI, how effective do you think these exams have been in providing an opportunity to demonstrate your learning and application of course material? (Students were asked a filtering question of whether they have had an exam yet in a PSCI class this semester).




| # | Field | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std Deviation | Variance | Count |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Different classes in PSCI are administering exams in different ways, but they are all being done online/remotely. If you have had an exam this semester in PSCI, how effective do you think these exams have been in providing an opportunity to demonstrate your learning and application of course material? | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.69 | 1.07 | 1.15 | 58 |

| # | Answer | % | Count |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Extremely effective | 13.79% | 8 |
| 2 | Very effective | 29.31% | 17 |
| 3 | Moderately effective | 37.93% | 22 |
| 4 | Slightly effective | 12.07% | 7 |
| 5 | Not effective at all | 6.90% | 4 |
| | Total | 100% | 58 |

Group activities are being done in different ways in PSCI this semester than they are in a typical semester. Please think of any group activities you have done this semester. If you have had any group activities this semester in PSCI, how effective do you think the group activities have been in helping you learn? (Students were asked a filtering question over whether they have had a group activity yet in a PSCI class this semester).




| # | Field | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std Deviation | Variance | Count |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Group activities are being done in different ways in PSCI this semester than they are in a typical semester. Please think of any group activities you have done this semester. If you have had any group activities this semester in PSCI, how effective do you think the group activities have been in helping you learn? | 1.00 | 5.00 | 3.39 | 1.27 | 1.61 | 57 |

| # | Answer | % | Count |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Extremely effective | 8.77% | 5 |
| 2 | Very effective | 15.79% | 9 |
| 3 | Moderately effective | 29.82% | 17 |
| 4 | Slightly effective | 19.30% | 11 |
| 5 | Not effective at all | 26.32% | 15 |
| | Total | 100% | 57 |

## Section 4: Selected Qualitative Responses

This section includes selected qualitative comments for reference. The comments varied widely. In addition to the summary, these comments may be helpful in understanding some of the students' impressions. And note, the qualitative comments are often at odds with each other, and with the quantitative results. The students do not have a uniform perspective on this semester or next semester.

*Would you like to elaborate on your answers to any of the questions above?*

- Its very hard to manage a mixture of asynchronous and normal classes. If they were all the same modality it would be easier, or if the asynchronous class reduced the workload to a more reasonable level.
- I enjoy the synchronous work when it is discussion based, but joining synchronously for a lecture with limited interaction and discussion is inconvenient. I like the online discussion forums but they could be improved if there were requirements to respond to anothers post in order to facilitate the discussion.
- I think that group work is extremely difficult to do when you meet over zoom.
- I find it difficult to zoom in synchronously because online class can be very unpredictable in terms of internet connection.
- Having a group that is not able to meet physically is awful.
- If proctorio will be used in a class, I will be dropping that class. I see that as a privacy violation and an unnecessary stressor for an already stressful time in an examination.
- My professors are doing a great job, but online just sucks. I think doing one synchronous, Zoom lecture a week with the rest being asynchronous is the most I could handle. That way I'm not burnt out from looking at my screen all day. It is also had having some classes be asynchronous while others are synchronous. I ofter push off the asynchronous work until Friday. It would be nice if the PSCI department agreed on one way to do their classes (preferably being hybrid).
- I love being able to have the in person classes to ask professors questions but with zoom fatigue I am not always able to take the best notes. Having recorded lectures would be beneficial.
- Proctorio is spyware for the business school. They are not able to challenge their students so they look at them during exams. In PSCI, exams are so hard that open internet is even challenging as they are critical thinking based.

*Can you think of anything that you really like in your PSCI classes that you would like to see more of?*

- Passion.
- The recorded lectures make this learning process far better. Zoom lectures can be ruined by technical issues, and mine sometimes are. Having the lectures be recorded seems to make things more fair for those with technological problems.
- I would like to see more synchronous learning via zoom.
- More in person options.
- My PSCI professor has 2 classes a week and we can zoom in to one of the two and attend the other in person. Also, if we email him asking to come to both in person sessions he usually allows it (given the room isn't filled to max capacity). I really love this because it hold me accountable and is the closest way to get back to normal while still following COVID-19 precautions.
- Group work on zoom
- In person classes
- In person as much as possible
- I like how my professor records the lecture for you to watch and then discusses questions people have during the synchronous zoom meetings.
- One day of prerecorded lectures and the next meeting time as a zoom discussion.
- Small classes on Zoom where everyone can talk and engage

- I really like how much my professors are fostering an environment of comfortability and understanding.
- I really like when professors go fully synchronousd, even with some folks being in class. It feels closer to a regular class envrionment, and helps me stay motivated for class.
- I like how the zoom is recorded in case we miss a class
- Recorded lectures
- Asynchronous lectures are the future.
- live lectures
- prerecorded lectures

*Is there anything else you would like to share with the PSCI department about your experience this semester or your expectations for next semester?*

- We need more mental health resources in this department specifically. We need opportunities for students to share anxieties about our political world with a knowledgable facilitator.
- I hate to say it but I'm genuinely disappointed with my experience this semester. Online classes can be effective but I genuinely feel like some of these classes weren't in any way approved or looked at before allowing me to pay and sign up to take it.
- Every student I have talked to has said they are struggling to learn and absorb the material, this needs to be fixed somehow.
- I have a ton of discussion boards which all feel like an extra essay each week and are extremely time consuming so it makes it harder to focus on my other week. I'd like it if course work was different each week but it feels repetitive and time consuming. It's hard staring at a screen 10+ hours a day and now every time I go outside, the front of my head throbs.
- Please don't cancel classes at the last minute if possible
- I don't feel like any class is going that well because of this weird back and forth CU has created. I am frustrated I'm paying full tuition for classes where my professors "freeze" for a minute during class and class content is not as good of quality as in person. Discussions are also very meek because everyones online and afraid to talk over another. We are all doing our best to make the most of the situation but I can feel the strain on professors and students alike about the uncertainty everyday of what will happen with classes tomorrow.
- unless there is literally widespread use of an effective vaccine by then, we should just start off fully remote.
- If classes are still completely online I will be moving off campus for the remainder of the semester.
- Thanks for caring about us!!
- I am expecting that next semester many many students are planning on taking a semester off.
- Horrible experience and need professors to teach us more
- Teachers should be more lenient with absence from zoom as well as late assignments. We all have different things going on in our lives as well as family obligations that we did not expect when signing up for our schedule this semester. Limiting absences to being sick and emergencies doesn't take into account those obligations that come up with current circumstances.
- I love this department so much, thank you all for doing an amazing job!
- I'm so frustrated with my classes and the professors. I think the university needs to have a pass/fail option even for core classes. I know too many students that are struggling this semester. The teachers also seem to be assigning more homework just because we are online/remote. I truly feel that the professors were more prepared last semester than they are this semester, and I know other peers of mine within the PSCI dept feel the same.
- I hope to get back or closer to normal very soon.