Results from Pulse Survey #4
UC Berkeley Student Experiences in Fall 2020
11 January 2021

As we continually adjust to the changes due to the COVID-19 pandemic, UC Berkeley administered four Pulse Surveys in Fall 2020 to better understand and address student needs. During the 16th week through exam week, all undergraduate (N = 30,799) and graduate students (N = 11,548) were invited to take the final Pulse Survey. The response rate was 28% (n = 8,594) for undergraduates and 29% (n = 3,389) for graduate students.

Sources of motivation for students academically

Interest in in-person instruction

Plans to attend in-person instruction in Spring 2021 if offered

*Undergraduate (N = 8,431)*

- I definitely would: 21%
- I probably would: 24%
- I probably would not: 30%
- I definitely would not: 24%

*Graduate Student (N = 3,342)*

- I definitely would: 22%
- I probably would: 22%
- I probably would not: 30%
- I definitely would not: 26%
Rates of depression and anxiety decreased slightly at the end of Fall 2020. The pulse surveys were conducted about four weeks apart.

**Student mental health**

**Undergraduates: Percent of responses associated with major depressive disorder**
- Survey 1 (N = 10,692) 38%
- Survey 2 (N = 14,190) 43%
- Survey 3 (N = 10,141) 44%
- Survey 4 (N = 8,446) 41%

**Undergraduates: Percent of responses associated with generalized anxiety disorder**
- Survey 1 (N = 10,663) 41%
- Survey 2 (N = 14,131) 48%
- Survey 3 (N = 10,122) 50%
- Survey 4 (N = 8,423) 47%

**Graduate students: Percent of responses associated with major depressive disorder**
- Survey 1 (N = 4,460) 26%
- Survey 2 (N = 3,875) 29%
- Survey 3 (N = 3,867) 29%
- Survey 4 (N = 3,350) 26%

**Graduate students: Percent of responses associated with generalized anxiety disorder**
- Survey 1 (N = 4,459) 35%
- Survey 2 (N = 3,866) 38%
- Survey 3 (N = 3,857) 41%
- Survey 4 (N = 3,343) 34%
Silver linings and accommodations

There were many challenges with remote instruction, but students appreciated the ability to watch lectures at their own pace and some students found it easier than in-person instruction to ask questions during discussion sections.

Compared to in-person instruction, remote instruction was better because...

- **Watch lectures at my own pace** (N = 11,080)
  - Agree strongly: 37%
  - Agree somewhat: 41%
  - Disagree somewhat: 12%
  - Disagree strongly: 9%

- **Easier to ask questions in section** (N = 10,707)
  - Agree strongly: 15%
  - Agree somewhat: 38%
  - Disagree somewhat: 26%
  - Disagree strongly: 20%

- **Easier to ask questions in lecture** (N = 11,121)
  - Agree strongly: 11%
  - Agree somewhat: 35%
  - Disagree somewhat: 28%
  - Disagree strongly: 26%

- **Less content was covered** (N = 10,941)
  - Agree strongly: 5%
  - Agree somewhat: 24%
  - Disagree somewhat: 40%
  - Disagree strongly: 31%

Two-thirds of undergraduates and more than three-quarters of graduate students agreed that instructors adjusted workload because of remote instruction. The majority of students also agreed that instructors adjusted grading policies.

Undergraduates (N = 8,466)

- Instructors adjusted academic workload: 20% agree strongly, 48% agree somewhat, 20% disagree somewhat, 11% disagree strongly
- Instructors adjusted grading policies: 16% agree strongly, 44% agree somewhat, 26% disagree somewhat, 15% disagree strongly

Graduate students (N = 2,837)

- Instructors adjusted academic workload: 30% agree strongly, 46% agree somewhat, 15% disagree somewhat, 10% disagree strongly
- Instructors adjusted grading policies: 22% agree strongly, 43% agree somewhat, 20% disagree somewhat, 14% disagree strongly
Extracurricular activities

91% of undergraduates and 80% of graduate students would normally participate in extracurricular activities under non-pandemic conditions. Only a fraction participated remotely in Fall 2020.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Normal participation</th>
<th>Normally participate</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Undergrad (N = 8,594)</td>
<td>No 9.5% 90.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate students (N = 3,389)</td>
<td>No 19.7% 80.3%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Of students who would normally participate in extracurricular activities, percent who participated in remote activities in Fall 2020:

- Undergraduates 42%
- Graduate students 35%

While large proportions of students were too busy with academics or too stressed to participate in extracurricular activities, many also did not know their options or how to get involved.

Obstacles to participating in extracurricular activities

Limited to students who would have normally participated

- Too busy with academics
  - Undergraduate 58% (N = 7,537)
  - Graduate Student 32% (N = 2,646)
- Too stressed
  - Undergraduate 54% (N = 7,537)
  - Graduate Student 20% (N = 2,646)
- Unaware of options or how to get involved
  - Undergraduate 33% (N = 7,537)
  - Graduate Student 20% (N = 2,646)
- Too busy with work
  - Undergraduate 38% (N = 7,537)
  - Graduate Student 20% (N = 2,646)
- Family responsibilities
  - Undergraduate 35% (N = 7,537)
  - Graduate Student 20% (N = 2,646)
- Inadequate internet connection
  - Undergraduate 13% (N = 7,537)
  - Graduate Student 20% (N = 2,646)
Spring 2021 plans

Undergraduates
96% (n = 7,861) of surveyed undergraduates were planning to enroll and 2% (n = 177) were unsure about enrolling in Spring 2021.
98% of undergraduates may enroll

Planned geographic location of undergraduates for Spring 2021 (N = 8,022)
- 63% Bay Area

Planned housing types for undergraduates in the Bay Area (N = 4,987)
- 40% Rent an apartment, house, or condo
- 27% Parent or relative's home
- 23% California, not Bay Area
- 22% University-owned or -managed housing
- 5% Outside of the US
- 5% Co-op / sorority or fraternity
- 5% Unsure
- 4% Rent an apartment, house, or condo
- 5% US, not California
- 3% Parent or relative's home
- 3% Outside of the US
- 3% University-owned or -managed housing
- 2% Other
- 2% Don't know

Graduate students
98% (n = 3,148) of surveyed graduate students were planning to enroll and 1% (n = 47) were unsure about enrolling in Spring 2021.
99% of graduate students may enroll

Planned geographic location of graduate students for Spring 2021 (N = 3,193)
- 75% Bay Area

Planned housing types for graduate students in the Bay Area (N = 2,340)
- 73% Rent an apartment, house, or condo
- 63% Parent or relative's home
- 7% California, not Bay Area
- 6% University-owned or -managed housing
- 5% Outside of the US
- 5% Property you own or are buying
- 4% Unsure
- 4% Other
- 3% Don't know
- 3% Outside of the US
- 3% University-owned or -managed housing
- 2% Other
- 2% Don't know