

**ECU Covid-19 Impact Survey:
Additional Impacts on Students During Spring and Fall 2020**

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Executive Summary

Sociologists from East Carolina University (ECU) and Georgia Southern University, along with members of ECU's Center for Survey Research (CSR), developed two surveys to evaluate a broad range of Covid-19 experiences within the ECU community (Edwards, Francia, and Van Willigen 2020). During the summer and fall of 2020, the CSR distributed these surveys to a random sample of students. To assess students' spring semester experiences, the CSR contacted 4,000 students between June 19 and July 3. Of these, 495 students completed the survey, for a response rate of 12.4% and a margin of error of $\pm 4.0\%$. To assess fall semester experiences, the CSR contacted a different random sample of 4,000 students between October 20 and December 1. Overall, 9.8% of students surveyed responded, with a $\pm 5.0\%$ margin of error. In total, 391 students responded.

Analyses of the responses to these two surveys suggest the following:

- Following the spring transition to remote learning, an estimated 4,335 students reported living with friends and 14,627 with parents. In the fall, living situations changed with an estimated 10,367 students living with friends and 9,935 with parents.
- Students who relocated after the August 24 transition to online learning were less likely to believe the university made the correct decision in moving classes online, $r = -.166$, $p < .05$.
- Across both semesters, students who relocated were most likely to cite ECU's campus closure as their reason for doing so (spring – 82.5%, fall – 88.2%).
- Undergraduate students were significantly more likely than graduate students to relocate following each transition to online learning. In the spring, 24.0% of undergraduates relocated, a rate similar to the fall (26.2%). Among graduate students, approximately 12.2% relocated in the spring and 2.6% in the fall.
- Women (72.5%) were significantly more likely than men (64.3%) to believe that shifting undergraduate classes online on August 24 was the correct decision.
- Students who expressed concern about the political situation in the United States and those expressing concern about the November election were more likely to agree that moving undergraduate classes online for the fall was the correct decision, $r = .255$, $p < .05$, and $r = .270$, $p < .05$, respectively.
- More students preferred face-to-face instruction in the fall (an estimated 22,002) than did in the spring (an estimated 18,164).
- When asked in the spring, students receiving financial aid (69.5%) were significantly more likely to prefer face-to-face course delivery than those not receiving aid (56.3%).
- Across both semesters, students receiving aid (spring – 68.4%, fall – 57.7%) had greater difficulty learning after transitioning to online learning than peers who were not receiving financial aid (spring – 56.4%, fall – 44.5%).
- After switching to online instruction, undergraduate students experienced significantly greater difficulty learning than graduate students (spring – 66.0% vs. 54.4%, spring – 52.7% vs. 32.5%).

- In the spring, roughly one-quarter of students (25.2%) expressed concern about their ability to graduate on time. This decreased to 17.2% when asked in the fall.
- Despite overall concerns about graduation decreasing between semesters, when asked in the fall, African American students (21.6%) were slightly more likely than their white peers (17.4%) to express elevated concern.
- There was a positive relationship between fear of one's ability to graduate on time and perceived flexibility offered by professors. Students who were more worried felt fewer of their professors were flexible enough, $r=.415$, $p<.05$.
- Over half of all students indicated "most, but not all" or "all" of their professors offered enough flexibility for them to be successful in both the spring (62.6%) and fall (56.7%).
- Students who experienced greater difficulty learning after the shift to online instruction on August 24 believed fewer of their professors were flexible enough with deadlines, assignments, etc. to support their success, $r=.202$, $p<.05$.
- During the fall 2020 semester, there was a strong, positive correlation between feeling concern about the country's current political situation and concern about the outcome of the November presidential election, $r=.795$, $p<.05$.
- Opinions about the political climate and election outcomes did not significantly differ between black and white students, however they did relative to political party affiliation. Democrats expressed the greatest concern over the US's political climate (90.3% vs. 65.6% Republican vs. 59.6% independent) and the November 2020 election (81.2% vs. 58.8% Republican vs. 54.6% independent).
- Students most cited the CDC as their source of coronavirus-related information. About 66% of students indicated this during the spring and 62% during the fall.

Background

The World Health Organization labeled Covid-19, the disease caused by the novel coronavirus, as a pandemic in late January 2020. For the safety of their campus and local communities, many universities shifted all courses online during the spring 2020 semester. East Carolina University (ECU) did the same, initially closing for the university's Spring Break and moving fully online on March 16, 2020. Summer courses were also offered exclusively online. On August 10, 2020, ECU students partially returned to campus for face-to-face instruction. Despite following the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) preventative practice guidelines (e.g., wearing a facemask, socially distancing) and adopting new scheduling practices (e.g., condensed, 8-week courses, hybrid classes), the university elected to move all undergraduate courses fully online. Here, I explore how several personal and academic experiences of students changed between the spring and fall 2020 semesters.

Characteristics of the ECU Student Population and Covid-19 Survey Sample

Table 1 provides information on the select characteristics of the ECU student population. This information was obtained through the ECU Factbook (see the ECU Analytics Portal at <https://performance.ecu.edu/portal>). A survey weight corrected for any small imbalances between the survey samples and full student populations. Those related to gender, race, financial aid status, in- and out-of-state residence, and degree level allowed for more precise estimations of student opinions and experiences.

[Insert Table 1 here]

Covid-19 Impacts on Students and Related Pandemic Protective Practices

Tables 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 include descriptive statistics related to several survey questions regarding ECU students' 2020 transitions to online and in-person learning. These tables reveal student experiences, including housing situations, learning experiences, and sources of information about Covid-19. Table 2 examines these questions for all students. Table 3 considers the differences between graduate and undergraduate students. Tables 4, 5, 6, and 7 examine differences related to financial aid status, gender, race, and political party identification, respectively.

What Changed Between the Spring and Fall?

Five months passed between ECU's first and second transitions to online learning. Students may have been working, participating in classes, and/or socializing during this period. Table 2 shows the response rates for the larger ECU student population and confidence intervals.

[Insert Table 2 about here]

Living Situation

Roughly 22% of students relocated following the transition to online instruction in both the spring and fall 2020 semesters. Of these students, 82.5% cited the university's transition to online learning as their reason for doing so during the spring. This rate increased to 88.2% during the fall.

The composition of households varied between semesters. During the spring semester, most students (51.0%) reported living with one or more parents. Almost 30% of students reported the same in the fall. Roughly 12% of students lived with friends during the spring semester, a rate that increased to 31.0% in the fall. Across both semesters, students were least likely to report living alone.

Class Delivery, Structure, and Influence on Graduation

As expected, more students reported having previous online learning experience in the fall semester than did in the spring. Students expressed a greater preference for face-to-face course delivery during the fall (71.4%) than during the spring (64.3%). Relatedly, preferences for online course delivery decreased (spring – 18.7%, fall – 11.3%). A larger proportion of students reported that it was more difficult to learn after transitioning to online learning during the spring (63.9%) than during the fall (48.6%). When asked in the spring, 25.5% of students were worried about their ability to graduate on time. This rate dropped to 17.2% during the fall.

Academic Decisions and Opinions

Students were asked how many of their professors they believed had offered enough flexibility for them to be successful in their classes. During the spring, 62.6% answered that most or all of their professors did so. This declined to 56.7% during the fall. After August 24, students who expressed greater difficulty learning reported that fewer of their professors offered enough flexibility, $r=.202$, $p<.05$.

Political Concerns and Information Sources

Across both semesters, a large proportion of students cited the CDC as a source for obtaining Covid-19 related information. During the spring semester, 50.1% of students obtained information from family members and 43.8% from ECU's dedicated coronavirus website. These rates were 46.2% and 41.6% for the fall, respectively. Other sources of information include political leaders (i.e., President Donald Trump and North Carolina Governor Roy Cooper) and network news programs.

Notable Demographic and Experiential Differences

In addition to the coronavirus pandemic, many major events (e.g., the Black Lives Matter movement, presidential election, etc.) differentiated 2020 from years past. As such, the next sections in this report explore several relationships between student experiences and select demographic factors (i.e., degree level, financial aid status, gender, racial identification, and political party affiliation). What follows is an assessment of students' living situations, academic experiences and attitudes, political concerns, and sources of Covid-19 information.

Degree Level

Students' personal, professional, and academic experiences may vary across degree levels. For example, graduate students are more likely than undergraduates to be enrolled part-time and/or online. Additionally, graduate students typically have less flexibility in their course offerings than undergraduate students, making their paths clearer and seats more available in required courses. As such, it is important to consider this factor when exploring students' lived experiences. Table 3 presents more information.

[Insert Table 3 about here]

Living Situation

Undergraduate students were significantly more likely to relocate after the transition to online learning during the spring and fall semesters. This difference was larger during the fall, when only undergraduate courses moved online. Roughly 26% of undergraduate students relocated after August 24, compared to only 2.6% of graduate students. Of the undergraduate students who moved in the fall, 11.0% were still required to pay rent on their uninhabited living spaces, with over half of those students needing to do so for six months or longer. Additionally, 89.0% of those undergraduate students who relocated following August 24 cited ECU's transition to online learning as their reason for doing so. Too few graduate students had moved to generalize their reasons for doing so. During the spring, 84.4% of undergraduate and 72.7% of graduate students who relocated cited the campus closure as the primary reason for moving.

Across both semesters, graduate students were more likely to live with a spouse or significant other than were undergraduate students. Graduate students were also more likely to live with a spouse or significant other than alone or with a different type of roommate. In the spring, undergraduate students most reported living with parents, whereas they were most likely to report living with friends during the fall.

Class Delivery, Structure, and Influence on Graduation

Although all students were more likely to have previously taken online classes during the fall semester, graduate students were significantly more likely to report this (undergraduate – 75.7%, graduate – 93.6%). Both undergraduate and graduate students preferred face-to-face learning over online instruction throughout 2020. However, undergraduate students (68.4%) were significantly more likely to prefer face-to-face courses during the spring than were graduate students (48.8%).

Undergraduate students were significantly more likely to prefer the traditional, 15-week course structure. This may be in part because graduate students were more likely to report no preference for 15- versus 8-week-long courses. In both spring and fall, undergraduate students reported significantly greater difficulty learning post-transition than graduate students. They also had more difficulty registering for required courses during the fall (undergraduate – 20.4%, graduate – 2.6%).

Academic Decisions and Opinions

Graduate students believed that more of their professors offered enough flexibility in the spring and fall, as compared to ECU's undergraduate students. Despite this, students at each degree level were less likely to report professors offered enough flexibility during the fall (undergraduate – 54.3%, graduate – 65.9%) than in the spring (undergraduate – 59.0, graduate – 78.9%). Additionally, undergraduate students (80.2%) were significantly more likely to believe offering a pass/fail option was the “correct decision” during the fall than were graduate students (54.5%). Graduate students (28.6%) were significantly more likely to report they were unsure of the correct action than were undergraduates (13.1%).

Political Concerns and Information Sources

There were no significant differences related to concerns about the political climate or upcoming elections outcomes in the United States. Although not significant, graduate students expressed greater concern relative to undergraduates. When considering a range of sources (e.g., family, friends, etc.), graduate and undergraduate students were both most likely to obtain coronavirus-related information from the CDC throughout 2020.

Financial Aid Status

According to the ECU Factbook, fewer than half of all students received federal financial aid (e.g., Stafford Loans, Pell Grants) during the spring and fall 2020 semesters. As the coronavirus pandemic had economic repercussions (e.g., cancelled internships, layoffs), it is important to explore how financial aid status relates to lived student experiences. Key relationships with financial aid status are shown in Table 4.

[Insert Table 4 about here]

Living Situation

Students who reported receiving financial aid (28.9%) were significantly more likely to relocate after the fall transition to online learning than those not receiving aid (16.0%). There were no significant differences concerning relocation during the spring semester between students receiving or not receiving financial aid. However, in the spring, 78.3% of students receiving aid

and 88.2% not receiving aid cited the university's closure as their reason for relocating. During the fall, these rates were 90.5% and 86.5%, respectively. Additionally, after August 24, 9.8% of students receiving aid, and 7.9% of those not receiving aid, were still required to pay rent after moving.

Students receiving aid most reported living with at least one parent during the spring (50.5%) and fall (38.0%). Students not receiving aid reported the same during spring 2020 (51.2%). During fall 2020, students not receiving aid were more likely to live with friends (33.6%).

Class Delivery, Structure, and Influence on Graduation

Students generally preferred face-to-face course delivery to online learning. Some also expressed no preference during either semester. The preference for in-person instruction was most notable during the spring when 69.5% of students receiving aid and 56.3% not receiving aid expressed this opinion. In addition to preferring in-person classes, students receiving financial aid had greater difficulty learning after transitioning online on March 16 (68.4% vs. 56.4%). The same was true in the fall (57.7% vs. 44.5%). Additionally, as of the spring semester, students receiving financial aid (31.5%) were significantly more likely to worry about their ability to graduate on time compared to peers without aid (16.8%). These differences were less apparent during the fall.

Academic Decisions and Opinions

Students believed more of their professors were offering enough flexibility during the spring semester than in the fall semester. There were no significant differences regarding financial aid status. The majority of students felt ECU's transition to online learning on August 24 was correct, regardless of their financial aid status. When asked, students receiving aid were more likely than peers not receiving aid to believe offering a pass/fail option was the correct decision. This difference was also not significant.

Political Concerns and Information Sources

There were no significant differences regarding concern about the political climate or election outcome. Roughly 72% of students receiving aid and 76% of those not receiving aid expressed concern about the US's political climate. About two-thirds of each group felt concern about the outcome of the November election. Across both semesters, students were most likely to obtain Covid-19 related information from the CDC.

Gender

According to the CDC (2021), women are more likely to contract the coronavirus, while men diagnosed with Covid-19 are more likely to die as a result. Beyond these findings, there may be gender-based, experiential and attitudinal differences. As such, the results in this next section compare the responses of male and female students. Those who preferred to identify differently or not identify were not included in the analysis due to the small relative sample size. Additional information is available in Table 5.

[Insert Table 5 about here]

Living Situation

Neither male nor female students were significantly more likely to relocate following the transitions to online learning during 2020. Men (84.8%) and women (81.9%) were almost equally likely to report that the university's closure of campus influenced post-Spring Break relocations. A slightly larger portion of respondents responded this way during the fall (male – 90.3%, female – 86.5%). Women who relocated (13.5%) after August 24 were more likely to continue paying rent on their vacated housing unit than their male peers (3.3%).

During the spring semester, women and men were most likely to live with one or more parents. In the fall, men's and women's roommates were most often friends. Across both semesters, women were least likely to live alone when compared to having any of several types of roommates (e.g., parents, friends). This was true of men during the spring, though they were least likely to live with siblings during the fall.

Class Delivery, Structure, and Influence on Graduation

At the start of the pandemic, men (75.7%) were significantly more likely to prefer face-to-face classes than women (58.1%). While neither men nor women preferred online courses to face-to-face learning, women (21.0%) were significantly more likely to prefer online classes than male peers (14.6%). Male and female students (both 58.3%) were equally as likely to prefer traditional, 15-week classes to shorter, 8-week courses. During the fall, male and female students did not significantly differ in their concerns about graduating on time. This difference was significant during the spring (female – 21.6%, male – 31.0%).

Academic Decisions and Opinions

Male and female students shared similar opinions about how flexible professors were across semesters. They also held similar opinions about the pass/fail option offered during the fall. Roughly three-fourths of men and women agreed that offering a pass/fail option was the correct decision. Regarding the shift to online learning, women (72.5%) were significantly more likely to believe this was the correct decision than were men (64.3%).

Political Concerns and Information Sources

When asked, women expressed significantly greater concern about the current political climate and outcome of the presidential election. Male and female students were most likely to cite the CDC as a source of information about Covid-19 throughout 2020. Other commonly referenced sources included family members and ECU's Covid-10 information page. Fewer men and women referenced each of these sources in the fall than did in the spring.

Race

Findings from the CDC (2020) suggest there are racial differences related to Covid-19 contraction and severity. Non-Hispanic black Americans were 1.1 times more likely to catch Covid-19 than Non-Hispanic white Americans and 2.9 times as likely to be hospitalized as a result. Additionally, they were almost twice as likely to die from the disease. Given that there are racial differences, it is appropriate to explore the relationships between race and lived experiences. Based upon sample sizes, only black and white student respondents were considered in the following analyses. These findings are explored in Table 6.

[Insert Table 6 about here]

Living Situation

There were no discernable differences between black and white respondents regarding living situations during the spring or fall. Of black respondents, 20.9% relocated following the transition to online instruction that occurred on March 16, and 25.0% after August 24. Among white students, these rates were 23.2% and 20.3%, respectively. In the spring, 83.3% of black and 82.4% of white students agreed that the university's transition to online learning pushed them to find a new place to live. Similarly, 87.5% of black and 86.3% of white respondents cited this reasoning for moving in the fall. After August 24, black students were more likely to continue paying rent on the places they moved out of (18.8%) than white students (13.5%). All respondents still paying rent indicated a need to continue doing so for at least two months.

Following the spring transition, black and white students were each most likely to report living with at least one parent (47.7% and 54.2%, respectively) and least likely to report living alone (11.6% and 8.5%, respectively). In the fall, black students most often lived with one or more parents (34.4%) and least often with a sibling (10.9%). This differs from white students who most reported living with friends (38.3%) and least reported living alone (10.7%).

Class Delivery, Structure, and Influence on Graduation

Most students reported having taken at least one online class before the spring 2020 semester, with these rates rising into the fall 2020 semester. Black and white students both expressed a stronger preference for face-to-face instruction over online learning. These preferences were clearer during the fall semester, though the differences were not significant. Similarly, black and white students were both most likely to experience greater difficulty learning following the shift to online instruction. White students expressed a significantly greater preference for traditional, 15-week classes (63.9%) than did black peers (46.0%). Students did not significantly differ in their abilities to enroll in required courses for the fall 2020 semester. Despite this, when asked during the fall semester, black students (21.6%) were slightly more likely to express worry about their abilities to graduate on time than white peers (17.4%). There were no significant differences regarding this concern during the spring semester.

Academic Decisions and Opinions

Many students reported that the majority (i.e., "most, but not all" or "all") of their professors provided enough flexibility for them to be successful during the spring and fall semesters. During the fall 2020 survey, students were asked to what degree they believed shifting to online instruction and offering pass/fail options in place of letter grades were the correct decisions. Black students were significantly more likely to believe both decisions were correct (shift to online – 85.7%, pass/fail option – 79.7%) than were white students (shift to online – 63.0%, pass/fail option – 75.2%).

Political Concerns and Information Sources

There were no significant racial differences regarding concerns about the United States' political climate or the potential outcomes of the November presidential election. However, white students were more likely to express concern about each. Black and white students most often obtained Covid-19 related information from the CDC during both semesters. Almost 70% of

white students cited the CDC as a source of information during the spring 2020 semester. Other popular sources included family members and ECU's Covid-19 information page.

Political Party Affiliation

Earlier reports from the ECU CSR (e.g., Edwards, Francia, and Van Willigen 2020; Meier 2021) have highlighted differences based on party identification and coronavirus experiences. Survey organizations, such as the Gallup Organization, have reported partisan differences in views and behaviors about the coronavirus as well (see e.g., Newport 2020). Based on these earlier findings, Table 7 provides new and additional analysis on party identification.

[Insert Table 7 about here]

Living Situation

There were no significant partisan differences related to relocation after either shift to online learning. Despite this, independent students (15.3%) were least likely to relocate during the spring and Republican students during the fall (14.5%). About 80% of all students who relocated (regardless of party affiliation) responded that ECU's campus closure was their main reason for relocating. For Democrats and independents, this increased to about 90% during the fall. Additionally, there were no clear partisan differences regarding which students continued paying rent on the places they moved out of during the pandemic. About 10% of Democrats continued doing so, while about 11% of their independent and Republican peers reported the same.

Regardless of political party affiliation, students were most likely to report living with one or more parents during the spring. In the fall, independents (39.2%) and Democrats (29.7%) were most likely to live with parents, as compared to other potential roommates. Republicans (42.9%) were most likely to live with friends.

Class Delivery, Structure, and Influence on Graduation

Independent students (20.8%) were significantly more likely to prefer online classes than their Democratic (8.5%) or Republican (7.1%) peers. Conversely, Republicans (83.3%) were significantly more likely to prefer in-person instruction than were Democrats (72.7%) or independents (54.5%). There were no partisan differences related to trouble enrolling in required courses or learning after each semester's transition. There were significant differences related to concerns about graduating on time. During the spring, Democrats (29.7%) expressed greater concern than independents (24.2%) or Republicans (21.2%). This held true in the fall, when 22.4% of Democratic students reported feeling "very" or "extremely" worried about their ability to graduate on time. This contrasts 15.9% of Republicans and 11.0% of independents who felt the same way.

Academic Decisions and Opinions

There was an overwhelming belief that offering a pass/fail option was the correct decision, with no significant partisan differences. Students expressed more varied opinions about the decision to move classes online during the fall semester. Democrats (88.0%) were significantly more likely to believe this was the correct decision than were independent (74.0%) or Republican peers (45.2%). All students felt similarly about how many of their professors were flexible throughout the spring and fall semesters.

Political Concerns and Information Sources

Democrats were significantly more likely to express concern about the United States' political climate (90.3%) and the November election (81.2%) than their non-Democratic peers. Regarding the political climate, about 60% of independents felt the same, as did 66% of Republicans. When asked about the anticipated outcomes of the election, 54.6% of independents and 58.8% of Republicans expressed concern. Most students identified the CDC as a source of information about Covid-19 during the spring. While this held true for independents and Democrats during the fall, Republicans were more likely to obtain information from family members.

Summary

College students continue to manage stress related to the coronavirus pandemic and face challenges at home and in school. This report considered select influences of Covid-19 on ECU students. The results revealed several key differences across degree levels, financial aid status, and gender, racial, and partisan identities. These findings provide greater clarity into the experiences and attitudes of students throughout 2020, including their initial departure from campus, return for the fall, and subsequent transition to online learning. Additionally, the results expand upon key differences highlighted in earlier comparative assessments (i.e., Meier 2021). Overall, students held somewhat positive attitudes (e.g., professors offered enough flexibility), though these trended downwards as the year progressed. Additionally, it is apparent that students are expressing concerns about matters outside of academia and obtaining information from reputable sources (e.g., the CDC). This may have been inspired by peer and/or family engagement in such matters. Regardless, as few students reported living alone across each semester, there are potential benefits linked to social support from other household occupants. Future studies may relate some of the factors explored here to self-reported physical and emotional experiences.

Table 1: ECU Student Characteristics: ECU Population and Covid-19 Survey Sample	ECU Population		Unweighted Survey Sample		Weighted Survey Sample	
	Spring 2020	Fall 2020	Spring 2020	Fall 2020	Spring 2020	Fall 2020
Semester						
Total number of students in ECU population and Covid-19 Survey Sample	26,595	28,798	495	391	495	391
Student Status						
Undergraduate students	79.8%	87.0%	82.4%	74.7%	82.3%	80.1%
Graduate students	20.2%	13.0%	17.6%	25.3%	17.7%	19.9%
Financial Aid Status*						
Receiving Aid	43.0%	39.0%	64.9%	59.1%	63.8%	36.3%
Not Receiving Aid	57.0%	51.0%	35.1%	38.1%	36.4%	60.8%
Student Gender **						
Female	59.0%	60.0%	72.4%	73.5%	59.4%	59.0%
Male	41.0%	40.0%	27.2%	25.7%	40.2%	40.2%
Prefer to self-describe	n/a	n/a	0.4%	0.8%	0.4%	0.8%
Student Racial Identification ***						
Black or African American	16.0%	16.0%	25.6%	23.2%	16.1%	16.4%
White	66.0%	65.0%	63.4%	71.0%	65.8%	74.4%
Student Ethnic Identification						
Hispanic, Latinx, or Spanish Origin	7.0%	7.0%	9.0%	6.2%	13.3%	8.1%
Student Political Party Identification ****						
Republican	n/a	n/a	27.5%	28.6%	32.8%	32.2%
Independent	n/a	n/a	21.7%	24.6%	21.5%	25.6%
Democrat	n/a	n/a	50.8%	46.3%	45.7%	42.2%

* Financial aid refers to federal assistance including, but not limited to, Pell Grants, Stafford Loans, and federal student loans. The survey did not ask students to provide information regarding the value of financial aid packages and/or specific types of aid.

** Gender is based on responses to a survey question. Students who chose to self-describe were not included in the analysis on gender differences due to the small number of cases.

*** Racial identification is based on responses to two questions in the survey. Non-Hispanic/Latinx White students and non-Hispanic/Latinx Black students are included in the analysis on differences by race (see Table 6) because there are enough cases in each group for statistical comparisons. There were several respondents identifying as Hispanic/Latinx/Spanish, Asian American, American Indian, Native Alaskan, Native Hawaiian, or Pacific Islander. There were not enough responses from these students to perform quantitative analysis, although I note the proportion of students identifying as Hispanic/Latinx/Spanish in this table.

**** Republicans are defined as students who reported that they “usually think of themselves as Republicans.” Democrats are defined as students who reported that they “usually think of themselves as Democrats.” Republicans and Democrats also include independent “leaners.” These are respondents who answered that they do not think of themselves as Republicans or Democrats, but that they “lean” closer to one of those two parties. I treat those who “lean closer” to the Republican Party as Republicans and those who “lean closer” to the Democratic Party as Democrats. Independents are those who answer that they “lean closer” to neither political party. This coding scheme is consistent with the recommendations of political scientists who study partisanship (see e.g., Petrocik 2009).

Table 2. Results for all students (undergraduate and graduate) on selected questions.	Percent Yes		Estimated number of ECU Students (95% C. I.) *	
	Spring 2020	Fall 2020	Spring 2020	Fall 2020
Living Situation:				
Relocated after the transition to online instruction	21.7	21.6	4,707-6,835	4,780-7,660
Living alone	8.5	13.1	1,197-3,324	2,333-5,212
Living with friends	12.3	31.0	2,207-4,335	7,487-10,367
Living with one or more siblings	33.2	14.5	7,766-9,893	2,736-5,616
Living with a parent/parents	51.0	29.5	12,500-14,627	7,056-9,935
Living with a spouse/significant other	25.8	26.8	5,798-7,925	6,278-9,158
Class Delivery, Structure, and Influence on Graduation:				
Previously taken online classes	61.4	79.2	15,266-17,393	21,368-24,248
Preference for online course delivery	18.7	11.3	3,909-6,037	1,814-4,694
Preference for face-to-face course delivery	64.3	71.4	16,037-18,164	19,122-22,002
Preference for traditional, 15-week classes	n/a	58.3	n/a	15,349-18,229
Harder to learn after shift to online instruction	63.9	48.6	15,930-18,058	12,556-15,436
Had trouble enrolling in any required classes	n/a	16.9	n/a	3,427-6,307
Very or extremely worried about ability to graduate on time	25.5	17.2	5,718-7,846	3,513-6,393
Academic Decisions and Opinions:				
Felt most or all professors offered enough flexibility	62.6	56.7	15,585-17,712	14,889-17,768
Agreed shift to online learning was the correct decision	n/a	68.2	n/a	18,200-21,080
Believed offering pass/fail option was the correct decision	n/a	75.0	n/a	20,159-23,038
Political Concerns and Information Sources:				
Expressed concern about the current political climate	n/a	74.0	n/a	19,871-22,750
Expressed concern about the outcome of the November 2020 election	n/a	67.3	n/a	17,941-20,821
Obtained Covid-19-related information from:				
The CDC	66.3	61.9	16,569-18,696	16,386-19,266
Family members	50.1	46.2	12,260-14,388	11,865-14,745
ECU's Covid-19 information page	43.8	41.6	10,585-12,712	10,540-13,420

* Accounting for the margin of error for student sample and the size of the ECU student population, I can estimate with 95% confidence that the actual number of ECU students with a given attribute centers on the listed percentage and lies somewhere within the range listed.

** A response of “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree” was equated to “express[ing] concern” about the current political climate and the outcome of the November 2020 election.

Table 3. Student responses on selected questions by degree level.	% Undergrad		% Graduate	
	Spring 2020 (N=405)	Fall 2020 (N=313)	Spring 2020 (N=90)	Fall 2020 (N=78)
Living Situation:				
Relocated after the transition to online instruction	24.0	26.2	12.2	2.6
Living alone	6.7	12.1	16.7	16.7
Living with friends	13.6	35.5	6.7	14.1
Living with one or more siblings	38.8	17.3	7.8	3.8
Living with a parent/parents	58.0	33.9	20.0	12.8
Living with a spouse/significant other	20.2	20.4	50.0	52.6
Class Delivery, Structure, and Influence on Graduation:				
Previously taken online classes	59.4	75.7	75.8	93.6
Preference for online course delivery	17.9	11.1	22.0	11.7
Preference for face-to-face course delivery	68.4	73.2	48.8	63.6
Preference for traditional, 15-week classes	n/a	62.1	n/a	42.3
Harder to learn after shift to online instruction	66.0	52.7	54.4	32.5
Had trouble enrolling in any required classes	n/a	20.4	n/a	2.6
Very or extremely worried about ability to graduate on time	25.3	18.9	26.2	9.1
Academic Decisions and Opinions:				
Felt most or all professors offered enough flexibility	59.0	54.3	78.9	65.9
Agreed shift to online learning was the correct decision	n/a	68.2	n/a	71.4
Believed offering pass/fail option was the correct decision	n/a	80.2	n/a	54.5
Political Concerns and Information Sources:				
Expressed concern about the current political climate	n/a	71.5	n/a	74.1
Expressed concern about the outcome of the November 2020 election	n/a	64.1	n/a	80.5
Obtained Covid-19-related information from:				
The CDC	63.7	62.6	77.8	60.3
Family members	53.1	50.8	3.7	29.5
ECU's Covid-19 information page	46.7	44.4	31.1	30.8

* A response of “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree” was equated to “express[ing] concern” about the current political climate and the outcome of the November 2020 election.

** Results in **bold font** are statistically significant $\leq .05$ (one-tailed).

Table 4. Student responses on selected questions by financial aid status.	% Receiving Aid		% Not Receiving Aid	
	Spring 2020 (N=301)	Fall 2020 (N=142)	Spring 2020 (N=172)	Fall 2020 (N=238)
Living Situation:				
Relocated after the transition to online instruction	22.9	28.9	19.8	16.0
Living alone	9.0	12.7	8.7	13.0
Living with friends	13.6	27.5	11.0	33.6
Living with one or more siblings	33.6	22.5	33.7	9.2
Living with a parent/parents	50.5	38.0	51.2	23.9
Living with a spouse/significant other	25.2	22.5	25.6	30.3
Class Delivery, Structure, and Influence on Graduation:				
Previously taken online classes	61.4	77.5	60.5	81.5
Preference for online course delivery	14.6	8.5	25.4	12.6
Preference for face-to-face course delivery	69.5	79.6	56.3	68.1
Preference for traditional, 15-week classes	n/a	57.7	n/a	58.0
Harder to learn after shift to online instruction	68.4	57.7	56.4	44.5
Had trouble enrolling in any required classes	n/a	19.7	n/a	15.5
Very or extremely worried about ability to graduate on time	31.5	18.9	16.8	16.8
Academic Decisions and Opinions:				
Felt most or all professors offered enough flexibility	61.7	58.1	64.9	55.6
Agreed shift to online learning was the correct decision	n/a	67.6	n/a	69.1
Believed offering pass/fail option was the correct decision	n/a	80.9	n/a	72.3
Political Concerns and Information Sources:				
Expressed concern about the current political climate	n/a	71.8	n/a	75.6
Expressed concern about the outcome of the November 2020 election	n/a	67.2	n/a	67.5
Obtained Covid-19-related information from:				
The CDC	65.1	62.7	69.2	61.8
Family members	48.8	44.4	51.2	47.9
ECU's Covid-19 information page	48.8	47.9	35.5	37.4

* Financial aid refers to federal assistance including, but not limited to, Pell Grants, Stafford Loans, and federal student loans. The survey did not ask students to provide information regarding the value of financial aid packages and/or specific types of aid.

** A response of “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree” was equated to “express[ing] concern” about the current political climate and the outcome of the November 2020 election.

*** Results in **bold font** are statistically significant at the $\leq .05$ (one-tailed).

Table 5. Student responses on selected questions by gender.	% Female		% Male	
	Spring 2020 (N=303)	Fall 2020 (N=230)	Spring 2020 (N=187)	Fall 2020 (N=156)
Living Situation:				
Relocated after the transition to online instruction	23.8	22.6	18.2	19.4
Living alone	8.9	11.3	8.0	16.0
Living with friends	10.9	31.7	14.4	31.4
Living with one or more siblings	34.0	16.1	32.1	11.5
Living with a parent/parents	51.8	30.9	50.3	26.9
Living with a spouse/significant other	25.1	26.5	26.2	26.9
Class Delivery, Structure, and Influence on Graduation:				
Previously taken online classes	61.1	82.1	62.4	75.0
Preference for online course delivery	21.0	11.8	14.6	10.3
Preference for face-to-face course delivery	58.1	72.1	75.7	71.2
Preference for traditional, 15-week classes	n/a	58.3	n/a	58.3
Harder to learn after shift to online instruction	63.0	52.0	66.3	43.3
Had trouble enrolling in any required classes	n/a	18.3	n/a	14.7
Very or extremely worried about ability to graduate on time	21.6	17.4	31.0	17.9
Academic Decisions and Opinions:				
Felt most or all professors offered enough flexibility	63.6	56.3	63.6	56.0
Agreed shift to online learning was the correct decision	n/a	72.5	n/a	64.3
Believed offering pass/fail option was the correct decision	n/a	75.2	n/a	76.3
Political Concerns and Information Sources:				
Expressed concern about the current political climate	n/a	76.4	n/a	72.4
Expressed concern about the outcome of the November 2020 election	n/a	75.1	n/a	57.3
Obtained Covid-19-related information from:				
The CDC	67.0	61.7	70.3	62.8
Family members	51.2	48.7	53.5	44.2
ECU's Covid-19 information page	42.9	41.7	48.8	42.9

* Students not identifying as male or female are not included in this analysis.

** A response of “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree” was equated to “express[ing] concern” about the current political climate and the outcome of the November 2020 election.

*** Results in **bold font** are statistically significant $\leq .05$ (one-tailed).

Table 6. Student responses on selected questions by racial identity.	% Black		% White	
	Spring 2020 (N=86)	Fall 2020 (N=64)	Spring 2020 (N=319)	Fall 2020 (N=253)
Living Situation:				
Relocated after the transition to online instruction	20.9	25.0	23.2	20.3
Living alone	11.6	20.3	8.5	10.7
Living with friends	14.0	18.8	12.2	38.3
Living with one or more siblings	29.1	10.9	33.9	14.2
Living with a parent/parents	47.7	34.4	54.2	26.5
Living with a spouse/significant other	15.1	25.0	25.1	24.9
Class Delivery, Structure, and Influence on Graduation:				
Previously taken online classes	70.7	76.6	59.8	79.8
Preference for online course delivery	23.0	9.4	16.0	8.7
Preference for face-to-face course delivery	60.8	71.9	67.1	75.1
Preference for traditional, 15-week classes	n/a	46.0	n/a	63.9
Harder to learn after shift to online instruction	57.0	56.3	70.5	52.2
Had trouble enrolling in any required classes	n/a	15.6	n/a	20.9
Very or extremely worried about ability to graduate on time	29.1	21.6	25.1	17.4
Academic Decisions and Opinions:				
Felt most or all professors offered enough flexibility	55.8	57.1	66.2	58.3
Agreed shift to online learning was the correct decision	n/a	85.7	n/a	63.0
Believed offering pass/fail option was the correct decision	n/a	79.7	n/a	75.2
Political Concerns and Information Sources:				
Expressed concern about the current political climate	n/a	73.5	n/a	77.1
Expressed concern about the outcome of the November 2020 election	n/a	63.5	n/a	71.4
Obtained Covid-19-related information from:				
The CDC	62.8	51.6	69.0	65.2
Family members	46.5	46.9	52.7	48.6
ECU's Covid-19 information page	48.8	35.9	41.4	41.5

* Students not identifying as Black/African American or White are not included in this analysis.

** A response of “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree” was equated to “express[ing] concern” about the current political climate and the outcome of the November 2020 election.

*** Results in **bold font** are statistically significant $\leq .05$ (one-tailed)

Table 7. Student responses on selected questions by political party affiliation.	% REP		% IND		% DEM	
	Sp20 (N=146)	Fa20 (N=126)	Sp20 (N=98)	Fa20 (N=102)	Sp20 (N=210)	Fa20 (N=165)
Living Situation:						
Relocated after the transition to online instruction	24.8	14.5	15.3	26.7	21.3	23.6
Living alone	6.8	14.3	16.3	8.8	7.1	14.5
Living with friends	8.2	42.9	16.3	23.5	12.9	26.7
Living with one or more siblings	40.4	12.7	28.6	14.7	30.5	15.8
Living with a parent/parents	59.6	21.4	43.9	39.2	48.1	29.7
Living with a spouse/significant other	25.3	22.2	22.4	32.4	26.7	26.7
Class Delivery, Structure, and Influence on Graduation:						
Previously taken online classes	63.3	77.8	53.4	83.2	66.7	77.6
Preference for online course delivery	14.5	7.1	20.8	20.8	20.0	8.5
Preference for face-to-face course delivery	64.1	83.3	61.1	54.5	66.9	72.7
Preference for traditional, 15-week classes	n/a	66.7	n/a	50.0	n/a	56.7
Harder to learn after shift to online instruction	64.1	55.6	67.6	41.0	60.2	48.2
Had trouble enrolling in any required classes	n/a	19.0	n/a	17.0	n/a	15.2
Very or extremely worried about ability to graduate on time	21.2	15.9	24.2	11.0	29.7	22.4
Academic Decisions and Opinions:						
Felt most or all professors offered enough flexibility	58.9	56.4	69.4	58.4	61.5	55.8
Agreed shift to online learning was the correct decision	n/a	45.2	n/a	74.0	n/a	88.0
Believed offering pass/fail option was the correct decision	n/a	74.4	n/a	76.2	n/a	75.0
Political Concerns and Information Sources:						
Expressed concern about the current political climate	n/a	65.6	n/a	59.6	n/a	90.3
Expressed concern about the outcome of the November 2020 election	n/a	58.8	n/a	54.6	n/a	81.2
Obtained Covid-19-related information from:						
The CDC	64.4	47.6	71.4	56.9	67.1	75.8
Family members	60.3	54.8	44.9	40.2	47.6	43.0
ECU's Covid-19 information page	35.6	36.5	43.9	42.2	50.0	44.8

* Republicans are defined as students who reported that either that they “usually think of themselves as Republicans” or that they think of themselves as “closer to the Republican Party.” Democrats were

defined the same way. Independents are students who fit neither of these categories and includes how specifically thought of themselves as Independent or preferred not to answer these questions.

** Sp20 references the Spring 2020 academic semester and Fa20 the Fall 2020 semester.

*** A response of “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree” was equated to “express[ing] concern” about the current political climate and the outcome of the November 2020 election.

**** Results in **bold font** are statistically significant at the $\leq .05$ (one-tailed).

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