



INDIANA UNIVERSITY

Regional Campus COVID Response
Perceptions from Student Focus Groups



January 8, 2021

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This project benefits from the substantial efforts made by
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Likewise, the focus groups would not have been possible without the engagement of our
“co-researchers”, the students who participated in the focus groups. Thank you!

Overview

In the fall 2020 semester, campus and university leadership asked that UIRR work with regional campus offices to administer a series of focus groups examining student perceptions about their campus's response to the COVID-19 pandemic and their recommendations heading into the spring semester. UIRR's involvement varied from campus to campus. This report focuses on analyses for the East, Northwest, South Bend, and Southeast campuses. For the latter three campuses, UIRR assisted by sampling and recruiting students, coordinating focus groups sessions, transcribing the focus group recordings, and analyzing the transcripts. IU-East recruited and conducted their focus groups separately and subsequently shared their audio recordings with UIRR for transcription and analysis. IU-Kokomo chose to conduct and analyze their focus group sessions with no assistance from UIRR. See the [Methodology](#) section for more information on how the focus groups were organized and administered.

In reading this report, some limitations should be noted. Ideally, focus groups would include a much larger portion of the population spread over additional sessions. There were a couple of implications brought on by the limited time frame in which focus groups could be conducted. First, the comments provided by the students are only a snapshot in time. Should the focus groups have been held earlier or later in the semester, the students might have presented different views. However, it is worth noting that most of the opinions dealt with issues relevant throughout the semester. Secondly, the timing decreased the recruitment period. As such, groups of students who typically display lower engagement and therefore respond to later recruitment attempts, such as males, are represented at potentially lower rates than they might have otherwise been. This is particularly true with the Northwest and East campuses (See [Appendix A: Focus Group Participant Characteristics](#)). As such, nuances that are typical of male students, such as reasons for having lower rates of engagement, might have been drowned out by the opinions of other speakers.

How to read the analysis

The [Analysis](#) section has been broken up into overarching themes. In analyzing the focus group sessions, UIRR systematically evaluated approximately 10 hours of video footage and 191 pages of transcription, using *axial coding* to generate central themes across all participating regional campuses. Under each theme is a series of subthemes that students described as illustrating examples. All sections of the analysis apply to all of the reported campuses unless explicitly stated otherwise.

Relevant quotes from the focus group sessions have been added throughout the analysis. These quotes describe students' experiences at their home campus and also reflect similar sentiments from students at the other campuses. In attributing quotes to an individual, the student has been identified by a pseudonym that corresponds to a record in the set of tables found in [Appendix A: Focus Group Participant Characteristics](#). Within that table, you can find the students' sex, distance education status, academic level, and academic major. Additionally, the students' campuses have been marked within the analysis in parenthesis next to the pseudonym.

A bulleted set of recommendations have been included under most of the sections of the analysis. These are either recommendations derived by UIRR upon analyzing the focus group content or, as found in the [Student Recommendations](#) section, suggestions provided directly by the interviewed students. These recommendations were deemed most actionable before the spring semester and, in general, apply to all of the reported campuses.

Methodology

The [Methodology](#) section describes UIRR's involvement with the project including how students were recruited and screen into the focus groups, how the sessions were coordinated, and a description of the analysis procedures. The methodology also contains information about response and cooperation rates. This information is primarily relevant to IU-Northwest, IU-South Bend, and IU-Southeast.

Executive Summary

Things Done Well

Across the board, the students gave the campuses resounding commendations on how the pandemic has been handled from a **communications standpoint**. They also appreciated that their **safety was the number one concern** and that all policies, practices, and procedures were consistent in that vein (e.g. social distancing, signage, classroom scheduling, and physical layout). They gave high marks to the mask protocols, mitigation testing, and the cleanliness of the facilities. When made available, the **provision of mobile hotspots** was a needed and requisite service that students relied on. In most instances, **faculty members were viewed as being very flexible**. Faculty showed empathy and ethic of care in how they checked in with students, spoke to students, and connected them with various supports (i.e. mental health, financial, disability services to name a few).

See [Student's Perceptions of Institutional Response](#) for more information.

Student Challenges

See [Student Challenges](#) in the full analysis for more information.

Students are most consistent and vociferous about their **dissatisfaction with the academic experience**. While some students acknowledge gaps in student support services, the academic experience is what they have stressed the most concern about. **Freshman students are feeling the most estrangement and lack of connectivity to peers, faculty, and campus culture**. They have expressed a concern about a lack of efficacy to be able to tackle 200 level (and upwards) courses, and question if they are being effectively prepared to tackle what is up ahead. They have not been able to make connections with their peers and professors. They express feelings of isolation, lack of motivation, and an inability to effectively manage their time. Seniors on the other hand have long-established support systems in fellow peers, institutional knowledge, faculty relationships, and are more confident in their ability to navigate hiccups. To that end, **seniors are more concerned about completing** capstone projects, practicums, and internships, etc., all activities that are being affected in external environments that are also making adjustments due to the pandemic.

While most students had positive experiences, they often had a professor or two who did not meet their expectations of what they thought was needed for them to meet course learning objectives. **Students across the board feel most alienated when faculty:**

- are not responsive to emails
- did not provide timely and constructive feedback on completed work
- used only asynchronous format with no actual face time with the professor in a synchronous zoom lecture or online office hours
- inundated students with what is perceived as “busy work” with unclear or uncommunicated learning goals
- did not make content amenable to multiple learning styles
- inflexible and/or inconsistent with rubrics and deadlines, in the context of students’ lived experiences of trying to balance life, work, and school during a global pandemic

The students also had a visceral reaction to **a few administrative hurdles that were perceived as unfair**. The two prominent ones were parking and online fees. The overarching sentiment is that an alternative purchase option *to pay for what you use* philosophy should be applied to parking. In terms of online fees, the sentiment is “if you [administration] are forcing us to be online why are we paying for it? Also, if we are paying for it, we expect the quality we get in-person to be replicated.” Many focus group participants expressed that they felt they had been left to teach themselves online.

Possible Action Steps

The themes that emerged are consistent and lend support to the work completed in Summer 2020 by Ben Motz et. al., titled *Going Remote: Actionable Insights from Indiana University's Transition to Remote Instruction due to COVID-19*. Their recommendations were:

1. Assign classwork judiciously, and in alignment with clear learning goals.
2. Create opportunities for student-instructor communication, especially for first and second-year students.
3. Facilitate student success and foster a sense of virtual community through student-to-student communication.
4. Collaborate with other members of IU's vibrant teaching community by sharing materials and successes and providing venues for others to do the same.

These recommendations largely focus on academic instruction. It is important to realize that administrative staff in concert with faculty could facilitate a sense of belonging and peer-to-peer connections. Intentional programming that uses technology to recreate in-person engagement and connectivity should be the goal. An example surfaced where one peer mentor talked about how tutoring moved online but modeled the in-person format, but it is not translating as it is not agile to get tutoring to the student just-in-time. Other things like parking, access to the internet, time management, etc. all hint at some opportunities for support staff to create feedback loops sooner in the semester to get student voices centered in their learning. The student voice on what they would like to see change for Spring 2021 is espoused in the Analysis section next.

Analysis

Students' Perception of Institutional Response

In a preliminary survey sent to potential focus group participants, students expressed overall favorable opinions about how campuses responded to the pandemic (See [Appendix E: Screener Response Frequencies](#)). Likewise, students echoed these sentiments in their narratives during the focus group sessions. The areas they were most satisfied with can be categorized under campus communications, COVID-related safety measures, and administrator and faculty flexibility.

Campus Communications

Students felt that communication at both the system and campus level was timely, consistent, and for the most part transparent. Ziggy (SE) said his campus had been *“good about communicating what's happening, what the plans are, and where things are going with the students.”* April (EA) stated that she was able to decide on her schedule because *“well before the semester started, they were sending out emails reminding people to check their e-mail and confirm their class schedule.”*

Communications about scheduling, safety protocols, student wellbeing, and campus activities helped students to be informed and as prepared as they could have been given the uncertainty brought on by the pandemic. *“I really like how serious the situation has been taken. Like how, at the beginning, we got that announcement basically saying the severity of breaking the rules,”* said Love (SB). She then affirmed, *“I feel like it's kind of set the tone of making it a priority of everyone on campus to be safe. So I really appreciate that.”*

The excerpts shared above were recurring views that the majority of the students shared with facilitators that campus leadership was able to set the tone for a safe environment and an ethic of care that emanated to faculty and staff. Most students appreciated this tone and saw it as important in helping them to navigate the fall 2020 semester.

Despite overall satisfaction with institutional communication from most students, they thought some messages lacked clarity. Several students argued that classes switched modality at the last minute, which left them scrambling to find housing or childcare, or not having enough credits and shuffling to sort out financial aid implications. Other students were outright confused about perceived contradictions in emails sent out university-wide versus ones received locally on their campus (e.g. participation in athletics). Zanyia (SB) equivocated that early notification was important given her *“work schedules and family...I have three kids that are school age. I help [my children] online just because it's easier for me right now. If the schools close, that would be another variable for me. So I'm trying to reduce variables.”*

COVID-related Safety Measures

Almost all students who participated in the focus groups were in full support of the safety protocols that IU as an organization put into place. It was common to hear words like “thankful”, “grateful”, and “fortunate” used to express their overall positive views of how the pandemic was handled in the fall semester.

Mitigation testing was one area of general satisfaction among students. Olivia (SE) captured her perception of the university containment efforts in her assertion that *“mitigation testing has gone really well and I think that's a really good thing to do. I think it's an objective way to get numbers and to see how it's affecting our campus and if you need to do things better.”*

Other students commented that on-campus efforts toward crowd control and social distancing. Geraldine (EA) said, *“I think they did well with the classes since they're only allowed to have so many kids on campus at once.”*

Students acknowledged that IU had not experienced any serious concerns about shutting down in-person operations, and saw this as a testament to how well the pandemic was handled on all the campus.

Administrator and Faculty Flexibility

Students lauded their campus's ability to be agile. They praised administrators and faculty alike for their flexibility in scheduling classes and willingness to provide alternative pathways to success in their courses. Zanyia (SB) reasoned, *"You know, the reason why we have all these different options is because they're trying to be flexible and responsive to the changing needs of everybody's personal life, work life, school life."* Zelda (SB) agreed with Zanyia, highlighting that it was not just with scheduling classes: *"I found a lot of our teachers were really understanding."* She continued, *"If you have any issues, you could message them and just say, 'Hey, I'm having a hard time.' They give you a little bit of leeway and some extra time on assignments and things. So I think they've been great."*

While students had glossy evaluations about their interactions with the campus faculty and staff, they also took the opportunity to share exchanges with which they were dissatisfied. One example, narrated by Violet (SE), involved an instructor who had an inconsistent pattern for scheduling Zoom calls. She mentioned that they have been *"doing last minute Zoom calls which fall on days where we normally wouldn't have Zoom calls. So a lot of us students are at our jobs, and we can't really attend. The professors give us zeros for participation."* She pleads her case that *"we can't really drop everything last minute. So, I think that's a thing that a lot of people need to really grasp is that we're all still trying to handle this whole COVID situation, and we can't just be available all the time for them."* We will explore this theme in more detail in the [Student-Faculty Communication](#) section below.

Academic and Learning Experience

Focus group attendees were most vocal about the perceived gaps they thought existed in moving from in-person to completely online or hybrid. The conversations were centered on workload and course design in general, and Canvas in particular. It became clear after eight focus groups that there were central themes of how learning styles, course modality, and busy work impacted learning from faculty and peers.

One important observation researchers made while analyzing transcripts is that, in multiple instances, students would report doing well academically, but on the other hand, make claims of an absence of learning. Several students noted that the online environment promoted feelings of disconnectedness and, in turn, a perception of disengagement by both students and faculty and students feeling as if they were just being "pushed through".

Learning Styles

The main reasons provided by students as to why they were struggling with online instruction often had to do with a preference for how they had traditionally learned and their preferred learning style. Many students noted that the online format, in some ways, inhibits immediate two-way communication and feedback, with both peers and faculty. Rashida (EA) declared, *"I value face-to-face interaction, so getting moved to all online, I almost feel like there is a deficit in my learning experience."* Lily (SE) relayed the story of a peer she encountered at her place of work and why he ended up dropping out this semester:

The reason why he did it is because he knows that he is an in-person learner and all of his classes changed to online. So he's like, 'I don't want to pay to go to school to get an education if I feel like I'm not going to grasp the information.'

Students are accustomed to using campus and other students as psychological and physical benchmarks for their progress. They rely on faculty and peer interaction for support and motivation. April (EA) lent voice to this saying, *"I'm really, really bad about keeping myself accountable for schoolwork."* However, she recognized that she did *"a lot better when doing things in class and interacting with my classmates."*

JT (SB) partially attributed a lack of learning to the absence of communication between students. Other participants shared stories of blank screens in Zoom class sessions due to students not using a camera. This communicated a lack of engagement that clouded their enthusiasm to engage. Similarly, in Zoom breakout sessions, it was not uncommon to encounter total silence—barring faculty intervention—especially if the students did not have prior established relationships.

Many students have voiced concern about the efficacy of online platforms in delivering the learning they are used to from in-person instruction. To that end, students expressed a preference for having both *synchronous* (engagement and discussion) and *asynchronous* (class prep and revision) access in the same course.

Modality and Subject Area

Students thought some complex subjects (e.g. advanced Math, Spanish/English labs) were best taught in person. Dina (EA) pointed out that as an English major she spends a lot of time *“reading, so much writing. I am just buried in it. I think for me, not being able to have those discussions for literature, and especially literary criticism, you really don't get that same kind of feel as if you're in the classroom.”* Dina felt that moving the coursework from her discipline to an online format, was not conducive to effective learning. Janelle (NW) saw her Spanish labs as needing to be in person, asserting that *“I was taking an upper-level course where it's conversation driven... So when we transferred online when COVID hit, we did have to do everything virtual and through Zoom. We did the best we could, but it is difficult.”* Janelle, feeling as if she had not maximized her learning in her previous class, declared that she will be *“taking the course again just because you can get credit for it by different instructors.”* Abena (NW) had a problem with the lab portion of her geology class. She described her experience saying, *“They're showing us the rocks on each video. Which is really hard because to feel or compare each rock was a little bit difficult.”* On the contrary, Allison (NW), who also had Geology, had the option to take a similar lab in person. She reported a different experience saying, *“I'm taking geology, the lab and the lecture. They were both offered in-person or online. I'm in-person because I did feel like I needed that extra help because I don't really know much about it. And it did help when we were doing the minerals in the rocks because it was easier to see in person.”* The experience of both Abena and Allison juxtaposes how the same subject area was more effectively delivered in a physical setting. The students were keen to mention that they wanted faculty to consider how best to translate in-person courses online, with special consideration given to the subject area.

Busywork

Busy work, in the context of this report, is a term that students used to describe tasks or activities that students perceived as being assigned simply for the sake of doing “work” but not explicitly aligned with the course learning objectives. Bartholomew (SB) relayed both sides of the spectrum. He talked about his economics professor, with whom he had taken microeconomics in-person before COVID. He was now taking macroeconomics with the same professor. Bartholomew said the professor *“managed to make the classroom exactly the same, keep the work meaningful, and he's done a great job.”* On the contrary, Bartholomew described a lot of the work as *“ways to try stimulate you to keep working as if it were a [in-person] classroom experience. But, at the end of the day, it really just comes off as forced extra homework that is doing nothing more than adding time onto my day.”* Geraldine (EA) states that she *“just feels like they've given us more work as an online student than what we would have in person. It was just a big shock to me. A lot of it is busy work. I just don't think it was very helpful.”*

Not all students expressed this sentiment. Tarah (SE) had a balanced take on the matter, saying:

I feel like there are some things for some of my professors where we just watch this show and answer questions instead of doing an assignment or an activity...like in my chemistry lab it's very different from going in and actually physically doing stuff in the lab. We're doing the math and the calculations and watching professors do the lab.

While Tarah admitted that this doesn't seem like busywork to her, she also compared it to a lot of her other classes where additional work did not seem to be adding to the educational outcomes of the course.

In the absence of a clear and intentional connection to course learning objectives, students are interpreting course materials and assignments as busywork.

Student-Faculty Communication

Timely and thoughtful feedback from faculty was expressed as being paramount to students. In their reflections, the students who received feedback linked its relevance to their success. On the other hand, students saw a lack of feedback as a barrier to learning. April (EA) found getting in touch with instructors of asynchronous courses as a "hit or miss" exercise. She went further to say, *"I've had times where I've waited more than a day to get a response back on something that I needed"* while at other times *"they've gotten back to me within a couple of hours or a few minutes even."* Marsha (SB) described an even more drastic experience saying, *"I have a couple classes where I have yet to speak to the professor. They haven't reached out at all. So that's really, really difficult right now to get through classes without the communication aspect."*

Richie (SB) had a more positive experience: *"The faculty from my classes have made themselves incredibly available to us. And I think, having moved things online, it's more difficult for me to learn in an asynchronous kind of style, but [instructors] are still holding office hours during normally scheduled course times."* Richie mentioned that when he attended office hours *"not very many people ever show up. And so when I have needed help, I've been connecting less with tutors and just going straight to faculty because they're just sitting there...It's actually been incredibly encouraging how proactive and available the professors that I'm learning from have been."*

April (EA) underscored the nuance between online and in-person introductions at the beginning of the semester. Before COVID, she had at least a semblance of a relationship with her instructors. Since classes have shifted online, those introductions are less personal and students are likely to find it more difficult to approach faculty members for help. Some professors actively removed these communication barriers. For example, Janelle (NW) said that one of her professors *"made herself available by giving out her cell phone and personal email addresses, and would often follow up immediately through text messages."*

Students did not simply want feedback in a timely fashion. They also wanted it to be constructive and thoughtful feedback. Margaret (SB) mentioned that while some of her instructors were very good about providing critical feedback, others simply provided a short, one-sentence explanation. Cullen (NW) explained that this lack of feedback adds to the feeling of faculty disengagement. She said, *"I would ask other people, did you do this assignment and what did you get? Because we do get that feeling that it is just being checked off across the board."* In the absence of detailed feedback, Cullen was questioning if learning was taking place and felt anxious about her progress.

Etsuko (NW) however thought some faculty were doing a phenomenal job and showed an ethic of care. She noted, *"When we do meet on Zoom, professors typically always either open up with asking, 'How are you guys doing? How are you feeling?' They'll either open up or end the class with some form of that question."* Several other students also expressed that faculty have been proactive about checking on the overall well-being of their students.

Student Challenges

As challenging as times are, some students are faring better than others, and those students generally had less of a transition to make; they were largely studying online already, have strong support systems on and off campus, and/or relish in the new flexibility online schooling provides. As an example, juniors and seniors have had time to build up institutional knowledge, faculty and peer relationships, and time

management skills. These have been useful resources and supports in their survival toolkit. Traditional online learners were also less likely to report a massive usurping of their academic selves.

Struggling to Stay Motivated

The physical setting of the in-person classroom, dialogue between scholars and professor, and study groups were mainstays of the pre-COVID campus. These characteristics held students accountable and kept them motivated. One of the central themes that emanated from the students' narratives surrounding their challenges was the lack of motivation.

Bartholomew (SB) fashioned himself as “a very hands-on learner.” He explained, “I learn a lot more from the interactions that I get with [the] professor. When I'm going to Zoom classroom, whether I'm at school or [at home], I'm a lot more distracted by my surroundings.” Ziggy (SE) talked about his experience in the chemistry department. In the past, the department had made an office available for students to congregate between classes. Ziggy highlights that “there's usually one or two people in there working on homework or whatever. So there's a lot of studying in groups and working on stuff together, which is a lot harder to do on my own.” He went further to argue that professors could help motivate students in how they designed their courses. He gave the example of one of his professors:

We have something due Tuesday and Thursday or Friday. We have a Zoom meeting Wednesday. So the work is spread out throughout the week. Whereas, with my other classes, everything is due Sunday night... Ideally, I wouldn't wait until Sunday to do all that stuff, but that's what I end up doing...when it's spread out throughout the week, it forces you to sit down multiple times and work on stuff.

For the self-motivated student who can effectively manage their time and projects, all assignments due on Sunday was the preferred model since it offered them the most flexibility to get work done on their schedule. Having said that, many students needed multiple touchpoints to remain motivated and held accountable to remain engaged.

Balancing Work, School, and Life

COVID-related uncertainties are amplified for students who typically juggle multiple roles. These students are forced to balance work, school, and family in a more complicated and less predictable way than they ever have before. Janelle (NW) is balancing her practicum, homeschooling, parenting, and household responsibilities. She shares her story as follows:

I'm in an internship with the American Red Cross while they are completely virtual. And so while it's awesome and convenient, this is my office in the basement downstairs. I am going to be doing case management where you're going to need that sort of privacy. I can't just have my family walking around when I'm interviewing clients.

Janelle's story is analogous to many other students who were already working many hours pre-COVID and whose list of responsibilities is likely to have been multiplied.¹

Campus Life

Sense of Community

The majority of the students who shared their opinions about campus life were quick to describe our campuses as *ghost towns* or *shells of their former selves*. Students who were freshmen were yearning for the *college experience* and seniors felt slighted that they could potentially be missing, graduation, the

¹ According to the IU Financial Wellness Survey, 80% of student respondents from East, Northwest, South Bend, and Southeast combined were working for pay with 50% working over 20 hours per week (University Institutional Research and Reporting, 2020).

most important rite of passage for a college student. Seniors and juniors however had established relationships with peers and faculty in their programs and were far more likely to reach out to peers in study groups, group chats, or via more direct forms of communication, such as phone, text, or email. Freshman and even sophomores were more at risk of a lack of connectivity to campus.

Everald (SB) said for him *“It's been a little bit of a struggle both in class and then personally as well. I'm an RA. So, it's been a lot different than it normally would be...It's hard to get a grasp on the sense of community that we usually have on campus. I imagine that's really hard for freshmen. They're not getting the experience that they should.”*

Despite the difficulty of fostering connectivity through face-to-face interactions, some students had found other ways to build community and share a sense of common goals. Many of the juniors and seniors looked to support systems that were built before the pandemic, such as academic or professional organizations. Others used more novel online platforms. Sebastian (SE) shared how a fellow student in his program sent him an invite to join a chat channel that he had built in Discord, an online social and collaboration platform. He relayed that he used it to get help on assignments from his classmates in real time for different subjects when professors were not available.

Accessing Campus Resources

Most of the focus group respondents who utilized a student support service had positive experiences. Dante (EA) said he *“used the writing center a few times. That's great because it's all online. You can send them stuff, and they can reply to you or you can have a Zoom session or whatever.”* A student on one of the campuses did mention that while the writing center transitioned *“pretty well for the most part...sometimes it [took] them a lot longer than 30 minutes [as publicized] to get your material back to you.* Margaret (SB) was a discrepant voice since she thought there was *“a significant difference from doing things face-to-face rather than through Zoom. A lot of the people that work in those offices—financial aid or bursar or whatever—whether it's subconsciously or consciously, they take you more seriously in [in person].”* It must be noted that she thought the service she received over the phone and online was good *“But I just feel like, in general, face-to-face visits gave me more immediate results that actually helped.”* Jo Ellen (SB) agreed with Margaret that appointments with advisors were easy to set up, timely, and helpful, even going as far as to say that *“I think it worked out better this semester than it has in the past.”*

One would assume that with student-faculty interaction in the classroom drastically reduced, students would flock to tutors. Two students who were tutors shared that they too were seeing fewer students. Faith (SB) is a tutor for nursing found it difficult to explain things via Zoom and exclaimed that the experience for her was *“horrible. I hate it. Like I'm trying to show a book—and our nursing book is thick—so I'm trying to hold a nursing book up to the camera and I'm pointing at things and trying to explain things and I'm dropping it.”*

For Ziggy (SE), a tutor for the student success center, it was a situation of supply not meeting demand at the right time. He revealed that communication was inefficient; the school would email him to assist a student, he would relay his availability, and *“by the time they get back to me it's like a week later. At which point, I assume they don't really need help anymore.”* When probed by the facilitator if he had a solution Ziggy offered:

I mean, for me personally, I'd be OK with [the center] giving my email right off the bat, but they want scheduling to go through them so they can record the information.

An interesting sub-theme that needs to be illuminated is the incongruence between students wanting more personal face-to-face interactions versus their reluctance to seek out virtual campus events or extra-curricular activities.

Administrative Hurdles (South Bend and Southeast)

The students on the South Bend and Southeast campuses spent more time revealing how they saw the associated fees with parking and online learning as financial burdens that were unfairly imposed upon them. While students understood the legitimate reasons for a technology fee or the need to use parking fees to maintain parking lots, these administrative hurdles came across as insensitive and uncaring based on the timing and lack of forthright communication.

Parking

Marsha (SB) said her *“greatest concern this semester is only having one class that's in-person but having to pay the \$65 (or \$75) to park for only an hour a week. That's probably my biggest concern because that to me is a waste of money, but I want to be in person. So I pay it anyway. It's just kind of a big expense for me.”* Violet (SE) also had some in-person classes and did not think parking passes should still be full-priced given the lower number of on-campus classes. She complained that *“It didn't really make any sense to pay the full amount for a parking pass when we're not actually on-campus for the full amount.”* There is a segment of the student body who wants to be in-person and who want their parking charges to be prorated to match their usage. Bartholomew (SB) confirmed that the Student Government Association pushed to provide students with alternative parking pass options. He provided the examples of offering Monday/Wednesday passes or Tuesday/Thursday passes based on students' class schedules. Though the initiative was unsuccessful, he still sees it as a viable way to appease at least some student concerns. *“It would definitely be something that the students could look at and go, ‘Okay, they've thought of us.’ It would be like a little cherry on top of a cake for us.”*

Fee Reductions and Billing Transparency

Students were upset about increased fees associated with online learning. They did not think it was fair that they were being “pinned” with a charge for a class mode that they would not have chosen on their own. In many respects, they thought they were receiving a lesser value for more money. Zanyia (SB) had this to say about the fees, *“you certainly feel like you're paying more for distance learning classes, and obviously since nobody had time to prepare for a distance learning program, it's sub-par. It's kind of stings for a lot of people.”* Marsha (SB) had what she described as *“a serious issue with the distance learning fee.”* She went on to say, *“I didn't have the option to take the majority of my classes in person. So I was paying for a distance learning class that I didn't choose to take online.”*

Bartholomew (SB) thought part of the communication breakdown was owing to the lack of transparency in itemizing the fee structure, explaining what the fees were associated with, and why they were necessary. He felt this lack of communication further exacerbated the financial hardships some students were facing.

To many students, these issues juxtapose the concepts of value and choice. Like the other aspects discussed earlier like communication with faculty, course design, and campus programming, students are expressing a desire to have flexibility and choices. This theme also suggests a level of sensitivity to the increased financial pressures students may be experiencing and finding ways to connect them to local and campus resources that may help to assuage some of these concerns.

Expectations for Spring Semester

In discussing what other types of challenges were expected for the spring semester, students were quick to mention some of the other items that had already been mentioned about the fall semester. However, there were some novel concerns, especially dealing with starting the semester online and a sense of unease dealing with practicum courses.

Starting the Semester Online

Some students expressed apprehension about starting the semester online before attending in-person classes later in the semester. Olivia (SE) noted a lack of motivation associated with online learning from both students and instructors. She went on to say that the transition from online to in-person mid-semester might negatively impact the intensity and class expectations in a way that was not apparent in the fall semester since classes started in-person. Richie (SB) described his concerns as follows:

I mean, we're coming off of a long break, right into a new semester, where everything will be virtual. We won't have on-campus resources. As far as I'm aware, the library is still going to be shut down. And so, getting a good start on a semester may be hard because of a lack of motivation and because of a lack of on-campus resources.

Practicum Courses

Some coursework or campus activities are difficult to translate into a virtual environment and many of those occur in the spring as upper-level students are preparing to end their program. Some students expressed uncertainty about losing clinical sites and how those adjustments might impact their spring semester, especially given the rapidity at which establishments have been restricting access to contain the pandemic. Faith (SB) put it this way

Next semester is our capstone, and we're already not allowed to have any students in the Emergency Department [at the hospital] because anybody could come in with COVID. So we're losing capstone sites and clinical sites. So it's more readjustment mid-semester or last minute.

Olivia (SE) described having a lot of simulations in the spring 2020 semester due to closed or limited clinical sites. She said that those simulations took substantially more time to complete than the actual in-person tasks at the hospital. Likewise, in her opinion, the simulations didn't provide the same level of practical experience.

Jo Ellen (SB) expressed the concern that she might catch COVID-19 when she starts teaching in the classroom as part of her practicum. She also had apprehension about the possibility of teaching virtually if the schools go all online again, especially since her program spent little time exposing students to virtual teaching formats.

Student Recommendations

Following other talking points, students were asked to provide their recommendations about how to approach the spring semester and what types of improvements they would like to see. The following section outlines specific suggestions posed directly by focus group participants based on their perceptions and lived experiences that they wanted leadership to consider when making decisions for the upcoming Spring semester.

On-campus Study Locations

A handful of students noted that the lack of on-campus study locations or reduced hours for those locations has impacted coursework. Love (SB) describes the library as a “*huge resource*” in which she studies “*super well*.” However, she said that she had been negatively impacted by reduced hours. This sentiment was echoed by Richie (SB) who said that it is difficult for him to focus at home because he lives with four other students and two dogs. He describes the new library hours as a “*huge loss*,” especially since it's currently closed in the evening when he does most of his studying.

Campus Communications

Several students also mentioned ways in which communication could be improved for the spring semester. Margaret (SB) stressed the importance of online communications in terms of providing a connectedness to the campus and IU in general, especially since so many face-to-face events have been canceled. She recalled missing a drive-in movie event being hosted by the campus because of a lack of adequate notification about the event.

Other students were more concerned about knowing how the semester is “going to look like.” Jo Ellen (SB) said that she has a pretty clear idea of what is going to happen but she framed her comment around the uncertainty she had going into the fall semester. Antoinette (SB) expressed concerns that college students will likely be prioritized lower than other groups in the vaccine rollout. Since it seems that COVID-19 will be impacting the college community for several more months, Antoinette stressed the importance of providing consistent updates “as we move closer to a vaccine or to worsening pandemic conditions, whatever happens.”

Bartholomew (SB) mentioned the importance of having messaging that is more personal to the student:

I know sometimes we get these big broad messages sent to all students. Students will respond a lot more if they get something very specific, whether it's through their school of education or whether it's from a specific person who reaches out to them. Find out what they're concerned about; find out what they're worried about; find out what they're really thinking about.

Course Modality and Consistency

Students who were accustomed to an in-person experience favored synchronous classes with predictable schedules over asynchronous classes, where informal routines could lead to decreased motivation to keep up with classwork. Although students were sympathetic with the fact that instructors had limited time to prepare and structure their classes, students also recommended that more time be devoted to providing a consistent and thought-out learning experience, perhaps using additional teaching materials, such as videos, to supplement routine class time.

In explaining their learning preference and aversion to asynchronous classes, many students mentioned informal routines as a hindrance to staying motivated. Antoinette (SB) mentioned that she has a mix of synchronous and asynchronous classes. She also expressed an appreciation for the flexibility of being able to watch recorded lectures on her own time or re-watch them if she didn't retain the information. However, she added that regularly scheduled classes enabled her to manage her time more effectively. Other students were not tied to the idea of having a scheduled class time, but they still preferred routine, week-to-week deadlines to either hold them accountable or to help with juggling other aspects of their life. Jamaica, an online student from the East campus, explained that the assignments for all of his classes are typically due by Sunday at midnight. Since he works the rest of the week, he can reliably leave Thursday and Sunday available to catch up on coursework.

Students also used the opportunity to describe especially helpful teaching methods. Many of the students expressed appreciation for instructors who supplemented their lectures with additional materials, such as pre-recorded videos. Zanyia (SB) described the voice-over PowerPoint videos that her instructor created in Kaltura. Some students described Zoom fatigue and a general disconnectedness even with asynchronous classes. However, these additional learning materials aided in learning comprehension even after the scheduled class time. Zanyia added that these materials could be used to facilitate more active learning during synchronous classes. She mentioned that her instructor provides the slide decks early so that a portion of the class time can be diverted from lecture to discussion of the pre-recorded content.

Communicating with Instructors

Students view real-time question-and-answer sessions with their instructor as invaluable. Even when instructors are responsive by email, students would prefer real-time feedback to confirm that their questions are not being lost in transcription. In general, students wanted regular office hours using a dedicated Zoom channel. Students also mentioned that it's helpful to have the Zoom URL posted to at the front of Canvas materials as opposed to being buried in the syllabus.

Students appreciate when instructors are responsive to emails but it is often more helpful to receive immediate feedback about classwork. Dina, a student from the East campus, said that her professors have been “*super speedy*” about their email replies. However, she describes her preference for real-time conversations by saying, “*It’s easier to discuss something—especially if you don’t understand it and you have a hard time putting something you don’t understand into words.*” Bartholomew (SB) went further to say that, in a way, twenty minutes of one-on-one time with a professor is more helpful than an hour-and-fifteen-minute class period. Students with instructors who do have online office hours agreed that it was a productive use of time.

Respite/Breaks

Although students were understanding of the need to forego academic breaks, they also conveyed a sense of fatigue and burn out. Faith (SB) said that she understood the idea of “*front-loading spring break.*” However, she said that having a mid-semester break is necessary when powering through a busy 16-week period. Margaret (SB) mentioned that, for her, breaks typically marked a period during which she could devote time to the time management activities, such as planning and organization, without diverting attention away from day-to-day coursework or outside obligations. Recognizing that reinstating the breaks isn't an option at the moment, Zanyia (SB) suggested having an “*easy week*” built into the calendar, during which typical assignments would be replaced with fun, course-related activities. She described this as an opportunity to provide a “*mental reprieve*” without sacrificing course content.

Canvas Consistency

Participants in the focus groups belabored the point that faculty had an endless permutation of how courses were arranged and designed in Canvas, making it harder to comprehend how to use the interface and engage with course material. These discrepancies included differences in how instructors provide important information, where assignments are placed, and whether or not instructors use built-in scheduling and calendar components. Students also thought that making zoom links for classes readily accessible and the same for all class sessions would improve attendance.

Faith (SB) commented that some professors prefer to communicate via email while others will post announcements on Canvas. Students are forced to look in several different places to make sure they are not missing course-related information. Another student, JT (SB), mentioned that sometimes, even when notifications are sent through Canvas, they are posted as an afterthought to an earlier announcement made during class. In some cases, the notifications only appear on Canvas a couple of days before the due date. Zanya (SB) explained that while syllabi typically contain dates for assignments, it's easier for students to check the calendar on Canvas for a consolidated day-to-day overview of assignments for all of their classes.

Other students commented that class materials were placed in disparate places on the Canvas platform. Cullen (NW) described the Canvas experience as a “*scavenger hunt.*” Joe (SB) explained that this also happens with the Zoom links for the class. He explained that for one of his classes, the instructor created a different link for each class period. To find the appropriate URL, students had to find the current module, search for the correct date, and copy/paste the link into the browser window.

The issue of faculty members using completely different platforms in conjunction with Canvas was a concern that arose in the East focus groups. The resources that students cited faculty using the most were *Mastering*, *Top Hat*, *Matlab*, and *Piazza*. Students reported being accustomed to faculty using other

platforms with Canvas pre-COVID, so while additional adjustments were needed at times to navigate two systems, this was a practice that predated COVID. Regardless of the additional platform, through prolonged exposure, students generally gained comfort. As long as faculty synchronized these platforms with Canvas, the students were able to stay on track with assignments. To the extent that faculty plan to introduce additional learning platforms, Canvas compatibility should be a highly regarded criterion in the decision-making process to adopt that platform.

Instructor Training

In addition to the consistent use of Canvas, students also suggested that instructors receive better training on IU's learning technology, especially Canvas and Zoom, which play key roles in most classes. Margaret (SB) pointed to compiling modules and unlocking assignments as a couple of specific areas of Canvas usage that could improve with better training. Her experience was of particular note since her intense course load prompted her to switch one of her classes because the instructor was not proficient with Canvas. However, Margaret did note that most of her professors had done a great job at organizing their classes on Canvas. Regarding Zoom, JT from South Bend mentioned that it was not clear that instructors had been trained adequately because some of them had been having technical problems.

Graduation

Upper-level students expressed uncertainty about graduation. Etsuko (NW) commented that even though he received a graduation application from his department, the form stated that no plans had been made. He went on to imply that even if graduation had to be virtual, he would like to know what is happening as soon as possible because it's "*part of the college experience too.*" Lunar (NW) had a different take on graduation. She said that instead of something virtual, she would prefer graduation stretched out over multiple days to diffuse the crowd sizes. She also mentioned the idea of having a drive-thru graduation.

Conclusion

Throughout the focus groups, students discussed a plethora of challenges as well as positive steps taken by the campuses. However, course design, communication, and engagement rose to the top as specific themes of concern—especially since these concepts flow hand-in-hand with the traditional learning experience. While understanding that instructors had little time to transition their classes to an online format, students nonetheless expressed a desire that course designs be improved for the spring semester with an emphasis on finding novel ways to facilitate the types of discussions that would normally happen in a face-to-face learning environment. The students' comments also alluded to the ways in which certain aspects of communication, such as setting clear and consistent channels of communication and providing critical feedback, have become more important without face-to-face interactions. Students expect communications to be timely and forthright, from the campus community in general, to provide the information needed to juggle competing obligations of academics, work, family, finances, etc. The students attributed lack of engagement with peers and instructors as a potential reasons for decreased motivation. While the focus group participants spoke about engagement or connectedness in relation to individual topics, researchers noted that this common theme might be indirectly related to their overall self-identification as a student—especially since their current engagement with academia might be incongruent with traditional perceptions of what it means to be a student. As such, many of the students' comments alluded to a desire to have some of the tenets of a traditional educational experience reshaped, in a recognizable fashion, to fit the current online and socially distanced environment.

Methodology

At the onset of this project, UIRR offered to assist with focus group sampling, recruitment, coordination, and administration. IU-Northwest, IU-South Bend, and IU-Southeast accepted this offer, and this section describes those processes. IU-East performed these steps on their own.

Each campus held a series of two online focus groups which were scheduled during the two weeks starting Monday, November 2, and ending Friday, November 13. UIRR asked that the participating campuses provide a focus group facilitator, a set of preliminary focus group prompts, and the name of a campus signatory for recruitment emails. Students sampled for recruitment were offered a participation incentive in the form of a \$50 electronic Amazon gift code if they were selected for and attended one of the scheduled focus groups. In addition to the campus facilitator, focus groups were attended by a UIRR representative to take attendance, observe the discussion, and suggest additional talking points based on participant responses.

Sampling

Focus group participants were sampled for recruitment by UIRR in mid-October of 2020. Populations for the samples included all students, regardless of academic career level, who were enrolled at the time of the fall census. Students who opted out of university survey communications were excluded from sampling. Each student was included in the population of exactly one campus. Students who were enrolled at more than one campus were sampled at the campus providing the majority of the student's credit hours.

UIRR used a sampling process in which students were randomly selected in proportion to distributions within specific segments (or strata) of the population to ensure adequate representation within those subgroups. Student sex was chosen as one of the strata to help mitigate potential nonresponse by male students since they typically respond to surveys at lower rates than females. Additionally, academic career and distance education status were also used since could have different opinions based on their class level or degree of online instruction.

UIRR determined optimal focus group attendance to be between 7 and 10 students for each session. However, to account for possible attrition prior to the scheduled focus groups, UIRR allowed for a maximum attendance of 13 students per session or 26 students total within each campus. The COVID-19 pandemic generated an increase in survey research and perceived survey fatigue in fall 2020. Since it was unclear if students would respond to an additional request—especially to participate in a focus group—UIRR created two samples, without replacement and of equal size and distribution, before sending any recruitment messages. Recruitment messages were sent to the primary sample first with the intention of increasing the sample size, if needed, to increase participation. Both samples were ultimately sent an invitation to complete the preliminary screener for the focus groups.

UIRR monitored response throughout the recruitment phase. After sending recruitment emails to the secondary sample, UIRR deemed it necessary to bolster participation by beginner students at IU-Northwest by administering additional convenience sampling. For this, faculty teaching First Year Seminar classes were asked to share with their students the URL to the focus group screener. Respondents in the convenience sample were offered the same participation incentive as all other attendees.

See [Appendix B](#) for population, sample, and participant distributions.

Recruitment

Focus group recruitment was broken into 2 phases: *screeener recruitment* followed by *participant selection and coordination*. In total, attendees received 5 recruitment emails including an invitation and a reminder in the *screeener recruitment* phase and a selection notification, a scheduling confirmation, and a scheduling reminder in the *participant selection and coordination* phase.

All recruitment messages mentioned the participant incentive, a \$50 electronic Amazon gift card. This incentive was emailed to focus group attendees within a week after their focus group.

See [Appendix C](#) for the recruitment messages.

Screeener Recruitment

UIRR generated a screener, in the Qualtrics survey environment, to help ensure the focus groups contained students from all of the defined sampling strata. Along with providing initial information about the focus groups, UIRR included a brief set of questions asking about the respondents' satisfaction in four areas: the transition to the current learning environment, the quality of classroom formats, campus support, and campus life. Finally, respondents were asked to provide their typical availability, in two-hour time slots, from 8 am to 6 pm and from Monday through Friday.

Students in the primary samples were emailed an invitation to complete the screener on October 22 with a stated deadline of October 29. The invitation was sent by UIRR on behalf of a campus signatory. A follow-up reminder was sent to the primary sample on October 27. Upon determining that the primary sample response would not be high enough to garner adequate participation, UIRR emailed the invitation and reminder to the secondary samples on October 26 and October 29, respectively.

See [Appendix D](#) for the complete screener questionnaire and [Appendix E](#) for screener response distributions.

Participant Selection and Coordination

Upon completing the screener phase, UIRR selected focus group participants as follows:

1. Timeslots during which the campus facilitator would not be available were excluded from consideration.
2. Out of the remaining timeslots, UIRR identified the two focus group sessions with the greatest number of students available.
3. Respondents who were only available for one of the two sessions were automatically assigned to that session.
4. The remaining respondents (i.e. students who were available for both sessions) were assigned to approximate population proportions by sex, academic career level, and distance education status (i.e., the subgroups identified for sampling stratification).
5. Responses to the preliminary questions about satisfaction with campus response were largely positive. To help ensure representation by the spectrum of opinion, UIRR prioritized students who displayed dissatisfaction when selecting by strata.

UIRR emailed the selected participants and asked that they fill out an online form to confirm their attendance at their assigned session. Immediately following confirmation, an email was sent with the date/time of the focus group, Zoom link, and a link to a document describing what to expect at the focus group sessions (see [Appendix F: Participant Information Sheet](#)). Additionally, UIRR sent a schedule reminder 24 hours before each focus group session.

Focus Group Administration and Analysis

Focus groups lasted 60-90 minutes. They were held online using Zoom and recorded to IU's implementation of Kaltura, a cloud-based video management system. Students were encouraged to use a camera if possible. Before the focus groups, facilitators were provided a roster of confirmed participants along with characteristics about the students and their responses to the preliminary screener questions. Facilitators led the discussions by asking questions from the set of prompts created by campus stakeholders and reviewed by UIRR (see [Appendix G](#) for the focus group questionnaires). Students were encouraged to voice their opinions to all questions and to comment on the responses of other participants. Where appropriate, facilitators also probed students on certain topics to derive more information or to clarify a response. Additionally, UIRR representatives were allowed to send questions to the facilitator through the chat window.

UIRR used Kaltura's built-in natural language processing to create an initial transcript which was then edited and proofed by UIRR staff. All real names were replaced with pseudonyms in the final transcription. These transcriptions and the associated videos were used in the above analysis. UIRR systematically evaluated approximately 10 hours of video footage and 191 pages of transcription, using *axial coding* to generate central themes across all participating regional campuses. All the included themes apply to the East, Northwest, South Bend, and Southeast campus unless a theme is explicitly identified to be specific to a campus. Since the themes are germane to all campuses, the selected quotes were randomly chosen. As such, if a quote from a Northwest student described their experience about their interactions with faculty, a parallel sentiment was also expressed on all the other included regional campuses.

Calculation of Response and Cooperation Rates

Students were assigned two disposition codes according to their response to the screener and their attendance to a focus group, respectively. ² See [Appendix H](#) for the breakdown of screener and focus group dispositions.

Screener dispositions have been assigned to the entire sample of students who were identified for recruitment based on whether or not they responded to the screener. The response rates for the screener were as follows: Northwest, 6.4%; South Bend, 11.4%; and Southeast, 9.4%. These were calculated by finding the number of completed or partial responses out of all sampled students. ³

UIRR assigned focus group dispositions to all students who responded to the screener. Students who were unavailable for a scheduled focus group were coded as ineligible. The cooperation rates for the focus groups were as follows: Northwest, 43.5%; South Bend, 48.4%; and Southeast, 42.4%. These rates were calculated as the number of focus group attendees out of the number of screened respondents who were selected for a focus group.

² These disposition codes are modifications of the codes provided by The American Association of Public Opinion Research (2016).

³ The screener response rate calculation for IU-Northwest excludes 2 of the completed screeners. These respondents were recruited via an additional convenience sample and were not included in the original random sample. See the [Sampling section](#) for additional details.

Works Cited

The American Association of Public Opinion Research. (2016). *Standard Definitions: Final Dispositions of Case Codes and Outcome Rates for Surveys*. 9th edition. AAPOR.

University Institutional Research and Reporting. (2020). *Financial Wellness Survey*. Bloomington: UIRR.

Appendices

Appendix A: Focus Group Participant Characteristics

EAST

TABLE A1: IU-EAST FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS

Pseudonym	Sex	Academic Level	Distance Education Status	Academic Plan
April	F	Baccalaureate Underclass	All	Informatics BS
Dante King	M	Baccalaureate Upperclass	All	Computer Science BS
Dina	F	Graduate	All	English MA
Geraldine Ballenger	F	Baccalaureate Underclass	Part	Biology BS
Jamaica Thorpe	M	Baccalaureate Upperclass	All	Bus Admin BS-Online
Milo Stitch	F	Baccalaureate Underclass	Part	Biochemistry BS
Rashida	F	Baccalaureate Upperclass	All	Human Life Science BS

NORTHWEST

TABLE A2: IU-NORTHWEST FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS

Pseudonym	Sex	Academic Level	Distance Education Status	Academic Plan
Abena	F	Baccalaureate Upperclass	All	Elementary Education BSED
Allison	F	Baccalaureate Underclass	Part	Elementary Education BSED
Catherine	F	Baccalaureate Upperclass	None	Elementary Education BSED
Cullen	F	Baccalaureate Upperclass	Part	Social Work BSW-TSAP
Etsuko	F	Graduate	Part	Social Work MSW
Giselle	F	Graduate	Part	Social Work MSW
Janelle	F	Baccalaureate Upperclass	Part	Social Work BSW
Lunar	F	Baccalaureate Upperclass	All	Criminal Justice BS
Mona Lisa	F	Baccalaureate Upperclass	Part	Radiologic Sciences BS
Phylicia	F	Graduate	Part	Social Work MSW
Rose	F	Baccalaureate Underclass	Part	Appld Hlth Sci BSAHS-Online

SOUTH BEND

TABLE A3: IU-SOUTH BEND FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS

Pseudonym	Sex	Academic Level	Distance Education Status	Academic Plan
Antoinette	F	Baccalaureate Underclass	Part	History BA
Bartholomew	M	Baccalaureate Underclass	Part	Pre-Finance BSB
Everald	M	Baccalaureate Upperclass	Part	English BA
Faith	F	Baccalaureate Upperclass	Part	Nursing BSN
Florence	F	Baccalaureate Underclass	All	Dental Hygiene/General BS
Jo Ellen	F	Baccalaureate Upperclass	Part	English Education BSED
Joy	F	Baccalaureate Upperclass	All	Criminal Justice BS
JT	M	Baccalaureate Upperclass	Part	Integrated New Media Stds BFA
Kara	F	Graduate	Part	Special Education MAT
Love	F	Baccalaureate Upperclass	Part	Nursing BSN
Margaret Thatcher	F	Baccalaureate Underclass	Part	Physics BS
Marsha	F	Baccalaureate Underclass	Part	Mathematics BS
Richie	M	Baccalaureate Upperclass	Part	Nursing BSN
Zanyia	F	Other	Part	Non-Degree Baccalaureate
Zelda	F	Baccalaureate Underclass	All	Social Work BSW

SOUTHEAST

TABLE A4: IU-SOUTHEAST FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS

Pseudonym	Sex	Academic Level	Distance Education Status	Academic Plan
Aiko	F	Baccalaureate Upperclass	Part	Biology BS
Cassandra	F	Baccalaureate Upperclass	Part	General Studies BGS
Daniella	F	Baccalaureate Upperclass	Part	General Studies BGS
Forrest	M	Baccalaureate Underclass	Part	Nursing BSN
Jodie Ann	F	Baccalaureate Underclass	All	Appld Hlth Sci BSAHS-Online
Lily	F	Baccalaureate Upperclass	All	Business BSB
Olivia	F	Baccalaureate Upperclass	Part	Nursing BSN
Raphael	M	Graduate	All	Interdisciplinary Studies MIS
Samantha	F	Baccalaureate Underclass	All	International Studies BA
Sebastian	M	Baccalaureate Upperclass	All	Mathematics BS
Tarah	F	Baccalaureate Underclass	All	Biology BS
Violet	F	Baccalaureate Upperclass	Part	Special Education BSED
Ziggy	M	Baccalaureate Upperclass	Part	Chemistry BS-ACS Approved

Appendix B: Population, Sample, and Attendee Distributions

NORTHWEST

TABLE B1: STUDENT DISTRIBUTIONS BY SEX

	Population		Sample		Attendees	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Female	2,753	72.8%	440	70.7%	10	100.0%
Male	1,030	27.2%	182	29.3%	-	-
Grand Total	3,783	100.0%	622	100.0%	10	100.0%

TABLE B2: STUDENT DISTRIBUTIONS BY ACADEMIC LEVEL

	Population		Sample		Attendees	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Baccalaureate Underclass	1,681	44.4%	254	40.8%	2	20.0%
Baccalaureate Upperclass	1,507	39.8%	266	42.8%	5	50.0%
Graduate	380	10.0%	68	10.9%	3	30.0%
Other	215	5.7%	34	5.5%	-	-
Grand Total	3,783	100.0%	622	100.0%	10	100.0%

TABLE B3: STUDENT DISTRIBUTIONS BY DISTANCE EDUCATION STATUS

	Population		Sample		Attendees	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
None	356	9.4%	64	10.3%	1	10.0%
Part	2,167	57.3%	352	56.6%	8	80.0%
All	1,260	33.3%	206	33.1%	1	10.0%
Grand Total	3,783	100.0%	622	100.0%	10	100.0%

SOUTH BEND

TABLE B4: STUDENT DISTRIBUTIONS BY SEX

	Population		Sample		Attendees	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Female	3,222	65.4%	398	63.0%	11	73.3%
Male	1,708	34.6%	234	37.0%	4	26.7%
Grand Total	4,930	100.0%	632	100.0%	15	100.0%

TABLE B5: STUDENT DISTRIBUTIONS BY ACADEMIC LEVEL

	Population		Sample		Attendees	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Baccalaureate Underclass	1,982	40.2%	234	37.0%	6	40.0%
Baccalaureate Upperclass	2,151	43.6%	292	46.2%	7	46.7%
Graduate	567	11.5%	80	12.7%	1	6.7%
Other	230	4.7%	26	4.1%	1	6.7%
Grand Total	4,930	100.0%	632	100.0%	15	100.0%

TABLE B6: STUDENT DISTRIBUTIONS BY DISTANCE EDUCATION STATUS

	Population		Sample		Attendees	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
None	259	5.3%	36	5.7%	-	-
Part	2,260	45.8%	288	45.6%	12	80.0%
All	2,411	48.9%	308	48.7%	3	20.0%
Grand Total	4,930	100.0%	632	100.0%	15	100.0%

SOUTHEAST

TABLE B7: STUDENT DISTRIBUTIONS BY SEX

	Population		Sample		Attendees	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Female	2,887	61.9%	378	60.0%	10	71.4%
Male	1,778	38.1%	252	40.0%	4	28.6%
Grand Total	4,665	100.0%	630	100.0%	14	100.0%

TABLE B8: STUDENT DISTRIBUTIONS BY ACADEMIC LEVEL

	Population		Sample		Attendees	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Baccalaureate Underclass	1,857	39.8%	230	36.5%	6	42.9%
Baccalaureate Upperclass	2,092	44.8%	300	47.6%	7	50.0%
Graduate	586	12.6%	84	13.3%	1	7.1%
Other	130	2.8%	16	2.5%	-	-
Grand Total	4,665	100.0%	630	100.0%	14	100.0%

TABLE B9: STUDENT DISTRIBUTIONS BY DISTANCE EDUCATION STATUS

	Population		Sample		Attendees	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
None	172	3.7%	24	3.8%	-	-
Part	1,594	34.2%	214	34.0%	7	50.0%
All	2,899	62.1%	392	62.2%	7	50.0%
Grand Total	4,665	100.0%	630	100.0%	14	100.0%

Appendix C: Recruitment Messages

Screener Invitation

FROM: <SIGNATORY>

FROM EMAIL: uirrsurv@indiana.edu

SUBJECT: Participate in a focus group about <CAMPUS>'s COVID Response

Dear <FIRSTNAME>,

You've been selected as a possible participant for a special series of online focus groups at <CAMPUS>. We're interested in students' experiences during the pandemic and what we can do to improve the spring semester.

As a token of our appreciation, focus group attendees will receive a \$50 electronic gift card to Amazon. To learn more and to submit your availability, click the link below before the scheduling deadline of <DEADLINE>.

Unlike surveys that ask you to select from a pre-defined set of responses, these focus groups will have an open discussion format. A facilitator will provide prompts to guide the conversation, but we're ultimately interested in whatever you have to say about the topic—good or bad—that can help us improve the quality of your experience at <CAMPUS> in the coming semester.

To be considered for the focus groups,

<SCREENER LINK: Follow this link>

Or copy and paste the following URL into your browser: [<SCREENER URL>](mailto:uirrsurv@indiana.edu).

For additional information, email the focus group coordinator, IU University Institutional Research and Reporting, at uirrsurv@indiana.edu.

Sincerely,

<SIGNATORY>

<SIGNATORY TITLE>

<IMAGE: CAMPUS EMAIL FOOTER>

This email has been sent by the focus group coordinator, IU University Institutional Research and Reporting, on behalf of <SIGNATORY>, <SIGNATORY TITLE>.

For more information or to opt out of this project, please contact IU University Research and Reporting at uirrsurv@indiana.edu.

Screener Reminder

FROM: University Institutional Research and Reporting

FROM EMAIL: uirrsurv@indiana.edu

SUBJECT: Focus group reminder: Last Chance

Dear <FIRSTNAME>,

We recently emailed about your possible participation in a special series of online focus groups for which you might be able to receive a \$50 Amazon gift code.

Participants in the focus groups will discuss how they are dealing with the <CAMPUS>'s COVID response and provide feedback that will help shape the spring semester. Click the link below to learn more and to submit your availability.

<**SCREENER LINK: Submit your availability**>

Or copy and paste the following URL into your browser: [<SCREENER URL>](mailto:uirrsurv@indiana.edu).

Sincerely,

University Institutional Research and Reporting
uirrsurv@indiana.edu

<IMAGE: CAMPUS EMAIL FOOTER>

For more information or to opt out of this project, please contact IU University Research and Reporting at uirrsurv@indiana.edu.

Selection Confirmation

FROM: University Institutional Research and Reporting

FROM EMAIL: uirrsurv@indiana.edu

SUBJECT: You've been selected for our focus group

Dear <FIRSTNAME>,

You recently submitted your availability for a special series of focus groups about your campus's response to the pandemic. We'd like to invite you to attend one of the focus groups. **As a token of our appreciation for your time, all attendees will be provided with a \$50 electronic gift certificate to Amazon.**

Please follow the link below for the exact date/time of the focus group and to reserve your spot.

<CONFIRMATION LINK: Reserve your spot>

Thanks so much for your continued cooperation!

Best regards,
University Institutional Research and Reporting

For more information, contact the focus group coordinator, IU University Institutional Research and Reporting, at uirrsurv@indiana.edu.

To opt out of further communications about this project <OPT-OUT LINK: click here>

Scheduling Confirmation

FROM: University Institutional Research and Reporting

FROM EMAIL: uirrsurv@indiana.edu

SUBJECT: Focus Group Confirmation

Dear <FIRSTNAME>

You have been scheduled to attend a focus group at the following date and time:

DATE: <DATE>

TIME: <TIME>

ZOOM LINK: <ZOOM LINKE

FOCUS GROUP FACILITATOR: <FACILITATOR>

Please plan to log in to the Zoom session 5 min early to make sure that the session begins on time

The following link is a document that provides additional information about what to expect and some grounds rules including Zoom session settings, when/how to voice your thoughts, and how your gift card will be delivered. Please read through it prior to the focus group.

<INFO LINK: Click here for more information about the focus groups.>

or paste the following URL into your browser: **<INFO URL>**

Should you have any other questions or if you need to cancel your attendance, please email the focus group coordinator, University Institutional Research and Reporting, at uirrsurv@indiana.edu.

Thanks so much for your help with this project!

Best regards,

University Institutional Research and Reporting

Scheduling Reminder

FROM: University Institutional Research and Reporting

FROM EMAIL: uirrsurv@indiana.edu

SUBJECT: Focus Group Reminder

Dear <FIRSTNAME>,

This is a reminder that you have been scheduled to attend a focus group tomorrow about your campus's response to the pandemic.

DATE: <DATE>

TIME: <TIME>

ZOOM LINK: <ZOOM LINK>

FACILITATOR: <FACILITATOR>

Please reply to this email if you have any questions.

Best regards,
University Institutional Research and Reporting

Appendix D: Screener Questionnaire

Thank you for your interest in this special series of focus groups. The goal of this project is to provide campus leadership with student perspectives about your campus's response to the pandemic. This information will be used to inform improvements for the coming spring semester.

Please indicate your availability and respond to a short set of preliminary questions on the following page. Focus group attendees will be selected and emailed within the next 5-10 days to confirm the exact date and time for their focus group session. All focus group attendees will be emailed with a \$50 electronic Amazon gift card.

Focus groups will be held **online** over the course of the next few weeks. Exact dates and times will be dependent on participant availability. Focus group duration will be between 60 and 90 minutes.

All focus groups will be recorded and transcribed. Identifying information will be removed and speaker's names will be redacted prior to compiling final reports. These reports will only be available internally to IU stakeholders.

If you have additional questions about the project, please contact the focus group coordinator:

University Institutional Research and Reporting
Indiana University
uirrsurv@indiana.edu

Thank you for your help with this project.

Click the arrow below to continue.

[PAGE BREAK]

Before providing your availability for the focus groups, we're asking that you answer this short set of questions.

How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the following aspects of your campus's response to the pandemic?

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
The ease of transitioning from your previous classroom format to your current classroom format, whether that be in-person, online, or a mix of the two.					
The quality of your current classroom format.					
The quality of campus life during the pandemic, for example student activities, sports, dining options, etc.					

The quality of campus support services related to the pandemic, for example academic support, financial support, mental health support, etc.					
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[PAGE BREAK]

Focus groups will be held **online** over the course of the next few weeks and will last between **60 and 90 minutes**. Each selected attendee will be invited to only one focus group.

Please select **all** of the times during which you are available to attend a focus group in a typical week.

	8AM – 10AM	10AM – 12PM	12PM – 2PM	2PM – 4PM	4PM – 6PM
Monday					
Tuesday					
Wednesday					
Thursday					
Friday					

[PAGE BREAK]

Thank you for sharing your availability.

Focus group attendees will be selected and emailed within the next 5-10 days to confirm the exact date and time for their focus group session.

You may now close your browser.

Appendix E: Screener Response Frequencies

NORTHWEST

TABLE E1: SATISFACTION WITH EASE OF TRANSITION BY SAMPLING STRATA, RAW FREQUENCIES

	Dissatisfied		Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied		Satisfied		Total Count	Total Percent
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent		
Sex	3	7.5%	4	10.0%	33	82.5%	40	100.0%
Female	3	8.8%	4	11.8%	27	79.4%	34	100.0%
Male		0.0%		0.0%	6	100.0%	6	100.0%
Academic level	3	7.5%	4	10.0%	33	82.5%	40	100.0%
Baccalaureate Underclass		0.0%	2	20.0%	8	80.0%	10	100.0%
Baccalaureate Upperclass	1	5.3%	1	5.3%	17	89.5%	19	100.0%
Graduate	2	22.2%	1	11.1%	6	66.7%	9	100.0%
Other		0.0%		0.0%	2	100.0%	2	100.0%
Distance learning status	3	7.5%	4	10.0%	33	82.5%	40	100.0%
None		0.0%		0.0%	4	100.0%	4	100.0%
Part	3	10.3%	3	10.3%	23	79.3%	29	100.0%
All		0.0%	1	14.3%	6	85.7%	7	100.0%

TABLE E2: SATISFACTION WITH CLASS FORMAT BY SAMPLING STRATA, RAW FREQUENCIES

	Dissatisfied		Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied		Satisfied		Total Count	Total Percent
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent		
Sex	4	10.3%	11	28.2%	24	61.5%	39*	100.0%
Female	4	12.1%	8	24.2%	21	63.6%	33	100.0%
Male		0.0%	3	50.0%	3	50.0%	6	100.0%
Academic level	4	10.3%	11	28.2%	24	61.5%	39*	100.0%
Baccalaureate Underclass		0.0%	4	44.4%	5	55.6%	9	100.0%
Baccalaureate Upperclass	2	10.5%	5	26.3%	12	63.2%	19	100.0%
Graduate	2	22.2%	2	22.2%	5	55.6%	9	100.0%
Other		0.0%		0.0%	2	100.0%	2	100.0%
Distance learning status	4	10.3%	11	28.2%	24	61.5%	39*	100.0%
None	1	33.3%	1	33.3%	1	33.3%	3	100.0%
Part	3	10.3%	6	20.7%	20	69.0%	29	100.0%
All		0.0%	4	57.1%	3	42.9%	7	100.0%

*Total excludes 1 case with no response to this question.

TABLE E3: SATISFACTION WITH CAMPUS SUPPORT BY SAMPLING STRATA, RAW FREQUENCIES

	Dissatisfied		Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied		Satisfied		Total Count	Total Percent
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent		
Sex	1	2.6%	7	17.9%	31	79.5%	39*	100.0%
Female	1	3.0%	5	15.2%	27	81.8%	33	100.0%
Male		0.0%	2	33.3%	4	66.7%	6	100.0%
Academic level	1	2.6%	7	17.9%	31	79.5%	39*	100.0%
Baccalaureate Underclass	1	11.1%	1	11.1%	7	77.8%	9	100.0%
Baccalaureate Upperclass		0.0%	3	15.8%	16	84.2%	19	100.0%
Graduate		0.0%	3	33.3%	6	66.7%	9	100.0%
Other		0.0%		0.0%	2	100.0%	2	100.0%
Distance learning status	1	2.6%	7	17.9%	31	79.5%	39*	100.0%
None		0.0%	1	33.3%	2	66.7%	3	100.0%
Part	1	3.4%	5	17.2%	23	79.3%	29	100.0%
All		0.0%	1	14.3%	6	85.7%	7	100.0%

*Total excludes 1 case with no response to this question.

TABLE E4: SATISFACTION WITH CAMPUS LIFE BY SAMPLING STRATA, RAW FREQUENCIES

	Dissatisfied		Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied		Satisfied		Total Count	Total Percent
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent		
Sex	7	17.5%	18	45.0%	15	37.5%	40	100.0%
Female	5	14.7%	17	50.0%	12	35.3%	34	100.0%
Male	2	33.3%	1	16.7%	3	50.0%	6	100.0%
Academic level	7	17.5%	18	45.0%	15	37.5%	40	100.0%
Baccalaureate Underclass	4	40.0%	2	20.0%	4	40.0%	10	100.0%
Baccalaureate Upperclass	3	15.8%	10	52.6%	6	31.6%	19	100.0%
Graduate		0.0%	6	66.7%	3	33.3%	9	100.0%
Other		0.0%		0.0%	2	100.0%	2	100.0%
Distance learning status	7	17.5%	18	45.0%	15	37.5%	40	100.0%
None		0.0%	2	50.0%	2	50.0%	4	100.0%
Part	5	17.2%	14	48.3%	10	34.5%	29	100.0%
All	2	28.6%	2	28.6%	3	42.9%	7	100.0%

SOUTH BEND

TABLE E5: SATISFACTION WITH EASE OF TRANSITION BY SAMPLING STRATA, RAW FREQUENCIES

	Dissatisfied		Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied		Satisfied		Total Count	Total Percent
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent		
Sex	15	20.8%	15	20.8%	42	58.3%	72	100.0%
Female	12	22.2%	11	20.4%	31	57.4%	54	100.0%
Male	3	16.7%	4	22.2%	11	61.1%	18	100.0%
Academic level	15	20.8%	15	20.8%	42	58.3%	72	100.0%
Baccalaureate Underclass	5	22.7%	7	31.8%	10	45.5%	22	100.0%
Baccalaureate Upperclass	9	24.3%	5	13.5%	23	62.2%	37	100.0%
Graduate		0.0%	3	37.5%	5	62.5%	8	100.0%
Other	1	20.0%		0.0%	4	80.0%	5	100.0%
Distance learning status	15	20.8%	15	20.8%	42	58.3%	72	100.0%
None		0.0%	1	50.0%	1	50.0%	2	100.0%
Part	10	28.6%	6	17.1%	19	54.3%	35	100.0%
All	5	14.3%	8	22.9%	22	62.9%	35	100.0%

TABLE E6: SATISFACTION WITH CLASS FORMAT BY SAMPLING STRATA, RAW FREQUENCIES

	Dissatisfied		Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied		Satisfied		Total Count	Total Percent
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent		
Sex	17	23.9%	16	22.5%	38	53.5%	71*	100.0%
Female	14	26.4%	12	22.6%	27	50.9%	53	100.0%
Male	3	16.7%	4	22.2%	11	61.1%	18	100.0%
Academic level	17	23.9%	16	22.5%	38	53.5%	71*	100.0%
Baccalaureate Underclass	6	27.3%	6	27.3%	10	45.5%	22	100.0%
Baccalaureate Upperclass	8	22.2%	8	22.2%	20	55.6%	36	100.0%
Graduate	1	12.5%	2	25.0%	5	62.5%	8	100.0%
Other	2	40.0%		0.0%	3	60.0%	5	100.0%
Distance learning status	17	23.9%	16	22.5%	38	53.5%	71*	100.0%
None	1	50.0%		0.0%	1	50.0%	2	100.0%
Part	11	31.4%	9	25.7%	15	42.9%	35	100.0%
All	5	14.7%	7	20.6%	22	64.7%	34	100.0%

*Total excludes 1 case with no response to this question.

TABLE E7: SATISFACTION WITH CAMPUS SUPPORT BY SAMPLING STRATA, RAW FREQUENCIES

	Dissatisfied		Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied		Satisfied		Total Count	Total Percent
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent		
Sex	9	12.5%	23	31.9%	40	55.6%	72	100.0%
Female	7	13.0%	18	33.3%	29	53.7%	54	100.0%
Male	2	11.1%	5	27.8%	11	61.1%	18	100.0%
Academic level	9	12.5%	23	31.9%	40	55.6%	72	100.0%
Baccalaureate Underclass	4	18.2%	2	9.1%	16	72.7%	22	100.0%
Baccalaureate Upperclass	4	10.8%	16	43.2%	17	45.9%	37	100.0%
Graduate	1	12.5%	2	25.0%	5	62.5%	8	100.0%
Other		0.0%	3	60.0%	2	40.0%	5	100.0%
Distance learning status	9	12.5%	23	31.9%	40	55.6%	72	100.0%
None		0.0%	1	50.0%	1	50.0%	2	100.0%
Part	4	11.4%	14	40.0%	17	48.6%	35	100.0%
All	5	14.3%	8	22.9%	22	62.9%	35	100.0%

TABLE E8: SATISFACTION WITH CAMPUS LIFE BY SAMPLING STRATA, RAW FREQUENCIES

	Dissatisfied		Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied		Satisfied		Total Count	Total Percent
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent		
Sex	15	20.8%	41	56.9%	16	22.2%	72	100.0%
Female	12	22.2%	30	55.6%	12	22.2%	54	100.0%
Male	3	16.7%	11	61.1%	4	22.2%	18	100.0%
Academic level	15	20.8%	41	56.9%	16	22.2%	72	100.0%
Baccalaureate Underclass	6	27.3%	13	59.1%	3	13.6%	22	100.0%
Baccalaureate Upperclass	8	21.6%	18	48.6%	11	29.7%	37	100.0%
Graduate		0.0%	6	75.0%	2	25.0%	8	100.0%
Other	1	20.0%	4	80.0%		0.0%	5	100.0%
Distance learning status	15	20.8%	41	56.9%	16	22.2%	72	100.0%
None	1	50.0%	1	50.0%		0.0%	2	100.0%
Part	9	25.7%	20	57.1%	6	17.1%	35	100.0%
All	5	14.3%	20	57.1%	10	28.6%	35	100.0%

SOUTHEAST

TABLE E9: SATISFACTION WITH EASE OF TRANSITION BY SAMPLING STRATA, RAW FREQUENCIES

	Dissatisfied		Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied		Satisfied		Total Count	Total Percent
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent		
Sex	9	15.3%	11	18.6%	39	66.1%	59	100.0%
Female	7	15.9%	8	18.2%	29	65.9%	44	100.0%
Male	2	13.3%	3	20.0%	10	66.7%	15	100.0%
Academic level	9	15.3%	11	18.6%	39	66.1%	59	100.0%
Baccalaureate Underclass	4	19.0%	4	19.0%	13	61.9%	21	100.0%
Baccalaureate Upperclass	5	16.7%	6	20.0%	19	63.3%	30	100.0%
Graduate		0.0%	1	12.5%	7	87.5%	8	100.0%
Distance learning status	9	15.3%	11	18.6%	39	66.1%	59	100.0%
Part	8	32.0%	5	20.0%	12	48.0%	25	100.0%
All	1	2.9%	6	17.6%	27	79.4%	34	100.0%

TABLE E10: SATISFACTION WITH CLASS FORMAT BY SAMPLING STRATA, RAW FREQUENCIES

	Dissatisfied		Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied		Satisfied		Total Count	Total Percent
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent		
Sex	11	19.0%	15	25.9%	32	55.2%	58	100.0%
Female	9	20.9%	9	20.9%	25	58.1%	43	100.0%
Male	2	13.3%	6	40.0%	7	46.7%	15	100.0%
Academic level	11	19.0%	15	25.9%	32	55.2%	58	100.0%
Baccalaureate Underclass	3	14.3%	6	28.6%	12	57.1%	21	100.0%
Baccalaureate Upperclass	6	20.7%	7	24.1%	16	55.2%	29	100.0%
Graduate	2	25.0%	2	25.0%	4	50.0%	8	100.0%
Distance learning status	11	19.0%	15	25.9%	32	55.2%	58	100.0%
Part	8	33.3%	9	37.5%	7	29.2%	24	100.0%
All	3	8.8%	6	17.6%	25	73.5%	34	100.0%

*Total excludes 1 case with no response to this question.

TABLE E11: SATISFACTION WITH CAMPUS SUPPORT BY SAMPLING STRATA, RAW FREQUENCIES

	Dissatisfied		Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied		Satisfied		Total Count	Total Percent
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent		
Sex	11	19.0%	15	25.9%	32	55.2%	58	100.0%
Female	9	20.9%	12	27.9%	22	51.2%	43	100.0%
Male	2	13.3%	3	20.0%	10	66.7%	15	100.0%
Academic level	11	19.0%	15	25.9%	32	55.2%	58	100.0%
Baccalaureate Underclass	4	19.0%	3	14.3%	14	66.7%	21	100.0%
Baccalaureate Upperclass	6	20.7%	10	34.5%	13	44.8%	29	100.0%
Graduate	1	12.5%	2	25.0%	5	62.5%	8	100.0%
Distance learning status	11	19.0%	15	25.9%	32	55.2%	58	100.0%
Part	6	25.0%	10	41.7%	8	33.3%	24	100.0%
All	5	14.7%	5	14.7%	24	70.6%	34	100.0%

*Total excludes 1 case with no response to this question.

TABLE E12: SATISFACTION WITH CAMPUS LIFE BY SAMPLING STRATA, RAW FREQUENCIES

	Dissatisfied		Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied		Satisfied		Total Count	Total Percent
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent		
Sex	22	37.9%	22	37.9%	14	24.1%	58	100.0%
Female	16	37.2%	16	37.2%	11	25.6%	43	100.0%
Male	6	40.0%	6	40.0%	3	20.0%	15	100.0%
Academic level	22	37.9%	22	37.9%	14	24.1%	58	100.0%
Baccalaureate Underclass	10	47.6%	4	19.0%	7	33.3%	21	100.0%
Baccalaureate Upperclass	10	34.5%	14	48.3%	5	17.2%	29	100.0%
Graduate	2	25.0%	4	50.0%	2	25.0%	8	100.0%
Distance learning status	22	37.9%	22	37.9%	14	24.1%	58	100.0%
Part	12	50.0%	9	37.5%	3	12.5%	24	100.0%
All	10	29.4%	13	38.2%	11	32.4%	34	100.0%

*Total excludes 1 case with no response to this question.

Appendix F: Participant Information Sheet

Indiana University Check-in Forum

Focus Group Expectations and Ground Rules

What to expect during the focus group

- The focus group will start with introductions. This will allow the facilitator to get to know who is involved and take attendance so gift cards can be emailed to the attendees.
- The facilitator will guide discussion around a series of predetermined prompts that have been tailored to your campus's pandemic response.
- The facilitator might ask specific individuals to comment on certain questions, for example, if you haven't shared very much or if we're interested in hearing more about a particular question from a certain group of students.
- **All focus group sessions will be recorded.** These recordings will then be transcribed. Individual names and identifying information will be removed before compiling reports.

What is expected of attendees?

- **Please stay muted unless it's your turn to speak or if you'd like to respond to someone else's comments.**
- Cameras are not required, but they are encouraged to enhance the discussion.
- If possible, please join the focus group from a quiet location.
- Attendees are encouraged to provide honest thoughts and opinions about the focus group topics. We're not looking for a "right" answer. We're interested in hearing whatever you have to say.
- **Attendees are encouraged to engage in thoughtful discussions around the topics provided or responses provided by other participants.**
- Feel free to unmute and speak up whenever you have something to say or, if you're having trouble breaking into the conversation, raise your hand and the facilitator will call on you.
- Attendees are encouraged to voice their agreement or disagreement, but **please be respectful of other participants and the facilitator.**
- If you need to step away, for example, to use the bathroom, just send a private chat to the facilitator.

Gift card details

Attendees who show up for the entire focus group will receive a \$50 electronic Amazon gift card. Gift card codes will be emailed to attendees within a week *after* the focus group.

Appendix G: Focus Group Questionnaire

NORTHWEST

1. Let's talk about your course work this semester. How does your workload compare to what you expected?
 - a. What have professors done to compensate for not being able to hold all classes in person? Talk about the benefits of those strategies (or lack thereof)
 - b. Are there any classes in particular that you are finding difficult this semester and why?
 - c. If you have any lab classes, how are those going?
2. What about your ability to gain access to your instructors for answers to questions or getting assistance with assignments? How does that compare to pre-COVID times?
3. What kinds of virtual activities have you been a part of?
 - a. Academic/study groups?
 - b. Social/entertainment
 - c. What's missing?
4. *Describe any barriers/roadblocks you have experienced this semester related to studying or completing coursework.*
5. *As you think about preparing to switch to 100% remote learning after Thanksgiving break, what kinds of tech support will you need to be successful in your classes?*
6. Let's talk about stress and personal challenges. How are those affecting your academic progress so far?
7. What can IU Northwest do you support your personal health and safety?
8. You are the copers – any anecdotes for friends who are not coping as well?
9. What, if anything, would have made your fall 2020 IU Northwest experience more rewarding?

SOUTH BEND

1. How would you characterize your academic experience this semester?
 - a. How have you been able to make connections with classmates?
 - b. In what ways have you been able to communicate with your instructors?
 - c. When you needed assistance with classes, were you able to access that assistance?
 - d. How did the experience of online learning work out for you?
2. What campus offices have you needed to use this semester? (e.g.: Financial Aid, Registrar, TSC, advising offices, tutoring, library) How would you characterize the quality of the service you received:
 - a. Timeliness
 - b. Getting your needs met
3. If you have come to campus, what would you say your on-campus experience was like?
4. In general, what has IU South Bend done well this semester?
5. What could IU South Bend do differently next semester to enhance your student experience?
6. What are your greatest concerns about next semester, especially as students will begin the semester remotely and will not return in person until Feb. 9, 2021?
7. Do you have other comments that you would like to share about your experience at IU South Bend this semester?

SOUTHEAST

1. What challenges have you experienced this semester?
 - a. Some classes are being delivered as a hybrid. Tell me what that looks like for you.
 - b. Were you quarantined at any time this semester? If so, how did your professors work with you regarding missed classes (if in-person)?
 - c. *Have you experienced any technical issues with your courses? OR Do you have the technology you need for your course? (We will be all online November 20...)*
2. *Describe any barriers/roadblocks you experienced related to studying or completing coursework.*
3. What resources have you sought out to overcome those challenges?
 - a. Have you been able to easily access resources as you have needed them?
4. How would you describe your interactions with faculty this semester?
5. IU Southeast has worked to provide COVID compliant student activities this semester. Have you participated in any? If yes, what is your opinion of them? If not, why?
 - a. Have you participated in other extra-curricular activities, such as student clubs or athletic events?
 - b. Would you be interested in coming to campus to attend an event?
 - c. Are you interested in virtual events? How do you feel about zoom?
 - b. Would you be interested in being part of a study group virtually or in person?
6. What has IU Southeast done well this semester?
7. What can IU Southeast do differently next semester to enhance your student experience?
8. What are you most concerned about at IU Southeast next semester, especially as students will begin the semester remotely and will not return in person until February 9, 2021?
9. Do you have other comments or things that you think are important to share about your IU East experience thus far this semester?

Appendix H: Breakdown of Screener and Focus Group Dispositions

NORTHWEST

TABLE H1: COUNT AND PERCENT OF SAMPLED STUDENT BY SCREENER DISPOSITION

	Count	Percent
Response	40*	6.4%
Complete screener	39	6.3%
Partial screener	1	0.2%
Nonresponse	582	93.6%
Refusal	1	0.2%
No response	567	91.2%
Email returned undeliverable	14	2.3%
Grand Total	622	100.0%

*2 additional complete screeners, for a total 42 respondents, were attained from an additional convenience sampling (see [Sampling section](#)). These respondent were excluded from the response rates since they were not included in the initial random sample.

SOUTH BEND

TABLE H2: COUNT AND PERCENT OF SAMPLED STUDENT BY SCREENER DISPOSITION

	Count	Percent
Response	72	11.4%
Complete screener	71	11.2%
Partial screener	1	0.2%
Nonresponse	560	88.6%
Refusal	1	0.2%
Break-off (partial screener with no availability provided)	3	0.5%
No response	542	85.8%
Email returned undeliverable	14	2.2%
Grand Total	632	100.0%

SOUTHEAST

TABLE H3: COUNT AND PERCENT OF SAMPLED STUDENT BY SCREENER DISPOSITION

	Count	Percent
Response	59	9.4%
Complete screener	58	9.2%
Partial screener	1	0.2%
Nonresponse	571	90.6%
Refusal	2	0.3%
Break-off (partial screener with no availability provided)	1	0.2%
No response	557	88.4%
Email returned undeliverable	11	1.7%
Grand Total	630	100.0%

NORTHWEST

TABLE H4: COUNT AND PERCENT OF SAMPLED STUDENT BY FOCUS GROUP DISPOSITION

	Count	Percent
Cooperation	10*	43.5%
Attended focus group	10	43.5%
Noncooperation	13	56.5%
Confirmed attendance but did not show	10	43.5%
No response to focus group confirmation	3	13.0%
Grand Total	23	100.0%

*Total attendees include two students who completed the screener as respondents from an additional convenience sample to bolster focus group participation (see [Sampling section](#) for more information).

19 students of the students who responded to the screener were unavailable at the scheduled times.

SOUTH BEND

TABLE H5: COUNT AND PERCENT OF SAMPLED STUDENT BY FOCUS GROUP DISPOSITION

	Count	Percent
Cooperation	15	48.4%
Attended focus group	15	48.4%
Noncooperation	16	51.6%
Confirmed attendance but did not show	9	29.0%
No response to focus group confirmation	7	22.6%
Grand Total	31	100.0%

41 students of the students who responded to the screener were unavailable at the scheduled times.

SOUTHEAST

TABLE H6: COUNT AND PERCENT OF SAMPLED STUDENT BY FOCUS GROUP DISPOSITION

	Count	Percent
Cooperation	14	42.4%
Attended focus group	14	42.4%
Noncooperation	19	57.6%
Confirmed attendance but did not show	9	27.3%
No response to focus group confirmation	10	30.3%
Grand Total	33	100.0%

26 students of the students who responded to the screener were unavailable at the scheduled times.