



Remote Teaching Check-In Survey

Executive Summary

Purpose

The purpose of the remote teaching check-in survey was to obtain information summarizing Faculty's perceptions regarding the unprecedented transition from face-to-face to remote teaching instruction.

Methodology

The Remote Teaching Check-In Survey was conducted from March 26th to April 2nd. In total, 1,652 invitations were sent to Faculty. Five hundred forty-four responses from tenure track, non-tenure track, and librarians were collected by the end of the data collection period (33% response rate). The instrument asked participants about their perceptions regarding the transition to a remote teaching model on several categories such as technology tools, assignments, student engagement, as well as training needs and obstacles. The survey instrument was developed by the Faculty Senate Executive Committee Survey Task Force with the goal of collecting data and work as a conduit between the Faculty and the Administration to address any potential issues. The Remote Teaching Check-In Survey was completely anonymous, and no personal or contact information was recorded.

Main Takeaways

Overall, the results suggest that among those who participated in the survey, the transition from face-to-face to a remote teaching model worked under the circumstances. If the remote teaching model is to be continued, however, several aspects of remote teaching can be improved to maximize the impact of instruction.

The levels of anxiety among the Faculty over the 8-day data collection period varied significantly during the first five days due to the acclimation process inherent in the transition as well as due to the uncertainty of the current situation, the use of new technologies, and the overall anxiety related to work issues.

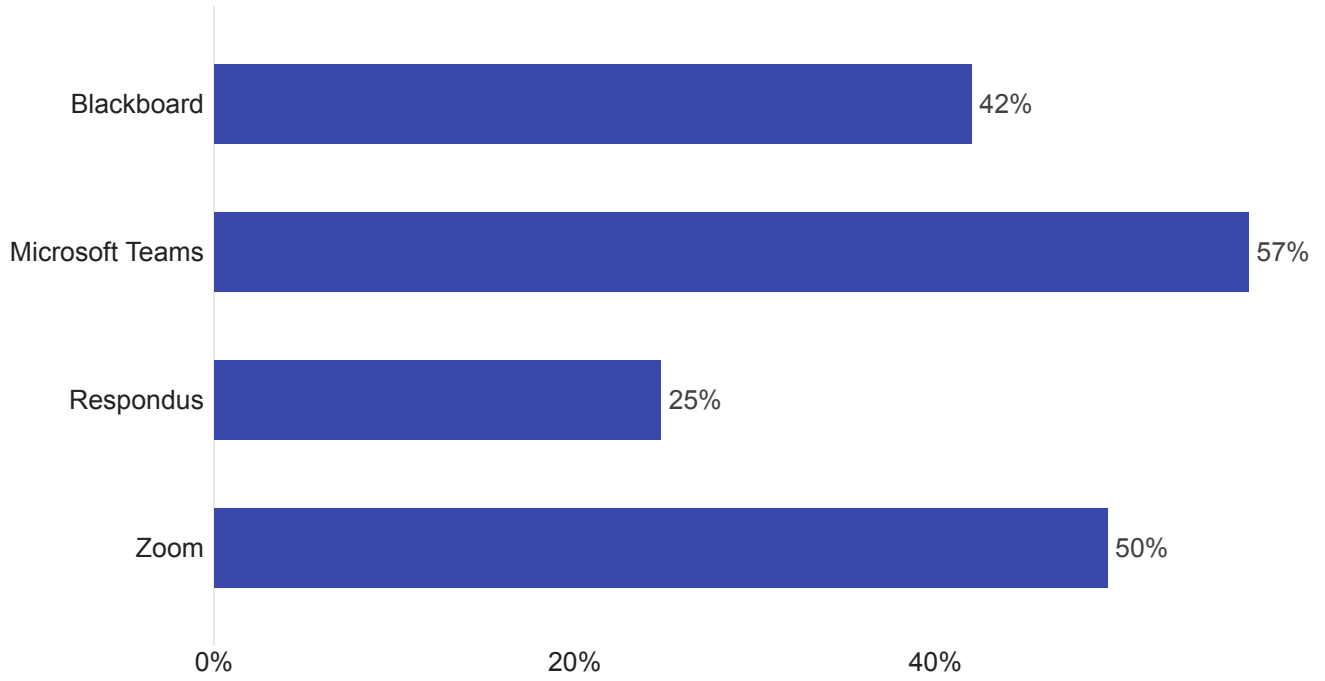
The data suggests that there is significant variation between colleges in terms of implementation (i.e., use of different technology tools) and mode of instruction from tailoring lectures to giving and completing assignments to monitoring student progress. Only a very small fraction of the Faculty during this transition phase did not experience any obstacles. There is also significant variation among students in different colleges that have experienced some problems with technology, most of them related to lack of reliable access to the internet as well as those related to hardware (i.e., laptops, microphones, and cameras).

Finally, the feedback received from those who participated in the survey highlights a significant concern regarding the final exam in terms of implementation, which opens the opportunity to provide general guidance and best practices before the final exam period begins.

On the subject of the availability of multiple online platforms (e.g., Blackboard, Skype, Teams, and Zoom) some faculty viewed them as positive since they had a wide number of applications to choose from, but many perceived the number of choices as overwhelming and frustrating since they did not feel that they had the right training on one single platform and instead had to choose among different applications without any previous information that would have allowed them to pick the best tool for the job.

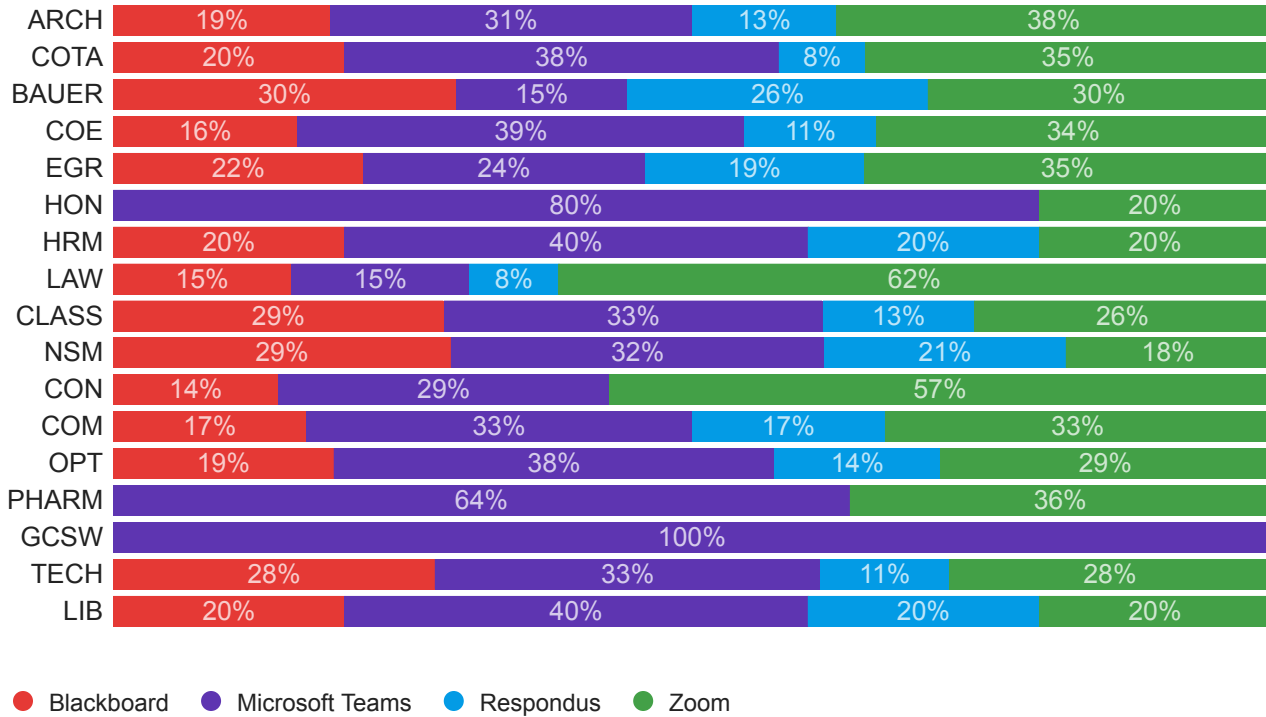
Finally, the Faculty was very appreciative of the outstanding warmth, caring, promptness, and flexibility shown by the University and college-level IT staff without whom this transition would not have been possible.

Which of the following technologies do you need more training on to effectively manage your class(es) remotely?

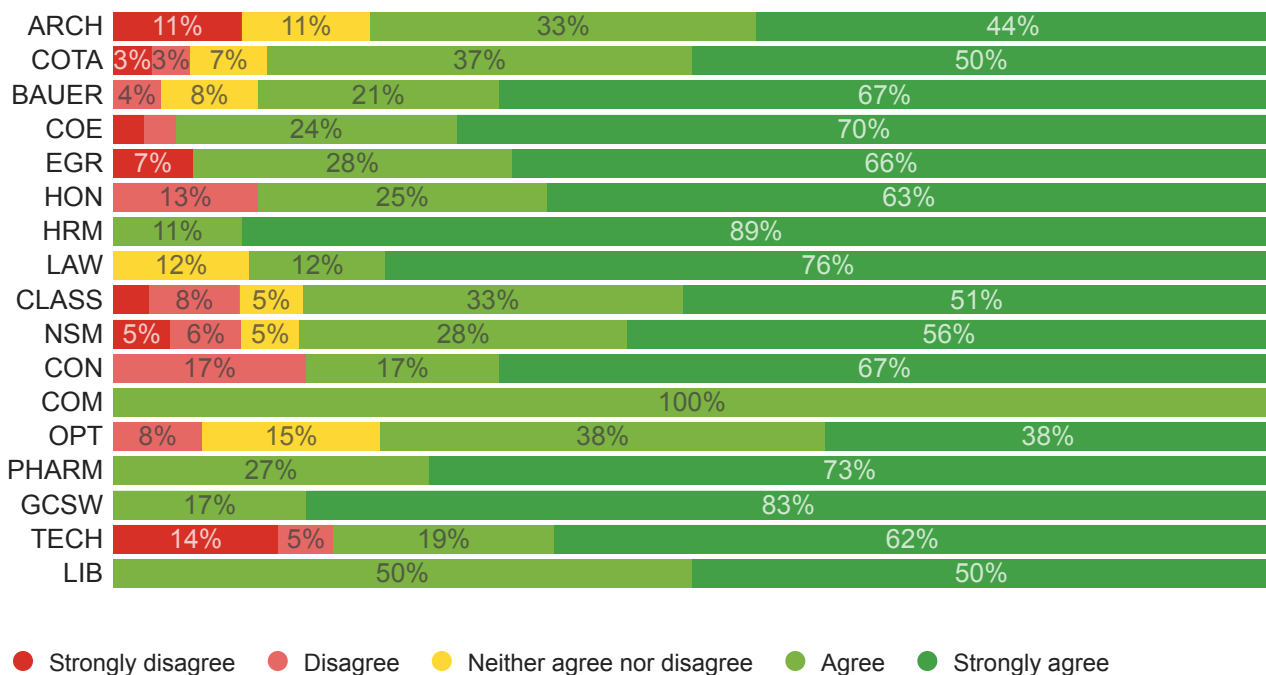


College Breakdown

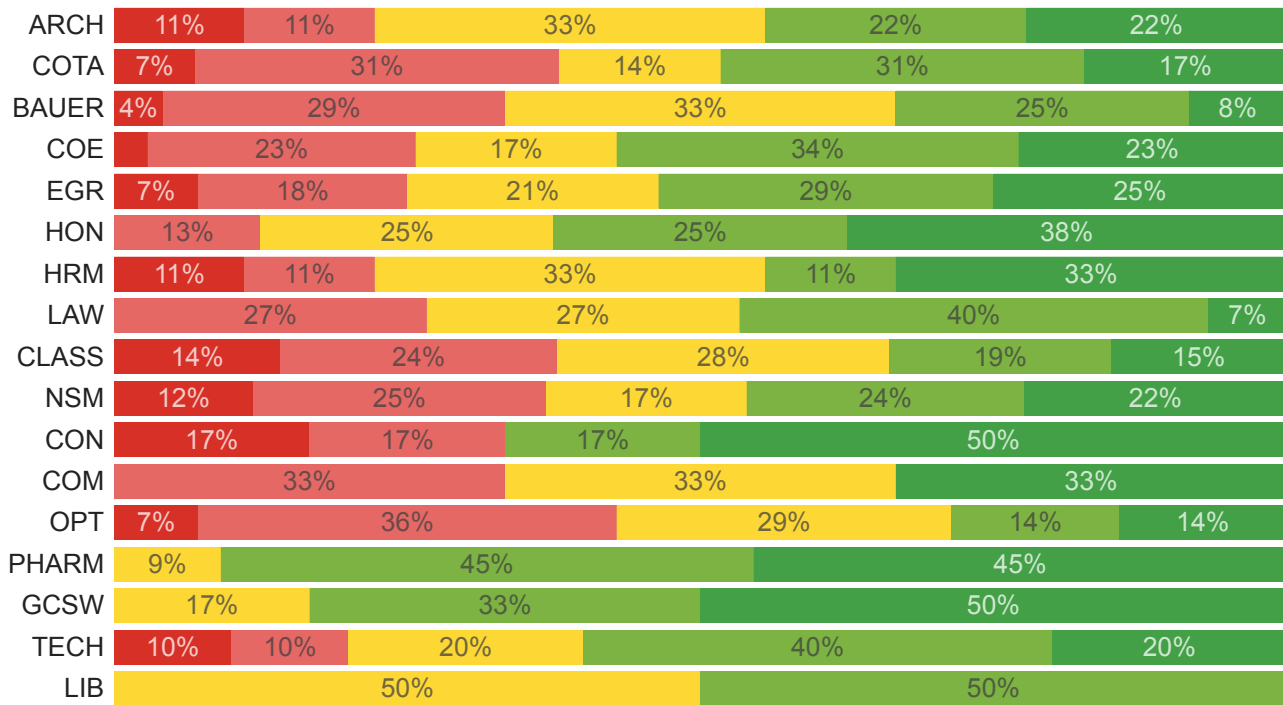
Technologies needing additional training to effectively manage classes.



To what extent do you agree that you have what you need to manage: Giving assignments

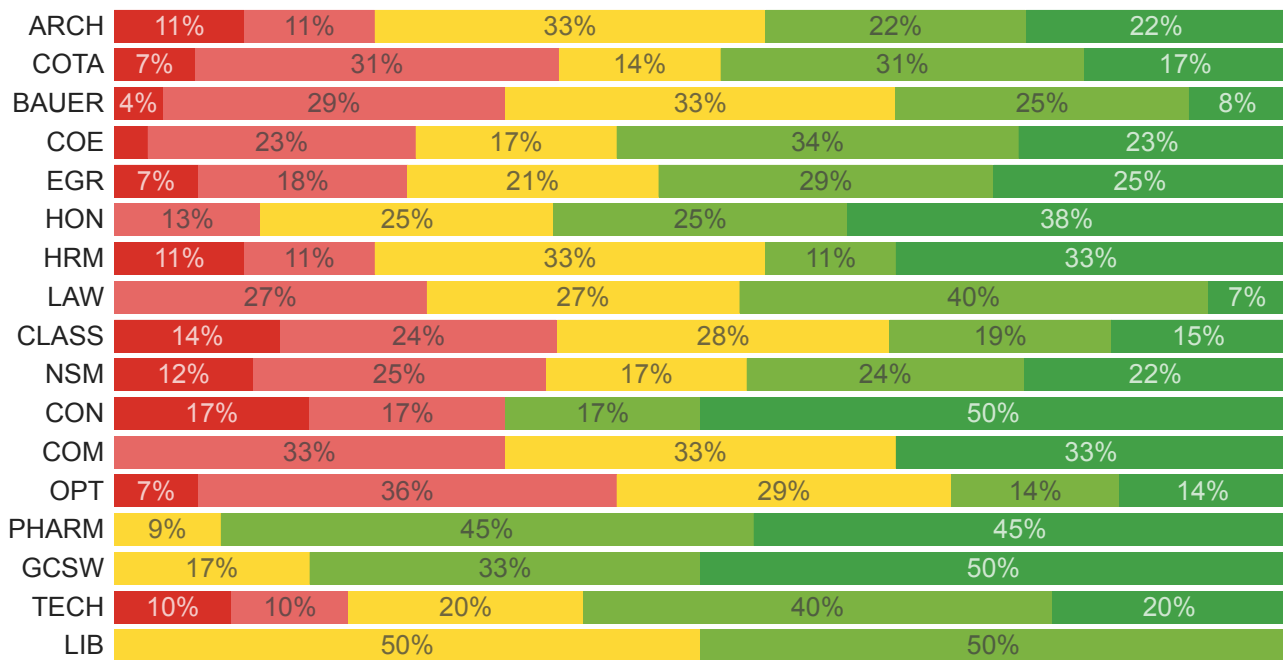


To what extent do you agree that you have what you need to manage: Completing assignments



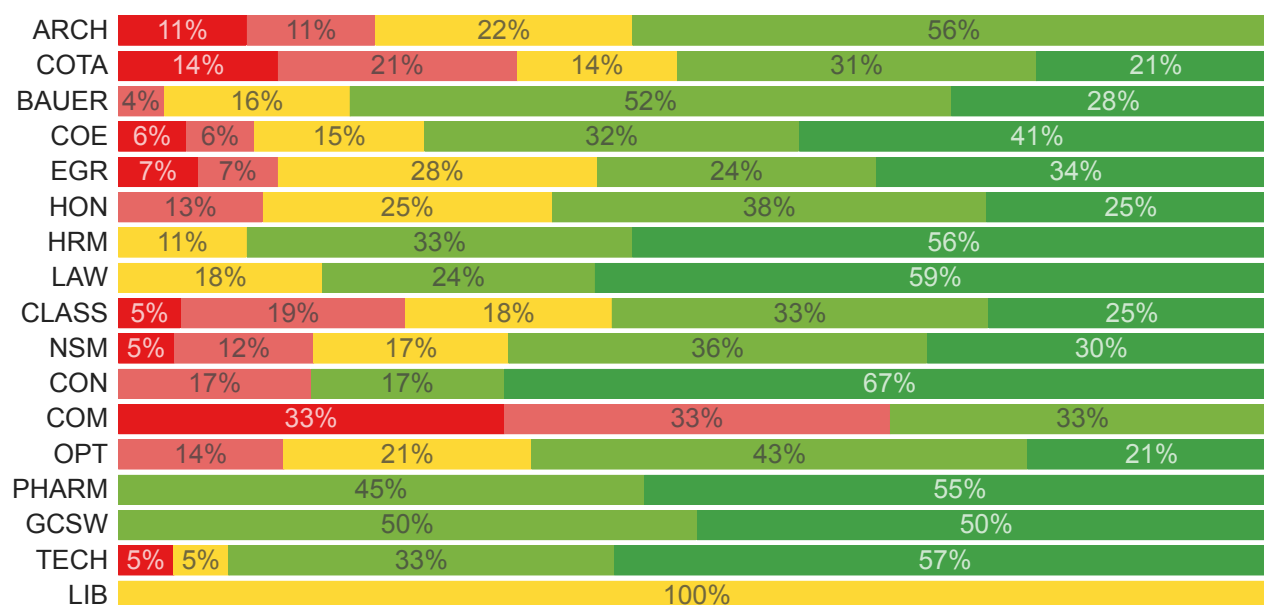
● Strongly disagree ● Disagree ● Neither agree nor disagree ● Agree ● Strongly agree

To what extent do you agree that you have what you need to manage: Tailoring instruction



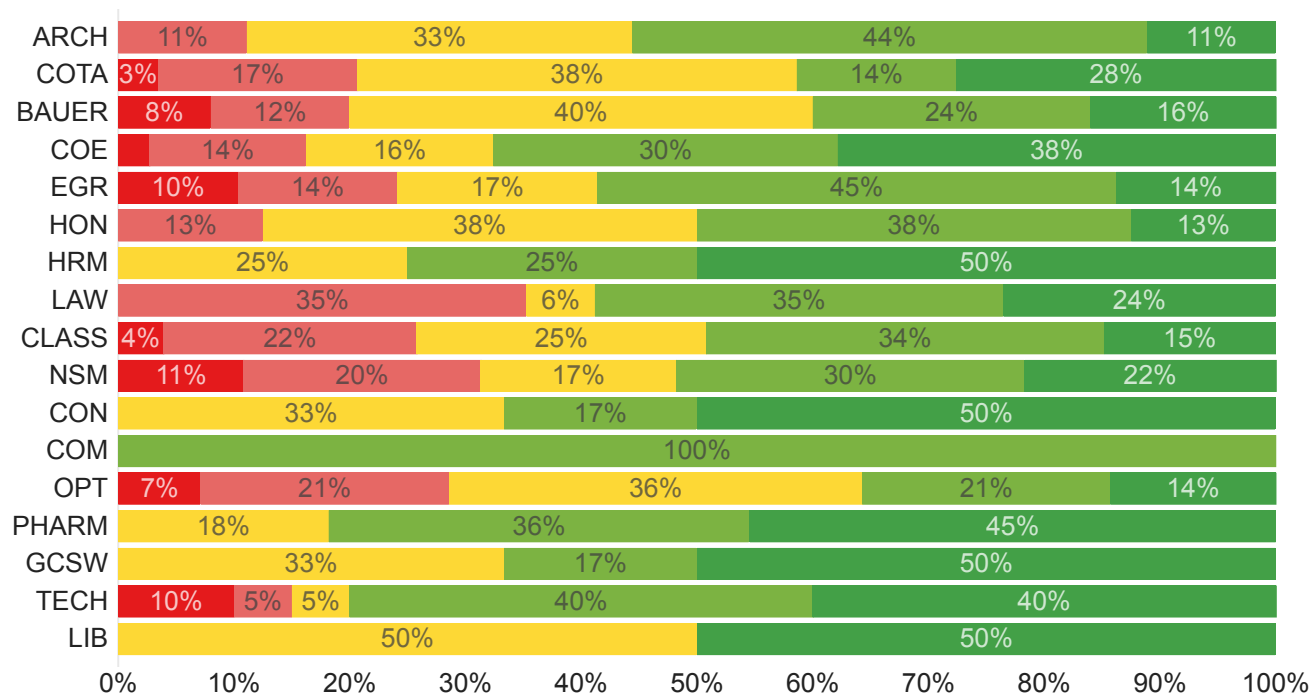
● Strongly disagree ● Disagree ● Neither agree nor disagree ● Agree ● Strongly agree

To what extent do you agree that you have what you need to manage: Transitioning to remote teaching



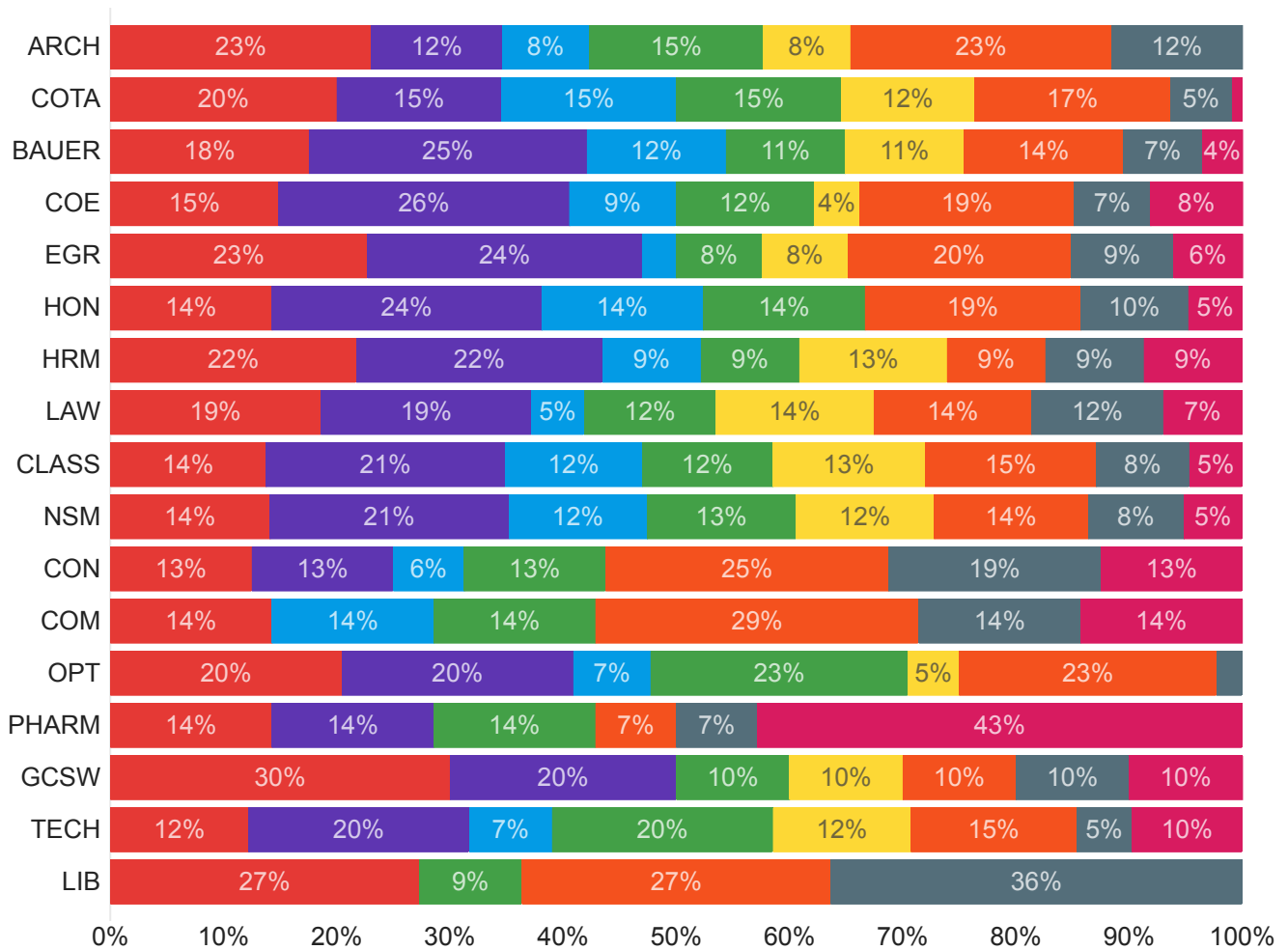
● Strongly disagree ● Disagree ● Neither agree nor disagree ● Agree ● Strongly agree

To what extent do you agree that you have what you need to manage: Monitoring student progress



● Strongly disagree ● Disagree ● Neither agree nor disagree ● Agree ● Strongly agree

Have you experienced any of the following obstacles while teaching remotely?



- Internet access / connectivity issues ● Reduced student engagement during class
- Students not having access to internet ● Feeling isolated ● Difficulty communicating with students
- Tools / Technology not working as expected ● Other (please specify) ● Have not experienced any obstacles

Summary of Comments

- **Concerns**

- Covering/skipping course material despite lost instructional days and no semester extension
- Overloads/intermittent access to Internet connection, Blackboard, other online learning tools
- Variable quality of computers, mics, cameras, software, online tool licenses (such as Zoom) during the swift transition
 - Backup of laptop orders so had to borrow equipment from others in the meantime
 - Using older laptops due to lengthy replacement schedules in colleges
 - Limitations of using the Zoom free account and not having the full Zoom capabilities provided by department/college/university
 - Didn't have camera at home for video meetings
 - Personal financial investment in purchasing own equipment (tech and furniture) to set up home office and continue teaching
- Challenges with communicating with students due to their variable Internet access and different time zones
 - Not having heard from some students since the transition to remote learning (as evident by not returning emails, logging into Bb, joining Teams, etc.)
 - Variable modes of communication being used, including communication via the sudden launch of Teams
 - Being able to engage/interact with learners and seeing/hearing their response/reaction remotely
 - Being able to make adjustments to instruction ad hoc based on student responses/reactions
- Challenges with dealing with student mental anxiety and stress due to pandemic
 - Need for policy on empathy/compassion for students during this time.
- Assessment of student progress and final exams to ensure integrity of testing and reduction of cheating
 - Reduction of assignment completions since start of pandemic
 - Time demands for assessing student progress in large enrollment courses
- Not wanting administration to view success in this semester as justification for more rapid roll-out of online instruction in the future or assuming that the online instruction was equivalent to what would have occurred in face-to-face
- University direction/communication
 - Too much University, College, Department, etc. communication – hard to keep up and cannot re-find emails later
 - Overwhelmed with too many resources and emails with suggestions for new things to add, try, do in remote teaching
 - Desired more institutional direction, rather than largely self-direction in making transition to remote teaching / Desired for less departmental direction and more autonomy in how to transition to remote teaching
 - Didn't know who to reach out to help in virtual teaching

- Being able to replicate hands-on and movement-related content in the online format (such as labs and performing arts)
- Time consumption in conversion of course activities and content to remote teaching format
- Difficulty in usability of online learning tools, including Teams and Blackboard for assessments
- Work-life balance while working from home 24/7
 - Disruptions at home, including spouses losing jobs, sickness
 - Demands from having kids at home all the time now / elder care demands
- Need for more integrated online learning platform
- Privacy issues
 - Being hacked in Zoom
 - Use of tools that monitor student progress during exams
- Being able to ensure accessibility and addressing diverse learner needs in remote instruction
 - Sudden increase in students with disabilities accommodation requests
- Had done minimal prior training in online teaching prior to this
- Being able to hold office hours
- Student limited prior experience with online learning
- Survey questions not capturing their unique content area (such as law) or experiences during this time
- What do I do *when* I get sick?
- University's need to gauge and deal with new student needs, such as their not receiving federal stimulus aid if did not file own taxes
- Disagreements regarding course adjustments due to COVID-19 across sections/instructors.
- Slowness of VPN server.
- Need for capturing/organizing/classifying/storing online learning "assets" created during this pandemic (such as using tools like Ensemble or Panopto)
- Scholarship concerns
 - Lost time/progress in research activities
 - Extension of tenure clock
- Not having course evaluations "count" this semester or having option to omit evaluations from promotion/review files
- Being able to move forward with hires already in the works
- Desire for more opportunities for faculty to connect socially (non-work related) across campus / feelings of isolation

- **Praises**

- College-level team that has provided adequate assistance during this transition
 - Informal problem-solving sessions are helpful.
 - Outstanding warmth/caring/promptness/flexibility shown by the University and college-level IT staff.
- Have experienced overall positive responses from students for remote changes to courses
 - Students seem to feel supported by the faculty and administration during this time. Students seem appreciative of faculty efforts and understanding that faculty are learning new tools at this time.
 - Examples of student initiative in virtually connecting and supporting each other to complete the semester
 - Individualized instruction and doctoral student mentioning via Zoom
 - Success with use of Zoom breakout rooms to have simultaneous student presentations
- Structured courses to be mostly asynchronous to provide flexibility for completion of activities
- The UH pass/fail policy helps to solve student stress about course performance this semester.
- It's not ideal or perfect, but it's fine. Will be able to get through this semester.
- Prior efforts are paying off
 - Had already started the process of developing "flipped learning" or online sections prior to the pandemic
 - College had already provided Zoom licenses to faculty prior to the pandemic.
- Glad to have an assistant during this time to be able to continue performing in teaching, service, and research
- This is the modern age and most everyone has the equipment to continue learning.
- Does not feel need for any additional *mandatory* training.
- Appreciative of being asked for perspectives during this time
- Focus more on recruiting local students for next year whose plans to attend college outside Houston may now change