

University of the District of Columbia

Office of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness

Institutional Assessment and Outcomes

Website: <https://www.udc.edu/assessment/>

Spring 2020 COVID-19 Assessment Report

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Intentions of this Report

- Share survey feedback from the UDC community on UDC's *immediate response* to COVID-19.
- Feature evidence of, and opportunities for, improvement to UDC's ongoing response to COVID-19.
- Highlight evidence of resilience within the UDC community during the pandemic.

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UDC Mission

Embracing its essence as a public historically black urban-focused land-grant university in the nation's capital, UDC is dedicated to serving the needs of the community of the District of Columbia, and producing lifelong learners who are transformative leaders in the workforce, government, nonprofit sectors and beyond.

UDC Vision

All students will achieve their highest levels of human potential.

The Equity Imperative – UDC's Strategic Plan

Equity Imperative Goals, Subgoals, & Objectives Addressed in this Report

- Goal Two: Increase the Numbers of UDC Degrees and Workforce Credentials Awarded
 - Subgoal Two (C): Create Environments Conducive to Learning
 - Objective Two (C) (1): Design and Operate Systems and Spaces that Most Effectively Support Teaching and Learning
 - Objective Two (C) (2): Data-Informed Decision-Making
- Goal Three: Graduate Transformative Urban Leaders Who are Lifelong Learners
 - Subgoal Three (A): Enhance Teaching and Learning

Data Featured in This Report

- To mitigate the spread of COVID-19, UDC moved to remote teaching/learning and expanded telework immediately following Spring Break. This report includes data from two institution-wide surveys distributed to all UDC faculty, staff, and students re: UDC’s immediate response to COVID-19. The first survey was distributed April 1 – April 5, 2020. The second survey was distributed May 7 – May 15, 2020.
- Although survey respondents graciously took the time to share open-ended feedback in the surveys, this report primarily features quantitative findings. Please note, however, that leaders across UDC have reviewed *all* survey findings to understand the *depth of feedback provided* and the *critical resources needed* for the Firebird community’s success during the pandemic.

Survey Participants

- UDC received **1,418** total responses to the April survey – **77%** of the responses (1,092) were completed by participants.
- UDC received **981** total responses to the May survey – **79%** of the surveys (773) were completed by participants.
- This report features **aggregated data/results** and includes **partial and completed responses** from both surveys.

UDC Role	April 2020 Responses (Partial and Completed)	Percent	May 2020 Responses (Partial and Completed)	Percent
Faculty	188	13%	134	14%
Staff*	250	18%	182	18%
Students	980	69%	665	68%
Total	1,418	100%	981	100%

* Includes Administrators, Contractors, and Staff

Feedback on Institution-Wide Communications

Equity Imperative Objective Two (C) (2): Data-Informed Decision-Making

“University-focused dashboards... will increase UDC’s capacity to focus on evidence and measurements in ways that allow optimal viewing of critical points of operations, enabling real-time and intuitive data visualization.” – The Equity Imperative (pg. 27)

UDC asked faculty and staff to provide feedback on **UDC communications that addressed institutional continuity**, specifically the amount, clarity, and timeliness of email and announcements regarding the status of University operations throughout the pandemic. Communication is a *critical part of institutional operations*. These survey results, which were *reviewed in real-time through secure, cloud-based reporting dashboards*, helped UDC understand how well we were communicating at the outset of the pandemic. See Tables 1-3 and Charts 1-2 below for **the most common responses from both surveys**.

Most Common Response (April)

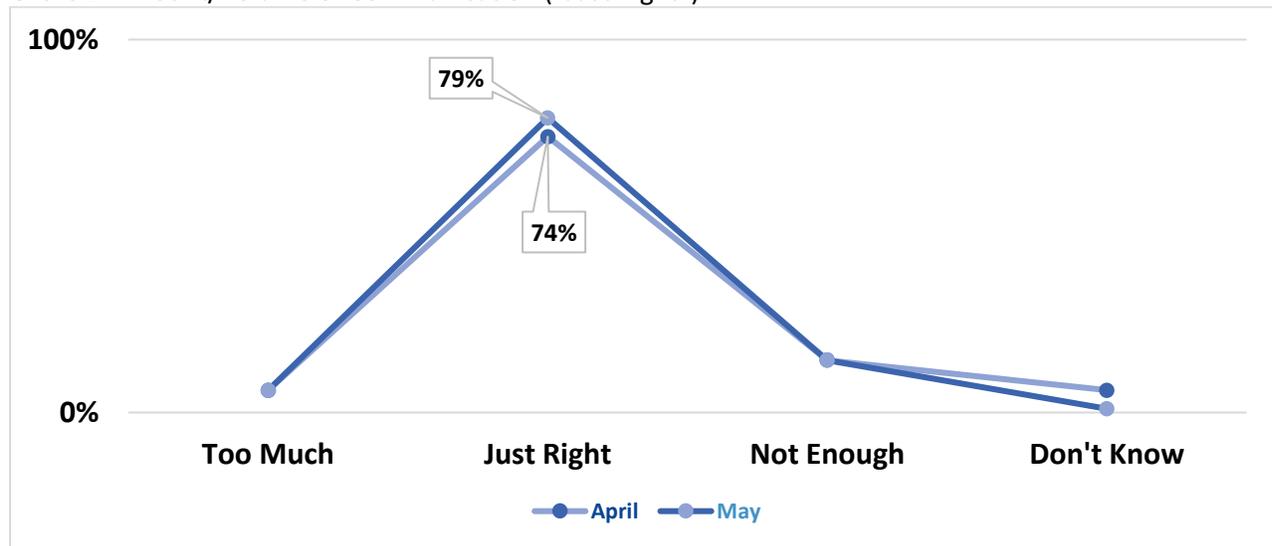
Table 1: Clarity of Communication				
	Clear	Somewhat Clear	Not Clear	Don't Know
April 2020 (N=308)	52%	34%	9%	5%
May 2020 (N=227)	64%	30%	6%	0%

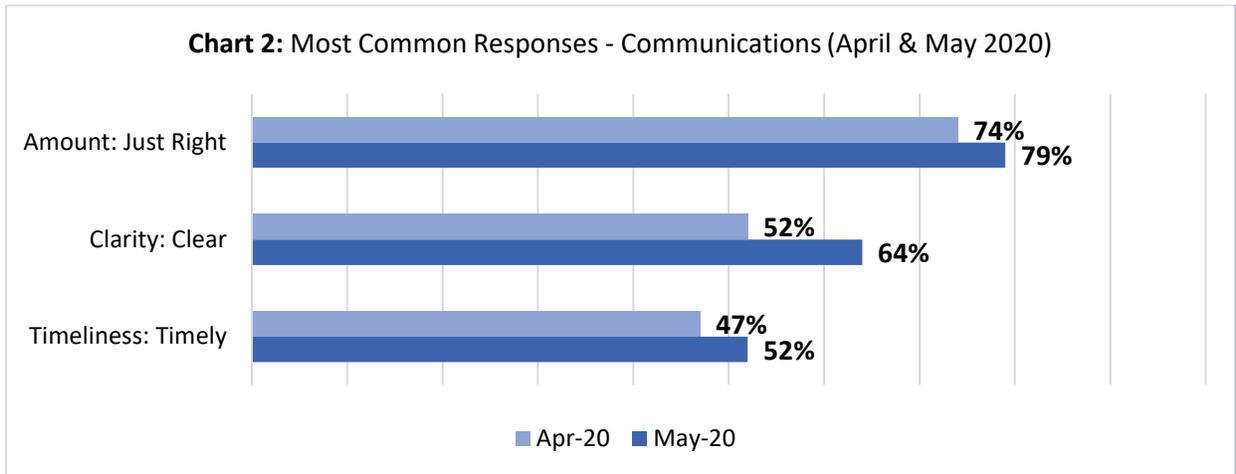
Most Common Response (May)

Table 2: Timeliness of Communication				
	Timely	Somewhat Timely	Not Timely	Don't Know
April 2020 (N=300)	47%	32%	15%	6%
May 2020 (N=223)	52%	35%	12%	1%

Table 3: Amount/Volume of Communication				
	Too Much	Just Right	Not Enough	Don't Know
April 2020 (N=333)	6%	74%	14%	6%
May 2020 (N=263)	6%	79%	14%	1%

Chart 1: Amount/Volume of Communication (“Just Right”)





- **Between April and May 2020, respondents reported improvement across all three categories of analysis** (amount, clarity, and timeliness – see Chart 2). The biggest opportunity for improvement in UDC communications: *timeliness*.
- **In Summer 2020, UDC shared ongoing updates, including video messages from President Mason, and periodic webinars on the University’s status, procedures, and health protocols for Fall 2020.**

Feedback on Technology

Equity Imperative Subgoal Two (C): Create Environments Conducive to Learning

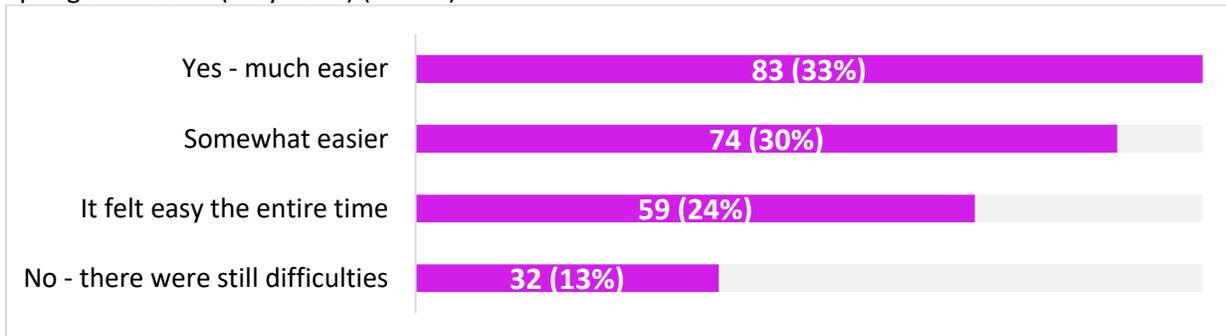
“All learning environments are expressions of cultures or approaches to learning and teaching which continue to evolve, *seeking additional and better ways to engage students and promote their consumption and analysis of knowledge.*” – *The Equity Imperative* (pg. 25)

Equity Imperative Objective Two (C) (1): Design and Operate Systems and Spaces that Most Effectively Support Teaching and Learning

“Data-informed management will be able to flexibly plan and continuously assess academic and administrative work... [to] ensure the *most efficient integration of talent, resources, and technology, enabling optimal support for students, staff, and faculty.*” – *The Equity Imperative* (pg. 26)

UDC offers several University-supported technology platforms for the institution-wide community. These technology platforms include Banner, Blackboard, Kaltura, Microsoft Teams, Qualtrics, Tk20, and WebEx. UDC offered these platforms *prior* to the pandemic, but with ramped up use of these technologies during the pandemic, UDC asked faculty and staff about the ease of using them during the second half of the semester. See Chart 3 below. **Eighty-seven percent (87%) of the May respondents reported that the platforms became *easier to use*, or were *easy to use the entire time*.**

Chart 3: Did it get easier to use UDC-supported technology platforms during the second half of the Spring Semester? (May 2020) (N=248)



When asked to elaborate on the question featured in Chart 3, survey respondents shared some insights on how the UDC community/University can improve in this area:

- For the community: practice and test the platforms, take time to learn, and be flexible. Review online tutorials, participate in trainings, and ask for help when needed.
- For the University: clearly describe the various functionalities for *all* of the UDC-supported platforms, explain their similarities/differences, and identify resources for learning the platforms. **In July 2020, UDC introduced a “How Do I...” page on its intranet, which includes guides and training documents for UDC-supported technology platforms.**
- For all of UDC in the post-COVID-19 world: intentionally and proactively integrate digital platforms into *all* programs, offerings, and offices.

To ensure continuous access to, and successful engagement with, these digital environments during the pandemic—members of the University community **participated in numerous campus-led trainings during the second half of the Spring 2020 semester.** These trainings continued into Summer 2020.

UDC also asked about the community’s **level of computer access** in April and May (computers include desktops, laptops, and tablets). Chart 4 highlights the percentage of survey respondents who had access to a computer **seven days a week** in April. (May survey responses were similar—see Table 4.)

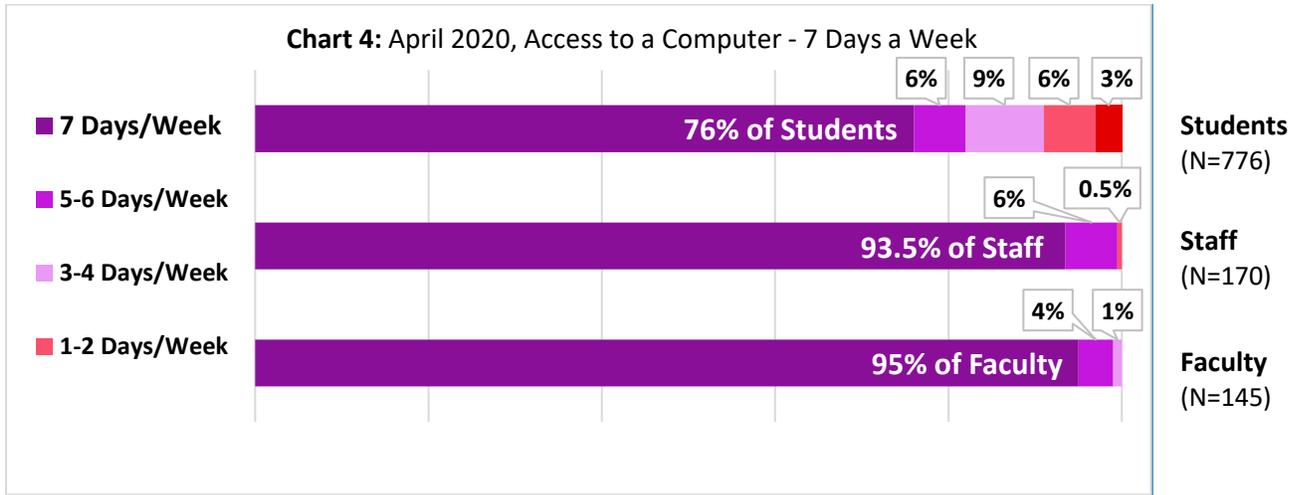
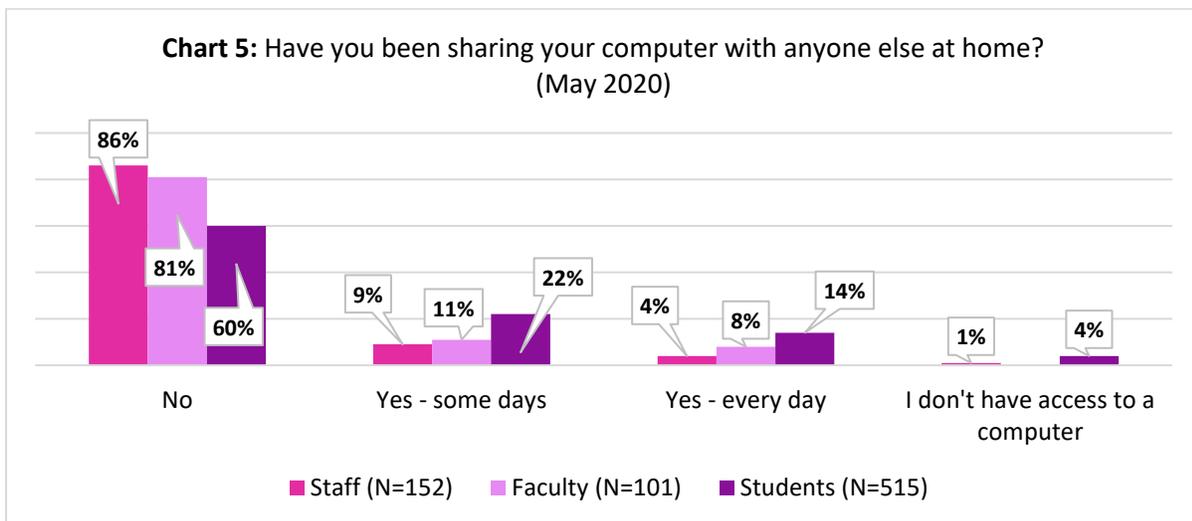


Table 4: Computer Access (April & May 2020)

	Students		Staff		Faculty	
	April (N=776)	May (N=515)	April (N=170)	May (N=151)	April (N=145)	May (N=103)
7 Days a Week	76%	75%	93.5%	92%	95%	95%
5-6 Days a Week	6%	8%	6%	5%	4%	3%
3-4 Days a Week	9%	8%	0%	0%	1%	2%
1-2 Days a Week	6%	4%	0.5%	2%	0%	0%
No Access	3%	5%	0%	1%	0%	0%

Chart 5 features May responses to the question, “Have you been **sharing your computer** with anyone else at home?” Although we didn’t ask this question in April—several survey respondents reported that they were sharing their computers at home in April, so we captured this data point in May.



In April and May of 2020, the UDC community reported on the **strength of their Internet connectivity** during the pandemic. Chart 6 highlights the percentages of students, staff, and faculty who had access to a **fast internet speed connection** during the second half of the Spring 2020 semester. Table 5 compares Internet connectivity data between the April and May 2020 surveys.

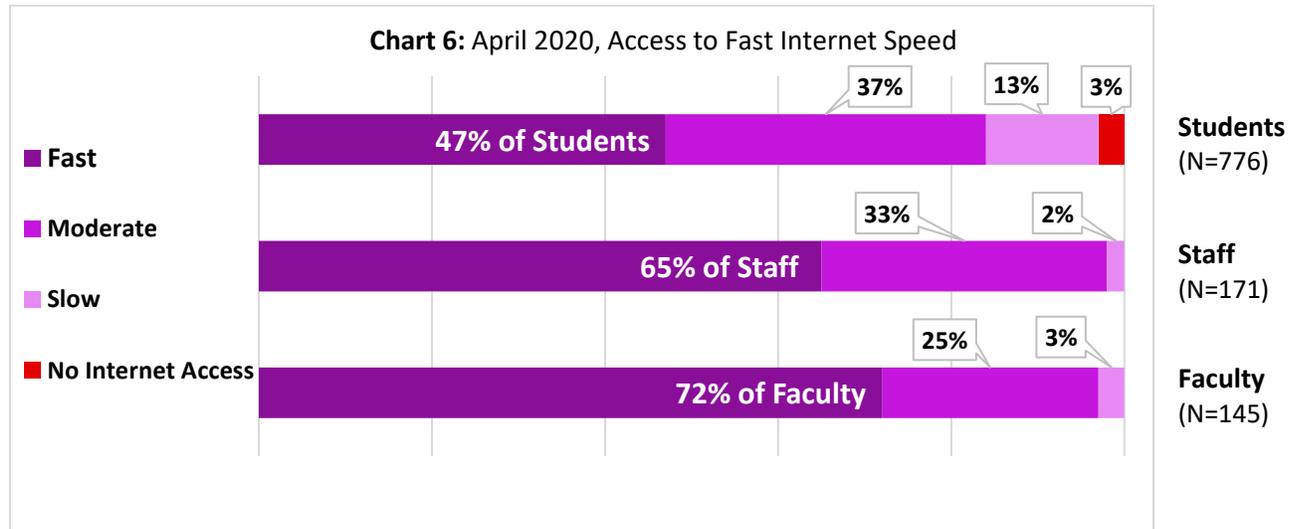


Table 5: Strength of Internet Connectivity (April & May 2020)

	Students		Staff		Faculty	
	April (N=776)	May (N=515)	April (N=171)	May (N=152)	April (N=145)	May (N=104)
Fast	47%	41%	65%	62%	72%	77%
Moderate	37%	47%	33%	36%	25%	21%
Slow	13%	10%	2%	2%	3%	1%
N/A (No Access)	3%	2%	0%	0%	0%	1%

Fast: I can download files quickly and videos stream with little-to-no interruptions

Moderate: Files take some time to download and videos stream with some interruptions

Slow: Files take a long time to download and videos stream with a lot of interruptions

N/A: Not applicable – I do not have access to the Internet

Computer Access and Internet Connectivity for the University Community in Fall 2020

- At least one floor in the 4250 Connecticut Ave NW building will be used as a “lower health risk learning environment” with **individual learning pods and digital projection studios** for faculty, staff, and students who have issues with Internet connectivity and computer access.
- UDC partnered with Microsoft to provide **Surface Pro devices for all new First-Time-in-College students beginning in Fall 2020.**
- **Computers at UDC’s main library** on the Van Ness campus will be available by appointment only during specified hours. The library also offers short-term reservations for laptops.

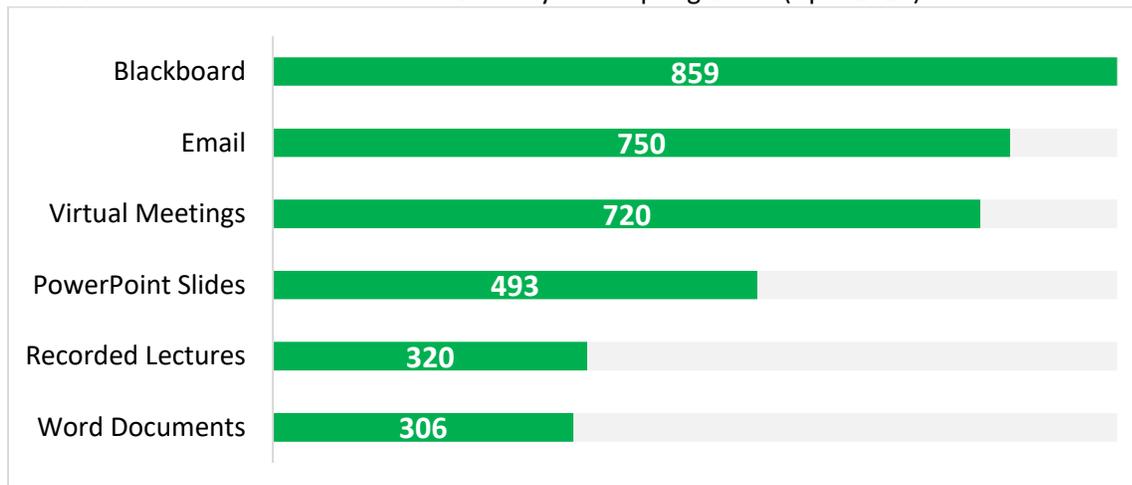
Remote Teaching and Learning After Spring Break 2020

Equity Imperative Subgoal Three (A): Enhance Teaching and Learning

“One of UDC’s overarching goals is to develop and strengthen a student-focused, learner-centered culture that celebrates innovative and effective teaching and learning experiences, while encouraging both faculty and students to become active learners.” – The Equity Imperative (pg. 30)

In the April 2020 survey, students and faculty were asked to select from a predetermined list, **methods used for delivering course content** at the outset of the pandemic. See Chart 7 below, which features combined total responses from students and faculty who selected “all that apply.”

Chart 7: Methods for Course Content Delivery After Spring Break (April 2020)



In the April 2020 survey, faculty and student respondents also shared the **activities and assignments they engaged in during the second half of the semester**. The most common responses:

- Faculty members assigned individual or group projects/presentations, virtual labs, interactive virtual activities, chat discussions, polling questions, discussions during virtual class time (with a flipped classroom approach, e.g., recorded lectures), virtual simulations, posters, PowerPoint presentations, and writing assignments/reflections/papers.
- In addition, students reported faculty assigned research assignments/papers, essays, case studies, reading assignments with questions/analysis/summaries, videos, podcasts, quizzes, and assignments addressing COVID-19.
- Many faculty members and students reported that course assignments for the second half of the semester *did not shift due to COVID-19*. Rather, faculty augmented their instruction with additional resources/support, increased office hours, and regular check-ins with students.

In the May survey, UDC asked faculty to report if there was a significant shift in the number of students who engaged in their course(s) after Spring Break—see Chart 8. In the same survey, UDC asked faculty to report on student progression in their learning during the second half of the Spring Semester—see Chart 9. Similarly, in the May survey, UDC also asked students to respond to the following statement: “I progressed in my learning during the second half of the Spring Semester.” See Chart 10.

Chart 8: Student Engagement After Spring Break (Faculty-Reported Data – May 2020) (N=104)

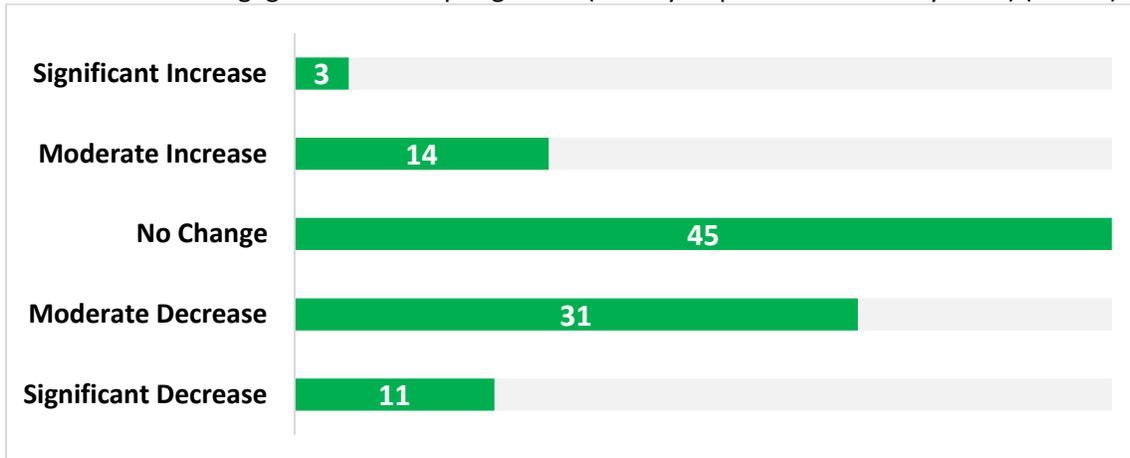
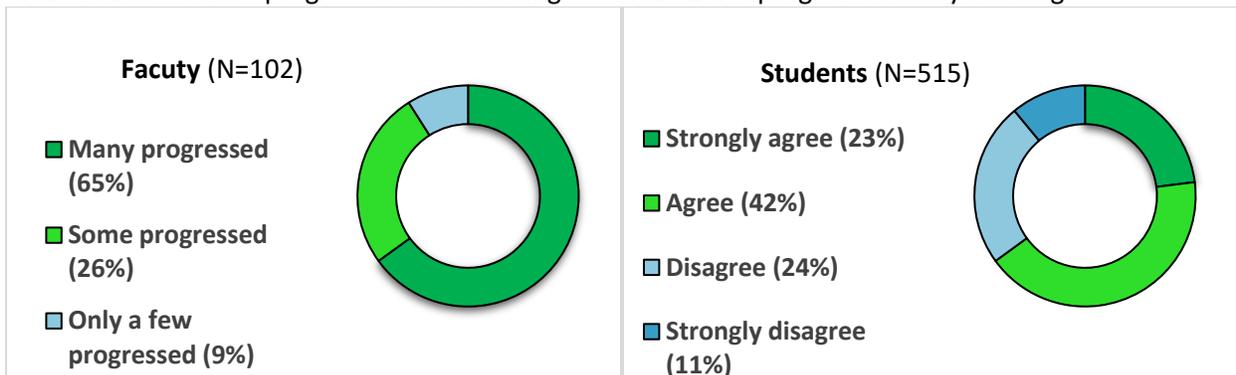


Chart 9: Did students progress in their learning?

Chart 10: “I progressed in my learning.”



Students who reported that they *did not* progress in their learning after Spring Break cited pandemic-related stress and the quick pivot to remote teaching/learning environments—with technology issues and some inconsistency in instructional approaches across courses. Students who are parents and/or caregivers cited particular stress. Students who reported that they *did* progress in their learning after Spring Break liked being in the comfort of their own homes while learning, and cited supportive professors. Several students also enjoyed asynchronous learning. See the “resiliency” word cloud on page 12 in this report for student “tips” on how to succeed in a remote learning environment.

Summer Preparation for Continued Emergency Remote Instruction (ERI) Through Fall 2020

To support faculty and UDC’s continued online instruction through Fall 2020 (87% of the University’s course offerings are ERI this fall), UDC’s Center for the Advancement of Learning ramped up its [Online Teach-Only Certification](#) (OTC) trainings throughout the summer of 2020. OTC certifies UDC faculty to teach online – **80% of UDC faculty are certified to teach online as of August 2020.**

Food Security and Employment (Students)

In the April and May surveys, UDC asked students if they were able to access enough food “right now.” See Charts 11-12 below for students’ responses in both surveys.

Chart 11: April – Food Security

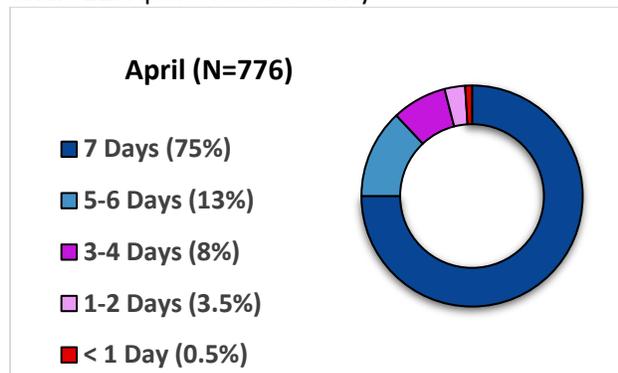
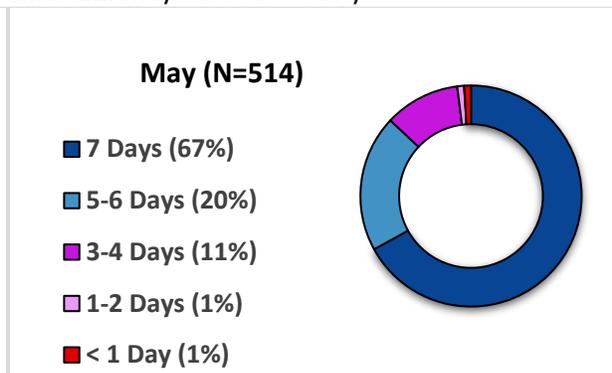


Chart 12: May – Food Security



7 Days: I can access enough food every day (7 days a week)

5-6 Days: I can access enough food most days (5-6 days a week)

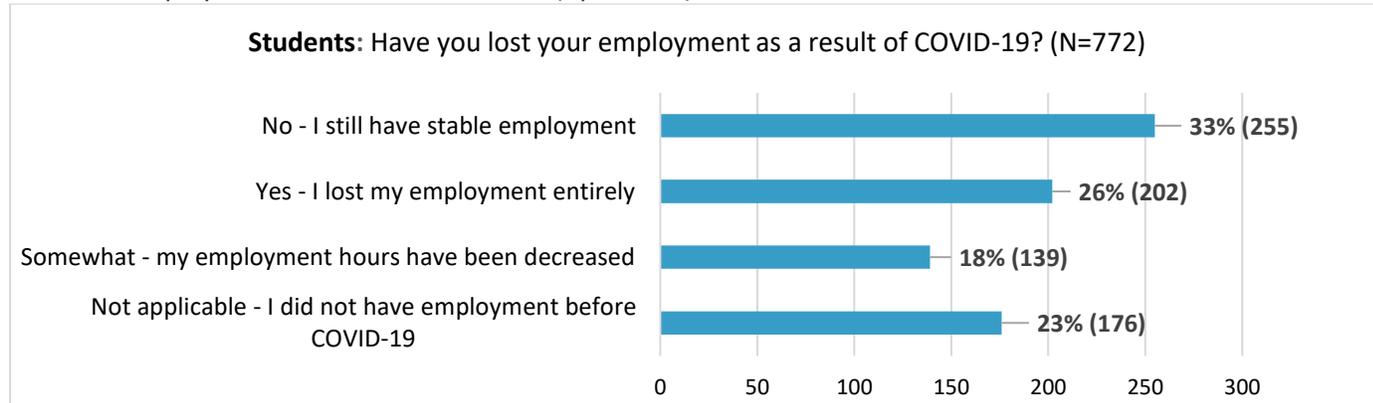
3-4 Days: I can access enough food some days (3-4 days a week)

1-2 Days: I can access enough food only 1-2 days a week

< 1 Day: I cannot access enough food even one day a week

In the April survey, UDC also asked students if they lost their employment as a result of COVID-19. See Chart 13 below.

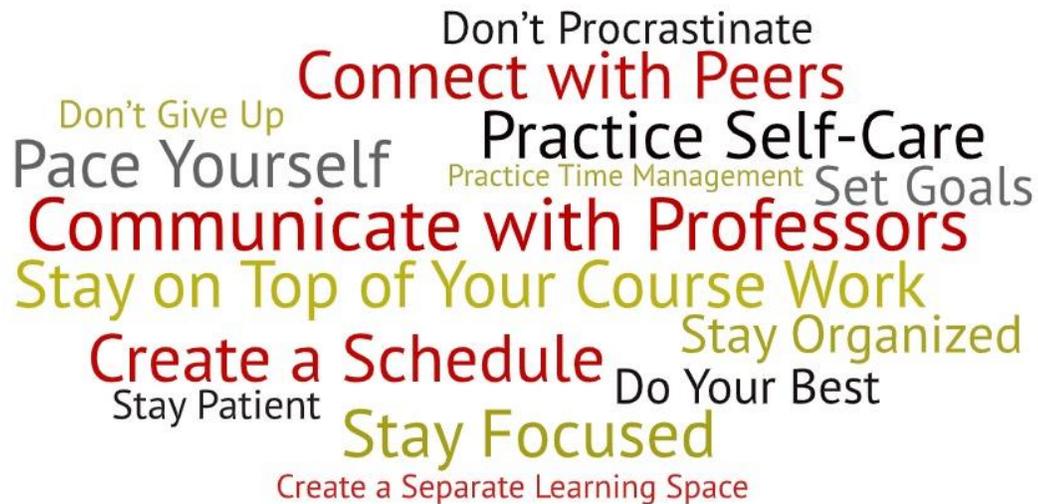
Chart 13: Employment Status After COVID-19 (April 2020)



UDC will continue to check in with students on food security and employment status, so that the University can understand how students are doing, and direct students to sources of support and community resources.

Resiliency

In the May 2020 survey, **students also shared tips on how to succeed in a remote learning environment.** See the word cloud below, featuring the most commonly shared advice from students.



Mental Well-Being and Mental Overload

With an ongoing pandemic and a national reckoning with racial injustice, mental health concerns live at the center of our everyday lives. Higher education communities are no exception to this, and the UDC COVID-19 survey data point to this explicitly. Even though UDC is a resilient community, like anywhere else, we are taxed. As the Firebird community continues to balance teaching, learning, and working from home with essential work/frontline work, parenting, homeschooling, caretaking, and everyday stressors (and joys), UDC will continue checking in with students, faculty, and staff to understand how we can best support our community in this evolving era.

Please note that during these challenging times, UDC's Counseling Center is available for teletherapy. Website: <https://www.udc.edu/student-life/cwc/>

#UDCSPIRIT

The University of the District of Columbia kicked off #UDCSpirit during the pandemic—a campaign to encourage the UDC community as we move through the pandemic. In a time when we are all called upon to stay safe by maintaining our distance, #UDCSpirit allows our University family to stay connected virtually for engagement, positivity, fun, and inspiration.

Student Support Hotline

In response to feedback received during a Spring 2020 Student Town Hall, as well directly from student leaders, UDC launched a Student Hotline to monitor COVID-19 concerns. The hotline is monitored daily, and all students receive responses within 24-48 hours, with an overall focus of student well-being. Contact: (202) 274-6989 or email: studenthotline@udc.edu

UDC Continuous Improvement During the Pandemic

UDC will continue gathering data for continuous improvement to increase our overall effectiveness as a University during the pandemic. Our goals from the *Equity Imperative* still stand at the center of our work. The pandemic only underscores an urgency for some of the *Equity Imperative's* subgoals and objectives, e.g., collecting and using real-time data to inform campus decisions and institution-wide communications; ensuring that UDC creates spaces that are supportive of teaching, learning, and work in virtual environments; enhancing overall teaching and learning across the University.

As we continue gathering data, we will be looking for additional evidence of effectiveness, success, and wellness in connection with:



Targeted University-Wide Communications



Trainings on UDC-Supported Technology Platforms



Trainings and Certifications for Faculty Who Are Teaching Online



Online Learning and Lower Health-Risk Learning Environments



Food Security and Employment



Resiliency and Well-Being