

SACSCOC Annual Meeting 2020

Assessment in times of disruption

*Lessons in continuity and
adaptation*

Jennifer Hill, Ed.D.

Evan Widney, M.A.

Alessandra Dinin, Ph.D.

Duke University

Live poll: Institutional priorities during times of disruption

Please use the following bit.ly link or QR code to complete a short engagement activity



https://bit.ly/disruption_priorities

Assessment frequently is perceived as a summative or retrospective activity.

Often we look for evidence of learning after the experience has ended.

However...



A well-developed assessment infrastructure can contribute to crisis response and management.

Assessment groups have...

- deep partnerships across the institution
- experience anticipating outcomes
- expertise in a variety of pedagogical & technical areas.

Each institution has a unique and compelling narrative of its response to COVID-19.

January 23: First COVID message to the Duke Community
January 28: Travel restrictions to China; Duke Kunshan University closed, expected to reopen March 30
February 27: Announcement of central website for COVID updates
February 29: Duke Spring Break travel advisory recommends avoiding international travel
March 5: Expanded international travel restrictions (China, Iran, Italy, South Korea, Japan)
March 10: Duke managers receive recommendations for workplace accommodations
March 10: NC governor declares state of emergency
March 10: Duke restricts students' return to campus post Spring Break. Spring break extended
March 10: Classes postponed through March 22
March 10: Events larger than 50 persons suspended through May 7
March 12: First communications about retrieval of students' belongings from residence halls
March 12: Restrictions on access to campus for research activities
March 12: Performances, residential activities, and athletic competitions suspended
March 12: Duke libraries remain open, with limited hours and controlled access
March 13: Duke Chapel closes
March 13: First COVID cases at Duke (graduate students returning from research overseas)
March 14: Governor issues exec. order closing public schools through March 30
March 15: Remote teaching resources for faculty published
March 16: Duke commits to full paid work status for all employees. Small group meetings are restricted
March 17: Duke Libraries close. NC restaurants and bars closed
March 18: Students issued default Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory grading, with option for reversion to A-F.
March 18: Initial alert that graduation may be held online
March 23: Classes resume online
March 24: Provost's message to the community about inclusion and inclusivity in learning
March 25: First COVID death in Durham County
March 26: Durham County issues stay-at-home order
March 30: State-wide stay-at-home order goes into effect
March 30: In-person instruction for Summer Session 1 moved online. All other programs move online or are canceled
March 30: All study abroad programs for summer are canceled



Each institution has a unique and compelling narrative of its response to COVID-19.

April 2: First communications about students' tuition credits and refunds
April 6: Duke Student Assistance Fund opens
April 6: Revised guidelines for working on campus
April 8: President's announcement about financial impacts of COVID and initial responses
April 15: Short-term and longer-term strategy teams deployed
April 18: Durham County required face coverings in public
April 21: Initial communications about return-to-work strategy and regulations
April 30: New online/remote courses developed for Summer Session 2
May 13: New steps announced for managing Duke's financial outlook
May 21: Initial announcement about uncertainty of F2F instruction in fall 2020
May 22: Most Duke staff to remain remote through June 2020
May 29: Initial announcement about changes to fall 2020 schedule and eligibility for on-campus housing
May 29: President's statement specifically addresses need for and value of inclusivity in instruction
June 25: President announces a stages return to campus, with specific procedures and requirements for students
June 25: In-person, public events canceled for fall 2020
June 26: Duke announces only first- and second-year students will be eligible for on-campus housing in fall
June 26: Initial plans for return-to-Duke COVID testing announced
August 1: Student wellness support services announced
August 1: Regulations for pre-arrival self-quarantine, testing, and symptom monitoring announced
August 4: Updates to Duke Community Standard announced, with new requirements for the Duke Compact
August 6: Changes to campus move-in and student orientation announced
August 7: Resources for faculty posted (research, teaching, academic integrity)
August 13: 3100+ COVID tests administered to returning students (ongoing). Four positive tests (0.13% positive rate)
August 13: Pool testing begins for COVID surveillance
August 17: Classes begin (earlier than usual)
September 6: Initial student compliance updates shared
October 7: Spring 2021 study away programs canceled



The worry:

Assessment professionals like to presume that assessment is ubiquitous and constant. But faculty have had very limited time to adapt their courses for remote instruction. Authentic and evidence-based assessment probably seems like a utopian extravagance.

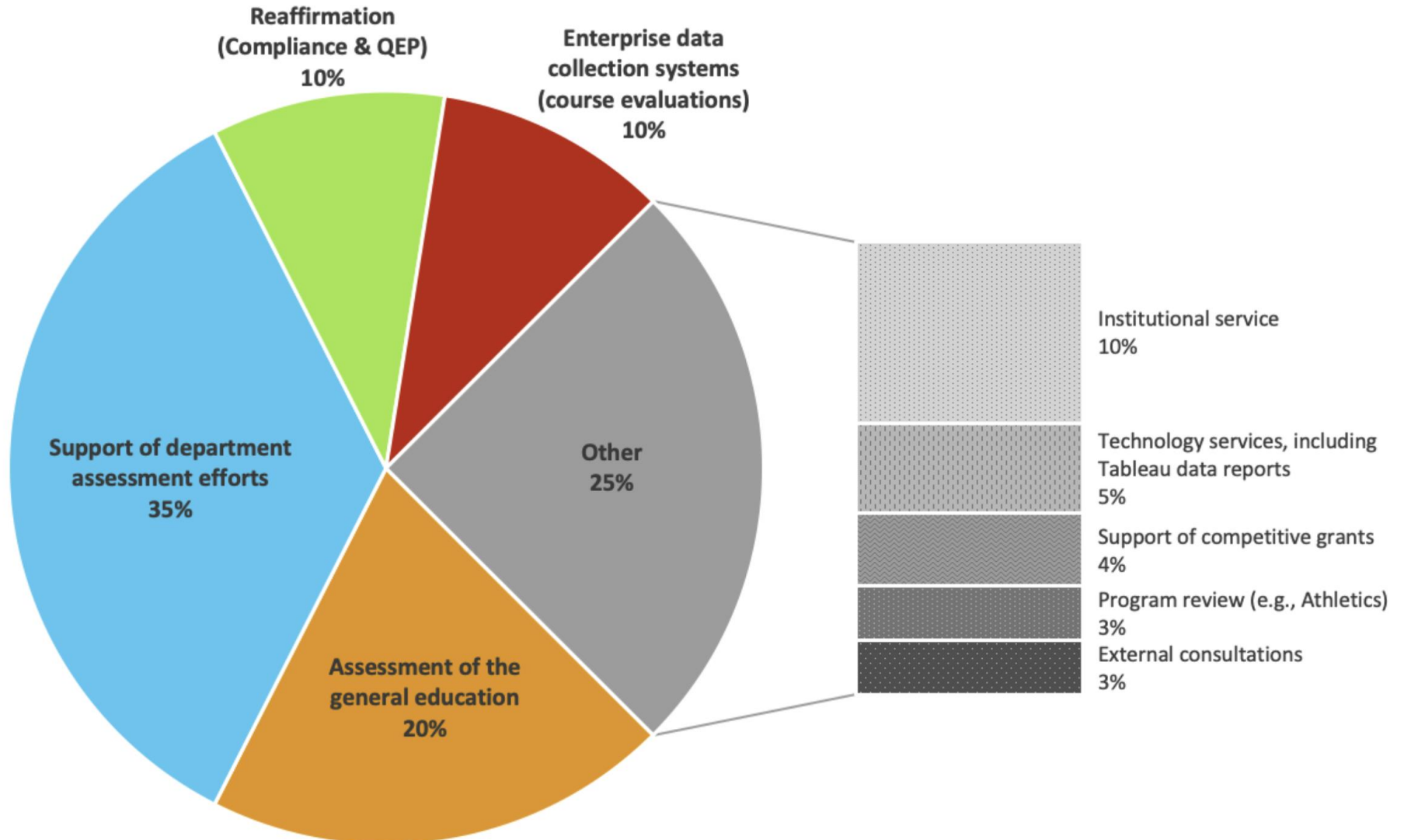
Where does assessment rank in the shifting triage of educational priorities? Will we lose ground?

The reality:

The NILOA survey found that out of all respondents, only 3 (less than 1%) indicated that assessment had stopped altogether. However, an ongoing concern raised by those in the field is whether assessment will remain a priority. In the survey of 858 respondents from 706 different institutions conducted in May 2020 by Watermark, they found increased prioritization of assessing student learning that was expected to continue for Fall 2020. Supporting this finding, Rice (2020) reported a 49% increase in importance of assessment in Spring 2020, but 61% reported no change in resources either.

SOURCE: Jankowski, N. A. (2020). *Assessment during a crisis*. NILOA.
<https://www.learningoutcomesassessment.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/2020-COVID-Survey.pdf>

What do we do?



What does assessment look like in times of disruption?

Today's agenda

Rapid adaptations to current work:

- Expectations of programs' assessment efforts
- General education assessment strategy
- Course evaluations

New measures to understand student learning

- Surveys
- Focus groups

Joining thought partnerships across campus

Facilitating conversations about our QEP

Supporting conversations about the silver linings:
Planning applications of pedagogical discovery in the future

What does assessment look like in times of disruption?

Rapid adaptations to current work:

- **Expectations of programs' assessment effort**
- **General education assessment strategy**
- **Course evaluations**

New measures to understand student learning

- Surveys
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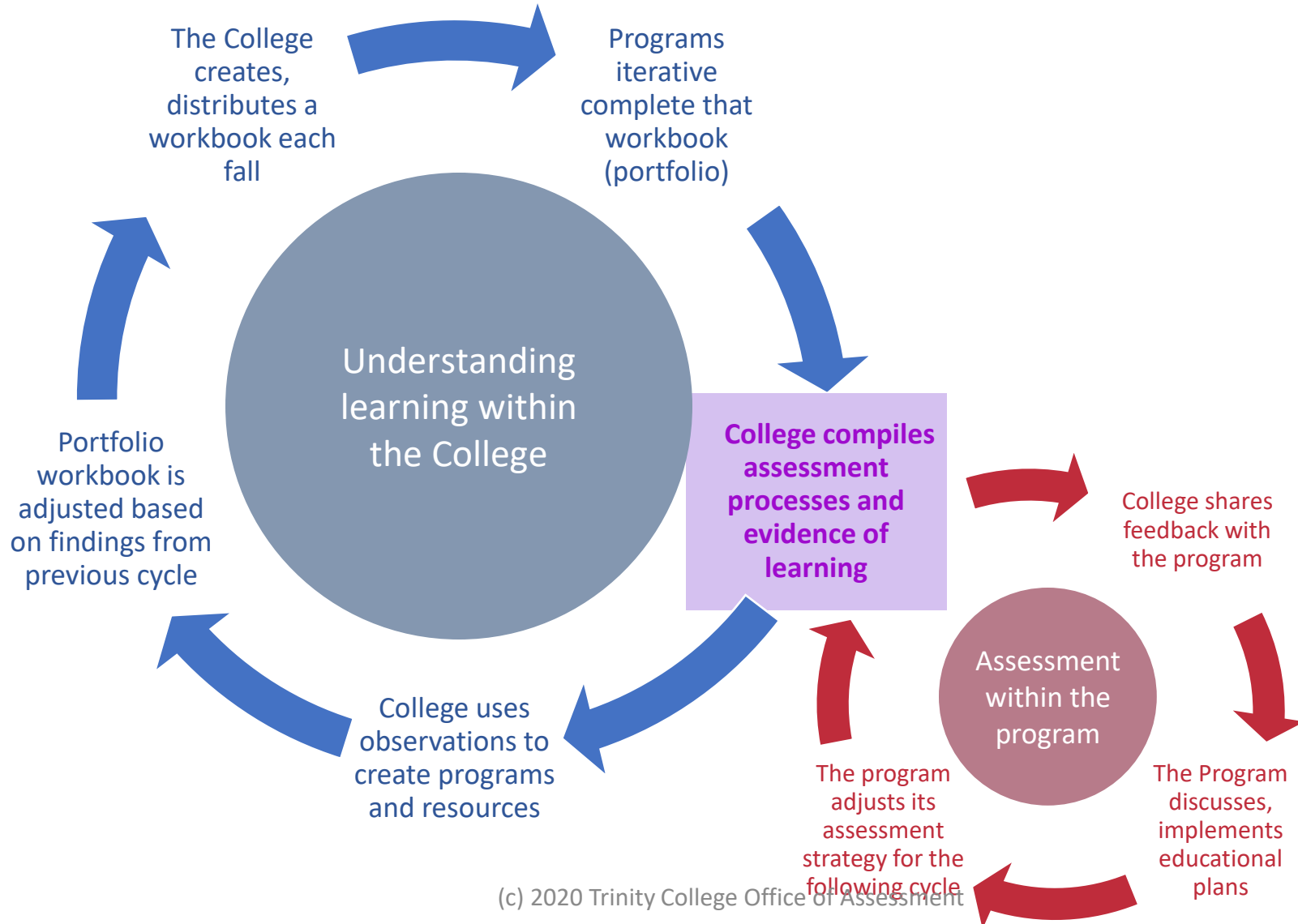
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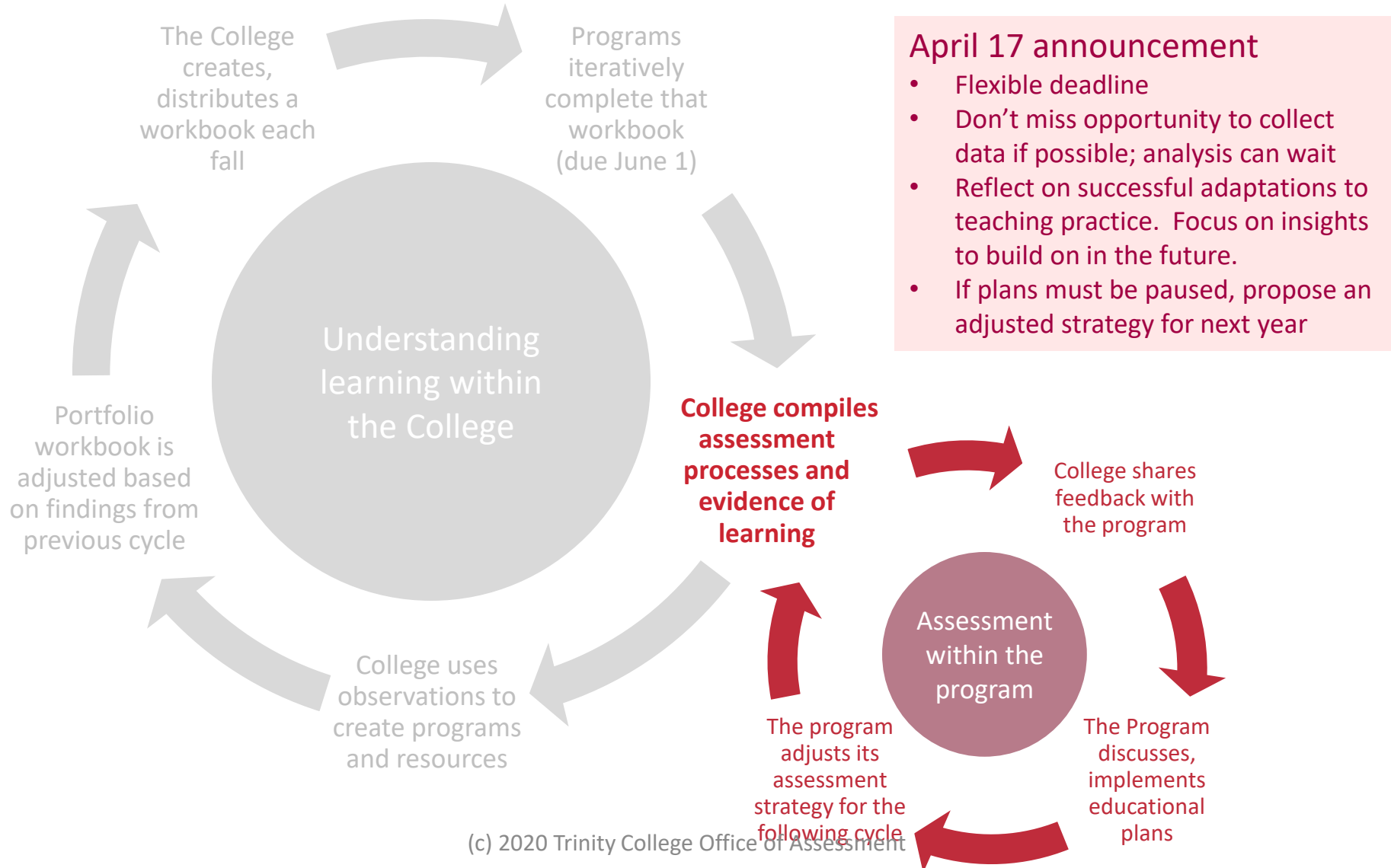
What does assessment look like in times of disruption?

Adaptations to existing measures: **Program-level assessment (8.2.a)**



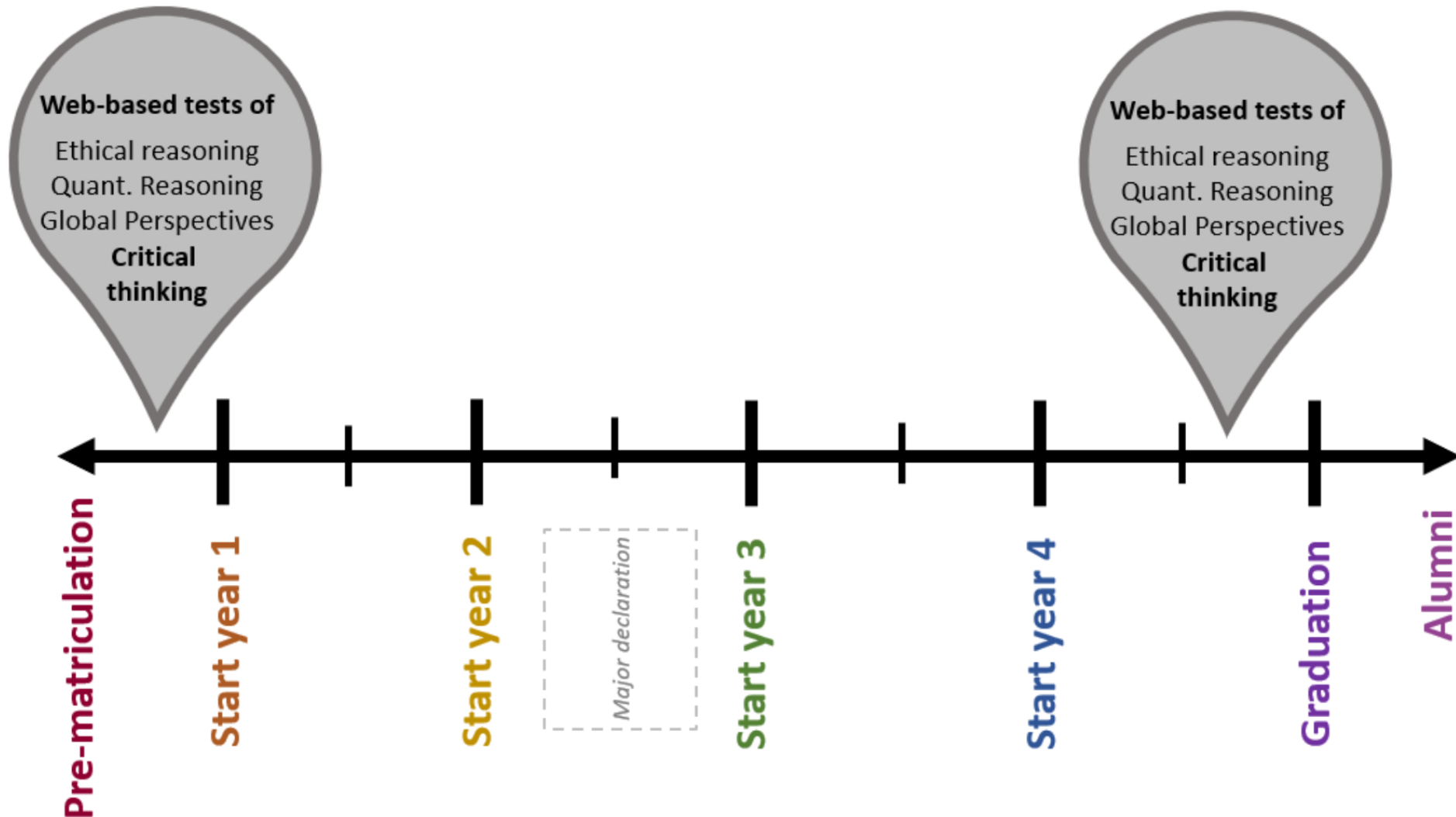
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Adaptations to existing measures: **Program-level assessment (8.2.a)**



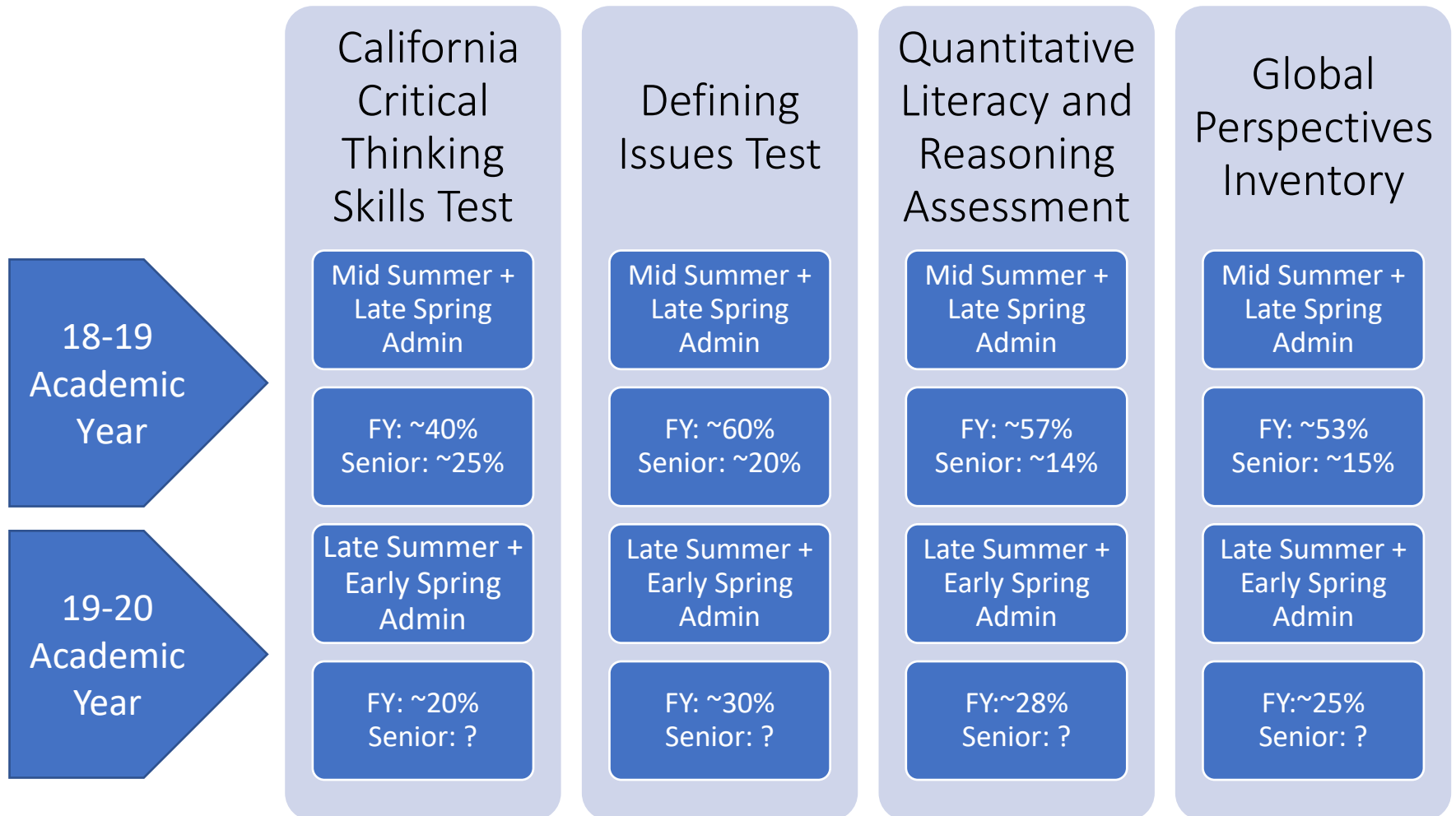
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Adaptations to existing measures: **General education assessment (8.2.b)**



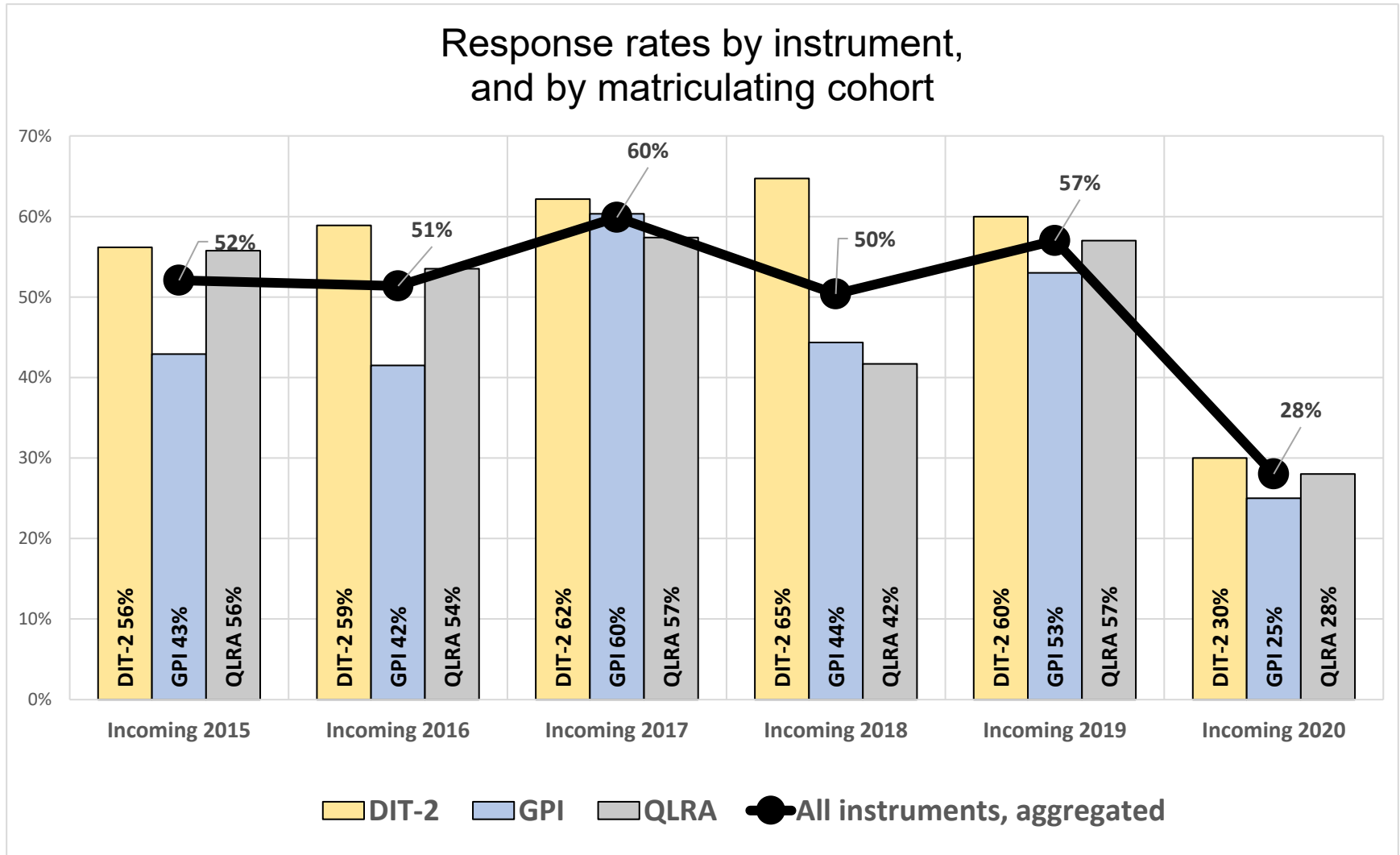
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Adaptations to existing measures: **General education assessment (8.2.b)**



What does assessment look like in times of disruption?

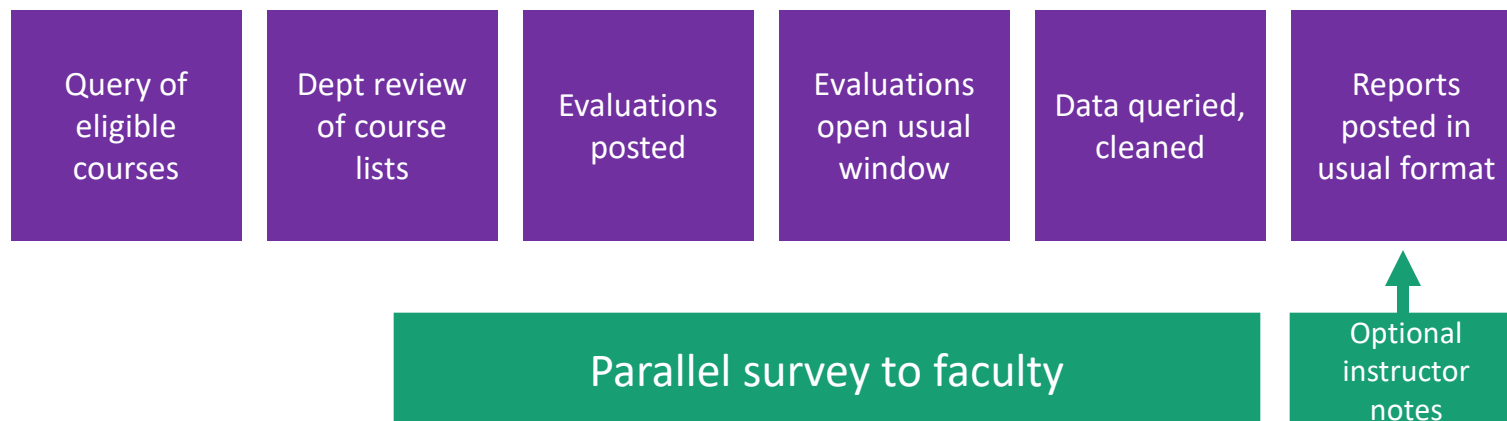
Adaptations to existing measures: **General education assessment (8.2.b)**



Rapid adaptations to existing measures: Course evaluations

March 25 email from the Office of the Provost:

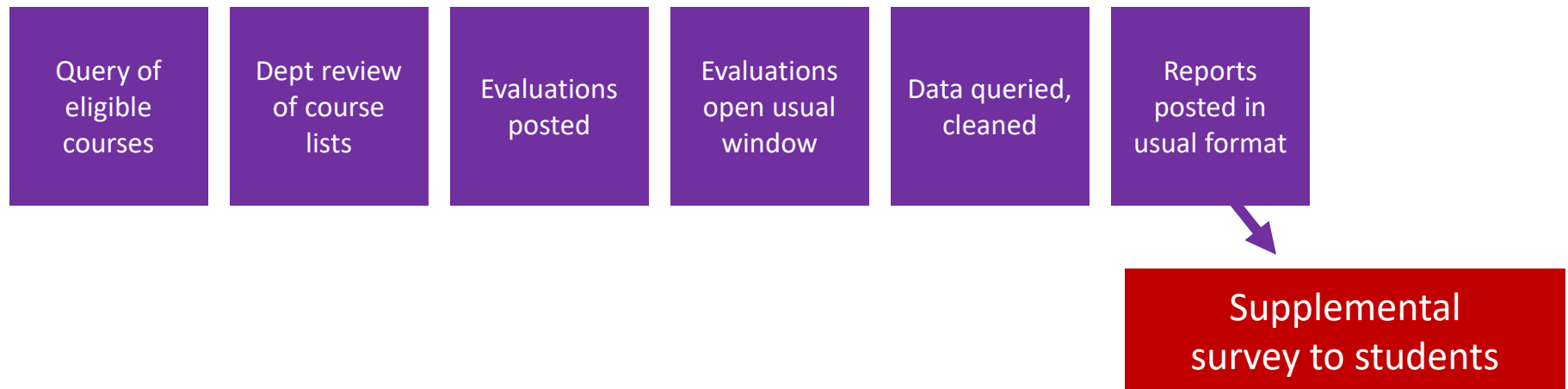
We will proceed as normal with course evaluations for the semester. However, each faculty member will have the right to include (or not include) these evaluations for any purpose such as tenure, promotion, annual review, etc. The reason for gathering course evaluation data is straightforward: everyone can learn from this experience. Collecting the information and providing the feedback on their course to faculty is essential to learning from this experience. It is also important to recognize that because remote teaching requires different skills and communication styles, some faculty may shine in remote teaching who might not shine in a traditional classroom setting. These faculty deserve to receive this positive feedback from their students. We plan to expand the “free form” comments on the course evaluation template to be able to capture more nuanced feedback from students.



Rapid adaptations to existing measures: Course evaluations

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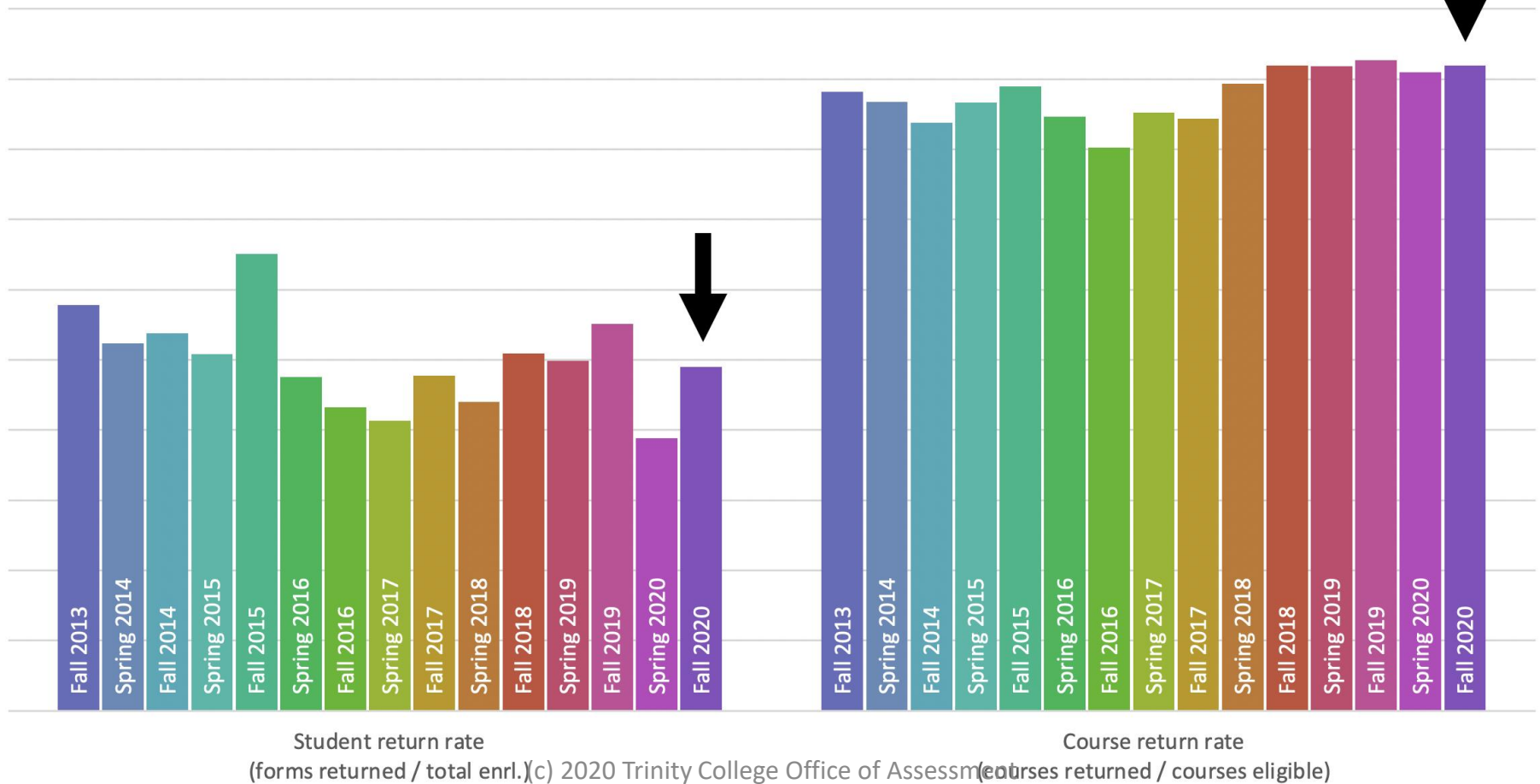
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What does assessment look like in times of disruption?

Rapid adaptations to existing measures: **Course evaluations**

Course evaluation return rates overall
Trinity College of A&S



What does assessment look like in times of disruption?

Rapid adaptations to current work:

- Expectations of programs' assessment effort
- General education assessment strategy
- Course evaluations

New measures to understand student learning

- **Surveys**
- **Focus groups**

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across campus

Facilitating conversations
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Supporting conversations about the silver linings:
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Development of new measures to understand student learning

New measures: **Survey & focus groups**

Spring

Summer

Fall

Purpose	<p>To understand successes and challenges of the emergency pivot to fully remote instruction</p> <p>Exploratory, emphasis on open-ended items</p>	<p>To understand reasons for enrollment</p> <p>To test new survey format prior to fall administration. Shift toward primarily fixed-choice items</p>	<p>To document effectiveness of adaptations to programming, policies, pedagogies, support services</p> <p>To move toward longer-term recommendations for sustained practices post-COVID</p>
Student sample	All students enrolled in undergraduate courses (0-599), regardless of degree-seeking status		
Administration windows	Opened during reading period, concluded after final exams	During final exam period of each summer session	After the end of the term November 25 – December 9
Survey themes	See next slide		
Challenges	<p>No national or peer survey resources to draw from or compare to</p> <p>Heavy emphasis on text responses introduced enormous coding labor</p>	<p>Lower Ns. Summer is a unique period, limiting generalizability of findings</p>	<p>Comparisons with previous administrations complicated by evolving survey format</p> <p>Compressed academic calendar leaves little time for administration</p>

Development of new measures to understand student learning

New measures: **Survey & focus groups**

	Spring	Summer	Fall 2020
Communications & faculty interactions	✓	✓	✓ Continue
Acad. support & accommodations	✓	✓	✓ Expand questions about experience students with accommodations, how neurodiverse students are included in remote learning
Effective pedagogies	✓	✓	✓ Retain, need further information
High-impact experiences	<i>Focus on arts, performance, civic engage, labs, collaboration</i>		✓ Expand to include u-grad research
Academic integrity	✓	✓	✓ Expand to include questions from student honor council, represent the COVID Campus Compact
Recommendations for improvement	✓	✓	✓ Continue, need further information
Participation in univ. programs	✓		✓ Continue
Learning technology	✓	✓	✓ Lower priority; retain one global question
Environment & materials for learning	✓	✓	✓ Shift to focus on student contingency planning; Retain one global question
Motivations for enrollment		✓	Pause until summer 2021
Wellness & support	✓	✓	Shift to a separate survey on stress, resilience, wellness
Learning areas and behaviors	✓	✓	Not useful, too general

Development of new measures to understand student learning

New measures: **Survey & focus groups**

Consistency with other findings nationally:

Student Experience in the Research University (SERU) policy briefs

<https://cshe.berkeley.edu/seru-covid-survey-reports>

Higher Education Research Institute (HERI at UCLA)

<https://heri.ucla.edu/covid-19-heri-information-and-resources/>

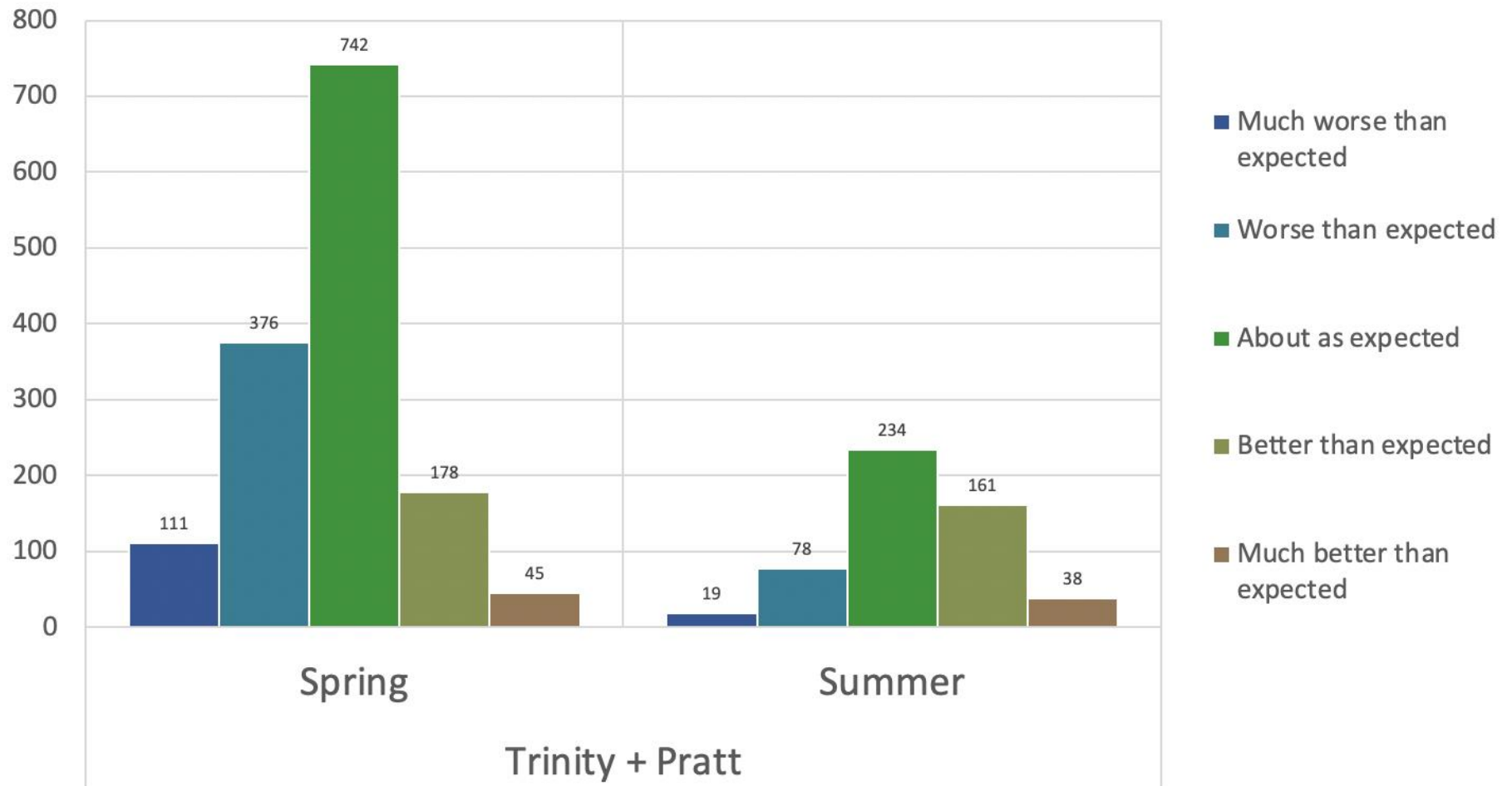
National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment (NILOA)

<https://www.learningoutcomesassessment.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/2020-COVID-Survey.pdf>

Consortium on Financing of Higher Education (COFHE): Unpublished survey findings

Quick findings

Altogether, how has the online/remote learning experience gone for you?



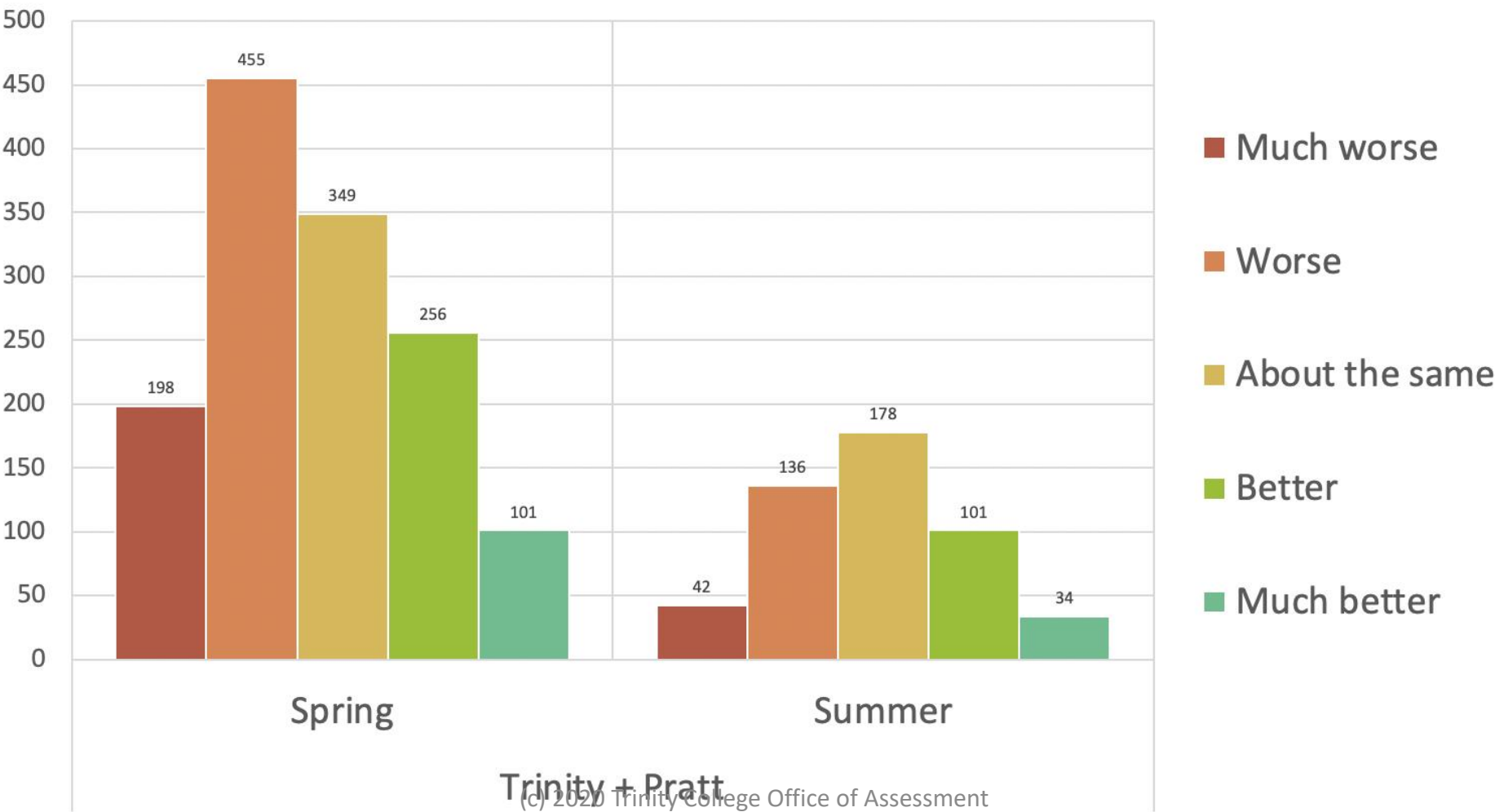
Trinity + Pratt

(c) 2020 Trinity College Office of Assessment

Quick findings

Compared to the first half of the term, in the second half of the [Spring] term your overall well-being was:

Compared to the spring semester, your overall well-being this summer was:



Quick findings

Students' wellness

"I regressed this term. I went backward. I had to go back to my childhood home with rules and restrictions."

"At home, I have other obligations."

"I was already struggling with severe depression and have felt extremely isolated... I don't have a normal sleep schedule... I can't separate a work environment from a home one or get any work done."

"I felt so utterly isolated and disconnected from any support system while... being widely expected to continue to perform at the same calibre."

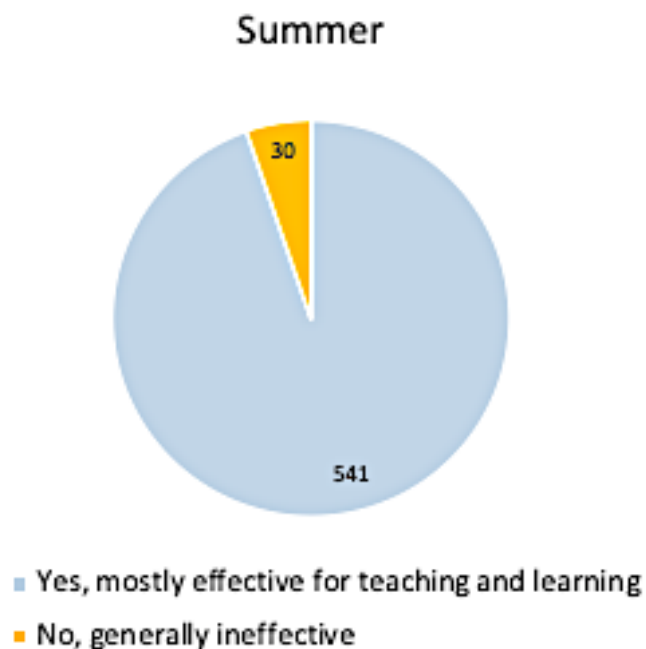
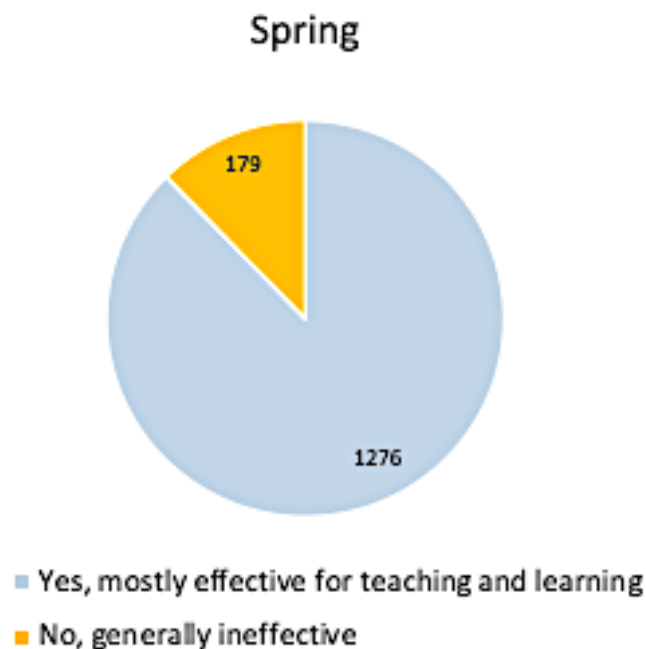
"I felt claustrophobic and demotivated the entire time."

"[I had a COVID emergency and] I did not know how to talk to my teacher about it since the impression was that unlike in the spring we should know the risk."

"I found the pressure of taking exams at home to be much more than taking exams in person... I found myself being anxious where I normally wouldn't."

Quick findings

Were the technologies used generally effective?



Even by summer, the most commonly-indicated supplies students lack are:

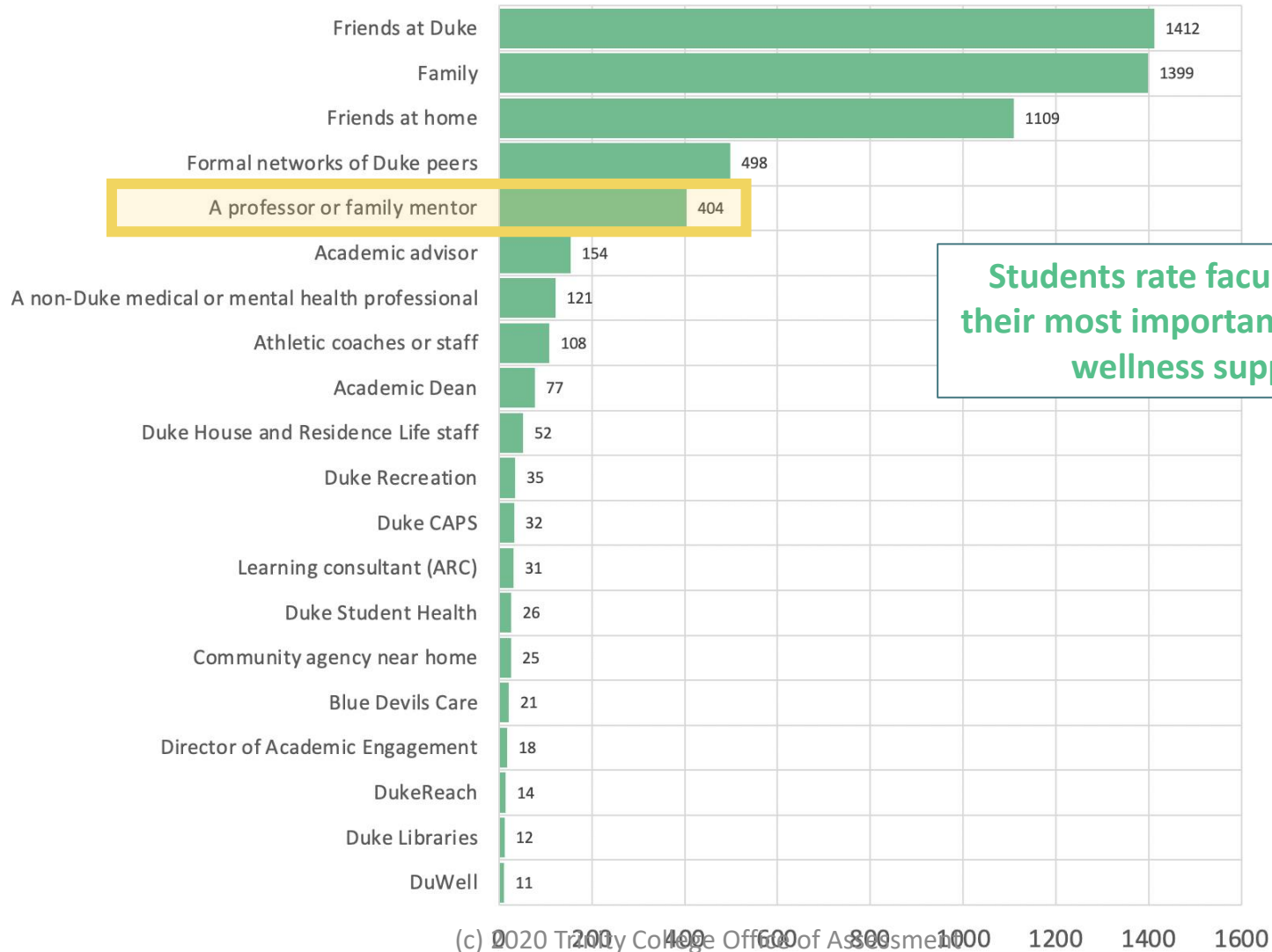
A quiet, designated study space

Reliable internet connections

(c) 2020 Trinity College Office of Assessment

Quick findings

Primary sources of support (spring & summer combined)



Quick findings

Faculty as critical sources of support

“Listen to their concerns about their mental health/capacity to continue with remote learning.”

“It would be really helpful if professors had more frequent office hours.”

“Encourage students to work together and interact. It can be easy to fall into bad habits when the people you interact with are limited to your living space.”

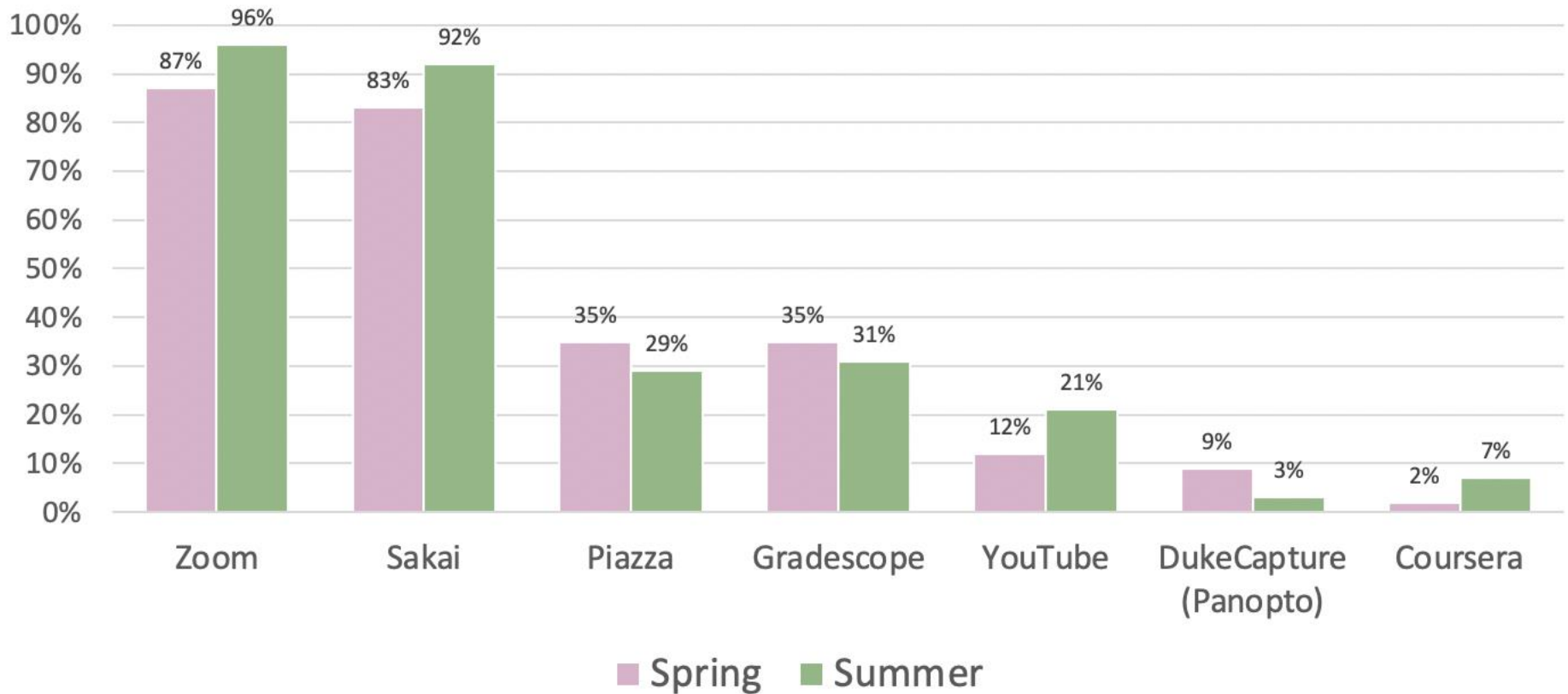
“We have plenty of resources but our culture must implement and promote activities or work that helps us not even need those resources for mental health.”

“[My instructor] was flexible and truly understood what we were going through as students... [He] recognized that everyone had different learning needs.”

Quick findings

Percentage of survey respondents indicating use of these platforms in one or more courses

Select platforms only



Quick findings

Learning technologies

“I hope the zoom office hours settings could be continued after shifting back to the normal teaching mode.”

“it [is] more difficult for instructors to identify when the studnets [sic] are not understanding well.”

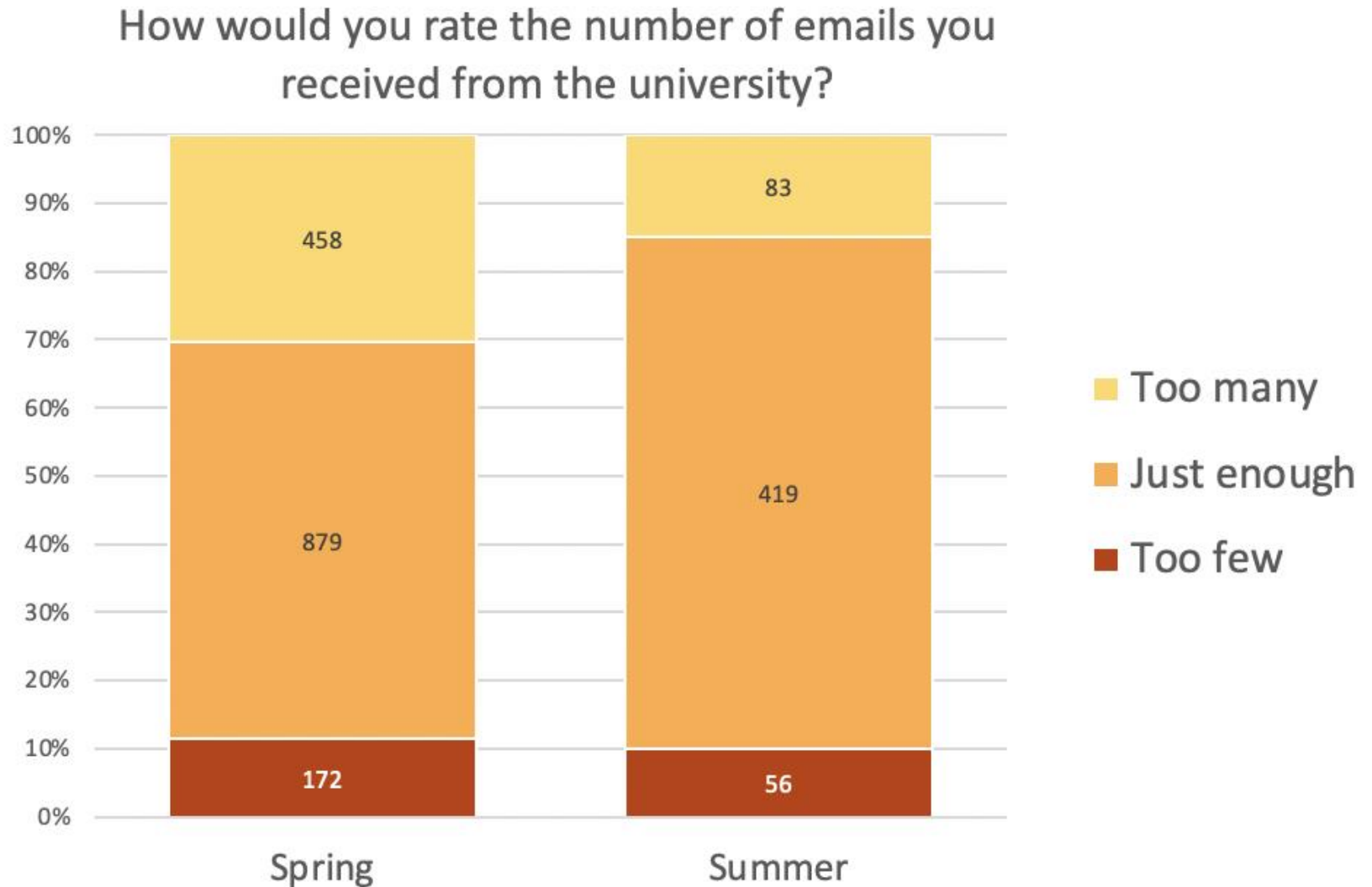
“I spent more time trying to figure out the software than I did learning the scientific concepts.”

“It's impossible for students to have each other's support over zoom.”

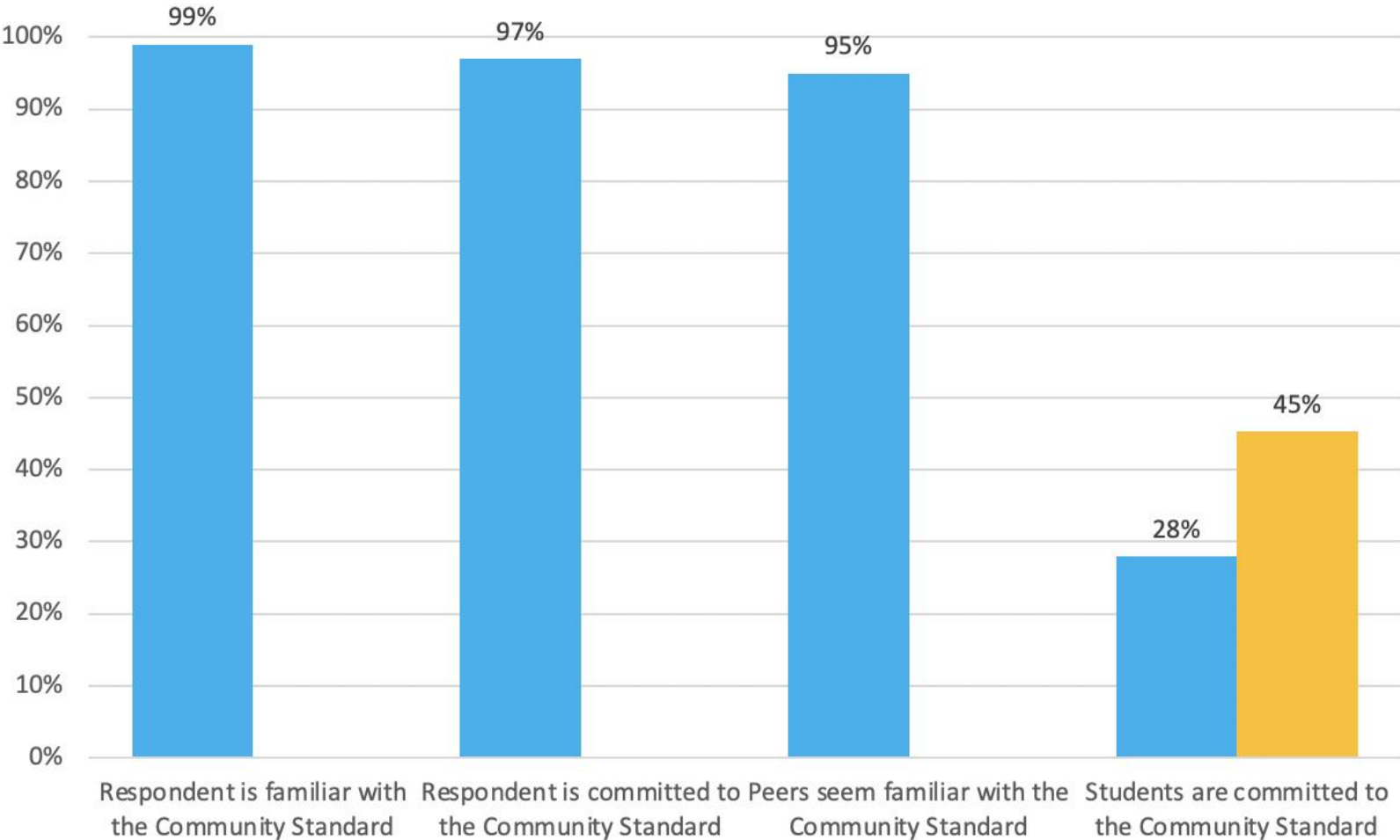
“Everyone was getting so many emails so it was hard to get responses quickly if I needed help...”

“As a visual learner, being able to pause asynchronous lecture videos to take more effective notes was very helpful in processing new material.”

Quick findings



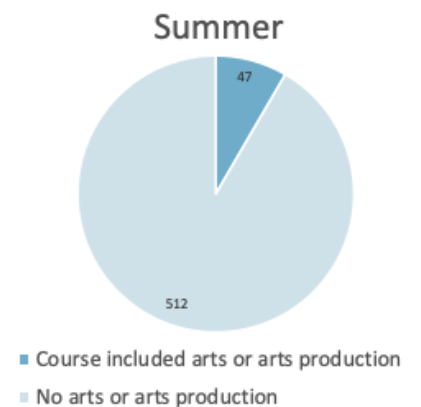
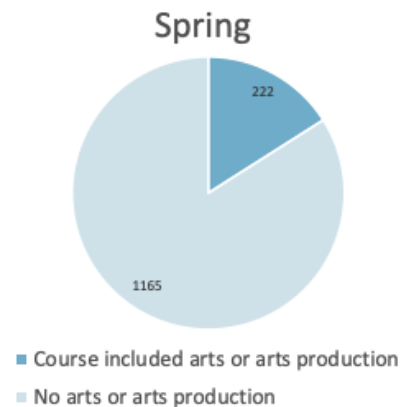
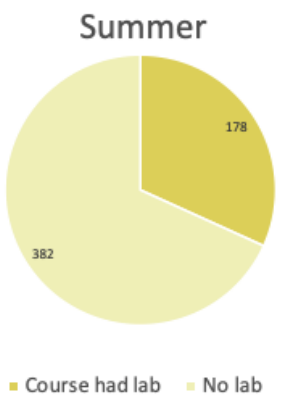
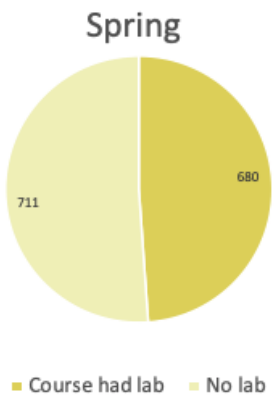
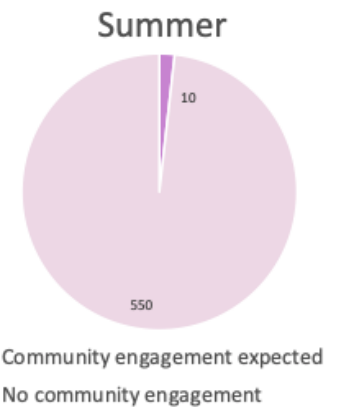
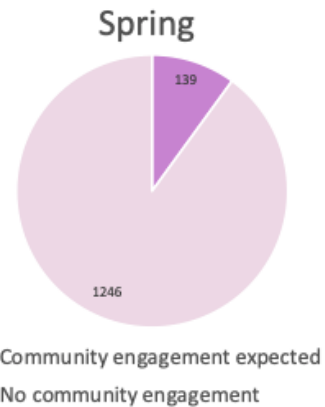
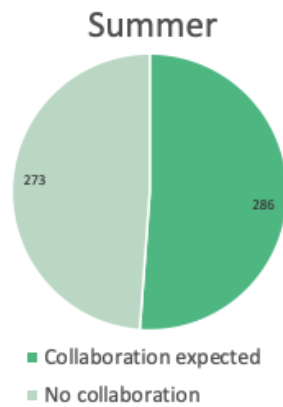
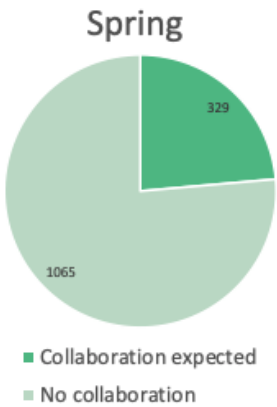
Quick findings



Quick findings

Types of High-Impact Experiences (HIE)

Collaboration • Community engagement • Labs • Arts & arts production



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Rapid adaptations to current work:

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Joining thought partnerships across campus

Facilitating conversations about our QEP

Supporting conversations about the silver linings:
Planning applications of pedagogical discovery in the future

Joining thought partnerships across campus

The Office of Assessment is a small corner of a massive community effort to balance and align the health, safety, and security of the community with our essential educational mission.

- 2020 has been an extraordinary year to study the impacts of experimental approaches to teaching and mentorship. It's tempting to take a break from assessment, but there's so much to learn.
- Assessment personnel must be ready to have straight-forward conversations about learning. More than ever, assessment activities must be practical, meaningful, focused.
- Assessment personnel must recognize and accommodate limited time among partners.
- We must make ourselves visible and be generous with our time.
- Assessment personnel must coordinate measurement -- especially surveys -- to minimize demands on students.

Huge thanks to our survey working group members

Improves survey outcomes ▪ Increases probability of data usage ▪ Strengthens long-term relationships

Kim Bethea, Ph.D.	Director of the Academic Resource Center
Ben Cooke, Ph.D.	Academic Dean, Pratt School of Engineering
Emily Daly	Head, Assessment and User Experience, Duke Libraries
Joan Durso, Ph.D.	Undergraduate Program Coordinator, Department of Statistical Science
Nahal Kaiven, Ph.D.	Trinity College Academic Dean
Kim Manturuk, Ph.D.	Director of Assessment, Duke Learning Innovation
Alyssa Perz, Ph.D.	Trinity College Academic Dean and Chief of Staff
David Rabiner, Ph.D.	Trinity College Academic Dean and Director of the Academic Advising Center
Matt Starcke, Ph.D.	Director of Assessment, Student Affairs
Molly Weeks, Ph.D.	Director of Research, Office of Undergraduate Education



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CS-095 Inverting the QEP: Coordinating Departmental Innovations in Teaching



Dr. Jennifer Hill

Duke University
Director of Assessment, Duke University



Dr. Alessandra Dinin

Duke University
Research Analyst



Mr. Evan Widney

Duke University
Research Analyst

🕒 2:45 PM - 3:45 PM EST on Monday, December 7
Add to Calendar ▾

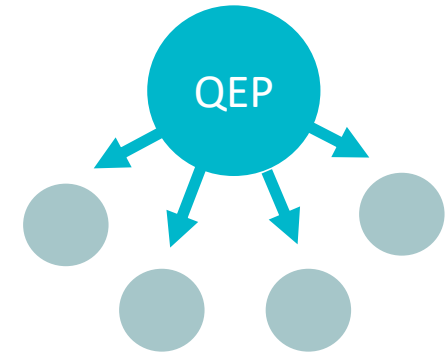
In this session we will summarize the development, organization, support, and assessment of Duke University's 2019–2029 QEP. Duke's QEP is unique in that it was written to distribute more agency and resources for educational innovation to individual academic departments. Unlike QEPs where the institution determines and provides centralized programming around a collective learning objective (e.g., engagement with global learning, Duke's 2009–2019 QEP), this approach establishes only the generalized goals of amplifying discovery and inquiry, disciplinary thinking, and disciplinary connections. Recognizing the close interaction between disciplinary expertise and advancement of innovative curricula, pedagogy, and advising practices, the QEP argues that faculty communities are best situated to observe, evaluate, and generate relevant new ideas about educational practice within the discipline.

Target Audience

Assessment and institutional effectiveness coordinators, individuals steering the process of QEP visioning and development, and institutional stakeholders responsible for QEP implementation and evaluation.

Duke's 2009-19 QEP: *Global learning*

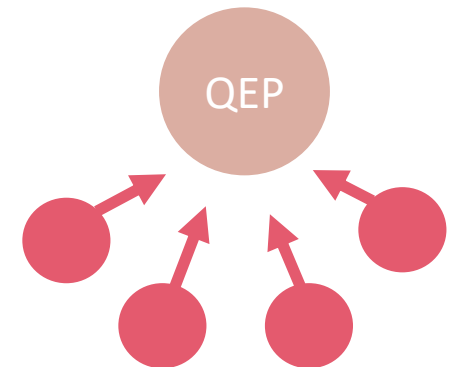
The institution determined and provided centralized programming around a collective learning objective.



Duke's 2019-29 QEP

Building gateways: Disciplinary discovery and cross-disciplinary insights

- QEP establishes only the generalized goals of amplifying discovery and inquiry, disciplinary thinking, and disciplinary connections.
- Faculty are best able to generate relevant new ideas about educational practice within the discipline.
- The institution provides a supportive infrastructure (resources, tools, assessment expertise) to accelerate the implementation of promising new ideas.



Preparing for changed conversations about our QEP

Duke belongs to SACSCOC reaffirmation class of 2019. Our topic is:

“Building gateways: Disciplinary discovery and cross-disciplinary insights”

It focuses on excellence in undergraduate education in students' first contacts with fields of study, especially those occurring in the first two years of college.

- Given what we've learned this year, does this framework need to change?
- Faculty are exhausted. How do we ask for *more* of their service right now?
- We lost some opportunities to collect baseline evidence about student learning. Does that matter?
- Given the shifting financial climate, are funds still available to bring innovative ideas to light?

Staged roll-out planned:

Steering Committee met Fall 2019 - Spring 2020

Discuss and settle on our interpretation of the Committee charge

Develop RFP to guide/support faculty and program officers

Funding provided for the reformulation of an introductory Social Sciences course

But then... COVID-19.

QEP in the time of COVID

Pause faculty meetings and service expectations

Address financial uncertainty

Pause some emerging ideas

Delay? Expect all programs to be involved within 5 years

Evaluate unexpected successes



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What practices can or must we maintain into the future...

While being mindful of and trying to mitigate inequities of access and learning outcomes?

We have some new insights about when asynchronous learning can work well, and under what conditions.

Flipping courses works if synchronous time is structured well, and if there are accommodations for time zone differences.

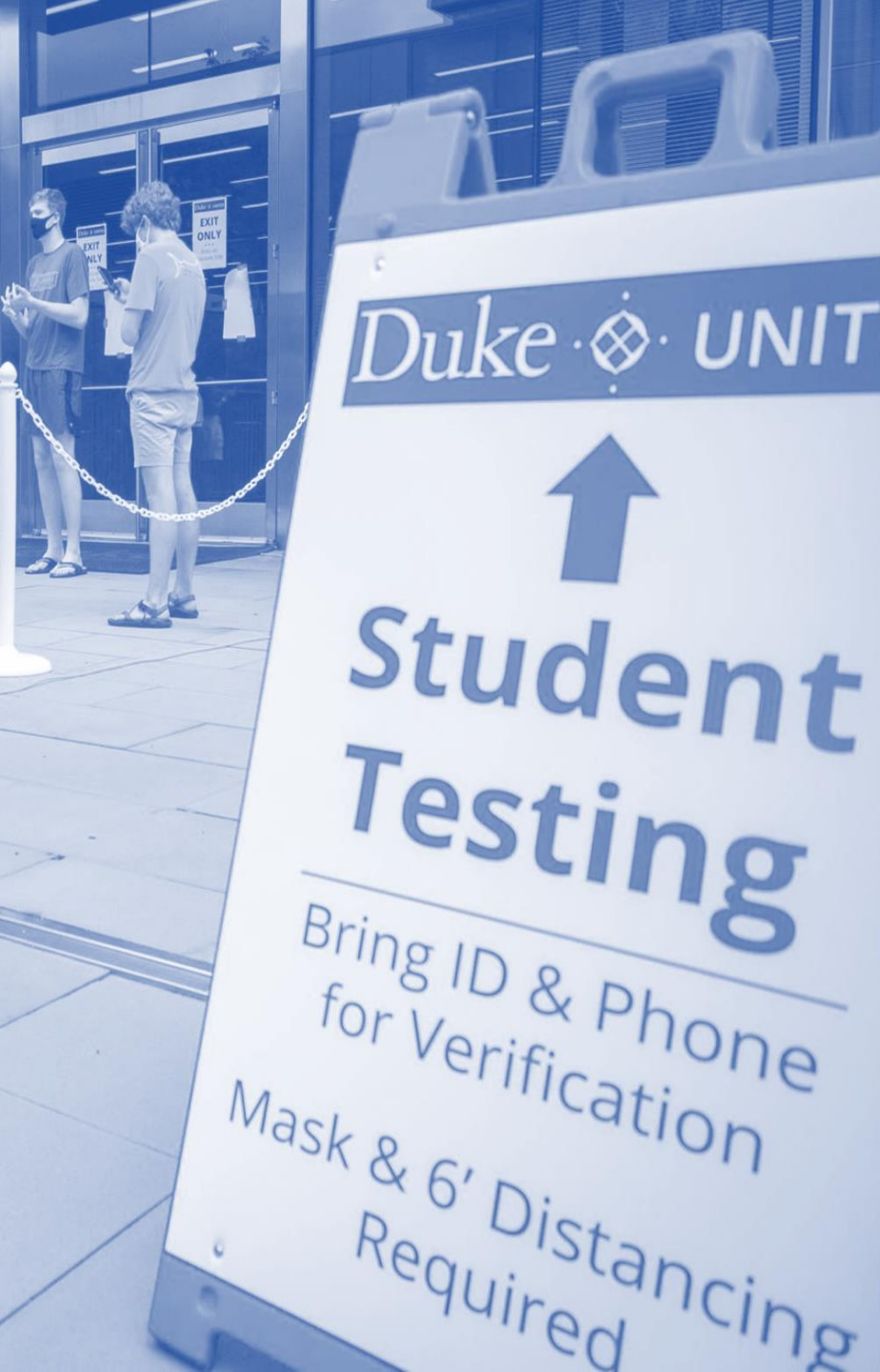
Students are learning “digital resourcefulness”.

Students show increased use of faculty office hours.

Some high-impact experiences translate to virtual spaces well.

Some types of faculty/staff meetings are more efficient in Zoom.

Where does assessment rank in
the shifting triage of
educational priorities?



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