



**Student Experiences between Spring 2020 and Spring 2021:
Institutional Response to COVID-19**

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Survey Administration Details Between Spring 2020 to Spring 2021

The purpose of this survey was to better understand students' experiences following Pitzer College's transition and experiences in Spring 2020 continuing through Spring 2021 in a remote teaching, learning, and working environment as a result of COVID-19. The survey was jointly developed by the Dean of Faculty and the Director of the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment and was sent to 908 degree-seeking students at Pitzer College on June 7, 2021. Pitzer students who were enrolled in courses during spring semester 2021 received a customized link via Qualtrics during the initial launch. Reminder emails (with survey links) were sent roughly three to four times a week to students whose responses had not been recorded as complete. The survey closed on June 27, 2021, with 290 respondents (Response Rate: 31.9%) and 54 surveys that were opened though no responses had been recorded.

The survey covered a range of topics. The results reported in this summary are focused on student experiences during the institution's response and changes brought on by COVID-19.

Description of the Sample

Demographic information on the sample of respondents is presented in this section. Overall, the sample of respondents was fairly representative of Pitzer's overall student population. Additional details follow below:

Race/Ethnicity	Spring 2020	Fall 2020	Spring 2021
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0.0%	1.8%	0.9%
Asian, Pacific Islander, Native Hawaiian	10.5%	13.7%	13.1%
Hispanic/Latinx	12.6%	16.5%	11.6%
Black or African American	5.0%	4.2%	5.8%
Two or More Races	9.2%	8.8%	10.8%
White	50.0%	41.5%	43.6%
International/Non-Resident Alien	8.4%	10.0%	9.9%
Unknown	4.2%	3.5%	4.1%

Class Year	Spring 2020	Fall 2020	Spring 2021
First-Year	27.9%	29.9%	28.2%
Sophomore	26.9%	29.9%	29.1%
Junior	24.8%	21.8%	24.7%
Senior	20.4%	18.4%	18.0%

Student Experiences with Pitzer's Response to COVID-19 between Spring 2020 and Spring 2021

Students were provided the opportunity to share their perceptions regarding the Spring 2021 semester in a fully remote environment for teaching, learning, and working. A range of questions were asked spanning academic and non-academic matters, different forms of support, and various stressors that students may be experiencing as a result of the transition brought on by COVID-19. Using this information, as well as information collected during the Spring 2020 and Fall 2020 semesters, we want to provide various insight regarding Students' experiences across these semesters.

Perceptions Regarding the Transition to Remote Teaching, Learning, and Working

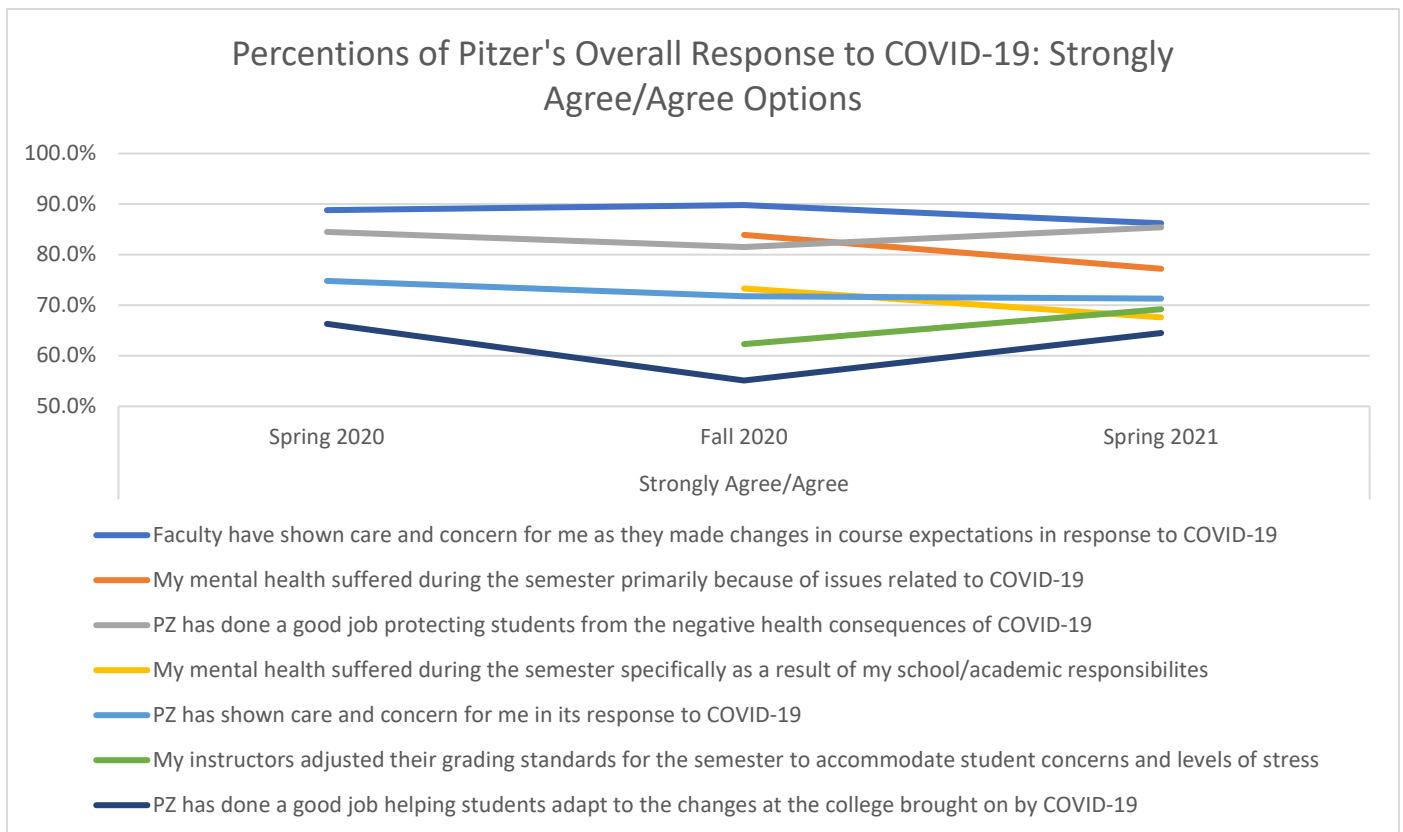
In general, respondents reported that the College had demonstrated consistent concern for the safety and well-being of students and provided helpful support during the transition to remote teaching, learning, and working. Respondents generally agreed that the College has continued to do a good job of protecting

students, assisting students to adapt to the changes that were occurring, and fostered a sense of care and concern. Throughout Spring 2020, Fall 2020, and Spring 2021 more specifically:

- The majority of respondents agreed that faculty have shown consistent care and concern in making changes to their course expectation (88% in Spring 2020, 90 % in Fall 2020, and 86% in Spring 2021)
- The majority of respondents agreed that the college has continued to do a good job of protecting students from the negative health consequences of COVID-19 (85% in Spring 2020, 81% in Fall 2020, and 86% in Spring 2021).
- Across all three semesters, most respondents agreed that the college showed consistent care and concern in its response (66% in Spring 2020, 55% in Fall 2020, and 64% in Spring 2021).

There were additional questions added during the Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 term that were not included in the Spring 2020 semester regarding respondent’s mental health, academic responsibilities, and grading standards.

- The majority of respondents agreed that their mental health suffered as a result of issues related to COVID 19 similarly across Fall 2020 (88%) and Spring 2021 (77%).
- Most respondents agreed that their mental health suffered as a result of their school/academic responsibilities similarly in Fall 2020 (73%) and Spring 2021 (67%).
- Most respondents agreed that instructors had adjusted their grading standards to accommodate student concerns and levels of stress similarly in Fall 2020 (62%) and Spring 2021 (67%)



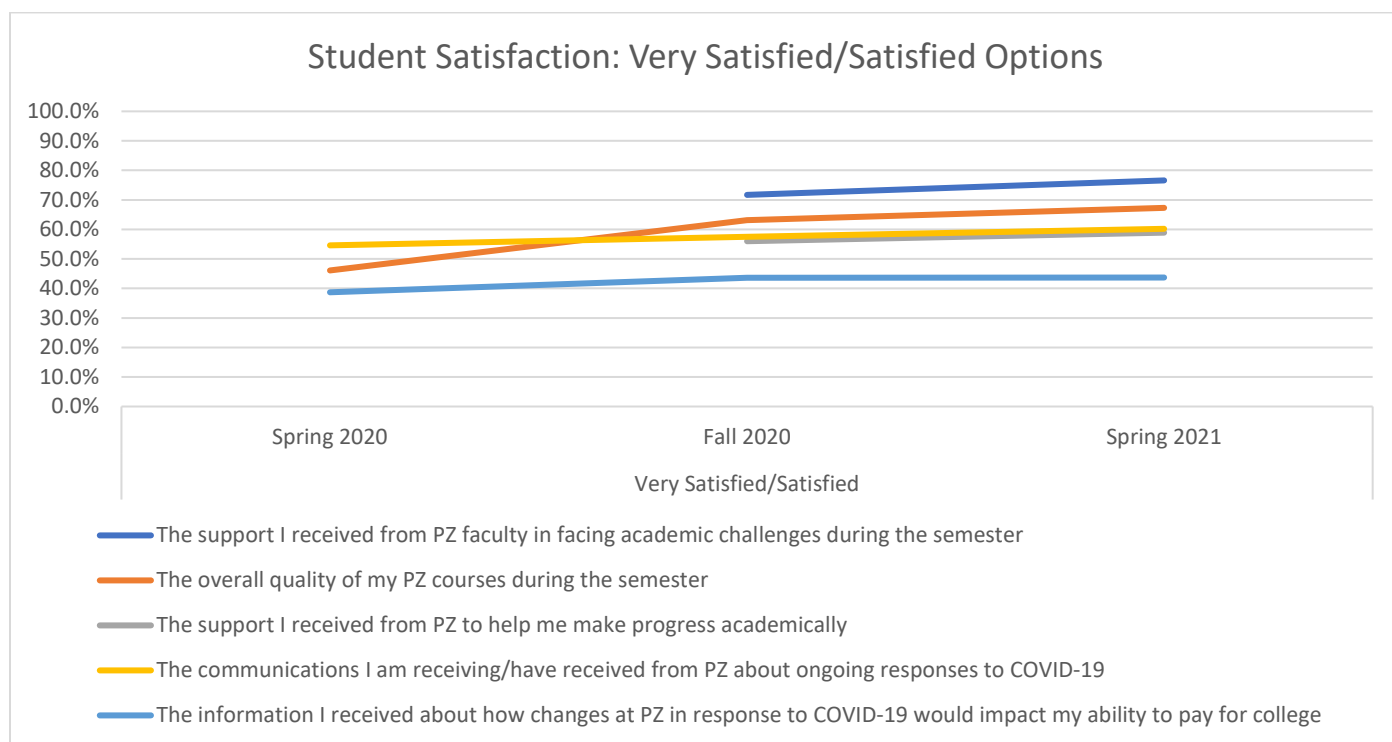
Knowledge of Who to Contact at Pitzer with Questions about the Impact of Changes of Educational Plans

It seems that communication with students regarding changes to educational plans has been a persisting challenge for the College. Across the three semesters, results were consistently mixed in relation to respondents’ knowledge of who to contact at Pitzer regarding how the changes being made may impact their educational plans. At least 39% of respondents strongly or somewhat disagreed that they had knowledge of who to contact at Pitzer. Concurrently, at least 40% of respondents strongly or somewhat agreed they had knowledge of who to contact at Pitzer.

	Spring 2020	Fall 2020	Spring 2021
Strongly Disagree	18.8%	12.5%	15.0%
Somewhat Disagree	24.4%	27.1%	29.1%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	17.5%	16.8%	14.2%
Somewhat Agree	26.6%	21.8%	26.4%
Strongly Agree	13.4%	21.8%	15.4%

Support for Students during the transition between Spring 2020 to Spring 2021

When COVID-19 prompted the transition of all courses and on-campus programming to a remote teaching and learning environment for the remainder of the semester and onward, students were forced to physically relocate, adapt to courses offered through a new online modality, and adjust to the onset of a global pandemic. Students were asked to report their satisfaction related to support they received for academic and non-academic matters related to this transition throughout the Spring 2020, Fall 2020, and Spring 2021 terms. The Spring 2020 semester included questions related to the initial transition from in-person to a remote-learning environment that were not included in Fall 2020 and Spring 2021. Academic matters include the support students received from Pitzer faculty in facing academic challenges, the support Pitzer provided to help students progress academically, and the overall quality of their courses during the spring semester (these questions were asked across the three semesters).



Please refer to [table 1](#) for full responses.

Across the three semesters, there has been a continuous increase in the satisfaction levels of students regarding the overall quality of their PZ courses. Lower levels of satisfaction in Spring 2020 in the overall quality in their PZ course may have been a result of the initial transition students were beginning to go through that were brought on by the pandemic. As the college began to get acclimated to the remote learning environment, adjustments were made to help these transitions as noted with higher levels of satisfaction in PZ courses for the Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 semesters. A little over half of respondents were satisfied/very satisfied in the communication they received from Pitzer about ongoing responses to COVID-19 in Spring 2020 and has remained stable over the course of the following semesters. Additionally, there has been consistency in the satisfaction of information provided for students by Pitzer regarding the changes at the college in response to COVID-19 and how these changes would impact students' ability to pay for college. Although levels of satisfaction have been consistent across semesters, it is important to note that less than half of respondents were Satisfied/Very Satisfied with the communication they received from Pitzer across the three semesters (39%-44%). A more detailed distribution of the responses is presented in the graph above.

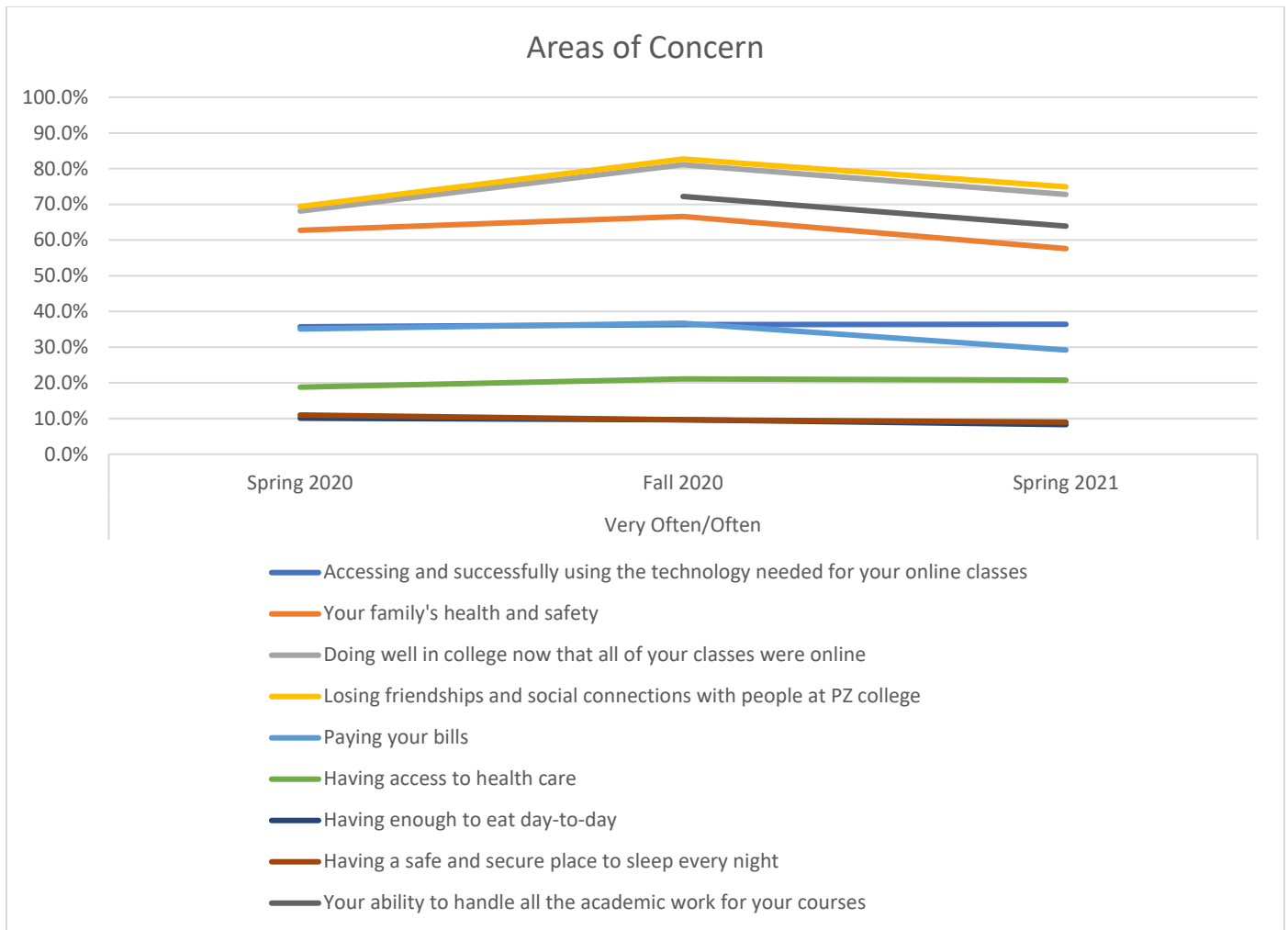
Between the Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 terms, respondents have continued to report high levels of satisfaction with the support they received from Pitzer faculty in facing academic challenges with 71% (Fall 2020) to 76% (Spring 2021) of respondents reporting they were generally/very satisfied. Respondents continued to report high levels of satisfaction with the support they received from Pitzer to help students progress academically with little over half of respondents reporting they were generally/very satisfied (56% to 59%).

Stressors Experienced by Students during the Transition Between Spring 2020 to Spring 2021

The disruption of the Spring 2020 semester presented an array of stressors for students as they made sense of the COVID-19 pandemic, relocated their living arrangements, and resumed coursework. Students were provided the opportunity to estimate the frequency with which they experienced these stressors and/or worries. Notably, most respondents reported being worried about losing connections at Pitzer, doing well in their courses, and their ability to handle all the academic work for their courses. More specifically:

- Across the three semesters, concerns of losing friendships were consistently of high concern for students (69% in Spring 2020, 83% in Fall 2020, and 75% in Spring 2021).
- Similarly, doing well in college as all courses transitioned to the online modality for respondents were of high concern for students across the three semesters. (68% in Spring 2020, 81% in Fall 2020, and 73% in Spring 2021).
- Respondents' concerns for their ability to handle all the academic work of their courses were only asked in Fall 2020 and Spring 2021. Although we didn't inquire about this prompt in Spring 2020, it was the third highest concern students had for the following semesters (72% in Fall 2020 and 64% in Spring 2021).

In contrast, access to health care, food and housing insecurity were consistently of less frequent concern for respondents across semesters. Eight out of ten respondents indicated they were never concerned about having enough to eat or a safe place to sleep every night. Additionally, Six out of ten respondents indicated they were never worried about access to health care (See graph Below).

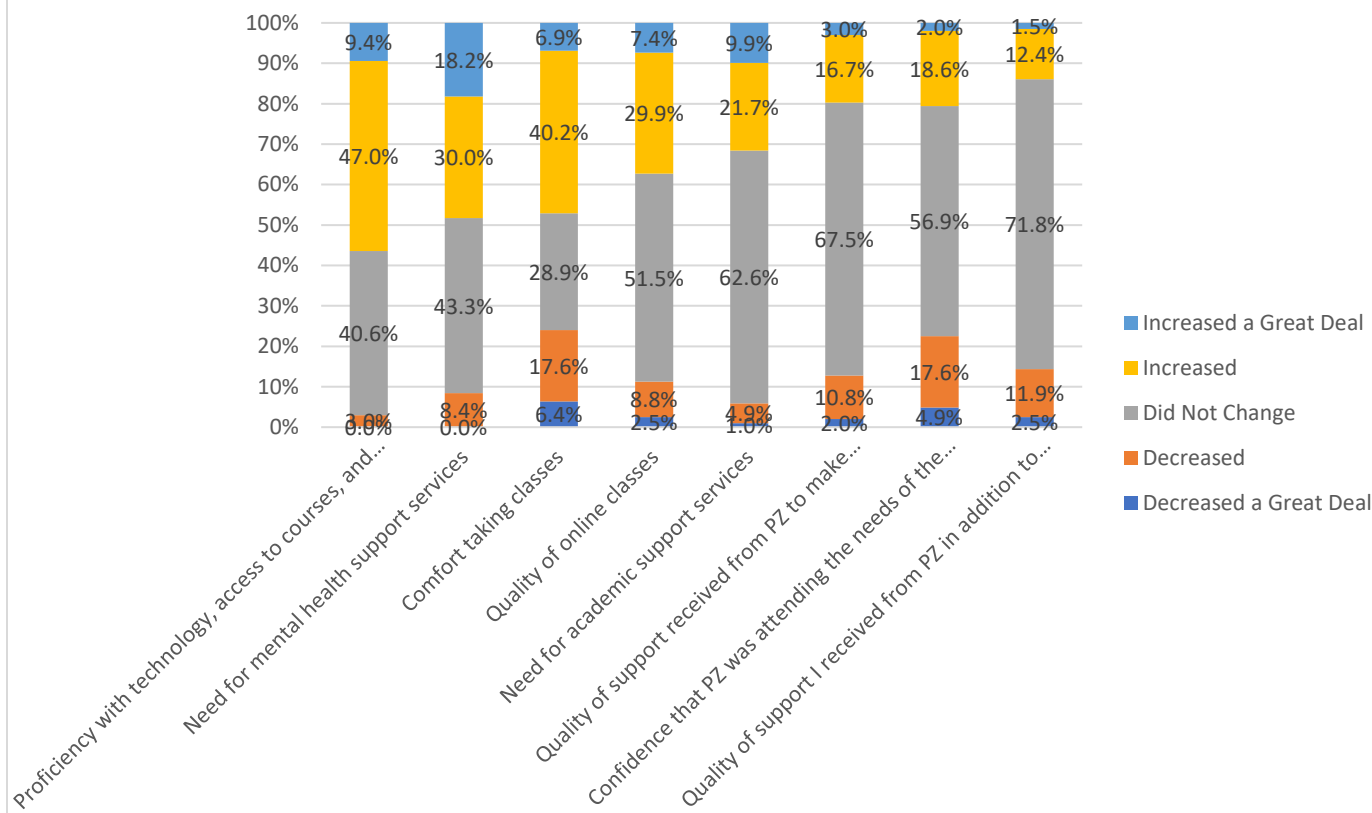


Experiences from FA 20 to SP 21:

With ensuing circumstances from COVID-19 and the continued use of learning in a remote environment beginning in Spring 2020, respondents were asked about their current progress and experiences in Spring 2021 since Fall 2020 (i.e., academic year 2020-21). 56% of respondents reported an increase/great deal of increase in their proficiency with technology, access to courses, and co-curricular events and 47% of respondents reported an increase/great deal of increase in their comfort taking classes. Additionally, 48% of respondents also reported an increased/great deal of increase in the need for mental health support services.

In these results, at least 63% of respondents reported that the need for academic services, the confidence that PZ is attending the needs of the entire community, and the quality of support they received from Pitzer in addition to their mental health needs did not change. Further exploration in these results could examine if these perceptions are stagnant due to student expectations/needs being met or not enough changes being implemented.

Student's Experiences from Fall 2020 to Spring 2021

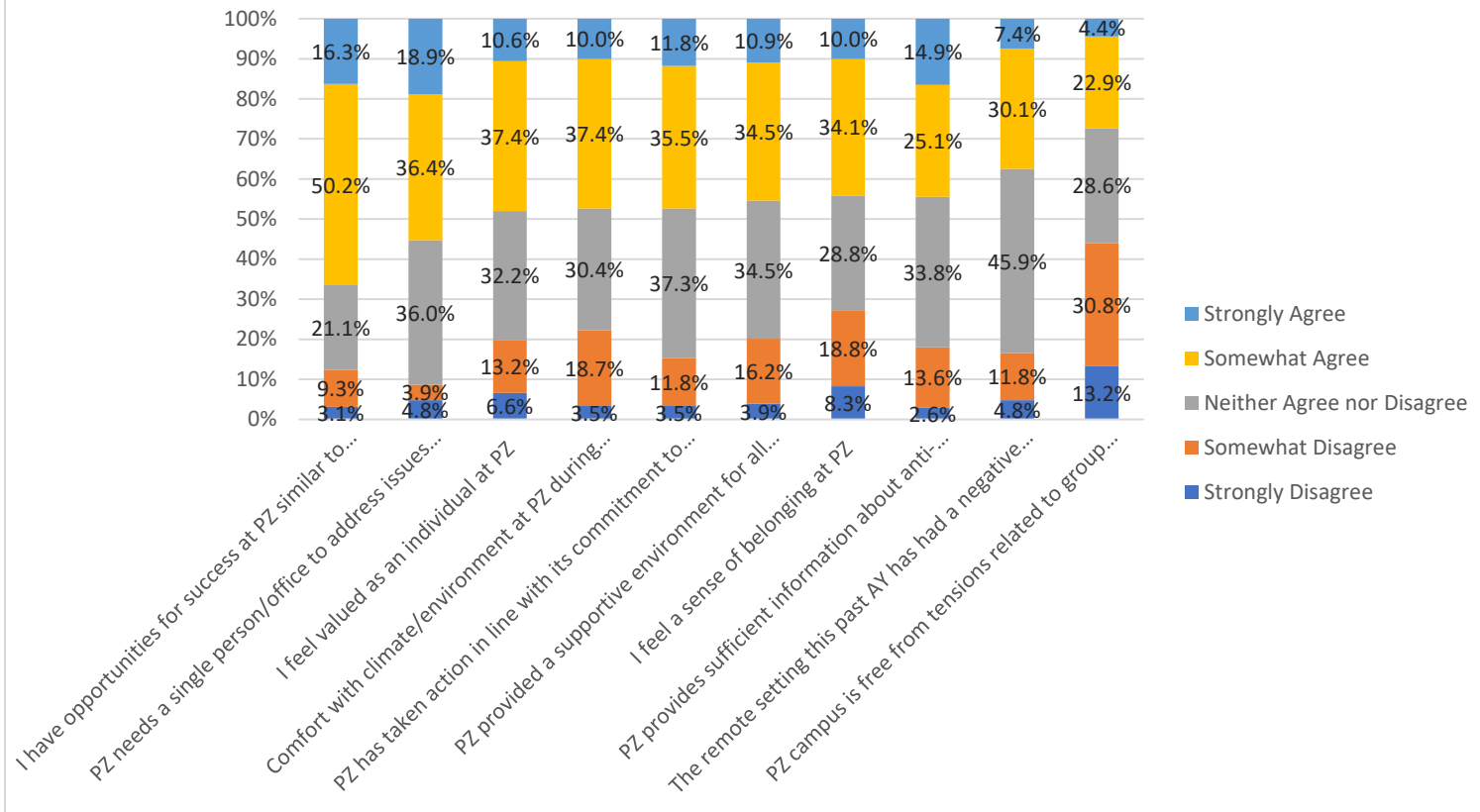


Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at Pitzer:

In terms of respondents' experiences with diversity, equity, and inclusion most believe they have opportunities for success at Pitzer similar to those of their peers and believe Pitzer needs a single person/office to address issues regarding diversity equity and inclusion, with more than half of respondents agreeing with these statements. There were some mixed results amongst respondents as well regarding these topics.

For example, 37% of respondents somewhat/strongly agreed that the remote setting had a negative impact on diversity, equity, and inclusion, while closer to half of respondents (45%) of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement. 40% of respondents also somewhat/strongly agreed Pitzer provides sufficient information about anti-discrimination and harassment policies while 34% of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed. What may be a point of concern is that 27% of respondents agreed that Pitzer college is free from tensions related to group and individual differences, while 44% of respondents somewhat/strongly disagreed.

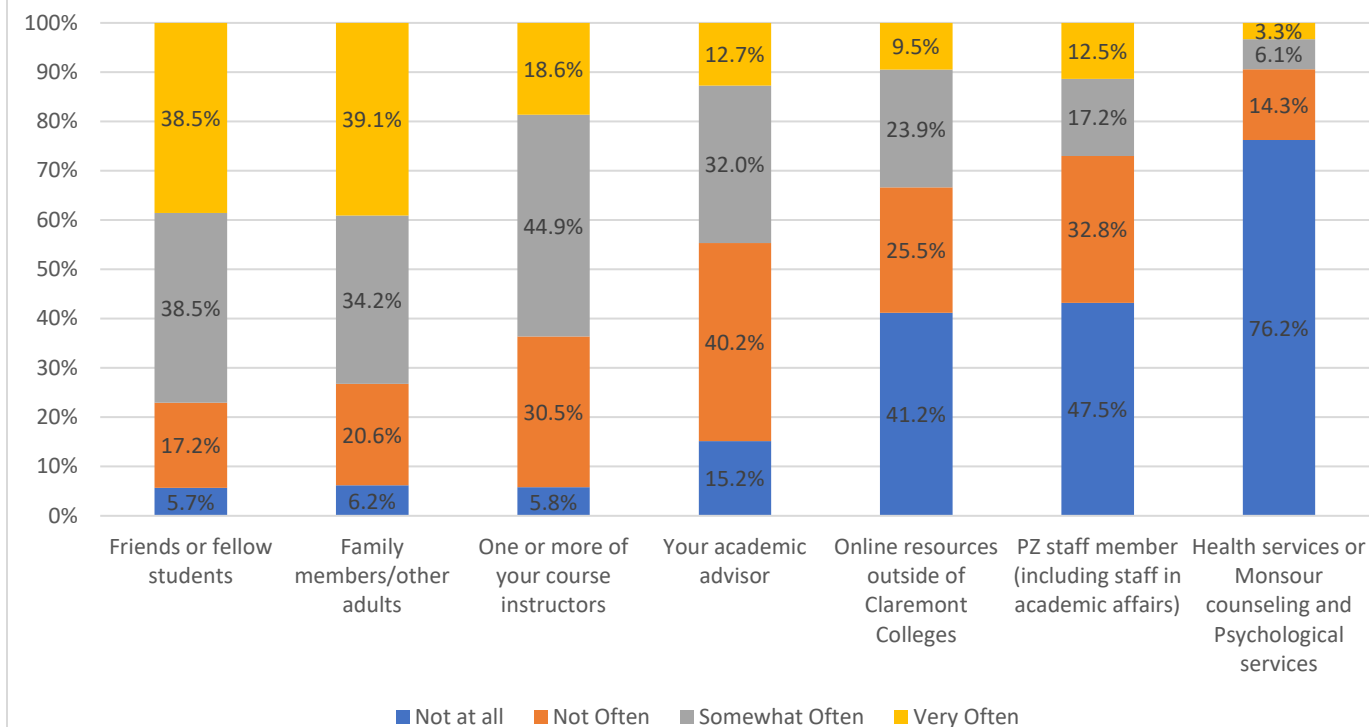
Student's Experiences with Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion



Student's experiences with seeking support:

Although these past semesters the college has partaken in learning through a remote environment, respondents indicated how often they reached out to others when seeking support. 77% of respondents reached out to friends and fellow students somewhat/very often. 84% of respondents reached out for support to family members/other adults somewhat/very often and 63% of respondents reached out to one or more of their course instructors for support somewhat/very often. It seems 76% of respondents did not at all seek help from the health services or Monsour Counseling Psychological services.

Frequency of Students Seeking Support



Looking Ahead

The evidence gathered through this survey, and ongoing data collection efforts, is compelling and clear: The value of “community” is deeply rooted in the ethos and experience of students, faculty, and staff at Pitzer College. However, distance from the college over time proved to be impactful. Respondents were asked to indicate how connected they felt to Pitzer College following each semester (Spring 2020, Fall 2020, Spring 2021):

Overall Connection with Pitzer:

- 28% of Spring 2020 respondents reported they had a very strong connection to Pitzer compared to Fall 2020 (11%) and Spring 2021 (13%) of respondents reporting a very strong connection, respectfully.
- Close to half of respondents across semesters reported they felt some connection (46% to 52%).
- Respondents that felt very little to no connection was lowest in Spring 2020 (23%) and has since almost doubled in Fall 2020 (42%) until Spring 2021 where it slightly dropped (35%).

	Spring 2020	Fall 2020	Spring 2021
No Connection	3.2%	7.0%	4.4%
Very Little Connection	20.2%	35.4%	30.8%
Some Connection	49.4%	46.3%	52.0%
Very Strong Connection	27.7%	11.4%	12.8%

Fall 2021 Planning:

In planning for the Fall 2021 Term, respondents were asked about their intentions for the upcoming semesters for both Fall 2020 and Spring 2021. It seems that respondents' plans have not changed and will continue to take courses needed to complete their degree. Additionally, a little over half (54%) of respondents indicated they planned to live on campus for a portion of the semester and/or share housing with one or more students. In contrast, less than 7% of respondents planned to take a leave of absence going into the subsequent semester (See graph below).

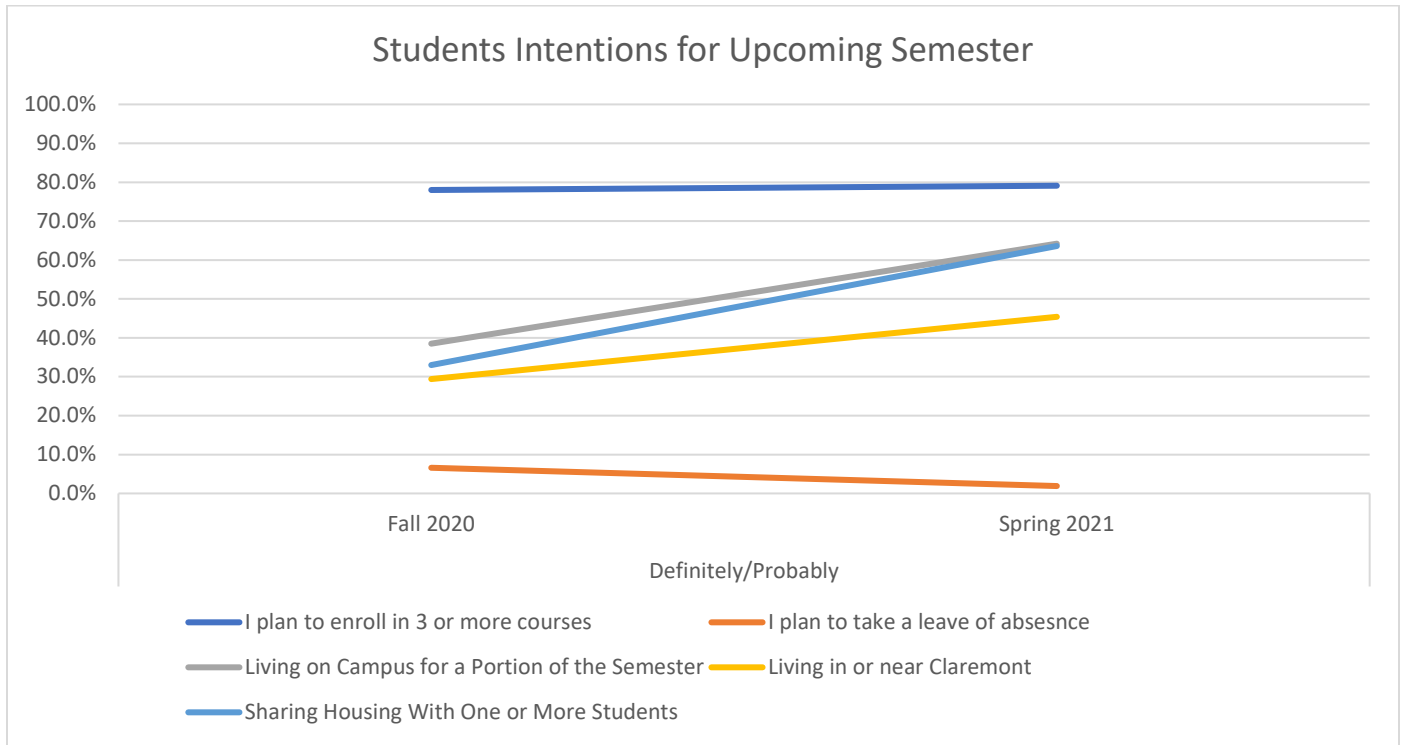


Table 1. Student’s Satisfaction: Support Related to Academic and Non-Academic Matters Across Spring 2021, Fall 2020, and Spring 2020.

		The support I received from PZ faculty in facing academic challenges during the semester	The overall quality of my PZ courses during Spring semester	The support I received from PZ to help me make progress academically	The communications I am receiving/have received from PZ about ongoing responses to COVID-19	The information I received about how changes at PZ in response to COVID-19 would impact my ability to pay for college	The final grading policy PZ adopted for SP20 semester course grades
Spring 2020	Very Dissatisfied		9.2%		6.1%	7.7%	5.6%
	Generally Dissatisfied		23.7%		19.8%	13.8%	7.2%
	Neutral/Neither		20.8%		19.5%	39.8%	11.7%
	Generally Satisfied		36.1%		38.0%	29.2%	25.8%
	Very Satisfied		10.0%		16.6%	9.5%	49.7%
Fall 2020	Very Dissatisfied	1.7%	4.6%	2.5%	2.9%	5.8%	
	Generally Dissatisfied	6.7%	12.0%	13.7%	18.3%	14.9%	
	Neutral/Neither	20.0%	20.3%	27.8%	21.3%	35.7%	
	Generally Satisfied	48.8%	46.1%	41.1%	37.1%	29.5%	
	Very Satisfied	22.9%	17.0%	14.9%	20.4%	14.1%	
Spring 2021	Very Dissatisfied	0.8%	1.9%	2.3%	3.8%	6.1%	
	Generally Dissatisfied	6.8%	14.1%	10.6%	11.0%	12.2%	
	Neutral/Neither	19.8%	16.7%	28.1%	25.0%	38.0%	
	Generally Satisfied	48.3%	45.2%	43.7%	39.0%	30.0%	
	Very Satisfied	28.3%	22.1%	15.2%	21.2%	13.7%	