MIT Architecture

Graduate & Undergraduate Students

Fall 2021 | Survey Results

Brief Summary

The Department of Architecture initiated this survey to understand the preferences of the student community with regard to learning and working in the department in order to address possible issues and concerns and to support potential new learning and working models. Department graduate and undergraduate students were surveyed. **The survey was conducted from October 20th, 2021 to November 3rd, 2021, and consisted of seventeen questions: thirteen quantitative questions and four open-ended questions soliciting additional comments. 106 responses were received, with a 41% response rate.** The survey gathered information on department community pulse, quality of engagement, learning experience, teaching and research experience, and safety, health, and well-being. The responses within these topics were also evaluated with respect to the three different learning and working models: fully remote, hybrid, and in-person. This summary presents some of the highlights from the survey.

Quality of Engagement

To evaluate the quality of engagement with respect to the different models, students were asked about their experience in engaging with different groups of people at the department, during the remote learning period (Spring 2020, Fall 2020, Spring 2021) and their in-person experience in Fall 2021. Students who started in Fall 2021 were filtered out from this comparison. **Comparison of the results of the remote and the in-person models show that students are more satisfied with the in-person engagement. In particular, the options with a significant increase in satisfaction compared to the remote model are studio projects (a difference of 44%), fellow students in subjects (a difference of 39%), instructors (a difference of 28%), fellows students in your cohort (a difference of 23%)**, followed by: TA (a difference of 18%), academic advisor (a difference of 15%), faculty (a difference of 16%) and staff (a difference of 6%). When students (students that started in Fall 2021 included) were asked how they prefer to engage with all of the groups of people, their responses indicate an overall preference to the in-person model with all the groups of people, except staff members where the preference leans towards the hybrid model (49% hybrid, 6% remotely).

Community

The first two questions focus on assessing the community pulse with the following results: **68% of students agreed** (49% somewhat agreed, 19% strongly agreed) with the statement **"I feel like I am part of the MIT Architecture community"**, and **69% agreed** with the statement **"I feel like I am part of my discipline group**", while 18% and 14% of students disagreed respectively. Additionally, based on the responses, **84% (66% strongly agreed, 22% somewhat agreed) of students prefer to participate in department events in person.**

Learning Experience

Students are satisfied overall with their learning experience in the Fall of 2021, with a 76% satisfaction rate and 12% dissatisfaction. Based on the responses, **students clearly prefer to take in-person classes (84%)**, while the responses to the statement "I prefer to take hybrid mode classes" are distributed, with 51% agreeing and 34% disagreeing. Regarding the class format, 64% of students prefer classes to be recorded, and 59% prefer that classes also use Zoom to offer some flexibility. Additionally, 69% of students prefer to work in a hybrid model, and 67% prefer to work at MIT.

Successful Practices, Tools, Policies from Remote Model

Students were asked to suggest tools, practices, or policies from the remote model that they found successful. For teaching, tools such as Miro, Zoom, and Canvas discussion boards were recommended. Recording lectures, using the online format for guest lectures or technical/tutorial lectures were suggested. For research, the Hathi Trust Access, Fast ILL was suggested as well as digitizing more physical media. For making, they suggested tools such as desktop CNC and 3D printing, and practices such as limiting access to spaces (such as N51) to avoid overcrowding, as well as sending kits to home. For advising, students suggested Zoom and flexibility to choose between in-person and online meetings.

Stress and Well-Being

Overall, **students feel safe and comfortable with being on campus (91% agreed) and going to events (91%) and classes in person (94%).** In addition, when asked for additional support, students mentioned: mental health, financial support (tuition and stipends), advising, help adjusting to MIT as international students, more social events, better SMArchS workspaces, more organized MArch reviews, and flexibility in the credits towards the MArch degree.

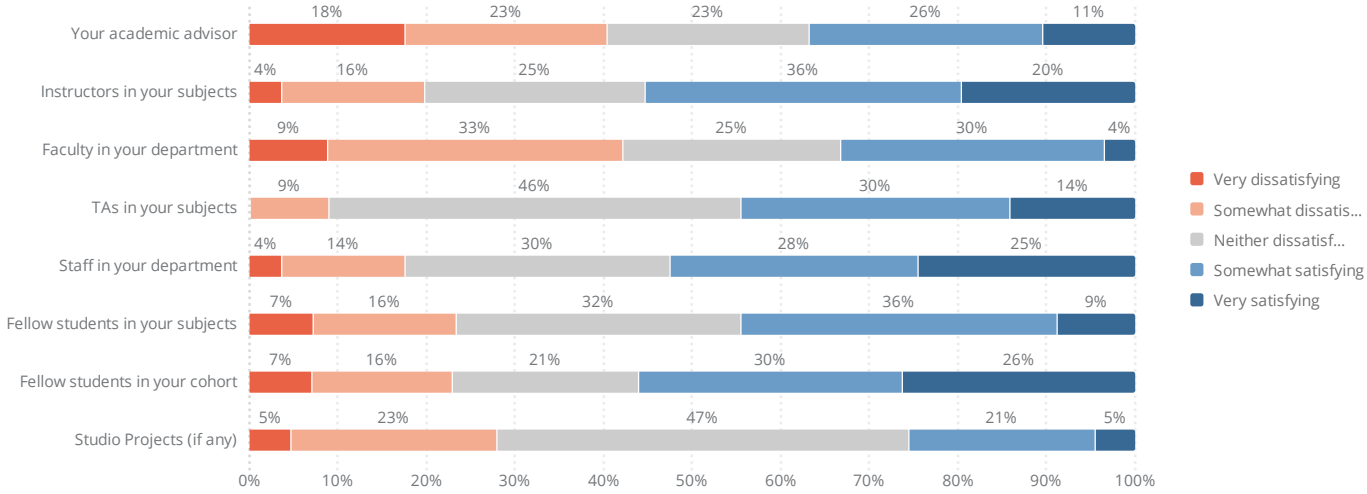
Additional Comments

The open-ended questions solicited comments about additional support from the department and general thoughts and concerns. Many comments highlighted the need for more support in mental health, tuition, stipends, and more help to navigate the MIT system for new students. Additionally, a vast majority of comments highlighted the need for more happy hours and department-wide social events to help connect students with faculty and cultivate a more intimate contact. In the general comments section, students left comments about their teaching experience. Students asked for a more caring attitude from faculty towards students and urged faculty to be more engaged in teaching instead of their research. Lastly, there were comments suggesting the need for student advisors that students could communicate with about their concerns and hardships, and more transparency in how the department is responding to COVID-19.

Assessment of the Quality of Engagement

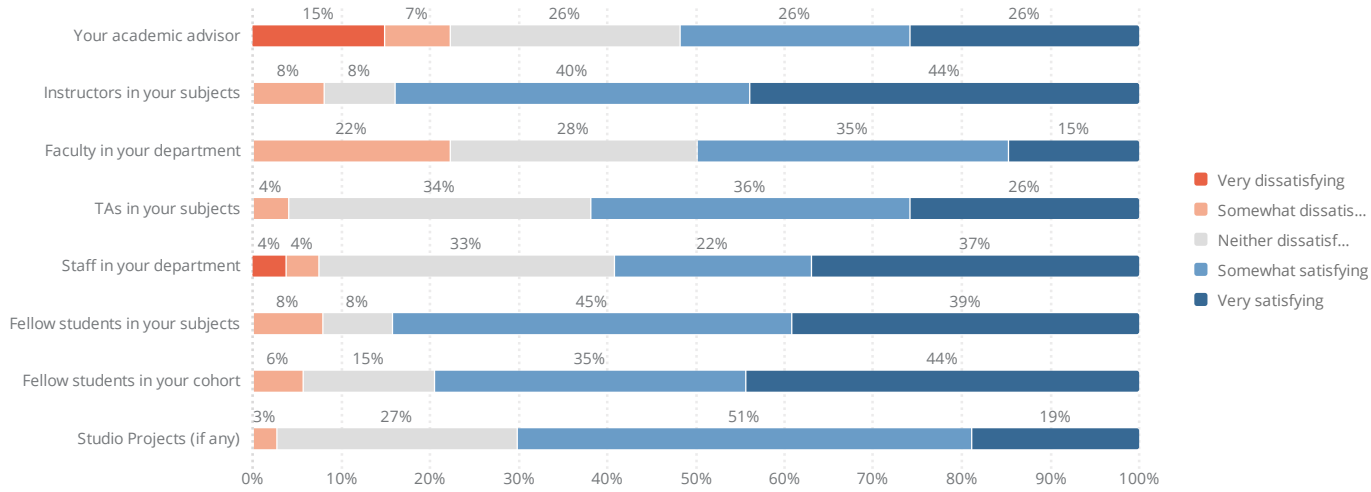
Quality of Engagement : **Remote Model** [Students started at MIT prior to Fall 2021]

How did you find the quality of your engagement with the following groups of people from MIT during your remote learning period?
All responses (total count) = 57



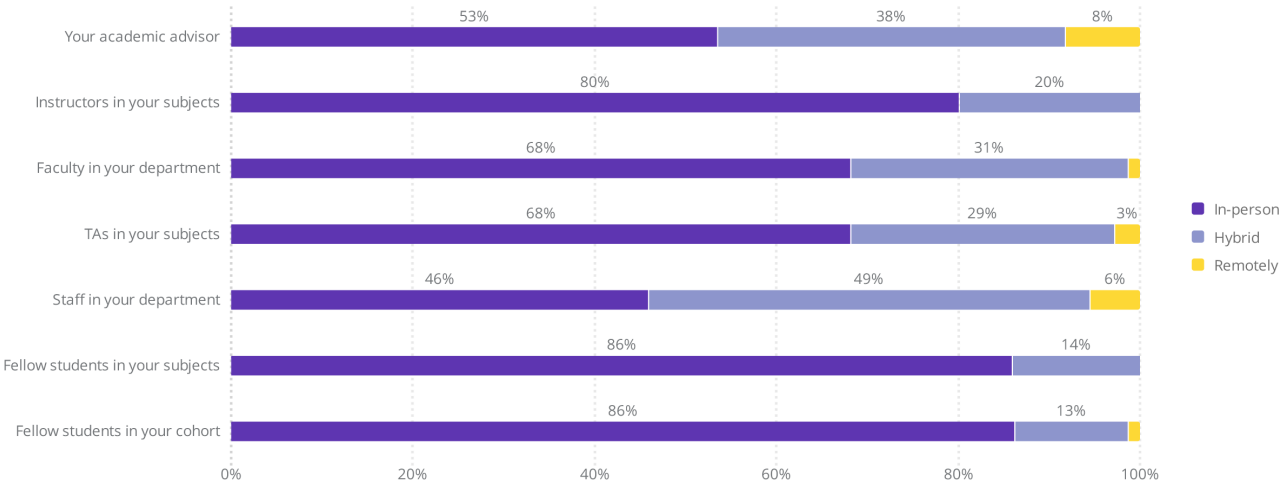
Quality of Engagement : **In-person Model** [Students started at MIT prior to Fall 2021]

Now that we are back on campus: How do you find the quality of your engagement with the following groups of people from MIT so far? All responses (total count) = 54



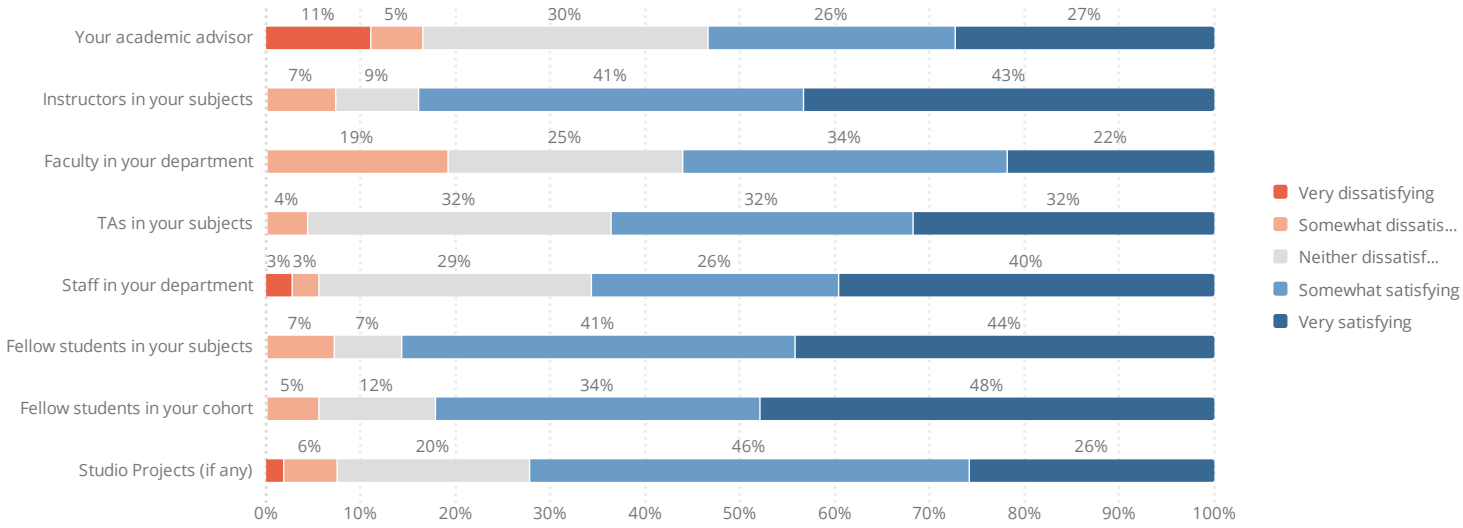
Quality of Engagement : **Preferences** [All Students - Students started at MIT in Fall 2021 included]

How do you prefer to engage with the following groups of people from MIT: All responses (total count) = 73



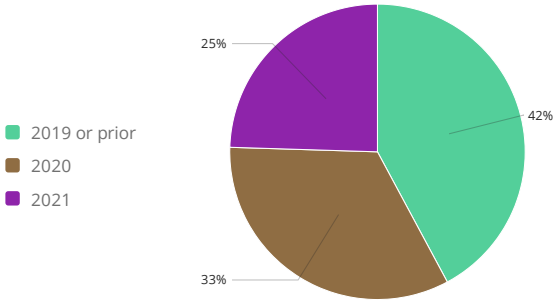
Quality of Engagement : **In-person Model** [All Students - Students started at MIT in Fall 2021 included]

Now that we are back on campus: How do you find the quality of your engagement with the following groups of people from MIT so far? All responses (total count) = 73

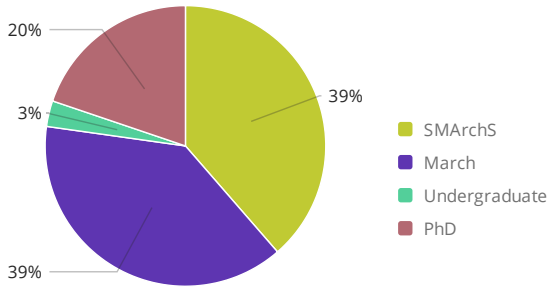


Distribution of Students by Program and Year

Please indicate the year that you started studying at MIT: All responses (total count) = 102

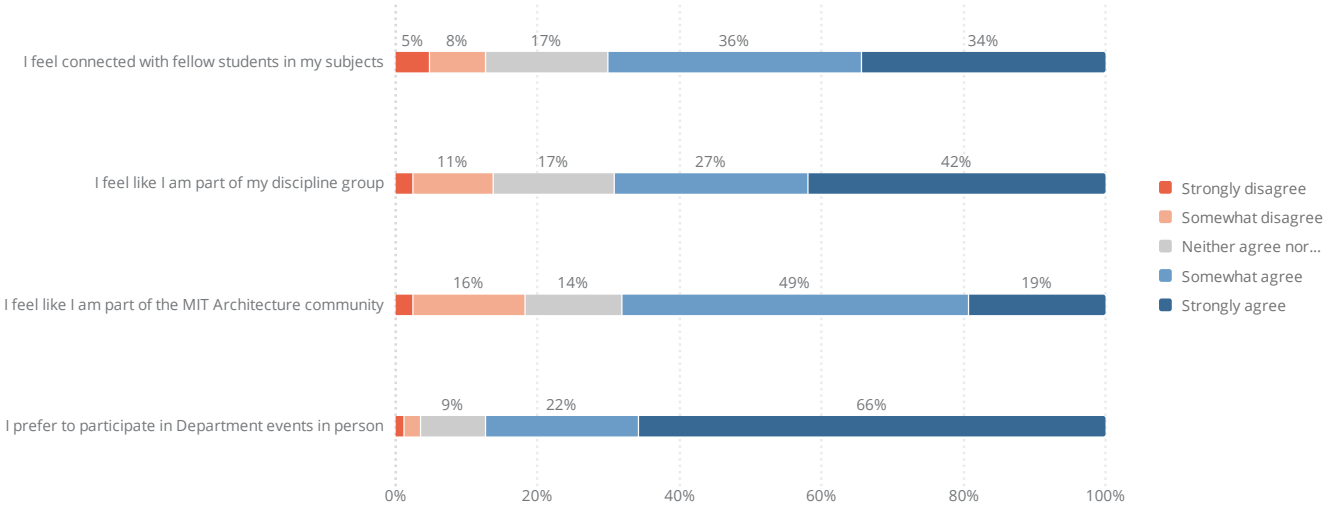


Distribution of students by program: All responses (total) = 101



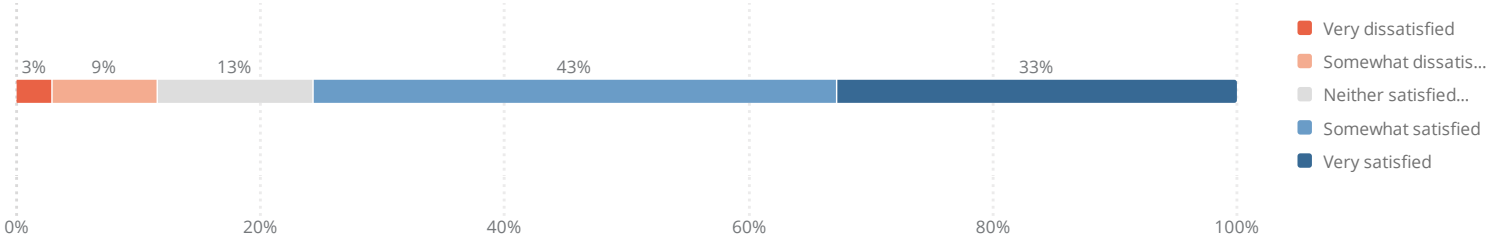
Community Assessment

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following: All responses (total count) = 88

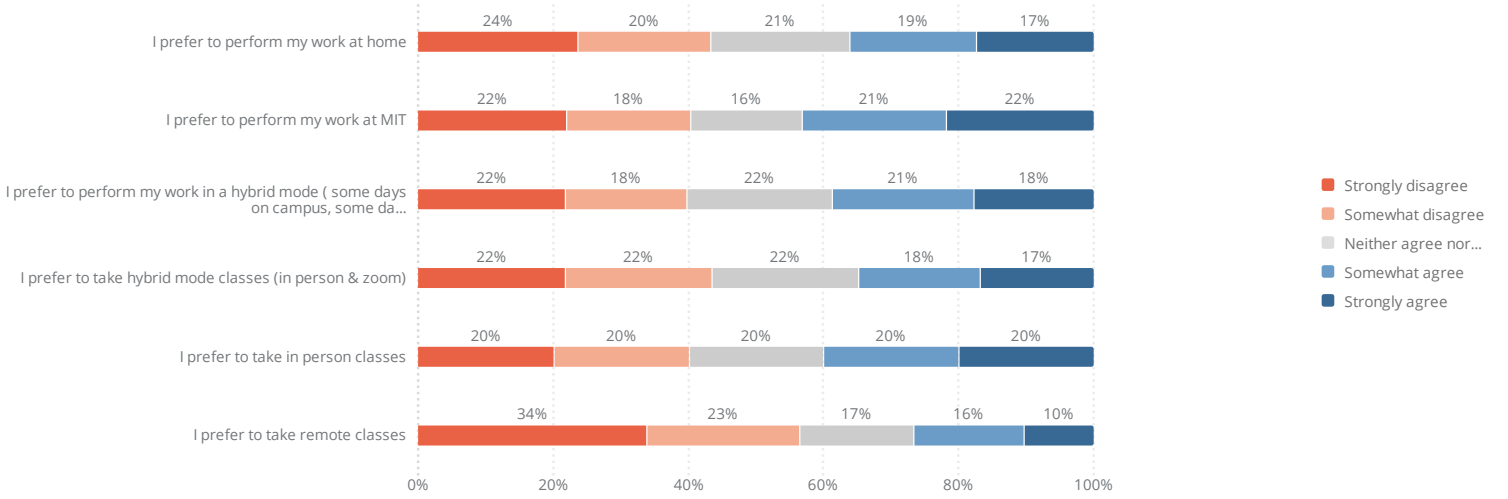


Assessment of Learning Experience | Fall 2021

How satisfied are you with your learning experience so far this Fall? All responses (total) = 70



To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following: All responses (total count) = 68

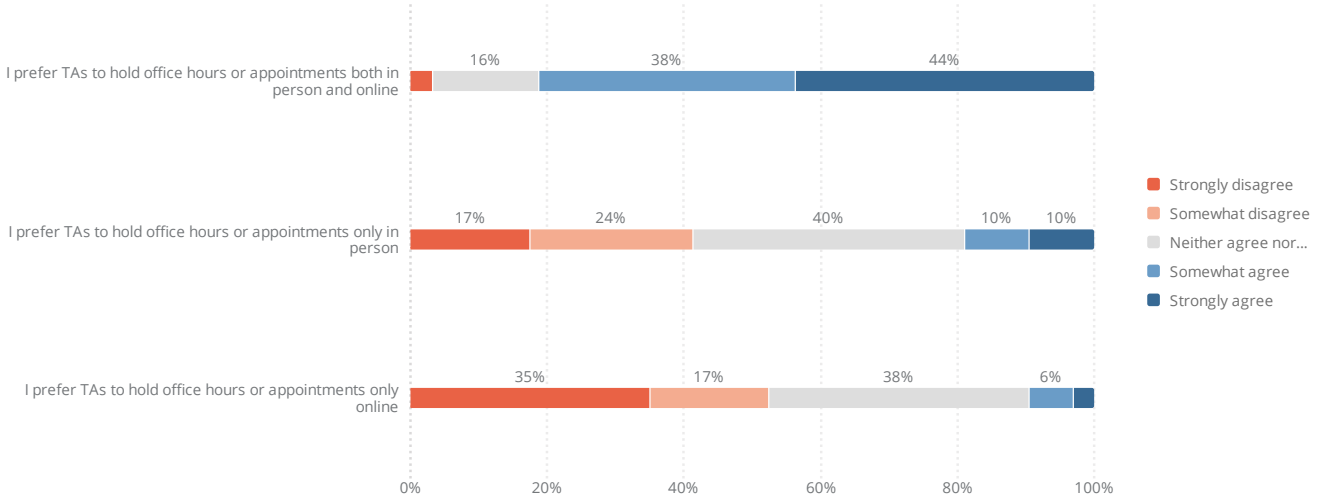


Student Suggestions for Learning, Teaching and Research

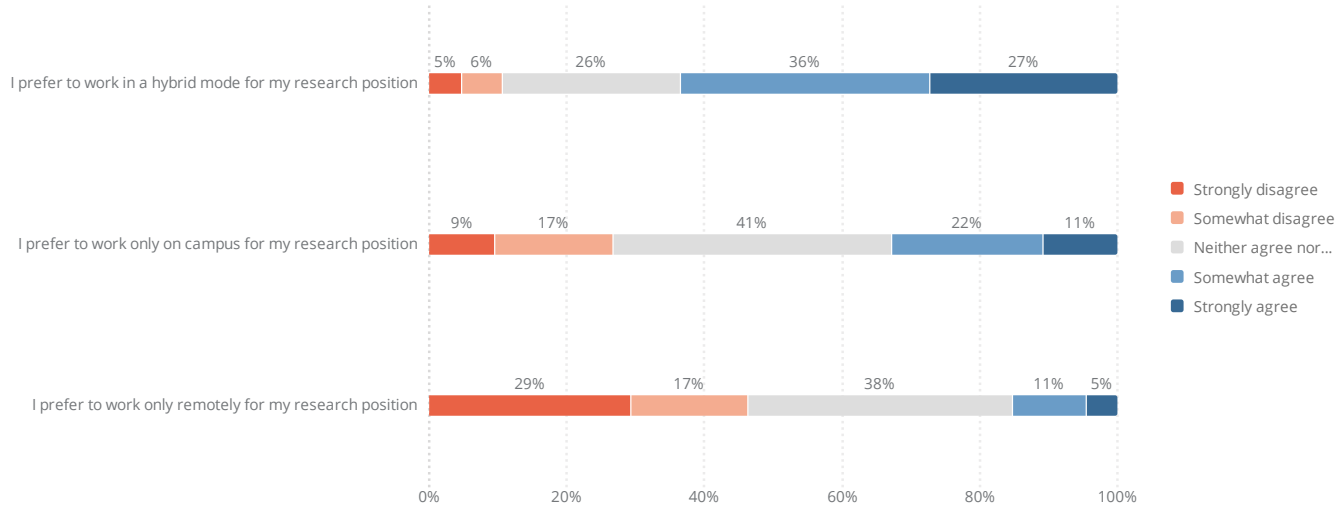
Teaching	Research	Making	Advising
Tools 1. Miro 2. Zoom 3. Canvas (Discoussion Boards) **Practices** 1. Recorded lectures to refer back 2. Mentor Sessions 3. Online Format for Guest lectures in classes - (“When it comes to guest lectures 4. Flexibility of meeting times 5. Online review format 6. Technical lectures or tutorial sessions to be recorded on Zoom 7. Flipped / reverse classroom	**Tools** 1. Hathi Trust Access, Fast ILL **Practices** 1. Hybrid 2. Resources organized from library 3. The ability to travel while remaining engaged with research 4. Digitization of physical media! Both physical and digital copies are tremendously useful in their own ways.	**Tools** 1. Home, desktop CNC, and 3D printing **Practices** 1. Limiting access to spaces so that they were not too crowded - namely N51 2. Sending Kits home for students to make from Home 3. 24 Shop Access	**Tools** 1. Zoom **Practices** 1. More zoom meetings 2. Flexibility to choose between in-person or online meetings

Student Preferences for Learning, Teaching and Research

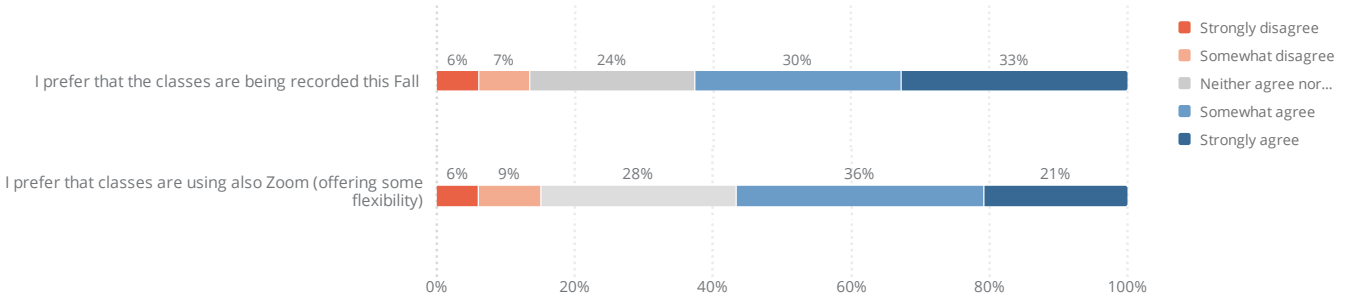
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following: All responses (total count) = 64



To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following: All responses (total count) = 66

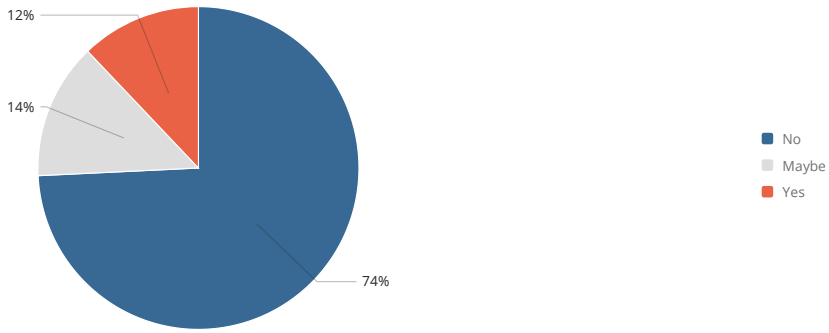
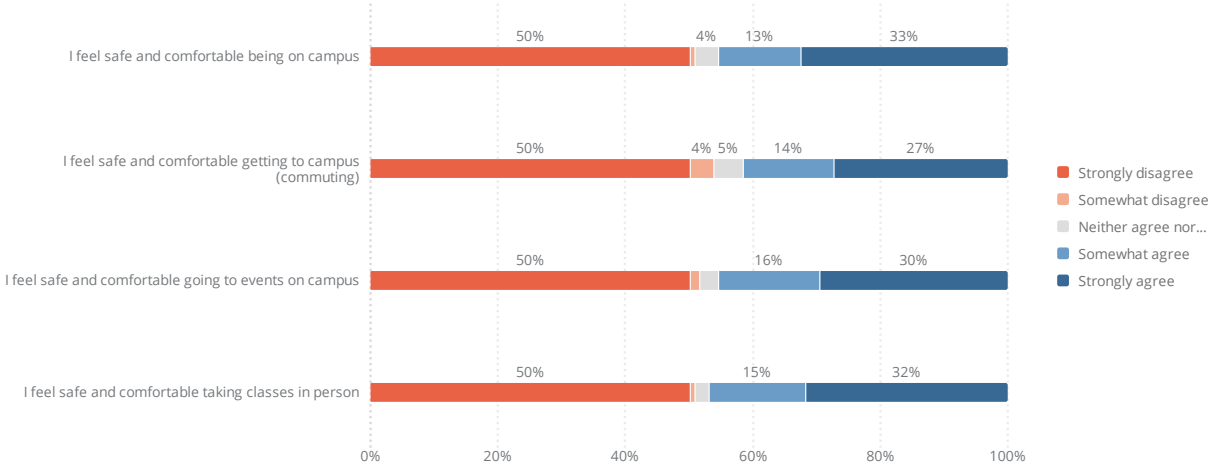


To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following: 67



Stress & Well-Being

Are you concerned about being back to campus? All responses (total count) = 66



To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following: All responses (total count) = 66