

# Temporary Online Learning Survey Report

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## Methodology and Students Profile

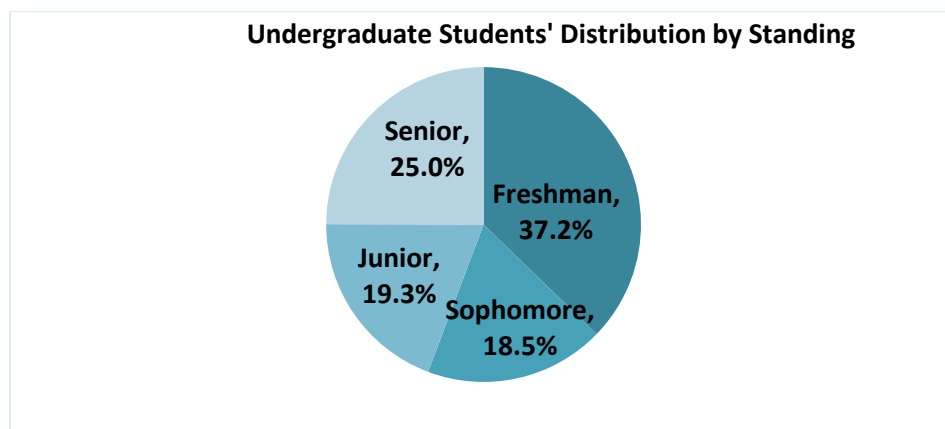
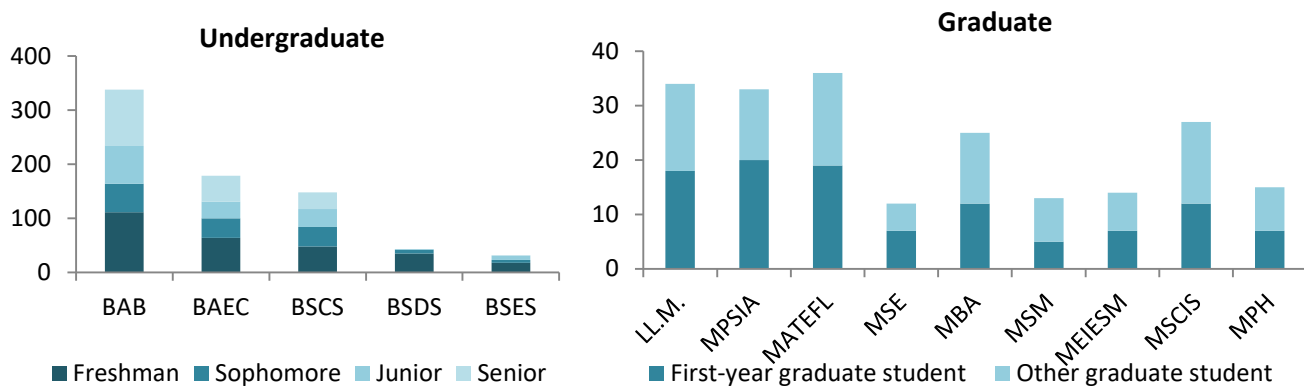
The American University of Armenia (AUA) administered a **Temporary Online Learning Survey** from April 1, 2020, to April 3, 2020. The survey was administered as a result of the University moving its operations including all courses to a temporary online platform. The objective of the survey was to solicit feedback from students regarding the temporary online learning experience so that the university could better understand what is going well and identify possible areas needing improvement.

The survey included 1695 undergraduate and graduate students who had at least one add/drop compliant enrollment as of April 1, 2020. The survey was carried out by the university's Office of Institutional Research and Assessment.

Responses were anonymous. Students were informed about the anonymity of their responses. One initial email invitation and two follow up emails were distributed to students to encourage participation. **951 undergraduate and graduate students** participated in the survey denoting a **response rate of 56.1%**. Two not-valid responses were excluded from the analysis.

According to the results of One-sample Chi-square test<sup>1</sup>, the collected data is representative with the corresponding population of undergraduate programs. However, according to the test's results<sup>2</sup> the collected data is not representative with the corresponding population of graduate programs.

The charts below represent respondents' distribution by program and standing.



<sup>1</sup> Undergraduate Programs:  $X^2(4) = 4092.488$ ,  $p = 0.000$

<sup>2</sup> Graduate Programs:  $X^2(9) = 13.418$ ,  $p = 0.145$

### Key Findings: Students' Transition to Online Learning

- **The majority of undergraduate and graduate students agreed that the *transition to online learning has been manageable*.**
  - **Agreement among undergraduate students from the College of Science and Engineering (CSE)** was lower compared to their undergraduate classmates from other Colleges. (Figure 1).
  - **Among undergraduate programs**, senior students reported statistically significantly higher<sup>3</sup> agreement with the statement that their transition to online learning *has been manageable* compared to freshman students. (Figure 1)
- While **76.7% of all respondents** reported that their *electricity supply is stable enough for online learning*, a noteworthy **7.5% of undergraduate and graduate students** disagreed with this statement. (Figure 1)
  - **Among undergraduate programs**, senior students reported statistically significantly higher<sup>4</sup> agreement with the statement that their *electricity supply is stable enough for online learning* compared to freshman students. (Figure 1)
- While 62.2% of all students **agreed that their internet connection is fast and stable enough for online learning**, **18.4% students disagreed** with the statement that their internet connection is fast and stable enough for online learning. (Figure 1)
- Approximately **48% of undergraduate students** reported that their online-learning *workload is heavier than their onsite-learning workload*. While **more than half of graduate students** indicated that their online and onsite workloads are the same. (Figure 2)
  - **Among undergraduate programs, more than half of BAB students (59.4%) and BSDS students (51.2%)** reported that their online workload was either lighter or the same as their onsite learning workload, while more than half of the students in BAEC, BSES and BSCS reported having heavier online workload. (Figure 2)
  - **Among graduate programs, approximately 79% of PSIA students** reported experiencing heavier online-learning workload than onsite-learning workload while students in the other graduate programs mainly reported that the workload in online-learning was either lighter or the same as their onsite-learning workload.
  - **Among undergraduate programs**, a statistically significantly lower percentage of senior students reported that their online-learning workload is heavier than their onsite-learning workload compared to other undergraduate students. (Figure 1)<sup>5</sup>
- **More than half of undergraduate (60%) and graduate students (58%)** reported that **what they like** so far about temporary online learning is that there is **no need to spend time and resources on commuting to the university**.

<sup>3</sup> Significance in ANOVA (Tukey HSD, LSD, Bonferonni, Sidak tests),  $F(3)= 2.662$ ,  $p=0.047$ .

<sup>4</sup> Significance in ANOVA (Tukey HSD, LSD, Bonferonni, Sidak tests),  $F(3)= 2.776$ ,  $p=0.040$ .

<sup>5</sup> Pearson Chi-Square(6)= 22.115,  $p=0.001$

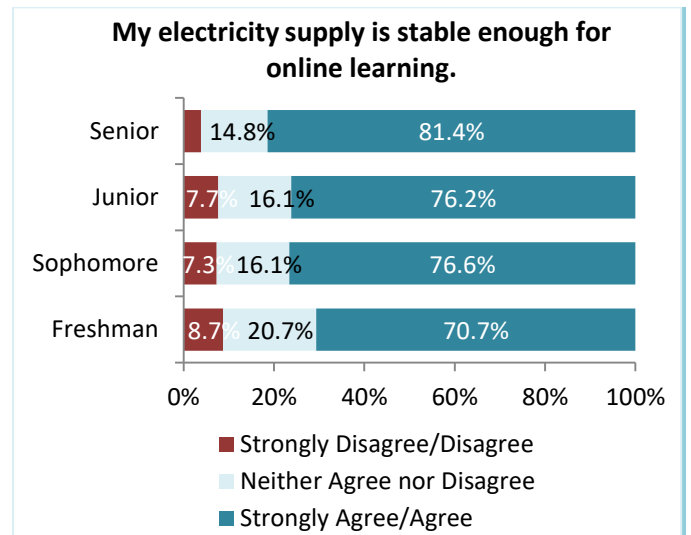
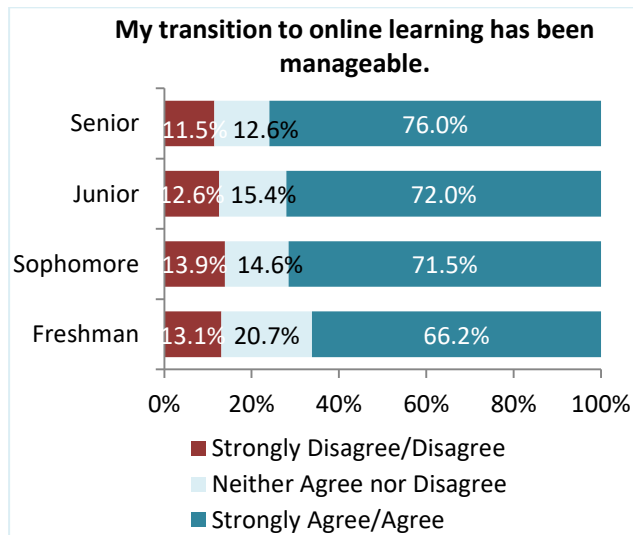
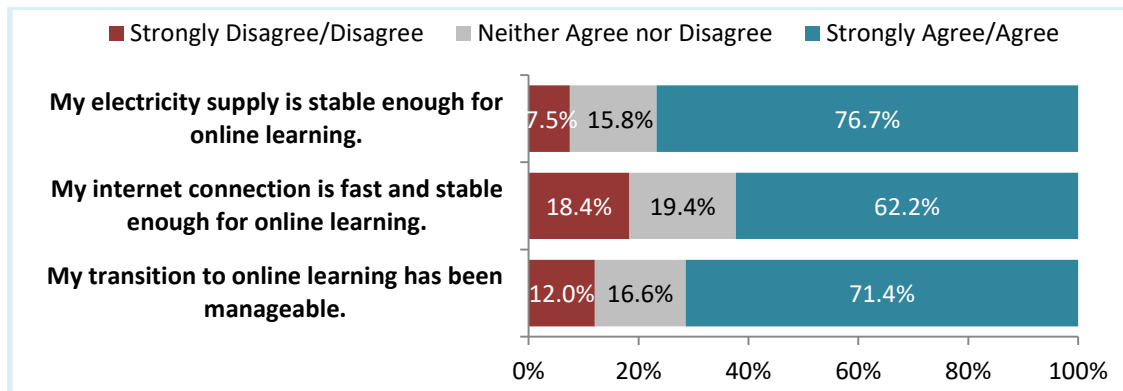
- Students also reported that they like the convenience of learning at home and the better time management.
  - 31% of undergraduate students and 23% of graduate students responded that they liked the **convenience of learning at home**. One student noted that the experience, “**can be helpful later.**”
  - Approximately the same percentage of undergraduate students (39%) and graduate students (38%) said they liked **the better time management**. At the same time, **35% of undergraduate students and 26% of graduate students said that one of the things they did not like was worse time management.**
  - One student acknowledged that what they liked was the “**safety from being infected, being home with my family.**”
  
- **62% of undergraduate students and almost half of graduate students** reported that what they **did not like** about online learning was a **higher possibility of distraction**. One comment in particular highlighted this challenge, “**online-learning requires much more individual work which I cannot do. We have a big family and it is really hard for me to do classes at home. More than that, we have a child at home.**” Some students mentioned the combination of distraction and stress, “**Noise as everyone is attending class from home. If online learning was used in other situations, it would be fine but everyone is stressed ... and everyone has to sit at home disturbing the ones taking classes.**”
- **Over half of undergraduate students (55%) and almost half of graduate students (49%) reported loneliness and feelings of isolation**. Comments included, “Sometimes I feel depressed being at home for so long” and, “**loneliness due to quarantine makes it easier to get into depressive condition what is an obstacle for successful learning.**”
- Students also mentioned that they did not like the lack of interaction with classmates and faculty. Comments about what they did not like included “**lack of dialogue with professors**”, “**lack of communication with peers**” and “**loss of networking**”
  
- **More than 25% of students reported that they had difficulty with time-management and complications with a technology**. Several students noted that some faculty struggled with technology.
  
- **17.2% of graduate students and 12.4% of undergraduate students reported having difficulty studying due to of child or family care responsibilities**. Comments came from student who are parents as well as students who take care of other family members. “**My parents are doctors and I am looking after my 2 years old brother and it is three time harder for me to focus on classes.**”

- When asked to provide additional feedback, some **students expressed praise for online learning**:
  - **“Online learning is more efficient...during our classes instructors record the lecture and post it in Moodle, which gives us opportunity to review the lecture later. I like this opportunity very much.”**
  - **“I am so happy we have managed to organize this transition smoothly.”**
  - **“I am overall happy of the way AUA dealt with this unexpected situation. Perhaps we can think about having such an online learning for some interval every year.”**

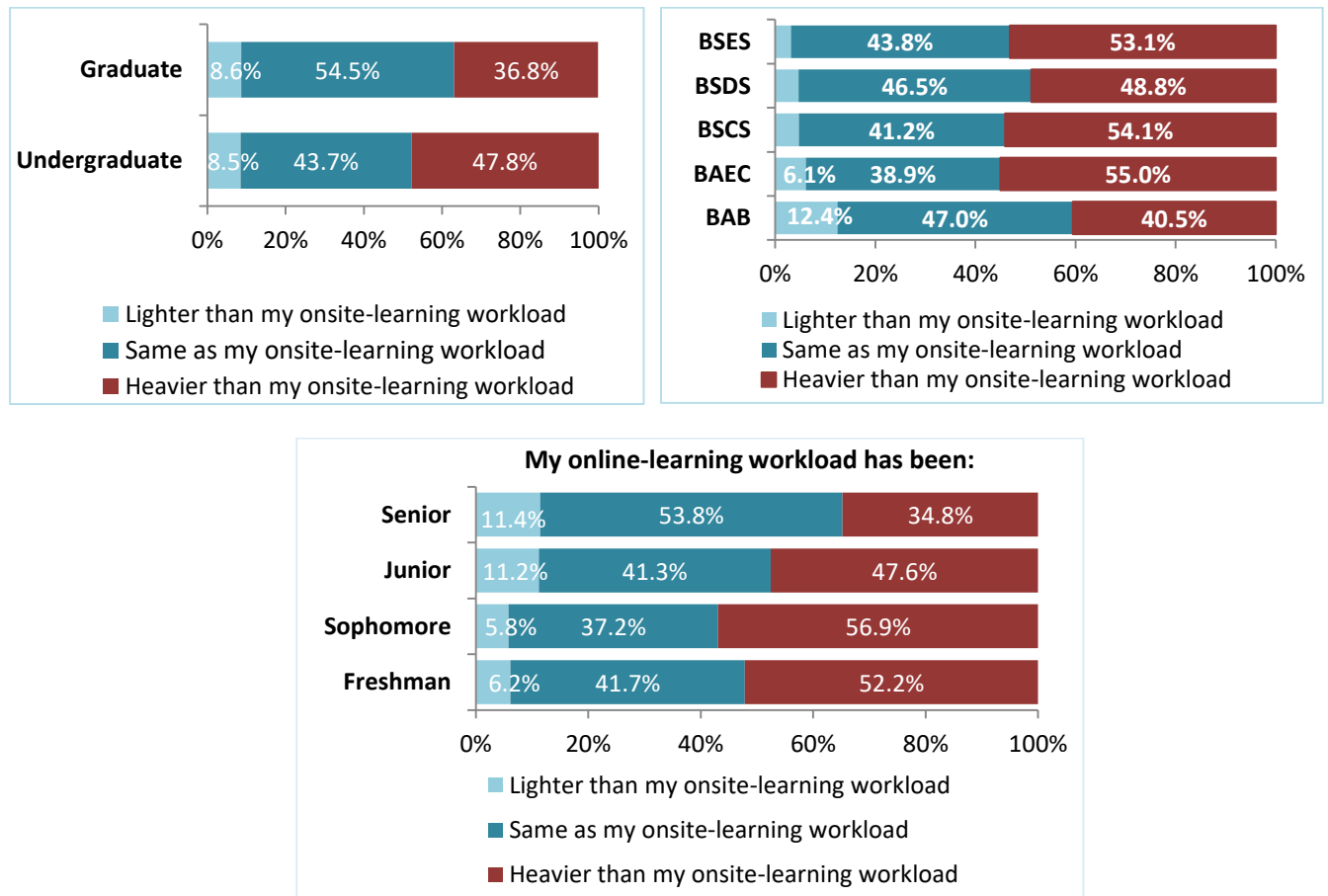
While some students expressed **concern** related to:

- **Stress and health issues.** One student noted that, **“The problem is not what I DID NOT LIKE ABOUT ONLINE TEACHING but the problem is that I do it under stress.”** While another noted that **“it is not easy to not think about the situation and the future of our country and relatives and just do lessons all day long as if nothing has happened.”** Students expressed being distracted at home with large families while others expressed concern about being alone and away from family.
  - **Effectiveness of online learning.** Some students expressed concern related to the overall effectiveness, while a few comments spoke to challenges with pedagogy. **One student noted that online learning provided, “limited opportunities to clarify and understand the material better.”** And other student noted that, **“everything depends on [the] professor.”**
  - **Uncertainty related to grading.** While expressing concern about grading and final grades, some students suggested adjusting the grading system.
  - **Issues related to tuition payments.** Students asked the University to consider, **“possible discounts to our remaining tuition fees because our parents do not work now...”**
  - **Graduation and commencement.** Students expressed concern about graduation and the commencement ceremony. Comments such as **“please, communicate some information about our graduation, it is also another pressure at this moment.”**, **“How will we graduate?”** and **“Will we have a graduation ceremony?”**
  - Students also expressed concern about **deadlines, particularly related to finishing Capstones.** Comments such as **“Uncertainty about capstone projects is putting more pressure”** and **“we can't do proper research and interviews because of quarantine”**
- Students reported that **the three most-used software** during temporary online learning are Zoom, Moodle, Google Drive. (Figure 4)

**Figure 1: University Wide: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your temporary ONLINE learning experience so far?<sup>6</sup>**

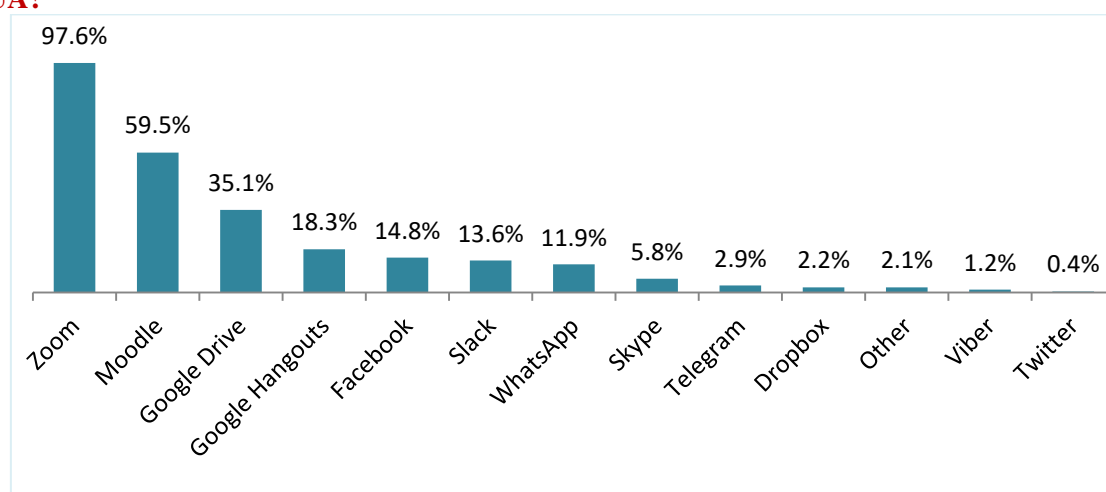


<sup>6</sup> One-way ANOVA test results didn't show any significant difference between undergraduate and graduate levels, between undergraduate programs, and between graduate programs. This is why by program charts for these three questions are not presented.

**Figure 2: By level and by undergraduate programs: My online-learning workload has been:**

**Table 1: What did you like or not like so far about ONLINE learning?<sup>7</sup>**

		Undergraduate	Graduate
<b>Like</b>	No need to spend time and resources on commuting to the university	60.1%	58.4%
	Better time management	38.6%	38.3%
	Convenient learning	30.9%	23.4%
	Do not like anything about online learning	3.6%	4.3%
	Opportunity to record classes	2.2%	N/A
	Other	3.5%	3.8%
<b>Did Not Like</b>	Higher possibility of distraction	62.0%	49.8%
	Loneliness and feelings of isolation	54.7%	49.3%
	Worse time management	35.3%	26.3%
	Complications with a technology	28.4%	25.4%
	No time for studying because of child or family care	12.4%	17.2%
	Absence of personal computer or device	4.9%	7.2%
	Heavier workload/more pressure	2.6%	2.9%
	Miss classmates, professors, university; face to face communication	1.9%	3.3%
	Too much time in front of the screen	1.6%	3.8%
	Other	8.0%	6.2%

**Figure 4: Which of the following applications have you been using for your ONLINE learning at AUA?**

<sup>7</sup> These two questions combine responses to precoded categories chosen based on some preliminary research (see: <https://www.communitycollegereview.com/blog/pros-and-cons-of-an-online-education-is-it-right-for-you>) as well as categories added during analysis by coding open-ended comments under the response “other” for this question.



**Table 2. Additional feedback (coded open-ended comments) – Undergraduate**

Codes	Total	Total out of respondents% <sup>8</sup>	Total out of responses % <sup>9</sup>
Quality of education suffers (not effective, inconvenient, distractive, hard to concentrate)	53	7.2%	28.0%
Heavier workload	27	3.6%	14.3%
Effectiveness depends on instructors/course type/student-faculty interaction	22	3.0%	11.6%
Good management of all processes by AUA/transition is smooth	17	2.3%	9.0%
Grading (uncertainty, exams, suggestions to revise the system)	36	4.9%	19.0%
I like online classes	18	2.4%	9.5%
Concerns about tuition	17	2.3%	9.0%
Technical issues with Zoom/other programs/software	16	2.2%	8.5%
Health issues/stress/psychological issues/long hours in front of computer	11	1.5%	5.8%
Suggestion to prolong the semester	8	1.1%	4.2%
Concerns about theses and capstones	9	1.2%	4.8%
Personal computer/internet connection issues	8	1.1%	4.2%
No socializing, no face-to-face communication	5	0.7%	2.6%
Extend deadlines	3	0.4%	1.6%
Uncertainty about graduation/commencement	0	0.0%	0.0%
Issues with family/child care	2	0.3%	1.1%
Other (general uncertainty, thank you, etc.)	37	5.0%	19.6%

<sup>8</sup> A total of 740 undergraduate respondents<sup>9</sup> A total of 189 open-ended comments by undergraduate respondents (responses)

**Table . Additional feedback (coded open-ended comments) – Graduate**

	Total	Total out of respondents % <sup>10</sup>	Total out of responses % <sup>11</sup>
Quality of education suffers (not effective, inconvenient, distractive, hard to concentrate)	13	6.3%	23.2%
Concerns regarding course load and assignments	10	4.8%	17.9%
Health issues/stress/psychological issues/long hours in front of computer	9	4.3%	16.1%
Concerns about theses and capstones	6	2.9%	10.7%
Technical issues with Zoom/other programs/software	6	2.9%	10.7%
Good management of all processes by AUA/transition is smooth	5	2.4%	8.9%
I like online classes	5	2.4%	8.9%
Grading (uncertainty, exams, suggestions to revise the system)	4	1.9%	7.1%
Effectiveness depends on instructors/course type/student-faculty interaction	3	1.4%	5.4%
Uncertainty about graduation/commencement	3	1.4%	5.4%
Suggestion to prolong the semester	2	1.0%	3.6%
Issues with family/child care	2	1.0%	3.6%
Concerns about tuition	1	0.5%	1.8%
Extend deadlines	1	0.5%	1.8%
Self-discipline issues	1	0.5%	1.8%
Other (general uncertainty, thank you, etc.)	11	5.3%	19.6%

<sup>10</sup> A total of 207 graduate respondents<sup>11</sup> A total of 56 open-ended comments by graduate respondents