WR Assessment Project

Spring 2022 Student Survey

## COVID Impact

We asked students "What impact did the COVID-19 pandemic have on how prepared you felt for success in your college writing class(es)?"

We received 810 student comments which we manually coded as indicating either negative, neutral, or positive impacts of the pandemic. Using a combination of close reading and computer-assisted categorization of comments, we also identified common themes within each category.

Of all of the student responses **53.7% indicated a negative impact** of the pandemic on their preparedness for college writing. Responses ranged from indicating being slightly nervous or wary of their writing courses to describing significant difficulties caused by COVID. The most common themes were students describing being more nervous or scared by their writing courses. For example,

> *"I was nervous at first because I was at a new school, new state, in the midst of a pandemic but I adjusted quickly and felt safe in class"*

> *"It set me back a little but getting back to class got me back into the swing of things"*

> *"I had been out of writing classes for a while and was initially uneasy. However, this course has been well structured and outlined how I should develop key writing skills."*

> *"At first it made me nervous to come to class but as cases fell I became more comfortable."*

> *"Few in person classes my senior year of high school made me nervous to go into a college level writing course"*
> *"I hadn't done a writing class in over two years in person so I was nervous to be back in person."*

> *"I was nervous that I was falling behind, and that I would not be able to perform at a high enough level."*

Students also commented on being less prepared, often due to the pandemic impacting their previous high school writing courses. For example,

> *"It definitely was a challenge because high school my senior year did not prepare me as a high school to the standards of being a college student. "*

> *"I feel less prepared than I should be for my college writing classes at UO"*

Students commonly reported a lack of motivation or a lack of focus that impacted their preparation.

> *"I don't think it made me feel less prepared but did make me more stressed."*

> *"I felt prepared when it came to understanding and feeling confident in my writing. I mostly struggled with time management and motivation. "*

Some students indicated that either physical health or mental health challenges impacted their ability to feel prepared for college writing.

> *"The COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on how prepared I felt for most of my college classes including my writing classes because I feel I am not suited to learn material as proficiently in online classes compared to in person. The pandemic took a serious toll on my mental health for a while and that translated into my school and work life."*

> *"impacted my mental health, in addition to my own physical health"*

> *"COVID really set me back immensely. It took a huge toll on my mental health and affected my abilities as student. I was not able to be the best that I could and it made me struggle a lot."*

Of all respondents **41.5% indicated no or negligible impacts** of the pandemic on their preparedness for college writing. Many comments were very brief indicating they didn't perceive that the pandemic had altered their preparation for the writing courses they completed.

> *"I felt prepared for the writing classes"*

> *"It didn't have an effect on my writing."*

> *"I did not feel an impact on my success in college writing classes. I think, even in the midst of a global pandemic, I felt plenty prepared for the writing classes I've taken."*

> *"There was not impact for me with the pandemic and my college writing classes"*

**Finally, 4.8% of respondents indicated a positive impact of the pandemic on their preparedness.** Specifically, students cited specific skills or enhanced motivation in their courses as a result of the COVID pandemic. For example,

*"I felt as if I had a better motivation to make sure that I would try my best to communicate with my professors"*

*"It taught me to be patient "*

*"Being able to come back to class made me so much more excited to be in class"*

*"Honestly it made me more eager to get back in to learning. I'll admit I was scared that I lost the drive I had when it came to studying but I was still able to get back in to a routine when I came here for school as a Freshman."*

*"It helped me feel more prepared since I had done a lot more online writing classes during covid. "*

*"It honestly helped me learn new writing skills and strategies"*

*"I had a lot of difficulties during COVID that honestly made my work ethic better."*