



Staff Council Report

Notes compiled by: Savannah Hembree

September 30, 2020

UGA Staff Survey

- During the August 5, 2020, Staff Council meeting, the creation of a survey for staff members on the return to work during the pandemic was assigned to the Health & Safety Committee
- The survey was submitted to the Staff Council Executive Board for approval on August 12, 2020
- The final survey was sent out to various staff listservs, including the UGA Staff listserv, starting on August 14, 2020. The link was emailed out to Staff Council representatives and chairs of the Staff Representative Groups for distribution
 - Note: Since the survey was distributed via listservs and to keep with allowing staff to respond anonymously, Staff Council cannot determine if units such as FMD or Auxiliary services were well represented. This may skew the results in relation to teleworking and job security
- The survey was open for submittals until August 28, 2020
- Once completed, the Health & Safety committee compiled the results, which were then shared with Staff Council during the September 2nd meeting

UGA Staff Survey Results

- Over 960 staff members completed the survey during the two weeks that it was available
- Over 65% rated the University's handling of the pandemic as average or above
- Over 73% of staff members were given the option to telework and 64% are satisfied with their unit's teleworking options
- When asked if staff members felt like their job would be in jeopardy if UGA shifts to all online courses, 74% said no
- An overwhelming 96% of staff members are satisfied with the communication from the University in regards to the pandemic
- Concerns moving forward from staff include
 - lack of transparency with the number of UGA students, faculty, and staff that have tested positive for COVID-19,
 - contact tracing being inadequate,
 - lack of unified approach across all campuses and departments,
 - COVID-19 testing,
 - teleworking,
 - reduction-in-force due to possible personnel budget cuts
 - disconnected employees, low morale
 - defined "next steps" plan

Enclosed: SC Staff Survey – UGA COVID-19 questions
SC Survey Results Report



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Staff Council

Introduction

As UGA students, faculty, and staff return to campus to prepare the fall semester, the Staff Council understands that staff feedback is crucial during this time. To gauge how the return to campus is progressing and to understand any continuing areas of concern, we are asking staff to complete a brief survey (approximately five minutes). The results of this survey will help UGA Staff Council determine how we can best assist staff members during this transition.

This survey is confidential. Staff members will not be asked for any identifying markers. If you have any questions regarding the survey, please do not hesitate to contact Savannah Hembree, UGA Staff Council President, at ugasc@uga.edu.

Are you a current staff member at the University of Georgia?

- Yes
- No

How would you rate the University's handling of the pandemic this far?

- Excellent
- Good
- Average
- Poor
- Terrible

In reference to the above response, why did you answer this?

Was the University's decision in March to move classes online and shut down the campus made:

- Too quickly
- In a timely and prudent manner
- Too slowly

Does your department require you to return to campus to resume working from your previous location prior to the pandemic?

- Yes
- No

If you have a position that allows you to work from home, were you given the option to telework?

- Yes
- No

If yes, how many hours per week?

Are you satisfied with your College/Unit's in-person vs. teleworking options?

- Yes
- No

If you are not satisfied, please explain.

If the University decides to shift all courses online and close the campus, will you be able to resume work remotely?

- Yes
- No
- Not Sure

Do you feel like your job will be in jeopardy if UGA shifts all courses online and close any or all campuses?

- Yes
- No

Why?

How do you feel about the timing and frequency of communication from the University about updates during the pandemic?

- I would like more communication
- I am satisfied with the current amount of communication
- I would like less communication

How likely would you be to watch recorded townhall-style videos from campus departments answering staff questions about operations in the fall?

- Extremely likely
- Somewhat likely
- Neither likely nor unlikely
- Somewhat unlikely
- Extremely unlikely

Block 1

CDC Guidelines Questions

The following questions are in reference to the CDC guidelines which can be found at

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/colleges-universities/>

How supportive are you of the policy for requiring that all faculty, staff, students, and visitors wear an appropriate face covering while inside campus facilities/buildings where six feet social distancing may not always be possible?

- Very supportive
- Somewhat supportive
- Unsure
- Not supportive

Block 2

The following responses will be used to work towards a resolution of identified shortcomings. Please use this space to tell us what UGA did well in their response, what areas they could improve on, and whether there is any specific action that your institution could take to help further.

I appreciate that UGA did...

I wish UGA would have...

Moving forward, my biggest concern is...

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Staff Council Survey Results

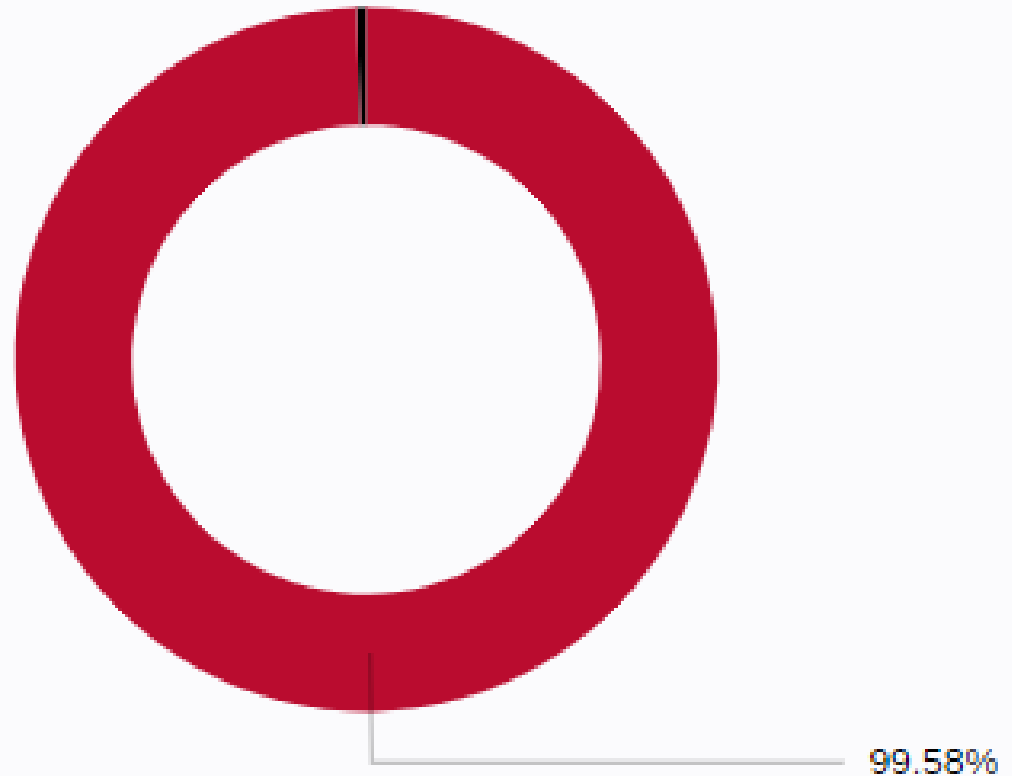


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**Are you a
current staff
member at
the
University
of Georgia?**

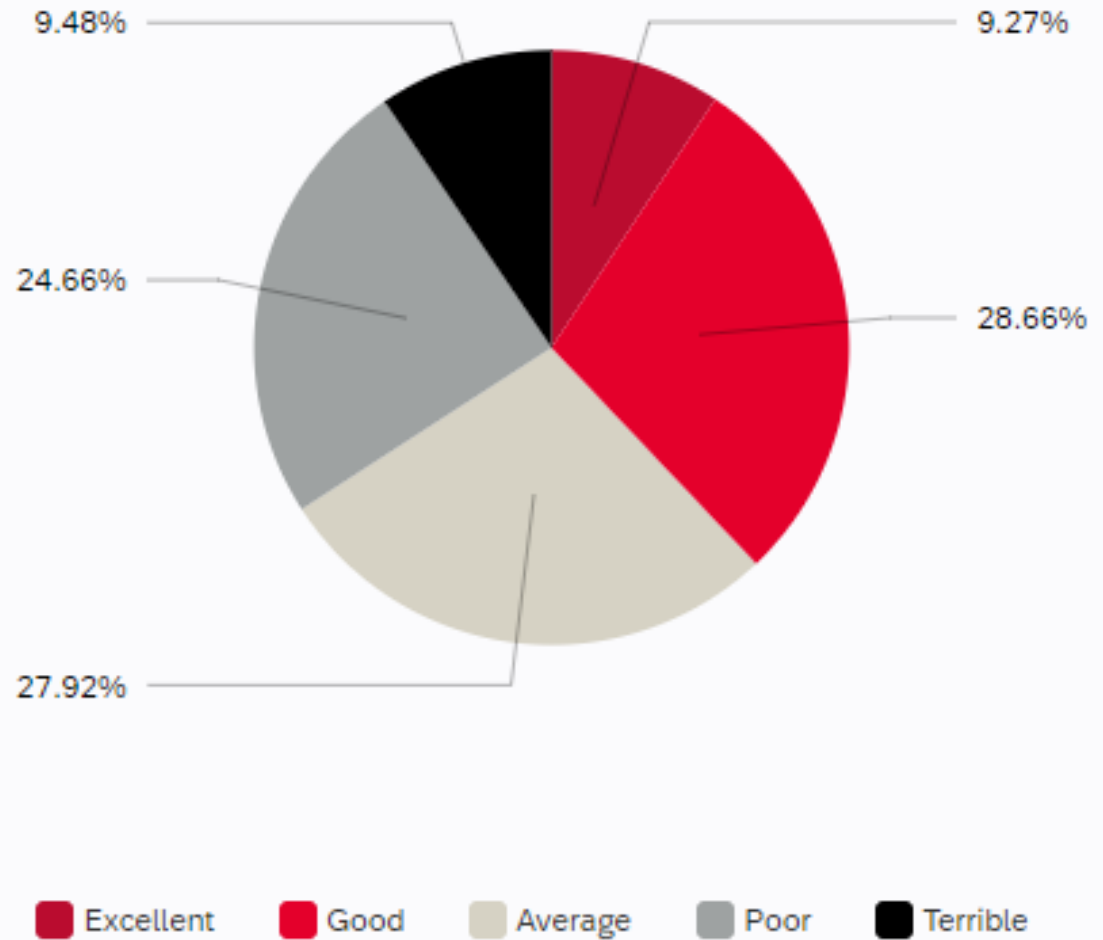


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Yes **No**

How would you rate the University's handling of the pandemic thus far?



In reference to the above response, **why did you answer this?**

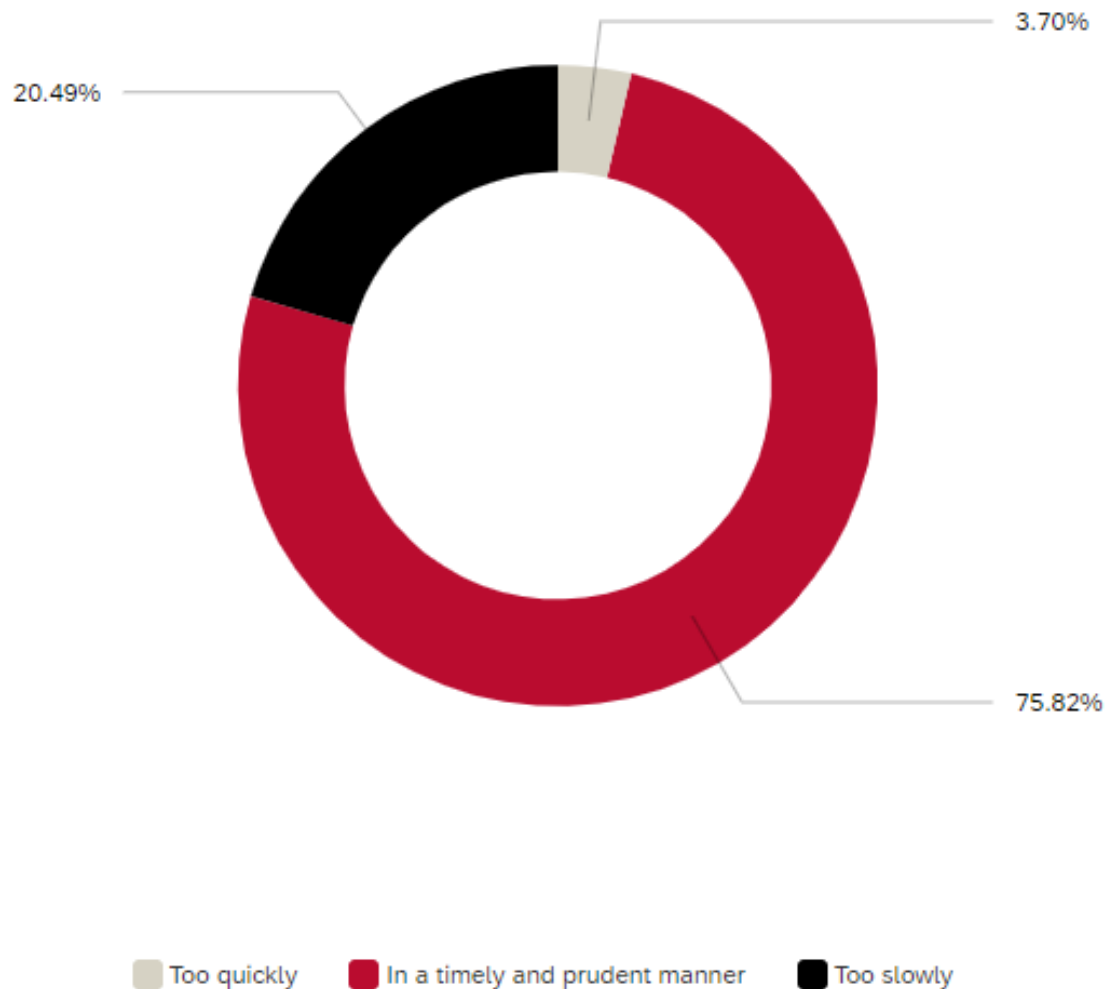
- Lack of transparency with numbers/data. Communication has not been transparent.
- Prioritizing profit over people. Faculty, staff, and students are asked to risk our lives for profit.
- Any worker who can work from home should be able to do so and those who cannot should receive hazard pay.
- Covid Dashboard has out of date and incomplete statistics, info not shared in a timely manner.
- Contact tracing is inadequate.
- Staffing should be staggered to avoid too much overlap in offices.
- Departments aren't given enough direction.
- Lack of unified approach to implement all programs and services.
- Testing should be mandated for every person on campus.
- Testing is inadequate, reporting is manipulative.
- Staff treatment has been demoralizing.
- No one enforces mask usage.
- Lack of PPE.
- Campuses other than the main campus feel forgotten, lack of testing at other campuses.
- Cases are rising, in person instruction is irresponsible and dangerous.



Was the University's decision in March to move classes online and shut down the campus made:



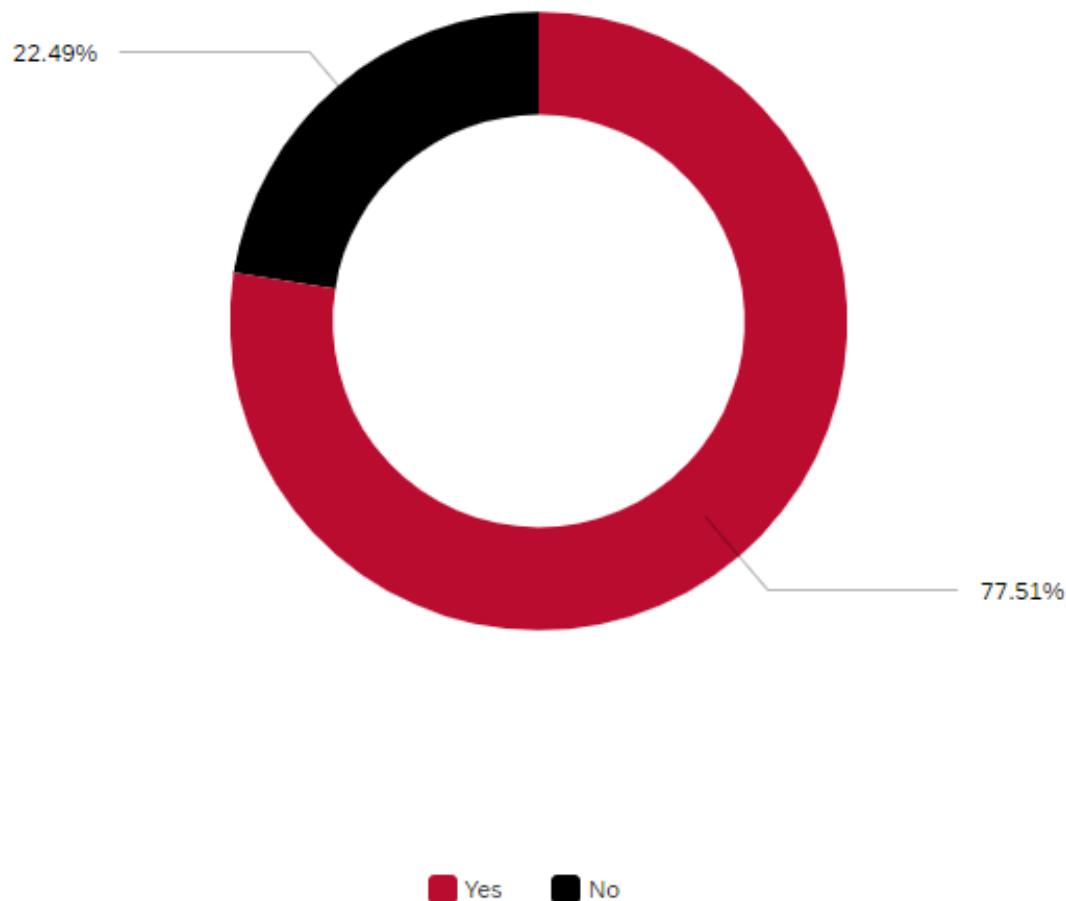
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Does your department require you to return to campus to resume working from your previous location prior to the pandemic?



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If you have a position that allows you to work from home, were you given the option to telework?



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If yes, how many hours per week?

- Up to 40 hours a week
- Varies
- Unsure
- Don't feel like it was encouraged
- 10 hours a week
- 24 hours a week
- Flexible
- Rotating amongst the department
- Received mixed messages



**Are you
satisfied with
your
College/Unit's
in-person vs.
teleworking
options?**



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■ Yes ■ No

If you are not satisfied, please explain.

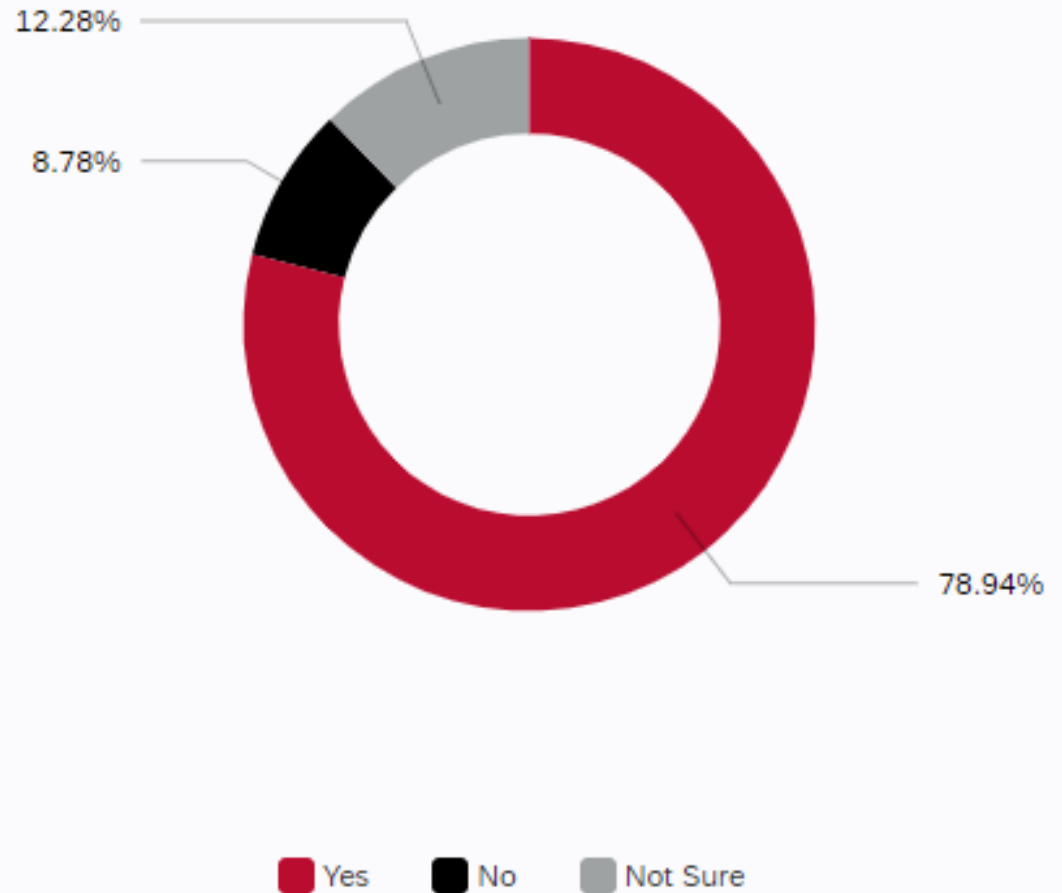
- 100% teleworking not an option. I was not given any options.
- UGA's Teleworking Policy (blanket requirement to be on campus) is antiquated.
- When UGA HR decided to leave the teleworking options in the hands of Deans/Units, this caused it to be handled very differently unit to unit. No equity across the University. Respect was lost for many supervisors and administrators for lack of flexibility shown and disregard for safety.
- With supervisors being required to be on campus 4 out of 5 days, it has caused a trickle-down effect of "if I have to be here, then everyone has to be here." We all have to be on campus to show solidarity. We have to have butts-in-seats for optics.
- There is a real perception that filing for reasonable accommodations puts a target on my back for retaliation, discrimination, and punishment. If I don't come to campus, I will lose my job.
- No accommodations for those living with high risk individuals or those with childcare issues. Lack of childcare should be a reason for accommodation.
- On campus work spaces are not compliant. No HEPA filters or HVAC upgrades. Those working in cubicles or open office areas are forced to wear masks all day.
- The quality of my work is not affected by working from home; if anything, it has improved due to the work-life balance I am able to achieve.
- Teleworkers are lazy and make jobs harder for those on campus.
- No incentives are given for essential workers. Those who are able to come to campus are being taken advantage of. Workers are taking advantage of telecommuting options.
- Week in/week out rotational schedules are more conducive to supporting de-densifying, allows time to monitor symptom development, reduces risk to others if asymptomatic.



If the University decides to shift all courses online and close the campus, will you be able to resume work remotely?



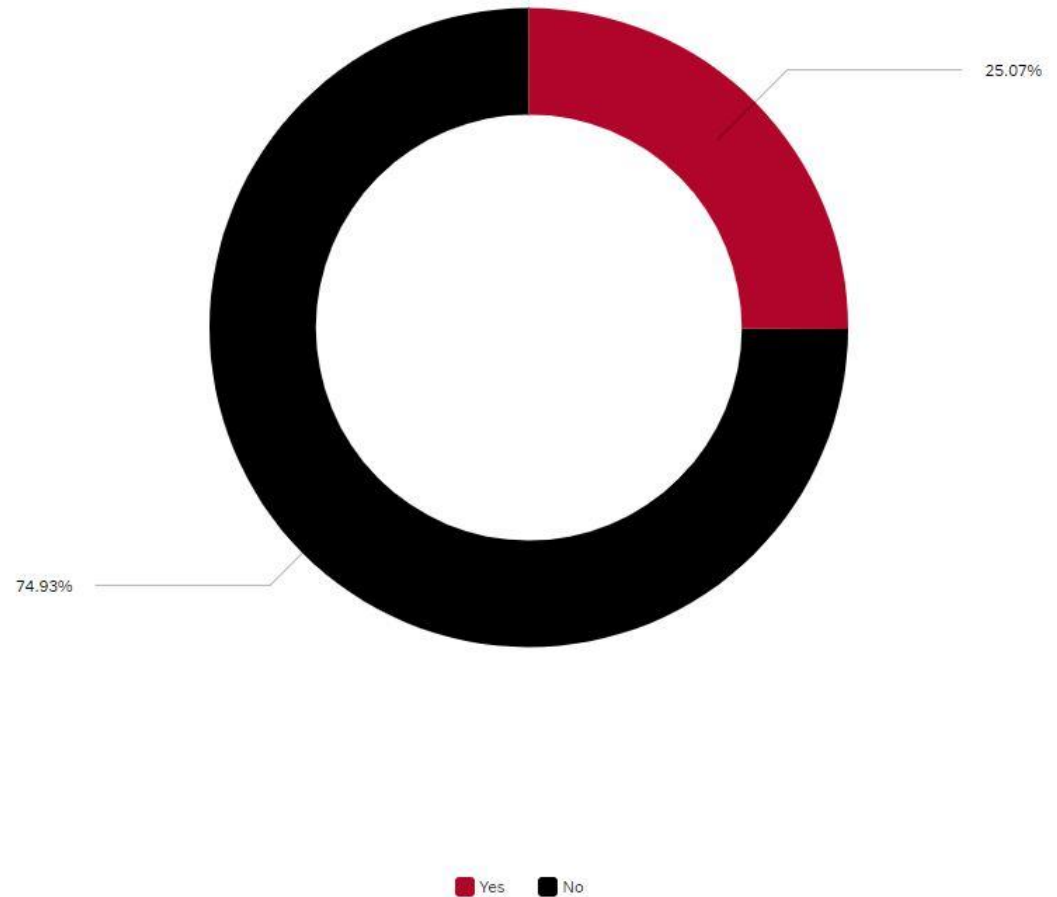
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Do you feel like your job will be in jeopardy if UGA shifts all courses online and closes any or all campuses?



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Why?

WORRIED

Research cannot continue

My position relies on campus being open or I cannot do my job from home

Our unit will be eliminated if we close again.

No revenue or budget reductions = no jobs

My salary is funded by tuition and student fees. Students will not continue to pay full tuition for only part of the experience.

My job duties are based on events, which are not occurring.

Low man on totem pole/lowest paid employee

NOT WORRIED

My position transitions easily

I am essential.

I have skills that others do not.

My college has made it clear that they will fight to keep people and cut money elsewhere

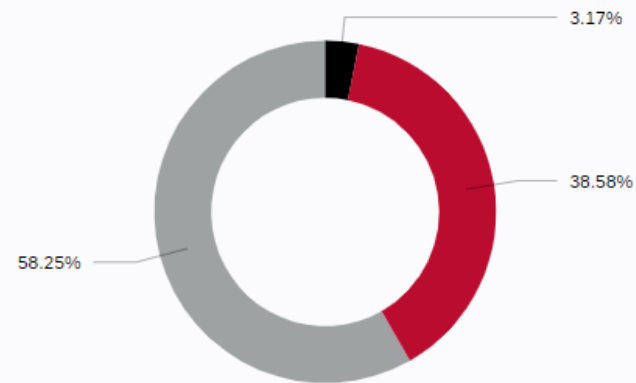
My salary is funded through secure money or state money



How do you feel about the timing and frequency of communication from the University about updates during the pandemic?



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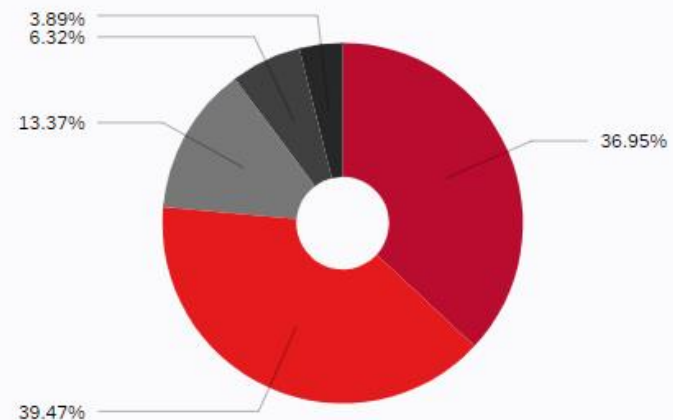


■ I would like less communication ■ I would like more communication ■ I am satisfied with the current amount of communication

How likely would you be to watch recorded townhall-style videos from campus departments answering staff questions about operations in the fall?



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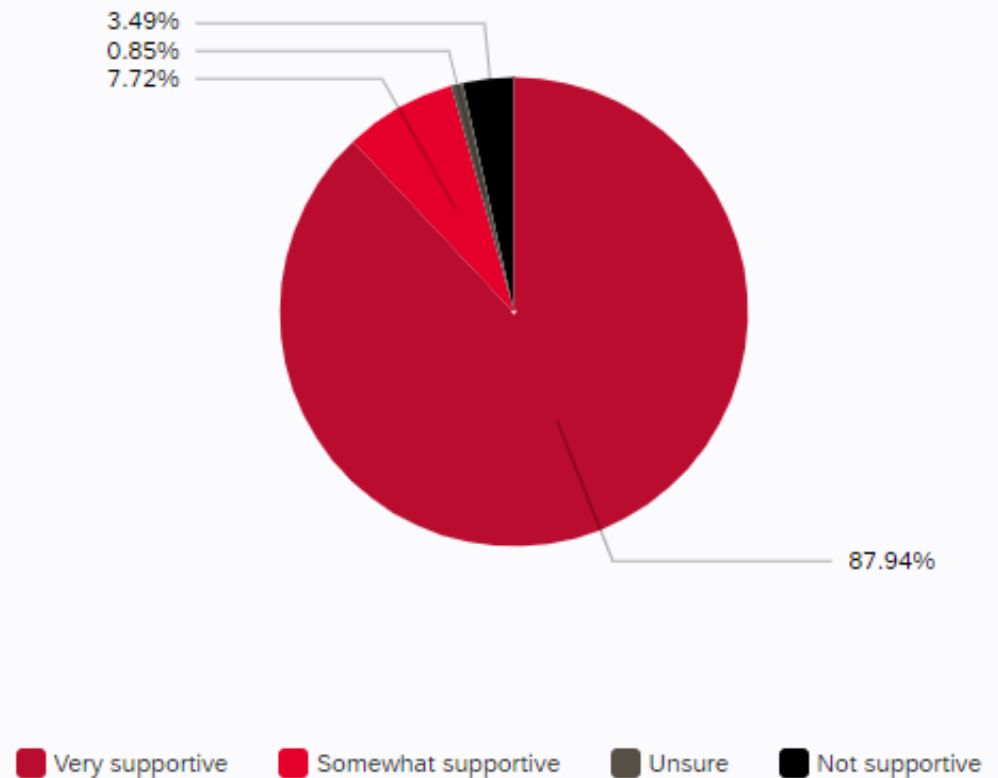


Extremely likely Somewhat likely Neither likely nor unlikely Somewhat unlikely Extremely unlikely

How supportive are you of the policy requiring that all faculty, staff, students, and visitors wear an appropriate face covering while inside campus facilities/buildings where six-foot social distancing may not always be possible?



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I appreciate that UGA did...

- Allowed telework
- Required face masks
- Provided PPE
- Moved operations to remote in March
- No layoffs
- Increased sanitation efforts
- No furloughs



I wish UGA would have...

Been more forward thinking, flexible, and proactive with long-term telecommuting options and mask requirements. Allowed 100% telecommuting. Allowed rotational staffing. Encourage telecommuting.

Been able to prevent students from going to bars and large social gatherings.

Reduce dorm capacity to 50% or less. Postpone/Ban Greek Life activities.

Treated all faculty, staff, students and stakeholders with more respect. Showed more empathy.

Been more transparent about positive cases. Daily results of tests.

Establish clear, direct RTC guidelines. Not given Phase 3 authority to departments/deans.

Included faculty and staff on task forces. Administrators are out of touch with the day-to-day.

Not started back so soon. Moved all classes to virtual. Remained online. Closed campus.

Required testing prior to return as well as regular testing.

Used money spent on PPE, shields, etc. for hazard pay, raises and keeping jobs.

Had autonomy and the courage to stand up to USGBOR instead of waiting for USGBOR direction for everything.

Cancelled football.

I am happy with everything the University has done thus far.



Moving forward, my biggest concern is...

- Staying healthy. Contact Tracing. Exposure. Spreading the virus. Death.
- Job Security. Layoffs seem imminent. University shut down.
- Economic Impact
- Lack of transparency. We have a right to know if there is a positive case in our building.
- Being on campus. Students not taking proper precautions.
- Feeling so disconnected. Boosting morale. Mental health and wellbeing.
- Not getting back to normal. Continued overreaction. Guidelines that are too stringent
- Having a defined plan for “next steps” and “what if” and “when”
- How long until UGA decides enough is enough and we go back online?
- When will UGA stop worrying about it’s image?
- The staff not being heard.

