

# International Student Experience During Pandemic

Fall 2020 Survey by ISAB, USG, DSL, & IP

**Introduction:** This survey was created to better understand international students' experience in Fall 2020 in order to advocate for actions and resources in improving international student experiences. The survey received a total of **280 responses**, with 117 undergraduate students, 158 graduate students, and 5 recent graduates or postdocs.

## **Data Summary:**

Where are international students in fall 2020?

| Classification  | % of Yes | % of No |
|---|----------|---------|
| Currently in the U.S. (N=279)   | 84.95%   | 15.05%  |
| Planning to stay in the U.S. in spring 2021 (among those who are currently in the U.S., N=222)      | 93.24%   | 6.76%   |
| Planning to return to the U.S. in spring 2021 (among those who are currently not in the U.S., N=35) | 42.86%   | 57.14%  |

**Over 80%** of international students **received their news** from the university **via email** and **over 90%** reported having **kept up well with news from the university**. **8.1%** reported **not keeping up well with news from university**.

International students shared their **academic experience**.

| Academic Experience Classification  | % of Yes      | % of No |
|---|---------------|---------|
| Has the constant <b>changing legislation</b> impacted your ability to fully engage with your academic goals?  | <b>43.75%</b> | 56.25%  |
| Have you encountered any difficulties <b>accessing technology</b> , such as Zoom, ICON, web or communication platforms, app, software, etc.?        | <b>27.08%</b> | 72.92%  |
| Have you encountered any difficulties attending your <b>synchronized classes</b> ?  | <b>25.91%</b> | 74.09%  |
| Have you encountered any difficulties to <b>fully participate</b> in your classes (due to assignment criteria, time zone differences, etc.)?        | <b>22.63%</b> | 77.37%  |
| Have you encountered any difficulties <b>getting/accessing your textbooks, class materials, assignments</b> , etc.?                                 | 15.87%        | 84.13%  |
| Have you encountered any difficulties attending your <b>asynchronous classes</b> ?  | 12.57%        | 87.43%  |
| Have you encountered difficulties <b>accessing academic support resources</b> , such as tutoring, writing support, supplemental instructions, etc.? | 10.47%        | 89.53%  |
| Have you encountered any difficulties <b>transitioning from asynchronous classes to your synchronized classes</b> ?                                 | 9.38%         | 90.63%  |

Regarding the Academic Experience component, students largely expressed a growing sense of confusion and difficulty in navigating their coursework and responsibilities. This difficulty arises, in part, from course structure and organization (which includes issues like course pacing, instructor support, reasonable accommodation, etc.) -- these issues are not surprising and are part of many current conversations on how to best support students.

However, an additional component mentioned by international students is the difficulty caused by overall climate, in part due to uncertainty arising from frequent legislative changes and federal declarations.

Key themes/issues unique from open-ended survey responses:

### 1) Graduate Student Concerns

- “I think it is important to remember that a lot of graduate students don't have classes but our work schedule and access to our research have also been heavily impacted. I think special attention needs to be paid to these Ph.D. students as well as they are in a vulnerable situation where they need to work in person, but maybe exposing themselves to covid and other emotional stresses.”
- “Switching back and forth between in-person classes and online classes creates extra work for me as a teaching assistant.”
- “First, the pandemic set me back research-wise since the place I was conducting my research shut down. Next, the changes in legislation regarding international students was stressful and took more time trying to figure out what would or wouldn't apply to my situation.”
- “I am also a TA. Replying to too many students' emails, as students are often confused about mode of lecture and availability of course materials, took up too much time.”
- “Huge load of coursework along with research. Our first child was born in October, and she is sick. So, it affected my mid-term exam. Tried to consult with certain professor about recovering that but have received very less support from certain professor about the course. And that course is very important for my PhD qualifying criteria.”

### 2) Class Structure & Organization

- “I've enrolled at the fall semester late and starting the classes that have already started in the past and having my first experiences with the canvas it was hard to find the zoom links at first, would be better to keep a consistency where the zoom links are provided in the canvas modules.”
- “Harder to keep on track with assignments than in-person classes because of it all being online.”
- “Zoom labs are not as productive as they should be. Real-time experience in handling substances and carrying out experiences is not pretty good via zoom.”
- “I've just found it overwhelming to stay on top of the sheer amount of virtual responsibilities, emails, lectures, and assignments and there doesn't seem to be a line between my time and my academic time in a situation like this - causing quicker and longer periods of burnout.”
- “Sometimes the internet connection is not stable, and I miss some portions of class.”

### 3) Class Materials

- “It has been a hard time for me to get access to materials since I wasn't able to buy English e-books due to boundaries authorial rights.”
- “I got told about some books that I would be needing the first week of classes and it took over two weeks for them to get to me so I was very behind on readings at the beginning of the semester which just didn't set a good tone for the remainder of the semester.”

### 4) Legislation

- “A lot of regulations have been proposed regarding international students. This has made it hard to stay focused on academics since I am worried about the future so much.”
- “Definitely researching constantly and dedicating so much time of my days to different news deviates me from my academics.”

### 5) Things that worked well/suggestions

- “Communicating with students through ICON announcements is helpful because I can easily go back and find the info I missed or forgot in the past. If it is just through emails, often the announcement is buried in my other emails and I would accidentally forget about it.”
- “Some professors have been rather kind and helpful, understanding of my situation. I have a class that records zoom discussions and posts them on ICON - with closed captions - and it's very helpful.”
- “My advisor and lecturers are providing help via email and office hours a lot and I am grateful for them, or it will be a tougher semester.”
- “It has been nice that advising appointments are available virtually - everything feels more accessible than making time to trek across campus for 15 minute meetings. I hope this carries forward in future semesters.”

International students shared their **health and wellbeing** responses.

| Health and Wellbeing Classification  | % of Yes      | % of No |
|--|---------------|---------|
| Has your <b>mental health</b> been <b>affected negatively</b> by the Fall semester (Ex: maintaining motivation, isolation, stress, anxiety, depression, etc.)? | <b>71.35%</b> | 28.65%  |
| Have <b>racial injustices</b> impacted your mental health or sense of belonging?   | <b>37.06%</b> | 62.94%  |
| Have you encountered difficulties <b>maintaining your physical health</b> during the Fall semester?  | <b>28.99%</b> | 71.1%   |
| Have you had to <b>assume any new responsibilities</b> due to working or studying remotely (ex: child/parent care giving)?                                     | 14.79%        | 85.21%  |

The primary themes regarding students’ health and well-being stemmed from uncertainty as a result of changes in legislation, the growing public concern around issues of racial injustice, lack of motivation, and isolation/loss of connection. The concerns expressed in the themes below constituted the most robust as well as consistent range of responses among all sections of the survey, suggesting that health and well-being have presented crucial challenges this academic year. Though we present responses related to these specific themes below, it is similarly important to keep in mind that these themes permeate other components of the student experience, including academics.

Key themes/issues unique from open-ended survey responses:

#### 1) General stress/anxiety from pandemic + going virtual

- “There is constant anxiety about what will happen next. The constant back and forth between online and in-person classes causes reorganisation of strategies to teach and learn. It does not allow me to give my 100%. In everything that is unknown right now, at least our course instruction mode should be certain.”
- “Early in the semester I had frequent bouts of anxiety linked to the rising numbers. None of that would have happened if the University remained online. I also am facing issues feeling motivated, mainly because of the isolation and aforementioned anxiety.”
- “I’ve just found it overwhelming to stay on top of the sheer amount of virtual responsibilities, emails, lectures, and assignments and there doesn’t seem to be a line between my time and my academic time in a situation like this - causing quicker and longer periods of burnout.”

- “This one professor has lectures in-person that can be joined via Zoom but his exams are entirely in-person, it causes me anxiety thinking about going into the exam room being given papers that others might have touched - virus lives for a couple of days on paper!”

## 2) Legislation

- “The fear associated with the constant changing legislation and anti-immigrant sentiment have taken a significant toll on my mental and emotional health and have significantly depleted my energy levels.”
- “The ICE student ban, policy of changing VISA duration of status to fixed period, and changes to H1B are very disturbing and constantly distract me from my study as I need to respond to the changing legislation.”
- “The constant threat of deportation, and the need to work in person in a vulnerable setting has heavily increased my depression and anxiety.”

## 3) Racial Injustice, including incidents of bias/treatment & perception from others

- “As a Mexican, it is hard to want to stay in a country where most people don't want you here.”
- “This racial stereotypes have severely impacted me since I came here. I would always have to prove myself more than required. I have been very badly affected mostly by other PhD students in my class or department. Some of these colleagues have very bad stereotypical beliefs which they are not even ashamed of exhibiting!”
- “I'm Chinese, and since Trump started blaming China on everything, I've experience anxiety and racism from the internet and once in Iowa.”
- “Being a student of color, it really has. I don't want to write anymore on this. Go figure.”

## 4) Isolation/(lack of) connection

- “Only knowing two people in my department - I am working as a TA and basically do not know my colleagues also not other students or people in general.”
- “Adjusting online learning/small in-person classes during the pandemic has been hard because I could never concentrate on studying at home prior to the Covid pandemic. Reduced library hours also affects how and where I was used to studying in the past. Also, Covid restrictions to gatherings has impacted social life. All of the previous examples mentioned have affected my mental health because I feel alone and isolated.”
- “Isolation has been tough. Living alone is not easy especially when you are away from home and when so many additional stressors are affecting you in addition to everything going on in general. Depression has been consuming, physically and emotionally.”

## 5) Family (e.g. homesickness & travel restrictions)

- “I am afraid to travel to visit my family and not be able to come back into the US for school due to uncertain legislation, and this is a little depressing and affects my ability to concentrate sometimes.”
- “The feelings of isolation, dissociation emerged. Staying away from family was a major stressor and feeling on insecurity were felt. Had to seek counselling and therapy.”
- “My family back home is really sick, and I can't go back because of COVID.”

## 6) Help-seeking

- “I sought help at UCS and talked with a counselor and they were super helpful. I think it was through these sessions that motivated me to pull myself back together and change some of my habits that were making me depressed and unmotivated. I also talked with someone from Student Care & Assistance and they were helpful as well. The person gave me some more general advice and pointed me to resources I did not know were available to me. I discovered Student Health and Wellness had many free resources

available to students like me (e.g. sleep program and consulting, meditation classes, virtual workouts, 15-day yoga challenge, etc.) and I've started utilizing them. These resources are all very helpful so far and I can't believe I can use them for free!"

- "I joined a men's therapy group and have felt great attending that. I also enrolled in koru mindfulness class which has helped as well. I am grateful for my academic advisor for reaching out and being there for us. I have felt a bigger connection to people who do care."
- "I was switching between anxiety and depression, from my experience with student counselling center years back, the counsellor offering to anxiety and depression was for me to go home, so I am not really ready to face with that again."

International students shared their experience in **off-campus housing**.

| Off-campus Housing Classification  | % of Yes | % of No |
|--|----------|---------|
| Do you have any <b>safety concerns</b> living in your current off-campus location?                                       | 23.64%   | 76.36%  |
| Have you encountered any challenges <b>living off-campus</b> ?   | 21.08%   | 78.92%  |
| Have you faced any challenges with off-campus <b>transportation</b> ?  | 17.79%   | 82.21%  |
| Have you encounter any challenges with your <b>landlord</b> ?  | 11.04%   | 88.96%  |
| Have you experienced/or do you anticipate experiencing difficulties <b>finding off-campus housing</b> (ex: Spring 2021)? | 9.15%    | 90.85%  |

Top concerns from living off-campus are people-oriented – dealing with landlord(s) and/or other tenants. There is an additional concern about accessing public transportation and how that might affect health and safety amidst the pandemic.

Key theme(s)/issue(s) unique from open-ended survey responses:

#### Dealing with landlord(s), other tenants, & transportation

- "If it is possible to provide funds for international students to fight with landlords that would be great because many a times we need to retain SLS with our own funds (or possibly pay extra charges to the landlord). And this possibly happens more with international students because they are discriminated against by the landlords."
- "My roommate got very controlling during quarantine."
- "The bigger issue was the transportation. We were trying to avoid public transportation as much as we can. But then we had to buy parking pass which is so expensive. If we can get discounted passes at least that would be helpful to many students. Specifically the TAs who has to travel long distances everyday."

International students shared their experience in **employment/financial support**.

| Finance/Employment Classification  | % of Yes | % of No |
|--|----------|---------|
| Have you experienced any <b>financial need</b> due to the COVID-19 pandemic? | 33.75%   | 66.25%  |
| Have you experienced changes in employment due to the COVID-19 pandemic?     | 23.75%   | 76.26%  |

Though stress and anxiety resulting from financial concerns came across many of the responses, of note are the particular concerns of graduate students, many of whom rely on funding packages (which themselves might be tenuous) and who may be experiencing unanticipated challenges due to family responsibilities as well as changes

in their financial condition due to the ongoing pandemic. Additionally, similar to what's happening in the U.S., international students' home countries have seen negative economic effects/downturns resulting from disruptions caused by the pandemic, and it is important to consider financial implications and lack of options international students have when it comes to funding their education.

Key themes/issues unique from open-ended survey responses:

### **1) Employment/Scholarships/Fellowships (including Summer funding)**

- “Yes, as an international grad student my main anxiety comes from the lack of stable and guaranteed summer employment/funding (TA/RA/fellowship) at the university. I cannot work anywhere but university, and not having a guaranteed summer funding raises my stress and anxiety levels every year. I do apply for fellowships every year, but they are competitive and there were summers when I barely scraped from whatever meager savings I had. plus, health insurance fees for partner are huge, and paying summer coverage in June means that I am left with <math>1/2</math> of my June paycheck before lean summer.”
- “I had the fear that I cannot graduate because of economical conditions. American dollar became 9 times my currency and I will be able to take only 1 course in a semester and this means I will graduate in 6 years. There should be scholarships for distance.”

### **2) New/Changed Family Responsibility or Financial Condition**

- “I am a graduate student parent. Due to daycare closure several times during Fall 2020 semester, I had to look for alternative care and I had to bear the extra cost by myself. As an international student who is on student Visa, I am not allowed to work outside the University. So, without having any extra financial support, it was (and still it is) very hard for me to manage my family needs.”
- “Having a hard time finishing my tuition this semester. My father is having issues with their works.”
- “I am unable to afford a new iPad to use since the one I have is being used by my son for his online learning.”
- “I was stressed due to daycare closure because of positive covid-19 cases and I am still feel desperate how I am going to manage my family financially as I do not have any outer financial support.”

### **3) Planning ahead (e.g. uncertainty about OPT, post-graduation employment, etc.)**

- “Change of H1B policies and the worries of potential effects on OPT and consequently changes of employers preference.”
- “I am worried about uncertainties in grad student funding in my department given declining enrollment of undergraduate students.”
- “We don't know what the next legislation will be and it's difficult to plan life.”
- “As the political situation fluctuates for internationals, I find myself re-thinking whether I should still commit to US-based goals or start focusing on building a career in a different country.”

### **Institutional Challenges**

In addition to the question blocks presented above, we found a significant amount of open-ended survey responses which did not directly address the themes presented but which captured unique challenges international students faced. We have grouped several themes here that we term ‘institutional challenges’ as we believe they represent considerations the broader UI community might consider. Though issues of access have been discussed as the university transitioned to a virtual delivery format, coordination across time zones has remained a particularly pertinent issue for international students. As mentioned previously, we had many more

responses than expected for open-ended survey questions. We believe this to be indicative of limited avenues for international students to have their voices heard, and this can be seen in comments from the ‘exasperation’ theme below. Finally, as admissions and transition protocols have not stopped, it is important to remember the additional challenges arising from students who are experiencing the U.S. higher education system for the first time and the unique difficulties which must be considered.

Key themes/issues unique from open-ended survey responses:

### **1) Access (from a distance)**

- “Due to the Great Firewall of network, sometimes the vpn is not stable so that I can't access zoom classes or keeping network disconnection.”
- “Different time zone, collaboration is hard with other group members.”
- “The final exam time can be changed to suit people from different regions.”

### **2) Exasperation/Voicelessness**

- “My mental health is super unstable, and it is really complex. I am having anxiety every day, and sometimes feeling depress, and lack of motivation with a lot of stress is another issue to, and I just have no way to solve them, plus that the apartment that I rent this year has really really bad sound proof, which I can even hear people talk downstairs in my room, so it cause tons of stress to me that I can't solve... Also the financial issue due to the covid has cause issue too, so overall it's super bad now.”
- “No, because of stress, I had a lot of health issues. UI students are not welcoming intl students and ignore students based on ethnicity.”
- “I want to get more involved in activities like research and volunteer work, but our current situation has made it difficult for me to feel comfortable pursuing those things. I worry that I am missing out or not doing enough when I could be, but I still feel too generally exhausted to feel in my mind that taking part in those opportunities would be a good idea. I want to be more responsible, but I worry that taking on any more tasks to do would overwhelm me. (I don't share this to put blame on anyone, I just needed to express that)”
- “I would rather trust my dead grandmother than the university to care about my mental and physical health.”

### **3) Differing academic systems (and difficulty navigating—continue from academic experience piece)**

- “A lot of slang is used in classes. That makes things tougher for those who use a more international English.”
- “The program has a lot of implicit information about the educational and social system in the USA that I ignore. That makes things difficult in both following the class and submitting assignments.”

## **Conclusions and Implications**

The survey responses showed that in addition to adjusting to the virtual environment during the pandemic like everyone else, international students carry additional burdens and stress due to constantly changing legislation (and resulting negative social climate), difficulty in adjusting to virtual learning environment, navigating academic system, and financial concerns. International graduate students have more concerns in areas such as financial needs, research, and balancing additional responsibilities (caregiving and/or additional workload). International students who were studying outside of the U.S. face additional challenges navigating academic responsibilities and structure due to time zone differences and other structural and logistical barriers. International students who

remain in the U.S. feel overwhelmed and more isolated. Based on the responses, we are proposing both a short-term and long-term list of recommendations/implications.

**Short-term list:**

1. Provide options and reasonable accommodations (such as adjusting assignment criteria, group work, exam time, etc.) to international students studying outside of the U.S.
2. Additional mental health outreach, support and validation of emotional challenges for international students is needed, showing empathy and encouragement for international students in both academic setting and non-academic setting. Some ideas: support group, zoom yoga, support from ethnic-based communities, etc.
3. Need-based funding as well as summer funding options
4. Support for international graduate and professional students whose research are impacted and those with additional caregiving and academic responsibilities
5. Assist international students with finding employment opportunities or connecting with employers
6. Highlight the comments from students on “things went well”

**Long-term list:**

1. Sustainable need-based funding and summer funding options for international students
2. Continuing mental health support and resources for international students (potentially an embedded counselor for international students)
3. Emotional and structural support as well as advocacy for international students regarding policy
  - a. Acknowledging it takes international students additional energy to navigate policy and regulation processes
  - b. Provide decisions early on so that there are plenty of room for international students to plan ahead as a lot of processes take longer time for international students
  - c. Advocate for policy and regulations for international students on state and federal levels
  - d. Empowering/educating students to advocate themselves
  - e. Provide educational opportunities ((e.g., credit-bearing courses) to understand U.S. policy
4. Educating/working with the greater Iowa City area to create an inclusive environment for international students residing off-campus
5. Continue to provide support in academic settings
  - a. Something like Building our Global Community as a formal part of faculty onboarding, helping faculty to understand how to work with international students
  - b. Continue to offer virtual support even after the pandemic
6. Assist international students to find employment opportunities or connecting with employers
  - a. Advocate on behalf of international students to employers (to hire our international students and to review their hiring policy)
  - b. Better coordination between ISSS, academic advising, and career services

## Appendix – Open-ended Responses on “What Worked Well?”

- The portal Vital Source has been really helpful when accessing digital books that are only available in the USA.
- Is there a way for the international students who might stay overseas to know with sufficient time beforehand about which textbooks the professors are going to use? (I had to use electronic textbooks for the first month or two, and I very much prefer physical textbooks over the electronic ones.)
- It has been nice that advising appointments are available virtually - everything feels more accessible than making time to trek across campus for 15 minute meetings. I hope this carries forward in future semesters.
- Meeting with the ISSS advisors has helped. Meeting with my academic advisor has helped a lot.
- Zoom meetings are a relief for me, because I do not need to worry I have to meet in person. Online scheduling of campus services are really helpful.
- The ISSS walk in hours online is very helpful.
- Thanks for your hard work (ISSS) I can be hanging in here.
- The additional learning tools are very useful which is helpful but it's at the cost of the student.
- I like to talk to my advisor.
- it's great to see how the cultural centers have been providing and sharing resources for students!
- Access to student support spaces/sessions.
- Keep notifying students what resources they can use and showing cares to students' health.
- Pace out homework and discussions rather than papers
- Smaller groups (for classes).
- Pre-recorded lessons on Canvas.
- I know it's not up to the faculty but sticking to one mode of instruction helps students orient themselves for the entire semester and helps us to take full advantage of the resources.
- Office hours and live zoom lectures. Synchronous teaching really helps me understand the material and also get my doubts solved.
- Lecture recordings.
- recording classes so that we can have access when we want to.
- The Zoom sessions for the subjects that would be ministered in group lessons were excellent (Dr. Kimber Wilson) and the way it was programmed made it to be even better than what it would have been in the traditional way.
- recorded lectures & recorded explanations for assigned essays/reports.
- hybrid from of discussions have been quite interesting.
- Asynchronous classes
- Allow students to take P/N this semester !
- I like recorded lectures.
- Adjusting online learning/small in-person classes during the pandemic has been hard because I could never concentrate on studying at home prior to the Covid pandemic. Reduced library hours also affects how and where I was used to studying in the past. Also, Covid restrictions to gatherings has impacted social life. All of the previous examples mentioned have affected my mental health because I feel alone and isolated.

- working outside my house in an isolated space in the chem building has helped me on being more productive.
- its definitely safer to live off-campus during a pandemic.
- My location is relatively quiet and is close to parks that I have easy access to.
- I'm home with my parents which is best for me right now.
- Clean and well-maintained apartment building. Landlord has been very responsive to any issues I have.
- I live a few blocks from the Voxman building, and I usually walk to get there and to come home. It's very nice not have concerns about safety in the street, as well as where we live.
- Home is the safest place on Earth 🌍
- I'm currently living at home with my parents, so yes I feel safe.
- I live with my husband and my baby boy and I feel safe.
- Separating study/workplace from my bedroom has been helpful for me to better relax and focus.
- The professor for my class is very considerate.
- Communicating with students through ICON announcements is helpful because I can easily go back and find the info I missed or forgot in the past. If it is just through emails, often the announcement is buried in my other emails and I would accidentally forget about it.
- The faculties are supportive because I always communicate with them.
- My advisor and lecturers are providing help via email and office hours a lot and I am grateful for them, or it will be a tougher semester.
- Faculty have overall been very supportive and accommodating through this period.
- My professors have been supportive overall and understand my needs.
- Advisor or other professors keep helping me to study. Thanks always.
- Having support from faculty has helped me get through hard times.
- Some professors have been rather kind and helpful, understanding of my situation. I have a class that records zoom discussions and posts them on ICON - with closed captions - and it's very helpful.
- Patience, support and being understanding.
- The fact that some faculty shift deadline is a reasonable and empathetic act.
- Some professors were more empathetic than others.
- Faculty holding more office hours during these challenging times has been helpful.
- more flexibility with grading and deadlines
- I like friendly professors who try to express to their students that they are capable of empathize what they are going through.
- It isn't easy to adjust to the situation and adapt, but most of my professors have been very flexible and understanding, which I think it's the most important thing when it comes to student struggles this semester. A little bit of individual support like that goes a long way.
- Some faculty members understand that working/studying during the pandemic is not easy and they don't have a problem with students asking for extensions on assignments as long as you show them that you're trying your best and come to office hour etc. Some faculty genuinely just wants their students to succeed meanwhile I get the feeling from others that they just don't care about what their students are dealing with and won't listen to any of their problems or won't even reply to emails.
- Professors have been very supportive.

- Some of the faculty members have been very understanding and supportive. They listened to the students and were sensitive towards the issues we all have been facing. Some faculty members still worked in a similar fashion as before and it seemed unsuitable to many students. It was more about finishing their duties and classes rather than understanding the situation and adapting as per the needs of time and students. The teachers who were more inclined towards the need of students and understood what and how were an immense relief this semester.
- Flexibility of faculty
- Being flexible with students. Nobody really could have predicted a lot of this. Understanding technical difficulties, willingness to adjust on the fly. Some do a good job with communication (within roughly 12 hours on a weekday and maybe 24 or so hours on the weekend). While others either don't reply to emails or take up to 3-5 days to reply.
- One of my professors, Jane Nachtman have been great with everything, has been very accommodating to help everyone where she can.
- I like to say that it will be a joyful and memorable thing if we can be supported with tuition in time like this. Thank you.
- Working on campus is a very good way.
- Appropriate social interaction. I make it a point to work in cafes, have recently joined Ulowa's Personal Fitness Training program, and make it a point to regularly interact with people on a regular live basis (and not just via Zoom).
- be around friends.
- I have made it a point to step out of my room and interact with people every day in public spaces (cafes/gyms etc). But a person I interact with on a daily basis has been giving me no end of trouble this past one month. (I am trying to get out of the situation asap and have taken steps to do so)
- I think the most important thing is for students to not let fears of COVID prevent them from interacting with others. Social isolation is probably a bad way of coping with these fears. Much better the wear a mask and step out every day while maintaining social distance -- that is my strong gut feeling.
- Remember to help each other and preparing to face any trouble is important.
- I guess for students who are taking an all online classes, I would want to let them know that whatever they are feeling, others probably feel that way as well.
- Though interactions with the community significant decrease, I still have people around me who I can turn to sometimes.
- my cohort friends are good, they really show me support during this hard time.
- I pay my rent on time no problem.
- Therapy and my partner have supported me well.
- I sought help at UCS and talked with a counselor and they were super helpful. I think it was through these sessions that motivated me to pull myself back together and change some of my habits that were making me depressed and unmotivated. I also talked with someone from Student Care & Assistance and they were helpful as well. The person gave me some more general advice and pointed me to resources I did not know were available to me. I discovered Student Health and Wellness had many free resources available to students like me (e.g. sleep program and consulting, meditation classes, virtual workouts, 15-day yoga challenge, etc.) and I've started utilizing them. These resources are all very helpful so far and I can't believe I can use them for free!
- Uhdtherapists is an account I follow on Instagram and the imbedded therapists post great stuff on there.

- The UI student counseling services have been a great help.
- I have been doing a lot of yoga at home and remote counseling.
- I joined a men's therapy group and have felt great attending that. I also enrolled in koru mindfulness class which has helped as well. I am grateful for my academic advisor for reaching out and being there for us. I have felt a bigger connection to people who do care.
- Yes, I listen to my best music, I meditate, I pray, I picked a promise from the Bible and I started believing it. I also bought a whiteboard and write all assignment due for each week, as I finish one and clean it, I feel relieved when I look at the board.
- For me, mental wellbeing is one hundred percent related to trusting God and committing unto Him all my cares and concerns. I cannot imagine how life it would be if I would not lean on this trust. It is in the worst moments that the real Peace happens in my heart. The Peace that God gives is exactly when everything seems to be falling apart, chaotic.
- Learned to be more hopeful.
- working out at home and realizing that a grade is a number that doesn't define yourself worth.
- I have full online courses this semester and it is good for us to stay safe.
- Mask mandate
- Provide masks and sanitizers on campus.
- Before the synchronized class, teachers should check the student's body temperature to make sure all the students are in a safe environment.
- Can follow covid preventive guidelines.
- I don't leave my home.
- Having virtual yoga sessions would be good.
- I like that fitness classes are offered online, and my time is more flexible since wfh started so I am able to attend these classes.
- Because all my classes are online, I first faced the challenge of sitting for long hours at home working on my computer. But then because I had more time at home, I started participating in online workout programs which has become the best part of my daily routine. I'm also very satisfied with my current sleeping patterns, I go to bed early and wake up early, this was something I couldn't do in my first semester.
- Maintain healthy lifestyle, eat well, sleep well, exercise regularly.
- Keeping exercise and try to find a new hobby such as cooking.
- As I am teaching in person, I always take precaution by wearing a mask and practice my social distance with my students through that I manage to stay safe and health during this pandemic.
- Working out in the gym has been very helpful.
- Going for walks, getting fresh air
- just wearing mask please !
- No. Going to the gym is not the best idea in the moment, and we just have to wait until it is safe.
- Due to the time zone difference, I'm enjoying being able to wake up early, go to gym, study for the day classes and then have my first class. It has been a good experience attending university online from my home country. The majority of teachers have been really comprehensive and helpful. I'm so happy about being a hawkkey!
- I love the way that we study new material by ourselves and have different office hours for students in different time zone.

- The final exam time can be changed to suit people from different regions.
- At least time is less consumed by class works as no need to move outside, so more leisure time is great.
- Since it is not safe to use Cambus as before it would be nice if TAs have parking for the day(s) they have to come to school to teach considering the fact that many parking spots are available during the pandemic.
- decreasing workload, constantly checking in with students and showing support to mental health, realizing that my life doesn't just consist of college.