Transfer Credit Evaluation, Official Transcript Receipt & Delivery, Test Score Receipt and Fall Calendar/Sessions Plans

Results of the AACRAO COVID-19 Impact Snapshot Survey #3

Contents

Introduction

This is the third in a series of snapshot reports on COVID-19's impact on practice. AACRAO has deployed guidance on a range of topics in support of institutions of higher education. This survey focused on the following:

- The receipt and delivery of official transcripts and standardized test scores
- Transfer credit evaluation
- Fall term calendar and session impacts

This was a bit of a catch-all survey to address questions that we have been asked in the last couple of weeks. The survey was open for two business days, and we received 569 responses in that timeframe (95% from U.S. institutions)[1]. As with the other impact surveys, we are grateful to our members for taking the time to respond in the midst of unprecedented institutional needs. We hope the resulting data will help inform practice.

Key Data

Official Transcript Printing
- Among the 76% printing official transcripts at this time,
  - 64% are printing transcripts on campus even though the campus is closed for normal business
  - 13% are being printed at home by a staff member
  - 43% are experiencing a delay in outbound printed transcripts at this time; 56% say the delay is less than one business week

Official Transcript Delivery and Receipt
- In direct response to COVID-19:
  - 34% of those who receive high school transcripts for any purpose are considering, or have already made, changes to how those transcripts are received
  - 21% of are considering, or have already made, changes to how official college transcripts are received
  - 24% are considering, or have already made, changes to how they delivery official college transcripts

Standardized Test Score Receipt
- In direct response to COVID-19, 28% of those who received standardized test scores are considering, or have already made, changes to how test scores are received
  - 58% are thinking about, or have already implemented, electronic receipt where it did not exist before

Transfer Credit Evaluation Practices Impacted by COVID-19[2]
- Undergraduate transfer credit evaluation:
  - 56% of institutions are considering, or have already decided, to count pass (P) and other non-qualitative grades as earned credit
  - 16% of institutions are considering, or have already decided, to exclude grades posted for terms impacted by COVID-19 from the transfer GPA calculation

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[1] All questions were not proffered to all respondents. Respondents could also skip questions.
[2] "not-applicable" was <u>not</u> a response choice. "standard practice – no change" <u>was</u> a response choice
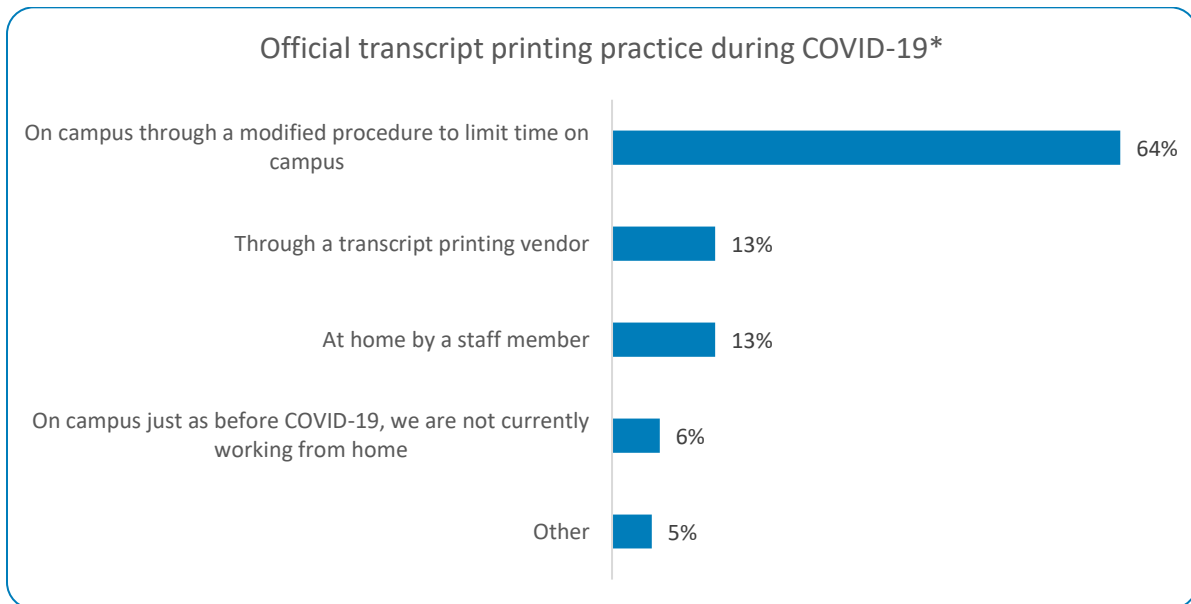
- Graduate transfer credit evaluation:
  - 44% of institutions are considering, or have already decided, to count pass (P) and other non-qualitative grades as earned credit
  - 15% of institutions are considering, or have already decided, to exclude grades posted for terms impacted by COVID-19 from the transfer GPA calculation

Fall Term Calendar and Session Impacts
- Semester calendar institutions:
  - 21% are considering, or have already decided, to delay the start of the semester
  - 10% are considering reducing the overall length of the fall semester
- Quarter calendar institutions:
  - 16% are considering, or have already decided, to delay the start of the semester
  - 8% are considering reducing the overall length of the fall semester

Data is displayed in the aggregate. If you have any questions or would like to see the data disaggregated by institutional size, type, or control please contact Wendy Kilgore, AACRAO Director of Research at wendyk@aacrao.org.

Official Transcript Printing

Official transcript printing practice during COVID-19*

Category	Percentage
On campus through a modified procedure to limit time on campus	64%
Through a transcript printing vendor	13%
At home by a staff member	13%
On campus just as before COVID-19, we are not currently working from home	6%
Other	5%

* Among the 76% who are printing official transcripts at this time

See appendix A for other official transcript printing methods.

Outbound printed official transcript delay*

- less than one business week — 56%
- 1 to less than 2 business weeks — 28%
- 2 to less than 3 business weeks — 7%
- 3 or more business weeks — 9%
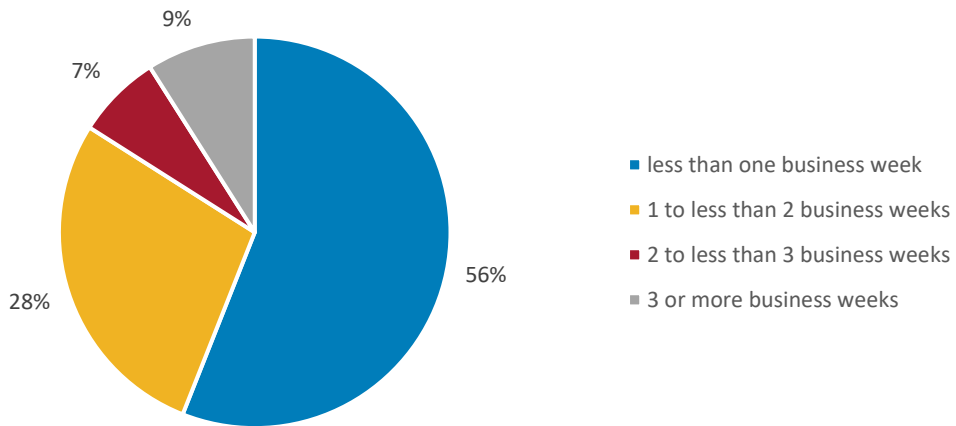
*Among the 43% who are experiencing a delay

Official Transcript Receipt and Delivery

Pre-COVID-19 official transcript delivery and/or receipt methods

Method	Percentage
Paper	96%
Electronic through a transcript vendor (not EDX)	79%
Electronic through an electronic data exchange (EDX) solution such as EDI, XML, JSON	42%
Electronic through FERPA compliant encrypted email solution (e.g., Barracuda, Zix, Virtu)	18%
Electronic through your own student information system (not EDX)	12%
Other	2%
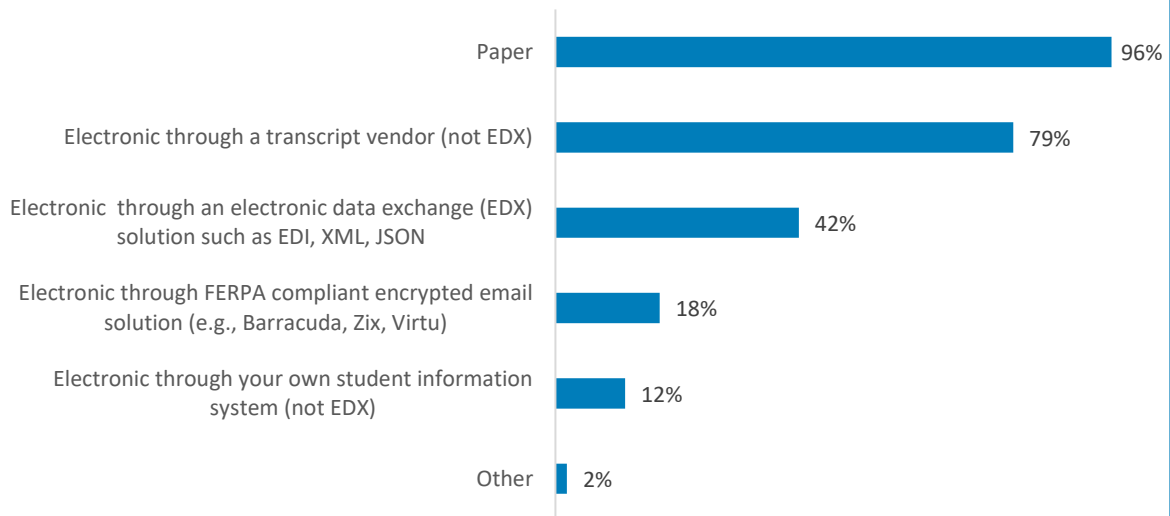
Changes under consideration, or already made, to how official high school transcripts are received in response to COVID-19 (n=121)*

Category	Percentage
Accepting unofficial transcripts in lieu of official transcript for the time being	83%
Electronic receipt through a transcript vendor (not EDX)	29%
Electronic receipt through an EDX solution with high schools	17%
Electronic receipt through FERPA compliant encrypted email solution (e.g., Barracuda, Zix, Virtu)	12%
Other solution for receipt of transcripts put in place due to COVID-19	11%

*Among the 87% who receive high school transcripts <u>and</u> the 34% who are considering, or have already made, changes

See appendix B for other official high school transcript receipt methods.

Changes under consideration, or already made, to how official college transcripts are <u>received</u> in response to COVID-19 (n=106)*

Category	Percentage
Accepting unofficial transcripts in lieu of official transcript for the time being	73%
Electronic receipt through a transcript vendor (not EDX)	31%
Electronic receipt through an EDX solution with other institutions	17%
Electronic receipt through FERPA compliant encrypted email solution (e.g., Barracuda, Zix, Virtu)	14%
Other solution for receipt of transcripts put in place due to COVID-19	9%

*Among those who receive official college transcripts <u>and</u> the 21% who are considering, or have already made, changes
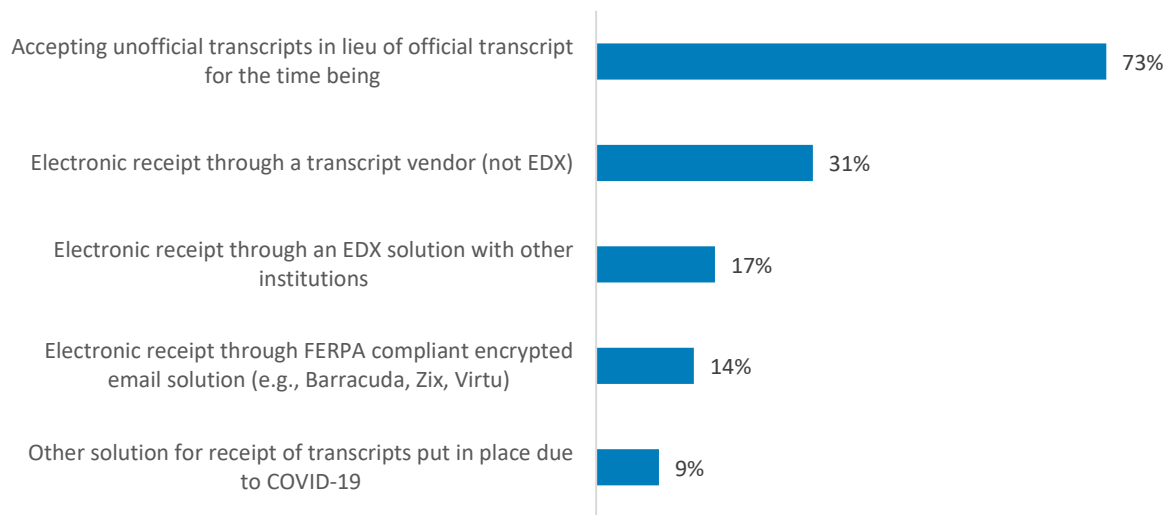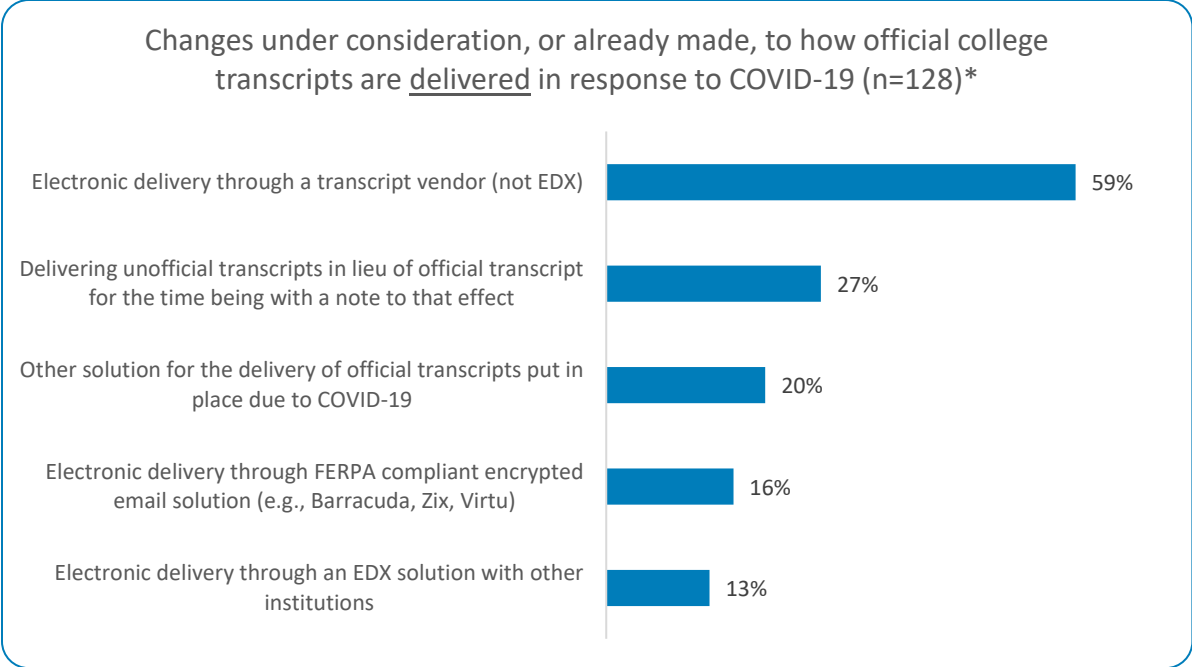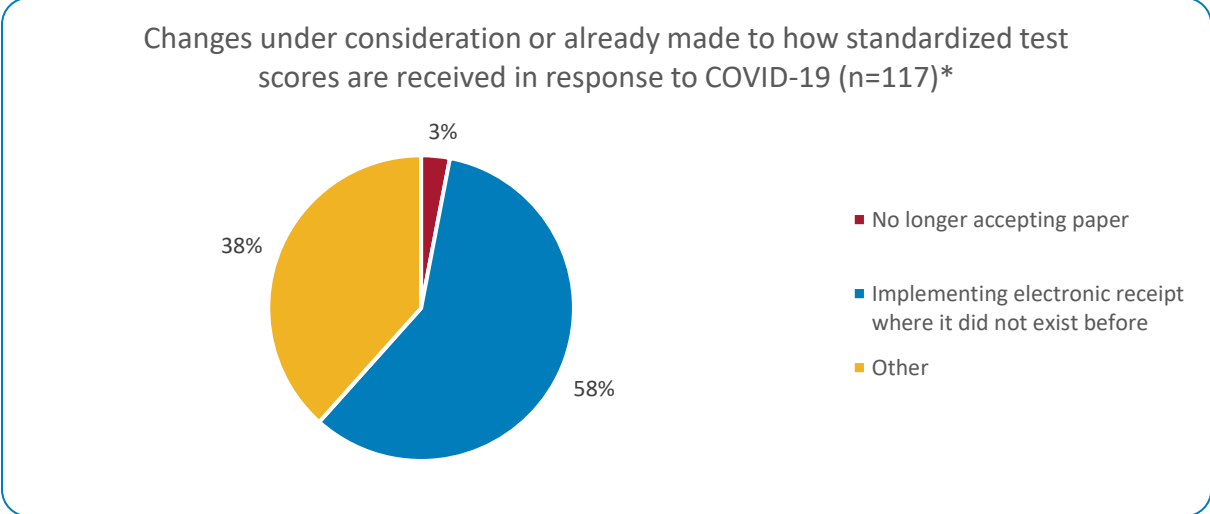
See appendix C for other official college transcript receipt methods.

Changes under consideration, or already made, to how official college transcripts are _delivered_ in response to COVID-19 (n=128)*

Category	Percentage
Electronic delivery through a transcript vendor (not EDX)	59%
Delivering unofficial transcripts in lieu of official transcript for the time being with a note to that effect	27%
Other solution for the delivery of official transcripts put in place due to COVID-19	20%
Electronic delivery through FERPA compliant encrypted email solution (e.g., Barracuda, Zix, Virtu)	16%
Electronic delivery through an EDX solution with other institutions	13%

*Among the 24% who are considering, or have already, made changes

See appendix D for other official college transcript delivery methods.

Receipt of Standardized Test Scores

Changes under consideration or already made to how standardized test scores are received in response to COVID-19 (n=117)*

- No longer accepting paper — 3%
- Implementing electronic receipt where it did not exist before — 58%
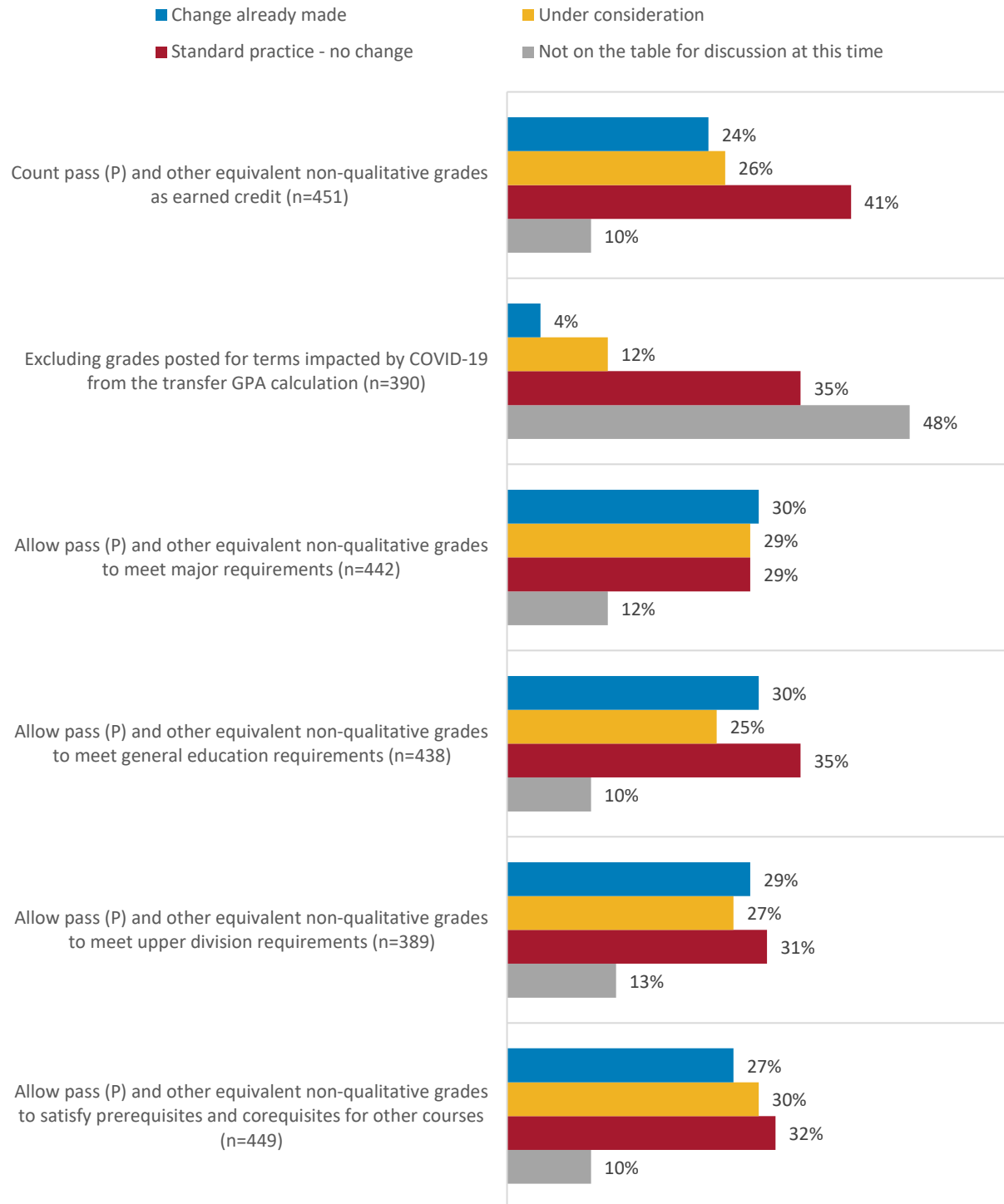- Other — 38%

*Among the 88% who receive standardized test scores _and_ the 28% who are considering, or have already made, changes

See appendix E for other changes under consideration or already made to how standardized test scores are received.
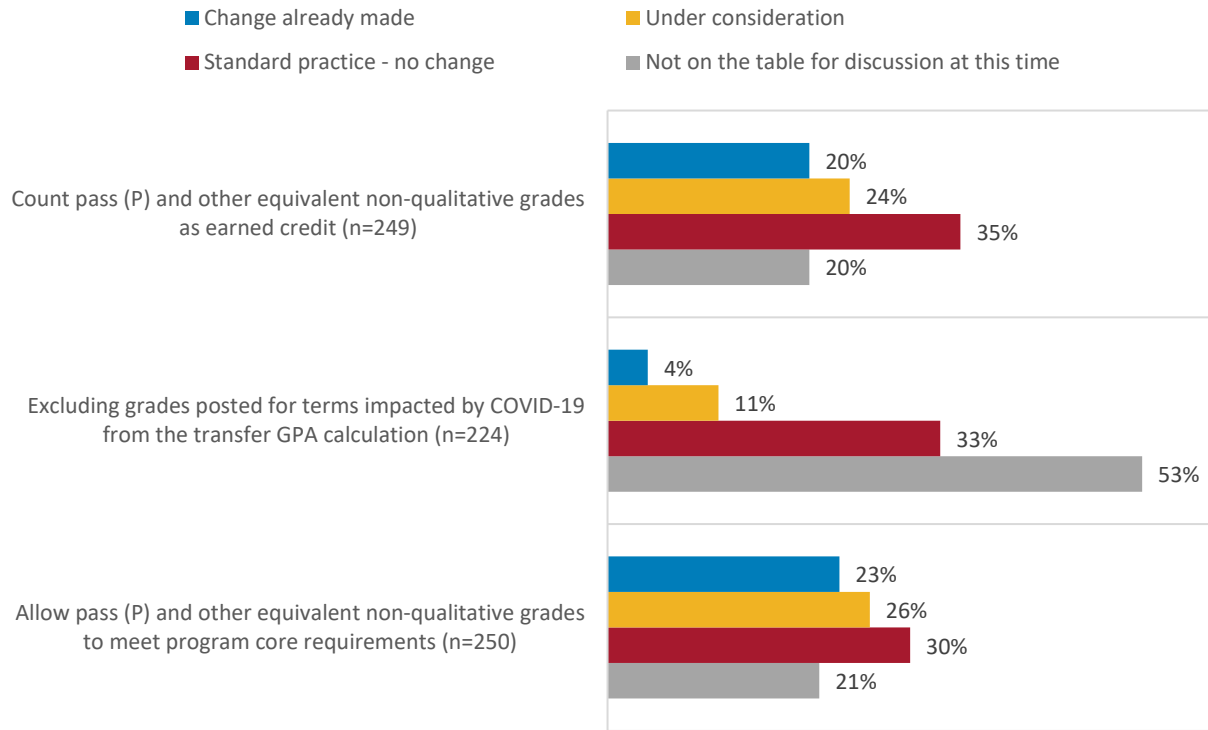
Undergraduate Transfer Credit Evaluation

Changes under consideration, or already made, to how undergraduate transfer credits are evaluated in response to COVID-19*

- ■ Change already made
- ■ Under consideration
- ■ Standard practice - no change
- ■ Not on the table for discussion at this time

Count pass (P) and other equivalent non-qualitative grades as earned credit (n=451)
- Change already made: 24%
- Under consideration: 26%
- Standard practice - no change: 41%
- Not on the table for discussion at this time: 10%

Excluding grades posted for terms impacted by COVID-19 from the transfer GPA calculation (n=390)
- Change already made: 4%
- Under consideration: 12%
- Standard practice - no change: 35%
- Not on the table for discussion at this time: 48%

Allow pass (P) and other equivalent non-qualitative grades to meet major requirements (n=442)
- Change already made: 30%
- Under consideration: 29%
- Standard practice - no change: 29%
- Not on the table for discussion at this time: 12%

Allow pass (P) and other equivalent non-qualitative grades to meet general education requirements (n=438)
- Change already made: 30%
- Under consideration: 25%
- Standard practice - no change: 35%
- Not on the table for discussion at this time: 10%

Allow pass (P) and other equivalent non-qualitative grades to meet upper division requirements (n=389)
- Change already made: 29%
- Under consideration: 27%
- Standard practice - no change: 31%
- Not on the table for discussion at this time: 13%

Allow pass (P) and other equivalent non-qualitative grades to satisfy prerequisites and corequisites for other courses (n=449)
- Change already made: 27%
- Under consideration: 30%
- Standard practice - no change: 32%
- Not on the table for discussion at this time: 10%

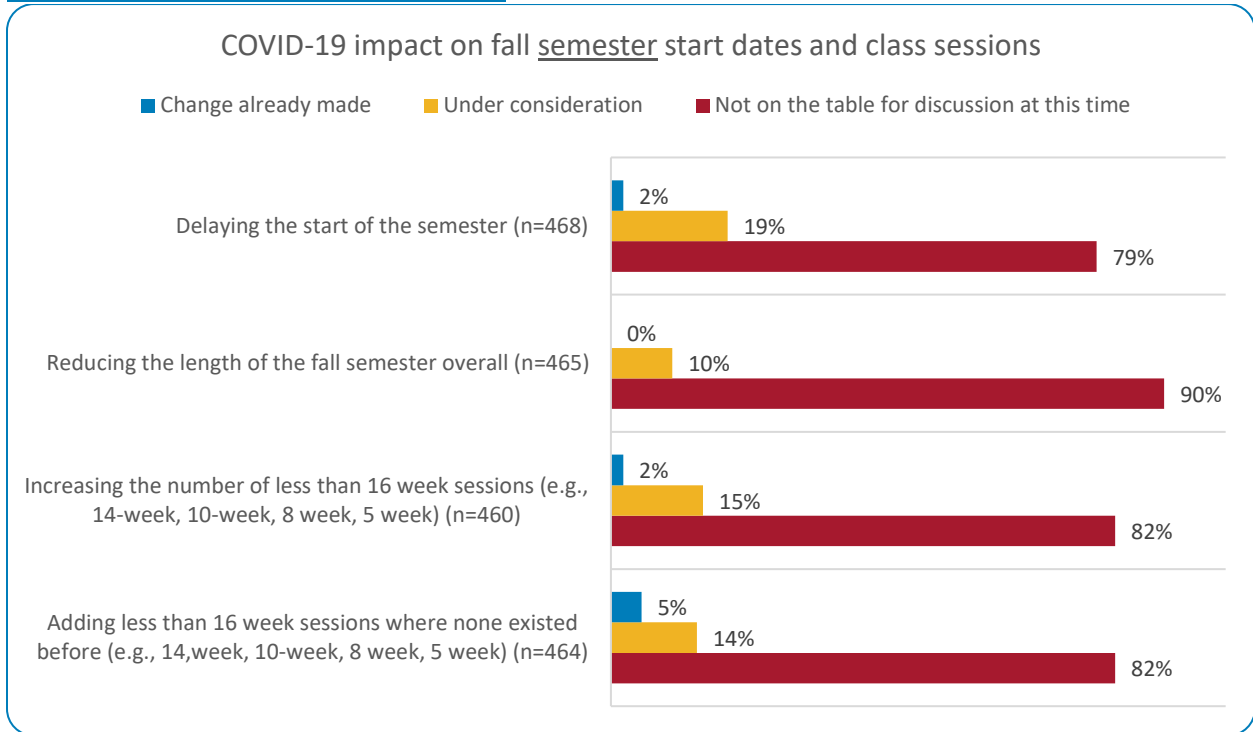*"not-applicable" was not a response option.

Graduate and/or Professional Transfer Credit Evaluation

Changes under consideration, or already made, to how graduate transfer credits are evaluated in response to COVID-19
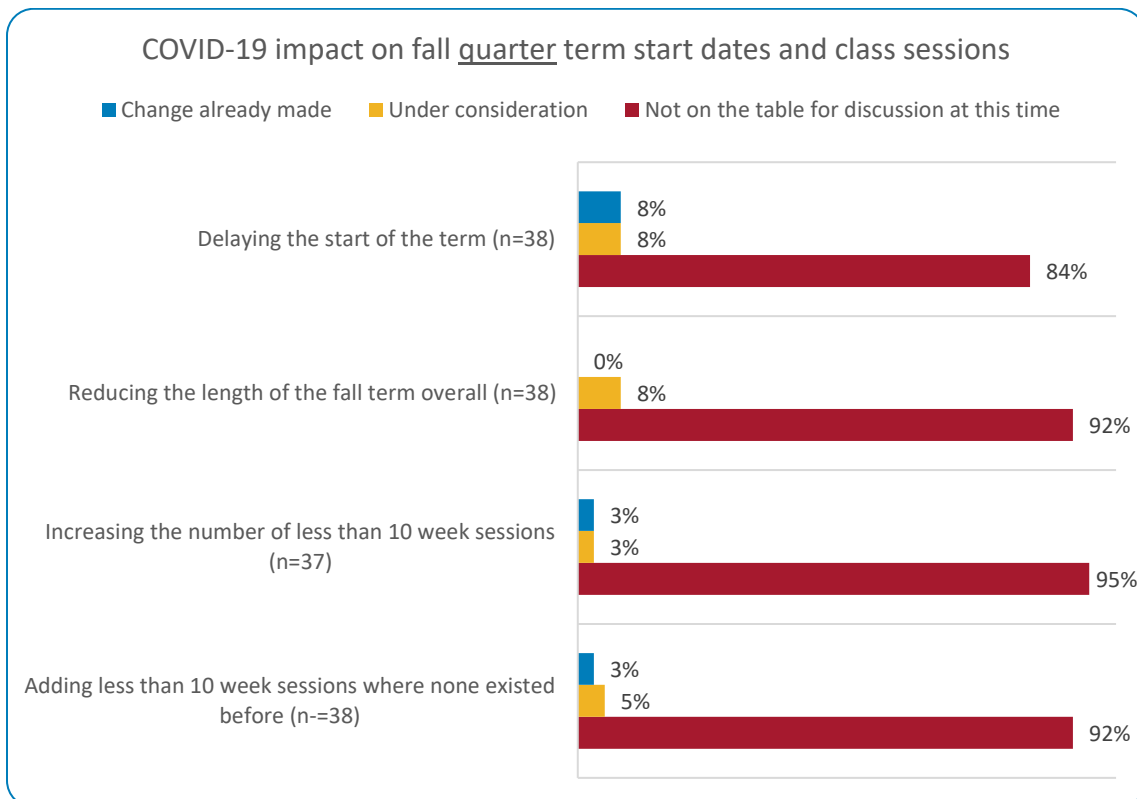
- ■ Change already made
- ■ Under consideration
- ■ Standard practice - no change
- ■ Not on the table for discussion at this time

Count pass (P) and other equivalent non-qualitative grades as earned credit (n=249)
- 20%
- 24%
- 35%
- 20%

Excluding grades posted for terms impacted by COVID-19 from the transfer GPA calculation (n=224)
- 4%
- 11%
- 33%
- 53%

Allow pass (P) and other equivalent non-qualitative grades to meet program core requirements (n=250)
- 23%
- 26%
- 30%
- 21%

*"not-applicable" was not a response option.

Fall Term Calendar and Class Sessions

COVID-19 impact on fall semester start dates and class sessions

■ Change already made ■ Under consideration ■ Not on the table for discussion at this time

Delaying the start of the semester (n=468)
- Change already made: 2%
- Under consideration: 19%
- Not on the table for discussion at this time: 79%

Reducing the length of the fall semester overall (n=465)
- Change already made: 0%
- Under consideration: 10%
- Not on the table for discussion at this time: 90%

Increasing the number of less than 16 week sessions (e.g., 14-week, 10-week, 8 week, 5 week) (n=460)
- Change already made: 2%
- Under consideration: 15%
- Not on the table for discussion at this time: 82%

Adding less than 16 week sessions where none existed before (e.g., 14,week, 10-week, 8 week, 5 week) (n=464)
- Change already made: 5%
- Under consideration: 14%
- Not on the table for discussion at this time: 82%

See appendix F for how institutions are considering reducing, or have already reduced, the overall length of the fall semester

COVID-19 impact on fall quarter term start dates and class sessions

■ Change already made ■ Under consideration ■ Not on the table for discussion at this time

Delaying the start of the term (n=38)
- Change already made: 8%
- Under consideration: 8%
- Not on the table for discussion at this time: 84%

Reducing the length of the fall term overall (n=38)
- Change already made: 0%
- Under consideration: 8%
- Not on the table for discussion at this time: 92%

Increasing the number of less than 10 week sessions (n=37)
- Change already made: 3%
- Under consideration: 3%
- Not on the table for discussion at this time: 95%

Adding less than 10 week sessions where none existed before (n-=38)
- Change already made: 3%
- Under consideration: 5%
- Not on the table for discussion at this time: 92%

Appendix A: Other official transcript printing transcript practices

(raw data)
- A mix of at home by a staff member and on campus through a modified procedure to limit time on campus.
- At home by staff AND vendor
- Both on campus/limited and through a vendor
- Combo. On campus if there for limited time, at home, or in some cases if possible, waiting to print until office opens back up
- Still working on a viable option
- Through our district support office
- We are sending unofficial transcripts with a letter by email.
- We can only print transcripts and are not going to campus at all right now.
- We go on to campus to print notarized transcripts, otherwise paper transcripts provided through vendor.
- We only print pre-1988 transcripts on campus
- We're printing paper official transcripts on campus through a modified procedure to limit time on campus, and our transcript vendor is also printing all paper official transcripts ordered through our student portal.

Appendix B: Other official high school transcript receipt practices

(raw data)

- Paper transcripts are held for 3 days before review.
- Allowing students up until the end of the semester to provide official transcripts if they are not available electronically.
- Emails received from the high school
- High schools are simply mailing them.
- Purchasing secure upload for FA documents and admissions/records documents
- Via email
- We are accepting unofficial transcripts from HS students to make admission decisions but will require a final official post-COVID crisis.
- We are using a high school attestation form per our accreditation organization guidelines. Once schools are reopened, students are expected to order and turn in transcripts within four weeks.
- We are using self-certification as well as high school transcripts
- We will allow students to obtain official transcripts once high schools reopen.

Appendix C: Other official college transcript receipt practices

(raw data)
- Paper transcripts are held for 3 days before review
- Google hangout to watch student open and scan official received at home
- Institutions across Canada are sharing the email address from which a receiving institution can consider an unofficial transcript as official. The addresses are stored in a confidential shared document.
- PDFed transcripts
- Receipt of PDF versions of official transcript from trusted sources
- Receive unofficial electronic transcripts directly from approved list of institutional senders, will consider these official
- Receiving transcripts from the college registrar office via email.
- Receiving via email trough a designated email address from other institutions
- We are accepting unofficial pdf transcripts sent from an institution or abroad program. We verify that the person is an employee.
- We are allowing students up until the end of the fall semester to provide official transcripts if they are not available electronically.

Appendix D: Other official college transcript delivery practices

(raw data)
- Activated Secure Print (NSC) to fulfill paper transcript requests
- Adding National Student Clearinghouse Secure Print service
- Attaching transcripts to e-mails
- Courier service
- Direct email with other institutions
- Electronic via secure link.
- Enrollment verification and completion letters
- In some cases, we are emailing pdf's and noting that the official will follow in the mail.
- National Student Clearinghouse
- No "rush" or "FedEx" options, and a strong persuasion to digital delivery through NSC
- PDFed transcripts
- Previously we offered paper and electronic delivery through a transcript vendor (not EDX), but we received few paper delivery requests and so we removed that option due to COVID-19.
- Regular email
- Scanning and delivery from a specified email address
- Sending PDF versions of official transcripts to trusted partners
- Suspended print delivery of transcripts and we are delivering electronic transcripts only.
- Transcripts that pre-date our IS an issue. Working on digitally signing, password protecting and sending onetime link for downloading.
- Using a third party to produce transcripts
- Using our electronic transcript vendor to print and mail paper transcripts
- We no longer allow students to pick up transcripts
- We removed paper delivery as an option on NSC page but left the opportunity for students to reach out to us if Paper is required, and we run to campus and print just those few.

Appendix E: Other changes under consideration, or already made, to how standardized test scores are received

(raw data)

- Not sure yet
- Holding students harmless for circumstances out of their control such as the cancellation of ACT or SAT testing dates, or a high school or college moving to a pass-fail grading system."
- Accepting any method
- Accepting both
- Accepting from high school transcript
- Accepting self-reported scores until official can be sent by testing company
- Allowing unofficial now for processing and will require official when they become available.
- Altering time frame for requiring these; especially for placement testing
- Being flexible as to required testing for credential students
- Considering options now.
- Considering unofficial
- Considering waiver of the standardized test score requirement
- Decision is still under discussion.
- Expanding list of those sending scores electronically.
- Extending deadlines for receipt of official documents
- Flexibility for those who were registered for the SAT/ACT whose exam was cancelled
- For Admission, we are ACT/SAT optional. Our time to processing AP credit received via paper score report is greatly increased as we are only checking physical mail once per week.
- Looking at re-engineering this and every process
- Looking into proctoring options
- May relax requirement for "official" score reports in hardship cases.
- Moving to National Clearinghouse
- No test options
- Not requiring
- Not requiring
- Our mail goes off-campus at 11:30 a.m., so we are having a few delays in sending them.
- Paper records are held for 3 days before review.
- Still discussing options
- Still receiving paper and electronic. Have added emailed/faxed or unofficial from student for the time being with stipulation that officials must be provided by June 1st.
- Still working on a viable option
- Suspension of some standardized test and receipt of more electronic test scores
- Unsure
- Unsure
- Waiving requirements if no scores are available
- Waiving the test score requirement this year
- We are considering not accepting test scores.
- We are exploring options
- We are granting deadline extensions
- We don't know yet.
- We electronic and paper scores. Most are received electronically. Paper scores will take longer to process.
- We prefer electronic and state that in our catalog. Currently one person is going into the office opening mail and scanning any transcripts in so that we can evaluate them. This takes about 2 hours a week.
- Will be moving to a new database, we will make determinations when we start this process.

Appendix F: How institutions are considering reducing, or have already reduced, the overall length of the fall semester

(raw data).

- Reducing the Fall term from 14 weeks plus exam week to 13 weeks plus exam week.
- 14 week fall semester - pushing the start date back one week. Waiting for DOE guidance
- Adding seat time per day to shorten the term by 1-3 weeks if necessary.
- Considering a trimester calendar for part or all of the year
- Considering eliminating finals week in December
- Creating compressed learning for contact hours
- Discussing changing from 16-week semester to 8 weeks.
- Discussions are just beginning...no final decisions at this time and all options are on the table.
- Discussions are taking place now. No decision made yet.
- Eliminate vacation days currently on the calendar to hold classes.
- Extended the length of the term, removed fall break, shortened the final exam period and will offer final exams over the weekend in December.
- For courses other than completely online, considering shorter semester time periods.
- Going from 13 to 12 weeks of instruction and reducing final exam period along with restricting amount of scheduled finals allowed
- I don't know. I believe it is speculative at this point.
- Keeping the number of weeks, the same, but considering reducing the number of in-person weeks the semester has.
- May delay start.
- Only a few days short and moved end closer to Christmas holiday
- Our semesters are typically 16-week, but we have delayed the start of Fall by one week and are discussing shortening it by one week as well.
- Possible reduction by 1 to 2 weeks, depending on needs.
- Reviewing how many weeks are needed to get in needed credit hours.
- Several options are on the table. Likely a decision may be made if there is a risk of a resurgence expected in the fall months.
- Starting a week later, with several different (staggered) arrival dates. Being outside the US we have to consider the student permit issue.
- Switching term month to September, and then adjusting the calendar accordingly.
- The discussions are just getting started. Everything is on the table at this point.
- This is currently being reviewed by Senior Staff and Administrators
- Unfortunately, I do not have information on this yet. It is only beginning discussion at this point.
- Various scenarios for late starts of 2, 4, or 7 weeks are in discussion
- We already have several short sessions. We are considering not offering the full-length session or only offering the full length as online or hybrid.
- We are considering removal of all breaks.
- We are in the process of forming a work group to discuss possibilities
- We reduced it by one week for on-ground classes that had to transition to online/remote classes. Classes that were already online started on time after spring break.