

# **UC Berkeley**

## **SERU Consortium Reports**

### **Title**

Will Students Come Back? Undergraduate Students' Plans to Re-Enroll in Fall 2020

### **Permalink**

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/6nk8v70v>

### **Author**

Student Experience in the Research University Consortium (SERU)

### **Publication Date**

2020-06-17

## Will Students Come Back? Undergraduate Students' Plans to Re-Enroll in Fall 2020

**The majority of students at research universities (90%) plan to continue their education in Fall 2020, 9% are unsure about their plans, and 1% say they won't re-enroll,** shows a recent SERU Consortium survey of 19,155 undergraduate students at five public research universities.

The percentage of not re-enrolling/undecided students is higher within the following subgroups: international students; students who relocated to a different state or a country after campus closures; students with caretaking responsibilities; students with disabilities (a learning disability, cognitive disability, or emotional/mental health disability or disorder); and students who reported they had not adapted well to remote instruction (Fig. 1). There are substantial differences across majors (see Tables 1-2). There are no differences by students' gender, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, social class, and parental education.

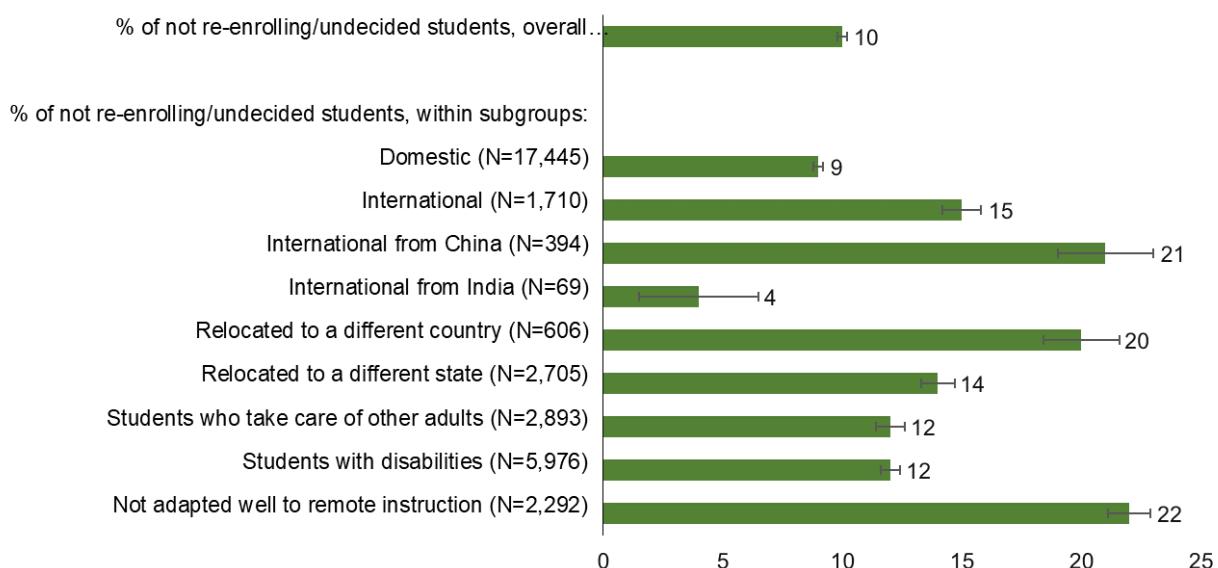


Fig. 1. Percentage of not re-enrolling/undecided students, within each subgroup

Table 1. Top-5 majors with the **highest** number of not re-enrolling/undecided students

Major (2-digit CIP Code Name)	%	N
Social sciences	14 (1.08)	1,017
Communication/journalism	14 (1.36)	643
Mathematics/statistics	14 (1.86)	339
Visual and performing arts	14 (1.48)	533
Physical sciences	13 (1.52)	505

Note: Standard errors in parentheses

Table 2. Top-5 majors with the **lowest** number of not re-enrolling/undecided students

Major (2-digit CIP Code Name)	%	N
Health professions/clinical sciences	4 (0.53)	1,248
Parks/rec./leisure/fitness studies	5 (1.82)	152
Security and protective services	6 (1.75)	176
Public administration/social services	6 (1.85)	166
Agriculture	7 (2.36)	116

Note: Standard errors in parentheses

Domestic and international students refer to somewhat different factors contributing to their decision not to continue at their university in Fall 2020.

Top-3 reasons for domestic students not to re-enroll in Fall 2020:



71%

Concerns that all classes will continue to be held online



49%

Financial constraints



48%

Their experience at the university during the COVID-19 pandemic

Top-3 reasons for international students not to re-enroll in Fall 2020:



66%

Concerns about it being safe to study in the U.S. because of the COVID-19 pandemic



54%

Travel restrictions



36%

Financial constraints

#### About SERU COVID-19 Survey:



Student Experience in the Research University (SERU) Consortium is administering a special survey on the impact of COVID-19 on student experience at 10 US public research universities. The SERU COVID-19 Survey assesses 5 areas of the student experience for both undergraduates and graduate students impacted by the pandemic and campus closures: (1) the transition to remote instruction, (2) the financial impact of COVID-19 on students, (3) student health and wellbeing, (4) belonging and engagement, and (5) future plans.

**Sample:** Census survey of undergraduate students at 5 large public research (R1) universities. Data collection started in the second half of May and is still ongoing at most universities. The report uses data from 19,155 students who completed the survey as of June 11, 2020. The response rate as of June 11, 2020 was 7-22%.

The Student Experience in the Research University (SERU) Consortium is an academic and policy research collaboration based at Center for Studies in Higher Education at the University of California – Berkeley (CSHE) working in partnership with the University of Minnesota and partner institutions. More information: <https://cshe.berkeley.edu/suru>

#### Contact Information:

Igor Chirikov, SERU Consortium Director and Senior Researcher, Center for Studies in Higher Education, UC Berkeley. [chirikov@berkeley.edu](mailto:chirikov@berkeley.edu).

Cite: SERU Consortium. (2020). Will Students Come Back? Undergraduate Students' Plans to Re-Enroll in Fall 2020. SERU COVID-19 Survey Policy Briefs. 06.17.2020. <https://cshe.berkeley.edu/suru-covid-survey-reports>