



**College of Dentistry  
and Dental Clinics**

# Virtual Learning Survey Data from our D1 Students

**Survey administered in Early May 2020**

**At end of GRISTO course**

# Survey Context

- After GRISTO Course Evaluation, D1 students were invited to complete an additional set of survey items related to virtual learning during Pandemic.
  - GRISTO-related experiences
  - General themes related to online learning
  - Student experiences of stress during pandemic
- 55/80 students completed the survey
- Responses were collected over a 2 week period (4/30-5/14)
- No incentives to participate
- Survey was fully anonymous

# Data Analysis

- Broad thematic analysis (2 readers)
- Processed and compared all essential themes
- Collected them into a narrative summary
- Did NOT do:
  - Response counts
  - Response association  
(if someone said X about Q1, did it predict what they said about Q2?)

# General Themes

- Communication
- Community
- Helping students stay on track
- Impact on Studying
- Assessment
- Instruction

# General Themes: Communication



- Uncertainty was the biggest reported stressor
  - Clear, frequent communication was the antidote to that problem
  - Sharing of detailed, updated calendars was desired
  - Direct communication with course directors
- Managing communication during instruction
  - If possible have a second course leader facilitate the chat/participant monitor in Zoom to make student questions part of the experience

# General Themes: Community



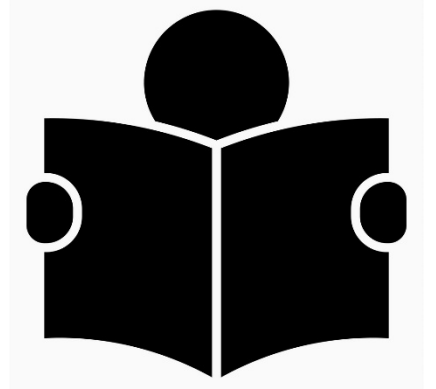
- Spending time connecting personally during virtual instruction is valuable
- Mixed feelings about going off-topic during class
  - Some enjoy the connection
  - Others want to stay on-topic
- Strongest approach was opening Zoom room prior to class to allow for casual conversation before lecture starts

# General Themes: Helping Students Stay on Track



- Some students need help staying on track with content in a mixed environment
  - Regular communication
  - Suggestions for study approaches
  - Additional lecture time for review and integration of material
  - Low stakes quizzes on PRIOR units' material to assist with retention

# General Themes: Impact on Studying



- Decreased motivation to study
  - Less memorization burden (open-book exams)
  - Reduced social pressure from peers
  - Higher baseline stress level
  - Lack of structure in the day
- Studying varied based on calendar
  - Some stretches had abundant study time
  - Others (during didactic double-ups) were busier with less study time
- Students missed group studying
  - Some used Facetime to mediate group studying



# General Themes: Assessment



- Project-based assessment had mixed appeal
  - Some enjoyed the socially-oriented work
  - Others wanted more efficiency in learning
- Lockdown Browser/Monitor
  - This is essential for exam security, preventing cheating in classmates
  - This is a more stressful exam experience
    - Concerns about being flagged for innocent actions
  - Some concerned that students will still figure out how to cheat even with monitoring
  - Not allowing scratch paper is a negative for some students who write to think
- Open Response Questions (essays/short answers)
  - Students report these questions can be difficult to predict what the professor is looking for
  - These exams take more time than a similar MCQ exam

# General Themes: Instruction



- Quality of experience in a Zoom lecture depends on tech skill of presenter
  - Skills:
    - Teaching without an immediate audience
    - Managing Zoom dynamics (chat/hand raises/Q&A/breakout rooms)
- Video/Audio quality in Zoom is inconsistent and can be frustrating
  - Video/Audio cuts in and out with internet connectivity
  - Zoom recording captures this inconsistency rather than filling in gaps
  - Some would prefer to just do lectures via Panopto with live stream

# Student Experience of Stress



- 36% indicated increased/very high stress
- 40% indicated decreased/very low stress
- 24% indicated similar stress levels

# Student Experience of Stress – Increases



- Wellness concerns
  - Family, friends physical health, lack of income
  - Student's own physical and mental health
- School concerns
  - Taking exams at home
  - Lost rigor in coursework, retention for future
  - Having enough time/opportunity to learn when they return
  - Not having enough of a break between summer/fall
  - Ability to have input in COD decisions as a student
  - Uncertainty about course/program organization
  - Impact of dental schedule on life plans
- Future Career/Global concerns
  - Ability to work/find employment in the future
  - Uncertainty of how COVID will impact society in the long run

# Student Experience of Stress – Decreases



- Dental School things
  - Open note quizzes/tests
  - Kindness/resilience of instructors
  - Not having peer social pressure about grades
  - Casual online meetups with peers (Zoom/Facetime)
- Personal Coping Strategies
  - Focusing on things they can control, finding the positive
  - Connecting with family and faith
  - Rediscovering hobbies and passions
  - Using extra time for self-care
- Resources
  - No commute = Less lost time in the car
  - Saving some money because of less expenses



# GRISTO Experiences: Panopto Lectures



- Context: Lectures were primarily presented asynchronously
- Pros:
  - Students enjoyed self-regulating their schedule
  - This was beneficial in context of doubled-up didactics in other courses
  - The usual things about panopto lectures (speed up/slow down, recording quality)
- Cons:
  - Some missed hearing peers' questions in class
  - Some students did not have a good distraction-free environment
- If using this approach
  - Screenshot limits/day is important. Consider how many other lectures are assigned.
  - If possible post lectures ahead of schedule to enable students to work ahead

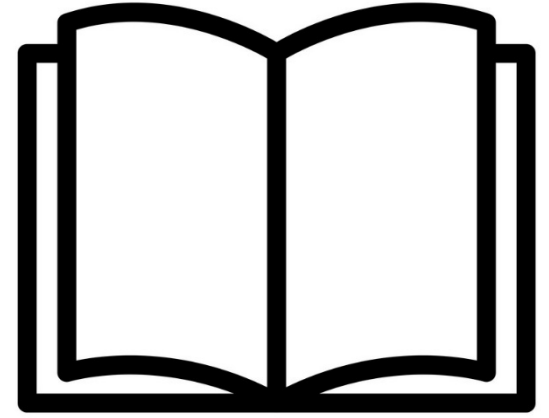
# GRISTO Experiences: Dissection Videos



- Pros
  - High quality video, good clean anatomy
  - Easier to study for the lab exams with repetitive viewing
  - Some did not enjoy dissecting previously, this was a plus for them
- Cons
  - Many felt that they missed out on key lab experiences for their education
  - Tactile learning, working up close, working with peers, spatial orientation, etc.
- If using this approach
  - More pictures of the content to study from
  - Provide tasks or assignments to beef up the experience
  - Caption videos and provide key words that pop up on screen when shown
  - Videos of multiple bodies to understand variation



# GRISTO Experiences: Open-Book Exams



- Pros:
  - This approach was essential in absence of adequate security
  - Students focused more on application and understanding than memorization
- Cons:
  - Concern that they didn't study as hard and retention may be low
  - Reduced motivation to study without grade threat
- If using this approach:
  - Pressure of closed book exams is a big part of hard study
  - Unless lockdown monitor/browser can be implemented, students are very concerned about their peers cheating