



Online vs. In-Person Attendance in a Sophomore-Level Hybrid Course

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INTRODUCTION

Students' motivation for optional in-person attendance in a sophomore-level hybrid course (AGRI 2317) was analyzed. The students had the option to meet in-person Tuesdays and Thursdays throughout the semester, except for exam weeks where students had to complete exams online. The instructor lectured on Tuesdays and had students do exercises and team activities on Thursdays. Students had to take quizzes and participate in discussions online once week. Video recordings were provided for lectures, exercise solutions, team activities, and review questions. Regardless of online or in-person, students had access to the same content. In fall 2022, an end-of-the-semester survey was conducted using Qualtrics XM Platform™ for the students who attended online, while a printed version of the survey was delivered to the students who attended in person throughout the semester. The study summarizes the opinion of a sample of students mostly from the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources (CASNR) at Texas A&M University -Commerce.

OBJECTIVES

The objective of the study was to assess the students' motivations for attending a sophomore-level hybrid course in person or online.

The study examined whether student classification, residency, employment, previous online experiences, class schedule, and other demographic variables played a role in attending in-person or online.

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

- The Qualtrics XM Platform™ was used, at the end of the fall 2022 semester, to conduct a survey.
- Students who attended online were invited to take the survey in Qualtrics, while a printed version of the survey was delivered to the students who attended in person throughout the semester.
- A course website announcement inviting online students to take the survey displayed from 12/05/2022 to 12/11/2022. A follow-up email was sent out to all 35 students to take the survey on 12/06/2022 at 1:39 PM, after the optional in-person meeting class time 9:30-10:45 AM. In-person students were instructed not to take the online survey in Qualtrics. See also Figure 1.
- Descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation coefficients (Table 1) were used to analyze the results.

RESULTS

- A total of 35 students enrolled in the course, 29 attended online, and 6 students attended in person throughout the semester. Of the 35 students invited to take the survey, 29 responded; 23 took the online survey and 6 took the in-person survey (Figure 1).
- Of the 29 student who responded:
 - 51.72% started as freshman while 48.28% were transfer students;
 - 31.03% were freshman, 34.48% sophomore, 27.59% junior, and 6.90% senior;
 - 41.38% lived on campus and 58.62% did not;
 - 48.28% lived in Commerce, and 51.72% did not; and
 - The average commuting time of the students who did not live on campus or in Commerce was about 34 minutes or 30 miles.
- Of 28 students who responded:

| | | Responses | | | Percentages | | |
|-------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|---------|-------------|-----------|---------|
| | | Online | In-Person | Overall | Online | In-Person | Overall |
| Dependents | Yes | 0 | 2 | 2 | 0.00% | 33.33% | 7.14% |
| | No | 22 | 4 | 26 | 100.00% | 66.67% | 92.86% |
| Full-time job | Yes | 5 | 3 | 8 | 22.73% | 50.00% | 28.57% |
| | No | 17 | 3 | 20 | 77.27% | 50.00% | 71.43% |
| Part-time job | Yes | 10 | 2 | 12 | 45.45% | 33.33% | 42.86% |
| | No | 12 | 4 | 16 | 54.55% | 66.67% | 57.14% |
| Past online here | Yes | 17 | 4 | 21 | 77.27% | 66.67% | 75.00% |
| | No | 5 | 2 | 7 | 22.73% | 33.33% | 25.00% |
| Past online else | Yes | 14 | 4 | 18 | 63.64% | 66.67% | 64.29% |
| | No | 8 | 2 | 10 | 36.36% | 33.33% | 35.71% |
| Another in person | Yes | 22 | 3 | 25 | 100.00% | 50.00% | 89.29% |
| | No | 0 | 3 | 3 | 0.00% | 50.00% | 10.71% |
| Age | Under 20 | 16 | 0 | 16 | 72.73% | 0.00% | 57.14% |
| | 20-30 | 6 | 4 | 10 | 27.27% | 66.67% | 35.71% |
| | Over 30 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 0.00% | 33.33% | 7.14% |
| Sex | Male | 7 | 3 | 10 | 31.82% | 50.00% | 35.71% |
| | Female | 15 | 3 | 18 | 68.18% | 50.00% | 64.29% |
| Live alone | Alone | 9 | 3 | 12 | 40.91% | 50.00% | 42.86% |
| | Not alone | 13 | 3 | 16 | 59.09% | 50.00% | 57.14% |

CONCLUSION

The results indicated positive linear correlation between attending in person and transfer, classification, dependents, and age (Table 1). Research indicates an increased demand for online courses post the COVID-19 pandemic. This study identified characteristics of students who prefer to attend in person when in-person attendance is optional and also found that the majority preferred to attend online. The study serves as a venue for discussing trends in online teaching as well as sharing experiences.

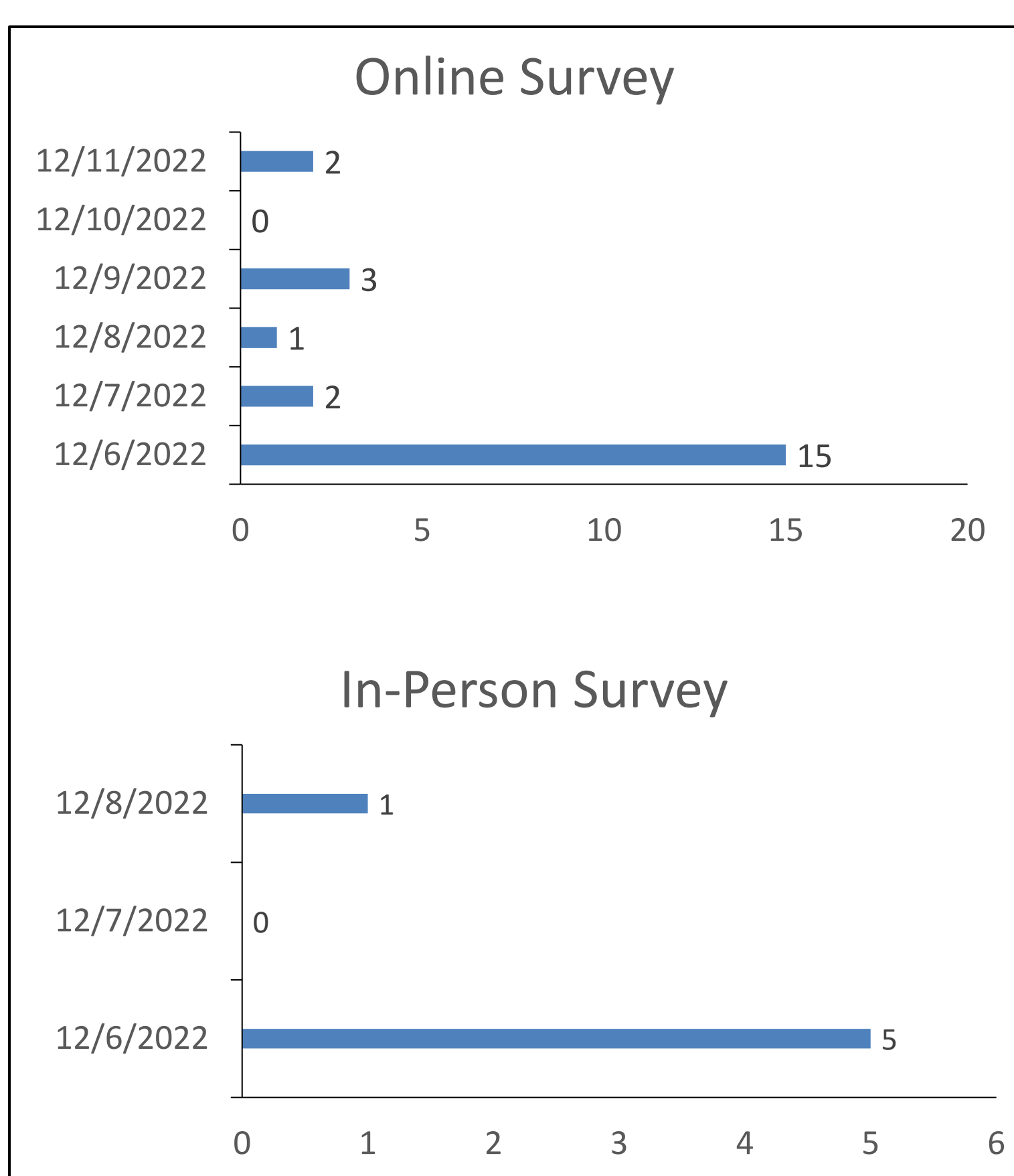


Table 1. Pearson Correlation Coefficients.

| | In-person att. | Transfer | Classification | Campus | City | Dependents. | Full-time job | Part-time job | Past online here | Past online else | Age | Sex | Live alone |
|------------------|----------------|----------|----------------|---------|--------|-------------|---------------|---------------|------------------|------------------|--------|--------|------------|
| In-person att. | 1.000* | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Transfer | 0.474* | 1.000* | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Classification | 0.601* | 0.723* | 1.000* | | | | | | | | | | |
| Live on campus | -0.185 | -0.366* | -0.325 | 1.000* | | | | | | | | | |
| Live in city | -0.272 | -0.358 | -0.259 | 0.864* | 1.000* | | | | | | | | |
| Dependents | 0.439* | 0.277 | 0.559* | -0.223 | -0.207 | 1.000* | | | | | | | |
| Full-time job | 0.300 | 0.158 | 0.349 | -0.185 | -0.141 | 0.132 | 1.000* | | | | | | |
| Part-time job | -0.068 | -0.144 | -0.099 | -0.401* | -0.344 | 0.320 | -0.228 | 1.000* | | | | | |
| Past online here | 0.000 | -0.082 | -0.110 | 0.296 | 0.430* | -0.160 | 0.183 | -0.167 | 1.000* | | | | |
| Past online else | -0.024 | 0.298 | 0.085 | -0.011 | -0.067 | -0.372* | -0.024 | -0.559* | -0.086 | 1.000* | | | |
| Age | 0.558* | 0.529* | 0.758* | -0.410* | -0.226 | 0.793* | 0.089 | 0.194 | -0.306 | -0.142 | 1.000* | | |
| Sex | 0.024 | 0.000 | -0.006 | -0.294 | -0.244 | 0.372* | -0.141 | 0.559* | -0.086 | -0.378* | 0.216 | 1.000* | |
| Live alone | -0.251 | 0.000 | -0.209 | -0.190 | -0.258 | 0.240 | -0.091 | 0.313 | 0.000 | 0.108 | 0.020 | 0.344 | 1.000* |

Note: Statistical significance at the 5% probability level is denoted by an asterisk (*), sample size = 28, r_critical = 0.361.

Figure 1. Response Distributions.