WHEN LAW SCHOOLS HAD TO TRANSITION FROM IN CLASS TO REMOTE LEARNING

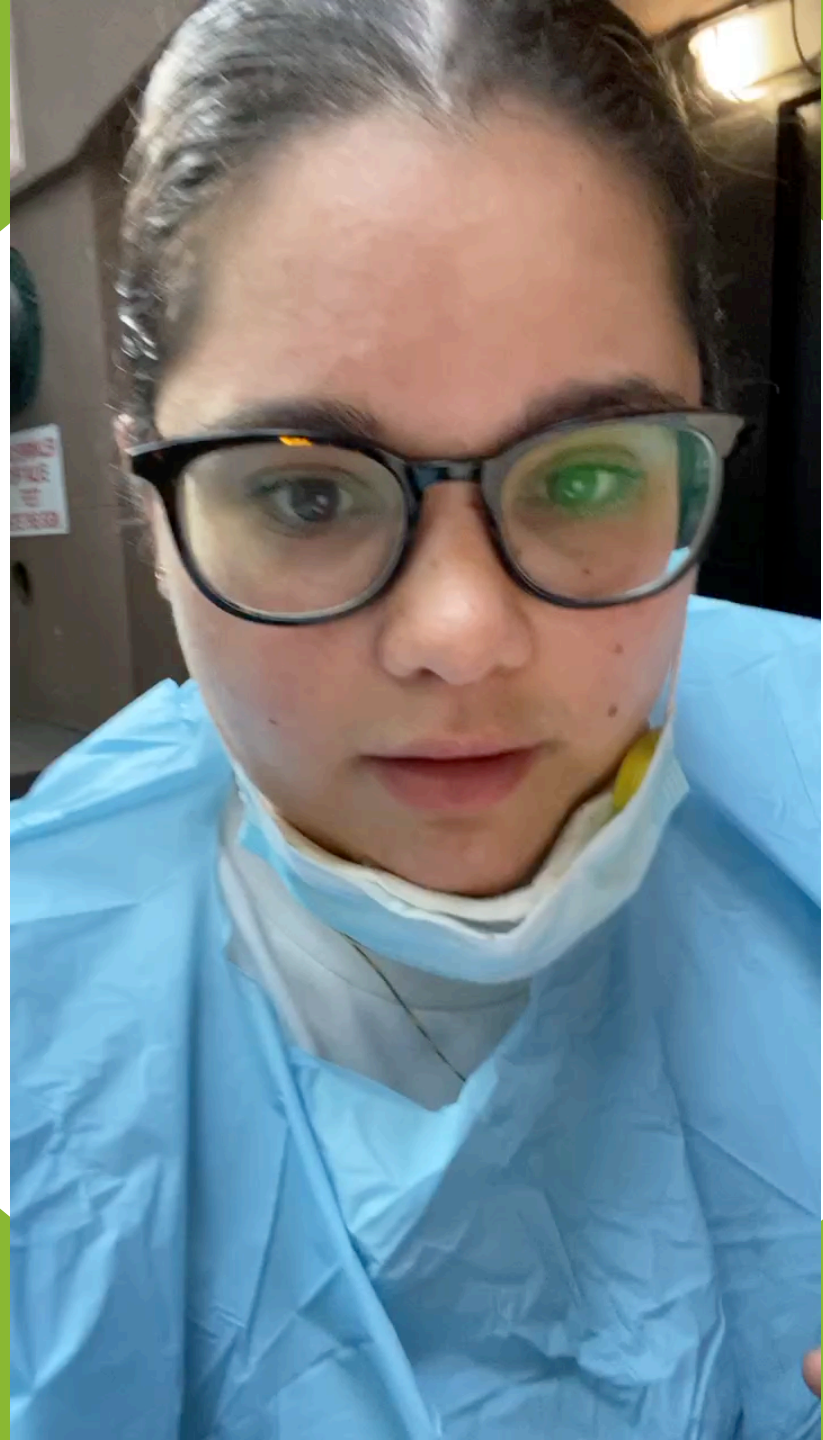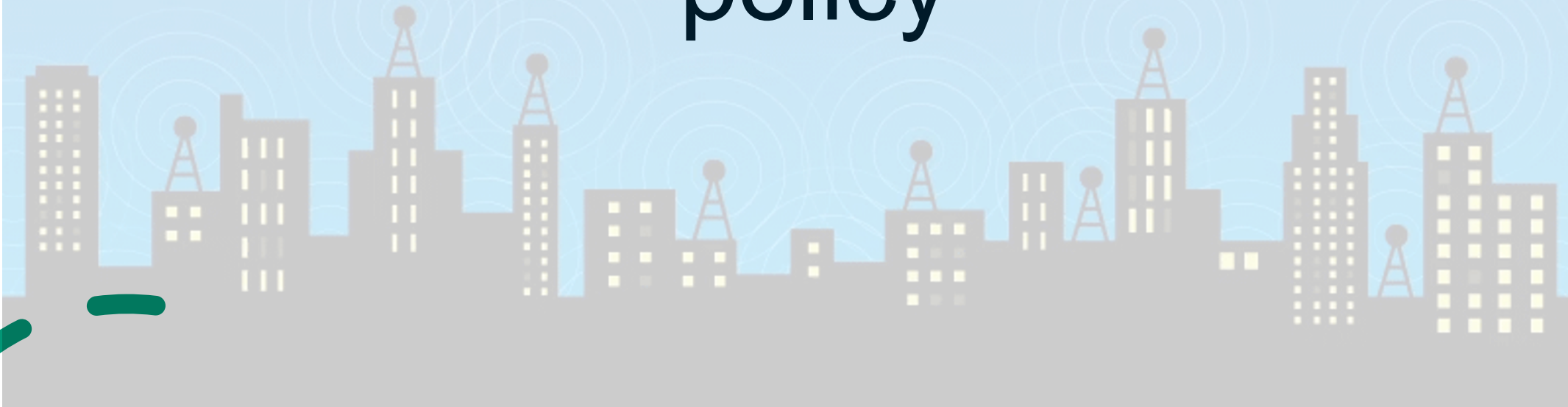imgflip.com

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JUSTINE ORTIZ
Rising 3L
Evening Student

Backdrop

CUNY Law adopted an emergency pass/fail grading policy

Distance Learning Survey: Response rate

|	FT	PT	Total
1L	46.5%	49.3%	47.4%
2L	44.3%	48.0%	45.2%
3L	19.4%	46.7%	24.7%
4L	n/a	32.0%	32.0%
Total	**37.6%**	**46.0%**	**40.1%**

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Results?

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…..No One-Size-Fits All Solution!

Summary

- **Mix of positive and negative experiences**
- A spectrum:
  - some found it challenging and less desirable
  - some preferred it
- **Difficulty interacting and fostering community** vs. traditional format

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Summary
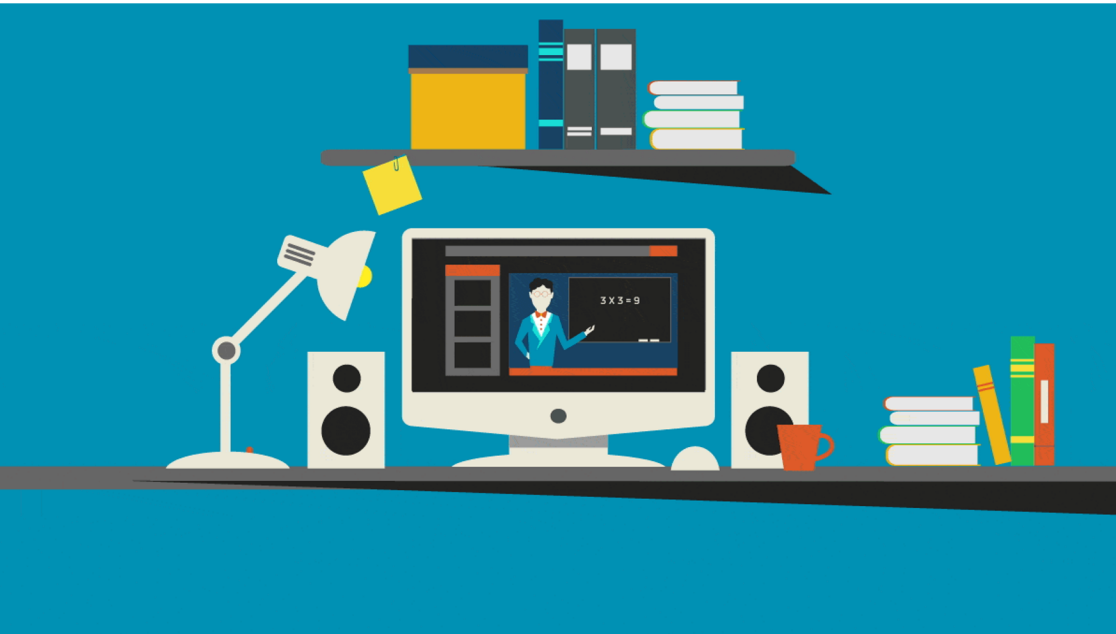
- **Desire for more structure, consistency, and accessible content**
  - Structure/expectations of class time
  - uniformity/ standardization using digital tools among faculty *(e.g. TWEN vs. Blackboard, etc.)*

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Pandemic Context: Pre-Covid Educational Challenges
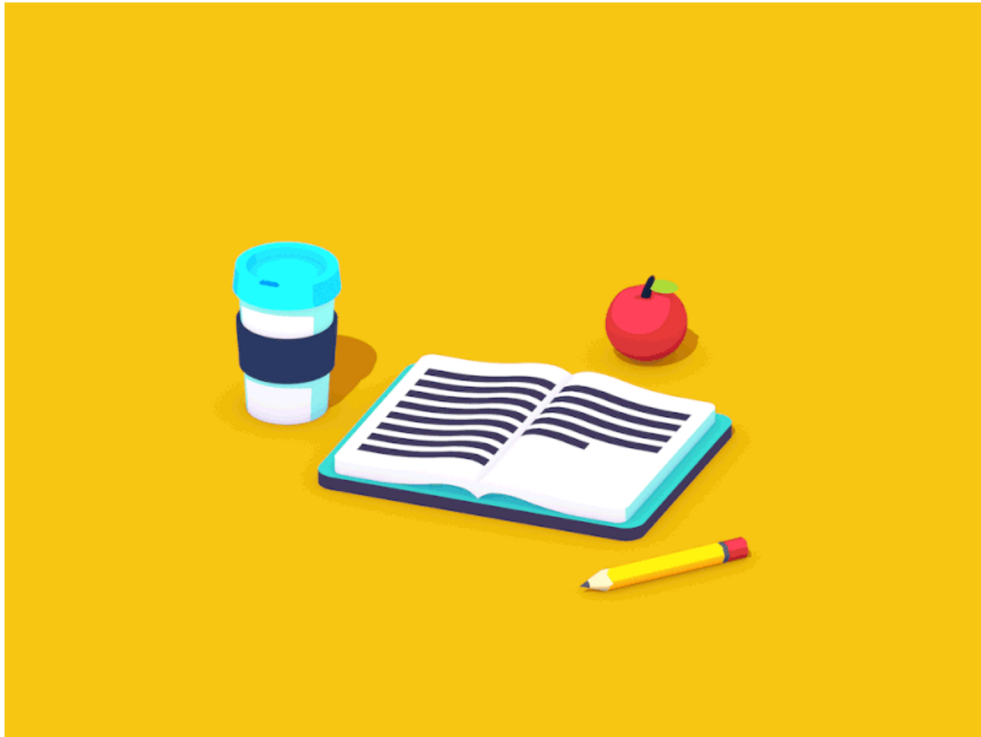

…AT LOW ENERGY LEVELS!

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Pandemic Context: Post-Covid Outbreak Challenges (general)

- Health insecurity
- Employment insecurity
- Financial insecurity
- Food insecurity
- Housing insecurity
- Trauma from addressing/handling loss

IN THAT MOMENT, WE WERE ONE!

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Pandemic Context: Post-Covid Outbreak Educational Challenges

- Delivering educational value
- Cognitive learning challenges/hurdles
- Cultivating sense of community and engagement

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Pandemic Context: Post-Covid Outbreak Educational Challenges

- Time constraints;

- Space constraints;

- Tech constraints;

- Resources constraints;

- Inability to Unwind

Exacerbated Evening Student Challenges

- Lack of meaningful "deep work" blocks
- Children/parental caretaking responsibilities
- Unanticipated job infringements on class & study time
- Late-night commuting difficulties
- Skills Appointments
- Study Group Time
- Planning Time
- Guilt
- **…drastically increased vectors for uncertainty and interruption!!**
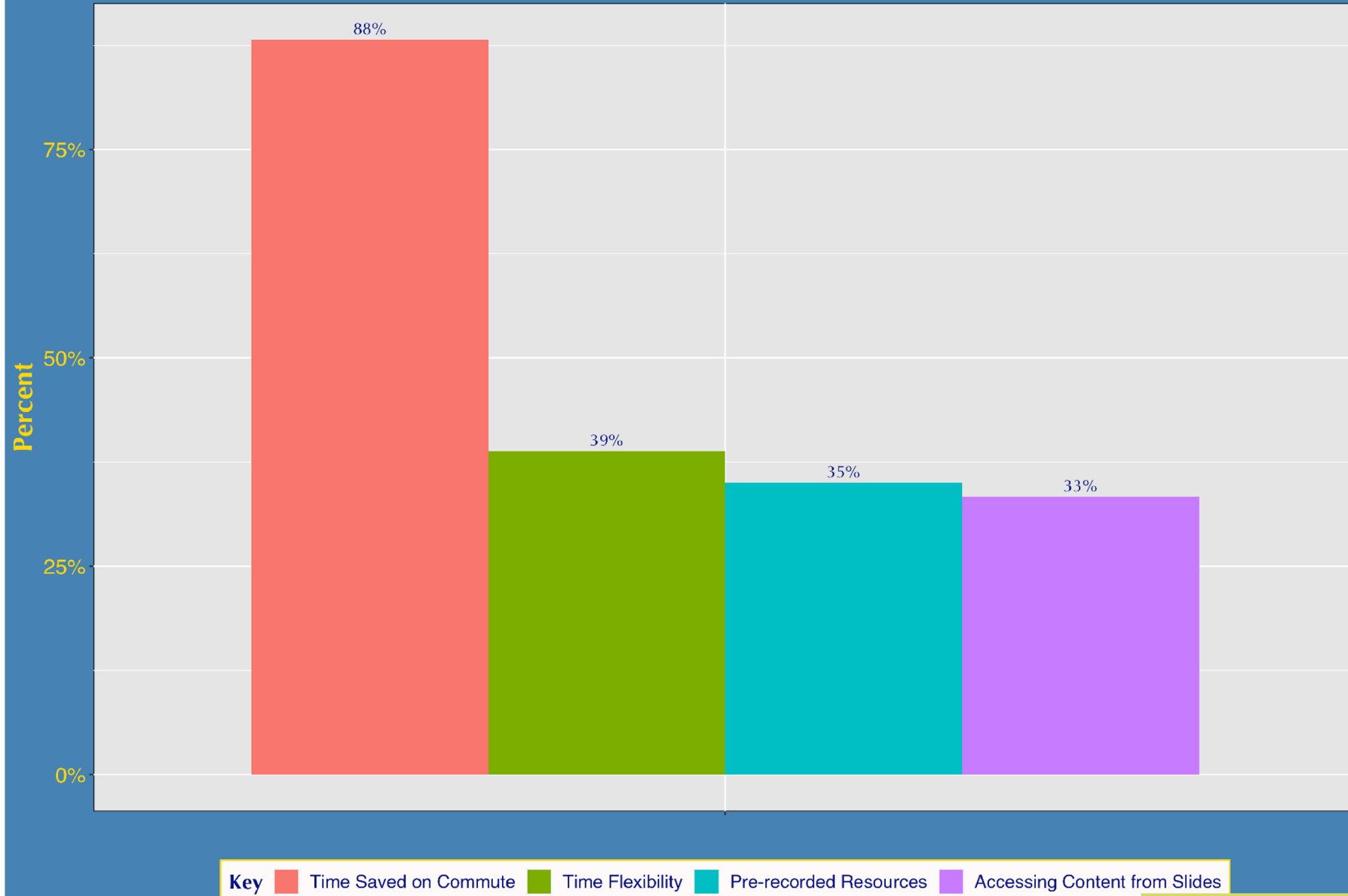
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Format Preferences: FT vs. PT

- FT students **twice** as likely to prefer **traditional** course formats

- PT students more likely to report **preferences for hybrid, online, and mixed** formats along with traditional courses

- 51% of respondents overall prefer traditional courses over
  - online,
  - hybrid, or
  - mixed formats

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Distance Learning: Benefits
'Benefits of taking online classes?'

Graph courtesy of Will Jawde, CUNY Law Institutional Research

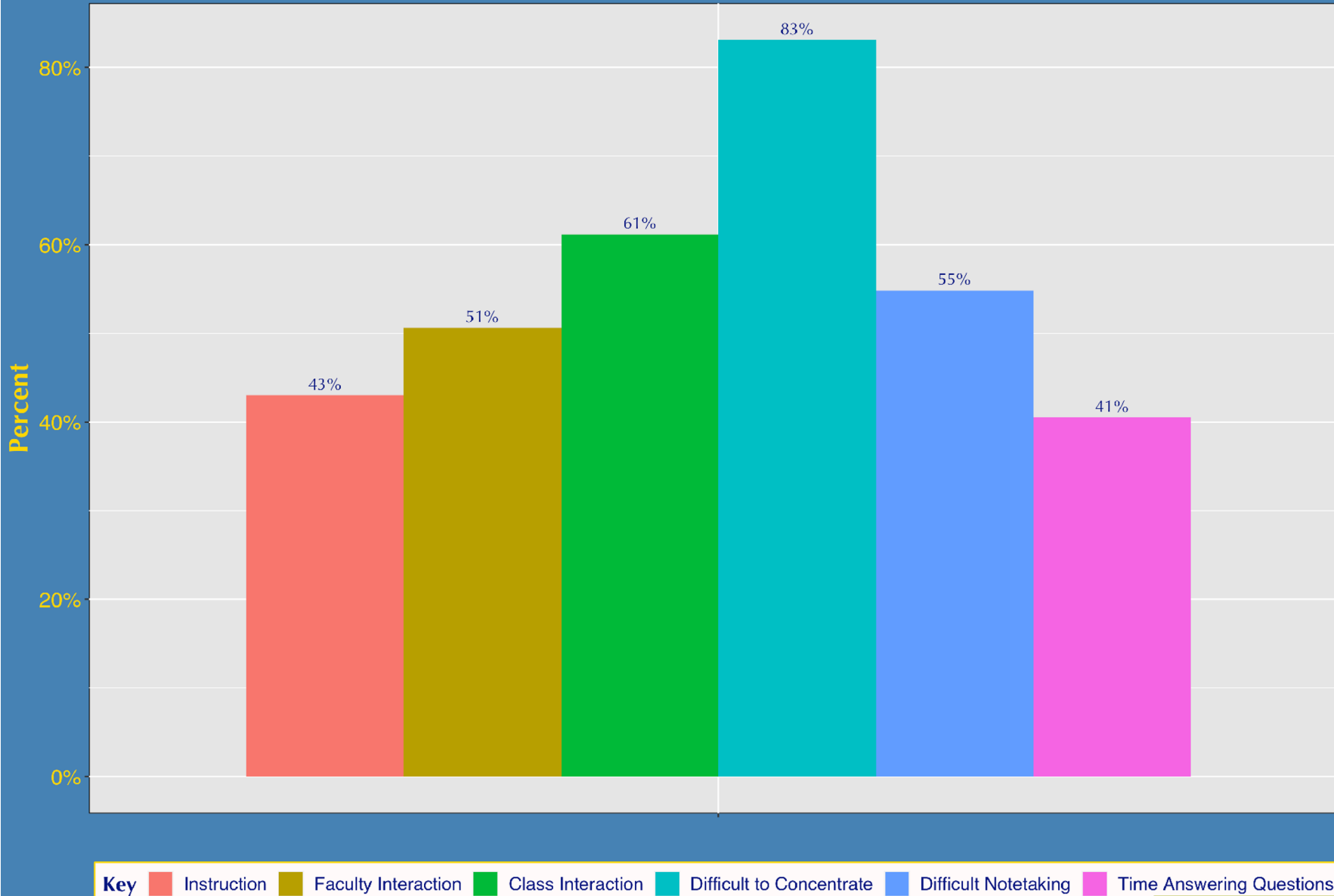ALEX
WARDEN

Rising 3L
Evening
Student

Distance Learning: Drawbacks

'Drawbacks of taking online classes?'

Graph courtesy of Will Jawde, CUNY Law Institutional Research

Key: Instruction, Faculty Interaction, Class Interaction, Difficult to Concentrate, Difficult Notetaking, Time Answering Questions

Percentage of respondents who report...

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Distance Learning: Resources Required
'What resources do you think you might need to take online classes?'

Graph courtesy of Will Jawde, CUNY Law Institutional Research

Key: Hardware Support | Laptop Loaner | Software Updates | MS Office | Training
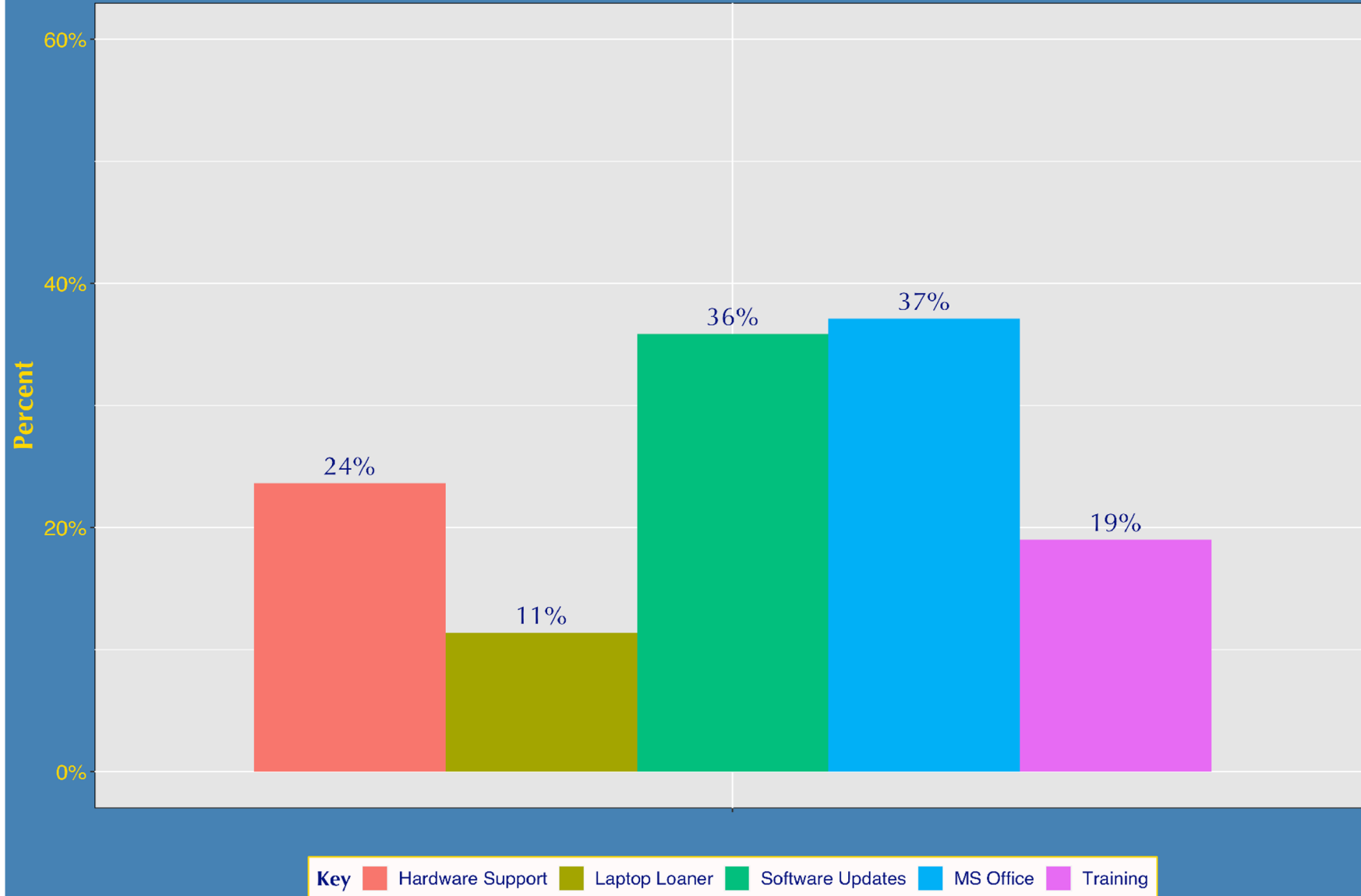
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Recommendations

1. Class Planning
2. Classroom Experience
3. Slides & Asynchronous Materials
4. Zoom Features
5. Student Support

1. Class Planning

- Send student guidance on virtual learning including:
- Sample community agreement
- Virtual classroom code of conduct
- Security/safety measures
- Technological requirements/ troubleshooting
- Non-digital self-care

1. Class Planning

- Larger courses involve more challenges than smaller ones.
- Plan or revise format for content delivery.

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1. Class Planning

- State the **maximum amount of time** students should allot on assignments

...**especially** for ungraded/ participation assignments!

1. Class Planning

- **Deadlines which don't change.**

2. Classroom Experience

- Structured question time
- Establish consistent format for in-class questions (chat box, hand raising, etc.)

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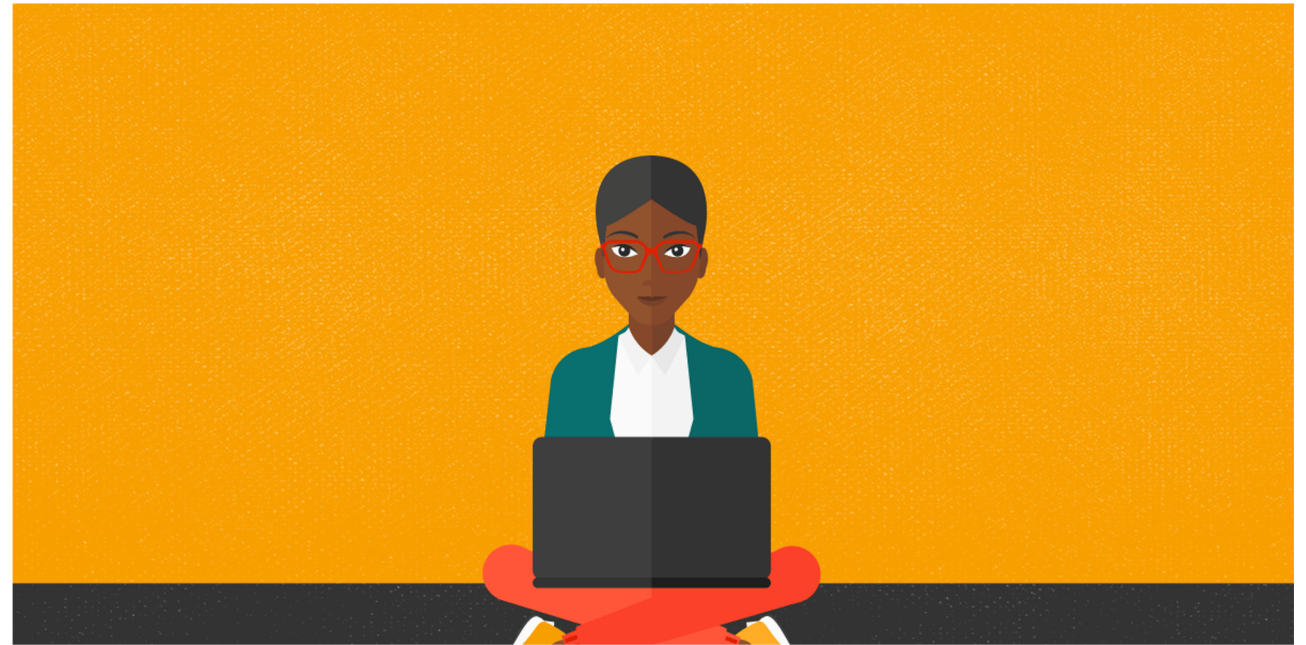# Although for class planning post-COVID...

FLEXIBILITY WAS KEY!!!!!

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2. Classroom Experience

Flexibility with:
- Attendance (i.e. sign in, dial in, TWEN)
- Extensions
- Appointment hours
- Participation
- Avenues of communications

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2. Classroom Experience

SCREEN Fatigue is real!

- Regular stretching & breathing breaks

- For every one hour, 5 minute break

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3. Slides & Asynchronous Materials

- Roadmap
- Locate discussion in the syllabus/outline.
- Include essential info only
- Post before class
- COLORFUL

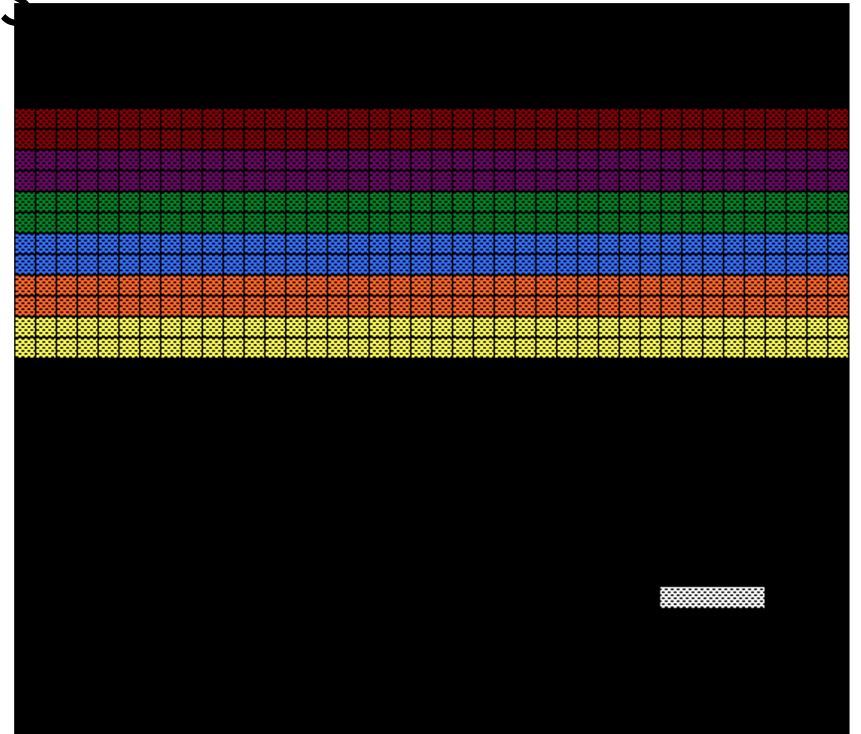CUNY SCHOOL OF LAW

3. Slides & Asynchronous Materials

- More availability and robust access to content, e.g. pre-recorded audio/ video, slideshows, etc.

4. Zoom Features: Break-out Rooms

- Smaller groups amplify voices
- Once every 1-1.5 hours?
- Assign roles
  - Plaintiff/Defendant
- Profs can jump in and out

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4. Zoom Features: Break-out Rooms

- Rule synthesis
- Hypos
  - Essay mapping
  - Multiple choice questions
  - Short-responses
- Outlining

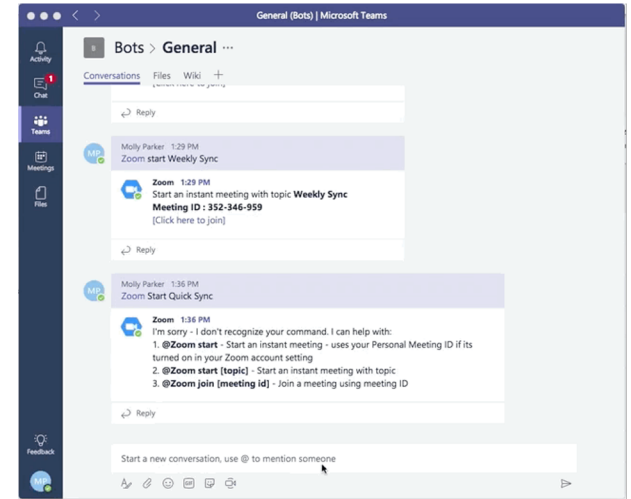CUNY SCHOOL OF LAW

4. Zoom Features: Break-out Rooms

- Use for post-class Q & A

- Other student-prof communications

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4. Zoom Features: Chat Box

- Chat with host only
- Allow to count as participation
- Monitor where students want you to speed up or slow down
- Periodically monitor questions, comments or feedback

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5. Student Support

As much as possible, ensure students all have access to additional resources:

- *academic support*
- *technological help or training*
- *counseling.*

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5. Student Support

- Encourage early and adequate technology resources provisioning:
  - Individual faculty and student IT appointments
  - Audio/visual equipment (within school budget)

Pandemic Learning Exacerbates Racial & Socioeconomic "Learning Loss"

"The disruption to education caused by the pandemic is likely to widen racial and socioeconomic achievement gaps because of disparities in access to computers, home internet connections and direct instructions from teachers."

Dana Goldstein, Research Shows Students Falling Months Behind During Virus Disruption. New York Times, June 5, 2020

Thanks for listening!