

Working Remotely Four Key Findings

The Early Impacts of COVID-19 on Graduate Students Across Canada

Find out more about the COVID-19 Graduate Student Survey at: toscipolicynet.ca/covid19-report







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1

Students were dissatisfied with updates

42%

of graduate students were unsatisfied with updates regarding financial support and funding. 89%

of graduate students received some form of instruction to begin remote work.



2

Insufficient resources to work remotely

27%

of graduate students did not have access to a safe and quiet work space.



3

Negative impact on degree components

76%

of graduate students reported a negative impact on their ability to conduct research. 50%

of graduate students reported a negative impact on their ability to find/complete work experiences such as practicums or internships.







51%

of graduate students reported that expectations for remote work were unclear or received no communications about expectations.



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Research







77%

of research-stream graduate students are dependent on some access to a physical research space.

Research







17%

of research-stream graduate students rarely met with their supervisor during COVID-19. 24%

of research-stream graduate students were unsatisfied with the frequency of their meetings.

Research



3

International activities were disrupted

78%

of graduate students planning to study or research abroad had to cancel their plans. 41%

of such graduate students felt the cancellation and virtual format of conferences would impact their future prospects.



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Funding



1

Students are concerned about finances

Graduate students expressing concern regarding income from:

69% Stipends

66% Teaching Assistantships

62% Research Assistantships

Graduate students expressing concern regarding ability to pay:

67% Tuition Fees

66% Rent

54% Credit Payments

Funding







88%

of professional-stream graduate students were not contacted about how COVID-19 would impact their time-tocompletion or associated costs. 30%

of research-stream graduate students do not receive a stipend.



Loss of critical work experience

40%

of professional-stream graduate students report not being able to complete their scheduled summer internship, practicum or work term as planned.



Health and Wellness Four Key Findings

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Health and Wellness



1

Students experienced housing changes

9%

of graduate students required additional housing support due to COVID-19.

Health and Wellness



2

Students considered leaves-of-absence

26%

of graduate students are considering taking a long term leave-of-absence from their degree.

Reasons for considering taking a leave-of-absence included:

- Inability to work remotely
- Financial challenges
- Caretaking needs

Health and Wellness



3

Dissatisfaction with health supports

23%

of graduate students were dissatisfied with access to primary care.

21%

of graduate students were dissatisfied with access to mental health services.

of graduate students were uncertain whether resources were provided

Graduate students level of satisfaction regarding additional mental health supports during COVID-19:

30% No resources were provided

21% Insufficient resources were provided

17% Sufficient resources were provided

Health and Wellnesss

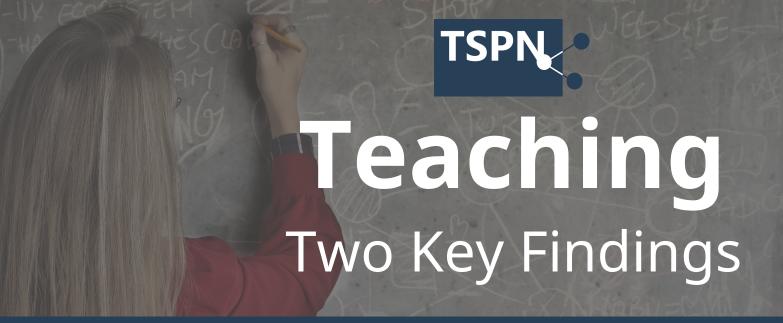




Student mental health declined

Graduate students experiencing an increase in severity of mental health challenges:

77% Feelings of anxiety
72% Feeling of being overwhelmed
76% Feelings of helplessness
71% Feelings of loneliness
63% Feelings of depression



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Teaching





30%

of graduate teaching assistants (TAs) and course instructors (CIs) reported receiving no support in the transition to remote teaching.

79%

of graduate TAs and CIs received no financial compensation for the additional work involved in transitioning to remote teaching.



Concerns with teaching requirements

34%

of graduate TAs and CIs reported dissatisfaction with departmental supports for completing their teaching requirements. 58%

of graduate TAs and CIs expressed concern about availability of future teaching opportunities.



Courses Two Key Findings

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Practical components cancelled



29%

of graduate students said the physical lab or field component of their course was cancelled.







Graduate students expressing dissatisfaction with quality of course delivery:

43% Practical Aspects

29% Lectures

Increased dissatisfaction also expressed regarding:

- Assignments
- Grading
- Instructor(s)
- Teaching Assistant(s)



Three Key Findings

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1

Students were unable to return home

60%

of international graduate students were intending to travel home but were unable to do so. Reasons for their inability to go home:

14% Canadian travel restrictions

13% Limited flights

12% Home country travel restrictions

12% Finances



2

Insufficient travel & housing support

29%

of international graduate students were dissatisfied with their institution's travel support. 46%

of international graduate students said they received no housing assistance from their institution.



3

Students concerned about study permits

54%

of international graduate students were worried about their ability to complete degree requirements before the expiration of their study permit.



Future Outlook Three Key Findings

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Future Outlook



1

Concern about time-to-completion

40%

of research-stream graduate students said COVID-19 would impact their degree timeline. 15%

of professional-stream graduate students said COVID-19 would impact their degree timeline.

Future Outlook



2

Concern about degree completion

44%

of research-stream graduate students were concerned COVID-19 would impact their ability to complete their degree. 33%

of professional-stream graduate students were concerned COVID-19 would impact their ability to complete their degree.

Future Outlook





Concern about ability to graduate

50%

of graduate students intending to graduate before August 2020 are now unable or unsure about their ability to do so.