

# MRU Employee Winter COVID-19 Survey Results

Institutional Research and Planning

April 28, 2021

## 1 Introduction and summary of key results

Overall, the results in the Fall and Winter employee COVID-19 impact surveys are very consistent with each other, and there are very few statistically significant differences. While the response rate was slightly lower, at 42.5% (compared to 47.9% for the Fall survey), it is still a robust sample of employees. The same statistically significant differences between respondents and non-respondents remained, and so the results in this report are not necessarily generalizable to all employees, but are representative of respondents to the survey.

Flexibility around continuing to work remotely post-pandemic continues to be important to employees, though the proportion is down slightly (to 52.1% wanting to work remotely 60% or more of the time, down from 56.2%), though this decrease is not statistically significant. There were many significant improvements in employees' concerns about COVID-19, specifically reductions in concern about being exposed by colleagues, by students, spreading to family/friends, and spreading to others. Employees express significantly more concern about "being isolated from family and friends" as compared with the Fall survey. This is possibly a result of the increased public health measures introduced in Alberta in December 2020.

Finally, in a new set of questions added to the Winter survey about health and well-being factors, a majority of employees (56%) reported experiencing 'mental or emotional exhaustion.' There were many statistically significant differences across demographic and employee variables on these factors.

## 2 Methodology and survey responders

The Winter 2021 Employee COVID Impact Survey was sent to 1,972 MRU employees on Tuesday, March 23, 2021. A reminder email was sent to those who had not yet responded on

Tuesday, March 30, 2021. The survey closed for entry at 11:59pm on Sunday, April 4, 2021. A total of 839 employees responded to at least one question, a response rate of 42.5%. The margin of error is therefore  $\pm 2.6\%$ , 19 times out of 20.

Demographic and employment variables were collected using a combination of administrative Banner data and survey responses. The data points provided exclusively from banner are employment category (e.g., staff, faculty, etc), age, number of years at MRU and division (e.g., Academic Affairs, Finance and Administration).

Gender was included from Banner, and collected on the survey as well, using a broader set of categories. If a response was not provided to the survey question, then Banner data was used; if a response was provided to the survey question, the survey response was used.

Table 1: Demographic and Employment Variables (Banner Population)

	N	Responded <i>N</i> = 839	No Response <i>N</i> = 1133	Combined <i>N</i> = 1972	Test Statistic
Role : Staff/Exempt	1972	49% (409)	21% (236)	33% (645)	$\chi^2_4=288.12, P<0.001^1$
Faculty		37% (310)	41% (469)	40% (779)	
Management		7% ( 55)	3% ( 36)	5% ( 91)	
Credit-Free		5% ( 38)	11% (123)	8% (161)	
Casual		3% ( 27)	24% (269)	15% (296)	
Age	1972	38 46 56	31 43 54	35 45 55	$F_{1,1970}=34.17, P<0.001^2$
YearsAtMRU	1971	4 9 15	2 6 14	2 7 14	$F_{1,1969}=44.1, P<0.001^2$
Banner Gender : F	1972	68% ( 573)	58% ( 659)	62% (1232)	$\chi^2_2=22.96, P<0.001^1$
M		31% ( 264)	41% ( 464)	37% ( 728)	
N		0% ( 2)	1% ( 10)	1% ( 12)	
Division : AA	1972	79% ( 667)	87% ( 982)	84% (1649)	$\chi^2_3=21.93, P<0.001^1$
FA		15% ( 123)	10% ( 117)	12% ( 240)	
Pres		2% ( 16)	1% ( 6)	1% ( 22)	
UA		4% ( 33)	2% ( 28)	3% ( 61)	

There were statistically significant differences between responders (i.e., the sample) and non-responders (i.e., the population) on all of the key demographic and employment variables. Full demographic and employment category information, comparing responders and non-responders is shown in Table 1. The difference by employment category was driven primarily by staff/exempt, who were more likely to respond, and casual and credit-free, who were less likely to respond. Responders were also significantly older (mean age 46 vs 43) and have worked at MRU for longer (median years 9 vs 6). Female-identified employees were significantly more likely to respond,<sup>1</sup> as were those who work in the Division of Finance and Administration. These findings are virtually identical to the Fall 2020 administration of the

<sup>1</sup>This comparison was done using self-reported gender in Banner; in the remainder of the survey, self-reported gender from the survey was used instead.

survey.

While there are statistically significant differences between the sample and the population, it is unclear whether this has an impact on the representativeness of the survey results, as the connection between demographic factors and survey responses is uncertain. It is, as well, theoretically possible that survey response is a proxy for employee engagement.

A number of demographic variables were collected only in the survey and are not available from any other administrative data set: detailed gender identity, sexual orientation, first language spoken at home, self-identified disability status, Indigenous status, and visible minority status. These demographics are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Demographic Variables (Survey Responses)

	N		
Gender : Woman	828	68%	(565)
Sexuality : LGBTQ2S+	641	14%	(90)
First Language Not English : Yes	752	19%	(146)
Disability : Yes	692	7%	(50)
Indigenous : Yes	704	2%	(13)
Visible Minority : Yes	686	15%	(104)

Throughout the survey report, overall frequencies and means are first presented, followed by highlighting of statistically significant<sup>2</sup> differences by demographic and employment variables, where present.

### 3 MRU’s response to COVID-19

Employees were asked a number of questions as to their perception of MRU’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>3</sup> Generally speaking, across most questions, employees are satisfied with MRU’s response to the pandemic (see Figure 1).<sup>4</sup> Employees feel most positively about the measures MRU has taken to protect its employees (88% satisfied; up from 84% in the Fall) and about receiving timely communication (81% agreement, down from 82% in the Fall). Only on one question, “I receive clear communication about how the pandemic will impact MRU financially,” were a majority of employees not in agreement (48% agreement, up from 45% in the Fall).

Results were largely consistent across demographic and employment variables, with a few exceptions. When asked if they were “satisfied with the measures MRU has taken to

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<sup>2</sup>For the purposes of this report, statistically significant is defined as  $p < 0.01$ . Binary variables were compared using a t-test; variables with multiple categories were compared using an ANOVA, with Tukey’s

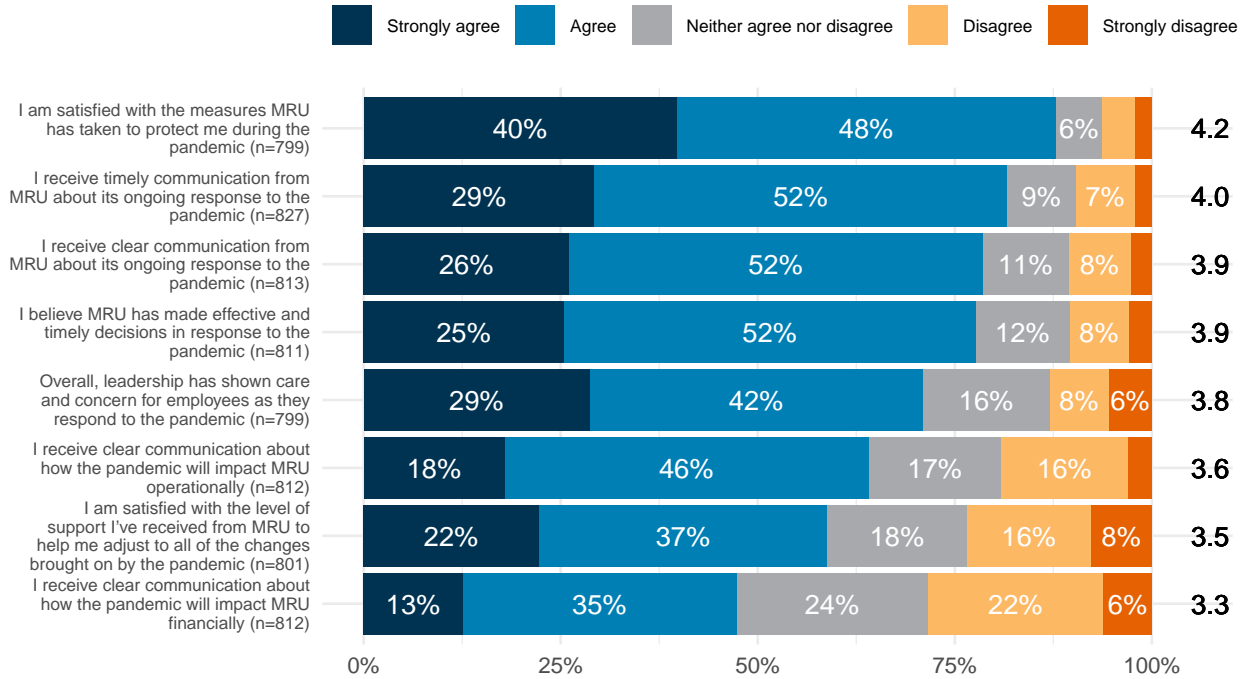


Figure 1: Employee perceptions MRU's response (with means)

protect [them] during the pandemic,” those whose first language is not English (mean=4.25) were less positive. This was the case in the Fall survey as well, though there were no significant differences on gender, age and self-identified minority status in the Winter survey. Age was also positively correlated with belief in “clear communication about ongoing response” ( $r = 0.12$ ), “clear communication about operational impacts” ( $r = 0.11$ ), and “timely communication about ongoing response” ( $r = 0.11$ ). This is similar to the findings in the Fall survey.

There were no statistically significant differences between Winter and Fall responses (see Table 3).

HSD as a post-hoc test; for continuous variables, Pearson's  $r$  was calculated.

<sup>3</sup>From this point forward, all results are reported only from those who answered at least one question; non-responders were excluded.

<sup>4</sup>Means are computed using the scale “strongly agree” = 5 and “strongly disagree” = 1.

Table 3: MRU’s Response (Winter/Fall Comparison)

Survey Question	W21 Mean	F20 Mean	T-Test
I receive timely communication from MRU about its ongoing response to the pandemic	3.99	4.02	$t(1722) = -0.7, p = 0.497$
I receive clear communication from MRU about its ongoing response to the pandemic	3.91	3.93	$t(1705) = -0.3, p = 0.727$
I receive clear communication about how the pandemic will impact MRU operationally	3.60	3.62	$t(1689) = -0.4, p = 0.696$
I receive clear communication about how the pandemic will impact MRU financially	3.25	3.21	$t(1697) = 0.7, p = 0.477$
I believe MRU has made effective and timely decisions in response to the pandemic	3.90	3.81	$t(1709) = 1.8, p = 0.068$
I am satisfied with the measures MRU has taken to protect me during the pandemic	4.19	4.19	$t(1675) = 0.1, p = 0.954$
I am satisfied with the level of support I’ve received from MRU to help me adjust to all of the changes brought on by the pandemic	3.50	3.39	$t(1683) = 1.8, p = 0.067$
Overall, leadership has shown care and concern for employees as they respond to the pandemic	3.81	3.75	$t(1681) = 1.2, p = 0.246$

## 4 Work at MRU during the pandemic

### 4.1 Work situation

Employees were asked about their current work situation (n=804); a significant majority (67%, up from 63%) responded that they are “working remotely”, followed by “remotely, but occasionally on campus” (17%, down from 19%), “on campus” (8%, down from 11%), and “remotely, but regularly on campus” (8%, up from 7%). Employees in Finance and Administration were significantly more likely to be working on campus; employees in Academic Affairs were significantly more likely to be working remotely ( $\chi^2 p < 0.001$ ). Staff/exempt and casuals were significantly more likely to be working on campus; faculty were significantly more likely to be working remotely; management were significantly more likely to be remote, but occasionally or regularly going to campus ( $\chi^2 p < 0.001$ ). There were no significant changes from the Fall survey.

A majority of employees (70%, up from 63%) agreed that they had the materials and equipment necessary to do their jobs. There was no significant difference by division ( $\chi^2 p > 0.01$ ). There was a significant difference by employment category, with staff/exempt more likely to agree and faculty more likely to disagree ( $\chi^2 p < 0.001$ ). These results are very similar to the Fall survey.

## 4.2 Work perceptions

Employees were asked seven questions how often they had experienced a number of work-related perceptions since MRU started responding to the pandemic (see Figure 2).<sup>5</sup> A majority had experienced having too much work to do (53% very often or often, down from 54%) or changing work priorities due to COVID-19 (51% very often or often, down from 57%). A large majority had not experienced having not enough work to do (88% almost never or never, same as Fall survey).

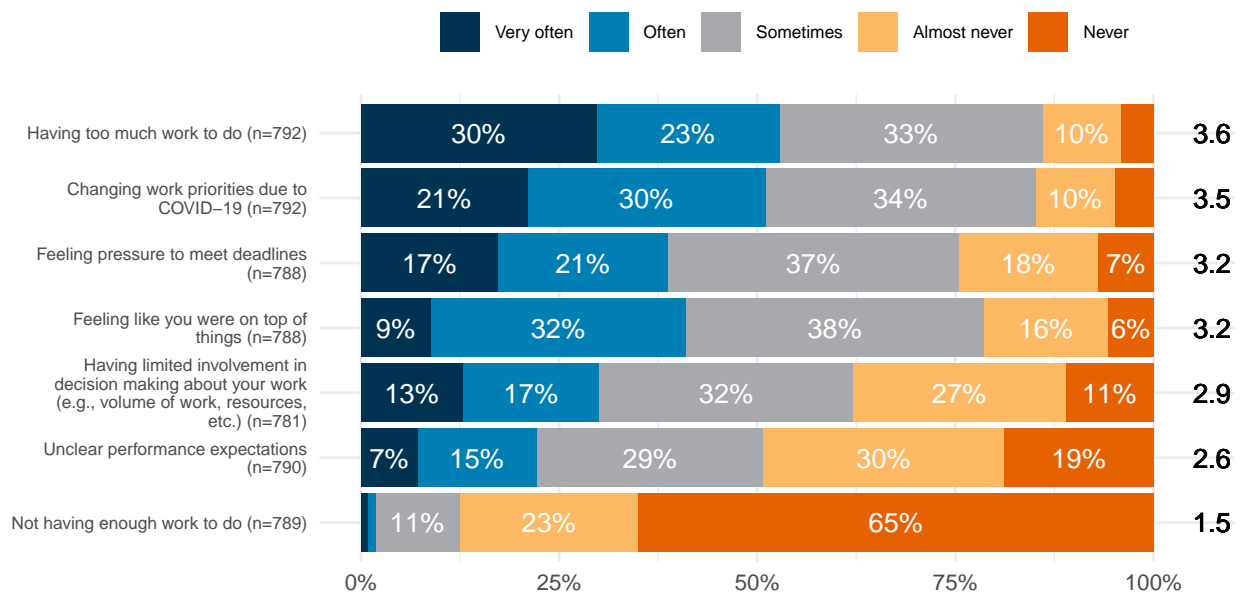


Figure 2: Employee work-related perceptions (with means)

Responses to these questions were largely consistent across demographic categories, with those identifying as a visible minority less likely to have experienced “changing work priorities due to COVID-19” (mean=3.3), and age being negatively correlated with experiencing “not having enough work to do” ( $r = -0.13$ ). This was less significant variation across demographic categories than in the Fall survey.

Experience of these work-related perceptions varied significantly by employment category: management were more likely to experience “changing work priorities” (mean=4.2); faculty were more likely to experience having “unclear performance expectations” (mean=2.9); faculty (mean=4.1) and management (mean=4.0) were more likely to experience “having too much work to do”; casual (mean=2.3) employees were more likely to experience “not having enough work to do.” Faculty (mean=3.6) and management (mean=3.7) were more

<sup>5</sup>Means are computed using the scale “very often” = 5 and “never” = 1.

likely to experience “feeling pressure to meet deadlines.” Faculty were more likely to experience “having limited involvement in decision making about your work” (mean=3.2) and less likely to experience “feeling like you were on top of things” (mean=2.8).

Responses were largely consistent by division, with three exceptions: employees in Academic Affairs were more likely to report having “unclear performance expectations” (mean=2.7) and to experience “having too much work to do” (mean=3.7); and employees in University Advancement were more likely to experience “not having enough work to do” (mean=1.8).

Table 4: Work Perceptions (Winter/Fall Comparison)

Survey Question	W21 Mean	F20 Mean	T-Test
Changing work priorities due to COVID-19	3.52	3.65	$t(1651) = -2.5, p = 0.013$
Unclear performance expectations	2.61	2.63	$t(1654) = -0.4, p = 0.718$
Having too much work to do	3.64	3.68	$t(1660) = -0.6, p = 0.517$
Not having enough work to do	1.50	1.50	$t(1665) = 0.0, p = 0.990$
Feeling pressure to meet deadlines	3.24	3.30	$t(1652) = -0.9, p = 0.353$
Having limited involvement in decision making about your work (e.g., volume of work, resources, etc.)	2.94	2.94	$t(1640) = -0.0, p = 0.987$
Feeling like you were on top of things	3.23	3.15	$t(1660) = 1.5, p = 0.126$

There were no statistically significant differences between Winter and Fall responses (see Table 4).

### 4.3 Work concern

Employees were asked nine questions as to their level of concern with a number of work-related COVID-19 issues (see Figure 3). In general, employees were less concerned about these various areas than they were in the Fall survey.

A majority of employees were concerned about “people on campus not following safety measures” (73% ‘very concerned’ or ‘concerned’, down from 78%) and “being exposed ... on campus and spreading it to family or friends” (73%, down from 82%). Concern about “being exposed to COVID-19 by students” fell to 70% from 78% in the Fall survey and concern about “being exposed to COVID-19 by colleagues” fell to 56% from 71%. Concern about potentially spreading to others on campus fell to 46% from 60%.

On the Winter survey, based in part on feedback after the Fall survey, an additional question was asked of employees as to whether they “have children under the age of 18,” with 36.3% of employees answering ‘yes.’ For those individuals indicating they had children under 18 who also answered the question about whether they had concerns around “organizing

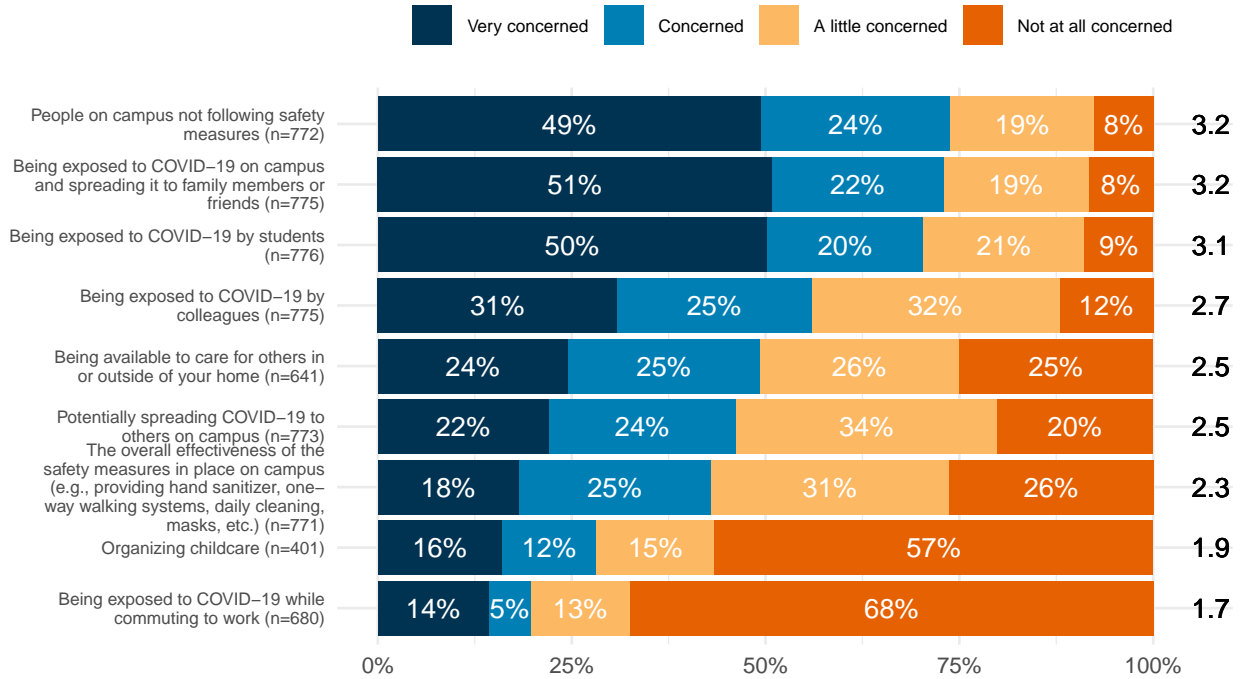


Figure 3: Employee work-related concerns (with means)

childcare,” 26% said they were ‘very concerned,’ 19% said they were ‘concerned’ (for a total of 45% saying ‘very concerned’ or ‘concerned’) (see Figure 4). These results are not directly comparable to the Fall survey.

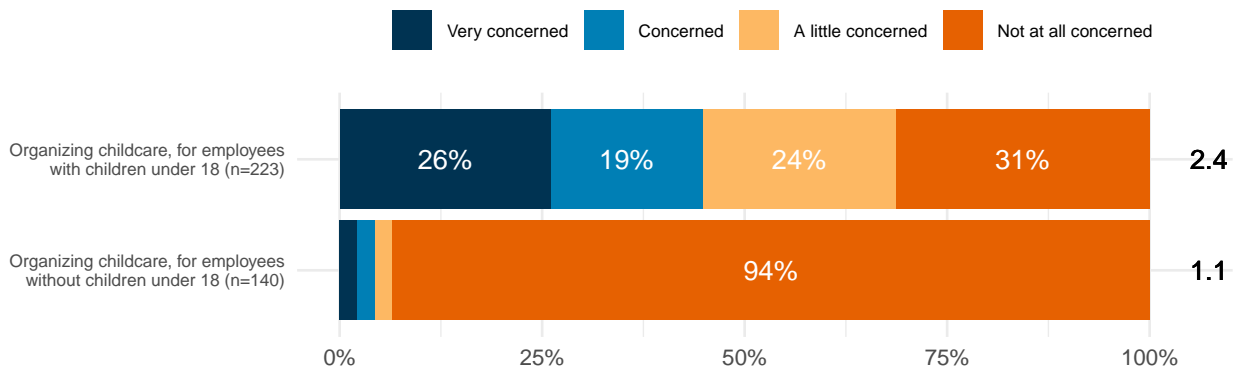


Figure 4: Organizing childcare concern, stratified by children

There were a number of statistically significant differences across demographic and employment variables. Employees identifying as women were more concerned about “being exposed ... by students” (mean=3.21), “being exposed ... on campus and spreading it” (mean=3.23) and the “overall effectiveness of safety measures on campus” (mean=2.42). Employees whose



first language was not English were more concerned about “organizing childcare” (mean=2.22) and “potentially spreading COVID-19 to others on campus” (mean=2.69). Those identifying as a visible minority were more concerned about “being exposed ... while commuting to work” (mean=2.00). Employee age was negatively correlated with “being exposed by colleagues” ( $r = -.130$ ), “being exposed by students” ( $r = -.096$ ), “being exposed on campus and spreading” ( $r = -.136$ ), “organizing childcare” ( $r = -.196$ ), and “potentially spreading to others on campus” ( $r = -.155$ ).

Looking at employee role, casuals, credit-free employees and management are generally less concerned about these questions, and staff/exempt are generally more concerned. Faculty are less concerned than average about being exposed, and more concerned about overall effectiveness of safety measures, people following those measures, being available to meet care obligations, and potentially spreading COVID-19 to others on campus.

Table 5: Work Concerns (Winter/Fall Comparison)

Survey Question	W21 Mean	F20 Mean	T-Test
Being exposed to COVID-19 by colleagues	2.75	3.10	$t(1492) = -7.1, p = 0.000$
Being exposed to COVID-19 by students	3.12	3.38	$t(1483) = -5.5, p = 0.000$
Being exposed to COVID-19 on campus and spreading it to family members or friends	3.15	3.50	$t(1459) = -7.4, p = 0.000$
Organizing childcare	1.88	2.10	$t(715) = -2.7, p = 0.008$
The overall effectiveness of the safety measures in place on campus (e.g., providing hand sanitizer, one-way walking systems, daily cleaning, masks, etc.)	2.35	2.39	$t(1462) = -0.8, p = 0.450$
People on campus not following safety measures	3.16	3.27	$t(1481) = -2.3, p = 0.020$
Being available to care for others in or outside of your home	2.49	2.61	$t(1193) = -2.0, p = 0.048$
Potentially spreading COVID-19 to others on campus	2.48	2.83	$t(1478) = -6.6, p = 0.000$
Being exposed to COVID-19 while commuting to work	1.66	1.75	$t(1281) = -1.3, p = 0.191$

As suggested by the aforementioned comparisons, there were many significant differences between Winter and Fall responses (see Table 5), with employees significantly less concerned about being exposed by colleagues (mean 2.75 vs 3.10), by students (3.12 vs 3.38), spreading to family/friends (3.15 vs 3.50), and spreading to others on campus (2.48 vs 2.83).

#### 4.4 Continuing remote work

Finally, employees were asked two questions about the amount they would prefer to continue to work at home, and how important that is to them. Asked “when you are able to return

to campus full time, about what percentage of the time would you prefer to continue to work remotely?” a majority (52.1%, down from 56.2%) responded 60% or more of the time, with a mean value of 53.2% (down from 55.8%; n=716). Employees who identified as women indicated a statistically significant higher proportion of time they would prefer to work remotely (mean=56.5%) as compared to employees who identified as men (mean=45.6%).

Asked how important “the flexibility to work remotely”, the vast majority (84%, same as Fall survey) said it was “important” or “very important” (mean=3.38, where “not at all important” = 1 and “very important” = 4, n=716; same as Fall survey). This flexibility was statistically significant more important to employees who identified as women (mean=3.46) than men (mean=3.20), and was negatively correlated with age ( $r = -.126$ ). It was more important to staff/exempt (mean +0.14) and less important to credit-free (mean -0.65) and casuals (mean -0.23).

Table 6: Amount and Importance of Work Flexibility (Fall Comparison)

Survey Question	W21 Mean	F20 Mean	T-Test
When you are able to return to campus full time, about what percentage of the time would you prefer to continue to work remotely?	53.18	55.84	$t(1434) = -1.7, p = 0.098$
When you are able to return to campus full time, how important is it to you to continue to have the flexibility to work remotely?	3.38	3.38	$t(1430) = 0.1, p = 0.958$

There were no statistically significant differences between Winter and Fall responses (see Table 6).

## 5 Employee wellbeing

### 5.1 Stress and mental health

In the final section of the survey, employees were asked 25 questions related to health and well-being. Of these, 18 questions were the same as the Fall survey, and 7 additional questions were added, based on feedback to the Fall survey, to attempt to capture more aspects of the mental health impacts. Asked about their work-related stress, a plurality of employees (40%, up from 37%) indicated that it was “moderate” with 27% (down from 28%) indicating it was “high” and 13% (down from 17%) saying “very high” (mean=3.3, n=774). Higher levels of work-related stress were reported by staff/exempt (mean +.136) and lower levels were reported by credit-free (mean -0.649) and casuals (mean -0.229).

Most employees (65%, up from 60%, mean=3.7, up from 3.6, where ‘strongly agree’ = 5 and ‘strongly disagree’ = 1) agreed that MRU “encourages employees to get mental health related help if they need it” and that MRU “shares useful resources and information on mental health” (65%, up from 61%, mean=3.7, up from 3.6) (see Figure 5). LGBTQ2S+ individuals were statistically significantly less likely to agree that MRU encourages employees to seek help when needed (mean=3.46 vs 3.79). Employees who identified as women were more likely to agree that MRU shares useful resources (mean=3.80 vs 3.52) and that it encourages employees to get help when needed (mean=3.79 vs 3.58). Staff/exempt (mean +0.24) and management (mean +0.40) were more likely to agree that MRU shares useful resources and that it encourages employees to get help when needed (staff mean +.19, management mean +.42).

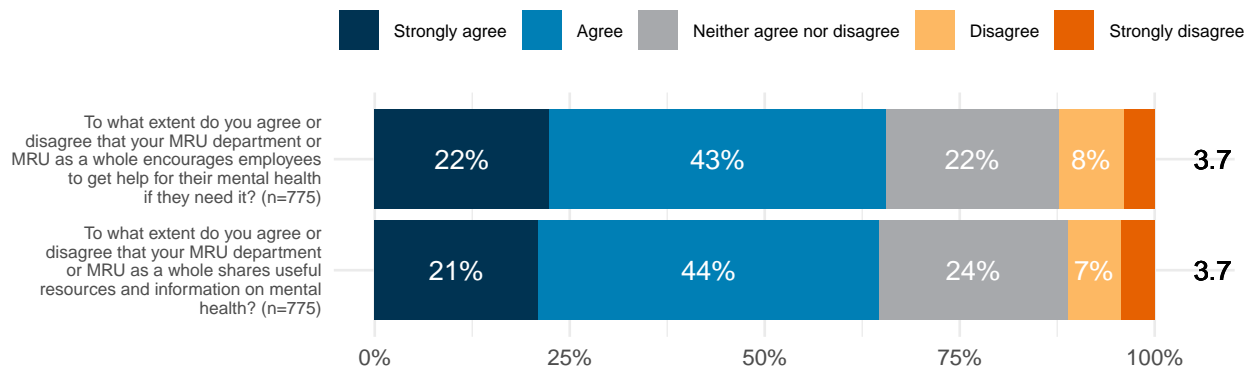


Figure 5: Encouragement to get mental health help and sharing of mental health resources (with means)

Table 7: Overall Stress (Fall Comparison)

Survey Question	W21 Mean	F20 Mean	T-Test
Overall, my work-related stress is:	3.30	3.41	$t(1629) = -2.2, p = 0.027$

There were no statistically significant differences between Winter and Fall responses (see Table 7 and Table 8).

## 5.2 Worry about work

Employees were asked seven questions about how much they worried about several different work-related aspects, on a scale of 1=Never to 5=Very Often (see Figure 6). Across all seven questions, 90% had worried at some point about the various questions. A majority (55%,

Table 8: Resources and Help (Fall Comparison)

Survey Question	W21 Mean	F20 Mean	T-Test
To what extent do you agree or disagree that your MRU department or MRU as a whole shares useful resources and information on mental health?	3.70	3.58	$t(1617) = 2.5, p = 0.014$
To what extent do you agree or disagree that your MRU department or MRU as a whole encourages employees to get help for their mental health if they need it?	3.71	3.60	$t(1622) = 2.3, p = 0.023$

down from 58%) worried about the health and well-being of students and their own health (55%, down from 56%). A majority likewise worried about the health and well-being of colleagues (50%, down from 53%), but less intensely, with fewer responding “very often.” 47% (down from 50%) of respondents worried about balancing work and personal life. A majority did not worry very often or often about losing connection with colleagues (38%, down from 41%), doing your job effectively (37%, down from 41%) and losing your job (34%, down from 40%).

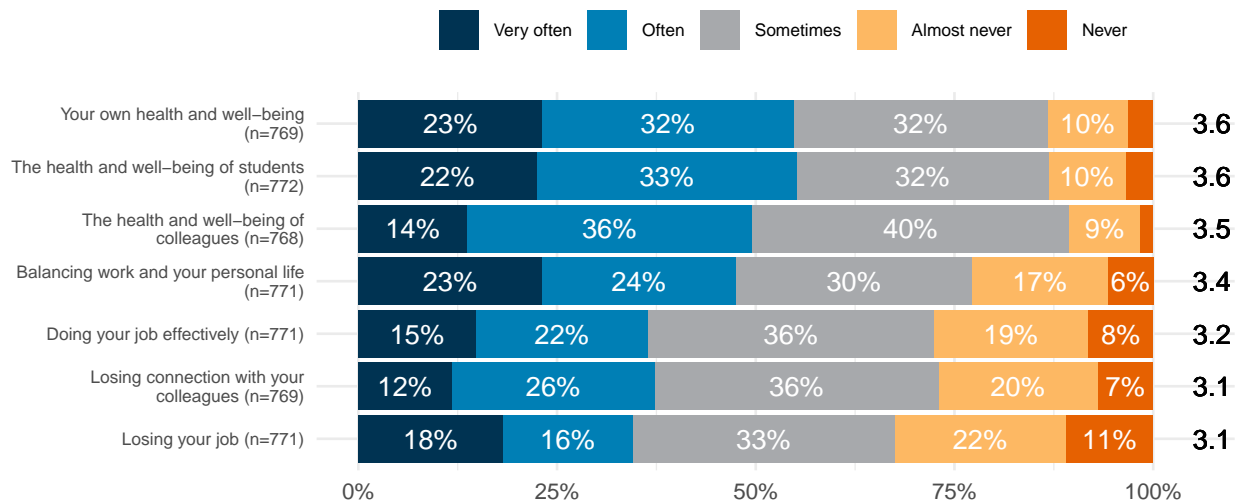


Figure 6: Employee work-related concerns (with means)

LGBQ2S+ individuals were statistically significantly more likely to worry about “your own health and well-being” (mean=3.86 vs 3.54). Individuals who identified as having a disability were more likely to worry about “doing your job effectively” (mean=3.72 vs 3.06). Employees who identified as a visible minority were more likely to worry about “losing your job” (mean=3.50 vs 3.01). Age was negatively correlated with worry about “your own health and well-being” ( $r = -.133$ ) and “losing your job” ( $r = -.100$ ). Staff/exempt were more

likely to worry about “losing your job” (mean +.18); faculty were more likely to worry about “doing your job effectively” (mean +.47), “losing connection with your colleagues” (mean +.19), “balancing work and your personal life” (mean +.54), “your own health and well-being” (mean +.24), and “the health and well-being of students” (mean +.48). Management were more likely to worry about “the health and well-being of colleagues” (mean +.43).

Table 9: Overall Stress and Resources/Help (Fall Comparison)

Survey Question	W21 Mean	F20 Mean	T-Test
Doing your job effectively	3.15	3.24	$t(1621) = -1.5, p = 0.129$
Losing connection with your colleagues	3.15	3.27	$t(1610) = -2.2, p = 0.027$
Balancing work and your personal life	3.42	3.50	$t(1617) = -1.3, p = 0.183$
Your own health and well-being	3.61	3.64	$t(1592) = -0.6, p = 0.560$
The health and well-being of students	3.61	3.66	$t(1605) = -0.9, p = 0.368$
The health and well-being of colleagues	3.51	3.57	$t(1617) = -1.4, p = 0.158$
Losing your job	3.09	3.23	$t(1623) = -2.2, p = 0.029$

There were no statistically significant differences between Winter and Fall responses (see Table 9).

### 5.3 Causes of stress

Asked about seven different potential causes of stress, employees generally did not indicate that all categories did not cause stress to a ‘very large’ or a ‘large’ extent (see Figure 7). The largest causes of stress were being isolated from family and friends (47%, up from 39% ‘very large’ or ‘large’ extent, mean=3.3, up from 3.1, where 5 = ‘very large’ and 1 = ‘not at all’) and caring for children or others in your home (30%, down from 31%, mean=2.6 unchanged). The vast majority, 83% (up from 72%), were not worried about feeling pressure to come to campus (mean=1.6, up from 1.5) or about being restricted from working on campus (81%, up from 52%, mean=1.8).

As above, the new question about employees having children under 18 is relevant to “caring for children or others in your home” as a cause of stress (see Figure 8). For employees with children under 18, 28.3% indicated “caring for children or others in your home” was a cause of stress “to a very large extent” and 20.7% indicated it was a cause of stress “to a large extent.” This compares to 2.3% and 5.0% respectively for those without children under 18.

Looking at statistically significant differences by demographic and employment variables, employees who identified as women were more likely to feel stress from “learning to use new tech” (mean 2.61 vs 2.35) and “being isolated from family/friends” (mean 3.39 vs 3.00),

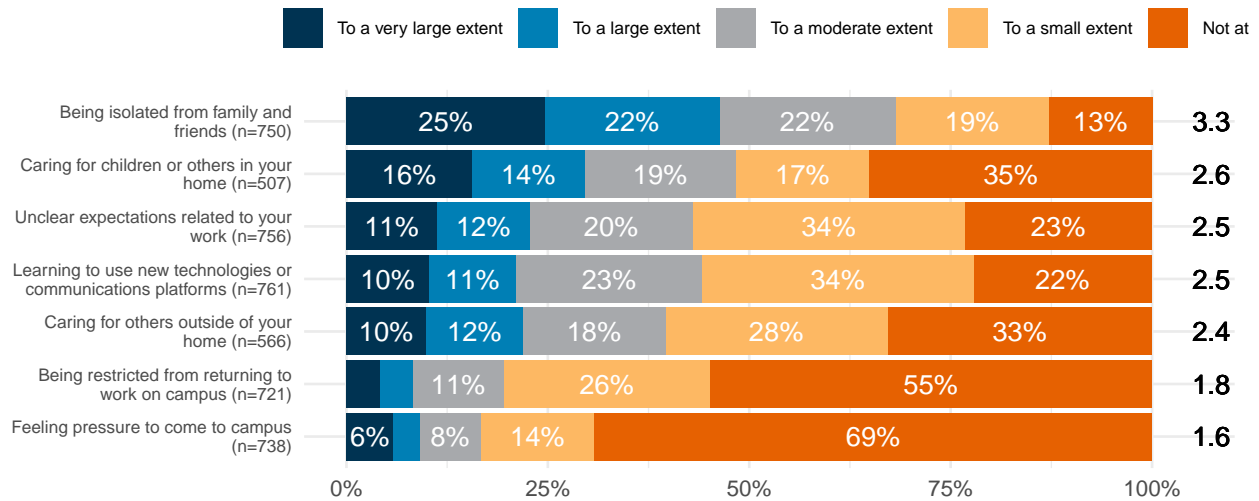


Figure 7: Causes of stress (with means)

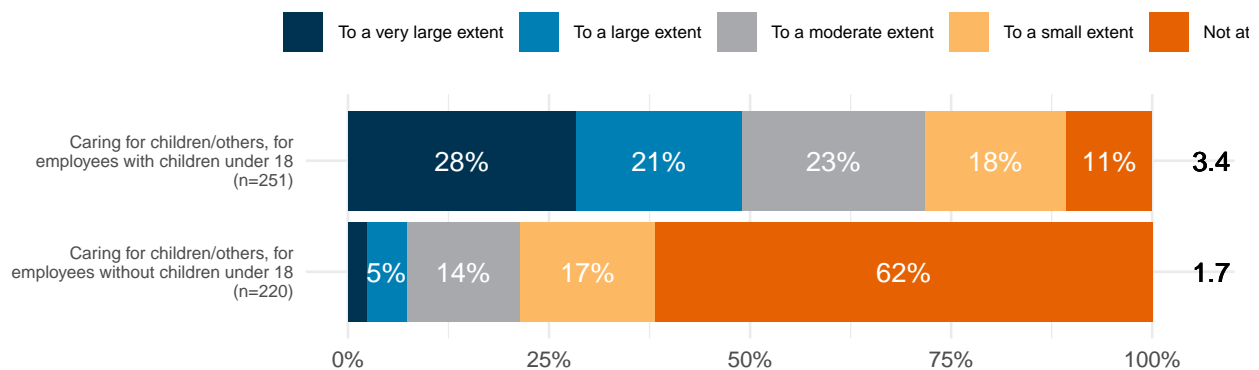


Figure 8: Caring for children/others as causes of stress, stratified by children

while those identifying as men were more likely to feel stress from “being restricted from returning to work on campus” (mean 1.95 vs 1.68). Individuals identifying as having a disability were more likely to feel stress from “learning to use new tech” (mean 3.06 vs 2.46). Age was positively correlated with stress around “learning to use new tech” ( $r = .26$ ) and negatively correlated with “feeling pressure to come to campus” ( $r = -.16$ ) and “caring for children/others in your home” ( $r = -.16$ ).

Faculty were more likely to feel stress from “unclear expectations related to your work” (mean +.31) and “learning to use new tech” (mean +.59). Staff/exempt were more likely to feel stress from “feeling pressure to come to campus” (mean +.16). As for “being restricted from returning to work on campus”, credit-free (mean +.47) and casual (mean +.86) employees were more likely to feel stress.

There was a statistically significant increase in employees’ concern about “being isolated

Table 10: Overall Stress and Resources/Help (Fall Comparison)

Survey Question	W21 Mean	F20 Mean	T-Test
Unclear expectations related to your work	2.54	2.55	$t(1574) = -0.2, p = 0.878$
Learning to use new technologies or communications platforms	2.53	2.51	$t(1597) = 0.3, p = 0.737$
Feeling pressure to come to campus	1.62	1.53	$t(1479) = 1.6, p = 0.105$
Being isolated from family and friends	3.26	3.06	$t(1558) = 3.0, p = 0.003$
Caring for children or others in your home	2.58	2.58	$t(1045) = 0.1, p = 0.927$
Caring for others outside of your home	2.39	2.34	$t(1178) = 0.6, p = 0.534$
Being restricted from returning to work on campus	1.77	1.83	$t(1518) = -1.1, p = 0.288$

from family and friends” (3.26, up from 3.06 in Fall), possibly as a result of the increased public health measures introduced after the Fall survey. There were no statistically significant differences between Winter and Fall responses on the other questions (see Table 10).

## 5.4 Effect of on mental health

Finally, employees noted that, compared with the pre-COVID-19 period, the last several months have had an impact on their mental health, with 55% (same as Fall) saying it has been slightly declined and and 17% (down from 19%) saying it has significantly declined (mean=2.2, where 1=Significantly Declined and 5=Significantly Improved, n=765, see Figure 9).

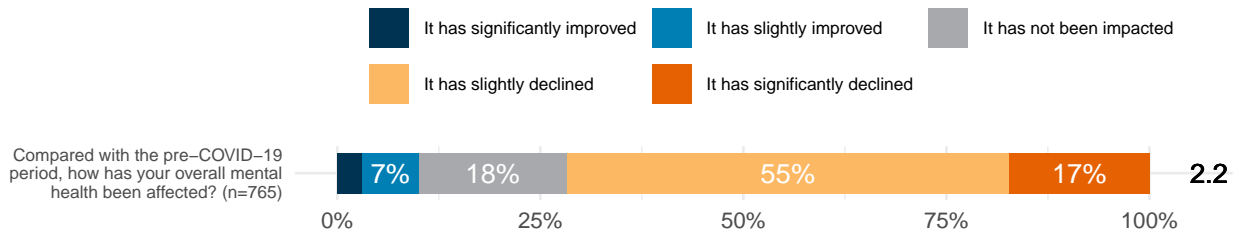


Figure 9: Effect of COVID-19 on mental health (with mean)

These results were fairly uniform across demographic and employment variables, except for a positive correlation with age ( $r = .09$ ) and that staff/exempt were more likely to experience a decline (mean +.12).

There was no statistically significant difference between Winter and Fall responses (see Table 11).

Table 11: Overall Stress and Resources/Help (Fall Comparison)

Survey Question	W21 Mean	F20 Mean	T-Test
Compared with the pre-COVID-19 period, how has your overall mental health been affected?	2.24	2.17	$t(1582) = 1.6, p = 0.119$

## 5.5 Health and well-being factors

For the Winter survey, 7 additional questions were added on health and well-being factors, derived from the Fall student COVID survey, and on the basis of feedback (see Figure 10). A majority of employees, 56% (mean=3.7, where 1=Not at all and 5=Very much) experienced ‘mental or emotional exhaustion.’ Less than a majority experienced ‘difficulty sleeping’ (34%), ‘inability to concentrate’ (26%), ‘anxiety that interfered with daily functioning’ (25%), ‘loneliness’ (25%), ‘feeling hopeless about your current situation’ (20%) and ‘depression that interfered with daily functioning’ (19%).

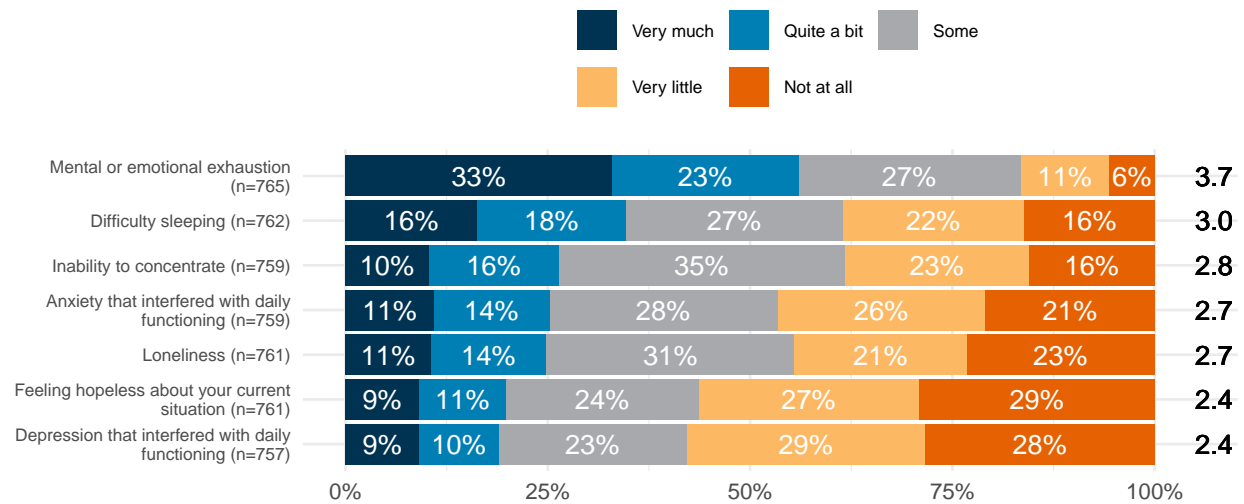


Figure 10: Health and well-being factors (with mean)

There were many significant differences across demographic and employment variables. Employees identifying as LGBTQ2S+ were more likely to have experienced “mental or emotional exhaustion” (mean 4.1 vs 3.6), “depression that interfered with daily functioning” (mean 3.1 vs 2.3), “anxiety that interfered with daily functioning” (mean 3.2 vs 2.6), “feeling hopeless about your current situation” (mean 3.0 vs 2.3), “inability to concentrate” (mean 3.2 vs 2.8), “difficulty sleeping” (mean 3.3 vs 2.9) and “loneliness” (mean 3.2 vs 2.6). Employees identifying as having a disability were more likely to have experienced “mental or emotional exhaustion” (mean 4.2 vs 3.6), “depression that interfered with daily functioning”



(mean 3.3 vs 2.3), “anxiety that interfered with daily functioning” (mean 3.5 vs 2.6), “feeling hopeless about your current situation” (mean 3.1 vs 2.4), “inability to concentrate” (mean 3.5 vs 2.7), “difficulty sleeping” (mean 3.5 vs 2.9) and “loneliness” (mean 3.3 vs 2.6). Employees who identified as a visible minority were less likely to have experienced “mental or emotional exhaustion” (mean 3.3 vs 3.7) or “inability to concentrate” (mean 2.5 vs 2.9). Age was negatively correlated with “mental or emotional exhaustion” ( $r = -.17$ ), “depression that interfered with daily functioning” ( $r = -.14$ ), “anxiety that interfered with daily functioning” ( $r = -.19$ ), “feeling hopeless about your current situation” ( $r = -.21$ ), “inability to concentrate” ( $r = -.17$ ) and “loneliness” ( $r = -.12$ ). Faculty (mean  $+.27$ ), management (mean  $+.26$ ) and casuals (mean  $+.22$ ) were more likely to experience “mental or emotional exhaustion.” Casuals were more likely to have experienced “anxiety that interfered with daily functioning” (mean  $+.37$ ). Faculty (mean  $+.22$ ) and casuals (mean  $+.34$ ) were more likely to have experienced an “inability to concentrate.”