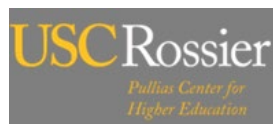


Supporting Student and Faculty Success in Distance Education: Lessons Learned from LACCD

Elise Swanson

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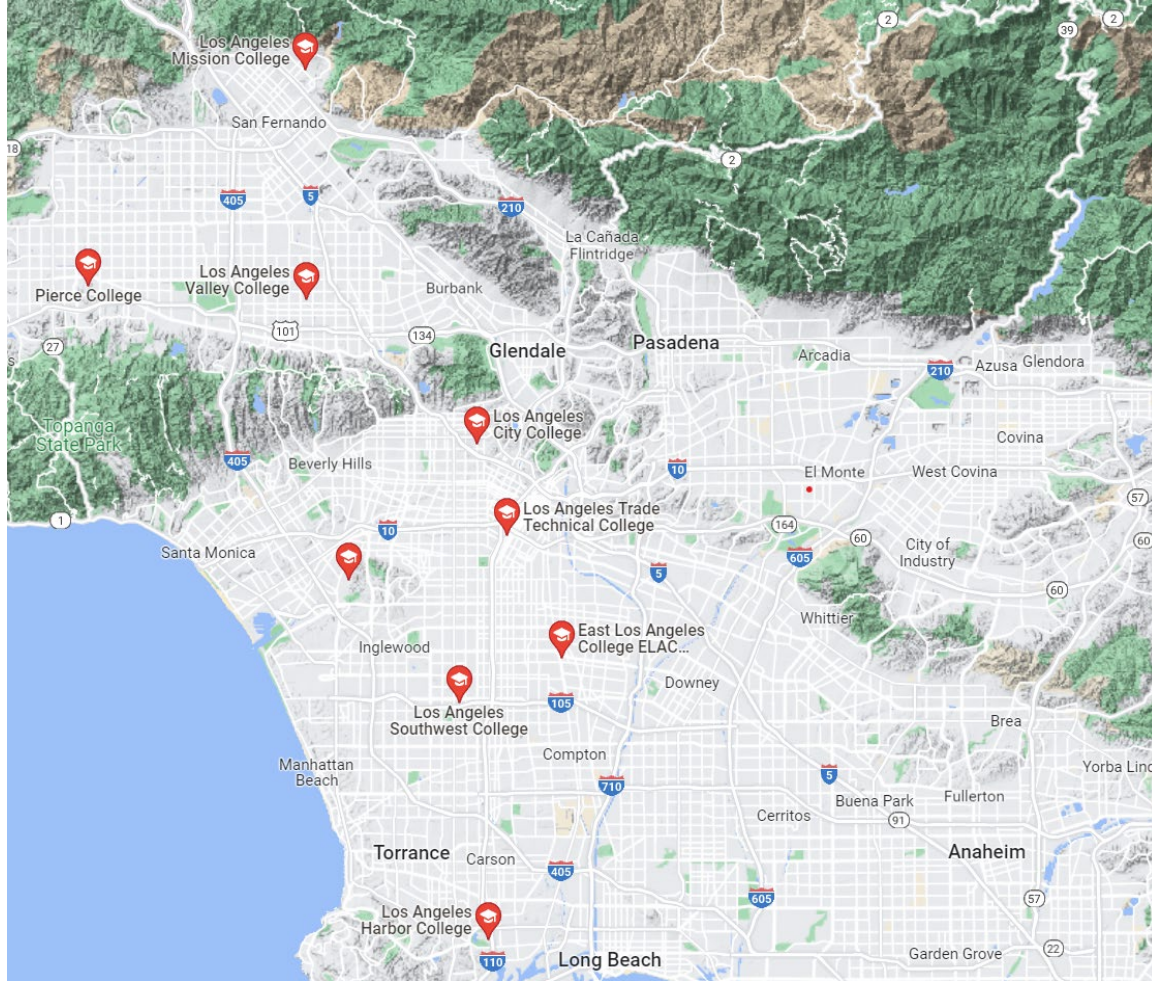


Roadmap

- ◉ Context of the Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD)
- ◉ Types, prevalence, and key differences across modalities offered within LACCD
- ◉ Student outcomes across modalities
- ◉ Thinking ahead

Getting to know the LACCD context

Largest community college district in CA

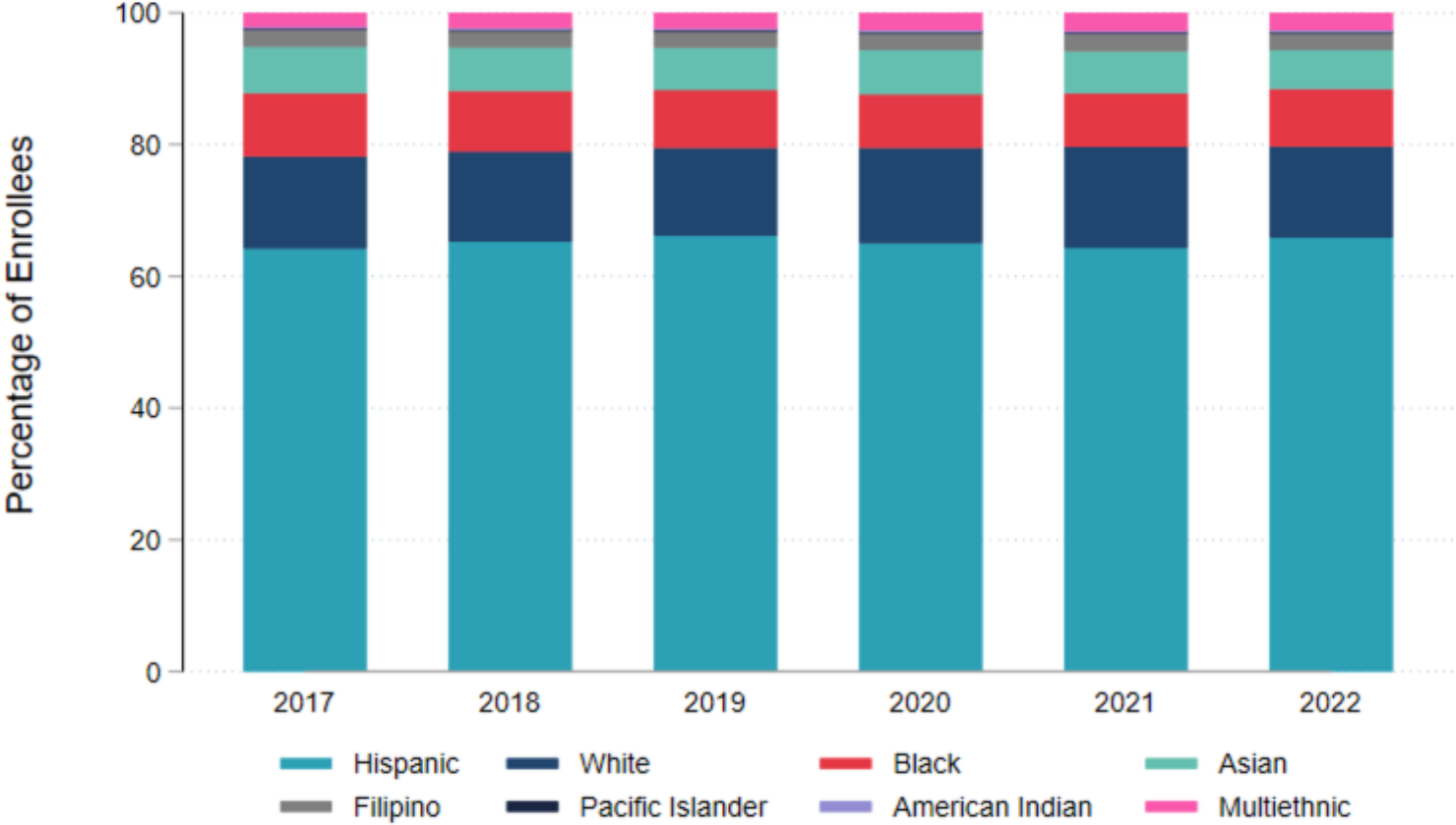


- 9 campuses
 - All HSIs, two also AANAPISIs and one a PBI
- 118,095 students enrolled in Fall 2023
- Of the 2018 entering Fall cohort
 - 57.6% persisted to next fall
 - 17.2% completed within 3 years (degree, certificate, or transfer)
- In 2023, had 1,292 tenure/TT and 2,757 adjunct faculty

Data from the California Community College Chancellor's System and the Los Angeles Community College District

LACCD student body is primarily Latina/o/x

Enrollments by Race: Fall Term



Note: Data come from LACCD administrative records. Limited to credit-taking students enrolled in fall term

Diverse teaching faculty

2023 LACCD Faculty Demographics

	Tenure Track N	Adjunct N	Percent of Total
Asian	144	286	10.6%
Black	4	5	0.2%
Hispanic	163	307	11.6%
Indigenous	272	530	19.8%
Multiethnic	12	16	0.7%
Pacific Islander	1	0	0.0%
Unknown	217	588	19.9%
White	479	1025	37.1%
Total	1292	2757	

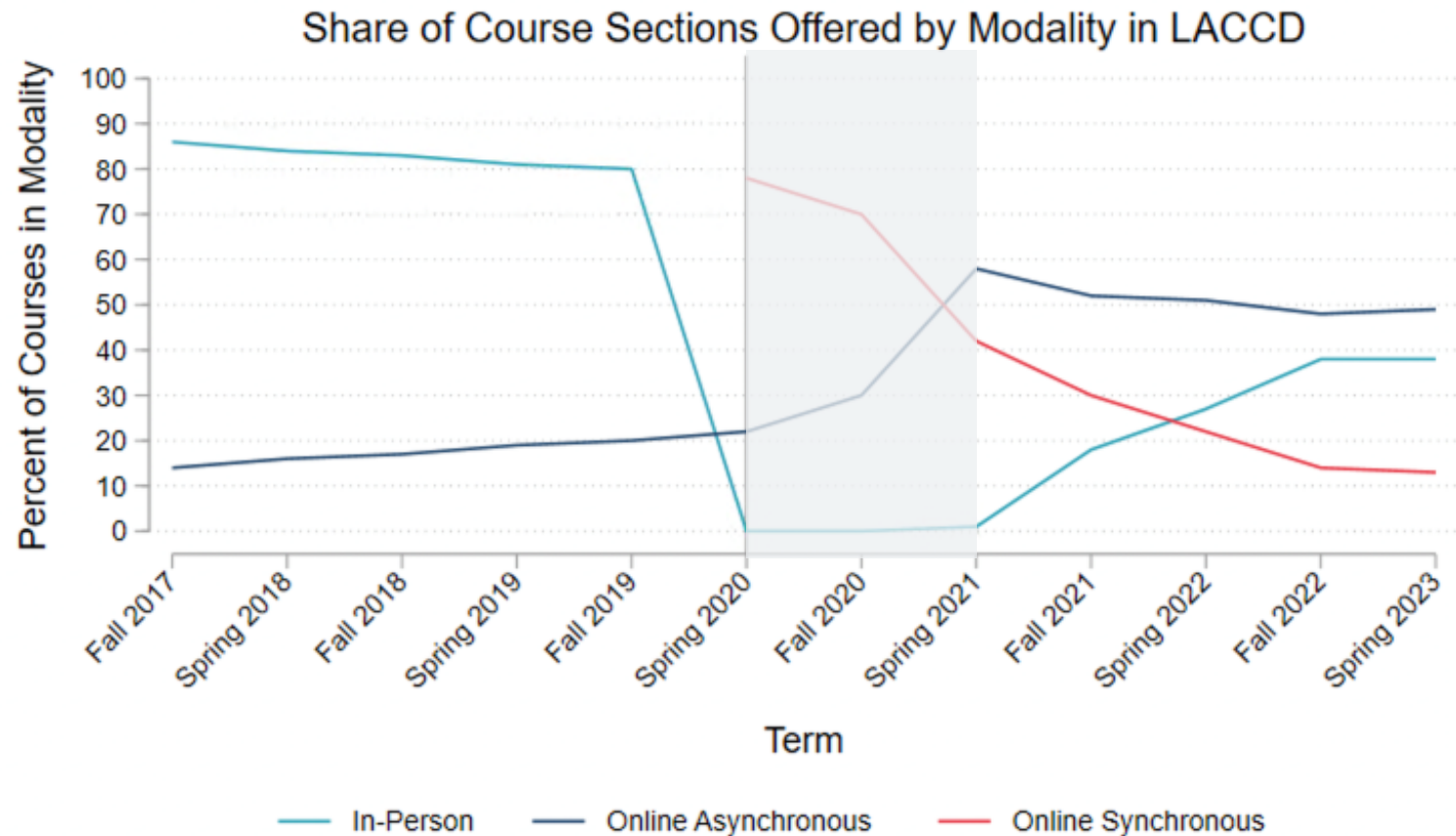
Data from the California Community College Chancellor's System

Distance Education in LACCD

Types of distance education courses in LACCD

- ◉ **Asynchronous online:** no assigned room on campus; all work is completed independently with pre-supplied content (recorded lectures, videos, texts, etc.)
- ◉ **Synchronous online:** no assigned room on campus; live class sections/lectures via online platform such as Zoom
- ◉ **Dual delivery/HyFlex:** assigned room on campus with technology (Owls, built-in cameras/mics) to facilitate communication; faculty lead synchronous class sections to online and in-person attendees
- ◉ **Hybrid/Blended learning:** assigned room on campus, part of course is taught in-person, part is taught online

Asynchronous the most persistent DE modality



Note: Data come from LACCD administrative records.
Online Synchronous was not recorded as a course format until Fall 2020.
In-person courses were imputed as synchronous in Fall and Spring 2020

Required trainings and recommended practices

Introduction to Online Teaching & Learning (IOTL)

- ◉ Model what it means to be an engaged student (e.g. provide example discussion response)
- ◉ Ensure course policies are easy to find and highlighted in multiple places
- ◉ Take steps to humanize your learning environment. Help your students feel that they belong and are set up to succeed

Introduction to Teaching with Canvas (ITC)

- ◉ Ensure all course materials are accessible
- ◉ Provide multiple training tools to help students learn to navigate your Canvas course (e.g., build an orientation module)
- ◉ Assume students have a wide range of technology skills and provide options for gaining the technology skills needed for course participation

Emerging best practices

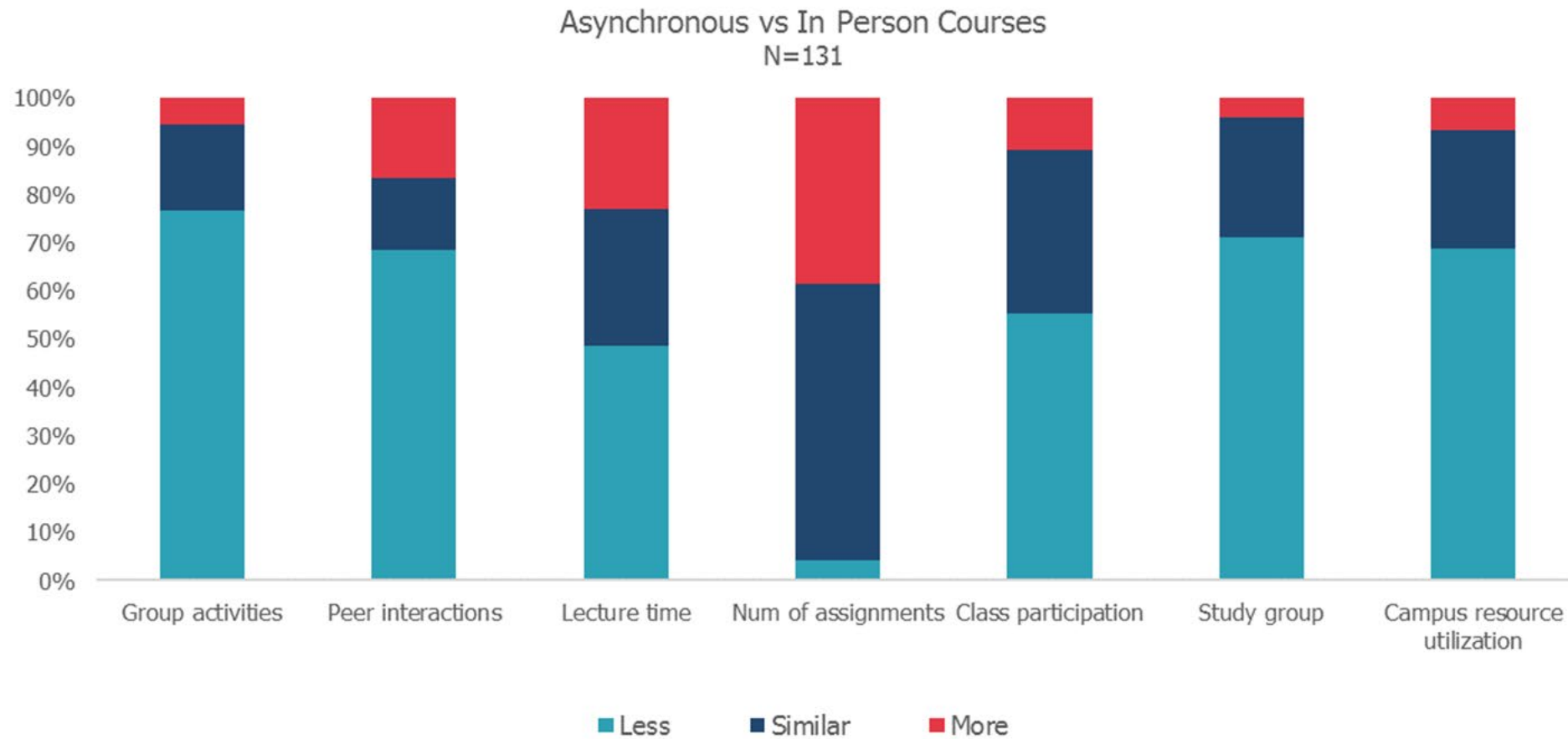
Building relationships

- Use icebreakers, discussion boards, and course announcements
- Offer in-person gatherings to forge connections and solidify learning
- Humanizing practices

Encouraging student engagement

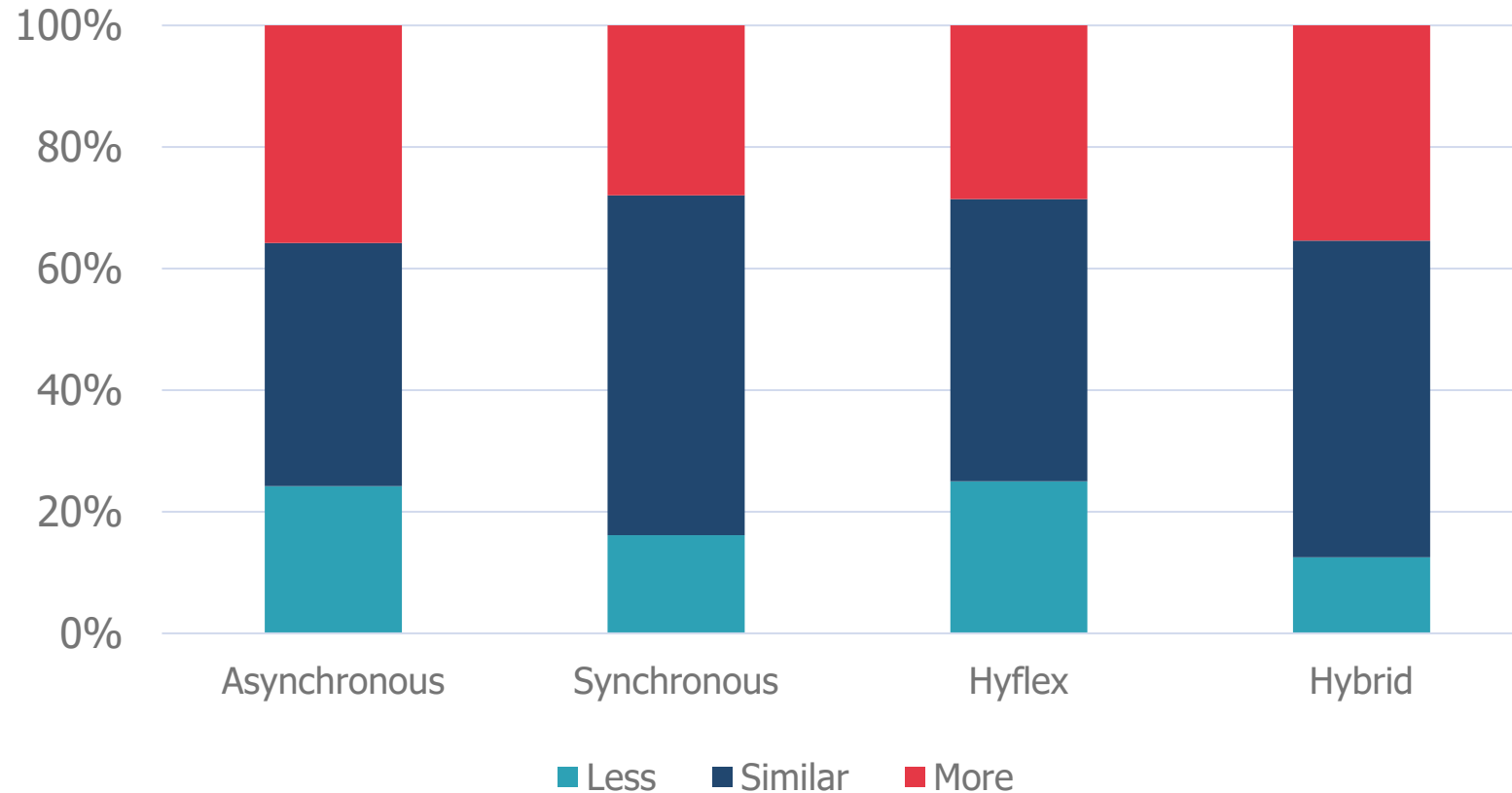
- “Live” discussion-based assignments
- Give feedback on all assignments
- Provide guidance and resources to facilitate on-camera participation
- Short videos with embedded quizzes

Differences in course design across asynchronous and in-person modalities



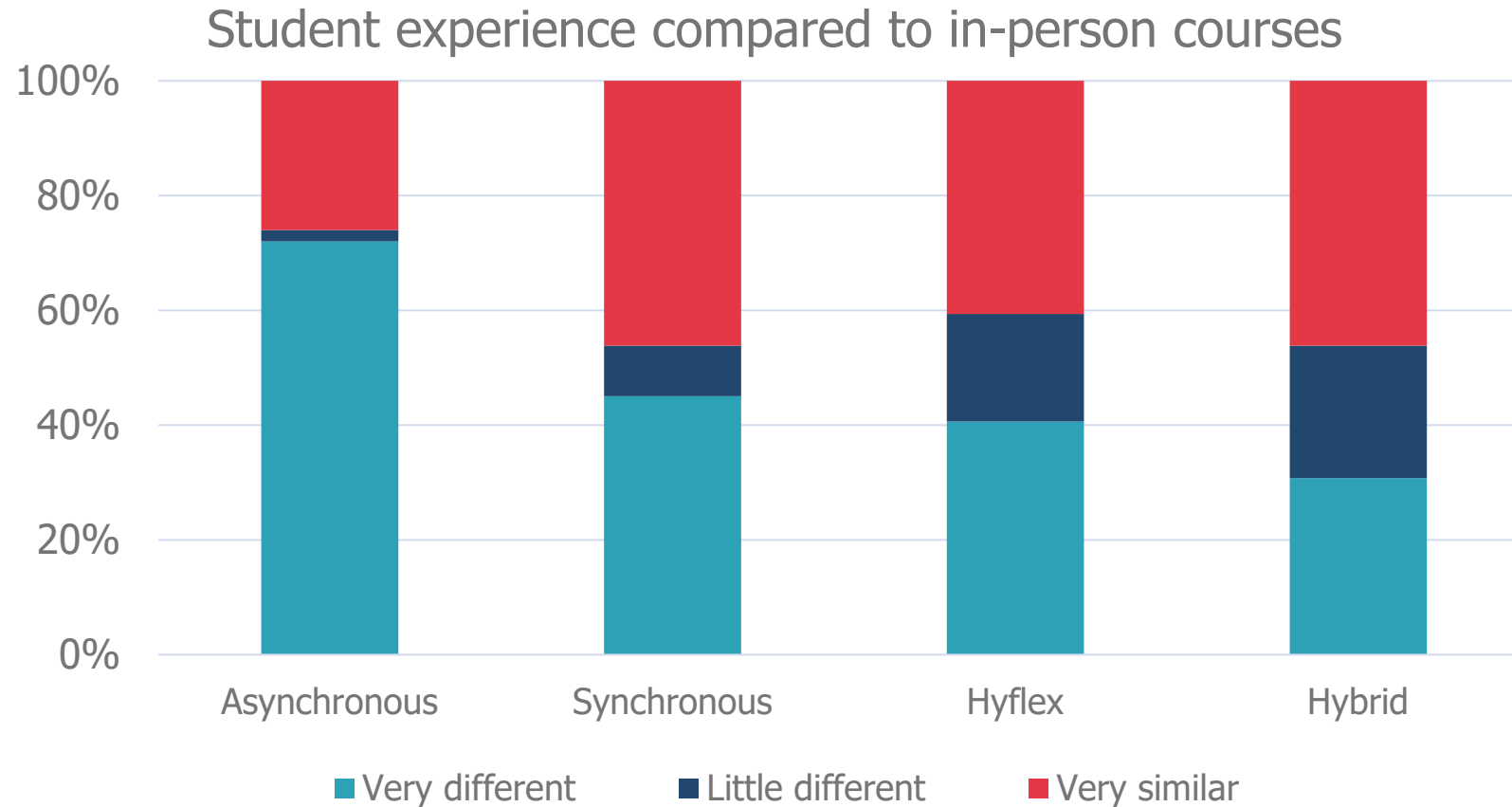
Similar amounts of content covered across modalities

Content coverage compared to in-person courses



N=110/103

Overall student experience varies across modalities



N=110/105

Outcomes across modalities

Faculty think students need specific skills to succeed in distance education courses

“I know that **there are students who can do a lot of their own teaching, and they can be very successful in online.** But I don’t know that that’s the majority of students that I’m personally seeing, in my classes.”

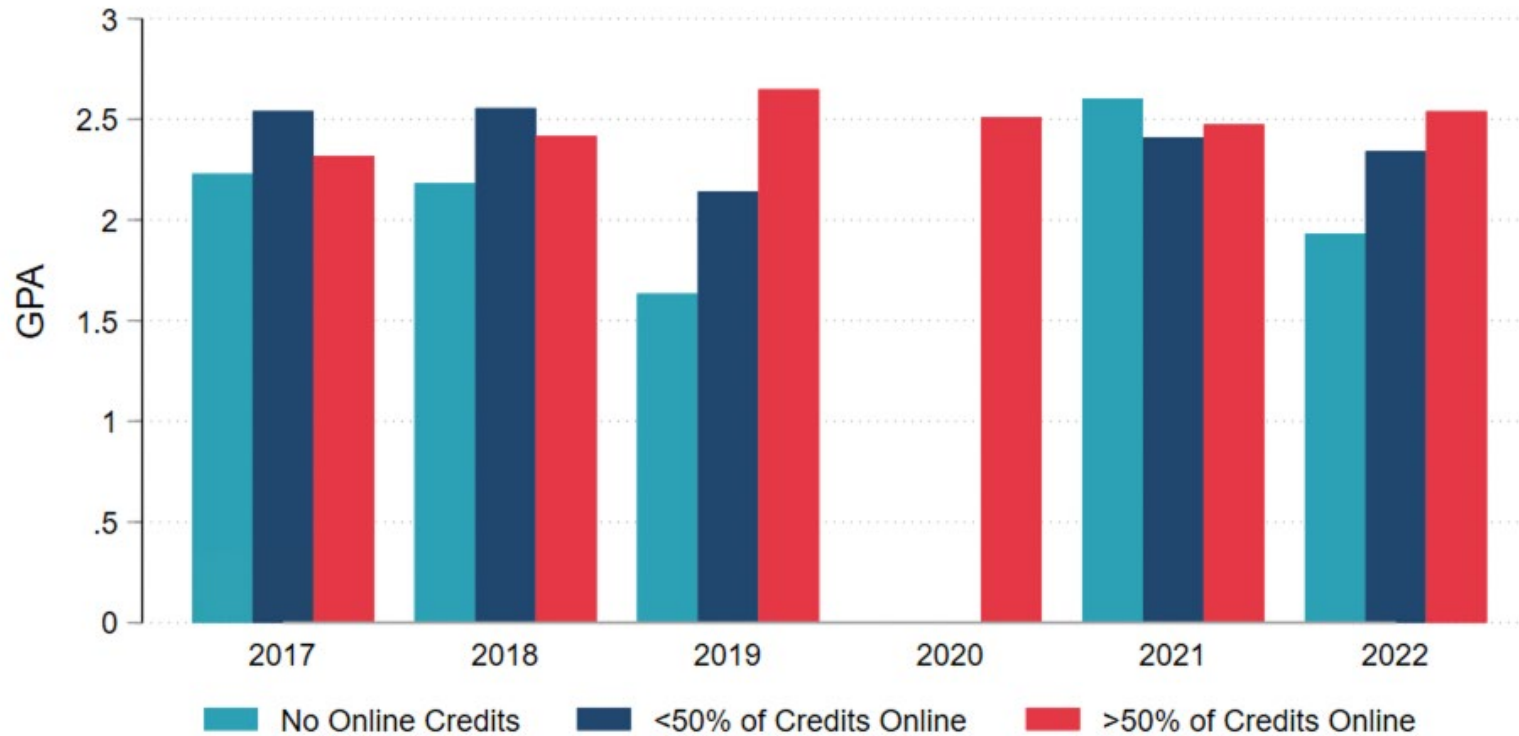
Tenured faculty member in Child Development

Tenured faculty member in Media, Journalism, and Photography

“They don’t actually fail because they don’t understand the material. **They fail because they forget to actually take the quiz or do the discussion or log in.**”

Among FTIC and continuing students, no consistent GPA benefit of a given modality

Average First-Year GPA for FTIC Students
by Online Enrollment Intensity



Note: Data come from LACCD administrative records.
Sample includes full-time FTIC students who entered in the fall semester and remained enrolled in the spring.
GPAs are calculated using an unweighted scale ranging from 0-4.
Courses included lectures that were taken for credit and counted toward the GPA.
In-person courses were imputed as synchronous in Fall and Spring 2020

Faculty perceive increase in DE course-taking as fundamentally shifting the student experience

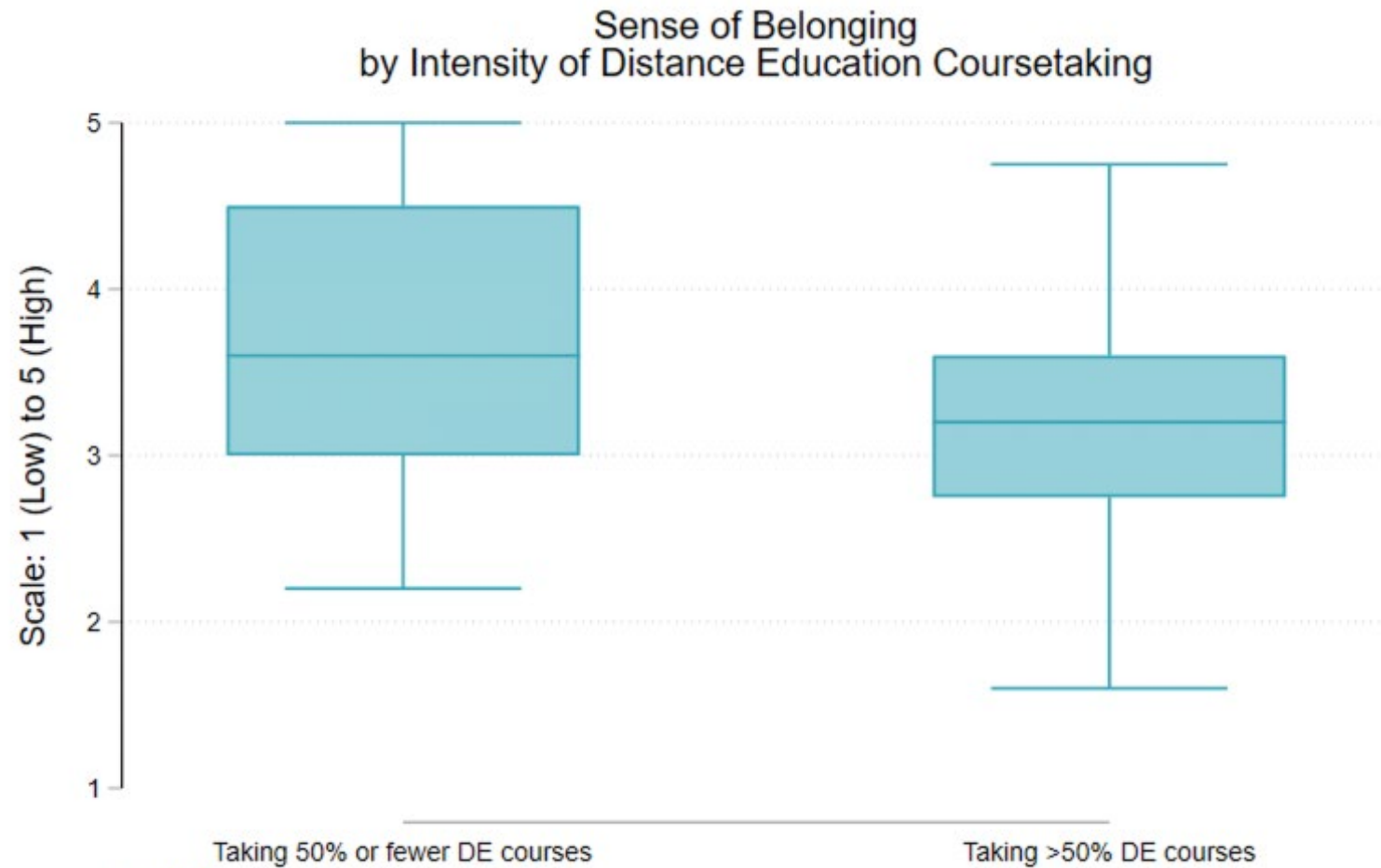
“I have to remind [my students], **learning happens in a social environment.** You should be interacting with each other when you’re taking [the course...] It’s mutual uplift, and mutual empowerment. And that’s if you’re engaging, and wrestling with the question together.”

*Faculty member in
Sociology*

*Tenured faculty member
in Child Development*

“The culture of what our college is supposed to be [is] that of engagement [...] **The whole essence and spirit of community colleges, I think, [is] hindered in this totally online experience.** We have events here on campus, and we don’t get nearly the numbers that we used to.”

Students taking majority of courses online have lower sense of belonging than students primarily in-person



N: 120

Future of distance education

- ◉ Faculty think preserving DE options is essential for maintaining enrollments, equitable access, and meeting student needs → **need to figure out the right mix of options to offer**
- ◉ Student demand for DE options persists even now that in-person learning is once again possible → **need to know how to do distance education in a way that supports student success**
- ◉ The combined effects of the pandemic and the switch to distance education has affected faculty and students' experiences, wellbeing, and learning → **efforts to support faculty and students need to be mindful of these realities**

Thanks!

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For more on the project, visit:

<https://cepr.harvard.edu/leveraging-technology-and-engaging-students-ltes>