



# Central Student Government

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## Report on findings of survey on winter plans

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Dear colleague,

Knowing what the students want and need—and their current situations—is extremely important to informing student advocacy. While we are connected to the student body through our own personal networks, there's no substitute to asking the student body at large. This unusual semester combined with the University's encouragement that students return to their alternate residences has created a need to know exactly what is going on.

Therefore, we ran a survey of the student body to inquire about both their fall and winter housing situations, so we could assess changes resulting from the abnormal semester. Further, we asked students about the services on campus that are important to them, even considering few students have classes on campus. We also inquired about uptake of both the influenza vaccine and the COVID-19 vaccine.

We were overall unsurprised by these results but confirming our suspicions will allow us to ensure we are making the right decisions when we advocate for student needs.

I sincerely thank my colleagues Taylor Lansey, the Chair of the Student Organization Funding Committee, and Nina Pantoja, Chair of the Michigan Union Board of Representatives, for their help on this project. I could not have done it without them.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Hayden Jackson

Member of the Assembly

Horace H. Rackham School of Graduate Studies

# Overview of survey

We sent a survey on Friday, January 22<sup>nd</sup> to 8,000 randomly selected students, and received 1,027 complete responses by Wednesday, January 27<sup>th</sup>, from both undergraduate and graduate students in all the schools and colleges. If you would like further information on the methodology of this survey, please inquire with the principal investigator.

The categories of our questions were essentially as follows: housing status, for both fall and winter, including questions about why students made the decisions they did; importance of services to students, such as the campus gyms and study spaces; whether students have in-person classes this semester, and whether they'd like to be fully online or in person; and the vaccination status of students, for both the influenza and COVID-19 vaccine, including plans on whether they would receive the vaccine when it is available.

## Housing status

For inquiry about the change in housing situations we asked students for both Fall 2020 and Winter 2021 whether they lived on or near campus in the given semester, their reasoning for their decisions, and their type of housing if they lived on or near campus.

Overall, **the University's request for students to return to their non-Ann Arbor residences seems to have been ineffective in changing much of the behavior of students.** 78% of students lived on or near campus in the fall semester, and 74% of students currently live on or near campus for the winter semester. **Just four percent of the student body changed their housing status from the fall semester to the winter semester.**

Of particular importance is what happened to first year students who lived in the dorms during fall semester. The University largely closed the dorms and did not itself offer another housing option to students, unless they had a specific reason to continue living in the dorms; instead, the University asked that these students not come back to campus. We wanted to see whether students followed this request, or whether they simply moved elsewhere.

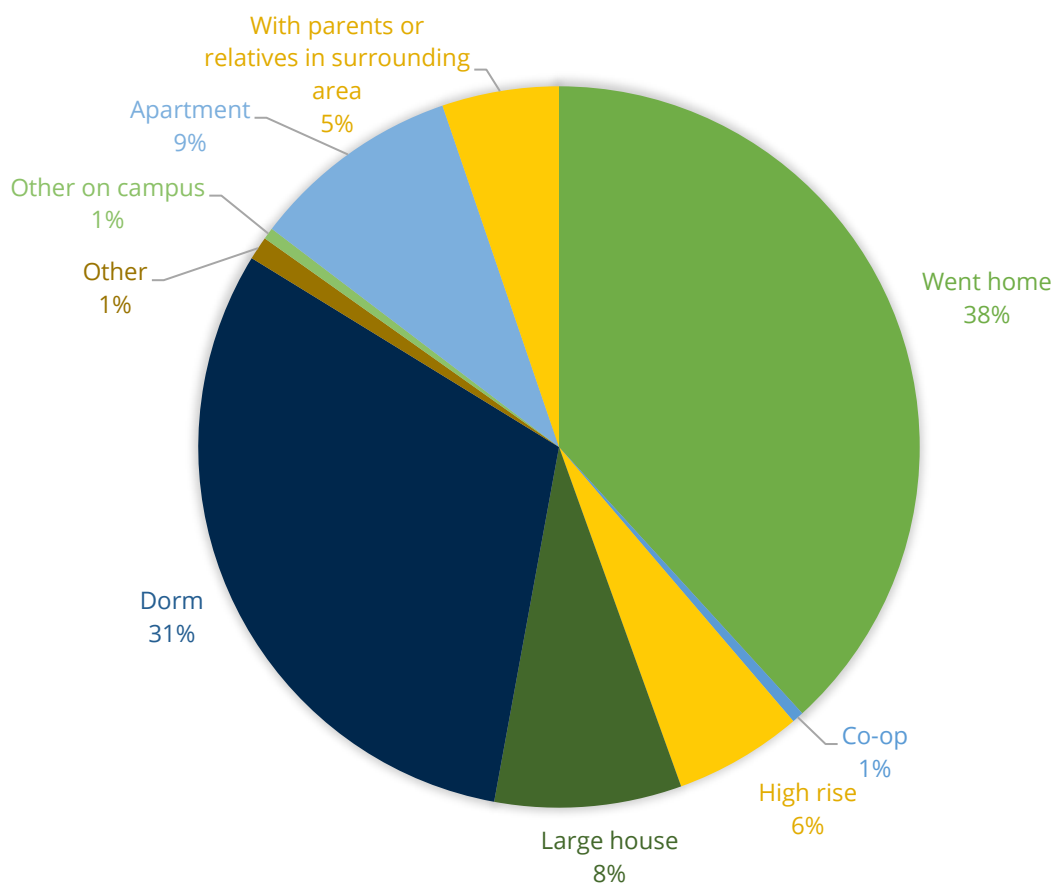
We found that about three fourths of students moved out of University housing—but only half of these students specifically followed the University's request for them to move elsewhere. The other half of students either moved to the house of parents or relatives in the Ann Arbor area, which was largely unpreventable—if students are from Ann Arbor or the surrounding area, they do not have anywhere else to go; or they stayed in the dorms. **About one third of students living in the dorms their first semester continued to live in the dorms this winter**, showing us that a sizeable proportion of students sufficiently demonstrated to the University that they need to stay in Ann Arbor despite the request to leave the area.

The remaining 25% of students living in the dorms moved elsewhere in the area. Leases were likely relatively easy to obtain, since most students sign leases well in advance of the school year, leaving

anyone who signed a lease before the pandemic but not wishing to continue living in Ann Arbor stuck with an unused space, available to sublease to others. Apartments and houses were the most popular, and high rises (such as Zaragon, University Towers, Six11, etc.) were a popular choice as well.

Why did these students in the dorms choose to come back? Some have in person classes, of course—19% of fall dorm residents told us this was why they came back. However, that leaves 80% of the population coming back for other reasons. **The top reason—27% of fall dorm residents—was to spend time with friends and housemates.** Clearly, the Michigan experience is not just classes, and students value the experience of being with their friends and housemates enough to come back for this.

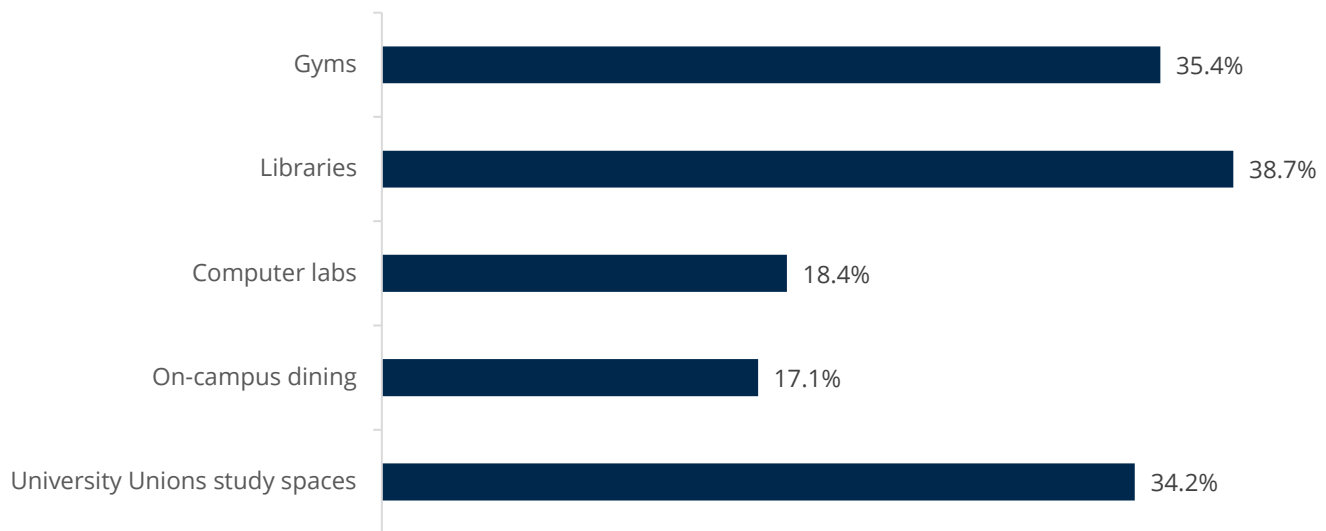
## Winter housing status of students who lived in the dorms during the fall



# Campus services

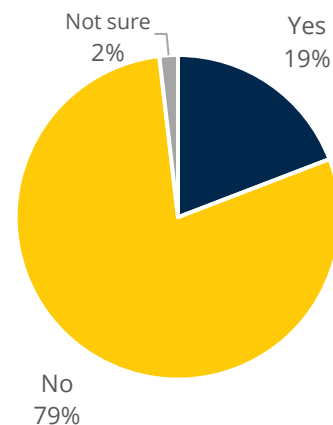
Many students are still using various on-campus services, as a large majority of students still live in the area. We wanted to know, however, which services specifically were most important to them. We asked students to rate the importance of several campus services. As expected, we found that many students find these services to be important to their academic and personal well-being.

Students responding that these campus services are “very important” or “extremely important” for them to have, even with the mostly online semester



In particular, the students find that the gyms, libraries, and study spaces in the Union, Pierpont, and the League are quite important—as they are in a normal year. Again, this is despite most students not having any in person classes (see pie chart to the right). **Clearly, the University must make efforts to keep the libraries, gyms, and study spaces open to the greatest extent possible.** Service cuts or closures should be considered a last resort.

Whether students have in-person (as a required component) classes or not



# Vaccination uptake and future plans to be vaccinated

As we are all aware, we have a highly effective vaccine against COVID-19 that health care providers are getting to people as we speak. While there is going to be some wait—particularly for students, given that they are rarely in one of the priority categories—everyone who wants a vaccine will eventually be able to get one.

Additionally, as we do every year, we have an influenza vaccine available. Public health officials have stressed the importance of getting the flu vaccine this year, so that we can preserve health care resources for those with COVID-19, for which the vaccine is not yet widely available. There is also some limited evidence that higher vaccine uptake may reduce the risk of developing severe COVID-19<sup>1</sup>.

We were pleased to see that almost 70% of students already received the flu vaccine. In addition, 12% of students say they still plan to receive it—though time is running out for it to be most effective for the flu season.

For the COVID-19 vaccine, there is even greater interest. 14% of students have already received it, and **the vast majority of students who have not had the chance to receive it will take it when it is available to them**. Only 3% are not interested at all, and 4% aren't sure (and likely desire more information about the vaccine before they make their decision).

This underscores the importance of the University having a robust student vaccination plan well in advance of the availability of the vaccine to the general public. Many students will likely rely on the University to receive the vaccine.

Vaccination status

