

MIT Community Engagement

Defining, Shaping, & Evaluating Options for Fall & Beyond

Our charge, on behalf of MIT's senior leadership, is to rigorously evaluate a range of options and to describe their advantages and disadvantages relative to different scenarios for the future. Senior leaders ultimately will have to make difficult decisions. Our job, with your help, is to provide information and viewpoints to enable them to better understand the complexities and trade-offs before making those decisions.

Beginning on May 21 and concluding on May 31, the MIT community may provide their insights through any or all of the following:

- **Share your thoughts and ideas via an online form.**
- Register to attend the various charrettes on May 26 or 27.
- Host or attend a self-guided small group discussion between May 21st and May 31st.

Online Form

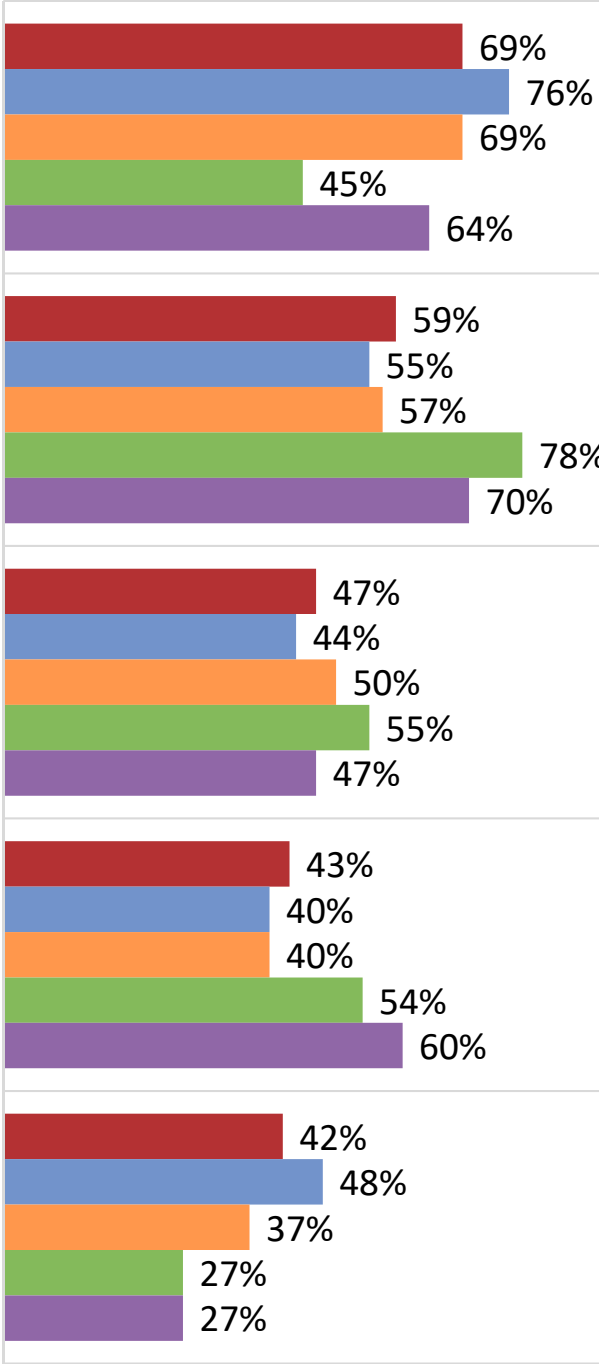
- More than 900 completed responses, another 900 provided some input
- Majority of responses from students:
 - ~1,000 undergraduates;
 - ~400 graduate students;
 - ~300 staff; and
 - ~100 faculty and instructors
- **27,000 text comments**
covid-team2020.mit.edu

Principles & Values Guiding Team 2020's Work

“Which principles and values are critical for evaluating potential options for undergraduates in AY2020-2021, and should be weighted more heavily? Please check 3-5 principles and values you feel are critical; you may also write in your own.”

- Respondents generally agreed that accomplishing MIT’s mission; prioritizing the health and welfare of the MIT and broader community; remaining flexible; and being guided by experts are the top principles and values to evaluate options.
- About half of the undergraduate respondents selected “Allocate access to campus in a way that best supports MIT's mission while adhering to our principles and values” as critical.
- A higher percentage of faculty and staff respondents selected prioritize the health and welfare of the MIT and broader community and be guided by experts in making judgments about health and welfare

**Focus on these three*



*Remain focused on accomplishing MIT's mission, upholding the quality of our educational offerings

*Prioritize the health and welfare of our MIT community and of the broader Boston/Cambridge communities

Remain flexible in an uncertain and rapidly changing environment

Be guided by experts in making judgments about health and welfare

*Allocate access to campus in a way that best supports MIT's mission while adhering to our principles and values

Overall is unweighted ■ Overall ■ UG ■ Grad ■ Staff ■ Faculty & Instructors

For each option, respondents were asked **Which principles and values does this plan address well?**

Respondents could check: Remain focused on accomplishing MIT's mission, upholding the quality of our educational offerings; Prioritizes community health and welfare; Addresses diversity, equity and inclusion; Maintains long-term financial viability of the Institute; Allocates access to campus to support MIT's mission; Other

Option 1: 100% return. Invite 100% of undergraduate students to return to campus, access and operate instructional spaces in a physically-distanced way, with much of the curriculum being offered remotely.

Option 2: Delayed start. Delayed start to subjects for all students (with students invited back as early as October 2020 or as late as early January 2021), then hold two regular semesters (no IAP) and potentially stretch the academic year into early summer 2021.

Option 3: Half UG for half semester. Invite half the undergraduates on-campus for the first six weeks, and then the other half for the last six weeks (following a two-week gap). The fraction of the curriculum that relies on the physical instruction spaces on campus would be adjusted within each subject to take advantage of the time on-campus.

Option 4: Half UG for full semester. Invite half of the undergraduates to campus for a full semester.

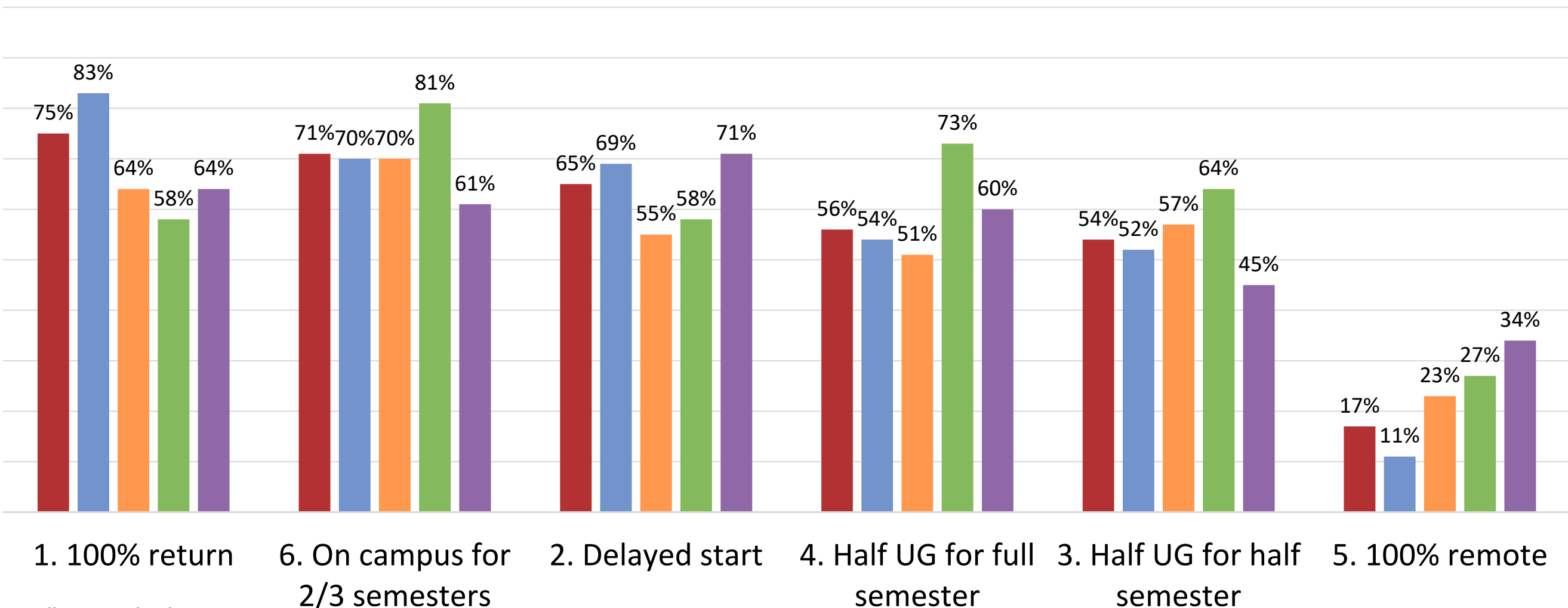
Option 5: 100% remote. Undergraduate students are 100% remote.

Option 6: On campus for 2/3 semesters. Invite 25% to 50% of undergraduate students on campus in the fall, as part of a three-semester year. Distribute typical fall and spring subjects taught over three semesters (fall, winter, and spring terms of equal length) and provide all undergraduate students with an on-campus experience for two of the three semesters.

Remain focused on accomplishing MIT's mission, upholding the quality of our educational offerings

More respondents indicated options for **100% return; On campus for 2/3 semesters; and Delayed start** address this principle well. Fewer respondents indicated 100% remote would address this principle well.

Overall UG Grad Staff Faculty & Instructors

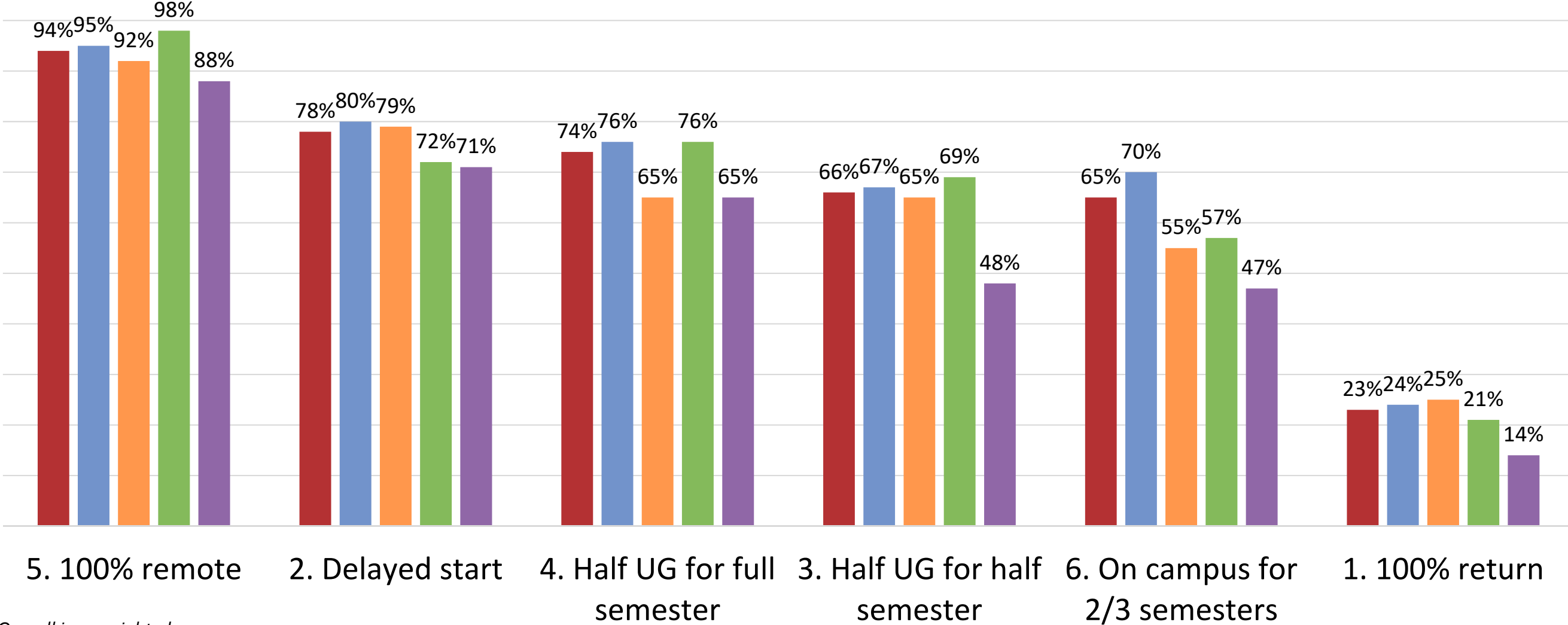


Overall is unweighted

Prioritizes community health and welfare

Respondents indicated **100% remote** addresses this principle well; followed by **delayed start** and **half the undergrads on campus for a full semester**. Fewer indicated 100% return would address this principle.

Overall UG Grad Staff Faculty & Instructors

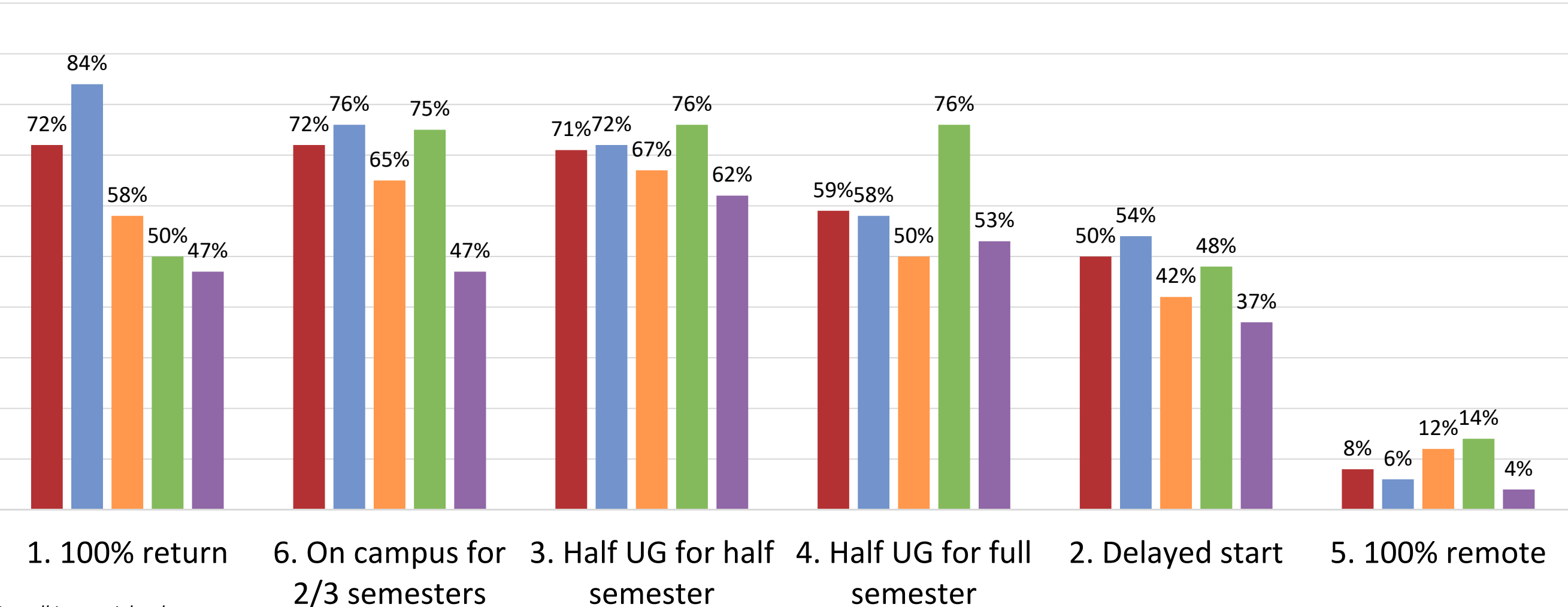


Overall is unweighted

Allocates access to campus to support MIT's mission

Respondents indicated options for **100% return; On campus for 2/3 semesters; and Half undergrads** for half a semester would address this principle well.

Overall UG Grad Staff Faculty & Instructors

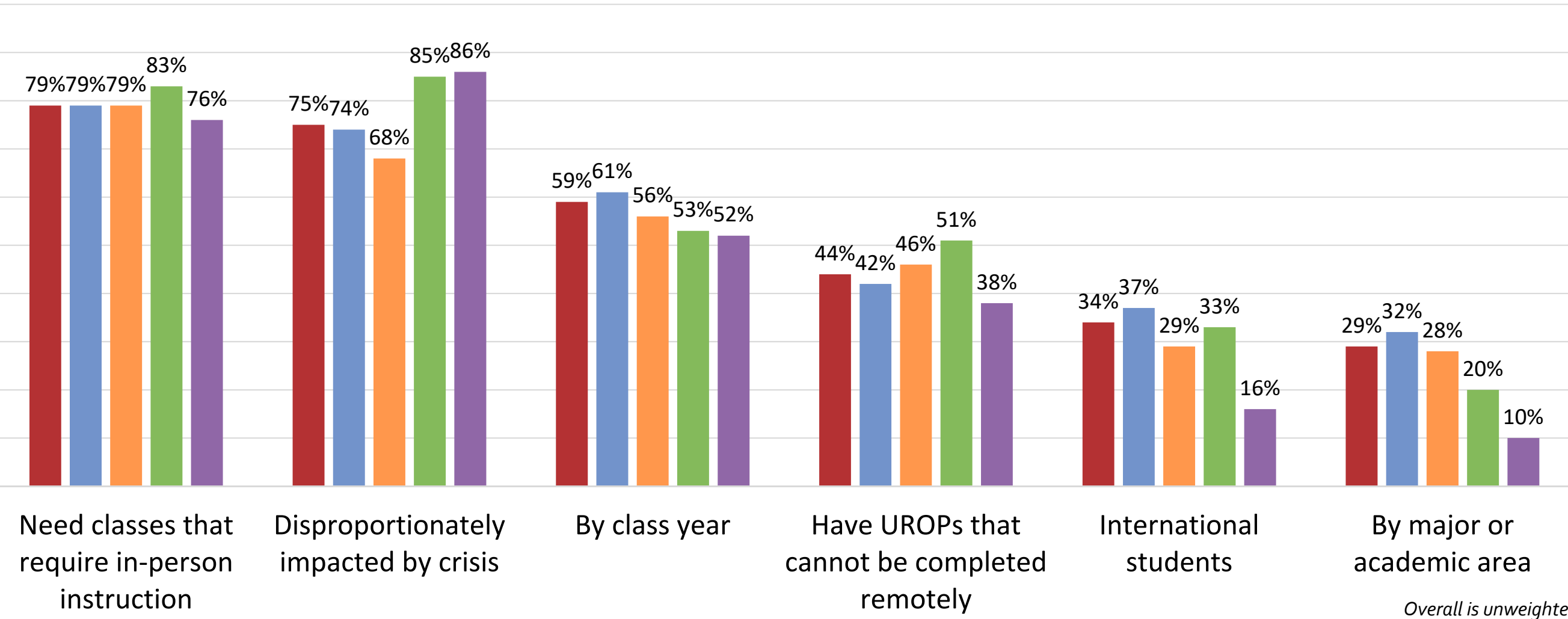


Overall is unweighted

What should be used to determine who is invited to live on campus at a particular time?

General agreement that “Students who need to take classes that require in-person instruction” and “Students who may be disproportionately impacted by this crisis for any number of reasons” should be among the top criteria used to determine who is on campus.

Overall UG Grad Staff Faculty & Instructors



Overall is unweighted

A sampling of faculty responses to “Are there particular aspects of this option you find challenging?” illustrate concerns about any option that brings students back to campus.

- I think the notion of students living in dorms (even in private rooms) and keeping social distancing is highly optimistic and most likely 100% unrealistic. The students will naturally try get together often, especially given the widespread notion that this pandemic is not very dangerous for their age group. *(100% back)*
- I worry what happens to MIT's reputation if one student dies... *(100% back)*
- Thanksgiving travel bringing back infection. Better to be done before it or start after it. (Delayed start)
- This option seems particularly problematic. It is possible that we will be in the same (or worse) covid situation in January 2021, and no learning will have occurred. (Delayed start)
- I think even 50% of the undergraduate population is very risky to the health of the older people who work at MIT. *(Half for half semester)*
- Doesn't change the fact that thousands of people would be sharing space and cafeterias etc. *(Half for full semester)*
- Realistically, people are not going to be able to maintain social distancing if 50% of all undergraduates are on campus; I don't believe it would be much safer than 100%. I think that the only reasonable choices are 0% or 100%. *(Half for full semester)*
- For the reasons listed elsewhere, it doesn't seem wise to assume that next spring and summer will be any safer than this one. *(2 out of 3 semesters on campus)*

Initial Takeaways

- Respondents generally agreed that accomplishing MIT's mission; prioritizing the health and welfare of the MIT and broader community; remaining flexible; and being guided by experts are the top principles and values to evaluate options.
- About half of the undergraduate respondents selected "Allocate access to campus in a way that best supports MIT's mission while adhering to our principles and values" as critical.
- A higher percentage of faculty and staff respondents selected prioritize the health and welfare of the MIT and broader community and be guided by experts in making judgments about health and welfare.
- **Remain focused on accomplishing MIT's mission, upholding the quality of our educational offerings.** More respondents indicated options for 100% return; On campus for 2/3 semesters; and Delayed start address this principle well.
- **Prioritizes community health and welfare.** Respondents indicated 100% remote addresses this principle well; followed by delayed start and half the undergrads on campus for a full semester. Fewer indicated 100% return would address this principle.
- **Allocates access to campus to support MIT's mission.** Respondents indicated options for 100% return; On campus for 2/3 semesters; and Half undergrads for half a semester would address this principle well.
- **What should be used to determine who is invited to live on campus at a particular time?** General agreement that "Students who need to take classes that require in-person instruction" and "Students who may be disproportionately impacted by this crisis for any number of reasons" should be among the top criteria used to determine who is on campus.