# Chabot Students' Technological Needs
For Online Learning, Spring 2020

Following the Bay Area shelter-in-place order in March of 2020, almost all Chabot classes moved to an online format for the remainder of spring. During this time, the Office of Institutional Research conducted two surveys where students were asked about their technology needs. These surveys were delivered via a link on the Canvas online learning platform and via an email to all students. *Given that some students may have limited or no phone or computer to access the survey itself, it is likely that the numbers below* **underrepresent** *the number of students who need additional resources to access online learning.*

Survey #1 "Chabot Students' Technological Needs for Online Learning"

A "Chabot Students' Technological Needs for Online Learning" survey was administered online between April 2 and April 9, 2020. Of the 13,304 students enrolled in a class at Chabot at the time of the survey, 2,425 (18%) took the survey. In this first survey, students were asked individual questions about their laptop, internet, and data plan needs. Overall, there were considerable technological needs expressed by respondents to the April survey.
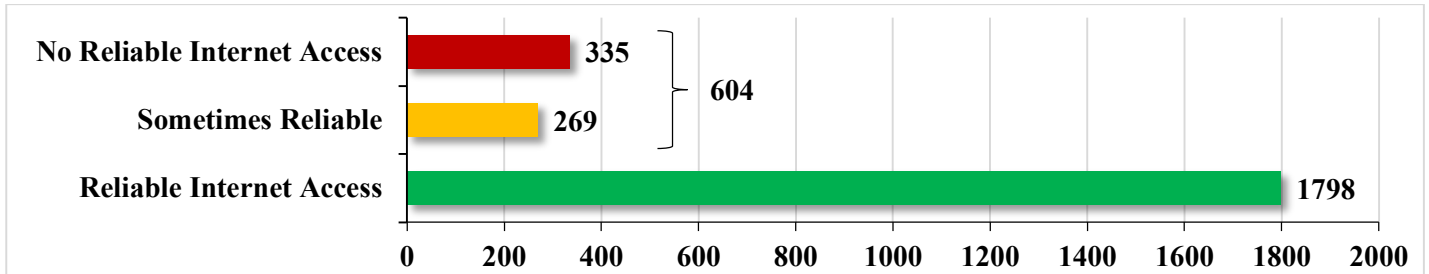
Reliable Access to a Laptop/Desktop Computer
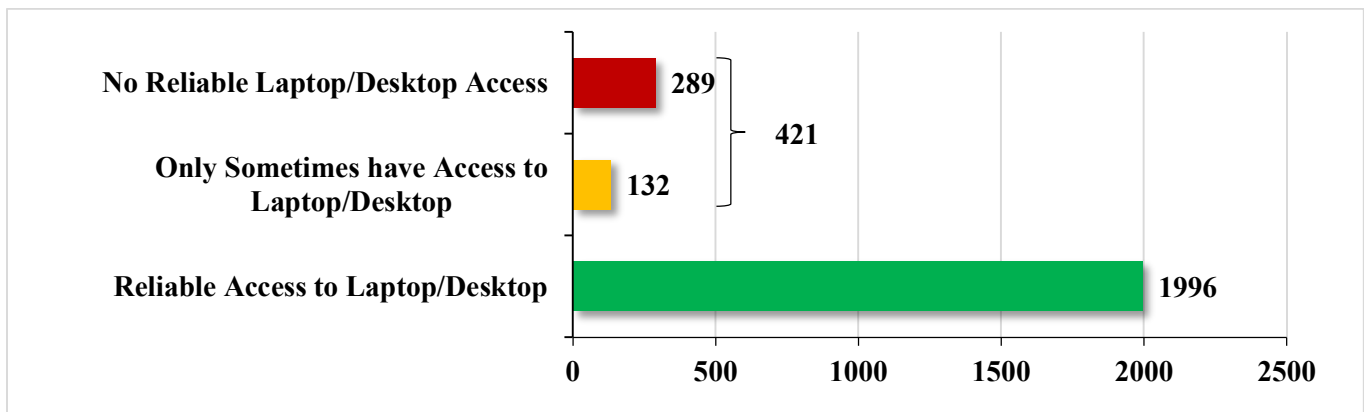
In this survey, 289 students (12% of survey respondents) did not have reliable access to a laptop/desktop for them to be successful in their online courses (and another 132 students were unsure about the reliability of their laptop/desktop). In the open-ended questions of the survey, some students shared that they were doing 100% of their courses, homework, and exams on their phones; others had to share one computer with other family members; or had old computers that were not adequate for their online learning needs (e.g. to log into Canvas, Zoom, etc.).
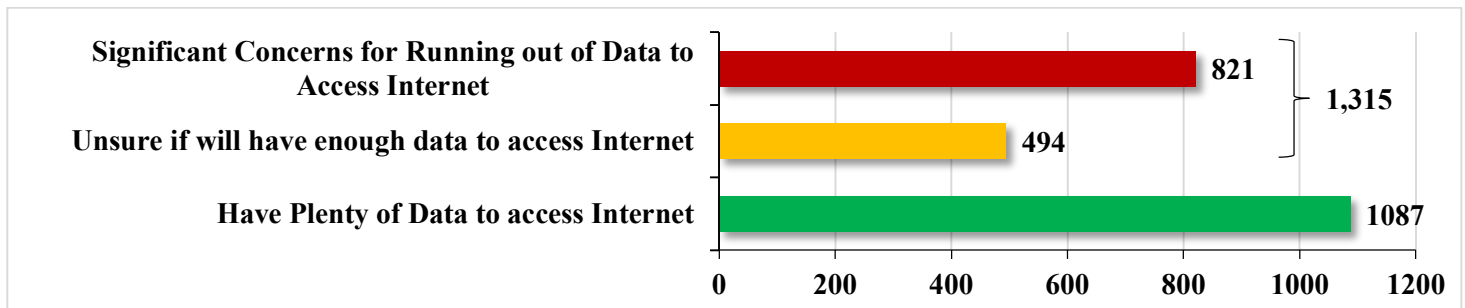
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Reliable Internet Access

Category	Value
No Reliable Internet Access	335
Sometimes Reliable	269
Reliable Internet Access	1798

(No Reliable Internet Access + Sometimes Reliable = 604)

With regard to internet access, 335 students (14% of survey respondents) did not have reliable internet to access their online courses (and an additional 269 respondents were unsure about the reliability of their internet). Some students shared that their internet would fail during their online classes and they were worried about that happening when they take their quizzes and exams online. Others shared that their internet access was spotty throughout the day.

Sufficient Data to Access Internet

Category	Value
Significant Concerns for Running out of Data to Access Internet	821
Unsure if will have enough data to access Internet	494
Have Plenty of Data to access Internet	1087

(Significant Concerns + Unsure = 1,315)

With regard to data plans to access Internet services, 821 students (34% of survey respondents) were concerned that they would run out of data on their internet or phone plan (and another 494 students were unsure if they needed to be concerned) — thus, a total of 1,315 had concerns about having sufficient data to access the internet. Some students shared that their home internet plans had become too pricey given their loss of income due to Covid 19.

Following the administration of the first survey, VP Thompson led a team of classified professionals, faculty and administrators in contacting students who had expressed technological needs, either through the survey or by contacting instructors, deans, counselors, or coordinators of special programs. Due to a number of generous funding sources (such as Strong Workforce and Measure A funds, U.S. CARES funds, and contributions garnered by the Institutional Advancement and the Equity & Success Offices from the Stupski Foundation, United Way Bay Area, Fremont Bank, and Chabot College employees and community members), this team was able to purchase laptops, Chromebooks, and hot spots. Chabot has distributed roughly **200 Chromebooks** and loaned out **150 laptops** and **150 hotspots** to students with technological needs so far. Additionally, there are still laptops and hotspots to loan to students this fall and plans for the Hayward Promise Neighborhood grant to distribute Chromebooks to students in their target population from the Tennyson Corridor.

Survey #2: "Chabot Students' Experiences with Converting to Online Learning"

A "Chabot Students' Experiences with Converting to Online Learning" survey was administered online between May 14 and May 25, 2020. Of the 13,346 students enrolled at Chabot at the time of the survey, 1,536 (12% of Chabot students) took the survey. While it is important to remember that different students took each survey—thus, percentages must be compared with *caution*— the May responses are encouraging that students' technological needs are being met. While we cannot be sure whether to attribute the changes in response distributions to actual changes in students' situations or simply differences in who responded to the survey, the differences in the numbers of respondents conveying technological need are so stark, it is reasonable to assume the technology give-way and lending program has made a difference in addressing students' technological needs.

Access to Technological Hardware and Software
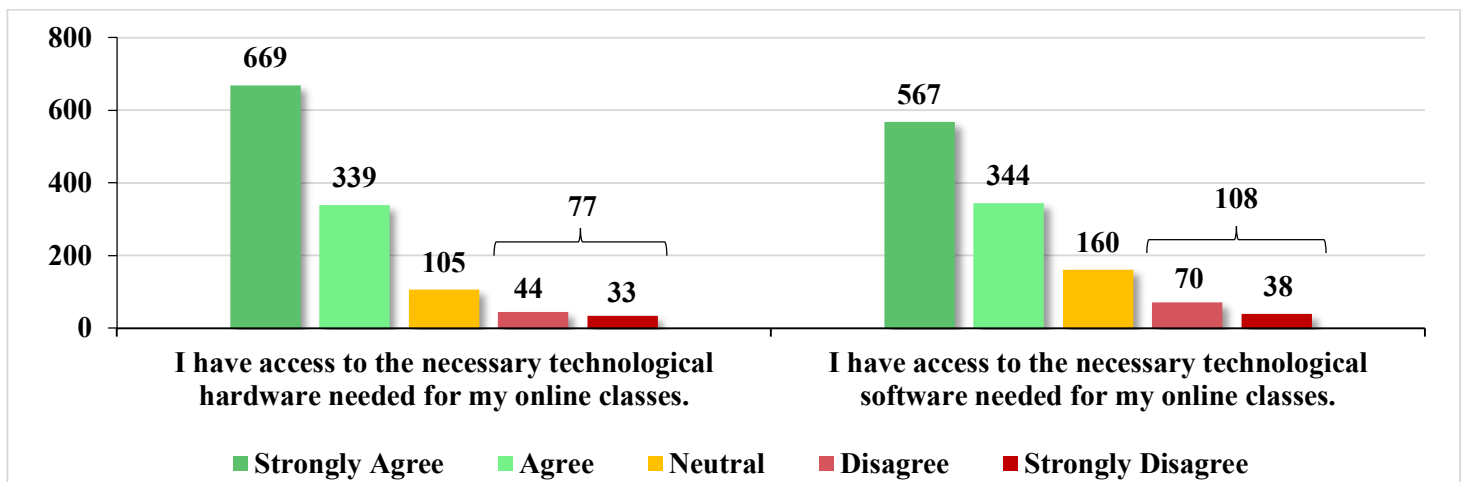
In the second survey, students were not asked individual questions about their laptop, internet, and data plan needs, rather they were asked two questions on their access to technological hardware and technological software needed for online classes. Whereas in the first survey, a total of somewhere between 1,315-2,340 students indicated a technological need for laptop, internet, and/or data plan, somewhere between 77-185 students in the second survey expressed concerns about having access to the hardware and/or software needed for online learning.

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Worries about Consistent Access to Technology needed for Online Learning
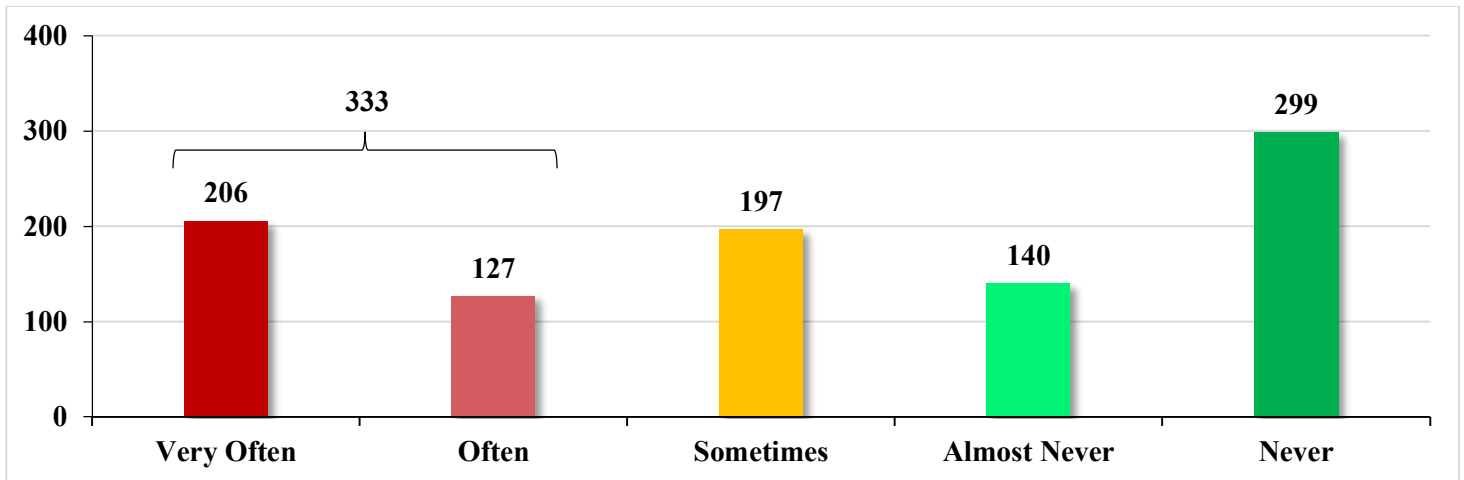
Interestingly, in a later survey question in which students were asked about their worries given the changes caused by the spread of COVID-19, 333 students (20% of survey respondents) expressed worrying very often or often about having consistent access to the technology needed for online learning. An additional 197 students indicated that they were sometimes worried. Thus, while it appears that there is increased access to technology among Chabot students, the situation should continue to be monitored.