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9 Student Attitudes and Experiences with COVID-19

A Case of One Research University in California

David Edens and Emily Kiresich

Abstract

This chapter examines student attitudes and issues regarding the rapid pivot to virtual instruction in March 2020. Results indicated that students reported well-prepared and comfortable in the online environment, but the transition and overall life experience of this time left them feeling frustrated, anxious, and worried. They expressed specific concern about the current and future readiness for next courses and careers, amplified by having concerns for their health, the health of others, and their finances. Their responses indicated that open and transparent communication with instructors and about expectations and being included in decision-making about future changes to courses would have provided them with comfort. Training in technology and open communication for educators and students is essential to improving student success and satisfaction during this time of unprecedented change.

Keywords

Change Management; Online Teaching; Student Impact; Survey Research; Student Success

Introduction

COVID-19 has had a tremendous impact on the United States and the world. As of this writing, there have been approximately 122 million cases worldwide, with over 30 million cases and 550,000 deaths in the United States (*Coronavirus Update (Live): Worldometer*, 2021). In response, many states established procedures to limit the risk of transmission through policies such as social distancing, closing non-essential businesses, and moving all education, including higher education, to an online or virtual format.

Higher education responded to the coronavirus crisis by limiting face-to-face instruction and closing campuses (Gluckman, 2020). College campuses are risky as students, faculty, and staff are in classrooms, labs, and offices

and often in close quarters. Additionally, campus housing is usually densely populated. Beyond these proximity issues, many of the curricular and co-curricular activities on campus require people to be in close contact. Wood (2020) noted that “a properly run college is a series of super-spreader events.” Limits, for many universities, went beyond just changing instructional modalities. Many universities closed all campus services, including housing, food service, and research labs.

This study was designed to assess students’ experiences in response to the rapid change in teaching at a large public university in Southern California. Using a sliding scale, students were asked to reflect and assess their attitudes towards the change and how the semester’s remainder progressed. The results provide insight into what has affected the students through this time of rapid change and adaptation. Students were affected by the change in instruction and many other life and socioeconomic changes that occurred because of the pandemic.

In March 2020, the university ceased all face-to-face instruction and moved all teaching, including labs and activities, to a virtual environment. Beyond instruction, housing and limited food service on campus remained open. As the pandemic progressed, many of these services also became further limited or closed entirely. At the end of the semester, only essential personnel were allowed on campus. Necessary administrative offices and animal units were staffed by university personnel on a rotating basis. The campus was essentially closed to faculty, staff, and students for the final two months of instruction. The university was conducting all Summer session instruction online and was planning to offer most, if not all, classes online in Fall 2020 (Burke, 2020).

Literature Review

Student Success

Student success has been a fruitful topic of research. Historically, researchers have focused on traditional success measures, such as grade point average, retention, persistence, and degree completion (Astin, 1993; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005).

Recently, student satisfaction is a topic of interest. When students are satisfied with their learning and the learning environment, they tend to invest more in their education and persist (Beltyukova & Fox, 2002; Billups, 2008; Elliot & Shin, 2002; Juillerat & Schreiner, 2004). Students who are motivated and self-directed tend to succeed in college (DeWitz et al., 2009; Dweck, 2006, 2007; Kuh et al., 2006).

Student interaction with faculty, both inside and outside of the classroom, is a strong predictor of student success (Cole, 2010; Fuentes et al., 2014; Umbach & Wawrzynski, 2005). When students trust, talk to and develop mentorship relationships with faculty, they tend to perform better and persevere.

Online Learning

Online learning takes many forms. Models range from web-assisted courses to fully online, asynchronous course delivery (Ainsworth, 2013). Web-assisted

courses use learning management software to deliver materials to students while the course meets face-to-face. Fully online courses meet virtually in a synchronous or asynchronous mode with no face-to-face instruction. Synchronous courses meet at a scheduled time, while asynchronous course delivery allows students to progress at their own pace. Hybrid courses blend both face-to-face and online delivery.

Online Learning and Student Success

Historically, much of the research on student success has focused on traditional students attending traditional four-year universities and colleges. However, online learning and non-traditional college environments have become popular delivery models for modern students with many outside demands and pressures. Drummond (2008) defined the factors that lead to student success in online learning as having excellent instructors, meaningful learning objectives, effective teaching practices, hands-on learning opportunities, real-world applications, rigorous assessments, and communication tools that assist with the learning process.

A challenge in the online environment is engagement. Students in online courses tend to be less engaged and withdraw more often than their peers in face-to-face courses (Glazier, 2016). Models that utilize practices such as personal e-mails, video introductions, and methods, build rapport and a sense of community and also support student engagement while online (Glazier, 2016; Winger, 2016). As with traditional instruction, students benefit from and are more satisfied with their learning experiences when they have meaningful faculty interaction (Lewis, 2010). Additional factors such as student readiness, student preparation, and student support from the university also improve success and retention in online courses (Harrell, 2008). University support, in terms of tutorials and help centers, improve the online student's self-efficacy with both learning and technology (Miltiadou & Savenye, 2003).

Faculty development programs that support eLearning are valuable (Orozco et al., 2012). Students will be more engaged when the course outcomes, assessments, and materials are well-designed and meaningful. Providing training opportunities supports the faculty as they design classes or transition to eLearning.

Change Management

Specific divisions of scholarly activity are dedicated to change management. Hayes (2018) discusses the process of identifying several models used to examine change in an organization. These models often have similar phases used to identify and manage change, including recognizing the need for change, and planning, implementing, leading, and managing, and assessing outcomes. Beyond these duties, management must communicate with all stakeholders. Gill (2002) argues that leading change is the management's priority. Change

is often framed in the negative and can develop fear and uncertainty in an organization (Antonacopoulou & Gabriel, 2001). This negative response is especially true in times of rapid change, where uncertainty levels are often very high. Therefore, leaders must react, communicate, and guide their constituents through the process (Gill, 2002).

Much of the existing research on change in higher education focuses on adaptations that arise from policy changes, funding shortfalls, accreditation pressures, and many other factors (Gumpert & Sporn, 1999). Student success has also been studied in relation to change. Kezar (2003) adds that students can benefit from a higher education change that supports collaboration between student affairs and academic affairs. Much of the change in higher education occurs over time, such as an academic year. The pace of change is dictated by the shared governance models that exist in most American universities. However, there has been little research that reviews the effects of rapid change within an organization, such as the response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Research Method

This research was conducted at a large, public university in Southern California. Participants were recruited from a single department at that university. The department has 628 students currently enrolled in three different degree options. After obtaining IRB approval (protocol #20-82), all students in the department were sent a Qualtrics^{XM} (SAP, 2013) link. The students were sent three e-mails between May 5, 2020, and May 18, 2020, encouraging participation. Participants were disqualified if they were not currently enrolled in courses in the department for the Spring 2020 semester or did not provide consent. Participants were asked questions about their comfort level with virtual learning before the COVID-19 transition, their feelings about their own ability to adapt to the virtual environment, and several questions about their reactions to and involvement in the transition to online learning in their department courses. Additional questions allowed reflection about mental and physical health, major concerns during this transition (related and unrelated to the transition to online learning), and their perceived implications of this transition for their academic and professional futures.

SPSS 25 (International Business Machines Corporation, 2017) was used for all analyses. Sliding scales from 0 to 10 were used to quantify reactions to each question. For analysis and aggregation responses were transformed into very low (0–2), low (3–4), moderate (5–6), high (7–8), and very high (9–10). Counts within each category were converted into percentages and presented as within-category percentages of the total possible answers.

Participants

Most of the respondents (57%) were 18–24 years of age, followed by 25–30 years of age (27%), reflecting a slightly older population when compared to the

department and university overall. The majority female (76%) closely resembles the department and is higher than the university overall. Race/Ethnicity reflects the department and the university at majority Hispanic/Latino, followed by Asian/Pacific Islander and White. Nearly 50% of respondents have completed 90 units. Most have taken online courses, with 3–4 courses (33%) being most common. Important to note, this department requires many laboratory and activity courses; of the respondents, nearly one-third (32.5%) reported being enrolled in a laboratory course in the Spring of 2020.

Results

Survey Responses

Between May 5 and May 27, 2020, 95 surveys were started. There were 83 usable surveys for analysis after disqualifications. For 95% Confidence Interval, 10% margin of error in our department population of 628 students, a sample size of 84 was ideal.

Readiness for Virtual Transition

To begin, we asked students about their perception of comfort in the virtual environment; 53.7% responded with high or very high (7–10) comfort before this rapid mandatory transition. The system of which this University is a part moved to a virtual learning approach in March 2020. Upon learning of this transition, our respondents' answers reflect uncertainty about being ready to tackle the challenge of online instruction (19% moderate, 17% high, 15% very high) and about the support they needed to be successful (16% moderate, 17% high, 15% very high), see Figure 9.1. There was a larger percentage of respondents who reported higher levels of agreement for these categories, but not a strong majority.

Initial Emotional Response

Many respondents scored high for stress, anxiety, and worry while 15% or fewer reported high or very high feelings for excited, angry, motivated, bored,

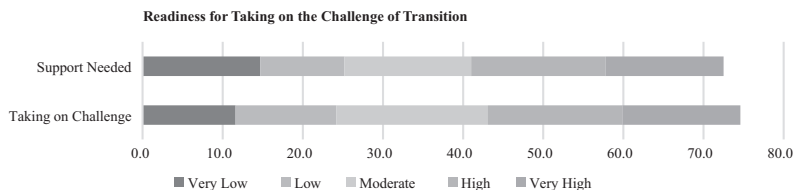


Figure 9.1 Comfort in taking on the challenge of transition to virtual instruction. Note: Percentage of respondents within five categories of agreement: (0–2 [very low], 3–4 [low], 5–6 [moderate], 7–8 [high], 9–10 [very high]).

shock, relief, shame, curiosity, or calm. Strong feelings of anxiety (30% high or very high), worry (25% high or very high), stress (39% high or very high), and frustration and loneliness (>25% high or very high, each). These reflect several challenging emotional and mental conditions to be operating under while trying to successfully complete course requirements for nearly half of a semester.

Personal Impact of COVID-19 and Related Policies

In the next set of responses, we investigate the personal impact of COVID-19 and factors that may be of concern during this time. Students responded with high levels of concern, >25% reporting very high for 3 of the 4 categories, and at least 40% of respondents reporting high or very high concern for all categories listed: financial situation, own health or the health of others, and work-life balance (see Figure 9.2).

Elements of Course Transition

This portion of the survey allowed students to reflect on their response to college, department, and course-specific changes and their interaction with instructors during that transition. Some positive feedback about courses included strong positive responses for feeling they had information needed (35.8% high or very high), had the opportunity to ask questions (39% high or very high), and had their questions answered (38.9% high and very high). Of note for future consideration, strong negative response for “I felt I was part of the decision-making process” (30.5% very low). On a whole, students responses reflected clear understanding and support for the change to a virtual setting, considering the pandemic environment (see Figure 9.3), overwhelmingly very high (51–64%) agreement that the change was needed for safety, that virtual was the correct choice for instruction, that the need was urgent to make a change, and in understanding the need for a transition to virtual.

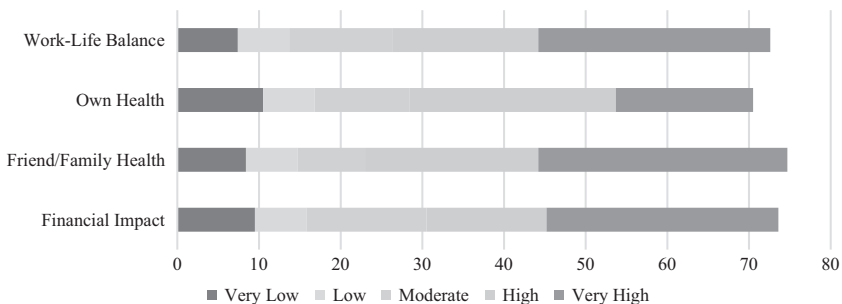


Figure 9.2 Personal impact of Covid-19 changes.

Note: Percentage of respondents within five categories of agreement: (0–2 [very low], 3–4 [low], 5–6 [moderate], 7–8 [high], 9–10 [very high]).

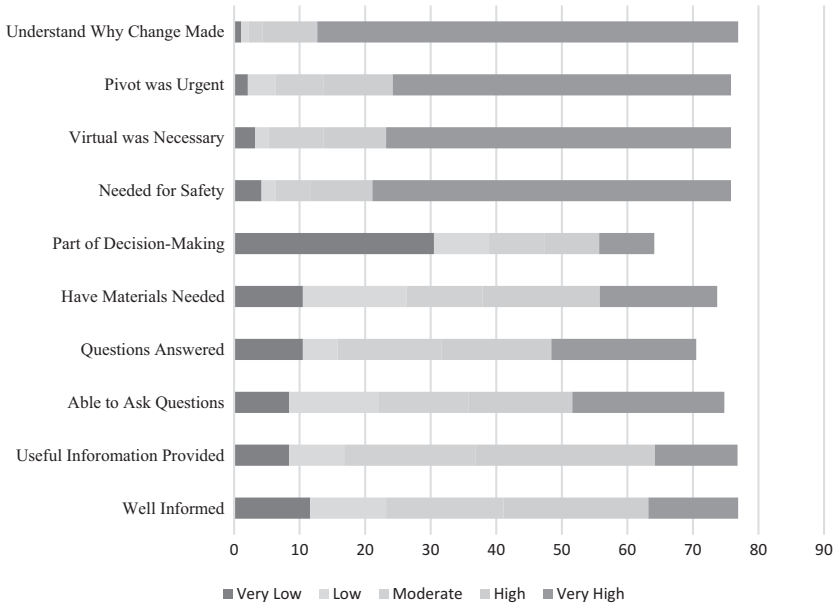


Figure 9.3 Respondent impression of the transition within department-specific courses.

Note: Percentage of respondents within five categories of agreement: (0–2 [very low], 3–4 [low], 5–6 [moderate], 7–8 [high], 9–10 [very high]).

Impact on the Learning Environment for This and Next Semester

Students were asked to reflect on their level of concern over elements of their physical and social environments as they relate to this transition to virtual instruction. Items, found in Figure 9.4, that were frequently scored of high concern were access to teachers and to peers (respectively 36.9% and 37.9% high and very high) and access to University services (38.9% high and very high). More course/class-specific concerns were: the ability to influence future changes related to COVID-19 (30.5% high and very high), will have adequate training (35.8% high and very high), classes meeting their learning expectations (44.2% high and very high), this environment creating more work than a traditional course (42.1% high and very high), the learning environment to being effective for the content (40% high and very high), and that this transition will cause them to be under-prepared for the next class or level of education (40% high and very high).

Will This Semester Have a Long-term Impact?

Students most strongly responded to the transition having a negative impact on their prospects of getting a job or internship (33.7% high and very high),

and that this will have a negative impact on their success in classes/major (32.6% high and very high). More details are listed in Figure 9.5, which reflect uncertainty (13–25% moderate) about the future impacts of this transition.

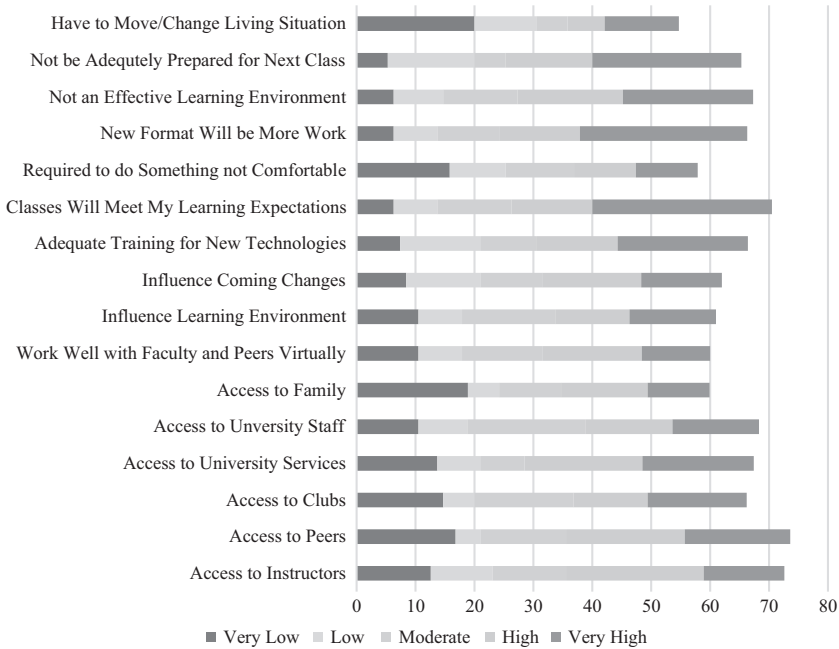


Figure 9.4 Student concerns moving through and beyond the Spring semester of instruction.

Note: Percentage of respondents within five categories of agreement: (0–2 [very low], 3–4 [low], 5–6 [moderate], 7–8 [high], 9–10 [very high]).

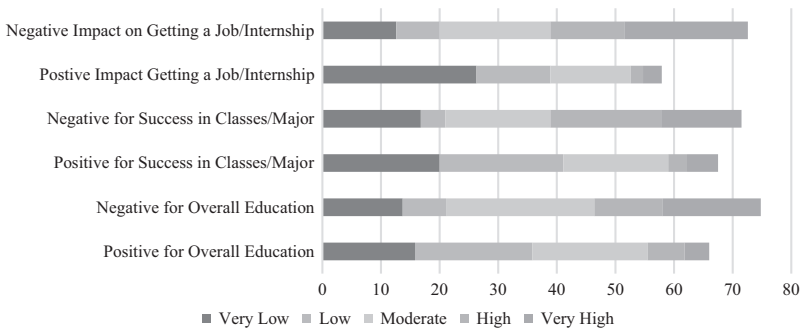


Figure 9.5 Student perceived impact of virtual instruction on future.

Note: Percentage of respondents within five categories of agreement: (0–2 [very low], 3–4 [low], 5–6 [moderate], 7–8 [high], 9–10 [very high]).

Personal Beliefs about the Environment of Their Classrooms after This Transition

Strong agreement was shown in the following: my instructor cared about my ability to work on tasks for the class (37.4% high and very high), my instructor expressed concern about my well-being outside of schoolwork (44.2% high and very high), and my instructor tried to keep a personal connection after virtual transition (23.1% high and very high). Disagreement is noted for the rigor of the course being decreased after transition (37.9% low and very low) and the expectations of [their] performance being decreased after transition (29.5% low and very low). Another area of attention is: my instructor seemed confident in the material after transition (27.4% low and very low), and course rigor was increased (20% high and very high). Results are represented in Figure 9.6.

Final Emotional Response

These responses are compared to their answers for an initial response after having been working for weeks and nearing or at the semester’s end. Promising responses include possibility of improving mental and emotional health, decreases in frustration, worry, and stress. Noteworthy, there were increases in average boredom, feeling overwhelmed, annoyed, and angry, also small increases in motivation and feeling ashamed. Emotional responses that continued to be strong for these respondents included anxiety (30.5% high and very high), stress (39% high and very high), disappointment (27.4% high

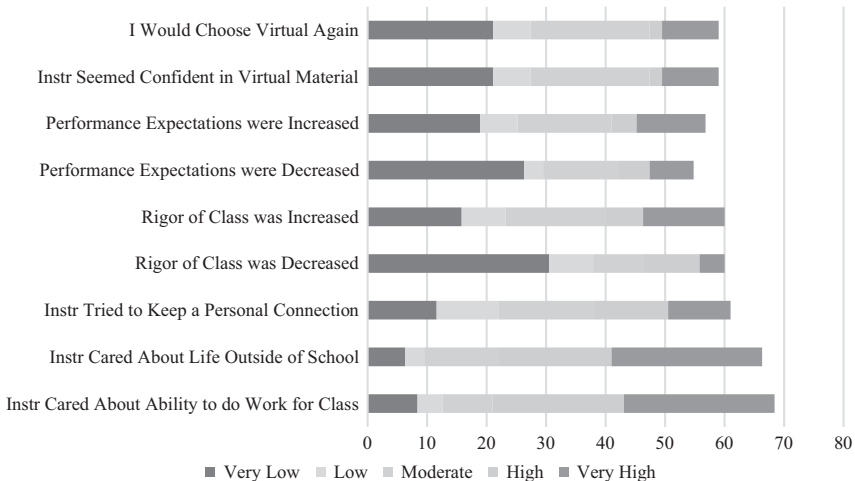


Figure 9.6 Classroom response and environment after virtual pivot.

Note: Percentage of respondents within five categories of agreement: (0–2 [very low], 3–4 [low], 5–6 [moderate], 7–8 [high], 9–10 [very high]).

and very high), frustration (23.6% high and very high), annoyance (26.3% high and very high), and lonely (25.2% high and very high).

Discussion and Conclusions

Students Readiness for Transition to Virtual Instruction

Despite student or educator preparedness for the online transition, the move to virtual instruction was mandated in mid-March, citing Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines for safety during the COVID-19 pandemic. Fortunately, more than 30% of students in our survey were confident about their readiness for taking on the challenge of online transition (Figure 9.1). This may be attributable to the high number of students, more than 50%, who stated comfort in the virtual learning environment prior to this required and rapid transition. An additional element to consider is the demographic makeup of this department, 37% reporting 25 years of age or older. Though older (non-traditional) students report lower use of technology, they often prefer virtual, asynchronous learning environments (Johnson, 2019). Non-traditional and older students are likely to be focused, learning-driven, and have commitments outside of the university that make more flexible options appealing (Rabourn et al., 2018). Though many students reported feeling prepared for this change, nearly 25% of students did not feel prepared or that they had the support they needed for this transition.

Student Response

Though students were asked about their feelings and emotions as a response to the COVID-19 transition, it may have been difficult to separate the normal stress of the progressing semester, which was approaching mid-term examinations, and the additional stress of rapid change. Not surprisingly, students' initial responses to the virtual transition were that of stress, anxiety, and worry. Andrews and Wilding (2004) found that between pre-term and mid-term, anxiety and depression scores increased among university students. In addition to anxiety, worry, and stress, students reported frustration and loneliness.

Elements of timing have been cited as too rapid when it was unexpected, or when participants were unable to collaborate on decision-making (Smollan et al., 2010) and that students may benefit from change when allowed to collaborate (Kezar, 2003). Students were in support of this change, and it happened in a wave of other institutions making a similar pivot, unlikely a surprise to the students. As Figure 9.3 demonstrates, the students understood the reasons for changing to a virtual teaching model. However, the students expressed the desire to be part of the process, according to Figure 9.4. This concept of a student partnership in governance and curriculum design is a

new and emerging field of study (Matthews et al., 2019). There is a feeling that partnering with students in decision-making is beneficial and improves overall success and engagement (Brooman et al., 2015).

The student experience and likelihood of success are indicated not only by the academic approach but are also influenced by other factors in their whole lives. In analyzing adverse life events, financial difficulties, personal injury or illness, the physical suffering of a close other, and relationship difficulties (separation), have been recognized as significant barriers for student success (Andrews & Wilding, 2004). Additionally, relationship difficulties, close other's illness, and financial difficulties were all significantly related to anxiety. In terms of online course success, unexpected emergencies and responsibilities apart from class (job, family, and health) can also negatively affect students' success (Yukselturk & Bulut, 2007). The student population for this survey indicated that the personal impact of the pandemic and its resultant mandated distancing policies, weighed heavily as they worked towards completing their academic semesters for Spring of 2020 (Figure 9.2).

After having a few weeks to acclimate to the new normal, students continued to have feelings that mirrored initial reactions, echoing established factors related to an expected response to rapid change. Of note, when allowed to provide an open response, students mentioned new challenges with childcare and the need for clear communication via e-mail and in assignment guidelines and expectations. This reiterates the view that allowing student collaboration and effective communication are imperative.

Classroom Environment

Student reflection of the classroom environment after transition revealed challenges including a perceived increase in course materials' rigor and a lack of perceived instructor-confidence in materials post-transition (Figure 9.6). Instructors had three days to work on the transition from original formats to entirely virtual, which could contribute to overall uncertainty felt by faculty and students. These perceptions may not reflect actual confidence but a response to the transparency of policy changes or instructor experience in the virtual environment. This transition required all faculty to go online, regardless of prior experience in any virtual formats. As cited by (Orozco et al., 2012), faculty support in eLearning is imperative for faculty success and translates to student success and satisfaction.

Concern for Future and Long-term Impact

Immediately, the students are concerned about their learning and success in the program. There is little research on the impact of rapid changes in education delivery. Higher education's response to the COVID-19 crisis will provide an opportunity to review the effects of rapid change on learning. The students' concerns over learning and outcomes reinforce the movement in

higher education over the last several years towards a more learner-focused method of delivery, supported by strong student learning outcomes (Barr & Tagg, 1995). The students in this survey expressed concern about adequate preparation and success. By developing courses around strong learning outcomes verified by an assessment program, faculty should improve student readiness for the remainder of their student and professional careers.

Additionally, the students expressed concern over access to both faculty and university support services. Student-faculty interaction, especially outside of the classroom, is an essential factor in student success (Umbach & Wawrzynski, 2005). Beyond the classroom, faculty and administrators must work to develop alternate means for students and faculty to interact and work together, such as research and open online sessions (Gresh & Mrozowski, 2000).

Implications

The COVID-19 pandemic and ultimate pivot to virtual learning affected many campuses across the United States. This research mirrors other recent research on how students were affected by the rapid response (Blankstein et al., 2020). Students understood the need to change and expressed concern about the quality of education, academic preparation, and career preparation. Students had concerns about emotional and physical health, and importantly, they expressed a loss of belonging and connection to others, including faculty. Managing assignments and completing the semester changed to a crisis-management situation, and policies that reflect as much could support student success. Flexibility in classroom policies, especially after an upheaval, may provide students the room to maneuver the challenges they are experiencing within and outside the classroom

Addressing the student experience during and after this pivot needs to include support for technical skills and capacity in a new environment as well as be sensitive to emerging physical and mental health concerns. It is essential to understand that the students who participated in this survey were under stress because of the changes occurring at the university and the sweeping changes that were happening due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Allowing students to have some voice could permit them to feel as if they gained some control back of at least one element of their lives during the pandemic. Acknowledging the students and having them interact with the faculty about how their courses would proceed during the shelter-in-place could provide some consolation. Going forward, especially as universities potentially plan for a new standard, student participation in decision-making may help engage the students and give them a voice in the process.

Student collaboration for course decision-making may be unfamiliar to instructors, on top of many having limited or no experience in virtual teaching. The most important characteristics of the online teacher are effective

communication, timely and precise interactions through various formats including e-mail, chat, live class questions, and assessment and feedback (Roddy et al., 2017). Reiterated by finding that student success and satisfaction, especially online, are often highest when there is effective communication and meaningful faculty interaction (Lewis, 2010). For instructors accustomed to face-to-face interaction, learning effective e-communication will take practice. Even in the absence of rapid change, faculty development in online instruction can foster deep learning in students (Restauri, 2006). Continued opportunities for faculty and staff skills development and support in creating interactive and effective online learning environments are essential for student and faculty success and satisfaction.

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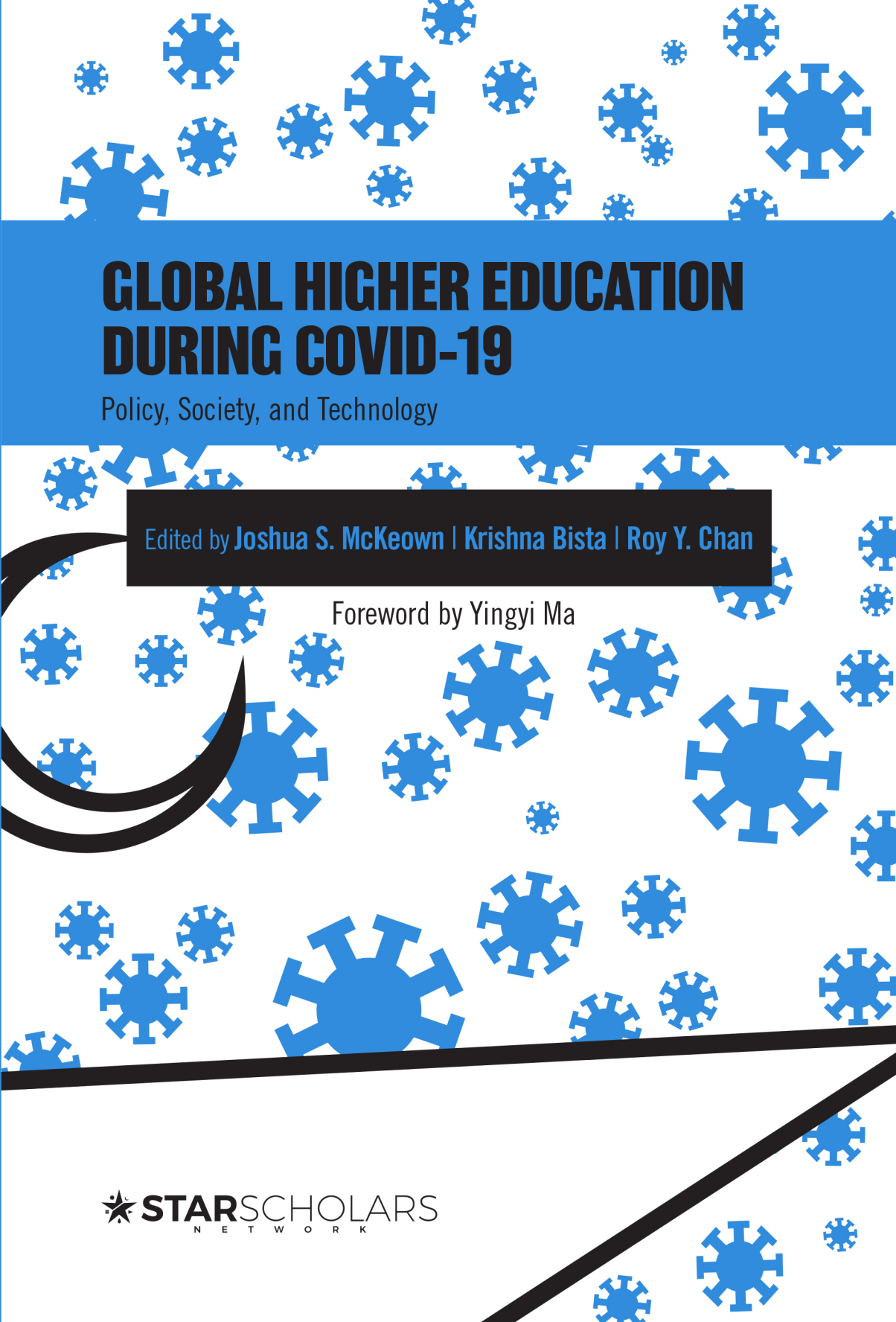
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Bios

David Edens, Ph.D., is an Assistant Professor in Nutrition and Food Science at Cal Poly Pomona. Dr. Edens was the former Chef Director for the Culinary Arts Programs at the Art Institute of California—Hollywood and Department Chair of Advanced Culinary Arts at Le Cordon Bleu Los Angeles. Dr. Edens has published and presented in the area of student success within the culinary student population, for-profit sector, under-served populations, and international students. E-mail: dredens@cpp.edu

Emily Kiresich, Ph.D., RD, is an Assistant Professor in Nutrition and Food Science at California Polytechnic State University, Pomona. She is also a Registered Dietitian with 12 years of experience in clinical nutrition; full-time for six years, and consulting and part-time for the past six years. She is a former Lecturer for California State University, Long Beach, for eight years where she served as Director for both the Didactic Program in Dietetics and the Individualized Supervised Practice Pathway Internship for three years. Dr. Kiresich has published and presented in the areas related to public health. E-mail: ejkiresich@cpp.edu



GLOBAL HIGHER EDUCATION DURING COVID-19

Policy, Society, and Technology

Edited by **Joshua S. McKeown** | **Krishna Bista** | **Roy Y. Chan**

Foreword by Yingyi Ma

Praises for this volume

COVID-19 pandemic and digital innovation are making unprecedented disruption to the global higher education landscape. These disruptions have increased academic discussion on how to reimagine the future of higher education after post-COVID 19. Thus, the book, *Global Higher Education During COVID-19: Policy, Society, and Technology* problematized these realities from a global policy context with policy recommendations on issues of racial justice, funding, technology among others. Therefore, I would like to congratulate the editors: *Joshua S. McKeown, Krishna Bista, and Roy T. Chan* for this excellent publication.

*Dr. KS Adeyemo, Senior Lecturer, University of Pretoria,
South Africa*

Global Higher Education During COVID-19: Policy, Society, and Technology is a highly recommended resource for higher education institution policymakers and educators around the globe. Not only does this book provide invaluable insights from higher education institution policymakers, educators, and students during the COVID-19 pandemic, but it also offers useful suggestions on dealing with possible challenges and seeking opportunities in future higher education.

*Dr. Misty So-Sum Wai-Cook, Centre for English Language
Studies, National University of Singapore*

It's a timely book reporting the most recent responses of international higher education across the world during the Covid-19 pandemic. Besides providing the theoretical contributions, the book also offers practical implications for stakeholders, including policymakers, education managers and practitioners, international students, and parents.

*Dr. Hiep Pham, Director, Center for Research and Practice on
Education, Phu Xuan University, Vietnam*

Global Higher Education During COVID-19: Policy, Society, and Technology is timely and relevant providing a critically engaged reflective account of geographically diverse higher education institutions' response and practice during the COVID-19 pandemic. This book illuminates some of the current

impediments to higher education internationalization within the context of COVID-19 and provides insights into shared learning experiences that address new challenges to internationalisation imposed by the pandemic. A must read for international higher education specialists, practitioners, scholars and researchers.

*Dr. Tasmeeera Singh, Advisor, International Office,
University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa*

A worldwide phenomenon: Strategies and inspiration to address the challenges and opportunities for the new normal in the field of global higher education. I cannot recommend it highly enough.

*Dr. Daisy Kee Mui Hung, Associate Professor,
Universiti Sains Malaysia, Malaysia*

The movement of people across borders furthered the spread of Covid-19. This inevitably impacted international higher education, which although not reducible to student mobility is its primary form. *Global Higher Education during COVID-19: Policy, Society, and Technology* is therefore a timely edited collection that begins to unpack the multifaceted impact the pandemic has had on higher education worldwide. It adds to the growing conversation on reimagining higher education. The collection will be valuable to current and future scholars of higher education, offering an important snapshot of policy and practice during the pandemic.

*Dr. Will Brehm, Lecturer of Education and International
Development, UCL Institute of Education, UK*

With the COVID-19 crisis having upended higher education around the world, this timely book provides a deep and much-needed analysis of the roles and responsibilities of universities going forward. It sheds light not only on the shared challenges countries have faced, but also reveals how the impact of the pandemic has varied in important ways across countries.

*Dr. Rajika Bhandari, Author/Advisor,
STAR Scholar Network, USA*

Case studies provide valuable baseline information for practitioners of higher education as the world begins to emerge from the pandemic. A must-read for those looking to understand how various regions reacted, and how institutional systems changed their models to survive.

*Dr. L. Amber Brugnoli, Assoc Vice-President and
Executive Director for Global Affairs
West Virginia University, USA*

This book presents a comprehensive and rigorous worldwide account of Covid-19 impact, challenges and new opportunities. It stands out as a ground-breaking valuable companion for all those involved in the future of internationalization in higher education.

*Dr. Elena de Prada Creo, Vice Dean for International Affairs
Facultad de CC. Empresariales y Turismo, Spain*

The STAR Scholars Network Titles

We seek to explore new ideas and best practices related to international and comparative education from the US and around the world, and from a wide range of academic fields, including leadership studies, technology, general education, and area and cultural studies. STAR Scholars publishes some titles in collaboration with Routledge, Palgrave MacMillan, Open Journals in Education, Journal of International Students, and other university presses. At STAR Scholars Network, we aim to amplify the voices of underrepresented scholars, epistemologies, and perspectives. We are committed to an inclusion of a diversity of racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds and are particularly interested in proposals from scholars who identify with countries in the Global South.

We value linguistic diversity. Although many of the volumes that we publish are written in English, we welcome proposals in any language. More information at <https://starscholars.org/open-access/>

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Challenges COVID-19 and Higher

Edited by Ravichandran Ammigan, Roy Y. Chan, and Krishna Bista

Global Higher Education During COVID-19: Policy, Society, and
Technology

Joshua S. McKeown, Krishna Bista, and Roy Y. Chan

Global Higher Education During COVID-19

Policy, Society, and Technology

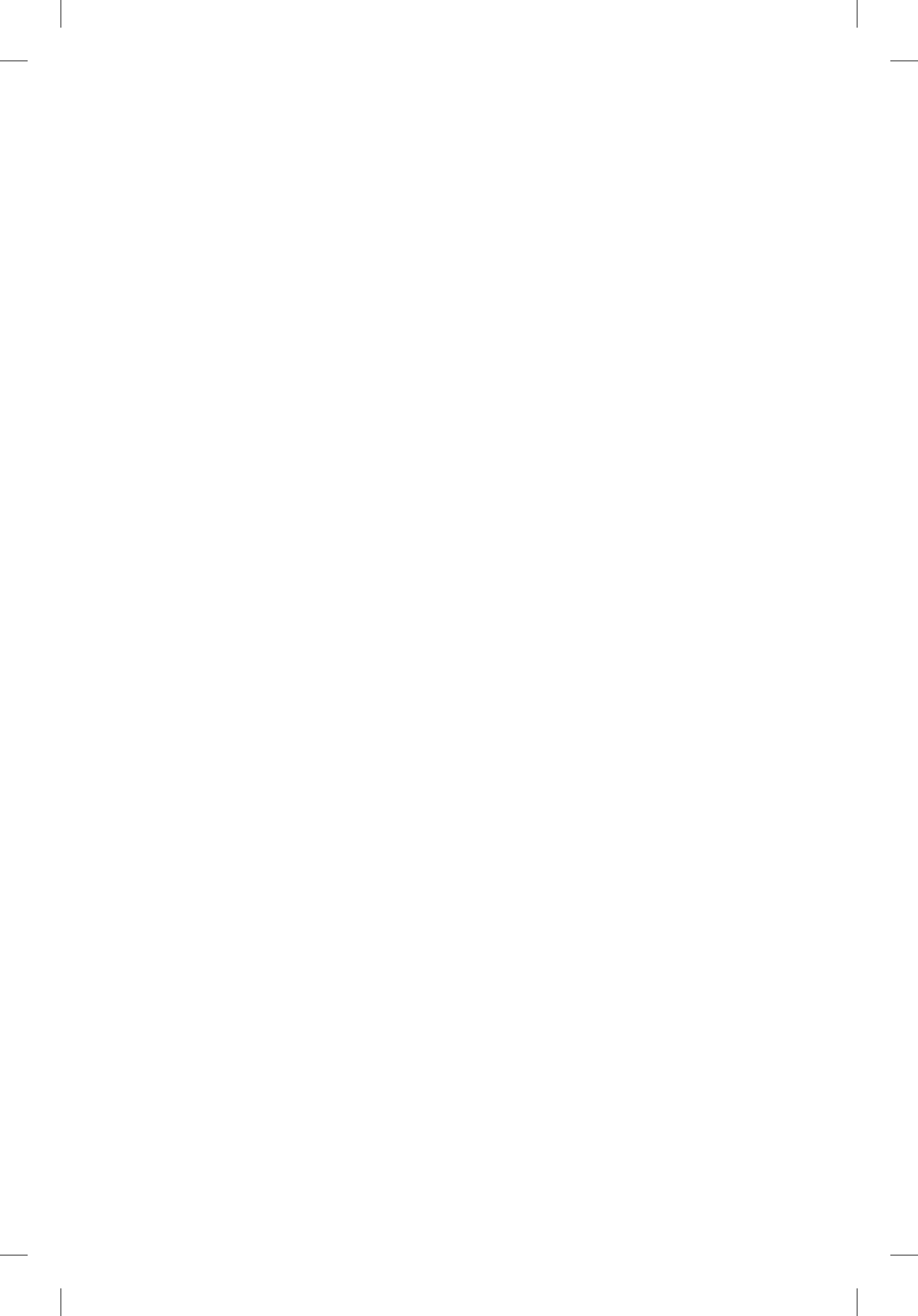
Global Higher Education During COVID-19: Policy, Society, and Technology explores the impacts of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) for institutions of higher education worldwide. Specifically, this book responds to the growing need for new insights and perspectives to improve higher education policy and practice in the era of COVID-19. The sub-theme that runs through this book concerns the changing roles and responsibilities of higher education leaders and the demand to rethink global higher education post-COVID. Topics in this book include: international student experiences, pedagogical innovations through technology, challenges to existing organizational cultures and societal roles, international academic relations, and shifting national policy implications for global higher education.

With the increasing threat of COVID-19 on all aspects of the global economy and workforce, this book serves as an opportunity for teacher-scholars, policymakers, and university administrators to reconsider and reimagine their work and the role of higher education in a global context. The ultimate goal of this book is to provide a critical reflection on the opportunities and challenges brought by COVID-19 and how tertiary education systems around the world learn from each other to address them.

Joshua S. McKeown, PhD, is Associate Provost for International Education & Programs at SUNY Oswego and International Education Leadership Fellow at the University at Albany, USA.

Krishna Bista, EdD, is Professor of Higher Education in the Department of Advanced Studies, Leadership and Policy at Morgan State University, Maryland, USA.

Roy Y. Chan, PhD, is Assistant Professor of Education and Director of the Doctor of Education (EdD) program in Leadership and Professional Practice in the Helen DeVos College of Education at Lee University, Tennessee, USA.



Global Higher Education During COVID-19

Policy, Society, and Technology

Editors

Joshua S. McKeown

Krishna Bista

Roy Y. Chan



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In memory of those who lost their lives during the COVID-19 global pandemic (as of August 2021):

4.38 Million

And to the 204 million heroes worldwide who recovered from the disease.



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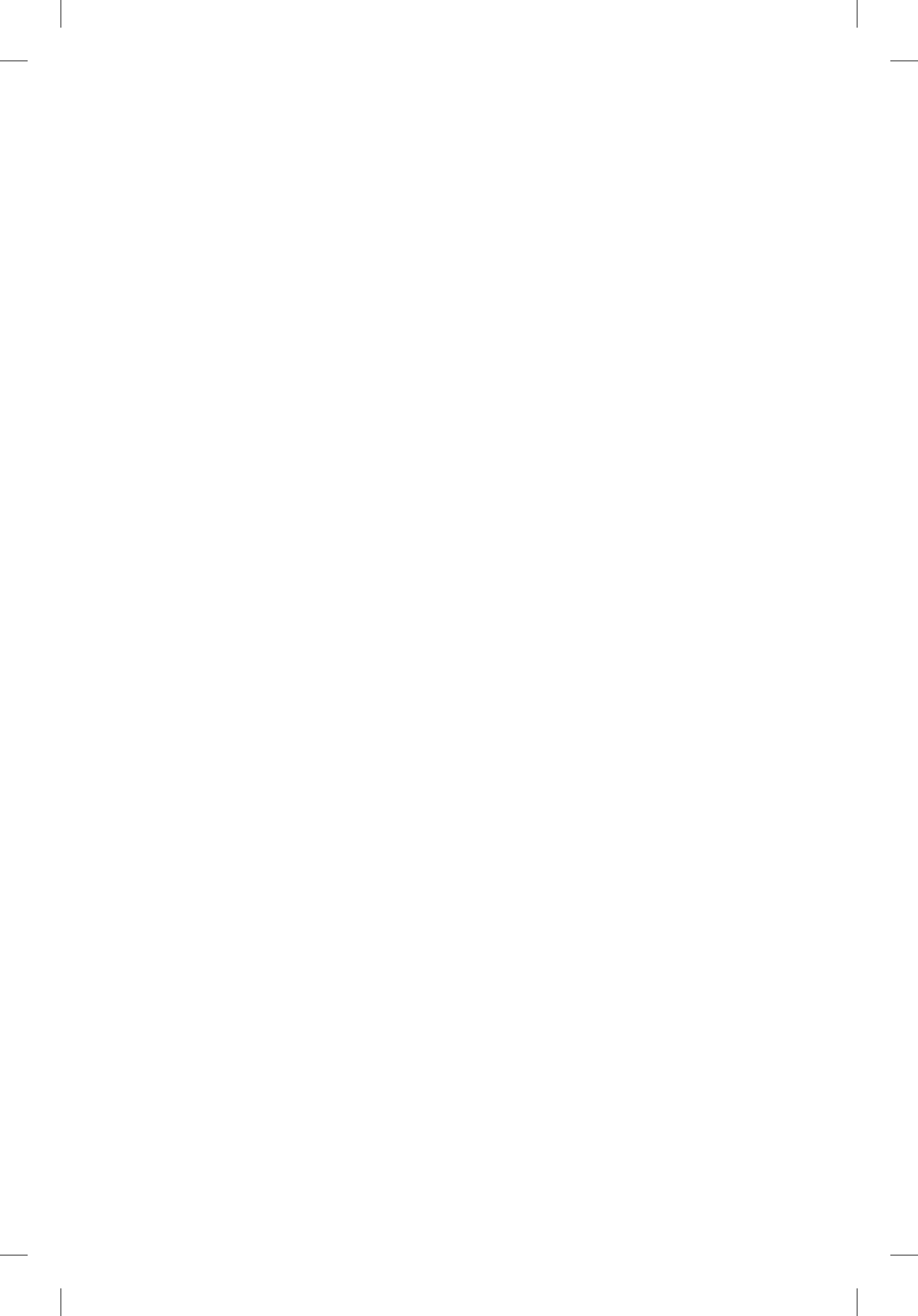
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Foreword

Yingyi Ma

COVID-19 is upending daily life, and its impact on global higher education (HE) is seismic. How to understand the impacts and improve policy and practice in the field of international HE during and post-COVID? Colleges and universities around the world are wondering about the above questions, and this book has provided a much-needed discussion for those questions.

The editors of this book have done a tremendous job in assembling a wide range of in-depth studies, both in terms of substantive topics and geographic regions. The topics range from the role of HE in society, crisis and innovation through technology in HE, international student experiences navigating the pandemic, national policies, international academic relations, public and private university responses, and the innovative engagement efforts of global HE institutions. Despite the expansive topics, various articles share the theme of exploring the traditional and changing roles of HE in society. Part I presents a few studies grounded in diverse national contexts that show how HE operates and adapts to society changed by the pandemic.

I commend the editors for their efforts to include a wide variety of contexts of HE institutions in different countries. While the impacts of COVID-19 on HE may be uncertain, what is certain is the increasing inequality among countries in dealing with the pandemic due to the unequal access to resources, technologies, and public health management. Part II in this book, in particular, focuses on the Global South (lower-income countries). The studies have shown the devastating impact on HE in countries of the global south due to the faltering economy during the pandemic as well as the incredible resilience of faculty and students in these countries to lessen the hardship through impressive innovations.

Technology-powered online education has been the quintessential innovation of 21st-century HE. Technology is liberating as much as limiting. COVID-19 has forced global HE to confront, leverage, and manage the power of technology to engage with students, experiment, and explore new pedagogy. The editors of this book have presented a wide range of empirically based studies in different HE settings to show that technology is indeed the double-edged sword, and it is incumbent on global HE leaders and educators to figure out innovative ways to use technology well, while fully recognizing and managing its limitations. Part III has been devoted to this theme.

This book is for anyone who is interested in HE in the global world, including but not limited to scholars, teachers, administrators, and students, and for any concerned citizens to reimagine and redesign the global HE in a new era.

Bio

Yingyi Ma is an Associate Professor of Sociology and Director of Asian/Asian American Studies. She is the Provost Faculty Fellow on internationalization at Syracuse University (New York), carrying the term between 2020 and 2022, where she leads and supports culturally responsive pedagogy and programs for international education and partnership. She received her Ph.D. in sociology from Johns Hopkins University in 2007. Ma's research addresses education and migration in the U.S. and China and she has published about 30 peer-reviewed articles and book chapters, in addition to books. She is the author of *Ambitious and Anxious: How Chinese College Students Succeed and Struggle in American Higher Education* (Columbia University Press, 2021). This book has won multiple awards from the Comparative and International Education Association and has been featured in national and international news media such as *The Washington Post* and *Times Higher Education*. She is the co-editor of *Understanding International Students from Asia in American Universities: Learning and Living Globalization* (2017), which has won the honorable mention of the Best Book Award from the Comparative and International Education Association's Study Abroad and International Students Section.

E-mail: yma03@syr.edu

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List of Chapter Reviewers

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Chris Glass, Boston College Center for International Higher Education, U.S.A.
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Mary McConer, Christian Brothers University, U.S.A.
Melisa Valentin, University of Louisiana Monroe, U.S.A.
Mercedes Mareque, University of Vigo, Spain
Mingxuan Liang, Al Afaaq School, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates

“Global Higher Education during COVID-19: Policy, Society, and Technology is a timely edited collection that begins to unpack the multifaceted impact the pandemic has had on higher education worldwide. It adds to the growing conversation on reimagining higher education.”

—**Dr. Will Brehm**

UCL Institute of Education, UK

“This book is a highly recommended resource for higher education institution policymakers and educators around the globe.”

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- Dr. Hiep Pham, Director, Center for Research and Practice on Education, Phu Xuan University, Vietnam
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- Dr. Rajika Bhandari, Author/Advisor, STAR Scholar Network, USA
- Dr. Tasmeera Singh, Advisor, International Office, University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa
- Dr. Will Brehm, Lecturer of Education and International Development, UCL Institute of Education, UK

Editors

Joshua S. McKeown, PhD, is Associate Provost for International Education & Programs at SUNY Oswego and International Education Leadership Fellow at the University at Albany (SUNY). Under his leadership SUNY Oswego has earned national awards for international education from the American Association of State Colleges & Universities (AASCU), the Institute of International Education (IIE), Diversity Abroad, and achieved multiple top rankings in the annual Open Doors survey for education abroad enrollment. McKeown is a scholar-practitioner who authored *The First Time Effect: The Impact of Study Abroad on College Student Intellectual Development* (SUNY Press, 2009), several book chapters including *Education Abroad: Bridging Scholarship and Practice* (Routledge, 2021) and NAFSA's *Guide to Education Abroad* (NAFSA, 2014), and numerous articles and presentations worldwide including in the *Journal of Contemporary China*. He was a Fulbright-Nehru International Education Administrators recipient for India, a mentor with the IIE's Connecting with the World Myanmar program, and has served professional organizations like the Forum on Education Abroad, CAPA, and Phi Beta Delta Honor Society for International Scholars. He holds a Ph.D. and bachelor's from Syracuse University, master's from Clarkson University, and teaches in the undergraduate Global & International Studies program at SUNY Oswego and the graduate program in International Education Management & Leadership (IEML) at UAlbany. E-mail: joshua.mckeown@oswego.edu

Krishna Bista, EdD, is Vice President of the STAR Scholars Network and a Professor of Higher Education in the Department of Advanced Studies, Leadership, and Policy at Morgan State University, Maryland. Dr. Bista is the Founding Editor of the *Journal of International Students*. His research interests include comparative and international higher education issues, global student mobility, and innovative technology in teaching and learning. His recent books include *Online Teaching and Learning in Higher Education* (Routledge, w/Chan and Allen), *Global Perspectives on International Student Experiences* (Routledge), *Higher Education in Nepal* (Routledge, w/Raby and Sharma), *Rethinking Education Across Border* (Springer, w/Gaulee & Sharma), and *Inequalities in Study and Student Mobility* (Routledge, w/Kommers).

Dr. Bista serves on the editorial review boards for *Kappa Delta Pi Record*, *Teachers College Record*, *Journal of Leadership and Organizational Studies*, and *International Journal of Leadership in Education*. Dr. Bista has organized more than 70 professional development workshops on a variety of topics related to college student experience, international student/faculty mobility, internationalization and exchange programs, and cross-cultural studies; he has published 15 books, and more than 80 articles, book chapters, and review essays. He is the founding Chair of the Comparative and International Educational Society (CIES) Study Abroad and International Students SIG and the editor of the Routledge Global Student Mobility Series. Previously, Dr. Bista served as the director of Global Education at the University of Louisiana at Monroe, where he was also Chase Endowed Professor of Education in the School of Education. He holds a doctoral degree in Educational Leadership/Higher Education, a specialist degree in Community College Teaching and Administration, both from Arkansas State University, an M.S. in Postsecondary Education/Higher Education from Troy University, Alabama. E-mail: krishna.bista@morgan.edu

Roy Y. Chan, PhD, is Assistant Professor of Education & Director of the Doctorate of Education (Ed.D.) program in Leadership and Professional Practice in the Helen DeVos College of Education at Lee University. Previously, Dr. Chan served as the Director of TRIO Student Support Services (SSS), where he managed a budget of \$1.3 million funded by the U.S. Department of Education. His research interests include cross-border and transnational higher education, study abroad, global education policy, and educational philanthropy. Dr. Chan currently serves as Chair-Elect of the Comparative and International Education Society (CIES) Study Abroad and International Students (SAIS) Special Interest Group, and previously served as an advisor to the Forum on Education Abroad's Data Committee. His latest books include *Online Teaching and Learning in Higher Education during COVID-19: International Perspectives and Experiences* (Routledge, 2021), *The Future of Accessibility in International Higher Education* (IGI Global, 2017), and *Higher Education: A Worldwide Inventory of Research Centers, Academic Programs, Journals and Publications* (Lemmens Media, 2014). Dr. Chan holds a Ph.D. in History, Philosophy, and Policy in Education from Indiana University Bloomington, an M.A. in Higher Education Administration from Boston College, an M.Ed. in Comparative Higher Education from The University of Hong Kong, and a B.A. from the University of California, Irvine. E-mail: rchan@leeuniversity.edu