

2022 COVID-19 Health & Safety Report 2022

PSAC 610 Health & Safety Committee



Report

The 2022 Health & Safety Committee of PSAC 610 sent out a Survey to assess the physical and mental health and safety concerns of union members related to Western's COVID-19 policy. This survey was open from **May 26, 2022**, to **July 01, 2022**.

Response demographic information

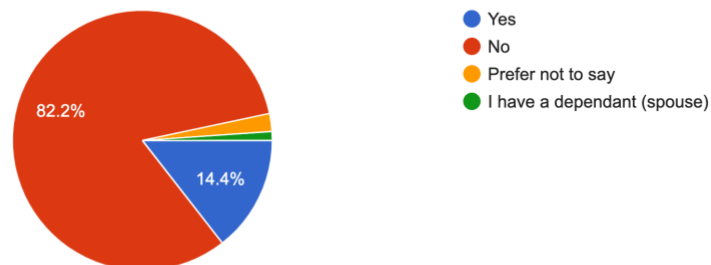
- 94 Individual responses
- Respondents are spread across 12 different faculties at Western.
- 88.3% Graduate students, 9.6% Postdocs
- 58.1% Domestic students, 40.9% International students
- 36.7% Married or Common-Law
- Age range 22-57 years old
- 58.2% Woman identifying; 34.1% Man identifying; 2.2% non-binary; 1.1% transgender

Key findings

- 14.4% of respondents are caregivers (for children, elderly family members, etc.)

9. Are you a caregiver (e.g., for children, elderly family members, etc.)?

90 responses



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- 58.5% do not feel comfortable with Western's decision to lift the mask mandate on campus

10. If Western University lifted its mask mandate, would you feel safe?

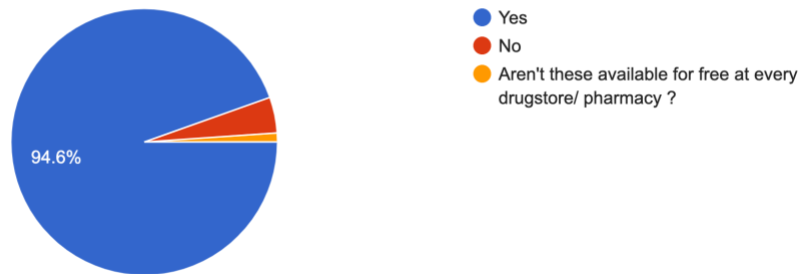
94 responses



- 94.6% would like for rapid antigen test kits to remain available for free on campus

12. Do you think rapid antigen test kits should be made available for free on campus?

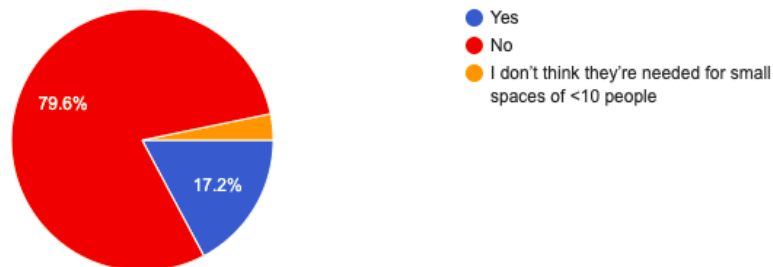
92 responses



- 17.2% have encountered difficulties related to Western's COVID-19 protocols/restrictions

13. Have you encountered any difficulties related to Western's COVID-19 protocols/restrictions?

93 responses



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- Below is a random sampling of some concerns (in anecdotal form) faced by respondents due to Western's COVID-19 policy implementation. These anecdotes were submitted anonymously.
 - o *"I got mental health problems because of aggressive implementation of policies and no accommodation provided for my personal medical conditions. I was afraid to lose a job. My work has stopped for 6 months because of quarantine and I know, that university will not add this 6 month to my contract to compensate me that. My PI isn't able to see and supervise me in person because of restrictions and it impacted my work progress."*
 - o *"I have proctored multiple exams and taught classes where there was always one or two students who would not keep their masks on despite repeated reminders. No guidance from Western on how to handle these situations."*
 - o *"Pressure to come back even though there are frequent outbreaks."*
 - o *"The closeness of large lecture halls - student illness and persistent student absence."*
 - o *"I am immunocompromised and I had to "fight" (I involved the union) to be allowed to teach online this year. It was incredibly stressful and very disappointing. I felt dehumanized and powerless in the face of large bureaucracy. The university insisted that the doctors had to write a letter insisting on isolation, but the doctors said the College of physicians had instructed them NOT to write those letters, and that it was up to the employer. HR was not helpful as they had to stick to the 'letter policy.'" I seriously considered withdrawing from my program if the situation couldn't be resolved. I still am unsure what is going to happen in September."*
 - o *"I cannot breath properly with masks on due to lungs problem and they made us wear masks even in squash courts in the recreation center."*
 - o *"I'm all for the mask and vaccine mandate but it's almost impossible to have mask on during an exercise in the rec center! That's why everyone takes it off immediately when the staff is not seen. It just does not work at all. How are you gonna do Aerobic exercises with mask on or squash with safety glasses with masks on?"*
 - o *"Lack of available testing, unclear guidelines overall, self-assessment tool is not helpful or clear on it's purpose."*
 - o *"Lack of clarity on designated eating areas. I have received conflicting information from safety ambassadors. At times, there was literally nowhere I was allowed to eat."*

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- 27.2% of respondents do not feel comfortable with eating protocols and accommodations on campus.

15. Do you feel comfortable with eating protocols and accommodations on campus?

92 responses



- 28.6% of respondents do not think Western's current COVID-19 policy is useful and appropriate.

16. Would you say Western's current COVID-19 policy is useful and appropriate?

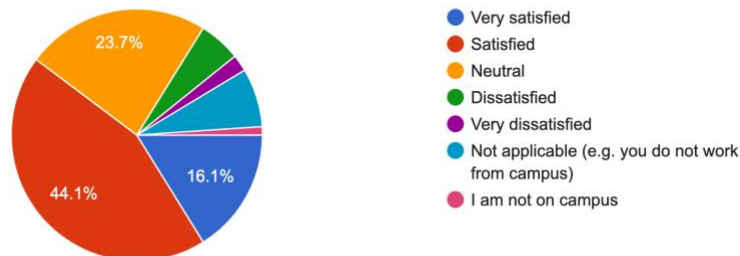
91 responses



- 60.2% of respondents are either satisfied or very satisfied with the availability of hand sanitizers on campus.

17. How satisfied are you with the availability of hand sanitizers on campus?

93 responses



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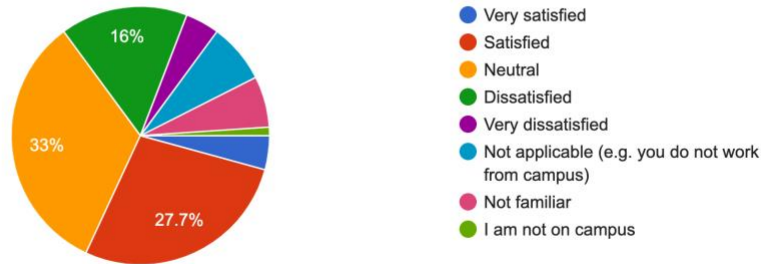
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- 20.3% of respondents are dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the mask disposal process on campus.

18. How satisfied are you with the mask disposal process on campus?

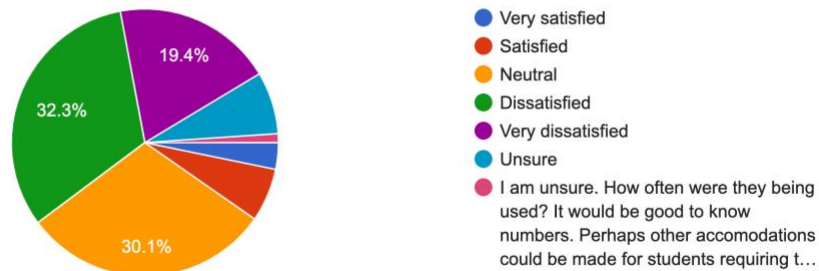
94 responses



- 51.7% are dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with Western's decision to remove PCR testing centers from campus.

19. How satisfied are you with the Western's decision to remove PCR testing centers from campus?

93 responses



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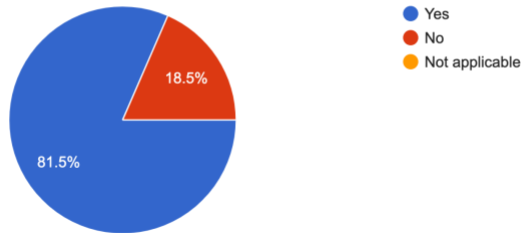
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- 81.5% had received their third dose of the COVID-19 vaccine at time of response.

20. Have you received your third dose of the COVID-19 vaccine?

92 responses



- 29.3% never fill out Western's self-assessment and absence notification survey. Only 10.9% do so every day.

21. How often do you fill out Western's self-assessment and absence notification survey?

92 responses



▲ 1/2 ▼