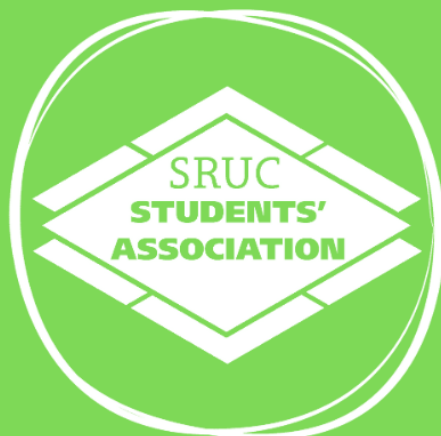


# **SPEAK WEEK**

**2020/21**



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## Introduction from SRUCSA Co-presidents

Every year, SRUCSA asks SRUC students and learners two questions – *what do you love about SRUC?* and *what would you change if you were in charge?* The answers these two questions can create so much change.

For example, your Speak Week comments told us that something similar to last year's 'Help not Hinder' policy was needed for this academic year. As a result, SRUC made changes to its Mitigating Circumstances policy and we are working with SRUC to find out what further mitigating measures can be put in place for the rest of this Academic Year. You also told us that having too many lecturing platforms was unhelpful and confusing. SRUC are now moving towards the use of one platform, Kaltura.

Speak Week provides you the opportunity to use your Student Voice and make the changes important to you and your fellow students. At SRUCSA, it gives us so much pride to be able to empower students and help to facilitate change.

As a students' association, we talk a lot about how important it is that we "close the feedback loop" and encourage SRUC teaching staff to do so. As a result, this year we have added a section to consolidate and update where we are at with the previous Speak Week. Our last Speak Week was our one-off special – the COVID-19 edition. At the end of this report, you can find a section which has details of the recommendations that SRUCSA last took to SRUC, the actions SRUC said they would do, and an update on those actions. We also call for SRUC to provide further updates on these areas.

Finally, we would like to say a huge thank you. Firstly, to those who continue to take part in Speak Week (welcome to those who are experiencing it for the first time!) - Speak Week simply would not happen without you. Secondly, thank you to SRUC for considering the changes from our previous Speak Week and for acting on the suggested recommendations – we are grateful to be part of an institution which values the voices of our students.

*Cara, Kevin, and Amy*

SRUCSA Co-Presidents 2020/2021

## Headlines

Under normal circumstances we stand in corridors and hand out Speak Week cards to students. This was not possible this time. So, we sent out over 3000 physical cards to student home addresses with freepost return envelopes to enable them to give anonymous feedback about SRUC and their studies. Responses were fewer than normal; we received 90 response in our online survey and 40 returned by post. But all the responses we got are valuable and contained 502 individual comments.

Learning and teaching was the most popular area for comment in this year's results, gathering over 40% of all comments. Students love the rich content that has been provided for them online (8.5% of comments) and there are fantastic examples of great teaching practice, with many staff delivering engaging lessons (3.9% of comments).

Unfortunately, this has not been universal, with 'I would change course delivery' netting 6.9% of total comments. Although some of this sentiment is related to the lack of face-to-face teaching, there is also a need to continue improving online delivery to ensure a uniform learning experience. Students would also like to see improvements to the relevance of individual modules. They see their course as a step on the way to a career in a sector they are passionate about and are frustrated by outdated content or attitudes.

We've seen a big shift in attitudes towards Moodle in this year's results. Historically we've received many negative comments about Moodle, the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) used at SRUC; and were thrilled last summer when SRUC carried out an overhaul of the VLE, created dedicated resources, and provided protected time for staff development. Although not every comment is positive, the responses we've received this year show that the effort has made a real difference.

Students expressed frustration at the continued use of the term 'blended learning' when many cohorts are effectively fully online. This is an area where, with only a few months of the academic year remaining, SRUC may wish to reconsider the use of the term 'blended learning'. We recognise this is a difficult area of work while so much is still uncertain, and SRUCSA will be happy to continue working closely with the College on this topic.

Praise for staff is always a nice read during Speak Week, and this year is no exception. You can read a selection of heart-warming testimonials in this report. It has been a difficult year for everyone, so it is good to hear some lovely feedback from our learners about staff who have gone above-and-beyond. This report is anonymous, but don't forget that students will have the opportunity to nominate individual staff for SRUCSA Awards later in the year.

Unfortunately, we received comments from students who are struggling with balancing study with poor mental health. The student mental health crisis is a sector-wide and societal issue, and these results are clear evidence that our students are also affected. Although efforts have been made to support mental wellbeing at SRUC, the comments received suggest some students are living with mental illness without proper support. In our recommendations, we ask SRUC to commit with us to reviewing the experiences and support of students living with mental illness and mental health conditions.

We also call on SRUC to update us on progress of recommendations from our previous Speak Week report (COVID-19 edition - see Appendix). This will allow us to update the student body on progress and highlight how their participation in Speak Week helps generate change for the better.

### Speak Week 2020 results

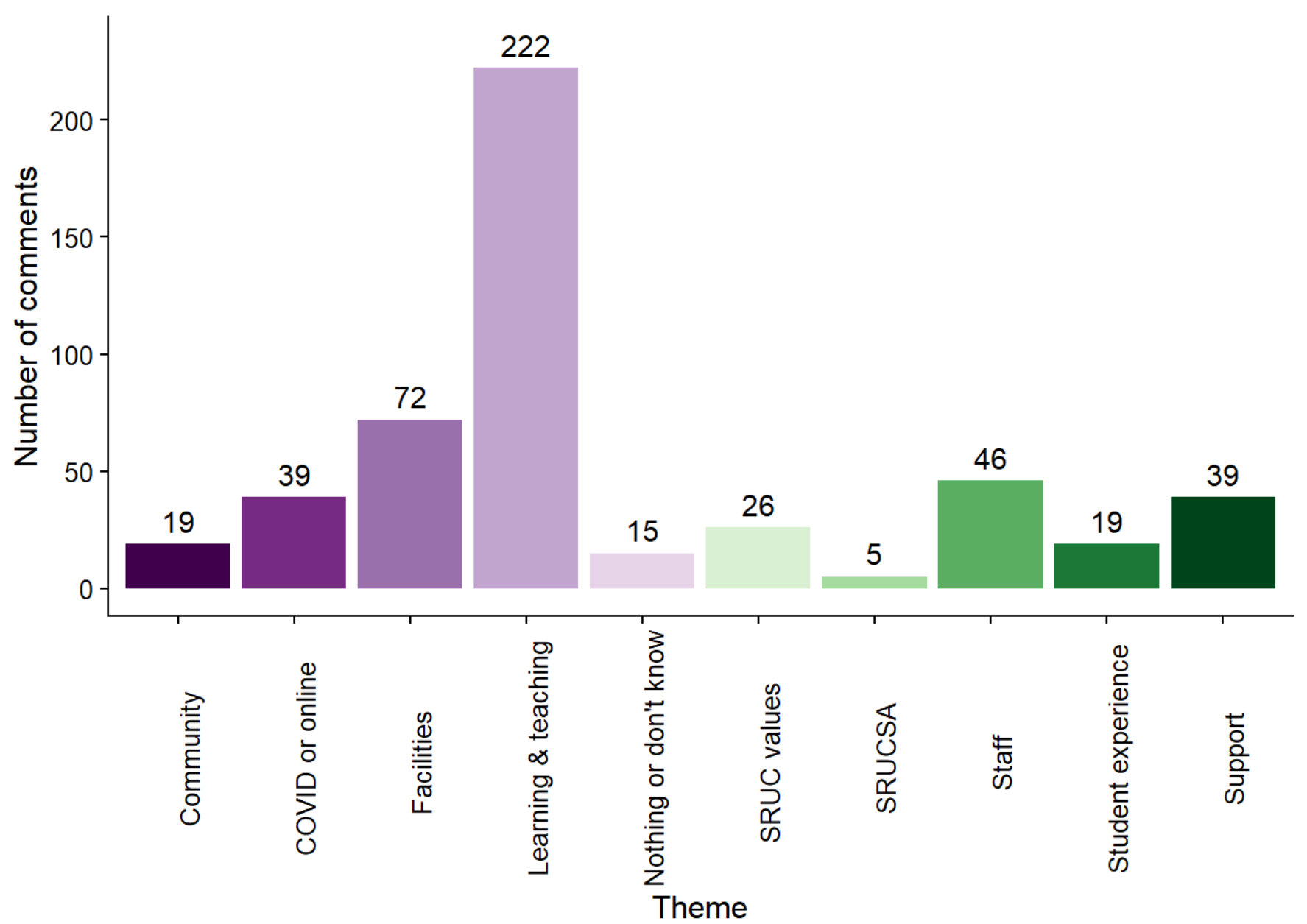


Figure 1 - Comments received by theme

## What we did

We have all lived through exceptional circumstances this year and reaching students for Speak Week was more challenging than usual. Our normal system of handing out cards in corridors would not work. We required an approach to allow students to respond with their feedback with ease from home, and in a COVID-safe manner.

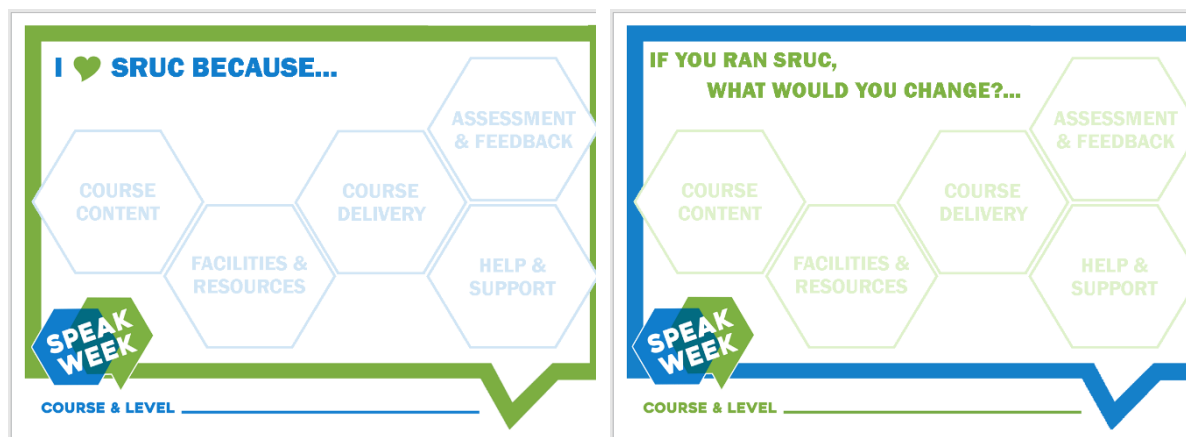


Figure 2 - Speak Week card design

All SRUC learners will have received teaching online this year, making screen fatigue and bombardment with online content a challenge for many and for some near impossible. Because of this, an email survey can be easily missed or dismissed. Also, our online surveys received fewer responses before the pandemic. We chose to use both an online and a paper-based approach to maximise the opportunity for students to take part. We used a postal services partner to send Speak Week cards to students (shown in fig. 2), and an online survey sent to all students via their student email address. The online survey opened on the same day the posted cards were due to arrive on the 23rd of November, closing on the 29<sup>th</sup>.

From our past surveys we kept the same two simple questions: 'I love SRUC because...' and 'If I were in charge of SRUC I would change...'.

This combined approach has allowed us to gather student opinion on their learning during this challenging time, in a way that suits them best.

We treat every comment from the students individually, splitting each response into a series of comments. Comments received in the post were written up into digital format and combined with online responses for processing.

The comments were read and sorted manually into themes using a Qualitative Data Analysis (QDA) approach and the NVivo 12 software. Some of the themes were expected but the process was not limited to these, and some unexpected themes were found.

## What you told us

The following key themes arose from the analysis:

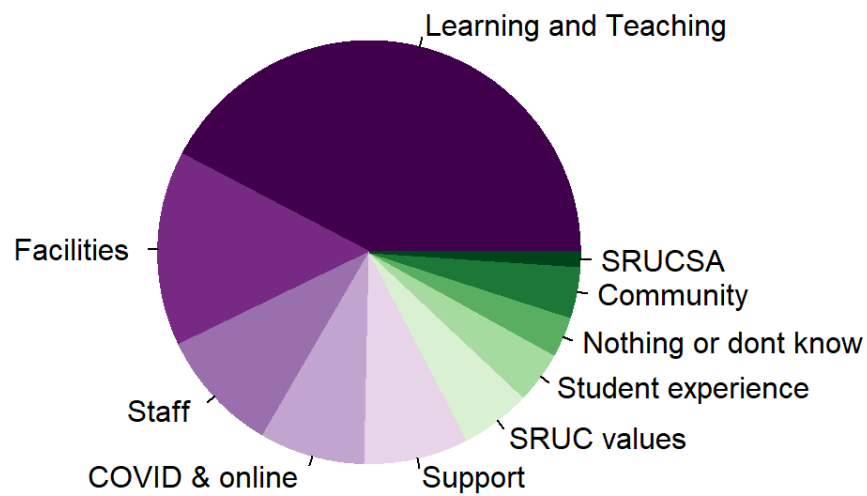


Figure 3 - Pie chart showing proportion of comments per area

Table 1 - Percentage of comments per area

<b>Theme</b>	<b>% of comments</b>	<b>Theme</b>	<b>% of comments</b>
Learning and Teaching	41.7	Support	7.9
Facilities	14.6	SRUC values	5.3
Staff	9.3	Student experience	3.9
COVID & online	7.9		

## Learning and Teaching (41.7%)

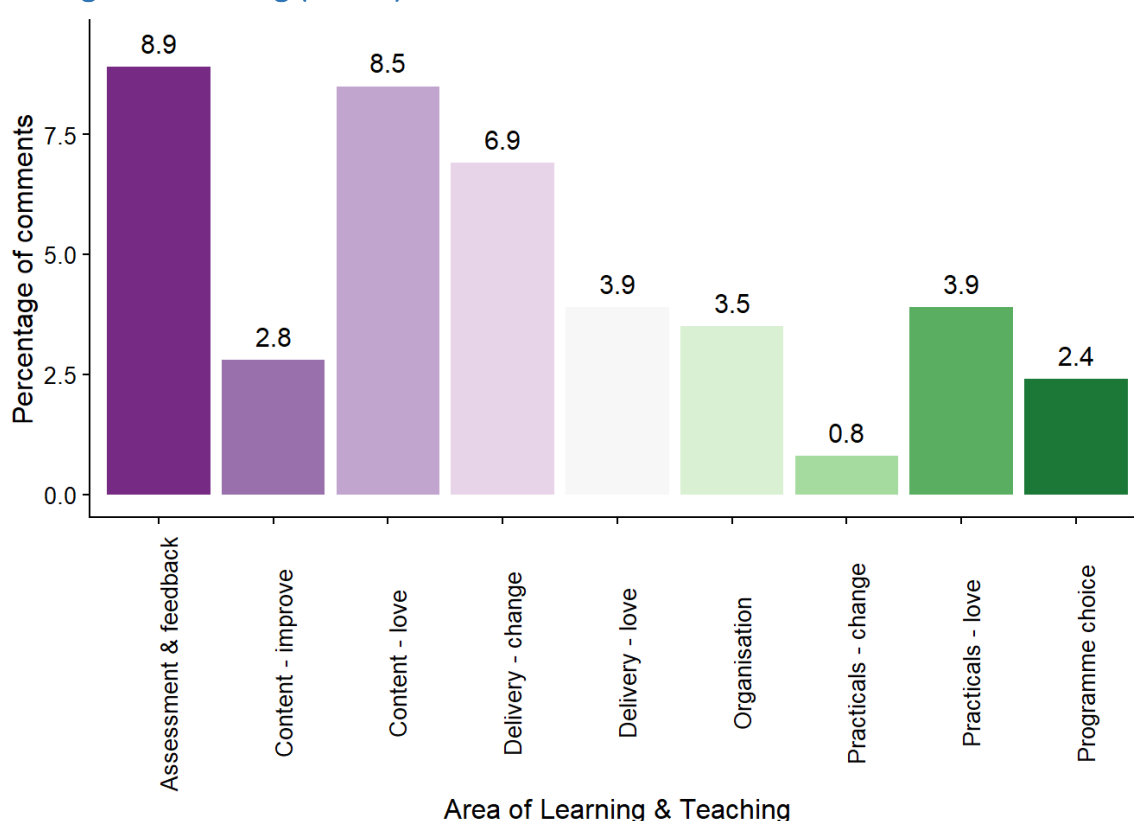


Figure 4 - Percentage of comments per area in Learning & Teaching theme

We got more comments from students on the theme of learning and teaching than any other. Over 40% of all comments related to this topic. We sorted this theme again into sub-themes, some of these were prompts on the survey cards (course content, course delivery, assessment and feedback). Some course related themes came through unprompted (e.g., practical lessons). In addition, comments relating to online learning/blended delivery were sorted here as well as in the COVID section. The difference between course delivery and online learning in the context of this survey is subtle. Where a comment mentions online delivery but underlines a teaching practice (positive or negative) this has been sorted as course delivery.

Table 2 - Summary of percentages in Learning & Teaching theme

Theme	% of comments	Theme	% of comments
Course content – improve	2.8	Assessment & feedback	8.9
Course content – love	8.5	Practical – change	0.8
Course delivery – change	6.9	Practical – love	3.9
Course delivery – love	3.9	Programme choice	2.4
Course organisation	3.5		



## Content (15.4%)

Course content was the largest area of concern for students, with 11.4% of total comments. These were in majority positive comments (8.5% versus 2.8% negative). Students emphasised enjoyment of the course content, describing it as 'interesting', 'fun', and similar positive sentiment:



*'I am doing a course I really love'*

Most of the 'change' comments received were related to course content design and topics that students felt should or should not be covered. This reflects learner's interest in their course area and making sure that their studies are relevant to current discussion and practice in their future career areas. Examples include:



*'Horticultural Practices has to be environmentally aware + not anti-environmental protections law. Sustainability is key in education especially at SRUC'*

*'More in-depth training & electrics (particularly as this will only increase on new vehicles'*



*'Soil science needs to be earlier in course/ a base for all other learning'*

SRUCSA will always advocate for student involvement in course content design and planning. Industry focused education is one of SRUC's strong points. It is good to remember that many students are already working in their chosen industry and authentic engagement with them will enhance courses for current and future cohorts. Continued engagement with relevant industry bodies and businesses on current practice and future needs is also essential to ensure teaching is relevant and up to date.

## Delivery (10.8%)

Course delivery came only slightly behind course content, with 10.8% of all comments received. There were more negative comments received than positive (6.9% vs 3.9% respectively). Students commenting on delivery emphasised good practice and praised staff and other students for making the best of the situation.



*'The staff and fellow students have had to adapt, very quickly, to new teaching methods and procedures - the help available from staff, SRUCSA and classmates has been excellent'.*

A number of these responses discuss delivery of online learning, and the aspects raised often included elements of practice that can also be found in the physical classroom. Examples include clarity of delivery and pacing of lessons.



*'The staff during online classes have been so welcoming and helpful.'*

*'Classes can be accessed at any time to look back over, it means the teaching is really flexible and they always put up so much extra - relevant videos and articles that are great.'*



Although it is heartening to see positive feedback on online delivery, reflecting the effort put into staff training, the experience seems to be far from the normal student experience. 'I would change' comments in this category speak of an unsatisfactory learning experience:



*'Some classes just read off the screens which can be boring'*

*'Give time regularly for students to ask Qs throughout + especially at the end of lectures. Tutorials are a must for online learning. Please organise these.'*



*'Self-directed study for 50% of horti practices is not recommended especially if this hasn't even been made available. This content is too difficult for doing alone.'*

Comments such as these suggest that there is continued work to be done on supporting and training staff to provide engaging online delivery. Promoting or sharing good practice across SRUC and within teams/Boards of Studies should also continue to be prioritised. We also recommend that teaching teams gather feedback from their own student cohorts, specifically focusing on delivery. This could help staff 'drill down' into any problems area or modules, such as in the examples above. Our data reveals the broad strokes but engaging with course & year cohorts on this area will bear the most fruit.

It was expected that there would be comments reflecting a desire to move to in-person classes. The view from students in this area is mixed. Some students comment on their satisfaction with delivery, considering the situation around COVID-19. Others are dissatisfied and would rather have physical classes. It is worth bearing in mind that these responses were received before the latest lockdown/movement restriction announcements around Christmas.

Within the 'course delivery – change' area respondents comment on the specific difficulties they have faced. It is worth keeping in mind that this year has been difficult for all, and that some

students rightly will feel disappointed despite everyone's best efforts. Staying sensitive and supportive is important.



*'On the run up to the start of term, I received information via email which stated that the learning at SRUC would be blended. The emails (and the SRUC website) detailed that the outdoor nature of the SRUC and small class sizes meant that the SRUC was well suited to the current situation. So, with that in mind, I handed in my notice [...] and started packing up to move into halls for the start of term. A week before the move, I received confirmation that most/all the course would be held online. Had I known this earlier, my decision to move might have been different.'*

Some respondents expressed frustration at the continued use of the term 'blended learning', when many cohorts are effectively fully online. This is an area where, with only a few months of the academic year remaining, SRUC may wish to reconsider the use of the term 'blended learning'. We recognise this is a difficult area of work while so much is still uncertain, and SRUCSA will be happy to continue working closely with the College on this topic.

### Organisation (3.5%)

Course organisation was a novel theme that arose, and contained negative sentiments around advance notice of lectures or pre-learning, and disorganisation of materials on Moodle:



*'Give more notice for pre-learning. We sometimes had 2 classes on a Tuesday and only found out about the pre-learning on the Monday and sometimes there was a lot of it.'*

Most of the comments in this theme came from students studying online Distance MSc courses, rather than on-campus courses that have moved to online delivery. These comments suggest these learners are facing further challenges due to problems with organisation. We suggest SRUC investigate how these programmes have been affected this academic year, and support programme teams to improve organisation.



*'I am doing an online course and it is poorly run, disorganised, we are not given clear instructions on assignments, lecture dates are never entered onto the course calendars'*

*'I do have to point out how disorganised this course is. The students spend the majority of the time confused about when deadlines + lectures are. I know some students have dropped out because of this.'*





*'APP [Agricultural Professional Practice] have been left with no course lead. Recruitment should start before staff leave.'*

*'Not having a course leader has created a lot of issues for support where students have relied on each other to work through issues. A course tutor needs to introduce themselves + offer support to all students that they support.'*



### Practical (4.7%)

SRUC Students love hands-on study, working with animals, being outdoors, and working with real world situations. Students referenced practical lessons/delivery specifically in just under 5% of comments. These were mostly positive (3.9% vs 0.8% negative). Even during this difficult academic year, some students have been able to access practical lessons. From the comments received, this would largely appear to be students working with animals, an area where hands-on experience is often required in the workplace.



*'There is a good chance for you to interact with all the animals'*

*'It's very practical'*



A few comments requested more practical classes, this is mentioned by students each year in Speak Week and other feedback mechanisms. This year students showed understanding of the situation limiting access to some practical classes:



*'More time in the practical unit (however I know this is due to COVID and is impossible to do at this time)'*

*'As this is my first year at SRUC and it comes at the same time as the COVID-19 pandemic I don't know what a normal year at SRUC consists of. I'm a big believer in practical aspects of learning but I do understand that without COVID students would receive a lot more practical learning.'*



## Assessment and Feedback (8.9%)

This area stands for 8.9% of responses in total. Most of these were 'change' comments covering a range of issues and suggestions. We recognise that assessment and feedback is an area of ongoing work, and SRUCSA engages with SRUC regularly on this topic. Some students have faced problems with accessing information on assessments:



*'Module + assessment summaries are often out of date. So dates and summaries are incorrect'*

*'Need a more unified system and all deadlines to be given clearly and all in one same place!'*



*'Feedback should be via Turnitin, can't always access (links not working).'*

The number and spread of assessments across the semester were also a concern, as was the speed at which feedback was received. It is disappointing that we continue to receive complaints of slow or late feedback, despite the efforts and processes put in place by the College. As these data are too generic to pinpoint specific modules that may be problematic, SRUCSA will continue to prompt students for late feedback reports at upcoming Student Panels. These will then be reported to the relevant SRUC departments.

*'Coursework feedback is slow to be returned but there are a lot of students so that is understandable bit it's hard to then judge for later assessments.'*



*'Should be given date for when we we'll receive results. As a 1st year it would have been helpful to get 1st assignment back before the 2nd one so I've get an idea of the level expected.'*

*'Spread out assessments more throughout module.'*



We believe students have a right to privacy when it comes to their assessments and results. Although this was an isolated comment it is important to remind staff that follow-up on work (outstanding or otherwise) should be done via private means, such as through email:



*'Chase-up of outstanding work direct to student, not on Facebook*

The positive comments were few but praised good practice:

*'Feedback is always very good'*



*'Moved dates to [help us] manage workload'*

### COVID (4.5%)

As expected, most of the negative comments received related to COVID-19 speak of frustration at the restrictions put in place. As we approach a year of restrictions in the UK, these feelings are understandable.

*More options for in person teaching/trips out. I am very aware we are in the middle of a pandemic but my class is 16 people and most have their own cars to reach sites. I can feel myself losing motivation near the end of term and I think if we had a couple more in person sessions then that would boost morale and motivation a lot*



However, these comments were a minority, with 2/3rds of comments referencing 'COVID-19' with either a neutral or positive sentiment. Positive comments tended to focus on good COVID-safe measures and a feeling of making the best of the situation.



*It leads by example. During Covid SRUC has been innovative and forward thinking to avoid unnecessary stress to students. SRUC is way ahead of other Colleges and Universities and they would benefit from following SRUCs example.*

*It has given me a focus and something positive to work towards during this difficult time.*



*I think everyone involved has done a really great job changing the course to fit around Covid. The best idea was to work from home as much as possible. I can't think of anything I would change*

*They are taking Covid seriously and have put into place good hygiene practices to keep everyone safe.*



Neutral comments expressed understanding for the situation, even when learners would like to be on campus:



*It's a shame we can't come to college due to COVID 19 but maybe one day we can come to college.*

*This is a hard question to answer as it has been such a strange year. I would have liked more practical days out but I realise this is circumstantial and nothing to do with the SRUC.*



### Online learning (3.4%)

Comments were recorded as related to 'online learning' when they discussed specific advantages of, or difficulties engaging with or accessing online learning, rather than teaching practice. As good teaching practice is essential to both in person and online courses, comments on this topic were classified in 'course delivery'.

This was an area where opinion was clearly split. Half of comments spoke of online teaching allowing them to manage other commitments, such as work or home education of children:



*'Going forward continue with possibility to study online, allows flexibility for mature students.'*

Students who spoke negatively of online learning largely spoke of difficulties concentrating at home, accessing materials, or technical problems:



*'This year in particular I'm struggling to focus with all online but I know that's nothing you can really change!'*

*'I have struggled understanding and accessing some of the info.'*



*'Some lecturer's poor internet connection makes them very hard to understand.'*

## Facilities (14.6%)

Table 3 - Summary of percentages in Facilities theme

Theme	% of comments	Theme	% of comments
Facilities – accommodation	0.8	Facilities – IT	3.0
Facilities – change	3.0	Facilities – library	0.8
Facilities - course specific resources	2.8	Facilities – love	4.1

Comments about facilities were evenly spread across a few areas, apart from accommodation and libraries that received few comments. 'Change' responses requested more outdoor spaces, particularly eating areas. This is likely a response to changes to indoor use due to COVID. The responses relating to course specific resources were overwhelmingly requests for larger Animal Care Units, accompanied by a wider range of species. The 'love' comments held general praise for available facilities, resources, and a pleasant campus environment.

This year the comments on IT, specifically Moodle, have seen a shift. In previous years students often felt negative about Moodle and SRUC has put significant resources into redeveloping the VLE and staff training. The responses are mostly positive, for example:



*'Moodle is great'*

*'All the unit information is in one place that is easy to access'*







*'Moodle. Tutors use this brilliantly'*

*'Good resources, Moodle has plenty of information, along with textbooks that are given'*



There were still some negative comments, and they reflect continued training needs for some staff and perhaps also for students:



*'Moodle, because although it has been greatly improved from last year, it seems to still confuse several lecturers. Moodle is only as strong as its weakest link'*

*'Develop/improve Moodle, it's not easy to navigate. New students need more training on it'*



This is a very encouraging change, and reflects the hard work of IDS, the Digital Learning Team, and teaching staff across the College. It is still important to remember that fully digital systems can remain difficult to access for some, and that continued training and support will be needed to continue this upward trend.

### Staff (9.3%)

Most of the comments about staff were positive, and largely reflected the passion for the subject and expertise that staff transmit to students. There was also overlap in comments about staff and course delivery. There were references to help and support from teaching staff, and where this was clear comments have been placed here rather than in 'support'. Overall, students who mentioned staff spoke of their expertise and ability to make content engaging and interesting. It is also clear that staff are going 'above and beyond' during this time to help students, even with technical difficulties.



*'The lecturers are passionate about what they teach'*

*'The tutors are nice, good information, fun activities'*





*'Good amount of support from tutors and lecturers.'*

*'The staff is what makes it a good experience'*



*'The lectures really try to understand every individual's needs and they are very helpful.'*

*'The way they put their heart and soul into their teachings'*



Very few negative comments about staff were received:



*'I would invest more in the staff, making sure they work in their expert area and not spread thin to cover other areas they have no experience in. I've seen a reduction in staff with lecturers being forced to cover multiple subjects. This can be confusing to the students and a sense of dilution of education. I'd like to see more 'experts in their fields' employed.'*

### SRUC values (5.3%)

Comments in this theme reflect the ideals and culture that SRUC strives to promote. Largely these were all positive, apart from communication. Communication had a mix of sentiment, with some respondents feeling that they had received good communication, while other found communications unsatisfactory:



*'Organization!! And communication. It's really not great...'*

*'I would have more transparency. Staff are secretive'*



Communication is an area that students have often commented on, such as during the COVID-19 Speak Week. The small percentage of comments here may reflect the efforts put into improving communication over the last year.

We have included comments from the other areas here as we feel they reflect great examples of the power of education and SRUC culture.



*'The SRUC has given me the opportunity to restart my life and take it in a direction I am happy with. This course has allowed me to start actively working towards my goals again, in an environment where I can give it my all. Thank you.'*

*'...innovative, feel surrounded by knowledge'*



*'Access to experts in the field'*

*'It's given me the confidence to believe I can study as a mature student and strive for a better future'*



*'They care about their students'*

### Student experience (3.9%)

We have included Student Experience as a theme although it only being a small percentage of comments. Most of the comments classified here reflect negative experiences lived by students during this academic year. Some of them specifically reference difficulties related to mental health and feelings of isolation. To us, these are important even if they affect small numbers, or even one student:



*'I would make [SRUC] more aware of mental health. I have severe anxiety and have reached out to lecturers about not understanding things and was met with rude replies that made me not want to reach out again.'*

*'I'm not sure I do like SRUC. I choose this university because of the closeness of students and how no one was ever ignored or left out. Since the start of the year, I have been ignored, kicked out of groups and I've made no friends. I have not enjoyed anything. It's made me more depressed than I was.'*



*'Increase awareness of invisible disabilities.'*

*'I would make a policy that we all have to be treated with respect and like adults'*



*'They don't provide the mental health support that so many students need'*

*'I miss more help and support and more contact with peers [...] that would help a lot it those times when we feel very isolated'*



*'I've not made any friends. No one speaks to me. I have been ignored and left out since the second week'*

Due to the survey being optionally anonymous we can't link these comments to a student or even to a course or campus. We recommend carrying out a comprehensive review of the experience and support of learners living with mental illness while studying at SRUC. We expect SRUC to continue to check in with students who do not engage and take time to promote support services within SRUC and in the wider community. In addition, SRUCSA will continue to promote mental health support services and commit to collaborating with SRUC on a review.

### Support (7.9%)

Among the comments in this area, students focussed on availability of support staff, and subject specific support.

*'[have] basic information that each specialises in'*





*'Support team are fab, just not enough of, therefore I'd recruit more ASN tutors'*

There were also individually worrying comments. Although it should be noted that it is not clear what staff members are being referred to in these comments, they have been classified here as they mention a support need:

*'Support for disabled students and the approach staff take towards the students'*



*'Some of the support from people isn't the best/they aren't very happy to help'*

Two thirds of comments about support (5.5% overall) were positive:

*'Support is great, I would've left if it wasn't for them'*



*'Support staff appears well available online, sure it's different, but good that they are still there'*

There were too few responses with campus information to find any meaningful links, but we would encourage SRUC to ensure work on equalising support provision across all campuses is progressing.

## Recommendations

### SRUCSA will...

1. Prioritise mental health, we will take steps to understand the experiences of our members who live with mental illness. We will push SRUC to offer better support for those students as well as continuing to support the mental wellbeing of all.
2. Monitor learner experiences of assessment and feedback through Student Panels and report any courses/modules that are having issues to the appropriate SRUC department.
3. Train our class rep to be experts in learning and give them the skills needed to be excellent representatives of their class. We will undertake a review of our class rep system and make changes where our reps tell us we should.

### SRUC Should...

1. Commit to a review of our support for students who live with mental illness. This is in addition to supporting the mental wellbeing of all students. This could be achieved by:
  - 1.1. Working with SRUCSA and the student body on a **Student Partnership Agreement (SPA) project** on the topic of students living with mental illness & mental health conditions.
  - 1.2. **Reviewing the Student Mental Health Agreement (SMHA)** with SRUCSA to ensure there is specific inclusion of mental illness & mental health conditions, and high-level monitoring of the Agreement.
2. Share best practice in teaching widely both within teams and across the College.
3. Continue to provide support and training that is accessible to all staff to help raise the standard of delivery across SRUC. This includes both access to training materials and **protected time**, allowing staff to engage fully.
4. Investigate the experiences of learners on 100% online courses during the pandemic.
5. Improve the learner voice in curriculum design and review. This includes engaging with students throughout the year to gain feedback on content and discuss ideas or proposed changes with them. This can be achieved through structured discussions at Student Liaison Groups (SLGs), informal in-class discussions, and through student representation on Boards of Studies.
6. Review the use of the term 'blended learning' over the rest of the academic year.
7. **Provide an update to SRUCSA** on the actions taken from Speak Week Covid-19 Edition recommendations (summarised in Appendix 1).

## Appendix 1 - Speak Week Covid-19 Edition Update

SRUCSA Recommended	SRUC's Intended Actions	Progress
1. Revised version of "Help Not Hinder"	<p>Registry were tasked with revising and making the policy fit for purpose for AY20/21 during the pandemic.</p> <p>"This will be an additional policy in operation only during the pandemic. The usual extenuating circumstances policy will also be in place and continues to be the main reference point in non-pandemic related circumstances."</p>	<p>The Mitigating Circumstances policy was revised to include shielding requirements in line with current government guidelines/local lockdown/isolation.</p> <p>Need for evidence removed from the policy (e.g., doctors note).</p>
2. Improving communications and monitoring gaps	<p>"The Academic Division are working with our Marketing and Communications team to develop a protocol for and clear guidance about communication."</p>	<p>Early in the pandemic a weekly email went out to students. Further updates have been going out from senior management to students.</p> <p>Communication has been increased in January 2020 due to further lockdown measures.</p>
3. Regular student check-ins	<p>"Our Faculty Teams are currently working on a Contact and Non-Engagement code of practice. It was clear that some teams did this really well, and this code will ensure a SRUC-wide approach to this."</p>	
4. Consistency in online platforms used	<p>"The Learning and Teaching 2020/21 Working Group have now developed a "Use of Teaching Platforms" guide which highlights which platforms are best used for which activities, aiming for consistency in use. This is being disseminated across SRUC this week and will be re-disseminated at the start of the academic year."</p>	<p>Student Feedback showed that a variety of online platforms were being used.</p> <p>Kaltura has been informally chosen as the platform of choice. There are plans to make teaching rooms "Kaltura ready" and install webcams, mics etc over summer 2021 (From ELT briefing 27 Jan).</p> <p>Big Blue Button is being phased out by the end of June.</p>
5. Process to identify students requiring digital assistance	<p>"Learning and Teaching 2020/21 Working Group have created a form to be completed by students to identify – and then work to solve – hardware/connectivity needs. This form has been successfully piloted with our Apprentices and will be sent out to all students as part of the</p>	<p>Students were asked to fill in a form during induction and enrolment to identify hardware needs.</p>

	<p>enrolment/induction process. We have invested in laptops for loan purposes to help plug gaps.”</p>	<p>Lapsafes launched and put on campus November 2020.</p>
<p>6. Recording of on-campus lectures</p>	<p>“Information and Digital Services Team and Digital Learning Team are in the process of reviewing two lecture recording companies – Panopto and Kaltura. Once reviewed, we will invest in lecture recording software to enable recording of in-person lectures once everyone returns to campus. It is likely that in 2020/21 this software will be used in two ways: i) when necessary, to account for localised lockdowns and to ensure those students unable to come to campus once open can access their learning ii) by select programme teams as a pilot. By piloting the software, this will enable us to ensure that we can roll it out across SRUC in a way that works best for all our students and staff.”</p>	<p>Lecture recording is much more common. SRUC has chosen Kaltura. “By default, virtual classes should be recorded. Exceptions might include for legal / ethical / privacy reasons and/or because the teaching approaches are not suitable for recording, such as those with a high degree of interactivity. In these instances, it might be more appropriate to pause the parts of the virtual class not to be recorded.”</p>