

# SFU Student Participation in a Distance Course during COVID-19

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## Presentation Description:

Communication students were surveyed to learn more about their experience during the pandemic and what factors affected their participation in the new videoconferencing distance mode of course delivery. Survey findings will help to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 on education and prepare students for future disruptions to their learning.

## Abstract:

The COVID-19 pandemic has had significant effects on education worldwide. Millions of students now rely on videoconferencing technology to continue their education remotely during lockdowns across the world. In the Spring 2021 semester, students in SFU's School of Communication were surveyed to learn more about their experience during the pandemic and what factors affected their participation in the new videoconferencing mode of course delivery. As distance course delivery is a mediated form of communication that students have had to adapt to, students need additional resources in order to participate at the same level as they did in traditional face-to-face classes. Survey results showed that students' resource quality, expertise with videoconferencing, and sense of social presence can impact their capacity to participate in distance classes that use videoconferencing as the mode of course delivery. It is vitally important for distance learning strategies to be well-thought out and tested against the real student experience. The findings from this study are especially valuable because they provide perspectives and insight into the effects of COVID-19 on education directly from students. The more we can find out about student experiences during the crisis, the better we can mitigate the negative impacts of COVID-19 on education and prepare students for future disruptions to their learning.