

A deep dive into the myth of online learning inferiority: Comparison of pre-pandemic and pandemic cohorts

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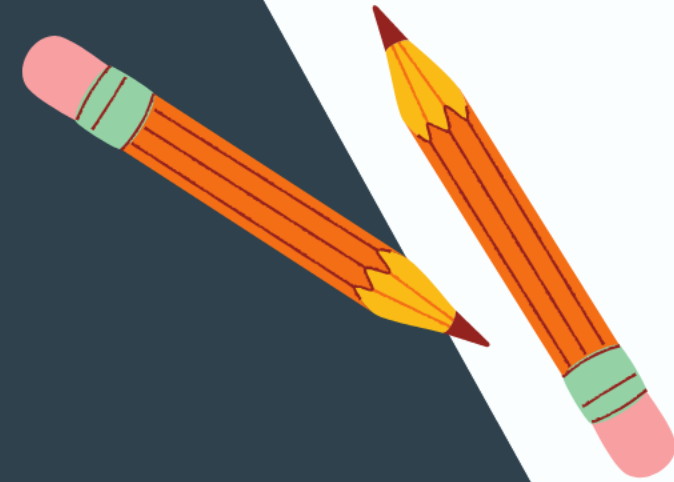
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STUDENT PROFILE PRIOR TO THE PANDEMIC (SECOND SEM 2019-2020)...

- Students attend university in person.
- Continuing students from batches 2019, 2018, 2017 (also some from batches 2016, 2015, 2014 and earlier)
- Older than 23 years old.
- Usually, have a regular study load of 18 units per semester.
- Need to do library search on materials to be studied
- Considered millennial (1981-1996- ages 23 to 38 in 2019)



STUDENT PROFILE DURING THE PANDEMIC (1ST SEM 2020-2021)

- 18-19 years old
- Just completed senior high school through online learning (last half of the year)
- Attended university through remote teaching and learning
- Carries a regular study load of 12-23 units
- Provided with modules, links, SAQs, indicative dates for synchronous sessions
- Recorded lectures made available for those who were not able to attend (online)
- Belong to Gen Z (born from 1997 onward) labelled to be the most well-educated generation so far



THE SITUATIONER

- Teaching most development communication courses require face to face interactions with stakeholders.
- All devcom courses were offered online and offline (through the course packs).
- The Academic Field Instruction closely coordinates with partner agencies and conduct activities online.
- No in person student activities was allowed regardless of the nature of subject except thesis conduct which is an agreement between the student and the adviser.



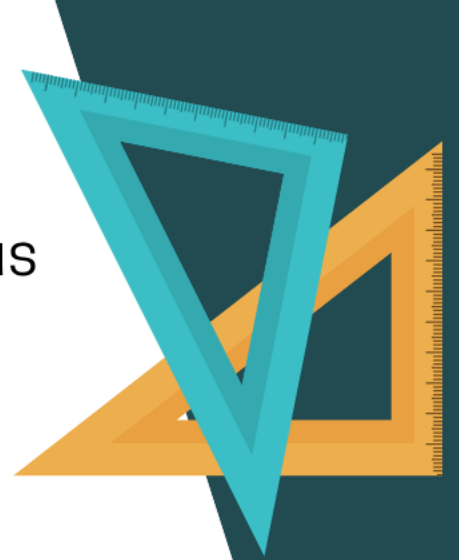
THE SITUATIONER

- Google Classroom and MOODLE were used as LMS. For synchronous sessions, conferencing tools like zoom as official platform which the university subscribed to.
- Asynchronously, chats via FB messenger or other instant messaging apps were employed along with our official email accounts.
- While instant messaging apps were prohibited for use, this was employed for easy access and response to communicate urgent announcements and changes in schedule or deadlines that may have not been part of the original learning sequence.
- Instructional materials were not to be circulated using IMs but limited to the LMS or official email accounts of students.



THE SITUATIONER

- Since March 2020, the UP system had a battery of webinars on various topics to prepare teachers before migrating to remote teaching and learning.
- Suffice to say, teachers had a crashed course on RTL barely a few months before the first semester started.
- Both teachers and continuing regular students were groping toward embracing a new teaching and learning pedagogy.
- While the transition was difficult for teachers, it was more cumbersome for students.
- However, most incoming freshmen already experienced online learning during their senior high schools. Hence, they were familiar to the “new” teaching and learning style that they will undertake in UPLB.



THE SITUATIONER

- As per recommendation from the UP System in August 2021, all CUs are encouraged to restructure the program by allowing students to enroll between 12-15 units per semester and nine units during the midyear to avoid delays in the graduation of students.
- Accommodating all constraints including the courses that continuing students should take, the College came up with a four-year redesign to spread out allocation of the 145-unit BSDC curriculum.





- Courses were redesigned based on preparation for course delivery, course outline / lesson, etc (ex. how much percentage of the content had to be shelved?), and assessment plans as presented in Table 3.
- Overall, contents of all courses remained the same whether these be through online or offline delivery modes.

- Assessments, however, were likewise adjusted to accommodate various circumstances that may have hampered the teaching-learning process.
- An undergraduate done by a BSDC student showed that course materials were easy to understand and follow.
- Faculty in-charge was also accommodating and easy to communicate with as well as their peers. The problem lies on the mindset of the pre-pandemic students who migrated to remote learning.





- Students with poor or no good Internet access were provided course packs either both in hard copy or flash disks or both.
- A readiness survey was rolled out to determine the students who needed the offline assistance as basis on what set of reading materials shall be sent.
- Materials were sent through courier, whichever is nearest to the student in case they live in far flung areas.

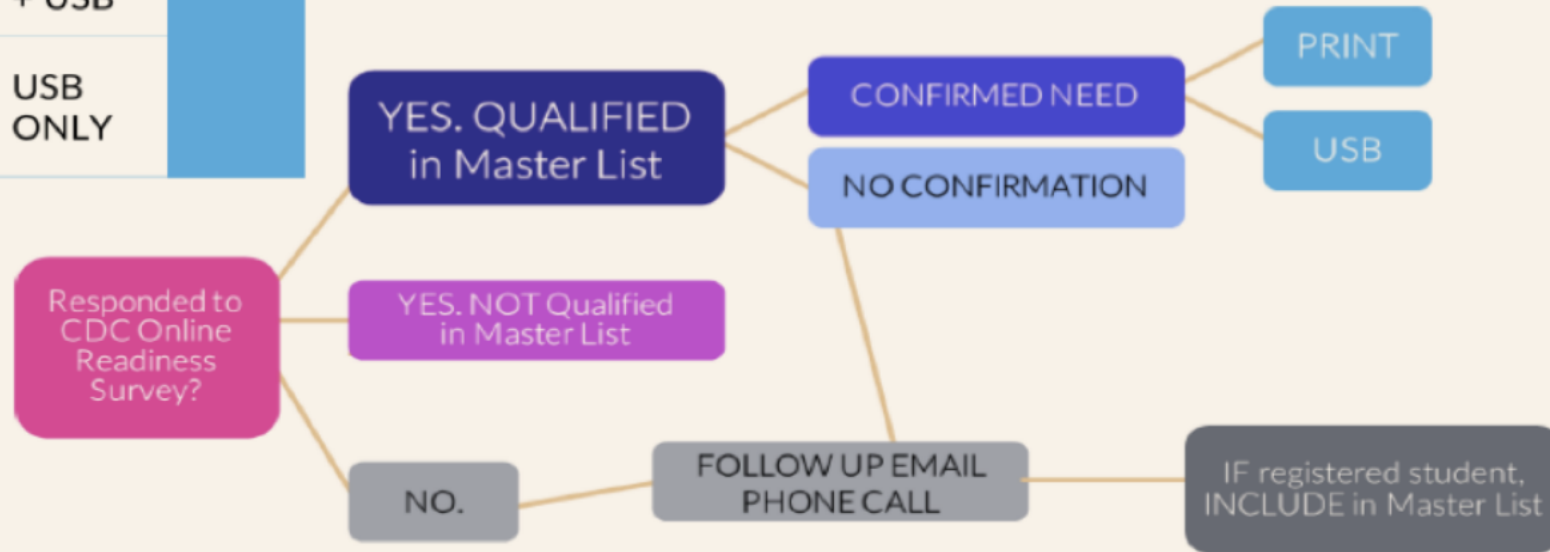
- Students were to collect the materials from the courier service if this is not available in their locality otherwise these were delivered to their homes directly.
- Like an assembly line, each stage in the workflow, a person in-charge was assigned to have a more systematic process of course pack distribution.



Main Decision Tool

INTERNET CONNECTIVITY	
None to Poor	
Good to Excellent	
None to Poor	PRINT + USB
Good to Excellent	USB ONLY

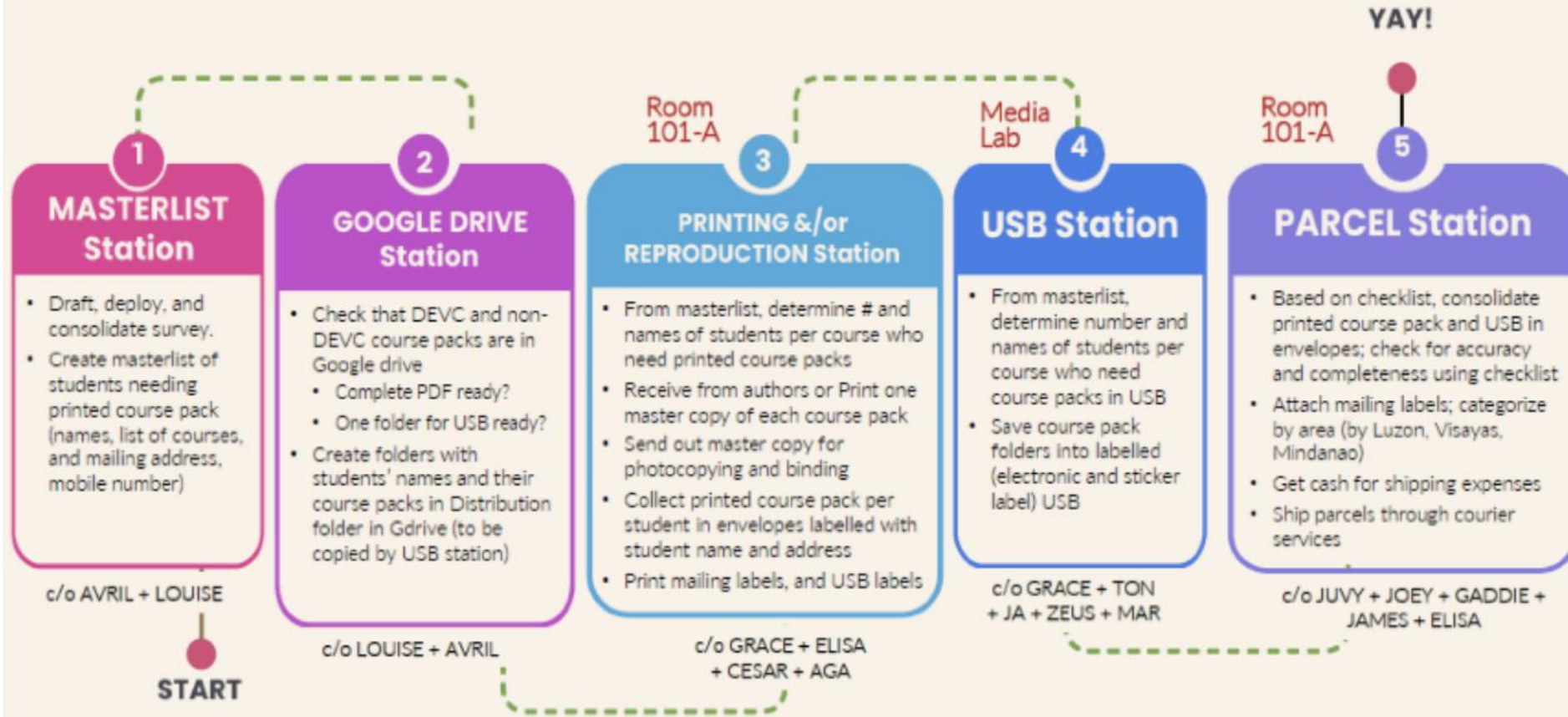
HOW DID WE **DECIDE**?



Process of determining recipients of course pack



WORKFLOW

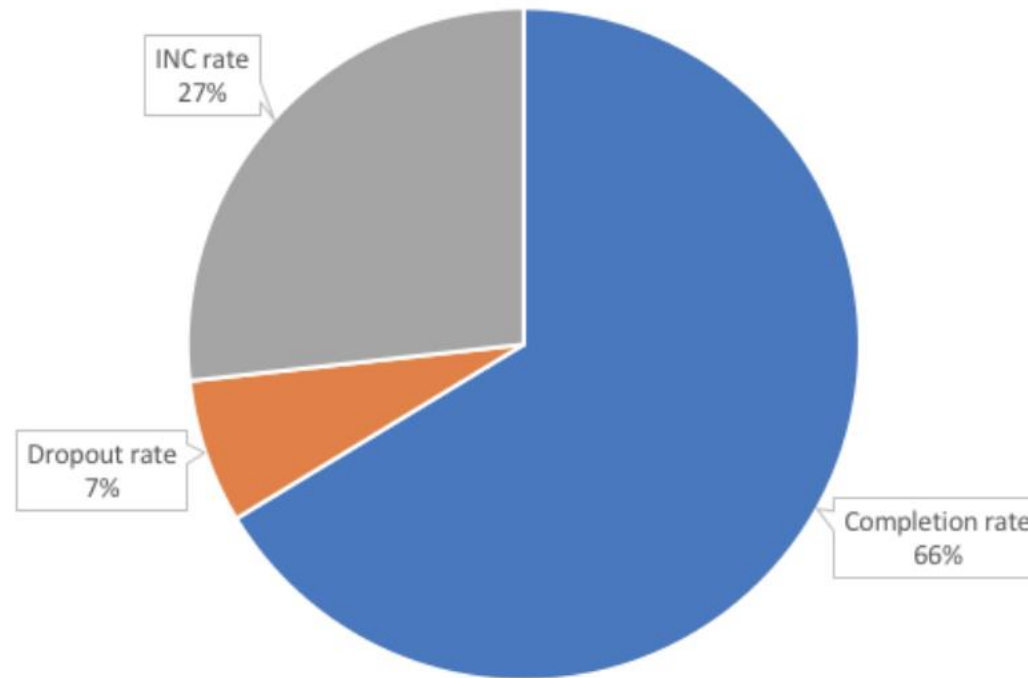


Workflow for course pack distribution

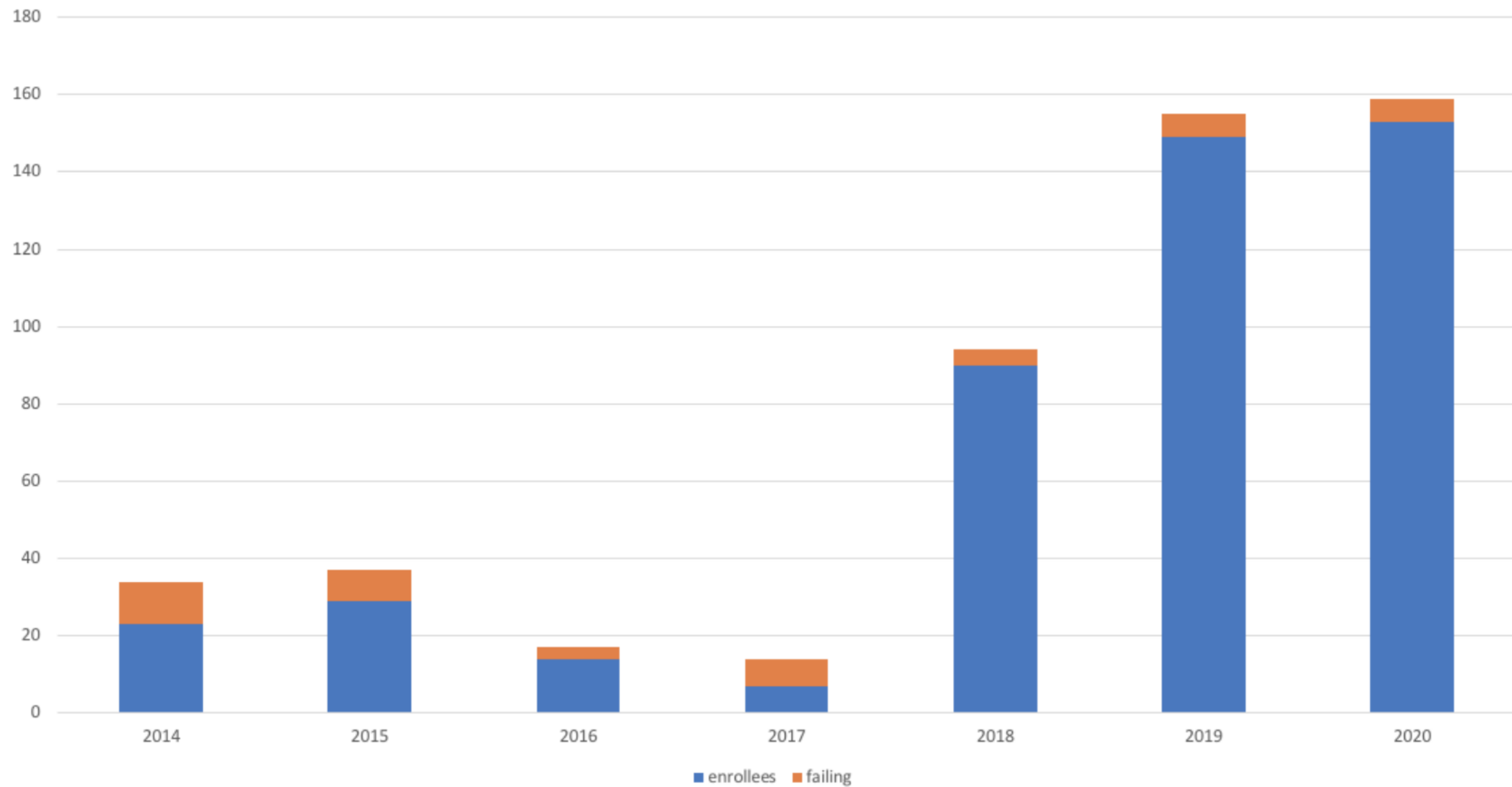


ASSESSMENT AND ANALYSIS OF PROGRAM OUTCOMES

Second Semester Program Outcomes



Status of BSDC students SY 2020-2021





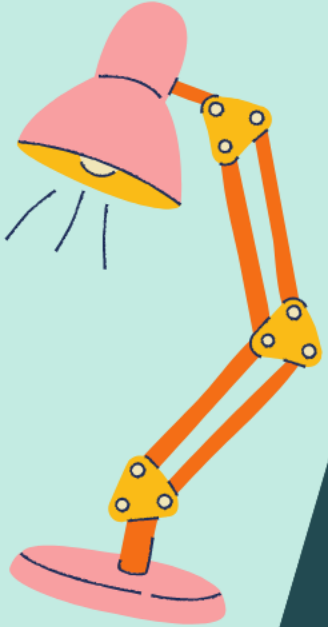
Why the pandemic cohort did better?

- They completed their senior year through online learning before they entered the university.
- They may have less psychological baggage so they can adapt well.
- They are more tech savvy.
- May have more skills in circumventing the process.
- There could be other services like coursehero.com.
- Perhaps, they are more networking savvy being the youngest generation.



Why the pandemic cohort did better?

- They have also been recipients of well-developed course packs that contained all the readings, self-assessment questions, and exercises were limited to the most essentials.
- Hence, if a student has no psychological baggage, online learning may be all right as an alternative to traditional education with or without a pandemic.



Why the pandemic cohort did better?

- Looking at the last three years, 2018, 2019, and 2020, it appears that the older the student has a lower the possibility of completing the term.
- The students in 2018 started with 160 but only 100 are expected to graduate by 2021.
- The 2019 which is younger is faring well with less dropouts and number of failing students.
- If the pandemic continues, it seems that the 2020 cohort will have a higher completion rate compared to pre-pandemic cohorts.



Why the pandemic cohort did better?

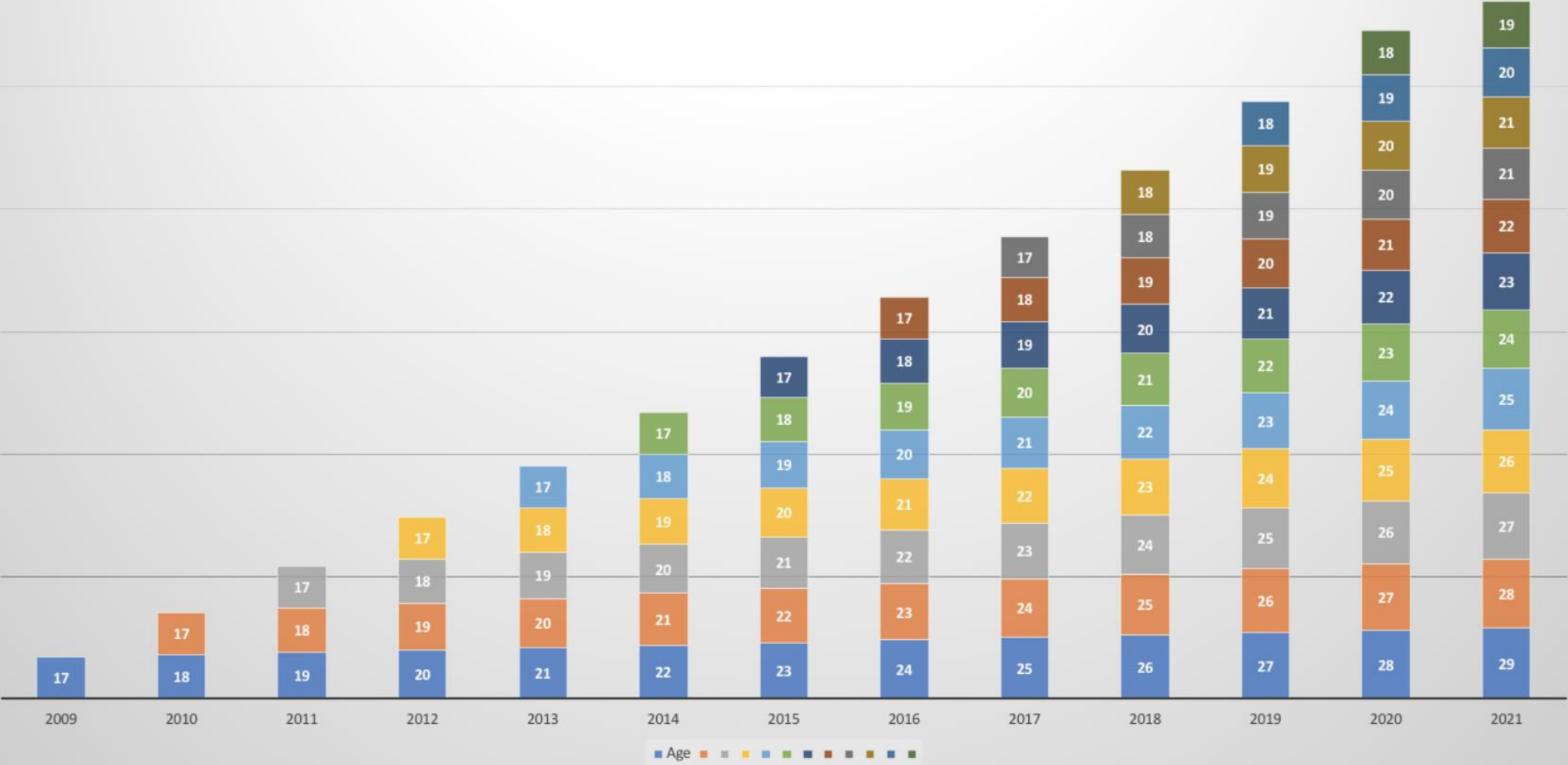
- It appears that those who should have graduated long before are still in school and the more that they found difficulty finishing the degree through distance education.
- Those who entered the university in 2009 still have not graduated who are in their late 20s. Similarly, the trend shows that the older they get, the longer it takes for them to complete their degrees at an older age.

Why the pandemic cohort did better?

- They should have finished their degrees within four years but due to some reasons they were not.
- The completion was further delayed by the pandemic.
- However, those who are younger from 2018 onwards were on time.
- This implies that the older the student the higher the propensity of not completing the degree on time.



Entry and current age



1. What one factor drove you to take on online learning?

opportunities

motivation

perseverance

education

available resources

time

choice

fear of delay

graduation

determination

effort

disappointment

privilege

2. What is your secret for continuously studying online?

special hobbies
determination rest rest
extreme time management
family day power dream
goal rest
rest goal goal
fact online class
expectations motivation
advantage
eye

3. What would you tell students who find difficulty studying online?





CONCLUSION

- These results imply that regardless of the learning modality, students have presumably accepted to study remotely which means that online learning being viewed as inferior may no longer be viewed as such because everyone else is on the same learning platform.
- The pandemic has debunked that distance education is less effective and unpopular to students because their only choice is to study online.



CONCLUSION

- Given this experience in online education, it seems that younger students have learned to adapt quickly to the alternative learning pedagogy.
- It implies that technology-based education may soon become a regular mode of learning delivery given its affordances.



CONCLUSION

- Perhaps, it is also because Gen Zs are labelled to be the most well-educated generation so far.
- Gen Zers are presumed to be in school than working unlike their predecessors.
- They are also forward looking and responsible.
- They save for their future and to ensure that they must complete their education regardless of delivery mode.

Way Forward

- In anticipation of natural or man-made calamities, LMSs should be cloud-based.
- Files should also be done through google drives to ensure security and easy access.
- Since there are natural or manmade calamities which can be location-specific, the faculty in-charge should be aware of the locations of their students.



Way Forward

- Utmost diligence and understanding should be accorded to students who have suffered or are suffering from covid or other disease or any harm that the student may have encountered.
- A system of monitoring the welfare of students should be maintained and acted upon.



Way Forward

- It would also be good if the college constituents can extend assistance to members who are badly affected by these natural or manmade calamities to lessen the burden of students even staff involved.



Way Forward

- Students who may have indicated that they have stable connections during the early part of the semester should be checked and if needed course packs will be sent as well.



Way Forward

- Incidentally, a quick comparison of those with course packs albeit fewer than those without showed that less than 60 percent (22 out of 41) of students completed all courses enrolled during the first semester and over a little 10 percent (11 out of 28) during the second semester were able to pass all their subjects.



Way Forward

- The course packs, however, were found useful even if not everyone completed their courses because if there were no course packs maybe the 69 students who availed of the course pack may have dropped as well.



Way Forward

- It would also be good if FICS could have a regular Kamustahan of each student just so to know their physical condition and if they need help, they could be referred to OVCSA or an online doctor for consultation.
- It is incumbent upon the faculty to reach out to their students in times of natural or manmade calamities.





THANK YOU

