



2021 PROJECT C

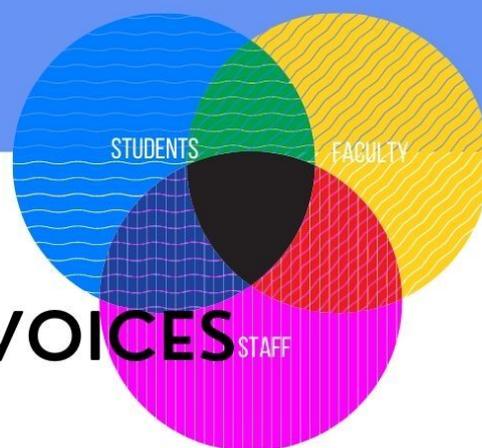
Division of Student Affairs

Student Voices Project

学生の声プロジェクト

Proposal to the University

大学への提言書



MAKE STUDENT VOICES HEARD!

学生の声なきシステム構築のためのプロジェクト
学生一同

ALL STUDENTS IN THE PROJECT FOR BUILDING A SYSTEM TO
LISTEN TO STUDENTS' VOICES

Greetings from the representative

The APU Student Voices Project is the first of its kind to be initiated by the university. The objective of the project, and the members was to be able to bring the voices of the student body to the forefront, working alongside APU faculty and administration to create an enhanced learning environment for a harmonious balance. The project commenced under unprecedented circumstances during the Covid-19 pandemic. However, the timing was well-matched as the past two years have been very different, and difficult for both students and faculty/administration staff members to adjust to. We believe that the need for this kind of project has never been more crucial than now. The University was forced to move online under time constraints and create new frameworks and systems so that the quality of students' learning would not be affected. Due to this, we believe that the project and the survey asking the students for their opinions and concerns were meaningful as we want to be able to implement improvements to create a bridge between the APU administration and the students.

Under the support of faculty and administration, we the student members of this project were handed a crucial role in bringing forth proposals that would reflect the voices of the students, no matter how small. As the saying goes, "with great power comes great responsibility", and we members recognize the herculean task that was set upon us. Hence, we have created a proposal with great care and thought to convey the best course of action for the university and the students. After countless meetings, data analysis, rewrites, and follow-up surveys, our aim is to submit a proposal that reflects on the "real voices of the students" and addresses their concerns and wishes. We hope that this proposal will guide the university in a better direction, especially given the circumstances of the pandemic. Despite having to conduct the project completely online, we received a large number of responses from students, which has made this possible. The students voiced their opinions on academics, job-hunting, mental health, and various systems. Many have been able to tell us their opinion on how to improve current systems. For many students, especially first and second years, their university life has only been online. Due to them having limited experiences, it sheds light on the difference of perspectives and experiences. We have to reflect on what the Covid-19 pandemic means, and how it has shaped learning and university life. Subsequently, how to make the best of the resources given. Therefore, the proposal focuses on academics and university systems but also on student support, mental health, and student life for a well-rounded improvement recommendation. From the questions in the survey to the final proposals included here, each step was carefully planned and discussed to reflect the best course of reflecting student voices. Hence, the recommendations here are important, and we hope that they will act as a catalyst for building a more harmonious student life and improving university systems. It was difficult for us members to work online on such a massive project under deadlines, while the whole concept was unfamiliar and we had other responsibilities. However, we learned to cooperate and support each other in spite of the difficult circumstances, Through the completion of the proposal, we appreciate the importance of teamwork, cooperation, and communication.

Finally, we would like to express our immense gratitude to all the students who responded to the surveys. This project and this proposal would not have been possible without your responses. Thank you for raising your voices, so we could help improve the university, little by little. And we ask for your continued cooperation. We would also like to thank the APU faculty and administration staff members who supported and helped us through every step of the project. Their efforts in supporting us students to reach a consensus have been invaluable, despite their busy schedules.

Lastly, we would also like to thank all the department members who took the time to read the drafts, met with us, and gave us the opportunity to start bringing the proposal to reality.

Thank you all for your continued support.

Student Voices Project 2021 Representative

Subah Anbar ALI (APS 7th semester)

Ryosuke SAKAMOTO (APS 4th semester)

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Introduction

■ Purpose of the project

The Student Voices Project aims to bring students' opinions to the forefront by having students take an active role together with faculty and staff to improve APU by accomplishing the following three objectives:

- (1) For the university to fully listen to the voices of students and create a system to reflect them in the development of the university
- (2) Promote autonomous student learning and enable students to realize their own personal growth (think independently, discuss with other students, and take action for change)
- (3) To sustain the creation of a vibrant university for all organizations and members of APU, including students

【Project period】 June 2021 – February 2022

【Website】 https://secure.en.apu.ac.jp/secure_students/studentsupport/page/content0346.html/

■ Survey Overview

- **Project Management:** The Student Voices Project is a “Type C: Enterprise & NPOs Co-Creat Project” overseen by the Division of Student Affairs. Project staff recruitment began in June 2021 with the majority of members selected primarily from students with previous student staff experience. Staff (16 members) were tasked with implementing a survey targeted at the entire student body, analyzing the survey response data, and summarizing the student voices found in the survey responses in a proposal to the university. Staff implemented a second follow-up survey targeted at the APU student body for students to give feedback on the recommendations in the proposal, such as their level of agreement with the proposal contents and reasons for their agreement level, before submitting it to the university.

< Staff Framework > *A mix of 1-3 international and domestic students were assigned to each position below

Position	Duties
Project Leaders	Overall project management (managing project progress), officiate project meetings
A)Data Collector	Survey design, prep, maintenance, etc.
B)Analyst	Survey data analysis, make graphs of survey results, etc.
C)Proposal Editor/Writer	Decisions on proposal format and style, proposal edits
D)Translator	Proposal translations (Japanese/English) and interpreting at project meetings
E)Result Editor/Writer	Draft and edit the AY2021 Student Voices Project Progress Report
F)Web designer/Manager	Edit, design, and upload website content (project meeting minutes, project related data, proposal, AY2021 Student Voices Project Progress Report, etc.)

- **Survey target:** All APU undergraduate students
- **Survey method:** LimeSurvey (Survey notice posted to Campus Terminal and additionally sent to all students' APU email accounts.)
- **Survey period:** i) July 2, 2021 (Fri) – July 15, 2021 (Thu)
ii) October 29, 2021 (Fri) – November 7, 2021 (Sun) [Follow-up Survey]

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- **Survey analysis methods:** Survey results were analyzed by project staff and working groups divided by project theme (themes I-V in the Table of Contents). Analysts tabulated the affiliations in the quantitative data (basic statistics such as college, year, etc.) and each working group was responsible for summarizing the qualitative data for their respective theme.

- **Overview of Survey i):**

- Survey Design

The Division of Student Affairs conducted a pilot survey in AY2020 prior to the start of this year's Student Voices Project and had already obtained responses from a portion of the student body. The Division of Student Affairs and project staff in the "data collector" position used the opinions obtained from students in the pilot survey to come up with this year's survey questions. More specifically, the opinions obtained in last year's survey were used to formulate the questions in categories Q1-Q9 to which respondents had to answer by choosing from a 5-point scale of agreement (strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, and strongly disagree). Below each question was a comment box where respondents were given space to explain the reason(s) behind the level of agreement they selected and offer detailed feedback or ideas for improvements. (Although the 5-point level of agreement questions were mandatory to answer, it was not mandatory to leave feedback in the comment box.) We were able to obtain quantitative data (respondents' student ID numbers, enrollment language basis, international/domestic, college, semester) through this survey.

< Survey categories >

- Q1: Study Support
- Q2: Depth of Learning
- Q3: Availability and application of information
- Q4: Online class format
- Q5: Other: Classes and curriculum-related issues
- Q6: Cafeteria
- Q7: Exchange Between Students
- Q8: Student support (safety and security), counseling support
- Q9: Comments for the university other than those in Q1-Q8 above

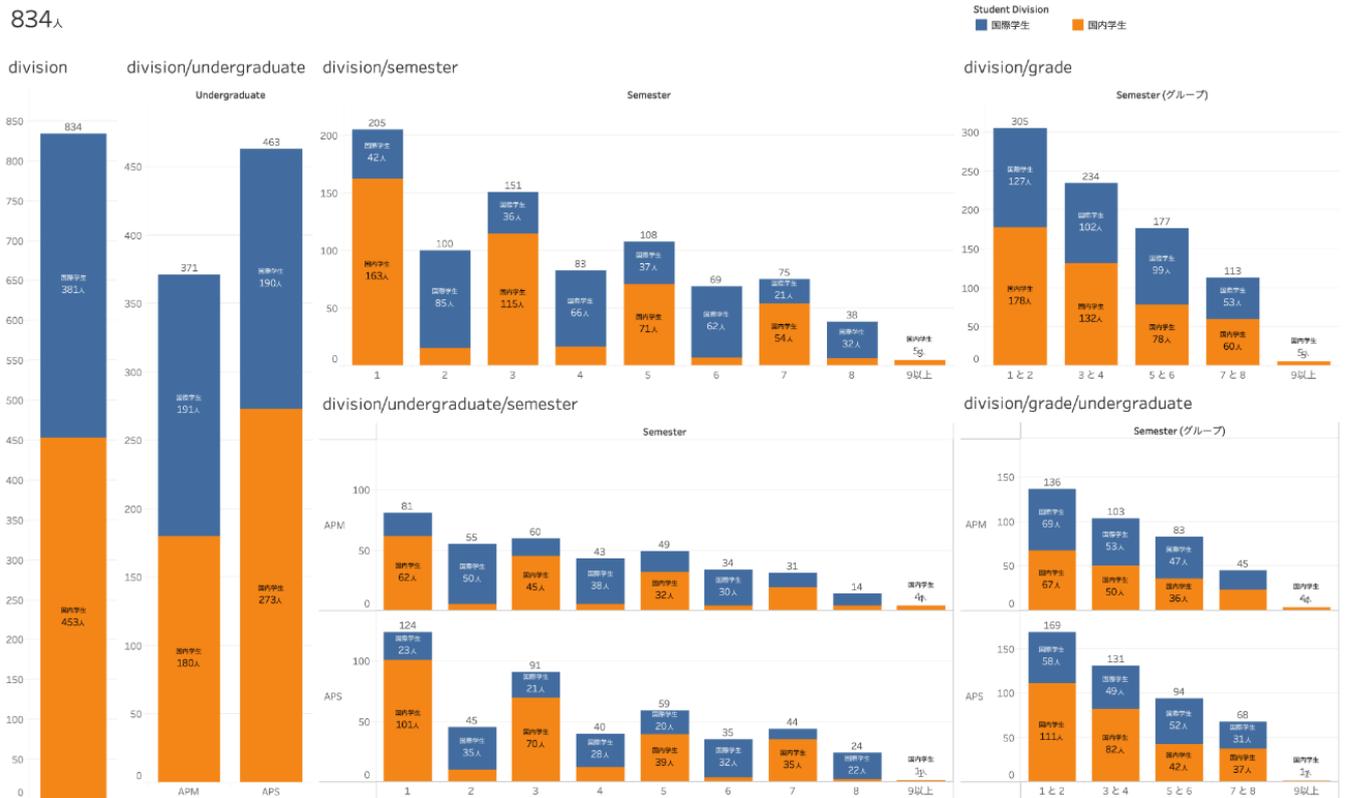
- Breakdown of Survey Respondents

The survey response rate was 15.3%. (We received a total of 834 valid survey responses out of 5,438 undergraduate students.) The affiliation of respondents who submitted valid responses are shown in Figure 1 below. With 381 international students (46%) and 453 domestic students (54%), the ratio of international/domestic students was generally close to the actual domestic/international student enrollment ratio. For undergraduate students, there were 463 APS (56%) and 371 APM (44%), with a slight increase in the number of APS respondents. Looking at the results by year, the number of respondents gradually decreased by year.

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[Figure 1] Affiliation (international/domestic, semester) of the 834 students who submitted valid survey responses. (Vertical axis=total number of survey respondents / Horizontal axis=semester) (Only the last survey submission by students who answered the survey more than once was counted as valid. Responses by graduate students were considered invalid.)

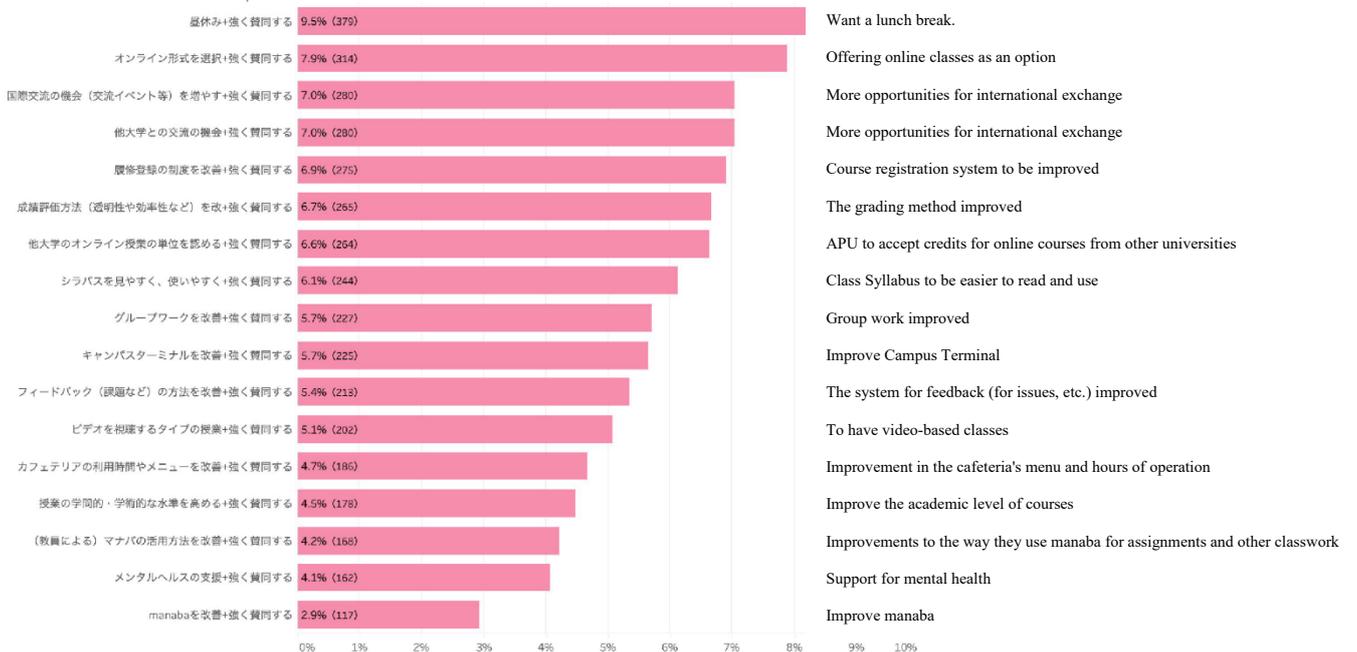
834人



[Figure 2] “Strongly agree” ranking (Affiliation [college/semester] omitted due to paper size limitations)

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Confidential



Introduction

● Overview of Survey ii) [Follow-up Survey]:

➤ Survey Design

The follow-up survey was implemented by project staff to assess the degree to which the student body agreed with the recommendations in the proposal. Students were asked to select whether they agreed or disagreed with the recommendations put forth in the proposal followed by a comment box where students could give reasons for their answer and leave additional feedback. (Survey designed by the Data Collectors.) Answering the initial agree/disagree question was mandatory to proceed to the next question, however, leaving a comment in the comment box was not. The purpose of this second survey was to objectively evaluate whether the project staff's recommendations in the proposal accurately represented the opinions of the student body prior to submission.

➤ Survey Data

Attribute data was not obtained in the follow-up survey. There was a significant decrease in survey respondents compared to the initial survey in July with only 93 students submitting follow-up survey responses. It is important to note that the pie charts that show the ratio of students who agreed and disagreed with each of the recommendations in the proposal is calculated based on the 93 students who answered the follow-up survey. (It is unclear whether this follow-up survey was effective in properly assessing whether the proposal was an accurate representation of student opinion.) This survey data has been included at the end of each section of the proposal to support the recommendations put forth by project staff.

■ Executive Summary of the proposal

※The "Improvement Demand Rate" is the sum of the "Strongly Agree" and "Agree" percentages for each proposal heading (from the responses to Survey i)), and [**%] is the percentage of "Agree" for proposals a, b, ... (from the, at the most, 93 responses to Survey ii)).

I. Academic Aspects (Class Depth, classes, curriculum, etc.)

Proposal I-1 Priority Registration System (Improvement Demand Rate: 67%)

Course registration methods and learning opportunities are not provided fairly to students

- a. Replace Priority System from GPA-based to Student-Year-based [59%]
- b. Offer More Classes to Offset the Demand [91%]
- c. Lottery-based Registration [34%]
- d. Requirements for International Students to register opposite-language-based courses under the same condition as Japanese-based students [67%]

Proposal I-2 Timely Student Support (Improvement Demand Rate: No data for Survey i))

Student opinions are not sufficiently reflected in the general framework for studying and living at APU (the university is slow to respond to students, communication is not smooth, lack of support for international students, etc.)

- a. Construct a mechanism on par with a student council composed of current students and alumni to serve as a bridge between the university and students [94%]

Proposal I-3 Group Works (Improvement Demand Rate: 66%)

Countermeasures to the language barrier, online implementation, and free-riders that occur in group work and evaluation

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methods

- a. Method to decrease the language barriers [72%]
- b. Measures in regards to the free riders and peer review [74%]

Proposal I-4 **Grading Method** (Improvement Demand Rate: 69%)

The current grading system and its processes, which do not easily lead to increased interest in learning or self-analysis by the students themselves

- a. Transparency of the grades [97%]
- b. Flexibility of the grade inquiries [99%]

Proposal I-5 **Depth of Learning (1)** (Improvement Demand Rate: 68%)

Teaching methods (e.g., just reading slides, unidirectional lectures), lack of major subjects (department(s) in charge interviewed)

- a. Increase the quality of the learning material [78%]
- b. Broaden the opportunity for students to take various specialized lectures and major subjects [86%]
- c. Special/additional training for APU instructors to improve their teaching method [85%]

Proposal I-6 **Depth of Learning (2)** (Improvement Demand Rate: 68%)

Based on the belief that a certain number of students are positive about deepening and advancing their expertise and learning new things, and that underclassmen also want to register for 200- and 300-level subjects (and based on interview(s) with the department(s) in charge)

- a. Make the results of the remaining six items of the class evaluation questionnaire available, which are not currently available

Proposal I-7 **Timetable** (Improvement demand rate for "we want a lunch break": 72%)

Based on opinions related to the large number of undergraduate classes, the inability to concentrate and negative impact on health due to a lack of break time, ensuring time for extracurricular activities, and safe meals during the pandemic (and based on interview(s) with the department(s) in charge)

- a. Using empty classrooms, we would offer a shop like the House CO-OP and several spaces for eating [85%]
- b. Have Instructors Innovate Teaching Methods [82%]

II. Learning Support Services

Proposal II-1 **IT Support Services** (Improvement Demand Rate: See chart below)

manaba (utilization by faculty, etc.), Campus Terminal (difficult to understand necessary information, etc.), and the syllabus (hard to search, slow to update, etc.)

	manaba	Campus Terminal	Syllabus
Improvement Demand Rate	40%	64%	73%
a. Modification of IT services	-Enable deletion of the display of finished lectures. -Display of email addresses of TAs and professors.	-UI improvements. -Extension of the time before you are asked to log in again. -Change in handling of cancelled emails.	-Changes to the search method. -Thorough updating of syllabus so that it does not interfere with registration.

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b. IT services functional addition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Notification of due dates and deadlines. -Allow lectures to be categorized by folders, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Categorize emails and information by folders, etc. -Add pin function and favorite function. -Enable deletion of unnecessary emails. Add a function to notify only necessary information. 	
c. Unification of IT service function	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Unification of handling of completed lectures. -Unify assignment submission method with manaba. 		

Proposal II-2 **Online Classes** (Improvement demand rate for the continuation of online classes: 76%)

From the fact that by increasing options for where and how to learn according to the environment and circumstances of individual students (job hunting, health issues, ability to maintain concentration, energy, etc.), universities can provide more people with opportunities to learn and students can also learn more efficiently

- a. Make online classes an option
- b. Incorporate on-demand classes

Proposal II-3 **Learning Support Services at APU** (Frequency of student use of existing services: see the proposal text)

For students, lack of a systematic and consistent approach to using and applying existing services, lack of motivation to use them, and lack of uniformity in services

- a. Collaboration between learning support services and Student Social Media Unit (SMU) [87%]
- b. Creation of webpage informing the access methods and availability of the services [94%]
- c. Working with instructors to encourage the usage of learning support services [95%]

III. Facility (Cafeteria)

Proposal III-1 **Cafeteria** (Improvement Demand Rate: 54%)

From the comprehensive perspective of whether students are eating healthy meals (and from interview(s) with the department(s) in charge)

- a. Referencing examples of the APU CO-OP shop's initiatives, the cafeteria and the Administration Office will establish mechanisms so that student needs can be heard and then make the opinions obtained and their responses available to the public
- b. In particular, the cafeteria/APU CO-OP working together with the student committee members will collect the student opinions obtained during implementation of Proposal (a) above and formulate operational guidelines that take these opinions into consideration. Also, we will strengthen public relations of our own efforts and make students further aware of them through the use of Campus Terminal and other means in addition to our existing media (leaflets, CO-OP website, etc.)

IV. International and Educational Exchange

Proposal IV-1 **International Exchange** (Improvement Demand Rate: 72%)

Reduced opportunities for interaction due to the pandemic (cancellation of related programs, etc.), lack of support for study

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abroad scholarships, etc., and lack of awareness regarding information on studying abroad and international interaction

- a. Language Partner System [92%]
- b. Visibility of Clubs and Accessibility [91%]
- c. International Exchange Programs and Scholarships Briefings [94%]

Proposal IV-2 Domestic Student Exchange (Improvement Demand Rate: 74%)

From the lack of interaction between students which occurs during learning and extracurricular activities with domestic universities and the lack of interaction during the pandemic, including in the Beppu area

- a. Beach Beautification & BBQ [Combined with b. below, 92%]
- b. Polar Plunge [Combined with a. above, 92%]

V. Counseling and Student Services

Proposal V-1 Mental Health Support (Improvement Demand Rate: 50%)

Based on the language and cultural barriers between students and counselors, inadequate facilities and provision of services, low awareness of mental health on campus, strong demand for improvements from international students, and interview(s) with the department(s) in charge

- a. Cooperating with International Mental Health Organization [96%]
- b. Improve access to counselling services [98%]
- c. Working with MeWe [95%]
- d. Mental Health checkup for students [96%]

I. Academic Aspects (Class Depth, classes, curriculum, etc.)

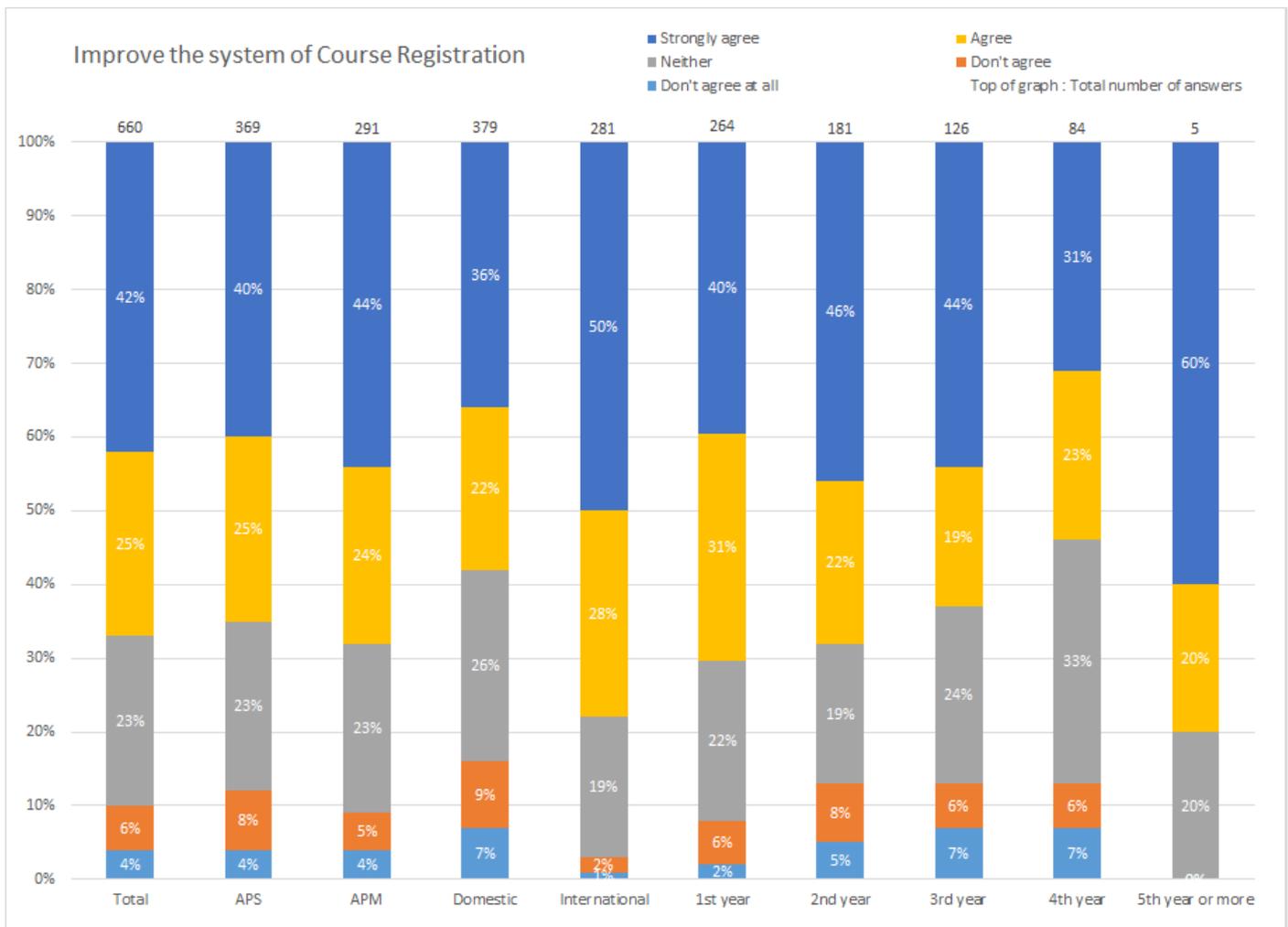
Proposal I-1 Priority Registration System

■ Problem Addressed

1. Course Registration as a system
2. Requirements for credits

■ Data and Analysis of the Present Situation

[Figure 1] Level of agreement with "Improve the system of course registration" (5-point scale), with the vertical axis representing %



Observing the graph, the average rate of response for “Agree” and “Strongly Agree” is around 67%. Further, if we look at the rate by student year for the responses "Agree" and "Strongly Agree," fifth-year and above students are at 80% (granted, there were only 5 respondents), which is the highest rate. Continuing, first-year students are 71%, second-year students are 68%, third-year students are 63%, and fourth-year students are 54%.

I. Academic Aspects (Class Depth, classes, curriculum, etc.)

[Figure 2] Current Structure and Schedule of the Priority System

Period	Student Group		Registration Begins		Registration Ends	
			Date	Time	Date	Time
Registration Period A Cumulative GPA or Semester GPA 1st Priority: 3.00 or higher 2nd Priority: 2.50 or higher	APS	1st Priority	Tue, March 23	9:30	Wed, March 24	12:00
		2nd Priority		12:30		
		Regular		15:30		
	APM	1st Priority	Thu, March 25	9:30	Fri, March 26	12:00
		2nd Priority		12:30		
		Regular		15:30		
Registration Period B	All Students	New or Reinstated	Wed, April 7	10:00	Thu, April 8	12:00
		Current Students		15:00		
Correction Period 1	All Students		Mon, April 19	10:00	Tue, April 20	10:00
Correction Period 2	All Students		Mon, June 14	10:00	Tue, June 15	10:00

Student Opinions (Total ??? responses = ???[Japanese] + ???[English])

● “I Strongly Agree” or “I Agree”

- There is a tendency to focus on grades more than learning...
- Might be better if there were more options...
- Might be better if there were more options...
- The difference in the difficulty of obtaining credits due to the difference in GPA is a bigger issue than the quality of the classes...
- When the registration is based on how fast your reaction speed and internet connection is, it can become a detriment to some students...

● “Neither”

- Not necessarily a drastic change, but an upscale of the priority 1 GPA to be 3.5 instead of 3.0.
- Don't really have an opinion on this topic...
- Am okay with the current system, but at the same time, there could always be improvements...

● “I don't agree” or “I don't agree at all”

- I think the standard is already high enough...
- It feels good enough...
- I am satisfied with the current level...
- I think the system is fine where it is currently at...
- I think it should be stricter...

■ Proposals

a. Replace Priority System from GPA-based to Student-Year-based

I. Academic Aspects (Class Depth, classes, curriculum, etc.)

When analyzing the systems used in Oregon State University and Boston College, academia located in the United States, the respective universities use a student's status, in other words based on student year. Within this system creates opportunities for students that are a year-or-two from graduating, to have an opportunity of getting classes that are crucial for their chances of success at graduating from the university. The purpose of this system is to alleviate the stress that is placed on those that are a year-or-two away from graduation and are in a peculiar position which certain courses must be completed and have not had the opportunity to take such courses.

Understanding the potential flaws that could cause issues such as underhanded tactics (registering general courses for financial reasons), the system creates a relief from the concurrent bottlenecked system for students who are not academically-strong or had external factors affect their academic capabilities that affected their grade point average. It allows an equal opportunity for every student in their respective grade level.

[Figure 3] Oregon State University's¹(the left-hand side) and Boston College's² (the right-hand side) Course Registration Priority System, as of Fall 2021.

Fall 2021 Registration Timeline

Registration Date	Beginning Access Time	Students Eligible to Register		
Sunday, May 16	9:00 AM	Athletes: Senior/Junior	April 13	Fall advising begins. Fall course search opens in EagleApps (fall courses available for view). Public view of Course Information and Schedule will also be available for those without access to the Agora Portal.
	11:00 AM	Honors College & Veterans: Senior	April 19	EagleApps registration course planning module opens for fall.
	12:00 PM	Seniors	May 25, 9 a.m.	Fall registration opens for graduate CSOM, and undergraduate and graduate WCAS.
Monday, May 17	7:00 PM	Athletes: Sophomore/Freshman	May 25, 12 p.m.	Fall registration opens for graduate MCAS and graduate LSEHD.
Tuesday, May 18	7:00 PM	Post Baccalaureate Veterans	May 26, 9 a.m.	Fall registration opens for STM and graduate CSON.
	8:00 PM	Post Baccalaureate Students	May 26, 7/7:30 p.m.	Fall registration opens for SSW.
	9:00 PM	Honors College & Veterans: Junior	May 27–28	Fall registration opens for the undergraduate Class of 2022 (registration by appointment, 9:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.).
	10:00 PM	Juniors	June 1–2	Fall registration opens for the undergraduate Class of 2023 (registration by appointment, 9:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.).
Sunday, May 23	6:00 AM	Honors College & Veterans: Sophomore	June 3–4	Fall registration opens for the undergraduate Class of 2024 (registration by appointment, 9:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.).
	7:00 AM	Sophomores	June 7–8	Fall registration opens for Law students (registration by appointment, 9:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.).
Monday, May 24	5:00 PM	Honors College & Veterans: Freshman		
	6:00 PM	Freshman		

¹ Oregon State University. (2021, July 15). *Priority registration*. Office of the Registrar. Retrieved October 13, 2021, from <https://registrar.oregonstate.edu/priority-registration>.

² Boston College. (n.d.). *Course Priority System*. Introducing EagleApps at Boston College. Retrieved October 13, 2021, from https://www.bc.edu/content/dam/files/offices/stserv/academic/html/EagleApps_StudentComm_Registration_Module_Intro.html.

I. Academic Aspects (Class Depth, classes, curriculum, etc.)

b. Offer More Classes to Offset the Demand

A basic principle of demand and supply indicates that a bigger demand occurs when the supply is limited. As quoted by students with the issue of “click wars,” the severe limitation of opportunities creates a sense of urgency to enroll in specific classes to ensure that they can participate. This sense of urgency can create extreme behaviors to occur within the student population. Examples such as: trading classes with another peer to obtain certain classes, paying students for spots in a class due to the significance for the student who is paying. Severe course opportunities can disrupt a student’s pace towards graduation, especially if there are classes that are a requirement for the major that tend to become full due to the sheer amount of students.

In addition to the severe competition environment that is displayed, the current system promotes domestic students to participate and complete courses in English, a secondary language for those respective students, which creates even more pressure on the English-basis courses. For the international students, they are not competing for courses against their own peers, they must compete with the domestic students that are taking courses in English to meet their graduation requirement- 20 credits completed by taking English-based courses. With this requirement, plentiful of courses that are Japanese-based have a lot of vacancy spots.

c. Lottery-based Registration

A lottery-based registration system is a system where certain classes, especially those with higher demand, are based on luck and a lottery, rather than through a traditional priority system or student-year system. An example of a lottery system being implemented is Ritsumeikan University, the sister university to Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University. According to the, “2021 Academic Handbook” by Ritsumeikan University, on page 24, section 4.2 titled *Course Registration Schedule*: “Courses with limited enrollment capacity require registration before regular registration begins. A lottery is used to determine which applicants are enrolled in the course. Please be aware that once a student is accepted into such a course, they cannot withdraw from it.”³ With a lottery system for certain classes, Ritsumeikan University filters the regular pool for certain classes, assuming it is specific classes that are more specialized towards certain subjects/majors. The system promotes luck and probability rather than academic performance or other forms of measurement for a student’s placement in a system.

d. Requirements for International Students

As mentioned in Proposal b, domestic students have a requirement for graduation, which requires enrolling in 20 APU credits worth of English-based classes. This creates a bottleneck of class vacancy for English-based classes as well as an increase in pressure for students to rush for those specialized classes. As a result, this creates a gap in the Japanese-based course population where vacancy spots are increasing. In addition, international students do not have a requirement for Japanese-based classes despite having to take Japanese language courses to learn the language.

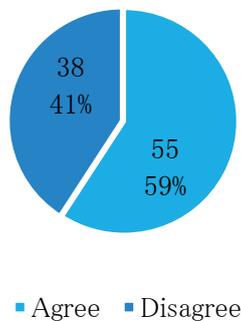
³ Ritsumeikan University. (n.d.). *Academic handbook (for all undergraduate students) –AY2021 ... Academic Handbook*. Retrieved October 13, 2021, from http://en.ritsumei.ac.jp/gla2-e/file/academics/courses/forms/academic_handbook_for_all_undergraduate_students_-ay2021-.pdf.

I. Academic Aspects (Class Depth, classes, curriculum, etc.)

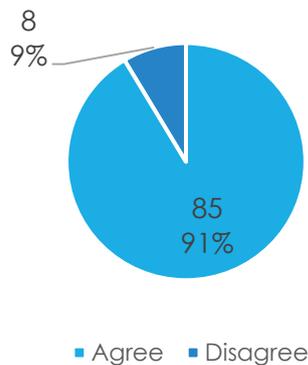
An idea of international students taking Japanese-based classes should be encouraged to give the students opportunities to use the language and further improve their vocabulary and fluidity in speaking. The concept of requiring domestic students to enroll in classes of a different language while international students are not required, but slightly encouraged, creates a false narrative of fairness. A question can be raised, "If domestic students have to take English-based classes, why don't international students take Japanese-based classes?" as well as, "Shouldn't international students take Japanese-based classes to further enhance their Japanese capabilities?." While international students are not required to take Japanese-based courses, there are signs of those students remaining to struggle speaking the language because of consistently enrolling in English-based courses.

■ Results and examination of additional survey in response to the above proposal

[Figure 4] Proposal a: Percentage "Agree" and "Disagree" regarding a student-year-based priority registration system (93 responses)

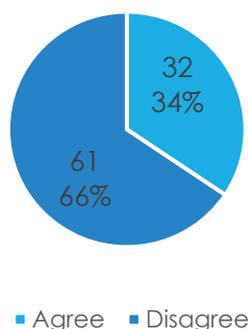


[Figure 5] Proposal b: Percentage "Agree" and "Disagree" regarding offering more classes (93 responses)



I. Academic Aspects (Class Depth, classes, curriculum, etc.)

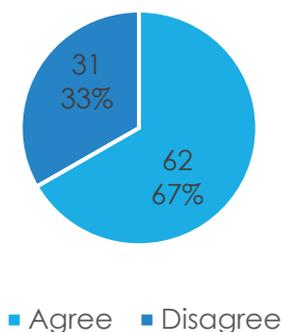
[Figure 6] Proposal c: Percentage "Agree" and "Disagree" regarding a lottery-based registration system (93 responses)



Student Opinions (Total 25 responses = 13 [Japanese] + 12 [English])

- With a lottery, "study opportunities" can be lost (2+7 similar opinions)
- Increasing the number of students and/or classes is better than even a highly random lottery (1+0 similar opinions)
- With a lottery, won't issues with changing registered subjects just be compounded? (2+0 similar opinions)
- Students who put everything into studying and raising their GPA in order to get classes they want to take will no longer be rewarded (1+2 similar opinions)
- (In any case) I want to be able to take the classes I want to take (2+0 similar opinions)
- To start with, what should be done with the popular subjects known as "easy-A classes" needs to be considered before a lottery system is considered (1+0 similar opinions)
- I would agree if the lottery were to be held before the start of general registration (1+0 similar opinions)
- I would agree to a lottery for specific popular subjects (1+0 similar opinions)
- I want to be able to register for new subjects during the correction period (1+0 similar opinions)
- Finding out which subjects I can take and which I can't take will take longer and will cost me time and effort (1+1 similar opinions)
- A lottery is a good strategy if we're looking for a way to operate registration that will be fair for all students (for example, in parallel with student-year-based registration) (0+2 similar opinions)

[Figure 7] Proposal d: Percentage "Agree" and "Disagree" regarding requiring students to take classes in their opposite language (93 responses)



Proposal I-2 Timely Student Support

■ Problem Addressed

1. Complaints/Issues not being addressed soon enough
2. Communicative barriers
3. Insufficient support for international students

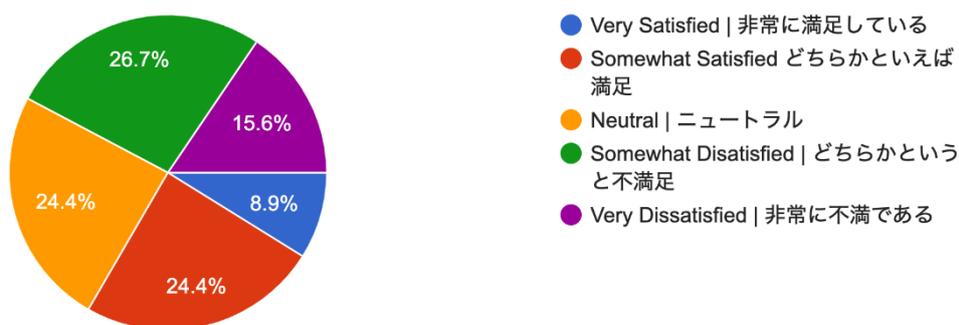
■ Data and Analysis of the Present Situation

[Figure 1] Level of agreement with "Support students feel they receive from APU currently " (5-point scale), by 45 responses

Are you satisfied with the current level of support you're receiving from APU currently?

現在、APUから受けているサポートのレベルに満足していますか？

45 responses

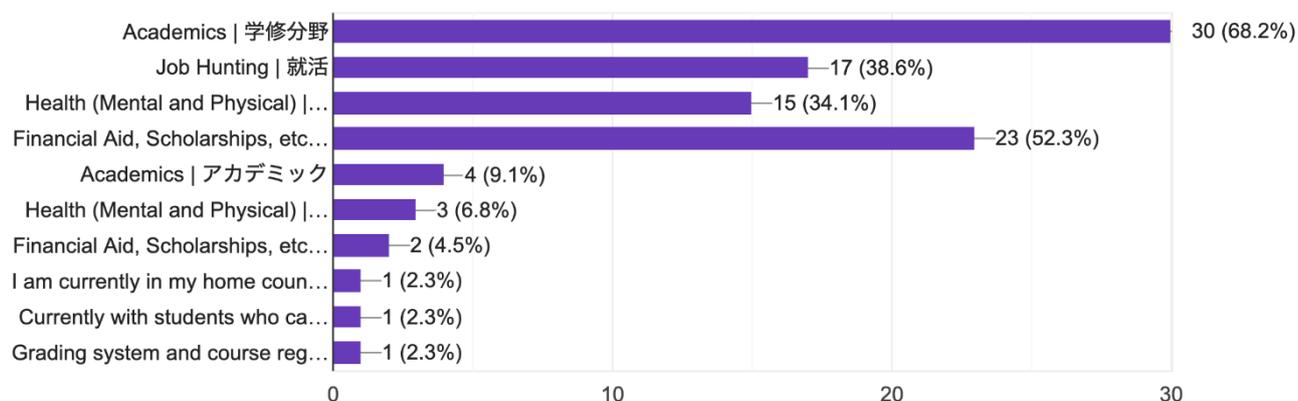


[Figure 2] Aspect's students would like to receive more support in (44 responses)

Which area would you like to see more support in? Check all that apply.

どの分野のサポートを強化してほしいですか？該当するものすべてにチェックを入れてください。

44 responses



I. Academic Aspects (Class Depth, classes, curriculum, etc.)

In [Figure 1] with 33.3% of all students responding "Very Satisfied" or "Somewhat Satisfied," the rate of satisfaction can be considered comparatively low. Further, according to [Figure 2], we see that "Academics" is an item for which improved support is strongly demanded.

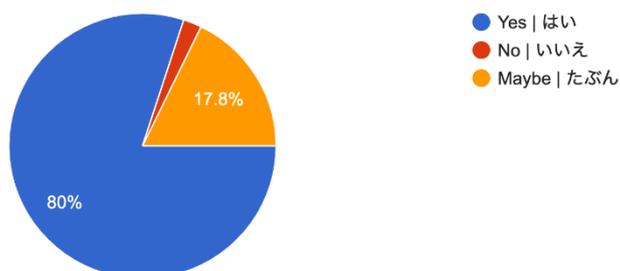
Student Opinions (Total 45 responses = 6 [Japanese] + 39 [English])

- I am hoping for major changes from the university. For instance, students should be involved in the process of curriculum adjustment, or a survey for cafeteria food selection should have some impact on the actual menu.
- APU needs to actively listen to student voices and make changes accordingly.
- I hope that APU can develop a column of courses recommended by students. This can provide some convenience and direction for students who want to choose courses.
- For the students abroad, I want APU to provide more updated information often.
- I really want the university to improve the curriculum as it is the most important for students and have a faster reaction to our voice. The teachers should be carefully screening into the university, their way of teaching and personality are especially important. I want all teachers here to be great, not just one or two people, and we must compete to get the class with a nice teacher. I want the university to visit and observe each class regularly to be able to understand the students and the way of teaching from teachers.
- I have had the most issue with the security office as we do not know a lot of the specific jargon or names of equipment in Japanese and, from my own experience, some of the staff were not exactly patient with our Japanese or attempted to use English at all.

Also, we conducted an additional survey in order to propose the establishment of a student council-like Student Association as a suggestion for reflecting these types of student opinions.

[Figure 3] Response to the possible establishment of a permanent student association in APU (45 responses)

Do you think APU should have a permanent Student Association?
APUにおいて、学生会のような学生団体を創設する必要はあると思いますか
45 responses



The last question of the survey conducted was for comments from the students, and it is evident from the enormous range of topics from academics to cafeterias, the students feel that their voices should have more of a say in decisions and changes.

I. Academic Aspects (Class Depth, classes, curriculum, etc.)

A further brief survey done by one of the Student Voices members shows that only 33.3% of APU students that took the survey are satisfied with the current level of support they are receiving. feel that they are currently not satisfied with the level of support they are receiving. Moreover, the participants overwhelmingly feel that a Student Body would be beneficial, with only 1 disagreement against 44 agreements.

From the survey done to assess the situation, and the voices of students for improvement of APU, it can be said that there lacks a middleman between the students and the university. There are miscellaneous issues and difficulties faced by students that vehemently want changes too but do not know where to go. Hence, the recommendation is to establish a student union composed of both current students and alumni, that will efficiently serve as the bridge between APU and its students.

According to research, “Not only are student associations great for improving the university experience, the skills and connections gained from participation in one can help launch a student well past graduation. The role of student associations is critical, especially now during the time of the COVID-19 pandemic.”

The project would be extremely beneficial and follow APU’s goal of increased student proactivity, leadership skills and a multicultural environment. With both J-basis and E-basis students working on the project together, under different roles, it has provided a simulation of an international working environment. Under the guidance of the student office and various faculty members, the Student Voices Project has already brought many concerns and improvements to the university. According to research done in Irish universities, a collaboration between academic disciplines and a student union has shown to bring in success and high rates of student engagement. Data shows that students’ satisfaction and interest in student union projects had greatly increased, as well as an 80% increase in students who wanted to be leaders. It increased leadership and social skills, as well as preparing students to work in intensive environments to make crucial decisions⁴.

■ Proposals

a. Establish a student body association to make changes according to the student voices

Student Body Associations have proven to be extremely favorable for both the students and the university. Higher rates of satisfaction from being integrated with the university, and developing skills mean students are more likely to be happier and successful. The university will also get higher ratings if their students are happier, and they improve according to the students’ needs and ideas put forth by the students. Thus, there is a greater probability of improvement if the Student Voices’ Project becomes permanent.

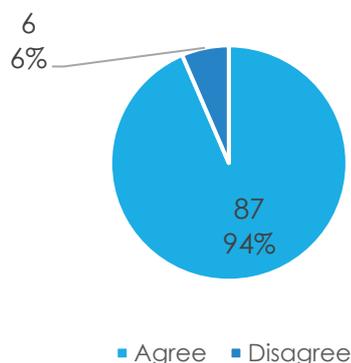
The problems in Section 1, such as communicative barriers and lack of timely response are issues that need constant feedback to make the student body feel listened to, and a way for APU to make proactive changes according to the changing needs of the students, especially during the time of pandemic and online classes.

⁴ Scriver, S., Walsh Olesen, A., & Clifford, E. (2021). Partnering for success: A students’ union-academic collaborative approach to supplemental instruction. *Irish Educational Studies*, 40(4), 669-688. doi:10.1080/03323315.2021.1899020

I. Academic Aspects (Class Depth, classes, curriculum, etc.)

■ Results and examination of additional survey in response to the above proposal

[Figure 4] Proposal a: Percentage "Agree" and "Disagree" regarding establishing a Student Association (93 responses)



Student Opinions (Total 13 responses = 8 [Japanese] + 5 [English])

- Activities that reflect student opinions are very good (4+5 similar opinions)
- Students ought to be encouraged to participate in a project every semester (1+0 similar opinions)
- In the proposal, some things seemed to be expressed inappropriately and some suggestions seemed to be based on the ideas of individual members (3+0 similar opinions)

The additional survey response about the proposal to form a permanent student body was overwhelmingly positive with 94% (87 respondents) agreeing. As per comments, the students expressed that this would ensure a viable step towards students becoming more proactive in the university environment and having a say. Some expressed that this would be especially crucial during the pandemic, when students feel a larger disconnect from the university due to the lack of physical presence.

Proposal I-3 Group Works

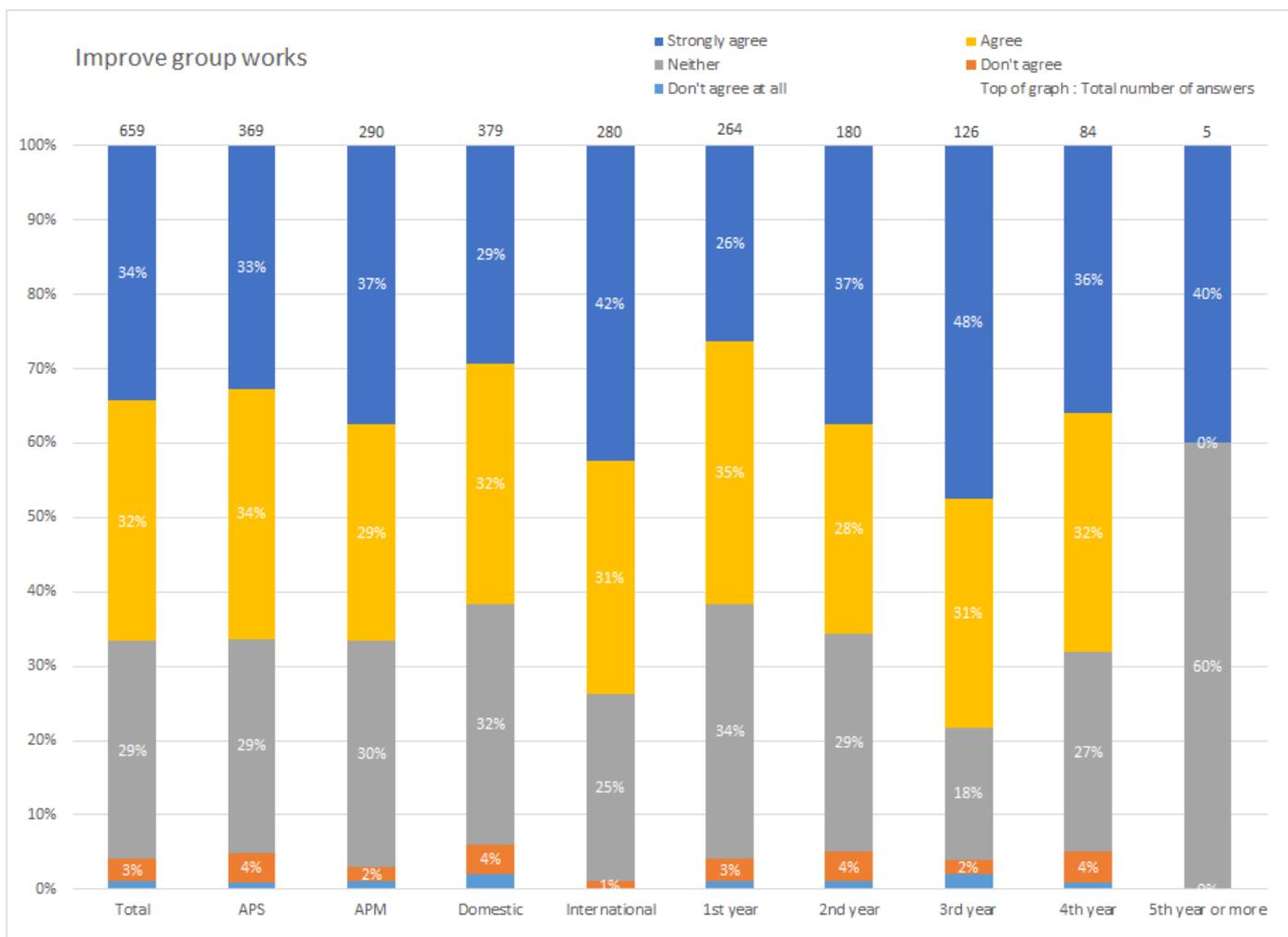
■ Problem Addressed

I want group work to be improved

1. Efficiency
2. Free riders

■ Data and Analysis of the Present Situation

[Figure 1] Level of agreement with "Improve group works" (5-point scale), with the vertical axis representing %



"Agree" and "Strongly Agree" combined comprise 66% of all responses. Further, if we look at the approval rate ("Agree" + "Strongly Agree") by student year, at 79% third-year students had the highest rate. Continuing, fourth-year students are 68%, second-year students are 65%, first-year students are 61%, and for all student years together, 60% of students desire improvements in group work.

At Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University (hereinafter, APU), students are encouraged to learn in a multicultural environment starting from First-Year Multicultural Workshop and SSAW. Additionally, the official entrance

I. Academic Aspects (Class Depth, classes, curriculum, etc.)

examination website also says that "group work constitutes a large part of APU's education." Student opinions regarding group work follow.

Student Opinions (Total ??? responses = ???[Japanese] + ???[English])

● "I Strongly Agree" or "I Agree"

- Please stop doing group work online. I do not know what I am thinking because no one replies, and I cannot see the other person's expression when I express my opinion and encourage others' opinions.
- Free riders who frequently appear in group work are extremely annoying, so please make sure to adopt mutual evaluation for classes that incorporate group work, and if it is lower than a certain level, please give the student an F.
- I do not think group work will necessarily deepen my learning. On the other hand, group work results in unnecessary stress.
- Teachers should also pay attention to those who are not cooperative in group work. There are some grades that come out and others that do not, so please make them all into scores and visualize how much you get.
- I want group work to improve. There are many cases of free riders in APU. students do not participate properly and end up getting good grades based on someone else's challenging work. This is unfair and the group work system needs to be changed or abolished.
- I do not understand the need for active learning now that it is online. I mean, I would rather have knowledge than communication skills, so I would like you to stop recommending group work. All reports are good.

● "Neither"

- There are lectures aimed at group work itself. Group work is a task that needs to be done, or a way to learn better if you do group work.
- I would like you to limit the percentage of group work evaluation. There are too many uncooperative students.
- Group work is one method for us to learn better.
- I had one professor who has us upload group chat messages on manaba so that the professor could see who participated in group work. I liked that method of evaluation and think that it should be implemented in classes with group work.
- Group work is particularly difficult to do in online classes. It is exceedingly difficult for some people not to turn on the video or microphone. I want you to force me to turn on the video instead of saying, "Please turn on the video if possible."

● "I don't agree" or "I don't agree at all"

- No qualitative data

Opinions from students include "free riders" and "language barriers" "are not learning methods for group work, but rather, just stress." For example, communication and sharing out work doesn't go well due to differences in language level among members. This happens frequently in the classes offered in English. The reason given is that domestic

I. Academic Aspects (Class Depth, classes, curriculum, etc.)

students are often unresponsive and uncooperative. Free riders are believed to exist out of the conviction that "even if I don't do my work, the other members will do it for me." Some students who, to all appearances, look to be active members are actually escaping from doing any work by telling their group, and especially the leaders, that they "don't understand how to do it." Thus, some classes include a peer review for group work in their grading, but there are also those that don't. However, while some classes direct students to hold discussions within their group and carry out a peer review, it is hard to believe that evaluations decided by discussion can be impartial.

■ Proposals

a. Method to decrease the language barriers

As some of the comments mentioned, there are a lot of cases where communication and work distribution are not done effectively due to different language levels between the members. This is common in English basis classes, the conflicts between the members often turn out to be between Japanese members not being responsive or cooperative.

Therefore we are proposing to the university to produce a better method of allowing students to take opposite language classes. One method of doing so is conducting interviews, having mandatory sessions before joining opposite language classes dealing with group works, or school can give short individual assignments so that the students taking their opposite language classes know what to expect and participate in the group work. Through interviews and assignments, the university will be able to minimize this issue between different language basis students.

b. Measures in regards to the free riders and peer review

Another major problem when it comes to group work is free-riders. It is impossible to avoid having free rides during group work, however, there are ways to minimize this issue. Although it may sound cliché, all the classes with group work must have a peer review and apply it to the student's grade massively. For instance, students may get an automatic F if the group members' peer review says that the member did not contribute at all. The reason behind the existence of the free-riders is that most of the time they are sure that other group members will do their parts as well even if they do not do it. Additionally, there are students who seem like active members, but, they tell the group and especially leaders that they do not know how to do it and are just getting away from the work.

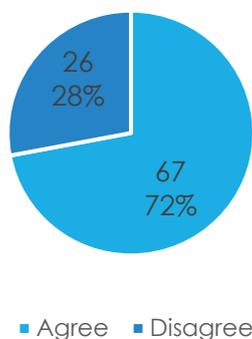
There are professors who make sure the peer review is included in the grades while some professors do not even have a peer review system. There are classes where they ask the students to do the peer review as a group, which is not going to be an efficient and honest peer review. The university should make a peer review system necessary if the class has group work. It would be even better if the university could make a detailed peer review form for professors to use if they do not have a specific method of asking the students to do the peer review. Considering how group works are considered important in APU, making peer review mandatory is vital.

Another measure mentioned in the students' comments regarding free-riders includes making it mandatory for students to turn on the camera in breakout rooms as well as placing TAs in the breakout rooms so that the breakout rooms can facilitate better.

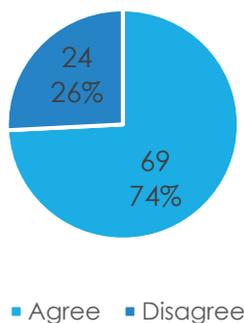
I. Academic Aspects (Class Depth, classes, curriculum, etc.)

■ Results and examination of additional survey in response to the above proposal

[Figure 2] Proposal a: Percentage "Agree" and "Disagree" regarding devising methods for reducing the language barrier (93 responses)



[Figure 3] Proposal b: Percentage "Agree" and "Disagree" regarding a peer review system for group work (93 responses)



With a total of 93 responses collected, both proposals received more than 70 percent of the agreement level. To mention the comments by the students for proposal A, a lot of students mentioned the negative impact on the other students if there are difficulties with communication. Some mentioned that it causes confusion if students are not cooperative and have trouble communicating with the group members. It is true that having mandatory sessions and setting certain limits for students to take opposite language classes may be challenging and not as easy as it sounds. However, measures need to be taken by the university to enhance the quality of the education the students are receiving. As for proposal B, especially with COVID 19 and online classes, a lot of students experienced group discussions done in silence. A standardized peer review system will be effective for classes with low quality or no peer review system to minimize the students impacted unfair grading and prevent free riders as well.

Proposal I-4

Grading Method

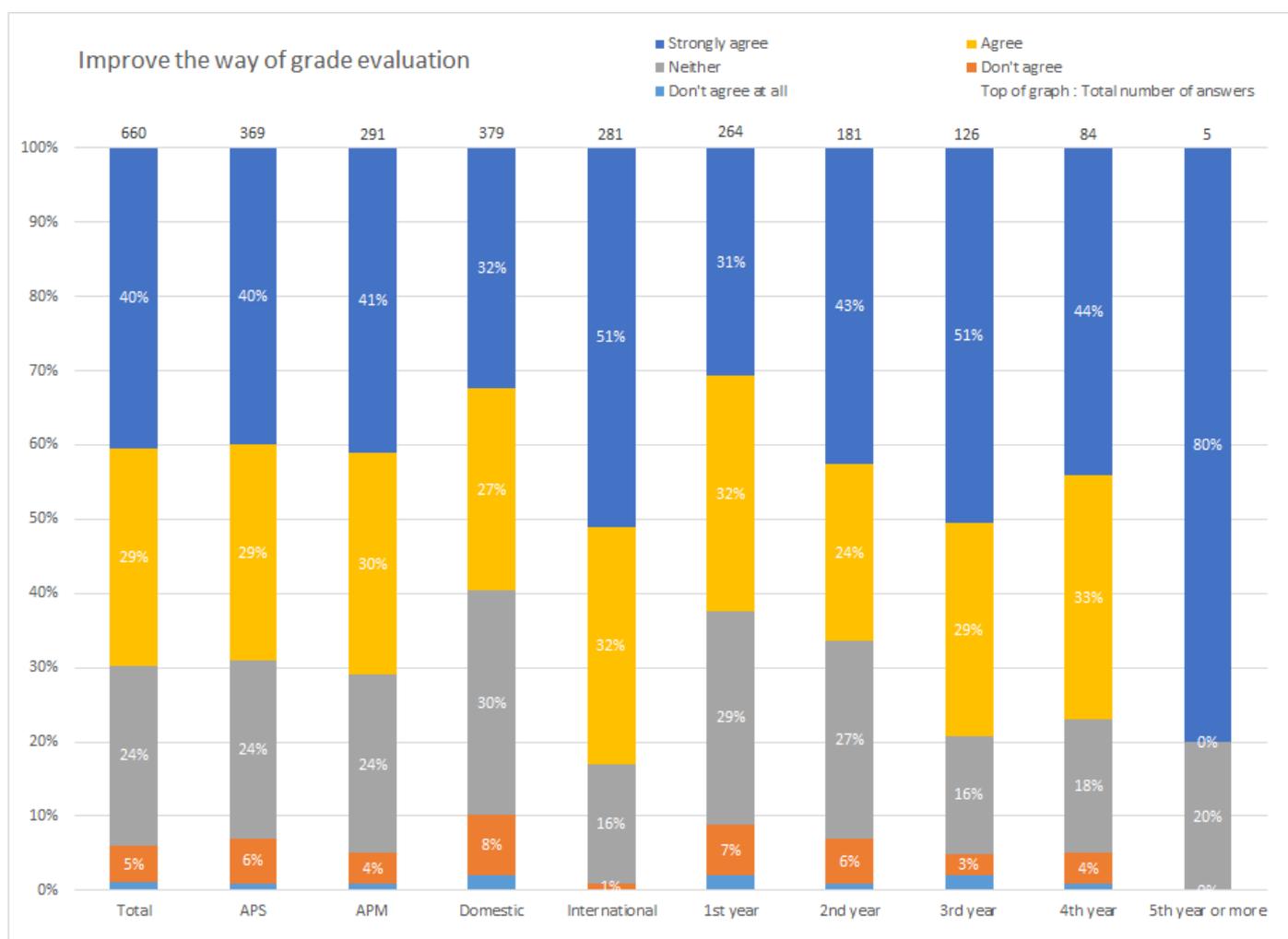
Problem Addressed

I want the grading method improved

1. Efficiency
2. Transparency

Data and Analysis of the Present Situation

[Figure 1] Level of agreement with "Improve the way of grade evaluation" (5-point scale), with the vertical axis representing %



To briefly talk about the current situation of APU in relation to the grading system, currently, in APU, there are two types of classes that either give letter graders from A-plus to F or Pass or Fail. Additionally, there are two ways of looking at the GPAs which are cumulative GPA and semester GPA, which are used to decide the priorities for the course registration every semester (Details on the Academic Handbook / Page 149~153).

Based on the survey results, a lot of students have complaints regarding the grading methods and system in APU. As shown on the chart, more than 69 percent of the students answered that there is room for the grading system to

I. Academic Aspects (Class Depth, classes, curriculum, etc.)

improve. To add on, there were a lot of students who were not satisfied with how the grading system is being managed now in APU. With the combination of the ideas from the comments and our academic team, we produced 2 main proposals regarding the grading system.

[Figure 2] Current grading method in APU

Letter Grades

Letter	Grade (%)	Pass / Fail
A+	90% or higher	Pass
A	80-89%	
B	70-79%	
C	60-69%	
F	59% or lower	Fail

Other Evaluation Codes

Code	Definition	Memo
P	Pass	Utilized in some subjects
T	Transfer	A maximum of 60 credits*
R	Approved for Re-registration	Credits are not counted
E	Exemption	Credits are not counted

*Credits transferred at the time of enrollment at APU do not count toward the 60 credit limit for 2nd or 3rd year transfer students ONLY.

Student Opinions (Total ??? responses = ???[Japanese] + ???[English])

● “I Strongly Agree” or “I Agree”

- Grading inquiry did not function for the benefits of students.
- Please fix the grading method, it is so broken and does not make sense.
- I wish I could actively track my grades in real time, some teachers do not post assignment grades at all on Manaba, and others just use different websites such as Cengage, etc. It makes calculating what my grade is difficult at times, and there is a way that this can be improved.
- I would like better transparency in gradings so to understand and improve myself through the better grasp of my mistakes.
- I would like professors to report our progress in the middle of the year to see where we stand regarding the potential final grades, so there will be less surprises.

● “Neither”

- I am satisfied with the courses offered at APU.
- I do not think I know much about what is good or bad because it is just the beginning.

I. Academic Aspects (Class Depth, classes, curriculum, etc.)

- **"I don't agree" or "I don't agree at all"**

- I think teachers have already demonstrated sufficient transparency in performance evaluation.

■ Proposals

a. Transparency of the grades

One of the key issues of APU's grading system is transparency. Students in APU can only see their final grade after more than a month the semester has ended. Additionally, there are a lot of professors who do not provide the details for the grades students receive in their quizzes, assignments, or exams. There are professors who says that the students should not make any comments or complain about the grades the students receives. How can the students send a grade inquiry if they do not know the grades for the assignments, quizzes, and tests that the students have been doing throughout the semester. This is crucial for the students to be able to calculate the scores by themselves and accept the score they get. In some of the classes, the scores for any submission are enclosed to students. The university should not think the students will accept the grades given unless details are provided for the grades given and change the systems so that it has a lot more transparency.

Lack of transparency demotivates students and causes worries for students. If the students can consistently check where they stand through the semester, it will help the students to know their place and is most likely to work harder for a better grade if they are falling behind.

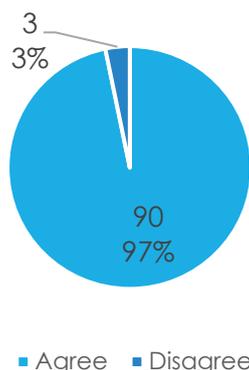
b. Flexibility of the grade inquiries

In APU, a grade inquiry system exists, however, it is not working as well as it should be. Although the students are allowed to submit a grade inquiry form, there are a lot of limitations to it. Additionally, as stated on the Academic Office's website, even if the professor changes the students' grades, it is only applied to the student's GPA after the Course registration period B has passed. Considering how APU's course registration system is based on the GPA divided into different priorities, first-come-first-basis system, this must be fixed. APU should allow more flexibility in terms of grade inquiry. The professors should be able to have more authority when it comes to giving or changing grades. Finally, if the grade inquiry is accepted, it should be reflected in the grades received as soon as possible as it may change the time of course registration and the course the student can take for the following semester.

I. Academic Aspects (Class Depth, classes, curriculum, etc.)

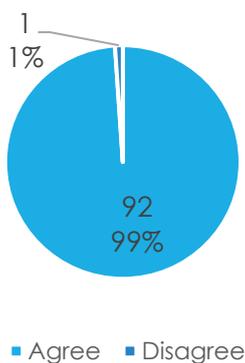
■ Results and examination of additional survey in response to the above proposal

[Figure 3] Proposal a: Percentage "Agree" and "Disagree" regarding increasing grading transparency (93 responses)



With 97 percent of the students agreeing with the transparency issue, this proposal received a lot of support from the students. Most of the students showed a sense of high agreement through the comments as well. With the grades being shared to the students, students will be able to accept and understand the reason for receiving the grades that get on the final report. Feedback and grades given to the students will definitely help the majority to learn and develop a deeper understanding throughout the courses.

[Figure 4] Proposal b: Percentage "Agree" and "Disagree" regarding flexible handling for grade inquiries (93 responses)



With 99 percent of an agreement on proposal b, the flexibility of the grade inquiry must be considered by the university. The main point of proposal b is that the grade inquiry system that currently exists is inconvenient. As the number of the students agreeing on this proposal shows, it would be greatly helpful to the students if this proposal is considered and implemented.

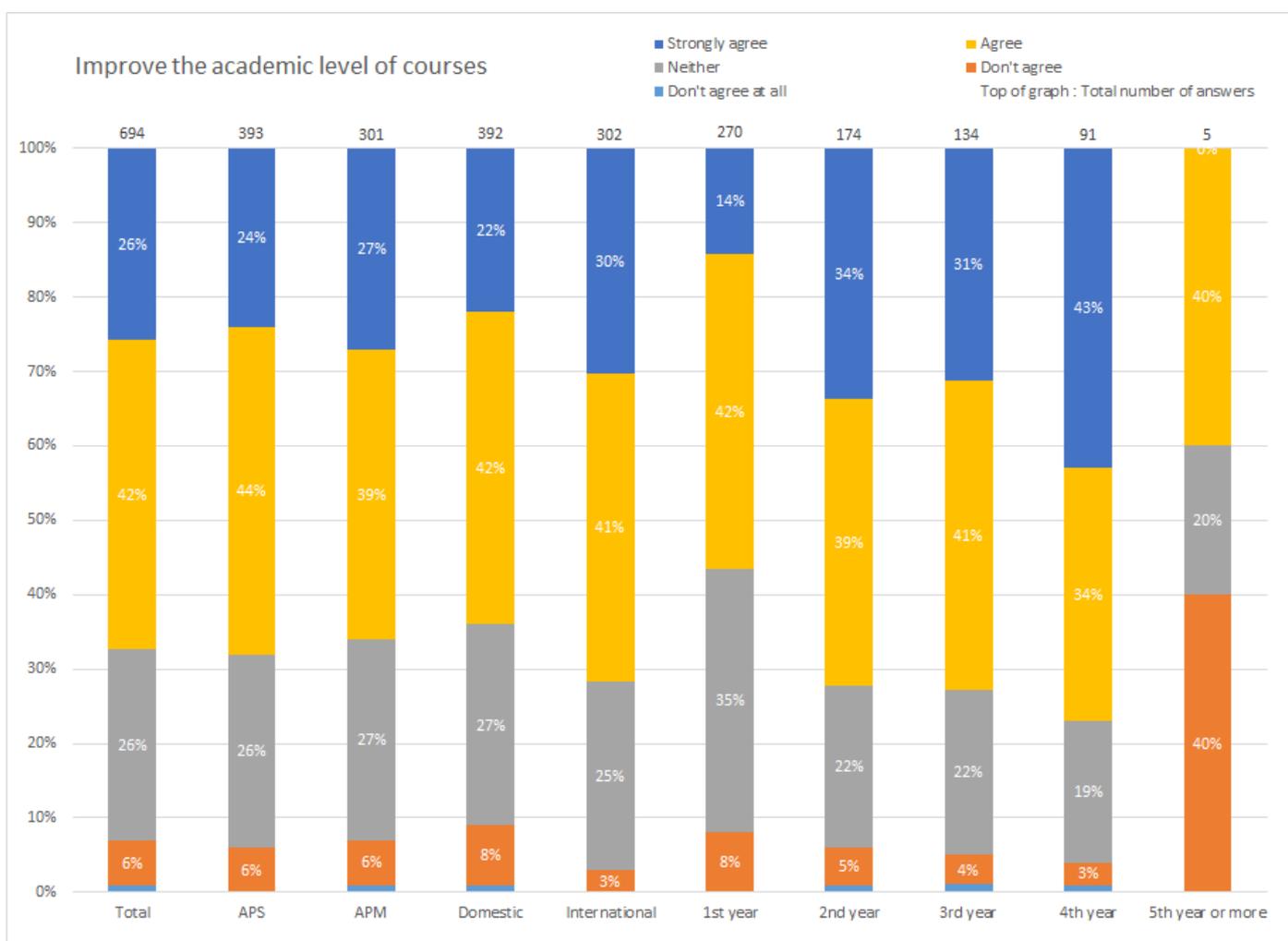
Proposal I-5 Depth of Learning (1)

■ Problem Addressed

1. Lack of quality of the courses
2. Poor instructor's teaching method
3. Small quantity of specialized lectures and major subjects

■ Data and Analysis of the Present Situation

[Figure 1] Level of agreement with "Improve the academic level of courses" (5-point scale), with the vertical axis representing %



The overall response rate of "agree" or "strongly agree" was 66%. Regarding the degree of agreement (5-point scale), the percentage of respondents who agreed with the statement decreased as the grade level decreased as the number of regenerative students increased, and the percentage of respondents who agreed with "undergraduate" and "domestic / international" (5-point scale). The ratios are about the same.

I. Academic Aspects (Class Depth, classes, curriculum, etc.)

Student Opinions (Total ??? responses = ???[Japanese] + ???[English])

- **“I Strongly Agree” or “I Agree”**
 - APU courses were too easy, too general, and not beneficial for them.
 - Some professors are not up to par as their teaching’s method. Some professors only read slides while lecturing and often give one-way lectures.
 - APU has a lot of inflexible courses and limited variety.
 - APU to increase the number of specialized lectures. The university policy transformation on the flexibility of taking 200s and 300s courses, regardless of the grade.

- **“Neither”**
 - Satisfied with the current academic system.

- **“I don't agree" or "I don't agree at all”**
 - The lessons at APU are good enough.

■ Proposals

a. Increase the quality of the learning material

To improve the quality of its courses, APU must

- Involve all relevant parties in the process of making the syllabus, including instructors and student representative to gather various ideas and perspectives from all parties. By applying this method, APU could produce a high-quality of class contents.
- Prioritizing practical learning over theory because students need more concrete examples that they can learn and apply in the future.

b. Broaden the opportunity for students to take various specialized lectures and major subjects

To remedy the situation where there is a limited quantity of specialized lectures and major subjects, APU should increase the number of it by hiring some new instructors to teach in the new additional subjects. The second solution is to give extra responsibilities for current instructors to lecture in additional classes but this is not a productive idea as most of the instructors have taught for several subjects and they may not teach well as they will be exhausted both physically and mentally.

c. Special/additional training for APU instructors to improve their teaching method

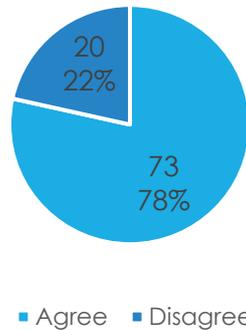
As one of the major academic problems is the quality of the instructors’ teaching method, it is necessary for APU to do monthly special training for all the instructors to improve their teaching skills. APU could invite an education

I. Academic Aspects (Class Depth, classes, curriculum, etc.)

consultation or another professional to give training to the instructors. An interactive teaching method should be applied by every instructor to create an active class ambience.

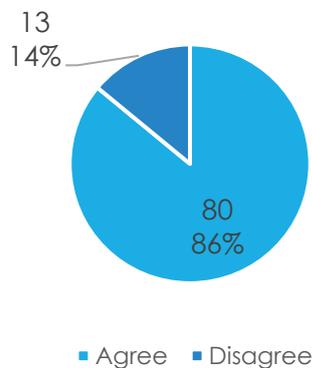
■ Results and examination of additional survey in response to the above proposal

[Figure 2] Proposal a: Percentage "Agree" and "Disagree" regarding increasing quality of courses (93 responses)



The additional survey response about the proposal to increase the quality of learning material was overwhelmingly positive with 78% (78 respondents) agreeing.

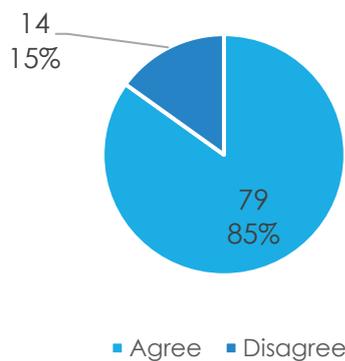
[Figure 3] Proposal b: Percentage "Agree" and "Disagree" regarding increasing opportunities to take special lectures and major subjects (93 responses)



The additional survey response about the proposal to broaden the opportunity for students to take various specialized lectures and major subjects was overwhelmingly positive with 86% (80 respondents) agreeing.

I. Academic Aspects (Class Depth, classes, curriculum, etc.)

[Figure 4] Proposal c: Percentage "Agree" and "Disagree" regarding training to improve faculty teaching methods (93 responses)



The additional survey response about the proposal to hold special/additional training for APU instructors to improve their teaching method was overwhelmingly positive with 85% (79 respondents) agreeing.

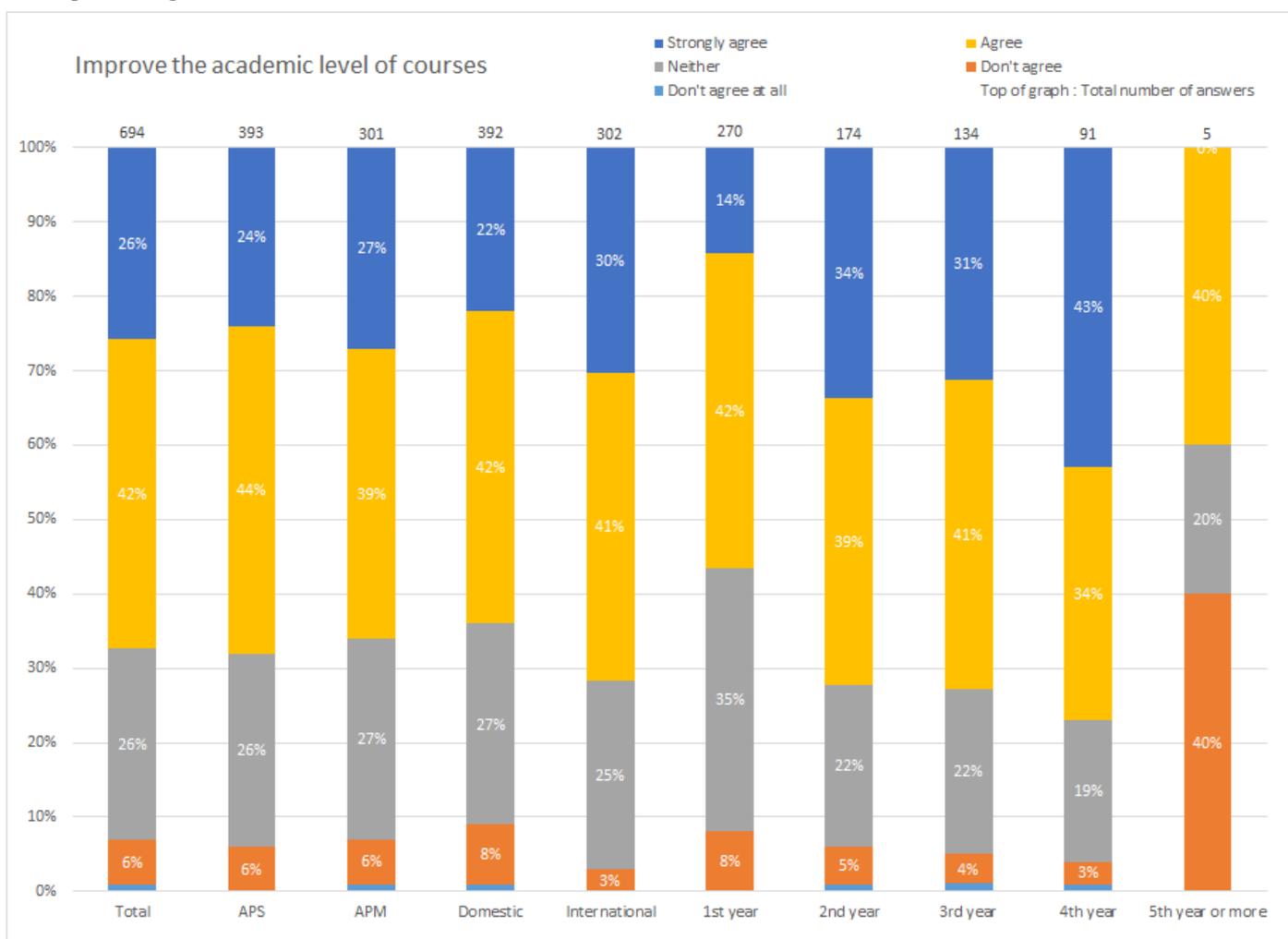
Proposal I-6 Depth of Learning (2)

■ Problem Addressed

1. Low level of academic standards

■ Data and Analysis of the Present Situation

[Figure 1] Level of agreement with "Improve the academic level of courses" (5-point scale), with the vertical axis representing %



The total response rate of "Agree" and "Strongly agree" is 68%. It can also be read that the percentage of respondents who answered "do not agree" or "do not agree at all" was exceedingly small (less than 8%), except for the 5th year students and above who gave 7 responses.

Student Opinions (Total ??? responses = ???[Japanese] + ???[English])

● "I Strongly Agree" or "I Agree"

- I do not learn anything new, it's too easy, and it is boring. (47 similar opinions)

I. Academic Aspects (Class Depth, classes, curriculum, etc.)

- I would like to see more specialization, I would like to see more fields of study, and I would like to see more courses in my major. (23 similar opinions)
 - There is a problem with classes that consist of just reading slides, professors often give one-way lectures, and more group work is needed. (69 similar opinions)
 - I want to be able to take courses in the 200s and 300s regardless of grade, and I want more specialized lectures. (36 similar opinions)
 - Other comments included suggestions about the motivation of professors and students, disadvantages caused by international accreditation, and a desire for face-to-face classes.
- **“Neither”**
 - Satisfied or agree with improving the quality of teaching but concerned that it may cause some students to lag behind. (46 similar opinions)
 - **“I don't agree" or "I don't agree at all”**
 - I want to desire to maintain the current status. (15 similar opinions)

Given that 68% of all students agree and that only 6% of students disagree, it is not simply that course quality is low, but also that the issues are exceedingly complex, such as lack of substance in subjects in the major fields and dissatisfaction with the course system. Further, oftentimes course quality depends on the instructor and aiming for improvements across APU as a whole is not a simple matter. Therefore, this proposal will focus on methods for making the most of the class evaluation surveys conducted at the end of each semester without touching on course content or the course system.

Currently, APU conducts student surveys when courses end and those results are shared on the Academic Office's website.⁵ However, only multiple-choice-type responses are shared; comments are not shared, and students are not permitted to know those details. Thus, even if students submit comments, it is difficult to know if those opinions are actually reflected in courses or not. Further, results from only 25 of the 31 items on the survey are shared on the Academic Office's website. The 6 items not shared are ones that compare courses in terms of course pace and degree of difficulty, amount of homework, study time required, etc.

■ Proposals

Based on interview with the Division of Academic Affairs, we propose the following:

- a. **Make the results of the remaining six items of the class evaluation questionnaire available, which are not currently available.**

To collect a large amount of data, the questionnaire should be selective in nature, and sharing it would provide information about the opinions of the entire class, which is necessary for both professors who want to improve their

⁵ Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University (2021). *Academic Office*. Retrieved from Class Evaluation Survey:

<<https://en.apu.ac.jp/academic/page/content0324.html/?c=17>>

I. Academic Aspects (Class Depth, classes, curriculum, etc.)

courses and students who are considering taking them. The fact that students responded to 31 questions and wrote freely indicates that they are likely to have dissatisfaction with the class and suggestions for effective improvement of the class content, which are valuable opinions. By making the results available to the public, students will be able to choose their courses more appropriately, and professors will be able to tackle their lectures with a sense of urgency, which will lead to improvements in the quality of each class. The same is true for publishing the results of the six responses for which results are not currently shared.

■ Results and examination of additional survey in response to the above proposal

No additional surveys were conducted regarding this proposal.

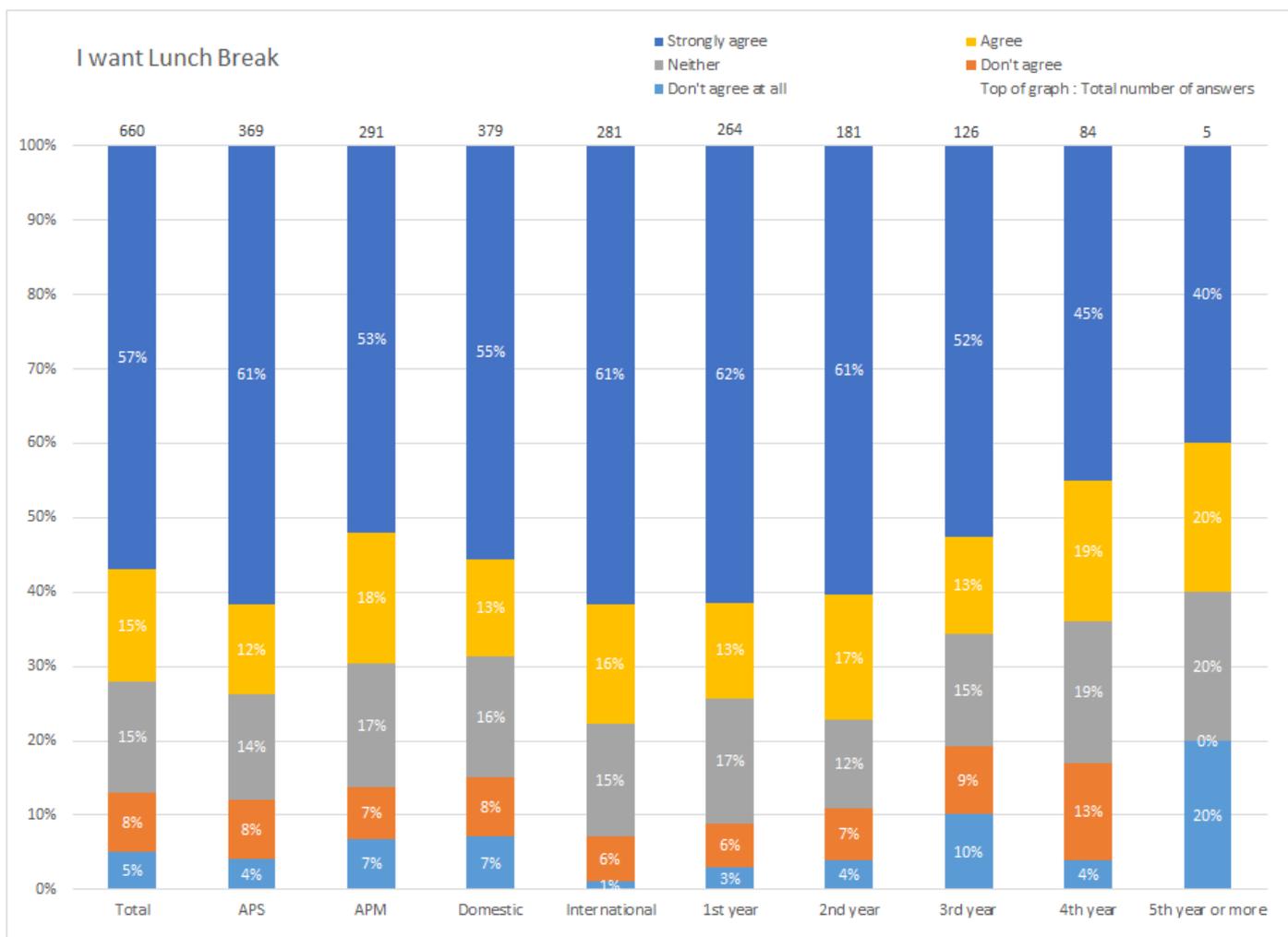
Proposal I-7 Timetable

■ Problem Addressed

1. Lack of Time for Lunch

■ Data and Analysis of the Present Situation

[Figure 1] Level of agreement with "I want a lunch break" (5-point scale), with the vertical axis representing %



"Agree" and "Strongly Agree" combined comprise 72% of all responses. Further, as regards the response rate for degree of agreement (on a 5-point scale) by "student year," the percentage who agree declines as the student year increases; also, the response rate for degree of agreement (on a 5-point scale) is nearly the same for each category: "college" and "domestic/international."

First, starting with AY2021 Spring Semester, all classes at Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University (hereinafter, APU) were changed to 100 minutes in length. At the same time, the break after second period was changed to 15 minutes (other than after second period, all breaks are 10 minutes). Student opinions on the "Lunch Break" for this timetable follow.

I. Academic Aspects (Class Depth, classes, curriculum, etc.)

Student Opinions (Total ??? responses = ???[Japanese] + ???[English])

● "I Strongly Agree" or "I Agree"

- I cannot eat lunch in 15 minutes (10+10 similar opinions)
- For newer students as well as APM students who have a lot of required courses, the timetable is packed, and it is often impossible to eat all day (5+3 similar comments)
- I cannot find time to have or make lunch because I have a lot of classes to attend (5+3 similar opinions)
- When I cannot eat lunch, I feel sick, its unhealthy- I lose weight, my rhythm is irregular (5+3 similar opinions)
- Without a lunch break (and often without lunch), it is difficult to concentrate in class, or rest well, we get sleepy, lose efficiency, feel tired, and have poor mental health (13+12 similar opinions)

● "Neither"

- While I would like to avoid this because a lunch break would lower the class time, some students have difficulty concentrating in consecutive classes (1+0 similar opinions)
- No problem if there is a lunch break or not (0+1 similar opinions)
- My current class is online, so I do not know about lunch break (0+1 similar opinions)

● "I don't agree" or "I don't agree at all"

- I think the introduction of a lunch break will reduce the time for circles (1+0 similar opinions)
- Lunch break is non desirable because it will lead to concentrated use of the cafeteria (3+0 similar opinions)
- I do not want to have a lunch break because it would make me come home late (2+1 similar opinions)
- Now that there's online classes, there is no need for a lunch break (1+0 similar opinions)
- Lunch break is not necessary. It is not a problem if you schedule your classes well (1+0 similar opinions)

Many students (72% of all students) agreed with the idea of offering a lunch break, and one of the major reasons they gave for this was "we don't have time to eat lunch." As things are, because "the classes we want to register for, and particularly required subjects for underclassmen, run one after another" (8 similar opinions), "it's hard to fit lunch into such a short time as 15 minutes" (20 similar opinions). "Lack of ability to focus on class," "lost weight," and "irregular rhythm of daily life" are the impacts that go hand-in-hand with this. Of course, there are also some students who don't agree with the idea of offering a lunch break. However, if a lunch break is offered, "the time available for circles will decrease," "use of the cafeteria will be concentrated," and "we will get home later in the day" (7 similar opinions); we understood there is much that is negative.

From this point you can use any outside reference points for the data such as outside universities for comparisons to APU. Let us look at the status of timetables at other universities.

I. Academic Aspects (Class Depth, classes, curriculum, etc.)

< the current status of timetables at other universities >

Name of univ.	Number of hours	Start and end time	Class hours and breaks
Ritsumeikan univ. ⁶	1-6	9:00-21:10	90min class time, 40min lunch break, 15min rest time
Nanzan univ. ⁷	1-5	9:10-19:05	100min class time, 50min lunch break, 15min rest time
Toyo univ. ⁸	1-7	9:00-21:25	90min class time, 50min lunch break, 15min rest time between 4 th and 5 th period (10min between 1 st and 2 nd period, 6 th and 7 th period only)
Shibaura Institute of Technology ⁹	1-6	9:00-20:30	100min class time, 50min lunch break, 10min rest time

■ Proposals

Based on interviews with both the Division of Academic Affairs and the CO-OP, we propose the following:

a. Using empty classrooms, we would offer a shop like the House CO-OP and several spaces for eating

If we provide time for a lunch break, the cafeteria will be packed and also, currently it's difficult to reach out to external providers of food and drink. However, we propose making space to sell CO-OP bento lunches and such since we have received word from the CO-OP on campus that they will work with us. Additionally, it is thought that we can also avoid having people gather in just the cafeteria by using empty classrooms.

b. Have Instructors Innovate Teaching Methods

【Concrete Proposal】

- Have them respect the end time for the class
- Have instructors wrap up class a little early to facilitate students moving to their next classroom (class).

⁶ Ritsumeikan University (n.d.) "Academic Calendar/Class Starting Time" "Ritsumeikan University Learning Support Site" (online) Retrieved 2021.9.2 <http://www.ritsumei.ac.jp/pathways-future/course/calendar.html/>>

⁷ Robert Kisala (2020) "Changes in the AY2021 Schedule of Class Times and Class Days (Notification)" p. 1-5.

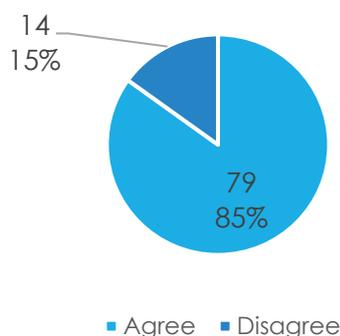
⁸ < <https://www.toyo.ac.jp/academics/student-support/jyugyou/octime/hakusan/>>

⁹ Shibaura Institute of Technology (n.d.) "Student Life" "Shibaura Institute of Technology website" (online) Retrieved 2021.9.2 <https://www.shibaura-it.ac.jp/campus_life/class/schedule.html>

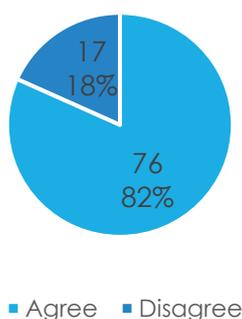
I. Academic Aspects (Class Depth, classes, curriculum, etc.)

■ Results and examination of additional survey in response to the above proposal

[Figure 2] Proposal a: Percentage "Agree" and "Disagree" regarding securing spaces for meals (93 responses)



[Figure 3] Proposal b: Percentage "Agree" and "Disagree" regarding having instructors innovate teaching methods (93 responses)



Student Opinions (Total ??? responses = ???[Japanese] + ???[English])

- Break times are short and we can't relax; they are too short (3 similar opinions)
- We'd like an explanation for why classes were changed to 100 minutes in length (2 similar opinions)
- Often I only manage to eat a light meal and I can't get enough nutrition; sometimes I forego meals altogether (2 similar opinions)
- It's good because students are getting better at time management. It doesn't bother me (2 similar opinions)

The results of the follow-up survey were similar to those of the original questionnaire.

II. Learning Support Services

Proposal II-1

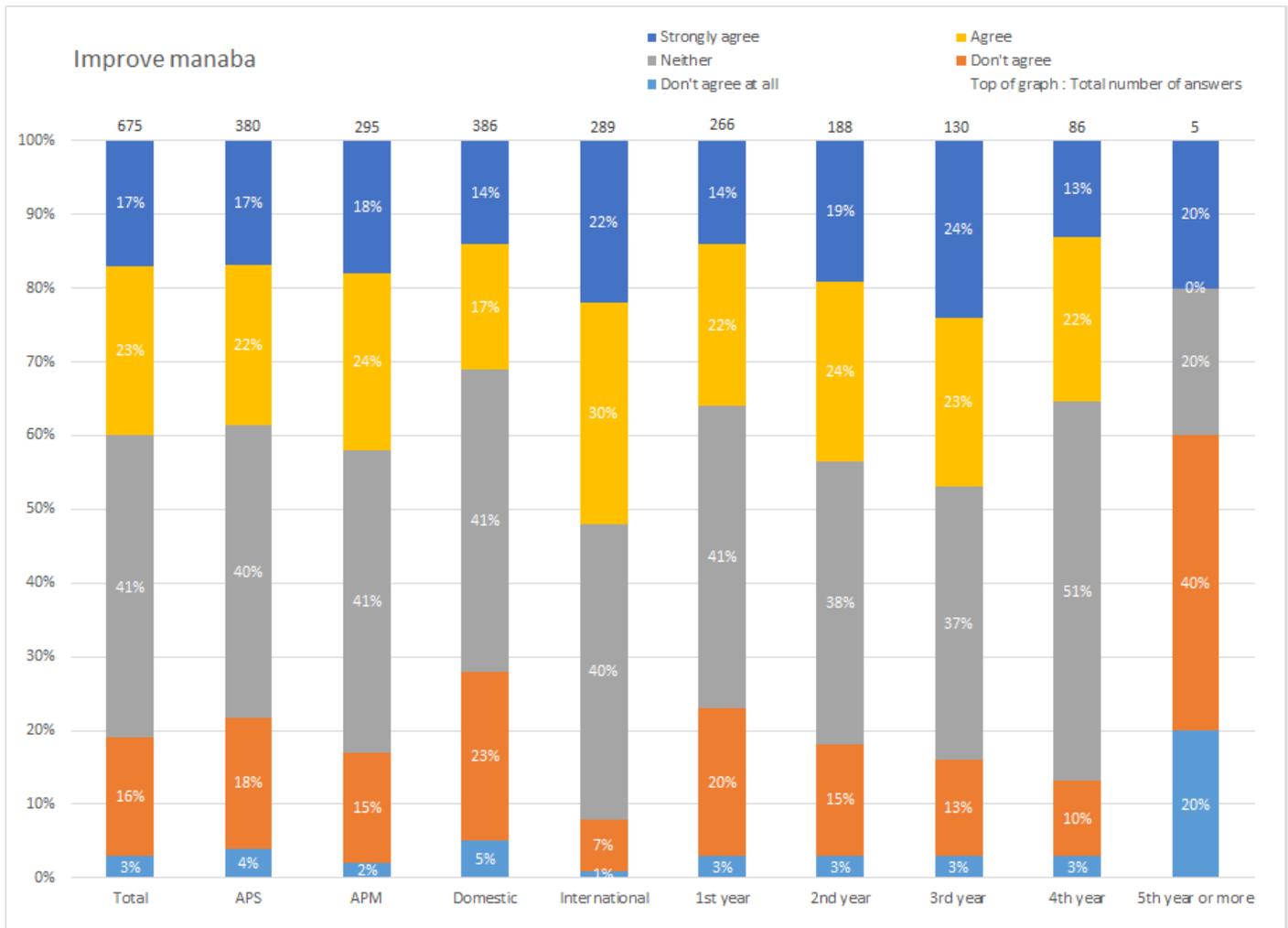
IT Support Services

Problem Addressed

1. What do students find inconvenient about IT services?
2. What are some ways to improve them?

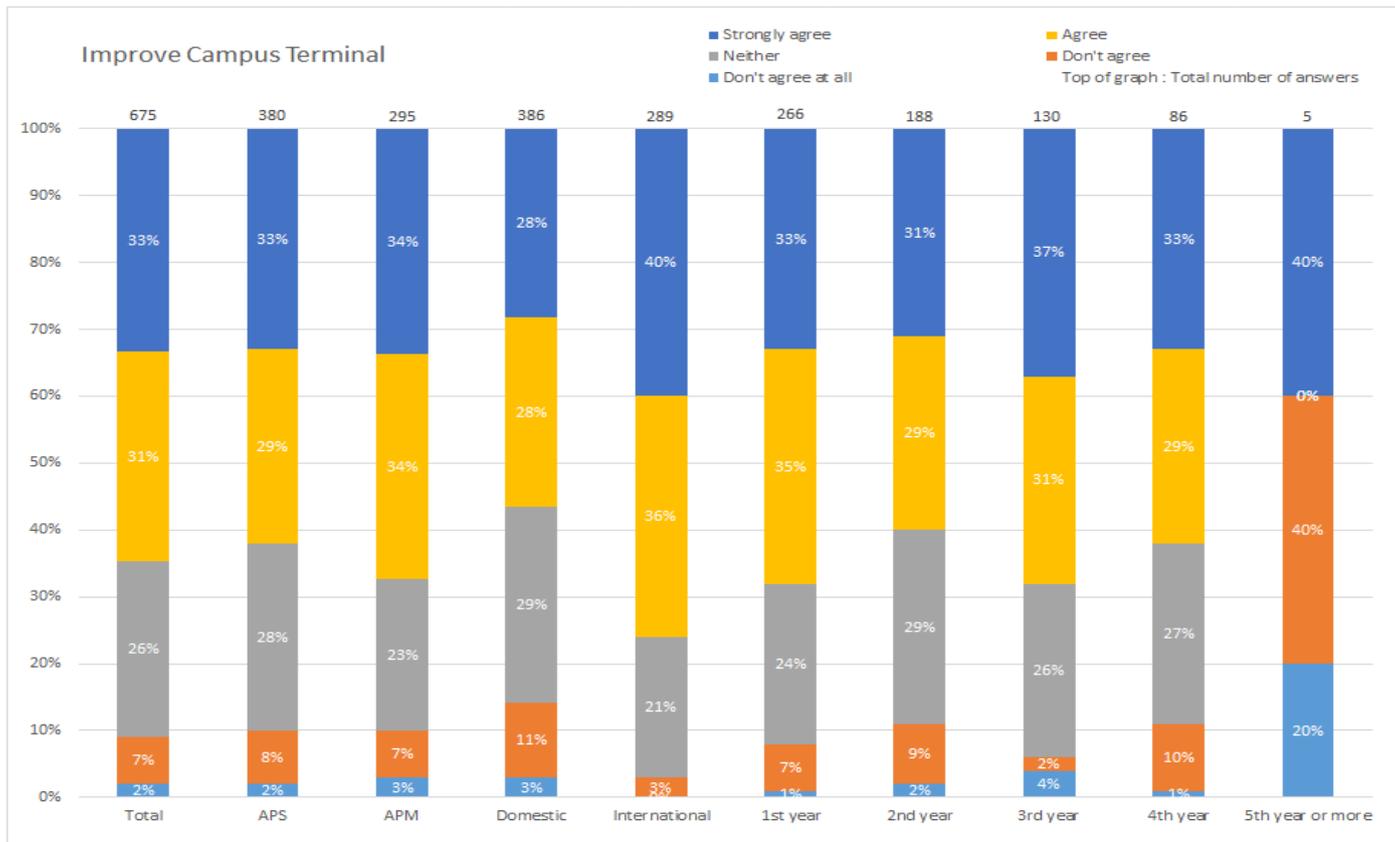
Data and Analysis of the Present Situation

[Figure 1] Level of agreement with "Improve manaba" (5-point scale), with the vertical axis representing %

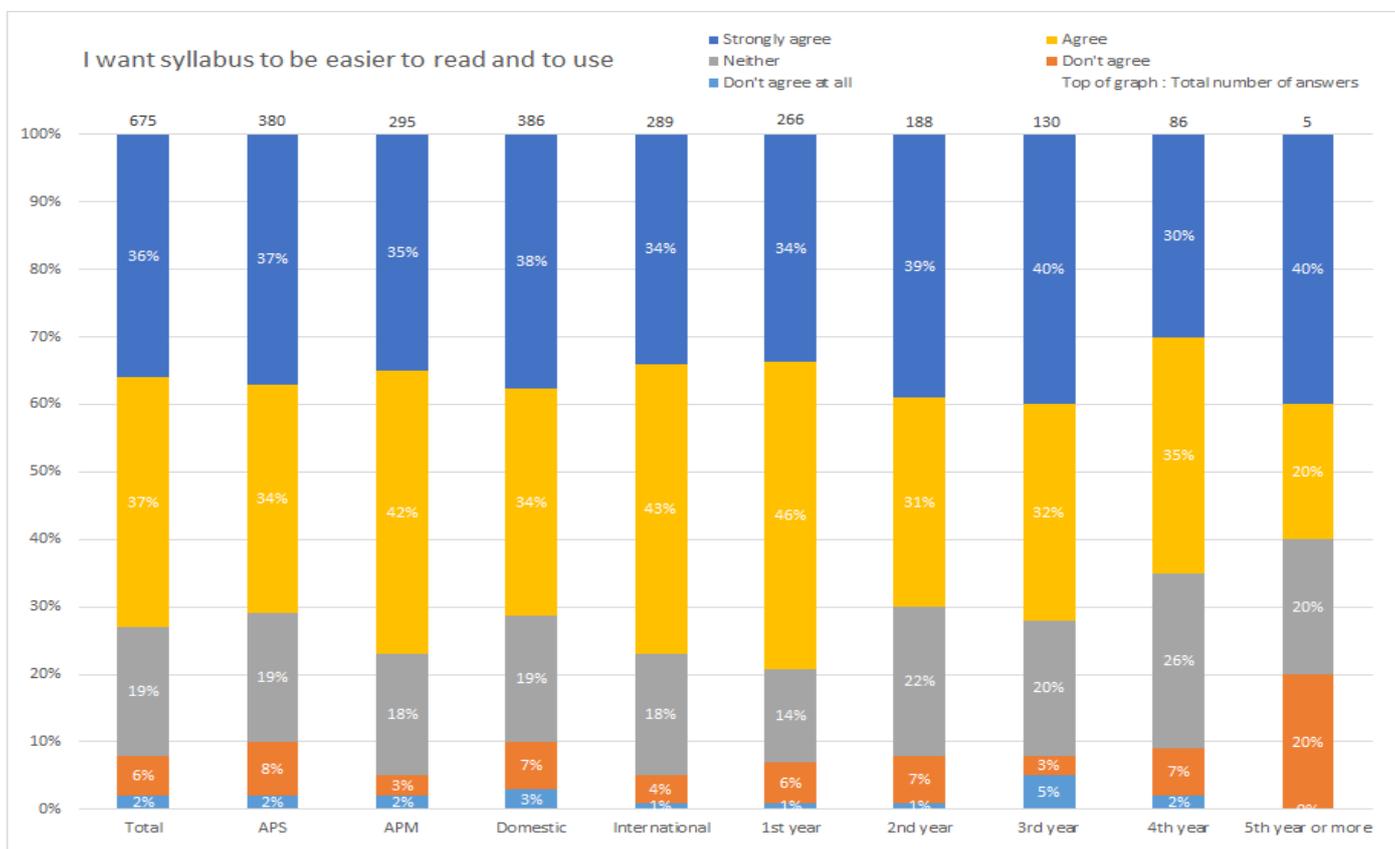


II. Learning Support Services

[Figure 2] Level of agreement with "Improve Campus Terminal" (5-point scale), with the vertical axis representing %



[Figure 3] Level of agreement with "I want syllabus to be easier to read and to use" (5-point scale), with the vertical axis representing %



II. Learning Support Services

Student Opinions (Total ??? responses = ???[Japanese] + ???[English])

● manaba

- A voice was raised questioning the continued display of subjects that have been completed. (35 similar opinions)
- A professor uses a platform other than manaba. (14 similar opinions)
- I want the email addresses of TAs and professors to be listed in manaba. (3 similar opinions)
- I want to be notified of deadlines and additional information. (9 similar opinions)

● Campus Terminal

- Requests for updates due to difficulty in use and viewing (251 similar opinions)
- It is simply difficult to use, and the UI is outdated. (134 similar opinions)
- It is too much trouble to go to the website. (23 similar opinions)
- There is too much information, and it is hard to see. (27 similar opinions)
- It is confused with job hunting and other activities. I want to manage it in a separate folder. (29 similar opinions)
- The site is heavy and slow. (25 similar opinions)
- I am immediately asked to log in again. (13 similar opinions)
- Requests for specific functions to be added (123 similar opinions)
- I would like to be notified of important notices to you and real-time notices from the university. (89 similar opinions)
- Add a button to change language. (5 similar opinions)
- I would like to see the addition of a pin function and a favourite function. (19 similar opinions)
- I want to delete unnecessary e-mails. (6 similar opinions)
- Please stop resending cancelled messages. (4 similar opinions)

● Syllabus

- It is difficult to search. (42 similar opinions)
- Information is updated too slowly. (18 similar opinions)

● Others

- I want them to be combined into one app. (3 similar opinions)

manaba

Regarding manaba, the users have already been notified about the updated information and they are satisfied with the UI. The most common comment was the handling of completed lectures. Currently, professors decide whether to keep completed lectures on manaba or not, so the solution depends on them. Some students said that they would like to see the handling of these lectures unified, and that they would like to see the completed lectures moved to a different folder. Other students tended to ask for more detailed updates, such as notification of deadlines and the email addresses of TAs and professors. In addition to the UI, some students asked the university to unify the use of platforms other than manaba, such as Microsoft OneNote and Facebook, or to stop using multiple platforms because it is complicated for students.

II. Learning Support Services

Campus Terminal

Regarding Campus Terminal, the majority of the 250 comments (the total opinions about Campus Terminal in the open comments section) were about the difficulty of using the UI and the difficulty of viewing the information. These comments included information, outdated UI, difficulty in using the site, and difficulty in finding necessary information. In addition to UI updates, there were 123 requests for specific functions to be added. There were also requests to organize necessary information, and to separate necessary or unnecessary information, cancelled information, and information on job hunting into folders.

Syllabus

Regarding syllabus, the most common comment was that it was difficult to search (42 responses). There was also a report that the information was not updated quickly enough, which sometimes interfered with course registration.

■ Proposals

Online classes started in 2020 due to the spread of the coronavirus, and information sharing among students is becoming increasingly important. On the other hand, communication among students is decreasing due to online classes. Therefore, based on the nature of classes and the importance of information, it is necessary to update the IT services and adapt them to the environment with new IT services, as well as to improve the university life of students. Therefore, based on the opinions of students, we have several recommendations on the future of IT services and their updates.

a. Modification of IT services

manaba

- Enable deletion of the display of finished lectures.
- Display of email addresses of TAs and professors.

Campus Terminal

- UI improvements.
- Extension of the time before you are asked to log in again.
- Change in handling of cancelled emails.

Syllabus

- Changes to the search method
- Thorough updating of syllabus so that it does not interfere with registration.

b. IT services functional addition

manaba

- Notification of due dates and deadlines.

II. Learning Support Services

- Allow lectures to be categorized by folders, etc.

Campus Terminal

- Categorize emails and information by folders, etc.
- Add pin function and favourite function.
- Enable deletion of unnecessary emails.
- Add a function to notify only necessary information.

c. Unification of IT service function

manaba

- Unification of handling of completed lectures.
- Unify assignment submission method with manaba.

■ Results and examination of additional survey in response to the above proposal

No additional surveys were conducted regarding this proposal.

* Ritsumeikan Univeristy (2021). *Ritsumeikan Univeristy*. Retrieved October 2021, from IT service:

<<http://www.ritsumei.ac.jp/rainbow/>>

II. Learning Support Services

Proposal II-2

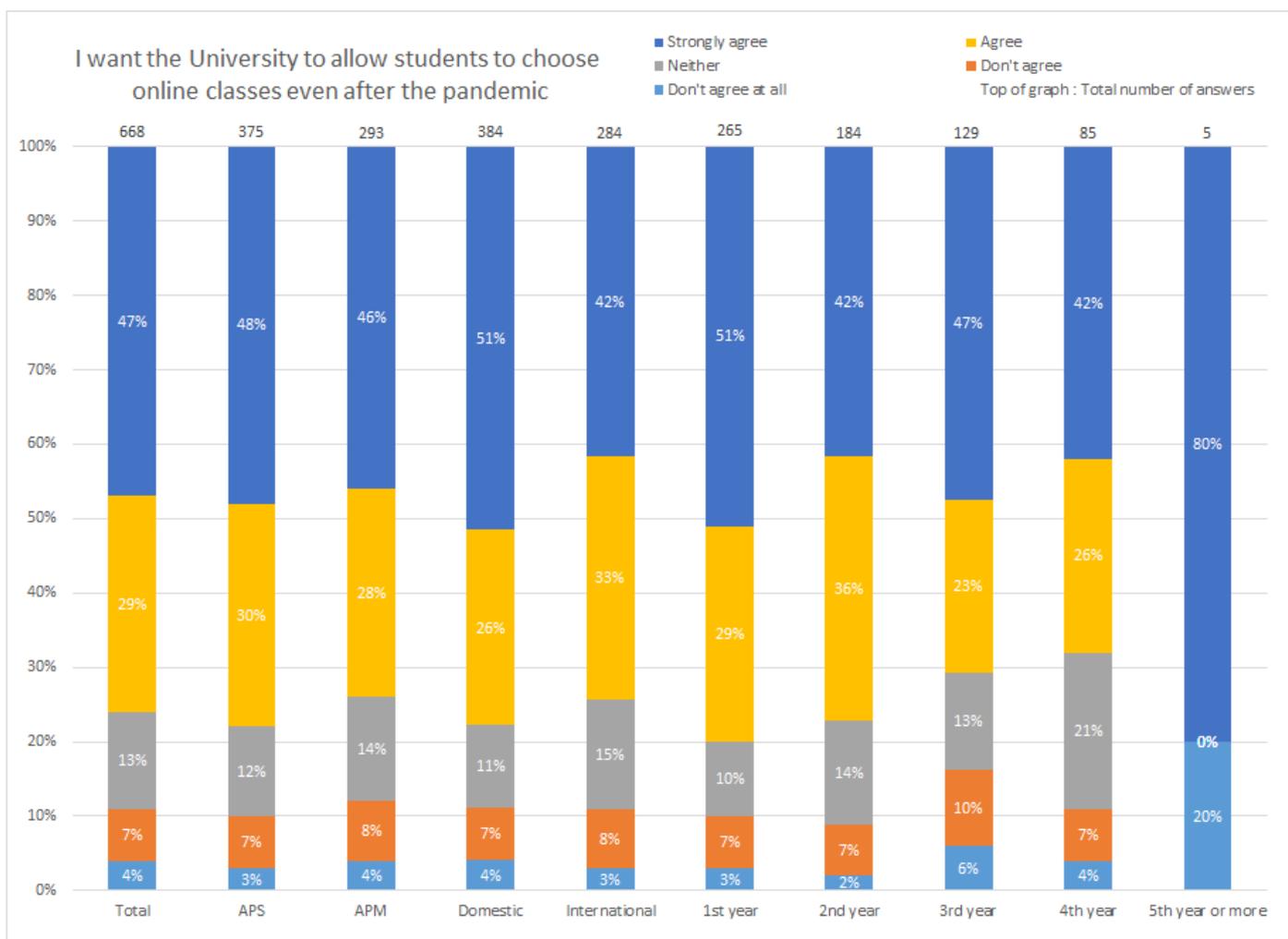
Online Classes

■ Problem Addressed

1. Do students want to have the choice to choose Online classes in the future?

■ Data and Analysis of the Present Situation

[Figure 1] Level of agreement with "I want the University to allow students to choose online classes even after the pandemic" (5-point scale), with the vertical axis representing %



Student Opinions (Total ??? responses = ???[Japanese] + ???[English])

● "I Strongly Agree" or "I Agree"

- Please do not eliminate the option for people who are job hunting, sick, or overseas because they can take classes at home without having to go to campus. (13+6 similar opinions)
- Students can make better use of their time by reducing travel time. (4+0 similar opinions)
- There are universities such as the University of Minerva and the University of the people where all classes are conducted online, and online classes alone are sufficient to deepen my understanding. Therefore, it would be better

II. Learning Support Services

to improve the quality of the classes rather than the format. (1+0 similar opinions)

- Because I am afraid of corona. (6+2 similar opinions)
- The corona increased the number of new class formats, such as online classes, and I saw many advantages, so I think it would be good if it were implemented again in the future. (3+2 similar opinions)

● “Neither”

- Most of the classes I take are online, so I cannot compare. (1+0 similar opinions)
- It would be good to have some students who take online classes and some who take face-to-face classes. (2+0 similar opinions)
- I agree that online classes should remain, but if we do not promote face-to-face classes, the campus will not come back to life (1+0 similar opinions)
- I agree with online classes, but I do not know if online classes make me lazy. (0+1 similar opinions)

● “I don't agree” or “I don't agree at all”

- If we want to restore APU's international environment, we should not make online classes an option. (2+0 similar opinions)
- Offline is a hassle, but if you include concentration, offline is better. (1+0 similar opinions)
- I agree with the idea of taking classes online because of job hunting, but it is necessary to have direct interaction with peers and professors in education, so it should be offline unless there is a special reason. (0+1 similar opinions)

Many students (76% of all students) agreed that they would like the option to choose online classes in the future, too. At present, as their reason for this they said, "they are easy to attend for those job hunting or who aren't feeling well, and also for students located abroad" (19 similar opinions). Also, "since they've gone to the trouble of creating this new class format and it's been noticed that there are some advantages, there's no reason to get rid of it, is there?" (5 similar opinions). At the same time, we understand that there are also some negative opinions, such as "I can't concentrate" and "there won't be any return of school spirit."

Class Format

Currently, classes at APU are conducted either online or in a hybrid format. In comparison to Ritsumeikan University, which is also an educational corporation, Ritsumeikan University¹⁰ has face-to-face classes, online classes, and on-demand classes. Students responded that the on-demand classes were good because they allowed them to study at their own pace.

About Absence Criteria¹¹

¹⁰ Ritsumeikan University (2021). *Ritsumeikan University*. Retrieved from Study Support Site: <
<http://www.ritsumei.ac.jp/pathways-future/course/web-based.html/>>

¹¹ Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University (2021). *Academic Office*. Retrieved from Class Absences:
< <https://www.apu.ac.jp/academic/page/content0016.html/?c=17>>

II. Learning Support Services

At APU, if you need to be absent from work for one to three weeks due to injury or illness, you can apply to the office with a doctor's note or medical certificate and receipts for treatment. In the case of bereavement, the absence must be within 7 days (including Sundays and holidays) for first degree relatives and within 5 days (including Sundays and holidays) for second degree relatives and must be accompanied by a funeral certificate or official death certificate. If a student is absent for an extended period, he or she may withdraw from all courses registered for that quarter, semester, or session. If a student does not attend at least three-fourths of the total number of classes, no credit will be granted.

■ Proposals

Online classes began in 2020 due to the spread of the coronavirus. Initially, the class format was designed to cope with the spread of the virus, but this format has many advantages, as noted above. It is true that schools have been providing an environment that is easy to learn in face-to-face classes, but by increasing the options of where and how to learn according to the environment, we can provide opportunities for more people to learn, and students can learn more efficiently. If students are absent due to health problems or job hunting, they will be late for class and learning will be hindered.

Combining the advantages of online and hybrid classes with the problems of face-to-face classes, the following are recommendations for future class formats.

a. Make online classes an option

- The use of school facilities should be included in the tuition fee, so the option of face-to-face classes should always be included in the class format.
- Since there are people who have difficulty adjusting their schedules due to job hunting, etc., and people who are physically weak, hybrid classes, online classes, and on-demand classes should be available.

b. Incorporate on-demand classes

- Make more assignments for on-demand classes, as some students may not be able to see what they are working on and may not take them seriously without watching the videos.
- To equalize the learning achievement of all students, the final exam and report should be the same whether it is a face-to-face class or a hybrid class.

■ Results and examination of additional survey in response to the above proposal

No additional surveys were conducted regarding this proposal.

II. Learning Support Services

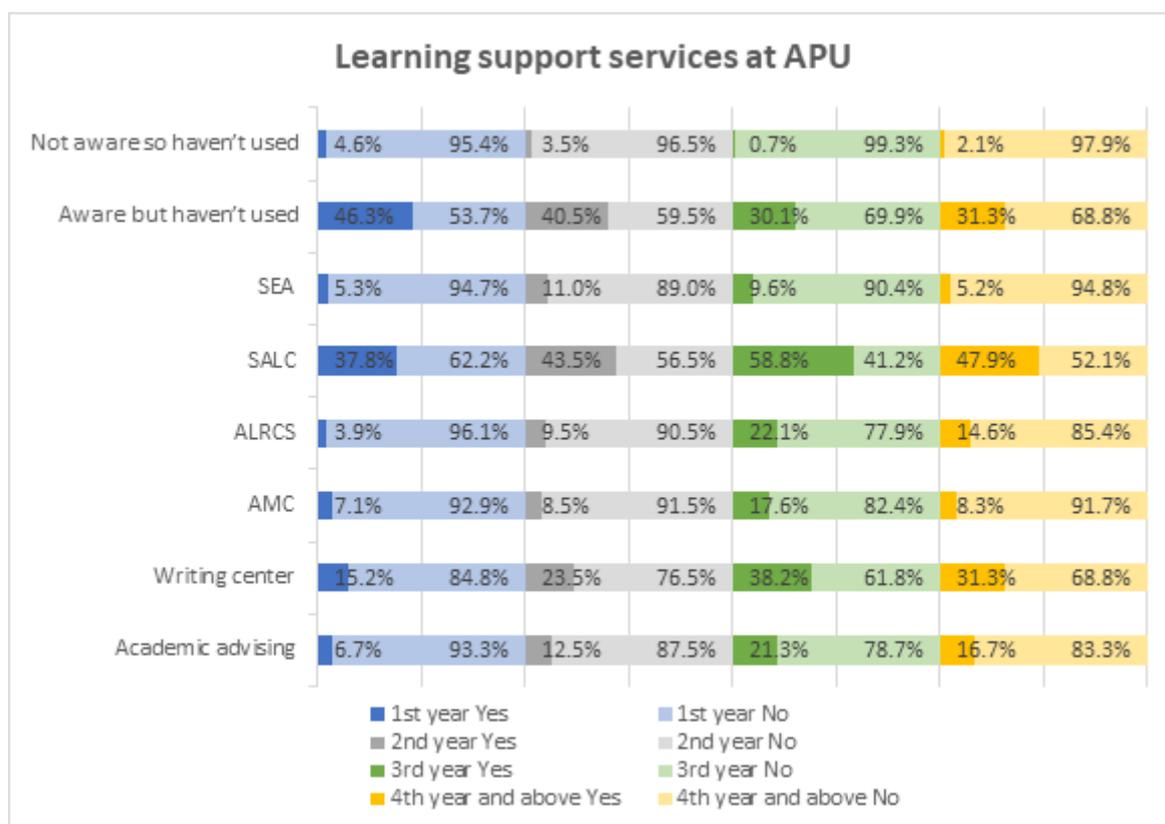
Proposal II-3 Learning Support Services at APU

■ Problem Addressed

1. Lack of systematic and consistent approach in promoting the learning support services
2. Lack of unified and easy-to-access information regarding the services
3. Lack of incentives for the students to use the service

■ Data and Analysis of the Present Situation

[Figure 1] Level of usage (Yes/No) of learning support services at APU, with the vertical axis representing %



Student Opinions (Total ??? responses = ???[Japanese] + ???[English])

● “I Strongly Agree” or “I Agree”

- The quality of these services provided by APU is good/helpful/useful. (49 similar opinions)
- I have not used it but from my friends' feedback, the quality is good. (7 similar opinions)
- SALC is a great environment for learning and practicing languages. (17 similar opinions)

● “Neither”

- I want SALC to open services for other AP languages, especially Korean. (8 similar opinions)
- I want more professional support, or support for more major subjects (e.g., Finance, Accounting...). (5 similar opinions)

II. Learning Support Services

● “I don't agree” or “I don't agree at all”

- These services need more recognition and promotion support. (14 similar opinions)
- I do not know how to make reservations for these services. (7 similar opinions)
- I do not pay that much attention once these services moved online. (6 similar opinions)

From the quantitative data, the overall usage rate of learning support services at APU is low. Furthermore, there is a significant difference in the popularity of Self-Accessed Learning Center compared with the remaining services.

Regarding the quality of the learning support services, most of the students claimed to be satisfied with the quality. Aligning with the SALC's highest usage rate, students' experiences when using SALC are also seen to be positive. In detail, most students agree that SALC is a great environment for them to practice their languages of interest, and the student staff there (PAs) are friendly and endearing. There are specific requests for SALC to open services for other AP languages, specifically Korean. Additionally, some students knew about SALC as their language instructors introduced and/or encouraged the use of the service in class, so they have stronger push to reserve and use the service.

However, there is demand for more varying types of academic support service, which include: support for major subjects (e.g., Finance, Accounting,), more professional support from instructors/experts (besides students), more specialized support (i.e., doctoral students helping undergraduate to improve academic research quality) ...

For those who know about the services but have not used them, they insist on their hesitation to use. First, they do not feel the need to use these services, partially because they are not sure whether these services can solve the academic problems they are facing, or they do not understand clearly about the roles of each respective service. Second, the hesitation also comes from the asymmetry of information about these services, such as operating hours, reservation methods, it is also noteworthy that there is popular concern about the accessibility of the services once moving online, especially for first-year students who have never been to APU.

Finally, one consistent idea among the survey respondents is that the academic support services need more consistent, widespread, and equal promotion support from the university. Currently, SALC has the most exposure, while the same situation is not seen for other services.

■ Proposals

a. Collaboration between learning support services and Student Social Media Unit (SMU)

To improve and standardize the presence of those learning support services on social media, each organization should have 1 representing PR staff, who will collaborate directly with SMU members. This collaboration will be helpful in terms of (1) promotion strategy planning and (2) promotion materials improvement.

- Promotion strategy: Each learning support service should produce a semester-based promotion plan at the beginning of the break. This will include, but not limited to, what kind of information they want to convey through the SNS posts (e.g., event announcement, organization introduction...), how frequent they can post (e.g., once per week),

II. Learning Support Services

what kind of branding image they want to appeal (e.g., professional, close...) as well as the KPIs they want to achieve within that semester (e.g., increase reach by 300%). Subsequently, the organization can bring up this timeline and consult with SMU members for input and make suitable adjustment. Once finalized, the organization should be committed to executing this plan.

- Promotion materials: Organizations can leverage their experience to contribute examples of successful social media posts they have carried out. SMU members will help with consolidating these materials in an archived folder and creating a manual which can be referred to throughout the semester. If the system is efficient enough, it can be developed into a semester-based training session. In this session, representing PR staff from 2-3 organizations and a SMU member can co-facilitate and share successful promotion material examples

b. Creation of webpage informing the access methods and availability of the services

To improve the awareness and information accessibility of the students about the learning support services, there should be a user-friendly, easy-to-navigate and updated section, which can be created by:

- Turning the current [master information sheet](#) into a dedicated web page with the following must-have items: Overview, opening hours, and reservation method. Other detailed information such as the main target or inquiry address can be put on the organization's respective page. Moreover, a special section called "Keyword," which features the area of expertise of each service in 1-2 words (e.g., VPN, language support...), should be added for faster navigation.
- Creating a chatbot, which can interact in real-time with students who are seeking help but do not know which service they should visit. The chatbot can later be in the library or in AP House's computer room for more convenient access.
- Incorporating shortcut URL/icon/QR code in other platforms like APU Facebook page (as a post), APU website (as a fixed section on the homepage), manaba (as a fixed section in the right panel to replace the current chaotic menu) and APU Times (as a featured article).

c. Working with instructors to encourage the usage of learning support services

To increase the incentive of using the learning support services and to demonstrate exact situation when and where the services might be helpful, the Academic Office can consider:

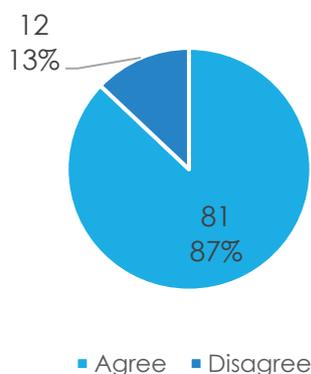
- Introducing to the course instructors the list of available study support at APU and asking which of them might be helpful for the courses they are teaching.
- Adding a new section on online syllabus (Campus Terminal) labeled "Academic Support Services for Reference" and ask the instructors to add the names or tick on those services that can be helpful for their students.
- Kindly requesting the instructors to reinforce the usage of these services in the first day of class, or in a specific situation when the services can be helpful (e.g., students need to submit a long report and high-quality writing, as

II. Learning Support Services

well as accurate citation are required).

■ Results and examination of additional survey in response to the above proposal

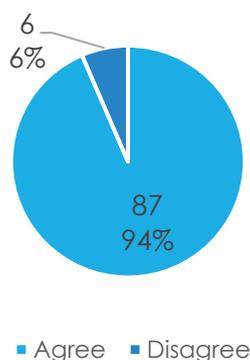
[Figure 2] Proposal a: Percentage "Agree" and "Disagree" regarding collaboration between learning support and SMU (93 responses)



Student Opinions (Total ??? responses = ???[Japanese] + ???[English])

- 87% of the survey respondents agree with the proposal
- There are also mixed opinions among those who put extra comments. For those who have already known about the services, they assume that there are no issues at the moment. While for those who have not known, they think it would be a good initiative

[Figure 3] Proposal b: Percentage "Agree" and "Disagree" regarding creation of a webpage for checking access methods and service availability (93 responses)

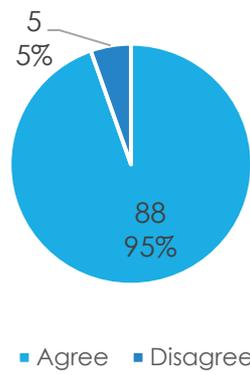


Student Opinions (Total ??? responses = ???[Japanese] + ???[English])

- Students agree that putting information about learning support services on Campus Terminal was hard to navigate and hard to see
- They also suggest the integration of comprehensive information about the learning support services into the currently available websites

II. Learning Support Services

[Figure 4] Proposal c: Percentage "Agree" and "Disagree" regarding working with instructors to encourage the use of learning support services (93 responses)



III. Facility (Cafeteria)

Proposal III-1

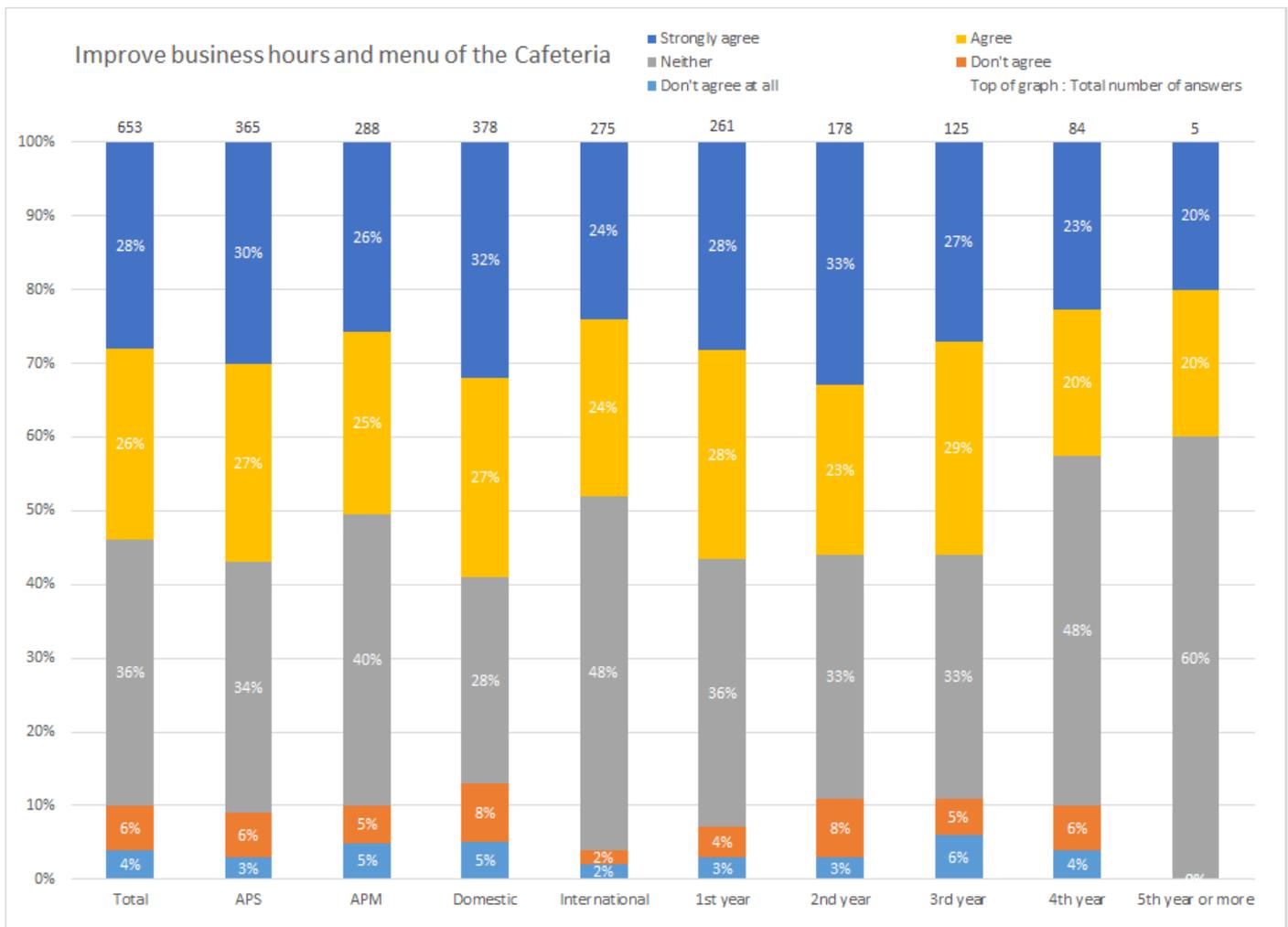
Cafeteria

Problem Addressed

1. Communication between students and the cafeteria cannot always be said to be sufficient, and there are times when the expectations of both parties are at odds with one another
2. As regards the sweeping issue of are students able to get healthy meals, it has been acknowledged that the APU CO-OP, the cafeteria, and the Administration Office need to work together to handle this

Data and Analysis of the Present Situation

[Figure 1] Level of agreement with "Improve business hours and menu of the Cafeteria" (5-point scale), with the vertical axis representing %



Among all respondents, the percentage of students who selected "agree" or "strongly agree" was 54%. The proportion of students who selected "disagree" or "completely disagree" was quite low. This is a consequence of the fact that most of the students who do not have any requests chose "undecided" because the improvement of the cafeteria would not cause any disadvantage to most of the students.

III. Facility (Cafeteria)

Student Opinions (Total ??? responses = ???[Japanese] + ???[English])

- **“I Strongly Agree” or “I Agree”**

- More diversified menu. (37+26 similar opinions) (“The menu should be updated more frequently.” “I’m sick of eating the same thing every day.” “Too many fried food dishes.” Comments such as these show that students want a more diversified menu with healthier options. There are not enough halal, vegetarian, vegan, and food allergy-friendly options which make it difficult for students who require such options to get the nutrition they need from the current choices.)
- Improvements to Cafeteria business hours. (22+14 similar opinions)
- Cafeteria prices are too expensive. (2+10 similar opinions)
- Bring back the free water & tea stations. (1+0 similar opinions)

- **“Neither”**

- I have not been going to campus and have not eaten at the cafeteria. (8+23 similar opinions)
- More diversified menu. (5+5 similar opinions)
- I am satisfied with the current service. (2+8 similar opinions)
- Cafeteria prices are too expensive. (0+1 similar opinions)
- Facility improvements (increase the number of electrical outlets, better WIFI, etc.) (2+0 similar opinions)
- Bring back the free water & tea stations. (1+0 similar opinions)
- Sell the remaining food for students to bring home prior to closing. (1+0 similar opinions)

- **“I don't agree" or "I don't agree at all”**

- I am satisfied with the current service. (6+1 similar opinions)
- More diversified menu. (1+0 similar opinions)
- Improvements to Cafeteria business hours. (1+0 similar opinions)

On the other hand, from interviews with the cafeteria, the Administration Office, and the APU CO-OP, we knew the following innovations and present situation.

- **Cafeteria**

- Under the supervision of a senior nutritionist, the cafeteria is trying to enlighten students from the perspective of dietary education and proposes an assortment including small dishes, etc.
- If we look at recent data, many students choose one-bowl meals of noodles or donburi rice bowls. We calculate that on average, each person takes about one side dish (such as a small dish) or dessert, but this does not necessarily mean they are choosing vegetables
- There are "Student Committee Members" for the cafeteria, and in relation to the activities aimed at enlightening students described above, they have been undertaking PR using leaflets and such. However, we can't really say that the leaflets they went to the trouble of creating are being used by students

III. Facility (Cafeteria)

● Administration Office

- When in-person classes were being held, we did tie-ins with local food service providers and attract food trucks
- Some students have been aware of the issues; but even so they rarely go so far as to offer concrete counterproposals. We will communicate closely with students in the future and want them to take the initiative in offering concrete counterproposals

● APU CO-OP

- While management has been difficult during the pandemic, we introduced the "¥100 breakfast"
- It seems to us that the mobile sale of bento lunches in the classroom buildings (which was a suggestion that the person in charge of the Student Voices Project gave as an example) is a good idea. We would like to do a test run and measure whether or not there is any student need for this¹²

From the above, it can be seen that both the APU CO-OP/cafeteria and the Administration Office conduct their daily operations with the intention of providing better service and a better environment from the students' perspective. On the other hand, we recognize there is room for improvement as students are unaware of these efforts nor is there any mechanism for directly fulfilling student needs.

■ Proposals

Based on interviews with the APU CO-OP, the cafeteria, and the Administration Office, we propose the following:

a. Referencing examples of the APU CO-OP shop's initiatives, the cafeteria and the Administration Office will establish mechanisms so that student needs can be heard and then make the opinions obtained and their responses available to the public

In this way, they will be able to operate such that student needs are taken into consideration. Further, facilitating communication with students will contribute to building a relationship of trust between both parties.

b. In particular, the cafeteria/APU CO-OP working together with the student committee members will collect the student opinions obtained during implementation of Proposal a. above and formulate operational guidelines that take these opinions into consideration. Also, we will strengthen public relations of our own efforts and make students further aware of them through the use of Campus Terminal and other means in addition to our existing media (leaflets, CO-OP website, etc.).

■ Results and examination of additional survey in response to the above proposal

No additional surveys were conducted regarding this proposal.

¹² Following this interview, APU CO-OP launched the mobile sale of bento lunches in Building F in actual fact for the limited period of November 15–19 (details: https://kyushu.seikyoku.ne.jp/apu/news_im/news_detail_2840.html). I would like to take the opportunity here to thank them for their kind and swift response to the "student opinions."

IV. International and Educational Exchange

Proposal IV-1

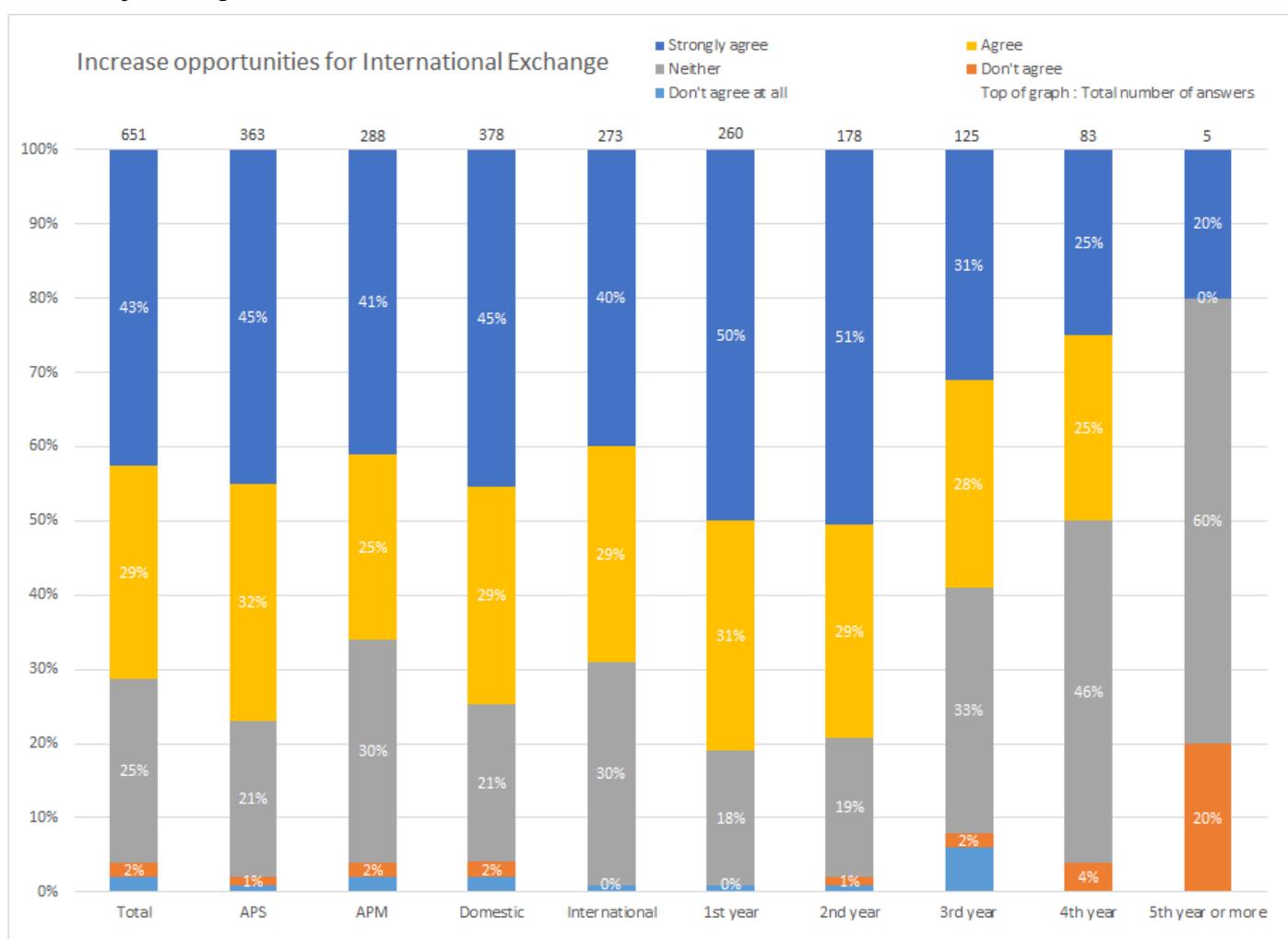
International Exchange

■ Problem Addressed

1. Lack of international exchange opportunities during the pandemic due to a) some students being stuck in their home countries, b) a lot of exchange programs canceled
2. Lack of study abroad scholarship support for international students

■ Data and Analysis of the Present Situation

[Figure 1] Level of agreement with "Increase opportunities for International Exchange" (5-point scale), with the vertical axis representing %



Student Opinions (Total ??? responses = ???[Japanese] + ???[English])

● "I Strongly Agree" or "I Agree"

- I want more scholarships for International Exchange. Sometimes, it is hard for students to cover their expenses for themselves. For example, I could not apply for the exchange program simply because I did not have enough money. (5+1 similar opinions)

IV. International and Educational Exchange

- My exchange program was canceled altogether without having the possibility of attending an online exchange. APU not allowing online exchange despite the host university has already accepted them for online exchange is diminishing students' chances to enrich their university life altogether. (4+3 similar opinions)
- Japanese and International students rarely have opportunities to interact. (11+15 similar opinions)
- It's easier to say than done, but there are enough opportunities for capable students who can find opportunities for themselves. But for those who struggle, an event is needed so they know where to look for opportunities. (13 + 13 similar opinions)

- **“Neither”**
 - In my opinion, opportunities for international exchange are sufficient, with a great number of universities abroad to choose from. (6 + 4 similar opinions)
 - As someone who went on an exchange program during high school, adaptation is not something I am looking forward to any more in the level of the university learning experience. I seek opportunities for a future career by doing related activities and international students exchange will not do the job for my side. I would better appreciate it if APU could improve its students' ratio and making a more "International" environment from now on than focusing on "student exchange".
 - It may be a little difficult to increase interaction with this corona disaster now.
 - Even if it already exists, I think people don't know much about it, so I think the best way to improve it is to improve the way the information is displayed in the campus terminal, as I mentioned earlier.

- **“I don't agree" or "I don't agree at all”**
 - It's okay, I can make those opportunities myself.
 - The current situation is completely satisfactory.
 - I am not really interested in international exchange.
 - Even though it is an exchange program it ends up being online

Currently, APU is working as a partner with 150 universities from 43 countries all over the world (Netherlands, Korea, China, Germany, etc.). Therefore, students can choose to participate in different courses aligning with their interest. Each course will last for a semester or a year, and all the credits gained from this exchange program will be transferred to APU. According to the APU Academic Office, students who join international exchange programs like this will only have to pay for APU tuition. However, due to the current COVID-19 pandemic, a lot of these exchange programs have been canceled, which only allows exchanges to countries with Level 2 warning systems to be held.

Besides the above courses, APU also offers students with Dual Degree Programs, which allows students to study in other Universities while attending classes from APU. However, due to the pandemic, accepted students may have not been able to travel to host universities.

Moreover, students can also enjoy Short-term Summer or Winter programs in foreign universities during their studies at APU. As these programs are held by APU, all credits will be transferred to APU after the exchange. Nevertheless, there are still some clashes in academic calendars in some programs, which means the students will have

IV. International and Educational Exchange

to sacrifice by not taking quarter 2 classes in the semester. Therefore, there are not so many students who have enough motivation to apply for these programs.

As a big support for the students, APU provides various kinds of Scholarships for exchange courses. First of all, is the APU tuition reduction scholarship. Even though they are in exchange with other universities, the students with this scholarship will still have their tuition reduced by 100%, 80%, 65%, 50% or 30%. Besides, JASSO also provides scholarships for domestic students who want to go on international exchange. However, it may be more challenging for international students to find scholarships if they don't look for it carefully. There are many Japanese foundations that provide economic support to these students with different conditions depending on each theme of the programs. To seek help and advice for exchange programs, students can ask from Private Consultation with the Exchange team of the Academic Office through Zoom meetings.

■ Proposals

a. Language Partner System

Currently, APU is divided primarily into domestic and international student bodies. One of the biggest problems that we face in having meaningful international student body exchange is the language barrier. However, this presents an opportunity to turn something that drives a wedge between the two parties into a bridge that connects them. As everyone is aware, APU students must take either English or Japanese courses depending on their domestic or international student status. And, what many students lament is the fact that it can be difficult to get practical application of what they have learned in classes in a normal conversational setting. So, if a program is created so that each student is introduced to one or two of their domestic or international counterparts during orientation week it can help drive not only language learning success but also meaningful and lasting international exchange.

For the application of the program, it should be male with male and female with female. The first reason is to prevent potential sexual harassment. Obviously intragender sexual harassment still exists, but it happens at a significantly reduced rate compared to intergender sexual harassment. Secondly, students will, as a majority, feel more comfortable in one-on-one environments with new people of the same gender and so the acceptance and usage rate of the program will be larger.

With this program it is merely introducing the students to each other, and then in order to continue the professional relationship after that is up to them. This proposal shares a similar thought trend as the APU Buddy program, linking students together to create an environment for the potential of meaningful and continued exchange. However, the APU Buddy program is only for exchange students while this new Language Partner System will be for all students. But even just by providing an opportunity for international exchange to happen on such a simple basis it has the potential to trigger a profound change within the student body. Finally, after each semester we can also ask the student body to answer a short survey merely asking them if they think that this program has helped at all and if they still talk with their language exchange partners in order to see how productive the program is.

IV. International and Educational Exchange

b. Visibility of Clubs and Accessibility

Currently it is quite inconvenient in order to get in contact with someone in the club that you are interested in joining or finding information about. The main factor that makes it inconvenient is that there are next to no definitive points of contact listed in neither the physical copy of the Extracurricular Activity booklet or the official online sources that APU provides at https://en.apu-online.jp/?club_filter=all#clubs (2021). The closest that comes to a point of contact is a link to the group's social media account via Facebook or Instagram.

What we propose is to create a listing of clubs and to post this listing to Campus Terminal under a new tab and to list a point of contact for inquiries about the club and for joining. The best point of contact usage would be the work email, APU email, of the club's designated recruitment email account; details about this email account are in the next paragraph.

Listing a personal email account on the internet opens the owner of that account to potential phishing and scam emails. So, considering this possibility it is suggested that there is an email created for each club for the sole purpose of receiving recruitment inquiries. This email account will be handled by either the club president or a designated individual within the club. Also, since these listings are posted in a new club listing within Campus Terminal, this will ensure that only APU authorized personnel are able to access these email listings. With this approach there is a two-pronged defense against potential harm to individuals in charge of receiving the inquiries.

With this proposal every APU member would be able to easily contact the club in our current COVID era where physical recruitment and meetings are all but void. By making it easier for students to get in contact with all the clubs that APU has, we believe that it will help drive international exchange between students with the already vibrant and diverse clubs that APU has to offer.

c. International Exchange Programs and Scholarships Briefings

We believe that the best way for this team to help is to increase the awareness, visibility, and usage of already established exchange programs and scholarships.

For the international exchange programs APU already has a very well-developed website at <https://en.apu.ac.jp/academic/page/content0105.html/?c=17> (2021) that provides key resources such as an updated list of student exchange program destinations, consultation services, and scholarship information for international exchange. There is also a Participant Recruitment Guidance Session that APU (2021) notes covers the topics of, “the list of universities currently accepting applications, language requirements, selection methods, costs of going on exchange, scholarship information, how grades are handled during exchange, and things to watch out for when incorporating student exchange into your four-year study plan.” However, as of early September 2021 the last Participant Recruitment Guidance Session that was held, according to the website, was on April 14 of 2021, during 6th period. This means that the last comprehensive briefing was held nearly 4 months ago. It also does not list any future dates for another Participant Recruitment Guidance Session.

The resources available to the students regarding exchange programs is exemplary, but the students are either not aware of it or do not know how to access it. Therefore, we propose that an introductory briefing be held monthly at different times to accommodate for differing student schedules. This introductory briefing would include such topics as what resources are available to students to aid in their exchange program research, points of contact for the various

IV. International and Educational Exchange

offices involved, and general timelines and outlines of programs. The key points about this briefing are that it would be concise, available to students throughout the year with differing schedules, and for it to bridge the gap between students and the wealth of information that is already available.

While it would be helpful to increase the number of Participant Recruitment Guidance Sessions held, if the new introductory briefings are held then it will correlate to more individual appointments with a Student Exchange Coordinator and Student Exchange Advisors as exchange programs tend to be highly individualized with several questions that change on a case-by-case basis. To paint a clearer picture, we can think of the Participant Recruitment Guidance Session, individual consultations, and the new Introductory Exchange Programs Briefing as different stages of information. The Participant Recruitment Guidance Session and individual consultations are Stage 2 with highly specific information. The difference between the two is the scope of the target audience. The Introductory Exchange Programs Briefing would introduce a Stage 1 information level of general information and points of contact. We believe that if we can target and hit a wide audience with Stage 1 information then those same people will choose to receive Stage 2 information at a more one-on-one basis through consultations.

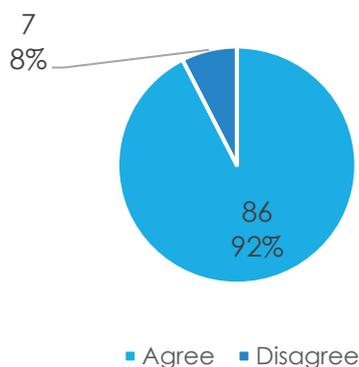
On the aspect of scholarships APU once again already has a well-developed website at <https://en.apu.ac.jp/studentsupport/page/content0037.html/> (2021) that provides a plethora of information about available scholarships. So once again this is merely about a case of visibility, accessibility, and usage.

Following the same format as with exchange programs, a monthly introductory briefing to introduce key information, how to obtain specific details, and to introduce various points of contact would be helpful for many of the students to get the information that they need to know about all the different scholarship availability and to apply for them successfully. Again, this briefing should be held at different times so that students with conflicting schedules for one of the meetings have the ability to attend the proceeding meetings based on their own schedule. In this way we can disperse this information to as many students as possible by making it much more accessible to every student.

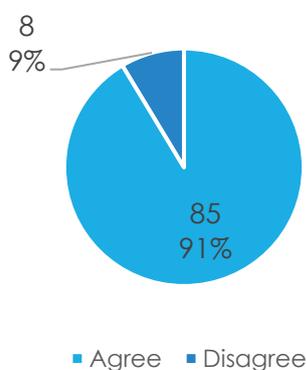
IV. International and Educational Exchange

■ Results and examination of additional survey in response to the above proposal

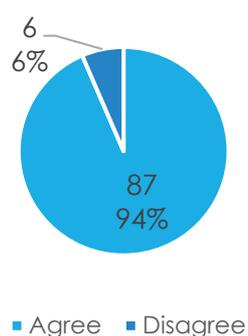
[Figure 2] Proposal a: Percentage "Agree" and "Disagree" regarding a language partner system (93 responses)



[Figure 3] Proposal b: Percentage "Agree" and "Disagree" regarding visibility of clubs and accessibility (93 responses)



[Figure 4] Proposal c: Percentage "Agree" and "Disagree" regarding international exchange program and scholarship briefings (93 responses)



Regularly hold briefings on exchange programs and scholarships for studying abroad. We propose to hold briefings at a different time each month so that all students will be able to participate. At these briefings, we will take up topics such as resources students can use when researching exchange programs, contact details for the various offices involved, and general schedules and overviews for programs.

Student Opinions (Total ??? responses = ???[Japanese] + ???[English])

- It might be because of the coronavirus, but I feel like studying abroad is not really something relevant to me. (1+0 similar opinions)
- I'm sure others already wrote this, but I think it's important to increase the number of briefings. (1+0 similar opinions)

Proposal IV-2

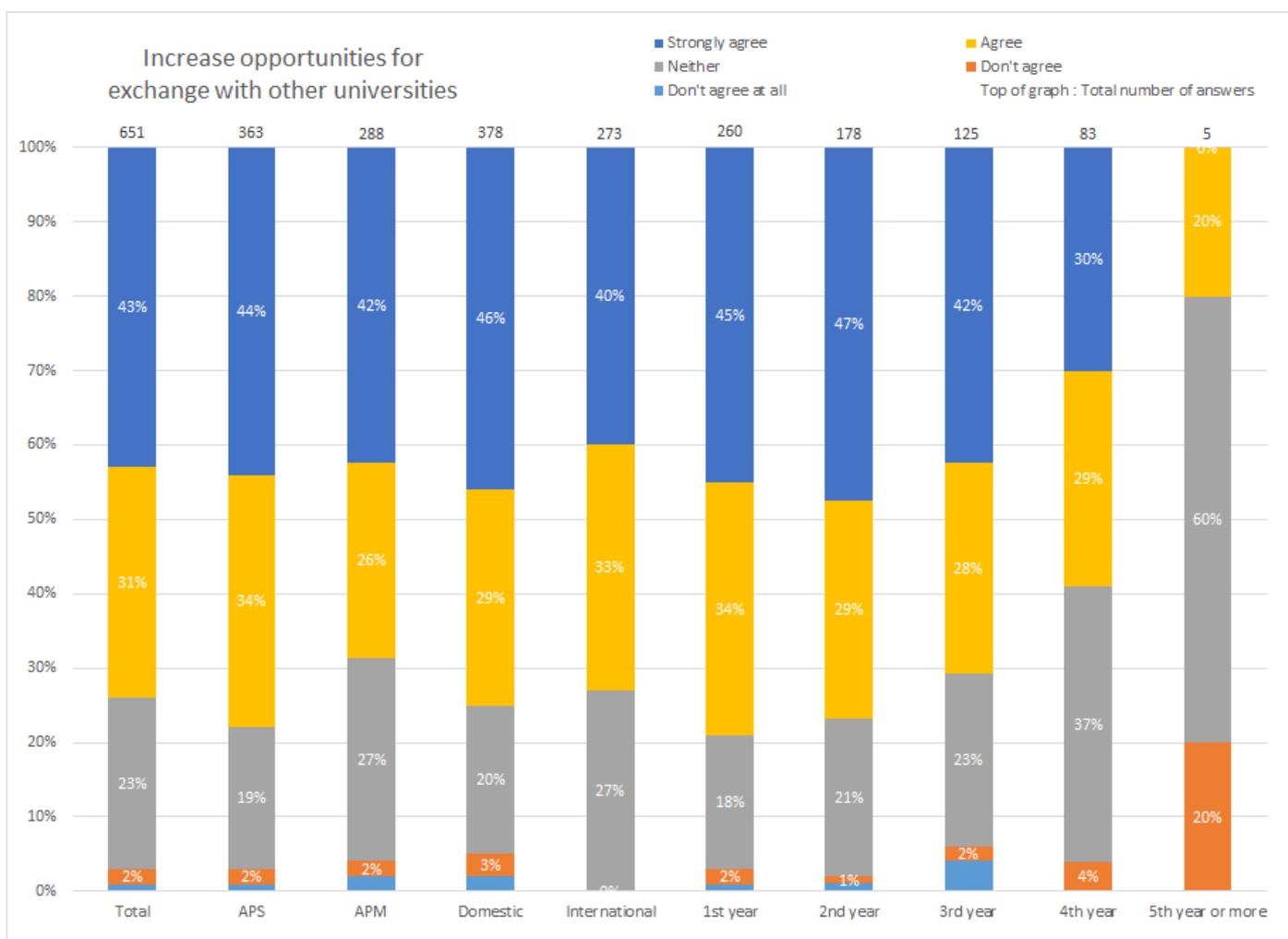
Domestic Student Exchange

Problem Addressed

1. Students are eager for more exchanges with domestic universities in Japan, both in academics and in extracurriculars

Data and Analysis of the Present Situation

[Figure 1] Level of agreement with "Increase opportunities for exchange with other universities" (5-point scale), with the vertical axis representing %



First year students show the most eagerness and agree that more international exchange with students from other universities is needed.

Student Opinions (Total ??? responses = ???[Japanese] + ???[English])

● **“I Strongly Agree” or “I Agree”**

- I wish to see more activity regarding the exchange and making friends between students from Oita University,

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Beppu university, high school students in Beppu and Oita city, as well Ritsumeikan University and other universities in Japan. (26 + 9 similar opinions)

- I wish the school had circles working with other university students. For instance, doing volunteer work, cross-cultural circles, sports clubs, and many more. (6 + 2 similar opinions)
- Other universities are offering online classes as well. Let APU students have access and credits to those classes and subjects that APU does not offer. (1+2 similar opinions)

- **“Neither”**

- As I have never tried to make friends at a social event officially organized by some organization, I would like to face my own communication characteristics and abilities myself too.
- Unlike universities in the Tokyo metropolitan area, we are located in a rural area, so it is understandable that it is difficult to interact with other universities, but I think it is better to increase interaction with other universities, even if it is online.

- **“I don't agree" or "I don't agree at all”**

- I don't know if I would even participate in more events for socializing.

APU has close relationships with Ritsumeikan University and Akita International University for domestic student exchange. Ritsumeikan University is located in Kyoto and runs classes in Japanese during the summer term. However, exchange students must have mastered advanced level Japanese skills. On the other hand, classes are held in English during the winter term at Akita University (Akita Prefecture). This might be a good choice for students wanting to go on a domestic exchange at another university in Japan even though they don't have confidence in their Japanese. Students transfer the credits they earn to APU and pay only APU's tuition.

Further, if the student can pay both APU's tuition and the tuition of the exchange program destination university, then they can also choose a destination for their exchange program from among APU's partner schools. In short, students can freely choose the courses and programs they want to participate in. Although, graduation from APU is also a requirement.

Together with the spread of COVID-19, since 2020 new students have had difficulty in coming to AP House and the opportunity to enjoy an international environment has been lost. Additionally, as it is no longer possible to travel freely, many exchange programs have been postponed or cancelled. However, online classes have been substituted in several programs, but these classes don't allow for the creation of a proper international environment. In order to resolve this problem, APU is running online exchanges, such as the REACT Multicultural Day, homestay events, and Virtual Field Study. Additionally, APU is also running classes such as Multicultural Workshop, Peer Leader Training, and the GLAD program so students will be able to enjoy APU's international environment.

■ Proposals

During the COVID era, exchange with others has been stunted due to the social impact of the virus. While we recognize that our current situation is difficult for exchange, we are operating these next proposals on the premise of

IV. International and Educational Exchange

adoption and execution at such a time that social distancing and COVID preventative measures are not the determining factor of social gatherings anymore. We wish to propose programs that will last for several years to come beyond COVID. The key benefit of this is that this allows us time to perfectly plan out and coordinate these proposals before even the first execution of them. It should also be known and remembered that both Proposal a and Proposal b are voluntary events. In no way shape or form should these events be mandatory for either students, faculty, or staff to attend.

a. Beach Beautification & BBQ

One of the main attractions of the Beppu area is the beaches that are all over. What we propose is an event organized by APU and the student body for a beach cleanup that then turns into a BBQ with all sorts of beach games and food. The reason that this proposal fits under the criteria of this question's theme is that we also propose that we invite students and faculty of neighboring universities. APU is not the only university in Beppu, and so why should our exchange be limited to only within APU's student body.

This proposal has four key benefits. Community service, international student body exchange, domestic exchange, and FUN! By coming together as a team, we can help serve the community by making sure that one of Beppu's biggest attractions, the beaches, are clean and beautiful for everyone that lives here to use. And by everyone coming together for a common goal you promote organic exchange between participants. And finally, it's about having fun. By having a BBQ on the beach and playing games together everyone can have great lasting memories, form friendships, and just have a good time.

To ease the financial burden of the food and equipment cost we recommend seeking a sponsor or sponsors for this event. Companies absolutely love cheap and positive PR, especially when it is right here in the city with visible and tangible effects. And we can also invite local newspapers for an article to showcase how APU is leading the charge in making sure our city is clean while also making sure that our students are leading a balanced lifestyle enjoying the local specialties of Beppu. This can entice sponsors as well since who would be helping to fund this endeavor would be showcased in the article as well.

b. Polar Plunge

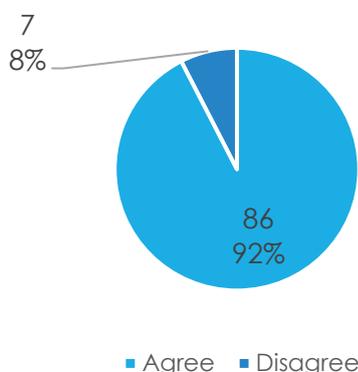
Something that originates from Canada and popular in the northern states of the U.S.A is the polar plunge. The idea is that in the middle of winter you go and jump into a lake, river, or sea for a minute and then run to the nearest hot tub. Here in Beppu we have a beautiful sea, and countless onsen for everyone to enjoy. What we propose is to hold a polar plunge in conjunction with one or several onsen with parts of the proceeds going towards a charitable cause located here in Beppu city, such as buying toys for children at the local orphanages for the holiday season since it is in the winter.

Once again, we would invite surrounding universities to participate as well to promote exchange between all different sorts of people. This is also something new that very few people have done before or even know about in Asia. It's one of those unique experiences that students can look back on and laugh about doing it while also helping a charitable cause.

IV. International and Educational Exchange

■ Results and examination of additional survey in response to the above proposal

[Figure 2] Proposals a and b: Percentage "Agree" and "Disagree" regarding holding events such as the Beach Beautification & BBQ and the Polar Plunge (93 responses)



Hold events such as the Beach Beautification & BBQ and the Polar Plunge. One of Beppu's attractions is its beaches. Accordingly, we propose an event where APU and student organizations sponsor a beach cleanup activity and then afterwards prepare food and games for at the beach and have a BBQ. We are suggesting this proposal for the "International & Educational Exchange" category because we anticipate also inviting students and faculty from nearby universities for the event. Furthermore, the sea in Beppu is beautiful and there are countless hot springs everyone can enjoy. What we are proposing is to hold a Polar Plunge in cooperation with one or more hot springs and donate a portion of the proceeds to a charity here in Beppu. (For example, since it's wintertime, donate toys to the children at local orphanages for the holiday season, etc.)

Student Opinions (Total ??? responses = ???[Japanese] + ???[English])

- This is good because we can also interact with local people (2+0 similar opinions)
- Sounds like fun (1+2 similar opinions)

V. Counseling and Student Services

Proposal V-1

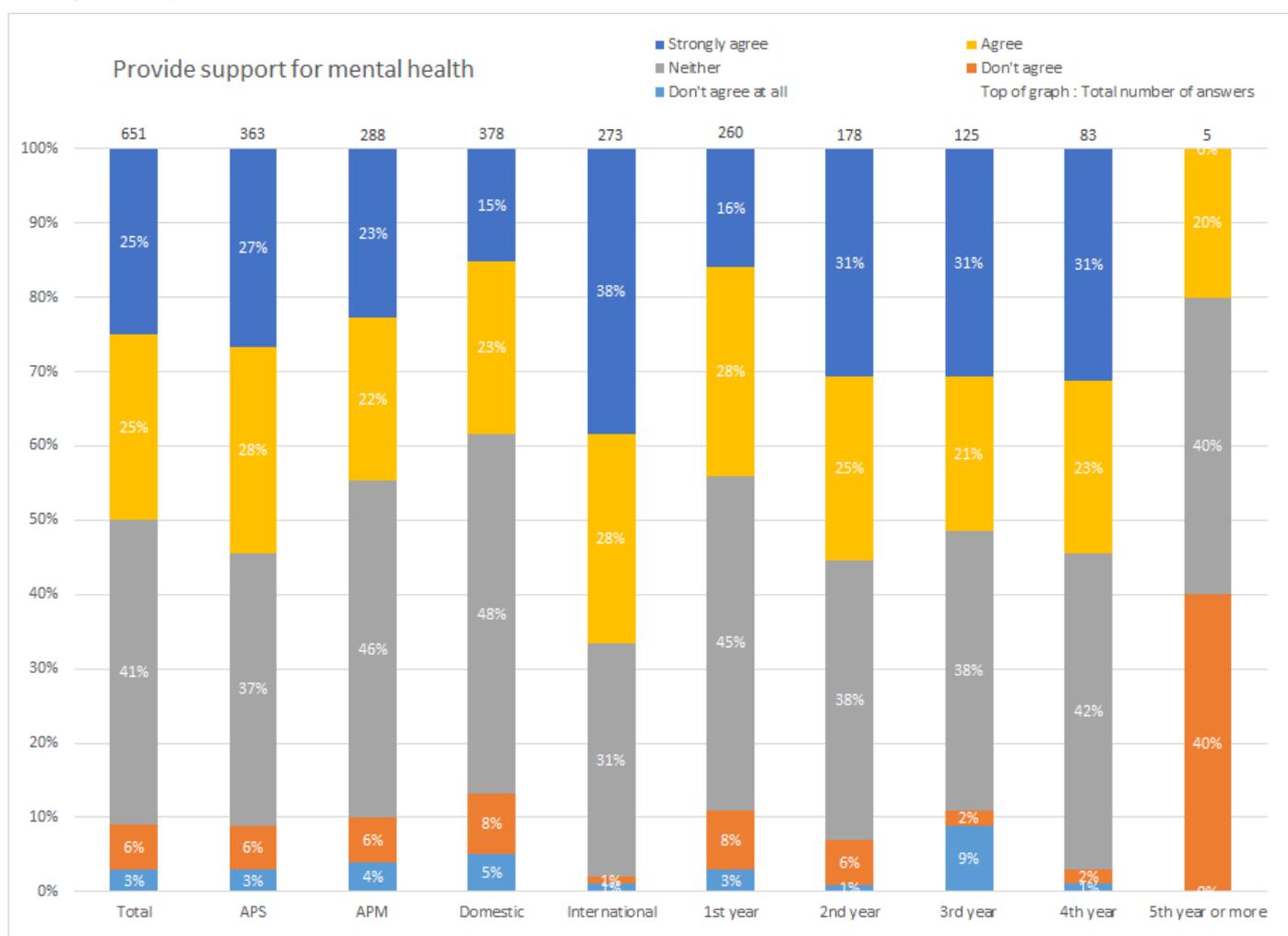
Mental Health Support

■ Problem Addressed

1. Language and cultural barrier between students and counsellors
2. Lack of some mental health services in counselling room
3. Limited facilities
4. Lack of Mental health support and awareness in university system

■ Data and Analysis of the Present Situation

[Figure 1] Level of agreement with "Provide support for mental health" (5-point scale), with the vertical axis representing %



"Agree" and "Strongly Agree" combined comprise 50% of all responses. Differences can be observed between the response rate for degree of agreement (on a 5-point scale) for each of the groups "International" and "Domestic." For "Domestic," the response rate for "I agree" and "I strongly agree" combined comprises 38% versus a response rate of 66% for "International."

V. Counseling and Student Services

If we take into consideration that the demand from international students for mental health services is greater, we can clarify the types of mental health services required by focusing on "international interaction" and "intercultural communication."

Student Opinions (Total 150 responses = 68 [Japanese] + 82 [English])

● “I Strongly Agree” or “I Agree”

- I want to see more professionals working in the counselling room such as psychiatrists or psychologists rather than just professional counsellors. (22 similar opinions)
- I want to see improvement in the availability of counselling services and their accessibility. (21 similar opinions)
- The Counselling Room should cater to the needs of international students more. (12 similar opinions)
- Academic support should be offered to students going through mental health issues and learning disabilities. (8 similar opinions)
- APU should put more of an effort into creating an environment that would encourage faculty to be more involved in supporting students' mental health such as having faculty get counseling training. (7 similar opinions)
- The student office/counselling room should take a more active role in promoting mental health awareness and support. (13 similar opinions)

● “Neither”

- I do not have any mental health related issues. (7 similar opinions)
- Personally, I don't have any issues, but APU ought to provide services for those who do have mental issues. (6 similar opinions)
- The current level of support provided is enough. (5 similar opinions)
- I get support from my friends and/or boyfriend/girlfriend, so I don't need this service. (3 similar opinions)
- There is already an existing support service, but it needs to be publicized. (2 similar opinions)
- Some people do not want to get support or share their mental health problems with others.

● “I don't agree” or “I don't agree at all”

- The support the university provides is sufficient (3 similar opinions)
- It is important to put the mental health of teachers and staff first so that they can perform well. (1 similar opinions)
- Personally, I don't have any problems, but this support is needed for first-year students who, with the coronavirus, have few chances to meet people. (1 similar opinions)
- I get this support from the hospital, so I don't need this service. (1 similar opinions)
- I don't have any mental health issues because I have received a scholarship. (1 similar opinions)

If you want to see the complete comment breakdown for a more detailed listing, please follow the [link](#) here to the attachment.

Thus, it can be observed that for students who responded "I strongly agree" and "I agree," many opinions express dissatisfaction with access to counselor services and how they function, etc. On the other hand, for the students who

V. Counseling and Student Services

responded "Neither," "I don't agree," or "I don't agree at all," many of them shared their personal sentiments, and these were not opinions from the perspective of those needing mental health services.

Therefore, we will focus on current statistics and usage information from the APU Counseling Room.

APU Counseling Room statistics and usage

Facility Name	Number of Full-time staff	Number of Part-time staff	Days open per week	Days open per year	Room Hours	Number of Annual Consultation	Remarks
Counseling Room	1	4	5	197	10:00~16:30	AY2016: 656 AY2017: 800 AY2018: 676	Full-time: 1 Administrative staff (certified clinical psychologist) Part-time: 4(Certified clinical Psychologists)

From the room usage statistics, we can see that **more than 600 students** have used the counseling room from 2016 to 2018. That is not a small number of students needing mental support and there are still quite a substantial number of students who wish to see changes in these services and facilities to start using them.

However, the diversity in the group of counselors available is still not impressive given that within the four counselors available, 3 are Japanese and 1 is Chinese. This could lead to certain difficulties when dealing with students from diverse cultures and backgrounds, as it might be hard for the counsellors to understand them and relate to them.

Secondly, we asked where students get sent within Beppu in case their issues cannot be dealt with in APU, and the counselors mentioned that **they are sent to psychiatric hospitals in Beppu. However, there is a limited number of these psychiatrists who can speak English fluently, which is still a big barrier to international students.**

The counsellor also mentioned that in Japan, most people suffering from mental health use medication instead of therapy-based treatment which is also another limitation especially to students who prefer therapy over medication due to the level and the seriousness of their issue.

APU MeWe statistics and usage

Additionally, we interviewed the founder of MeWe, a student-led organization founded in APU with an aim of raising student's awareness of mental health through different activities conducted on and offline. Some of their activities include posting informative posts about mental health, affirmation posts, hosting community events such as open discussions and webinars on different topics.

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As of September 2021, MeWe has more than 400 followers on Instagram. Some of the events they organized had around 10 participants on average and a maximum of around 20 students. **The ratio between international and domestic students is 8:2, respectively.** This supports the data collected above that shows the high need for mental health support and services among international students.

During the interview, we also asked about the challenges that MeWe is facing, and the founder mentioned **the lack of professional assistance, promotional issues, and the need for training for the members.**

Interview with students who have experience using the Counselling Room

In addition to interviewing the Counselling Room and the founder of APU MeWe, we also had the opportunity to interview two students who have personal experience in using the Counselling Room and trying to find mental health related assistance in Japan, as APU students. Please follow the [link](#) here to view the analysis of our findings through this interview.

■ Proposals

Based on interviews with both the APU Counselling Room and APU MeWe, we propose the following:

a. Cooperating with International Mental Health Organization

International Mental Health organizations such as International Counselling and Psychology Center that have a diverse staff and experts in dealing with college student's mental health related issues can cooperate with APU to solve these issues and offer more other services such as psychotherapy treatment that is rare in Japan. Tell Japan is also another organization that can cooperate with APU. It is an accredited and certified non-profit organization with more than 20 years of experience in providing effective support and counselling services to Japan's international community. Their services include free phone counseling, professional face-to-face evaluations and therapy, and community-wide programs. We recommend that the university collaborate with such organizations to provide their students with the appropriate mental health support. At the minimum level, the university staff can check these services and certify their validity and effectiveness so that it can be recommended to students as an alternate method of treatment.

b. Improve access to counselling services

According to the students' response in the survey, some students highlighted the limitation in the number of counselling sessions they can reserve in a week (only once per week), the limited and inconvenient working hours of the existing counselling room. therefore, we suggest the University: To be flexible and increase the number of sessions that students in need of these services can reserve per week. Additionally, we recommend that the process of reserving an appointment be made less tedious and more open to walk-in sessions as mental health is not something that can be predicted. To adjust to students' schedules and extend the working hours in the evening when students are mostly done with their daily school schedule. To consider opening a new counselling room in AP house that could cater for the need

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of mental health support among first year students.

c. Working with MeWe

By training and offering promotional support to MeWe members, they would be better prepared to be able to offer first aid support such as information sharing about mental health, facilitating open conversations with students facing certain issues (Peer counselling). APU Counselling Room could collaborate with them to organize and execute awareness programs about mental health. MeWe can also work as a bridge between students and staff by identifying the common issues among students and offering recommendations to the staff in charge. MeWe can be an enormous potential for the counselling room in promoting their sessions on MeWe's social media platforms that gather quite a substantial number of APU students.

d. Mental Health checkup for students

In APU, all students are required to go through a physical health checkup once a year to know their health conditions. We recommend the University to also include a mental health checkup test at least every semester. It will help students identify the warning signs and seek help immediately. Taking this test can also raise awareness of mental health conditions among APU students, therefore finding solutions and implementations needs. It will also help in breaking the stigma or ignorance around mental health awareness that is associated with many cultures and backgrounds found in APU.

■ Results and examination of additional survey in response to the above proposal

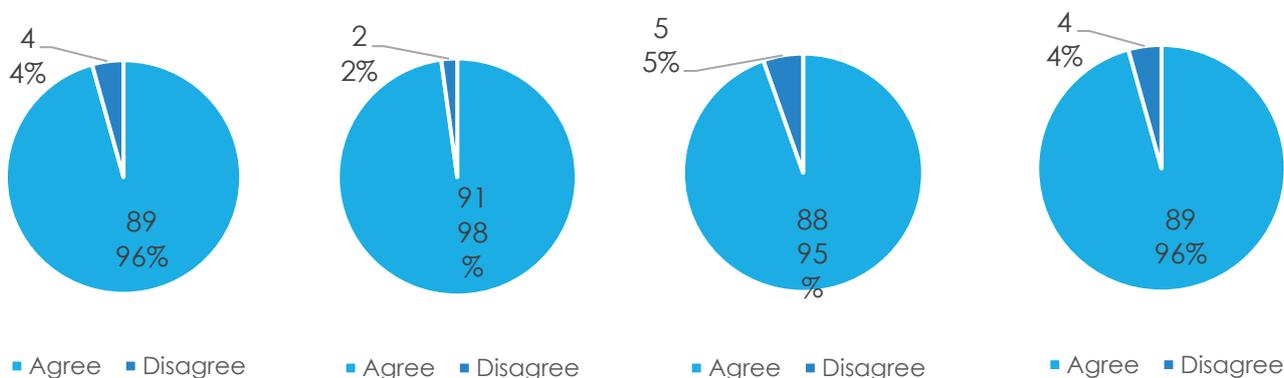
[Figure 2] Proposal a: Percentage "Agree" and "Disagree" regarding cooperation with international mental health organizations (93 responses)

[Figure 3] Proposal b: Percentage "Agree" and "Disagree" regarding improving access to counseling services (93 responses)

[Figure 4] Proposal c: Percentage "Agree" and "Disagree" regarding working together with MeWe (93 responses)

[Figure 5] Proposal d: Percentage "Agree" and "Disagree" regarding mental health checks for students (93 responses)

< Circle graphs: in order, from the left: Figures 2, 3, 4, and 5 >



Student Opinions (Total 24 responses = 9 [Japanese] + 15 [English])

● "I Strongly Agree" or "I Agree" (24 comments)

- Mental health is an important aspect of student life and an issue that should be addressed.

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- Mental health support should also cater to the needs of the international community as well as the Japanese community.
- Mental health support is an issue that should be addressed by the university administration, not just student-based organizations.
- The counselling room is not effective at times due to language and cultural differences and students should be offered alternative solutions.

In total, 95% of the responses agree with the recommended proposals, and 5% show disagreement. The highest rate of agreement (98%) pertains to Proposal b regarding easy access to counselling services, therefore the university should give priority to it. The highest rate of disagreement (5%) pertains to Proposal c regarding collaborating with MeWe, which as one comment suggests, might refer to student opinion that mental health is an issue that should be dealt with by the university authorities rather than just the students. To conclude with, the additional survey shows an overall strong agreement towards the proposals recommended and highlights the students' need for more support regarding mental health.

AY2021 Student Staff

Position	Name	APS/APM	Semester
Project Leaders	ALI Subah Anbar	APS	7
Project Leaders	SAKAMOTO Ryosuke	APS	4
A)Data Collector	UWINEZA Celine	APS	8
A)Data Collector	KARINA Viella Darminto	APS	5
A)Data Collector	KIM Gahyun	APM	5
B)Analyst	HAGA Hideto	APM	6
B)Analyst	LIYANARACHCHI Hiruni Thiranya	APM	5
B)Analyst	THAI Minh Long	APM	7
C)Proposal Editor/Writer	FISCHER Dylan Anthony	APM	3
C)Proposal Editor/Writer	JUSTIN Manual Adhinegara	APM	3
C)Proposal Editor/Writer	KAWAI Momomi	APS	6
D)Translator	PHAN Nam Anh	APS	4
D)Translator	TSUKADA Haruki	APS	6
E)Result Editor/Writer	SASAKI Ikuno	APM	4
E)Result Editor/Writer	WARD Wayne Kaito	APM	6
F)Web Designer/Manager	TOKUDA Shiori	APS	2

* "Name" in each "Position" is alphabetical order.