

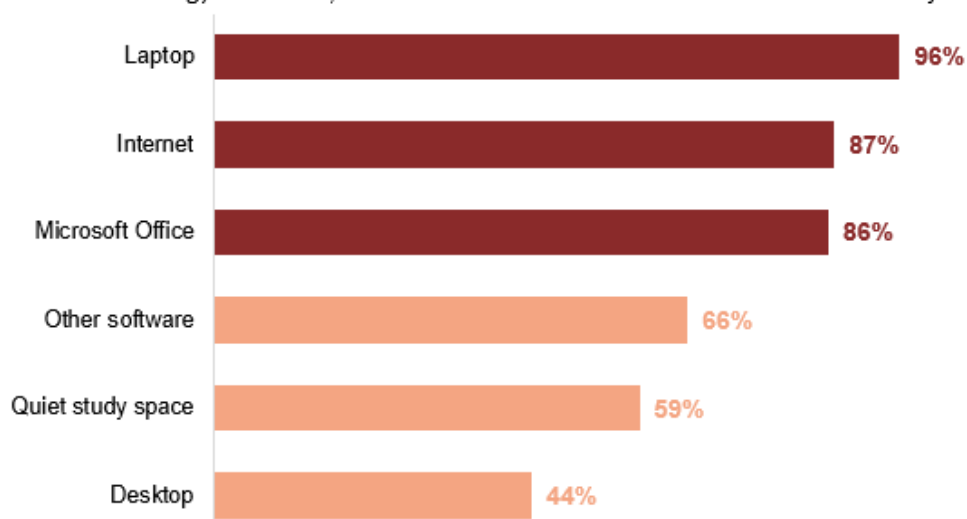
Learning from home: Resources NU students have access to and anticipated challenges

Recently, NU (like many other academic institutions around the world) decided to switch to online learning and instruction—a measure intended to curb the spread of COVID-19. In March 2020, NU Institutional Research and Analytics administered a short survey to identify (1) NU students' access to basic resources and (2) challenges students anticipate as they transition to home-based online learning.

Over 3,700 CPS, undergraduate, and graduate students responded to the survey (response rate = 71.4%). Figure 1 suggests that most students have access to a computer, internet, and Microsoft Office software. We estimate that 2% to 3% of NU students (survey respondents and non-respondents combined) do not have a computer and 12% to 15% do not have internet access at home.

Figure 1. Students' access to key resources for online learning at home

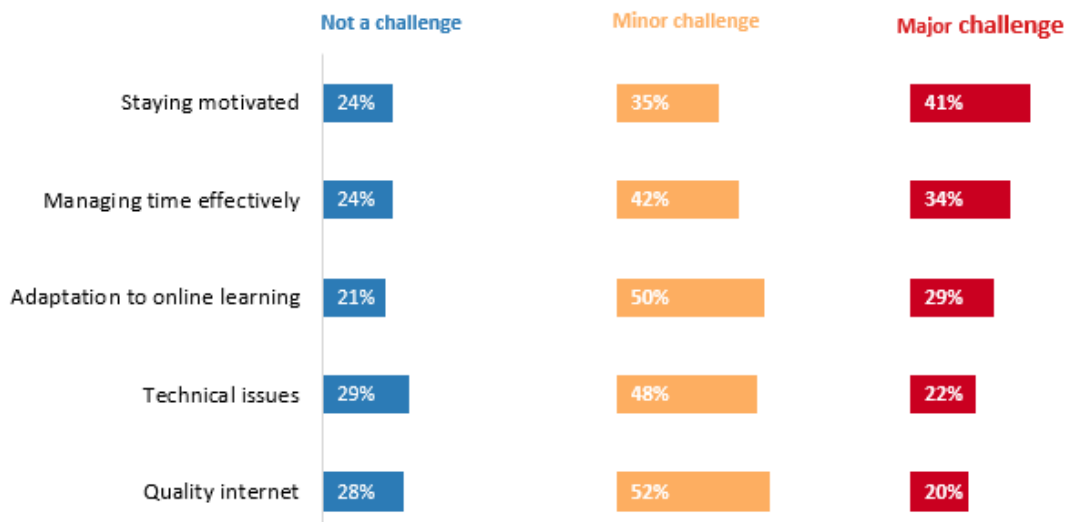
The vast majority of students have **computer**, **internet**, and **basic software** access at home (for online learning). However, this also means that a number of students lack key resources.



Staying motivated and managing time effectively emerged as the greatest challenge students expect to encounter (Figure 2). In analyses of over 600 open-ended comments, lack of a comfortable study environment at home emerged as a major challenge for close to 40% of the respondents. Issues such as online examination processes, access to labs/classrooms/library, and interaction with faculty and students were much less prominent in open-ended comments (5% to 10% identified them as major concerns).

Figure 2. Online-learning challenges NU students expect to encounter

Staying motivated and managing time effectively are the **greatest challenges** that NU students expect to encounter as they transition to online learning.



In sum, most students have access to basic resources for online learning. However, some students also lack access to such resources. NU proactively used preliminary results from this survey to make over 70 laptops available (for loan) to students without computer access at home. Lack of internet access for some students and concerns with internet quality for others suggest the need to emphasize asynchronous modes of course delivery. Other considerations include the need to ensure (1) adequate software access (Microsoft Office and other relevant specialized software) by students and (2) adequate academic and moral support to students in this time of crisis.

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We invite you to write to IR (ir@nu.edu.kz) and (1) share your thoughts and experiences relative to the topic under discussion in this **IR-MFF** issue and/or (2) suggest a question/topic that you would like us to address in a future issue of the **IR-MFF**.

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