

## **ESAAC Sub Committee on Fall Reading Break (SFRB) Consultation Document**

Version: March 12, 2019

### **Background:**

Discussions about the introduction of a Fall Reading Break in previous years have led to the conclusion that there was no easy way to introduce such a break without some tradeoffs to maintain contact hours; including, for instance, an earlier start date for the semester, a later end date and/or more compressed exam periods. None of these tradeoffs were deemed acceptable during these earlier discussions.

Given the strong support for a Fall Reading Break among the undergraduate student population, the ESAAC Sub Committee on Fall Reading Break (SFRB) is mandated to re-examine the different possible scenarios for a Fall Reading Break in an effort to clearly define the corresponding tradeoffs, from the perspective of students, faculty, staff, academic programs. The SFRB is also mandated to identify the corresponding logistics associated with these scenarios.

In fall 2018, the SSMU conducted a student survey to identify the tradeoffs that are preferred by the student population. Survey results showed preference among students for two different possible scenarios (a) starting classes before Labour Day or in late August and (b) having longer class times (but not starting classes earlier in the day). Please refer to Appendix B for a summary and detailed analysis of the SSMU fall 2018 student survey results, as well as subsequent focus group results.

### **Consultation process:**

In light of these survey results, the SFRB has prepared this consultation document to catalogue the considerations relevant to these options, to collect feedback from stakeholders, and to identify the best solution toward a Fall Reading Break that is acceptable to students, faculty, and staff and that will minimize impact on academic programs.

As part of the consultation process, all stakeholders are requested to give feedback on considerations identified in this document, as well as identify additional considerations that are not yet identified here.

Please send feedback by **Friday March 22, 2019** to Nadine Lessard, [nadine.lessard@mcgill.ca](mailto:nadine.lessard@mcgill.ca), in Enrolment Services.

SFRB will report to ESAAC on April 2, 2019.

### OPTION 1: Starting the fall semester the last week of August

The SSMU student survey asked whether students (a) would be willing to start classes before Labour Day but within the month of September and (b) whether they would be willing to start classes a week early. Starting classes before Labour Day but within the month of September was the most preferred option, while starting classes a week early was “tied” for the second most preferred option, along with longer class times.

The SFRB focused on simulations that show starting the fall semester one week early, rather than before Labour Day but within the month of September because in years where Labour Day is early in the month, starting in August would be necessary in either case, and because starting a week early facilitates a 5-day Fall Break.

The SSMU survey results show that students prefer to have the fall break in late October or early November. In the context of starting fall classes a week earlier, the SFRB placed the fall break during the week of Thanksgiving Monday for the following reasons:

- If classes start a week earlier in August, the week of Thanksgiving Monday becomes the 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> week of classes; notably, midway through the semester and later in the semester than this week currently sits.
- Placing the fall break during this week avoids losing a second Monday (Thanksgiving) in the schedule.

*Table: Important Dates - starting fall semester the last week of August*

YEAR	LABOUR DAY	THANKS-GIVING	CLASSES START	Move In	FALL BREAK	CLASSES END	STUDY DAY	EXAMS START	EXAMS END	# EXAM DAYS
2019	Sept. 2	Oct. 14	Mon. Aug. 26	Aug 17-18	Oct. 14-18 week 8	Mon. Dec. 2	Tues. Dec. 3	Wed. Dec. 4	Thurs. Dec 19	12
2020	Sept. 7	Oct. 12	Mon. Aug. 31	Aug 22-23	Oct. 12-16 week 7	Mon. Dec. 7	Tues. Dec. 8	Wed. Dec. 9	Tues. Dec. 22	10
2021	Sept. 6	Oct. 11	Mon. Aug. 30	Aug 21-22	Oct. 11-15 week 7	Mon. Dec. 6	Tues. Dec. 7	Wed. Dec. 8	Wed. Dec. 22	11
2022	Sept. 5	Oct. 10	Mon. Aug. 29	Aug 20-21	Oct. 10-14 week 7	Mon. Dec. 5	Tues. Dec. 6	Wed. Dec. 7	Thurs. Dec. 22	12
2023	Sept. 4	Oct. 9	Mon. Aug. 28	Aug 19-20	Oct. 9-13 week 7	Mon. Dec. 4	Tues. Dec. 5	Wed. Dec. 6	Thurs. Dec. 21	12
2024	Sept. 2	Oct. 14	Mon. Aug. 26	Aug 17-18	Oct. 14-18 week 8	Mon. Dec. 2	Tues. Dec. 3	Wed. Dec. 4	Thurs. Dec. 19	12
2025	Sept. 1	Oct. 13	Mon. Aug. 25	Aug 16-17	Oct. 13-17 week 8	Mon. Dec. 1	Tues. Dec. 2	Wed. Dec. 3	Thurs. Dec. 18	12
2026	Sept. 7	Oct. 12	Mon. Aug. 31	Aug 22-23	Oct. 12-16 week 7	Mon. Dec. 7	Tues. Dec. 8	Wed. Dec. 9	Tues. Dec. 22	10
2027	Sept. 6	Oct. 11	Mon. Aug. 30	Aug 21-22	Oct. 11-15 week 7	Mon. Dec. 6	Tues. Dec. 7	Wed. Dec. 8	Wed. Dec. 22	11
2028	Sept. 4	Oct. 9	Mon. Aug. 28	Aug 19-20	Oct. 9-13 week 7	Mon. Dec. 4	Tues. Dec. 5	Wed. Dec. 6	Thurs. Dec. 21	12
2029	Sept. 3	Oct. 8	Mon. Aug 27	Aug 18-19	Oct. 8-12 week 7	Mon. Dec. 3	Tues. Dec. 4	Wed. Dec. 5	Thurs. Dec 20	12

*Table: Considerations and possible mitigations or action items for starting fall semester the last week of August*

CONSIDERATION	POSSIBLE MITIGATION / ACTION
Reduced number of weeks available for mandatory summer academic activities and courses	There are 16 – 17 full weeks between May 1 <sup>st</sup> and the last Monday in August, depending on the year. - Internships for coop programs in Engineering require a minimum of 14.5 weeks ACTION: Broader consultation with academic units
Reduced number of weeks available for non-mandatory summer academic activities and courses, eg internships, field courses, exchanges, research experiences	Preliminary consultations with FAES, Law, Management, Arts, Engineering, Computer Science, and Education indicated that summer activities would be able to accommodate a shortened summer span.
Winter term supplemental and deferred exams currently take place the week before Orientation. Moving them a week earlier may disrupt students' summer plans.	Hold winter term supplemental and deferred exams the same week as orientation.
Two out of ten years result in a shorter exam period (2020 and 2026)	This is an issue with the current schedule.
Faculties could opt out of the new schedule with minimal impact on other units or class scheduling	
Professors would have a week less for research, conferences, and projects during the summer	ACTION: Consult with MAUT and academic units
Students would have a week less to work during the summer	ACTION: Is this an issue for students? Consult with SSMU, PGSS, MACES, MCSS
Students would have to extend their rental leases by one month.	The SSMU fall 2018 student survey revealed that most students have 12-month leases or no leases, with only 9% having 8-month leases. Subsequent SSMU focus groups found that this was an issue for self-supported students (see Appendix B)
Orientation and orientation training would start a week earlier	ACTION: Consult with CLE
Move In weekend would move to mid-August	ACTION: Consult with Service Point and SHHS
SHHS would lose a week of summer booking	ACTION: Consult with SHHS
Would add a week of black out days for scheduling staff summer vacations	ACTION: Consult with Service Point, SHHS, HR, and various unions

## OPTION 2: Longer class times

The SSMU survey results showed that having longer class times was the second most preferred tradeoff for maintaining contact hours and implementing a fall break (tied with starting classes a week early).

The following tables outline:

- 1) adding 4 minutes to every hour to gain 4 days for fall break. During Thanksgiving week, these 4 days would allow room for a 5 day fall break, and
- 2) adding 5 minutes to every hour to gain 5 days for a fall break. This would allow for a 5 day fall break in late October or early November, the timing preferred in the SSMU fall 2018 survey.

The SSMU fall 2018 survey results showed students are unwilling to start classes before 8:30am. The simulations below include 8:00, 8:15, and 8:30am start times for discussion because of considerations around a day that ends later.

*Table: adding 4 minutes to every contact hour*

3 classes/week at 1h4min per class			3 classes/week at 1h4min per class			3 classes/week at 1h4mi per class		
Start	Duration	End	Start	Duration	End	Start	Duration	End
8:00:00	1:04:00	9:04:00	8:15:00	1:04:00	9:19:00	8:30:00	1:04:00	9:34:00
9:04:00	1:04:00	10:08:00	9:19:00	1:04:00	10:23:00	9:34:00	1:04:00	10:38:00
10:08:00	1:04:00	11:12:00	10:23:00	1:04:00	11:27:00	10:38:00	1:04:00	11:42:00
11:12:00	1:04:00	12:16:00	11:27:00	1:04:00	12:31:00	11:42:00	1:04:00	12:46:00
12:16:00	1:04:00	13:20:00	12:31:00	1:04:00	13:35:00	12:46:00	1:04:00	13:50:00
13:20:00	1:04:00	14:24:00	13:35:00	1:04:00	14:39:00	13:50:00	1:04:00	14:54:00
14:24:00	1:04:00	15:28:00	14:39:00	1:04:00	15:43:00	14:54:00	1:04:00	15:58:00
15:28:00	1:04:00	16:32:00	15:43:00	1:04:00	16:47:00	15:58:00	1:04:00	17:02:00
16:32:00	1:04:00	17:36:00	16:47:00	1:04:00	17:51:00	17:02:00	1:04:00	18:06:00
2 classes/week at 1h36min per class			2 classes/week at 1h36min per class			2 classes/week at 1h36min per class		
Start	Duration	End	Start	Duration	End	Start	Duration	End
8:00:00	1:36:00	9:36:00	8:15:00	1:36:00	9:51:00	8:30:00	1:36:00	10:06:00
9:36:00	1:36:00	11:12:00	9:51:00	1:36:00	11:27:00	10:06:00	1:36:00	11:42:00
11:12:00	1:36:00	12:48:00	11:27:00	1:36:00	13:03:00	11:42:00	1:36:00	13:18:00
12:48:00	1:36:00	14:24:00	13:03:00	1:36:00	14:39:00	13:18:00	1:36:00	14:54:00
14:24:00	1:36:00	16:00:00	14:39:00	1:36:00	16:15:00	14:54:00	1:36:00	16:30:00
16:00:00	1:36:00	17:36:00	16:15:00	1:36:00	17:51:00	16:30:00	1:36:00	18:06:00
17:36:00	1:36:00	19:12:00	17:51:00	1:36:00	19:27:00	18:06:00	1:36:00	19:42:00
19:12:00	1:36:00	20:48:00	19:27:00	1:36:00	21:03:00	19:42:00	1:36:00	21:18:00
1 class per week at 3h12min per class			1 class per week at 3h12min per class			1 class per week at 3h12min per class		
Start	Duration	End	Start	Duration	End	Start	Duration	End
8:00:00	3:12:00	11:12:00	8:15:00	3:12:00	11:27:00	8:30:00	3:12:00	11:42:00
11:12:00	3:12:00	14:24:00	11:27:00	3:12:00	14:39:00	11:42:00	3:12:00	14:54:00
14:24:00	3:12:00	17:36:00	14:39:00	3:12:00	17:51:00	14:54:00	3:12:00	18:06:00
17:36:00	3:12:00	20:48:00	17:51:00	3:12:00	21:03:00	18:06:00	3:12:00	21:18:00

Table: adding 5 minutes to every contact hour

3 classes/week at 1h5min per class		
Start	Duration	End
8:00:00	1:05:00	9:05:00
9:05:00	1:05:00	10:10:00
10:10:00	1:05:00	11:15:00
11:15:00	1:05:00	12:20:00
12:20:00	1:05:00	13:25:00
13:25:00	1:05:00	14:30:00
14:30:00	1:05:00	15:35:00
15:35:00	1:05:00	16:40:00
16:40:00	1:05:00	17:45:00
2 classes/week at 1h37:30 per class		
Start	Duration	End
8:00:00	1:37:30	9:37:30
9:37:30	1:37:30	11:15:00
11:15:00	1:37:30	12:52:30
12:52:30	1:37:30	14:30:00
14:30:00	1:37:30	16:07:30
16:07:30	1:37:30	17:45:00
17:45:00	1:37:30	19:22:30
19:22:30	1:37:30	21:00:00
1 class/week at 3h15min per class		
Start	Duration	End
8:00:00	3:15:00	11:15:00
11:15:00	3:15:00	14:30:00
14:30:00	3:15:00	17:45:00
17:45:00	3:15:00	21:00:00

3 classes/week at 1h5min per class		
Start	Duration	End
8:15:00	1:05:00	9:20:00
9:20:00	1:05:00	10:25:00
10:25:00	1:05:00	11:30:00
11:30:00	1:05:00	12:35:00
12:35:00	1:05:00	13:40:00
13:40:00	1:05:00	14:45:00
14:45:00	1:05:00	15:50:00
15:50:00	1:05:00	16:55:00
16:55:00	1:05:00	18:00:00
2 classes/week at 1h37:30 per class		
Start	Duration	End
8:15:00	1:37:30	9:52:30
9:52:30	1:37:30	11:30:00
11:30:00	1:37:30	13:07:30
13:07:30	1:37:30	14:45:00
14:45:00	1:37:30	16:22:30
16:22:30	1:37:30	18:00:00
18:00:00	1:37:30	19:37:30
19:37:30	1:37:30	21:15:00
1 class/week at 3h15min per class		
Start	Duration	End
8:15:00	3:15:00	11:30:00
11:30:00	3:15:00	14:45:00
14:45:00	3:15:00	18:00:00
18:00:00	3:15:00	21:15:00

3 classes/week at 1h5min per class		
Start	Duration	End
8:30:00	1:05:00	9:35:00
9:35:00	1:05:00	10:40:00
10:40:00	1:05:00	11:45:00
11:45:00	1:05:00	12:50:00
12:50:00	1:05:00	13:55:00
13:55:00	1:05:00	15:00:00
15:00:00	1:05:00	16:05:00
16:05:00	1:05:00	17:10:00
17:10:00	1:05:00	18:15:00
2 classes/week at 1h37:30 per class		
Start	Duration	End
8:30:00	1:37:30	10:07:30
10:07:30	1:37:30	11:45:00
11:45:00	1:37:30	13:22:30
13:22:30	1:37:30	15:00:00
15:00:00	1:37:30	16:37:30
16:37:30	1:37:30	18:15:00
18:15:00	1:37:30	19:52:30
19:52:30	1:37:30	21:30:00
1 class/week at 3h15min per class		
Start	Duration	End
8:30:00	3:15:00	11:45:00
11:45:00	3:15:00	15:00:00
15:00:00	3:15:00	18:15:00
18:15:00	3:15:00	21:30:00

*Table: Considerations and possible mitigations or action items in relation to longer class times*

<b>CONSIDERATION</b>	<b>POSSIBLE MITIGATION / ACTION</b>
Losing a week of classes would mean loss of a lab in science and possibly loss of readings in other courses.	ACTION: Consult with academic units
Increased instructor unavailability over the span of these scheduling blocks.	Communication with departments and instructors regarding new scheduling blocks.
The timing for departmental meetings would need to shift to accommodate the new schedule blocks	Communication with departments regarding new scheduling blocks.
Collective agreements and contracts must be assessed with respect to extending the schedule before 8:30am and after 5:30pm.	ACTION: Consult with HR
SSMU fall 2018 survey showed student unwillingness to start classes early, however longer class times starting at 8:30am has the day ending late for SCS commuter students (last West Island train departs from Lucien station at 9:15pm)	ACTION: Consult with MACES and SCS.
Current technology/calendar view does not accommodate the increments in these simulations.	ACTION: ES to scope changing/updating this system.
All faculties would need to agree on the new schedule blocks. Class scheduling would be impossible otherwise.	ACTION: Consult with academic units.
Possible impact on system reports and processes, as well as government reporting	ACTION: ES to scope
Fall and winter semesters would operate on different blocks	ACTION: Consult with ES and academic units

Table: Benchmarking breaks in Canadian and Quebec Universities

Canadian University	Classes (Begin/End)		Study Breaks
	First day of class	Last day of class	
University of British Columbia	September 3, 2018	April 8, 2019	Winter break: Monday, February 18, 2019 to Thursday, February 21, 2019 (Monday, February 18 <sup>th</sup> 2019 Family day in BC)
University of Alberta	September 4, 2018	April 10, 2019	Winter break: Thursday, March 7, 2019 to Sunday, March 9, 2019 – Augustana campus only
McMaster University	September 4, 2018	April 9, 2019	Fall break : Monday, October 8, 2018 to Friday, October 12, 2018 (Monday October 8, 2018 Thanksgiving Day) Winter break: Monday, February 18, 2019 to Friday, February 22, 2019 (Monday, February 18 <sup>th</sup> 2019 Family day in Ontario)
University of Waterloo	September 6, 2018	April 5, 2019	Fall break : Monday, October 8, 2018 to Wednesday, October 10, 2018 (Monday October 8, 2018 Thanksgiving Day) Winter break: Monday, February 18, 2019 to Friday, February 22, 2019 (Monday, February 18 <sup>th</sup> 2019 Family day in Ontario)
University of Western Ontario	September 3, 2019	April 8, 2020	Fall break: Monday, October 14, 2019 to Friday, October 18, 2019 (Monday October 14, 2019 Thanksgiving Day) Winter break: Monday, February 17, 2020 to Friday, February 21, 2020 (Monday, February 17 <sup>th</sup> 2020 Family day in Ontario)
University of Calgary	September 5, 2019	April 15, 2020	Fall break : Monday, November 12, 2018 to Friday, November 16, 2018 (November 11, Remembrance Day, is a statutory holiday in Alberta) Winter break : Sunday, February 17, 2019 to Saturday, February 23, 2019 (Monday, February 18 <sup>th</sup> 2019 Family day in Alberta)
Queen's University	September 6, 2018	April 5, 2019	Fall break : Thursday, October 25, 2018 to Friday, October 26, 2018 Winter break: Monday, February 18, 2019 to Friday, February 22, 2019 (Monday, February 18 <sup>th</sup> 2019 Family day in Ontario)
University of Toronto	September 6, 2018	April 5, 2019	Fall break : Monday, November 5, 2018 to Friday, November 9, 2018 (November 11, Remembrance Day, is a statutory Holiday in Ontario) Winter break: Monday, February 18, 2019 to Friday, February 22, 2019

			(Monday, February 18 <sup>th</sup> 2019 Family day in Ontario)
University of Ottawa	September 4, 2019	April 4, 2020	Fall break: Monday, October 14, 2019 to Friday, October 18, 2019 (Monday, October 14, 2019 Thanksgiving Day) Winter break : Monday, February 17, 2020 to Friday, February 21, 2020 (Monday, February 17 <sup>th</sup> 2020 Family day in Ontario)
Quebec University	Classes (Begin/End)		Study Breaks
	First day of class	Last day of class	
Bishop's University	August 28, 2018	April 9, 2019	Winter break : Monday, March 4, 2019 to Friday, March 8, 2019
Concordia University	September 4, 2018	April 13, 2019	Winter break: Monday, February 25, 2019 to Friday, March 1, 2019
ETS	September 3, 2019	April 7, 2020	Winter break : Monday February 24 and Tuesday 25, 2020
HEC	August 24, 2019	April 13, 2020	Fall break: Wednesday , October 16, 2019 to Tuesday, October 22, 2019 (Cert M.Sc. and Ph.d. ) Wednesday, October 23, 2019 to Tuesday, October 29, 2019 (B.A.A. and D.E.S.) (Monday, October 14, 2019 Thanksgiving Day) Winter break :, Monday February 24, 2020 to Friday, February 28, 2020 (Cert M.Sc. and Ph.d.) Monday March 2, 2020 to Friday, March 6, 2020 (B.A.A. and D.E.S.)
Université de Montréal	September 4, 2018	April 12, 2019	Fall break (some academic units): Monday, October 22, 2018 to Friday, October 26, 2018 Winter break (some academic units):, Monday March 4, 2019 to Friday, March 8, 2019
Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières	August 27, 2018	April 26, 2019	Fall break: Monday, October 29, 2018 to Friday, November 2, 2018 Winter break : Monday, March 4, 2019 to Friday, March 8, 2019
Université du Québec à Montréal	September 3, 2019	April 17, 2020 OR April 24, 2020 OR April 26, 2020	Winter break: Monday, February 24, 2020 to Friday, February 28, 2020
Université Laval	September 2, 2019	April 24, 2020 (inc. exam period / calendar doesn't indicate)	Fall break: Monday, October 28, 2019 to Friday, November 1, 2019 Winter break : Monday, March 2, 2020 to Friday, March 6, 2020



## **Appendix A:**

### **ESAAC SFRB membership**

Chair:

University Registrar and Executive Director, Enrolment Services: Gillian Nycum, [Gillian.nycum@mcgill.ca](mailto:Gillian.nycum@mcgill.ca)

Student members:

2 SSMU representatives: Bryan Buraga [artsscisenator@ssmu.ca](mailto:artsscisenator@ssmu.ca); Tre Mansdoerfer [president@ssmu.ca](mailto:president@ssmu.ca)

1 PGSS representative: did not provide a representative and must be consulted.

1 MCSS representative: Shubhanker Joshi [academic.mcass@mail.mcgill.ca](mailto:academic.mcass@mail.mcgill.ca)

One Faculty representative from each of the:

Faculty of Medicine: Paola Fata [paola.fata@mcgill.ca](mailto:paola.fata@mcgill.ca)

Faculty of Engineering: Kaila Folinsbee [kaila.folinsbee@mcgill.ca](mailto:kaila.folinsbee@mcgill.ca)

Faculty of Science: Nicole Allard [nicole.allard@mcgill.ca](mailto:nicole.allard@mcgill.ca)

One representative from Enrolment Services:

Nermein Gamal [Nermein.Gamal@mcgill.ca](mailto:Nermein.Gamal@mcgill.ca)

## **Appendix B: Summary of, as well as detailed results of the SSMU fall 2018 survey on fall break.**

### **Summary of November 2018 Student Survey on Fall Break Results**

- 4339 responses, 17% U0, 34% U1, 21% U2, 17% U3, 5% U4+.
- 38.7% of respondents from Arts, 23.2% from Science, 12.5% from Engineering, 7.7% from Management, with the balance from Education, Arts and Science, Nursing, AES.
- 35% Quebec students, 34% rest of Canada, 31% International.
- 45% of respondents have a 12-months lease, 9% have an 8-month lease, with the balance having no lease or living in residence.
- The most preferred option among students for adding the contact hours necessary to enable a fall break is starting classes before Labour Day (but within September) with PT/OT, Medicine and AES with largest margins of support for this option.
- There was a “tie” for the second most preferred option: one of these is starting classes in late August; the other is a willingness to have longer classes. Note however, that respondents showed the lowest overall willingness to start classes before 8:30am, suggesting that longer classes and a longer day would perhaps mean a later day.
- 51% of respondents indicated a preference for a fall break in late October and 50% indicated a preference for early November (respondents were able to indicate more than one choice).
- 83% of respondents believe a fall break would allow them to focus on their mental health, 73% on studying, 72% on physical health, 70% on seeing family and friends (respondents were able to indicate more than one choice).

Detailed analysis of survey results and subsequent focus groups is by JED consulting on behalf of SSMU.



AGENDA

AGENDA

Survey Methodology and Analysis
Testimonials
Focus Group Methodology and Results
Importance of Mental Health: EUS Survey
Key Takeaways
Problems per Faculty



## Survey Methodology and Analysis

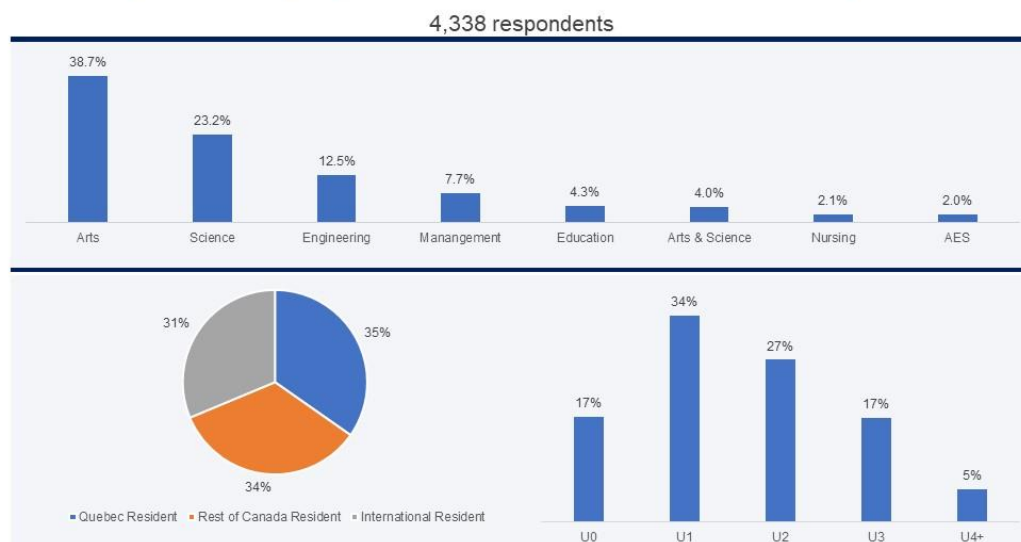
Survey Methodology and Analysis
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## Survey Demographics: All Faculties well Represented



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## Survey Demographics: in Numbers

Year of Program	N	%	Faculty	N	%
U0	746	17%	Arts	1658	39%
U1	1466	34%	Science	993	23%
U2	1154	27%	Engineering	534	12%
U3	739	17%	Manangement	331	8%
U4+	233	5%	Education	185	4%
Lease Length	N	%	Arts & Science	173	4%
12 months	1961	45%	Nursing	88	2%
I live in a McGill Residence	954	22%	AES	87	2%
I am not renting/I do not have a lease	869	20%	Music	83	2%
8 months	397	9%	Law	60	1%
Other	157	4%	PT/OT	48	1%
Residency	N	%	Medicine	29	1%
Quebec Resident	1506	35%	Dentistry	18	0.4%
Rest of Canada Resident	1475	34%			
International Resident	1357	31%			

About 15.7% of McGill undergraduates were surveyed and only 9% of students have an 8 month lease.

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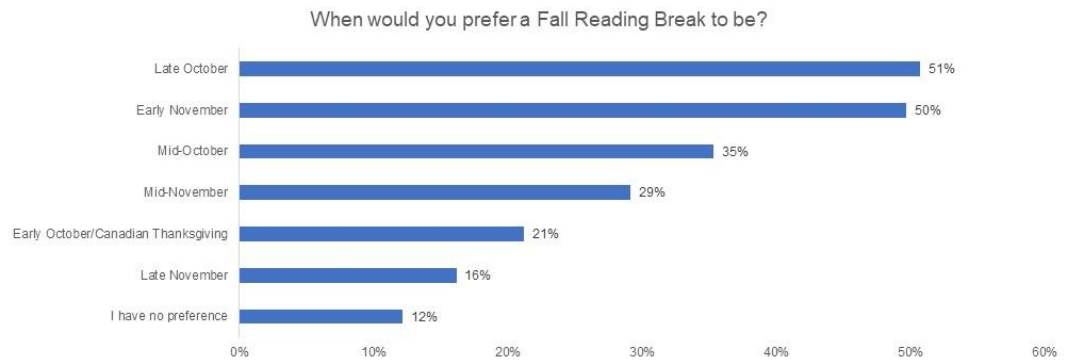
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U4+	233	5%	Education	185	4%
Lease Length	N	%	Arts & Science	173	4%
12 months	1961	45%	Nursing	88	2%
I live in a McGill Residence	954	22%	AES	87	2%
I am not renting/I do not have a lease	869	20%	Music	83	2%
8 months	397	9%	Law	60	1%
Other	157	4%	PT/OT	48	1%
Residency	N	%	Medicine	29	1%
Quebec Resident	1506	35%	Dentistry	18	0.4%
Rest of Canada Resident	1475	34%			
International Resident	1357	31%			

About 15.7% of McGill undergraduates were surveyed and only 9% of students have an 8 month lease.

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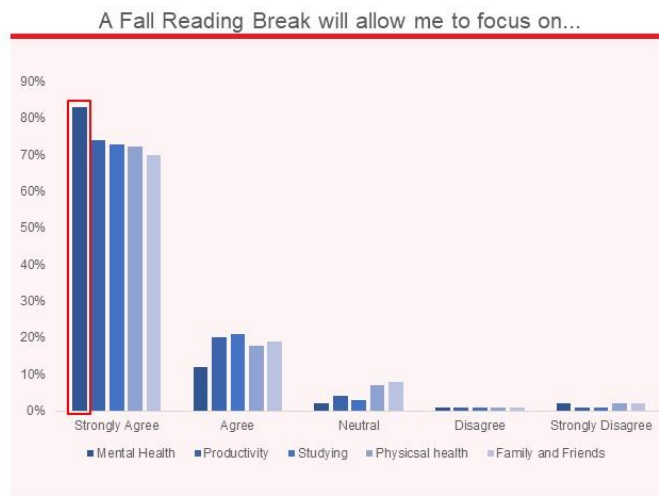
## Fall Reading Week Placement



15% of those who said late November mentioned "thanksgiving" in their reasons why they want a reading week (American thanksgiving is late November so likely correlation).

7

## What would a fall reading week be used for?



### Insights

- The majority of students agreed that a reading week would benefit each polled category.
- Mental Health is the greatest concern for students since it is **10% greater** than the next category.

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## Survey Results: Methodology

**GOAL:** To determine the favourite solutions among students and learn about the sacrifices they would accept.

**QUESTION:** For a Fall Reading Break, I would be willing to:

- ① Have the earliest morning classes start earlier than 8:30 AM
- ② Have Fall exams start the day after the last day of classes (remove study day)
- ③ Have more condensed midterm schedules
- ④ Have weekend exams during the Fall exam period
- ⑤ Have slightly longer class times
- ⑥ Have classes start before Labour Day but within the month of September
- ⑦ Have classes start in late August

Response options were broken down into:

- 1 Week
  - 4 day
  - 5 days
  - I would not be willing to do this → NO\*
- } YES

\* If respondents answered "yes" and "no" – qualified as no (approx. 255)

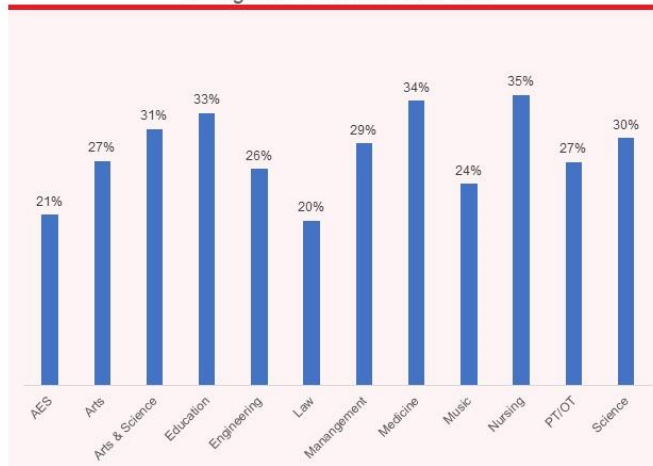


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## Survey Results

Willingness to Start before 8:30



Insights

- BY FAR lowest overall willingness – standard deviation is 5%: not much variation in the dislike of the option
- AES: 79% unwilling to start 8:30 – many would have to commute to mac campus

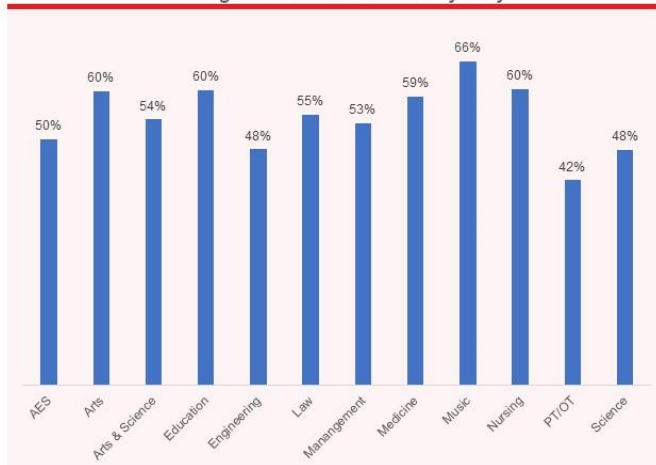


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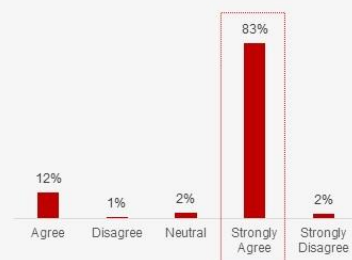
## Survey Results

Willingness to Remove Study Day



Insights

- The second worst option for the biggest faculties (arts, management, science, engineering, arts & science)
- 83% of respondents said the reading week will help them with mental health

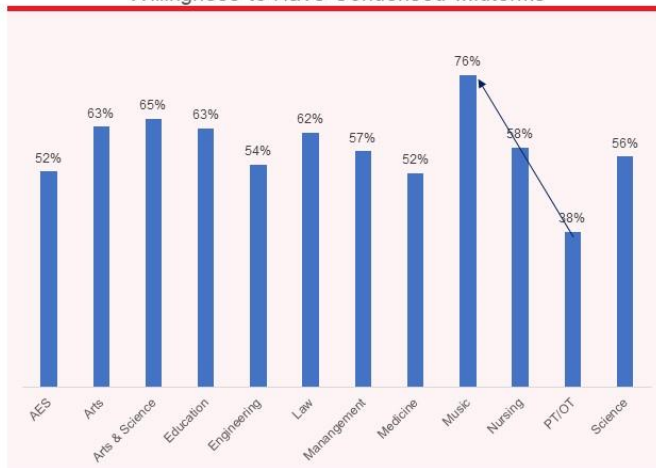


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## Survey Results

Willingness to Have Condensed Midterms



Insights

- Music department's second highest option, but overall a bad option for other faculties
- Extremely high spread – 38% spread in responses
- May be part of a faculty-tailored response. Not recommended university-wide



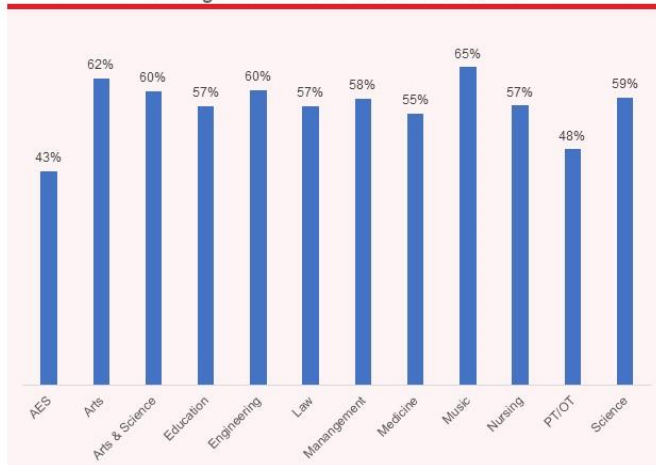
12





## Survey Results

Willingness to Have Weekend Exams



Insights

- Engineering is 60% willing to have weekend exams → could make weekend exams faculty specific?
- Agriculture not willing → would have to commute to mac.

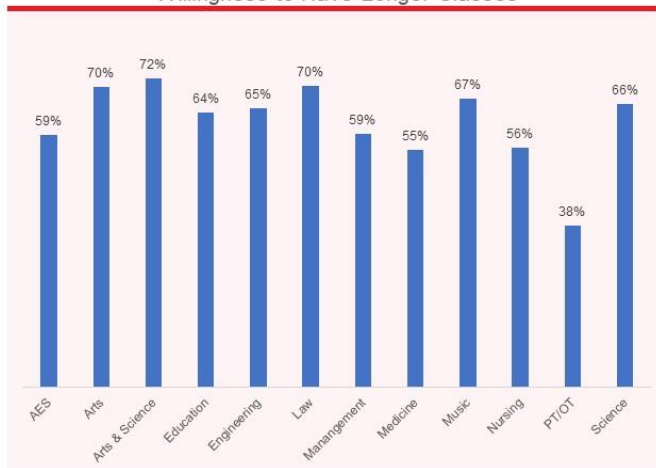


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## Survey Results

Willingness to Have Longer Classes



Insights

- One of the two "second most popular" options – average of 62%
- Arts/Arts & Science likes this option the most – unlike management, they have no classes after 6pm.

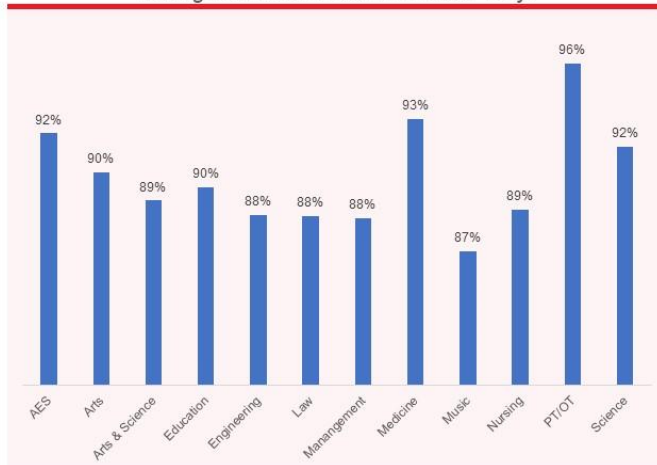


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## Survey Results

Willingness to Start before Labour Day:



Insights

- BY FAR highest overall willingness: grand majority of each faculty willing to do this (min: 87%)
- PT/OT and Medicine faculties like this option the most
- AES responded highest to this option, compared to all other responses (drop in 27% to second best option)

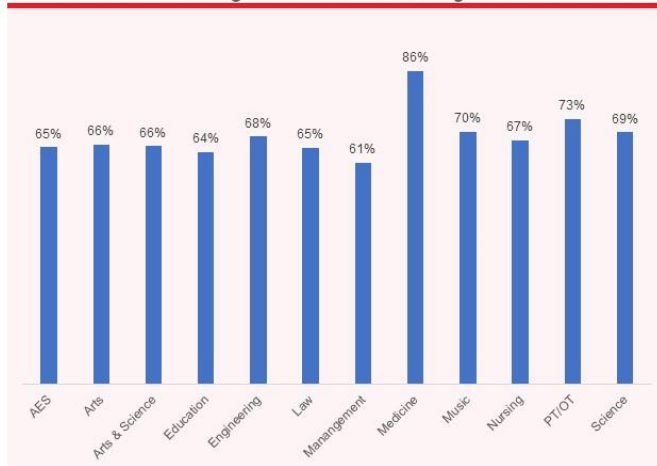


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## Survey Results

Willingness to Start Late August



Insights

- One of the two "second most popular" options – average of 68%
- Feasible since only 9% have 8 month leases



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## Testimonials

Survey Methodology and Analysis



Testimonials

Focus Group Methodology and Results

Importance of Mental Health: EUS Survey

Key Takeaways

Problems per Faculty



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## Popular student responses

### 1<sup>st</sup> Order Consequences

- 1 Allow more time to study and catchup on semester deadlines
- 2 Allow students to go home and visit their families
- 3 More time to do extra-curriculars and to deal with post graduation (i.e. Recruitment, Grad School)

### Student Responses

"This was incredibly helpful to **catch up** and to revise material. Without the breaks we are just trying to **keep up instead of actually learning**."

"I often get **homesick and struggle with depression**, it's difficult for me to travel home for the short amount of time and I often feel like a miss out and it makes me very **unhappy at McGill**."

"**Recruitment** for consulting happens right during this time frame, and is pretty intense on top of juggling with school work."

"It is essential to have a couple days off to refocus on applications, **catch up on school work** or classes missed because of tight interview timelines."

"Would have given me the chance to catch up on my **extracurricular responsibilities** running a club that organizes workshops for high schoolers."

Students are suffering in the fall from a higher pressure in their schedules and are forced to remain behind in their studies.



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## Popular student responses

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Order Consequences

- 1 It will reduce the burnout after midterms, and aid students mental health.
- 2 Allow students to recover from physical illness from midterm stress or sudden change of weather.
- 3 Allow students to take or manage a full course load during the fall semester.

### Student Responses

"I feel completely **burnt out after midterms** and need some time to get it together before finals."

"I experienced **mental breakdowns** and even **physical illnesses** during those periods."

"If not given the chance to catch up on our work, have some time to see our families, and recoup, the effects on our **mental health and well-being** will be **detrimental**."

"I always took one fewer classes in the fall semester because **without the break**, it was just **not possible** to take a full load."

"This year my physical health is declining and I have **lost weight** to the point of a **sickly BMI** but I feel like I have no time to manage meals and get myself on a **healthy track**."

The lack of a fall reading in turn has affected students mental and physical health pushing students to very unhealthy and unenjoyable lifestyles.

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## Impactful Testimonials

"Walk in McConnell starting **Mid October** and ask every person you see if they have any will to **live anymore**, and that question will answer itself."

"People have seriously talked about **suicide and feeling pointless** at that point due to the amount of **pressure and workload** they are put under with no seeming benefit."

"For the past three years, the Fall semesters have driven me to **contemplate suicide** and that I have had to **seek help**."

"I had just come back to start my 2nd year after tragically losing my older brother to suicide less than 2 months earlier. The previous year, I had a 4.0 GPA and then, I was **deferring exams, crying everyday, and considering dropping out**. I am from Vancouver, a 6 hr flight away, and although my parents are more than willing to fly me home, doing so for 2 days is just not as realistic as people who live closer."

"I question my decision to **remain at McGill** as I simply feel as though I am **not cared for**."

Students' mental health are affected most heavily from the high workload and lack of a break which in some cases lead to suicide or suicidal thoughts.

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## Testimonials – Survey Results

"Why do you want a fall reading week" qualitative responses:

Factor (word used)	Frequency
"Stress or mental health or burnout"	39.66%
"Study"	25.74%
"Family or Friends"	16.44%
"Physical health or gym or exercise"	5.80%

This relates to responses about benefits from reading week:

- 83% strongly agree it will help them focus on **mental health**
- 73% strongly agree it will help them focus on **studying**
- 72% strongly agree it will help them focus on **physical health**
- 70% strongly agree it will help them focus on **family & friends**

Mental health is the **most** crucial factor. Reading week could potentially **reduce** spending on the Student Mental Health Action Plan.



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## Focus Group Methodology and Results

Survey Methodology and Analysis

Testimonials



Focus Group Methodology and Results

Importance of Mental Health: EUS Survey

Key Takeaways

Problems per Faculty



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## Focus Groups: Methodology

**GOAL:** How would people's opinions change based on the sacrifices that would have to be made?

### SCHEDULE:

Time	Title	Description
1 minutes	Intro	- Introduction to the project and its goals - Description of the current situation
2 minutes	Group Info	- Gather data on the students
15 minutes	Round Table Discussion	- Pros and cons of a Fall Reading Week - Find out what are the recurring themes about why students need this break. Don't mention the options yet - let them chat and discuss first - What do you think the restrictions could be?
2 minutes	Present Solutions	- Present the current solutions on the table - Explain restrictions
12 minutes	Debate	- Discuss impact of the solutions (pros/cons specifically for faculty) - Ask probing questions
3 minutes	Outro	- Did anybody change their mind about a fall reading week? - Thank participants and encourage them to vote later

### KEY QUESTIONS:

- 1 Why do you want a Fall Reading Week?
- 2 What would you use your reading week for?
- 3 When would you want a reading week?
- 4 What is your biggest concern/problem with a reading week?
- 5 Would you start earlier or mind having longer class times?
- 6 How would you be affected with starting before August?



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## Focus Groups: Methodology

53 respondents



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## Focus Groups: Analysis

Why do you want a Fall reading week and what would you use it for?

### Key Points

- 1 Improving students mental health and preventing burnout or depression are key benefits.
- 2 The primary motivation for a Fall reading week is for the ability to catchup on work.
- 3 Engineering students found that the Fall semester was more difficult than the winter
- 4 Most students would use the break to study or work on personal projects. Only a few may use it to travel.

### Focus Group Insights

"I'm an **anxious person** and the break would really allow me to catchup on things"

"I believe it would really help with our **mental health** by giving us sufficient time to **relax** and work at our **own pace**."

"I need time to **regroup** after midterms and **catchup** on material I may have missed"

"After a tough midterm period, I need **time to recover** from bad midterm"

"The break would really allow me and everyone to study at their **own pace** or just **study leisurely** without too much stress"

"I would use it to get more **involved at McGill** and join new clubs knowing that I have a little **extra time**"

A reading week would strongly impact students ability to handle the course load and prevent a lot of the added stress from keeping up with the constant flow of work.

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## Focus Groups: Analysis

When would you like a Fall reading week and what are your concerns?

### Key Points

- 1 Most students agreed that the ideal time would be in between midterms.
- 2 Students are most concerned about a condensed exam or midterm schedule.
- 3 Some Students are also worried about starting school before labour day due to financial reasons.

### Focus Group Insights

"In engineering we have typically have 2 midterms in classes and it would be perfect for it to **break up both periods**."

"I am really scared about **losing time** in between in midterms, especially when I already have so many."

"I've had exam periods where I had 3 exams in 24 hours and it's really unbearable and **my grades suffered** because of it"

"I don't mind having to start **before labour day** and I know all my employers are **super flexible** on ending my internships."

"Starting classes in August is unfair to students who are of less **financial means** and have to pay for more of their lives themselves."

Students main concern with a reading break is how it would affect their exams and midterms schedules.

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## Focus Groups: Analysis

How do you feel about the two possible solutions?

### Key Points

- 1 Students would be open to starting at 8 AM but wouldn't mind starting at 8:15.
- 2 Longer classes would not be a problem for students to handle.
- 3 The only concerns with starting before labour day are financial reasons. (i.e. less work hours, subletting)
- 4 Student did not have concerns about ability to find a place to stay if we started before labour day.

### Focus Group Insights

"I live an **hour and a half away** and I wouldn't mind starting as early as 8AM for a morning class."

"As children we were expected to **sit for hours in class**, why when we are graduate students can we not do the same"

"I don't think any **Quebec student** will have any **issues with before labour day** since we did both in high school and Cegep and UDM is doing it now."

"The **extra costs** would have to be made up by working more during the semester, which will take up critical school work/study time, ultimately impacting grades or to take on study-related extracurricular activities."

"I would lose out on a **months rent** from subletting if I can't sublet for the month of august."

"Most of the time when I sublet the **person leaves halfway** through August anyways"

The only hurdle from the solutions is ensuring that financially sensitive students would be able to handle or wouldn't be affect much by the changes.



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## Focus Groups: Analysis

### Important stats

- 2 out of 53 students started off against the fall reading week and remained against it.
- 1 out of 53 students changed their mind throughout the process. (e.g. they started off as a yes and changed their mind to a no)
- 48 out of 53 students cited mental health or stress when reasoning for a fall reading week

Most students minds were not changed after talking about the potential solutions to come but it's important to keep in mind some students will be unmoved regardless of the benefits of reading week.



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## Importance of Mental Health: EUS Survey

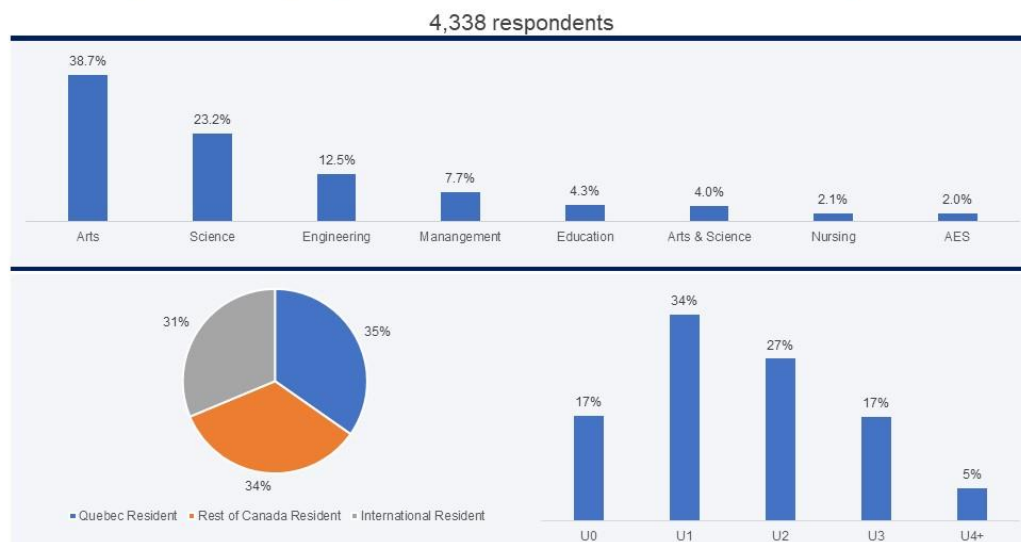
Survey Methodology and Analysis
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Focus Group Methodology and Results
<b>Importance of Mental Health: EUS Survey</b>
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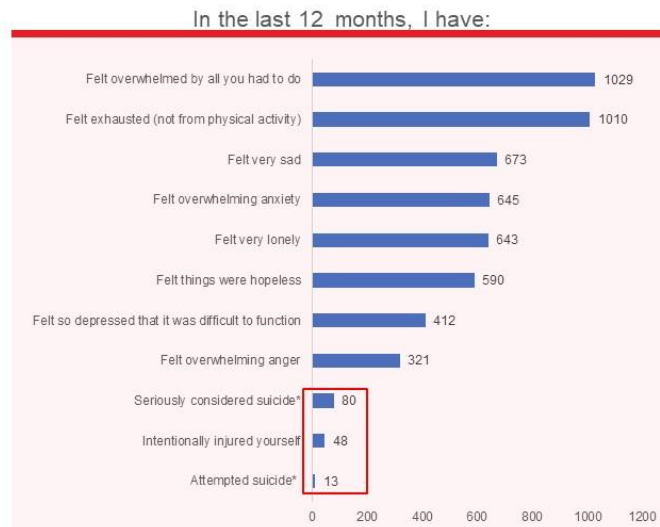
## Survey Demographics: All Faculties well Represented



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## Overview of EUS survey



### Insights

- 69% of respondents cited "lack of time to prioritize self-care" as top barrier for accessing on-campus resources
- 63% of respondents feel pressured to maintain unhealthy habits to keep up with workload
- 36% of respondents spend 0-5 hours per week on social activities/leisure (less than an hour per day)

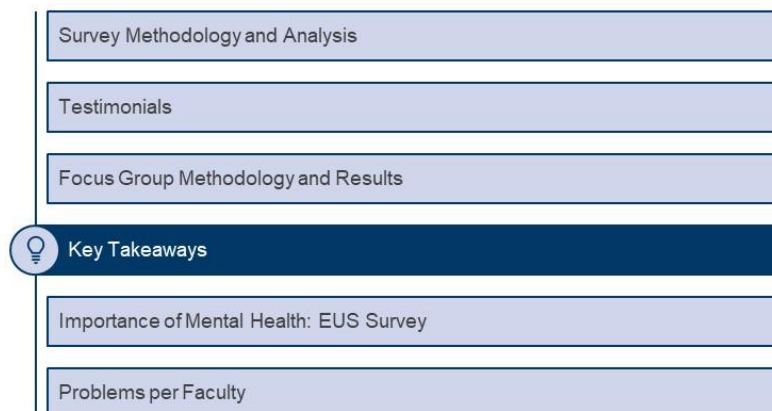


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### Key Takeaways

## Key Takeaways



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## Key Takeaways


- 1 Mental Health is a key benefit for a Fall reading week.
- 2 Most students will benefit in different ways from a fall reading week
- 3 Need to consider the financial burden that may affect a certain population of students
- 3 Students are very open to the ideas for a reading week.



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## Problems per Faculty

Survey Methodology and Analysis
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Importance of Mental Health: EUS Survey
Key Takeaways
 Problems per Faculty



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## PROBLEMS AND RESTRICTIONS PER FACULTY

Two main issues:

- ① Must reach a required amount of contact hours for accreditation
- ② Must accommodate summer or field study classes that run to the end of August

### Things to keep in mind

- Starting in late August and introducing a fall reading week does not affect contact hours or number of class days
- There can be an issue with summer courses that run until the last week of August, however, these courses are flexible



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