"TAYLOR Your Life" (TYL) Fall 2020 Assessment Report

Purpose of Report

This report shares data from 65 students who participated in the TYL course in the Fall 2020 semester and outlines curricular triumphs and challenges, as well as changes to course materials and future directions for the TYL course.

Contents

### i.   Course Description

Course Description

Taylor Your Life (TYL) is a 2 credit 14-week social impact career development lab for undergraduate and graduate students to "Taylor" their life course by applying methods and mindsets of design thinking (human centered design) to career development. In the TYL journey, students identify multiple life paths, clarify their interests, focus and target their search, prototype and test changemaking careers, learn how to market and brand themselves to stand out from the crowd, map their community to effectively join the network of movers and shakers in their field, and design a life that makes a positive difference in the world and is "TAYLORed" to their unique life and personality.

Course Rating + Course of Study
TYL ranked as compared to other classes at Tulane
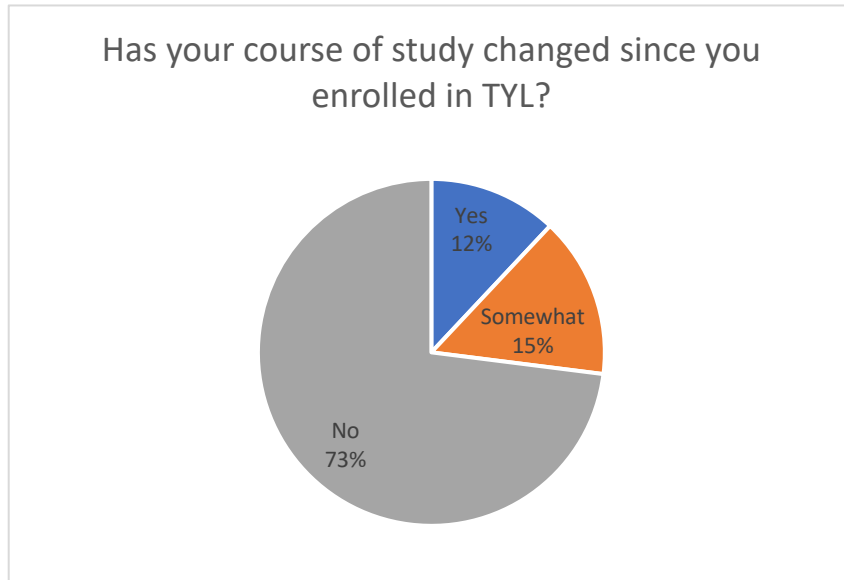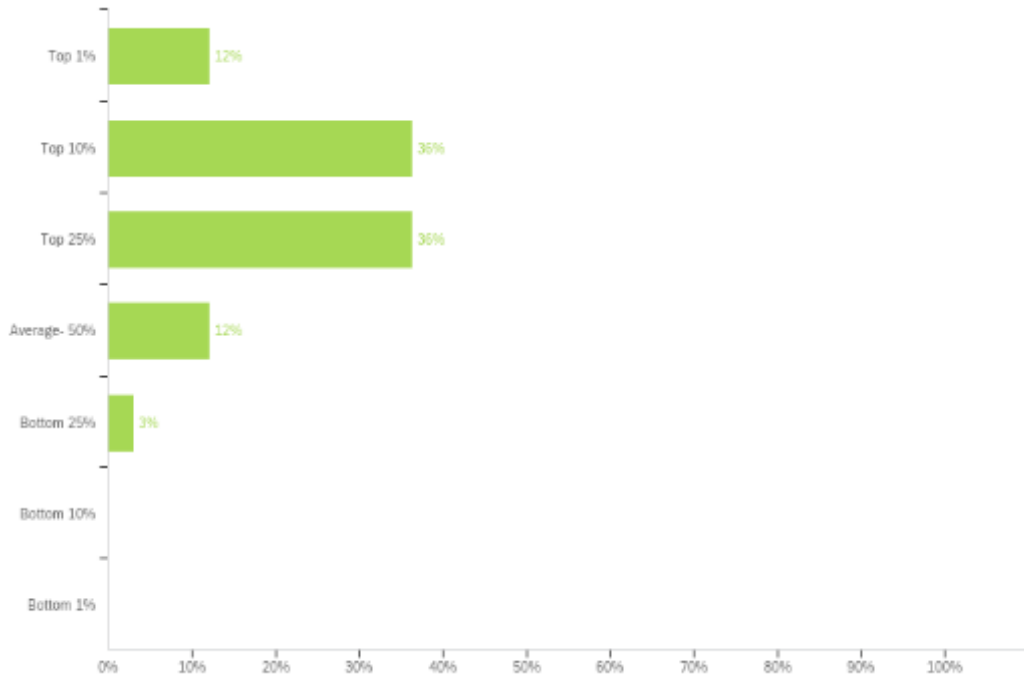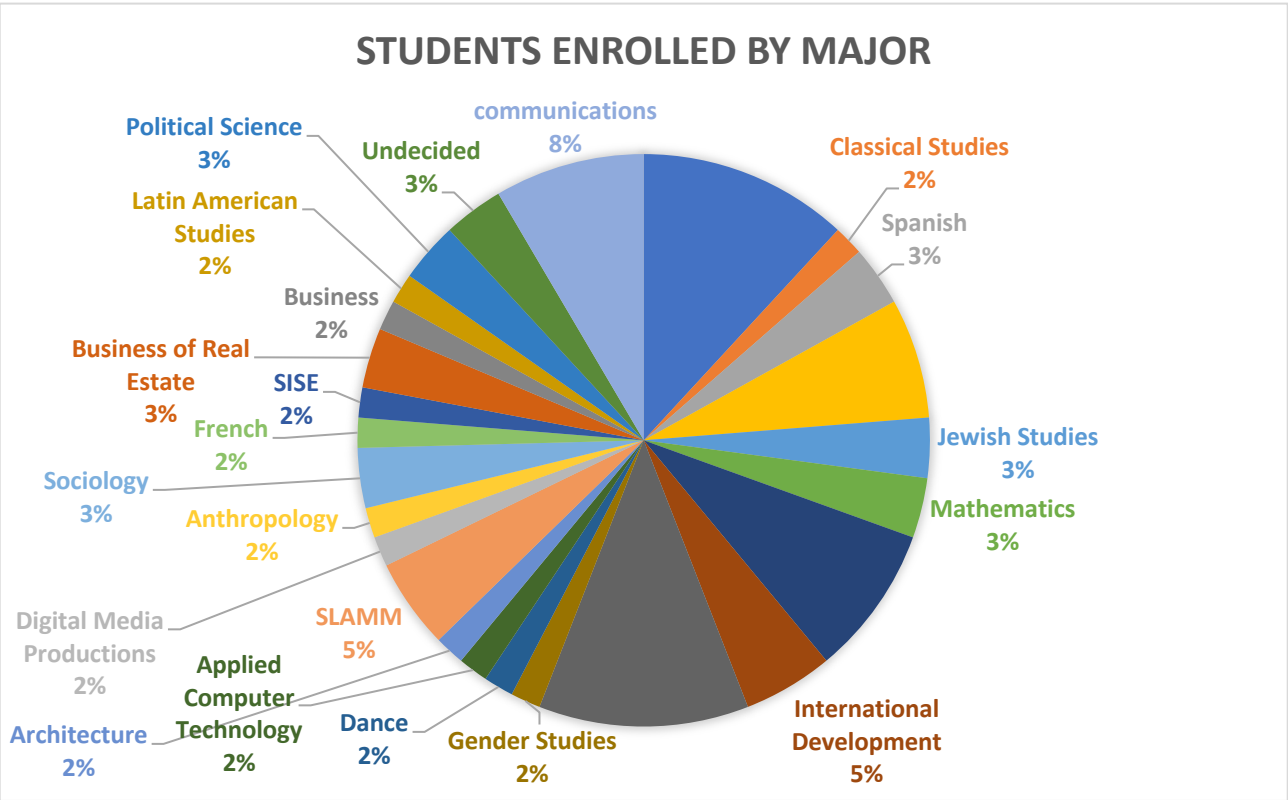

Summary: Survey report demonstrated that TYL course ranked highly, coming in above the 50th percentile with **72%**, of Fall 2020 participants. Being such an impactful class, it is interesting that while the majority of students did not change their course of study (**73%**), some (**27%**) found that a change in study was the best plan of action after taking TYL.

ii.	Academic Sanding + Major

Academic Standing of TYL Students

Graduate Student 6%

Freshman 6%

Sophomore...
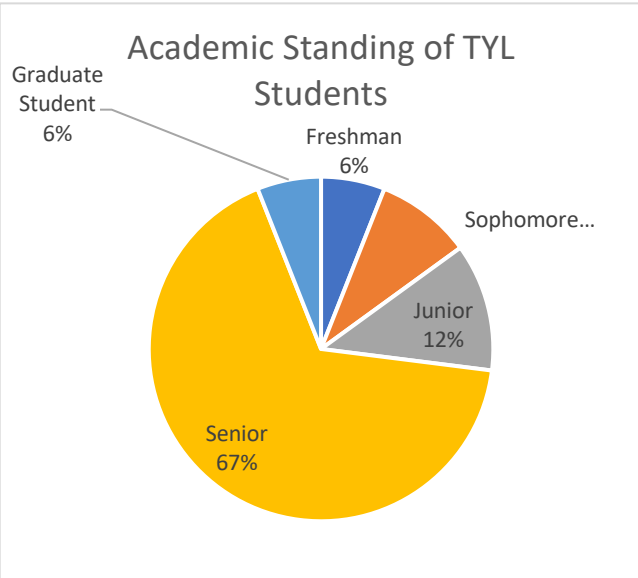
Junior 12%

Senior 67%

Summary: Most students in Fall 2020 TYL course were seniors (**67%**). Followed by Juniors (**12%**), Sophomores (**9%**), and Freshman and Graduate Students both at (**6%**). The most popular major for TYL students in the Fall 2020 semester was a tie between Public Health and Psychology, both had 7 students.

STUDENTS ENROLLED BY MAJOR

Political Science 3%

communications 8%

Undecided 3%

Classical Studies 2%

Latin American Studies 2%

Spanish 3%

Business 2%

Business of Real Estate 3%

SISE 2%

French 2%

Sociology 3%

Jewish Studies 3%

Anthropology 2%

Mathematics 3%

Digital Media Productions 2%

SLAMM 5%

Applied Computer Technology 2%

Architecture 2%

Dance 2%

Gender Studies 2%

International Development 5%

iii.   Student Feedback Snapshot

Summary: **91%** of the students reported they would recommend this course to others.

Would you recommend this course to others?

Maybe 6%
No 3%
Yes 91%
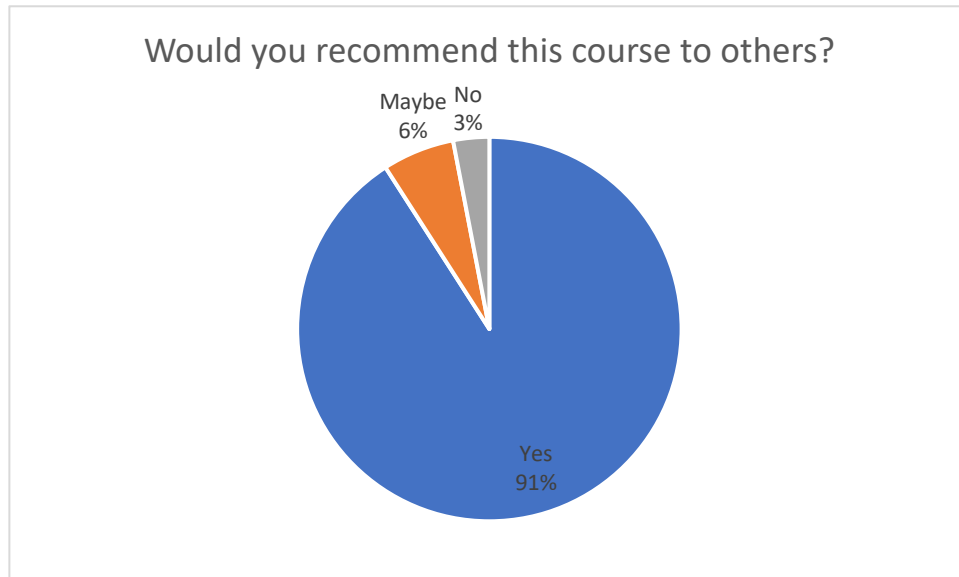
Summary: Survey report demonstrated that TYL course helped students (as expressed by students reporting that they were not confident, confident, or very confident with different areas of life design) with being able to envision and explore multiple life paths (**76%**), understanding their interests and skills (**73%**), and tailoring their resume to a job (**73%**). The details are shown below.

iv.   Student Confidence Levels

Envisioning and exploring multiple life paths	
	% Confidence
Not Confident	0%
Confident	24%
Very Confident	76%
Overall Confidence (Confidence + Very Confident)	100%
Conducting a job or internship search	
Not Confident	3%
Confident	39%
Very Confident	58%
Overall Confidence (Confidence + Very Confident)	97%
Understanding my interests and skills	
Not Confident	0%
Confident	27%

Very Confident	73%
Overall Confidence (Confidence + Very Confident)	100&
Creating a life that is aligned with my interests and values	
Not Confident	0%
Confident	42%
Very Confident	58%
Overall Confidence (Confidence + Very Confident)	100%
Networking in my targeted professional community	
Not Confident	6%
Confident	48%
Very Confident	45%
Overall Confidence (Confidence + Very Confident)	94%
Differentiating between what I want to study or do after college compared to what others think I should do	
Not Confident	6%
Confident	33%
Very Confident	61%
Overall Confidence (Confidence + Very Confident)	94%
Talking about myself and my interests to a potential employer	
Not Confident	6%
Confident	39%
Very Confident	55%
Overall Confidence (Confidence + Very Confident)	94%
Creating a good LinkedIn profile	
Not Confident	3%
Confident	36%
Very Confident	61%
Overall Confidence (Confidence + Very Confident)	97%
Tailoring a résumé to a job	
Not Confident	0%
Confident	27%
Very Confident	73%
Overall Confidence (Confidence + Very Confident)	100%
Recognizing when fear holds me back in life	
Not Confident	6%
Confident	27%
Very Confident	67%
Overall Confidence (Confidence + Very Confident)	94%
Preparing for a negotiation conversation with a potential employer	
Not Confident	24%
Confident	27%

Very Confident	48%
Overall Confidence (Confidence + Very Confident)	75%

Total Confidence Levels from Fall 2020 TYL Cohort

Not Confident
5%

Confident
35%
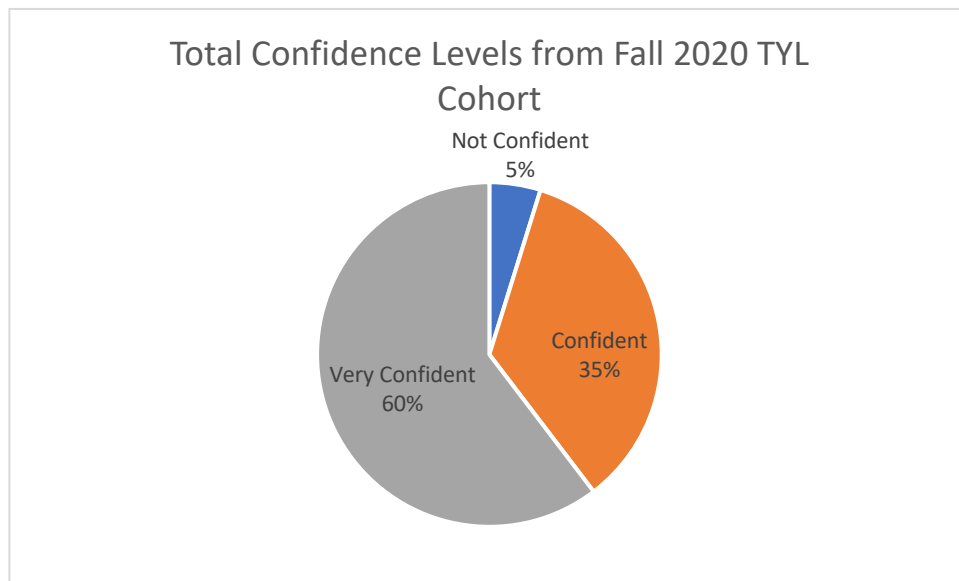
Very Confident
60%

Summary: The table and corresponding graph above demonstrate the TYL course's overall positive impact on student's confidence when it comes to employment preparedness and overall comfortability utilizing life design skills. Notably, the vast majority of students (**95%**) came away from the TYL course reporting confidence in their newly acquired skills.

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v.	**Online Course Suggestions and Feedback**

The student testimonials extracted from the post TYL survey are as follows:

1) COVID-19 online course suggestions and feedback

I liked the breakout rooms a lot because we had the chance to dig deep with each other.

I think this class did the best job online out of all my classes! Felt like I got almost as much out of it as I would if it were in person.

I think calling on people to share/having people speak in the group setting keeps people really engaged! When we did activities and everyone had to share at least one takeaway, I found those to be the most engaging classes.

I really liked using docs/other group sharing software so we could interact with each others' work while being remote.

I think it worked really well online. The break out rooms, chat feature and screen sharing was really useful and Abigail used all the features really well.

I think it was very hard to connect with my peers, but I think the class itself went very smoothly online.

I think this course was successfully taught online. I still felt connected to my classmates and enjoyed getting to know them, despite never meeting in person.

It honestly worked flawlessly!

vi.   Quality of Course Curriculum and Instructor Feedback

TYL Class Activities and Homework Assignments

Summary: The TYL class activities and homework assignments received mostly positive reviews in the post-TYL survey. Testimonies are listed below.

1) Student comments about activities/homework

I really liked the barrier fears activities, editing each others resumes, and the head and heart activity.

My favorites were the head and the heart, community mapping, and salary negotiation.

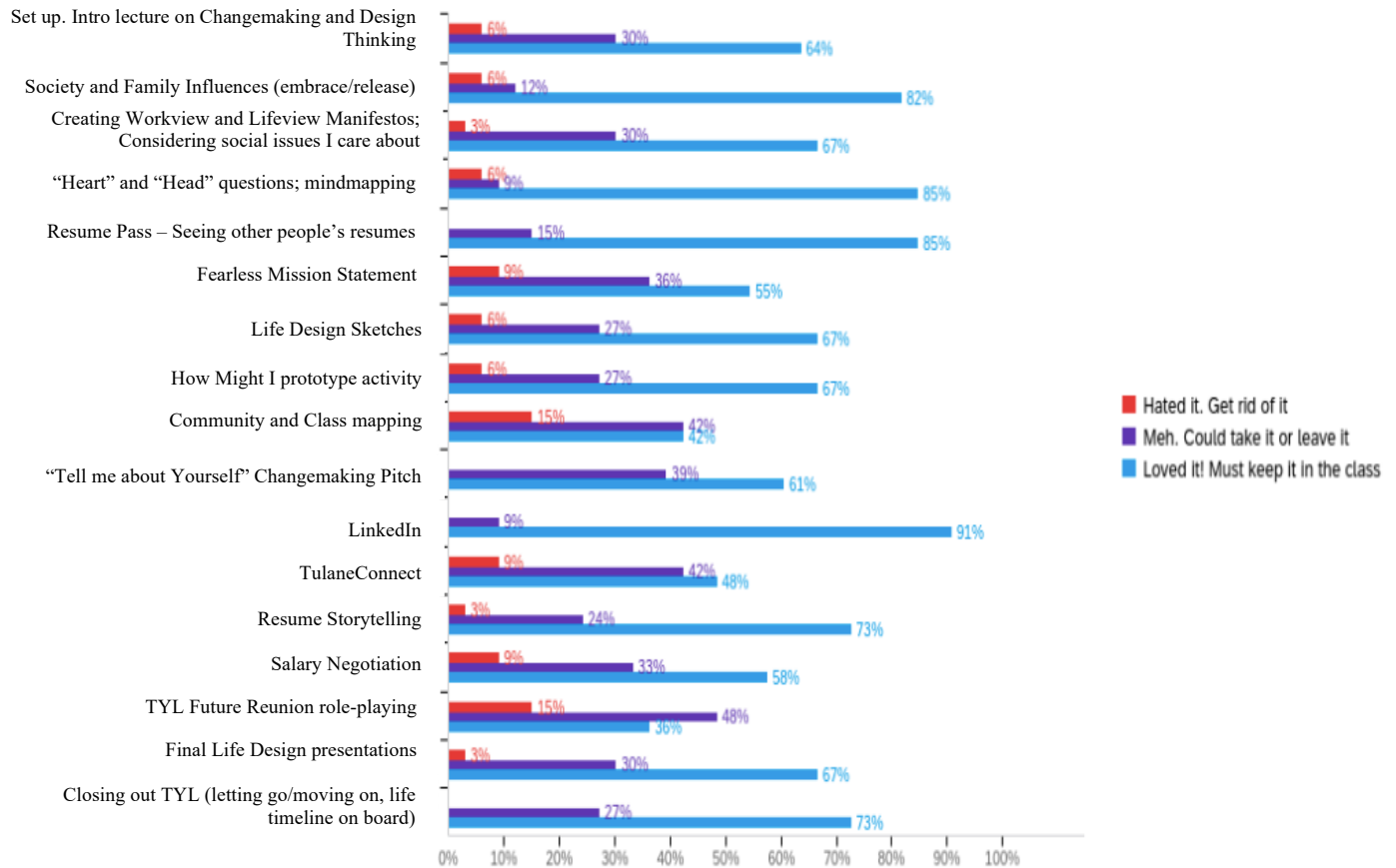I liked the life design assignments and usually enjoyed the readings.

All the homework activities were very useful and fun to do.

I loved, loved, loved the life design interviews, and I liked a lot of the activities like embrace release and the worldview/workview.

I loved all of the modules and homework assignments. Nothing ever felt like "busy work" because I gained something from every single assignment.

I LOVED the life design interviews. I almost think that four interviews could be required! They definitely helped me tremendously.

**Student feedback on specific TYL activities and homework assignments:**

Summary	
Most Popular Activities + HW	**Least Popular Activities + HW**
- LinkedIn Profile (91%) - "Heart" and "Head" questions; mind mapping (85%) - Resume Pass – seeing other people's resumes (85%) - Society and family influences (embrace/release messages) (82%) - Resume storytelling (talking about your resume) (73%) - Letting go/moving on, life timeline (73%)	- Community and Class Mapping (post it notes "ask" and T-shirt walk around) (15% said they hated it, 42% said they could take it or leave it) - TYL Future Reunion role-playing (15% said they hated it, 48% said they could take it or leave it) - Fearless Mission Statement (9% said they hated it, 36% said they could take or leave it)

TYL Instructor Feedback

TYL Instructor Feedback: Number of Students that Agree that my professor was...
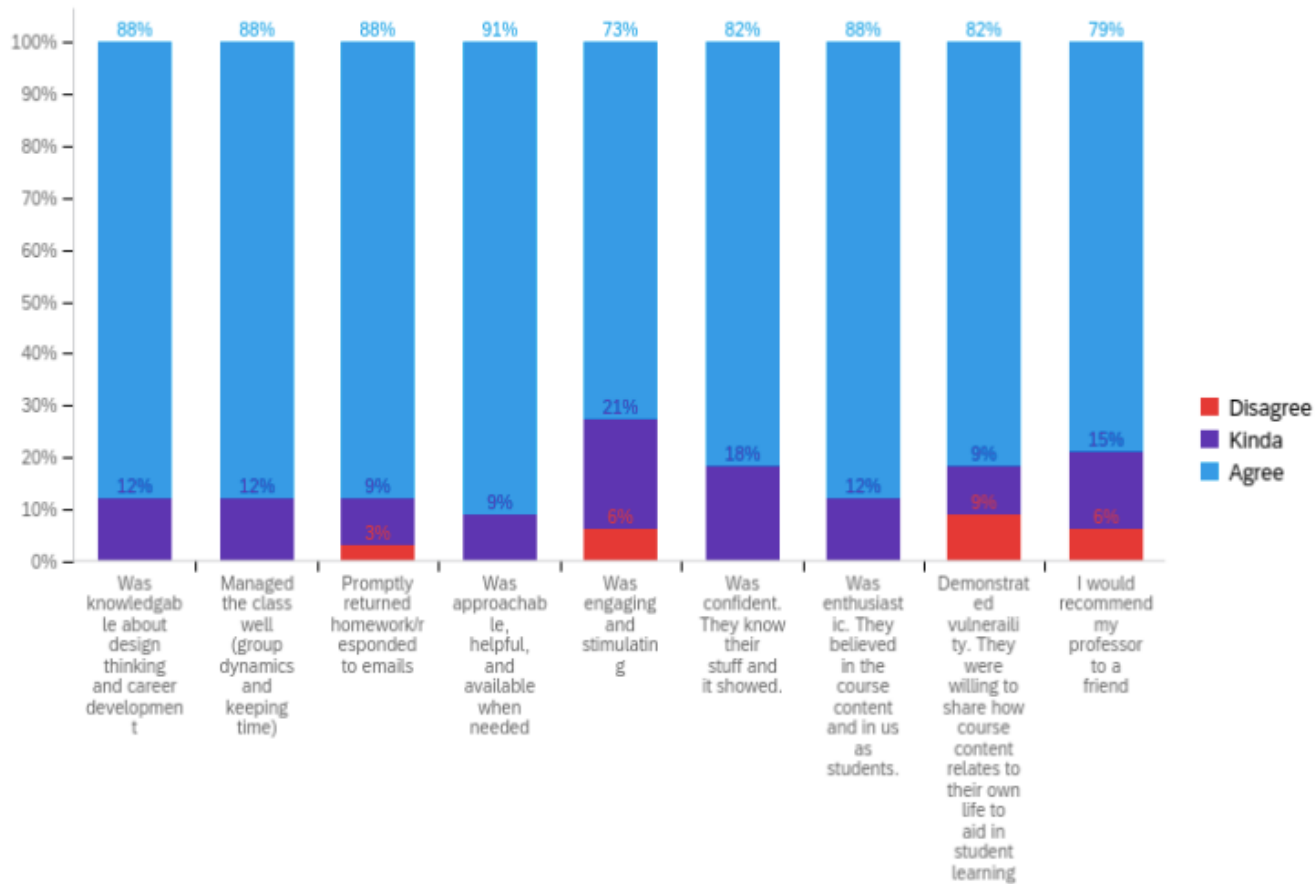
Summary: Most students found their TYL instructor to be approachable, helpful, and available when needed (91%). Similarly, students felt that their TYL instructor was knowledgeable about design thinking and career development (88%), as well as able to manage the class well (88%). One notable area of growth to highlight is for instructors to demonstrate vulnerability by sharing how course content relates to their own life – 9% of students felt that their instructor lacked this asset.

Instructor Highlights

Instructor	Feedback
Meghan Straughen	Megan was **really engaging** and **pushed us to be our best**!
	Megan was **incredible**!!! Super **accommodating** and **flexible**.
	Professor Straughen was really receptive to hearing our advice and feedback and was willing to alter the course structure and calendar based on our feedback.

Myron Shaffer	Professor Shaffer was awesome! He was **nice** and **very approachable** and never made anyone feel less than. He was **patient** and **understanding** about confusion or assignment deadlines.
Abigail Lukens	Abby was super **helpful, kind, organized, approachable, and accommodating**. She's a really **good listener** and helped students of all ages. I really enjoyed her class. Abby was so wonderful!! I am so glad I took the course with her. She is a **really great teacher** and life design "coach" and I will definitely keep in touch! Abigail is great!!! So **kind** and always made me feel good about what I was saying/submitting. I LOVED PROFESSOR LUKENS! An absolute angel who was so **helpful** to me during challenging times this semester. She helped me look into opportunities without any question, and I would seriously let her plan my whole life (she's that smart and kind)!!!!
Tiye Jones	Tiye Jones is **one of my favorite professors** I have had at Tulane. She is so **approachable and helpful**. I constantly raved about the class the entire semester and have already recommended it to my friends for next semester. Professor Jones was **my favorite professors** I've had at Tulane. She was **upbeat, engaging, and kind**. She helped me feel comfortable in this class although I tend to be very shy. She is clearly **passionate** about the content and wants to help us in any way she can. I've recommended her to several friends, and wish I could take another class with her.

vii.	**Constructive Feedback for Future Sections (Post TYL)**

Summary: The key concerns that appeared in student's comments and feedback are summarized below.

1) **Addressing Mental Health**: While it was just one student who noted this concern, we think it is an important point. This student mentioned how the course should incorporate a focus on "*mental health issues like post-grad depression*", recognizing that the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated many student's mental health issues, it is of upmost importance to create a safe place for students to share their experiences

2) **Homework Assignments:** Students felt that the amount of homework for this class was too much given its only a 2-credit hour course. Some students felt that "the activities should be less creative and more to the point". They related that they would "rater just learn the concepts then make projects out of them". However, most students gave positive feedback on reflective activities. Notably 85% of students reported enjoying mind mapping, a very creative activity.

3) **Class Duration:** There was suggestion to extend the class period. One student suggested to "extend the class period [because they] sometimes didn't get as much out of a lesson as I could have because we moved so fast". Although this is a registrar allotted time slot, this issue may be remedied by providing students with extra coursework if they went to deep dive into a concept more than class time allows. Alternatively, another student suggested to "offer this class twice a

week with shorter class times". Although students are not aligned on their opinions of the durations of class, it is important to highlight the overarching dissatisfaction with class time.

4) **Transition to Zoom / Online Sessions:** Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic all TYL classes were online. One student described their experience with online TYL as such:

"I think building that bonding with peers is something that's much more difficult to do online than in person. In normal times, I certainly see how this class could foster closer relationships, but online made it much more difficult and I feel like I never really got that relationship with my classmates. I don't have any suggestion for ways to fix this, though ☹."

The Taylor Center is continually working to make online learning more dynamic. Student responses such as this are greatly informative for future changes.

| viii. | **Future Direction** |

Summary: Key future development for TYL are as follows:

1. **Incorporate a Discussion of Mental Health Issues:** This should be fully embedded in the curriculum. Private reflection on mental health and safe space to share experiences should be encouraged in curriculum.

2. **Homework & Class Activities:** Instructors must make it clear that this class is about taking a big picture view of what you want out of your life and career, while infusing career development tools, such as LinkedIn and salary negotiation. Students who just want to build specific tools (resume/cover letter/job application) should enroll in CRDV.

3. **Class Duration:** Potentially rework the schedule of classes to MWF, or consider offering classes with different scheduling formats.

4. **Zoom / Online Format:** Consider how to maintain student engagement throughout zoom class sessions. Encouraging collaboration on online platforms is crucial. Incorporating activities so that they are more engaging in the online format is also critical.