



Spring 2021 Student Texting Attitudes Survey Summary

Date: 15 June 2021
To: Student Success and Retention Committee
From: Frances Miller, UITS – Trellis CRM; Lucas Schalewski, Office of Assessment and Research
Re: Spring 2021 Student Texting Survey

Introduction

During the last two weeks of April 2021, Trellis and the Office of Assessment and Research administered a survey to University of Arizona students to solicit their opinions, attitudes, and current behaviors regarding texting both in general and specifically in regard to receiving text messages from UArizona¹. The ultimate goal of this work is to ensure that students have a voice in crafting university policy and practice surrounding mass texts to students.²

This brief is an executive summary comprised of key survey results as well as the ways in which those results have and will continue to inform the way UArizona approaches texting the student population both in policy and in practice. Appendix A reports detailed survey results.

Key Survey Takeaways

Despite the low response rate, survey results show clear texting preferences and behaviors amongst respondents.

- 72% of students believe university texting will at least slightly support their success as students.
- If asked to opt-in now, 56% of respondents would do so, and only 9% of respondents are opposed to receiving texts from UA.

¹ The survey was emailed directly to all active UArizona students (n = 44,500), and we received responses from 1,894 of those students for a response rate of 4%. Any conclusions drawn from the resulting data should be done so with the caveat that the data may not represent the student population at large.

² We found no substantial differences between the results of the whole respondent population and the results for only main campus undergraduates.

- Students who are hesitant or opposed to receiving text messages from UA tend to prefer receiving information via email, feel they get enough correspondence from UA regardless of mode, and/or are concerned about abuse of a text messaging platform.
- Students who reported that they would opt-in to University text messaging if given the chance report excitement about the convenience of text messages and the perceived utility of this style of reminders for appointments and deadlines.
- 66% of respondents would like to receive text messages at least weekly from UA, and 5 is the general maximum number of texts per week students feel comfortable receiving.
- The top three requested topics of UA texts are UAlerts (64%), academic deadlines (57%), and appointment and event reminders (46%).
- Of students who have a preference, students overwhelmingly prefer to have separate opt-ins for each type of UA message (49%).
- Students who have unsubscribed from organizational messaging in the past have done so for the following reasons: 1) The content was no longer relevant (40%) and 2) They received too many messages from the organization (37%).

Actions Taken

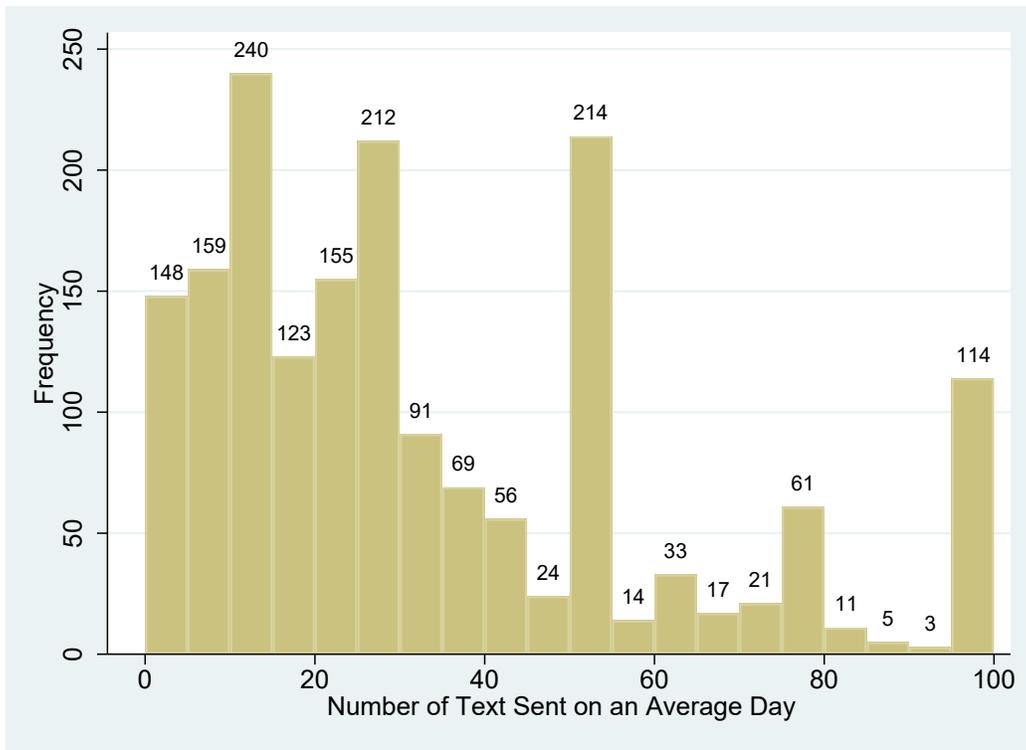
These survey results have and will continue to inform the University of Arizona's approach to communicating with students via text message. Student needs and attitudes as identified in the survey have been integral to work to prepare to implement mass texting capabilities it within the context of the university's overarching policy. Areas of particular focus include development of responsive opt-in infrastructure, best practices around how users are trained, and how texting actions will be monitored and audited. Specifically,

- Survey results indicating student desire to choose to opt-in for each separate message type has directly influenced the technical solution with the reliance on unique codes per office, along with a transactional account for student support.
- The preponderance of students indicating that receipt of about five texts weekly from University sources would be acceptable will help target auditing/reports to examine channel-saturation and pre-emptively work to mitigate student opt-out.
- Training for users of text messaging capabilities includes survey results about student preference for message timing and frequency in order to respect student wishes and promote texting best practices.

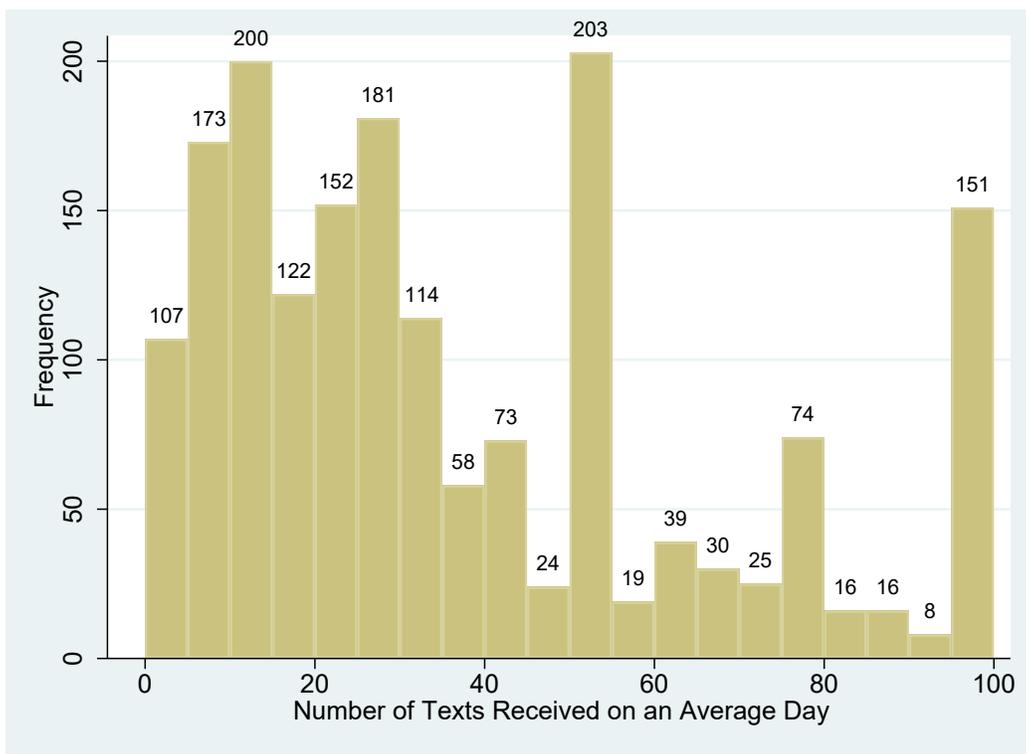
Future development and actions in relation to University texting of students will continue to respect these results until new evidence arises that indicate a revised understanding of student preferences is necessary.

Appendix A. Detailed Survey Descriptives

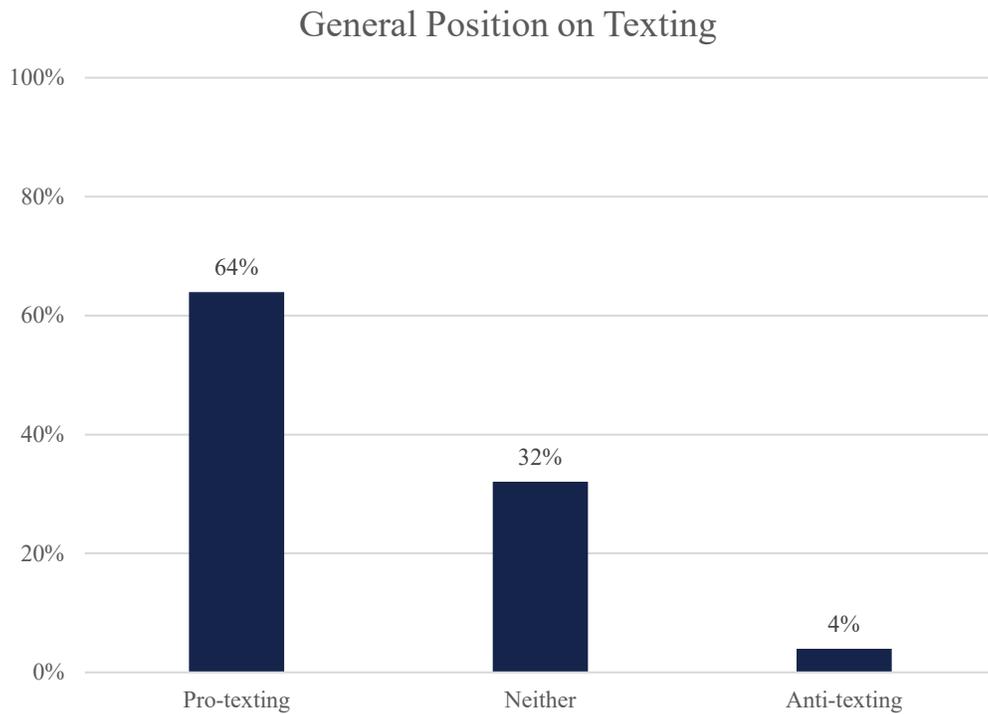
Q1. How many messages do you send on an average day?



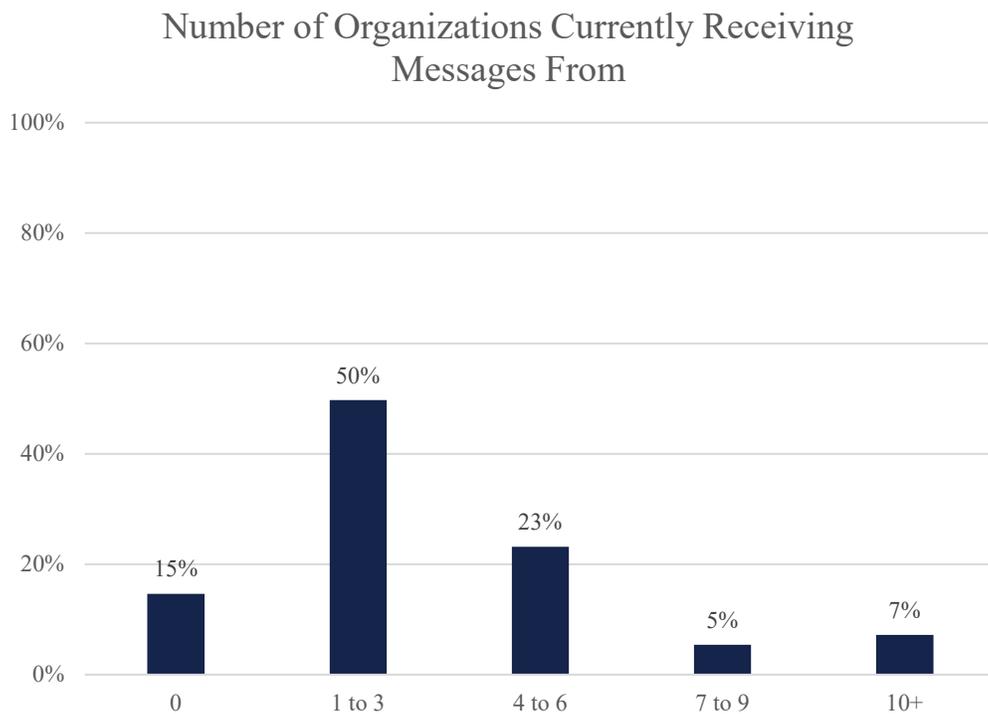
Q2. How many messages do you receive on an average day?



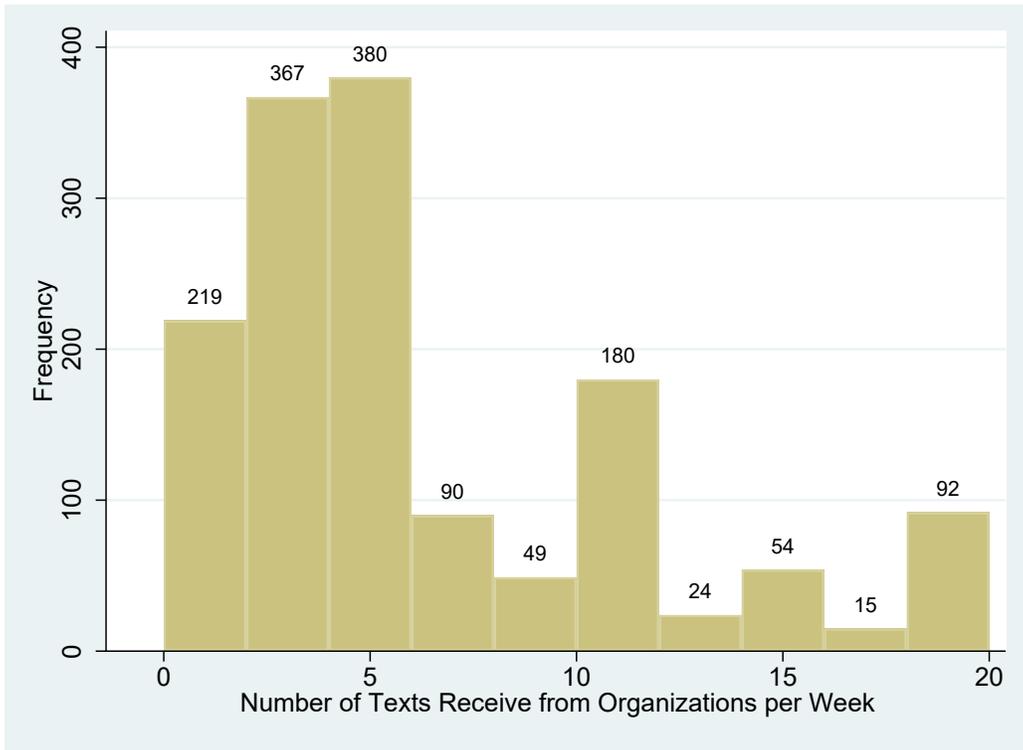
Q3. Please indicate what best describes your position relative to text messaging overall.



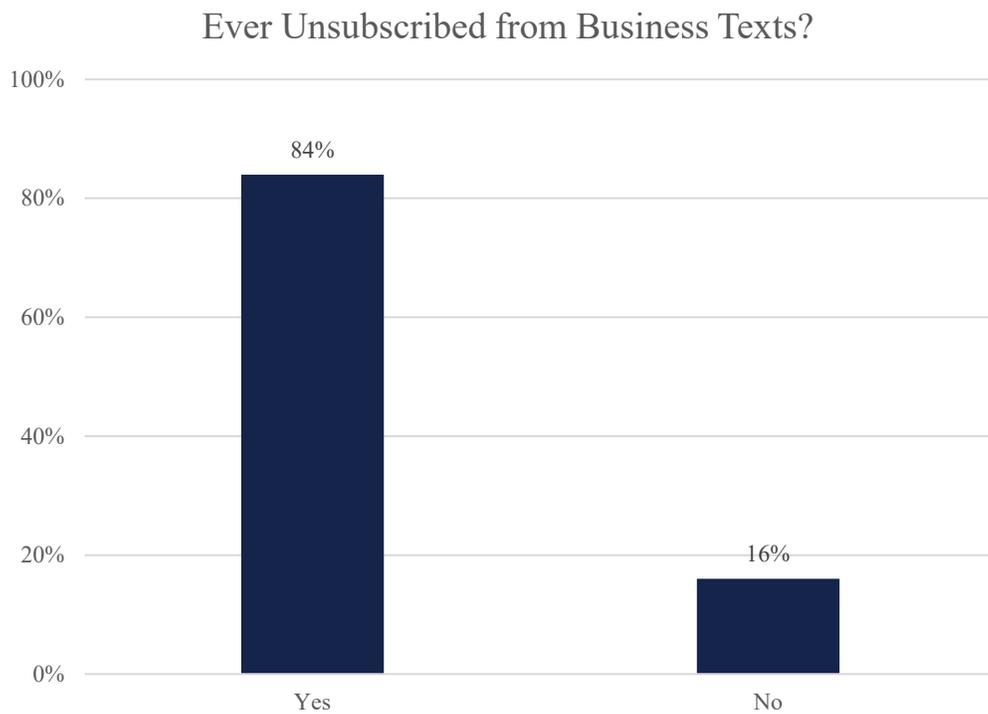
Q4. How many organizations outside of the University of Arizona (businesses, community services, media) have you opted-in to receiving text messaging from?



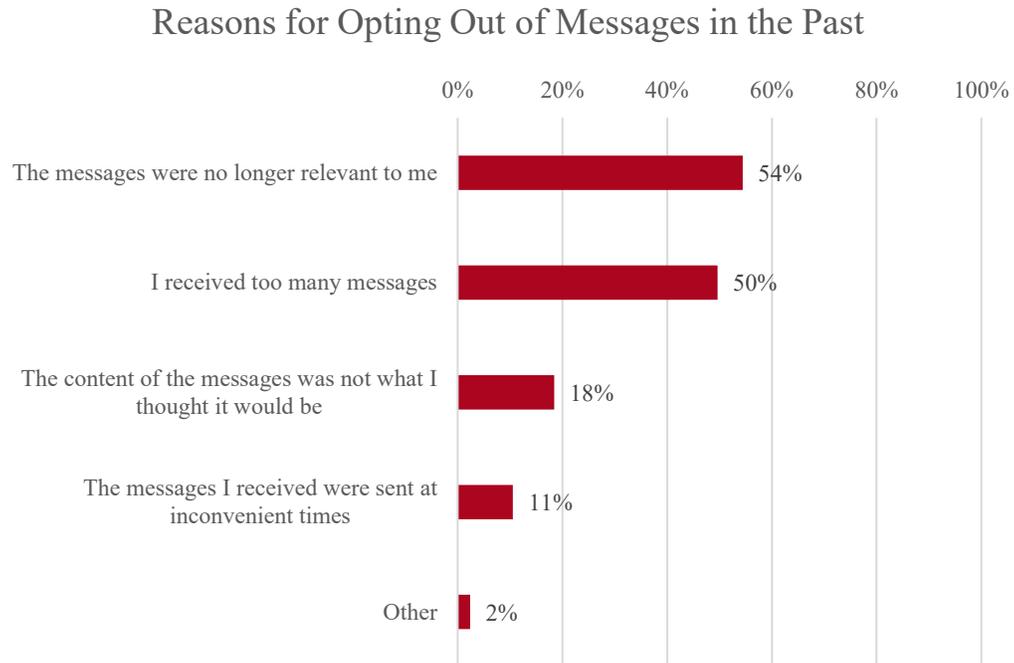
Q5. How many text messages do you receive during an average week from these organizations?



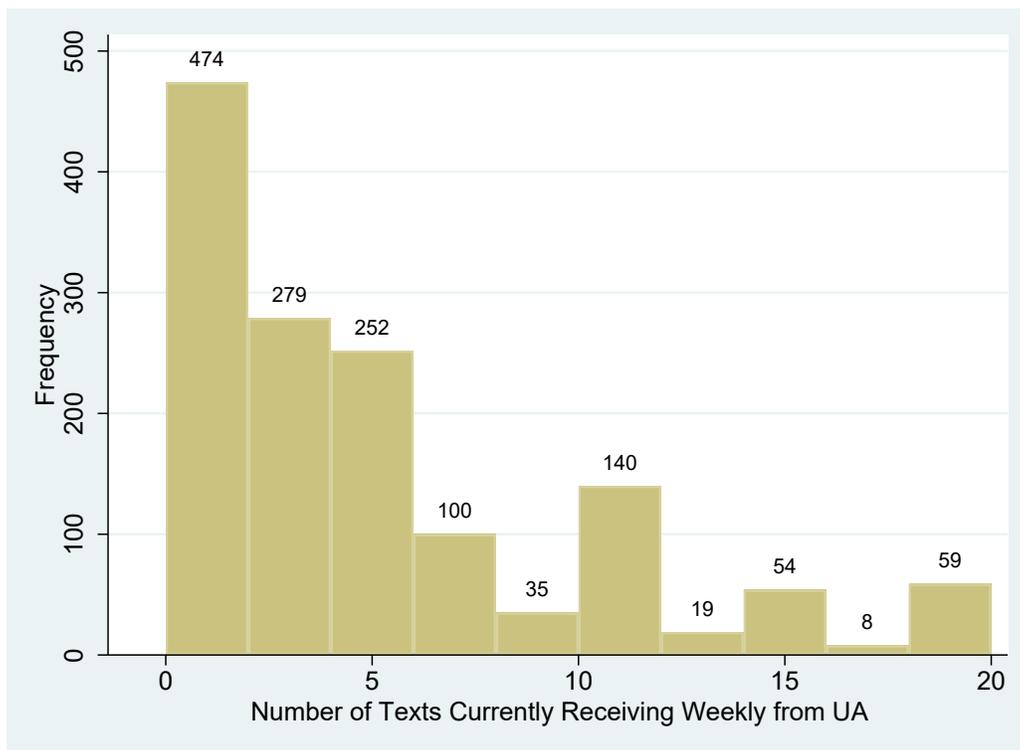
Q6. After opting in to receiving text messages from an organization, have you ever chosen to unsubscribe?



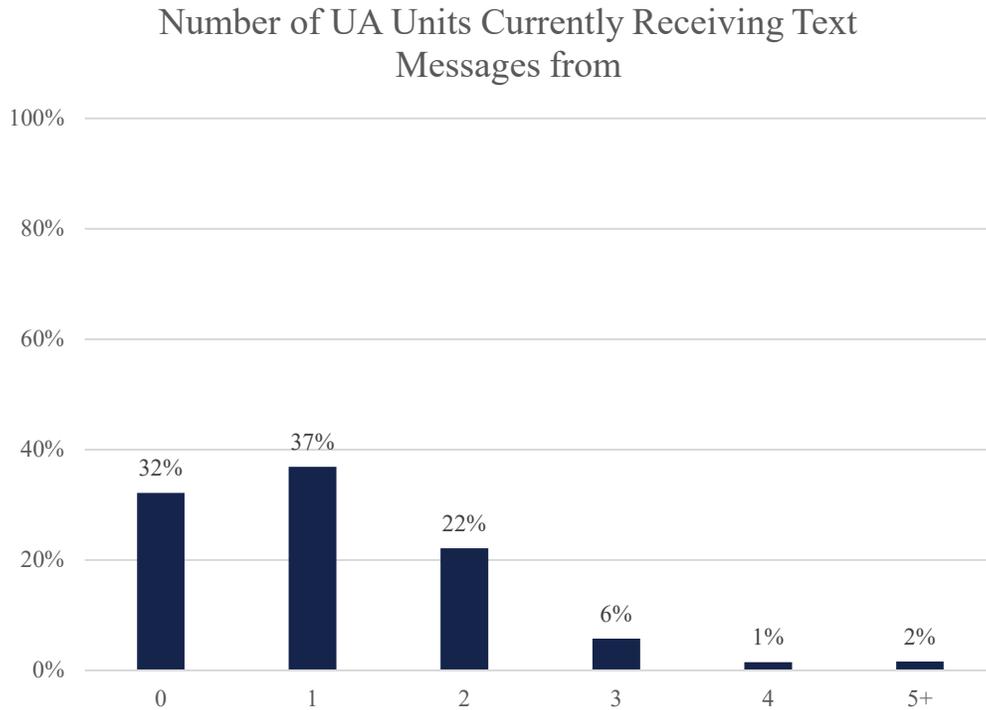
Q7. What informed your decision to unsubscribe from receiving those messages? (Select all that apply)



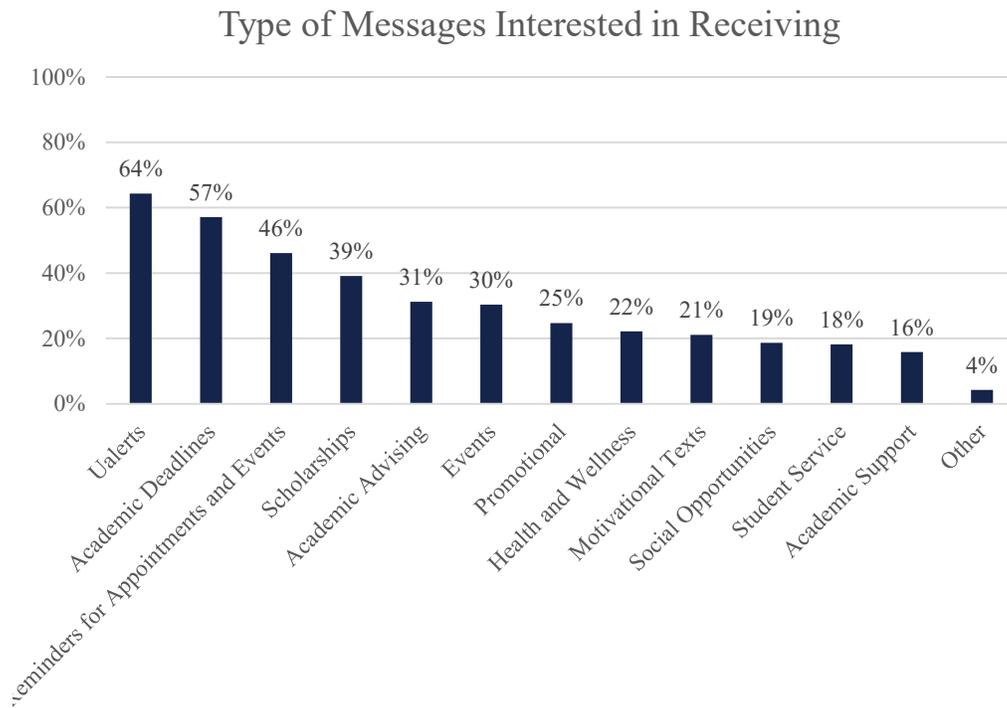
Q8. How many text messages do you already receive during an average week from the University of Arizona?



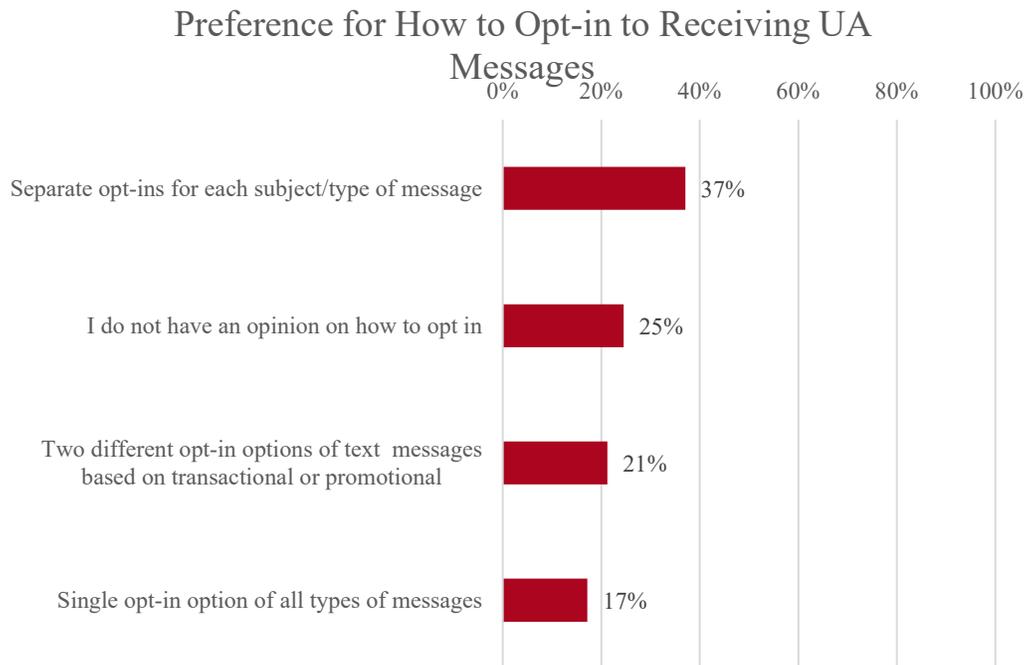
Q9. From how many departments/areas within the University do you currently receive text messages?



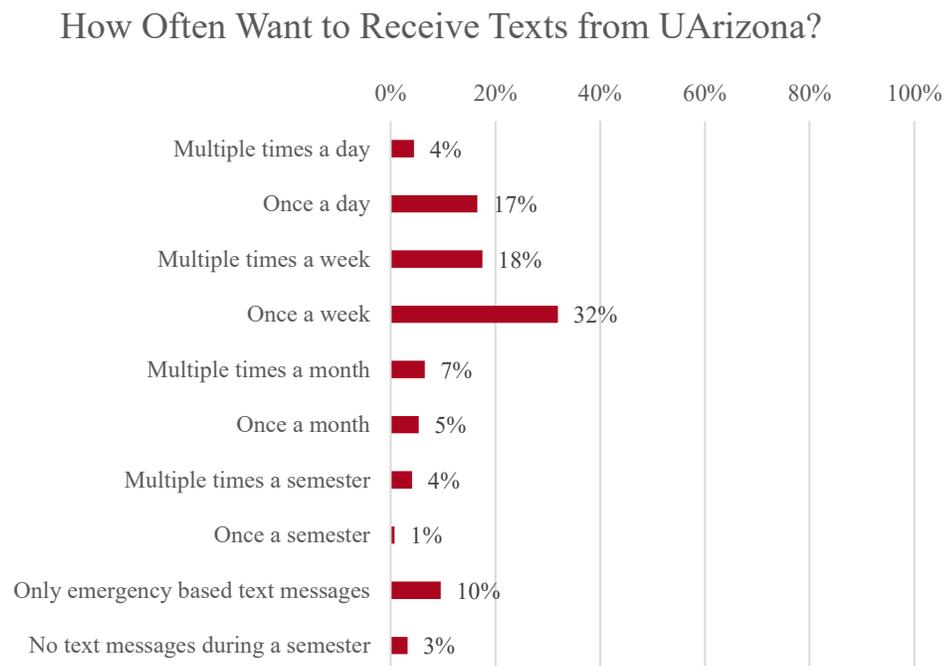
Q10. In the future, what information would you be interested in receiving through University text messaging? (Select all that apply)



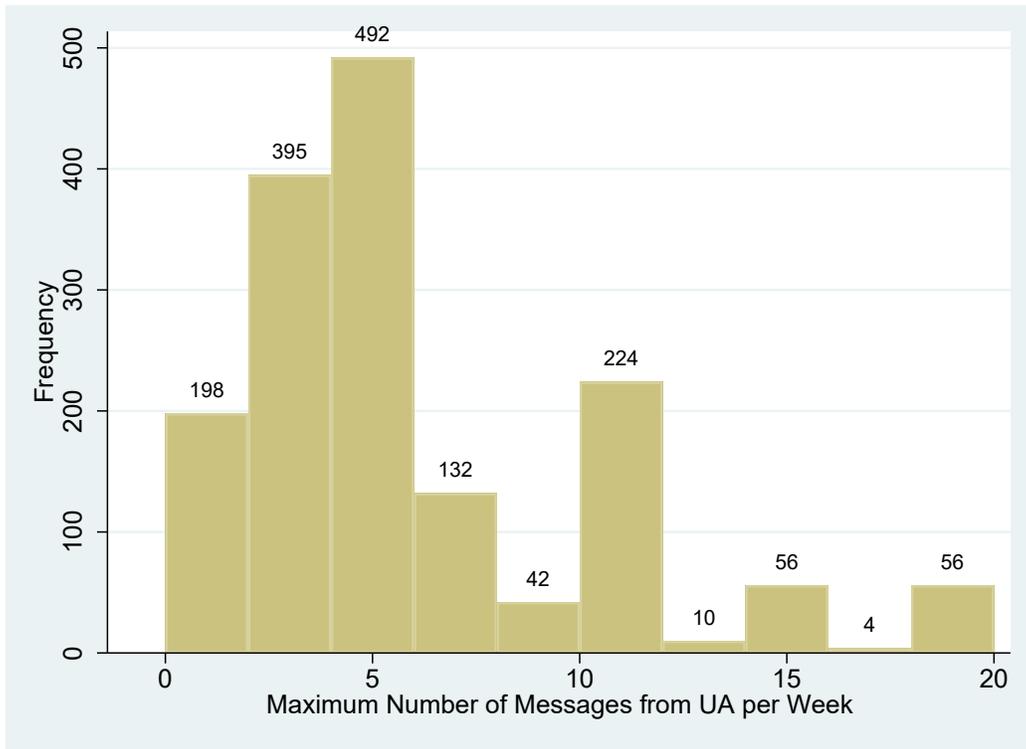
Q11. Given the above types of messages that may be available, how would you prefer to opt-in to University text messaging?



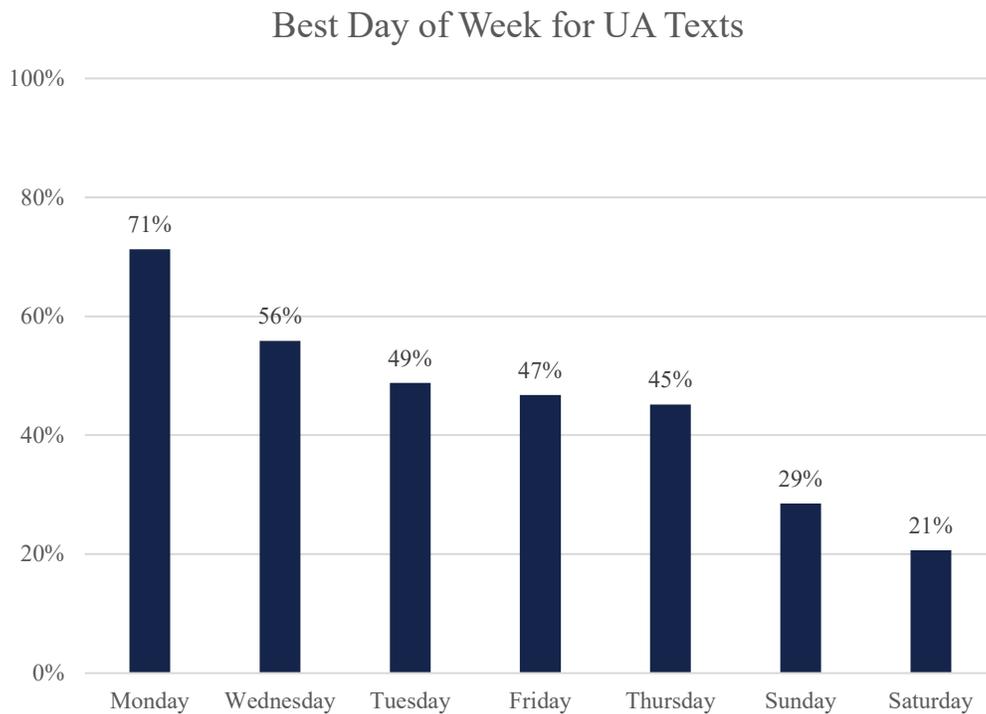
Q12. How often would you want to receive text messages over the course of an academic semester from the University?



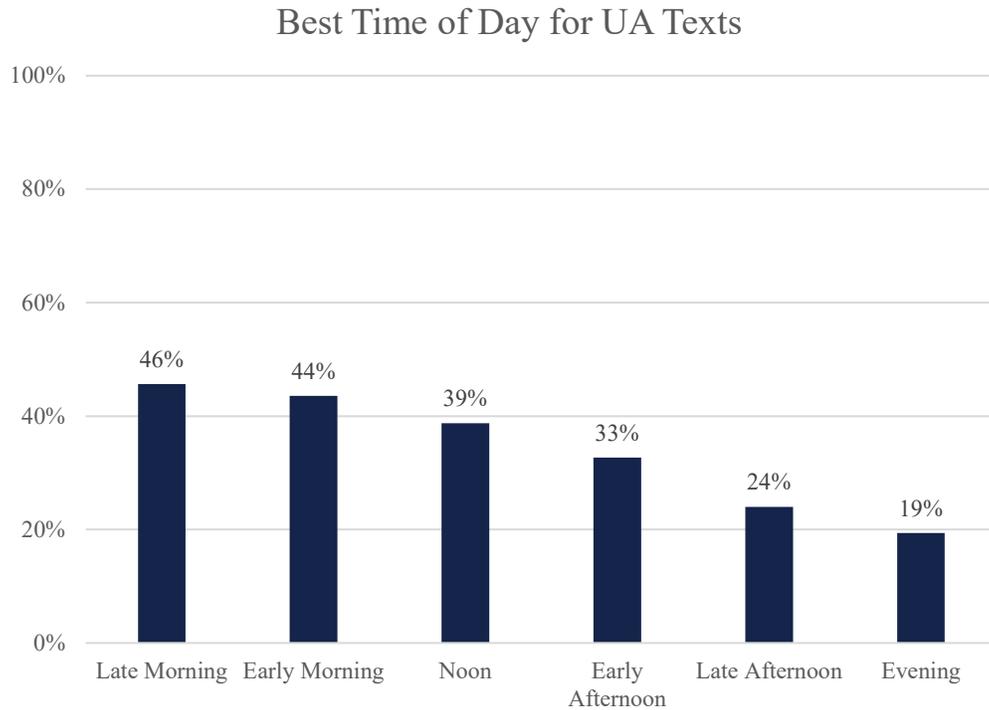
Q13. What is the maximum number of text messages a week that you would feel comfortable receiving from the University?



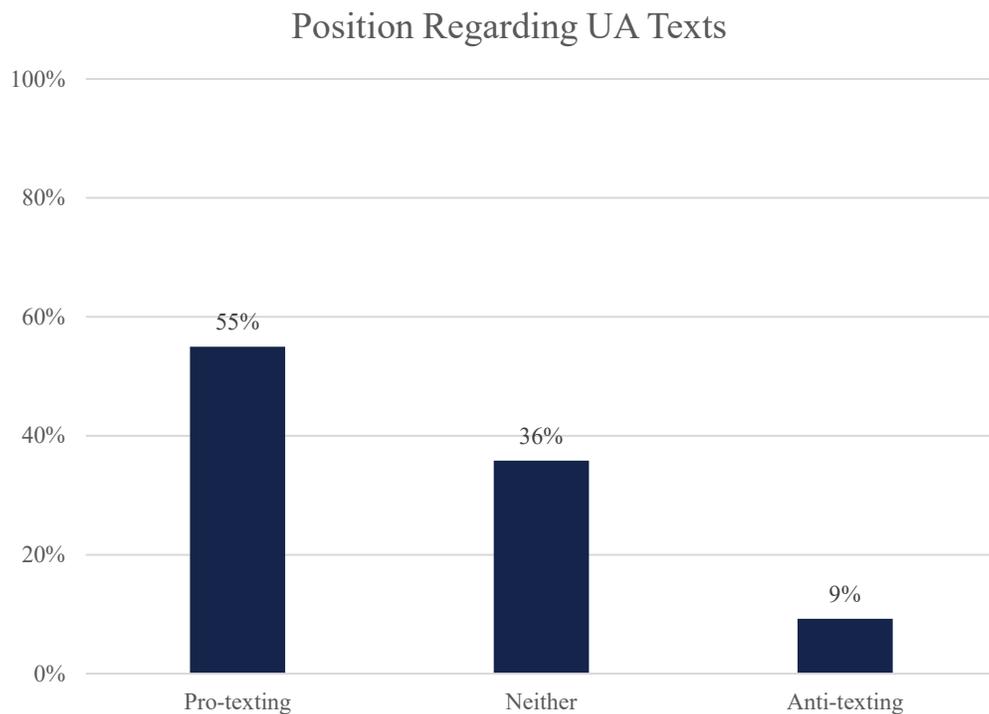
Q14. What days of the week are the best times to receive an informative text message from the University? (Select all that apply)



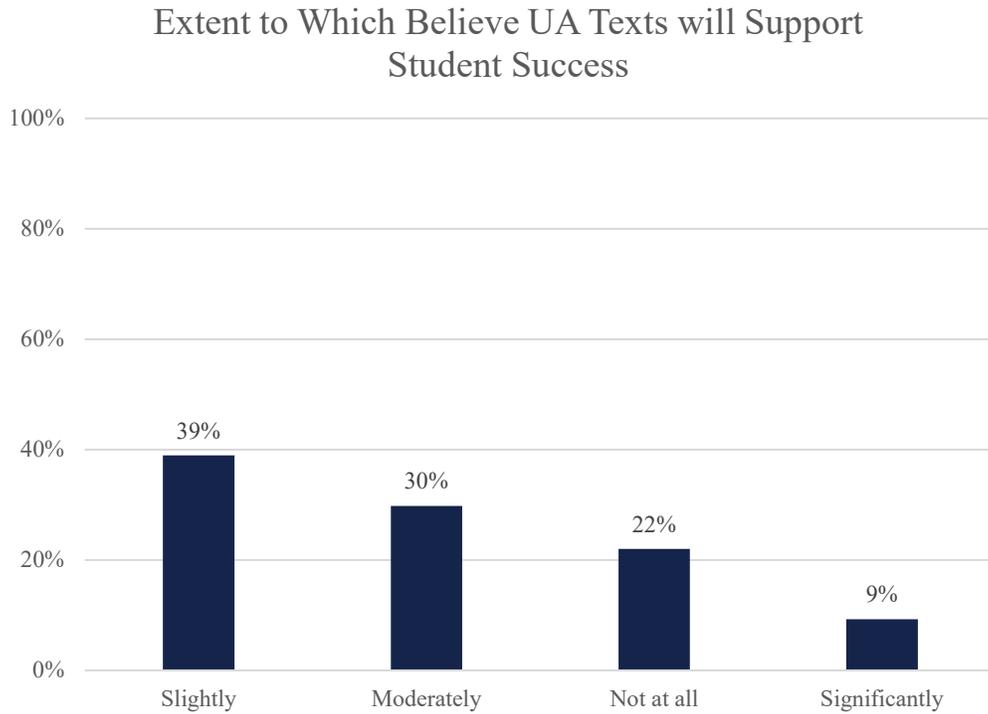
Q15. What times of the day are the best to receive an informative text message from the University? (Select all that apply)



Q16. Please indicate what best describes your position relative to text messaging from the University.



Q17. To what extent do you believe text messaging communication from the University will support your success as a student?



Q18. Would you opt-in to receiving University text messaging intended to support your success as a student if offered today?

