

Towards an institutional strategy for the use of technology in teaching and learning: Lessons learned in turbulent times

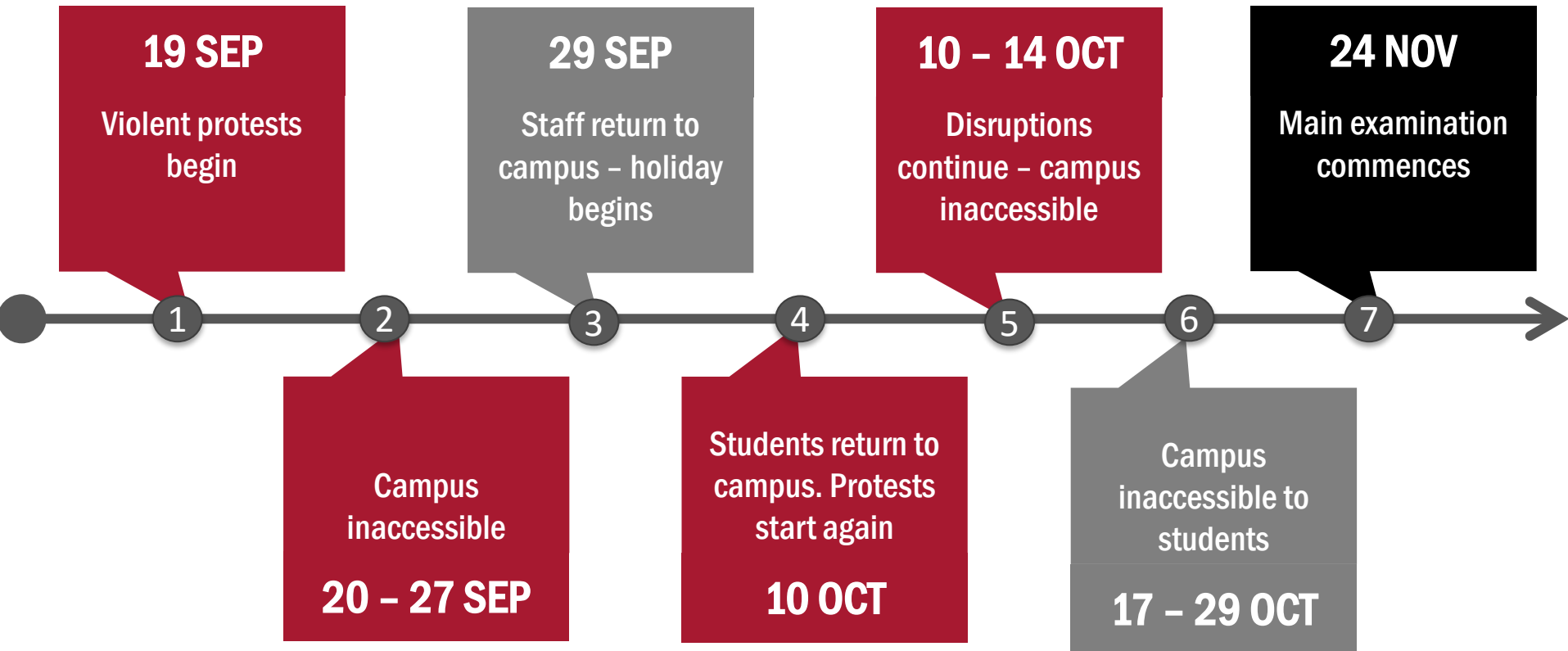
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OUTLINE

- Background
- Data collection
- Findings
- Considerations for the development of institutional guidelines

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TIMELINE OF UFS CAMPUS DISRUPTIONS IN 2016



CAMPUS INACCESSIBLE TO STAFF AND STUDENTS

CAMPUS INACCESSIBLE TO STUDENTS ONLY

CAMPUS ACCESSIBLE

FACULTY RESCUE STRATEGIES

Distribution of learning materials and outstanding content

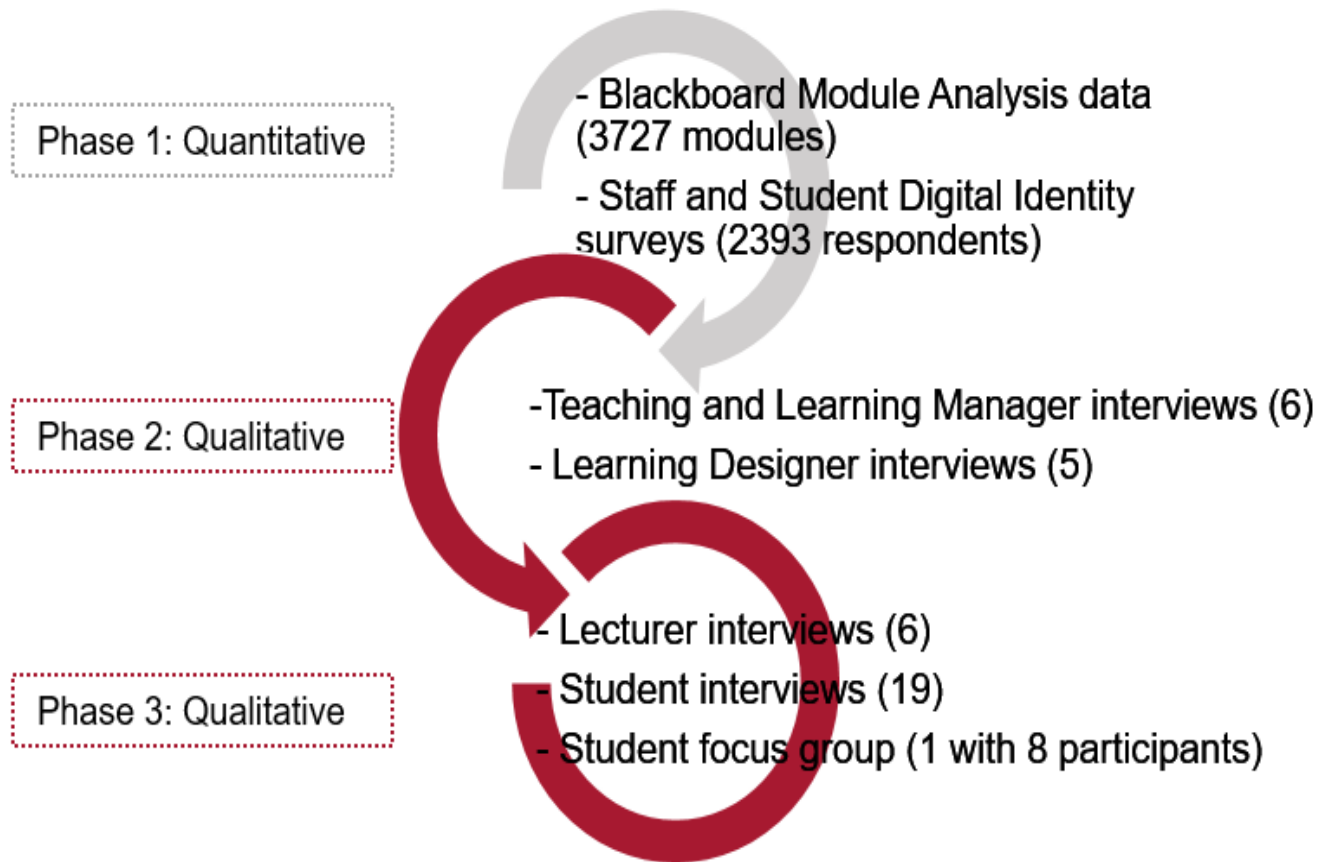
Distribution of additional / support material

Finalisation of semester assessments & semester marks

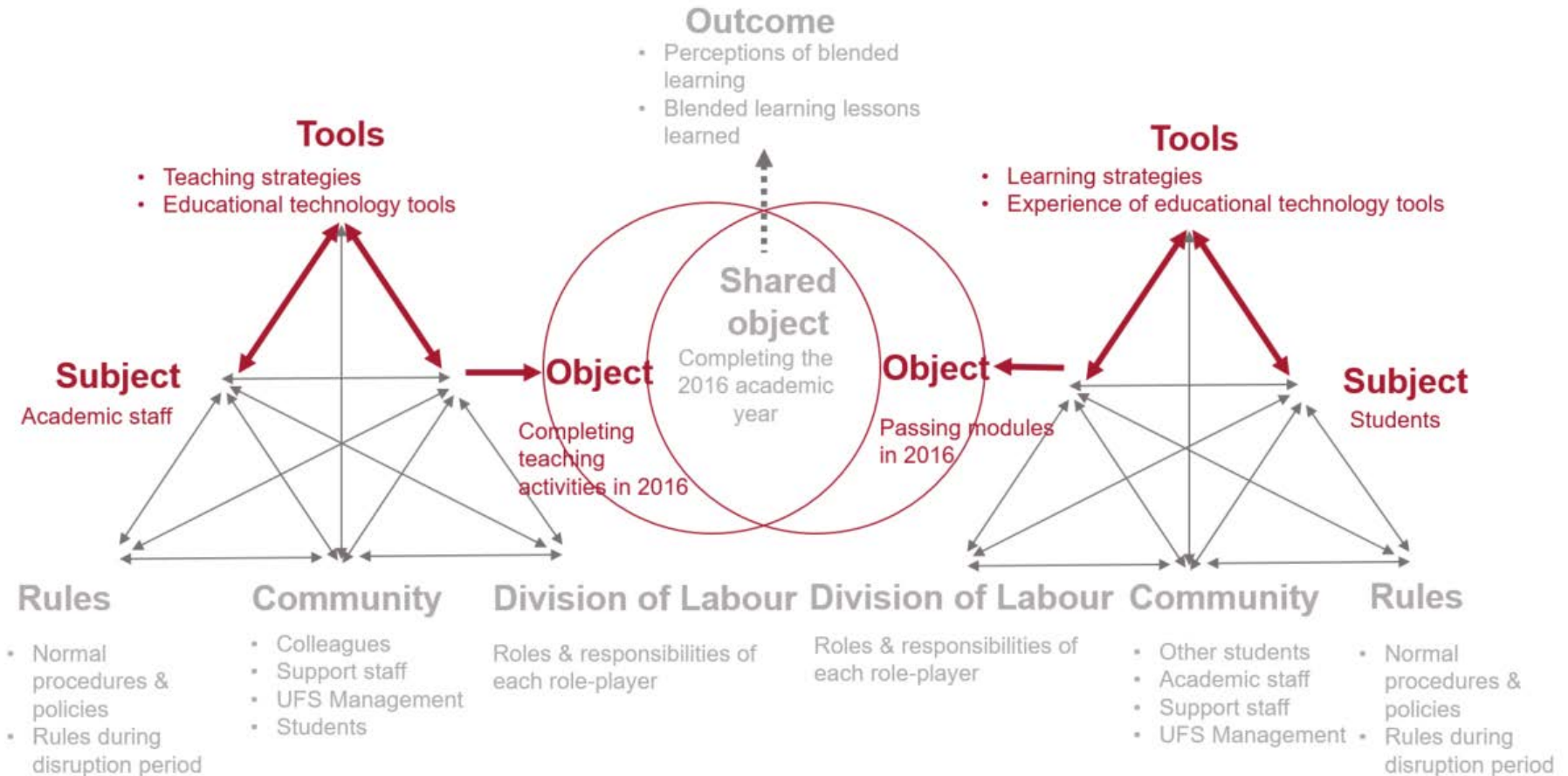
Examinations

Focus on 3 faculties

DATA COLLECTION



ACTIVITY THEORY: UFS ACTIVITY SYSTEM





1. Need for meaningful interactions between students & lecturers

PARTICIPANT PERSPECTIVES

“Certain things you cannot do on your own. Stats on its own in class with other students is tough. Now imagine you are on your own doing it at home. Because even after classes certain things you do not understand, even if you went to class. Now, imagine if you are alone”

Student participant 3



Students expressed need for interaction
with other students & lecturers

“None of us knew what was going to happen after the strikes. I was afraid the whole university system and everything is going to change online. You can study from home. Then I just felt like I could have studied through Unisa, or I could have done an online course. The reason why I came to the University of the Free State is to have class, to have lectures, to have interaction with people and that’s the important thing for me.”

Student participant 5

PARTICIPANT PERSPECTIVES

“What was difficult for me was that I could not get feedback from students to know whether they received the information I posted on Blackboard. There was no two-way communication... Students also complained that they get information from us but they can’t communicate with us. Yes, emails are an option, but emails are a slow way to communicate. Sometimes you can only reply a couple of hours later or even the next day”.

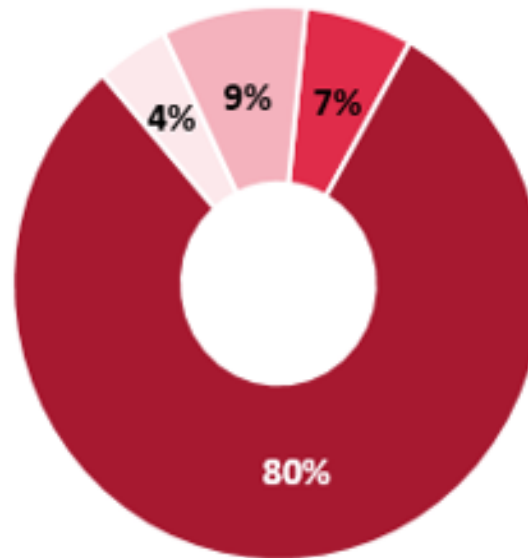
Staff Participant 3



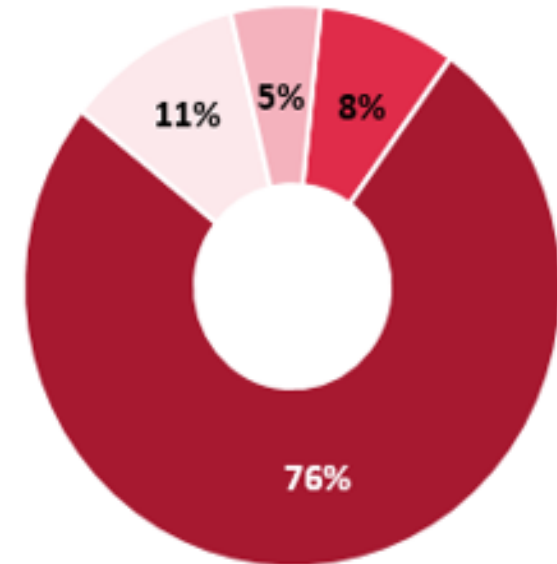
Staff also expressed a need for interaction with students

PREFERRED TEACHING AND LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

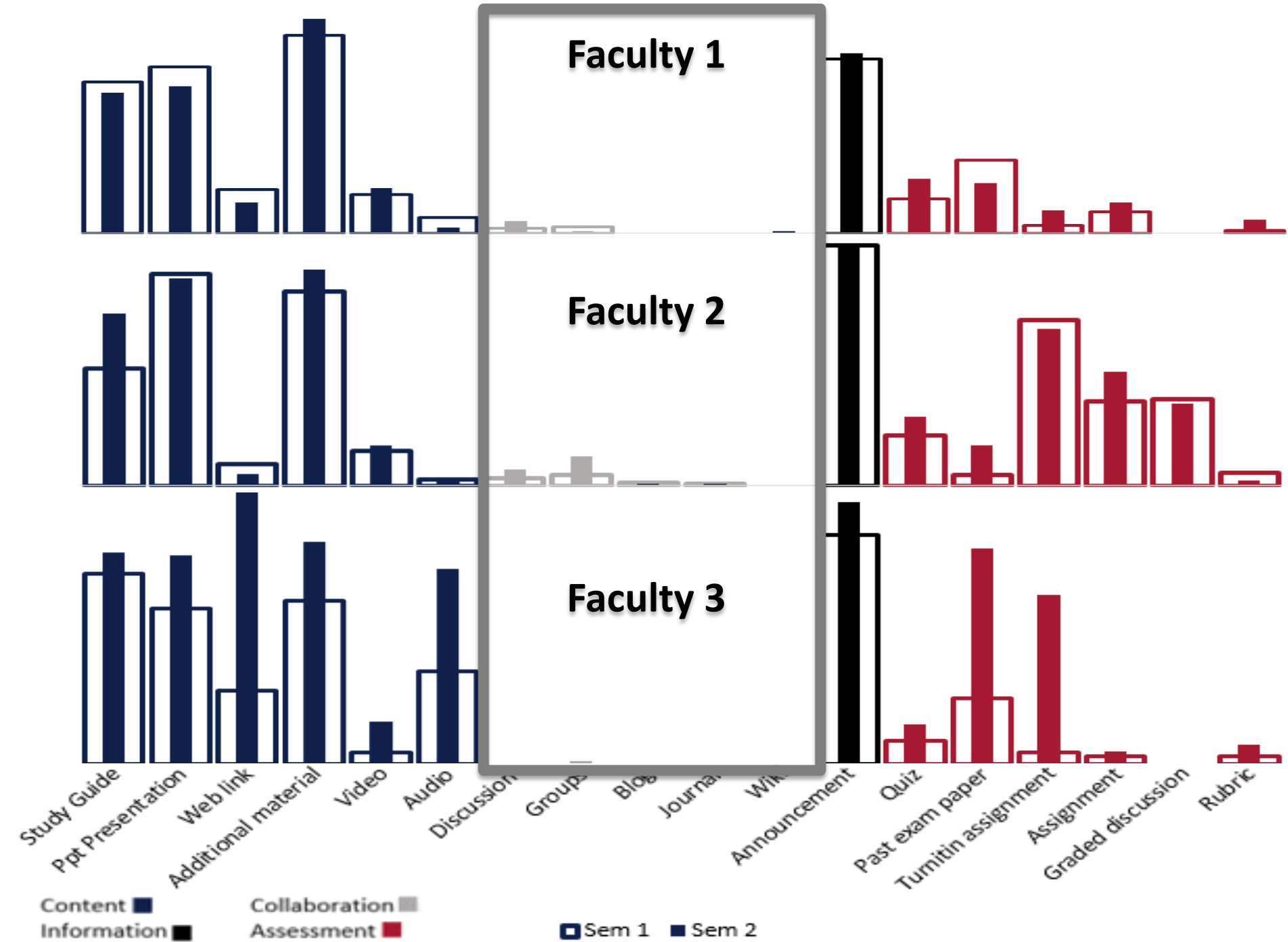
STAFF



STUDENTS



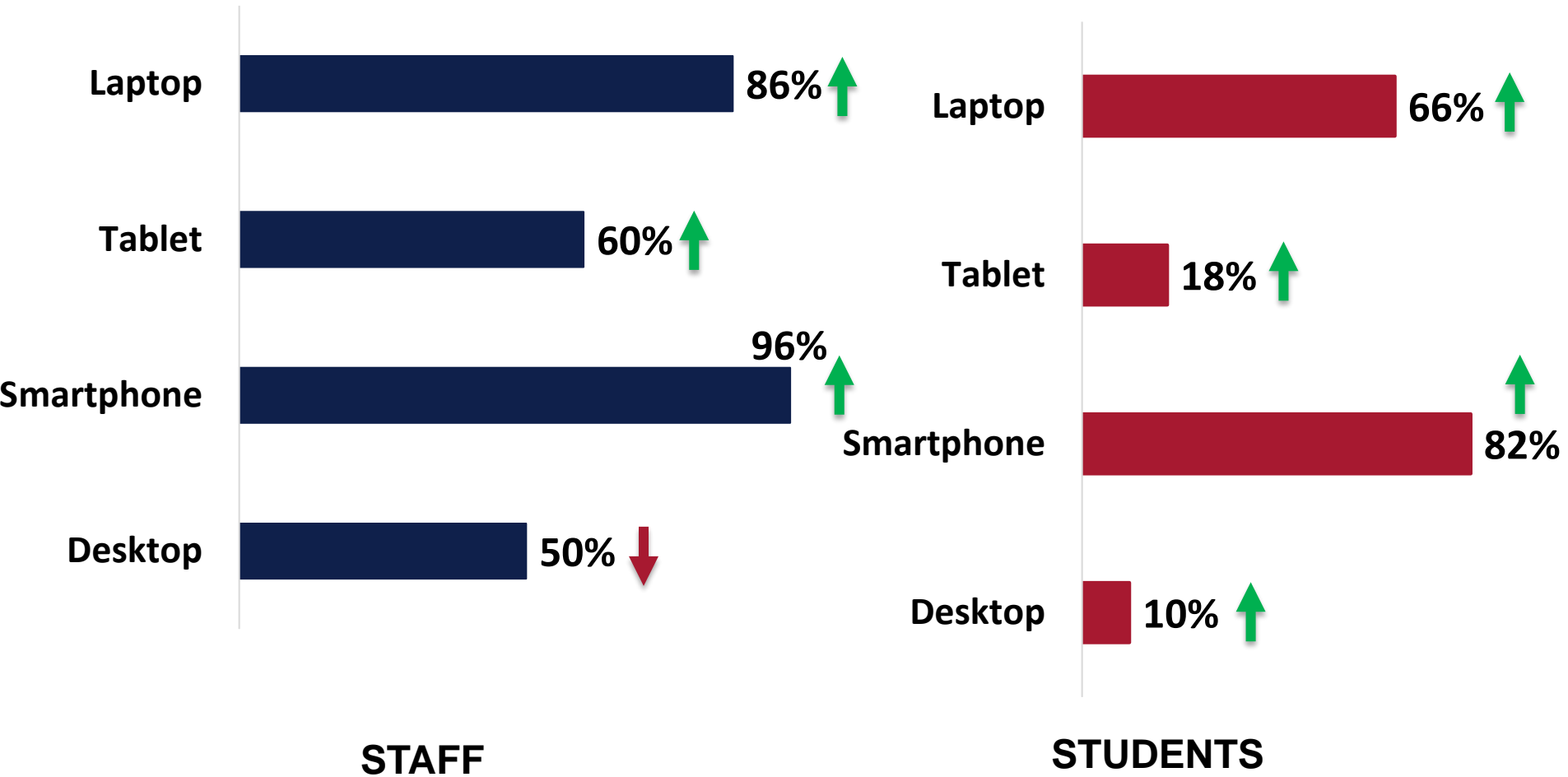
- Modules with no online components
- Modules with some online components (blended modules)
- Modules that are completely online
- No preference



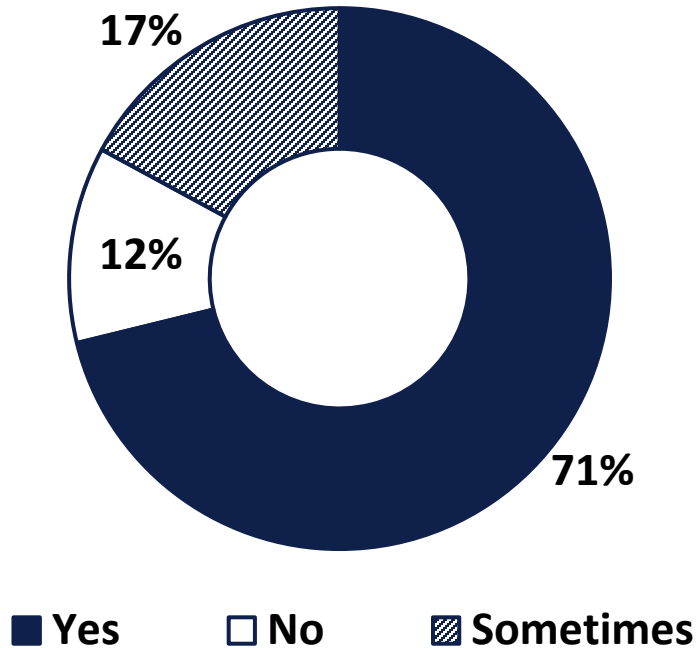


2. Lack of resources

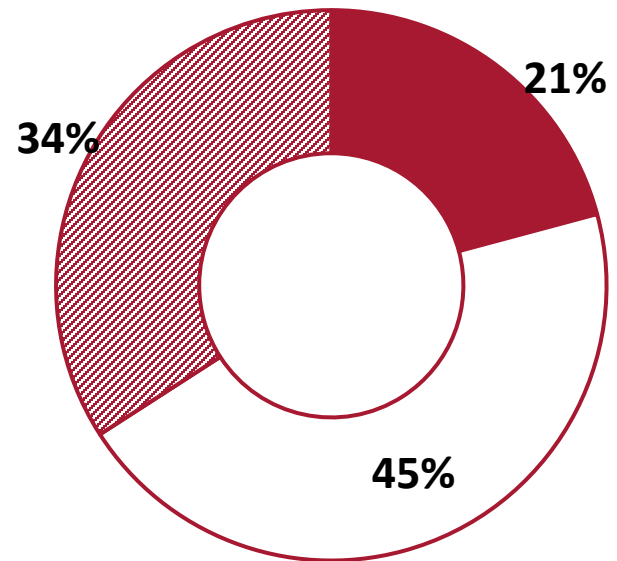
ACCESS TO DEVICES



STAFF AND STUDENT ACCESS TO RELIABLE INTERNET OFF CAMPUS



STAFF



STUDENTS

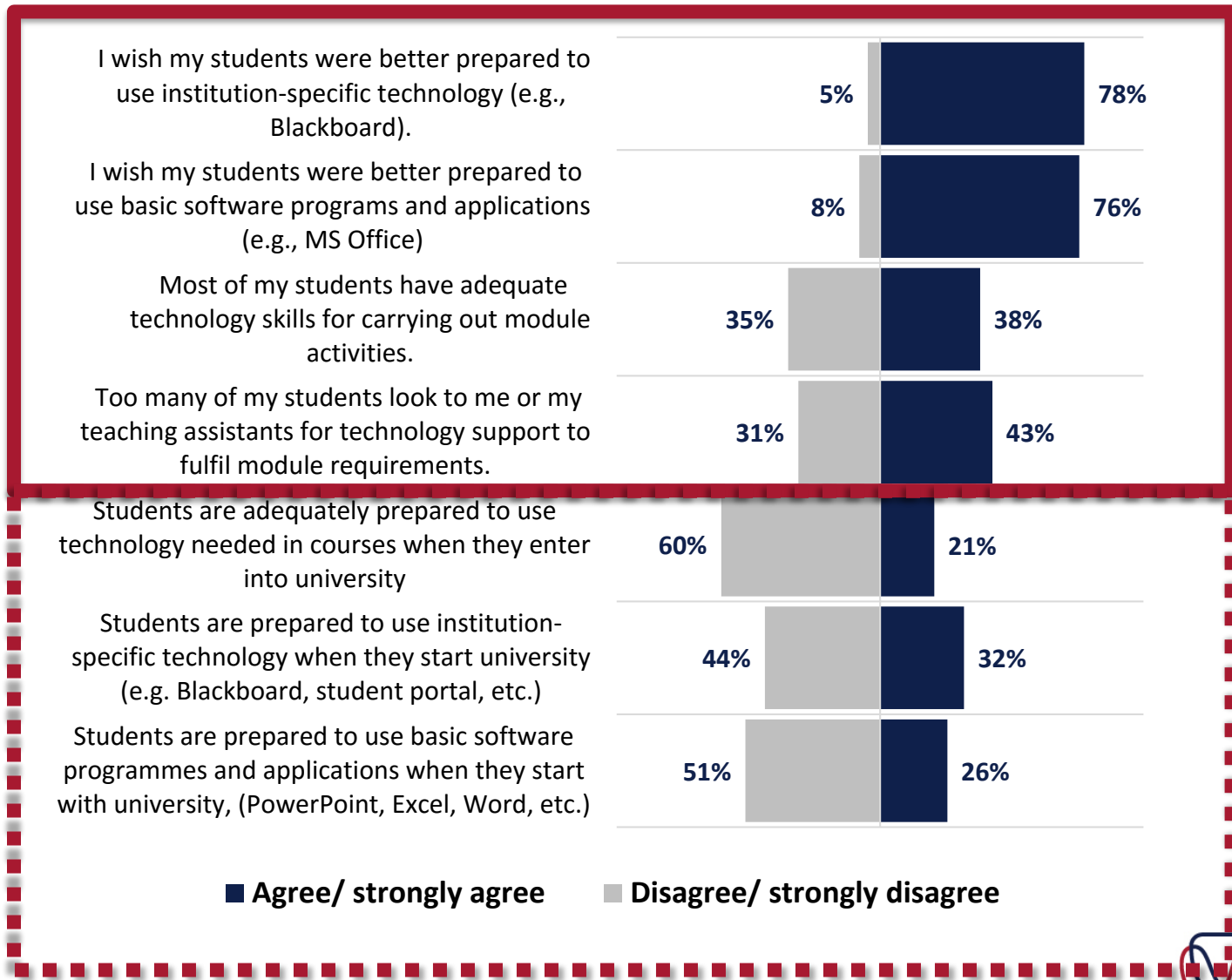


3. Student preparedness to use educational technology

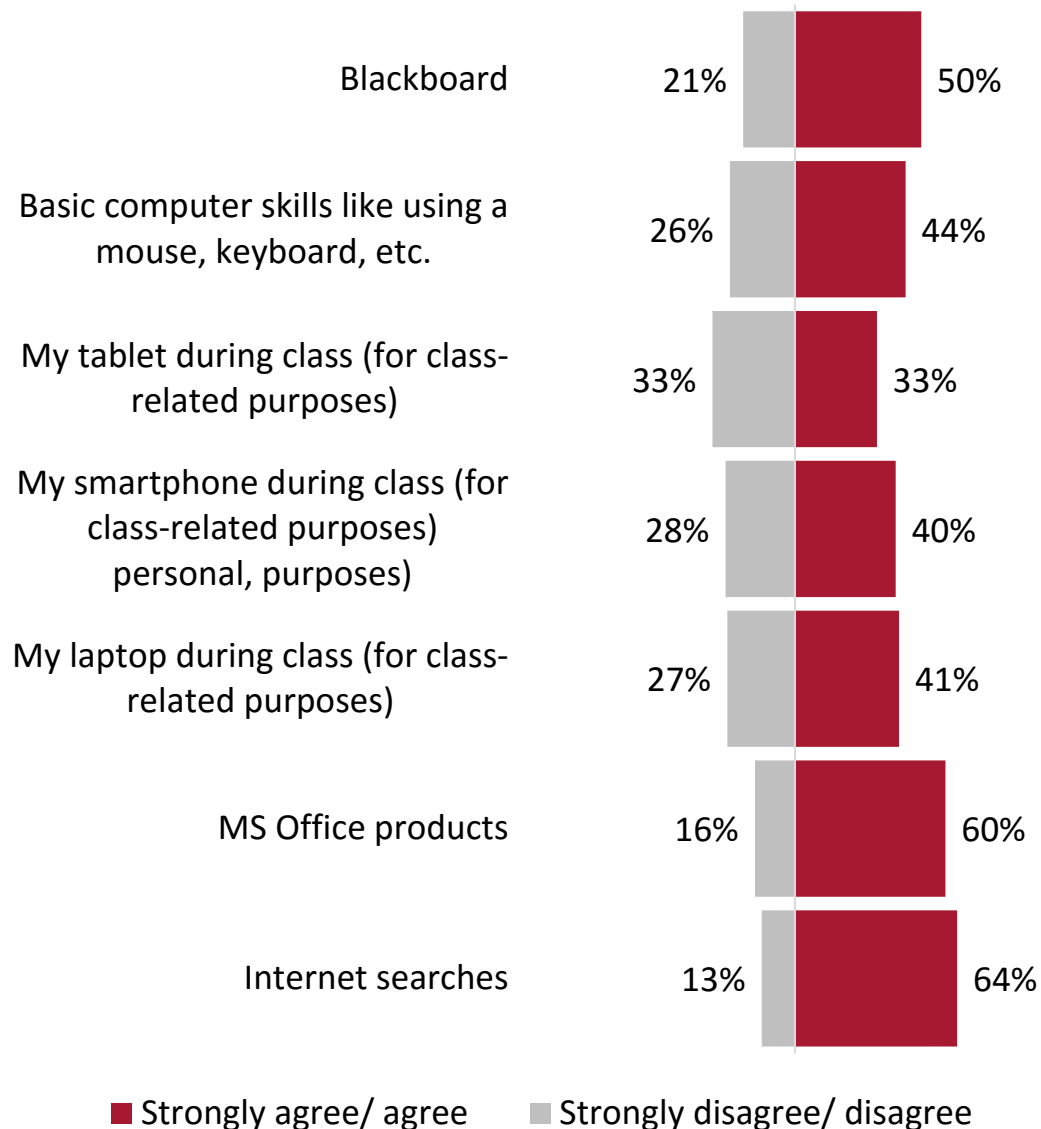
Staff perceptions of student preparedness to use technology in T&L

STUDENTS THEY
CURRENTLY TEACH

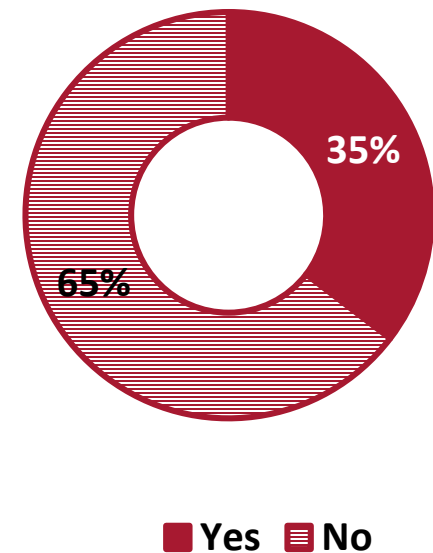
WHEN STUDENTS
FIRST ENTER
UNIVERSITY



Student perceived skills development needs




Students who indicated that they need additional training



PARTICIPANT PERSPECTIVES

“I think our faculty, compared to other faculties, they use Blackboard more often. So, we were already, kind of, used to where you have to go (to access learning material). They (lecturers) would actually also tell us in class or give us a mini presentation on Blackboard, you know, how to access certain things. Considering the time we had to study and how we already knew how to use Blackboard, it was easy (switching to online learning)”.

(Student focus group) participant 1



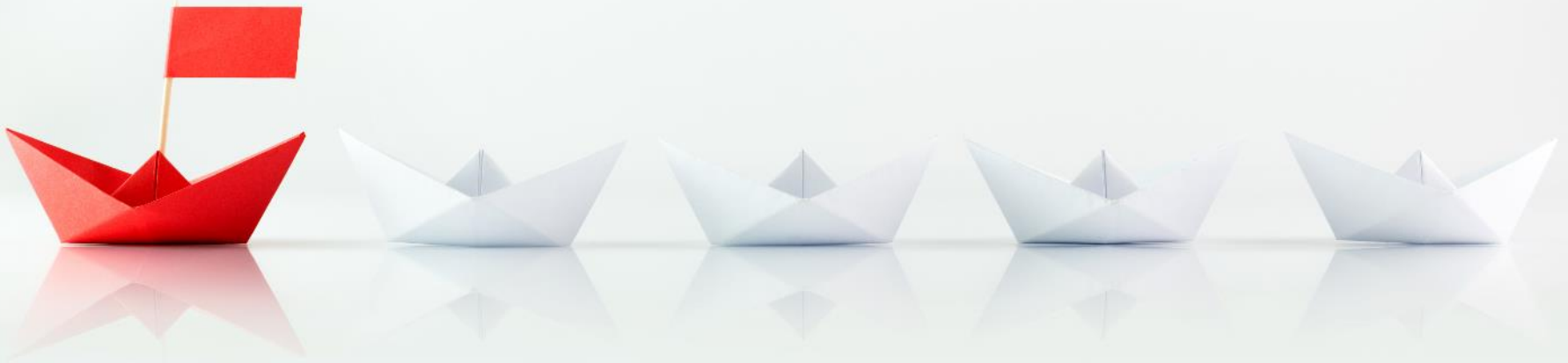
Previous experience with technology =
better prepared



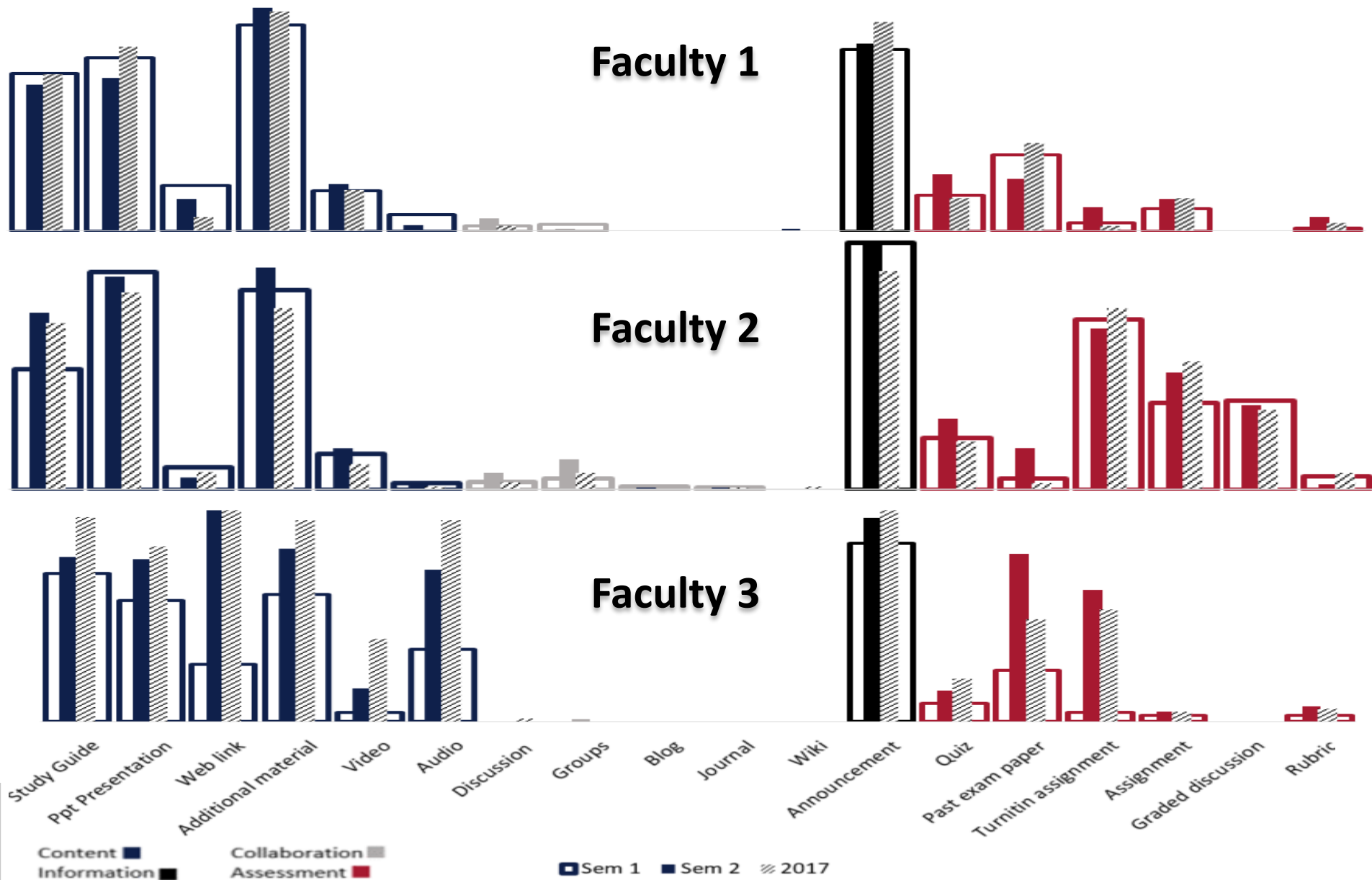
4. Staff resistance/motivation to use technology

“People were forced, by a hell of a tsunami, to change practice”.

Staff participant 10



BLACKBOARD USE AFTER THE DISRUPTIONS



Considerations for the development of institutional guidelines

- Use technology to facilitate meaningful interaction between students and staff
- Guidelines for the South African context
- Students need to be equipped to use educational technology
- Consider staff with varying levels of motivation to use technology
- Institutional research is needed to inform this type of decision-making



Thank
you!!

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