



# Taking Measure of the Covid-19 Pandemic's Impact on Members of the Morningside Heights Community

Findings of the June 2020 Survey Conducted by the  
Morningside Heights Community Coalition

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# Background and Survey Objective

- Currently, while MHCC is not able to hold face-to-face meetings to hear what our neighbors are thinking about, we created a survey in order gain insights into what Morningside Heights residents are feeling at a specific point in time during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- As expressed in the first issue of the *Morningsider*, MHCC's Newsletter, MHCC supports the heroic contributions of our health care workers, first responders, and essential service employees in response to Covid-19.
- MHCC has responded to the increasing reliance on food banks resulting from the pandemic through grants of \$5,000 each to Broadway Presbyterian Church and St. Mary's Episcopal Church, funding made possible through Morningside Heights Community Fund (MHCF).\*
- As an advocate for the well-being of our neighbors, MHCC has requested meetings with each of the colleges and universities in Morningside Heights to discuss their Fall 2020 plans. We know that while Covid-19 continues to be a health risk, schools face many challenges, especially if they plan to have students, faculty, and staff on campus.

\*<https://mhccnyc.org/morningside-heights-community-fund/>

# Method

Two different software programs were used for survey collection:

- *SurveyMonkey* – an online tool used for survey design and data collection
- *Mailchimp* – a marketing tool used to send emails to a designated contact list
- An email with an invitation to participate in the survey was mailed to MHCC's contact list on June 18, 2020. An email reminder to complete the survey was sent to this same list on June 26, 2020. Survey collection ended at the close of day June 30, 2020.
- A total of 315 respondents, ages 18 years and older answered the survey.

Note about the survey findings. The findings are limited to a self-select sample (not a random sample) and therefore not statistically projectible to any group or groups outside of this survey.

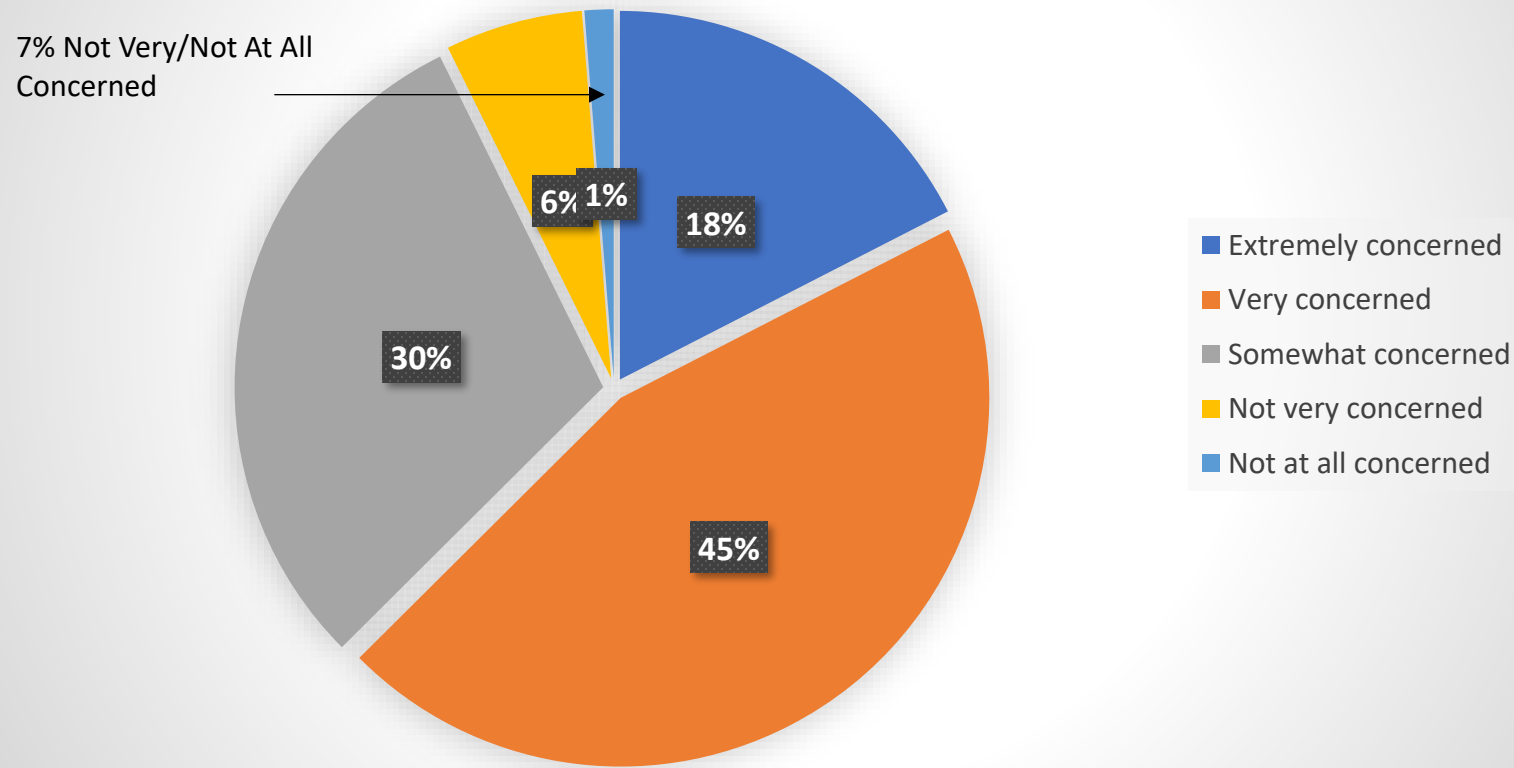
# Key Takeaways

- After more than three months of measures taken to “flatten the curve” in New York, members of the Morningside Heights community are concerned about the impact of Covid-19 on their well-being and that of their family members. Top-of mind is that the coronavirus is an unchecked health risk.
- The potential of college students spreading Covid in the neighborhood underlies why significantly more neighborhood residents are *not* in favor of Morningside Heights colleges/universities having on-site classes than are those more amenable to having in-person classes as of Fall 2020.
- Wanting the community to remaining healthy, specifically, not facing an increased risk of infection, is a focus of concern. There is an awareness that as some areas in the US have re-opened, Covid rates have spiked.
- There is keen recognition of social distancing and face coverings as requisites for preventing the spread of Covid, but also awareness that the college-aged cohort is less apt to follow these practices.
- Residents of Morningside Heights want to support local businesses that rely on commerce from students, faculty, and school staff, but to do so within the context of community safety.

# Detailed Findings

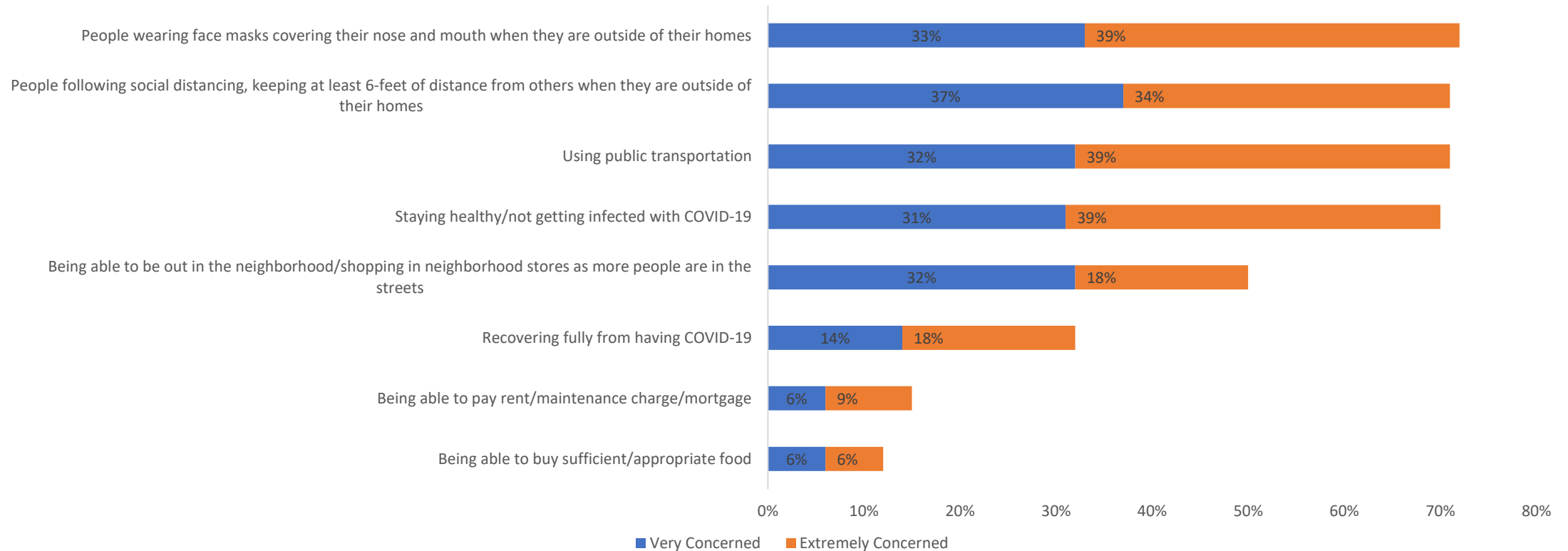
# Morningside Heights residents are concerned about the impact of Covid. Fewer than one in ten express little or no concern.

Overall Impact of Covid – Degree of Concern



Staying healthy is the greatest concern including that others will adhere to appropriate social distance and face covering. Using public transportation is a related health concern.

### Specific Concerns About Corvid's Impact





# Reasons colleges/universities should *not* have in-person classes Fall 2020

- The continued risk of Covid-19 infection underlies the way Morningside Heights residents regard the prospect of colleges/universities having in-person classes in Fall 2020.
- Very salient among those not wanting in-person classes is wanting to avoid neighborhood residents' exposure to the coronavirus.
- Awareness that the college age cohort have shown to not fully adhere to safety protocol and being unsure that social distancing can be enforced, is a related concern.
  - Even for those more amenable to schools having students on campus, concern about Covid-19 is evident in their expressed need for colleges/universities having safety protocols in place.

The higher proportion of those not wanting in-person classes in Fall 2020 (57%) is a statistically significant difference vs. those amenable to in-person classes (43%). Based on n=291

# Reasons colleges/universities should *not* have in-person classes Fall 2020 (Continued)

In their own words, Morningside Heights residents described reasons for not wanting to have in-person classes.

## **Covid Remains a Risk**

- *Epidemiologists expect another spike in spread of the virus in the fall*
- *It will greatly increase the spread*
- *The risk of spreading the virus is too high*
- *It feels like a high-risk environment that would continue the spread of the disease with no vaccine or solutions at the moment*
- *Too soon. We will be in the second wave in the fall*
- *I don't think ANYONE should be offering onsite classes*

# Reasons colleges/universities should *not* have in-person classes Fall 2020 (Continued)

## **Concern about Residents in the Neighborhood**

- *Too risky for the entire community*
- *Dangerous for students and local residents*
- *Early opening could pose a threat to residents of the Heights*
- *Past history of these institutions not factoring in concerns of neighborhood does not bode well*
- *Too many students on street mixing with older people risk of infection*
- *Residents shouldn't be put at higher risk than currently*
- *Institutions must conference with the community and have Independent approval of safety plans by epidemiologists and other independent qualified experts. Otherwise stay away.*

# Reasons colleges/universities should *not* have in-person classes Fall 2020 (Continued)

## **Students May Not Follow Safety Protocols**

- *Unless social distancing can be implemented, indoor classes with many students are too dangerous at this time*
- *Impossible to control social distancing*
- *The youth tend not to follow precautions*
- *I don't believe that social distancing and safety guidelines will be followed*
- *No way to ensure social distancing*
- *Young people haven't been social distancing*
- *I think it is risky and unrealistic that students will follow social distancing*

# Reasons colleges/universities should *not* have in-person classes Fall 2020 (Continued)

## **Students Will Come From Other States/Other Countries\***

- *In thinking about Columbia University, students come from many places throughout the country and the world.*
- *I'm concerned that the university attendees are coming from various countries and states and will increase cases in NYC.*
- *They are students from all over the world which will increase the possibility of infections. I'm not certain the colleges/universities will be able to prevent their community members from bringing the virus from elsewhere to NYC*

\*On June 22, 2020 President Trump expanded his temporary suspension of entry of individuals to the US. Per ICE (July 6) students on visas will be barred from staying in the US if their school's classes are entirely online during the Fall semester.

# Reasons colleges/universities should have in-person classes Fall 2020

Community residents inclined toward students being on campus in the Fall, also articulate that **safety protocol** is necessary.

- *If they provide social distancing in classrooms, set up alternating classes, require wearing masks, do testing and follow other CDC guidelines I think it would be okay.*
- *If they do resume on site classes they need to test and quarantine all incoming students and maintain strict policies about gatherings, masks, etc.*
- *If they can maintain masking, social distancing and other protective measures , they can offer onsite.*
- *I am assuming these institutions will have established protocols to prevent exposure and spreading of the virus*

## Reasons colleges/universities should have in-person classes Fall 2020 (Continued)

Even when considering the notion of having onsite classes, there is uncertainty that Covid's status will have changed by Fall 2020.

- *Hope the threat will be reduced otherwise shouldn't*
- *Covid should be reduced by then*
- *Hope Covid-19 will be under control in the Fall*
- *Need more info about Covid cases in the city over the coming months, and need to know the universities' safety plans*
- *I don't know the decisions they've made, and we don't know how things will be in September*
- *It depends on how the circumstances change. It's June. Things will change before Fall, no one knows HOW they will change.*

## Reasons colleges/universities should have in-person classes Fall 2020 (Continued)

For some, concern about neighborhood businesses influences thoughts about opening the campuses to students, albeit safety is still a consideration.

- *Important to neighborhood. Supports local business. Will be screening and testing.*
- *If the virus numbers are down and other businesses are open, the presence of students is a plus for the community.*
- *If they think it is safe for their community. It will prevent some stores and restaurants from going under.*
- *Because adds to economic stability in the neighborhood*

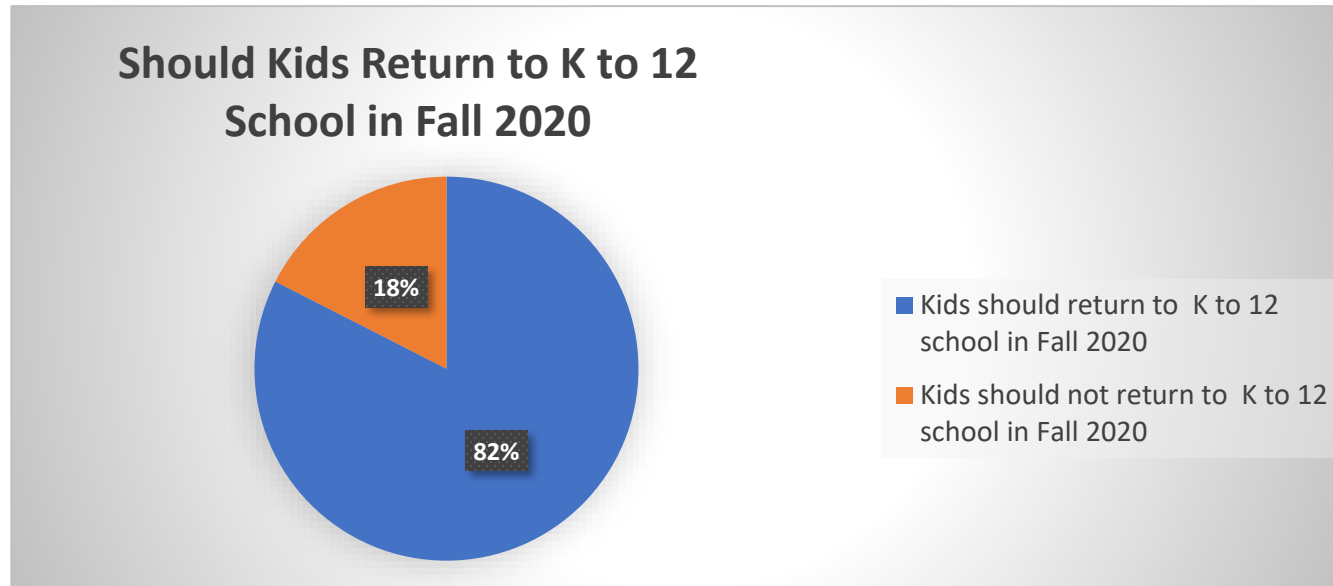


## Reasons colleges/universities should have in-person classes Fall 2020 (Continued)

Believing that an in-person experience is germane to a college education is a consideration for some residents. Still, the need for safety is recognized.

- *With proper precautions, it is important to proceed as normally as possible; on-line learning is never the same.*
- *It is so important for the students, and for the survival of the institutions. The schools can use a hybrid model and take other steps to reduce risk.*
- *All students need an education, only the privileged ones can get it online or with parent's help. On the other hand, health should remain a priority*
- *Monitored, restricted access and spacing is a fair trade-off. Distant learning hinders learning.*

Apart from the status of colleges/universities, most parents with school age children want them to return to K to 12 schools in Fall 2020.



Base: 40 Answering Question,  
Have K-12 School Age Kids

# APPENDIX

# Verbatim Responses: Reasons colleges/universities should *not* have in-person classes Fall 2020

Verbatim

Response

- # **The Virus Is Not Yet Contained/Covid Remains a Risk (Responses #1 to #47)**
- 1 Epidemiologists expect another spike in spread of the virus in the fall
  - 2 ITS TOO SOON. JUST REMEMBER 1918
  - 3 They are just as much at risk
  - 4 The danger is still there
  - 5 No way to prevent infection
  - 6 The pandemic is ongoing.
  - 7 dangerous
  - 8 Not safe yet
  - 9 They should not hold in-person/on-site classes until there is a vaccine that is proven to work. Otherwise they'll just be petri dishes.
  - 10 It's not over. Could spike again.
  - 11 too early to make proper decisions regarding full school openings
  - 12 Increases the likelihood of infection
  - 13 Better to err on the side of caution until the coronavirus is contained
  - 14 The possible spread of Covid
  - 15 In general, places where re-opening is taking place are seeing increases in Covid-19 infection.
  - 16 Not appropriate unless more becomes known about the illness
  - 17 Danger of infection
  - 18 Not safe yet.
  - 19 It will greatly increase the spread

# Verbatim Responses: Reasons colleges/universities should *not* have in-person classes Fall 2020

- 20 Too risky
- 21 Too many spikes in COVID-19 as Reopening occurs
- 22 I don't see how it can be made safe for faculty, students, or staff.
- 23 The pandemic is unlikely to be sufficiently controlled by Fall 2020 to enable students to return to campus safely.
- 24 To prevent the spread of a virus. Treatment for virus was not efficient to prevent death of 25,000 people in NYC. There is still not a vaccination. Though, there is hope and prevention by wearing a mask, washing hands, keeping physical distance.
- 25 Studies show transmission inside, these are highly populated indoor sites
- 26 We will be having a second wave or slow burn in the late fall/early winter and it will be challenging for students and faculty on campus to get back home.
- 27 Because dormitories and other communal living situations will spread the coronavirus
- 28 This virus is not contained and going to class in person will only increase the amount of cases
- 29 The risk of spreading the virus is too high.
- 30 There is too much we don't know about the virus.
- 31 To prevent spread of Covid
- 32 There will be a second surge
- 33 It feels like a high risk environment that would continue the spread of the disease with no vaccine or solutions at the moment.
- 34 Too risky until there's a vaccine. Maybe resume classes in spring if cases are minimal.
- 35 Because we don't know enough yet. It is too risky. School can wait. Worse things have happened than missing a few semesters of "in person" education.

# Verbatim Responses: Reasons colleges/universities should *not* have in-person classes Fall 2020

- 36 Social distancing is not possible and the virus is still very much with us, also there is the matter of the regular flu season in the fall  
37 Too soon. We will be in the second wave in the fall.  
It seems impossible to do so without these young people being at risk. I have a college-age child not in Morningside Heights about  
38 whom I feel the same way.
- 39 There should not be in person gatherings unless spaces are equipped for social distancing until a vaccine is created.
- 40 We're still in the first wave... young people can easily carry the virus and be contagious without ever knowing it.  
41 Fall 2020 will be too soon to reopen on-site classes.  
42 Too early. Too dangerous.
- 43 I feel they should wait until Jan '21, when the second wave will be (one hopes) over.  
It's a hard choice, and I am not sure of my answer, but I think NYS has made tremendous progress in lowering the presence of the  
44 virus here, and I would like to see that progress maintained.
- 45 The pandemic seems to be escalating in areas around the country where people are congregating in large groups, especially indoors.  
I don't think ANYONE should be offering onsite classes. Classrooms are far too crowded to keep people safe. The safest option is to  
46 keep most classes online.
- Yale professor of Epidemiology, Gregg Gonsalves: <https://www.thenation.com/article/society/reopening-coronavirus-needless-deaths/> And, an opinion piece from the newspaper, Inside Higher Ed: <https://www.insidehighered.com/views/2020/05/21/rush-reopen-colleges-fall-ignores-harsh-scientific-and-ethical-realities-opinion>  
47

# Verbatim Responses: Reasons colleges/universities should *not* have in-person classes Fall 2020

## Concerns about residents in the Morningside Heights Neighborhood (Responses #48 to #79)

- 48 To protect all involved in the school and community.  
I am very concerned about the numbers of people coming to the neighborhood from around the country where they have not been as diligent as New York. Also, I am concerned that the students will not wear masks and social distance
- 49 and will put Morningside Heights residents in more danger.  
Colleges are naturally high-contact/high-exposure environments. Even if the majority of students are low-risk, the virus is still a serious danger to some of them and to many staff and faculty who are at higher risk. Even with many precautions, it's just ludicrous to imagine that the virus will not spread rapidly and affect the rest of the Morningside
- 50 Heights community.  
Too risky for the entire community
- 51 I think it is a threat to neighborhood residents as they will not all wear masks and they will overfill our streets,  
52 endangering we older residents
- 53 Dangerous for students and local residents.  
Colleges are better poised to use online/distance learning than the NYC Public Schools. This neighborhood is overwhelmed with students when colleges are in session. At the moment we are watching what's happening in Texas & Florida with the bar scene, which we have plenty of in the Heights. The subway stops at 125th & 116th are also
- 54 packed at certain times of the day/night.  
It will not be safe the students/ faculty/ staff, but it will also bring more people back to the neighborhood.
- 55 The virus is still raging in a large portion of the country and bringing people back into the city from all over is going to
- 56 put our neighborhood in a higher risk  
The whole community is at risk if physical distancing is not practiced
- 57 Early opening could pose a threat to residents of the Heights.

# Verbatim Responses: Reasons colleges/universities should *not* have in-person classes Fall 2020

- 59 With no vaccine and only very partial treatments, distancing is essential. There is no way for that to be maintained in classes, on campus, in the neighborhood, and, especially, in living quarters. It's wiser to wait a bit longer, primarily for students, faculty, staff of the institutions, but also for the entire community.
- 60 Morningside Heights is already a densely populated community. The influx of people that in person classes in Fall 2020 would generate would put students, faculty and staff, as well as members of the community, at greater risk. Columbia and Barnard do not have the infrastructure to support operations at a safe capacity and any level of operation will pose a risk to West Harlem community members. These institutions have already done so much to displace local communities; creating additional health risks would be an extremely irresponsible thing to do on top of that.
- 61 We are living in a plague that is killing people. Every endeavor available to human activity must be taken to ward-off/eliminate the dangers of living in close proximity. Keeping the community safe and alive is what the main priority.
- 62 Past history of these institutions not factoring in concerns of neighborhood does not bode well
- 63 To many students on street mixing with older people risk of infection
- 64 Breeding grounds for infections that will spread to the rest of the nabe
- 65 I would imagine that the total number of people returning to MSH is between 30-60,000 people if all institutions where to resume in-person classes/business. The neighborhood barely manages without Covid...imagine walking on Byway, shopping in our very small local grocery (110th St.)... I can't/don't want to imagine. Once there is a tested and proven vaccine that is safe for all ages, then we can flood the neighborhood.
- 66 Neighborhood already over crowded now and the university is not open yet. Too hard to isolate.



# Verbatim Responses: Reasons colleges/universities should *not* have in-person classes Fall 2020

67 It's not appropriate for any colleges to offer in-person classes at this time. But it's especially worrisome in a high-density  
neighborhood like Morningside Heights/Harlem.  
68 increase in population and density of people near campus; increased need for staff to commute; I am Columbia faculty and  
don't want to be in the classroom.

69 Unlike other colleges, Columbia is integrated into the community and undergrads regularly move between the college and  
the community, making transmission between the two groups a lot more likely

70 This is perhaps selfish, but I am among the many older adults in the neighborhood, and I feel that it makes all of us,  
including those on the faculty, vulnerable, given the behavior of students.

College students are not at an age where they are cognitively capable of assessing risky behaviors. Moving a large number  
(thousands, if not more) of undergraduate and graduate students into the neighborhood from all over the world will  
astronomically increase the risk to permanent residents just by bringing people from high-risk areas who may be symptom  
free but carriers of COVID19. Add to that the need for students to hold social gatherings, the ways that universities have  
integrated students into non-student housing, and the reluctance of many students/asymptomatic people to wear masks  
(not to mention gloves or other PPE), and you increase the risks even more. It's already difficult to navigate the streets and  
surrounding area effectively maintaining physical distancing. With tens of thousands of additional people in the  
community, it will be even more challenging. It's clear that there aren't the social systems in place to safely support the  
community's permanent residents and their interest in and need to be out and active. Supporting an additional influx of  
temporary student residents will be nearly impossible. Sidewalks, buildings, elevators, restaurants, bars, parks, public  
transportation...all will be acutely overfull. And then the hospitals will once again become overwhelmed, and a second  
71 shutdown will be even harder to absorb.

# Verbatim Responses: Reasons colleges/universities should *not* have in-person classes Fall 2020

- 72 College students lack the appropriate brain maturity to make responsible decisions in the long term. They can not be expected to follow all the necessary rules to keep the community healthy
- 73 I'm concerned that students would not be careful about social distancing, masks, etc. Residents shouldn't be put at higher risk than currently
- 74 I am concerned their carelessness can spread to residents in stores, restaurants, and public transportation. Because of all the people who are not social distancing or wearing masks, they appear to be college age.
- 75 There is NO WAY that the students attending from all over the world will follow best and safest health protocols. I am petrified that the permanent residents will be infected in greater numbers than other areas of the city, as the second wave begins.
- 76 Too crowded in neighborhood; students won't be responsible.
- 77 There is no way to guarantee that community transmission of the virus is able to be contained.
- 78 we are still fighting the pandemic...granted Ny state is in the best condition because of Gov. Cuomo, but if gathering situations reoccur, all students, personnel and the neighborhood could be in danger. we need a serum first.
- 79 Institutions must conference with the community and have Independent approval of safety plans by epidemiologists and other independent qualified experts. Otherwise stay away.

# Verbatim Responses: Reasons colleges/universities should *not* have in-person classes Fall 2020

## **Will Require Adhering to Social Distancing/Wearing Face Coverings/Students May Not Follow Safety Protocols (Responses #80 to #108)**

- 80 Unless social distancing can be implemented, indoor classes with many students are too dangerous at this time.  
Population density has the potential to spread the virus in the community. As it is, maybe two out of three folks in the area  
81 wear masks. As much as I love young people - I am an educator - I recognize the sense of immunity and the pressure that may lead them to avoid masks.
- 82 Too hard to maintain social distancing, problem that students may be returning from different states or countries that are still  
83 having outbreaks, not sure students will be responsible in Covid safety measures, Impossible to control social distancing.
- 84 Absolutely unacceptable. Not enough members in the community are practicing social distancing and quarantining  
85 The youth tend not to follow precautions  
Young adults more careless, more likely not to follow rules, therefore more dangerous to themselves and the community.
- 86 Number will also contribute to crowds, lack of social distance.  
87 I don't believe that social distancing and safety guidelines will be followed.  
88 social distancing will be hard to maintain indoors for in person classes
- 89 Will add to crowds on the streets of people heedless of others, not wearing masks, eating and drinking in public.  
It's too soon; the discipline of social distancing would be too hard to maintain. It is more possible for middle schools and high  
90 schools, where teachers have more control over students.  
91 No way to ensure social distancing.

# Verbatim Responses: Reasons colleges/universities should *not* have in-person classes Fall 2020

- 92 Until everyone "gets it" and starts using masks religiously, I want no part of kids coming into the neighborhood from idiot States around the US and spreading this disease. NYC is, IMHO, barely keeping its act together. Until we ALL behave like people have in Hong Kong and Taiwan, we are at substantial risk.
- 93 In order to keep the COVID-19 numbers low we as a community must continue to maintain social distancing and mask wearing. Not sure that existing school structures are equipped with the space to do so.
- 94 the kids will not comply with social distancing
- 95 Young people haven't been social distancing
- 96 I don't know. If they can do social distancing, wear masks???
- 97 Still important to maintain social distancing, and mask wearing during classes is oppressive
- 98 I live in a building in which a lot of Columbia students reside in and they definitely do not practice social distancing, they have parties all the time. I don't feel comfortable at all leaving my apartment. Therefore ,I do not feel like school should not open yet because they would not follow social distancing or wear face masks
- 99 Students will not follow social distancing rules and wear proper face coverings
- 100 There will be thousands more people on the streets, in the markets, etc., making social distancing more difficult, if not impossible.
- 101 They can't social distance appropriately.
- 102 We don't know enough about how the virus will spread during the fall, young people are the least compliant re: masks and social distancing, no treatment or vaccine yet.
- 103 Very hard for college students to observe social distancing.
- 104 The college students may not want to wear the mask

## Verbatim Responses: Reasons colleges/universities should *not* have in-person classes Fall 2020

- 105 I find it highly unlikely that college students will socially distance, or follow any other kind of rules and regulations that might help slow down the second wave.
- 106 None of the students will socially distance themselves and the schools will become spreaders of COVID just as the weather gets colder.
- 107 Because this pandemic is not yet under control, and college students will not socially distance. I do not even feel comfortable they will wear masks.
- 108 I think it is risky and unrealistic that students will follow social distancing

# Verbatim Responses: Reasons colleges/universities should *not* have in-person classes Fall 2020

## **Students Will Come from Other States/Other Countries (Responses #109 to #120)**

- 109 Second wave is coming and bringing back people from all over the world will exacerbate the second wave. Hope for vaccine in 2021
- 110 The city might get shut down again without notice. Also better not to have thousands of potential new cases brought into the city from out of state.
- 111 The student population is large because of the number of institutions of higher ed, and the students come from all over the world. They will frequent neighborhood stores, and I don't know how careful they'll be about wearing masks and maintaining social distance.
- 112 any reopening of Columbia, JTS, Barnard, etc. will involve students and faculty traveling from all over the country and indeed the world to live and work in close proximity in conditions under which it is impossible to practice social distancing. This puts the students, faculty, staff, community and city at undue risk.
- 113 In thinking about Columbia University, students come from many places throughout the country and the world.
- 114 I'm concerned that the university attendees are coming from various countries and states and will increase cases in NYC. With the epidemic at different stages in different states and countries, it seems ill -advised to bring together students from all over the country and world, as there will be a high risk of another outbreak, which will affect the school community, the neighborhood and the city
- 115
- 116 Because MH will become overcrowded with thousands more people many from far away. They can get infected or infect others

# Verbatim Responses: Reasons colleges/universities should *not* have in-person classes Fall 2020

The colleges/universities have students from all parts of the world, especially Columbia. They shop in stores such as west side market which is not keeping shoppers 6 ft apart or marking aisles to be one way. They pass on their germs to one another and they spread through the community. There should be no foreign students permitted in the country until there is treatment for Covid 19. The opening of the economy serves to provide a political platform to Trump who is influencing Cuomo. His boast mirrors Trump's boasts. The numbers of new cases should not be compared to higher numbers but seen in absolute terms. Each new case creates another new case. Southerners and westerners come to the east. There should be no reopening. Money is being put above lives. The students living in dorms are passing around the virus and taking it into the community. Employed older residents are bringing the virus into the building. All locations are tactile. I am disgusted hearing Cuomo brag about the lower number of new infections and deaths. The relevant fact is that there daily are new infections and deaths. It is deadly that public pools are opening in various regions, on the justification that chlorine kills the virus. People can cough in one another's face. Trump has his supporters claiming Covid 19 is but a watered down flu. Testing must be increased. Everyone needs to be tested. The problem is that adequate isolation is impossible because people live with others and touch such objects as toilet flush handles. Adequate disinfection is impossible. Most apartments have only one bathroom. It's irrelevant that NY is improving. The colleges and universities will have infected students coming to NY. The distinction between states is artificial. There are no borders in the US. The schools should be closed to foreigners as a matter of health and safety and students should live by themselves. Roommate arrangements which are the dorm are deadly. The schools should have virtual learning only for the fall. It is unrealistic to think there would be less danger in the fall than there was in the spring. Landlords have to lower rents so tenants can pay to stay in safer locations. They are predators, even taking action if tenants sheltering away for safety pay rent one month late. Landlords think they should make a profit no matter the losses the tenants suffer. They read this into the U.S. Constitution. Buildings should be taken over by the CDC or government if any government officials can be found that are not subject to corruption. DeBlasio is honest but is eclipsed by Cuomo who is a political operative and gullible. He is putting judges who lack integrity and do not follow the law on intermediate appellate courts, such as in the 3rd judicial department, ignorantly claiming they have integrity when they admit they ignore the law which amounts to judicial misconduct. NY needs to oust Cuomo. He is part of the problem. Cases will increase come the fall. I am sickened by his boast. Does he not realize that Morningside Heights will invite Covid 19 patients to the area come fall? Have you been in West Side Market. Do you know what Morton Williams will be like in 2 months? I understand Covid 19 if protected against properly will make the economy "sick." No significant progress has been made. It's in my own building. My roommate had it from a class mate. I've been away for 3 months, calling remotely to hear my landlord's agent's message that I'm late in rent. I'll drive back to pay rent and leave. There are predators all around, patsies, and Columbia is acting irresponsibly. Columbia should rent space in an upstate location with almost no cases and regularly test students. Daily tests and have them live alone in rooms. The upstate economy needs the money. If classes are to be in person they should not be in NYC.

# Verbatim Responses: Reasons colleges/universities should *not* have in-person classes Fall 2020

## Other Reasons (Responses #121 to #139)

- 121 The answer is so much more complicated than Yes / No... and it's a matter of degree and flexibility.
- 122 It MAY be too soon to risk reopening any schools. Or not. Will have to follow the data.
- 123 I note that Union Seminary has developed a trimester schedule, so that as the school moves later into the fall it can decide whether to move into a second semester on line or move to face to face teaching/learning with suitable precautions.
- 124 Though I am an adjunct at two institutions of higher education, and a sworn enemy of online education, I feel it is too soon and will result in strange dynamics (like dorm clusters). I also worry about fairness in terms of who can come. I remain open to good ideas and long for the return of in-person learning.
- 125 I am a teacher. Classes are crowded places. Students can learn with on-line classes even though it isn't an optimal learning environment, it is the safest at the moment.
- 126 Density, both within buildings and on campus spaces generally
- 127 Older students and faculty must do better in utilizing technology. No choice as 2021 and beyond is upon us!
- 128 I think primary schools and pre-Ks should open with proper cautions. I think should Columbia, Barnard, etc. should wait until January. This is my employer. I understand some classes and degree programs require face-to-face instruction--we simply have to continue to train people in laboratory research and artistic practice courses--while others do not require it and thus should not take the risk of P-2-P instruction.
- 129 It's more nuanced than a yes/no answer. Can it be done safely? What about families who can't keep their kids home? What about kids who need school meals? The very circumstances of resuming on campus life are those that spread the virus. It needs to be handled carefully, and with thought, and perhaps some limited on campus activities, necessary hands on classes and addressing the questions above.
- 130



# Verbatim Responses: Reasons colleges/universities should have in-person classes Fall 2020

Verbatim Response #	In-Person Classes Will Require Adherence a Safety Protocol/Adjusted Schedules/Smaller Class Size (Responses #1 to #64)
1	OK if they implement the appropriate measures (requiring students, faculty and staff to wear masks, classes set up with social distancing, etc.).
2	I think that adjustments would have to be made and proper safety measures taken, but, presuming there's not a sharp increase in cases in New York, classes should resume at least partially in person.
3	I am assuming these institutions will have established protocols to prevent exposure and spreading of a virus.
4	I trust that any attempt at partial re-opening will be happening within a general framework of state/ city regulations & accompanied by some reasonable policy aimed at increasing a chance of containment of the plague.
5	If they provide social distancing in classrooms, set up alternating classes, require wearing masks, do testing and follow other CDC guidelines I think it would be okay
6	If appropriate distances can be preserved, with caution, I think it could be time to introduce some in person classes.
7	I don't know enough about it. I suspect Columbia is not only going to be very careful, but to attempt to influence the whole neighborhood in smart ways to keep us healthy. This is, of course an opinion absolutely the opposite of the crook in the White House
8	I think they most likely will have the appropriate protocols in place.
9	Can hold with very revised restrictions and lots of alignment in these with the community
10	Life needs to continue under the new nirms. We need to practice the restricción of this new season of COVID19.
11	They need to limit the number of people on campus, but some courses (e.g., science labs) really can't be done remotely. That and research need to be able to continue.
12	In person education is much more worthwhile than online and young people are least likely to get seriously ill
13	Based on data about YMCA and DOE providing child care numbers of infection was almost none. If done properly ensue small class setting/frequency of cleaning schools it should be fine. It is essential that early childhood children return to school. As an educator I found it challenging for my 1 and 2nd graders to navigate google classrooms and Assignments
14	Columbia is run by very intelligent staff, keeping to guidelines

# Verbatim Responses: Reasons colleges/universities should have in-person classes Fall 2020

- 15 As long as the schools take all appropriate precautions.
- 16 If they offer they should make sure to adhere to the standards accorded to other areas of life ie separation etc.
- 17 IF they can maintain masking, social distancing and other protective measures, they can offer onsite.
- 18 with necessary precautions and limitations
- 19 Wear masks & social distance + wash hands.
- 20 IF it can be done safely, with proper distance kept and people following precautions, I think especially in cases where programs have a strong hands-on component (like labs) in person classes should resume if they can. For programs that more easily adapt to distance learning, perhaps that can still also be an option. Maybe it's a mix.
- 21 I know for a fact that the many schools within Columbia University are planning new strategies for a combination of online and in-person classes. I believe that Columbia is quite capable and responsible enough for taking care of the community as they have already demonstrated since the beginning of March.
- 22 If they condition the classes based on safety--such as small grouping, adapting based on age groups, some classes will work. But the younger the children, the more caution is required.
- 23 I feel confident that they can prepare a campus that will be safe and appropriately distanced and allow for learning to continue.
- 24 If they do resume on site classes, they need to test and quarantine all incoming students and maintain strict policies about gatherings, masks, etc.
- 25 Reasonable precautions and mitigations can be employed
- 26 As long as they take precautions, provide hand sanitizer, masks, space for social distancing, they would be like any other community organization/residence.
- 27 If they limit the number of students per classroom and offer 6 feet of separation and use of masks
- 28 Institutions will establish own health standards for classes.
- 29 I would hope that these institutions would only conduct in person classes if the scientific evidence indicated it was a safe thing to do

# Verbatim Responses: Reasons colleges/universities should have in-person classes Fall 2020

- 30 In person, for fewer students, the college experience is too valuable for this generation of students to not give it a try with appropriate pre-cautions.
- 31 Education must continue in some form, with absolute care
- 32 They will be following city and state safety guidance
- 33 proper planning
- 34 A measured, careful, well-planned, limited opportunity for size-limited on-site classes would be appropriate - as long as 'rules' for mask wearing, social distancing, hand sanitizer etc for participants are followed, and prior changes as may be needed in heating, cooling, air duct systems to assure appropriate ventilation and arranging for regular sanitizing (multiple times a day) of rooms. Rules would include daily checks for students, faculty, staff using the space (fever, symptom check lists). It can be done if appropriate public health precautions are followed.
- 35 Many things are being done to prevent the spread of COVID-2. It is up to the students to protect themselves.
- 36 If they feel that they can decide on whether to bring back their full student body versus First year students and seniors, house with distancing, ensure masks, sanitation, testing & tracing... If NOT, then no.
- 37 I don't want to get sick. I don't want illness spreading. And I know people who have been ill, and I've lost someone close to me in this pandemic. But we can't stay home forever. I think we know more now about how to reduce the spread and if students wear masks and follow protocols they should be allowed to have class in person.
- 38 With social distancing and PPE and fewer people in a class
- 39 If proper distancing is maintained and masks are worn some classes may be able to return
- 40 I am assuming the institutions will closely monitor their students and their students behavior. And send home any students who are violating safety precautions, provide safe spaces for quarantine, etc.
- 41 Proper precautions will be taken
- 42 Preventative measures have taken place, life needs to move on
- 43 With a mix of live and remote classes. Social distancing. MASKS REQUIRED
- 44 Assume the institution will take all necessary precautions

# Verbatim Responses: Reasons colleges/universities should have in-person classes Fall 2020

- 45 I think if the schools can sufficiently supervise social distancing and set markers for their students for compliance it could work. But markers must be set and enforced.
- 46 I think at least having the option for in-person classes is extremely important for students' overall development and ability to engage with the professors, other classmates, and substantive material. But I think the schools need to make sure adequate rules and awareness trainings are in place so that students take precautions when going to bars, restaurants, shops, grocery stores, and otherwise interacting with the surrounding neighborhood to limit the risk of infection to local residents.
- 47 I think it's possible for in-person classes to be held safely if the university thinks outside of the box and follows expert advice.
- 48 College students are capable of maintaining social distancing and wearing masks to minimize the spread of COVID
- 49 I trust Columbia to make sure they have the proper precautions.
- 50 As long as PPE is provided and social distancing followed along with all cleaning etc. required, I think they should be able to open with reduced density and also offer students the option to attend remotely if they need to.
- 51 If offices can open, schools can too as long as proper precautions are taken.
- 52 Actually, I'm not totally sure. You need a 3rd category for question 8 answers. If Columbia could, with its good scientific resources and informed intelligence, figure out a safe way to gather students safely, like using large lecture halls for small groups, it could be fine. Testing should be done.
- 53 I think they need to try but with extremely strict precautions
- 54 They can space people if necessary. Also I need to use Columbia facilities (library in particular).
- 55 Students are old enough to take proper precautions.
- 56 Students can be monitored and guided while living in campus better than when dispersed and living with elderly family members.
- 57 As long as they follow guidelines, I'm okay with them offering on site classes
- 58 Education is hugely important not only to the students, but to our society. The pandemic is under control in NYC. It is primarily affecting senior citizens who of course need to be protected. If schools take the proper precautions and safety measures, the virus can be contained.

# Verbatim Responses: Reasons colleges/universities should have in-person classes Fall 2020

- 59 I opted to open the schools at least partially, in stages, with changes in times, grades attending, etc
- 60 Partial operation only. I plan on seeing covid 19 for 2 1/2 years
- 61 There should be a mix of on and offsite learning depending on majors.
- 62 There should be a mix of on site, online, and other options. It's not either/or.
- 63 Staggering classes or having smaller class sizes might be an option, but I also think that offering online classes is also essential.
- 64 I think they should offer a mix of virtual and on-site classes, with many safety measures in place.

# Verbatim Responses: Reasons colleges/universities should have in-person classes Fall 2020

## In-Person Experience Needed for College Education (Responses #65 to #80)

- 65 On-campus living is vitally important to the college experience.
- 66 Distance education is not adequate for higher education. Maybe it is for quantitative subjects. If Covid-19 conditions permit, in-person classes are preferable.
- 67 Some people need in person teaching
- 68 Some in-person class activities and interactions are necessary to achieve the full course benefits.
- 69 monitored, restricted access and spacing is a fair trade-off. Distant learning hinders learning.
- 70 very old professor here concerned about educational procedures and need for students' having personal campus study/laboratory use [within safety concerns]
- 71 All students need an education, only the privileged ones can get it on line or with parent's help. On the other hand, health should remain a priority. I'm not saying I have the answer to this dilemma...
- 72 Tutoring and debate is essential. It keeps me going
- 73 I think it's a crucial aspect of the social interaction/higher learning process.
- 74 I see no point of paying for Columbia University classes if they are taken online. MOOC has an exceptional variety of classes from top educators for a fraction of the price.
- 75 It is so important for the students, and for the survival of the institutions. The schools can use a hybrid model and take other steps to reduce risk.
- 76 Onsite learning is still more effective than online.
- 77 I'm a student. Our work must align with what is happening in schools to prepare teachers for teaching. If schools are open, so should universities.
- 78 Our students deserve the education for which they worked so hard, and our small businesses need their patronage.
- 79 with proper precautions, it is important for education to proceed as normally as possible; on-line learning is never the same
- 80 I have absolutely no concerns about health, but quite a lot of concerns about education, and some about economics. Having offered online classes I know that with the best will and the most effort in the world they are not a substitute for in person learning, and their loss will tarnish Columbia's reputation irreparably for years to come. Furthermore, the loss of students will mean massive lay-offs at the university, which will affect me personally and a large number of my friends.

# Verbatim Responses: Reasons colleges/universities should have in-person classes Fall 2020

## **Important for Local Businesses/Economic Factors (Responses #81 to #89)**

- 81 Important to neighborhood. Supports local business. Will be screening and testing.
- 82 Because adds to economic stability in neighborhood
- 83 The future of our local and national economy depends on further education of all. If the Universities were to close, many will boycott tuition payments and it will lead to further Unemployment among those in the education sector as well those employees that support these institutions in other capacities. While COVID will potentially be an issue, there is a way to limit class size or alternate online with in-person classes as well as doing best to maintain health protocols. If you think about it, education resources that this area along with NYC provides is a draw of NYC and top tier job talent. As it stands with the pandemic, the next few years will be tough as it is.
- 84 The class size need to be limited, but the students bring a huge economic benefit to the neighborhood- we don't have large stores/chain restaurants so many small businesses are struggling right now.
- 85 While I think it is possible to offer a quality online college/graduate education with enough preparation, I'm concerned that demand for that education will fall, upending and potentially destabilizing the institutions' financial viability.
- 86 If they think it's safe for their community, that's ok with me. Doesn't put my safety at much more risk than it is now. And it will prevent some stores and restaurants from going under.
- 87 The actual dangers of Covid have been overblown. We need to protect the most vulnerable (the sick and the elderly) while intelligently opening most of society —the damage to the economy and to all of our futures is already severe
- 88 If the virus numbers are down and other businesses are open, the presence of students is a plus for the community
- 89 Worry about the institution continuing

# Verbatim Responses: Reasons colleges/universities should have in-person classes Fall 2020

## **Virus Might be Contained by Fall 2020/Too Soon To Know Now (Responses #90 to #98)**

- 90 I am hoping the crisis will be over and if not, the schools can follow guidelines for social distancing and masks. I think remote learning is limited.
- 91 Covid should be reduced ny then; if not, institutions will take appropriate action so they don't get sued.
- 92 Hope the thread will be reduced otherwise shouldn't.
- 93 Hope covid 19 will be under control in the Fall.
- 94 virus should be over
- 95 I think we should take a wait and see attitude, and what the situation may be 2 months from now.
- 96 Too soon to tell. Need more info about COVID cases in the city over the coming months, and need to know the universities' safety plans. I cannot answer question 8 without this information.
- 97 It depends on how circumstances change. It's June. Things will change before Fall-no one knows HOW they will change
- 98 I don't know the decisions they've made, and we don't know how things will be in September.



# Verbatim Responses: Reasons colleges/universities should have in-person classes Fall 2020

## **Other Reasons (Response #99 to #110)**

- 99 it should be optional, and be played by ear, as infection rates are tracked
- 100 I have pretty mixed feelings about it. But having a college bound daughter myself, I also feel concerned for all these kids who will not be able to attend college in person this fall.
- 101 I don't know the answer to this. Some schools are bringing kids back from Labor Day thru Thanksgiving only. I don't understand how they live in dorms and eat in cafeterias safely yet. But if they cannot come back, then I don't see how the rest of us will travel via subway, got back to offices, school, etc...
- 102 We can try allowing in person classes and take it slowly.
- 103 I think the universities are wrestling with impossible problems. I am very thankful that I do not have to make those decisions. I won't second guess them.
- 104 because they will eventually have to figure out how to do face to face classes midst the virus so they might as well start now
- 105 I feel that it is important for every resident, every college or university student, every faculty, staff, alumni, and neighbors in the Morningside Heights community section should be able to utilize the resources based upon what is needed before classes would start in a fall semester of 2020. Most importantly, their safety comes first before visiting a college or a university institution.
- 106 they have to make their own decision on whether to hold in-person classes in fall 2020
- 107 Really I'm not sure what they should do, but it wasn't an answer option.
- 108 I feel that the institutions are capable of making reasonable risk assessments.
- 109 personal experience with Columbia University
- 110 Due to the risk of returning infection/second wave Covid 19 and difficulty maintaining observance of safety in large groups, etc.