

**Faculty Senate IT Committee Members** (Heather Heckman & Nesan Hikmet, Co-Chairs)

**22 May 2020**

**Report on the 2020 Faculty Senate IT Survey**

In the spring of 2020, the Faculty Senate IT Committee distributed a brief survey on satisfaction with UofSC's state of technology to faculty. The project had two goals:

- to continue to monitor trends in faculty assessment of IT
- to identify topics for investigation by the IT Committee during the 2020-2021 academic year

357 responses were received, a substantial increase over the 228 faculty members who participated last year. Demographic information is included in [Appendix 4](#).

Thus far, we have collected responses on satisfaction for only 2 years. We urge caution in the interpretation of these results.

- As in 2019, in the aggregate, satisfaction with IT services and support offered by *units* appears to exceed satisfaction with those provided *centrally* by the Division of IT (see [Appendix 1](#)).
- However, satisfaction ratings seem to have improved overall relative to 2019. This change might be attributable, at least in part, to the larger sample size recruited this year; nevertheless it is commendable that a survey distributed during this difficult time would receive so many positive satisfaction ratings (see [Appendix 2](#)).
- As in 2019, satisfaction appears to be lower in the College of Arts and Sciences than in other academic units (See [Appendix 3](#)).

From the comments submitted, the Committee selected the following issues for possible exploration in Academic Year 2020-2021:

- Classroom technology & support: Concerns about equipment age, maintenance scheduling and support response times continue to be reported. These topics have been considered by the Committee since its formation, but we anticipate renewed urgency in Fall 2020.
- Virtual classroom technology & support: Subtopics that emerged from this spring's survey—distributed during the COVID-19 emergency—include online testing, a need for backup options when Blackboard Collaborate fails, reports of erratic behavior of the centralized authorization system (CAS), and support for both synchronous and asynchronous teaching.
- Learning management systems (LMS): Many respondents expressed dissatisfaction with Blackboard and/or interest in Canvas. DoIT is establishing an LMS governance group that will include input from this Committee. In parallel, and related to both in-person and virtual classroom technology, above, our Committee will consider whether requirements to use particular learning technologies violate academic freedom.
- Software licensing: The software licensing process, both for new licenses and renewals, remains challenging. The Committee endorses efforts by DoIT's unITe group to begin to collect a centralized "catalog" of license approvals and rejections. We will work in parallel to identify other avenues toward more timely acquisition of software for teaching and research.
- Centralization: The tension between centralized infrastructure, which lowers costs to the benefit of all, and decentralized services and support, which seem to be preferred by many faculty, remains and will likely never be perfectly resolved. The Committee hopes this year's more positive results are early evidence that we are moving toward a more productive equilibrium, but there is still room for improvement. Can we identify targeted improvements? Which specific services are most valuable at the local level? Which services could be centralized?
- Archival data storage: UofSC's solution for archival data storage is, increasingly, cloud storage. Is this a satisfactory solution for our faculty?
- Data security when working from home: What, if anything, needs to be done to secure the data that faculty need to access?

- Preferred names: The preferred name framework developed by the Registrar and the Office of Diversity and Inclusion was limited to students. Faculty Welfare is working to extend it to faculty and staff. What is needed to implement the framework for faculty and staff?

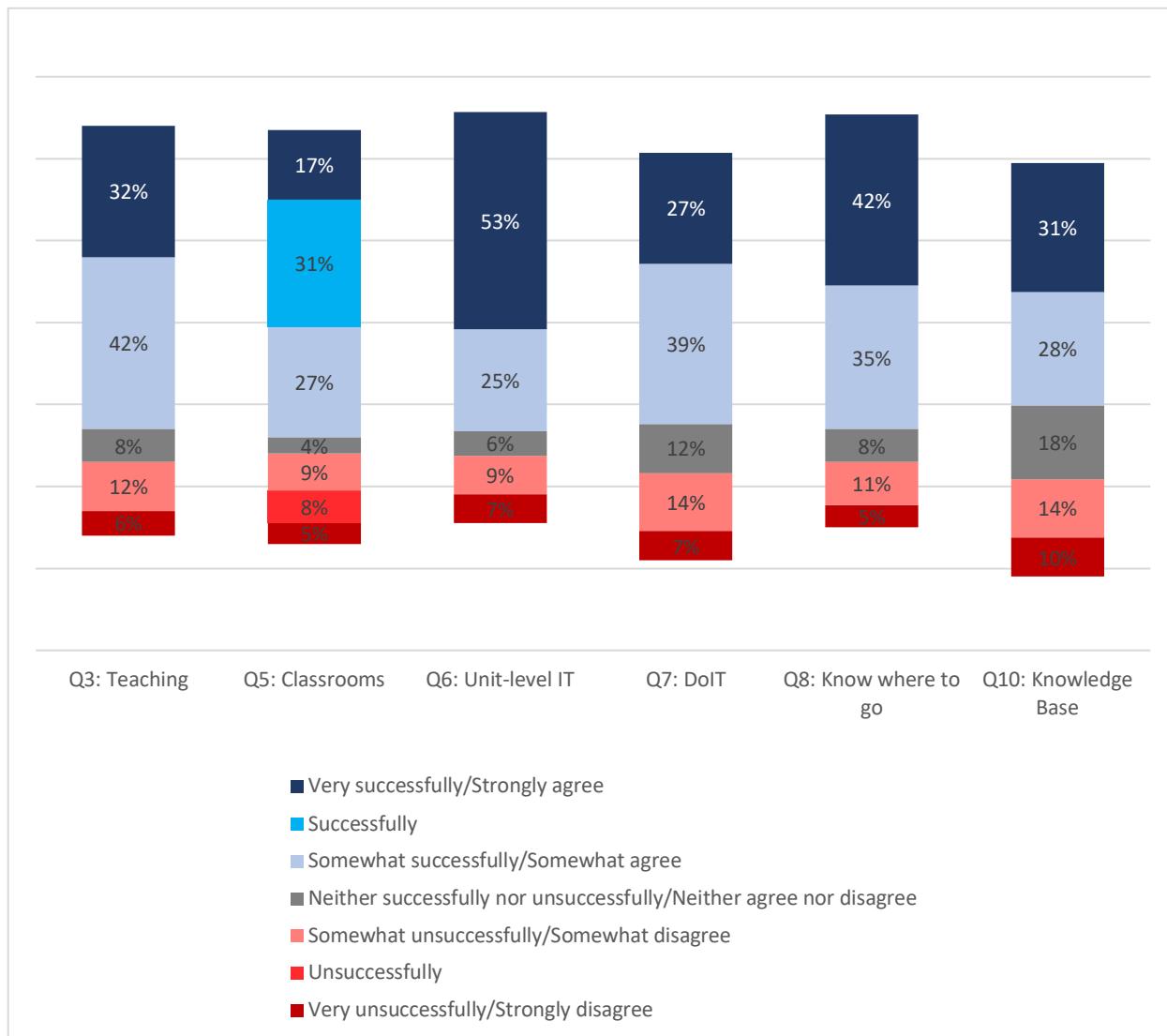
The Committee also notes:

- Even as satisfaction with the state of technology on campus may be improving, this Committee believes we still under-invest in IT infrastructure. The current crisis places both unprecedented economic pressure on the university and unprecedented demands on our campus technology. DoIT must be supported to the fullest level possible.
- More than a third of respondents had never heard of DoIT's Knowledge Base. We urge promotion and discoverability of this resource (e.g., presentation to the Faculty Senate next fall; Google indexing).
- The emphasis on classroom technology in the responses collected may have been influenced by the questions asked. We plan to add prompts on the state of research technology, as well as on satisfaction with administrative systems used by faculty (e.g., PeopleSoft, Finance Intranet).
- Some survey respondents raised concerns about students' ability to remotely access specialized software required for their coursework during the COVID-19 pandemic. This issue is under consideration by DoIT's unITe group.
- Reports of poor WiFi coverage continue. The Committee endorses efforts to improve WiFi coverage and internet access more broadly on campus.

See [Appendix 4](#) for aggregated responses.

## Appendix 1: Comparison of satisfaction ratings

The diverging bar charts that follow are centered around the median of “Neither successfully nor unsuccessfully/Neither agree nor disagree” responses.



Q3. How successfully has the IT environment on your campus met your teaching needs? (Very unsuccessfully—dark red; Somewhat unsuccessfully; Neither successfully nor unsuccessfully; Somewhat successfully; Very successfully—dark blue)

Q5. Considering my experiences from January 2019-January 2020, I am satisfied with the technology in the classroom(s) I have been assigned. (Very dissatisfied; Dissatisfied; Somewhat dissatisfied; Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied; Somewhat satisfied; Satisfied; Very satisfied)

Q6. Overall, how satisfied are you with the services specifically offered by your academic unit (college/department specific)? (Very dissatisfied; Somewhat dissatisfied; Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied; Somewhat satisfied; Very satisfied)

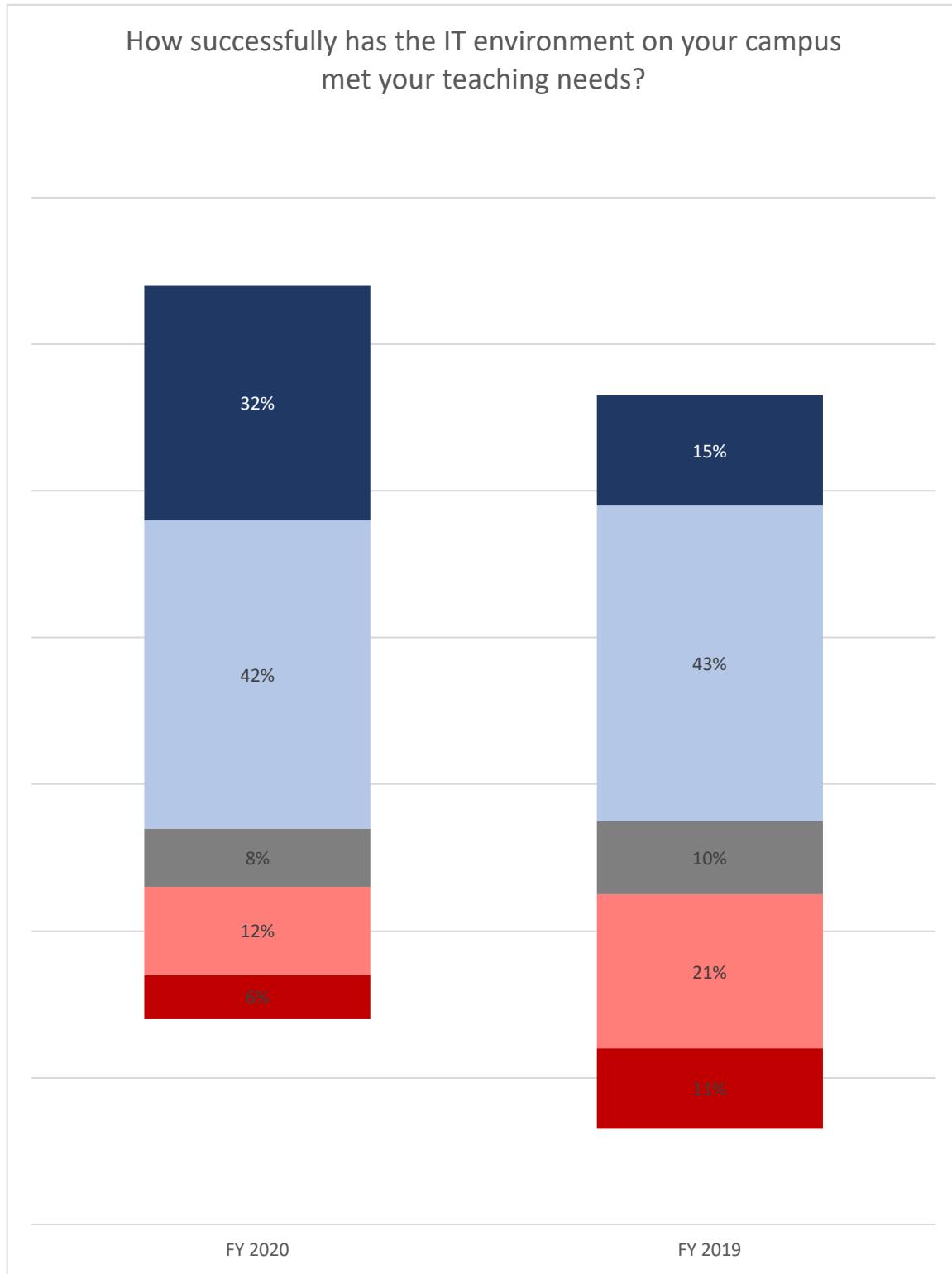
Q7. Overall, how satisfied are you with the services specifically offered by the Division of IT (examples: software availability, networking, research clusters)? (Very dissatisfied; Somewhat dissatisfied; Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied; Somewhat satisfied; Very satisfied)

Q8. Please rate your level of agreement with the following statement: “When I have an IT problem or need, I know where to go for a solution.” (Strongly disagree; Somewhat disagree; Neither agree nor disagree; Somewhat agree; Strongly agree)

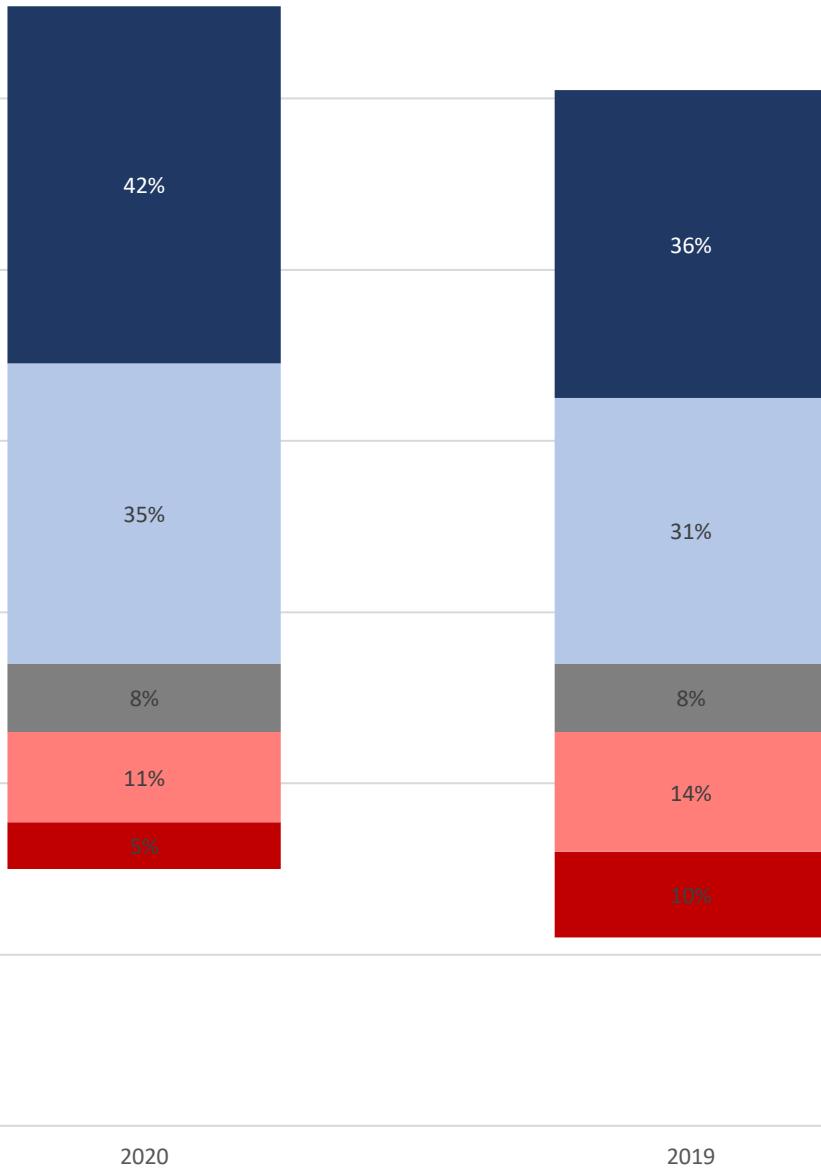
Q10. How satisfied are you with DoIT's Knowledge Base? (Very dissatisfied; Somewhat dissatisfied; Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied; Somewhat satisfied; Very satisfied)

## Appendix 2: 2020 vs 2019 comparison

In general, ratings were more positive this year. However, changes to this year's questions to shorten and disambiguate the survey, and the erroneous inclusion of extra categories in question 5, allow the direct comparison of only two questions.



Please rate your level of agreement with the following statement: "When I have an IT problem or need, I know where to go for a solution."



The lower proportion of "Somewhat unsuccessfully" & "Very unsuccessfully" and "Somewhat agree" & "Strongly agree" responses, respectively, might be attributable to the increase in respondents from 228 to 357. The absolute number of negative responses trended down (with one exception), but the size of the change was small:

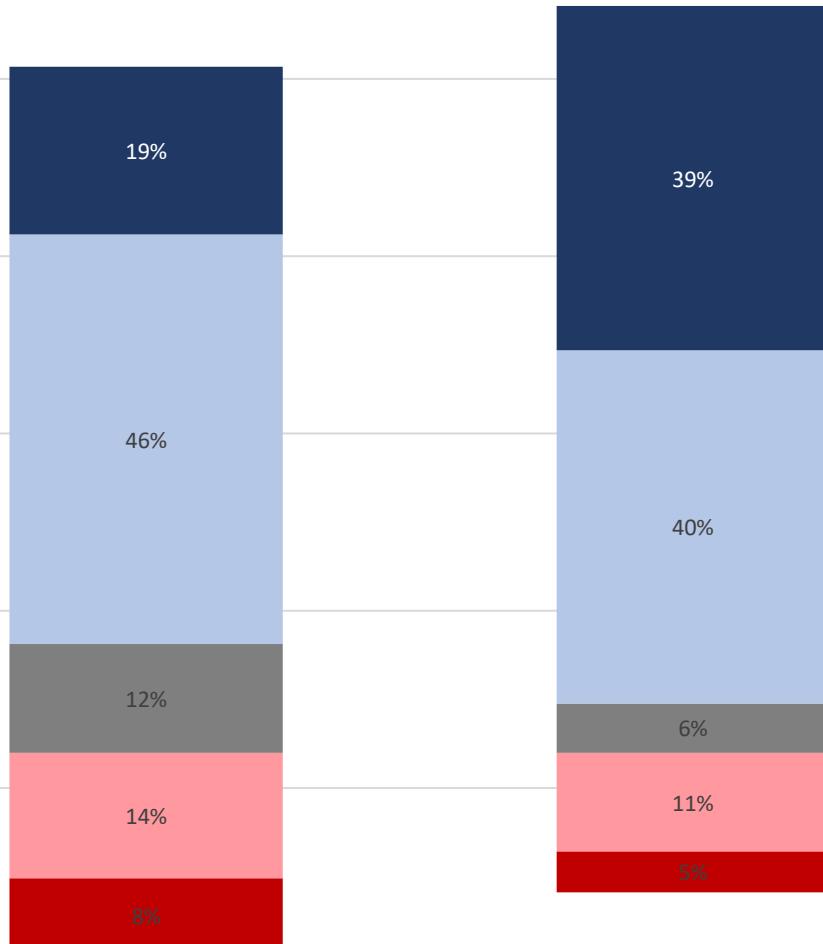
<b>How successfully has the IT environment on your campus met your teaching needs?</b>			
<b>Response</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>Change</b>
Somewhat unsuccessfully	43	39	-4
Very unsuccessfully	23	19	-4
<b>Total</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>-8</b>

<b>Please rate your level of agreement with the following statement:</b>			
<b>"When I have an IT problem or need, I know where to go for a solution"</b>			
<b>Response</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>Change</b>
Somewhat disagree	21	35	+14
Strongly disagree	28	18	-10
<b>Total</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>+4</b>

### Appendix 3: College of Arts and Sciences comparison

As was the case in 2019, satisfaction ratings were relatively lower in the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) than in other academic units. We received 108 responses from CAS, accounting for approximately 30% of all responses.

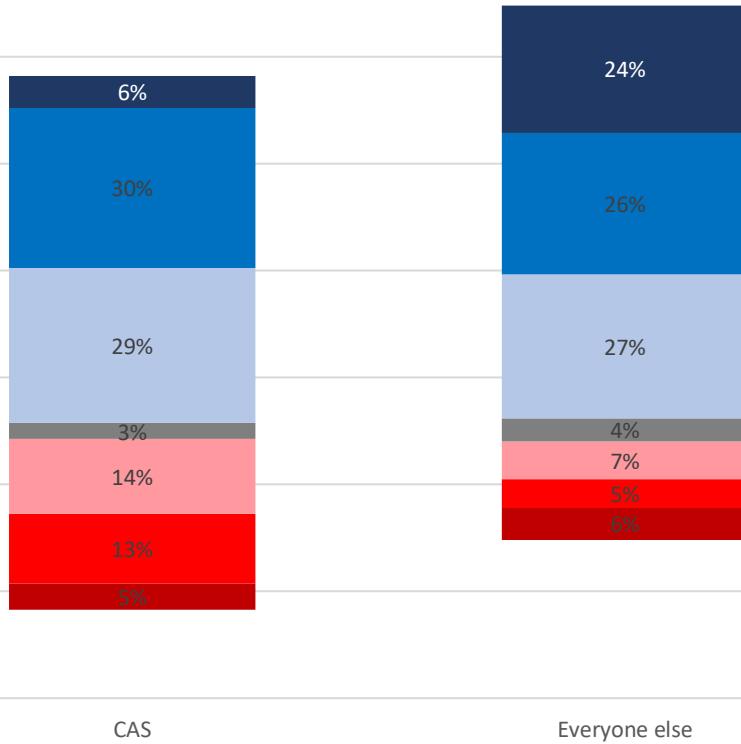
**How successfully has the IT environment on your campus met your teaching needs?**



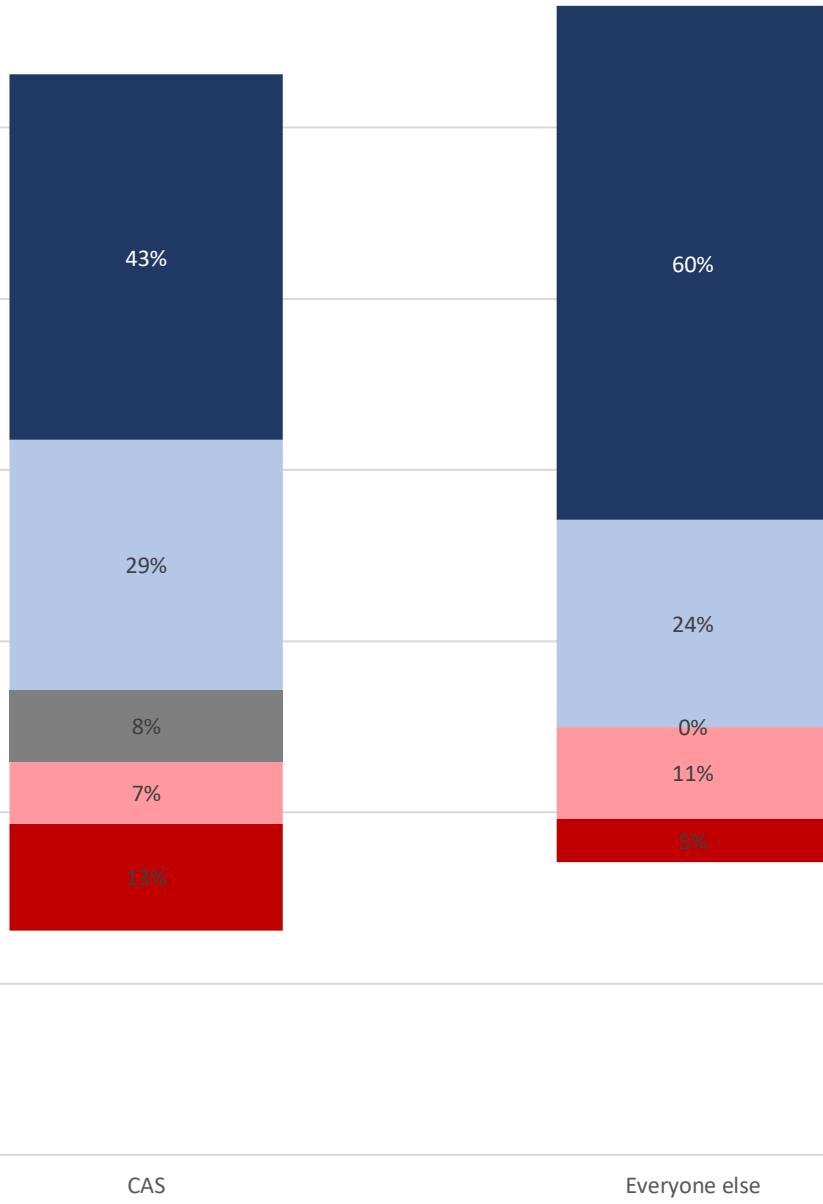
CAS

Everyone else

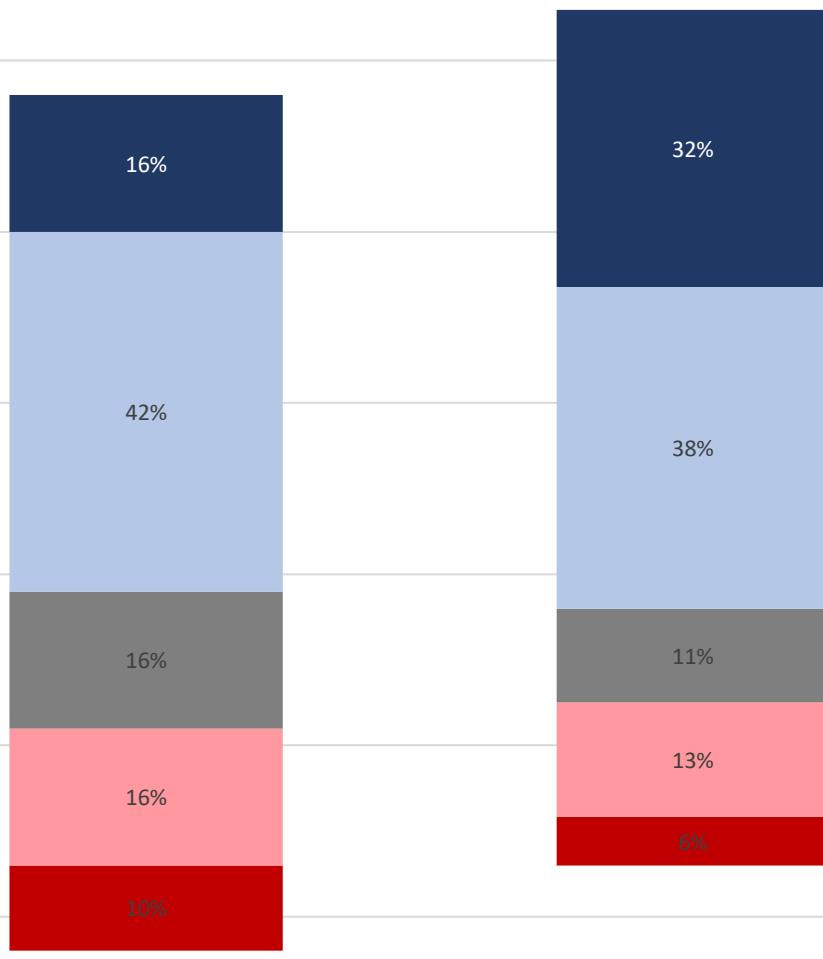
**Considering my experiences from January 2019-January 2020, I am satisfied with the technology in the classroom(s) I have been assigned.**



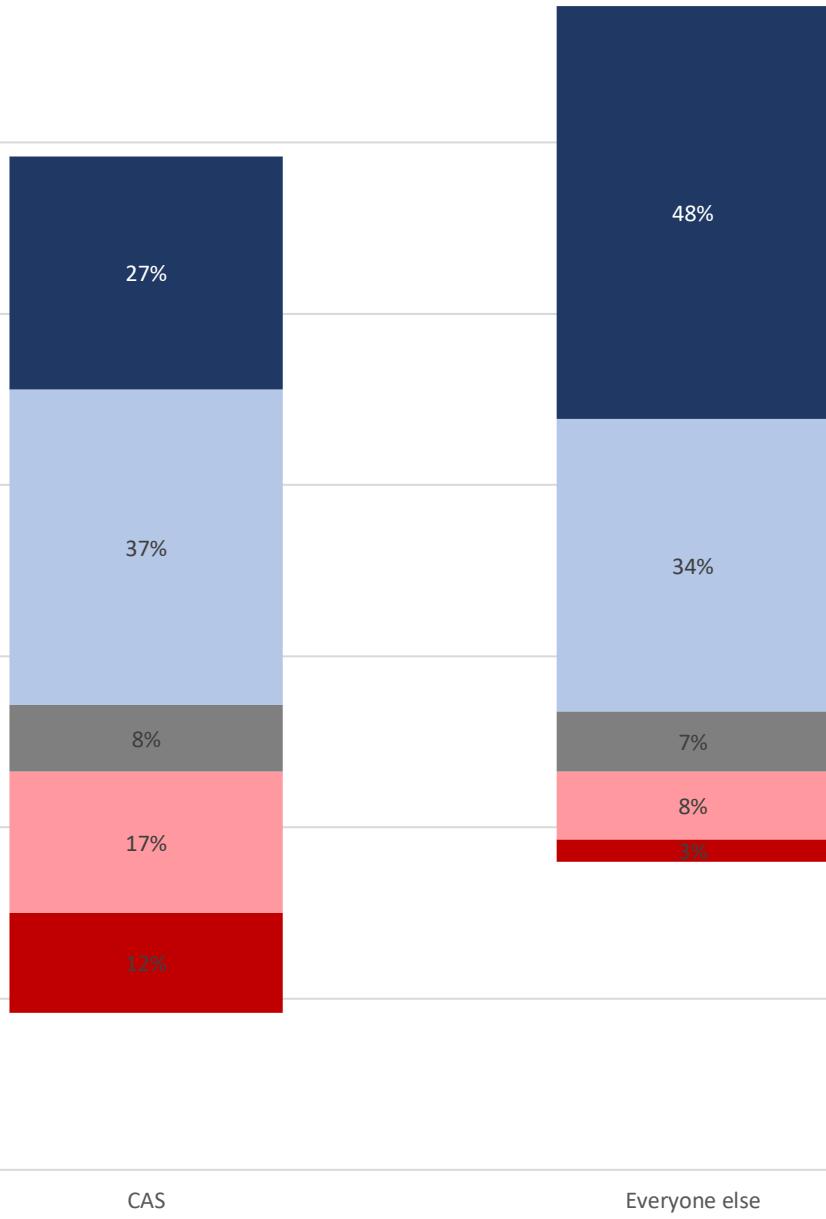
**Overall, how satisfied are you with the IT services and support offered by your academic unit (college/department specific)?**



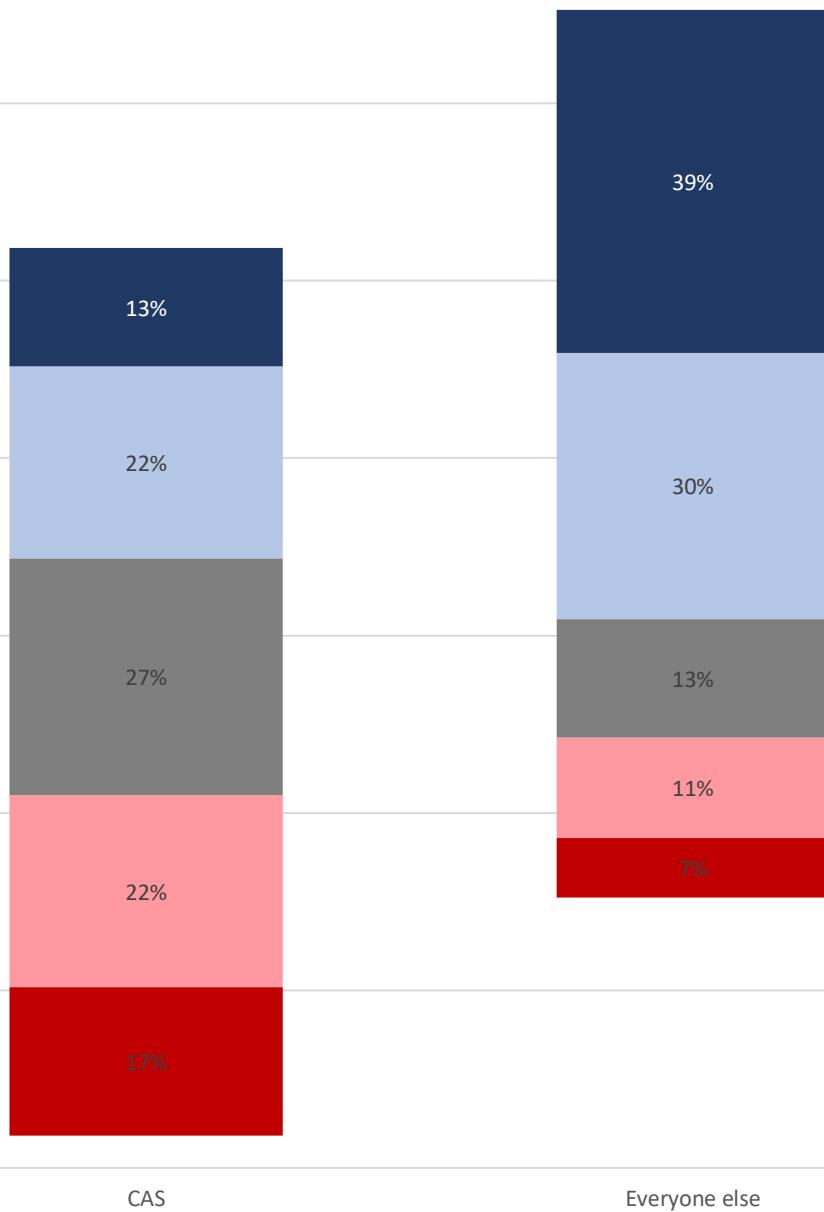
**Overall, how satisfied are you with the services and support offered by the Division of IT (examples: software availability, networking research clusters, Service Desk)?**



Please rate your level of agreement with the following statement: "When I have an IT problem or need I know where to go for a solution"



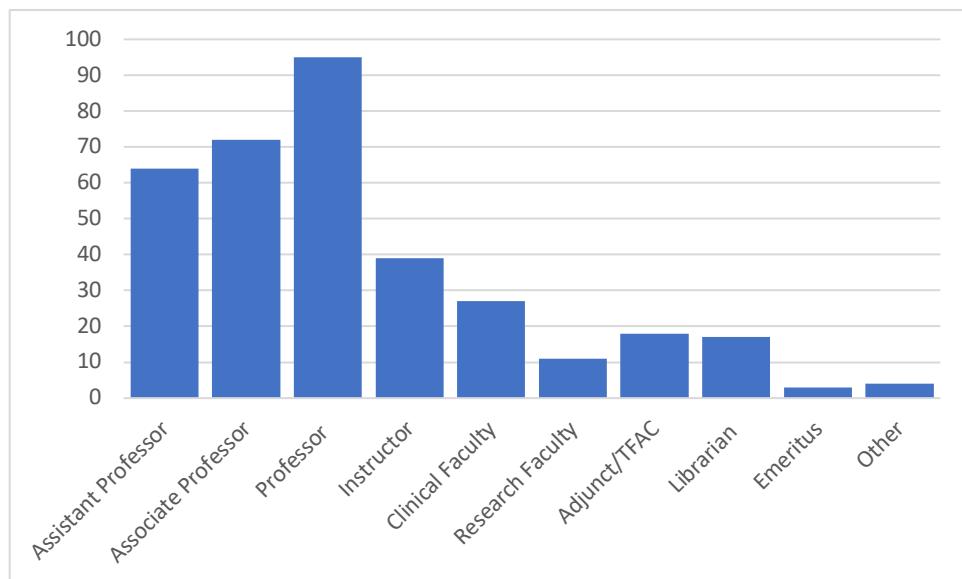
## How satisfied are you with DoIT's Knowledge Base?



## Appendix 4: Results

### Q1. Which of the following best describes your position? (n=352)

Response	Count
Assistant Professor	64
Associate Professor	72
Professor	95
Instructor	39
Clinical Faculty	27
Research Faculty	11
Adjunct/TFAC	18
Librarian	17
Emeritus	3
Other	4

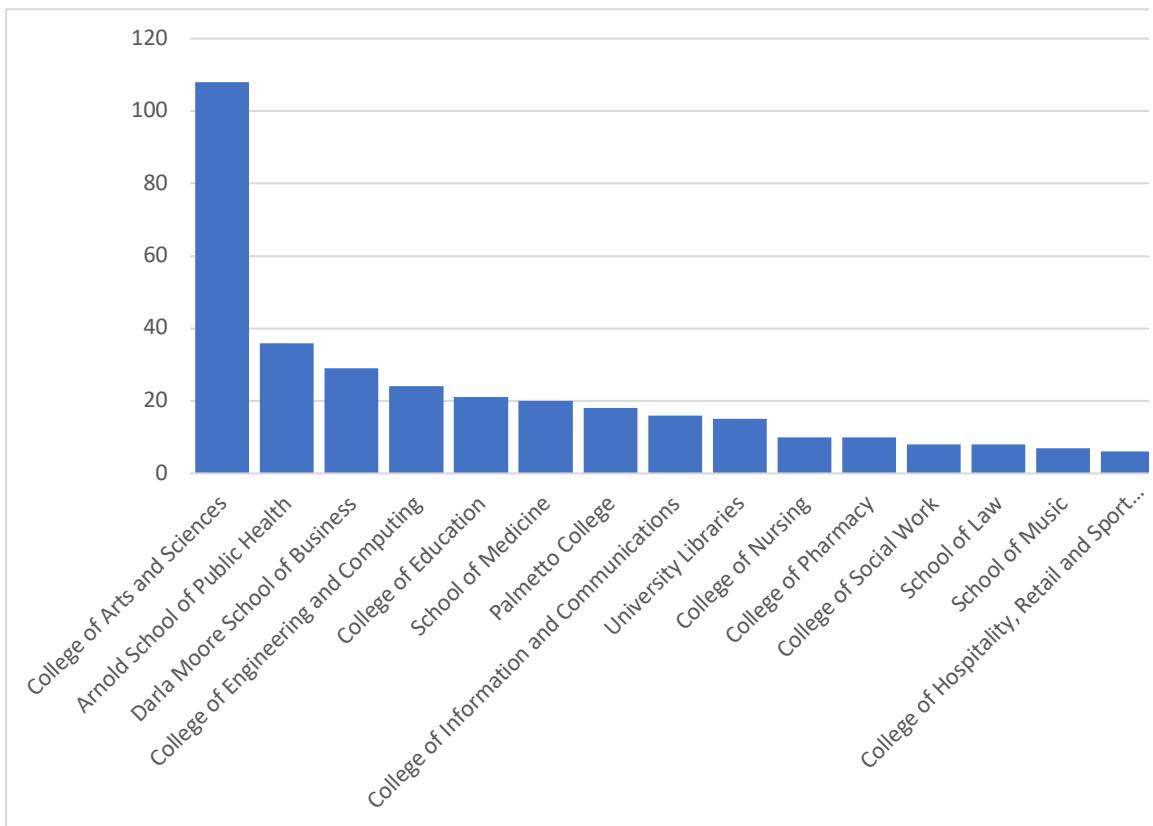


Descriptions of "Other" may be available upon request.

### Q2. Please enter the department or school you are in (aggregated by college; n=341)

College	Count
College of Arts and Sciences	108
Arnold School of Public Health	36
Darla Moore School of Business	29
College of Engineering and Computing	24
College of Education	21
School of Medicine	20
Palmetto College	18
College of Information and Communications	16

University Libraries	15
College of Nursing	10
College of Pharmacy	10
College of Social Work	8
School of Law	8
School of Music	7
College of Hospitality, Retail and Sport Management	6
Other	5



Descriptions of “Other” may be available upon request.

**Q3. How successfully has the IT environment on your campus met your teaching needs?**  
(n=337)

Response	Count
Very successfully	104
Somewhat successfully	135
Neither successfully nor unsuccessfully	25
Somewhat unsuccessfully	39
Very unsuccessfully	19
I don't know	1
I don't teach	14

**Q4. Please explain (for somewhat or very unsatisfied responses to Q3; n=51)**  
Responses may be made available upon request.

**Q5. Considering my experiences from January 2019-January 2020, I am satisfied with the technology in the classroom(s) I have been assigned. (n=335)**

Response	Count
Strongly agree	50
Agree	92
Somewhat agree	79
Neither agree nor disagree	11
Somewhat disagree	27
Disagree	23
Strongly disagree	16
I did not teach in the classroom during this period	37

**Q6. Overall, how satisfied are you with the services specifically offered by your academic unit (college/department specific)? (n=333)**

Response	Count
Very satisfied	170
Somewhat satisfied	80
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	18
Somewhat dissatisfied	30
Very dissatisfied	23
I don't know	4
My unit does not provide IT services	8

**Q7. Overall, how satisfied are you with the services specifically offered by the Division of IT (examples: software availability, networking, research clusters)? (n=331)**

Response	Count
Very satisfied	84
Somewhat dissatisfied	44
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	39
Somewhat satisfied	121
Very dissatisfied	22
I don't know	21

**Q8. Please rate your level of agreement with the following statement: "When I have an IT problem or need, I know where to go for a solution" (n=331)**

Response	Count
Strongly agree	138
Somewhat agree	116

Neither agree nor disagree	24
Somewhat disagree	35
Strongly disagree	18

**Q9. Where do you go for IT solutions? Check all that apply. (n=330; responses sum to more than 100%)**

College/department/academic unit IT staff	275
DoIT Service Desk	198
Faculty Senate	8
Other	36

Descriptions of "Other" may be made available upon request.

**Q10. How satisfied are you with DoIT's Knowledge Base? (n=329)**

Responses	Count
Very satisfied	66
Somewhat satisfied	58
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	36
Somewhat dissatisfied	30
Very dissatisfied	20
I have never used DoIT's Knowledge Base	119

**Q11. How can the IT environment on your campus be improved to better serve faculty, staff and students? (n=245)**

Responses may be made available upon request.

**Q12. Please offer any additional comments or suggestions. (n=104)**

Responses may be made available upon request.