

# ONLINE AND FIELD CLINICAL OBSERVATION: A COMPARISON STUDY

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## ABSTRACT

TCH 210 students at ISU are required to complete clinical observations as part of the course. In the fall of 2013, TCH 210 students completed Methods of Effective Teaching Extension (MET Ex) online observations in addition to Laboratory School observations. The purpose of this study was to measure students' satisfaction or dissatisfaction with both observation styles. Research results determined that TCH 210 students prefer Laboratory School observations over MET Ex online observations.

## METHODS

Results were gathered in this descriptive study by administering a survey composed of 13 questions and a consent form. The survey was designed so that depending on responses to certain yes/no questions, respondents were directed to coordinating questions in the survey. No respondent answered all 13 questions. The survey consisted of three Likert Scale questions, three yes/no questions, and seven open-ended questions.

## PROCEDURE

The survey was active for student completion from December 2, 2013 until December 19, 2013. Emails were sent to TCH 210 students requesting that they complete the survey based on their TCH 210 observation experience. Upon survey completion, 122 student responses were analyzed in efforts to gain an understanding of students' like or dislike for the METEx online observations.

In-depth analysis of open-ended responses narrowed down the top three pros and cons for both the Laboratory School observations and the METEx online observation styles. The results of this analysis support the initial data which concludes that TCH 210 students prefer Laboratory School observations over METEx online observations.

## RESULTS: LABORATORY SCHOOL PROS

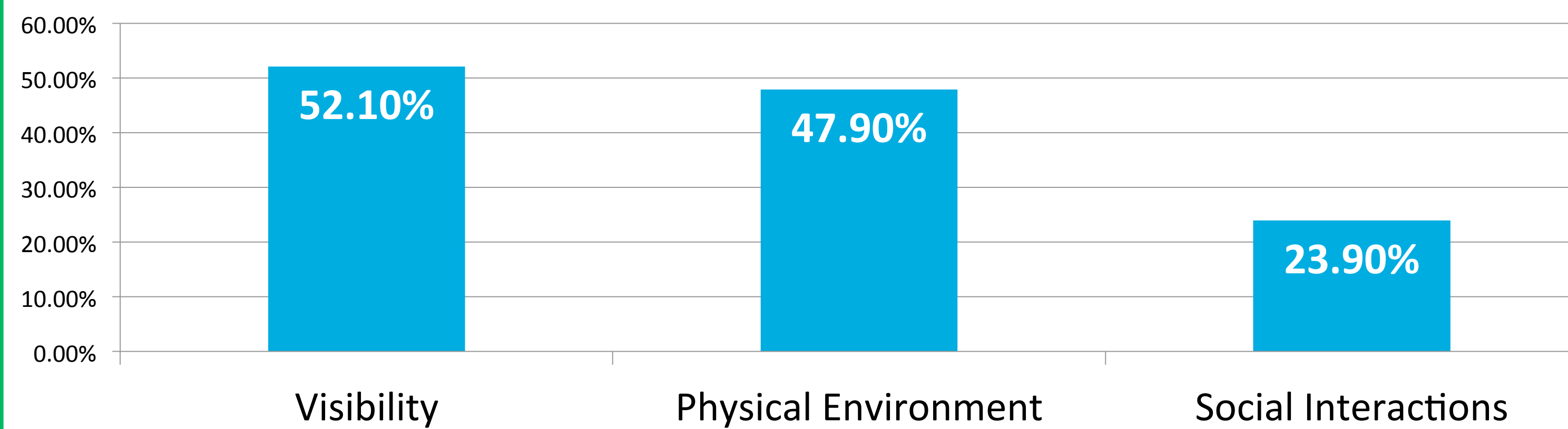
**QUESTION:** What are the strengths of scheduled classroom observations at lab schools? Please indicate particular strengths at each lab school, if applicable.

**STUDENT RESPONSES:**

"Lab school observations gave me the authentic experience of being in a real functioning classroom. Metcalf gave us the opportunity to see what students were doing when independent work took place. U-high observations allowed us to see how high school aged students engage in discussion."

"Better time management and scheduling; more interactive and interesting observations due to diverse age range, class type, and population. Easy to hear the children and teachers; easier to follow the classroom lesson and set up."

**RESPONSE DATA: OUT OF 71 STUDENT RESPONSES:**



## RESULTS: LABORATORY SCHOOL CONS

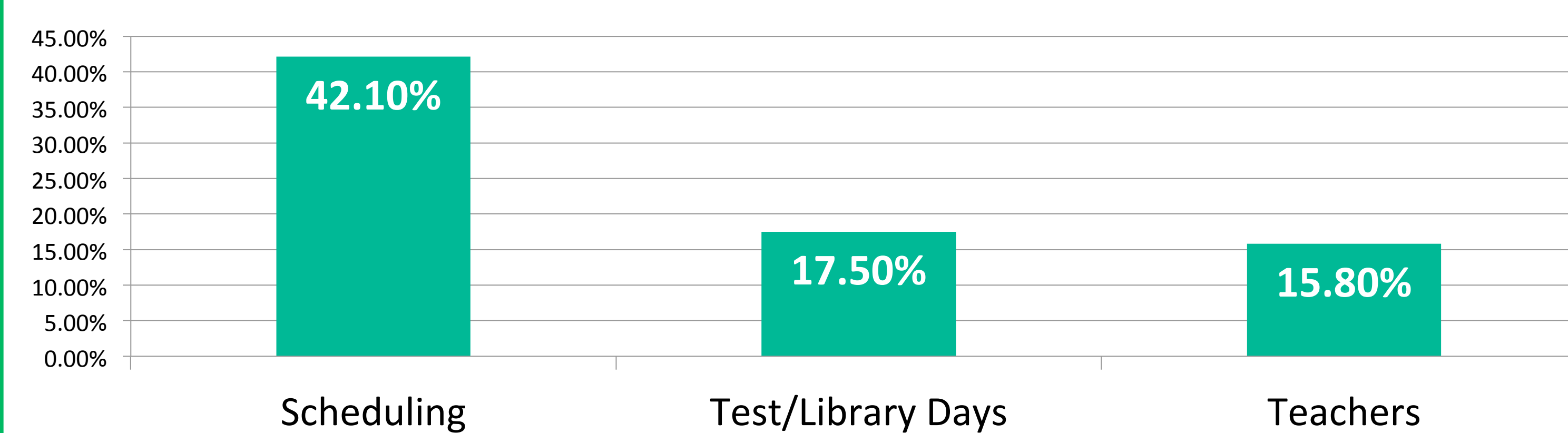
**QUESTION:** What are the weaknesses of scheduled classroom observations at lab schools? Please indicate particular weaknesses at each lab school if applicable.

**STUDENT RESPONSES:**

"The purpose of observations for this class was to watch how students mature and develop, and most of that is cognitive, which is really difficult to observe in just one hour in a classroom. I was scheduled for observations for several test days at U-high and so got very little out of my classroom experiences there."

"For some, it may be hard to find observation times that work within one's schedule for either of the lab schools. Also the classes were kind of short so it may be difficult for somebody to fully collect all of the observation notes that they need."

**RESPONSE DATA: OUT OF 57 STUDENT RESPONSES:**



## RESULTS: METEX PROS

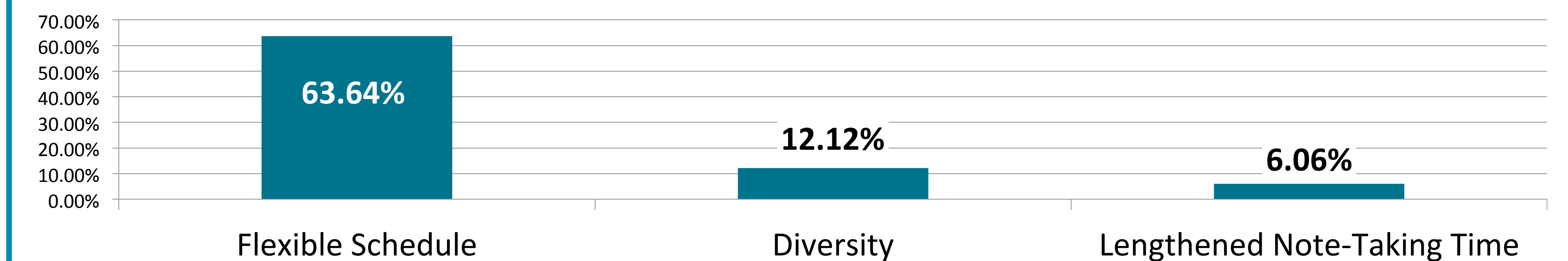
**QUESTION:** What are the strengths of the online observations?

**STUDENT RESPONSES:**

"They were generally longer than the actual classroom observations so you could take more notes and pay better attention to what was going on in the class. Also it's a more flexible option for students with a busy schedule since you can complete them at any time."

"With online observations, it gives the students a chance to see other classrooms that may be more diverse, and gives a chance to see how other schools around the country function (although Metcalf and U-high are very good schools). Watching the teaching style, and the mannerisms of students from all over is very beneficial to creating a teaching style of our own and what we can expect from different places."

**RESPONSE DATA: OUT OF 66 STUDENT RESPONSES:**



## RESULTS: METEX CONS

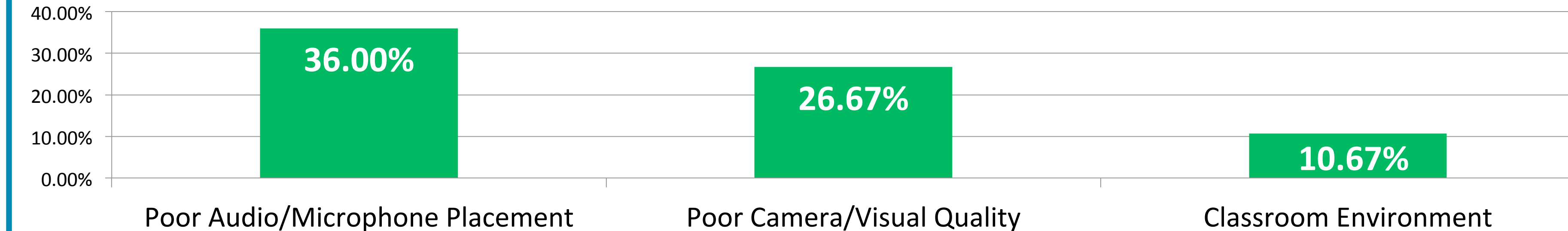
**QUESTION:** What are the weaknesses of the online observations?

**STUDENT RESPONSES:**

"Hard to see, hard to understand, encountered technical problems, was nearly impossible to actually make observations. My task was to observe students, but the website is made for observing teaching."

"Could not hear the students or see how they were interacting. Had to focus more on tagging than what we were looking for. Always forgot about doing them since there was no set date. Cameras were often off with the voices and video. Never felt like I was in the classroom setting. Couldn't see much of how the classroom was set up. I did not enjoy the online observations at all."

**RESPONSE DATA: OUT OF 57 STUDENT RESPONSES:**



## RESULTS: LIKERT SCALE

