



# Accessibility Concerns at UNC Chapel Hill

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April 21, 2023

Presentation to the Faculty Council



# Tar Heels at the Table

Tar Heels at the Table exists to create awareness surrounding disability, accessibility, and inclusion on the campus of UNC-Chapel Hill. The club serves as an advisory committee to senior leadership and advises them on issues of disability, accessibility, and inclusion.



# Our Experiences

- Data sources
  - Written and verbal communications with other students and staff with disabilities
  - UNC subreddit comment data (scraped 4/21/2023,  $n = 143$ )
    - Keywords: accessibility, accessible, accommodations, ARS, disability, disabled, handicap, health, inaccessibility
  - Informal survey (November 2021,  $n = 45$ )
    - Limitations: Voluntary, limited dissemination, part of a larger online post proposing ways to address physical inaccessibility



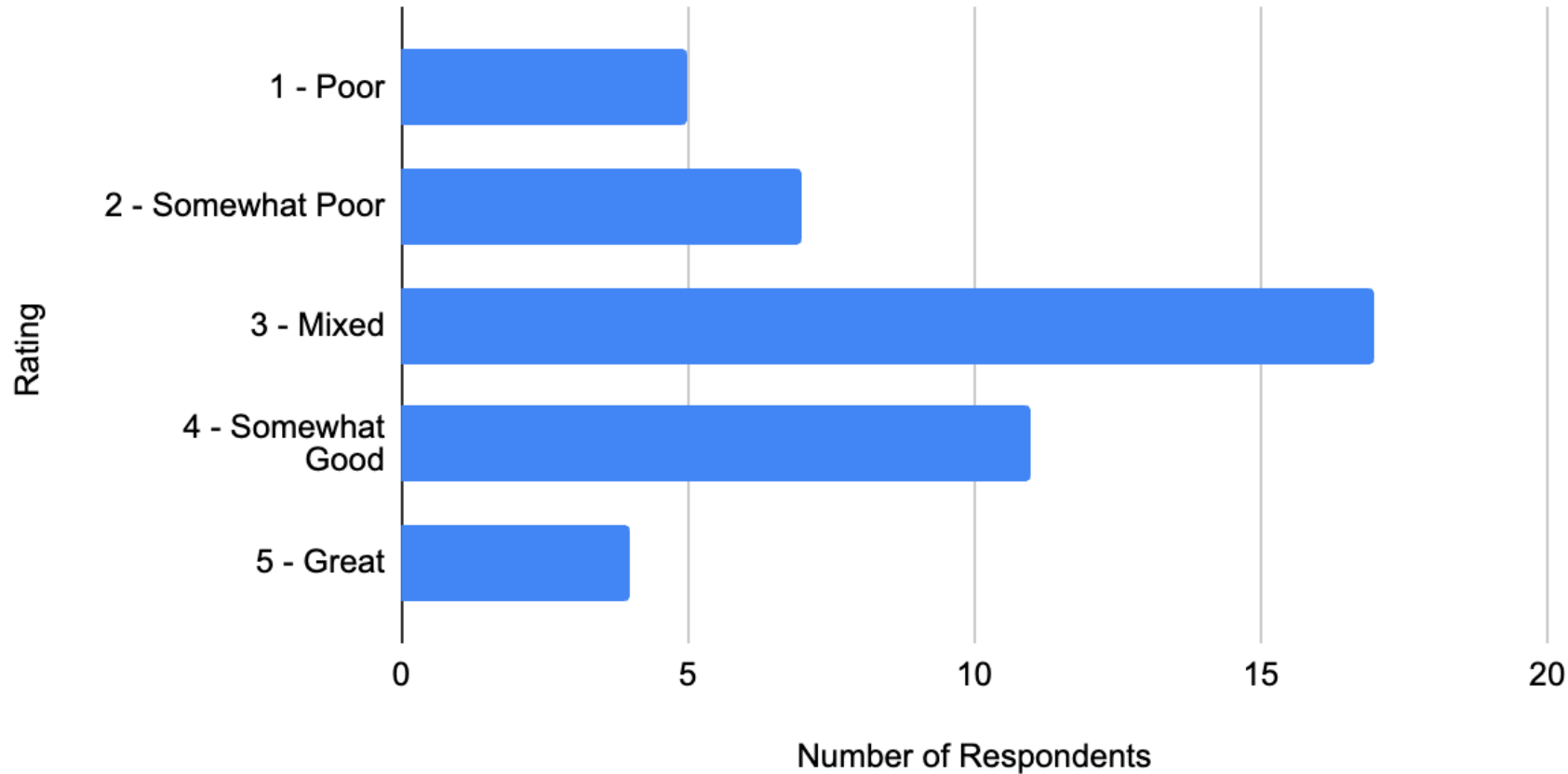
# Subreddit Comment Data





# Informal Survey: Ratings of Classwork Accessibility

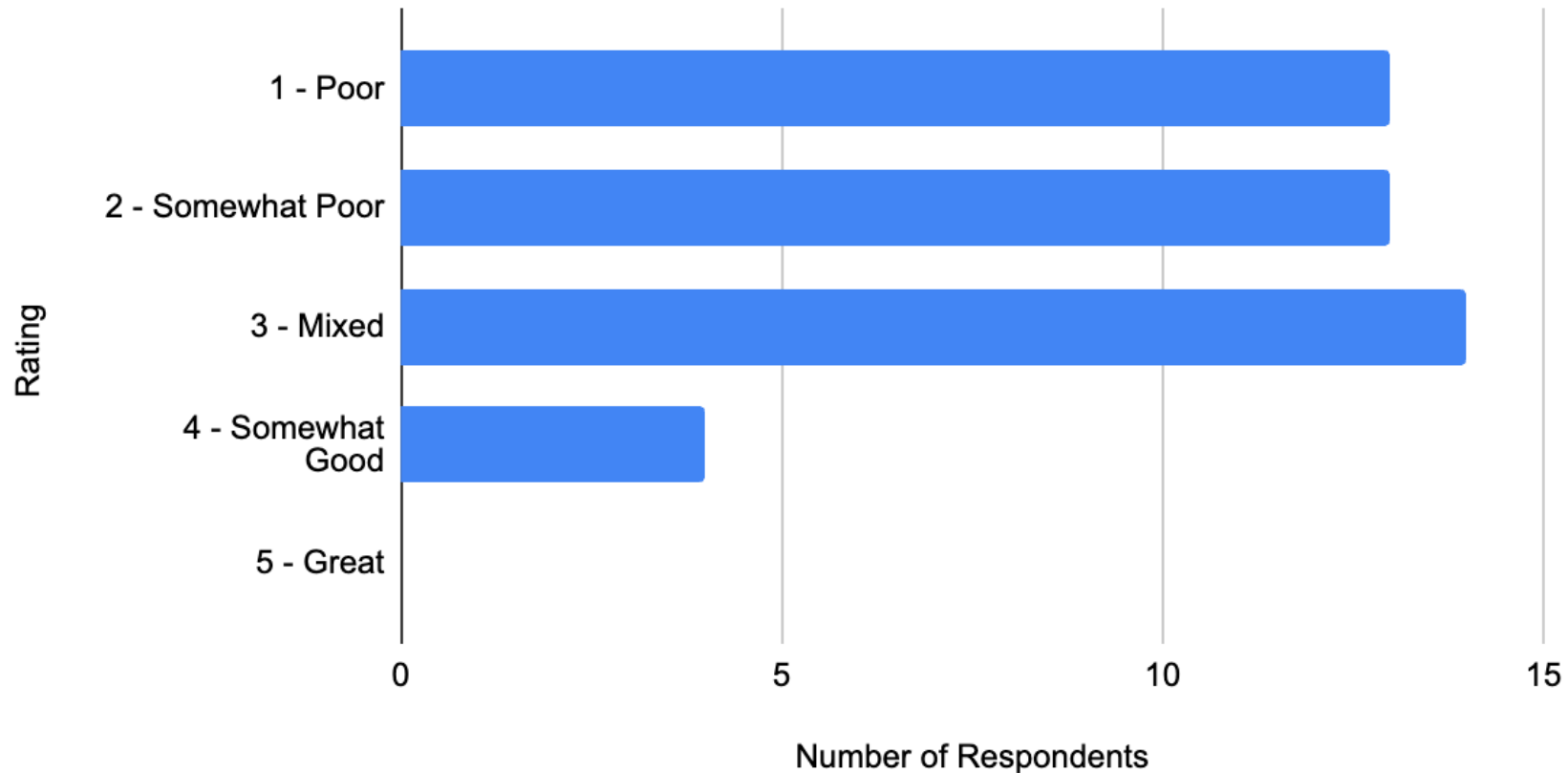
On a scale of 1 to 5, how would you rate the accessibility of class materials and classwork at UNC?





# Informal Survey: Ratings of Physical Campus Accessibility

On a scale of 1 to 5, how would you rate the accessibility of physical spaces at UNC?





# Themes

- Inequitable Educational Experience
  - Academics
  - Extracurriculars
  - Emotional Inclusivity
- Unintentional Isolation and Exclusion
  - Carolina Culture



# Quotes: Classroom Accommodations

- *"My accommodations for my hearing loss and auditory processing disorder are consistently ignored. I have a film class that assigns films that often do not have captions. For the midterm I emailed him specifically to ask for captions on the clips and in the end there were no captions whatsoever. Zoom meetings never have captions. Masks make it hard to lip read - faculty should be given a supply of clear masks. I had to drop a language class because I was so reliant on lip reading for that language that I could not understand a word with them on. I went to that class and cried silently through the second half because I felt so ashamed and stupid for not being able to understand. That was the first day of class and I immediately felt like **I did not belong here.**" - Respondent 2*
- *"Professors at UNC are not generally accessibility-friendly, I had two professors tell me it would be better to drop their class rather than take class remotely." - Respondent 8*





# Quotes: Physical Accessibility

- *"It is hard to find the accessibility places at UNC. Even though I do not need to use them I can see how **difficult** finding these easily accessibility routes can be. There are barely any signs that direct you to these places and for a freshman or a person that is not familiar with the alternative routes on campus getting to called can be inconvenient and time-consuming." - Respondent 4*
- *"I love the proposal idea of trying to get Google maps to work on another layer feature for disability access, as well as making sure all events include information about accessibility.  
I'm unaware if this is already addressed on campus, but do students, staff and visitors have ways to notify anyone of areas of sidewalk that need attention for wheelchair access (broken pavement)?" - Respondent 5*



## Quotes: Other Concerns

*"This university was not built for students with disability, so it makes sense why the current infrastructure is not suitable for their livelihood here at Carolina. Change needs to happen in order for everyone including those with disability to feel like they can be ABLE on this campus." - Respondent 3*



# Current Activities

- Working with Christi Hurt (Chancellor's Office) and Rick Wernoski (Operational Excellence)
  - Update accessibility of classroom and lab spaces
  - Accessibility Strategic Plan
    - Accessibility Assessment
- Disability Training (in creation)
- Accessible Navigation App (in development)



# Areas for Support

- Disability and Accommodations Training
- Accessible Navigation App: Luminary
  - Data contribution
- Interdepartmental Research
- Department Awareness



# Thank you!

- Questions?
- Contact Information
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