



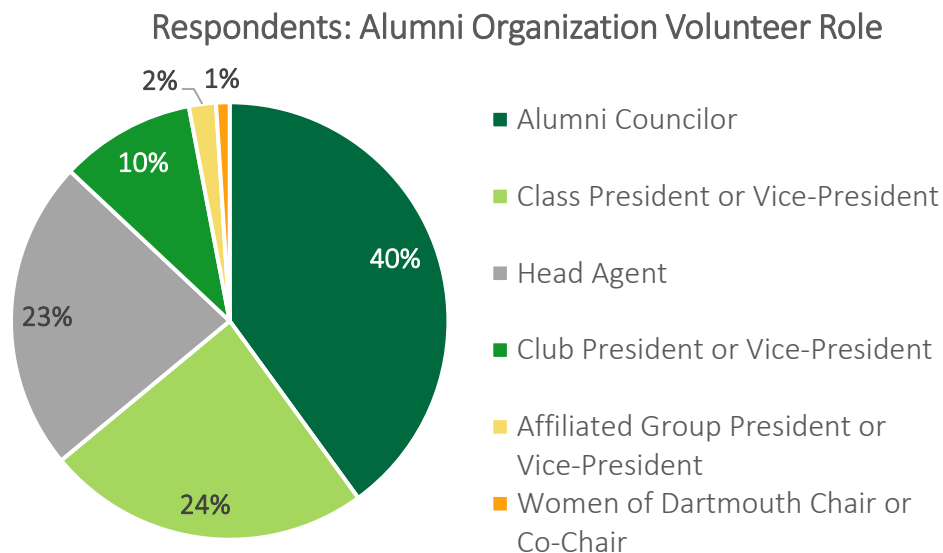
Alumni Liaison Committee Snapshot Report: November 2022 Pulse Check

Background/ Survey Structure

Since March of 2021, the Alumni Liaison Committee (ALC) has fielded simple “pulse check” surveys 1-2 times per year to class and club presidents and vice-presidents, Women of Dartmouth leadership, affiliated and shared interest groups, head agents, and members of the Alumni Council. The survey was designed to assess the volume and tenor of alumni sentiment as represented by alumni leaders, who, given their broad networks and leadership roles in our organized alumni groups, are in an excellent position to articulate alumni questions, comments, concerns, and feedback.

This short survey has asked the same questions for each of the 3 deployment timeframes (March 2021, April 2022, and November 2022) to provide longitudinal results and perspective. For the most recent survey in November of 2022, the ALC added 1 fixed-response question and 1 open-ended opportunity to better capture what the committee believes may be a current pivot in sentiment.

The November 2022 pulse check was distributed to 657 alumni leaders and was open for two weeks. The response rate was lower than the Spring 2022 survey – 122 leaders, or 18.6%, responded versus 190 (28.7%) in April – but yielded a similar composition of respondents, and, with the addition of these few questions, is still rich in its information.



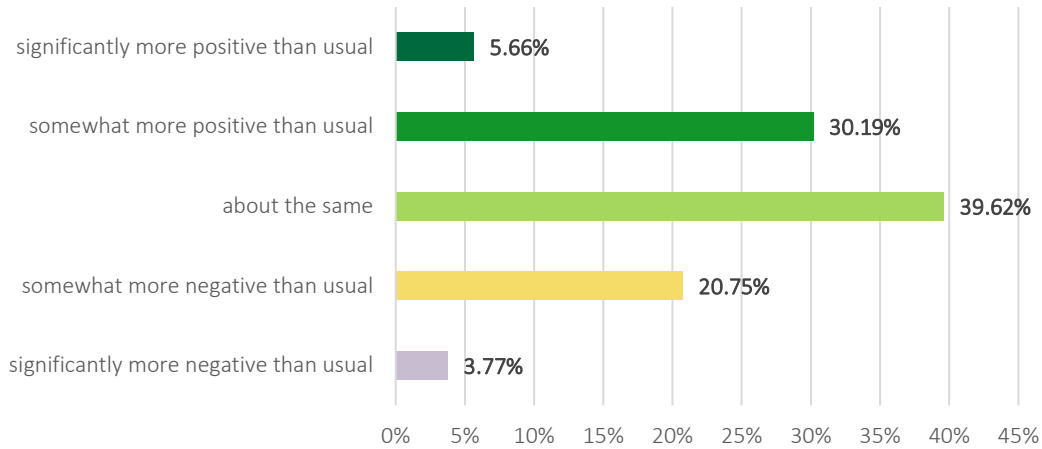
Key Learnings

Not only did almost 91% of respondents state they have heard some form of feedback (+7% from the spring survey), but also the tenor of the responses was far more positive than previous survey results. When asked about the nature of the feedback received, almost 36% of alumni leaders stated the feedback was either significantly or somewhat more positive than usual, which was a 9-point

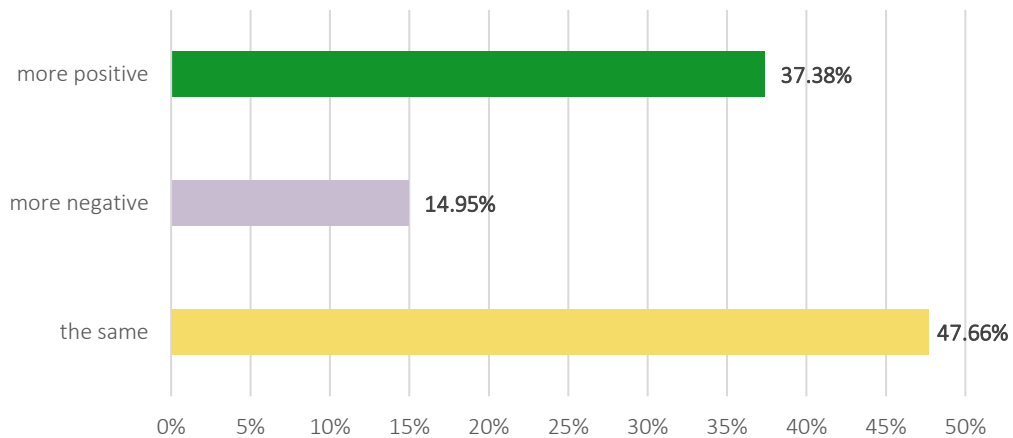
improvement over the spring. A commensurate 8% fewer respondents stated the feedback they heard was somewhat or significantly more negative than usual.

The additional survey question asked respondents to consider how the tenor of feedback has directionally changed over the past 6 months. 37.4% said it was more positive, echoing the results noted above, and only 14.9% said it was more negative.

What is the nature of the feedback you are hearing?



Compared to the previous 6 months, do you think the feedback is more positive/ more negative/ the same?



Qualitatively, the survey allowed alumni leaders both to provide up to four topics that are garnering the most feedback within their alumni networks as well as to comment on the primary reasons for the change in alumni feedback/sentiment.

Here is a summary of the key themes and noteworthy areas:

- Nearly half of the commenters mentioned the **selection of Sian Beilock** as the College's next president and were overwhelmingly positive about the potential contributions she may make at Dartmouth.
- While **student mental health** continued to be a prominent topic (as it has been for all 3 surveys), the sentiment seems to be showing some small signs of **"cautious optimism"** that the College has made this a priority and is addressing it through resource and action. Student mental health and well-being was a topic of critical focus during the Fall 2022 Alumni Council meeting. The ALC hypothesizes that, through the open and thorough discussion of the initiatives underway, AC members were able to articulate action and share information such that alumni sentiment may be evolving. Nevertheless, alumni are still laser-focused on this topic, and expectations remain extremely high for evidence of tangible results and benefit on the climate of the campus.
- The resumption of **on-campus and regional events for alumni** has been perceived as highly positive and renewing, in the absolute as well as compared to the spring 2022 survey where there was much disappointment expressed about lack of reunions and on-campus events due to COVID-19 policies.
- Several, more negative comments emerged surrounding housing shortages (although Lyme Road/North campus initiatives seemed less of an issue than before), dormitory disrepair and the general **lack of "the basics" for student life** and well-being on campus.
- As the opportunities increase for alumni get-togethers in our post-pandemic moment, so too do more concerns arise about **rebuilding supports within Alumni Relations**, as several comments surfaced this as a possible roadblock in reconnecting alumni to each other and to Dartmouth.
- An area of emerging concern seems to be **DEI initiatives**, both on campus as well as in admissions criteria. Alumni seem to be questioning 1. Are we "doing diversity for diversity's sake" or do we know what "good looks like" and will be able to measure and express results? and 2. Does DEI only equate to the more "politically correct" areas such as race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic opportunity, and as a result are we stifling or shutting out (legitimate and appropriate) diversity of thought? This aspect of alumni sentiment should be monitored, and College initiatives and metrics should be communicated with frequency and transparency. It may be helpful, for example, to have Shontay Delaloe address the Alumni Council at the Spring 2023 session, as the 3-year DEI strategic plan, *Toward Equity: Aligning Action and Accountability*, was recently published.
- **Athletics** and **Admissions/Financial Aid** rounded out the most mentioned topics and were of mixed sentiment. In athletics, a positive response to Mike Harrity's hiring was coupled with poor results and problems within the athletics programs. While need-blind financial aid for international students was seen as generally positive, some expressed concerns that applications are already too high. And although not a high number overall, there was a noticeable uptick in comments about class and school size, most likely precipitated by the steadily increasing applicant numbers. Although tempered by other comments citing the infrastructure "crunch" (housing, dining choices, etc.), this may become a more prominent topic in the near future.

It is also helpful to note that the number of topics alumni leaders are hearing the most about has begun to coalesce into the 8 or so areas outlined above. In the April 2022 survey, in addition to the current themes, there were an equal number of other unique topics that were forefront on the minds of our alumni body: COVID policies and restrictions, cancelled events, inadequate communication and/or lack of transparency from the College, the Call To Lead campaign/capital investment on campus, the golf course, the medical school suspensions and reversals, an Asian American Studies program, the Baker Tower weathervane removal, and a host of frustrations over administrative actions.

Change is indeed in the air. More restrictive COVID policies have been lifted, allowing more freedom and access to the campus for students and alumni alike; the Call to Lead campaign and President Hanlon's tenure are concluding with all the appropriate celebration and reflection they deserve; and the excitement and possibility of a new president, one who has been carefully selected in this moment, *for* this moment, has allowed a pause and a certain optimism for what is to come. How the administration moves forward on addressing and then sharing positive changes on such foundational areas as mental health, student/campus life, DEI activities, and alumni re-engagement will be critical in defining the trajectory of alumni sentiment in the future.