

Gap Year Research Consortium at Colorado College

Preliminary Results of the Spring/Summer 2021 Post-Gap Year Student Survey



Structure of the Gap Year

What did you end up *doing* with your gap year?
(n=114)

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>		<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Travel	56%	44%	Comm. Service	27%	73%
Work	84%	16%	Academic Classes	36%	64%
Compet. Athletics	12%	88%	Gap Year Program	20%	80%
Career Preparation	37%	63%	Unstructured Time	56%	44%

Impact of the Gap Year

Now that you have taken a gap year, are you glad you did? (n=108)

- Yes-**99%!!**
- No-1%

What impact, if any, did taking a gap year have on your college plans?
(n=108)

- Taking a gap year did not have any impact on my college plans-69%
(Check all that apply)
- My intended major-28%
- Not planning to attend college immediately-5%
- College that I am planning to attend changed-4%
- Geographical region where my college is located changed-1%

Impact of the Gap Year

For you, what were the primary benefits of taking a gap year? (n=108)

- Avoiding going to college during the pandemic-86%
- Having more downtime and a break from academics- 69%
- Gaining work experience-67%
- Earning money-66%
- Learning (or improving) another skill-59%
- Reducing stress-53%
- Improving emotional health-48%
- Helping me figure out what I might want to study in college-46%
- Experience living in a new place-40%
- Completing a goal or project-38%
- Giving back via service-22%
- Learning (or improving) a foreign language-22%
- Developing a deeper understanding of a different culture-21%
- Supporting my family at home-20%
- Opportunity to reapply to college-2%



Impact of the Gap Year

How did your gap year influence how you feel about going to college?

(n=108)

	<u>Strongly Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Neither</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>Strongly Disagree</u>
<u>Increased Self-Confidence</u>	46%	35%	15%	4%	0%
<u>Developed a Sense of Purpose</u>	28%	52%	14%	6%	1%
<u>Identified Questions to Explore</u>	24%	44%	28%	3%	1%
<u>More Comfortable with Ambiguity and Uncertainty</u>	43%	36%	14%	6%	1%
<u>More Socially and Emotionally Prepared for College</u>	43%	34%	18%	4%	2%
<u>More Prepared to Take Full Advantage of College</u>	46%	34%	18%	2%	0%

Sample Responses from Open-Ended Question

What was the most important thing you *learned* from your gap year experience?

- **“I learned how to be self-sufficient and listen to other people’s struggles during the pandemic.”**
- **“I learned life skills and how to take care of myself. My parents spoiled me a lot and I cried over the simplest things because they insisted on doing everything.”**
- **“How to succeed in a professional work environment and the importance of following my own path regardless of what my friends are doing.”**
- **“I was very lacking in self-awareness before my gap year experience, and now self-awareness and empathy are things I am actively working towards.”**
- **“I learned what kind of jobs I like and don’t like, how to feel fulfilled during unstructured time, how to deal with homesickness, and the kinds of people I really want in my life.”**
- **“I am powerful and capable of all things. People are generally good. Working hard pays off.”**

