

OIR Assessment Tool
Center for Applied Research (ECAR)
Study of Undergraduate Students and Information Technology 2010
December 12, 2011

Purpose of Survey:

1. The data collected addresses information relating to what university group or situation? (I.e., from whom is the university collecting this information? Whose perceptions are we reading?)

The purpose of the survey is to investigate the perceptions of freshman and seniors as compared to national freshman and senior perception data regarding: (1) the kinds of information technologies used by students, (2) students' perceived skill level with technology, (3) the value that students place on technology, and (4) the obstacles students face when using technology.

2. How often is this tool used and analyzed? What time of year?

The survey is given in the spring of alternate years. UND has participated in 2006, 2008, and 2010.

3. To whom does the assessment group believe that an analysis of this report would be beneficial? In other words, what individuals, departments, or programs need this information in order to have reliable information to 'close the loop' on their assessment process?

Given the low response rate (14%), the validity of the results is questionable for use in decision-making activities. There may be some value in examining these data longitudinally with the results from 2006 and 2008 to determine if trends exist.

4. What UND student learning goals are assessed?

- a. Use Y, N, ? to indicate whether the instrument collects data relevant to each of the following Institutional and/or General Education goals:

___N___ 1 Communication – written or oral (“able to write and speak in various settings with a sense of purpose/audience”)

___N___ 2 Thinking and reasoning – critical thinking (or “be intellectually curious”; analyze, synthesize, evaluate)

___N___ 3 Thinking and reasoning – creative thinking (or “be intellectually creative”; explore, discover, engage)

___N___ 4 Thinking and reasoning – quantitative reasoning (“apply empirical data...analyze graphical information”)

___N___ 5 Information literacy (“be able to access and evaluate...for effective, efficient, and ethical use”)

___N___ 6 Diversity (“demonstrate understanding of diversity and use that understanding...”)

___N___ 7 Lifelong learning (“commit themselves to lifelong learning”)

___N___ 8 Service/citizenship (“share responsibility both for their communities and for the world”)

b. Additional goals

The survey provides information about freshman and senior opinions of technology, their use of it, and its value, but it does not address learning goals.

5. What are the findings/results of this tool?

- a. From Question 5a above: For the goals with a Y or ?, describe the relevant findings/results from this survey: N/A
- b. Other findings/results

This survey provides a snapshot of the opinions of 192 freshman and seniors with regard to technology and their use of it. The majority of the student's polled own laptops and perceived themselves skilled in their use. Fifty-eight per cent of these students prefer taking courses that use a moderate level of information technology. UND students report effective instructor use of IT, but would like more guidance from the instructor when it is applied to student work. About two-thirds of the polled students report positive use of a course management system (e.g., Blackboard) and the convenience that online materials provide, but 22% stated that they would skip class when course materials are available on line. We note that 15% of the responding students reported that they took some of their courses online and 8% reported taking all of their classes online. We question how these students might have interpreted "skipping class." Only percentages were reported. There were no tests for statistical significance.

6. What evidence does the assessment group believe should be collected/compiled for the next accreditation visit?

The findings of this survey are not particularly relevant for accreditation. We recommend that the Office of Institutional Research explore ways to increase the number of student participants.

7. Is this tool a direct measure, an indirect measure, or a non-measure of student learning?

This tool does not measure student learning, only student opinion.

8. Does this tool empower individuals or the university to better understand and assess student learning at the university? If so, how?

In conjunction with other tools, this survey may help us to understand student engagement in technology, which may lead us to better assessment mechanisms.

9. Is there a better way to obtain or report the data to be analyzed?

Analysis of statistical significance would be useful. A greater participant pool would yield more valid results, generalizable to the UND student population.

10. Does the tool need increased university or administrative support or faculty involvement in order to make it more useable or effective?

We do not see the benefits of increased administrative support or faculty involvement.

11. Does the assessment group need any administrative insight or guidance in order to analyze the tool effectively?

No.

12. What value does the committee place on this tool for helping to achieve the university's assessment plan?

This assessment tool measures the opinions of a small number of students on their use of computer and internet technology. It does not directly address student learning. Perhaps, when taken in conjunction with other surveys of student opinion, it may reflect on overall student behaviors with regard to their learning.

Review Summary (one or two sentences)

The purpose of the survey was to investigate the perceptions of freshman and seniors as compared to national freshman and senior perception data regarding: (1) the kinds of information technologies used by students, (2) students' perceived skill level with technology, (3) the value that students place on technology, and (4) the obstacles students face when using technology.

18. Recommendations of the Reviewers

We recommend that a larger group of students could be polled with analysis reflecting statistical tests comparing freshman and seniors as well as UND students with students nationwide.

19. What might faculty want to know about this survey? *(Please provide one to two paragraphs describing some findings from this survey. These paragraphs will be forwarded to academic departments as a means of keeping them informed about the existence of information that might be useful to them.)*

The Center for Applied Research (ECAR), Study of Undergraduate Students and Information Technology 2010 polled the perceptions of UND freshman and seniors about their use of technology. This survey provides a snapshot of the opinions of 192 freshman and seniors with regard to technology and their use of it. The majority of them own laptops and smart phones and perceive themselves skilled in their use. Fifty-eight per cent of these students prefer taking courses that use a moderate level of information technology. The students also report effective instructor use of IT, but would like more guidance from the instructor when it is applied to student work. About two-thirds of the polled students report positive use of a course management system (e.g., Blackboard) and the convenience that online materials provide.

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