

Survey Results (Summary Only):

Online Learning Services at A-B Tech

Following is a summary of results of an informal e-mail survey mailed to A-B Tech instructors and staff on Friday, February 6, 2009. The purpose of the survey was to capture key support issues associated with the College's online learning environment, and obtain useful feedback and suggestions. An email rather than form-based approach was selected to increase submission rates and encourage anecdotal responses.

This approach proved quite successful. Many responders took trouble to add comments, even when answering multiple choice questions. The extent and quality of these comments provide a rich overview of our current support infrastructure, and capture widespread concerns regarding these services. Ambiguities in the multiple choice questions were often clarified in the commentaries.

While many support issues are significant and require attention, instructor training and improvements to the student orientation are clearly uppermost. The survey results reflect the most critical support needs identified by instructional support staff, following their experiences during the opening weeks of the Spring 200 semester:

- Simple improvements to the structure and content of the campus Distance Learning Web site, along with a more consistent approach to student email addresses in Blackboard, should significantly reduce student problems with logins and other start up issues.
- Short videos, online FAQ's, hands-on orientation services, improved help desk routing, and more consistent design and technical standards will help students become comfortable with the online learning environment.
- Support for instructors should include:
 - Training and workshops
 - Just-in-time services (online FAQ's and manuals, skilled and effective help desk support, walk-in services and technical help)
 - Templates and content standards for consistency and ease of development.
- Common technology and format standards will go a long way to achieving a consistent, supportable environment for instructors and students (standards should be platform-independent, cost-effective, and feasible for non-technical instructors and students).

Steps are now being taken to implement these improvements. A status report will be provided at the end of the spring 2009 semester.

Summary of Responses

Total number of survey responses: 66

Breakdown of primary roles of survey responders (as identified by responder):

Full-time Faculty	30	46.9%	*****
Part-time (adjunct Faculty)	16	25.0%	*****
Staff	7	10.9%	***
Technical Staff	6	9.4%	**
College Administrator (all levels)	4	6.3%	**
Other Staff	1	1.6%	*

Responses to Multiple Choice Questions

SUPPORTING OUR STUDENTS:

1. Based on what you hear, how would you rate our day-to-day Help Desk support for students?

(a) Excellent	12	20.3%	****
(b) Adequate	16	27.1%	*****
(c) Inadequate	7	11.9%	***
(d) Poor	3	5.1%	*
(e) No opinion	21	35.6%	*****

3. What can we do to improve support for students? Indicate all that apply

(a) Improved Help Desk services	17	18.7%	****
(b) Online Orientation and FAQ's	30	33.0%	*****
(c) Remedial support services for students who need help working online	32	35.2%	*****
(d) Other	12	13.2%	***

SUPPORTING OUR INSTRUCTORS:

4. How would you rate our current orientation and training for instructors with regard to Blackboard and online learning?

(a) Excellent	8	15.1%	***
(b) Adequate	10	18.9%	****
(c) Inadequate	14	26.4%	*****
(d) Poor	7	13.2%	***
(e) No opinion	14	26.4%	*****

5. How would you rate our day-to-day support for instructors with regard to Blackboard and online learning?

(a) Excellent	16	27.6%	*****
(b) Adequate	14	24.1%	*****
(c) Inadequate	7	12.1%	***
(d) Poor	2	3.4%	*
(e) No opinion	19	32.8%	*****

6. What will help provide for your day-to-day support needs in this area? (indicate all that apply)

(a) A responsive individual you can call/email with questions and problems	44	29.3%	*****
(b) Online FAQ's and how-to tutorials	28	18.7%	****
(c) An "Instructor Resource Lab" to get hands-on help when you need it	33	22.0%	****
(d) Scheduled training and workshops	34	22.7%	*****
(e) Other	11	7.3%	**