Minnesota West Community & Technical College ECARS Student Survey Data: What Did They Say?
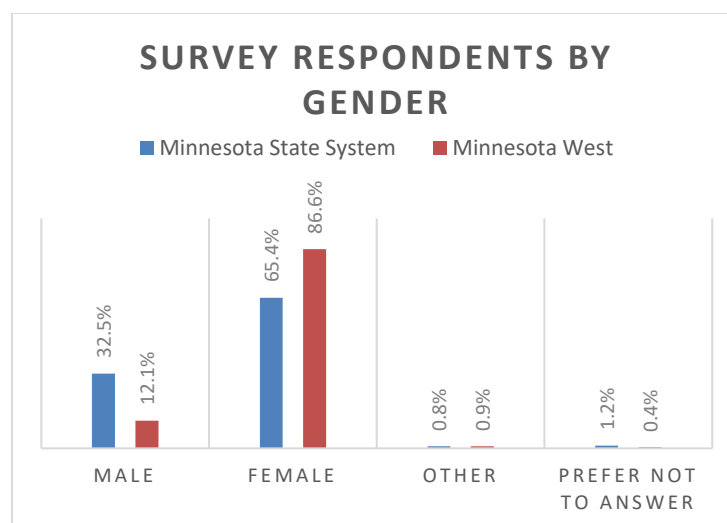
Overview

The Education Center for Analysis and Research (ECAR) at Educause does a yearly student survey to find out information about student use of technologies and student reflections on technology use at their college or university. In 2017-18, The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities participated in this research study. This is a summary document of the Minnesota West student data; the full results of the survey can be obtained from Kayla Westra, if you want to review all of the ECAR data.
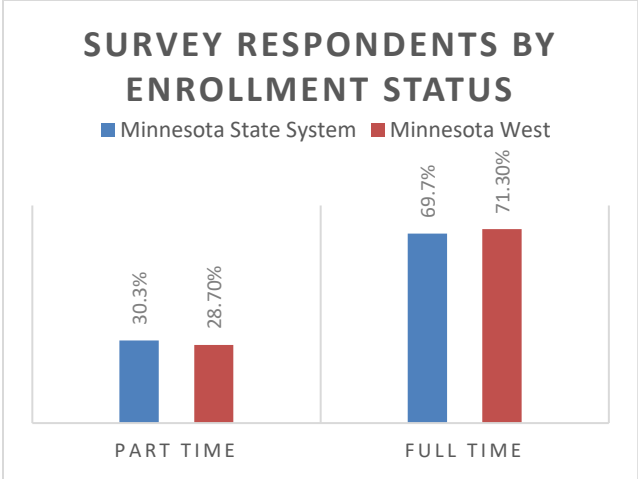
Who Was Surveyed

The results for Minnesota West show just responses from our students. The aggregate data from the system shows data from all of the Minnesota State colleges and universities. The survey was sent to students who were enrolled in classes during the spring 2018 semester. System-wide, 9,371 students responded out of 77,179 who received the survey link. This is about a 12% response rate. Minnesota West had 225 students respond.

System-wide, respondents were more likely to be female and full-time students.

Minnesota West's data correlates with the system-wide statistics with 86% of respondents being female and 71% of the survey respondents attending college full-time. Almost 10% (9.9) of students were enrolled at more than one college or university.

SURVEY RESPONDENTS BY GENDER

Minnesota State System   Minnesota West

	Minnesota State System	Minnesota West
MALE	32.5%	12.1%
FEMALE	65.4%	86.6%
OTHER	0.8%	0.9%
PREFER NOT TO ANSWER	1.2%	0.4%

SURVEY RESPONDENTS BY ENROLLMENT STATUS

■ Minnesota State System ■ Minnesota West

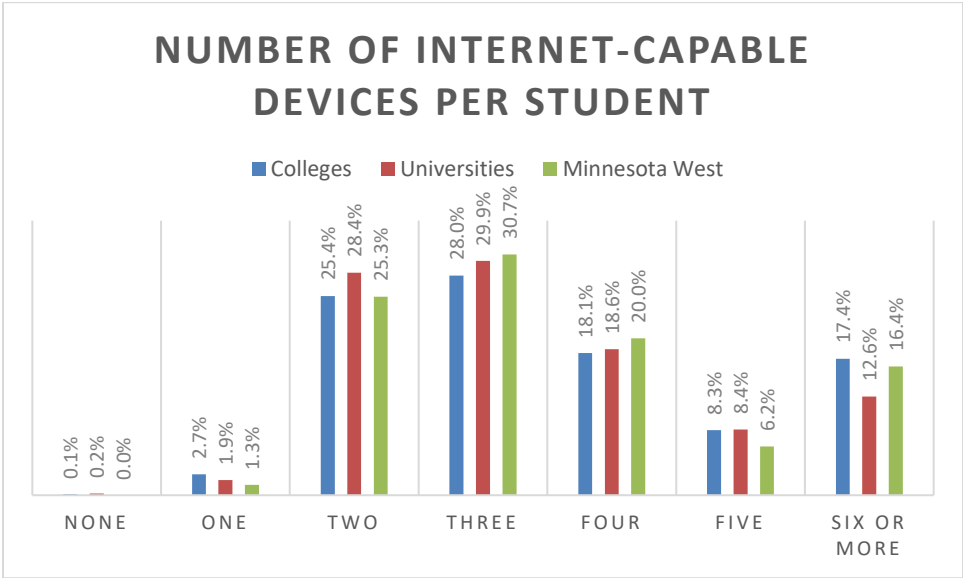|	PART TIME	FULL TIME
Minnesota State System	30.3%	69.7%
Minnesota West	28.70%	71.30%

When asked if they lived on or off campus, 99% of the students who responded stated they lived off campus. Eighty-seven percent of students worked while enrolled. Of those, 71% worked an average of at least 20 hours per week.

Additionally, 27% were the first person in their family to attend college.

Data of Relevance

Devices

While there is much in the survey that isn't surprising, given our technology-heavy society, the following data is important to teaching and learning.

NUMBER OF INTERNET-CAPABLE DEVICES PER STUDENT

■ Colleges ■ Universities ■ Minnesota West

	NONE	ONE	TWO	THREE	FOUR	FIVE	SIX OR MORE
Colleges	0.1%	2.7%	25.4%	28.0%	18.1%	8.3%	17.4%
Universities	0.2%	1.9%	28.4%	29.9%	18.6%	8.4%	12.6%
Minnesota West	0.0%	1.3%	25.3%	30.7%	20.0%	6.2%	16.4%

- Over 98% of Minnesota West's students have two or more Internet-capable devices.
- Over 94% of our students own a laptop.
- 50% have a tablet.
- 97% have a smart phone.

Wearable technologies, gaming devices, and streaming media devices were not as prevalent among the survey respondents. Of all device types surveyed, students typically owned instead of borrowing or utilizing devices provided by an institution.

Use of Computers in Courses
- Over 83% of students said they used their laptop for all or most of their courses.
- Only 33% said they used their smart phone in all or most of their courses.
- Tablet usage in courses was considerably less at 11%.

Viewed Relationship of Academic Success
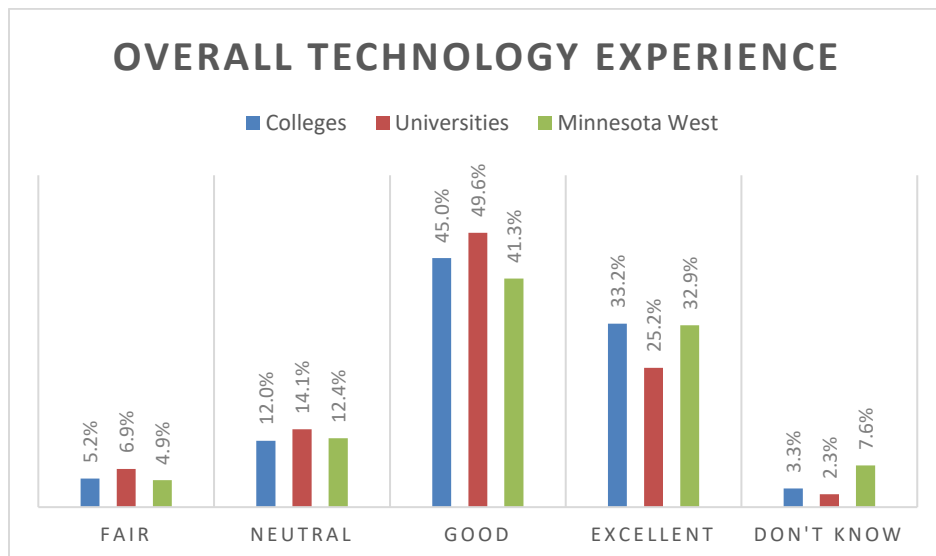Students were asked to relate their academic success to the use of their devices:

- Laptop – 88% said very or extremely important to academic success
- Tablet – 32% said very or extremely important to academic success
- Smart phone – 43% said very or extremely important to academic success

Technology Experience

Overall
Seventy-four percent of students rated their overall technology experience at Minnesota West as good or excellent.

The graph below shows how this figure compares system-wide.

OVERALL TECHNOLOGY EXPERIENCE

Colleges | Universities | Minnesota West

	FAIR	NEUTRAL	GOOD	EXCELLENT	DON'T KNOW
Colleges	5.2%	12.0%	45.0%	33.2%	3.3%
Universities	6.9%	14.1%	49.6%	25.2%	2.3%
Minnesota West	4.9%	12.4%	41.3%	32.9%	7.6%

Ninety-two percent of the students indicated some or all of their courses were offered completely online compared to only 73% of respondents system-wide.

Eighty-eighty percent of students had used Minnesota West's learning management system for most or all of their courses. Ratings of the learning management system indicated 85% of students were either satisfied or very satisfied with the system.

Wireless Access/Reliability

The institutional logon process for wireless access was rated as good or excellent by 45% of respondents.

Wireless was rated in various locations:

- Library—58% rated as good or excellent
- Classrooms/instructional spaces—63% rated as good or excellent
- Student housing—24% rated as good or excellent

Access to a reliable internet connection is important for student success. Seventy-four percent of students reported their home or off-campus internet connection was either good or excellent. Less than 1% of students stated they did not have internet access at their place of residence.

Time Spent Online

Students reported the following time online doing the following activities:

Activity	None	Less than 1 hr	1-2 hrs	3-4 hrs	5-8 hrs	8+ hrs
Online research/homework	0%	5.4%	30%	43.5%	15.2%	5.8%
Social Media	5.8%	24.4%	40.9%	23.6%	3.6%	1.8%
Streaming video	21.3%	21.3%	31.6%	18.2%	5.3%	2.2%
Online gaming	72.9%	16.9%	7.1%	2.7%	.8%	.4%

Online Success Tools/Notifications

Students responded that notifications were useful to them, especially alerts about their course progress. Online success tools such as degree audit tools to show completed degree requirements, self-service tools to conduct student business, and self-service systems in place to monitor credit transfer information were also deemed helpful.

Preferred Learning Environment

Our students listed the following preferences.

No online component	24%
Some online components	32%
Mostly but not completely online	8%
Completely online	20%
No preference	13%

Student Perceptions about Instructors and Technology

Seventy percent of students thought that their instructors used technology to maintain a student's attention. Sixty-eight percent indicated that instructors used technology to enhance learning with additional learning material.

Forty-four percent of students said that their instructors encouraged them to use their own technology devices during class to further their learning; however, only 27% of students indicated that their instructors have them use their smartphone as a learning tool during class.

Sixty-nine percent of students stated their instructors encouraged them to utilize online collaboration tools to communicate or collaborate with the instructor or other students in or outside class.

Student Perceptions about Technology on Their Career

Students were asked to respond to a series of statements regarding technology in relation to their future career:

- Technology will play an important role in my future career (46% agree; 40% strongly agree; 11% neutral).
- Technologies that I use in my courses now are relevant to my career (44% agree; 25% strongly agree; 21% neutral).
- Technological skills that I develop in my courses now will adequately prepare me for my career (50% agree; 25% strongly agree; 18% neutral).

Disabilities

Students were asked about disabilities and adaptive technologies. Ninety percent of respondents stated they did not have a disability. Fifteen percent of students stated that the institution is not aware of their needs. Sixty-nine percent stated that they have good or excellent institution support of their accessibility or adaptive technology needs.

Other

Student responses to questions asking them to indicate what they would like their instructors or institution to do with technology in order to enhance their academic success were also included in the survey results and can be obtained from Kayla Westra.