

ECARS Student Survey Data: What Did They Say?

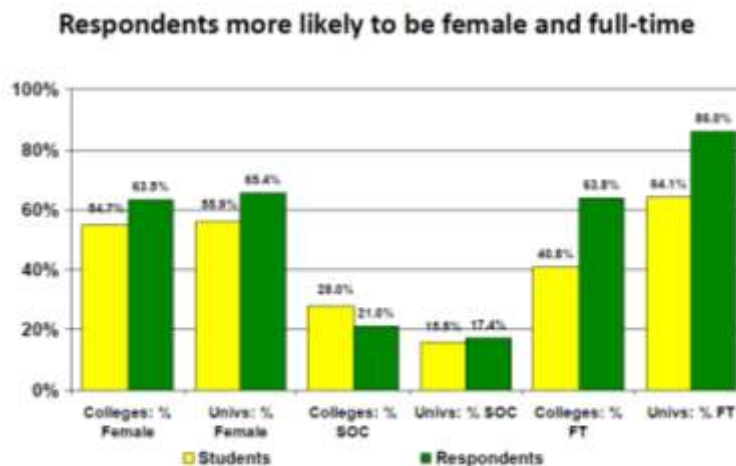
Overview

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 2015-6, 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 (65+ pages) 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 2016 semester. System-wide, 11,000 students responded out of 83,500 who received the survey link. This is about a 13% response rate. Minnesota West had 373 students respond.

System-wide, respondents were more likely to be female and full-time students. The graph below shows how this was split system-wide.



Source: System Office Research – Academic and Student Affairs

At Minnesota West, 57% of respondents were 25 or older. Sixty-three percent were freshman or sophomores. Female respondents outnumbered male respondents three to one.

Additionally, when asked if on or off campus, 98% of the students who responded stated they were off campus.

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.

- Over 90% of Minnesota West students have two or more Internet-capable devices.
- Over 93% of our students own a laptop.
- 67% have a tablet.
- 96% have a smart phone. (And they are about evenly split between iPhones and Android devices.)

Wearable technologies, gaming devices, and streaming media devices were not as prevalent, but still around the 50% mark.

- Over 85% of our students use Windows.
- Only 10% of our students use Macs.

Most students do not have docking stations for their laptops.

Use of Computers in Courses

- Over 80% of students said they used their laptop for all or most of their courses.
- Only 24% said they used their smart phone in all or most of their courses.
- Tablet usage in courses was even less.

Viewed Relationship of Academic Success

Students were asked to relate their academic success to the use of their devices:

- Laptop – 94% said very or extremely important to academic success
- Tablet – 39% said very or extremely important to academic success
- Smart phone – 45% said very or extremely important to academic success

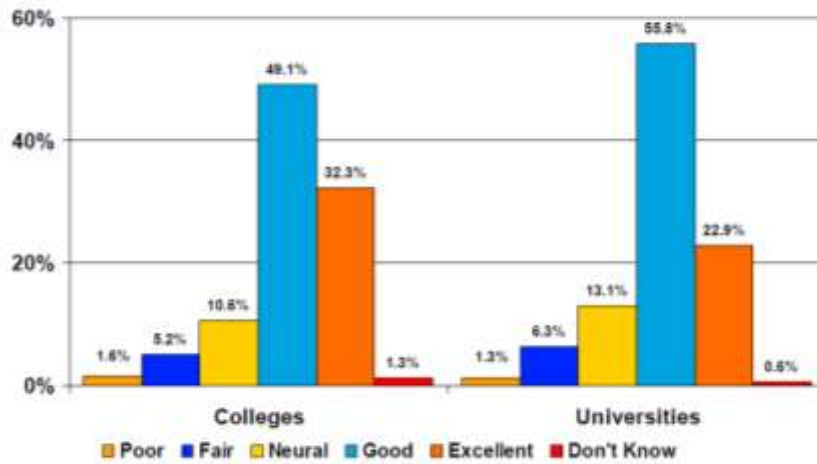
Technology Experience

Overall

Eighty-five percent of students at Minnesota West rated their overall technology experience as good or excellent. Sixty-five percent of the students stated they had one or two devices connected to the wireless at most times.

The graphs below show how these compare system-wide.

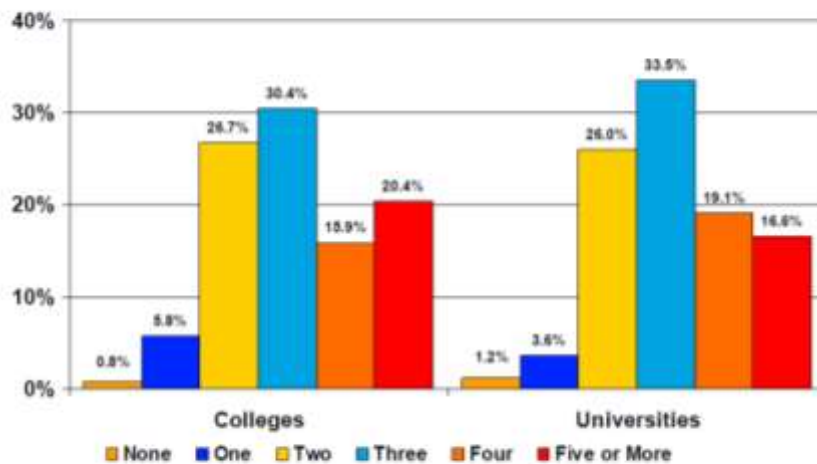
Overall Technology Experience



8

Source: System Office Research – Academic and Student Affairs

Number of Internet Devices



5

Source: System Office Research – Academic and Student Affairs

Wireless Access/Reliability

Wireless was rated in various locations:

- Library – 57% rated as good or excellent
- Classrooms/instructional spaces – 54% rated as good or excellent

It is important to note in the wireless categories that 23% listed this as not applicable (likely these were online only students).

Wireless Performance

Wireless was also rated in terms of network performance, with 54% said it was good or excellent.

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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	.5%	6.7%	28.7%	41%	16.6%	6.4%
Social Media	6.7%	29.1%	43.1%	13.7%	6.5%	.8%
Streaming video	27.4%	33.3%	22.5%	11.9%	4.1%	.8%
Online gaming	69%	16.2%	9.9%	3.3%	.8%	.8%

Notifications

Students responded that notifications were useful to them, especially alerts about their course progress. About 10% of the students did not think that alerts were provided as a service; another 21% didn't know if the alerts were helpful.

Student Perceptions about Instructors and Technology

Overall, Minnesota West students thought that their instructors had most, almost all, or all of the technical skills needed for their classes (84%). Sixty-five percent thought that instructors used technology to maintain a student's attention. Seventy-three percent thought that instructors used technology to help students make connections to the learning material.

Fifty-nine percent of students said that most or all of their instructors encouraged them to use their own technology devices during class.

Students also expressed they wished their instructors used the learning management system (D2L) more (58%). Data on ebooks, free educational resources, games, recorded lectures, and other teaching methods can be found starting on page 39 of the survey results.

Preferred Learning Environment

Our students listed the following preferences (found on page 17).

No online component	8%
Some online components	32%

Mostly but not completely online	25%
Completely online	22%
No preference	13%

Teaching Strategies

Students provided feedback on the following areas:

- I get more actively involved in courses that use technology (45% agree or strongly agree; 40% neutral)
- I am more likely to skip classes when streamed or recorded lectures available (24% agree or strongly agree; 20% neutral; 50% disagree or strongly disagree)
- I am more likely to skip classes when materials presented in class available online (20% agree or strongly agree; 20% neutral; 54% disagree or strongly disagree)

Sixty-five percent of students agreed or strongly agreed that they entered college prepared to use the technology present in their classes.

Disabilities

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

Influence of Technology

Students were asked a series of questions that began, "Technology helped me...."

- Engage in the learning process (75% agree/strongly agree; 20% neutral)
- Develop a personal relationship with the instructor (47% agree/strongly agree; 31% neutral)
- Ask my instructors questions (82% agree/strongly agree; 13% neutral)
- Discuss course topics with my instructors (72% agree/strongly agree; 20% neutral)
- Understand my instructors' expectations (74% agree/strongly agree; 17% neutral)
- View my instructors as approachable (68% agree/strongly agree; 22% neutral)
- Get feedback from instructors in a timely manner (74% agree/strongly agree; 16% neutral)
- Develop a personal relationship with other students (40% agree/strongly agree; 30% neutral)
- Ask other students questions (59% agree/strongly agree; 21% neutral)
- Discuss course topics with other students (71% agree/strongly agree; 19% neutral)
- View other students as approachable (51% agree/strongly agree; 31% neutral)

Additional 20 topics in this area – review pages 24-31 for additional information)

Also, subsection 6.4 talks about in class distractions. About 40% of students admitted to distractions from text messages, social media, and web sites.