Using Your Students’ Voices to Inform Your Learning Ecosystem

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Hosted in partnership with:
Today’s Moderator

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Speakers

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Academic Partnerships
Welcome & Introduction

Topic 1: Voice of the Online Learner & Institutional Learning Ecosystem

Topic 2: Modality, Program Design, and Stackable Credentials

Topic 3: Institutional Governance Structure

Topic 4: University Example: East Tennessee State University

Q & A

Close
Using the Student Voice to Inform the Learning Ecosystem
Student Voices

VOICE OF THE ONLINE LEARNER
Responding to students’ evolving preferences and concerns

ONLINE LEARNER EXPERIENCES
The importance of cohesive design and learning communities to student satisfaction

Research from Academic Partnerships and Wiley University Services, now a combined company.
What Is a Learning Ecosystem?
Voice of the Online Learner – Modality, Program Design, and Stackable Credentials
Modality comes first

If the program you wanted was not available in an online format at your school of choice, would you most likely:

- Find the program online at a different school
- Not enroll in a program
- Enroll in a different program online at the same school
- Enroll in the on-campus program at the same school

Also, four out of five learners told us they selected the online modality before any other criteria, including school and program.
Ideal online program design

**Student Preferences**

- ✔ Fully Online (71%)
- ✔ Asynchronous (71%)
- ✔ Option to take multiple classes at once (63%)
- ✔ Flexibility to choose electives (59%)
Certificates and stackables

How interested would you be in the following certificate options if they were available in your subject area of interest, but you couldn’t use financial aid to help pay for them?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Extremely/Very interested</th>
<th>Moderately interested</th>
<th>Not interested</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Completing a certificate program to gain a new skill for my career</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completing multiple certificates over time that would earn a degree</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completing a certificate program that would lead to my admission to a degree program</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Institutional Standards for Online Course Design, Expectations & Faculty Presence
Consistent Course Design & Expectation

Consistent Course Content Layout and Navigation

Content is organized structurally the same throughout the course.

The navigation in courses is the same across the program.

Programmatic Consistency

Content is organized structurally the same across the courses in the program.

Diverse learning experiences

Course learning activities and assessments vary across the program.

Clear expectations for grading and due dates and syllabus alignment

The grading expectations are clear with specified due dates to accommodate scheduling.

The assignments described in the syllabus mirror what’s in the course.
Consistent Course Design & Expectation

Each course is **structured** the same, with the same format which is **helpful** because it’s easier to hop into a course without having to relearn individual formats along the way.

– MPA student at Anna Maria College

The **layout** of the course materials helps me **stay organized** regardless the subject of the class.

– MSW student at George Mason University

More consistent layout with placement of learning modules, grades, etc. on the left-hand side of the navigation page in the LMS. Professors customize the course and it can be **confusing** and **difficult to find** what I need.

– MBA student at University of West Alabama
Faculty Presence and Engagement

- **Timely Feedback and Grading**: Feedback is provided in time to inform student performance.
- **Engaging with Students via Course Discussions**: Students want to learn from faculty contributions via discussion boards and class discussions.
- **Connecting with Students**: Be present.
- **Peer Engagement**: Students want to learn from and connect with their peers.
Faculty Presence and Engagement

My teachers have been very wonderful in explaining directions and giving me constructive feedback when grading my papers and assignments.

– MSCMHC student at the University of West Alabama

Frequent communication from my instructor helps me feel connected to the course and helps me better develop my assignments and projects, ultimately creating an effective learning environment.

– MS LDT student at George Mason University

The most valuable component is knowing some of my peers in the program.

– MSN student at Sacred Heart University

Teachers who care, respond in a timely manner, give good instructions and provide good feedback.

– MSW student at Campbellsville University
### Inside Higher Ed – 2023 Survey of College and University Chief Academic Advisors

Please indicate whether you plan to increase emphasis on the following practices at your institution over the next year. (n=375)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practice</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increasing collaboration with other colleges and universities</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding programs based on the alignment with our mission</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expanding online programs and offerings</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cutting underperforming academic programs</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dismissing underperforming faculty members</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Expanding online programs and offerings

- 81% Yes
- 19% No
What Is a Learning Ecosystem?
## Decision Making ~ Governance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Centralized</th>
<th>Decentralized</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strategy</strong></td>
<td>• <em>Integrate</em>d throughout the institution</td>
<td>• <em>Limited</em> institutional engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• <em>Policies integrated</em> into online ecosystem`</td>
<td>• <em>Defined</em> policies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Technology</strong></td>
<td>• <em>Coordinated</em> through Central IT organization (including learning technologies)</td>
<td>• <em>Limited</em> coordination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Learning technologies and tools managed by faculty/programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Resources</strong></td>
<td>• Resources are <em>coordinated</em> through <em>administration</em></td>
<td>• Resources are <em>managed</em> by <em>programs</em> and individual <em>colleges</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Support</strong></td>
<td>• <em>Integrate</em>d resources and tools</td>
<td>• <em>Integrate</em>d resources and tools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Center for Teaching and Learning</strong></td>
<td>• Comprehensive and <em>coordination</em> faculty development and design services (breadth and depth)</td>
<td>• Teaching and Learning teams <em>distributed</em> across entire campus; managed by programs and individual <em>colleges</em></td>
</tr>
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## Governance – Advantages & Disadvantages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Centralized</th>
<th>Decentralized</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Alignment with programmatic practices that align with institutional strategy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Distribution of resources supported across entire network</td>
<td>• Decision-making is <em>placed</em> at the program and school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Coordinated efforts for student services needs</td>
<td>• Greater autonomy with experimenting with different resources/tools/modalities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Aids in adoption of best practices</td>
<td>• Supports response to different student needs depending on discipline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• May stifle ‘entrepreneurship’ projects that require innovation</td>
<td>• Limits for centralized services connected to serve all needs – lack of communication of needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• May limit agility and flexibility</td>
<td>• Spurious efforts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Practices may end up differentiating/conflicting from the needs of the institution</td>
<td>• Different specifications for best practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Slower to adopt “best practices”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
East Tennessee State University

Goal – Growth and flexibility through online education

- Founded in 1911 as a normal school for training teachers
- Located in Johnson City, TN
- Nearly 14,500 undergraduate, graduate and professional students from 71 countries and all 50 states
- Started their distance education journey by offering occasional online courses and expanded into summer

Compete
Connect

Learning systems and tools

Benchmarks for excellence in online learning
Professional development
Digital Journey

Governance and Leadership

Technology Solutions

Excellence in Practice
Outcomes

➢ At least one section of **core business courses** is offered online one time per semester.

➢ All College of Business and Technology **summer courses now 100% online**.

➢ **One of the graduate programs requires an online student orientation** for the 100% online students.

➢ The Department of Management, Marketing, and Supply Chain **offers two 100% undergraduate programs and two 100% online graduate programs**.
Questions from the Audience
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Additional Information and Resources

The webcast recording and additional resources will be available in the next week: wcet.wiche.edu/events/webcasts.
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Community  |  Equity  |  Policy  |  Practice
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academicpartnerships.com
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• Member Closer Conversations
  • April 26, 12 PM MT: U.S. Department of Education’s Latest Proposed Changes
  • May 17, 12 PM MT: What You Need to Know Before July 1

• Can Microcredentials Re-engage 40.4 Million Learners? – Webcast | May 7, 12:00 PM MT
Join us for a WCET and SAN special event:

Distance Ed at a Crossroads: The Changing Landscape of New Regulations
July 30-31, 2024 | St. Louis, Missouri
Save the Date for the WCET Annual Meeting

Join us October 8-10 in Long Beach, CA!

Registration opens in May
Thank you

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Thank you for attending!

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