

Report on Results from Instructional Technology Services Faculty Support Survey - 2014

Overview

Instructional Technology Services provides support to San Diego State University faculty in the areas of instructional design, visual design, course management, technology integration, student assessment, and course evaluation. ITS helps SDSU faculty to integrate instructional tools and learning theories for the purpose of organizing, sequencing, presenting, and reinforcing information appropriately for particular teaching/learning situations. ITS's role at SDSU is vital – so much so that the Student Success section in SDSU's Strategic Plan specifically mentions the department:

Initiative 3: Pursue Pedagogical Innovation through Faculty Support

Increase institutional commitment to the design, development, assessment, and promotion of high-quality courses, programs and degrees through funding for Instructional Technology Services course designers and faculty-assigned time for participation in the Curriculum Design Institute.

Because serving faculty is its primary mission, ITS frequently seeks feedback from SDSU faculty in order to better understand their needs and improve the quality of service it provides.

This survey was distributed through email to 2,272 faculty in spring 2014. The three goals of the survey were to:

- Create awareness of the ITS department
- Help ITS understand how today's faculty use ITS services
- Help determine how ITS can better support faculty as it looks ahead to the next three-five years

329 faculty started the survey and 256 completed it. The response rate was 11% and included faculty from all eight of SDSU's colleges. 60% of the respondents were tenured or tenure-track faculty and 31% were lecturers. The remaining 9% listed themselves as administrator or "other." Almost two-thirds (62%) of respondents had 11 or more years of higher education teaching experience.

The findings support the following conclusions:

- Most courses are still taught in the traditional classroom format with no participation by distance students nor class sessions recorded for later viewing
- Faculty who teach online courses and courses with online elements need support for delivery of these courses
- Faculty would like support in the form of:
 - Recorded webinars and downloadable reference guides accessible any time
 - An ITS instructional designer assigned to work with their college, school, or department
 - Faculty-led demonstrations on how to use technology for teaching and learning
- Blackboard is the most commonly used tool supported by ITS
- Faculty are very satisfied with the support and services ITS provides
- Faculty do not use many online tools as part of course delivery
- Though there is widespread awareness of ITS programs and services, use is limited
- Faculty are interested in learning more about ITS programs and services

Findings and Interpretations

Upon analyzing the survey results, we were able to classify the results into six themes, in addition to characteristics of survey participants. These themes are not independent of each other and many survey items can fall under multiple themes. The themes are:

1. How (and how much) faculty use ITS services and programs
2. Faculty opinions about ITS support
3. How (and how much) faculty use online tools for instruction
4. “Smart” classroom support and issues
5. Type of courses taught
6. Support needs

How (and how much) faculty use ITS services and programs

In general, the survey results did not indicate widespread use of the ITS programs and services; however, 94% (n=268) of respondents said they use Blackboard. Equipment checkout was the next most commonly selected option at 50% (n=153). Less than 50% of respondents indicated use of the other services, such as:

- The Faculty Instructional Technology (FIT) Center (48%, n=138)
- Course design and redesign (23%, n=65)
- Clickers (16%, n=47)

Less than 15% (n=43) of participants indicated use of ITS services such as video production, graphics development, and Universal Design for Learning consultation.

Because there is widespread use of Blackboard (see above), it is not surprising that 67% (n=184) of participants had attended Blackboard workshops. Participants indicated less than 50% participation in all other workshops, such as:

- ITS consultations (47%, n=130)
- Lunches with ITS and the Center for Teaching and Learning (39%, n=107)
- Course Design Institute (16%, n=44)
- Large course workshops (9%, n=25)

However, among those who did take advantage of ITS services and programs, 92% (n=227) indicated that what they learned “moderately” or “extensively” influenced the design or structure of their courses, most commonly through better or increased use of Blackboard.

Though many faculty do not take advantage of ITS services and events, there is interest in these offerings. In a question about faculty use of ITS services and events, less than half (n=100) of participants indicated they take advantage of ITS offerings. However, for all events and services, over half of participants indicated that they *would like* to attend or use them. The most popular options were:

- Pre-recorded webinar/workshop (n=148)
- An ITS instructional designer assigned to work with my college (n=147)
- Faculty--led demonstrations on the uses of technology for teaching and learning in specific contexts (n=144)
- Downloadable/printable reference guides (n=140)

Through the survey, we sought to answer *why* faculty do not take advantage of ITS offerings in larger numbers, and it appears to be lack of time. When asked what has prevented them from attending ITS workshops or taking advantage of consultation services, the most common response was lack of time (62%, n=171). The next most common selection was inconvenient scheduling (36%, n=101). 22% of participants (n=61) responded that they had attended all ITS workshops/services that interested them.

Lack of awareness of ITS offerings does seem to explain the lack of participation.

- Only 16% of participants (n=44) indicated they did not know about workshops or consultation services
- 14% (n=39) indicated they did not know how workshops and services might help them.

Faculty opinions about ITS support

Even though faculty take advantage of few ITS services, survey participants indicated a positive impression of the support ITS provides. In one open-ended question about ITS support, 21 out of 59 respondents responded with positive comments about ITS/and or its staff members. In another open-ended question soliciting additional comments about the survey and/or support needs, 13 out of 26 respondents responded with positive comments about ITS and/or its staff members. Other responses to open-ended questions were not necessarily coded as positive or negative; instead, they were neutral comments about various ITS-related issues raised by the respondent (e.g., "I'd like some easy to use student conference scheduling software" or "Why isn't Hepner Hall 218 'Smart?'").

How (and how much) faculty use online tools for instruction

As with use of ITS programs and services, most participants did not indicate use of online tools as part of their courses. One exception was use of online collaboration tools such as Blackboard Collaborate and Google Docs, these tools were used by 51% (n=123) of the faculty who responded. All other tools, such as e-books, lecture capture, simulations and educational games, and e-portfolios were used by less than 50% of respondents.

While faculty do not use online tools in general as part of their courses, for the most part they do take advantage of some of Blackboard's capabilities as part of their courses. In another question, participants viewed a list of tasks and responded about if they use online tools (including Blackboard) for these tasks.

The top tasks for which participants indicated use of online tools were:

- Communicate with students (97%, n=238)
- Provide course readings and materials (90%, n=222)
- Online grade book (68%, n=168)

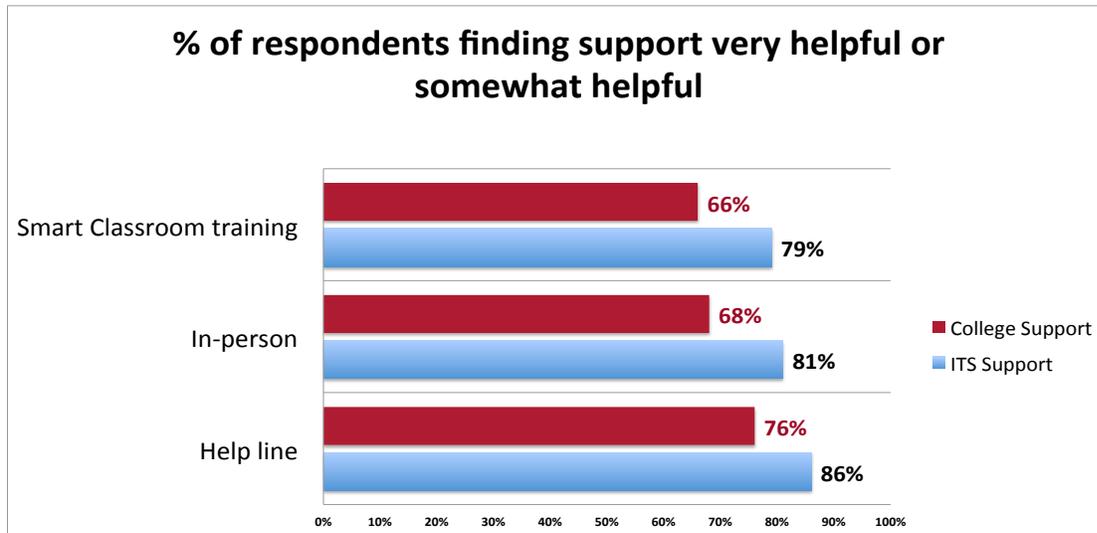
All other tasks presented in the question were also tasks available through Blackboard, but were not widely used. Less than 50% of participants indicated use of online tools for the other tasks, such as:

- Have students collaborate with each other (41%, n=101)
- Have students present work they've completed (33%, n=81)
- Have students conduct peer reviews (13%, n=32)
- Proctor online tests remotely (7%, n=17)

It appears that teaching faculty may not be aware of all of Blackboard's capabilities since many of these tools are not widely used.

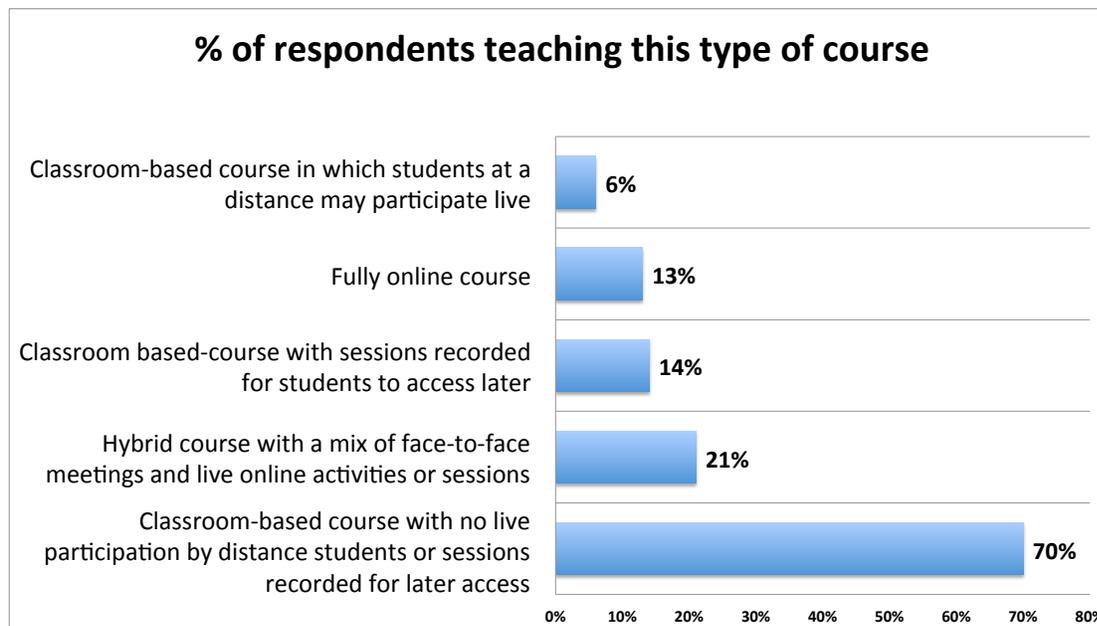
“Smart” classroom support and issues

Just as survey participants indicated satisfaction with services ITS provides, they also considered ITS support for “Smart” classrooms to be helpful. The results were not as positive regarding support from colleges or departments, as shown in this chart.



Type of courses taught

As there is a push toward offering more online courses, we were curious about the number of faculty actually teaching fully or partially online courses. Survey results indicated that most classes are still taught in the traditional classroom format. Participants were able to check all that applied when they indicated the type of courses they teach.

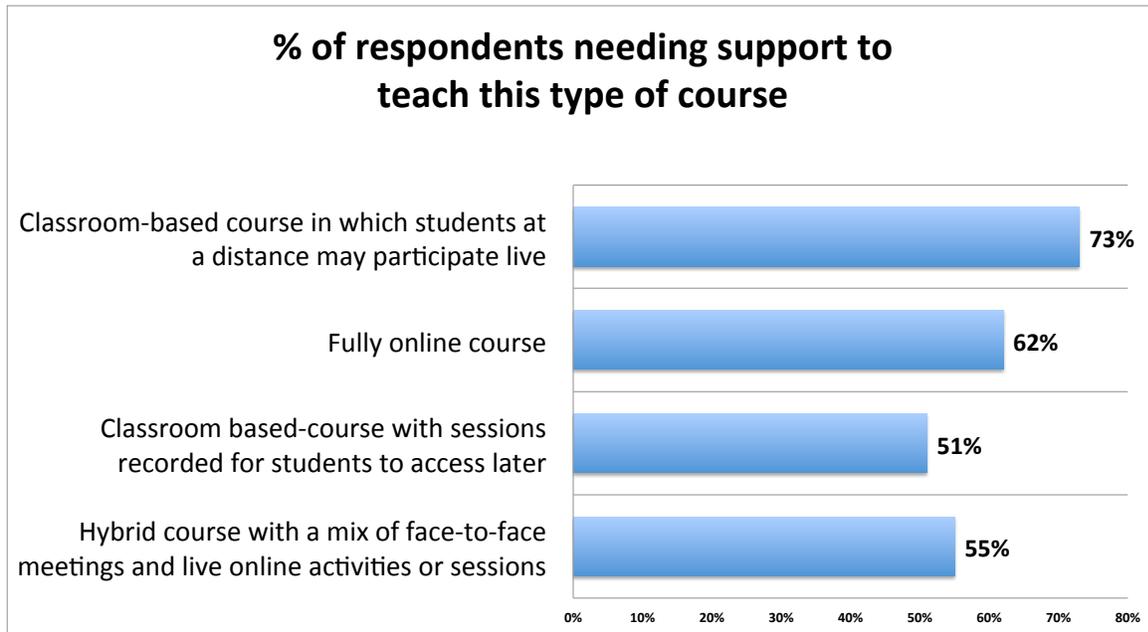


Just as survey participants are not using many online tools as part of their courses, most are not “flipping” their courses, a method which usually involves some online elements. However, participants were interested in learning about this. Though only 22% (n=57) of survey participants responded that they use this method, 44% (n=111) indicated that they do not, but would like to learn more.

On the other hand, some participants were not interested in “flipping” and expressed skepticism about it. 33% (n=82) of participants said they do not use the method of flipping and are not interested in using it.

Support needs

As the number of online courses and courses with online components is increasing, it is not surprising that survey participants indicated they need support for delivery of these courses.



Within their courses, participants needed the most support with incorporating multimedia and creating and providing narrated presentations for students. Participants were provided with 13 tasks and asked to rank the top five for which they needed support to do, using online tools. The tasks with the most top five rankings were:

1. Build or find multimedia rich learning activities (n=119)
2. Create/provide narrated presentations for students to view anytime (n=102)
3. Conduct live, online, interactive class sessions (n=87)
4. Have students collaborate with one another (n=86)
5. Assess students via online quizzes and/or tests (n=73)

Moving forward, ITS will use these data as a springboard to determine the pace and direction of efforts to continue to assist faculty in creating optimal learning environments for themselves and their students. Over the course of the next three to five years, findings from this survey will help to inform ITS' efforts to collaborate effectively with faculty in the areas of instructional design, visual design, course management, technology integration, student assessment, and course evaluation.

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