Student Feedback on Online Course Design

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Background and Methods
- How/Why
  - Individual course/instructor feedback
  - General online ID research
- Began in Fall 2015 (IRB201602565)
  - Baseline Data, CITR Research, Course Specific (1 – 5 cr)
- Qualtrics (36 ?) – 18 core + 18 display logic
- Response rate = 39% (1,185 students in 61 courses)
  - 3 reminder e-mails @ end of semester (pre-scheduled, varying times of day)
- Idea for improvement: Encourage offering Extra Credit

Module Objectives
Do you use the module objectives to guide your studying? (n = 1,095)

Module Objectives – Appropriate Use (71%)
How do you use the objectives to guide your studying?
  - "It helps me to realize what to focus on when reading the material or listening to the lectures"
  - "I like to read the module objectives before I start learning the material so I know what the end goal is and then again afterward to make sure I know the points listed."
  - "Looked at them to figure out what would be graded and how since expectations for the course varied and were difficult to surmise"
  - "It gives me an outline to study and I can always get more in depth if I wanted with each subject. It also gives me an end goal to achieve so I know what to expect."

Module Objectives – Confusion (25%)
How do you use the objectives to guide your studying?
  - "If you're talking about the bulleted tasks in each module, the only way to pass the class is to address each one."
  - "As a timeframe of when materials were due"
  - "Well the lecture and all the readings I need to do are in the modules, so that's where I go to find that as well as what assignments are due for the week."
  - "I look at them to make sure I'm working on the correct assignment."
  - "I used the flashcards and the module lectures."
Module Objectives – Recommendations

- New wording added to module pages:
  - Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) are presented at the beginning of each module to inform you of the specific knowledge, skills, or abilities that will be assessed as well as the complexity of understanding that is expected. This allows you to focus on these items as you interact with the assigned instructional materials (lectures, readings, etc). More information on the structuring of objectives can be found here.

- Objective use added to the Welcome video

- Question re-worded/defined on questionnaire: module objectives (listed at the beginning of each module page) – Confusing responses dropped to 12% in Spring 2017

Module Objectives – Recommendations

*Italics have been added for Summer*

- Do you use the module objectives (listed at the beginning of each module page) to guide your studying?
  - Never
  - Rarely
  - Sometimes
  - Most of the time
  - Always
- Please explain how you use the module objectives to guide your studying.

Lecture Videos

- Video Style Preference
  - n = 679
  - 29% Prefer/Strongly prefer Mediasite
  - 42% Prefer/Strongly prefer Greenscreen
  - 26% No Preference

Lecture Videos

- Do you pause or rewind the lecture videos to take notes? (n = 169)
  - Never/Rarely: 21%
  - Sometimes - Always: 79%
Lecture Videos

If more than 20 minutes, is it important to you that the content is divided into separate videos? (n = 169)

- Important: 31%
- Neutral: 46%
- Unimportant: 23%

Lecture Videos

Were you satisfied with the number and length of the lectures or would you prefer one of the following changes? (n = 912)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Dissatisfied: Less/Shorter</th>
<th>Dissatisfied: More/Longer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td># of lectures</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of lectures</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Course Access Methods

How did you access this course? (For each device, please note the method and frequency)

- Access Via Web Browser
  - Sometimes, Most of the Time, or Always
    - 62% of PC users
    - 64% of Mac users
    - 13% of Tablet users
    - 38% of Phone users
    - Never or Rarely
    - 87% of Tablet users
    - 62% of Phone users

- Access Via Canvas App
  - Sometimes, Most of the Time, or Always
    - 43% of Phone users
    - 14% of Tablet users

A large percentage of students access their courses through the Canvas App.

Course Access Methods

- Students are using a variety of devices

Device Usage (n=684)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Windows Desktop or Laptop</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mac Desktop or Laptop</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tablet (ex: iPad)</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
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Questions?

- Survey Design
- Module Objectives
- Lecture Videos
- Access Methods

Expectation Management

- Managing Student Expectations of Response Time
- We found:
  - Some students expected 4 hour response times
  - Student preference mean: 19.78 hours / max: 36.75
  - Sometimes instructor response time varied widely within a single course: “There was no consistency with the response time from the instructor. Sometimes he would answer right away, sometimes it would take days.”
- Action taken:
  - Recommend 24 hours weekdays, 48 hours weekends
  - Mention response time in syllabus and welcome video

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On average, students are NOT spending more time per week on their summer courses than they did on Spring/Fall courses. (3 credit courses only)

- Fall 2015 (9): 6.69h, avg expected grade A-
- Spring 2016 (17): 6.60h, B+
- Summer A (3): 7.22h, A
- Summer B (3): 6.63h, A-
- Summer C (1): 10.16h, A-
- Fall 2016 (18): 7.53h, B+

Rigor should be the same, avg. time should increase by at least 50% in summer semesters

### Student Time Spent Per Week

- **Addressing rigor issues:**
  - Remind instructors of SACS accreditation standards
  - Recommend using the RICE course workload estimator (9 - 12 hours should be the Fall/Spring expectation)
  - Working with chairs to get adequate/accurate instructor workload assignments for development and teaching semesters
  - Other ideas?

### Engagement Satisfaction

- Majority of students (n=1,086) are very satisfied - neutral

  - Very Dissatisfied: 5%
  - Dissatisfied: 17%
  - Neutral: 33%
  - Satisfied: 37%
  - Very Satisfied: 8%

### Engagement Satisfaction

- Preferences of those dissatisfied (13%):
  - More with Classmates: 40%
  - More with Instructor: 30%
  - More with TA: 20%
  - Less with Classmates: 10%
  - Less with Instructor: 10%
  - Less with TA: 5%
  - Different Types with Classmates: 50%
  - Different Types with Instructor: 40%
  - Different Types with TA: 10%

- How would students like to change interactions?
  - "Philosophy requires debate and it is difficult to discuss ideas through discussion posts. I wish we had in-class discussions so students could easily talk out ideas."
  - "A weekly or bi-weekly video conference with the instructor to review material would be incredibly helpful as these concepts are complicated (too complicated) for a powerpoint to convey."
  - "I believe that instead of making us work on a huge group project together, make the students work on smaller group projects and make the T.A.s ensure that everyone in the group is participating."
  - "Increase the interaction among students, because it would be really helpful if we could study together or do more assignments together as opposed to just posting discussions and replies."
Engagement Satisfaction – Office Hours

- Poor attendance at virtual office hour sessions (By appointment only policy)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>% of Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2015</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2016</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer A 2016</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer B/C 2016</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2016</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Selected: There were NO virtual office hour sessions offered

Recommendations:
- Emphasize appointment option in welcome video and on the syllabus (virtual or in person for local students)
- Hold virtual office hours before all exams (if possible survey for preferred time)
- Record all class-wide sessions (and individual sessions when appropriate) for those who can’t attend live sessions
- Offer EC for live attendance
- Require question submissions prior to live session
- Use “message students who…” function to suggest appts
- Include office hour reminders on select module pages

Engagement Satisfaction – Groups

- Expected that students would have a preference
- Data does not show a strong preference for either

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preference</th>
<th>% of Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly prefer different group members</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slightly prefer different group members</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Preference</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slightly prefer same group members</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly prefer same group members</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

n = 136

Summary - Valuable Course Specific ?s

- Satisfaction with # and length of lectures
- Hours/week
- Average instructor response time
- Level of interaction

Plus:
- Clarity of assignment instructions
- Do you think that any part of the course was weighted too heavily or did not have enough point value?
- Would you recommend this course to a friend?

Summary – Communication Best Practices

- Survey the students! (idea: mid-semester start/stop/continue)
- Explain purpose of SLOs to students
- Enable speed-control in videos
- Tailor videos to the course content and instructor
- Design with compatibility and accessibility in mind
- Set expectations early/Justify ID decisions (ex: group work)
- Communicate with students frequently and in varied ways (ideas: weekly announcements, 5 min video assignment explanations)

Questions/Comments

- Expectation Management
- Engagement Satisfaction
Quick Survey!

- What data (if any) do you provide to faculty about their courses?

Think-Pair-Share

- What else could we be asking students to improve the quality of courses?
- How can course quality improvement be incentivized and rewarded?