

Remote Student Learning Survey Results

UW Oshkosh: Spring, 2020

Total Respondents: 1,703

Home Campus:	#	%
Oshkosh	1,555	91%
Fond du Lac	35	2%
Fox Cities	110	6%
Blank	3	0.1%

YEAR	#	%
Freshman	349	20%
Sophomore	403	24%
Junior	399	23%
Senior	389	23%
Graduate	160	9%
Blanks	3	0%

Ever Taken Online Classes Before :	#	%
No	892	52%
Yes	804	47%
Blank	7	0.4%

How Many Classes Taken Online Before:	#	%
1	260	32%
2	208	26%
3	121	15%
4	56	7%
5	40	5%
6 - 9 classes	42	5%
10+	67	8%
Blanks	10	1%

Many of the students reporting that they had taken courses online previously noted it was during either high school or for a graduate program. Many who took courses at the undergraduate level reported having taken those online courses during the interim or summer sessions at UW O or at another institution.

Technology Utilization for Online Learning:

Device Used:	#	%
Personal Computer	1612	95%
Mobile Device	807	48%
Tablet or iPad	126	6%
Chromebook	96	6%
UW Oshkosh Owned Computer	27	1%
Blank	3	0.1%

Mobile Device (Android or iPhone):	#	%
iPhone	611	76%
Android	196	24%
Blank	0	0

UW-O Computer (Mac or Windows):	#	%
Windows	16	59%
Mac	11	41%
Blank	0	0

Personal Computer (Mac or Windows):	#	%
Windows	917	57%
Mac	687	43%
Blanks	8	0.5%

Type of Tablet Used:	#	%
iPad	110	87%
Android	10	8%
Other	5	4%
Blank	1	0.7%

Student learning experiences will differ across courses and instructors. When thinking about your classes this semester, how satisfied are you overall with your instructors' use of each of the following methods for online instruction? (Select N/A for any method that was not used by any of your instructors.)	Satisfied		Somewhat Satisfied		Somewhat Dissatisfied		Dissatisfied		N/A	Blanks
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	#
Recorded video lecture	593	42%	445	32%	205	15%	160	11%	240	59
Lecture notes (Powerpoint, Word docs, etc.)	574	38%	538	35%	244	16%	165	11%	121	60
Enhanced lecture notes (text w/ audio, video, etc.)	400	33%	451	37%	212	17%	165	13%	408	66
Live (real-time) video lecture	322	27%	468	39%	225	19%	182	15%	451	54

Real-time interaction discussion or group activities in Collaborate Ultra	327	26%	472	38%	237	19%	219	17%	384	63
Interactive discussion groups	282	22%	446	36%	263	21%	264	21%	378	69
Synchronous interactive discussion or group activities in Collaborate Ultra	218	20%	364	34%	239	22%	243	23%	569	69

When thinking about your online classes this semester, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you, on average, with . . .	Satisfied		Somewhat Satisfied		Somewhat Dissatisfied		Dissatisfied		N/A	Blanks
1. your instructor(s)' ability?	746	46%	627	39%	171	11%	84	5%	0	74
2. the technical support you received for software issues?	223	32%	251	36%	122	18%	98	14%	937	71
3. online tutoring this semester?	93	38%	56	23%	28	12%	66	27%	1389	70
4. your online learning experiences in the second half of the semester?	241	15%	487	30%	427	26%	476	29%	0	74

What obstacles have you faced while participating in online learning activities? (Check all that apply.)	# of Students	% of Students
Difficulty staying motivated	1370	80.49%
Feeling isolated from your instructors and/or classmates	1085	63.75%
Access to Internet / Connectivity Issues	762	44.77%
Tools / Technology not working as expected	703	41.30%
Difficulty communicating with your fellow students	661	38.84%
Difficulty communicating with your instructor	585	34.37%
Other	175	10.28%
Faced no obstacles	72	4.23%

Please describe any examples of effective online teaching that you experienced this semester. What worked particularly well, from your perspective? (Summary of Responses)

Technology/Software (84 responses)

Overall, students appreciated any opportunities to meet with their professors regardless of platform. They felt that it helped them with their understanding of course content, connection to their instructors and peers, and provided a sense of normalcy.

The most highly praised platform was Collaborate Ultra for the breakout rooms, whiteboard, and screen sharing features. Zoom seemed to also be favored by students because it provided the most normal classroom setting/environment. It seems as though any platform that provided a way for the students to see one another and the instructor really helped students feel engaged in their course.

Other platforms mentioned: Flipgrid, Blue Jeans, Google Meet, Kaltura, ALEKS, Web Assign, Google Docs, YouTube, Canvas

Course Structure/Methods – General (314 responses)

Students appreciated having expectations laid out clearly each week. They also appreciated being able to do their assignments at their own pace so instructors providing a longer timeframe for assignment due dates was helpful. Flexibility and accommodations were two other themes – weekly updates (email, Canvas, or video) and agendas provided by professors. Consistent and timely communication with their professor helped the students stay on track and feel connected.

Discussions worked best when instructors took part in them and were purposeful. Virtual office hours were a big hit. When class structure was well organized, students felt they could better keep track of things. Recorded science lab experiments were very helpful for students to see demonstrations.

Course Structure/Methods – Lectures (351 responses)

Students appreciated when professors lectured their own material versus referring students to YouTube or another university.

Synchronous vs asynchronous – Students wanted synchronous lectures as an option, but not a requirement. They appreciated them for accountability purposes and being able to ask questions in real time, but liked that they were recorded so that they could go back and re-watch for clarification. Given that student schedules/roles changed, they appreciated asynchronous options as well. Pre-recorded lectures with voiceover was appreciated. They also liked getting slides in advance of the lecture to help with notetaking. Students really liked when they could see the professor writing out material during lecture because it made it feel more like an in-person class.

Overall, recorded lectures and podcasts were most frequently regarded as effective online teaching methods.

Course Structure/Methods – Exams & Quizzes (14 responses)

Longer time and flexibility to take assessments and substituting other assignments for one or more exams/quizzes was most helpful to students. Weekly quizzes instead of big exams were also appreciated.

Instructor Characteristics (75 responses)

Overall, students really appreciated when instructors would reach out and check up on them. Students commented that when professors were available, accommodating, understanding, and flexible, they had a better experience with online learning. Prompt and efficient communication by instructors helped students stay connected and engaged. They appreciated knowing their instructors were going through the same challenges as them.

Misc. (23 responses)

SI and tutoring went well. In some courses, students felt as if they had to teach themselves. Some students felt that working on things in their own time was a positive while others found it to be a challenge.

N/A (66 responses)

Some students did not feel that anything in the online environment went well. They found it challenging to learn online and didn't feel as if they received the same education as they would have if classes were on campus.

What suggestions do you have for faculty to enhance student engagement in online classes? (Summary of responses in 6 categories)**Technology / Software**

Many students noted that they liked having synchronous video chats. Suggestions were made to require cameras for professors and/or students in the video chat to foster a sense of a normal classroom environment.

Some students enjoyed using Collaborate Ultra, although others seemed to encounter video / audio / internet connection issues with the platform. Many commented that Collaborate only allows for a limited number of video feeds to be displayed at once, and they preferred being able to see a greater number of participants' video feeds through platforms such as Zoom. Several stated that Zoom was easy to use and included more features than Collaborate Ultra.

Many students indicated dissatisfaction with instructors' usage of Canvas and other online tools; in a number of these instances, students believed that instructors did not have an adequate understanding of how to use it.

A few students also commented on wanting access to printing services, or else for the fees allocated toward printing services to be refunded.

Some respondents expressed frustration with the inability to access required technology, whether this was in the form of an internet connection, software, or hardware.

Instructor Characteristics

Students' responses showed that they wished faculty would be understanding, flexible, patient, and positive. Students wanted instructors to understand the struggles and challenges they were facing and to make accommodations when necessary (some students suggested reworking the course structure and assignments; others suggested more leniency with grading and deadlines.)

When instructors reached out to check in and/or provide updates, this seemed to go a long way with students. Students wanted to feel that their instructor was present and hadn't forgotten about them.

Students also frequently commented about the level of effort they perceived their instructor was putting into the class. Some felt as though the level of effort decreased. Others remarked that they appreciated extra time professors devoted to virtual office hours.

Communication

Overall, students appreciated regular, consistent communication. Clear, structured communication helped students stay on track with course content and deadlines, as did periodic reminders. Students liked knowing when and where to look for / expect different components of their courses.

Many responses requested that instructors respond to emails in a timely fashion (students' specification of time frame ranged from within 24 hours to within one week.) Furthermore, students wanted to feel as though the instructor had thoroughly answered their email and that the instructor responded in a way that didn't seem as though they were frustrated or burdened by the student's email.

Students wished that they would have had more access to virtually talk with their instructor for questions about content and even to connect informally. Engagement with other peers and the instructor was something that many students definitely missed having while learning remotely. A few students noted that it is difficult to ensure everyone actively takes part in the online learning environment, no matter what method is used.

Class Structure

The majority of students were adamant that professors should provide lectures for their courses in order for them to gain an understanding of the material. Without this, many of them felt that they were deprived of the education they deserved. In courses where professors provided lectures, some respondents favored synchronous lectures, while others preferred asynchronous, and others said they learned best from a mix of both. When lecture notes or PowerPoint presentations were given, students liked having narration provided as well to expound upon the concepts in print. Most students did not appreciate instruction to use the textbook as their only source of information (without lectures or notes from the instructor.)

Most students seemed to agree that instructors should have a live session, whether to provide instruction, answer questions, or just generally check in, at least every one or two weeks.

A few comments indicated that students were especially dissatisfied when instructors had given them videos from other universities' lectures or other sources such as YouTube, instead of using their own material.

A high number of students commented that the workload they were given was excessive and often unmanageable. Several remarked that time allotted to complete assignments was unreasonable, and that instructions were not given enough in advance of the deadline. Some students also expressed concern regarding the quality of the work, referring to it as busy work that seemed disconnected with the course content or objectives.

Some students favored the use of discussion boards on Canvas. A few suggested including more structured guidelines for participation, so that students were not merely agreeing with those who had already posted.

Stances on group work were quite varied. Some students said that finding times to meet together was challenging, while others appreciated the opportunity to connect with some of their peers.

In their comments, students advocated for deadlines that accommodated their new schedules off campus. Some students who work during the week suggested that at least one weekend day be included before the expiration of a deadline. Others said that weekend deadlines would not have existed on campus and therefore should not exist now. Some students noted that assignments related to labs became more difficult. Many requested that instructors record themselves doing the labs for students to view.

Another overarching theme found in students' comments pertains to consistency among all instructors. Students sometimes struggled with the amount of variation in course structure and instructors' expectations.

Misc.

Students asked for better preparation on the part of the university and instructors.

Many comments included mentions of difficulty staying motivated; some stated that this was because of their home environment.

N/A

Some students took this opportunity to say that UWO did a good job providing quality learning experiences for students, considering the circumstances.

A few students said that they didn't notice a substantial shift in their learning experience when classes transitioned online.

A number of students expressed a strong desire never to have online classes again.

If training were offered to increase your ability to participate in online learning, on which of these topics might you take advantage of such training? (Check all that apply.)	# of Students	% of Students
Time management / using time effectively in online learning	903	53.06%
Using Collaborate Ultra	339	19.92%
Using Kaltura or MyMedia to create your own multimedia content for class assignments	284	16.69%
Using Canvas to submit work, see grades, access feedback	249	14.63%
GoBoard (online tutoring platform)	237	13.92%
Using discussion groups in Canvas	194	11.40%
Other (specify)	132	7.76%

What other online learning training topics are you interested in?

Programs / Software / Technology (9)

Microsoft Teams (3)

Zoom (2)

Using alternative video conferencing tools to Collaborate Ultra

How to upload projects such as video and audio

How to take lecture notes online.

Websites to use

Personal Success Strategies (11)

The campus should look into self-care topics: e.g., coping methods for anxiety and stress. This has been difficult for everyone.

Self-Motivation ; Finding motivation (4)

How to focus when not being able to leave your room

Organization while at home, efficiency

Time management on a bigger scale; creating schedules/our own intermediate deadlines and goals for large assignments throughout the entire class; juggling multiple heavy-duty classes.

How to stay active when learning online

Learning to teach yourself

Professors (1)

I am interested in getting a perspective on what the professors see. Not grades or anything, just to see what they can.

Using Campus Resources (2)

How to register for next fall's classes.

Access to resources we would normally receive at the library.

None / N/A (49)

I don't want to take any more online classes. (6)

Not needed; tools were clearly explained and easy to use. (2)

None. The rest of my classes are phenomenal.

Too busy for online training.

None or N/A (39)

Please describe the other obstacles you faced while participating in online learning activities this semester:

Technology Issues (12)
Not having a printer. (2)
Computer not being able to run software required for classes.
Uploading videos and voice over PowerPoint; haven't done this until this semester.
Collaborate Ultra was terrible. The video connection always got lost or froze. I got kicked out and I couldn't get back in a few times. I used zoom with some professors and it worked out pretty well!
Did not have access to required software.
We were told we had to download software in order to complete labs in the course. But the software was not applicable to all devices and some students were left with no other options than to buy a new device, which is NOT always an option for some people due to financial reasons.
This is specific to using Canvas and Person Books. It still takes too long to get to the material for class. I had to open three duplicate tabs to get to Persons material. I understand that all of this is difficult to have in one seamless experience, but for future folks, say five years from now, it would be nice to have this worked out.
Not having access to normally provided equipment and resources. My school laptop is a Chromebook and can't handle the video editing software that is used in class. I bought a Chromebook because all of the software that I needed was available in campus labs. Now that campus is closed, I'm left quite behind in what I can do.
Having to deal with Examsoft. I hated having someone watch me through my computer camera as I take my exams. I feel that it really hurt my grade due to the increased anxiety.
Collaborate Ultra was a program that did not work well on my personal laptop, as well as my phone. To me, the program was hard to operate and maintain, and I wish the university would have allowed the use of ZOOM. But, everyone did the best that they could, and I am excited to return to campus in the fall.

Issues with Instructors (49)

Fourteen students said that instructors assigned additional work, perhaps to make up for missed class time, to the point where the students were spending much more time on their classes than they normally would. Many of the same students said that instructors failed to understand or take into account the disruption in the students' lives that was caused by the pandemic and were unwilling to grant the needed flexibility.

Fourteen students also cited a lack of communication or direction from their instructors. Communication issues ranged from a lack of clarity and detail in assignment instructions to instructors not posting needed materials or any instructions at all.

Six students said that at least one of their instructors essentially stopped teaching and just posted assignments for students to complete.

Several students said that the exam format made it difficult for students with attention issues--e.g., being able to see only question at a time, and not being able to go back. Some professors cut the exam time into half of what students would normally have in the classroom.

According to several students, some instructors could not keep up with posting lectures and assignments on time, making it impossible for students to keep up with the assigned work.

Several students said that some instructors were not computer savvy and had difficulty with the technology; one student complained of instructors relying too much on discussion forums and not using other software tools.

Issues with Learning Environment (13)

I think that not being on campus really made me feel like I had no help. Yes you said the resources are all there but it's way different seeking help on campus.

had not only a hard time motivating myself but also not a great work environment to be in. I don't have a desk so I did most of my work on my floor. My house is very small and with that I felt sad as I wasn't getting the social interaction I'm used to. I can only imagine people that have a worse situation than me and how they got anything done.

It was difficult to stay on track without a set schedule and to keep up with all of the extra assignments (discussion posts, etc.); it was also very easy to become distracted.

Lack of access to lab equipment. Not much to do about that.

I am an art major and this just doesn't work. I don't have supplies I need, tools, space, or really anything. Going online was like slapping a band-aid on a chopped off leg.

Having a hard time concentrating with family members making distractions .

The learning environment of my home caused huge disadvantages.

Having a quiet space to do work.

Stayed focused was a lot harder, and I also lacked in my studying/ fell short of my study habits. I have a brand new puppy and so meetings or speeches that needed to be given through CU was difficult since she was so loud and barking. And I did not have anyone to watch her for me so I could have the house quiet, so I would expect a bit more understanding with that since it was out of my control that her doggy daycare was shut down.

I get so much energy from working in the same room as other people, so I felt less motivated overall during long stretches when we didn't have in-person classes.

The awkward and uncomfortable feeling of participating through a computer caused me to skip class.

Not being able to concentrate while taking exams, due to thin walls.

Issues with Work / School / Life Balance (25)

Some students returned to a full house of parents and siblings, with near-constant noise and no place to work quietly.

Several students remarked that they has several family members needing to use the internet and/or the one computer in the house.

Parents had children at home, with no school or daycare, which made it impossible to participate in live class sessions. Parents with school-age children were also expected to help them with schoolwork in addition to attending to their own studies.

Some students had to increase hours at work or find a second job to help their families respond to financial difficulties caused by the pandemic. Others were forced to work more hours in order to increase worker safety or cover for other workers affected by COVID.

Several students mentioned stress, anxiety and depression, often caused by financial strain.

Even in the best of situations, it was difficult to focus for several hours at a time each day spent on the computer.

Students again mentioned that some instructors added additional work to their classes, making time management even more difficult.

Some students had family members who became ill from COVID, increasing their financial and emotional burdens.

Mental Health / Physical Health / Stress / Anxiety (8)

Moving off campus broke my mindset for learning, so my depression is rampant.

Struggling with depression and Generalized Anxiety Disorder.

It was VERY intimidating having to adapt to such a new process with little to no time. I honestly can say that because of this, it did result in a change in my mental health and mental stamina and NOT for the better. The coursework that I was expecting to adapt to under these circumstances was extremely a challenge. I was NOT satisfied with this year.

Personal mental health issues that impacted my learning.

My mental health completely depleted due to the pandemic and I could barely get out of bed let alone do homework, this was the worst possible transition ever and my grades are tanking because of it. I was excelling on campus but I do not learn well when doing online courses.

The pandemic caused unprecedented stress and uncertainty that needs to be accounted for when professors are grading. I personally have never been so stressed about passing my classes before. This was an incredibly difficult transition learning online from professors and classes that were not designed to be online. I do not feel the university has done enough for the students to recognize this issue and help students. The pass/fail options are not sufficient for the students who are trying harder than ever but are still not seeing the same grades they would have if it were in-person classes.

Health problems due to constant screen time. With the lack of face to face instruction, 12-15 hours a day would be looking at a computer screen.

I got bronchitis so that posed a problem since I missed a couple real time video classes

Other (11)

I could never get a timely response out of anyone associated with the campus whether it be professors tutors or campus workers.

I'm disappointed in how this whole situation was handled honestly.

Not feeling like I'm actually learning anything.

Didn't feel like I learned anything. "Just going through the motions"

Colleges not upholding their mission and values in a time which truly tested these concepts. Fairly disappointed in this University as a whole.

Everything. I don't blame the instructors. I blame whoever the decisions for the campus who completely messed up this situation. Totally unprepared.

Not getting the experience that led to choosing UWO as my grad school.

The fact that I paid the same price to receive little to no education during this semester.

Extra Help in math, writing.

Tutor help. There were limited resources to get direct tutor style help. Whether from student tutor or sitting down with professor to review work.

Normal support from people on campus was reduced.

Please provide any additional comments about how your experience with online learning could be improved.

Technology / Software (84 responses)

Many students expressed dissatisfaction with the way their instructors utilized technology platforms (namely Canvas.) Overall, students wanted instructors' usage of Canvas to be updated in a timely manner and consistent across all of their courses. Many comments asked for training for various online platforms (mainly for instructors, and sometimes for themselves.)

Some students commented that they did not have access to a printer. Others remarked that the hardware they own was not compatible with software instructors required for their courses. Many noted that they had experienced issues connecting to the internet. Overall, students wanted the university and their instructors to be more cognizant of their ability / inability to access needed technology and to make appropriate accommodations.

A few students whose courses used exam proctoring software felt that this was an invasion of their privacy and added undue stress (as the program flagged any time they were not looking directly at the screen.) Often, students experienced technical difficulties with proctoring software and were unable to complete the assessment within its allotted time limit because of the time they lost trying to reconnect.

Some respondents asked for instructors to be given tablets to draw on in order to share their work with students, in addition to microphones to be heard clearly.

As with responses to other questions in this survey, some students expressed a preference for Zoom over Collaborate Ultra.

Instructors (71 responses)

Students appreciated when instructors were available to answer questions. Some commented that they did not hear from their instructors for several weeks, and their engagement in the course lessened as a result. Students who felt that their instructors cared and were involved in the class seemed to have better experiences with their courses.

A few students suggested that the university set minimum requirements for instructors' involvement in the course and provision of course materials (such as making sure lecture materials were uploaded.)

Students wanted instructors to understand that the online environment presented challenges for them. While they recognized that the online transition was difficult for instructors too, students said that a particular challenge was handling the differences among all of their instructors in terms of course presentation, expectations, and workload.

Students remarked that they appreciated responses from instructors when they emailed them. A few said that they felt instructors were rude to them about things they could not control (such as connectivity issues.) Sometimes, they felt that they were bothering instructors when they emailed them.

Generally, students asked for instructors to be trained in effective online teaching.

A few students noted that their professors had done a great job being understanding and helping their online learning experience go smoothly.

Communication (74 responses)

Similar to responses to other questions in the survey, many students wanted more communication from instructors. They liked being able to virtually connect with their instructors. They appreciated opportunities to take part in virtual sessions with their peers as well.

Some students were frustrated at their instructors' lengthy response times or lack of response to email.

Many comments indicated that students wanted instructors to provide more frequent updates about what students should be working on and upcoming due dates. They also wanted clear communication about course / assignment expectations.

Students wanted their instructors to post their grades in Canvas – some students said they had no idea what their grade was; others said that grading and giving feedback on assignments were significantly delayed.

Campus Resources (10 responses)

Some students wanted additional resources related to the counseling center.

A student requested more online tutoring, and others mentioned increased access to online SI.

Class Structure / Rigor (239 responses)

As suggested in previous responses, students wanted lecture materials from their UWO instructors, rather than from instructors at other universities or YouTube. Without materials from their own instructor, many often felt that their tuition money was wasted.

Several students felt that instructors increased the workload too much. Some respondents said the work given seemed like busy work.

Students said that the exams they took online often prohibited them from going back to previous questions, and this added stress to the assessment.

Some mentioned that the discussion posts on Canvas were difficult to respond to because they lacked sincere student critical thinking and effort. A few students felt as though their professors had no awareness of what was being written in the discussion posts, and they would have liked instructor input on whether their answers were accurate or not.

Comments were varied in regard to class schedules. Some said that instructors should have adhered to the original schedule (a few seemed to think their professors were slacking if they were no longer available during the scheduled class time and did not make arrangements to meet during other times). Others voiced the opinion that maintaining the original class schedule was impossible because of their new work and/or family responsibilities. The perspective on

deadlines was similar – some students wanted strict deadlines to help ensure they stayed on track; others preferred more relaxed deadlines to work at their own pace.

Students wanted class material to be organized.

At the very least, students seemed to appreciate lecture slides with the instructor's voice as a narration. A better option for them was a recorded or live lecture. Many students attested that they needed to hear the instructor's voice explaining the material in order to understand it.

As with responses to other questions, students provided varying stances on whether lectures should be synchronous or asynchronous. Some students who attended synchronous classes said it was hard to focus on the lecture.

Students often said that the nature of their course / program (whether referring to a lab component, nursing simulation, or art/music course) was not conducive to an online environment.

Whichever way instructors chose to structure their class, students wanted to feel that the instructor had taken into consideration the new challenges presented by online learning during a pandemic and had either changed or kept the course structure accordingly.

Home Environment (13 responses)

Students commented that it was difficult to concentrate or focus when they were home with their family. Some said that distractions in their home environment negatively affected their performance.

A student commented that being at home rather than on campus was regressing back to their high school self and erasing progress toward independence.

Miscellaneous (51 responses)

Several students commented that they had positive experiences with online learning. Some stated their appreciation for being safe at home and limiting their exposure to others.

Even if students did not have an ideal learning experience, many of them said everyone did the best they could under the conditions.

Students remarked that tuition should be reduced or refunded for online learning.

Some students said they struggled with staying motivated this semester.

No Way to Improve Online Learning or N/A (132 responses)

Many students shared their strong dissatisfaction with online learning and insisted classes need to be held on campus.

Many students said they did not learn well online.

Several students stated that they will take a semester off if fall classes are online.