



2009 Study of Students and Information Technology

Student Focus Group Questions

1. Background

- a. Student information: age, gender, senior/freshman, full/part time, on/off campus, discipline.
- b. How many computers do you own? What kinds? How long have you owned them?
- c. Do you own a smartphone or PDA that can access the Internet? Do you use it to access the Internet? What other electronic devices do you own?
- d. What do you use your smartphone or PDA for?
- e. Are there any barriers to your use of your smartphone or PDA to access to Internet?
- f. Have you used your smartphone or PDA for any university applications? Which ones? Instruction?
- g. How do you think you will be using your mobile device in the future? Are there university applications you'd like to see on your mobile device?

2. Skill and use

- a. How skilled are you at using computer technology to do the work required for your classes?
- b. Much is being said and written about the current generation of students using information technology extensively and being tech savvy. Do you think this statement is true of yourself? Of your friends?
- c. What kinds of technology skills are you weak in? What are you strong in?
- d. What kinds of technology skills do you think students in general are weak in?
- e. Do you use computers and the Internet for entertainment? If so, what kinds of activities do you engage in for entertainment?
- f. What impact do you think a student's major has on his or her use and skills with technology?
- g. What sorts of things do you use on the Internet (blogs, wikis, YouTube, etc.)? How much do you use them?

3. Your use of technology in courses

- a. How have instructors used information technology in the courses you have taken thus far?
- b. How effective are your instructors with these information technologies?
- c. What are the major advantages that you see in the use of information technology in your courses?
- d. What is the major disadvantage that you see in the use of information technology in your courses?
- e. Do you think that the use of information technology in your courses has helped you in your learning?

 If so, how?

 If not, why not?
- f. What are the major obstacles you see to more effective use of computer and information technology in your courses?
- g. One of the findings of last year's study was that students indicated that technology in their classes was primarily about convenience. While improved learning was also mentioned, it seemed to play a lesser role. Can you please comment on this?
- h. If there was one thing your professors could do or not do with respect to technology in your course, what would it be?

4. Future

What advice would you give university administrators who are keen to encourage the effective use of technology in college courses? What sorts of things should they be doing?

5. Other Comments?