

MyGateway Faculty WS 2006 Survey

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Purpose

The ongoing evaluation of technology-enhanced credit courses, making use of the course management tool, MyGateway, documents the experiences of two key stakeholder groups: enrolled students and teaching faculty. The questions and subsequent analyses here identify essential support strategies for faculty who use technology to improve learning experiences for students. Objectives include:

- Documentation of improvements in UMSL faculty computing capabilities and sophistication,
- Documentation of the use of MyGateway features by selected faculty in WS 2006, and,
- Demonstration of indicators of optimal teaching and learning interactions between and among faculty and students.

Methodology

The WS 2006 Faculty MyGateway/ITS Classroom Survey (see, appendix 1) was available to all active faculty at UM-St. Louis via the MyGateway course management system. All faculty logging on to the system had access to a survey link. Additionally, faculty were notified of the survey's availability via campus email. The evaluation period ran from March 10 through May 5 2006. Completed surveys numbered 282 (approximately 28.1% of all employed faculty [1002] and 47.5% of all faculty actively using MyGateway [594] for WS 2006).

Table 1: Academic Unit of Respondent (Q1)

Academic Unit	Percentage of respondents	responses
A&S-Anthropology	1.80%	5
A&S-Biology	2.50%	7
A&S-CCJ	2.10%	6
A&S-Center for Trauma Recovery	0.40%	1
A&S-Chemistry	2.80%	8
A&S-Communication	1.80%	5
A&S-Economics	2.80%	8
A&S-English	7.10%	20
A&S-Foreign Lang.	3.90%	11
A&S-History	2.10%	6
A&S-Mathematics	3.90%	11
A&S-Philosophy	1.10%	3
A&S-Physics&Astronomy	1.40%	4
A&S-Political Science	1.80%	5
A&S-Psychology	5.70%	16
A&S-Social Work	2.50%	7
A&S-Sociology	2.10%	6
Business Administration	7.80%	22
COFAC-Art and Art History	2.50%	7
COFAC-Music	1.10%	3
Education	16.00%	45
Honors	1.80%	5
Nursing	5.70%	16
Optometry	3.20%	9
Other	16.30%	46
Total	100%	282

Internet access and online activities

Instructors at UM-St. Louis for WS 2006 were surveyed to determine the type of internet access they have off-campus, their use of on-campus internet resources, and the type of classes they teach using MyGateway.

Table 2: Off-Campus Internet Connection (Q2)

Type of Connection	Percentage (multiple responses possible)
Dial-up Modem	23%
DSL/Cable Modem	69.5%
Work LAN	4.3%
Wireless at Home	17.4%
Wireless Work	2.8%
Other Wireless	5.3%
Other Internet Access	3.9%

Faculty access to the internet from off-campus locations is comparable to that of students at UM-St. Louis (see, WS 2006 Student Survey). With over 75% of the campus community having broad-band internet access from off-campus, some level of internet-based course activity has become the norm. This year's survey also asked about wire-less internet access. With over 17% of the faculty and 23% of students using wireless access, challenges and benefits of ubiquitous computing are starting to become a focus of attention.

Table 3: Considering Switching to Broadband? (Q3)

If you are currently using a dial-up Internet connection, are you considering changing to DSL or Cable broadband service?	Percentage
Yes	11.4%
No	21.7%
Not using Dial-up	66.9%

A distinct proportion of the faculty, approximately one-third of those still using dial-up modem connections from off-campus, appear to be satisfied with this level of service. Some may use dial-up as a back-up internet connection while primarily using the broadband connections on campus. It appears certain that as price of off-campus broadband service lowers and availability increases, type of internet connection will no longer play a significant role in the type of online components used within a course context. With the added availability of on-campus computing resources, the digital line dividing the "haves from the have-nots" is gradually disappearing.

Table 4: Use of Online Services and Assistance (Q4)

Which of the following have you used?	Percentage (multiple responses possible)
The Faculty Resource Center	60.3%
The Online Testing Center	9.6%
Technology Fridays Workshops	29.1%
Photo Roster	33.7%

A majority of the faculty completing the survey report making use of the Faculty Resource Center, while less than a third report attending ITS workshops on MyGateway and other internet-based

teaching tools. As revealed in the comments (below), a broader and more flexible work schedule, and increased advertisement of on-campus resources and workshops would most certainly augment the ongoing need for faculty development in the rapidly changing context of technology enhanced teaching and learning.

Table 5: Type of MyGateway Class (Q5)

Which of the following is most typical of the classes you teach using MyGateway?	Percentage
Combination of face-to-face and online with MyGateway	84.5%
Combination of ITV and online with MyGateway	.9%
Combination of video instruction and online with MyGateway	1.3%
Totally online with MyGateway	3.5%
I do not use MyGateway	9.7%

The vast majority of instructors (84.5%) teach face-to-face classes supported with online components via MyGateway. The value, and certainly the popularity, of this type of “blended class” environment is difficult to challenge. Although we have not yet seen substantial increases in the number of totally online courses, it appears certain, based on the computing and internet sophistication of our campus community that growth in this area is coming.

MyGateway Experiences

Table 6: Expectations and MyGateway

Instructors responded to the following question:

Think about how using MyGateway has affected your ideas about teaching and learning. Compared to courses that you have taught that did not use MyGateway, has using MyGateway made it more likely for you to (1: strongly agree, 3: neutral, 5: strongly disagree):

	Mean	Standard Deviation	Percent Not Responding
Q6: Expect students to take more responsibility for their own learning	2	.902	27%
Q7: Expect students to participate in class discussions	2.31	.923	30%
Q8: Feel distant from your students	3.58	1.14	32%

Faculty responses indicate that blending online components into their courses leads to higher expectations for student responsibility and participation. Online learning strategies are becoming seen as a method for increasing student engagement in the learning process. Importantly, the idea that internet-based course components produce a “distancing” within the student-teacher relationship receives little support in this survey.

Table 7: MyGateway and Student Learning

Faculty respondents were then asked to respond to the following statements:

Because of the way my course uses MyGateway (1: strongly agree, 3: neutral, 5: strongly disagree):

	Mean	Standard Deviation	Percent Not Responding
Q9: My students are better able to understand the ideas and concepts taught in this course	2.22	.793	28%
Q10: My students are better able to visualize the ideas and concepts taught in this course	2.28	.802	29%
Q11: I expect the students to complete more course work	2.56	.828	30%

The overall positive response to these statements concerning student learning and activity serves to further emphasize a significant change in faculty perceptions, based perhaps on their growing experience with online educational strategies; teaching “online” is becoming viewed as a positive addition to the classroom experience.

Additionally, with approximately 30% of survey participants not responding to these items regarding changes in teaching and learning practice, questions are raised concerning the lack of involvement of this group of faculty users. Current research plans are to investigate perceptions and motivations of faculty in several focus groups, comprised of faculty who make minimal or no use of the course management system, and those who are “high users” of technology.

Barriers and Benefits with Online Teaching and Learning

Table 8: Barriers to Online Teaching (Q12)

Faculty respondents were asked to identify both barriers and benefits associated with online teaching and learning strategies. The following tables and charts summarize their responses.

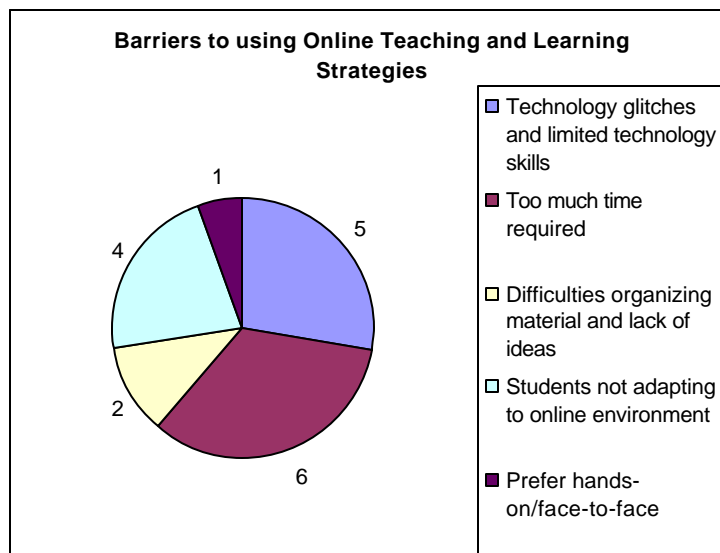
As an instructor, which of the following is/are the greatest barrier(s) in using online teaching and learning strategies:

Barriers, Q12	Percentage	Number Responding (multiple responses possible)
Time involved in redesigning teaching approaches and material	43.3%	122
Preference for face-to-face student-instructor interactions	31.9%	90
Students' inexperience with computers	17.7%	50
Access to technology-enhanced classrooms	17%	48
Categorizing materials and navigating in MyGateway	15.6%	44

Email volume	16.3%	46
My own lack of experience with computer/software and the Internet	14.9%	42
No real reward or recognition given for using these resources	14.5%	41
Overloaded with Technology	10.6%	30
Incompatibility of computers and file formats with MyGateway	9.6%	27

Other barriers to online teaching (Q12 other) : Nineteen (19) faculty members provided written comments concerning other barriers to online teaching and learning. Six of these comments duplicated responses to the item in the table above, "Preference for face-to-face student - instructor interactions."

Chart 1: Other barriers to online teaching (Q13)



What do you feel is/are the greatest benefits in using online teaching and learning strategies?

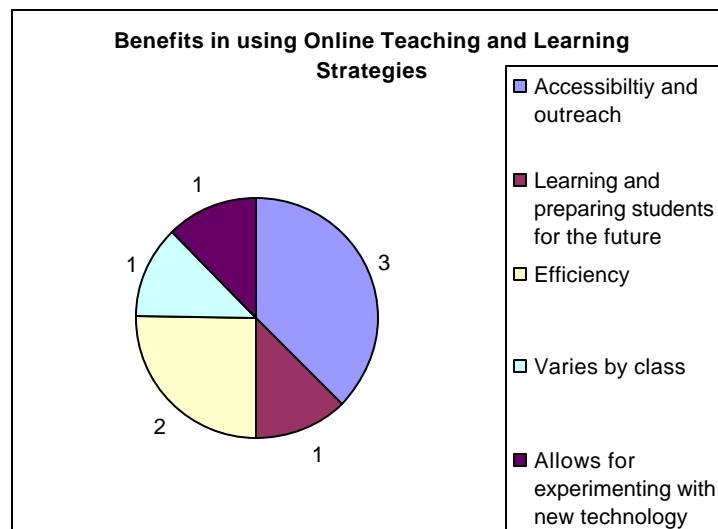
Table 9: Benefits from Online Teaching

Benefits, Q13	Percentage	Number Responding (multiple responses possible)
Ability to keep students informed about the course, and keep the course organized	69.9%	197
Access to course materials, 24 by 7	64.9%	183
Convenience and ease of use of MyGateway	56.4%	159
Access to enriched teaching materials	56.4%	159
Students having access to their current course grades	51.1%	144
Creating new ways to engage students with content	41.5%	117
Opportunity to continue interaction/discussion outside class time	40.8%	115

Giving more immediate feedback on papers, quizzes and exams	40.4%	114
Increased contact between students and instructors	31.2%	88
Enabling students to learn at their own pace	20.9%	59
More thoughtful and equitable class discussions online	16%	45
Archiving (recording) live class presentations for playback and review	9.6%	27
Real time, online Interaction (Centra, Wimba Live Classroom)	6.7%	19

Other benefits in using online teaching and learning (Q13 other): eight (8) faculty members provided written comments concerning other benefits associated with online teaching and learning:

Chart 2: Other benefits in using online teaching and learning



Written Comments:

One-hundred and one (101) respondents provided written comments concerning their use of technology and technology enhanced classrooms. For the first time, assessments of MyGateway and technology enhanced classrooms were combined in the same evaluation survey for faculty and students.

- Thirty-five (35) comments pertained to the use of MyGateway (summarized below).
- Eight (8) focused on faculty training opportunities: 5 commended ITS, the FRC, and the CTL for providing excellent opportunities; 3 requested more variety and flexibility in workshop scheduling.
- Two (2) comments pertained to the “clicker” system: one on its compatibility issues with Macintosh computers and one on the need for access to the system in additional classroom (note: PRS is available in all TECs).
- Two (2) comments requested adding “Smart boards” to all classrooms.
- Ten (10) comments suggested that more TECs are needed and/or that a better scheduling system is needed.

- Three (3) comments pointed to a variety of problems in using the TECs: acoustics, lighting, and room layout.
- The remaining 41 comments were specific to room problems, hardware issues, and other miscellaneous comments.

Faculty Comments concerning MyGateway, Q29

The following categories (from the analysis of current responses) based responses to the final “Comments’ item on the survey, characterize the benefits and problems student report. The number of responses indicated in the tables below total more than 35 since many response contain two or more specific comments:

Table 10: Benefits of Using MyGateway

Benefits	Percentage of respondents	Number or comments
Course is more effective	6.93%	7
MyGateway is convenient and efficient	6.93%	7
MyGateway is useful for making course documents available	6.93%	7
MyGateway is an aid to within course communication	2.97%	3
Online discussions are more effective	1.98%	2
Use of MyGateway and other technologies is good preparation for students’ future careers	.99%	1
Excited about getting started	.99%	1

Table 11: Problems and Concerns related to Using MyGateway

Problem or Concern	Percentage of Respondents	Number or comments
More Workshops at a variety of times (especially for adjuncts)	4.95%	5
System conflicts: Macintosh and Sun, text formatting	3.96%	4
Navigation issue (slow and repetitive	1.98%	2
Grade book need more functionality	1.98%	2
Enrollment lags at semester start	1.98%	2
Too much time commitment	1.98%	2
Adjunct/Student access to computers	1.98%	2
TEC room availability	1.98%	2
Copyright concerns	.99%	1

Selected Comments

Benefits and Innovations:

While this course COULD be taught without technology, it is much more effective WITH technology. This class (Eng./Sec. Ed. 4885) is the last "Methods" course for preservice English teachers. I can think of no better way to train the next generation of teachers than modeling effective, responsible use of technology.

My innovation this semester was to use Discussion Board for a scheduled hour of data analysis while students were working on the case study assignment. We began with a face-to-face meeting where we analyzed a piece of student work from several angles. ..., Discussion would then flow until time was called. This activity was spectacularly successful. ... The overall quality of the discussion was far beyond what I have normally gotten face to face from a student teaching group.

MyGateway is a wonderful resource for keeping students up-to-date on class materials and their grades. It's also a great time saver for submitting grades electronically at the end of the semester.

I have used a version of MyGateway for many years -- I started at Mizzou in roughly 2000 and found myself happy when UMSL had the services similarly available in 2004. I don't think I could teach effectively without the technological aids.

The support for Mygateway is generally excellent. My only problems with its use for on-line classes and other student access is the delay in getting newly enrolled students online.

I need ideas; some of my courses aren't suited for some of the strengths of MyGateway, at least as far as I can see, but others' ideas might help. I have tried to go to the Friday technology sessions but they keep being scheduled for mornings, when I have several classes. Thanks.

We have created a mygateway community for students expected to matriculate into the program next fall. It has been well received and I am hopeful that the attrition rate will be reduced by helping new students connect with others over the summer. We have also placed the college academic and event calendars and other important information for students, faculty and staff into mygateway.

Concerns and Problems:

The biggest drawbacks for using MyGateway involve the COMPLETE lack of formatting options and the excessive number of steps required to post (or remove) anything. Being unable to use bold, underlining or italics means that text blurs together. It also means that all bibliographic citations are robbed of their essential identifying features (italicizing titles of books, for instance), things our courses try to impress upon our students as requirements for proper citations.

Please use consistency with the blackboard design, so we don't have to re-learn everytime we use a different classroom, or use more flexibility with the training sections schedule.

The repetition involved with MyGateway makes using the system tedious at times, especially when the same announcement must be posted for all courses

I would be inclined to use the gradebook in MyGateway if it were more flexible. I do intend to incorporate MyGateway more after I can find the time to set it up and really learn it.

Convenient learning situations for adjunct faculty to enable them to more easily use the gradebook and other tools.

Discussion

The amount of time involved in developing online teaching resources and a preference for face-to-face interaction still stand out as the major barriers to increasing faculty adoption of online teaching strategies. Faculty concerns with other issues, lack of experience, sophistication with, and access to internet technologies appear to be declining as not only the UM-St. Louis community, but American society in general, becomes more and more of a “networked society.” Recent data indicate that 73% of the America adult population (and over 80% of the 18-49 year old population) use the Internet.¹ Faculty have also come to realize the value of technologies like the MyGateway system for increasing access to educational resources and for maintaining contact with students—eliminating the barriers of traditional classroom walls.

The increasing support for online technologies appears to be a self-sustaining (and driving) force in and of itself. As faculty become more accustomed to and intrigued by the online teaching environment, they voice more concerns about training opportunities and are beginning to demand increasing sophistication of technological resources. Coupled with student perceptions of the positive value of online learning opportunities², it is apparent that campus support at both the administrative and technological levels must continue to expand.

Student and faculty perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors documented in these surveys, and the consistency of these findings over the previous four years, highlight MyGateway’s important contribution to the strategic campus goals of:

- **Recruitment**
- **Retention**
- **Student engagement**
- **Community building**

New Investigative Phase

Unanswered questions, such as “why” many faculty do not increase their use of MyGateway and WWW resources beyond minimal posting of syllabi and course materials, or “how” Information Technology, Center for Teaching and Learning and other support units can better serve the diverse needs and schedules of our faculty, have prompted a departure from the broad surveying approach in the coming academic year.

Plans are to further investigate and probe the perceptions and motivations of faculty in several focus groups, comprised of faculty who make minimal or no use of the course management system, and those who are “high users” of technology. Student will also be involved in focus groups to compare experiences and ideas for improvement of technology integration, Fall Semester, 2006.

¹ See the recent Pew Internet and American Life data on Internet Activities (<http://www.pewinternet.org/trends.asp>) and Demographics of Internet Users, http://www.pewinternet.org/trends/User_Demo_4.26.06.htm.

² See, *MyGateway Student Survey WS 2006*, <http://www.umsl.edu/technology/mgwhelp/mgwinfo/mgwinfo.html>

MyGateway and Instructional Computing Technology Enhanced Classroom Faculty Survey Spring 2006

Computer and Internet Access

1. If you connect to the Internet from home, what type of Internet connection do you have?
 - A. Dial-up modem
 - B. DSL /Cable Modem
 - C. Work LAN
 - D. Other, Please specify
 - E. Do not connect to the Internet from home.

2. If you are currently using a dial-up Internet connection, are you considering changing to DSL or Cable broadband service?
 - A. Yes
 - B. No
 - C. Not using dial-up

3. The following services are intended to help you manage your courses more easily. Which of them have you used (select all that apply)?
 - The Faculty Resource Center (copying, digital conversions, equipment check out, MyGateway help)
 - The Online Testing Center
 - Technology Fridays Workshops
 - Photo Roster

4. Please indicate your academic department from list below:

5. Which of the following is most typical of the classes you teach using MyGateway?
 - A. Combination of face-to-face and online with MyGateway
 - B. Combination of ITV and online with MyGateway
 - C. Combination of video instruction and online with MyGateway
 - D. Totally online with MyGateway

MyGateway Experiences

If you do not use MyGateway, [click here](#) to go to questions concerning Technology Enhanced Classrooms.

Think about how using MyGateway has affected your ideas about teaching and learning. Compared to courses that you have taught that did not use MyGateway, has using MyGateway made it more likely for you to:

6. Expect students to take more responsibility for their own learning.
Much More Likely Somewhat More Likely About the Same Somewhat Less Likely Much Less Likely No Response

7. Expect students to participate in class discussions (face-to-face or online).

Much More Likely Somewhat More Likely About the Same Somewhat Less Likely Much Less Likely No Response

8. Feel distant from your students.

Much More Likely Somewhat More Likely About the Same Somewhat Less Likely Much Less Likely No Response

Because of the way my course uses the MyGateway:

9. My students are better able to understand the ideas and concepts taught in this course.

Strongly Agree Agree No difference Disagree Strongly Disagree N/A

10. My students are better able to visualize the ideas and concepts taught in this course.

Strongly Agree Agree No difference Disagree Strongly Disagree N/A

11. I expect the students to complete more course work.

Strongly Agree Agree No difference Disagree Strongly Disagree N/A

12. As an instructor which of the following are the greatest barrier(s) in using online teaching and learning strategies [check Yes for all that apply]

- Time involved in redesigning teaching approaches and materials
- Incompatibility of computers and file formats with MyGateway
- Overloaded with Technology
- Categorizing materials and navigating in MyGateway
- Preference for face-to-face student-instructor interactions
- Students' inexperience with computers
- My own lack of experience with computer/software and the Internet
- Access to technology-enhanced classrooms
- E-mail volume
- No real reward or recognition given for using these resources
- Other:

13. What do you feel is/are the greatest benefits in using online teaching and learning strategies? [check Yes for all that apply]

- Access to enriched teaching materials
- Ability to keep students informed about the course, and keep the course organized
- Convenience and ease of use of MyGateway
- Opportunity to continue interaction/discussion outside class time
- More thoughtful and equitable class discussions online
- Giving more immediate feedback on papers, quizzes and exams
- Creating new ways to engage students with content
- Real time, online Interaction (Centra, Wimba Live Classroom)
- Archiving (recording) live class presentations for playback and review (Centra, Wimba, ITV)
- Encouraging group/team projects and collaborative learning
- Students having access to their current course grades
- Increased contact between students and instructors
- Enabling students to learn at their own pace
- Access to course materials, 24 by 7
- Other:

If you used a Technology Enhanced Classroom (TEC) during spring semester 2006, please answer questions 14-29, if not, [click here](#) to go to question 30.

14. How frequently did this class meet in a Technology Enhanced Classroom(TEC)?
Every class period Half of the class periods Less than half of the class periods
15. How often did you use the ceiling mounted projection system, in the TEC?
Every class period At least half of the classes Less than half Not at all
16. Which Instructional Computing services have you used within the past semester in the Technology Classrooms? (check all that apply)
- Start of semester TEC training
 - Accessed file from my steamboat account in the classrooms
 - Computer's DVD player
 - VCR in the classroom
 - LANSchool or Apple Remote Desktop (only in rooms with Student Stations)
 - Smart Sympodiums (only in select rooms)
 - Mimio XI (only in CCB 104 or SSB 134)
 - Downloaded the free download of Norton Anti-Virus (www.umsl.edu/norton)
 - Online Service Request Forms
17. If you do make use of the VCR, could your materials be found on DVD?
Yes No Did not use the VCR
18. Does this course require your students to use the student workstations in class?
Yes No Room only has an Instructor Station
19. If this course is taught in a room with student workstations, could it be taught without them?
Yes No Room doesn't have student stations
20. Could this course be taught in a traditional classroom without technology?
Yes No
21. How do you feel that your students learned in a technology enhanced classroom?
Better than a traditional classroom
The same as a traditional classroom
Worse than in a traditional classroom
22. The Instructor Station operated properly:
All the time Most of the time Some of the time None of the time
23. If you did encounter problems with the instructor station, please describe them below.
24. Is this your first semester teaching in a TEC?
Yes No
25. Please rate your satisfaction with the timeliness with which reported problems were addressed, in the TECs.
Very Satisfied Satisfied Dissatisfied Very Dissatisfied Reported no problems.
26. How would you rate the overall classroom support provided by the TEC staff?
Very good Good Bad Poor

27. How would you rate your overall experience using the Technology Enhanced Classrooms?
Very good Good Bad Poor

28. Please specify from the list the building and room in which this course is held.
(CCB003, CCB005, CCB103, CCB104, CCB106, CCB107, SSB102, SSB131, SSB132, SSB133, SSB134, SSB201, SSB202, SSB204, SSB205, SSB206, SSB207, SSB215, SSB216, SSB218, SSB224, SSB225, SSB332, SSB333, SSB335, SSB336, SSB342, Clark200, Clark300, Clark309, Clark311, Clark317, Clark409, Clark411, Clark413, Clark 415, Clark417, Lucas100, Lucas200, Lucas201, Research120, Research121, Benton101, Benton102, Benton104, Benton225, Benton 240, Benton242, Benton243, Benton443, Benton445, Stadler104, UCenter63, UCenter64, Seton6, Seton17, Seton Room, LeGras, OptA, OptB, SCC101, SCC103, SCC110, SCC111, SCC201, SCC202, SCC204, SCC206, SCC209, SCC210, SCC219, SCB102, NA002, Music105, MarkTwain218)

29. Additional comments or suggestions: