MyGateway Student Survey Report:
Fall 2014-Spring 2015

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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 students' computing capabilities and sophistication,
- Documentation of the use of MyGateway by students in FS 2014 and SP 2015\(^1\), and,
- Demonstration of indicators of optimal teaching and learning interactions between and among faculty and students.

Methodology

The FS 2014 and SP 2015 Comprehensive Evaluation of MyGateway and Instructional Computing Use by Students Surveys (see, appendix 1, page 30) were available to all enrolled students at UM-St. Louis via the MyGateway course management system. All students logging on to the system had access to a survey link. Additionally, students were notified of the survey’s availability via campus email. The evaluation period ran from November 9 through December 11, 2014 for the fall survey and April 3-May 11, 2015 for the spring semester. Completed surveys numbered 793 for the FS 2014 survey and 419 for SP 2015 (approximately 6.5% of all active student users of MyGateway at UMSL for FS14 [12,161] and 3.7% of all active student users during SP15 [11,424]).\(^2\) This report also presents data from previous surveys dating back to FS 2002 for comparison and long-term trend analysis.

Demographic Profile

Survey respondents

The distribution of student respondents by academic level, transfer status, and academic unit, although not a random or representative sample of the student population, does come close to representing the characteristics of student at UM-St. Louis. The following figures (1, 1a, 2, 3 and Table 1) represent the academic level, transfer status, and course of study for the respondents to the FS 2014 and SP 2015 surveys.

\(^1\) The designation for the spring semester changed from “WS” to “SP” in 2009.

\(^2\) Active student user data from the MyGateway tracking log. Registrar’s enrollment figures: FS14:12,108; SP15:11,724 Enrollment data from the registrar’s enrollment reports: [http://www.umsl.edu/~registration/Faculty-Staff/registrar%20enrollment%20reports.html](http://www.umsl.edu/~registration/Faculty-Staff/registrar%20enrollment%20reports.html).
Figure 1: Respondent’s Academic Level AY 2014-2015 N: 1212 (Q1)

Figure 1a: SP 2015: Total Student Population Academic Level (N: 11,424)
Figure 2: Transfer Status of Respondents AY 2014-2015 (N: FS14-793 SP15-419)(Q2)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FS14</td>
<td>62.0%</td>
<td>38.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SP15</td>
<td>60.0%</td>
<td>40.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Yes
No

Figure 3: Respondent’s Course of Study AY 2014-2015 N: 1212 (Q3)

- Arts and Sciences: 36.0%
- Business Administration: 11%
- Education: 8.0%
- Graduate School: 8.0%
- Nursing: 13.5%
- Optometry: 16.0%
- Fine Arts and Communication: 7.0%
- Other: 1.0%
Table 1: Respondent’s Course of Study: Mean WS 2006-SP 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent’s Course of study</th>
<th>Mean WS 2006-SP2015</th>
<th>Actual Percentage Enrolled SP2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arts and Sciences</td>
<td>31.11%</td>
<td>30.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Administration</td>
<td>20.97%</td>
<td>17.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>15.90%</td>
<td>6.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate School</td>
<td>10.03%</td>
<td>22.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing</td>
<td>6.26%</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optometry</td>
<td>1.83%</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fine Arts and Communications</td>
<td>5.64%</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>7.78%</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>99.66%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An additional factor to be taken into account in reviewing the data presented in this report is the pattern of use of MyGateway over the past fifteen years (figure 4, below). MyGateway use has grown relatively steadily and with modifications with course and instructor counting methods taken into consideration, growth continues at a slow, but steady rate. Note that this data does not indicate the extent that an instructor makes use of MyGateway features and tools in a course. Reports from students, documented in the analysis that follows, indicate a wide variation in instructor use of the MyGateway system.

Figure 4: Active courses and instructors in MyGateway FS 2000-SP 2015

- a: beginning of FS 2000, estimate based on historical graphs.
- b: end of FS 2000, estimate based on historical graphs.
- c: estimate based on historical graphs.
- d: change in how active courses are counted, including “hidden” or combined sections.
- e: change in the counting of active instructors—eliminating double counts and non-active course instructors.
- f: ss09 and fs09 data is not available, sp10-sp15 data reflects change in how active courses are counted and an elimination of courses no-longer active.
Survey Results

Questions in the MyGateway Student Survey focused on:
- Computing and Internet access
- Engagement in learning activities in MyGateway courses
- Student satisfaction with courses using MyGateway
- Communication between students, and between students and teachers

Computers and Access for Students

Mobile/wireless access has become the norm with over 90% of students reporting home or off-campus wireless Internet access and over 90% of survey respondents reporting use of a laptop or netbook. Additionally 82% reported “smart phone” use in SP15—up slightly from 80% in SP14 (75% in FS13, 66% in FS12, 46% in SP11, 34.9% in FS10, and 27% in SP10). This is in line with national trends reported by the Pew Internet and American Life Project, which charts over 64% of Americans making use of smart phones (up from 51% in 2009), and 85% of the 18-29 year old population owning smartphones. Over 61% of American adults own laptop computers and 50% own a tablet device or e-reader.

Figure 5: Survey Respondents Smart Phone Ownership, SP 2010-SP 2015 (Q18)

3 Based on surveys given to students in Robert Keel's classes at UMSL, 2012-2015. Unpublished.


5 http://www.pewinternet.org/2014/01/16/e-reading-rises-as-device-ownership-jumps/e-readers6/
With broadband access nearly universal (70% of American adults have broadband access at home, as do 80% of 18-29 year olds\textsuperscript{6}), and mobile devices owned or accessible to over 90% of students today—a trend that is accelerating, educational institutions are facing a new, “networked individual”\textsuperscript{7}. Not only is smartphone use becoming universal, in SP15, 47% of students reported owning an iPad, iTouch, or other tablet, 37% reported they plan on buying one of these devices in the coming year. (see figure 7, below). Students (and teachers) at UMSL are 21st Century Netizens.\textsuperscript{8}

\textsuperscript{6} Pew Internet and American Life Project, Trend Data (Adults), Home Broadband Adoption, http://pewinternet.org/Trend-Data-(Adults)/Home-Broadband-Adoption.aspx and http://pewinternet.org/Commentary/2012/May/Pew-Internet-Broadband.aspx


\textsuperscript{8} The specifics of faculty use can be found in the faculty survey analysis located at: http://www.umsl.edu/technology/mgwhelp/mgwinfo1.html. This report draws upon the analyses and trends documented in these reports. UM-St. Louis ceased providing dial-up internet access in June 2007.
Figure 7: Which of the following personal electronic devices do you plan on purchasing in the near future? (check all that apply) (Q19)


Figure 8, below, gives us a glimpse at how students use their mobile devices. Although the obvious use of a smart phone for making telephone calls ranks high, in SP15 students report as using their phones as much for texting as for calling. Over 80% of students also report using their devices for web browsing and email, 74% use their smartphones for social media, and 66% use their devices to access MyGateway.

Figure 8: What do you use your mobile device (other than laptop) for? (check all that apply) (Q20)

Beyond owning and using a mobile device, we are also interested (especially for purposes of planning for wireless coverage and computer lab development) in whether or not students bring their mobile devices to campus. Over the past four semesters, this rate has remained relatively constant at 65%, however for AY 2014-2015 the data documents an increase in students bringing their mobile devices to campus (74% in SP2015).

**Figure 9: If you own a laptop or mobile computing device, do you bring it to campus? (Q21)**

The primary reason students report for why they do not bring their laptop or mobile computing device to campus has to do with inconvenience based on weight and size. Other frequently cited reasons include concern over security, lack of need due to access to computers on-campus or being a distance/online student, problems with accessing the wireless network, and professors who do not allow or require the use of mobile devices in the classroom. Concerns less frequently mentioned include charging issues and difficulty with accessing Internet services while on campus.

In addition to questions concerning mobile devices, in SP15 student were asked about the use of “cloud storage”.

**Table 2: Type of Cloud Based Services Used (select all that apply)(Q25) SP15 N: 419**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Google Drive</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Google Docs</td>
<td>47.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DropBox</td>
<td>30.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chrome</td>
<td>39.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Google Hangouts</td>
<td>13.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MS Skydrive</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UMSL K drive</td>
<td>19.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Google Calendar</td>
<td>32.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other, please specify</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>18.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The most common other service cited by students was Apple iCloud (11 out of 20 responses)
Seventy-six percent (76.0%) of students responding to question 26 indicated they would be likely to use a Cloud Based Service if it was integrated into campus technology.

**MyGateway Course Activity**

Students (94% average FS14-SP15) consistently rank access to grades in MyGateway as the most useful feature of the course management system (“I do feel that keeping track of my grades on My Gateway helps me to stay engaged in the class. However, many professors do not keep up with posting grades in the same manner that I am required to finish assignments. When professors do not post grades, it makes me feel that the professor does not care about us, and I am less inclined to keep up.”) Access to Course Documents and Announcements and Email come in a close second and third in usefulness to students (89.5%% and 88% average FS14-SP15). Announcements and Email help students stay connected to the course and the campus. Accessing course documents enables students to study and review whenever and where they want. The Spring 2015 survey also indicates ongoing stability in perceived usefulness of “Online quizzes, exams, and tests (67%), and an upward trend in the perceived usefulness of Discussion forums (31% in SP12 to 36% in SP13 and 41% in SP14, FS14, and SP15). Also of note, a slow but steady growth in perceived usefulness of Wikis and Blogs (11% in SP12, 14% in SP13, 15% in SP14, and 18% in SP15), and a steady increase in appreciation of the virtual classroom tools (Collaborate and Wimba). Coupled with the appreciation students report for announcements and email, these last three trends point to a growing confidence among students in the benefits of online interaction and collaboration.

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9 Student comment from the FS 2014 survey
Figure 11: What are some of the most useful MyGateway features? (check all that apply) (Q5)


MyGateway Experience

Students answered a series of questions concerning their use of MyGateway in their classes. Time spent online, usefulness of features, learning, communication and satisfaction with MyGateway were the discrete areas.

Learning, Communication, and Satisfaction with MyGateway (Q4)

Students ranked the following statements on a seven-point Likert scale (1: strongly agree, 4: neutral, 7: strongly disagree). For all questions (except question 6: “Using MyGateway for my course work makes it more likely for me to work in face-to-face groups.”), the mean scores indicate perceptions of increased interactions and learning outcomes. The response on the prompt, “Using MyGateway makes it more likely for me to work in face-to-face groups” indicates that face-to-face group work is comparable between MyGateway and non-MyGateway courses.
Table 3: Communicating, Learning, and Satisfaction with MyGateway SP13-SP15 and Overall Mean for WS06-SP15 (Q4)

(1: strongly agree, 4: neutral, 7: strongly disagree)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Mean Score SP13</th>
<th>Mean Score FS13</th>
<th>Mean Score SP14</th>
<th>Mean Score FS14</th>
<th>Mean Score SP15</th>
<th>Mean WS06-SP15</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communicate with other students</td>
<td>2.80</td>
<td>2.81</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>2.80</td>
<td>3.02</td>
<td>2.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work in online groups</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>3.18</td>
<td>3.18</td>
<td>3.19</td>
<td>3.37</td>
<td>3.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More likely for me to work in face-to-face groups</td>
<td>3.79</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>3.79</td>
<td>3.68</td>
<td>3.89</td>
<td>3.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More likely that I spend additional time studying</td>
<td>3.01</td>
<td>3.02</td>
<td>3.03</td>
<td>3.04</td>
<td>3.09</td>
<td>3.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicate with my instructor</td>
<td>2.21</td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td>2.49</td>
<td>2.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MGW helps me do better (learn more)</td>
<td>2.63</td>
<td>2.64</td>
<td>2.66</td>
<td>2.64</td>
<td>2.78</td>
<td>2.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied with courses because of MGW</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>2.52</td>
<td>2.65</td>
<td>2.59</td>
<td>2.81</td>
<td>2.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessing Grades in MGW helps me stay engaged</td>
<td>1.79</td>
<td>1.83</td>
<td>1.82</td>
<td>1.77</td>
<td>1.94</td>
<td>1.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online discussions/think more about the course</td>
<td>2.93</td>
<td>2.86</td>
<td>2.88</td>
<td>2.83</td>
<td>3.01</td>
<td>2.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete course assignments</td>
<td>2.51</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>2.49</td>
<td>2.41</td>
<td>2.49</td>
<td>2.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use MGW in all my courses</td>
<td>2.12</td>
<td>2.15</td>
<td>2.08</td>
<td>2.16</td>
<td>2.32</td>
<td>2.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take another course at UMSL because it uses MyGateway</td>
<td>2.94</td>
<td>2.93</td>
<td>3.05</td>
<td>2.99</td>
<td>3.18</td>
<td>3.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete my degree at UMSL because of MGW</td>
<td>2.96</td>
<td>2.93</td>
<td>3.02</td>
<td>2.99</td>
<td>3.18</td>
<td>3.21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Most significantly (and supported by previous studies\textsuperscript{10}), "Being able to access course grades via MyGateway helps me stay engaged with my course work" (overall mean: 1.82); "I would like to have MyGateway used in all my courses" (overall mean: 2.13); and "Using MyGateway for my course work makes it more likely for me to communicate with my instructor" (overall mean: 2.26); \textbf{rank as being most significant to the students responding to the survey}. Overall, out of a total survey population of 13,990 students since the spring of 2006, perceptions of MyGateway use have been and remain quite positive.

\textsuperscript{10} See previous survey analyses at: http://www.umsl.edu/technology/mgwhelp/mgwinfo/mgwinfo.html
The data presented on the following pages (figures 13, 14, and 15) focus on student perceptions of the use of MyGateway within the contexts of communication (student-to-student, student-to-instructor), learning, and overall satisfaction with courses during the AY FS14-SP15 school year (N: 1195)

Average levels of agreement indicate that use of MyGateway results in more student/teacher communication, more student/student communication, a perception of increased learning outcomes and higher estimates of learning activity, as well as higher degrees of satisfaction with the students’ learning environment.

- **MyGateway use increases communication: overall, 68.5% of respondents agree.**
  - Using MyGateway for my course work makes it more likely for me to communicate with my instructor: **81.3% agree**
- **MyGateway use increases learning outcomes and activity: overall, 73.7% of students agree.**
  - Being able to access course grades via MyGateway helps me stay engaged with my course work: **91.5% agree**
• MyGateway use increases overall satisfaction with courses and learning at UMSL: overall, 65.9% of students agree.
  o I would like to have MyGateway used in all my courses: **80.4% agree**

Detailed distribution of responses to specific questions for FS14 and SP15, and long-term patterns of responses follows:

**Figure 13: Distribution of responses for “communication” questions (average for FS14-SP15 N: 1195)**

![Communication responses](image)

*Note. The communication prompt dealing with likelihood of working in face-to-face groups shows the most neutral response (at 3.79 on the 7-point scale).*

**Figure 14: Distribution of responses for “learning” questions (average for FS14-SP15 N: 1195)**

![Learning responses](image)
Note: The prompt, “access to grades keeps student engaged,” was most universally supported by those responding (91.5% agreeing).

Figure 15: Distribution of responses for “satisfaction” questions (average for FS14-SP15 N: 1195)

Figure 16 presents mean score data on student perceptions concerning communication, learning and satisfaction over eight instances of the current survey (WS 2006-SP 2014). Overall trends, while somewhat variable, document long-term stability in the tendency for students to view MyGateway as a key component of their learning experience and an increasingly positive perception of the utility of MyGateway by students.
Extending our look further back to the early surveys of students (WS02-WS05) we can discern significant long-term trends in increasing satisfaction and acceptance of MyGateway. Although these earlier surveys were structured somewhat differently than the current survey, most of the Likert scale questions have remained the same over the years. **Figure 16, (following page)** graphically reveals the steady increase in positive student perceptions of increased learning, communication, and overall satisfaction with the educational experience attributed to the use of the MyGateway course management system. The slight upturn in response for SP15 may be attributed to the small sample size. Interestingly, as use continues to increase, positive perceptions increase as well. This documents conclusions reached in the early years of use, students like using MyGateway in their courses and the more MyGateway is used (consistently and appropriately)\(^\text{11}\), the more they appreciate MyGateway.

\(^{11}\) See previous survey analyses at: [http://www.umsl.edu/technology/mgwhelp/mgwinfo1.html](http://www.umsl.edu/technology/mgwhelp/mgwinfo1.html)
Written Comments (Q6 and Q25 FS14/Q27 for SP15)

One-hundred and ninety-one (179) students provided written comments on the fall 2014 survey (22.6% of all respondents) related specifically to MyGateway and online learning. For SP 2015, 117 students provided written comments (27.9% of all respondents). Of these responses, 41 for FS14 and 25 for SP15 indicated, “N/A” or “Nothing to add.” Substantive comments for FS 2014 equal 138 (17.4% of all respondents) and for SP 2015 equal 92 (22% of all respondents). The total of all substantive comments for AY 2014-2015 equals 230 (19% of the 1212 student respondents).

The following categories (drawn from previous surveys responses and from analysis of current responses) characterize the benefits and problems student report. The data presented is a combination of FS14 and SP15 responses. The number of responses indicated in the tables below total more than 230 (not including N/A responses), since many responses contain two or more specific comments.

**Overall, generally positive statements about MyGateway (“MyGateway is great”) were the most common of all responses (21.7%).** Additionally, although not necessarily a benefit or a problem, 13% of comments requested additional feature and/or integration with other campus systems (detailed below) Also notable are the positive statements endorsing MyGateway as a
convenient tool for checking grades (11.3%) and the convenience and accessibility of the MyGateway system (5.7%).

Negative comments typically focused on how MyGateway is used inconsistently by instructors (13.5%), a growing concern that faculty need better training in using MyGateway (10.9%). 32 students (13.9%) specifically asked that instructors be mandated to use the grade book (regularly), and 12.6% of respondents voiced concerns over MyGateway not being used by instructors. Additional concerns pointed to other (often not MyGateway related) e-learning problems (9.6%), technical difficulties (8.3%), students needing training on the use of MyGateway (4.3%), and email and MyGateway navigation problems (7.4% and 9.1%, respectively—with the navigation problems being split between MyGateway/BlackBoard functionality and instructor course settings).

Ongoing issues:

- Thirty students (13% of those providing comments) indicated that they desired to see seamless interface connecting MyGateway to other campus systems (email, MyView [our student information system] and calendars), as well as the integration of cloud based collaboration software (“Dropbox,” “Google Drive”). Many of these students also expressed a desire for automated notifications within MyGateway to alert them to upcoming due dates and the addition of new content in MyGateway.
- There is an ongoing interest in accessing MyGateway via a mobile application. Ten students (5.2% of those providing comments) registered complaints concerning the functionality of the BlackBoard (MyGateway) app, or were not aware of the existence of a BlackBoard (MyGateway) app.
- Twenty-two students (9.6% of those providing comments) reported concerns over eLearning in general (favored face-to-face, saw MyGateway as a way for instructors to avoid “teaching,” disliked the reliance on computers in the classroom, etc.)

One new concern raised by eight (3.5% of those providing comments) students was to have a more efficient calendaring system that automatically entered assignment due dates and other relevant course information into a easy to access calendar. Many of the students also asked for an automated notification system that would send out either text or email notification when new documents or other materials are added to course sites.

Over the past four years, the UM-System and UMSL have worked to bring more classes online, and the increase in online enrollments may contribute to the perception of problems (mentions of problems with discussion boards, virtual classrooms and email—email issues were also affected by a change in student email access that went into effect in SP15). Students continue to be frustrated by the inconsistent use of MyGateway from instructor to instructor, and by the resistance of their instructors to use the system at all. Also notable, 4.3% of responses indicated the students themselves either want more instruction on the use of MyGateway or are unaware of some of its features (as well as other features of campus systems, i.e. being able to configure mobile phones to receive campus email, etc.).
Figure 18: Benefits of eLearning and Using MyGateway, FS14-SP15 Combined (N: 230)

- Generally positive ("MyGateway is great!"), 21.7%
- More Features/Integration, 13.0%
- Viewing and tracking grades, 11.3%
- More
- Accessing Documents and Assignments, 1.7%
- Organization features (personal and course-related), 2.6%
- Enhances Communication, 3.5%
- Other, non-MGW, 0.4%
- Convenience, Accessibility, and Reliability, 5.7%
- Enhances Campus Connection, 2.2%
- Virtual Classrooms, 0.4%
Table 4: Benefits of eLearning and Using MyGateway FS14-SP15 Combined

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benefits</th>
<th>FS14 (N: 138)</th>
<th>SP15 (N: 92)</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>% of all respondents commenting (N: 230)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Generally positive (&quot;MyGateway is great!&quot;)</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>21.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More Features/Integration</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>13.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viewing and tracking grades</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>11.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessing Documents and Assignments</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization features (personal and course-related)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhances Communication</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other, non-MGW</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convenience, Accessibility, and Reliability</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virtual Classrooms</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhances Campus Connection</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 19: Problems associated with eLearning and using MyGateway FS14-SP15 Combined (N: 296)

- MyGateway not used by instructors, 12.6%
- MyGateway used inconsistently, 13.5%
- Instructors Need Training, 10.9%
- Mandate use of grade book/require instructors to use MGW, 13.9%
- Other ELearning Problems, 9.6%
- Login and technical difficulties, 8.3%
- Email/other communication problems, 7.4%
- Navigation problems, 9.1%
- Student Need instruction on use, 4.3%
- Problems with Mobile Access/App, 5.2%
- Calendar Use, 3.5%
- Discussion Board/Chat Problems, 0.9%
- Generally Negative, 2.6%
Table 5: Problems Associated with eLearning and using MyGateway FS14-SP15 Combined

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problems</th>
<th>FS14 (N: 138)</th>
<th>SP15 (N: 92)</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>% of all respondents commenting (N: 230)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MyGateway used inconsistently</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>13.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructors Need Training</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>10.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandate use of grade book/require instructors to use MGW</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>13.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MyGateway not used by instructors</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>12.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other ELearning Problems</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>9.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Login and technical difficulties</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email/other communication problems</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>7.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Need instruction on use</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Navigation problems</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problems with Mobile Access/App</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Board/Chat Problems</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generally Negative</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calendar Use</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In their own words:

FS 2014 Selected Comments:

“MyGateway is a very helpful source and it is helping me complete my assignments on time.”

“Better professor knowledge of how to use MyGateway, whether it be uploading things to the appropriate tab (i.e. Class Documents) or consistently using the grading feature. I have some professors who update regularly and others who only update all grades at the mid or end of the semester, which is extremely unhelpful when trying to determine my progress thus far.”

“There should be an online community discussion board not specific to a particular class. For example, I am a graduate student who would be happy to help undergraduate students with a
homework question if they got stuck. There is no way for them to reach out to me. MyGateway should work to reach beyond classrooms and create an online UMSL community. Some professors do not use MyGateway which is unacceptable. Other professors don’t post grades because it takes too long to enter them. I also heard one professor say it was difficult to upload more than 1 picture at a time and used flickr instead. Whoever maintains MyGateway needs to address those problems.”

“My courses this semester do not use MyGateway except to post grades. I had previous courses that used MyGateway which made it much easier to keep up with assignments and schedule study time.”

“My gateway is an organizational nightmare. I have the most difficult time finding documents, because there is no standard layout, some professors add tabs or use them in different ways. It is ridiculous to try and quickly access documents when they must be downloaded, saved and the sso/password need to be used so often. I would like to see more content available online without the need to download or scroll through so many folders or announcements. Perhaps the problem is in the way the system is being used. If a professor can post a syllabus with dates, why cant those dates be incorporated into a front page or calendar page? This system causes real delays and aggravation. Maybe I need to learn how to use it also, but it is different from class to class.”

“I would very much like to see all of my professors at UMSL use MyGateway, as it is a fairly user-friendly interface that provides constant feedback regarding grades, instruction, and relevant class information. One of my professors uses the interface beautifully and it helps me feel more connected and involved in his course.”

“MyGateway is an EXTREMELY helpful tool that I believe aids myself and my classmates in accomplishing assignments and communicating with each other and faculty in several ways. Collaborate is one of my favorite resources that UMSL has to offer. I have boasted to plenty of friends, family, and other students about Collaborate many of times. I wish every class offered a Collaborate option. In short, UMSL does a great job incorporating technology within courses to make assignments, communication and resources easily accessible and very customizable.”

“Simplify the front page more. Make certain blocks removable. Simplicity is key. The less unnecessary information there is taking up brain power the better and the more likely I will be able to find what I need.”

“I would like to see the use of discussion boards be more prevalent. I used them at the community college level and found it a very valuable learning tool I would like to see the calendar and task function be more user friendly. I would also love to see the use of groups, etc. I am not sure if its my department or the user interface being a barrier, but I don’t see several of the above options used in my coursework and see how it would be valuable.”

“Would like instructors to participate in the use as well. They simply posts assignments and then have no discussion w students. Getting in contact w instructors can be difficult.”

“Its nice that we have mygateway, and I guess I have just taken it for granted now that I think about it, but I guess it’s just frustrating to me because, in my experience, all professors do not utilize it the same way, if they use it at all. Juggling all coursework each semester would be less
chaotic and increase our likelihood of success if teachers used it in a more organized, consistent, and efficient manner. Some teachers just put up a syllabus at the start of the semester and never use it again, while some teachers use it, but have us running all over the place with links from here to eternity - HEADACHE. I prefer when teachers use the gateway in a balanced way - they don’t leave us hanging or bombard us as if we enjoy feeling like rat fighting to get through a maze. / / Ideally, each class would also link up current syllabus due dates and exam dates with our calendars. I use my gmail calendar already, so I find I am not motivated to use mygateway calendar, and have to pull all the spread out dates from 5 classes per semester over to my gmail calendar. Currently, it is of little to no use, as my gmail can be set to remind me of timed tasks to alert me on my phone. / / :end rant: / / :)

“I would definitely like to see more of my professors using the My Grades on MyGateway. It gives students an opportunity to track their progress in the course and to see whether or not they may need to drop a course and try again another semester. Some professors don’t update the grades until the end of the semester.”

“I would like for the computer to automatically put assignment due dates on the calendar as well as other calendar events, or have an easy button that I control to easily put it on the calendar.”

“I think my favorite thing about the MyGateway software is it lets me see what I have to do in order to be better organized. Plus, it always announcements to be posted which can sometimes become lost if only sent by email. “

“It is very frustrating that none of the organizations I am affiliated with are listed on my homepage. I do not receive any notifications as a result and miss many opportunities. This is not just true for me, but others are also missing them as well.”

“I do feel that keeping track of my grades on My Gateway helps me to stay engaged in the class. However, many professors do not keep up with posting grades in the same manner that I am required to finish assignments. When professors do not post grades, it makes me feel that the professor does not care about us, and I am less inclined to keep up.”

“Add features that make it more like a facebook group chat or communication for the entire class. If you make tools more available to more useful for example text alerts for upcoming homework or updates.”

“I am an on-line student, MyGateway is my learning center.”

“Better training and communication needs to be done for all technology available, for both teachers and students. Having tech that no one knows how to use is a waste. But I’m sure that the tech we have, with better training, would be very beneficial to learning and to attracting and keeping students.”

“I like my gateway and I think it is a useful tool especially for students that work. I work two jobs and toward the end of this semester without my gateway I would have had to withdraw from my courses.”
SP2015 Selected Comments:

“I personally hate that I need to now not only log into my gateway, but also separately log in to my UMSL email. I also dislike that my gateway is no longer on the home page for UMSL. I feel as though these alterations waste my time as I log into my gateway and my UMSL email multiple times a day.”

“The discussion board consistently pushes students to do better because everyone participates when they are at their best. In person, you have off days when you are not at your best due. For example, if you have to come to class right after work, it is hard to be as fully present as you can be when you have the choice when to participate.”

“Instruct professors how to fully take advantage of all of the tools my gateway offers. Some instructors are not using my gateway to its full potential, which is very disappointing.”

“I have used various blackboards over my college career and this one here at UMSL was the easiest to navigate of all.”

“All teachers should actively use MyGateway to post grades.”

“I hate when professors do not know how to use Mygateway.”

“I do not like that we have to have a separate password for our e-mail. It takes too much time for me to type in separate stuff when I am in a hurry”

“Blackboard is not user friendly. It is better than nothing, but there should be other choices that are more flexible and less glitchy.”

“MyGateway could be a useful tool, however, often times professors start using the program at the beginning of the semester and neglect it after the first several weeks.”

“Most often, my learning happens in spite of MyGateway...not because of. / / When I work in groups, we always move to Google docs instead, because MyGateway’s features are irritating and cumbersome. It’s not as easy to use those tools to make a group presentation or shared paper --- Google Apps is much easier to use and it’s easier to take things back into MS Office for the final version. Most of my negative ratings of MyGateway are based on how my teachers have used MyGateway and not always about MyGateway itself. Unless they organize stuff into folders and label them properly, it’s impossible to find anything. / None of my teachers use the gradebook, and I often don’t know what grade I have until the very end of the term. My teachers also don’t return my papers to me using MyGateway and instead just email them or give me the printed version back.”

“The homepage/landing page for my gateway is really cluttered. There are far too many links/windows. It’s a real mess. Simplicity is key for a portal like that and my gateway has far too much going on.”
“the best professors realize that MyGateway is a tool that can and should be taken advantage of, to interact with students and to encourage students to interact with each other. It is sort of surprising how some instructors make extensive use of it, whereas others seem to ignore it.”

“MORE PROFESSORS SHOULD POST GRADES ON MY GATEWAY, MORE FREQUENTLY!”

“I would like a better App for mobile devices for UMSL to develop, and more refined design and more online classes, as education costs go up, people need to work more and online classes allow for UMSL to still make money and for people to take classes on their own time.”

“I only wish I’d have known all the resources available as a freshman. For instance I’ve found turn it in software through the writing lab particularly useful.”

“If MG had a user friendly, real-time format like Google Docs or Onedrive, it would be competitive. Typically, groups I am in use Google because it is so easy to communicate with one another and to work on documents/powerpoints at the same time.”

“Even professors who utilize My Gateway don’t utilize it fully. They may post grades for some things and not others which makes determining our total class grade very difficult.”

“I used the CampusPack wiki this semester for an English class and I found it very helpful for online group collaboration. I especially like that the professor is able to see who is participating towards the group work.”

“I would like to see every class being required to use MyGateway. If everything is uploaded to the cite each student can find anything they need at any time by logging on to one place. Syllabi, grades, documents, blogs, and email are all great and extremely helpful resources.”

“My view & my gateway compete with each other, and org sync does too. Simplify, consolidate, & make these navigable plz. I use each of these less because I have to login independently for each, & settle on one please. Some professors don’t use any of them because there is no incentive to become familiar with a program if it will be replaced in a month.”

“Instant Messenger lists to see who is online in your class working on hw or so. So you can message them with questions and basically talk to them live.”

“I have had several courses where the instructor does not use MyGateway and communicates by email/ That makes things much more difficult. There should be a standard. Either all instructors use it or no instructors use it.”

“I would like to make it a requirement for professors to pass some sort of MyGateway test before they are allowed to teach.”

“I used Blackboard extensively for an online graduate education class. The discussion boards and wiki tools were great. Our instructor set up the class purposefully to utilize Blackboard.”
Conclusions

Faculty and students at UM-St. Louis for the most part have incorporated MyGateway into the learning process. The use of MyGateway continues to change how students and instructors define their respective roles in the classroom, and online learning components offered via MyGateway continue to exert an increasingly positive influence on students’ perceptions.

**Students persist in requesting most or all MyGateway features be used in all their courses.** Depending on the subject matter, integrating more of the MyGateway components would help increase instructor-student interaction and increased interaction among students, according to this and all previous student surveys.

Another recurring theme is the **inconsistent use of MyGateway and instructors who lack training in effectively using MyGateway.** Students continue to voice their frustrations about the variety of ways MyGateway is used across the campus for the past several years. They continue to advocate mandates for its use and standards for types and placement of documents. Training opportunities for specific technology resources should be increased and better publicized to faculty, staff, and students.

MyGateway has been described as an instructional tool, not only helping keep students engaged throughout their courses, but actually serving as a **source for building student engagement.** The use of the online grade book, announcements, and course documents have been identified as the tools students most appreciate and expect.

Faculty members have also expressed their expectations for students. Respondents in previous faculty MyGateway surveys report increased expectations of students’ responsibility for learning and of participating actively in online discussions. Both faculty and students indicate that MyGateway promotes increased communication. **Workshops for faculty should focus on instructional considerations such as these, and promote course design that makes the most of available technologies.**

**A core area of interest:**

**Wireless and Mobile Computing:** The steady rise in wireless services and mobile computing by students parallels national trends. It is clear, however, that with 74% of students bringing a laptop or mobile device to campus (Q21, SP15), over 90% reporting the ability to access a laptop off-campus (Q18, SP15), over 82% reporting use of “smart phones” (up from 27% in SP 2010), and 47% using iPads or similar devices (up from 36% in SP13) that mobile computing is a central feature of the ways in which students, as well as faculty, work. **Online and “blended” course development clearly needs to consider this dramatic trend.**

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12 These comments are modest updates to conclusions drawn from previous MyGateway student surveys. See previous survey analyses at: [http://www.umsl.edu/technology/mgwhelp/mginfo1.html](http://www.umsl.edu/technology/mgwhelp/mginfo1.html)

13 See the FS 2009-SP 2010 Faculty MyGateway and TEC Classroom Survey analysis at: [http://www.umsl.edu/technology/mgwhelp/mginfo1.html](http://www.umsl.edu/technology/mgwhelp/mginfo1.html)
Implications for the Institution

The data from the current MyGateway survey lend support to the conclusions reached in the survey analysis of 2001-2015\(^{14}\): the more students are exposed to MyGateway, the higher their estimation of its positive effects, and the more likely they are to continue their education at UM-St. Louis. Use of MyGateway results in:

- Increased reports of learning activities (student engagement)
- Higher levels of student satisfaction with their courses
- More Student communication with their instructors
- More communication between students
- Higher levels of perceived learning outcomes

Student perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors documented in this survey, and the consistency of these findings over the past 15 years, highlight MyGateway's contribution to the strategic campus goals of:

- Recruitment
- Retention
- Student engagement
- Community building

Bibliography


\(^{14}\) See the FS 2009-SP 2010 Faculty MyGateway and TEC Classroom Survey analysis at: http://www.umsl.edu/technology/mgwhelp/mgwinfo1.html


Smith, Aaron. Smartphone Ownership 2015. Pew Internet and American Life Project, April 1, 2015

Appendix 1:

Comprehensive Evaluation of MyGateway and Instructional Computing Use by Students
SP 2015

1. What is your academic level?
   - Freshman
   - Sophomore
   - Junior
   - Senior
   - Graduate Student

2. Did you transfer to UMSL?
   - No
   - Yes

2a. If you answered "Yes" to being a transfer student, what was your class level when you transferred to UMSL?
   - Freshman
   - Sophomore
   - Junior
   - Senior

3. What is your course of study?
   - Arts and Sciences
   - Business Administration
   - Education
   - Graduate School
   - Nursing
   - Optometry
   - Fine Arts and Communication
   - Others

4. If you answered "Yes" to being a transfer student, what was your class level when you transferred to UMSL? (1 strongly agree- 7 strongly disagree)
   - Using MyGateway for my course work makes me more likely to communicate with other students taking this course.
   - Using MyGateway for my course work makes me more likely to work in online groups.
   - Using MyGateway for my course work makes it more likely for me to work in face-to-face groups.
   - Using MyGateway for my course work makes it more likely that I spend additional time studying.
• Using MyGateway for my course work makes it more likely for me to communicate with my instructor.
• Using MyGateway for my course work helps me do better (learn more).
• I am very satisfied with the courses I take because they use MyGateway.
• Being able to access course grades via MyGateway helps me stay engaged with my course work.
• The online discussions (text and/or audio) in MyGateway make me think more about the course topics.
• Using MyGateway makes it more likely for me to complete course assignments.
• I would like to have MyGateway used in all my courses.
• I am more likely to take another course at UMSL because it uses MyGateway.
• I am more likely to complete my degree at UMSL because of the advantages of using MyGateway in my courses.

5. Most useful MyGateway features: (check all that apply)

• Announcements and email
• My Grades
• Course documents
• Quizzes, exams and tests
• Discussion forums
• Calendar and tasks
• Multimedia resources
• Groups
• Collaborate/Wimba Classroom
• Chat and the virtual classroom
• Audio tools/Voice Threads
• Wikis and blogs

6. Are there any other features would you like to see in MyGateway, or do you have any other comments you would like to express concerning MyGateway?

7. Please select the lab location you used the most during this semester. The location you choose will be referred to as the primary lab in later questions.

• BH 232 (Benton Hall Lab)
• CCB 316 (MathCS Lab)
• Fine Arts 220
• Honors 308
• Math TLC (UC050)
• Music 105
• SSB 103(Main Computing Lab)
• SSB 222
• SSB 452(Social Sciences Lab)
• TJ 316(Thomas Jefferson Library Research Commons)
• TLC (E. Desmond Lee Technology and Learning Center, South campus)
8. Reason to use primary lab: (check all that apply)

- Color printing
- B&W printing
- Convenient
- Internet
- Wireless internet
- Tech Assistance
- Unique Software
- Resources not available off campus
- Did not use a campus computer lab

9. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements concerning campus labs and IT services: (1 strongly agree- 7 strongly disagree)

- The computer lab was clean and well organized.
- The hours of operation are sufficient.
- There is adequate access to computers to meet my educational goals.
- My overall experience was positive in the campus computer labs.
- I support the current print quota system, PaperCut NG.
- I would support a hard print quota system (one where additional fees would be incurred once a set number of pages are printed).
- I prefer to view my documents--lecture notes, reading, etc. digitally instead of in hard copy.
- I prefer to turn in assignments electronically.
- My experience using TritonApps was positive

10. How much did your classes use apps via TritonApps this semester?

11. Which TritonApps were most useful to your class?

12. What software would you like to see added to TritonApps?

13. Has using TritonApps reduced or replaced your use of the computer labs on campus?

- Yes
- No
- I do not currently use the computer labs on campus.

14. Please describe any negative primary lab experience.

15. Please describe the most positive primary lab experience.

16. How can we improve your primary lab experience?
17. Is there any technology missing from campus that you need for classes?

18. To which of the following personal devices do you currently have personal access (check all that apply)

- Laptop/Notebook
- Personal Computer (Desktop)
- iPad/iTouch/tablet
- eBook Reader
- Smartphone (iPhone, Android)
- Scanner
- Portable Hard Drive
- Other:

19. Which of the following personal electronic devices do you plan on purchasing in the near future? (check all that apply)

- Laptop/Notebook
- Personal Computer (Desktop)
- iPad/iTouch/tablet
- eBook Reader
- Smartphone (iPhone, Android)
- Scanner
- Portable Hard Drive
- Other:

20. What do you use your mobile device (other than laptop) for? (check all that apply)

- Phone calls
- Texting
- Web browsing
- Social media
- Email
- Classroom “Clicker”
- MyGateway access
- MyView access
- DARS reports
- Other:
- Does not apply

21. If you own a laptop or mobile computing device, do you bring it to campus?

- Yes
- No
- Does not apply

22. If you do not bring your laptop or mobile device to campus, what prohibits you from bringing it to campus?

23. How do you use Blackboard Instant Messenger (BB-IM)?
24. What is the level of your agreement with the following statement? I would like to see BB-IM used in more of my classes. (1 strongly agree- 7 strongly disagree)

25. Please state which of the following Cloud Based Services you currently for personal use: (Click all that apply)

- Google Drive
- Google Docs
- DropBox
- Chrome
- Google Hangouts
- MS Skydrive
- UMSL K drive
- Google Calendar
- Other, please specify:
- None

26. How likely would you be to use any of these services at UMSL if they were integrated in campus technology? (1 Very Likely-7 Very Unlikely)

27. Additional comments and suggestions for what Information Technology Services can provide in the future to improve your learning experience: