MyGateway Student Survey Report:
Fall 2016-Spring 2017

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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 2016 and SP 2017, and,
- Demonstration of indicators of optimal teaching and learning interactions between and among faculty and students.

Methodology

The FS 2016 and SP 2017 Comprehensive Evaluation of MyGateway and Instructional Support Services Use by Students Surveys (see, appendix 1, page 29) 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 and notifications on lab and classroom computers. The evaluation period ran from November 11-December 16, 2016 for the fall survey and April 10-May 12, 2017 for the spring semester. **Completed surveys numbered 496 for the FS 2016 survey and 208 for SP 2017 (approximately 4.6% of all active student users of MyGateway at UMSL for FS16 [10,716] and 2.1% of all active student users during SP17 [10,040]).**

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 2016 and SP 2017 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 on-campus enrollment figures: FS16: 10,872; SP16:10,090. 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 2016-2017 N: 704 (Q1)

Figure 1a: SP 2017: Total Student Population Academic Level (N: 10,090)

Figure 2: Transfer Status of Respondents AY 2016-2017 (FS15 N: 496 SP15 N: 208)(Q2)
Nearly half (45%) of transfer students came to UMSL during the junior year. Thirty-seven percent (37%) transferred during their sophomore year. Seniors accounted for 4% of the total and freshman year transfers were 6% of the total. Seven percent (7%) of the transfers selected “other” as their class level. This distribution has been steady over the past five years.

**Figure 3: Respondent’s Course of Study AY 2016-2017 N: 704 (Q3)**

![Pie chart showing course of study distribution]

**Table 1: Respondent’s Course of Study: Mean WS 2006-SP 2017 (WS06-SP17 N: 15,647)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent’s Course of study</th>
<th>Mean WS 2006-SP2017</th>
<th>Actual Percentage Enrolled SP2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arts and Sciences (includes School of Fine and Performing Arts)³</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Administration</td>
<td>20.3%</td>
<td>19.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>15.5%</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate School</td>
<td>9.2%</td>
<td>25.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
<td>6.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optometry</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (Social Work, Engineering, non-Divisional)</td>
<td>9.2%</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

³ The College of Fine Arts and Communication merged with the College of Arts and Sciences for AY 2016-2017
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 2017

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\(^4\) reporting home or off-campus wireless Internet access and over 90% of survey respondents reporting use of a laptop or netbook. **Additionally 91% reported “smart phone” use in SP17**—up steadily 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\(^5\) reported by the Pew Internet and American Life Project, which charts over 77% of American adults own smart phones (up from 51% in 2009 and 75% in 2015), and

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\(^4\) Based on surveys given to students in Robert Keel’s classes at UMSL, 2012-2016. Unpublished.

92% of the 18-35 year old population owning smartphones. Over 60% of American adults own laptop computers and 64% own a tablet device or e-reader.

Figure 5: Survey Respondents Smart Phone Ownership, SP 2010-SP 2017 (Q18)

Figure 6: To which of the following personal devices do you currently have personal access? (check all that apply) (Q18)

With broadband access nearly universal (73% of American adults have broadband access at home, as do 80% of 18-29 year olds), and mobile devices owned or accessible by over 90% of

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6 Poushter, Jacob. 2016. Smartphone Ownership and Internet Usage Continues to Climb in Emerging Economies. Pew Research Center, Global Attitudes and Trends. [http://pewrsr.ch/1Q5e2Yw](http://pewrsr.ch/1Q5e2Yw)

students today, educational institutions are facing a new, “networked individual”\textsuperscript{9}. With smartphone use becoming universal, the use of other mobile devices (besides laptops) appears to be stabilizing-- in SP17, 50\% of students reported owning an iPad, iTouch, or other tablet (down from 54\% in SP 2016) and 23\% reported they plan on buying one of these devices in the coming year (down from 32\% in SP 2016) (see figure 7, below). Nonetheless, students (and teachers) at UMSL are 2\textsuperscript{nd} Century Netizens.\textsuperscript{10}

Figure 7: Which of the following personal electronic devices do you plan on purchasing in the near future? (check all that apply) (Q19)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Device</th>
<th>SP12 N</th>
<th>FS12 N</th>
<th>SP13 N</th>
<th>FS13 N</th>
<th>SP14 N</th>
<th>FS14 N</th>
<th>SP15 N</th>
<th>FS15 N</th>
<th>SP16 N</th>
<th>FS16 N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Laptop/Notebook</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>14%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personal Computer (Desktop)</td>
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<tr>
<td>iPad/iTouch</td>
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<td>eBook Reader</td>
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<tr>
<td>Smartphone (Phone, Android)</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Scanner</td>
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<tr>
<td>Portable Hard Drive</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other:</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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 FS16/ SP17 students report as using their phones as much for texting as for calling. Nearly 88\% of students also report using their devices for web browsing and social media use increased from 80\% in SP16 to over 845 for SP17. Smartphone use for MyGateway remained constant at 72\% from SP16-FS16, but dropped to 66\% in SP17. It is well known that the mobile app for Blackboard is lacking in functionality and this may explain the drop in mobile use. With a switch the Canvas LMS, it is expected that mobile use will grow significantly. In any case, the data reported in figure 8 documents the \textit{steadily increase in mobile device use since we first asked about this topic in 2012}.  


\textsuperscript{10} 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 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 (see figure 9 on the following page). The percentage of students reporting that they bring their mobile devices to campus remained relatively constant at 65% for AY 2012 and 2013, however for AY 2014-2015 the data documented an increase in students bringing their mobile devices to campus (74% by SP2015) and this rate remains relatively stable through SP17 with 73% of respondents bringing their mobile devices to campus. It is interesting to note that for FS16, the rate jumped to 76% (highest percentage record over the past five years). It may be that the low response rate in the SP 2017 survey distorts the trend, or that FS16 is an outlier.

In examining the reasons students give for not bringing their mobile devices to campus, it is clear that they are focusing on their laptops, and that with smartphone ownership at over 90%, mobile computing is a reality for the vast majority of students on campus. 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. With devices becoming smaller and lighter, it makes sense that students will opt to bring their own computers to campus. Other frequently cited reasons for not bringing their devices to campus include concern over security, lack of need due to access to computers on-campus, 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.
Figure 9: If you own a laptop or mobile computing device, do you bring it to campus?

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

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

FS15 N: 453 SP16 N: 500 FS16 N: 496 SP17 N: 208
Google Drive became available in SP16 and replaced student “K” drives (local online drive) in AY 2016-17. Google Drive or one of Google’s affiliated products is clearly the service of choice for UMSL students. MS OneDrive became available to students via their UMSL accounts in SP10 and continues to be available to students via Office 365, but never became a popular alternative. The most common “other service” cited by students was Apple iCloud (8 out of 20 responses, 40%, of those listing some other service).

In response to question 26. “How likely would you be to use any of these services at UMSL if they were integrated in campus technology?”, 72% of students in FS15 and 91% of student in SP16 indicated they would be likely to use a Cloud Based Service if it was integrated into campus technology. For FS16 the percentage of likely users dropped to 76%, but rose to 95% for SP17. Use of Google cloud services has shown steady growth over the past 4 semesters and now that it is integrated into UMSL student accounts, continue use is expected.

**Figure 10: Are you currently enrolled in a 100% online class this semester (Q4)**

The AY 2015-2016 iteration of this survey was the first time students were asked about taking 100% online classes here at UMSL. Based on the response to this survey question, more than one-third (SP16: 37%) of our students report taking at least one 100% online class. For FS16, the percentage of students taking at least one online class grew to 43%; it dropped to 40% for SP17. This significant level of online learning, coupled with the increasing use of mobile devices, suggests the nature of classroom teaching as well as the structure of the university will both be experiencing continued pressure to accommodate these new learning styles.

**MyGateway Course Activity**

Students (95% in FS16 and SP17) consistently rank access to grades in MyGateway as the most useful feature of the course management system (“I wish that all teachers were required to put all of their grades in and keep them updated the whole semester instead of most of them just inputting everything at the last minute. It would make it so much less stressful at the end if I knew where I stood before the end of the semester sometimes my gateway is the only
way to stay on top of that because some teachers don’t email or respond in a timely fashion.”) 11

Access to Course Documents and Announcements and Email come in a close second and third in usefulness to students (88% and 84% for SP17). 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 2017 survey also documents a **upward trend in the perceived usefulness of “Online quizzes, exams, and tests** (75%, rising steadily from 66% in FS14), and an **increase in the perceived usefulness of Discussion forums** (41% in SP14, FS14, and SP15 and dropping to 37% in FS15 and 35% in SP16, but back up to over 40% in FS16 and SP17). Also of note, an **ongoing decline in the perceived usefulness of Wikis and Blogs** (11% in SP12, rising to 18% in SP15, and now dropping to 9% in FS16 and 7% in SP17) and what appears to be a **steady and significant increase in the perceived usefulness of audio tools, particularly Voice Thread** (7% in FS12 and 20% in SP17).

The slight declines in the perceived usefulness of some of these online collaboration tools over the past two years may be due to a variety of factors. The response rate for this survey has been dropping (perhaps correlated to an increase in online surveys and evaluations as well as increased email activity throughout the campus). Responses may therefore reflect “self-selection” and a higher percentage of students reporting levels of dissatisfaction. There is also the fact that the basic MyGateway interface and the tools available have been basically unchanged for more than 4 years. New technologies and improved user interfaces are available (i.e. the new virtual classroom tool Zoom will be available in FS17), and as the campus moves to incorporate these newer technologies over the coming years, it is likely student satisfaction will show a marked change.

**Figure 11: What are some of the most useful MyGateway features? (check all that apply) (Q6)**

![Bar chart showing the percentage of students who find various MyGateway features useful]

FS15 N: 453 SP16 N: 500 FS16 N: 496 SP17 N: 208

11 Student comment from the SP 2017 survey
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 (Q5)

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 FS15-SP17 and Overall Mean for WS06-SP17 (Q5)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Mean Score FS15</th>
<th>Mean Score SP16</th>
<th>Mean Score FS16</th>
<th>Mean Score SP17</th>
<th>Mean WS06-SP17</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communicate with other students</td>
<td>3.30</td>
<td>3.44</td>
<td>3.11</td>
<td>3.21</td>
<td>2.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work in online groups</td>
<td>3.65</td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>3.40</td>
<td>3.59</td>
<td>3.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More likely for me to work in face-to-face groups</td>
<td>4.16</td>
<td>4.17</td>
<td>3.79</td>
<td>3.99</td>
<td>3.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More likely that I spend additional time studying</td>
<td>3.27</td>
<td>3.21</td>
<td>3.05</td>
<td>3.13</td>
<td>3.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicate with my instructor</td>
<td>2.68</td>
<td>2.71</td>
<td>2.49</td>
<td>2.79</td>
<td>2.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MGW helps me do better (learn more)</td>
<td>2.93</td>
<td>2.95</td>
<td>2.74</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>2.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied with courses because of MGW</td>
<td>2.84</td>
<td>2.79</td>
<td>2.67</td>
<td>2.66</td>
<td>2.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessing Grades in MGW helps me stay engaged</td>
<td>1.94</td>
<td>1.93</td>
<td>1.84</td>
<td>1.91</td>
<td>1.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online discussions/think more about the course</td>
<td>3.06</td>
<td>3.06</td>
<td>2.89</td>
<td>2.93</td>
<td>2.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete course assignments</td>
<td>2.64</td>
<td>2.52</td>
<td>2.48</td>
<td>2.43</td>
<td>2.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use MGW in all my courses</td>
<td>2.35</td>
<td>2.35</td>
<td>2.27</td>
<td>2.35</td>
<td>2.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take another course at UMSL because it uses MyGateway</td>
<td>3.19</td>
<td>3.19</td>
<td>2.96</td>
<td>2.99</td>
<td>3.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete my degree at UMSL because of MGW</td>
<td>3.18</td>
<td>3.15</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>3.03</td>
<td>3.17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FS15 N: 453 SP16 N: 500 FS16 N: 496 SP17 N: 208, WS06-SP17 N: 15,647
Most significantly (and supported by previous studies\textsuperscript{12}), “Being able to access course grades via MyGateway helps me stay engaged with my course work” (overall mean: 1.84); “I would like to have MyGateway used in all my courses” (overall mean: 2.18); and “Using MyGateway for my course work makes it more likely for me to communicate with my instructor” (overall mean: 2.35); rank as being most significant to the students responding to the survey. Overall, out of a total survey population of 15,647 students since the spring of 2006, perceptions of MyGateway use have been and remain quite positive.

**Figure 12: Overall Mean Scores WS06-SP16 Combined (N: 15,647)**

(7 point Likert Scale, 1: Strongly agree, 4: neutral, and 7 Strongly disagree)

![Graph showing overall mean scores for various statements related to MyGateway use.]

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 FS16-SP17 school year (N: 704)

\textsuperscript{12} See previous survey analyses at: [http://www.umsl.edu/technology/mgwhelp/mgwinfo/mgwinf0.html](http://www.umsl.edu/technology/mgwhelp/mgwinfo/mgwinf0.html)
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, 56.1% of respondents agree (up from 52.7% in FS15-SP16).
  - Using MyGateway for my course work makes it more likely for me to communicate with my instructor: **73.8% agree**

- **MyGateway use increases learning outcomes and activity**: overall, 72.8% of students agree (up from 70.4% in FS15-SP16).
  - Being able to access course grades via MyGateway helps me stay engaged with my course work: **91.4% agree**

- **MyGateway use increases overall satisfaction with courses and learning at UMSL**: overall, 66.8% of students agree (up from 63.2% in FS15-SP16).
  - I would like to have MyGateway used in all my courses: **78.1% agree**

Detailed distribution of responses to specific questions for FS16 and SP17, and long-term patterns of responses follows:

**Figure 13: Distribution of responses for “communication” questions (average for FS16-SP17 N: 704)**

![Distribution of responses](image)

*Note. The communication prompt dealing with likelihood of working in face-to-face groups shows the most neutral response (at 3.98 on the 7-point scale).*
Figure 14: Distribution of responses for “learning” questions (average for FS16-SP17 N: 704)

Note: The prompt, “access to grades keeps student engaged,” was most universally supported by those responding (91.4% agreeing).

Figure 15: Distribution of responses for “satisfaction” questions (average for FS16-SP17 N: 704)

Figure 16 (following page) presents mean score data on student perceptions concerning communication, learning and satisfaction over eleven instances of the current survey (WS 2006-SP 2017). 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.
Figure 16: Trends in Mean Scores for Communicating, Learning, and Satisfaction with MyGateway WS06-SP17 (N: 15,647)

1: strongly agree, 4: neutral, 7: strongly disagree
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 17, (following page)** graphically reveals the consistency 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 (slight decrease in satisfaction) in responses since FS14 may be attributed to the small sample size and to other factors discussed above (see page 10). **Over the past sixteen years, all surveys focusing on student satisfaction with MyGateway present the same, consistent findings that students like using MyGateway in their courses and the more MyGateway is used (consistently and appropriately)**\(^{13}\), the more they appreciate MyGateway.

\(^{13}\) See previous survey analyses at: [http://www.umsl.edu/technology/mgwhelp/mgwinfo1.html](http://www.umsl.edu/technology/mgwhelp/mgwinfo1.html)
Figure 17: Long-term Trends in Mean Scores for Communicating, Learning, and Satisfaction with MyGateway WS02-SP17 (N: 19,476)

1: strongly agree, 4: neutral, 7: strongly disagree
Written Comments (Q7 and Q27 for FS16 and SP17)

One-hundred and thirty-one (131) (26.4% of all respondents) students provided written comments on the fall 2016 survey related specifically to MyGateway and online learning. For SP 2017, 47 (22.6% of all respondents) students provided written comments relating specifically to MyGateway and online learning. Of these responses, 47 for FS16 and 20 for SP17 indicated, “N/A” or “Nothing to add.” Substantive comments for FS 2016 equal 84 (16.9% of all respondents) and for SP 2017 equal 27 (13.0% of all respondents). The total of all substantive comments for AY 2016-2017 equals 111 (15.8% of the 704 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 FS16 and SP17 responses. The number of responses indicated in the tables below total more than 111, since many responses contain two or more specific comments. The

Overall, generally positive statements about MyGateway (“MyGateway is great”) were the most common of all substantive responses (23.4%). Also notable are the positive statements endorsing MyGateway as a convenient tool for checking grades (14.4%) and the organizational features of MyGateway for both class and personal activities (6.3%). The convenience, accessibility, and reliability of the MyGateway was mention in 5.4% of the comments.

Negative comments typically focused on faculty need better training in using MyGateway (18.0%). Other items of note:

- Over sixteen percent (16.2%) of respondents indicated other eLearning problems notification issues being primary (reminders, alerts, and due date notifications) being most mentioned.
- Respondents also mention inconsistent use of MyGateway by instructors was a problem (16.2%).
- 12.6% of respondents voiced concerns over navigation problems in MyGateway (confusing interface, broken links, lack of a seamless connection to other campus online services, problems with text entry interfaces, and an overall dissatisfaction with the “look and feel” of MyGateway).
- Thirteen (13) students (11.7%) specifically asked that instructors be mandated to use the grade book (regularly).
- Slightly over eight percent of respondents (8.1%) specifically mentioned Canvas as a preference over MyGateway (BlackBoard).

Ongoing issues:

- Eight students (7.2% of those providing substantive comments, up from 3.5% in FS14-SP15) express a desire for 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.
- There is a small, but ongoing interest in accessing MyGateway via a mobile application. Four (4) students (3.6% of those providing substantive comments, a percentage consistent with the past two iterations of this survey) registered complaints concerning the functionality of the BlackBoard (MyGateway) app, or were not aware of the existence of a BlackBoard (MyGateway) app.
Over the past six years, the UM-System and UMSL have worked to bring more classes online, and the increase in online enrollments (40% of SP16 respondents reported taking one or more 100% online classes). This level of activity may contribute to the perception of other E-Learning problems (mentions of problems with discussion boards, virtual classrooms and email). **Students continue to be frustrated by the inconsistent use of MyGateway from instructor to instructor, and from class to class.**

**Figure 18: Benefits of eLearning and Using MyGateway, FS16-SP17 Combined (N: 111)**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benefits</th>
<th>FS16 (N: 131)</th>
<th>SP17 (N: 47)</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>% of all respondents commenting (N: 178)</th>
<th>% of all substantive Comments (N: 111)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Generally positive (&quot;MyGateway is great!&quot;)</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>14.6%</td>
<td>23.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More Features/Integration</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viewing and tracking grades</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
<td>14.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessing Documents and Assignments</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization features (personal and course-related)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhances Communication</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convenience, Accessibility, and Reliability</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virtual Classrooms (Collaborate)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other, Non-MGW</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 19: Problems associated with eLearning and using MyGateway FS16-SP17 Combined (N: 111)
Table 5: Problems Associated with eLearning and using MyGateway FS16-SP17 Combined (N: 111)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problems</th>
<th>FS16 (N: 131)</th>
<th>SP17 (N: 47)</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>% of all respondents commenting (N: 178)</th>
<th>% of all substantive Comments (N: 111)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MyGateway used inconsistently</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>10.1%</td>
<td>16.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructors Need Training</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>11.2%</td>
<td>18.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandate use of grade book/require instructors to use MGW</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
<td>11.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MyGateway not used by instructors</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other ELearning Problems</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>10.1%</td>
<td>16.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Login and technical difficulties</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email/other communication problems</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Need instruction on use</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Navigation problems</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
<td>12.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problems with Mobile Access/App</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Board/Chat Problems/Collaboration issues</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generally Negative</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
<td>10.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calendar Use</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prefer Canvas</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
<td>8.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**In their own words:**

FS 2016 Selected Comments:

“Tell Blackboard to be more mobile friendly.”

“I like MyGateway. Google Drive and Classroom is efficient and collaborative for on-line courses.”
“I think that switching to Canva[s] would be a wonderful move. Blackboard has many unnecessary features. I think that the DARS report is too difficult to use as well. The labs are working just fine.”

“Please make UMSL sites, like the UMSL main page, myView, myGateway, etc. mobile view friendly. Those websites don’t really work on mobile devices, and that’s super inconvenient.”

“I think my gateway is a great program, could use some small teaks”

“Almost all of my teachers have used MyGateway, but some don’t use all of the features. It does help one keep up with course-work and studies.”

“Automatic calendar reminders of due dates”

“Calendar reminder”

“Enjoyed using mygateway but Excited to use Canvas next year!”

“I am not impressed with MyGateway. In 2016 with so much technology I would expect this to be a bit more user friendly and not so outdated.”

“I appreciate when professors utilize MyGateway to post relevant documents for a course. I also highly appreciate when professors regularly update my grades using MyGateway. It helps me know where I stand in that course, whether I am doing what I need to or if I need to change my study habits. MyGateway also makes emailing my professors and other students in the same course as myself much easier, in my opinion.”

“I do enjoy the feature of being able to use MyGateway, as it is helpful to view grades and announcements made by the teacher.”

“I don’t like Mygateway.”

“I like MyGateway. Do not change.”

“I like using My Gateway but each instructor uses it a little differently. Depending how the course documents or links are listed or set up per course, sometimes My Gateay is easy to locate what I need for my classes while other times, it is possible to miss material because it is listed under another category. Inconsistency in how information is presented in the different classes can make it difficult to find.”

“I love using MyGateway.”

“I prefer the system MurrayState University uses. It is called Canvas. It connects with all of your homework sites and gives you a timeline on your homepage of every homework assignment due. With my gateway I have to enter various different sites just to see if I have any homework due & it has caused me to miss quite a few assignments or announcements because they aren’t always on my gateway.”

“I really like MyGateway.”

“I wish that all teachers were required to put all of their grades in and keep them updated the whole semester instead of most of them just inputing everything at the last minute. It would make
it so much less stressful at the end if I knew where I stood before the end of the semester sometimes my gateway is the only way to stay on top of that because some teachers don't email or respond in a timely fashion.”

“I would like teachers to use the grading system.”

“I would love to see calendars that give the classes due dates on projects so that its printable and can cut out a lot of clutter from multiple uses of others programs.”

“I am currently disappointed in the organization of class material from professors. It would help if every professor was required to use mygateway calendar to list assignment deadlines and exams. Overall I would be more satisfied with the use of mygateway if professor utilized mygateway features.”

“In general, my professors don't use MyGateway properly or at all. I would like them to use it or whatever the new tool is more…and be organized about it. I rarely see my grades posted until the very end of the semester so I never know where I am in the course. I use it primarily as a communication tool with my professors and fellow students.”

“MyGateway very helpful.”

“MyGateway is outdated and confusing. Too much clutter. The calendar doesn't even work. I would take my High Schools route and use Blackboard solely.”

“…I think that a lot of the features of MyGateway are a waste because many instructors do not utilize them or even have a need for them.”

“Professors do not always update grades effectively and in a timely manner on MyGateway.”

“require all teachers to stay up to date on my gateway in regards to assignments and grades”

“The best part about using MyGateway is the flexibility by which you can view recordings of the class and keep up with the course work. Especially as someone who has a full time job.”

“the mobile blackboard app has not been updated since 2014. This is a useful tool, but is becoming less and less reliable.”

“The platform is hacked together mess that most of the user base has no clue on how to use effectively.”

“Switch to Canvas.”

“Teachers need to be taught how to use it.”

SP2017 Selected Comments:

“The overall look and feel of My Gateway could be improved.”

“Canvas is much easier to use”

“kill blackboard pls”
“The word processor that is used in MyGateway needs to be updated or replaced with a new model. My biggest problem is the fact that copy and paste options do not work and that I have to look up the manual way to do these functions myself.”

“Have it as a requirement that professors must enter all assignments into the calendar”

“I found it difficult to navigate as a new student. I wonder if it might be possible for all teachers to use the same system of organization. If they were I strongly feel it would feel easier to navigate.”

“I really do not like the set up of my gateway and I'd like for every class to be switched to canvas or something that is more organized and has a better user interface.”

“I transferred from St. Charles Community College which uses canvas. Switching to my gateway was very stressful. My peers and I agree that Canvas is a much more user friendly then my gateway.”

“I wish all online classes had the option to collaborate. I work a full time job and would like to see my Professor and interact with the class while I work.”

“I wonder how much training on MyGateway all professors get, simply because some professors use it much more fully and efficiently than others. Hopefully they get training on all its many uses.”

“I would have liked to receive updates when grades are posted.”

“I would like for all my classes to have the ability to view online. Watching live online.”

“I would like the calendar to be on the front page of MyGateway with the information, once with reminders of when an assignment is due. Even when we have syllabi, we sometimes don’t always look at so a calendar on the front would be really convenient.”

“if all instructors actually graded things on time that would be helpful.”

“My teachers barely use MyGateway. When they do, it’s not effective with little to no instruction about where to go or what to do. It’s a missed opportunity because I think it could be helpful.”

“MyGateway usage is inconsistently used by teaching staff. I would like grades updated to MyGateway more often. I would like the ability to submit homework more often via Mygateway as I don’t have to print and carry paper.”

“MyGateway works so smoothly and easily. It is simple and easy to use. I love it.”

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

14 These comments are modest updates to conclusions drawn from previous MyGateway student surveys. See previous survey analyses at: http://www.umsl.edu/technology/mgwhelp/mgwinfo1.html
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\(^\text{15}\) 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 73% of students bringing a laptop or mobile device to campus (Q21, SP15), over 90% reporting the ability to access a laptop off-campus (Q18, SP16), **over 91% reporting use of “smart phones” (up from 27% in SP 2010), and 50% 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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\(^{15}\) See the FS 2009-SP 2010 Faculty MyGateway and TEC Classroom Survey analysis at: [http://www.umsl.edu/technology/mgwhelp/mgwinfo1.html](http://www.umsl.edu/technology/mgwhelp/mgwinfo1.html)
Implications for the Institution

The data from the current MyGateway survey lend support to the conclusions reached in the survey analysis of 2001-2017\(^{16}\), 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 16 years, highlight MyGateway’s contribution to the strategic campus goals of:

- Recruitment
- Retention
- Student engagement
- Community building

Bibliography


\(^{16}\) See the FS 2009-SP 2010 Faculty MyGateway and TEC Classroom Survey analysis at: [http://www.umsl.edu/technology/mgwhelp/mgwinfo1.html](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 Instruction Support Services by Students SP 2017

Q1 What is your academic level?
- Freshman
- Sophomore
- Junior
- Senior
- Graduate Student

Q2 Did you transfer to UMSL?
- Yes
- No

Q2a If you answered “Yes” to being a transfer student, what was your class level when you transferred to UMSL?
- Freshman
- Sophomore
- Junior
- Senior
- Other

Q3 What is your course of study?
- Arts and Sciences
- Business Administration
- Education
- Graduate School
- Nursing
- Optometry
- Fine Arts and Communication
- Other

Q4 Are you currently enrolled in a 100% online class this semester (SP16)?
- Yes, I am taking one 100% online class.
- Yes, I am taking two 100% online classes
- Yes, I am taking three 100% online classes
- Yes, I am taking four or more 100% online classes
- No, I am not taking any 100% online classes
Q4a Are you currently taking a class that uses Canvas here at UMSL? If so, please answer questions 5-7 based on your experiences with Canvas.

Yes, I am taking a class that uses Canvas this semester here at UMSL

No, I am not taking a class that uses Canvas this semester

Q5 Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements comparing classes you are taking that make considerable use of MyGateway to those that use it little or not at all.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Using MyGateway for my course work makes me more likely to communicate with other students taking a course.</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Using MyGateway for my course work makes me more likely to work in online groups.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using MyGateway for my course work makes it more likely for me to work in face-to-face groups.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using MyGateway for my course work makes it</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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.

Q6 What are some of the 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
- Chat and the virtual classroom
- Audio tools/Voice Thread
Q7 Are there any other features you would like to see in MyGateway, or do you have any other comments you would like to express concerning MyGateway?

Q8 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.

- Benton Hall 232
- ESH 316 (Math/CS Lab)
- Fine Arts 220
- Honors 308
- Math TLC (UC050)
- Music 105
- SSB 103 (Main Computing Lab)
- SSB 222 (Mathematics & Writing Academic Center)
- SSB 452 (Social Sciences Lab)
- TJ 316 (Thomas Jefferson Library Research Commons)
- TLC (E. Desmond Lee Technology and Learning Center, South campus)
- WEB 100 (Ward E. Barnes Library Research Commons)
- Did not use a campus computer lab

Q9 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

Q10 Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements concerning campus labs and IT services:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The computer</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Did Not Use/NA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lab was clean and well organized.</td>
<td>The hours of operation are sufficient.</td>
<td>There is adequate access to computers to meet my educational goals.</td>
<td>My overall experience was positive in the campus computer labs.</td>
<td>I support the current print quota system, Pharos.</td>
<td>I would support a hard print quota system (one where additional fees would be incurred once a set number of pages are printed).</td>
<td>I prefer to view my documents-lecture notes, reading, etc. digitally instead of in</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
hard copy. I prefer to turn in assignments electronically. My experience using TritonApps was positive.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How much did your classes use apps via TritonApps this semester?</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Less than Once a Month</th>
<th>Once a Month</th>
<th>2-3 Times a Month</th>
<th>Once a Week</th>
<th>2-3 Times a Week</th>
<th>Daily</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q11 Concerning TritonApps:

Q12 Which TritonApps were most useful to your class?

Q13 What software would you like to see added to TritonApps?

Q14 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.

Q15 Please describe any negative primary lab experience.

Q16 Please describe the most positive primary lab experience.

Q17 How can we improve your primary lab experience?

Q17a Is there any technology missing from campus that you need for classes?

Q18 To which of the following personal devices do you currently have access (check all that apply)
Q19 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: ____________________

Q20 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

Q21 If you own a laptop or mobile computing device, do you bring it to campus?

- Yes
- No
- Does not apply

Q22 If you do not bring your laptop or mobile device to campus, what prohibits you from bringing it to campus?
Q23 How do you use Blackboard Instant Messenger (BB-IM)?

- Class work
- Contacting my instructor
- Contacting other students in my class
- For non-class chatting and social networking
- Other: ____________________
- Don’t use

Q24 What is the level of your agreement with the following statement?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat Disagree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Don’t use/N/A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I would like to see BB-IM used in more of my classes</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q25 Please state which of the following Cloud Based Services you currently for personal use: (Click all that apply)

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

Q26 How likely would you be to use any of these services at UMSL if they were integrated in campus technology?

- Very Likely
- Likely
Somewhat Likely
Undecided
Somewhat Unlikely
Unlikely
Very Unlikely

Q27 Additional Comments and suggestions for what Information Technology Services can provide in the future to improve your learning experience: