CRC Desire2Learn and Teaching Survey Analysis (Spring 2013)

by Gregory Beyrer, distance education coordinator

Executive summary

Desire2Learn (D2L) is the learning management system used by faculty at Cosumnes River College for distance education courses as well as to supplement face-to-face courses. Faculty are not required to use it but many do. As of April 19, 67% of the college’s courses had a course offering in D2L. These courses included 64% of the college’s duplicated enrollments. Almost 84% of the college’s students were enrolled in at least one class that used D2L.

The tools that are available by default in new course offerings are appreciated by faculty who use them, though not all are viewed as positively. The communication of information common to all courses (sharing content like the course syllabus, posting grades) were the two areas that were most likely used and had the strongest support among those who expressed an opinion. As students were surveyed as well and asked the same questions, their responses can be used to point to future questions. Students were more positive in their responses to all questions, indicating that increased usage of these tools will not be viewed negatively.

Method

The survey instrument is a Google Form and was sent to all users of Desire2Learn (employees and students) across the Los Rios Community College District (~77,000 recipients). This survey is part of the district’s quadrennial review of its learning management system. These responses were received between February 25 and March 11, 2013. A total of 44 respondents selected the role of Instructor and indicated that CRC was at least one of their colleges (for Student the equivalent number was 751).
Level of Satisfaction

Please rank your overall level of satisfaction using D2L (5 is the best, 1 is the worst).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very Satisfied</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>21</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Very Dissatisfied</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
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By comparison, 83% of the 747 students who answered this question chose the top two options and 28 (4%) chose the bottom two options.

D2L Tool Benefits

The wording for these questions was aimed at student users, who comprised the majority of survey respondents. For instructor respondents, the answers were assumed to reflect the instructional benefit of using the particular tool. This includes the instructors’ perception of how students feel as well about the tool.
Please state whether you agree with each of the following statements.
[strongly disagree | disagree | agree | strongly agree | NA, no opinion, or didn't use]

I appreciate having online access to course content (syllabus, lecture outlines, etc.)

An additional 4 respondents (9% of those who answered this question) chose the option “NA, no opinion or didn’t use.” By comparison, CRC students generally felt the same: 90% of the instructors who expressed an opinion selected either “agree” or “strongly agree,” and 95% of students felt the same (697 out of 737).

I like taking quizzes online instead of during class.

An additional 17 respondents (39% of those who answered this question) chose the option “NA, no opinion or didn’t use,” which means that only 43% of instructors expressed a positive
opinion of this tool. By comparison, CRC students were much more positive: 73% of the 744 who answered this question (including those who chose the NA answer) selected either “agree” or “strongly agree.” Students and instructors who expressed a negative opinion (chose “disagree” or “strongly disagree”) were a similar proportion of those who answered the question (18% of instructors and 16% of students).

The online discussion increased my understanding of course topics.

An additional 23 respondents (52% of those who answered this question) chose the option “NA, no opinion or didn’t use,” which meant this question had the highest percentage of instructor recipients who chose this option. This tool question had the lowest positive response by far, with only 32% choosing “strongly agree” or “agree.” For CRC students, this tool also was the least used (141 out of 743 or 19% chose the NA answer) and least popular, though they too felt better about it than the faculty did (435 or 59% expressed some level of agreement).
Submitting papers via the dropbox is easy.

An additional 19 respondents (43% of those who answered this question) chose the option “NA, no opinion or didn’t use.” The same percentage of students expressed a negative opinion (79 out of 745 or 11%), but this was also the tool that had the greatest difference between the percentage of respondents who expressed a positive opinion (36 points separated the percentage of students who chose “agree” or “strongly agree” and instructors who felt the same).

I appreciate having anytime access to my grades.

An additional 14 respondents (32% of those who answered this question) chose the option “NA, no opinion or didn’t use.” Unsurprisingly, CRC students responded very positively. Of the 742 who answered this question, 90% chose “agree” or “strongly agree.”
The schedule of classes should indicate whether a class uses D2L.

An additional 7 respondents (16% of those who answered this question) chose the option “NA, no opinion or didn’t use.” As with the other questions, students generally felt better than instructors. Only 10% (71 out of 746) expressed a negative opinion, and 78% were positive about this.

Additional questions

Respondents were also asked to share positive experiences using D2L, suggestions for improvement, and other comments. Responses to these questions will be used to help instructors provide an effective learning environment for students. The survey finished with a series of questions on the help desk and user support.