

STUDENT PERSPECTIVES

on Online Programs

*A Survey of Learners Supported by
Wiley Education Services*



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on Online Programs

A Survey of Learners Supported by Wiley Education Services

A joint project of Wiley Education Services and Aslanian Market Research

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INTRODUCTION

Online learning is a critical element of the long-term strategy for most schools. An analysis of IPEDS data validates this point, as online course enrollments grew 41 percent from 2013 to 2018.¹ Considering that overall higher education enrollments decreased 1 percent during that period, it's easy to understand why schools prioritize online programs in their strategic plans.

Of course, growth in online learning is a positive trend for students. Now, students can choose from more programs and be more selective while searching for the best option for their needs. However, the rapid launch of online degrees has created intense competition among schools. This competition raises the stakes for schools to build credentials that attract students and provide a rewarding experience once classes begin.

Wiley Education Services partners with schools to produce best-in-class educational opportunities, including impactful online programs. Capturing insights about the student experience helps Wiley refine the services and solutions that partner schools find valuable. *Student Perspectives on Online Programs* represents one of many efforts that Wiley leads to meet the ever-changing needs of partners and their students.

To conduct this study, Wiley Education Services teamed up with Aslanian Market Research, a division of EducationDynamics, in 2019 to survey online students enrolled at 19 partner schools. All students were pursuing degrees in Wiley-supported programs, with the majority engaged in graduate study. Gathering these insights directly from students helps pinpoint why they chose to study online, factors that contribute to their success, and whether they are satisfied with their enrollment decision. Furthermore, this study provides data

for refining best practices and establishing benchmarks for further research into student satisfaction.


Presenting these findings provides a transparent look at the benefits of partnering with Wiley. For instance, this survey found that 88 percent of online students in Wiley-supported programs are satisfied with their enrollment decisions. What's more, this survey population has a Net Promoter Score that is good and borders on excellent. This score indicates that students will likely recommend their program, making it a powerful market indicator for Wiley's partners.



88%

**OF STUDENTS ARE SATISFIED WITH THEIR
DECISION TO ENROLL IN AN ONLINE PROGRAM
THAT WILEY SUPPORTS.**

Online learning offers tremendous value for schools, and its importance will grow through improvements to the student experience. This study demonstrates Wiley's commitment to thought leadership, along with a dedication to driving continuous growth through research. Explore [**edservices.wiley.com/resources**](#) for more white papers, articles, and case studies that share how schools can succeed as higher education evolves.



Recommendations based on survey findings and best practices appear in selected sections, and the top recommendations are summarized near the end of the report. While some suggestions will not apply to all schools, following the spirit of these items can enhance efforts to recruit, engage, support, and instruct online students.

KEY FINDINGS

Through an analysis of survey results, the following emerged as the top findings.

1. The Net Promoter Score (NPS) for this survey population is good and borders on excellent.

- NPS is a customer satisfaction metric that schools can use to forecast if students will likely recommend their programs.
- About 63 percent of respondents are highly likely to recommend their program to someone seeking a similar degree and are considered “promoters” for their program.
- Students who are less likely to recommend their specific program of study indicated concerns related to the course design, course content, and faculty interaction.
- Students tend to become detractors when programs suffer from outdated content, unengaging courses, and a lack of faculty feedback.
- In addition to a high NPS, 88 percent of students agree or strongly agree that they are satisfied with their programmatic decision.

2. Surveyed students place a premium on consistency throughout their program of study.

- These students want courses to follow a consistent structure, which includes developing a standard syllabus format and placing library and support resources in the same location in learning management systems (LMS).
- While most respondents are pleased with LMS functionality, survey data indicates satisfaction may rise if schools make course navigation more intuitive.

3. Students in this survey population value interactions with faculty, peers, and institutional staff.

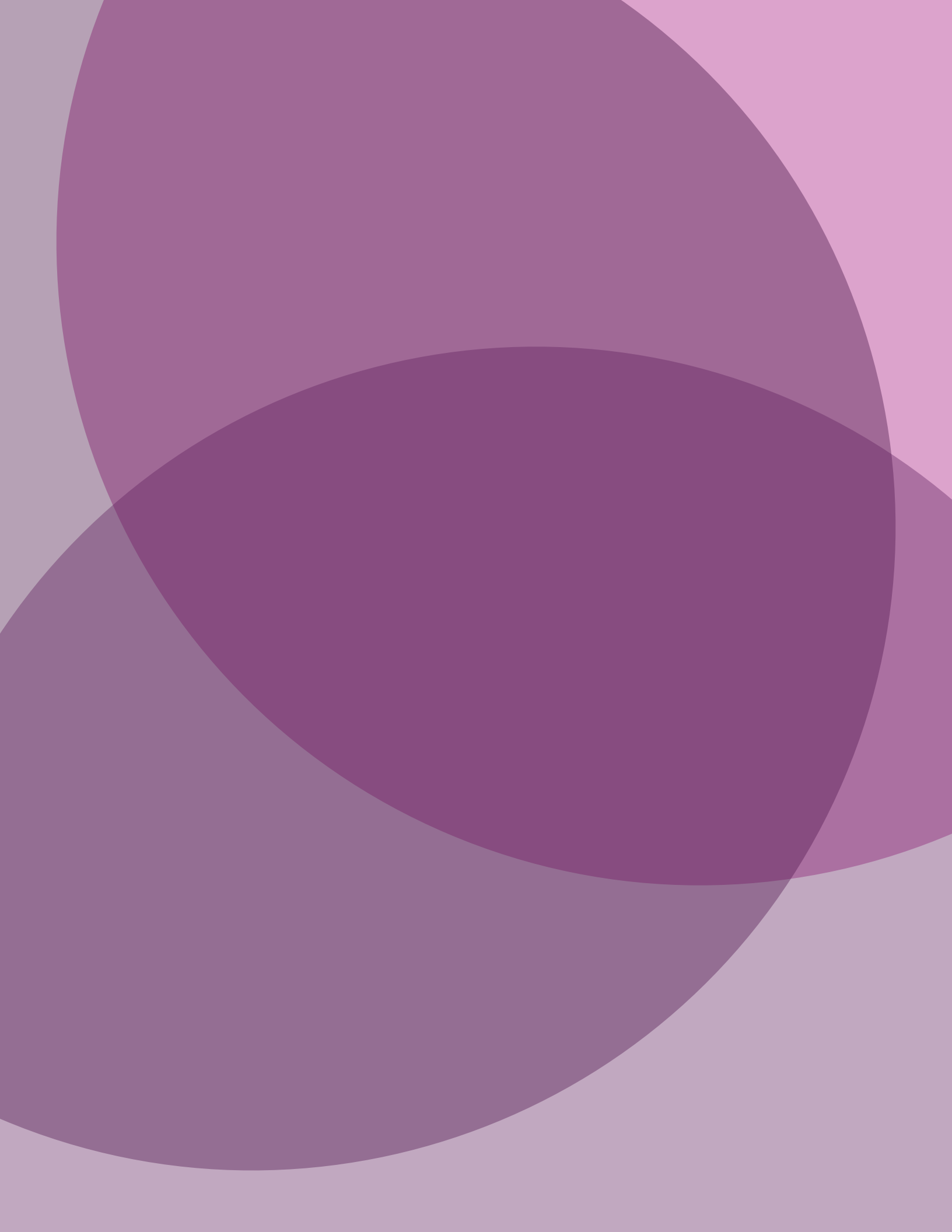
- Group work and similar collaborative learning experiences contribute to the success of these students.
- Respondents value meaningful faculty feedback and indicate that personal interactions with faculty strengthen their learning experience.

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4. Respondents equate “online” with “flexibility” and seek programs that allow them to keep up with their other responsibilities, such as employment.

- These students say flexibility is a top priority, as they expect to blend online learning around their personal and professional obligations.
- Survey data indicates that student satisfaction may decrease when online programs fall short of expectations for flexibility.
- Other reasons these students study online include the convenience of course schedules and lengths of programs.



SECTION 1

Online Program Selection and Student Satisfaction

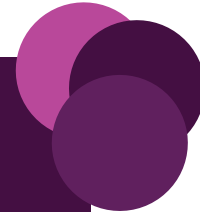
This section reviews what motivated this population of students to study online and offers insights about their satisfaction with enrollment decisions. These findings can help schools refine their recruitment and marketing efforts, as well as consider ways to improve the design of current online programs.



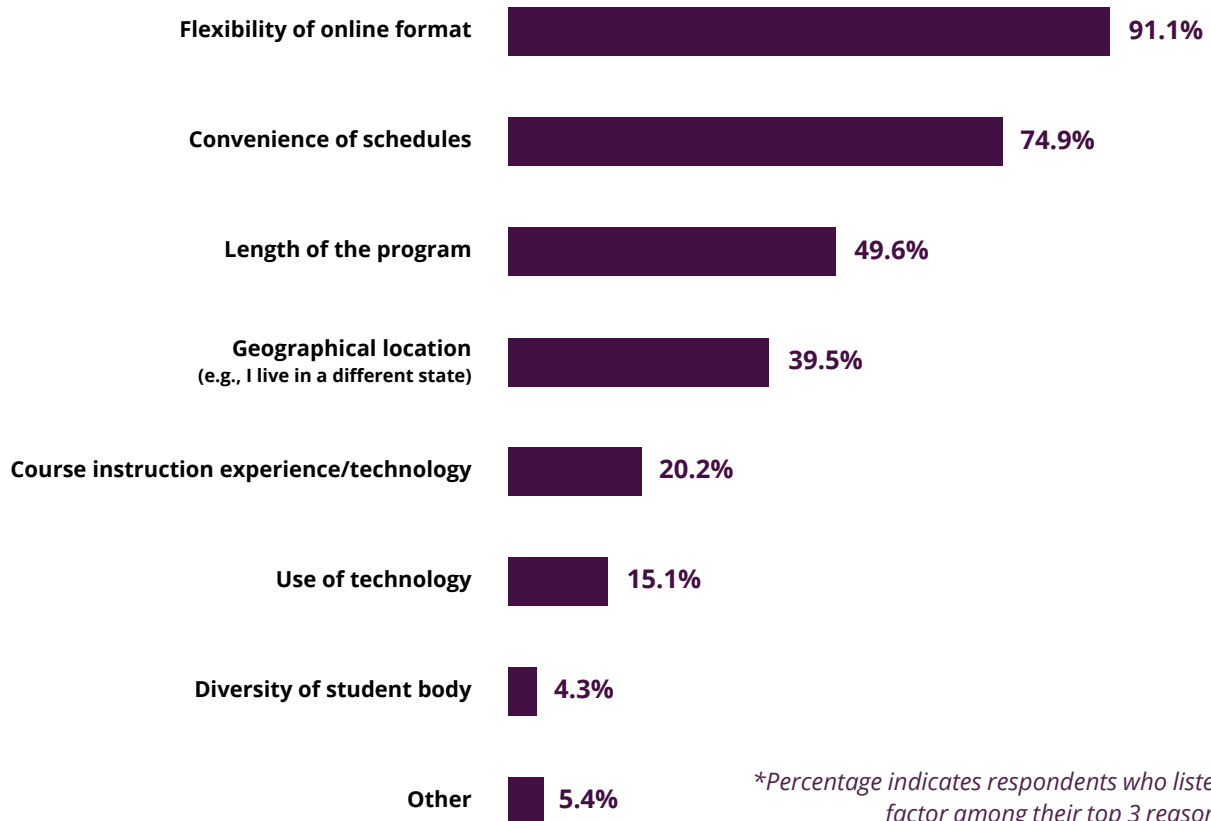
WHY STUDENTS PREFER TO STUDY ONLINE

What is the leading reason these students enrolled in online programs? Flexibility. About half of respondents say it's the No. 1 reason they study online, and 91 percent list it in their top three. Convenient scheduling is a top factor for nearly 75 percent of these students, and about 50 percent rank program length in their top three.

The leading reason these students enrolled in online programs:
FLEXIBILITY



*What was the main reason you chose to enroll in an online program (compared, for example, to an on-campus program)? Please select and rank the top 3 factors, where 1 is the most important factor and 3 is the least important.**





RECOMMENDATION

When these students chose a school, they prioritized flexible coursework that would allow them to juggle family and professional responsibilities. This finding reinforces the need for schools to keep flexibility top of mind when designing and marketing online programs. To stand out from competitors that market programs as flexible, schools must establish standards for flexibility that they can promote to students—and live up to those standards after students enroll. Faculty members play a central role in these efforts. For example, they can set weekly assignment deadlines to offer flexibility while holding students accountable for their performance. That said, faculty may need guidance for how to enforce those deadlines without causing courses to seem overly burdensome.



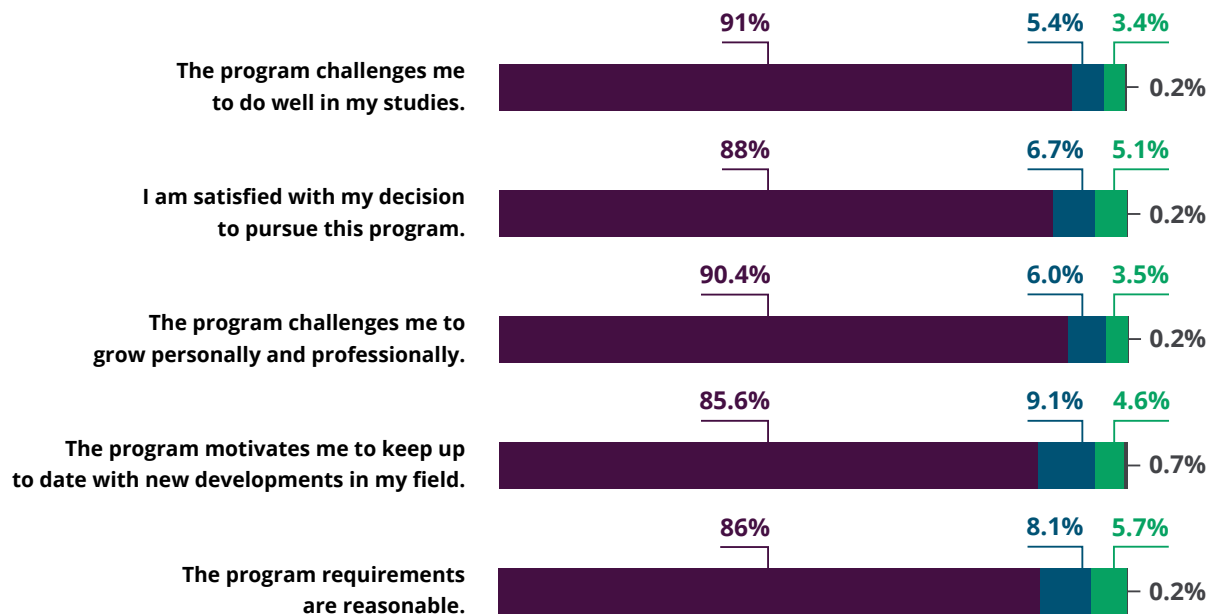
THE MAJORITY OF SURVEYED STUDENTS ARE SATISFIED

Overall, respondents are overwhelmingly satisfied with their programs. More than 90 percent agree or strongly agree that online programs challenge them to do well and grow personally and professionally. Additionally, 88 percent of students say they are satisfied with their enrollment decisions. Note that respondents rate these factors higher than other components of their learning experience, as shown in Section Four of this report, which covers Net Promoter Score.

91%

of respondents agree that online programs challenge them to do well in their studies.

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements about the program in which you are currently enrolled:



● Strongly Agree / Agree

● Neutral

● Strongly Disagree / Disagree

● Not Applicable



COMPARING STUDENT SATISFACTION TO DISCIPLINE

While responses were similar for most disciplines, a smaller share of business students strongly agree that programs challenge them personally or professionally. These students are also less likely to strongly agree that their programs motivate them to keep up with new developments in their field.

Across all disciplines, less than half of respondents strongly agree that program requirements are reasonable. This finding aligns with write-in feedback that shows respondents struggle to balance work, education, and family commitments. Students also feel they must read an overwhelming amount of content before their discussion board posts are due.

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements about the program in which you are currently enrolled*:

	<i>Bus.</i>	<i>Edu.</i>	<i>Health</i>	<i>Nursing</i>	<i>Social Work</i>	<i>Other</i>
The program challenges me to do well in my studies.	61.7%	62.1%	60.4%	63.5%	63.4%	60.1%
I am satisfied with my decision to pursue this program.	60.1%	62.9%	61.9%	59.0%	61.8%	61.1%
The program challenges me to grow personally and professionally.	55.9%	64.9%	60.0%	62.4%	66.1%	56.1%
The program motivates me to keep up to date with new developments in my field.	46.2%	59.3%	59.4%	62.0%	57.6%	52.8%
The program requirements are reasonable.	45.5%	44.0%	45.4%	48.1%	49.9%	44.8%

**Percentage indicates selection of "Strongly Agree"*



RECOMMENDATION

Fewer respondents strongly agree that their online program has reasonable requirements, providing motivation for schools to examine program schedules and demands. Survey feedback also indicates the need for breaks so students can balance their commitments at work, school, and home. An option to help students transition from one course to the next is to postpone deadlines for pre-work to the first week of class. This approach makes programs less stressful, as students avoid having to focus on upcoming courses before they begin.



SECTION 2

Meeting Expectations to Foster Success

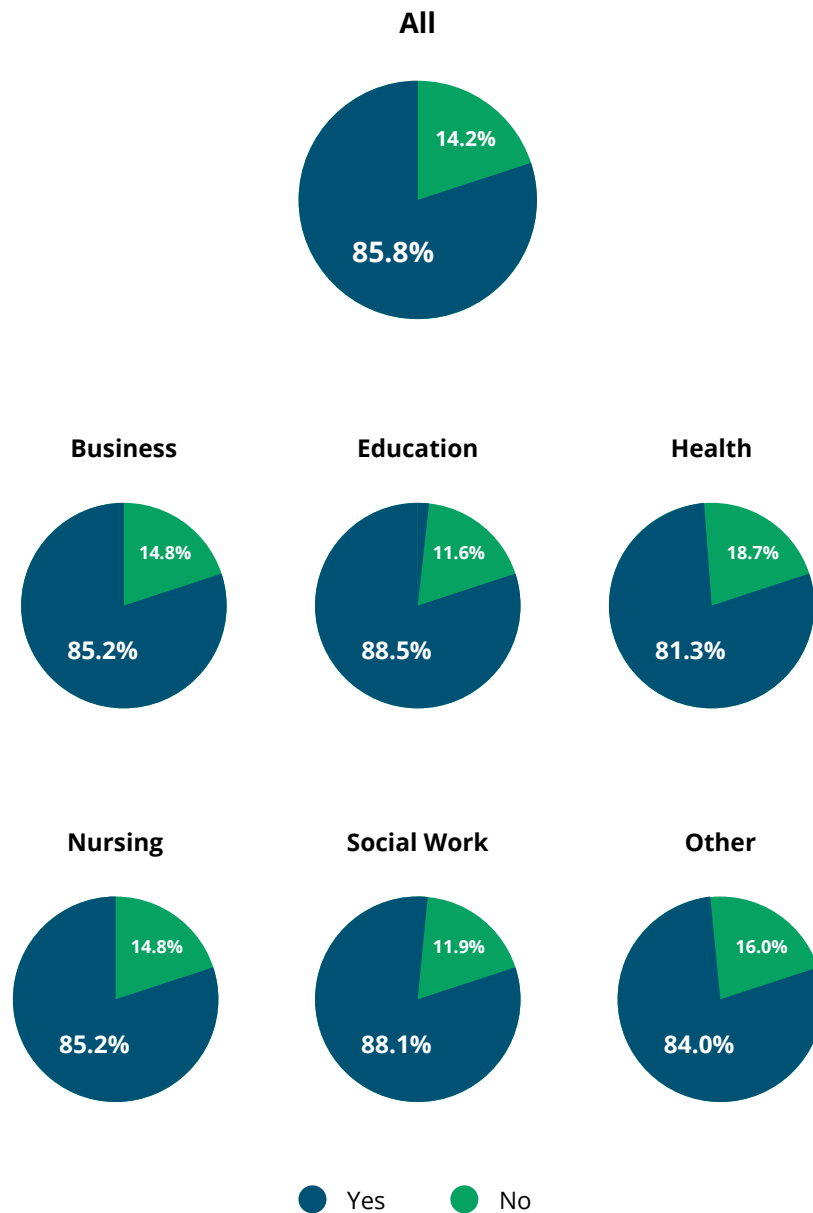
This section reviews high-level data for whether online programs meet student expectations, along with factors that boost academic performance. Findings presented here can help recruitment and enrollment teams refine how they set expectations for incoming students.



MEASURING IF ONLINE PROGRAMS MEET STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

Eighty-six percent of respondents answered “yes” when asked if online programs live up to their expectations. This question was posed in a simple yes/no format for two reasons—to take a quick measurement of satisfaction and to gather high-level data for making targeted program improvements.

Share of students whose program experience matches their expectations





RECOMMENDATION

Although online programs live up to most surveyed students' expectations, 14 percent of respondents do not hold that view. To prevent the feeling of buyer's remorse, schools must ensure online classes mirror the program features presented throughout the enrollment journey. This goes beyond meeting expectations for flexibility, as schools should also update course content regularly to account for emerging industry needs. These updates are especially important for programs related to fields subject to rapid change, such as IT and health. Also, students consider interactions with faculty vital to their success, making it essential to create processes and policies that promote this engagement.



EMPOWERING ONLINE STUDENTS TO SUCCEED

When respondents indicated they would likely complete their program, the survey asked them to provide feedback about what has contributed to their success. Themes that appear in their feedback include:

- Effectiveness of the professors responsible for online courses.
- Overall flexibility and convenience of online classes.
- Being able to manage their time, juggle schoolwork and employment, or work at their own pace.
- Support systems provided by family or peers.
- Personal characteristics, such as discipline, dedication, or determination.

Many of these students cited flexibility, convenience, and faculty engagement when discussing why they expect to complete their online program. Flexibility is especially important, as respondents across study areas say it's vital for success. That said, they may use that term in different ways, such as to describe the design of programs or when referring to instructors who adjust course requirements for individual students. An examination of feedback by discipline found:

- Education students are significantly more likely to reference faculty when reviewing their success, whereas students in social work programs mention faculty less often.
- More students in social work programs reference full-time employment, and they often tie their success to time-management skills or the ability to work at their own pace.
- Nursing students are less likely to mention support groups, such as family or other students. But they are more likely to say that motivation and other personal characteristics are vital to their success.
- Business students describe themselves as determined more often than disciplined or committed.

**Three reasons respondents expect to complete their programs:
*FLEXIBILITY | CONVENIENCE | FACULTY ENGAGEMENT***



SECTION 3

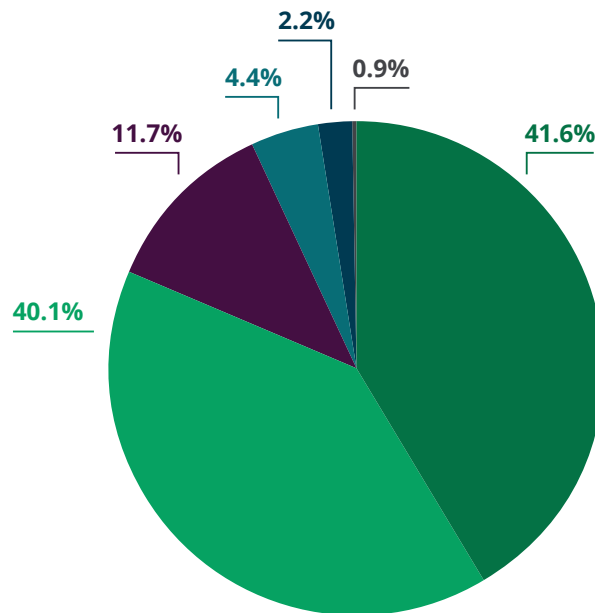
Factors That Create a Positive Learning Experience

Schools shouldn't assume that students who study online shy away from chances to interact with faculty and peers. According to this study, accessing resources and building relationships with professors and other students can contribute to academic success.



OFFERING RESOURCES TO SUPPORT ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Schools that tailor resources to the needs of online students can boost academic performance. This study found that most online programs have supportive learning environments, as about **82 percent of students agree or strongly agree that they receive resources that support their online education.**



- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- NA

82% of students agree that they receive resources that support their studies.



RESOURCES THAT IMPROVE THE ONLINE LEARNING EXPERIENCE

When asked to write in what support or resources would improve their experiences, 59 percent of respondents did not provide specific suggestions. However, of the 41 percent of respondents who offered suggestions, the most common involve a desire to interact with support personnel, such as an advisor, student services coordinator, or coach.

Feedback mentioning faculty accounts for 21 percent of the comments, which were provided by nearly 10 percent of all respondents. This feedback indicates that students desire additional faculty engagement and that connecting with instructors can lead to higher quality learning experiences.

Nearly 13 percent of feedback involves technology, and many of those suggestions call for professors to create more video lectures. As a point of comparison, feedback refers to video lectures (or the lack thereof) as a resource six times more than textbooks.

More than 25 percent of comments cover a range of academic support resources, such as feedback for a school's librarians, tutors, and field placement assistance. Other comments indicate interest in more writing resources, such as for following APA style, and additional opportunities to check in with faculty or support staff.

What support and resources would improve your experience in this program?

	<i>Percent of responses with content</i>	<i>Percent of all respondents</i>
Advisor/success coach	22.4%	9.2%
Faculty	21.1%	8.7%
Technology	12.8%	5.3%
Academic support resources	26.4%	10.9%
Other	33.5%	13.8%



RECOMMENDATION

Online programs include adult students who are returning to school after a long break, and this population may appreciate services that help them reacclimate to authoring lengthy research papers and thinking critically about reading assignments. Academic advisors can promote access to these services by remaining engaged with students throughout a program. Such long-term investment allows advisors to celebrate student triumphs and point students toward helpful resources when challenges arise.



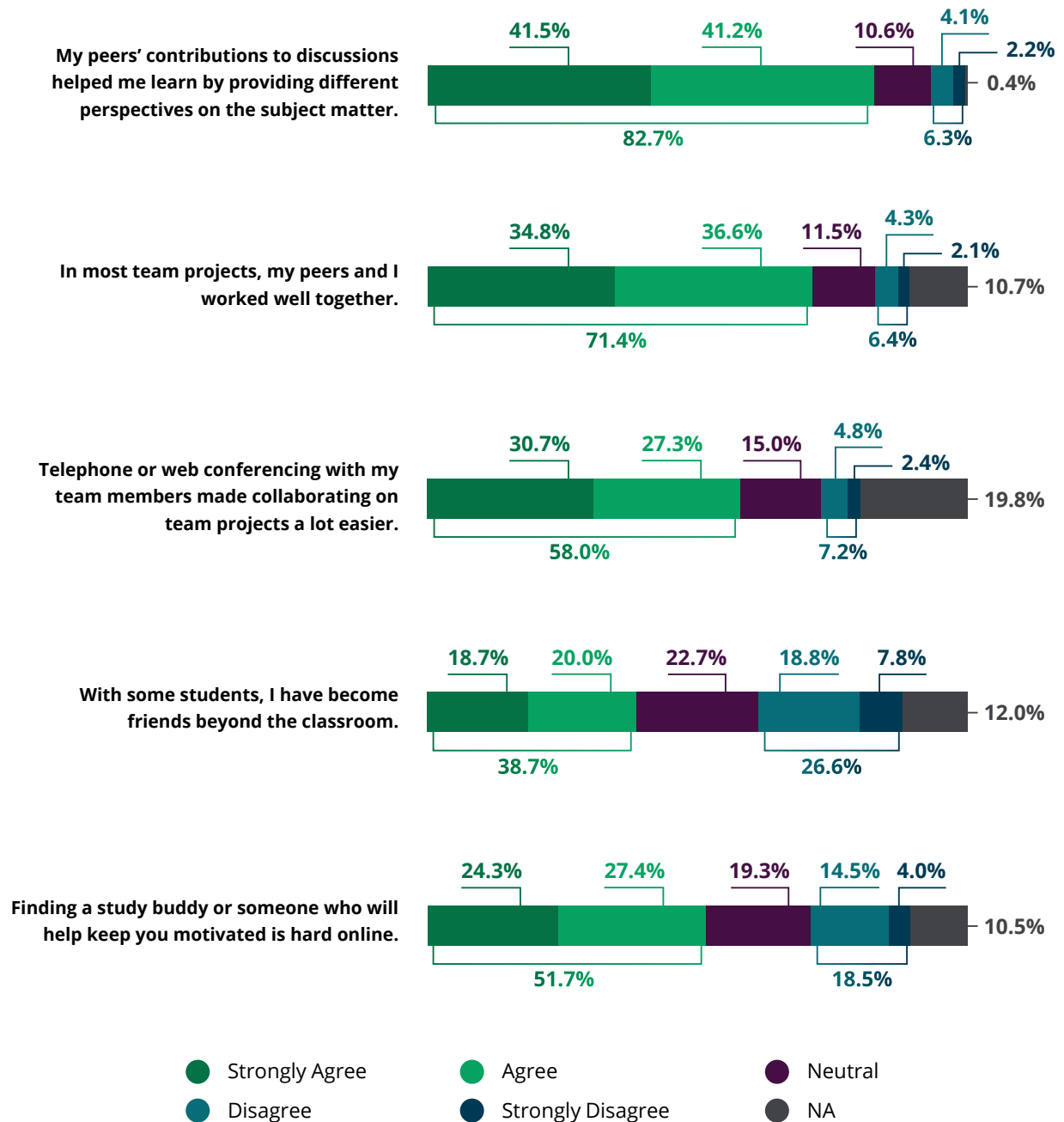
OPPORTUNITIES TO INTERACT AND BUILD RELATIONSHIPS WITH PEERS

Although some students consider online group work challenging, many responses show that this learning format can foster greater engagement among students. Personal interaction seems essential, as respondents indicate in their write-in responses to various questions that peer and family support systems contribute to program success.

Note that schools can foster peer engagement beyond assigning group projects. For instance, some programs follow cohort models, though this approach also has operational challenges and can limit the flexibility that online students desire. Other programs take a hybrid approach by providing face-to-face instruction through intensives. Regardless of the program's structure, there are ways to help students build relationships that take place entirely online. To begin, faculty should be familiar with resources available to online students, such as peer support and study groups, and they should provide instructions for how to join these groups. Faculty can also use web conferencing platforms or LMS video functionality to hold optional synchronous sessions and foster peer-to-peer learning through group work, which can improve the student experience and increase the likelihood of success.

To further aid remote collaboration, faculty may encourage students to communicate via Google Hangouts, Messenger, or another messaging app they use regularly. However, the viability of this approach may depend on what the LMS supports. Students may also need help juggling group assignments with employment responsibilities, as discussed later in this report.

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements about the opportunities to engage and build relationships with your peers in your online courses:





PERSPECTIVES ON PEER INTERACTION BY DISCIPLINE

An analysis of responses by discipline shows that surveyed students in health programs are more likely to value their peers' contributions to discussion boards. Respondents in social work programs are more likely to develop friendships that extend beyond the classroom, and more of these students find that telephone and web conferencing make group projects more manageable. By contrast, respondents in nursing programs are less likely to say that these communication tools enhance collaboration.

These findings indicate the need for the online program design process to account for how work schedules impact peer interactions. During this process, schools should consider whether students are familiar with communication tools, which may dictate how well they collaborate remotely. At the same time, schools should experiment with emerging technologies to find better ways for online students to work together.

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements about the opportunities to engage and build relationships with your peers in your online courses*:

	<i>Bus.</i>	<i>Edu.</i>	<i>Health</i>	<i>Nursing</i>	<i>Social Work</i>	<i>Other</i>
My peers' contributions to discussions helped me learn by providing different perspectives on the subject matter.	39.3%	42.9%	48.6%	42.0%	41.4%	39.55%
In most team projects, my peers and I worked well together.	32.1%	39.0%	35.1%	32.1%	35.9%	34.67%
Telephone or web conferencing with my team members made collaborating on team projects a lot easier.	27.8%	31.4%	30.7%	19.2%	38.3%	31.88%
With some students, I have become friends beyond the classroom.	12.6%	16.6%	21.5%	14.8%	25.2%	21.08%
Finding a study buddy or someone who will help keep you motivated is hard online.	22.8%	21.6%	28.7%	25.8%	25.5%	23.69%

** Percentages indicate the respondents who Strongly Agree.*



RECOMMENDATION

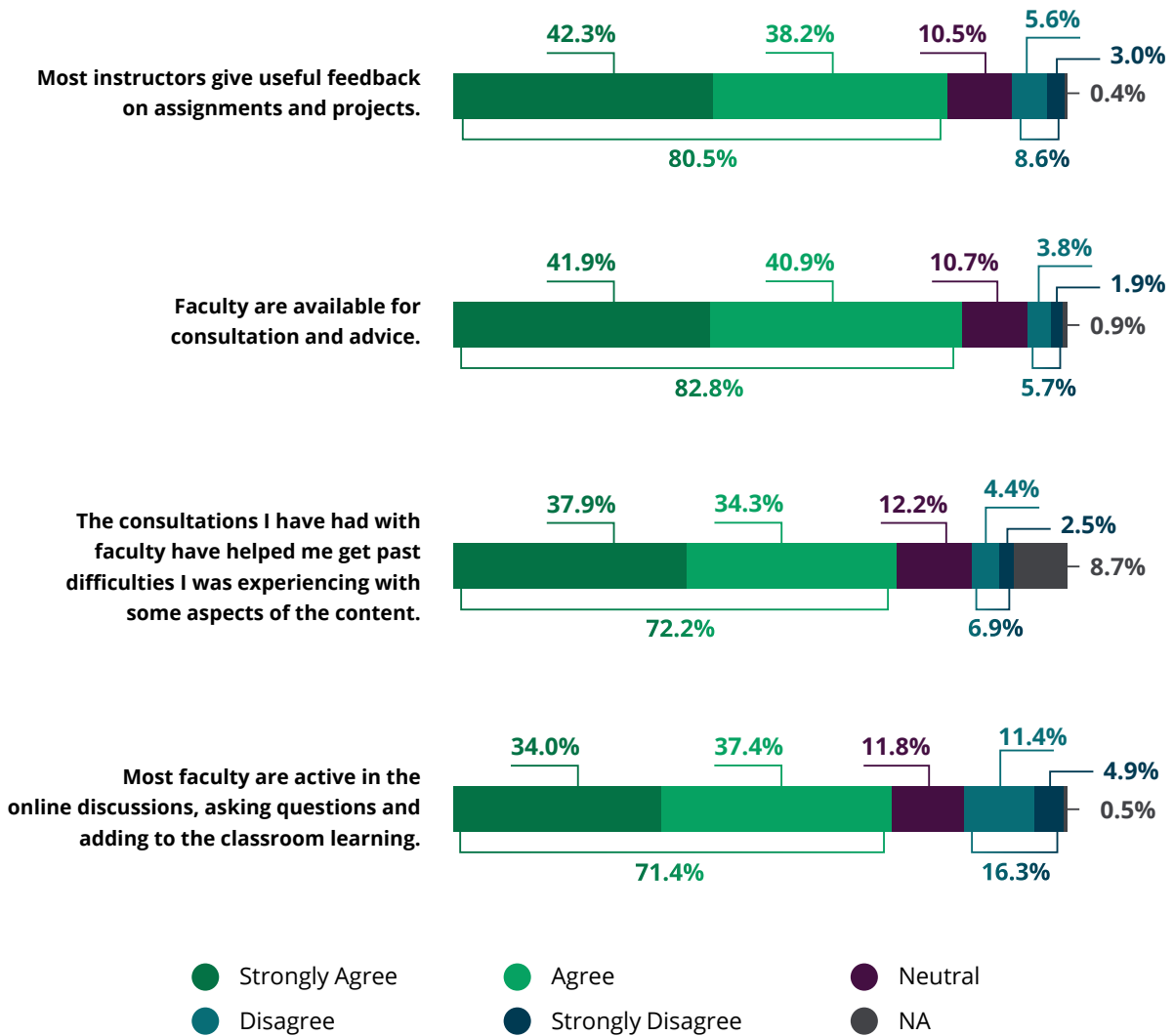
Although respondents demand the flexibility to learn on their own time, they also value peer interactions. As a result, faculty should identify a few lessons per term that accommodate group work or class discussions. These activities will let students interact, collaborate, and bond with their classmates. Furthermore, schools should empathize with students who have challenging work schedules, such as nurses and students who work varying shifts. To accommodate these students, it's vital to create environments and solutions that foster collaboration in asynchronous formats.



BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS WITH ONLINE FACULTY

Most respondents agree or strongly agree that faculty members give useful feedback. That said, fewer students strongly agree that faculty are active in online discussion boards. Because faculty engagement can bolster the student experience, encouraging them to take part in online discussions could yield positive results.

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements about the opportunities to build relationships with faculty in your online courses:





RECOMMENDATION

By taking part in discussion boards, instructors can answer student questions and provide additional context for difficult content. Instructors can also drive conversations by posting weekly updates that recap lessons and introduce new topics. Survey feedback shows that students desire more video content. By recording each weekly update as a video, instructors could help satisfy that need. Note that students often communicate via FaceTime and other video chat platforms, so it's acceptable for instructors to produce video updates using a smartphone or laptop.



PERSPECTIVES ON FACULTY ENGAGEMENT BY DISCIPLINE

Respondents in nursing programs are more likely than their peers to build relationships with online faculty. Nearly half of these students strongly agree that instructors make time for consultations and offer useful feedback on assignments. On the other hand, respondents in business programs seem less likely than other students to build relationships with faculty. Across all disciplines, surveyed students are often less satisfied with faculty participation in online discussions and the help that instructors provide for understanding difficult content.

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements about the opportunities to build relationships with faculty in your online courses:

	<i>Bus.</i>	<i>Edu.</i>	<i>Health</i>	<i>Nursing</i>	<i>Social Work</i>	<i>Other</i>
Most instructors give useful feedback on assignments and projects.	36.0%	43.4%	46.2%	49.2%	44.6%	40.1%
Faculty are available for consultation and advice.	38.1%	44.2%	41.8%	48.1%	40.8%	42.0%
The consultations I have had with faculty have helped me get past difficulties I was experiencing with some aspects of the content.	30.3%	41.0%	41.8%	42.6%	40.6%	36.2%
Most faculty are active in the online discussions, asking questions, and adding to the classroom learning.	28.7%	32.7%	35.1%	43.7%	34.8%	33.4%



RECOMMENDATION

Much like peer interactions, opportunities for students to engage with faculty can create rewarding learning experiences. One way to foster this engagement is for faculty to host optional synchronous sessions focused on course content. These sessions should be recorded for students who cannot attend. It's also vital to grade assignments in a timely fashion and provide personalized feedback to help students overcome their unique comprehension gaps.

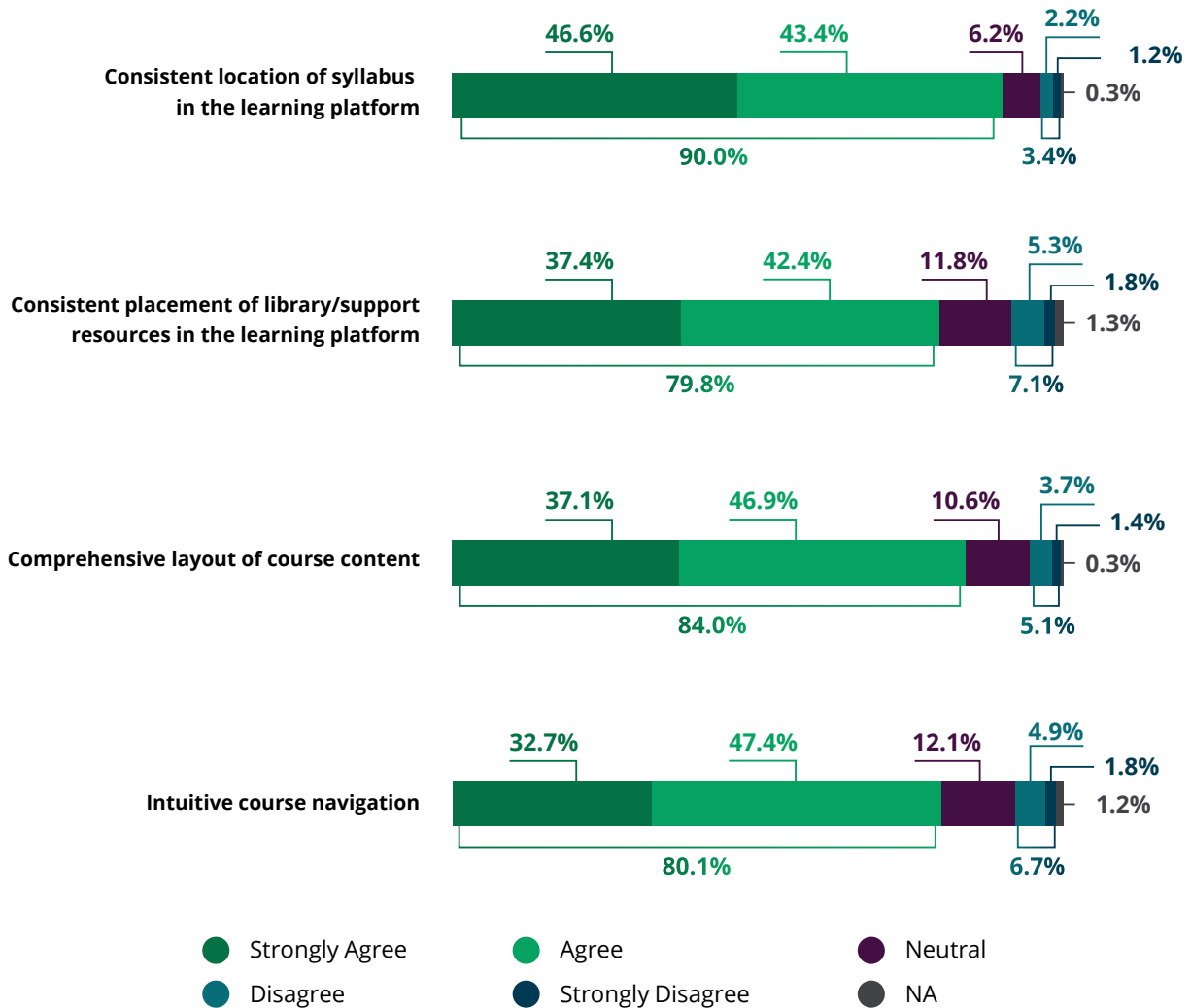


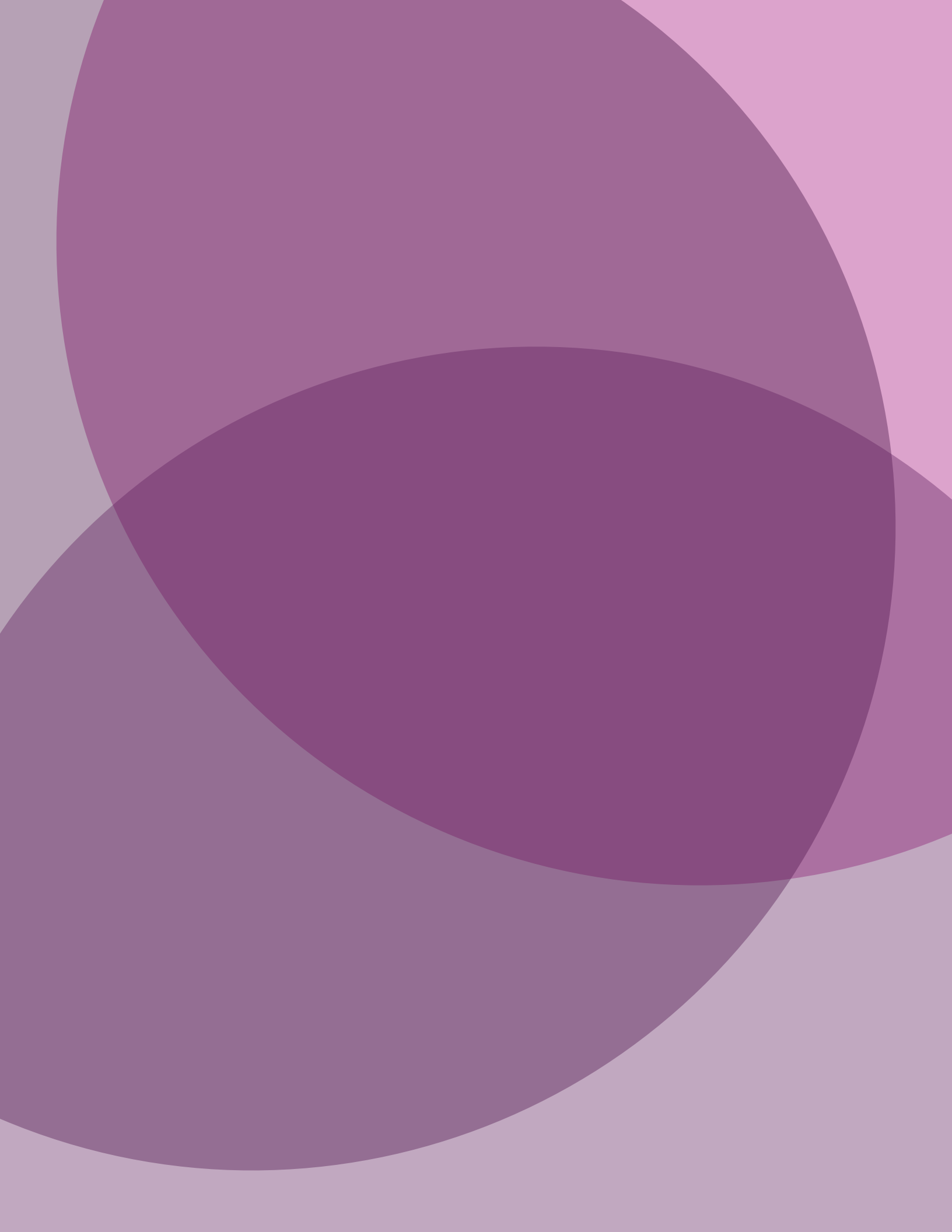
STUDENT EXPERIENCES WITH LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

Respondents rate LMS functionality nearly as high as other aspects of their learning experience. Ninety percent of surveyed students agree that syllabi appear in consistent locations, which is a top-of-mind consideration for this population. Additionally, 84 percent agree that course content follows a comprehensive layout.

This study also found opportunities for schools to enhance course technologies. An area for improvement involves course navigation, as only about 80 percent of students agree it's intuitive. A similar percentage of students agree that library and support resources have a consistent placement in the LMS. While these findings provide reasons to refine LMS functionality, most respondents are satisfied, as only about 7 percent indicate dissatisfaction.

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements about the presentation of various features of the courses you have taken in this program:





SECTION 4

An Analysis of Net Promoter Score Findings

Net Promoter Score (NPS) is a standard measure of customer satisfaction. Schools can use this metric to determine the likelihood that students will suggest a program to friends and family. This study assigned an NPS to the survey population by asking if respondents would recommend their program to someone seeking a similar degree.



DETERMINING IF STUDENTS ARE PROMOTERS, PASSIVE, OR DETRACTORS

Questions for determining an NPS are based on a scale of 1 (low loyalty) to 10 (high loyalty). Based on the rating they provided, respondents are assigned to one of three categories:

- Detractor: Rating of 1 to 6
- Passive: Rating of 7 or 8
- Promoter: Rating of 9 or 10

For this study, about **63 percent of respondents fell into the promoter category**, 22 percent were passive promoters, and 15 percent were detractors.

On a scale of 1-10, how likely is it that you recommend this program to someone seeking a similar degree?



● Detractor ● Passive ● Promoter



OVERALL NET PROMOTER SCORE

The overall NPS is calculated by subtracting the percent of detractors from the percent of promoters. The resulting NPS could range from -100 to 100, with most benchmarks following this classification:



Good



Excellent



World-Class

The NPS for this population of online students is 47.1, a score that is good, bordering on excellent. As a point of comparison, Apple and Samsung tied for the top NPS in the smartphone industry with a 45, Allstate is the leading life insurance provider at 40, and an NPS of 36 makes UPS the top shipping services company.²



WHAT PROMOTERS RECOMMEND

Promoters are more likely to recommend their programs, and nearly six percent of these students have done so while still enrolled. Respondents in business and social work programs have indicated they would promote their schools at the highest rate, and nearly one-third of all promoters describe their experience using words like “great,” “love,” or “enjoy.”

Although flexibility and convenience are top reasons for students to choose online programs, only about 25 percent of promoters would reference those features when offering recommendations. Of all promoter sub-groups, flexibility and convenience matter most to nursing students, followed by students in social work and health programs.

More promoters in education and business programs link their positive impressions to the quality of faculty. Many of these students also say program rigor is a selling point. Of all the promoters in this study, around 22 percent would reference their overall experience when suggesting their program.

	<i>All</i>	<i>Bus.</i>	<i>Edu.</i>	<i>Health</i>	<i>Nursing</i>	<i>Social Work</i>	<i>Other</i>
Recommended their program	5.7%	7.1%	3.4%	1.6%	3.8%	7.8%	6.3%
Positive descriptors such as great, love, and enjoy	32.1%	29.7%	34.5%	29.5%	25.4%	31.4%	38.5%
Faculty	16.7%	18.6%	19.2%	9.3%	14.6%	16.4%	17.3%
Rigor	13.2%	14.9%	15.7%	10.1%	11.4%	9.7%	16.3%
Flexibility or convenience	25.1%	25.1%	20.3%	27.1%	32.4%	27.3%	21.3%
Overall experience	22.4%	20.4%	23.0%	23.3%	18.9%	36.5%	30.6%
Count of promoters who left the feedback field blank	281	70	38	29	39	51	54
Size of promoter population	1,853	393	299	158	224	424	355
Share of all respondents categorized as a promoter	62.5%	59.5%	65.1%	62.9%	61.5%	64.7%	61.8%



STUDENT VOICES: PROMOTERS [RATING OF 9 OR 10]

I was able to balance a full-time work schedule, newborn baby, and be a full-time student. Not only that, but I have found a passion for my work.

I have been extremely impressed with the level of class participation, and I feel like I know the students with whom I have been in online courses more than I have in previous in-person classes.

This program allows me to be flexible by working, having outside obligations, and also learn. The program allows me to get ahead when I know I have things coming up in my schedule, and it is easy to communicate with the professors.



PROGRAM SUGGESTIONS FROM PASSIVE RESPONDENTS

This survey asked the 654 passive respondents—students who rated their programs a 7 or 8 out of 10—to suggest ways for schools to enhance online programs. Responses reflect student voices—there were no boxes to check. Wiley Education Services and Aslanian Market Research analyzed these suggestions to identify insights for turning this population into promoters.

A significant share of suggestions relate to improving course design or content. For these students, outdated reference materials and assignments that seem like busywork diminish the learning experience. They also feel shortchanged when schools repurpose on-campus assignments that translate poorly to an online format. This feedback shows the value of building relevant course content while delivering seamless learning experiences.

Passive respondents had concerns about faculty performance. Disorganized instructors frustrate students, and other sore spots include improper use of course technology and incorrect due dates. These respondents also dislike instances when professors fail to respond to emails. Performance may improve if schools offer training that focuses on faculty-student engagement, along with lessons on best practices for managing an online course.

Feedback about a program's LMS and course technology indicates the need for schools to test systems frequently. Errors within these systems lead to headaches for students, as do cumbersome features that students struggle to navigate. Collaborating online also proves challenging for respondents who balance a job and schoolwork, especially when group members live in different time zones. To give students ample time to complete group work, faculty can divide assignments across several weeks. Each syllabus should also outline the process for taking part in group work and establish expectations for how students should contribute to these assignments.

More than half of passive respondents in education programs suggested improvements to course design or content, and faculty was the principal focus of feedback from business students. Respondents in nursing programs focused on administrative issues or policies at a higher rate, and they often joined social work students in providing feedback about internships and field placement.

What could we do to provide a more successful experience for you in this program?

<i>Feedback Focus Area</i>	<i>All</i>	<i>Bus.</i>	<i>Edu.</i>	<i>Health</i>	<i>Nursing</i>	<i>Social Work</i>	<i>Other</i>
Course design or content	42.1%	42.8%	57.1%	47.7%	35.2%	34.8%	38.0%
Professor, teacher, instructor, or faculty	31.8%	43.5%	28.6%	38.6%	20.4%	17.9%	37.0%
LMS and technology	18.8%	14.5%	27.4%	20.5%	20.4%	13.4%	22.0%
Administration, communication, and/or policies	12.4%	8.0%	10.7%	13.6%	20.4%	15.2%	12.0%
Students, community, and/or group projects	8.3%	6.5%	7.1%	4.5%	9.3%	8.0%	13.0%
Textbooks, resources, and/or course materials	6.2%	7.2%	7.1%	2.3%	5.6%	3.6%	9.0%
Advising and/or resources	4.7%	6.5%	3.6%	0.0%	9.3%	4.5%	3.0%
Internships, field placements, and/or career services	4.5%	2.2%	0.0%	0.0%	5.6%	13.4%	3.0%
Admissions	3.6%	4.3%	1.2%	4.5%	5.6%	4.5%	2.0%
Tuition or financial aid	2.1%	0.7%	1.2%	4.5%	3.7%	2.7%	2.0%
Networking	0.9%	2.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.0%
Nothing or N/A	7.3%	6.5%	4.8%	2.3%	13.0%	9.8%	7.0%
Count of passive students who left the feedback field blank	122	26	19	12	18	22	25
Size of passive population	654	164	103	56	72	134	125
Share of all respondents categorized as passive	22.1%	24.8%	22.4%	22.3%	18.8%	20.5%	21.8%



STUDENT VOICES: PASSIVE RESPONDENTS [RATING OF 7 OR 8]

The professors need to be more organized in [the LMS]. It is very frustrating when they are posting incorrect due dates or are confused about the course schedule.

More clearly stated objectives in the course material learning modules. It is not always clear what is required and what is optional.

More interaction—either scheduled, periodic meetings by phone with instructors (midway for each student) or weekly webcam instructor-led lectures featuring a PowerPoint presentation, allowing students to ask questions in real-time.



PROGRAM SUGGESTIONS FROM DETRACTORS

Feedback from detractors often focused on faculty communication practices. This population desires faster responses to questions as well as timely and more robust feedback on assignments. Detractors would also like for faculty to take a more prominent role in the learning process. Suggestions include requests for the primary instructor to produce more video lectures and for faculty to moderate discussion boards as they would do during in-person classroom discussions.

Many detractors have concerns about course syllabus quality, such as inadequate information for how instructors determine grades. This feedback highlights the importance of including rubrics for assessing student work in the syllabus as well as using a templated master syllabus that prevents the editing of essential details. Program administrators should also work with faculty to ensure this content is current, complete, and presented the same way in all courses. To further strengthen the quality, pre-course checklists should include steps for matching syllabus requirements to the course calendar.

Detractors also voiced concerns about typos, outdated content, and the need to buy textbooks that went unused. These concerns bolster the need for faculty to partner with instructional designers to resolve program shortcomings and improve the student experience.

What could we do to provide a more successful experience for you in this program?

Feedback Focus Area	All	Bus.	Edu.	Health	Nursing	Social Work	Other
Professor, instructor, faculty, or teacher	42.7%	53.8%	36.8%	81.1%	29.4%	24.7%	46.8%
Program and course content or design	36.3%	36.5%	42.1%	48.6%	33.8%	23.7%	42.6%
LMS and technology	12.3%	15.4%	17.5%	16.2%	8.8%	8.2%	10.6%
Administration and communication	11.4%	9.6%	10.5%	10.8%	14.7%	14.4%	8.5%
Student interactions and/or group projects	10.9%	8.7%	3.5%	18.9%	11.8%	13.4%	11.7%

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Feedback Focus Area	All	Bus.	Edu.	Health	Nursing	Social Work	Other
Advising	9.8%	5.8%	12.3%	13.5%	13.2%	9.3%	9.6%
Textbooks, resources, and/or course materials	9.4%	12.5%	7.0%	27.0%	4.4%	6.2%	7.4%
Internships, field placements, and/or career services	8.1%	1.0%	8.8%	2.7%	8.8%	21.6%	3.2%
Admissions	5.9%	6.7%	5.3%	0.0%	11.8%	4.1%	5.3%
Tuition or financial aid	5.9%	9.6%	3.5%	2.7%	4.4%	3.1%	8.5%
Networking	1.1%	1.0%	0.0%	5.4%	0.0%	1.0%	1.1%
Nothing at this time or N/A	1.5%	1.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.8%	2.4%	3.6%
Count of detractors who left the feedback field blank	59	14	9	2	11	13	10
Size of detractor population	457	104	57	37	68	97	94
Share of all respondents categorized as detractors	15.4%	15.7%	12.4%	14.7%	18.7%	14.8%	16.4%



STUDENT VOICES: DETRACTORS [RATING OF 1 TO 6]

There is little interaction with the instructors. There are times when they do not respond to emails about assignments in a timely manner.

Each professor is different, but I wish they would give more feedback/be more involved. At times, it just feels like a side gig for them.

The professors need to be more engaged with the students. Additionally, the university needs to do a better job of supporting the online students with external requirements.



RECOMMENDATION

NPS is a powerful market indicator that helps schools determine if students will recommend their programs. But its value goes even further, as schools can use NPS as a diagnostic tool for measuring program health. While a high NPS is worth celebrating, schools should analyze why students like a program to continue improving the learning experience. When a school finds a program's NPS is low, they can begin searching for pain points that diminish student satisfaction. This examination can draw from study areas that appear in this report, such as whether a program is reasonably challenging and that content is relevant. Conducting this exercise can improve programs in ways that help reenergize students and move them from passive to promoters.



KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

To fulfill the following recommendations, schools must take a student-first approach for every step of the online education journey. As most online students are employed, schools can boost student satisfaction by structuring programs in time-conscious ways that offer a flexible path to a degree.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Examine the complete student journey—from the program research phase through graduation and beyond—to remove barriers to flexibility.

- These students believe that online learning offers a more flexible path to a degree than on-campus programs. In fact, they may not recommend programs with overly rigid requirements.
- Schools should limit cumbersome features to ensure students meet their work-life commitments. What's more, offering flexible course schedules and multiple start dates allow students to earn a degree on their ideal timeline.

2. Create a consistent learning experience to alleviate unneeded stress.

- Respondents voiced dissatisfaction with errors and clumsy navigation in course technologies. Schools can ease these issues by developing a master-course model. This model ensures all courses follow a standard format to provide a seamless experience throughout a program, including within the LMS.
- Other enhancements include presenting content in intuitive ways and storing syllabi in consistent locations, which students say is vital to their success.

3. Empower faculty to engage with students to improve the learning experience.

- Like in physical classrooms, faculty serve as the face of an institution for online students. Effective faculty communication is a top measure by which students assess their experience, and online courses should foster this interaction.
- Rapid ways to boost engagement include scheduling time for students to check in during a term, offering timely feedback on assignments, and tailoring comments around individual learning needs.
- Instructors can also post weekly updates to recap lessons and help students with challenging assignments. Survey feedback indicates students desire more video coursework, and faculty could satisfy that need by recording each week's update as a video.

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4. Provide development opportunities that focus on teaching online students.

- Respondents consider faculty participation to be integral to their learning experience. Thus, faculty development must cover more than LMS use.
- Schools should offer development opportunities and workshops that focus on teaching students online. This training will help faculty engage with students in enriching ways beyond posting a syllabus to the LMS and using a discussion board to instruct their class.

METHODOLOGY

Through a collaboration with Aslanian Market Research, Wiley Education Services designed a survey to determine how the students participating in Wiley-supported online programs rate their experience, as well as their satisfaction with their education choices. The purpose of this study was to capture insights that help schools improve the design, delivery, and marketing of online programs.

All students enrolled in Wiley-supported online programs as of February 8, 2019, were eligible for the survey. At that time, Wiley supported programs at 19 schools. Inquiries were emailed to students in early 2019; respondents did not receive an incentive to participate.

This survey received 3,175 responses; of those, 2,992 were complete, and removal of duplicates netted a final data set with 2,965 responses. Ninety percent of respondents were enrolled in graduate programs. The response rate was roughly 25 percent, and the median time to complete the survey was about seven minutes. Respondents answered 17 questions. While most questions followed a multiple-choice format or asked for ratings, four questions prompted respondents to input text.

PARTNERS

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Aslanian Market Research (AMR) is **EducationDynamics'** market research division and a part of the Enrollment Management Services group. AMR works with dozens of colleges and universities each year to ensure that their on-ground and online programs meet the demands and preferences of today's adult, post-traditional, and online students. AMR team members have conducted market analyses for nearly 300 colleges and universities in 44 states from Maine to Oregon and Minnesota to Texas, as well as internationally.

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