

Author: Denhart, Richard

Title: *Non-traditional Undergraduate Perceptions of the Effectiveness of Hybrid Instruction in an Entertainment and Media Business Bachelor's Degree Completion Program*

The accompanying research report is submitted to the **University of Wisconsin-Stout, Graduate School** in partial completion of the requirements for the

Graduate Degree/ Major: MS Career and Technical Education

Research Adviser: Carol Mooney, Ed.D.

Submission Term/Year: Fall, 2012

Number of Pages: 61

Style Manual Used: American Psychological Association, 6th edition

I understand that this research report must be officially approved by the Graduate School and that an electronic copy of the approved version will be made available through the University Library website

I attest that the research report is my original work (that any copyrightable materials have been used with the permission of the original authors), and as such, it is automatically protected by the laws, rules, and regulations of the U.S. Copyright Office.

My research adviser has approved the content and quality of this paper.

STUDENT:

NAME Richard Denhart

DATE: 12/11/2012

ADVISER: (Committee Chair if MS Plan A or EdS Thesis or Field Project/Problem):

NAME Carol T. Mooney

DATE: 12/10/2012

This section for MS Plan A Thesis or EdS Thesis/Field Project papers only
Committee members (other than your adviser who is listed in the section above)

1. CMTE MEMBER'S NAME: DATE:

2. CMTE MEMBER'S NAME: DATE:

3. CMTE MEMBER'S NAME: DATE:

This section to be completed by the Graduate School

This final research report has been approved by the Graduate School.

Director, Office of Graduate Studies:

DATE:

Denhart, Richard *Non-traditional Undergraduate Perceptions of the Effectiveness of Hybrid Instruction in an Entertainment and Media Business Bachelor's Degree Completion Program*

Abstract

The intent of the following study was to investigate student perceptions of the effectiveness of hybrid instruction in an entertainment and media business bachelor's degree completion program. The investigation was conducted via a survey of students enrolled in an entertainment and media business bachelor's degree completion program at Madison Media Institute, a proprietary technical institution for post secondary education, during 2012. Six research questions were posed to the population of the program in an anonymous, voluntary survey. Areas explored in the study included perception of satisfaction with hybrid courses, continuity between online and face-to-face components, the balance between those components, factors that could lead to improvement of hybrid courses, strengths and weaknesses of hybrid courses, and perception as a customer experience. The results of the survey showed a general perception that hybrid learning can be an effective instructional tool, and although there was a strong preference for hybrid compared to online learning there remains a significant preference for and a high value on face-to-face instruction.

Table Of Contents

Abstract.....	2
List Of Tables	5
List Of Figures	6
Chapter I: Introduction.....	7
Background.....	7
Statement Of The Problem.....	8
Purpose Of The Study.....	9
Definition Of Terms.....	9
Limitations Of The Study	10
Chapter II: Review Of Literature.....	11
Customer Satisfaction Theory.....	11
Effective Learning	12
Expectations.....	13
Face-To-Face Instruction.....	14
Ambivalence	14
The Role Of Instructor Or Facilitator	15
The Role Of Technology	15
Chapter III: Methodology.....	17
Research Design.....	17
Population And Sample	17
Instrumentation	18
Data Collection	18

Data Analysis	19
Chapter IV: Findings	20
Research Question One.....	22
Research Question Two	26
Research Question Three	29
Research Question Four.....	33
Research Question Five	34
Research Question Six	37
Chapter V: Summary, Conclusions, And Recommendations.....	42
Summary.....	42
Discussion And Conclusions	43
Recommendations.....	51
References.....	54
Appendix A: Survey Instrument	59

List of Tables

Table 1: Age ranges of respondents.....	21
Table 2: Participants by semester	22
Table 3: Course delivery preference	23
Table 4: Research questions one and two statement statistics.....	24
Table 5: Statistics for research question three statements	30
Table 6: What could be done to improve the quality of hybrid learning - research question four	34
Table 7: Strengths of the hybrid format.....	36
Table 8: Weaknesses of the hybrid format	37
Table 9: Research question six statements	38

List of Figures

Figure 1: Start dates and total number of responders	22
Figure 2: Responses to first in a series of three statements referring to research question one....	25
Figure 3: Responses to the second in a series of three statements referring to research question one.....	25
Figure 4: Responses to the third in a series of three statements referring to research question one	26
Figure 5: Responses to the first in a series of two statements referring to research question two	28
Figure 6: Responses to the second in a series of two statements referring to research question two	29
Figure 7: Responses to the first in a series of two statements referring to research question three	31
Figure 8: Responses to the second in a series of two statements referring to research question three.....	32
Figure 9: Student preference for class frequency referring to research question three	32
Figure 10: Responses to the first in a series of three statements referring to research question six	39
Figure 11: Responses to the second in a series of three statements referring to research question six.....	40
Figure 12: Responses to the third in a series of three statements referring to research question six	41

Chapter I: Introduction

Background

The rapid development of technology has led to profound transformations in educational development (DeNeui & Dodge, 2006). Studies show a steady increase in the growth of distance learning in general and hybrid learning specifically (Parsad & Lewis, 2008). The combined online and traditional face-to-face learning environments commonly referred to as hybrid or blended learning, is increasingly being incorporated in both public and private institutions (Brunner, 2006). The list of attributable, positive qualities is often long (Wong, 2006).

Some administrators profess popularity because of the potential cost savings with the reduction in use of physical resources (Niemic & Otte, 2010), while others tout the prospects of a high degree of student satisfaction when the considerable investment of training and time is made (Ocak, 2011), or cite the capacity for increased flexibility for all parties involved (Youslf & Lichty, 2005). Not all research studies have reported consistently positive results (Nowell, 2011). One major area of concern is student perception of the quality and efficacy of blended or hybrid learning (Jackson & Helms, 2008).

It is important to understand how hybrid courses are perceived by students in order to correct or adjust methodology used and to provide a more positive experience. Not as much research has been done on hybrid and blended learning compared to the number of studies on online or distance learning in general and the field is changing all the time. (Kurthen, 2005)

The Entertainment Media Business (EMB) program at Madison Media Institute (MMI) was established in 2009 and currently consists of hybrid courses for the entire four-semester program. This bachelor's degree completion program affords the opportunity to examine perceptions of non-traditional students immersed in a completely hybrid course program. This valuable feedback will allow for evaluation of student perception of the effectiveness of hybrid

learning at MMI. Since the program's inception there have been surveys and student evaluations as to the effectiveness of the program's content but no examination of the student's perception of hybrid courses as a delivery method beyond anecdotal testimonials. Anecdotal feedback has prompted the consideration of broadening the use of similar hybrid models for other programs and appropriate general education courses.

Statement of the Problem

The Entertainment and Media Business (EMB) bachelor's degree completion program uses a hybrid-learning model. The perception of satisfaction of hybrid learning by non-traditional students is currently unknown. This study examines student perspectives regarding hybrid learning by asking the following questions:

- 1) Do students perceive their satisfaction of hybrid courses to be inferior, the same or better than face-to-face classes or online classes?
- 2) Did the student feel that there was a sense of continuity between the online and face-to-face portions of the courses? Specifically, did the online and face-to-face portions of the courses supplement and support each other or seem to be separated in purpose?
- 3) What do students perceive as the most beneficial balance of time spent online and time spent face to face?
- 4) What factors could be adjusted to improve the student perception of the quality of hybrid courses?
- 5) What would students identify as strengths and weaknesses of hybrid courses?
- 6) How do students perceive hybrid learning as a customer experience?

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to determine non-traditional undergraduate student perceptions regarding the effectiveness of hybrid Instruction. Specifically the study focuses on student perceptions of satisfaction regarding online and face-to-face elements, continuity between those elements and their time allocation, factors to be adjusted to improve perception of hybrid learning quality, and strengths and weaknesses of hybrid courses.

Definition of Terms

Hybrid learning. For the purpose of this study uses the definition Wong stated in his 2006 study, “30-79% of course content delivered online”. As referred to in this study it is considered synonymous with blended learning.

Blended learning. For the purpose of this study is considered to be synonymous with hybrid learning.

LMS (Learning Management System). Also referred to as a CMS (Course Management System), a web based learning platform is understood to be “server-side installed software which helps to distribute any learning content via internet and supports the organization of the learning processes” (Henninger & Kutter 2010).

Online learning. A form of distance education where “transmission of information occurs through the internet connected computer while continuing the distance education construct where students and faculty do not need to be in the same place at the same time” (Geith & Vignare, 2008). For the purposes of this study assumed to be the same as e-learning.

Non-traditional student. The definition of non-traditional student in academic circles has changed over time. The U.S. Department of Education Institute of Education Sciences National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) refers to a study conducted by the NCES in

2002 that identify a number of non-traditional student characteristics (*Nontraditional undergraduates, 2002*).

- 1) Delays enrollment (does not enter postsecondary education in the same calendar year that he or she finished high school);
- 2) Attends part time for at least part of the academic year;
- 3) Works full time (35 hours or more per week) while enrolled;
- 4) Is considered financially independent for purposes of determining eligibility for financial aid;
- 5) Has dependents other than a spouse (usually children, but sometimes others);
- 6) Is a single parent (either not married or married but separated and has dependents); or does not have a high school diploma (completed high school with a GED or other high school completion certificate or did not finish high school).

Limitations of the Study

This study is limited by the following factors.

- 1) The results of study were limited to the students at Madison Media Institute.
- 2) Madison Media Institute is a private technical college; therefore the results may not be generalizable to a population from other institutions of higher learning.
- 3) Madison Media Institute and EMB students are commonly considered to be non-traditional and therefore should not be generalized to a more traditional or diverse student population.
- 4) Data collection and analysis was restricted to four groups of enrolled students in one program, thereby limiting generalization.

Chapter II: Review Of Literature

The purpose of the study is to determine non-traditional undergraduate student perceptions regarding the effectiveness of hybrid Instruction. Specifically the study focuses on student perceptions of satisfaction regarding online and face-to-face elements, continuity between those elements and their time allocation, factors to be adjusted to improve perception of hybrid learning quality, and strengths and weaknesses of hybrid courses.

Customer Satisfaction Theory

The theory base that provides the foundation for this study is the Customer Satisfaction Theory. Franklin & Shemwell (1995) focus on the shift from student as employee to the focus of student as customer and the attendant rise of the ‘consumerization’ of higher education. Increasingly, higher education institutions are required to approach student perception and satisfaction with a more consumer oriented philosophy (Kara & DeShields, 2004). In the context for this study, student perceptions are evaluated through the lens of Customer Satisfaction. One consideration regarding Customer Satisfaction Theory is the importance of expectation... both those met and those not met, along with three psychological elements: thinking or evaluation, emotional or feeling, and behavioral. ("Customer satisfaction theory," n.d.).

The conceptual shift by public post-secondary institutions to a customer satisfaction theory is not necessarily an accepted point of view. Wueste & Fishman (2010) point to the perceived danger of damaging the credibility of public higher education institutions when adopting a “branding” strategy. Contrasting the hesitation to freely embrace customer satisfaction theory exhibited by public institutions, private or proprietary schools (such as this study’s institution, MMI) have commonly adapted customer satisfaction oriented techniques recognizing the increasingly common approach of a potential student search for college to attend using techniques such as “secret shopper” strategies (Dupaul & Harris, 2012). Student “shoppers”

shopping for college, exhibit behaviors during their information search similar to commercial shopping techniques. Because private institutions of higher education do not receive public subsidies, the lifeblood of those institutions is tuition. Private schools have embraced the concepts of customer satisfaction analysis and branding to increase funding and to further insure their survival (Zamani-Gallaher, 2004). Satisfied student customers provide referrals, the highest value student leads for enrollment available, resulting in the highest number of enrollments. Continuing to produce students that are satisfied with their experience is the most effective means to source new students through referral.

Whether part of a public or private institution, analysis of student perception has increasingly been informed by customer satisfaction theory. Techniques used for marketing and enrollment methods have permeated administrative and academic examination of content delivery methods such as hybrid learning. Serenko, in a 2011 study, points out that the metaphor, whether it is marketing, or customer satisfaction orientation, is not the salient issue. The question, despite the focus on semantics, revolves around student satisfaction, a universal concern and appropriate factor for all levels of higher education. The desire to analyze student satisfaction is evidenced by the proliferation of student surveys at all institutions. The difference between student and customer is a distinction focused on word definition rather than meaning.

Effective Learning

The balance of instructional based and collaborative or participatory elements along with authentic assessments play a part in the students' perceptions regarding effectiveness of learning taking place in a hybrid environment (Delialioglu, & Yildirim, 2007). Another study (Lin, 2008) pointed out that student views of hybrid learning and its effectiveness might be met by more engaging student learning. Lin goes on to suggest that hybrid learning, properly implemented is

more effective than either face-to-face or online by itself (citing Boyle, Bradley, Chalk, Jones, & Pickard, P. 2003). Tsai, in 2011, strongly supports Lin's conclusions in an unrelated study that comes to a similar but even more strongly posited conclusion that blended or hybrid learning offers the opportunity for better results than through traditional delivery of content. Other studies have exhibited contrary conclusions and found no evidence of significant improvement when comparing hybrid to online and face-to-face classroom structures (Vaughan and Garrison, 2005). The consensus of the aforementioned studies is that hybrid studies do not negatively impact effective learning and there is at least some general improvement. Estelami, (2012) remarks on the ability of hybrid learning to positively benefit retention and drop out rates, thereby providing a positive impact on the effectiveness of learning.

Expectations

The lack of attention to documenting potential differences in student and faculty expectations was found to be a barrier that might diminish effectiveness perception of hybrid student learning (Osborne, Kriese, Tobey, & Johnson, 2009). As previously referenced the concept of expectations ties well into Customer Satisfaction Theory ("Customer satisfaction theory," n.d.). A different perspective is that student expectations do not necessarily correlate with student satisfaction. A Canadian study focusing on music programs of study at a higher education level, show significant correlation between program quality and student satisfaction but less of a connection between program expectations and student satisfaction (Serenko, 2011).

Additional factors relating to student perceptions and expectations can be workload, course design, cultural aspects, technical support, and the inter-dependence of the two environments; face-to-face and virtual (Gedik, Kiraz, & Yaşar Özden, 2012).

Face-to-face instruction

In a 2010 study, Ahmed found that face-to-face is a factor in hybrid learning. Similarly, Hock & Dougher in a 2011 study found that previous experience with subject matter could affect the perception of face-to-face instruction. And finally, face-to-face instruction was found to be generally more effective than completely online instruction (Buzzetto-More, 2008). High value of face-to-face instruction was a thematic referral throughout the reviewed literature.

deNoyelles, Cobb, and Lowe (2012), present a different perspective and approach. In a study of faculty training for online course creation, weekly face-to-face time or “seat time” was reduced by substituting collaborative and work shop oriented activities. Using peer review techniques, faculty evaluation of the more hybrid approach was positive, with common citations for more relevancy being a predominate conclusion. The authors point out that the general perception was that subjects preferred to engage in collaborative work rather than didactic based content delivery. It was also pointed out that the success of the collaborative work approach was dependent on the specific approach taken. In other words, previous community or collaborative work was not necessarily successful in achieving objectives. The specific nature of the activities rather than structure alone was deemed to be an important factor.

Ambivalence

The literature on hybrid learning often references a certain ambivalence regarding face-to-face and time flexibility factors. It is common in perception of satisfaction studies to see high value placed on face-to-face contact while simultaneously placing high value on the flexibility of time management afforded by a hybrid structure (Buzzetto-More, 2008). This produces a stated preference for increased face-to-face instruction while simultaneously producing a preference for the flexibility of hybrid instruction, a contradictory position. These perceptions tie directly into

research question number three, “What do students perceive as the most beneficial balance of time spent online and time spent face to face?” Finding the optimal balance between face-to-face time and “flex” time that is produced by the online component, resolves the contradictory position.

These types of trade-offs inform generally positive conclusions in various studies (Brunner, 2006; El Mansour & Mupinga, 2007).

The Role of Instructor or Facilitator

Another factor affecting student perception of satisfaction is the role of instructor or facilitator (Delialioğlu, & Yildirim, 2007). Ahmed’s 2010 study, in addition to identifying face-to-face as a high value factor pertaining to student perception, also found that instructor characteristics are an important component in the student perception equation.

The role of the instructor or facilitator is critical because the independence of virtual students is not as assured as might previously have been thought (de la Varre, Keane, & Irvin, 2011). Textual coding in course and instructor evaluations using citations of “too much” or “not enough” discussion, or “answers to questions posed online” not being timely, point to possible instructor or facilitator issues that may be attributable to lack of training or understanding of online facilitator best practices.

The Role of Technology

Ahmed, in his 2010 study identified technology as an important component and consideration when designing hybrid-learning curriculum. Other studies reference the importance of a certain level of competence, or fluency in the use of technology as necessary for the success of a hybrid program (Lin, 2008; Napier, Dekhane, & Smith, 2011). (Lehmann & Chamberlin, 2008) In their book published in 2008, Lehman and Chamberlin identify the

concept of instructor or facilitator as “instructional technologist”... describing the probable situation where the instructor for an online (or in this case, hybrid class) will by necessity, be expected to provide a certain amount of technical support.

The theory and practice of Technology Enabled Active Learning (TEAL) introduces a different conceptualization of technology as it relates to learning (" TEAL –," 2005). This holistic approach to technology and learning considers all factors that make up a learning environment; on the surface of the concept lies consideration of the integration of all physical elements of an educational environment, including acoustics, furniture, lighting (both natural and artificial), mobility, flexibility, air temperature and security. Digging deeper below the surface of TEAL, its interconnectedness to the virtual components of learning becomes more evident (Fisher, 2010). This includes what Fisher referred to as the “third space” that posit the difficulty in separating differing factors when analyzing perceptions regarding learning.

A similar approach embracing technology as a means to an end, is “flip” teaching, which through the use of virtual technologies, the student incorporates hybrid learning techniques to enhance and optimize the learning experience (Fulton, 2012).

All the aforementioned integrations of technology and hybrid learning require careful analysis of student perception of their effectiveness in achieving learning goals. The review of literature provides several recurring themes regarding student perception of hybrid learning. Viewed through the lenses of customer satisfaction theory, the role of the facilitator, technology, face-to-face contact, ambivalence, expectations, and effectiveness are repeated throughout the review of literature and results of this study.

Chapter III: Methodology

The purpose of the study is to determine non-traditional undergraduate student perceptions regarding the effectiveness of hybrid instruction. Specifically the study focuses on student perceptions of satisfaction regarding online and face-to-face elements, continuity between those elements and their time allocation, factors to be adjusted to improve perception of hybrid learning quality, and strengths and weaknesses of hybrid courses.

Research Design

The design of the study is primarily quantitative. A survey questionnaire was developed using five multiple-choice questions and nine Likert scaled response options. The descriptive survey included three qualitative short answer questions,. The variables are student perception of:

- Hybrid learning
- Face-to-face and online elements of hybrid learning
- Continuity and time allocation between those elements
- Factors that could improve hybrid learning
- Strengths and weaknesses of hybrid learning

Population and Sample

Subjects are all graduates of an associate's program from an accredited institution and are all currently enrolled in the Entertainment and Media Business (EMB) bachelor's degree completion program offered by the Madison Media Institute. These students are non-traditional in the sense that they have either delayed entry to post secondary education, support a family, or have full time employment. All were new to the hybrid model used in the EMB program. This particular group of subjects was chosen because of availability and the size of the group (37 total

students enrolled in the Entertainment and Media Business program). The subjects also had the appropriate educational experiences to legitimately answer the research questions and provide valid and reliable responses.

Instrumentation

The tool used to conduct this study was an online survey consisting of three sections. The first section consists of two multiple choice questions and nine statements using a five level Likert scale ranging from “Strongly Disagree” to “ Strongly Agree”. The second section consisted of three short answer questions posed using a text box. The third and final section consisted of three multiple choice, demographic oriented questions.

The study was based on a pilot study created using Qualtrics software, a suite of web based research tools, provided to students of University of Wisconsin-Stout. The pilot study surveyed one summer cohort of students and posed the same research questions. Feedback from staff of University of Wisconsin Stout Applied Research Center Project Specialists provided input on realigning the pilot study survey to obtain more pertinent results.

Data Collection

After obtaining approval from the UW-Stout IRB and input from the aforementioned University of Wisconsin Stout Applied Research Center Project Specialists, the survey was distributed and data collected in the following manner. A link to the survey was placed in the Learning Management System in one class for each of the three “cohorts” or group of students. In this particular instance “cohort” refers to groups of students that attend classes one of the three nights face-to-face instruction is scheduled. On Monday night, first semester students meet for a five hour block of face-to-face instruction; on Tuesday night, third and fourth semester students meet for a five hour block of face-to-face instruction; and on Wednesday night, second semester

students meet for their five hour block of face-to-face instruction. The link to the survey was placed in the following three courses; Monday night, MM305 (Contemporary Issues in Management and Marketing), Tuesday night, MK335 (Advanced Promotion and Publicity), and on Wednesday night, BU412 (Entertainment and the World Wide Web). The link was grouped at the end of the list of activities for the fourth week of the course (the third week of October, 2012). The instructor for each course explained that the survey was part of a study of hybrid learning, was voluntary, and was anonymous. Follow up reminders were made the fifth week of classes (the fourth week of October, 2012). The survey was closed on Nov. 12, 2012.

Data Analysis

The basic strategy used to analyze the collected data entailed quantifying each of the multiple-choice questions and Likert scale responses using descriptive statistics. Total number of responses per question, the mean response for all questions, minimum value, maximum value, variance, and standard deviation for each question were calculated wherever applicable. The resulting data was placed in a consistent tabular form for each quantifiable question. Bar graphs of the tabular data are included as the graphical information provides an additional perspective. Open ended short answer questions for research questions 4 and 5 were analyzed for relevant references to the appropriate research questions.

Chapter IV: Findings

The purpose of the study is to determine non-traditional undergraduate student perceptions regarding the effectiveness of hybrid instruction. Specifically the study focused on student perceptions of satisfaction regarding online and face-to-face elements, continuity between those elements and their time allocation, factors to be adjusted to improve perception of hybrid learning quality, and strengths and weaknesses of hybrid courses. The subjects of the study were all enrolled in MMI, EMB bachelor's degree completion program. The thirty-seven students enrolled consisted of thirteen first semester students, nine third and fourth semester students, and fifteen second semester students. All students were recent graduates of an associate's program offered at MMI or other accredited institution.

As shown in Figure 1, twenty-seven of the students responded for a 72% rate of participation. Survey start dates by students were primarily during the first two days the survey was open (37% and 25.9%). The number of students starting the survey was less than ten percent for the rest of the time the survey was open except for a Saturday start number of 4 (14% on November 30th). Two respondents opened the survey but did not answer any questions leaving 25 active respondents. Twenty of the participating students were male and five were female.



Figure 1: Start dates and total number of responders

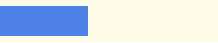

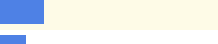
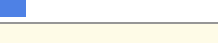
Ages of respondents ranged from 20-24 to 45-54, with the majority of students falling in a 20-34 range (Table 1). Thirteen students were in the 20 to 24 age range (52%), eight students were in the 25 to 34 age range (32%), two students were in the 35 to 44 age range (8%), and two students were in the 45 to 54 age range (8%). There were no students under twenty years of age and no students over fifty-four years of age.

Table 1
Age ranges of respondents

Answer	Response	%
16 to 19	0	0%
20 to 24	13	52%
25 to 34	8	32%
35 to 44	2	8%
45 to 54	2	8%
55 to 64	0	0%
65 or over	0	0%
Total	25	100%

Students enrolled in the first semester of the EMB program had the highest rate of participation with 10 of 13 students responding to the survey (Table 2). Of the thirteen students enrolled in the first semester “cohort”, ten students responded for a 40% rate of participation. Of the fifteen students enrolled in the second semester “cohort”, seven responded for a 46% rate of participation. Of six students enrolled in the third semester “cohort”, five responded for a 83% rate of participation. The fourth semester “cohort” consisting of three students had 100% participation. From first semester to fourth semester students there was a decline in the number of respondents participating from that “cohort”.

Table 2
Participants by semester



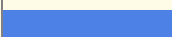

#	Answer		Response	%	Number of students enrolled in "Cohort"	% of "Cohort" participation
1	First Semester		10	40%	13	76%
2	Second Semester		7	28%	15	46%
3	Third Semester		5	20%	6	83%
4	Fourth Semester		3	12%	3	100%
	Total		25	100%	37	

Male students made up 80% of participating respondents (20) while 20% were female (20%).

Research Question One: Do students perceive their satisfaction of hybrid courses to be inferior, the same or better than face-to-face classes or online classes?

The first research question was “Do students perceive their satisfaction of hybrid courses to be inferior, the same or better than face-to-face classes or online classes?” The first baseline survey question pertaining to research question one asks “In general, what type of course delivery do you prefer?” and provides four choices for a response: “all online”, “all face-to-face”, “hybrid – a combination of online and face-to-face”, and “I have no preference”. Of the 25 students that provided a response, 60% preferred hybrid format, while 32% named face-to-face as their preferred course delivery choice. “All online” and “no preference” were chosen by 4% each (Table 3).

Table 3
Course delivery preference

#	Answer		Response	%
1	All online		1	4%
2	All face-to-face		8	32%
3	Hybrid - a combination of online and Face-to-face		15	60%
4	I have no preference		1	4%
	Total		25	100%

The next survey components associated with research question one were a series of three statements correlated to the student's level of satisfaction with hybrid style courses. There was a typographical error in the actual survey statement that requested; "Please indicate your level of satisfaction with hybrid style questions", which should have substituted the words "courses and programs" for the word "questions". There was no indication that this error affected understanding of the statement or skewed the results of this survey statement. Of the twenty-five active respondents, all twenty-five responded to two of the statements and twenty-four responded to one of the statements.

Statistics for the three statements associated with research question one are shown in Table 4. The first three statements are associated with research question one and the final two are associated with research question two and are reviewed in the research question two section of this chapter.

The Likert scale used for the statements returned values ranging from 1-5. The most positive response possible (strongly agree) using scale values, is one. The most negative response possible (strongly disagree) is a response of 5. This scale convention was used throughout the study. For each statement, the table shows the minimum value returned by respondents and the maximum value returned by respondents. A lower number represents

agreement and a higher number represents disagreement. The table also shows the mean value for each statement, the amount of variance, standard deviation, and total number of responses for each statement. The minimum value for each statement was consistent at a value of 1 for each of the five statements. The remaining statistical measurements varied from statement to statement.

Table 4
Research questions one and two statement statistics

Statistic	I was satisfied with the hybrid program when compared to program that were all face-to-face courses.	I was satisfied with the hybrid program when compared to programs that were all online courses.	I would recommend taking hybrid courses to a friend.	There was a sense of continuity between the online and face-to-face portions of the classes.	The online and face-to-face portions of the courses supplemented and supported each other.
Min Value	1	1	1	1	1
Max Value	4	4	5	5	4
Mean	2.64	2.00	2.38	2.60	2.16
Variance	0.66	0.50	0.85	1.17	1.06
Standard Deviation	0.81	0.71	0.92	1.08	1.03
Total Responses	25	25	24	25	25

Figure 2 shows that the first statement, “I was satisfied with the hybrid program compared to that program(s) that were all face-to-face” resulted in strong agreement for one respondent, agreement with the statement for eleven respondents, a neutral reaction from nine respondents and four respondents disagreeing, for a total of twenty-five respondents. The mean value for the responses was 2.64 with the variance (.66) and standard deviation (.81) at less than one.

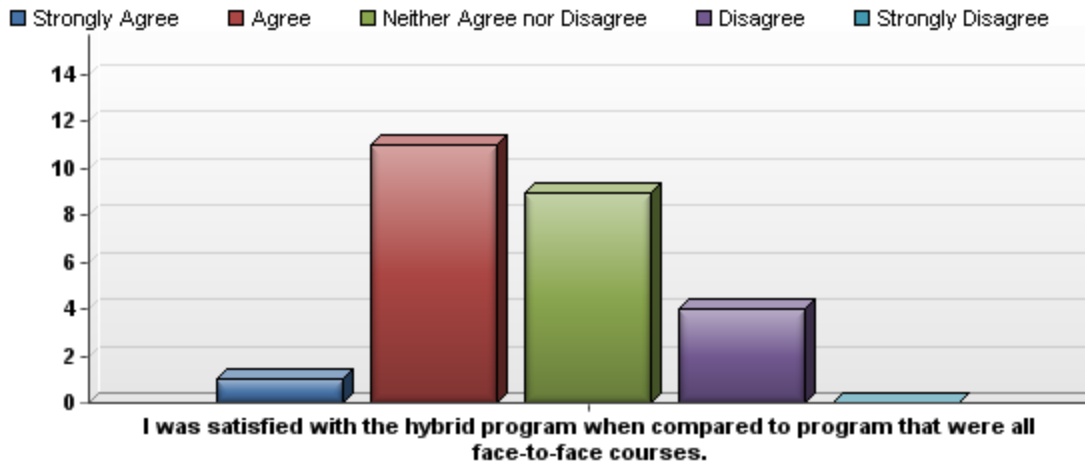


Figure 2: Responses to first in a series of three statements referring to research question one

Figure 3 shows that the second statement, “I was satisfied with the hybrid program when compared to programs that were all online courses” resulted in five respondents strongly agreeing, sixteen respondents agreeing, three respondents neither agreeing or disagreeing, and one respondent disagreeing for a total of twenty-five respondents. The mean value for the responses was 2.00 with the variance (.50) and standard deviation (.71) at less than one.

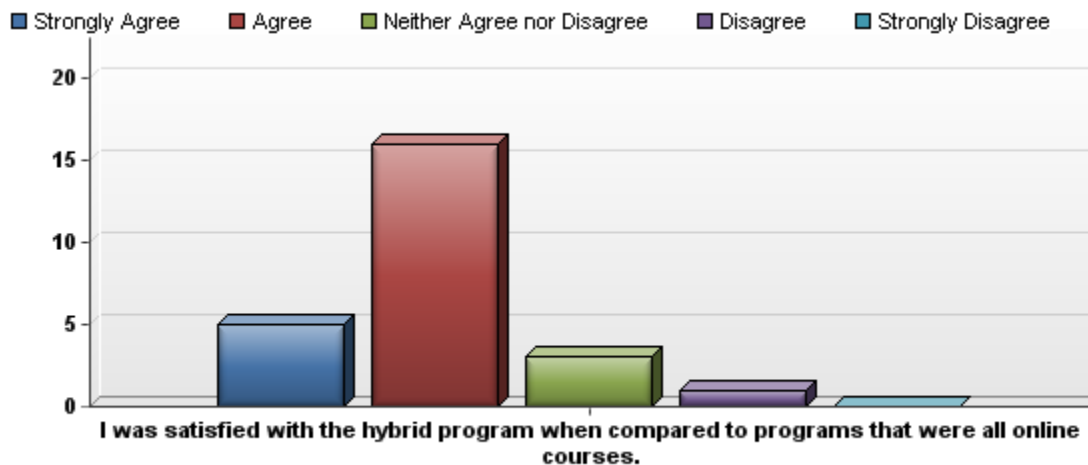


Figure 3: Responses to the second in a series of three statements referring to research question one

The graph represented in Figure 4 shows that the third statement, “I would recommend taking hybrid courses to a friend” resulted in three respondents strongly agreeing, twelve respondents agreeing, seven respondents neither agreeing or disagreeing, one respondent disagreeing, and one respondent strongly disagreeing for a total of twenty-four respondents. The mean value for the responses was 2.38 with the variance (.85) and standard deviation (.92) at less than one.

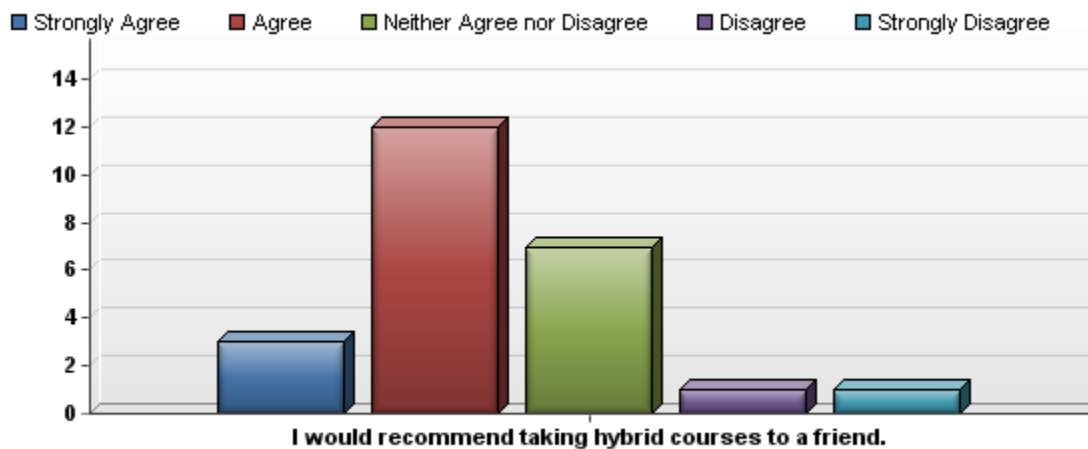


Figure 4: Responses to the third in a series of three statements referring to research question one

Research Question Two: Did the student feel that there was a sense of continuity between the online and face-to-face portions of the courses? Specifically, did the online and face-to-face portions of the courses supplement and support each other or seem to be separated in purpose

The second research question is “Did the student feel that there was a sense of continuity between the online and face-to-face portions of the courses? Specifically, did the online and face-to-face portions of the courses supplement and support each other or seem to be separated in purpose?”

Statistics for the two statements associated with research question two are shown in Table 4. The first three statements are associated with research question one and the final two are associated with research question two. The Likert scale used for the statements returned values ranging from 1-5. The most positive response possible (strongly agree) using scale values, is one. The most negative response possible (strongly disagree) is a response of 5. For each statement, the table shows the minimum value returned by respondents and the maximum value returned by respondents. A lower number represents agreement and a higher number represents disagreement. The table also shows the mean value for each statement, the amount of variance, standard deviation, and total number of responses for each statement. The remaining statistical measurements varied from statement to statement.

Figure 5 shows that the first statement referring to research question two, “There was a sense of continuity between the online and face-to-face portions of the classes” resulted in four respondents strongly agreeing, eight respondents agreeing, eight respondents neither agreeing or disagreeing, four respondents disagreeing, and one respondent strongly disagreeing for a total of twenty-five respondents. The mean value for the responses was 2.60 with the variance (1.17) and standard deviation (1.08) at slightly above a value of one.

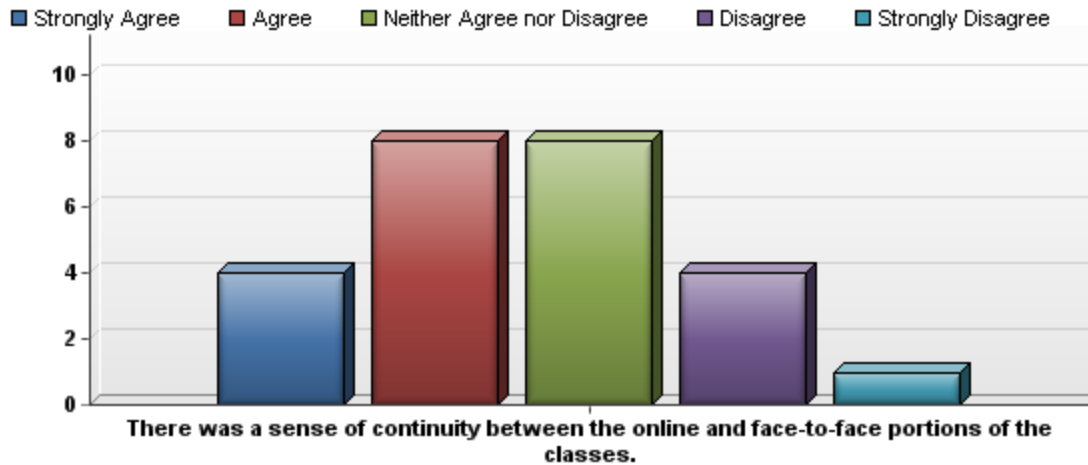


Figure 5: Responses to the first in a series of two statements referring to research question two

The graphical representation of the second statement in the series of two statements referring to research question two is shown in Figure 6. That graph shows that the final statement, “The online and face-to-face portions of the courses supplemented and supported each other” resulted in eight respondents strongly agreeing, eight respondents agreeing, six respondents neither agreeing or disagreeing, three respondents disagreeing, and no respondents strongly disagreeing for a total of twenty-five respondents. The mean value for the responses was 2.16 with the variance (1.06) and standard deviation (1.03) at slightly above a value of one.

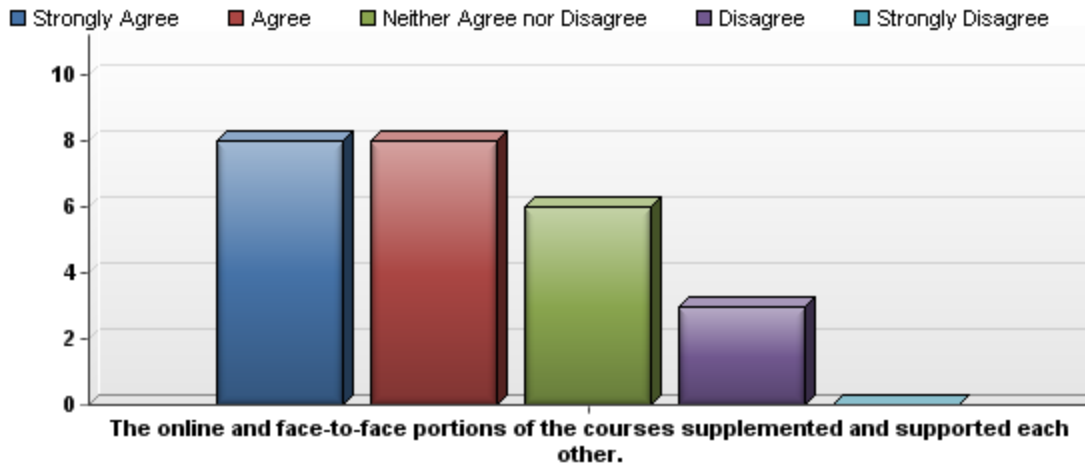


Figure 6: *Responses to the second in a series of two statements referring to research question two*

Research Question Three: What do students perceive as the most beneficial balance of time spent online and time spent face to face?

The third research question is “What do students perceive as the most beneficial balance of time spent online and time spent face to face?” The survey questions that addressed the third research question were two Likert scaled response options: “I would have preferred more face-to-face time and less online work for each course”, and “I would have preferred more online and less face-to-face time for each class”. A multiple choice question was also asked to determine what would be the ideal in terms of how often each week the classes should meet.

Statistics for the two statements associated with research question three are shown in Table 5. The Likert scale used for the statements returned values ranging from 1-5. The most positive response possible (strongly agree) using scale values, is one. The most negative response possible (strongly disagree) is a response of 5. For each statement, the table shows the minimum value returned by respondents and the maximum value returned by respondents. A lower number represents agreement and a higher number represents disagreement. The table also

shows the mean value for each statement, the amount of variance, standard deviation, and total number of responses for each statement. All twenty-five respondents that actively participated in the survey responded to the question 3 statements.

Table 5:
Statistics for research question three statements

Statistic	I would have preferred more face-to-face time and less online work for each course	I would have preferred more online and less face-to-face time for each class
Min Value	1	2
Max Value	4	5
Mean	2.00	3.80
Variance	0.75	0.50
Standard Deviation	0.87	0.71
Total Responses	25	25

Figure 7 shows that the responses to the first statement referring to research question three, “I would have preferred more face-to-face time and less online work for each course” resulted in eight respondents strongly agreeing, ten respondents agreeing, six neither agreeing nor disagreeing, and one respondent disagreeing. No respondent strongly disagreed. The statistical results for this statement were a minimum value of 1, a maximum value of 4, mean response of 2.00, a variance of .75, and a standard deviation of .87.

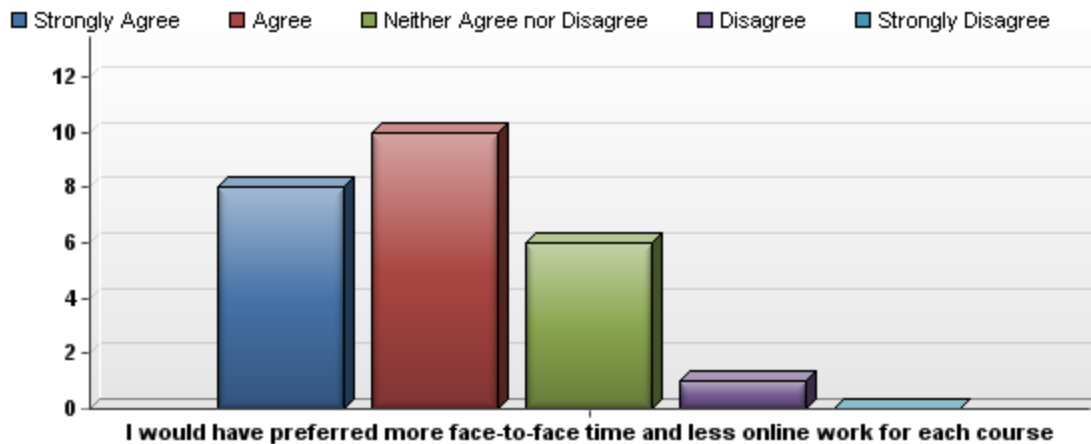


Figure 7: Responses to the first in a series of two statements referring to research question three

Figure 8 shows the results from the second statement referring to research question three, “I would have preferred more online and less face-to-face time for each class” resulted in no respondents strongly agreeing, one respondents agreeing, six neither agreeing nor disagreeing, fifteen respondents disagreeing, and three respondents strongly disagreeing. The statistical results for this statement were a minimum value of 2, a maximum value of 5, mean response of 3.80, a variance of .50, and a standard deviation of .71. All twenty-five active respondents completed this entry.

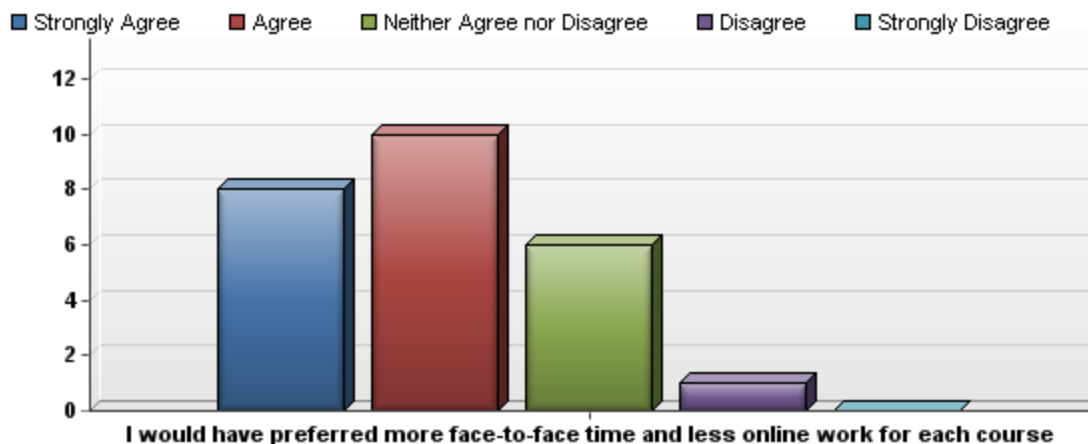


Figure 8: Responses to the second in a series of two statements referring to research question three

The multiple choice question referencing student preference asked, “How often would you prefer to have met for these types of courses” and offered five choices for the number of meetings per week. Figure 9 graphically represents the results. 52% of students would prefer class meetings of 2-3 times a week, 40% would prefer meetings once a week (the current configuration), 4% would prefer daily meetings and another 4% would prefer class meetings held once a month.

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Once a Month	1	4%
2	2-3 Times a Month	0	0%
3	Once a Week	10	40%
4	2-3 Times a Week	13	52%
5	Daily	1	4%
	Total	25	100%

Figure 9: Student preference for class frequency referring to research question three

Research Question Four: What factors could be adjusted to improve the student perception of the quality of hybrid courses?

The fourth research question is “What factors could be adjusted to improve the student perception of the quality of hybrid courses?” was addressed with an open-ended short answer text box question, “What could be done to improve the quality of the hybrid format?” Of the twenty-five active respondents twenty-three completed this portion of the survey.

Four of the answers did not directly address the question posed; “not having statistics class”, “Nothing actually comes to mind”, “none”, and “sound quality, perhaps each remote student with their own monitor so that they feel like distinct individuals in class”. The remaining answers could be classified into three areas.

The first was the suggestion for more face-to-face time. Eight of the responses mentioned the desire for more face-to-face time. Another thematic answer pertained to better integration of online and face-to-face components of the program. Six of the answers related to better integration between online and face-to-face components. At least two and possibly three of the answers identified individual instructor’s varying ability to connect the two course components. A third area cited was responsiveness to questions posed online. Three answers directly cited problems with receiving answers to questions in a timely fashion. The remaining two answers, “More lecturing less discussion in class” and “Making sure that the instructors are covering the correct content at the correct time. For example, after we do a linked in assignment is not a good time to talk about linked in. That should have been the week before” are both issues directly related to instructor facilitators.

Table 6:
What could be done to improve the quality of hybrid learning - research question four

Text Response
Individual Instructor input to the online portion of a class. less generalized.
I personally can't stand hybrid formats. It's almost impossible to get answers to questions or points of views from others.
not having statistics class
More lecturing less discussion in class
More Face To Face
I believe the length of face-to-face time is very important. There is much information that can only be provided through physical interaction. It is much more difficult to clear up any misunderstandings when done only online.
Nothing actually comes to mind.
Giving more of an option of two or three days of the face-to-face courses so it fits more into the students work schedules.
Longer face-to-face sessions. A lot of information is needed for each class, with not enough time to cram it all in. Slightly longer sessions would improve comprehension
More face time and explanation of the assignments and reading.
More face to face time, scheduled online meetings/phone calls
more of a connection between materials
Faster response time when we have questions
More time to discuss assignments and problems that arise as well as quicker response time for questions for the online classes.
If it was more of a fluent process between class time and online time, I believe that the class would have more quality. Sometimes I feel the face-to-face learning is not quite coinciding with the online portions.
none
Better Face-to-Face time and integration with the online components.
More days of meeting face to face. Getting only an hour for some class leaves only a half hour once the class gets off subject for half of the time.
More continuity between what is taught in class and what is assigned for online work. Often times they did not correlate.
sound quality, perhaps each remote student with their own monitor so that they feel like distinct individuals in class
better continuity between face & online - some teachers did this well, some did not
have more than one day in-class
Making sure that the instructors are covering the correct content at the correct time. For example, after we do a linked in assignment is not a good time to talk about linked in. That should have been the week before.

Research Question Five: What would students identify as strengths and weaknesses of hybrid courses?

The fifth research question is “What would students identify as strengths and weaknesses of hybrid courses?” was addressed with two open-ended short answer text box questions, “What

do you identify as the strength of hybrid learning?” and “What would you identify as the weaknesses of hybrid learning?”

Twenty-three of the twenty-five respondents completed the question “What do you identify as the strength of hybrid learning?” Twenty-two of the answers pertained to the flexibility and scheduling convenience of the hybrid format. The one answer that did not list flexibility as a personally perceived strength acknowledged that others would consider the flexibility as a plus (“Some may say less time in a classroom environment, but I am not one of those types. I don't learn well in this format”). See Table 7.

Table 8 shows the answers to the questions “What would you identify as the weaknesses of hybrid learning?” Twenty-three of the twenty-five respondents completed this question. Thirteen of the responses listed either “not enough face-to-face” or “not enough time” as the weakness of hybrid learning. Five respondents listed confusion or lack of integration between online and face-to-face components as the weakness of hybrid learning. One respondent listed “none” as a response; two respondents answered the question by referencing how “teachers” were willing and able to help with concerns and problems, and the remaining respondent comments that “This learning style may not be appropriate for all types of students”.

Table 7:
Strengths of the hybrid format

Text Response
enhances classroom experience by opening time for discussion/explanation of topics studied in online format.
Some may say less time in a classroom environment, but I am not one of those types. I don't learn well in this format.
being able to work full time and be a full time student simultaneously
Ease of schedule, very flexible
Allowing the student to have the freedom to express his or herself on an assignment without being held to specific confines.
The student is gaining the best of both worlds.
Flexibility. It is incredibly easy to be a student and have a full time job and a part time job.
I like the fact that it allows me more flexibility than having to be in class physically 5 days out of the week.
Improvements with initiative and resourcefulness. It encourages students to work independently and develop skills for excavating information from various sources.
Showing that a person wants to learn to take some initiative to learn something on your own.
Sharing online materials
more on your own learning
More time to yourself
The ability to work on your own as well as have help.
Having to only be there for class once a week, so that I can have a full-time and part time job while attending college.
being able to come to class and ask questions about what's online
Flexibility.
It is nice to work around people's schedules and you can work and have a life beyond school.
The ability to work at a pace semi-decided by the student.
the ability to schedule your own time to address the weekly assignments and assimilate the materials
it can be done from home; often the online time spent is used better than in class
being able to do coursework in my own time over the internet, anywhere i'm at
Having the majority of my materials online was nice.

Table 8:
Weaknesses of the hybrid format

Text Response
not having an instructor to explain everything while conducting the online portion.
Not enough face to face time. Questions don't get answered efficiently or at all in most cases.
certain classes need more face to face time with instructors
sometimes confusing online
Not enough time learning together as a class.
This learning style may not be appropriate for all types of students.
Possibly not having questions answered but that seems like more of a teacher by teacher basis. Everyone here is ready and willing to help if need be.
When there is a challenging course its hard to gain a complete understanding without the option of being able to have more time to figure out the problem. Example: Statistics.
Disconnect. If a student is stuck, there may be no one to guide them in the right direction
Confusing online questions and no explanation.
Not enough face to face time, problems with website and links
less time with an instructor
Not enough face to face time
Not enough time to answer questions to problems that arise. Also, not enough congruity with online sources and what is taught and discussed in class.
The same as the strength, but only due to the fact that there is not enough time face-to-face with the instructor.
None
Lack of integration.
The "Do it all yourself" vibe that I get. There is not enough classroom time to learn a lot of this stuff for the price you are paying.
The disconnect between class time and online time.
perhaps that extra time from an instructor on a difficult area, compounded by jittery communications from a skype type experience
Very difficult modules or concepts aren't always explained fully, or well in class.
occasionally the online coursework is outdated, or the site isn't working properly. However, having instructors that are easily reachable via email to address the problems is a plus
It is still sometimes difficult to hear the instructors through Webex. The new mics are far superior to what was in place before but new tech brings new complications

Research Question Six; How do students perceive hybrid learning as a customer experience?

The sixth research question is “How do students perceive hybrid learning as a customer experience?” was addressed by three statements posed in the Likert scale format, “Hybrid

learning provides a reliable format”, “I am confident that hybrid learning can meet my educational needs”, and “the hybrid structure provides an opportunity for a responsive experience”. The Likert scale used for the statements returned values ranging from 1-5. The most positive response possible (strongly agree) using scale values, is one. The most negative response possible (strongly disagree) is a response of 5. For each statement, the table shows the minimum value returned by respondents and the maximum value returned by respondents. A lower number represents agreement and a higher number represents disagreement. The table also shows the mean value for each statement, the amount of variance, standard deviation, and total number of responses for each statement. All twenty-five respondents completed this section of the survey.

Table 9:
Research question six statements

Statistic	Hybrid learning provides a reliable format	The hybrid structure provides an opportunity for a responsive experience	I am confident that hybrid learning can meet my educational needs.
Min Value	1	1	1
Max Value	4	5	4
Mean	2.44	2.40	2.20
Variance	0.84	0.58	0.67
Standard Deviation	0.92	0.76	0.82
Total Responses	25	25	25

The first of the three statements referring to research question six was “Hybrid learning provides a reliable format”. Figure 10 shows that the responses resulted in three respondents strongly agreeing, twelve respondents agreeing, six respondents neither agreeing or disagreeing, four respondents disagreeing, and no respondents strongly disagreeing for a total of twenty-five respondents. The minimum value posted by respondents was 1 and the maximum was 4. The mean value for the responses was 2.44 with a variance of .84 and a standard deviation of .92.

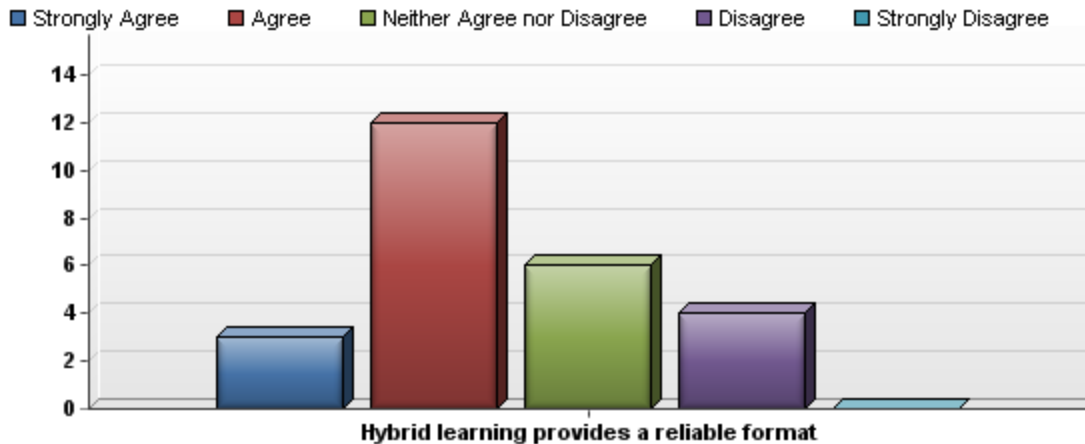


Figure 10: Responses to the first in a series of three statements referring to research question six

Figure 11 shows that the responses to the second statement referring to research question six, “The hybrid structure provides an opportunity for a responsive experience” resulted in one respondents strongly agreeing, fifteen respondents agreeing, eight neither agreeing nor disagreeing, and zero respondents disagreeing. One respondent strongly disagreed. The statistical results for this statement were a minimum value of 1, a maximum value of 5, mean response of 2.40, a variance of .58, and a standard deviation of .76. All twenty-five of the participants completed this portion of the survey.

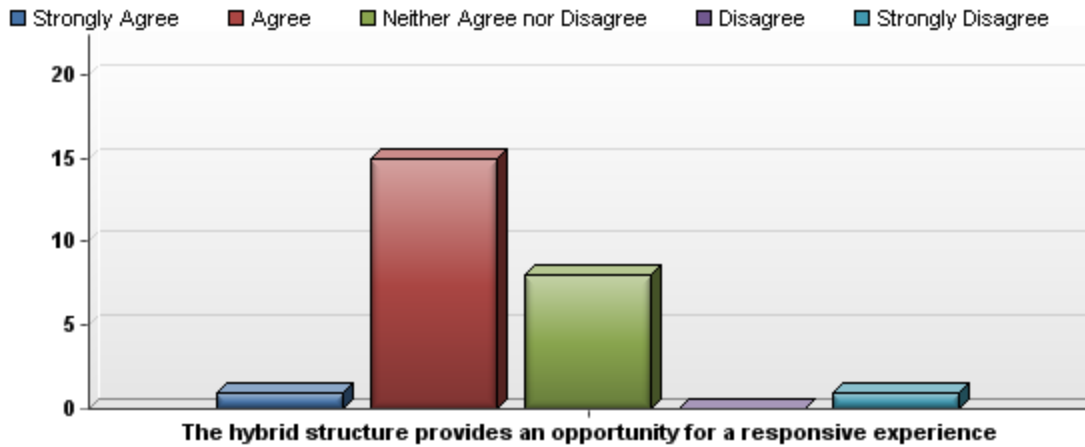


Figure 11: *Responses to the second in a series of three statements referring to research question six*

Figure 12 shows that the responses to the third statement referring to research question six, "I am confident that hybrid learning can meet my educational needs" resulted in four respondents strongly agreeing, fourteen respondents agreeing, five neither agreeing nor disagreeing, and two respondents disagreeing. Zero respondents strongly disagreed. The statistical results for this statement were a minimum value of 1, a maximum value of 4, mean response of 2.20, a variance of .67, and a standard deviation of .82. All twenty-five of the participants completed this portion of the survey.

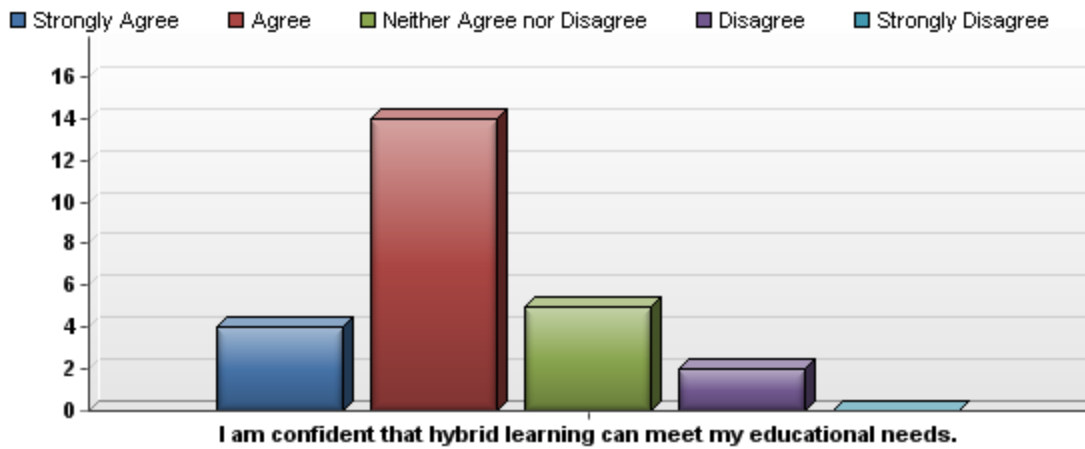


Figure 12: *Responses to the third in a series of three statements referring to research question six*

Chapter 4 presented the findings of the student responses to the survey. Chapter 5 will discuss the findings, conclusions and recommendations concluded from the survey responses.

Chapter V: Summary, Conclusions, And Recommendations

Summary

The purpose of the study is to determine non-traditional undergraduate student perceptions regarding the effectiveness of hybrid instruction. Specifically the study focuses on student perceptions of satisfaction regarding online and face-to-face elements, continuity between those elements and their time allocation, factors to be adjusted to improve perception of hybrid learning quality, and strengths and weaknesses of hybrid courses.

The six research questions were:

1. Do students perceive their satisfaction of hybrid courses to be inferior, the same or better than face-to-face classes or online classes?
2. Did the student feel that there was a sense of continuity between the online and face-to-face portions of the courses? Did the online and face-to-face portions of the courses supplement and support each other or seem to be separated in purpose?
3. What do students perceive as the most beneficial balance of time spent online and time spent face to face?
4. What factors could be adjusted to improve the student perception of the quality of hybrid courses?
5. What would students identify as strengths and weaknesses of hybrid courses?
6. How do students perceive hybrid learning as a customer experience?

The instrumentation used for this study was a descriptive survey. The tool used to conduct this study was a survey consisting of three sections. The first section consists of two multiple choice questions and nine statements using a five point Likert scale ranging from “Strongly Disagree” to “ Strongly Agree”. The second section consisted of three short answer questions

posed using a text box. The third and final section consisted of three demographic oriented questions.

Twenty-eight students out of a population of thirty-seven took part in the survey during a two week period from October 22, 2012 through November 12, 2012 for a 75% rate of participation. One student opened the survey but did not record any responses to the survey resulting in an adjusted percentage of participation of 72%. Participation was voluntary and the survey was anonymous.

Discussion and Conclusions

In the following section the findings are reported and conclusions expressed for each of the six research questions sequentially.

Research Question One “Do students perceive their satisfaction of hybrid courses to be inferior, the same or better than face-to-face classes or online classes?”

The first question of the survey, used a multiple-choice format to pose the baseline question “In general, what type of course delivery do you prefer?” with available response being “All online”, “All face-to-face”, “hybrid – a combination of online and face-to-face”, and “I have no preference”. The respondents preferred “Hybrid - a combination of online and face-to-face” by 60%. Thirty-two percent preferred “All face-to-face”, with “All online” and “I have no preference” receiving 4% of the choices each. This establishes a majority preference for the hybrid format.

The results of the first three statements used a five point Likert scale; designed to examine perceptions of the students regarding their satisfaction from different perspectives were generally consistent. The first statement, “I was satisfied with the hybrid program when compared to programs that were all face-to-face courses” elicited a more positive response than

negative with 48% responding strongly agree or agree. Sixteen percent of respondents replied negatively with a disagree choice. No respondents disagreed strongly. The aforementioned ambivalence referred to in the literature review regarding hybrid programs or coursework supports the nine neutral responses for a percentage of 36% neutral.

The second statement in the group of three related to research question one, “I was satisfied with the hybrid program when compared to programs that were all online courses”, returned the most strongly positive results of the three statements. Eighty-four percent of the respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” while only 12% elicited neutral responses and only 4% responded negatively with a “disagree” response. This exhibits a very strong preference for hybrid over only online coursework.

The third statement related to research question one, “I would recommend taking hybrid courses to a friend”, produced the greatest standard deviation (.92) and variance (.85) of the three statements. It was also the one question that had twenty-four respondents rather than 25 and the only statement of the three to return a “strongly disagree” response. Sixty-two percent responded positively with “agree” or strongly agree, 29% returned a neutral response and 8% responded negatively with “disagree” or “strongly disagree”.

The fact that the statement referencing satisfaction received a more positive response (84%) than the statement regarding recommending hybrid courses to a friend (62%), once again shows evidence of the ambivalence referred to in the literature review. Overall the responses to this series of statements associated with research question one, produced replies that were predominately positive in nature, with some evidence of ambivalence. This is entirely consistent with the general trend established by the literature review.

Using the data from the survey to address the first research questions, “Do students perceive their satisfaction of hybrid courses to be inferior, the same or better than face-to-face classes or online classes?” one can conclude that students generally perceive hybrid classes to be on par with face-to-face or online classes. There is a high value placed on the face-to-face component of hybrid classes. This is consistent with the findings in the review of literature. Given any opportunity to comment on face-to-face time, respondents consistently expressed preference for face-to-face over online time but there was general agreement that the hybrid format did provide flexibility, another high value factor consistent with the review of literature findings.

Research Question Two, “Did the student feel that there was sense of continuity between the online and face-to-face portions of the courses? Specifically, did the online and face-to-face portions of the courses supplement and support each other or seem to be separated in purpose?”

This research question was addressed using two statements incorporating a five level Likert scale. The two statements, “There was a sense of continuity between the online and face-to-face portions of the classes” and “The online face-to-face portions of the courses supplemented and supported each other” are statistically referenced as the last two columns in Table 4. Responses showed more variance and standard deviation for these two statements than the previously referenced three statements associated with research question one. The first statement regarding “continuity” had the most variance (1.17) and largest standard deviation (1.08) of all the first group of statements. The second statement pertaining specifically to research question two, regarding online and face-to-face portions of the supporting one another, showed less variance (1.06) and standard deviation (1.03) than the “continuity” question but

significantly more variance and deviation than the grouping of statements referring to research question one. The responses indicated a more predominately neutral response. All students responded to these statements. Reviewing the graphs for the “continuity” statement (Figure 5) and the “online and face-to-face supporting” statement (Figure 6) one can visualize the spread of responses as wider than the first set of statements for research question one. The statement referencing “online and face-to-face portions supporting each other” skewed more positively than the “continuity” statement, which shows a more neutral result. Unlike the research question one statements, which can to a certain extent be generalized to results reported in the literature review, the statements associated with research question two refer to how this specific program is perceived by this specific set of respondents and would not reveal more generalized conclusions.

The researcher can conclude a general agreement that students perceive a sense of continuity between the online and face-to-face components of the hybrid courses but with some students identifying this as an area of weakness for the EMB program. The findings for this particular research question are not generalizable beyond the EMB program.

Research Question Three, “What do students perceive as the most beneficial balance of time spent online and time spent face to face?”

The survey questions that addressed the third research question were two Likert scaled statements: “I would have preferred more face-to-face time and less online work for each course”, and “I would have preferred more online and less face-to-face time for each class”. A multiple-choice question was also asked to determine what would be the ideal in terms of how often each week the classes should meet. Both statements and the multiple choice question generated responses from all 25 active participants.

The first statement related to research question three, “I would have preferred more face-to-face time and less online work for each course”, produced skewed results leaning towards a positive response. Seventy-two percent of the respondents strongly agreed or agreed to a preference of more face-to-face while only 4% responded that they disagreed with the statement. 24% returned a negative response. The second statement related to research question three, “I would have preferred more online and less face-to-face time for each class” elicited a mirror image return. This time 72% disagreed with the second statement and 4% agreed, while 24% were neutral. These two statements were exact opposites of each other and produced the expected consistent replies and further supported the preference for face-to-face over online as postulated in the literature review.

The multiple-choice question posed as the third component of research question three, “how often would you prefer to have met for these types of courses”, confirmed once again the strong preference for face-to-face meetings. In this case participants were asked for specific rather than general preferences regarding frequency of meeting face-to-face and the responses showed less of a commitment to spending time in class with its 52% preference for increased face time as opposed to the first statement in research question three’s series which returned a 72% general preference for face-to-face time. This supports the ambivalence factor as referred to in the literature review.

The conclusion of survey data pertaining to the third research question, “What do students perceive as the most beneficial balance of time spent online and time spent face to face?” show that students perceive the current balance of time resulting in face-to-face once a week as a net positive but with the understanding that high value is placed on face-to-face time.

Research Question Four “What factors could be adjusted to improve the student perception of the quality of hybrid courses?”

This question was posed using an open-ended short answer text box. Not all the answers supplied were pertinent to the research question, but three themes were evident in the answers. The first theme was the preference for more face-to-face time and is additional support for face time preference related to research question three “What do students perceive as the most beneficial balance of time spent online and time spent face-to-face.

The second theme would be cross-referenced with research question two, “Did the student feel that there was a sense of continuity between the online and face-to-face portions of the courses. Did the online and face-to-face portions of the courses supplement and support each other or seem to be separated in purpose.” Three of the responses; “more of a connection between materials”, “better face-to-face time and integration with the online components”, and “better continuity between face & online some teachers did this well, some did not” directly relate to perception of online and face-to-face integration. The percentage of participants identifying integration as a way to improve the quality of hybrid learning was relatively low at 12% but the fact that students chose this as the one factor to identify as an area of potential improvement is significant.

The final theme that produced more than one response was regarding response to questions by instructors and also identification of variance between instructors ability to integrate online and face-to-face components. These responses would tend to point to a variance perceived as related to individual instructors rather than to the structure of class. This would be rectified by more effective instructor training rather than a change to the balance of face-to-face and online components of a class.

Research question four provided the students with the opportunity to express their level of satisfaction with hybrid courses. The conclusion was that areas of concern were consistent with both the other research questions, answers supplied, the literature review, and the results of the pilot study. The three most common themes of the responses revolved around desire for more face-to-face time, better integration between face-to-face and online components, and individual instructor related factors.

Research Question Five, “What would students identify as strengths and weaknesses of hybrid courses?”

The fifth research question was posed as an open-ended text box question in two parts. The first part pertained to perceived strengths and the second part to perceived weaknesses. Two respondents chose not to reply to the strength and weakness questions. The strengths continued to be consistent with time management and flexibility issues of the hybrid structure. Flexibility was cited as a strength by 65% of the twenty-three respondents. Three statements entered showed support for the perceived strength pertaining to initiative and working independently; “Improvements with initiative and resourcefulness”, “Showing that a person wants to learn to take some initiative to learn something on your own”, and “more on your own learning”.

The weaknesses as perceived by the students included concerns about technology, eBooks, and confusion between online and face-to-face content. Associated with research question three, respondents cited lack of face-to-face time as a weakness, continuing the support of previous research identifying face-to-face as a high value element of learning. Directly related to research question two, respondents referred to confusion or lack of integration between online and face-to-face components. The literature review findings point to dependence on instructors and technology as important criteria for a well functioning hybrid class. Three respondents cited

technology concerns as a weakness and three participants referred to the instructor's role as a potential weakness.

The conclusions from the fifth research question, "What would students identify as strengths and weaknesses of hybrid courses?" continue to identify areas of concern for students regarding the hybrid format. As with the fourth research question, the open-ended response resulted in some comments that strayed off the topic of the hybrid format but also reinforced areas of concerns identified by students. In particular, face-to-face preference, technology concerns, and time management continue to be recurring themes.

Research Question Six, "How do students perceive hybrid learning as a customer experience?"

The sixth research question is directly associated with the theory informing the pilot study, "How do students perceive hybrid learning as a customer experience?" Three statements were used to examine student perspectives of hybrid learning as a customer experience. The responses to this series of statements exhibited the highest mean responses, falling on the agree side of the scale. No respondent disagreed with the statement "hybrid learning provides a reliable format." Only one other statement (statement 3, research question 2) had no "disagree" responses. One person disagreed with hybrid structure as an opportunity for a responsive experience and two students were not confident that hybrid learning could meet their educational needs. All students responded to this series of statements.

Evidence of each of the various subheading subjects introduced in the Review of Literature; customer satisfaction theory, effective learning, expectations, face-to-face instruction, ambivalence, role of instructor, and the role of technology, were apparent within the results of the survey.

The sixth research question, “How do students perceive hybrid learning as a customer experience?” results are informed by the theory base of the study and relate to statements identifying reliability, responsiveness and confidence as pertains to customer satisfaction. Proprietary schools have subscribed to the notion that viewing the student experience as a customer experience provides insight into quality and benefit of a particular learning experience. This perspective has begun to be adapted by other institutions of learning as an effective and useful evaluation technique. The responses to the three statements associated with this research question produced the highest level of aggregate satisfaction in the study. All participants responded with some measure of positive response to the statement that “hybrid learning provides a reliable format”, connecting back from the theory of hybrid learning as a customer experience to a summative conclusion that a carefully crafted hybrid course or curriculum can be a viable alternative to either face-to-face or online options.

Recommendations

The common recommendation informed by all the research questions results is a follow-up meeting and discussion with students, program instructors and leaders, to address those results and the various issues and concerns expressed.

1. Regarding the first research question, “Do students perceive their satisfaction of hybrid courses to be inferior, the same or better than face-to-face classes or online classes?” to address student’s level of satisfaction of hybrid courses in relation to face-to-face classes or online classes, follow up with discussions with the students in a group setting to speak to their range of comments.
2. Regarding the second research question, “Did the student feel that there was a sense of continuity between the online and face-to-face portions of the courses? Specifically, did

the online and face-to-face portions of the courses supplement and support each other or seem to be separated in purpose?” requires a follow-up discussion and analysis with instructors, facilitators, and curriculum authors to address the perception that the online and face-to-face components are not perceived to be supplemental and supportive in some cases. This research question and its conclusions and recommendations are limited to application for the EMB program exclusively and are not generalizable.

3. Regarding the third research question, “What do students perceive as the most beneficial balance of time spent online and time spent face-to-face”, further discussion and a brainstorming session on how to address the dichotomy of wanting more face-to-face time but placing equal high value on meeting once a week would be appropriate. The multiple choice question referencing student preference of the number of meetings per week and its 52% response calling for meetings two to three times per week should be addressed in an open forum and a solution agreed upon by faculty and students. Once again, any results and recommendations are restricted to the EMB program and are not generalizable.
4. Recommendations for issues related to research question four, “What factors could be adjusted to improve the student perception of the quality of hybrid courses?” as with the other recommendations, are a group discussion addressing each concern expressed. Additional training for the instructors would be appropriate.
5. As with the previous research questions, number five, “What would students identify as strengths and weaknesses of hybrid courses?” should be addressed with an open group discussion regarding concerns and issues expressed. All recommendations referred to in number four would apply.

6. Regarding research question number six, “How do students perceive hybrid learning as a customer experience?” should be attended to contingent upon following through with all previous research question recommendations. There would be an expectation for an increase in positive customer perception response after initial recommendations are completed.

In conclusion, the general approach to optimizing a positive student perception of hybrid learning in the EMB program would be to address the above recommendations through continued discussion and by developing and executing a plan to target identified areas for improvement.

Areas for further research would be a study of EMB student retention within the hybrid program, a follow-up study to evaluate results from completed recommendations, and a study evaluating faculty perceptions of the EMB model of hybrid structure and its applicability to other programs or courses.

References

- Ahmed, H. (2010). Hybrid e-learning acceptance model: learner perceptions. *Decision Sciences Journal Of Innovative Education*, 8(2), 313-346. doi:10.1111/j.1540-4609.2010.00259.x
- Boyle, T., Bradley, C., Chalk, P., Jones, R., & Pickard, P. (2003, October). Using blended learning to improve student success rates in learning to program. *Journal of Educational Media*, 28 (2-3), 165-178.
- Buzzetto-More, N. A. (2008). Student perceptions of various E-learning components. *Interdisciplinary Journal Of Knowledge & Learning Objects*, 4113-135.
- Brunner, D. L. (2006). The potential of the hybrid course vis-a-vis online and traditional courses. *Teaching Theology & Religion*, 9(4), 229-235.
- Customer satisfaction theory*. (n.d.). Retrieved June 2012 from <http://www.qualtrics.com/university/researchsuite/survey-types/market-surveys/customer-satisfaction-theory>
- de la Varre, C., Keane, J., & Irvin, M. (2011). Dual perspectives on the contribution of on-site facilitators to teaching presence in a blended learning environment. *Journal Of Distance Education*, 25(3), 1-13.
- Delialioglu, O., & Yildirim, Z. (2007). Students' perceptions on effective dimensions of interactive learning in a blended learning environment. *Journal Of Educational Technology & Society*, 10(2), 133-146.
- DeNeui, D. L., & Dodge, T. L. (2006). Asynchronous learning networks and student outcomes: The utility of online learning components in hybrid courses. *Journal of Instructional Psychology*, 33(4), 256-259.

- deNoyelles, A., Cobb, C., & Lowe, D. (2012). Influence of reduced seat time on satisfaction and perception of course development goals: a case study in faculty development. *Journal Of Asynchronous Learning Networks, 16*(2), 85-98.
- Dupaul, S., & Harris, M. S. (2012). Secret shoppers: The stealth applicant search for higher education. (cover story). *Journal Of College Admission, (215)*, 8-16.
- El Mansour, B., & Mupinga, D. M. (2007). Students' positive and negative experiences In hybrid and online classes. *College Student Journal, 41*(1), 242-248.
- Estelami, H. (2012). An exploratory study of the drivers of student satisfaction and learning experience in hybrid-online and purely online marketing courses. *Marketing Education Review, 22*(2), 143-156.
- Fisher, K. (2010). Technology-enabled active learning environments: an appraisal. *CELE Exchange. Centre For Effective Learning Environments, 2010*(6-10), 1-8.
- Franklin, K., & Shemwell, D. W. (1995). Disconfirmation theory: An approach to student satisfaction assessment in higher education. *Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Mid-South Educational Research Association Conference Biloxi, MS.*
- Fulton, K. P. (2012). 10 reasons to flip. *Phi Delta Kappan, 94*(2), 20.
- Gedik, N., Kiraz, E., & Yaşar Özden, M. M. (2012). The optimum blend: Affordances and challenges of blended learning for students. *Turkish Online Journal Of Qualitative Inquiry, 3*(3), 102-117.
- Geith, C., & Vignare, K. (2008). Access to education with online learning and open educational resources: Can they close the gap?. *Journal of Asynchronous Learning Networks, 12*(1), 105-126.

- Henninger, M., & Kutter, A. K. (2010). Integration of education and technology -- A long-term study about possibilities and adequacy of a learning management system for education. *Journal of Systemics, Cybernetics & Informatics*, 8(3), 10-14.
- Hoch, W. A., & Dougher, T. O. (2011). Student perceptions of hybrid vs. traditional courses: A case study in plant identification. *NACTA Journal*, 55(4), 8-13.
- Kara, A., & DeShields, O. W. (2004). Business student satisfaction, intentions and retention in a higher education: An empirical investigation. *MEQ*, 3(Fall), Retrieved June 2012 from http://www.realmarcom.com/uop/documents/research/student_satisfaction.pdf
- Kurthen, H., & Smith, G. G. (2005). Hybrid online face-to-face teaching. *International Journal of Learning*, 12(5), 237-245.
- Lehmann, K., & Chamberlin, L. (2008). *Making the move to elearning*. Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Education.
- Lin, Q., (2008). Student views of hybrid learning: A one-year exploratory study. *Journal of Computing in Teacher Education*, 25(2), 57-66.
- Napier, N. P., Dekhane, S., & Smith, S. (2011). Transitioning to blended learning: understanding student and faculty perceptions. *Journal Of Asynchronous Learning Networks*, 15(1), 20-32.
- Niemiec, M., & Otte, G. (2010). An administrator's guide to the whys and hows of blended learning. *Journal of Asynchronous Learning Networks*, 14(1), 115-126.
- Nontraditional undergraduates*, (2002). U.S. Department of Education. Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics. Retrieved 6/30/2012 from <http://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/analysis/2002a-sa01.asp>

- Nowell, G. (2011). Student course evaluations in traditional and blended courses: A case study. *American Journal of Business Education*, 4(1), 13-18.
- Ocak, M. (2011). Blend or not to blend: a study investigating faculty members' perceptions of blended teaching. *World Journal on Educational Technology*, 2(3), 196-210.
- Osborne, R. E., Kriese, P., Tobey, H., & Johnson, E. (2009). And never the two shall meet?: Student vs. faculty perceptions of online courses. *Journal Of Educational Computing Research*, 40(2), 171-182.
- Parsad, B., and Lewis, L. (2008). *Distance Education at Degree-Granting Postsecondary Institutions: 2006–07* (NCES 2009–044). National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. Washington, DC.
- Serenko, A. (2011). Student satisfaction with Canadian music programmes: the application of the American Customer Satisfaction Model in higher education. *Assessment & Evaluation In Higher Education*, 36(3), 281-299. doi:10.1080/02602930903337612
- TEAL – *technology enabled active learning*. (2005). Retrieved from <http://icampus.mit.edu/projects/teal/>
- Tsai, C. (2011). Achieving effective learning effects in the blended course: A combined approach of online self-regulated learning and collaborative learning with initiation. *Cyberpsychology, Behavior & Social Networking*, 14(9), 505-510. doi:10.1089/cyber.2010.0388
- Vaughan, N., & Garrison, D. R. (2005). Creating cognitive presence in a blended faculty development community. *Internet and Higher Education*, 8 (1), 1–12.
- Wong, J. J. (2006). Traditional versus hybrid courses. *International Journal of Learning*, 13(8), 163-170.

Wueste, D. E., & Fishman, T. (2010). The customer isn't always right: Limitations of 'customer service' approaches to education or why higher ed is not Burger King. *International Journal For Educational Integrity*, 6(1), 3-12.

Zamani-Gallaher, E. M. (2004). Proprietary schools: Beyond the issue of profit. *New Directions For Institutional Research*, 2004(124), 63-79.

Appendix A

Survey Instrument

University of Wisconsin-Stout WISCONSIN'S POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY

This survey is being conducted by a UW-Stout student

Description:

The Entertainment and Media Business (EMB) bachelor's degree completion program at Madison Media Institute uses a hybrid-learning model. The perception of satisfaction of hybrid learning by non-traditional students is currently unknown. This study examines student perspectives regarding hybrid learning.

Risks and Benefits:

There are no perceived risks associated with completing the survey. Participation will result in data that will help in the evaluation of the effectiveness of this hybrid model of content delivery. The data supplied will inform adaptations and improvements of this model and will assist in determining the desirability of expanding this method of content delivery into other programs and courses.

Time Commitment

The survey will take ten to fifteen minutes to complete.

Confidentiality:

Your name will not be included on any documents. We do not believe that you can be identified from any of this information.

Right to Withdraw:

Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You may choose not to participate without any adverse consequences to you. You have the right to stop the survey at any time. However, should you choose to participate and later wish to withdraw from the study, there is no way to identify your anonymous document after it has been turned into the investigator.

IRB Approval:

This study has been reviewed and approved by The University of Wisconsin-Stout's Institutional Review Board (IRB). The IRB has determined that this study meets the ethical obligations required by federal law and University policies. If you have questions or concerns regarding this study please contact the Investigator or Advisor. If you have any questions, concerns, or reports regarding your rights as a research subject, please contact the IRB Administrator.

<p>Investigator: Richard Denhart, rdenhart@mediainstitute.edu, 414-429-3123</p>
<p>IRB Administrator Sue Foxwell, Research Services 152 Vocational Rehabilitation Bldg. UW-Stout Menomonie, WI 54751 715-232-2477 foxwells@uwstout.edu</p>
<p>Advisor: Dr. Carol Mooney, Office: 232 Communications Technology Phone: 715/232-1444 Email: mooneyc@uwstout.edu</p>

Statement of Consent:

By completing the following survey you agree to participate in the project entitled, **Non-traditional Undergraduate Perceptions of the Effectiveness of Hybrid Instruction in an Entertainment and Media Business Bachelor's Degree Completion Program.**

Definition of Hybrid Instruction

"Hybrid courses are courses in which a significant portion of the learning activities have been moved online, and time traditionally spent in the classroom is reduced but not eliminated."

<http://www.uwstout.edu/articles/garnham.htm>

EMB currently uses a hybrid model with one third time spent face-to-face and two thirds of class time online.



University of Wisconsin-Stout WISCONSIN'S POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY

This survey is being conducted by a UW-Stout student

In general, what type of course delivery do you prefer?

- All online
- All face-to-face
- Hybrid - a combination of online and Face-to-face
- I have no preference

Please indicate your level of satisfaction with hybrid style questions.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I was satisfied with the hybrid program when compared to programs that were all face-to-face courses.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I was satisfied with the hybrid program when compared to programs that were all online courses.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
I would recommend taking hybrid courses to a friend.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There was a sense of continuity between the online and face-to-face portions of the classes.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
The online and face-to-face portions of the courses supplemented and supported each other.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please indicate your perception of the most beneficial balance of time spent online and time spent face to face.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I would have preferred more face-to-face time and less online work for each course.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would have preferred more online and less face-to-face time for each class.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

How often would you prefer to have met for these types of courses?

- Once a Month
- 2-3 Times a Month
- Once a Week
- 2-3 Times a Week
- Daily

Hybrid learning as a customer experience

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Hybrid learning provides a reliable format.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The hybrid structure provides an opportunity for a responsive experience.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
I am confident that hybrid learning can meet my educational needs.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

What could be done to improve the quality of the hybrid format?

What do you identify as the strength of hybrid learning?

What would you identify as the weaknesses of hybrid learning

1.7) What is your gender?

Male

Female

What is your current age?

- 18 to 19
- 20 to 24
- 25 to 34
- 35 to 44
- 45 to 54
- 55 to 64
- 65 or over

What is your current semester in the program?

- First Semester
- Second Semester
- Third Semester
- Fourth Semester
- Other



Survey Powered By [Qualtrics](#)

University of Wisconsin-Stout WISCONSIN'S POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY

This survey is being conducted by a UW-Stout student

We thank you for your time spent taking this survey
Your response has been recorded.

Survey Powered By [Qualtrics](#)