

ECAMPUS STUDENT SUCCESS HISTORICAL ASSESSMENT



2016 & 2017

Oregon State Ecampus Student Success

Prepared by

Oregon State Ecampus Student Success

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Contents

Executive Summary

1.0 Background

2.0 Surveys & Sample

2.1 Data analysis

3.0 Results

3.1 Instructional Elements

3.2 Tutoring

3.3 Advising

3.4 Website Tools

3.5 Online-Only and On-Campus/Online Students

4.0 Recommendations

Appendix I. – 2016 Survey

Appendix II. – 2017 Survey

Figures & Tables

Figure 1. – Survey respondents by online status, campus, and standing (2017 only)

Figure 2. – Number of completed credits, student age, and residence (2017 only)

Figure 3. – Ecampus website tools used

Figure 4. – Student success tools used

Table 1. Survey respondents by program (2016 & 2017)

Table 2. Instructional elements and their importance

Table 3. Advising elements and students' agreement

Researchers

Andres Lazaro Lopez, Ph.D Candidate – Student Success Assessment Coordinator

Executive Summary

Oregon State Ecampus, Division of Extended Campus (DEC), surveys its students once a year to assess the success of their services and overall student experience around instructional elements, advising, tutoring, library services, use of student success tools, and a host of other satisfaction questions. This report analyses two DEC student surveys from 2016 and 2017. The intent of the report is twofold. First, report findings from both surveys to better understand DEC student population, their successes, struggles, and needs. Second, use these findings to help shape future survey assessments of DEC students and to make strategic decisions across DEC units.

The assessment focuses primarily on the 2017 survey results that captured 2,442 respondents. Since the 2016 survey only captured 752 respondents, data from that survey are only represented in Table 1.

Both surveys assessed four key areas of student success*:

- Instructional Elements
- Advising
- Tutoring
- Use of Website Tools

The results section covers these four key areas and includes a section on the statistical differences between online only and on-campus/online student responses.

Recommendations are suggested across three areas:

- Advertising and Communication
- Survey Assessment Improvements
- Possible Qualitative Study Questions

* The surveys asked a host of questions that are not reported here, such as library questions, technology use, and a host of qualitative questions. These areas were excluded to focus on key areas of student success.

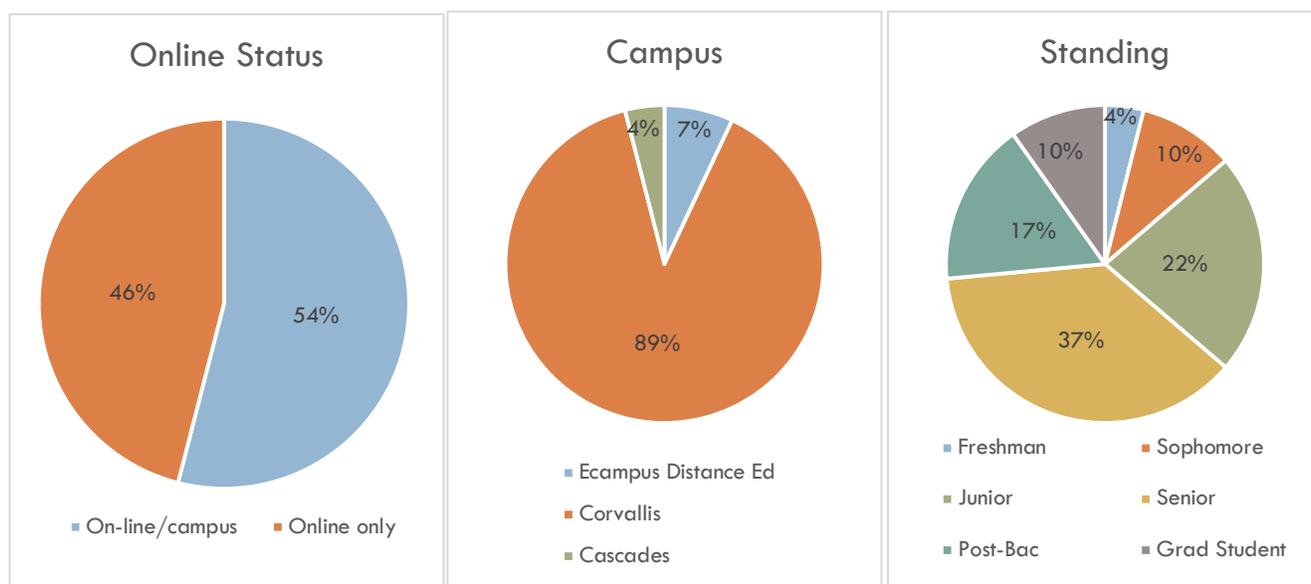
1.0 BACKGROUND

Oregon State Ecampus Student Success offers success counseling, success coaching, student services, and proctoring services. In addition to these student success services, a host of other DEC units and campus partners help to bolster Ecampus student experience. In order to assess these efforts, Ecampus Student Success surveys students once a year to better understand the student population and their needs.

2.0 SURVEYS & SAMPLE

On December 28, 2016 (n=752) and again on June 5, 2017 (n=2442), the Oregon State Ecampus student success team survey DEC students to better understand their needs. The surveys were administered via Campuslabs[†], a web-based survey and data analytics tool, over the course of four weeks. Of the students surveyed in 2017, 95% (n=2321) were degree seeking. Survey respondents were mostly seniors (n=873), more than half took both on-campus and online courses, and the vast majority (n=1319) took courses through the Corvallis campus (n=1176) – see Figure 1. below.

Figure 1. – Survey respondents by online status, campus, and standing (2017 only)



2017 survey respondents represented all of Ecampus' 23 programs. About 30% (n=651) were from other on-campus programs and were taking online courses to meet their degree requirements (see Table 1. Below). Computer Science (n=325), Business (n=224), Human Development and Family Studies (n=152), Fisheries and Wildlife Sciences (n=131), Psychology (n=103), and Ag Sciences (n=101) make up the top six programs with the most number of survey respondents. There were five programs with less than 0.5% of survey participation: French (n=1), Rangeland Science (n=4), German (n=7), Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies (n=5), and Environmental Economic Policy (n=10).

[†] Campuslab – Online survey platform (<https://www.campuslabs.com>)

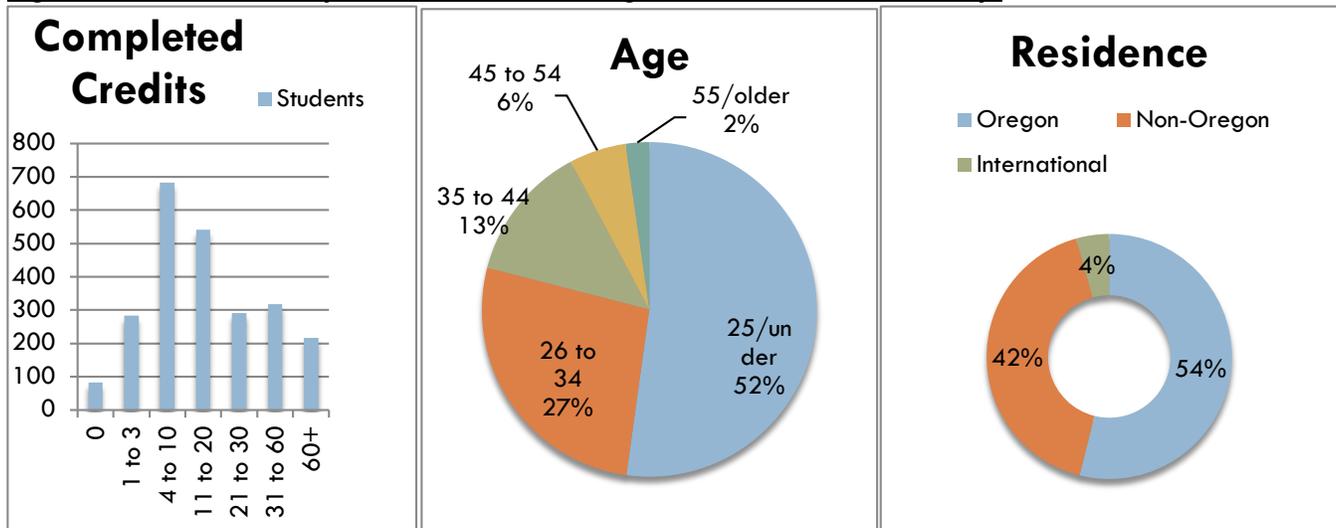
ECAMPUS STUDENT SUCCESS HISTORICAL ASSESSMENT

Table 1. – Survey respondents by program (2016 & 2017)

Ecampus Program	2017 Count	Percentage	2016 Count	Percentage
Ag Sciences	101	4.58%	37	5.65%
Anthropology	60	2.72%	22	3.36%
Business	224	10.16%	63	9.62%
Computer Science	325	14.74%	135	20.61%
Economics	42	1.90%	18	2.75%
Enviro. Economic/Policy	10	0.45%	5	0.76%
Enviro. Sciences	66	2.99%	44	6.72%
Fisheries & Wildlife Science	131	5.94%	39	5.95%
French	1	0.05%	3	0.46%
German	7	0.32%	8	1.22%
History	18	0.82%	N/A	N/A
Horticulture	23	1.04%	15	2.29%
Human Dev. Family Studies	152	6.89%	54	8.24%
Liberal Studies	63	2.86%	30	4.58%
Natural Resources	92	4.17%	53	8.09%
Political Science	34	1.54%	16	2.44%
Psychology	103	4.67%	28	4.27%
Rangeland Science	4	0.18%	N/A	N/A
Sociology	39	1.77%	9	1.37%
Spanish	21	0.95%	3	0.46%
Sustainability	22	1.00%	8	1.22%
Women/Gender/Sexuality	5	0.23%	5	0.76%
Univ. Exploratory Studies	11	0.50%	6	0.92%
Other	651	29.52%	54	8.24%

The majority of 2017 survey participants completed 4-10 credit hours (28%), were 25 years of age or younger (n=1261), and are Oregon residents (n=1302) – see Figure 2. Below.

Figure 2. Number of completed credits, student age, and residence (2017 only)



2.1 DATA ANALYSIS

Both the 2016 and 2017 survey asked the same 85 questions, except for one question in the 2016 survey that asked about the texting preferences of students. Each survey included nine biographical and demographic questions, three technology questions, nine website use and tech support questions, 16 instructional element questions, six communication and information seeking questions, eight tutoring questions, twelve advising questions, eleven library questions, and eleven general Ecampus questions.

In what follows, relevant results from the general Ecampus questions, instructional elements, tutoring, advising, and use of website tools questions are explored. These results come from reading frequencies and descriptive statistics. The final subsection uses chi-square statistical tests to explore differences in the responses between online-only and on-campus/online students.

The final section of the report offers recommendations for future assessments.

3.0 Results

Survey respondents from the 2017 survey learned about OSU Ecampus through its website (36%, n=807), word of mouth (26%, n=574), and web searches like Google (23%, n=516). The survey revealed that the majority of survey respondents (86%) rated the overall quality of online courses offered through OSU Ecampus as excellent (XX%, n=917) or good (XX%, n=1011). Further, 81% (n=1808) of respondents said they would recommend Ecampus courses to their friends, and 16% (n=353) said maybe. Lastly, respondents who live within driving distance of the Corvallis campus (n=1308) said they took online courses because the courses they needed were not available on campus when student needed to take them (44%, n=578), their work schedule conflicted with taking campus courses (37%, n=484), and some courses were only offered through Ecampus (35% n=456).

In what follows, results are shared covering instructional elements, tutoring, advising, and use of web tools.

3.1 INSTRUCTIONAL ELEMENTS

Students were asked to rate the importance of various instructional elements (see Table 2 below) to maximize their online experience. The most important instructional elements centered around clear assignments and grading criteria, timely and constructive feedback, acceptable response times from the instructor and the promotion of academic integrity. Respondents seemed to be less concerned with supplemental course material, regular announcements, encouraging student questions, and student-to-student interaction (e.g., discussion boards and group projects).

Table 2. Instructional elements and their importance[‡]

Instructional Elements	Importance
Clear assignments	99%
Clear grading criteria	98%
Timely/constructive feedback	97%
Response times	95%
Academic integrity	91%

[‡] Instructional elements were measured on a five point scale: no opinion/not sure, not important, slightly important, somewhat important, and very important. The importance percentage consist of those choose somewhat and very important.

ECAMPUS STUDENT SUCCESS HISTORICAL ASSESSMENT

Effective exams	85%
Canvas grade center	84%
Midterm grades before drop deadlines [§]	79%
Multimedia course content	77%
Quizzes for understanding	75%
Supplemental course materials	73%
Regular announcements	71%
Encouraging student questions	70%
Online peer interaction	53%
Group Projects	17%

3.2 TUTORING

The majority of DEC students (93% n=2141) have not utilized the NetTutor online service, and 22% (n=512) of students did not even know it was available. While math and statistics are the two most commonly used NetTutor services (63%, n=100), other subject areas like computer science (19%, n=30), humanities and social science writing (14%, n=23), and business (13%, n=21) also fulfilled many students' tutoring needs. Of the students who did use the services, 66% (n=106) believed that it helped improve their overall grade in the course. Further, 68% (n=108) of those who used the service ranked their experience as good or excellent.

3.3 ADVISING

Over half (58%) of DEC students surveyed typically communicate with their academic advisor once or twice a quarter (n=1134), while a quarter (26%) of student only communicate with them once or twice a year (n=510). The majority of students (89%) prefer to communicate either in person (n=850) or via email (902), with only 8% preferring phone communication (n=166). Overall (88%), students rated their experience with their advisor as excellent (n=1244) or good (n=482). Also, they agreed that advisors excelled in all of the areas asked on the survey (see Table 3. below).

Table 3. Advising elements and students' agreement

Advising Elements	Agreement
Courteous	92%
Addressed concerns	88%
Knowledgeable	87%
Punctual	86%
Provided useful information	85%
Ease to make appointment	84%

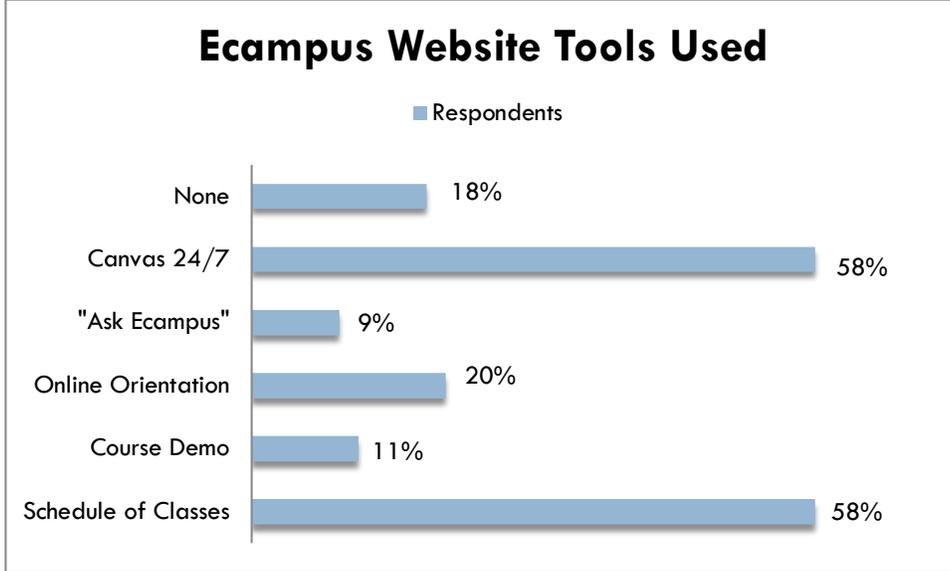
3.4 WEBSITE TOOLS

The majority (70%) of respondents use their laptop computers (n=1680) to access Ecampus websites, followed by desktop computers (15%) and then their mobile devices (13%). Only 24% (n=571) of respondents said they had not visited the Ecampus website in the last six months (approximately December 2016 to June 2017).

[§] Notes: This is the median of importance. The RNL PSOL would consider everything above this line as important.

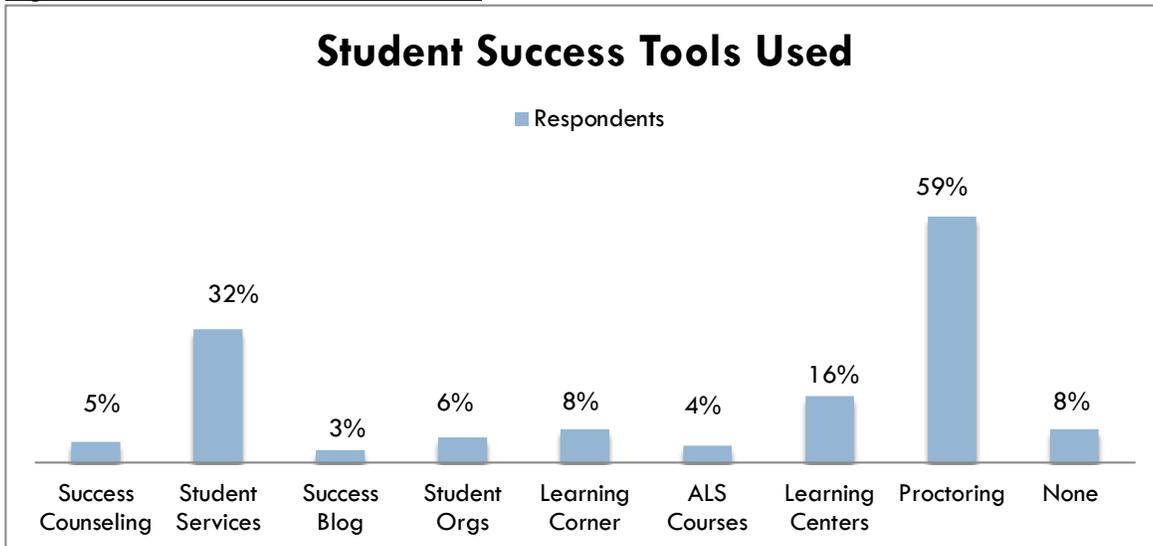
1976 respondents (82%) used one or more Ecampus website tools, while 18% said they had not (n=426). Of these 1976 students, they used the Ecampus website mostly for the schedule of classes (58% n=1398), Canvas 24/7 (58%, n=1390), and the online orientation (20%, n=477) – see Figure 3. below.

Figure 3. – Ecampus website tools used



1,419 Respondents (66%) used the Ecampus Student Success website, while about 34% (n=778) student said they had not. Of these students, a majority used exam and proctoring services (59% n=1345), some used student services (32% n=724), and fewer used the OSU Learning Centers (16% n=363) – see Figure 4 below.

Figure 4. – Student success tools used



3.5 ONLINE ONLY AND ON-CAMPUS/ONLINE STUDENTS

To see if there were significant differences between online-only and on-campus/online students, a chi-square analysis was run on 21 different questions throughout the survey. It appears that 17 items had a 95% (p-value less than .05) confidence that the two variables were not independent of each other and that there is a statistically significant difference in the distribution of responses between the two groups. The following section outlines the questions that were statistically significant. It ends with a summary of the findings.

Instructional elements

- Clear instructions for doing assignments (p=.017)

Online-only students were **more likely** to rate this very important (95%) as opposed to the other given options compared to the on-campus/online students (92%).

- Providing constructive and timely feedback (p=.000)

It appears that online-only students were **more likely** to rate this very important (84%) as opposed to the other given options compared to the on-campus/online students (72%).

- Providing multimedia course content (p=.000)

It appears that online-only students were **more likely** to rate this as important/very important (84%) as opposed to the other given options compared to the on-campus/online students (71%).

- Providing supplemental course materials (p=.005)

It appears that online-only students were **more likely** to rate this as important/very important (76%) as opposed to the other given options compared to the on-campus/online students (70%).

- Encouraging students to ask questions (p=.000)

It appears that online-only students were **more likely** to rate this as important/very important (76%) as opposed to the other given options compared to the on-campus/online students (64%).

- Upholding academic integrity (p=.000)

Both groups believed this to be very important, but it appears that online-only students were **more likely** to rate this as very important (77%) as opposed to the other given options compared to the on-campus/online students (65%).

- Mid-term grades before the drop/withdraw deadlines (p=.000)

It appears that online-only students were **more likely** to rate this as slightly/not important or no opinion (31%) as opposed to the other given options compared to the on-campus/online students (13%).

- Providing regular announcements (p=.000)

It appears that online-only students were **less likely** to rate this as very important (28%) as opposed to the other given options compared to the on-campus/online students (36%).

- Using the Grade Center in Canvas (p=.000)

It appears that online-only students were **less likely** to rate this as very important or no opinion (64%) as opposed to the other given options compared to the on-campus/online students (73%).

- Online interactions/discussions between students in courses (p=.000)

It appears that online-only students were **less likely** to rate this as slightly/not important or no opinion (40%) as opposed to the other given options compared to the on-campus/online students (53%).

- Group projects ($p=.000$)

While neither group seems to think group projects are that important, online-only students were **less likely** to rate this as not important (53%) compared to the on-campus/online students (61%).

- Quizzes to check understanding ($p=.001$)

It appears that online-only students were **less likely** to rate this as slightly/not important or no opinion (22%) as opposed to the other given options compared to the on-campus/online students (28%).

Other questions

- Overall experience with advisor ($p=.000$)

It appears that online-only students were **more likely** to rate this as excellent (72%) as opposed to the other given options compared to the on-campus/online students (56%).

- Used the online tutoring service ($p=.000$)

It appears that online-only students were **more likely** to have used (10% compared to 4%) and known (8% said they didn't know compared to 34%) of the availability of NetTutor compared to the on-campus/online students.

- Visited the Student Services website ($p=.000$)

It appears that online-only students were **more likely** to have visited the student services website (79%) compared to the on-campus/online students (54%).

- Overall quality of online courses ($p=.000$)

It appears that online-only students were **more likely** to rate Ecampus courses as excellent (52%) as opposed to the other given options compared to the on-campus/online students (31%).

- Would you recommend Ecampus courses to your friends ($p=.000$)

It appears that online-only students were **more likely** to say yes (84% compared to 78%) than maybe (13% compared to 19%) when asked if they would recommend Ecampus courses to friends compared to the on-campus/online students.

Summary

The online only students and the on-campus/online students had significantly different responses to instructional elements, advising, tutoring, student services, and overall Ecampus questions. Online only students were more likely to rate clearer instructions for doing assignments, receiving constructive and timely feedback as very important compared to on-campus/online students. They also were more likely to rate providing multimedia course content, supplemental course content, encouragement for students to ask questions, and upholding academic integrity as important or very important than their counterparts. Also, they were more likely to rate receiving midterm grades before the withdraw deadline as slightly/not important or no opinion compared to on-campus and online students.

Also, online-only students were less likely to rate providing regular announcements and using the Grade Center in Canvas as important or very important compared to their counterparts. Also, they were less likely to rate online interactions between students, group projects, and quizzes to check understanding as slightly not important or no opinion compared to on-campus and online students.

ECAMPUS STUDENT SUCCESS HISTORICAL ASSESSMENT

Lastly, online-only students were more likely to rate their overall experience with advisors as excellent or no opinion, use and know about the availability of NetTutor, and have visited the student services website compared to their counterparts. Further, they were more likely to rate Ecampus courses as excellent and say yes rather than maybe when asked if they would recommend Ecampus course to friends compared to on-campus and online students.

4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations put forth from this analysis fit into three different categories: advertising and communication, survey assessment improvements, and possible qualitative study questions.

Advertising and Communication

There are a few opportunities for Ecampus to quickly increase the use of NetTutor, the Student Services website, and success counseling by executing stronger communication plans or encouraging advisors to recommend these services. Also, only 20% of respondents said they took the online orientation. Incorporating strategies that require or encourage more students to take the online orientation may direct students towards these underutilized services.

Survey Assessment Improvements

The annual Ecampus survey can improve by incorporating a few different strategies. First, both importance and satisfaction questions should be asked for instructional elements, academic advisors, library questions, student success, and overall Ecampus questions. Both of these past surveys tell a story about what students use or think is important, but it does not ask them to assess how Ecampus is doing in relation to how important it may be to the survey taker. Including importance and satisfaction allows the assessment to recommend a clearer path forward as opposed to making decisions with only a limited understanding of what matters to students and what is or is not working for students. Second, clearly defining thematic areas of the survey will also be helpful to orientate students through a long survey process and to inform them of how Ecampus views its services and products.

Also, it is clear that the Ecampus experience is different for online-only and on-campus/online students. Being mindful of these differences and asking questions that can tell more about these two experiences is necessary for making decisions for the two different populations. Further, statistical analysis of different majors that have larger sample sizes (recommended here are the top six programs with the largest number of survey participants) may also be revealing as to what is and is not working for students.

Possible Qualitative Study Questions

Twelve open-ended questions in the 2017 survey could warrant a future qualitative study.

Tools, Instruction, and Communication

- Suggested website tools to be added (Q.19 n=638)
- Suggestions for instruction or course design (Q.35 n=600)
- Suggestions to improve content, timing, or function of bi-quarterly e-newsletter (Q.38 n=457)
- Suggestions for improved communication with Ecampus staff (Q.41 n=405)

Student Services

- Concerns regarding advising that were not asked (Q.61 n=324)
- Suggestions for improving library services (Q.74. n=318)
- What Ecampus can do to help those who started but did not finish online courses (Q.79 n=736)
- Reasons why classes were not available on-campus when students needed to take them (Q.85 n=220)

Student Experience

- Other comments or suggestions about Ecampus student experience (Q.80 n=494)
- Why students selected Ecampus to take online courses (Q.83 n=100)
- Explaining why they might (n=353) or would not (n=76) recommend Ecampus (Q.77)
- Favorite Ecampus course and why (Q.78 n=1390)