



**SAN DIEGO
COMMUNITY COLLEGE
DISTRICT**

City College • Mesa College • Miramar College
College of Continuing Education

Distance Education Experience Survey Fall 2023

SDCCD Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Research

Division of Institutional Innovation and Effectiveness

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Context

In Fall 2023, all students enrolled in a distance education course at San Diego Community College District (SDCCD) and all faculty teaching distance education courses were invited to complete a survey about their experiences online at the District.

Student Survey: About 37,500 students from San Diego City, Mesa, and Miramar Colleges and the College of Continuing Education (SDCCE) were invited, representing 70% of students enrolled at SDCCD in Fall 2023 (City: 71%, Mesa: 77%, Miramar: 66%, SDCCE: 64%). 3,135 students responded (~6% response rate), 2,188 of whom finished the survey. 1,068 respondents were enrolled only at one or more of the credit colleges (34% of respondents), 990 were only enrolled at SDCCE (32%), 74 (2%) were enrolled at both SDCCE and at least one of the credit colleges, and 1,068 respondents did not indicate which college they were enrolled at in Fall 2023.

Faculty Survey: All 2,537 faculty teaching Distance Education courses in Fall 2023 at San Diego City, Mesa, and Miramar Colleges and SDCCE were surveyed. 143 faculty responded to the survey for a 5.6% response rate. 39 respondents indicated they only taught online at Mesa College in Fall 2023, 38 only taught at SDCCE, 29 only taught at Miramar, 24 only taught at City, 2 taught at more than 1 credit college, and 11 did not indicate which college they were taught at.

The surveys included questions regarding:

- **Modality Preference and Club Participation**
- **Student and Faculty Sentiment in Online Classes**
- **Student and Faculty Challenges and Barriers Online**
- **Student and Faculty Assets Online**
- **Open Educational Resources (OER) and Zero Textbook Cost (ZTC) data**

Methodology

Multiple choice and multiple response data is presented in this briefing as provided by respondents.

A preliminary analysis of open-ended responses was conducted by a researcher to identify descriptive codes; all responses were assigned one of those descriptive codes a Language Learning Model (Chat GPT). LLM output was reviewed by the researcher and revised as needed.

Definitions

- **Distance Education:** A course taught in an online modality (i.e., Fully Online, Online-live, Hyflex).
- **Fully Online:** Sections offered online with no set meeting time (asynchronous). These are a subset of Distance Education enrollments.
- **Online-live:** Sections offered online with set meeting times (synchronous). These are a subset of Distance Education enrollments.
- **Hyflex:** Sections offered in which students may attend fully online, fully on-ground, or any possible combination of online and on-ground. These are a subset of Distance Education enrollments.
- **Partially Online:** Sections that include components both in online and on-campus modalities.
- **On-ground:** "Face to face" sections, in which the instructor and students physically occupy the same place at the same time. This includes sections offered on-campus and off-campus (such as CCAP sections offered on high school campuses) sections.

Contents

Executive Summary 4

Key Findings and Next Steps 6

Modality Preference and Club Participation 7

 1. Preferred Modality: 7

 2. Participation in clubs 10

 3. Reasons to Enroll Online 11

Student and Faculty Sentiment in Online Classes 12

 4. Sentiment about Online Classes, Overall: 12

 5. Sentiment about Online Classes, by Group: 14

Student and Faculty Challenges and Barriers Online 16

 6. Challenges and Barriers Online: 16

Student and Faculty Assets Online 19

 7. What helps students learn online, existing resources: 19

 8. What helps students learn online, open-ended responses: 19

 9. For those unprepared for online, what would help students learn: 22

 10. What helps faculty teach online: 23

 11. What helps faculty learn about Canvas: 23

 12. Requested Professional Development Topics for Faculty: 24

Open Educational Resources (OER) and Zero Textbook Cost (ZTC) data 25

 13. Zero Textbook Cost Class Search 25

 14. Importance of free course materials 25

 15. Diversity of Materials: 26

 16. Faculty Perception of OER: 28

Supplemental Tables 29

Distance Ed. Experience Survey, Fall 2023

Table of Tables

Table 1. Groups who preferred Online Live over Fully Online	7
Table 2. Groups with high relative preference for Hyflex	8
Table 3. Student Modality Preference, Groups with over 30 Respondents	9
Table 4. Participation in and Awareness of Online Clubs, by Group	10
Table 5. Faculty Sentiment about Support for Teaching Online	12
Table 6. Student sentiment about online classes.....	13
Table 7. Student Average Online Sentiment, Groups with more than 30 respondents	15
Table 8. Barriers and Challenges Online, Student Responses by Theme.....	18
Table 9. Student Assets Online, Student Responses by Theme	21
Table 10. If you were unprepared to learn online, what would have helped? Open-ended Student Response Samples.....	22
Table 11. Awareness of ZTC filter in class search.....	25
Table 12. Importance of free course materials on decision to enroll	25
Table 13. OER, ZTC, and LCC Student Survey Responses, Overall	26
Table 14. Percent of Respondents who Agreed/Strongly Agreed that Materials were Representative of Diversity.....	26
Table 15. OER, ZTC, and LCC Student Survey Responses by Demographic	27
Table 16. OER Benefits, Faculty Responses	28
Table 17. OER Challenges, Faculty Responses	28

Executive Summary

1. **Preferred Modality:** Survey respondents were about twice as likely to express preference for online classes as on-ground classes, and similarly likely to express preference for fully online (asynchronous classes) as online-live (synchronous). It should be noted that given the sample (students enrolled online) and the survey format (online only), a pre-existing preference for online classes was likely present among survey respondents. See page 7.

Key Finding 1) Generally, SDCCE respondents and those aged 55+ preferred Online-Live. Respondents aged 18-24 and those with an educational objective of Transfer/Associate degree preferred Fully Online (age 18-24: 38%, Transfer/Associate: 44%) and On-ground classes (age 18-24: 26%, Transfer/Associate: 21%).

2. **Participation in clubs:** 23% of student respondents participated in clubs online. Another 35% didn't participate, but were aware of opportunities to do so. See page 10.
3. **Reasons to Enroll Online:** 36% of respondents indicated they enroll online due to their personal schedule, although respondents provided a relatively large number of reasons they enroll online. See page 11.
4. **Sentiment about Online Classes, Overall:** Student respondents expressed generally positive sentiments about their experience in online classes; this varied by group. Faculty also generally indicated positive sentiments about teaching online. See page 12.

Key Finding 2) While students generally agreed their course materials were representative of diversity, they were connected to their instructors, and they were prepared to learn online, they were less likely to agree that they felt connected to their classmates.

5. **Sentiment about Online Classes, by Group:** Survey responses suggest that some groups of students feel less engaged by their online coursework than others. See page 14.
6. **Challenges and barriers Online:** Students most often indicated that technology was a barrier to online classes (39% of respondents) and that challenges learning content online primarily arose from impacts on their personal lives (36% of respondents). Faculty indicated that Internet access and mobile device limitations were the most common challenges. See page 16.

Key Finding 3) Largest Barriers and Challenges Online, Student Responses:

- Technology, largely internet access, access to a capable computer, and mobile device limitations.
 - Inconsistent class structure and organization, largely courses that did not allow students to access multiple weeks' of course content at once, or with unclear/inconsistent module layout.
 - Online community, largely lack of communication with classmates.
7. **What helps students learn online, existing resources:** Respondents indicated most resources were relatively helpful, with Canvas Support receiving the most positive response. See page 19.
 8. **What helps students learn online, open-ended responses:** Students indicated that academic support (such as from supplemental readings); their professors; and courses with recorded lectures, consistently organized course modules, early access to course content, and flexible due dates helped them learn online. See page 19.

Key Finding 4) Most Important Assets Online, Student Responses:

- Academic support, largely supplemental resources (i.e. YouTube)
- Online community, largely professor engagement
- Clear, organized class structure, i.e. recorded lectures, clear class layout, early access to materials, and flexible due dates

9. **For those unprepared for online, what would help students learn:** Respondents who felt unprepared to learn online reported more engagement with their instructor and classmates, in-person support, academic support like tutoring, and more consistent organization of the class structure would have helped them learn online. See page 22.
10. **What helps faculty teach online:** Canvas and Zoom were ranked most highly (close to “Very Helpful” on average), and Pronto (messaging app) and Generative AI were ranked least highly (close to “Somewhat Helpful” on average). See page 23.
11. **What helps faculty learn about Canvas:** Faculty ranked their peers and the Online Faculty Mentor as the most helpful, and their college’s professional development website as the least helpful. See page 23.
12. **Requested Professional Development Topics for Faculty:** Faculty were mostly likely to indicate they were interested in learning more about Creative and/or Extended Use of Canvas Features.

Key Finding 5) The second-most requested professional development topic was the use of AI in classroom assignments. This is notable because faculty ranked Generative AI as the least helpful resources in teaching online, suggesting that faculty may believe Generative AI provides opportunities that they don’t yet know about.

13. **OER/ZTC:** Districtwide, only about 1 in 4 students are of the Zero Textbook Cost (ZTC) class search option. The availability of free course materials was moderately important in students’ decisions to enroll. Open Educational Resources (OER) were generally perceived to be representative of diverse perspectives, cultures, and backgrounds. See page 25.

Key Findings and Next Steps

Key Finding	Next Step
<p>Generally, SDCCE respondents and those aged 55+ preferred Online-Live. Respondents aged 18-24 and those with an educational objective of Transfer/ Associate degree preferred Fully Online (age 18-24: 38%, Transfer/Associate: 44%) and On-ground classes (age 18-24: 26%, Transfer/Associate: 21%).</p>	<p>Survey data suggests that younger and associate/transfer students prefer online courses with maximum flexibility. Older students, those from SDCCE, and those seeking CTE certificates prefer courses with more direct engagement, such as synchronous courses.</p>
<p>While students generally agreed their course materials were representative of diversity, they were connected to their instructors, and they were prepared to learn online, they were less likely to agree that they felt connected to their classmates.</p>	<p>Efforts in the virtual classroom to foster meaningful engagement between students should consider the main reason students enroll online: they want and/or need additional flexibility in when and how they complete coursework.</p>
<p>Largest Barriers and Challenges Online, Student Responses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technology, largely internet access, access to a capable computer, and mobile device limitations. • Inconsistent class structure and organization, largely courses that did not allow students to access multiple weeks’ of course content at once, or with unclear/inconsistent module layout. • Online community, largely lack of communication with classmates. 	<p>Possible solutions to these barriers and challenges include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of mobile-friendly platforms, laptop loan programs, recommendations of off-campus Wi-Fi enabled locations to students • Professional development around developing robust and clear course modules • Professional development around fostering meaningful engagement between students online
<p>Most Important Assets Online, Student Responses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic support, largely supplemental resources (i.e. YouTube) • Online community, largely professor engagement • Clear, organized class structure, i.e. recorded lectures, clear class layout, early access to materials, and flexible due dates 	<p>Survey data suggests that many faculty are already employing strategies and solutions to address commonly identified barriers and challenges. Increased support for peer faculty mentoring may facilitate increased adoption of these strategies and solutions.</p>
<p>The second-most requested professional development topic was the use of AI in classroom assignments. This is notable because faculty ranked Generative AI as the least helpful resources in teaching online, suggesting that faculty may believe Generative AI provides opportunities that they don’t yet know about.</p>	<p>The Division of Institutional Innovation and Effectiveness maintains and is pursuing professional development opportunities around the use of AI. Connecting faculty to this and other opportunities to learn about the use of AI may result in more dynamic virtual assignments and help better prepare students to successfully engage with emerging technology and tools.</p>

Modality Preference and Club Participation

- Preferred Modality:** Survey respondents were about twice as likely to express preference for online classes as on-ground classes, and similarly likely to express preference for fully online (asynchronous classes) as online-live (synchronous). It should be noted that given the sample (students enrolled online) and the survey format (online only), a pre-existing preference for online classes was likely present among survey respondents.

Course modality preference varied depending on college, age group, major, and educational objective.

Generally, SDCCE respondents and those aged 55+ preferred Online-Live. Respondents aged 18-24 and those with an educational objective of Transfer/Associate degree preferred Fully Online (age 18-24: 38%, Transfer/Associate: 44%) and On-ground classes (age 18-24: 26%, Transfer/Assoc: 21%).

It should be noted that SDCCE respondents were generally older, reflecting the demographics of the college.

Preference for Online Live: The survey was sent out only to students who enrolled online during Fall 2023 and was only able to be completed in an online format. Consequently, bias is likely present among survey respondents. Given the likely bias of survey respondents to prefer online classes, the evident preference for online-live (synchronous) classes among the groups listed in Table 1 is notable.

Table 1. Groups who preferred Online Live over Fully Online

Group	Preferred Online Live	Preferred Fully Online	Respondents
Enrolled at SDCCE	45%	21%	926
Age: 55-64	42%	20%	239
Age: 65+	48%	18%	531
Major: Nursing	28%	20%	73
Ed. Obj: Ed. Development	42%	24%	615
Ed. Obj: Prepare for a new job	38%	24%	263
Ed. Obj: CTE Cert, no Transfer	33%	31%	156
Ed. Obj: Personal Enrichment	43%	13%	88
Ed. Obj: Physical Exercise	75%	14%	44

See Table 3 on page 9 for all responses by all groups with more than 30 responses.

Preference for Hyflex: Overall, 8% of respondents indicated they prefer Hyflex courses (a modality in which students have the option to attend each meeting online or in person). Hyflex courses have been primarily offered at SDCCE and have just begun to be offered at the credit colleges.

Table 2. Groups with high relative preference for Hyflex

Group	Preferred Hyflex	Total Respondents
Age: 45-54	11%	276
Gender: Non-Bin./Non-Conf./Gender Fluid	20%	25
Ethnicity: Pacific Islander	17%	12
Major: Engineering/Pre-engineering	17%	36
Major: Radiologic Technology	17%	23
Major: Undeclared/Undecided	11%	80
Major: Child Development	10%	84
Ed. Objective: Prepare for a new job	10%	263

Distance Ed. Experience Survey, Fall 2023

Table 3. Student Modality Preference, Groups with over 30 Respondents

		% who Preferred this Modality					Total Respondents
		Online Live	Fully Online	On-ground	Partially Online	HyFlex	
Overall Average		30%	29%	14%	11%	8%	2,502
College Enrolled	City Only	24%	35%	16%	13%	5%	285
	Mesa Only	16%	37%	19%	13%	6%	326
	Miramar Only	20%	38%	16%	12%	6%	210
	More than 1 Credit	14%	54%	20%	6%	4%	171
	SDCCE Only	45%	21%	8%	10%	9%	926
Age Group	18 - 24	9%	38%	26%	12%	6%	276
	25 - 34	27%	32%	13%	12%	8%	294
	35 - 44	26%	41%	10%	11%	4%	365
	45 - 54	29%	34%	10%	8%	11%	254
	55 - 64	42%	20%	9%	14%	8%	239
	65+	48%	18%	11%	11%	8%	531
Academic Area of Major	Business	29%	39%	14%	7%	5%	165
	Computer Science	32%	36%	10%	6%	9%	81
	Child Development	21%	39%	11%	12%	10%	78
	Nursing or pre-Nursing	28%	20%	18%	21%	5%	73
	Undeclared/Undecided	29%	43%	6%	6%	11%	76
	Biology or Allied Health	16%	43%	19%	12%	1%	70
	Psychology	17%	42%	23%	6%	5%	60
	Engineering/Pre Eng.	11%	36%	19%	11%	17%	34
	Art/Graphic Design	22%	41%	16%	9%	6%	30
Ed. Objective	Ed. Development	42%	24%	10%	10%	9%	615
	Transfer/Associate	13%	44%	21%	11%	5%	599
	Prepare for a new job	38%	24%	9%	11%	10%	263
	CTE Cert, no Transfer	33%	31%	13%	12%	5%	156
	Maintain cert.	29%	31%	9%	11%	12%	90
	Personal Enrichment	43%	13%	11%	14%	13%	88
	Currently enrolled in 4-yr	25%	29%	10%	20%	8%	59
	Physical Exercise	75%	14%	2%	7%	0%	44

Distance Ed. Experience Survey, Fall 2023

2. Participation in clubs: 23% of student respondents participated in clubs online. Another 35% didn't participate, but were aware of opportunities to do so.

Students from SDCCE, older students, and students with an educational objective of educational development, prepare for a new job, personal enrichment, and seeking a CTE certificate were much less likely to be aware of opportunities to participate in online clubs.

Table 4. Participation in and Awareness of Online Clubs, by Group

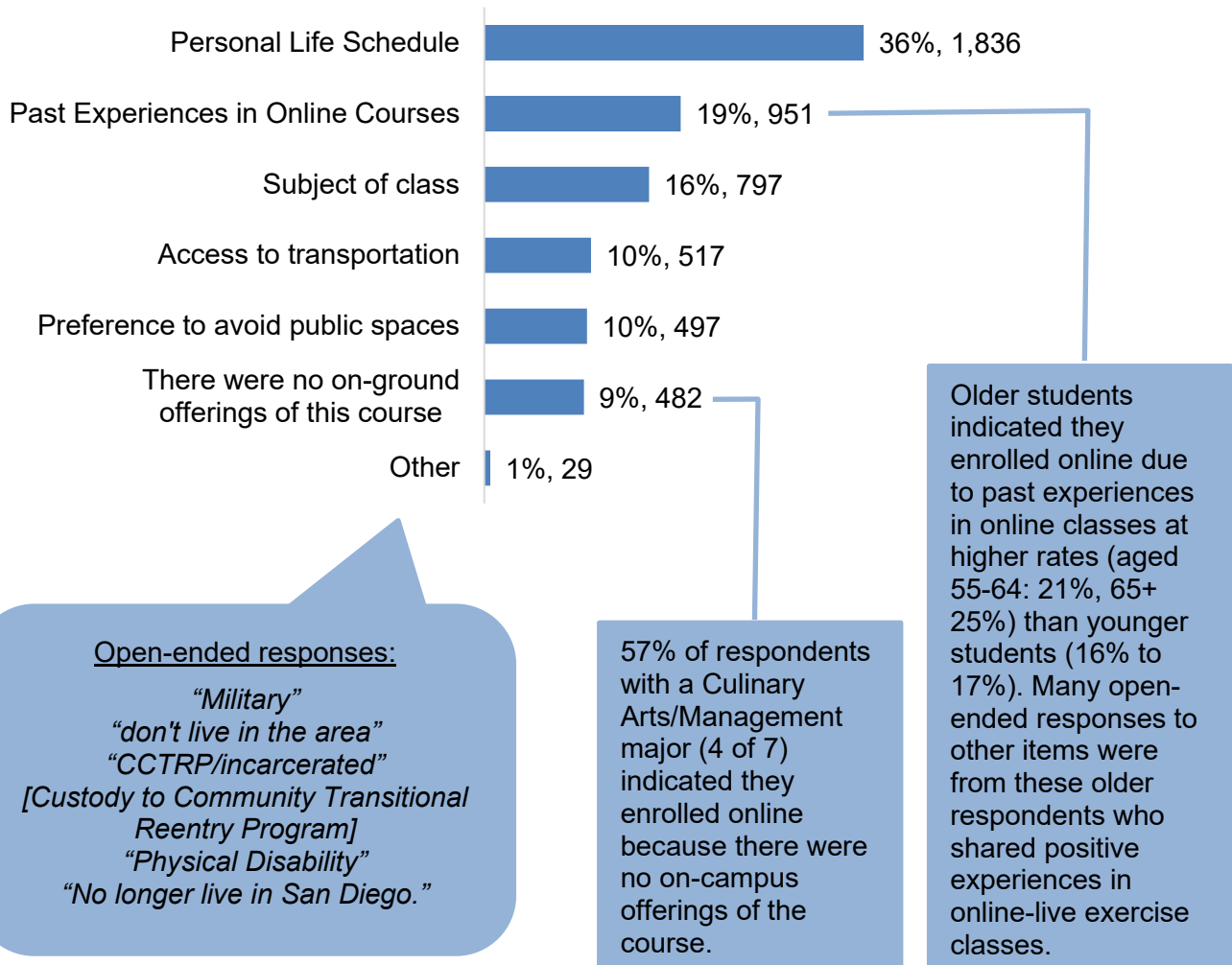
		Yes	No, but know about opportunities	No, and don't know about opportunities	Total Respondents
Overall Average		23%	35%	42%	3,135
College Enrolled	City Only	24%	40%	36%	306
	Mesa Only	19%	46%	35%	361
	Miramar Only	22%	43%	36%	227
	More than 1 Credit	16%	57%	28%	174
	SDCCE Only	15%	31%	54%	990
Age Group	18 - 24	19%	52%	28%	304
	25 - 34	34%	33%	34%	322
	35 - 44	24%	35%	41%	391
	45 - 54	19%	34%	47%	276
	55 - 64	14%	38%	47%	258
	65+	6%	36%	57%	555
Academic Area of Major	Business	20%	33%	47%	175
	Computer Science	32%	33%	34%	87
	Child Development	23%	39%	38%	84
	Undeclared/Undecided	11%	39%	50%	80
	Nursing or pre-Nursing	33%	40%	28%	80
	Biology or Allied Health	19%	48%	32%	77
	Psychology	28%	45%	27%	64
	Engineering/Pre Eng.	28%	33%	39%	36
	Art/Graphic Design	6%	66%	28%	32
Ed. Objective	Ed. Development	11%	33%	56%	616
	Transfer/Associate	24%	48%	28%	598
	Prepare for a new job	24%	27%	49%	263
	CTE Cert, no Transfer	21%	34%	46%	156
	Maintain cert.	29%	36%	36%	90
	Personal Enrichment	6%	42%	52%	88
	Currently enrolled in 4-yr	29%	44%	27%	59
	Physical Exercise	5%	55%	41%	44
Race	White	10%	42%	48%	748
	Latina/o/e/x	19%	42%	39%	437
	Black/African American	40%	26%	33%	287
	Asian	18%	34%	48%	268
	Multiple Ethnicities	18%	42%	41%	125

3. **Reasons to Enroll Online:** 36% of respondents indicated they enroll online due to their personal schedule, although respondents provided a relatively large number of reasons they enroll online.

Over 1 in 3 respondents indicated they enrolled online to accommodate their personal schedule. This trend was consistent among every disaggregation. Another 1 in 10 respondents indicated they enrolled online due to transportation challenges, as well as a preference to avoid public spaces.

Of respondents who provided an “Other” open-ended reason for enrolling online, several indicated personal health issues, living far from the colleges, or being incarcerated as the reason for enrolling online. For these respondents, distance education presents a unique opportunity to access education.

Figure 1. Student Reasons to Enroll Online



Student and Faculty Sentiment in Online Classes

4. Sentiment about Online Classes, Overall: Student respondents expressed generally positive sentiments about their experience in online classes. 85% agreed that they were prepared to learn online, 75% agreed that their course materials were representative of diversity, and 77% agreed they felt connected to their instructors. 61% of respondents agreed that they felt connected to other students in their online classes, the least positive area of online sentiment for the survey.

Students generally agreed their course materials were representative of diversity, they were connected to their instructors, and they were prepared to learn online, but they were less likely to agree that they felt connected to their classmates.

While overall responses were largely positive, there was some variation by age, race, gender, educational objective, and academic area of major. See Table 7 on page 15 in the next section of the report for response rates by group.

Faculty Perspective: Faculty also generally indicated positive sentiments about teaching online. Faculty were asked to indicate how strongly they agreed with the following statements – responses were generally positive (4.29 out of 5). See Table 5 below for average responses by college and item.

- I am satisfied with the support provided by SDCCD to teach online classes.
- I am satisfied with the resources and tools provided by SDCCD to teach online classes.
- I was adequately prepared to teach an online class.
- Average of above three items

Table 5. Faculty Sentiment about Support for Teaching Online

	Overall	Felt prepared to teach online	Satisfied with support	Satisfied with resources	Count
Overall Average	4.29	4.55	4.18	4.14	143
City Only	4.40	4.67	4.29	4.25	24
Mesa Only	4.44	4.62	4.36	4.36	39
Miramar Only	4.25	4.69	4.17	3.90	29
SDCCE Only	4.12	4.39	3.95	4.03	38

Distance Ed. Experience Survey, Fall 2023

Table 6. Student sentiment about online classes

Question	Response	Count	% of Total	% Agree	Average Response
I felt connected to the instructor in my online class.	Strongly Agree (5)	1,308	55%	77%	4.14
	Agree (4)	531	22%		
	Neither Agree nor Dis.(3)	235	10%		
	Disagree (2)	151	6%		
	Strongly Disagree (1)	149	6%		
	Total	2,374	100%		
I felt connected to the other students in my online class.	Strongly Agree	766	32%	61%	3.63
	Agree	689	29%		
	Neither Agree nor Dis.	437	18%		
	Disagree	227	10%		
	Strongly Disagree	252	11%		
	Total	2,371	100%		
The course materials in my online class were representative of diversity.	Strongly Agree	1,252	53%	75%	4.20
	Agree	515	22%		
	Neither Agree nor Dis.	437	19%		
	Disagree	56	2%		
	Strongly Disagree	81	3%		
	Total	2,341	100%		
I was adequately prepared to learn in an online class.	Strongly Agree	1,437	61%	85%	4.36
	Agree	561	24%		
	Neither Agree nor Dis.	199	8%		
	Disagree	68	3%		
	Strongly Disagree	88	4%		
	Total	2,353	100%		

Methodology: Table 6 above includes each survey item and the number and percent of responses (Strongly Disagree/1 indicates a negative sentiment and Strongly Agree/5 indicates a positive sentiment). The average for each response was calculated by multiplying the count of each response by the weight for that level of agreement and then dividing by the total number of responses.

5. **Sentiment about Online Classes, by Group:** Survey responses suggest that some groups of students may feel less engaged by their online coursework than others, including students who identify as non-binary, Middle Eastern, Multiple Ethnicities, younger students (24 and under), students in Biology/Allied Health and Engineering/Pre-Engineering majors, and students seeking to Transfer and/or earn an Associate degree.

Older students expressed more positive sentiments about their online classes than younger students (average, aged 18-24: 3.76, aged 45-54: 4.15, aged 55-64: 4.20, aged 65+: 4.23), as did SDCCE students compared to students from the credit colleges (Enrolled at City Only: 3.93, Mesa: 3.86, Miramar: 4.01, SDCCE: 4.28). It should be noted that SDCCE students tend to be older, so these two trends are likely linked.

Students in Biology, Psychology, and Engineering majors expressed the least positive sentiments by major (3.85, 3.85, and 3.81, respectively), generally agreeing at lower rates that they felt connected to their instructors and classmates than students in other majors. Engineering students in particular indicated the course materials in their online classes were less representative of diverse perspectives, cultures, and backgrounds (3.89) than students in other majors.

See Table 7 on the next page for more detail.

Methodology: Table 7 on the next page includes the averages for each survey item about “Sentiment in Online Classes,” with a score of 1 indicating a negative sentiment and a score of 5 indicating a positive sentiment expressed by that group for that item.

The average for each survey item was calculated by multiplying the count of each response by the weight for that level of agreement and then dividing by the total number of responses for that group. The values in the left-hand “Average” column are the average of the four items for that group.

Distance Ed. Experience Survey, Fall 2023

Table 7. Student Average Online Sentiment, Groups with more than 30 respondents

		Average	Prepared to Learn Online	Course Materials	Connection to Instructor	Connection to other Students	Total Respondents
Overall Average		4.08	4.36	4.20	4.14	3.63	3,135
Gender	Woman (Cisgender)	4.18	4.46	4.30	4.24	3.72	1,416
	Man (Cisgender)	3.93	4.21	4.06	4.00	3.46	543
	Non-binary	3.64	4.36	3.83	3.72	2.64	25
Race	White	4.09	4.45	4.19	4.17	3.56	748
	Latina/o/e/x	4.09	4.33	4.26	4.14	3.64	437
	Black/African American	4.27	4.42	4.24	4.38	4.01	287
	Asian	4.17	4.42	4.27	4.24	3.76	268
	Multiple Ethnicities	3.80	4.20	4.13	3.73	3.14	125
	Filipino	4.12	4.42	4.26	4.14	3.66	66
	Middle Eastern	4.21	4.21	4.36	4.43	3.85	40
College Enrolled	City Only	3.93	4.26	4.13	3.90	3.43	306
	Mesa Only	3.86	4.25	4.08	3.80	3.30	361
	Miramar Only	4.01	4.29	4.24	3.99	3.50	227
	More than 1 Credit	3.91	4.31	4.24	3.77	3.28	174
	SDCCE Only	4.28	4.49	4.27	4.46	3.91	990
Age Group	18 - 24	3.76	4.18	4.02	3.66	3.17	276
	25 - 34	3.99	4.30	4.08	3.97	3.60	294
	35 - 44	4.12	4.38	4.24	4.12	3.75	365
	45 - 54	4.15	4.28	4.30	4.27	3.75	254
	55 - 64	4.20	4.44	4.27	4.34	3.77	239
	65+	4.23	4.50	4.25	4.45	3.75	531
Academic Area of Major	Business	3.97	4.27	4.17	3.98	3.43	175
	Computer Science	4.03	4.30	4.14	4.10	3.53	87
	Child Development	4.29	4.49	4.46	4.26	3.96	84
	Undeclared/Undecided	4.09	4.32	4.27	4.13	3.66	80
	Nursing or pre-Nursing	4.27	4.57	4.28	4.28	3.95	80
	Biology or Allied Health	3.85	4.39	4.24	3.66	3.10	77
	Psychology	3.85	4.33	4.16	3.77	3.16	64
	Engineering/Pre Eng.	3.81	4.25	3.89	3.78	3.33	36
	Art/Graphic Design	3.90	4.61	4.10	3.90	2.97	32
Ed. Objective	Ed. Development	4.17	4.42	4.21	4.33	3.75	616
	Transfer/Associate	3.85	4.26	4.15	3.73	3.25	599
	Prepare for a new job	4.29	4.48	4.31	4.41	3.95	263
	CTE Cert, no Transfer	4.11	4.35	4.25	4.23	3.61	156
	Maintain cert.	4.21	4.30	4.11	4.38	4.04	90
	Personal Enrichment	4.13	4.34	4.16	4.36	3.65	88
	Currently enrolled in 4-yr	4.19	4.36	4.34	4.16	3.90	59
	Physical Exercise	4.48	4.79	4.26	4.82	4.20	44

Student and Faculty Challenges and Barriers Online

6. **Challenges and Barriers Online:** Students most often indicated that technology was a barrier to online classes (39% of respondents) and that challenges learning content online primarily arose from impacts on their personal lives (36% of respondents). Faculty indicated that Internet access and mobile device limitations were the most common challenges.

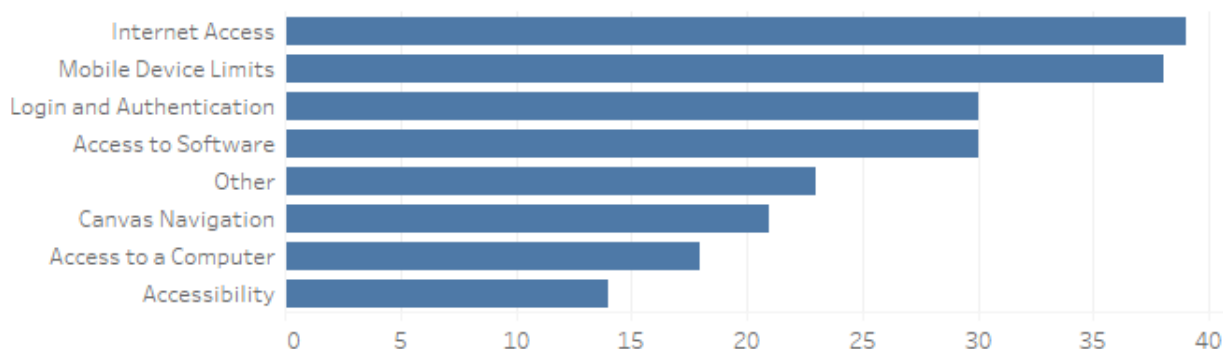
Student Responses: In two multiple response survey items that included open-ended “Other” options, students were asked to indicate which of a list of factors had been a barrier or challenge in online classes. Open-ended responses were coded into factors aligned with the multiple response options.

The prevalence of these types of challenges and barriers was consistent across age, ethnicity, gender, college enrolled, educational objective, and academic area of major.

The most-reported barriers or challenges are shown in Figure 3 on the next page. The factors that make up the most common theme are called out in blue to the right of the figure. See Table 8 on page 18 for sample responses in each theme.

Faculty Responses: Faculty responses also indicated Internet Access as a significant technical challenge, followed by mobile device limitations. Faculty who provided open-ended responses highlighted challenges students checking their SDCCD emails, old personal computers, and internet access.

Figure 2. Faculty Technical Challenges



Largest Barriers and Challenges Online, Student and Faculty Responses:

- **Technology**, largely internet access or access to a computer capable of handling course computing requirements. Faculty also experienced challenges with internet access and mobile device limitations.
- **Inconsistent class structure and organization**, largely courses that did not allow students to access multiple weeks’ of course content at once, or with unclear/inconsistent module layout.
- **Online community**, largely lack of communication with classmates.

Figure 3. Common Barriers and Challenges Learning Online, Student Responses

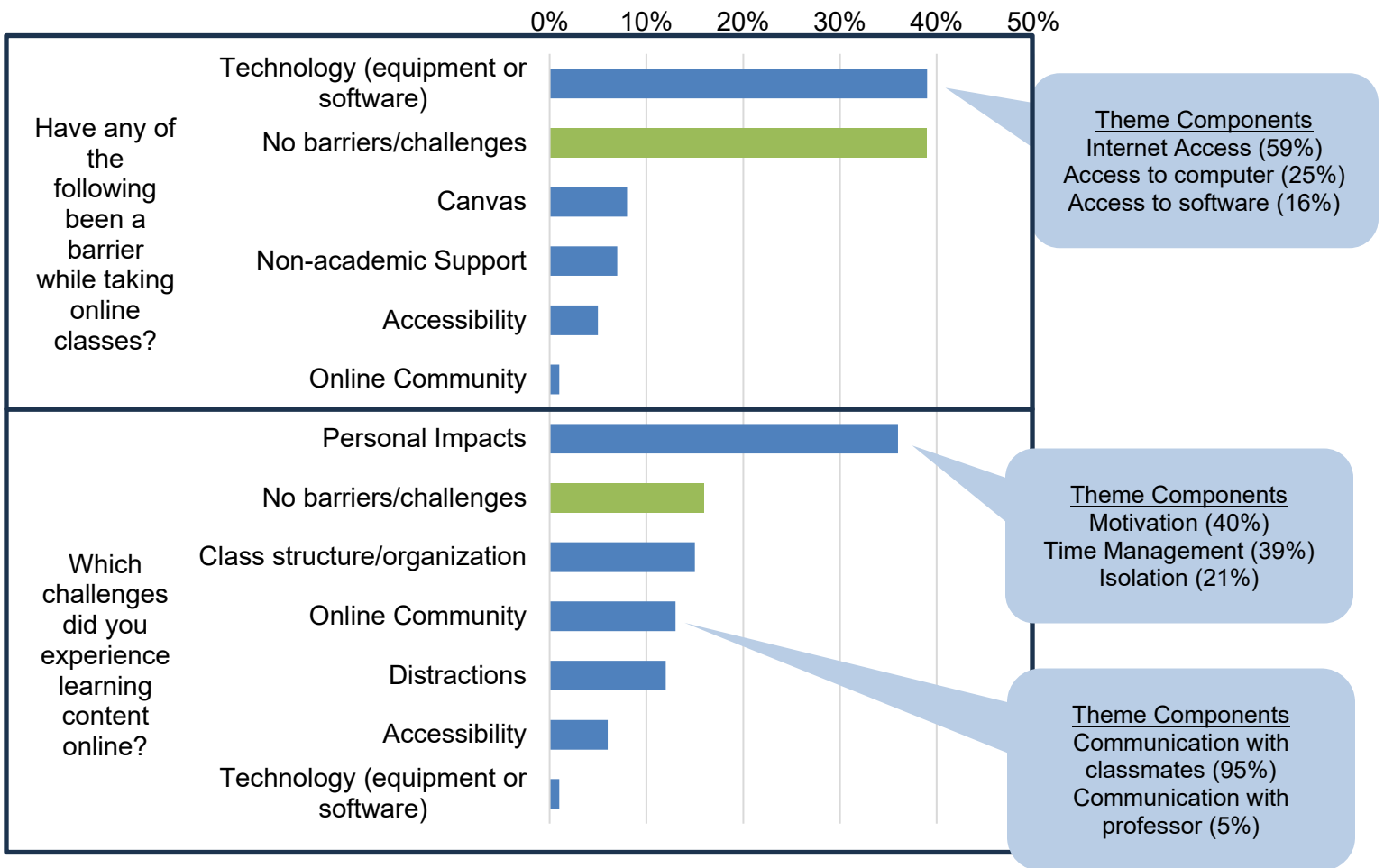


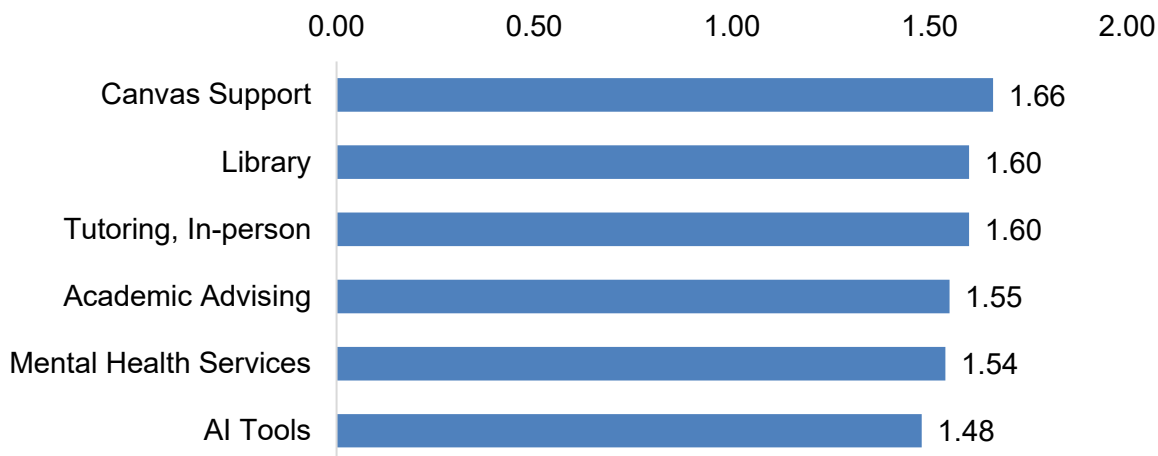
Table 8. Barriers and Challenges Online, Student Responses by Theme

Theme	Response
Technology	<p><i>"I wish it was easier to sign up and log in"</i></p> <p><i>"My laptop has been breaking down"</i></p> <p><i>"I have been kicked out of Cengage in the middle of taking a test."</i></p> <p><i>"running zoom while in project time; running Adobe often crashes my network and/or laptop."</i></p>
Inconsistent class structure/ organization	<p><i>"locked modules- allowing one week ahead of class would greatly help for people who have to travel for work and balance personal commit"</i></p> <p><i>"In some of the online courses the material on exams was not closely correlated with the coursework assigned by the professor."</i></p> <p><i>"It helps me manage my time better when professors unlock the assignments early. [...]. I've had free time and been caught up on my work- wishing to work ahead but could not. Other times- I've had an extremely busy week and wished I could have worked ahead."</i></p>
Online Community	<p><i>"Many professors do not communicate. They assign an online learning tool and then do not communicate with you for the whole semester."</i></p> <p><i>"Students tend not to come together as "a class" (team) in online formats. Typically very little student interaction or communication"</i></p>

Student and Faculty Assets Online

7. **What helps students learn online, existing resources:** Students were asked which of the listed resources were most helpful, and on average ranked all resources between “Somewhat helpful” and “Very helpful.”

Figure 4. Student Average Ranking of Helpfulness of Resources, from Not Helpful (0) to Very Helpful (2)



8. **What helps students learn online, open-ended responses:** Students indicated that **academic support (such as from supplemental readings), their professors, and courses that included recorded lectures, consistently organized course modules, early access to course content, and flexible dues dates.**

The prevalence of these types of assets was consistent across age, ethnicity, gender, college enrolled, educational objective, and academic area of major.

In two open-ended items, students were asked to list assets to their learning in online classes. These open-ended responses were coded into factors, which were then grouped into the themes below.

The most reported themes are shown in Figure 5 on the next page. The factors that make up the most common theme are called out in blue to the right of the figure. See Table 9 on page 7 for sample responses in each theme.

Most Important Assets Online, Student Responses:

- **Academic support**, largely supplemental resources (i.e. YouTube)
- **Online community**, largely professor engagement
- **Clear and consistent class structure and organization**, i.e. recorded lectures, clear class layout, early access to materials, and flexible due dates.

Figure 5. Student Assets Online

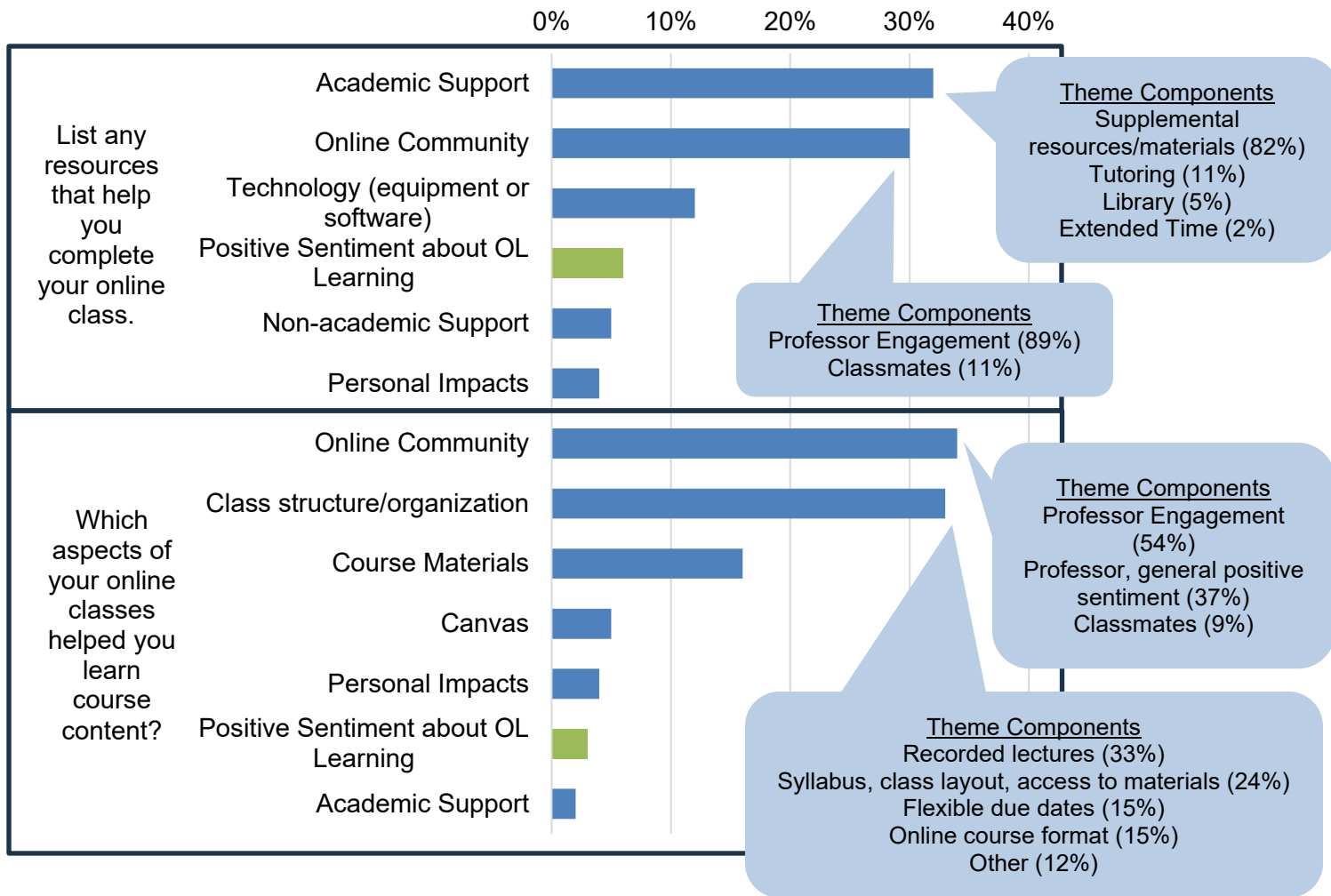


Table 9. Student Assets Online, Student Responses by Theme

Theme	Response
Academic Support	<p><i>"in person tutoring," "Online tutoring," "Tutors," "Volunteers support"</i></p> <p><i>"YouTube links for Math"</i></p> <p><i>"English Writing help on the second floor at the library"</i></p> <p><i>"youtube lectures from other professors"</i></p>
Online Community	<p><i>"Pronto connects all students to communicate and discuss the problems regarding our subjects."</i></p> <p><i>"Instructor emailing and class weekly updates"</i></p> <p><i>"Had at least one meeting in person with instructor"</i></p> <p><i>"Certain Professors are very helpful and have adapted well to online learning support"</i></p> <p><i>"Emailing the teacher was somewhat helpful. Discussions in the groups she set up were helpful also."</i></p> <p><i>"Sharing with other students"</i></p>
Clear and consistent class Structure and Organization	<p><i>"clear syllabus - content that is understandable not too vague"</i></p> <p><i>"Organized modules- accessible teachers- clear expectations"</i></p> <p><i>"The teacher organized everything really good which helped me find content easier and know what I was learning"</i></p> <p><i>"Related assignments to real life situation."</i></p>

9. For those unprepared for online, what would help students learn: Respondents who felt unprepared to learn online reported more engagement with their instructor and classmates, in-person support, academic support like tutoring, and more consistent organization of the class structure would have helped them learn online.

Figure 6. If you were unprepared to learn online, what would have helped? Open-ended Student Responses by Theme

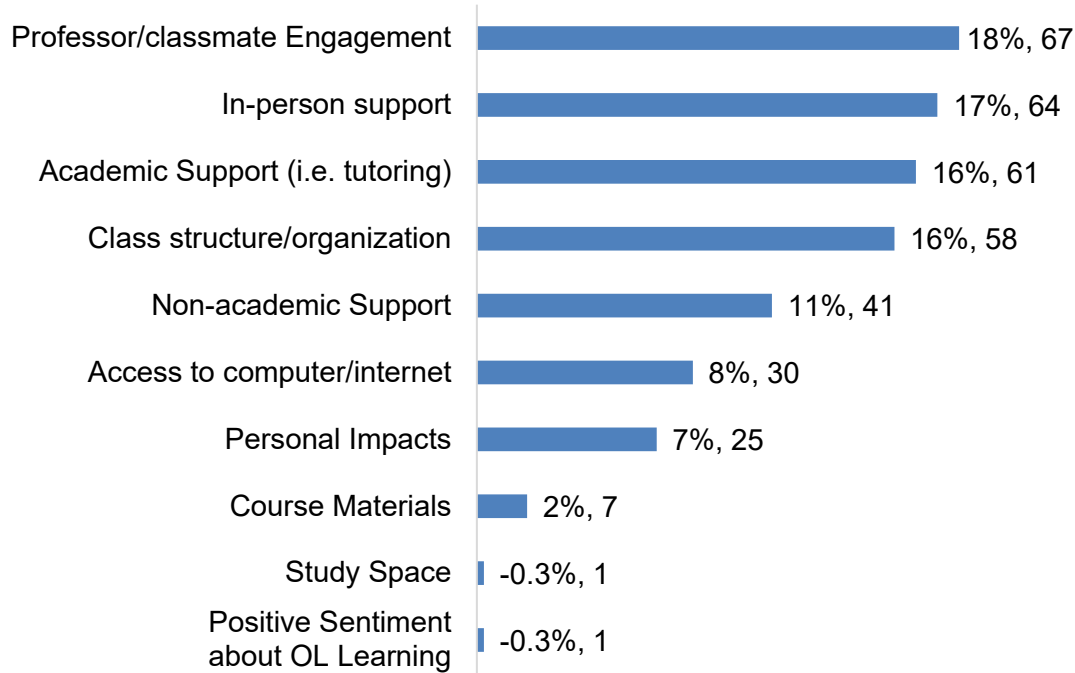
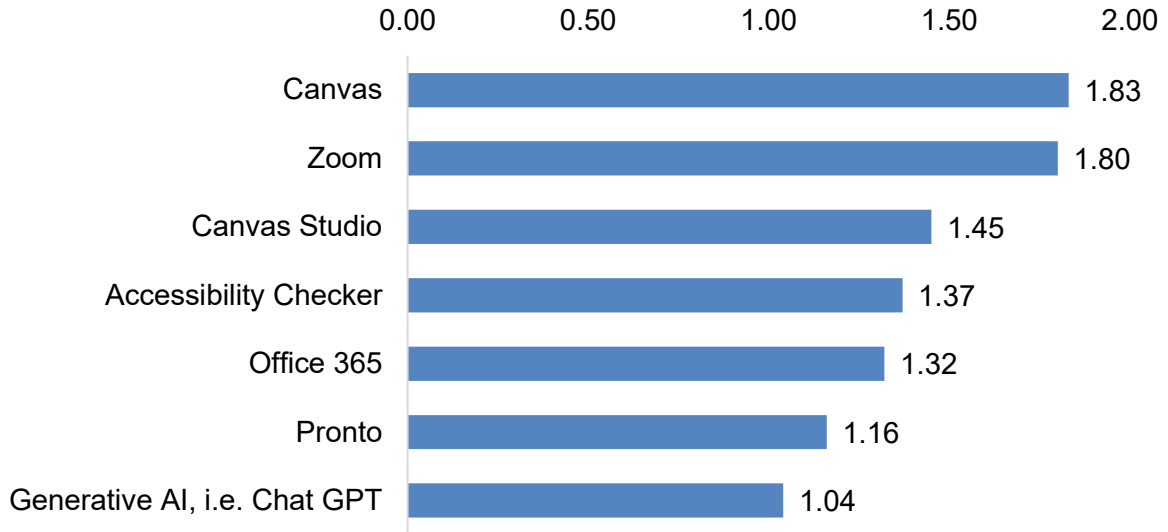


Table 10. If you were unprepared to learn online, what would have helped? Open-ended Student Response Samples

Theme	Response
Professor/classmate engagement	<p><i>“more information or quicker responses from teachers”</i></p> <p><i>“Teachers need to be more prepared to teach online and must be more available for assistance.”</i></p> <p><i>“What would help is try to get students involved with each other.”</i></p>
In-person support	<p><i>“I am just better at learning and understanding material when I am face to face with a professor.”</i></p> <p><i>“On-ground components to have direct help from the instructor”</i></p>
Academic Support	<p><i>“I don’t know what resources are available to help me”</i></p> <p><i>“Online tutoring”</i></p> <p><i>“Tutoring in person”</i></p>
Clear and consistent class structure/organization	<p><i>“The instructors should have clearly organized their Canvas shells instead of sending students in a wild chase for the required information.”</i></p> <p><i>“A more organized and simplified syllabus”</i></p>

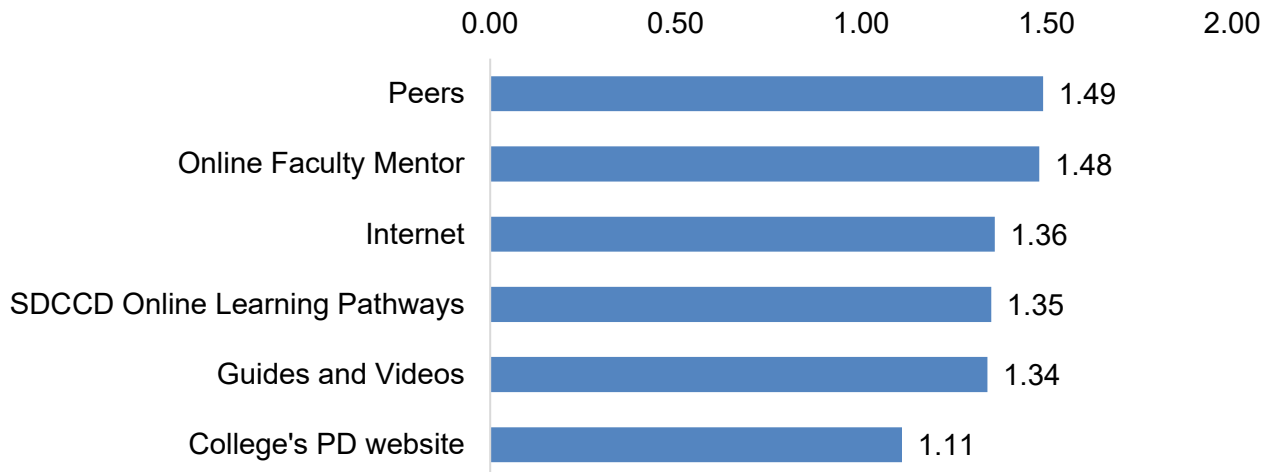
10. What helps faculty teach online: Faculty were asked which of the listed resources were most helpful in teaching online courses, and on average ranked all resources between “Somewhat helpful” and “Very helpful. Canvas and Zoom were ranked most highly (close to “Very Helpful” on average), and Pronto (messaging app) and Generative AI were ranked least highly (close to “Somewhat Helpful” on average).

Figure 7. Faculty Average Ranking of Helpfulness of Resources in Teaching Online, from Not Helpful (0) to Very Helpful (2)



11. What helps faculty learn about Canvas: Faculty were asked which of the listed resources were most helpful in learning how to use Canvas, and on average ranked all resources as slightly better than “Somewhat helpful.” Other faculty, i.e. peers, and the Online Faculty Mentor were ranked most highly and their college’s professional development (PD) website was ranked least highly (close to “Somewhat Helpful” on average).

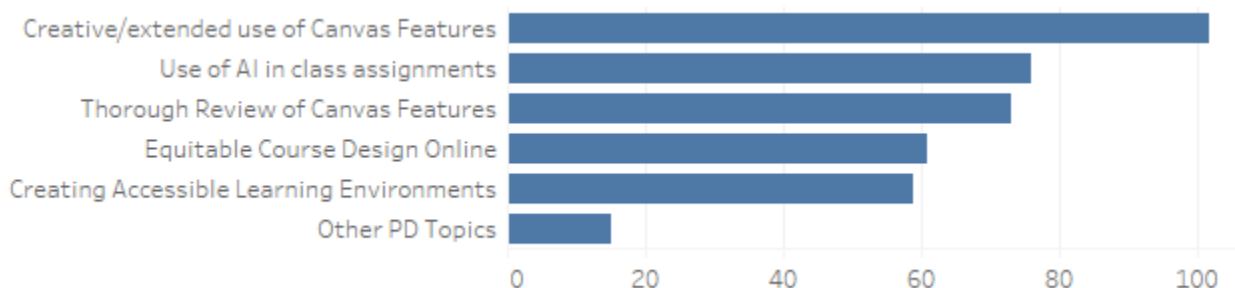
Figure 8. Faculty Average Ranking of Helpfulness of Resources in Using Canvas, from Not Helpful (0) to Very Helpful (2)



12. Requested Professional Development Topics for Faculty: Faculty were mostly likely to indicate they were interested in learning more about Creative and/or Extended Use of Canvas Features.

The second-most requested professional development topic was the use of AI in classroom assignments. This is notable because faculty ranked Generative AI as the least helpful resources in teaching online, suggesting that faculty may believe Generative AI provides opportunities that they don't yet know about.

Figure 9. Requested Professional Development Topics, Faculty Responses



Other professional development topics included several suggestions about making online classes in classes at SDCCE, painting, music, and DSPS.

“Actually for my demographic the simpler I can keep the class format, the better. They are interest in painting, not learning the latest bit of technology.”

“how to make it more engaging, creating online trivia etc”

Open Educational Resources (OER) and Zero Textbook Cost (ZTC) data

13. Zero Textbook Cost Class Search: Districtwide, only about 1 in 4 students are of the Zero Textbook Cost (ZTC) class search option.

25% of respondents were aware of the Zero Textbook Cost (ZTC) filter when using the class search. This varies by:

- **College:** Students enrolled at multiple credit college were more likely to be aware of the ZTC filter (45%) than students enrolled at only one of the colleges (City Only: 27%, Mesa: 29%, Miramar: 26%, SDCCE: 19%).
- **Age Group:** Older students were less likely to be aware of the filter than younger students.
- **Academic Area of Major:** Students with Undeclared/Undecided majors were least likely to be aware (25%), followed by Art/Graphic Design students (28%). Psychology students were most likely to be aware (48%).

Table 11 below shows overall response counts. See Table 15 on page 27 for response disaggregations by group.

Table 11. Awareness of ZTC filter in class search

Question	Response	Count	% of Total
Are you aware of the Zero Textbook Cost filter when using the class search?	Yes	555	25%
	No	1,225	55%
	Not Sure	430	19%
	Total	2,210	100%

14. Importance of free course materials: The availability of free course materials was moderately important in students' decisions to enroll.

63% of respondents indicated the availability of free course materials was either very or extremely important in their decision to enroll. This varies by:

- **Academic Area of Major:** Open Education Resources (OER)/ZTC was least important to Engineering majors (3.53) and most important to those in Child Development (4.30) and those with Undeclared/Undecided majors (4.28).
- **Race:** Latina/o/e/x and Black or African American students indicated that OER/ZTC was more important (4.15 and 4.18, respectively) than other groups (i.e. white: 2.99, Asian: 3.65).
- Older SDCCE students enrolled in exercise classes.

Table 12 below shows overall response counts and averages. See Table 15 on page 27 for response disaggregations by group.

Table 12. Importance of free course materials on decision to enroll

Question	Response	Count	% of Total
How important is the availability of free course materials (such as OER) or low-cost course materials (total cost less than \$30) in your decision to enroll in courses?	Extremely (5)	830	38%
	Very (4)	561	25%
	Moderately (3)	290	13%
	Slightly (2)	145	7%
	Not At All (1)	380	17%
	Total	2,206	100%

Average Response: 3.60

15. Diversity of Materials: Open Educational Resources (OER) were generally perceived to be representative of diverse perspectives, cultures, and backgrounds by students.

Nearly three-quarters of respondents (73%) agreed or strongly agreed that course materials in their OER or ZTC section were representative of diverse perspectives, cultures, and backgrounds. Responses were mostly consistently positive across college, age group, and race. There was some variation by:

- **Academic area of major:** Engineering students and Art/Graphic Design students were less likely to agree (3.75 and 3.78, respectively) that course materials were diverse.

Table 13 below shows overall response counts and averages. See Table 15 on page 27 for response disaggregations by group.

Table 13. OER, ZTC, and LCC Student Survey Responses, Overall

Question	Response	Count	% of Total
The course materials in my OER or ZTC class were representative of diverse perspectives, cultures, and backgrounds.	Strongly Agree (5)	528	38%
	Agree (4)	493	35%
	Neither Agree. nor Dis.(3)	335	24%
	Disagree (2)	26	2%
	Strongly Disagree (1)	14	1%
	Total	1,396	100%

Average Response: 4.07

Diversity in OER Materials compared to Materials in all Distance Education Courses:

Responses regarding the diversity of OER materials were slightly less positive than for materials used in distance education classes in general (see Sentiment about Online Classes, page 13). This was mostly consistent across ethnicity, with all groups (except those who chose “Other”) indicating OER materials were less diverse than materials in distance education classes in general. By gender, however, those who identified as Non-Binary/Gender Non-conforming/Gender Fluid indicated OER materials were representative of diverse perspectives, cultures, and backgrounds at higher rates than in distance education classes in general (24 responses from this group to “Overall” item; 14 responses to “OER” item).

Table 14. Percent of Respondents who Agreed/Strongly Agreed that Materials were Representative of Diversity

	Distance Ed. Overall	OER Courses
Woman, Cisgender	79%	76%
Man, Cisgender	70%	70%
Non-Bin./Gender Non-Conf./Gender Fluid	63%	71%
Woman, Transgender	50%	50%
Man, Transgender	100%	83%

Distance Ed. Experience Survey, Fall 2023

Table 15. OER, ZTC, and LCC Student Survey Responses by Demographic

		Average Online Sentiment			Total Respondents
		Aware of ZTC Class Search (0-100%)	OER/ZTC important for enrollment (1-5)	OER Materials were Representative (1-5)	
Overall Average		25%	3.60	4.07	2,210
College Enrolled	City Only	27%	3.91	4.03	303
	Mesa Only	29%	3.70	4.04	361
	Miramar Only	26%	3.75	4.08	227
	More than 1 Credit	45%	3.99	4.05	174
	SDCCE Only	19%	3.32	4.11	985
Age Group	18 - 24	35%	3.93	3.98	304
	25 - 34	38%	4.14	4.11	322
	35 - 44	30%	4.02	4.16	389
	45 - 54	25%	4.09	4.07	274
	55 - 64	23%	3.63	4.13	257
	65+	10%	2.47	3.97	549
Academic Area of Major	Business	37%	4.15	4.14	175
	Computer Science	33%	4.08	4.15	87
	Child Development	33%	4.30	4.15	84
	Undeclared/Undecided	25%	4.28	4.14	79
	Nursing or pre-Nursing	33%	4.05	4.20	80
	Biology or Allied Health	36%	4.05	4.02	77
	Psychology	48%	3.97	4.06	64
	Engineering/Pre Eng.	31%	3.53	3.75	36
	Art/Graphic Design	28%	4.19	3.78	32
Ed. Objective	Ed. Development	14%	3.09	4.06	612
	Transfer/Associate	36%	3.97	4.03	599
	Prepare for a new job	31%	4.15	4.21	262
	CTE Cert, no Transfer	28%	4.04	4.16	156
	Maintain cert.	37%	4.13	4.10	90
	Personal Enrichment	13%	2.66	4.13	88
	Currently enrolled in 4-yr	39%	4.36	4.17	59
	Physical Exercise	2%	1.63	4.00	42
Race	White	17%	2.99	4.07	742
	Latina/o/e/x	30%	4.15	4.13	434
	Black/African American	31%	4.18	4.12	287
	Asian	29%	3.65	4.13	266
	Multiple Ethnicities	33%	3.57	3.94	125

16. Faculty Perception of OER: Faculty largely perceive the main benefit of OER to students as representing cost savings to students, although many faculty indicated that OER benefits students in many ways. Faculty responses were somewhat split regarding challenges in OER use: 18% of respondents had never used OER, but 16% reported encountering no issues. 17% indicated the quality of available OER was an issue.

Table 16. OER Benefits, Faculty Responses

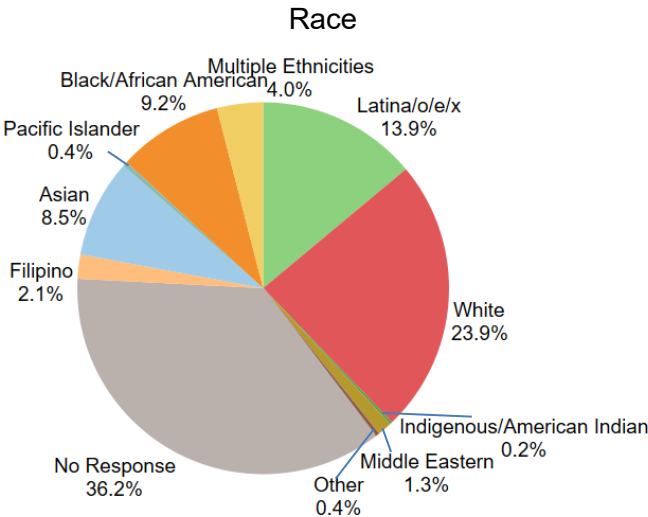
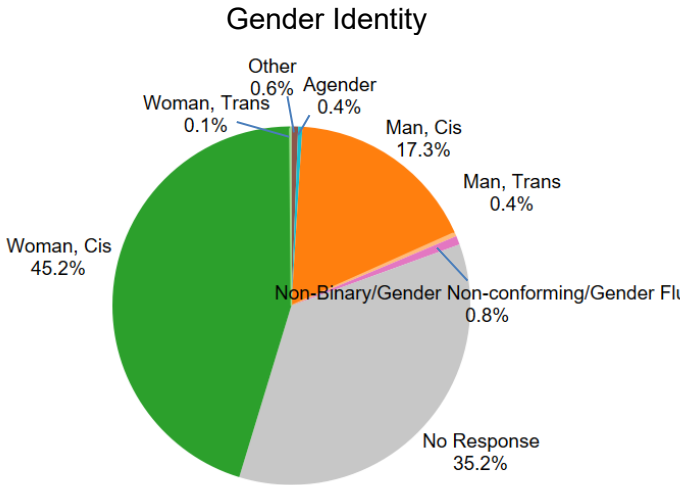
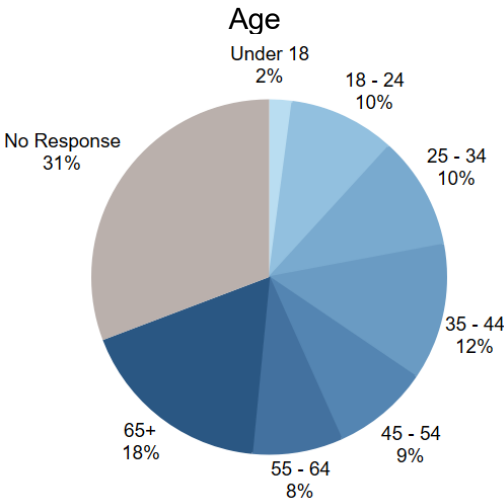
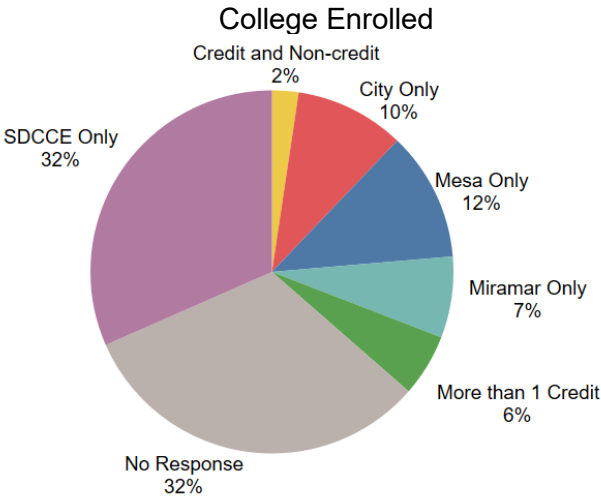
OER Benefits	Faculty	% of Total
Cost Savings for Students	82	57%
Other	16	11%
Faster access to resources	13	9%
Customizability of Course Materials	12	8%
Pedagogical Flexibility	10	7%
None	4	3%
Grand Total	143	100%

Table 17. OER Challenges, Faculty Responses

OER Challenges	Faculty	% of Total
Have not used	26	18%
Quality	24	17%
I have not encountered any challenges using OER	23	16%
Other	20	14%
Lack of time to integrate them into my class	19	13%
Availability of OER in my subject	18	13%
Lack of support in using OER	4	3%
Copyright and licensing	3	2%
Grand Total	143	100%

Supplemental Tables

Figure 10. Demographics for the 3,135 student respondents to the Fall 2023 survey



The image features an abstract geometric design in the bottom-left corner. It consists of several overlapping shapes in two shades of teal: a lighter teal and a darker teal. These shapes include triangles and parallelograms, creating a layered, architectural effect. The rest of the page is plain white.

May 10, 2024