



Research Brief: Distance Education Course Evaluations Spring 2011

Overview: In spring of 2011 the Crafton Hills College (CHC) Distance Education Committee (DEC) in collaboration with the Office of Research and Planning (ORP) administered an online course evaluation to students who were enrolled in an online or hybrid course. The purpose of this brief is to summarize the findings from the participants who completed the evaluation.

Methodology: All students enrolled in a distance learning course at Crafton Hills in spring of 2011 were given access to the survey by means of an on-line link provided by their instructor. Two-hundred and forty responses were received anonymously from students taking courses from 10 instructors, in a total of 17 sections. As seen in Tables 1a and 1b, the overall response rate was 47%. Responses from students who received a grade-on-record (A, B, C, D, F, P, NP, I or W) were sufficient to generalize the results with a 95% confidence level¹. Table 1a illustrates the number of submitted evaluations compared to the actual number of grades on record by instructor. Table 1b shows the number of submitted evaluations compared to the number of grades on record by section.

Table 1a: Participation rate by instructor

Instructor	Evaluations (N)*	GOR (#)**	Participation Rate (%)
Allen	48	106	45.3%
Bray	34	35	97.1%
McLaren	3	31	9.7%
Pace-Pequeno	17	21	81.0%
DiPonio	1	27	3.7%
McConnell	72	93	77.4%
Brink	1	34	2.9%
Franko	21	35	60.0%
Urbanovich	42	109	38.5%
Hansler	1	22	4.5%
Total	240	513	46.8%

* Number of students who submitted an on-line course evaluation. **Number of students who earned a grade on record. ***Response rate; N/#= the percent of students who participated by completing an evaluation.

¹ Krejcie, R.V. & Morgan, D.W. (1970). Determining sample size for research activities. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 30, 607-610.

Table 1b: Participation rate by course

Course	Evaluations (N)*	GOR (#)**	Participation
			Rate (%)***
AH 101-70	34	35	97.1%
CD 105-70	1	31	3.2%
CIS 101-70 / BUSAD 230-70	29	34	85.3%
CIS 101-71 / BUSAD 230-71	15	21	71.4%
CIS 101-72 / BUSAD 230-72	17	34	50.0%
ENGL 101-70	1	22	4.5%
ENGL 102-70	1	27	3.7%
MUSIC 103-70	42	52	80.8%
MUSIC 120-70	30	41	73.2%
RELIG 101-70	1	34	2.9%
RELIG 135-70 / HIST 135-70	21	35	60.0%
SPEECH 100-70	13	29	44.8%
SPEECH 100-71	14	34	41.2%
SPEECH 125-70	12	23	52.2%
CIS 141X2-70	4	20	20.0%
CIS 141X2-71	2	18	11.1%
SPEECH 174-70	3	23	13.0%
Total	240	513	46.8%

* Number of students who submitted an on-line course evaluation. **Number of students who earned a grade on record. ***Response rate; N/#= the percent of students who participated by completing an evaluation.

Sample: Overall, students who responded to the survey were more likely female (61%), between the ages of 18-24 (58%), and of European-American ethnicity (44%). In addition, students were more likely to not work (23%), to be enrolled in 4-6 classes this semester (53%), and taking their first online course at Crafton (43%).

Table 2: Student demographics and characteristics

DE Student Demographics			DE Student Characteristics		
Gender	N	%	# of work hours this semester	N	%
Female	147	61.3	0 hours per week	56	23.3
Male	89	37.1	1-10 hours per week	24	10.0
Unknown/Missing/Other	4	1.7	11-20 hours per week	41	17.1
Total	240	100.0	21-30 hours per week	46	19.2
			31-40 hours per week	33	13.8
			40 or more hours per week	36	15.0
Age	N	%	Unknown/Missing	4	1.7
18-24	140	58.3	Total	240	100.0
25-30	41	17.1			
31-35	25	10.4	# of classes this semester	N	%
36-40	10	4.2	1-3 classes	104	43.3
41 and above	23	9.6	4-6 classes	128	53.3
Unknown/Missing	1	.4	7-9 classes	6	2.5
Total	240	100.0	Unknown/Missing	2	.8
			Total	240	100.0
Ethnicity	N	%			
African American/Black	9	3.8	# of online classes taken at CHC	N	%
American Indian/Native Alaskan	3	1.3	1 online class	104	43.3
Asian American	16	6.7	2 online classes	56	23.3
European American/White	105	43.8	3 online classes	32	13.3
Hispanic/Latino (Any/All Races)	57	23.8	4 online classes	20	8.3
Multi-Racial	13	5.4	5 or more online classes	26	10.8
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	1	.4	Unknown/Missing	2	.8
Other	35	14.6	Total	240	100.0
Unknown/Missing	1	.4			
Total	240	100.0			

Next, the survey was divided into three sections each with ten, eleven, and seven statements respectively. Students were asked to rate their level of agreement with statements about usefulness, timeliness, and accuracy of course content and pedagogy to capture the perceived level of satisfaction with online courses.

Referring to Tables 3, 4, and 5; the first column lists the statements, the second column (i.e. "N") shows the number of Distance Education students who responded to the item, the column entitled "Min" shows the lowest response on the scale, the column entitled "Max" shows the highest response on the scale, the column "Mean" shows the average rating, and the last column shows the standard deviation. Students rated whether or not they agreed with the statements on a four point Likert scale as follows:

- 1 = Strongly Disagree
- 2 = Disagree
- 3 = Agree
- 4 = Strongly Agree

If the Min (i.e. lowest) score was a “3”, that means that none of the students disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement. If the Max score was a “4”, that means that at least one student strongly agreed with the statement. As an illustration, if the mean score was 3.65, that would indicate that, on average, students either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement. All tables are arranged by Mean score in descending order and exclude not applicable responses.

Findings: As seen in Table 3, on average, students agreed or strongly agreed with every statement in this section. Specifically, students were pleased with the instructor’s timeliness of the distribution of the syllabus (mean=3.87) as well as the relevancy of the assignments and exams (mean=3.82). On the other hand, students were less likely to feel that the instructor used explanations that were clear and understandable (mean=3.63) or that the instructor inspired interest/excitement in the subject matter (mean=3.58).

Table 3: Course content and instructional procedures

Please rate your level of agreement with the following:	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
The instructor posted a syllabus for this course in a timely manner	240	1	4	3.87	.383
The instructor gave assignments and exams that were related to the learning objectives of this course	240	1	4	3.82	.435
The syllabus accurately described what was involved in the course	240	1	4	3.78	.479
The method of grading for this course was clearly stated in the syllabus with an outline of assignments	240	1	4	3.75	.490
The instructor demonstrated knowledge of course subject matter	238	1	4	3.73	.562
The instructor allowed sufficient time for assignments to be completed	240	1	4	3.68	.564
The instructor organized the schedule effectively to promote learning	238	1	4	3.68	.581
All course materials were posted in a timely manner	240	1	4	3.67	.598
The instructor used explanations that were clear and understandable	239	1	4	3.63	.640
The instructor inspired interest/excitement in the subject matter	234	1	4	3.58	.639

Table 4 illustrates the student’s perceptions of the instructional approach and techniques. Overall, students agreed or strongly agreed with every statement and were most likely to be satisfied with the unbiased treatment (mean=3.76), communication as described in the syllabus (mean=3.76), and availability of instructor outside of class (mean=3.76). Students were less likely to indicate agreement with the statements “the exams were fair and understandable” (mean=3.61) and “the instructor allowed group interaction or assigned group projects” (mean=3.59).

Table 4: Instructional approach and techniques

Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements:	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
The instructor treated students in an unbiased manner	228	1	4	3.76	.484
The instructor responded to student communication within the guidelines described in the course syllabus	239	1	4	3.76	.476
The instructor was available to help students and made it clear how to contact him/her outside of class	238	1	4	3.76	.527
The instructor was sensitive to gender and multi-cultural concerns	203	1	4	3.74	.513
The instructor made an effort to help students succeed in the course	237	1	4	3.72	.529
The instructor returned test and assignment grades/evaluations in a reasonable length of time	238	1	4	3.71	.530
The instructor's system of grading was fair	239	1	4	3.70	.534
The instructor provided opportunities for student input/class discussion and was open to other people's viewpoints	234	1	4	3.69	.571
The instructor applied course material to the real world	232	1	4	3.68	.575
The exams were fair and understandable	238	1	4	3.61	.639
The instructor allowed group interaction or assigned group projects	211	1	4	3.59	.643

The results portrayed in Table 5 indicate that students agreed or strongly agreed with every statement related to course satisfaction. Students were more likely to agree that they would choose to take another online course (mean=3.61) and that they would recommend the online course experience to other students (mean=3.60). However, communication with classmates was not as frequent as that in a face-to-face course (mean=3.06).

Table 5: Course satisfaction

Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements:	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
I would choose to take another online course	238	1	4	3.61	.719
I would recommend the online course experience to another student	237	1	4	3.60	.710
This course was more convenient to take than a traditional face-to-face course	235	1	4	3.56	.722
I had to work at least as hard in this course as I would have in a traditional face-to-face course	238	1	4	3.54	.691
I found that I learned at least as much in this online course as I probably would in a face-to-face course	236	1	4	3.48	.763
Without the availability of this course via Internet, I would not have been able to enroll in this course/program	235	1	4	3.48	.808
I communicated at least as much with other students in this online course as I would in a face-to-face course	230	1	4	3.06	.992

Table 6 is a compilation of the resources and course components ranked by the perceived usefulness in the opinion of the respondents using a three point Likert scale of very useful=3,

adequately useful=2, and not useful=1. Students were more likely to find the online grade book (mean=2.72) and textbooks/workbooks used in this course (mean=2.68) to be very useful. In contrast, discussion boards (mean=2.53) were more often rated as not useful to a student's distance education learning experience. In addition, 48% of the respondents chose not-applicable when asked to rate the usefulness of group projects.

Table 6: Resources and components used in DE courses

How rate the usefulness of the following:	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
Online Gradebook	235	1	3	2.72	.504
Textbook(s)/Workbook(s) used in this course	232	1	3	2.68	.529
Quizzes and exams	238	1	3	2.67	.523
Required assignments	239	1	3	2.67	.523
Instructor generated content (e.g. powerpoints, videos, podcats, etc.)	211	1	3	2.63	.557
Internet resources	227	1	3	2.63	.544
Online lectures given by the instructor	184	1	3	2.57	.588
Discussion Boards	231	1	3	2.53	.651
Group projects	124	1	3	2.42	.711

Respondents asked to choose any or all of the elements listed in Table 7 that they feel would be useful to incorporate into future online courses. Fifty-one percent of the respondents indicated video lectures should be integrated, while 40% thought website links related to course content and instructor podcasts should be included. Students were less likely to indicate that instructional videos on how to use Blackboard should be a component of their online courses.

Table 7: Future DE course components

Which would you like to see more of in future online classes?	N	%
Video lectures	122	50.8
Website links related to course content	96	40.0
Instructor podcasts	96	40.0
Chat rooms	87	36.3
Videos on related course content from a variety of sources	84	35.0
Instructional videos on how to use Blackboard	52	21.7

When students were asked if they would recommend the DE course to another student, 94% answered "yes" (see Table 8a). Additionally, 95% would recommend their instructor to another student (see Table 8b).

Table 8a: Course recommendation

Would you recommend this course to another student?	N	%
Yes	226	94.2
No	14	5.8
Total	240	100.0

Table 8b: Instructor recommendation

Would you recommend this instructor to another student?	N	%
Yes	228	95.0
No	12	5.0
Total	240	100.0

Following the two questions related to recommending the course and instructor to other students, respondents were asked to leave any comments or suggestions for improvement of online and hybrid classes. The following feedback was offered by 34% of the respondents (N=81):

- All the dates she posted were wrong, my assignments were never graded on time, she never emailed me back. Horrible online class!
- Amazing class and course!!!
- AMAZING COURSE! SO HAPPY TO TAKE IT ONLINE!
- Being shy, this class opened doors to friendships I would never have experienced in a traditional face-to-face course! :)
- Best instructor I have had in my life. Very responsible instructor.
- Blackboard itself was a challenge. With the NEW layout and all the technical difficulties throughout the year, it caused the class and retrieving the info harder. The class itself was great.
- Blackboard this semester was a major problem, particularly in this course! It was going down constantly for maintenance causing me lost time in studying and caused me to turn in my final late, because of the maintenance. Luckily Professor (Instructor) was understanding of the situation and gave me more time to study and turn in my final. I hope ALL issues are resolved by blackboard asap, so this problem doesn't persist next year. Otherwise, I would no longer advise people to take online courses!!
- (Name) is an excellent instructor in (Course) and I have learned a tremendous amount of information that will prove to be very valuable to me. (Name) in the lab was so very helpful and has such a calm, positive attitude which helped me to complete my projects. When I was in college in the early '70, a computer took up most of one building at San Bernardino Valley College, so I had a lot to learn in the advancement of computer technology. Thank you to Crafton College for these 2 amazing people teaching (Course).
- Each Chapter for this course is quite long with much detail. To prepare for test it was difficult because there was no outline on what to focus more on. Or any type of review questions. A study guide with question and topics would have helped. I would only recommend taking an online class if blackboards performance improved. There were a lot of problems, and many times blocked out. With only having the certain time to do my work. I was unable to do some discussions. But He was a great teacher and responded to emails pretty quick.
- Entering into this class I was not looking forward to taking (subject) AT ALL! The professor was very passionate about what he teaches and it seemed to be contagious. I almost wished we met as a class every week because class was so much fun. Great teacher and I have given thought to taking another class of his. He made speaking formally, which is something I was terrified of, something I kind of enjoyed.
- Fantastic course. Professor (Name) has been wonderful - her class is very organized and she teaches the subject matter in a clear, very understandable manner. She responds to emails and addresses questions in an inordinately timely fashion. I have already highly recommended this course to family, friends, and co-workers. Thank you, Professor (Name).
- Good instructor however I dislike the subject of this class. I've finished a (subject) class already but I'm forced to do another.
- Great course. Thoroughly enjoyed the course! Thanks, (Instructor)!
- Great online class. I enjoyed it.
- Great professor, good response times to e-mails and organized blackboard to make it easy understandable :)

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- Great refresher course from (Subject). In fact to improve course grades towards (Course), this course should be a pre-requisite
- Great teacher and very convenient class.
- Great teacher, great class!
- Great teacher! I enjoyed the class even though it was challenging!
- He was awesome! Made this course seem so simple. He rocks my socks.
- I already have recommended this course to other students. This course was very helpful due to the fact that it works so well around my schedule.
- I did enjoyed reading (Instructor)'s textbooks. This class has also helped me learn the material for (subject)!
- I enjoyed the discussion board aspect of this class. I was actually able to communicate more with other students in this class in comparison to other non-online classes. I really liked this class and I do feel as if I am taking away knowledge that will help me in the future.
- I feel he gave us a chance to learn about and enjoy (subject).
- I have already explained and recommended this class and the instructor to several of my friends.
- I have already recommended this course and instructors to other students on campus. The assignments were given in a timely manner and I felt like I always had enough time to complete the assignments. My only complaint is my frustration with Blackboard. It wouldn't load and would kick me off when I was almost finished with a test. It was infuriating to have completed 98% of my midterm only to have Blackboard not load the additional questions and force me to time out. Fortunately I had an instructor who was sympathetic to the situation and allow me to take the rest of the exam. Please fix Blackboard's issues so other students don't have these issues and are able to have the convenience of taking online courses.
- I have rarely had to contact (Instructor) with any questions or concerns but when I have, I received a prompt response. (Instructor) is very helpful and understanding.
- I have taken many online courses and really enjoyed them, however, there was a bit of frustration for the students/professor early in the semester due to the upgrading and crashing of the blackboard program. The crashing caused delays in getting work posted and caused delays in our responses to discussion boards which, thankfully, our teacher was understanding about and would extend deadlines according to the weeks Blackboard program condition. I found that in (Course) I learned just as much as I would with a face-to-face class. Like other online classes I have taken in the past I found the class to be a little more challenging than face-to-face and sometimes the workload a bit more, but not anything unmanageable and an enjoyable challenge. Although I thought the 2 concert attendance requirement was going to be hard to complete, I found it was not too difficult and actually found the concerts very enjoyable.
- I love the teacher he was great
- I really like the fact that I am able to take classes online. I really think that there should be more classes available online to take, and more openings in the online classes for students that have really tight schedules, like myself. I am not able to go to class face to face at all hours of the day due to having a baby at home and working. So, having the chance to take an online course that I need really helps out tremendously.
- I really love taking online classes they work perfectly for someone like myself who works two jobs and is going to school at the same time. I wish CHC could offer more online courses.
- I think that blackboard problems made it difficult for my instructor to give us our weekly assignments in a timely manner for some time
- I think the only big issue this semester was logging into Blackboard. At times it was so frustrating not being able to sufficiently access work because there seemed to be a problem

with the campus website. The instructor made wonderful accommodations for the students though and for that I say the semester was a success!

- I thought this class was very well put together and (Instructor) knew what he was doing. He is an excellent online teacher.
- I would not recommend this course in a fast past class again. It was a lot more work than I realized which is understandable because it is a shorter class but when taking 5 classes it is really overwhelming. If I recommended this course to anyone online I would make sure to tell them not to take more than 3 classes total to allow enough time to do all the work in this course.
- I've been talking about this class non-stop. Not only am I excited about the experience, but many of my friends/family are now interested in taking this class. Beautiful, amazing experience!!! Whooda Thunk?!! (sic)
- Instructor was very understanding to students situation and adjust accordingly to the situation
- It was a very interesting class and I enjoyed the current event responses we did.
- (Instructor) is a great teacher. Although he challenges his students and his class isn't easy, he allows freedom in his assignments which makes it fun. He made me want to excel. Thank you Prof!!
- Learned a lot about (Subject) making and really enjoyed the course.
- Loved the class learned a lot about (Subject)
- Many problems with blackboard. They were not the teachers fault. Blackboard was always causing problems in this class. Improve blackboard.
- (Instructor) goes out of his way to insure that his students are taken care of when it comes to his class(es) and learning, giving us every opportunity to succeed.
- (Instructor) was very consistent and reliable. Even though he was my online teacher I felt comfortable calling him for any problems I was having in class. Blackboard not only for this class but for my (Subject) class has been annoying but other than that I really enjoyed taking (Subject) with (Instructor).
- (Instructor) our teacher has been great. She is deeply concerned that each student achieves. I love the online classes and I wish there were more of them.
- Navigating Blackboard was confusing especially the discussion board.
- Overall good class structure. I would like to see online speeches being added to the class. I think that being able to do your speech, record it, and then post the video could be a good addition to the course. This would truly allow the course to be entirely online with no on Campus meetings.
- please accept late assignments....sometime and with special circumstances
- (Instructor) was great! She has great communication skills and made sure to inform the students constantly about when assignments were due.
- Professor (Name) is straight to the point. Excellent course!
- Professor is very fast at responding to emails
- Professor (Name) is an enthusiastic (Subject) instructor.
- She insulted Mac users. She said "People who use Mac's are intimidated by technology." Also the tests are flawed on many many questions, and I had adequate proof and she did not accept my rebuttal.
- Thank you!
- The biggest problem with the online course was that blackboard was always having problems.
- The blackboard problems weren't very fun. The instructor was very good at providing alternatives when blackboard was problematic with the course.
- the Blackboard system compared to other collages is very cumbersome and hard to figure out

- The course was a great course to take. I really enjoyed it. With a busy schedule I was able to make my own time for class rather than having a specific time to be there which made it much easier for me.
- The Hybrid class seemed to have more work assigned than a face-face. This class was very insightful and related to my other classes. I enjoyed the content but I found the class to be somewhat inconvenient, which may have been due to my busy schedule. I really enjoyed and respected my instructor.
- The instructor was great we had some technical difficulties but we overcame those and he was very understanding for certain situations.
- The modules are very time consuming. I would have preferred to go to a classroom setting instead of taking this online course. The amount of time that is spent completing the modules is more time than what is stated in the syllabus. I would have spent less time attending a class in person.
- The online course allows flexibility with work schedules. I have learned just as much, if not more from taking the online course, than I would have actually being at the school. It also allows you to complete assignments more at your pace, slower, or faster, than the actual class period may take in an actual classroom.
- The online course was very convenient for me.
- The only part that was confusing was using evolve, although she helped with all questions:]!! She was extremely helpful and responded to emails very fast. Wonderful teacher and wonderful course.
- The only thing I would keep in mind when recommending this course is the fact that Blackboard is not always up and running efficiently. Fortunately, my professor would extend due dates or make other accommodations for this problem.
- The purpose of the course is to instill / develop critical thinking in the student's mind and that objective was met by allowing the students to foray more into their thinking in a structured way than simply relying on text. A good course. However, Blackboard with more focus on its frills (how to use instructions took about 90% of the space, the course links were restricted to about 1/10th of the screen, the discussion thread is very limiting, formatting in the discussion thread is not good)
- The technical issues with Blackboard made this class a bit frustrating, but the instructor was very understanding.
- There are too many problems with the new blackboard system. It was difficult to get assignments to upload and have never did.
- This class was challenging and the instructor was awesome. I am very happy I took this class because I learned a lot.
- This class was unique and exciting. It took the class room into the real world and made the subject matter come alive seeming more life applicable, experiential, and progressive.
- This class was very challenging. The instructor was excellent. I feel very fortunate to have been able to take this class online.
- This class was wonderful to take and I enjoy the teaching format this instructor used. The only issue was that the blackboard system would run slowly. Overall taking this online course was a fantastic way to enhance your learning skills.
- This course was on track with the syllabus and the instructor was very understanding and useful.
- This is the 2Nd class I have taken with (Instructor). He is a good instructor, his classes are somewhat rigid but you definitely feel that you have learned the material.
- (Instructor) Rocks!! Best teacher I have ever had!

- Very good organization of information presented through power points. Well established schedule
- Very good teacher! And actually emailed back unlike other online classes I've taken!
- We need more online courses for us working people. Especially non-science courses.
- Wish that the grades posted had actual due dates other than the ones from last semester! Instructions were sometimes a little vague and needed clear definition. One last thing would be a unified location for the exams, lectures, book work...it is hard taking 4 classes and some do this here and some do the same thing there, but this class has three places to do work and this one has similar but different places to access. Gets a little confusing sometimes. For me it would have been nice to have the grades part of BB with due dates that were accurate! Or (Subject) class I am in week 13, but in (Subject) class I am in week 12, WTH!! Spring break is still a week, let's all just get along and use the same stuff!
- With all the blackboard changes it made it hard to complete some work. But the instructor was very understanding about it and gave extensions when they were needed.
- Wonderful Teacher. Would recommend him to everyone.