



Starfish Usage Survey – Spring 2018

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Purpose of Brief

The purpose of this brief is to analyze the results of a Starfish usage survey that was distributed during April 2018.

Summary of Findings

- 70% of respondents indicated that they were using Starfish.
 - 46% stated that they used it because they liked it.
 - 23% used it as it was the preferred method for completing EOPS progress reports.
- Of the 33 respondents who provided additional feedback on Starfish, 55% pointed out things they enjoyed about Starfish while 24% provided suggestions for improving the system.
- 12 respondents provided reasons why they did not use Starfish. These open-ended responses referenced the inconvenience of using another system, addition of tasks without additional pay, preference for direct communication, and the concern that students are being handheld by relying on the service, among other reasons.

Overview

Starfish Solutions is a retention solution program that helps create an online student success environment, facilitating programs such as counseling and advising, tutoring, mentoring, and others with the aim of improving student success and retention. The purpose of this brief is to analyze reasons why faculty may have chosen to adopt or not adopt Starfish for their courses.

Methodology

The Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Research and Planning (OIERP) distributed the surveys to all part-time and full-time faculty at Crafton Hills College in April 2018. The survey consisted of a question gauging whether the faculty member used or did not use Starfish. Next, respondents were asked to respond in an open-ended format to obtain feedback on what they enjoyed about Starfish, what they would want to change about it, or why they did not use it. Lastly, respondents were given options to provide their contact information to be given more information about Starfish.

Findings

Table 1 examines whether respondents have been using Starfish for their courses. Forty-six percent of respondents reported using Starfish because they liked it while 27% knew about Starfish but chose not to use it.

Response	#	%
No, I don't know about Starfish. Please send me more information.	2	3.6
No, I know about Starfish but choose not to use it.	15	26.8
Yes because I like it.	26	46.4
Yes but only because it is the preferred method for completing EOPS progress reports.	13	23.2
Total	56	100.0

Note: missing responses are not included in the table

Table 2 contains open-ended responses provided by the faculty detailing what they like about Starfish or what they would like to see improved. This question was only provided to respondents who indicated that they used Starfish in the previous question. Thirty-three responses were submitted. Fifty-five percent of responses referenced things that they enjoyed about Starfish. One respondent stated “I like the fact that I can send referrals. Also, I received quite a few responses from students after I sent out a progress report. Those individuals who were failing began to take their academic work more seriously.” Twenty-four percent of responses contained feedback regarding improvements that respondents would like to see. Two respondents mentioned that Canvas integration was desired. Lastly, 12% of responses submitted listed the ways in which they use Starfish.

Table 2. Feedback Given Among Starfish Usage

Compliments/Things They Like About Starfish (n=18)
Ability for counselors to follow student attendance, grades to more effectively guide them to success.
Easy to send early alerts for student assistance. Easy to make online mid-term reports to EOPS and CalWorks.
Great retention tool for students and faculty.
I am a Counselor and getting early alerts for my students' progress is a great tool for me. This helps me to properly guide my students and make referrals as necessary. It is easy to use and navigate.
I like bringing certain students to the attention of Counseling without having to tell the student to go see their counselor. I also enjoy giving Kudos when they are warranted.
I like it for probation students. I can see progress reports and canvas grades
I like recording attendance, mass emails.
I like the ability to send flags and kudos to students and their advisors and counselors. When a student needs attention, Starfish is an additional means to reach them besides phone and email, and it reaches their counselors as well. I have had good results.
I like the ease of communication with students and the wraparound services that follow up with more severe issues; however, I would like it to be better integrated with Canvas. Many of the functions are becoming redundant, and ease of use often wins out. If I can quickly communicate to students through the Speedgrading function or through email in Canvas, for instance, then it limits the functionality of Starfish, unless I want student services to become involved. More overlap[end of comment]
I like the fact that I can send referrals. Also, I received quite a few responses from students after I sent out a progress report. Those individuals who were failing began to take their academic work more seriously.
I like the level of detail requested.
It is an excellent way to track student's performance
It is easier to use Starfish than fill out and scan reports, especially for online classes.
It is easy and intuitive and makes providing feedback simple. Keeps everyone who needs to know, in the loop and helps motivate students.
It is easy to use and I like the ability to give kudos.
It's fantastic. The best early alert system I've ever used.
It's straightforward to use.
Starfish is a good way to contact or notify students (with subpar grade) if they need help or support. It allows the instructors in a program (i.e., Respiratory) see how each student are progressing in the courses taken during a semester. Also, it is a nice record-keeping that can be kept electronically (paperless & cleanly) for CHC school documentation.

Feedback (n=8)

I do like it but I'm not sure exactly how to use it effectively. I have done kudos- but probably not as much as I should. I have done EOP- which were great. I wished this was for all students since some are struggling that are not in EOP- but they do take time to do since I like to be detailed. I would like to know more about referring students to other services- writing center, mental health services, tutorial center. I typically do this via email but I often worry if I'm [end of comment]

I like that it connects students directly to the help and services they need to succeed. I wish it were easier to access through or integrate with Canvas.

I would like to be able to send a flag when a student needs improvement on something and then specify within that flags comments if it's in regards to homework, quizzes, attendance, etc instead of basically answering and then giving similar comments to each flag raised in the current system for missing assignments, low quiz/test scores, attendance, etc

I would like to comment on each student ONCE and not have to do multiple reports for multiple programs.

Increased customizable features for specific program or instructional needs would benefit instructors. Ease of use and ability to share information seamlessly amongst instructors is of great benefit. Ability to recommend or force consults outside of instruction is also a great benefit (e.g. counseling, or tutoring referral)

Since I teach at 3 different colleges, the fewer programs used the better. I find Starfish to be very user friendly and easy to navigate overall, but I simply don't have time to use it to its full capability. I wish there was some way to embed it in Canvas or create an easy interface between the 2 so that when I am managing my classes in Canvas, I could shoot updates, concerns, reports, referrals to Starfish in real time.

The choices for reporting on three students is awkward. And it would be nice if there was a separate box for grade.

The interface is web 1.0. It could use a UI update.

What They Use it For (n=4)

I just started using Starfish to take attendance.

I only use it complete the EOPS reports.

I take roll, raise automatic flags, and complete student reports on it.

I used STARFISH because: STARFISH provides me with an easy, convenient method to link students with challenges and issues to the myriad of resources we have available for STUDENTS; STARFISH provides the capability to check status of students performance with the resources the student is utilizing; Track issues with students via notes; STARFISH has an easy to use attendance tracking tool; Give students additional recognition when the excel or improve; Students who aren't comfortable [end of comment]

Table 3 contains responses from faculty who indicated why they did not use Starfish. The respondents were only asked this question if they had stated that they knew about Starfish but did not use it in the previous question. Twelve responses were provided. Reasons why Starfish was not being used among this set of respondents ranged from inconvenience, addition of tasks without additional pay, preference for direct communication, and the concern that students are being handheld by relying on the service.

Table 3. Feedback for Why Respondents Chose Not to Use Starfish.

I already have communication with each student about how they are performing in the course throughout the course and I do not like having to go through another system to do what I already have done for years.
I do not find a need for it. Through Canvas, students are already fully aware of their status in the course. Starfish is unneeded and redundant.
I have not had time to learn about it. When I have used it, it seemed to take a long time to add details that weren't needed. I could simply talk to students face to face.
I prefer a hands-one, direct interaction with most groups, especially students.
I see no reason to use this. We are teaching college students. At what point in time do these students learn how to be responsible for their own knowledge of their grades, of coming to a professor for help, etc. When these students transfer to four year colleges and universities they are going to think they will be handheld the same way we have here. This is why some colleges few community colleges as "grade 13" and not a true college. I truly believe that in some ways Starfish [end of comment]
I teach KIN 049 for the fire cadets and they do not use Starfish.
I wish my communications to be as first-hand and direct as possible!
It's another request to put more on my plate that I'm not compensated for. The argument that it's easy, or simple or whatever, simply avoids that issue of another thing I'm asked to do without compensation (nor respect) for my time.
Need to establish relevancy to HWC services.
One more program to learn!
The program is not user friendly at all. it makes it difficult to do complete reports on some of the students and go back for remaining. it sends notifications from the instructors rather than the appropriate councilor, thus the students return to us with out proper actions taken. The program is time consuming and in my opinion a waste of time.
We have decided as a department not to use starfish.