

Baseline Survey Results – eLearning May 2012

Background & Methodology

As stated in the University Academic Plan (2010 – 2015), one of York’s highest priorities is to recruit and retain quality graduate and undergraduate students. To do this, we need to ensure that our curricular offerings are addressing the changing needs of our students and that our teaching faculty members feel supported. Two approaches that York has identified as important elements of our teaching and learning strategy going forward are Experiential Education (a pedagogical approach that blends theory and coursework with applied experience) and eLearning (which involves the electronic delivery of all or some academic instruction via computers and the Web.) To help identify the various types of experiential education and eLearning a ‘Common Language’ document was developed to describe ways of employing EE and eLearning in more detail. This document can be found on the Academic Innovation Fund website: <http://aifprojects.yorku.ca/>.

In the Fall of 2011, Sue Vail, associate vice-president, Teaching and Learning undertook a baseline survey to determine the extent to which eLearning delivery was being used at the University. An online survey was developed and implemented with the assistance of staff from the Office of Institutional Research and Analysis beginning in the Fall of 2011 and into the Winter semester 2012.

In total, 1,527 full and part time faculty were surveyed representing 3,405 undergraduate classes across all Faculties at the university. Each faculty member was asked to identify the type of eLearning employed for each course and to provide comments as required.

After an extensive round of surveying and follow up, an overall response rate of 57% was achieved representing 1,909 courses. It was deemed that the sample was of suitable size to establish a baseline for the university.

Summary of Results

Overall the predominate method of course delivery was lecture format with classroom aids (47% of responses). However, slightly over one in five (21%) courses was delivered in face-to-face format only. Blended learning and total online education represented only a small number of courses at 4.3% and 2.8% of courses respectively.

Blended learning appeared to be more prevalent in senior courses (3.4% of year 1 vs 5.2% of year 4) while online education appeared to be used more at the first year level (4.1% year 1 vs 2.2% at year 4)

As expected there is significant variation in program delivery across Faculties with the Faculty of Education and the Faculty of Health representing the highest proportion of blended learning (10.5% and 8.5%) and Liberal Arts and Professional Studies and Health having the highest proportion of online education (3.7% and 4.2%)

There was little variation in the type of delivery by type of instructor. However it appears to be the case that part time faculty used more face-to-face learning and less online education when compared to full time faculty.

Detailed results as well as breakdowns can be found in the attached table.

