

# THE EDUCAUSE ALMANAC FOR UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT AND TECHNOLOGY SURVEY, 2017

August 2017

## All U.S. Institutions

Colleges and universities use the EDUCAUSE Technology Research in the Academic Community (ETRAC) data to develop and support their strategic objectives for educational technology. With ETRAC data, institutions can understand and benchmark what students and faculty need and expect from technology. Institutions can use data to improve IT services, prioritize strategic contributions of IT to higher education, and become more technologically competitive among peers. There is no cost to participate, and campuses will have access to all research publications, the aggregate-level summary/benchmarking report, and the institution's raw (anonymous) response data. Learn more at <http://www.educause.edu/etrac>.

## DEVICE OWNERSHIP, USAGE, AND IMPORTANCE

- 2% Own zero or one Internet-capable device
- 66% Own two or three Internet-capable devices
- 32% Own four or more Internet-capable devices

### 29% Own a desktop

- 24% Use a desktop in most or all of their courses
- 49% Rate desktops as very/extremely important to academic success (among students who use desktops in at least one course)

### 95% Own a laptop

- 89% Use a laptop in most or all of their courses
- 94% Rate laptops as very/extremely important to academic success (among students who use laptops in at least one course)

### 53% Own a tablet

- 14% Use a tablet in most or all of their courses
- 38% Rate tablets as very/extremely important to academic success (among students who use tablets in at least one course)

### 97% Own a smartphone

- 41% Use a smartphone in most or all of their courses
- 47% Rate smartphones as very/extremely important to academic success (among students who use smartphones in at least one course)

### Rate support of these activities from a handheld device highest:

1. Communicating with other students about class-related matters outside class sessions (78%)
2. Communicating with instructors about class-related matters outside class sessions (75%)
3. Taking pictures of in-class activities or resources (74%)
3. Checking grades (74%)

### Rate support of these activities from a handheld device lowest:

1. Registering for courses (25%)
2. Producing content (23%)
3. Taking notes in class (22%)
3. Recording lectures or in-class activities (22%)

## TECHNOLOGY AND THE COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY EXPERIENCE

- 18% Typically connect zero or one device to the campus network
- 78% Typically connect two or three devices to the campus network simultaneously
- 3% Typically connect four or more devices to the campus network simultaneously

### Rate as good or excellent:

- Network performance (e.g., high speed, no interruptions) (52%)
- Reliability of access to Wi-Fi in classroom/instructional spaces (68%)
- Reliability of access to Wi-Fi in campus libraries (76%)
- Reliability of access to Wi-Fi in student housing/dormitories (51%)
- Reliability of access to Wi-Fi in outdoor spaces (34%)

### Find the following online student-success tools at least moderately useful:

- Guidance about courses students might consider taking in the future (83%)
- Early-alert systems designed to catch potential academic trouble as soon as possible (85%)
- Suggestions for how to improve performance in a course (80%)
- Degree planning or mapping tools that identify courses needed to complete degree (90%)
- Degree audit tools that show the degree requirements completed (91%)
- Online self-service tools for conducting student-related business (93%)
- Digital tools that keep a record of services used, advice given, or decisions made (83%)

### Report that most or all of their instructors:

- Use technology adequately for course instruction (68%)
- Encourage the use of online collaboration tools (54%)
- Encourage the use of technology for creative or critical-thinking tasks (46%)
- Encourage the use of student devices during class to deepen learning (35%)

### Wish instructors used these resources/tools MORE:

1. Lecture capture (66%)
2. Free, web-based content to supplement course-related materials (62%)
3. Early-alert systems designed to catch potential academic trouble as soon as possible (61%)

### Wish instructors used these resources/tools LESS:

1. Social media as a teaching and learning tool (42%)
2. E-portfolios (36%)
3. Student tablets as learning tools for course-related activities (35%)

### Would include on a résumé:

1. Undergraduate degree/diploma (81%)
2. Certificate from an accredited college or university (58%)
3. Major projects completed during coursework (47%)
4. Certificate from an industry-based training program (42%)
5. Certificate of completion of a free course (32%)
6. Digital badge (26%)
7. E-portfolio (23%)

## PRIVACY AND SECURITY

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- 40% Are concerned that technology advances may increasingly invade privacy
- 90% Secure access to their computers, tablets, and smartphones with a password or PIN
- 36% Gave the password or PIN *for their computers, tablets, or smartphones* to another person in the past 12 months
- 19% Gave the password or PIN *for an online account* to another person in the past 12 months
- 13% Let someone log in as them to a college or university service, system, application, or website in the past 12 months
- 10% Have had an online account hacked in the past 12 months

## LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

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### Are most satisfied with these LMS aspects:

1. Submitting course assignments (77%)
2. Accessing course content (75%)
3. Checking course progress (66%)

### Are most dissatisfied with these LMS aspects:

1. Study groups with other students (20%)
  2. Collaborating on projects (19%)
  3. Engaging with other students (15%)
  3. Receiving feedback on course assignments (15%)
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- 9% Prefer to learn in a completely face-to-face learning environment
  - 79% Prefer to learn in a blended learning environment
  - 6% Prefer to learn in a completely online learning environment
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- 43% Get more actively involved in courses that use technology
  - 34% Are more likely to skip classes when materials presented in class are available online
  - 38% Are more likely to skip classes when streamed or recorded lectures are available
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- 41% Find the use of mobile devices in the classroom distracting
  - 47% Believe the use of mobile devices in the classroom distracts other students
  - 53% Believe the use of mobile devices in the classroom is distracting for instructors

## PERSONAL COMPUTING ENVIRONMENT

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### Typically encounter this *smartphone* policy:

- 70% Are banned or discouraged from using it in the classroom
- 7% Are required or encouraged to use it in the classroom

### Typically encounter this *tablet* policy:

- 40% Are banned or discouraged from using it in the classroom
- 20% Are required or encouraged to use it in the classroom

### Typically encounter this *laptop* policy:

- 19% Are banned or discouraged from using it in the classroom
- 35% Are required or encouraged to use it in the classroom

### Typically use their devices in the classroom for these activities:

- **Smartphone:** Use to engage in nonclass activities (45%)
- **Tablet:** Use to make other connections with the learning material (29%)
- **Laptop:** Use to make other connections with the learning material (51%)

### Among students reporting a physical or learning disability that requires accessible or adaptive technologies for coursework:

- 44% Rate institutional support of needed technologies as good or excellent
- 12% Report that their institution is unaware of student needs

## ENHANCE DECISION MAKING WITH ECAR STUDENT AND IT DATA

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In 2017, ECAR collaborated with 124 institutions to collect responses from 43,559 undergraduate students about their technology experiences. The research can catalyze conversations among IT professionals about how to better serve their constituents; among institutional leaders about how to use technology strategically; and among students about how to articulate their technology needs and expectations.

ECAR research on students and IT is conducted annually, and all institutions are invited to participate for free. Participating institutions receive the annual research report; an aggregate-level summary/benchmarking report that compares the institution's responses with other institutions'; and the raw (anonymous) data of the institution's responses, allowing institutions to conduct further analyses.

For more information, or to confirm your intent to participate in the next survey, contact the EDUCAUSE research team at [ecarsurvey@educause.edu](mailto:ecarsurvey@educause.edu).