Student Use and Assessment of Instructional Technology at UMass Boston.

Academic Council meeting

November 9, 2009

Office of Institutional Research and Policy
Studies / Information Technology

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What can we expect?

- http://www.schooltube.com/video/21838/Learning-to-Change-Changing-to-Learn--Kids-Tech

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Educause Center for Applied Research (ECAR)
The ECAR Study of Students and Information Technology, 2009
asked freshmen and seniors questions about their use of technology.

- The ECAR studies of instructional technologies and student technology use has been conducted since 2004. This is the first time UMass Boston has participated.

- 2009 ECAR surveyed 149 colleges and universities
  - **Two of UMass Boston's Performance Measurement Peers participated**
    - ▸ University of Maryland, Baltimore County
    - ▸ University of Memphis

- 2009 ECAR total sample size is not yet available however what is available is 2008's sample survey. "The study is based on quantitative data from a spring 2008 survey of 27,317 freshmen and seniors at 90 four-year institutions and eight two-year institutions; student focus groups that included input from 75 students at four institutions; and analysis of qualitative data from 5,877 written responses to open-ended questions. In addition to studying student ownership, experience, behaviors, preferences, and skills with respect to information technologies, the 2008 study also includes a special focus on student participation in social networking sites." *http://www.educause.edu/ECAR/TheECARStudyofUndergraduateStu/163283*.

ECAR: Quick Facts

- Purpose of the survey is to gain an understanding of how our students…
    - **use technology**
    - **assess their technical skills**
    - **use information technologies in their courses**
    - **perceive the impact of IT on their academic experience**

- Quick facts about survey respondents
    - **Number of respondents: 333**
    - **Class standing**
        - ▸ 47% senior
        - ▸ 24% freshman
        - ▸ 29% other

- Key information
    - **Best way to first notify you in case of a campus emergency**
        - ▸ 41% text message
        - ▸ 27% e-mail
        - ▸ 17% voice telephone call

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How do the respondents compare with our student characteristics?

Our respondents, like our student body, included more:

- Students over 25

- Students who are women

- Students who are part-time

- Students who live off campus

- Thus, the sample reflected our own student characteristics and our differences from the group of respondents as a whole.
  However, our respondents, like those of the whole group, reported GPA's of B or better.

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What is the overall story of technology use?

- UMass Boston respondents are very much like the respondents from all public four year institutions

Instructional Technology Use

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Students owning a computer

- Desktop computer: % of students who do not own
  - **45% of UMB**
  - **57% of other four-year institutions**
- Laptop computer: % of students who do not own
  - **14% of UMB**
  - **11% of other four-year institutions**
- Handheld device: % of students responding "no, and I don't plan to purchase one in the next 12 months"
  - **28% of UMB**
  - **36% of other four-year institutions**

  Only 1.5% of UMass Boston respondents owned neither a desktop nor a laptop.

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Student Use of Technologies: Most Frequent

	UMass % checking daily	Other 4 year Institutions % checking daily	UMass % checking never	Other 4 year Institutions % checking never
Text messaging	56%	67%	15%	9%
Facebook	48%	64%	15%	8%
Instant message	28%	27%	27%	27%
University library website	15%	16%	5%	4%
Spreadsheets	14%	7%	16%	12%

Student Use of Technologies: Least Frequent

	UMass % checking daily	Other 4 year Institutions % checking daily	UMass % checking never	Other 4 year Institutions % checking never
Blogs	5%	3%	60%	63%
YouTube	9%	6%	56%	55%
Wikis	5%	4%	53%	58%

Hours per Week Spent on Internet Activities

- About one third of UMass Boston students and all public 4 yr respondents reported 10 or fewer hours per week

- Another one third reported between 11 and 20 hours per week

- Of those reporting more than 21 hours per week, 15% of UMass Boston students reported 40 hrs + per week while 9% of the public 4 yr respondents did so

Learning Preferences

When do students adopt new technologies?

	UMass %	Other 4 year Institutions %
I usually use new technologies when most people I know do	45%	52%
I like new technologies and use them before most people I know	26%	26%
I love new technologies and am among the first to experiment with and use them	15%	10%
I am usually one of the last people I know to use new technologies	11%	8%
I am skeptical of new technologies and use them only when I have to	3%	4%

How do students prefer to learn?

	UMass %	Other 4 year Institutions %
Running Internet searches	83%	79%
Programs I can control such as video games, simulations, etc.	50%	49%
Text based conversation over email, IM and text messaging	50%	43%
Contributing to website, blogs, wikis, etc.	43%	37%
Creating or listening to podcasts or webcasts	34%	31%

Use of Learning Management System this semester?

	UMass %	Other 4 year Institutions %
Yes	73%	80%
No	27%	20%

How do students assess their skill in using Learning Management Systems?

	UMass %	Other 4 year Institutions %
Expert	9%	8%
Very skilled	41%	37%
Fairly skilled	39%	44%
Not very skilled	8%	7%
Not at all skilled	4%	4%

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How do students assess their experience with Learning Management Systems?

- 75% of our students reported their experience as positive or very positive
- None of our students reported their experience as very negative
- We compare very favorably with all other public four years

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Do students prefer IT use in courses?

	UMass %	Other 4 year Institutions %
I prefer taking courses that use no IT	2%	2%
I prefer taking courses that use limited IT	14%	14%
I prefer taking courses that use a moderate level of IT	56%	60%
I prefer taking courses that use IT extensively	22%	21%
I prefer taking courses that use IT exclusively	5%	3%

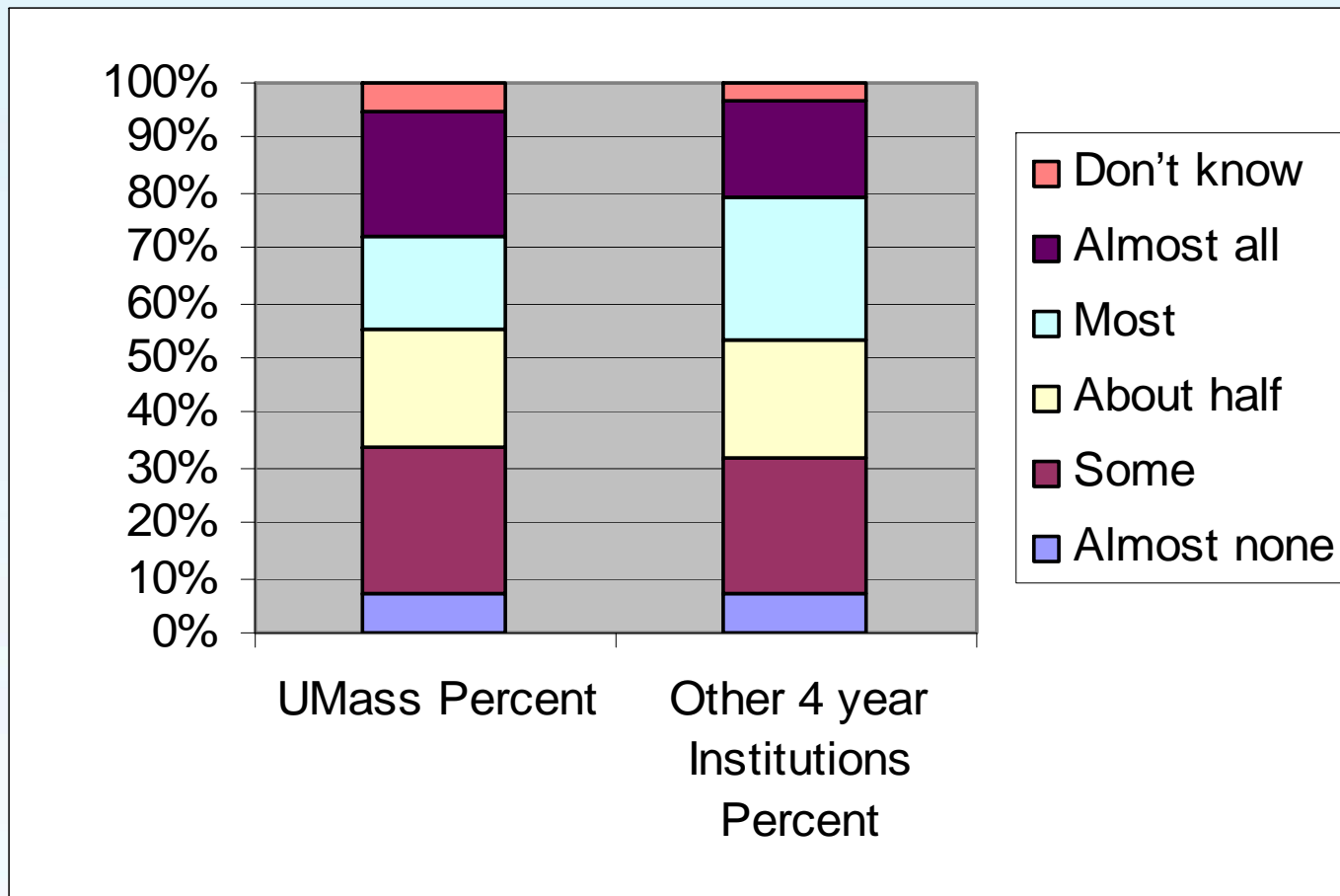- The majority of students (83% at UMass Boston) like some or a lot of IT use in courses

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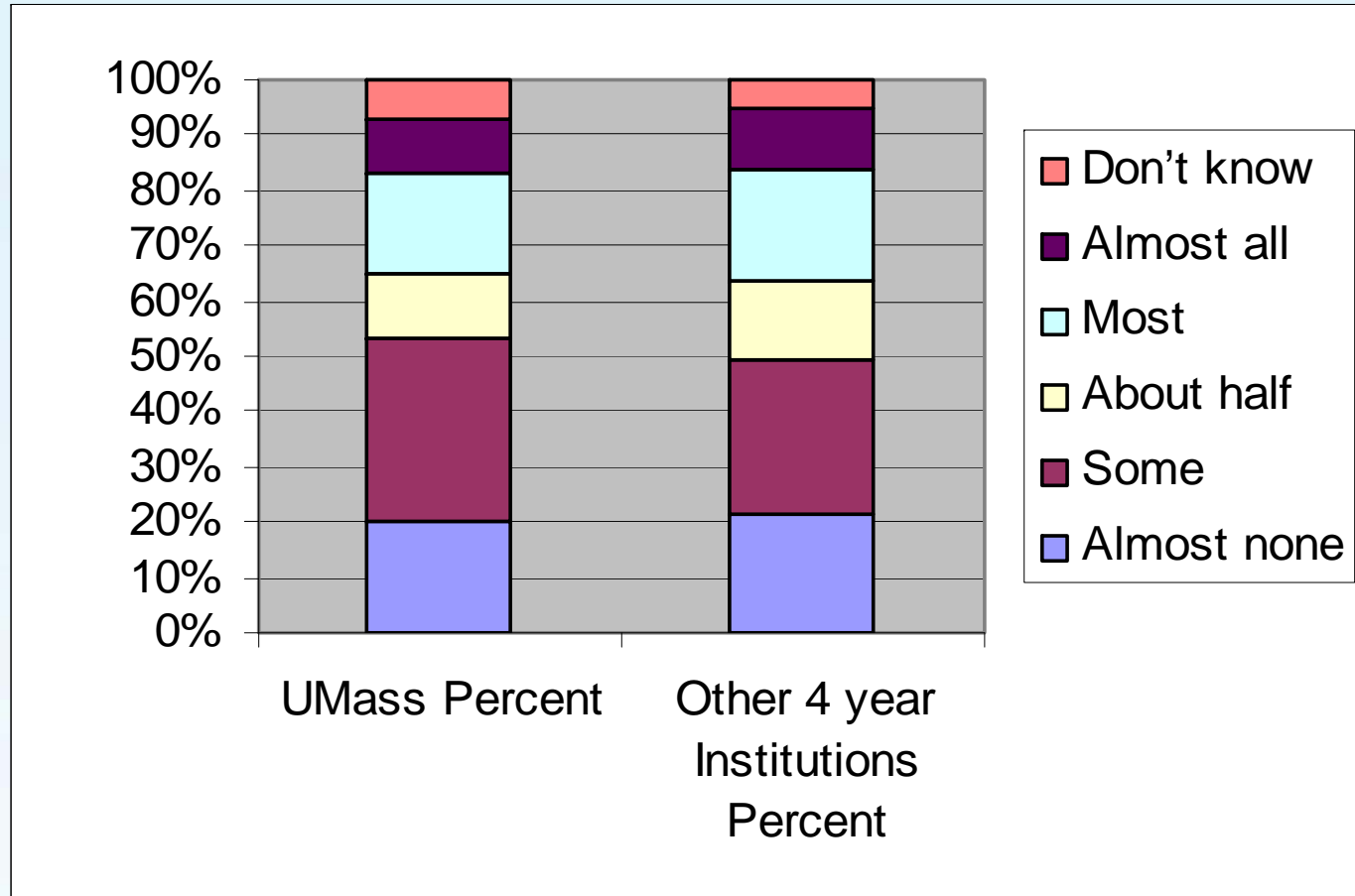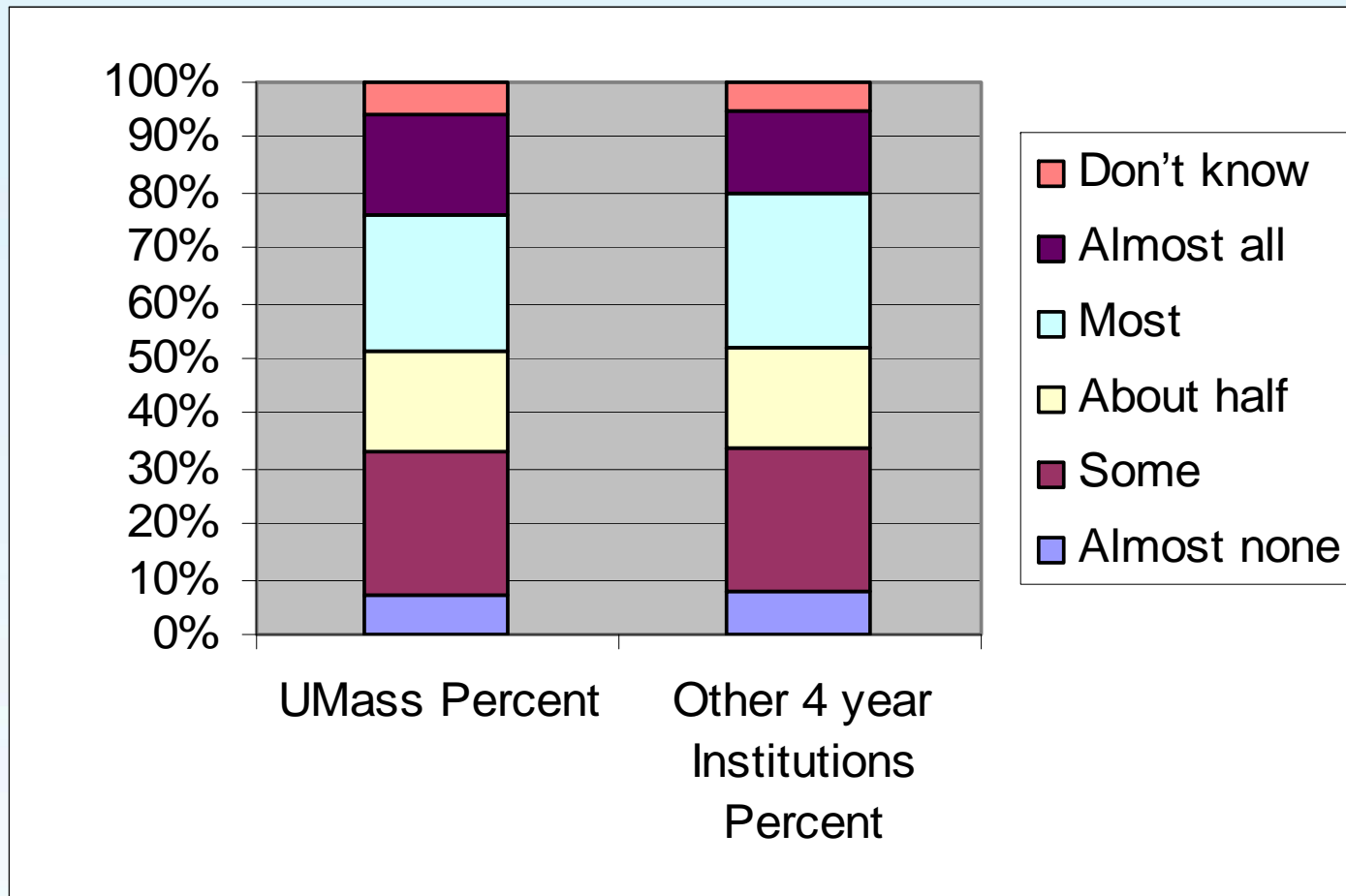# Student Assessment of Faculty Instructional Technology Use

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How many of your instructors use information technology effectively in courses?

How many of your instructors provide students with adequate training for IT and instructor uses in courses?

How many of your instructors have adequate IT skills for carrying out course instruction?

What have we learned?

- That in this arena, we are on a par with or "better" than other 4 yrs
- That our students share the learning technology preferences and adoption patterns of other students
- That our use of Learning Management Systems is high
- That most of our students are comfortable with their use
- That our students, like those at other institutions, think some faculty could use some assistance in using learning technologies and in teaching learning technologies

There is more to learn from the survey

E.g. provision of data to web development team for Title III activities

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