Southern Utah University 2010 Information Technology Survey

SUU Compared to ECAR

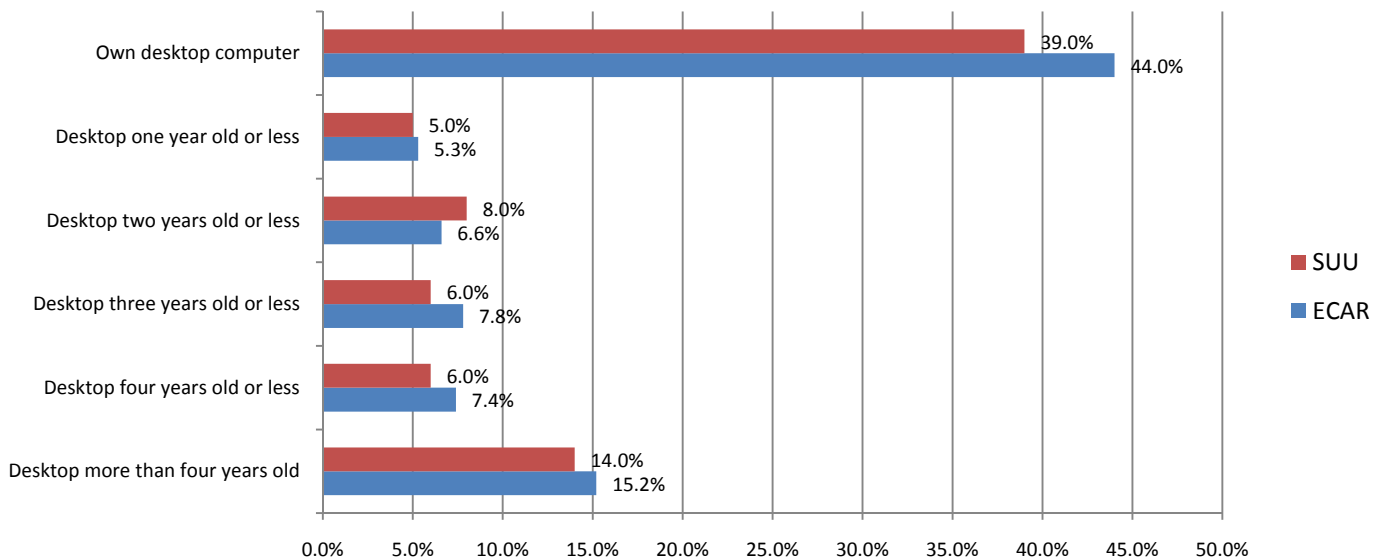**11/10/2010**

Introduction & Acknowledgements

The Southern Utah University (SUU) 2010 Information Technology Survey was conducted during the spring 2010 semester. The survey was pushed to student computer labs and classrooms where students were given the option to participate in the survey. The scope of results obtained from SUU represents a sample of 1672 students. The results obtained from the SUU survey are, in this document, compared to the results obtained by EDUCAUSE Center for Applied Research (ECAR). ECAR's results were obtained from a sample of nearly 40,000 students comprising 39 different educational institutions across the United States.

Permission for SUU to use ECAR's results in this document was given on August 26th, 2010 by Ron Yanosky the acting director and senior fellow at ECAR.
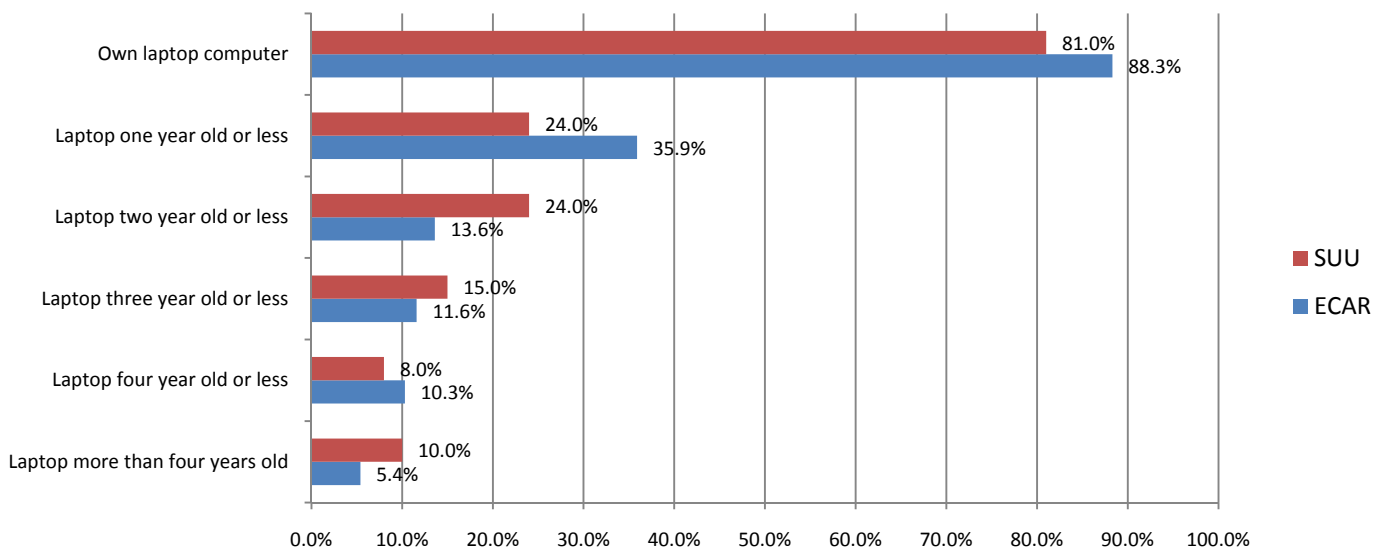
Results

SUU students fit well into national norms for the number of students that own a desktop computer. The actual number of SUU students who own a computer is slightly below national norms (5%) but within the margin of error. Other deviations are within 1.5%.

1) How old is your personal desktop computer?

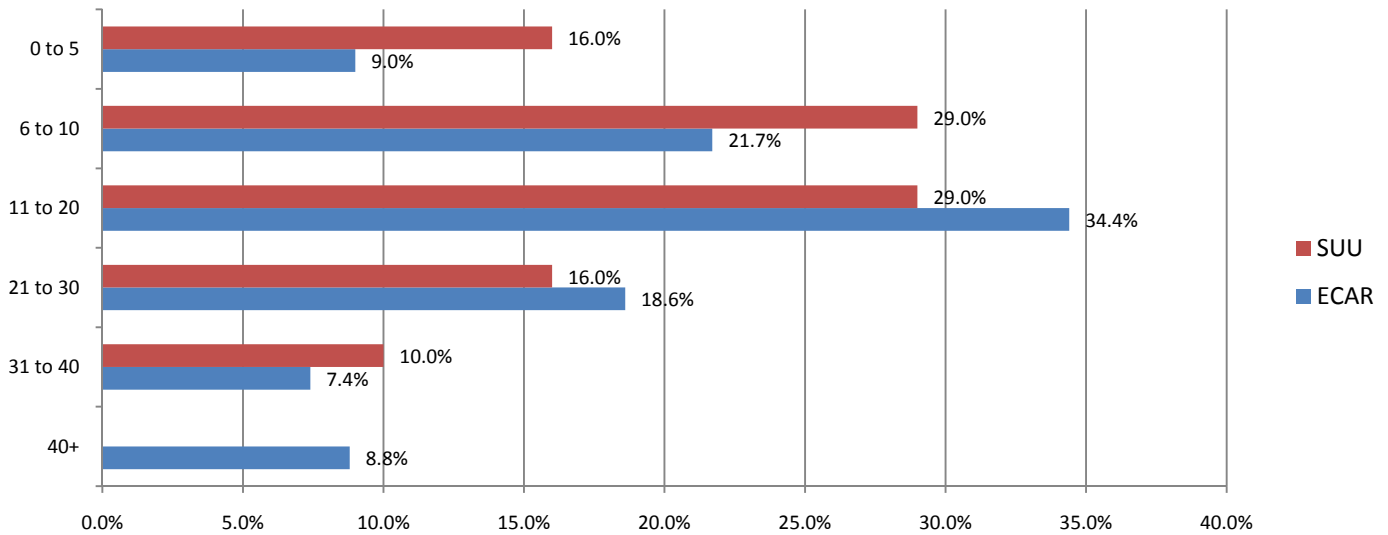| Category	SUU	ECAR
Own desktop computer	39.0%	44.0%
Desktop one year old or less	5.0%	5.3%
Desktop two years old or less	8.0%	6.6%
Desktop three years old or less	6.0%	7.8%
Desktop four years old or less	6.0%	7.4%
Desktop more than four years old	14.0%	15.2%

When it comes to laptop computers, SUU students who own a laptop are within 2.3% of national norms but the number whose computer is one year old or less is 11.9% below the nation while those that are two years old is almost 11% higher.

2) How old is your personal laptop computer?

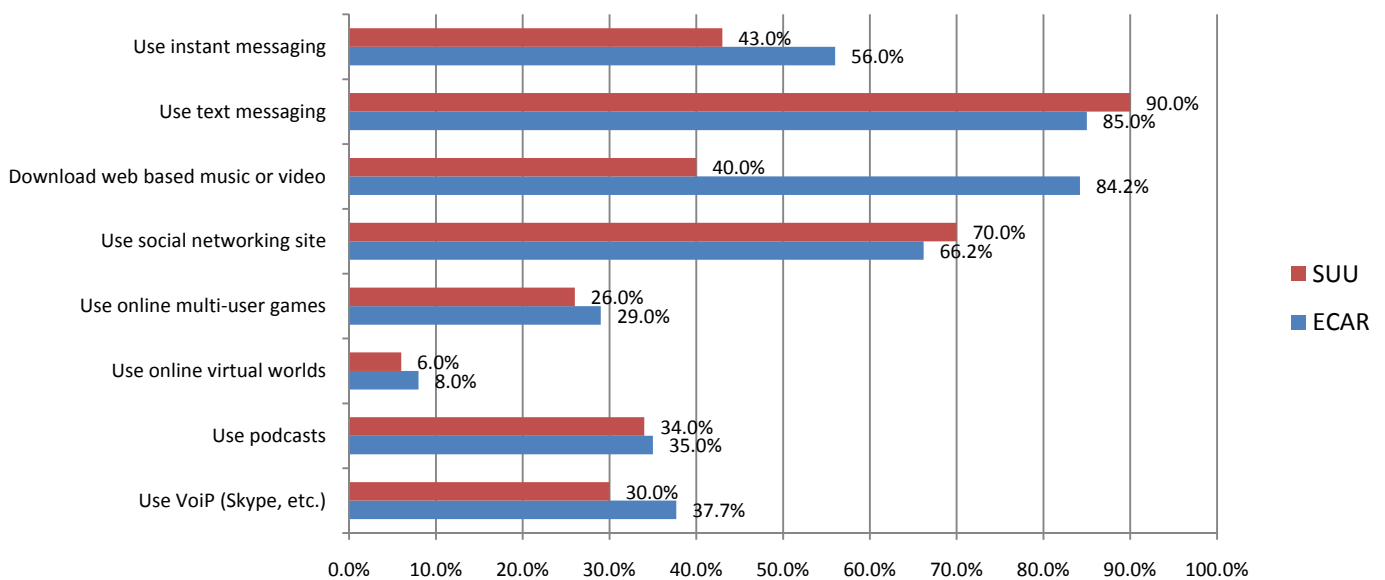| Category	SUU	ECAR
Own laptop computer	81.0%	88.3%
Laptop one year old or less	24.0%	35.9%
Laptop two year old or less	24.0%	13.6%
Laptop three year old or less	15.0%	11.6%
Laptop four year old or less	8.0%	10.3%
Laptop more than four years old	10.0%	5.4%

Students in the nation spend more time using the internet than do SUU students. SUU students tend to use the internet for less than 10 hours a week at 46% while most national students use the internet more than 10 hours a week at 69%.

3) Hours spent each week doing internet activities for school, work, or recreation combined?

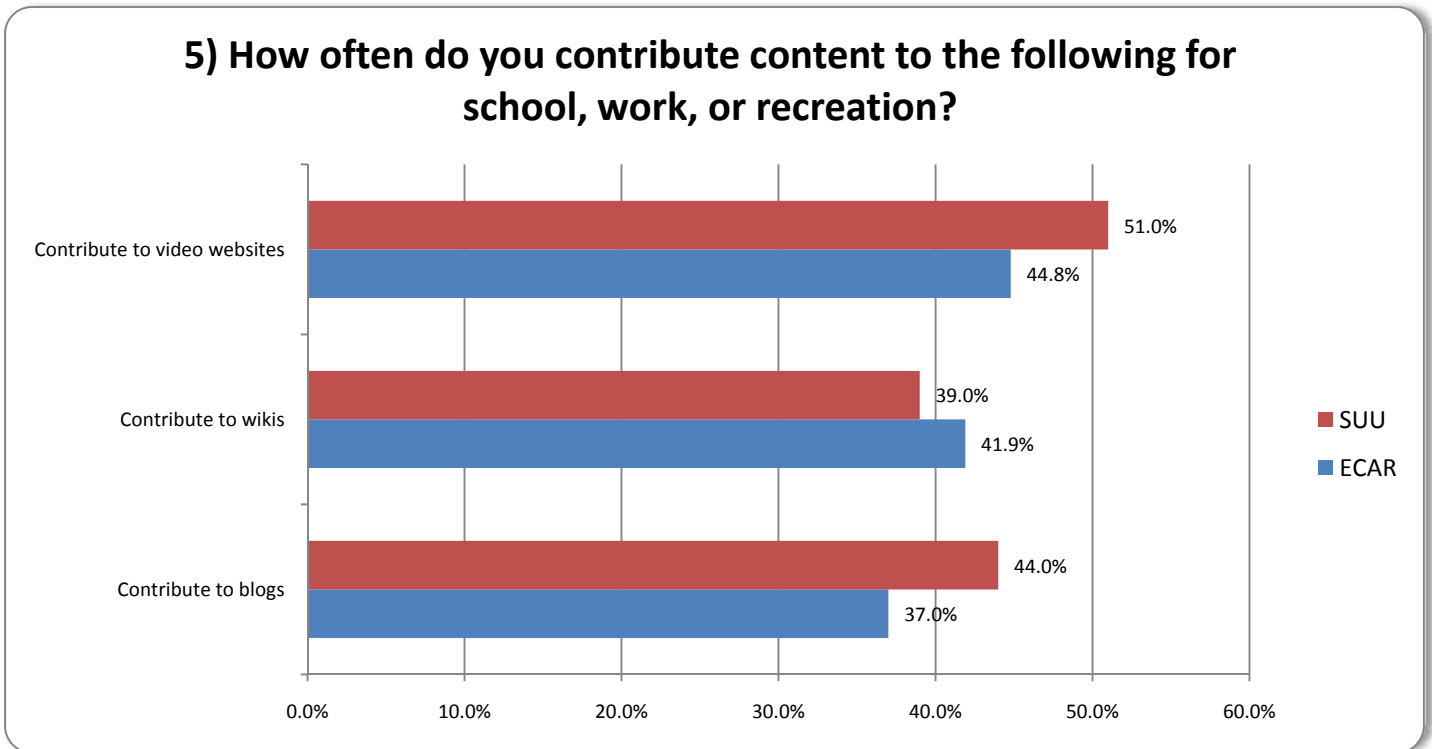| Range	SUU	ECAR
0 to 5	16.0%	9.0%
6 to 10	29.0%	21.7%
11 to 20	29.0%	34.4%
21 to 30	16.0%	18.6%
31 to 40	10.0%	7.4%
40+		8.8%

SUU students and students across the nation do a great deal of text messaging with 90% of SUU students doing it on a weekly or more frequent basis, with the nation at a close 85%. It can also be seen that SUU students spend much less time downloading web based music and video as SUU is more than 40% below the nation.
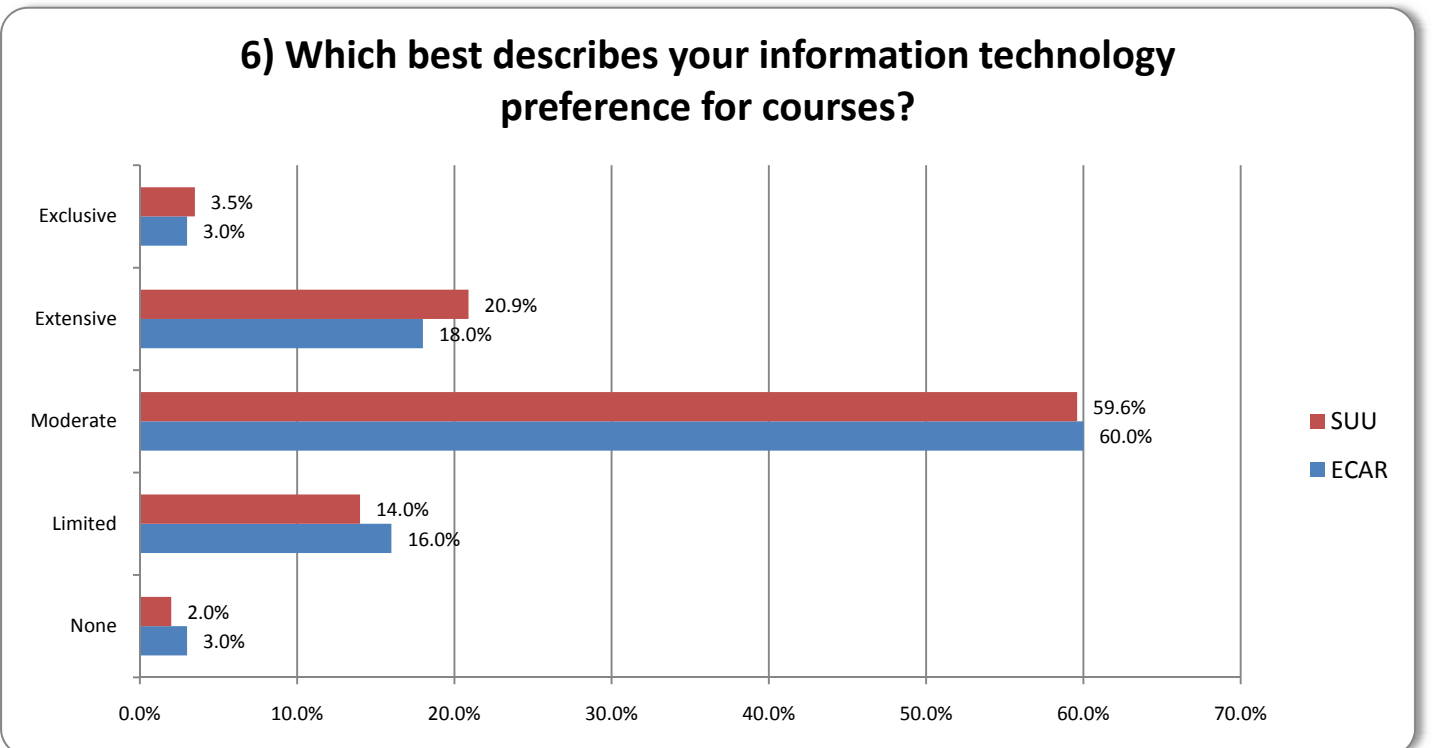
4) Do you do the following weekly or more for school, work, or recreation?

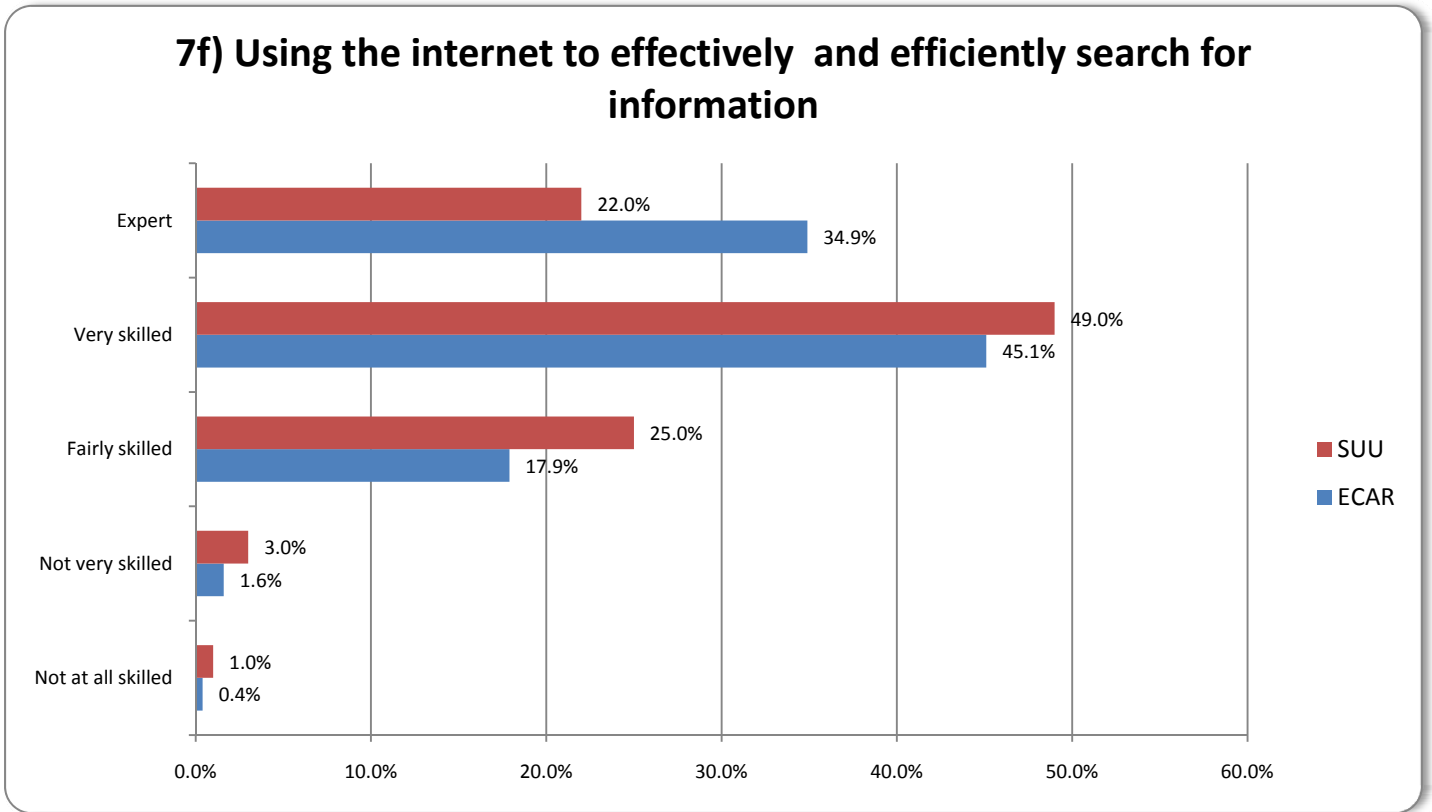| Activity	SUU	ECAR
Use instant messaging	43.0%	56.0%
Use text messaging	90.0%	85.0%
Download web based music or video	40.0%	84.2%
Use social networking site	70.0%	66.2%
Use online multi-user games	26.0%	29.0%
Use online virtual worlds	6.0%	8.0%
Use podcasts	34.0%	35.0%
Use VoiP (Skype, etc.)	30.0%	37.7%

SUU students come close to the nation with how they contribute content online, although SUU is 7% higher than the nation when it comes to students contributing content to blogs.

5) How often do you contribute content to the following for school, work, or recreation?

Contribute to video websites: SUU 51.0%, ECAR 44.8%

Contribute to wikis: SUU 39.0%, ECAR 41.9%

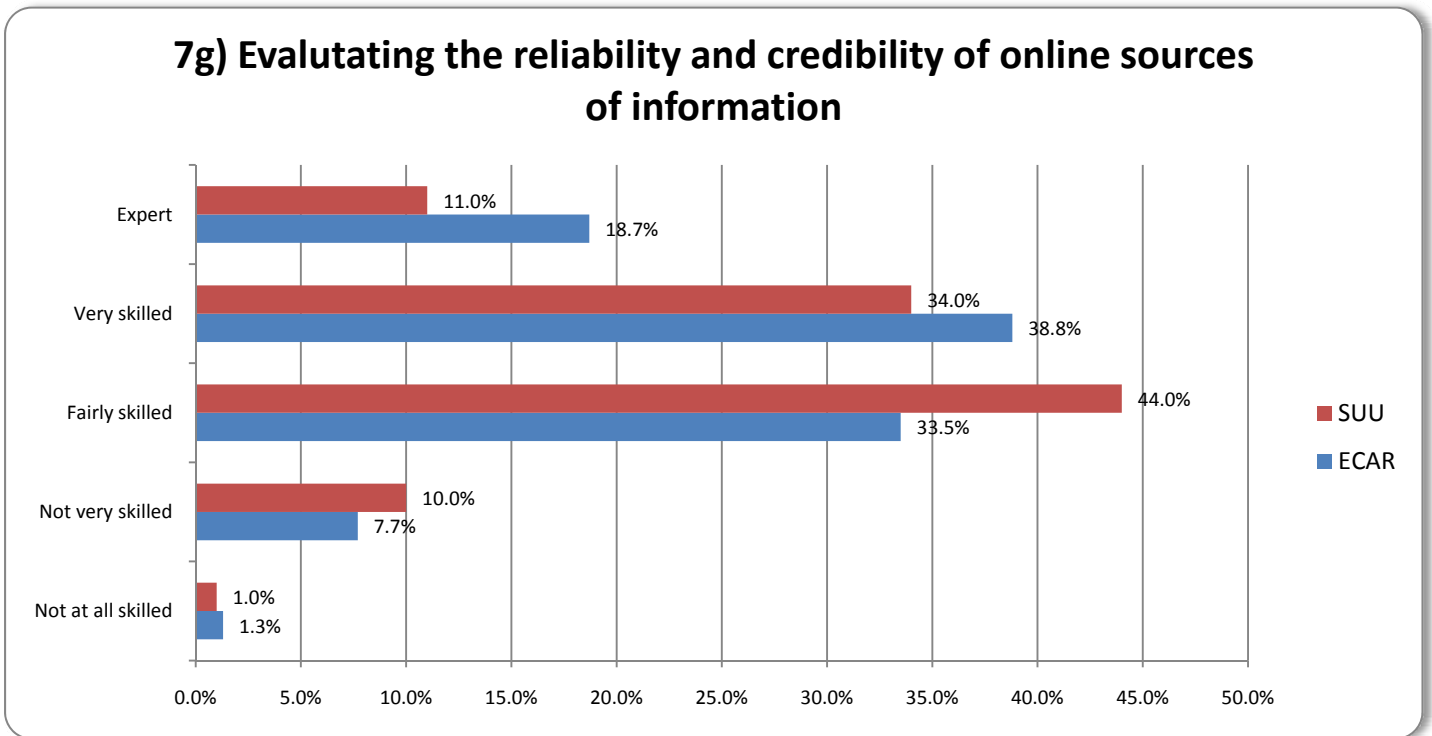Contribute to blogs: SUU 44.0%, ECAR 37.0%

Legend: SUU, ECAR

SUU is only 2% or less different from the nation with how its students prefer to have IT in their courses. Nearly 60% of students like only moderate use of IT in their courses.

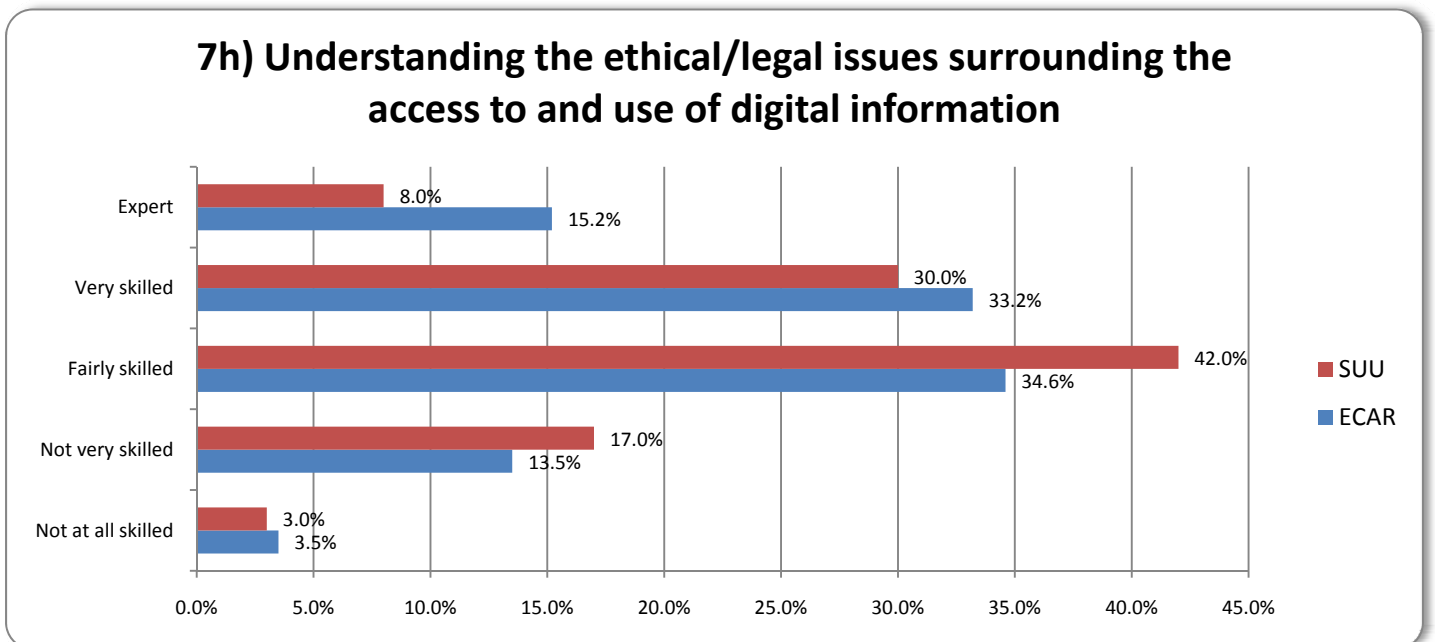## 6) Which best describes your information technology preference for courses?

Exclusive: SUU 3.5%, ECAR 3.0%

Extensive: SUU 20.9%, ECAR 18.0%

Moderate: SUU 59.6%, ECAR 60.0%

Limited: SUU 14.0%, ECAR 16.0%

None: SUU 2.0%, ECAR 3.0%

Legend: SUU, ECAR

The data show a big difference, 12%, in the ability of SUU students to expertly use the internet to gather information.

7f) Using the internet to effectively and efficiently search for information

	Expert	Very skilled	Fairly skilled	Not very skilled	Not at all skilled
SUU	22.0%	49.0%	25.0%	3.0%	1.0%
ECAR	34.9%	45.1%	17.9%	1.6%	0.4%

SUU students also have a difficulty being able to evaluate the information they obtain online with SUU dropping below the national norm on those that are expert and very skilled at evaluating information.

7g) Evalutating the reliability and credibility of online sources of information

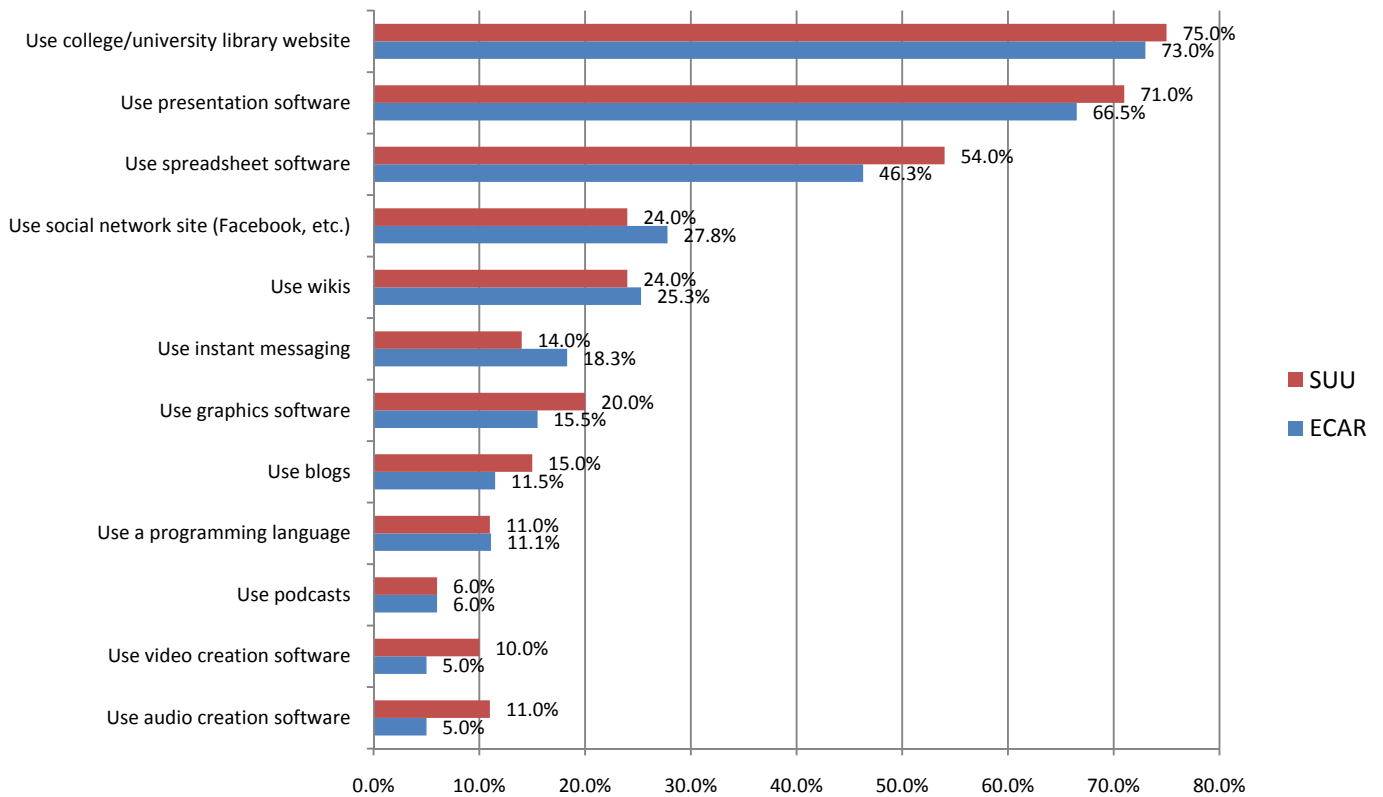|	Expert	Very skilled	Fairly skilled	Not very skilled	Not at all skilled
SUU	11.0%	34.0%	44.0%	10.0%	1.0%
ECAR	18.7%	38.8%	33.5%	7.7%	1.3%

SUU students seem to have difficulties understanding ethical and legal issues of Internet use with those that are expert and very skilled falling below the national norm and those that are less skilled being greater than the national norm.

7h) Understanding the ethical/legal issues surrounding the access to and use of digital information

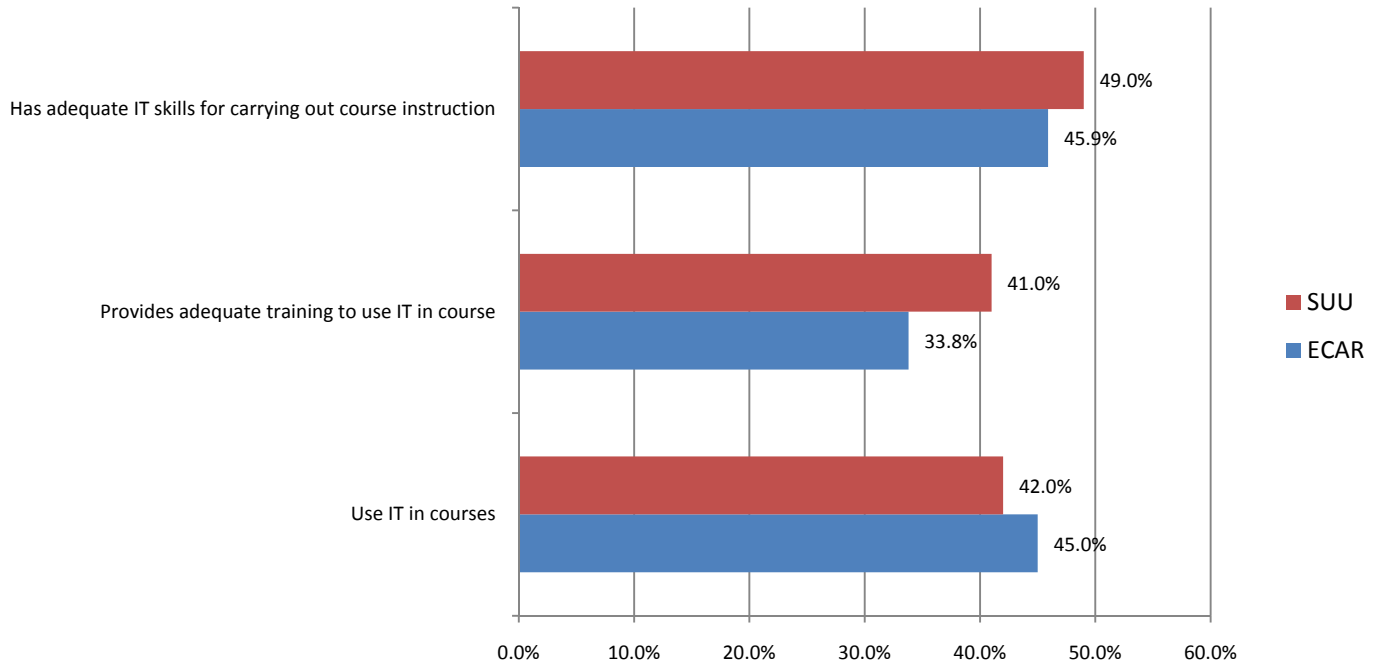| Category	SUU	ECAR
Expert	8.0%	15.2%
Very skilled	30.0%	33.2%
Fairly skilled	42.0%	34.6%
Not very skilled	17.0%	13.5%
Not at all skilled	3.0%	3.5%

SUU is higher than the nation in library website usage at 2% greater, presentation software usage at 5% greater, and spreadsheet software usage at 8% greater which is an indicator that SUU demands a bit more from its students regarding IT.

8) Are you using the following for any of your courses this semester?

| Category	SUU	ECAR
Use college/university library website	75.0%	73.0%
Use presentation software	71.0%	66.5%
Use spreadsheet software	54.0%	46.3%
Use social network site (Facebook, etc.)	24.0%	27.8%
Use wikis	24.0%	25.3%
Use instant messaging	14.0%	18.3%
Use graphics software	20.0%	15.5%
Use blogs	15.0%	11.5%
Use a programming language	11.0%	11.1%
Use podcasts	6.0%	6.0%
Use video creation software	10.0%	5.0%
Use audio creation software	11.0%	5.0%

Half of SUU students feel that their professors have adequate skills to use IT in courses. 41% of students at SUU feel like their professors show them how to perform course tasks that require IT with the nation coming in even lower at 33.8%.

9) How many of your instructors do the following

| Category	SUU	ECAR
Has adequate IT skills for carrying out course instruction	49.0%	45.9%
Provides adequate training to use IT in course	41.0%	33.8%
Use IT in courses	42.0%	45.0%

Almost every student at SUU has taken a course using a CMS (eLearning) at 96% of students, 7% more than the nation. The data show that the use of IT in driving courses at SUU is high.
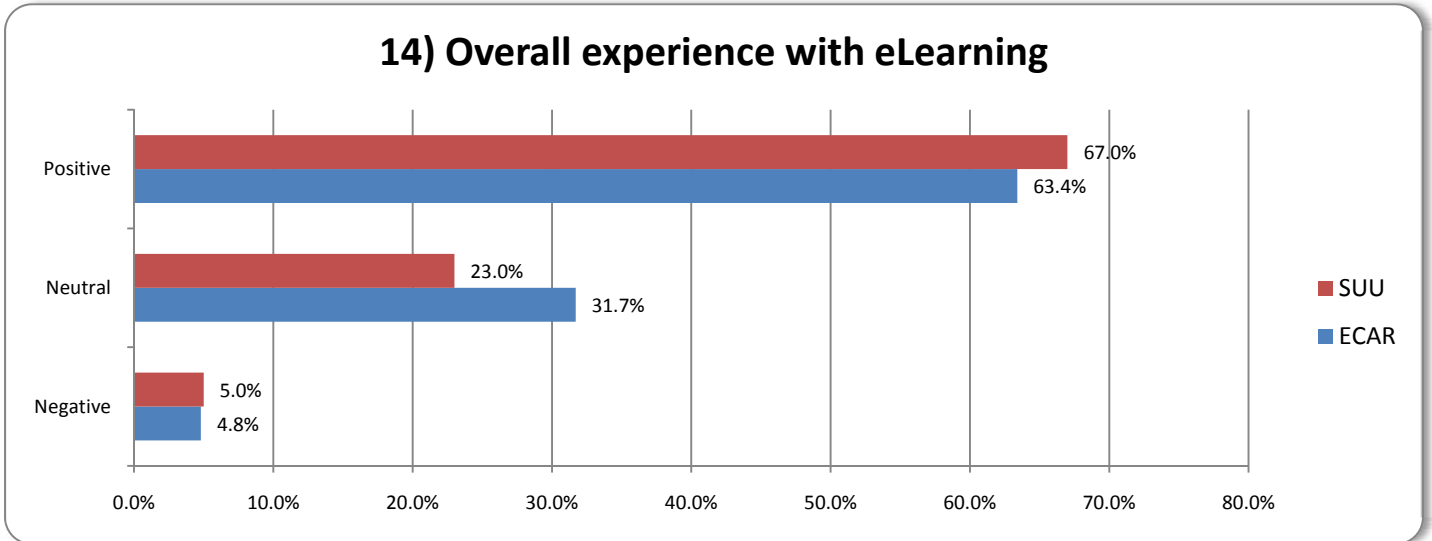
10) Have you ever taken a course where the instructor used a CMS (eLearning)?

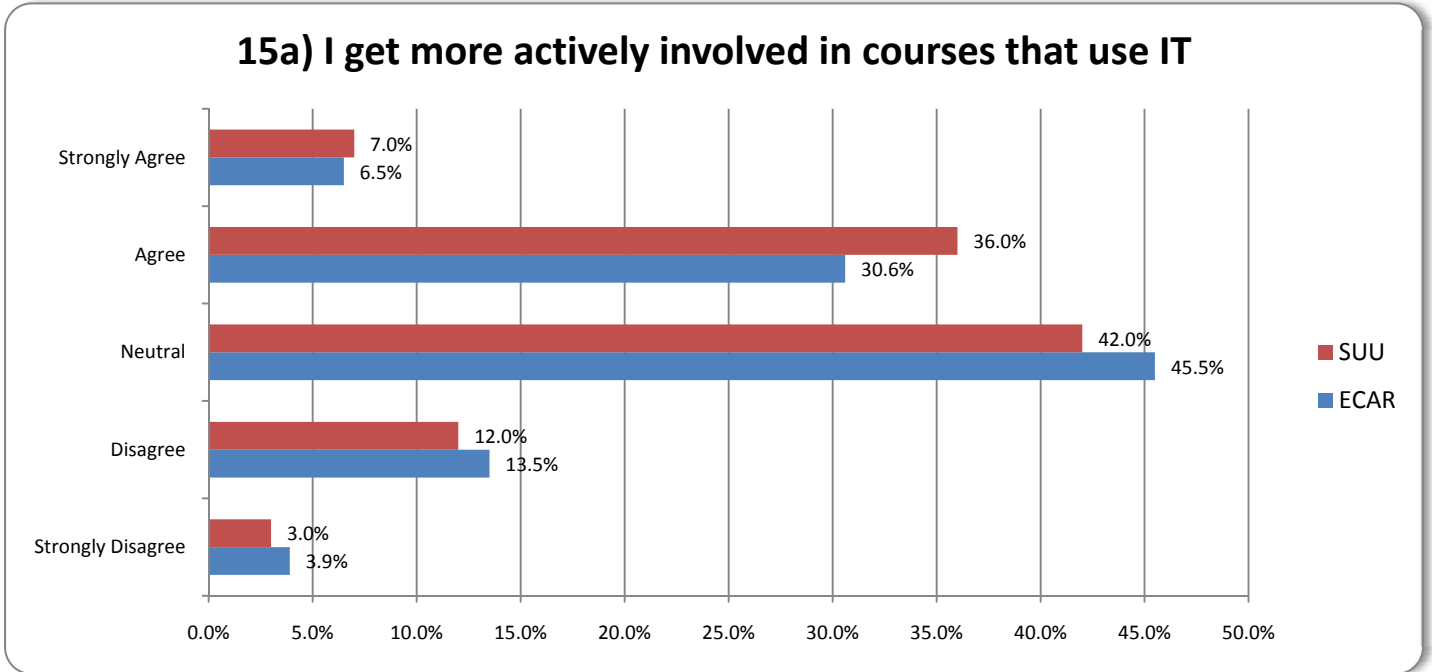| Category	SUU	ECAR
CMS Course	96.0%	88.9%
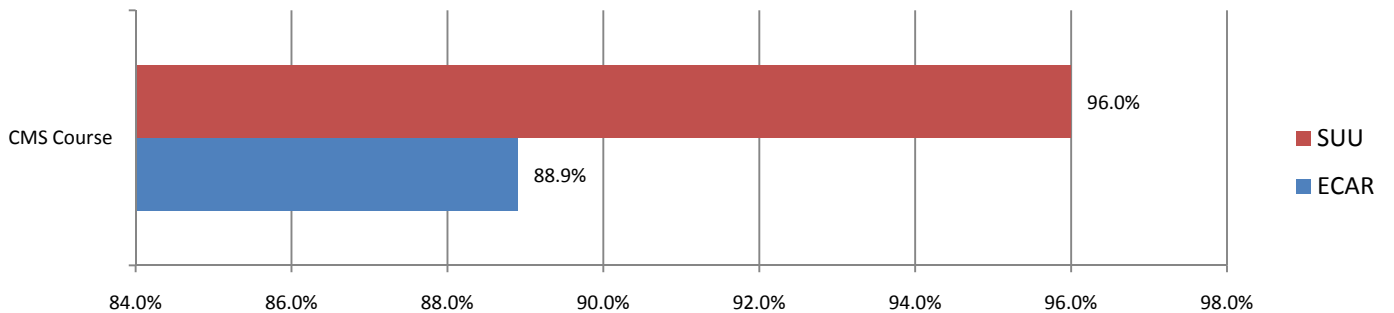
84% of students at SUU said they used eLearning during the semester with the nation at a close 80%. These numbers indicate that a large number of courses are using CMS systems to drive course work.

11) Use a CMS (eLearning) during the semester?

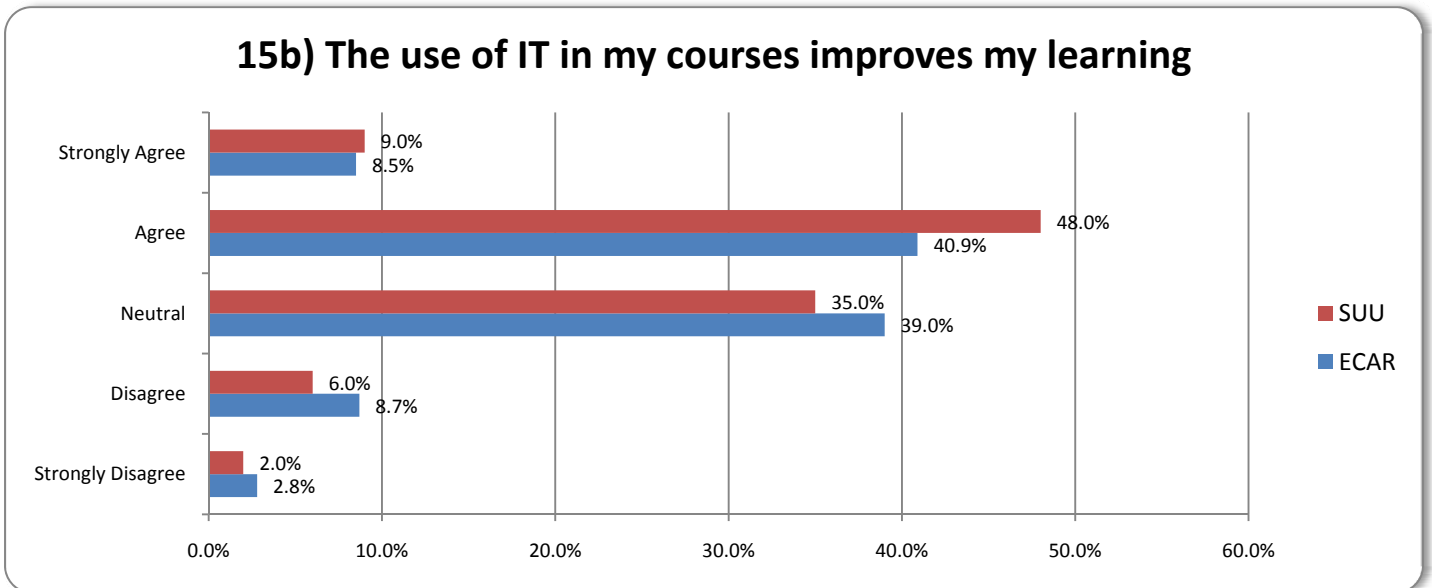Use CMS (eLearning): SUU 84.0%, ECAR 80.0%
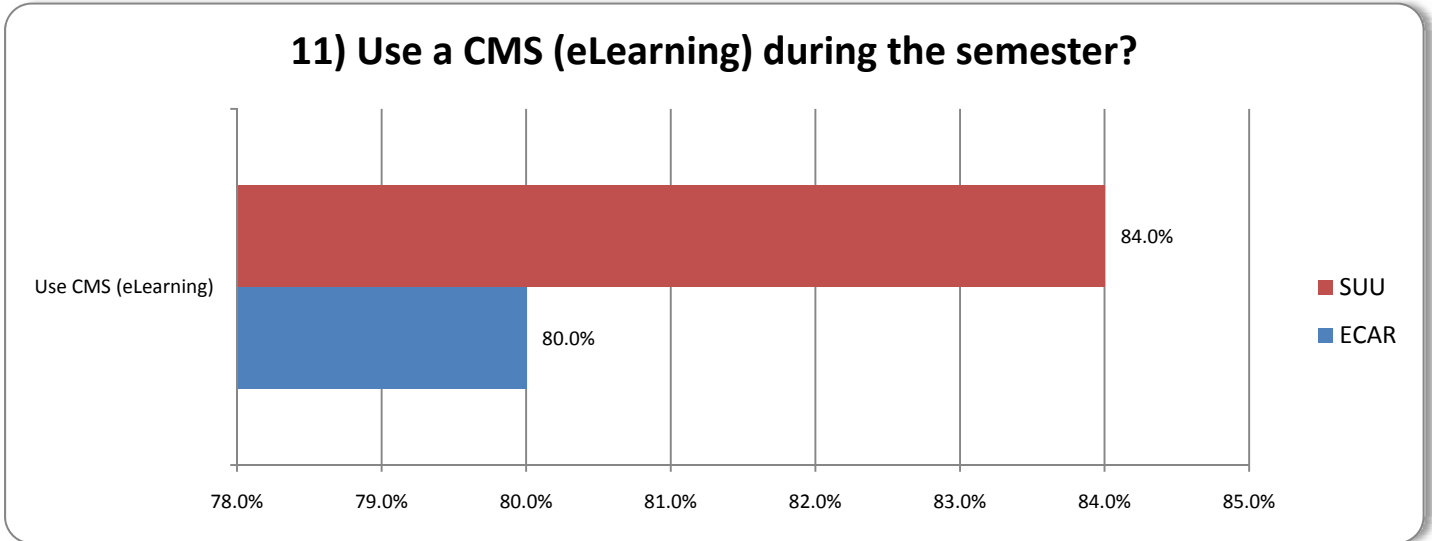
Two thirds of students surveyed in both the nation at SUU have generally a positive experience with CMS systems (eLearning) while only a few, less than 5%, have a negative experience.

14) Overall experience with eLearning

Positive: SUU 67.0%, ECAR 63.4%
Neutral: SUU 23.0%, ECAR 31.7%
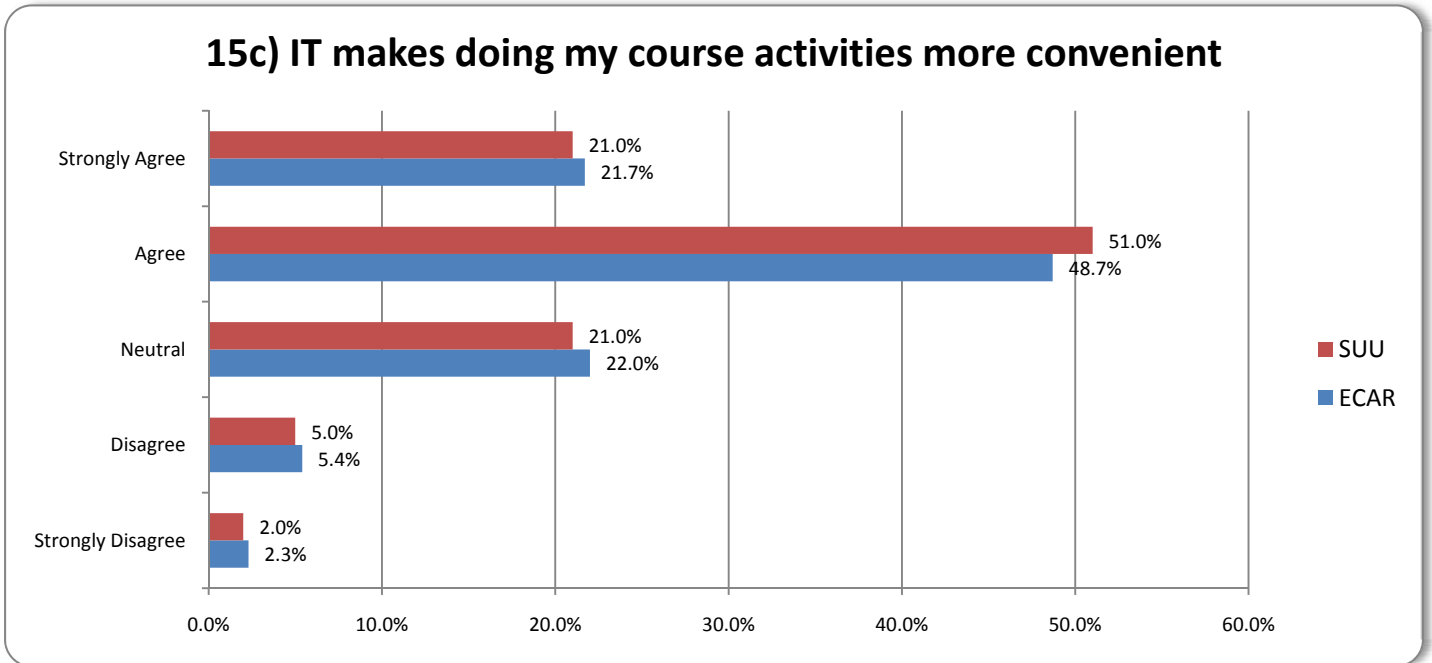Negative: SUU 5.0%, ECAR 4.8%

Just under 40% of SUU students said they get more actively involved in courses that use IT, but just over 40% didn't seem to care one way or the other. SUU comes out ahead of the nation with those that agree or strongly agree.

15a) I get more actively involved in courses that use IT

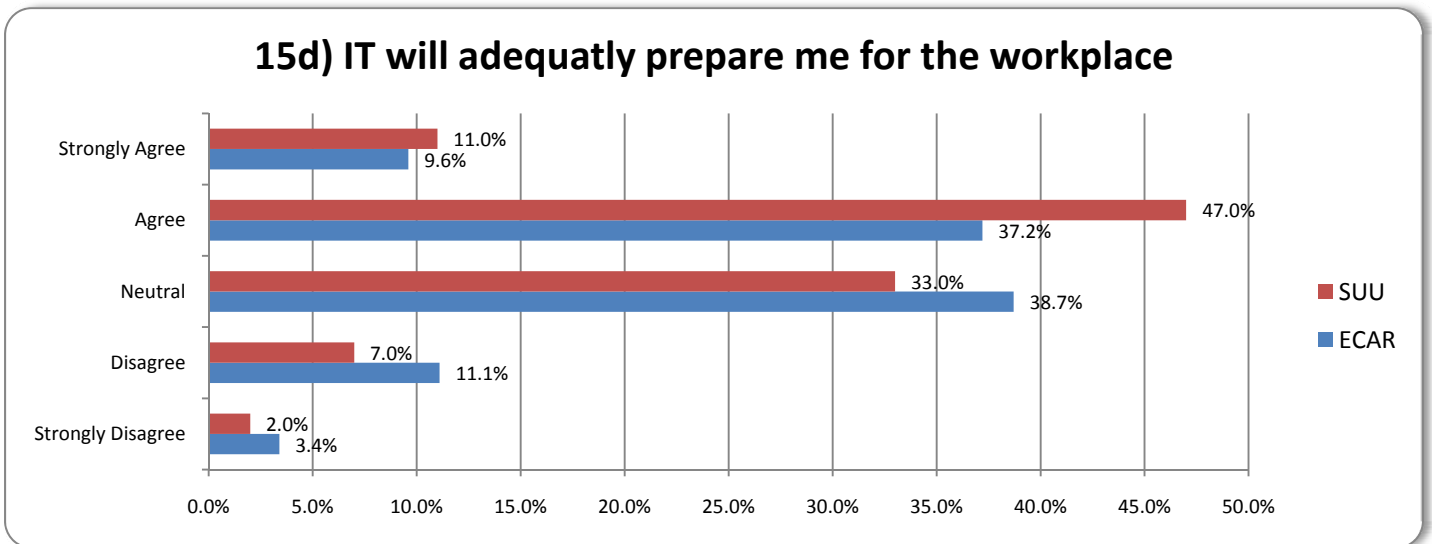| Category	SUU	ECAR
Strongly Agree	7.0%	6.5%
Agree	36.0%	30.6%
Neutral	42.0%	45.5%
Disagree	12.0%	13.5%
Strongly Disagree	3.0%	3.9%

57% of SUU students said that using IT in courses improves their learning while the nation is at just over 49%. Thus far SUU students seem to like using IT more than the national norm.

15b) The use of IT in my courses improves my learning

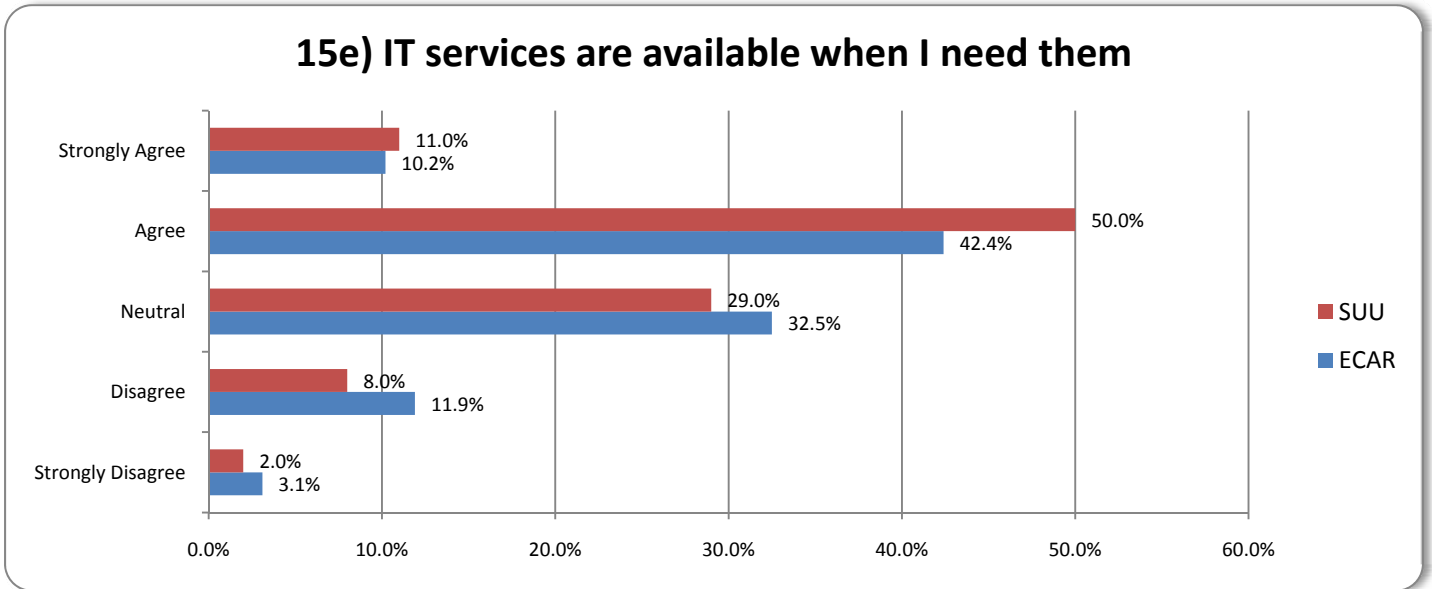| Category	SUU	ECAR
Strongly Agree	9.0%	8.5%
Agree	48.0%	40.9%
Neutral	35.0%	39.0%
Disagree	6.0%	8.7%
Strongly Disagree	2.0%	2.8%

SUU ranked nearly the same with the nation on the convenience of IT use in course activities with more than 70% of students saying that it makes their course work more convenient.

15c) IT makes doing my course activities more convenient

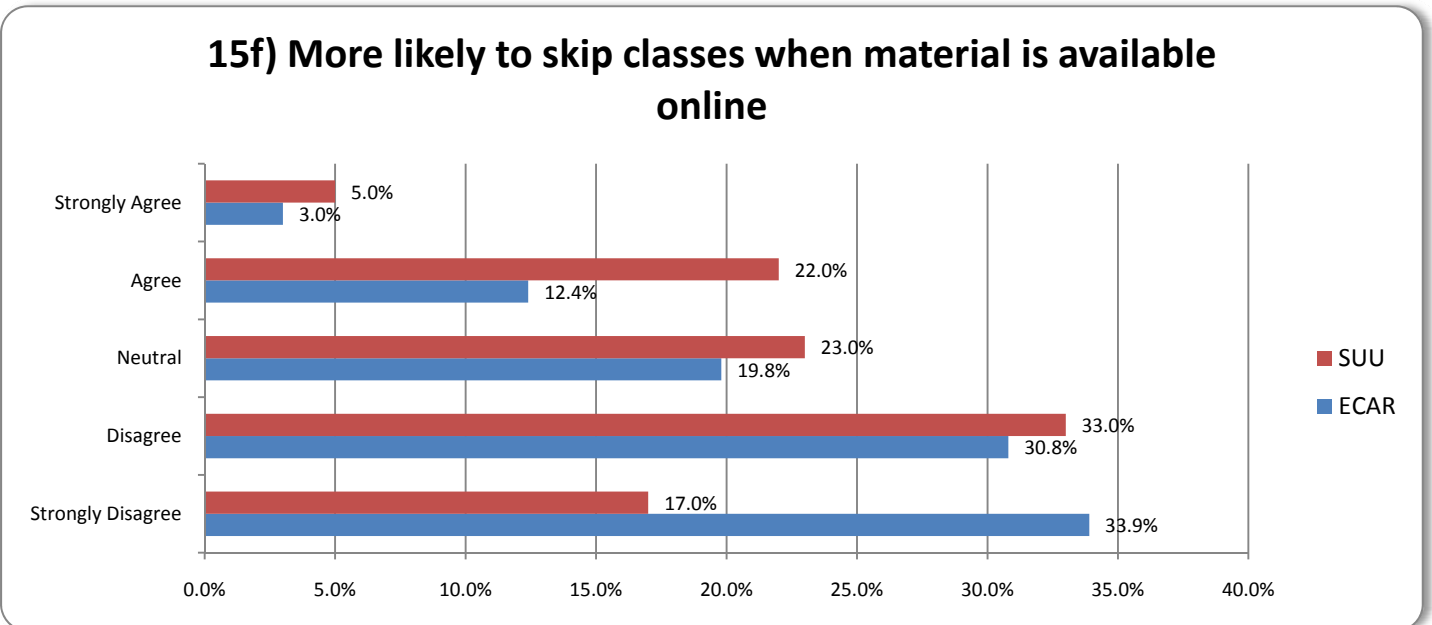| Category	SUU	ECAR
Strongly Agree	21.0%	21.7%
Agree	51.0%	48.7%
Neutral	21.0%	22.0%
Disagree	5.0%	5.4%
Strongly Disagree	2.0%	2.3%

68% of SUU students agree that the IT they use in courses will prepare them for the workplace while 47% of national students said IT will prepare them for the workplace.
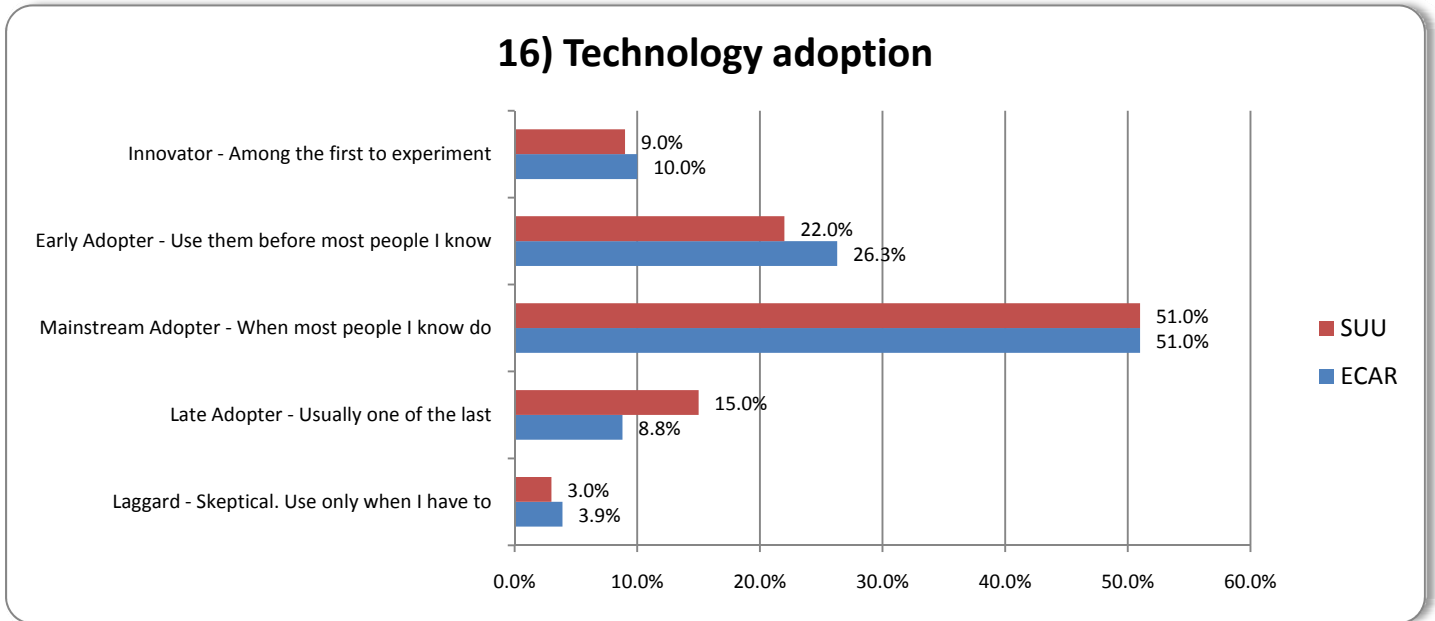
15d) IT will adequatly prepare me for the workplace

Category	SUU	ECAR
Strongly Agree	11.0%	9.6%
Agree	47.0%	37.2%
Neutral	33.0%	38.7%
Disagree	7.0%	11.1%
Strongly Disagree	2.0%	3.4%

IT service availability at SUU faired quite a bit better than the nation with 61% of students saying services were there when they needed them whereas the national norm was just over 50%.

15e) IT services are available when I need them

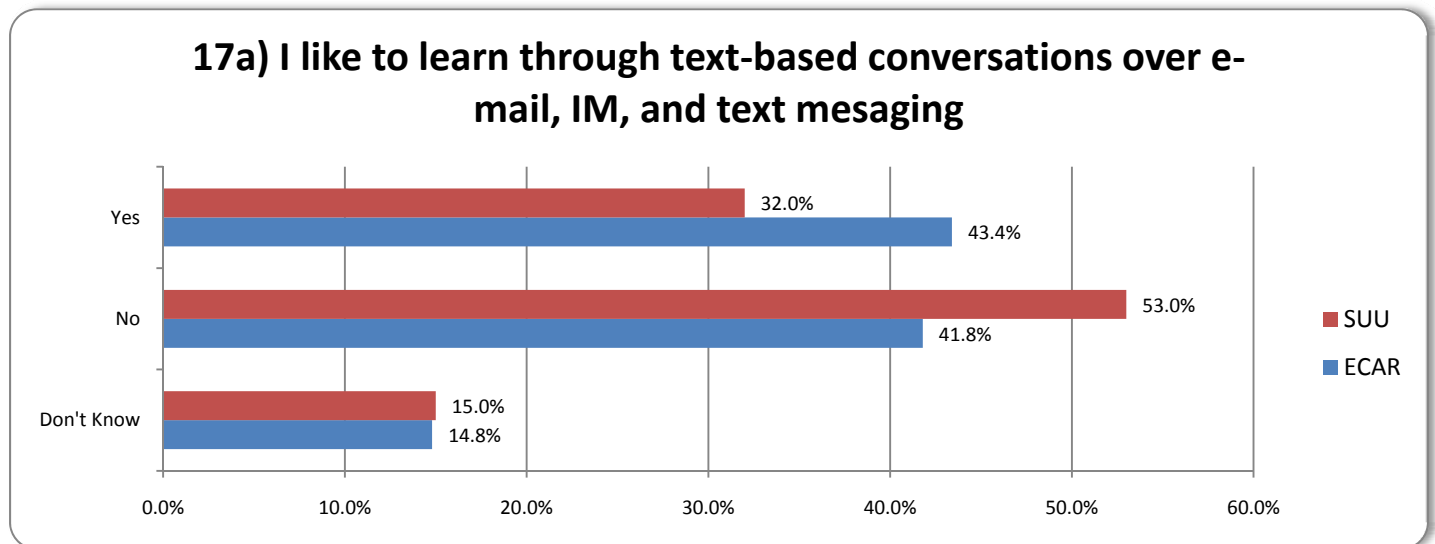| Response	SUU	ECAR
Strongly Agree	11.0%	10.2%
Agree	50.0%	42.4%
Neutral	29.0%	32.5%
Disagree	8.0%	11.9%
Strongly Disagree	2.0%	3.1%

As a nation, most students seem to prefer traditional class encounters and 67% of students would not skip class even if materials were available online. In comparison only 47% of SUU students said they would not skip class if materials were available online. SUU nearly doubles the national norm of students that agree that they would skip class if materials were available online.

15f) More likely to skip classes when material is available online

| Response	SUU	ECAR
Strongly Agree	5.0%	3.0%
Agree	22.0%	12.4%
Neutral	23.0%	19.8%
Disagree	33.0%	30.8%
Strongly Disagree	17.0%	33.9%

SUU matches the national norm quite closely with exactly 51% of students defining themselves as mainstream adopters. But almost double the amount of SUU students say they are late adopters of technology compared to the national norm of 8.8%.

16) Technology adoption

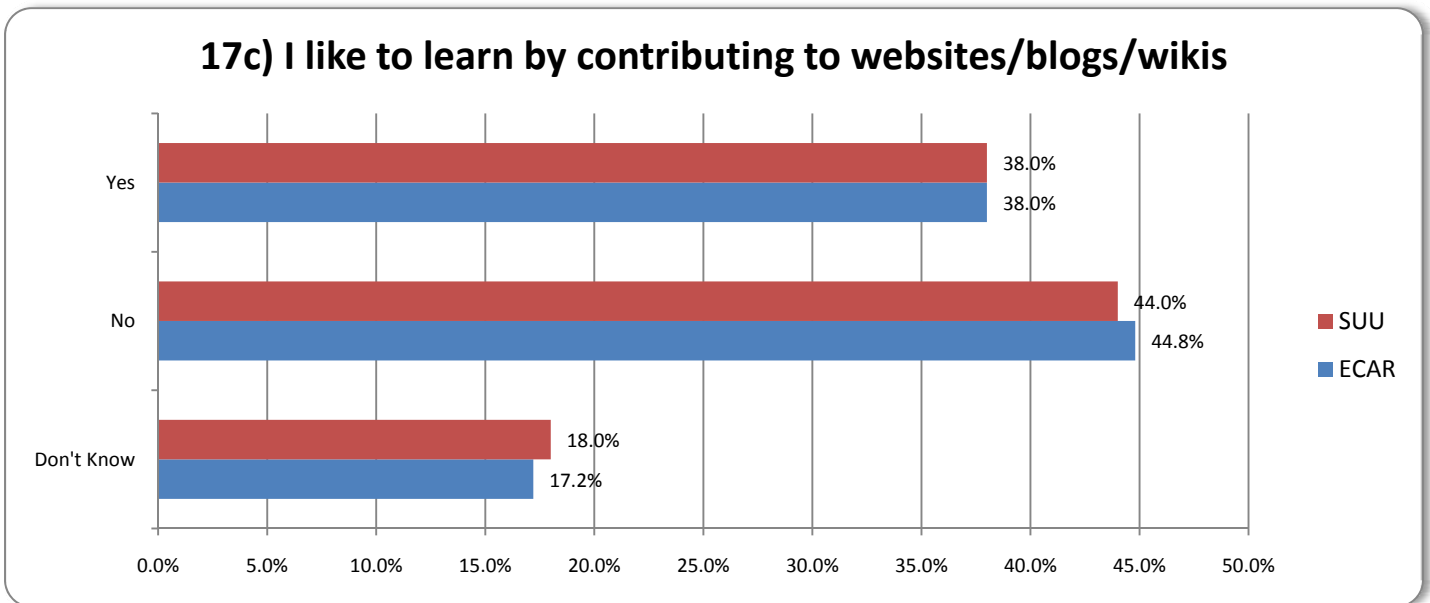| Category	SUU	ECAR
Innovator - Among the first to experiment	9.0%	10.0%
Early Adopter - Use them before most people I know	22.0%	26.3%
Mainstream Adopter - When most people I know do	51.0%	51.0%
Late Adopter - Usually one of the last	15.0%	8.8%
Laggard - Skeptical. Use only when I have to	3.0%	3.9%

The national norm here is pretty even with only about a 2% difference in students that like and dislike learning with text-based conversations. But SUU has a "no" with more than half of students saying they dislike learning by text-based means which is 12% more than the nation with only 32% of SUU students saying "yes".

17a) I like to learn through text-based conversations over e-mail, IM, and text mesaging

| Response	SUU	ECAR
Yes	32.0%	43.4%
No	53.0%	41.8%
Don't Know	15.0%	14.8%

SUU and the national norm are nearly identical here with a 1% or less difference for each result where half of students say they like to learn through programs, games, and simulations while 30% don't.

17b) I like to learn through programs, video games, and simulations

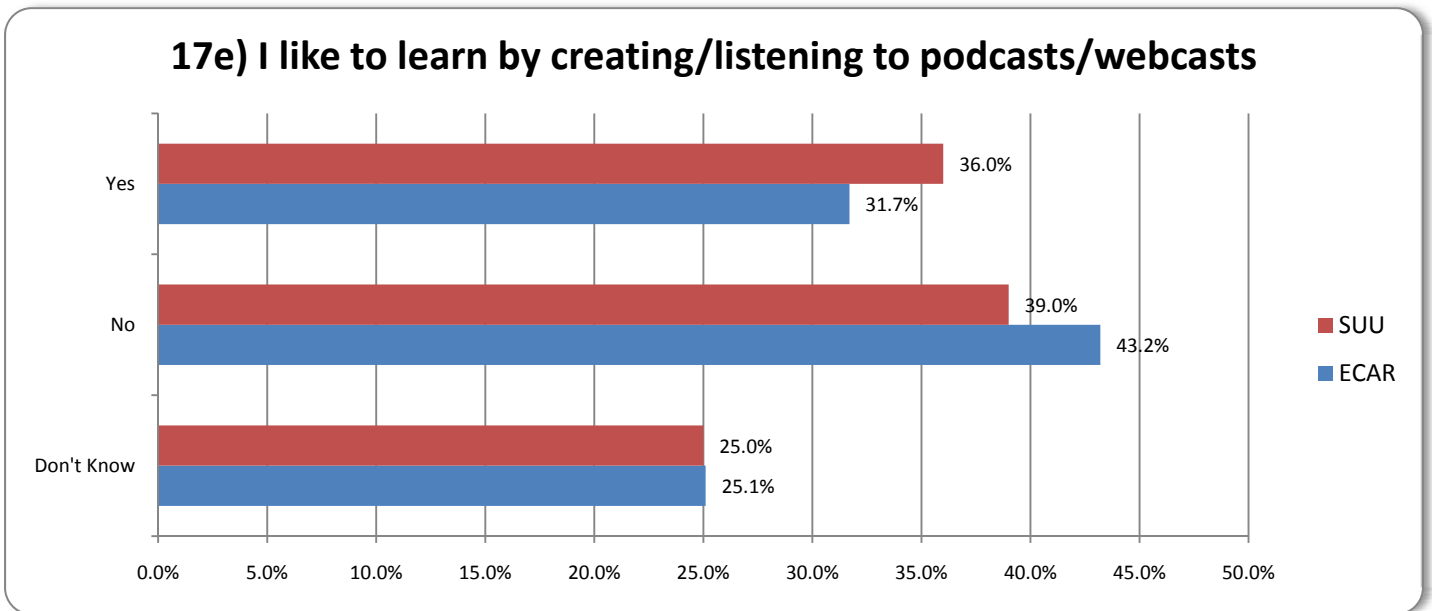|	SUU	ECAR
Yes	50.0%	49.2%
No	32.0%	33.8%
Don't Know	18.0%	17.0%
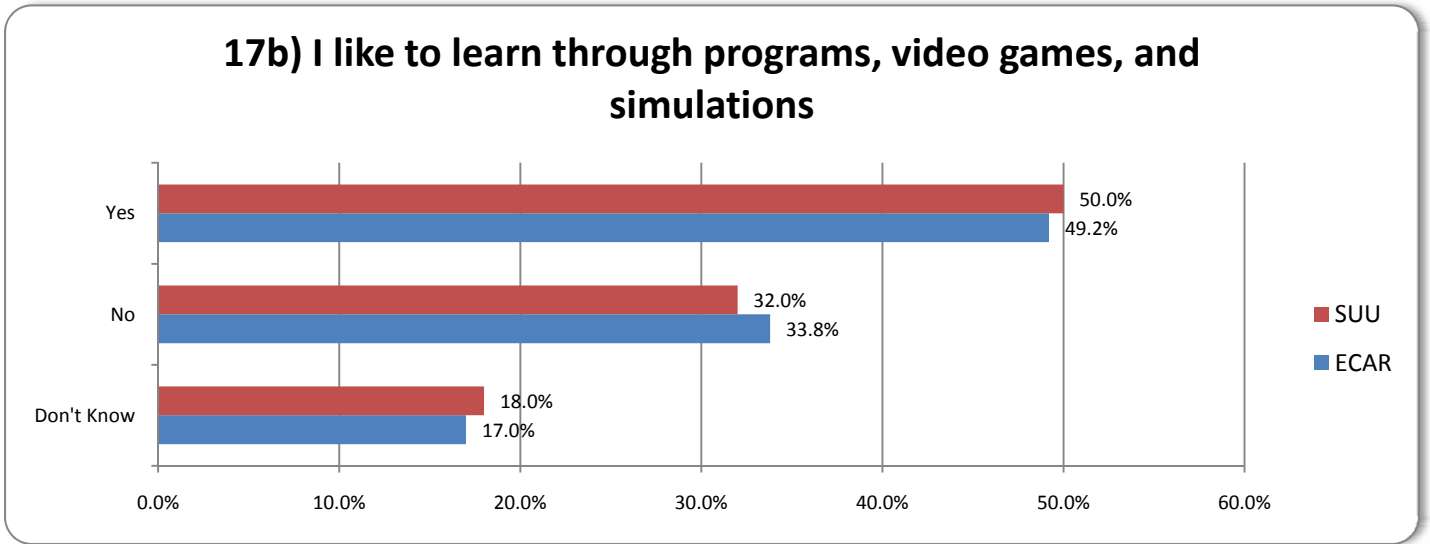
SUU and the national norm are nearly identical here with less than a 1% difference for each result. 38% of students like to contribute content to websites, blogs, and wikis to learn where roughly 44% don't.

17c) I like to learn by contributing to websites/blogs/wikis

	SUU	ECAR
Yes	38.0%	38.0%
No	44.0%	44.8%
Don't Know	18.0%	17.2%

At SUU and nationally, students like to learn by searching for the information themselves using the internet with 75% of SUU students saying they like this method.
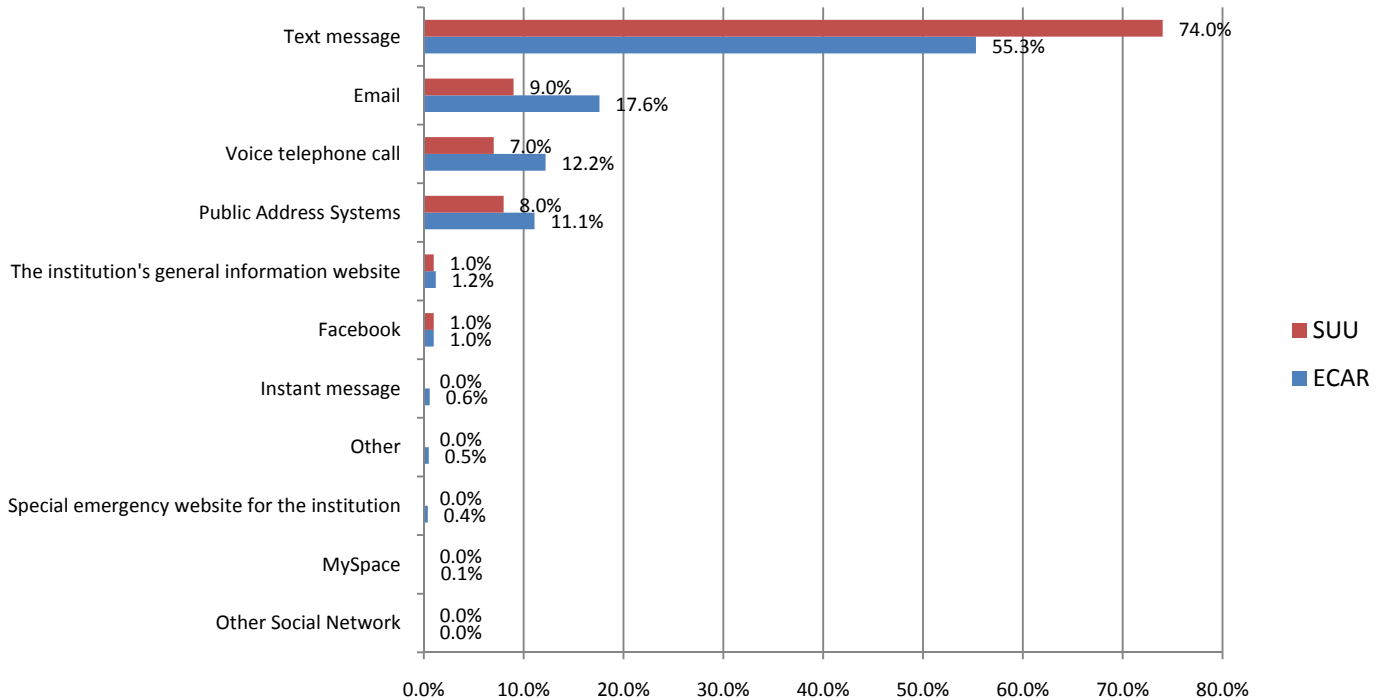
17d) I like to learn by running internet searches

	SUU	ECAR
Yes	75.0%	79.5%
No	17.0%	14.0%
Don't Know	8.0%	6.4%
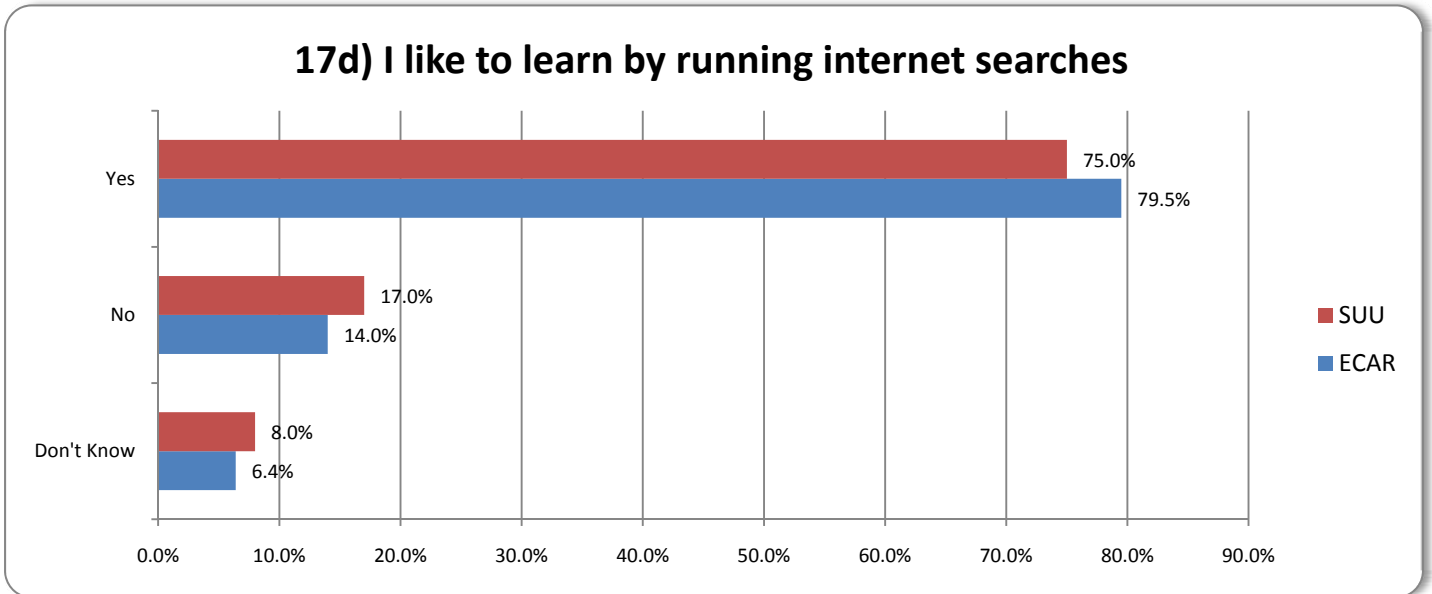
The conclusion can be drawn from the data that a quarter of all students probably don't have any experience with podcasts and webcasts.

17e) I like to learn by creating/listening to podcasts/webcasts

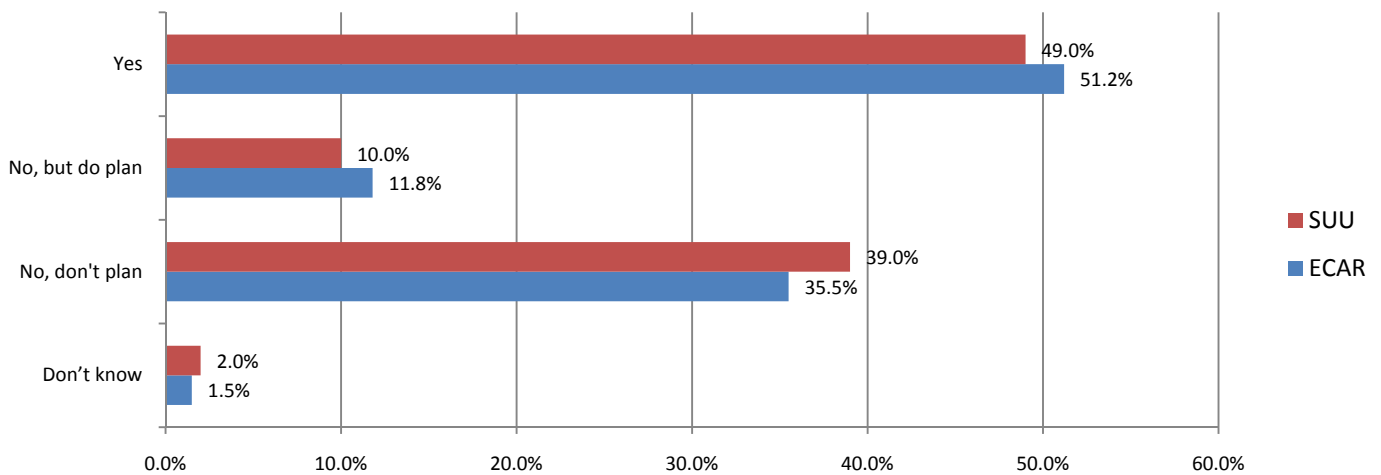|	SUU	ECAR
Yes	36.0%	31.7%
No	39.0%	43.2%
Don't Know	25.0%	25.1%

SUU's results here are expected, with 74% of students wanting to be notified by text message when there is a campus emergency since it was noted in question 4 that 90% of students use text messaging weekly or more.

18) How should you be contacted in case of an emergency?

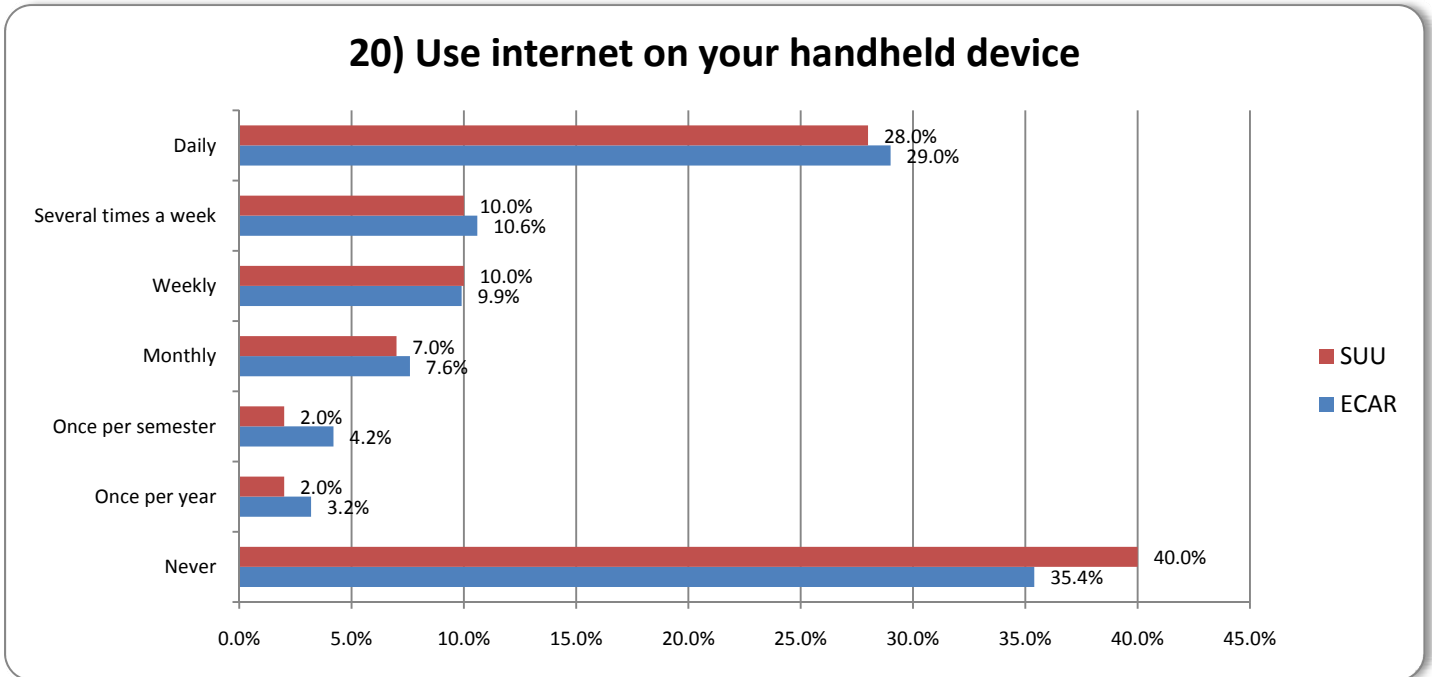| Category	SUU	ECAR
Text message	74.0%	55.3%
Email	9.0%	17.6%
Voice telephone call	7.0%	12.2%
Public Address Systems	8.0%	11.1%
The institution's general information website	1.0%	1.2%
Facebook	1.0%	1.0%
Instant message	0.0%	0.6%
Other	0.0%	0.5%
Special emergency website for the institution	0.0%	0.4%
MySpace	0.0%	0.1%
Other Social Network	0.0%	0.0%

SUU fits into the national norm with nearly 50% of students owning an internet capable device. SUU is a bit above the national norm with 39% of students saying they don't have an internet capable device and they don't plan on getting one in the near future.
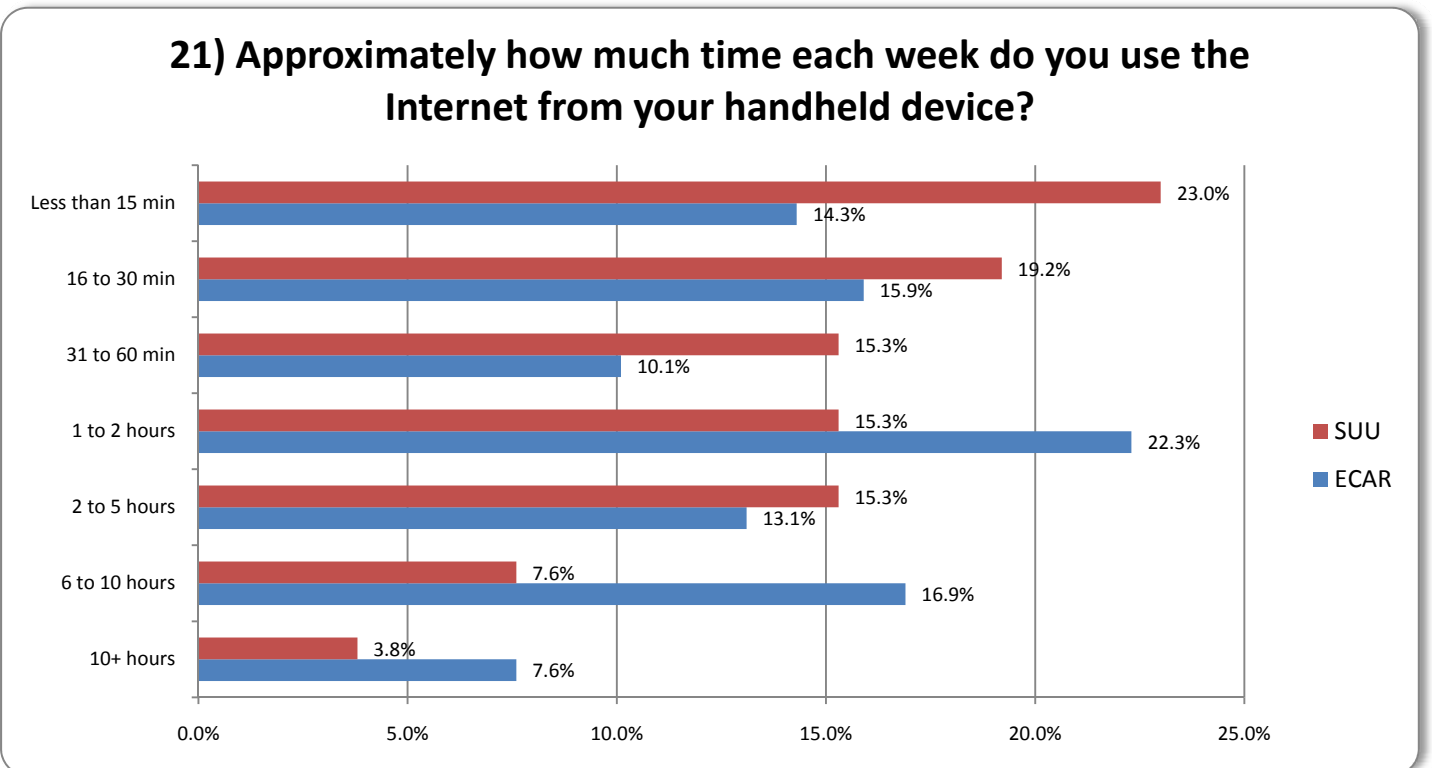
19) Do you own a handheld device that is capable of accessing the Internet (whether or not you use that capability)?
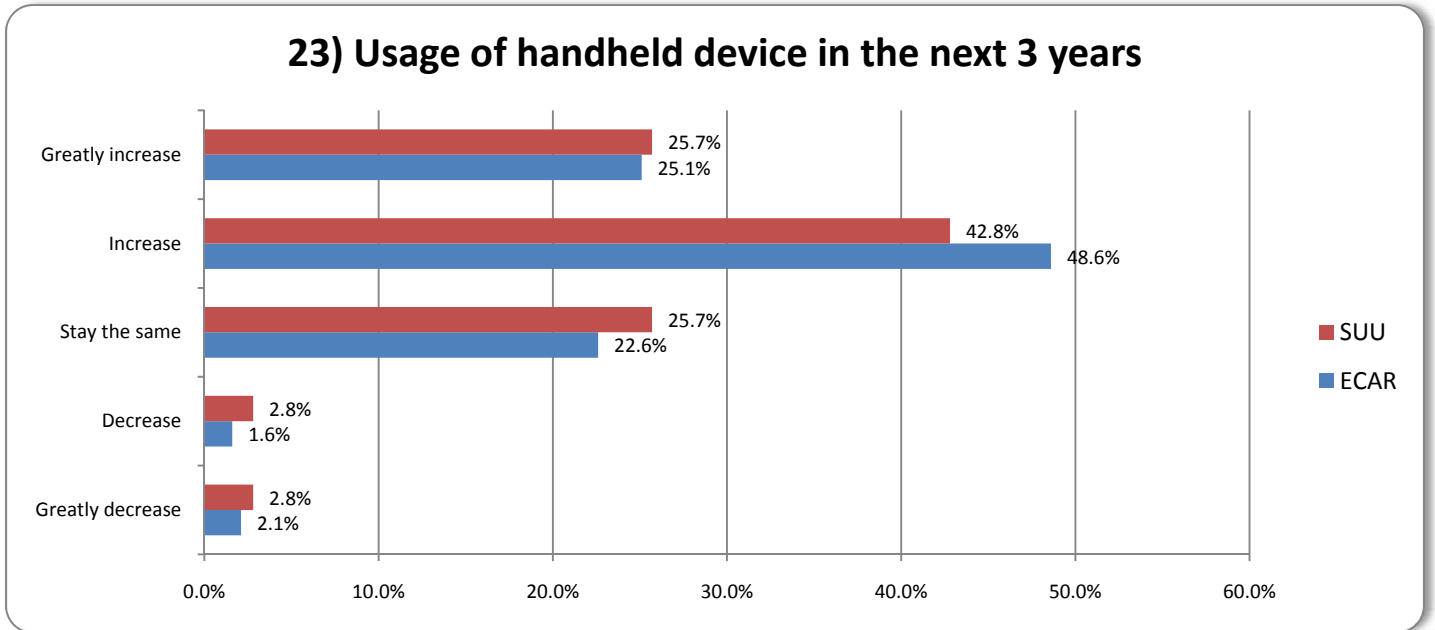
Category	SUU	ECAR
Yes	49.0%	51.2%
No, but do plan	10.0%	11.8%
No, don't plan	39.0%	35.5%
Don't know	2.0%	1.5%

SUU fits just under the national norm for those students that use their internet capable devices with each time period coming within 1%.

20) Use internet on your handheld device

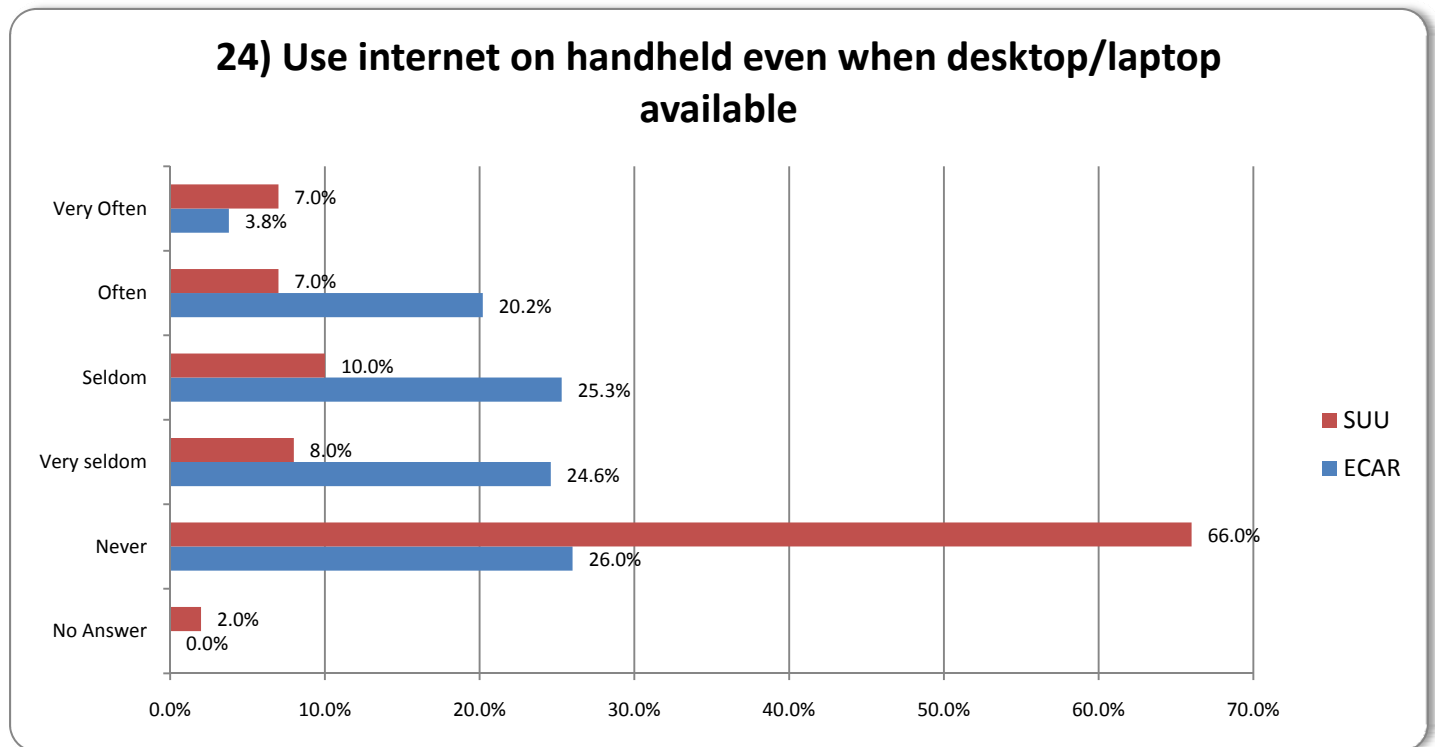| Category	SUU	ECAR
Daily	28.0%	29.0%
Several times a week	10.0%	10.6%
Weekly	10.0%	9.9%
Monthly	7.0%	7.6%
Once per semester	2.0%	4.2%
Once per year	2.0%	3.2%
Never	40.0%	35.4%

The time SUU students spend using the internet on their handheld device is much lower than the national norm with 23% of SUU students using the internet on their device less than 15 minutes a week.

21) Approximately how much time each week do you use the Internet from your handheld device?

Category	SUU	ECAR
Less than 15 min	23.0%	14.3%
16 to 30 min	19.2%	15.9%
31 to 60 min	15.3%	10.1%
1 to 2 hours	15.3%	22.3%
2 to 5 hours	15.3%	13.1%
6 to 10 hours	7.6%	16.9%
10+ hours	3.8%	7.6%

25% of SUU and national students that use handheld devices expect that their usage will increase greatly while over 40% say it will increase.
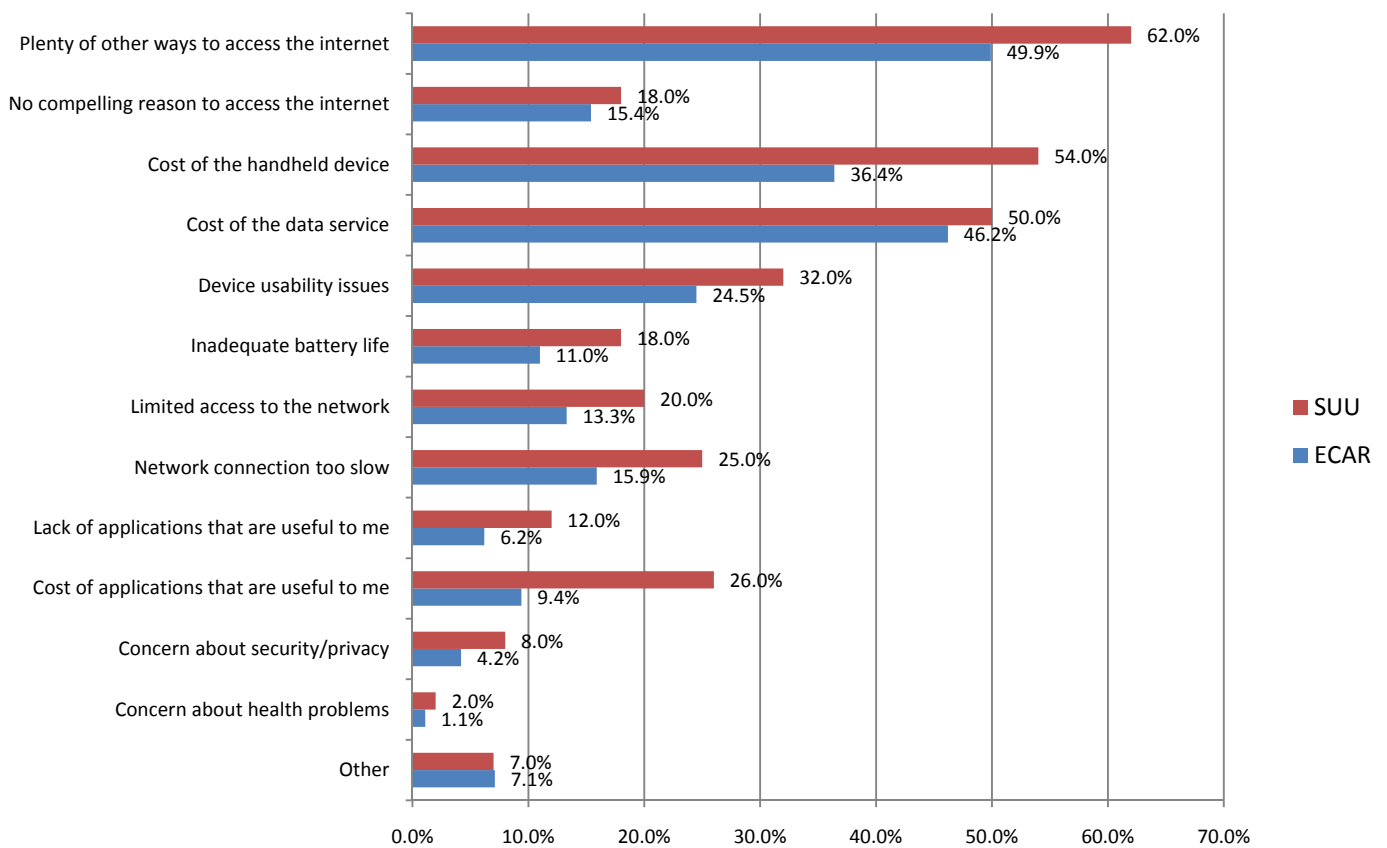
23) Usage of handheld device in the next 3 years

Category	SUU	ECAR
Greatly increase	25.7%	25.1%
Increase	42.8%	48.6%
Stay the same	25.7%	22.6%
Decrease	2.8%	1.6%
Greatly decrease	2.8%	2.1%

The national norm is more evenly distributed than SUU's distribution but SUU students prefer a desktop or laptop computer to a handheld device with 66% of students saying they never use their handheld internet capable device if a desktop or laptop is available whereas only 26% of national students responded that way.

24) Use internet on handheld even when desktop/laptop available

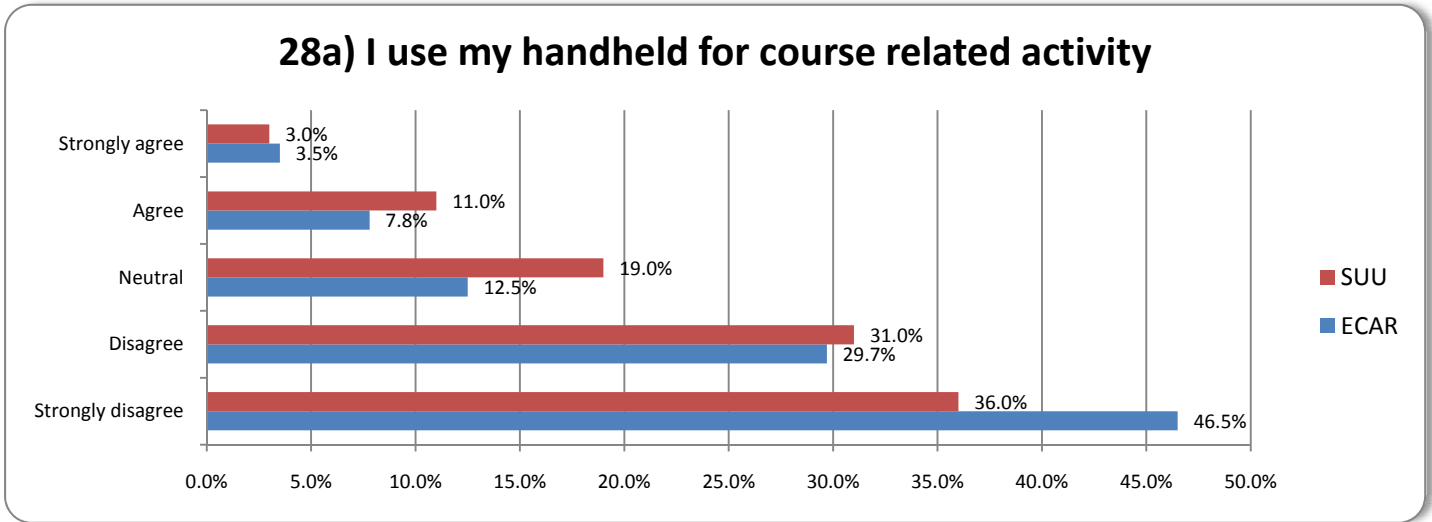| Category	SUU	ECAR
Very Often	7.0%	3.8%
Often	7.0%	20.2%
Seldom	10.0%	25.3%
Very seldom	8.0%	24.6%
Never	66.0%	26.0%
No Answer	2.0%	0.0%

Based on question 24, it is easy to see why 62% of SUU students said that there are plenty of other ways to use the internet and this is why they don't use internet on their handheld device while the national norm is lower at 50%. Also looking at results regarding the cost of handheld devices and the cost of applications that are useful to students on the devices the data show that SUU students find internet usage on handheld devices expensive.
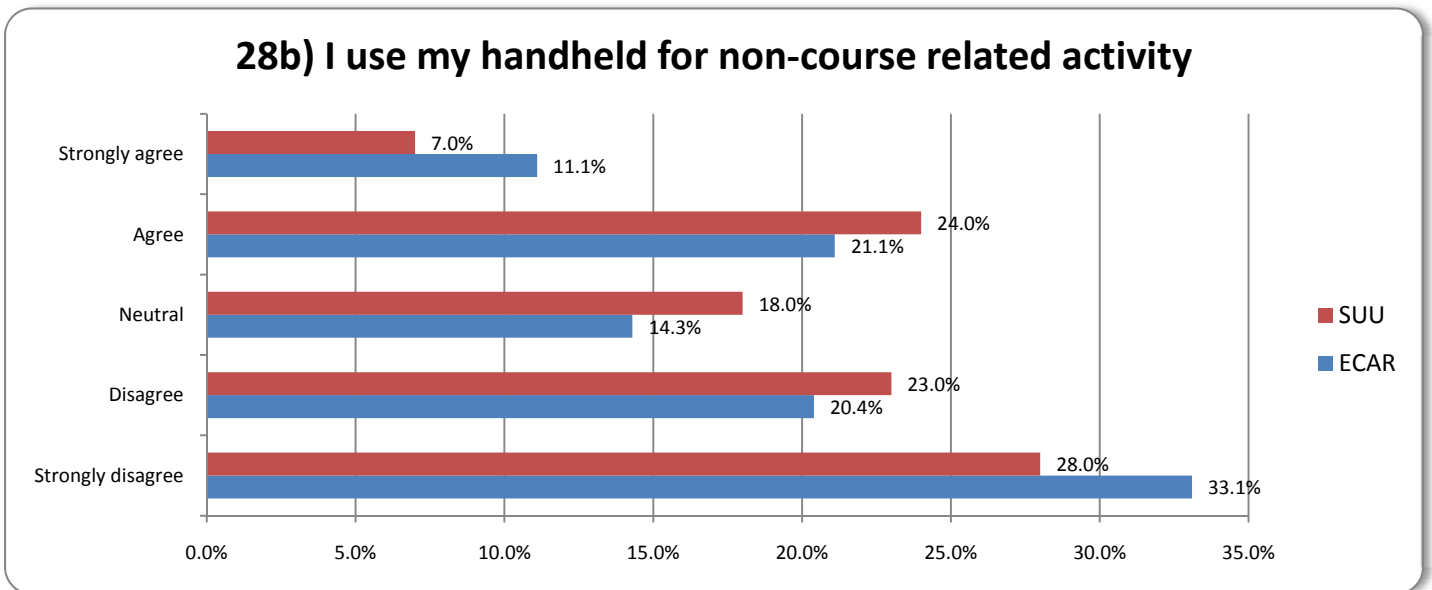
27) What keeps you from using the internet on your handheld device

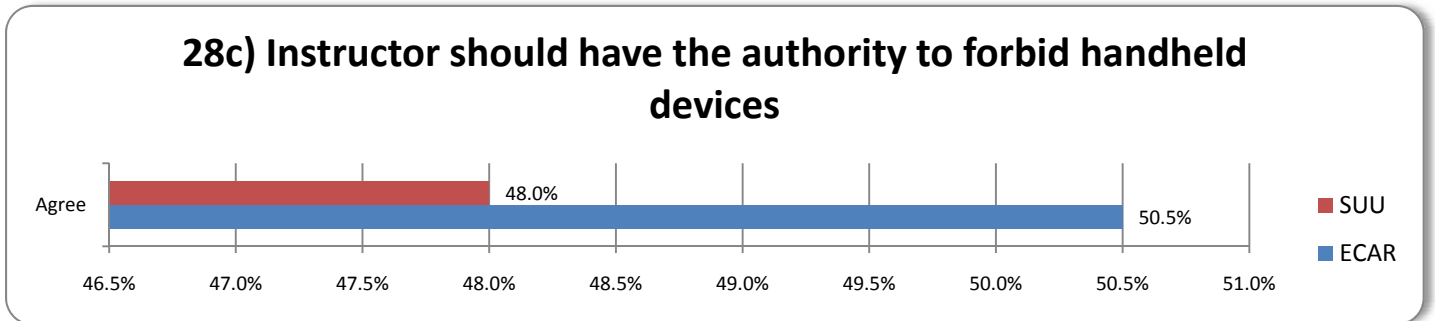| Category	SUU	ECAR
Plenty of other ways to access the internet	62.0%	49.9%
No compelling reason to access the internet	18.0%	15.4%
Cost of the handheld device	54.0%	36.4%
Cost of the data service	50.0%	46.2%
Device usability issues	32.0%	24.5%
Inadequate battery life	18.0%	11.0%
Limited access to the network	20.0%	13.3%
Network connection too slow	25.0%	15.9%
Lack of applications that are useful to me	12.0%	6.2%
Cost of applications that are useful to me	26.0%	9.4%
Concern about security/privacy	8.0%	4.2%
Concern about health problems	2.0%	1.1%
Other	7.0%	7.1%

14% of SUU students say they use their handheld device for course related activity while the national norm is 11.3%. A majority of students, 67% at SUU and 76.5% nationally, said they don't use their handheld device for course related activities.
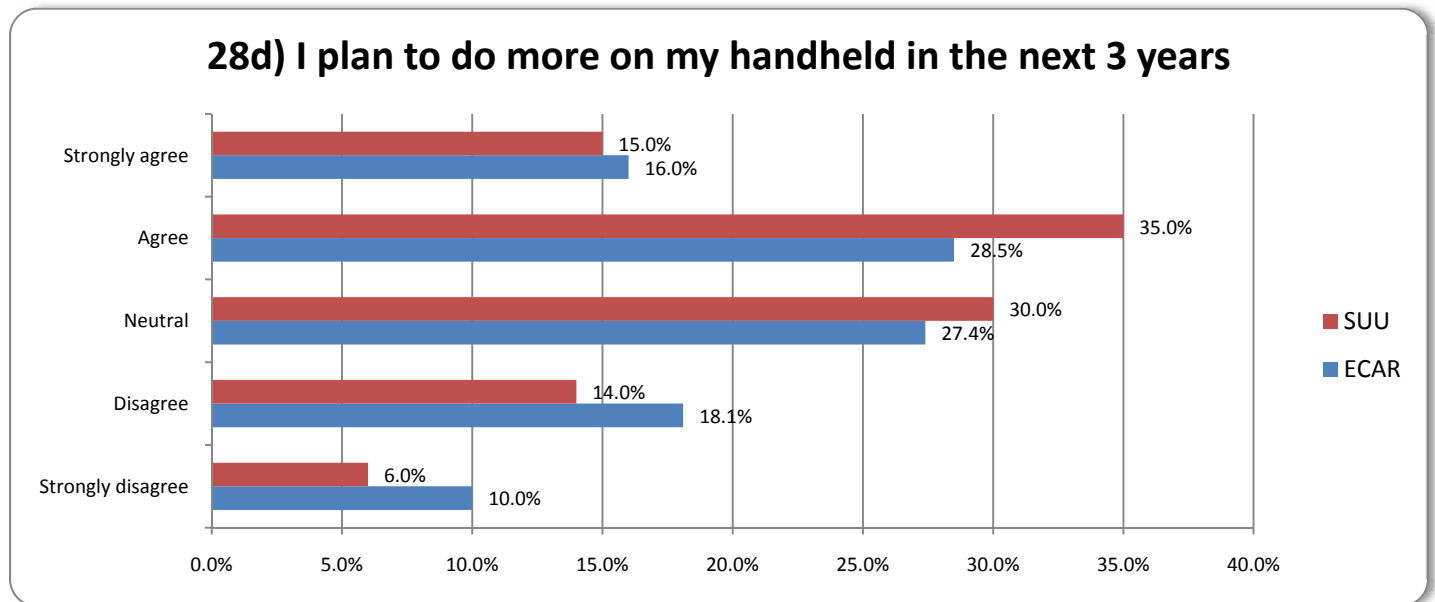
28a) I use my handheld for course related activity

	SUU	ECAR
Strongly agree	3.0%	3.5%
Agree	11.0%	7.8%
Neutral	19.0%	12.5%
Disagree	31.0%	29.7%
Strongly disagree	36.0%	46.5%

About 30% of students, both at SUU and nationally, said they use their handheld for non-course related activity. Just over 50% of SUU and national students said they do not use their handheld for non-course related activity.

28b) I use my handheld for non-course related activity

	SUU	ECAR
Strongly agree	7.0%	11.1%
Agree	24.0%	21.1%
Neutral	18.0%	14.3%
Disagree	23.0%	20.4%
Strongly disagree	28.0%	33.1%

Half of all students, both nationally and at SUU feel that instructors should have the authority to forbid handheld devices in class.

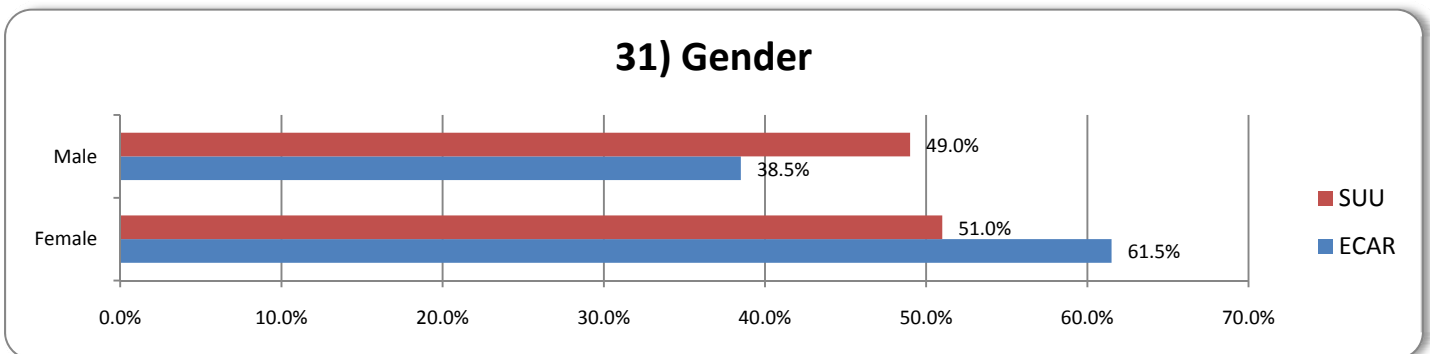## 28c) Instructor should have the authority to forbid handheld devices

Agree	SUU 48.0%
	ECAR 50.5%

Legend: SUU, ECAR

Axis: 46.5% 47.0% 47.5% 48.0% 48.5% 49.0% 49.5% 50.0% 50.5% 51.0%

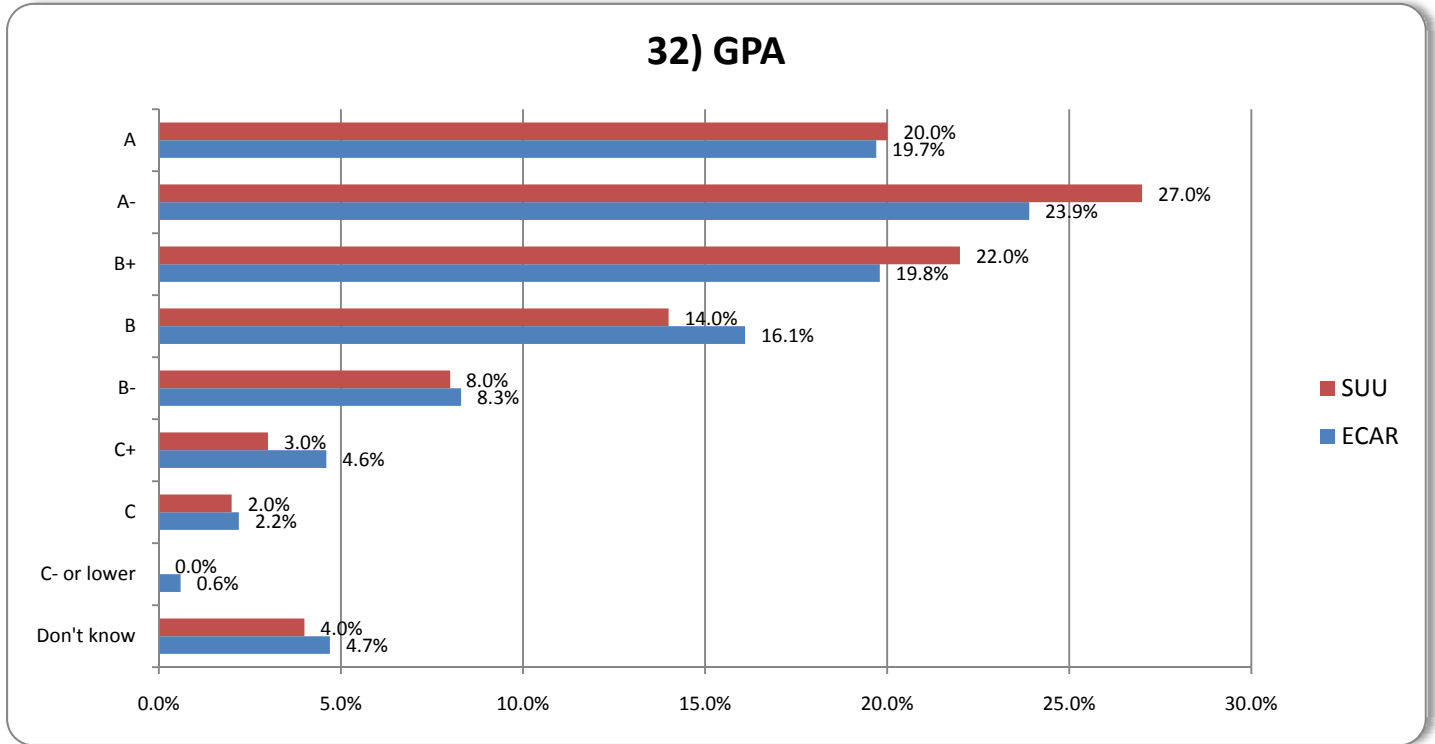50% of SUU students agree that they plan on doing more on their handheld device in the next 3 years while 44.5% of the nation agrees.

28d) I plan to do more on my handheld in the next 3 years

	SUU	ECAR
Strongly agree	15.0%	16.0%
Agree	35.0%	28.5%
Neutral	30.0%	27.4%
Disagree	14.0%	18.1%
Strongly disagree	6.0%	10.0%

Axis: 0.0% 5.0% 10.0% 15.0% 20.0% 25.0% 30.0% 35.0% 40.0%

SUU's student age group distribution is nearly identical to that of the nation with nearly 90% of students fitting into the 18 to 29 age group range.
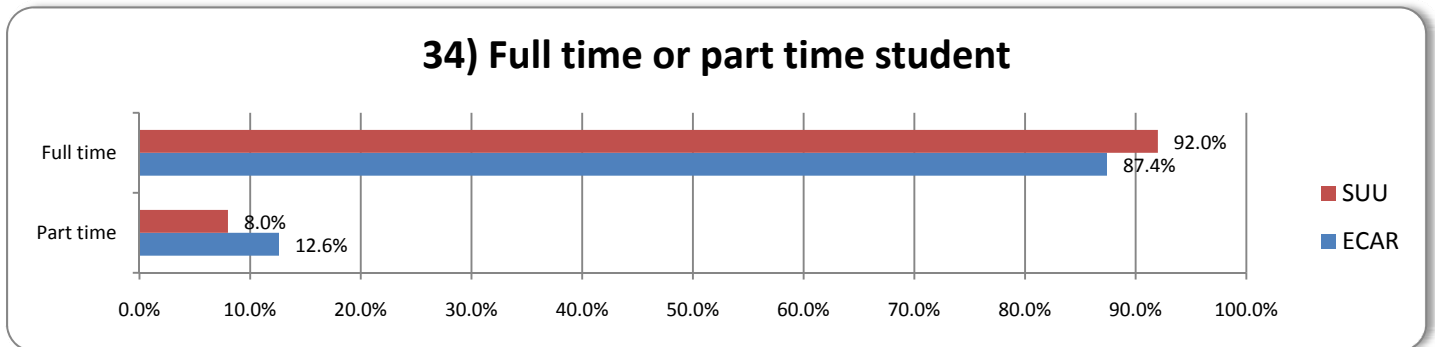
30) Age

Age	SUU	ECAR
18 to 29	89.0%	88.6%
30 to 39	6.0%	5.7%
40 to 49	3.0%	3.7%
50 to 59	1.0%	1.9%
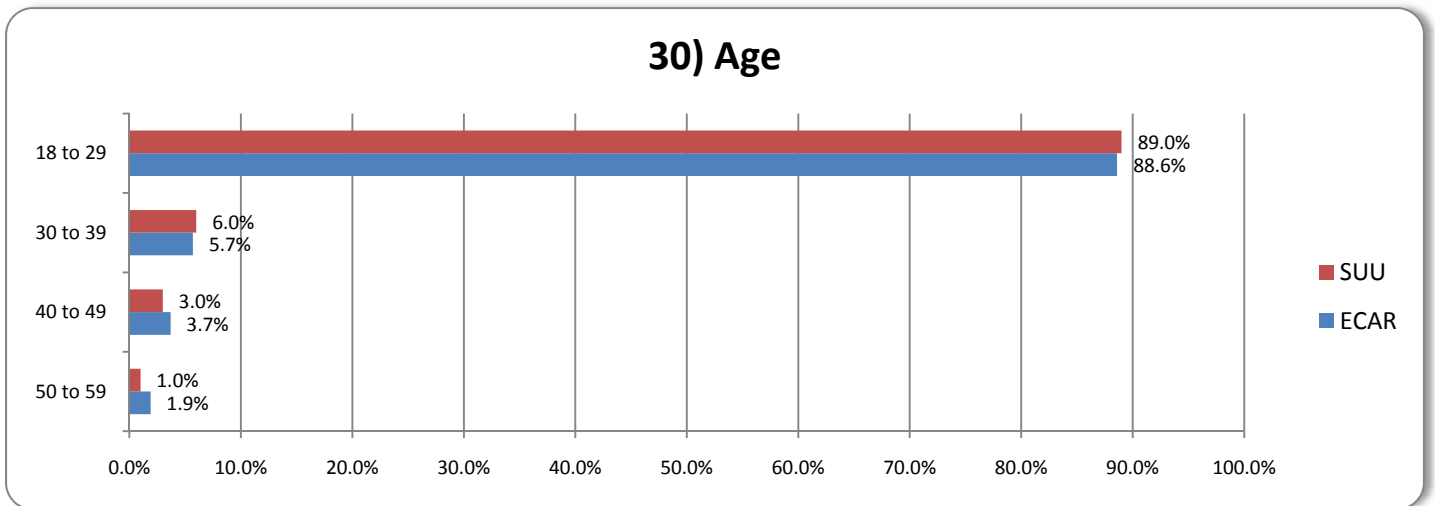
The student sample from SUU was almost evenly distributed at 50%.

31) Gender

Gender	SUU	ECAR
Male	49.0%	38.5%
Female	51.0%	61.5%

SUU is above the national norm on the academic performance of its students.

32) GPA

Grade	SUU	ECAR
A	20.0%	19.7%
A-	27.0%	23.9%
B+	22.0%	19.8%
B	14.0%	16.1%
B-	8.0%	8.3%
C+	3.0%	4.6%
C	2.0%	2.2%
C- or lower	0.0%	0.6%
Don't know	4.0%	4.7%

SUU has slightly more full time students the national norm.

34) Full time or part time student

	SUU	ECAR
Full time	92.0%	87.4%
Part time	8.0%	12.6%

30% more of SUU's students live off campus than the national norm with only 12% of its students living on campus.

35) Residence location

	SUU	ECAR
On campus	12.0%	40.4%
Off campus	88.0%	59.6%
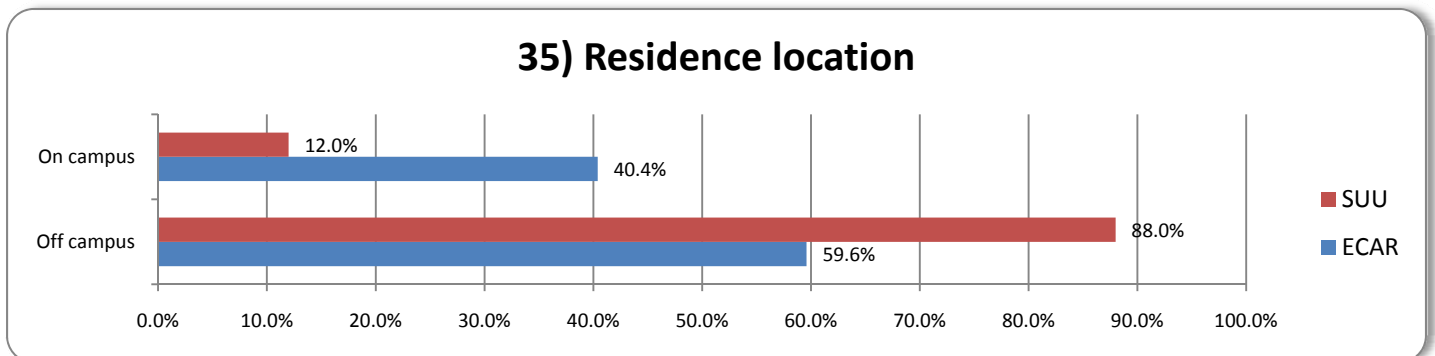
SUU comes close to the national norm on almost all majors except for Education/Physical Education where it is nearly double the national norm of 9.3% coming in at 18%.

36) Major
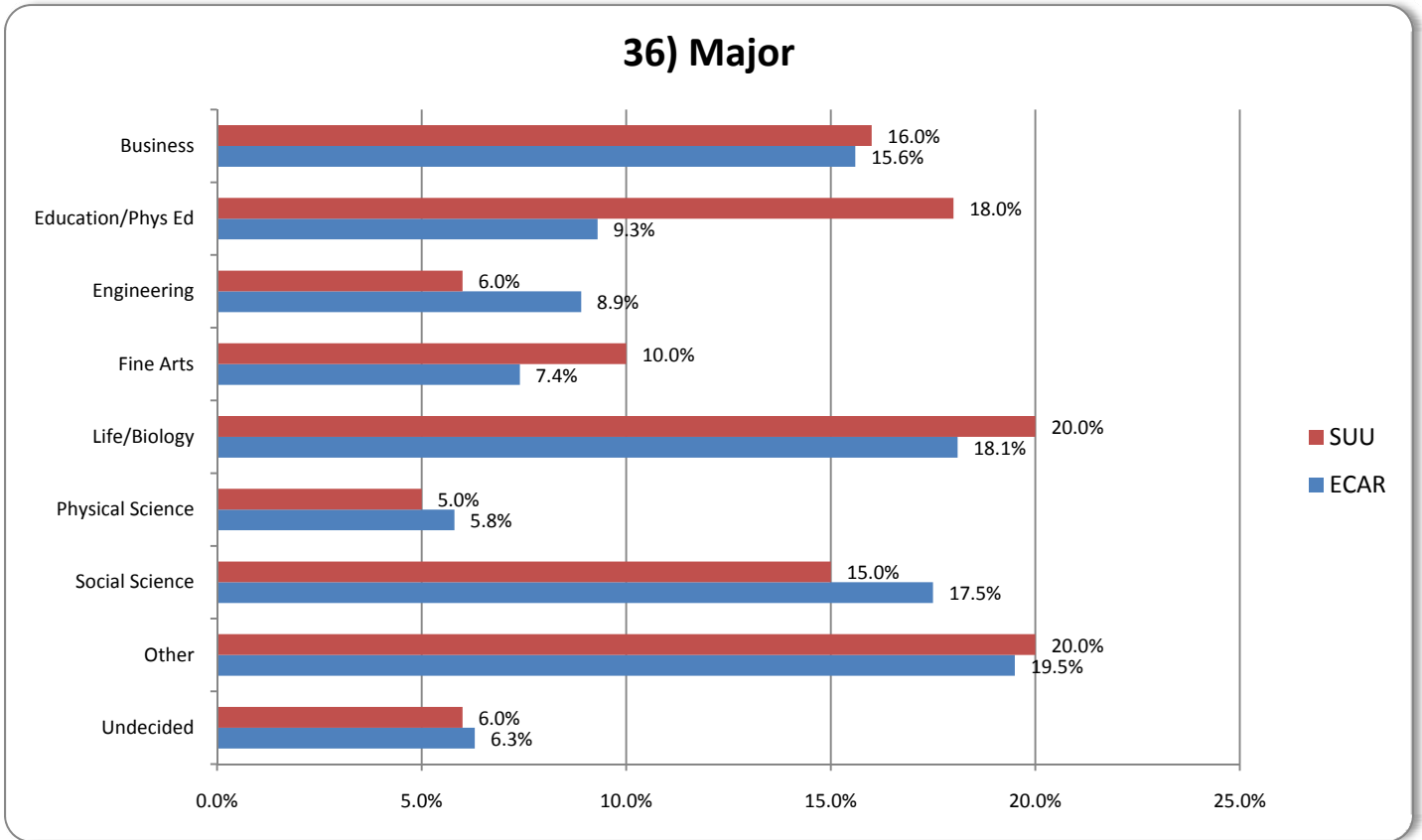
Conclusion

SUU students fit well into national norms for the number of students that own a desktop computer. The actual number of SUU students who own a computer is slightly below national norms (5%) but within the margin of error. Other deviations are within 1.5%

When it comes to laptop computers, SUU students who own a laptop are within 2.3% of national norms but the number whose computer is one year or less old is 11.9% below the nation while those that are two years old is almost 11% higher.

SUU is slightly ahead of the nation in the number of students using computers and the Internet for course related activities and recreation. But the data show a deficit in the ability of students to use the Internet effectively for information gathering. SUU students also have difficulty being able to evaluate the information they obtain online.

One area of great concern is that SUU students seem to have greater difficulty than national norms in understanding ethical and legal issues of Internet use. This is an issue that probably should be addressed more completely in the university's basic computer courses.

Almost all of the students at SUU have experience using eLearning and have generally enjoyed using it. However, if professors put a greater emphasis on the usage of eLearning, it could cause the number of students that show up to class to go down since students said that if more class material was available online they would consider skipping class more often.

Nearly 40% of SUU students said that they would get more actively involved in their courses if IT was used more. 57% said that they feel like using IT in their courses helps them to learn better, which is 10% above the national norm.

More than three quarters of the students at SUU agree that IT makes their course activities more convenient which is on par with the national norm. Nearly the same amount feels that the use of IT in their courses is helping them adequately prepare for the workplace which was 10% higher than the national norm.

Two thirds of students said that the IT services that the school offers are available when they need them which is 10% higher than the national norm. Only 10% of SUU students said that it isn't available when they need it.

SUU students are mainstream technology adopters, meaning they adopt technology when the people they know around them start adopting. 30% of students said they are early adopters or innovative adopters that adopt before the people around them do.

While SUU students like using technology to learn, a majority of them don't like using text-based conversations to learn. Half of the students like to learn by using programs, video games, and simulations and about 28% of students like to learn by using the Internet to contribute content to websites, blogs, and wikis. 75% of SUU students like to learn by performing internet searches which shows a desire for self-directed learning. The quality of this search based learning could be improved if students had a better understanding of how search engines worked and knew more efficient ways to get exactly what they are looking for.

In emergency situations when students on campus need to be contacted quickly, it would appear that the best method would be to send a text message, since 74% of the students on campus said they were available via text messaging. With this kind of saturation there is almost a guarantee that there is at least one of these texting students per class at any given moment. However, in past tests of the emergency notification system, cell phone companies have throttled

the number of messages coming from SUU servers. So there are technical hurdles to overcome to help this notification medium become more effective.

While half of the students at SUU have internet capable handheld devices, only a third of them use the internet daily and 40% said they never use it. Of those students that do use the internet on their handheld only about 40% use it more than 30 minutes per week. This is actually about 20% more than the national norm.

More than a third of SUU students believe they will be using their internet capable handheld device more in the next 3 years which is just slightly lower than the national norm. But a majority of students, 66%, said they prefer to use a desktop or laptop computer if one is available to use the internet which is double the national norm.

What keeps SUU students away from using handheld devices is that they feel there are plenty of other ways to access the internet, the cost of handheld devices is high, and the cost of the data service is high.

Few students actually use their handheld devices for course related activities with only 14% saying they do. This is only slightly above the national norm.

Half of all students, SUU and national, believe that professors should have the authority to forbid handheld devices in class.

90% of students at SUU fit into the 18 to 29 age group which is nearly identical to the national norm, with only 0.4% difference. The gender sample from SUU was nearly symmetrical at 50% with only slightly fewer males participating in the survey whereas the national split was a 40-60% with males at 40%. Academically, SUU has a higher overall GPA standing than the national norm which a majority of students receiving a B+ or higher GPA. Fitting in with the national norm, slightly more than 90% of SUU students are full time. Most of SUU's students reside off campus at just under 90% of the students while nationally only 60% of students reside off campus.

SUU comes close to the national norm of the distribution of majors with the majority of students studying Business, Education/Physical Education, Life Science/Biology and Other (which includes Math, Information Systems, and Computer Science).