

Computer Use Survey – Fall 2000

Highlights

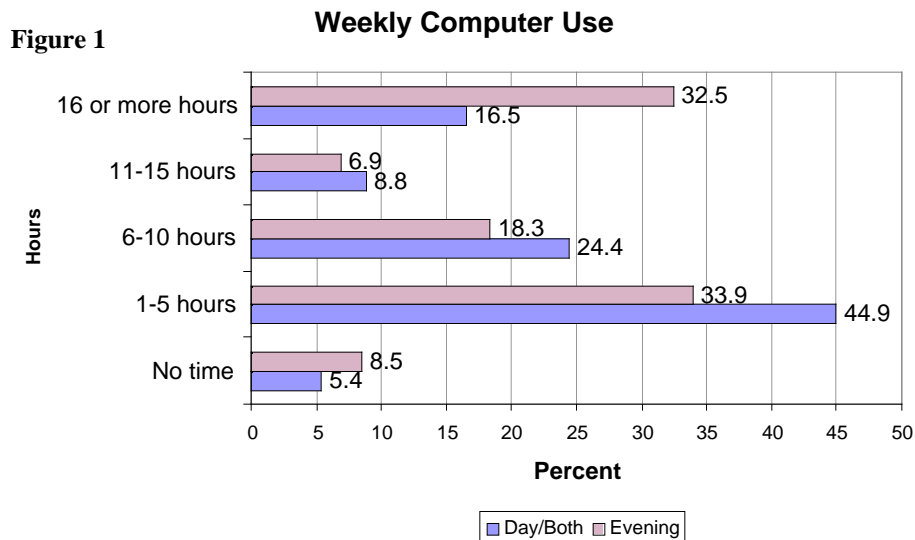
- 41.2% of students spend from 1-5 hours a week using a computer
- At least half of students rate themselves at least somewhat skilled in word processing, browsers, spreadsheets and presentation software.
- 59% use a computer at MCC.
- 85% have access to a computer at home.
 - of those > 90% have Internet access
- Word processing is the only skill at least half of students said was required in a class
- 65% of students say that they have improved their computer skills due to taking classes.

Purpose

The Computer Use Survey was administered to over seventeen hundred students in randomly selected classes in Fall 2000. Both evening and day students were polled. The survey was designed by the Teaching Learning Technology Roundtable at Mesa Community College and collects information concerning computer access, use, application and student skill level. The data will inform the on-going dialog about technology as a tool for learning.

How much time do students spend using computers?

Students were asked the amount of time that they spend using a computer in a typical week. Overall, most students (41.2%) spend from 1-5 hours a week. The next highest response was nearly evenly split between 6-10 hours (22.4%) and 16 or more hours (21.8%). The graph that follows shows that significantly more of the evening students use a computer for 16 or more hours.

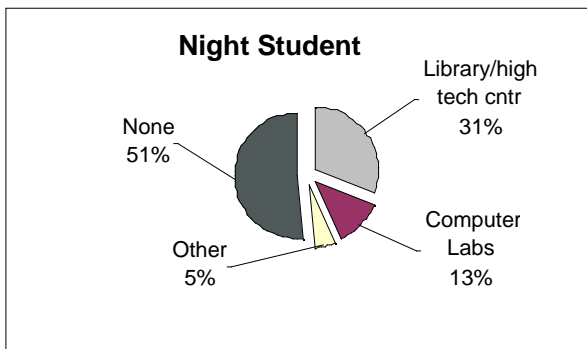
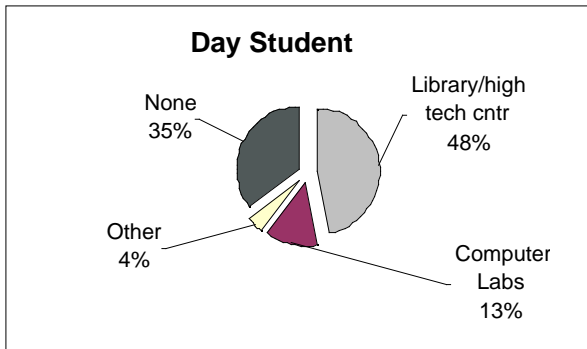


Access

Where do students access computing resources?

Overall, 59.3 percent of the students polled said that they used a computer at MCC. Significantly more day students use computer resources on campus (65%) compared to night students (49%). Both evening and day students use the Library/ High Tech Center most often followed by computer labs. Other locations (student center or classrooms) are used least frequently as illustrated in figure 2.

Figure 2 Student Computer Use

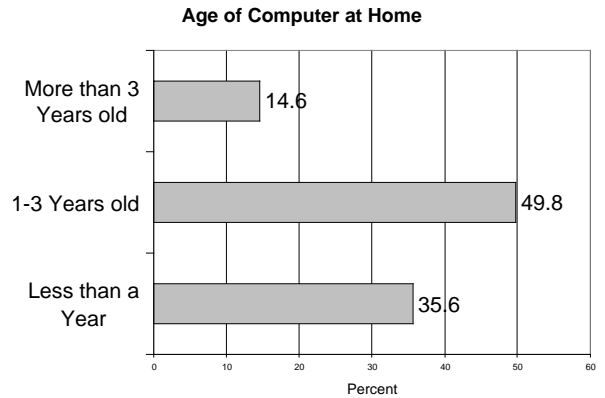


How many students have access to a computer at home?

Over 85% of all students report having access to a computer at home. Of those students 87% have an IBM computer. The majority of computers are three years old or younger.

Ninety-two percent of the students who have a computer at home have Internet access.

Figure 3 Age of Computer



Skill Level

More than half of the students who responded rated themselves as at least somewhat skilled in word processing, web browsers, spreadsheets and presentation software as shown in Table 1, below. Students were less skilled in using HTML, graphic design and developing web pages.

Table 1

| Student Computer Skills | Student Computer Skills | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------|
| | Somewhat skilled | Not skilled |
| Word Processing | 89.3% | 10.7% |
| Web browsers | 75.0% | 25.0% |
| Spreadsheets | 70.2% | 29.8% |
| Presentation Software | 57.4% | 42.6% |
| HTML | 40.1% | 59.9% |
| Graphic design | 36.9% | 63.1% |
| Web page development | 29.7% | 70.3% |

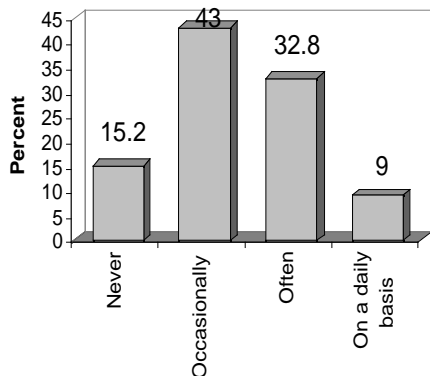
Application of Technology

Students were asked what computer technologies have been required in or for a class at Mesa Community College. Only one technology, word processing, was reported by at least half of students. The ranking by percent of students responding positively was as follows:

- 66.5% Word processing
- 40.6% Web browsers
- 37.5% Graphing calculator
- 30.8% Spreadsheets
- 30.5% Computer-based data collection
- 26.0% Calculator-based data collection
- 25.5% Presentation software
- 12.5% Webpage development

Students were also asked how often they used the Internet to do research for their classes. In aggregate 84.8% of students use the Internet at least occasionally for class assignments.

Figure 4 Student Internet Use



Have skills improved?

Students were asked to assess whether their technological skills increased as a result of taking classes at MCC. Over 65% of students indicated that they have had at least some increase in their skills. 13% of students said that the increase is significant. Slightly more than a third of the students (35.1%) said that their

technology skills had not increased as a result of courses.

Differences: Ethnicity

827 students provided information about their ethnicity. There were significant differences in computer use at MCC between groups. The share of students who use a computer on campus by location is presented below.

Table 2 Computer use by ethnicity

| | Library/ high tech center | Computer Lab | Other | None |
|-----------------|---------------------------------|-----------------|-------|------|
| Hispanic | 40% | 10% | 3% | 47% |
| Asian | 22% | 22% | 13% | 43% |
| White | 41% | 12% | 4% | 43% |
| Native American | 44% | 13% | 8% | 35% |
| Black | 52% | 9% | 12% | 27% |

Further, computer access at home differs significantly between ethnic groups. The percentage of students who said that they had access to a computer at home was:

- 87% White
- 86% Asian
- 79% Hispanic
- 75% Black
- 64% Native American

Gender

Gender differences were seen in student perception of skill level and in the mean score for overall use in a class. Female students perceived their word processing skills more positively than males. Male students perceived their skills in graphic design and web page development more positively than females. Further, more male students reported using computer and calculator-based data collection in their classes. Female students reported less technology use in their classes overall.