EXPERIMENTING WITH TECHNOLOGY:

STUDENT INNOVATION AND COLLABORATION

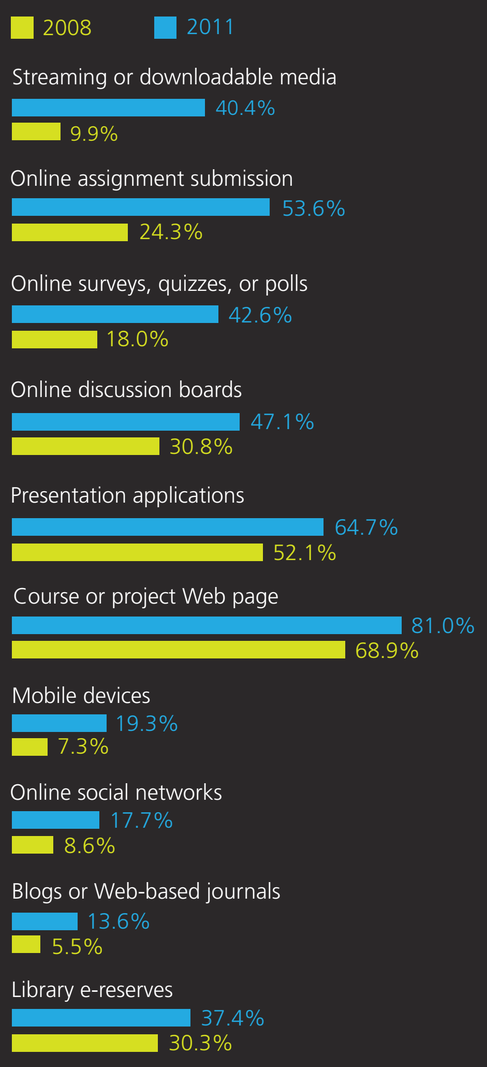
BACKGROUND

Every three years, UW Information Technology surveys faculty members, researchers, teaching assistants, and students at UW-Seattle about how they use technology to do their work, what supports and obstacles they experience in using technology, and where they believe the UW should place its resources in the future. Survey results help the UW make informed decisions about which tools and services will best support the goals of the campus community. Data from the 2011 report indicate, among other trends, that students are using even mainstream technologies (e.g., Facebook, mobile devices) to support their learning.

UW students are using technology to foster communication, facilitate collaboration, and deepen learning.

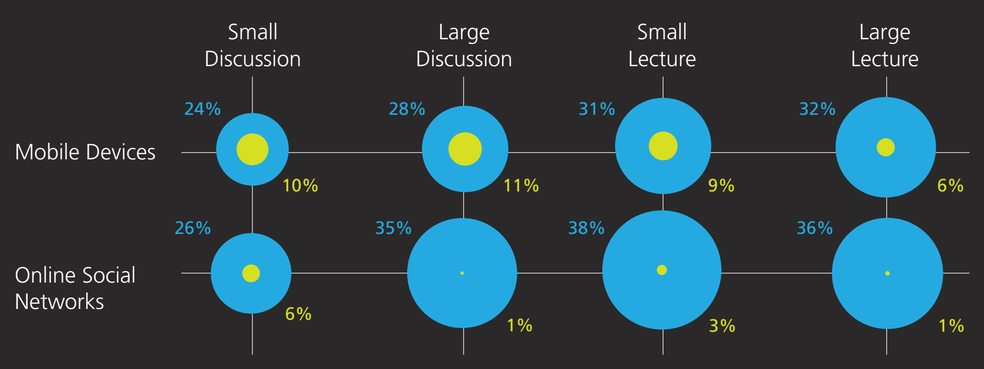
Changes in Tool Use Since 2008

Collaborative technologies—such as discussion boards, project Web pages, social networks, and collaborative Web applications (e.g., wikis)—and online tools—such as online assignment submission, surveys, quizzes, or polls—are increasingly central to teaching and learning.



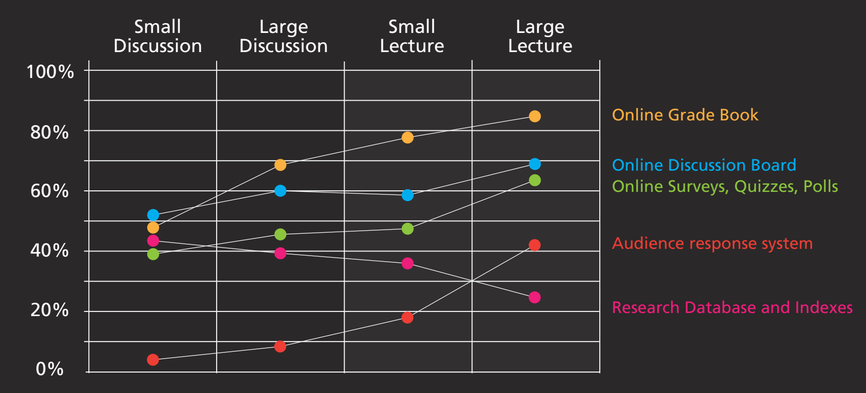
Student Innovation, Collaboration, and Creation of Content

Students (and instructors) are using technology to make large classes more manageable. Students are also using mainstream technologies, such as Facebook and mobile devices, to support learning beyond what instructors require.



Learning Contexts

Student use of technology has increased, but it is important to note that use of tools varies by learning context. Tools that are useful in a large lecture are not necessarily as useful in a small seminar.



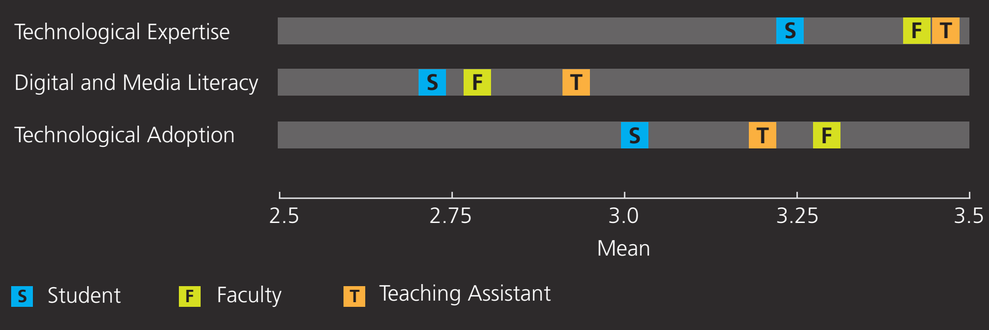
Top 5 Purposes for Students to Use Technology

Across learning contexts, the primary purpose for using technology for instructors and students is to manage and access course content.

1. To access course information — 86.0%
2. To access lecture, overview, or study materials — 81.4%
3. To retrieve or submit assignments — 68.0%
4. To take a quiz, test, or poll — 51.0%
5. To participate in a discussion — 50.5%

Technological Proficiency

We asked survey respondents to rate their level of technological expertise, digital and media literacy, and rates of adoption of new technologies. While all survey respondents (instructors, TAs and students) land on the higher end of the scale, students consistently rated themselves lower on all three scales than TAs and instructors rated themselves. An interesting paradox emerges: In spite of an apparent self-perception of comparatively lower technological ability, students are confident and creative enough to innovate with technology.



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