

*Asynchronous web-based courses at UMaine:  
From the students' perspective*

**UMaine Office of Institutional Research<sup>1</sup>  
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The delivery of courses online is, to be sure, an increasingly popular complement to traditional, face-to-face instruction at institutions of higher education across the United States. By one estimate, online enrollments increased over the past decade at a rate ten times that observed in all of higher education.<sup>2</sup> Increased activity in online education can be seen at UMaine as well, where such courses accounted for 8.56% of all student credit hours in fiscal year 2009, increasing to 10.7% in fiscal year 2011. And there is no reason to believe that UMaine's embrace of online education is a passing fancy.

To date, the experiences and sentiments of UMaine students taking UMaine online courses have remained largely unexamined. (Even student evaluations of teaching are, for the most part, unavailable for online courses.) Consequently, little is known about why our students are taking online courses, how they feel about the online experiences they have had, or, say, how their learning orientation is related to these feelings. Credible data regarding such questions would be helpful, of course—both to inform opinions about online education (not that the absence of data has prevented strong opinions from being formed) and, moreover, to frame needed discussion regarding online-education pedagogy and policy at UMaine. In short, the present undertaking is a step toward that end.

We begin on the next page with an encapsulated version of our method and results—the proverbial “elevator speech.” This is followed by a more detailed consideration of our methodology and in turn, of the results. The survey itself can be found in Appendix A, and Appendix B presents the item-by-item frequencies.

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<sup>2</sup> Allen, I. E., & Seaman, J. (2011). *Going the distance: Online education in the United States, 2011*. Wellesley, MA: Babson Survey Research Group. (This report can be downloaded from [http://sloanconsortium.org/publications/survey/going\\_distance\\_2011](http://sloanconsortium.org/publications/survey/going_distance_2011).)

### *In Brief*

- Population surveyed: 3,892 UMaine degree-seeking students who had completed at least one UMaine asynchronous web-based course in either spring 2011 or fall 2011. Response rate: 23%. (92% of respondents reflected on an undergraduate course, and 8% reflected on a graduate course.)
- When they took the online course in question, over two thirds of undergraduate-course respondents were living either on campus or in the Orono or Old Town area; graduate-course respondents were much more geographically dispersed.
- About a quarter of undergraduate-course respondents, and more than a third of graduate-course respondents, took the course online because of a general preference for this delivery mode (versus, say, scheduling conflicts or course availability).
- The majority of both undergraduate-course and graduate-course respondents appraised their online experience positively (the latter more than the former).
- Roughly half of both undergraduate-course and graduate-course respondents felt they learned “about as much” in their online class as they probably would have in the traditional format. (A third of undergraduate-course respondents, and a fifth of graduate-course respondents, felt they probably learned less.)
- The plurality (46%) of undergraduate-course respondents felt they worked “about the same” for their grade in the online class as they probably would have had to in the traditional format, with a third feeling they probably worked harder. Among graduate-course respondents, the plurality (45%) felt they probably worked harder for their grade in the online class, with almost an equal number reporting “about the same.”
- The majority of both undergraduate-course and graduate-course respondents provided positive ratings (the latter more than the former) on items selected from the UMaine student evaluation of teaching form.
- About three quarters of undergraduate-course respondents, and 83% of graduate-course respondents, agreed that “all things considered, the advantages of taking a course online outweigh any limitations.”
- Of the aforementioned undergraduate-course respondents who agreed that “all things considered, the advantages of taking a course online outweigh any limitations,” a noticeable minority nonetheless felt they learned less than they probably would have in the traditional format.
- One’s learning orientation is related to one’s appraisal of the online experience. For example, undergraduate-course respondents who felt they learned less in their online class than they probably would have in the traditional format were much more likely to disagree with these two statements:
  - “As a rule, I work best in self-directed and self-paced course formats.”
  - “This online experience was well-suited to the way I like to learn.”

## *Method*

We describe in this section (a) the development of the survey instrument, (b) the targeted population to be surveyed, and (c) the procedure employed for surveying the targeted population.

### *Survey Instrument*

Presented in its entirety in Appendix A (pp. 19-25), the survey comprises items taken or adapted from The IDEA Center,<sup>3</sup> items taken from the short form of the UMaine student evaluation of teaching form, and items written wholly by us. Seven general questions guided us in crafting this survey:

1. *Why do students take a course online?* Is it because the student prefers this instructional modality, for example, or is it that the needed course was only offered online?<sup>4</sup> (See item Q5 on the survey.)
2. *How do students appraise their online experience?* Borrowing heavily from IDEA Center items, we focused on the opportunity for online interaction with the instructor and other students, the adequacy of online technology and the provision of technology support when needed, and the self-reported agreement between online instruction and one's learning orientation. (Q6–Q11)
3. *How do students compare their online experience with their experience in traditional courses with respect to how much they learned and how hard they had to work?* (Q12, Q13)
4. *How do students rate online courses, using select items on the UMaine student evaluation of teaching form (short form)?* (Q14–Q18)
5. *From what other schools have UMaine students taken online courses, and why have they done so?* (Q20–Q22)
6. *Do students believe the advantages of taking a course online outweigh any limitations?* (Q24)
7. *Is a student's learning orientation related to one's sentiments regarding the online experience?* An additional item, taken from The IDEA Center, assessed the degree to which the student prefers self-directed and self-paced course formats (Q23). By cross-tabulating responses to this item against responses to key items on the survey, we hoped to better understand students' views and experiences regarding their online experience. We similarly enlisted Q11 for this purpose ("This online experience was well-suited to the way I like to learn.").

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<sup>3</sup> See Appendix B in <http://www.theideacenter.org/sites/default/files/Technical%20Report15pdf.pdf>.

<sup>4</sup> Truth be told, addressing this question provided the seeds for the present study. At a fall 2011 meeting of the Faculty Senate, there was a brief, if spirited, exchange regarding online courses at UMaine. Provost Hunter later said to one of us, "It would be helpful if we knew just why our students take classes online."

Additional items asked for the student's cumulative GPA (Q1) and class level (Q2); where the student was living when taking the online course (Q3); whether the online course satisfied a program requirement, a general education requirement, or was taken as an elective (Q4); and how many online courses had previously been taken at UMaine (Q19).

The survey closed with the obligatory open-ended item, inviting respondents to provide additional observations they may have about their online experience at UMaine, the relative value of online versus traditional classes in their view, and any other comments they wish to share (Q25).

### ***Targeted Population***

The Office of Institutional Research produced a list of 3,892 UMaine degree-seeking students who had completed at least one UMaine asynchronous web-based course (carrying a section number of 0990, 0991, 0992, 0993, or 0999) in either spring 2011 or fall 2011. This was the population targeted to survey.

### ***Survey Procedure***

The survey was formatted using Qualtrics and administered online. By completing the survey, each respondent could win one of two iPads through a random drawing.

In customized emails to the 3,892 prospective respondents, we specified a single online course the respondent had completed in either of the two semesters and asked that this course be kept in mind while contemplating particular items on the survey. (Where a student completed an online course in both spring 2011 and fall 2011, we selected the course from the more recent semester assuming this course would be fresher in mind.) For students who took EDS 510 online in spring 2011, for example, this part of the email invitation read as follows:

*You will see that some of the survey questions are general while others are course-specific. For course-specific questions, please respond by thinking about your spring 2011 online course, EDS 510. Even though you may have taken other online courses, please only consider your spring 2011 experience with EDS 510. Be assured that results will not be reported by individual course or shared with the instructor: You are asked to concentrate on EDS 510 simply to focus your responses with a specific course in mind.*

The targeted population of 3,892 students to whom email invitations were sent represented 146 online classes: the course was at the lower-division level for 71.6% of these students (33 courses), at the upper-division level for 22.5% (45 courses), and at the graduate level for 5.9% (68 courses). Thus, roughly 94% of the students in the population to be surveyed had completed an undergraduate online course, with 6% having completed a graduate online course.

We launched the survey on February 15, 2012, prompted nonrespondents on March 14, and closed the survey on March 28. Useable data were provided by a maximum of 898 respondents (depending on the survey item)—822 having completed an undergraduate online

course and 76 completing a graduate online course. This is an overall response rate of 23%, with disaggregated response rates of 22% and 33% for undergraduate-course and graduate-course completers, respectively. Undergraduate-course respondents constituted 91.5% of all respondents, and graduate-course respondents, 8.5%—not dissimilar to the aforementioned mix in the targeted population (94% and 6%, respectively).

## ***Results***

Appendix B (pp. 26-39) provides frequencies associated with each item on the survey, separately for undergraduate-course and graduate-course respondents. It is not our intention to provide (nor is it probably your desire to endure) an exhaustive narrative to accompany this table or others we provide. Rather, we wish simply to highlight key findings we saw surfacing from these data and, in turn, let the interested reader dig further into the tables as one pleases.

***Overview of the respondents.*** We begin with descriptive information about the respondents, which is followed by a brief narrative of results.

As Table 1 shows, there was good representation of sophomores, juniors, and seniors among the undergraduate-course respondents, with comparatively few first-year students and a handful of graduate students. About a quarter of these undergraduate-course respondents were satisfying a program requirement, with larger percentages satisfying a general-education requirement or taking the course as an elective. Approximately two thirds of these respondents were living on campus (28%) or in either Orono or Old Town (40%) at the time.

Among graduate-course respondents, all but one were in fact graduate students. About two thirds were satisfying a program requirement, with the remaining one third taking the course as an elective. In contrast to undergraduate-course respondents, those taking an online graduate course were more dispersed geographically, with over half living outside the greater Bangor area (although still residing in Maine).

Table 1. Item frequencies: Undergraduate-course and graduate-course respondents.<sup>5</sup>

**Q2. What was your class standing when you began this online course?**

	undergraduate course		graduate course	
	frequency	valid %	frequency	valid %
first-year student	78	9.5	0	0.0
sophomore	217	26.5	0	0.0
junior	262	32.0	0	0.0
senior	239	29.2	1	1.3
graduate	23	2.8	75	98.7
Total	819	100.0	76	100.0

**Q3. Where were you living when you took this online course?**

	undergraduate course		graduate course	
	frequency	valid %	frequency	valid %
on campus	233	28.4	4	5.3
Orono or Old Town	329	40.1	14	18.4
the greater Bangor area	118	14.4	15	19.7
other (please specify):	130	15.8	42	55.3
out of state	11	1.3	1	1.3
Total	821	100.0	76	100.0

**Q4. Which statement about the online course you took applies to you best?**

	undergraduate course		graduate course	
	frequency	valid %	frequency	valid %
This course is required by my major or program.	219	26.7	46	62.2
This course satisfies a general education requirement.	317	38.6	4	5.4
I took this course as an elective.	285	34.7	24	32.4
Total	821	100.0	74	100.0

<sup>5</sup> Table 1 is a subset of the item frequencies presented in Appendix B.

We now turn to our narrative, which is structured around the seven general questions that guided the design of the survey. Because they constitute the vast majority of all respondents, undergraduate-course respondents receive somewhat more attention in this narrative. Further, cell size often is quite small in the graduate-course results, particularly where one item is crosstabulated against another (in which case we do not address graduate-course results at all).

### ***1. Why do students take a course online? (Q5)***

Almost two thirds of undergraduate-course respondents reportedly took the course online either because (a) the course was only offered online (37%); or (b) although there was an on-campus section of the course, it conflicted with the respondent's academic schedule (25%). In contrast, approximately one fifth did so because they generally prefer online courses.<sup>6</sup>

Some respondents selected the option *other* for Q5 and, in turn, offered written elaboration. We determined the thrust of the 107 comments and, where possible, grouped each comment with an existing (or slightly more general) option from the original selection to form a recrafted Q5.<sup>7</sup> For example, *scheduling considerations* in the recrafted Q5 combines respondents who had selected the related, but more specific, Q5 option—*Although there was an on-campus section of this course, it conflicted with my academic schedule*—with respondents who mentioned in their Q5 written comments having to schedule courses around employment, athletics, student teaching, and the like. And *prefer online classes* in the recrafted Q5 combines respondents who selected *I generally prefer online courses* in Q5 with those whose Q5 written comments spoke to distance-related constraints they were facing at the time.

From this recrafted Q5, one sees that over a quarter of undergraduate-course respondents took the course online because of a general preference for this instructional modality, and a full two thirds did so either because the course was only offered online (37%) or because of scheduling considerations (29%).

As for graduate-course respondents, more than a third took the course online because of a preference for this modality, with over half doing so because the course was offered online only. Scheduling considerations did not surface as a factor.

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<sup>6</sup> As the first table in Appendix B discloses (p. 26), these asynchronous web-based classes entailed an occasional face-to-face meeting for 27% of undergraduate-course respondents and 38% of graduate-course respondents—primarily for examination-related purposes. There were no meaningful differences in the survey results associated with this course feature.

<sup>7</sup> The recrafted Q5 follows the original Q5 in Appendix B and is creatively entitled “Q5.recoded (unpacking 'other').”

## 2. *How do students appraise their online experience?* (Q6–Q11)

The majority of undergraduate-course respondents reported positive sentiments about their online experience, agreeing or strongly agreeing that:

- there was adequate opportunity to interact online with either the instructor (70% agreeing or strongly agreeing) or other students (60%);
- the online technologies worked the way they were supposed to (83%);
- communication tools, such as email and chatroom, were easy to use (82%); and
- technology support was available if needed (78%).

Although still a majority, fewer of these undergraduate-course respondents (55%) agreed or strongly agreed that their online experience was well-suited to the way they like to learn (Q11)—three quarters when *slightly agree* is included. If one similarly includes *slightly disagree*, about a quarter of undergraduate-course respondents thus do not share the important sentiment that their online experience was well-suited to the way they like to learn. (We will return to Q11 when we crosstabulate it against other items.)

In comparison, graduate-course respondents were generally more positive in their appraisal of the online experience. Q11 provides the most vivid example, where over two thirds of these respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their online experience was well-suited to the way they like to learn (83% with *slightly agree* included).<sup>8</sup>

## 3. *How do students compare their online experience with their experience in traditional courses with respect to how much they learned and how hard they worked?* (Q12, Q13)

Approximately one fifth of undergraduate-course respondents (21%) reported they learned “a little more” or “much more” in their online class than they probably would have in the traditional format. This compares with the one third (34%) who, in contrast, indicated they learned “a little less” or “much less” in the online class. The plurality of undergraduate-course respondents (45%) felt they learned “about as much” as they probably would have in the traditional format.

This pattern of results somewhat flips when we turn to perceived effort for the grade obtained. Here, about a third of undergraduate-course respondents (34%) indicated they had to work “a little harder” or “much harder” for their grade in the online class than they probably would have had to in the traditional format. In contrast, one fifth reported they worked “a little less” or “much less” for their grade, with the plurality (46%) falling in the middle.

Responses to Q12 among graduate-course respondents are distributed more symmetrically, with roughly a quarter (27%) reporting they probably learned more in their online class, about a fifth (21%) feeling they probably learned less, and about half (52%) falling in the middle. Regarding perceived effort for the grade obtained, only 11% of graduate-course

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<sup>8</sup> In considering such comparisons, one must remain mindful of the relatively small number of graduate-course respondents.

respondents reported having worked less for their grade than they probably would have had to in the traditional format, with the plurality reporting having worked more.

**4. How do students rate online courses, using select items on the UMaine student evaluation of teaching form (short)? (Q14–Q18)**

As indicated above, the survey included five items taken verbatim from the short form of the UMaine student evaluation of teaching form. Using the familiar 5-point scale, the majority of undergraduate-course respondents chose the highest or next-highest rating on four of these five items:

- the overall assessment process (69% choosing the two highest ratings, mean rating = 3.8);
- how much was learned (60%, mean rating = 3.6);
- overall rating of the course (64%, mean rating = 3.7); and
- overall rating of the instructor (70%, mean rating = 3.9)

The exception among these undergraduate-course respondents pertained to how much they were challenged intellectually by the online course. Here, the two highest ratings captured 49% of the responses, with a mean rating of 3.4.

As for graduate-course respondents, the ratings are generally positive across the five items:

- intellectual challenge (74%, mean rating = 3.9)
- the overall assessment process (68%, mean rating = 4.0);
- how much was learned (72%, mean rating = 4.0);
- overall rating of the course (72%, mean rating = 4.1); and
- overall rating of the instructor (72%, mean rating = 4.2)

**Comparison with UMaine norms?** One might reasonably ask how the ratings above compare with those obtained from the regular administration of the UMaine student evaluation of teaching (SET) form. Because academic units across UMaine vary in the extent to which each uses the short SET form versus the long form, the most meaningful comparison is that based on the two items common to both forms: overall rating of the course and overall rating of the instructor.

Table 2 shows this comparison (where, to ease interpretation, we combined the two lowest ratings and the two highest ratings). Both undergraduate- and graduate-course respondents rated their online course and its instructor less positively than the respective UMaine norm. Generally positive, to be sure, but somewhat lower nonetheless.

Table 2. Overall rating of the course and overall rating of the instructor versus UMaine norms.

<b>Q17. What is your overall rating of the course?</b>						
	<b>1, 2 (low)</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4, 5 (high)</b>	<b>mean (5-point scale)</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>undergraduate-course respondents</b>	15.4%	21.0%	63.6%	3.7	1.2	813
UMaine norms <sup>9</sup>	6.9%	16.4%	76.6%	4.1	1.0	29,819
<b>graduate-course respondents</b>						
<b>graduate-course respondents</b>	8.0%	20.0%	72.0%	4.1	1.1	75
UMaine norms	5.7%	8.9%	85.4%	4.3	0.9	874

<b>Q18. Overall, how would you rate the instructor?</b>						
	<b>1, 2 (low)</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4, 5 (high)</b>	<b>mean (5-point scale)</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>undergraduate-course respondents</b>	12.0%	18.6%	69.4%	3.9	1.1	814
UMaine norms	4.6%	9.8%	85.7%	4.4	0.9	29,958
<b>graduate-course respondents</b>						
<b>graduate-course respondents</b>	10.7%	17.3%	72.0%	4.1	1.1	75
UMaine norms	3.1%	9.2%	87.7%	4.5	0.8	925

**5. From what other schools have UMaine students taken online courses, and why have they done so? (Q20–Q22)**

The vast majority of respondents had not taken an online course offered by another school. For the 11% of undergraduate-course respondents who did, the school tended to be either another UMS campus or a Maine community college. The primary reason for doing so was scheduling considerations, although course availability and cost influenced the decision as well.

Graduate-course respondents were twice as likely (23%) to have taken an online course from another school—primarily another UMS campus. Scheduling considerations and course availability both influenced the decision to do so.

**6. Do students believe the advantages of taking a course online outweigh any limitations? (Q24)**

Arguably the bottom line from the student’s perspective, the final item is this: “For me, and all things considered, the advantages of taking a course online outweigh any limitations.” Almost half of the undergraduate-course respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with this

<sup>9</sup> The UMaine norms for Q17 and Q18 include only courses having a course prefix represented in the present study (e.g., "ANT"). Further, we weighted these norms to reflect the proportionate representation of course prefixes among respondents.

important sentiment—almost three quarters if one includes the option *slightly agree*. Conversely, then, over a quarter of these respondents disagreed (to some extent) with this positive overall evaluation of the online experience.

Among graduate-course respondents, 83% agreed (to some extent) that the advantages of an online course outweigh any limitations.

### ***7. Is the student's learning orientation related to one's sentiments regarding the online experience?***

As indicated at the outset, one of the items we took from The IDEA Center sought to get at the student's general learning orientation: the degree to which one prefers a self-directed and self-paced course format (Q23). Appendix B shows that respondents vary in this regard. For example, three quarters of undergraduate-course respondents agreed (to some extent) that they work best in such course formats—an orientation arguably compatible with the nature of many online courses. But what about the sizeable minority of respondents who do not share this learning orientation? In short, is the student's learning orientation (as assessed here, at least) related to how one responded to key items on the survey?

To address this question, we crosstabulated Q23 against various items on the survey. We included two additional items to join Q23 for this purpose: Q11 ("This online experience was well-suited to the way I like to learn.") and Q24 ("For me, and all things considered, the advantages of taking a course online outweigh any limitations."). Like Q23, Q11 directly speaks to the respondent's learning orientation. Although Q24 admittedly does not, as a summative measure of the respondent's online experience, its crosstabulation with key items should prove illuminating nonetheless.

Table 3 presents these crosstabulations for undergraduate-course respondents (to whom we limited this analysis).<sup>10</sup> There is much to consider in Table 3—again, a task we largely leave to the interests, and endurance, of the reader. Here, we offer several observations:

***Q23. As a rule, I work best in self-directed and self-paced course formats.*** As we suspected, Q23 is associated with the undergraduate-course respondent's evaluation of various aspects of the online experience. Although this association is evident across the board, the Q23 x Q12 crosstabulation provides the most striking example. Consider respondents who agreed they work best when self-directed and self-paced. About a quarter (26%) of them also reported they learned more in their online class (than they probably would have in the traditional format). In contrast, only 6% of respondents who disagreed (that they work best when self-directed and self-paced) felt this way. Indeed, the majority of this latter group—61%—believed they probably learned less. In contrast, only 25% of those who agreed with Q23 felt they probably learned less in the online course.

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<sup>10</sup> Like Table 2, Table 3 combines various options to ease the reader's task. First, the six-point agreement scales are reduced to the dichotomous *agree* versus *disagree*. (Thus, *agree* should be interpreted as agreeing to some extent [i.e., from slightly to strongly]; similarly for *disagree*.) Second, the five-point scales for Q12–Q18 are reduced to a trichotomy in which the two lowest ratings are combined as are the two highest ratings.

**Q11. *This online experience was well-suited to the way I like to learn.*** Q11 also is associated, across the board, with the undergraduate-course respondent's evaluation of various aspects of the online experience. And again, the most striking example is found in its crosstabulation with Q12. Here, over a quarter (27%) of those who agreed that the online experience was well-suited to the way they like to learn also reported they probably learned more in their online class. In contrast, less than 2% of the respondents who disagreed (that the online experience was well-suited to the way they like to learn) felt this way. Even more pronounced, a full 82% of this latter group—versus only 19% among those who agreed—reported they probably learned less in their online class. Finally, consider the association between Q11 and the respondent's overall rating of the course, Q17: Whereas 77% of those who agreed with Q11 provided the highest two ratings for the course, only 22% of those who disagreed did so.

Combined, the crosstabulations involving Q23 and Q11 suggest an interaction perhaps is at play between a student's learning orientation and one's responsiveness to the online delivery of courses.

**Q24. *For me, and all things considered, the advantages of taking a course online outweigh any limitations.*** As we acknowledged above, Q24 admittedly does not pertain directly to the respondent's learning orientation. But as a summative evaluation of one's online experience, its crosstabulation with key items should prove illuminating. We therefore consider this item here.

Not surprisingly, respondents who agreed with Q24 generally provided more positive ratings on these other items than did respondents who disagreed with Q24. Among the latter, for example, a full 71% believed they learned less in their online class than they probably would have in the traditional format. As the most salient finding for these respondents, this sense of having learned less in the online course perhaps is a central consideration in their negative appraisal of the advantages/limitations ratio of online courses.

Interestingly, a noticeable minority of those agreeing with Q24—favorably appraising the advantages/limitations ratio of online courses—nonetheless provided low ratings on learning-related items. Specifically, 20% of such respondents believed they probably learned less in their online class, 18% that they probably had to work less for their grade, 15% that the course did not challenge them intellectually, and 12% that they learned little. Again, these are minority percentages. But they nevertheless suggest that learning-related considerations may not be central to one's judgment that, in the end, the advantages of taking a course online indeed outweigh any limitations.

Table 3. Crosstabulation of Q11, Q23, and Q24 against key items: Undergraduate-course respondents only.

			Q11. This online experience was well-suited to the way I like to learn.		Q23. As a rule, I work best in self-directed and self-paced course formats.		Q24. For me, and all things considered, the advantages of taking a course online outweigh any limitations.	
			agree	disagree	agree	disagree	agree	disagree
<b>Q6. There was adequate opportunity for me to interact online with the instructor.</b>	agree	count col. % <sup>11</sup>	574 93.0%	121 60.8%	531 87.6%	159 77.6%	529 90.0%	158 71.8%
	disagree	count col. %	43 7.0%	78 39.2%	75 12.4%	46 22.4%	59 10.0%	62 28.2%
<b>Q7. There was adequate opportunity for me to interact online with other students.</b>	agree	count col. %	514 83.2%	107 54.0%	480 79.1%	137 67.2%	473 80.3%	140 63.9%
	disagree	count col. %	104 16.8%	91 46.0%	127 20.9%	67 32.8%	116 19.7%	79 36.1%
<b>Q8. The online technologies used in this course worked the way they were supposed to.</b>	agree	count col. %	598 96.8%	156 78.4%	567 93.4%	183 89.3%	562 95.4%	186 84.5%
	disagree	count col. %	20 3.2%	43 21.6%	40 6.6%	22 10.7%	27 4.6%	34 15.5%
<b>Q9. The communication tools were easy to use (email, chatroom, message board, etc.).</b>	agree	count col. %	602 97.4%	153 76.9%	569 93.9%	180 87.8%	559 95.1%	187 85.0%
	disagree	count col. %	16 2.6%	46 23.1%	37 6.1%	25 12.2%	29 4.9%	33 15.0%

<sup>11</sup> For a particular crosstabulation, “col. %” expresses the number of respondents in a cell as column percentage. With respect to the Q11 x Q6 crosstabulation, for example, 93% of respondents who agreed with Q11 also agreed with Q6, whereas 7.0% who agreed with Q11 disagreed with Q11.

Table 3 (cont.)

			Q11. This online experience was well-suited to the way I like to learn.		Q23. As a rule, I work best in self-directed and self-paced course formats.		Q24. For me, and all things considered, the advantages of taking a course online outweigh any limitations.	
			agree	disagree	agree	disagree	agree	disagree
<b>Q10. Technology support was there if I needed it.</b>	agree	count	595	159	567	181	556	190
		col. %	96.7%	80.3%	94.2%	88.3%	95.2%	86.4%
	disagree	count	20	39	35	24	28	30
		col. %	3.3%	19.7%	5.8%	11.7%	4.8%	13.6%
<b>Q12. Which statement best characterizes your belief after having taken this online class?</b>	I learned much more [a little more] in this online class than I probably would have in the traditional format.	count	167	3	159	12	161	10
		col. %	27.1%	1.5%	26.2%	5.9%	27.3%	4.5%
	I learned about as much in this online class as I probably would have in the traditional format.	count	331	32	295	69	308	54
	col. %	53.7%	16.2%	48.6%	33.7%	52.3%	24.5%	
	I learned much less [a little less] in this online class than I probably would have in the traditional format.	count	118	162	153	124	120	156
		col. %	19.2%	82.2%	25.2%	60.5%	20.4%	70.9%
<b>Q13. Which statement best characterizes your belief about the grade you received in this online class?</b>	I had to work much harder [a little harder] for my grade in this online class than I probably would have had to in the traditional format.	count	182	96	200	79	180	98
		col. %	29.6%	48.7%	33.1%	38.5%	30.7%	44.5%
	I worked about the same for my grade in this online class as I probably would have had to in the traditional format.	count	316	56	297	74	301	68
	col. %	51.5%	28.4%	49.1%	36.1%	51.3%	30.9%	
	I worked much less [a little less] for my grade in this online class than I probably would have had to in the traditional format.	count	116	45	108	52	106	54
		col. %	18.9%	22.8%	17.9%	25.4%	18.1%	24.5%

Table 3 (cont.)

			Q11. This online experience was well-suited to the way I like to learn.		Q23. As a rule, I work best in self-directed and self-paced course formats.		Q24. For me, and all things considered, the advantages of taking a course online outweigh any limitations.	
			agree	disagree	agree	disagree	agree	disagree
<b>Q14. How much did this course challenge you intellectually?</b>	little (two lowest ratings)	count	79	60	94	44	87	51
		col. %	13.3%	31.4%	16.0%	22.2%	15.2%	24.2%
	middle rating	count	193	68	181	80	174	85
		col. %	32.4%	35.6%	30.8%	40.4%	30.4%	40.3%
	a lot (two highest ratings)	count	324	63	313	74	311	75
		col. %	54.4%	33.0%	53.2%	37.4%	54.4%	35.5%
<b>Q15. Overall, how would you rate the assessment process for this course (exams, assignments, projects, papers, etc.)?</b>	little (two lowest ratings)	count	25	71	65	30	45	49
		col. %	4.1%	36.2%	10.8%	14.6%	7.7%	22.3%
	middle rating	count	95	63	102	56	93	65
		col. %	15.5%	32.1%	16.9%	27.3%	15.9%	29.5%
	a lot (two highest ratings)	count	493	62	437	119	448	106
		col. %	80.4%	31.6%	72.4%	58.0%	76.5%	48.2%
<b>Q16. How much did you learn from this course?</b>	little (two lowest ratings)	count	51	92	93	50	70	72
		col. %	8.3%	47.2%	15.3%	24.5%	11.9%	32.9%
	middle rating	count	132	53	115	70	119	66
		col. %	21.4%	27.2%	18.9%	34.3%	20.2%	30.1%
	a lot (two highest ratings)	count	433	50	399	84	400	81
		col. %	70.3%	25.6%	65.7%	41.2%	67.9%	37.0%

Table 3 (cont.)

			Q11. This online experience was well-suited to the way I like to learn.		Q23. As a rule, I work best in self-directed and self-paced course formats.		Q24. For me, and all things considered, the advantages of taking a course online outweigh any limitations.	
			agree	disagree	agree	disagree	agree	disagree
<b>Q17. What is your overall rating of this course?</b>	little (two lowest ratings)	count	33	92	72	52	49	74
		col. %	5.4%	46.9%	11.9%	25.4%	8.3%	33.6%
	middle rating	count	111	60	110	61	107	64
		col. %	18.0%	30.6%	18.2%	29.8%	18.2%	29.1%
	a lot (two highest ratings)	count	471	44	424	92	432	82
		col. %	76.6%	22.4%	70.0%	44.9%	73.5%	37.3%
<b>Q18. Overall, how would you rate the instructor?</b>	little (two lowest ratings)	count	33	65	61	37	49	49
		col. %	5.4%	33.2%	10.0%	18.0%	8.3%	22.3%
	middle rating	count	101	50	107	44	101	50
		col. %	16.4%	25.5%	17.6%	21.5%	17.1%	22.7%
	a lot (two highest ratings)	count	482	81	439	124	439	121
		col. %	78.2%	41.3%	72.3%	60.5%	74.5%	55.0%

***Postscript: Q11, Q23, Q24 and the number of online courses previously taken at UMaine.***

As Table 4 shows, respondents who agreed with Q11, Q23, or Q24 also tended to have taken more online courses than respondents who disagreed with these three items. Although one might expect this positive association, these data cannot distinguish between two competing explanations that immediately come to mind: (a) taking additional courses online engenders more favorable sentiments (as measured by these three items), or (b) those who are favorably predisposed to this instructional modality seek out additional online opportunities. That said, we are encouraged nonetheless that these are positive, not negative, associations!

Table 4. Crosstabulation of Q19 against Q11, Q23, and Q24: Undergraduate-course respondents only.

			<b>Q19. Before taking this online course, how many online courses had you taken at UMaine?</b>  <b>(Do not include "hybrid" courses that combined on-site instruction with an online component.)</b>			
			none	1-2	3-4	5+
<b>Q11. This online experience was well-suited to the way I like to learn.</b>	agree	count col. %	163 71.5%	231 73.1%	156 83.0%	64 84.2%
	disagree	count col. %	65 28.5%	85 26.9%	32 17.0%	12 15.8%
<b>Q23. As a rule, I work best in self-directed and self-paced course formats.</b>	agree	count col. %	158 69.3%	223 70.6%	153 81.8%	69 89.6%
	disagree	count col. %	70 30.7%	93 29.4%	34 18.2%	8 10.4%
<b>Q24. For me, and all things considered, the advantages of taking a course online outweigh any limitations.</b>	agree	count col. %	146 64.3%	218 69.4%	149 79.3%	72 94.7%
	disagree	count col. %	81 35.7%	96 30.6%	39 20.7%	4 5.3%

### *Concluding Caveats and Comments*

Any study has its limitations, of course, and the present study is no exception. While not atypical of student surveys, our response rate of 23% nevertheless means we did not hear from three quarters of the targeted population. We do not believe this fact gainsays the validity of our results, but we do urge readers not to casually generalize these results to all students having taken a UMaine course online. On a related note, the online courses represented in these results are a small subset of the universe of UMaine courses that could be (or perhaps someday will be) offered online, and one should be careful not to overgeneralize here as well. In short, these results very well could change with other courses (and instructors) in the mix. Similarly, insofar as the technology and pedagogy of online education is evolving, one would expect the results of a study such as ours to change were it repeated in a year or two. Time, then, is another aspect of generalization for which one should exercise caution in considering these results. Finally, any inferences and generalizations are constrained by the specific questions we posed on the survey.

All of this is to reiterate what we stated at the outset: We see this study as a first step—and only a first step—in providing data to inform opinions about online education and to frame needed discussion regarding online education pedagogy and policy at UMaine. The above limitations notwithstanding, we are hopeful that this report will engender campus discussion of online education and, in turn, the determination of next steps to move UMaine forward in this increasingly important area.

## Appendix A

### Survey Instrument<sup>12</sup>

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Thank you for taking a few minutes to share your thoughts and experiences about the online course you recently took at UMaine -- the course that was stated in the email you received inviting you to participate in this survey. Please respond to any course-specific question below by thinking about your experience in this particular online course (and only this course). Your responses will be kept strictly confidential, and results will not be reported by individual course or shared with the instructor.

If you wish to participate in the lottery for a free iPad, please provide your 6-digit Maine Street identification number (including any leading zeros): \_\_\_\_\_

In the text box below, please provide the course designation for the online course stated in the survey invitation email you received (e.g., ANT 120): \_\_\_\_\_

Did this online class involve any face-to-face meetings?

- Yes (please briefly describe): (1) \_\_\_\_\_
- No, it was totally online. (2)

Q1. What is your cumulative GPA?

- less than 1.50 (1)
- 1.50 to 2.49 (2)
- 2.50 to 3.49 (3)
- 3.5 or higher (4)

Q2. What was your class standing when you began this online course?

- first-year student (fewer than 24 completed credit hours) (1)
- sophomore (24-53 completed credit hours) (2)
- junior (54-83 completed hours) (3)
- senior (84 or more completed credit hours) (4)
- graduate student (5)

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<sup>12</sup> Administered online using Qualtrics, this survey was developed in a collaboration involving Mark Anderson, Ted Coladarci, Al Kezis, Tina Passman, Jeff St. John, and Lu Zeph. This survey comprises items taken (or adapted) from The IDEA Center ([www.theideacenter.org](http://www.theideacenter.org)), items taken verbatim from the UMaine student evaluation of teaching form, and items written from scratch. The format of the survey as seen here differs in minor and nonsubstantive ways from how the survey appeared to the online respondents.

Q3. Where were you living when you took this online course?

- on campus (1)
- Orono or Old Town (2)
- the greater Bangor area (3)
- other (please specify): (4) \_\_\_\_\_

Q4. Which statement about the online course you took applies to you best?

- This course is required by my major or program. (1)
- This course satisfies a general education requirement. (2)
- I took this course as an elective. (3)

Q5. Which statement best characterizes your reason for taking this course online?

- There was only one section of this course and it happened to be online. (1)
- Although there was an on-campus section of this course, it was closed. (2)
- Although there was an on-campus section of this course, it conflicted with my academic schedule. (3)
- I generally prefer online courses. (4)
- other (please specify): (5) \_\_\_\_\_

Please respond to Q6-Q18 by thinking about the online course that you specified at the beginning of this survey (and was included in your email invitation).

Q6. There was adequate opportunity for me to interact online with the instructor.

- strongly agree (1)
- agree (2)
- slightly agree (3)
- slightly disagree (4)
- disagree (5)
- strongly disagree (6)

Q7. There was adequate opportunity for me to interact online with other students.

- strongly agree (1)
- agree (2)
- slightly agree (3)
- slightly disagree (4)
- disagree (5)
- strongly disagree (6)

Q8. The online technologies used in this course worked the way they were supposed to.

- strongly agree (1)
- agree (2)
- slightly agree (3)
- slightly disagree (4)
- disagree (5)
- strongly disagree (6)

Q9. The communication tools were easy to use (email, chatroom, message board, etc.).

- strongly agree (1)
- agree (2)
- slightly agree (3)
- slightly disagree (4)
- disagree (5)
- strongly disagree (6)

Q10. Technology support was there if I needed it.

- strongly agree (1)
- agree (2)
- slightly agree (3)
- slightly disagree (4)
- disagree (5)
- strongly disagree (6)

Q11. This online experience was well-suited to the way I like to learn.

- strongly agree (1)
- agree (2)
- slightly agree (3)
- slightly disagree (4)
- disagree (5)
- strongly disagree (6)

Q12. Which statement best characterizes your belief after having taken this online class?

- I learned much more in this online class than I probably would have in the traditional format. (1)
- I learned a little more in this online class than I probably would have in the traditional format. (2)
- I learned about as much in this online class as I probably would have in the traditional format. (3)
- I learned a little less in this online class than I probably would have in the traditional format. (4)
- I learned much less in this online class than I probably would have in the traditional format. (5)

Q13. Which statement best characterizes your belief about the grade you received in this online class?

- I had to work much harder for my grade in this online class than I probably would have had to in the traditional format. (1)
- I had to work a little harder for my grade in this online class than I probably would have had to in the traditional format. (2)
- I worked about the same for my grade in this online class as I probably would have had to in the traditional format. (3)
- I worked a little less for my grade in this online class than I probably would have had to in the traditional format. (4)
- I worked much less for my grade in this online class than I probably would have had to in the traditional format. (5)

Q14. How much did this course challenge you intellectually?

- very little (1)
- (2)
- (3)
- (4)
- very much (5)

Q15. Overall, how would you rate the assessment process for this course (exams, assignments, projects, papers, etc.)?

- poor (1)
- (2)
- (3)
- (4)
- excellent (5)

Q16. How much did you learn from this course?

- very little (1)
- (2)
- (3)
- (4)
- very much (5)

Q17. What is your overall rating of this course?

- poor (1)
- (2)
- (3)
- (4)
- excellent (5)

Q18. Overall, how would you rate the instructor?

- poor (1)
- (2)
- (3)
- (4)
- excellent (5)

Q19. Before taking this online course, how many online courses had you taken at UMaine? (Do not include "hybrid" courses that combined on-site instruction with an online component.)

- none (1)
- 1-2 (2)
- 3-4 (3)
- 5 or more (4)

Q20. During your time as a UMaine student, have you taken an online course offered by another school?

- yes (1)
- no (2)

If "no" is selected, respondent is skipped to Q23.

Q21. From which school(s) have you taken an online course? (Check all that apply.)

- University of Maine at Augusta (1)
- University of Maine at Farmington (2)
- University of Maine at Fort Kent (3)
- University of Maine at Machias (4)
- University of Maine at Presque Isle (5)
- University of Southern Maine (6)
- University of Phoenix (7)
- University of New England (8)
- Western Oklahoma State University (9)
- other(s): (10) \_\_\_\_\_

Q22. Generally speaking, how important was each factor below in your decision to take an online course offered through a school other than UMaine?

	very important (1)	somewhat important (2)	not important (3)
the course fit my schedule (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
my advisor's recommendation (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
course was not available at UMaine (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
less expensive course than at UMaine (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
easier course than at UMaine (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

These last few items call for more general reflections.

Q23. As a rule, I work best in self-directed and self-paced course formats.

- strongly agree (1)
- agree (2)
- slightly agree (3)
- slightly disagree (4)
- disagree (5)
- strongly disagree (6)

Q24. For me, and all things considered, the advantages of taking a course online outweigh any limitations.

- strongly agree (1)
- agree (2)
- slightly agree (3)
- slightly disagree (4)
- disagree (5)
- strongly disagree (6)

Q25. In the text box below, please feel free to share any general observations about your experience with online courses at UMaine, the relative value of online versus on-campus classes in your view, or anything else in regard to this important topic.

**Appendix B**

Item Frequencies: Undergraduate-course and graduate-course respondents

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**Did this online class involve any face-to-face meetings?**

	undergraduate course		graduate course	
	frequency	valid %	frequency	valid %
Yes (please briefly describe):	221	26.9	29	38.2
No, it was totally online.	600	73.1	47	61.8
Total	821	100.0	76	100.0

**Q1. What is your cumulative GPA?**

	undergraduate course		graduate course	
	frequency	valid %	frequency	valid %
less than 1.50	3	.4	0	0.0
1.50 to 2.49	73	8.9	0	0.0
2.50 to 3.49	464	56.4	7	9.2
3.5 or higher	282	34.3	69	90.8
Total	822	100.0	76	100.0

**Q2. What was your class standing when you began this online course?**

	undergraduate course		graduate course	
	frequency	valid %	frequency	valid %
first-year student (fewer than 24 completed credit hours)	78	9.5	0	0.0
sophomore (24-53 completed credit hours)	217	26.5	0	0.0
junior (54-83 completed hours)	262	32.0	0	0.0
senior (84 or more completed credit hours)	239	29.2	1	1.3
graduate	23	2.8	75	98.7
Total	819	100.0	76	100.0

**Q3. Where were you living when you took this online course?**

	undergraduate course		graduate course	
	frequency	valid %	frequency	valid %
on campus	233	28.4	4	5.3
Orono or Old Town	329	40.1	14	18.4
the greater Bangor area	118	14.4	15	19.7
other (please specify):	130	15.8	42	55.3
out of state	11	1.3	1	1.3
Total	821	100.0	76	100.0

**Q4. Which statement about the online course you took applies to you best?**

	undergraduate course		graduate course	
	frequency	valid %	frequency	valid %
This course is required by my major or program.	219	26.7	46	62.2
This course satisfies a general education requirement.	317	38.6	4	5.4
I took this course as an elective.	285	34.7	24	32.4
Total	821	100.0	74	100.0

**Q5. Which statement best characterizes your reason for taking this course online?**

	undergraduate course		graduate course	
	frequency	valid %	frequency	valid %
There was only one section of this course and it happened to be online.	303	37.0	41	54.7
Although there was an on-campus section of this course, it was closed.	19	2.3	0	0.0
Although there was an on-campus section of this course, it conflicted with my academic schedule.	208	25.4	1	1.3
I generally prefer online courses.	183	22.3	21	28.0
other (please specify):	107	13.0	12	16.0
Total	820	100.0	75	100.0

**Q5.recoded (unpacking 'other')**

	<b>undergraduate course</b>		<b>graduate course</b>	
	frequency	valid %	frequency	valid %
only available online	303	37.0	41	54.7
on-campus section closed	19	2.3	0	0.0
scheduling issues	238	29.0	1	1.3
prefer online classes (includes geographical distance)	234	28.5	29	38.7
interested in class/instructor	8	1.0	2	2.7
easier class	3	.4	0	.0
miscellaneous	15	1.8	2	2.7
Total	820	100.0	75	100.0

**Q6. There was adequate opportunity for me to interact online with the instructor.**

	<b>undergraduate course</b>		<b>graduate course</b>	
	frequency	valid %	frequency	valid %
strongly agree	242	29.5	39	52.0
agree	333	40.7	19	25.3
slightly agree	122	14.9	7	9.3
slightly disagree	52	6.3	4	5.3
disagree	43	5.3	3	4.0
strongly disagree	27	3.3	3	4.0
Total	819	100.0	75	100.0

**Q7. There was adequate opportunity for me to interact online with other students.**

	undergraduate course		graduate course	
	frequency	valid %	frequency	valid %
strongly agree	242	29.5	29	38.7
agree	249	30.4	21	28.0
slightly agree	132	16.1	13	17.3
slightly disagree	78	9.5	4	5.3
disagree	72	8.8	3	4.0
strongly disagree	46	5.6	5	6.7
Total	819	100.0	75	100.0

**Q8. The online technologies used in this course worked the way they were supposed to.**

	undergraduate course		graduate course	
	frequency	valid %	frequency	valid %
strongly agree	292	35.6	26	34.7
agree	389	47.4	38	50.7
slightly agree	76	9.3	6	8.0
slightly disagree	32	3.9	2	2.7
disagree	19	2.3	1	1.3
strongly disagree	12	1.5	2	2.7
Total	820	100.0	75	100.0

**Q9. The communication tools were easy to use (email, chatroom, message board, etc.).**

	undergraduate course		graduate course	
	frequency	valid %	frequency	valid %
strongly agree	281	34.4	25	33.3
agree	391	47.8	35	46.7
slightly agree	84	10.3	10	13.3
slightly disagree	39	4.8	3	4.0
disagree	17	2.1	2	2.7
strongly disagree	6	.7	0	0.0
Total	818	100.0	75	100.0

**Q10. Technology support was there if I needed it.**

	undergraduate course		graduate course	
	frequency	valid %	frequency	valid %
strongly agree	212	26.0	26	35.1
agree	420	51.6	35	47.3
slightly agree	123	15.1	10	13.5
slightly disagree	36	4.4	2	2.7
disagree	14	1.7	1	1.4
strongly disagree	9	1.1	0	0.0
Total	814	100.0	74	100.0

**Q11. This online experience was well-suited to the way I like to learn.**

	undergraduate course		graduate course	
	frequency	valid %	frequency	valid %
strongly agree	181	22.2	21	28.0
agree	273	33.4	31	41.3
slightly agree	164	20.1	10	13.3
slightly disagree	75	9.2	7	9.3
disagree	73	8.9	4	5.3
strongly disagree	51	6.2	2	2.7
Total	817	100.0	75	100.0

**Q12. Which statement best characterizes your belief after having taken this online class?**

	undergraduate course		graduate course	
	frequency	valid %	frequency	valid %
I learned much more in this online class than I probably would have in the traditional format.	70	8.6	12	16.0
I learned a little more in this online class than I probably would have in the traditional format.	101	12.4	8	10.7
I learned about as much in this online class as I probably would have in the traditional format.	364	44.7	39	52.0
I learned a little less in this online class than I probably would have in the traditional format.	171	21.0	9	12.0
I learned much less in this online class than I probably would have in the traditional format.	109	13.4	7	9.3
Total	815	100.0	75	100.0

**Q13. Which statement best characterizes your belief about the grade you received in this online class?**

	undergraduate course		graduate course	
	frequency	valid %	frequency	valid %
I had to work much harder for my grade in this online class than I probably would have had to in the traditional format.	78	9.6	10	13.3
I had to work a little harder for my grade in this online class than I probably would have had to in the traditional format.	202	24.8	24	32.0
I worked about the same for my grade in this online class as I probably would have had to in the traditional format.	372	45.8	33	44.0
I worked a little less for my grade in this online class than I probably would have had to in the traditional format.	120	14.8	5	6.7
I worked much less for my grade in this online class than I probably would have had to in the traditional format.	41	5.0	3	4.0
Total	813	100.0	75	100.0

**Q14. How much did this course challenge you intellectually?**

	undergraduate course		graduate course	
	frequency	valid %	frequency	valid %
1 very little	54	6.8	3	4.3
2	85	10.8	5	7.2
3	262	33.2	10	14.5
4	296	37.5	24	34.8
5 very much	92	11.7	27	39.1
Total	789	100.0	69	100.0

**Q15. Overall, how would you rate the assessment process for this course?**

	undergraduate course		graduate course	
	frequency	valid %	frequency	valid %
1 poor	43	5.3	1	1.3
2	53	6.5	4	5.3
3	159	19.6	19	25.3
4	324	40.0	24	32.0
5 excellent	232	28.6	27	36.0
Total	811	100.0	75	100.0

**Q16. How much did you learn from this course?**

	undergraduate course		graduate course	
	frequency	valid %	frequency	valid %
1 very little	45	5.5	1	1.3
2	98	12.1	7	9.3
3	186	22.9	13	17.3
4	285	35.1	21	28.0
5 very much	199	24.5	33	44.0
Total	813	100.0	75	100.0

**Q17. What is your overall rating of this course?**

	undergraduate course		graduate course	
	frequency	valid %	frequency	valid %
1 poor	51	6.3	2	2.7
2	74	9.1	4	5.3
3	171	21.0	15	20.0
4	286	35.2	19	25.3
5 excellent	231	28.4	35	46.7
Total	813	100.0	75	100.0

**Q18. Overall, how would you rate the instructor?**

	undergraduate course		graduate course	
	frequency	valid %	frequency	valid %
1 poor	38	4.7	3	4.0
2	60	7.4	5	6.7
3	151	18.6	13	17.3
4	243	29.9	16	21.3
5 excellent	322	39.6	38	50.7
Total	814	100.0	75	100.0

**Q19. Before taking this online course, how many online courses had you taken at UMaine?  
(Do not include "hybrid" courses that combined on-site instruction with an online component.)**

	undergraduate course		graduate course	
	frequency	valid %	frequency	valid %
none	228	28.1	23	31.1
1-2	316	39.0	23	31.1
3-4	189	23.3	15	20.3
5 or more	77	9.5	13	17.6
Total	810	100.0	74	100.0

**Q20. During your time as a UMaine student,  
have you taken an online course offered by another school?**

	undergraduate course		graduate course	
	frequency	valid %	frequency	valid %
no	726	89.2	58	77.3
yes	88	10.8	17	22.7
Total	814	100.0	75	100.0

**UMA**

	<b>undergraduate course</b>		<b>graduate course</b>	
	frequency	valid %	frequency	valid %
no	67	76.1	12	70.6
yes	21	23.9	5	29.4
Total	88	100.0	17	100.0

**UMF**

	<b>undergraduate course</b>		<b>graduate course</b>	
	frequency	valid %	frequency	valid %
no	86	97.7	16	94.1
yes	2	2.3	1	5.9
Total	88	100.0	17	100.0

**UMFK**

	<b>undergraduate course</b>		<b>graduate course</b>	
	frequency	valid %	frequency	valid %
no	66	75.0	15	88.2
yes	22	25.0	2	11.8
Total	88	100.0	17	100.0

**UMM**

	<b>undergraduate course</b>		<b>graduate course</b>	
	frequency	valid %	frequency	valid %
no	75	85.2	14	82.4
yes	13	14.8	3	17.6
Total	88	100.0	17	100.0

**UMPI**

	<b>undergraduate course</b>		<b>graduate course</b>	
	frequency	valid %	frequency	valid %
no	79	89.8	16	94.1
yes	9	10.2	1	5.9
Total	88	100.0	17	100.0

**USM**

	<b>undergraduate course</b>		<b>graduate course</b>	
	frequency	valid %	frequency	valid %
no	74	84.1	13	76.5
yes	14	15.9	4	23.5
Total	88	100.0	17	100.0

**U of Phoenix**

	<b>undergraduate course</b>		<b>graduate course</b>	
	frequency	valid %	frequency	valid %
no	87	98.9	15	88.2
yes	1	1.1	2	11.8
Total	88	100.0	17	100.0

**Western OK State**

	<b>undergraduate course</b>		<b>graduate course</b>	
	frequency	valid %	frequency	valid %
no	85	96.6	0	0.0
yes	3	3.4	0	0.0
Total	88	100.0	0	0.0

**MeCC**

	<b>undergraduate course</b>		<b>graduate course</b>	
	frequency	valid %	frequency	valid %
no	73	83.0	0	0.0
yes	15	17.0	0	0.0
Total	88	100.0	0	0.0

**KS State**

	<b>undergraduate course</b>		<b>graduate course</b>	
	frequency	valid %	frequency	valid %
no	84	95.5	0	0.0
yes	4	4.5	0	0.0
Total	88	100.0	0	0.0

**other**

	<b>undergraduate course</b>		<b>graduate course</b>	
	frequency	valid %	frequency	valid %
no	73	83.0	12	70.6
yes	15	17.0	5	29.4
Total	88	100.0	17	100.0

**Q22. Generally speaking, how important was each factor below in your decision to take an online course offered through a school other than UMaine?**

**...the course fit my schedule**

	<b>undergraduate course</b>		<b>graduate course</b>	
	frequency	valid %	frequency	valid %
very important	79	89.8	13	81.3
somewhat important	7	8.0	1	6.3
not important	2	2.3	2	12.5
Total	88	100.0	16	100.0

**...my advisor's recommendation**

	<b>undergraduate course</b>		<b>graduate course</b>	
	frequency	valid %	frequency	valid %
very important	13	15.1	3	17.6
somewhat important	36	41.9	5	29.4
not important	37	43.0	9	52.9
Total	86	100.0	17	100.0

**...course was not available at UMaine**

	<b>undergraduate course</b>		<b>graduate course</b>	
	frequency	valid %	frequency	valid %
very important	36	42.4	10	58.8
somewhat important	23	27.1	3	17.6
not important	26	30.6	4	23.5
Total	85	100.0	17	100.0

**... less expensive course than at UMaine**

	<b>undergraduate course</b>		<b>graduate course</b>	
	frequency	valid %	frequency	valid %
very important	37	43.0	3	18.8
somewhat important	20	23.3	2	12.5
not important	29	33.7	11	68.8
Total	86	100.0	16	100.0

... easier course than at UMaine

	undergraduate course		graduate course	
	frequency	valid %	frequency	valid %
very important	8	9.4	0	0.0
somewhat important	18	21.2	0	0.0
not important	59	69.4	16	100.0
Total	85	100.0	16	100.0

**Q23. As a rule, I work best in self-directed and self-paced course formats.**

	undergraduate course		graduate course	
	frequency	valid %	frequency	valid %
strongly agree	113	13.9	16	21.3
agree	232	28.6	25	33.3
slightly agree	262	32.3	20	26.7
slightly disagree	122	15.0	11	14.7
disagree	70	8.6	1	1.3
strongly disagree	13	1.6	2	2.7
Total	812	100.0	75	100.0

**Q24. For me, and all things considered, the advantages of taking a course online outweigh any limitations.**

	undergraduate course		graduate course	
	frequency	valid %	frequency	valid %
strongly agree	126	15.6	26	34.7
agree	261	32.3	25	33.3
slightly agree	202	25.0	11	14.7
slightly disagree	123	15.2	6	8.0
disagree	69	8.5	4	5.3
strongly disagree	28	3.5	3	4.0
Total	809	100.0	75	100.0