EVALUATION OF BLENDED LEARNING COURSES IN THE FACULTY OF FINE ARTS

SECOND EVALUATION ANNUAL REPORT, 2012-2013

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This report is the second report of the evaluation of blended learning courses in the Faculty of Fine Arts at York University that first began in the 2011-12 academic year. The evaluation examines course Moodle website design, student perceptions of blended courses, and instructor experiences in teaching in the blended format. The current report presents findings from evaluation activities conducted within five introductory courses that were offered in the blended format in Fall 2012 and Winter 2013 and builds on the results discussed in the prior report (Owston & York, 2012).

The Moodle sites for each course were analyzed on four evaluation criteria derived from the literature and our prior study conducted in 2011-12: (a) Moodle organization and layout design, (b) instructional design and delivery, (c) student engagement, and (d) student support and resources. Most Moodle sites evaluated have been well received by students because of their usability and appropriate layout design. Additionally, most Moodle sites produced evidence of structuring their course content in a logically sequential way. One course Moodle site has met all the expectations appropriate for a blended course. The other four course Moodle sites however produced little evidence of the expectations appropriate for a blended course, particularly in the areas pertaining to providing opportunities for student engagement and offering adequate access to student support and resources required for a blended course.

The student survey results suggest that fewer than half were satisfied with their blended course, except one course which has left the overwhelming majority of students pleased with their blended learning experience. Students overwhelmingly prefer classroom instruction and express concern about a reduced amount of interaction with the instructor, a disconnection of the online and face-to-face components, and a lower degree of student engagement outside of the traditional classroom. While students have perceived that the blended format allows for greater flexibility in their personal schedule, most students reported that they were not able to reduce their travel time and cut down the cost of their commute.

Our findings suggest that the course instructors have been supportive of the blended learning initiative in the Faculty and are willing to continue to experiment and improve their teaching in a blended format. While most instructors have been pleased with technical support provided, they have asked for more pedagogical support offered by experts in course re-design and instructional methods.

Given the above findings, we offer seven recommendations with respect to the blended learning initiative in the upcoming year.

1. Given that student satisfaction with blended learning is highly variable, we recommend that the Faculty work with instructors more closely to rethink their approach to mixing classroom and online delivery modes in order to create conditions under which both residence and commuter students will benefit more from the blended format.

2. Findings suggest that the students are nearly equally divided in their preferences for learning in either face-to-face or blended format. We recommend that instructors

may wish to consider a model whereby face-to-face seating time of both lectures and tutorials is reduced (e.g., 30% in-class and 70% online lectures and perhaps a 70/30 ratio applied to tutorials) to have more flexibility in adapting their teaching to address students' needs, their learning preferences, and expectations.

3. We recommend that instructors explore instructional strategies and take advantage of a diverse repertoire of Moodle activities and tools to enhance active learning and engagement in order to reach out to students of different learning preferences.

4. Compared to the findings presented in the 2011-12 report, the organization and instructional design of Moodle sites have achieved a better quality. However, the Moodle sites still need improvement, particularly in the areas of student engagement and student support and resources required for a blended course. Additionally, we recommend that a standard Moodle course shell template be designed and used as a foundation for all 1900 courses to address issues common to blended learning as specified in the evaluation rubric used in this evaluation.

5. Considering the differences of reading text from a computer monitor or mobile device screen, we recommend that instructors in blended courses need to think carefully about how they present and organize course information on their course Moodle sites in order to encourage students to read and view materials online.

6. We recommend that instructors and tutorial leaders should be provided with a comprehensive course redesign support system involving an instructional designer, opportunities for continuous professional development, and peer mentoring. In addition, we recommend that the Faculty may wish to create a digital repository of sharable and reusable resources on blended learning to ensure sustainability of the blended learning initiative in the Faculty.

7. Considering that most students in 1900 courses are first-year students who are unfamiliar with a university and may be challenged by blended learning, initial support for such students is vital to their academic success, as well as to the reputation of the Faculty. In this regard, we recommend a self-assessment survey be developed for students which would provide them with information on what they could expect from a blended course, help them assess their readiness for blended learning, and determine what skills they need to succeed at blended learning. We suggest that the Faculty may wish to work in collaboration with the Teaching Commons on this matter.

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1. INTRODUCTION

This is the second report of the evaluation of blended learning courses in the Faculty of Fine Arts at York University that first began in the 2011-12 academic year. The current report presents findings from evaluation activities conducted within five introductory courses that were offered in the blended format in Fall 2012 and Winter 2013 and builds on the results discussed in the prior report (Owston & York, 2012).

The second report addresses the following issues as observed up through the 2012-13 academic year:

- assessment of course Moodle websites, their organization and layout design, their elements of instructional design and delivery, opportunities provided for student engagement, and the availability of student support and resources within the Moodle learning environment;
- examination of students attitudes toward their blended learning experience, such as their satisfaction with the course, their elearning preferences, and their perceptions of learning opportunities, technology use, engagement, and learning outcomes in their blended courses;
- examination of instructor experiences in teaching in the blended format, their perceptions of strengths and weaknesses of the blended models they utilized, as well as their concerns about the pedagogical and technical support provided by York University.

The framework used to guide the study was developed as part of the *eLearning Business Case for York University* (eLearning Working Group, 2010). This framework uses four criteria to assess the merits of three instructional modes: web-enhanced learning, blended learning, and fully online learning. The criteria asked of the three instructional methods, how well they:

1. increase York's ability to respond to enrolment pressures;
2. provide better experience for commuter students;
3. better engage students;
4. improve student learning.

The criteria led to the development of the data collection instruments and are used as organizers for presenting the results of student and instructor perceptions sections of this report.

The report begins with a brief overview of the sample of blended courses participated in the evaluation and a description of the methodological arrangements used to collect and analyze data. There then follows a section on the analysis of course Moodle websites designed and utilized to deliver the blended courses under investigation. In the next two sections, we report on the results derived from the analysis of data collected from the students' surveys of their blended learning experiences, and then provide an analysis of instructors' teaching experiences in the blended courses. The report concludes with a summary and recommendations for future blended learning offerings in the Faculty of Fine Arts.

Three models were used to blend learning in the participating courses in the Faculty of Fine Arts in the 2012-13 academic year:

- *Web-enhanced model*: There was no reduction of face-to-face time under this model. The instructor retained the structure of the traditional course format and used Moodle to supplement in-class sessions with additional online activities in order to enhance students' understanding of key concepts and to increase interaction among the learning participants. Furthermore, Moodle was utilized to build a repository of course documents, reference materials, and complementary resources for students to support their learning. One course out of five courses under investigation utilized this model.

- *"Online lectures/in-class tutorials" model*: In this model students rotated on a fixed weekly schedule between viewing a two-hour online lecture delivered by the instructor via Moodle and attending a one-hour face-to-face tutorial guided by teaching assistants (TAs) along with out-of-class experiential learning activities. Two courses utilized this model.

- *"In-class lectures/hybrid tutorials"* model: In this model students rotated on a fixed schedule between attending a two-hour lecture delivered by the instructor in the face-to-face format and participating in a TA-guided tutorial either on campus or using Moodle. Two courses utilized this model. However, we detected some distinctions in using this model by the course instructors. Within one course, the instructor delivered weekly face-to-face lectures assisted by TAs who conducted tutorial sessions fully online using Moodle. In addition, students were provided with an opportunity to attend an in-class tutorial every other week on a drop-in basis, which was available to all students. Within another course, the instructor delivered face-to-face lectures followed by in-class tutorials led by TAs on even weeks, and then a combination of online tutorials and out-of-class experiential activities were implemented on odd weeks.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 PARTICIPANTS

A total of 945 students who were enrolled in five non-major introductory fine arts courses in the Fall 2012 and Winter 2013 completed the survey. The five courses in the study and the enrolments as reported by the instructors are given in Table 1.

Table 1: Courses Included in Study

Course Number	Course Title	Term	Enrolment	Survey Response
VISA 1900	Art in the City	Fall 2012	368	289 (79%)
FILM 1900	Anatomy of the Feature Film	Fall 2012	384	261 (68%)
THEA 1900	Intercultural Theatre	Winter 2013	235	89 (38%)
MUSI 1900	Music in the City	Winter 2013	313	235 (75%)
DANC 1900	Dance, Film and Culture	Winter 2013	340	71 (21%)
TOTAL:			**1,640**	**945 (58%)**

One third of the survey respondents were taken VISA 1900, another third of the total sample represented FILM 1900, a quarter of the participants were from MUSI 1900, and two other courses – DANC 1900 and THEA 1900 – were represented by less than 10% of their registered students. The overall course proportions within the sample of the evaluation are provided below.
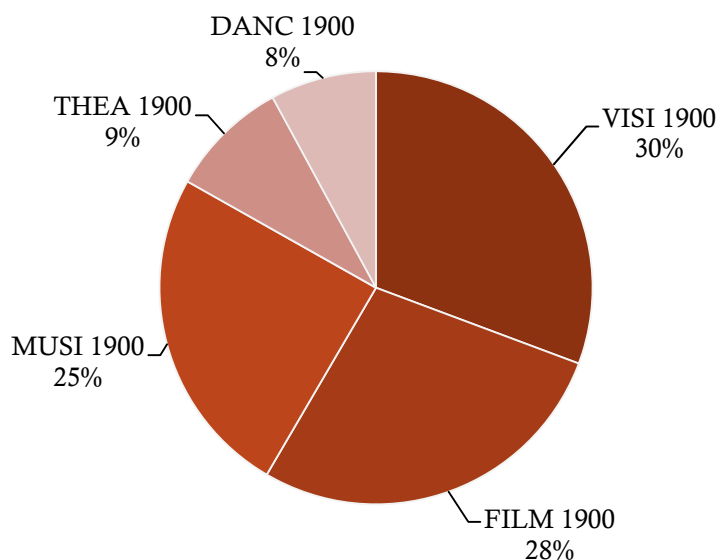
Students' representation by courses in the sample of the evaluation

2.2 ANALYSIS OF COURSE MOODLE WEBSITE DESIGN

We analyzed the content of the above five Moodle course websites using the *Moodle Course Website Evaluation Rubric*, a modified version of the Moodle Course Website Evaluation Checklist we developed in the prior evaluation report (Owston & York, 2012). Our rubric is specifically tailored for assessing blended courses and its criteria are grouped into four areas of evaluation as follows:

1. *Moodle organization and layout design*: refers to the ease and clarity of navigation of the Moodle home page, consistent navigation from page to page, visual and functional consistency, and the use of multimedia within the Moodle course website.
2. *Instructional design and delivery*: refers to the analysis of learning needs and the systemic approach to organizing blended course and building learning paths in a manner that facilitate the transfer of knowledge and skills to the students through the use of a variety of instructional methods, resources, activities, and Moodle tools, which cater to multiple learning styles, strategies, and needs of students.
3. *Student engagement:* addresses how the Moodle course design, assignments, and collaborative Moodle tools effectively encourage exchanges amongst the instructor, students, and content.
4. *Student support and resources:* refers to information about being a successful learner in a blended course, course-related materials, academic, program, and technical support and resources available to students.

The criteria provided in this evaluation rubric represent some of the most important issues instructors face when designing Moodle for their blended learning courses. Each of the above criteria has five sub-criteria. Each sub-criterion was rated using a 3-point scale, where 1 (*developing*) means that little evidence of this criterion present, 2 (*appropriate*) means that evidence of this criterion is clear and is appropriate for this blended course, and 3 (*outstanding*) means that evidence of this criterion exceeds the expectations of the "appropriate" criterion, and demonstrates best practices in a manner that models its use. Note that the sub-criterion is given "0" points in one of the three instances, such as: (a) if evidence of the sub-criterion is not present, but one would expect it to be there because of the nature of a blended course and its content; (b) if evidence of the sub-criterion is present, but not appropriate for this course; or (c) if the criterion is not applicable based on design of a blended course. A complete description of the rubric is given in Appendix A.

Our analysis consisted of providing a quantitative overview and narrative summary of the extent to which the Moodle course websites met the above criteria for the delivery of blended learning.

2.3 STUDENT AND INSTRUCTOR SURVEYS

The student survey was modified by the researchers from the student questionnaire used in the prior study (Owston & York, 2012). Based on the results emerging from an internal consistency test, seven survey items with low item-total correlation coefficients (ranging from .079 to .491) were removed from the survey version used in the prior report. These questions were related to helpfulness of the York's technical support services, extra course fee for video recordings, students' feelings of isolation and anxiety during the blended

course, their time management skills and self-motivation, and self-reported GPA. Another seven items were rephrased to eliminate any possible ambiguity in the statements. For instance, the survey item "Moodle is well organized and easy to navigate" was rephrased to "I was able to find course information easily at the Moodle site." We also developed four new survey items and added them to the survey. Three new survey items were added to explore the improvement of students' perceptions of their learning outcomes in blended courses, compared to typical face-to-face courses. And the fourth new question that we added was used to estimate a proportion of commuting students in blended courses. The resulting final version of students' survey is given in Appendix B.

A paper version of the student survey was administered in each class a week or two before the classes ended by the research team. Prior to completing the survey, students read and signed an informed consent form that was approved by York University's Research Ethics Sub-Committee. Responses were anonymous, however students were asked to voluntarily fill in their student number so that the relationship between responses and course final grades could be obtained. All students in attendance at the time of administration agreed to complete the survey resulting in a total of 945 respondents (58% response rate). Therefore, the low response rate in some courses was due to low class attendance, not by students refusing to participate.

The researchers collected data on course instructors from two sources – surveys and interviews. The five instructors were invited to attend a face-to-face meeting: one was held for instructors who taught their courses in Fall 2012, and another meeting was held for instructors who taught in Winter 2013. In the meeting, the instructors were asked to complete a survey which asked about their most recent experience in teaching a blended course. The survey included 24 statements to measure instructor's perceptions of their experience in designing and implementing their blended course, their interaction with pedagogical and technical support given by York, as well as their interaction with students. Each statement was followed by a 5-point Likert-type scale with values ranging from 1 (*Strongly Disagree*) to 5 (*Strongly Agree*). In addition, instructors were asked three open-ended questions so that they could describe in their own words the blended model they utilized in their course and share their thoughts on the improvement of support needed for effective design and implementation of blended courses in the future. The Blended Learning Survey for Faculty is provided in Appendix C. Following the completion of the survey, we conducted an informal discussion in the form of a focus group interview that offered instructors an opportunity to provide feedback on various aspects of their experience teaching in the blended mode and elaborate on their responses provided in the survey. Four out of five instructors completed the survey and participated in the face-to-face interview.

3. ANALYSIS OF COURSE MOODLE WEBSITES

Next we present our analysis of course Moodle websites. Each of the five courses had its own Moodle website created by the course instructor. Our evaluation of Moodle sites is presented under the headings that represent four most important issues the instructors face when designing a course website for blended learning using a Learning Management System: (a) Moodle organization and layout design; (b) instructional design and delivery; (c) student engagement; and (d) student support and resources. More details on the evaluation rubric are given in Appendix A.

3.1 MOODLE COURSE WEBSITE ORGANIZATION AND LAYOUT DESIGN

Four of five course Moodle websites scored from 11 to 14 points suggesting that they were organized and navigable in accordance with stated measures. One of those four websites exceeded the minimum expectations set for the site organization and layout design criteria, therefore demonstrated best practice and could be suggested as an appropriate model for design of blended courses. One course received 7 points suggesting that it showed little evidence on some measures of the criteria. See Table 2 for further details.

Table 2: Summary of Course Moodle Site Organization and Layout Design

Evaluation criteria	Course A	Course B	Course C	Course D	Course E	Average
Ease and clarity of navigation of Moodle course website	2	3	2	3	2	2.4
Consistent navigation from page to page throughout Moodle	2	3	3	2	2	2.4
Visual consistency of a Moodle course website	2	2	3	3	3	2.6
Functional consistency of a Moodle course website	1	3	2	3	2	2.2
Use of multimedia	0	3	2	1	2	1.6
Total	**7**	**14**	**12**	**12**	**11**	**11.2**

Note: Rating scale: 0 means not present or applicable, 1 (*developing*) means that little evidence of this criterion present, 2 (*appropriate*) means that evidence of this criterion is clear and is appropriate for this blended course, and 3 (*outstanding*) means that evidence of this criterion exceeds the expectations of the "appropriate" criterion.

Some Moodle sites demonstrated major flaws in content organization and functional consistency of their Moodle pages which could put an obstacle in communicating course information to a student in a clear and sequential order. The placement of course information on the website is crucial for a blended course. Moodle allows instructors to place important, course-related information in a general area located near the top of the home page. Three Moodle sites had a large number of links to various data files (e.g., course outline, lecture notes, articles for reading, instructions for assignments, external links, and others) located in the high priority area that was too overwhelming for students' eyes to locate necessary information. Furthermore, some weekly sections on a course home page had two or three links to resources or activities, whereas other weekly sections were simply blank. One Moodle site used repetitively identical files in various weekly sections within a

home page. Therefore, such distribution of the links to course resources or activities made some sections of the course too long and confusing to a student in order to navigate the website efficiently. In addition, a few Moodle sites provided links to resources without giving a subtle visual cue or textual directives. Use of such links can increase frustration levels for many students as they are not aware where those links could take them next – either to a document, an external video, or elsewhere.

Most Moodle sites continues to displayed Word- or PDF-processed documents, PowerPoint presentations, and audio files as individual items that needed to be opened in a separate window to be able to view or listen to the file. More instructors this year were able to embed documents, particularly those in a .pdf format, and rich media files into Moodle and make the viewing experience smoother and more comfortable for students, especially those who access course materials using mobile devices or in the computer labs where the applications required to view the files may not be available.

While most pages of course Moodle sites examined were visually consistent, a few imperfections were noted. One site used more than three colors and fonts of heading and body text styles that could be distracting to the students' eyes. Another site was a bit cluttered with images that needed a better alignment with headings. Overall, most sites were clean and had sufficient amount of white space on the margins that is important for better readability of online text.

With regards to the use of multimedia elements, three course Moodle sites provided students with ample opportunity to access and review lecture content captured in rich media format, such as audio recordings and a combination of PowerPoint slides and audio (using Camtasia Relay). Most audio/video files met minimum audio and video standards, such as clarity, length, and system compatibility. There were only a few recordings with fuzzy pictures and/or poor sound quality. It needs to be noted that one instructor demonstrated an exemplary way of delivering lectures on Moodle by combining multiple modes of representation – textual narratives, audio, images, and videos. In this way, the instructor was able to accommodate different learning preferences of most students. In addition, most instructors made effective use of external media-sharing websites (e.g., YouTube, Vimeo etc.) either by embedding nicely video fragments into their course page or by simply providing links to audio or video fragments relevant to the subject. Nevertheless, one course provided no evidence of any multimedia use even though its use would have been appropriate.

3.2 INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN AND DELIVERY

Two of five course Moodle websites scored 10 and 14 points respectively suggesting that one Moodle site met the minimum criteria and the other one exceeded the minimum expectations for effective instructional design and delivery of a blended learning course. The other three courses obtained either 7 or 9 points which is indicative of growing concern about the strategy inherent in the Moodle site for effective delivery of a blended course. See Table 3 for further details.

Most Moodle sites demonstrated enough evidence of structuring the course content with resources and activities in a logical sequence (i.e., building learning paths) in order to meet the learning objectives of the course and to help students engaged with the course content

on Moodle. One course though was structured inconsistently in terms of resources organization and their placement within weekly sections. Table 4 also indicates that most course websites provided adequate resources and/or activities to meet the diverse learning needs of the students in the blended course; most evidence was found in the course syllabi rather than on the pages of the course Moodle sites.

Table 3: Summary of Moodle Instructional Design and Delivery

Evaluation criteria	Course A	Course B	Course C	Course D	Course E	Average
Organization of a blended course	2	3	3	0	1	1.8
Building learning paths	2	2	3	3	2	2.4
Meeting students' diverse learning needs	2	3	3	1	3	2.4
Use of Moodle technology	2	1	2	2	1	1.6
Use of a variety of learning activities	2	0	2	1	0	1.0
Total	10	9	13	7	7	9.2

Note: Rating scale: 0 means not present or appropriate, 1 (*developing*) means that little evidence of this criterion present, 2 (*appropriate*) means that evidence of this criterion is clear and is appropriate for this blended course, and 3 (*outstanding*) means that evidence of this criterion exceeds the expectations of the "appropriate" criterion.

As can be seen from Table 3, little evidence was found for three measures: (a) organization of a blended course; (b) use of Moodle technology; and (c) use of a variety of learning activities on Moodle. Similar to the prior report (Owston & York, 2012), the instructors provide information about the organization of the blended course in the course syllabus rather than placing it on a course home page and therefore draw students' attention to it. Only two Moodle sites showed evidence of providing students with detailed information about the organization of the course that was put in the general area of the home page. Two course instructors did not provide information regarding the nature of the course and its organization either in a course syllabus or on a Moodle site. It also needs to be mentioned that all course instructors followed their own template of a course syllabus, suggesting that the instructors may have very different ideas about course structure and policies. Additionally, a few syllabi were poorly formatted that may reflect negatively on the instructor's attitude to the course and the quality of teaching.

Similarly to the 2011-12 evaluation, the instructors use a traditional set of Moodle technologies such as assignments and forums. A few instructors used Turnitin Assignment and Choice. Only two Moodle sites provided opportunities for students to participate in online activities intended to help students master the content, develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Three other Moodle sites acted more as a repository of course documents and reference materials for self-directed learning, rather than being an active and supportive community that provided multiple activities aimed at facilitating students' understanding of the course material. The instructors need to be encouraged to utilize more Moodle activities and tools (e.g., Chat, Wiki, Workshop, Choice, Quiz, Feedback) and

diversify a set of online activities to promote peer learning and support, as well as to make contact more easily with tutorial leaders for those courses where tutorials are held online.

3.3 STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Three of five course Moodle sites met the minimum criteria for effective student engagement in the blended course. Note that none of the five courses had group work thus this measure was excluded from the evaluation. One course had no interactive component present on the Moodle site, even though the course syllabus noted that online participation was counted towards a participation mark. Another course Moodle site provided limited opportunity for both student-to-student and student-to-instructor interaction. See Table 4 for further details.

Table 4: Summary of Student Engagement on Course Moodle Site

Evaluation criteria	Course A	Course B	Course C	Course D	Course E	Average
Student-to-student interaction	2	1	2	1	0	1.2
Student-to-instructor interaction	1	1	3	2	0	1.4
Student-to-content interaction	2	0	3	2	0	1.4
Organization and management of discussion forums	2	0	3	2	0	1.4
Organization and facilitation of group work	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Total	**8**	**2**	**11**	**7**	**0**	**5.6**

Note: Rating scale: 0 means not present or appropriate, 1 (*developing*) means that little evidence of this criterion present, 2 (*appropriate*) means that evidence of this criterion is clear and is appropriate for this blended course, and 3 (*outstanding*) means that evidence of this criterion exceeds the expectations of the "appropriate" criterion.

Four instructors utilized a course announcement feature which is a one-way interactive tool to communicate course-related information, as well as to keep students updated about any changes occurring during the course. It is worth mentioning that one course demonstrated an exemplary model of the instructor's interaction with students; the instructor managed, monitored, and participated actively in students' weekly discussions. In another course, tutorial leaders were actively engaged in online interaction with students, rather than the course instructor. In addition, one instructor created a Q&A forum to encourage students to ask the instructor or other students about course-related concerns. Three course Moodle sites (courses A, C, and D) provided adequate opportunity to facilitate student interaction with the course content and were well-organized and managed either by the course instructors or TAs. On the other hand Courses A and C provided opportunity to foster interaction and connectivity among students themselves.

3.4 STUDENT SUPPORT AND RESOURCES

Two out of five course Moodle sites met the minimum criteria for providing access to adequate student support and resources. The other three Moodle sites showed little evidence of these criteria and more resources needed to be better developed and presented more clearly on the Moodle pages. See Table 5 for further detail.

Table 5: Summary of Student Support and Resources Provided on Course Moodle Sites

Evaluation criteria	Course A	Course B	Course C	Course D	Course E	Average
Information about being a successful learner in a blended course	0	1	1	0	0	0.4
Course-related information	2	1	3	3	1	2.0
Technical support and resources	0	1	3	2	0	1.2
Academic support and resources	0	2	2	2	1	1.4
Institutional/program support and resources	1	1	3	1	1	1.4
Total	**3**	**6**	**12**	**8**	**3**	**6.4**

Note: Rating scale: 0 means not present or appropriate, 1 (*developing*) means that little evidence of this criterion present, 2 (*appropriate*) means that evidence of this criterion is clear and is appropriate for this blended course, and 3 (*outstanding*) means that evidence of this criterion exceeds the expectations of the "appropriate" criterion.

None of the Moodle sites offers adequate information about how to be a successful learner in a blended course. Three Moodle sites (Courses A, C, and D) demonstrated evidence of providing students with links to course-related information, often provided in specially designated areas that could be easily located by students, either in a general area, within a relevant weekly section, or in a widget located on the right-hand side. The course-related information usually included: a course outline, a calendar of due dates, assignment requirements, evaluation rubrics, an online code of conduct, a link to academic integrity tutorial, preparation notes for tutorials, examples of work, and the like. Courses B and D provided most course-related information (e.g., course assignments, calendar of due dates, grading scale and weights) in their syllabi. Three courses embedded Moodle widgets into their hope pages, for instance, recent activities, latest news, and section links.

Two out of five courses provided adequate access to information about technical support in order to assist students in effectively using the technologies in a blended course. Such support included either links or visual tutorials uploaded to the Moodle site (e.g., use of iTunes, editing of Moodle profile, and links to relevant technologies used in the course).

Three courses offered access to adequate resources related to York's academic support in order to assist students in improving their strategies for academic success and achieving better academic goals (e.g., links to writing center services, accessibility services etc.). Yet

most of these links were located inside the course syllabus. Using a built-in widget on Moodle, three course sites provided access to a wide range of library resources specific to the course subject (e.g., research help, subject guides for film studies, best online resources, course reserves etc.).

Most instructors offered access to institutional and program policies in their course syllabi, rather than on their Moodle sites. Most access to institutional and program support and resources was limited; only one course syllabus provided access to a comprehensive list of resources related to university and program policies, procedures and regulations.

3.5 SUMMARY

Overall, the strongest areas of most Moodle sites evaluated were site organization, layout design, and instructional delivery. One course Moodle site that scored 48 points out of 60 (maximum) appeared to meet the expectations appropriate for a blended course. The other four course Moodle sites scored between 21 and 34 points, suggesting that they provided little evidence of the expectations appropriate for a blended course. Therefore, these Moodle sites need improvement, particularly in the areas of student engagement and student support and resources required for a blended course. See Table 6 for a quantitative summary of evidence for each course Moodle website in accordance with four major criteria discussed in this section. Each criterion represents an aggregated score that is derived from totaling the rating score given to five measures associated with each of the four criteria. More details on how to interpret each score for the criterion, as well as the final score of the Moodle website are provided in Appendix A.

Table 6: Moodle Course Websites: Total Score for Four criteria and Final Score

Courses	Website Organization	Instructional Design	Student Engagement	Student Support	Final Score
Course A	7	10	7	3	27
Course B	14	8	2	6	30
Course C	12	13	11	12	48
Course D	12	7	7	8	34
Course E	11	7	0	3	21

4. STUDENT RESPONSES TO BLENDED LEARNING

In this section, the results of the student survey on blended learning are presented under the headings of: Increase York's Ability to Respond to Enrolment Pressures; Provide Better Experience for Commuter Students; Better Engage Students; and Improve Student Learning. Under each heading, we provide an analysis of descriptive statistics. For more details on mean scores and standard deviations consult Appendix D. Following the quantitative analysis, a summary of students' written comments is given.

4.1 INCREASE YORK'S ABILITY TO RESPOND TO ENROLMENT PRESSURES

Six survey questions addressed York's ability to respond to enrolment pressures. In particular, two questions dealt with student satisfaction with their blended course and another four questions related to student preference for instructional format. Table 7 shows that only 40% of the students reported that they were satisfied (i.e., Agreed and Strongly Agreed) with their course, compared to 49% of satisfaction reported in the first year of evaluation. Slightly more (44%) would take another blended course in the future if given the opportunity.

Table 7: Students Responses to Questions Relating to Enrolment Pressures (%)

Survey Questions	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Q1 (overall satisfied)[a]	10.3	17.6	31.5	32.8	7.3
Q3 (I'd take another course)[b]	12.1	16.4	25.7	31.9	12.1

Note: [a] 0.5% and [b] 1.8% responded as "Not Applicable."

Interestingly, a breakdown by individual courses revealed two drastic patterns of students' satisfaction with the courses deviating from the average percentage for course satisfaction across all five courses. Within one course[1], the overwhelming majority of students were most satisfied with the course (66.2%), and more than half (56.2%) claimed their aspirations to take another blended course in the future. Within another course, less than a third was satisfied with the course (26.4%) and 35% students would take another blended course in the future.

When asked to choose their preferred format of instruction (Q24), almost equal number of students favored both face-to-face (44%) and blended (43.4%) formats of instruction, while only 12.6% chose entirely online instruction (see Table 8). Similar preferences were reported in the 2011-12 evaluation, 41.5% chose face-to-face, 40.6% chose blended, and17.5% chose entirely online instruction (Owston & York, 2012).

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[1] This course had a well-designed Moodle course website which met all the expectations appropriate for a blended course, as reported in the previous section.

Table 8: Students Responses to Course Format Preferences (%)

Course	Entirely Face-to-Face	Blended	Entirely Online
Q24: Course format (on the whole)	44.0	43.4	12.6
Q25: Lecture format	45.1	23.9	31.0
Q26: Tutorial format	60.0	20.5	19.6
Q27: Discussion format	49.1	25.7	25.2

When students were forced to choose their modality preference for a particular teaching method, a majority of students gave preference to a face-to-face format of attending tutorials (60%), lectures (45.1%), participating in class discussions (49.1%). Choices for a blended mode of instructional activities were reported by less than a quarter of the participants, showing close resemblance in numbers of supporters for a fully online delivery.

Compared to the findings presented in the 2011-12 report, students' preference for accessing lectures online has grown by 9%, while their preference for a lecture in a blended format has decreased by almost 5%. As to the tutorial sessions, we have observed a noteworthy increase in students' preference for attending in-class tutorials by almost 16%, while their preference for online tutorials have dropped by almost 13%; students preference for tutorials in a blended format has remained about the same (20.5% in 2012-13 and 22.6% in 2011-12). No substantial changes in students' preferences for the modalities of discussion activities have been observed, compared to the results reported in the previous year i.e., about 3% increase for in-class discussions, 7% decrease for online discussions, and 7% increase for a combination of face-to-face and online discussions.

4.2 PROVIDE BETTER EXPERIENCE FOR COMMUTER STUDENTS

Responses to the seven survey items related to improving commuter students' university experience are given in Table 9. The responses suggest that the majority of students (62.6%) commuted to campus, while 37.4% students lived on campus for the duration of their course. The responses indicate that slightly more than half of students (55.1%) were not working, while those who did work spent fewer than 20 hours per week (36.3%). The employment workload reported by students concurs with the findings reported in the 2011-12 evaluation.

In terms of students' perceptions of blended learning benefits, 52.3% responded that they agreed or strongly agreed that the blended course allowed them to have more flexibility in their personal schedule. Similar response (55%) was given in 2011-12. Yet, slightly more than a quarter of the students (26.1%) indicated that taking a blended course results in less travel time compared to 38.7% reported in the 2011-12 evaluation.

Table 9: Students Responses to Questions on Better Experience for Commuter Students (%)

Survey Item	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Q9 (flexibility in personal schedule)[a]	8.8	16.7	21.6	31.9	20.4
Q10 (reduced travel time)[b]	15.5	22.4	23.3	14.1	12.0
Q19 (extra effort required)[c]	5.0	22.2	28.6	29.4	14.4
Q15 (feel connected to others)[d]	19.7	29.3	33.1	13.2	3.2
Q18 (overwhelmed with information)[e]	8.3	33.0	30.3	18.8	9.3
Q28 (commuting status)	37.4% live on campus | 62.6% commute to campus				
Q29 (employment workload)	Not working – 55.1 | 1-9 hours – 18.4 | 10-19 hours – 17.9 20-29 hours – 6.0 | 30-39 hours – 2.3 | 40+ hours – 0.2				

Note: [a] 0.4%, [b] 12.7%, [c] 0.3%, [d] 1.5%, and [e] 0.3% responded "Not Applicable."

Less than half of students (43.8%) responded that blended courses required extra effort (50% was reported in 2011-12). Only 16.4% students reported that they agreed that they felt more connected to other students (14.7% was reported in 2011-12). The responses to Q18 suggest that nearly one third (28.1%) felt overwhelmed with information in the blended course (30.9% reported in 2011-12).

4.3 BETTER ENGAGE STUDENTS

Twelve survey questions dealt with topics related to student engagement, interaction, and effectiveness of technology use in blended courses (see Tables 10 through 12). In Table 10, the response to Q11 suggest that only a fraction of students (17.7%) felt more engaged in their blended course compared to others they had taken. These results agree with those reported in the 2011-12 (21.3% felt more engaged, 29.4% were neutral, and 48.1% did not feel more engaged). Similar students' reaction was reported for Q12 suggesting that nearly half (47.1%) did not feel they had more opportunities to ask questions in the blended course.

Table 10: Students Responses to Questions on Engagement (%)

Survey Item	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Q4 (online and F2F components enhanced each other)	9.6	21.9	31.7	26.7	9.0
Q7 (clearly communicated expectations)	6.3	13.6	27.5	39.0	13.4
Q11 (more engaged)	17.7	27.3	36.3	13.8	3.9
Q12 (likely to ask questions more)	14.5	32.6	35.2	13.1	3.7

Students' perceptions of the role of an online component in the blended course divided almost equally: slightly more students (35.7%) felt that the online and face-to-face components enhanced each other, 31.7% were neutral, and 31.5% disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement. In comparison with the 2011-12 report, a slight improvement

in students' perceptions of the relationship between face-to-face and online components was observed (37.5% D/SD, 27.5% N, and 34.4% A/SA in 2011-12). Of interest was that half of the respondents perceived that the course expectations were clearly communicated.

Four of the questions focused quantity and quality on interaction with other students (Q13 and Q14) and between students and instructor (Q16 and Q17) in the blended course (see Table 11). Response to these questions was less than positive as a plurality of students disagreed or strongly disagreed that their interaction experiences in the blended course were superior. We noted a slight improvement in students' perceptions of their interaction with other students. The number of students who strongly disagreed on the issues of interaction with other students has dropped by almost 10%, compared to the 2011-12 report. Yet, no change was observed in students' attitudes towards their interaction with the instructor.

Table 11: Students Responses to Questions on Interaction (%)

Survey Item	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Q13 (increased amount of interaction among students)	18.0	31.0	25.8	19.8	4.1
Q14 (better quality of interaction among students)	16.3	28.3	33.8	16.7	3.5
Q16 (increased amount of interaction with instructor)	24.4	24.2	28.9	16.9	3.8
Q17 (better quality of interaction with instructor)	20.7	23.5	32.5	16.8	4.1

Four survey items related to students' perceptions of the effectiveness of technology use in their blended course (see Table 12). A majority of students (65.8%) reported that their course Moodle site was easy to navigate and locate course information needed, 59.1% found the resources on Moodle helpful, and 53.8% reported that the technology used for the online portion of the blended course was reliable. Compared to the 2011-12 evaluation, students' perceptions of Moodle navigation and the quality of online resources has improved by 8.3% and 11% respectively. Still, a number of students (20.8%) felt that technology interfered with their learning in the blended course, compared to a smaller fraction (13.3%) reported in 2011-12.

Table 12: Students Responses to Questions on Use of Technology (%)

Survey Item	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Q5 (easy to find course information on Moodle)	5.4	10.7	17.6	40.4	25.4
Q6 (Moodle resources were useful)	3.9	8.2	28.3	39.1	20.0
Q8 (technology for online activities was reliable)	7.8	14.8	22.9	40.3	13.5
Q23 (technology interfered with learning)	12.8	36.4	28.1	13.8	7.0

4.4 IMPROVE STUDENT LEARNING

Four questions asked students about their perceptions of whether the blended format helped improve their learning (see Table 13). A slight majority of students indicated that they agreed or strongly agreed that their interest in the subject matter increased (43.6%), and their understanding of key concepts of the course was better (42.8%) than previous face-to-face courses. Nearly one third of all participants (28.8%) felt that they had more opportunities in the blended course to reflect on what they had learned. The report also shows just 18.9% of students perceived that the blended course helped them develop better communication skills than traditional courses.

Table 13: Students Responses to Questions on Learning Outcomes (%)

Survey Item	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Q2 (increased interest in subject)	8.6	19.2	28.2	33.2	10.4
Q20 (improved understanding of concepts)	6.8	14.3	35.9	36.6	6.2
Q21 (developed better communication skills)	15.5	27.4	37.2	16.4	2.5
Q22 (more opportunities to reflect)	10.2	22.4	37.8	24.1	4.7

4.5 STUDENTS' WRITTEN COMMENTS

Students had the opportunity to provide written comments on the survey. Three themes were dominant: (a) advantages of blended learning; (b) limitations of blended courses; and (c) the role of tutorial sessions in a blended course.

Advantages of blended learning. Many students felt that learning in face-to-face lectures and tutorials is more engaging and more effective. However, some students admitted that online learning allowed them to learn at their own pace and increased flexibility in their schedule. Another benefit to blended learning was that students did not have to commute to class every week and that way saved money and time. Moodle was noted by students to be helpful mostly in keeping them on track with regards to due dates of assignments and access

to grades. Some of the typical verbatim feedback with regards to the strengths of a blended format was as follows:

- I like the online lectures, they allow me to stop the lecture at any time so I can take notes or repeat parts that I have trouble understanding.
- I have had the experience of all 3 types of formats and depending [on] how necessary classmate interaction is, I think blended is my favorite. I would also suggest a program to combine both audio + visual formats together. Youtube? That way, the order of images stays with the audio, also something live stream might make it more accessible, rather than downloading.
- I found it really great being able to listen to the lectures online on my own time because it gave me a lot of flexibility.
- Moodle helps you keep on track because it clearly states what is due.

Limitations of blended courses. There were many students who felt that watching lectures online could be challenging because of reasons such as distractions at home and lack of access to the Internet for students who resided on campus. Students also perceived that learning online was more time-consuming. Some students did not consider online lectures seriously therefore they did not watch them. Other students stated that online lectures were hard to fit into their schedules and made them easy to fall behind in the course. A review of the comments also indicates that some students were challenged to "learn from a computer." These students emphasized that they needed to be physically present in class so that they could understand concepts better. For instance, some student noted:

- The course itself was alright, but the fact that the lectures were online was frustrating. I can't learn from online PowerPoint on my computer because there are other things on my computer that distract me, which is why I prefer face-to-face. I have difficulty focusing, so face-to-face learning works better for me.
- If something is offered online, I'm/we're more distracted and are less focused. Offering online info/slides on the Moodle, makes students not pay attention in face-to-face class.
- It was difficult getting used to an online course because I am so used to having a teacher/professor give the lectures or instruct the class. I was missing out of assignments because of me not checking the Moodle as often, and when there was a change in dates, I got confused as to when an assignment is due.

With regards to Moodle, there were several issues raised by student: some were of technical nature while others were related to a pedagogical aspect. The technical challenges mostly included computer glitches and slow internet connectivity that prevented students from smooth and pleasant learning experience over the Web. The pedagogically related challenges were lack of adequate guidance and communication of course-related information. Some of the comments are worth mentioning:

- I do think that supplementing this course with Moodle was a good idea, in that dates and notes were easily communicated, but I've found Moodle no better than WebCT (and buggier). I've also found that as some of the course is online and in class, a great deal of information is miscommunicated if it is communicated at all.

- The online portion of the class was a hassle to find time for and to access. I found the audio quality of the recorded 'lecture' to be dismal, and annoyingly distracting. Because we didn't absorb the material as a group, all at once, I felt distanced from the class and there was very little interaction between us during tutorial. I would have much preferred a set class time for a face-to-face lecture. I strongly disliked the Moodle interface, as it required many separate downloads and a lot of effort. Perhaps a single file folder with all required documents & instructions would work better.

With regards to lectures delivered online, students in their responses indicated that the length of such lectures differed on a weekly basis. Compared to traditional lectures, students felt that lengthy online lectures were tiresome and made it difficult to stay engaged, concentrated on learning something from them, and read the material presented. Students suggested that an online lecture should communicate information through various audio-visual methods. Some students voiced a need for a face-to-face lecture throughout the term, especially in courses that were using the blended format of online lectures and face-to-face tutorials. That way they felt that they could not feel alienated and would be able to socialize with their peers and interact with the instructor in a "real-time" mode. Representative comments pertaining to online lectures were:

- The lectures were incredibly difficult to follow, almost as if the professor thought that because we could pause and rewind it was okay to talk extremely fast.
- All of the lectures felt like homework instead of class and therefore it was difficult to get motivated.
- This course is my lowest mark this year, and I strongly believe it is due to the online lectures. They are not lectures, but rather readings, and I am not simply able to retain the mass amounts of text put up each week.
- Great course, but I was not able to take it as seriously because of a lack of face to face lectures, and an increased amount of time I have to spend on the computer, teaching myself. To get my full money's worth (OSAP's full money's worth) out of university, I wish to have a chance to learn from an actual lecture!

As to participation in online forums on Moodle, students' responses varied. Some students felt that online posts decreased the depth of postings to a mere opinion and therefore online tutorials limited interaction with the instructor and their peers. For instance, one student commented:

In-class discussions suffered because there was no accountability for watching/ listening to audio-lectures. This could be resolved by administering online quizzes before each tutorial, based on lecture. Very few people were prepared to discuss new material.

Tutorials. Tutorials were found to be an important component of blended learning, particularly when lectures were taught completely online. Students with no background knowledge in the subject pointed out that they derived a benefit from face-to-face tutorials. Many students preferred in-class tutorials, as they felt that they allowed for a better and more comfortable learning environment than a more formal and less motivating environment of online tutorials. Students did not feel accountable for online participation and lacked motivation in online discussions. While some students expressed their desire to participate more in face-to-face tutorials, others gave preference to fully online tutorials

instead of commuting to a one-hour tutorial, which was reported as a waste of time and money. For instance, some students were quite negative about the scheduling of tutorials:

- I am very annoyed that this one hour class is at 8.30 in the morning! It's such a waste of time, I don't learn much, I'm very tired and cannot pay attention because I get home late the night before from Sheridan. There are a lot of YSDN students in this course, and right after this useless one hour class I have to commute home then drive to Sheridan, it ruins my whole focus for the day! If this supposes to be an online course it should all be online, this tutorial class annoys me a lot! Also I don't have extra time to travel into the city to look at art! I live outside of the city and it's such a hassle to create time to go, I did not enjoy or learn much in this class thanks for wasting my time and money.
- It doesn't help that this tutorial is at 8:30 AM and is only one hour so I spend more time than double the time commuting to this class than I spend in the class. At this point I would rather not come in every week and take the course 100% online and I hate online.

In some comments students believed that online tutorials were better organized and produced more in-depth discussions than in-class discussions. These students noted that they had more time to think and formulate their responses; they also did not feel intimidated or shy to speak up in front of their peers. In addition, they saw online forums as storage of their posts, which they could access and review at any time throughout the term. A few students indicated that their tutorial leaders lacked technical skills to manage discussions in an online format. Representative comments pertaining to tutorials were:

- I enjoyed the course although I felt that each week I was more and more disengaged with the material because the online lectures were long and dry. Perhaps it is the type of learner I am but I find that it was difficult to 'want' to keep up. Tutorials really helped, that being said. Surely if this course was entirely online there is no way I would be able to do as well.
- I found that tutorials were helpful in supplementing my online learning. Although it would have been nice to extend the length of the tutorial so we had more time to talk about the material.
- Tutorials are necessary and should be face-to-face if I have a problem I don't understand, it's hard to articulate that by email…Face to face, you can always clarify right then & there…

4.6 SUMMARY

Overall, four out of five courses appear to leave one third of students dissatisfied with the blended learning model. Some 40% of students overall responded that they were satisfied with their course or would take another blended course in the future. Most students felt the blended format allowed for greater flexibility that comes with a more intense workload than a traditional course. Despite a high ratio of commuter students, the results suggest that students were disappointed about not being able to cut their travel time and therefore bring down the cost of commuting to campus. While some students support the idea of blended learning, most students still value more highly classroom instruction, particularly attending in-class tutorial sessions (60%). The use of Moodle and other technology in the blended

course appears to be beneficial to student learning experiences. Students' low satisfaction with blended learning is more likely conditioned by a number of factors, such as a reduced amount of interaction with the instructor, a disconnection of the online and face-to-face components, and a lower degree of student engagement outside of the traditional classroom. Overall, students' responses regarding their preference to a course format were mixed. Some students prefer fully online lectures and tutorials whereas others favor some face-to-face interaction in the learning environment. Students indicated that face-to-face lectures are more motivating and facilitate their comprehension of new material. Additionally, face-to-face tutorials are especially relevant to students who favor interaction and connectivity with their peers.

5. INSTRUCTOR RESPONSES TO BLENDED LEARNING

The instructors' perceptions of teaching a blended learning course were grouped under the same four criteria that were used for student responses. The instructor survey responses are quantified and presented in frequency tables. This is followed by an analysis of their responses during the focus group interview. Four out five instructors completed a survey and participated in a focus group interview.

5.1 INCREASE YORK'S ABILITY TO RESPOND TO ENROLMENT PRESSURES

With regard to issues related to York's ability to respond to enrolment pressures by offering blended learning, the instructor responses are provided in Table 14. The results suggest that all four instructors gave preference to teach their courses in the blended format. To strengthen further their position on blended learning, all the instructors agreed or strongly agreed that designing a blended course gave them an opportunity to experiment with both new teaching methodologies and technologies (Q1 and Q3). Nevertheless, all of them were in agreement that both preparing and teaching in a blended format consumed more time than they would spend on the development and delivery of a traditional in-class format (Q6 and Q11). Only one instructor indicated that blended learning gave faculty more flexibility in their schedule than traditional classes (Q8). Instructors' reactions this year were similar to those expressed in 2011-12. Looking on the positive side, more instructors tended to be optimistic about students' satisfaction with their blended course (Q22), compared to the results presented in the prior report, where three instructors disagreed and three were neutral as to whether students benefited from blended learning.

When asked questions related to support issues (Q2 and Q4), instructors' reactions were less positive, compared to last year's evaluation. Three instructors indicated that both pedagogical and technical support given by York during the design and implementation phases was inadequate, whereas one instructor reported the opposite and was satisfied with the support provided. At the same time, instructors' opinions on whether their TAs were provided with sufficient training (Q7) were further divided: two instructors either disagreed or strongly disagreed, while the other two instructors agreed with the statement. It also needs to be noted that three instructors indicated that they were capable of using technology effectively in their teaching. This is another positive trend towards the improvement of teaching experience in a blended format, compared to the 2011-12 report.

Table 14: Instructor Students Responses to Questions Relating to Enrolment Pressures (n=4)

Survey Item	(Strongly Disagree) Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Q25 (course format preference)	Blended format – 4			
Q1 (designing a blended course gave me an opportunity to experiment with new teaching methodologies)	0	0	2	2
Q3 (designing a blended course gave me an opportunity to experiment with new technologies for teaching)	0	0	2	2
Q6 (With the support given by York, it took about the same amount of time to develop my blended course as it would have taken for a new fully face-to-face course)	(2 SD) 2	0	0	0
Q11 (teaching a blended course is a time-consuming experience)	0	0	2	2
Q8 (blended learning gives me more flexibility in my work schedule)	(1 SD) 2	1	1	0
Q22 (students enjoyed this blended course more)[1]	0	2	1	0
Q2 (York's pedagogical support to design this blended course was effective)	3	0	1	0
Q4 (York's technical support to deliver this blended course was effective)	3	0	1	0
Q5 (I have sufficient skills to make effective use of the technologies)	(1 SD)	0	3	0
Q7 (TAs had adequate training to perform their duties in this course)	(1 SD) 1	0	2	0

Note: [1] One instructor was unable to agree or disagree.

5.2 PROVIDE BETTER EXPERIENCE FOR COMMUTER STUDENTS

Table 15 shows instructors' responses to a question related to building a better experience for commuter students (Q13). It appears that the instructors felt that having in-class activities with students helped them collaborate better in an online environment.

Table 15: Instructor Responses to Questions on Better Experience for Commuter Students

Survey Item	N/A	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Q13 (students collaborated online better after building a sense of community in a face-to-face context)	1	1	1	1

5.3 BETTER ENGAGE STUDENTS

Instructors' responses to questions pertaining to student engagement are given in Table 16. It appears that most instructors felt more confident about student engagement in their blended courses, compared to last year's evaluation. Two instructors reported an increased interaction among students, improved quality of "student-to-instructor" interaction, and an increased level of engagement. In terms of student participation in the blended course, two instructors were anxious about students' reluctance to participate in online activities (Q9) and one instructor had attendance concerns (Q20). Two instructors also worried about academic integrity in the blended course.

Table 16: Instructor Responses to Questions on Engagement

Survey Item	(Strongly Disagree) Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Q12 (more engaged)	1	1	2	0
Q14 (S-S amount of interaction increased)	1	1	1	1
Q15 (S-S quality of interaction better)	1	2	1	0
Q16 (S-I amount of interaction increased)	(1 SD) 0	2	1	0
Q17 (S-I quality of interaction better)	(1 SD) 0	1	2	0
Q18 (assessment of student achievement differed)	2	0	2	0
Q19 (concerned about academic integrity in this course)	1	1	2	0
Q9 (students were reluctant to participate in online activities)	1	1	2	0
Q20 (concerned about low student attendance in this course)	(1 SD) 0	2	1	0

5.4 IMPROVE STUDENT LEARNING

With regard to instructors' opinions on the improvement of student learning in a blended format (Table 17), three instructors indicated that they were either neutral or positive about better quality of students' educational experience in the blended course, compared to a fully face-to-face (course Q21). Mixed reactions to students overall performance were reported by the instructors (Q24). Nevertheless, the instructors felt that students were capable of monitoring their progress in the course (Q10). There was some consensus among the instructors that they were not able to get to know their students better. This can be attributed to a large class size, as well as to the instructor's function as a lecturer and generally not involved in online discussion forums. Overall, instructors were neutral or positive in their reactions to student learning experience in their blended courses.

Table 17: Instructor Responses on Questions Related to Learning

Survey Item	(Strongly Disagree) Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Q21 (quality of students' educational experience was better)	0[1]	2	1	0
Q23 (I got to know students better)	(1 SD) 2	0	1	0
Q24 (students' overall performance was better)	1[1]	1	1	0
Q10 (students lacked the ability to monitor their progress in this course)	3	1	0	0

Note: [1]One instructor indicated "Not applicable."

5.5 INSTRUCTORS' INTERVIEW

Instructors had the opportunity to provide written comments on the survey as well as express their opinions in an informal group interview with their colleagues. Two themes were dominant: (a) pedagogical support for course instructors and (b) the technical preparation for students prior their enrolment in a blended course.

The first was the need for more pedagogical support during preparation and delivery of blended learning courses. They felt that they needed more workshop opportunities, either in a face-to-face or online format, offered preferably during spring or summer sessions when they are not preoccupied with teaching. In addition, it was mentioned that support regarding the use of technology in the blended course should come from an expert who knows how to use technology rather than a person who is learning technology along with them (as was the case this year). All four instructors perceived a need for peer mentoring so that they could discuss with their colleagues design process and experiences, as well as share lessons learned and examples of course instructional elements (activities, Moodle tools, or other technology used) utilized in blended courses in their Faculty. Due to a busy schedule of the instructors, some instructors asked for having access to a digital repository of useful resources on blended learning. Two instructors pointed out that having access to some exemplary blended courses could be beneficial as it gives a sense of what is possible for effective delivery of a blended course. Furthermore, the instructors endorsed an idea of being consistent in delivering blended courses within the Faculty. For instance, one instructor suggested having a template for the design of course Moodle site so that students are able to navigate effectively Moodle pages and find easily the basic components of the blended course on Moodle. Finally, some instructors felt that they need more freedom in varying the amount of time spent on online components in lectures and tutorials in order to meet the learning expectations of their students.

The other theme was related to providing students with proper training in Moodle use and learning skills necessary for succeeding in a blended course. One instructor commented that such training need to be designed in an online learning environment and be provided before students enroll in the blended course. In addition, another instructor indicated that blended courses should be easily distinguished from other formats in a course calendar so that students are aware of the course format before enrolling in for a particular course.

5.6 SUMMARY

Overall, the course instructors supported the blended learning initiative by the Faculty of Fine Arts and were willing to continue to experiment and improve their teaching in a blended format. While most instructors were satisfied with technical support provided, they called for improved pedagogical support provided in online or face-to-face formats during convenient times of the year.

6. OVERALL SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this report, we present the results of the evaluation of the second year implementation of the blended learning initiative in the Faculty of Fine Arts that was supported by the York's Academic Innovation Fund. Five introductory courses were redesigned using three models of blended learning: a Web-enhanced version of the supplemental model and two versions of the rotation model, in which students rotated on a fixed schedule either between attending face-to-face lectures and a combination of in-class and online tutorials or between watching video lectures online and participating in tutorials held in a classroom setting. We analyzed course Moodle sites, administered surveys to students, and surveyed and interviewed course instructors for their perceptions of teaching a blended course.

The course Moodle sites for each course were analyzed on four evaluation criteria derived from the literature and our prior study conducted in 2011-12: (a) Moodle organization and layout design, (b) instructional design and delivery, (c) student engagement, and (d) student support and resources. Most Moodle sites produced evidence of instructors structuring their course content in a logically sequential way that helped students find various course components and build their learning paths during their course. One course Moodle site met all the expectations appropriate for a blended course. The other four course Moodle sites however produced little evidence of the expectations appropriate for a blended course, particularly in the areas pertaining to providing opportunities for student engagement and offering adequate access to student support and resources required for a blended course.

Similar to the prior evaluation in 2011-12, the student survey results suggest that fewer than half were satisfied with their blended course, except one course which has left the overwhelming majority of students satisfied with their blended learning experience. They overwhelmingly still prefer classroom instruction and tend to be concerned about a reduced amount of interaction with the instructor, a disconnection of the online and face-to-face components, and a lower degree of student engagement outside of the traditional classroom. While students have perceived that the blended format allows for greater flexibility, most students have been disappointed about not being able to reduce their travel time, as well as cut down the cost of their commute.

Our findings suggest that the course instructors have been supportive of the blended learning initiative in the Faculty of Fine Arts and are willing to continue to experiment and improve their teaching in a blended format. While most instructors have been pleased with technical support provided, they have asked for more pedagogical support offered by experts in instructional design using various formats.

Given the above findings, we offer several recommendations below with respect to the blended learning initiative in the upcoming year.

RECOMMENDATION 1: STUDENT SATISFACTION

Given that student satisfaction with blended learning is highly variable, receiving from 26.4% to 66.2% satisfaction ratings (Agree and Strongly Agree), the Faculty of Fine Arts needs to be concerned about the implications for future enrolments and the quality of learning experiences in their large introductory courses for non-major students. We recommend that the Faculty work with instructors more closely to rethink their approach to mixing classroom and online delivery modes in order to create conditions under which both residence and commuter students will benefit more from the blended format. This discussion should focus on aspects such as student learning preferences, flexible scheduling, closer connection with the instructor, use of technology to better enrich the curriculum, and increasing interaction among students. Furthermore, we recommend that the course calendar should inform students of (a) the blended mode of the course by using LECI course code[2] and (b) its structure by listing the in-class meeting time. It would allow students to make informed decisions about Faculty's course offerings and help them coordinate better their individual course schedules and use learning time productively.

RECOMMENDATION 2: BLENDED FORMAT

The findings suggest that the students are nearly equally divided in their preferences for learning in either face-to-face or blended format. Only a third of students reported that blended courses help them reduce travel time, whereas other students indicated that they did not benefit from the convenience of a blended learning modality either because they resided on campus or because the timing of in-class meetings was inconvenient or conflicted with other commitments. In this regard, we recommend that the instructors may wish to consider a model whereby face-to-face seating time of both lectures and tutorials is reduced (e.g., 30% in-class and 70% online lectures and perhaps a 70/30 ratio applied to tutorials). In this way, instructors will have more flexibility in adapting their teaching to address students' needs, their learning preferences, and expectations. Students, on the other hand, will be more likely to establish a closer connection with their instructor and other students in class, and will be less likely to feel alienated and disengaged.

RECOMMENDATION 3: STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

The instructors may wish to explore instructional strategies and take advantage of a diverse repertoire of Moodle activities and tools to enhance active learning and provide various learning experiences to reach out students of different learning preferences. We recommend that the instructors may want to encourage interactions among students by providing opportunities on Moodle for gathering, discussing, and thinking by using online discussion

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[2] We were unsure whether York's LECI course code, which indicates a combination of lecture and Internet formats, was used for the 1900 courses or, if it was, whether students understood the meaning of the course code.

forums, virtual office meeting spaces with instructor and TAs, wiki-mediated project working space, real-time chats, Moodle workshop module, and similar technologies. With regard to the online lectures, we recommend that the instructors provide students with opportunity to interact with the content of a recorded lecture by encouraging students to discuss its content in a linked discussion forum on Moodle. This would allow students to have more in-depth exploration of themes and concepts, as well as to gain feedback on critical issues presented in the lecture from other students, TAs, and instructor. In addition, instructors would have an additional mechanism of monitoring and analyzing what students are watching and how they engage with the lecture content.

RECOMMENDATION 4: COURSE MOODLE SITE DESIGN

Compared to the findings presented in the 2011-12 report, the organization and instructional design of Moodle sites have achieved a better quality. However, the Moodle sites still need improvement, particularly in the areas of student engagement and student support and resources required for a blended course. We recommend that a standard Moodle course shell template be designed and used as a foundation for all 1900 courses. While the content of each of five courses is different, this template should be carefully developed to address issues common to blended learning as specified in the evaluation rubric used in this study. Additionally, having a standard Moodle course template would provide a consistent experience for students since they are required to enroll in two of the courses. An instructional designer may need to work with instructors to develop a shell template and explain how it can be integrated effectively into their courses.

RECOMMENDATION 5: ONLINE TEXT ON MOODLE SITES

Considering the differences of reading text from a computer monitor or mobile device screen, instructors in blended courses need to think carefully about how they present and organize course information on their course Moodle sites in order to encourage students to read materials online. We recommend a number of techniques that can be applied to improve navigation and readability of on-screen text so that students are able to locate, perceive, read, and comprehend online text effectively. First, it is crucial to place course information or materials consistently in the same location on a course home page so that students are able to find easily and quickly critical information. Moodle allows instructors to move all course-related information (e.g., course outline documents, course announcements, etc.) to a general area located in a very specific area – in the upper center of the home page. Second, the instructors need to limit the amount of online text in lengthy documents (e.g., course outline, recorded lectures) by dividing it into several sections (e.g., course schedule, grading scale, calendar of due dates, etc.) to promote effective scanning of information on screen and reading it without scrolling down. Third, the instructors should provide subtle visual cues or text directives to hyperlinks (e.g., an external video or requires Passport York to access this document), particularly if those links direct students to resources outside of

Moodle. Finally, instead of attaching documents to Moodle, it is better to embed documents into Moodle pages. This will allow students to view the content of a file in its entirety either on a computer monitor or any mobile device without making extra steps to save, download, and open a document.

RECOMMENDATION 6: INSTRUCTOR PEDAGOGICAL SUPPORT

We recommend that instructors and TAs should be provided with a comprehensive pedagogical support system involving an instructional designer who ideally should meet with instructors before a course starts so that they could develop an instructional plan and course material, review effective instructional re-design strategies and assessments, and resolve critical issues in advance. The pedagogical support system should also provide opportunities for continuous professional development in both face-to-face and blended formats, as well as for peer mentoring and sharing of best teaching practices among course instructors. In addition, we recommend that the Faculty may wish to create a digital repository of sharable and reusable learning objects, resources, lessons learned, and exemplar models and engagement strategies related to blended learning in order to ensure sustainability of the blended learning initiative in the Faculty.

RECOMMENDATION 7: STUDENT SUPPORT

Considering that most students in 1900 courses are first-year students who are unfamiliar with a university and may be challenged by blended learning, initial support for those students is vital to their academic success, as well as to the reputation of the Faculty. Before enrolling in a blended course, we recommend that students be provided with information on what they can expect from a blended course. In this regard, we recommend a self-assessment survey be developed for students which would help them assess their readiness for blended learning and determine what skills they need to succeed at blended learning. We suggest that the Faculty may wish to work in collaboration with the Teaching Commons on this matter. The link to the survey can be placed next to a course description in the course calendar, and students should be encouraged to take the survey before enrolling in the blended course. After completing the survey, a student should be clear as to what is expected through various stages of the blended course and provided with guidelines and additional information that would be helpful to improve their learning abilities (e.g., links to guidelines or workshops on time management, self-regulation, Moodle skills, and other related study habits). Similar links to student support services are suggested to be posted on a course Moodle home page to assist students during their blended course.

7. REFERENCES

eLearning Working Group (2010, June). *E-learning business case for York University* (Occasional Report). Toronto, ON: York University, Institute for Research on Learning Technologies. Available at http://irlt.yorku.ca/reports/E-learningcasefinalversion.pdf

Owston, R., & York, D. (2012, July). *Evaluation of blended learning courses in the Faculty of Fine Arts – Fall/Winter Session 2011-2012* (Technical Report No. 2012-4). Toronto, ON: York University, IRLT. Available at http://irlt.yorku.ca/reports/TechReport2012-4.pdf

8. APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: MOODLE COURSE WEBSITE EVALUATION RUBRIC

The framework employed was an adaptation of three existing evaluation rubrics frequently used to assess the design and delivery of online courses in higher education. These rubrics include: the *Quality Online Course Initiative (QOCI) Rubric*[3], the *Quality Matters Rubric*[4], and the *Rubric for Online Instruction*[5].

INSTRUCTIONS

The criteria are grouped into four areas of evaluation: (a) Moodle organization and layout design; (b) instructional design and delivery; (c) student engagement; and (d) student support and resources. The criteria provided in this evaluation rubric represent some of the most important issues instructors face when designing Moodle for their blended learning courses.

Here's how to use the rubric:

- Respond to each criterion along the 3-point scale (1 to 3) provided. The scale is provided along with each criterion. Please select "0," if evidence of the criterion is not present, but should be, based on design of a blended course and content; or present, but not appropriate for this course. Also, select "0," if the criterion is not applicable based on design of a blended course.

- There are three interpretive statements for each criterion that will assist the evaluator in selecting the right score:

  1 **"Developing"** (i.e., does not meet the criterion) means that little evidence of this criterion present, but it *needs improvement* (to be presented more clearly or better developed).
  2 **"Appropriate"** (i.e., meets the criterion) means that evidence of this criterion is clear and is *appropriate* for this blended course. More could possibly be added.
  3 **"Outstanding"** (i.e., exceeds the criterion) means that evidence of this criterion is clear, appropriate for this blended course, *exceeds the expectations of the "appropriate" criterion*, and *demonstrates best practices* in a manner that models its use.

- From a drop-down menu select the score that best represents your viewpoint regarding the Moodle course site. Be honest and realistic in your assessment.

- Although criteria ask the evaluator to rate the Moodle site in a quantitative way, the evaluator can respond from his/her own perspective in the "observation notes" field at the end of the rubric.

- At the end of each evaluation category, the evaluator is provided with information on how to interpret the total score in a particular category. At the end of evaluation, interpretation for the final score is also provided to determine the overall state of the Moodle course design and implementation.

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[3] Quality Online Course Initiative (QOCI) Rubric. An initiative sponsored by Illinois Online Network (ION) University of Illinois. Retrieved February 09, 2012, from http://www.ion.uillinois.edu/initiatives/qoci/rubric.asp
[4] Quality Matters™Rubric Standards 2011-2013 (2011) developed by Quality Matters Program, Maryland Online Inc. Retrieved February 09, 2012, from http://www.qmprogram.org/files/QM_Standards_2011-2013.pdf
[5] Rubric for Online Instruction (2009). An initiative sponsored by California State University, Chico. Retrieved February 09, 2012, from http://www.csuchico.edu/tlp/resources/rubric/rubric.pdf

MOODLE ORGANIZATION AND LAYOUT DESIGN

Evaluation criteria	Criteria interpretation			Score
	Developing (1)	**Appropriate (2)**	**Outstanding (3)**	
Ease and clarity of navigation of Moodle course website	Much of Moodle is under construction, with some key components identified such as the syllabus.	Moodle is organized and navigable. Students can understand the key components and structure of the course.	Moodle is well-organized and easy to navigate. Scrolling is minimized and facilitated with anchors. Hyperlinks are based on visual cues such as color, underlining, and text directives (e.g., Start here).	0
Consistent navigation from page to page throughout Moodle	Windows open in inappropriate frames that might confuse students. Alien (third-party, other than those within Moodle) frames (widgets, applications) are used.	Most windows/hyperlinks open in appropriate frames that do not confuse students. The use of non- Moodle frames (applications) is avoided.	All windows/hyperlinks open in appropriate frames. The use of additional frames, other than those within the Moodle is avoided.	0
Visual consistency of a Moodle course website	The visual design elements (e.g., sizes and colours of heading and body text styles) are used inconsistently, and do not present course information clearly (long activity/resources names, cluttered with images or other dynamic visuals).	Most Moodle pages are visually consistent. Short activity/resources names are used. The use of images and other dynamic visual objects (animation, videos) is limited to only those that contribute to the learning experience	All Moodle pages are readable and visually consistent. Use of short names, images, and other dynamic visuals enhances the course and streamlines delivery of the content.	0
Functional consistency of a Moodle course website	Moodle pages are functionally inconsistent and do not communicate course information clearly.	Most Moodle pages are functionally consistent, and communicate course information clearly and in sequential order.	All Moodle pages are functionally consistent, and communicate course information clearly and in sequential order throughout Moodle.	0
Use of multimedia	Multimedia files do not meet minimum standards, e.g., blurry (quality), too large size, or inadequate length of audio/video files – that restrict users' ability to view/download the file. Audio/video player required is not compatible with multiple operating systems and requires additional plug-ins.	Multimedia files meet minimum standards: clear (quality), adequate (size/length). Audio/video player required is compatible with multiple operating systems and requires only a free, standard, and easily downloadable plug-in.	Multimedia files exceed minimum standards and are optimized for efficient loading on computers with lower bandwidths. A written transcript is provided with all audio/video files.	0
Total score (in this category):				0

Interpretation of the total score in this category

13-15   (90-100%) Moodle exceeds the expectations of the "appropriate" criteria for the Moodle site organization and layout design. Overall, the Moodle site demonstrates best practices in a manner that models its use.

10-12   (67-89%) Moodle meets the minimum criteria for the Moodle site organization and layout design and is appropriate for a blended course.

5-9   (33-66%) Moodle shows little evidence of the criteria for the Moodle site organization and layout. Some areas need to be better developed.

4 >   (32% and less) Moodle does not meet the minimum criteria for the Moodle site organization and layout, and may confuse the users. This Moodle may be a very difficult sell for blended learning. Major improvements are needed.

INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN & DELIVERY

Evaluation criteria	Criteria interpretation			Score
	Developing (1)	**Appropriate (2)**	**Outstanding (3)**	
Organization of a blended course	Moodle provides <u>fragmentary</u> information about the blended course and its structure. It is <u>unclear</u> about what is expected of students in the course.	Moodle provides <u>adequate</u> information about the blended course, its structure. Specifically, it identifies and delineates the role the online component will play in the blended course.	Moodle provides <u>extensive</u> information about the blended course, the structure of learning; <u>clearly</u> delineates the role the online component will play in the course; and <u>clarifies the relationship</u> between the face-to-face and online components.	0
Building learning paths *(i.e., a logical way of structuring the course content – resources and activities)*	The structure of the course (e.g., modules and activities) is <u>unclear</u> on Moodle.	The course content on Moodle is <u>logically sequenced *OR* grouped</u>. Navigational instructions make clear how to get started and where to find various course components.	The course content on Moodle is <u>logically sequenced *AND* integrated</u> to help students engage with it. Instructions to students on how to meet the learning objectives are <u>adequate</u>.	0
Meeting the diverse learning needs of students	Moodle provides <u>limited</u> visual, textual, kinesthetic and/or auditory activities/multimedia resources to enhance student learning and accommodate different learning preferences.	Moodle provides <u>adequate</u> visual, textual, kinesthetic and/or auditory activities/multimedia resources to enhance student learning and accommodate different learning preferences.	Moodle provides <u>multiple</u> visual, textual, kinesthetic and/or auditory activities and multimedia resources to enhance student learning and accommodate different learning preferences.	0
Use of Moodle technology	Course uses <u>limited</u> Moodle tools to facilitate communication and learning.	Course uses <u>adequate</u> Moodle tools to facilitate communication and learning.	Course uses <u>a variety of</u> Moodle tools to <u>appropriately</u> facilitate communication and learning. The course design also takes advantage of <u>other technologies</u> and media to support the learning objectives.	0
Use of a variety of learning activities	Moodle provides <u>limited</u> activities to help students master the content, develop critical thinking and/or problem-solving skills.	Moodle provides <u>adequate</u> activities to help students master the content, develop critical thinking and/or problem-solving skills.	Moodle provides <u>multiple</u> activities that help students master the content, develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills.	0
Total score in this category:				0

Interpretation of the total score in this category

13-15 (90-100%) Moodle exceeds the expectations of the "appropriate" criteria for instructional design and delivery. Overall, the Moodle site demonstrates best practices in a manner that models its use.

10-12 (67-89%) Moodle meets the minimum criteria for effective instructional design and delivery, and appropriate for a blended course.

5-9 (33-66%) Moodle shows little evidence of the criteria for effective instructional design and delivery. Some areas need to be presented more clearly.

4 > (32% and less) Moodle does not meet the minimum criteria for effective instructional design and delivery, and may prevent students from achieving the stated learning objectives in the blended course. Major improvements in developing the blended course are needed.

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Evaluation criteria	Criteria interpretation			Score
	Developing (1)	**Appropriate (2)**	**Outstanding (3)**	
Student-to-student interaction	Moodle offers limited opportunity for student-to-student interaction and communication.	Moodle offers adequate opportunity for student-to-student interaction and communication. The requirements for interaction are clearly articulated.	Moodle offers ample opportunities and activities to foster student-to-student interaction and communication. Students are asked to introduce themselves to the class.	0
Student-to-instructor interaction	Moodle offers limited opportunity for student-to-instructor interaction and communication.	Moodle offers adequate opportunity for student-to-instructor interaction and communication. Clear standards are set for instructor response and availability (turn-around time for email, grade posting).	Moodle offers ample opportunities for student-to-instructor interaction and communication. The course design prompts the instructor to be active and engaged with the students.	0
Student-to-content interaction	Moodle offers limited opportunity for student-to-content interaction.	Moodle offers adequate opportunity for student-to-content interaction.	Moodle offers ample opportunities and activities to foster student-to-content interaction. Communication tools guide the student to become more engaged with the course content.	0
Organization and management of discussion forums	Course engages students in Moodle discussions in a very limited way. Discussions are unstructured, inconsistent, and lack regulation.	Course takes the full advantage of Moodle forums and effectively engages students in online discussions. Discussions are organized in clearly defined forums and/or threads.	Moodle effectively engages students in Moodle discussions in a variety of ways and offers separate forums for community-related issues, course Q&A, content discussions, etc.	0
Organization and facilitation of group work	Moodle offers limited opportunity for students to work in groups.	Moodle offers adequate opportunities for students to work in groups. Instructions on how to form groups and carry out the group's overall task are adequate.	Moodle offers ample opportunities for students to work in groups. The expectations of group participation and instructions on how to form groups and carry out the group's overall task are clearly stated.	0
Total score in this category				0

Interpretation of the total score in this category

13-15 (90-100%) Moodle exceeds the expectations of the "appropriate" criteria for student engagement. Overall, the Moodle site demonstrates best practices in a manner that models its use.

10-12 (67-89%) Moodle meets the minimum criteria for effective student engagement, and appropriate for a blended course.

5-9 (33-66%) Moodle shows little evidence of the criteria for effective student engagement. Some areas need to be organized and managed better.

4 > (32% and less) Moodle does not meet the minimum criteria for effective student engagement, and may prevent students from productive interaction and communication in the blended course. Major improvements in fostering communication, interaction, and collaboration are needed.

STUDENT SUPPORT & RESOURCES

Evaluation criteria	Criteria interpretation			Score
	Developing (1)	**Appropriate (2)**	**Outstanding (3)**	
Information about being a successful learner in a blended course	Moodle contains limited information about being a blended learner and offers limited resources for students to succeed in a blended course.	Moodle contains adequate information about being a blended learner and provides adequate resources for students to succeed in a blended course.	Moodle contains extensive information about being a blended learner and provides links to a wide range of tutorials and resources for students to succeed in a blended course.	0
Course-related information *(See Note below for more details)*	Moodle provides limited course-specific resources, limited instructor information (e.g., contact information).	Moodle provides adequate course-specific resources, appropriate instructor information (e.g., contact or biographical information).	Moodle provides a variety of course-specific resources, extensive instructor information (contact, biographical, office and virtual availability information, and picture).	0
Technical support and resources *(e.g., links to Moodle and other technology tutorials, contact information for technical assistance)*	Moodle offers limited information about technical support for Moodle and other course-related technologies that can assist students in effectively using the technologies in a blended course.	Moodle offers adequate information about technical support for Moodle and other course-related technologies in order to assist students in effectively using the technologies in a blended course.	Moodle offers access to a wide range of resources related to technical support for Moodle and other course-related technologies in order to assist students in effectively using the technologies in a blended course.	0
Academic support and resources *(i.e., links to library, academic advising, learning skills, ESL, counseling services, writing centre, etc.)*	Moodle provides limited information about (or links to) York's academic support that can assist students in improving their strategies for academic success and achieving their academic goals.	Moodle offers access to adequate resources related to York's academic support in order to assist students in improving their strategies for academic success and achieving their academic goals.	Moodle offers access to a wide range of resources related to York's academic support in order to assist students in improving their strategies for academic success and achieving their academic goals.	0
Institutional/program support and resources *(i.e., academic integrity expectations, grading and attending policies, emergencies, etc.)*	Moodle provides limited information about university and program policies, procedures, and regulations, and limited contact information for department and program.	Moodle offers access to adequate resources related to university and program policies, procedures, and regulations, and provides some contact information for department and program.	Moodle offers access to a comprehensive list of resources related to university and program policies, procedures, and regulations, and provides full contact information for department and program.	0
Total score in this category				0

Note: Components of course-related information include (but not limited to) articulation or link to: course description, **syllabus**, **navigational instructions** (i.e., how to get started and where to find various course components), **course resources** (i.e., a list of textbooks and other instructional materials needed for the course), instructions on how to access resources at a distance, **grading scale and weights**, **calendar of due dates** and other events, **a code of online conduct** (i.e., netiquette expectations with regard to Moodle discussions, email, and other forms of communication), **the requirements for course interaction**, a list of technical competencies and minimum learning skills (if applicable, prerequisite knowledge in the discipline) necessary for course completion, a list of technical requirements, and any other instructions to students on how to meet the course objectives. **In bold** – essential elements the blended course must have present on Moodle as part of the "appropriate" criterion.

Interpretation of the total score in this category

13-15 (90-100%) Moodle exceeds the expectations of the "appropriate" criteria for student support and resources. Overall, the Moodle site demonstrates best practices in a manner that models its use.

10-12 (67-89%) Moodle meets the minimum criteria for adequate student support and resources, and appropriate for a blended course.

5-9 (33-66%) Moodle shows little evidence of the criteria for adequate student support and resources. Some resources need to be presented more clearly and/or better developed.

4 > (32% and less) Moodle does not meet the minimum criteria for adequate student support and resources, and may prevent students from access to available resources to improve their strategies for academic success in the blended course. Major improvements are needed in articulating an explanation of how available support systems can assist students and/or in providing links to available resources that answer students' questions for the duration of the blended course.

OBSERVATION NOTES:

FINAL DECISION FOR MOODLE WEBSITE EVALUATION:

Total score:
Strong areas:
Weak areas:

Interpretation of the total score:

54-60 (90-100%) The Moodle site exceeds the expectations of the "appropriate" criteria a blended course must meet. It thus demonstrates best practices in a manner that models its use.

40-53 (67-89%) The Moodle site meets the expectations appropriate for a blended course. More could possibly be added.

20-39 (33-66%) The Moodle site is under development, little evidence of the expectations appropriate for a blended course present. Therefore, Moodle needs to be presented more clearly or better developed.

> 19 (32% and less) Moodle does not meet the minimum criteria appropriate for a blended course, but there are potential improvement opportunities.

Please indicate your response by darkening the appropriate bubble on the answer sheet. Your frank opinions will help us improve the design of courses at York in future. Your answers will not be seen by your course instructor.

How much you agree or disagree with the following statements:	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
1. Overall, I am satisfied with this course.	A	B	C	D	E	F
2. Taking this course increased my interest in the material.	A	B	C	D	E	F
3. Given the opportunity I would take another course in the future that has both online and face-to-face components.	A	B	C	D	E	F
4. The online and face-to-face course components of this course enhanced each other.	A	B	C	D	E	F
5. I was able to find course information easily at the Moodle site.	A	B	C	D	E	F
6. The resources at the Moodle site were useful.	A	B	C	D	E	F
7. The course expectations were clearly communicated.	A	B	C	D	E	F
8. The technology used for online portions of this course was reliable.	A	B	C	D	E	F

Compared to typical face-to-face courses I have taken…	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
9. …this course allowed me to have more flexibility in my personal schedule.	A	B	C	D	E	F
10. …this course allowed me to reduce my total travel time to campus each week.	A	B	C	D	E	F
11. …I was more engaged in this course.	A	B	C	D	E	F
12. …I was more likely to ask questions in this course.	A	B	C	D	E	F
13. …the amount of my interaction with other students in this course increased.	A	B	C	D	E	F
14. …the quality of my interaction with other students in this course was better.	A	B	C	D	E	F
15. …I felt connected to other students in this course.	A	B	C	D	E	F
16. ...the amount of my interaction with the instructor in this course increased.	A	B	C	D	E	F
17. ...the quality of my interaction with the instructor in this course was better.	A	B	C	D	E	F
18. ...I was overwhelmed with information in this course.	A	B	C	D	E	F
19. …this course required extra effort.	A	B	C	D	E	F
20. ...this course improved my understanding of key concepts.	A	B	C	D	E	F
21. …this course helped me develop better communication skills.	A	B	C	D	E	F
22. …I had more opportunities in this course to reflect on what I have learned.	A	B	C	D	E	F
23. …the technology used in this course interfered with my learning.	A	B	C	D	E	F

Course Format Preferences

24. If the same course is being offered in different formats, which course format would you prefer?
    A. Entirely face-to-face course format
    B. Blended course format (meaning some face-to-face activities are replaced with online activities)
    C. Entirely online course format (with no face-to-face class time)

25. If you had a choice between attending lectures face-to-face or accessing lectures online which would you choose?
    A. Attending lectures face-to-face
    B. Accessing online downloadable videos of lectures
    C. A combination of both

26. If you had a choice between attending tutorials face-to-face or participating in tutorials online which would you choose?
    A. Attending tutorials face-to-face
    B. Participating in tutorials online
    C. A combination of both

27. If you had a choice between participation in classroom discussion or online discussion which would you choose?
    A. Class discussion
    B. Online discussion
    C. A combination of both

Additional Information

28. Please indicate which of the following best describes your situation:
    A. I live on campus.
    B. I commute to campus.

29. How many hours a week on average are you employed?
    A. I'm not working
    B. 1-9 hours
    C. 10-19
    D. 20-29
    E. 30-39
    F. 40+

Please share any additional comments or suggestions.

_____

_____

_____

Thank You!

Please circle your response to each question and answer the open-ended questions as appropriate. Be assured that your responses will be kept confidential.

In this section, please rate the following statements:	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
Designing a blended course gave me an opportunity to experiment with new teaching methodologies.	A	B	C	D	E	F
The <u>pedagogical</u> support given by York to help me design this blended course was effective.	A	B	C	D	E	F
Designing a blended course gave me an opportunity to experiment with new technologies for teaching.	A	B	C	D	E	F
The <u>technical</u> support given by York to help me deliver this blended course was effective.	A	B	C	D	E	F
I have sufficient skills to make effective use of the technologies in this course.	A	B	C	D	E	F
With the support given by York, it took about the same amount of time to develop my blended course as it would have taken for a new fully face-to-face course.	A	B	C	D	E	F
The TAs had adequate training/preparation to perform their duties in this course. (Circle N/A if not applicable.)	A	B	C	D	E	F
Blended learning gives me more flexibility in my work schedule.	A	B	C	D	E	F
Students were reluctant to participate in online activities in this course.	A	B	C	D	E	F
Students lacked the ability to monitor their progress in this course.	A	B	C	D	E	F

Any Suggestions

What suggestions, if any, do you have for improving support in (a) designing and (b) implementing blended courses?

_____
_____
_____

Compared to typical face-to-face courses I have taught…	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
… teaching a blended course is a time-consuming experience.	A	B	C	D	E	F
… students are more engaged in this blended course.	A	B	C	D	E	F
… students collaborated online better after building a sense of community in a face-to-face context.	A	B	C	D	E	F
… I feel that the *amount* of *student-to-student* interaction in this blended course increased.	A	B	C	D	E	F
… I feel that the *quality* of *student-to-student* interaction in this blended course was much better.	A	B	C	D	E	F
… I feel that the *amount* of my interaction with *students* in this blended course increased.	A	B	C	D	E	F
… I feel that the *quality* of my interaction with *students* in this blended course was much better.	A	B	C	D	E	F
… assessment of student achievement in this blended class differed.	A	B	C	D	E	F
... I was concerned about academic integrity in this course.	A	B	C	D	E	F
... I was concerned about low student attendance in this course.	A	B	C	D	E	F
... the quality of students' educational experience in this blended course was better.	A	B	C	D	E	F
... students enjoyed this blended course more.	A	B	C	D	E	F
... I got to know students better in this blended course.	A	B	C	D	E	F
... students' overall performance was better.	A	B	C	D	E	F

Course Format Preferences

In the future, if you had a choice, which format would you consider teaching this course?

    A. Entirely face-to-face teaching
    B. Blended teaching (meaning some face-to-face activities are replaced with online activities)
    C. Entirely online teaching (with no face-to-face class time)

Please share any additional comments or suggestions about your course.

_____

_____

_____

Thank You!

Survey Questions	N	Mean	Std. Dev.
I was able to find course information easily at the Moodle site.	937	3.68	1.148
The resources at the Moodle site were useful.	934	3.62	1.048
The course expectations were clearly communicated.	937	3.39	1.088
This course allowed me to have more flexibility in my personal schedule.	939	3.37	1.249
The technology used for online portions of this course was reliable.	939	3.35	1.162
This course required extra effort.	936	3.25	1.123
This course improved my understanding of key concepts.	932	3.21	1.003
Taking this course increased my interest in the material.	943	3.16	1.138
Given the opportunity I would take another course in the future that has both online and face-to-face components.	941	3.15	1.243
Overall I am satisfied with this course.	940	3.08	1.119
The online and face-to-face course components of this course enhanced each other.	937	3.00	1.156
I had more opportunities in this course to reflect on what I have learned.	933	2.89	1.057
I was overwhelmed with information in this course.	940	2.87	1.110
The technology used in this course interfered with my learning.	925	2.60	1.142
This course helped me develop better communication skills.	932	2.60	1.045
The quality of my interaction with other students in this course was better.	932	2.59	1.093
The amount of my interaction with other students in this course increased.	934	2.57	1.150
I was more likely to ask questions in this course.	940	2.56	1.039
I was more engaged in this course.	929	2.56	1.083
The quality of my interaction with the instructor in this course was better.	933	2.53	1.180
This course allowed me to reduce my total travel time to campus each week.	943	2.47	1.525
I felt connected to other students in this course.	934	2.46	1.091
The amount of my interaction with the instructor in this course increased.	931	2.46	1.190

Note: Mean scores are sorted out in descending order.