

**Utah State  
UNIVERSITY****Accountability In Action Program 2003****Customer and Futures Survey  
Executive Summary**

The views and perceptions of Utah State University Extension's customers are critical as we engage those we serve in meaningful dialogue on performance improvement and collaborative programs. USU Extension has established a three-year Accountability in Action Program that systematically evaluates Continuing Education student satisfaction against benchmarks established from research conducted by University Assessment in the Spring 2000 Distance Education Survey (n=423). A random sample of Continuing Education students were asked to share their opinions on the importance of issues affecting the quality of their USU educational program. The survey was conducted three times between 2001-2003, 409 Continuing Education students from ten Continuing Education delivery sites were surveyed. The results of this Accountability in Action Program and Customer and Futures Survey are highlighted in this report.

**Selected Continuing Education Student Benchmarks**

Continuing Education students were asked to comment on their perceptions of the advising system at USU during the past academic year.

**1. Advisor gave me correct information on services/programs.**

	<b>2000 Distance Education Survey Benchmarks</b>	<b>2001-2003 Customer and Futures Surveys</b>
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>27.2%</b>	<b>43.5%</b>
<b>Agree</b>	<b>34.2%</b>	<b>32.2%</b>
<b>Neutral</b>	<b>24.6%</b>	<b>14.1%</b>
<b>Disagree</b>	<b>6.4%</b>	<b>5.5%</b>
<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>7.5%</b>	<b>4.7%</b>

***Cumulative Data 2001-03 Suggests***

A majority of students (76%) reported that they agreed or strongly-agreed that their advisors gave them correct information. Less than 7% failed to respond to this item. Clearly correct advisement is improving as perceived by students surveyed 2001-03.

**2. Overall I was satisfied with the advising system at USU.**

	<b>2000 Distance Education Survey Benchmarks</b>	<b>2001-2003 Customer and Futures Surveys</b>
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>20.3%</b>	<b>34.5%</b>
<b>Agree</b>	<b>27.2%</b>	<b>33.4%</b>
<b>Neutral</b>	<b>32.5%</b>	<b>18%</b>
<b>Disagree</b>	<b>10.1%</b>	<b>7.6%</b>
<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>9.9%</b>	<b>6.5%</b>

***Cumulative Data 2001-03 Suggests***

68% of the students agreed or strongly agreed with being satisfied with the advising system at USU. This was a 21% increase over the 2000 Distance Education Survey. Progress is being made in the advisement program with Distance Education students.

**3. Overall I was satisfied with my advisor.**

	<b>2000 Distance Education Survey Benchmarks</b>	<b>2001-2003 Customer and Futures Surveys</b>
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>24.3%</b>	<b>40.4%</b>
<b>Agree</b>	<b>31.3%</b>	<b>31.2%</b>
<b>Neutral</b>	<b>28.4%</b>	<b>17.3%</b>
<b>Disagree</b>	<b>8.1%</b>	<b>4.5%</b>
<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>7.8%</b>	<b>6.6%</b>

***Cumulative Data 2001-03 Suggests***

Overall, 71% of students were satisfied with their advisor and fewer than 11% were dissatisfied with their advisor. Overall 16% of students were more satisfied with their advisors in the 2001-03 surveys than those in the 2000 study.

**Continuing Education students were asked to comment on their level of satisfaction on issues associated with courses and faculty.**

#### 4. Overall quality of education.

	2000 Distance Education Survey Benchmarks	2001-2003 Customer and Futures Surveys
<b>Very Satisfied</b>	<b>37.3%</b>	<b>38.2%</b>
<b>Satisfied</b>	<b>56.2%</b>	<b>48.5%</b>
<b>Neutral</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>10.1%</b>
<b>Dissatisfied</b>	<b>2.9%</b>	<b>2.5%</b>
<b>Very Dissatisfied</b>	<b>4.1%</b>	<b>.7%</b>

#### ***Cumulative Data 2001-03 Suggests***

The Benchmark study suggests that 93.5% were satisfied-very satisfied with the overall quality of their education when compared with 87% from the 2001-03 study. A higher neutral response in the 2001-03 perhaps accounts somewhat for the 7% decline in overall satisfaction levels.

#### 5. Accessibility of Faculty.

	2000 Distance Education Survey Benchmarks	2001-2003 Customer and Futures Surveys
<b>Very Satisfied</b>	<b>24.9%</b>	<b>38.2%</b>
<b>Satisfied</b>	<b>58.8%</b>	<b>39.7%</b>
<b>Neutral</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>14%</b>
<b>Dissatisfied</b>	<b>12.4%</b>	<b>4.9%</b>
<b>Very Dissatisfied</b>	<b>3.9%</b>	<b>3.2%</b>

#### ***Cumulative Data 2001-03 Suggests***

The dissatisfaction level of Continuing Education students in the 2001-03 survey was reduced by nearly 8% when comparisons were made with the 2000 survey. Students in the 2000 survey were slightly more satisfied with their accessibility to faculty than in the 2001-2003 surveys.

**6. Helpfulness of Faculty.**

	<b>2000 Distance Education Survey Benchmarks</b>	<b>2001-2003 Customer and Futures Surveys</b>
<b>Very Satisfied</b>	<b>31.2%</b>	<b>44.9%</b>
<b>Satisfied</b>	<b>56.3%</b>	<b>35.3%</b>
<b>Neutral</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>12.8%</b>
<b>Dissatisfied</b>	<b>8.3%</b>	<b>5.2%</b>
<b>Very Dissatisfied</b>	<b>4.1%</b>	<b>1.7%</b>

***Cumulative Data 2001-03 Suggests***

The helpfulness of the faculty remained strong in both the benchmark study and the 2001-03 Customer and Futures Surveys. Faculty helpfulness drives high levels of student satisfaction with their USU experience. Dissatisfaction levels have been perceptually reduced by 4%.

**7. The degree to which you were treated fairly.**

	<b>2000 Distance Education Survey Benchmarks</b>	<b>2001-2003 Customer and Futures Surveys</b>
<b>Very Satisfied</b>	<b>35.9%</b>	<b>51.1%</b>
<b>Satisfied</b>	<b>56.1%</b>	<b>35.1%</b>
<b>Neutral</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>10.4%</b>
<b>Dissatisfied</b>	<b>4.9%</b>	<b>2%</b>
<b>Very Dissatisfied</b>	<b>3.2%</b>	<b>1.5%</b>

***Cumulative Data 2001-03 Suggests***

There was over an 86% satisfaction level from students when the fairly treated indicator was analyzed. Students in the 2001-03 Customer and Futures Survey indicated a higher level of satisfaction overall. A 5% reduction in dissatisfaction by students from the Customer and Futures Surveys points to a declining trend in dissatisfaction.

**During the collegiate experience, technology and facilities play a significant role in Continuing Education student satisfaction. Students were asked how conducive the facilities and technology was in fostering positive learning experiences.**

8. How conducive were the facilities in communicating with the instructor during and after class.

	2000 Distance Education Survey Benchmarks		2001-2003 Customer and Futures Surveys	
	During	After	During	After
<b>Best</b>	11.7%	9.2%	28.0%	23.8%
<b>Pleasant</b>	43.1%	36.9%	39.1%	30.3%
<b>Adequate</b>	36.9%	37.7%	27.3%	33.7%
<b>Barely Tolerable</b>	7.5%	9.7%	4.4%	8.2%
<b>Worst</b>	.7%	6.6%	1.2%	4%

**Cumulative Data 2001-03 Suggests**

Facility satisfaction levels for communicating with instructors was greater with Continuing Education students during class than after class. In 2001-03 more than 94% expressed best or adequate when rating conduciveness of facilities in communicating with instructors during class.

9. How conducive were the facilities at your site for viewing videotapes and other multimedia materials?

	2000 Distance Education Survey Benchmarks	2001-2003 Customer and Futures Surveys
<b>Best</b>	10.7%	24.7%
<b>Pleasant</b>	31.6%	39.2%
<b>Adequate</b>	46.5%	28.8%
<b>Barely Tolerable</b>	6.3%	4.9%
<b>Worst</b>	5.0%	2.3%

10. How conducive was the environment at your site for paying attention to the instructor and taking exams?

	2000 Distance Education Survey Benchmarks		2001-2003 Customer and Futures Surveys	
	Attention	Exams	Attention	Exams
<b>Best</b>	14.8%	19.8%	31.7%	39%
<b>Pleasant</b>	42.5%	44.5%	39.6%	39.3%
<b>Adequate</b>	31.4%	27.9%	20.1%	17.4%
<b>Barely Tolerable</b>	8.5%	5.5%	6.1%	2.5%
<b>Worst</b>	2.8%	2.3%	2.5%	1.8%

### **Cumulative Data 2001-03 Suggests**

2001-03 Customer and Futures respondents were much more likely to view facilities positively than those in the 2000 Distance Education Benchmark study. The ongoing improvement of facilities in distance education sites has made a marked difference in the perceptions of students.

#### **11. In your classes, the technology used enhanced learning and was essential to the course.**

	2000 Distance Education Survey Benchmarks		2001-2003 Customer and Futures Surveys	
	Enh Learn	Tech Ess	Enh Learn	Tech Ess
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	19.8%	32.9%	32%	36.6%
<b>Agree</b>	55.6%	44.0%	40%	36.3%
<b>Neutral</b>	15.6%	15.8%	21.6%	21.1%
<b>Disagree</b>	7.0%	4.8%	6%	4.7%
<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	2.0%	2.5%	0.5%	1.2%

### **Cumulative Data 2001-03 Suggests**

More than 7 out of every 10 students believed that the technology used enhanced learning and was essential to the course in the 2001-03 surveys. More than 73% of students in all three surveys indicated that technology was essential to courses.

#### **12. In your classes the technology used was either reliable or actually got in the way.**

	2000 Distance Education Survey Benchmarks		2001-2003 Customer and Futures Surveys	
	Reliable	Got in Way	Reliable	Got in Way
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	16.8%	5.5%	24.6%	7.5%
<b>Agree</b>	58.3%	16.9%	43%	11.2%
<b>Neutral</b>	13.3%	18.9%	22.9%	18.5%
<b>Disagree</b>	8.8%	39.3%	6.7%	26.4%
<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	2.8%	19.4%	2.7%	36.4%

### **Cumulative Data 2001-03 Suggests**

Nearly 7 out of 10 students believe that the technology used was reliable while 19% of students believed that it actually got in the way of learning. The perception of technology reliability has remained relatively constant over this three-year period.

Continuing Education students were asked to assess satisfaction levels with student service related areas. The assessment included Express A Book, Distance Education and Library Services, Fee and Tuition Payment Services, and the Financial Aid Office.

**13. How satisfied were you with the Express A Book and the Distance Education Library services?**

	2000 Distance Education Survey Benchmarks		2001-2003 Customer and Futures Surveys	
	Exp Bk	Library Srvs	Exp Bk	Library Srvs
<b>Very Satisfied</b>	15.1%	17.6%	29%	16.8%
<b>Satisfied</b>	50.0%	34.5%	37.5%	28.4%
<b>Dissatisfied</b>	12.2%	6.7%	13.8%	11.2%
<b>Very Dissatisfied</b>	8.3%	4.0%	8%	2.5%
<b>Didn't Use</b>	14.3%	37.2%	11.8%	41.1%

***Cumulative Data 2001-03 Suggests***

There is a noticeable trend in reduction of library services use and lower levels of overall satisfaction in Distance Education Library Services when compared with the benchmarks of 2000. Satisfaction levels with the Express a Book program have significantly improved from the benchmark data.

**14. How satisfied were you with the Fee and Tuition Payment Services and the Financial Aid Office?**

	2000 Distance Education Survey Benchmarks		2000-2003 Customer and Futures Surveys	
	Fee/Tuitn	F Aid Off	Fee/Tuitn	F Aid Off
<b>Very Satisfied</b>	16.8%	11.5%	26.5%	24.9%
<b>Satisfied</b>	47.1%	33.4%	46.5%	28%
<b>Dissatisfied</b>	8.2%	4.0%	10.8%	10%
<b>Very Dissatisfied</b>	2.6%	4.3%	7.8%	2.8%
<b>Didn't Use</b>	25.3%	46.8%	8.5%	34.2%

***Cumulative Data 2001-03 Suggests***

Customer and Futures students were increasingly likely to view fee and tuition payment services and the service of the financial aid office more positively than were the 2000 Distance Education Survey students. There has been a marked decline of over 10% in the number of students utilizing financial aid services when comparisons are made with the benchmark.

Classroom interaction and the frequency of communication exchanges between student and student as well as instructor and student are critical to the learning process. Continuing Education students were asked to indicate the level of importance of these communication exchanges.

**15. In your opinion how important is interaction in a university class?**

	2000 Distance Education Survey Benchmarks	2001-2003 Customer and Futures Survey
Essential	27.2%	44%
Very Important	35.4%	33%
Important	28.0%	19%
Slightly Important	7.9%	2.7%
Not Important at All	1.5%	1.4%

**Cumulative Data 2001-03 Suggests**

Customer and Futures Survey students were 15% more likely to believe that student interaction was essential to very important than were the 2000 Distance Education Survey students.

**16. In your university experience to date, during most class sessions, about how many times did you interact with the instructors and students at your location?**

	2000 Distance Education Survey Benchmarks		2001-2003 Customer and Futures Surveys	
	Int Inst	Int Stdts	Int Inst	Int Stdts
0 per term	5.5%	47.2%	5.5%	8.6%
1-2 per term	27.6%	19.0%	19.4%	9.9%
3-4 per term	39.1%	13.5%	25.8%	12.7%
5-8 per term	11.0%	12.9%	16.9%	14.5%
9+ per term	16.8%	7.4%	32.5%	54.3%

**Cumulative Data 2001-03 Suggests**

Interaction with instructors remained relatively unchanged when comparisons were made between the surveys. A significant difference in student-to-student interaction at their location occurred with 2001 and 2003 Customer and Futures Survey students when comparisons were made with the 2000 Distance Education Survey students.

17. In your university experience to date, during most class sessions, about how many times did you interact with students at other locations?

	2000 Distance Education Survey Benchmarks	2001-03 Customer and Futures Surveys
	Interaction Other Loc	Interaction Other Loc
0 per term	4.5%	45.8%
1-2 per term	12.1%	27.3%
3-4 per term	59.8%	14.4%
5-8 per term	5.3%	4.6%
9+ per term	18.2%	7.8%

**Cumulative Data 2001-03 Suggests**

Students appear to interact with other students best within their own classroom setting. Interaction between sites appears to be on a decline when compared with the 2000 Distance Education benchmarks.

Availability of course materials, technical assistance in helping students with distance education, and multimedia materials help ensure a positive learning experience. Continuing Education students were asked about the availability of these resources.

18. How available were course materials (books, handouts, etc.) and technical assistance in helping you use distance education.

	2000 Distance Education Survey Benchmarks		2001-2003 Customer and Futures Survey	
	Crs Mtrls	Tech Ast	Crs Mtrls	Tech Ast
Always available	26.1%	22.6%	37.8%	43.3%
Usually available	59.2%	53.0%	45.4%	40.4%
Available about ½ the time	8.6%	12.1%	14.1%	11.7%
Unavailable more than available	4.8%	8.0%	2.7%	3.6%
Never available	1.3%	4.4%	0.0%	.8%

**Cumulative Data 2001-03 Suggests**

Significant improvements appear to be occurring in the availability of technical assistance to students at distance education sites. The availability of course materials continues to be a perceived problem by students in distance education classes.

**19. How available were multimedia materials (videotapes, etc.)?**

	2000 Distance Education Survey Benchmarks	2001-03 Customer and Futures Surveys
	Multimedia Materials	Multimedia Materials
Always available	16.0%	29.5%
Usually available	51.3%	44.9%
Available about ½ the time	17.6%	15.4%
Unavailable more than available	7.5%	5.2%
Never available	7.5%	5%

***Cumulative Data 2001-03 Suggests***

An increase of 8% (always available-usually available) by 2001-03 Customer and Futures survey respondents over the 2000 Distance Education survey respondents point to improvements in meeting student needs for multimedia and video tapes materials at respective distance education sites.

Continuing Education students were asked to indicate the extent to which their education at USU has contributed to their personal progress in several goal areas.

**20. The degree to which USU has contributed to your progress in general knowledge and social interpersonal skills.**

	2000 Distance Education Survey Benchmarks		2001-2003 Customer and Futures Surveys	
	Gen Kldg	Intp Skills	Gen Kldg	Intp Skills
Very good	34.3%	27.3%	68.2%	44.1%
Moderate	62.0%	61.4%	30.5%	49.1%
Very poor	3.7%	11.2%	1.2%	6.8%

***Cumulative Data 2001-03 Suggests***

2001-03 Customer and Futures survey respondents perceived increased levels of very good progress in the personal progress area of general knowledge and social interpersonal skills when compared with the 2000 Distance Education survey respondents.

**21. The degree to which USU has contributed to your progress in independence and self-confidence.**

	2000 Distance Education Survey Benchmarks		2001-2003 Customer and Futures Surveys	
	Indpd	Self Confd	Indpd	Self Confd
<b>Very good</b>	36.0%	26.8%	59.9%	53.5%
<b>Moderate</b>	57.2%	60.1%	36.8%	42.3%
<b>Very poor</b>	6.8%	13.1%	3.3%	4.2%

***Cumulative Data 2001-03 Suggests***

2001-03 Customer and Futures Survey respondents perceived greater personal progress in self-confidence and independence than did those students surveyed in the 2000 Distance Education Survey.

**22. The degree to which USU has contributed to your progress in sensitivity/tolerance to others and level of intellect.**

	2000 Distance Education Survey Benchmarks		2001-03 Customer and Futures Survey	
	Sen/Tol	Lvl Intelc	Sen/Tol	Lvl Intelc
<b>Very good</b>	31.0%	34.6%	48.6%	60.2%
<b>Moderate</b>	58.0%	60.9%	45.6%	36.8%
<b>Very poor</b>	11.0%	4.5%	5.7%	3%

***Cumulative Data 2001-03 Suggests***

2001-03 Customer and Futures Survey respondents perceived greater personal progress in sensitivity/tolerance and level of intellect than did those students surveyed in the 2000 Distance Education Survey. 2001-03 respondents were nearly twice as likely to perceive very good personal progress in level of intellect than the 2000 respondents.

**23. The degree to which USU has contributed to your progress in time management and planning and organizational skills.**

	2000 Distance Education Survey Benchmark		2001-2003 Customer and Futures Surveys	
	T Mgmnt	PI/Org Skls	T Mgmnt	PI/Org Skls
<b>Very good</b>	22.2%	25.9%	48%	51.5%
<b>Moderate</b>	66.4%	64.3%	47.5%	44.3%
<b>Very poor</b>	11.4%	9.7%	4.5%	4.2%

### **Cumulative Data 2001-03 Suggests**

2001-03 Customer and Futures respondents showed perceptual improvements in both time management and planning and organizational skills as areas of personal progress when compared with 2000 Distance Education respondents. 2001-03 respondents were nearly twice as likely to perceive very good personal improvements in these two areas than the 2000 respondents.

The Customer Satisfaction and Futures Survey sought to identify the sources of news used by Continuing Education students in addition to the single most significant challenge students faced in returning or continuing their education. These indicators will assist USU Extension in focusing marketing efforts for Continuing Education students.

#### **24. What is your primary source of daily news?**

	<b>2000 Distance Education Survey Benchmarks</b>	<b>2001-03 Customer and Futures Survey</b>
<b>Newspaper</b>	No data available	15%
<b>Radio</b>	No data available	21.4%
<b>Television</b>	No data available	44.3%
<b>The Web</b>	No data available	16%
<b>Other</b>	No data available	3.2%

### **Cumulative Data 2001-03 Suggests**

Students overwhelmingly utilize television as their primary source of daily news followed by radio. The web has surpassed the newspaper as a news source among students surveyed.

#### **25. What was the single most significant challenge you faced in returning to or continuing your education?**

	<b>2000 Distance Education Survey Benchmarks</b>	<b>2001-03 Customer and Futures Survey</b>
<b>Time</b>	No data available	38.2%
<b>Cost</b>	No data available	28.9%
<b>Fear academic failure</b>	No data available	10.2%
<b>Lack of encouragement</b>	No data available	1.7%
<b>Child care and family</b>	No data available	9.2%
<b>Class location</b>	No data available	3.7%
<b>Lack of employer encouragement</b>	No data available	2%
<b>Other</b>	No data available	6%

### **Cumulative Data 2001-03 Suggests**

The three most significant factors influencing student return/continuing their education was time, cost, and fear of academic failure. Future marketing efforts focusing on time and cost elements could effectively peak the interests of these potential students.

## **Information about the 2001-03 Customer and Futures Survey**

**Survey was conducted March 2001, November 2001, and November 2002**

**(Reported in 2002 US government fiscal year)**

**409 survey respondents from 10 Continuing Education Sites**

- Brigham City Campus
- Snow Continuing Education
- Richfield Continuing Education
- Wayne County Continuing Education
- Uintah Basin Vernal Campus
- Uintah Basin Roosevelt Campus
- Blanding Continuing Education
- Moab Continuing Education
- Tooele Campus
- Salt Lake Continuing Education Center

### **Gender**

38.9% Male  
61.1% Female

### **Age**

0.5% 17 or younger  
12.6% 18-20  
22.0% 21-25  
17.0% 26-30  
24.7% 31-40  
17.8% 41-50  
3.7% 51-60  
1.7% 60+

### **Born or raised in or near this community**

59.4% Yes  
19% Moved here since 1980  
46% Moved here since 1990

### **Employment Status**

55.6% Employed Full-Time  
25.5% Employed Part-Time  
6.8% Unemployed  
12.1% Not in Labor Force

### **Marriage/Family Relationship**

45.2% Married w/ Dependent Children  
17.0% Married w/ No Dependent Children  
9.8% Single w/ Dependent Children  
28.0% Single w/ No Dependent Children

### **What do you tell your friends about USU**

#### **Extension?**

82.6% It's great – mostly positive things  
13.5% Neither negative nor positive things  
3.2% Mostly negative things  
.7% It's not great

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