

Summer 2024 Student Feedback Report

Executive Summary

Background

Western University transitioned from the Sakai Learning Management System to Brightspace to enhance the educational experience, aligning with strategic goals for growth and future teaching needs. The Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL) and Western Technology Services (WTS) facilitated this transition by providing extensive training resources for both instructors and students.

Purpose of the Survey

The survey aimed to capture student feedback on their experience using Brightspace during the summer term, focusing on navigation, tool usability, and mobile accessibility. The insights gathered will inform ongoing improvements in training, resources, and system enhancements.

Methods

The survey included 1060 students (7.2% response rate) from various summer session formats. Conducted via Qualtrics, the survey period was from August 6–21, 2025, approximately one month after the latest summer course ended. Thematic analysis was used to identify key patterns and insights from the feedback.

Summary of Findings

Student feedback revealed mixed experiences with Brightspace. Key themes and action items emerged:

Ease of Navigation and User Experience: 53% found Brightspace easy to navigate, whereas 20% did not. Issues included cluttered content sections and difficulties in locating materials. Actions include streamlining course structures, creating templates, and providing video guidance.

Tool Usability: 53% found Brightspace tools easy to use, but issues with Calendar and Discussions were noted. Actions include workshops for instructors, re-enabling content download, and providing messaging tool workarounds.

Brightspace Pulse (Mobile App): Only 30% used the app, with many unaware of its existence. Actions include advertising the app more widely and addressing perceived functionality issues with D2L.

Instructor Familiarity and Course Setup: Concerns about instructors' unfamiliarity with Brightspace impacting course organization. Actions include continued comprehensive training for instructors and promoting course templates.

Awareness of Support Resources: Low usage of Brightspace Help webpage and training modules. Actions include improving communication about existing resources and including information in course materials.

Conclusion

While Brightspace shows potential as a robust learning platform, improvements are needed in areas like instructor training, tool utilization, and mobile functionality. Addressing these challenges by implementing targeted actions will enhance the student experience in future terms.