

Izmir University of Economics

Blackboard Learn

Students' Evaluation Report

Introduction

The purpose of this report is to identify issues, advantages, disadvantages, problems and impact that the Blackboard Learning Management System has on faculty and students at IUE. Blackboard is a learning management system that IUE has utilized to support the teaching and learning process since Fall 2015. Blackboard is a powerful instruction, communication, and assessment tool that allows faculty to connect with students, share course material and lecture notes, administer assignments and exams, and give feedback on students' work. Therefore, Blackboard is a critical component to the university's operation.

At the end of the 2017-2018 academic year a survey to identify the level of satisfaction students have when using Blackboard Learn was conducted by the Teaching and Learning Center (TLC), which provides training and support services both to students and faculty members to enhance the teaching quality at IUE.

A web-based survey was sent to all 8627 students enrolled in Blackboard LMS at the end of Spring 2018. These users were offered the opportunity to respond to the student feedback survey which included a total of 14 questions. The survey included closed-ended as well as opportunities for providing open-ended comments on important issues of relevance that may have been missed in the survey. 513 responses were received. Response rate was not very high so the generalizability of the findings are limited. However, despite the low response rate, open-ended comments by the instructors provided insight on several issues that need to be addressed to better support the teaching and learning process.

The following **key findings** have been reached based on the accumulated results of this study.

IUE students;

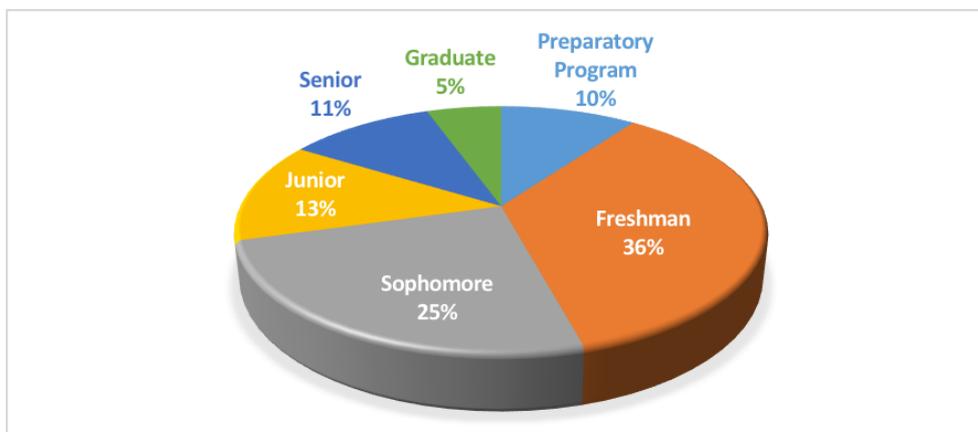
- consistently use Blackboard Learn
- are generally satisfied with Blackboard Learn
- find Blackboard Learn easy to use
- are generally satisfied with the Blackboard mobile app
- find Blackboard Learn a simple way to access course material
- mostly use Blackboard Learn to submit assignments, keep track of announcements made by instructors, follow their course grades, and access course material
- are generally satisfied with the way they access their course material, follow course notes and announcements, get feedback on homework, and send assignments
- do not fully exploit Analytics Student report
- access the system on their laptops/notebooks
- mention slow or interrupted Internet connection as a factor that negatively affect their use of Blackboard Learn
- rely mostly on their friends when they need help with Blackboard Learn

Survey Distribution

The survey was created on Blackboard Learn. A request for survey participation was sent via Blackboard announcement tool and email to the entire body of the current students at University of Economics on May 2018. A reminder email was sent every week in May and June 2018. The survey was closed at the end of June.

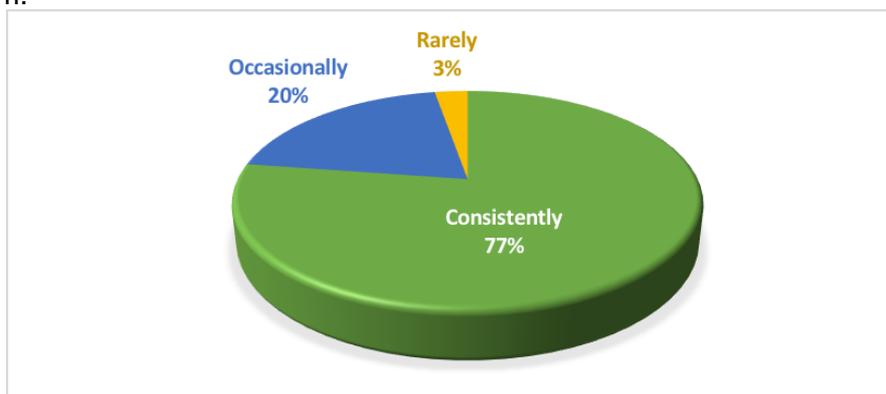
Student Grade Levels

Out of 8627 students enrolled in IUE, 513 students completed the survey, which represents a 5% response rate. According to the graph below, 10% of the respondents are enrolled in the Preparatory Program, 36% identified themselves as freshman, 25% as sophomore, 13% as junior, 11% as senior, and 5% as graduate students.



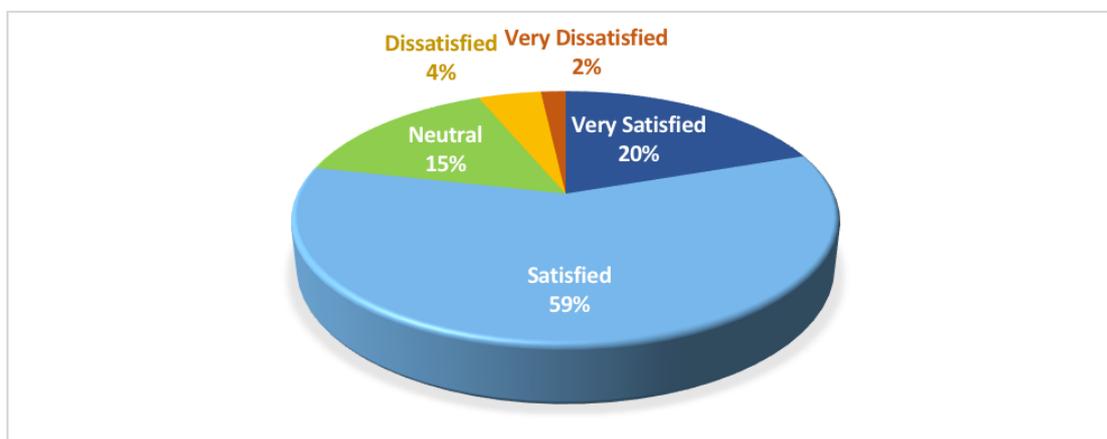
How often do you use the Blackboard Learning Management system?

Participants in the survey were asked to reveal how often they use the Blackboard Learn Management system. According to the following graph, 77% of those who responded to the survey said they consistently use the system, while 20% said they use it occasionally, and 3% said rarely use the platform.



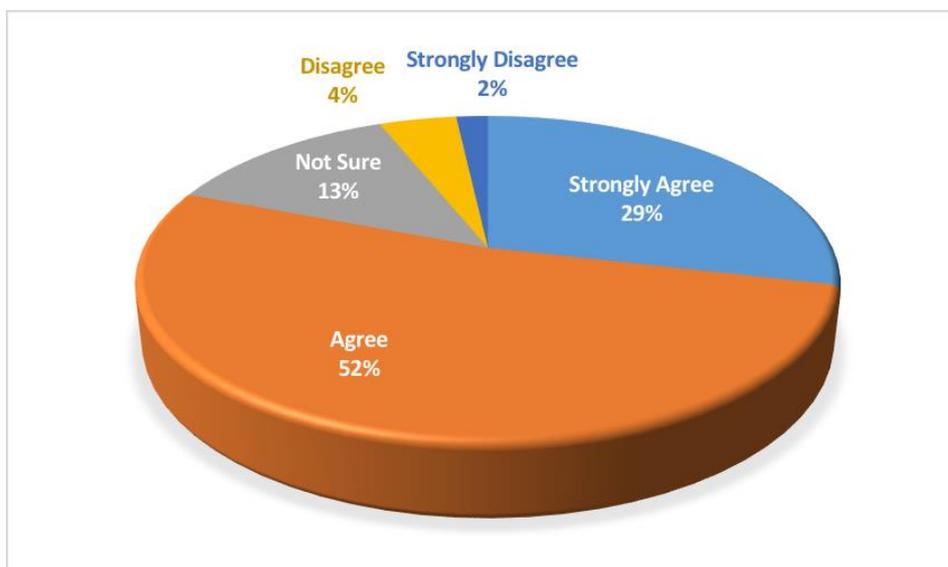
How satisfied are you with using Blackboard Learn?

When asked how satisfied they were with Blackboard Learn, 20% of students who responded to the survey said they were very satisfied, more than half of respondents, 59%, said they were satisfied, 15% were neutral, 4% were dissatisfied, and only 2% said they were very dissatisfied.



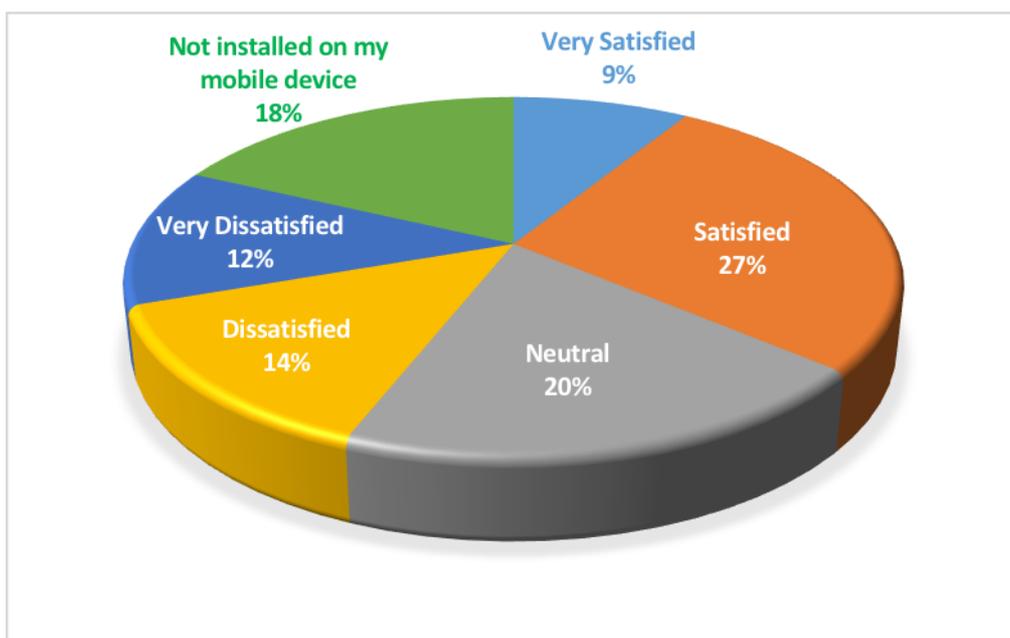
I can easily use Blackboard Learn.

The survey also measures how easy students think the system is to use. According to the graph below, 29% of respondents strongly agree with the fact that the platform is easy to use, 52% agree, 4% disagree, and 2% strongly disagree. 13% of respondents said they were not sure.



How satisfied are you with using the Blackboard Learn Mobile App?

The following question on the survey was about the satisfaction levels of students with using the mobile app, which was renewed in the summer of 2017. According to the graph below, 9% of respondents are very satisfied and 27% are satisfied with the mobile app. A total of 26% students said they were not satisfied with the app and 20% were neutral. On the other hand, 18% of the respondents do not have the mobile app installed on their devices.



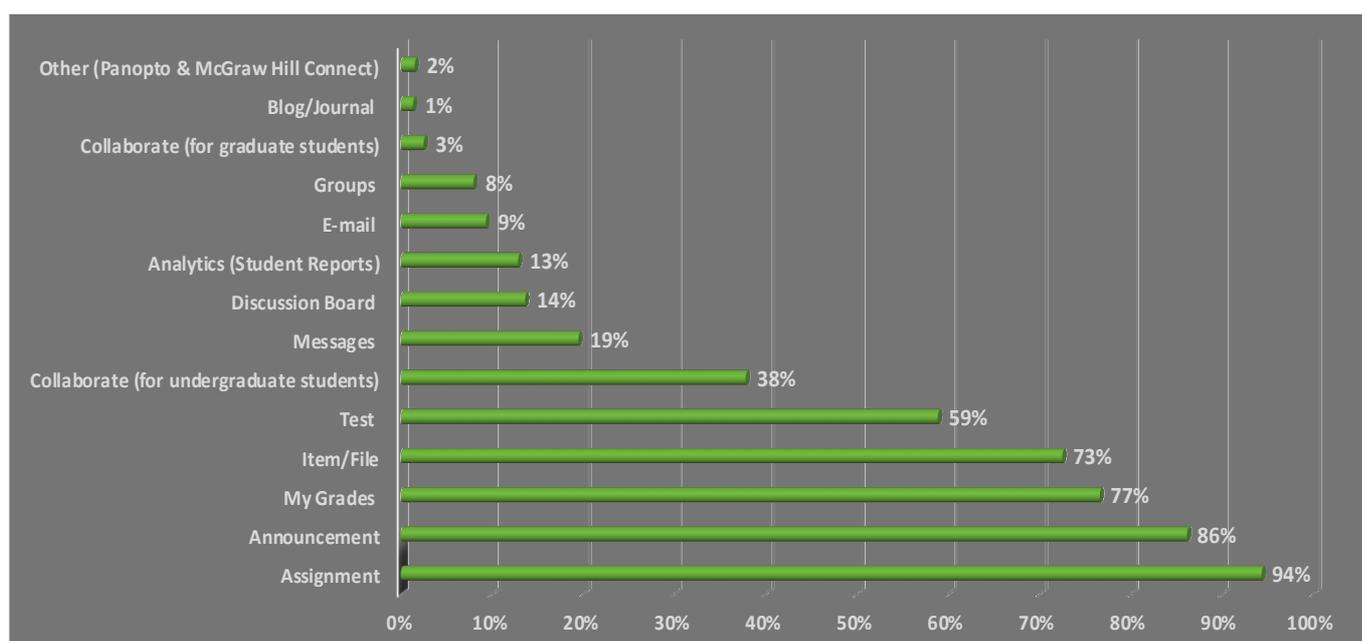
How often do you access the Blackboard Learn Analytics Student report?

Blackboard Learn provides students and instructors with analytics reports which are derived from student access to the course, number of interaction clicks, time spent in the course, and the number of submissions, and provide real-time information about student engagement and performance. According to the following graph, 6% of those who responded to the survey said they consistently access the report, while 20% said they access it occasionally, and 27% said rarely access it. 14% of the respondents never access the report and a considerable number of students, 33%, said they have no idea about this report.



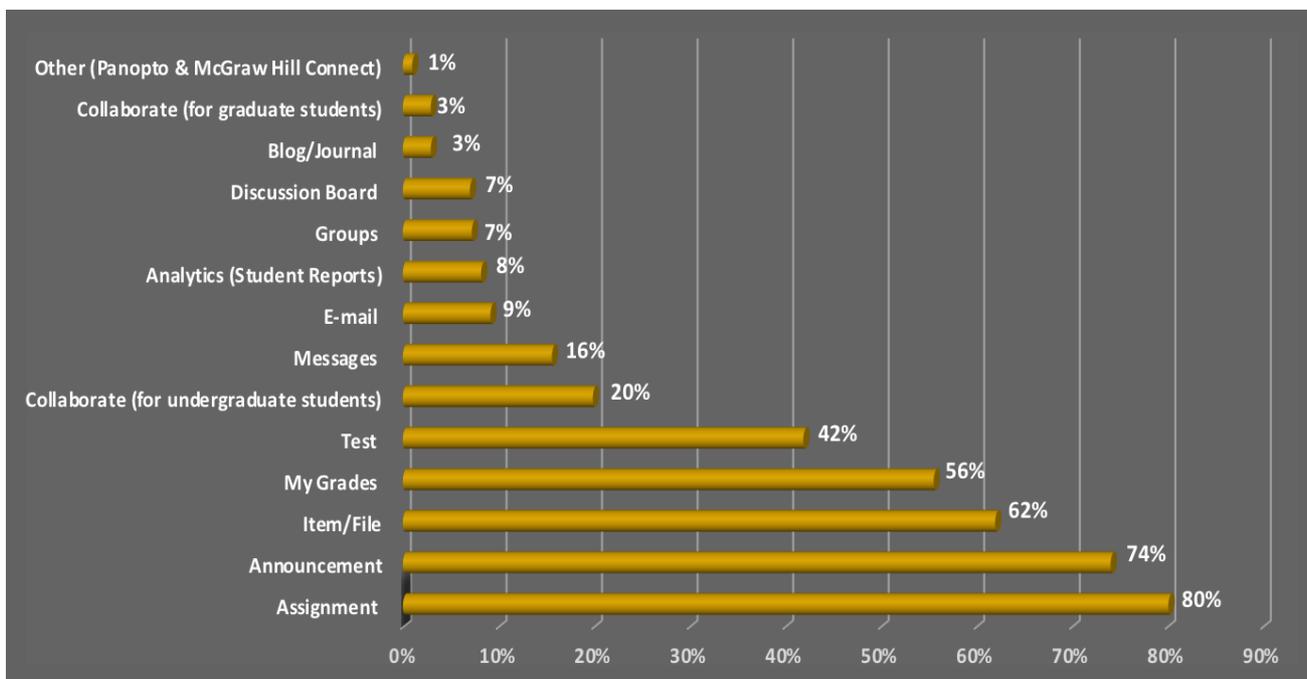
Which of the following Blackboard instructional tools do/did you use?

The survey aimed to find out the level of utilization of some of the most popular tools in Blackboard Learn among students. According to the graph below, Assignment is a very popular tool, with 94% of respondents saying they use it. A good number of students seem to keep track of instructors' messages through the Announcements feature of Blackboard Learn as 86% of respondents said they use the tool. To see their scores, 77% of respondents use the My Grades tool. To access course material, three quarters of respondents said they use Item/File. 59% have used the Test tool. Among the least frequently used tools are Discussion Board, Messages, Email, Groups, Collaborate, Blogs and Analytics reports. Also, 2% of the students selected "other" and mentioned the Panopto and McGrawHill additional tools that are integrated with Blackboard Learn.



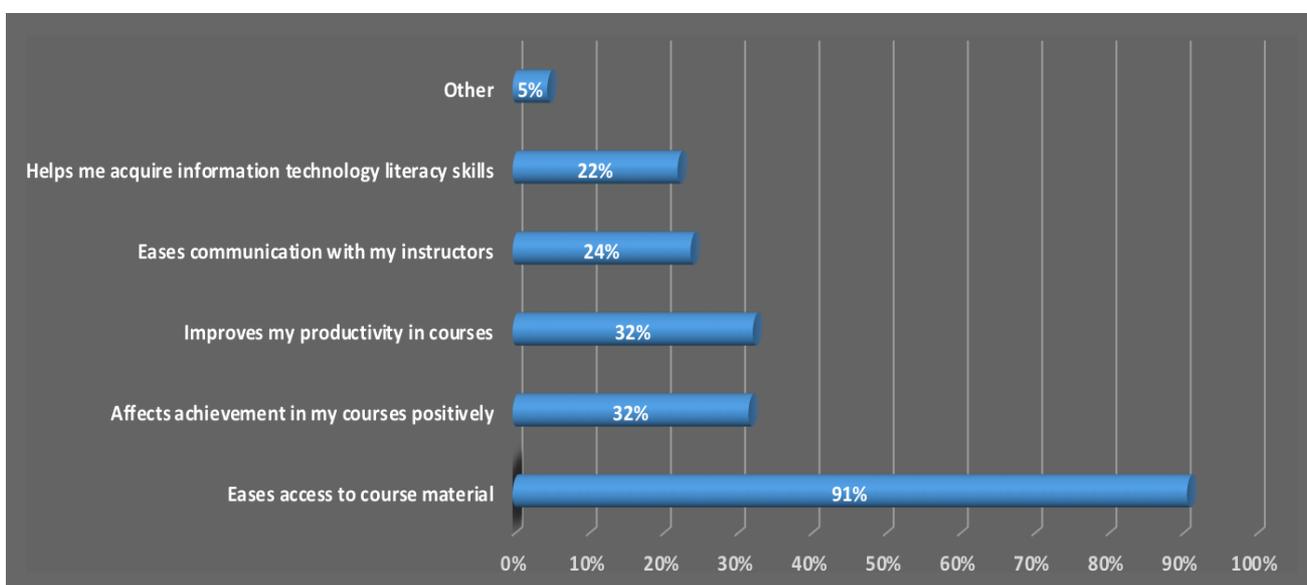
Which of the following Blackboard instructional tools do you prefer to use?

They survey aimed to get an insight into what features of Blackboard Learn students would be interested in using. It was found out that, with 80% of the votes, students would prefer to use the Assignments feature. With 74% of the votes, Announcement is a feature that respondents would prefer to use, while 62% chose Item/File, and 56% My Grades. 42% of respondents said they prefer to use the Test feature and 20% of the undergraduate students mentioned Collaborate as a tool they enjoy using. Among the least popular features are messages, email, Analytics student report, groups, discussion board and blog.



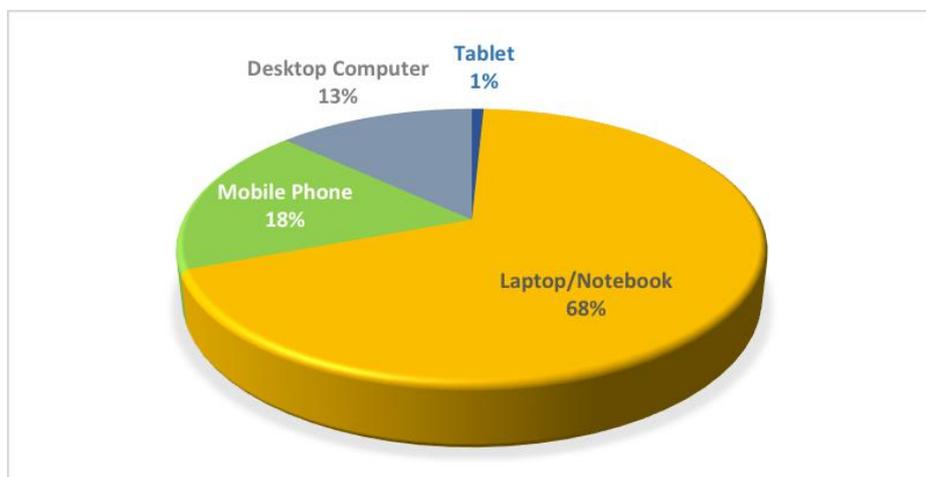
I think the Blackboard Learn contributes to my learning process because it ...

Another objective of the survey was to find out how students think Blackboard Learn contributes to their education. The respondents were allowed to select all that apply. A big majority of respondents, 91%, said the system eases the way they access course material. 32% believe the system positively affects achievement in their courses, and the same percentage of students believe the system improves their productivity. On the other hand, seven of the respondents commented that they do not think Blackboard contributes to their learning.



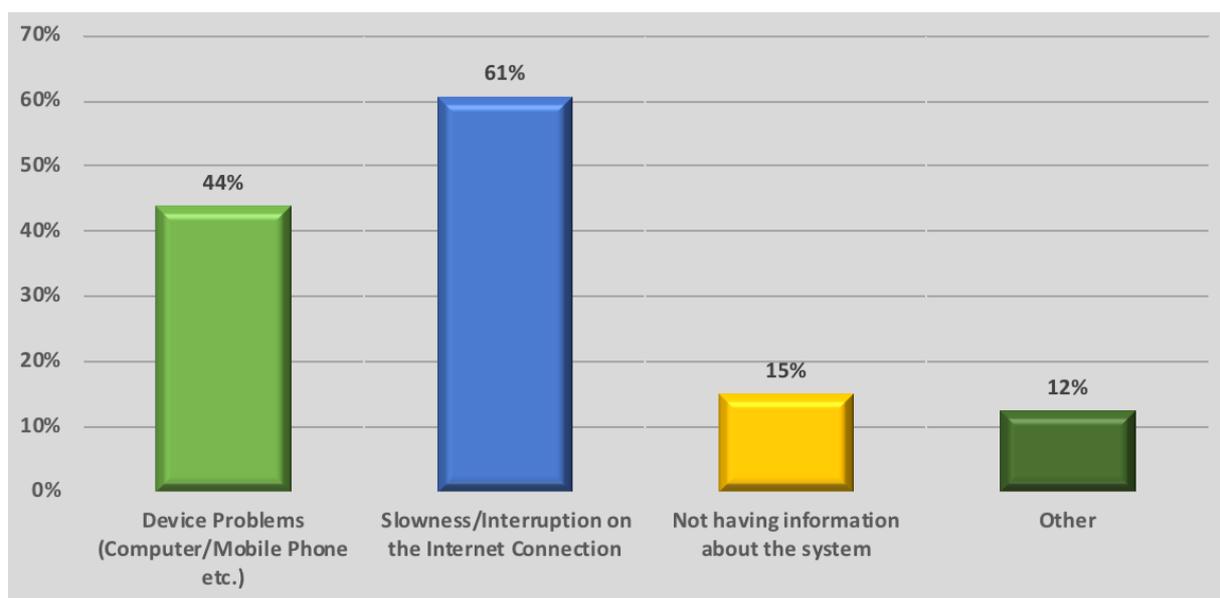
Which device do you use to access Blackboard Learn?

An interesting fact that the survey allowed us to find out was which device was used by students to access the Blackboard Learn system. As the figure below shows, the majority of the respondents said they used a laptop/notebook to access the system, while 18% said they used their mobile phones. As far as devices such as desktop computers and tablets are concerned, 13% and 1% of respondents said those are the devices they use to access the system, respectively.



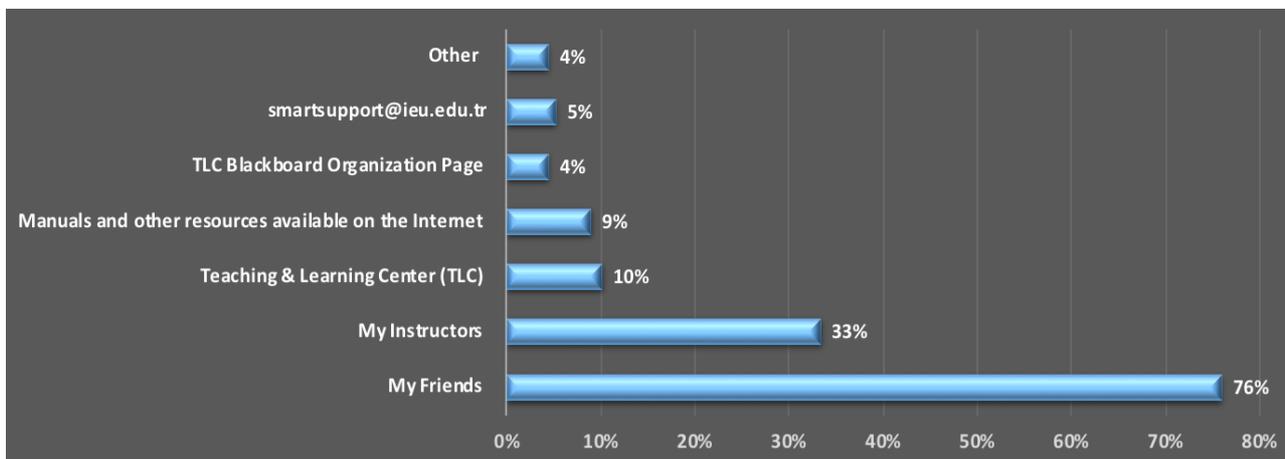
Which of the following affects your use of Blackboard Learn negatively?

We wanted to get a sense of the factors that may impact the use of Blackboard Learn on students in a negative way. To achieve this, four factors were presented to students in the survey: *Device Problems (Computer/Mobile Phone, etc.)*, *Slowness/Interruption on the Internet Connection*, *Not having information about the system*, and *Other*. They were allowed to select more than one option. According to the graph below, most of the votes went to Slowness/Interruption on the Internet with 61%, while 44% of the votes went to Device Problems. The additional comments are as follows: “I had difficulty uploading my assignments” (9 students), “The mobile app is not user-friendly” (9 students), “Some instructors do not use the system consistently/efficiently” (5 students). 14 of the students mentioned that they had notification issues or technical problems, whereas 7 students commented that they had no problems using the system.



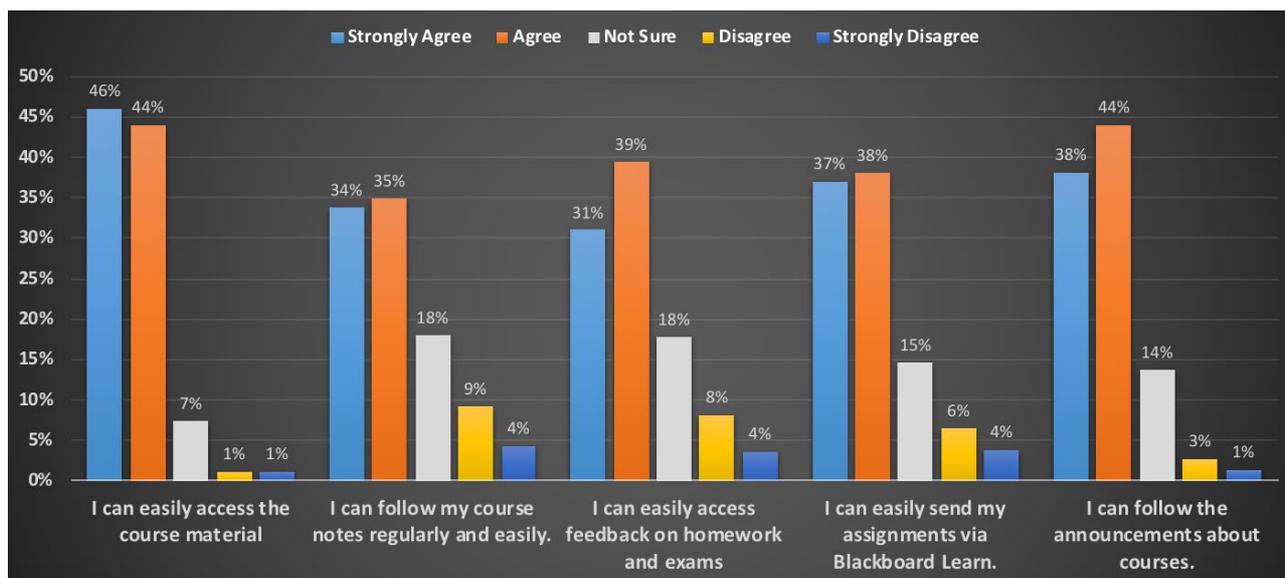
Where do you get help while using Blackboard?

To find out where students go to get help while using Blackboard Learn, respondents were presented with a list of options and were allowed to select more than one option. As the figure indicates, more than half of respondents get help from their friends, while 33% get help from instructors. In third place came the Teaching & Learning Center (TLC) with 10%. The respondents who selected the “other” option (17 students) stated that they do not need any help using the system.



State your level of satisfaction about the benefits that Blackboard Learn offers.

Respondents were presented with a list of benefits that Blackboard Learn offers and queried about their level of satisfaction with these benefits. They were allowed to select more than one option. Results show that, with a combined percentage of 90, students agree with Blackboard being an easy way to access course material. The survey also suggests that students are pleased with how they can follow announcements about courses. Another benefit that seems to satisfy students is the ability to follow course notes regularly and easily. When combined, 69% of respondents were satisfied with being able to follow course notes, 70% were satisfied with being able to easily access feedback and 75% were happy being able to easily submit assignments.



Common Themes from Open-Ended Questions

Out of 126 students who offered additional comments, 43 students expressed their satisfaction with the system. They emphasized the benefits that Blackboard provides in terms of easy access to course material, which helps them better prepare for exams. On the other hand, 3 of the respondents briefly expressed their dissatisfaction with the system.

17 of the respondents commented that they are generally happy with the system; however, not all instructors use the system as efficiently and/or regularly. As one student commented “The system can reach its fullest potential only if all instructors use it efficiently” Another said, *“I don’t think instructors know how to use it and how the system works.”*

19 students mentioned that having the Blackboard app is an additional benefit; however, they stated some difficulties and problems with the app and suggested that it should be improved.

29 students mentioned the problems they had while using the system. Among the problems mentioned are technical problems uploading assignments, not having Turkish language support, not receiving notifications, and dissatisfaction with the user interface.

Among those who expressed their views, 15 also mentioned the problems they had while viewing Panopto recordings.