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CREATING A POSITIVE COURSEWARE ADOPTION EXPERIENCE

Certain institutional, course-level, and faculty-level characteristics have a significant impact on the likelihood of a positive courseware adoption experience, while others have minimal effect. For the best chance of success, examine these factors as they present themselves at your institution.

TIME FOR CLASS TOOLKIT

QUESTIONS ADDRESSED

What are the institutional, course-level, and faculty-specific attributes that contribute to a positive courseware experience?



KEY INSIGHTS

Peer recommendations matter most in the courseware selection process, so understanding current users' likelihood to recommend courseware is an important consideration.


Institutions that require professional development for digital learning have a higher percentage of courseware promoters, underscoring the importance of professional development in achieving a positive adoption experience.

The way courseware is used impacts the likelihood that faculty will recommend it. Those faculty who employ courseware as core to their course tend to give it a higher Net Promoter Score than those who use it as a supplemental resource.

Faculty experience plays a role in driving a positive courseware experience.

The most experienced faculty – as measured by those with 20+ years of teaching experience – are most likely to recommend courseware.

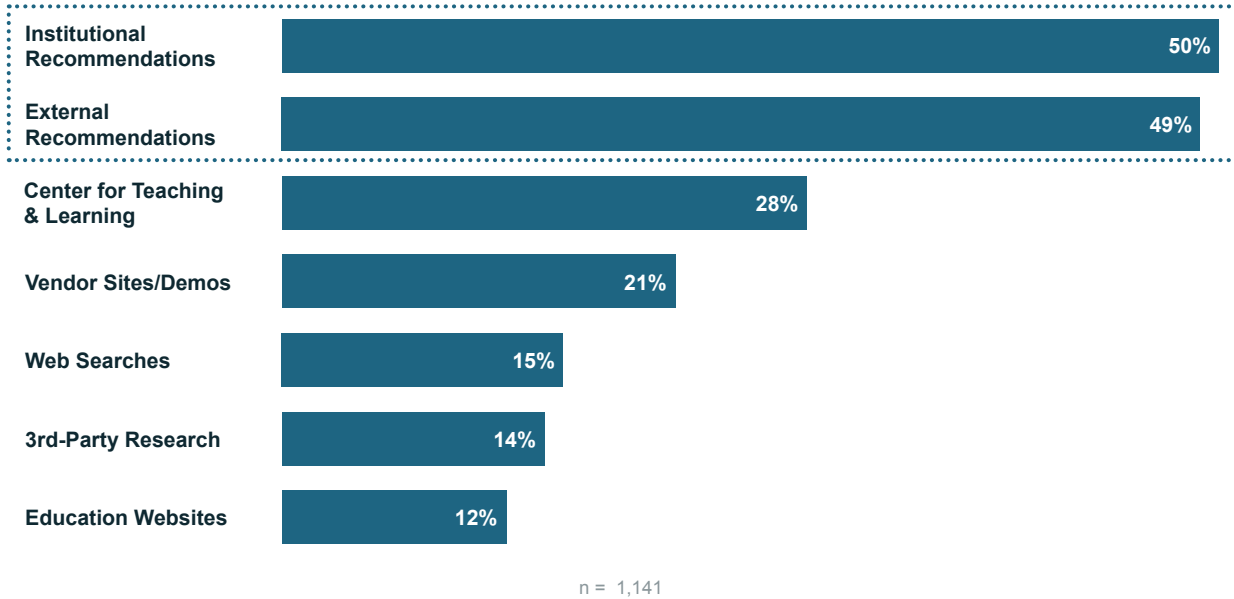
Differences in satisfaction with courseware are *not* driven by course modality, course level, or whether adoption is part of a course redesign.



Recommendations matter most in digital learning selection.

Although there are many digital learning information and product comparison resources available to inform courseware selection,¹ higher education administrators overwhelmingly rely on recommendations from professionals at their own institutions or others (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Factors Informing Courseware Selection²



Recognizing this preference for peer-endorsed resources, *Time for Class 2019* was structured to enable analysis of faculty recommendations across different tools. The following research uses faculty likelihood to recommend their primary³ courseware products on a scale of 1 to 10⁴ as a proxy for a positive adoption experience and satisfaction.



¹E.g., EdSurge Product Index, LearnPlatform product library ²Based on data from Time for Class 2016; the 2019 instrument did not include this question. ³Question: “Considering all the courses you use or have used courseware products in, for the following questions, please select the singular course with the largest enrollment. From the following list, please select the product you are using in this highest enrollment course.” ⁴Question: “How likely are you to recommend [this courseware product] to a colleague?” Respondents answering with scores of 9 or 10 (out of 10) were labeled as “Promoters” and those answering 1-6 were labeled as “Detractors.” Promoters – Detractors = Net Promoter Score (NPS).

KEY FACTORS INFLUENCE COURSEWARE ADOPTION SATISFACTION.

Like most resources in higher education, faculty-reported satisfaction with courseware products depends on the quality and coordination of specific factors across the institution, course, and faculty

Institution



- ✓ % Distance Students
- ✓ Training

Course



- ✓ Discipline

Faculty

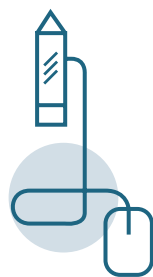


- ✓ Classroom Techniques

Courseware promoters are more likely to be found at institutions where students have relevant needs and faculty relevant training.

Faculty at high-distance institutions are slightly more likely to be courseware promoters than faculty at low-distance institutions.⁵ Given the greater degree of focus on digital learning, this finding aligns with expectations.

Engagement in relevant professional development has a stronger effect. At institutions that require faculty to participate in training on digital learning instructional practice, faculty are more likely to be promoters.⁶ This finding is reinforced by SRI's *Next Generation Courseware Challenge* (NGCC) study, which shows that training for instructors on how to integrate the courseware with their intended pedagogy is associated with more positive impacts for adaptive courseware implementation.⁷



16%

At institutions that require faculty to participate in training digital learning instructional practice, **faculty are 16% more likely to be promoters of their courseware product.**

⁵ Low-distance institutions are those where less than 25% of undergraduate students have taken at least one course online, based on 2018 IPEDS data. High-distance institutions are those where 25% or more of undergraduate students have taken at least one course online, based on 2018 IPEDS data. ⁶Question: "Does your institution require faculty to participate in professional development on their instructional practice for digital learning?" ⁷House, A., Means, B., Peters Hinton, V., Boyce, J., Wetzel, T., & Wang, S., Next Generation Courseware Challenge Evaluation (Menlo Park, CA: SRI International, 2018) https://www.sri.com/sites/default/files/publications/next_generation_courseware_challenge_evaluation_final_report_dec_2018.pdf

Adoption of courseware as part of a redesign brings benefits, but not necessarily more courseware promoters.

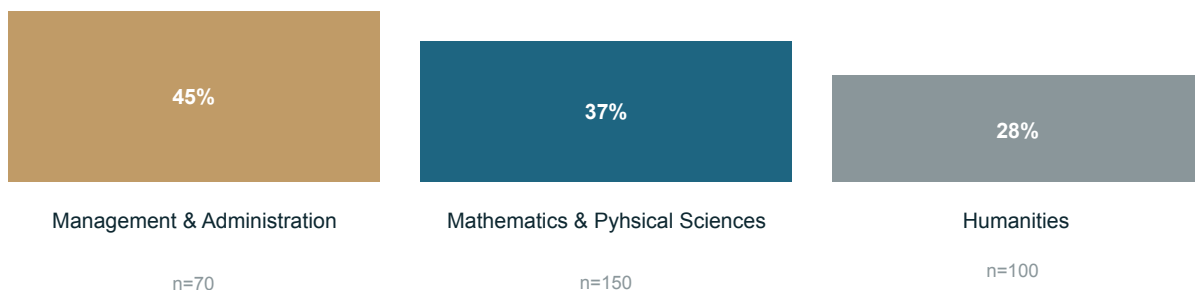
While 85% of courseware users are recent course redesigners, and while instances of courseware redesign certainly bring the potential to pair tool use with meaningful instructional change and added institutional support, the redesign process in isolation has little effect on courseware adoption satisfaction. Current faculty courseware users who have taken on a course redesign or substantial modification in the previous three years are no more likely than non-redesigners to identify as promoters. To learn more about the benefits of redesign, refer to *Time for Class Toolkit* brief *Adopting Courseware Through Course Redesign*.

Differences in satisfaction with courseware are not driven by course modality or level.

Satisfaction with courseware does not vary greatly based on course modality. Whether the class taught is face-to-face, in a blended setting, or fully online, faculty members are not significantly more or less likely to be courseware promoters. Across all modalities, 33% to 37% of users identified as courseware promoters.⁸ Similarly, there is little variation in the percentage of promoters across course levels, from developmental education (39%), across introductory and intermediate level courses, up to graduate level courses (41%).⁹

Although faculty report courseware use across a variety of academic disciplines, faculty in quantitative fields like management and administration, mathematics and physical science are slightly more likely to report that they are promoters of courseware than traditionally qualitative disciplines like the humanities (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Percent of Courseware Promoters by Discipline¹⁰



These findings reinforce those of the *NGCC* study, that implementations of courseware in biology, psychology, math, and statistics classes led to higher student course grades than those earned in other classes.

⁸Question: "Is [your primary courseware product] used in the following types of courses?" Answers: "Face-to-face" [and/or] "Blended/Hybrid" [and/or] "Fully Online" ⁹Question: "Is [your primary courseware product] used in the following types of courses?" Answers: "Undergraduate Level – Developmental Education (remedial education)" [and/or] "Undergraduate Level – Introductory Level Courses" [and/or] "Undergraduate Level – Upper Level Courses" [and/or] "Graduate Level Courses" ¹⁰Question: "What is your primary [academic] discipline?"

¹¹House, A., Means, B., Peters Hinton, V., Boyce, J., Wetzel, T., & Wang, S., Next Generation Courseware Challenge Evaluation (Menlo Park, CA: SRI International, 2018) https://www.sri.com/sites/default/files/publications/next_generation_courseware_challenge_evaluation_final_report_dec_2018.pdf

Courseware promoters are more common among experienced faculty.

Faculty with greater than 20 years of teaching experience are most likely to be courseware promoters and to have the highest NPS scores.¹² There are many reasons why this could be the case – including confidence in pedagogy and content, and understanding of student needs.

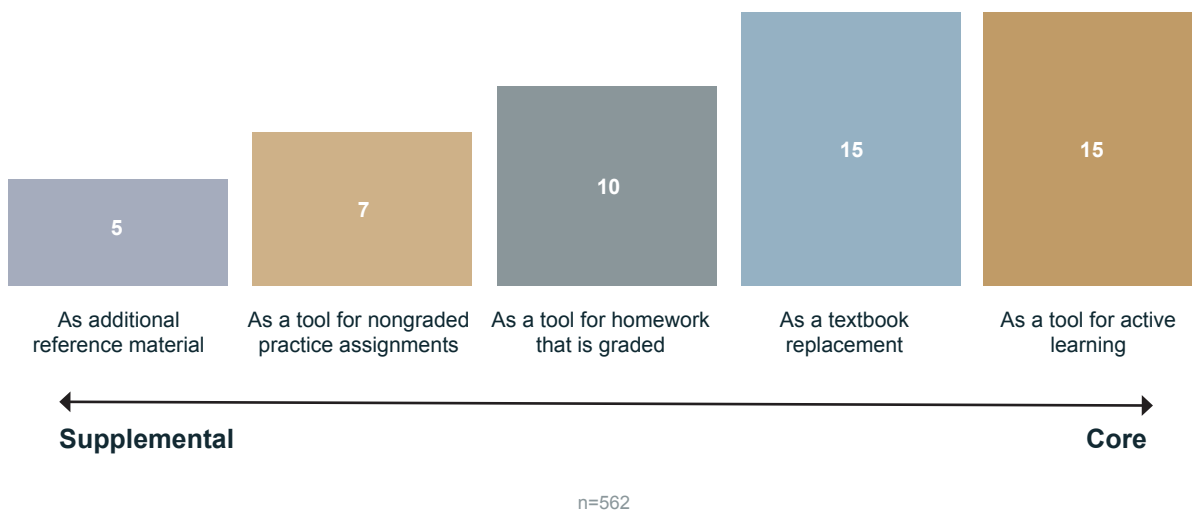
Faculty members’ involvement in the selection of courseware is not a key driver that determines satisfaction.

Faculty members who say that they have influence over courseware product decision-making are just as likely to be courseware promoters (34%) as those who do not cite influence.¹³

Faculty who use courseware as core course material and to drive active learning are more satisfied.

Though courseware can be leveraged in a variety of ways, faculty adopting the most transformational teaching practices have more positive views of courseware. Net Promoter Scores¹⁴ suggest that the more integrated courseware is into the learning experience, the more likely faculty are to recommend it as a resource (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Faculty Net Promoter Score by Use of Courseware

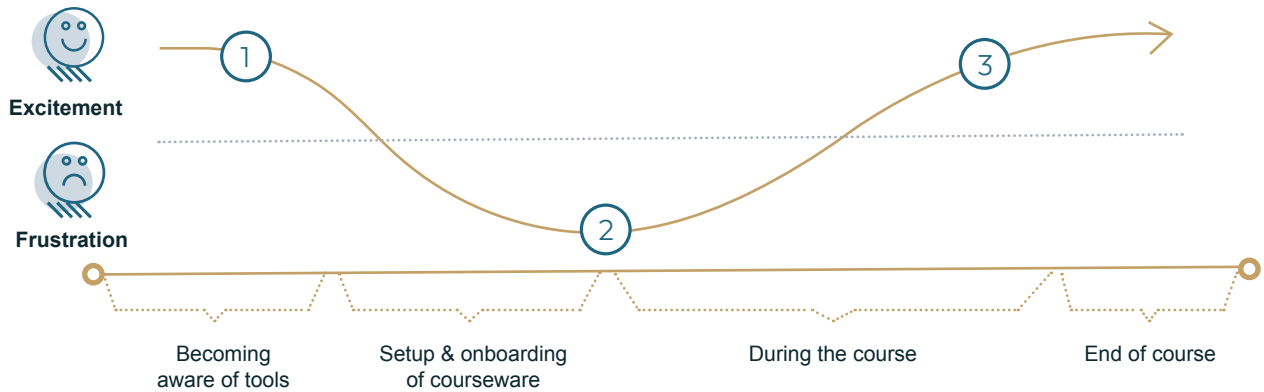


¹²Question: "Please indicate the number of years you have been teaching." ¹³ Question: "Who influences the selection of the following at your institution? Please select all that apply."¹⁴ Percentage of Promoters (scores of 9–10) minus percentage of Detractors (scores of 1–6)

TOOL FOR ACTION

Navigating the Courseware Implementation Journey¹⁶

The faculty and student experience along the courseware implementation journey has its ups and downs.



| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | <p>Instructor – Optimistic about potential of a new tool</p> <p>Student – Enthusiastic about an affordable and easily accessible resource</p> |
| 2 | <p>Instructor – Concerned about how much work is required, how it fits into lesson plans, and how to provide technical support to students</p> <p>Student – Worried about grades, and discouraged by unclear expectations</p> |
| 3 | <p>Instructor and Student – Becoming more comfortable with the tool and starting to see the value it offers</p> |

There are key actions that administrators and faculty can take to increase the chances of courseware implementation success.

- ✓ Consider the intensity of redesign relative to the goals of adopting courseware. Review the *Adopting Courseware through Course Redesign* action brief if exploring adoption in this context.
- ✓ Courseware promoters can be drawn from a range of experience levels; consider approaching experienced faculty to rally support.
- ✓ Explore trialing courseware across levels and modalities:
 - Identify faculty members who plan on using courseware as a core tool.
 - Propose adoption in quantitative disciplines that align to courseware capabilities.
- ✓ Ensure faculty have access to digital-specific professional development opportunities.

Consider using Intentional Futures' *Key Design Lessons Workbook* for developing effective courseware as a tool to build courseware support, assess current and future products, and assist implementation success. Based on student and instructor interviews, user experience design principles, learning science, and instructional design best practices, these worksheets and activities can be an aid to developing effective courseware within an institution.

¹⁶Intentional Futures, *Designing Effective Courseware: 10 Lessons Learned for Mapping the Experiences of Instructors and Students* (Seattle, WA: Intentional Futures, 2017.) https://intentionalfutures.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/designing_effective_courseware_workbook.pdf

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

For more information, visit [Every Learner Everywhere Resources](#) or the [Tyton Partners Library](#).

⁶ Adapted from "Digital Promise EdTech Pilot Framework" for a higher education context. "Edtech Pilot Framework," Digital Promise, [Webpage]. <https://edtech.digitalpromise.org>

ABOUT

Time for Class is a comprehensive longitudinal survey of 4,000+ higher education faculty and administrators, fielded since 2014 by [Tyton Partners](#) and the [Babson Survey Research Group](#) and underwritten by the [Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation](#). Results inform a comprehensive fact base focused particularly on the postsecondary digital courseware landscape, in the service of making this diverse and complex market easier to navigate for institutions and education professionals.



Tyton Partners is the leading provider of investment banking and strategy consulting services to the education sector and leverages its deep transactional and advisory experience to support a range of clients, including companies, foundations, institutions, and investors.

For more information, visit www.tytonpartners.com.



The Babson Survey Research Group is a survey design, implementation, and analysis organization. Founded in 2005, the organization has worked on a number of large surveys including an annual survey of online education that includes all colleges and universities in the United States.

For more information, visit www.onlinelearningsurvey.com.



Every Learner Everywhere is a network of 12 partner organizations focused on providing a comprehensive, coordinated approach to help colleges and universities take advantage of the rapidly evolving digital learning landscape.

For more information, visit www.everylearnereverywhere.com.

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We also would like to thank the 4,000+ survey respondents across 1,300+ institutions for their input and their daily work to advance the field's knowledge of digital tools and courseware in higher education.

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