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Online SINQs and Capstones - Fall 2011 to Spring 2014

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This report follows previous research that compared students in online and face to face SINQs in Fall 2010 and Fall 2011 (see http://www.pdx.edu/unst/sites/www.pdx.edu.unst/files/13%20ONLINE%20SINQ%20PROFILE.pdf). Since then, there has been an investment in offering more SINQ and Capstone classes online. This report takes a more comprehensive look at online students enrolled in both SINQ and Capstone courses over three full academic years: 2011-2012; 2012-2013; and 2013-14. The goal of this report is to examine student experience and outcomes in online classes. Data is from Portland State University's data warehouse and SINQ and Capstone end-of-term course evaluation responses. This research is supported by the Provost Challenge (details at http://www.pdx.edu/oai/provosts-challenge-projects-63).

Overall, the percent of online SINQs and Capstones showed a pattern of growth from Fall 2011 to Spring 2014.
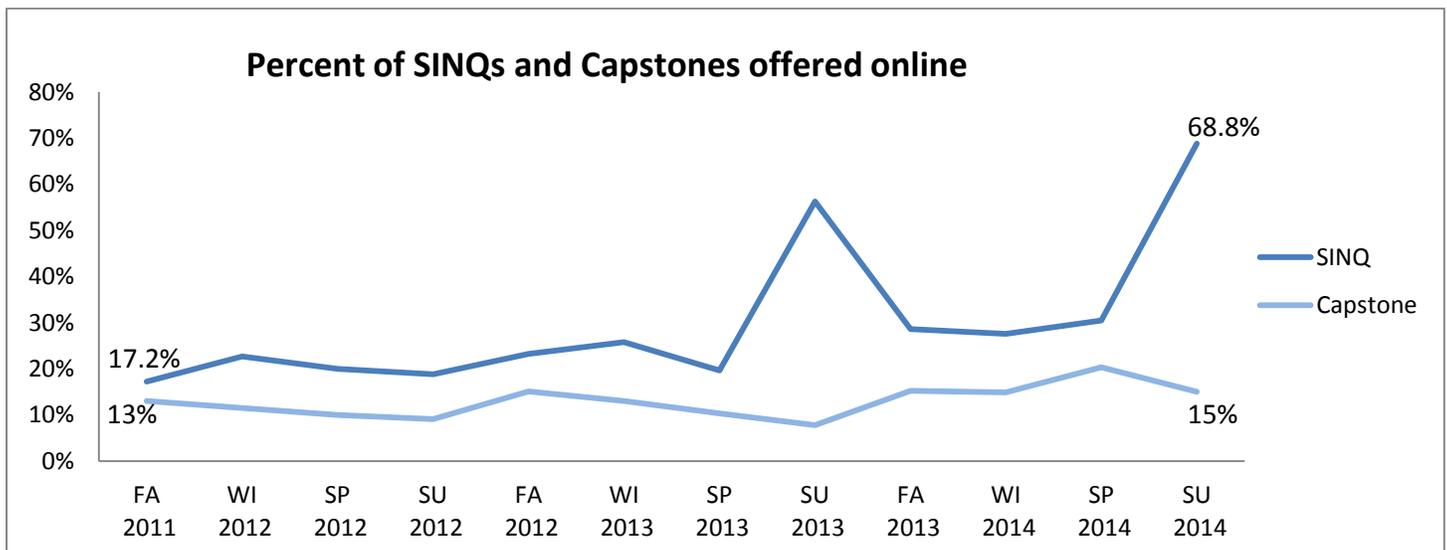
SINQs

From Fall 2011 to Spring 2014 (12 terms) 585 SINQs were offered. Of these, 434 were face to face and 151 were online.

Overall, the number of face to face SINQs slightly decreased and the number of online SINQs slightly increased over the three academic years, as seen in the following figure.
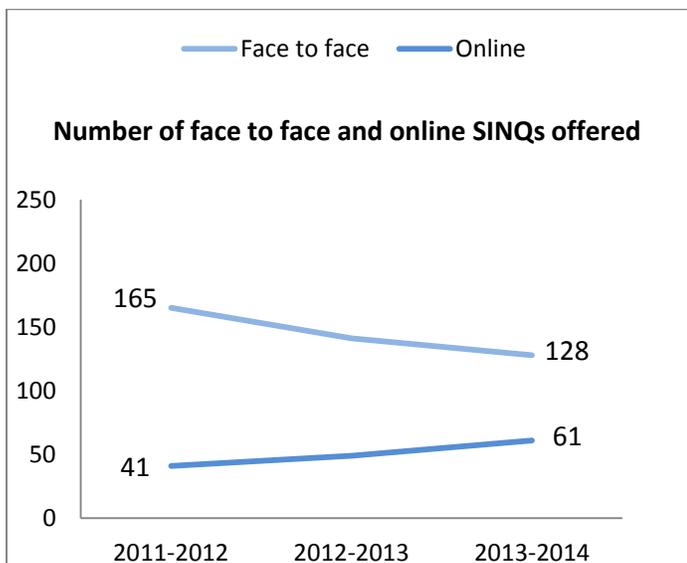
Capstones

From Fall 2011 to Spring 2014 (12 terms) 720 Capstones were offered. Of these, 628 were face to face and 92 were online.

Overall, there has been a pattern of slight increase in online Capstones and a slight decrease in face to face Capstones over the three academic years, as seen in the following figure.
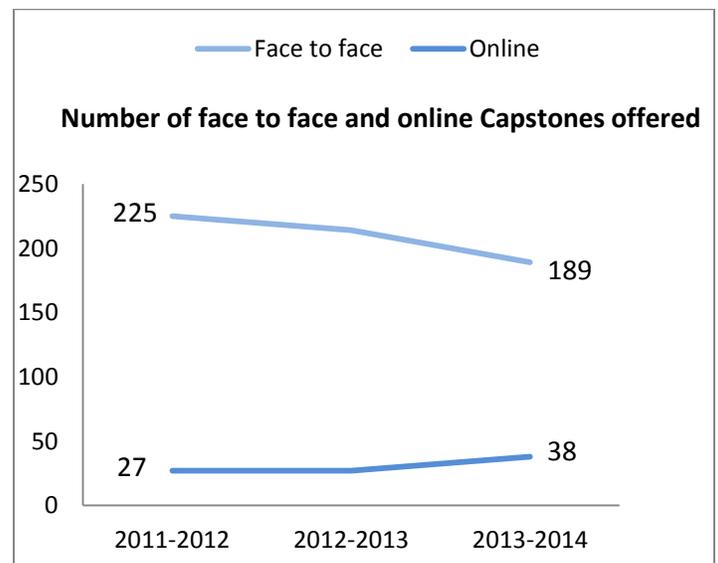
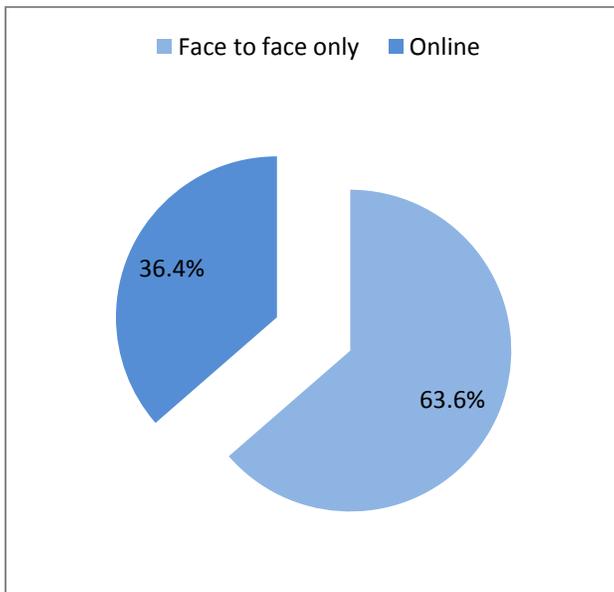# SINQ Online Student Profile
Fall 2011 to Spring 2014

From Fall 2011 to Spring 2014, 8697 students took at least one SINQ. The profile below compares the demographics of students taking at least one online SINQ class (n=3162) to all SINQ students (N=8697).

As shown in the following figure, out of 8697 students enrolled in a SINQ class from Fall 2011 to Spring 2014 (12 terms), 36.4% (3162) took at least one online SINQ, and 63.6% (5535) took only face to face SINQs.

Online SINQ Student Profile

Gender: 57.6% of online SINQ students identified as female, 41.6% as male, and 0.8% as unknown or other genders.

Ethnicity: 6.6% identified as International, 10% as Hispanic/Latino, 5.7% as Multiple Race/Ethnicity, 0.9% as American Indian or Alaskan Native, 7.8% as Asian, 3.8% as Black or African American, 0.8 % as Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, 60.9% as White, and 3.6% of students did not respond.

Residency Status: 84.1% were Oregon residents.

Age: 27% were 19 years or younger, 45.3% were between 20 and 24, 13.3% were between 25 and 29, and 14.4% were 30 years or older.

Class level: 3.4% Freshman, 47.4% Sophomore, 32.2% Junior, 17% Senior, (0.1% Non-Admitted, 0.1% Post-Bac).

Transfer: 53.2% transferred from another institution

Online and face to face SINQ student comparison

Gender: Among online SINQ students, male students were underrepresented and female students were overrepresented.*

Ethnicity: International students, Hispanic/Latino students, and African American students were underrepresented among online SINQ students, while Multiple Race/Ethnicity students, Asian students and White students were overrepresented.*

Residency Status: Oregon residents were overrepresented among online SINQ students.*

Age: Among online SINQ students, students under 25 were underrepresented, and students 30 and over were overrepresented.*

Class level: Freshmen were underrepresented and Seniors were overrepresented among online SINQ students.*

*difference between groups is significant at the .05 level (p<0.05).

Capstone Online Student Profile
Fall 2011 to Spring 2014

From Fall 2011 to Spring 2014, 9724 students took at least one Capstone class. The profile below compares the demographics of students taking at least one online Capstone (n=1488) to all Capstone students (N=9724).

As shown in the following figure, out of 9724 students enrolled in a Capstone class from Fall 2011 to Spring 2014 (12 terms), 15.3% (1488) took at least one online Capstone, and 84.7% (8236) took only face-to-face Capstones.
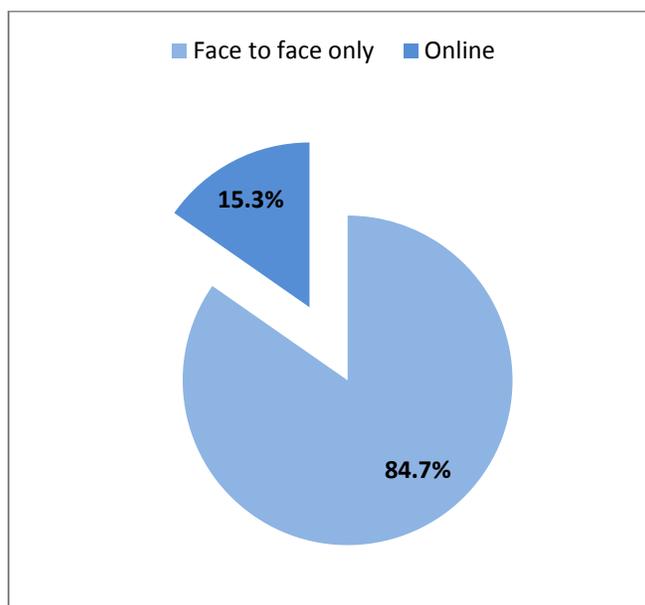
Online Capstone Student Profile

Gender: 63.6% of online Capstone students identified as female, 36% as male, and 0.7% as unknown or other genders.

Ethnicity: 2.8% identified as International, 8.3% as Hispanic/Latino, 5.2% as Multiple Race/Ethnicity, 1.4% as American Indian or Alaskan Native, 4.8% as Asian, 3.4% as Black or African American, 0.8% as Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, 71% as White, and 2.3% of students did not respond.

Residency Status: 79% were Oregon residents.

Age: 0.4% were 19 years or younger, 30.8% were between 20 and 24, 27.9% were between 25 and 29, and 40.9% were 30 years or older.

Class level: 0% Freshman, 0% Sophomore, 3.9% Junior, 95.8% Senior, (0.1% Non-Admitted, 0.1% Post-Bac, 0.1% Graduate).

Transfer: 84.2% were transfer students.

Online and face to face Capstone student comparison

Gender: Among online Capstone students, male students were underrepresented and female students were overrepresented**

Ethnicity: International students and White students were overrepresented among online Capstone students, while Asian students were underrepresented.*

Residency Status: Oregon residents were underrepresented among online Capstone students.*

Age: Among online Capstone students, 20 to 24 year olds were underrepresented, while 25 to 29 year olds and students 30 and over were overrepresented.*

Class level: Juniors were underrepresented and Seniors were overrepresented among online Capstone students.**

Transfer: Among online Capstone students, transfer students were underrepresented.*

*difference between groups is significant at the .05 level (p<0.05).

**difference between groups is significant at the .1 level (p<0.1).

DFWXI rates for SINQ

Fall 2011 to Spring 2014

434 face to face courses

151 online courses

Beyond questions of which students enroll in online courses, we wanted to investigate student performance in those courses. One way to do that is to compare the grade distributions in online and face-to-face courses. Using data from Portland State University's data warehouse, we looked at student grades in 434 face to face SINQs and 151 online SINQs from Fall 2011 to Spring 2014.

The figure and chart below show the percent of Ds, Fs, Ws, Xs, and Is in face to face classes and online classes. The combined DFWXI rate for face to face classes was 10.2%, while the combined DFWXI rate for online classes was 22.5%.

Percent of DFWXI grades in face to face and online SINQs
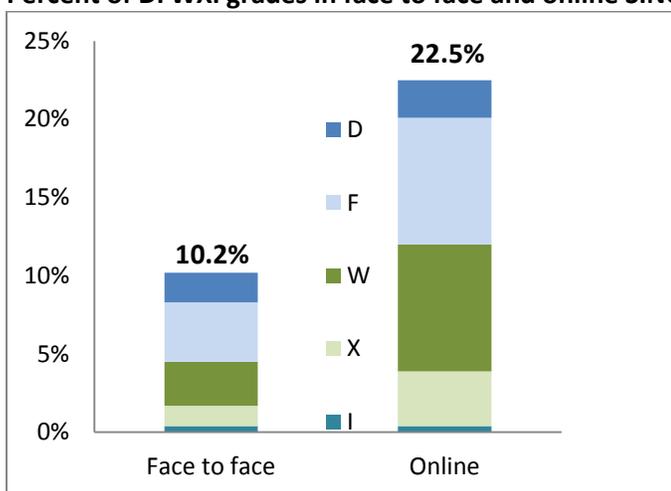
	Face to face	Online
D	1.9%	2.4%
F*	3.8%	8.1%
W*	2.8%	8.1%
X*	1.3%	3.5%
I	0.4%	0.4%

*Difference between face to face and online classes is significant at the 0.05 level (p<0.05).

Another way to look at DFWXI rates is to look at how many classes have high DFWXI rates. In this report, a high DFWXI rate is when over 20% of the students, or 1/5 of the class, receive a D, F, W, X or I. For sophomore inquiry courses with enrollments of 36 students, 20% is approximately 8 students. A higher percent of online courses (58.3%) than face to face courses (12.7%) had a high combined DFWXI rate.

High DFWXI courses by mode

DFWXI rates for Capstone

Fall 2011 to Spring 2014

628 face to face courses

92 online courses

Using data from Portland State University's data warehouse, we also looked at student grades in 628 face to face Capstones and 92 online Capstones from Fall 2011 to Spring 2014.

The figure and chart below show the percent of Ds, Fs, Ws, Xs, and Is in face to face classes and online classes. The combined DFWXI rate for face to face classes was 2.8%, while the combined DFWXI rate for online classes was 5.9%.
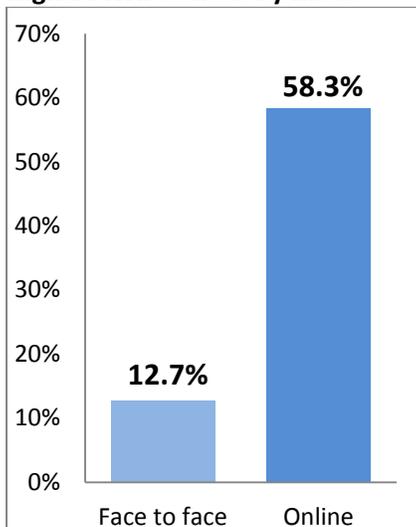
Percent of DFWXI grades in face to face and online Capstones
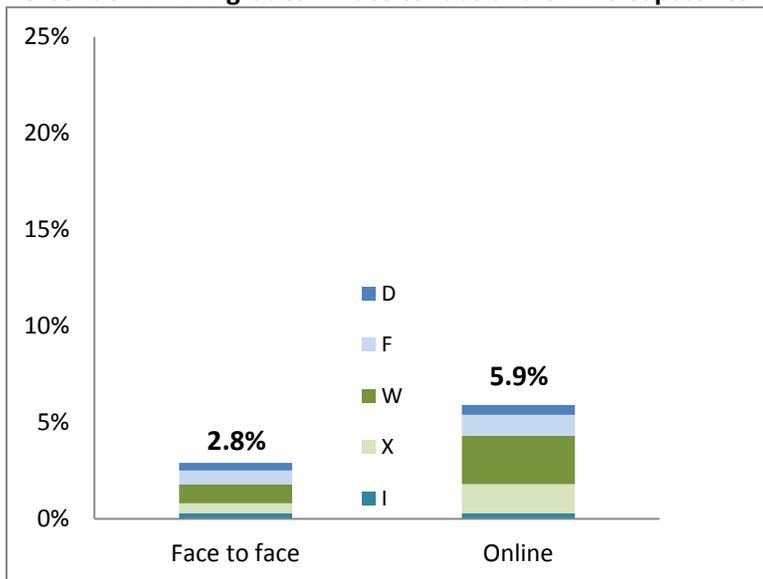
	Face to face	Online
D	0.4%	0.5%
F	0.7%	1.1%
W*	1%	2.5%
X*	0.5%	1.5%
I	0.3%	0.3%

*Difference between face to face and online classes is significant at the 0.05 level ($p<0.05$).

Another way to look at DFWXI rates is to look at how many classes have high DFWXI rates. In this report, a high DFWXI rate is when over 20% of the students, or 1/5 of the class, receive a D, F, W, X or I. For Capstone courses with enrollments of 16 students, 20% is approximately 3 or 4 students. A higher percent of online courses (7.6%) than face to face courses (2.4%) had a high combined DFWXI rate, as shown in the figure below.

High DFWXI courses by mode
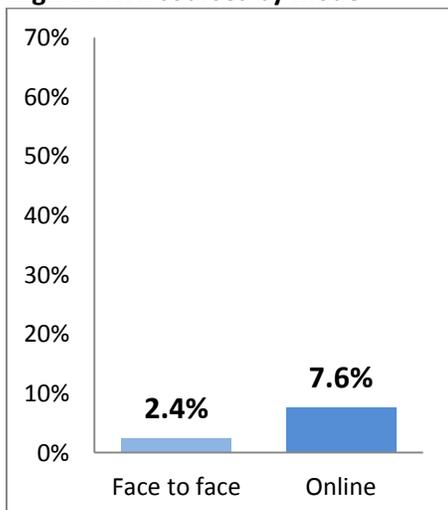
SINQ Course Evaluations

Fall 2011 to Spring 2014
N = 8848

This report provides response data from University Studies Sophomore Inquiry end of term course evaluations from Fall 2011 to Spring 2014. Of 18 questions, there were nine in which online students had responses that were significantly different than the responses of face to face students. Those questions are displayed below. For text of the full 18 questions, see http://www.pdx.edu/sites/www.pdx.edu.unst/files/UNST_Survey_EndTerm.pdf. For a summary of SINQ course evaluation reports, see http://www.pdx.edu/unst/sophomore-inquiry-assessment-and-research.

Regarding questions about the course in general, students in face to face classes reported their overall satisfaction as higher than they did in online courses. In addition, in face to face class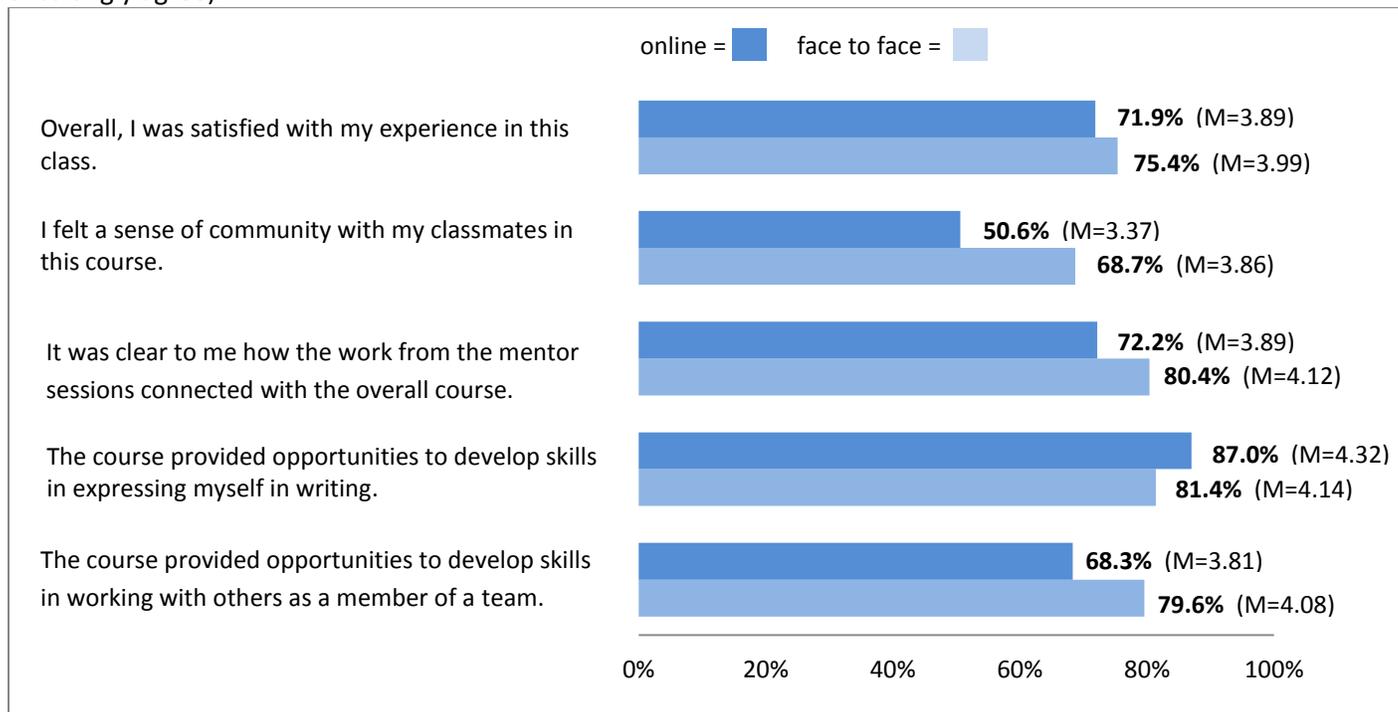es, students reported more of a sense of community and more opportunities to work as a team than they did in online classes. This may not be surprising, since building community and working as a team are generally easier in face-to-face environments than in online environments.

Students in online classes reported opportunities to develop writing skills at a higher rate than those in face to face classes. In addition, students in online classes reported greater clarity in seeing how the work from the mentor session connected with the overall course than did students in face to face classes.

When asked about their course, the percentages of students who agreed or strongly agreed with the following statements are displayed below. (In parentheses, mean response: 1=strongly disagree; 2=disagree; 3=neutral; 4=agree; 5=strongly agree).

online = ▇   face to face = ▇

Overall, I was satisfied with my experience in this class.
- 71.9% (M=3.89)
- 75.4% (M=3.99)

I felt a sense of community with my classmates in this course.
- 50.6% (M=3.37)
- 68.7% (M=3.86)

It was clear to me how the work from the mentor sessions connected with the overall course.
- 72.2% (M=3.89)
- 80.4% (M=4.12)

The course provided opportunities to develop skills in expressing myself in writing.
- 87.0% (M=4.32)
- 81.4% (M=4.14)

The course provided opportunities to develop skills in working with others as a member of a team.
- 68.3% (M=3.81)
- 79.6% (M=4.08)

0%   20%   40%   60%   80%   100%

Regarding questions about their faculty members, students in online classes agreed or strongly agreed at a higher rate than students in face to face classes that faculty members clearly stated grading criteria and learning objects, provided timely and helpful feedback, and scheduled coursework in ways which encouraged students to stay up to date in their work.

When asked about their faculty member, the percentages of students who agreed or strongly agreed with the following statements are displayed below. (In parentheses, mean response: 1=strongly disagree; 2=disagree; 3=neutral; 4=agree; 5=strongly agree).

online = ▉   face to face = ▉

Clearly stated the criteria for grading.
82.7% (M=4.20)
75.7% (M=4.00)

Clearly stated learning objectives for the overall course.
83.8% (M=4.21)
79.1% (M=4.08)

Provided timely and helpful feedback on tests; reports; projects; etc. to help students improve.
80.2% (M=4.15)
74.0% (M=3.97)

Scheduled course work (class activities; tests; projects) in ways which encouraged students to stay up to date in their work.
84.4% (M=4.20)
78.8% (M=4.07)

0%   20%   40%   60%   80%   100%
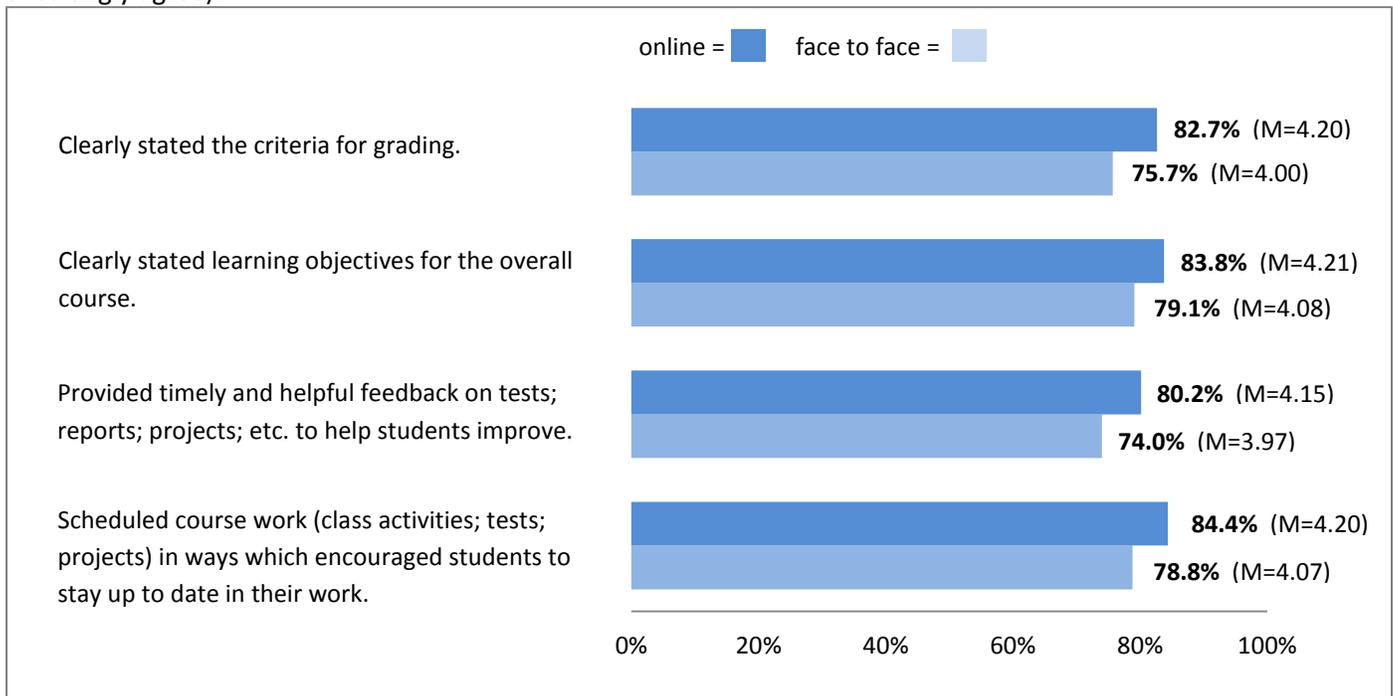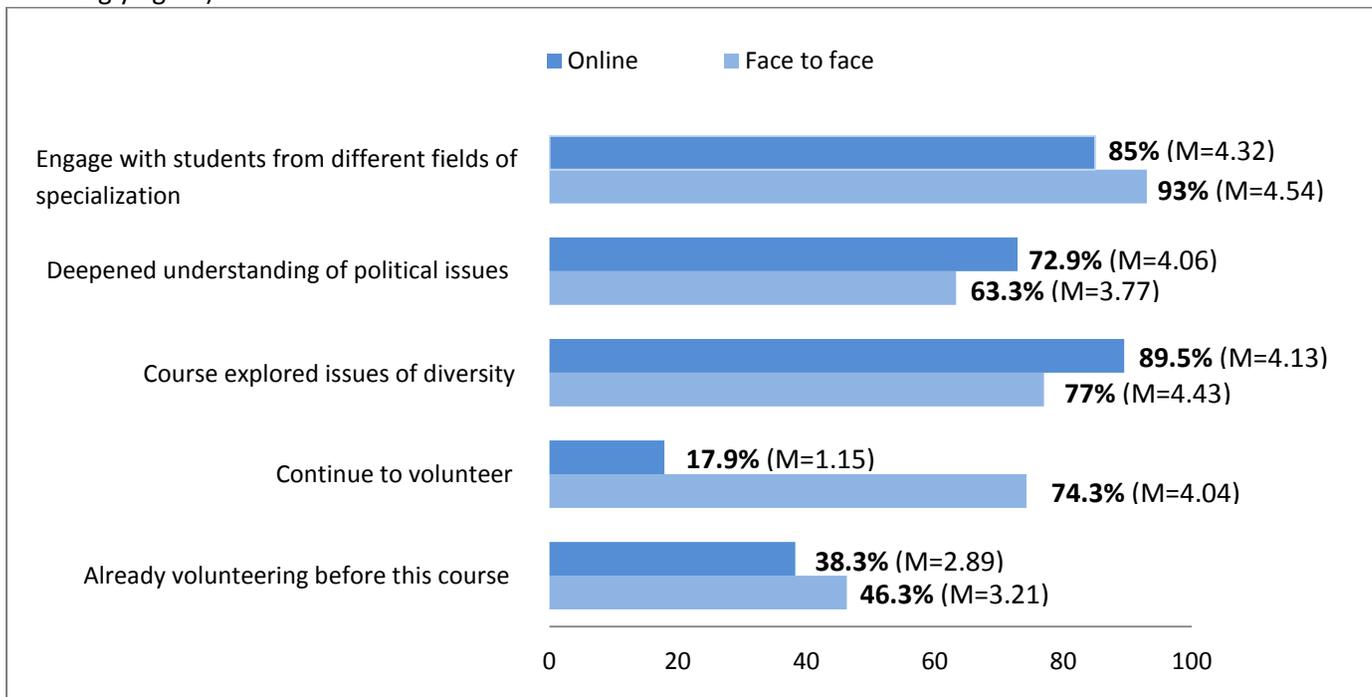
Capstone Course Evaluations

Fall 2011 to Spring 2014
N = 7616

This report provides response data from University Studies Capstone end of term course evaluations . Of 23 questions, there were five in which online students had responses that were significantly different than the responses of face to face students. Those questions are displayed below. For text to the full 23 questions, see http://www.pdx.edu/sites/www.pdx.edu.unst/files/UNST_Survey_Capstone.pdf. For a summary of Capstone course evaluation reports, see http://www.pdx.edu/unst/capstone-assessment-and-research.

More face to face students than online students said that they had a chance to engage with students from different fields of specialization, possibly because it is easier to engage with other students in a face to face class as opposed to an online class. On the other hand, more online students than face to face students said that their course deepened understanding of political issues and explored issues of diversity. Finally, regarding volunteering, more face to face students than online students said that they were volunteering before the course, and far more face to face students than online students said they would continue to volunteer.

When asked about their course, the percentages of students who agreed or strongly agreed with the following statements are displayed below. (In parentheses, mean response: 1=strongly disagree; 2=disagree; 3=neutral; 4=agree; 5=strongly agree).

SINQ Course Evaluations – Mentor Questions
Fall 2011 to Spring 2014
N = 8848

This report provides response data from University Studies Sophomore Inquiry end of term course evaluations. There were seven questions about SINQ mentors. For all seven questions, the responses of online students were significantly different from the responses of face to face students. For text to the full survey, see http://www.pdx.edu/sites/www.pdx.edu.unst/files/UNST_Survey_EndTerm.pdf. For a summary of SINQ course evaluation reports, see http://www.pdx.edu/unst/sophomore-inquiry-assessment-and-research.

The results were higher across the board for face to face students. For all questions, more face to face students than online students agreed or strongly agreed with the statements about their mentor. More face to face students agreed or strongly agreed that mentors: displayed a personal interest in their learning; provided opportunities to help students complete their assignments successfully; clearly presented the learning objectives for the mentor session; created an atmosphere that encouraged active student participation; clearly stated expectations of students in mentor sessions; used activities and assignments that allowed students to feel personally engaged in their learning; and helped students to understand the resources available at PSU. These results are not surprising, because the nature of mentor sessions is notably different in online classes than in face to face classes, and due to this difference, online mentors face additional challenges in connecting and communicating with students.

When asked about their course, the percentages of students who agreed or strongly agreed with the following statements about their SINQ mentor are displayed below. (In parentheses, mean response: 1=strongly disagree; 2=disagree; 3=neutral; 4=agree; 5=strongly agree).

Statement	Online	Face to face
Displayed a personal interest in my learning.	69.4% (M=3.90)	87.7% (M=4.41)
Provided opportunities to help me complete my assignments successfully.	72.8% (M=3.97)	87.3% (M=4.41)
Clearly presented the learning objectives for the mentor sessions.	70.9% (M=3.92)	86.1% (M=4.35)
Created an atmosphere that encouraged active student participation.	72.7% (M=3.96)	89.6% (M=4.47)
Clearly stated expectations of students in mentor sessions.	74.0% (M=3.94)	87.3% (M=4.38)
Used activities and assignments that allowed me to feel personally engaged in my learning.	65.4% (M=3.84)	82.9% (M=4.28)
Helped me to understand the resources available to me at PSU.	64.8% (M=3.78)	81.2% (M=4.29)