The NODE project
The Networking Online to Diversify Engagement (NODE) Project was initially funded in 2006 by the Registrar’s Initiative fund. The project consisted of two key elements: ‘node.live’; an online social network for UWA students (www.node.uwa.edu.au) and the annual student ICT survey which started in 2006-07. The project was initiated by Dr. Lisa Cluett and Dr Judy Skene of Student Services and has been continued as part of the CLTPF-funded Online Student Journey Project since 2008.

The node.live online community was developed using Drupal in collaboration with the UWA WebOffice and allowed UWA users (staff and enrolled students) to write a blog, host a wiki and contribute to discussion boards. In mid-2009 the in-house node.live community became unsustainable in the face of popular social networks and was therefore relocated to Facebook at www.facebook.com/UWAstudents.

The survey has been run annually since the NODE project began with the 4th iteration open during the summer of 2009-10. The cohort consists of first year undergraduate students that have completed at least half the credit points required to pass their First Year. Results of the 2006-07 survey are available in a full report. Since 2009, survey findings have been published in a condensed format called the ‘TechNODE bulletins’.

Evolution of the survey
The original (2006-07) survey established 3 areas of interest: First Year UWA students’:
- access to;
- experience with, and
- expectations of ICT
This first survey contained 37 questions and has been written up in the report available here.

The 2007-08 and 2008-09 surveys included an added focus on ICT and student learning following input from CATL and the University library. Facebook was added as a new tool.

The 2009-10 survey added questions about Facebook groups, Twitter, Google Wave, Google apps and virtual worlds. A series of questions about SISO and the computing facilities provided on campus were also added following input from ITS and the UWA staff Web 2.0 Community Group. Some questions on printing, email accounts and web browsing were removed to streamline the survey instrument.

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The work of the NODE project has been conducted within the context of similar work occurring in Australia and overseas including:

Curtin University

Joint information services committee (UK)
- JISC (2007a) Student Expectations Study: Key findings from online research and discussion evenings held in June 2007 for the Joint Information Systems Committee.

University of Melbourne

Educause Centre for Applied Research (US)

ALTC
- University of Melbourne, Wollongong and Charles Sturt’s Educating the net generation: Implications for learning and teaching in Australian universities.

Use of the term ‘staff.node’ commenced in mid 2009 with the introduction of the forum site for UWA staff (at http://staff.node.uwa.edu.au/). Shared use of the NODE acronym reflects our partnership with the UWA WebOffice and a joint commitment to online engagement.

TechNODE - an overview
NODE in the future

The TechNODE bulletin 2010 will be released in April/May providing a summary of the findings from the 2009-10 student survey. In November 2010, the 2010-11 survey will be emailed to students who have completed at least half the credits required to pass first year. If you would like to view the survey instrument, raw data or have ideas for the next survey then please contact Dr. Lisa Cluett (details below).

Related publications


Other useful resources

- TechNODE bulletin 2009 summarises the findings of the 2008-09 NODE survey
- Full report for the 2006-07 survey is available online
- NODE project webpage (via http://tiny.cc/9uREu) containing all project documents and contact information

Using this bulletin


Contact

Web: Online Student Journey project page: [http://tiny.cc/9uREu](http://tiny.cc/9uREu)

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