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# E-Learning Focus Groups Report

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## **E-Learning Core Group Members**

This report was written under the guidance and input of the E-Learning Core Group at the University of Iowa. Members of the Core Group include:

Molly Langstaff, Academic Technologies, ITS, Chair

Jim Duncan, Hardin Library of the Health Sciences

Maggie Jessie, Henry B. Tippie College of Business

Lisa Troyer, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Tom Rocklin, College of Education

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## **Introduction**

The eLearning Assessment Project is an advisory group of University of Iowa faculty and staff, who are working to assess how colleges and faculty are currently using technology to support teaching and learning at the University of Iowa. As part of this assessment Monalco, Inc. was hired by the eLearning Assessment Core Group to conduct a series of focus groups among teaching staff to discuss how technology is and can be used to support teaching and learning at the University.

Faculty, including tenure and tenure track, adjunct instructors and teaching assistants were invited to a series of groups held during late October and early November 2003. Seven groups were planned with faculty meeting the following criteria:

- 1)** Early adopters of eLearning among both tenure/tenure track and adjunct faculty
- 2)** Moderate/New eLearning users among Teaching Assistants
- 3)** Moderate/New eLearning users among tenure/tenure track faculty
- 4)** Moderate/New eLearning users among other teaching faculty (adjunct faculty)
- 5)** Tenure/tenure track faculty non-users
- 6)** Teaching Assistant non-users
- 7)** Adjunct faculty non-users

The non-user groups were quite difficult to recruit through the primarily e-mail methodology employed by staff who were assigned to identify group participants. Despite urgings that telephone contact be employed to recruit the non-users, this method (telephone contact) was undertaken just one day in advance of the final groups, too late to significantly increase participation. Ultimately the fifth group (tenure track faculty non-users) was cancelled, and groups six and seven were quite small, consisting of three and four participants respectively.

All groups were moderated by Monica Dignam, President of Monalco, and conducted in various locations on the University of Iowa main campus. All groups were recorded on audio. A transcript for each group was also prepared. Participants included faculty in sixteen different departments. A list of participants is provided in Appendix A of this report.

### **Organization of This Report**

Immediately following is a narrative report of findings with discussion of the major issues that arose in the six groups. Each area is discussed, followed by quotes from participants that further illustrate the finding.

The narrative is based upon transcripts of each session and summary grids of major discussion points shown beginning on page 16. Major ideas covered in each discussion are summarized in the grid with references indexed to the page of each group transcript where the discussion appears. Quotes in the narrative are also indexed to the group and transcript page number.

The discussion guide is provided in Appendix A. Transcripts for each group are available electronically in Word documents submitted with this report.

## Narrative Report of Findings

### Definition of eLearning

After introducing themselves all participants were asked to give their personal definition of eLearning in one or two sentences. Definitions fell into five general areas, discussed below in order of frequency.

- 1) The concept of eLearning technologies as one of the tools used to facilitate learning, by far, the most frequently described.

“Using some sort of technology to teach various pieces of the curriculum...” (Early Adopters, page 2)

“Using technology to learn and share what you learn.” (Early Adopters, page 2)

“Any computing or communication technologies that support the learning process...” (Early Adopters, page 4)

- 2) A definition having to do with convenience or self-directed learning was mentioned about half as frequently as one having to do with learning.

“Content any time it’s convenient for [students] to go through it...” (Tenure Users, page 3)

“When the students can get it on demand...” (Adjunct Users, page 1)

“The ability to enhance students’ self-directed learning” (Early Adopters, page 4)

- 3) Several defined it only in terms of technology, excluding any words having to do with learning or delivery.

“Fun gadgetry” (Early Adopters, page 6)

“Using the computer and the internet” (Adjunct Users, page 3)

“Electronic media” (Early Adopters, page 2)

“Anything that uses electrons” (TA Users, page 3)

- 4) Participants in several groups also described a definition that had to do with making scarce resources more accessible:

“It makes us as instructors much more accessible, and we can communicate much better with our students through eLearning.” (Tenure Users, page 2)

“We use it to help deliver content that maybe we don’t have real patients, maybe we don’t have real sounds to hear...” (Tenure Users, page 2)

“Enabling the bundling of various different delivery modes and reception modes...all in the same place.” (Early Adopters, page 5)

- 5) Distance education, distributive learning or online learning/education was another thread brought up repeatedly in the early adopters group but not in any of the other groups.

“The boundaries are taken away” (Early Adopters, page 4)

“Some form of distributive learning” (Early adopters, page 1)

A summary grid of definitions by group is shown beginning on page 17.

### **Current Uses of eLearning Technologies**

Participants in each group were also asked to describe how they use currently use eTechnologies. There was a wide disparity in uses depending on the availability of both hardware and support in the various colleges (discussed in more detail below, see page 11). The various uses are summarized below, roughly in order with most frequently mentioned uses first. A grid showing the respondent's college or department and their descriptions provides more detail, see page 19.

- Specific software: PPT, WebCT, Blackboard, Flash animation, Macromedia, Authorware, Bivochi, Band in a Box, MD Consult,
- Web links, government/other sources
- Simulations/modeling
- e-mail communication with students
- Course websites, syllabus, reference materials, grading, homework
- Course development (syllabus, roster, references, planning, etc.)
- Assessment/examinations
- Distance learning/full course online learning/distributed learning
- Case-based learning
- Teaching technology courses
- In classroom/lab teaching
- Discussion groups/listserv
- Searchable database
- Online conferencing (in development)/web conferencing/video conferencing
- Auditing/monitoring student lab activities
- Collaboration with other schools
- Direct to websites referenced in textbooks
- On-computer classroom/lab instruction
- Out of classroom supplemental learning
- Publishes zine

- Streaming video (in development)
- Students have accounts
- Students have PDAs
- Website development
- Patient management (appointments, interviews, history, etc.)
- Online prescriptions

### **Benefits/Potential of eLearning**

Concerns about student passivity and the skepticism about the effect of technology on pedagogy notwithstanding (see discussion beginning on page 8 below), respondents in every group acknowledged the clear benefits of eLearning.

Allowing teachers to expose students to visual imagery and modeling that were not possible before the widespread availability of technology were at the forefront. Some spoke of advantages they currently enjoy and others, more wistfully, about things they know are possible or on the near horizon and they would like to be able to do now.

"[PowerPoint] is good in that it's a step up from a lecture...at least there's a visual component, people can read things along the way, and it communicates such a clear sense of structure that I think is very valuable...and it's so much faster than writing them on a board." (TA Non-Users, page 10)

"[We're exploring] using different types of questions [on assessments], questions that are based on digital imaging, digital sound files, whatever. So it opens up some new possibilities." (Tenure Users, page 15)

"A couple of years ago we went to digital video exams, and I was surprised, the students really liked it." (Tenure Users, page 18)

"Something that can demonstrate, to make a visual...[helping some students] to better grasp things." (TA Users, page 7)

"Enables us to do things that make classes different than generalizations of the book..." (Early Adopters, page 11)

"One idea that would really help my new improvisation students would be if there was some way to have computers in the practice rooms...the one thing they need to do is...play along with prerecorded sequences...This is very easy to do on the computer..." (Adjunct Non-Users, page 4)

"One of the things that is very hard to convey in a lecture is the behaviors of being a health professional...we're starting...to use digital video based behavior modeling.... [It] will allow us to increase the quantity of teaching in that sense." (Tenure Users, page 12)

"The student is no longer bound by just the expertise or interest or possible bias of the professor...a sense of larger potential learning...not limited by the personality and the time restrictions of the individual leading the course." (TA Non-Users, page 5)

"We have guest speakers come in, and we'll digitally record it. Then they can either be MP3 or whatever...so we have a bank of those." (Tenure Users, page 18)

"We plan to use web-based technology to allow more communication in our consulting classes when we're working with real clients." (TA Non-Users, page 18)

[It increases interest in the class] by giving you an opportunity ...[to create a PowerPoint slide with] a main definition of something that you want retained." (Tenure Users, page 10)

There were also discussions in several groups about the advantages of eLearning in both exposure to and communicating with a greater number of students, mitigating the constraints of physical boundaries and exposing students to more independent experiences.

"Because you don't have physical space to handle [a greater number of] students, they're going to look for other ways to provide information or education, teaching. I think eLearning is a natural to pick that up." (Early Adopters, page )

"It's a means to increase the communication..." (TA Users, page 8)

"There are about 47-48 lectures [that are] on the web." (Tenure Users, page 18)

"A lot of learning is the opportunity...[eLearning has the potential to increase exposure] so [it increases] the opportunity to learn." (TA Users, page 10)

"I think it's a great communication tool." (Tenure Users, page 14)

"It makes it easier for me to communicate to the group as a whole instead of managing two or three hundred emails, to just be able to say send to all and get the thing out there." (Tenure Users, page 15)

"It would be nice if I could have a sort of Listserv or place where [students] could post [their writing]. If they write a response to a given work of literature, if other people in the class could see what they've been writing..." (TA Non-Users, page 26)

"It's better that students become much more independent thinkers [by doing their own research]. They become much more aware of what they are able to do to seek out information...[it] isn't bound by just a certain few people who tell them the way things are." (TA Non-Users, page 7)

"We're trying to do some online conferencing where somebody can be in Fairfield and they can get on via the web and have voice communication." (Tenure Users, page 17)

"eTechnologies are a way to provide learning statewide... I think it has tremendous opportunities and benefits. We've already started to see that and look forward to continuing...because it's more effective and efficient and everybody's got access to it" (Tenure Users, page 9)

[Technology facilitates distance learning by actually making] "it feasible for the professor to be in the classroom for some time." [Professors are not willing to be present every week but may be on-site several times in a semester] (Early Adopters, page 12)

Other advantages discussed included the efficiencies in grading and administrative tasks, the ability to present information in different ways to accommodate different learning styles and in getting and giving feedback and information.

### **Effect on Learning**

There was considerable discussion in every group about the negative effect of technology on teaching, learning and student behavior. Many concerns emerged, particularly about encouraging passivity and a sense of entitlement among students. There is real concern about using PowerPoint in classes in this regard. There were also concerns about professors creating a course in one year and becoming so wedded to it that they don't make changes.

"I think [electronic technologies] have actually inhibited learning...Whatever technology does, it has to engage the student in such a way that he or she becomes active in the learning process. I think that much of what happened over the last ten years, certainly in this College, has been people getting off on the wrong foot and thinking that just because it was electronic, it was something that was better. We've seen a lot of passivity in the classroom around here..." (Early Adopters, page 5)

"I'm always surprised ...that people think that technology is a solution...It has to go with organizational changes too, and you know we don't pay attention to that." (Early Adopters, page 9)

"Technology might allow an instructor to do some things more efficiently, but that doesn't mean that students will learn more." (Early Adopters, page 9)

"When you have a class of 400 students, it's extremely difficult to get the students to be active, and you can kiss goodbye any kind of active learning if all they see are electronic images, especially if they have the notes in front of them. I mean, that's just a ticket to sleep." (Early Adopters, page 11)

"If you eliminate spatial and time barriers through technology, then you must look at the impact on engagement...You put a lot of effort into fairly elegant technology development and you generate more passivity...That's the equation that really needs to be factored into this..." (Early Adopters, page 13)

"The right perspective is how does it facilitate learning? And just because I can say things to a greater number of people doesn't mean that anything more gets heard." (Early Adopters, page 22)

"I am in a class as a student where [PowerPoint] is being abused. It's being over-used. It can be used as a tool to enhance a lecture. [In this class] it is the lecture...it loses all its effectiveness." (TA Users, page 2)

"One of the disadvantages, I think, is that the technology can take over. So much emphasis can be put on the technology itself that we forget about the over arching goal of transmitting information to students and helping them learn." (TA Users, page 4)

"The lecture begins, and the first thing goes up [are slides] of the whole lecture...Students...are copying everything that is written behind...[but they don't] quite understand what they're writing down." (TA Users, page 11)

"[If the whole lecture is provided to students on PowerPoint] then [students] stop coming to class." (Tenure Users, page 6)

"What we've seen in the past few years is that the students have become dependent on having a carefully prepared PowerPoint handout, and they take very few notes during the lecture...They don't even really have to go to class...And we're also concerned that the students are becoming entitled...I don't know if it's a dumbing down or if it's the students changing the way they learn the material..." (Tenure Users, page 5)

"It's sort of a passive learning style, and they're becoming less involved in their own learning...feeling like it is just being delivered to them and they're just supposed to swallow it...and that's that." (Tenure Users, page 6)

"It's turned into edutainment almost versus education. If you use technology, it allows you to provide that edutainment value for these kids who grew up in TV Land." (Tenure Users, page 6)

"I am troubled by the fact that we are seeming to have to...play games almost to make sure that they are watching...and not just pulling it up, printing it out and sticking it in a folder." (Tenure Users, page 8)

"The students feel like they're buying a degree and not an education...that's sort of the behavior we see with this PowerPoint slide thing...sort of shortcutting the process." (Tenure Users, page 8)

"I'm amazed at how many e-mails I get from students...I think, on Sunday nights, you're working on your homework, if you have a question, rather than thinking it out and trying to research other avenues...it's easier to just email the professor." (Tenure Users, page 13)

"The students won't think anymore...they just fire off the e-mail and they expect you to respond in 10 minutes. If you don't respond, you get more of them." (Tenure Users, page 16)

"If you're looking at what individual teachers are adding to their classroom in the form of eLearning, then I don't know if it does or not because a lot of people try things and it turns out maybe to be a hindrance sometimes, or they don't completely think through what they are doing." (TA Non-Users, page 8)

"With PowerPoint it just seems like it's read, the students are copying it down, there's no feedback of, is there learning going on, you know, of certain comprehensions." (TA Non-Users, page 9)

"In some of our electronic competent people, they don't pay attention to spelling, to grammar..." (Adjunct Non-Users, page 20)

"Frankly, I find it a way to make them lazier." (Adjunct Users, page 7)

In addition to concerns about passivity participants also discussed concerns about assessment, plagiarism, cheating, and the loss of one-to-one communication between the student and the teacher and the student and others.

## **The Need for Education in How to Use eLearning to Enhance Pedagogy**

Another issue that came up in every group was a desire for research and information about how to use technology in teaching. The consensus was that there are a lot of resources and effort devoted to the technology but that for the most part neither the university nor the colleges devote enough effort to teaching teachers how to use these resources to enhance learning.

"I learned rather quickly that it's more important to have an education background when you get involved with distance or online education. It highlights the need for that more..." (Early Adopters, page 6)

"I think we've got to train the faculty on how to most effectively [use] the technology..." (Early Adopters, page 10)

"I've never really seen the University provide any kind of support for how to pedagogically integrate these communication technologies into your courses. It's mostly been support for the technologies themselves." (Early Adopters, page 11)

"I don't think there's ever been a strong program out there, something put in place to educate the educators on how to use this stuff...Here, and everywhere really, it just kind of gets thrown in our laps, and there's not a strong system to educate." (TA Users, page 6)

"We have a group of wonderful technicians, people who can get a WebCT site all set up with grades, with comment books, with quizzes, with exams. We have people who technically can do that...But what we don't have, and what I think the university would need to consider a little bit more, is [questioning] 'Is that technology necessarily what we need to do to solve this particular classroom problem or this particular educational problem?' [It's] one thing to use technology, but I think sometimes we make the mistake of using it just for the sake of it being there..." (Tenure Users, page 25)

"What is it that makes a good teacher...we [need to] make some conscious decisions about what works well and what is efficient and what isn't? And that's where I see the big hole in academic consulting technologies...We have plenty of people who can get that set up...[but] I don't see that we're assessing outcomes from that." (Tenure Users, page 25)

"[We need] sort of a higher level of consulting that I just don't think we have." (Tenure Users, page 26)

"[We need] feedback on is what we're doing working? Some way to look at outcomes." (Tenure Users, page 28)

"If we're going to spend all of our time doing this, thousands of dollars and tremendous resources, if we can't measure what we're doing, it'll forever hamstring whatever we do." (Tenure Users, page 28)

"There has been so little, if any, research on the quality and the quantity of student learning in these different formats, and we are going the way of eLearning, and courses online, because we can, because the technology allows us to and because people think that it's going to be revenue-generating for the institutions" (Adjunct Users, page 19)

"[We need to be] integrating pedagogical insights, concerns, principles, into the selection and use of eLearning tools, for me [that is] the most crucial thing." (Adjunct Users, page 16)

In another vein on this subject, participants in most groups also discussed the low value placed on teaching in a research institution. To the extent that no one is taught how to teach, they are not surprised that no one is teaching them how to most effectively use technology pedagogically.

"I have never had any instruction on teaching whatsoever in my entire life, and most professors never have either...So it's sad but not surprising that they don't teach us how to do anything, because they don't teach us how to teach either." (TA Users, page 11)

"[Research], that is where the emphasis is at. It's not on learning, it's not on teaching, it's on research." (TA Users, page 12)

"My mom's a first grade teacher. She learned how to teach because she went to an education college. I'm going to finish my PhD and I could have actually not taught one course--ever-- and stepped up and the first day I arrive at whatever U and teach my first course...not ever been taught how to do anything -- teaching, anything. So... because you don't learn how to teach, you're definitely not going to learn the pros and mistakes from technologies. I mean that's even farther down the line of stuff you're going to learn." (TA Non-Users, page 22)

### **Need for Ongoing Support**

Issues of ongoing support arose in every group, as did the observation that eLearning is not really a time saver as many expected. It takes a lot of time and effort to get started and, when used appropriately, to keep the information up to date and dynamic.

If participants knew of the technical support available at either the university or their college they invariably characterized the people providing that support in positive terms; "nice," "helpful" and "knowledgeable" were characteristic comments. However, participants in every group also expressed frustration.

Some of those that want help feel they have to go out and find it for themselves, and such information is often difficult to find, inconvenient and inappropriate to their needs. Others have received help at the beginning, through nTITLE, the library and/or support personnel in their college, but feel abandoned once they begin to apply what they have learned to their own situation.

Other issues in this vein included:

- The need for organizational changes and leadership. A sense that eLearning technologies have been applied to a traditional infrastructure.
- The need for more equal resources throughout the university. Business and Medicine have many more resources than are found in the Liberal Arts departments.
- More support for new technologies and alternatives, particularly support for Apple operating systems.

- Concern about relying too heavily on technologies, particularly in classroom settings, and having no alternative when it fails.

"[The university has] tried but I think it's pretty much self selected. The people who want to get that information go out and get help....There's a lot more people doing stuff that have never had any help." (Early Adopters, page 10)

"I think it's like the nTITLE program, been very good at getting people involved, but they have tended to emphasize the technology--how to develop a Blackboard course or what not, and not pedagogy at all." (Early Adopters, page 11)

"I do think...that the university does make a lot of efforts to get new people involved...And I think there's not enough service after the sale. That's when people start utilizing things heavily and need a higher level of support or for the infrastructure to support...that's were the university pretty much leaves you on your own." (Early Adopters, page 25)

"The get a lot of people started with nTITLE...every summer...but are they supported sufficiently as they really start to get into...the details. That's where it's lacking." (Early Adopters, page 25)

"I do get announcements from faculty members and from people within my division encouraging attendance at different workshops...you just had to know how to utilize the support that exist[s but] it was a pull to get that." (TA Users, page 21)

"I know ITC exists, but I really don't know what it does. I know it's this big thing...I know it's at Lindquist Center. But in terms of getting actual information from it...How do you find out where they are? When they're going on? Then that's it. Nobody knows." (TA Users, page 22)

"I heard there was this thing at the library that is supposed to assist TAs with things like that, but then it is actually finding, getting directly to an individual...Then it is kind of wavy...you don't really get the direct or specific information that you want to get, so it's just a matter of trying to fish it out all over the place." (TA Users, page 23)

"On campus, the infrastructure is definitely there. I've seen it here and there. But in my department, I have to know what I want to do and then find out how to do it. Because so few people are doing [a lot of innovative things] in Classics...I don't even know what I could do." (TA Users, page 23)

"It's that people plop this stuff down on us and say, 'enhance your class'...How? Why? I don't know." (TA Users, page 24)

"All the support people...we're on a first name basis...but I still feel like the burden of it all rests on me. I wish that we had more support where we could go and say, 'we need this, here's the raw material, here's the raw footage, now put it into this format for a quiz.' And then, as soon as you learn one software product...somebody comes along and say, 'Oh no, you should learn this other one.'...Yes, we do have a lot of support, but we don't have the resources to have somebody else who is an expert do it." (Tenure Users, page 20)

"I wanted to learn about streaming, I thought 'Okay, there's going to be somebody who can teach me about streaming.' I made an appointment...[at] WEEG] and talked to this guy who said, 'Oh you need to talk to so and so'...I felt like I kind of got bounced around and I finally gave up." (TA Users, page 20)

"They do an outstanding job on the core technologies. They do a lot of training for all of the new faculty...I would have to say, however, on anything new...streaming for example...It has been a nightmare. I have had to be the expert." (Tenure Users, page 21)

"You do have to seek it out. You have to have either a reason...or because you have a problem you want to solve...or you go out and just by accident find it." (Tenure Users, page 22)

"I think [the thing I most need is] being aware of what it out there, where there is resources, and then choosing from those to what works for me, for my needs...to make it effective in the classroom." (Adjunct Users, page )

"I've been told that Blackboard and WebCT have options for recording student grades, but when I tried to do it through Blackboard, I looked and looked and looked and tried to find out where it was that I could access this grading program, but wasn't able to find it..." (TA Non-Users, page 17)

"I know there's things available...like, ITS or something, but I know most people...don't know about them...Maybe the dissemination of information's not getting through to them or maybe...there's all these different things coming out all the time and there's nothing set, ever. It's always changing, so it's hard to get set into a mode...[it's] like a massive hassle." (TA Non-Users, page 19)

"I never heard of WebCT until today." (Adjunct Non-Users, page 6)

"[I've participated in nTITLE] they do it so well and they're so helpful...[but] it's just enough to kind of get your feet wet, it's really up to you to continue it...But you have to do it, that's one of the reasons I forgot a lot of it because I thought, 'Oh now I can set up my own website.' But now I say, 'How did that go now?'..." (Adjunct Non-Users, page 7)

"I have gone to several education things, but the problem is the people who are doing the educating are the computer geeks, and they're on such a completely different wavelength that they can't understand my limited basic knowledge, and they can't communicate to me how to get there...there's a complete disconnect in the middle..." (Adjunct Non-Users, page 10)

"Well, I have one problem with Hawk ID. I called up ITS and they said I'm on the hospital, or the College of Medicine domain, and then I called them up on the telephone, but they never, ever respond, so at the moment, I can't even utilize my Hawk ID." (Adjunct Non-Users, page 16)

One thread that was repeated in all but one group has to do with the need for someone at the college level as a bridge between the user and ITS. There's a lot of variability among the various colleges and departments. The participants that expressed the greatest satisfaction have a person in this role; the ones that don't wish they did.

One participant suggested that just as departments fought for department secretaries in the past, they would have to begin to fight for a person who could act in this capacity. The ideal person would be someone who knows something about their field and able to suggest realistic technology solutions. Several also discussed their frustration with the technology support they receive when it focuses more on the technology than on their specific needs.

"Well, variability between Colleges] is the thing. If anything, there are huge individual differences and if the administration or ITS thinks that there's one solution that will make everyone's life better, they're not." "That's the problem." "They've got to pay attention to the individual differences of classes and faculties." (Early Adopters, page 27)

"[In my department] we have access to human capital as well, people who will show us how to use it, and we can go and ask questions to people. We have a media specialist on staff who can help us..." (TA Users, page 20)

"Perhaps it's a divisional thing within our College, because we're strongly encouraged to attend workshops and our advisors send out information about all of them." (TA Users, page 21)

"[Having a webmaster for the department] that's the key right there. We have incredible web administrators in the College of Education who are willing and have an open door policy where we can walk in and ask any question to them, and if they don't have the time to answer it, they'll refer us." (TA Users, page 22)

"In the Business School, they have this Stead Technology Center where there's always people there, you go in if you have questions." (TA Users, page 23)

"Maybe this bridging person isn't someone who would be from ITS, but I think there is kind of a more general problem in our interactions with ITS. I mean faculty talk about it all the time, you know, I think you're made to feel stupid when you ask a question." (Adjunct Users, page 15)

"[The one thing we need] is a support person or people that can help translate your pedagogical interests into electronic media...we're not trained to do that, yet we want to do it...if you can have somebody who can [take my project] get excited about it [and help me put it together]. (Adjunct Users, page 17)

"[Having a] support person who has some knowledge of at least your general topic and how things are taught in the classroom. I think that would be most important." (Adjunct Users, page 18)

"Pretty much, what I want is somebody who ...will tell me exactly what I can use based on the technology that's available...But it seems like there's a lot of time given to hearing about new technologies and I find the vast majority of the time that I'm spending isn't productive." (TA Non-Users, page 24)

"I find my young students are much better at doing electronic things, and so I pretty much tell them what I need, and they go and do it and then when they've done it, they can tell me how they get there so that I can take a shortcut if I want." (Adjunct Non-Users, page 24)

"I think that the ITS people need to interact far more with the people who are going to be using the stuff at the end. We see it with our new instruments, designed by engineers, and they never even go into a clinic and find out what you can really use it for. So half the things you want to do, you can't. They have to come and reprogram everything, and I say 'Why would you ever want to do that?' You know." (Adjunct Non-Users, page 21)

## **Non-Users**

It is important to note that the preponderance of information in this report is derived from faculty that are known to have used at least some eLearning technologies at the University of Iowa. Only two of the six groups were among non-users, and those were also the smallest groups. In addition, the non-user participants had very little knowledge about the technology resources available and how to access those resources.

In general, those in the non-user groups did not appear to be unwilling to use eLearning technologies but tended to be more affected by several inhibitors that were also shared by their user counterparts.

First, participants in both non-user groups expressed greater skepticism than those in user groups that e-solutions are more efficient or better pedagogically than their current practices. This was an issue mentioned in every other group, but the users were more interested in knowing that research supports the pedagogical value of technology (see also page 8).

“If somebody showed me a way that my teaching could be greatly improved with some technology available [on this campus]...I would be all open. I mean, that would be wonderful, but I just haven’t—I’ve not come across a single technology that has made me think that my teaching would be vastly improved with the use of it.” (TA Non-Users, page 26)

“I’ve taken a couple of classes, and it seems like the focus on improving your teaching is deviating from technology....It’s more what you can do in the class, what you can do to bring the students into the discussion...and you know it seems like technology kind of does the opposite sometimes.” (TA Non-Users, page 26)

Non-users were also much less aware of where or how to get help and support, another issue that came up in every group (see also page 11).

“I think that eLearning is something that is defined by who’s using it and the amount of expertise they have; I wouldn’t say that I would use much of that because I’m not sure how to do it.” (Adjunct Non-Users, page 1)

## Summary

One participant summed up what's needed next:

"Leadership is...very important. But the right type of leadership, leadership that listens to what people are trying to accomplish and comes up with structures that support it, in contrast to dictatorial leadership that you bring in someone from the outside who says, well, I did it this way down at, I don't know, Florida State, and so that's what we'll do here at Iowa. The university has tried that approach sometimes as well, which doesn't work very well." (Early Adopters, page 24)

Immediately following are three grids that provide a summary of each group.

- Starting on page 17: Definition of eLearning
- Starting on page 19: Uses of eLearning Technologies by College or Department
- Starting on page 25: Discussion Topics