

2026 OSU Ecampus annual student survey report

Survey introduction

Each spring, Ecampus administers an annual student survey to all undergraduate students studying at a distance ('DSC' campus code in OSU student information system). This population includes both students pursuing undergraduate degrees as well as those pursuing a post-baccalaureate (second bachelors) degree. In May, 12,066 students were invited to participate in the 2026 Ecampus annual student survey. A total of 1,134 students responded to the survey, generating a response rate of 9.3%. The 2026 survey focused on overall satisfaction across various aspects of the online student experience as well as demographic information. This report shares results in 6 sections – respondent demographics, overall satisfaction, academic and student support, course design and instruction, engagement and belonging, and summarized insights.

Respondent demographics

We continue to see most respondents fall within the age range of 25 – 44 years old, and a majority (59%) identify as women. Just under two-thirds of the population identifies as White (64%), followed by Hispanic/Latino (13%), Asian (7%), Black or African American (5%), American Indian or Alaskan Native (3%), Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (1%), Middle Eastern or North African (1%), and those who preferred not to identify (6%).

Sixty percent of respondents first enrolled as an online degree-seeking student at OSU before summer of 2025, while the remaining forty percent first enrolled in the last academic year.

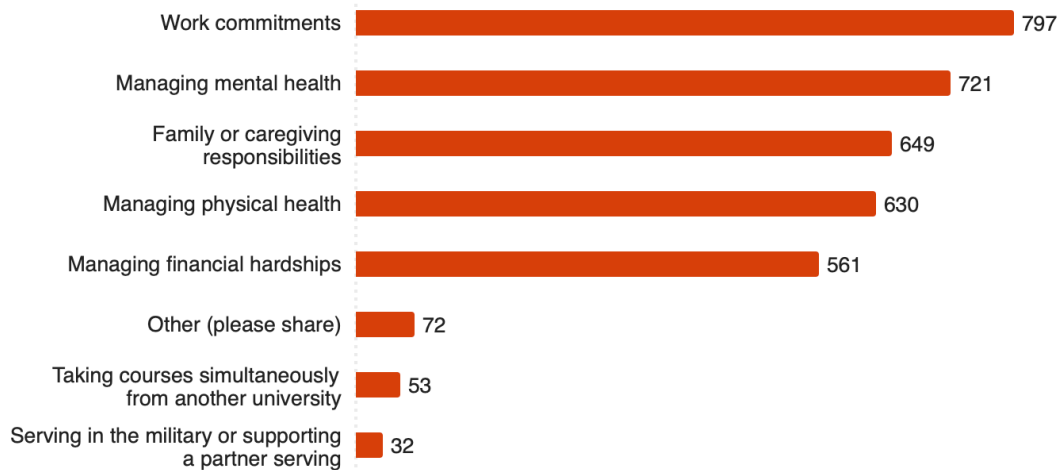
Student responses by college (for students who reported a major) are listed in Table 1. The largest number of responses came from three colleges – Liberal Arts, Engineering, and Agricultural Sciences.

Table 1. Responses by college

College	Count (n = 961)	Percentage
Agricultural Sciences	156	16%
Business	133	14%
Earth, Ocean, Atmospheric Sciences	63	7%
Engineering	187	19%
Forestry	52	5%
Health	44	5%
Liberal Arts	247	26%
Science	79	8%

When asked about personal obligations in addition to enrolling in courses at OSU Ecampus, students indicated many in which they are balancing (Figure 2, $n = 979$). Overwhelmingly, Ecampus students report work commitments (81%), managing mental health (74%), family or caregiving responsibilities (66%), and managing physical health (64%). Managing financial hardships rounds out the top five with over half (57%) noting it as a personal obligation.

Figure 2. Personal obligations



Overall satisfaction

OSU consistently tracks student net promoter scores—the likelihood that a student would recommend OSU to a family member or friend (Figure 3). This is measured on a scale of 1 to 10, 1 being not likely at all and 10 being extremely likely. Those who report 9 – 10 are considered promoters, while those who report 7 – 8 and 0 – 6 are considered passives and detractors, respectively. This year, 56% of respondents fall into the category of ‘promoter’. This score continues to indicate that OSU students have found value in their experience at OSU.

Figure 3. Net Promoter results



Academic and Student Support

Participants were asked a series of questions related to academic and student support, one of which was how easy it is to know where to go at OSU as an online student to get academic support (e.g., tutoring, help from a person, or learning resources). Overwhelmingly, students found it extremely easy (33%) or somewhat easy (42%) to find that support. Participants were also asked about their satisfaction with various services (Table 3). Satisfaction is measured on a 5-point Likert type scale (1=very dissatisfied, 2=somewhat dissatisfied, 3=neutral, 4=somewhat satisfied, 5=very satisfied).

Table 3. Satisfaction with Various Services.

OSU Service	Satisfaction (n)
Academic Advising	4.40 (984)
Ecampus Student Services	4.24 (7.11)

Ecampus Career Hub	4.05 (466)
OSU provided online tutoring	3.75 (331)
Disability Access Services	3.88 (216)

Another set of questions addressed financial support and the impact it has on enrollment patterns and progression towards a degree. When asked how much influence financial aid has on their ability to progress in their degree, 50% of students indicated it was extremely influential and another 15% indicated it was very influential. Of the remaining 35% of respondents, 12% said it was moderately influential, 5% for slightly influential, and 18% indicated no influence at all.

In terms of enrollment patterns, students were asked how likely they would be to enroll in more credits per term than usual if there were no financial constraints. Over 60% of respondents indicated they were very likely or somewhat likely to increase credits per term if not financial constraints existed. When asked what factors influence the number of credits they enroll in each term or year, overwhelmingly students cited work commitments (69%), cost of tuition (59%), family or caregiving responsibilities (46%), personal health or wellness (45%), and financial aid limits (42%) as the top five.

Course design and instruction

Students continue to indicate strong satisfaction with overall course design (4.29, $n = 1,000$) and quality of instruction (4.14, $n = 1,000$), also measured on a 5-point Likert type (1=very dissatisfied, 2=somewhat dissatisfied, 3=neutral, 4=somewhat satisfied, 5=very satisfied)

Engagement and Belonging

Online student engagement has been highlighted as an institutional priority. As such, we included a survey question (expanded from previous years) to measure interest in a variety of engagement opportunities. Students were asked to rate their interest on a 3-point scale (1 = not at all interested, 2 = moderately interested, or 3 = extremely interested). Results are presented in order of highest to lowest interest in Table 4 below.

Table 4. Engagement interest

Engagement opportunity	Mean interest (n = 987)
Internships for credit or pay	2.38
Undergraduate research experiences	2.18
Virtual career webinars and workshops	2.05
Service-learning opportunities	2.04
Short-term field course offered off campus	1.98
More opportunities to visit an OSU campus	1.97
Short-term study abroad experience	1.96
Virtual events on resources and tips for success	1.96
Virtual events to connect with OSU alumni	1.85
Short-term field course on an OSU campus	1.80

Sense of belonging is a success metric that is tracked annually and we continue to see consistent scores year-over-year, with a noticeable increase in promoting an inclusive learning environment. Sense of

belonging is measured using six statements, in which students indicate their level of agreement on a 4-point Likert-type scale (1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=agree, 4=strongly agree).

Table 7. Sense of belonging scores

Belonging aspect	Average score (change YOY)	(n)
I feel a real sense of belonging in my classes	3.02 (-.06)	987
I feel like I really matter	2.98 (n/a)	987
I feel a close connection to other students	2.35 (-.08)	987
I feel like my instructors really care about me as a person	3.03 (+.01)	987
I feel like the staff are there for me	3.15 (+.04)	987
I think Ecampus promotes an inclusive learning environment where all students can thrive	3.31 (+.07)	987

Key takeaways

Course quality and academic support services remain key strengths of the Ecampus experience.

Students expressed strong satisfaction with both course design and the quality of instruction across their online courses. Academic advising received particularly high satisfaction ratings, and most students indicated it is easy to identify where to find academic support and resources as an online learner.

Financial factors significantly influence student success and enrollment decisions. Many students report that financial aid plays an important role in their ability to persist and progress toward a degree, and a majority indicate they would take more credits if financial constraints were reduced. Tuition costs and financial aid limits are among the most influential factors affecting enrollment intensity.

Career-connected experiences generate the greatest interest among online learners. Students expressed the strongest interest in internships, undergraduate research opportunities, and virtual career development programming, suggesting continued demand for opportunities that connect academic experiences to career goals and outcomes.

Students generally report a strong sense of support and inclusion. Belonging measures remained stable overall, with improvements in perceptions that Ecampus promotes and inclusive learning environment and that staff are available to support students. However, building peer-to-peer connections remains an opportunity. While students report feeling supported by instructors and staff, connections with other students continue to be a comparatively lower-scoring aspect of belonging, highlighting an area for ongoing engagement efforts.