

@IPSD



Indian Prairie School District 204 On line Courses Report Fall Semester 2008



Institute For On line Learning

Frontier Campus

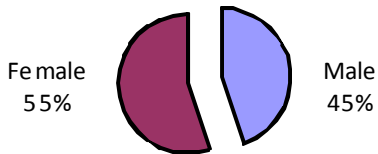
2244 W. 95th Street

Naperville, Illinois 60564

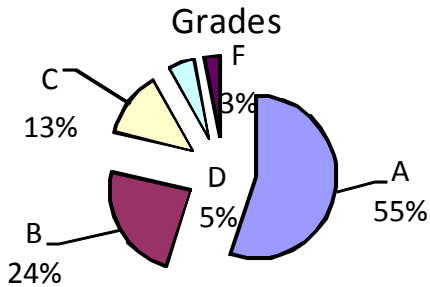
Fall 2008 Courses

During the Fall 2008 semester, 98 students took Indian Prairie on line courses: Consumer Economics, Health, and English IV AP. The results of these course offerings are outlined in this report as well as other program activities. The students:

Gender



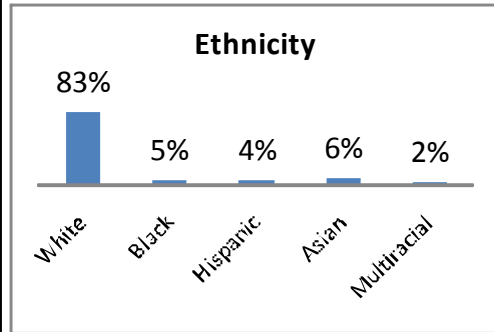
Their grades (in this semester's on line courses):



Ninety two percent (92%) of the students earned the letter grade of "A," "B," or "C."

The students' average PLAN score is 21.5 with a range of 15 28. Five students do not have PLAN scores on file with the district.

The ethnicity of the students:



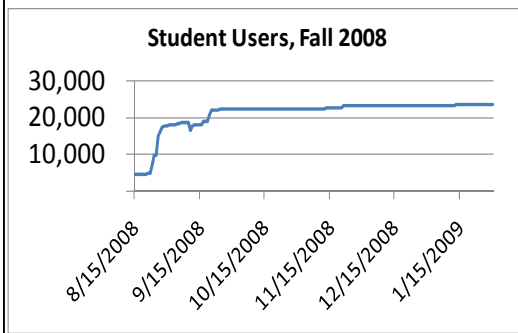
Summer 2008

During the summer two teachers developed on line Health and one worked on English IV AP.

Technology

On line courses are housed on the district's *Blackboard* system. In addition to on line courses, the software houses content for traditional courses. Students can retrieve materials or work with their peers when they are away from campus or faculty can conduct remote classes.

This chart shows the number of individuals enrolled in *Blackboard* during the semester.



Three add on components are used in *Blackboard: Learning Objects, Wimba Classroom* and *Wimba Pronto*.

Learning Objects provide multifaceted opportunities to blog and create wikis within *Blackboard*. Teachers can create writing journals that are shared electronically with the students. Each student's compositions and the teacher's comments are only viewed by those individuals. Classroom or group blogs can be created for large groups to write in.

The strength of this software is that the blogs are only viewable within *Blackboard*. The students' entries are not viewable on the public Internet and not exposed to the Internet's permanent record or undesirable audiences.

Wimba Classroom is a second add on software to *Blackboard* for creating virtual classrooms. The feature, implemented during the semester, was an express version, in that it did not have all the features.

On line teachers use the software for virtual classes; traditional classrooms use the software for sessions outside normal classroom times.

The software has a digital white board, displays *Powerpoint* slides, shares audio, and displays web pages that the teacher wants to show during virtual sessions. The teachers used the software and reported that the remote camera and session recording are

essential to their classes. A trial subscription was purchased for second semester. A larger implementation is planned for the 2009 2010 school year. Current on line teachers received an introduction to the full version of the software in early January 2009. More detailed professional development will occur in February.

Additionally, *Wimba Pronto Express* was implemented. This software allows for instant messaging/texting between class members.

Participants in a *Blackboard* class download the software and they can only communicate with individuals in their classes.

2009 2010 Classes

Several meetings with high school principals and high school department chairs, identified four additional courses for development: 20th Century Literature, Astronomy, U.S. History, and Math Analysis. Depending on enrollment, these courses will be developed during the summer of 2009 for use next year.

A course guide for the seven on line courses was distributed through the district's web site and school email lists.

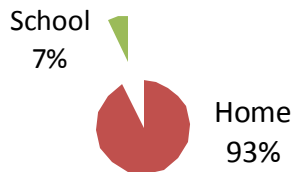
Survey of Health Students

At the end of the semester, a survey was developed and administered to the on line health students.

Several questions are highlighted here.

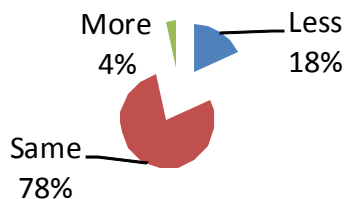
Where did you complete the majority of your course work?

Location



How did the time compare to your other classes?

Time in Class

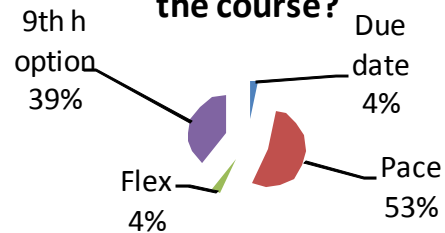


Students' comments:

- "Wasn't as much, but it felt like a lot of 'busy' work if all in one setting."
- "It seemed like less work because you could move at your own pace."

What did you like about the course?

What did you like about the course?



Students' comments:

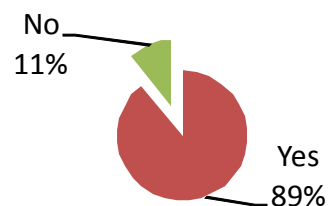
I liked

- "The flexibility that comes with an option hour."
- "Taking the class on my terms."
- That I "always had an easy way to ask for help with the [technology]."

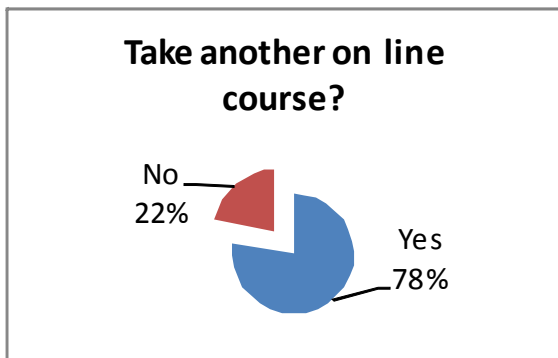
The data and comments indicate that the students in the course liked the flexibility and ability to work at their own pace during the week before homework is due.

Would you recommend this class to another student?

Recommend Class?



Would you take another class on line?



Students provided advice to future course participants. Their comments include:

- "Keep organized."
- "Do discussion boards before Sunday night."
- "Don't take this class to be a blow off class; it's challenging but worth the extra stuff that comes along with it."
- "Be responsible; enjoy the freedom."
- "Don't just coast; treat it like a real class because it is."

Students also provided ideas to improve the class. Their responses include:

- "Have more virtual classroom sessions."
- "Use on line texting more."
- "We need more descriptive instructions on some assignments."
- "Improve the technology issues."
- "Stress the importance of due dates."
- "Have more quizzes (without notes) to evaluate knowledge before a big test."

From this data, the teacher developed the following course improvements for the Spring 2009 semester:

- Adjust the schedule to allow adequate time for test preparation and project completion.
- "Meet" on line or in person with students to discuss plans for one of the three projects.
- Hold on line discussions [in *Wimba Classroom*] for all three projects, which can be archived for students who do not participate in the sessions.
- Post review guides for exams to help students prepare.
- Add more choices to the notes and quizzes to include more possibilities of student responses.
- Change a setting in the on line quizzes so students can see why the submitted answer is incorrect.
- Include more teacher made videos to brief students on the significance of content and assignments.
- Rearrange the content in *Blackboard* to include more course links to make the information more accessible.

This survey, developed by the on line health teacher shows that she is receptive to feedback from the students and ready to make improvements in the course.

The survey will be refined and implemented for all classes at the end of the Spring 2009 semester.

Student feedback shows that the on line health course has high quality and rigor. The students provided valuable feedback that was used to improve the Spring 2009 course.

Compass Learning

Compass Learning Odyssey (<http://odyssey.ipisd.org>) was purchased for Crone, Granger, Gregory, Hill, Scullen, NVHS, and WVHS. Middle school mathematics has been used at Still Middle School for several years. Algebra I content was added for middle schools and high schools.

All secondary students can access *Compass Learning* from home or from school for homework help purposes, extra study, or remediation. Students login with their student numbers and school computer passwords. Teachers can reference specific lessons for students by lesson numbers.

During the Fall 2008 semester, secondary students logged 2,139.5 hours on *Compass Learning*.

NROC

Indian Prairie is a member of the National Repository for Online Courses (NROC). Operated by the Monterey Institute, NROC has over thirty courses. Some of NROC's content is available on the Internet. The district has its own branded page of NROC content at <http://www.hippocampus.org/myHippo/?user=myIPSD>. The district has the public content on DVD media along with course guides, problem sets, and study guides. The NROC content will be imported into *Blackboard* and used to form foundations of on line courses. It will be combined with content and activities from traditional courses, when possible.

Theoretical Course Study

During the Fall of 2008, the director attended the Virtual Schools Symposium to learn more about the state of the art of on line schools. Nearly 1,200 individuals from across the nation attended.

Reading about on line schools revealed research from Dr. Margaret Roblyer. She developed an on line survey that gauges a student's "probability of passing" an on line course. The 25 question survey is in development for use during second semester for registration purposes.

Goals for Spring Semester 2009

- Finalize course offerings for the 2009 2010 school year.
- Provide on line (Roblyer) survey results to high school guidance departments.
- Provide formal professional development for current on line teachers and prospective teachers in *Wimba Classroom*.
- Provide professional development from one speaker who works at an existing on line school.
- Provide professional development for current on line teachers to discuss methodology, content, final exams, and course practices.
- Standardize and implement a student satisfaction survey for the end of the semester.
- Present two series of *Blackboard* professional development courses to district employees.