

Technology at Simmons College

Assessment of Student Use of Technology, March 2004

In March 2004, Technology User Services surveyed Simmons College students about what technology they own, and how they use technology in their coursework.

Question 1: Gender

Gender	No. of Responses	%
Female	601	92
Male	45	7
Other	8	1
Total	654	100

Question 2: Are you a/an Undergraduate, Graduate, Dix scholar or other type of student?

Student Type	No. of responses	%
Undergraduate	286	44
Graduate	320	49
Dix	41	6
Other	7	1
Total	654	100

Question 3: Do you live on campus or off campus?

	No. of Responses	%
On-campus	248	38
Off-campus	406	62
Total	654	100

Question 4: Your academic program or major:

Note: this was a short-answer question, and not a sub-part to #2. Below are summaries that were prepared manually.

Undergraduate program	No. of Responses
Communications	27
Undecided	26
Psychology	23
Political science and international relations	20
Economics	15
Biology	10
Biochemistry	9
Mathematics	9
Art Administration	8
Chemistry	8
Psychobiology	6

Computer science and information technology	5
Finance	5
Public relations	5
History	4
Marketing	4
Society and Health	3
Art	2
East Asian studies	2
Graphic design	2
Sociology	2

Environmental science	1
French	1
Human Physiology	1
Management Information systems	1

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Premed	1
Women's studies	1
Total	174

Graduate Programs	No. of Responses
GSLIS	153
SSW	44
SOM	25
CAS: Education: MA in Teaching or ESL	10
CAS: Children's Literature	6
CAS: Communications Management	5
CAS: Gender and cultural studies	5
SHS	5
Total	254

Undergraduate or graduate programs (unable to distinguish from answer)	No. of responses
Nursing	57
Physical therapy	57
English	25
Education	14
Special education	12
Nutrition	11
Management	10
Philosophy	4
Spanish	2
Total	192

Question 5: *Anticipated graduation date*

Short answer question, not tabulated.

Question 6: *Do you currently own a computer?*

	No. of Responses	%
Yes	623	95
No	31	5
Total	654	100

Cross Tabulation between student type (#2) and computer ownership (#6)

Computer ownership	Student Type								Total
	UG		Grad		Dix		Other		
	No. of responses	%	No. of responses	%	No. of responses	%	No. of responses	%	
Yes	273	95	304	64	40	98	6	86	623
No	13	5	16	36	1	2	1	14	31
Total	286	100	320	100	41	100	7	100	654

Question 7: *What type of computer do you own?*

Computer type	No. of Responses	%
Laptop	249	40
Desktop	254	41
Both	122	19
Total	625	100

Cross tabulation between student type (#2) and computer type (#7):

Computer type	Student Type								Total
	UG		Grad		Dix		Other		
	No. of Responses	%	No. of Responses	%	No. of Responses	%	No. of Responses	%	
Laptop	148	54	87	28	12	30	2	33	249
Desktop	94	35	139	45	19	48	2	33	254
Both	30	11	81	26	9	22	2	33	122
Total	272	100	307	99	40	100	6	99	625

Question 8: *Do you own a Mac or PC?*

Platform	No. of Responses	%
Mac	56	9.0
PC	542	87
Both	22	4
Total	620	100

Question 9: *How old is your computer?*

Text answers summarized as follows, for the first computer listed:

Computer age	No. of Responses	%
0 Mo - 2 yr	369	59
3 yr - 5 yr	204	33
6+ yr	43	7
I don't know	7	1
Total	623	100

Cross-tabulation between student type (#2) and computer age (#9)

Computer age in years	Student Type								Total
	UG		Grad		Dix		Other		
	No. of Responses	%	No. of Responses	%	No. of Responses	%	No. of Responses	%	
0-2	174	64	167	54	25	62	3	50	369
3-5	80	30	110	36	11	28	3	50	204
6+	13	5	26	9	4	10	0	0	43
Don't know	3	1	4	1	0	0	0	0	7
Total	270	100	307	100	40	100	6	100	623

Question 10: *Do you own a printer?*

Printer own	No of Responses	%
yes	518	83
no	109	17
Total	627	100

Cross tabulation between residency and owning a personal printer (questions #3 & 10):

Own printer?	Housing				Total
	On campus		Off campus		
	No. of Responses	%	No. of Responses	%	
Yes	177	74	341	88	518
No	61	26	48	12	109
Total	238	100	389	100	627

Question 11: *If you own a printer, what kind is it?*

502 people responded to this free text question. There were no check boxes, so these results were determined by running searches for specific terms. Some answers were too vague to quantify.

Printer type	No. of Responses
Hewlett-Packard	246
Epson	73
Lexmark	73
Canon	49
Brother	5
Apollo	1
Okidata	2
Xerox	1
Dell	15
Laser printer	38
Ink jet	108
All-in-one	12

Question 12: *What other technical devices do you use?*

Note: multiple answers were allowed.

	No. of Responses	%
Cell	540	83
PDA	142	22
iPod	28	4
Other MP3 Player	93	14
Other technical device(s)	64	10

Question 12AA, "specify other": 81 responses

	No. of Responses
Digital camera	27
Scanner	21
CD player	7
Video camera	7
CD burner	5
DVD player	5
Webman	4
Zip drive	4
Graphics tablet (e.g. Wacom)	3
None	3
Dragon natural speaker	2
Laptop	2
Minidisc player	2
Pager	2
Palm pilot/PDA	2
AirPort	1
Analog camera	1

Cell phone	1
Digital audio recorder	1
DVD writer	1
Fax machine	1
Heart rate monitor	1
Intel	1
Memory stick	1
MP3 player/portable hard drive	1
Playstation 2	1
Photocopier	1
Remote control	1
TV adapter	1
TV tuner	1
USB device	1
Walkman	1

Question 13: *What operating system do you use?*

Note: the percentages are based on the total number of survey responses rather than on how many people said they own a computer.

	No. of Responses	%
WinXP	388	59
Win2000	97	15
Win98	128	20
WinNT	5	1
OSX	49	8
Mac OS 9x	30	5
Linux	11	2
I Don't Know	9	1
Other OS	31	5

Question 14: *How often do you download Windows and/or OSX updates to protect your system(s)?*

Frequency of security updates	No. of Responses	%
Never	112	18
Regularly	188	30
Updates automatic	219	35
I don't know	106	17
<i>Total</i>	625	100

Question 15: *Do you own anti-virus software?*

	No. of Responses	%
yes	529	85
no	96	15
Total	625	100

Question 16: *What brand of anti-virus software do you own?*

	No. of Responses	%
Norton	405	62
McAfee	134	21
Other	33	5

Question 16AA, "specify other": 31 responses

	No. of responses
PC-Cillin	8
Symantec Corporate	8
Don't know/remember, or not sure	4
Virex	2
Ad-aware	1
Avast	1
Computer associates	1
eTrust	1
EVG	1
Guardian	1
Norton	1
PC Doctor for Windows	1
ZoneAlarm	1

Question 17: *Have you downloaded a free copy of Norton Anti-virus from the Technology Website?*

Downloaded free NAV	No. of Responses	%
Yes	125	22
No	457	78
Total	582	100

Question 18: *If you haven't downloaded a free NAV copy, tell us why.*

	No. of Responses
Already have antivirus software	247
Didn't know about its free availability, its use, or its accessibility	98
Just did not consider it	15
Broken links or error messages displayed	13
No internet connection/ do not use internet with my computer	12
Too busy/forgot	9
Mac user	7
Took too long to install	5
Did not know how to install	5
Will install later	4

Slowed down computer system	2
Computer ran out of memory	2
Could not remember password	1
GSLIS gives Symantec for free	1
I do not open attachments	1

Question 19: *Do you use Instant Messaging (IM)?*

	No. of Responses	%
yes	435	67
no	218	33
Total	653	100

Cross tabulation between student type (#2) and IM (#19):

IM user	Student Type								Total
	UG		Grad		Dix		Other		
	No. of Responses	%	No. of Responses	%	No. of Responses	%	No. of Responses	%	
Yes	256	90%	149	47%	24	59%	6	86%	435
No	30	10%	170	53%	17	41%	1	14%	218
Total	286	100	319	100	41	100	7	100	653

Question 20: *What IM programs do you use?*

Note: multiple answers allowed.

	No. of Responses	%
AOL	375	57
Yahoo	75	12
iChat	20	3
Other	77	12

Question 1AA, "specify other": 86 responses, not summarized.

Question 21: *For what purpose(s) do you use IM?*

	No. of Responses	%
IM Social	426	65
Academics	188	29
Other	46	7

Question 1AA, "specify other": 43 responses, summarized as follows:

	No. of responses
Work/Business/Professional	20
Family and friends	14
Communication/organizing	7
News	1
Deaf/disability	1

Question 22: *What software do you use to complete all of your course work?*

Note: multiple answers allowed; percentages based on total number of responses.

	No. of Responses	%
Word	635	97
WebCT	507	78
PowerPoint	441	67
Excel	349	53
Photoshop	136	21
Other	75	12
Minitab	57	9
Access	46	7
Dreamweaver	38	6
SPSS	37	6
SAS	5	1

Question 1AA, "specify other": 100 responses, summarized as follows:

Software	No. of Responses
Apple Works	12
Adobe Acrobat	9
Adobe Illustrator	9
PHstat	9
QuarkXpress	9
WordPerfect	7
Microsoft Works	5
Filemaker Pro	4
Internet Explorer	4
Notepad	4
Open Office	4
Apple iMovie	3
Netscape	3
Apple Keynote	2
Apple Safari	2
Dragon Natural Speaking	2
Jasc Paint Shop Pro	2
Macromedia Flash	2
Microsoft PowerPoint	2
Microsoft Project	2
Activstats	1
Adobe Framemaker	1
Adobe InDesign	1
Apple Final Cut Pro	1
Apple Mail	1
AppleTextEdit	1
Arc View	1
BBEdit	1
ChemDraw	1
Course specific applications	1
Cute FTP	1
Element K	1

EViews	1
Font Reserve	1
FTP Transfer	1
HTML	1
Insight tech	1
Java	1
JGrasp	1
JMP	1
Lotus Word Pro	1
Microsoft Composer	1
Microsoft Publisher	1
Microsoft Studio C++	1
NIH Image software	1
Nikon view	1
NuSphere	1
On target	1
Paint	1
Perl	1
Print shop/MS Greetings workshop	1
Quark Illustrator	1
Search engines	1
Sparta	1
SPC Excel	1
Telnet	1
Textpad	1
Vim	1
Visio	1
Web authoring	1
Web coder 4	1
WebDesign 2.1.1	1

Question 23: *How would you rate your technical skills?*

	No. of Responses	%
Beginner	45	7
Intermediate	496	76
Advanced	111	17
Total	652	100

Question 24: *Have you ever needed hardware/software assistance?*

	No. of Responses	%
Yes	338	52
No	316	48
Total	654	100

Question 25: *If you needed technical assistance, where did you go to get help?*

Note: some provided more than one answer to this short answer question. For tabulation purposes, only the first response was counted, as categorized below.

	No. of Responses	%
Family/friends	110	32
Manufacturer	89	26
Help Desk	67	20
Other Technology Staff	48	14
Other Simmons staff	13	4
Work/colleagues	8	2
Other	6	2
Total	341	100

Question 26: *What type of assistance did you need?*

321 answered this question. Common answers were categorized as follows:

	No. of responses
Virus/worm/spyware/security	58
Software/application	45
Internet/network	31
Hardware/broken	26
Re/installation (software/hardware)	22
Email	9
Printer (hardware/software)	7
Computer frozen	3

Question 27: *Do you download sound or movie files from the Internet?*

	No. of Responses	%
yes	161	25
no	488	75
Total	649	100

Question 28: *If you do download sound or movie files, how often?*

Frequency of movie/sound downloads	Frequency	Percent of total # of surveys	Valid Percent of those that answered this question
Once a week or less	128	20	72
2-10 times/week	42	6	24
10+ times/week	7	1	4.0
Total	177	27	100

Question 29: *What email programs do you use?*

	No. of Responses	%
WebMail	563	86
Hotmail	243	37
Yahoo	204	31
Outlook	172	26
AOL	162	25
Other	106	16
Netscape	29	4
Entourage	8	1

Question 29AA, "specify other": 131 responses, summarized as follows:

	No. of responses
Internet Service Provider (Comcast, Juno, ATT, RCN, Verizon, Earthlink, CompuServe, AOL, Bell South, NetZero, Surf Global)	46
Online email provider (mostly free: MSN, Excite, Bolt, College Club, Fat Cow, Hello Kitty, Iam.bemzine, Ignitegeneration, Lycos, mail.com, Microsoft bcentral, Tdmail, webHost)	20
Eudora	17
Through another school or business	13
Apple mail	11
Groupwise	4
Mozilla thunderbird	4
First class	3
Internet Explorer	3
Lotus Notes	3
Pine	3
Pegasus	2
Charter mail	1
Dell mail	1

Evolution	1
Mail2web	1
Mulberry	1
Netscape	1
Outlook	1
Simmons email	1

Question 30: *Is @ Simmons your primary email account?*

	No. of Responses	%
Yes	216	33
No	434	67
Total	650	100

Cross-tabulation of student type (#2) and @ Simmons as primary email account (#30)

@simmons.edu primary email	Student Type								Total
	UG		Grad		Dix		Other		
	No. of Responses	%	No. of Responses	%	No. of Responses	%	No. of Responses	%	
Yes	145	51	60	19	8	20	3	43	216
No	139	49	258	81	33	80	4	47	434
Total	284	100	318	100	41	100	7	100	650

Question 31: *How often do you check your Simmons email account?*

	No. of Responses	%
Once a week or less	106	16
2-10 times/week	207	32
10+ times/week	340	52
Total	653	100

Question 32: *What are your preferred method(s) of saving and transporting documents?*
(check only 2)

Note: multiple answers were allowed.

	No. of Responses	%
Floppy	393	60
Zip	87	13
CD	166	25
DVD	8	1
Simmons server	100	15
USB device	94	14
Other	124	19

Question 32AA, "specify other": 133 responses, summarized as follows:

	No. of Responses
Email	112
Hard drive	15
Office servers	6
X-drive	1
Flash drive	1
In transition/ no preference/ don't know	5

Question 33: *What is the best way to inform you of resources and/or changes in User Services?*

Note: multiple answers were allowed.

	No. of Responses	%
Website	49	8
Signs	15	2
Handouts	5	1
Email	524	80
Campus announcements	55	8
Other	6	1
Total	654	100

Question 34: *How do you prefer to request services from or report problems to User Services?*

Note: multiple answers were allowed.

	No. of Responses	%
Phone	234	36
Email	371	57
In-person	40	6
Other	9	1
Total	654	100

Cross tabulation between student type (#2) and preferred method of learning about computers and software (#35)

Preferred training method	Student Type								Total
	UG		Grad		Dix		Other		
	No. of Responses	%	No. of Responses	%	No. of Responses	%	No. of Responses	%	
Workshops	42	15	80	25	10	24	0	0	132
Online tutorial	57	20	83	26	13	32	2	33	155
Manual	8	3	14	4	0	0	2	33	24
Self taught	131	46	85	27	10	24	2	33	228
One-on-one with tech staff	39	14	45	16	7	18	0	0	91
other	6	2	7	2	1	2	0	0	14
Total	283	100	314	100	41	100	6	100	644

Question 35: *How do you prefer to learn about using computers and software?*

Note: multiple answers were allowed.

	No. of Responses	%
Self taught	228	35
Online tutorial	155	24
Workshops	132	21
One-on-one with tech staff	91	14
Manual	24	4
Other	14	2
Total	644	100

Question 36: *For which software would you like to receive training/support?*

Note: multiple answers allowed; percentages based on total number of survey responses.

	No. of responses	%
Photoshop	210	32
Don't Need training	187	29
Dreamweaver	169	26
PowerPoint	157	24
Excel	144	22
Access	143	22
SPSS	81	12
SAS	64	10
Minitab	50	8
Word	47	7
WebCT	29	4

Question 36AA, "specify other": 13 responses

- Access Simmons server from Residence Campus
- Adobe Acrobat
- Adobe Illustrator (2)
- Digital camera
- Final Cut Pro
- HTML/web design software (2)
- Librarian-specific applications
- Macromedia Fireworks/Flash
- Outlook Express
- PDA training
- Quark Express
- Visio

Question 37: *What else can User Service do to meet your needs?*

155 answered, summarized as follows:

	No. of Responses
Good/satisfied/nothing	25
Improve webmail/email	9
Increase staffing /availability /hours	6
Publicize services	5
More training	5
Expand training hours	4
Go to dorms	4
Improve Mac support	3
Online tutorials	3
Improve/update website	3
Good tech communication	3
Slow server/internet	3
Like Norton	3
Purchase/ discount program	2
Residence campus printers	2
Improve kiosks	2
More wireless/less restrictive	2
Like training	2
Respond to email refs for help	2
Improve customer service	2
Support for students	1
How to use server	1
Improve WebCT	1
Late night hotline	1
Palm handheld help	1
Lab too crowded	1
SOM printers	1
Improve knowledge in lab staff	1
Improve antispam	1