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Issue #23, Summer 2015

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eLearning Team

The fall 2015 semester is quickly approaching and we are gearing up for the most students (online and traditional) in UTD's history. Last semester's survey asked about your thoughts on Competency Based Education (CBE). CBE courses allow students to advance based on their ability to master a skill or competency at their own pace. We received 302 responses. Here is what you said:

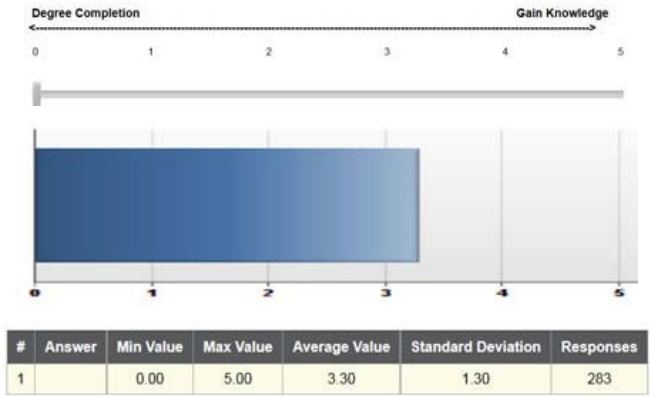
Question 1: Would you be interested in taking Competency Based Education (CBE) courses?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	<a href="#">Yes</a>	259	86%
2	<a href="#">No</a>	41	14%
Total		300	100%

Question 2: If taking CBE courses meant a large amount of your contact would be with Teaching Assistants (as opposed to a Professor), would that affect your decision to enroll?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	<a href="#">Yes</a>	140	47%
2	<a href="#">No</a>	160	53%
Total		300	100%

Question 3: Please move the slider to reflect your motivation for taking classes.



Question 4: Do you have any comments on Competency Based Education (CBE)?

45 out of 82 respondents expressed interest in exploring CBE. Examples of responses include:

- (a) Very progressive way of learning. It will free up time for other activities or difficult courses.
- (b) I have attended UTD for many years. In that time I have had to juggle a full time job (which includes shift work, change of shifts, etc.), an elderly mother, and a one hour commute. These and other factors have restricted me to one or two classes per semester. The commute alone takes up more than four hours that I could use for studying. In short, I am not certain what all CBE entails but I would be willing to explore it.
- (c) I think they would be a good option for students who are well versed in certain aspects of the course, because it would allow them to advance throughout the course without wasting time on topics already well known.

11 out of 82 expressed concern about potential substandard course quality:

- (a) This sounds like a good idea in theory, but may run into problems in practice. Some of these problems may be whether the student has truly mastered the material, or if they are simply using their textbook or other resources during evaluations to find the answers.
- (b) Sounds promising in the sense that I wouldn't be held back by people at a different point in their development or that work at a different pace, but I'm concerned about the possibility that this may be a "check the box to get a degree" opportunity.
- (c) The goal and stress for CBE should be about allowing flexibility to learn more rather than get done faster with degree requirements - otherwise it can be a slippery slope to below average quality of education.

Thank you for all of the great responses! I really do appreciate that you take your valuable time to share your opinions.

This semester, we would like to hear about your satisfaction with online courses at UT Dallas. We are always looking for ways to improve our courses, and enhance your educational experience. Please take a moment to answer this brief survey:



Best of luck in the fall semester!

Darren Crone, Ed.D., Assistant Provost, Educational Technology Services

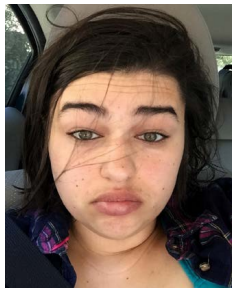
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### Featured Online Student

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The eLearning Team invites you to meet our students by viewing different student profiles in each newsletter. This semester's featured student is Mimi Newman.



**Mimi Newman**

**Where do you work?**

*As I struggle with a genetic condition, I've decided to focus on my studies and put my energy there. Also, being an international student, I can only work on campus so that makes finding a job limited.*

**What do you want to do after you finish your degree?**

*I want to be a writer. I want to write novels or screenplays that inspire young adults to explore the world and to look past their own front door. I would like them to educate themselves on the problems not only in our own society but also beyond that. However, I want to do this by encouraging imagination. I would also like to do journalistic work focusing on contemporary cinema.*

**How many online courses have you taken?**

*I have taken two online courses.*

**Why did you decide to take online courses?**

*I wanted to take the Earthquakes and Volcanoes course and Survey Oral & Tech Based Communications course online.*

**How is the online experience different from the traditional classroom?**

*It is self-paced which is incredible for me. I am often very tired because of my condition, so being able to make my own timetable was a huge benefit. The moments where I feel most refreshed or feel my best are the times that I can get the most out of myself. Online courses give me some control so that I can achieve the best level of study out of myself. You are also not contained to a classroom or lecture hall. I had extra energy because I could do the course in my pajamas compared to the energy I lose getting up and ready to catch the bus to the campus.*

**What makes an online course effective?**

*It must sound silly but the stress is lessened because of this. Being in my own environment just made everything more relaxed. A big thing for me, in communications especially, is I suffer from extreme anxiety. The online discussion boards allowed me to stay calm while getting involved because I didn't have to worry about face to face interaction.*

**Who was your favorite professor and why?**

*Of my online instructors, Professor Carlson is my favorite. He was very kind and understanding but still pushed me to get the most out of the activity. Every project handed back had feedback and he never shied away from enthusiasm; which is really refreshing. It is much easier to get involved in a course when the professor shows enthusiasm for the task. He also played devil's advocate within online discussions and probed us to make things more interesting. This made it more fun and it got the best results out of an exercise!*

***Is there any advice you can give to other online students?***

*You have to be self-motivated. You can forget about it if you think just because it's an online course it means you have less work to do. It is not a free credit or something to be ignored until the last minute since there isn't a professor to push deadlines or enforce the work. If you fall behind, it will come down on you like an avalanche. If you do not think you will have the motivation to keep up with the work, then it may be not be right for you. If you do want to take one online course, I would suggest allowing time in your diary each week to work on that course so that you do not end up being buried under a mountain of work. It can still be flexible, but it keeps the class on your mind every week so that you do not wind up with a semester's worth of work to do in a few days.*

If you would like to be featured in the eLearning Newsletter, [email us!](#)

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## **Jindal School of Management**

### ***Academic Advising***

#### **PREPARE FOR REGISTRATION**

The fall 2015 registration period is now in full swing. To prepare for registration, please make sure to follow these steps: (1) review the [Academic Calendar](#) for important deadlines, (2) clear all academic holds (registration blocks), (3) check your degree plan, (4) research your courses in [Course Lookup](#), and (5) plan your class schedule.

Once you are ready to register, you will be able to add your courses through [Galaxy](#).

Please make sure to check your UTD email address on a daily basis. The University and the Jindal School of Management Advising Office will communicate with you through your email throughout the registration period and will provide you with any necessary updates or helpful information.

At any time, if you encounter issues or have questions, please feel free to reach out to [our office for assistance](#).

Corina Cantua, Director | JSOM Academic Advising | [corina.cantua@utdallas.edu](mailto:corina.cantua@utdallas.edu) | 972-883-5963

Want to see an Advisor? Join the line from anywhere! Text JSOM to 626-414-3210 or Call: 855-883-5766

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## **Meet Our Faculty**



**Eric Carlson**

**Professor Eric Carlson** is a Senior Lecturer at UT Dallas and he specializes in communication education; mass communication; technology-based learning for speech communication; and Invitational Rhetoric. He teaches the online course Survey of Oral and Technology Based Communication (COMM 1311).

Mr. Carlson comes to UT Dallas after 11 years of teaching as Professor of Communication Studies at Collin County Community College. At Collin College, he taught both speech and mass communication courses, developing the college's first fully online core speech course. In addition to the Fundamentals of Human Communication course, Professor Carlson also taught Public Speaking, Business and Professional Communication, and Introduction to Mass Communication. In 2011, Mr. Carlson was nominated for the college's Professor of the Year award, and in 2014, he was named Professor of the Year for Collin College's Honor's Institute.

While at Collin College, Mr. Carlson spearheaded a national chapter of Sigma Chi Eta, The National Communication Association's honor society for communication students. Collin's Omega chapter won the NCA "Chapter of the Year" award in 2008.

At UT Dallas, Mr. Carlson co-developed the Survey of Oral and Technology-based Communication course in various learning modalities, including hybrid and online sections. He serves as the Basic Course Director for the online and honors sections.

Prior to teaching, Mr. Carlson spent his career in the publishing industry, working as a Senior Editor/Communication for various publishers, including Harcourt-Brace, South-Western, and Wadsworth College Publishers (now Cengage Learning). He had the opportunity to work directly with major researchers and authors in the communication discipline, guiding, managing, and market testing the development of their best-selling textbooks. He also served as a publisher's field representative for Bedford/St. Martin's publishers, and worked in the wireless telecom industry as a Relationship Manager/National Accounts.

As time and funding permits, Mr. Carlson likes to engage in regional and national communication conferences, participating and/or leading seminars in using technology for speech communication.

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*Newsletter edited by Rita Cubie, Administrative Assistant, UT Dallas eLearning Team*

