

Summary of 2026 MTSU Online Student Survey Results

Overview

The Spring 2026 MTSU Online Student Survey gathered feedback from students regarding their experiences with online learning, course engagement, instructor communication, support services, and technology. Overall, students expressed appreciation for the flexibility and accessibility of online learning, while also identifying several areas for improvement related to instructor engagement, communication, course organization, and student interaction.

A large number of respondents reported that online courses fit well with their personal and professional responsibilities, especially for working students, parents, graduate students, and students living outside the Murfreesboro area. Students frequently described online learning as convenient, flexible, and helpful for balancing employment, internships, and family obligations.

Student Demographics and Enrollment Trends

Survey responses represented a wide range of students across age groups, classifications, and work schedules. Many respondents were nontraditional students balancing school with full-time employment, internships, or family responsibilities. Graduate students and upper-level undergraduate students appeared prominently throughout the open-ended responses.

Many students reported working between 31–40 hours per week or more than 40 hours per week while enrolled in courses. Students also varied widely in credit-hour enrollment, demonstrating that online learning serves both part-time and full-time students.

Students consistently emphasized that online learning provides opportunities they might not otherwise have due to distance, work schedules, or family obligations. Several students specifically mentioned living far from campus and relying on online courses to continue progressing toward graduation.

Key Challenges Students Experienced

Balancing Responsibilities

Students frequently mentioned:

- Difficulty managing time effectively
- Heavy weekly assignment loads
- Feeling overwhelmed by multiple deadlines
- Limited time for reading and coursework
- Difficulty balancing school with work and personal responsibilities

Several students stated that online courses often felt more demanding than in-person courses because instructors assign numerous weekly activities such as readings, quizzes, discussion posts, writing assignments, and projects.

Communication and Instructor Engagement

Students appreciated instructors who:

- Posted weekly announcements or videos
- Responded quickly to emails
- Provided detailed feedback
- Recorded lectures or instructional videos
- Created a sense of connection in the online environment

However, some students reported:

- Delayed responses to emails
- Lack of feedback on assignments
- Confusing instructions
- Unclear grading expectations
- Courses that felt disorganized or impersonal

One recurring concern involved inconsistency between instructors. Students noted that every online course is structured differently, making it difficult to adapt to varying expectations and navigation styles.

Course Design and Engagement

Students repeatedly requested:

- More recorded lectures
- Interactive learning activities
- Live Zoom sessions or Q&A opportunities
- Better discussion board experiences
- More real-time interaction with instructors and peers

Discussion boards received particularly mixed feedback. Some students valued them, while others described them as repetitive, forced, or lacking meaningful interaction.

Several students also expressed frustration with group projects in online courses, especially when group members failed to participate equally.

Student Preferences and Learning Tools

Preferred Learning Methods

Students identified videos and interactive media as some of the most effective learning tools in online courses.

- Recorded lectures
- Demonstration videos
- Interactive assignments
- Practice problems
- Hands-on learning opportunities
- Structured modules

- Clear due dates
- Online textbooks
- Flexible pacing
- Assignments connected to real-world applications

A significant number of students preferred fully asynchronous or partially asynchronous course formats, allowing flexibility while still providing occasional live interaction opportunities.

Technology and Accessibility

Overall, students reported that submitting assignments online was relatively easy. Many students expressed satisfaction with the flexibility online learning provides.

However, students also identified several technical and accessibility concerns, including:

- Difficulty navigating course layouts
 - Confusing module organization
 - Problems with internet reliability during exams
 - Frustration with two-factor authentication
 - Limited mobile compatibility in some systems
 - Difficulty accessing online resources or assignment instructions
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Support Services and Resources

Students who used support services generally reported positive experiences with:

- The Writing Center
- Academic advising
- Library databases and research assistance
- Online library services

The Writing Center received especially strong praise throughout the survey. Students described tutors as helpful, supportive, and effective in improving writing assignments.

Library services also received positive feedback, particularly for:

- Research databases
- Online article access
- Virtual librarian assistance
- Textbook support

Several students requested:

- Better communication about available resources
 - More tutoring options beyond writing support
 - More support for math and technical courses
 - Improved guidance for nontraditional or first-time online students
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Overall Satisfaction and Recommendations

Overall feedback regarding MTSU Online was largely positive. Many students stated they would recommend MTSU Online courses to friends or colleagues, particularly for working adults and students seeking flexible scheduling.

Students frequently described MTSU Online as:

- Flexible
- Convenient
- Accessible
- Helpful for work-life balance
- Beneficial for completing degree requirements

Students also expressed appreciation for instructors who demonstrated strong communication, empathy, organization, and engagement.

Key Takeaways

The 2026 MTSU Online Student Survey demonstrates that online learning continues to provide significant value and flexibility for students with diverse educational and personal needs. Students appreciate the accessibility of online education and the opportunities it creates for working professionals, nontraditional learners, and students who live away from campus.

Overall, the survey results suggest that students value MTSU Online and recognize its strengths, while also encouraging continued efforts to improve communication, engagement, support services, and course quality across the online learning experience.