



**V C S U**  
VALLEY CITY STATE UNIVERSITY

# **TRANSFORMING HIGHER EDUCATION: EXCELLENCE WITHIN A CULTURE OF INNOVATION**

**STUDENT SURVEY RESULTS**  
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Valley City State University  
Notebook Computer Campus - Year Four 1999-2000



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## TRANSFORMING HIGHER EDUCATION: EXCELLENCE WITHIN A CULTURE OF INNOVATION

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### INTRODUCTION

Change has become an established norm for all aspects of contemporary life. Lifelong learning is a critical mandate, technology a revolutionizing force. Responding to a directive for meaningful change, Valley City State University has positioned itself as a leader among those institutions that seek to meet the challenge of transforming traditional education practice in meaningful ways

Capitalizing on its excellent reputation and historic role in teacher preparation, VCSU has earned national recognition for its transformational efforts. Focused on learners, directed by their needs, and influenced by a culture of innovation adopted several years ago, the college engages in ground-breaking efforts that enable faculty and students not only to increase their learning productivity and accountability but also to prepare for professional careers that extend well into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This report sets forth key components of the journey.

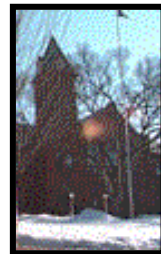
### VISION AND MISSION

Thanks to forward looking leadership from two presidents, visionary thinkers and planners among the faculty, an innovative campus culture, and an institutional willingness to embrace change, Valley City State University built on its tradition of excellence and witnessed phenomenal development throughout the 1990s. The North Dakota State Board of Higher Education recognized the emerging uniqueness and future potential of VCSU and in February 1990 mandated the university play a statewide leadership role in the effective use of instructional technology. That action would become the cornerstone for two separate mission statement revisions within a few short years and provide impetus for the transformation.

In 1992, the Board approved a VCSU mission revision that formalized its mandate for the institution to assume a leadership role in the effective use of instructional technology. This mission included this statement:

Pursuit of knowledge at VCSU is a dynamic, never ending process founded on a belief that the rapid emergence of technology as an intellectual, cultural and economic force requires new types of relationships with other human beings and significant changes in societal institutions.

Transformation of education practice within a culture of innovation had now become a serious challenge for the university. The prospect energized people on campus, but concerns about the “how” were enormous, especially since no financial assistance was forthcoming and there was no map to follow. Assurances from President Charles House were certainly helpful and the university had indeed established itself as a quality leader under his distinguished reign, but no one knew for sure exactly what VCSU was going to do in order accomplish all that might be required by this new mission designation.



Complicating the picture, the President announced his retirement intention, and the State Board of Higher Education then decided that the new VCSU leader would assume presidential responsibilities for two campuses within the North Dakota University System. After open discussion and hearings in both communities, the SBHE followed through on this resolution, in order to generate economic efficiencies during a time of dwindling state resources and also to increase learning opportunities for students. The colleges were determined to make the best of the arrangement, even though the decision created new uncertainties and questions that remain ongoing challenges.

VCSU had no choice but to forge ahead. It had a mandate. It had not resolved the “how.” Credit the new visionary president for recognizing that Valley City State University needed a vision. As a critical first step, President Ellen Earle Chaffee created conditions for success by establishing a process and a team to work on one. After several weeks of deliberation and input, the university community formally adopted its vision statement in January 1994. Grounded in institutional mission, principles, and values, it would provide both direction and inspiration.

Valley City State University is a nationally recognized learner-centered caring community committed to continuous improvement.

In 1994, this ambitious vision statement was way out there, and some folks outside the institution even thought it humorous that VCSU could make such an assertion, much less take it seriously.

The vision statement gave the college wings. Pursuant action and practice over the next three years made it apparent that the 1992 revised mission would no longer be adequate to describe who or what Valley City State University was. After lengthy campus-wide discussion on various draft statements, the institution proposed a revised mission that the North Dakota State Board of Higher Education ultimately adopted at its February 1998 meeting.

Valley City State University is a learner-centered community dedicated to continuing improvement in meeting student needs. Preparing individuals to serve in a changing world, the institution provides a quality educational experience in an innovative culture and a technologically enhanced environment.

A leader in the effective use of instructional technologies, Valley City State University is a member of the North Dakota University System and offers baccalaureate degrees in education, business, and the liberal arts.

This mission statement includes descriptive language that reflects carefully chosen elements essential to Valley City State University, for now and the foreseeable future.

## **ACTION AND PRACTICE – THE VISION MADE REAL**

### **SYMBOLS OF CHANGE**

Two new institutional units were instrumental in the change process. VCSU worked with a group of public school administrators to create the Center for Innovation in Instruction in 1993, the first of two major steps. Based at VCSU, the CII adopted the mission statement, “Improving Teaching with Technology”, and committed to serve the common technology needs of North Dakota educators at all levels. The Center was funded through a combination of fees for services and grants from public schools, vocational education, higher education, and more recently the federal government. Directed by Dan Pullen, the CII staff offers technology workshops, planning assistance, leadership institutes, and a variety of other services on campus and across the state.



Exemplary fulfillment of its mission earned the Center for Innovation in Instruction and Valley City State University the 1996 CAUSE Award for Best Practices in Professional Development.

In 1994, Valley City State University established the Kathryn Center for Lifelong Learning. Currently directed by Dan McRoberts, it is designed to provide experiences that support the institutional mission as a model for the application of innovative instructional technology and to provide a professional development and training center for internal and external groups and organizations.



The KCLL outdoor high ropes adventure learning course and other programs promote team building, risk taking, trust, communication, problem solving, and lifelong learning. The Center offers workshops and seminars throughout the region on topics such as conflict resolution, total quality management, customer service, strategic planning, Achieveglobal (Zenger Miller) Myers Briggs Type Indicator, experiential learning, computer software training, and supervisory development. Since its creation, the Kathryn Center for Lifelong Learning has served several thousand corporate employees, in addition to many campus-based programs. It provides instructional support for the VCSU Corporate Training minor, assumes an integral role in new student orientation, and relies on faculty, staff and students to assist with facilitation and corporate training needs.

In an era of limited state financial resources, VCSU organized both the CII and the KCLL to create centers for change, to meet campus needs, and to generate revenue from outside customers. Because they competitively meet needs of outside groups, they are well positioned to maintain the leading edge skills that assist VCSU faculty, staff, and students, an unanticipated benefit to the university. These two symbols of change have successfully established themselves to operate over the longer term as sustainable campus resources.

## LEARNER CENTERED EDUCATION

Convinced of the necessity for sweeping change and determined to make it so, Valley City State University faculty members, with input from students, responded to the revised mission and vision. They redefined the teacher role by a new focus on the learner; a commitment to instructional technologies across the curriculum; and improving the quality of the learning experience. The student became the center of the learning universe.



Faculty engagement was characterized by:

- Frequent and extensive conversations during brown-bag seminars and informal late afternoon gatherings.
- Recognition that students and people from the broader community needed to be partners in the dialogue.
- Abandonment of teacher as source of information in favor of a role as consultant, facilitator, and adviser.
- The view that students are actively involved in and responsible for their own learning.
- Definition of required institutional abilities for students to master.
- Challenging traditional assessment strategies to define and document competencies.

- Increasing communication and enhancing motivation.
- A focus on customizing learning opportunities.
- Use of various instructional technologies as essential tools.

The American Psychological Association and Mid-continent Regional Educational Laboratory identified learner centered psychological principles as the foundation for guidelines that can provide direction in school redesign and reform. VCSU faculty and staff made a commitment to provide meaningful learning experiences related to these principles. Lending credibility and support to campus initiatives, in 1996 McREL chose VCSU as one of six universities in the nation to participate in a multiyear project on learner centered education. This partnership expanded to include area K-12 schools.

What does learner centered education represent? At VCSU, it means practices that:

- Help learners pursue meaningful goals.
- Make learning meaningful and fun.
- Enhance learner ability to set learning goals and experience success in meeting them.
- Involve learners actively in learning.
- Broaden ways for learners to receive and/or present information.
- Contribute to higher level thinking among learners.
- Enable learners to engage in activities that promote choice and responsibility.
- Make the learning environment supportive and positive.
- Increase learner level of motivation.
- Support learner curiosity and intrinsic interest in learning.
- Contribute to meeting individual learner needs.
- Enable learners to integrate and organize knowledge in personally meaningful ways.
- Provide a variety of settings for learning.
- Help diminish competition in learning.
- Foster cooperation in learning.
- Empower learners to meet their learning needs.
- Help learners to increase the quality of their relationships.
- Broaden learner appreciation for the diversity among people.
- Make the learning environment more responsive to learning needs.
- Help learners assume personal responsibility for learning.

While the campus had committed to these effective practices, something more was required. What? How? Further institutional change was inevitable.

#### UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO COMPUTERS

VCSU was at a crossroads. The institution was faced with the expensive prospect of updating its campus computer laboratories, indefinitely. Learners were restricted as to the times they could use those labs. Labs were not always a very convenient place to do work. Staffing issues proved difficult. Accountability expectations were high. Judicious use of public money was a critical consideration. Accomplishing any goal related to technology use and learner centered education seemed an increasingly insurmountable task without additional financial support or a major shift in resources or a more creative solution.

In 1993 an informal group composed of faculty and staff voluntarily formed the Committee for Innovation and Technology in Education. Over a two-year period, the study and work of this group led to greater campus dialog and inspiration for change. The committee is also credited with the ultimate completion of the 1995 VCSU Technology Plan, valuable for the institution and one used by others as a model. Process and development details related to their pioneering work are available at <http://www.vcsu.nodak.edu/offices/itc/notebooks/articles/planning.htm>.

The impact of the Committee for Innovation and Technology in Education cannot be overstated. Largely through their influence, VCSU embraced creative solutions to accomplish its goals and came to consensus on critical issues. Eventually, it became clear to faculty and students alike that becoming a notebook computer campus was the only viable thing to do. Only universal access to computers would enable Valley City State University to achieve progress essential to its learner centered environment. Everyone would need computer access, twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. The President paved the political path, and the State Board of Higher Education approved yet another major VCSU initiative.



In 1996 Valley City State University became the first university in North Dakota and the second one in the United States to provide notebook computers to its students and faculty. Worth noting, it was the first such institution in the country whose mission included teacher education. Universal notebook computer access pushed the university into uncharted territory and became key to many more successful change efforts.

What is the big deal about universal access? Based partially on student survey results, VCSU is confident that access to information is virtually limitless. Students become more actively involved in and responsible for their own learning. Communication among students and faculty increases. Learning ends up being more meaningful and fun. Motivation is enhanced. Work is completed more efficiently. Customizing learning is more likely to happen. Learners have at their disposal an effective tool to assist them as they define and document their abilities and competencies.

In addition to universal notebook computer access, several other critical factors came together for Valley City State University to help make its vision reality.

- A yearly strategic plan for the university provided direction.
- The institution required students to create portfolios to document learning and abilities.
- The college reallocated resources to accommodate technology needs and infrastructure.
- Faculty development opportunities, including technology training, were prevalent.
- Futuristic thinking that involved risk and willingness to change became the norm.
- An innovative campus culture worked to ensure a quality educational environment.
- The University President provided visionary leadership and support.
- Administration, faculty, staff, and students engaged in exemplary institutional planning.
- Governing bodies, on and off campus, lent their support.
- Commitment to learner centered education afforded a key focus.
- A campus infrastructure supported academic integration of technology.

While all of these factors were important, faculty development opportunities not only assisted VCSU in making its vision real, they prompted additional transformational efforts.

## FACULTY DEVELOPMENT

Both preceding and coinciding with the use of the notebook computers, a comprehensive VCSU faculty development model evolved to include specific technology-based activities. Grant funding has been critical to faculty development at VCSU, as well as to a broader scope of change in the learner centered educational environment. The institution has been successful in securing outside funding to help with creative proposals in sync with national priorities for education.

VCSU initially obtained funding from the Bush Foundation and the Fund for the Improvement of Post Secondary Education to finance faculty development and travel to exemplary technology sites. In addition, the institution benefited from a \$1.4 million collaborative United States Department of Education Title III grant to promote instructional innovation through learning teams composed of students and faculty, as well as a \$1.7 million institutional Title III grant to move

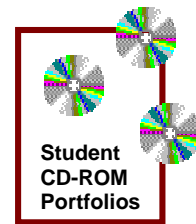
forward with customized learning initiatives. Faculty members also worked cooperatively on several other grant projects involving the effective use of technology.

Two notable campus initiatives resulted from grant-based activities.

- VCSU adopted eight institutional abilities that provide a framework for student outcomes.
  - Communication
  - Global perspective
  - Problem solving
  - Wellness
  - Collaboration
  - Aesthetic engagement
  - Technology
  - Effective citizenship

Each of these eight abilities has a corresponding set of skills that define them more precisely.

- Student portfolio creation became a VCSU degree requirement. Students design their portfolios to include course projects based on defined institutional Abilities. Those students currently opting to create CD-ROM portfolios have the potential to enhance employment prospects.



Dr. Therese Corwin, Information Technology Director, claims that "Presently, the educational employers who have seen our graduate portfolios are more impressed by the technology than by the content. I believe that when the portfolios can be accessed from the web, they will be more useful to employers." Though Corwin remarks that this is the direction, she adds that the "web is not quite ready for all of the technology our students are using."

Beyond these two major initiatives, Valley City State University is moving toward increasing customized learning opportunities for individuals and groups and plans to create a centralized institute for learning and teaching. Grant funding is vital to support this important endeavor.

## **SYNERGY OF VISION AND MISSION**

The phrase Synergy of Vision and Mission comes from an NCATE report on Valley City State University. The 1996 visitation team from the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education recognized VCSU for Exemplary Practice and noted:

Valley City State University through its collaborative work with the Center for Innovation in Instruction (CII) and the Kathryn Center, and through the initiative of its faculty in pursuing grants, has achieved a synergy of vision and mission in action which would not normally be possible for an institution of its size and financial resources. In this case, the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Noting that institutional culture is notoriously resistant to change, VCSU has achieved virtual transformation of the culture of the entire institution...these multiple efforts have worked in concert, focusing philosophy, and broad range of human and financial resources, to create institution-wide movement toward their long range vision to be a leader in technology in education.

While the entire campus community is credited for the commendable review by NCATE, Division Chairman Dr. Larry Grooters, Division of Education and Psychology faculty members, and teacher education students have exercised broad leadership for change, on campus and beyond. Prior to institutional adoption of the portfolio requirement for graduation, the Division had accepted and encouraged portfolio creation as an alternative to taking the National Teacher Exam, a program exit requirement. It has actively supported various campus initiatives and exercised leadership in promoting innovation. In 1994, the Division sponsored what would

become its Annual Partners in Quality Conference. Featuring a prominent keynote presenter each year, this event is well attended by P-16 educators, parents, and pre-service teachers.

*Technology and the New Professional Teacher: Preparing for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Classroom*, a 1997 report of an NCATE Task Force on Technology and Teacher Education, recognizes and underscores the influence that the VCSU teacher education program exerts at the national level. Referencing that report, Arthur Wise, President of NCATE, sent President Ellen Earle Chaffee a letter that states, in part:

The report derives its credibility from the expertise of its members and their selection of exemplary practices to highlight. The task force cited a project at your institution as a case illustration. Your selection makes clear that you are at the cutting edge of teacher preparation practice. Your inclusion in our report should extend your influence and help to change the norms of practice.

In addition to NCATE, the American Association of Higher Education, American Association of University Administrators, IBM, American Association of State Colleges and Universities, and the Mid-continent Regional Educational Laboratory are among those that have found ways to endorse and approve the transformational excellence at VCSU.

A summary list of other recognitions would include:

- 1996 John L. Blackburn Award Winner for exemplary administrative leadership
- 1996 CAUSE Award Winner for Best Practices in Professional Development
- FIPSE grant
- \$1.4 million cooperative Title III grant, 1995-2000
- \$1.7 million institutional Title III grant, 1998-2003
- Bush Grants for faculty development
- Eisenhower Grant and US West Grant
- 1999 US News Awards - top regional public liberal arts college ranking
- 2000 US News Awards - top regional public liberal arts college ranking
- State and national conference presentations by VCSU faculty, as well as professional publications
- VCSU faculty members have been consultants and presenters for IBM.
- VCSU included in several versions of an IBM three-ring binder used to promote the ThinkPad University concept.
- The 1999 IBM Global Campus brochure, "ThinkPad University - The edge for education", features Valley City State University, Seton Hall and Villanova. A PDF file of this document is available at the IBM higher education web site: <http://www.hied.ibm.com/thinkpadu/what.html>.
- "The Results Are In", an article by Peter Benchley, 1999 spring issue of the IBM Multiversity Magazine, features VCSU, along with three other higher education institutions.
- The IBM ThinkPad University on Campus site identifies several interesting articles on notebook computer campuses, including Valley City State University. Readers may access this site at <http://www.hied.ibm.com/thinkpadu/oncampus.html>.
- VCSU remains a sought-after leader among those engaged in transformational efforts and has become a resource for other organizations. Among them are:
  - University of Hong Kong.
  - Clayton College and State University in Georgia.
  - Seton Hall University in New Jersey.
  - Pennsylvania State University in Harrisburg.
  - IBM in Minneapolis, Minnesota and San Francisco, California.
  - University of La Verne in Alaska.
  - Sigmund Weis School of Business at Susquehanna University in Pennsylvania.



- The Teaching, Learning, and Technology Group of AAHE in Washington, D.C.
- Wake Forest University in North Carolina.
- Vanderbilt School of Engineering in Tennessee.
- The College of St. Scholastica in Minnesota.
- Representatives from the Higher Education Funding Council of England, an entity that determines government funding distributions to universities in the country. Among those visitors to campus, a faculty member from the University of Kent.

While exercising bold moves, VCSU is in some ways only at the threshold of new developments. The possibilities are endless in this age of explosive technological change and insistent consumer demand for quality.

Since the college is committed to continuous improvement, it will explore new and better methods to meet the needs of those who seek its services. Establishing priorities and finding money to apply cutting edge practice to theory will remain among the toughest challenges for the institution.

## **PARTNERSHIPS**

In the world today, institutions cannot afford to work in isolation or retain the *ivory tower* image so highly valued in the past. A new age calls for reform, and it will not suffice for any university to go it alone or cling to the status quo. Accordingly, Valley City State University has established several partnerships and will pursue others as needs dictate. Currently, the institution partners formally with the following entities:

- Barnes County Consortium.
- Barnes County Historical Society and Museum.
- Universities in Mexico and Canada: LaPaz, Oaxaca, and Brandon.
- Great Plains Software.
- NetworkCenter Incorporated
- Mayville State University.
- North Dakota State University.
- The Regional Technology Center.

The approved Regional Technology Center represents the most recent and exciting partnership. Valley City State University and the Valley City Barnes County Development Corporation will build a new 20,000 square foot state-of-the-art building to support and spur economic development in Instructional Technology.



Funding for this grand project exceeds \$1.6 million. The regional EDA is providing \$500,000, and together the city and county have committed to \$250,000 up front for construction and another \$250,000 over a five-year period for ongoing operating costs and debt repayment. In addition, the US West Foundation has donated \$150,000 to the project. In a letter to Jennifer Feist, Director of Development, Judy Pepler said US West was "pleased to have the opportunity to become a partner in the development of an IT economy for the area and look forward to working with your team on the community infrastructure and technical needs for the new Regional Technology Center."

Loans and tenant rent will cover the remaining costs associated with this initiative. The University will occupy space in the facility, with the Center for innovation in Instruction overseeing general operations. In addition to housing the CII and the VCSU Technology Education Program, the Regional Technology Center will provide a wide range of services tailored to meet a variety of technology needs. Two private companies involved in information technology have already signed letters of intent to join the Center, which promises to become a powerful force for renewal and change, not only at VCSU but also within the greater Barnes County area and beyond.

## **IMPROVING TECHNOLOGY COMPETENCIES**

Online at <http://www.milkenexchange.org/>, the Milken Professional Competency Continuum is an outstanding resource that provides educators with a framework for being successful in a digital-age classroom. The site includes an interactive online assessment that measures competency in using educational technology and provides “advice, specific recommendations and resources for improving professional competency to support student learning.”

“As a catalyst to change in classroom practice, learning technology can help educators promote active and participatory student learning. But the key to success isn’t in the computers, probeware, graphing calculators or access to networks and the Internet. It is liberated educators, whose understanding and creative use of technology can help them to achieve undreamed-of levels of excellence for themselves and for their students.”

Lowell Milken,  
President and Co-Founder of the Milken Family Foundation

Several respected education experts provided input to the PCC that resulted in identification of five key areas to target for improvements to professional development. They are:

- Core Technology Skills
- Curriculum, Learning and Assessment
- Professional Practice
- Classroom and Instructional Management
- Administrative Competencies

These areas are currently the focal point of a major North Dakota project. The VCSU Center for Innovation in Instruction and other important associated entities worked together to earn a \$7.3 million United States Department of Education Technology Innovation Challenge Grant award. The grant has resulted in an impressive Teaching With Technology Initiative that makes use of the Milken Professional Competency Continuum. This project, coordinated by CII Director Dan Pullen, is a plan whereby all interested North Dakota P-16 teachers will have opportunities to become skilled in using technology tools effectively in teaching and learning.

## **THE LEARNER SURVEY**

An interesting and relevant essay is available at <http://www.aahe.org/technology/ehrmann.htm>. *Implementing the Seven Principles: Technology as Lever*, by Arthur W. Chickering and Stephen C. Ehrmann, focuses on using technology tools in ways consistent with the research-based Seven Principles of Good Practice in Undergraduate Education, created by Art Chickering and Zelda Gamson.

1. Good Practice Encourages Contacts Between Students and Faculty.
2. Good Practice Develops Reciprocity and Cooperation Among Students.
3. Good Practice Uses Active Learning Techniques.
4. Good Practice Gives Prompt Feedback.
5. Good Practice Emphasizes Time on Task.
6. Good Practice Communicates High Expectations.
7. Good Practice Respects Diverse Talents and Ways of Learning.

“If the power of the new technologies is to be fully realized, they should be employed in ways consistent with the Seven Principles.” The authors expand on appropriate uses of technologies for each of these principles. Concluding their essay, Chickering and Ehrmann provide concrete suggestions for both students and faculty members, offer insight regarding institutional policies, and give a word of advice to legislators and benefactors.

Dr. Kathryn Holleque, VCSU Professor in the Division of Education and Psychology, designed The Learner Survey to obtain information relative to learner centered practices and effective use of instructional technologies. Learner centered psychological principles identified by the American Psychological Association and Mid-continent Regional Educational Laboratory initially formed the basis for constructing the survey, which includes items from earlier student surveys Holleque created and administered on campus.

The Seven Principles of Good Practice, along with the corresponding Flashlight Project, closely parallel APA and McREL learner centered psychological principles. Because of the close association, The Learner Survey items can be coded according to specific factors created through the Flashlight Project, a program related to technology use and described at <http://www.wiche.edu/flshlght/flash.htm>. VCSU has purchased the rights to use this material. By grouping questions by code and tracking change over time through The Learner Survey, VCSU can look at increases or decreases in these factors across the university. Researchers are in the process of double coding with the Seven Principles, as well, since a notable overlap exists. Charts comparing entry-level student responses throughout the first four years of the notebook initiative conclude this document.

Data from numerous campus surveys reflect positive perceptions from both students and faculty. Accumulating evidence continues to be encouraging and fortifies the identity of Valley City State University as an exemplary learner centered institution and an undisputed leader in the effective use of instructional technologies.

## **THE FUTURE**

Valley City State University is on the transformational fast track. Final destination not in sight! While creative ideas abound for making improvements in teaching and learning, VCSU has currently committed itself to an approach outlined in its next Bush Foundation Grant proposal for faculty development. Bush Foundation funding has been vital to achieving progress on campus goals, and securing that support will ensure institutionalizing additional change efforts.

The Vision Statement of the Bush 2000 Faculty Development Grant is *Bridging from common benchmarks to customized portfolios with 100% faculty involvement*. The purpose involves increasing faculty ability to:

- Understand the theory behind non-traditional learning approaches.
- Apply on-line software to the teaching/learning process.
- Apply and evaluate ability-based assessment.

The main strategy will be to create a centralized institute for learning and teaching, and three goals will frame the process.

1. To support and understand a customized approach, focusing on learning styles and best practices within a technology rich environment.
2. To maximize learning for a lifetime by providing the faculty with the best practices and research on customized and on-line design.
3. To document and assess student learning to confirm and improve the quality of instruction.

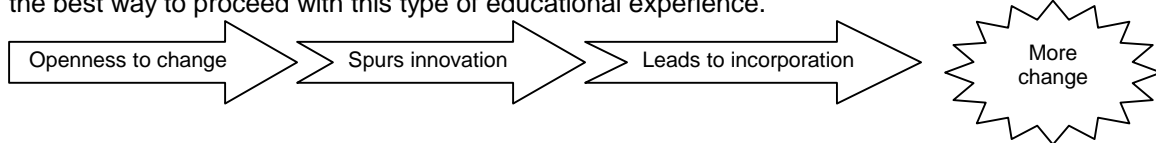
Customizing educational opportunities has been part of the VCSU strategic plan for a couple of years. Focused discussion and campus activity related to the eight defined institutional abilities,

learning styles, student assessment, learning online, and digitized portfolios for students and faculty has already begun. Early in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the college will distinguish itself in bringing these areas together.

Online learning is in its infancy here. Thanks to the latest Title III Grant directed by Dan Pullen and inspired by visionary faculty member Dr. Donald Mugan, the Educational Technology program of study is available entirely online for re-training educators. In addition, the institution currently has several courses delivered at least partially online. Previous surveys, given by Holleque to students taking her VCSU courses partially online, reveal that most students agree completing coursework online:

- Is more convenient.
- Meets learning needs better.
- Fosters greater personal responsibility for learning.
- Contributes to more effective communication in the class.
- Increases Internet familiarity.
- Provides more feedback opportunities.
- Promotes greater participation and interaction.

Furthermore, most students reported that they prefer to complete coursework partially or entirely online, rather than meet regularly in a classroom setting. Specific results and student comments are available on the Holleque survey www site, identified later. The institution will continue to gather appropriate information and engage in serious dialog and planning, in order to determine the best way to proceed with this type of educational experience.



### **PERSONAL COMMENT**

The Valley City State University community continues to be excited about and energized by change. What is happening here is important and necessary and worthwhile and right! The momentum is contagious and exhilarating.

Nationally acclaimed authority in higher education circles, Dr. Ellen Earle Chaffee, President, offers uncompromising vision, leads courageous tasks, clears major roadblocks, finds alternate routes, blazes new trails, and vigorously promotes the institution, tirelessly. Dr. Leslie Wong, Vice President for Academic Affairs, brings outstanding experience, exceptional scholarship, innovative ideas, reflective thinking, depth of character, keen awareness of cultural diversity, and a warm, delightful sense of humor to his new position. Former faculty member turned Chief Information Officer, Joseph Tykwinski engages in important futuristic planning and exerts broad leadership on technology issues. These individuals find countless ways to affirm other people, support campus initiatives, and encourage innovative ideas. Leadership matters! But leadership is not the whole story. It is part of something far more important.

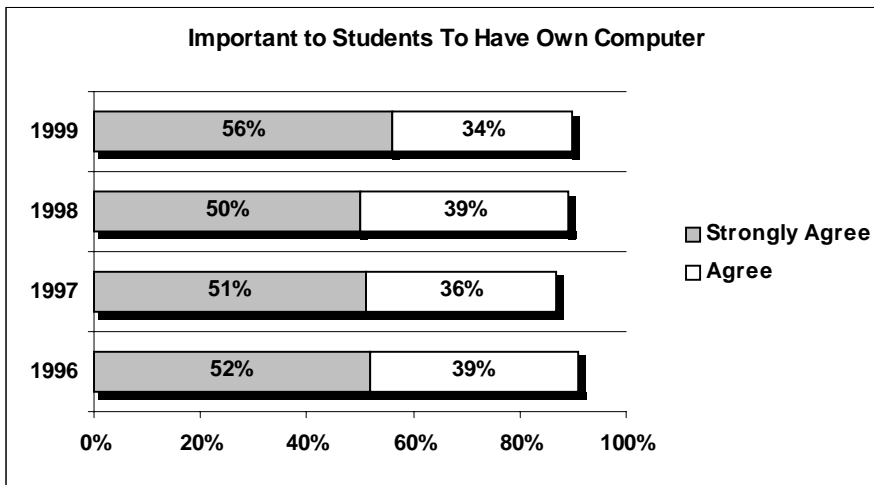
Valley City State University administrators, faculty, staff, and students work exceedingly hard at their various pursuits and bring joy to the journey. They give a great deal of themselves, personally and professionally, and in the process build upon the tradition of excellence that defines the institution. These are not isolated groups that have nothing to do with each other. They care about each other and work together in a collegial spirit of cooperation. While they disagree from time to time and deal with difficult issues along the way, care remains. It is people who are important at Valley City State University, people who matter most. This person is deeply grateful for their presence in her life.

*Kathryn Holleque, December 1999*

# Valley City State University Survey Trends

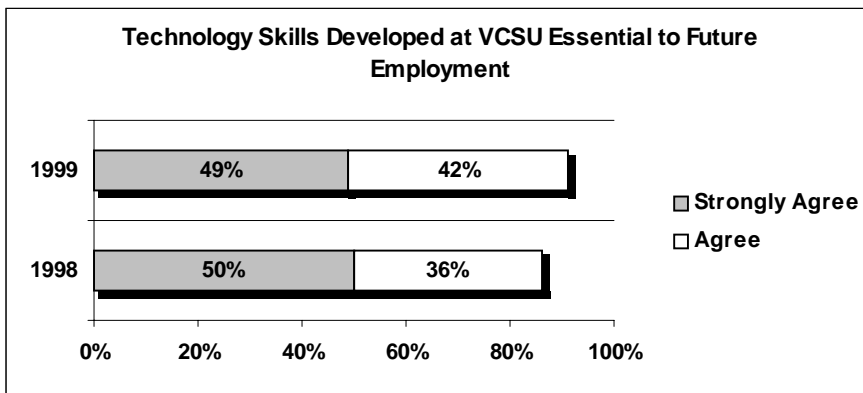
Learner centered practices  
 Notebook computer campus since 1996

Constructs related to Flashlight Project code



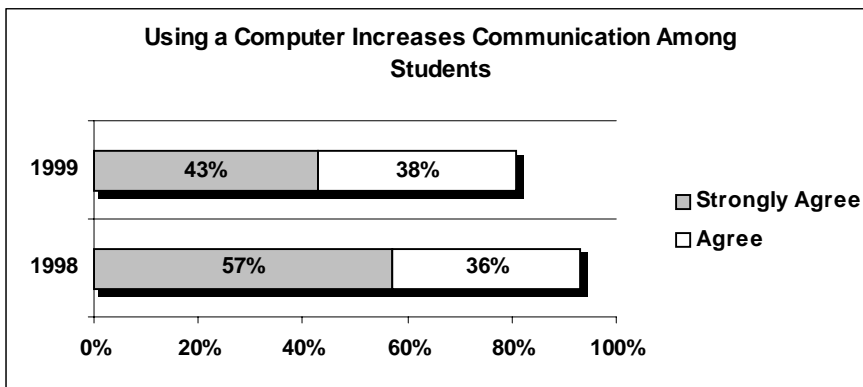
Accessibility

Positive addition to technology

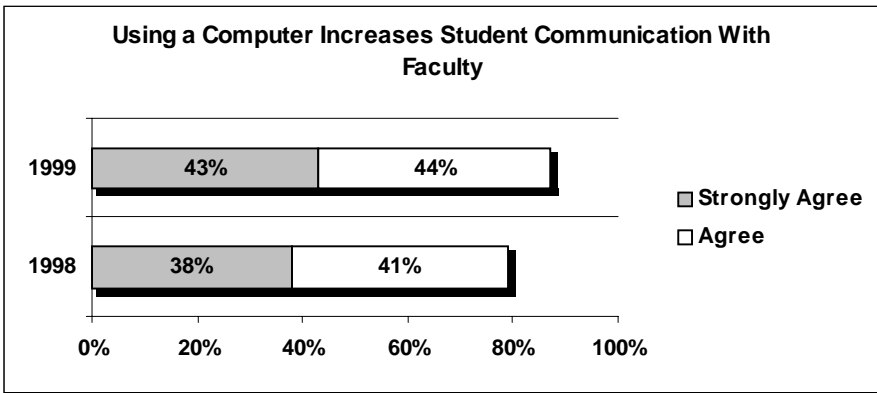


Application to "real world" problems

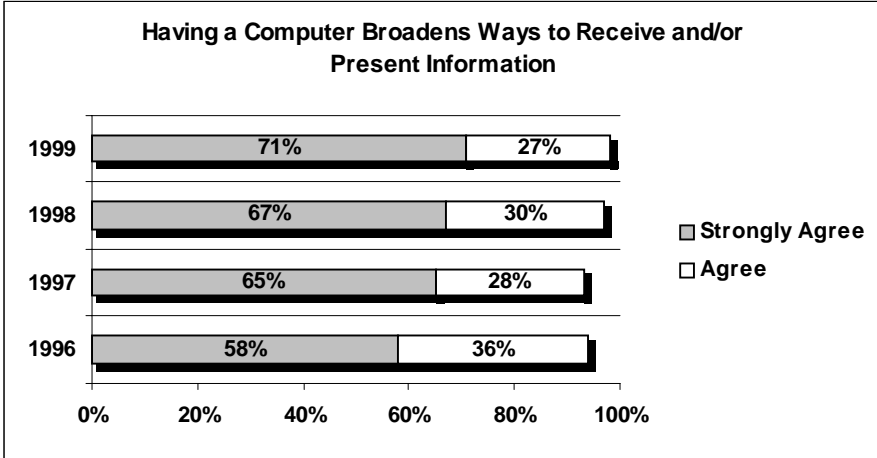
Preparation for work



Collaborative learning (and other forms of student-student interaction)

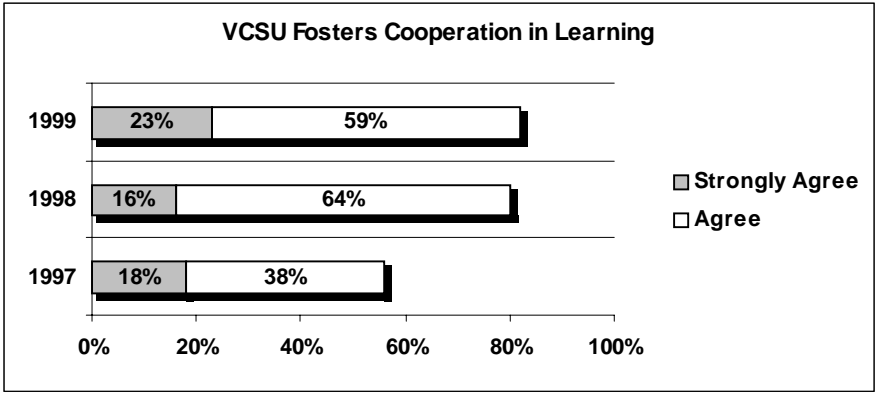


Faculty-student interaction

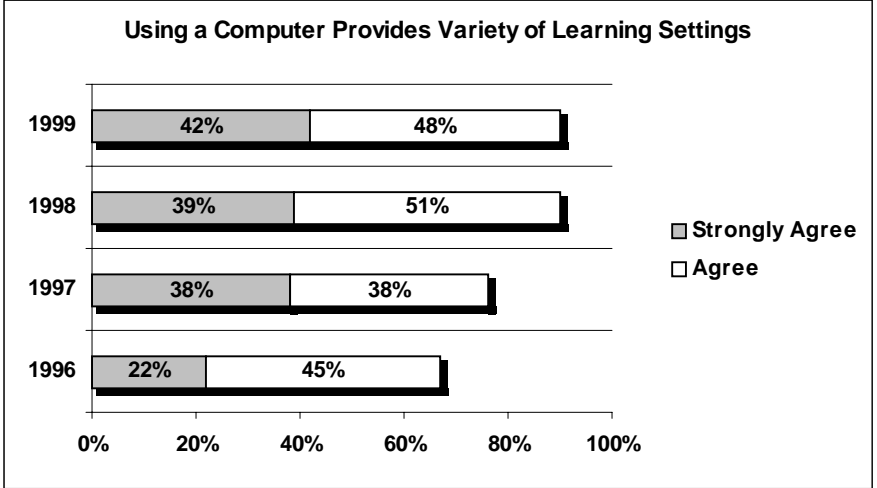


Respect for diversity

Cognitive and creative outcomes (including encouraging diversity)

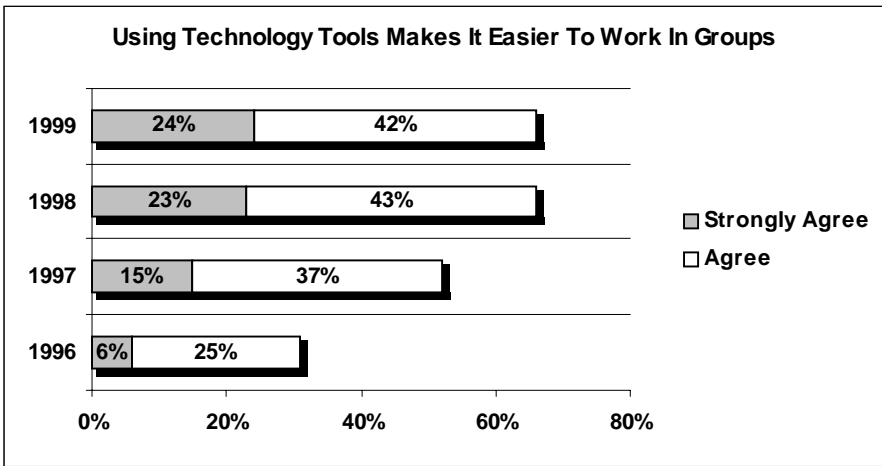


Collaborative learning

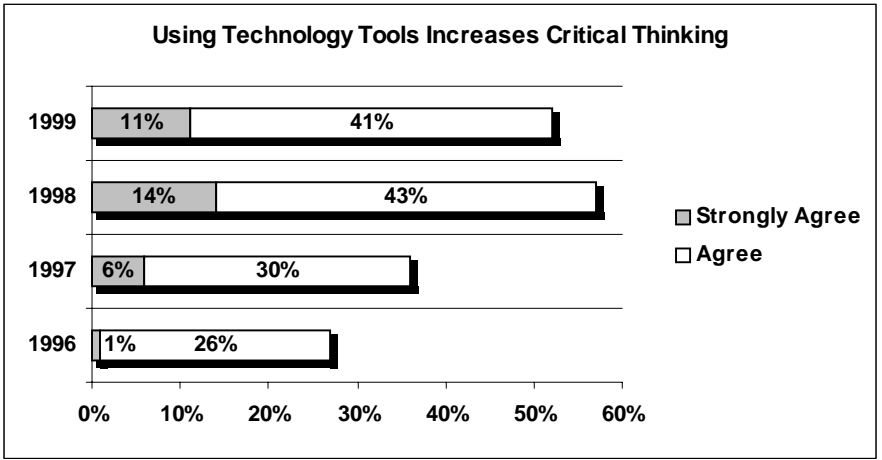


Engagement in learning

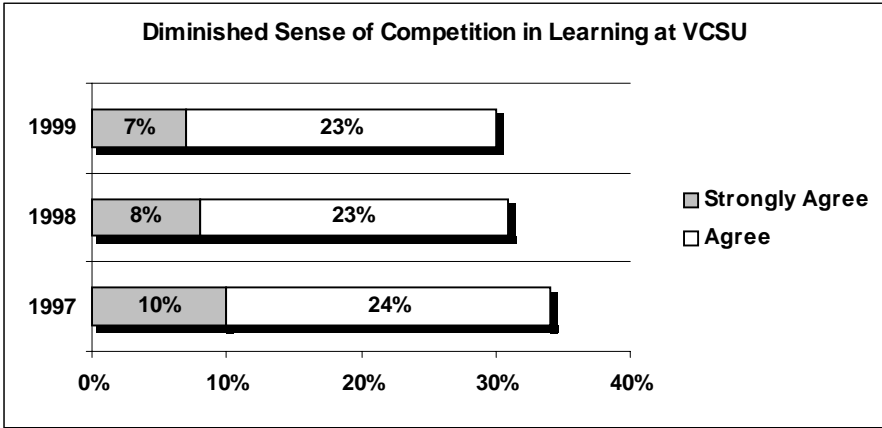
High expectations for all students regardless of learning style



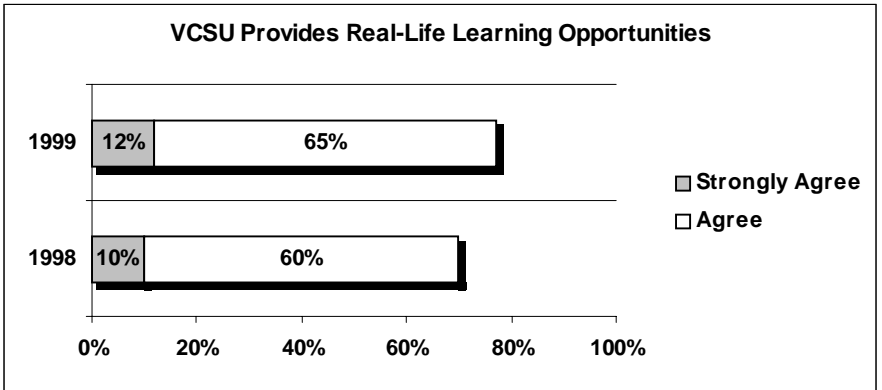
Using time productively  
Collaborative learning



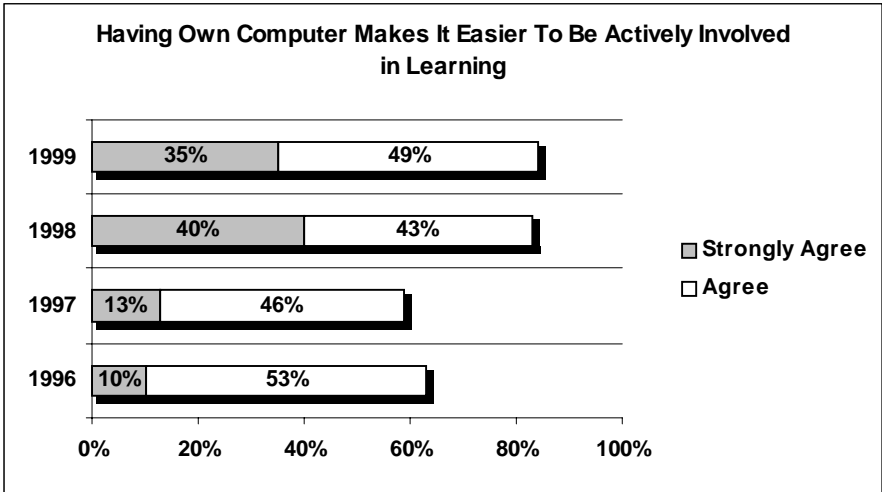
Cognitive and creative outcomes (including encouraging diversity)  
Engagement in learning



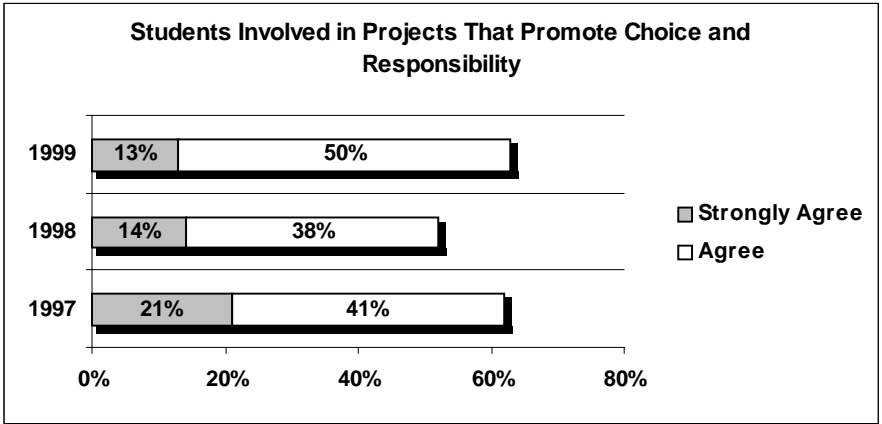
Respect for diversity  
Collaborative learning



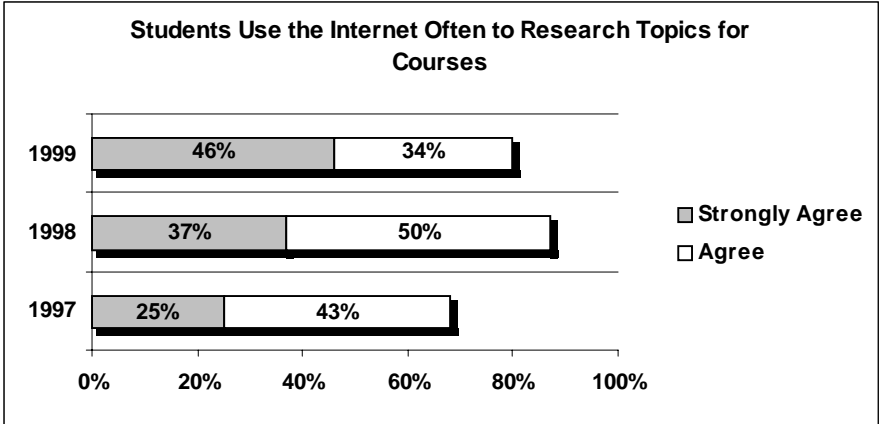
Application to "real world" problems  
Preparation for work



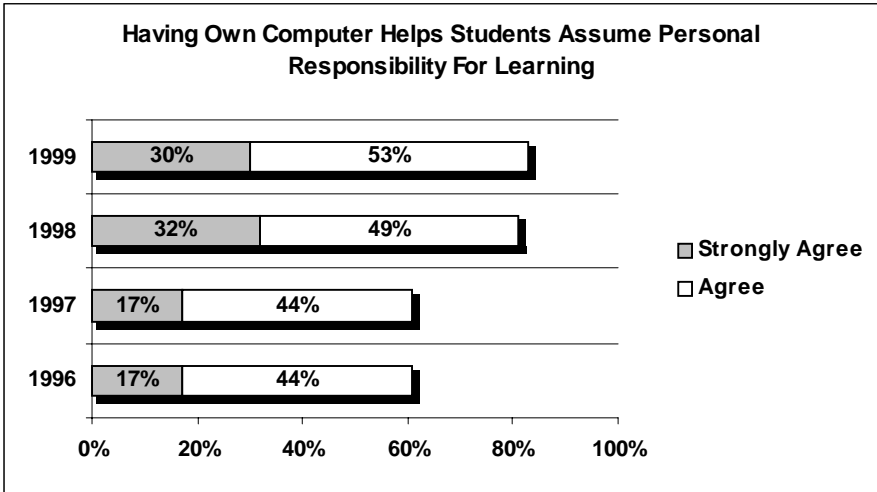
Active learning  
Engagement in learning



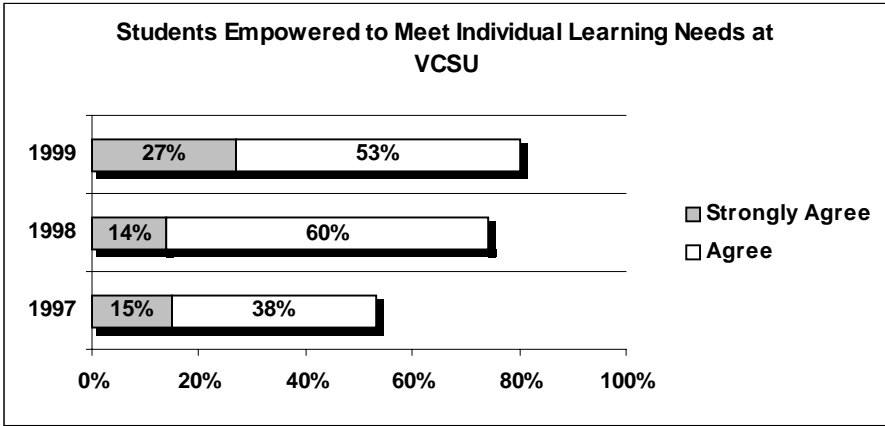
Application to "real world" problems  
Preparation for work  
Active learning



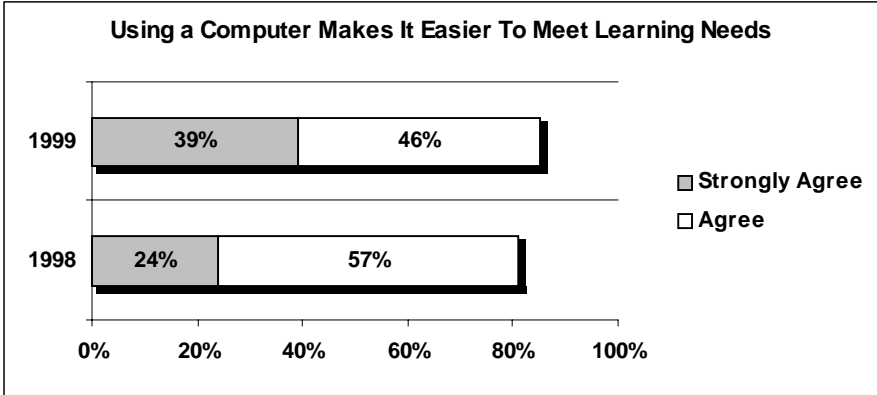
Rich and rapid feedback  
Active learning



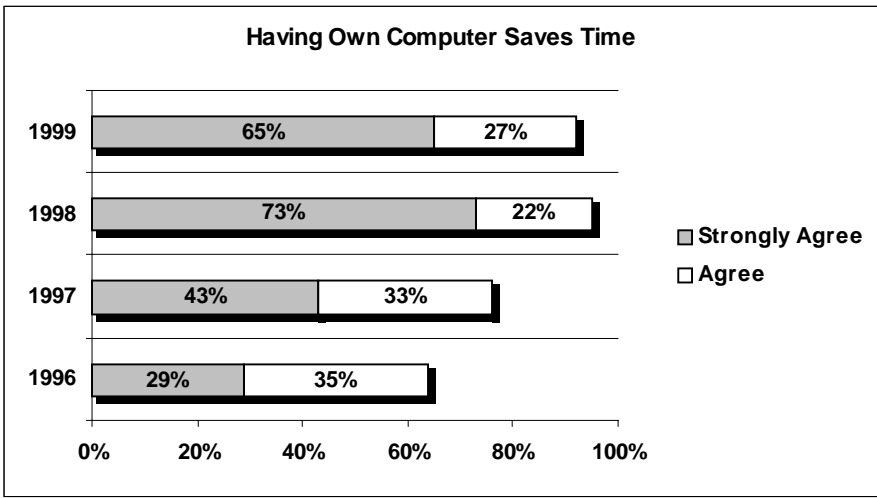
High expectations for all students regardless of learning style



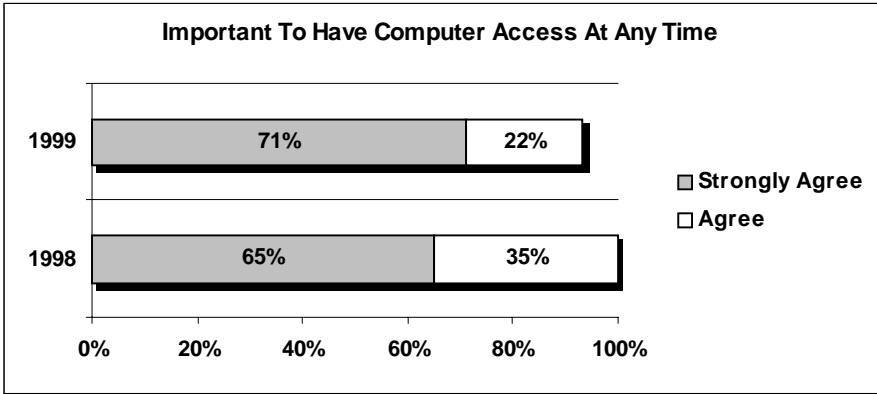
High expectations for all students regardless of learning style



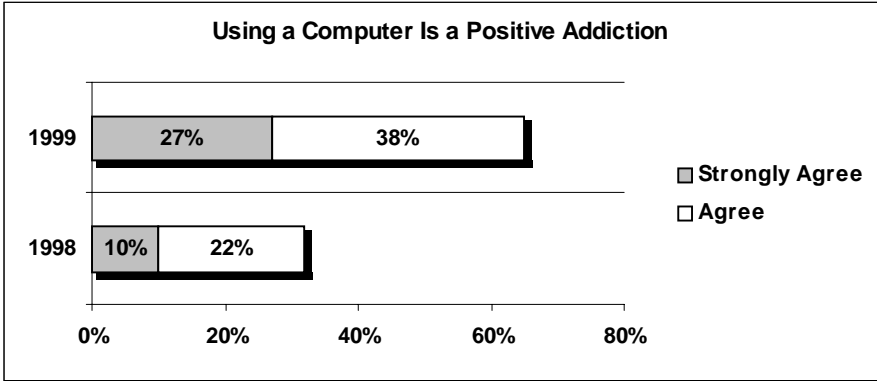
High expectations for all students regardless of learning style



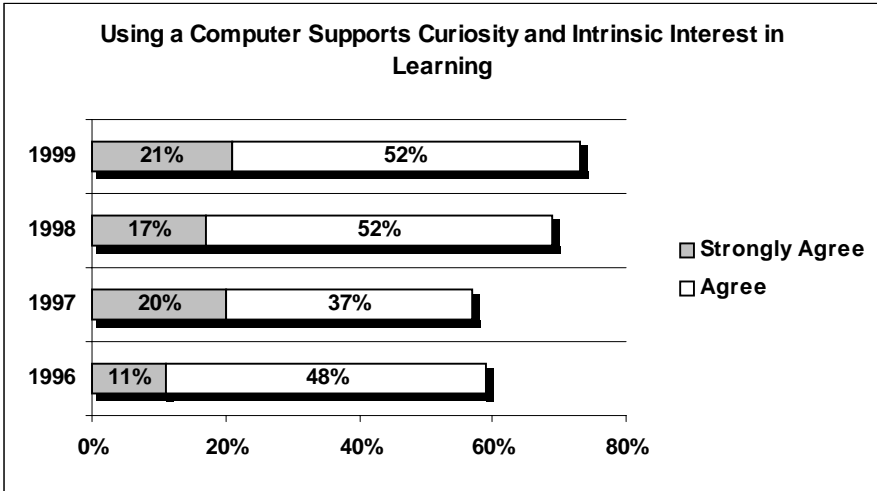
Using time productively



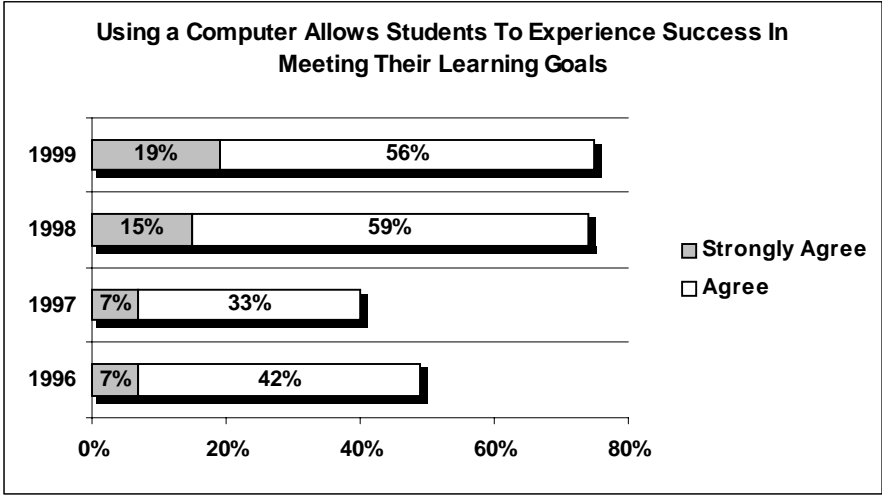
Accessibility



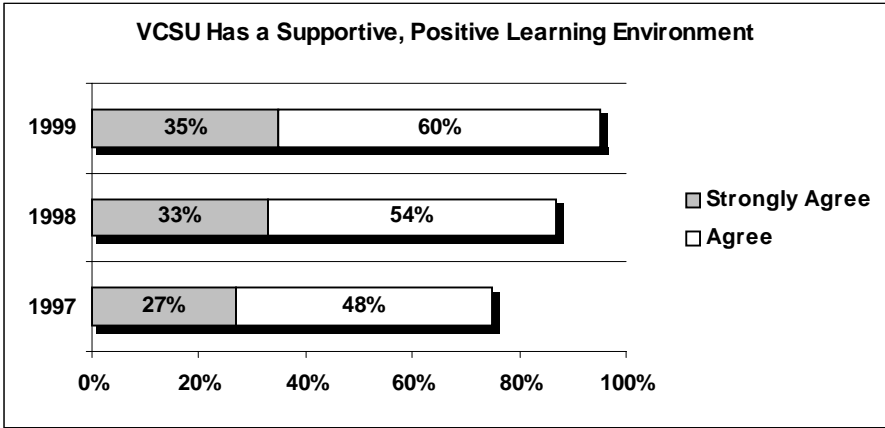
Positive addiction to technology



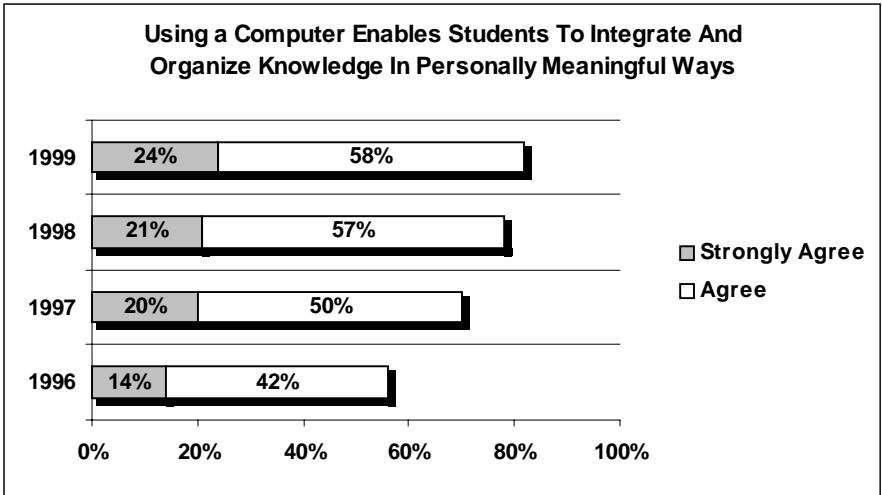
Engagement in learning  
Cognitive and creative outcomes



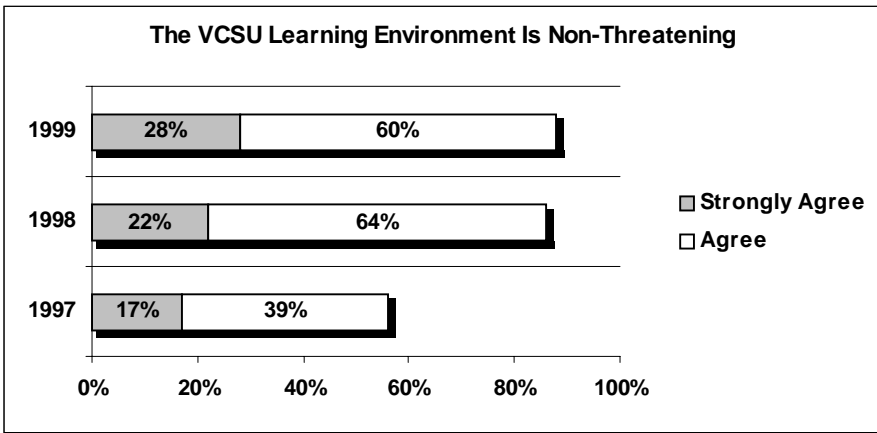
High expectations for all students regardless of learning style



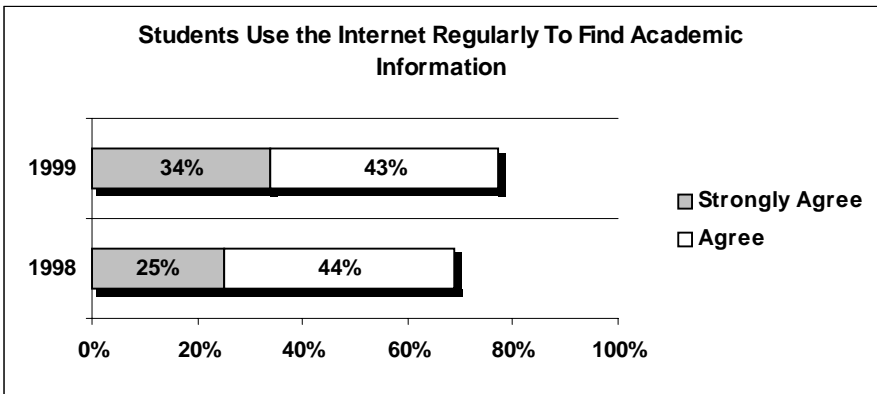
Faculty-student interaction  
  
High expectations for all students regardless of learning style



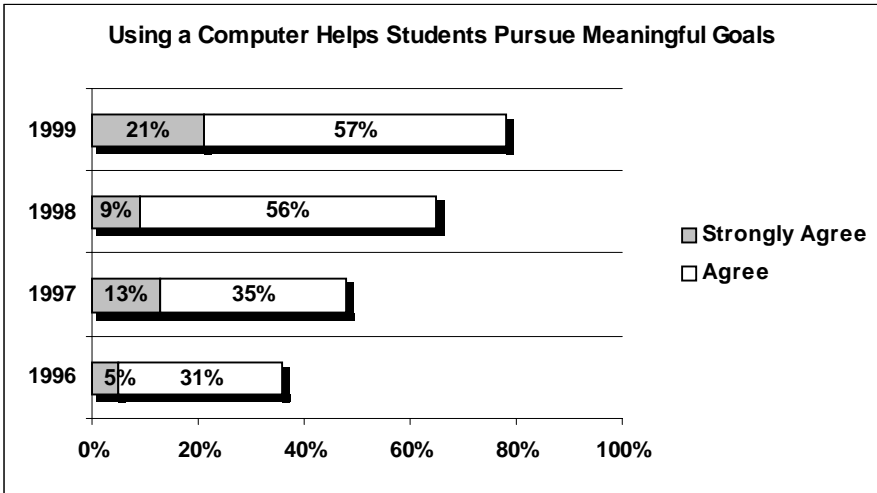
Cognitive and creative outcomes



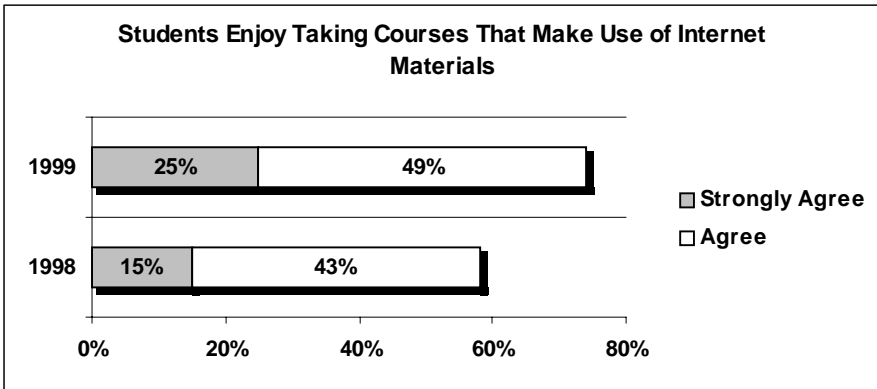
Faculty-student interaction  
 Collaborative learning



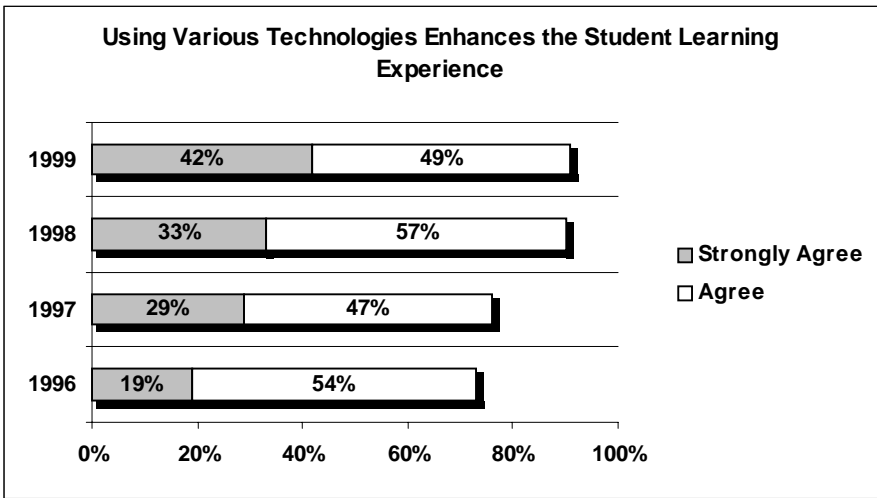
Rich and rapid feedback  
 Active learning



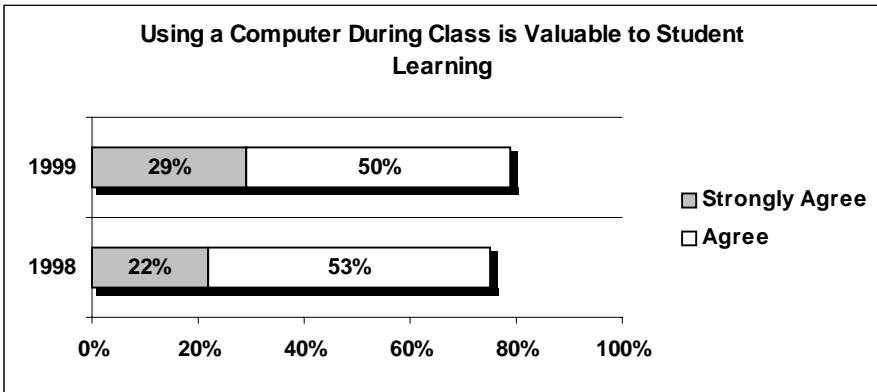
Using time productively  
 Cognitive and creative outcomes



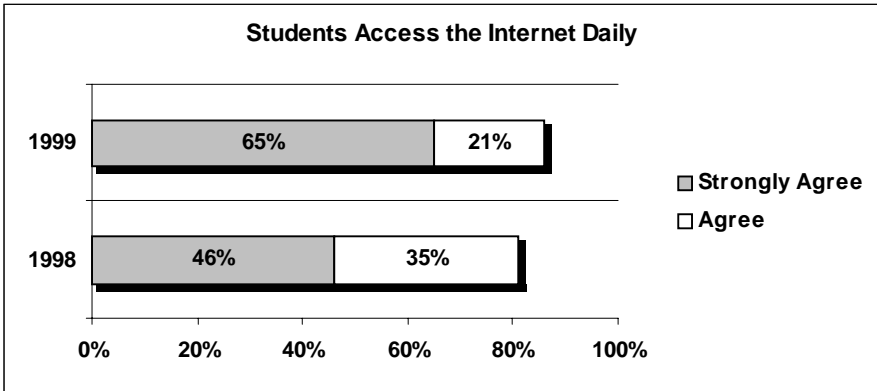
Positive addiction to technology



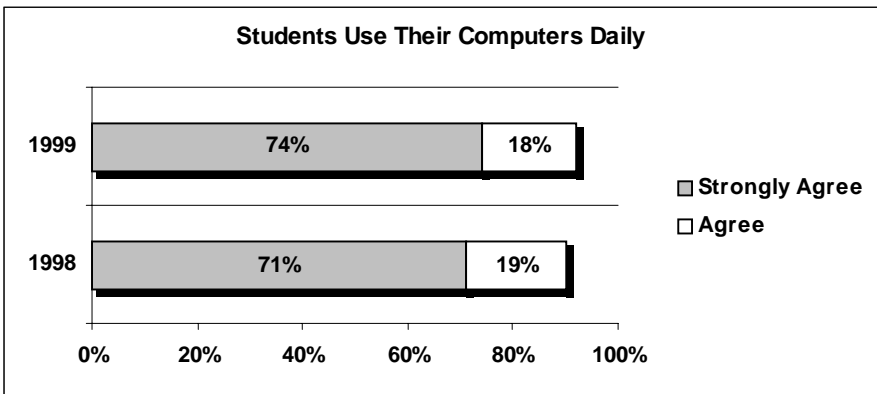
Positive addition to technology  
 Engagement in learning



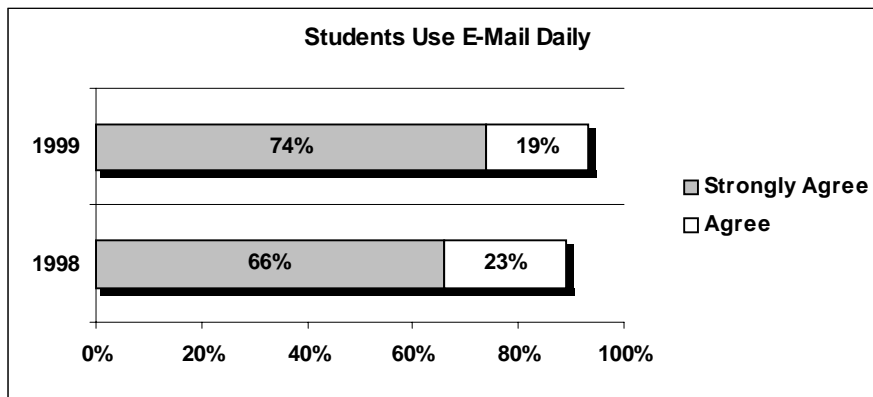
Positive addition to technology



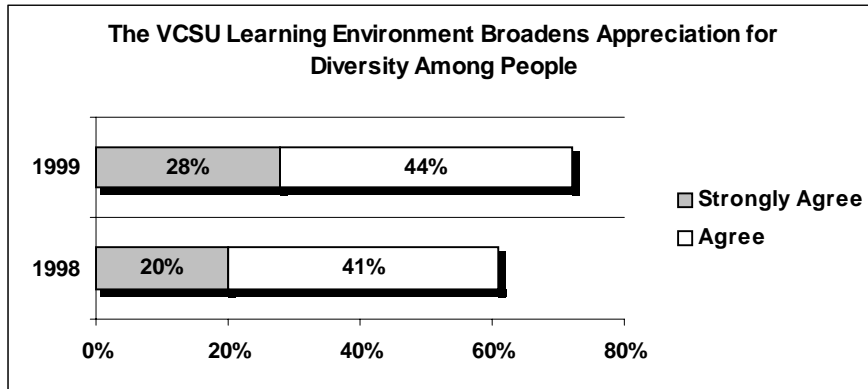
Rich and rapid feedback



Rich and rapid feedback



Rich and rapid  
feedback



Respect for  
diversity

#### LIST OF WEB RESOURCES IMPORTANT TO VCSU AND REFERENCED IN THIS REPORT

- Valley City State University home page at <http://www.vcsu.nodak.edu/>
- VCSU accreditation page at <http://www.vcsu.nodak.edu/accreditation/>
- VCSU case illustration for NCATE at <http://ncate.org/projects/tech/ci6.html>
- Center for Innovation in Instruction at <http://www.cii.k12.nd.us/>
- CII Teaching With Technology Initiative at <http://www.cii.k12.nd.us/catalog.pdf>
- Kathryn Center for Lifelong Learning at <http://www.vcsu.nodak.edu/offices/partners/kathryn/>
- Notebook Computer Initiative at <http://www.vcsu.nodak.edu/offices/itc/notebooks/index.htm>
- Title III Cooperative Grant at <http://www.vcsu.nodak.edu/offices/titleiii/>
- Title III Institutional Grant at <http://www.vcsu.nodak.edu/Customizedlearning/>
- The Regional Technology Center at <http://www.hellovalley.com/valleycity/techcenter.htm>

Readers may access this report and other student survey results from the web page Holleque created at [http://www.vcsu.nodak.edu/offices/EdPsysc/faculty/Kathryn\\_Holleque/Surveys.htm](http://www.vcsu.nodak.edu/offices/EdPsysc/faculty/Kathryn_Holleque/Surveys.htm)

# APPENDIX

## THE LEARNER SURVEY

This survey is designed to obtain information related to learner centered education and the effective use of various instructional technologies. The first three questions provide important demographic data. Please mark your answer with the appropriate letter.

1. What is your sex?                      A) Male    B) Female
2. In which class are you?            A) Freshman    B) Sophomore    C) Junior    D) Senior    E) Other
3. What is your age?                    A) 18 years or younger    B) 19    C) 20    D) 21-22    E) Over 22

Please read each of the statements. Using the scale provided, indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree that a statement is true. Thank you very much for participating in this research project.

**A) STRONGLY DISAGREE    B) DISAGREE    C) NEUTRAL    D) AGREE    E) STRONGLY AGREE**

4. It is important to me to have my own computer to use.
5. The various technology skills I am developing at this university are essential to my future employment.
6. Using a computer increases my communication with other students.
7. Using a computer increases my communication with faculty.
8. Having my own computer broadens ways for me to receive and/or present information.
9. This university fosters cooperation in learning.
10. Using a computer provides a variety of settings for learning (e.g., working by myself, working with others, working as a member of a team).
11. Using technology tools makes it easier to work in groups.
12. Using technology tools increases my critical thinking.
13. I feel a diminished sense of competition in learning at this institution.
14. This university provides real-life learning opportunities.
15. Having my own computer makes it easier to be actively involved in the learning process.
16. I am involved in projects that promote student choice and responsibility.
17. I use the Internet often to research topics for courses.
18. Having my own computer helps me assume personal responsibility for learning.
19. I am empowered to meet my individual learning needs at this university.
20. Using a computer makes it easier to meet my learning needs.
21. Having my own computer saves me time.
22. It is important to me to have computer access at any time, day or night.
23. Using a computer is a positive addiction for me.
24. Using a computer supports my curiosity and intrinsic interest in learning.
25. Using a computer allows me to experience success in meeting my learning goals.
26. This university has a supportive, positive learning environment.
27. Using a computer enables me to integrate and organize knowledge in personally meaningful ways.
28. The learning environment at this university is non-threatening.
29. I use the Internet regularly to find academic information.
30. Using a computer helps me pursue meaningful goals.
31. I enjoy taking courses that make use of Internet materials.
32. Using various technologies enhances my learning experience.
33. Using a computer during class is valuable to my learning.
34. I access the Internet daily.
35. I use my computer daily.
36. I use e-mail daily.
37. The learning environment at this university broadens my appreciation for the diversity among people.

**Dr. Kathryn Holleque, Professor, Division of Education and Psychology, Valley City State University.  
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## THE LEARNER SURVEY RESULTS for 1999\*

118 total surveys, 113 of which were usable.

Question 1		Question 2		Question 3	
Male	48%	Freshman	67%	18 years or younger	41%
Female	52%	Sophomore	21%	19 years	31%
		Junior	6%	20 years	13%
		Senior	3%	21-22 years	9%
		Other	3%	Over 22	6%
Question 4		Question 5		Question 6	
Strongly Disagree	0%	Strongly Disagree	2%	Strongly Disagree	1%
Disagree	3%	Disagree	0%	Disagree	4%
Neutral	8%	Neutral	7%	Neutral	14%
Agree	34%	Agree	42%	Agree	38%
Strongly Agree	56%	Strongly Agree	49%	Strongly Agree	43%
Question 7		Question 8		Question 9	
Strongly Disagree	1%	Strongly Disagree	1%	Strongly Disagree	0%
Disagree	2%	Disagree	0%	Disagree	2%
Neutral	10%	Neutral	2%	Neutral	16%
Agree	44%	Agree	27%	Agree	59%
Strongly Agree	43%	Strongly Agree	71%	Strongly Agree	23%
Question 10		Question 11		Question 12	
Strongly Disagree	0%	Strongly Disagree	0%	Strongly Disagree	0%
Disagree	2%	Disagree	9%	Disagree	12%
Neutral	9%	Neutral	26%	Neutral	36%
Agree	48%	Agree	42%	Agree	41%
Strongly Agree	42%	Strongly Agree	24%	Strongly Agree	11%
Question 13		Question 14		Question 15	
Strongly Disagree	2%	Strongly Disagree	0%	Strongly Disagree	2%
Disagree	19%	Disagree	4%	Disagree	1%
Neutral	50%	Neutral	19%	Neutral	13%
Agree	23%	Agree	65%	Agree	49%
Strongly Agree	7%	Strongly Agree	12%	Strongly Agree	35%
Question 16		Question 17		Question 18	
Strongly Disagree	0%	Strongly Disagree	1%	Strongly Disagree	1%
Disagree	7%	Disagree	4%	Disagree	2%
Neutral	30%	Neutral	15%	Neutral	14%
Agree	50%	Agree	34%	Agree	53%
Strongly Agree	13%	Strongly Agree	46%	Strongly Agree	30%
Question 19	0%	Question 20		Question 21	
Strongly Disagree	1%	Strongly Disagree	1%	Strongly Disagree	1%
Disagree	2%	Disagree	1%	Disagree	0%
Neutral	18%	Neutral	13%	Neutral	6%
Agree	53%	Agree	46%	Agree	27%
Strongly Agree	27%	Strongly Agree	39%	Strongly Agree	65%

Question 22		Question 23		Question 24	
Strongly Disagree	1%	Strongly Disagree	1%	Strongly Disagree	0%
Disagree	3%	Disagree	10%	Disagree	4%
Neutral	4%	Neutral	24%	Neutral	23%
Agree	22%	Agree	38%	Agree	52%
Strongly Agree	71%	Strongly Agree	27%	Strongly Agree	21%
Question 25		Question 26		Question 27	
Strongly Disagree	0%	Strongly Disagree	0%	Strongly Disagree	1%
Disagree	3%	Disagree	1%	Disagree	2%
Neutral	22%	Neutral	4%	Neutral	15%
Agree	56%	Agree	60%	Agree	58%
Strongly Agree	19%	Strongly Agree	35%	Strongly Agree	24%
Question 28		Question 29		Question 30	
Strongly Disagree	0%	Strongly Disagree	0%	Strongly Disagree	0%
Disagree	2%	Disagree	4%	Disagree	4%
Neutral	10%	Neutral	19%	Neutral	18%
Agree	60%	Agree	43%	Agree	57%
Strongly Agree	28%	Strongly Agree	34%	Strongly Agree	21%
Question 31		Question 32		Question 33	
Strongly Disagree	1%	Strongly Disagree	1%	Strongly Disagree	1%
Disagree	4%	Disagree	0%	Disagree	4%
Neutral	22%	Neutral	9%	Neutral	16%
Agree	49%	Agree	49%	Agree	50%
Strongly Agree	25%	Strongly Agree	42%	Strongly Agree	29%
Question 34		Question 35		Question 36	
Strongly Disagree	2%	Strongly Disagree	3%	Strongly Disagree	2%
Disagree	4%	Disagree	2%	Disagree	1%
Neutral	9%	Neutral	4%	Neutral	4%
Agree	21%	Agree	18%	Agree	19%
Strongly Agree	65%	Strongly Agree	74%	Strongly Agree	74%
Question 37					
Strongly Disagree	1%				
Disagree	2%				
Neutral	25%				
Agree	44%				
Strongly Agree	28%				

\*Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.