

VitalSource Survey

QuickRead Report

May 2018

METHODOLOGY

An online survey of 1,000 currently enrolled college students in the U.S. (500) and Canada (500)

CONTENT QUESTIONS

1. Which of the following, if any, have you ever done with course materials required for a class?

Response	US	Canada
Waited to purchase the course materials after the class started	80%*	79%
Avoided purchasing the course materials at all	37%	32%
None of these	15%	13%
QuickFacts[±]		
Any (net)	85%	87%

2. How important or unimportant was cost in avoiding or delaying getting course materials for a class?

(Asked among those who avoided purchasing course materials at all or waited to purchase course materials after the class started)

Response	US	Canada
Very important	56%	46%
Somewhat important	36%	42%
Somewhat unimportant	6%	8%
Very unimportant	2%	4%
QuickFacts		
Important (net)	92%	88%
Unimportant (net)	8%	12%

* All decimals are rounded to the nearest percentage point. This may result in certain numerical totals adding up to slightly more or slightly less than 100%.

± Data under "QuickFacts" were derived from the responses, not included as response options that were read during fielding. We include QuickFacts in instances where we feel they will be helpful.



3. Which of the following reasons best describes why you waited to purchase course materials until after the class started?

(Asked among those waited to purchase course materials after the class started)

Response	US	Canada
I didn't initially know which course materials I would actually need	58%	49%
I realized I needed them to succeed in the class	16%	19%
I hadn't had time to buy them before the class started	8%	7%
Prices dropped	7%	9%
I didn't know if I would drop the class	5%	10%
I was borrowing them, but had to return them	3%	3%
Other	3%	2%

4. Has avoiding or delaying buying course materials for a class ever negatively impacted your grades?

(Asked among those who avoided purchasing course materials at all or waited to purchase course materials after the class started)

Response	US	Canada
Yes, more than once	14%	16%
Yes, once	25%	26%
No	61%	58%
QuickFacts		
Yes (net)	39%	42%

5. Does your school give you the option to include the cost of course materials as part of your tuition? Meaning, the cost is billed to your student account along with your tuition.

Response	US	Canada
No	53%	61%
Yes	28%	21%
I don't know	18%	18%



6. Have you ever opted out of paying for course materials as part of your tuition cost?

(Asked among those whose school gives the option to include the cost of course materials as a part of the tuition)

Response	US	Canada
Yes, more than once	23%	29%
Yes, once	27%	25%
No	50%	46%
QuickFacts		
Yes (net)	50%	54%

7. How confident or unconfident are you that your school negotiates the most affordable prices possible for course materials included as part of your tuition cost?

(Asked among those whose school gives the option to include the cost of course materials as a part of the tuition)

Response	US	Canada
Very confident	25%	31%
Somewhat confident	42%	43%
Not very confident	24%	20%
Not at all confident	9%	7%
QuickFacts		
Confident (net)	67%	74%
Unconfident (net)	33%	26%

8. How interested or uninterested are you in paying for course materials as part of your tuition cost, rather than purchasing them separately?

(Asked among those whose school does not give the option to include the cost of course materials as a part of the tuition or doesn't know if their school gives the option to include the cost of course materials as a part of the tuition)

Response	US	Canada
Very interested	34%	26%
Somewhat interested	39%	41%
Somewhat uninterested	15%	18%
Very uninterested	12%	15%
QuickFacts		
Interested (net)	73%	67%
Uninterested (net)	27%	33%



9. How likely or unlikely would you be to choose to access and review course materials before deciding to purchase them? For example, while you are deciding whether to keep or drop the class.

Response	US	Canada
Very likely	41%	36%
Somewhat likely	46%	48%
Somewhat unlikely	11%	12%
Very unlikely	3%	3%
QuickFacts		
Likely (net)	87%	85%
Unlikely (net)	13%	15%

10. Which of the following, if any, have you ever done to help pay for course materials?

Response	US	Canada
Purchased older versions	52%	52%
Got a job	51%	46%
Shared materials with a classmate	48%	44%
Used financial aid money to pay for them	44%	37%
Used library copies of materials	35%	29%
None of these	6%	7%
QuickFacts		
Any (net)	94%	93%

11. Which of the following digital enhancements, if any, do you think would improve your learning experience?

Response	US	Canada
Ability to take quizzes on information learned during study sessions	66%	62%
Ability to keep track of what information has been learned during study sessions	63%	59%
Ability to take notes and highlight content in a digital textbook	57%	56%
Ability to set study goals and track my learning progress	51%	47%
None of these	7%	6%
QuickFacts		
Any (net)	93%	94%



12. How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statement – I would get better grades studying with tools I can interact with, rather than traditional textbooks. For example, e-textbooks that include quizzes on what I read.

Response	US	Canada
Agree strongly	44%	39%
Agree somewhat	42%	45%
Disagree somewhat	12%	13%
Disagree strongly	3%	2%
QuickFacts		
Agree (net)	86%	85%
Disagree (net)	14%	15%

13. How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statement – within the next 10 years, fewer students will complete or enroll in college because it's too expensive.

Response	US	Canada
Agree strongly	37%	29%
Agree somewhat	41%	42%
Disagree somewhat	18%	22%
Disagree strongly	3%	7%
QuickFacts		
Agree (net)	78%	70%
Disagree (net)	22%	30%

14. After being accepted, did you decide not to attend any colleges because the cost was too high?

Response	US	Canada
Yes, more than one	26%	15%
Yes, one	27%	22%
No, none	47%	64%
QuickFacts		
Yes (net)	53%	36%



15. How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statement – I would make better grades if I had access to all my course materials before the first day of class.

Response	US	Canada
Agree strongly	29%	28%
Agree somewhat	39%	41%
Disagree somewhat	25%	24%
Disagree strongly	7%	7%
QuickFacts		
Agree (net)	68%	69%
Disagree (net)	32%	31%

16. Approximately how many sources do you typically consult when shopping for course materials for a particular class? Please consider all the stores, websites, and other people you ask for pricing information, availability, etc.

Response	US	Canada
1 source	11%	15%
2 sources	19%	20%
3 sources	33%	29%
More than 3 sources	37%	36%
QuickFacts		
Average (sources)	4	3

17. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the technology used in your classes currently? Meaning, the devices used and how they are used.

Response	US	Canada
Completely satisfied	20%	20%
Somewhat satisfied	64%	62%
Not very satisfied	14%	16%
Not at all satisfied	2%	2%
QuickFacts		
Satisfied (net)	84%	82%
Dissatisfied (net)	16%	18%



18. How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statement – I could get better grades if my professors used more tech in the classroom. For example, tablets or cloud-based presentation programs.

Response	US	Canada
Agree strongly	22%	21%
Agree somewhat	45%	47%
Disagree somewhat	29%	26%
Disagree strongly	4%	7%
QuickFacts		
Agree (net)	67%	67%
Disagree (net)	33%	33%

19. Approximately how many of your college classes, if any, have you taken online? Meaning, a class for which coursework is entirely online.

Response	US	Canada
1-2 classes	31%	23%
3-4 classes	18%	14%
5 classes or more	17%	8%
I've never taken an online class in college	33%	55%
QuickFacts		
Any (net)	67%	45%
Average	3	1

20. In which of the following did you get better grades – online courses or in-person courses?

(Asked among those who have taken online courses)

Response	US	Canada
Online courses	52%	45%
In-person courses	48%	55%



21. In your opinion, which of the following is the greatest benefit of digital textbooks over physical textbooks?

Response	US	Canada
They are more convenient	30%	23%
They are more affordable	28%	24%
They are more interactive	22%	27%
They make lessons easier to remember and understand	9%	11%
Other	1%	2%
I've never used an interactive textbook	10%	13%
QuickFacts		
Ever used (net)	90%	87%

22. How significant or insignificant would the cost savings need to be for you to permanently switch to using all digital course materials rather than print ones? For example, using only online textbooks instead of physical books.

Response	US	Canada
Very significant	41%	38%
Somewhat significant	47%	48%
Somewhat insignificant	10%	10%
Very insignificant	2%	4%
QuickFacts		
Significant (net)	87%	86%
Insignificant (net)	13%	14%

23. During an average school day, what's the longest you'll go without using some form of digital technology during waking hours? For the purposes of this question "digital technology" refers to items such as mobile devices, e-readers, tablets and laptops.

Response	US	Canada
Less than a minute	23%	28%
1-10 minutes	30%	22%
11-30 minutes	10%	13%
31-60 minutes	16%	16%
61-120 minutes	15%	12%
More than 2 hours	7%	9%
QuickFacts		
Average (minutes)	45	49
10 minutes or less (net)	53%	50%



24. Which of the following, if any, do you own?

Response	US	Canada
Smartphone	93%	90%
Laptop	92%	88%
iPad/tablet	45%	41%
eReader like a Kindle or Nook	19%	15%
None of these	1%	1%
QuickFacts		
Any (net)	99%	99%

25. Have you ever used your device to read an eTextbook or a digital textbook?

(Asked among those who own a digital device)

Response	US	Canada
Yes, many times	46%	38%
Yes, a few times	36%	37%
Yes, once	9%	10%
No, never	9%	16%
QuickFacts		
Yes (net)	91%	84%

26. Which of the following platforms have you used to read an eTextbook or a digital textbook?

(Asked among those who have read an eTextbook or digital textbook)

Response	US	Canada
Online, using a web browser	81%	74%
Online, using an app downloaded onto a device	42%	39%
Offline, using an app downloaded onto a device	34%	36%
Other	2%	2%
QuickFacts		
Online (net)	94%	88%



27. In which of the following ways do you primarily read eTextbooks or digital textbooks?

(Asked among those who read eTextbooks or digital textbooks both online and offline)

Response	US	Canada
Online	37%	36%
Offline	25%	29%
Online and offline equally	38%	36%

28. Given the option, which of the following platforms would you prefer to use to read an eTextbook or a digital textbook?

Response	US	Canada
Using an app downloaded onto a device	44%	44%
Using a web browser	41%	38%
No preference	16%	18%

29. How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statement – digital textbooks are not worth the money if they can't be viewed offline. Meaning, without an Internet connection.

Response	US	Canada
Agree strongly	49%	53%
Agree somewhat	39%	36%
Disagree somewhat	9%	8%
Disagree strongly	3%	2%
QuickFacts		
Agree (net)	88%	90%
Disagree (net)	12%	10%

30. How often, if ever, do your professors recommend that you purchase the e-text versions of the textbooks and other course materials?

Response	US	Canada
All the time	13%	10%
Some of the time	47%	43%
Hardly ever	32%	36%
Never	8%	11%
QuickFacts		
Frequently (net)	60%	53%
Infrequently (net)	40%	47%
Ever (net)	92%	89%

**Methodological Notes:**

The VitalSource Survey was conducted by Wakefield Research (www.wakefieldresearch.com) among 1,000 currently enrolled college students in the US (500) and Canada (500), between May 18 and May 25, 2018, using an email invitation and an online survey.

Results of any sample are subject to sampling variation. The magnitude of the variation is measurable and is affected by the number of interviews and the level of the percentages expressing the results. For the interviews conducted in this particular study, the chances are 95 in 100 that a survey result does not vary, plus or minus, by more than 4.4 percentage points for each of the American and Canadian samples from the result that would be obtained if interviews had been conducted with all persons in the universe represented by the sample.