



# 2011 Computer and Technology Survey Executive Summary

## Completed by University Housing

The purpose of this assessment was to learn about knowledge, opinions, and behaviors related to technology preferences from University of South Carolina students currently living in the residence halls. This survey was originally administered in 1999 during Fall move-in weekend with the objective of learning about students' use of computer technology. The survey has grown to incorporate additional features from campus partners, including questions regarding classroom technology, printing services, and communication technology. This latest version also takes into consideration student behaviors in relation to technology usage and preferred technology products.

The survey was conducted over the course of three weeks during September and October 2011 with students living in USC residence halls, including those members of the USC community residing in family/graduate housing. The survey was sent via university-issued email accounts and weekly reminders were sent with the goal of increasing the overall response rate. Our target population consisted of 6559 students. Upon its closure, 1042 surveys were determined usable for an overall response rate of 15.88%.

### Demographic Breakdown:

Academic Classification	
Freshman	63.6%
Sophomore	21.6%
Junior	8.9%
Senior	3.6%
Graduate Students	1.1%
Other	0.5%

Ethnicity	
American Indian/Alaska Native	0.7%
Asian including South and Southeast Asian	5.3%
African American/Black	11.0%
Hispanic/Latino or Spanish	3.1%
Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0.4%
White	79.5%

Residence Hall	
Bates House	4.6%
Bates West	5.0%
Capstone	11.9%
Carolina Gardens	1.3%
Cliff Apartments	0%
Columbia Hall	4.7%
East Quad	4.1%
Honors	12.4%
Horseshoe	5.9%
Maxcy	2.6%
McBryde	2.5%
McClintock	2.8%
Patterson	9.5%
Preston	2.8%
Roost	1.4%
Sims	4.2%
South Quad	6.0%
South Tower	7.8%
Wade Hampton	3.8%
West Quad	6.7%

Learning Community	
Bridge	0.3%
Business Community	1.4%
Capstone Scholars	11.0%
Carolina Global Community	1.1%
Carolina Women's Community	4.4%
Engineering and Computing	1.8%
French House	0.2%
Green Quad	2.2%
Healthy Carolina Wellness	1.2%
Honors College	8.5%
Law, Justice, Politics	1.2%
Journalism and Mass Communications	1.2%
Majors and Career Exploration	0.6%
Music	0.5%
Pre-Medical and Dental	3.0%
Preston Residential College	1.5%
Psychology and Service-Learning	0.5%
Spanish House	0.0%
Sports and Entertainment Management	0.9%
Other	2.0%

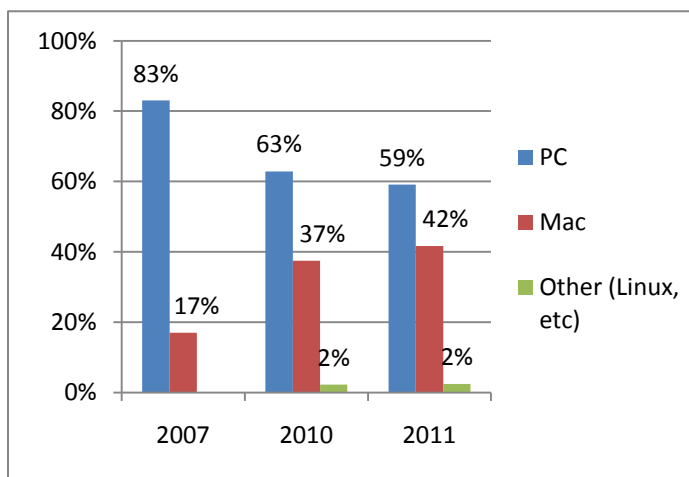
The majority of the respondents were female, at 68.5%, with males at 31%, and 0.4% did not provide identifying information. Transfer students accounted for 5.1% of respondents, while 41.7% identified themselves as a member of a learning community and 58.3 % selected no affiliation. The list of learning communities identified are in the

corresponding table, with other providing a write-in opportunity, most of which were responses saying that they resided in a general learning community.

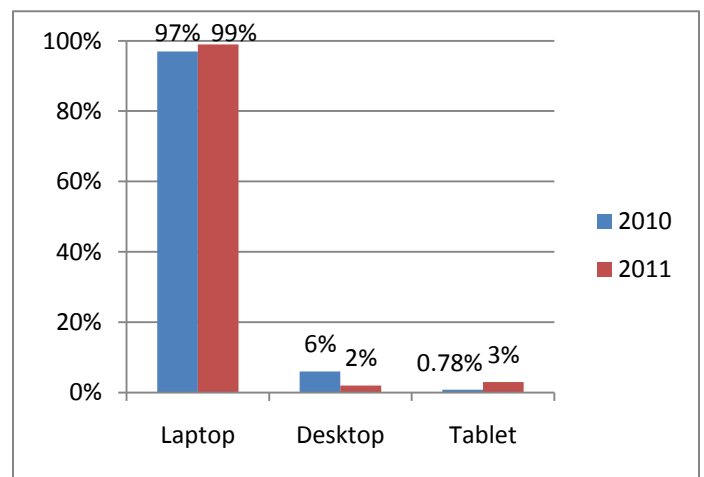
## Technology Brought to Campus

The trend of college students bringing technology to campus continues as noted especially by the 99.6% of respondents stating that they brought personal computers in fall 2011. Laptops remain the most popular design to bring to campus, but an increase was seen since last year in the amount of students bringing tablets. An increase is also seen in the students bringing Macs (Macintosh computers) to campus, while the amount bringing PCs with Windows have been decreasing.

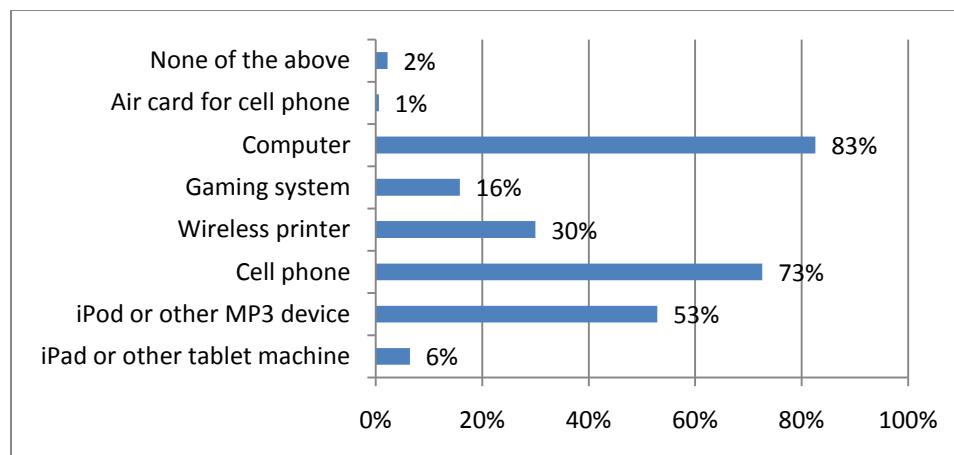
**Which type of computer(s) did you bring to campus?**



**What is/are the design(s) of your computer(s) brought to campus?**



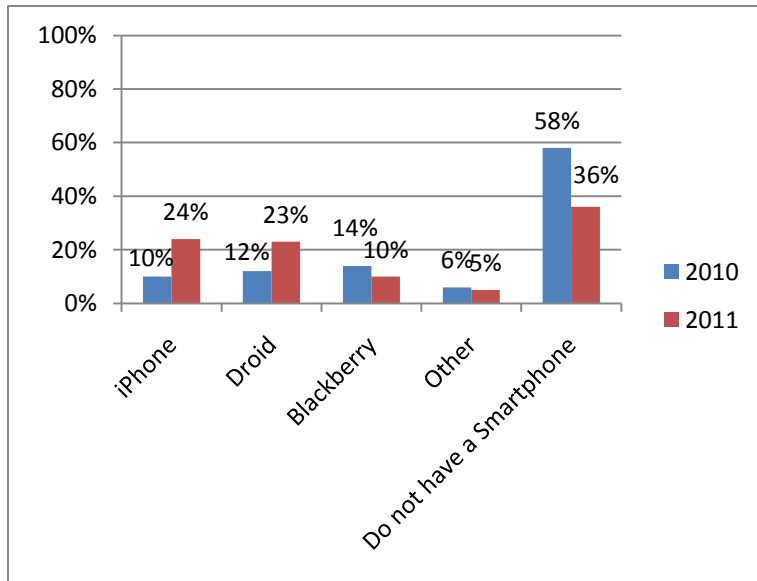
**Please indicate if you brought any of the following items that will access the wireless network:**



## Cell Phone Preferences and Habits

When asked what cell phone service provide students had, the most popular was Verizon with 55.5%, with AT&T next with 24.7%, then finally T-Mobile/Suncom (7.9%) and Spring/Nextel (7.3%). No one selected the option that indicated that they did not bring a phone to campus. Smartphones are becoming increasingly popular at USC as indicated by the 64% of respondents who brought one to campus. This is a fairly drastic increase from last year, when only 42% brought a smartphone. The specific brands of smartphones used by participants are listed below.

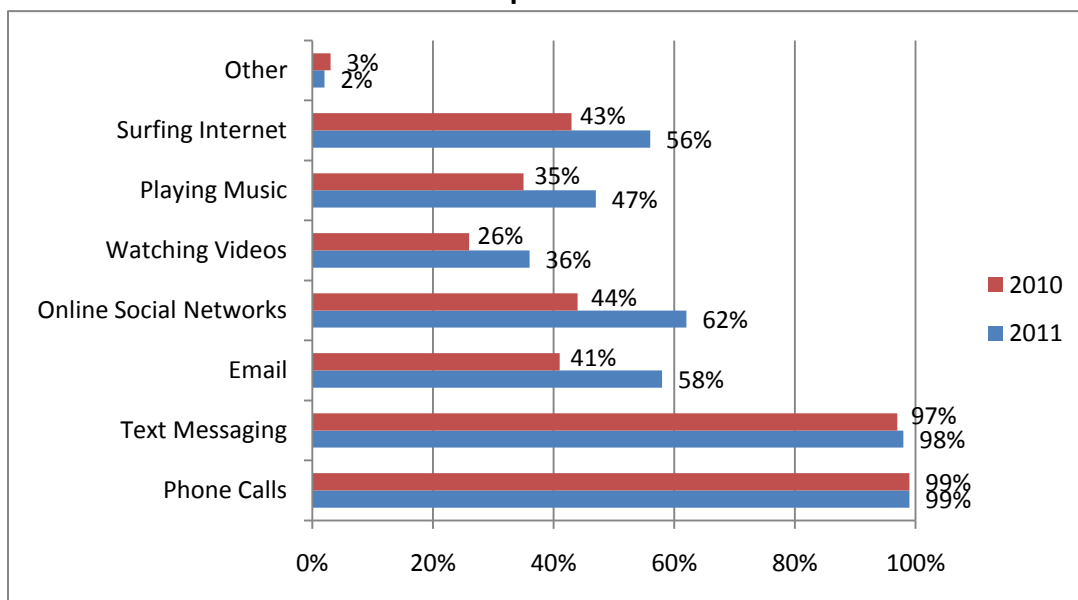
**What type of smartphone did you bring to campus?**



Considering the multi-functionality associated with cell phones, participants were asked to select the activities they conduct with these devices. Results (visible below) show nearly the same number of participants engage in phone conversations (99%) and texting (98%) with their phones. Comparing the data to last year's technology survey, respondents are indicating doing more on their phone at increasing rates, with the most popular being online social networks, surfing the internet, and email. Given the option of "Other", many students wrote in functions like gaming and other applications.

Student reported using the cell phone during class for any of these activities at varying levels. 11% said 4+ times per class, 20% said 2-3 times, and 37% said about once per class. An entire 30% reported never using their cell phone during class.

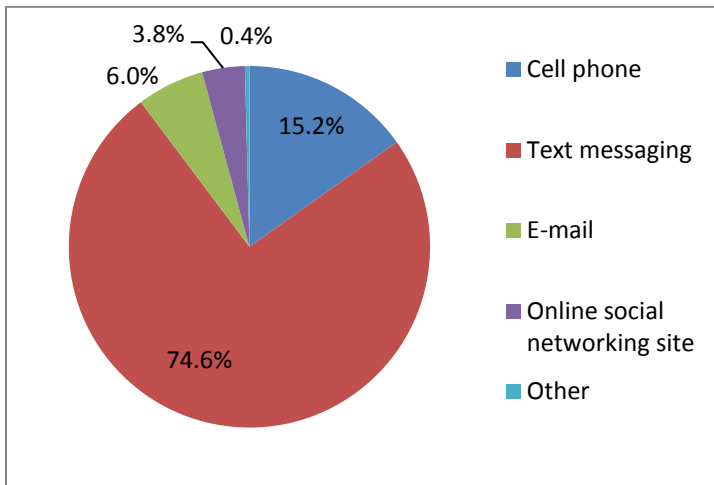
**What activities do you conduct using your cell phone?**



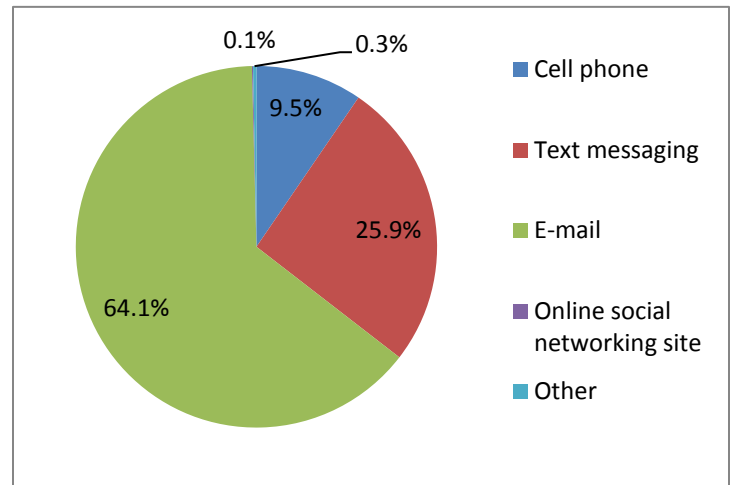
## Communication Technology Behaviors

Respondents noted varied methods for communication preferences depending upon who they are contacting. For example, 74% noted text-messaging as their primary choice of communication between student peers while email was selected at a rate of 6 percent. Conversely, 64% of survey participants desired to be contacted by the university through email while only 25% reported text-messaging as their preferred choice.

**If you need to contact another student, which is your preferred method of communication?**

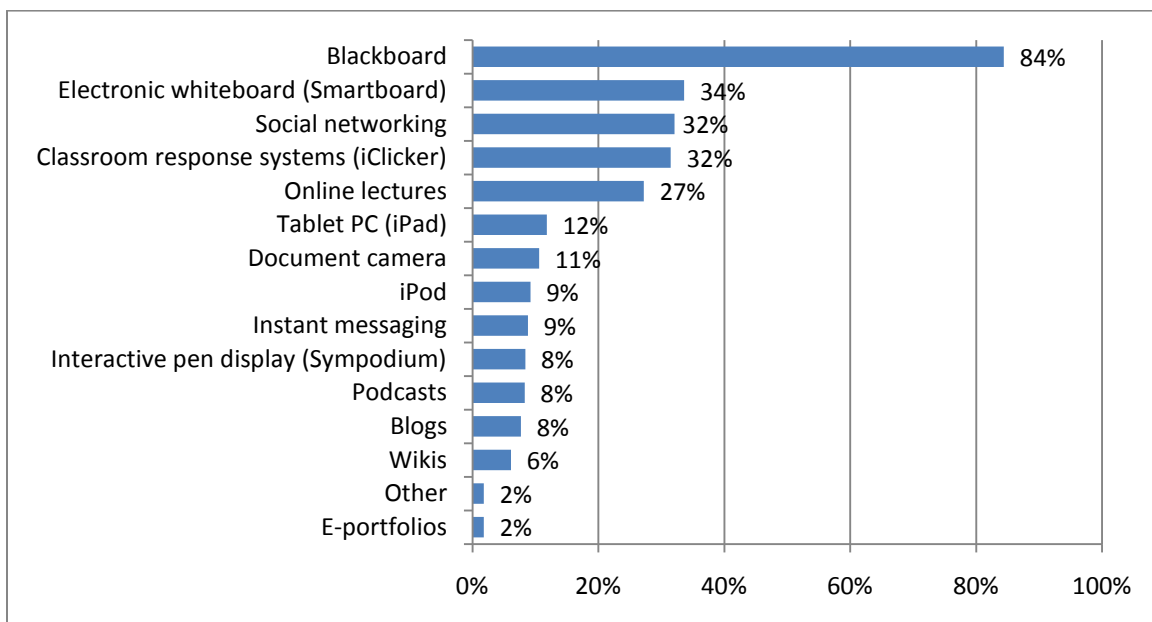


**If the University needs to contact you, which is your preferred method of communication?**



Participants were asked about the technology applications they prefer to see their instructors select for course activities. The range included Blackboard as the most selected response (84%) and E-portfolios as the least selected response (1%).

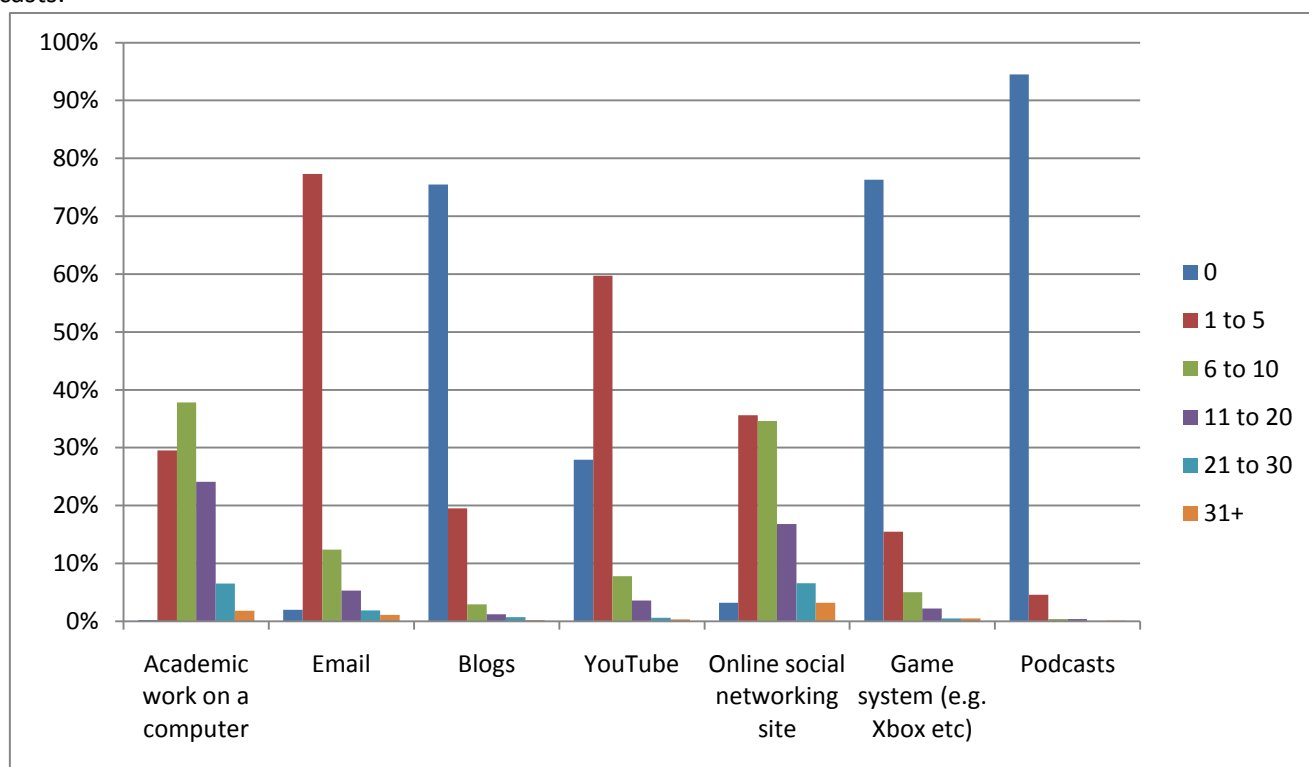
**What technology applications would you prefer that your instructors use for purposes of course activities?**



The university does provide the students with an email account to communicate with their peers, faculty, and staff, and when asked about that, only 12.6% said they only use that email account. The majority (75.8%) said that they use that account in addition to another account, while another 9.6% said they have the university account forwarded to their personal account. Only 0.8% said they have their personal account forwarded to their university-provided account.

## Overall Technology Behaviors

Students were asked how much time they spend in hours on various activities involving technology. The percentages for each amount (in hours) are shown for each activity in the graph below. The activity with the highest average was academic work, with the average falling in eleven to twenty hours. Social networking came in second also with an average in the eleven to twenty hours. The activity that students reported spending the lowest time on were blogs and podcasts.



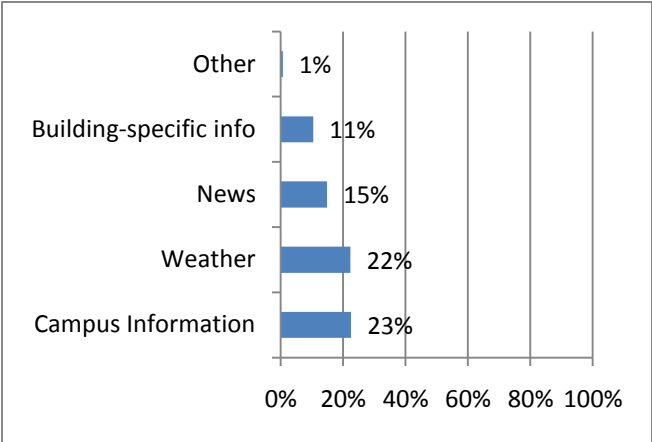
Residents were also asked about the social networking sites that they frequent. Facebook was a clear favorite with 97.1% participating on that site, with Twitter coming in second with 45.7% of the population participating. Not participating in any of them, MySpace, and Gamecock Connection were all options that were selected by less than 2.2% of the population. Additionally, 5.9% selected other, and popular write in responses included Google+, LinkedIn, Tumblr and Pinterest.

## Housing Technology Services Preferences

Printer kiosks were recently installed in many of the residence halls in anticipation for students printing paper copies at a rate of 10 cents per page. In response to how often they thought they would utilize this service, residents responded on average "monthly", with the most popular response being "I do not plan to use them at all" with 42.4%.

Electronic information boards are TV screens placed in some of the residence halls lobbies for information purposes, and when asked if they watched them, 30.5% of residents responded yes, while 47.8% said no. Additionally, 21.7% responded that their residence didn't have an information board. When asked what they watched the boards for, the most popular choice was for campus information. Only 1% selected "Other", and they mostly wrote in sports and/or ESPN. Popular suggestions for things that could be displayed on the screen included both campus and hall activities and events, movie listings, campus dining menus, athletic events, simply keeping it up to date and making the TV portion larger.

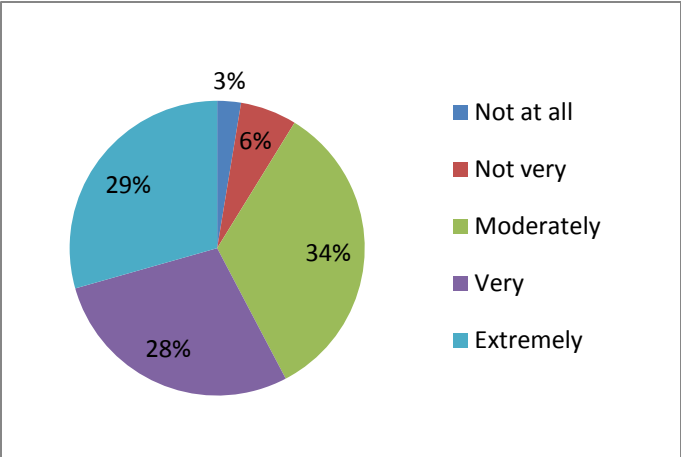
**What information do you watch from the electronic information boards?**



In an effort to get residents settled on campus, technical support was available to them during move-in weekend in their residence halls. Of the respondents, 69.7% responded

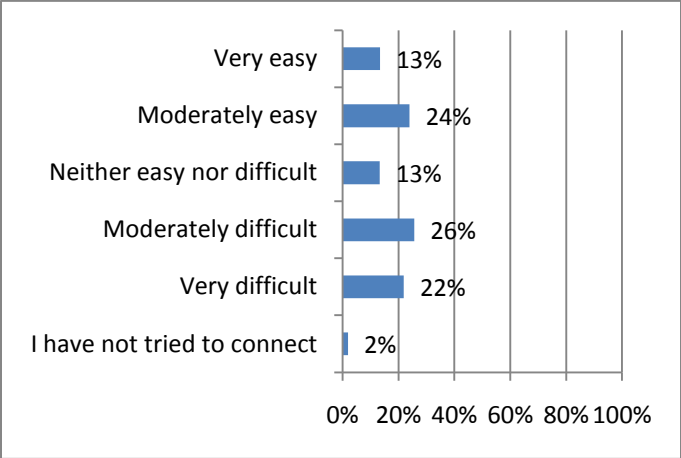
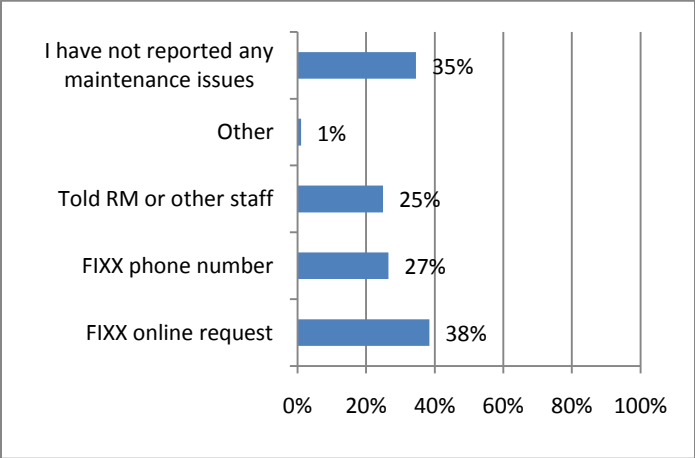
**What value would you place on having technical support available during move-in weekend? (shown in terms of how valuable)**

that they were aware of this support, and 30.3% said that they didn't know this was available. Respondents were also asked how valuable that technical support is to them, with the most popular response being moderately valuable while the average decreased in the very valuable category. Along the topic of getting settled, students were also asked about the ease to which they could connect to the residence hall wired network. The most popular response was moderately difficult, but the average dipped into the neither easy nor difficult category.



Residents were also asked about contacting University Housing regarding maintenance issues thus far. Those that did report an issue did so slight more through the FIXX online request system, while 35% did not ever report any maintenance

**Please indicate the level of ease you experienced connecting to the University residence hall wired network:**



issues at all. Some of those that checked other wrote in things like “requested maintenance during move-in” or “emailed housing”.

These results represent a summary of some of the questions asked with the surveyed population. Reports are also available with results based upon differences by gender, ethnicity, and classification as well as reports regarding individual buildings.

**Please contact Amber Fallucca, Director of Assessment or Ashley Ellis, Graduate Assistant for Assessment for University Housing for additional information.**

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