

# STUDENT AND INSTRUCTOR USER SATISFACTION REPORT

**Results from Yellowdig's Fall 2021 Semester  
Student and Instructor Surveys**

Featuring Expanded Studies with Embry-Riddle and NIU

## Table of Contents

The Survey Basics

03

How Has Yellowdig Impacted Students?

04

A Deep Dive into Yellowdig Usage for a MOOC at Embry-Riddle

06

Driving Student Satisfaction

09

A Deep Dive into Yellowdig Usage Across Modalities at NIU

11

The Instructor Perspective – Saving Time and Increasing Satisfaction

14

"Best student engagement opportunity ever!"

**Geoffrey R. , Student**

University of Arizona

## The Survey Basics

Following the Fall 2021 semester, we asked Yellowdig instructors to complete a survey reflecting on their use of Yellowdig. We also asked that they distribute a separate Yellowdig survey to their students.

The following analyses are based on over 150 student responses as well as 21 instructor responses.

Of those who responded to the survey...



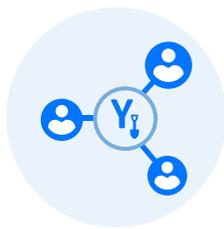
The statistics in this report are from questions asked on a 0-6 scale, with answers 4-6 being counted as positive.

In addition to the quantitative survey data, we collected qualitative open-ended responses from students and instructors which are included in quote format throughout the report.

To add depth to our findings, we sat down with 2 of our respondents to elaborate on their responses. These two case studies are included in the final report in story format.

## How Has Yellowdig Impacted Students?

It is not news that the COVID-19 pandemic has affected the state of education and the emotional state of students and instructors alike. A February 2021 report from Harvard found that 61% of those aged 18–25 felt lonely "frequently" or "almost all the time or all the time." When surveying Yellowdig learners, we found that Yellowdig increased feelings of connectedness as well as academic motivation.



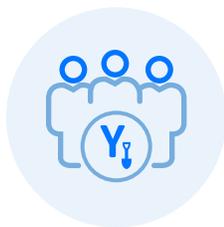
# 86%

of learners said that Yellowdig made them feel more connected to their peers.



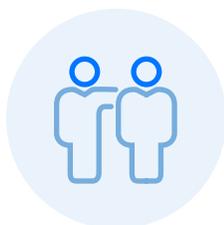
# 79%

of Yellowdig's learners felt motivated to explore content-related questions.



2/3

of learners said that they connected with their peers on topics outside of the course content in their Yellowdig community.



2/3

of learners felt like they got to know the other students in their courses that used Yellowdig better than those in their courses that didn't use it.

**Daniel N., Student at UC Davis**

"Yellowdig was a clean-cut, clear, cohesive yet casual concept that allowed for the class in its current form to take on a new facet and become more relevant .... [Yellowdig] has connected students taking the course in a new yet natural way that works because it encourages the creative quirks of each individual student to craft the quintessential questions that combine both intrigue and information to make learning lively, even online."

## Embry–Riddle Aeronautical University



**Professor:** Dr. Leila Halawi

**Course Style:** Massive Open Online Course (MOOC)



It was pretty impressive to see how engaged the community was; keep in mind that the discussions were only required if the learner wanted to receive a certificate of completion.

**Dr. Leila Halawi**

Dr. Halawi has taught many different classes at the undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral levels across all modalities and around the globe.

At Embry–Riddle Aeronautical University, Worldwide Campus (ERAU), Dr. Halawi developed the whole curriculum for the graduate program in management information systems.

Dr. Halawi has established a reputation as a transformational leader who is driven by challenge, undeterred by obstacles, and committed to furthering standards of excellence.

"As an educator and course developer, I constantly look for ways to improve the learning experience, increase engagement and balance the workload for both students and faculty. This past Spring, I designed and led a massive online class (MOOC) and used Yellowdig for our discussions." ~ Dr. Halawi

Over two weeks, the MOOC had over 1519 comments and 3517 total reactions. This significantly high value, shows that their learners read and appreciated each others' content.



**"Yellowdig technology has a social networking feel; students can share anything from music, videos, images, texts, emojis, polls, etc." ~ Dr. Halawi**

Dr. Halawi shared that what contributed to this transformative experience overall is attributed to **the ease and flexibility of Yellowdig** features, in addition to a change in pedagogy. She innovatively embraced action research and case study methodology to design the discussion with practical sessions and group discussions. Her learners could **interact and actively participate with content** that they related to and shared their personal experiences, thoughts, views, and critiques on the discipline's most current, even controversial topics. She shared, "The technology in Yellowdig provides a window into our world."

She explained, "I like to rethink the classroom experience, constantly **improving and leveraging the best tools** that enrich the experience for all stakeholders, as I believe that faculty get bored, not only students."

#### A piece of advice from Dr. Halawi:

"When designing your discussions, choose topics that foster conversation. I had success with real cases from the news, controversial topics, situations where students could share their own experiences and reflections. Keep setup simple and flexible, reward the best posts, be a role model post often and use the different functionalities with Yellowdig. Their support team is one of the best I have ever worked with. Reach out to them if you feel you are stuck or want an extra opinion."

## Driving Student Satisfaction

The Yellowdig platform can be used for a wide variety of subjects and purposes, but what ties everything together is how the platform produces course satisfaction for both instructor and student.

**The following statistics are based on a 0–6 scale reflecting the average satisfaction rating under different conditions. A rating of 6 would be completely satisfied.**



Avg. Student Satisfaction Score:

**5.5/6**

when their instructor encouraged learners to explore all of the concepts in their course in Yellowdig, not just prompts.

This is over 1 point higher than the average satisfaction rating when instructors implemented a prompt-based discussion.



Compared to other discussion boards:

**94.5%**

of instructors felt that **Yellowdig** engaged their students more in course material.

Yellowdig is designed to bring students back to the platform multiple times per week and to encourage meaningful conversations around course topics.

According to a survey by RNL\*, **73%** of students from **2020–2021** felt satisfied in their remote learning experience. Students using **Yellowdig** felt an increasingly higher rate of satisfaction. When asked "How satisfied are you with your remote learning experience?" Yellowdig users responded with a satisfaction rate of:

**90.5%** (+17.5 % points)

Now, Yellowdig is just one aspect of a student's remote learning experience, but this significant increase indicates that institutions leveraging Yellowdig and making active choices to improve the remote learning experience are able to improve satisfaction.

\*RLN conducted their [2021 National Student Satisfaction and Priorities Report](#) that gathered 397,571 student records at four-year and two-year colleges and universities.

## Northern Illinois University

**Professor:** Dr. Lisa Finkelstein

**Course Subject:** Psychology



Northern Illinois  
University



"I was amazed at what I saw unfold. I participated as well and always got all my points – in fact, I have to admit I got a little hooked on it. It was so cool to be able to see how they were relating to the material and each other."

**Dr. Lisa Finkelstein**

During the Fall 2021 semester, Dr. Lisa Finkelstein used Yellowdig for her undergraduate psychology courses. Dr. Finkelstein is an engaging presence in her community, encouraging connection, promoting authentic interaction, and creating a haven. She continues to utilize Yellowdig during the Spring 2022 semester, where she is back to teaching in a face-to-face environment.

In a virtual class environment, it can seem difficult to connect with your students and for your students to connect with their peers. But, Lisa Finkelstein was able to overcome this rut and engage her students by using Yellowdig.

Dr. Finkelstein says, "I felt like I was more comfortable with them, because I had Yellowdig... I saw that they were trying and I saw that they were being nice to each other."

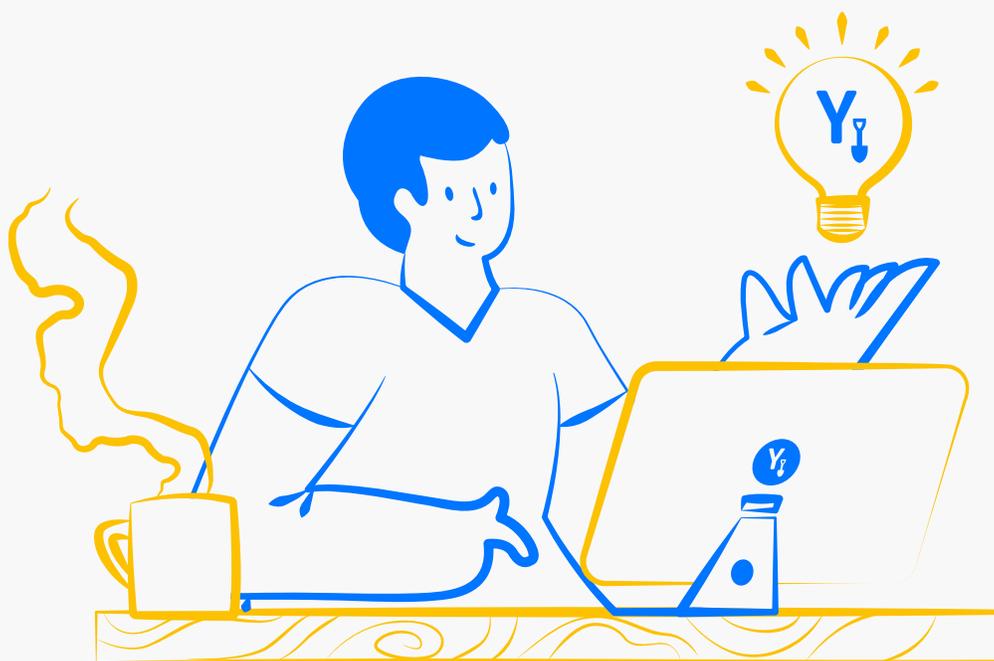


"[I] felt like I was getting to know these online students better than I got to know the ones I interacted with prior in person... I knew I'd want to use Yellowdig for my huge asynchronous class and was so glad I did," shares Dr. Finkelstein. In that course, she added a many fun topics right from the beginning to assure students that it was okay to spend time getting to know each other beyond course topics. Some topics she included were: TV (what's everyone binging?), music (anything new we should check out?), cute pics of your pets, hobbies or clubs they were joining, etc. Other instructors have opted to use Yellowdig's "no-point" topics for such conversations, but she opted to have these seemingly off-topic conversations count towards point-earnings because she saw the value in her learners creating bonds with each other.

For her current in-person classroom environment, Yellowdig has continued to help Dr. Finkelstein bridge the gap between learners. Her students are able to connect in the community and support each other immensely outside of class hours.

**Dr. Finkelstein created a supportive community:**

"I think a lot about the support when they got stressed out... People are responding, 'Yeah, I get it' and just feeling like they weren't alone... Other people felt the same kinds of things that they felt."



## The Instructor Perspective – Saving Time and Increasing Satisfaction

Yellowdig has many former instructors on our team, so we know the feeling of not having enough time in the day to get things done. Yellowdig Engage takes a huge burden off of instructors' backs because it does not require traditional grading. You can easily provide additional input, but it also automatically gives points to students who engage in good conversations so you can spend your time helping them instead. These survey results support Yellowdig's value to instructors in saving them time and energy while also increasing their connection to students and overall enjoyment of teaching.



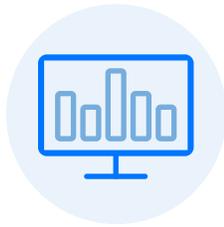
# 100%

Of surveyed instructors said that they would recommend that their colleagues use Yellowdig.



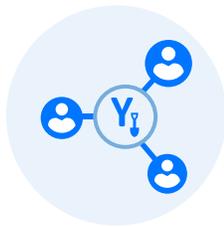
# 95%

Of instructors felt that their students were able to help each other learn.



# 95%

Would rather use Yellowdig for online discussions than other discussion boards.



# 95%

Of instructors felt more connected to their students through using Yellowdig.



# 85%

Of instructors enjoyed their time spent in their Yellowdig communities more than other discussion boards.

**Danette Grantz, Instructor at Bryan University**

"I believe I learned more about my students through Yellowdig, which helped me build and strengthen those relationships. Yellowdig helped me connect on a deeper level with my students."

## Yellowdig Is Creating a Connected Learning Experience

"Yellowdig positively impacted my class experience by keeping both myself and my peers more engaged in the content that we learned. It was an easy to navigate platform that fostered collaboration and mutual understanding."

**Anonymous Student**

Drexel

Thank you to all of our survey respondents. The results of the Fall 2021 Yellowdig User Survey speak miles of the positive impact that Yellowdig has on learning communities. Our clients opinions are very important and valuable to us as we continue to improve the ways we can learn together. The times of "regular" discussion boards are behind us, and our instructors and students agree as well, with 90% of the survey pool preferring the overall experience of Yellowdig to other discussion boards.



We are committed to helping instructors and learners alike in navigating the changing world of learning. As our results show, there is no better time than NOW to join the Yellowdig community. [Click here to get started.](#)