

Alignment to UAS Mission and Strategic Goals

UAS values the integration of technology in education, and has long recognized the potential for technology to support institutional goals. This recognition is reflected in the UAS policies guiding the course web site strategy by including active course sites for every section, retaining course sites indefinitely, maximizing student interactivity and faculty control, requiring a posted syllabus for every course, and delivering student course ratings at the end of each semester.

These policies align course web strategies with the following UAS Core Themes¹:

STUDENT ACCESS: In addition to course information and activities, UAS access policies allow prospective students to make informed decisions about specific courses and programs of study.

TEACHING AND LEARNING: Course web site technologies directly support many best practices². These include fostering communication among peers, delivering prompt feedback, encouraging active learning, communicating expectations and emphasizing time on task.

COMMUNITY ENGAEMENT: The UAS policies provide transparency, allowing the community a peek inside the classroom, while protecting confidentiality and intellectual property.

The purpose of this analysis is to assess if these efforts have created an online environment that is valued by students. This assessment is based on the metric of *student persistence* – measuring when students first visit their course sites and the proportion of students who return week after week throughout the semester.

Key Finding:

The UAS course management system is widely used across UAS. Students visit their course sites long before classes start, and use persists throughout the semester:

- In the typical week, only 6% of course websites are unused by the students.
- 63% of course websites have high activity (accessed by 75% of the class roster).
- On average, students first visit a course site 24 days prior to the start of classes.

Courses analyzed:

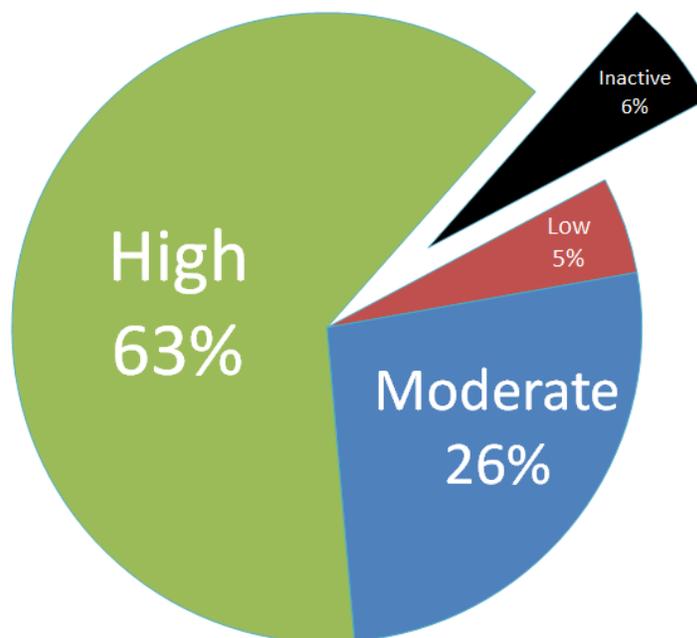
This analysis is focused on traditional university courses (both eLearning and on-campus). While a course web site is provided to every course section, this analysis is limited to courses coded as “lecture” with four or more students enrolled. Specifically excluded were ED593 and continuing education courses. In the Fall 2012 semester, there were 343 courses which matched these criteria.

Persistence Metric:

The UAS web portal tracks connections to course web sites. This analysis assessed each class by identifying how many students on the the class roster visited their course site each week. Each week, courses were assigned to one of four groups:

Inactive	No students on the class roster visited the web site
Low	The site was visited by less than 1/4 of the class roster
High	3/4 of the students on the roster visited the site
Moderate	1/4 to 3/4 of the students on the roster visited the site

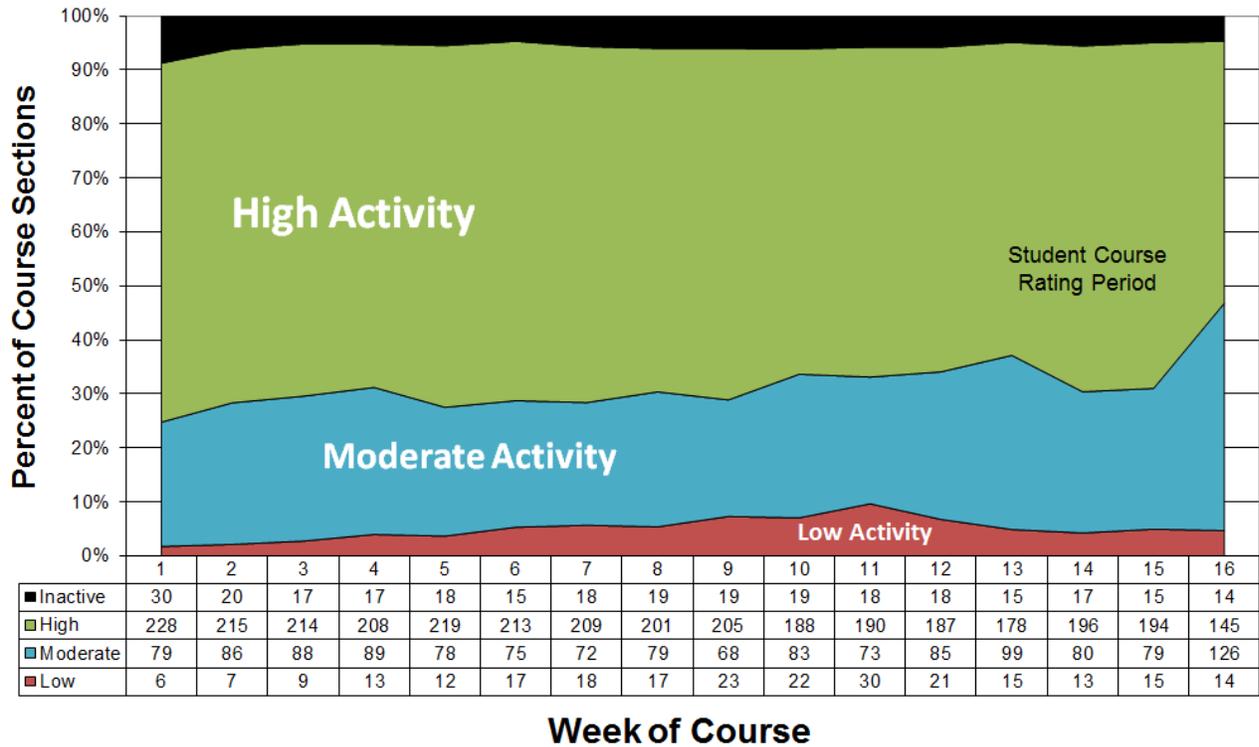
Figure 1 Course Site Activity, Fall 2012 Average



¹ http://www.uas.alaska.edu/UAS_StrategicPlan/docs/strategic-plan-public_10-17.pdf

² <http://www.tltgroup.org/programs/seven.html>

Since the data are assessed week by week, the approach allows UAS to assess how course website use changes over the course of a semester:



In addition, use can be differentiated by originating campus:

