

Blackboard's plagiarism prevention service, SafeAssign, was deployed during Spring Break 2013. As of Week 7 of S2013, 114 instructors teaching 24 different subjects had created more than 180 SafeAssignments in Blackboard courses sites.

The Blackboard Steering Committee created a survey to gather baseline metrics on how SafeAssign is being used by instructors and students, and to what extent users value SafeAssign as a tool to help student prevents plagiarism and improve their writing.

This document summarizes conclusions and recommended next steps that the Blackboard Steering Committee derived from responses to the survey.

Methodology

The S2013 SafeAssign instructor and student surveys were developed with the Qualtrics online survey software; all responses were collected anonymously. Links to the survey were emailed out to instructors who had created SafeAssignments in their Blackboard course site.

The 114 instructors using SafeAssign were asked to provide their students with a link to the survey designed for them.

Response rate

Of the 114 instructors invited to participate, 28 responded to the survey. We did not track the number of students who were enrolled in courses using SafeAssign; 36 students responded to the survey.

Instructor survey

The instructor survey was designed to assess the following:

- Whether instructors used OSU's plagiarism prevention and SafeAssign instructional training material
- Whether instructors shared OSU's plagiarism prevention and SafeAssign training instructional material with their students
- Level of difficulty in creating SafeAssignments
- Level of difficulty in interpreting SafeAssign reports
- Value that SafeAssign reports offer instructors in identifying potential plagiarism
- Value that SafeAssign reports offer students to identify potential plagiarism and improve writing
- Likelihood that instructor would use SafeAssign again in another course

Student survey

The student survey was designed to assess the following:

- Level of difficulty in submitting SafeAssignments
- Whether instructors made SafeAssign reports visible to students

- Value that SafeAssign reports offer students to identify potential plagiarism
- Information students wish had been available when they began using SafeAssign
- How knowledgeable students felt about being able to avoid plagiarism in their written work
- Whether students knew that there is a Blackboard site with multiple draft SafeAssignments that they can submit their paper to and view a report
- What information respondents want to have available to all OSU students regarding plagiarism prevention and using SafeAssign

Both surveys also solicited open-ended comments on SafeAssign and plagiarism prevention resources.

Key findings - instructors

1. 82% of respondents reviewed training material on SafeAssign when getting started using the tool.
2. 50% of respondents included a statement in their syllabus describing SafeAssign; 86% provided a link to OSU's instructions for students on using SafeAssign
3. 75% of respondents found SafeAssign "not at all difficult" to set up in their course site. 1 respondent found it "very difficult."
4. 53% of respondents found interpreting SafeAssign reports "not at all difficult;" 43% found it "somewhat difficult."
5. 50% of respondents said SafeAssign provides "very high value" in identifying potential plagiarism; 39% said it provides "moderate value."
6. 32% of respondents rated SafeAssign as offering "very high value" to students so they can identify potential plagiarism and improve their writing; 50% rated it as offering "moderate value."
7. 93% of respondents are "likely" or "very likely" to use SafeAssign in another course.

Key findings –students

1. 75% of students who responded found it "not at all difficult" to submit SafeAssignments; the remaining found it "very difficult" to "somewhat difficult" to submit SafeAssignments.
2. 86% of students reported that their instructor made the SafeAssign report(s) visible to them.
3. 64% of students rated SafeAssign as having "no value" to "moderate" value in identifying potential plagiarism in their assignments; 25% rated "high value. The remaining responded "not applicable."
4. 50% of students rated themselves as having a "moderate level of knowledge" in being able to avoid plagiarism in their written work; 39% reported a "high level of knowledge." 11% reported a "low level of knowledge."
5. 64% of students did not know about the Blackboard site with multiple draft SafeAssignments that they can submit their paper to and view a report

Recommended next steps

- ✓ Instructors and students alike will benefit from easy-to-access, consistent training material on SafeAssign and plagiarism prevention, including online tutorials, webinars, and quick reference guides. The basics are in place now, with more content under development in time for Fall 2013.
- ✓ TAC and the Office of Student Conduct should continue to reach out to colleges and departments to understand their specific needs and concerns, and provide communication and training accordingly.
- ✓ Continue to track SafeAssign use and adoption on an on-going basis. Continue surveying users to evaluate how and to what extent SafeAssign and plagiarism prevention training resources contribute to academic integrity at OSU.