

KEY QUESTIONS:

- Will moving from an in-person and/or by-phone system of registering for tests become more confusing when changed to an online system, particularly when there are number of changes to the established testing system?
- What are some ways we can adjust the online registration system so that it is less confusing to students?

INQUIRY:

Students were increasingly put off by the convoluted system needed to register for tests. Because of complicated calendaring rules, we were unable to register students for tests online using standard systems endorsed by our colleagues in the NCTA and GLCTA. Students indicated a wish for online test registration a customer service survey in Winter 2015.

We collaborated with C&IT to develop an in-house system that would track number of times a student has taken an exam, and other important pieces of the student record in Banner, while allowing them to register for exams online. The system, ASTRO, was shared with administration and students in Winter 2016. Feedback from students was used to improve the student interface in Winter 2017. When first implemented, students rated it very highly: 0% indicated difficulty using the system (n=20).

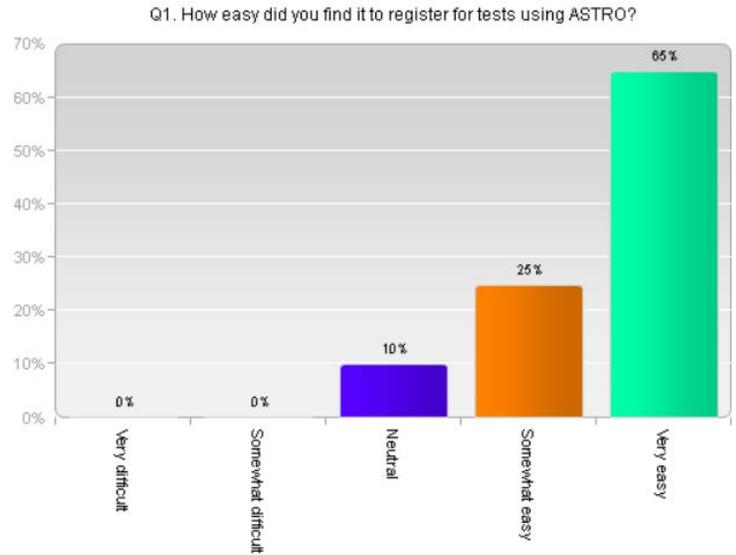


Figure 1 Winter 2016 Ratings of ASTRO, (n=20)

However, a number of changes were implemented in terms of general education requirements in Winter 2018. A number of departments revised their test descriptions as a result. We wondered if ASTRO was still considered easy to use by the students. The old system of having to talk to a person may have been inconvenient for students, but it meant that typical confusions could be cleared up on the phone before a student registered for a test.

WHAT WE LEARNED:

As expected, students indicated more difficulty using ASTRO during the year when there were many changes to testing. The percentage of students indicating any difficulty increased from 0% to 4% (n=113). However, the amount of change was minimal.

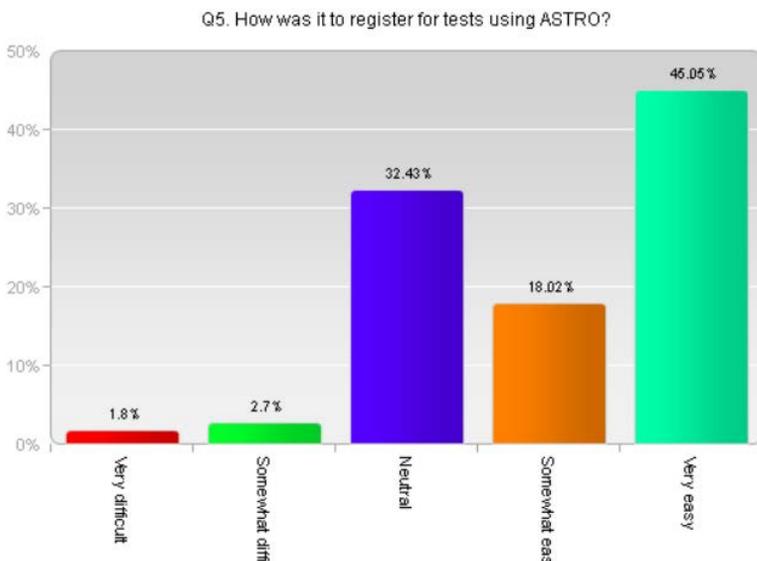


Figure 2 Ratings of ASTRO during a high change year, 2018 (n=113)



Commentary continued to be positive, for the most part: 14/17 of the comments were neutral or positive. These were the suggestions the remainder had for us.

- Change the color of our website, using less white, to reduce glare.
- Be more explicit about which test to take. Unfortunately, we are as explicit as we can be. We refer students to Advising, because that question can be more complicated than you would think.
- Mention that the suggested end time for the test can vary, and that it may not take a full 2 ½ hours.

NEXT STEPS:

- Continue to monitor ASTRO usage patterns.
- Review ways to make the website more clear to students using the tips above. Collaborate with Advising to improve our referral path from the registration system.

NEW QUESTIONS:

- Are there more recent websites where advisors offer more explicit advice regarding test-taking?
- Will confusion during this transition be reduced as changes to the system become more widely known?