

Internet Marketing Course Collaboration between Panama and Slovakia:

Lessons learned creating an Internet
Marketing Plan and Website for
Habitat for Humanity

PANAMA PARTNER



Quality Leadership University
Partnerships with ESC, University of Louisville, Towson
University, Universidad de Chile and FIU

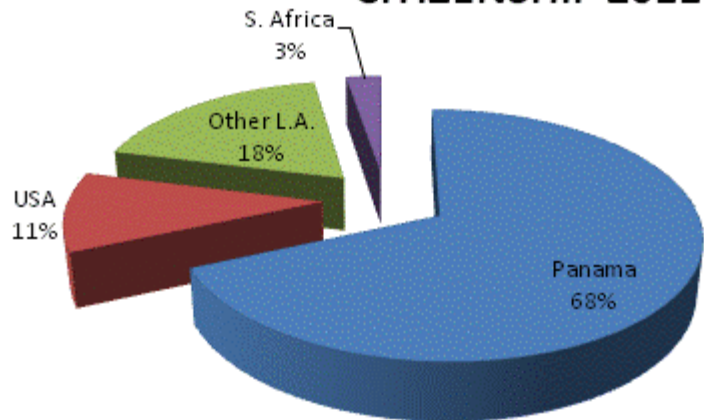
BACKGROUND



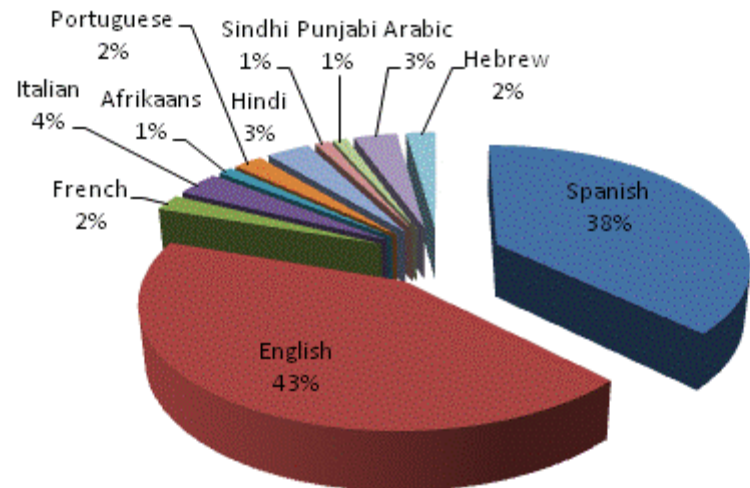
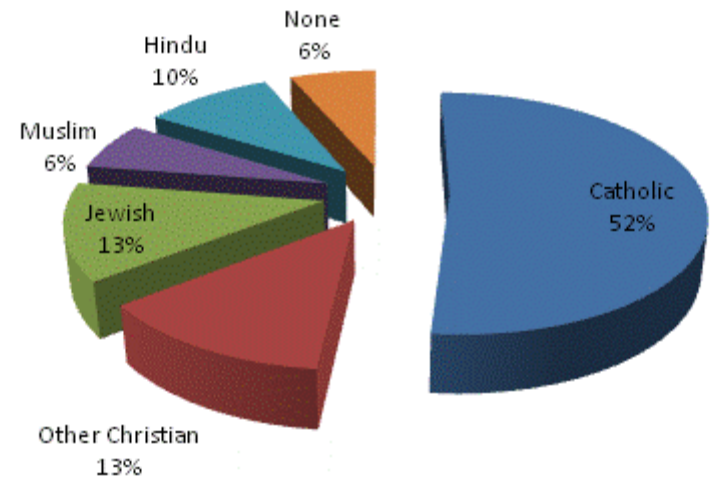
- **Started January, 2009**
- **Currently 4th cohort**
- **Average 20 – 30 students**
- **Graduates – approx. 60 (Dec., 2012)**

Demographics

CITIZENSHIP 2011-12



RELIGION



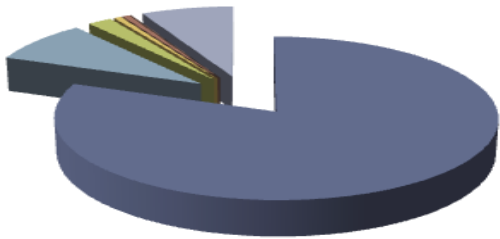
LANGUAGES SPOKEN WELL - 2011-12

Slovakia

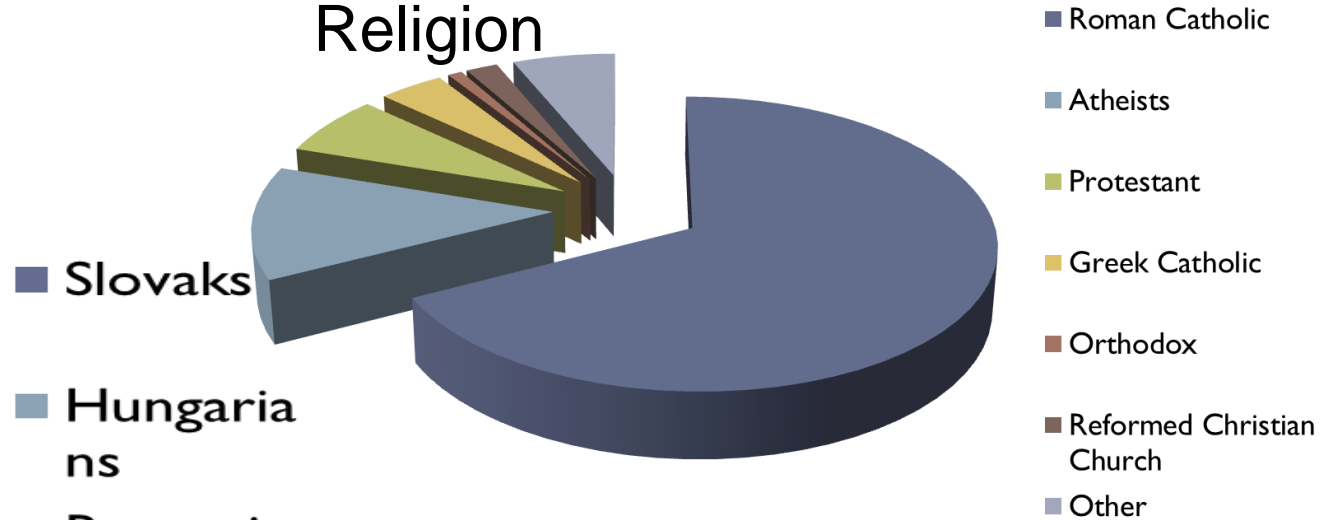


Slovakia Demographics

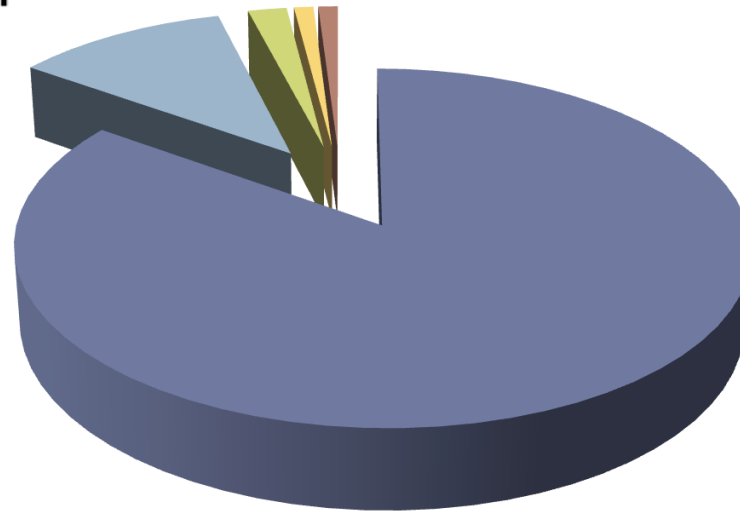
Population



Religion



Slovaks
Hungarians
Romani
Czechs



Slovak
Hungarian
Roma
Ukrainian
Other

Languages

University of Economics Bratislava

- **11, 500 students**
- **Face to Face only**
- **Moodle**
- **High interest in taking a “US” course**
- **Certificate of completion for collaboration**



Slovakia Higher Education Pedagogy

- **Thomas Arnold**
- **Authoritarian**
- **Changes 1960-1980**
- **ECE Region**
- **Communist government**

Slovakia Higher Education Pre-1989

- **Czechoslovakia 1918**
- **First Universities 1919**
- **Quality “good”**
- **Education Free**
- **Communist government**

Slovakia Higher Education Post 1989

- **Economic Transformation**
- **Increased Access to Education**
- **State Monopoly Ends**
- **Academic Freedom**
- **New Funding Structures**

Slovakia Higher Education 2013

- **Financial Problems**
- **Staff Issues**
- **Atmosphere**
- **Quality**
- **Internationalization**

Implications for Online

PANAMA

- High context
- Collectivist
- High power distance – may hesitate to participate, ask questions
- High uncertainty avoidance
- English usually a second or third language

ONLINE

- Low context
- Individualist
- Students construct understanding through participation; instructor doesn't give a "right" answer
- Students resistant/anxious
- Communication relies heavily on reading and writing

Online education in Panama

- **Universidad Interamericana de Educación a Distancia (UNIEDPA)**
- **Universidad Abierta y a Distancia de Panama (UNADP)**
- **Universidad del Istmo (UDI) – Whitney International**

Online education in Slovakia

- **“Beginning Stage” for 10 years**
- **LMS systems available, no training, no funding, no other support**
- **College of Management (City University of Seattle) – exception**

Legal Considerations in Panama

- **Until recently all “distance” education required a face-to-face component**
- **New legislation opens opportunities for 100% online**
- **Any online programs in Panama must be approved by Higher Education authorities**

Legal Considerations in Slovakia

- **Lack of legislation for online education**
- **Universities get accreditation awarding degrees (quality of teachers, research results, etc.), form is up to them**
- **Any non-university education programs seek approval from the Higher Education authorities independently of the form they use**

Student Experience

PANAMA

- Prior experience:
 - online
 - APA
 - US education
- Plagiarism acceptable
- English usually a second or third language
- Familiar with workload

Slovak

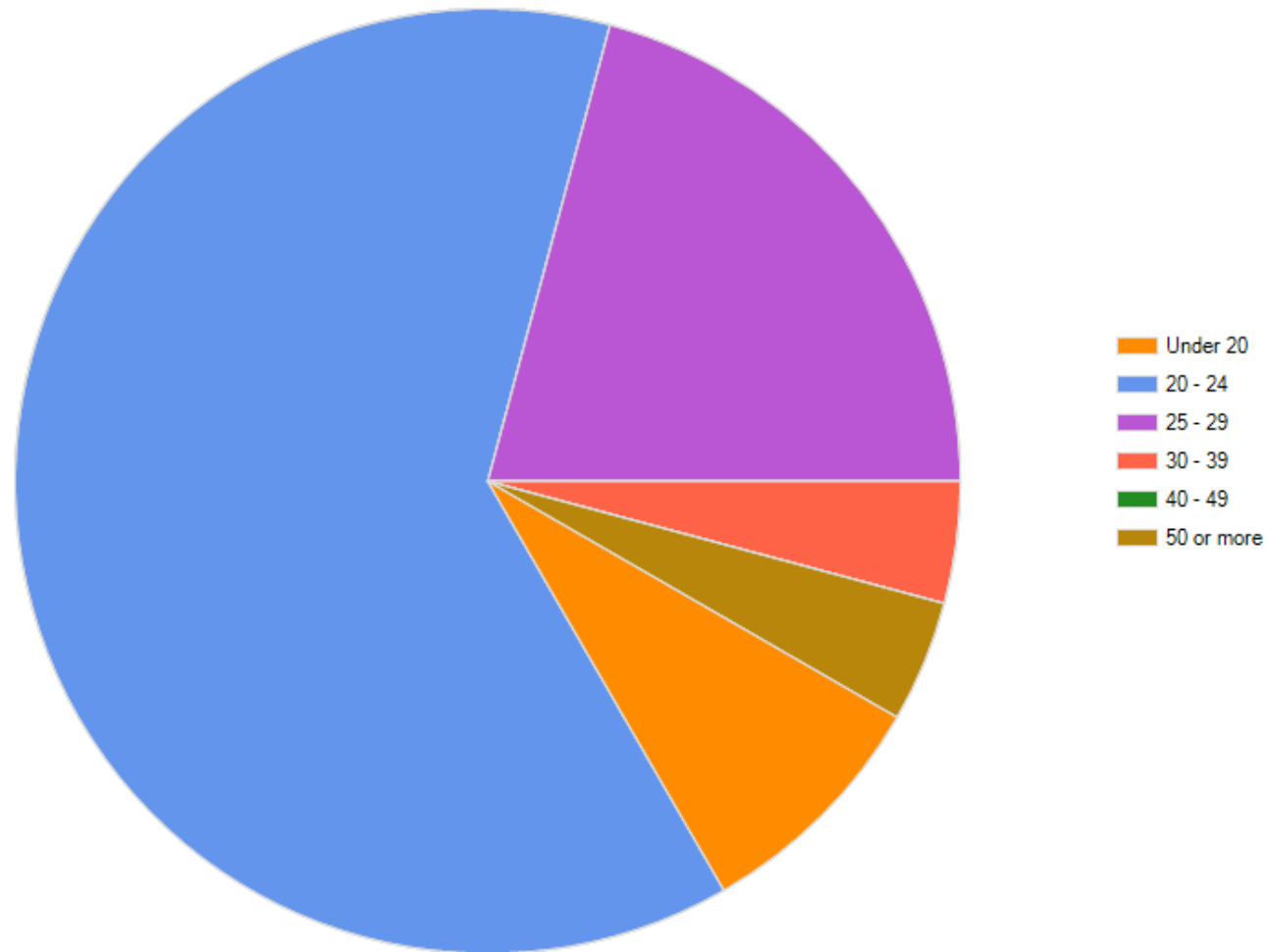
- Prior experience:
 - No online
 - No APA
 - US education?
- Plagiarism acceptable
- English usually a second or third language?
- Unrealistic expectations

The Course

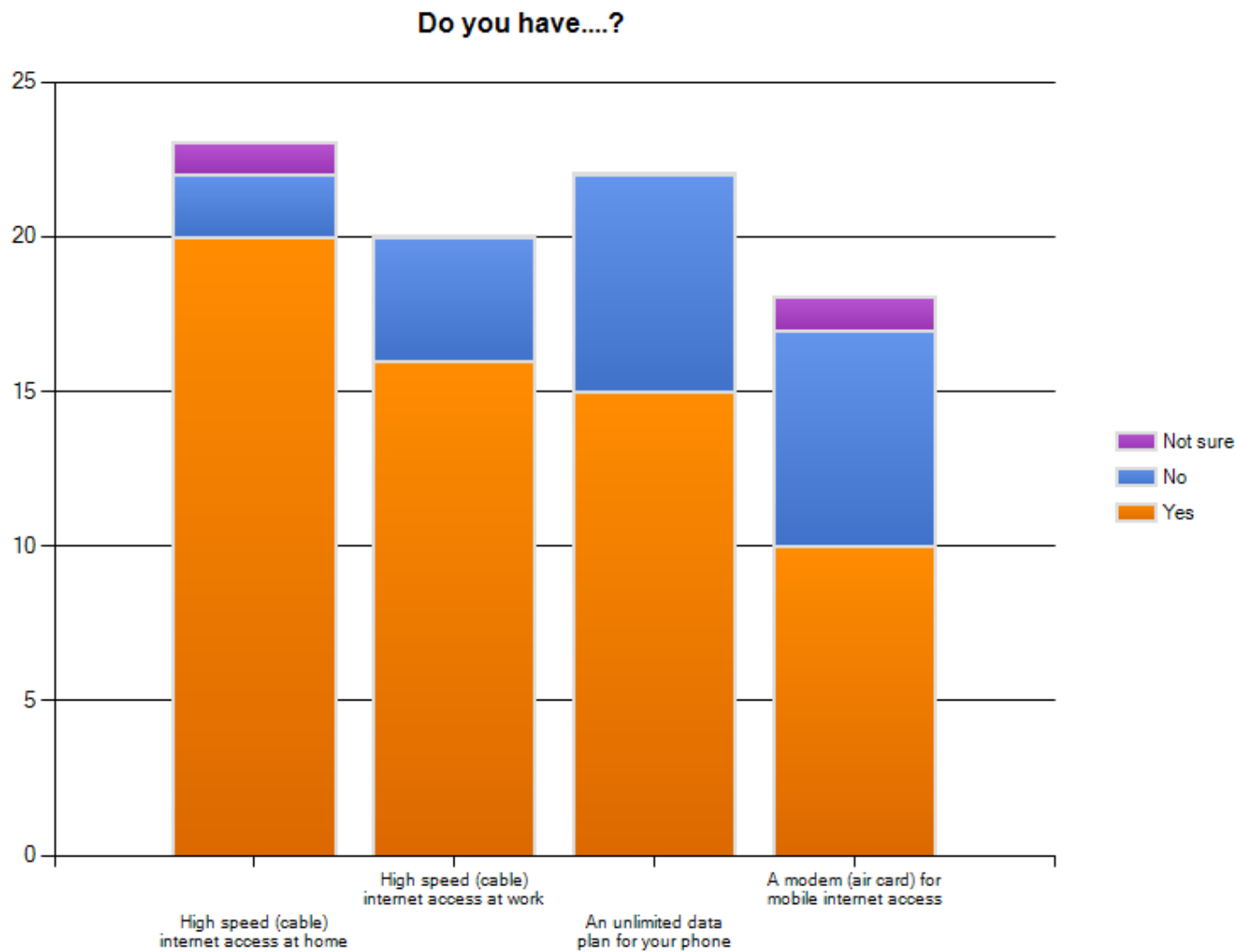
- 10 Week Course Collaboration
- Moodle at University of Economics
- Individual and Team Assignments
- Asynchronous Discussions
- Virtual Sessions
- Co-Developed
- Co-Taught
- Facebook

Panama/DR Student Age

What is your age?

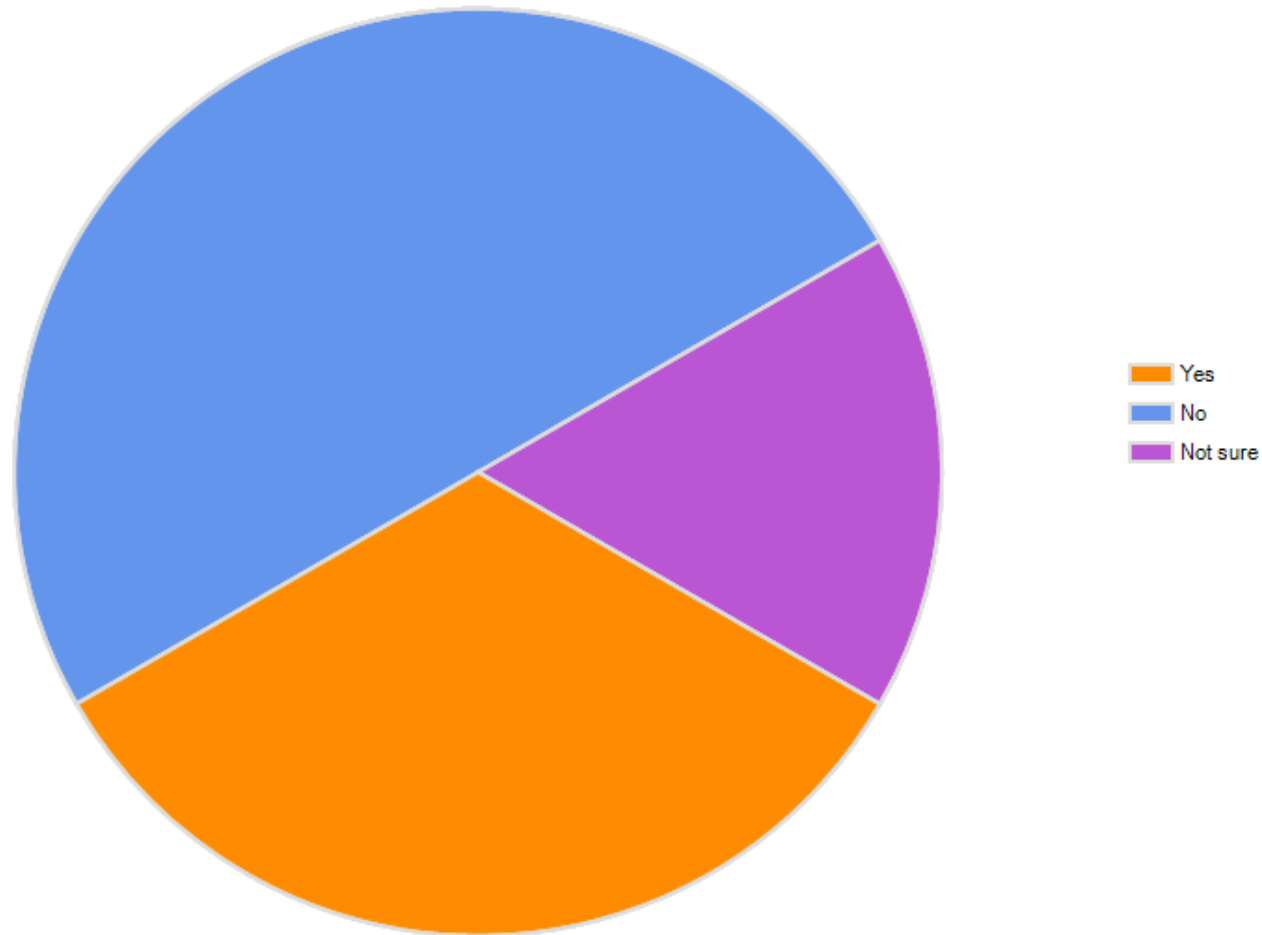


Panama/DR Devices Owned



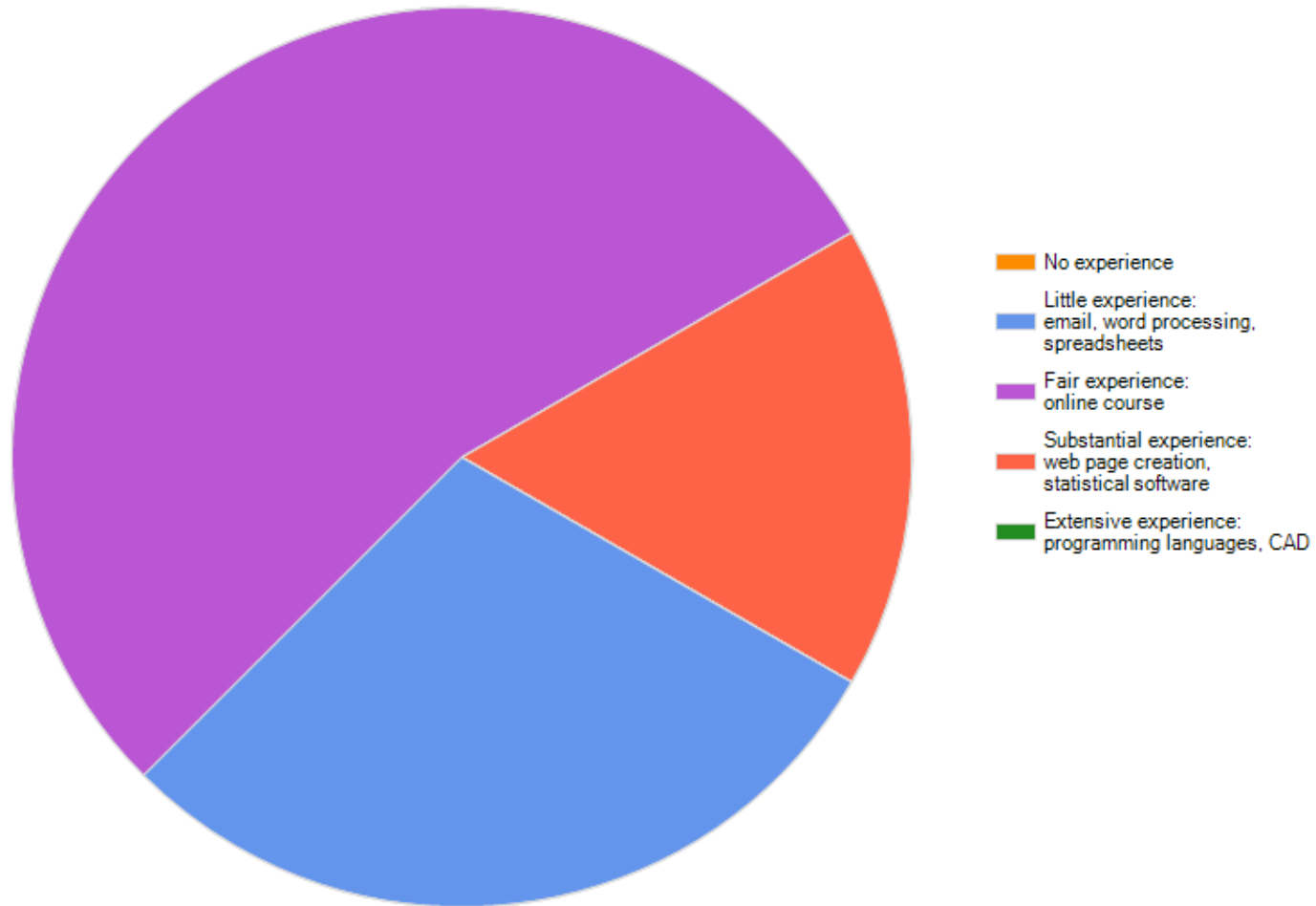
Panama/DR Prior Experience

Prior to your courses with SUNY/ESC, had you ever used Blackboard Collaborate/Elluminate or a similar tool?



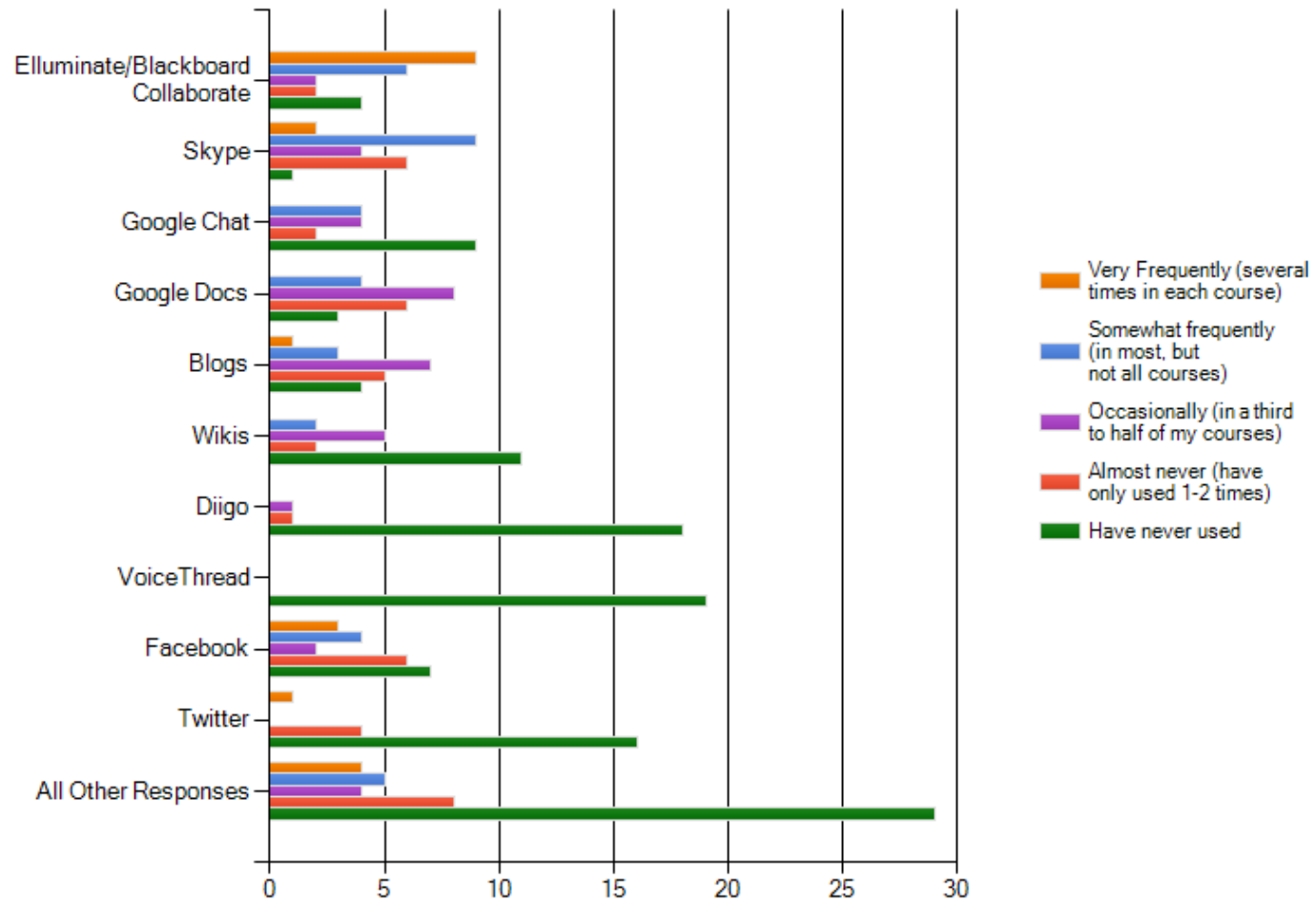
Panama/DR Technology

How do you consider yourself with regards to technology use?



Panama/DR Tools

Which of the following tools have you used for course related work?



Course Demographics

- 7 Panama/DR (ESC) Students
 - All matriculated undergrad junior/senior
 - Elective course part of degree program
- 25 Slovak Students
 - Undergrad through PhD/”extra course”
- 5 Teams (1-2 ESC per team)
- 6 Panama Students complete course
- 5 Slovak Students completed course

Low Sensitivity to Plagiarism

- Plagiarism culturally acceptable
- Copyright laws not enforced
- Slovak not familiar with citation and copyright rules

Lessons Learned: Slovak

- Slow to engage
 - Pre-course student orientation
- Lack of experience
 - Face to face training in online learning
- Large drop out rate
 - Application process
 - Charge for course
- Plagiarism
 - Workshops on citation and copyright

Panama/DR Experience

- Initial concerns:
 - Team assignments
 - Working across time zones
 - Language differences
- Course Experience
 - Initial excitement during icebreaker
 - Frustration with lack of Slovak engagement
 - Concern about grades

Habitat for Humanity Websites



- <http://habitatsk.wordpress.com/>

QLU IS NOT ALONE

“online programs only succeed if they are offered within cultures that accept them, or are at least willing to explore them... The issue is that our learners – their parents and our educational partners -- are unconvinced that online options have validity or worth. They are often categorized as impersonal, educationally ineffective, and simply introduced to reduce costs.”

David Starr-Glass – Prague program, 2012

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References

- Al Harti, A. (2005). Distance Higher Education Experiences of Arab Gulf Students in the United States: A cultural perspective. *The International Review of Research in Open & Distance Learning*. 6(3)

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