

Media Relations

UNH Study: College Students Use Cell Phones In Class, Despite Adverse Affects

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Editors and Reporters: The full study can be downloaded at <http://www.unh.edu/news/docs/2010CellphoneUsageStudy.pdf>.

DURHAM, NH — College students use cell phones in class, despite knowing that it adversely affects their concentration, according to a study conducted at the University of New Hampshire.

In a university-wide study, student researchers at the UNH Whittemore School of Business and Economics found student cell phone users check their phones an average of one to five times during class. About half of students (51 percent) say that cell phone use in class affects their ability to concentrate and the amount of information that they receive during class (52 percent).

“Even though the majority of college students do not own a smartphone, those who do are much more active using their phones in class,” said Chuck Martin, adjunct professor of marketing, whose class conducted the study.

Although students are aware that phone use is frowned upon in class, almost half (49 percent) of those who check their phones during class attempt to conceal their use somewhat or extremely frequently, based on the study of 1,265 students.






The most commonly used phone feature was the clock, followed by texting. Students at the business school were the most active phone users, and they were also the highest percentage who owned smartphones (51 percent vs. 33 percent).

Class standing did not have a significant effect on the amount of times students checked their phones, at only a 3 percent difference. However, 77 percent of seniors check their phone’s clock frequently or extremely frequently, while 42 percent of freshmen check the clock on their phone at the same frequency.

Female students were found to be 7 percent more likely to text, or more times per class period, and they are also 13 percent more likely to frequently hide their phone use in class. Female students are 5 percent more likely to text frequently during class. Almost all (99 percent) of college students own a cell phone, with 9 percent owning multiple mobile devices.

The UNH Whittemore School of Business and Economics offers a full complement of high-quality programs in business, economics, accounting, finance, information systems management, marketing, and hospitality management. Programs are offered at the undergraduate, graduate, and executive development levels. The school is accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business, the premier accrediting agency for business schools worldwide.

The University of New Hampshire, founded in 1866, is a world-class public research university with the feel of a New England liberal arts college. A land, sea, and space-grant university, UNH is the state’s flagship public institution, enrolling 12,200 undergraduate and 2,300 graduate students.

 
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