

**Department of Information Technology (DIT) Annual  
Student and Faculty Survey  
Fall 2011  
Mobile Technology: Executive Summary**

This year's DIT Annual Survey focused on mobile devices and use. The online survey was distributed to students and faculty via email late November 2011 and open for two weeks. As the mobile landscape rapidly grows, the popularity of mobile devices increases, particularly the iPhone and iPad and the Android mobile operating system, our intention was to accurately assess the mobile landscape at PTS now, as well as to gather student and faculty ideas about what might be possible in the future. Mobile devices have undeniably moved out of a technological niche and into the mainstream and await their full integration into theological education. What is evident is many students and scholars are still determining how to best adopt this new technology into their academic work flow.

Respondents included 108 students and 10 faculty. The high survey response rate suggests a strong interest in the issue of mobile technology by students and faculty, and both groups of respondents submitted some good ideas for potential mobile projects. However, respondents also reported some ambiguity regarding the use mobile devices and mobile apps to serve academic and scholarly needs.

60% of both students and faculty reported having a mobile device, either a smartphone or tablet, with approximately a third of those having an iPhone. These results are consistent with a 2010 Educause study that reported 63% of students owned an Internet-capable handheld device. Android smartphones and the iPad were effectively tied for second amongst students with 20% followed by RIM/Blackberry. Faculty were more prone to have an RIM/Blackberry device (20%) than an Android. However, the iPad remained prominent with 20%.

Communication purposes, comprised of email, text messaging and engaging via social media, was the foremost category of use followed by informational needs, such as looking up hours/locations and news, events and weather. While these findings could be expected as they echo student mobile use trends nationally, as reported in *Mobile Access 2010* released by the Pew Internet and American Life Project and *The Horizon Report* released by The New Media Consortium and Educause, what was particularly interesting about the PTS community is its disposition to incorporate the use of these devices for academic pursuits. Despite faculty's higher use of mobile devices for academic work, students (64%) were more open to incorporating mobile apps into academic pursuits than faculty (40%). Specific uses cited by both faculty and students include accessing: e-reserves, student papers, documents for meetings, library catalogs and databases, dictionaries, conference program material, Blackboard, and particular reference apps like Blue Letter Bible, Revised Common Lectionary, and various Biblical language apps. While most students expressed interest in using mobile more in their academic lives, some students also expressed concern about the issue of devoting institutional resources to new technologies that not all students have, can afford, or even want.