Report for PLATO Course Coordinator Assessment Survey

Response Statistics

	Count	Percent
Complete	51	96.2%
Partial	2	3.8%
Total	53	

Sixty-five PLATO course coordinators were invited to complete a survey. Fifty-three submitted their surveys for a response rate of 82%.

What I like best about the support I get from PLATO that makes it easy and fun to teach for its members is . . .

1. A Medical procedure required my absence.
2. Allowing me the flexibility and independence to coordinate the course in my own style.
3. Aside from writing up the course description, I don't have to do anything else except show up to facilitate the course.
4. At my 2 PLATO courses we are largely self-sufficient...we do our copying and have our own overhead projector....support from the downtown PLATO office is minimal
5. Conversations among other coordinators at events
6. Dealing with the details of scheduling space
7. Don Reeder is a great discussant, and offers to post our presentations on the PLATO web site.
8. Emails and messages from the Curriculum Committee that ask how things are going.
9. Everyone I have worked with has been friendly and supportive.
10. Everyone involved from student to coordinator, wants to learn - and is very pleasant about it! No complaints.
11. Good communication and encouragement
12. Help in selecting site and accommodating for changes in the schedule
13. I am not teaching a course but am co-coordinating a book group, Novels Old and New.
14. I benefit from the openness of structure and potential subject matter, as well as the patience and helpfulness of individual organizers!
15. I came in to coordinate an established class. I am not sure what support there is.
16. I can post the semester syllabus online
17. I coordinate a course that often relies on an Overhead projector (and in one that has the same condition) PLATO has one OH projector that is terrible and useless. It would be nice to have a few, working projectors to be able to use. Yes, power point is more popular but OH projectors have a place.

18. I feel i can always call on someone for help and advice if needed. Knowing the support is there feels very important.
19. I feel that I receive minimal support.
1. I have not requested any support for my course. I have sought-out new locations for the course and I have arranged for technical support from the location staff or provided it myself or from course members.
20. I have not required much from PLATO other than the printing of the syllabus, and, of course, the Preview.
21. I have too little experience, having taught only one course, to make this judgement.
22. I was co-coordinator (really assistant coordinator.) The lead coordinator was wonderful.
23. It's dependable
24. I've already answered survey
25. Making sure he room is set up and a sound system is available if needed.
26. Much better website for information and organization than several years ago.
27. My teaching partner and I have been at it for about l7 years now; we know what we're doing, and pretty much do it all ourselves without much input from PLATO. Reminders to send in information about courses is, however, always useful.
28. No opinion for my class
29. Not sure. I'm just filling for someone to prepare for the spring semester.
30. People in general are tolerant and open-minded about our subject matter
31. PLATO advertises the class and that's about it.
32. PLATO publicizes my course contents, time and location; and the Open House is a good place for newcomers to find out about my course.
33. Provides learning space
34. Questions in 1. were not phrased well for my needs. Cur. Com liaisons for fall 2015, spring 2016, and fall 2016 were excellent. Cur. Com. liaison for summer 2016 was combative and no help at all. I had to work to get the information I needed - it was the first summer course I offered. I also found and arranged for my own course location which also provided the required teaching tools and technology.
35. Secretarial assistance once per semester is a great help. Provision of needed technology and wonderful physical space helps with the enjoyment factor.
36. Support/administrative matters are taken care of so that I can concentrate on my preparation and coordinating/teaching.
37. The Curriculum Committee does all the work of listing the course, posting on the web if asked, and arranging the venue.
38. The group dynamic is wonderful. Everyone just feels like a good friend.
39. The open and friendly responses and help from the Curriculum Committee and my various liaison persons.
40. The people who I teach are adult!
41. The Plato members who took my courses contributed greatly to the quality of the course. In several cases they brought interesting new ideas to the class.
42. They help me get the room.
43. We have a very stable base of class members which genuinely supports the current coordinator. A decent percentage (maybe 10%) have served as coordinators themselves, and are always there to help the newbie. Also, we have a generous group of presenters in our membership base.

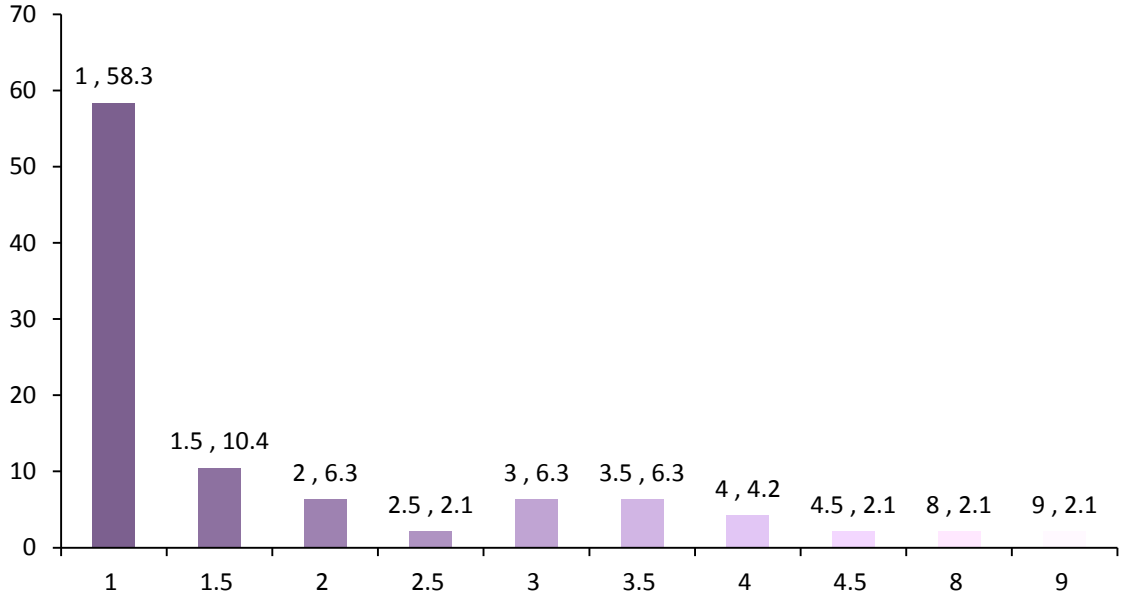
44. When I have a question or concern I can contact my liaison or anyone on the curriculum committee and always get a prompt and helpful answer.

One thing that PLATO could do to better support me in delivering high quality learning courses is . . .

1. ...nothing. PLATO folk do all that I could wish for.
2. Cannot think of anything
3. Can't think of anything
4. Can't think of anything.
5. Continue to work at finding more places with parking and video capabilities
6. Encourage people to join the course.
7. Find additional ways to promote new or difficult courses to members beyond the course postings and Preview. Also, Cur. Com. liaisons should play role of consultant to and advocates for coordinators in addition to gate keeping and process time keepers.
8. Find more people to deliver courses
9. I believe things are going smoothly. We are pleased with how our course is run.
10. I can't think of a thing.
11. I could use some basic computer skill updates. Like how to create presentations, maintaining participant list on an iPad.
12. I have no complaints; things are going smoothly now
13. I have too little experience, having taught only one course, to make this judgement.
14. I hope we can be a little more organized with the course listings as we seemed to have a lot of confusion
15. I miss participating in the general information meetings during which presenters could describe their offerings. (The personality of a teacher always meant a lot to me as a student.)
16. I'm not sure yet.
17. I'm very happy
18. It would be useful if PLATO could provide an email mailing list for course attendees. Most useful would be to provide some means (website or email) to get course evaluations.
19. It's fine now.
20. Last season, I was asked if my Film History course could use a larger venue. I said, "Yes." That's the last I've heard of it.
21. Make regular attendance at classes a very important part of enrolling.
22. Making sure the venue hosting the course understands what classroom equipment is required, e.g. TV, white board & markers, etc. Provide some duplicating services. Help out with the purchases of DVDs, etc.
23. More direct help with posting information on the web.
24. No opinion
25. Nothing
26. Nothing I can think of.
27. Nothing to recommend at this point
28. Noting more needed.
29. One thing that PLATO DOES to support me... I appreciate the luncheon for coordinators. Keep up the good work!

30. Perhaps it will be better this year but in the past I have had difficulty finding out the dates of the next semester. As a participatory class we need to be able to prepare for the next semester early on.
31. Reduce expenses by letting us photocopy for free
32. Support in reproducing or paying to reproduce background materials and helping to pay for DVD rentals needed for our International Films course.
33. The use of a high quality laptop for Power Point usage at Capitol Lakes would enable some of our presenters to use Power Point when their personal laptops are out-of-date and don't coordinate with the new and excellent equipment in the Grand Hall.
34. To have a place where I could Xerox course materials at no cost. My building complex used to have a Xerox for tenants, but this broke down and has not been replaced.
35. We need to upgrade our equipment. More and more participating "teachers" want to present programs from a good laptop with projection capabilities. We have the projector, but need a good laptop capable of connecting to both projector and current tuner. Tech is not my specialty, but I'm certain we can make it work to improve programming and move into 2017.

How likely would it be that you would be willing to coordinate a course that was offered only via a webinar format?

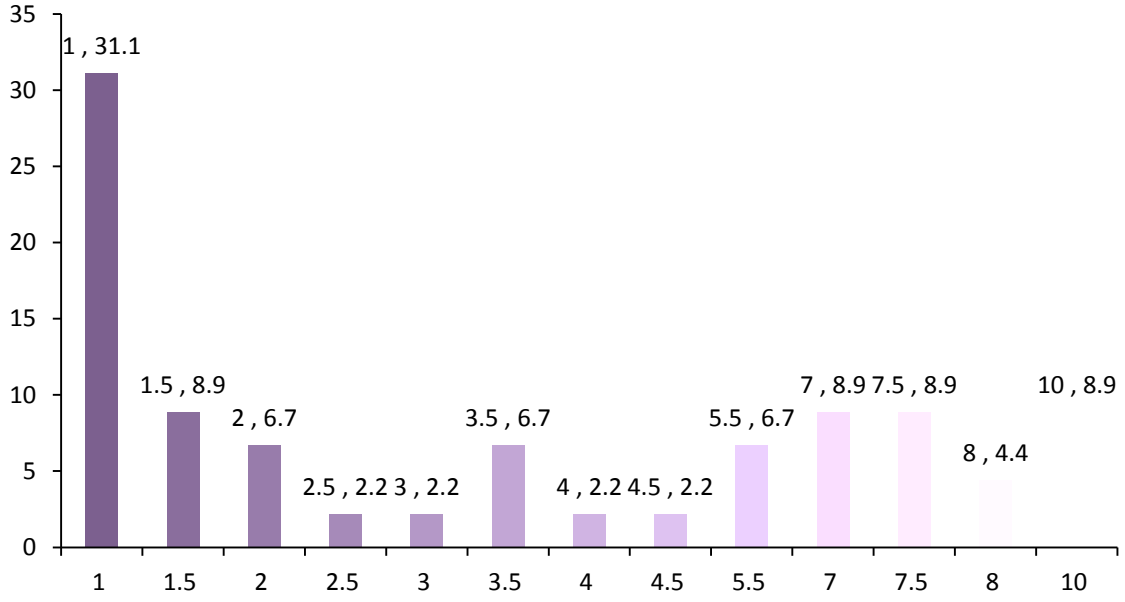


Count	Response
28	1
5	1.5
3	2
1	2.5
3	3
3	3.5

Count	Response
2	4
1	4.5
1	8
1	9

	Statistics
Total Responses	48.0
Average	1.9
StdDev	1.7
Skipped	4.0

How likely would it be that you would be willing to coordinate a course that would be conducted live to registered members but also recorded for later viewing by other members on any computer with access to the Internet?



Count	Response
14	1
4	1.5
3	2
1	2.5

Count	Response
1	3
3	3.5
1	4
1	4.5
3	5.5
4	7
4	7.5
2	8
4	10

	Statistics
Total Responses	45.0
Average	4.0
StdDev	3.1
Skipped	7.0

I know what it would take to develop and deliver an interactive course via a webinar format and am comfortable with doing so.

Value	Percent	Count
Strongly Disagree	46.8%	22
Disagree	29.8%	14
Slightly Disagree	10.6%	5
Slightly Agree	2.1%	1
Agree	4.3%	2
Strongly Agree	2.1%	1
Don't Know/No Opinion	4.3%	2
	Total	47

	Statistics
Total Responses	47.0
Average	1.9
StdDev	1.2
Skipped	5.0

My greatest concern about delivering a course online via a webinar or through a recorded live session is . . .

1. #6 includes 2 questions. I know what it takes but I prefer the feedback and discussion that comes with face-to-face.
2. But I would be willing to learn
3. Class interaction and personal contact are crucial to significant learning. I would only agree to a recorded format as a supplement for people unable to attend a course in person.
4. Extra time and tech incompetence
5. Human contact missing.
6. I am concerned re use of materials (potentially copyrighted) that I download from the Internet. Since the teaching is not reimbursed, I am not too worried, but it is an issue that should be clarified.
7. I am no good at computer things. I think face to face is very important in learning.
8. I am pretty saturated with work and other hobbies now.
9. I like to be spontaneous and interactive with my classes but working with a camera and participants not in the room would be uncomfortable for me.
10. I much prefer the interaction of a classroom setting.
11. I teach to the needs of the participants and want to keep making my course very one-on-one
12. I think in an art class the personal interactions between myself and class members is essential and also the growing community of artists as we bond and feel safe enough to experiment. And the visuals are of course essential and very few can see both the artist and the art well enough to get things like how much water or which tube of blue.
13. I think music is best experienced in a room full of like-minded listeners. The "vibe" is just better. As to a recorded course, that would be okay, as the original would have been presented before a live audience.
14. Just not interested in doing so; prefer live interaction
15. Lack of experience with the process, no expertise in this area.
16. Lack of human interaction
17. lack of participation by members
18. Lack of personal interaction
19. Let those who are comfortable doing it, do it. I would not be interested.
20. Losing the pleasure of personal face to face interaction and the immediate feedback involved in conversation Enjoyment of students sharing personal relevant experiences adds to the emotional connection.

21. Loss of personal interaction or live back and forth, one of the positives of Plato is that it provides social contact for members
22. My class depends on strict confidentially. Sharing very personal discoveries with a wider audience would prohibit deep and honest participation by my class members.
23. My joy in teaching is the one-on-one interaction with live persons in the class.
24. My subject matter always involves creative process in words and/or body movement!
25. My technical incompetence
26. No real personal or group interaction
27. Not applicable to my course as I use DVDs and there would be a licensing problem.
28. Not familiar with the format.
29. Nothing replaces live, active teaching and learning. Anything less would drive me quickly and far away. These very questions suggest a movement toward something larger, more bureaucratic, and more institutionalized. I sense a drift toward misguided thinking that more and bigger is better. It isn't.
30. Participant engagement is quite limited. The competition is great for this type.
31. Re: webinar - the nature of my courses benefit from in person interaction and require it during some sessions. Re: recorded sessions - I pioneered this concept. I did not feel that PLATO supported me in ways I believed they would. It was much work for the benefit it produced. I have discontinued using this approach. If PLATO wishes to develop recorded sessions for future access, it needs to realize that Course Coordinators do not have the capacity/resources to develop the course, locate/contract with the videographer, attend to the editing and promote the ...continued in 8
32. Since my course involves showing full-length films, I believe recording them might violate copyright laws. Also, group discussion of the films is an important element of the course.
33. Technology and its associated problems
34. The added time it might take to manage the course.
35. The additional time involved
36. The course I coordinate is based on class participation (there is no lecturing) and my experience with internet discussions is that they don't work well.
37. The loss of community and friendships that are, for me, an essential part of the Plato experience.
38. The loss of interaction around the table with participants.
39. The recording inhibiting discussion during the class and the building of community within the course.
40. The technology may interfere with the quality of the course.
41. There are so many great ones that already exist and what makes my courses special is the participant contribution- I don't lecture just provide questions videotaping would ruin it.
42. Too much work. I'm fine with the way it is now.
43. Too technical for my computer skills

One topic that I would love to teach using a webinar format would be . . .

1. As you can imagine from my earlier responses, I reject what you assume here, that I could love the webinar format.
2. Healthy Aging
3. I don't know of any

4. I suppose more "academic" topics would work in that format. Again, I think music requires a live audience for the best experience.
5. I would be okay to record any session for later viewing as a webinar or webinar series. No interest to doing a webinar that would only have remote attendees.
6. I would not LOVE to use webinar format
7. I would only be comfortable teaching. Purely fact based course but that is not the kind of course I want to teach for Plato
8. I'm really not into giving a webinar presentation. Whoever came up with this idea? I much prefer things to be LIVE..!!! Most of the fun is through live inter-actions, as in a small intimate theater.
9. None. This may appeal to some but not to me. I do see the need to offer courses to people who may not be able to get to certain locations or any location. But it is not something I am interested in doing.
10. Not interested in more work.
11. Not teach, but would love to take the American History course online
12. Webinar: N/A from 7...recorded videos to the membership. In my case, there was a total misunderstanding on my part as to what PLATO leadership was willing/able to do (support). And, I think the leadership thought I would do it - in other words, if the coordinator thought it, he would do it. If recording of courses/lectures is in PLATO's future, it will need to figure out what it can support through committees or other mechanisms/resources. It will not succeed if it thinks coordinators will be able to shoulder all aspects of the project's processes.

How many years have you been or were you a course coordinator with PLATO?

Value	Percent	Count
Less than 1 year	12.2%	6
1 year to less than 2 years	10.2%	5
2 years to less than 5 years	18.4%	9
5 years to less than 10 years	38.8%	19
10 years or more	20.4%	10
	Total	49

How many semesters have you taught for PLATO during this time? Indicate the number of semesters you have taught here:

Number of Coordinators	Number of Semesters Taught
5	1
4	10
4	5
3	16
3	3

Number of Coordinators	Number of Semesters Taught
3	4
3	8
2	15
2	0
2	12
2	6
1	1 per sem.
1	10+
1	14
1	17
1	2
1	2-6
1	25-30
1	32
1	33
1	45+
1	7
1	Forty.
1	about 6-8
1	obvious

Are you currently a PLATO course coordinator?

Value	Percent	Count
Yes	90.0%	45
No	10.0%	5
	Total	50

Why do you continue to teach for PLATO? Please describe your reasons for continuing to be a course coordinator for PLATO . . .

1. As a coordinator, I don't really teach, other than one or two presentations per semester. I continue to be a coordinator because I'm interested in the subject and there's no one willing to take my place.

2. Course was fun.
3. Enjoy interaction with participants and feel I am filling a need
4. Enjoy teaching
5. Enjoy teaching and interacting with students. Great learning experience for the instructor.
6. Enjoy the subjects, the preparation, and the interaction with the classes.
7. Enjoyable to work with people of similar interest and particularly to help others to learn more about a topic they are interested in.
8. Feel responsible because was asked to assume the coordinator position and am able to do it. Enjoy it. Enjoy collaborating with the co-coordinator. Group participation has improved.
9. For the educational and social experiences
10. For the students who are part of a community but am getting tired
11. I am actually a course co-coordinator backing up a long time coordinator,
12. I am gratified by the response of participants and I enjoy exposing myself to new material that I have not previously been familiar with.
13. I coordinate member presentations. I do not teach.
14. I enjoy doing it and people continue to come. When one or both of those reasons end, I'll quit.
15. I enjoy it
16. I enjoy learning and sharing interesting ideas about mitigating against climate change. This is the most pressing issue of our century; we had better get it right soon!
17. I enjoy sharing my expertise
18. I enjoy speaking to groups...I enjoy the social interactions
19. I enjoy teaching the course and the attendees really enjoy it.
20. I enjoy the chance to share my areas of strong interest. I also enjoy the peer relationship with other members and the chance to coordinate a class without the encumbrances of grading and collegiate competition. The sense of open and shared learning is very meaningful to me.
21. I enjoy the class itself, I don't have to do much teaching, just organizing! I enjoy the people I meet in the class as well as the curators and artists I get to know through this class. The feedback from my participants is consistently positive.
22. I enjoy the interaction with a group that has a variety of opinions and can "agree to disagree" if necessary.
23. I enjoy watching people grow their skills and I enjoy our group. We have a good group of repeaters and yet all seem to be very welcoming to newcomers. I am happy with our eclectic approaches and the way everyone will help each and support others. I like to think I helped create that
24. I greatly enjoy the course and the people that join it. It stimulates my interests and is what keeps me going!
25. I have a very active and stimulating group. I always look forward to our meetings.
26. I learn more about a subject when I am planning to teach it. Also I like directing an engaging audience on a topic I have a strong interest. There is no doubt that I have learned a lot from others in attendance.
27. I LOVE teaching and it keeps me on my professional toes. I love to use what I know to both instruct and entertain my participants.

28. I love the ability to facilitate the class in the way that I find most meaningful and that allows the most expression from class members.
29. I love the experience.
30. I love this class. It is vital that it remain strongly led. As I mentioned earlier, there is a core group of about 10% that have rotated through leading. I think, after 5 years as a class member, it was my turn and responsibility.
31. I really enjoy it! I am grateful that I can teach in spite of my handicaps.
32. I still have ideas for course offerings that I hope will be of interest to PLATO members.
33. I teach areas that are interesting to me.
34. I thoroughly enjoy the class and am happy to do more than just attend. I co-coordinate; lead one section of three, and class members volunteer to lead the other sections, so I don't have the responsibility of presenting all the material.
35. I want to be sure that my course, which has been in existence for many years, continues.
36. It gives me joy. My students are wonderful. We laugh a lot and city some. They say they love my class.
37. It is enjoyable
38. It is good for me to prepare and -- I hope -- good to motivate the other participants.
39. Just trying to help out.
40. No one has overthrown me or volunteered to take the driver's seat. I do like the course I teach. There are the usual challenging times of getting people to present or to cover for a sudden cancellation, but that is par for the course...keeps me feeling like a coordinator.
41. Teaching my passion, making for a rich and rewarding experience in retirement. I want to stay active and keep learning
42. To make a contribution that uses my expertise.
43. Well, no one seems to want the job but two long term members are helping. I do believe a coordinator for the course in which I am involved should serve a limited time for new perspectives, etc.
44. When the previous coordinator could not continue to do so, I decided to volunteer because I wanted the class to continue and other class members didn't seem anxious to take over.

Why do you no longer teach for PLATO? Please describe your reasons for not continuing as a course coordinator for PLATO . . .

1. I do not feel up-to-date in my field any more.
2. I only teach in the fall
3. I'm taking time off for independent research that might inform my next course.
4. I've facilitated two courses. One was merely to keep Jim Christiansen's course going one more semester for participants to adjust to his death. In the other case, it was material that caught my attention that I wanted to share. Haven't found anything else so compelling.
5. We took a year break due to personal issues, but are working on our course for fall 2017.