

AN EXAMINATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EASE OF NAVIGATION
AND COURSE COMPLETION IN THE ONLINE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

A Dissertation

by

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ABSTRACT

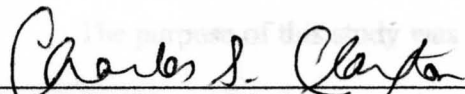
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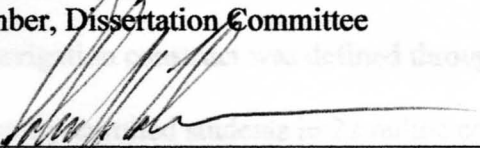
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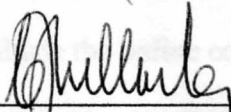
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AN EXAMINATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EASE OF NAVIGATION AND COURSE COMPLETION IN THE ONLINE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

(May 2009)

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The purpose of this study was to determine if the ease of navigating online courses is a significant factor in whether or not students complete these courses. The ease of navigation construct was defined through embedded questions in student surveys of currently-enrolled students in 22 online courses at Gaston College in Dallas, NC, as well as expert evaluations of these same courses. Both students and experts were asked to evaluate the online courses on a scale from 1 to 5, with 5 being the easiest to navigate and 1 being the most difficult. The results of these course evaluations were then averaged, with student and expert evaluations given equal weight, and compared with course completion data for these same online courses during a single semester. Correlational data were collected to measure the degree of influence each course's ease of navigation had on whether or not students completed the course with a score of at least a "D" for the semester. Simple linear regression and student *t* tests were also performed to analyze the

significance of the interaction between variables. The results indicate that there is not a statistically significant correlation between ease of navigation and course completion. In addition, no significant correlation was found between expert analysis of the courses and student analysis of the same courses.