

**Office of Learning Technologies  
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Information Support Project  
Final Report- Part II  
Project #21021**

**Year 2: Pilot Project Evaluation**

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## **Overview**

The following document depicts a study that was intended to evaluate 4 pilot projects which are provided to distance education students from Novanet Inc. Distance education students received a \$15 incentive for participating in a two part study. During phase 1, participants were invited to participate in a program simulation which took place directly on campus. Following the simulations, the participants then evaluated the programs. In phase 2, participants were asked to complete a very short exercise from an off-campus location to verify if the participants were satisfied with the programs from their homes. Forty-three distance education students participated in the study, overall ratings for the Electronic Books, Live Help, and Online Tutorials were positive. Unfortunately, the Electronic Reserves program was not up and running during the testing period and consequently could not be evaluated. Out of 43 distance education students, 25 completed phase 2. Overall, participants perceived all 3 programs positively.

## **Introduction**

As evaluation consultant for the present project, my main objective was to develop a scientifically sound research design that would effectively evaluate all 4 trial projects. Before selecting the most appropriate research design, the following publications were read in order to familiarize myself with the programs: Business Plan, Stakeholders Forum Proceedings, and Discussion paper. These documents were very helpful in providing me with a greater understanding of the Novanet culture, its employees and clients, as well as the 4 trial programs. Furthermore, focus groups were conducted with all 4 trial project committee members. During focus groups, committee members were asked specific questions to discover the most appropriate research design for the study and to determine what elements/components would have to be measured in the surveys. Information taken from the focus groups and publications were considered when selecting a suitable research design. Moreover, all committee members were given an opportunity to provide feedback and recommendations upon reviewing the research proposal.

## **Research Design**

Selecting an appropriate research design can be a daunting task. Numerous factors have to be taken into consideration. These factors include, but are not limited to, the timeline of the study, selecting an appropriate sample size, developing a psychometrically sound survey, and the costs associated to the study. Considering all these factors, committee members were presented with two research designs.

### ***First Research Design – Mail-Out Surveys***

Originally I anticipated using the same research design that was used for the Distance Education Needs Assessment, which was previously conducted in 2001. More specifically, a

random sample of Distance Education students would be selected from student lists provided by Distance Education departments at various educational facilities that are associated with Novanet Inc. Students selected from this list would be mailed a short (10 to 15) minute survey similar to that developed by Miss Adams for the Needs Analysis; however, the survey would be slightly modified in order to properly evaluate all 4 trial programs. Upon completing the survey, students would use pre-paid postage to return it to the appropriate individuals.

**Benefits and Limitations.** The greatest benefit of administering mail out surveys is that there is a greater possibility of attaining a more diverse and ample sample. Mailing out surveys would ensure that Distance Education students outside of Nova Scotia would have an opportunity to submit their feedback. Although this is an excellent benefit, there are numerous limitations to conducting this type of research. First and foremost, it was brought to my attention that several programs were not completely functional during their trial periods. Certain programs were either non-accessible for Distance Education students or were not properly functioning due to technical difficulties. These issues are not uncommon and are to be expected when developing new programs over the internet; however, for evaluation purposes, they pose a serious threat. Mainly, Distance Education students may not be aware of these programs and may not have even had an opportunity to use them. Consequently, there maybe a lower response rate than anticipated as students may not be able to complete a survey pertaining to programs that they have never or barely used. Thus, information provided from these surveys may be inaccurate.

Secondly, in order to mail out these surveys, lists of all Distance Education students would be required. It has been brought to my attention that the procedures necessary to attain these lists could be extremely difficult and time consuming. Lists containing all Distance

Education Students would have to be attained from their respected programs/departments at various educational facilities throughout Nova Scotia. These departments may be weary to give out this contact information because of concerns about confidentiality issues. The amount of time to attain these lists and mail out the surveys may hinder the success of the study. There is a distinct possibility that surveys would only be returned after the tentative date for submitting the final report.

Finally, considering that most students have probably not used any of these programs, the cost to actually mail out the surveys and have them returned may be unwarranted. In order to attain an ample return rate that is representative of the target population (i.e. 2, 000 with a 30 - 40% return rate), a mail budget of \$ 4, 000 was suggested. This seems costly given that a large percentage of students may have been unable to use these programs during the trial period and as a result they may be unwilling to complete the survey.

### ***Second Research Design – In Class Trial Session***

Upon acknowledging that certain programs were not properly functioning during the trial session, a second research design was developed. This design ensures that all students have actually used the programs before they are asked to evaluate them. Before completing the evaluations students would be invited to participate in an in-class trial session. It's important to note that students would not receive any formal type of training during these sessions. The trial session's main objective would be to give students an opportunity to become familiarized with all 4 programs.

Numerous trial sessions would take place at various university/college establishments throughout the province. Sessions would be held during the evenings or the weekends and would not last longer than an hour in order to facilitate Distance Education students' busy

schedule. Each session could include 10 to 30 participants, thus each university/college would have to be contacted in advance to reserve the appropriate facilities. Distance Education students' would be invited to participate in the study by faculty or by email. Participants would also receive an incentive for their time. The specific amount of the incentive will be determined at a later time.

Upon arriving at these trial sessions, participants would receive a standardized set of instructions. These instructions would resemble a fictitious class assignment, listing various objectives that all participants must accomplish. In order to attain each objective, Distance Education students would have to use all 4 programs. Once they have completed their objectives and familiarized themselves with the programs, they would be asked to complete two evaluations. The first evaluation would be administered directly on site. It would be a short questionnaire, containing between 40 to 50 items, taking the participant no longer than 10 to 15 minutes to complete. All items would be centered towards the use of the programs. For the second evaluation, participants would be given a few minor tasks using the programs on a computer off-campus. Upon completing these tasks, participants would be asked to complete another short questionnaire of 20 to 30 items that would be returned via email. These questions would focus on students' accessibility to the programs from an off-campus computer and would also contain certain descriptive questions focusing on the accessibility of computer/internet information.

**Benefits and Limitations.** This research design offers numerous benefits. First, the design guarantees that all students who complete the survey will have actually used the programs. Secondly, it's less expensive to offer participants a small incentive than it is to mail out 2, 000 surveys. Thirdly, the information taken from the questionnaires will be fresh and

accurate as students would have just used the programs. Finally, participants will hand in their surveys immediately following the trial sessions; their follow-up surveys will be returned via email. Receiving completed surveys immediately following the sessions in comparison for waiting for completed surveys to be returned via mail will accelerate the data entry process. The only limitation presented by conducting simulation sessions in comparison to mailing out surveys is that fewer students will be able to participate in the evaluation. For example, it would not be possible to access students outside of the province (e.g., New York or Toronto).

### ***Recommendations***

Given the timeframe of this study, I recommended the second research design – inviting Distance Education students to participate in in-class trial sessions. This research design offers far more benefits than limitations and it is relatively cost effective given the alternative of mailing out surveys. Furthermore, the majority of all committee members supported conducting in-class simulations. Moreover, I requested advice from Dr. Catano (chair of the psychology department at Saint Mary’s University) and Dr. Kelloway (psychology professor at Saint Mary’s University). Both of these individuals have years of experience conducting research, and given the timeline of the study, they both recommended the second research design. Upon agreeing on a research design for the evaluations, it would have to be decided whether or not to apply for ethics approval at all the various academic institutions where testing will take place.

### **Ethics Approval**

Ethics approval for the present evaluation was deemed unnecessary since:

(a) no independent variables are being manipulated, (b) there are no immediate or secondary psychological/physiological consequences to completing the evaluation, (c) under no circumstances can students be identified on the questionnaires (e.g., participants will be given a

code number and their names will never be written on the surveys) (e) the evaluation is being conducted by an external consultant who is not directly associated with Novanet Inc., (f) the external consultant adheres to an ethical code and will not, under any circumstances, divulge any information of participants that would place them at risk, and (g) the final report that will be submitted to Novanet Inc. will only include data, under no circumstances will participants names be included in this report.

Moreover, the purpose of this evaluation is to gather information that will improve library services for Distance Education students. By definition, this is more of a customer service survey to help Novanet Inc. improve their services, than a scientific research study sponsored by a university/college. Since no university or college will be sponsoring this survey and since their institutions' names will not appear on the surveys, there is really no reason to request ethics approval from them. The survey will consist of similar items to the ones found in the Needs Assessment study in 2001, which was developed by Miss Adams and approved by various ethical committees throughout Nova Scotia. For the present evaluation, items will be modified to effectively measure all 4 programs.

### **Research Objectives**

This study had two main objectives. The first was to measure distance education students' level of satisfaction with all 4 programs. Obviously, each program had different components that had to be measured. These are depicted in the methodology section under measures. The second was to assess whether the programs were accessible from an off-campus location. In order to assess this information, an off-campus survey was developed. For additional information on this survey, please see the measures section in the methodology.

## Methodology

### *Participants*

Distance Education students were invited to participate in the present study via emails. Members from Novanet committees received a standardized email, which described the study and listed the various locations where the study took place. Committee members then forwarded this information to distance education departments throughout the province. Also, certain Novanet committee members approached professors with a high percentage of Distance Education students in their classes and asked that they personally invite students to participate in the study.

Forty-four distance education students completed phase 1 (i.e., in-class simulations). Unfortunately, one participant had to be dropped from the study as his/her survey was uninterpretable, bringing the final total of participants for phase 1 to 43. Regrettably, there is no way of knowing if 43 participants is a decent return rate as there is no concrete information on the amount of emails sent out to students. Out of these 43 participants, 9 were males (20.9 %) and 34 were females (79.1 %). Participants had an average age of 26.12 years and a standard deviation of 8.4, with the youngest participant being 18 and the oldest 52. The majority of participants came from urban settings, 18 (43.9 %) were from Truro, 11 (26.8 %) were from Halifax, and 2 (4.9 %) were from Bible Hill. The rest of the participants came from different cities throughout Nova-Scotia, New-Brunswick, and Ontario, but their frequencies are so low, that they are not worth reporting here (e.g., 1 participant per city). The majority of participants were enrolled at the Nova Scotia Agriculture College (61.0 %), for additional information on participants and their academic institution please refer to Table 1. All information on biographical data presented in the survey can be found in Appendix A.

Twenty-five participants completed phase 2 of the study (i.e., off-campus survey). Twenty-four of these individuals (96.0%) used a PC computer and only 1 participant (4.0%) used a Macintosh computer. In terms of internet connection, 15 individuals (60.0%) used Digital/Cable internet, 8 participants (32.0%) did not what type of connection they used, 1 person (4.0%) used a Network and another participant (4.0%) used Ramnet. With respect to Internet programs, 21 individuals (84.0%) used Microsoft Internet Explorer, while 4 participants used Netscape. For additional information on technological data, please refer to Appendix B.

All participants received a \$15 incentive for taking the time to complete the survey. Although this study did not require the signature of a consent form, participants were still asked to sign one.

Table 1

Students and the Academic Institution

Academic Institution	Frequency	Percent (%)
DAL	3	7.3
NSAC	25	61.0
SMU	6	14.6
STFX	6	14.6
UCCB	1	2.4

**Measures**

To properly evaluate all 4 programs, 2 exercises and 2 surveys had to be developed. The exercises consisted of small objectives that would permit participants to familiarize themselves with the programs before evaluating. Two separate exercises were developed for the present

study, one for phase 1 of the study, more specifically the in-class trial session (see Appendix C), and the other for phase 2, the off-campus session (see Appendix D). The appendices also identify the component that each question assesses. Additional information on components will be presented in the following paragraphs. The exercise for phase 1 was centered on getting participants to maneuver around the program; while the exercise for phase 2 was focused on getting the participants to access material from an off-campus location (their homes). Both exercises took approximately 20 to 30 minutes to complete. Each program had 1 to 4 objectives that participants had to accomplish before evaluating the programs. The various objectives were developed by trial project committee members to ensure that participants had taken sufficient time to use the programs. These exercises were mandatory, requiring participants to use the programs, which in turn should create more accurate and reliable evaluations.

Two surveys were developed in the present study to evaluate the programs. The first survey was developed to evaluate the participants' level of satisfaction with the programs (e.g., After having used the programs for the first time, do Distance Education Students like them?); while the second survey was developed to assess to what extent did participants have a level of accessibility to the programs from an off-campus location (e.g., Can Distance Education Students use these programs from their homes or will they run into technical difficulties?). Both surveys were an extension of the one previously developed by Miss Adams; however items were modified to evaluate all 4 programs. Items were modified by taking items drafted by committee members into consideration and by conducting focus groups with trial project committee members. During focus groups, committee members identified 7 components. From these components, specific items were developed for each program. Trial project committee members had one week to review these items and offer their feedback before the items were finalized for

the surveys. A detailed list of these components, including their definitions, is presented in Table 2. It's important to note that not all 7 components are required to measure each program.

Components which will be used to assess each program will be presented below.

Table 2

Components and their definitions

Component	Definition
<i>Usefulness</i>	The extent to which users perceive the program as being useful in meeting their needs.
<i>User Friendliness</i>	The extent to which users can navigate through the program with ease.
<i>Accessibility</i>	The visibility of this program and if clients were actually able to use it without any technical difficulties.
<i>Personal Preference</i>	An individual's preference on what type of services they would like to receive.
<i>Level of Comfort</i>	An individual's comfort level with using these programs.
<i>Familiarity or Experience with Program</i>	An individual's experience with using these programs.
<i>Identification of Problems/ Suggestions for Improvement</i>	Suggestions on how participants would improve facilities.

In order to properly evaluate all programs, both surveys include of a variety of items: quantitative (e.g., multiple choices), dichotomous (e.g., true or false), and qualitative (e.g., open ended questions). However, the core of the surveys consist of quantitative items, where respondents were asked to answer questions by using a 5 point Likert-Type scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Dichotomous variables were mostly used to identify specific information (e.g., did you have any difficulties while using the program?) and the qualitative items were used as follow-ups to gather additional information (e.g. if you had any difficulties when using the program, please identify them). To facilitate the presentation of which components and items were used for each program, as well as which items were added together to create new variables (i.e. components), the following section will be divided into 4 subsections. Certain items were added together to create new variables (i.e., components). Each subsection will represent 1 of the 4 trial programs. Subsections will list all components for both surveys (i.e., in-class survey and off-campus survey), including an example item for each component. Evaluations for each program, including the components for each item, are presented in the appendix section. It should be noted that although each program's evaluation is presented separately, they were still administered as one "whole survey" during the study.

Following the presentation of 4 subsections for each program, there will be an additional subsection entitled Other Components that will be presented in order to describe other aspects of the survey that were not yet discussed, mainly biographical data, technological data, and program rankings.

**Electronic Books.** The Electronic Books section of the survey - phase 1 consists of 17 questions (see Appendix E, section 2 questions 1 to 17). Six components were deemed sufficient to access the Electronic Books program: User Friendliness, Accessibility, Usefulness,

Identification of Problems/Suggestions for Improvement, Familiarity or Experience with Program, and Personal Preference. *User Friendliness* (e.g., A two hour loan period provides students with sufficient time to access material) was measured by using 5 quantitative items (items 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9). These items were added together to create a new variable-User Friendliness, scores for this variable ranged from 5 (low levels of user friendliness) to 25 (high levels of user friendliness).

*Accessibility* (e.g., I was able to view the online books without any difficulty) was measured by using 3 quantitative items (items 10, 11, and 13-reversed). These items were added together to create a new variable-Accessibility, scores for this variable ranged from 3 (low levels of accessibility) to 15 (high levels of accessibility).

*Usefulness* (e.g. The Electronic Books program is a useful tool for Distance Ed. Students) was assessed with 3 quantitative items (items 1, 2, and 12). These items were added to create a new variable-Usefulness, scores for this variable ranged from 3 (low levels of usefulness) to 15 (high levels of usefulness).

*Identification of Problems/Suggestions for Improvement* (e.g., Do you have any recommendations on how the Electronic Books program could be improved?) was measured by using 1 dichotomous items and 2 qualitative items.

*Familiarity or Experience with Program* (e.g., Have you ever used the Electronic Books program before today's session?) was measured with 1 dichotomous item and 1 quantitative item.

Finally, *Personal Preference* (e.g. If books were available in both an electronic and no-electronic format, which would you prefer?) was measured with 1 dichotomous item.

The section pertaining to Electronic Books in the survey-phase 2 consists of 7 questions (see Appendix F, section 2, items 1 to 7). There were 2 components that were measured during phase 2: Familiarity and Accessibility. *Familiarity or Experience with Program* (e.g. Have you ever used or searched in netLibrary before participating in this study?) was assessed using 1 dichotomous item. *Accessibility* (e.g., I was able to access Electronic Books program from an off-campus location) was measured with 3 dichotomous items and 3 qualitative items.

**Electronic Reserve.** The Electronic Reserves section of the survey - phase 1 consists of 12 questions (see Appendix E, section 3, items 1 to 12). Five components were deemed sufficient to evaluate the Electronic Reserve program: Accessibility, Usefulness, Identification of Problem/Suggestions for Improvement, User Friendliness, and Personal Preference.

*Accessibility* (e.g. I was able to view the Electronic Reserves material without any difficulty) was measured with 3 quantitative items (items 1, 2, and 3). These items were added together to create a new variable- Accessibility, scores for this variable ranged from 3 (low level of accessibility) to 15 (high level of accessibility).

*Usefulness* (e.g., Electronic Reserves would be useful in helping me to complete a class project) was assessed with 3 quantitative items (items 4, 5, and 8). These items were added together to create a new variable – Usefulness, scores on this variable ranged from 3 (low levels of usefulness) to 15 (high levels of usefulness).

*Identification of Problems/Suggestions for Improvement* (e.g., Do you have any recommendations on how the Electronic Reserves program could be improved?) was measured with 1 dichotomous item and 2 qualitative items.

*User Friendliness* (e.g. It was easy to use the Electronic Reserves program to access documents) was assessed with 2 quantitative items (items 6 and 7). These items were added

together to create a new variable- *User Friendliness*, scores for this variable ranged from 2 (low levels of user friendliness) to 10 (high levels of user friendliness). Finally, *Personal Preference* (e.g., If documents within the reserve were available in both an electronic and non-electronic format which would you prefer?) was measured with 1 dichotomous item.

The Electronic Reserves section of the survey-phase 2 consisted of 6 questions (see Appendix F, section 3, items 1 to 6). All of these questions measured *Accessibility* (e.g., I was able to access the Electronic Reserves program from an off-campus location), of these 6 items, 3 were dichotomous and 3 were qualitative.

**Live Help.** The Live Help section of the survey - phase 1 consisted of 19 questions (see Appendix E, section 4, items 1 to 19). Seven components were deemed necessary to evaluate the Live Help program: Identification of Problems/Suggestions for improvement, User Friendliness, Usefulness, Accessibility, Familiarity or Experience with Program, and Personal Preference.

*Identification of Problems/Suggestions for Improvement* (e.g., Do you have any recommendations on how the Live Help program could be improved?) was assessed with 2 dichotomous items and 3 qualitative items.

*User Friendliness* (e.g., The Live Help program was very easy to use) was measured with 4 quantitative items (items 7, 8-reversed, 9, and 10). These items were added together to create a new variable-user friendliness, scores for this new variable ranged from 4 (low levels of user friendliness) to 20 (high levels of user friendliness)

*Usefulness* (e.g., The Live Help program is a useful tool for Distance Education Students) was assessed using 3 qualitative items (items 4, 5, and 6). These items were added together to create a new variable-usefulness, scores for this variable ranged from 3 (low levels of usefulness) to 15 (high levels of usefulness).

*Accessibility* (e.g., The working hours for the Live Help program are convenient) was measured with 1 quantitative item, 1 dichotomous item and 1 qualitative item.

*Familiarity or Experience with Program* (e.g., Have you ever used the Live Help program before today's session?) was measured with 1 dichotomous item and 1 quantitative item.

*Personal Preference* (e.g., If librarian help were available either on Live Help, E-Mail, or over the Telephone, I would prefer.....) was measured with 1 quantitative item.

Finally, *Level of Comfort* (e.g., I felt comfortable using the Live Help program to chat with a librarian) was measured with 1 quantitative item.

The Live Help section of the survey-phase 2 consisted of 6 questions (see Appendix F, section 4, items 1 to 6). All of these questions measured *Accessibility* (e.g., The Live Help was functional during its hours of operation). Out of these 6 items, 3 were quantitative and 3 were qualitative.

**Online Tutorials.** The Online Tutorial section of the survey - phase 1 consists of 17 questions (see Appendix E, section 5, items 1 to 17). Six components were deemed sufficient to evaluate the Online Tutorials program: User Friendliness, Accessibility, Usefulness, Identification of Problems/Suggestions for Improvement, Personal Preference, and Familiarity or Experience with Program.

*User Friendliness* (e.g., The language used in the Online Tutorials was easy to understand) was measured with 2 quantitative items (items 6 and 7-reversed), which will be added to create a new variable-user friendliness with scores ranging from 2 (low user-friendliness) to 10 (high user friendliness); an additional 2 quantitative items were added to the survey to measure pace and length of tutorials.

*Accessibility* (e.g., I was able to view various Online Tutorials without any difficulty) was measured with 3 quantitative items (items 7-reversed, 9, and 10). These items were added together to create a new variable – accessibility, with scores on this new variable ranging from 3 (low levels of accessibility) to 15 (high levels of accessibility).

*Usefulness* (e.g., The Online Tutorials answered my questions regarding Novanet) was accessed with 3 quantitative items (items 3, 4, and 5). These items were added together to create a new variable-usefulness, scores on this new variable ranged from 3 (low levels of usefulness) to 15 (high levels of usefulness).

*Identification of Problems/Suggestions for Improvement* (e.g., Do you have any recommendations on how the Online Tutorials program could be improved?) was measured with 1 dichotomous item and 2 qualitative items.

*Personal Preference* (e.g., Given the choice, I would prefer to learn about Novanet via) with 2 quantitative items.

Finally, *Familiarity or Experience with Program* (e.g., Have you ever used the Online Tutorials program before today's session?) was accessed with 2 quantitative items.

The Online Tutorials section of the survey-phase 2 consists of 4 questions (see Appendix F, section 5, items 1 to 4). All of these questions measured *Accessibility* (e.g., I had technical difficulties while using the Online Tutorial), using 2 dichotomous and 2 qualitative items.

**Other Components.** The survey also incorporated three additional sections: biographical data (survey-phase 1), technical data (survey-phase 2), and program rankings (both surveys). The biographical data section found in the survey during phase 1 consists of 6 questions asking participants to identify their gender, age, residence, academic institutions, faculty, and courses taken (see Appendix A). This data was collected to gather descriptive

information on the sample. The technical data section found in the survey during phase 2 consists of 3 questions pertaining to the participants' computer, internet connection, and internet program (see Appendix B). This section was incorporated in the survey to gather information on technicalities that could influence the programs from an off-campus location. Finally, the program rank section can be found as the very last question in both surveys (see Appendix E for phase 1 and Appendix F for phase 2). This section simply asked participants to rank their favorite program in chronological order.

### ***Procedure***

Distance Education Students were contacted via email and invited to participate in the study. The email depicted the study and gave Distance Education Students the opportunity to select an in-class session that was most convenient for their locations (see Appendix G).

Distance Education Students contacted the principal researcher directly via email to reserve a spot in the study. If Distance Education Students were unable to participate in the study, they were still given the option to contact the principal researcher and try to arrange another testing session that was more convenient for their schedule and location.

Phase 1 of the study took place in small computer labs at 12 university/college campuses throughout Nova Scotia. These labs were booked well in advance and were an excellent controlled environment to eliminate any distractions that could have influenced participants' concentration. Miss Todie Winter and the principal researcher were present during each testing session to greet participants and assign them to a computer. The computers were already turned on to the Novanet web page and the chat applet was already downloaded. It should be noted that at certain locations it was impossible to download the chat applet. Once participants were seated, they were given a brief explanation of the study and were asked to sign a consent form.

Upon receiving their consent, participants were given phase 1 of the study, which consisted of a short in-class exercise and a survey that followed. Completion time was approximately 40 to 60 minutes.

Upon completing the study, participants signed a log stating that they had received their \$10 incentive for phase 1 of the study. Then, they were given a brief explanation of phase 2 of the study. Participants were informed that the purpose of the study was to verify that the programs actually worked from an off-campus location and that it took about 30 minutes to complete. Those that wished to participate in the phase 2 were asked to sign another log stating that they have received their \$5 incentive. Before leaving phase 1 of the study, every participant received a feedback sheet which stated the purpose of the study and how to contact the principal researcher should they have any additional questions in the future. Individuals who agreed to participate in phase 2 of the study also received the take home exercise, the survey for phase 2, and a pre-paid postage envelope addressed to the principal researcher to return the survey.

### **Results**

The purpose of the present study was to develop an empirically sound survey that would be able to support a decision on whether or not the 4 trial programs should be implemented by Novanet Inc. Unfortunately, the results presented in this section can not significantly support any decision solely due to the fact that the sample size is too small. Considering there are over 3 000 Distance Education Students, a sample size of 43 participants only represents 1.43% of the Distance Education Student population, if not less.

Although the results taken from this study can not be used to scientifically support any decisions, the information taken from it can still be used for directive purposes. Information taken from this result section can be compared to information taken from a focus group. Thus,

results can be used to improve or fine tune any flaws before (or if) these programs become accessible to more Distance Education Students.

To facilitate presentation, results will be presented in subsections. Each subsection will represent one program and summarize the results found for every component that was evaluated for that program in phase 1 and phase 2 of the survey. Results reported in this section will consist of demographics as the sample size was too small to compute any form of advanced statistics. The mean and the standard deviation (i.e., a measure of dispersion around the mean) will be presented for each component. The standard deviation will be presented in parentheses directly after the mean. If additional information is required an item-per-item analysis can be found in the appendix section. The proper appendix for each program will be identified in that program's subsection. Regrettably, results for the Electronic Reserves program will be omitted from the report as the program was not functional during the testing period. After all programs have been presented, there will be an additional subsection that examines Program Rankings.

### ***Electronic Books***

Six components were used to evaluate phase – 1 of the Electronic Books program: Familiarity or Experience with Program, User Friendliness, Accessibility, Usefulness, Personal Preference, Identification of Problems/Suggestions for Improvement. In terms of *Familiarity or Experience with Program*, only 4 (9.3%) of participants had previously used the Electronic Books program before phase-1 of the study. Of these individuals, the majority were referred to the Electronic Books program by a librarian, colleague, and/or professor.

With regards to *User Friendliness*, which was measured by adding participants' scores on 5 items together, had a mean score of 20 (2.82). This is quite high considering the maximum score for this variable was 25. *Accessibility*, which was accessed by adding participants' scores

on 3 items together, had a mean score of 11.57 (2.64). Again, this is quite high considering the maximum score for this variable is 15. *Usefulness*, which was measured participants' scores on 3 items together, had a mean score of 12.83 (1.53). This is exceptional high, as the highest score for this variable was 15. In terms of *Personal Preference*, 23 participants (53.5%) stated that they would prefer to view books electronically.

In regards to *Identification of Problems/Suggestions for Improvements*, only 28.6% of participants ran into difficulties while using the program. The majority of problems were associated with lack of information (e.g. "I am a novice computer user. I need more detailed instructions as to how to access each program. I find this intimidating.") and technical problems (e.g. "It would not let me make an account"). With respect to recommendations, 32 participants were prepared to offer a variety of suggestions. The core themes from these suggestions were the following: Longer loan periods, more books, multiple users, additional instructions/information, technical improvements, and increased publicity. Participants also offered much praise for the program. For additional information on phase 1 of the Electronic Books program, an item-by-item analysis of the evaluation is presented in Appendix H.

Two components were used to evaluate phase – 2 of the Electronic Books program: Familiarity or Experience with Program and Accessibility. In regards to *Familiarity or Experience with Program*, 21 participants (84.0%) have never used or searched in the netLibrary before the study. With respects to *Accessibility*, every individual was capable of accessing the Electronic Books program from an off-campus location. Only 1 participant (4.0%) reported having difficulties when checking out a book. This individual defined his/her problem with a lack of information (i.e., "I could not find anywhere to click to take it out. Not clearly labeled". Three participants (12.0%) ran into technical difficulties when trying to print a page from the

Electronic book. For additional information on phase 2 of the Electronic Books program, an item-by-item analysis of the evaluation is provided in Appendix I.

### ***Live Help***

Seven components were deemed necessary to evaluate phase –1 of the Live Help program: Familiarity or Experience with Program, User Friendliness, Usefulness, Accessibility, Personal Preference, and Identification of Problems/Suggestions for improvement. In regards to *Familiarity or Experience with Program*, only 1 individual (2.6%) had previously used Live Help before the study. Scores from 4 items were added together to create a new variable in order to assess *User Friendliness*. Participants reported a mean score of 14.42 (2.32) on this variable, which is quite positive considering the maximum attainable score was 20. Scores from three items were added together to create a new variable to measure *Usefulness*. Participants reported a mean score of 13.18 (2.65). Again, this mean is exceptionally high as the maximum attainable mean score would be 15.00.

In terms of *Accessibility*, participants were asked if they had any difficulties downloading the Live Help program, on a scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree) participants reported a mean score of 4.13 (1.17). Twenty-two participants (56.4%) reported that the present working hours (i.e., Monday to Friday 2 – 4 pm; Sunday 6 – 9 pm) were convenient. The majority of those who did not find these hours convenient suggested adding more sessions during the evening hours. In terms of *Personal Preference*, 27 participants (69.2%) preferred Live Help over other outlets for help such as emails (i.e., 8 individuals – 20.5%) or telephone (i.e., 4 participants – 10.3%).

In regards to *Identification of Problems/Suggestions for Improvement*, 12 participants (30.8%) ran into difficulties while using the Live Help program. These difficulties were mostly

associated with technical glitches, such as issues logging off the Live Help, browser problems, and screen problems. Thirty-four participants (87.2%) reported that the Frequently Asked Question section provided them with sufficient information to answer all their Live Help questions. Those who reported that the Frequently Asked Questions did not provide them with sufficient information identified technical and browser difficulties as the major problems. For additional information on phase 1 of the Live Help program, an item-by-item analysis of the evaluation is presented in Appendix J.

*Accessibility* was the only component that was evaluated for Live Help during phase – 2 of the survey. Fifteen individuals (60.0%) were able to download the Live Help program without any technical difficulties. Those who encountered difficulties reported that their problems were associated with technical difficulties (e.g., Mac computer or Netscape Explorer) or that Live Help was closed when they tried to access it during the holidays. In terms of whether Live Help was functional during its hours of operation (e.g. Monday to Friday 2-4 pm; Friday to Sunday 6-9pm), 13 participants (54.2%) responded yes, 2 individuals (8.3%) reported no, and 9 participants (37.5%) responded that they did not try. Out of 3 people that responded no, they all stated that they could not log on to Live Help because it was closed for the holidays. Fifteen participants (62.5%) reported that they were comfortable using the Live Help program from an off-campus location, 3 individuals (12.5%) stated that they did not feel comfortable, while 6 participants (25.0%) reported that they did not try to use Live Help from an off-campus location. Again, the majority of those who did not feel comfortable using Live Help or who did not try to use it stated that they encountered technical difficulties or that they could not access the Live Help program because it was closed for the holidays. For additional information on

phase-2 of the Live Help program, an item-by-item analysis of the evaluation is presented in Appendix K.

### ***Online Tutorials***

Six components were required to evaluate phase –1 of the Online Tutorial program: Familiarity or Experience with Program, Accessibility, User Friendliness, Usefulness, Personal Preference, and Identification of Problems/Suggestions for Improvement. In regards to *Familiarity or Experience with Program* only 1 participant (2.4%) had previously used the Online Tutorials. In terms of accessibility, three items were added together to create a new variable to measure accessibility. Participants' mean score for this variable was 10.93 (.92), which is a high level of accessibility as the maximum score for this variable is 15.

With respects to *User Friendliness* two items were added together to create a new variable to measure user friendliness. Participants reported a mean score of 9.14 (1.09) for this variable. Again, this mean score is quite high as the maximum score for this variable is 10. Two additional quantitative items were used to measure User Friendliness. The first item asked participants if they found the pace and timing of the Online Tutorials too fast, just right or too slow. Five participants (11.9%) found the Online Tutorials too fast, 24 (85.7%) found them just right, and 13 (31.0%) reported them as being too slow. The second quantitative item assessed the appropriateness of the length of online tutorials; more specifically were they too short, just right, or too long. Not a single participant perceived the online tutorials as being too short, 36 (85.7%) found them to be just right, and 6 (14.3%) perceived them as being too long.

In regards to *Usefulness*, three items were added together to create a new variable to access this component. Participants reported a mean score of 13.45 (1.82) for this variable. This mean score demonstrates that participants perceived the online tutorials as having a high level of

usefulness as the maximum score for this variable is 15. In terms of *Personal Preference*, 35 participants (85.4%) stated that they would prefer to learn about Novanet via the Online Tutorials, over 5 individuals (12.2%) who would prefer to learn via in-class presentations and 1 person (2.4%) would prefer to learn via pamphlets. On a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), participants reported a mean of 4.38 when asked if they perceived the Online Tutorials as more convenient than having to contact a librarian for information regarding Novanet.

In terms of Identification of *Problems/Suggestions for Improvement* only 3 participants (7.1%) reported encountering difficulties while using the Online Tutorials. These 3 participants all reported that their problems were related to the speed of the Online Tutorial. Numerous participants offered recommendations on how to improve the Online Tutorials. The majority of these comments were associated with the speed of the online tutorials and technical difficulties. For additional information on phase1 of the Online Tutorials program, an item-by-item analysis of the evaluation is presented in Appendix L.

*Accessibility* was the only component that was evaluated for Online Tutorials during phase – 2 of the survey. Twenty-four participants (96.0%) reported that they were able to access the Online Tutorials from an off-campus location. The one individual who was unable to access the Online Tutorials stated that the problem was associated with technical difficulties, more specifically his/her screen went “wonky”. Only 2 participants (8.0%) encountered problems while using the Online Tutorials. These individuals associated their problems with technical difficulties (e.g., time required to download tutorials and screen problems). For additional information on phase-2 of the Online Tutorials program, an item-by-item analysis of the evaluation is presented in Appendix M.

### ***Program Rankings***

At the end of the survey for phase – 1, participants were asked how they would rate each one of the programs in order of their importance (i.e., 1 – most important, 2 – important, 3 – not that important, 4 – least important). The programs rated the most important (i.e., 1) and important (i.e., 2) were determined by adding the frequencies for both of these values for each program. The program with the highest score of frequencies and percentages ranked first and the program with the second highest score ranked second most important. The same procedure was used to determine the programs that participants perceived as not that important (i.e., 3) and the least important (i.e., 4). The program with the highest score/percentages for these two values ranked third. Considering that the Electronic Reserves program was not functional during the testing period, it will be placed in fourth. Participants who perceived this program as being useful did not actually have an opportunity to use it, thus their perceptions of the program may be inaccurate. Participants perceived the *Electronic Books (1)* program as the most important, the *Live Help (2)* as second important, the *Online Tutorials (3)* as not that important, and the *Electronic Reserves (4)* as the least important. For additional information on these rankings, please refer to Appendix N.

The exact same procedure was used to rank all 4 programs in phase – 2 of the survey. Again, the *Electronic Books (1)* were ranked most important, the *Online Tutorials (2)* was perceived as important, the *Live Help (3)* as not that important, and the *Electronic Reserves (4)* as the least important. For additional information on these rankings, please refer to Appendix O

### **Discussion**

The purpose of the present study was to evaluate 4 trial programs (e.g., Electronic Books, Electronic Reserves, Live Help, and Online Tutorials) that have been developed for Distance Education Students by Novanet Inc. Originally, results from this study were to be used to

support a decision regarding whether or not these programs should be implemented by Novanet Inc. Unfortunately, the sample size is far too small to support any important decision. Information taken from this study should be strictly used for developmental purposes. The information provided by participants can still be taken into consideration for recommendations on what is wrong with the programs and how they can be improved. As previously mentioned, the Electronic Reserves program was not functional during the testing period; consequently there is very little accurate feedback that can be given to trial committee members on this matter. It may be beneficial for trial committee members to conduct a cost-benefit analysis on the Electronic Reserves program to examine whether it is beneficial to pursue and implement.

Although most participants were unfamiliar with the remaining 3 programs (e.g. Electronic Books, Live Help, and Online Tutorials), they still rated them very positively. The *Electronic Books* program received high scores on user friendliness, accessibility, usefulness, and personal preference. The majority of the sample did not encounter any problems or difficulties when using the program during phase 1 and phase 2. The only problems that participants seem to stumble upon while using the program were related to technical difficulties (e.g., could not log-in or search was not functioning properly) and lack of instructions (e.g., novice computer users found it lacked instructions). Participants did offer numerous recommendations on how to improve the Electronic Books program, these recommendations included: increasing the duration of the loan time, adding a larger variety of books in various disciplines, allowing multiple users to check out one book at a given time, adding more instructions to the program, and repairing technical glitches.

As previously mentioned, the *Live Help* was very well received by participants. Participants reported high levels of user friendliness, accessibility, usefulness, and comfort.

Although participants rated this program positively, about 31% of them encountered some type of difficulty while using the program during phase 1. Again, the majority of these problems were either associated with technical difficulties (e.g., took too long to download) or browser problems (e.g., too many screens, became confusing). During phase 2 of the study, participants seemed to report fewer difficulties with the program. This could be attributed to the fact that participants had grown accustomed to the program given that they had previously used it. In regards to how to improve the Live Help program, participants suggested improving technical aspects (e.g., larger dialogue/text box and remain at page were librarian left participant) and longer working hours (e.g., more hours in the evenings).

As with the two previous programs, participants perceived the *Online Tutorials* very positively. Participants reported high levels of user friendliness, accessibility, and usefulness. The majority of participants did not encounter any problems while using the Online Tutorials during phase 1 and phase 2 of the study. The only problems that were identified were associated with the speed of the Online Tutorials. Participants also offered a variety of suggestions on how the program could be improved. These suggestions included improving the speed of the tutorials (e.g., allow speed to be controlled by users, as some find it too fast and others find it too slow) and technical aspects of the program (e.g., messages were not always visible).

Although one section of the survey during phase 1 and phase 2 asked participants to rank the programs in order of their importance in helping them complete their studies as a distance education student, the data is unreliable given the nature of the sample size. Overall, participants ranked the Electronic Books program as the most important in phase 1 and phase 2 of the study. The second most important program is Live Help (phase 1) and Online Tutorials (phase 2). The third most important program is the Online Tutorials (phase 1) and Live Help (phase 2). As

previously reported, considering that the Electronic Reserves program was not properly functioning it ranked as the least important in both phase 1 and phase 2. It should be taken into consideration that the Live Help program may have received a higher ranking during phase 2 of the study if it was operational during the holidays and if it was accessible for longer hours in the evening. Again, I would like to emphasize that this data should not be used to support any important decisions as the sample size is too small.

### **Limitations**

Obviously the main limitation of the present study is its sample size. A sample size of 43 participants is not representative of a Distance Education Student population which exceeds 3 000. Thus results taken from this study can not be generalized to that entire population. There are several factors that could have potentially influenced students' participation in the study. Mainly, Distance Education Students may not have had access or transportation to the in-class sessions. Secondly, the time frame of the study was less than favorable. The majority of students were completing their final papers and preparing for exams. If the study was extended for a period longer than three weeks, there is a greater possibility that more students would have participated in the study. In hindsight, it is my firm belief that the research team as well as trial committee members did everything in their power to attain as large a sample size as possible. Given that the study had to be completed by the end of December, it is very doubtful that a larger sample would have been achieved by conducting the study via a mass mail-out.

The other problematic issue surrounding this study is that the programs were not always functioning properly. This matter becomes apparent when analyzing the component that assessed Identification of Problems/Suggestions for Improvement in the evaluations. The majority of the problems that participants encountered seemed to be associated with technical

difficulties regarding the programs. All three programs had some minor technical difficulties that could have potentially biased some of the findings; however, given that fact that Miss Winter was able to resolve most of the technical issues during the in-class sessions, this issue is more than likely had a minimum effect on the findings.

### **Recommendations**

Overall, all three programs were perceived very highly by participants. I see no reason why these programs can not be implemented. As recommendations, I would suggest the following. First, the results section can be used to provide trial committee members with ideas or suggestions on how to improve their respective programs. Participants seemed to encounter various technical difficulties for each program. For example, participants requested more instructions/information for the Electronic Books program. Other individuals reported that the Live Help program would benefit from having a larger dialogue/text box. Participants also suggested that the Online Tutorials could be improved by allowing users to select pace/speed. A computer/program technician could examine these issues and see whether or not they are feasible to change.

Secondly, upon completing any modifications or improvements, trial committee members should consider creating some type of publicity campaign to promote these programs. Once certain technical glitches have been repaired, Distance Education Students will be less likely to encounter frustrating difficulties, thus there is a greater likelihood that they will perceive the programs positively. A publicity program would be an excellent method in promoting these programs. In fact, this recommendation was suggested by some participants as well. The cost associated with promoting these programs can be determined by trial committee members. One suggestion would be to create direct links on numerous library web pages; or perhaps creating

icons in bright flashing colors; or adding an Icon that says “NEW”; or sending out a mass email occasionally to Distance Education Students providing them information on these services.

Finally, once some technical difficulties have been remedied and the programs have been properly publicized, I would recommend that the trial committee members administer another survey. This survey would not be done in an in-class environment; instead it would consist of mailing out surveys to a random number of Distance Education Students within and outside the province. Once the programs have been properly functioning for some time, there is a small likelihood that participants will encounter technical difficulties within the programs, thus their ratings will consist of how they accurately perceive the programs and not the programs’ problems or technical difficulties. A larger sample size would also produce results that can be generalized to a large population and could be used to support a decision regarding whether or not these programs should be implemented on a continuous basis.

I would be more than happy to assist with the construction of this measure free of charge. Before any items are developed for the next survey it would be essential to further discuss the purpose of the measure. These discussions will guarantee that the items are properly developed to evaluate the programs. As always, any recommendations or suggestions from committee members are greatly welcomed and should be forwarded to [miketeed@yahoo.ca](mailto:miketeed@yahoo.ca).

## Appendix A – Phase 1 (In-Class) Biographical Data

### 1. Gender

Gender	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Male	9	20.9
Female	34	79.1

### 2. Age: M = 26.12; SD = 8.40

### 3. Where is your place of residence (e.g. city or town)?

City	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Antigonish	1	2.4
Bayswater	1	2.4
Bedford	1	2.4
Bible Hill	2	4.9
Glace Bay	1	2.4
Halifax	11	26.8
Lower Sackville	1	2.4
Moncton	1	2.4
North River	1	2.4
Rural	1	2.4
Summerville	1	2.4
Truro	18	43.9
Windsor, Ontario	1	2.4

### 4. Which academic institution are you attending?

Academic Institution	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
AST	-	-
DAL	3	7.0
MSVU	-	-
NSAC	27	62.8
NSCC	-	-
NSCAD	-	-
SMU	6	14.0
STFX	6	14.0
UCCB	1	2.3
UKC	-	-

### 5. What is your faculty or program?

Faculty or Program	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Agriculture Business	1	2.3
Agriculture	5	11.6
Animal Science	7	16.3
Aquaculture	1	2.3
Arts	2	4.7
Bio env. Systems Management	1	2.3
Bachelor Sc.	1	2.3
Business	3	7.0
Business Administration	1	2.3
Commerce	1	2.3
Environment	2	4.7
Environmental Studies	2	4.7
Master of Adult Education	2	4.7
Nursing	3	7.0
Pet Vet	1	2.3
Plant Science	2	4.7
Pre-Vet	5	11.6
Psychology	2	4.7
Psychology and Philosophy	1	2.3

### 6. How many distance education courses have you previously completed? Not including the ones you are presently taking.

Number of Courses	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
0 courses	28	65.1
1 course	5	11.6
2 courses	4	9.3
4 courses	1	2.3
6 courses	3	7.0
7 courses	1	2.3
10 courses	1	2.3

## Appendix B – Phase 2 Technological Data Results

### 1. Computer

Type of Computer	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
PC	24	96.0
Macintosh	1	4.0

### 2. Internet Speed

Type of Connection	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
56k	-	-
Digital/Cable	15	60.0
Other		
- Network	1	4.0
- Ramnet	1	4.0
Don't know	8	32.0

### 3. Internet Program

Internet Program	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Netscape	4	16.0
Internet Explorer	21	84.0

## Appendix C – Phase – 1 Exercise (In-Class Session)

Thank you for participating in phase 1 of the study. Today, you will be asked to evaluate 4 programs (i.e., Electronic Books, Electronic Reserves, Live Help, and Online Tutorials) that are provided to Distance Education students by Novanet Inc. Before you evaluate these programs, I would like you to familiarize yourself with them. In order to familiarize yourself with these programs, I will ask you to complete the following exercise. The exercise is very short and has 4 sections (i.e., one for each program). For each section, you will be provided with a set of directions and objectives. It should take you no longer than 30 minutes to complete the exercise.

**First, I'd like to begin by asking you to generate an identifying code: To do so please write the answers to the following three questions in the space provided. For example, my mother's name is Laura, I was born on the 30<sup>th</sup> day of the month and my last name is Kelloway so I would respond "LA", "30", and "AY".**

What is the first two letters of your mother's first name? \_\_\_\_\_

What day of the month is your birthday on (i.e. 01 – 31)? \_\_\_\_\_

What is the last two letters of your last name? \_\_\_\_\_

### Section 1

**The following section's goal is to help you familiarize yourself with the Electronic-Books program. Please read the directions carefully and complete all objectives.**

#### Directions

1. Go to the Novanet website (<http://novanet.ns.ca>) and click the Distance Education button
2. Select the link for Electronic Books

#### Objectives

1. Scan through the Frequently Asked Questions Section
2. Browse the titles for one discipline listed at the top of the page, and select one title. Please right the author and the title down.  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. Connect to netLibrary, and check out the selected book. If you are a first time netLibrary user, you will need to create and account to do this. Use the link that says "create account" to do this.

## Section 2

The following section's goal is to help you familiarize yourself with the Electronic-Reserves program. Please read the directions carefully and complete all objectives.

### Directions

1. Go to the Novanet website (<http://novanet.ns.ca>) and click the Distance Education button
2. Select the link for Electronic Reserves

### Objectives

1. Locate and quickly read the following two articles that have been put on the Reserves collection.
  - Class notes July 14<sup>th</sup>, Sandy Dwyer
  - Kalifa, Dominique: "Les Embarras de l'historien". Belphegor, Vol. 1, No. 1, Nov. 2001

## Section 3

The following section's goal is to help you familiarize yourself with the Live Help program. Please read the directions carefully and complete all objectives.

### Directions

1. Go to the Novanet website (<http://novanet.ns.ca>) and click the Distance Education button
2. Select the link for Live Help

### Objectives

1. Scan through the Frequently Asked Questions Section
2. Click on the Live Help logo on the top right hand corner of your browser.
3. Ask the librarian to find a book on one of these topics of:-leadership, medieval literature, invasive plants, child welfare, or maternity nursing.

## Section 4

The following section's goal is to help you familiarize yourself with the Online Tutorials program. Please read the directions carefully and complete all objectives.

### Directions

1. Go to the Novanet website (<http://novanet.ns.ca>) and click the Distance Education button
2. Select the link for Online Tutorials

### Objectives

1. Choose 2 tutorials to view. Please list the two tutorials that you viewed.

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## Appendix D – Phase 2 (Off-Campus) Exercise

Thank you for participating in phase 2 of the study. Today, you will be asked to evaluate 4 programs (i.e., Electronic Books, Electronic Reserves, Live Help, and Online Tutorials) that are provided to Distance Education students by Novanet Inc. In comparison to phase 1, these programs will be evaluated from an off-campus location. Before you evaluate these programs, I would like you to try and access them from an off-campus location. Again, I will ask that you complete the following exercise. The exercise is very short and has 4 sections (i.e., one for each program). For each section, you will be provided with a set of directions and objectives. It should take you no longer than 20 minutes to complete the exercise.

**First, I'd like to begin by asking you to generate an identifying code: To do so please write the answers to the following three questions in the space provided. For example, my mother's name is Laura, I was born on the 30<sup>th</sup> day of the month and my last name is Kelloway so I would respond "LA", "30", and "AY".**

What is the first two letters of your mother's first name? \_\_\_\_\_

What day of the month is your birthday on (i.e. 01 – 31)? \_\_\_\_\_

What is the last two letters of your last name? \_\_\_\_\_

### Section 1

**The following section's goal is to help you familiarize yourself with the Electronic-Books program. Please read the directions carefully and complete all objectives.**

#### Directions

1. Go to the Novanet website (<http://novanet.ns.ca>) and click the Distance Education button
2. Select the link for Electronic Books

#### Objectives

1. Using the username and password (that you got from when you created an account during the in-class session) check out any book from netLibrary and print a page.

### Section 2

**The following section's goal is to help you familiarize yourself with the Electronic-Reserves program. Please read the directions carefully and complete all objectives.**

#### Directions

1. Go to the Novanet website (<http://novanet.ns.ca>) and click the Distance Education button
2. Select the link for Electronic Reserves

### Objectives

1. Locate and quickly read the following two articles that have been put on the Reserves collection.
  - Class notes July 16th, Sandy Dwyer
  - Clarke, George Elliot: Saltwater Spirituals and Deeper Blues. Porter Lake, N.S. Pottersfield Press 1983.
2. Please print the first page of each of the 2 reserve articles.

### **Section 3**

**The following section's goal is to help you familiarize yourself with the Live Help program. Please read the directions carefully and complete all objectives.**

### Directions

1. Go to the Novanet website (<http://novanet.ns.ca>) and click the Distance Education button
2. Select the link for Live Help

### Objectives

1. If you haven't already downloaded the Live Help Applet, click "Click here to get started"
2. Click the Live Help logo (i.e. icon) to download the applet
3. Once the applet has been downloaded, click the Live Help button in the right hand corner of the screen to call a librarian. Remember: a librarian can only be accessed during the program's working hours (i.e., Monday to Friday 2 - 4 pm; Friday to Sunday 6 - 9 pm)
4. Ask the librarian to find one of the following journals: Child's Nervous System, Psychological Research, or Environment Management

### **Section 4**

**The following section's goal is to help you familiarize yourself with the Online Tutorials program. Please read the directions carefully and complete all objectives.**

### Directions

1. Go to the Novanet website (<http://novanet.ns.ca>) and click the Distance Education button
2. Select the link for Online Tutorials

### Objectives

1. Choose 2 tutorials to view. Please list the two tutorials that you viewed.
-

## Appendix E – Phase 1 (In-Class) Evaluation and Components

### Section 1

Please answer the following questions regarding your personal and educational background. Information in this section will be used to identify trends across groups. Your responses will be treated with the strictest confidentiality.

1. Gender (*Biographical Data*)
  - Male
  - Female
  
2. Age: \_\_\_\_\_ (*Biographical Data*)
  
3. Where is your place of residence (e.g. city or town)? (*Biographical Data*)
  
4. Which academic institution are you attending? (*Biographical Data*)
  - AST
  - DAL
  - MSVU
  - NSAC
  - NSCC
  - NSCAD
  - SMU
  - STFX
  - UCCB
  - UKC
  
5. What is your faculty or program? (*Biographical Data*)  
\_\_\_\_\_
  
6. How many distance education courses have you previously completed? Not including the ones you are presently taking. \_\_\_\_\_ (*Biographical Data*)

## Section 2

The following statements are focused on your level of awareness of Novanet's Electronic Books program. Please read each statement carefully and answer accordingly.

1. Have you ever used the Electronic Books program before today's session? (*Familiarity*)
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
  
2. If you have answered **YES**, please indicate how you became aware of this program. (*Familiarity*)
  - Colleagues/Other Students
  - Professor
  - Librarian
  - Information Pamphlets
  - Other (Please Indicate) \_\_\_\_\_

The following statements are focused on your perceptions of Novanet's Electronic Books program. Please read each statement carefully and respond by using the following scale.

<b>1 = Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>4 = Agree</b>
<b>2 = Disagree</b>	<b>5 = Strongly Agree</b>
<b>3 = Neutral</b>	

3. The Electronic Books program is a useful tool for Distance Ed. Students.	<i>(Usefulness)</i>
4. I would be willing to use the Electronic Books program again to complete my class assignments.	<i>(Usefulness)</i>
5. It was easy to use the Electronic Books program to access material.	<i>(User Friendliness)</i>
6. I could easily navigate through the Electronic Books program.	<i>(User Friendliness)</i>
7. The organization and presentation of information of the Electronic Books program made it very easy for me to access the information that I was looking for.	<i>(User Friendliness)</i>
8. Any question I had pertaining to the Electronic Books program was answered in the Frequently Asked Questions section.	<i>(User Friendliness)</i>
9. A two hour loan period provides students with sufficient time to access material.	<i>(User Friendliness)</i>
10. I was able to view the online books without any difficulty.	<i>(Accessibility)</i>

11. The links that I used within the Electronic Books program were properly working and brought me to the appropriate web pages.	<i>(Accessibility)</i>
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**If you are a business, nursing, or education student, please answer the following statements (if you are not in any of these programs, please go directly to question 14). Please read each statement carefully and respond by using the following scale.**

<b>1 = Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>4 = Agree</b>
<b>2 = Disagree</b>	<b>5 = Strongly Agree</b>
<b>3 = Neutral</b>	

12. The books provided on the Electronic Books program would be useful in helping me complete my class projects (real assignments, not like the one given today).	<i>(Usefulness)</i>
13. I did <b>NOT</b> find that the books provided in the Electronic Books program were useful to my course work (e.g., outdated or off-topic).	<i>(Accessibility)</i>

**The following questions are focused on your personal preferences and Novanet’s Electronic Books program. Please read each statement carefully and respond accordingly.**

14. If books were available in both an electronic and non-electronic format (i.e. on paper at the library), which would you prefer? *(Personal Preference)*
- Electronic
  - Non-Electronic

15. I had difficulties using the Electronic Books program. *(Identification of Problem/Suggestions for Improvement)*
- Yes
  - No

16. If you responded **YES** to the previous question, please identify the problems that you encountered. *(Identification of Problems/Suggestions for Improvement)*


17. Do you have any recommendations on how the Electronic Books program could be improved? *(Identification of Problems/Suggestions for Improvement)*


### Section 3

The following statements are focused on your perceptions of Novanet's Electronic Reserves program. Please read each statement carefully and respond by using the following scale.

1 = Strongly Disagree	4 = Agree
2 = Disagree	5 = Strongly Agree
3 = Neutral	

1. The Electronic Reserves program is a useful tool for Distance Ed. Students.	<i>(Usefulness)</i>
2. I would be willing to use the Electronic Reserves program again to complete my class assignments.	<i>(Usefulness)</i>
3. Electronic Reserves would be useful in helping me to complete a class project.	<i>(Usefulness)</i>
4. I was able to view the Electronic Reserves material without any difficulty.	<i>(Accessibility)</i>
5. The quality of material (i.e. items complete, pages in order, and quality of print readable) on the Electronic Reserves program was acceptable.	<i>(Accessibility)</i>
6. It was easy to use the Electronic Reserves program to access documents.	<i>(User Friendliness)</i>
7. The organization of electronic documents on the Electronic Reserves program made it very easy to access the information that I was looking for.	<i>(User Friendliness)</i>
8. The links that I used within the Electronic Reserves program were properly working and brought me to the appropriate web pages.	<i>(Accessibility)</i>

The following questions are focused on your personal preferences and Novanet's Electronic Reserves program. Please read each statement carefully and respond accordingly.

9. If documents within the reserve were available in both an electronic and non-electronic format (i.e. on paper at the library), which would you prefer? *(Personal Preference)*
- Electronic
- Non-Electronic

10. I had difficulties using the Electronic Reserves program. (*Identification of Problems/Suggestions for Improvement*)

- Yes
- No

11. If you responded **YES** to the previous question, please identify the problems that you encountered. (*Identification of Problems/Suggestions for Improvement*)


12. Do you have any recommendations on how the Electronic Reserves program could be improved? (*Identification of Problems/Suggestions for Improvement*)


**Section 4**

The following statements are focused on your level of awareness of Novanet’s Live Help program. Please read each statement carefully and answer accordingly.

1. Have you ever used the Live Help program before today’s session? (*Familiarity*)
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
  
2. If you have answered **YES** to the previous statement, please indicate how you became aware of this program. (*Familiarity*)
  - Colleagues/Other Students
  - Professor
  - Librarian
  - Information Pamphlets
  - Other (Please Indicate)\_\_\_\_\_

The following statements are focused on your perceptions of Novanet’s Live Help program. Please read each statement carefully and respond by using the following scale.

<b>1 = Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>4 = Agree</b>
<b>2 = Disagree</b>	<b>5 = Strongly Agree</b>
<b>3 = Neutral</b>	

3. I felt comfortable using the Live Help program to chat with a librarian.	<i>(Level of Comfort)</i>
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4. The Live Help program is a useful tool for Distance Education Students.	<i>(Usefulness)</i>
5. I would be willing to use the Live Help program again if I was at an off-campus location and required assistance from a librarian.	<i>(Usefulness)</i>
6. The librarian with whom I was chatting with was able to answer my question.	<i>(Usefulness)</i>
7. The Live Help program was easy to use.	<i>(User Friendliness)</i>
8. I did <b>NOT</b> have any difficulties downloading the Live Help “Icon”.	<i>(User Friendliness)</i>
9. The librarian with whom I was chatting with was friendly.	<i>(User Friendliness)</i>
10. The librarian with whom I was chatting with was knowledgeable.	<i>(User Friendliness)</i>
11. The link to download the Live Help program was working properly.	<i>(Accessibility)</i>

**The following questions are focused on your personal preferences and Novanet’s Live Help program. Please read each statement carefully and respond accordingly.**

12. The working hours for the Live Help program (i.e., Monday to Friday 2 - 4 pm; Friday to Sunday 6 – 9 pm) are convenient? *(Accessibility)*
- Yes  
 No
13. If you answered **NO** to the previous question, please identify your ideal working hours for the Live Help program. *(Accessibility)*
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
14. If librarian help were available either on Live Help, E-Mail, or over the Telephone, I would prefer. *(Personal Preference)*
- Live Help  
 Email  
 Telephone
15. I had difficulties using the Live Help program. *(Identification of Problems/Suggestions for Improvement)*
- Yes  
 No

16. If you responded **YES** to the previous question, please identify the problems that you encountered. (*Identification of Problems/Suggestions for Improvement*)


17. The Frequently Asked Questions section provided me with sufficient information to answer all my questions regarding how to use Live Help. (*Identification of Problems/Suggestions for Improvement*)

- Yes
- No

18. If you responded **NO** to the previous question, please identify the problems that you encountered. (*Identification of Problems/Suggestions for Improvement*)


19. Do you have any recommendations on how the Live Help program could be improved? (*Identification of Problems/Suggestions for Improvement*)


**Section 5**

The following statements are focused on your level of awareness of Novanet’s Online Tutorials program. Please read each statement carefully and answer accordingly.

1. Have you ever used the Online Tutorials program before today’s session? (*Familiarity*)
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
  
2. If you have answered **YES** to the previous statement, please indicate how you became aware of this program. (*Familiarity*)
  - Colleagues/Other Students
  - Professor
  - Librarian
  - Information Pamphlets
  - Other (Please Indicate)\_\_\_\_\_

The following statements are focused on your perceptions of Novanet's Online Tutorials program. Please read each statement carefully and respond by using the following scale.

<b>1 = Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>4 = Agree</b>
<b>2 = Disagree</b>	<b>5 = Strongly Agree</b>
<b>3 = Neutral</b>	

3. The Online Tutorials were helpful in providing me with information regarding how to use Novanet.	<i>(Usefulness)</i>
4. I would be willing to use the Online Tutorials again if I was looking for specific information regarding how to use Novanet.	<i>(Usefulness)</i>
5. The Online Tutorials answered my questions regarding Novanet.	<i>(Usefulness)</i>
6. The language used in the Online Tutorials was easy to understand (i.e., free of jargon).	<i>(User Friendliness)</i>
7. I did <b>NOT</b> have any difficulties navigating through the Online Tutorials program.	<i>(Accessibility)</i>
8. The information provided in the Tutorials made sense.	<i>(User Friendliness)</i>
9. I was able to view various Online Tutorials without any difficulty.	<i>(Accessibility)</i>
10. The links brought me directly to the Online Tutorials that I was seeking.	<i>(Accessibility)</i>
11. The Online Tutorial is more convenient than having to contact a librarian for information regarding Novanet.	<i>(Personal Preference)</i>

The following questions are focused on your personal preferences and Novanet's Online Tutorials program. Please read each statement carefully and respond accordingly.

12. The pace and timing of the Online Tutorials was *(User Friendliness)*
- Too Fast
  - Just Right
  - Too Slow
13. The length of the Online Tutorials was *(User Friendliness)*
- Too Short
  - Just Right
  - Too Long

14. Given the choice, I would prefer to learn about Novanet via (*Personal Preference*)

- Online Tutorials
- In-Class Presentations
- Pamphlets
- Other (Please Specify):\_\_\_\_\_

15. I had difficulties using the Online Tutorials program. (*Identification of Problems/Suggestions for Improvement*)

- Yes
- No

16. If you responded **YES** to the previous question, please identify the problems that you encountered. (*Identification of Problems/Suggestions for Improvement*)


17. Do you have any recommendations on how the Online Tutorials program could be improved? (*Identification of Problems/Suggestions for Improvement*)


In the present study, you were asked to evaluate 4 programs (Electronic Books, Electronic Reserves, Live Help, and Online Tutorials). How would you rate these programs in order of their importance in helping you to complete your studies as a Distance Education student? Please assign each program a number from 1 (most important) to 4 (least important). Each number can only be used once. (*Program Ranking*)

Program	Chronological Order of Importance
Electronic Books	_____
Electronic Reserves	_____
Live Help	_____
Online Tutorials	_____

**THANK YOU!!!**

**Appendix F – Phase 2 (Off-Campus) Evaluation and Components**

**Section 1**

Please answer the following questions regarding personal information and computer software/programs that you are using from an Off-Campus location. Information in this section will be used to identify trends across groups. Your responses will be treated with the strictest confidentiality.

**1. Computer (*Technological Data*)**

- PC
- Macintosh

**2. Internet Speed (*Technological Data*)**

- 56k
- Digital/Cable
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- Don't know

**3. Internet Program (*Technological Data*)**

- Netscape
- Internet Explorer

**Section 2**

The following statements are focused on the accessibility of Novanet's Electronic Books program at an off-campus location. Please read each statement carefully and answer accordingly.

1. Have you ever used or searched in netLibrary before participating in this study? (*Familiarity or Experience with Program*)

- Yes
- No

2. I was able to access the Electronic Books program from an off-campus location. (*Accessibility*)

- Yes
- No
- Did not try

3. If you responded **NO** to the previous statement, please specify the problems that you encountered. (*Accessibility*)


4. I had difficulties checking out a book from the Electronic Books. (*Accessibility*)

- Yes
- No

5. If you responded **YES** to the previous question, please identify the problems that you encountered. (*Accessibility*)


6. I had difficulties printing a page of the book I borrowed from Electronic Books. (*Accessibility*)

- Yes
- No

7. If you responded **YES** to the previous question, please identify the problems that you encountered. (*Accessibility*)


**Section 3**

**The following statements are focused on the accessibility of Novanet’s Electronic Reserves program at an off-campus location. Please read each statement carefully and answer accordingly.**

1. I was able to access the Electronic Reserves program from an off-campus location. (*Accessibility*)

- Yes
- No
- Did not try

2. If you answered **NO** to the previous statement, please specify the problems that you encountered. (*Accessibility*)


3. I had problems concerning the quality of material (i.e. items complete and pages in order) on Electronic Reserves. (*Accessibility*)

- Yes
- No

4. If you responded **YES** to the previous question, please specify what problems you encountered. (*Accessibility*)


5. Were you able to print Electronic Reserve material from off-campus? (*Accessibility*)

- Yes
- No

6. If you responded **NO** to the previous question, please identify what problems you encountered. (*Accessibility*)


**Section 4**

The following statements are focused on the accessibility of Novanet's Live Help program from an off-campus location. Please read each statement carefully and answer accordingly.

1. I was able to download the Live Help program from an off-campus location. (*Accessibility*)

- Yes
- No
- Did not try

2. If you answered **NO** to the previous statement, please specify what problems you encountered. (*Accessibility*)


3. The Live Help program was functional during its hours of operation (e.g., Monday to Friday 2 - 4 pm; Friday to Sunday 6 – 9 pm). (*Accessibility*)

- Yes
- No
- Did not try

4. If you responded **NO** to the previous question, please specify the time that you tried to access Live Help and the problems that you encountered. (*Accessibility*)


5. Were you comfortable using Live Help from an off-campus location? (*Accessibility*)

- Yes
- No
- Did not try

6. If you responded **NO** to the previous question, please explain why you were not comfortable. (*Accessibility*)


**Section 5**

**The following statements are focused on your level of awareness of Novanet’s Online Tutorials program. Please read each statement carefully and answer accordingly.**

1. I was able to access the Online Tutorials from an off-campus location. (*Accessibility*)

- Yes
- No
- Did not try

2. If you responded **NO** to the previous question, please specify what problems you encountered. (*Accessibility*)


3. I had technical difficulties while using the Online Tutorials. (*Accessibility*)

- Yes
- No

4. If you responded **YES** to the previous question, please identify the problems that you encountered. (*Accessibility*)


In the present study, you were asked to evaluate 4 programs (Electronic Books, Electronic Reserves, Live Help, and Online Tutorials). How would you rate these programs in order of their importance in helping you to complete your studies as a Distance Education student? Please assign each program a number from 1 (most important) to 4 (least important). Each number can only be used once. (*Program Ranking*)

Program	Chronological Order of Importance
Electronic Books	_____
Electronic Reserves	_____
Live Help	_____
Online Tutorials	_____

**Thank you for completing both phases of the survey. Please use the envelope with the pre-paid postage to return the survey**

**THANK YOU!!!!**

### Appendix G – Phase 1 (In-Class) Schedule

<b>Session</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>
1	Halifax - Saint Mary's University	Monday, Nov 17 <sup>th</sup>	7:00 – 8:00 pm
2	New Glasgow - Career Connections	Tuesday, Nov 18 <sup>th</sup>	7:00 – 8:00 pm
3	Halifax -Dalhousie Killam Library	Wednesday, Nov 19 <sup>th</sup>	7:00 – 8:00 pm
4	Truro - NSAC	Monday, Nov 24 <sup>th</sup>	7:00 – 8:00 pm
5	Kentville – NSCC	Tuesday, Nov 25 <sup>th</sup>	7:00 – 8:00 pm
6	Dartmouth - NSCC	Wednesday, Nov 26 <sup>th</sup>	7:00 – 8:00 pm
7	Halifax – Saint Mary's University	Thursday, Nov 27 <sup>th</sup>	7:00 – 8:00 pm
8	Antigonish - STFX	Friday, Nov 28 <sup>th</sup>	7:00 – 8:00 pm
9	Sydney - UCCB	Saturday, Nov 29 <sup>th</sup>	1:00 pm – 2:00pm
10	Halifax – Dalhousie Killam Library	Tuesday, Dec 2 <sup>nd</sup>	7:00 – 8:00 pm
11	Dartmouth – NSCC	Wednesday, Dec 3 <sup>rd</sup>	7:00 – 8:00 pm
12	Halifax – Dalhousie Killam Library	Monday, Dec 8 <sup>th</sup>	7:00 – 8:00 pm

### Appendix H – Results for Phase 1 (In-Class) Evaluation for Electronic Books

1. Have you ever used the Electronic Books program before today's session? (**Familiarity or Experience with Program**)

Answer	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Yes	4	9.3
No	39	90.7

2. If you have answered **YES**, please indicate how you became aware of this program. (**Familiarity or Experience with Program**)

Answer	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Colleagues/Other Students	1	20.0
Professor	-	-
Librarian	2	40.0
Information Pamphlets	-	-
Other		
- Colleagues and Professor	1	20.0
- Colleagues, Professor, and Librarians	1	20.0

Item	Frequencies	M	SD	N	
3. The Electronic Books program is a useful tool for Distance Ed. Students. ( <b>Usefulness</b> )	1) Strongly Disagree	0	4.65	.53	43
	2) Disagree	0			
	3) Neutral	1			
	4) Agree	13			
	5) Strongly Agree	29			
4. I would be willing to use the Electronic Books program again to complete my class assignments. ( <b>Usefulness</b> )	1) Strongly Disagree	0	4.56	.55	43
	2) Disagree	0			
	3) Neutral	1			
	4) Agree	17			
	5) Strongly Agree	25			
5. It was easy to use the Electronic Books program to access material. ( <b>User Friendliness</b> )	1) Strongly Disagree	0	4.00	.79	43
	2) Disagree	1			
	3) Neutral	10			
	4) Agree	20			
	5) Strongly Agree	12			

	Item	Frequencies ( <i>n</i> )	M	SD	N
6.	I could easily navigate through the Electronic Books program. (User Friendliness)	1) Strongly Disagree 2) Disagree 3) Neutral 4) Agree 5) Strongly Agree	1 1 11 16 14	3.95 .95	43
7.	The organization and presentation of information of the Electronic Books program made it very easy for me to access the information that I was looking for. (User Friendliness)	1) Strongly Disagree 2) Disagree 3) Neutral 4) Agree 5) Strongly Agree	0 2 8 20 13	4.02 .83	43
8.	Any question I had pertaining to the Electronic Books program was answered in the Frequently Asked Questions section. (User Friendliness)	1) Strongly Disagree 2) Disagree 3) Neutral 4) Agree 5) Strongly Agree	0 1 7 20 15	4.14 .77	43
9.	A two hour loan period provides students with sufficient time to access material. (User Friendliness)	1) Strongly Disagree 2) Disagree 3) Neutral 4) Agree 5) Strongly Agree	0 6 9 12 16	3.88 1.07	43
10.	I was able to view the online books without any difficulty. (Accessibility)	1) Strongly Disagree 2) Disagree 3) Neutral 4) Agree 5) Strongly Agree	3 2 5 12 21	4.07 1.20	43
11.	The links that I used within the Electronic Books program were properly working and brought me to the appropriate web pages. (Accessibility)	1) Strongly Disagree 2) Disagree 3) Neutral 4) Agree 5) Strongly Agree	2 1 5 10 25	4.28 1.08	43
12.	The books provided on the Electronic Books program would be useful in helping me complete my class projects (real assignments, not like the one given today). (Usefulness)	1) Strongly Disagree 2) Disagree 3) Neutral 4) Agree 5) Strongly Agree	2 1 3 12 5	3.74 1.14	23

Item	Frequencies ( <i>n</i> )	M	SD	N	Item
13. I did <b>NOT</b> find that the books provided in the Electronic Books program were useful to my course work (e.g., outdated or off-topic). <b>(Accessibility – Reversed)</b>	1) Strongly Disagree	7	2.26	1.32	23
	2) Disagree	10			
	3) Neutral	2			
	4) Agree	12			
	5) Strongly Agree	5			

14. If books were available in both an electronic and non-electronic format (i.e. on paper at the library), which would you prefer? **(Preference)**

Format	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Electronic	23	53.5
Non-Electronic	20	46.5

15. I had difficulties using the Electronic Books program. **(Identification of Problems)**

Answer	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Yes	12	28.6
No	30	71.4

16. If you responded **YES** to the previous question, please identify the problems that you encountered. **(Identification of Problems/Suggestions for Improvement)**

Theme	Comments
More Instructions/Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I am a novice computer user. I need more detailed instruction as to how to access each program. I find this intimidating.</li> <li>It needed to be more general for beginners. I found I couldn't do what was plainly asked.</li> <li>It was confusing as to how exactly I was suppose to create a new account</li> <li>Some – I could not easily find the “net library” link on the page that listed book titles. No clear indication of how to check book back in when done.</li> </ul>

Technical Problems

- I have trouble reading off the screen for prolonged periods of time.
- I typed in author and title but it said netLibrary didn't have it. I had to only type the author not the title.
- It would not let me make my account.
- Librarian unable to help me (unable to put username or password in).

Technical Problems  
(Continued)

- Problems with logging in and having areas covered by a large green and black square
- The first I searched for was listed as an e-book, but the search did not locate it.
- When I accessed the book my computer froze otherwise it worked fine.

17. Do you have any recommendations on how the Electronic Books program could be improved? (**Identification of Problems/Suggestions for Improvement**)

Theme	Comments
<p>Longer Loan/ More Books/ Multiple User</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Get more books on the program! Great idea-resource for distance students.</li> <li>• Get some books on agriculture</li> <li>• Higher diversity of titles, choices etc</li> <li>• Longer loan periods and to allow more than one person to borrow a book at the same time</li> <li>• Longer than a 2 hr. limit</li> <li>• Multiple users</li> <li>• There were no books on agriculture and there should be</li> </ul>

---

More Information/Instructions

- A little more direction because it takes some time to find the exact link you need to search for books.
  - More instructions
  - Make sure all distance education students have a step by step “how to” on the program sent on paper
  - Making it more clear on how to get a new account
  - More detailed instruction for access
- 

Positive

- I have no idea
  - Looks great!
  - No
  - No, I think it is good. It will just take some time for people to get used to it
  - No, it’s a great idea
  - No, so far it seems great and is easy to use
  - No
  - None
  - None at the moment
  - Not at this time
- 

Publicity

- Make it more widely publicized so students can access it and become proficient at using it
-

---

**Technical**

- A link between the list of books and the search engine. I don't like having to write down the information before searching.
  - Have a sign in option available on the page which displays the list of available books. That would save some time and make it easier to find where to sign in.
  - Have it open on a new window, having the Novanet tool bar on the left had side really decreased the viewing space.
  - If the document is in digital format, why force it to be checked out exclusively. It is absurd that only one user may view it at a time.
  - Let me make an account
  - The search title seems to be a bit off, it needs improvement. I typed in an exact title and it would not search
-

### Appendix I – Results for Phase 2 (Off-Campus) Evaluation of Electronics Books

1. Have you ever used or searched in netLibrary before participating in this study? (**Familiarity**)

Answer	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Yes	4	16.0
No	21	84.0

2. I was able to access the Electronic Books program from an off-campus location.

(**Accessibility**)

Answer	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Yes	25	100
No	-	-
Did not try	-	-

3. If you responded **NO** to the previous statement, please specify the problems that you encountered. (**Accessibility**)

**There were no responses for this item**

4. I had difficulties checking out a book from the Electronic Books. (**Accessibility**)

Answer	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Yes	1	40.0
No	24	96.0

5. If you responded **YES** to the previous question, please identify the problems that you encountered. (**Accessibility**)

Theme	Comment
Lack of Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I could not find anywhere to click to take it out. Not clearly labeled.</li> </ul>

6. I had difficulties printing a page of the book I borrowed from Electronic Books.

(**Accessibility**)

Answer	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Yes	3	12.0
No	22	88.0

7. If you responded **YES** to the previous question, please identify the problems that you encountered. (**Accessibility**)

Theme	Comments
Technical Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ It just printed the table of contents.</li><li>▪ It said unsupported file format when the page tried to open in word perfect.</li><li>▪ Printers broken, print 6 pages, strange!</li></ul>

### Appendix J – Results for Phase 1 (In-Class) Evaluation of Live Help

1. Have you ever used the Live Help program before today's session? (**Familiarity**)

Answer	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Yes	1	2.6
No	38	97.4

2. If you have answered **YES** to the previous statement, please indicate how you became aware of this program. (**Familiarity**)

Awareness	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Colleagues/Other Students	-	-
Professor	-	-
Librarian	-	-
Information Pamphlets	-	-
Other (Please Indicate)	-	-

Item	Frequencies (n)	M	SD	N
3. I felt comfortable using the Live Help program to chat with a librarian. ( <b>Level of Comfort</b> )	1) Strongly Disagree	1	4.23	39
	2) Disagree	2		
	3) Neutral	4		
	4) Agree	12		
	5) Strongly Agree	20		
4. The Live Help program is a useful tool for Distance Education Students. ( <b>Usefulness</b> )	1) Strongly Disagree	1	4.46	39
	2) Disagree	0		
	3) Neutral	3		
	4) Agree	11		
	5) Strongly Agree	24		
5. I would be willing to use the Live Help program again if I was at an off-campus location and required assistance from a librarian. ( <b>Usefulness</b> )	1) Strongly Disagree	1	4.62	39
	2) Disagree	1		
	3) Neutral	0		
	4) Agree	8		
	5) Strongly Agree	29		
6. The librarian with whom I was chatting with was able to answer my question. ( <b>Usefulness</b> )	1) Strongly Disagree	4	4.10	39
	2) Disagree	3		
	3) Neutral	2		
	4) Agree	6		
	5) Strongly Agree	24		

	<b>Item</b>	<b>Frequencies (n)</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>N</b>	
7.	The Live Help program was easy to use. ( <b>User Friendliness</b> )	1) Strongly Disagree 2) Disagree 3) Neutral 4) Agree 5) Strongly Agree	2 1 4 12 20	4.21	1.08	39
8.	I did <b>NOT</b> have any difficulties downloading the Live Help “Icon”. ( <b>User Friendliness - Reversed</b> )	1) Strongly Disagree 2) Disagree 3) Neutral 4) Agree 5) Strongly Agree	2 1 1 13 19	4.28	1.06	36
9.	The librarian with whom I was chatting with was friendly. ( <b>User Friendliness</b> )	1) Strongly Disagree 2) Disagree 3) Neutral 4) Agree 5) Strongly Agree	2 0 4 8 25	4.38	1.04	39
10.	The librarian with whom I was chatting with was knowledgeable. ( <b>User Friendliness</b> )	1) Strongly Disagree 2) Disagree 3) Neutral 4) Agree 5) Strongly Agree	2 0 4 12 21	4.28	1.02	39
11.	The link to download the Live Help program was working properly. ( <b>Accessibility</b> )	1) Strongly Disagree 2) Disagree 3) Neutral 4) Agree 5) Strongly Agree	2 2 5 9 20	4.13	1.17	38

12. The working hours for the Live Help program (i.e., Monday to Friday 2 - 4 pm; Friday to Sunday 6 – 9 pm) are convenient? (**Accessibility**)

<b>Answer</b>	<b>Frequency (N)</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Yes	22	56.4
No	17	43.6

13. If you answered **NO** to the previous question, please identify your ideal working hours for the Live Help program. (**Accessibility**)

Theme	Comments
Additional Hours in the Afternoons and Evenings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evenings could be good on the weekdays as well.</li> <li>• Help available during the evening hours</li> <li>• Monday-Friday 6-9pm and Sat-Sun 12-6pm</li> <li>• Monday-Friday 6-9pm</li> <li>• Everyday 6-9pm</li> <li>• Monday-Friday at least until 9pm</li> <li>• Monday-Friday 2-4pm and 6-9pm</li> <li>• Monday-Friday 7-9pm</li> <li>• Monday-Friday 2-9pm; or just 6-9 everyday</li> <li>• Monday-Friday 3-5pm and Friday-Sunday 6-9pm</li> <li>• Monday-Friday 4-9pm, Saturday none and Sunday 12pm -12am</li> <li>• Some days Monday-Friday should be 3-6pm</li> </ul>
Additional Hours in the Morning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As many hours as possible. At least two hours during the week in the morning, 9-11am.</li> </ul>
Additional Hours in the Weekend	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weekday evenings as well</li> </ul>
Various Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It would be helpful to have longer access hours than 2 hour a day.</li> <li>• Just an idea, or 10-12 or 5-7.</li> <li>• With their scheduled hours it wasn't working, which really doesn't make it useful for asking for help</li> </ul>

14. If librarian help were available either on Live Help, E-Mail, or over the Telephone, I would prefer. **(Personal Preference)**

Librarian Help - Preference	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Live Help	27	69.2
Email	8	20.5
Telephone	4	10.3

15. I had difficulties using the Live Help program. **(Identification of Problems)**

Answer	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Yes	12	30.8
No	27	69.2

16. If you responded **YES** to the previous question, please identify the problems that you encountered. **(Identification of Problems/Suggestions for Improvement)**

Theme	Comments
Technical Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A dialogue box that was supposed to come up didn't and it took 20 minutes for the librarian's search results to show up on the screen. Also, there is no indication on how to sign off.</li> <li>• Could not get it to work on the first try. After I was taken to the library web page, something happened and I got disconnected from the librarian.</li> <li>• Difficulty with the set up of the program</li> <li>• It didn't work, there wasn't any access to the librarian, it stopped calling</li> <li>• First time using this. Was not prepared for this kind of assistance. Found it confusing to follow</li> <li>• The librarian could not answer my question due to technical difficulties</li> <li>• The librarian had difficulty linking me to the information that I had requested.</li> </ul>

16. If you responded **YES** to the previous question, please identify the problems that you encountered. – (Continued)

Theme	Comments
Screen or Browser Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Just that the operator wasn't aware that I had finished with her. I had to say thanks and move on. If not she took over my screen to redo the problem when I had already moved on.</li> <li>• Multiple drop down screen were confusing</li> <li>• The librarian closed the page (browser) on our conversation accidentally. It took a long time and refused to let me see her browser.</li> <li>• The screen did not refresh properly and it was hard to see what was displayed.</li> <li>• There was a large square on my screen blocking the information that the librarian was showing me. The screen was not properly refreshing.</li> </ul>

17. The Frequently Asked Questions section provided me with sufficient information to answer all my questions regarding how to use Live Help. (**Identification of Problems**)

Answer	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Yes	34	87.2
No	5	12.8

18. If you responded **NO** to the previous question, please identify the problems that you encountered. (**Identification of Problems/Suggestions of Improvement**)

Theme	Comments
Technical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A dialogue box that was supposed to come up didn't and it took 20 minutes.</li> <li>• There wasn't a "question" to answer if the calling didn't work.</li> <li>• There were too many screens that became confusing.</li> </ul>
Various	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I don't remember reading this section.</li> <li>• I need more practice using this to feel comfortable. The first time through went too fast. (I clicked through without knowing what I was doing).</li> </ul>

19. Do you have any recommendations on how the Live Help program could be improved?  
**(Identification of Problems/Suggestions for Improvement)**

Theme	Comments
Hours or Operation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Just being accessible during weekday evening</li> </ul>
Technical Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Easier access to it to work</li> <li>• I think the chat box should be larger. I found it difficult to see when the librarian sent me a response and it was hard to scroll up and down to see true sentences.</li> <li>• It seems that the live help only led me to the Novanet catalogue; I thought that maybe I'd be led to other sources.</li> <li>• Larger screen area to chat with librarian. I had to keep scrolling to see what they wrote. I could only see 1 line at a time.</li> <li>• Longer text window. Perhaps pop-up window like MSN.</li> <li>• Move the icon so it is a little more noticeable. The text box was a little too small to read when the librarian was typing at first.</li> <li>• Perhaps the operator can wait until the student gets back to them. In other words the operator should not assume and take over the screen. More communication.</li> <li>• Remove square from screen. Also leave the search that the librarian did for me on the screen so I don't have to do it all again.</li> <li>• Take care of technical interface glitches.</li> <li>• The librarian went to the catalogue via the Dal page-this was confusing. I am used to using the NSAC page.</li> <li>• The only problem I had was a technical one with viewing the screen. The screen had images superimposed over one half the screen during my session.</li> <li>• The search results disappeared and I had to repeat the search. Would be nice if the screen could stay as is when the call is ended.</li> <li>• Tidy it up</li> <li>• While the librarian had control of the screen there was a weird checker pattern on it which was distracting. Also, when I ended the call I was returned to the Live Help page. It would be better if I could stay at the page where the librarian had left me.</li> </ul>

19. Do you have any recommendations on how the Live Help program could be improved?  
 – (Continued)

Theme	Comments
Positive/Neutral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No</li> <li>• I have no idea</li> <li>• I think that it is great!</li> <li>• No, it was great!</li> <li>• No, the librarian was right there, and very helpful</li> <li>• None</li> </ul>
Publicity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Just to make people aware of it and that it's an option out there.</li> <li>• Let more people know about it! Today was the first time I heard about it. I would love to have used it in the past if I knew about it.</li> </ul>

### Appendix K – Results for Phase 2 (Off-Campus) Evaluation of Live Help

1. I was able to download the Live Help program from an off-campus location. (**Accessibility**)

Answer	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Yes	15	60.0
No	6	24.0
Did not try	4	16.0

2. If you answered **NO** to the previous statement, please specify what problems you encountered. (**Accessibility**)

Theme	Comments
Closed for Holidays	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Closed for the holidays.</li> <li>▪ The Live Help was not available on the date I tried.</li> <li>▪ Was closed on December 23<sup>rd</sup>.</li> </ul>
Technical Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ It wouldn't download, it just stalled, then internet explorer shut down.</li> <li>▪ Live Help cannot be downloaded on a Mac which is unfortunate.</li> <li>▪ Nothing happened after clicking the Live Help logo to start the download.</li> <li>▪ Only had Netscape on computer, could not download applet.</li> <li>▪ Unable to download. Very frustrating. Too much work to bother with this.</li> </ul>

3. The Live Help program was functional during its hours of operation (e.g., Monday to Friday 2 - 4 pm; Friday to Sunday 6 – 9 pm). (**Accessibility**)

Answer	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Yes	13	54.2
No	2	8.3
Did not try	9	37.5

4. If you responded **NO** to the previous question, please specify the time that you tried to access Live Help and the problems that you encountered. (**Accessibility**)

Theme	Comments
Closed for the Holidays	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Completed survey outside of hours of operations (bad times)</li> <li>▪ December 19<sup>th</sup> at 2:14 pm (closed)</li> <li>▪ I tried on December 19<sup>th</sup>, but they had closed for the holidays</li> </ul>

5. Were you comfortable using Live Help from an off-campus location? (**Accessibility**)

Answer	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Yes	15	62.5
No	3	12.5
Did not try	6	25.0

6. If you responded **NO** to the previous question, please explain why you were not comfortable. (**Accessibility**)

Theme	Comments
Closed for Holidays	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Closed</li> <li>▪ Completed survey outside of hours of operations</li> </ul>
Technical Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Could not download applet because only had Netscape</li> <li>▪ Dialog box too small</li> <li>▪ Too much work. Too complicated. Would not try this again!!</li> </ul>

### Appendix L – Results for Phase 1 (In-Class) Evaluation of Online Tutorials

1. Have you ever used the Online Tutorials program before today's session? (**Familiarity**)

Answer	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Yes	1	2.4
No	41	97.6

2. If you have answered **YES** to the previous statement, please indicate how you became aware of this program. (**Familiarity**)

**There was no response for this item**

	Item	Frequencies (n)	M	SD	N
3.	The Online Tutorials were helpful in providing me with information regarding how to use Novanet. ( <b>Usefulness</b> )	1) Strongly Disagree 0 2) Disagree 0 3) Neutral 3 4) Agree 16 5) Strongly Agree 23	4.48	.63	42
4.	I would be willing to use the Online Tutorials again if I was looking for specific information regarding how to use Novanet. ( <b>Usefulness</b> )	1) Strongly Disagree 0 2) Disagree 0 3) Neutral 3 4) Agree 14 5) Strongly Agree 25	4.52	.63	42
5.	The Online Tutorials answered my questions regarding Novanet. ( <b>Usefulness</b> )	1) Strongly Disagree 0 2) Disagree 0 3) Neutral 5 4) Agree 13 5) Strongly Agree 24	4.45	.71	42
6.	The language used in the Online Tutorials was easy to understand (i.e., free of jargon). ( <b>User Friendliness</b> )	1) Strongly Disagree 0 2) Disagree 0 3) Neutral 3 4) Agree 12 5) Strongly Agree 27	4.57	.63	42
7.	I did <b>NOT</b> have any difficulties navigating through the Online Tutorials program. ( <b>Accessibility – Reversed</b> )	1) Strongly Disagree 0 2) Disagree 1 3) Neutral 4 4) Agree 13 5) Strongly Agree 24	4.43	.77	42

	<b>Item</b>	<b>Frequencies (n)</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>N</b>
8.	The information provided in the Tutorials made sense. <b>(User Friendliness)</b>	1) Strongly Disagree 0 2) Disagree 0 3) Neutral 1 4) Agree 16 5) Strongly Agree 25	4.57	.55	42
9.	I was able to view various Online Tutorials without any difficulty. <b>(Accessibility)</b>	1) Strongly Disagree 0 2) Disagree 0 3) Neutral 3 4) Agree 8 5) Strongly Agree 31	4.67	.61	42
10.	The links brought me directly to the Online Tutorials that I was seeking. <b>(Accessibility)</b>	1) Strongly Disagree 0 2) Disagree 0 3) Neutral 1 4) Agree 11 5) Strongly Agree 30	4.69	.52	42
11.	The Online Tutorial is more convenient than having to contact a librarian for information regarding Novanet. <b>(Personal Preference)</b>	1) Strongly Disagree 0 2) Disagree 1 3) Neutral 4 4) Agree 15 5) Strongly Agree 22	4.38	.76	42

12. The pace and timing of the Online Tutorials was **(User Friendliness)**

<b>Pace and Timing</b>	<b>Frequency (N)</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Too Fast	5	11.9
Just Right	24	57.1
Too Slow	13	31.0

13. The length of the Online Tutorials was **(User Friendliness)**

<b>Length</b>	<b>Frequency (N)</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Too Short	-	-
Just Right	36	85.7
Too Long	6	14.3

14. Given the choice, I would prefer to learn about Novanet via **(Personal Preference)**

Preference for Learning	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Online Tutorials	35	85.4
In-Class Presentations	5	12.2
Pamphlets	1	2.4
Other (Please Specify)	-	-

15. I had difficulties using the Online Tutorials program. **(Identification of Problems)**

Answer	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Yes	3	7.1
No	39	92.9

16. If you responded **YES** to the previous question, please identify the problems that you encountered. **(Identification of Problems/Suggestions for Improvement)**

Theme	Comments
Speed of Tutorials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I wanted to control the speed but couldn't see how</li> <li>▪ Just too slow</li> <li>▪ The tutorials went a little too fast for me to properly read them</li> </ul>

17. Do you have any recommendations on how the Online Tutorials program could be improved? **(Identification of Problems/Suggestions for Improvement)**

Theme	Comments
Expand Tutorials to Other Subjects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ It would be nice in the future to expand the tutorials to other areas like math, biology, etc.</li> </ul>
Positive/Neutral Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I believe that these tutorials are a huge help and are very informative. I love them.</li> <li>▪ No</li> <li>▪ No, I thought it was helpful and that I will use it again if needed.</li> <li>▪ No, they are very helpful and easy to use</li> <li>▪ None</li> </ul>

17. Do you have any recommendations on how the Online Tutorials program could be improved? (*Continued*)

Theme	Comments
Speed of Tutorials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A bit faster to go through the tutorial.</li> <li>▪ Allow speed to be controlled for different levels of familiarity and comprehension.</li> <li>▪ Be able to choose how quickly you would like to view the tutorial.</li> <li>▪ Little bit quicker</li> <li>▪ Slow down the pace!</li> <li>▪ Tutorials should be a bit slower (just a tad)</li> </ul>
Technical Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The messages were not always visible and disappeared quickly.</li> <li>▪ The viewer window did not fit on my screen properly so I had to scroll up and down to view the tutor.</li> <li>▪ There should be a static file that is able to be accessed at any time in addition to the screen by.</li> </ul>

### Appendix M – Results of Phase 2 (Off-Campus) Evaluation of Online Tutorials

1. I was able to access the Online Tutorials from an off-campus location. (**Accessibility**)

Answer	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Yes	24	96.0
No	1	4.0
Did not try	-	-

2. If you responded **NO** to the previous question, please specify what problems you encountered. (**Accessibility**)

Theme	Comment
Technical Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The screen was wonky. Could not read. The links did not work.</li> </ul>

3. I had technical difficulties while using the Online Tutorials. (**Accessibility**)

Answer	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Yes	2	8.0
No	23	92.0

4. If you responded **YES** to the previous question, please identify the problems that you encountered. (**Accessibility**)

Theme	Comments
Technical Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Screen difficulties</li> <li>▪ Took a bit to download, but not too bad</li> </ul>

### Appendix N – Results for Phase 1 (In-Class) Program Rankings

Program	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
<b>Electronic Books</b>		
Most Important	26	61.9
Important	9	21.4
Not that Important	7	16.7
Least Important	-	-
<b>Electronic Reserves</b>		
Most Important	2	13.3
Important	2	13.3
Not that Important	4	26.7
Least Important	7	46.7
<b>Live Help</b>		
Most Important	9	23.7
Important	18	47.4
Not that Important	8	21.1
Least Important	3	7.9
<b>Online Tutorials</b>		
Most Important	5	11.9
Important	13	31.0
Not that Important	19	45.2
Least Important	5	11.9

### Appendix O – Results for Phase 2 (Off-Campus) Program Rankings

Program	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
<b>Electronic Books</b>		
Most Important	14	56.0
Important	6	24.0
Not that Important	5	20.0
Least Important	-	
<b>Electronic Reserves</b>		
Most Important	-	-
Important	4	33.3
Not that Important	2	16.7
Least Important	6	50.0
<b>Live Help</b>		
Most Important	8	32.0
Important	4	16.0
Not that Important	9	36.0
Least Important	4	16.0
<b>Online Tutorials</b>		
Most Important	3	12.0
Important	11	44.0
Not that Important	9	36.0
Least Important	2	8.0