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Study Guides: To Give or Not to Give? That is the Question!

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Presenters

Velina Boteva, Emmanuel Clottey, Lauren Bigham, Aaron Dilday, Kimberly Lawrence, Judith Longfield, and Ram Polur

While You Are Waiting...



Please fill out the survey!

Faculty Survey (*Originally on line*)

Directions: This is a survey of your ideas about test study guides. Its purpose is to gain a better understanding of your views as a faculty member on the use of study guides. Circle or underline your response. During our presentation, you will be comparing your responses with those of our study participants.

1. With study guides being defined as “an aid... designed to assist students with their learning”, I have provided a study guide to undergraduate students before:
A. Yes, regularly B. Yes, occasionally C. No, never
2. I perceive the **OVERALL** helpfulness of study guides for undergraduate test preparation as:
A. Very helpful B. Somewhat helpful C. Neither helpful or unhelpful
D. Somewhat unhelpful E. Not helpful at all
3. Please select the **BEST** type of undergraduate study guide for your discipline:
A. Guide featuring an outline or summary of the lectures.
B. Guide featuring questions to clarify weekly readings.
C. Guide featuring a review of broad themes or problems.
D. Guide featuring sample questions of specific concepts or ideas.
E. A combination of _____ above.
F. Other, please specify: _____



Study Guides: To Give or Not to Give? That Is the Question!



Lauren Bigham (Health & Kinesiology)

Velina Boteva (Sports Management)

Emmanuel Clotey (Public Health)

Aaron Dilday (History)

Kimberly Lawrence (History)

Judith Longfield (CTLIS)

Ram Polur (Public Health)



Today's Agenda



- What Does the Literature Say?
- How Did We Conduct Our Study?
- What Does Our Data Show?
- What Did We Learn?
- What Do You Think?



Judith Longfield



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What Does the Literature Say?



Operational Definition of Study Guides

“An aid . . . designed to assist students with their learning. It indicates what should be learned, how it can be learned and how students can recognize if they have learned it.”

(Laidlaw & Harden, 1990)

Frequency of usage?

Lauren Bigham



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What Does the Literature Say?



How do we measure academic success?

- **Improved performance on tests** (Dickson, Miller, & Devoley, 2005; Gurung, Weidert, & Jeske, 2010, Flora & Logan, 1996)
- **Improved retention** (Szafran, 1981)
- **Enhanced development of life skills, *i.e.* organizational abilities** (Wilhelm & Pieters, 2007)
- **Anxiety & coping mechanisms** (Szafran, 1981)

What are the limitations?

Lauren Bigham



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How Did We Conduct Our Study?



Purpose:

To examine perceptions of undergraduates & instructors regarding use of study guides for tests

Objectives:

1. Evaluate views of undergraduates & instructors to determine what constitutes a “good” study guide.
2. Assess differences in students’ & instructors’ views through quantitative & qualitative analysis.

Aaron Dilday



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How Did We Conduct Our Study?



Subjects

Over 1300 undergraduates & 70+ faculty members from a Southern, regional, state university participated

Methods

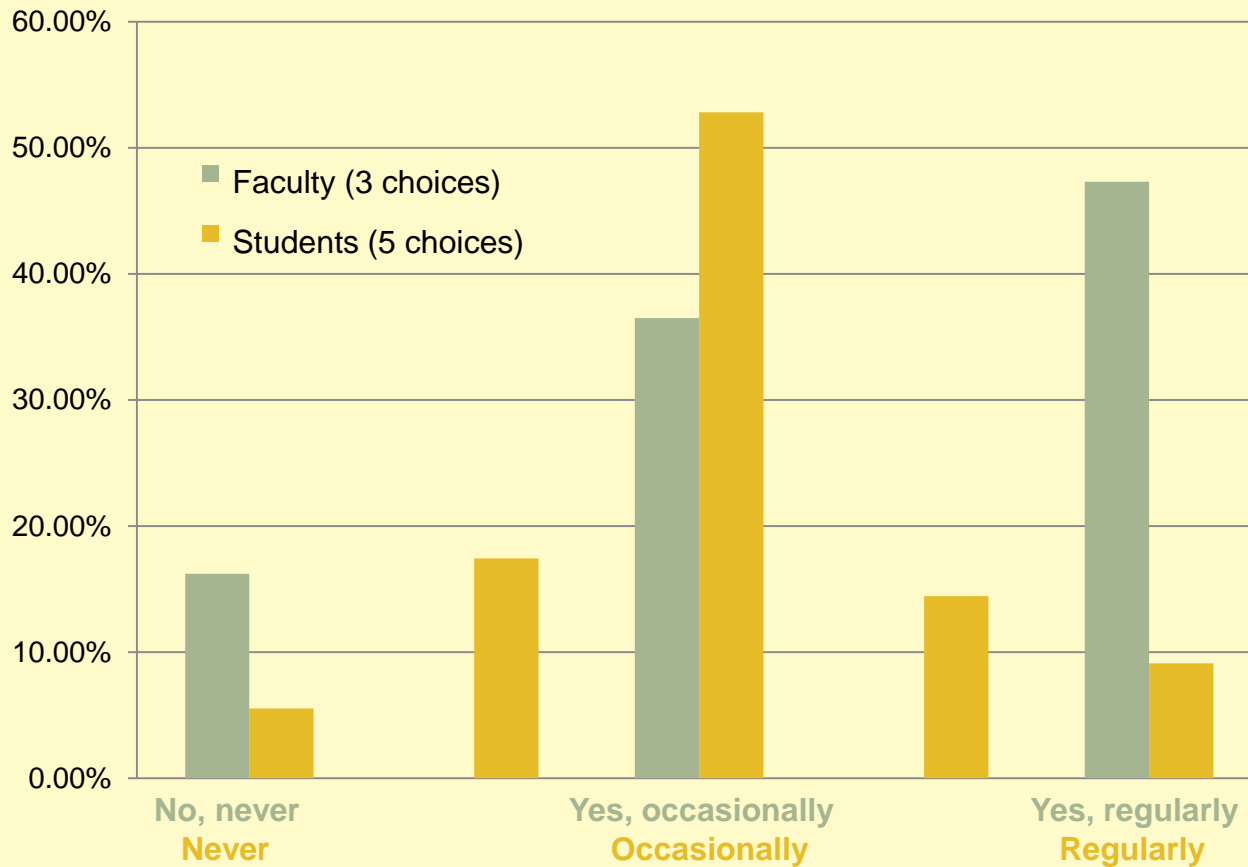
- All faculty invited to participate in on-line survey by e-mail.
- Undergraduates in major & core courses took paper-based survey.
- Surveys were anonymous & asked for demographic data.
- Surveys contained qualitative & quantitative questions.

Aaron Dilday



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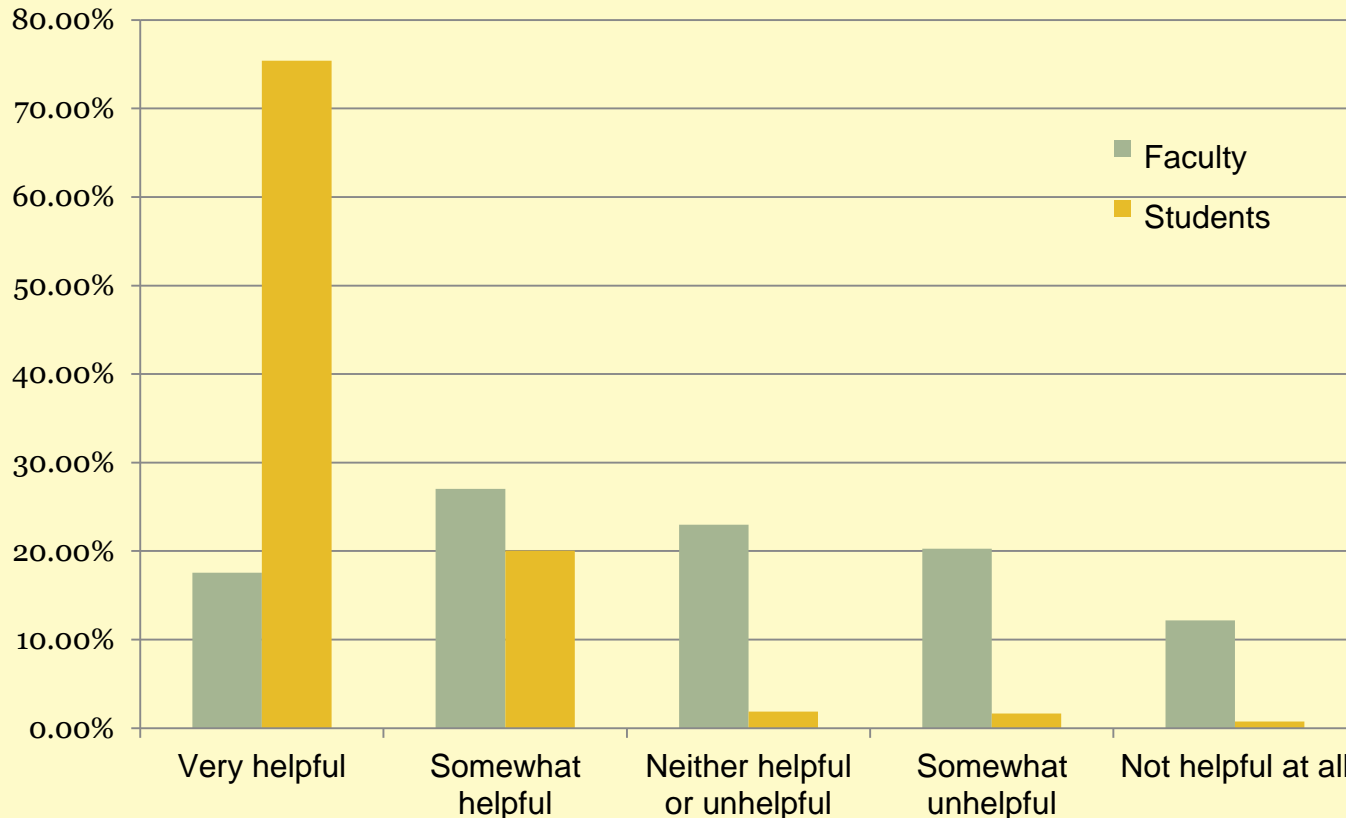
Frequency of Study Guide Utilize (#1)



Ram Polur



Overall Perceptions of Study Guides (#2 & 5)



Ram Polur



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Advantages of Study Guides



Faculty

1. Focus on important issues
2. Give examples/practice problems
3. Help review material
4. Students know what to expect
5. Lowers stress & anxiety

Students

1. Better idea of what's on the test
2. Tell you what to focus on so you aren't focusing on details you don't need
3. Clarification of material/better idea of what to study
4. Help review material
5. Receive better grades

Velina Boteva



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Disadvantages of Study Guides



Faculty

1. Students study only what's on the guide
2. Students don't take notes/pay attention in class
3. Students don't learn how to conceptualize/summarize material
4. No difference in student grades
5. Students memorize instead of learn

Students

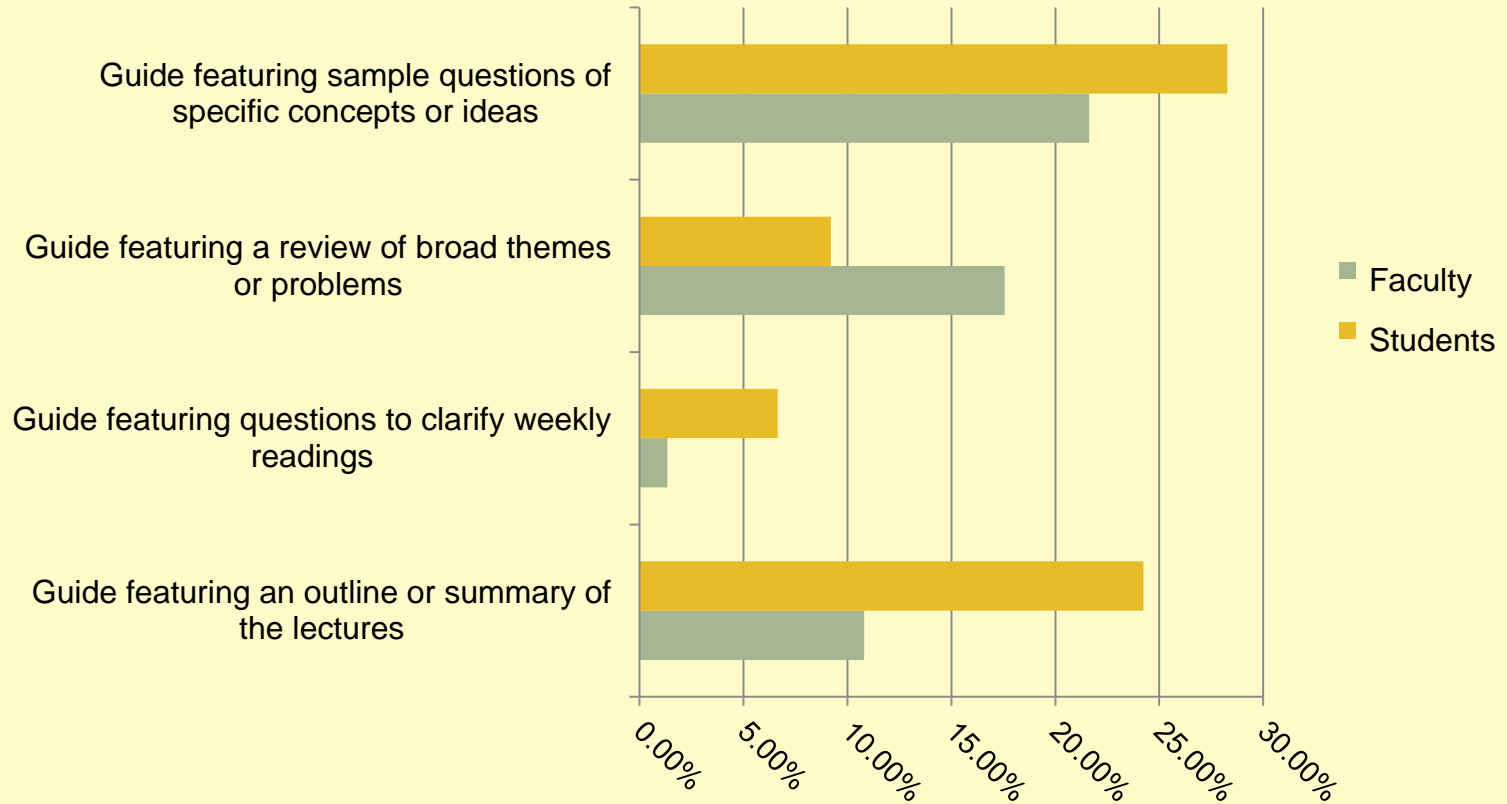
1. People only study/learn/memorize what's on the guide
2. None/There are no disadvantages
3. Professors give material on the tests that is not on the guide
4. Professors don't use information that is on the guide
5. People will not attend class

*Many faculty provide study guides only when students' request them.

Velina Boteva



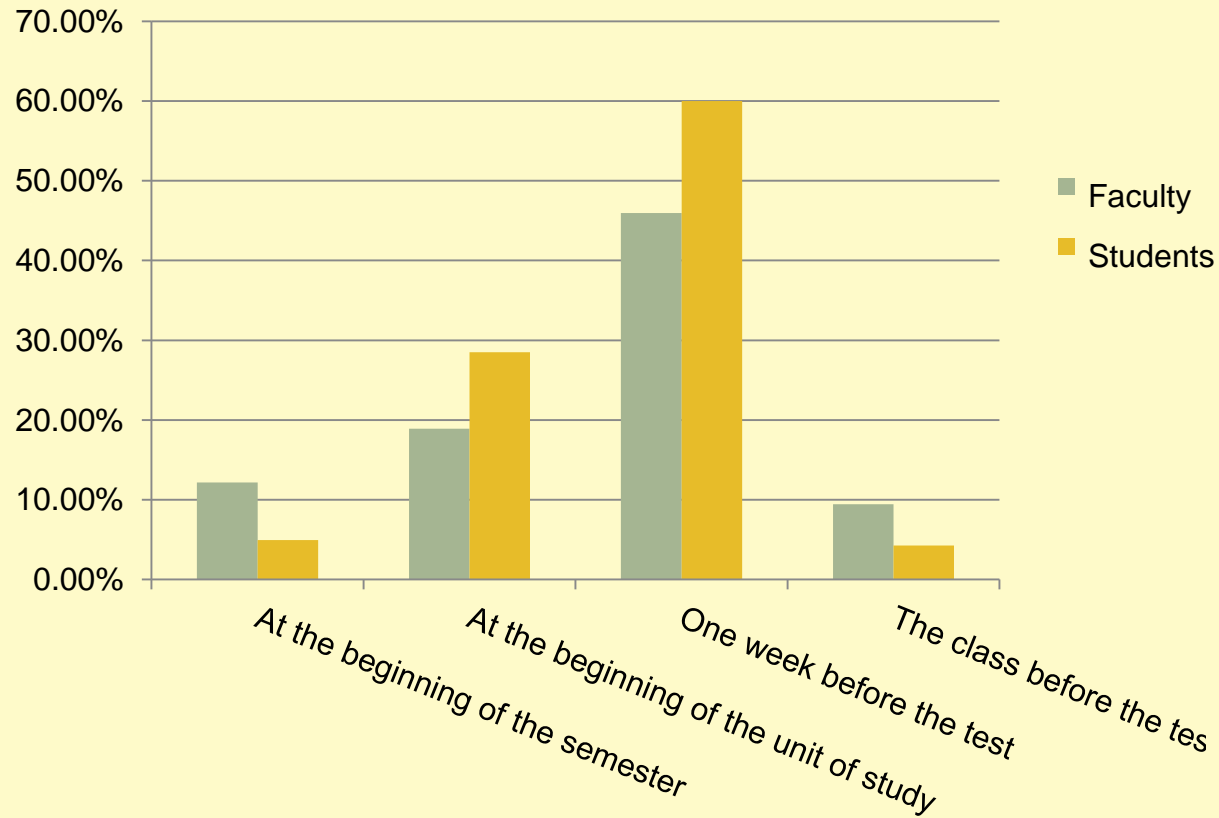
Best Type of Study Guide (#3 & 6)



Ram Polur



Distribution for Exam Preparation (#4 & 7)



Ram Polur



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What Did We Learn?



- Study guides are perceived to be helpful by both faculty & students
- Faculty regularly give study guides
- Faculty prefer to give study guides about a week before an exam
- More research is needed to determine the actual effectiveness of study guides

And the question is still, whether or not to give study guides to students . . .

Emmanuel Clotey



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What Do You Think?



- What surprised you about our results?
- In your opinion, should study guides be used? Why? Why not?
- If so, what kind(s) of study guides should be used?
- If used, when should the study guide be handed out?



Kimberly Lawrence



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