# Sustaining an ethical digital learning environment: Perceptions of student privacy among faculty, librarians, and instructional designers

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## ABSTRACT

Despite educators' eagerness to return to "normal," the pandemic has demonstrated the importance and usefulness of online learning and its accompanying technologies, especially in times of crisis. No one wants to re-experience the chaos of the Spring 2020 transition to online learning, so taking care to plan ahead and make deliberate choices is important. In the rush to convert courses to the online format, the increased student privacy risks that result from online learning technologies were likely not at the forefront of educators' minds. But with time to reflect and make rational decisions, educators can consider their values about student privacy and whether or not their instructional choices reflect these values.

We surveyed instructors from a variety of disciplines and institutions in the United States and found that educators highly valued student privacy. Although privacy can be defined in many ways, most defined personal privacy and student privacy in the same way, generally with a focus on limiting information access. Instructors' discipline, rank, and personal demographics did not influence their views of student privacy. We are currently interviewing instructors, librarians, and instructional designers to provide context for the survey findings and to explore how these groups can productively discuss student privacy issues and make informed decisions.

By sharing the results of the ongoing project, our aim is to stimulate conversation among library and information science educators about student privacy values and actions, and to discuss how we prepare future academic librarians to support faculty in ethical decision-making about student privacy.

**ALISE RESEARCH TAXONOMY TOPICS**

Information privacy; education; information ethics.


**AUTHOR KEYWORDS**

Student privacy; learning analytics; higher education; online learning.