



# Online Education

STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM *of* FLORIDA

Annual Report 2018



**STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF FLORIDA**  
**2018 Annual Report for Online Education**

*Approved on June 13, 2019*

*Board of Governors  
State University System of Florida  
325 W. Gaines St.  
Tallahassee, FL 32399  
[www.flbog.edu](http://www.flbog.edu)*



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# Highlights

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The State University System *2018 Annual Report for Online Education*<sup>1</sup> reflects the progress universities have made in the provision of online programs, with a special emphasis on their progress in implementing the *SUS 2025 Strategic Plan for Online Education*. In 2017-18:

- In the top ten states for distance learning enrollments, Florida tied for first place in terms of the percentage of university students enrolled in distance learning courses and placed second in terms of the number of students enrolled in distance learning courses.
- System-wide, 227,801 undergraduate students (72%) took at least one distance learning course during 2017-18, an increase from 216,323 students (69%) in 2016-17.
- Of undergraduate credit hours, 28% were taken in distance learning courses, an increase from 26% in the prior year.
- Of graduate credit hours, 29% were taken in distance learning courses, an increase from 27% in the prior year.
- Fifty-one percent (51%) of graduate students took at least one distance learning course, an increase from 49% in 2016-17.
- The average time to degree was 3.92 years for full-time students earning Bachelor's degrees in 120-credit-hour programs, with students who took up to 80% of their courses via distance learning graduating in an average of 3.75 – 4.0 years.
- Undergraduates who took only distance learning courses were older (average age of 28) than students who took no distance learning courses or a mix of distance learning and classroom and/or hybrid courses (average age of 22 for both groups).
- Graduate students who took only distance learning courses were also older (average age of 33) than students who took no distance learning courses (average age of 30) or a mix of distance learning and classroom and/or hybrid courses (average age of 28).
- Of undergraduate students who took only distance learning courses, 95% were Florida residents. Of those undergraduates who took no distance learning courses, 92% were Florida residents.
- SUS institutions offered 540 online programs/majors in 2017-18.
- Florida universities are collaborating on many initiatives to ensure the quality of their distance learning programs and efficient use of their resources.

<sup>1</sup> *Online education is one type of distance learning and is the focus of this report. Distance Learning encompasses other modalities when instructor and student are separated by time and/or distance, such as courses broadcast over television networks, and SUS data elements do not distinguish between those modalities. Therefore, the term "distance learning" is used in this report when appropriate.*



# Introduction

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The *State University System 2018 Annual Report for Online Education* provides a review of the initiatives, accomplishments, and opportunities for improvement in online education in the State University System of Florida. The Annual Report is a companion document to the *State University System 2025 Strategic Plan for Online Education*, which was adopted by the Board of Governors in November 2015 to guide the growth of online education in the System and to ensure quality instruction and services are being provided in a cost-efficient and effective manner.

The Board of Governors believes that online education provides a means to address capacity requirements while providing students with options for completing their education in a timely manner. Online education allows individuals with family or work obligations to complete their education and on-campus students to accelerate the completion of their degrees and/or engage in co-curricular activities.

## Implementation of the 2025 Strategic Plan for Online Education

The *SUS 2025 Strategic Plan for Online Education* presents goals, strategies, and tactics organized around the primary elements of Quality, Access, and Affordability, building on the collective strength of institutions in the System. Upon the Plan's adoption by the Board of Governors in November 2015, the Board Office immediately worked with institutions to establish a system-wide Implementation Committee that consists of representatives from all institutions, and a Steering Committee that guides the work of the Implementation Committee. (Appendix A).

The Steering Committee has six voting members who are drawn from the Council of Academic Vice Presidents and appointed by and reporting to the Chancellor, and one non-voting member of the Chancellor's staff. By-laws codify the responsibilities and operations of the Committee.

Under the general guidance of the Implementation Committee, system-wide workgroups address assigned tactics in the Plan. In some instances, sub-groups of experts are formed to address specific issues assigned to workgroups. Over a hundred people have served on these workgroups and sub-groups, including representatives from the Florida College System.

*“The online MBA Program at Florida A&M University equipped me with the tools and skill set that I needed to excel to the executive level within the federal government. The educational foundation I received has been essential to my career advancement. I have excelled to three different levels within my organization since completing the FAMU online MBA degree program.”*

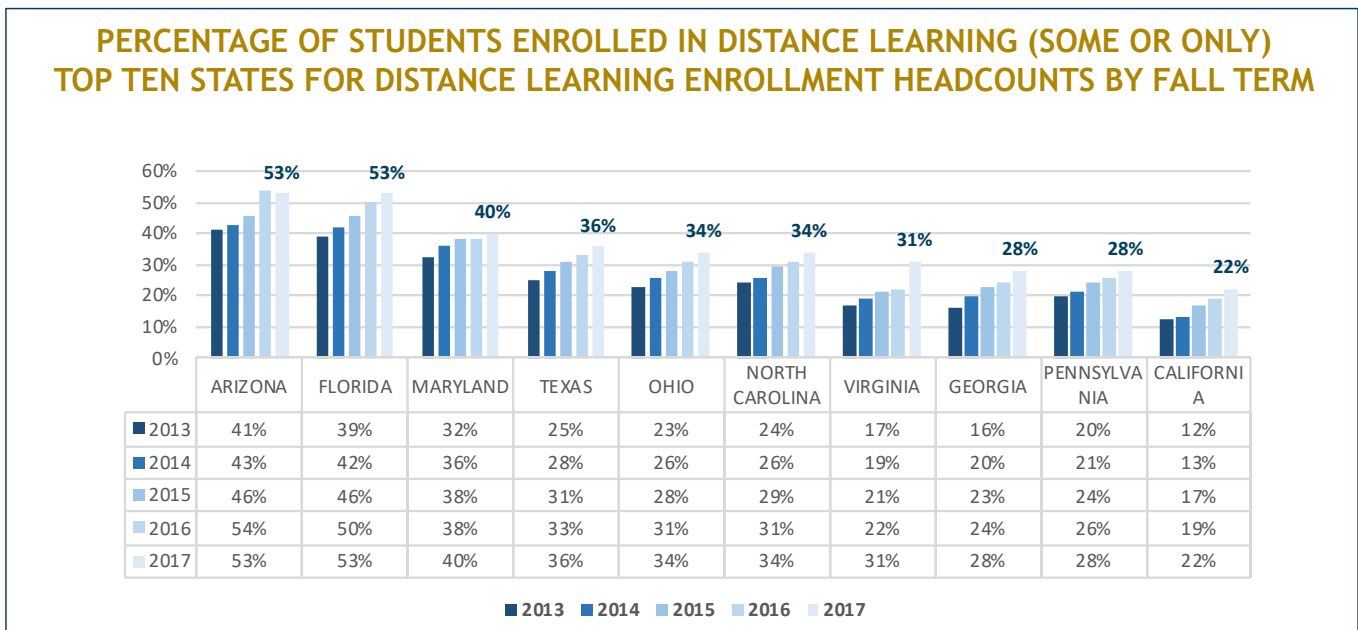
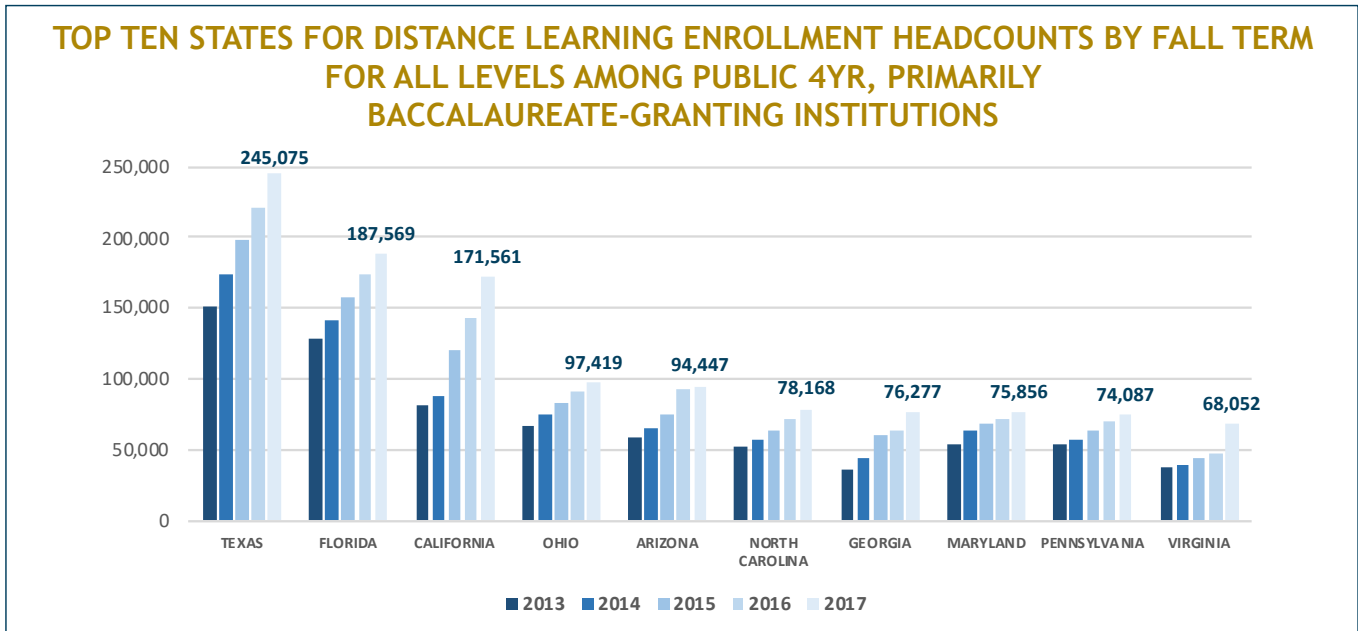
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JUSTIN GREEN, ACTING DEPUTY DIRECTOR  
SPECIAL AGENT IN CHARGE-MIAMI FIELD OFFICE, U.S. FDA-OFFICE OF CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS

# Student Enrollment

## Florida's Ranking in Distance Learning Enrollments

Florida continued to be a leader in distance learning, ranking second in the nation in the number of students enrolled in distance learning courses, behind Texas, and tying Arizona for the top ranking in the percentage of students enrolled in distance learning courses.



SOURCE: Board of Governors staff analysis of US Dept. of Education's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) available at the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) website (data extracted 4/10/2019). Notes: IPEDS defines Distance Learning as instructional content that is delivered exclusively (100%) via distance education within a Fall term – Florida Statutes 1009.24(17) defines Distance Learning as at least 80%. It is important to note that the percent of total students enrolled in at least one Distance Learning course for the entire 2017-18 academic year jumps to 72%, because the expanded time period provides more opportunities for a student to take a DL course (IPEDS reporting includes fall term enrollment only).

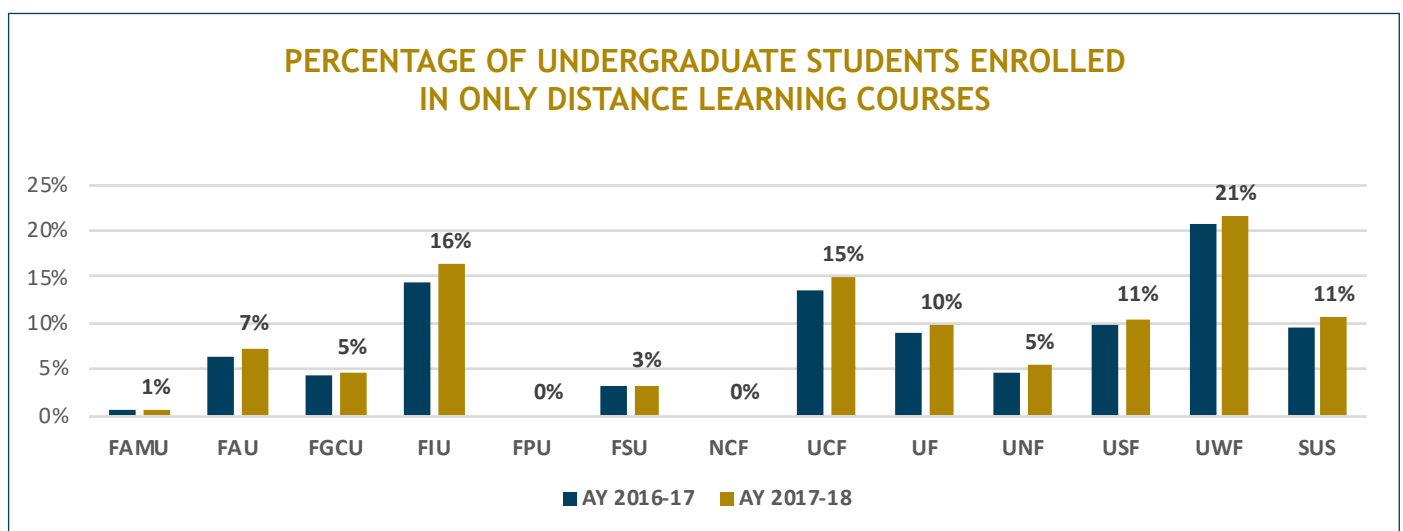
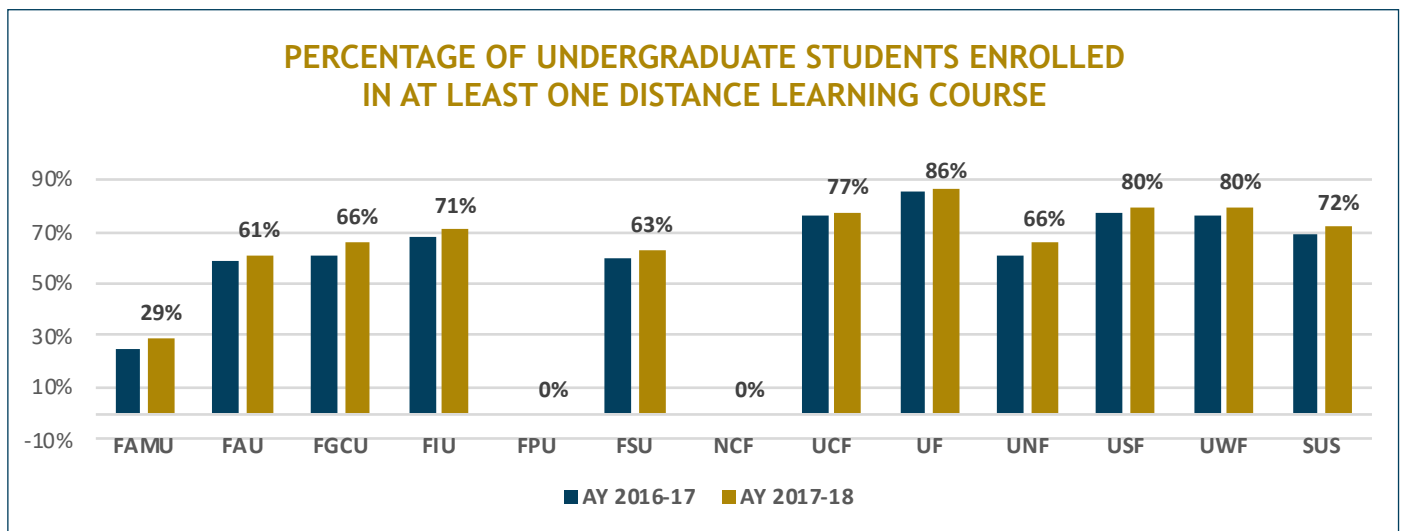


# Student Enrollments (Headcounts)

## UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

System-wide, 72% of undergraduate students took at least one distance learning course in academic year 2017-18, an increase from 69% in 2016-17. At four institutions, more than 75% of undergraduate students took at least one distance learning course during the year: UCF (77%), UF (86%), USF (80%), and UWF (80%). UCF had the greatest number of undergraduates who took at least one distance learning course – 51,013. UWF had the largest percentage (21%) of undergraduates who were enrolled only in distance learning courses.

Eleven percent (11%) of SUS undergraduates took only distance learning courses, compared to 10% in the previous year. The majority of undergraduate students (61%) took a mix of distance learning and classroom and/or hybrid courses, an increase from 59% in 2016-17. Only 28% of undergraduates took no distance learning courses in 2017-18, a decrease from 31% in 2016-17.



SOURCE: BOG Office of Data & Analytics, extracted from datamarts on 4/9/2019. Notes: Undergraduate students include lower- and upper-division students only and excludes unclassified students. Distance learning courses are defined as a course in which at least 80 percent of the direct instruction of the course is delivered using some form of technology when the student and instructor are separated by time or space, or both (per 1009.24(17), F.S.). Delivery Method categories are based on element #2052.





## 2017-2018 UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT ENROLLMENTS

INSTITUTION	STUDENTS WHO TOOK ONLY DL COURSES		STUDENTS WHO TOOK BOTH DL AND CLASSROOM AND/OR HYBRID COURSES		STUDENTS WHO TOOK NO DL COURSES	
	HEADCOUNT	PERCENTAGE	HEADCOUNT	PERCENTAGE	HEADCOUNT	PERCENTAGE
FAMU	45	1%	2,386	28%	5,958	71%
FAU	2,086	7%	15,302	54%	11,150	39%
FGCU	716	5%	9,264	62%	5,053	34%
FIU	8,210	16%	27,527	55%	14,585	29%
FPU	0	0%	0	0%	1,503	100%
FSU	1,215	3%	21,735	60%	13,406	37%
NCF	0	0%	0	0%	873	100%
UCF	9,874	15%	41,139	62%	14,938	23%
UF	3,911	10%	30,487	76%	5,485	14%
UNF	887	5%	9,816	60%	5,620	34%
USF	4,501	11%	29,563	69%	8,725	20%
UWF	2,469	21%	6,668	58%	2,350	20%
SUS	33,914	11%	193,887	61%	89,646	28%

## GRADUATE STUDENTS

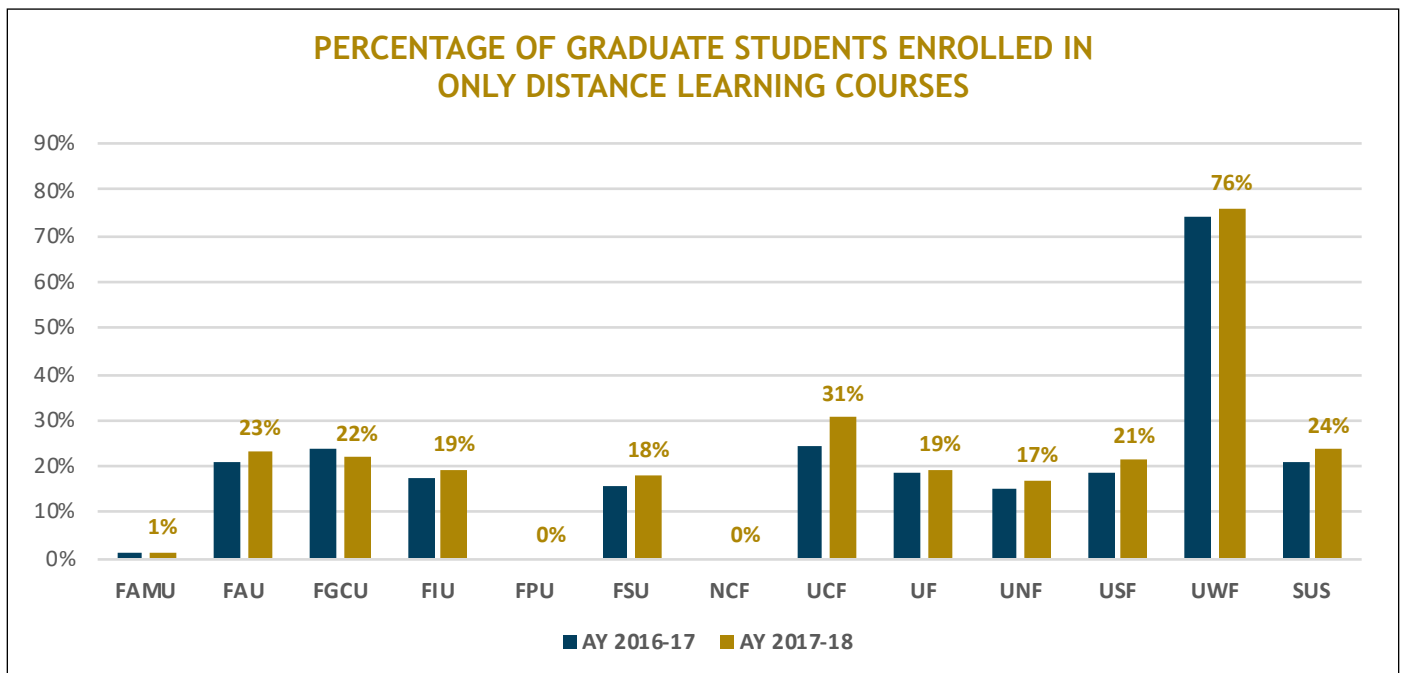
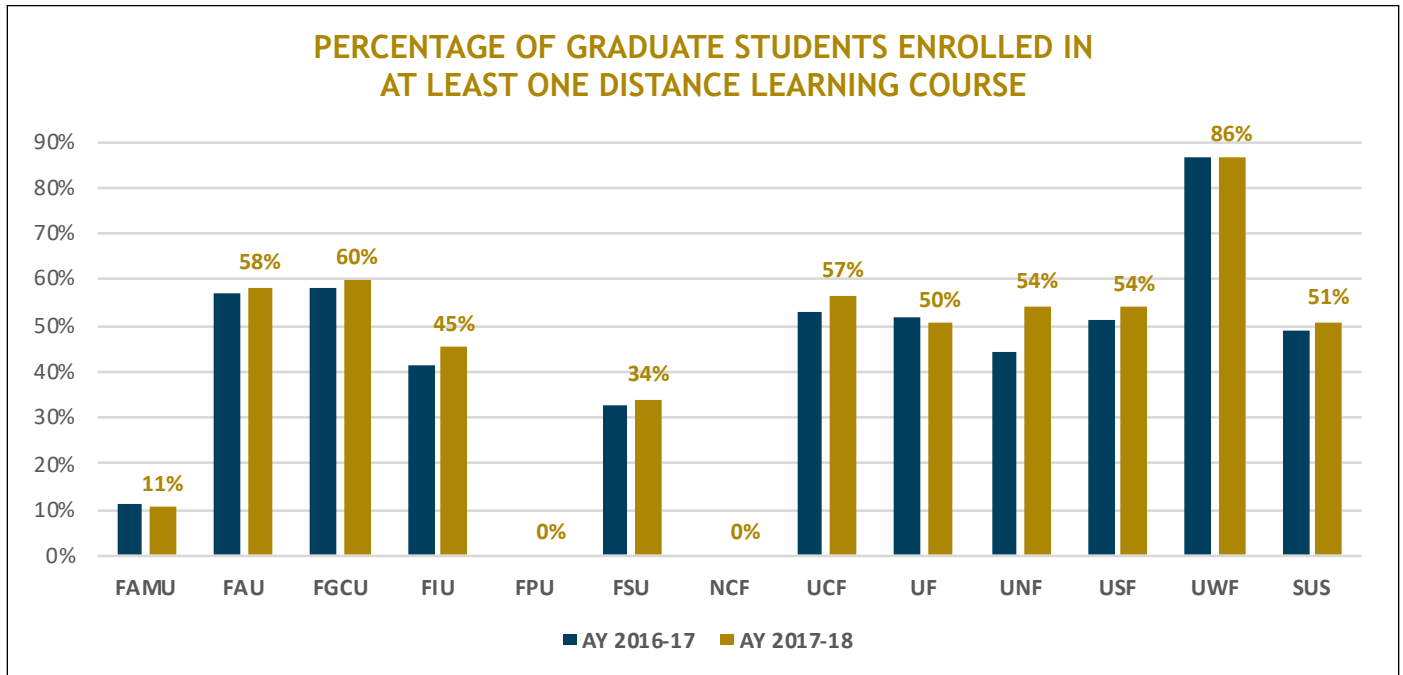
### 2017-2018 GRADUATE STUDENT ENROLLMENTS

INSTITUTION	STUDENTS WHO TOOK ONLY DL COURSES		STUDENTS WHO TOOK BOTH DL AND CLASSROOM AND/OR HYBRID COURSES		STUDENTS WHO TOOK NO DL COURSES	
	HEADCOUNT	PERCENTAGE	HEADCOUNT	PERCENTAGE	HEADCOUNT	PERCENTAGE
FAMU	25	1%	194	9%	1,854	89%
FAU	1,339	23%	2,048	35%	2,413	42%
FGCU	271	22%	465	38%	499	40%
FIU	2,067	19%	2,745	26%	5,842	55%
FPU	0	0%	0	0%	23	100%
FSU	1,618	18%	1,391	16%	5,881	66%
NCF	0	0%	0	0%	23	100%
UCF	3,140	31%	2,666	26%	4,436	43%
UF	3,348	19%	5,387	31%	8,607	50%
UNF	418	17%	916	37%	1,128	46%
USF	2,798	21%	4,247	32%	6,034	46%
UWF	2,796	76%	373	10%	502	14%
SUS	17,820	24%	20,432	27%	37,242	49%

SOURCE: BOG Office of Data & Analytics, extracted from datamarts on 4/9/2019. Undergraduate students include lower- and upper-division students only and excludes unclassified students. Graduate students include advanced- and beginning -levels based on beginning- and advanced-graduate level. Only includes students enrolled in courses. "Students who took only distance learning courses" include students enrolled in any combination of courses where 80 percent or more of the direct instruction of the course is delivered using some form of technology when the student and instructor are separated by time or space, or both. "Students who took no distance learning courses" include students enrolled in any combination of courses where less than 80 percent of the course is delivered using some form of technology when the student and instructor are separated by time, space or both. "Students who took both distance learning and classroom and/or hybrid" includes students taking any combination of distance learning courses with classroom and/or hybrid courses.



System-wide, the percentage of graduate students taking at least one distance learning course increased from 49% in 2016-17 to 51% in 2017-18. UWF had the largest percentage (86%) of graduate students who took at least one distance learning course and the largest percentage (76%) who took only distance learning courses. UF had the largest number of graduate students enrolled in at least one distance learning course – 8,735.



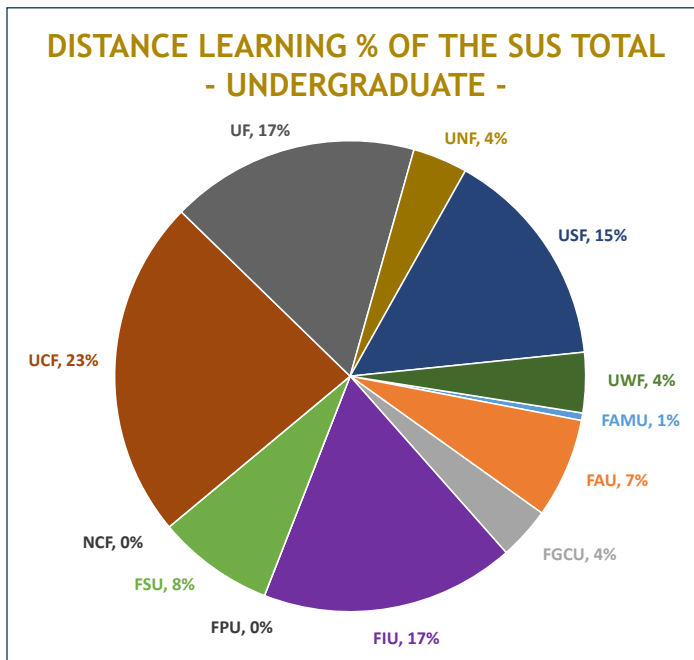
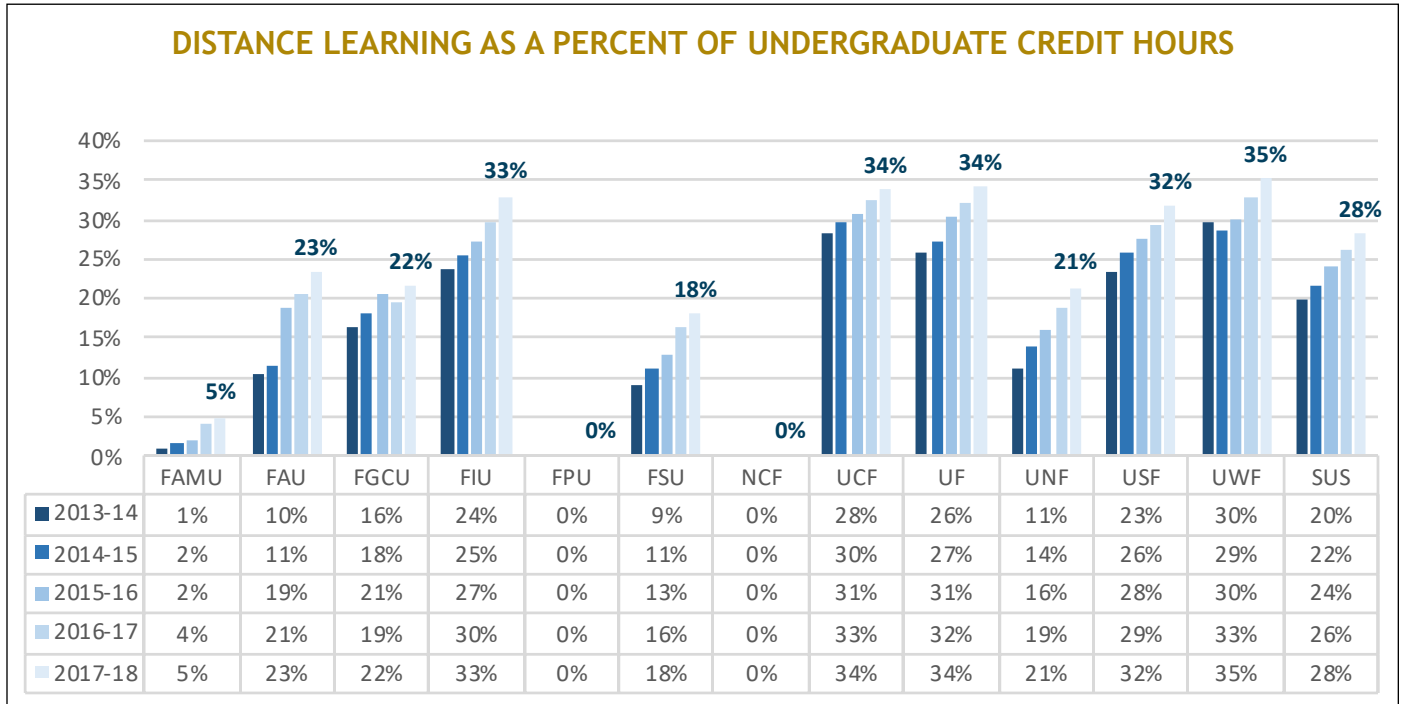
SOURCE: BOG Office of Data & Analytics, extracted from datamarts on 4/9/2019. Graduates based on beginning- and advanced-graduate student level. Only includes students enrolled in courses. Distance learning courses are defined as a course in which at least 80 percent of the direct instruction of the course is delivered using some form of technology when the student and instructor are separated by time or space, or both (per 1009.24(17), F.S.).



# Credit Hours by Delivery Method

## UNDERGRADUATE CREDIT HOURS

System-wide, 28% of undergraduate credit hours were taken in distance learning courses in 2017-18, an increase from 26% in 2016-17. UWF had the highest percentage (35%), followed closely by UF and UCF, both with 34%, FIU with 33%, and USF with 32%. In the past 5 years, FAU has had the largest percentage growth, from 10% in 2013-14 to 23% in 2017-18.



“Online education is a reflection of technology at its best, allowing us to reach heights we thought unreachable and goals we thought unattainable. It allows us to connect with the world of learning, from the comfort of our personal spaces.”

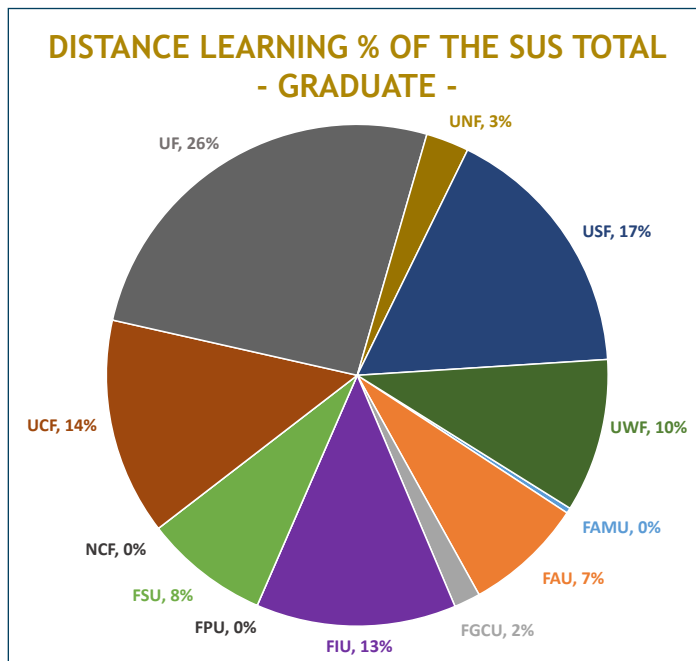
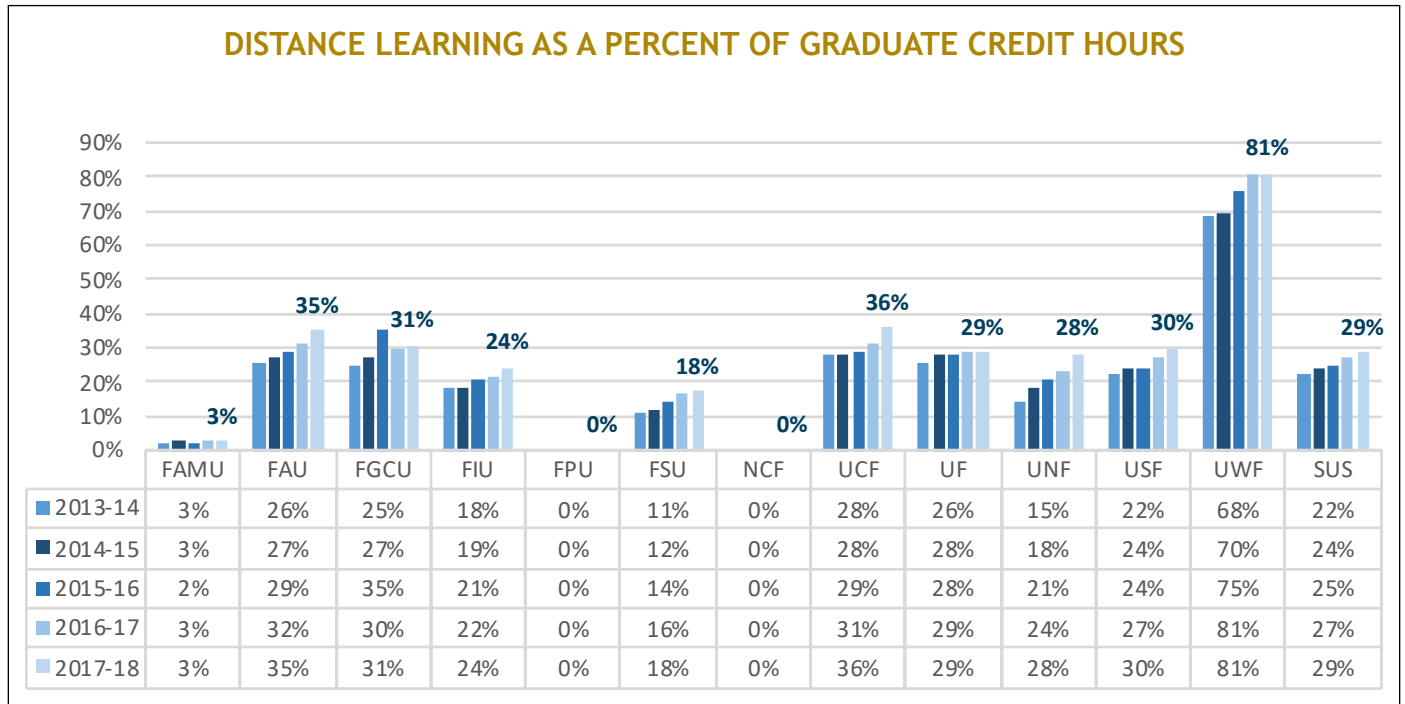
MS. LAKRYSTAL HOWELL  
ONLINE STUDENT,  
UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

SOURCE: BOG Office of Data & Analytics, extracted from datamarts on 3/13/2019. Notes: Undergraduate students include lower- and upper-division students only and excludes unclassified students. Distance Learning is a course in which at least 80 percent of the direct instruction of the course is delivered using some form of technology when the student and instructor are separated by time or space, or both (per 1009.24(17), F.S.). Delivery Method categories are based on element #2052. Includes all instructional activity regardless of funding sources.



## GRADUATE CREDIT HOURS

For graduate courses, 29% of student credit hours were taken in distance learning courses in 2017-18, an increase from 27% in 2016-17. UWF's percentage, the highest in the System, stayed at 81%. The second highest was UCF at 36%, an increase from 31% in 2016-17.



*I currently work full-time and many other programs I looked into required me to relocate and become a full-time student. This program allows me to continue to work full-time and work towards the degree on my time.*

STUDENT, UNIVERSITY OF NORTH FLORIDA

SOURCE: BOG Office of Data & Analytics, extracted from datamarts on 3/13/2019. Undergraduate students include lower- and upper-division students only and excludes unclassified students. Distance Learning is a course in which at least 80 percent of the direct instruction of the course is delivered using some form of technology when the student and instructor are separated by time or space, or both (per 1009.24(17), F.S.). Delivery Method categories are based on element #2052. Includes all instructional activity regardless of funding sources.

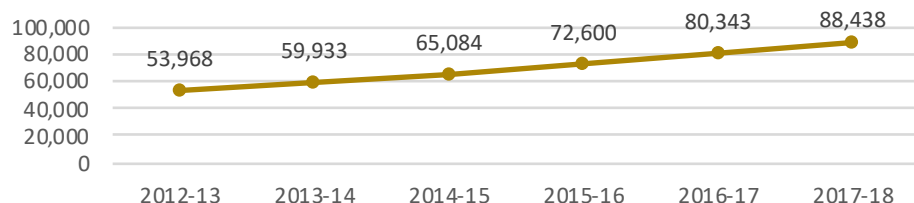
# Historical Full-Time Equivalents (FTE) in Distance Learning Courses

A Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) student is a measure of instructional activity that is based on the number of credit hours in which students enroll. Credit hours, translated into student FTE, in distance learning courses increased by 64% from 2012-13 to 2017-18.

## STUDENT FULL-TIME EQUIVALENTS (FTE) IN DISTANCE LEARNING COURSES

LEVEL/YEAR	FAMU	FAU	FGCU	FIU	FPU	FSU	NCF	UCF	UF	UNF	USF	UWF	SUS
<b>UNDERGRAD</b>													
2012-2013	50	1,876	1,597	7,104		1,982		12,433	6,404	1,054	7,805	2,582	42,885
2013-2014	73	2,164	1,774	8,396		2,854		12,807	8,380	1,389	7,867	2,545	48,248
2014-2015	131	2,388	2,055	9,192		3,476		13,559	8,921	1,722	8,745	2,434	52,622
2015-2016	172	4,002	2,428	9,957		4,064		14,523	10,287	1,941	9,442	2,559	59,375
2016-2017	297	4,432	2,309	11,007		5,286		15,857	11,282	2,320	10,070	2,795	65,655
2017-2018	375	4,977	2,617	12,673	0	5,825	0	16,944	12,409	2,735	11,061	2,999	72,615
<b>MASTERS</b>													
2012-2013	82	761	201	1,387		608		1,522	2,027	154	1,657	861	9,258
2013-2014	47	755	182	1,429		751		1,411	2,079	173	1,718	1,017	9,562
2014-2015	49	786	187	1,461		822		1,361	2,336	214	1,921	1,081	10,218
2015-2016	39	863	240	1,625		955		1,429	2,609	214	1,960	1,125	11,058
2016-2017	51	1,012	206	1,759		1,071		1,608	2,852	201	2,173	1,343	12,277
2017-2018	51	1,131	220	1,846	0	1,152	0	2,001	2,747	272	2,404	1,388	13,212
<b>DOCTORATE</b>													
2012-2013	1	52	29	35		48		185	1,329	10	91	44	1,824
2013-2014	0	67	35	39		70		183	1,564	13	108	42	2,122
2014-2015	4	73	38	41		79		177	1,608	38	130	55	2,244
2015-2016	6	62	52	46		103		161	1,392	82	149	117	2,167
2016-2017	5	64	39	69		139		164	1,449	144	173	166	2,411
2017-2018	5	86	49	194	0	118	0	210	1,359	166	246	178	2,611
<b>TOTAL</b>													
2012-2013	134	2,689	1,827	8,525		2,637		14,140	9,760	1,217	9,553	3,486	53,968
2013-2014	120	2,986	1,991	9,864		3,675		14,401	12,023	1,575	9,693	3,604	59,932
2014-2015	183	3,247	2,280	10,694		4,377		15,098	12,865	1,975	10,797	3,569	65,085
2015-2016	217	4,927	2,720	11,627		5,121		16,112	14,287	2,237	11,551	3,801	72,600
2016-2017	353	5,507	2,554	12,834		6,496		17,629	15,583	2,665	12,417	4,303	80,343
2017-2018	431	6,194	2,886	14,713	0	7,096	0	19,155	16,514	3,174	13,710	4,564	88,438

STUDENT FULL-TIME EQUIVALENTS (FTE) IN DISTANCE LEARNING COURSES - SUS TOTALS -



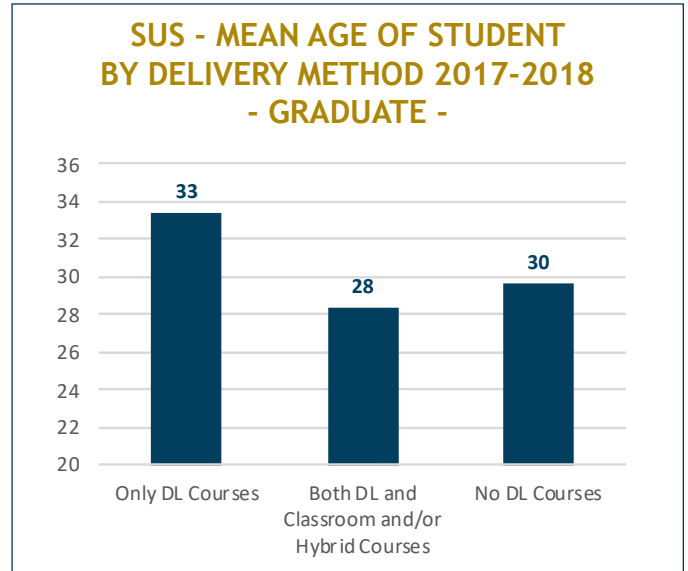
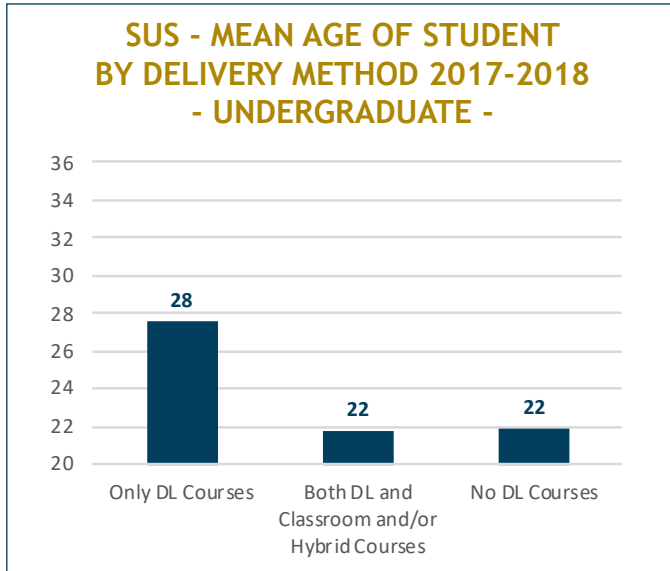
SOURCE: BOG Office of Data & Analytics, extracted from datamarts on 3/13/2019. Data reports credit hours attempted and aggregated by course level. Total undergraduate student credit hours are divided by 30 to obtain the number of undergraduate FTEs. Total graduate student credit hours are divided by 24 to obtain the number of graduate FTEs.



# Student Demographics

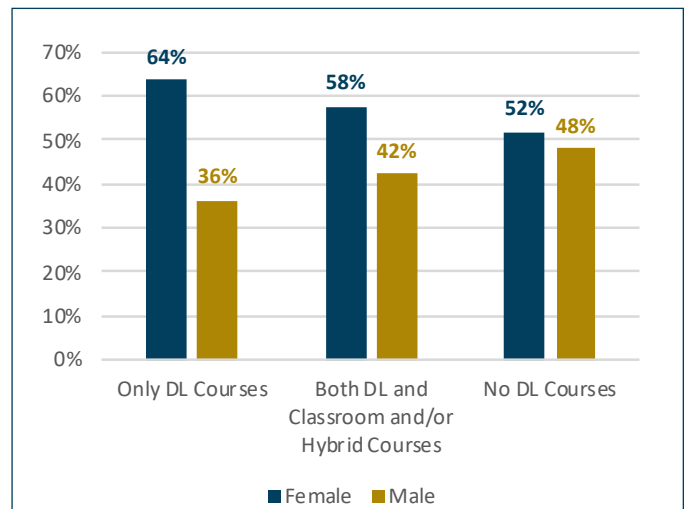
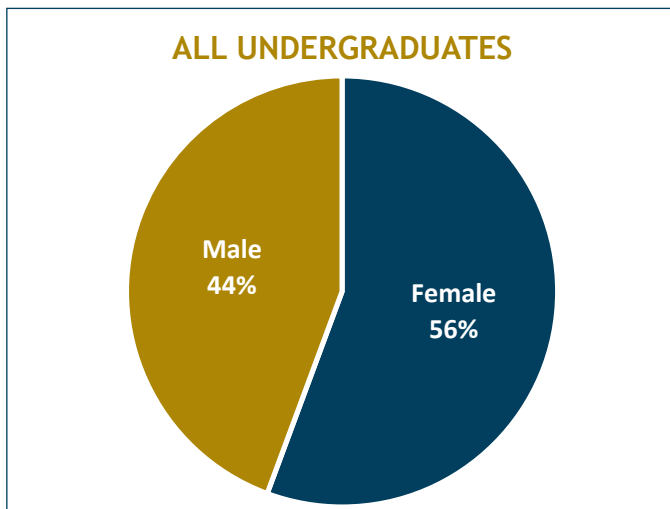
## Age of Student

Both undergraduate and graduate students who took only distance learning courses were older than their counterparts who took no distance learning courses or who took a mix of distance learning and classroom and/or hybrid courses. Older students are more likely to be place-bound because of job or family responsibilities.



## Gender

Sixty-four percent (64%) of undergraduates who took only distance learning courses were female, although females comprised just 56% of the undergraduate student body. This difference is consistent with studies that have shown that females are more likely than males to be family caregivers, leaving them place-bound.



SOURCE: BOG Office of Data & Analytics, extracted from datamarts on 4/9/2019. Undergraduate students include lower- and upper-division students only and excludes unclassified students. Students with missing or unreported gender data are also excluded. Headcounts are unduplicated. "Students who took only distance learning courses" include students enrolled in any combination of courses where 80 percent or more of the direct instruction of the course is delivered using some form of technology when the student and instructor are separated by time or space, or both. "Students who took no distance learning courses" include students enrolled in any combination of courses where less than 80 percent of the course is delivered using some form of technology when the student and instructor are separated by time, space or both. "Students who took both distance learning and classroom and/or hybrid" includes students taking any combination of distance learning courses with classroom and/or hybrid courses.



# Race/Ethnicity

The race/ethnicity of undergraduates who took only distance learning courses closely aligned with those students who took no distance learning courses.

## RACE/ETHNICITY OF SUS UNDERGRADUATES

RACE/ETHNICITY	ONLY DL COURSES	BOTH DL AND CLASSROOM AND/OR HYBRID COURSES	NO DL COURSES
American Indian or Alaska Native	0%	0%	0%
Asian	4%	5%	4%
Black or African American	14%	11%	14%
Hispanic/Latino	31%	27%	28%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0%	0%	0%
Nonresident alien	1%	3%	3%
Race and ethnicity unknown	2%	1%	1%
Two or more races	3%	4%	4%
White	46%	48%	45%

# Residency

Ninety-five percent (95%) of undergraduate students who took only distance learning courses were Florida residents, compared to ninety-two percent (92%) of the undergraduate student body as a whole.

RESIDENCY	UNDERGRADUATES WHO ONLY TOOK DL COURSES		UNDERGRADUATES WHO TOOK BOTH DL COURSES AND HYBRID AND/OR CLASSROOM COURSES		UNDERGRADUATES WHO TOOK NO DL COURSES		ALL UNDERGRADUATES	
	HEADCOUNT	%	HEADCOUNT	%	HEADCOUNT	%	HEADCOUNT	%
Florida	27,689	95%	110,394	92%	115,157	92%	253,240	92%
Non-Florida	1,497	5%	9,986	8%	10,366	8%	21,849	8%

SOURCE: BOG Office of Data & Analytics, extracted from datamarts on 4/9/2019. Undergraduate students include lower- and upper-division students only and excludes unclassified students. Headcounts are unduplicated. "Students who took only distance learning courses" include students enrolled in any combination of courses where 80 percent or more of the direct instruction of the course is delivered using some form of technology when the student and instructor are separated by time or space, or both. "Students who took no distance learning courses" include students enrolled in any combination of courses where less than 80 percent of the course is delivered using some form of technology when the student and instructor are separated by time, space or both. "Students who took both distance learning and classroom and/or hybrid" includes students taking any combination of distance learning courses with classroom and/or hybrid courses.

*I chose to take online courses for the flexibility and convenience. I have completed the MBA in a mixed format, taking courses both on-campus and online. The online modality allowed me to balance full-time work, child care, and complete the Business Analytics Program.*

STUDENT, UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA - TAMPA



## Florida Virtual Campus

The Florida Virtual Campus (FLVC) is Florida's educational services portal provider for current and aspiring college and university students in Florida. Working collaboratively with Florida's 12 state universities, 28 state colleges, 74 K-12 school districts, and other partners, FLVC provides state-funded services to help students go to college, succeed in school, prepare for career success, and thrive in life after graduation. These services include academic library resources and services; distance learning navigation and support; online career exploration and academic advising; and, in cooperation with the Complete Florida Degree Initiative, assistance to enable adult learners to return to college to complete previously interrupted degree plans.

The Florida Academic Library Services Cooperative (FALSC) provides a single library automation system that all public postsecondary institutions use to support learning, teaching, and research needs at over 150 campus libraries throughout Florida. In 2018, students, faculty, and staff performed more than 54 million searches of library materials and electronic resources using the integrated library system through the FALSC. Using interlibrary loan facilitated by FALSC, Florida students saved over \$4.6 million in material costs. During 2018, FALSC's work with electronic library resources saved state universities and colleges more than \$14 million through the central licensing process.



FloridaShines continues to be a 'student hub for innovative educational services' for students in Florida. It is a one-stop for K-20 students seeking three major areas of support that are legislatively identified as part of the Florida Virtual Campus/Complete Florida Plus Program:

- college preparation materials,
- resources to support success while in college, and
- connection to careers.

FloridaShines provides middle and high school students tools to help them explore Florida's colleges and universities, check their progress toward graduation and eligibility for Bright Futures scholarships, and investigate other forms of financial aid and college affordability. FloridaShines gives college and university students tools to explore online programs and courses; take courses from other institutions through the statewide transient student admissions application; assess the impact of changing majors, programs or institutions; ease transition from a state college to university via 2+2 articulation programs; and take advantage of a comprehensive career and education planning system.

The FloridaShines website was enhanced in 2018 with new tools for aspiring college and university students. The FloridaShines College and Career Planner was also updated with improved career and academic planning tools. During 2018, over 65,000 transient student applications were processed for Florida students, with peak numbers during March and April.



MyCareerShines is a career education and advising tool that supports K-20 students and Florida's adult job-seekers as they build preparatory pathways to careers. MyCareerShines helps students and adults connect their interests with careers, make plans for education, and prepare for successful employment. The system provides research-based self-assessments on skills, aptitudes and interests, and then matches those results to potential careers. It also identifies educational pathways to those careers, tips on job interviewing skills, and provides Florida workforce data about jobs and salaries.





MyCareerShines has registered over 710,000 users, with more than 1.1 million career assessments completed by middle school, high school, college, and adult users of the system. MyCareerShines is used at 2,800 middle and high schools throughout Florida and at over 450 college, university, and adult education centers. During peak periods the system is used by Floridians 3,000 times daily. Work is currently underway to add elementary school (PreK – Grade 5) career awareness support to the system.

## Open Educational Resources and e-Textbooks

The Florida Virtual Campus conducted a survey of 21,000 students in 2018, which found that in the Spring 2018 term, 43.8% of students spent more than \$300 on textbooks and 8.3% spent \$300 or more on required course materials, such as handbooks, guides, course packets, and other learning materials.

Students taking the survey indicated they reduced textbook costs by purchasing books from a source other than the campus bookstore (66%), buying used copies from the campus bookstore (53%), renting printed textbooks (47.8%), and renting digital textbooks (41.4%).

Survey findings indicate that the cost of materials do have an effect on student behavior: 64.2% of respondents said they did not purchase the required textbook, 42.8% took fewer courses, and 40.5% did not register for a specific course. The FLVC summary of key findings indicated that these percentages had decreased from 2% - 5% from survey results in 2016, which is consistent with a trend of decreasing textbook costs and an increased use of strategies to reduce textbook costs.

The *2025 Strategic Plan for Online Education* recognized the high cost of materials by including Affordability Strategy 2.1, which was to develop a statewide model for the use of eTextbooks and open educational resources to reduce costs for students in Florida. The Open Educational

Resources/eText Workgroup, co-chaired by USF and UF, continued to meet during the 2017-18 year and drafted best practices and recommendations for publication through the TOPKit and/or FLVC website.

The Workgroup recommended that SUS institutions have the ability to opt into FIU's Affordability Counts initiative, which recognizes faculty who are actively reducing the cost of materials for students. FIU has committed to host the Affordability Counts website on behalf of the SUS, and several institutions are planning to participate. The OER/eText Workgroup has agreed to add affordable courses to a centralized course directory which will be maintained by FIU, ensuring the broadest exposure of affordable courses across the SUS.

In addition, FLVC purchased system membership in the Open Textbook Network, whose library contains over 400 open textbooks, along with faculty reviews of materials.

TOPkit, the Teaching Online Preparation Toolkit developed in response to tactics in the *2025 Strategic Plan for Online Education* and hosted by UCF on behalf of the System, continued to provide tools, techniques, and strategies to encourage faculty development of affordable content.

To further raise awareness of textbook costs and OER options, FLVC hosted an OER Summit in February 2018, bringing national and regional leaders for presentations and discussions with institutional leaders at Florida universities and colleges.

In addition to the system-wide initiatives above, individual universities continued to explore and/or implement approaches to reduce textbook costs. Examples are initiatives at USF, FSU, and UF. USF formed a Textbook Affordability Task Force; the Task Force carefully considered strategies to drive reductions in textbook costs through fostering faculty engagement, creating new guidelines for textbook adoptions, and/or altering existing textbook affordability policies. FSU's libraries are providing grants for faculty to replace commercial textbooks

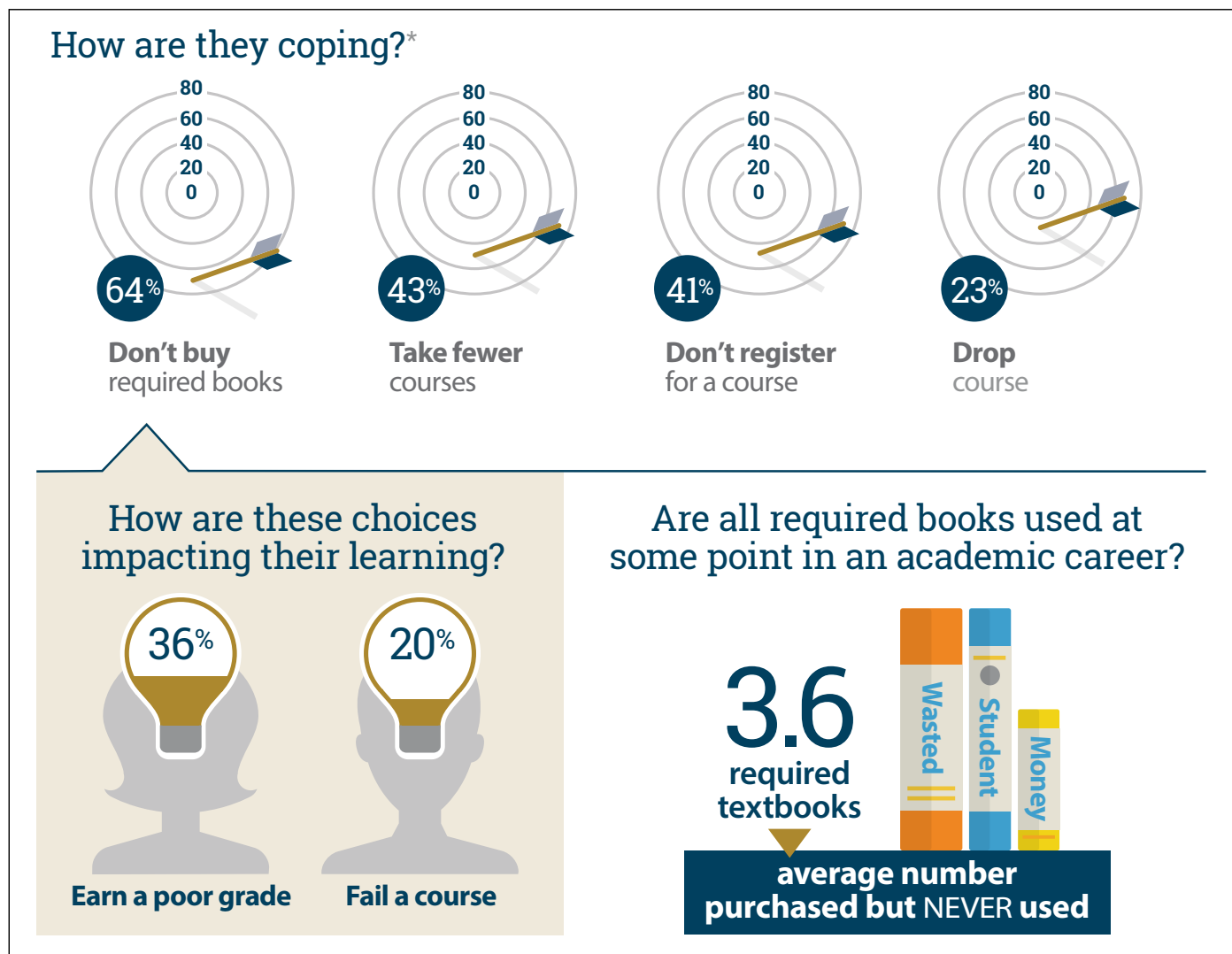


with open source alternatives that will be made available to students at no cost. Another example is the UF All Access program, which is a partnership between UF's bookstore, business services, and textbook publishers; students who opt into this program are given price discounts negotiated by the university, and have digital access to materials upon course registration. Charges are automatically applied to the student's account. The University of Florida continues to expand the open source Ximera homework system to include college algebra, in addition to the currently available calculus materials.

Textbook affordability efforts will continue in 2018-19, when FLVC plans to host additional OER workshops.<sup>2</sup> Also, the OER/eText Workgroup plans to identify useful practices for bookstore collaboration and will assist in the OER/eTexts workshop planned for the Board's Innovation and Online Committee in November 2018.<sup>3</sup>

## IMPACT OF TEXTBOOK COSTS ON STUDENT PROGRESS

The high cost of textbooks is negatively impacting students' academic progress.



\*More than one answer may apply.

SOURCE: 2018 Student Textbook and Course Materials Survey Results and Findings. To view the full report, visit [www.dlss.flvc.org](http://www.dlss.flvc.org).

<sup>2</sup> FLVC hosted an OER Summit in Maitland, FL, on February 27-28, 2019.

<sup>3</sup> The workshop was held on November 8, 2018, at the Board's Innovation and Online Committee meeting at FAU.



## Tutoring

Tutoring for online students is offered in some form at many state universities. A variety of tutoring strategies for online student support are employed across the SUS, including the examples below.

- The writing center at Florida Gulf Coast University uses Smarthinking, an online tutoring resource. This tool allows students to submit essay drafts and request feedback in areas such as formatting and punctuation.
- At Florida State University, the Reading Writing Center connects students with tutors in one-on-one, online consultations while the Academic Center for Excellence offers access to online study materials and test preparation tools.
- The Center for Learning and Student Success at FAU offers free online group tutoring and course review in the form of Supplemental Instruction (SI) sessions facilitated by teaching assistants in high drop/withdraw/fail courses.
- UWF Global Online offers 24/7 free tutoring and academic resources for military-connected students through a program funded by the Department of Defense, Tutor.com/Military.

In 2017-18, by using a tool developed by the Student Services Workgroup – the Student Services Scorecard, which is described in the “Student Support and Retention” section of this report -universities assessed the quality of student access to their tutoring services. Guidance for improving access to tutoring is included in the Scorecard’s companion document, also developed by the Student Services Workgroup; it suggests the use of tutorial support services via web-conferencing software using after-hours live tutors to guide students in how to study for exams and to complete homework. The Scorecard Guide also recommends the use of teaching assistants or student coaches for live and recorded group sessions.

## Proctoring

The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Commission on Colleges’ Policy Statement on Distance and Correspondence Education provides that institutions must demonstrate that students who register in distance or correspondence education courses or programs are the same students who participate in, complete, and receive credit for the course. The Policy Statement goes on to state that institutions may use “methods such as (1) a secure login and pass code, (2) proctored examinations, and (3) new or other technologies and practices that are effective in verifying student identification.”

Methods to proctor exams in online courses vary by institution and include the use of live remote proctoring services, testing centers, and various software. For example, at UNF, faculty may choose to use in-person or online proctoring. For their online proctoring, there are typically two options, both which involve the use of a computer with a webcam and microphone, where exam sessions are recorded from start to finish; (1) where a proctor monitors the exam live (2) where a student completes the exam on his/her own, and then a proctor reviews the exam recording after the exam is completed. In both options, student IDs are shown before the test begins to verify the person taking the test is the student registered for the course.

Another example is the approach used by USF: an automated online proctoring solution that uses algorithms to detect suspicious events that are available for review immediately after the exam. The system permits customization of exam security by allowing instructors to choose if they want to verify I.D., lockdown the browser, prevent printing, and record screen or camera.

Upon recommendation by the Infrastructure Workgroup and the Innovation and Online Committee, the Board of Governors approved in March 2017 the establishment of a statewide proctoring network that will allow for the establishment of a centralized location to provide

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education, procedural information, and resources on academic integrity. During 2017-18, the Infrastructure Workgroup collaborated with the FLVC in the development of a website for proctoring and related resources. The FLVC described the website as “a user-friendly location for Proctoring Resources, FAQs, a Database of Institutional Proctoring Centers, Student Academic Integrity Information, Faculty Resources, and Support.”<sup>4</sup>

To move this initiative forward during 2018-19, UWF – on behalf of the FLVC – plans to utilize a competitive procurement process to select vendor(s) that will provide online proctored testing services for Florida’s higher education institutions via a negotiated Master Agreement.<sup>5</sup>

## Student Support and Retention

Universities within the SUS implement a variety of academic and student support services for their online students. Each institution employs different methods, but all share the common goal of providing a similar level of support to online students as they do to their on-campus counterparts. Examples of these services are below:

- UCF has employed success coaches for the UCF Online program to work with online students from first inquiry to graduation. Focused services include: Online Therapy Assistance, Veteran’s Services, Accessibility Support, and Career Services.
- UF Online provides an array of options for extracurricular involvement, including a virtual campus to connect all UF Online students, face-to-face engagement events, and an Optional Fee Package for students frequenting the main UF

campus and seeking additional student services in Gainesville.

- FIU provides an online hub, the Panther Den, designed to build community and affinity for student life online. In addition to being a one-stop shop where students keep up with university news, Panther Den also works as an online portal to access vital university resources like success coaching, counseling, and tutoring services. Online students also have access to engaging FIU-generated content like exercise videos, podcasts, and more.
- FAU’s fully online Criminal Justice program launched a Virtual Community of Practice (vCoP) to connect and engage students with peers and instructors. vCoP facilitators provide mentorship, employment leads, and program-specific information. During live, interactive sessions, students are given an opportunity to dialog with experts on current event topics like Human Trafficking, Behavioral Health and Law Enforcement, and Shoot/Don’t Shoot Protocols.
- Students in UNF’s online nursing programs have the opportunity to engage in community-based activities in their local communities, as well as in a community-focused study abroad program designed specifically for online students.

To assist universities in assessing the level of service provided to their online students, the *2025 Strategic Plan for Online Education* included tactics for the development of a scorecard and the recommendation of best practices for delivering those services. The Student Services Workgroup developed a scorecard that allows universities to conduct a self-assessment for 44 quality indicators

<sup>4</sup> <https://dlss.flvc.org/documents/210036/1051160/2018+MARCH+DLSS+News.pdf/d55a4d4e-834e-4748-c35d-763778026d0d>

<sup>5</sup> UWF began the competitive procurement process by posting an Invitation to Negotiate (ITN) on January 10, 2019, with the estimated date of August 1, 2019, for the Master Agreement to begin.

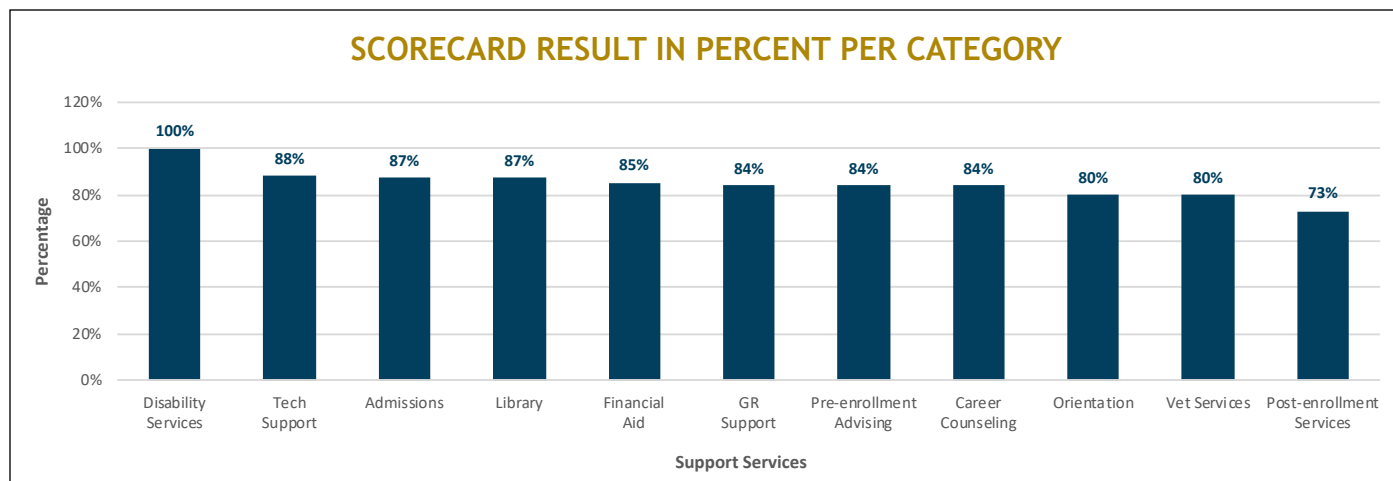


within 11 different categories, which include admissions, financial aid, pre-enrollment advising, veterans' services, career counseling, orientation, post-enrollment services, library, services for students with disabilities, and technology support. The Workgroup also developed a companion document to provide guidance to institutions in improving their student services.

The Online Student Support Scorecard was administered in Fall 2017, and the summary report of results was presented to the Board's Innovation and Online Committee in June 2018. Results indicated that, overall, universities are doing a good job at providing services to their online students. The System achieved an 80% or higher score

on most of the service categories, with the highest score (100%) being for access to disability services and the lowest score being for post-enrollment services (73%), which provides an opportunity for improvement. During the 2019-20 academic year, system-wide events that focus on student services needed for online students are being planned for campus leaders and staff at the direction of the Steering Committee.

The Workgroup and Steering Committee recommended that the Scorecard be administered again during the 2019-2020 academic year. The Innovation and Online Committee and the full Board approved the recommendation.



## Health Affairs For Fully Online Students

Providing mental health support for fully online students is a challenge for any university, and universities in the SUS are addressing mental health issues in a variety of ways. For example, in the 2016-17 annual report, UF's "U Matter, We Care" program was described; the university continues to provide that support. The U Matter We Care Team schedules a phone call or video conference to help a student to identify and prioritize issues that are barriers to success, then develop a plan to address each issue.

Another example is the "Student Resilience Project," an online tool implemented by FSU to help students adjust to

campus, improve mental health, increase resilience, and reduce stress. The online trauma resilience training tool was developed by the Institute for Family Violence Studies at the FSU College of Social Work. The tool uses highly engaging animation, videos, and TED-talk style educational audio sessions from faculty and mental health providers. The training helps students build on their existing strengths and provides them with new strategies that promote health and teach crucial new resilience and coping skills. The project aims to increase a sense of safety, connection, and belonging for students at FSU and has been selected to receive a national award from the American Association of University Administrators.



## Online Programs

To assist universities in reaching Access Goal 1, “The State University System will increase access to and participation in online education,” the *2025 Strategic Plan for Online Education* provides that an inventory of fully online and primarily online programs would be established.

During 2017-18, the Board of Governors Office completed the development of a database that allows institutions to input – and keep current – online programs/majors they offer. The database went live during the 2017-18 academic year to assist institutions in their planning activities, providing an easy-to-use mechanism to determine if planned programs/majors are already being offered online within the SUS. The database will assist in reducing the likelihood of unnecessary duplication, while allowing universities to identify gaps in programs that may need to be provided online.

SUS institutions offered 540 online programs/majors in 2017-18:

<b>424</b>	<b>FULLY ONLINE<sup>6</sup></b>
<b>51</b>	<b>PRIMARILY ONLINE<sup>7</sup></b>
<b>57</b>	<b>UPPER LEVEL FULLY ONLINE</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>UPPER LEVEL PRIMARILY ONLINE</b>
<b>540</b>	<b>ONLINE PROGRAMS/MAJORS</b>

Most of the online programs/majors were in programs of strategic emphasis as defined in the *SUS 2025 Strategic Plan for Online Education*. Programs of strategic emphasis promote the alignment of program offerings with the economic development and workforce needs of the State.

Of the 540 online programs/majors in the SUS in 2017-18, 130 were in STEM programs; 74 Education; 85 Health; 19 Global; and 19 Gap Analysis.

## UF Online

UF Online was created by the 2013 Legislature as an institute for online learning at a preeminent state research university to provide for “high quality, fully online baccalaureate degree programs at an affordable cost.” Since its 2013 enabling legislation, UF Online has experienced strategic development and expansion and now offers 20 full online bachelor’s degrees and 36 pathways to earn the degrees. Over 300 UF faculty across 13 colleges conduct all teaching and course design, ensuring that all online students receive academic offerings of the same rigor as campus offerings. During 2018, UF Online further expanded by introducing three new majors – Microbiology and Cell Science, Fire & Emergency Services, and Communication Sciences & Disorders.

UF Online has maintained a ratio of one advisor for every 250 students. Each online student has a dedicated advisor to ensure flexible, custom pathways and the learning pathways are nested in the “UF Plaza,” a student virtual campus, with on-going, campus-based support for all students. During the 2018 academic year, UF Online served over 3,500 students, a 28 percent increase over the prior year. This year also saw the graduation total for the UF Online program surpass 1,000 students.

In May 2018, UF Online introduced a new initiative, the Employer Pathways Program. Through Employer Pathways, employees of Discover Financial Services, Walmart, and The Walt Disney Company are now able

<sup>6</sup> Fully Online Program: 100% of the direct instruction of the program is available using some form of technology when the student and instructor are separated by time, space, or both. All program requirements that cannot be completed online can be completed off-campus. [Ref: Board of Governors 2025 Strategic Plan for Online Education]

<sup>7</sup> Primarily Online Program: 80-99% of the direct instruction of the program is available using some form of technology when the student and instructor are separated by time, space, or both. There is a requirement for the student to attend campus or another explicit geographic location for a portion of the program. [Ref: Board of Governors 2025 Strategic Plan for Online Education]



to apply their company's educational benefits to select degrees at UF Online. Applicants are held to the same rigorous standards as any prospective UF student, with the benefit of having their tuition and fees covered by their employer. This initiative further expands the impact of UF Online by reaching working adults who wish to pursue higher education while being employed full-time.

UF Online will present a new, comprehensive Business Plan for 2019-2024 to the UF Online Advisory Board at its October 2018 meeting.<sup>8</sup> With the approval of this business plan, UF Online intends to expand its emphasis on STEM degree programs. In the coming years, program priorities will include: expanding degree programs to meet workforce needs, enhancing academic and student support services, investing in and empowering exemplary faculty, expanding the employer pathway program, and prioritizing cost containment in all areas.



The Complete Florida Degree Initiative was established by the Florida Legislature to serve more than 2.8 million Floridians who have earned some college credit, but have not completed a degree. The Initiative currently serves more than 3,000 adult learners through a partnership of 15 Florida state colleges, state universities, and private universities. Over 8,900 prospective students have worked with Complete Florida coaches since 2014.

In 2018, Complete Florida began a targeted approach of working with its partner institutions to reach more than 12,000 students who had “stopped out,” assisting them to return to college and complete their degrees. To date, Complete Florida has helped 1,086 students graduate, with 416 of those students graduating in the 2017-2018 academic year, primarily in the areas of Nursing,

Information Technology, and completion of associate degrees. Complete Florida students reside in 62 of Florida's 67 counties.

Students focused on completing an associate of arts degree (AA) continue to make up a large part of the Complete Florida clientele. Complete Florida success coaches work collaboratively with both students and enrollment professionals at partner institutions to find the best pathway for each student to complete his or her degree. Critical initiatives of Complete Florida involve reducing time and costs required for adult learners to earn academic credentials. In 2018, the focus has been on:

- Exploration of how various Prior Learning Assessment options at partner institutions (free CLEP prep courses, credit by challenging exams, and portfolio reviews) can help students earn college credit efficiently and affordably.
- Expansion of business partnerships that align workplace needs with higher education efforts to help students optimize professional development and experience, scholarships, and tuition assistance.
- Continual fine-tuning of Complete Florida coaching strategies to focus on transcript reviews of previous credits earned, completion of admission forms, development of focused pathways to graduation, and regularly scheduled appointments with students.

## Complete Florida Military

Complete Florida Military was created in 2015 with funding from Florida's Defense Support Task Force (FDSTF) to provide targeted, tailored support to the 75,000-plus members of Florida's military personnel and veteran

<sup>8</sup> The UF Online Advisory Board approved the UF Online 2019-2024 Comprehensive Business Plan on October 17, 2018. It was presented to the Board of Governors innovation and Online Committee on January 31, 2019.

community and their dependents. Complete Florida success coaches work directly with active-military and veterans to evaluate relevant military experiences and benefits, find scholarship assistance, and select the most appropriate Florida college or university that will match the individual's interests, experiences, and abilities. Degree programs consist of 100% fully online classes that will lead to the completion of a postsecondary degree.

Since many active military personnel and veterans reside in and around military bases, Complete Florida advertising efforts are focused in these areas throughout Florida. The campaigns consist of a variety of on-base advertising tactics: posters, banners, digital displays and ads in recreation areas. Off-base advertising includes geo-targeted mobile advertising in and around the bases and email campaigns to military personnel and veterans. Through the execution of these tactics, there has been a 140% increase in visits to the Complete Florida Military webpage in 2018 over the same time-period in 2017, and a 360% increase in applications started.

## Innovative Strategies

Affordability Goal 3 in the *2025 Strategic Plan for Online Education* indicates that the SUS “will adopt innovative instructional models to create instructional efficiencies.”

### INNOVATIONS IN ONLINE LEARNING

In March 2018, the Steering Committee approved the concept of providing an annual Innovation Summit to serve as a venue for sharing innovative projects being implemented throughout the SUS, as well as sharing research related to online education that has been conducted (or is being planned) in the System. The first Innovation Summit will be held during 2018-19 at UCF.<sup>9</sup>

### COMPETENCY-BASED EDUCATION (CBE)

Complete Florida continued competency-based

programs through its partnership with public and private postsecondary institutions in Florida. Competency-based education (CBE) allows students to receive college credit based on demonstration of skills that are taught in the course. Depending on the partner institution and program, students may be able to start their programs once a month or on demand.

### ADAPTIVE LEARNING

Adaptive learning is a computer-based instructional strategy that personalizes the educational experience of learning and assessment for each individual student, based upon his/her own unique strengths, weaknesses, and performance. Adaptive learning can be deployed for a variety of reasons, including improving student success and retention, allowing acceleration through a curriculum, and providing targeted remediation when necessary.

UCF has been expanding its implementation of adaptive learning for several years. In 2017-18, the university's pilot impacted 21 courses (51 sections), 22 faculty members, and 6,590 students.

### PREDICTIVE ANALYTICS

FIU has been piloting a project to integrate adaptive data models to early intervention. Project Predict Achievement Through Targeting (Project PATT) uses sophisticated analytics to predict student outcomes and identify actions that increase the probability of success.

Another example of the use of predictive analytics in the System is found at USF. USF deployed a predictive analytics platform to monitor student performance (triage) and predict the likelihood of a student persisting into the next year. With these insights, the Student Success team can provide the right support, to the right student, at the right time. USF developed a communications platform that supports a case management approach to student success. The platform allows all student support personnel

<sup>9</sup> UCF hosted the first annual SUS Innovation Summit on March 7, 2019, in partnership with Complete Florida and with participation by universities throughout the SUS.





to post notes, upload documents, refer students to other offices, schedule appointments, and send text messages to selected students.

## ACCELERATED TERMS

Access Tactic 1.1.8 in the *2025 Strategic Plan for Online Education* is to “provide a robust set of student support services to support the delivery of multiple, accelerated models.” The Student Services Workgroup, chaired by FAU, developed a white paper to provide guidance to SUS institutions on services needed to support this delivery method, describing advantages, issues to consider, and resources required.

In order to assist online student in retention and time to degree, USF has designed and delivered two fully online accelerated terms (Maymester and Wintersession). Data analytics indicate the same or improved learning outcomes in these immersive terms.

## MASTER COURSES

Affordability Goal 1 in the *2025 Strategic Plan for Online Education* focused on enhancing shared services to support online program development and delivery costs, with an associated tactic being to “Develop or co-develop shared master courses that would be available, but not required, for use in specific high-demand areas.”

UF is the lead institution for this tactic and is planning to pilot a course preparation and tracking process in 2018-19 that will use Canvas Commons as a repository where full courses, course modules, ancillary materials such as quiz and exam questions, recordings, and other select course materials will be available for sharing. When the pilot has been successfully completed, the initiative could be scaled up to the rest of the State University System and possibly beyond.

## SHARED PROGRAMS

To implement the Plan’s tactic regarding developing or co-developing shared programs, the Steering Committee approved the creation of a Shared Programs Task Force in January 2018 to explore the sharing of instruction for specific languages. Under the leadership of UWF, but with the participation of language instructors and academic staff throughout the System, this collaborative approach has the potential to enrich each institution’s language portfolio by yielding degree programming, certificates, and individual courses. The Task Force will be launched during 2018-19 and will include discussion of accreditation requirements, institutional expertise, best practices, and the designation of a shared programming model.

## STEM LABS

The Steering Committee, which is helping guide the implementation of the *2025 Strategic Plan for Online Education*, approved the creation of a system-wide task force, led by UF, to evaluate options for deployment of STEM labs for online students. An inventory of SUS STEM lab courses conducted in 2016-17 revealed that 91 labs for online students exist across the System and most are tied to the individual preferences or initiatives of faculty.

The task force report was presented to the Innovation and Online Committee in January 2018; its recommendations included continuation of the task force, host a system-wide conference for faculty who teach online, and launch a system-wide pilot in Chemistry during the summer of 2019.<sup>10</sup> The recommendations were approved by the Committee and by the full Board.

Plans to implement these recommendations will move forward in 2018-19, with UF planning to convene a STEM faculty symposium in October 2018 and launching a boot camp in Chemistry during the summer of 2019.

<sup>10</sup> UF Online hosted the SUS Faculty Symposium, STEMPowered Florida, on October 23-24, 2019, at UF.



# State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA)

Florida became a participant in the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA) in 2017. SARA allows each member state to accept each other’s authorization of accredited institutions to provide distance learning services in their respective states. A Florida Postsecondary Reciprocal Distance Education Coordinating Council was established to provide oversight and guidance to Florida postsecondary institutions that elect to follow the national standards for interstate offering of postsecondary distance education courses and programs. FL-SARA facilitates the delivery of distance education by Florida institutions and ensures consistent consumer protection practices for students engaged in distance learning activities.

Florida’s participation continued to expand during 2017-18, with 75 member institutions participating in the reciprocity agreement, including 12 state universities and branches and 21 state colleges. Participating institutions are now reporting the number of students enrolled exclusively in distance education delivered outside of the home state of the institution. In its 2017-18 Annual Report, the Coordinating Council reported the following enrollments:

- Total number of out-of-state students enrolled in FL-SARA institutions – 37,814
- Total number of Florida students enrolled in distance education programs at participating SARA schools in other states – 73,287

*“Online education means that I have access to education with it being convenient, still being able to work as an older adult and keep up with life while pursuing [my] goals and education. It has opened up a new big, field of subjects that I wouldn’t be able to learn about, or to participate in, if it wasn’t for online classes and programs.”*

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DANIJEL LEE MYCHAEL (UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA ONLINE LEGAL STUDIES, BA)

*“The online EdD program has been immensely helpful to me as I develop my professional skills in higher education administration. My advisor is accessible and enthusiastic about my work and my cohort members are a valued support group.”*

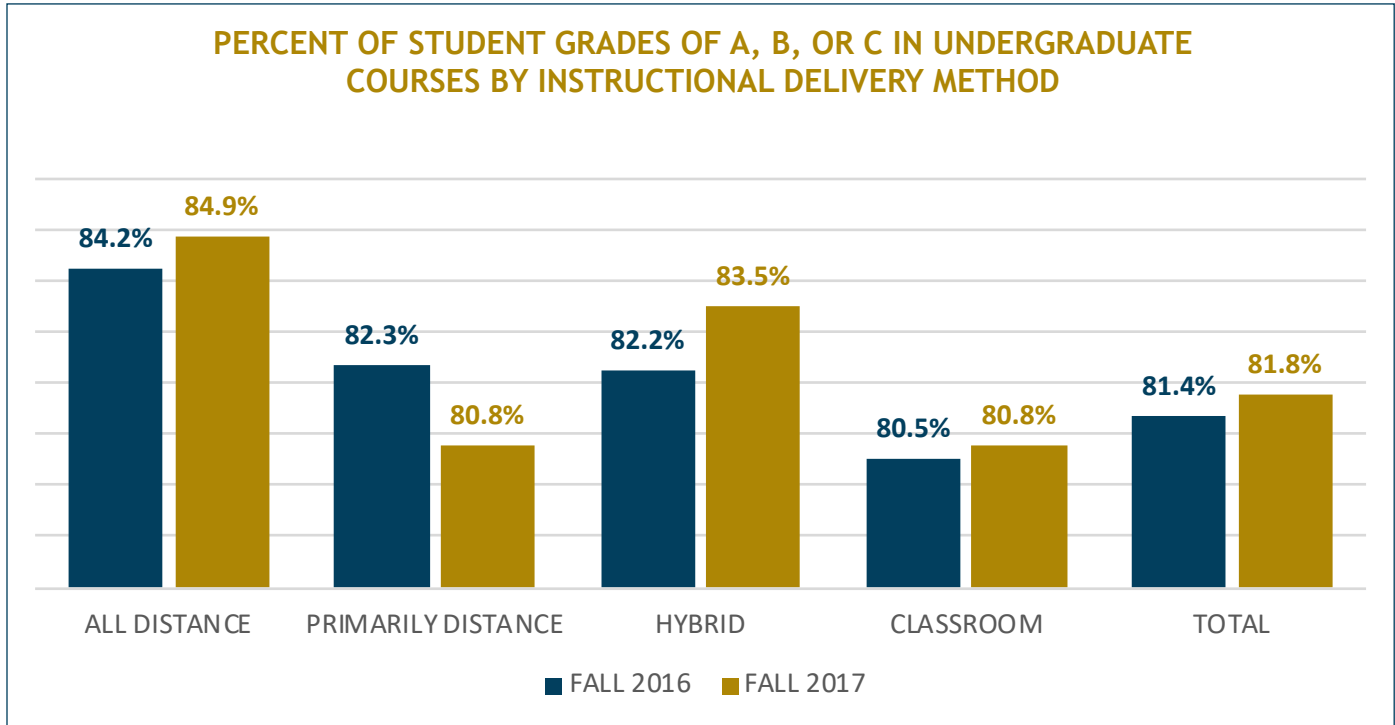
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STUDENT, FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY



# Grade Comparison

Students performed well in distance learning classes in 2017-18. Of the undergraduate students who enrolled in courses offered 100% at a distance, 84.9% received grades of A, B, or C, while 80.8% of classroom students and students enrolled in courses offered primarily at a distance earned grades of A, B, or C.



SOURCE: BOG Office of Data & Analytics, extracted from datamarts on 4/11/2019. Notes: Undergraduate courses include lower- and upper-division only and excludes unclassified students. Course grades of "W" (withdraw) are included in the denominators for calculating percentages (change in methodology from 2017 report). Delivery Method categories are based on element #2052. The share of courses taken by delivery method are as follows: All distance (19%), Primarily distance (1%), Hybrid (3%) and Classroom (76%).

# Withdrawal from Courses

Five percent (5%) of students withdrew from undergraduate courses during Fall 2017. Students who took primarily online courses had a withdrawal rate of 4%, while the withdrawal rate was higher – 9% - for students in fully online courses. While the withdrawal rate this year was higher for students who took fully online courses than for those who took primarily online courses or classroom courses, the previous bar chart shows that students who completed their fully online courses had higher grades than students in either of the other two groups.<sup>11</sup>

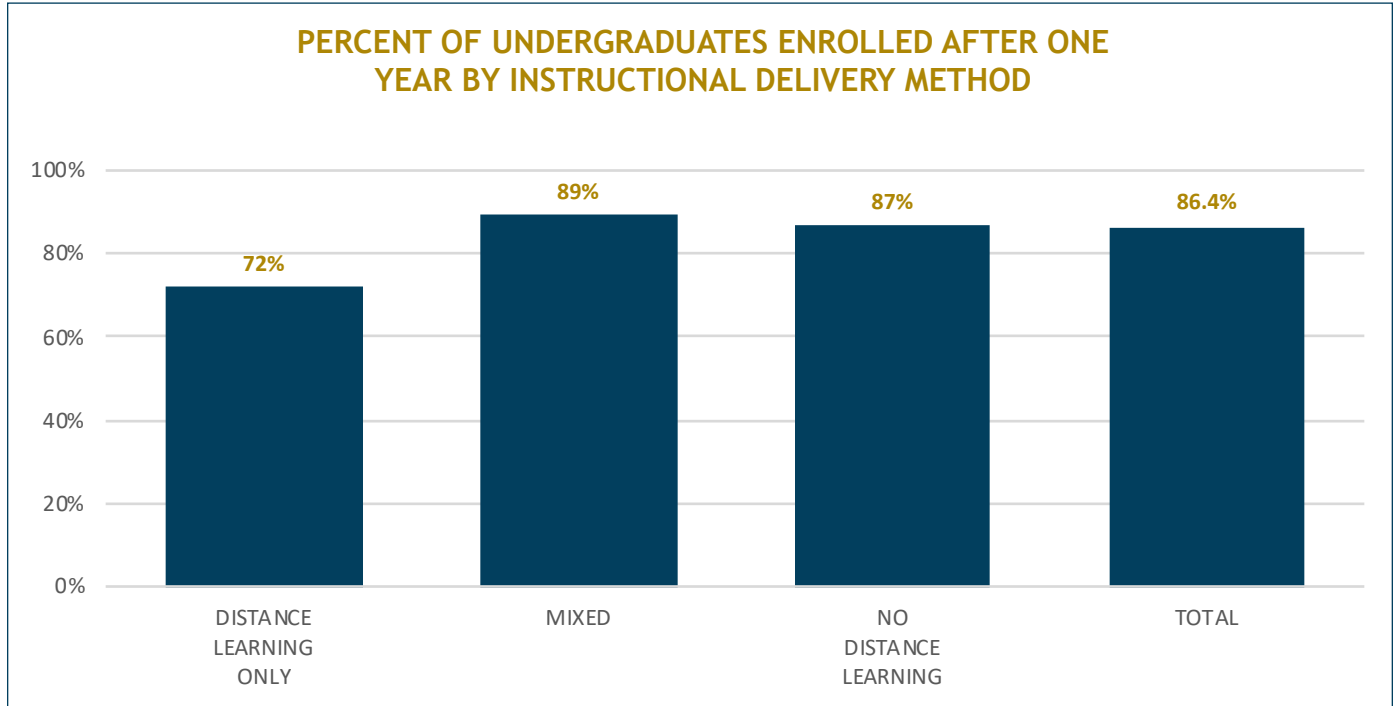
<sup>11</sup> Preliminary Fall 2018 data show a withdrawal rate of 4% from fully online courses and 6% from primarily online courses.



# Retention

Seventy-two percent (72%) of undergraduate students who enrolled only in distance learning courses in Fall 2016 were also enrolled in Fall 2017. Additional research is needed to determine if those students who were not enrolled in Fall 2017 enrolled in a subsequent semester, transferred to another institution, or had been transient students with a different home institution in Fall 2016.

Students who took a mix of distance learning and classroom or hybrid courses had a higher retention rate than those who took only distance learning courses or those who took only classroom or hybrid courses.



SOURCE: BOG Office of Data & Analytics, extracted from datamarts on 4/11/2019. Notes: Includes all undergraduates. Delivery Method Categories are based on their enrollments during the Fall 2016 term. The percentages report the proportion of the Fall 2016 undergraduates who were enrolled during Fall 2017. Students who graduated between Fall 2016 and Summer 2017 were removed from both the numerator and the denominator.

*The hardest adjustment of working and attending school at the same time is Time Management. Without the flexibility of an online degree program, it would not have been possible for me to complete my bachelor's degree.*

STUDENT, UNIVERSITY OF WEST FLORIDA

*I appreciate that even though the distance learning course is online, we still have opportunities to engage with other students.*

STUDENT, UNIVERSITY OF NORTH FLORIDA



# Time to Degree

The average time-to-degree was 3.92 years for full-time students earning Bachelor’s degrees in 120-credit-hour programs, with those students who took up to 80% of their courses via distance learning graduating in an average of 3.75 – 4.0 years. The number of graduates who took 81% - 100% of their courses online was too small to generalize to other populations.

## AVERAGE YEARS TO DEGREE FOR FULL-TIME, FTIC BACCALAUREATES IN 120 HR PROGRAMS

% DL	2016-17			2017-18		
	N	%	MEDIAN	N	%	MEDIAN
0%	1,581	7%	4.08	1,362	6%	3.75
1-20%	12,883	54%	4.00	11,762	48%	4.00
21-40%	7,119	30%	3.92	8,381	34%	3.92
41-60%	2,003	8%	3.75	2,736	11%	3.92
61-80%	227	1%	3.75	370	2%	3.75
81-99%	20	0.1%	*	38	0.2%	*
100%	2	<0.1%	*	5	<0.1%	*
<b>Total</b>	<b>23,835</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>4.00</b>	<b>24,654</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>3.92</b>

SOURCE: BOG Office of Data & Analytics, extracted from datamarts on 4/23/2019. Notes: Analysis based on SIF data. Years-to-degree is measured as number of calendar years (12 months) from the student’s first entry date as a Bachelor’s-seeking undergraduate to the last month of the degree term. FTIC status is based on the student recent admit type and includes early admits. Student headcount represent those who earned a bachelor’s degree during academic years 2016-17 and 2017-18 and includes only those who graduated from programs that require 120 credit hours. In addition, data only includes ‘full-time’ students — those with a least half of all the terms in which they were enrolled were at full-time status (fall and spring = 12 SCHs; Summer = 6 SCHs). These students were then designated into groups of online activity based on the delivery method indicator (‘DL’) for all courses taken throughout their academic career. For courses taken prior to summer 2010, the technology delivery indicator-primary (‘W’) was used. For courses taken after summer 2010, the delivery method indicator (‘DL’) was used. The dataset only extends back to students who entered in Summer 2004 or later. An asterisk (\*) indicates groups with counts too low to be generalize to other populations. Methodology improved to more accurately represent distance learning courses taken by students.

*After receiving my bachelor’s degree, I realized that I wanted to further my education. Since I was working full time, I didn’t think my dream of continuing my education was possible, until I discovered Distance Learning. The added flexibility of distance courses made it possible for me to continue my post graduate education without having to put a hold on my professional career.*

JOHN SAULLO, M.S. INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM, FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY

*I would tell my fellow students if you’re thinking about taking online courses, definitely do it! You have the tools to connect. You will feel part of the university, and you have great flexibility.*

STUDENT, FLORIDA ATLANTIC UNIVERSITY



# Professional Development

During 2017-18, the SUS continued its focus on the 2025 *Strategic Plan for Online Education's* goals related to Quality by further addressing the Plan's tactics for the professional development of faculty and staff:

## INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGNERS

In partnership with UCF and Seminole State College, FLVC launched the Instructional Designer Network so that instructional design professionals in both delivery systems could share research and best practices. The Network plans to begin a monthly professional development webinar series in October 2018. In addition, FLVC continued to support its web page for instructional designers by providing links to best practices, "real world tips," related organizations, training and support, and development.

## INSTITUTIONAL LEADERS

As mentioned in the Open Educational Resources/ Textbooks section of this report, FLVC continued to assist in the implementation of the 2025 *Strategic Plan for Online Education* by hosting the Open Educational Resources Summit for institutional leaders in February 2018. National and regional speakers focused on raising the level of awareness around textbook costs and bringing OER options to the forefront. A follow-up OER Summit is being planned for the 2018-19 year.<sup>12</sup>

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT STAFF



The Teaching Online Preparation Toolkit (TOPkit) was launched in February 2017. During 2017-18, it continued its impact on institutional staff who are responsible for professional development activities for faculty who teach

online courses. Hosted by UCF in partnership with other institutions in the SUS and Florida College System, the TOPkit website provides resources for planning, developing, and evaluating institutions' faculty development programs. A Community of Practice provides for collaboration and sharing of resources and practices, while a monthly email newsletter distributes website content and contributions from the Community of Practice to the email inboxes of subscribers. An annual two-day workshop provides a train-the-trainer experience so that staff can return to their campuses to effectively implement the best practices, resources, and tools found within TOPkit.

In 2017-18, TOPkit had:

- 5,890 unique website visitors
- 28,144 pageviews, with the top pages including Checklists and Rubrics, Sample Courses, Community Forums, and Ask ADDIE (an "advice column" for online faculty development practitioners).
- 60 new registered users of the TOPkit website, bringing the total to 294 as of June 2018. (Note: Registered users can participate in the Community of Practice.)
- 128 new subscriptions to the Topkit Digest (monthly email newsletter), bringing the total to 660 as of June 2018.
- 71 attendees at the 2018 workshop.

## Quality Courses

### QUALITY COURSE DESIGN

A primary focus of the 2025 *Strategic Plan for Online Education* is quality in all aspects of online education, including quality of the design of courses. During 2017-18,

<sup>12</sup> FLVC hosted the 2019 Florida OER Summit on February 27-28, 2019, in Maitland, FL.



the system-wide Quality Workgroup recommended – and the Steering Committee approved – that the nationally recognized Quality Matters standards and rubric would be the standard by which SUS institutions would review the design of their online courses; institutions that prefer to use their own standards and rubrics would provide evidence that they are comparable to those published by Quality Matters. A course design review process unique to Florida was developed by a statewide workgroup. The process is flexible enough to work across all SUS and FCS institutions and accommodate institutional differences while increasing overall online course quality. A system-wide Quality Review Panel will randomly audit a certain percentage of courses each year to ensure consistent application of the standards throughout the SUS.

When reviewing a course for quality design, trained reviewers must determine that the course meets all Quality

Matters essential standards and provides alternative means of access to course materials in formats that meet the needs of diverse learners. The costs of reviewing the courses will be the responsibility of each institution.

### QUALITY AWARDS PROGRAM

The *2025 Strategic Plan for Online Education* provides for the creation of a statewide awards system for faculty who teach exceptional online courses. In 2017-18, the Quality Workgroup recommended that there would be three levels of awards for faculty who teach online courses: institutional (President’s Award), System (Florida Quality Award), and Chancellor’s Quality Award. Details of the awards process will continue being fine-tuned during 2018-19.

*Not only has Complete Florida given me the tools to continue my education, the program has shown me that giving up is never the answer.*

BRITTANY, FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

*To accommodate my work schedule, I really needed a bachelor’s program with flexibility, one that didn’t require me to be on campus... I get the same great education online as I would have as a traditional student. I just have the benefit of getting it on my schedule.*

ONLINE STUDENT, UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA



## Cost of Online Education Report

In response to Affordability Goal 4 in the *2025 Strategic Plan for Online Education*, “The State University System will determine the costs of online education campus-by-campus,” the universities’ distance learning leaders and Board staff collaborated in the creation of the Cost of Online Education report in 2016. The report was not updated in 2017-18, because not enough time had elapsed for major shifts to be reflected in the cost categories. The cost report was described in the 2016-17 Annual Report for Online Education as follows:

Presented to the Board’s Innovation and Online Committee in October 2016, the Cost of Online Education report produced by the Affordability Workgroup found that the average incremental cost of online learning was \$41.48 per credit hour, with 42% of incremental costs for the development of the online course and 58% for the delivery of the online course.

The analysis of the 2015-16 data showed that institutions increased costs for developing and delivering online education were from the investment in staffing, the cost of creating online courses with high interaction levels and media rich content, and the technology infrastructure. The report found that the development and delivery of online education requires additional human resources and technology resources that are not necessary for face-to-face education, increasing the cost of online education.

## Common LMS

A master agreement that could be used by institutions in both the SUS and the Florida College System for a common, opt-in learning management system was signed after a system-wide competitive selection process was undertaken in 2015. All twelve universities are either continuing to implement or are transitioning to the common LMS, as are several institutions in the Florida College System.

## Impact of Online Enrollments on Facilities

In May 2016, a joint meeting of the Board of Governors’ Innovation and Online Committee and Facilities Committee was held to consider the impact of increased online enrollments on capital funding plans. As a result of this meeting, Board staff developed a new Dynamic Capital Planning (DCP) model that utilizes standardized definitions for a distance learning course, a hybrid course, and a classroom/traditional course. Initially removing 100% of distance learning enrollments from several elements of the facilities planning model, there was a realization that distance learning students may – and frequently do – come to campus for up to 20% of their instructional activities. The model was fine-tuned to remove 80%, rather than 100%, of the distance learning FTE from classrooms, teaching labs, gymnasium, and auditorium space types, thereby decreasing the amount of funds needed to meet minimum required space standards. This model will be applied to all state universities during each institution’s space needs survey over the next five-year cycle of surveys for the SUS. It is projected that the updated DCP model calculations will result in lower classroom and teaching lab space needs due to the increased participation in online education.





# Infrastructure

Quality Goal 2 of the *2025 Strategic Plan for Online Education* is to “provide the infrastructure needed to support the development and delivery of online education.”

To assist institutions in reviewing their infrastructure to ensure they have the technology and associated processes in place to provide quality online instruction, the Infrastructure Workgroup developed a Technology Scorecard, which institutions used as a management tool to assess their operations, support, security policies, and disaster recovery capabilities in the Fall of 2017. These four areas had 17 quality indicators, where universities determined if they met the criteria, were insufficient, or were exemplary for each indicator.

Results reflected that all universities were performing well overall in operations, support, security policies, and disaster recovery. The Workgroup recommended administering the Scorecard on an annual basis and having collaborative discussions to help ensure institutions that score below “Meets Criteria” on any indicator can improve

their infrastructure accordingly. The Innovation and Online Committee and full Board approved the recommendations in January 2018.

In response to Affordability Tactic 1.1.2, “Explore additional items for potential sharing to expand the quality of the student online learning experience while reducing costs through efficiency,” the Infrastructure Workgroup found that institutions often work independently to explore, test, and implement educational technology and that collaboration would reduce duplication of effort in technology adoption and selection. In March 2017, the Workgroup recommended to the Board’s Innovation and Online Committee that a state education licensing committee be formed to facilitate collaborations system-wide. The Committee and the full Board approved the recommendation.

During 2017-18, the Workgroup collaborated with the FLVC to develop a structure to facilitate collaboration across the SUS and Florida College System to share available statewide agreements, services, and contracts. The website will go live in 2018-19.

*“Online learning has helped to discipline me versus being in the classroom. It has helped me stay on top of my courses and my due dates for assignments. It has helped me take school more seriously. As I became more comfortable with the online environment, I have progressed more inside and outside the classroom. I am a Teacher’s Assistant so online helps me to provide support to the students I work with as well.”*

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MARCUS MCMAHON (GRADUATE STUDENT, ONLINE EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP,  
MA, UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA)



# Resources

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# Appendix A

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## STEERING COMMITTEE

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**Dr. Joseph Glover (Chair, through 12/2017)**

Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs  
University of Florida

**Dr. Ralph Wilcox (Chair, 1/2018)**

Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs  
University of South Florida System

**Dr. Ken Furton**

Provost and Executive Vice President  
Florida International University

**Dr. Dale Whittaker**

Provost and Executive Vice President  
for Academic Affairs  
University of Central Florida

**Dr. Gary Perry**

Provost and Vice President  
for Academic Affairs  
Florida Atlantic University

**Dr. George Ellenberg**

Provost and Vice President  
for Academic Affairs  
University of West Florida

**Dr. Nancy C. McKee**

Associate Vice Chancellor,  
Innovation and Online Education  
Board of Governors

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## IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE

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**Dr. Kelley Bailey**

Assistant Professor  
Florida Agricultural  
and Mechanical University

**Dr. Cynthia DeLuca**

Associate Vice President,  
Innovative Education  
University of South Florida

**Dr. Andy McCollough**

Associate Provost,  
Teaching and Technology  
University of Florida

**Dr. Vicki Brown**

Assistant Provost,  
eLearning  
Florida Atlantic University

**Dr. Cathy Duff**

Associate Vice President,  
Academic and Curriculum Support  
Florida Gulf Coast University

**Dr. Deb Miller**

Senior Director, Center for  
Instruction and Research Technology  
University of North Florida

**Dr. Tom Cavanagh (4/2018)**

Vice Provost for Digital Learning  
University of Central Florida

**Robert Fuselier**

Director,  
Office of Distance Learning  
Florida State University

**Dr. Pam Northrup**

Vice President, Research and  
Strategic Innovation  
University of West Florida

**Kevin Celebi (through 12/2017)**

Coordinator of Educational  
Technology  
New College of Florida

**Dr. Joel Hartman (through 3/2018)**

Vice President, Information  
Technologies and Resources  
University of Central Florida

**Joseph Riquelme**

Assistant Vice President, FIU Online  
Florida International University

**Dr. Tom Hull (through 3/2018)**

Chief Information Officer  
Florida Polytechnic University

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## BOARD of GOVERNORS OFFICE

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**Dr. Nancy McKee**

Associate Vice Chancellor  
Board of Governors



# Appendix B

DATA ELEMENTS	COURSES - DEFINITION
<b>Fully Distance Learning Course</b>	100% of the direct instruction of the course is delivered using some form of technology when the student and instructor are separated by time, space, or both. All special course components (exams, internships, practica, clinicals, labs, etc.) that cannot be completed online can be completed off-campus.
<b>Primarily Distance Learning Course</b>	80-99% of the direct instruction of the course is delivered using some form of technology when the student and instructor are separated by time, space, or both. There is a requirement for the student to attend campus or another explicit geographic location for a portion of the course.
<b>Hybrid Course</b>	50-79% of the direct instruction of the course is delivered using some form of technology when the student and instructor are separated by time, space or both.
<b>Primarily Classroom</b>	Less than 50% of the direct instruction of the course is delivered using some form of technology when the student and instructor are separated by time, space or both. This designation can include activities that do not occur in a classroom (ie, labs, internships, practica, clinicals, labs, etc).

The SUS also adopted definitions for "Fully Online Programs" and "Primarily Online Programs," which were needed for development of an inventory of online programs:

TERMS	PROGRAMS - DEFINITION
<b>Fully Online Program</b>	100% of the direct instruction of the program is available using some form of technology when the student and instructor are separated by time, space, or both. All program requirements that cannot be completed online can be completed off-campus.
<b>Primarily Online Program</b>	80-99% of the direct instruction of the program is available using some form of technology when the student and instructor are separated by time, space, or both. There is a requirement for the student to attend campus or another explicit geographic location for a portion of the program.

