

2017 ONLINE EDUCATION

TRENDS REPORT



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Online education continues to see a steady increase in student enrollment (Babson, 2015); however, as students are presented with more program choices and formats from a wider variety of institutions, the competition for those students is also increasing. How can BestColleges.com help? In this second annual Online Education Trends report, we seek to distill existing research about online learners' characteristics, goals, and preferences, as well as information related to innovation in the design of online programs.

To bolster our research, we also conducted a proprietary survey. More than 300 school administrators and 1,500 students responded to us, providing detailed information about their current experiences in online education. This new report is designed to help you make the best decisions possible about the online programs you are managing, as well as those you may be planning for the future. Key issues are identified in three categories.

The State of Online Learning

- **Students care about careers:** 72% of online students report job and employment goals as a reason for enrolling, including transitioning to a new career field (36%) and earning academic credentials in a current field of work (32%).
- **Cost is the most prominent concern:** Students report their biggest challenges in making decisions about online education related to cost estimates, finding funding sources, and navigating the financial aid process.

Developing and Managing Online Programs

- **Online program demand is on the rise:** 98% of administrators find that demand for online education has increased or stayed the same over the past few years. However, 60% do not plan to change their budgets for online program development in the next year.
- **Local options matter:** 65% of administrators consider "needs of local employers" and/or "general employment/job market trends or forecasts" when designing a new online program.
- **Recruitment is still an obstacle, even with increased demand:** Marketing new online programs to prospective students and meeting recruitment goals is seen as the biggest challenge to offering an online program.

Meeting Online Student Needs and Expectations

- **Students want more outcomes data:** 77% of schools report that students are asking for "placement/employment" rates in addition to other outcome data, such as completion rates (58%) and post-graduation salaries (48%).

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INTRODUCTION

Our Goals: Annual Update

Online education is a dynamic industry, with new technologies and instructional strategies always on the horizon. Marketing and program maintenance also need to keep pace with this changing landscape. Last year, we provided a look at existing research related to online students, technology, learning environments, and college costs (BestColleges, 2016). This year's report offers a snapshot of online education issues as they currently relate to demographics, program management, and student expectations. We provide insight into the students who are enrolled in your online programs and those who are considering enrolling, as well as an awareness of trends affecting stakeholders.

What We Did: Methodology

In October 2016 we conducted two survey studies. The first was sent to school administrators representing public and private nonprofit colleges and universities offering online courses per IPEDS reporting. More than 250 participants shared information about their experiences with program management, the challenges they face with new programs, and their plans for future online education offerings. With the second study, we received responses from 1,500 current, prospective, and past online students regarding their learning experiences and their advice for future students.

What We Found: Online Education Trends

In addition to the results of our original studies, we also reference existing research to identify broader trends in the industry. These trends are reported in three categories:

- **The State of Online Learning**
- **Developing and Managing Online Programs**
- **Meeting Online Student Needs and Expectations**

THE STATE OF ONLINE LEARNING

Who is learning online?

The “typical” college student is harder to define than ever before. Educators see this trend and are beginning to recognize the many different reasons students choose to continue their education, and their approaches to learning. The majority of today’s online students enroll with career-related goals in mind. The Learning House has confirmed this to be the case over the past several years in their annual Online College Students reports. The 2016 report shared that more than 75% of online students have career motivations for continuing their education (The Learning House, 2016).

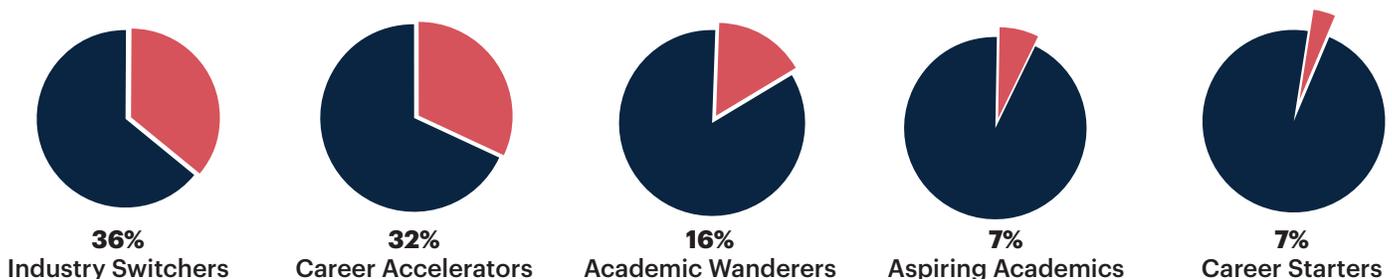
A report from The Parthanon Group identified six categories, or “segments,” of students, which get beyond the age-based labels of traditional and non-traditional that are more commonly used. The image below provides a quick description of these segments (Ladd, Reynolds, & Selingo, n.d.).

COLLEGE STUDENT CATEGORIES

CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION
Aspiring Academics	18-24 year olds, focused on academic studies
Coming of Age	18-24 year olds, exploring college academics, social offerings, and a variety of activities
Academic Wanderers	Older students who perceive the advantages of a college degree, but are unsure about academic and career goals, and how to reach them
Career Starters	Wider age range, interested in college as a path to a specific career
Career Accelerators	Older students with some college and job experience, interested in college as a way to move forward in their current career field
Industry Switchers	Older students with some college and job experience, interested in transitioning to a new career field

We used this approach to frame our survey, asking students to identify their motivation for enrolling in an online program. We found that 75% reported motivation related to the three career-related segments listed above.

PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS BY STUDENT CATEGORY



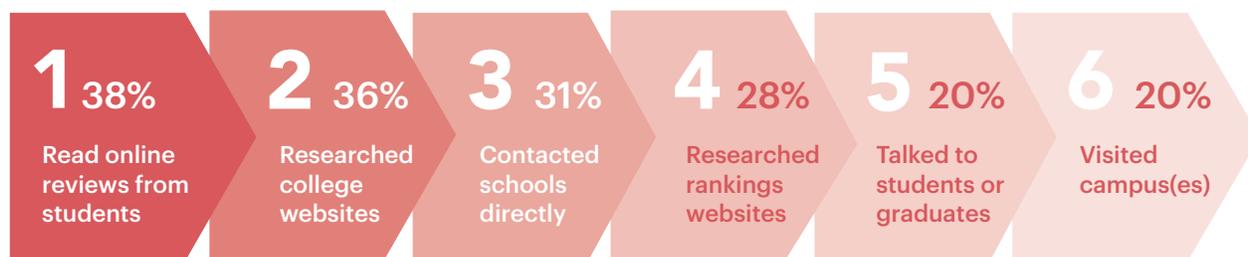
Choosing an Online Program

Choosing an online program can be a daunting process for a prospective student, however there are many ways to research the options. How are students comparing the programs they are interested in pursuing? What would online graduates do differently? This section provides some insight from our student survey, which includes advice for future students.

Researching Information about Colleges

Our survey participants were asked to select the ways in which they gathered information. Many students relied on multiple sources, but the most frequently selected options were *reading online reviews from students* and *researching college websites*.

TOP METHODS USED BY STUDENTS TO RESEARCH ONLINE SCHOOLS



Of those who used only one method to find out about online programs, the top three responses were: contacting the school directly, researching college websites, and reading online reviews from students.



BestColleges.com's Insight: Reaching potential online students requires a multi-faceted approach. Consider integrating current and past student voices in the form of reviews and in live Q&A sessions, as well as maintaining a detailed website.

Student research seems to leave some gaps in the information needed to make the best decision possible. Our study participants ranked the challenges they encountered in the process, sharing that tasks related to estimating costs, applying for financial aid, and finding funding are more difficult, while finding a program that meets their needs and interests is less difficult.

Top Challenges Faced by Students Making Decisions about Online Education

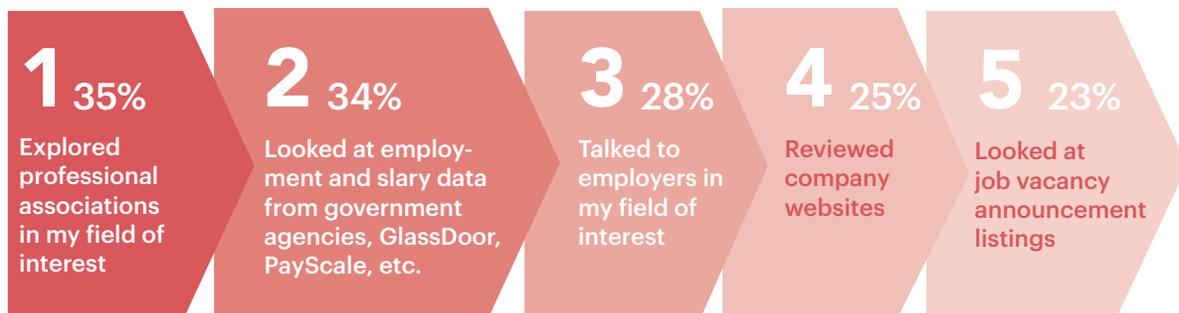
1. Estimating Actual Costs
2. Applying for financial aid and identifying sufficient funding sources
3. Finding sufficient information about academic requirements
4. Contacting a real person to ask detailed questions about specific programs
5. Finding information about how graduates fared in the workplace
6. Finding a program that met my needs and interests

Paying for courses is the biggest roadblock to making decisions about online education, according to students.

Researching Information about Employment

By now it is probably no surprise that a majority of online students are motivated by career goals (The Learning House, 2016). But how does their planning for life and work after graduation affect their college decision-making process? Our student survey participants used the following methods to specifically re-search employment information before choosing a program.

TOP METHODS STUDENTS USE TO RESEARCH EMPLOYMENT INFORMATION PRIOR TO ENROLLING IN A PROGRAM





BestColleges.com's Insight: Partnership or coordination with relevant professional organizations could increase visibility of your online programs and provide resources to ensure curricula address recognized competencies and other training/learning guidelines.

Advice from Online Alumni

We asked students who have graduated from an online program to share what they would have done differently before enrolling. Their responses reflect regrets about not expanding their initial search to include more schools and questions about costs, which could impact their decisions as well as completion of a program after enrolling.

MOST OFFERED ADVICE FROM ONLINE ALUMNI:

What they wish they had done differently prior to their online degree program



28%
"Compare more programs"



15%
"Have better technological resources"



25%
"Do more research about cost and financial aid"



14%
"Speak with current students or alumni"



18%
"Find out if credits will transfer"



7%
"Better understand how long it would take to complete the program"



16%
"Speak with employers or professionals in the field"



7%
"Research faculty experience and credentials"

The Learning House's most recent study found that online students consider an average of three online programs, and about 20% only consider one option when making a decision (2016).



BestColleges.com's Insight: Student decisions about online programs are usually made quickly. Providing easy, obvious access to information about funding, transfer credits, and relevant employment resources will help students make more effective decisions about online education.

Online Program Formats

The New Media Consortium's 2016 Horizon Report expects "increasing use of blended learning designs" to strongly impact online learning over the next two years (New Media Consortium, 2016). There are many ways to incorporate both on-campus and online experiences in a program, from adding in-person classroom requirements to offering access to campus-based support services (e.g., libraries, financial aid offices, advisors, tutoring centers). The Learning House recently identified a trend in online students choosing programs that are close to home - almost 75% enroll in online programs at schools within 100 miles of home (The Learning House, 2016).

When asked to tell us more about their experiences, our student respondents shared several combinations of online and on-campus activities. Of those currently enrolled in a degree or certificate program, approximately half visit campus either by choice or because there is an in-person requirement in their courses

WHAT BEST DESCRIBES YOUR CURRENT ONLINE EDUCATION EXPERIENCE?



Approximately half of students currently enrolled in online courses still visit campus.

We also asked students about synchronous requirements in their courses - 56% of those currently enrolled in online or blended programs said they have some synchronous component to their courses (i.e., must attend live, scheduled class meetings). The same percentage of those enrolled in "completely online" programs also report real-time requirements.

According to the Online Learning Consortium (OLC), "as eLearning has matured, it has begun to be used in different ways to address diverse goals" (2014). This group is promoting a new tiered system of definitions, which includes six options at the course level (from traditional classroom to completely online), and four options at the program level. OLC's updated eLearning definitions are presented below.

Course Level Definitions

TYPE	DESCRIPTION
Traditional Classroom Course	Course activity is organized around scheduled class meetings
Synchronous Distributed Course	Web-based technologies are used to extend classroom lectures and discussions to students at remote sites in real time.
Web-Enhanced Course	Online course activity complements class sessions without reducing the number of required class meetings.
“Emporium” Course	This model, designed for on-campus use, eliminates all class meetings and replaces them with a learning resource center featuring online materials and on-demand personalized assistance.
Hybrid Course	Online activity is mixed with classroom meetings, replacing at least 20%, but not all required face-to-face meetings.
Online Course	All course activity is done online; there are no required face-to-face sessions within the course and no requirements for on-campus activity.

(Online Learning Consortium, 2014)

Program Level Definitions

TYPE	DESCRIPTION
Traditional Classroom Program	The program may include a mix of traditional, web-enhanced, or hybrid courses, but all courses require some face-to-face sessions.
Multi-Format Program	A program mixes, along with traditional classroom courses, other formats that use a variety of different delivery modes, web-enhanced, hybrid, fully online courses, synchronous distributed education, etc., without a specific access goal.
Blended Program	A significant percentage, but not all of the credits required for program completion are offered fully online. Typically, up to 30 percent of the curriculum may be offered as face-to-face or hybrid courses or other face-to-face formats or as independent study.
Online Program	All credits required to complete the program are offered as fully online courses. Students can complete the program completely at a distance, with no required face-to-face meetings.

(Online Learning Consortium, 2014)



BestColleges.com’s Insight: Just as students now represent more demographic diversity than traditional and nontraditional age groups, “online” classes can offer a wide range of learning environments that defy easy categorization. To maximize chances for student success, schools should clearly publicize the options available to prospective students, including the requirements they can expect (e.g., on-campus advising, synchronous class meetings), before enrollment.

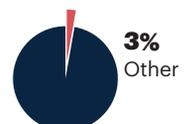
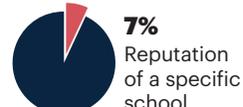
Why Online?

Our respondents gave several other scenarios related to why they chose to study online, some of which narrowed their options even before they began to think about academics and other factors of online learning.

- **Moving from On Campus to Online:** They are already attending a traditional, campus-based college, which started offering online courses and programs in their areas of interest
- **Alumni Going Back for More:** They are alumni of an institution that now offers online programs, and wanted to return in an online status to continue their studies and pursue advanced degrees or training
- **Making the Most of Employment Connections:** They work for a university that offers online programs, or for an employer already partnered in some way with the school, or enrolled on the recommendation of an employer

The focus on employment related factors emerged in several areas of our study. When asked why they chose online or blended learning over on-campus programs, 20% said that an employer incentive or partnership was the primary reason they chose to learn online.

REASONS WHY STUDENTS CHOSE ONLINE VS. ON-CAMPUS DEGREE PROGRAMS



What other reasons would make online a better learning option for students? Our survey found an interest in easier access to a college education for those with disabilities, illness, and anxiety.



BestColleges.com's Insight: Students are choosing online education for a wide variety of reasons that go well beyond "convenience" and "flexibility" of anytime, anyplace learning. Program/school reputation is fairly low on the list. Schools should capitalize on this information when they are deciding how to market their online programs.

DEVELOPING AND MANAGING ONLINE PROGRAMS

Designing and developing a new online program can be a major undertaking, even if the program already exists in a traditional on-campus format. It's critical to determine which subject areas are "right" for on-line delivery at your institution and your student populations, before committing resources to the project. Our school administrator survey provides insight into how these decisions are made, and the challenges faced in the process.

Online Program Demand

While overall higher education enrollments are declining, the number of students engaging in online education continues to increase, with 28% of college students taking at least one online course last year (Babson, 2015). In our survey of higher education school administrators, 74% of respondents indicated that "there is an increase in demand for online courses" at their institutions. An overwhelming majority, 98%, reported that demand is either increasing or has stayed the same for the past few years.

CHANGES IN DEMAND FOR ONLINE EDUCATION AS REPORTED BY SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS



Less than 2% responded that there is a decrease in demand for online courses

Despite increasing demand for online programs, the majority of schools have no plan to increase their on-line program development budget in the coming year. A little less than half (43%) of 4 year schools anticipate increasing their current budgets, while only 31% of 2-year schools plan to do the same. Less than 5% of schools planned a decrease in their online budget.

74% of respondents indicated that "there is an increase in demand for online courses" at their institutions.

PLANS FOR ONLINE PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT IN 2017

	2-Year Schools	4-Year Schools
Increasing budget	31%	43%
No change	67%	54%
Decreasing budget	2%	3%

Deciding to Offer a New Program

Deciding to offer a new online program is not a minor decision, and has consequences that can extend well beyond teaching and learning components. What motivates an institution to add a new program? Primary reasons include: the program already exists in an on-campus format (79%), there's student demand for an online version (73%), and there's employer demand for job-related knowledge or skills (69%). Once the decision has been made to offer a program, about two-thirds (65%) of school respondents consider "needs of local employers" and/or "general employment/job market trends or forecasts" when designing the program.

HOW ADMINISTRATORS CHOOSE TO CREATE AN ONLINE PROGRAM.



79%

We already offer an on-campus program in the subject area and want to extend it to online students



69%

There is employment demand for the knowledge or skills



29%

Competitor schools are offering a similar program



73%

There is a demand from students who are interested in the subject area or degree level



50%

We have existing in-house resources and faculty expertise in the new subject area



9%

Other

(65%) of school respondents consider "needs of local employers" and/or "general employment/job market trends or forecasts" when designing an online program.



BestColleges.com's Insight: Several online program administrators indicated a course-level approach to adding online learning options at their institutions. Decisions to bring individual courses online across existing programs are based on demand or other internal factors, rather than pursuing projects that have program-level development as a goal. Once most of the courses in a program are available online, they will move forward to develop any remaining courses as a fully online program. Schools that are unsure about committing to online program development may want to pilot test their processes and resources with individual courses or a certificate program.

Challenges Faced

Online education projects present a host of problems to be solved as institutional teams move from deciding to launch a new program to maintaining it and providing related services to faculty and students. When asked to identify the most pressing challenge faced, the top responses involved meeting marketing and recruiting goals (41%) and meeting cost and program management demands (31%).

TOP CHALLENGES FACED WHEN LAUNCHING AN ONLINE PROGRAM

RANK	CHALLENGE	
1	Marketing new online programs to prospective students and meeting requirement goals	41%
2	Meeting cost and management demands required by new online programs (eg. faculty training, technology infrastructure, help desk, administrative functions)	31%
3	Reaching goals related to making new online programs profitable	8%
4	Selecting content sources and/or third-party content providers	3%

The two biggest challenges in launching new online programs are meeting marketing and recruiting goals, and cost and program management demands.

Additional responses to our question about challenges included a host of issues school administrators are working through as they plan and implement new online programs. These responses included several “all of the above” comments, as a reminder that online program development is no small task.

Other challenges for online program administrators:

- Meeting federal regulations and accreditation standards
- Offering courses that use “other than LMS” technologies, i.e. options to structure online materials and access outside of a learning management system package
- Working within the university system to avoid duplication and internal competition
- Finding quality faculty with online course development and teaching experience
- Getting approval to increase course sizes and give priority enrollment to non-local students in order to meet enrollment demands
- Building general institutional and faculty support for online delivery



BestColleges.com's Insight: Developing and managing online academic programs involves multiple stakeholders, including faculty members, information technology professionals, and curriculum review committees. Coordinating the process can be difficult and slow to gain momentum if all participants are not on board. A collaborative approach is needed to not only gain buy-in, but also ensure that the resulting courses and programs are effective for students and instructors. Consistent and open communication is critical to the process.

MEETING ONLINE STUDENT NEEDS AND EXPECTATIONS

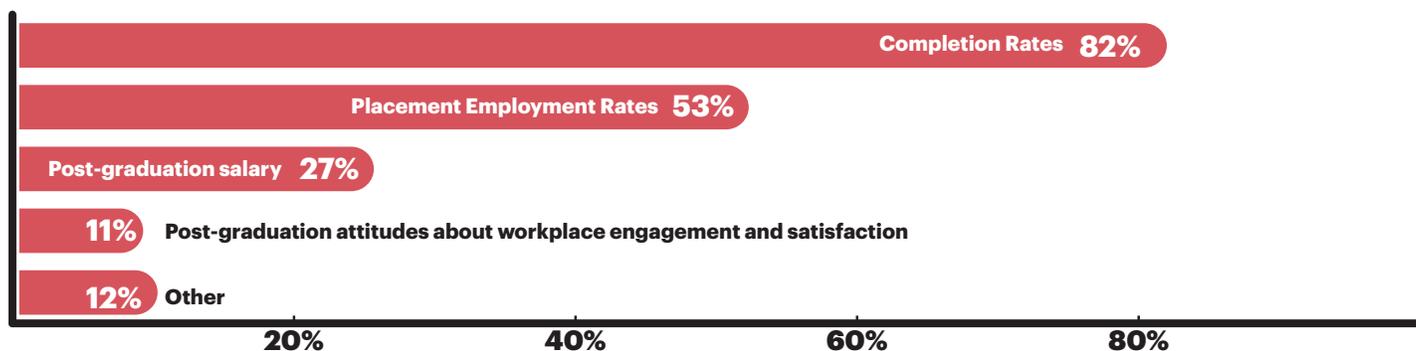
There's a call for more transparency in the reporting of higher education outcomes, such as graduation and placement rates. Institutions are doing more to track these numbers, make them available to prospective students, and include them as part of the accreditation process (Riley & Merisotis, 2016). Prospective students are also taking the initiative to ask for information about student and alumni success as they compare online programs.

Tracking and Reporting Outcomes

What outcome-related information do you provide to students?

In addition to completion and placement rates, our survey participants shared other outcome information they make available to prospective students, which includes: continuing education rates, student success stories, and potential employment opportunities.

PROGRAM OUTCOMES DATA SHARED BY SCHOOLS

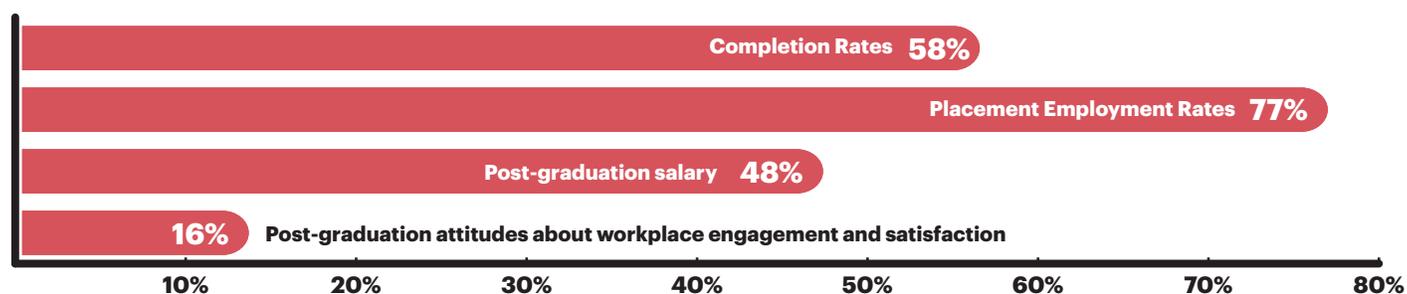


Some participants also shared that the outcomes they report can vary by program. Nursing programs, for example, might report exam pass rates (i.e., NCLEX), while business programs might report average signing bonuses for graduates, as well as internship rates and salaries. Several respondents also indicated that the outcome information they are collecting and reporting is changing due to new requirements by their accrediting agencies.

Which outcome-related resources are students interested in seeing or asking about?

77% of schools report that students are asking for “placement/employment” rates. There seems to be more of an interest in this than in completion or graduation information, which has been the traditional benchmark of how successful a program is.

PROGRAM OUTCOMES DATA WANTED BY STUDENTS



Our school survey respondents also provided a list of additional information students are asking for before enrolling, which includes: opportunities in the field of study, examination pass rates (clinical fields), information related to the transferability of credits, details about support resources, and costs.



BestColleges.com’s Insight: Students already working in their fields want more detailed information about the rates of alumni seeking continuing education after graduation, promotions, job changes, and how completing the online program will benefit their employment. Schools looking to up their recruitment for specific online programs should prominently advertise these numbers.

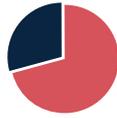
Career Preparation

A recent study from Pearson finds that 72% of adults who are enrolled or planning to enroll in a degree or certificate program in the next two months say “they will need additional education to keep up with advancements in their field in the next five years” (2016). Are online programs designed with this career preparation in mind? Our school survey participants shared not only their awareness of this trend, but also an active incorporation of multi-level career development needs in academic program design. Online programs are developed for students interested in a range of career goals, from entering their first career to advancing in a current field as a working professional.

CAREER DEVELOPMENT STAGES SCHOOLS CONSIDER IN ONLINE PROGRAM DESIGN



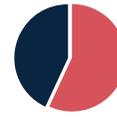
72%
Career advancement, preparing students to develop advanced skills or move ahead in their current fields



71%
Career changers transitioning into a new field



57%
Professional development, helping students stay current or maintain continuing education requirements in their current field



56%
Entry-level, preparing students for their first career

14% Other or N/A

Pearson's 2016 Adult Learner Motivations and Expectations study provides some related insight into how "the education industry is advancing to meet the needs of [a] changing employment market." These efforts include bootcamps and MOOCs, along with initiatives to assess prior learning for academic credit and offer more online learning opportunities (Pearson, 2016). Courses that feature scenario-based learning, simulations, and other strategies, such as case studies and problem-based learning, have the potential to move higher education in directions that better address student and employer expectations for workplace readiness (Education Dive, 2016).



BestColleges.com's Insight: Students who are working need the flexibility of online access, as well as professional development and career preparation alternatives to full degree programs. When planning and marketing online programs, be sure to focus on the unique career preparation opportunities you can offer.

Special Student Populations

Career preparation is just one consideration when designing a new online program. Many schools also choose to create programs with specific student characteristics in mind.

By spending the time and energy to explore the market and find out more about the students most likely to be interested in online learning, schools can boost enrollment rates through strategically targeted programs.

ARE YOUR ONLINE PROGRAMS DESIGNED WITH SPECIAL POPULATIONS IN MIND?

RANK	POPULATION	
1	Adult students returning to school after an absence	83%
2	Transfer students	72%
3	First-generation students	51%
4	Military - veterans and retired	49%
5	Military - active duty	48%
6	Students with disabilities	41%
7	Academically underprepared students	31%
8	International students outside the US	29%

The way in which most online courses and programs are developed lends itself to purposeful design, and even customization for a specific audience. Many schools organize teams, which include faculty member subject matter experts, instructional designers, and multimedia specialists to not only create digital content, but also select communication tools and strategies, curate relevant resources, and link to student support services. Conducting a learner analysis is critical to the process - schools need to know who the target student population is and what their needs and expectations are in order to design programs that drive success.



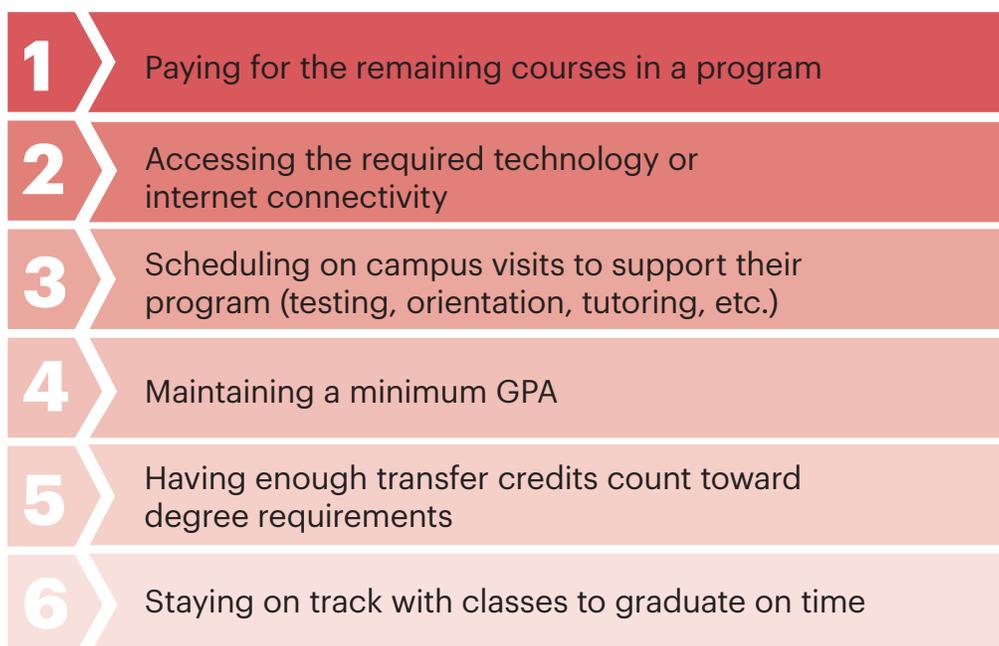
BestColleges.com's Insight: Online programs usually meet the needs of a wide range of learners, but can be designed with specific groups in mind. As an example, courses designed for military students might limit requirements for synchronous meetings (to avoid conflicts with time zones and deployments), and include military references in case studies, simulations, and other assignments. This program could also provide admissions and financial aid counselors with special training in VA benefits, tuition assistance, prior learning assessments, as well as organize clubs or organizations to connect veteran students with each other and the institution. Provide evidence of how you service specific audiences, so that those students can more easily find you and have a better idea of the support and resources they can expect once enrolled.

Navigating Roadblocks to Graduation

Our student survey revealed some of the top “roadblocks” to completing an online education. Those who reached graduation ranked *paying for courses and having access to required technology or Internet connectivity* as the biggest challenges they faced. More academic considerations, such as maintaining a minimum GPA and staying on track to graduate on time were ranked lower.

Online students rank paying for courses and access to technology or internet connectivity as their biggest challenges to completion.

TOP ROADBLOCKS TO COMPLETING AN ONLINE EDUCATION ACCORDING TO STUDENTS.



BestColleges.com’s Insight: While many online students generally find themselves academically prepared to succeed, a large number feel they lack the resources and support needed to fully participate in their courses and cover the costs. Ensuring that students have support to overcome these obstacles will help increase graduation rates and student satisfaction. Proactively addressing these issues in marketing materials may help increase student recruitment.

CONCLUSION

As the options for learning in a digital environment continue to expand, so do the needs and preferences of learners. How can you best reach prospective students and provide them with ongoing support that leads to retention and graduation after enrollment? Our research revealed insights from both online program administrators and online students.

Program Marketing

- Include more career outcome information in your recruiting and marketing materials, such as how often alumni are changing jobs or seeking continuing education.
- Share details about how your online programs and support services are designed to meet the needs of specific student groups (e.g., military, disabled, transfer students)
- Connect with relevant professional associations and employment websites to increase visibility of and familiarity with your program curriculum.
- Make it easy for prospective students to find the information they are most interested in - financial aid and funding options, transfer credit process.
- Share details about the variety of learning environments you offer, such as blended courses or programs, synchronous requirements, and online or on campus access to services.

Program Development

- Consider multiple options to online program development, which may include initial work on individual courses or a certificate program as a pilot for full degree offerings.
- Take a collaborative approach to working with all online program stakeholders to not only increase buy-in, but also encourage insight into enhancing the student experience.
- Explore the reasons students are choosing your online programs, beyond “anytime, anyplace” access, as a way to differentiate your offerings.

Student-Centered Resources and Activities

- Provide new ways for prospective students to connect with current students and alumni, through student profiles and live interactions.
- Provide connections to career-related support activities for your students, whether they are planning to enter their first career field or are working professionals making a transition.
- Maintain student support after recruitment in the areas they most need, including financial assistance (i.e., tuition and fees, hardware and software, Internet service)

A majority of these insights are related to transparency and follow-through. Make a commitment to providing prospective students with realistic expectations about your programs and outcomes, as well as providing assistance and support to each student from enrollment to graduation. The team at BestColleges.com can help administrators decide what program data to advertise, implement best practices for marketing online programs, and recruit high-intent students. Contact info@bestcolleges.com for more information.

APPENDIX

Demographics*

School Survey Participants

ONLINE ENROLLMENT

64% of schools report enrolling fewer than 500 students in their online and blended degree and certificate programs. While another 20% enroll 1,000-5,000 students online.

CLASSIFICATION

67% - 4-Year Colleges and Universities
 32% - 2-Year Colleges, Community Colleges, and Technical Schools

Number of Programs Offered

	10 or <	11-25	26-50	51 or >
Certificate				
100% Online	74.6%	6.7%	2.2%	<1%
Blended	77.4%	11.8%	7.5%	3.3%
Associate				
100% Online	90.9%	7.6%	1.5%	-
Blended	72.6%	13.2%	7.7%	6.6%
Bachelor's				
100% Online	88.8%	7.5%	2.2%	1.5%
Blended	92.5%	3.8%	1.25%	2.5%
Master's (non MBA)				
100% Online	91.1%	4.8%	3.2%	<1%
Blended	95.4%	2.3%	-	2.4%
MBA				
100% Online	98.9%	-	-	1.0%
Blended	98.5%	-	-	1.5%
Professional (JD, etc.)				
100% Online	100%	-	-	-
Blended	100%	-	-	-

* Percentages reported in this document have been rounded, resulting in some totals adding up to just under or over 100. Several charts present results for questions in which survey participants could select more than one response.

STUDENT SURVEY PARTICIPANTS

GENDER:

female 64%
 male 36%

AGE:

(14-17)4%
 (18-24) 13%
 (25-34).....37%
 (35-44)25%
 (45-54)..... 15%
 (>54) 6%

ENROLLMENT STATUS:

full-time47%
 part-time 54%

DEGREE PURSUING:

Associate 36%
 Bachelors 30%
 MBA5%
 NonMBA Master's..... 6%
 Doctorate2%
 Professional degree3%
 Industry certification 17%

ENROLLMENT LEVEL:

Undergraduate 66%
 Graduate16%
 Industry Certification ... 17%

MARITAL STATUS:

Divorced..... 6%
 Living with partner 12%
 Married..... 46%
 Not reported3%
 Separated3%
 Single28%
 Widowed 1%

EDUCATION LEVEL:

High school 38%
 University29%
 Postgraduate8%
 Vocational
 Technical College.....22%
 Other3%

NUMBER OF CHILDREN:

Zero 30%
 One.....19%
 Two24%
 Three 14%
 Four 7%
 Five2%
 Six or more2%
 Not reported2%

EMPLOYMENT STATUS:

Employed for wages ... 54%
 Homemaker 19%
 Military 1%
 Other2%
 Retired3%
 Self employed 9%
 Student 7%
 Unable to work4%
 Unemployed, looking ...5%
 Unemployed, not looking 2%

RACE:

Arab 1%
 Asian5%
 Black10%
 Hispanic 6%
 Latino2%
 Multiracial3%
 Other2%
 Not reported2%
 White 69%

INCOME LEVEL:

Lower 1 19%
 Lower 2.....29%
 Middle 1..... 20%
 Middle 2 12%
 High 1 6%
 High 23%
 High 33%
 Not reported8%

STUDENT SURVEY PARTICIPANTS

STUDENT STATUS:

Online program graduate	17%
Taking at least one online class, but not enrolled in a full program	10%
Thinking about online programs but not enrolled	39%
Admitted to an online program, but haven't started coursework	5%
Currently enrolled in an online or blended program	29%

MAJOR OR INTENDED MAJOR:

Biological and Physical Sciences.....	7%
Business, management, marketing, accounting and related services	27%
Communication, journalism, and related programs	5%
Computer and information sciences and support services	10%
Criminal justice, law enforcement, firefighting and related protective services.....	6%
Education	9%
Engineering.....	4%
Health professions and related programs	13%
Humanities and Liberal Arts (e.g. Philosophy, Religion, History, English, Languages, Art)....	4%
Mathematics and statistics	2%
Psychology, Sociology, and social sciences	6%
Other	6%

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