

DRAFT 06/22/20

# Online Education

STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF FLORIDA

*Annual Report 2019*





# **STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF FLORIDA**

## **2019 Annual Report for Online Education**

*Pending Approval July 21, 2020*

**Board of Governors  
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# Highlights

The State University System *2019 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*. While the Annual Report focuses primarily on 2018-19 data and accomplishments during that year, it also reflects how the infrastructure, resources, and professional networks established in the past few years had a great impact on the System's ability to react quickly to convert on-campus, hybrid, and primarily online courses to courses provided 100% at a distance in response to the novel coronavirus during the Spring 2020 term. Highlights of the Annual Report include:

- SUS institutions converted almost 50,000 courses from primarily classroom, hybrid, and primarily distance learning to ones that could be completed fully at a distance during the Spring 2020 term.
- In 2018-19, the State of Florida ranked second in the nation in both the number and the percentage of public university students enrolled in distance learning courses.
- During 2018-19, 75% of undergraduates – and 53% of graduate students - took at least one distance learning course.
- Eleven percent (11%) of undergraduate students took only distance learning courses, while 26% of graduate students did so.
- During Fall 2019, there were 504 online programs/majors in the SUS, with 305 of those being in Programs of Strategic Emphasis.
- Undergraduates who took only distance learning courses were older (average age of 27) than students who took no distance learning courses (average age of 22).
- Of undergraduate students who took only distance learning courses, 94% were Florida residents, while 91% of those who took no distance learning courses were Florida residents.
- Florida universities are collaborating on many initiatives to ensure the quality of their distance learning programs and efficient use of their resources.
- SUS distance learning programs have won numerous awards and recognitions for their high quality.



**UF (# 4) and UCF (# 16)**  
**ranked in the top 20 of the**  
**BEST ONLINE**  
**BACHELOR'S PROGRAMS**  
by *U.S. News & World Report*

<sup>1</sup> Online education is one type of distance learning and is the focus of this report. Distance Learning encompasses other modes of delivery using technology when instructor and student are separated by time and/or distance for at least 80% of the time, such as broadcasting courses over television networks. SUS data elements do not distinguish between those different approaches. Therefore, the term "distance learning" rather than "online education" is used in this report when appropriate.

# Introduction

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The *State University System 2019 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 began working 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. Institutions in the Florida College System are represented on the workgroups.

## Effect of COVID-19 on Distance Learning in 2020 Spring Term

While focusing on 2018-19 data and activities, this report reflects how the SUS has reacted to and planned for the demand for distance learning courses and programs since the *2025 Strategic Plan for Online Education* was adopted by the Board of Governors in November 2015. The infrastructure, resources, and professional networks established in the past few years had a great impact on the System's ability to react quickly to convert on-campus, hybrid, and primarily online courses to courses provided 100% remotely in response to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) during the Spring 2020 term.

While many courses had begun the term in fully distance learning modality, almost 50,000 courses had begun the term as primarily classroom, hybrid, or primarily online courses. Faculty, many with the help

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*\*Online Education is one type of distance learning and is the focus of this report. Distance Learning encompasses other modes of delivery 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 different approaches. Therefore, the term "distance learning", rather than "online education," is used in this report when appropriate.*

of instructional designers, undertook a herculean effort to convert those courses to ones that could be completed 100% at a distance.

The foresight of the Board of Governors when it approved the *2025 Strategic Plan for Online Education* in 2015, and the commitment of university leadership, faculty, and staff in its implementation since that point, elevated the importance of distance learning, allowing an infrastructure to be developed that was – and continues to be - vital to managing the disruption of massive course conversions.

Most students had taken at least one distance learning course and were familiar with the use of the tools they needed for remote courses. In 2018-19, before the COVID-19 was a world threat, 75% of undergraduate students had taken at least one distance learning course and 53% of graduate students had done so. That high level of participation meant that many faculty already had experience teaching distance learning courses.

The following sections help explain the services and actions taken by institutions to ensure the successful delivery of courses remotely.

### **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (TRAINING AND SUPPORT):**

Each university provided support services to faculty as they worked to convert their courses. The services varied by campus and included ones such as:

- Rapid course design training in areas such as academic technologies, online assignment and assessment strategies, student engagement activities, and accessibility via:
  - Live Zoom training sessions
  - YouTube training sessions
  - Daily webinars
  - Online workshops for Canvas, the learning management system used in the SUS and the platform for online courses
- Web pages with resources
- Individual faculty consultations
- Call centers for immediate assistance
- Facilitating peer interactions for sharing of experiences, resources, and support
- Facilitating communications with faculty to identify and resolve issues

The SUS *2025 Strategic Plan for Online Education* included the development of an online toolkit for institutional staff who are responsible for professional development activities for faculty who teach online courses. UCF, as host of the Teaching Online Preparation Toolkit (TOPkit) in partnership with other institutions, had resources available online for professional development staff to effectively implement the best practices, resources and tools found within the website.

## TECHNOLOGY: FACULTY

To successfully provide courses remotely, both faculty and students needed access to appropriate technology. Institutions that were already heavily engaged in distance learning had existing technology that was easily scalable; all had to quickly purchase hardware and software to fill needed gaps. Ways in which universities addressed technology issues varied by university and included such activities as:

- Quickly purchasing web cams for the classrooms that had no lecture-capture technology allowing faculty to deliver synchronous class sessions from the classroom and/or record instructional content for asynchronous delivery
- Updating classroom podium technology to work with the designated remote instructional tools
- Quickly upgrading web conferencing tools
- Establishing a laptop/webcam loan program for faculty
- Providing software to help faculty make course materials accessible to students with disabilities
- Establishing or expanding IT call centers to provide technology assistance to faculty

## TECHNOLOGY: STUDENTS

To ensure students had the equipment and Internet access they needed to take courses remotely, strategies used by various universities included:

- Establishing a laptop/webcam loan program and rapidly purchasing additional units for students
- Providing students with a listing of Internet providers offering free or reduced-price services
- Increasing computer lab licensing to allow students access to specialized software required by some courses

## PROCTORING

Methods to proctor exams in distance learning courses vary by institution and include the use of live remote proctoring services, testing centers, and various software. With the expansion of courses in remote format, universities expanded the choices faculty had for proctoring services, as well as expanded existing contracts to cover the increase in usage of proctoring services.

## LABS

Moving labs to remote instruction not only varied by university, but by discipline. During the Spring term, faculty used such strategies as:

- Zoom meetings
- Self-produced video lab demonstrations
- You-tube videos of lab simulations, followed by data for students to analyze
- Custom videos, made in conjunction with university digital design teams, of experiments and procedures conducted in university laboratories

- Publisher and third-party video and simulation content
- Giving assignments that could be completed remotely, such as written reports and scientific literature readings and presentations
- For clinical courses, participation in telemedicine, applying clinical simulation programs, and conducting case studies
- Development and use of “lab kits” containing materials, tools, and safety equipment, that allow students to conduct scientific exploration at a remote location
- Development (with a vendor) of a lab experience through virtual reality
- Participation in “citizen science” observation and data analysis activities



*UF and FSU have several online Education programs ranked in the top 20  
**BEST ONLINE MASTER’S IN EDUCATION PROGRAMS**  
 in their respective specialties by [U.S. News & World Report](#)*

<i>Education</i>	<i>Curriculum and Instruction</i>	<i>Educational Administration</i>	<i>Instructional Media</i>	<i>Special Education</i>
# 2 UF	# 3 UF	# 3 UF	# 1 FSU	# 3 UF
#15 FSU	# 6 FSU	# 6 FSU	# 4 UF	#15 FSU



*FSU (#8) and UCF (#17) have online programs ranked in the top 20 of the  
**BEST ONLINE MASTER’S IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE PROGRAMS**  
 by [U.S. News & World Report](#)*



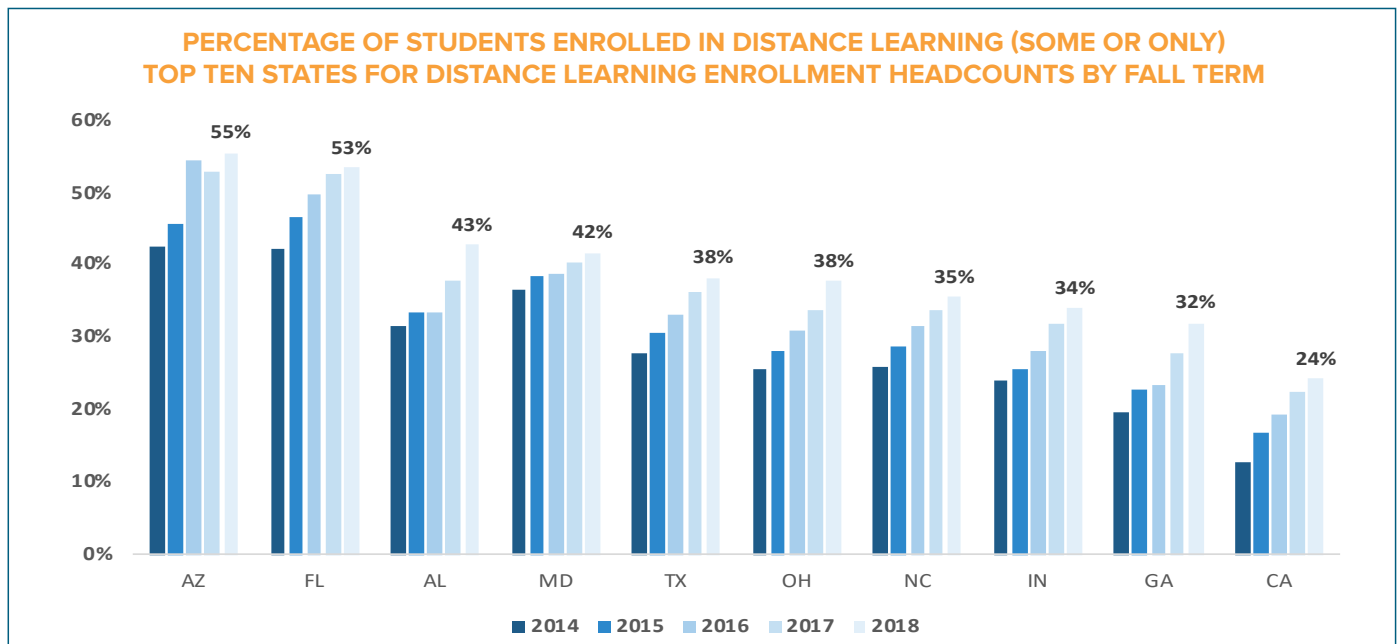
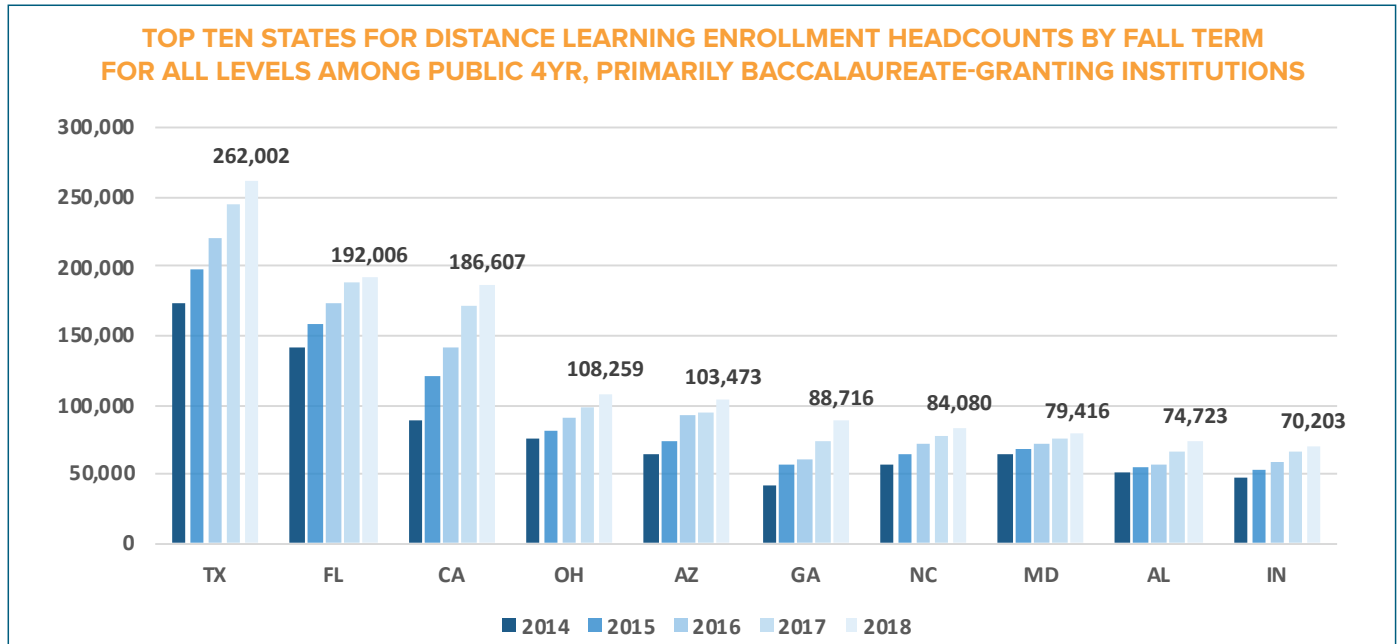
*USF’s Engineering Management online program ranked #6 in  
**BEST ONLINE MASTER’S IN ENGINEERING MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS**  
 by [U.S. News & World Report](#)*



# 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 in public universities, behind Texas, and second in the nation, behind Arizona, in the percentage of students enrolled in distance learning courses.



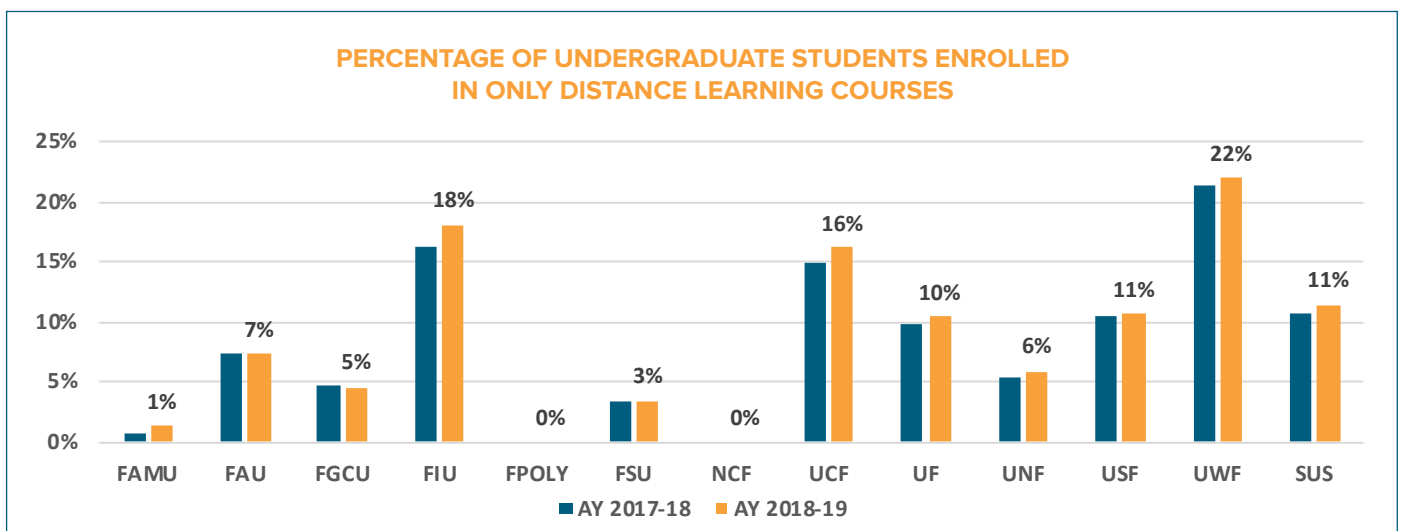
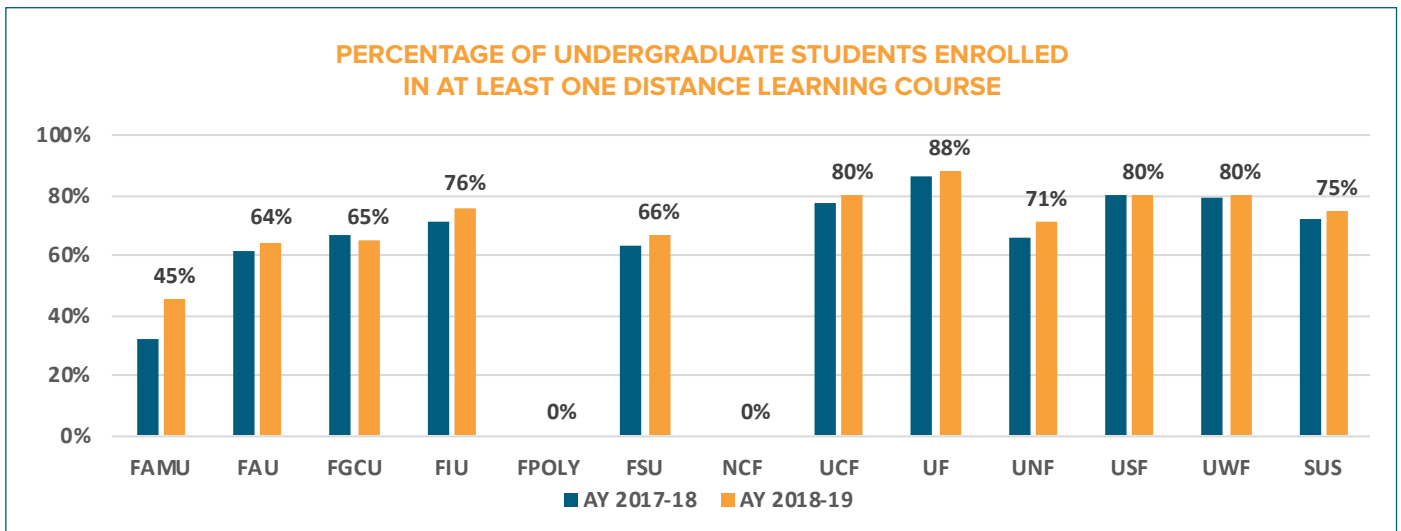
SOURCE: Board of Governors staff analysis of US Dept. of Education's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) available at the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) website (data extracted 3/19/2020). Notes: IPEDS defines Distance Learning as instructional content that is delivered exclusively (100%) via distance education within a Fall term, while section 1009.24(17), F.S., defines a Distance Learning course as one in which at least 80% of direct instructional content is delivered at a distance; full-year data is used in the SUS analyses. The differences in timespan and definitions result in different percentages being reflected on this chart (based on IPEDS timespan and definition) and the chart on the next page of this report (based on the Florida timespan and definition).

# Student Enrollments (Headcounts)

## UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

System-wide, 75% of undergraduate students took at least one distance learning course in 2018-19, continuing a steady increase from 66% in 2015-16 when the *2025 Strategic Plan for Online Education* was adopted. At four institutions, at least 80% of undergraduate students took at least one distance learning course during 2018-19: UCF (80%), UF (88%), USF (80%), and UWF (80%). FAMU had the greatest one-year percentage increase, from 32% in 2017-18 to 45% in 2018-19.

Eleven percent (11%) of SUS undergraduates (36,648) took only distance learning courses, with UCF having the highest number (10,952) and UWF having the highest percentage (22%). A majority (63%) of undergraduate students (202,895) in the SUS took both distance learning and classroom and/or hybrid courses in 2018-19, with UCF having the highest number (42,897) and USF having the highest percentage (69%). The percentage of undergraduate students taking no distance learning courses declined from 34% in 2015-16 to 25% in 2018-19.



SOURCE: BOG Office of Data & Analytics, extracted from datamarts on 3/23/2020. 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.

## 2018-2019 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	116	1%	3,766	44%	4,697	55%
FAU	2,075	7%	16,240	57%	10,148	36%
FGCU	686	5%	9,169	60%	5,365	35%
FIU	9,220	18%	29,396	58%	12,313	24%
FPOLY	0	0%	0	0%	1,475	100%
FSU	1,234	3%	22,670	63%	12,050	34%
NCF	0	0%	0	0%	837	100%
UCF	10,952	16%	42,897	63%	13,762	20%
UF	4,295	10%	31,701	77%	5,063	12%
UNF	984	6%	10,751	65%	4,854	29%
USF	4,605	11%	29,779	69%	8,689	20%
UWF	2,481	22%	6,526	58%	2,271	20%
<b>SUS</b>	<b>36,648</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>202,895</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>81,524</b>	<b>25%</b>

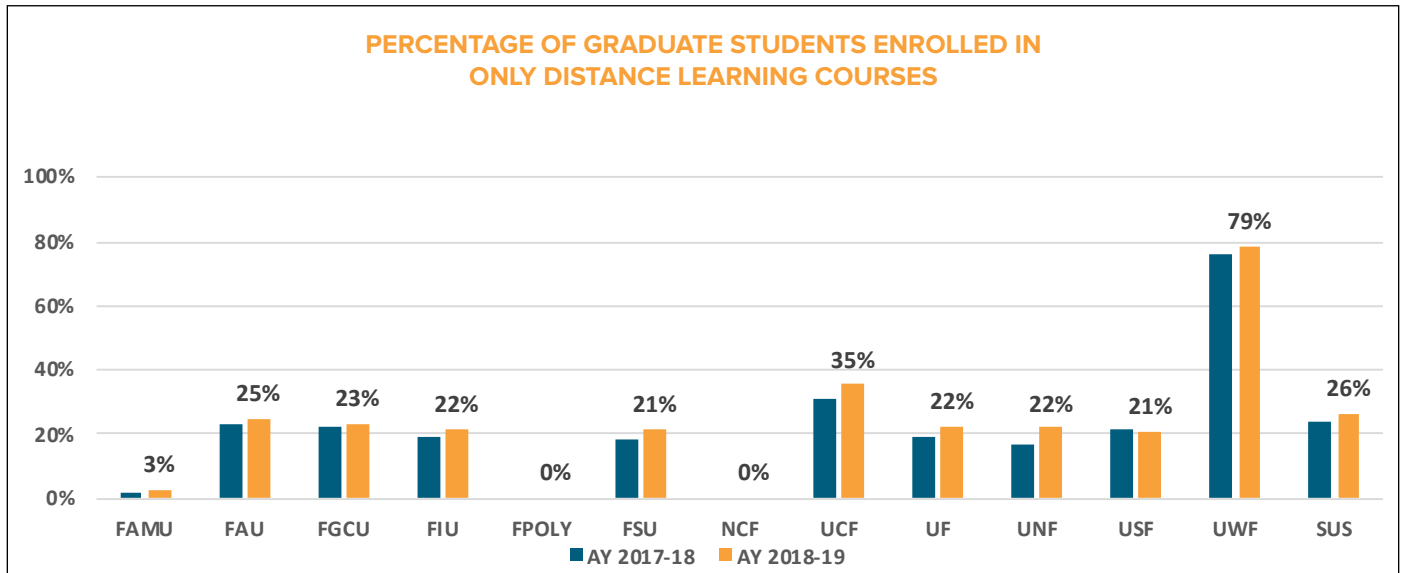
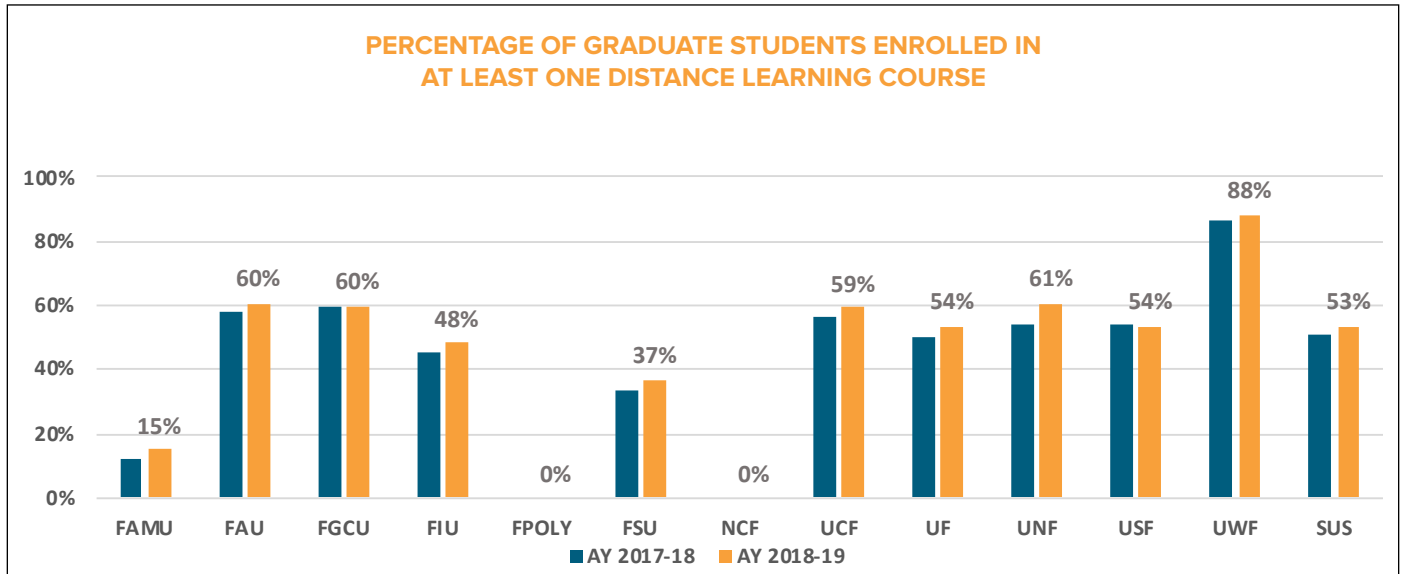
## GRADUATE STUDENTS

### 2018-2019 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	57	3%	249	12%	1,745	85%
FAU	1,445	25%	2,034	35%	2,289	40%
FGCU	299	23%	467	36%	516	40%
FIU	2,343	22%	2,901	27%	5,644	52%
FPOLY	0	0%	0	0%	38	100%
FSU	1,942	21%	1,406	16%	5,716	63%
NCF	0	0%	0	0%	29	100%
UCF	3,860	35%	2,600	24%	4,420	41%
UF	3,725	22%	5,242	31%	7,765	46%
UNF	612	22%	1,085	39%	1,095	39%
USF	2,709	21%	4,257	33%	6,021	46%
UWF	2,919	79%	357	10%	426	12%
<b>SUS</b>	<b>19,911</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>20,598</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>35,704</b>	<b>47%</b>

SOURCE: BOG Office of Data & Analytics, extracted from datamarts on 3/23/2020. 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 continued its rise from 46% in 2015-16 to 53% in 2018-19. At 88%, UWF led the System in the percentage of graduate students – and UF led in the number of graduate students (8,967) - taking at least one distance learning course. UNF had the greatest one-year percentage increase in graduate students taking at least one distance learning course, increasing from 54% in 2017-18 to 61% in 2018-19.

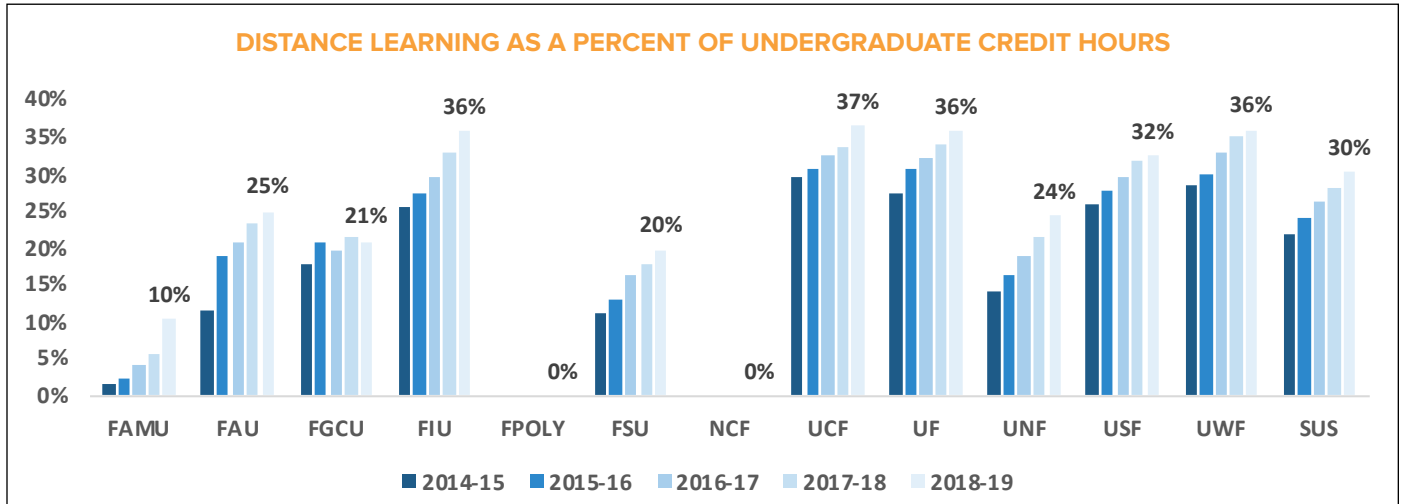


SOURCE: BOG Office of Data & Analytics, extracted from datamarts on 3/23/2020. Graduates based on beginning- and advanced-graduate student level. Only includes students enrolled in courses. Distance learning courses are defined as a course in which at least 80 percent of the direct instruction of the 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

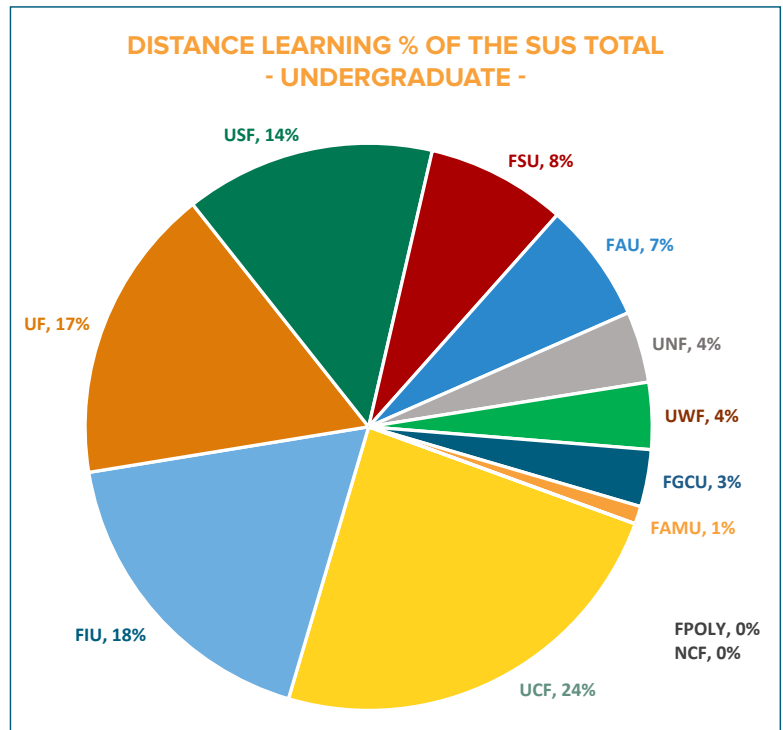
## UNDERGRADUATE CREDIT HOURS

System-wide, 30% of undergraduate credit hours were taken in distance learning courses in 2018-19, an increase from 28% in 2017-18, and an increase from 24% in 2015-16, when the Board approved the *2025 Strategic Plan for Online Education*. UCF had the highest percentage (37%), followed closely by FIU, UF, and UWF, all with 36%. FAMU had the greatest one-year percentage increase, from 6% in 2017-18 to 10% in 2018-19.



**Two of FAU's programs ranked in the top 20 BEST ONLINE MASTER'S NURSING PROGRAMS in their respective specialty categories by *U.S. News & World Report***

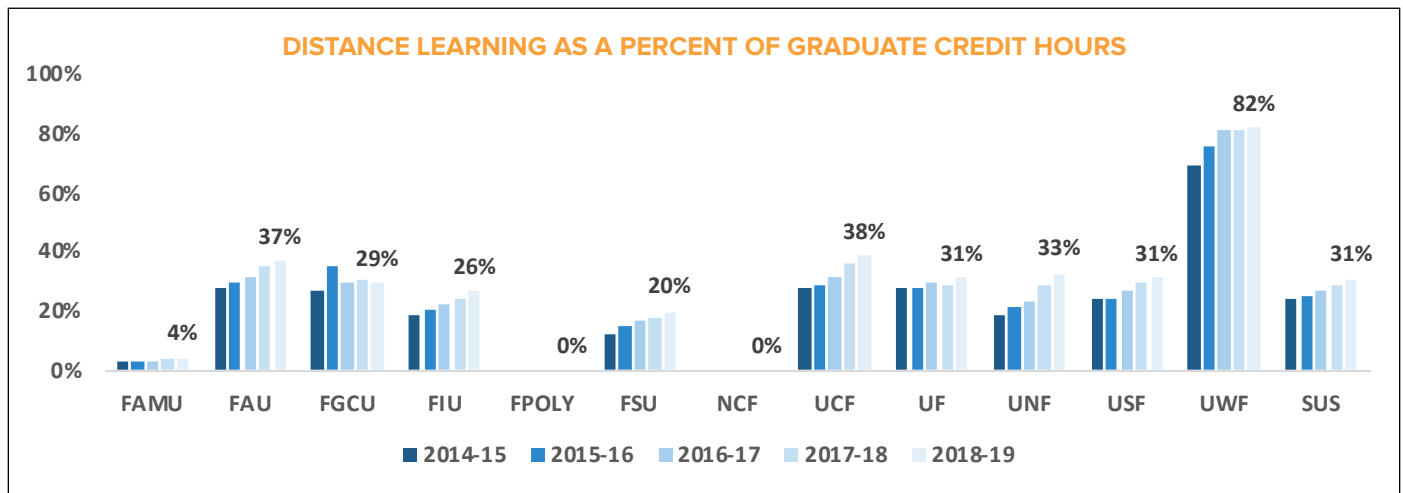
**Nursing Programs (#7) and Nursing Administration Programs (#17)**



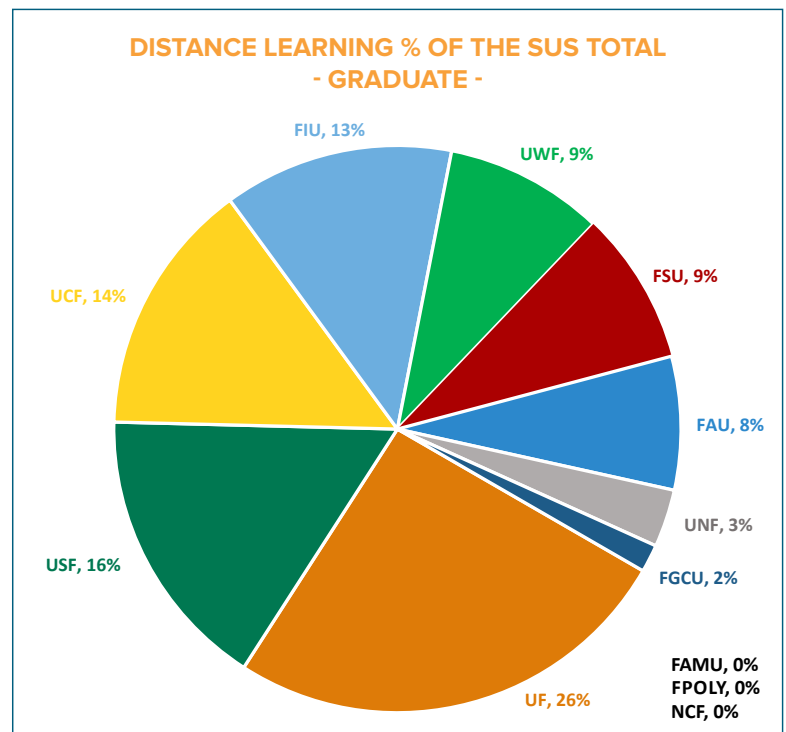
SOURCE: BOG Office of Data & Analytics, extracted from datamarts on 3/19/2020. Notes: Undergraduate students include lower- and upper-division students only and excludes unclassified students. Distance Learning is a course in which at least 80 percent of the direct instruction of the course is delivered 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, 31% of student credit hours were taken in distance learning courses in 2018-19, an increase from 29% in 2017-18 and an increase from 25% in 2015-16. UWF's percentage, the highest in the System, was 82%. Five institutions were in the 30% - 40% range (FAU, UCF, UF, UNF, and USF).



While the above percentages reflect the instructional effort within each university, the pie chart on the right portrays each university's undergraduate distance learning credit hours as a percentage of total undergraduate credit hours in the SUS. UF's students took the most undergraduate distance learning credit hours in the System, 26%, followed by USF (16%), UCF (14%), and FIU (13%).



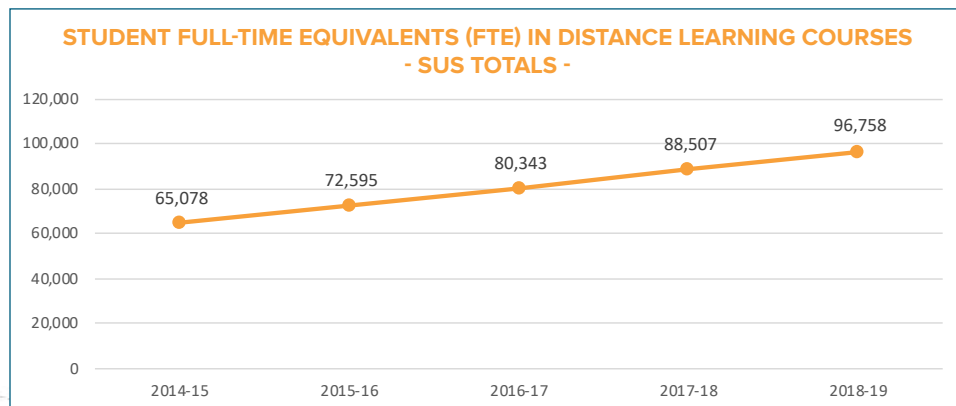
SOURCE: BOG Office of Data & Analytics, extracted from datamarts on 3/19/2020. Undergraduate students include lower- and upper-division students only and excludes unclassified students. Distance Learning is a course in which at least 80 percent of the direct instruction of the course is delivered using 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. Of SUS FTE in distance learning courses in 2018-19, 82% were in undergraduate courses.

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

LEVEL/YEAR	FAMU	FAU	FGCU	FIU	FPOLY	FSU	NCF	UCF	UF	UNF	USF	UWF	SUS
<b>UNDERGRAD</b>													
2014-15	131	2,388	2,055	9,192		3,476		13,559	8,918	1,722	8,745	2,434	52,618
2015-16	172	4,002	2,428	9,957		4,064		14,523	10,284	1,941	9,441	2,559	59,371
2016-17	297	4,432	2,309	11,007		5,286		15,857	11,282	2,320	10,070	2,795	65,655
2017-18	434	4,977	2,617	12,673		5,825		16,944	12,409	2,735	11,061	2,999	72,674
2018-19	808	5,455	2,594	14,243	0	6,348	0	19,139	13,490	3,237	11,368	3,041	79,722
<b>MASTERS</b>													
2014-15	49	786	187	1,461		822		1,361	2,336	214	1,920	1,081	10,216
2015-16	39	862	240	1,625		955		1,429	2,608	214	1,960	1,125	11,057
2016-17	51	1,012	206	1,759		1,071		1,608	2,852	201	2,173	1,343	12,277
2017-18	61	1,131	220	1,846		1,152		2,001	2,747	272	2,404	1,388	13,222
2018-19	77	1,191	217	1,991	0	1,368	0	2,211	2,760	365	2,469	1,376	14,025
<b>DOCTORATE</b>													
2014-15	4	73	38	41		79		177	1,607	38	130	55	2,243
2015-16	6	62	52	46		103		161	1,391	82	149	117	2,167
2016-17	5	64	39	69		139		164	1,449	144	173	166	2,411
2017-18	5	86	49	194		118		210	1,359	166	246	178	2,611
2018-19	5	98	51	234	0	111	0	256	1,610	193	293	161	3,012
<b>TOTAL</b>													
2014-15	183	3,247	2,280	10,694		4,377		15,098	12,861	1,974	10,796	3,569	65,078
2015-16	217	4,927	2,720	11,627		5,121		16,112	14,284	2,236	11,550	3,801	72,595
2016-17	353	5,507	2,554	12,834		6,496		17,629	15,583	2,665	12,417	4,303	80,343
2017-18	499	6,194	2,886	14,713		7,096		19,155	16,514	3,174	13,710	4,564	88,507
2018-19	890	6,744	2,861	16,468	0	7,827	0	21,606	17,861	3,795	14,129	4,578	96,758



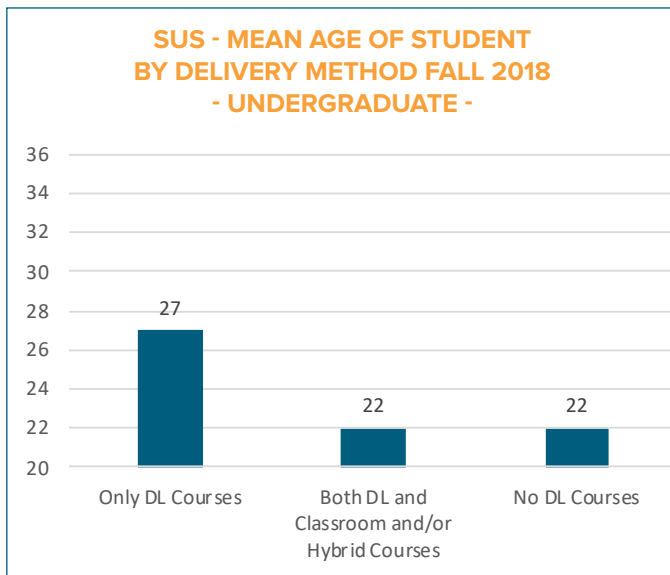
SOURCE: BOG Office of Data & Analytics, extracted from datamarts on 3/19/2020. Data reports credit hours attempted and aggregated by course level. Total undergraduate student credit hours are divided by 30 to obtain the number of undergraduate FTEs. Total graduate student credit hours are divided by 24 to obtain the number of graduate FTEs.

# Student Demographics

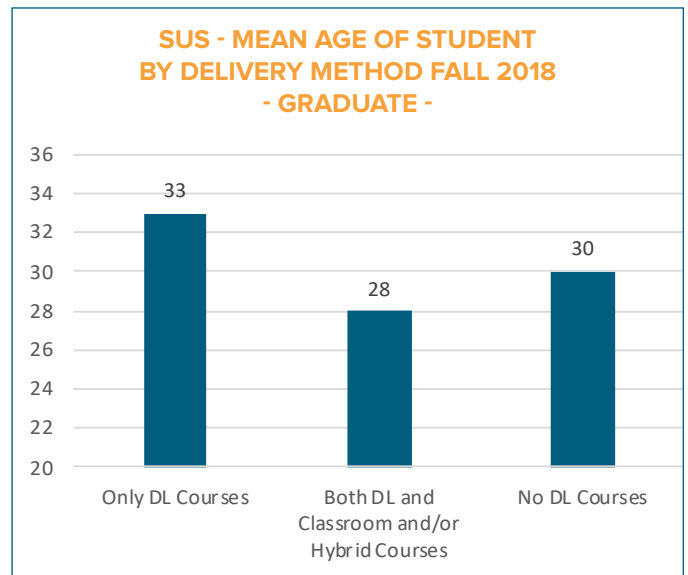
## Age of Student

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 both distance learning and classroom and/or hybrid courses. This is consistent with studies that have shown fully online students are likely to be working while enrolled and need the flexibility afforded by distance learning courses.

As noted in a review of data submitted to U.S. News & World Report, “In the past, working adults returning to college had to quit their jobs to pursue a full-time degree, or commute to a campus for classes at night or on weekends. Today, given the flexibility of [online education](#), it’s no surprise that – as U.S. News data show – it’s those very working professionals who are drawn to the virtual classroom.”<sup>1</sup>



SOURCE: See next page



SOURCE: See next page

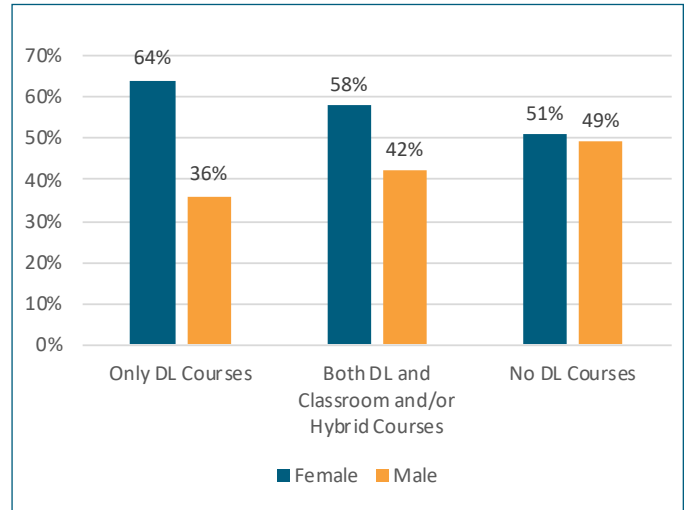
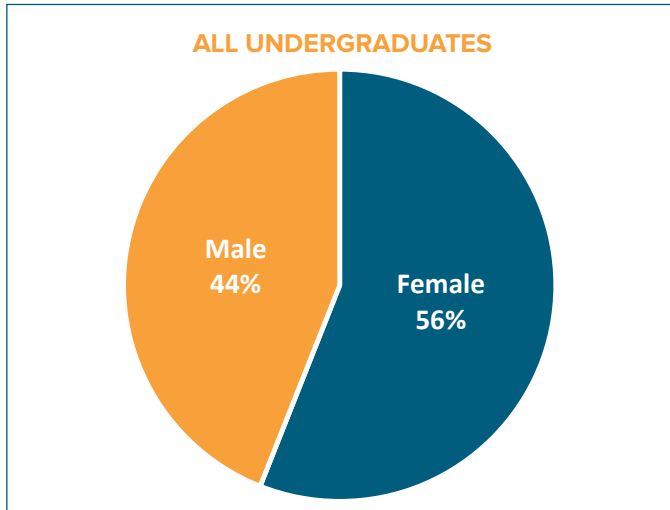
*“I really like the flexibility [UF Online] allowed me to have with my schedule,” Amelia said. “As a mother of three, I was very busy with my children’s activities, tending to family obligations, and having a full-time job. The online program allowed me to access the lectures and assignments at times I was able to – like in the evenings, late nights, or on the weekends.”<sup>2</sup>*

AMELIA NICHOLS ALAVA



# Gender

Females comprise a greater proportion of undergraduates who took only distance learning courses than in those who took no distance learning courses. Sixty-four percent (64%) of undergraduates who took only distance learning courses in 2018-19 were female, compared to 51% who took no distance learning courses. Females comprised 56% of the undergraduate student body as a whole. A common reason cited for the high number of females in the distance learning space is family caregiving responsibilities, which leave them place-bound.



*SOURCE: BOG Office of Data & Analytics, extracted from datamarts on 3/23/2020. 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.*



**Business programs in the SUS ranked in the top 20  
BEST ONLINE MASTER'S BUSINESS PROGRAMS**

*in their respective specialty categories by [U.S. News & World Report](#)*

**# 4 UF**  
**Master's in Business Administration**

**# 4 UF**  
**General Management MBA**

**#12 FSU**  
**Master's in Business (non-MBA)**

## 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	
	2017	2018	2017	2018	2017	2018
American Indian or Alaska Native	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Asian	4%	4%	5%	5%	4%	5%
Black or African American	14%	13%	11%	12%	14%	14%
Hispanic/Latino	31%	31%	27%	28%	28%	29%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Nonresident alien	1%	1%	3%	3%	3%	4%
Race and ethnicity unknown	2%	2%	1%	2%	1%	1%
Two or more races	3%	3%	4%	4%	4%	4%
White	46%	45%	48%	46%	45%	44%

## Residency

Ninety-four percent (94%) of undergraduate students who took only distance learning courses were Florida residents, while 91% of all undergraduates were Florida residents.

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	
<b>2017</b>								
	HEADCOUNT	%	HEADCOUNT	%	HEADCOUNT	%	HEADCOUNT	%
Florida	27,697	95%	110,446	92%	115,089	92%	253,232	92%
Non-Florida	1,497	5%	9,991	8%	10,350	8%	21,838	8%
<b>2018</b>								
	HEADCOUNT	%	HEADCOUNT	%	HEADCOUNT	%	HEADCOUNT	%
Florida	29,274	94%	116,589	91%	107,858	91%	253,721	91%
Non-Florida	1,730	6%	11,685	9%	10,482	9%	23,897	9%

SOURCE: BOG Office of Data & Analytics, extracted from datamarts on 3/23/2020. 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.

# Student Services

## Florida Virtual Campus

The Florida Virtual Campus (FLVC) provides state-funded services to fulfill its statutory responsibilities delineated in sections 1006.75 and 1006.735, Florida Statutes. These services, which are provided to institutions in both the State University System and Florida College System, include:

1. Developing and managing a state-wide internet-based catalog of distance learning courses and programs;
2. Providing statewide online student advising services and support;
3. Providing a K-20 statewide computer-assisted student advising system to support career and education planning;
4. Providing a single library automation system and associated resources and services for the State University System and the Florida College System.

## QUALITY COURSE DESIGN

The first goal in the *SUS 2025 Strategic Plan for Online Education* is “The State University will create a culture of quality for online education.” In support of this goal, and continuing its involvement in efforts to support quality online programs in both the SUS and Florida College System, FLVC implemented the following initiatives in 2019:

- The Florida Quality Matters Initiative, which reduces costs to institutions through the shared licensing of a statewide subscription to the Quality Matters system.
- The Florida Instructional Designer Network, which sponsors professional development events for instructional design and technology professionals in partnership with the two lead institutions for this effort, the University of Central Florida and Seminole State College.

## ONLINE CAREER AND ACADEMIC ONLINE ADVISING SERVICES

In 2019, FLVC began re-envisioning and re-designing its career and academic online advising system “with particular emphasis on integrating career and academic planning into a single tool by merging the career planning features of MyCareerShines with the academic advising capabilities of FloridaShines. This new tool will allow Floridians to explore their career goals, identify relevant credentials and preparation programs, and find their best path to that credential among Florida’s postsecondary program offerings.”<sup>3</sup>

In 2019, FLVC processed over 64,000 online applications for transient students who wished to enroll in courses offered by a public postsecondary education institution that is not their home institution.

## LIBRARY RESOURCES AND SERVICES

FLVC is statutorily responsible for administering the Florida Academic Library Services Cooperative (FALSC) to provide a single library automation system and associated resources and services for the State University System and the Florida College System. FLVC’s 2019 Annual Report includes the following key points regarding FALSC:

- Students, faculty, and staff performed almost 21 million searches using the integrated library system and checked out more than 3 million library materials;
- FALSC receives direct funding to provide a portfolio of e-resources that meet the needs of students and libraries. In 2019, college and university students, faculty, and staff performed more than 37 million searches of e-resources provided by FALSC.
- FALSC also coordinates the group licensing of e-resources with local institutional funds, negotiating substantial cost savings on behalf of college and university libraries. During 2019, FALSC’s work with electronic library resources provided a savings of over \$15 million through the central licensing process.<sup>4</sup>

## Open Educational Resources and e-Textbooks

One of the goals in the *2025 Strategic Plan for Online Education* is to reduce the costs of educational materials for students. To that end, several initiatives are underway in the SUS to increase the use of Open Educational Resources (OER) and reduce the costs of textbooks and other materials.

Upon approval of the Innovation and Online Committee and Board of Governors in 2019, the Chancellor and his staff pursued an action plan to obtain letters of commitment from publishers and university bookstore vendors to ensure that students in the State University System will be paying less for textbooks and other instructional materials than they currently pay, beginning with the 2020 Fall term, and that students throughout the System will be paying consistent prices for the same materials. The Chancellor recognized participating entities as Torchbearers and invited them to use the SUS torch symbol to identify materials that met all of the components of the Action Plan. Faculty are not required to use materials with the torch symbol, but the torch

will help them, as well as students, easily identify materials that meet the affordability initiative.

The SUS Open Educational Resources/eText Workgroup, created in response to the *2025 Strategic Plan for Online Education*'s goal of reducing costs to students for educational materials, recommended that SUS institutions have the ability to opt into FIU's Affordability Counts initiative. FIU developed the Affordability Counts website with a searchable database of courses using Open Education Resources and low-cost materials. By basing the repository on common course codes, faculty in the SUS are able to easily identify the courses using free and low-cost materials already adopted by their peers. Six SUS institutions (FAMU, FAU, FIU, UCF, UNF, and USF) are currently participating in the initiative, and UF has established a similar initiative for its faculty, Affordable UF, which is described below.

Other system-wide initiatives include:

- FLVC's purchase of a system membership in the Open Textbook Network, whose library contains over 400 open textbooks, as well as faculty reviews of materials;

### 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).

- FLVC’s second statewide open educational resources (OER) summit, held in February 2019, focused on collaborations between instructional designers, student services professionals, and librarians, with over 200 attendees from these areas. Additional information about TOPkit is included in the Academic Affairs section of this report.”
- The Teaching Online Preparation Toolkit’s (TOPkit) continued provision of tools, techniques, and strategies to encourage faculty development of affordable content. TOPkit was developed in response to tactics in the *2025 Strategic Plan for Online Education* and hosted by UCF on behalf of the System.



*FAU’s Center for Online and Continuing Education has been chosen for the*  
**UNITED STATES  
 DISTANCE LEARNING  
 ASSOCIATION (USDLA)  
 INNOVATION AWARD**  
*for the development of an open education resource (OER), zero-cost Methods of Calculus eText.*

In addition to the system-wide initiatives above, individual universities continued to explore and/or implement approaches to reduce textbook costs. Examples include, but are not limited to, the following initiatives at UF, FSU, and UNF.

- The Affordable UF initiative brings together partners from across campus to help address the issue of high cost materials: UF Libraries curate a list of OER repositories for faculty use; UF faculty may use the Mason OER Metafinder to simultaneously search well-known OER repositories; and

UF’s Center for Instructional Technology and Training helps faculty develop OER materials.

- In March 2018, FSU libraries hosted an OER Symposium to raise awareness among faculty regarding OER materials, and FSU is continuing to award grants to faculty to support them in replacing commercial textbooks with materials that are available to students at no cost, either open educational resources or library-licensed ebooks.
- UNF is another example of a state university that awards grants to faculty members as encouragement for adopting open educational resources for their courses. In their redesigned courses, all required textbooks are free to students and the cost of any supplementary materials does not exceed \$25. The class syllabus is made available to other department faculty teaching the same course.

## Tutoring

Many state universities offer tutoring for online students through their own academic units, distance learning offices, and/or third-party providers. Two of many examples in the System are the services provided by FAU and UWF:

- FAU’s Center for Learning and Student Success (CLASS) uses high-performing student tutors to provide free eTutoring for online students via the university’s learning management system. In addition, CLASS provides online course orientations so students can better understand the online learning environment; one-on-one eSuccess online consultations for students to discuss such issues as removing barriers to success in online courses; and online concierge services to help students better navigate FAU resources;

- At UWF, one-on-one tutoring is available to eligible military families through a program funded by the Department of Defense. In addition to accessing tutoring services in many academic fields, eligible military families may receive assistance with career preparation, such as resume writing and job searches, and preparation for tests such as the ACT and SAT.

## 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."<sup>5</sup>

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, UCF developed a proctoring program to capture students' test-taking process by using web cameras and web browsers. Students are recorded taking their exams and their captured image can be compared to that of the "official" student likeness from the UCF Card Office. If there are any concerns, the faculty or administration can investigate each recording. If the student does not have a web camera, one may be checked out at the UCF library, or the student may take the test using a computer in the library or via one of several downloaded apps that can convert a smartphone into a webcam.

USF uses a commercially available product that records the student's identity via webcam and monitors the exam attempt in various ways,

depending upon the exam settings controlled by individual instructors; for example, it can record the student's webcam or screen and share that information with the instructor.

Several institutions, including UF, UCF, UNF, FAU, and UWF, use more than one proctoring vendor, providing faculty the opportunity to select the one that best meets his or her needs for the exams being monitored. The approaches used by vendors vary. For example, one of the vendors provides facial detection, which "notifies the instructor if a student looks away from the exam for too long, to detect if the student leaves the testing environment, or if a secondary face is present within the testing environment...The instructor is then able to review the exam attempt by the student and make the final decision on whether or not the behavior actually infringes their exam's integrity."<sup>6</sup>

Another vendor uses Artificial Intelligence to monitor the student during the exam, alerting a live proctor if it detects a potential problem. The proctor assesses the situation and sends notes and a recording to the student's instructor.<sup>7</sup>

FGCU uses a mix of online proctoring solutions; however, the automated proctoring of Respondus Monitor with recording and analysis is a primary option integrated within FGCU's Canvas learning management system.

Exams may also be taken at proctored testing centers. The Florida Virtual Campus (FLVC) provides a searchable web page that allows students to find a testing center in Florida located near them. FLVC has also negotiated statewide prices for two online proctoring services that institutions may choose to use.

## Student Support and Retention

To provide quality online programs and to meet accreditation requirements, universities need support services for online students that are

equivalent to those offered for on-campus students. Institutions in the SUS implement a variety of services to support their online students. Examples throughout the System are below:

- UF Online advisors work collaboratively with each student to develop a customized completion plan that considers major, transfer credits, goals, and desired timeline for completion of his or her degree. UF Online continues to provide a venue for academic and social engagement of online students via its UF Plaza, where students may collaborate, encourage, and support one another.
- As is true of other libraries in the SUS, FAMU's library participates in providing 24-hour online service, real-time online chat, and telephone and email reference service via the "Ask a Librarian" program administered by the Florida Department of State Division of Library and Information Services. In addition, interlibrary loan services are available, and distance learning students have reciprocal borrowing privileges from SUS and Florida College System institutions.
- USF provides remote access to academic support services through a partnership between its library and Tutoring and Learning Services. Additional services provided for online students include a toolkit for successful online learning; a video series on the journey to a career, including finding full-time employment; success and wellness coaching; and a case management team that will meet virtually with students to identify intervention options for students in need of support.
- FIU has established an ecosystem of support services that cater to the student experience from student to career. Success coaches help students adjust to their new fully online learning experience by helping them persist toward graduation

and introducing them to resources such as Panther Den. Panther Den was created as a social learning community where students are able to access resources, engage with other peers, find opportunities to contribute to the FIU community, and access Career Engage. Career Engage is a professional readiness path, tailored specifically to a student's future industry, that can be integrated into the current student's academic experience.

- FLVC's MyCareerShines supported 2,646 new SUS students who completed 4,207 assessments and began planning for their future and their transition to the world of work.



*The SUS, in partnership with the Texas State System, won the Online Learning Consortium's **2018 AWARD FOR EFFECTIVE PRACTICE** for implementation of the Online Student Support Services Scorecard which was developed in response to the SUS 2025 Strategic Plan for Online Education.*

## Mental Health Services for Online Students

Universities provide various health services for online students and have expanded their services in response to COVID-19. For example, FSU's Counseling Center offers telemental-health services, utilizes video-conferencing to provide workshops that focusing on anxiety and depression, and provides self-help interactive therapy by utilizing a suite of online tools and services. FIU's Counseling and Psychological Services offers online self-screening for depression and anxiety, with links to resources that may be of help to students.

# Academic Affairs

## Online Programs

Access Goal 1 in the *2025 Strategic Plan for Online Education* is to increase access to and participation in online education, with one of the tactics being to establish and maintain an inventory of SUS fully online and primarily online programs. The Board of Governors Office developed a database that captures online programs, defined as “online majors.”

During the Fall 2019 term, the following online programs were provided in the SUS:

DEGREE LEVEL	SUS	
	TOTAL	PROGRAMS OF STRATEGIC EMPHASIS
Bachelor’s	164	72
Master’s	311	210
Specialist	4	3
Research Doctorate	15	10
Professional Doctorate	10	10
<b>Total Programs</b>	<b>504</b>	<b>305</b>

SOURCE: Board of Governors Inventory of Online Programs/Majors

Most – 61% - of the online programs/majors were in Programs of Strategic Emphasis as defined in the SUS 2025 Strategic Plan. Programs of Strategic Emphasis promote the alignment of program offerings with the economic development and workforce needs of the State.

## 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 in 2018-19 offered 21 fully online majors, 7 minors, and 6 certificate programs. More than 2,000 students have graduated from UF Online since its inception, and it was recognized in 2019 by U.S. News & World Report as the #5 Best Online Bachelor’s Program in the United States and as #4 in 2020. U.S. News & World Report evaluates online Bachelor’s programs in four categories:

- Engagement
- Services and Technologies
- Faculty Credentials and Training
- Expert Opinion

Each UF Online student works with a dedicated advisor to develop a custom completion plan. The advisor follows up with the student on a regular basis to ensure successful completion of the plan. Students receive additional support from UF Online’s virtual campus community, the UF Plaza, which provides focused resources, engagement opportunities, and peer interactions.

UF Online has continued its Pathway to Campus Enrollment (PaCE) program, which was launched in 2015. First Time in College students complete the first part of their programs online and then may transition to campus for upper division courses in certain majors without having to reapply. In 2018-19, over 50 majors were available for students in the PaCE program.

During 2018-19, UF Online continued the new initiative it launched in May 2018, the Employer Pathways Program. Through this initiative, Discover Financial Services, Walmart, and The Walt Disney Company pay 100% of tuition, fees, and books for their employees admitted into select programs. This initiative further expands the impact of UF Online by reaching working adults who wish to pursue higher education while being employed full-time.





challenges and share best practices for working with returning adult learners.<sup>8</sup>

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. Since 2014, the program has graduated 1,754 students. During the 2018-19 academic year, over 2,500 students were enrolled in the program, which has a partnership with 20 Florida state colleges, state universities, and private universities; over 200 certificate, associate, and bachelor degree programs are offered in most high-demand fields, including information technology, business, healthcare, and education.

Complete Florida's annual survey of 601 currently enrolled, not enrolled, and graduated adult learners in 2018-19 found that:

- 75% of respondents are employed;
- 48% of respondents typically take one or two classes a semester;
- 50% of respondents have children younger than 18;
- 59% of respondents are first generation in college; and
- 35% of respondents have undergraduate debt of more than \$10,000.

Critical initiatives of Complete Florida involve reducing time and costs required for adult learners to earn academic credentials. Notable this year is a focus on:

- Growing business partnerships to align workplace needs with higher education programs.
- Working with partners to identify and re-enroll existing students who had stopped-out for more than three consecutive semesters.
- Launching the Complete Florida Network for education professionals to discuss



*U.S. News & World Report*  
ranked several graduate programs  
in the SUS in the top 20 of the  
**BEST ONLINE GRADUATE  
PROGRAMS FOR VETERANS**  
in their respective specialty areas

- #4 FSU Education Programs
- #6 FSU Information Technology Programs
- #6 FSU Criminal Justice Programs
- #11 UCF Criminal Justice Programs
- #19 FAU Business Programs

## Complete Florida Military

Complete Florida Military was created in 2015 to help current military, veterans, and their families go to college. Managed by the Innovation Institute at UWF, coaches assist applicants with navigating the admissions and financial aid processes, finding the shortest path to a degree, and guiding students from application to graduation and a career. Complete Florida success coaches work directly with active-military and veterans to evaluate relevant military experiences and benefits and select the most appropriate Florida college or university that will match the individual's interests, experiences, and abilities. Degree programs consist of fully online classes that will lead to the completion of a postsecondary degree.



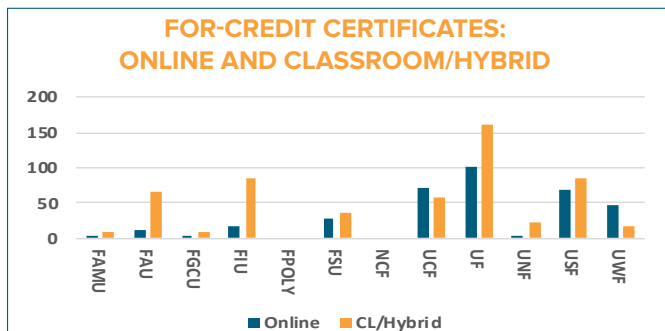
*UF (#2) and UCF (#12) were  
ranked in the top 20 of  
**BEST ONLINE BACHELOR'S  
PROGRAMS FOR VETERANS**  
by *U.S. News & World Report**

## Meeting Workforce Needs

In addition to providing traditional academic degree programs, SUS institutions provide noncredit programs and credit certificate programs, many online, to help address workforce needs. Of the 908 credit certificate programs provided system-wide in 2018-19, 60% were in Programs of Strategic Emphasis and 39% were offered online. Over 5,000 credit certificates were awarded.

Credit certificate programs offered online varied by institution and included such programs as:

- USF’s Applied Biostatistics; Business Analytics; and Epidemiology of Infectious Diseases programs;
- UCF’s Instructional Design for Simulation; Autism Spectrum Disorders; and Transportation Engineering programs; and
- UF’s Global Strategic Communication; Engineering Innovation; Sustainable Construction; and Forensic Drug Chemistry programs.



SOURCE: SUS Data Submissions 9/2019

SUS institutions also offer noncredit programs, many online, that:

- Prepare enrollees to seek licensure or certification by a recognized certifying or licensing body or for admission into college or specific programs;
- Result in successful completers obtaining and/or maintaining licensure/certification;

- Assist enrollees in obtaining skills for entry into an occupation or upskilling to higher levels of work; and
- Contribute to people performing better through physical and mental well-being and personal growth.

Excluding medical and law programs, over 1,600 noncredit programs were provided in the SUS in 2018-19, with approximately 42% of those being provided online.

### 2018-2019 NON-CREDIT PROGRAMS (Excludes Medical and Law Schools)

CATEGORIES	PROGRAMS	ONLINE	COMPLETERS
Preparing Enrollees for Obtaining Licensure/ Certification or for Admissions into College or Special Programs	230	142	14,867
Obtaining and Maintaining Licensure/ Certifications	229	11	22,012
Career Development	825	315	140,681
Well-Being and Personal Growth	> 348	> 213	67,085
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>&gt; 1,632</b>	<b>&gt; 681</b>	<b>244,645</b>

SOURCE: SUS Data Submissions 2/2020

## 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 provide 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 University of Central Florida has

hosted the first two annual Innovation Summits, with enrollment – and opportunities to present – open to faculty and staff from institutions in the SUS, as well as those in the Florida College System and private institutions.

Sessions for the March 2019 Innovation Summit included, but were not limited to, the following presentations from faculty and staff in the SUS:

- Low-Cost and High-Impact Immersive Assignments for Your Online Course (FIU)
- Adaptive Learning: Lessons Learned from 3 Years of Research (UCF)
- Virtual Mentoring (UNF)
- Driving Student Success with Predictive Analytics (FIU)
- Using Digital Badges to Connect Career Readiness Across Campus (USF)
- Overcoming the Challenges of Online Language Learning (UF)

The March 2020 Innovation Summit included the following sessions from SUS faculty and staff, in addition to sessions from the Florida College System institutions:

- Affordability Counts: Scaling Textbook Affordability Initiatives to Reduce Student Cost (FIU)
- Imparting Future Workforce Skills Using Virtualized Active Learning (UCF)
- Analytics Informed Interventions for Increased Student Engagement (FIU)
- Crafting Interactive Video Lectures through PlayPosit (UF)
- Adventures in Adaptive Learning in Elementary Spanish Language (UCF)
- Gallery Tour for Engaging Education (FAU)
- Perspective on Adaptive Learning from Across the State (panel discussion USF, UCF, Indian River State College)

## 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.

Faculty in the SUS have begun implementing adaptive learning in their courses. During the 2020 Innovation Summit described above, faculty from USF, UCF, and Indian River State College discussed how they personalized the student experience in their own courses in Mathematics, Biology, Modern Languages, and Accounting, sharing technology selection, pedagogical choices, success stories, and lessons learned.

UCF was an early adopter of adaptive learning and has been expanding its implementation of adaptive learning for several years. The university provides a faculty development course for faculty who wish to teach adaptive courses using tools such as Realizeit, an adaptive learning platform for higher education and corporate learning. The course includes such topics as pedagogy, technical and logistical issues, course development strategies, and building the course in Realizeit and Canvas, the institution's learning management system. UCF has seen improved student success in courses that use adaptive learning and has expanded the number of platforms it supports.

UF is conducting a pilot project with Realizeit with two Biology courses and their labs. This is the first time Realizeit has used adaptive learning with labs, and UF is conducting a study to evaluate the performance of the adaptive learning students with traditional students to determine if better learning outcomes and retention are accomplished with adaptive learning.

USF is evaluating the effectiveness of personalized learning strategies with Engineering and a bootcamp Accounting course after piloting the courses using the Realizeit platform.



*In 2018, UCF won the Online Learning Consortium's **DIGITAL LEARNING INNOVATION AWARD** (\$100,000) for its use of innovative adaptive courseware in a gateway Mathematics course.*

FGCU piloted Realizeit with several modules of a College Algebra course. The pilot was successful and development of the full course is in progress.

### 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 piloting the Florida CourseShare initiative for sharing course materials created and donated by faculty throughout the SUS. The types of materials that may be contributed include full courses, syllabi, assignments, quizzes, content modules, and videos. These materials may be used in full or in part. Contributed courses must have earned a High Quality designation through the Florida Quality Online Courses Review Process. Materials are placed in Canvas Commons, which is accessible by faculty throughout the System.

### SHARED PROGRAMS

One of the tactics in the *2025 Strategic Plan for Online Education* is to “develop or co-develop shared programs that would be available, but not required, for use in areas of high demand while maintaining quality and increasing efficiencies through an innovative, shared model.

With support of Title VI grants, UF has shared parts of several language programs with other institutions. Working with the UF Center for African studies, courses in Swahili, Yoruba, and Akan have been shared with FAMU, Bethune-Cookman, and Tuskegee University (Alabama). Working with UF’s Center for European studies, courses/programs in Polish, Hungarian and Turkish have been offered to SUS institutions.

In an effort to enrich each SUS institution’s language portfolio by yielding degree programming, certificates, and individual courses, a system-wide Task Force for Shared Language Instruction was created and began initial work in 2018-19.


### STEM LABS

After approval of the system-wide STEM Labs Task Force report and recommendations by the Innovation and Online Committee and full Board of Governors in January 2018, UF Online moved forward in October 2018 with convening a symposium and showcase for SUS faculty who teach Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) courses and labs online. In addition to having a keynote speaker from Johns Hopkins University, faculty from throughout the SUS (UF, FGCU, UCF, FSU, FAU, FIU) presented lessons learned in the development and delivery of various STEM courses provided online, including courses in Computer Science, Math, Engineering, Physics, and Chemistry. The final plenary session focused on “Ensuring High Quality STEM Undergraduate Courses and Labs Considerations for Medical School & Veterinary School Admission.”



*UCF won the Online Learning Consortium's **2018 AWARD FOR EFFECTIVE PRACTICE** for work with digitized assessments in large-enrollment STEM curricula.*

In June 2019, UF offered its first Chemistry Lab Bootcamp, which was developed by faculty from UF's Chemistry Department in conjunction with UF's Center for Online Innovation and Production. UF collaborated with faculty and instructional designers from across the SUS in the development of the lab. Upon its successful completion, SUS institutions were able to take the curriculum plan and adapt it to their own campuses, students, and faculty. Students took the first part of the lab completely online, then were required to come to campus for a two-week lab bootcamp. After the two-week bootcamp, students were able to complete remaining course requirements online.



*In 2018, a UF Online faculty-led team won the Online Learning Consortium's **DIGITAL LEARNING INNOVATION AWARD** (\$10,000) for providing access to at-home data acquisition labs for the introductory physics sequence.*

FAU launched a fully online version of CHM 2045 and Lab in spring 2020. A unique feature of the course is the creation of 360 degree interactive lab videos that students can view through low cost Google Goggles or on their computer. Embedded questions in the videos prompt students to test their knowledge of lab content. This course was designed for students in fully online computer science programs. The 3-credit lecture for this course also meets the Affordability Counts benchmark of \$60 or less for eText and course materials. The total cost for the course and lab is \$122.45, a savings of \$125.04 per student (over 50% off).

## State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA)

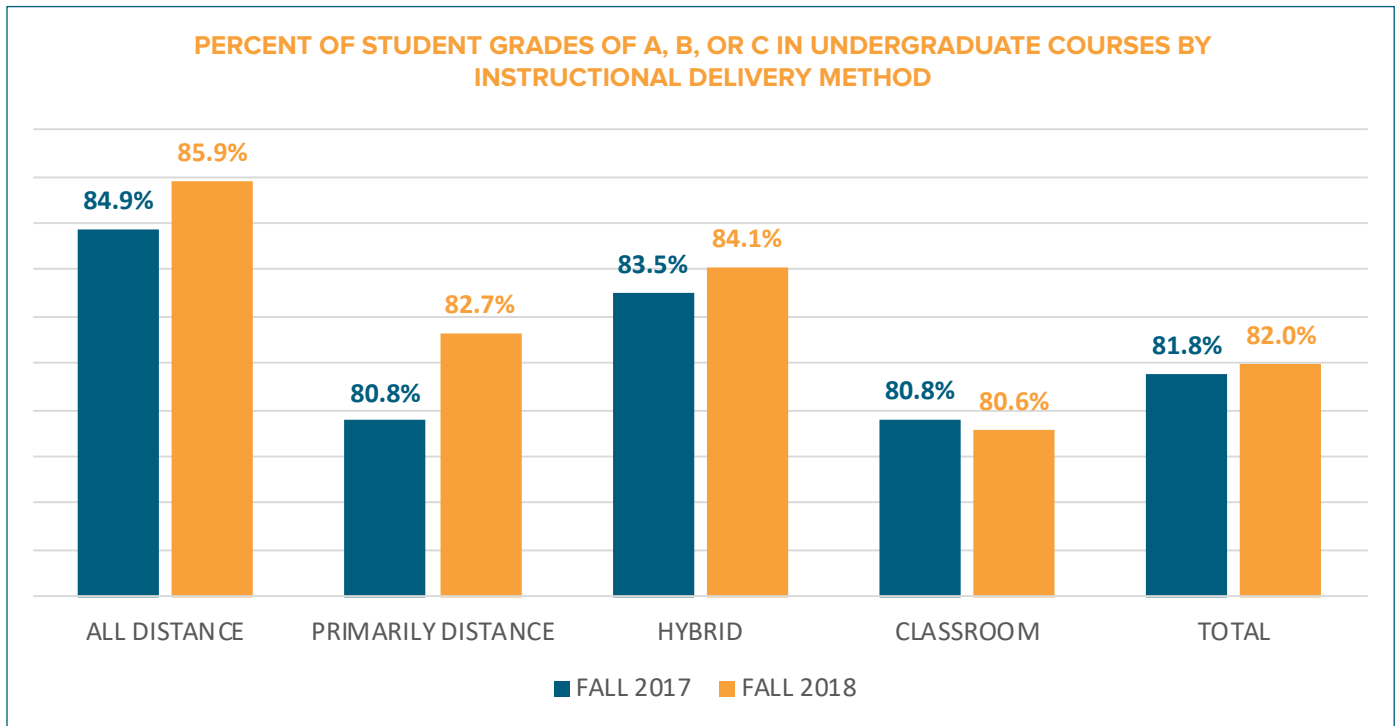
Florida became a participant in the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA) in 2017 after legislation authorized the state to participate with other states to deliver postsecondary distance education beyond state boundaries, accepting each other's authorization of accredited institutions to deliver distance education. Along with many private institutions and institutions in the Florida College System, all institutions in the SUS, except Florida Polytechnic University, are members of SARA. Participating institutions report the number of students enrolled exclusively in distance education delivered outside of the home state of the institution. The most recent data reflected the following participation for the State.

- Total number of out-of-state students enrolled in FL-SARA institutions – 41,315
- Total number of Florida students enrolled in distance education programs in other states – 79,368<sup>9</sup>

FLVC has extended its membership in the Western Cooperative for Educational Telecommunication (WCET) State Authorization Network (SAN) to all SUS and Florida College System institutions. SAN provides guidance and support for navigating state authorization compliance issues.

## Grade Comparison

Overall, students in distance learning and hybrid courses performed well in 2018-19, with a higher percentage of students receiving an A, B, or C in courses provided fully at a distance than in courses provided in other modalities.



*SOURCE: BOG Office of Data & Analytics, extracted from datamarts on 3/23/2020. 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

The withdrawal rate from distance learning courses was comparable to the withdrawal rate from classroom courses.

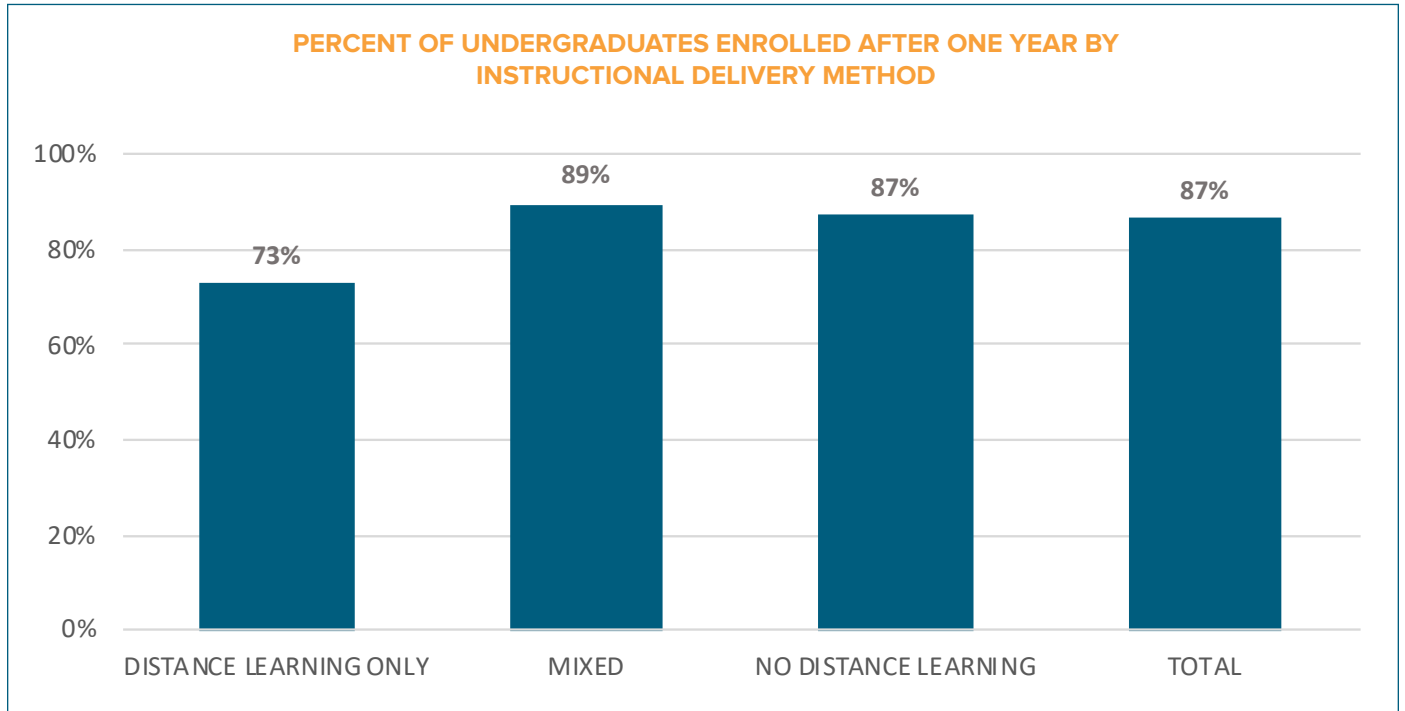
### PERCENT OF WITHDRAWAL GRADES AWARDED BY COURSE DELIVERY METHOD

DELIVERY METHOD	FALL 2017		FALL 2018	
	# WITHDRAWALS	% WITHDRAWALS	# WITHDRAWALS	% WITHDRAWALS
ALL DISTANCE	13,164	5.0%	11,327	4.1%
PRIMARILY DISTANCE	1,387	8.8%	1,677	6.2%
HYBRID	1,871	3.5%	2,056	3.2%
CLASSROOM	36,985	4.2%	33,930	3.9%
TOTAL	53,407	4.4%	48,990	3.9%

*Note: 'Withdrawals' represents the number of withdrawals divided by all grades awarded in courses by delivery method indicator.*

# Retention

Seventy-three percent (73%) of students enrolled only in distance learning courses in Fall 2017 were enrolled in Fall 2018. Additional research is needed to determine if those students who were not enrolled in Fall 2018 enrolled in a subsequent semester, transferred to another institution, or had been transient students with a different home institution in Fall 2017.



SOURCE: BOG Office of Data & Analytics, extracted from datamarts on 3/23/2020. 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.

**Best Colleges** ranked SUS institutions as the top three **BEST ONLINE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES**  
UF Online (#1), UCF (#2), and FIU (#3)

UF's Engineering online program ranked **#15 IN BEST ONLINE MASTER'S IN ENGINEERING PROGRAMS** by *U.S. News & World Report*

USF's "Gamification in Online Course Design: Instructional Technology Superhero" won **1ST PLACE IN THE CRYSTAL AWARDS** by the Division of Distance Learning of the Association for Educational Communications Technology

# Time to Degree

The average time-to-degree in 2018-19 was 3.92 years for full-time students earning Bachelor’s degrees in 120-credit-hour programs, the same as it was in 2017-18. Students who took no distance learning classes and those who took 61% - 80% of their credit hours via distance learning graduated in an average of 3.75 years, while all other students took an average of 3.92 - 4.0 years. The number of graduates who took 81% - 100% of their credit hours online was too small to generalize their time to degree.


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

% DL	2017-2018			2018-2019		
	N	%	MEDIAN	N	%	MEDIAN
0%	1,341	5%	3.75	1,011	4%	3.75
1-20%	11,776	48%	4.00	11,533	44%	4.00
21-40%	8,379	34%	3.92	9,519	37%	3.92
41-60%	2,737	11%	3.92	3,363	13%	3.92
61-80%	370	2%	3.75	473	2%	3.75
81-99%	37	0.2%	*	37	0.1%	*
100%	5	<0.1%	*	17	<0.1%	*
<b>Total</b>	<b>24,654</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>3.92</b>	<b>25,953</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>3.92</b>

SOURCE: BOG Office of Data & Analytics, extracted from datamarts on 3/31/2020. 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.



*FSU (#9) and USF (#10) have online programs ranked in the top 10 of the **BEST ONLINE MASTER’S IN COMPUTER INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY PROGRAMS** by U.S. News & World Report*



*Created as part of an interactive multimedia strategy to engage virtual students and first-time-in-college students, the “This is USF” video was a Platinum winner of the **2018 HERMES CREATIVE AWARDS***



## Professional Development

Continuing its focus on Quality in online education, the *2025 Strategic Plan for Online Education* stresses the importance of professional development of faculty and staff, specifically mentioning professional development opportunities for instructional designers, institutional leaders in online education, and those staff responsible for professional development activities for faculty who teach online courses:

### INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGNERS

The FLVC, in partnership with UCF and Seminole State College, hosts the Instructional Designer Network for instructional/learning designers, instructional/learning technologists, and educators who are interested in pedagogies, instructional design, course development, and technology.

In addition to providing monthly webinars, FLVC provides links to best practices, “real world tips,” related organizations, training and support, and development.

### INSTITUTIONAL LEADERS

FLVC hosted the 2019 Florida Open Educational Resources (OER) Summit on February 27-28, 2019, in Maitland, FL, with more than 200 faculty, academic librarians, instructional design and technology professionals, administrators, OER service providers, and supporters in attendance. Guest speakers and break-out sessions provided resources and opportunities for attendees to begin implementing strategies or enhancing their current strategies for providing OER on their campuses.

The 2020 Summit, provided in Daytona Beach, FL, and also hosted by FLVC, focused on the changing environment of higher education and included sessions on:

- Shifting demographics and enrollments
- Understanding the impact of changing federal policy

- The current state of online education and emergent instructional models
- Considering “the degree” in light of the movement toward more discrete and skills-based credentials
- How colleges and universities are already changing to meet increased competition
- What the future might bring

### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT STAFF



UCF, in partnership with other institutions in the SUS and Florida College System, launched and hosts the Teaching Online Preparation Toolkit (TOPkit) program for those staff who are responsible for professional development programs for faculty who teach online courses. TOPkit consists of three components:

1. A website to provide resources for planning, developing, and evaluation of institutions’ faculty development programs
2. A Community of Practice for collaboration and sharing of resources and best practices, including a monthly newsletter
3. Annual two-day workshops to provide a train-the-trainer experience so staff can return to their campuses to effectively implement the best practices, resources, and tools found within TOPkit.

In 2018-19, TOPkit had:

- 13,998 new unique website visitors, bringing the total to 19,888 as of June 2019
- 70,133 new pageviews, bringing the total to 98,277 as of June 2019, with the top visited pages of Checklists and Rubrics,

Sample Courses, Community Forums, and Ask ADDIE (an “advice column” for online faculty development practitioners)

- 132 new registered users of the TOPkit website, bringing the total to 426 as of June 2019 (Note: Registered users can participate in the Community of Practice and submit an event to the Calendar of Events.)
- 40 new subscriptions to the TOPkit Digest (monthly email newsletter), bringing the total to 700 as of June 2019
- 79 participants at TOPkit Workshop 2019, up 8 participants from 2018

## Quality Courses

### QUALITY COURSE DESIGN

As the demand for online courses in higher education continues to increase, so has the concern for the quality of online education and its impact on student success. While there are many components of online education that can impact student success, the most standardized and least subjective component is course design and structure.

### QUALITY ONLINE 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 online courses. The SUS and Florida College System (FCS) Quality Workgroup recommended – and the Steering Committee approved - the Florida Online Course Design Quality review process, which is used in conjunction with the Quality Matters Standards to assign quality designations to online courses. The SUS and FCS Quality Workgroup developed this unique Florida process to be flexible enough to work across all SUS and FCS institutions. Institutions that prefer to use their own standards and rubrics provide evidence that they are comparable to those published by Quality Matters.



*FIU is*  
**SECOND IN THE NATION**  
*for the number of courses certified*  
*by Quality Matters*

### ONLINE COURSE DESIGN QUALITY PROCESS

The standards-based course review process is a significant commitment of institutional time and resources. When reviewing an online 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 Quality Matters Standards are below:

1. **Course Overview and Introduction:** The overall design of the course is made clear to the learner at the beginning of the course.
2. **Learning Objectives:** Learning objectives or competencies describe what learners will be able to do upon completion of the course.
3. **Assessment and Measurement:** Assessments are integral to the learning process and are designed to evaluate learner progress in achieving the stated learning objectives or mastering the competencies.
4. **Instructional Materials:** Instructional materials enable learners to achieve stated learning objectives or competencies.
5. **Learning Activities and Learner Interaction:** Learning activities facilitate and support learner interaction and engagement.
6. **Course Technology:** Course technologies support learners’ achievement of course objectives or competencies.

- 7. **Learner Support:** The course facilitates learner access to institutional support services essential to learner success.
- 8. **Accessibility and Usability:** The course design reflects a commitment to accessibility and usability for all learners.

## 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. The Quality Workgroup developed, and the Steering Committee approved, three levels

of awards: President’s Award, State University System Distinguished Online Teaching Award (working title), and Chancellor’s Award. Quality course design designations will be a prerequisite for the awards, which will be based on evidence of exemplary online teaching. Broad-based evaluation and eligibility criteria, such as a High Quality course designation, number of years teaching online, evidence of learning gains, and student evaluation data, will be developed by the faculty awards committee, but each institution could have slightly different criteria for its own President’s Award winner.



*Affordable Colleges Online ranked several online Bachelor’s programs in the SUS in the top 20 of*  
**BEST SCHOOLS AND PROGRAMS ONLINE**

Accounting . . . . .	FAU	# 12
Art Programs . . . . .	UF	# 17
Communications . . . . .	FIU	# 1
Communications . . . . .	UCF	# 3
Communications . . . . .	UF	# 8
Construction Management . . . . .	FIU	# 9
Criminal Justice . . . . .	FIU	# 3
Criminal Justice . . . . .	USF	# 8
Environmental Science . . . . .	UNF	# 18
Hotel Management Degrees . . . . .	FIU	# 1
Psychology . . . . .	UF	# 2
Psychology . . . . .	FIU	# 8
Psychology . . . . .	UCF	# 20
Education . . . . .	FIU	# 1
Education . . . . .	UWF	# 16
Theology . . . . .	UCF	# 13



*Online programs in the SUS received*  
**TOP 20 RANKINGS**  
*by additional organizations*

#1	USF	<a href="#"><u>Master’s in Health Informatics</u></a> <sup>10</sup>
#2	UF	<a href="#"><u>Top Online Master’s in Business Administration</u></a> <sup>11</sup>
#4	UNF	<a href="#"><u>2019 Best, Most Affordable LGBTQ-Friendly Online Colleges</u></a> <sup>12</sup>
#6	FGCU:	<a href="#"><u>Most Affordable Online Master of Public Administration Degrees for 2020</u></a> <sup>13</sup>
#7	UNF	<a href="#"><u>Online RN to BSN Programs</u></a> <sup>14</sup>
#9	FIU	<a href="#"><u>Professional Online MBA program ranked #9 in the world</u></a> <sup>15</sup>
#18	UNF	<a href="#"><u>Master of Science in Nutrition and Dietetics</u></a> <sup>16</sup>
#18	FIU	<a href="#"><u>Top Online Master’s in Business Administration</u></a> <sup>17</sup>

## Cost of Online Education

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 has not been updated, because not enough time has elapsed for major shifts to be reflected in the cost categories. The cost report was described in previous annual reports 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 using the common LMS, as are several institutions in the Florida College System.

## Facilities

As a result of a joint meeting of the Board’s Facilities and Innovation and Online Committees in 2017, Board staff developed a facilities planning model that removed 80% of the distance learning FTE from classroom, teaching labs, gymnasium, and auditorium space types, thereby decreasing the amount of funds needed to meet minimum required space standards. This model is being 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 model calculations will result in lower space needs related to online education.

## Infrastructure

Affordability tactics in the *2025 Strategic Plan for Online Education* include expanding and enhancing shared support services for online students. The Infrastructure Workgroup collaborated with FLVC to develop a structure to facilitate collaboration across the SUS and Florida College System to share available statewide agreements, services, and contracts. The site for sharing agreements is live and FLVC is continuing to populate it for use by SUS and FCS institutions. The proctoring master agreements have recently been added to the site, and agreements for closed captioning should soon be added. FLVC is compiling a list of additional institutional agreements related to online education that other universities may use because of “piggyback” provisions.



*Affordable Colleges Online ranked three SUS institutions in the top 20 of the*  
**BEST ONLINE COLLEGES OF 2020**  
*UF (#1), FIU (#10), and FAU (#16)*

# Endnotes

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# Appendix A

## STEERING COMMITTEE

**Dr. Joseph Glover**

Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs  
University of Florida

**Dr. Ralph Wilcox, Chair**

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

**Dr. Ken Furton**

Provost and Executive Vice President  
Florida International University

**Dr. George Ellenberg**

Provost and Vice President  
for Academic Affairs  
University of West Florida

**Dr. Bret Danilowicz**

Provost and Vice President  
for Academic Affairs  
Florida Atlantic University

**Dr. Nancy C. McKee**

Associate Vice Chancellor,  
Innovation and Online Education  
Board of Governors  
Nonvoting Member

**Dr. Sally McRorie**

Provost and Executive Vice President  
for Academic Affairs  
Florida State University

## IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE

**Dr. Kelley Bailey (through 1/2019)**

Assistant Professor  
Florida Agricultural  
and Mechanical University

**Angie Fairweather (2/2019)**

Director of Educational  
Technology Services  
New College of Florida

**Dr. Deb Miller**

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

**Dr. Vicki Brown (through 1/2019)**

Assistant Provost, eLearning  
Florida Atlantic University

**Franzetta Fitz (2/2019)**

Director of Instructional Technology  
Florida Agriculture and  
Mechanical University

**Dr. Pam Northrup (through 10/2019)**

Vice President, Research and  
Strategic Innovation  
University of West Florida

**Dr. Tom Cavanagh**

Vice Provost for Digital Learning  
University of Central Florida

**Robert Fuselier**

Director,  
Office of Distance Learning  
Florida State University

**Evangelia Prevolis (3/2020)**

Interim Assistant Vice President  
FIU Online  
Florida International University

**Dr. Cynthia DeLuca, Chair**

Associate Vice President,  
Innovative Education  
University of South Florida

**Dr. Julie Golden-Botti (2/2019)**

Executive Director for Online  
and Continuing Education  
Florida Atlantic University

**Joseph Riquelme (through 2/2020)**

Assistant Vice President, FIU Online  
Florida International University

**Dr. Cathy Duff (through 1/2019)**

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

**Dr. Michelle Horton (11/2019)**

Interim Assistant Vice President,  
Online Innovation and  
Director, Complete Florida,  
University of West Florida

**Dr. Paul Snyder (2/2019)**

Senior Associate Provost,  
Associate Vice President for Planning  
and Institutional Performance  
Florida Gulf Coast University

**Dr. Tom Dvorske (2/2019)**

Vice Provost, Assessment & Instruction  
Florida Polytechnic University

**Dr. Andy McCollough**

Associate Provost,  
Teaching and Technology  
University of Florida

**Dr. Jennifer Wells (through 1/2019)**

Director of Writing  
New College of Florida

## BOARD of GOVERNORS OFFICE

**Dr. Nancy McKee**

Associate Vice Chancellor  
Board of Governors



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