

Online Education

STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF FLORIDA

Annual Report 2020





STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF FLORIDA

2020 Annual Report for Online Education

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Board of Governors

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Highlights

The State University System *2020 Annual Report for Online Education* provides data that reflect the status and progress made in the provision of online education in the system. While the *Annual Report* focuses primarily on 2019-20 data, it also provides an overview of universities' responses to COVID-19 in 2020-21, as well as planning efforts underway for the post-pandemic world in the SUS.

Highlights of the *Annual Report* include:

- In 2019-20, the State of Florida ranked second in the nation in the percentage of public university students – and third in the number of university students - enrolled in distance learning courses.
- During 2019-20, 78% of undergraduates – and 55% of graduate students - took at least one distance learning course.
- There are 476 online programs/majors in the SUS, with 302 (63%) of those being in Programs of Strategic Emphasis (STEM, Health, Education, Critical Workforce Gap Analysis, and Global Competitiveness).
- 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.
- Twelve percent (12%) of undergraduate students took only distance learning courses, while 28% of graduate students did so.
- 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).
- Undergraduate students who took a mix of distance learning and classroom courses had a higher retention rate (90%) than either students who took only distance learning courses (74%) or students who took only classroom courses (88%).
- SUS distance learning programs have won numerous awards and recognitions for their high quality.



U.S. News & World Report
**BEST ONLINE GRADUATE
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
PROGRAMS**
FSU #5, USF #12



U.S. News & World Report
**BEST ONLINE
BACHELOR'S PROGRAMS**
UF #3, UCF #14



U.S. News & World Report
**BEST ONLINE GRADUATE
CRIMINAL JUSTICE PROGRAMS**
FSU #8, UCF #12, FIU #17



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ADMINISTRATION PROGRAMS**
FAU #11

Introduction

The *State University System 2020 Annual Report for Online Education** 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.

Implementation of the 2025 Strategic Plan for Online Education

Upon adoption of the *Plan*, 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 consists of provosts and a non-voting representative from the Board Office, which guides the work of the Implementation Committee (Appendix A). These committees have met regularly since then to implement the strategies and tactics in the Plan.

Effect of COVID-19 on Distance Learning

While the data in this 2019-20 *Annual Report* includes Spring 2020, when the System began reacting to the pandemic, the report would not be complete without also acknowledging actions taken to address COVID-19 during 2020-21, as well as planning activities underway for the post-pandemic world in the SUS.

SPRING 2020

Although many courses began the Spring 2020 term as fully distance learning courses, approximately 50,000 courses began the term in on-campus, hybrid, or primarily online modalities and had to be quickly converted to courses that could be – and were - provided 100% remotely. The infrastructure, resources, and professional networks put in place for distance learning in the past few years provided institutions the ability to convert these courses to a remote format while maintaining a focus on quality.

One of the primary services provided to faculty to assist in their conversion of courses to remote formats was professional development in the form of training and support. The services varied by institution and included rapid course design training in areas such as academic technologies, online assignment and assessment strategies, student engagement activities, and accessibility; web pages with resources; individual faculty consultations; call centers for immediate assistance; facilitating peer interactions for sharing of experiences, resources, and support; and ongoing communications with faculty to identify and resolve issues. In addition, professional development staff throughout the SUS had access to the resources available on TOPKit, the site hosted by the University of Central Florida, in partnership with other institutions. The Teaching Online Preparation Toolkit (TOPKit) was developed in response to the *SUS 2025 Strategic Plan for Online Education* and provides online resources for staff responsible for professional development of faculty who teach online courses.

**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.*

Faculty and students also needed access to appropriate technology to deliver and take courses remotely. Ways in which technology issues were addressed for faculty varied by institution and included activities such as purchasing web cams, upgrading web conferencing tools, establishing a laptop/webcam loan program, providing software to help make course materials accessible to students with disabilities, and establishing or expanding IT call centers to provide technology assistance to faculty.

Strategies used to assist students in having the equipment and internet access they needed also varied by institution and included establishing a laptop/webcam loan program, purchasing additional units for students, providing a list of Internet providers offering free or reduced-price services, increasing computer lab licensing to students, and providing access to specialized software required by some courses.

Institutions also expanded the choices faculty had for proctoring services for exams, and they assisted faculty with strategies for converting labs to remote instruction.

FALL 2020

On May 28, 2020, the Board of Governors approved the *State University System of Florida Blueprint for Reopening Campuses* for Fall Semester 2020. The *Blueprint* stated that “The foundational priority of each university’s plan will be the health and welfare of all students, faculty, staff, vendors, volunteers, and visitors.”¹ It identified critical elements to guide universities in the development of their plans for Fall 2020: A Healthy Campus Environment; A Healthy Community Environment; COVID-19 Virus Testing; Contact Tracing and Surveillance; and Academic Program Delivery.

The Academic Program Delivery element of the *Blueprint* emphasized the delivery of courses in a variety of modalities, with flexibility being stressed in acknowledgement of evolving health conditions on each campus and in each community due to the COVID-19 virus. The components of this element were:

- Universities should continue to explore new and creative ways to use technology to deliver classes in a variety of delivery modes using alternative instructional formats and hybrid combinations of face-to-face and online delivery modes.
- Reasonable alternatives should be made available for faculty and students who are unable to participate in available class delivery formats, including individuals with serious illness, older adults, and individuals of any age with serious underlying conditions who may be at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19.
- Class sizes and classroom densities, as well as outdoor and non-traditional spaces, should be evaluated in consideration of the current CDC, state, and local social distancing guidelines.
- Universities are encouraged to consider varied course scheduling and calendar options to accommodate alternative instructional delivery formats.
- Faculty training and professional development should continue to provide enhanced training and support for new online technologies and non-traditional modes of delivery of instruction.
- Each university plan should acknowledge that from the time of the development of its plan to the time of the beginning of fall semester, the health environment of the local community will likely look very different. The need for flexibility should be stressed to all students, faculty, and staff as schedules and delivery modes may need to be adjusted in reaction to the evolving health conditions on each campus and in each campus community.

While COVID-19 brought changes in the Fall 2020 term, students continued to enroll in SUS institutions and focus on fulfilling graduation requirements. In the SUS, enrollment increased by 2% from Fall 2019 to Fall 2020 and courses continued to be offered in face-to-face and distance learning modalities.² As stated in the Chancellor’s Newsletter (March 2021), “The percent of students earning 15+ credits in Fall 2020 increased to 20% which is the highest rate that we have ever reported. This success is an important early indicator of students focusing on finishing their degree in four years.”³

SPRING 2021

In Spring 2020, 82% of courses were offered face-to-face; of those courses, aggregated data show that approximately 61% continued to be offered face-to-face in Spring 2021, with only 39% being offered via distance learning.⁴

Planning for the Post-Pandemic World in the State University System

On November 18, 2020, the Steering Committee, which guides the implementation of the *2025 Strategic Plan for Online Education*, and other provosts discussed the role of technology and innovation in teaching and learning across the SUS in a post-pandemic world. To help prepare for that discussion, USF Provost Ralph Wilcox, chair of the Steering Committee, posed the following questions to the Committee and the other provosts:

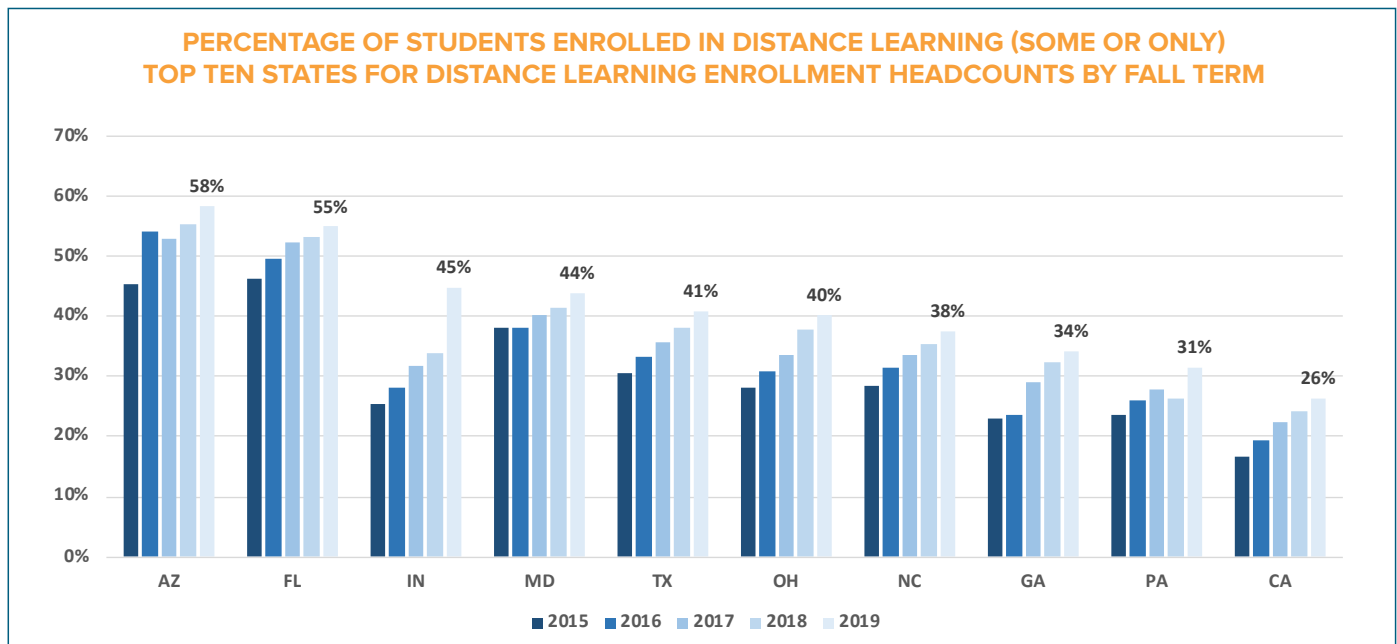
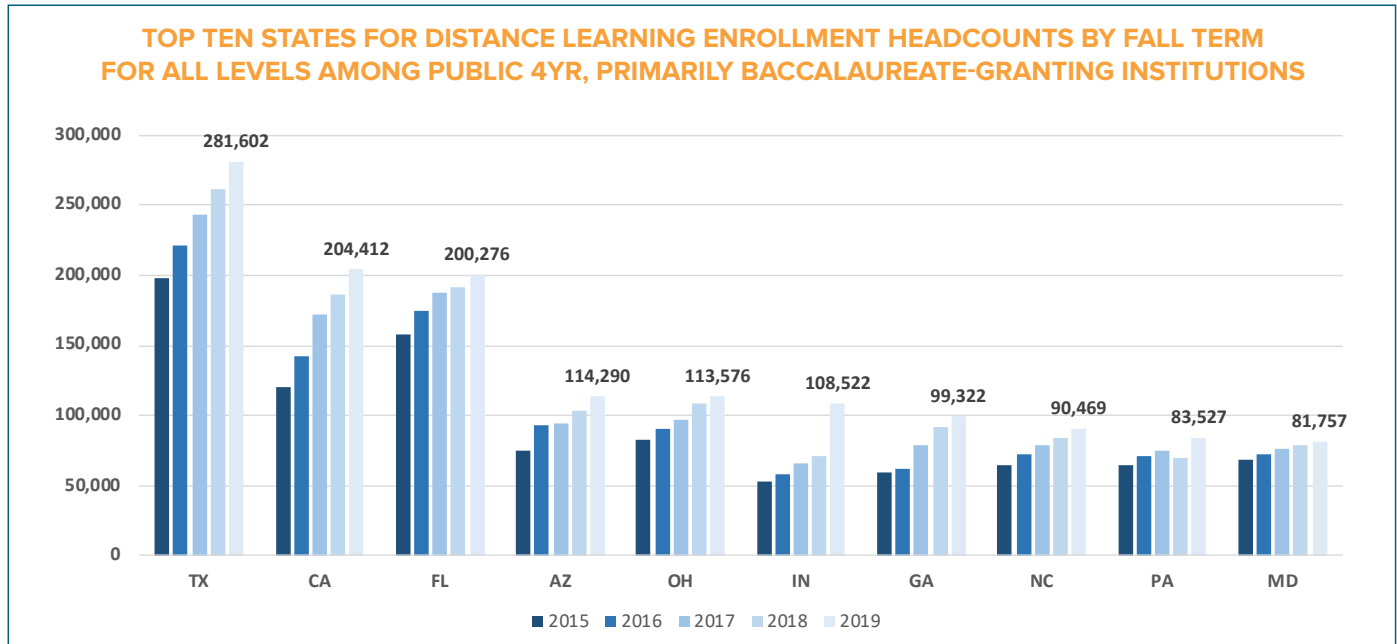
- What potential opportunities has the global pandemic revealed in higher education?
- What “best practices” have emerged and what are the most significant “lessons learned” with relevance to the future state of higher education delivery across the SUS?
- What might the “new normal” look like in higher education, post COVID-19, and what innovations are most likely going to gain traction and sustain in the mid- to long-term?
- What have emerged as the greatest deficits in higher education over the past eight months and how successful have we been in compensating through the use of technology?
- How can the 12 SUS institutions collaborate more effectively in anticipation of a potential paradigm shift in higher education?

On February 24, 2021, the Steering Committee recommended to the Board of Governors Innovation and Online Committee (IOC) that a planning committee be formed to assist the IOC’s discussion on the post-pandemic world in the SUS. The IOC charged the Steering Committee with this responsibility and to call upon the expertise of other institutional leaders as needed. The IOC also approved a work plan that will culminate in a report with recommendations by the end of 2021.

Student Enrollment

Florida's Ranking in Distance Learning Enrollments

Florida continued to be a leader in distance learning in 2019-20, ranking second in the nation in the percentage of students – and third in the nation in the number of students - enrolled in distance learning courses in public universities.



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 3/30/2021). 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)

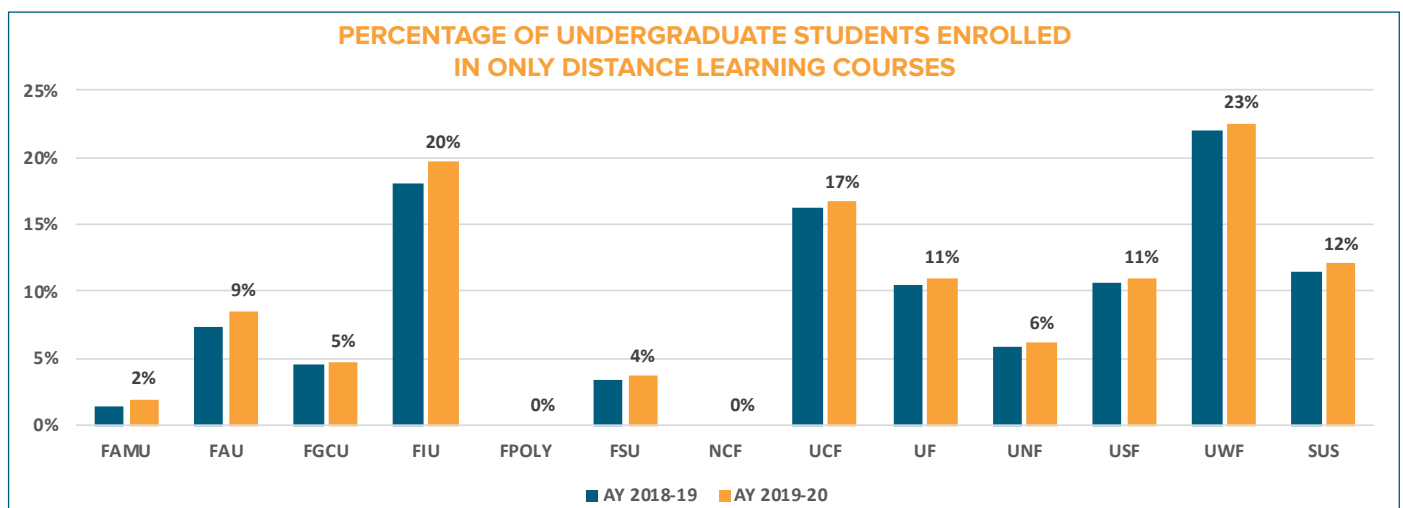
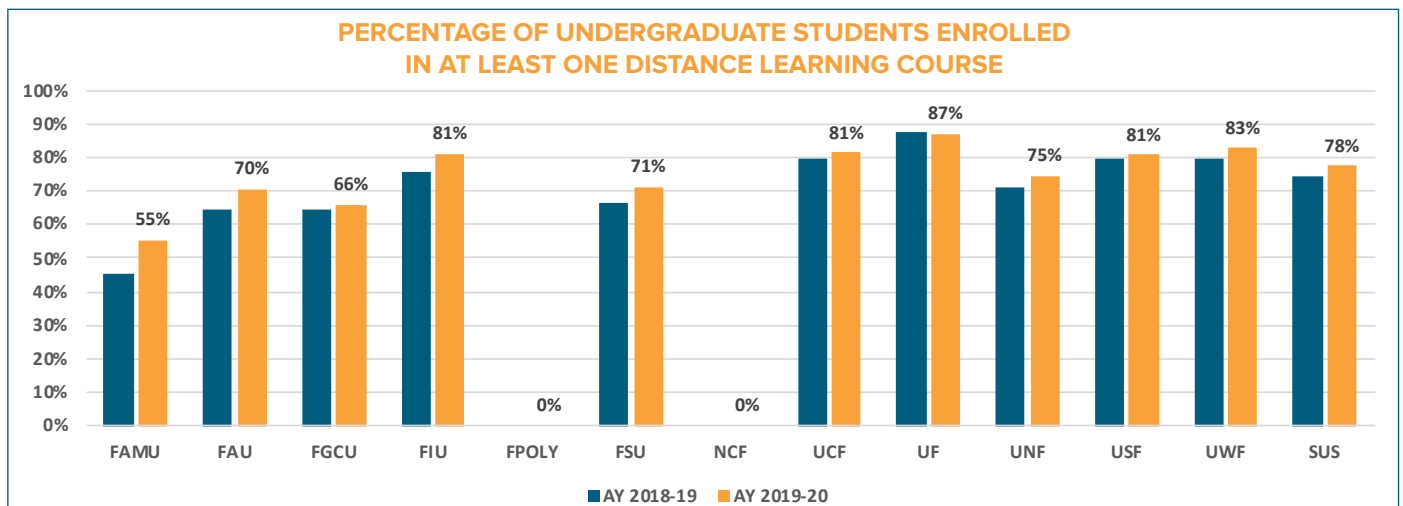
UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

System-wide, 78% of undergraduate students took at least one distance learning course in 2019-20, continuing a steady increase from 66% in 2015-16 when the *2025 Strategic Plan for Online Education* was adopted. At five institutions, at least 80% of undergraduate students took at least one distance learning course during 2019-20: FIU (81%), UCF (81%), UF (87%), USF (81%), and UWF (83%). FAMU had the greatest one-year percentage increase, from 45% in 2018-19 to 55% in 2019-20.

Twelve percent (12%) of SUS undergraduates took only distance learning courses, with UCF having the highest number (11,341) and UWF having the highest percentage (23%).

A majority (66%) of undergraduate students (210,909) in the SUS took both distance learning and classroom and/or hybrid courses in 2019-20, with UCF having the highest number (44,045) and UF having the highest percentage (76%).

The percentage of undergraduate students taking no distance learning courses declined from 35% in 2015-16 to 22% in 2019-20.⁵



SOURCE: BOG Office of Data & Analytics, extracted from datamarts on 3/26/2021. 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.

2019-2020 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	166	2%	4,482	53%	3,734	45%
FAU	2,438	9%	17,670	62%	8,429	30%
FGCU	714	5%	9,165	61%	5,121	34%
FIU	10,079	20%	31,351	61%	9,764	19%
FPOLY	0	0%	0	0%	1,362	100%
FSU	1,324	4%	24,533	67%	10,496	29%
NCF	0	0%	0	0%	722	100%
UCF	11,341	17%	44,045	65%	12,646	19%
UF	4,551	11%	31,547	76%	5,330	13%
UNF	1,037	6%	11,462	68%	4,274	25%
USF	4,742	11%	29,971	70%	8,315	19%
UWF	2,491	23%	6,683	60%	1,892	17%
SUS	38,883	12%	210,909	66%	72,085	22%

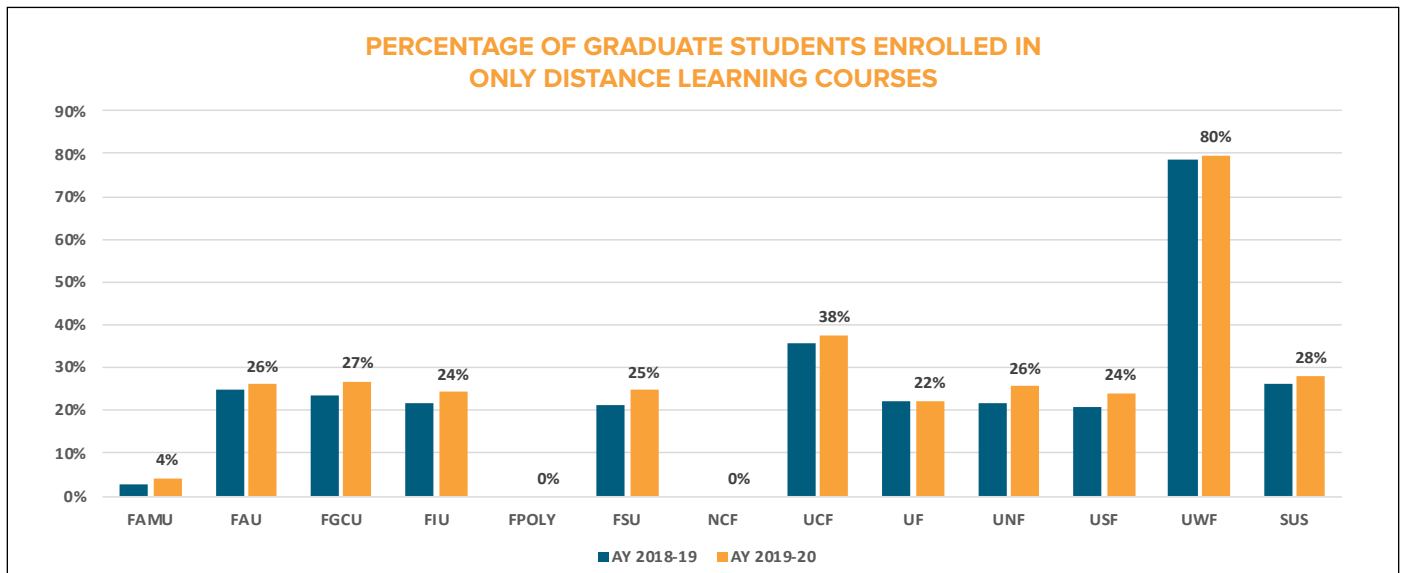
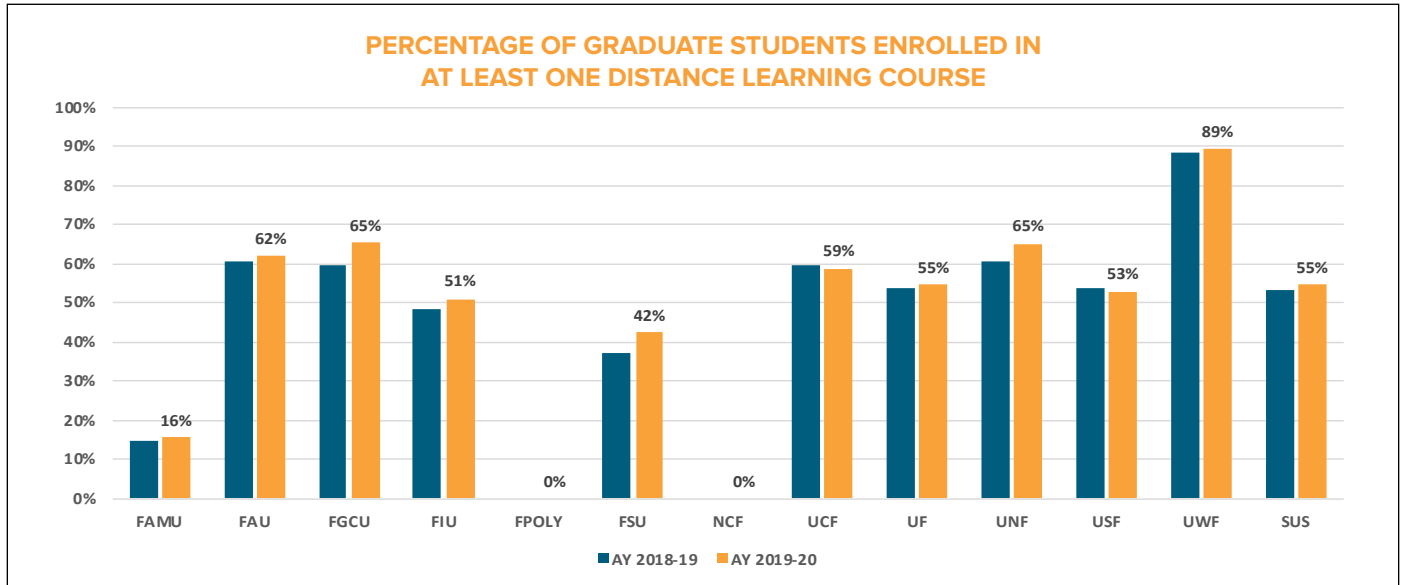
GRADUATE STUDENTS

2019-2020 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	85	4%	225	11%	1,673	84%
FAU	1,551	26%	2,149	36%	2,267	38%
FGCU	370	27%	535	39%	481	35%
FIU	2,754	24%	2,991	27%	5,540	49%
FPOLY	0	0%	0	0%	59	100%
FSU	2,427	25%	1,734	18%	5,648	58%
NCF	0	0%	0	0%	25	100%
UCF	4,294	38%	2,412	21%	4,697	41%
UF	3,800	22%	5,502	32%	7,711	45%
UNF	749	26%	1,159	40%	1,021	35%
USF	3,111	24%	3,718	29%	6,080	47%
UWF	3,010	80%	364	10%	406	11%
SUS	22,151	28%	20,789	26%	35,608	45%

SOURCE: BOG Office of Data & Analytics, extracted from datamarts on 3/26/2021. Undergraduate students include lower- and upper-division students only and excludes unclassified students. Graduate students include advanced- and beginning -levels based on beginning- and advanced-graduate level. Only includes students enrolled in courses. "Students who took only distance learning courses" include students enrolled in any combination of courses where 80 percent or more of the direct instruction of the course is delivered using some form of technology when the student and instructor are separated by time or space, or both. "Students who took no distance learning courses" include students enrolled in any combination of courses where less than 80 percent of the course is delivered using some form of technology when the student and instructor are separated by time, space or both. "Students who took both distance learning and classroom and/or hybrid" includes students taking any combination of distance learning courses with classroom and/or hybrid courses.

System-wide, the percentage of graduate students taking at least one distance learning course increased from 46% in 2015-16 to 55% in 2019-20. At 89%, UWF led the System in the percentage of graduate students – and UF led in the number of graduate students (9,302) - taking at least one distance learning course. Two universities tied for having the greatest one-year percentage increase in graduate students taking at least one distance learning course: FGCU increased from 60% in 2018-19 to 65% in 2019-20, and FSU increased from 37% in 2018-19 to 42% in 2019-20.



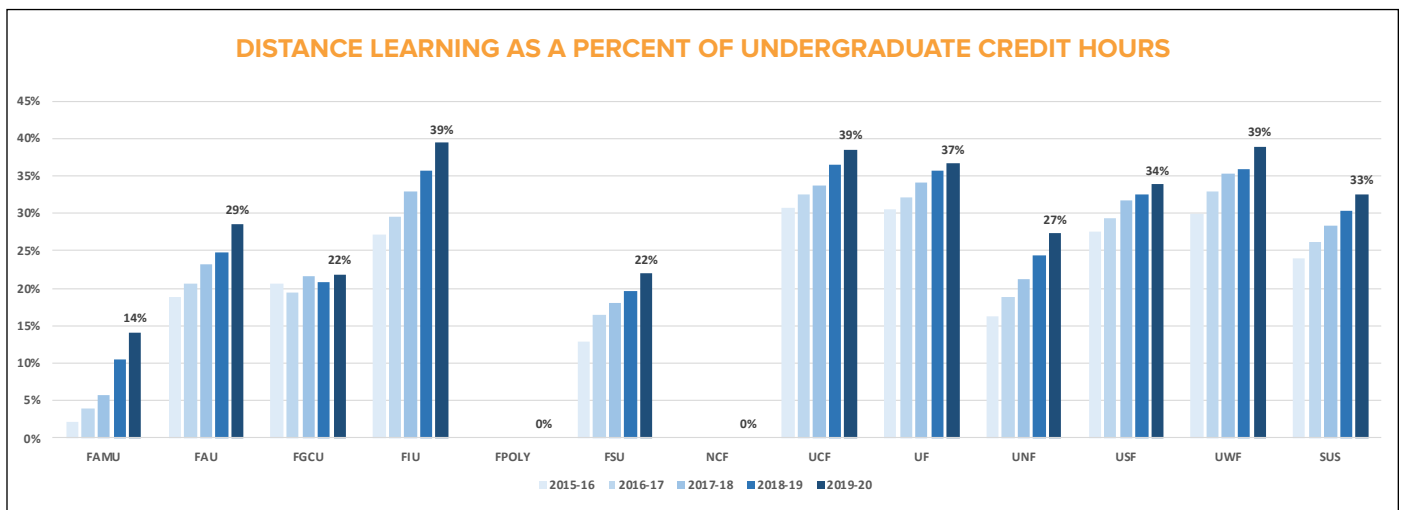
SOURCE: BOG Office of Data & Analytics, extracted from datamarts on 3/26/2021. Graduates based on beginning- and advanced-graduate student level. Only includes students enrolled in courses. Distance learning courses are defined as a course in which at least 80 percent of the direct instruction of the 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

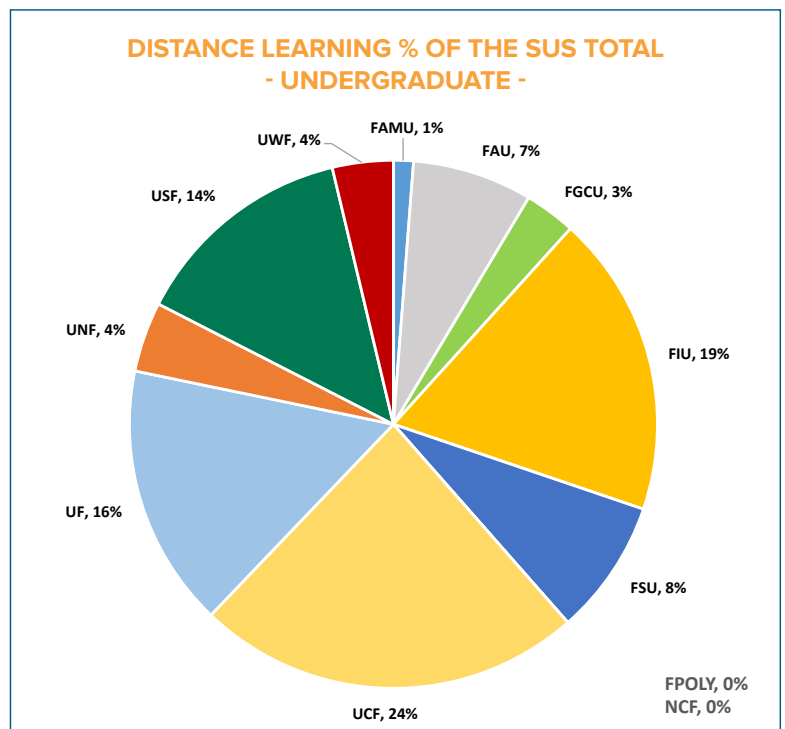
System-wide, 33% of undergraduate credit hours were taken in distance learning courses in 2019-20, an increase from 30% in 2018-19, and an increase from 24% in 2015-16, when the Board approved the *Strategic Plan for Online Education*. FIU, UCF, and UWF tied for the highest percentage (39%), followed by UF with 37%. FAMU and FAU had the greatest one-year percentage increases: FAMU increased from 10% in 2018-19 to 14% in 2019-20, and FAU increased from 25% in 2018-19 to 29% in 2019-20.

While the above percentages reflect the instructional effort within each university, the pie chart portrays each university's undergraduate distance learning credit hours as a percentage of total undergraduate credit hours in the SUS. As in 2018-19, the largest share of SUS undergraduate student credit hours in distance learning was provided by UCF (24%) in 2019-20.



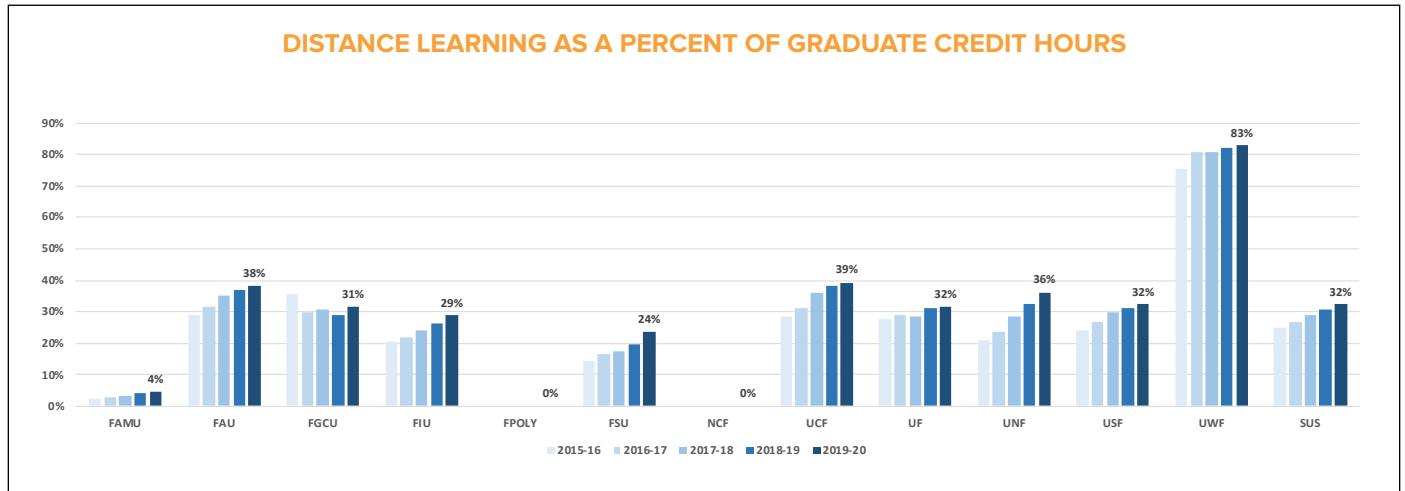
**U.S. News & World Report
BEST ONLINE SPECIAL
EDUCATION PROGRAMS
UF #2, FSU #7**

SOURCE: BOG Office of Data & Analytics, extracted from datamarts on 3/17/2021. 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.

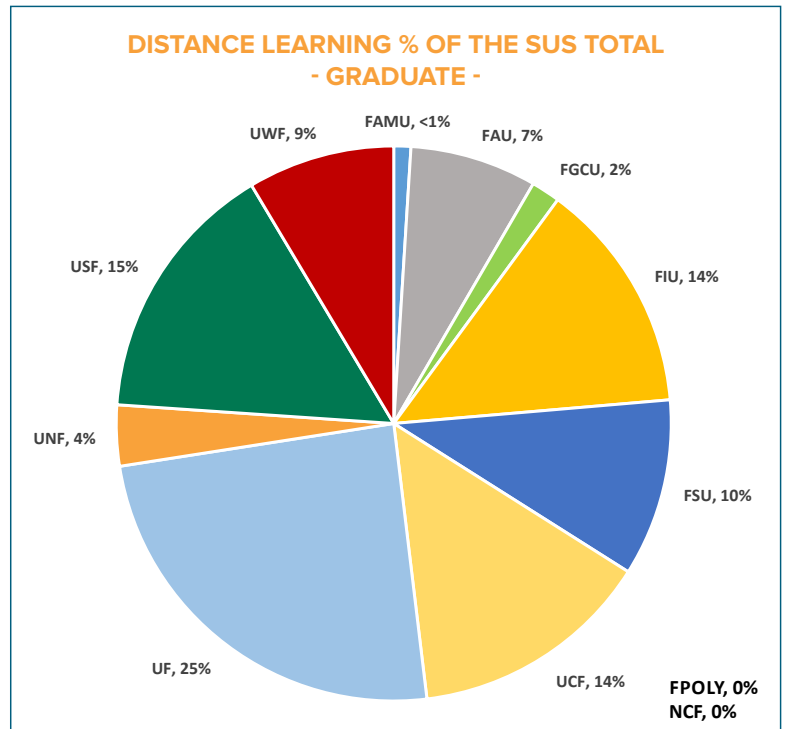


GRADUATE CREDIT HOURS

For graduate courses, 32% of student credit hours were taken in distance learning courses in 2019-20, an increase from 31% in 2018-19. UWF's percentage, the highest in the System, was 83%. Six institutions were in the 30% - 40% range (FAU, FGCU, UCF, UF, UNF, and USF).



While the above percentages reflect the instructional effort within each university, the pie chart portrays each university's graduate distance learning credit hours as a percentage of total graduate credit hours in the SUS. UF's students took the most graduate distance learning credit hours in the System (25%), followed by USF (15%), UCF (14%), and FIU (14%).



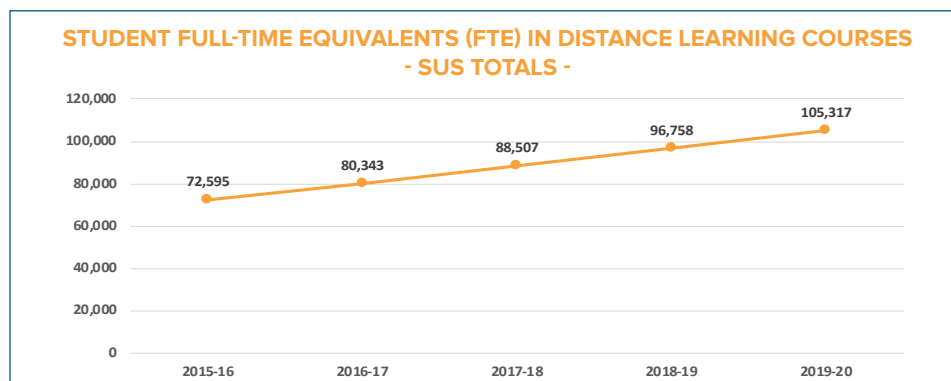
SOURCE: BOG Office of Data & Analytics, extracted from datamarts on 3/27/2021. Undergraduate students include lower- and upper-division students only and excludes unclassified students. Distance Learning is a course in which at least 80 percent of the direct instruction of the course is delivered using 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 taken by students. SUS FTE in distance learning courses increased from 72,595 in 2015-16 to 105,317 in 2019-20. Of SUS FTE in distance learning courses in 2019-20, most (83%) were in undergraduate courses.

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

LEVEL/YEAR	FAMU	FAU	FIU	FGCU	FPOLY	FSU	NCF	UCF	UF	UNF	USF	UWF	SUS
UNDERGRAD													
2015-16	172	4,002	9,957	2,428	0	4,064	0	14,523	10,284	1,941	9,441	2,559	59,371
2016-17	297	4,432	11,007	2,309	0	5,286	0	15,857	11,282	2,320	10,070	2,795	65,655
2017-18	434	4,977	12,673	2,617	0	5,825	0	16,944	12,409	2,735	11,061	2,999	72,674
2018-19	808	5,455	14,243	2,594	0	6,348	0	19,139	13,490	3,237	11,368	3,041	79,722
2019-20	1,062	6,388	16,093	2,730	0	7,220	0	20,553	13,996	3,731	11,950	3,241	86,964
MASTERS													
2015-16	39	862	1,625	240	0	955	0	1,429	2,608	214	1,960	1,125	11,057
2016-17	51	1,012	1,759	206	0	1,071	0	1,608	2,852	201	2,173	1,343	12,277
2017-18	61	1,131	1,846	220	0	1,152	0	2,001	2,747	272	2,404	1,388	13,222
2018-19	77	1,191	1,991	217	0	1,368	0	2,211	2,760	365	2,469	1,376	14,025
2019-20	81	1,260	2,235	264	0	1,725	0	2,303	3,020	461	2,527	1,440	15,316
DOCTORATE													
2015-16	6	62	46	52	0	103	0	161	1,391	82	149	117	2,167
2016-17	5	64	69	39	0	139	0	164	1,449	144	173	166	2,411
2017-18	5	86	194	49	0	118	0	210	1,359	166	246	178	2,611
2018-19	5	98	234	51	0	111	0	256	1,610	193	293	161	3,012
2019-20	2	104	269	46	0	182	0	301	1,491	193	306	141	3,036
TOTAL													
2015-16	217	4,927	11,627	2,720	0	5,121	0	16,112	14,284	2,236	11,550	3,801	72,595
2016-17	353	5,507	12,834	2,554	0	6,496	0	17,629	15,583	2,665	12,417	4,303	80,343
2017-18	499	6,194	14,713	2,886	0	7,096	0	19,155	16,514	3,174	13,710	4,564	88,507
2018-19	890	6,744	16,468	2,861	0	7,827	0	21,606	17,861	3,795	14,129	4,578	96,758
2019-20	1,145	7,753	18,597	3,040	0	9,127	0	23,158	18,507	4,385	14,783	4,822	105,317

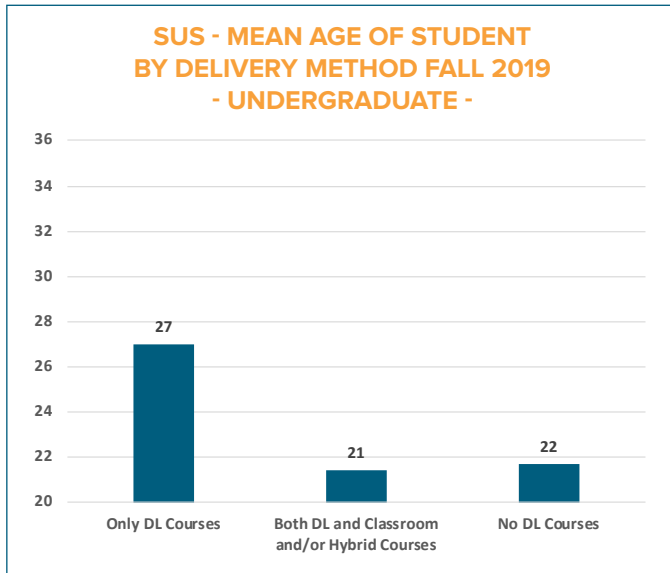


SOURCE: BOG Office of Data & Analytics, extracted from datamarts on 3/27/2021. Data reports credit hours attempted and aggregated by course level. Total undergraduate student credit hours are divided by 30 to obtain the number of undergraduate FTEs. Total graduate student credit hours are divided by 24 to obtain the number of graduate FTEs.

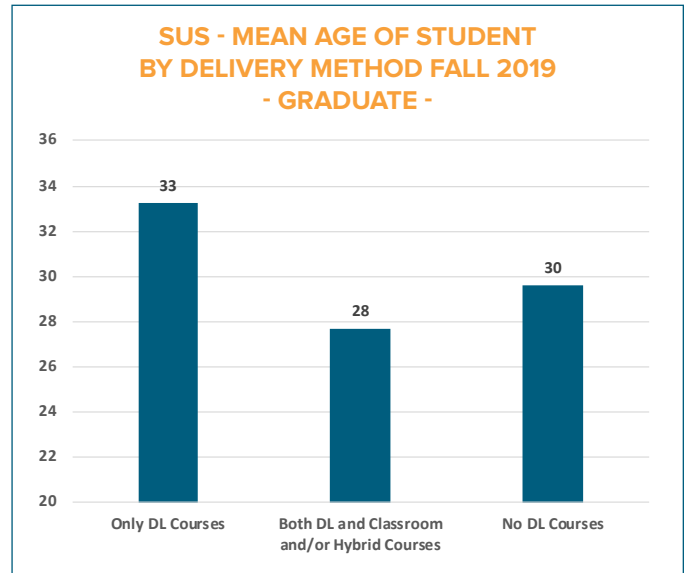
Student Demographics

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 age difference increases the likelihood that fully online students are working and/or have family responsibilities and need the flexibility afforded by distance learning courses.



SOURCE: See next page



SOURCE: See next page



**U.S. News & World Report
BEST ONLINE NURSING
EDUCATION PROGRAMS
UCF #8**



**U.S. News & World Report
BEST ONLINE GRADUATE
EDUCATION PROGRAMS
UF #1, FSU #15**



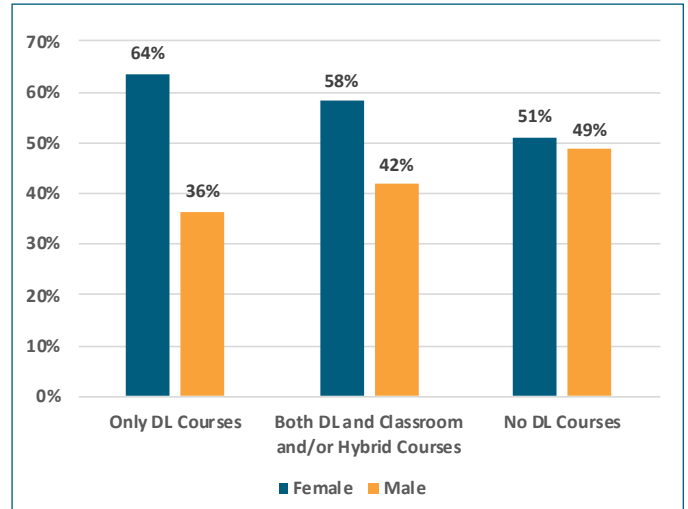
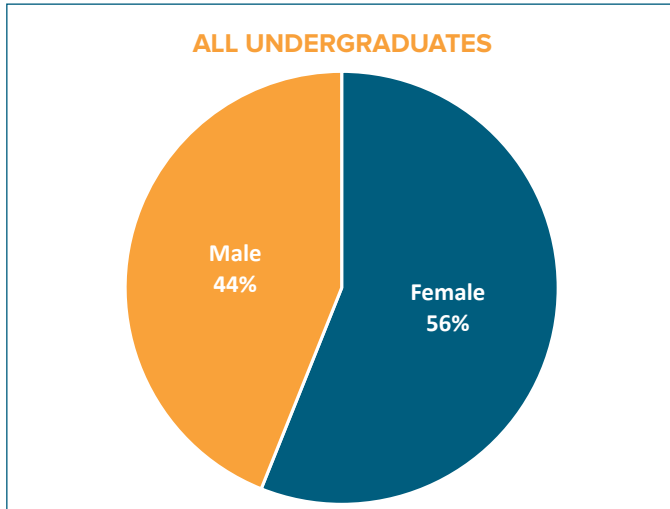
**U.S. News & World Report
BEST ONLINE MBA
PROGRAMS FOR VETERANS
UF #2**



**U.S. News & World Report
BEST ONLINE BACHELORS
PROGRAMS FOR VETERANS
UF #2, UCF #20**

Gender

Females comprise a greater proportion of undergraduates who took only distance learning courses than of those who took no distance learning courses. As in 2018-19, sixty-four percent (64%) of undergraduates who took only distance learning courses were female, while 51% of undergraduates who took no distance learning courses were female. Females comprised 56% of the undergraduate student body in 2019-20.



SOURCE: BOG Office of Data & Analytics, extracted from datamarts on 3/28/2021. 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.

U.S. News & World Report
BEST ONLINE CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION PROGRAMS
 UF #3, FSU #4

U.S. News & World Report
BEST ONLINE MASTER’S IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE PROGRAMS FOR VETERANS
 FSU #5, UCF #9

U.S. News & World Report
BEST ONLINE INSTRUCTIONAL MEDIA PROGRAMS
 FSU #1, UF #6

U.S. News & World Report
BEST ONLINE BACHELOR’S IN PSYCHOLOGY PROGRAMS
 UF #2, UCF #6

Race/Ethnicity

The race/ethnicity of undergraduates who took only distance learning courses closely aligned with those students who took no distance learning courses, with two exceptions: Hispanic/Latino students and nonresident aliens. Of students taking only distance learning courses, 33% were Hispanic/Latino, while 29% of students taking no distance learning courses were Hispanic/Latino. Conversely, of students taking online distance learning courses, 1% were nonresident aliens, while 4% of students taking no distance learning courses were nonresident aliens.

RACE/ETHNICITY OF SUS UNDERGRADUATES

RACE/ETHNICITY	ONLY DL COURSES		BOTH DL AND CLASSROOM AND/OR HYBRID COURSES		NO DL COURSES	
	FALL 2018	FALL 2019	FALL 2018	FALL 2019	FALL 2018	FALL 2019
American Indian or Alaska Native	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Asian	4%	4%	5%	5%	5%	5%
Black or African American	13%	14%	12%	12%	14%	13%
Hispanic/Latino	31%	33%	28%	29%	29%	29%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Nonresident alien	1%	1%	3%	4%	4%	4%
Race and ethnicity unknown	2%	2%	2%	1%	1%	1%
Two or more races	3%	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%
White	45%	43%	46%	45%	44%	43%

Residency

As was the case in 2018-19, six percent (6%) of undergraduate students who took only distance learning courses in 2019-20 were non-residents, while nine percent (9%) of undergraduates who took no distance learning courses were non-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	
FALL 2019						
	HEADCOUNT	%	HEADCOUNT	%	HEADCOUNT	%
Florida	31,233	94%	121,624	90%	100,755	91%
Non-Florida	2,036	6%	12,829	10%	10,271	9%
FALL 2018						
	HEADCOUNT	%	HEADCOUNT	%	HEADCOUNT	%
Florida	29,337	94%	116,234	91%	108,207	91%
Non-Florida	1,734	6%	11,666	9%	10,521	9%

SOURCE: BOG Office of Data & Analytics, extracted from datamarts on 3/28/2021. 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

During 2019-20, the Florida Virtual Campus (FLVC) provided services to fulfill its statutory responsibilities delineated in sections 1006.75 and 1006.735, Florida Statutes. These services, which were provided to institutions in both the State University System and Florida College System, included:

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.

FLVC had been statutorily assigned to the Complete Florida Plus Program at UWF. Upon veto of the CFPP funding after the 2020 legislative session, the Board staff worked closely with the Florida College System and Department of Education staff to select a new host institution to provide essential library, distance learning, and student support services to universities and institutions in the Florida College System. FSU's Northwest Regional Data Center was selected to provide these essential support services.

Open Educational Resources/ eTextbooks

One of the goals in the *2025 Strategic Plan for Online Education* is to reduce the costs of educational materials for students. In addition to the continuation of system-wide and institutional initiatives described in the *2019 Annual Report for Online Education*, universities have updated their policies on textbook and instructional materials affordability to include the opt-out provision for students to purchase course materials. This statutory language was approved by the 2020 Legislature and by the Board of Governors, as reflected in Board Regulation 8.003 Textbook and Instructional Materials Affordability. The institutions are currently considering which provision, opt-in or opt-out, to pursue based on which provision will offer the most significant cost savings to students.

Tutoring

Many state universities offer tutoring for online students through their own academic units, distance learning offices, and/or third-party providers. Institutional initiatives described in the *2019 Annual Report for Online Education* are continuing.

Proctoring

Institutions must demonstrate that students who register in distance or correspondence education courses or programs are the same students who



U.S. News & World Report
**BEST ONLINE EDUCATIONAL
ADMINISTRATION PROGRAMS**
UF #3, FSU #7, FAU #19

participate in, complete, and receive credit for the course, according to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Commission on Colleges, Policy Statement on Distance and Correspondence Education.

As described in last year's *Annual Report*, methods to proctor exams in online courses vary by institution and include the use of live remote proctoring services, testing centers, and various software. With the expansion of courses being delivered remotely in response to COVID-19, universities expanded the choices faculty had for proctoring services and expanded existing contracts to cover the increase in usage of proctoring services.

Student Support and Retention

One of the strategies in the *2025 Strategic Plan for Online Education* is to "Ensure support services that promote student success are available for online students." 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 are provided in last year's *Annual Report*.

Mental Health Services for Online Students

Universities provide various health services for online students and have expanded their services in response to COVID-19. Examples are given in last year's *Annual Report*.



U.S. News & World Report
BEST ONLINE (BUSINESS)

MBA PROGRAM
UF #5

**BACHELOR'S IN
BUSINESS PROGRAMS**
UF #1, FIU #11

**BUSINESS ANALYTICS
MBA PROGRAMS**
FSU #16

**FINANCE
MBA PROGRAMS**
UF #7, FIU #14

**GENERAL MANAGEMENT
MBA PROGRAMS**
UF #6, FSU #16

**MARKETING
MBA PROGRAMS**
UF #6, FIU #14 (tie), FSU #14 (tie)



Best Colleges
**BEST ONLINE COLLEGES
AND UNIVERSITIES:**
UF Online #4, UCF #5

Academic Affairs

Online Programs/Majors

The following online programs, defined as online majors, are provided in the SUS:

DEGREE LEVEL OF PROGRAMS OF STRATEGIC EMPHASIS

DEGREE LEVEL	TOTAL	PROGRAMS OF STRATEGIC EMPHASIS (#)	PROGRAMS OF STRATEGIC EMPHASIS (%)
Bachelor's	148	67	45%
Master's	298	211	71%
Specialist	4	3	75%
Professional Doctorate	11	10	91%
Research Doctorate	15	11	73%
Total Online Programs/Majors	476	302	63%

Most – 63% – of the online programs/majors are 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.

ONLINE PROGRAMS/MAJORS IN PROGRAMS OF STRATEGIC EMPHASIS

PROGRAMS OF STRATEGIC EMPHASIS	TOTAL
STEM	130
Education	60
Gap Analysis	15
Global	13
Health	84
Total Programs of Strategic Emphasis	302

UNIVERSITY DEGREE LEVELS OF ONLINE PROGRAMS/MAJORS

UNIV	BACHELOR'S	MASTER'S	SPECIALIST	PROF DOC	RESEARCH DOC	TOTAL
FAMU	0	3	0	0	0	3
FAU	12	28	0	0	0	40
FGCU	3	5	0	1	0	9
FIU	44	44	0	1	0	89
FPoly	0	0	0	0	0	0
FSU	7	27	2	0	3	39
NCF	0	0	0	0	0	0
UCF	32	40	0	1	4	77
UF	22	52	1	5	3	83
UNF	3	8	0	3	0	14
USF	11	49	0	0	3	63
UWF	14	42	1	0	2	59
Total	148	298	4	11	15	476

SOURCE: SUS Online Majors Inventory, extracted 4/26/2021

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.” In 2019-20, UF Online graduated 657 students, bringing its cumulative total of graduates since its 2013 enabling legislation to 2,800.

In 2019-20, UF Online enrolled 4,524 students, with 37.8% being First-Time-in-College, 57.48% transfers, and 5.31% post-baccalaureates. Twenty-five majors, nine minors, and eleven certificates were offered. Most UF Online students enrolled part-time (66.3%); the average credit load was 8.77 hours in the Fall 2019 term.

UF Online is currently ranked as the #3 Best Online Bachelor’s Program in the nation by the U.S. News and World Report.



The Complete Florida Degree Initiative was established by the Florida Legislature and hosted by UWF to serve Floridians who had earned some college credit, but had not completed a degree. The program was disbanded in 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.” Some of the innovations in the System include:

INNOVATIONS IN ONLINE LEARNING

UCF has hosted three annual Innovation Summits 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. Opportunities to present at the Summits are open to faculty and staff from institutions in the SUS, as well as those in the Florida College System and private institutions.

The March 2020 and March 2021 Innovation Summits included the following sessions from SUS faculty and staff, in addition to sessions from the Florida College System institutions:

March 2020:

- 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)

March 2021:

- Filling the Gaps in Fundamental Quantitative Reasoning with Adaptive Learning Modules (UCF)
- Using a chatbot to facilitate an authentic assessment in a legal psychology course (UF)
- How does that make you feel? (UF)
- Developing a “Hands On” Virtual Lab Experience (UNF)

- Shippable Hands-On Mechanical Engineering Teaching Laboratory Kits to Enable Fully Online Undergraduate ME Degree Programs (UF and Engineer, Inc.)
- How Cross-departmental Collaboration Arose to Meet the Urgent Need for Webcourses@UCF DHH Support (UCF)
- Developing and Evaluating Customized Computer-Based Simulations that Facilitate an Organizational and Systems Leadership Education for Nursing Students During a Pandemic (USF)
- Adventures in online teaching: Secrets behind award-winning online courses (UCF)

ADAPTIVE LEARNING

Faculty in the SUS have begun implementing adaptive learning in their courses, as described in last year's *Annual Report*. Educause defines adaptive learning as "...one technique for providing personalized learning which aims to provide efficient, effective, and customized learning paths to engage each student. Adaptive learning systems use a data-driven – and, in some cases, nonlinear – approach to instruction and remediation."⁶

MASTER COURSES

In response to Affordability Goal 1 in the *2025 Strategic Plan for Online Education*, which focuses on enhancing shared services to support online program development and delivery costs, and in collaboration with other SUS institutions, UF became the lead university for piloting and implementing the Florida CourseShare initiative for sharing course materials created and donated by faculty. The types of materials that may be contributed to the repository include full courses, syllabi, assignments, quizzes, and content modules that may be used in full or in part by faculty throughout the System. 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 SUS. UF is working with provosts from other SUS institutions to inform and encourage faculty to contribute to - and use materials in - the repository.

STEM LABS

The STEM Labs Task Force continues to move forward under the leadership of UF Online. The STEMPowered Symposium was convened in October 2020 to provide Science, Technology, Engineering and Math faculty a venue to exchange ideas and approaches across disciplines regarding the future of STEM labs and courses.

State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA)

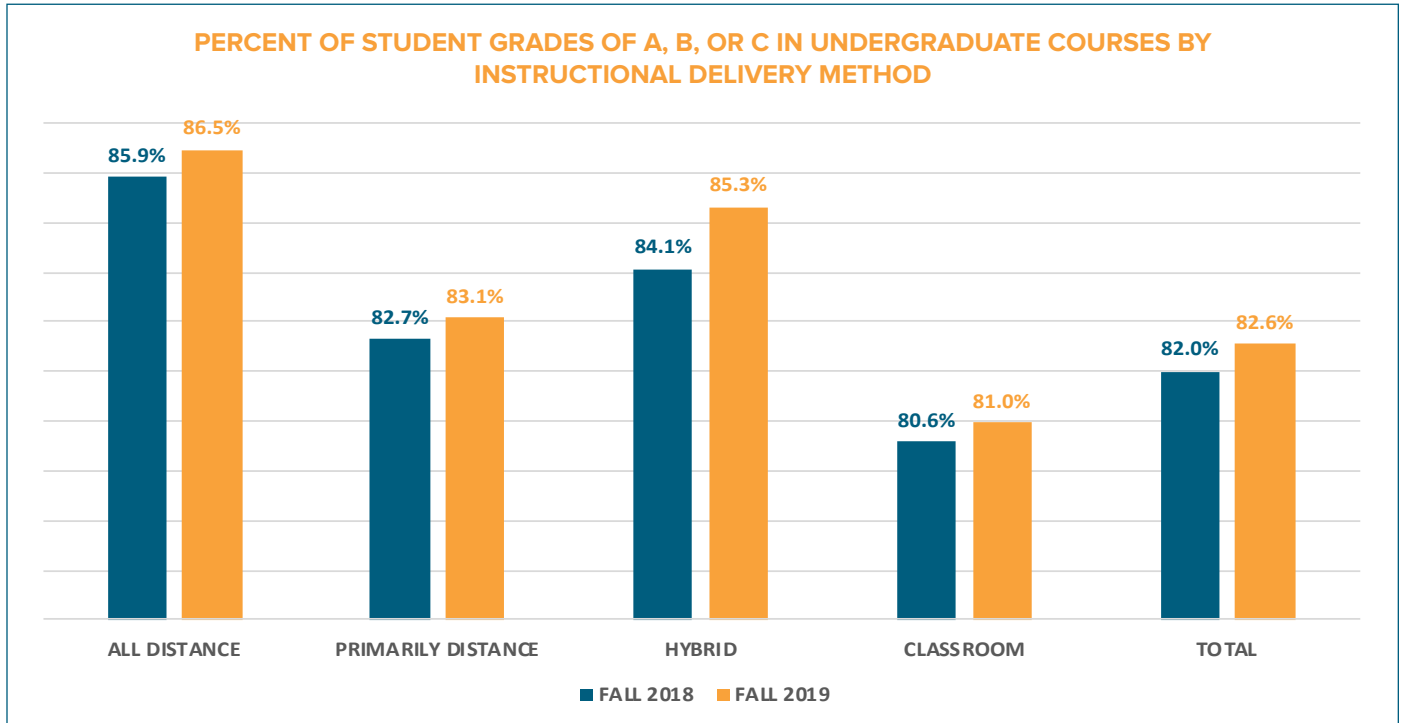
Florida is continuing its participation in the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA) to deliver postsecondary distance education beyond state boundaries, with each participating state accepting each other's authorization of accredited institutions to deliver distance education. Eighty-six (86) postsecondary institutions in Florida are members of SARA; all SUS institutions, except Florida Polytechnic University, along with many private institutions and institutions in the Florida College System, are members.

In Fall 2019:

- Total number of out-of-state distance learning students enrolled in FL-SARA institutions (SUS, Florida College System, private) – 43,363
- Total number of Florida students enrolled in distance education programs in other SARA states – 86,119⁷

Grade Comparison

Overall, students in distance learning and hybrid courses (Appendix B) performed well in 2019-20, with a higher percentage of students receiving an A, B, or C in these courses than in classroom courses.



SOURCE: BOG Office of Data & Analytics, extracted from datamarts on 3/29/2021. 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 courses offered fully at a distance in the Fall 2019 term (3.6%) is comparable to the withdrawal rate from classroom courses (3.4%). The withdrawal rate from courses offered primarily at a distance is higher (6.3%) than in other modalities.

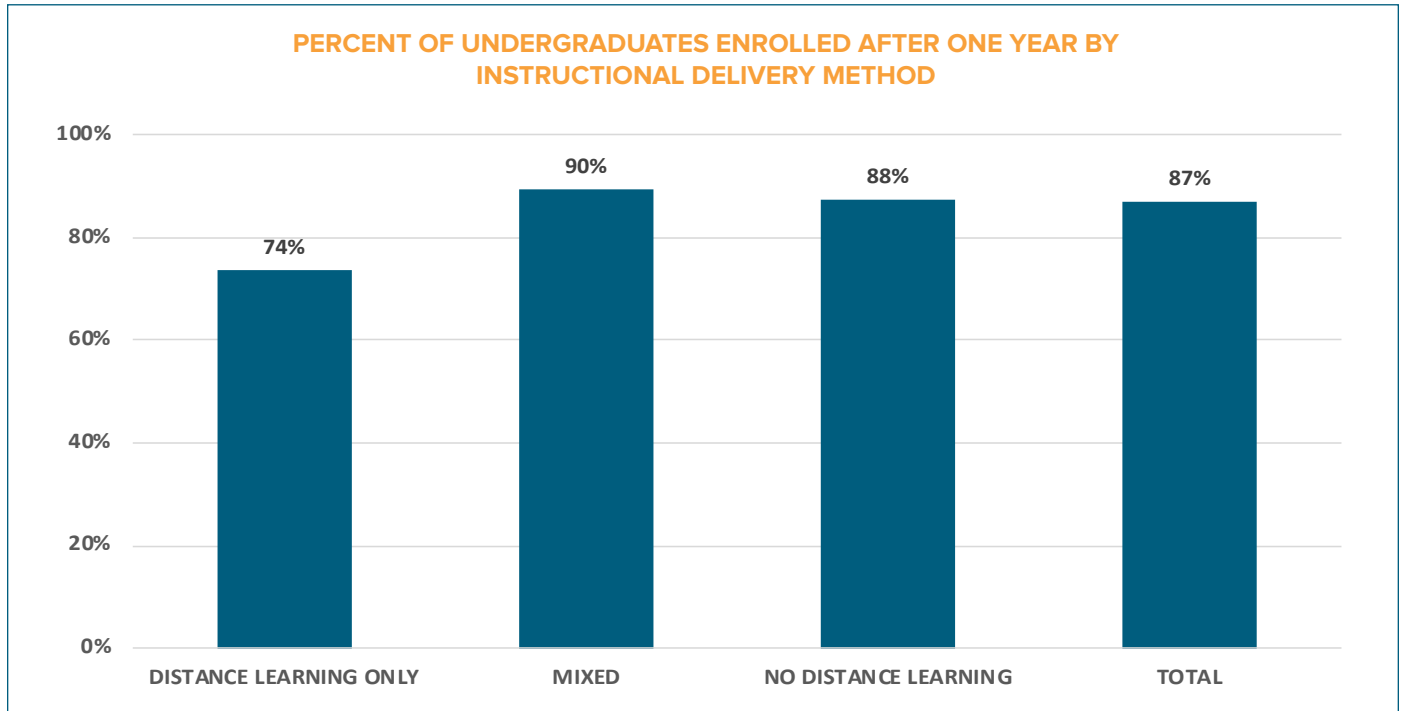
PERCENT OF WITHDRAWAL GRADES AWARDED BY COURSE DELIVERY METHOD

DELIVERY METHOD	FALL 2018		FALL 2019	
	# WITHDRAWALS	% WITHDRAWALS	# WITHDRAWALS	% WITHDRAWALS
ALL DISTANCE	11,327	4.1%	10,642	3.6%
PRIMARILY DISTANCE	1,677	6.2%	1,956	6.3%
HYBRID	2,056	3.2%	1,925	2.9%
CLASSROOM	33,930	3.9%	29,006	3.4%
TOTAL	48,990	4.8%	43,529	3.5%

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

Retention

Seventy-four percent (74%) of students enrolled only in distance learning courses in Fall 2018 were enrolled in Fall 2019. Additional research is needed to determine if those students who were not enrolled in Fall 2019 were enrolled in a subsequent semester, transferred to another institution, or had been transient students with a different home institution in Fall 2018.



SOURCE: BOG Office of Data & Analytics, extracted from datamarts on 3/29/2021. 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.



U.S. News & World Report
BEST ONLINE GRADUATE ENGINEERING PROGRAM UF #11
BEST ONLINE ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING PROGRAMS UF #15
BEST ONLINE INDUSTRIAL ENGINEERING PROGRAMS UF #18
BEST ONLINE MECHANICAL ENGINEERING PROGRAMS UF #13

Time to Degree

The average time-to-degree in 2019-20 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 and 2018-19. Students who took no distance learning classes and those taking 41%-80% of their credit hours via distance learning graduated in an average of 3.75 years, while all other students graduated in an average of 3.92 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	2018-2019			2019-2020		
	N	%	MEDIAN	N	%	MEDIAN
0%	1,011	4%	3.75	819	3%	3.75
1-20%	11,536	44%	4.00	10,984	41%	3.92
21-40%	9,520	37%	3.92	10,229	38%	3.92
41-60%	3,363	13%	3.92	4,139	15%	3.75
61-80%	473	2%	3.75	663	2%	3.75
81-99%	37	0.1%	*	53	0.2%	*
100%	17	<0.1%	*	20	<0.1%	*
Total	25,957	100%	3.92	26,907	100%	3.92

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.*

Professional Development

SUS institutions, the Florida Virtual Campus, and UCF, as host of the Teaching Online Preparation Toolkit (TOPkit), continue providing 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. These opportunities were described in the *2019 Annual Report*.

Quality Courses

SUS institutions began piloting the Florida Online Course Design Quality review process in 2019-20. When reviewing an online course for quality design, trained reviewers must determine that the course meets all Quality Matters essential standards. Institutions that prefer to use their own standards and rubrics provide evidence that they are comparable to those published by Quality Matters.

Cost of Online Education

The Cost of Online Education report was produced in 2016 and discussions are underway to update it in 2021. 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

In 2015, a master agreement that could be used by institutions in both the SUS and FCS was signed for a common, opt-in learning management system. FSU renewed the contract on behalf of the System in 2020.

Impact of Online Enrollments on Facilities

The Board Office is continuing to remove 80% of the distance learning FTE from classroom, teaching labs, gymnasium, and auditorium space types from the facilities planning model, thereby decreasing the amount of funds needed to meet minimum required space standards. This revision to the model was made in 2017 in response to a joint meeting of the Board’s Facilities and Innovation and Online Education Committees.

Infrastructure

FLVC is continuing to populate its site for sharing available statewide agreements, services, and contracts related to distance learning, as described in last year’s *Annual Report*.



U.S. News & World Report
**BEST ONLINE MASTER’S
IN EDUCATION PROGRAMS
FOR VETERANS**
FSU #7



U.S. News & World Report
**BEST ONLINE MASTER’S IN
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
PROGRAMS FOR VETERANS**
FSU #3, UWF #13

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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. 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. 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. Sally McRorie

Provost and Executive Vice President
for Academic Affairs
Florida State University

IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE

Dr. Tom Cavanagh

Vice Provost for Digital Learning
University of Central Florida

Robert Fuselier

Director, Office of Distance Learning
Florida State University

Dr. Andy McCollough

Associate Provost,
Teaching and Technology
University of Florida

Dr. Cynthia DeLuca, Chair

Associate Vice President,
Innovation Education
University of South Florida

Dr. Julie Golden-Botti

Executive Director for Online
and Continuing Education
Florida Atlantic University

Dr. Deb Miller

Assistant Vice President for
Digital Learning
University of North Florida

Dr. Tom Dvorske

Vice Provost, Assessment & Instruction
Florida Polytechnic University

Dr. Michelle Horton

Executive Director
Global Online Learning and Development
University of West Florida

Evangelia Prevolis (3/2020)

Interim Assistant Vice President
FIU Online
Florida International University

Angie Fairweather (Through 9/2020)

Director of Educational
Technology Services
New College of Florida

Dr. David Jaeger (1/2021)

Director, Digital Learning
Florida Gulf Coast University

Joseph Riquelme (Through 2/2020)

Assistant Vice President, FIU Online
Florida International University

Franzetta Fitz

Director of Instructional Technology
Florida Agriculture and Mechanical
University

Mariam Manzur-Leiva (10/2020)

Instructor
New College of Florida

Dr. Paul Snyder (Through 9/2020)

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

BOARD of GOVERNORS OFFICE

Dr. Nancy McKee

Associate Vice Chancellor
Board of Governors

Appendix B

Instructional Delivery Methods

Code	Description
AD	<p><i>Full Distance Learning Course</i></p> <p>Full Distance Learning Course - 100% of the direct instruction of the course is delivered using some form of technology when the student and instructor are separated by time, space, or both. All special course components (exams, internships, practica, clinicals, labs, etc) that cannot be completed online can be completed off-campus.</p>
CL	<p><i>Primarily Classroom Course</i></p> <p>Primarily Classroom Course - Less than 50% of the direct instruction of the course section is delivered using some form of technology when the student and instructor are separated by time, space or both. This designation can include activities that do not occur in a classroom (ie, labs, internships, practica, clinicals, labs, etc). These course sections are required to have records on the COURSE MEETINGS table.</p>
FL	<p><i>Flex Course</i></p> <p>Flex course - any course section that is delivered using both face-to-face and remote modalities that allows students to switch between modalities during the term. These course sections are required to have records on the COURSE MEETINGS table.</p>
HB	<p><i>Hybrid Course</i></p> <p>Hybrid Course - 50-79% of the direct instruction of the course section is delivered using some form of technology when the student and instructor are separated by time, space or both. These course sections are required to have records on the COURSE MEETINGS table.</p>
PD	<p><i>Primarily Distance Learning Course</i></p> <p>Primarily Distance Learning Course - 80-99% of the direct instruction of the course section is delivered using some form of technology when the student and instructor are separated by time, space, or both. There is a requirement for the student to attend campus or another explicit geographic location for a portion of the course. These course sections are required to have records on the COURSE MEETINGS table.</p>

SOURCE: SUDS Data Dictionary. Data element 02052. Last modified 12/09/2020.

Appendix C

Online Programs/Majors Definitions

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



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