

ANNUAL REPORT

ONLINE EDUCATION

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Summary

The State University System (SUS) 2025 Strategic Plan for Online Education, adopted by the Board of Governors in 2015, has guided online education delivery in the System and assures that quality instruction is provided in an efficient and outcomes-focused approach. Florida maintains its position as a top-ranking state for online enrollment among public four-year institutions, with continued emphasis on quality and affordability.

For the 2024-2025 Academic Year, SUS institutions offered 407 fully online degree programs. The online degree programs are offered at the bachelor's, master's, and doctoral levels. Over 150 programs are classified as Programs of Strategic Emphasis, reinforcing the System's alignment with Florida's economic development goals and talent pipeline priorities. In addition to the fully online programs, universities also offer programs that combine online instruction with traditional face-to-face instruction.

Strategic Pillars of Online Education

Quality

As a core strategic initiative of the SUS 2025 Online Education Strategic Plan, quality remains the foundation of the System's approach to online learning. Courses are intentionally designed for virtual delivery, featuring engaging, meaningful learning modules that reflect best practices in instructional design. Faculty, supported by skilled instructional designers, receive comprehensive training and ongoing professional development to ensure excellence in online teaching. The latest academic technologies are integrated to enhance course delivery and support the learning needs of students. Every institution offering online education opportunities is using the Florida Online Course Design review or an approved institutional process.

Online courses are built to foster engagement through student-to-faculty, student-to-student, and student-to-content interaction. Secure, well-aligned assessments are structured for virtual environments, ensuring academic integrity and clear learning outcomes.

State universities continue to expand access to flexible learning opportunities, leveraging shared infrastructure, coordinated planning, and data-informed strategies. Faculty and staff have worked to develop resources promoting quality course design, professional development, and networking opportunities for educators and researchers to share experiences, strategies, and innovations to advance online learning. Examples of these resources are described in Appendix A.

Enrollment

Online education throughout the System continues to serve as an important access point for students across Florida. Florida remains a national leader in online learning, ranking third among all public four-year institutions in both the percentage and number of students enrolled in distance learning. The top ten states for distance learning enrollment headcounts for the 2023 fall term for undergraduate and graduate levels among four-year public institutions are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Top 10 States for Distance Learning Enrollment

Rank	State	Fall 2023 Enrollment
1	Texas	410,383
2	California	344,629
3	Florida	239,887
4	Georgia	183,005
5	New York	162,959
6	Arizona	159,292
7	Ohio	159,171
8	Indiana	139,097
9	North Carolina	133,497
10	Michigan	113,624

Source: State University System of Florida Office of Data Analytics, April 2, 2025

Undergraduate enrollment for students taking only distance learning courses exceeded 52,000 across the System, with Florida International University and the University of Central Florida having the greatest number of students enrolled. The number of students who enrolled in hybrid instruction exceeded 220,000 across the System. Hybrid courses are defined as using some form of technology for 50-79% of the direct instruction. Table 2 provides an overview by institution of the enrollment of undergraduate students by modality and the System totals, and Table 3 provides a summary of the percentage of undergraduate student enrollment in the System for three academic years.

Table 2: Undergraduate Student Enrollment 2023-24 Academic Year

Institution	Students Who Took Only Distance Learning Courses		Students Who Took Distance Learning and Classroom Courses/ Hybrid Courses		Students Who Took No Distance Learning Courses	
	Headcount	%	Headcount	%	Headcount	%
FAMU	500	6%	6,136	73%	1,752	21%
FAU	5,316	19%	19,413	70%	2,991	11%
FGCU	1,558	10%	11,445	74%	2,395	16%
FIU	12,880	27%	28,863	61%	5,796	12%
FL POLY	2	0%	64	4%	1,572	96%
FSU	1,757	5%	27,806	78%	6,064	17%
NCF	0	0%	32	4%	748	96%
UCF	13,866	20%	46,958	69%	7,356	11%
UF	6,408	15%	31,907	75%	4,264	10%
UNF	1,801	11%	12,646	78%	1,727	11%
USF	5,109	12%	31,684	77%	4,611	11%
UWF	3,425	32%	6,483	60%	922	9%
SUS	52,622	17%	223,437	71%	40,198	13%

Source: State University System of Florida Office of Data Analytics, April 2, 2025

Table 3: Undergraduate Student Enrollment for Three Academic Years

Academic Year	% Students Who Took Only Distance Learning Courses	% Students Who Took Distance Learning and Classroom Courses/ Hybrid Courses	% Students Who Took No Distance Learning Courses
2021-2022	19%	70%	10%
2022-2023	17%	70%	13%
2023-2024	17%	71%	13%

Source: State University System of Florida 2023-2024, 2022-2023, and 2021-2022 Annual Reports for Online Education

Graduate enrollment for students taking only distance learning courses exceeded 34,000 across the System, with the greatest enrollment at the University of Florida. The number of students who enrolled in hybrid instruction exceeded 25,000 across the System. Table 4 provides an overview by institution of the enrollment of graduate students by modality and the System totals, and Table 5 provides a summary of the percentage of graduate student enrollment for three academic years.

Table 4: Graduate Student Enrollment 2023-24 Academic Year

Institution	Students Who Took Only Distance Learning Courses		Students Who Took Distance Learning and Classroom Courses/ Hybrid Courses		Students Who Took No Distance Learning Courses	
	Headcount	%	Headcount	%	Headcount	%
FAMU	239	14%	630	37%	828	49%
FAU	2,801	38%	2,683	37%	1,858	25%
FGCU	1,292	53%	793	32%	369	15%
FIU	3,630	32%	3,323	29%	4,427	39%
FL POLY	0	0%	15	21%	56	79%
FSU	4,407	36%	2,709	22%	5,216	42%
NCF	0	0%	0	0%	24	100%
UCF	4,858	43%	2,667	24%	3,734	33%
UF	8,332	39%	6,256	29%	6,771	32%
UNF	969	35%	1,130	41%	689	25%
USF	3,126	26%	4,696	38%	4,378	36%
UWF	4,865	85%	604	11%	253	4%
SUS	34,519	39%	25,506	29%	28,603	32%

Source: State University System of Florida Office of Data Analytics, April 2, 2025

Table 5: Graduate Student Enrollment for Three Academic Years

Academic Year	% Students Who Took Only Distance Learning Courses	% Students Who Took Distance Learning and Classroom Courses/ Hybrid Courses	% Students Who Took No Distance Learning Courses
2021-2022	40%	31%	29%
2022-2023	40%	28%	32%
2023-2024	39%	29%	32%

Source: State University System of Florida 2023-2024, 2022-2023, and 2021-2022 Annual Reports for Online Education

Affordability

Online learners benefit from reduced costs associated with transportation, housing, and selected campus fees, particularly when paired with flexible scheduling that supports employment and financial aid eligibility. The Board of Governors identified key areas to help reduce the cost of online education in the 2025 Strategic Plan for Online Education. These key areas are shared services, content collaboration, and efficient instructional innovation. In support of these goals, the System has expanded its affordability efforts through collaborative initiatives designed to lower the cost of attendance while preserving the quality of instruction. An example of an initiative is Affordability Counts, led by Florida International University. This initiative recognizes faculty who adopt low-cost materials for their undergraduate or graduate-level courses. The database includes over 3,200 courses, offered both online and on-campus, that have been reviewed and earned the distinction as an Affordability Counts course.

The System's institutions continue to pursue cost efficiencies through shared course content, instructional design tools, a shared digital infrastructure, and professional development programs. These combined strategies reflect the System's commitment to increasing access through affordability, helping students complete their degrees with less debt and greater opportunity.

Next Steps

Each university offering online education has a chief online learning officer, and they have worked collectively over the past ten years to meet the System's goals outlined in the 2025 Strategic Plan for Online Education. This group will now constitute the SUS Council of Digital Learning Leaders. This council will continue to foster statewide collaboration and innovation and serve as an advisory council to the Board of Governors staff.

The mission of the council is to utilize collective expertise and resources to enhance the quality of digital education throughout the state, thereby contributing to the successful achievement of the System's strategic goals. It will provide strategic guidance and recommendations on digital learning initiatives, policies, and best practices, while supporting student access, engagement, and success in digital learning environments.

Conclusion

Over the past ten years, the State University System of Florida's institutions have transformed online education into a high-quality, student-centered, and strategically aligned initiative that expands access, drives innovation, and enhances affordability. The lessons learned and progress made under the 2025 Strategic Plan for Online Education will guide future innovation, ensuring that Florida remains a national leader in delivering high-impact, affordable, and accessible online education.

Appendix A: State University System Resources for Online Education

- **Teaching Online Preparation Toolkit:** Provides licensed resources and models that faculty may adopt and adapt, supports partnerships for professional development and collaboration.
- **Florida Quality Matters Consortium:** Provides resources to promote quality course design and learning experiences for students in online and blended courses.
- **Florida Instructional Designer Network:** Collaborative partnership offering professional development webinars for instructional designers, technologists, and other online learning professionals.
- **Florida Online Innovation Summit:** Conference designed to advance Florida's online learning delivery by bringing together thought leaders, researchers, and educators in the State University System and the Florida College System to share experiences, strategies, research, and innovation.

Appendix B – President's Award

To recognize exemplary online teaching faculty at each institution, the 2025 Strategic Plan for Online Education provided for the establishment of a statewide awards program. A President's Award was established at each university to annually recognize a faculty member based on evidence of exceptional online teaching practice. The 2024-25 President's Award winners appear below.

2024-25 President's Award Recipients

Institution	Faculty	College/Department
FAU	Dr. Katarina Brant	Business Management
FGCU	Mr. Conan Griffin	Language & Literature
FIU	Ms. Albena Petrus	Communication, Architecture, & The Arts
FSU	Dr. Amber Ward	Fine Arts
UCF	Dr. Gail Humiston	Criminal Justice
UF	Dr. Swapna Kumar	Education
UNF	Dr. Suzanne Ehrlich	Education & Human Services
USF	Dr. Thomas Henry Culhane	Global Sustainability
UWF	Dr. Julie Ann Stuart Williams	Business Administration

Source: Each university reported the award recipient



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