

Online Education: Where are we headed?

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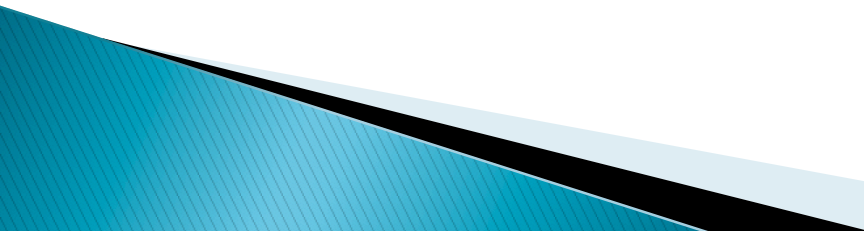
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Online Education: Where are we headed?

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Online Education: Where are we headed?

A Success Story: Southern New Hampshire University, Manchester, New Hampshire

- *2003 – Paul LeBlanc become President of SNHU which was a small college.
- *2008 – Recession – Lower enrollments
- *2009 – LeBlanc hired Dr. Clay Christensen from Harvard Business School (**The Innovator's Dilemma** [Disruptive Technology - 1997] [Business Model - 2008] (Johnson, Christensen, & Kagermann, 2008) as a Board of Trustee member.
- *2009 – LeBlanc convinced the Board of Trustees to significantly increase the online education based on Christensen's arguments about higher education models. "His solution was to tackle what colleges were doing poorly: graduating students. Half the students who enroll in post-secondary education never get a degree but accumulate debt" (Kahn, 2014, p. 2).
- *2009-2013 – Standardized online curriculum (8 week undergraduate courses); admissions counselors; and a warning system if a student has not interacted online.
- *2013 – "Traditional Undergraduates: 2,750; online college: 25,000 students" (Hechinger, 2013, p. 1).
- *2013-2014 Academic Year – "29 million profit from the online college which amounts to a 22% margin...the online operation will soon have 25 full-time professors" (Hechinger, 2013, p. 2).

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Some Industry Statistics

***Private colleges are facing declining enrollments.** “From 2010 through 2012, freshman enrollment at **more than a quarter of U. S. private four-year colleges declined 10% or more...**From 2006 through 2009, fewer than one in five experienced a similar decline” (Belkin, 2013, p. 1; *Wall Street Journal* Analysis of Department of Education Data [Decline], November 11, 2013).

***There is tremendous growth in the adult student markets.** “The share of students is projected to increase by approximately **23% by 2019**” (Hess, 2011, p. 2).

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Some Industry Statistics

*2012 – 32% (6.7 million) of all college students completed one online course.

*Chief Academic Officers who believe that “online learning is critical to their long-term strategy is now at 69.1% - the highest it has been for the ten-year period from 2002-2012” (Allen & Seaman, 2013, p. 4).

***MOOCS** – Massive Open Online Courses – 2.6% of colleges use MOOCS while 9.4% of institutions plan to use them. Doctoral and research universities plan to use them at a higher rate (21.4%) (Allen & Seaman, 2013, pp. 7&8).

NOTE: The colleges and universities included in the Allen and Seaman study (4,527 schools with 2,820 responses or 62.3% of the sample) represent 83.3% of all higher education enrollments in 2012 (Allen & Seaman, 2013, p. 32).

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Some Industry Statistics - Projected Enrollments in U.S. Degree-Granting Institutions, 2012-2022 (in 000s)

Projected Enrollments	2012	2013	2016	2019	2022	% Change, 2012-2022
All students	20,968	21,216	22,076	23,025	23,888	13.9%
Men	8,998	9,070	9,216	9,493	9,796	8.9%
Women	11,970	12,146	12,860	13,533	14,092	17.7%
Full time	13,104	13,107	13,532	14,068	14,616	11.5%
Part time	7,953	8,109	8,544	8,957	9,273	16.6%
Undergraduate	18,006	18,187	18,848	19,634	20,399	13.3%
Graduate	2,962	3,029	3,228	3,392	3,489	17.8%
First-Time Freshmen	3,165	3,196	3,309	3,445	3,578	13.1%
Public 4-Year	8,045	8,131	8,443	8,790	9,120	13.4%
Public 2-Year	7,033	7,125	7,420	7,755	8,048	14.4%
Private 4-Year	5,455	5,521	5,757	6,003	6,223	14.1%

Source: College enrollment growth 2012-2022. (2014, February 28). Projections of education statistics to 2022 [National Center for Education Statistics] found in Dave Lederman's article on The enrollment slowdown. *Inside Higher Education*. Retrieved from <http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2014/02/28/us-projects-college-enrollment-grow-14-through2022#ixzz31KW4KsSt>

NOTE: Bachelor's degrees will increase only 17% in comparison to the 45% increase in the decade from 2002-2012.

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Types of Online Education

***Web Based** – This is a face-to-face source that uses a course management system.

***Hybrid** – A course that uses both face-to-face and online delivery. The first and last classes may be live with the rest being online.

***Online** – A course that uses only online delivery in a Moodle or Blackboard platform (Allen & Seaman, 2013, p. 7).

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Pros and Cons of Online Education – The Debate

Pros

*62.4% of surveyed colleges offered online degree programs at the end of 2012 (Sheehy, 2013).

*In 2003, “**57.2%** of academic leaders rated **learning outcomes in online education the same or superior to face-to-face. That number is now 77%**” (Allen & Seaman, 2013, p. 5).

*When reviewing **learning outcomes in online courses**, the “percent reporting that outcomes are inferior or somewhat inferior dropped from 32.4% in 2011 to only 23% in 2012....Over three-quarters of academic leaders believe that **online is ‘just as good’ or better**” (Allen & Seaman, 2013, p. 24).

*Since higher education now has many adult students, they are looking for efficiencies and time flexibilities that online education offers.

*Online education can facilitate the degree completions for traditional students in 3 years instead of 4 years. This saves time and money.

Cons

*Online course retention rates are **10 to 20% lower** than face to face courses (Zatynski, 2013, p. 1; Retention rates, 2012, p. 1).

*“Only **30.2%** of the officials surveyed in the Fall of **2012** said their **faculty members ‘accept the value and legitimacy of online education,’** the lowest level reported since the Fall of **2005** when only **27.6 % of administrators said their faculty backed** online education” (Sheehy, 2013, p. 2).

*23% of academic leaders feel that online education learning outcomes are inferior to face to face outcomes (Allen & Seaman, 2013, p. 5).

*There is a **barrier by the faculty in the acceptance of online education growth.** Between 2007 and 2012, **this barrier increased from 61.1% to 66.8%** (Allen & Seaman, 2013, p.28). This is a concern for Chief Academic Officers.

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Challenges for the Students

*The proper use and changes in technology are issues for students.

*Discipline is a challenge. “The proportion of academic leaders who cite the need for more **discipline on the part of online students as a barrier** has increased from just over **80% in 2007 to 88.8% in 2012**” (Allen & Seaman, 2013, p. 6).

*Everything is written in an online environment. For students who need a lot of repetition for success (verbal discussions), this type of education may present challenges.

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Challenges for the Professors

*It takes **more time and effort** to deliver a well-structured online course that achieves course outcomes. (“**In 2006, 40.7%** of Chief Academic Officers reported this statistic....**in 2012, this number was 44.6%**” [Allen & Seaman, 2012, p. 22]).

*In many colleges, the design and delivery of online courses is not more efficient than in the same face-to face class.

*Technology changes are always a factor. Faculty need continuous technology improvements.

***Faculty workloads** can impact the delivery of an online course (Britt, Kelly, Hardenbergh, & Hardenbergh, 2012).

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Accreditation Standards

*Most accreditation standards are similar for the online courses as well as the face-to-face courses (Higher Learning Commission), the ACBSP (Accreditation Council for Collegiate Business School Programs), and the IACBE (International Assembly for Collegiate Business Education). For Mount Vernon Nazarene University, this includes attendance, meeting course objectives and required learning outcomes as stated in the syllabi (*MVNU Catalog*, 2013-2014, p. 165).

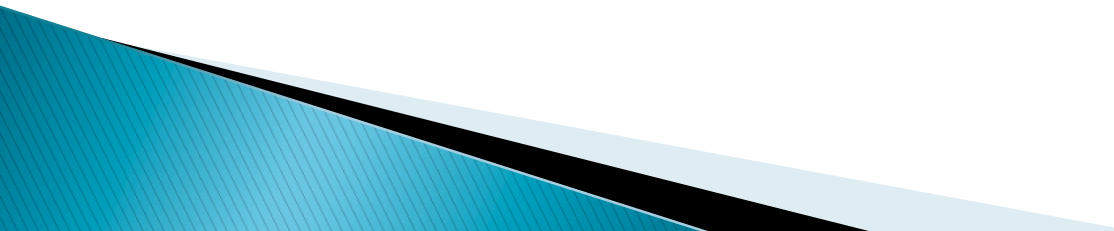
*For online degree programs, it helps to have standardized grading rubrics, standardized syllabi, and standardized discussion boards.

*Maintain high curriculum standards for all online courses.

*Online students need to understand that the degree of accountability in the online courses will be the same as in a face-to-face class.

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Education and Change

- *Certifications instead of degree completions will impact higher education (Bergeron & Klinsky, 2013; Porter, 2013; Britt, Kelly, Hardenbergh, & Hardenbergh, 2012).
 - *Faculty need to participate in continuous education for technology changes.
 - *The survival of some private colleges will be impacted by the changes in the industry.
 - *Since life is about continual change, people need to have a positive attitude when dealing with transformational change.
 - *Higher Education must meet the needs of business and professional employers in the proper education of their students.
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Online Education: Where are we headed?

Sam Nobilucci – An MVNU Online Success Story

- *B. S. in Sports Management - Traditional Undergraduate at MVNU
- *M.S.M. in Healthcare Administration – Online student who graduated in 2011
- *Manager of the Ohio Health Urgent Care Clinic in New Albany, Ohio (age-26)
- *Sam was accepted in April, 2014 into the Inaugural Class of the Ohio Health/ Ohio University Osteopathic Medical Program in Dublin, Ohio.
- *Sam was a very motivated student who thrived in an online environment.

Permission to use this information was received on August 9, 2014 from Sam Nobilucci.



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Conclusion

*Higher education is undergoing some major transformations in terms of survival, rapid technological changes, and the delivery of various types of education.

*Anyone who works in this industry needs to maintain excellence in all aspects of their work and change with the industry.

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