The Center for Distance Education Research

Access ✿ Engagement ✿ Success

Who We Are

The Center for Distance Education Research is a professional organization dedicated to promoting student access, engagement, and success in distance learning.

Who We Serve

The Center serves to generate and inform a renewed interest in distance education in U.S. higher education institutions and strives to make vital contributions to higher education research, policy, and practice. We desire to conduct research on the issues affecting distance education and work with colleges and states to improve student access, student engagement, student success, and institutional performance.

http://www.distanceeducationresearch.org/

http://linkedin.com/company/center-for-distance-education-research

Kevin N. Shriner, Ed.D.
Executive Director

The Center for Distance Education Research was founded by Kevin N. Shriner, Ed.D. in 2014. Kevin has over 25 years of experience in higher education, spending 16 of those years at public and private institutions and 9 years in higher education consulting.

During his higher education career, Kevin has collaborated with faculty and administrators to assess academic and institutional preparedness to launch online undergraduate and graduate programs. His past experiences include roles as Associate Dean for Academic Success and First Year Experience; Associate Dean for Institutional Research, Planning, and Effectiveness; Director of Institutional Effectiveness; Assistant Director of Admissions; Assistant Professor; and Dean of Academic Affairs. Kevin has been responsible for developing programs with faculty, managing regional and programmatic accreditation, overseeing institutional effectiveness processes, and managing student services areas. Kevin has also taught online undergraduate and graduate courses for the past 14 years

Kevin earned his bachelor's degree in Park Resource Management from Kansas State University, a master's degree in History and Higher Education Administration from the University of Arkansas, and a doctorate in Higher Education Leadership from Nova Southeastern University.

Kevin is a past Fellow for the National Summer Data Policy Institute on the Datasets of the National Center for Education Statistics and National Science Foundation as well as the Association for Institutional Research and National Center for Education Statistics Fellowship Program in Institutional Research

Executive Summary

The Center for Distance Education Research releases an annual analysis of the National Center for Education Statistics' Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) fall enrollment survey. Our reports are a valuable resource for researchers, institutional administrators, academic affairs officers and the public in general. Annually, all institutions that participate in any federal assistance program authorized by Title IV of the Higher Education Act are mandated to submit the required data through IPEDS surveys. Information on distance education was included for the first time during the annual data collection for fall 2012. Institutions were required to report on the number of students enrolled in *exclusively distance education courses* and students enrolled in *some but not all distance education courses*.

The purpose of our reports is to continue the dialogue around distance education enrollments and provide analysis of the IPEDS data about distance education enrollments as related to institutional characteristics like size, location, sector and institutional level. Specifically, our reports utilize data from fall 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, and 2017.

Our Methodology
All data for our reports were freely downloaded from the IPEDS Data Center. The data located at the IPEDS Data Center can change over time due to corrections of the data files, and it is important to note that when comparing other reports. All results in our reports utilize degree-granting institutions designated as such in the IPEDS data files. All non- degree granting institutions are excluded from the analysis.

Annual Fall Enrollment Reports

The primary focus of the center is to produce annual reports from the fall enrollment data files produced by IPEDS. These annual reports are valuable resource for researchers, institutional administrators, academic affairs officers and the public in general.

Enrollments by Institution Control in Exclusively Distance Education, Fall 2017

Summary:

Public institutions comprised 52% of exclusively distance education enrollments, a market share that has been steadily increasing since 2012. The private institutions, however, enrolled more of their students exclusively online: 66% in private not-for-profit and 84% in private for-profit. At 65%, most student enrollments at public institutions are in some, but not all, distance education courses.
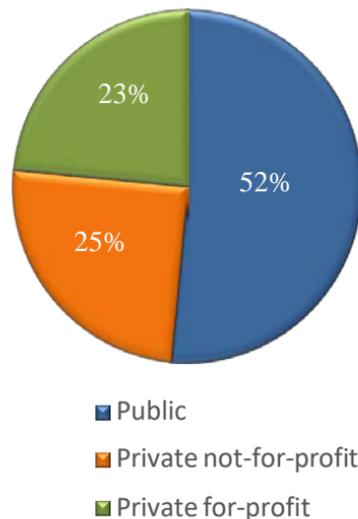
- Public
- Private not-for-profit
- Private for-profit

Enrollments by Institution Control in Exclusively Distance Education for 2013 to 2017

Institution Control	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	% Change 2013-2017
Public	1,283,983	1,384,262	1,458,051	1,547,662	1,658,970	29%
Private not-for-profit	556,434	632,341	692,714	750,651	806,672	45%
Private for-profit	862,563	843,579	753,346	706,188	666,139	-23%
Total	2,702,980	2,860,182	2,904,111	3,004,501	3,131,781	16%

Enrollments by Institution Sector in Exclusively Distance Education, Fall 2017

Summary:

Public, 4-year institutions enrolled 915,682 students exclusively in distance education and increased enrollments 47% over the past five years. In contrast, private for-profit, 4-year institutions enrolled 655,981 students exclusively in distance education but have decreased 22% over the past five years. Public, 2- year institutions enrolled 743,288 students exclusively in distance education but has grown slowly over the past five years.

Legend:
- Public, 4-year
- Private not-for-profit, 4- year
- Private for-profit, 4-year
- Public, 2-year
- Private not-for-profit, 2- year
- Private for-profit, 2-year
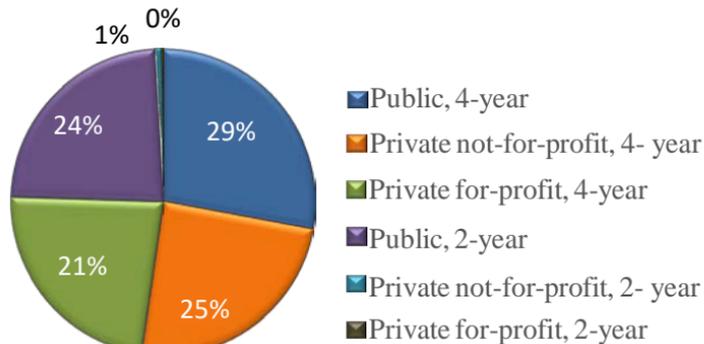
Enrollments by Sector in Exclusively Distance Education for 2013 to 2017						
Institution Sector	**2013**	**2014**	**2015**	**2016**	**2017**	**% Change 2013-2017**
Public, 4-year	622,459	694,076	741,355	838,833	915,682	47%
Private not-for-profit, 4-year	555,632	631,539	691,511	733,102	786,950	42%
Private for-profit, 4-year	843,420	823,222	743,535	696,618	655,981	-22%
Public, 2-year	661,524	690,186	716,696	708,829	743,288	12%
Private not-for-profit, 2-year*	802	802	1,203	17,549	19,722	1539%
Private for-profit, 2-year*	19,143	20,357	9,811	9,570	10,158	4%
Total	2,702,980	2,860,182	2,904,111	3,004,501	3,131,781	16%

Distance Education Enrollments at Institutions Greater than 20,000 Students

Summary:

Institutions greater than 20,000 students accounted for 43% (2,660,909 students) of all enrollments in distance education courses in fall 2017. There were 10 private for-profit, 4-year institutions that enrolled 438,063 students exclusively in distance education in fall 2017, reflecting 33% of the enrollments. This exceeded the 147 public, 4-year institutions enrollments (416,221) during the same time period by 21,842 students.

Enrollments at 20,000 and Above in Exclusively Distance Education for 2012 to 2017

Institution Sector	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	% Change 2013-2017
Public, 4-year	288,602	310,886	341,415	379,170	416,221	44%
Private not-for-profit, 4-year	246,309	279,556	301,657	321,350	349,208	42%
Private for-profit, 4-year	607,566	572,390	536,578	472,535	438,063	-28%
Public, 2-year	162,840	168,169	155,115	129,775	141,880	-13%
Total	1,305,317	1,331,001	1,334,765	1,302,830	1,345,372	3%

Enrollments by Level of Student in Exclusively Distance Education, Fall 2017

Summary:

Graduate students enrolled exclusively in distance education comprised 76% of student enrollments, compared to 38% for undergraduate degree/certificate-seeking, and 66% in undergraduate non-degree/certificate seeking in fall 2017. All levels of students continued to grow in exclusively distance education in fall 2017 but the growth was even or slowed compared to previous years.
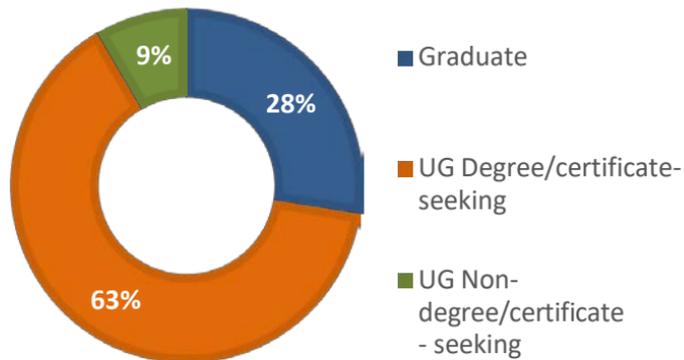
Enrollments by Level of Student in Exclusively Distance Education for 2013 to 2017

Level of Student	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	% Change 2013-2017
Graduate	685,207	734,542	777,533	827,708	878,984	28%
UG Degree/certificate-seeking	1,816,606	1,908,495	1,882,894	1,922,802	1,974,625	9%
UG Non-degree/certificate-seeking	201,167	217,145	243,684	253,991	278,172	38%
Total	2,702,980	2,860,182	2,904,111	3,004,501	3,131,781	16%

Distance Education Enrollments: Top 10 Institutions

Summary:

Over the past five years, fifteen different institutions have held a position in the top ten of higher education distance education enrollments, and eight of those have never been outside the top ten. The top institution for the fifth year in a row was the University of Phoenix-Arizona, and it was one of four private for-profit institutions in the top ten. Rounding out the rest of the top ten were two public institution and four private not-for-profit institutions. Brigham Young University – Idaho and the University of Central Florida were in the top ten for the first time this year replacing Excelsior College and Ashford University.

Top 10 Distance Education Enrollments for Fall 2017

Institution Name	Sector	2016	2017	Change in Enrollment
University of Phoenix-Arizona	Private for-profit, 4-year	129,332	101,938	-21%
Western Governors University	Private not-for-profit, 4-year	84,289	98,627	17%
Southern New Hampshire University	Private not-for-profit, 4-year	63,973	84,550	32%
Grand Canyon University	Private for-profit, 4-year	68,542	75,154	10%
Liberty University	Private not-for-profit, 4-year	67,766	67,312	-1%
University of Maryland-University College	Public, 4-year	50,932	53,080	4%
Walden University	Private for-profit, 4-year	52,565	49,680	-5%
American Public University System	Private for-profit, 4-year	48,623	46,420	-5%
Brigham Young University – Idaho*	Private not-for-profit, 4-year	35,826	42,057	17%
University of Central Florida*	Public, 4-year	36,107	38,073	5%

Fall 2017 "Online Colleges"

Summary:

By comparing exclusively distance education enrollments to overall enrollments at each degree granting institution in fall 2017, there were 67 institutions where overall enrollments matched exclusively distance education enrollments 100 percent; and with zero enrollments in the some but not all exclusively distance education category. These 67 institutions are referred to as "online colleges". These online colleges resided in 27 different states with California (n=10), Indiana (n=6), Florida (n=5), Arizona (n=5), and Colorado (n=4) rounding out the top five and being the home state to 45 percent of the online colleges. Adding in Alabama, West Virginia, Utah and Wisconsin, each with three online colleges, these nine states were home to 63 percent of the online colleges.

Online Colleges by Institution Sector and Enrollment

Institution Sector	Number Colleges	Student Enrollments
Private for-profit, 2-year	6	3,685
Private for-profit, 4-year	32	262,117
Private not-for-profit, 4-year	23	154,600
Public, 2-year	1	54
Public, 4-year	5	31,548
Total	**67**	**452,004**

14 percent of all exclusively distance education enrollments.

Number of Programs Offered Through Distance Education

Summary:

The decline in the number of degree-granting institutions from 4,991 in 2013 to 4,701 in 2017 has led to a decrease in the number of degree programs offered via distance education since reporting first started in 2013. The above chart reflects the top ten programs by overall distance education and for bachelor's and master's degrees. The bolded number in each respective column is the number one program for that degree group. IPEDS utilizes student completion data during the annual collection cycle to determine the number of programs at an institution.

Number of Distance Education Programs Offered by Classification of Instructional Programs Code, Fall 2017

2017 Classification of Instructional Programs – Distance Education	Total DE Programs	Total DE Bachelor's	Total DE Master's
52) Business, Management, Marketing, and Related Support Services	**6,957**	**1,743**	1,565
51) Health Professions and Related Programs	4,898	1,210	1,179
13) Education	3,767	374	**2,043**
11) Computer and Information Sciences and Support Services	2,130	478	371
43) Homeland Security, Law Enforcement, Firefighting and Related Protectives Services	1,756	511	268
24) Liberal Arts and Sciences, General Studies and Humanities	1,152	282	NR
44) Public Administration and Social Service Professions	870	249	298
39) Theology and Religious Vocations	776	NR	294
42) Psychology	674	278	179
14) Engineering	647	NR	411

IPEDS Challenges to Distance Education Reporting

- **ENROLLMENT DATA BY CIP CODE**

- **COMPLETION DATA BY CIP CODE FOR DISTANCE EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

- **ATTENDANCE STATUS FOR DISTANCE EDUCATION ENROLLMENTS**

- **RACE/ETHNICITY, GENDER, AGE BY DISTANCE EDUCATION ENROLLMENTS**

Q&A

Charting our Future Direction

INTERNATIONAL DISTANCE EDUCATION BENCHMARK PROJECT
Assessing Core Indicators of Distance Education

We are very excited to share the launch of the very first benchmarking project for distance education. The International Distance Education Benchmark Project (**http://idebp.org/**) intends to become the first, most representative and comprehensive benchmarking initiative for higher education institutions around the world delivering distance education programs and courses. Please see the new page and let us know if you are interested in participating.

PARTNER OPPORTUNITIES

The Center for Distance Education Research (CDER) has several studies in which we are looking for institutional partners for data collection. Interested in being a CDER partner? The data collection may consist of CDER gathering institutional data and/or the administration of a survey to your distance education students.

- Students Exclusively Enrolled in Distance Education Demographic Research

# Sharing IPEDS Data Insights on LinkedIn

PLEASE BE SURE TO FOLLOW US!

Is the MBA Degree Declining?

Are MBA programs growing or declining? The answer really depends on how you slice the data. In the traditional analysis of IPEDS conferrals for CIP code 52.0201 (where the majority of MBAs are recorded) there were 113,076 conferrals in 2013 and 107,841 in 2018, a decline of 4.9 percent.

In 2013, there were 220 degree granting institutions that conferred 12,384 students in the CIP code category of 52.0201. Those 220 institutions do not exist in 2018. They have either closed their doors or merged with another institution. The second graphic reflects the difference in conferrals when removing institutions [from all years, not just 2013] that do not exist in 2018.

If we assume that the conferrals from those 220 institutions are not reported, as there was no way to continue to confer that many degrees from shuttered doors, then the MBA (52.0201) from existing institutions actually grew from 2013 to 2018, up 6.6 percent.

So, is the MBA growing or declining? That answer depends on whether or not you are comfortable removing past historical data from institutions that are unable to repeat past performances because they do not exist.

All Degree Granting Conferrals for CIP Code 52.0201

2018 Degree Granting Institution Conferrals for CIP Code 52.0201
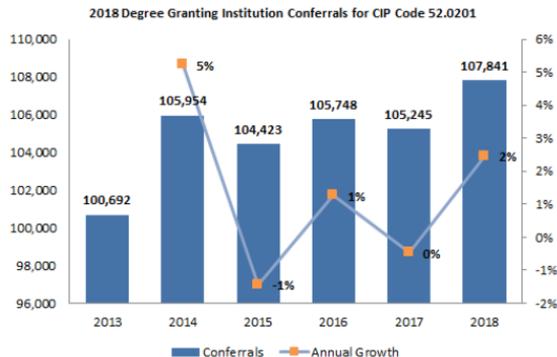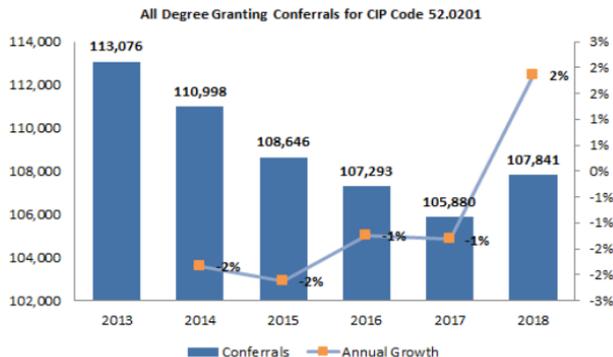
Top Ten Institutions for African-American Female Doctorates in Research

Institution Name	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Walden University	258	386	408	614	702
Capella University	332	520	506	584	542
Nova Southeastern University	290	276	346	344	418
University of Phoenix-Arizona	198	158	178	158	146
Northcentral University	24	14	60	72	134
Howard University	126	96	146	104	116
Argosy University-Phoenix Online Division	136	208	200	170	108
Argosy University-Atlanta	156	190	136	80	106
Regent University	30	36	56	48	96
Jackson State University	72	66	94	104	84
University of Georgia	68	64	66	82	68
Argosy University-Sarasota	132	116	78	60	54

Exclusively Distance Education By State, Fall 2017
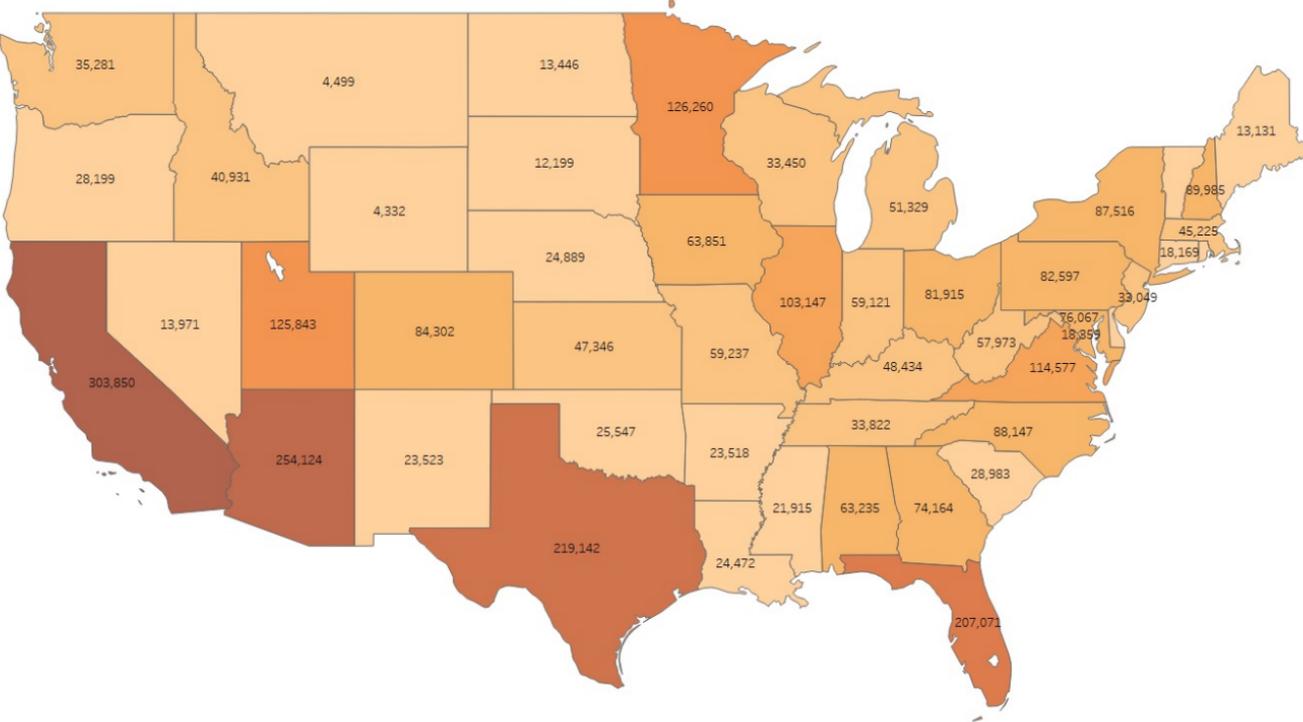
Having Fun with the NCAA Men's Basketball Tournament

2019 March Madness Distance Education Bracket

| First Round March 21-22 | Second Round March 23-24 | Sweet 16 March 28-29 | Elite 8 March 30-31 | Final Four April 6 | Championship April 8 | Final Four April 6 | Elite 8 March 30-31 | Sweet 16 March 28-29 | Second Round March 23-24 | First Round March 21-22 |

Liberty (59,840) — National Champions

First Four March 19-20

16 NC Central (944)	(340) Prairie View A&M 16
16 N. Dakota St. (756)	(563) Fairleigh Dickinson 16
East	West
11 Belmont (17)	(368) Arizona St. 11
11 Temple (1,382)	(444) St. John's 11
East	West