EMILY VINSON

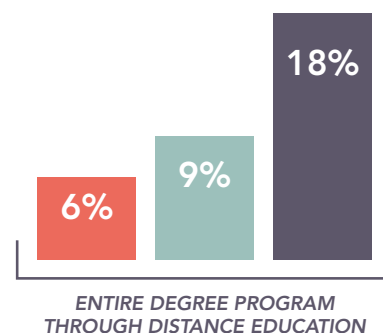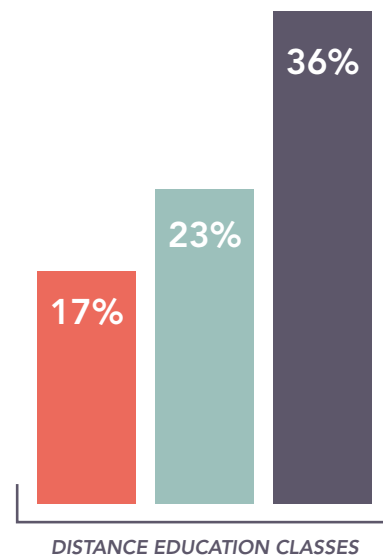# A NEW APPROACH TO ONLINE LEARNING:

CREATING AN E-LESSON

LESSON

01

CHANGING DEMOGRAPHICS IN HIGHER EDUCATION:
THE ONLINE COLLEGE STUDENT

DEMOGRAPHICS

Demographics in higher education are shifting to non-traditional student populations seeking online degree programs. Universities should include or increase program offerings online to increase enrollment and adapt to these new trends. The traditional student population of 18-24 year olds attending on-campus classes is fading. Adult degree seekers are choosing fully online or hybrid degree programs for affordability, flexibility and convenience. Here's what we know about these new enrollment numbers:

- Online degree and certificate programs grew more than 25 percent between 2013 - 2015 to more than 25,000 total programs.

- Online enrollments grew an estimated 4 percent in 2016 to 3.75 million full-time or majority online learners.

- Graduate students are 14% of the student population but 27% of the total online student population

- In 2012, 36 percent of US graduate students took distance education courses. Another 18 percent completed their entire degree program online.

36%

23%

17%

DISTANCE EDUCATION CLASSES

18%

9%

6%

ENTIRE DEGREE PROGRAM
THROUGH DISTANCE EDUCATION

Use of distance education in Graduate Students

2003 - 2004   2007 - 2008   2011 - 2012

FACTORS

There are there many factors that affect the shift in student populations. There is more of an increase in graduate student numbers versus undergraduate numbers, although undergraduate enrollment remains strong. The three most common factors are:

THE FAMILY FACTOR

45 percent of graduate students are between the ages of 30-39. Of that age group, 54 percent of graduate students have at least one child under the age of 18.

AGE	Percent Undergraduate	Percent Graduate
18 to 24	16%	8%
25 to 29	21%	20%
30 to 34	18%	27%
35 to 39	20%	18%
40 to 44	2%	6%
45 to 49	7%	8%
50 to 54	7%	3%
55 and older	9%	9%

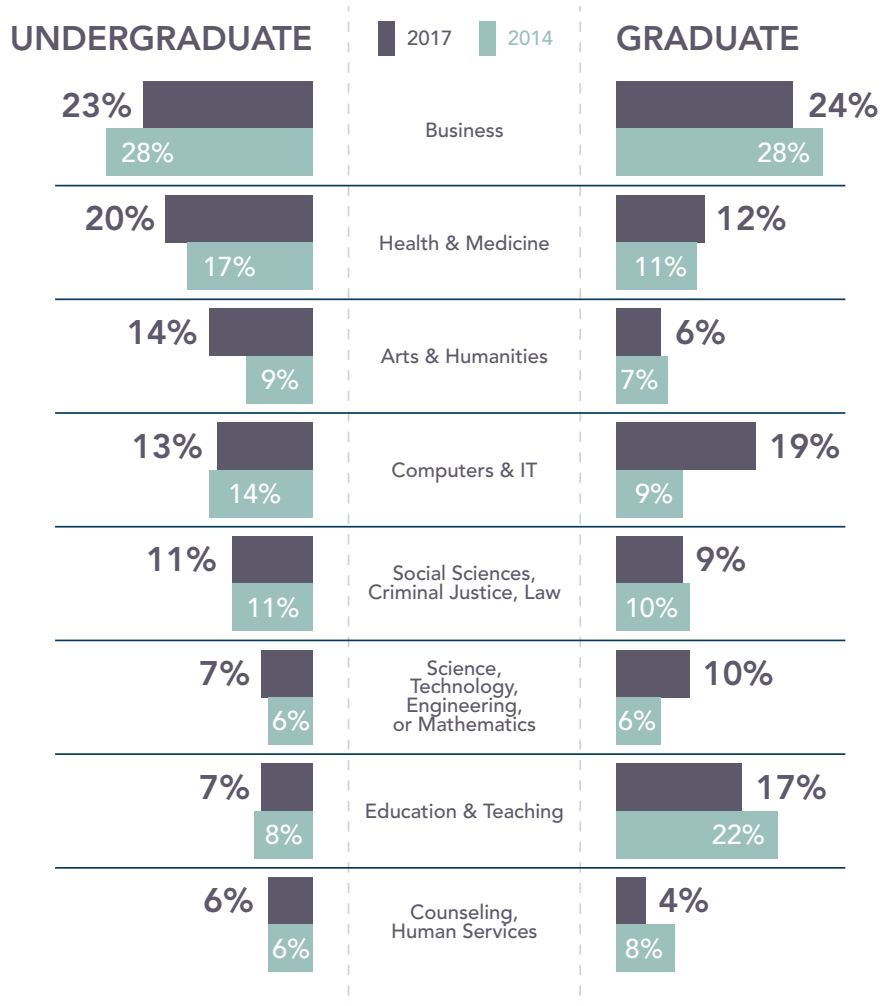| HOW MANY CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF 18 DO YOU HAVE?	Percent Undergraduate	Percent Graduate
None	55%	45%
One	20%	22%
Two	16%	23%
Three or more	8%	9%
Prefer not to say	1%	2%

FACTORS CONT.

THE EMPLOYMENT FACTOR
71 percent of graduate students are employed full-time. Another 16 percent work part-time.

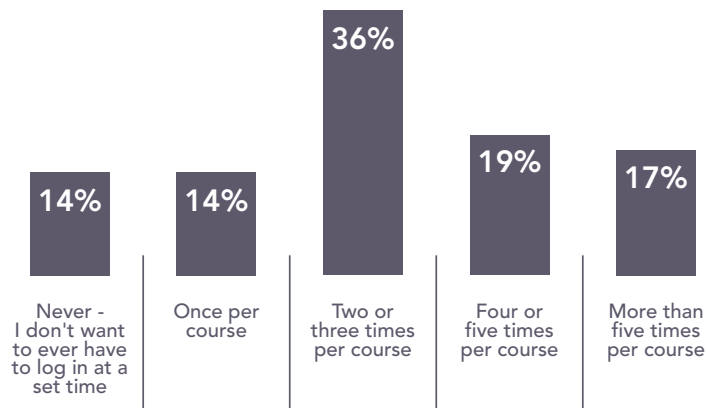| WHAT IS YOUR EMPLOYMENT STATUS?	Percent Undergraduate	Percent Graduate
Employed full time	49%	71%
Employed part time	26%	16%
Not employed	23%	11%
Retired	1%	1%
Prefer not to say	2%	1%

FACTORS CONT.

THE SHIFT IN JOB GROWTH FACTOR

Industries are changing. Student interest in Information Technology degrees has grown by 10 percent since 2014. Business degrees still remain the most popular online degree among both undergraduates and graduates.

UNDERGRADUATE	2017 / 2014		GRADUATE
23% / 28%		Business	24% / 28%
20% / 17%		Health & Medicine	12% / 11%
14% / 9%		Arts & Humanities	6% / 7%
13% / 14%		Computers & IT	19% / 9%
11% / 11%		Social Sciences, Criminal Justice, Law	9% / 10%
7% / 6%		Science, Technology, Engineering, or Mathematics	10% / 6%
7% / 8%		Education & Teaching	17% / 22%
6% / 6%		Counseling, Human Services	4% / 8%

ASYNCHRONOUS VS. SYNCHRONOUS

When moving a course or entire program to an online setting the question of "how" arises. There are many ways to approach structuring an online course—including which Learning Management System (LMS) to operate from and how to schedule course meetings. The question of asynchronous or synchronous class times remains unanswered. The recommendation for choosing a class meeting time depends on each specific course or program. Here's what students think:

Never - I don't want to ever have to log in at a set time	Once per course	Two or three times per course	Four or five times per course	More than five times per course
14%	14%	36%	19%	17%

86% of students would be willing to log in for a synchronous class time at least once per course

34% of students choose online universities because of multiple study options

DISCUSSION QUESTION — *Provide an example of an online degree program that would benefit from an asynchronous class structure. What factors of the student population contribute to asynchronous being beneficial for this program?*

OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES (OERS)

OER's are teaching and learning materials that are freely available online for everyone to use.

EXAMPLES OF OER INCLUDE:

- Full courses
- Course modules
- Lectures
- Homework assignments
- Classroom activities
- Quizzes

OER's are beneficial because they can integrate multimodal resources into face-to-face, online or hybrid instruction. Students are increasingly demanding resources and services that are not limited by time and place (Nicholas, 2012). For example, a pdf that contains a weekly lesson with sections for question and answer, options for annotation and no requirement to be connected to Wi-Fi to use give the student flexible study options. After all, online learning resources are only relevant when they have a purpose and assist self-pacing of students (Milliron, 2010).

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