



**COLUMBIA GORGE**  
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

**Distance Education and Instructional Technology Plan**

July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2018

Innovation. Efficiency. Accountability.

Paula Ascher, M.Ed., Coordinator  
Distance Learning and Instructional Technology  
Columbia Gorge Community College  
400 East Scenic Drive  
The Dalles, OR 97058  
541-506-6035, pascher@cgcc.edu

May 23, 2017

**Table of Contents**

Distance Education and Instructional Technology Plan .....	1
Table of Contents .....	2
Introduction .....	3
2016-2017 Overview and New Trends .....	4
Overview.....	4
Quantity.....	4
Quality.....	7
New Trends.....	8
Completion and Big Data .....	8
New Degrees.....	9
Types of Classes, LMS.....	10
Faculty Training.....	10
Quality Matters.....	11
Multi-media Production.....	11
Open Educational Resources .....	12
Other Online Learning Environments.....	12
Gamification.....	12
Second Life .....	12
Webconferencing.....	13
Distance Learning Students .....	13
Appendix.....	14
Online and Hybrid Course Design Review.....	14
Requirements for Teaching Online and Hybrid Classes.....	14

*“online learning is no longer a novelty. It is simply a regular part of their education. They are increasingly unconcerned with the distinctions between face-to-face and online learning, instead choosing individual courses that meet their particular needs at any given time, regardless of modality. This postmodality behavior, enabled by instructional technology, has become their normal routine. Going forward, meeting the needs of these students with institutional ecosystems that support, encourage, and enable them to succeed will become key components of college and university strategic plans.”*  
– Thomas Cavanaugh<sup>1</sup>

## **Introduction**

Columbia Gorge Community College (CGCC) primarily serves students in the region where the Columbia River has formed a deep gorge through the Cascade Mountains and serves as a border between the states of Washington and Oregon in the United States of America. The college is one of seventeen community colleges in Oregon and is supported financially by the state of Oregon as well as the taxpayers in Hood River and Wasco counties. It is the purpose of this document to report on the 2016-2017 school year and to describe how the CGCC will enhance distance learning and instructional technology in 2017-2018. It is the author’s hope that this plan lays the foundation for enrichment in the learning spaces, real and virtual, of all students at Columbia Gorge Community College.

## 2016-2017 Overview and New Trends

### Overview

#### Quantity

There is a downward trend in overall distance learning full-time equivalent (FTE) and headcount at Columbia Gorge Community College, as has been experienced the entire college and nationally at other institutions. The percentage of credit classes that are hybrid or online has decreased slightly, but CGCC remains the community college in Oregon with the highest percentage of hybrid and online courses.

#### Community College Enrollment

Fall 2015	5,906,419	-2.4%
Fall 2014	6,052,069	-4.4%
Fall 2013	6,329,631	-3.3%
Fall 2012	6,544,820	-3.6%
Fall 2011	6,787,176	-2.3%

\*Data from the National Clearinghouse Research Center

“The Instructional Technology Council (ITC) asked respondents to report comparative enrollment trends in eLearning classes from Fall 2015 to Fall 2016, the most recent full year of available data. Campuses reported less than a one percent increase in eLearning enrollments—a number that significantly lower than last year’s (more than four percent). This represents the first “NO ENROLLMENT GROWTH” year in the twelve-year history of the ITC survey. According to The National Clearinghouse Research Center, overall community college enrollment has been in decline since the end of the Great Recession in 2010. Student enrollments have been reported down at for-profit institutions, 4-year institutions and community colleges. For the past five years, online enrollments seemingly defied the overall downward trend, but, it appears that even online enrollments are no longer immune to decreasing enrollments. As the economy continues to improve, the longer-term prospects for higher education – and online - enrollments are more optimistic, but increased tuition costs, increased competition and soft student demand have been cited as the most likely short-term cause for the enrollment decline in higher education.”<sup>ii</sup>

Distance Learning and Instructional Technology Plan 2017 - 2018  
 Columbia Gorge Community College

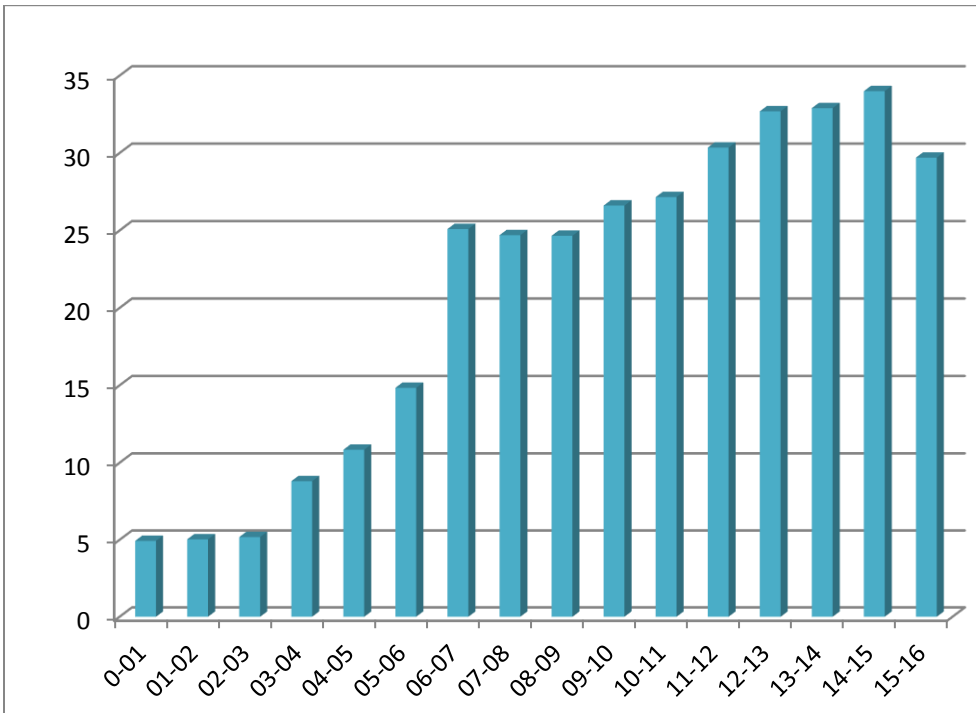
Oregon Community Colleges	
Percentage of all credit FTE taught as distance learning	
2015-16	
College	%
Blue Mountain	23.2%
Central Oregon	13.3%
Chemeketa	26.1%
Clackamas	17.4%
Clatsop	9.4%
Columbia Gorge	29.7%
Klamath	25.7%
Lane	22.0%
Linn Benton	7.4%
Mt Hood	14.4%
Oregon Coast	24.7%
Portland	23.8%
Rogue	22.2%
Southwestern	20.9%
Tillamook Bay	1.8%
Treasure Valley	27.4%
Umpqua	22.0%
Total	20.7%

Note: Distance learning courses include: live interactive, online, telecourses, correspondence, and hybrid.

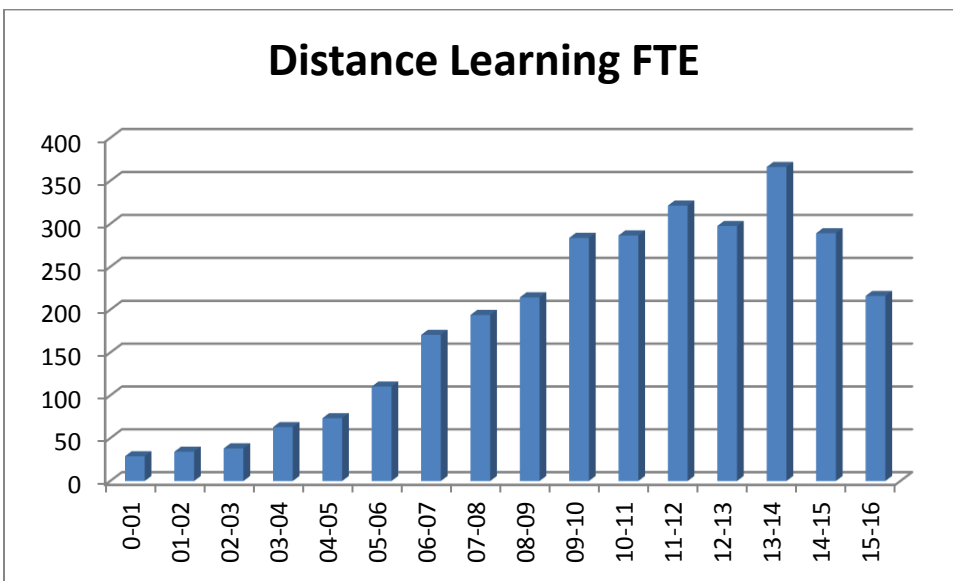
Source: HECC D4A

26-Oct-16

Distance Learning and Instructional Technology Plan 2017 - 2018  
 Columbia Gorge Community College

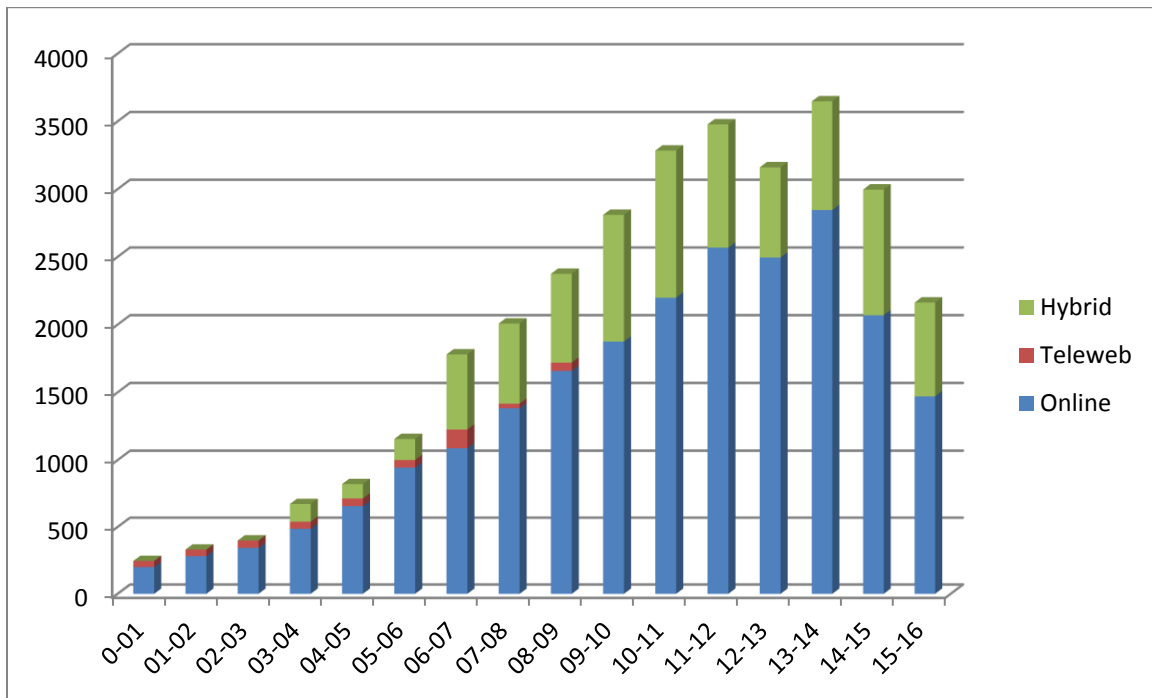


Percentage of distance learning (online and hybrid) FTE for credit classes



Distance Learning FTE at CGCC (includes hybrid and online courses)

Distance Learning and Instructional Technology Plan 2017 - 2018  
Columbia Gorge Community College



Duplicated Headcount by school year

### Quality

The quality of CGCC online and hybrid classes continues to improve through the implementation of Quality Matters and innovative uses of other technologies that enhance synchronous (such as Blackboard Collaborate) and asynchronous modalities (such as lecture capture videos on the college YouTube site). Twenty six instructional videos were added to the college YouTube site in the 2016-2017 school year. About eighty hours of videos on the site were captioned by CaptionSync, through an Oregon Community College Distance Learning project at Chemeketa Community College.

Instructors participated in Applying the Quality Matters Rubric (APPQMR) and Improving Your Online Course training, which was offered online through the state consortium. The APPQMR training is the first part of certification as a peer reviewer. Eight courses were internally reviewed by a peer reviewer, five courses were formally reviewed by a three person panel (master reviewer, subject matter expert, and external reviewer), and six courses were recertified by external master reviewer subject matter expert.

## New Trends

### *Completion and Big Data*

*“If you can take data and create efficiencies, best practices, and processes that enhance the classroom and learning experience, then you are really enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of the institution and student outcomes.”*

*Dr. David Starrett*

*Provost, Columbia College<sup>iii</sup>*

“For some years now, learning-technology visionaries have anticipated a time when analytical tools will harness streams of data about how students fare in courses, generating reliable predictive models that will help make sure they succeed in college. But so far comparatively few institutions have seen those visions become reality. Elsewhere, technical challenges, wariness among faculty and staff members, and commercial offerings that fail to satisfy mean that widespread adoption of learning analytics is yet to come.”<sup>iv</sup>

CGCC hopes in the future to be able to access student data in a way that is nimble and timely for faculty to notice when students lag behind, and be able to contact them efficiently. For example, although instructors can see a record of student activity through Moodle, there is not currently a way to see a dashboard that uses and processes this data in a way that clearly notes the students that need some extra attention and communication.

Likewise, we do not have a way to present to the students the degree to which they are behind or ahead of their fellow students in each course. This kind of feedback would help students stay on task and use their time efficiently for studying. Beyond the individual classroom, there is also no way currently to use student data from all of our online and hybrid classes to assist faculty and students with norms and critical periods on which to base an early alert system.

There are intriguing case studies from other fields which show that data presented to people in a concise and useful manner can shake up the status quo. Here is an example:

*“..the team addressed British doctors’ overprescribing of antibiotics, contacting outliers who’d written prescriptions at the highest rates. The letter it sent did little more than note the recipient’s status on the far end of the statistical spectrum, but the prescription rates dropped by three percent during the next six months. Some critics dismissed such accomplishments as overhyped fluff; others warned of the rising nanny state. Even the team’s guiding mantra – “Make it Easy, Attractive, Social and Timely” – could be seen as nothing more than common sense.”<sup>v</sup>*



## Distance Learning and Instructional Technology Plan 2017 - 2018 Columbia Gorge Community College

The author of this report would argue that the simplicity of the British team's approach to communication was an important part of its success. The vehicle of communication is also important. In the case of our students, texting is often their primary mode, but the college currently lacks a way to do this at any level. Here is another successful experiment, this time from education:

"...the team formed a partnership with the Department of Education and a nonprofit, uAspire, to find a way to lessen "summer melt." Typically, twenty or thirty per cent of students in urban districts who were accepted to college didn't matriculate, owing to last-minute burdens like financial-aid deadlines. The team helped devise a pilot program in which students were sent eight personalized text messages over the summer, prompting them to follow through. Matriculation rates increased by several percentage points."<sup>vi</sup>

To address the growing conviction that we need to do better in assisting students through data, the college is starting work to replace the current (Roguenet) student information system. In addition, the Oregon Community College Distance Learning Association has started a completion workgroup, which plans to hold annual conferences to work on this issue with faculty and staff across the state.

### *New Degrees*

The following degrees have been designated as distance learning degrees in the latest (2016) NWCCU Annual Report, since they had at least 50% or more online classes between spring 2013 and spring 2015:

- Associate of Arts Oregon Transfer
- Associate of General Studies
- Associate of Science Oregon Transfer – Business
- Associate of Applied Science Accounting
- Associate of Applied Science Management
  - Accounting Clerk Certificate
  - Marketing Certificate
  - Administrative Assistant Certificate
- Associate of Applied Science Administrative Assistant
- Associate of Applied Science Office Professional

## ***Types of Classes, LMS***

**Online classes** take place on the internet, using a learning management system called Moodle, which allows instructors to place course content in a password-protected site that only students who are registered for the class can access. Students can access these courses from any computer that has a connection to the internet at any time, day or night.

**Hybrid classes** combine live lecture classes with online components. Students and instructors interact in the classroom, as well online via Moodle. Some in-class time is replaced by online work.

The following shows the latest results (2016) from the Instructional Technology Council’s annual report on learning management systems across the country:

**Table 2: Learning Management System Usage**

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Blackboard Learn	39%	38%	26%	26%	30%	35%	58%	42%	38.6%	43%
Canvas by Instructure <sup>2</sup>	—	—	—	—	—	9%	12%	16%	22.7%	23%
Moodle	1%	11%	6%	9%	11%	14%	17%	15%	12%	13%
D2L	4%	5%	7%	8%	13%	15%	11%	13%	15.8%	8%
WebStudy	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3%	3.9%	5%
Sakai	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1%	2%	2%
Timecruiser	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2%	1%	-----
Etudes	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1%	1%	-----
Canvas Open-Source	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	1%	2%
Other	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	7%	2%	2%

## ***Faculty Training***

For the purposes of distance learning at CGCC, a facilitator is a person that teaches or directs students via a Moodle shell. This person could be faculty, staff or administrator working for CGCC. A Moodle shell is usually a course, but could be another tool, such as a shell used in advising.

Facilitator training for the utilization of Moodle has three parts:

- 1) online training
- 2) technical tutoring

3) Quality Matters reviews

The online training is designed to help the facilitator in using an existing shell or developing a new shell. The training is offered as a series of modules, covering both technical skills and andragogical issues. This course also gives facilitators a chance to be online students so they can better understand what their students will experience.

Rob Kovacich, Ron Watrus, and Paula Ascher tutor facilitators in Moodle technology. The training and tutorials provide instructors with the skills needed to develop classes that meet the Quality Matters standards. Paula Ascher reviews classes under development to assist the faculty developer. A final Quality Matters check is prepared before determining whether the facilitator has learned the requisite skills to meet the needs of the student users. The facilitator may also need to complete the Quality Matters check to complete the requirements of the development contract.

Regional conference: In the fall of 2017, faculty will attend the NWeLearn Conference for the sixth year in a row.

## **Quality Matters**

Quality improvement in distance learning classes is focused on implementing the process outlined in the CGCC Quality Matters Manual. Currently, the college has one online facilitator, 7 master reviewers, and 14 peer reviewers. Many more faculty and staff have taken the Applying the Quality Matters Rubric course.

In the fall of 2017 faculty will attend the national Quality Matters conference in Ft. Worth, Texas.

Peer reviewer training will be held in the 2016-2017 school year. Both informal and formal reviews will be conducted.

## **Multi-media Production**

More than 1000 short videos have been produced by the faculty to enhance their online, hybrid and on-ground classes. Videos are hosted in YouTube, which has automatic captioning for the hearing impaired. The college receives funding through the Oregon Distance Learning Association to support captioning of the videos through CaptionSync and is systematically captioning more videos every term. Multi-media training and production assistance is available by request to the distance learning and instructional technology coordinator.

## Open Educational Resources

“Online education is possible only because of the technology changes that have impacted all areas of contemporary life. High-speed networks, nearly ubiquitous computing availability, and software to support teaching and learning have combined to provide the foundation on which online learning has grown. This changing landscape also has opened the door for other changes in higher education. One such change element is the use of Open Education Resources (OER).”<sup>vii</sup>

At CGCC, 2013-2014 an OER project was announced. A group of faculty and staff met in early fall for a presentation from Quill West, OER Manager at Tacoma Community College. Information about OERs was improved on the college website. For the 2017-2018 school year there will be a focus on faculty adoption of open textbooks, under the leadership of the library. Classes using Open Education Resources have saved our students \$101,551.34 in textbook costs since June 2011.

## Other Online Learning Environments

### *Gamification*

In the 2012-2013 school year, the DLITC and two instructors attended an online teacher camp for 3DGameLab. As a result, one instructor created a gamification pilot project, creating CAS 104 Internet Basics as a gamified class. Students took the course on the gamified 3D GameLab server or on Moodle in summer term 2013.

To evaluate the 3D Gamelab version of the class, the DLITC created a gamification rubric: <http://bit.ly/gamerubric> . She also created a link to a short video exemplifying some of the rubric standards <http://bit.ly/18bixgW> and participated in an Educause Google Hangout focused on the rubric: <http://bit.ly/ajsyoutube> . Other gamification resources are available at <http://www.cgcc.edu/online/faculty-resources#Gamification> .

### *Second Life*

A site in Second Life was created to facilitate online student study groups, synchronous class discussions and connections to academic support staff by the Oregon Community College Distance Learning Association (OCCDLA). Starting in 2009 CGCC began offering PHL 201 Philosophical Problems as a hybrid class, with synchronous student interaction taking place in Second Life. The resources in Second Life for philosophy have been moved to Beaver Island (Oregon State University), since the island maintained by the OCCDLA project was discontinued.

### *Webconferencing*

In 2010 the college bought an institutional license for Elluminate, which is now called Blackboard Collaborate, as part of a state wide effort to adopt this technology. This provides the instructor the ability to synchronously broadcast a computer screen with audio and video. The Oregon Community College Workforce and Development Department started funding a statewide subscription for Collaborate, but by 2017, the Oregon Community College Distance Learning Association determined that the service should be phased out in favor of Zoom. The plan for 2017-2018 is to start the transition over to Zoom for faculty and staff around the state.

### ***Distance Learning Students***

Online students at CGCC are overwhelmingly local and increasingly savvy at distance learning. Of the students who completed *Online Learning at Columbia Gorge Community College 2017* student survey, 98% lived in the Mid-Columbia area and 87% took an on-ground class at CGCC during the school year. A significant number, 59%, had taken three or more online or hybrid classes at the college. 24% of students had taken an online class from other colleges or universities, down slightly from 26% percentage as in 2004. 91% of respondents reported using broadband internet at home.

Historically students have completed online classes an average of 6% less successfully than on-ground classes and 2% more successfully in hybrid classes. A successful completion is defined as a grade of "A", "B", "C", or "P". Students who drop (that is, drop from a class in the first 4 weeks) are not counted at all as these courses do not appear on the student transcript. Students who withdraw (that is, drop from a class in week 5 - week 8) are counted as unsuccessful.

According to the *Online Learning at Columbia Gorge Community College 2017* survey, students most often get technological help for an online class from their instructor (36%), the CGCC Helpdesk (14%), Student Services (5%), friends or other students (41%). The CGCC Helpdesk has a phone number and schedule published on the college website.

## ***Appendix***

### **Online and Hybrid Course Design Review**

Faculty contracts for developing online and hybrid classes are proposed by Department Chairs and signed by the Instructional Director, Distance Learning and Instructional Technology Coordinator (DLITC) and Chief Academic Officer.

Before the first term that an online or hybrid class is offered, it is evaluated by the DLITC using the Quality Matters (QM) rubric. The DLITC will inform the department chair if the course does not meet standards. Instructors are encouraged to take QM training.

Each course will be evaluated every three years by a QM peer reviewer. The instructor may ask for a formal evaluation by a team of three reviewers per QM procedures. A successful formal review results in QM recognition in the schedule of classes.

### **Requirements for Teaching Online and Hybrid Classes**

The instructor is expected to:

1. Evaluate and return graded assignments in a timely manner and provide feedback on assignment to facilitate student preparation of future assignments.
2. Give an explanation of the evaluation process.
3. Maintain a list of active resources and links to appropriate online resources within the course shell.
4. Keep a record of all graded activities in a secure, private, and accurate manner.
5. Respond in a timely manner to questions regarding the course or learning materials, within a 48-hour period on weekdays, daily during the first week of the term.
6. Provide and facilitate a forum for student questions.
7. Design learning activities that promote CGCC core learning outcomes.
8. Where appropriate, encourage student-student collaboration and interaction.

## Distance Learning and Instructional Technology Plan 2017 - 2018 Columbia Gorge Community College

---

<sup>i</sup> “The Postmodality Era: How ‘Online Learning’ is Becoming ‘Learning,’ *Educause*, 2012

<sup>ii</sup> Lokken, Fred. “ITC Annual National eLearning Report - 2016 Survey Results -” page 7

<sup>iii</sup> Campus Works. “Defining the Student Experience – Creating an Integrated, Engaging Student Experience” Powerpoint – Prepared for Oregon Community Colleges April 2017

<sup>iv</sup> Biemiller, Lawrence. “Big Data for Student Success Still Limited to Early Adopters” *Chronicle of Higher Education* Special Report April 9, 2017

<sup>v</sup> Stillman, Sarah. “Good Behavior – An unusual team of White House scientists works through the final days of the administration” *The New Yorker* January 23, 2017 page 48

<sup>vi</sup> Ibid page 49

<sup>vii</sup> I. Elaine Allen and Jeff Seaman, *Going the Distance: Online Education in the United States*, 2011  
Babson Survey Research Group