

Online misconceptions
Debunking the myths
and starting your career

Distance education
The new path to
job security

Combining teaching
methods
The future of education

**MEDIA
PLANET**

September 2011

ONLINE EDUCATION

3
TIPS

TAKING EDUCATION TO THE NEXT LEVEL

Reggie Smith III, chairman of the board of directors for the USDLA,
is dedicated to enabling equal access to distance learning

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CHALLENGES

Since 2008, institutions of higher education have been **hit hard with financial challenges**. Numerous colleges have either closed or merged with other institutions. Enrollments have decreased in both private colleges and for-profit colleges. Public institutions are struggling to balance the budget and to retain programs.



WE RECOMMEND



Reggie Smith
works to enable
equal access to
distance learning

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"I want to be able to provide a college-level education for everyone, globally."

MEDIA PLANET

ONLINE EDUCATION,
5TH EDITION, SEPTEMBER 2011

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Distributed within:
USA Today, September 2011
This section was created by
Mediaplanet and did not involve USA
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Marketing both traditional and online programs: The key to financial stability

In these hard financial times, it is easy to lose hope. Will this economy ever turn around? Will the politicians ever team up to support good policy? Will my institution survive this economic downturn? History has shown that successful colleges have relied on having a set of diverse, quality programs delivered via alternative formats to pull them through the hard times. They build a quality brand name for themselves, and they market that brand name in the good times and the bad. They deliver their programs through traditional, adult and online learning systems. They use both face-to-face instruction and online learn-

ing systems to deliver the content.

In addition, they market themselves via multiple avenues. They tell the story of their college through both traditional (print, television, radio, magazines) as well as online advertising. Marketing of both traditional and online learning programs is essential for promoting the growth of any institution.

Increase of enrollments

Online learning enrollments have been increasing while enrollments in traditional programs have been decreasing. The Chronicle of Higher Education (August, 2011) highlighted a traditional college in New England that has



Denzil Edge
President, USDLA

integrated online learning into their high-quality program mix. The college has grown tremendously since 2008 while other colleges have experienced decreased enrollments and many have closed their doors.

In summary, quality programs delivered in diverse traditional and online learning formats and marketed through multiple avenues will increase enrollment and enable the college to prosper.

DENZIL EDGE

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NEWS

Technology
mythology

With distance learning remaining a mystery to many, confusing misperceptions still exist for some parents and students.

“Students fail to compete with traditionally educated peers.”

■ A twelve-year statistical compilation by SRI International for the U.S. Department of Education found that students completing part or all coursework online ranked in the 59th percentile of tested performance. Average classroom students scored in the 50th percentile.

“Distance learning works best for self-motivated students.”

■ While it's true that the most successful students of online programs already possess a healthy work discipline, many online programs provide highly customizable curriculum that tailors to individual motivations, including those struggling with attention and retention difficulties.

“Online course credits won't transfer.”

■ While requirements differ from state to state—as they do for brick-and-mortar schools—accredited distance-learning program counselors help families identify transfer opportunities within primary and secondary schools, as well as at the collegiate level.

WENDY TAYLOR

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Question: What's the future for students heading back to class this year?

Answer: From kindergarten to post-grad, trends point towards online coursework.

K-12: Reading, writing and streaming

Researchers predict by 2015, seventeen million pre-kindergarten through 12th grade students in the U.S. will participate in at least a portion of online—or distance—learning.

The research by Ambient Insight also found more than four million students already receive full-time, online instruction.

Beyond home-schooling

While a great portion of online education has been associated with home-school teaching in the past decade, more and more online opportunities are appearing within traditional classrooms. Rural schools see advanced opportunities for lectures previously held as impossible or inconvenient, while even urban settings see the increased educational opportunities and fiscal savings of virtual field trips, such as those to zoos or museums around the world.

Today, 45 states in addition to



FACTS

■ **Twenty-four states** provide statewide, full-time online coursework options

■ **A twelve-year** statistical compilation found that students completing part or all course work online rank in the 59th percentile of tested performance (SRI International for the U.S. Department of Education)

■ **Faced with retraining** 50 million American workers,

corporate America is using distance learning, both internally and externally, for all aspects of training. (usdla.org)

■ **Research on** distance learning applications for Pre-K through grade 12, as well as in adult learning and training settings, strongly suggests that distance education is an effective means for delivering instruction. (usdla.org)

TIP

2

DO YOUR
HOMEWORK
WHEN
RESEARCHING
ONLINE
PROGRAMS

Washington D.C. offer distance-learning initiatives that consist of either partial or full-time coursework. Twenty-four states provide statewide, full-time online coursework options, and a National Center for Educational Statistics survey of public school superintendents reported that 72 percent of districts planned further expansion.

Multiple benefits

Motivation for online coursework covers a broad range, but a recent Sloan Consortium survey of school district administrators cited the ability to offer subjects or topics currently unavailable at a school, ability to meet the needs of specific student groups, as well as access to Advance Placement and college-level coursework as top motivations to expand distance learning or blended courses.

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Question 1:
What are the most common misconceptions related to getting a degree online?

The most common misconception is that there is little interaction with faculty and other students and as a result limited networking opportunities. Nothing can be further from the truth. In Kelley Direct, our students interact with the Kelley faculty and classmates on a daily basis, through live virtual classes, ongoing discussion forums and team assignments. In today's global business environment, the ability to work in virtual teams and to build a truly global network is vital.

The two most common misconceptions involving online learning by first time students, ironically, is that online is easy/effortless, or that the technology skills required are beyond their abilities. The truth is that while online courses do require students to be disciplined, they are generally no easier or harder than classroom expectations.

The misconception is that it's impersonal and that human connection is lost. That couldn't be further from the truth. What our students find is that relationships are deeper and stronger with their online teachers. From the 2010-2011 school year student survey, 94 percent of students respond that teachers demonstrate a personal interest in them and their success. Without a doubt, there is a strong relationship between student-teacher-parent.

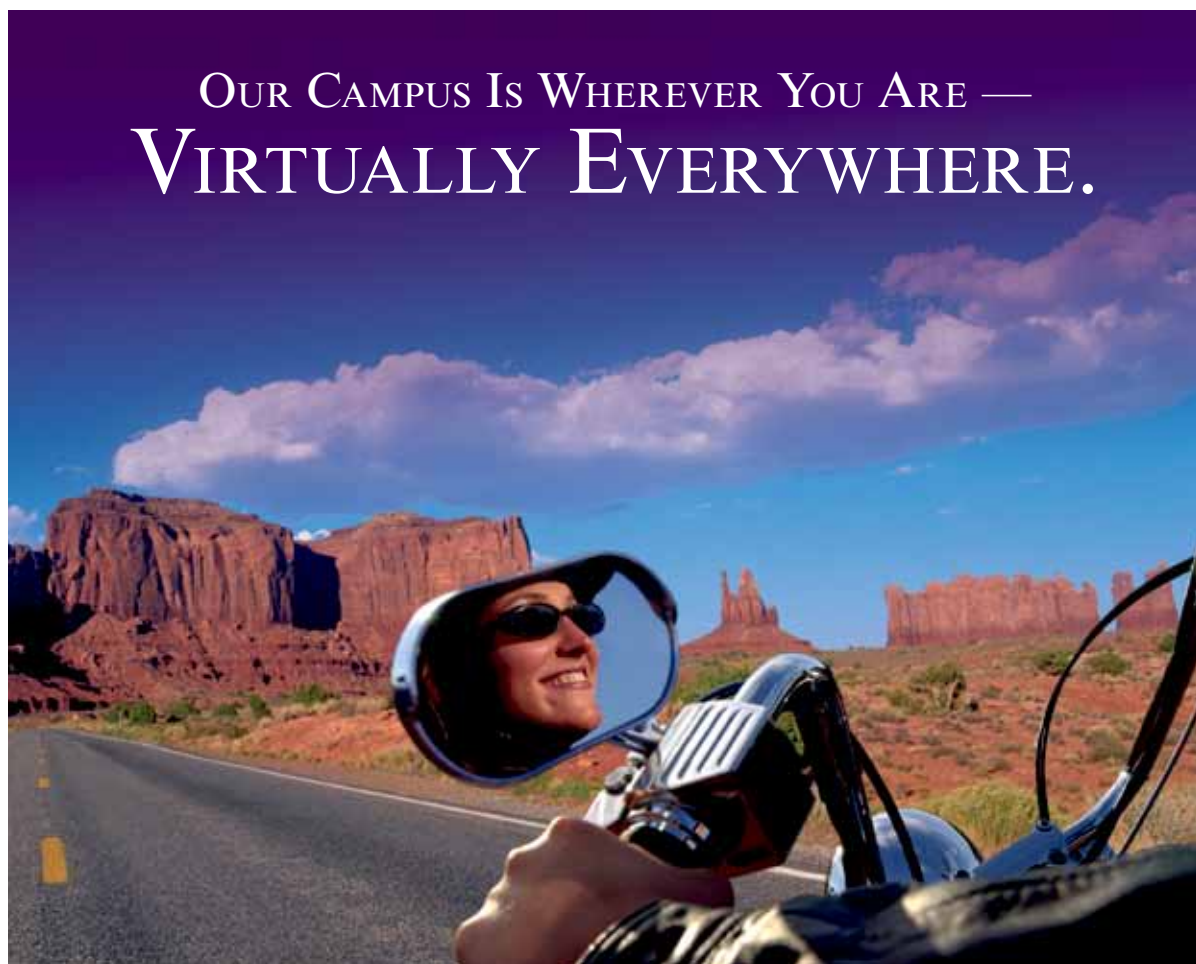
Question 2:
How do you see the world of online education evolving in the coming years?

As technology evolves, interactivity will continue to increase. Working professionals will continue to demand more of their programs as corporate tuition reimbursement amounts decrease. Students are already beginning to demand more experiential learning opportunities in their online programs. Meanwhile, traditional classroom programs will adopt more online teaching methodologies, leading to a blurring of the line between true on-campus and online academic programs.

Online has expanded into K-12 and is exploding across colleges. Over time it will continue to grow, and through great minds pushing and prodding technology and instructional innovations, we will gain better and ever more effective instructional methods and content. Students and employers respond favorably to such efforts and its acceptance across traditional and nontraditional education shows.

Online education will be spread throughout all 50 states. Online education in the K-12 space has evolved from a 'cool thing' rather than a viable and successful option to use as credit recovery, accelerating with addition course load, or simply using as a way to be flexible in their daily lives and accommodate their extracurricular activities and individual learning styles.

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INSIGHT

QUESTION &
ANSWERShannen Doherty
Actress

■ How did your online education compare to your traditional education?

Working online gave me the freedom and convenience to work and earn my degree on my own time.

■ What advice would you give to a prospective student looking into getting an education online?

The most important thing is knowing what your passion is; it's not about where you go or how you do it, it's about advancing your education and increasing your prospects for your future. Online education is tailored to your needs and is convenient even if you are working and have a full time job.

Ensuring growth and prosperity for american families

The pursuit of life-long learning for all Americans

The Joint Distance Learning, Education & Training Caucus is dedicated to enabling equal access to distance learning, education, training and workforce development to ensure growth and prosperity for American families in a global economy. In a global economy driven by technology, competition and knowledge, the Caucus will be at the forefront—pushing for constant improvement and access to support life-long learning, education and training for all Americans.

Distance learning initiatives and markets impact every facet of American life. These interconnected areas deal with acquiring knowledge and skills through mediated information and instruction. This encompasses all technologies and supports the pursuit of life-long learning for all Americans within Pre-K through grade 12, higher education, home school education, continuing education, corporate training, military and government training, and telehealth. Simply put, distance learning ultimately impacts America's ability to compete globally.

The Caucus will showcase dis-



Reggie Smith III, Chairman, Board of Directors for the United States Distance Learning Association (USDLA)

"The Caucus will be at the forefront—pushing for constant improvement and access to support life-long learning, education and training for all Americans."



tance learning, education, training and workforce development initiatives across the interconnected industries covering the entire blended learning continuum, promote the distance learning industry, and will be a forum to understand the importance of distance learning, education and training to fulfill life-long learning for the benefit of the society as a whole. This will include events both physical and virtual throughout the year to inform and educate both the House and Senate.

REGGIE SMITH III

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NEWS

Prior to now, the purpose of a college degree was **employment.**

THE FUTURE OF DISTANCE EDUCATION

In the future, a college degree will not only be a path to a job, but a means of job security in which colleges, employers, and students form a compact of sorts. In effect, distance education will serve as a platform by which members of the compact will be engaged in sustained learning environments.

Some current trends will become accepted practices in the future as part of the compact:

■ Learning Management Systems (LMS) will become advanced

organizers of huge amounts of information in anticipation of individual student needs, an attribute not available in most traditional classrooms. As a result students will manage more information much more efficiently. Student profiles, including learning styles and subject matter interests, will be matched with thousands of bits of new knowledge for on demand delivery.

■ Using social networking models, virtual world wide teams with hundreds of students will

“Employers want workers who are skilled at processing lots of new information quickly and reliably while adapting to ever changing work environments.”

engage in simulations depicting real work related experiences. They will be guided by teams of expert instructors.

■ The programs of study leading to degrees or certificates will be developed by experts in the fields of study along with students and prospective employers, all of whom are focused on an agreed set of outcomes designed to measure proficiency well into the future careers of the students.

■ Through distance education, students, employers, and college personnel will engage in the development of flexible job related skills by which employees invent and reinvent products

and processes.

Why will distance education be the vanguard for the future? Because employers want workers who are skilled at processing lots of new information quickly and reliably while adapting to ever changing work environments. Distance education by its very nature inspires, in fact, demands these attributes.

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Herzing Grad Takes Leading Role

Shining star Tommie Jo Haugh knows there is nothing worse than a toothache, especially for a proud Army soldier. So when the weekend warriors in the state of Indiana's Army National Guard needed dental exams, the Herzing University student set them up – all 300 of them.

In her job as Operations Manager with Complete Mobile Dentistry, she whipped together travel arrangements for the 300-plus staff, made sure they had adequate supplies and equipment, and basically organized check-ups for the more than 5000 service members. She did this while pursuing her master's degree full-time from Herzing University Online.

"Being busy and getting things done in the most efficient amount of time works for me," Haugh said. She knows what she's talking about. Haugh earned her Master of Business Administration degree with a specialty in Healthcare Management at Herzing University in just 18 months.

"Herzing University's flexible program made it easy to keep working while earning my degree," Haugh said. "It was convenient, adult-oriented and flexible. Herzing University caters to the non-traditional student which is about 80% of the student population. I could log in and do my homework assignments whenever I needed to. I could attend class any time of day, making it very flexible."

In addition to the 18-month M.B.A. with specializations in accounting, business management, healthcare management, human resources, project management, technology management, and marketing, Herzing University offers a one year M.B.A. Students can take one class or two, depending on their life situation.

Accredited* by the Higher Learning Commission, Herzing University encompasses 12 physical

campuses in eight states, three continuing education divisions in three states, plus Herzing University Online. Students can earn master's, bachelor's, and associate degrees and diplomas in the fields of technology, business, healthcare, design, and public safety.

Tommie Jo Haugh graduated from Herzing University twice. She walked the stage Magna Cum Laude for her bachelor of science in business management in 2009 and for her

"I have excelled in my position... reaching commission rates that usually take individuals two to three years to achieve."

— Tommie Jo Haugh, who earned her M.B.A. in just 18 months at Herzing University

M.B.A. in 2010. That accomplishment helped earn her a new position as a senior account representative at Staff Care in Irving, Texas. There for just seven months, Haugh has already been nominated as MVP on her team twice, which comes with being delegated winner of the "Power to Achieve Award." She's also been nominated for a VIP award by a provider in the area of customer focus.

"I have excelled in my position and am reaching commission rates that usually take individuals two to three years to achieve," she said. "Having my M.B.A. makes me much more aware of time management and priorities."

Haugh exemplifies leadership in every way and uses her knowledge, skills, and abilities as she climbs the ladder of success in her career, one rung at a time.

"Earning my M.B.A. really helped me move up," she said. "And I'm not finished yet."

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