A Snapshot of Online Courses in Louisiana
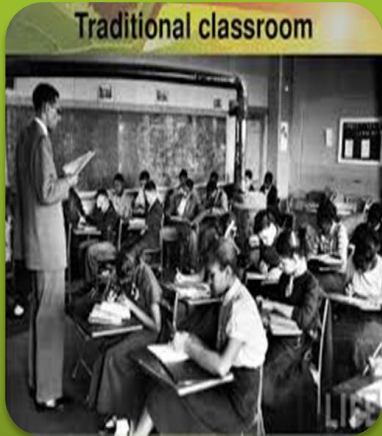
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CHANGING COURSE

Traditional Courses

- Instruction conducted in a synchronous setting
- Face-to-face is the primary mode of interaction

Online Courses

- Learning occurs in an asynchronous environment
- Interaction occurs across space and time

DRIVERS OF CHANGE

State Level
- The need to educate a greater number of Louisiana residents
- A focus on adults to upgrade skills
- Meeting workforce demands for economic expansion

Institutional Level
- The need to remain globally competitive
- Be innovative in course development to support student learning
- The need for efficiency

Student Level
- Increased access and degree options
- Convenience
- Expanded opportunities

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

❖ **Question 1**
Is there a mode of instruction (i.e., traditional, hybrid, or online) that appears to be more successful in terms of student outcomes?

❖ **Question 2**
Is there a mode of instruction (i.e., traditional, hybrid, or online) that appears to be more suitable for certain course subjects and levels?

❖ **Question 3**
Can online delivery advance an institution's ability to reach and teach students?

RESEARCH DESIGN

- **Data Collection Period**: Academic Year 2014-15

- **Data Source:** Louisiana Board of Regents Statewide Student Profile System (SSPS)

- **Course Section Comparisons:** Only courses taught **both** traditionally and online/hybrid included in the analysis

- **Course Delivery Options**:
  Traditional course –
      50% or less of the course is taught online
  Hybrid course –
      51% to 99% of the course is taught online
  Online course –
      100% of the course is taught online

- **Course Level:** Undergraduate only

- **Course Outcomes:** Passing measured as A, B, C, and D;
                        Failing measured as F and withdrawal

DATA ASSUMPTIONS AND REALITIES

1. Faculty course preparations similar across modalities

2. No control for academic preparation

3. Institutions submitted reliable data

COURSE MODALITIES ACROSS LA'S PUBLIC POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTIONS AT THE UNDERGRADUATE LEVEL (AY 2014-15)

	Traditional	Hybrid	Online
# of Course Sections	66,575	1,158	7,173
Enrollments (duplicated)	1,311,675	30,907	162,441
Average Section Size	20	27	23
Withdrawal/Failure Rate	16%	15%	23%

UNDERGRADUATE COURSE LEVEL COMPARISON

Overall, upper-level (UL) course sections have a lower withdrawal/failure rate than lower-level (LL) course sections.

Findings	Traditional	Hybrid	Online
Online UL course sections	9%	7%	12%
	2,536	641	5,143
	27,714	9,050	42,501
Online LL course sections	23%	19%	27%
	76,218	3,980	31,482
	336,236	21,231	115,749

DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION

Findings	Traditional	Online
Little difference noted between withdrawal/failure rate for developmental English (**Note:** small sample size)	30% 604 <hr> 2,038	33% 37 <hr> 111
The withdrawal/failure rate is higher among students who take developmental Math online	42% 4,104 <hr> 9,886	60% 458 <hr> 760

REACH AND TEACH

Demographics of Students Enrolled in Undergraduate Online Courses

Residency	
International	1%
Louisiana	91%
Out-of-State	8%
Age	
19 and under	14%
20-24 years	43%
25 and Over	43%

REACH AND TEACH

❖256 ACADEMIC PROGRAMS ARE ONLINE

❖153 ACADEMIC PROGRAMS ARE HYBRID

❖1,633 ACADEMIC PROGRAMS ARE TRADITIONAL

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

❖ **Question 1**
Is there a mode of instruction (i.e., traditional, hybrid, or online) that appears to be more successful in terms of student outcomes?

❖ **Response**
Preliminary findings indicate that online course delivery appears to have the highest withdrawal/failure rate, compared to other modes of instruction.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

❖ **Question 2**
Is there a mode of instruction (i.e., traditional, hybrid, or online) that appears to be more suitable for certain course subjects and levels?

❖ **Response**
Preliminary findings indicate that both developmental Math and developmental English have high withdrawal/failure rates – with the withdrawal failure rate higher among students who took developmental Math online.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

❖ **Question 3**
Can online delivery advance an institution's ability to reach and teach students?

❖ **Response**
Over the last several years, the number of programs taught online and/or hybrid has increased. Data indicate that 20% of active programs are online (13%) or hybrid (7%).

INHERENT CHALLENGES MOVING FORWARD

– Institutions
- Student Progression
- Technology Infrastructure

– Faculty
- Buy-in

– Students
- Not all students are online ready