



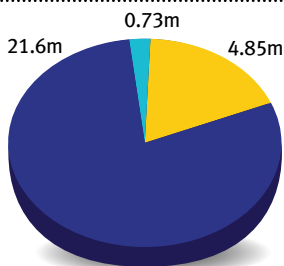
**Online Program  
Optimization and  
Efficiency:  
Harnessing the Power  
of Online Program  
Administration**



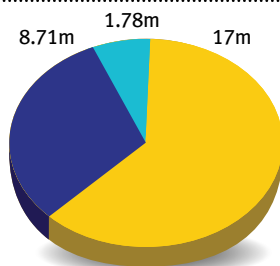
*There's no denying it – web-enabled classrooms are booming, expected to serve more than 17 million students by 2013. In fact, the Sloan Consortium states that, of the postsecondary institutions that offer online coursework, 83 percent expect their enrollment numbers to increase over the next year. Thirty-eight percent of all college students are now 25 or older, according to a recent U.S Census Bureau report. For people with children, full-time or even part-time jobs, most traditional brick-and-mortar college classes have schedules that can be impossible to make. Online education can work into any student's schedule – late at night, in the morning or throughout the weekend.*

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**Total Students in 2008**



**Total Students in 2013**



■ Attend Physical Classes Only   ■ Take All classes Online   ■ Take Some Classes Online

\*Source: Ambient Insight 2009

Recently, an analysis by the U.S. Department of Education revealed that students who took a mixture of online courses and face-to-face instruction performed better than those who took the same course using the traditional classroom or fully online classes – making optimal online course/program administration important across all universities.

But with growth, there is a ripple effect across the whole institution – a need for greater communication between departments and a desire among administrators for efficient, cost-effective and scalable solutions.

## The Plight of an Online Program Administrator

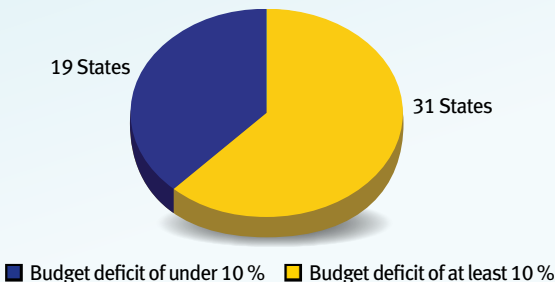
*Time and money is tight across all institutions. Time magazine says the states collectively will face a \$55 billion budget shortfall in 2011, with 31 of the 50 expecting a budget deficit of at least 10 percent. The likely cutbacks will leave few government services untouched – resulting in larger class sizes, laid-off teachers and hiring freezes in state universities. Fewer hires means each employee is tasked with more work and has less time to communicate with other departments. With limited resources to physically expand classrooms and buildings, online courses may be the only way for colleges and universities to grow.*

Yet the challenges of running a successful online program that can be backed up with credible data and is able to scale with your growth are many. Blended program reporting, data collecting and data management preferences are scattered – meaning that finding ways to get filterable, compare/contrast student data is a challenge, and finding a platform that will aggregate all factors and create unique reports for accrediting bodies and deans is no easy task.

Consequently, the pressure is on for online program administrators to demonstrate performance management analytics to prove that their programs are up-to-par and that they have laid the groundwork for their students to be gainfully employed after graduation.

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State Budget Shortfalls



## Online Program Administration – Not as Simple as 1-2-3

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*When a physical class size grows, institutions already know the logistical side effects. But when an online program or course expands, it's a different story. There are resulting changes to the registration process, data filters, server space, storage and bandwidth – all of which must be addressed.*

The administration that goes on behind the scenes to make an online course or program run successfully is a huge and vitally important undertaking. It includes much more than the student information system (SIS) – data management, technology infrastructure, and teaching, learning and accounting modules are all critical components.

Every college and university has their own tools for handling administrative tasks, the largest of which is the SIS, which runs student registration, term setup, course organization, and more. Additionally, the registrar, accounting, enrollment and other departments must be able to communicate with each other in the fastest and easiest way possible. Institutions need tools and support that allow for interoperability and seamless integration with their learning management system (LMS) to streamline all aspects of managing online programs.

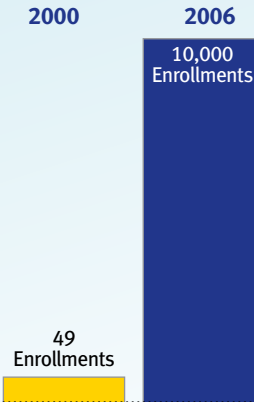


## Rules of Engagement for a Successful Large-Scale Online Program

*Almost all education program implementations involve integration and interoperation with the SIS. Additionally, it is essential to have a technology ‘bridge’ that is intrinsic to the institution that allows for third-party content and curriculum to be implemented synchronously to the LMS and to the SIS – an integration of the inherent tools that enable all departments to be connected.*

All administrators who work with online programs/courses should work with an education partner that has an application programming interface (API) for their SIS. This provides an efficient method for transferring course, user and enrollment information synchronously between the LMS and the SIS. Similar to how humans communicate via a handshake, or how they communicate with computers via the user interface, APIs facilitate interaction between different software programs.

### Solano Community College



One example is Solano Community College, located between San Francisco and Sacramento. Solano places a primary focus on meeting the needs of returning and non-traditional leaders, with a flexibility that allows many of its students to work while seeking a degree. Through a partnership with Pearson LearningStudio, an innovative and comprehensive learning management system that has integrated platform, tools, content and support for administrators to implement successful online education programs, Solano was able to grow its student enrollment from 3 classes of 49 enrollments in the summer of 2000 to 10,000 students in six years without a single new administrative hire. Pearson LearningStudio team members provided Solano with full day-to-day operational support by a professional client services consultant who helped Solano administrators maintain proper and effective utilization of the system.

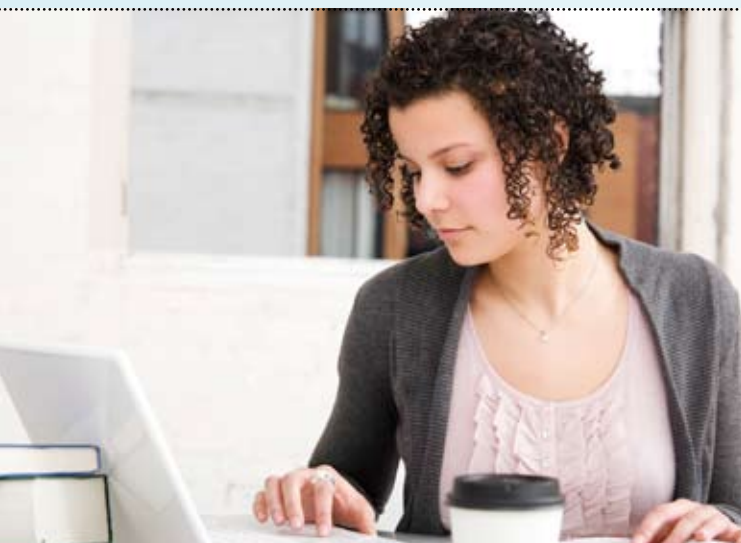
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## What do you want from your Online Program? Optimizing Administration to Meet Goals

*Whether your goal is to expand course and degree offerings, grow enrollment or have more data to support your program's value, the benefits of optimizing the administration of your online programs are endless. These include the following:*

- Automatically update user and enrollment information in your online campus,
- During times of high activity, roll out of online campus, or beginning of a term, set up multiple course sections and create and enroll thousands of students in a single operation,
- Set up flexible rules and rights for any user in the system,
- Create and manage new terms and courses,
- Duplicate courses and content for multiple offerings across terms,
- Reduce costs and save resources by not having to hire,
- Communicate via targeted messages to specific users, groups, or stakeholders,
- Report on historical, enrollment, program and course activity quickly and easily for specified users, groups, and participants,
- Deploy pre, mid, and post course surveys,
- Save time by using an efficient program that supports communication between the LMS, SIS, and other, mission critical, third party applications.

*As a result, when all the right technology tools come together and the proper support is in place, college and universities can grow their online programs without increasing their administrative costs, while also creating a more efficient and impactful learning environment.*



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