Using Your Students' Voices to Inform Your Learning Ecosystem

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Hosted in partnership with:

Today's Moderator

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Speakers

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Agenda

- Welcome & Introduction
- Topic 1: Voice of the Online Learner & Institutional Learning Ecosystem
- Topic 2: Modality, Program Design, and Stackable Credentials
- Topic 3: Institutional Governance Structure
- Topic 4: University Example: East Tennessee State University
- Q & A
- Close

Using the Student Voice to Inform the Learning Ecosystem

Student Voices

Research from Academic Partnerships and Wiley University Services, now a combined company.
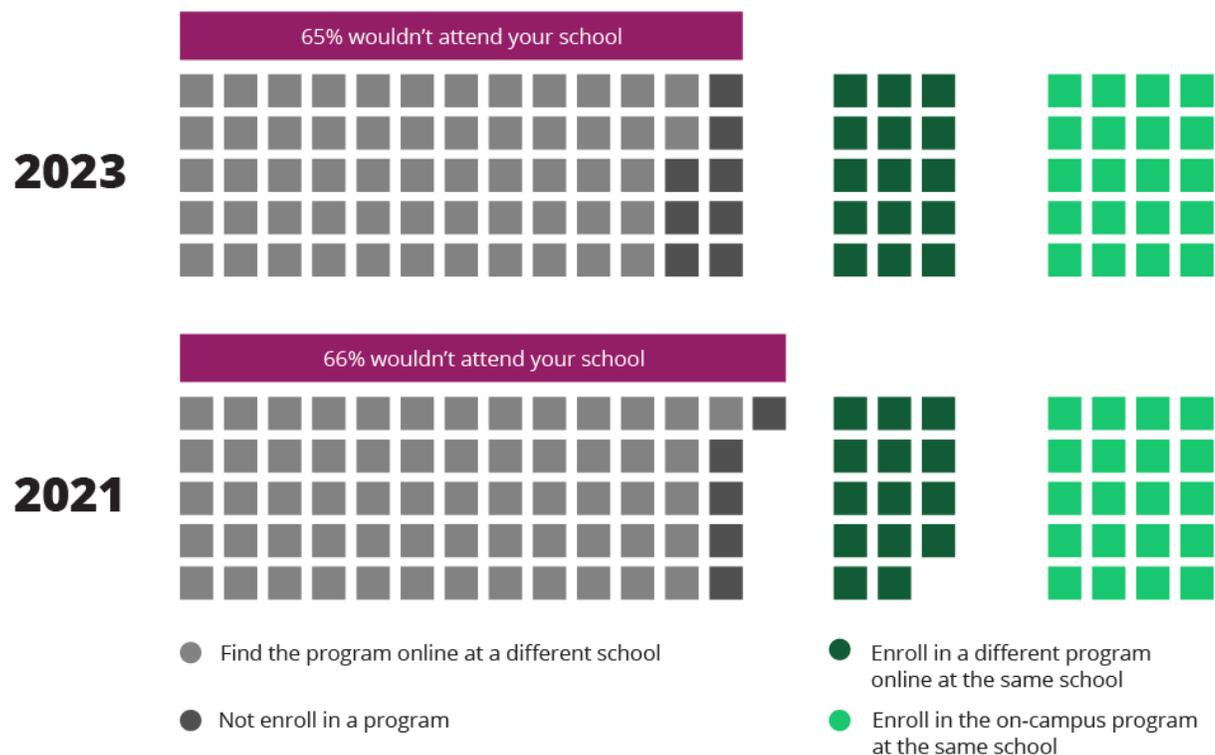
What Is a
Learning
Ecosystem?

# Voice of the Online Learner – Modality, Program Design, and Stackable Credentials

Modality comes first

If the program you wanted was not available in an online format at your school of choice, would you most likely:

65% wouldn't attend your school

2023

66% wouldn't attend your school

2021

- Find the program online at a different school
- Not enroll in a program
- Enroll in a different program online at the same school
- Enroll in the on-campus program at the same school

Also, four out of five learners told us they selected the online modality before any other criteria, including school and program
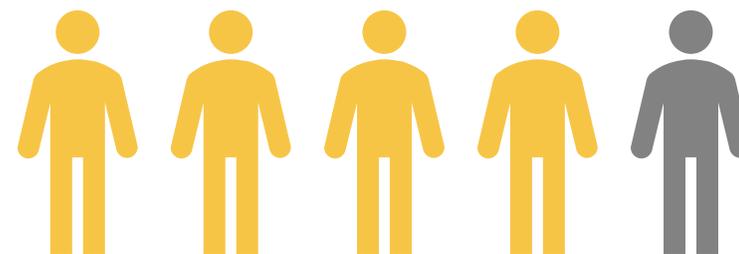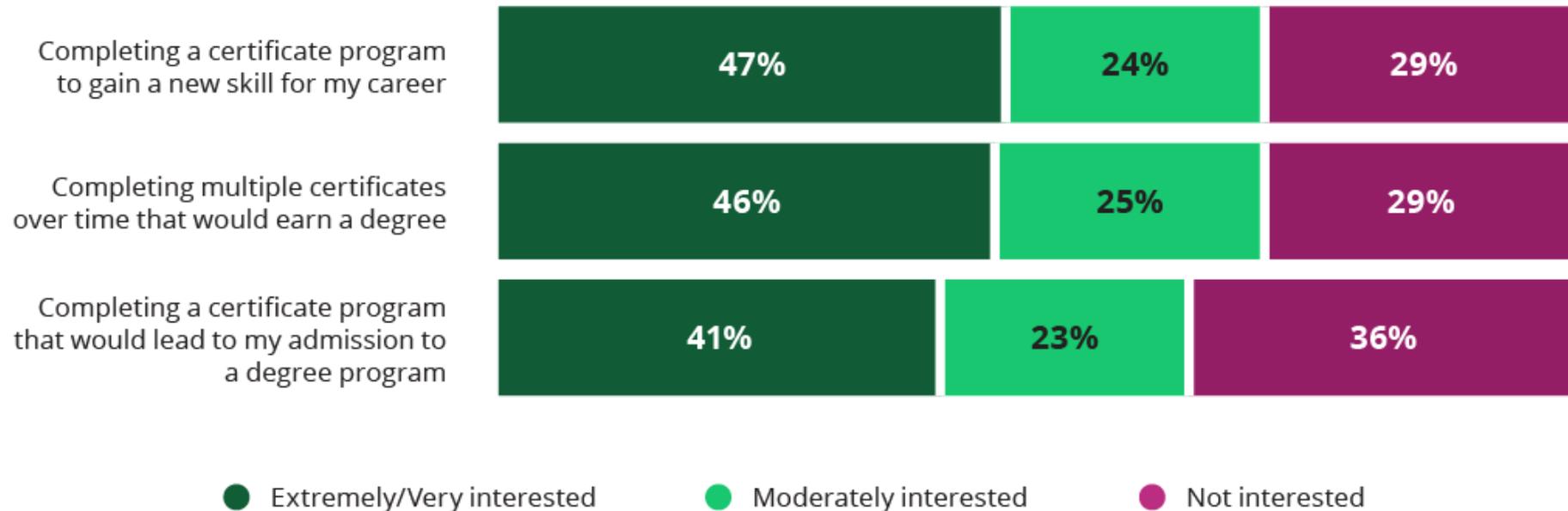
Ideal online program design

Student Preferences

✓ Fully Online (71%)

✓ Asynchronous (71%)

✓ Option to take multiple classes at once (63%)

✓ Flexibility to choose electives (59%)

Certificates and stackables

How interested would you be in the following certificate options if they were available in your subject area of interest, but you couldn't use financial aid to help pay for them?

	Extremely/Very interested	Moderately interested	Not interested
Completing a certificate program to gain a new skill for my career	47%	24%	29%
Completing multiple certificates over time that would earn a degree	46%	25%	29%
Completing a certificate program that would lead to my admission to a degree program	41%	23%	36%

Institutional
Standards for
Online Course
Design, Expectations
& Faculty Presence

Consistent Course Design & Expectation

Consistent Course Content Layout and Navigation

Content is organized structurally the same throughout the course.

The navigation in courses is the same across the program.

Programmatic Consistency

Content is organized structurally the same across the courses in the program.

Diverse learning experiences

Course learning activities and assessments vary across the program.

Clear expectations for grading and due dates and syllabus alignment

The grading expectations are clear with specified due dates to accommodate scheduling.

The assignments described in the syllabus mirror what's in the course.

Consistent Course Design & Expectation

> Each course is **structured** the same, with the same format which is **helpful** because it's easier to hop into a course without having to relearn individual formats along the way.
>
> – MPA student at Anna Maria College

> More consistent layout with placement of learning modules, grades, etc. on the left-hand side of the navigation page in the LMS. Professors customize the course and it can be **confusing** and **difficult to find** what I need.
>
> – MBA student at University of West Alabama

> The **layout** of the course materials helps me **stay organized** regardless the subject of the class.
>
> – MSW student at George Mason University

Faculty Presence and Engagement

Timely Feedback and Grading

Feedback is provided in time to inform student performance.

Engaging with Students via Course Discussions

Students want to learn from faculty contributions via discussion boards and class discussions

Connecting with Students

Be present.

Peer Engagement

Students want to learn from and connect with their peers.

Faculty Presence and Engagement

"My teachers have been very wonderful in explaining directions and giving me constructive feedback when grading my papers and assignments.
– MSCMHC student at the University of West Alabama

Frequent communication from my instructor helps me feel connected to the course and helps me better develop my assignments and projects, ultimately creating an effective learning environment.

– MS LDT student at George Mason University

The most valuable component is knowing some of my peers in the program.
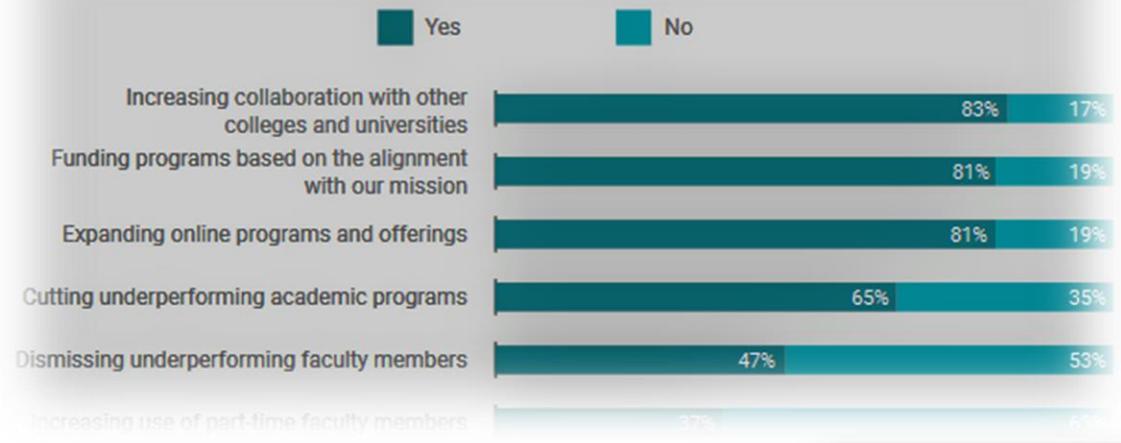
– MSN student at Sacred Heart University

Teachers who care, respond in a timely manner, give good instructions and provide good feedback.

– MSW student at Campbellsville University

Inside Higher Ed – 2023 Survey of College and University Chief Academic Advisors

Please indicate whether you plan to increase emphasis on the following practices at your institution over the next year. (n=375)

■ Yes   ■ No

Practice	Yes	No
Increasing collaboration with other colleges and universities	83%	17%
Funding programs based on the alignment with our mission	81%	19%
Expanding online programs and offerings	81%	19%
Cutting underperforming academic programs	65%	35%
Dismissing underperforming faculty members	47%	53%

■ **YES**   ■ **NO**

81	19

Expanding online programs and offerings
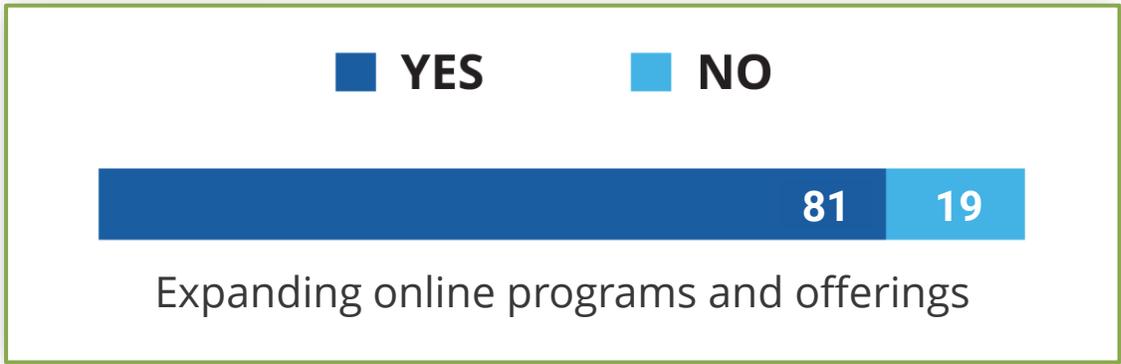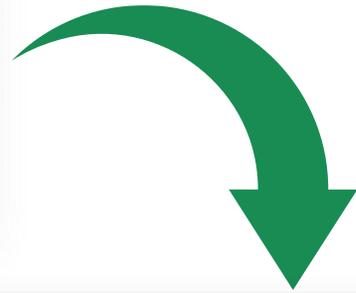
What Is a Learning Ecosystem?

Decision Making ~ Governance

	Centralized	Decentralized
Strategy	• ***Integrated*** throughout the institution • ***Policies integrated*** into online ecosystem`	• ***Limited*** institutional engagement • ***Defined*** policies
Technology	• ***Coordinated*** through Central IT organization (including learning technologies)	• ***Limited*** coordination • Learning technologies and tools managed by faculty/programs
Resources	• Resources are ***coordinated*** through ***administration***	• Resources are ***managed*** by ***programs*** and individual ***colleges***
Support	• ***Integrated*** resources and tools	• ***Integrated*** resources and tools
Center for Teaching and Learning	• Comprehensive and ***coordination*** faculty development and design services (breadth and depth)	• Teaching and Learning teams ***distributed*** across entire campus; managed by programs and individual *colleges*

Governance – Advantages & Disadvantages

Centralized	Decentralized
• Alignment with programmatic practices that align with institutional strategy • Distribution of resources supported across entire network • Coordinated efforts for student services needs • Aids in adoption of best practices	• Decision-making is *placed* at the program and school • Greater autonomy with experimenting with different resources/tools/modalities • Supports response to different student needs depending on discipline
• May stifle 'entrepreneurship' projects that require innovation • May limit agility and flexibility • Practices may end up differentiating/conflicting from the needs of the institution	• Limits for centralized services connected to serve all needs – lack of communication of needs • Spurious efforts • Different specifications for best practices • Slower to adopt "best practices"

East Tennessee State University

Goal – Growth and flexibility through online education

- Founded in 1911 as a normal school for training teachers
- Located in Johnson City, TN
- Nearly 14,500 undergraduate, graduate and professional students from 71 countries and all 50 states
- Started their distance education journey by offering occasional online courses and expanded into summer

Compete Connect

Learning systems and tools

Benchmarks for excellence in online learning

Professional development

Digital Journey
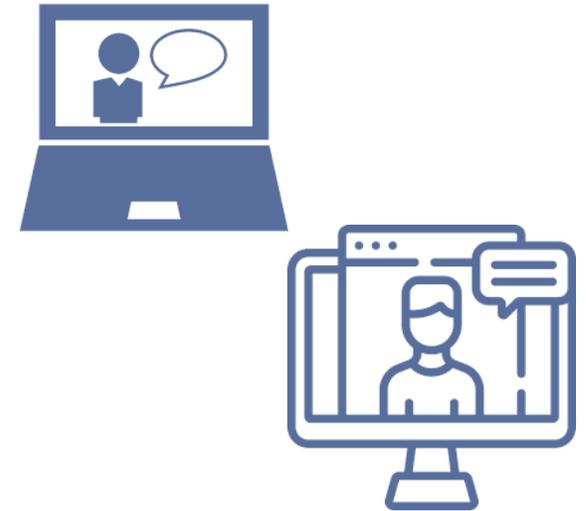

Governance and Leadership

Technology Solutions

Blackboard
NOW PART OF ANTHOLOGY

Excellence in Practice

Outcomes

➤ At least one section of **core business courses** is offered online one time per semester.

➤ All College of Business and Technology **summer courses now 100% online**.

➤ **One of the graduate programs requires an online student orientation** for the 100% online students.

➤ The Department of Management, Marketing, and Supply Chain **offers two 100% undergraduate programs and two 100% online graduate programs.**

Questions from the Audience

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Additional Information and Resources

The webcast recording and additional resources will be available in the next week: wcet.wiche.edu/events/webcasts.

Learn more and stay connected:

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Learn more about the benefits of joining our community: wcet.wiche.edu/join-us

WCET is the leader in the practice, policy & advocacy of digital learning in higher education.
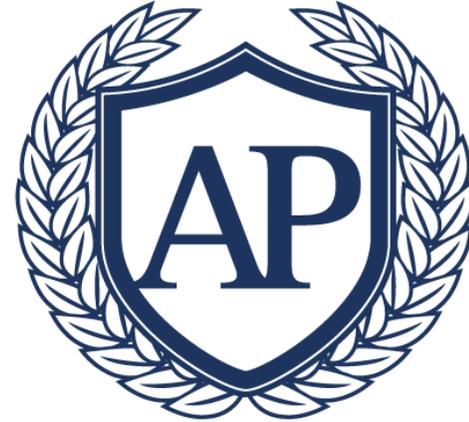
| Community | Equity | Policy | Practice |

Learn more about our webcast partner:

Academic Partnerships:
Elevating Higher Education
Online

academicpartnerships.com

Upcoming WCET Events

Learn more and register: wcet.wiche.edu/events

- Member Closer Conversations
  - April 26, 12 PM MT: U.S. Department of Education's Latest Proposed Changes
  - May 17, 12 PM MT: What You Need to Know Before July 1
- Can Microcredentials Re-engage 40.4 Million Learners? – Webcast | May 7, 12:00 PM MT

Join us for a WCET and SAN special event:

Distance Ed at a Crossroads: The Changing Landscape of New Regulations

July 30-31, 2024 | St. Louis, Missouri

wcet SAN

Save the Date for the WCET Annual Meeting

Join us October 8-10 in Long Beach, CA!

Registration opens in May

Thank you

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Thank you for attending!

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