

**Joint Committee on Online and Distance Learning**  
**Report to the Faculty Senate**  
**April 19, 2018**  
**Dr. Diane J. Goldsmith**  
**Dr. Kathleen M. Torrens**

**Committee Members:** Christy Ashley, Laura Beauvais, Tom Boving, Jill Doerner, Diane Goldsmith, Ben Leveillee, Aria Mia Loberti, Art Mead, Debbie Mongeau, Vincent Petronio, Anne Seitsinger, Kathleen Torrens

**Online Pedagogy:**

Using feedback from faculty who have participated in the online pedagogy courses, the Office of Online Education combined OP1 and OP2 into a single 4-week asynchronous course in order to ensure the one course included both pedagogy and design and to increase completion rates. This year 17 faculty have completed this four-week combined course. As of December 2017, 256 faculty had completed OP1; and 149 had completed OP2.

**Blended Pedagogy:**

During Spring 2018, with the support of the Provost's office, the Office of Online Education piloted a blended pedagogy initiative. A small stipend was offered for faculty to participate in a blended workshop (featuring face to face meetings and online interaction and assignments), transform an on-ground course to blended, and to present their work in poster format at the ATL Teaching Showcase. Eleven faculty successfully completed all of the requirements, two of whom declined the stipend. These faculty hailed from across the university, including the College of Business, College of Education and Professional Studies, the Harrington School of Communication and Media, and the College of Arts and Sciences.

**Course Shells:**

The Committee discussed the use of course shells by departments to ensure navigational consistency and eliminate confusion while allowing for "branding." The committee asked the Office of Online Education to add resources and examples to their website for all to use. The use of course shells (standard or similar structures for online and blended courses) has been piloted in the online RN-BS program as well as in the Online Pedagogy and Blended Pedagogy workshops. Students report high satisfaction with standard navigation across courses, and faculty have noted satisfaction with the design process being simplified, reducing the time necessary for the process.

**Course Evaluations:**

With the implementation of IDEA online which allows for additional questions on the online forms, the committee agreed that there were 4 questions that would be good to suggest that all faculty teaching online add to their evaluations.

- The course materials are easily accessible
- I was able to understand and follow the course navigation structure.
- There was adequate opportunity to interact online with other students
- There was adequate opportunity to interact online with the instructor

The committee suggested that we first work with the Accelerated online programs to add these questions to test their validity and value.

### **Accessibility:**

- The committee spent a lot of time discussing the need to increase resources and training to ensure that all online/blended courses are accessible to all learners. MTS has added trainings including drop in sessions and resources as has the Office of Online Education.
- MTS has taken over the responsibility of working with faculty to caption videos.
- Sakai has a tool, Accessibility Feedback, which will allow students to send ITS a message if there is an issue with accessibility in their course. This allows ITS to work with the faculty to correct any issues.
- Sakai also has a feature that allows faculty to test their Sakai courses for accessibility of text, images, etc. The Committee intends to continue outreach to educate the community on the need for Universal Design and for overall accessibility protocols.

### **Sakai:**

- The committee continues to work on issues of onboarding new faculty to Sakai in a timely fashion. This is a problem especially for late hires. One work around is to have the department chair create a project or course site and add the hire to it directly. It can get copied into a true site when the HR paperwork is finalized.
- The summer upgrade to Sakai 11 went well. There will be a similar small upgrade to Sakai 12 in August. There will be a demo version available soon.
- We worked with MTS to ensure a fix was in place for a problem with uploading grades to eCampus.

### **LMS**

- After a great deal of discussion the Committee suggested that the chair meet with IT Gov, the CIO, and the Provost to discuss the formation of an Task Force to Review LMS options for URI
- As part of this decision, the Committee was unanimous in stating:
  - That the process not be controlled by ITS, be highly transparent, and provide for input by all LMS stakeholders.
  - That any change in an LMS would need to take a year of the two systems running concurrently
  - That there be a system to archive old courses and projects for a reasonable amount of time so that faculty would have time to move older courses over when needed.
- The Committee consists of:
  - Chair: Kathleen Torrens, Professor Communication Studies – Sits on IT Gov
  - Two faculty from JCODL
    - Vince Petronio
    - Art Mead
  - Two faculty nominated by the Faculty Senate
    - Jay Fogelberg
    - ?

- Dean of a College – Jen Riley
- One Student
  - Aria Mia Loberti
- Director Advancement of Teaching and Learning
  - Diane Goldsmith
- One Representative from Office of Online Education
  - Joannah Portman-Daley
- Two representatives from ITS
  - Ben Leveillee
  - Mike Motta
- One representative from Student Records
  - Jack Humphrey

### **Student Concerns:**

- The student representative reported that students were concerned with faculty who use multiple online platforms that aren't well integrated with Sakai. This is confusing to students. Some outside sources are also not accessible or they require students to learn a new interface
- There is a concern that students who have delayed motor skills may have issues with clicker systems and faculty should be aware of that.
- There was a concern about whether or not livestream events like TEDx and the Honors Colloquium are closed captioned
- There was a concern that Poster sessions done on campus are often not accessible. They can be made accessible easily by having the posters available as word documents online (See ATL Showcase for example).

### **Current Online Programs:**

- MS in Dietetics (accelerated)
- MS in Cybersecurity
- MA in Education: Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages/Dual Language Immersion
- RN to BS (accelerated)

### **Upcoming Programs**

- MA in Education with a Specialization in Adult Education

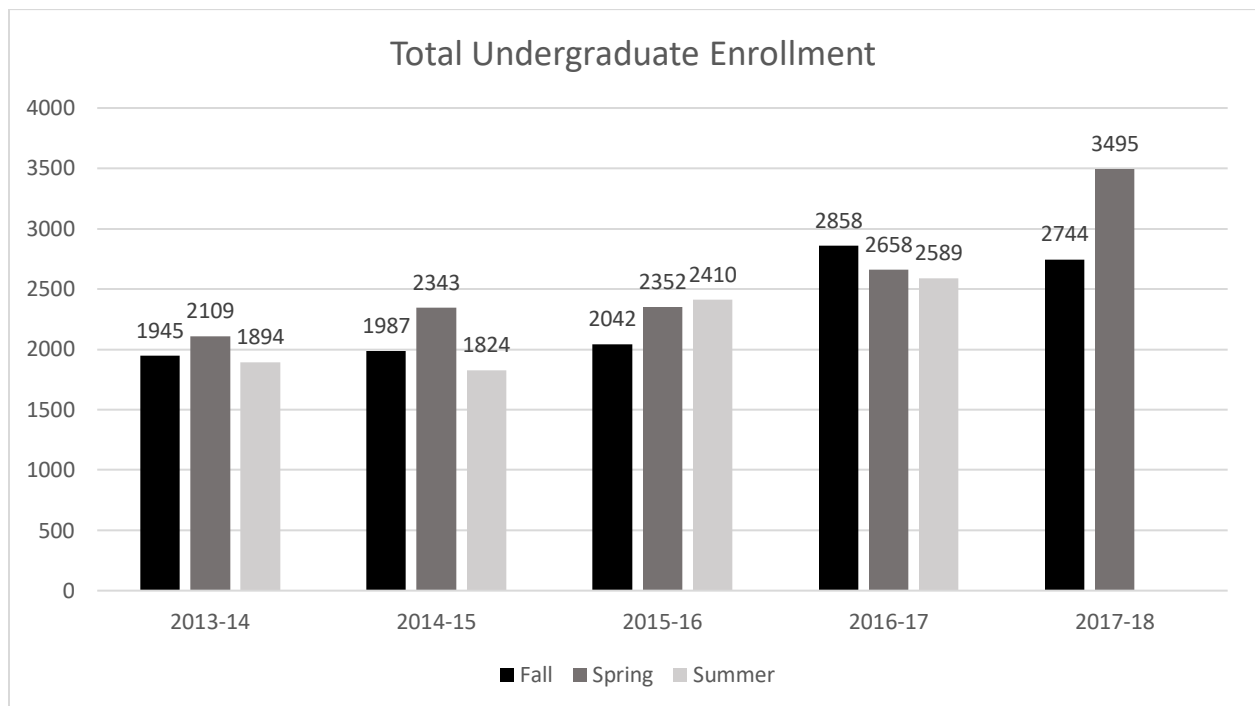
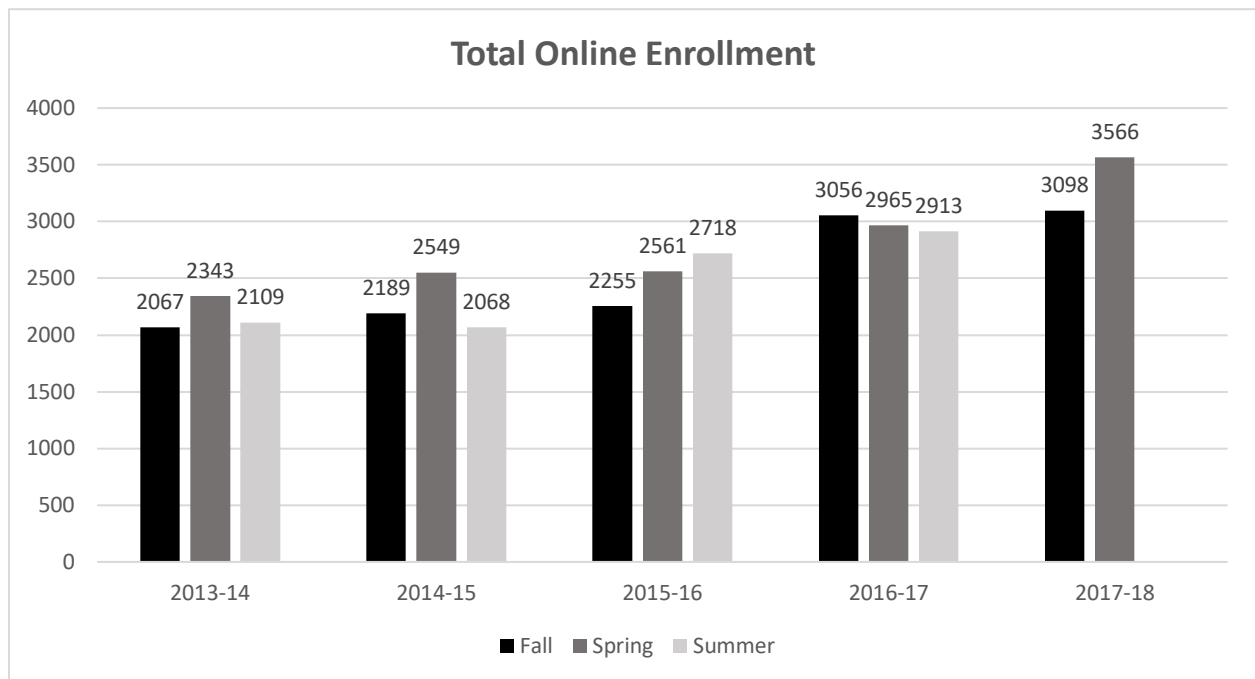
### **Majors online**

- Communication Studies Major is all online but has yet to be finalized prior to advertising.

### **Certificates Online**

- Graduate Certificate in Cyber Security
- Graduate Certificate in Digital Forensics
- Graduate Certificate in Digital Literacy
- Professional Certificate in Cyber Security
- Professional Certificate in Digital Forensics

**Online Courses:** There has been a significant increase in the online enrollments. This does not include courses in the accelerated online programs.



### Race/Ethnicity Demographics for Online Students in Spring 2018

	Total Number	Percentage
White	2008	74.0%
Hispanic/Latino	253	9.3%
Black/African American	169	6.2%
Asian	83	3.1%
American Indian / Alaskan Native / Native Hawaiian	4	0.1%
Multiracial	88	3.2%
Not Specified	106	4.0%
Grand Total	2714	100%

**61.2% of students in Undergraduate classes are female**

### Age Groups of Undergraduates Spring 2018

	Total Number	Percentage
18-22	2453	90.4%
23-30	188	6.9%
31+	73	2.7%

### RN to BS Accelerated Program - Enrollment

	Fall 2015	Spring 2016	Summer 2016	Fall 2016	Spring 2017	Summer 2017	Fall 2017
Session 1	31	160	209	461	534	441	547
Session 2	75	228	251	477	502	411	611
Total	106	388	460	938	1,036	852	1,158