

Online Education

Online Education is the use of electronic media, images, animation, and streaming video, and includes technology applications and processes such as audio or video tape, satellite TV, CD-ROM, and computer-based learning, as well as local intranet/extranet and web-based learning. E-learning can occur in or out of the classroom. It can be self-paced, asynchronous learning or may be instructor-led, synchronous learning. E-learning is suited to distance learning and flexible learning, but it can also be used in conjunction with face-to-face teaching, in which case the term blended learning is commonly used.

Online Education Programs

Although online education is often similar to on-campus instruction, it can be delivered in a number of ways. Distance learning is usually offered using one of these methods, or a combination of them:

- **100% Online Education** - Fully-online degrees are earned from the comfort of your own home with no required visits to your college or university campus.
- **Hybrid Education** - Hybrid education allows students to pursue a combination of online and on-campus courses.
- **Online Courses** - While online courses may be part of a degree program, they can also be taken on their own in order to master a certain subject or learn a specific skill.
- **MOOCs** - MOOCs, or massive open online courses, are usually delivered in lecture form to online "classrooms" with as many as 10,000 people.

No matter which type — or types — of online education one chooses to pursue, the options are typically plentiful. Where online education put down roots in just a handful of college majors, it has since expanded to nearly every field and discipline in academia, with very few exceptions. With that being said, certain fields lend themselves to online learning for various reasons. Across the nation, the most popular degree programs offered online include:

- Nursing
- Business Administration
- Criminal Justice
- Accounting
- Computer and Information Technology
- Early Childhood Education

How does Online Education Work?

In an online course, your instruction is delivered via Canvas, Bellevue College Learning Management System, rather than in a face-to-face classroom. Think of Canvas as a virtual classroom.

Strategies for success in online classes include logging on your course on the first day of class, dedicating time each day to completing your course assignments, having reliable technology and Internet connection.

8 Reasons Why Online Education is Better than Traditional

1. You're not bound by geography

Huge strides in technology have made a college education more accessible than ever. With a computer and Internet access, the entirety of the educational world can be yours as long as you have Internet access, no matter where you live.

That's hardly an exaggeration when you consider that for the past few years, highly prestigious schools, such as Harvard, MIT, and Stanford, have been offering full, non-credit courses of study online for free through something called MOOCs (which stands for massive open online course). MOOCs generally have the same professors and the same study material you'd get if you were attending the university in-person.

It was probably inevitable that schools would begin wanting to monetize all of the material they were providing online. In 2013, Georgia Tech became the first school to create a MOOC-based degree program. The University of Illinois followed suit two years later. Now, more than 30 brick-and-mortar schools offer MOOC-based degrees, through partnerships with tech-ed companies like Coursera, edX, and Udacity.

But MOOCs are only the tip of the online-learning iceberg. Digital and traditional institutions are also perfecting more-intimate online learning options, with smaller class sizes and more one-to-one professor-to-student interactions. Online degree options abound and if you can't find the offering you want at a local university, you can probably find it at another school.

So whether you're looking to earn your degree to go nab a 9-to-5, or you're looking to study the stars with the world's top astronomers, you can probably find what you're looking for online.

2. Online learning may be more engaging than classroom learning

A recent article in *Forbes* offers some insight into the state of online learning. Researchers have begun diving into how efficient online learning is compared to classroom education. So far, the results have been promising.

A study from California State University in San Bernadino found that two different sets of students—one group who studied online and the other who went to class—who received the same instruction from the same professor fared equally well in terms of performance. However, the study revealed that online students were less intimidated about participating, and that there was a higher-quality of interaction between students and the professor.

In addition, the *Forbes* article notes online classes are more likely to present material in attention-grabbing, multimedia formats that may be better suited to today's students.

The upshot: Educators have long known that different people take in information in different ways, but educational methods have struggled to adapt. If you're someone whose eyes glaze over during a classroom lecture, you may find that you respond better to online learning approaches.

3. Feedback is faster and more frequent

Believe it or not, online learners may actually have more contact with their educators than classroom learners.

Online students are generally asked to complete more-frequent assessments so that professors can monitor their competence. Because of this, learning gaps can be identified and addressed faster, rather than allowing a struggling student to slip through the cracks until exam time.

Remember, this isn't just about GPAs. When you're paying thousands of dollars for an education, you don't want to hide in the back corner of the classroom. You want to ensure you understand the course material so you can apply it later.

4. Online college can be a cheaper way to earn your bachelor's or master's degree

What's the biggest difference between online and traditional school? The campus, obviously. If you attend a regular college, you're probably going to spend several thousand dollars a year on room and board, as well as transportation.

Online college removes all of those expenses from the equation, effectively yielding you a five-figure discount during the course of your studies. *Score!*

5. You may incur a lot less student loan debt

In addition to not having to pay for room and board and commuting, online study may reduce your costs in another extremely significant way.

Most online programs are structured around the idea that students are employed, and possibly employed full-time. Being able to continue working while going to school means that you may have to take on less student loan debt.

Smaller student loans means you'll be paying less student loan interest. When you consider that most people take close to 20 years to pay off their student loan debt, reducing your total debt load is one of the most-important strategies you can adopt. Your future self will thank you.

6. You have more control over your schedule

Absenteeism and scheduling conflicts are virtually removed from the online learning equation. While some programs may require participation in online lectures at certain times, those same lectures are generally archived for later reference.

Because online learning is more flexible than classroom-based learning, students can work through material at their own pace. People who need more time to grasp a concept can take it. People who want to work faster may do so.

Schedule flexibility is also a huge asset for people who work full-time or who have childcare responsibilities that would interfere with regular campus attendance. Just think about it—the single mom whose babysitter canceled at the last minute would be out of luck with traditional learning. With online education, she can still attend class with the assurance that her child is being care for.

7. The online classroom is good preparation for a changing workforce

Getting comfortable with technology is an excellent side benefit to online education.

As technology advances, workforces are become increasingly distributed. Whether you're working with someone across the state or across the world, becoming adept at technology for video conferencing, messaging, aggregating information, and collaborating is a skill set that you're likely to find a need for.

8. Online learning is getting a good reputation

Academics have seen the value in online education for quite some time. A 2012 study from Babson/College Board showed that 77% of academic leaders believed that online education offerings were just as good, if not better, than classroom-based educational offerings.

Employers are also getting that message. A recent article in U.S. News & World Report shows that more hiring managers are seeing the value in online degrees, as long as they come from properly accredited institutions.

Benefits of Online Education

The benefits that come with online learning depend a lot on the individual. While some students simply enjoy the convenience of studying in their pajamas, others must choose online education in order to stay home with their children. Still, the biggest perk that comes with online degree programs has to do with location. Simply put, when you pursue online education, you don't have to uproot your life to do it; you can just stay home.

"The primary benefit of an online program is flexibility," notes Monroe. "In a well-designed online program, students are not limited to programs physically located near their home."

Staying home to pursue a degree can not only make earning a degree possible, but also less time-consuming. For example, students who pursue online degrees may not have to:

- Quit their jobs to attend school
- Commute to and from their college campus
- Plan their day around their course schedule
- Spend money on parking or babysitting

At the same time, it allows them to study and take tests at a time and place that works best for them, learn at their own pace, and transition through their courses faster.

Of course, nothing is perfect, and while there are many benefits, online education does have one drawback — the lack of a personal connection.

"The primary benefit of a campus-based program, compared to an online program, is the opportunity it provides for personal interactions with your professors and your fellow students," says Monroe. "For many, learning is fundamentally a social activity and these person-to-person interactions are a very important component of their education."

To lessen the impact, many online schools have begun offering a wide range of services that connect students with their peers and instructors. Commonly, those features include online message boards and chat rooms, video conferences, and web-based forums.

Disadvantages of Online Education

1. Online Education Requires Immense Self-discipline

In the traditional form of education, there's usually a set of guidelines and rules that all students are bound to follow. This is a crucial aspect as it gives students a sense of purpose and the discipline to stick to it. They, therefore, mostly end up covering lots of the tasks and assignments delegated to them. When it comes to online education the story is different. Here the student has a lot of freedom to do whatever they want without worrying about a teacher or lecturer showing up. This sort of freedom can quickly ruin a student's focus. Online courses come with strict deadlines on submission of assignments and tasks. If you cannot manage your time well to balance your life priorities and study times, then you are bound to fail. It is, therefore, up to you to ensure that you are disciplined enough not to procrastinate or lag behind as you could easily find yourself dropping out.

2. Lack of Direct Interaction with Your Teacher

There has been an argument that online education creates a monolog instead of dialogue form of learning. This is a vital concern because the importance of direct interaction between a student and tutor cannot be overlooked. When you are learning from a teacher in front of you, they can monitor your body language to ensure you remain focused; they can tell when something is distracting you, when you haven't grasped a topic or when you are not interested in a particular subject. None of this is possible when you are learning online. Moreover, physical teachers can spur the interests of students using that direct contact to keep them motivated. Online education barely provides that opportunity, and this is a huge challenge.

3. Lack of Company from Other Students

The importance of the company of students that one interacts with during his/her studies is hugely underrated. These are the people who can help to boost your interests towards pursuing particular subjects. It's also from such classmates where the flame of competition can light up within you motivating you to work harder so as to make a good name for yourself. Furthermore, it is such a company that you can get good friends who can be of significant help in building your future career. Therefore, when you decide to take online courses, then it means that you will be studying in isolation with no one to brainstorm with. If you choose to look for individuals doing similar online courses, then it means you will be spending, even more, time on the internet which can get tedious.

4. The Workload Is Bigger Than in Traditional Education

Learning institutions offering online education realize that they cannot effectively monitor the day to day activities of their students. This is a massive challenge as it risks putting to question the quality of education they are offering. To solve this problem, they end up giving more tasks and assignment to their students. In most cases, these tasks are so many surpassing the workload

typical in traditional education. You will end up spending more time reading and writing papers. This workload problem gets bigger if you lack self-discipline and enough commitment.

5. The Online Learning Institution Might Not be Accredited

Cases of individuals having graduated from online schools only to realize that they are not accredited are not rare. There are lots of scams online which pretend to be offering courses, yet they are not licensed. This is why even in job interviews they scrutinize online degrees and the institutions where they come from more strictly before you are considered for a position. To save yourself from this kind of problem you have to conduct a thorough research to determine whether the institution is accredited before you further commit yourself.

Everything has its up and downside, and online education is not any different. Some challenges, however, can easily be solved by tools such as ezTalks Meetings which can significantly boost your online education experience. This is a platform that can help to bridge the gap between a student and the tutor ensuring that monitoring and consultations can be conducted easily. With such a tool and if well conducted, online education is undoubtedly very beneficial.

Conclusion

1. ICT and e-learning offers opportunity to schools.
2. Helping to break the educational barrier.
3. Need a lot of improvement.
4. Need to create awareness for online education.