

Distance Education in the Illinois Community College System

Fiscal Year 2014

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Introduction

Distance education courses include online/internet-based instructional delivery, interactive instructional TV/distance learning, broadcast television/audio, stored media, correspondence, and hybrid/blended instructional delivery. Online/internet-based courses are courses in which asynchronous internet/world wide web serves as the primary delivery method for instruction. Interactive instructional TV/distance learning courses include fully interactive video courses provided via two-way video /two-way audio compressed video telecommunication technology. Also includes one-way video/two-way audio which provide for immediate interaction with students. Broadcast television/audio courses are courses broadcasted via one-way audio/video, cable, satellite TV or radio. Stored media courses are courses taught primarily through instructional audiotapes, videotapes, CD-ROM, DVD, or other stored disc/media technology. Correspondence courses are courses provided in print via the mail, fax, etc. Hybrid/blended courses are courses combining traditional and Internet-based delivery of instruction, significantly reducing in-class seat-time.

Online/internet-based courses have become an increasingly common method of instructional delivery at community colleges, which offers a convenient and cost effective way to earn college credits, certificates, and degrees. Illinois community colleges reported a total of 111,266 headcount enrollments in online credit courses during fiscal year 2014. This is a 21 percent increase in online enrollments from fiscal year 2010 when there were 91,862 online enrollments.

Data for this report come from the Illinois Community College System's Annual Student Enrollment and Completion (A1) submission (Tables A-1 through A-21) and Course Enrollment and Resources (SU/SR) submission (Tables A-22 through A-25). Information from the A1 submission is used in the report to describe the characteristics of students who enrolled in online courses. A1 data are required for all students who are officially enrolled in a credit course at an Illinois community college any time during the specified fiscal year. The A1 record also includes information about student completions during the year. The file includes a variety of demographic and academic information about community college students in Illinois. A1 enrollments are unduplicated end of year counts. SU/SR data are used to determine enrollment (credit hour) based funding and are combined with additional data collection to study facilities utilization. The SU contains the credit hours associated with courses that are paid with 50 percent or more from unrestricted funds. The SR contains the credit hours associated with courses that are paid with more than 50 percent from restricted funds. The SU data is used to determine allocations of the credit hour formula driven grant. Both the SU and SR data are used to determine allocations of all other grants that have an allocation based on credit hours. SU/SR enrollments are duplicated counts from midterm.

Characteristics of Online Students

OVERALL HEADCOUNT The Illinois Community College System recorded a total of 111,266 students enrolled in online credit courses during fiscal year 2014. All Illinois community colleges offer online courses. Annual online credit enrollments increased 1.8 percent compared to the previous year (N = 109,263) and 21.1 percent compared to five years ago (N = 91,862). Out of all credit enrollments in fiscal year 2014, 16.9 percent were online credit enrollments (N =659,712). Table A-1 provides online credit headcount enrollment for fiscal year 2014 for

Nearly 20 percent of all credit enrollments at Illinois Community colleges are internet-based.
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each community college. Among Illinois' 48 colleges, 35 colleges reported more than 1,000 online enrollments. College of DuPage (N = 10,832) reported the most online enrollments followed by Parkland College (N = 6,822) and Joliet Junior College (N = 5,245). Four out of ten credit enrollments at John Wood Community College were online enrollments (40.6 percent). Other colleges with higher percentages of online enrollments in fiscal year 2014 include Kaskaskia College (33.8 percent) and Spoon River College (32.3 percent).

OVERALL FTE Annual online full-time equivalent (FTE) enrollments totaled 59,228, which is 24.2 percent of the fiscal year 2014 total FTE enrollment (N = 244,860). Table A-2 contains fiscal year 2014 online FTE enrollments by college. FTE calculations convert the substantial part-time enrollment into the number of students there would be if everyone attended on a full-time basis (30 credits equals 1 FTE). Twenty-four colleges reported FTE enrollments greater than 1,000. College of DuPage reported the highest online FTE enrollments (N = 5,101) followed by Parkland College (N = 3,143) and Joliet Junior College (2,887). Colleges with the highest percentages of online FTE enrollments include Lincoln Trail College (59.9 percent), Spoon River College (57.9 percent), and Southeastern Illinois College (52.7 percent).

GENDER: Overall during fiscal year 2014, nearly two thirds (64.7 percent) of the online enrollments were females (Table A-3). Online Baccalaureate/Transfer courses were the most popular for both genders (Table A-7). Male students taking online courses were more likely to be enrolled in Baccalaureate/Transfer courses (61.6 percent) than female students taking online courses (58.1 percent).

ETHNIC ORIGIN: In general, minority students were less likely to pursue online courses than white students. About one in four individuals enrolled in online coursework was a minority student (27.3 percent). African American students were the largest minority group enrolled in online coursework during fiscal year 2014 (N = 11,976) and accounted for 11.2 percent of online enrollments among students whose ethnicity was known. Latino Students accounted for 9.6 percent online enrollments (Table A-4).

Illinois Community College Board Enrollment in Online Courses by Ethnicity Fiscal Year 2014		
	Number	Percent
Asian	5,641	5.3%
Native American	506	0.5%
African American	11,976	11.2%
Latino	10,260	9.6%
White	77,710	72.7%
Non Resident Alien	372	0.3%
Pacific Islander	355	0.3%
Source of Data: Annual Enrollment (A1) Data		

STUDENT AGE: In fiscal year 2014, the average age of Illinois community college students in credit courses was 27.5 while the median age was 23.6 (Table A-5). Traditional aged students – 24 or younger – accounted for over one-half (57.0 percent) of all online enrollments. Table A-9 shows that online Baccalaureate/Transfer coursework was the most popular with students aged 24 or younger enrolled in internet based courses (67.3 percent).

Illinois Community College Board Enrollment in Online Courses by Age Fiscal Year 2014		
	Number	Percent
Traditional: 24 and younger	63,454	57.0%
Early to Mid Career: 25 to 39	34,410	30.9%
Established Workers: 40 to 55	11,550	10.4%
Seasoned Workers: Over 55	1,773	1.6%
Source of Data: Annual Enrollment (A1) Data		

ENROLLMENT BY INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM AREA: Baccalaureate/Transfer was the largest instructional program area for online courses in the Illinois Community College System during fiscal year 2014 accounting for nearly six out of every ten online enrollments (N = 65,983). Career and Technical Education programs accounted for three in ten online enrollments (N = 34,223). Another eight percent of online course

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enrollments were in General Associate Degree courses (N + 9,245). About two percent of enrollments were in Vocational Skills (N = 1,364), Adult Education (N = 263), and General Studies Certificates (N = 188) courses (Table A-6a).

The largest Career and Technical Education curricula with over 1,000 online enrollments in fiscal year 2014 included Associate Degree Nursing (ADN/RN); Business Administration and Management; Child Care Provider/Assistant; Accounting Technology/Technician and Bookkeeping; Criminal Justice Technology; and Accounting. Associate Degree Nursing was by far the largest online Career and Technical Education program in fiscal year 2014 with 4,675 online enrollments, an increase of 1.7 percent (+79 students) from fiscal year 2013. Business Administration and Management was the second largest program with 1,705 online enrollments, an increase of 3.3 percent (+55 students) from fiscal year 2013 (Table A-10).

HOURS ATTEMPTED AND EARNED: In fiscal year 2014, Illinois community college students earned on average 88.8 percent of the online credit hours they attempted (N = 1,577,710/1,776,854). Full-time and part-time students earned a similar percentage of the hours they attempted (Table A-15).

Table A-20 demonstrates how many internet hours students earned during fiscal year 2014. Out of 111,266 students enrolled in online coursework in fiscal year 2014, 51.5 percent of students earned up to three credit hours, 36.5 percent of students earned between four and nine credit hours, 8.6 percent of students earned between ten and fifteen credit hours, 3.3 percent of students earned between 16 and 30 credit hours, and 0.1 percent of students earned more than 30 credit hours.

Table A-21 provides the rate of internet hours compared to overall credit hours. Out of 111,266 students enrolled in online coursework in fiscal year 2014, 27.5 percent of students earned up to 25 percent of credit hours through internet-based courses, 21.2 percent of students earned between 25 percent and 50 percent of credit hours through internet-based courses, 13.4 percent of students earned between 50 percent and 75 percent of credit hours through internet-based courses, and 37.8 percent of students earned between 75 percent and 100 percent of credit hours through internet-based courses.

Overall Course Counts and Enrollment

All distance education course enrollment totaled 308,350 in fiscal year 2014 and accounted for 13.1 percent of all course enrollments. Online/internet based course enrollments accounted for 81.5 percent of all distance education enrollments in fiscal year 2014 with hybrid/blended enrollments accounting for another 14.8 percent for a total of 96.3 of all distance education course enrollments (Table A-22). The ratio of all distance education enrollment to all course enrollment was 13.1 percent in fiscal year 2014. Spoon River College had the highest ratio of distance education enrollment to all course enrollments (29.0 percent), followed by Southeastern Illinois College (26.3 percent), and Kaskaskia College (25.7 percent).

Illinois community colleges offered the total of 22,140 of distance education courses in fiscal year 2014 and accounted for 13.4 percent of all courses. Online/internet based courses, the most common instructional delivery in distance education, accounted for 75.0 of all distance education courses in fiscal year 2014 with hybrid/ blended courses accounting for another 17.3 percent for a total of 92.2 of all distance education courses (Table A-23).

In fiscal year 2014, distance education courses accounted for 13.4 percent of all courses.
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The average enrollment in online and hybrid courses in fiscal year 2014 was 14.5 students per course. Waubensee Community College has the largest average online and hybrid enrollments per course in fiscal year 2014 at 22.6 while Kennedy King College has the smallest average online and hybrid enrollments per course at 6.8 (Table A-24).

All courses except for hybrid/blended courses in online education experienced decreases in enrollment compared to the previous year. In comparison to fiscal year 2013, enrollment in interactive instructional television courses decreased by 24.6 percent, in broadcast television/audio courses by 18.2 percent, in stored media courses by 22.9 percent, in Internet-based courses by 3.1 percent, and in correspondence courses the enrollment decreased by 10.1 percent. Enrollments in hybrid/blended courses increased by 20.4 percent versus fiscal year 2013 (Table A-25).

Appendix A:

Distance Education Data Tables