



ANNUAL REPORT

ACADEMIC YEAR 2020-2021

UF ONLINE
UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA

TABLE OF CONTENTS

MESSAGE FROM THE SENIOR ASSISTANT PROVOST AND DIRECTOR OF UF ONLINE _____	02
HIGHLIGHTS FOR ACADEMIC YEAR 2020-2021 _____	03
CHAPTER 1 – A MEANINGFUL MISSION _____	07
CHAPTER 2 – PROGRESS TOWARD OUR MISSION _____	13
GOAL 1: ROBUST STUDENT LEARNING _____	13
GOAL 2: SMART DESIGN, PRODUCTION, & DELIVERY OF ACADEMIC PROGRAMS _____	22
GOAL 3: AN ENRICHING AND SUPPORTED ONLINE STUDENT EXPERIENCE _____	34
GOAL 4: DEPLOYMENT OF STRATEGIC MARKETING & RECRUITMENT _____	47
GOAL 5: SMART GROWTH & DATA-DRIVEN OPERATIONS _____	54
CHAPTER 3 – UF ONLINE BY THE NUMBERS _____	57
LOOKING AHEAD: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES _____	61



UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA MISSION STATEMENT

"The University of Florida is a comprehensive learning institution built on a land-grant foundation. We are The Gator Nation, a diverse community dedicated to excellence in education and research and shaping a better future for Florida, the nation and the world."

Our mission is to enable our students to lead and influence the next generation and beyond for economic, cultural and societal benefit."



MESSAGE FROM THE SENIOR ASSISTANT PROVOST AND DIRECTOR OF UF ONLINE

As we take a moment to pause and reflect on the past academic year, we're proud to have overcome many challenges presented by COVID-19, together, as the University of Florida community. UF Online has continued to grow and achieve goals that have been set forth to ensure students have every opportunity to earn the same accredited UF degree from the convenience of wherever they may be, and in doing so, join a family of over 400,000 UF alumni worldwide. In our seventh edition of UF Online's annual report, we'd like to share our progress on achieving the goals of our UF Online Comprehensive Business Plan 2019-2024. In that business plan we have committed to:



- Fueling our strategic expansion through major investments in the academic core of UF colleges. This includes faculty needs, academic advising, and innovative course production.
- Launching and growing an analytic, central unit that leads strategic marketing, communications, and academic affairs.
- Identifying optimal ways to fully integrate online programs into the traditions of the colleges, led by faculty leaders across our campus.
- Remaining committed to ensuring that UF Online, as an administrative unit, would “remain flexible, changing with the climate and needs of the institution as we work toward our mission.”

While we certainly could not have predicted that UF Online would position the University of Florida to better weather a pandemic, nor that the needs of online learning would rapidly expand during the timing of this annual report, I am proud to announce that given our relentless commitment to value for our students, support for our incredible UF faculty, deployment of expert staff teams, reliance on data and analytics, and with steady growth in impact, we can look back and be proud of our work during this year, especially as we saw the greatest leap in enrollments in the Fall of 2020, welcoming our largest class ever.

We invite you to read of our accomplishments and continued plans for a brighter future, which we believe will allow us to continue earning recognition as one of the nation's leading public research universities. Each year we remain nimble in our strategies, open to new initiatives and partners, but always with a steady focus on our business plan's goals, commitments, and investments.

We know the future holds uncertainties, but with our authentic, in-house team effort, driven business practices, a laser focus on return on investment for students, a commitment to affordable programs, and the steady guidance of our business plan alongside the trust and dedicated investment of our state appropriators, I know we are ready for whatever the future may bring.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in white ink, appearing to read 'E. Cummings'.

Evangeline Tsibris Cummings
Senior Assistant Provost & Director of UF Online

HIGHLIGHTS FOR ACADEMIC YEAR 2020-2021

With another successful year of rising within the U.S. News & World Report rankings, UF Online has displayed what a top 5 public research university can achieve by enabling students to tailor their own path. UF Online does this by supporting students via innovative models of advising, engagement, and academic delivery. Highlights from this year's annual report include:

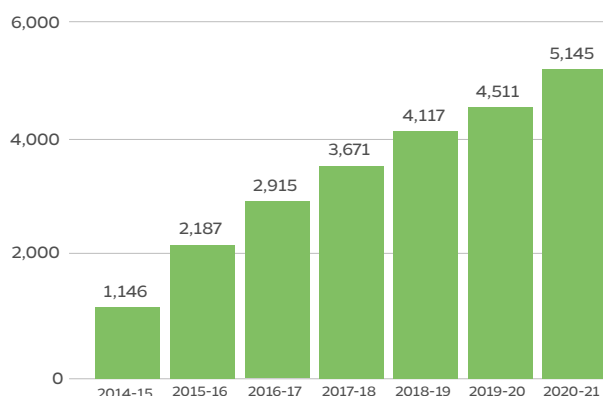
STUDENT SUCCESS & DEGREES AWARDED ON THE RISE

- As UF Online's enrollment continues to grow and reach an all-time high, our students have continued to push forward and have achieved a re-enrollment rate of 89% throughout the 2020-2021 academic year. This is an improvement from the previous year's rate of 88%.

RE-ENROLLMENT RATE OF NEW STUDENTS BY ACADEMIC YEAR

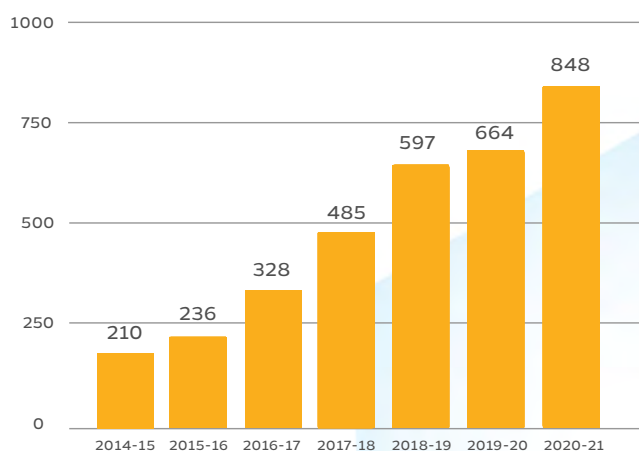
2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
88%	89%	87%	87%	88%	89%

UF Online Enrolled Headcount by Academic Year



- UF Online's number of graduates has continued to grow. This academic year, our number of Gator graduates leaped 28% over last year, allowing us to celebrate the tenacity and dedication of our students and further expanding access to a UF degree.

Degrees Awarded by Academic Year



HIGHLIGHTS FOR ACADEMIC YEAR 2020-2021

- UF Online welcomed its largest incoming fall cohort in 2020 – welcoming in 18% more new students (fully-online students, non-PaCE) and seeing a 13% rise in continuing students in fall 2020 vs fall 2019. No doubt driven by the pandemic, UF Online experienced the same COVID-19 surge that has been noted nationally as students were driven to pursue online learning options in greater numbers.

UF FACULTY CONTINUE TO DRIVE UF ONLINE

- During a year of such tremendous change due to COVID-19, UF Faculty delivered even more online course options via UF Online this year, increasing the UF Online course offerings by 22% over last academic year. Each and every UF Online course offering reflects dedicated efforts by faculty and instructional designers to deliver students an excellent learning environment and experience.
- Over 700 UF faculty across 76 departments and 12 colleges continued to drive the growth of UF Online academic offerings. Conducting all teaching and course design, our faculty members are ensuring that online students receive academic offerings of the same quality and rigor as their residential counterparts. As such, this year UF Online funded the redesign or new development of 47 courses while working alongside UF faculty.

UF Colleges offering degrees and/or courses via UF Online

College of Agricultural and Life Sciences

College of the Arts

Warrington College of Business

College of Design, Construction and Planning

College of Education

College of Health and Human Performance

College of Journalism and Communications

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

College of Nursing

College of Public Health and Professions

Wertheim College of Engineering

College of Medicine



HIGHLIGHTS FOR ACADEMIC YEAR 2020-2021

- The award-winning UF Center for Online Innovation and Production (COIP) is now in its sixth year of developing courses in partnership with UF faculty, ensuring that UF Online students have a dynamic and engaging learning experience. The following courses, produced by COIP, were recognized with a 2021 Exemplary Online Award:
 - ADV4302 Great Ideas In Marketplace Communications
 - CLP3144 Abnormal Psychology (category winner for Imaginative or Innovative Approach)
 - FOS2001 Man's Food
 - JOU2100 Broadcast Writing Bootcamp (category winner for Instructional Approach)
 - PSY3213L Research Methods Lab
 - ZOO4926 | ZOO4050 Animal Behavior

EXPANSION OF UF BACHELOR'S DEGREES AND MINORS

- The University of Florida is committed to expanding access via UF Online, and this includes expanding the number of UF academic programs available. Faculty across three UF academic colleges successfully completed the transformation of their curriculum into a fully online degree program, now available via the UF Online portfolio. The new bachelor's degrees now offered include:
 - UF College of Journalism and Communications has completed:
 - B.S., Advertising: Persuasive Messaging
 - B.S., Journalism: Sports and Media
 - UF College of Health and Human Performance has completed:
 - B.S., Tourism Hospitality and Event Management
 - UF College of the Arts has completed:
 - B.A., in Digital Arts and Sciences
 - In addition to the robust existing selection of minors readily available to students via UF Online, we have proudly added an additional new minor:
 - Educational Technology, UF College of Education

EXPANSION OF ACADEMIC PATHWAYS TO UF VIA UF ONLINE

UF Online always works to expand pathways so that more students may enjoy UF academic offerings. This year:

- UF Online **more than doubled** the enrollments of Gators via the Employer Pathways Program. This program bridges UF Online with top employers that wish to cover tuition and fee costs for admitted students. The UF Online Employer Pathways program was available to more than **one million employees** at Walmart, The Walt Disney Company, JP Morgan Chase, and the Rock Family of Companies.
- Four UF colleges - Health and Human Performance, Business, Journalism and Communications, Agricultural and Life Sciences - joined with UF Online to launch an entirely new onramp for future Gators, inviting students to take missing prerequisite coursework via UF Online. Starting with ten of the bachelor's degrees available via UF Online, students can be admitted to UF Online via "UF Online Ready." UF Online Ready now welcomes students to start their studies via UF Online, taking select missing prerequisites as a first step.

HIGHLIGHTS FOR ACADEMIC YEAR 2020-2021

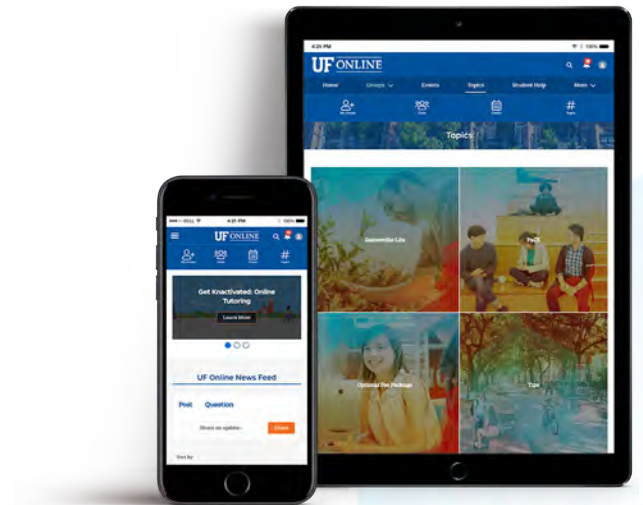
HIRING MORE ACADEMIC ADVISORS

- UF Online continues progress on our Academic Advising Initiative 2019-2024, by continuing to invest in our assigned advising model whereby each UF Online student has an assigned, personal UF academic advisor from their home UF college to guide them throughout their UF Online journey to graduation. This year, even as enrollment surged, UF Online continued this steady investment in academic advising. In fact, UF Online has lowered our student to advisor ratio even further thanks to these new hirings of additional, full-time expert academic advisors dedicated completely to UF Online students.

UF Online investments increased the number of academic advisors across the 10 UF colleges offering bachelor's degrees, bringing the ratio of students to advisors to under 200:1, which is an improvement on last year's ratio of 250:1.

NEW FEATURES FOR STUDENTS: LEARNING ENVIRONMENT & COMMUNITY

- This year, UF Online launched its first-ever mobile application (app), available for students to utilize via iOS and Android devices, placing all of their needs, including access to courses and the UF Student Plaza right at their fingertips. Now UF Online students can connect with each other and with campus events via their smartphone, computer, or tablet. The UF Online app also allows students to access a list of curated events and job fairs, all with virtual access components for online students. By lowering the hurdles for access to events, support services, and more, UF Online aims to foster greater connectivity with students, with one another, and as a key cohort within the broader UF community.
- Reinventing student onboarding during a pandemic, UF Online organized our first-ever entirely virtual Fall Welcome Week in August 2020. In an effort to maximize opportunities for UF Online students to engage and get excited about the upcoming term, students were able to attend drop-in virtual open houses with their academic advisors, participate in virtual game nights hosted by the UF Online Student Ambassadors, and even win prizes by providing advice in the UF Online Plaza. We intentionally designed UF Online's virtual Fall Welcome Week to include both synchronous and asynchronous activities to provide an inclusive experience for all students, no matter how busy their day might be. This was accomplished by collaborating with multiple student support areas to provide videos for students to watch on-demand, detailing how UF Online students can access direct support from their area.



Our Fall Welcome Week accumulated over 3,500 views and 26 hours of discussion on our digital “Meet and Greet” board!

CHAPTER 1: A MEANINGFUL MISSION

As we continue to expand UF Online under the guidance of the University of Florida's vision and mission, UF is proud to have adopted a campus-wide commitment model to online learning. We follow the lead of our UF Online Comprehensive Business Plan 2019 - 2024, guided by our mission, our vision for UF Online, and our values as a program at the University of Florida.

UF ONLINE

MISSION

The mission of UF Online is to enable our students to lead and influence the next generation and beyond for economic, cultural, and societal benefit by delivering a comprehensive offering of high-quality, fully-online academic programs at an affordable cost.

VISION

A public, land-grant university as a hub of learning, accessible from anywhere in the world, bridging learners, educators, and researchers over a lifetime of learning and discovery.

VALUES

Academic Excellence

Relevant, Flexible, and Affordable Academics

Individualized Support for Every Online Student

Welcoming and Engaging Learning Community

Unparalleled Commitment to Academic Integrity

Lean Operations Fueled by Data

CHAPTER 1: A MEANINGFUL MISSION

TAKING A MULTIDIMENSIONAL APPROACH TO ONLINE LEARNING

The UF Online program model is unique and dynamic. All courses and pathways are designed and taught by the same esteemed faculty who teach on our main Gainesville campus, and as such, our UF Online enterprise is fully integrated into the fabric of our university and not a separate entity. In 2013, a decision was made to factor every aspect of UF Online into the fundamental fabric of this top research university. As such, our focus and attention on the steady growth of UF Online is only one component of a university filled with tradition. Our programmatic model takes a multidimensional approach, working within each of these key dimensions of our campus community.

UF Online students are Gators from day one, with the progressive needs and expectations of fully-online students. Faculty members are experts in their respective fields, and similar to their online students, come with their own unique needs and expectations as they work to design and deliver incredible online courses. For each of our seven dimensions, we pursue collaborative approaches tailored to serve the unique needs of students and faculty in an online space. Still, we remain one university with a proud tradition of excellence.

The UF Online program model addresses the needs of online students via transformative digital pathways, all while upholding the values of the Gator Nation within each of our seven dimensions. Each dimension is driven by several organizations across the University working in collaboration, contributing value to our ultimate purpose as a program: student academic achievement.



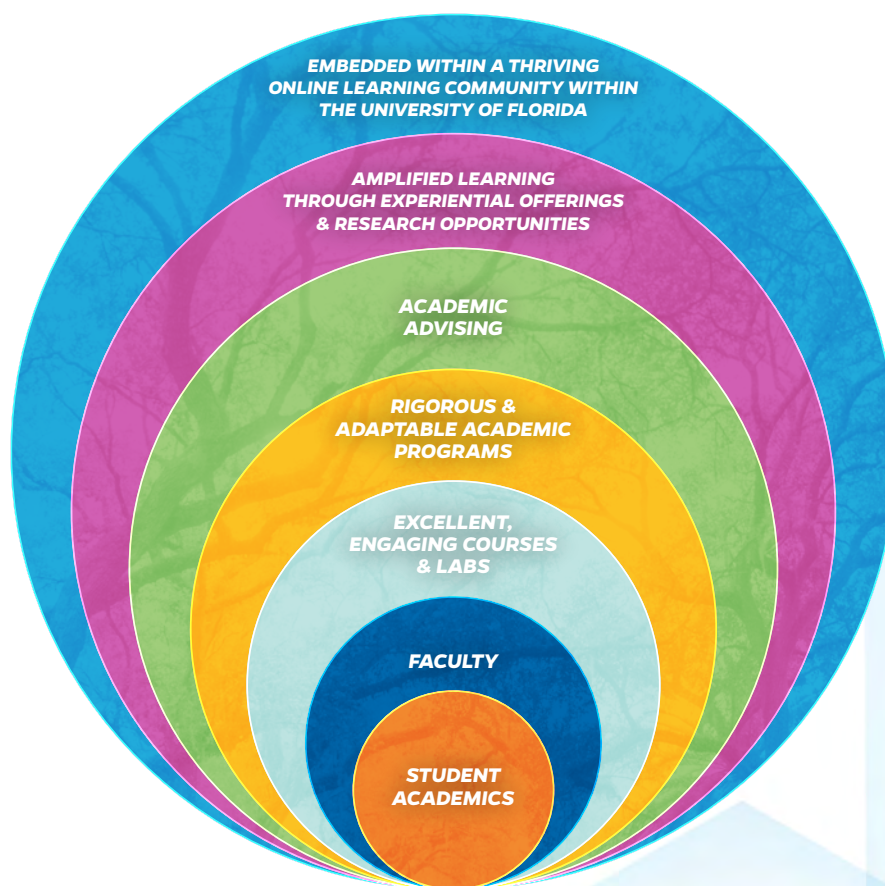
CHAPTER 1: A MEANINGFUL MISSION

SEVEN DIMENSIONS EXPLAINED

As part of a unified campus working to implement a shared mission and vision, we recognize the interconnected dimensions that make the realization of this vision possible.



Each dimension represents an area that contributes value to our students, anchored in the actions and efforts of our students themselves. Each dimension therefore relies on the others, often supported and fueled by multiple organizational units – faculty, staff, and students across 12 colleges – to ultimately ensure UF Online’s success, but most importantly, the success of UF students while earning their undergraduate degrees via UF Online. Taking a multidimensional approach enables UF to recognize the complex, interconnected teams that ensure UF Online’s success while building specific initiatives, projects, activities, and investments.



When reviewing the seven dimensions of our UF Online model, remember these are the very same dimensions that drive student academic achievement online and on campus. These dimensions are universal components for success as an educational organization, and they are our focus within UF Online as we serve a growing population of students in earning their degree through an online modality. Holistically, all seven of these dimensions continue to drive UF Online students to excel.

CHAPTER 1: A MEANINGFUL MISSION

SEVEN DIMENSIONS

A MULTIDIMENSIONAL VIEW OF VALUE FUELING STUDENT ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Student academics

Our core programmatic dimension is the accomplishment of our online students. Driven and controlled by the students themselves, we expect each and every student to engage academically and to be present in their chosen pathway with timely advice from advisors and faculty. UF Online also strives to provide individualized support to each of our students, further investing in the academic core over the next five-year chapter.

Faculty leaders and mentors

Over 350 of UF's top faculty lead the way in content, course design, and teaching in UF Online. UF faculty design, deliver, teach, and evaluate all academic components of the UF Online program and experience. Faculty foster innovation, drive success, and often serve as mentors to students outside the digital classroom. UF Online students can have confidence in their instructors as leaders in their field.

Coursework and labs

Fueled with the creativity and acumen of their discipline, faculty design all courses and labs for UF Online students, often with the aid of a teaching support team comprised of expert instructional designers, graphic designers, and more. UF coursework is accessible through our learning management system and is not to be underestimated. Courses and labs are just as challenging as they are in our residential formats, given that students earn the very same degree and are taught by the same faculty as campus peers. Courses and labs are also available in varied formats, as determined by the faculty.

Academic program pathways

This dimension is comprised of courses, labs, and experiential learning requirements, as designed by faculty, departments and colleges here at UF. The programs offered in UF Online must meet the same rigor as campus yet may be available in more dynamic, versatile, and often flexible formats.

Academic advising

Looking across each student's academic coursework and their progression along their academic program pathway is the critical partnership between the student and their dedicated academic advisor. Each student enrolled in UF Online has their own dedicated academic advisor who works with them to design their own custom pathway given their schedules, life responsibilities, and other constraints. UF Online academic advisors are also a professional cadre of experts who can assist in course sequencing, locate academic support services, map career interests to degree offerings, and overall help ensure each student has the support they need to excel academically.

Amplified learning programs

UF Online is also unique in its promotion of co-curricular activities and opportunities for online students to gain experiential learning while they complete their course of study. From internships, to capstone courses, to study abroad, online students have the ability to take advantage of amplified learning programs. These opportunities complement our robust academic offerings by enabling students to explore their interests via a hands-on approach.

Learning environment and community

Surrounding all online students is the common student experience as a valued member of the UF Online learning environment. As we work to fortify a thriving and engaging learning community, we focus on both online and face-to-face opportunities for engagement and connection across our entire student body and alumni network. This dimension includes our UF Online Plaza, the country's first ever fully-online campus for online undergraduates, the Optional Fee Package, and Connections Events.

CHAPTER 1: A MEANINGFUL MISSION

OUR CURRENT ROADMAP: UF ONLINE BUSINESS PLAN 2019-2024

We utilize this multi-dimensional approach to achieve the goals and objectives in our current business plan. Approved by the Florida Board of Governors in Fall 2018, the UF Online Comprehensive Business Plan 2019-2024 articulates the work ahead of us that is made possible by a recurring annual, dedicated appropriation from the State of Florida legislature. Using our multidimensional model and driven by a campus-wide commitment, the business plan lays out our five-year concrete goals, major initiatives, and forecasted results through 2024. The goals are:

Goal 1: Robust Student Learning

Goal 1 is the primary focus of student learning through the efforts of UF faculty. Next, we focus on the vital infrastructure, talent, and investment needed to sustain online learning excellence with a fully supported faculty.

Goal 2: Smart Design, Production, & Delivery of Academic Programs

Goal 2 captures the growth of our academic offerings for students including courses and degrees.

Goal 3: An Enriching and Supported Online Student Experience

Goal 3 captures our commitment to ensuring each student enrolled via UF Online is given an excellent learning experience and a supportive community.

Goal 4: Deployment of Strategic Marketing & Recruitment

Goal 4 captures building awareness of our program, welcoming new students, making timely admissions decisions, and our commitment to building innovative pathways via employers, state colleges, and other partnerships.

Goal 5: Smart Growth & Data-Driven Operations

Goal 5 includes our commitment to the strategic development and management of UF Online as a program utilizing data and analytics to fulfill our unique mission relating to the modernization of a traditional, research university.

CHAPTER 1: A MEANINGFUL MISSION



CHAPTER 2: PROGRESS TOWARD OUR MISSION

The University of Florida continues to make meaningful and impactful progress on the goals we set forth for UF Online in 2019. We invite you to read the pages that follow the progress we have made this academic year (July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021) for each of the aforementioned goals of the UF Online Comprehensive Business Plan 2019-2024. We present these accomplishments as one campus, with all achievements made possible by the collaborative efforts across many teams and organizations at the University of Florida.

GOAL 1: ROBUST STUDENT LEARNING

TRANSITIONING TO EFFECTIVE ONLINE TEACHING: FACULTY RESPONSE TO COVID-19

The foundation of success for UF Online continues to be the university's commitment to academic excellence within the online learning environment. UF faculty and staff have cultivated a foundation for a vigorous student learning environment, which displays the power and value of premier academic faculty, departments, and colleges in the design and delivery of innovative online offerings and experiences.

In 2020, UF Online worked to support UF faculty and staff navigating their way through the unprecedented challenges brought upon us by COVID-19. A campus-wide emergency response left many residential faculty and staff with the sudden need to transition to online methods en masse. In response, UF Online created a resource for UF instructors, titled *What We Think About When We Think About Online*, as many were just now getting acquainted with the intricacies of teaching remotely.

What We Think About When We Think About Online: This UF Online document provided readers during a tumultuous crisis a succinct tool where they could access the many UF Online education support resources. Designed for a faculty audience, UF Online published this document in Summer 2020 as an aid for faculty at UF but also colleagues across higher education with proper context for use. Each resource was integrated into a four-phase instructional design cycle focused on Designing, Building, Teaching, and Reflecting. As leaders in online education, in a year filled with pivots, UF Online understood that quickly moving a course to an online environment required expertise not yet available to faculty. Connecting instructors with expert methods resulted in many instructors joining UF Online to develop courses with professional teams of instructional and multimedia designers.

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

KATHERINE COOK

Major: Education Sciences



While studying at UF in the early 2000's, Katherine Cook landed a job which allowed her to develop her professional skills. Moving up the corporate ladder led her to a career promotion she simply couldn't turn down. Due to the sudden prolonged closure of many companies within the travel and tourism industry due to COVID-19, Katherine took advantage of the opportunity to do two things she has always wanted to do – finish her bachelor's degree and start her own business.

"A lot of people regret leaving school, but for me, it was the best thing I could have done because I got to do exactly what I love doing and found my way doing it. I looked at a few other online programs before I saw the Education Sciences program at UF. Now, I'm back in school and really focusing on becoming better at it. The passion is already there."

CHAPTER 2: PROGRESS TOWARD OUR MISSION

EXCELLENT FACULTY TEACHING CONTINUES TO DRIVE UF ONLINE

This year, more than 770 UF faculty members across 76 departments and 12 colleges continued to deliver incredible online academics via UF Online, undertaking content creation, course design, and teaching. UF graduate students also worked tirelessly alongside our faculty in ensuring that all UF Online academic offerings provide students with the same quality and rigor as their residential counterparts. We celebrate their efforts and incredible teaching for UF students across 1,347 sections this year, exceeding last year's section total of 1,153. This year, over 100 additional UF instructors taught via UF Online. You can see that over time, this effort of UF faculty continues to increase as noted in the chart below.

FACULTY COMPLETED ALMOST 50 COURSE REDESIGNS

In 2020-2021, while UF responded to the COVID modality crisis, faculty continued to design new courses for UF Online and/or redesign existing courses. Each course going through design or redesign undergoes an intensive and collaborative process. This year, faculty teams completed 47 designs and/or redesigns.

NEW COURSES DEVELOPED BY UF FACULTY WITH THE CENTER FOR ONLINE INNOVATION AND PRODUCTION

UF ONLINE COURSE OFFERINGS

Academic Year	Colleges	Departments	Courses Offered	Sections Offered	Instructors
2014-15	9	51	159	271	160
2015-16	10	61	259	452	297
2016-17	12	67	333	615	366
2017-18	11	67	450	833	497
2018-19	11	71	530	987	575
2019-20	12	72	612	1153	655
2020-21	12	76	744	1347	775

College of The Arts	DIG4354 3D Character Animation
College of The Arts	DIG3313C 2D Animation Techniques
College of The Arts	DIG3525C Digital Production Studio 1
College of Human Health and Performance	HSC4664 Health Communication for Consumers
College of Liberal Arts and Sciences	AMH 2020 US History Since 1877
College of Liberal Arts and Sciences	AMH 4231 US History from WWI to WWII

CHAPTER 2: *PROGRESS TOWARD OUR MISSION*



CHAPTER 2: PROGRESS TOWARD OUR MISSION

UF ONLINE STEPS UP: STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM (SUS) OF FLORIDA STEM LAB TASK FORCE

As COVID-19 hit and all universities began the important work of emergency remote delivery, the acute needs of STEM Labs became a core focus of the UF Online-led Florida SUS STEM Lab Task Force. Chaired by UF Online Director Dr. Evangeline Cummings, this Task Force had been operating for several years to focus exclusively on the STEM Lab needs of online students enrolled system wide. However, when COVID-19 hit, the Task Force quickly pivoted to serve as a ready-hub of conversation and collaboration about how STEM Labs would be transformed into online formats for all students, given the campus restrictions. UF Online was proud to continue this forum as a hub of ideas and strategies, by STEM disciplines. Weekly collaborative Zoom sessions allowed for faculty and staff to attend the STEM Task Force meetings while welcoming all participants to share experiences, trade ideas, and ultimately make the best decisions for their own home University.

NEGOTIATING PRICING. PROCURING CUTTING-EDGE STEM DIGITAL CONTENT FOR FACULTY USE

From Task Force discussions, it became clear that STEM instructors across the state would need urgent, quality support for digital science instructional content. During STEM Task Force surveys of faculty needs, several tools and digital catalogs surfaced from faculty as invaluable to their STEM teaching. After the Task Force's comprehensive review of virtual labs, simulations, videos, and animations, two companies and catalogs stood out: the Journal of Visualized Experiments (JoVE) catalog and a subscription to all virtual labs via Labster. UF Online moved quickly to negotiate pricing, lower hurdles for faculty utilization of these catalogs via an enterprise purchase (eliminating any need for separate contracts for departments), and then procured and deployed these resources working with the UF Libraries for all UF faculty. In doing so, campus saved resources, valuable time, and academic STEM departments could spend less time on procurement procedures and more time on making their own best decisions on how to enable excellent STEM undergraduate learning environments during an emergency COVID response.

UF Online continues to invest in providing UF faculty with strategic digital catalogs for their use in online teaching environments of their own custom design. This enterprise wide and central negotiation approach and procurement model, in concert with UF Purchasing, has become our model in UF Online given its efficiencies but also our success in negotiating pricing at such a scale. UF Online continues to support the ongoing development of STEM instruction at UF by funding unlimited access to STEM digital content via subscription, useful University-wide and available to all faculty.



CHAPTER 2: PROGRESS TOWARD OUR MISSION

STRATEGIC PROCUREMENT TO HELP FACULTY

UF Online successfully negotiated a reduced subscription rate for institutional, unlimited access to both JoVE and Labster for use by UF's faculty and staff while also passing the benefits of those negotiations to other State University System institutions, should they choose to engage with either company.

UF Online continues to invest in providing UF faculty with strategic digital catalogs for their use in online teaching environments of their own custom design. This enterprise wide and central negotiation approach and procurement model, in concert with UF Purchasing, has become our model in UF Online given its efficiencies but also our success in negotiating pricing at such a scale. UF Online continues to support the ongoing development of STEM instruction at UF by funding unlimited access to STEM digital content via subscription, useful University-wide and available to all faculty.



CHAPTER 2: PROGRESS TOWARD OUR MISSION

STEM-POWERED FACULTY SYMPOSIUM

In October 2020, UF Online held our first ever completely virtual conference “STEM-Powered Faculty Symposium” dedicated to the robust exchange of ideas and approaches across STEM disciplines. Previously held in person, this event pivoted to a fully virtual format to maximize engagement during urgent times for STEM reinvention while keeping appropriate social distancing in place for faculty and staff. UF Online completely designed and customized the meeting interface with our in-house team, issued a call for proposals, and built an agenda of excellent faculty presentations, all to encourage ongoing collaboration and innovation by faculty across the State University System with regards to undergraduate online STEM courses and labs.

UF Online featured four keynote sessions and over two days, hosted faculty and expert staff from the fields of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) to an open engagement and exchange of ideas on the future of STEM courses and labs for undergraduate students. In the wake of the pandemic, leaders in STEM post-secondary education from across the State University System of Florida joined together virtually to share online teaching tools, support, and strategies. Presentations were provided by faculty from the following STEM disciplines: Chemistry, Biology, Algebra, Calculus, Physics, and Computer Science.

Some of the featured topics included:

- Tools for Success: Plug & Play Strategies for Online Learning
- Supporting the Student Experience: Community and Inclusion
- Thinking Big: Course Planning Strategies & Student Outcomes





STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

MARIANO AGUILAR

Major: Microbiology and Cell Science

Location: Peru

Mariano Aguilar had previously studied biology at the University of South Florida, but moved to Peru to be closer to his loved ones. After getting married and starting a new life in Peru, he knew going back to the U.S. to finish earning his degree in biology would be too difficult. Mariano decided to search for the best online education option via prominent ranking publications. It was then that he came across UF Online.

"My experience as an international UF Online student has been one of the best of my life. After months of research, I found very few online programs focused on Biological Sciences, and only the University of Florida offered a top-ranked Bachelor of Science in Microbiology and Cell Science. I also knew that UF was the best university in Florida and one of the top research universities in the world. The program would also help me save a lot of money and time, since I didn't have to travel all the way to Florida and spend a lot on living expenses as housing and food are much cheaper in Lima. As a general piece of advice to anyone looking into UF Online, I definitely recommend setting up your short, mid, and long-term goals. As one of my instructors said, you must always look for reasons to succeed, not for excuses to fail."

STEMPOWERED

■ FACULTY SYMPOSIUM ■

University of Florida Online hosts and invites faculty from the fields of Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) to a frank engagement and exchange of ideas on the future of STEM courses and labs for undergraduate students.



List of Speakers

Track 1: Tools for Success: Plug & Play Strategies for Online Learning

Ashish Aggarwal, *UF*
Maikel Alendy, *FIU*
Darryl Chamberlain, Jr., *UF*
Kent Crippen, *UF*
Syleste Hoskins, *USF*
Korey Sorge, *FAU*
Nancy Ruzyski, *UF*

Interactive Panels

Panel 1: What, So What, Now What? Designing and Teaching STEM Labs While the Meaning of Time and Space Warped

Panel 2: Won't You Be My Neighbor: University Systems as Collaborative Communities

Evangeline Cummings
Assistant Provost and Director of
UF Online
UF

Maikel Alendy
FIU Online
FIU

Asim Ali
Executive Director of the Biggio Center for
the Enhancement of Teaching & Learning
Auburn University

Karen Barnes
Department of Chemistry
UWF

Lunch Session: Out of the Box Features

Track 2: Supporting the Student Experience: Community & Inclusion

Lexi Ardisonne, *UF*
Jacqueline Baron-Lee, *UF*
Richard Biehl, *UCF*
Jennifer Drew, *UF*
Johnny El-Rady, *USF*
Amanda Ojeda, *UF*
Monika Oli, *UF*
Josh Steele, *UF*
Namratha Tarigopula, *UF*
Georgia Thompson, *UF*
Eric Triplett, *UF*

Emma Brady, *UF*
Stefanie Gazda, *UF*

Johnny El-Rady
Department of Cell Biology, Microbiology
and Molecular Biology
USF

Wendy Howard
Program Director of the Pegasus
Innovation Lab
UCF

Susan Seal
Executive Director of Distance Education
Mississippi State

Korey Sorge
Department of Physics
FAU

Melanie Veige
Department of Chemistry
UF

Christine Brown, *USF*
Christos Velissaris, *UCF*

Track 3: Thinking Big: Course Planning Strategies & Student Outcomes

Nicole Alford, *FAU*
Papiya Bhattacharjee, *FAU*
Kent Crippen, *UF*
Julie Golden-Botti, *FAU*
Lorelie Imperial, *UF*
Erica McCray, *UF*
Corey Payne, *UF*
Abigail Perkins, *FAU*
Shalaunda Reeves, *University of Michigan*
Kersten Schroeder, *UCF*
Magdalin Swanson, *FGCU*
Melanie Veige, *UF*
Joseph Watts, *UF*
Ozlem Yavuz-Petrowski, *FAU*

e-Poster Presenters

Pamela Benz, *UWF*
Jenae Burkart, *UWF*
Chad Garcia, *USF*
Colbi Gemmell, *USF*
Rasim Guldiken, *USF*
Jonathan L. Hall, *UWF*
Nina Jones, *UF*
Beth Jones-Mason, *USF*
Matthew Long, *UWF*
Diba Mani, *UF*
Samantha Seals, *UWF*
Laura Swann, *UWF*
Matthew Traum, *UF*
Christopher Varney, *UWF*
Aaron Wade, *UWF*

CHAPTER 2: PROGRESS TOWARD OUR MISSION

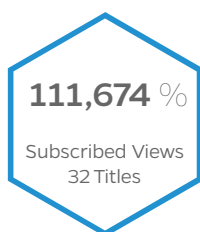
LABSTER

In an advancing effort to give online students equal access to the unique, in-person demands of specific courses, UF Online utilizes Labster, an innovative online program that provides virtual versions of labs, enabling laboratory courses to transition to an online format. Labster incorporates pedagogical techniques, uses gamification and storytelling approaches to engage students in course materials, and teaches methods, skills, protocols, and underlying theory - all at a fraction of the costs of an in-person lab.

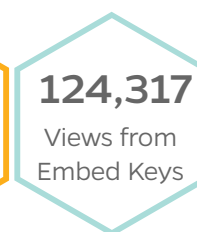
JoVE

The Journal of Visualized Experiments, or JoVE, is a leading producer of video solutions with a mission to increase productivity and reproducibility in scientific research and education. JoVE Unlimited access is a growing and living subscription, keeping the UF campus up to date with all current and upcoming content as it is released in JoVE Research and JoVE Education.

JoVE usage
7.1.21 - 6.30.22



Since UF's JoVE
access began



JoVE content provides the educational content and depth required to meet the needs of science students and researchers at all levels. JoVE features content mapping to a faculty member's syllabus or lab's research, which integrates into Canvas. Additionally, JoVE publishes methodological articles including text descriptions and video demonstrations of experiments to increase the productivity of scientific research. With over 12,000 videos and curriculum-focused visualizations, JoVE not only accelerates the mastery of STEM concepts, but has the potential to simplify and expedite the production of online courses. UF Online continually develops a partnership with JoVE to provide unlimited access to all of its content to all UF faculty, instructional designers, and librarians who may find this peer-reviewed resource to be a valuable addition to the already comprehensive materials they curate and make accessible to our faculty.

VALUE THAT JoVE BRINGS TO UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

18

Faculty Integrated
Content from JoVE

Examples of 2022 UF courses
that adopted JoVE

Plant Diversity - BOT2011
General Chemistry - CHM2046
Foundations of Health Education - HSC3032
Microbiology Lab - MCB 2000L
Intro to Environmental Science - EVR2001

192 %

YOY Growth

UF's usage has significantly
increased, driven by faculty
integrations into curriculum
58,217 views 7.1.20 - 6.30.21
111,674 views 7.1.21-6.30.22

40,719

Views from Newly
Added Content

With JoVE Unlimited, anything newly
added is activated automatically.
There have been 10+ titles released
since UF's Unlimited access began
and more than 40,000 views from
these titles between
7.1.21 - 6.30.22

CHAPTER 2: PROGRESS TOWARD OUR MISSION

GOAL 2: SMART DESIGN, PRODUCTION, & DELIVERY OF ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

UF Online continues to expand its design, production, and delivery model to ensure the availability of high-quality educational programs on par with the University of Florida's commitment to academic excellence. Goal 2 encompasses this work through expert production teams working with UF faculty to ensure high quality courses and labs, as well as UF Online's ongoing efforts to devise innovative and welcoming academic pathways. This year, not only has UF Online continued to expand academic offerings for students, but UF faculty have also received accolades for course quality, and UF Online launched a new readiness pathway program entitled UF Online Ready welcoming transfer applicants previously denied for missing prerequisite courses.

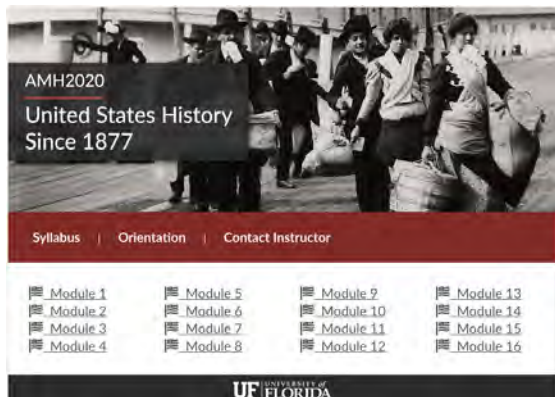
In addition to new coursework, COIP also worked with faculty to implement quality and interactivity enhancements. Specifically, interactive assessments were implemented in many videos through the use of Playposit. Playposit is an interactive video platform that allows instructional designers to overlay interactions over videos to transform passive observation into active learning. Students can explore, analyze, and apply concepts through enriched learning content. After a successful pilot, UF faculty have fully embraced its use, and student engagement hours in Playposit have increased by 45%.



Featured Innovations in Newly Developed Courses
Course: [AMH 2020 US History Since 1877](#)
Instructor: Ben Wise

In his face-to-face course, Ben Wise employs a dynamic teaching style and values interacting with students as he purposefully engages their critical thinking through inquiry and encourages students to discuss topics with him and their fellow classmates. Ben wanted to ensure that his highly engaging approach was not lost when his course was developed for online delivery.

Innovation Highlights: In this course, Perusall was used to foster discussion in a meaningful and dynamic way. In breaking away from the static, non-interactive nature of discussion boards, Perusall was used as a platform for students to actively comment and communicate with each other directly while reading the materials and viewing the video. This made the interactions in the class as robust, if not more so, than in a typical in-person class because they were not limited by class time, and all voices were heard. In addition, the artificial intelligence of Perusall assisted greatly in grading the assignments.



CHAPTER 2: PROGRESS TOWARD OUR MISSION

COIP produced 43 UF Online courses spanning six colleges: 23 of these courses were redesigns, and 20 were brand new developments. COIP also produced 3,310 educational videos with UF faculty, complete with captioning, as a key component of expanding course accessibility.

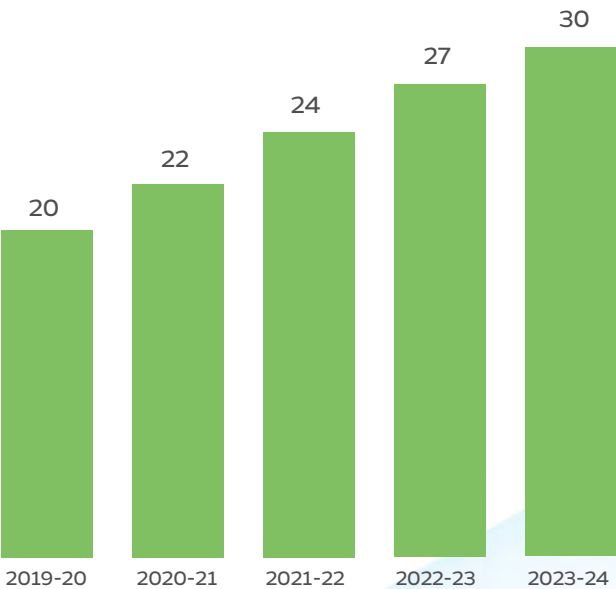
EXPANSION OF ONLINE ACADEMIC OFFERINGS

This year the University of Florida continued to expand the number of degrees offered and academic minors available to students in a fully online format via UF Online. As of 2020-2021, UF Online offers 24 academic programs, exceeding our Business Plan projection (see chart below) of 22.

EXPANSION IN OFFERINGS AND INTERACTIVE FEATURES WITH COIP

Even during UF Online’s continued academic expansion, our focus on quality is unwavering. All UF Online courses are produced and redesigned through our dedicated production center, the Center for Online Innovation and Production. In its sixth year, the Center for Online Innovation and Production (COIP) continues to develop courses for UF Online that provide a dynamic and engaging learning experience for students. Such an approach allows courses to sustain innovation and high quality over time. COIP’s mission is to collaborate with instructors to infuse their courses with engaging activities, authentic assessments, and immersive multimedia experiences that elevate the student learning experience. COIP is also dedicated to ensuring that courses are accessible and that course maintenance and delivery are sustainable.

UF Online Cumulative Total
Academic Program Offerings Projections
2019 - 2024



CHAPTER 2: PROGRESS TOWARD OUR MISSION

Innovation Highlights: Nick Heitsman teaches a course in Game Design. As a parallel to the principles the students would be learning in class, Nick decided to design the entire class as an immersive game. The game is set up so that as the students make their way through the course, they are actually trapped in a metaverse and need to unlock clues. Students need to help seven metaverse explorers safely return to their reality. They receive instructions in each module that is actually content-related, and their assessment is done by asking the students to complete quests. The parallel nature of the course helps students actually experience the concepts being presented.



Course: [DIG 2632 Creating Mobile Games](#)
Instructor: Nick Heitsman

METAVENTURE 01 | WORLDS AND PERSONALITIES



EXPLORATION



It's time to explore! The resources that are hidden in this location will provide you with the information that you need to complete the quest at the end of this metaventure. This will move you one step closer to saving the metaverse explorers who are trapped in the metaverse! Enter the portal above to begin.

HELP FORUM



Do you need help with this metaventure? Would you like to get feedback from your peers? Did you find information that would be helpful to your peers? You are encouraged to post your questions, responses, and findings here! NOTE: Help forums are optional and not graded. Enter the portal above to begin.

QUEST



After carefully studying the resources that you have found in this metaventure, complete this quest. In this quest, you will create your Game Design Document (GDD). Submit your GDD as a Microsoft Word document or as an Adobe PDF. Enter the portal above to access the quest and the detailed instructions.

After going through all resources and completing both quests, click the "Next" button below to proceed.

DIG 2632
CREATING MOBILE GAMES

CLICK TO PLAY

WELCOME 3 DIG2632
MOBILE_GAME_DEVELOPMENT

Syllabus Student Resources Contact Information Modules



CHAPTER 2: PROGRESS TOWARD OUR MISSION

EXPANSION IN ACADEMIC MAJORS, BACHELOR'S DEGREES

Given UF Online's commitment to expanding academic offerings by 2024, four new bachelor's degree curriculums completed their production this year. Specifically, COIP concluded development for the following UF Online bachelor's degrees:

UF College of Journalism and Communications, B.S., Advertising: Persuasive Messaging

UF College of Journalism and Communications, B.S., Journalism: Sports and Media

UF College of Health and Human Performance, B.S., Tourism Hospitality and Event Management

UF College of the Arts, B.A., Digital Arts and Sciences

In collaboration with UF colleges and the specific faculty subject matter experts, COIP was able to develop the courses in these academic programs cohesively by employing design strategies to ensure a consistent user experience and, most importantly, sustainability that allows faculty to maintain the course over time.



CHAPTER 2: PROGRESS TOWARD OUR MISSION

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

TORI FRENCH

Major: Public Relations

Location: Italy



Now, more than ever, online learning has made earning a bachelor's degree possible from anywhere in the world. Tori French didn't initially see herself completing her bachelor's while living abroad in Europe, but her plans changed when she married her husband who serves in the military and was to be stationed in Italy.

"In the middle of my sophomore year, I married my high school sweetheart who works for the Air Force and is stationed in Italy. It was then that I began preparing to transfer my public relations degree to UF Online's PR degree program so I could move to Europe with him and finish my degree a year early, like I had planned. While transitioning to the fully online PR program was easy, I ended up stuck in Florida for an extra seven months in which I was supposed to be in Italy because of the COVID-19 pandemic and travel restrictions. Finally, when I did actually reach Italy this past January, I saw a whole new world of UF Online from a different time zone. I eventually got into a habit of making coffee, sitting in my favorite yellow chair and doing schoolwork in the morning; running errands in the afternoon; and then hopping on video calls in the evening. While this schedule was intense at times, it was more than manageable, and I was so grateful that I was able to stay connected to my UF community. Because of UF Online's program, I was able to complete the UF Honors College Medallion program, earn the International Scholars' Medallion through the UF International Center, and graduate Summa Cum Laude a year earlier than my original graduation date."

CHAPTER 2: PROGRESS TOWARD OUR MISSION

2020-2021 Academic Programs

Each year, UF Online offers fully online majors, minors and certificates. The table below reflects the academic programs currently active in UF Online, including through the Pathway to Campus Enrollment (PaCE) Program.

Majors & Tracks: (25 TOTAL)

1. B.S., Advertising: Persuasive Messaging
2. B.A., Anthropology
3. B.A., Biology
4. B.S., Business Administration
5. B.A., Business Administration with 11 specializations
 - a. Anthropology
 - b. Business and Economic Geography
 - c. Computer and Information Science
 - d. Educational Studies
 - e. Event Management
 - f. General Studies
 - g. Geology
 - h. Mass Communication
 - i. Sociology
 - j. Sport Management
 - k. Travel and Tourism Management
6. B.H.S., Communication Sciences and Disorders
7. B.S., Computer Science
8. B.A., Criminology
9. B.A., Digital Arts and Science
10. B.A., Education Sciences
11. B.S., Environmental Management
12. B.S., Fire & Emergency Services with 3 concentrations
 - a. Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Specialization
 - b. Fire Management Specialization
 - c. Emergency Management Specialization
13. B.A., Geography
14. B.A., Geography: Environmental Geosciences
15. B.A., Geology
16. B.S., Health Education
17. B.S., Journalism: Sport & Media
18. B.S., Media Production, Management, and Technology
19. B.S., Microbiology & Cell Science
20. B.S.N., Nursing
21. B.A., Psychology
22. B.S., Public Relations
23. B.A., Sociology
24. B.S., Sport Management
25. B.S., Tourism, Hospitality and Event Managements

Minors: (11 TOTAL)

1. Accounting
2. Anthropology
3. Business Administration
4. Computer and Information Science Technology
5. Educational Technology
6. Event Management
7. Geography
8. German Studies
9. Health Promotion
10. Mass Communication
11. Sociology

Certificates: (14 TOTAL)

1. Animal Genetics
2. Emergency Management
3. Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Management
4. Environmental Horticulture Management
5. Geology
6. Geomatics
7. Horticultural Therapy
8. Landscape Pest Management
9. Medical Entomology
10. Nuclear Radiation and Reactor Analysis
11. Nuclear Thermal Systems Analysis
12. Pest Control Technology
13. Senior Fire Officer
14. Urban Pest Management

CHAPTER 2: PROGRESS TOWARD OUR MISSION

PATHWAY TO CAMPUS ENROLLMENT (PaCE)

Starting in Fall 2015, the University of Florida launched the Pathway to Campus Enrollment (PaCE) program to welcome First Time in College (FTIC) students into hybrid undergraduate majors at UF. PaCE students start their UF studies via UF Online, completing the first part of their degree online and later transitioning to campus at the upper division level. The following table contains the list of majors available via the PaCE program, with a fully-online initial 60 credits via UF Online. This list is maintained online at: <http://www.admissions.ufl.edu/learn/pace/majors>.

College of Agricultural & Life Sciences

1. Agricultural Education and Communication
 - a. Tracks include Communication and Leadership Development or Agricultural Education
2. Agricultural Operations Management
3. Animal Sciences
 - a. Tracks include Equine or Food Animal
4. Botany
5. Dietetics
6. Entomology and Nematology
 - a. Tracks include Biological Science of Insects and Urban Pest Management
7. Environmental Management in Agriculture and Natural Resources
8. Environmental Science
9. Family, Youth and Community Sciences
10. Food and Resource Economics
 - a. Tracks include Food and Agribusiness Marketing and Management or International Food and Resource Economics
11. Food Science
12. Forest Resources and Conservation
 - a. Tracks include Environmental Pre-Law, Forest Business Management, Forest Resource Management, Protected Areas Management, Recreation Resources Management, Urban Forestry or Watershed Science and Management
13. Horticultural Science
 - a. Tracks include Organic Horticultural Systems, Plant Biotechnology and Improvement or Science Technology of Horticultural Crops
14. Microbiology and Cell Science
15. Natural Resource Conservation
16. Nutritional Sciences
17. Plant Science
 - a. Tracks include Greenhouse and Landscape Industries (BS), General Plant Science, Native Plant Conservation, Plant Breeding and Genetics, Plant Health and Protection, Sustainable Crop Production, Soil Management and Plant Productivity or Turfgrass Science
18. Soil and Water Sciences
 - a. Tracks include Soil Science or Water Science
19. Wildlife Ecology and Conservation
 - a. Tracks include Wildlife Ecology and Conservation

College of the Arts

1. Art
2. Art History
3. Dance
4. Graphic Design
5. Music
6. Music Education
7. Theatre

CHAPTER 2: PROGRESS TOWARD OUR MISSION

Warrington College of Business

1. General Studies, Business Administration

College of Design, Construction & Planning

1. Sustainability and the Built Environment

College of Education

1. Education Studies
Tracks include Disabilities in Society, Educational Psychology and Research, Education Technology or Schools, Society and Policy.

College of Health & Human Performance

1. Health Education and Behavior
2. Sports Management
3. Tourism, Events and Recreation Management

College of Journalism & Communications

1. Advertising
 - a. Tracks include Agency and Persuasive Messaging
2. Journalism
 - a. Tracks include Media and Society or Sports and Media
3. Public Relations
4. Media Production, Management and Technology
 - a. Tracks include Management and Strategy, Media and Society or Digital Film & TV Production

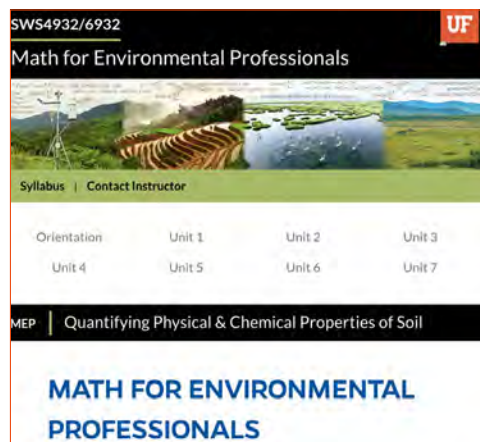
College of Liberal Arts & Sciences

1. African American Studies
2. Anthropology
3. Computer Science
4. English
5. Exploratory
6. Geography
7. Geology
8. History
9. Linguistics
10. Mathematics
11. Philosophy
12. Religion
13. Sociology
14. Spanish
15. Statistics
16. Sustainability Studies
17. Women's Studies

CHAPTER 2: PROGRESS TOWARD OUR MISSION

NEW UF ONLINE PROGRAMS

UF Online continues to develop tools that communicate lessons learned over the years spent producing and delivering high-quality academic programs for a growing online community. Further, UF Online courses are created and taught by UF faculty in collaboration with professional instructional designers who have refined strategies and gathered quality resources over years of creating online courses.



COIP WEBSITE LAUNCH: PUBLIC SHOWCASE

In 2020, COIP launched a new website, <https://coip.aa.ufl.edu/>, in order to help faculty and departments connect with the course production process. Features of the website include important dates and deadlines, a production intake form, COVID-19 safety procedures when recording in the studio, previous work examples, and course spotlights.

DEBUT OF THE “COURSE SPOTLIGHT” FEATURE

UF Online believes in utilizing innovative and unique approaches to course design and this year began a feature to showcase several courses to celebrate their faculty developers but also to inspire others with tangible examples of online learning excellence. In particular due to the transition during COVID to emergency remote formats, COIP began to showcase exemplary courses as a means to differentiate an important emergency response versus the outcomes of extensive course developments. To highlight exemplary courses produced, six course spotlights were created and shared with faculty via the newly designed COIP website. These include:

- Applied Physiology & Kinesiology
- Game Design Principles
- Math for Environmental Professionals
- Climate Change Biology
- Earth System Analysis
- Introduction to Data Science

Each spotlight includes a video walkthrough of the course, as well as annotated screenshots that allow for faculty to see the context behind how a specific course was built.

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

SETH BLAKE

Major: Health Education and Behavior (HEB)



Seth Blake never imagined spending his college years touring the world, but when his band Wage War was signed to a record label, he knew his educational plans would be a bit more challenging. Seth wanted to earn his degree from the University of Florida, but he wasn't sure how he'd be able to do that while pursuing his successful music career. It wasn't until he found out about UF Online that Seth knew he had found a way to pursue both of his dreams: music and becoming a Florida Gator.

"Taking classes online was the only way I could do school. I ended up calling UF Online, and they said they offer online classes for students who can't physically come to campus, such as those in the military. They even said that if you tell instructors your situation, they can be flexible with your schedule. That conversation made me decide that I can do this. I can't even express how much the professors were willing to work with me. I knew whether I graduate at 27 or 30, that time is going to pass no matter what. Just know that you'll be happy after you finish. It's a great finish line to cross."

CHAPTER 2: PROGRESS TOWARD OUR MISSION

AWARD-WINNING ONLINE ACADEMICS

COIP's work and efforts do not go unnoticed, as it continues to receive distinguishing awards. The UF Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE) recognizes exemplary and innovative online teaching and course production practices. The following courses, produced by COIP, were recognized with a 2021 Exemplary Online Award:

- ADV4302 Great Ideas In Marketplace Communications
- CLP3144 Abnormal Psychology (category winner for Imaginative or Innovative Approach)
- FOS2001 Man's Food
- JOU2100 Broadcast Writing Bootcamp (category winner for Instructional Approach)
- PSY3213L Research Methods Lab
- ZOO4926 | ZOO4050 Animal Behavior



CHAPTER 2: PROGRESS TOWARD OUR MISSION

LAUNCH OF A NEW ACADEMIC PATHWAY, UF ONLINE READY

This year, UF Online added a new onramp for future Gators to transfer into ten of the majors noted below. Available beginning with applicants for Fall 2021, UF Online Ready is a new program designed to support highly qualified upper-division applicants by giving them the opportunity to take specific prerequisite courses via UF Online. In the past, upper-division applicants who were missing even just a few prerequisite courses were turned away, denied admission to UF Online, and advised to reapply after completing all prerequisite requirements for their major at another institution. UF Online took into consideration that finding and taking those courses elsewhere can be daunting and discouraging while a student may also be working full-time, serving our nation in the armed forces, raising a family, caring for adult dependents, and/or supporting those in need through service projects and involvement in their local community.

With the launch of UF Online Ready by four UF colleges for their degree programs, these colleges now welcome those students, support them in their completion of these missing prerequisites via UF Online, and upon successful completion of those prerequisites in accordance with college admissions requirements, support them as they work to complete all their bachelor's degree graduation requirements. The four colleges that made this launch possible were the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences, College of Human and Health Performance, College of Journalism and Communications, and the Heavener School of Business.

UF Online Ready is currently available as an onramp to 10 of UF bachelor's degrees via UF Online:

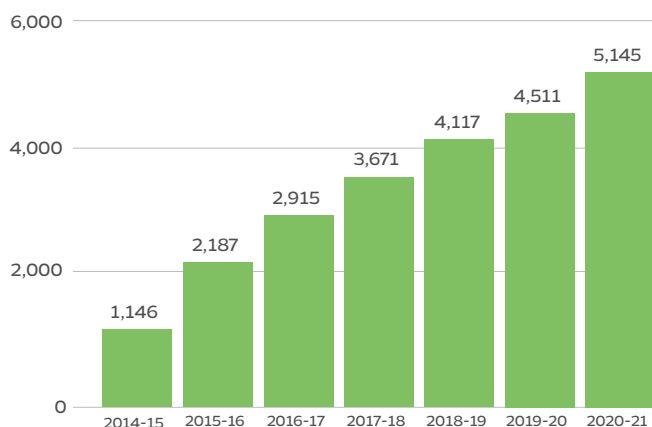
- Advertising: Persuasive Messaging, B.S.
- Business Administration, B.A.
- Business Administration, B.S.
- Environmental Management, B.S.
- Health Education, B.S.
- Journalism: Sports & Media, B.S.
- Media Production, Management, and Technology, B.S.
- Public Relations, B.S.
- Sport Management, B.S.
- Tourism, Hospitality and Event Management, B.S.

CHAPTER 2: PROGRESS TOWARD OUR MISSION

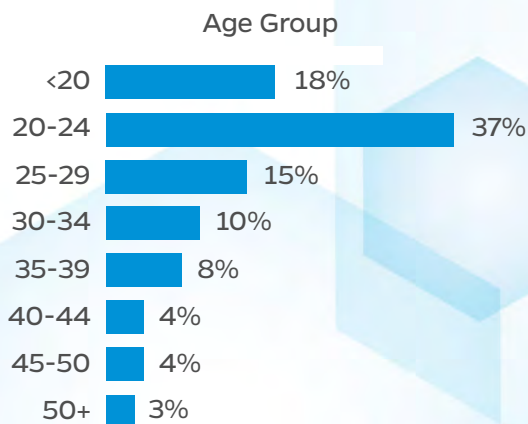
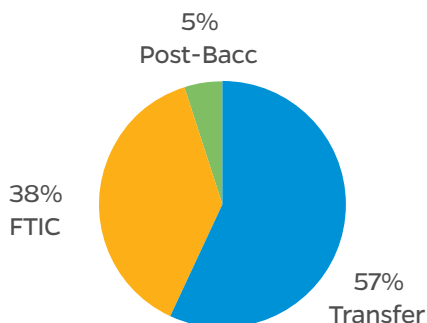
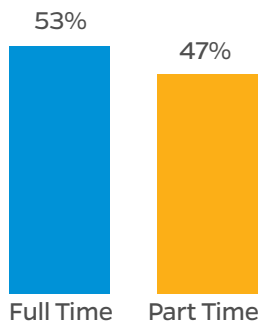
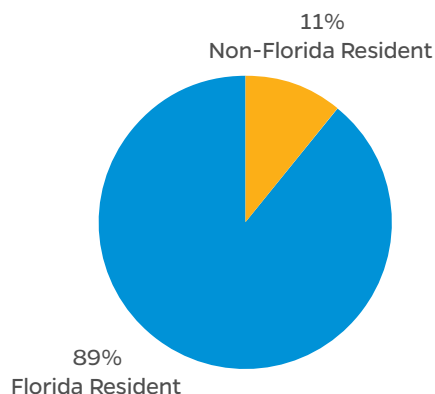
GOAL 3: AN ENRICHING & SUPPORTED ONLINE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

In the third goal of our business plan, we commit to ensuring a remarkable and engaging online student experience within and outside of a student's academic coursework. As depicted below, for this academic year UF Online supported 5,145 total students enrolled in either a fully online UF degree program or students enrolled via UF Online in the first segment of their degree via the Pathway to Campus Enrollment program. Student breakout and demographic information is presented below.

UF Online Enrolled Headcount by Academic Year



Demographic Information for Students enrolled in UF Online for the 2020 Fall Term



CHAPTER 2: PROGRESS TOWARD OUR MISSION

In short, our model for student engagement recognizes that each student may be at various stages in attaining their academic goals in any given semester. As such, our support and programs must remain dynamic and reflect the needs of our students. This year, we once again issued our UF Online student survey to benchmark our work against actual student satisfaction rates. At the same time, this survey gathers essential details about how our students engage with their coursework, if they are also employed, raising families, and more. With this knowledge, our support, engagement, and events for online students improve yearly.

FACULTY FOCUS

DR. CRYSTAL MARULL

Profession: UF Online Spanish Professor



Dr. Crystal Marull never anticipated that a trip to Europe in 10th grade would lead her to fall in love with the Spanish language and culture. It was this trip that started her journey toward revolutionizing the way students interact with new languages in an online learning environment. Dr. Marull worked on improving the online format of her course, noting the importance of conversation practice when learning a new language. She then opted to utilize a program called Lingua Meeting, which pairs students with native speakers living in other countries.

"When I came back from that trip, I was completely transformed. That was the pivotal experience that changed everything for me. Relationships are really at the base of language learning. I realized I can recapture that element virtually. The conversations were so personal, authentic, and organic. This is an opportunity to give them a taste of authentic engagement and it's tremendous for motivating their interest in the language and culture. UF Online has been fantastic in the way it's growing and I'm just really happy to be a part of it. I feel like I'm serving a higher purpose. It's not just teaching a language, it's transforming lives."

CHAPTER 2: PROGRESS TOWARD OUR MISSION

UF ONLINE PLAZA AND LAUNCH OF UF ONLINE APP

UF Online students have been connecting with one another in the UF Online Plaza - their exclusive digital community hub - since 2018, making it a special part of their online learning experience and connection to the University of Florida. In August 2020, the UF Online App, available for download on iOS and Android devices, was launched to bring this connectivity to our students in the palm of their hands.

Many students enjoy the convenience of using the UF Online Plaza as a one-stop “home page” to quickly access their e-learning courses, student email account, and connect with their peers. With more than 4,000 students in the Plaza, plus visits from faculty, advisors, and the UF Online team, the app is designed to allow students to customize push notifications for timely updates and resources.



SECOND YEAR FOR THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE SURVEY

This year, UF Online administered its second annual Student Experience Survey to all UF Online students who had enrolled in a UF Online course within the last year. UF Institutional Review Board (IRB) approved, this survey is a longitudinal study which is administered annually to gather feedback, but also to better understand UF Online student enrollment behaviors and needs. The questions asked within this survey involved thoughtful consideration for all aspects of the online student experience, both inside and outside the virtual classroom. As we strive to better serve our students, this survey serves an important purpose to the growth of our program. It is crucial that we continue to gain insight on our students, their circumstances, and how they truly feel about their experiences with UF Online.

Benchmarking against prior years, this year's survey had a response rate on par with the debut year, even while our enrollments increased. All active students (students that remain in good standing, even if not currently enrolled in the academic term) in Fall 2020 were sent the survey, just as we did in fall 2019. With this approach, in its first year, the UF Online Student Survey had a response rate of 12.6% across all active students. Looking closer, 14% of our students enrolled in Fall 2019 responded to the survey in 2019. This year the responses dipped slightly but held their own even as our enrollments rose. For the 2020 survey, 12.3% of active students responded, and within that - looking only at the active and enrolled students - 13.7% of enrolled Fall 2020 students filled it out. While the response rate dipped slightly (From 12.6% to 12.3%), we're proud to have seen a response rate on par with the prior year even while our students were grappling with COVID-19 disruptions in work, school, and family life. That said, we continue to seek better ways to reach students given the shifts in communication habits of students of all ages in 2020 and beyond.

Each year, UF Online uses the survey results to guide our programming, student communications, and to continually improve the student experience.

CHAPTER 2: PROGRESS TOWARD OUR MISSION

SIX KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM STUDENT SURVEY 2020

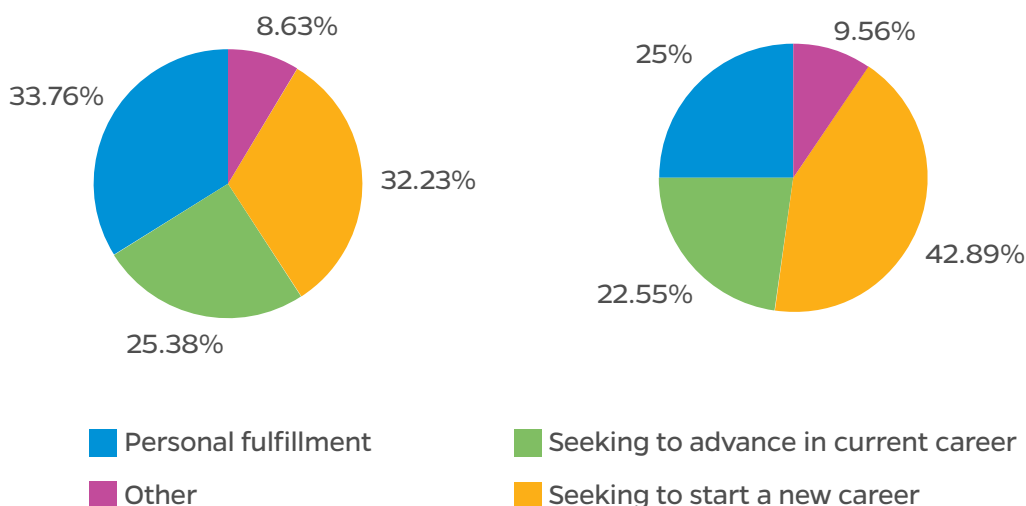
1: UF Online Student Satisfaction is high.

92% of online students responded with Satisfied or Very Satisfied, and show an appreciation for our intense focus on clarity and quality of programs and courses. Students have openly displayed their love of being Gators and are fully optimizing the opportunity to earn a degree from a preeminent public university.

2: UF Online respondents see this program as a great step in advancing a new career.

The motivation for enrollment among respondents shifted slightly in 2020 to more respondents reporting a desire to enroll in UF Online because they were “seeking to start a new career” than in 2019.

Fully Online: Why did you choose to attend? 2019 vs 2020

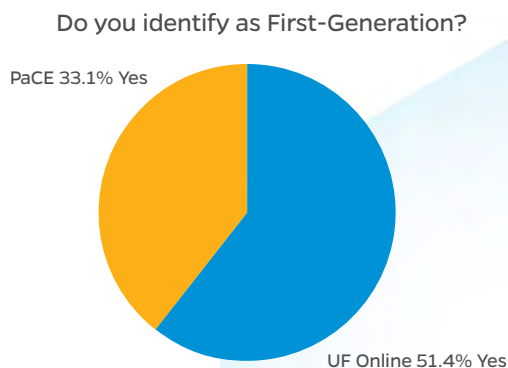


“Convenience. UF Online has a phenomenal reputation so I wanted to take courses through a credible institution.” ~ 2020

“All of the above. I need to provide better for my family.” ~ 2020

3. UF Online includes many first generation college students.

A significant number of survey respondents told us they self-identified as first generation college students and this included 51% of the fully online respondents and 33% of the PaCE student respondents. We take important lessons from this to ensure our programs and materials are always most welcoming to students.



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4. UF Online students are eager to graduate and pursue graduate studies.

When asked, “What is the highest credential you aim to earn?” more than half said graduate school, and within that group, 65% were eager to obtain a master’s degree.

Highest Credential:

- 61% Graduate School
- 23% Bachelor’s Degree
- 17% Undecided

Graduate School:

- 64.37% Master’s (MBA, MS, MA, MED)
- 24.29% Doctorate (PhD, EdD, etc.)
- 8.5% Law Degree (JD)
- 2.83% Medicinal Doctorate (MD, DDS, etc.)

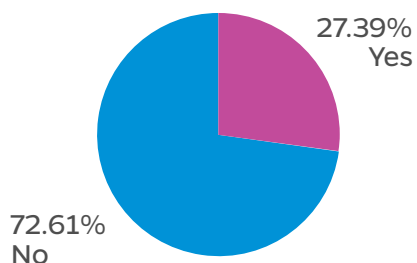
5. UF Online students are employed while taking classes.

Whether respondents were in fully online degree programs or in the online component of UF’s hybrid PaCE program, UF Online students told us they were employed.

65% of fully online students reported employment, with over 75% working more than 30 hours a week.

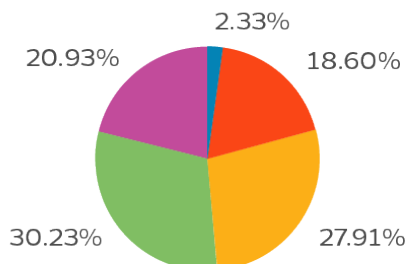
Interestingly, 27.4% of respondents in our traditionally college-aged, first time in college PaCE student group also reported employment in Fall 2020. Of those PaCE working students, 23.3% were working more than 30 hours a week while taking UF classes via UF Online.

Are you currently employed?

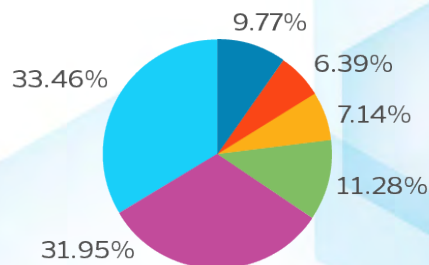


How many hours per week do you typically work?

PaCE



Fully online employed students



Legend: Red = 1-10 Orange = 11-20 Green = 21-30 Light Blue = 31-40 Purple = 41-50 Dark Blue = 51+

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6. UF Online students are caregivers.

When asked whether UF Online students have dependents in their care, 40.4% responded yes, with 20% caring for dependents over age 18, 25% caring for dependents under age 18, and 7% caring for dependents in both categories. This seems to indicate a “sandwich generation” cohort within our student population.

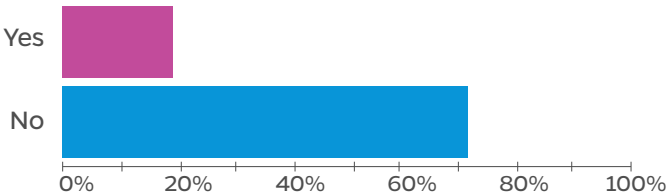
What is the Overlap?

Table 3: Cross tabulation for fully Online students who care for relatives.

Distribution for 18 and Under versus Over 18 care giving		
18 years and under care	Over 18 years care	
	No	Yes
No	239 (59.6%)	57 (14.2%)
Yes	76 (18.9%)	29 (7.2%)

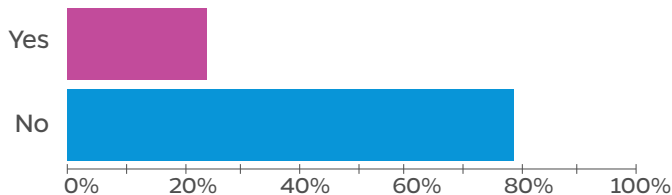
40.4% of fully-online respondents indicated they provide care.
7.2% are both caring for a dependent AND an over 18 relative.

For whom do you provide care? (dependents 18 years of age and older)
Fully Online with dependents 18 years of age or older (20.3%)

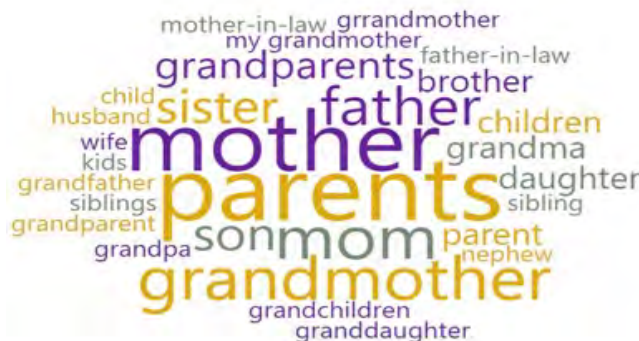


“I have a child with developmental delays and requires my care full time... so an online Bachelor’s degree program has given me the option to care for my child while still furthering my education.” ~ 2019

Fully Online with dependents 18 years of age or younger (25.3% Yes)



CHAPTER 2: PROGRESS TOWARD OUR MISSION



UF Online will continue to use this annual survey as a way to hear from our students, assess their satisfaction, improve our programs, and most importantly to ensure our learning community continues to embrace students who are working and/or providing care to others. We also aim to ensure UF Online students have the benefit of graduate program information while they are still enrolled and completing their bachelor's degrees.

UF ONLINE ACADEMIC ADVISING INITIATIVE, 2019-2024

As outlined in the UF Online Comprehensive Business Plan 2019-2024, UF Online has pledged to ensure that each student has a dedicated academic advisor to support them throughout their program. Over the first five years of UF Online's existence, the program managed to maintain a 250:1 student/advisor ratio. In 2019, UF Online's new Business Plan announced an initiative to decrease the ratio to 100:1 by 2024 by creating additional academic advising positions while reconfiguring the role of advisor to include secondary duties, such as life and career coaching.

Investments in our academic advising initiative continue across the 10 colleges in which our academic advisors are situated. By lowering this ratio we provide greater opportunities for advisors and students to build connections, and in turn, to tailor the university's services and support the needs of each individual UF Online student.

UF Online students have access to a range of educational undertakings. UF Online's academic advisors work alongside students to develop a customized completion plan for each student, taking important factors into account such as their major, transfer credits, career and personal goals, and the desired timeline for completing their degree. This partnership between advisor and student serves the purpose of supporting students along their own personal journey. **Our academic advising methods never involve prescribed, one-size-fits-all approaches.** Advisors have in-depth discussions with their students on a regular basis to follow up on plans, foster success, and promote progression within the degree program.

How Academic Advisors Engage with UF Online Students: Through personalized student sessions, UF Online academic advisors are able to offer students personal advice and counseling via tried and true UF practices including:

This year we have expanded the number of full-time, exclusively UF Online academic advisors from 14 to 19, bringing the ratio of students to advisors to under 200:1, an improvement on last year's ratio of 250:1, with the goal of increasing investments in academic advising to lower this ratio even further by 2024.

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DYNAMIC COMMUNITY AT UF: ACADEMIC ADVISING NETWORK

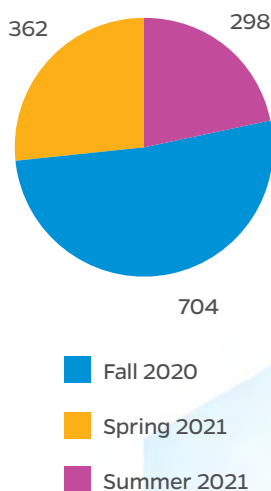
The UF Online advising community, composed of academic advisors and the central UF Online Academic Strategies team, meets regularly to engage in discussion of key issues impacting the success of online students at the University of Florida. This includes sharing best practices, reviewing updates, discussions with key stakeholders, and visits from guest speakers. These meetings are viewed as crucial opportunities to connect the entire UF campus with the professionals who advise the online students, fostering the growth of an institutional infrastructure that robustly serves our online student population.

- Reviewing each course calendar and syllabus at the start of each term.
- Organizing time-management skills via personal calendars.
- Allocating time to understand complex content via study sessions, thus improving comprehension while lowering stress levels.
- Developing direct communication between instructors and classmates, improving confidence when asking questions for clarification.
- Encouraging students to take advantage of all extra credit opportunities whenever available.
- Review past or practice exams available to students online to give students the best feel for the types of questions they should expect on quizzes and exams.

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT: LAUNCH OF FALL WELCOME WEEK

In 2020-2021, UF Online's Fall Welcome Week was cultivated to help new and returning students explore and familiarize themselves with UF Online resources, connect with campus partners, and engage with their peers to kick off the academic year. Fall Welcome Week was an entirely virtual experience that included a schedule of pre-recorded videos made available to watch anytime, live social hours with virtual game nights, our "Ask-An-Ambassador" chat, and Gator swag giveaways. **Our digital "Meet and Greet" board accumulated over 3,500 views and 26 hours of discussion.**

Overall Knack Usage by UF Online Students
Fall 2020 - Summer 2021



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KNACK TUTORING PILOT LAUNCHED IN JANUARY 2020

UF Online engaged in a review of available academic services accessible to students. Knack, a peer tutoring company, was identified as a partner to support increased tutoring options for fully online students. Knack partners with universities and colleges to identify students who have previously performed well in specific courses and gives them the option to serve as online tutors for their peers after completing a UF-sponsored training program.

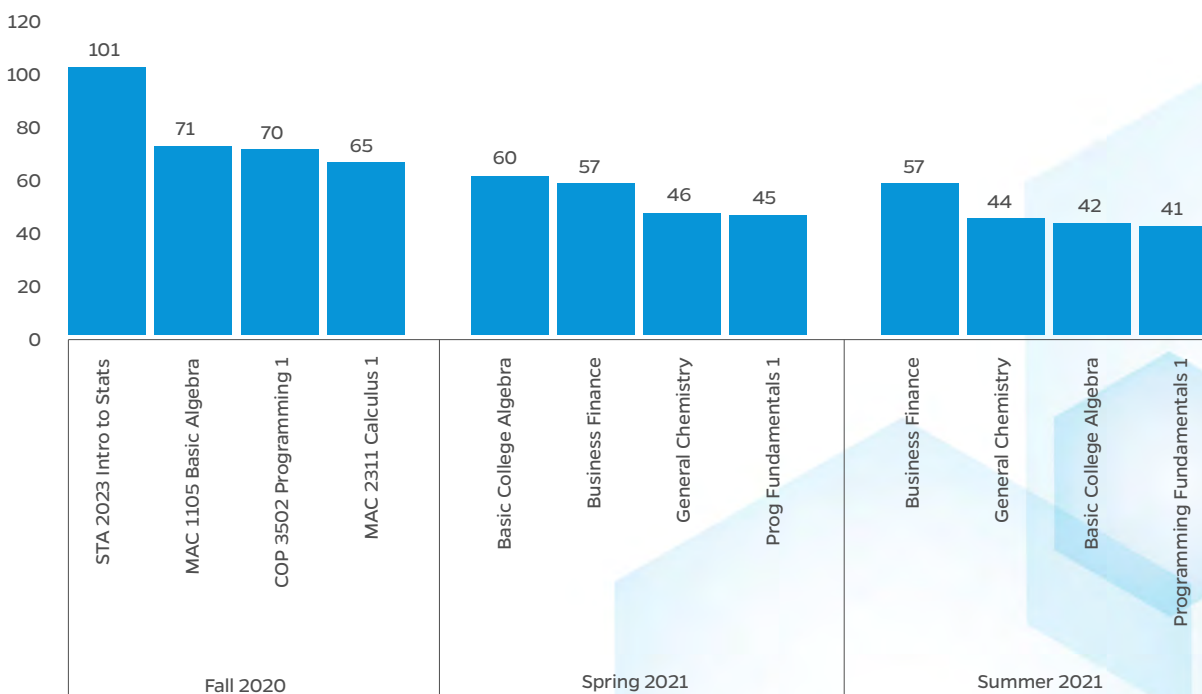
During the pilot program, **UF Online also opted to lower costs for online students by providing funding for complementary tutoring sessions in over 35 courses.** These courses were deemed as academically rigorous based on the overall academic performance of students who had previously completed each course.

The Knack tutoring pilot for UF Online has been successful in three different and impactful ways:

- **Convenience:** With over 580 UF Online students creating Knack tutoring accounts, students were able to access tutors across different time zones in an online format based on their schedule and availability.
- **Employability:** While serving as approved tutors to their online and campus peers, UF Online students had the opportunity to earn income and gain professional development skills to prepare them for post-graduate professional success.
- **Accessibility:** UF Online students were able to access peer tutoring in subjects including Business Finance, General Chemistry and Basic College Algebra, totaling over 1,300 tutoring hours during the pilot program.

We were delighted to see that this peer tutoring approach enabled online students to find additional ways to connect with one another in their pursuit of academic success.

Top 4 courses with the highest session hours
Fall 2020 - Summer 2021



CHAPTER 2: PROGRESS TOWARD OUR MISSION

ACADEMIC ADVISOR SPOTLIGHT

DYLAN KING

Advising Majors: Biology, Geography, and Geology



With UF Online having a low student-to-advisor ratio, advisors like Dylan King have the opportunity to build a strong relationship with students, putting the emphasis back on helping them achieve their academic and personal goals. UF Online students in Biology, Geography, or Geology meet with Dylan each semester. As an advisor, he juggles several responsibilities like helping students balance their workload, decide which courses to take, and stay on track to graduate. Students come to him with a variety of questions, like “Does my schedule look okay? Do I have time? What classes should I take?”

“I really enjoy being an advisor at UF Online, and I feel fortunate to work with our student population. I like getting to know them and that bond we create and hearing about their lives. Everyone’s so different, and I love that.”

LAUNCH OF THE FIRST-EVER UF ONLINE VIRTUAL RECOGNITION CEREMONY

UF Online hosted our first-ever Virtual Recognition Ceremony for Spring 2021 graduates. We recognized that many of our students and their loved ones may not be able to attend the in-person celebrations regularly held on UF’s Gainesville campus. As such, UF Online was delighted to provide this virtual ceremony to recognize and celebrate all of the Gator Grads who earned their UF bachelor’s degree via UF Online. This virtual event gives students a chance to enjoy celebrating their amazing milestone with family, friends, and members of our UF Online community. Graduates were able to personalize their own virtual recognition card with their favorite photo and either a shoutout or quote that they felt best reflected the excitement and gratitude for their accomplishment.

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UF ONLINE STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS

SECOND YEAR OF UF ONLINE STUDENT AMBASSADORS:

Launched in 2019, UF Online annually selects students to serve as Student Ambassadors, and in turn, work part time for the UF Online program. **Our UF Online Student Ambassadors share a mission to ensure every online student is welcomed, supported, and connected to the Gator Nation.** Ambassadors must be UF students and provide advice, host virtual meet-ups, and serve as liaisons between UF Online staff and the student body. Current UF Online students can connect with ambassadors in the UF Online Plaza to join them for game nights, chat with them during virtual meet-ups, and can even keep up with them on social media. Through this program, UF Online has been working to ensure that another aspect of the student experience grows: easy access for online students to communicate amongst their peers, to foster networking opportunities, and to lower the barriers and stigma that may be associated with reaching out for help and advice on how to excel in online classes.

During the 2020-2021 academic year, we welcomed our second cohort of ambassadors, and worked closely with them to identify projects and focus areas that would benefit their fellow students while enabling the ambassadors themselves to gain invaluable professional development experience. This year, the ambassadors increased their social media presence to reach and engage with fellow students, using new media and leveraging the UF Online Plaza and UF Online app while providing ongoing student-to-student communication.

Throughout Fall 2020 and Spring 2021, all UF students faced considerable challenges due to COVID-19, whether in their own homes, communities, workplaces, or beyond. **Student Ambassadors focused on creating engaging social events as a means to maintain momentum for students, but also to provide an outlet for social engagement.** These Virtual Game Nights also provided another opportunity for UF Online students to connect with one another across different majors, colleges, and students' locations.

Throughout 2020-2021 there were nine Virtual Game Nights planned and hosted by the UF Online Student Ambassadors, providing much needed relief during exceptionally challenging times.

UF Online aims to continue developing and utilizing the UF Online Student Ambassador program to provide students with an opportunity for leadership and employment, as well as innovating how we engage with our undergraduate students that now live across 43 states, D.C., and 16 countries. Best of all, this program continues to provide a solid foundation for a student leadership program that gives online students the opportunity to create a robust experience for their peers and allows for student-led engagement that meets the needs of this diverse community of online leaders.



STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

ERIC STRUBLE

Major: Fire & Emergency Services

Eric Struble always had a strong work ethic and a keen attention to detail, which he credits to his father. In 2021, at 41 years old, Eric was able to combine work, school, and his family life and triumphed as a UF Online graduate and the first college graduate in his family. While earning his degree didn't happen overnight, the journey to achieving it was more than rewarding.

"I kind of did everything backward compared to most people. I had a kid and then I got married. I got a career path and then went to college. I've made connections with students in places like Miami, and found out they have a lot in common with me, such as being driven and having the same mindset. I'm still a father at the end of the day, and my wife does help me out a lot. My wife would cook dinner, and I would help the kids get ready for bed. I already have about a half-dozen friends who I inspired to go back to school after they've seen me at the station table every shift working on schoolwork in my off time. It did motivate a few of my colleagues to go back to school."

CHAPTER 2: PROGRESS TOWARD OUR MISSION

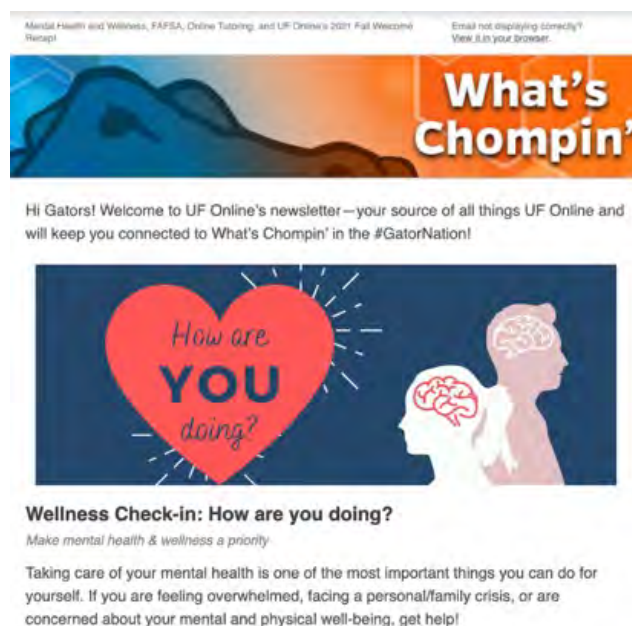
MODERNIZING HOW UF ONLINE COMMUNICATES WITH STUDENTS

The Academic Advising and Student Success team works closely with colleagues from our Marketing and Strategic Communications team to constantly enhance the student experience. An important aspect of this initiative is to provide students with the timely information they need in the ways they prefer to receive it.

This monthly newsletter includes topics to keep online students connected to UF resources and informed with timely updates, such as tips to prepare for a successful semester, course registration reminders, student spotlights, how to form study groups as an online student, and mental health and wellness strategies. As an effort to increase outreach and drive student retention. In August 2020, UF Online launched the first-ever UF Online monthly student newsletter, titled What's Chompin'.

During the 2020-2021 academic year, What's Chompin' averaged a 24% open rate, with 33% of those students reading and utilizing the direct links to resources such as scholarship opportunities, UF Online Plaza articles, tutoring resources, and various webinars and events hosted by campus partners.

We have also routinely communicated with students whose enrollment patterns indicate a risk of becoming inactive and potentially having to re-apply, by encouraging them to speak to their dedicated advisor on steps to stay on track toward degree completion. Our goal is to reach students before their change in status takes place, so that they are equipped with a plan of action and the support necessary to achieve the objectives they have set out for themselves.



ROUTINIZING STUDENT ENGAGEMENT DURING A LOCAL OR GLOBAL CRISIS

The collaboration between the UF Online Academic Advising and Student Success team and the Marketing and Strategic Communications team has been critical in emergency communications for students in areas impacted by natural disasters. From the wildfires on the West Coast to unprecedented hurricane seasons, and ultimately, to a global pandemic, we have sought to guide students through these troubling events and provide support, particularly in times of need.

CHAPTER 2: PROGRESS TOWARD OUR MISSION

GOAL 4: DEPLOYMENT OF STRATEGIC MARKETING & RECRUITMENT

As we work to expand access to the University of Florida via UF Online, we deploy annual, strategic marketing campaigns and strategies to generate interest and raise awareness of UF Online among prospective students across a range of backgrounds and experiences. We also take into consideration the understanding that students do their research before deciding where to apply. Our Marketing and Strategic Communications team ensures that all resources to assist students in making the best decision are readily available via traditional and digital advertising formats. Beyond marketing tactics, UF Online's team also focuses on strategic communications that includes engagement with current students as well as campus partners and external audiences. This year, UF Online has also continued to work closely with major employers as part of the UF Online Employer Pathways initiative, seeing steady success.

STRATEGIC MARKETING 2020-2021: OUTREACH DURING A PANDEMIC

The UF Online Marketing and Strategic Communications team uses robust analytics to design, deploy, and continually adjust a national digital marketing campaign that seeks to reach prospective students as well as key influencers. For example, UF Online marketing and outreach seeks to engage those who have never attended college, those who have some college credit but no degree, students that may wish to enroll at UF via UF Online as transfer students, or those who may already have a bachelor's degree and are seeking an online program to shift careers, and in doing so, earn a second bachelor's degree. Finally, to raise awareness about UF Online as a program, we also work to engage advisors, admissions counselors, parents, and employers, who are often the influencers that help future Gators consider programs and make plans for enrollment.

Fundamentally via robust digital marketing, we aim to ensure future Gators know about UF Online, its quality, affordability, but especially its unique flexibility for many working professionals, caregivers, and adult learners who might be eager to finish what they started many years ago but were otherwise unaware about UF Online.

BILLBOARD AND BUS ADVERTISEMENTS



CHAPTER 2: PROGRESS TOWARD OUR MISSION

ADMISSIONS AND ENROLLMENT

The UF Online Enrollment Services team is part of the Division of Enrollment Management. UF Online Enrollment Services includes the UF Online Recruitment and Outreach Center (ROC) and the UF Online OneStop Student Services Center. Both of these centers are located on UF's main campus and share physical office space in Criser Hall. Cohesively, this unit is charged with supporting UF Online students at various points of the enrollment cycle.

The UF Online ROC and the UF Online OneStop Student Services Center work with a high degree of unity to accomplish a shared mission. This mission is to provide UF Online prospective students, current students, and alumni with top tier support throughout the entire enrollment life cycle, with a specific interest in increasing student enrollment and retention.

The UF Online Recruitment and Outreach Center connects with prospective students through a variety of engagements, including Florida College System (FCS) institution site visits, virtual information sessions, admission fairs, and national recruitment conferences. This dynamic and layered approach ensures modern learners are able to connect with the University of Florida via their preferred method.



STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

AUBREY MYS

Major: Psychology and Sociology

Hobbies: Spending time with family, working out, exploring new places, learning to cook and speak Spanish.

Accolades: Inducted into the UF College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Hall of Fame.

"My son Vincent has been my motivation throughout my time at UF, and he has been a part of my journey since starting my undergraduate studies. I know how much UF Online has allowed me to grow as a student, as well as the opportunities that it offers students. I want all UF Online students to know that despite any obstacles that you are facing right now, you can overcome anything and still succeed."

CHAPTER 2: PROGRESS TOWARD OUR MISSION

EMPLOYER PATHWAYS PROGRAM

In 2020-2021, UF Online continued to facilitate access to high-quality online degrees through its Employer Pathways program, which provides access to UF bachelor’s degree programs to employees at participating employers. UF Online is proud to partner with progressive employers that support students as they pursue their University of Florida bachelor’s degree.

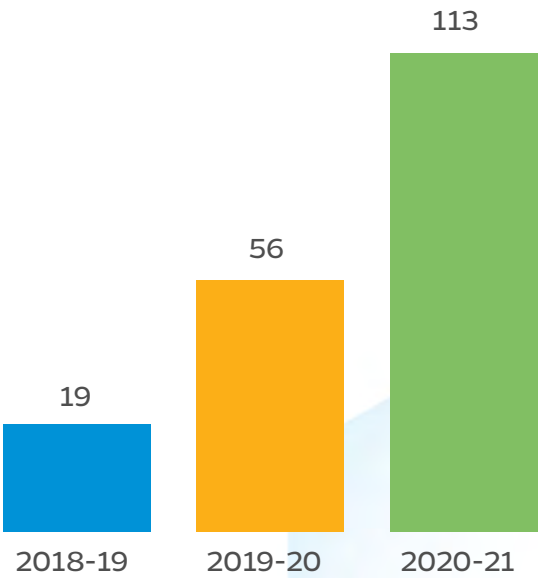
Launched in 2018, the UF Online Employer Pathways program bridges professional work and academics, available to over one million employees across the country who are choosing to continue their studies while working to support themselves and their loved ones.

Through Employer Pathways, employees of participating companies are able to apply their educational benefits toward select degrees with UF via UF Online. Through this initiative, employers are showing their workforce the value of a degree and the importance it holds for the future of their organization and the individuals within it. Applicants are held to the same rigorous standards as any prospective UF student, with the benefit of having their tuition, textbooks, and student fees completely covered by their employer.

- This year the UF Online Employer Pathways program bridges professional work and academics, available to over one million employees at Walmart, The Walt Disney Company, JP Morgan Chase, and the Rock Family of Companies.
- This program allows employees to achieve the dream of a college education through the support of their employer, while remaining active in the workforce.
- Each company supports selected degrees they determined to be relevant for their workforce and staffing needs.

UF Online applauds the employers that build and maintain these pathways for their employees striving for academic opportunities.

Employer Pathways Program Enrollment



STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

KENT STEIN

Major: Business Administration



Kent Stein had two goals while working at Walt Disney World in Orlando, FL. The first was to make guests' dreams come true, and the other was to earn a bachelor's degree from the University of Florida. As a kid, with his childhood bedroom decorated in orange and blue, Kent had always wanted to go to the University of Florida. Once he landed a job at Disney, his professional career took off and his plans to become a UF student suddenly seemed out of reach. As luck would have it, around the time he had gained enough credits to transfer to a university to earn a bachelor's degree, The Walt Disney Company unveiled a new program, Disney Aspire. This program allows eligible Disney employees to pursue their educational dreams at select universities, with 100% tuition paid upfront. When he spotted UF Online on the list, he applied and never looked back.

"A lot of people are afraid of online learning because they think it's super confusing or that they won't understand it because they've been out of school too long. My experience through UF Online was amazing! I actually prefer online learning over in-person learning. I've done both on-campus and online, and online makes more sense to me. To me, you can learn better since you're able to rewind and pause lectures."

CHAPTER 2: PROGRESS TOWARD OUR MISSION

MARKETING STRATEGY WILL CONTINUE TO EVOLVE

UF Online remains committed to the strategic deployment of marketing and communication strategies, coupled with recruitment events and engagements, to raise awareness of our effort to provide flexible and affordable pathways for future Gators via UF Online.

As part of UF Online's commitment to increasing Floridians' access to UF, we have partnered with the Florida College Access Network (FCAN) to sponsor a series of educational webinars on topics such as:

Love the Convenience, Hate the Pandemic: How to Find a Great Online Pathway to College

Paying for College Webinar Series – Employer-supported Education Programs

Meeting the Needs of First-Gen Students

FCAN webinars reach educators, advisors, and counselors across the state to share collaborative information and resources to help break down barriers to student success.



CHAPTER 2: PROGRESS TOWARD OUR MISSION

MODERNIZING OUTREACH TO PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS

UF Online's in-house Marketing and Strategic Communications team continued to focus on establishing processes and strategy, further developing messaging and tools, and tracking and analyzing marketing campaigns. In a continued partnership with a creative marketing agency, UF Online has produced a multitude of print and digital ads placed in key media channels. Projects have ranged from creating magazine ads to motion graphics on prominent streaming services.

It is important to understand that UF Online's prospective students will have an expectation that they will only be receiving messages and targeted ads that are relevant to their needs. To work toward achieving this expectation, the Marketing and Strategic Communications team has consistently worked in tandem with the UF Online Data and Analytics team, their creative marketing agency, and UF Teaching and Technology staff to improve the way data is both collected and utilized. As a result of these collective efforts and initiatives, we now have a much better understanding of prospective students' decision-making process that allows us to communicate our strategy in ways that best serve students.

A large part of communicating with a specific demographic or target market involves marketing activities focused on specific majors and applicant groups. As such, UF Online has added a variety of landing pages to use alongside specific marketing campaigns, such as those for Phi Theta Kappa honor students, active-duty and military veteran students, and partnered state colleges.

Additionally, the deployment of enhanced Tableau data visualization tools in conjunction with live Salesforce data has allowed for automated daily tracking of key performance indicators.



The purpose of these landing pages is to provide more useful information for these unique types of applicants, and to connect them with virtual resources such as information sessions specifically designed with them in mind.

CHAPTER 2: PROGRESS TOWARD OUR MISSION

Today's consumer highly values the opinions of their peers, so we have incorporated authentic student voices to provide a more vivid picture of what UF Online has to offer. Many of our students and alumni have led incredible journeys from all walks of life, and they are proud to share their experiences with others so that future students can make a well-informed decision based on others' real experiences.



STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

ALAN THOMPSON

Major: Business Administration

Hobbies: Web design, going to the beach, and spending time with his children.

"At the time when I was originally looking at colleges 12 years ago, online wasn't an option. Graduating from UF means that you're a part of an alumni base that has multiple academic and business leaders in the world. You're a part of something that's much bigger than yourself." It's more than just a degree."

STRATEGIC CHANGES

The UF Online Marketing and Strategic Communications team works closely with the Enrollment Management team to increase the number of new leads and facilitate the yield process. This year, a workgroup was assembled to examine both qualitative and quantitative metrics associated with UF Online's lead-to-start (enrolled) ratio. This taskforce will be examining the current operational processes, tracking mechanisms, and student associated journey from the time of interest in UF Online to course enrollment.

The Marketing and Strategic Communications team has also started the UF Online re-branding process, in conjunction with UF's central Strategic Communications unit. This exciting project will align UF Online's branding and associated creative marketing concepts with UF's overall central brand refresh. Additionally, we will be updating the UF Online style guide (a manual detailing for publication stylings of UF Online) inclusive of voice and tone, to better connect with our key audiences.

We have started the solicitation process to accept vendor proposals for a transition to a new marketing agency in the academic year 2021-2022. This process has been initiated to ensure sound financial management of marketing expenses in addition to modernizing our marketing operation to meet current market demands.

CHAPTER 2: PROGRESS TOWARD OUR MISSION

GOAL 5: SMART GROWTH & DATA-DRIVEN OPERATIONS

As noted in our business plan, the development of our core analytic capacity was vital for our continued success, strategic investments, and continued efficient operations. UF Online understands that data and information are important strategic resources for any program, but especially a growing online undergraduate program with few peers in terms of tuition pricing and reputation. (by major, but also down to individual courses, semester by semester). Our efforts in this space are directed at ensuring smart growth and data-informed decisions, and are always at the forefront, as we implement our business plan, continue to make wise investments, and do so as part of a large, traditional, land-grant research university.

To support this goal, UF Online has designed and implemented the Operations Hub, a central expert unit on campus focused exclusively on the efficient, effective, and strategic operations of UF Online, from finance, to strategic communications, to forecasting and planning, all fueled by an incredible analytic capacity. This hub, led by UF Online's Chief Operating Officer, drives the progress of UF Online through strategic analytics, communications, and the continual provision of business acumen. This unit also works to ensure adherence with all applicable operational policies and regulations, including sound financial practices and services to drive UF excellence in this critical area of UF's overall access mission. Specifically, the mission of the UF Online Operations Hub is to serve as the cross-functional beating heart of UF Online Services for UF leadership, organizations, colleges, and faculty. The unit operates as a business support function for campus partners, providing tools and resources to facilitate strategic in-unit operation of UF Online functions.

As our program continues to mature and grow, we are also continually improving our business intelligence, financial modeling, and ultimately, demand and enrollment forecasting



CHAPTER 2: PROGRESS TOWARD OUR MISSION

The Operation Hub's vital counterpart is the Academic Strategies hub. The Academic Strategies hub is housed in our central administration office and the Academic Strategies team is responsible for overseeing and supporting efforts campus-wide with regard to Academic Affairs, Student Life, Student Success, Course Quality, and Academic Advising. As such, this core central team is the keeper of the strategy for UF Online student engagement and ensures a high quality overall student experience. In turn, the Academic Strategies team oversees sound curriculum planning and management across all UF Online program offerings working with UF colleges, provides services, and works with the Center for Online Innovation and Production (COIP) to ensure the availability of high quality online programs, courses, and labs, and shepherds the campus-wide UF Online 2019-2024 academic advising investment initiative.

Working in concert, these two expert teams – the central UF Online Operations Hub and Academic Strategies hub – serve as day to day partners, with distinct roles, but inherently linked functions and customers on campus.

By adopting this model, UF Online has clear delineation of roles, but also a strong, cross-cutting central office team, driven by a commitment to partnership, transparency, and teamwork.

We therefore do not rely solely on analytics alone, but rather this cross-functional core office design, and as such, are best positioned to strategically grow and improve UF Online overtime. This central team and its dual focus design enables the colleges and academic units to focus on what they do best, their areas of expertise (teaching, research, mentorship, academic program launches, improvements, and much more). Centrally, the UF Online team also provides the first of its kind at UF: enrollment and capacity forecasting, down to the course, the student type, and academic department, to guide new course production, course refreshes, partnerships, new onboarding pathways, and more.

The University of Florida is thus accomplishing data-driven operations and smart growth thanks to this steady investment in central analytic capacity as well as cross-functional teamwork that is always in service to the UF academic colleges, departments, and needs of our faculty, and in turn, our students. With UF Online's fortified, expert central team, UF has limited to no reason to seek external vendor contracts to provide core UF Online services to students, faculty, staff or alumni.

CHAPTER 2: PROGRESS TOWARD OUR MISSION



CHAPTER 3: BY THE NUMBERS

FINANCIALS

UF Online continues to experience steady revenue flows, continually investing in the highest return on areas to ensure the best online educational environment for students and faculty alike. We continue to invest following the core elements of the UF Online Comprehensive Business Plan 2019-2024, strategically investing additional resources in UF's academic core value for our online student population via course production teams, course teaching/delivery, and our assigned academic advising model, all while supporting increased enrollment of in-state, out-of-state, and international students. Below we present a healthy and efficient financial overview demonstrating our strategic use of revenue to guide our continued expansion.

This year we are proud to report that UF Online's lower tuition rates directly led to reduced borrowing. In 2020-2021, only 43% of new UF Online graduates had student loans, and the average balance for those who borrowed was \$17,061, which is a 3.6% improvement over last year. The most recent national average student debt, according to The Institute for College Access and Success, was \$28,950 in 2019.

Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 presented a unique challenge of uncertainty for all higher education institutions. At UF Online, we had to make agile and strategic financial decisions to support critical areas of our program, even as we were grappling with new realities. We experienced a Fall 2020 surge in applications and, as such, strategically increased our marketing spend during an opportune time to best position UF Online as a national leader. Given the heightened awareness of online education due to COVID, our additional strategic spend worked to cement UF Online as a top online academic pathway during a time of heightened interest. Our additional spend also was intended to inform the market about a top online offering, differentiating us from the prevailing "emergency remote" phenomenon happening across K12 and Universities and the related backlash to concepts such as "zoom university." This investment seized a moment of great interest nationally for online programs and has resulted in a heightened national presence and application demand in subsequent years that are outside the scope of this year's report.

CHAPTER 3: BY THE NUMBERS

Below we present this year's financial overview followed by a detailed breakout of each major component of the UF Online financial model: revenue, expenses, and student fee revenues

		FY20	FY21
Total Revenue		\$16,720,080	\$18,726,357
Total Expenses		\$16,067,921	\$20,621,897
Total Fee Revenue for UF		\$2,891,873	\$3,008,462
Revenue	In State Tuition	\$8,135,354	\$10,000,274
	Out of State Tuition	\$3,373,101	\$3,490,872
	State Allocation	\$5,211,625	\$5,235,211
	Total	\$16,720,080	\$18,726,357
Expenses	Advising & Student Services	\$1,203,944	\$1,196,138
	Course Delivery	\$6,971,870	\$9,326,418
	Course Production	\$1,299,174	\$1,268,000
	Direct Administration	\$431,658	\$616,098
	Enrollment Management	\$1,106,420	\$1,294,151
	Marketing	\$2,678,931	\$4,507,483
	Operations	\$489,584	\$555,688
	Proctoring	\$259,090	\$135,220
	Third Party Vendors	\$123,092	\$218,543
	University of Florida Overhead Assessment	\$1,504,158	\$1,504,158
	Total	\$16,067,921	\$20,621,897
Required Fees	Capital Improvement	\$591,476	\$654,010
	Financial Aid	\$714,997	\$837,455
	Technology	\$459,255	\$507,834
	Total	\$1,765,728	\$1,999,299
Optional Fees	Activities & Service	\$477,011	\$418,465
	Athletic	\$42,793	\$40,859
	Health	\$377,569	\$343,975
	Transportation	\$228,772	\$205,864
	Total	\$1,126,145	\$1,009,163

CHAPTER 3: *BY THE NUMBERS*



CHAPTER 3: BY THE NUMBERS

FINANCIAL NOTES:

- This year saw leaps in tuition revenue as interest in online pathways surged globally due to the COVID Pandemic impact on K12 and post-secondary education. In 2020-2021, tuition revenue increased by 17.2% YoY, including a 22.9% increase in-state during a global pandemic.
- Revenue outlays to UF colleges soared 33.8% from fiscal year 2020. Each year we maximize investments directly to UF colleges to fund expanding faculty effort, a fundamental tenet of UF Online that relies completely on campus faculty effort for all teaching and learning via UF Online.
- UF Online revenue growth positioned UF Online to draw down reserves in accordance with our Business Plan. Whereas last year we ended the year with over \$5 million in reserves, strategic investments in FY21 have drawn down those reserves to now just over \$3 million. The strategic and focused spending of reserves led to a significant boost in marketing spending during the early and middle stages of the COVID-19 pandemic, as online education awareness was increasing nationally.
- During COVID response, the University hiring freeze indirectly decreased several UF Online investment areas above including advising and student services. Advising investments declined as a result of the University hiring freeze that left advising positions vacant and salary commitments were swept via UF Salary pullback. Furthermore due to the hiring freeze, colleges were unable to hire into additional UF Online dedicated academic advisor positions, as was planned prior to the pandemic.
- Investments in student services reduced due to the University's pause of in-person events. We anticipate those expenditures to rise in subsequent budget years.
- The University's hiring freeze also left UF Online marketing with staffing shortages driving increased marketing (outsourcing) expenses for creative and design development.
- Even though the optional fee package still topped \$1M in revenue for those University services, there was a moderate reduction of 10% in collection. UF Online students chose not to live in Gainesville as the campus was shut down and student activities were canceled. The ability to opt out of these fees is a key feature in UF Online's unique, student-centric affordability.



LOOKING AHEAD: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

*The University of Florida remains committed to ensuring students have a variety of quality pathways to earn a top-ranked bachelor's degree. **UF Online extends the reach of the University of Florida outward, reaching Gators across Florida, 47 states, and 18 countries, for which online is a preferred and/or only option for them to reach their academic goals.** As we continue to welcome outstanding students, and support and engage UF faculty, via a talented expert staff cadre campus-wide, UF Online will continue to deliver on the commitments of our business plan. We will continue to maximize our investments in academic core value: high quality academic courses and pathways, supported and engaged faculty, and a campus-wide group of expert academic advisors assigned to each UF Online student.*

LOOKING AHEAD

UF Online will undoubtedly face new challenges. Our major challenges looking ahead include:

- **Remaining agile as a program** yet with a continual steady focus on student success during a transformative time for higher education. Continuing to navigate the expansion and growth of UF Online's student population with a commitment to authenticity, while mindful that the University of Florida, along with other top universities around the world, are still facing an ever-changing and very challenging post-pandemic reality. Our goal is to remain viewed as a singular University, mindful that campus colleges, departments, and auxiliary teams may all be facing their own unique hardships.
- **Strategically selecting partnerships** including broker and/or direct-to-employer partners. **The confluence of UF Online's rise in reputation and the rise in demand for unique recruitment and retention strategies among top employers presents some fascinating future opportunities.**
- **Helping to inform conversations about the future of post-secondary online learning** with a vital differentiation between the emergency response modalities of COVID and the intensive work required by so many, faculty included, to offer programs like UF Online. We strive to provide valuable insight and an accurate representation, particularly to those who are new to online learning as a model of academic excellence. We continue to face outdated notions of online learning as an inferior, emergency option and presumptions about the needs of the modern day college student in the shift to "return to normal" post-COVID. **As UF Online continues to mature and grow as a program, we hope to serve as a pioneer example in supporting the modern student and their academic goals at any life stage.**
- **Ensuring our enrollment onramps are most welcoming** to first generation college students, adult learners eager to return to college, and students from lower income brackets that studies show stand to benefit the most from a high value bachelor's degree. We continue to reform and transform our traditional application procedures, requirements, deadlines and formats to ensure we're always offering prospective students the most welcoming, clear, and efficient onramp to the University of Florida.
- **Raising awareness of UF Online in a market with Mega Online Universities**, Public-private mergers to "go online," and their respective, massive marketing spending power. We will continue to wisely invest our limited marketing dollars to inform the marketplace about our unique offering, its value proposition, and our on ramps. Yet we aim to keep marketing spend steady, continuing to increase investment in our areas of academic core value: academic advising, faculty needs and personnel, and course quality and production.

Finally, our greatest challenge is also our greatest opportunity: **Ensuring that all UF Online students are welcomed by the Gator community with an authentic and genuine UF experience** in a more agile format, while still allowing each student to have their own, unique experience toward their specific academic goals, even as we continue to expand. We continually rise to this challenge!

OUR FUTURE IS BRIGHT

UF Online also remains focused on ensuring access to this flagship university through versatile modalities while maintaining the value and quality of our degree programs, each and every one designed and taught entirely by UF's incredible residential campus faculty and departments. We understand that there is much work and progress ahead as we continue to fortify and expand our opportunities while aligning our academic offerings with professional workforce needs facing us in 2022 and beyond.

Through the implementation of UF Online, the University of Florida has demonstrated that a high-quality education can be obtained online and that students will thrive in such an educational environment – and graduate, in the thousands – all thanks to a more versatile and accessible format. **The UF Online alumni community is now over 3,400 strong.** Our efforts are done with the goal of allowing that legacy to continue to thrive.

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