

Busting the Myth: Distance Education Enrollment



Utilizing the 2013 Fall IPEDS Enrollment numbers, WCET has gathered a quick overview of distance education enrollment patterns that might not be what popular opinion thinks they are.

Myth: Only a Small Number of Students Enroll in Distance.

Reality: One-in-Eight Students Took **ALL** Their Courses at a Distance.

Reality: One-in-Four Students Took **AT LEAST 1** Distance Course.

Myth: Students in Distance Courses are Primarily at For-Profit Colleges.

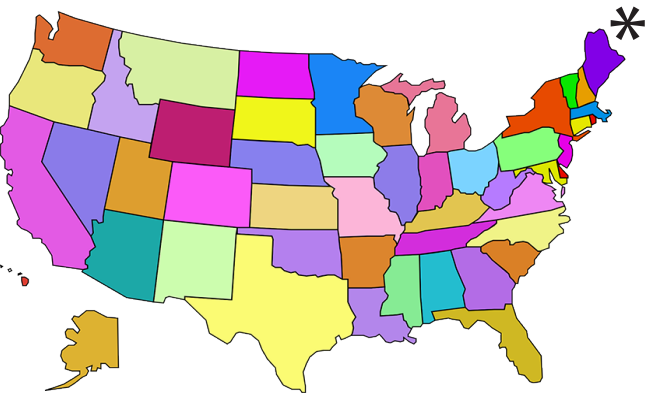
Reality: More than Two-Thirds of Fully Distance Students Enroll in Public or Non-Profit Colleges.

Students Enrolled Exclusively in Distance Ed by Sector

Sector	Percentage
Public	48%
Private, For-Profit	32%
Private, Non-Profit	20%

Myth: Institutional Location Does Not Matter for Distance Education.

Reality: Public Students Primarily Attend Distance Education Institutions in Their **HOME** State.



Reality: For-Profit Students Primarily Attend Distance Education Institutions in **OTHER** States.

*State colors are simply for decorative purposes, they do not denote any differences in the data.

Myth: Distance Education Growth has Slowed.

Reality: Distance Education Growth from 2012 to 2013 Varied Greatly by Higher Education Sector. And the Growth Occurred **DESPITE** Overall Higher Education Enrollments **DECREASING** by **4%**.

Category	Change
Non-Profit Fully Online Enrollment	Increase 9%
Public Fully Online Enrollment	Increase 2.4%
For-Profit Fully Online Enrollment	Decrease 8.3%

Myth: Only a Few Institutions Enroll Students From Outside Their Operating State in Distance Education.

Reality: The Number of Institutions Serving Students Outside Their State & Outside the U.S. is **GROWING**.

The Integrated Postsecondary Data System (IPEDS) defines Distance Education as:
 Education that uses one or more technologies to deliver instruction to students who are separated from the instructor and to support regular and substantive interaction between the students and the instructor synchronously or asynchronously. <http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/glossary/>