THE STATE OF ONLINE & DISTANCE EDUCATION AT UND

Wednesday, April 1 Noon-1pm, Memorial Union Ballroom

Sponsored by the Office of Instructional Development in collaboration with Assessment and Regional Accreditation; the Center for Instructional and Learning Technologies; Extended Learning; and the Registrar; and in partnership with the Senate Online and Distance Education Committee.

RESOURCE WEBSITE:  http://und.edu/academics/extended-learning/on-site-events/online-trends.cfm

NATIONAL TRENDS FOR ONLINE & DISTANCE EDUCATION:

*Online education is still growing, although the growth has slowed (3.7% this year which is the lowest recorded growth rate)

- Rate of Growth for for-profit, four year institutions down 8.7% (its first-ever drop)
- Rate of Growth for Public, four year institutions up 7.2%
- Rate of Growth for Private, non-profit, four year institutions up 12.7%

*73% of students nationally are satisfied with their online experience

*74% would re-enroll in their current online program

UND TRENDS FOR ONLINE & DISTANCE EDUCATION:

*Online & distance education continues to grow for UND

- 7% increase in Distance Only Undergraduate Students from Fall 2013 to Fall 2014
- 2.2% increase in Distance Only Graduate Students from Fall 2013 to Fall 2014

*UND students take an average of 3.3 online courses during their degree program (9.5 credit hrs.)

*In Fall 2014, 15.5% of UND’s full-time traditional undergraduate students were enrolled in at least one online course

TOP RISK FACTORS FOR UND DEGREE SEEKING STUDENTS

- Taking all classes online
- Age greater than 24
- Starting UND other than fall semester
- Withdrawing from 6 or more credits in a term
- Not obtaining a 2.0 GPA in at least 6 credits in a term
- If a student does not complete 50% of attempted credits
SELECT UND PREDICTIVE ANALYTICS DATA

Risk factors:

- 48% of students enrolled in all online courses do not return for their second year, those who do not take any online return at 77%
- 45% of students who are >24 years old are not retained to year two, 77% of 18-19 year olds are retained to year two
- 60% of students who withdraw from >6 – 12 credits are not retained to year two

Benchmarks – at 24 months for degree seeking students

- UND retains all degree seeking students at 67%, benchmarks at 59%
- UND retains fully online degree seeking students at 25%, benchmarks at 37%
- UND retains non-traditional students about the same as benchmarks 48% vs 49%
- Using both non-traditional and online together, UND retention remain 25% and benchmarks increases slightly to 39%

WHY ASSESS ONLINE COURSES AND PROGRAMS SEPARATELY?

Accreditation is one of many reasons (and in some ways, the least important of those reasons) to pay attention to learning outcomes in all programs, including those offered online. However, accreditation does serve as the hammer for enforcement of what we should be doing anyway as a matter of best practices in teaching and learning. In that sense, institutional accreditation standards are a lowest-common-denominator framework for what should be looked at, e.g., in every program approval or program review process conducted at UND. (Departments subject to program-specific accreditation standards will often find that expectations regarding assessing learning and using assessment results are considerably more prescriptive.)

Consider these example statements, drawn from the Higher Learning Commission accreditation criteria:

- Under HLC Criterion 3: “The institution’s program quality and learning goals are consistent across all modes of delivery and all locations....”
- Under HLC Criterion 4: “The institution assesses achievement of the learning outcomes that it claims....[and] uses the information gained from assessment to improve student learning.”
  
  The institution collects and analyzes information on student retention, persistence, and completion....[and] uses information...to make improvements as warranted by the data.”

Given the standard cited under Criterion 3, the more recent report-back from the HLC to UND mentioned assessment in online programs as an area where work is still needed: “The institution may wish to more clearly differentiate the demonstration of student learning in programs that are offered both on campus and on-line....”