

This document highlights the growth and development of online learning at University of Illinois at Springfield (UIS) as a direct result of funding by the Arthur P. Sloan Foundation. Our online growth has multiplied by 25-30 percent each year since 2001. Employing our own resources and building on the grant programs, UIS continues to advance the development of asynchronous learning within our own institution and to expand the development of ALN in other institutions around the nation and in the global community.



Background:

Established in 1969 as Sangamon State University by the Illinois General Assembly, the institution became a campus of the University of Illinois, on July 1, 1995 and changed its name to the University of Illinois at Springfield. The campus is located on 746 acres on the Southeast side of Springfield, Illinois approximately 200 miles southwest of Chicago and 100 miles northeast of St. Louis, Missouri. It is surrounded by rural communities and farmland. UIS consists of four colleges: **Business and Management, Education and Human Services, Liberal Arts and Sciences, Public Affairs and Administration** which offer 21 bachelor's degree programs and 25 minors, 20 master's degree programs, and one doctoral degree. There are approximately 170 full-time faculty members serving 4500 students. Locally, the campus is well-known for its student-friendly atmosphere, a commitment to technology, and our premiere online course initiative.

UIS Online's Emerging Role:

As a direct result of grant activity, UIS Online and the UIS campus have experienced dramatic changes in enrollment. This change attests to the access and reach of ALN. Through online delivery, we truly do find we are reaching a diverse population of students who could not achieve their educational goals in a traditional manner. The growth in online learning has extended the reach of the university in ways not seen previously through any other initiative. In addition to the changes in student population, faculty and staff have now come to believe in the important role online learning will play in the future of the university. When online learning was first introduced on campus, it was seen as pioneering and innovative but not for all. Key faculty members and individuals, who developed courses and online programs, did so largely as independent entities. Times have changed for online learning at UIS. Principle

policy makers, faculty, support staff, and academic professionals all now consider online students in campus decisions and recognize the benefits online learning offers to both our student population and our campus.

UIS Online Growth:

As mentioned, UIS Online enrollments have grown by approximately 30 percent each year since 1998. UIS Online currently offers six *fully* online undergraduate degrees, four *fully* online graduate degrees, and two *fully* online certificate programs.

In addition, UIS offers individual for-credit online courses and the U of I Online Making the Virtual Classroom a Reality (MVCR) classes. MVCR courses educate faculty at participating Illinois institutions about best practices in online instruction. UIS offers credit to faculty from community colleges and others around the state.

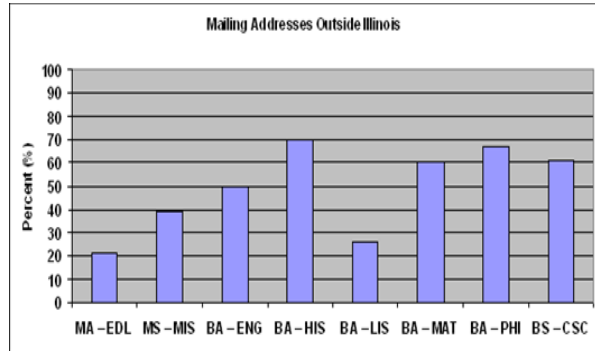
In fall 2005, more than 1,500 different

Credit Hours	40	% in Level	4M	% in Level	4U	% in Level	Total	Total %
On campus	103	100.0%	9002	72.0%	22588	77.8%	31673	76.1%
Online			3499	28.0%	6451	22.2%	9950	23.9%
Total	103		12501		29019		41623	

students at UIS took at least one online class: that's 37 percent of all students enrolled at UIS in the fall semester. In addition, 24 percent of the total credit hours taken at UIS are in online classes. Of these online enrollments, 63 percent were at the undergraduate level and 37 percent were at the graduate level.

Out of State Online Enrollments:

Only 3 ½ percent of UIS students with on-ground majors report mailing addresses outside of the Illinois. This statistic is based nearly entirely on international graduate



students and those who continue to work on their projects after they have completed degree required courses. In contrast, 36 percent of online majors list mailing addresses outside of Illinois with California, Georgia, Texas, and Florida having the largest representations respectively. Most surprising for our small university, we have found out-of-state online undergraduates out number out-of-state online graduates; 47 percent of undergraduate versus 26 percent of graduate.

UIS ALN Degrees Offered:

- AY 2002 - 3**
- Liberal Studies BA
 - Master Teaching and Leadership MA
 - Management Information Systems MS

- AY 2003 - 3+**
- MTL MS multiple tracks
 - English BA AY 2004
 - Computer Science BS
 - History BA

AY 2004 - 2

- Math BA,
- Philosophy BA

Online Enrollments:

- AY 2002 - 2,400 actual - 2404
- AY 2003 - 3,200 actual - 3315
- AY 2004 - 4,500 actual - 4554
- AY 2005 - 5,700 actual - 5533
- AY 2006 - 7,200 actual -

Community College Articulation Agreements:

- AY 2002 - 20
- AY 2003 - 35
- AY 2004 - 50
- AY 2005 - 75
- AY 2006 - 100

Out of State Online Enrollments:

- AY 2002 - 5%
- AY 2003 - 7.5%
- AY 2004 - 10%
- AY 2005 - 15%
- AY 2006 - 20%

Note: State universities with a national teaching reputation currently enroll no more than 25 percent of their students from out of state.

National Online Teaching Reputation:

Online teaching and research at UIS has consistently expanded both the national reputation of the online degree programs as well as the University as a whole. UIS's online degree programs have been the topic of numerous conference proceedings and presentations including the International Conference on Teaching and Learning, Annual Conference on Distance Teaching and Learning, Ed-Media sponsored by the Association for the Advancement of Computing in Education, the Sloan-C International Conference on Asynchronous Learning Networks, Syllabus, and regional Educause conferences. UIS online undergraduate degrees continue to meet the needs of learners from across the country as we expand the reach of our online programs to include more out-of-state students. In addition, we also note a marked increase in education and business partnership opportunities.

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences:

At this time, the University of Illinois at Springfield's College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) offers approximately 65 percent of the University's web-based programming. The Bachelor of Arts in Liberal Studies began in the fall of 1999 with an enrollment of 32 students. In 2005-2006, the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences has admitted approximately 1,000 majors to its online programs. Five of the six online undergraduate programs currently offered by CLAS were funded by the Sloan grant (**English, Computer Science, English, History, Mathematics and Philosophy**). The college also offers a degree completion in Liberal Studies

and two minor concentrations (mathematics and philosophy); two graduate certificates (computer science); and, one graduate program (computer science), as well as a range of elective courses offered throughout the liberal arts and sciences disciplines most of which have spun off of the success of the Sloan programs.

In the initial years of program operation (1999 – 2002) students applied for entrance to the online degree completion programs based solely on the perception that they offered convenience and accessibility; however, this has dramatically changed in the second half of the grant cycle (or the last three years). Although CLAS students continue to value the accessibility that online learning environments provide, they now increasingly pursue application to the programs based on the cohesiveness and quality of specific curricula, individual faculty members teaching in the programs, and carefully coordinated academic support services.

CLAS Growth:

As the fall semester 2005 enrollment numbers came in, we noted the recently added online major cohorts such as History, Philosophy, and Computer Science increased our overall online enrollment numbers. This is important evidence of a self-sustaining effort and pent up demand for online at the undergraduate level in the humanities. We continue to promote the expansion of these very successful programs. In the early years of the CLAS programs, students applied primarily on the basis of convenience. Although students continue to value the accessibility that online learning

environments provide, they now increasingly pursue application to the programs based upon the *quality* of specific curricula. Individuals serving in the military and reserves, as well as their spouses, returning non-traditional students, 25 and older, and working professionals continue to heavily populate the online degree programs.



The Master of Arts in Teaching Leadership (MTL):

The initial Master of Arts in Teaching Leadership (formerly a concentration in the Educational Leadership Department) program began in the fall of 2000 with three courses. MTL offered over 25 classes in Fall 2005. There is no on- campus counterpart to the MTL degree. It is offered only online.

Much of the growth of this program is due to the dedication of the dean, the program coordinators, and the faculty who continue to push for additional courses to fill the need of the ever growing population of K-12 educators who seek to further their education while still working full time in the classroom. When MTL became an independent degree (now titled a Master of Arts in Teacher Leadership), the program was able to hire their first, full-time faculty member. One of the courses funded by the Sloan grant, EDL 585

Foundations of Teacher Leadership, became a required course in the curriculum. As a single piece of evidence of the growth and need for this program, Fall 2005 enrollment in the program created the need for three sections of the EDL585 with a total of 59 students enrolled in the course. This course is a foundations course focusing on giving students the skills they need to become successful online learners, as well as basic knowledge of teacher leadership.

MTL Growth:

With a growing enrollment of over 350 students, MTL is the largest and fastest expanding online degree program at UIS. Areas of opportunity to expand on the success of the program continue to develop in numerous areas. Such areas include P-16 initiatives and diversity partnerships. In addition, the program now supports teachers who wish to become temporarily certified in special education in the state of Illinois and has become a partner of the Illinois University Alliance which supports and promotes teachers who wish to become Nationally Certified. Over the past year, the MTL Coordinator has traveled the state of Illinois conducting eleven presentations on the new Teacher Leadership Program to educate Illinois teachers about the professional opportunities available online at UIS.

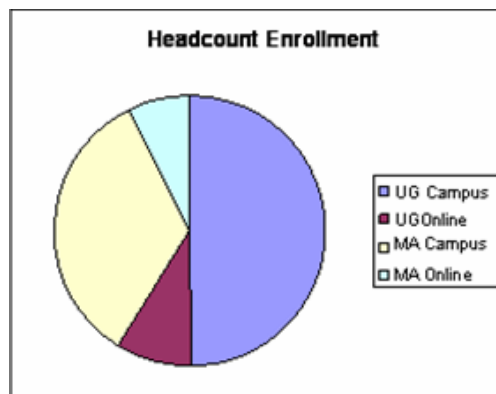
MTL Future:

With a growing enrollment of over 350 students, the MTL Program must hire additional full-time faculty. From prospective students, they note a strong need for an online

teacher certification program and are considering ways for the program to meet that need. In addition, the program continues to look for opportunities which might lead to a doctoral program in teacher leadership. In the summer of 2005, the program secured a partnership with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. In collaboration with the department, they have developed a series of five courses to be offered over the course of the next year. The goal is to eventually work toward a teaching endorsement in Environmental Science.

Expected Outcomes:

At the fall 2005 census, UIS reported a headcount of 4,517 students of which 2,634 were undergraduates (UG) (58.3 percent), 1,865 were masters students (41.3 percent), and 18 were doctoral students. (The doctorate in public administration is not offered online.) Of this count, 743 students majored (had program codes) in one of the eight online degrees offered by UIS (400 undergraduates, 343 masters). By major, 16.4 percent of the headcount enrollment was from online degrees (15.2 percent undergraduate (UG), 18.4 percent masters (MA)).



Unexpected Outcomes:

Each new semester brings remarkable growth. That the growth has hovered around or been near 30 percent each year since 2001 certainly meet or exceeded our expectations. Yet, beyond these traditional expectations, the University of Illinois at Springfield has seen some unusual enrollment activity as a result of this grant. Most unusual is the *national* demand for undergraduate programs in the humanities programs, English, Philosophy and History.



Three percent of on-ground majors report mailing addresses outside of Illinois. Thirty-six percent of students with online majors list mailing addresses outside of Illinois (25 percent of online graduates and 46 percent of undergraduates.) The enrollment of students from outside of Illinois at the undergraduate level has truly shown our online programs have national renown and appeal.

A national reputation of UIS has been a goal since the universities inception. In addition, we have found students who take both online and on-ground courses take a heavier course load than either their completely online or completely on-ground peers. The additional course load can translate into 3-4 more hours at the graduate level. We could not have predicted the growth of our online courses would translate into more hours for our traditional on-campus students.

Conclusion:

Nearly four years ago, just after our Sloan I grant proposal was awarded, we settled on the metrics for the half million dollar grant. While we listed a number of metrics, we all knew that the success or failure of this grant would rest on a single metric: **the final tally of online enrollments.** We promised we would triple online enrollments with the grant. In the proposal, we stated we would need to make our final report one year after the grant ended so those programs launched in the final year would be fully up to speed. Triple online enrollments in four years - this was the clear and certain bottom line. Frank Mayadas accepted the metrics, writing "Interesting challenge, but worthwhile".

In all of our minds, our figures were very aggressive. We knew the baseline total was 2,400 for the summer/fall 01 and spring 02. We used that cycle to coincide with the grant letting just before the summer of 2002 since we were funding our first classes for the summer session. With this in mind, we promised a total of 7,200 enrollments for summer/fall 05 and spring 06. We achieved the aggressive metrics on January 18, 2006, passing the 7200 mark before the spring term began - using the total enrollment s for each term, including our mid-semester classes, the total enrollment in online classes at UIS four years after the start of the grant is 7,302.

Summer 2005=	1444
Fall 2005=	2808
Spring 2006=	3050 (as of 3/6/06)
TOTAL=	7302

Making and surpassing this important metric represents an achievement for online learning at UIS but also for ALN as a whole.

Future:

Grant activity continues with 8 more fully online degree programs being developed for implementation by fall 2007. Programs either already underway or slated for development include: undergraduate degree programs in Business Administration and Economics and graduate degrees in Computer Science, Environmental Studies, Human Services and a certification program for Chief School Business Officers. Two additional programs are in the governance approval process. UIS will continue to broaden our boundaries with diversity and global partnerships, build on the national attention we've long desired via grant activities in podcasting repositories and Inter-institutional collaborations, and seek to establish an Online Center for Teaching and Research.

Finally, and perhaps most exciting of all, the University of Illinois is considering funding an entire fourth campus devoted to meeting the needs of online learners around the world. Our future as a leading institution in online education is secure due to the continued support of the Sloan foundation and the dedicated faculty, staff, and administration of the University of Illinois.

