The state of online learning in higher education.

Growth of online enrollments slowed to 6.1% in 2012. However, this number still represents over 400,000 additional students taking at least one online course this year.

The number of students taking at least one online course has now surpassed 7.1 million and represents 33% of all higher education students (21.3 million).

Is online education critical to the long-term strategy of institutions?

The decrease in agreement of online being critical was only seen in institutions that do not currently have online offerings. 66% of CAOs agree that online education is critical to the long-term strategy of their institution, a 4.6% decrease from 2012.

How do academic leaders rate learning outcomes in online education?

CAOs rating learning outcomes in online education as the same or superior to those in face-to-face environments grew from 57.2% in 2003 to 77.0% last year, but fell back to 74.1% this year.

The number of institutions with a MOOC has doubled in the past year. Only 5% of higher education institutions currently offer a MOOC and only 9.3% report being in the planning stages.

There is increased concern among CAOs that credentials for MOOCs will lead to confusion about higher education degrees.

Less than one-quarter of academic leaders believe that MOOCs represent a sustainable method for offering online courses.

The eleventh annual survey, a collaborative effort between the Babson Survey Research Group and the College Board, is the leading barometer of online learning in the United States. Based on responses from over 2,800 academic leaders, the complete survey report, “Grade Change,” is available at http://sloanconsortium.org/publications/survey/grade-change-2013. This report remains independent through the support of Pearson and the Sloan Consortium.

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