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Research by Clinefelter and Aslanian (2016) suggests that most adult learners will return to college online, and that online education has become mainstream.

The Texas State University System is the leader among public Texas university systems, with the highest percentage of fully online students in relation to the system’s student populations as a whole.

Texas State University is an Emerging Research University that generates numerous online student credit hours through 18 degree programs offered partially online. In 2018, Texas State University was awarded an Effective Practice Award from the Online Learning Consortium.

In 2018, Sam Houston State University created 181 “7B” online class sections in response to challenges posed by Hurricane Harvey; signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Lamar Institute of Technology for cooperation in online education; and was ranked number one for the second year in a row for its online graduate degrees in Criminal Justice by U.S. News & World Report.

Lamar University continues to be recognized for the strength of its online programs. This year, the BA/BS in Sociology and BS in Criminal Justice and the MS in Criminal Justice have been recognized for costs and return on investment. The Nursing program continues to rank well in Best Overall and Best Value.

Online education is important to Sul Ross State University’s mission, given the institution’s remote location. The two-year online MBA is designed for students who are employed and located at remote sites from campus. The university’s hope is that its MBA graduates will benefit with career promotions and professional growth as a result of this distance learning opportunity.

Students at Sul Ross State University Rio Grande College, which plays an important role in meeting the needs of underserved Latino communities in the border region, earn 77% of their semester credit hours in courses offered through distance education formats.

Texas State University System two-year institutions have a pipeline for seamless transfer pathways to degrees earned online at four-year TSUS institutions.

Lamar State College-Port Arthur had 389 students taking at least one or more courses online, which is a 16.4% increase from 2017.

Lamar State College-Orange now offers the Texas Core Curriculum online. Currently over 66% of the institution’s associate degrees can be completed mostly online.

Lamar Institute of Technology offers three certificates and associate programs that are 100% online, and students can continue with baccalaureate programs online through four-year TSUS institutions.
Welcome to the second annual Texas State University System Online Education report.

The Texas State University System is leading online education into the future. Any doubt about that can be set aside by simply looking at the numbers. When it comes to online education, TSUS is seizing the initiative. Many online education semester credit hours attempted in the state of Texas are taken by students within TSUS institutions. As of Fall 2018, among the six public university systems in Texas, TSUS leads the way in the percentage of students pursuing their degrees fully online, with 14%.

With its component institutions stretching from eastern Texas to the west, the Texas State University System is uniquely positioned to move forward as the state’s leader in online education. Though there are a total of six public university systems in Texas, none of the others have opted to focus on online education in the way that TSUS institutions have, and that creates a singular opportunity for the System.

The Online College Students 2018: Comprehensive Data on Demands and Preferences report (Magda, A. J., & Aslanian, C. B., 2018) states:

“Online students are bypassing the on-ground classroom for added convenience. Nearly 60% of online college students who had a choice between online and on-ground actively chose online learning. Online programs have built in many conveniences that on-ground programs often still lack. Opportunities to take year-round courses (27%) and accelerated courses (20%) inform some online students’ decisions, while others take advantage of generous transfer policies that ease their time to completion (85% of online learners have prior college credit, with 25% of these students having more than 60 credits, priming them for quick completion of a bachelor’s degree).”
Courses and degree programs offered online are increasingly important tools within the Texas State University System to address issues of both college access and student success. TSUS institutions plan to increase online education opportunities as a way to support the growing interest among Texas students and families.

Over the past six years, the number of degree programs offered fully online and semester credit hours earned online have increased dramatically. Through programs offered online, students can log on to class using any computer with internet access—at home, at work, at the local library, or on campus, and anytime—24 hours a day, seven days a week. This allows students with jobs and family responsibilities to make learning an integral part of their busy lives.

Click here to hear more for a video Message from TSUS Chancellor Brian McCall, Ph.D.

Continued on page 5
Online learning is providing a positive return on students’ investment. 86% believe the value of their degree equals or exceeds the cost. 85% who have experienced in-person and virtual classrooms feel learning online is as good or better than attending courses on campus.

Clinefelter and Aslanian provide several key findings among online college students in 2018:

- Online students are bypassing the on-ground classroom for added convenience.
- Online programs are becoming more diversified.
  - Graduate programs in STEM and health sciences have reported steady growth over the last four years.
  - Diversifying online program offerings may allow institutions to serve new segments of students.
- Online students need career services.
  - 74% of online college students are pursuing their program for career-focused reasons.
- An online degree’s value is more than its price.
  - Factors increasing the perception of value include program convenience, institutional reputation, or offering the best content.
- Online students support innovations that decrease the cost and time to complete a degree.
  - 61% of students would consider electronic books as an innovation in decreasing cost to complete a degree.

As Magda, A. J., & Aslanian, C. B. (2018) also note, colleges and universities attempting to service the online market also have an increased sense of competition amongst their peers. Nearly 60% of institutions with online enrollments believe that the online program marketplace is ‘much more competitive’ than it was five years ago.

(Online College Students 2018: Comprehensive Data on Demands and Preferences)
The Texas State University System is the leader among the Texas university systems, with the highest percentage of fully online students.

**The Texas State University System**
- Percentage of Fully Online Students: 14%
- Fully Online Students Enrolled: 11,131
- Total Students Enrolled: 77,230

**Texas Independent Institutions**
- Percentage of Fully Online Students: 12%
- Fully Online Students Enrolled: 11,644
- Total Students Enrolled: 98,476

**The University of Texas System**
- Percentage of Fully Online Students: 11%
- Fully Online Students Enrolled: 26,820
- Total Students Enrolled: 234,621

**Texas Tech University System**
- Percentage of Fully Online Students: 10%
- Fully Online Students Enrolled: 14,216
- Total Students Enrolled: 51,364

**Texas A&M University System**
- Percentage of Fully Online Students: 9%
- Fully Online Students Enrolled: 14,216
- Total Students Enrolled: 149,901

**University of North Texas System**
- Percentage of Fully Online Students: 8%
- Fully Online Students Enrolled: 3,908
- Total Students Enrolled: 43,556

**University of Houston System**
- Percentage of Fully Online Students: 6%
- Fully Online Students Enrolled: 4,594
- Total Students Enrolled: 71,078

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education’s National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) available at the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) website. Note: IPEDS defines Distance Learning as instructional content that is delivered exclusively (100%) via distance education.
Lamar University, Sam Houston State University, Sul Ross State University, and Texas State University offer a wide variety of quality undergraduate and graduate degree programs online, several of which have been recognized by high rankings from U.S. News & World Report, and by awards from the Texas Distance Learning Association and other organizations.

In addition, Lamar Institute of Technology, Lamar State College-Orange, and Lamar State College-Port Arthur have online workforce-related courses and a pipeline for seamless transfer pathways to degrees earned online at four-year TSUS institutions.
Home to over 15,000 students, Lamar University, in Beaumont, Texas, is among the fastest growing Texas colleges and universities, with more than 100 programs of study leading to bachelor’s, master’s and doctoral degrees. 42 of those undergraduate and graduate programs are online.

As a doctoral granting institution, Lamar University is internationally recognized for its high-quality academics, innovative curriculum, diverse student population, accessibility, and leading-edge scholarly activities dedicated to transforming the communities of Southeast Texas and beyond.

Lamar’s commitment to online education is reflected in high rankings and awards. The university’s online programs have been recognized among the best in the nation by the 2018 U.S. News & World Report Best Online Programs rankings.

Almost 6,500 graduate and undergraduate students at Lamar are studying fully online. The university enrolls the most students in shortened-semester-format courses (among TSUS institutions), which is reflected in their number of fully online graduates (see page 21).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester Credit Hours (SCH)</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Online SCH</td>
<td>44,009</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>36,324</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>38,352</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total SCH</td>
<td>137,925</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>128,916</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>125,618</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to growth in fully online enrollments, Lamar University also delivers 2% of its semester credit hours in a hybrid/blended format.

Online Education in TSUS Institutions
Online Education in TSUS Institutions

Sam Houston State University provides high quality education, scholarship, and service to over 21,000 students for the benefit of regional, state, national and international constituencies. For more than 139 years, SHSU has been preparing students for meaningful lives of achievement.

While embracing its legacy, SHSU also strives to meet the needs of contemporary students, both traditional and online. The university offers 49 fully online undergraduate and graduate degrees and numerous certificates, all of which are taught by on-campus professors.

In 2018, for the second year in a row, SHSU was ranked number one in the nation in U.S. News & World Report, for its online graduate degrees in Criminal Justice. This sign of excellence is the result of implementing research-based best practices in online pedagogy to improve learning outcomes for students online.

Presently, SHSU has 3,500 students taking 100% of their courses online, and more than 11,400 students are taking one or more courses online. Currently, 53% of the university’s student body is taking at least one online course.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Semester Credit Hours (SCH)</td>
<td>Semester Credit Hrs (SCH)</td>
<td>% of Total SCH</td>
<td>Semester Credit Hrs (SCH)</td>
<td>% of Total SCH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Online SCH</td>
<td>38,693</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>46,864</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total SCH</td>
<td>229,673</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>237,629</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 2018, for the second year in a row, Sam Houston State University was ranked number one in the nation in U.S. News & World Report for its online graduate degrees in Criminal Justice.
Sul Ross State University is a public, comprehensive, master’s-degree granting, multi-campus university, providing on-site and distance education in the Big Bend and the U.S.-Mexico border regions of Texas. The university serves over 2,000 students from its Alpine, Texas campus.

Online education is important to Sul Ross’s mission, given the university’s remote location in far West Texas. Thus the university offers many courses in online education formats, including web-delivered courses. Sul Ross offers a total of 15 online programs at present, including two Criminal Justice master’s degree programs, a dual M.A. in Public Administration and M.S. in Criminal Justice, as well as the M.S. in Criminal Justice. The Criminal Justice master’s degree is ranked high nationally in affordability, according to a survey by SR Education Group.

The two-year online MBA is designed for students who are employed and located at remote sites from campus. The university’s hope is that its MBA graduates will benefit with career promotions and professional growth as a result of this distance learning opportunity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester Credit Hours (SCH)</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Online SCH</td>
<td>4,121</td>
<td>4,052</td>
<td>4,547</td>
<td>4,377</td>
<td>4,409</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total SCH</td>
<td>20,270</td>
<td>20,392</td>
<td>21,518</td>
<td>20,813</td>
<td>19,686</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to growth in fully online enrollments, Sul Ross State University also delivers 1% of its semester credit hours in a hybrid/blended format.
SUL ROSS STATE UNIVERSITY RIO GRANDE COLLEGE

Sul Ross State University Rio Grande College, through its sites in Uvalde, Del Rio, and Eagle Pass, Texas, offers bachelor’s degrees in a variety of fields, including nursing, education, business, biology, criminal justice, English, Spanish, history, mathematics, psychology, and social science, as well as child development and organizational leadership. Students may also earn teacher certification at the elementary or secondary level. Master’s degrees in English, history, public administration, business, education, criminal justice, and health and human performance are also offered.

The college, with an approximate enrollment of around 1,000 students, seeks to play an important role in meeting the needs of underserved Latino communities in the U.S.-Mexico border region. Currently, a large number of Rio Grande College courses are still offered via two-way interactive video conferencing. This infrastructure provides an opportunity to implement lecture capture technology in order to grow fully online programs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester Credit Hours (SCH)</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Online SCH</td>
<td>2,547</td>
<td>3,075</td>
<td>3,027</td>
<td>3,261</td>
<td>2,790</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total SCH</td>
<td>6,915</td>
<td>7,364</td>
<td>7,598</td>
<td>7,431</td>
<td>6,943</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to growth in fully online enrollments, Sul Ross State University Rio Grande College also delivers 36% of its semester credit hours in a two-way interactive format.
Texas State University is a public, student-centered, Emerging Research University dedicated to excellence in serving the educational needs of the diverse population of Texas and the world beyond.

Texas State’s almost 40,000 students choose from 98 bachelor’s, 91 master’s and 13 doctoral degree programs offered by the following colleges: Applied Arts, McCoy College of Business Administration, Education, Fine Arts and Communication, Health Professions, Liberal Arts, Science and Engineering, University College, and The Graduate College.

As an Emerging Research University, Texas State offers opportunities for discovery and innovation to faculty and students.

Currently, Texas State University has just over 1,000 undergraduate and graduate students who are 100% online. The university has received a number of recognitions and awards for its programs offered online, including the 2017 TxDLA Award for the School of Social Work (for Outstanding Commitment to Excellence and Innovation in Distance Education by an Organization, Four-Year Higher Education category).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester Credit Hours (SCH)</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Online SCH</td>
<td>13,313</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>17,599</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>18,341</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total SCH</td>
<td>440,711</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>456,771</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>468,137</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to growth in fully online enrollments, Texas State University also delivers 3% of its semester credit hours through 18 partially online degree programs.
Lamar Institute of Technology (LIT) offers educational programs and training to over 3,200 students that expand students’ knowledge, encourage their development, and give them marketable skills for today’s workforce.

LIT is a two-year technical college offering Associate of Applied Science (AAS) and Academic Transfer (AA/AS) Degrees. LIT offers three fully online degree or certificate programs and 23 partially online programs. Fully online programs include an associate degree in Health Information Technology, a Real Estate Certificate, and a Medical Coding Certificate.

LIT offers numerous online courses each semester. Students can build on their associate degrees at Lamar Institute of Technology by continuing with baccalaureate programs online through four-year institutions in the Texas State University System.

Lamar Institute of Technology, as of 2017, had 151 fully online students, with an additional 696 students taking at least one or more courses online.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester Credit Hours (SCH)</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Online SCH</td>
<td>1,170</td>
<td>1,442</td>
<td>3,502</td>
<td>4,542</td>
<td>5,832</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total SCH</td>
<td>27,490</td>
<td>28,728</td>
<td>27,720</td>
<td>29,714</td>
<td>31,894</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Lamar Institute of Technology’s continued growth in online education has provided the opportunity for students to continue their education at four-year TSUS institutions.
Lamar State College-Orange currently has a student body of approximately 2,700. Two-year academic programs are offered in business, communication, computer science, criminal justice, education, liberal arts, theater, natural science and sociology. These academic programs lead to associate of science degrees and transfers to four-year institutions, such as Sam Houston State University and Lamar University, for students seeking baccalaureate degrees online.

Thirty technical programs are available, leading to associate of applied science degrees, certificates of completion and institutional awards. Over 40 hybrid courses are available each semester and more than 60 courses are offered fully online, allowing students to “attend” class at any location they prefer.

Lamar State College-Orange has six fully online programs, including an associate of arts degree in Liberal Arts, an associate of science degree in Business, an associate of applied science degree in Business Management, and certificates in General Education, Business Management, and Entrepreneurship.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester Credit Hours (SCH)</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Online SCH</td>
<td>3,411</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>4,145</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>4,935</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total SCH</td>
<td>21,392</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>21,301</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>21,234</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to growth in fully online enrollments, Lamar State College-Orange also delivers 5% of its semester credit hours in a hybrid/blended format.
Over 60 courses are offered online each semester at Lamar State College-Port Arthur, allowing additional flexibility in class schedules for students who are working. Eight-week sessions are available for students who wish to take courses over a shorter time period, as opposed to a traditional semester. Lamar State College-Port Arthur students can enroll in online courses after consulting with an advisor. Students new to Lamar State College must first apply for admission to the college. The registration period for online courses is concurrent with on-campus courses.

Over 2,600 Lamar State College-Port Arthur students learn valuable, job-ready skills through a curriculum of more than 30 academic and technical programs that will transfer to a four-year college or university.

In the fall of 2018, Lamar State College-Port Arthur had 389 students taking at least one or more courses online, which is a 16.4% increase from 2017.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester Credit Hours (SCH)</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Online SCH</td>
<td>3,433</td>
<td>2,132</td>
<td>2,415</td>
<td>2,645</td>
<td>3,231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total SCH</td>
<td>19,038</td>
<td>16,605</td>
<td>18,268</td>
<td>19,719</td>
<td>22,153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Total SCH</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Total SCH</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Lamar State College-Port Arthur had 389 students taking at least one or more courses online, which is a 16.4% increase from 2017.
2020 TSUS Online Education Goals
Texas State University System component institutions have persisted in their commitment to increasing the number of courses and programs offered online. Building upon this success, the System is determined to be even more innovative and aggressive in its online education efforts by the year 2020.

TSUS aligns with the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board’s definitions of distance education: The formal educational process that occurs when students and instructors are not in the same physical setting for the majority (more than 50%) of instruction. A program in which a student may complete a majority (more than 50%) of the credit hours required for the program through distance education courses is a distance education degree. Fully Distance Courses are defined as: a course which may have mandatory face-to-face sessions totaling no more than 15% of the instructional time.

Highlighted below are TSUS’s goals in terms of credit hours earned online, degree programs offered online, and degrees earned online by 2020:
2020 TSUS Online Education Goals

2020 Online Education Goals

Out of 128 (program goal)
Lamar University

2020 TSUS Online Education Goals

Online Degree Programs
out of 40 (program goal)

Online Semester Credit Hours

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Credit Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>38,353</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>48,446</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>58,204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>65,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Online Degrees Awarded

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Degrees Awarded</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>2117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>2077</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>2214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>2500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SAM HOUSTON STATE UNIVERSITY

2020 Online Education Goals

2020 TSUS Online Education Goals

2020 TSUS Online Education Goals

49 Online Degree Programs out of 50 (program goal)
SUL ROSS STATE UNIVERSITY

15 Online Degree Programs
out of 12 (program goal)

2020 TSUS Online Education Goals
SUL ROSS STATE UNIVERSITY
RIO GRANDE COLLEGE

Online Degree Programs
out of 1 (program goal)

2016 2017 2018 2020

Online Semester Credit Hours

3,027 3,261 2,790 3,500

Online Degrees Awarded

7 7 7 8

2016 2017 2018 2020

2020 TSUS Online Education Goals
TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

2020 TSUS Online Education Goals

4 Online Degree Programs out of 8 (program goal)

- 2020 Online Semester Credit Hours:
  - 2016: 18,341
  - 2017: 19,229
  - 2018: 22,763
  - 2020: 25,000

- 2020 Online Degrees Awarded:
  - 2016: 29
  - 2017: 36
  - 2018: 36
  - 2020: 70
2020 TSUS Online Education Goals

LAMAR INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

3 Online Programs out of 8 (program goal)

2020 TSUS Online Education Goals

Online Semester Credit Hours

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Value</td>
<td>3,402</td>
<td>4,542</td>
<td>5,832</td>
<td>4,061</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Online Credentials Awarded

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Value</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>237</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LAMAR STATE COLLEGE - ORANGE

6 Online Programs out of 3 (program goal)

2020 TSUS Online Education Goals

Online Programs Awarded:
- 2016: 0
- 2017: 2
- 2018: 3
- 2019: 5

Online Semester Credit Hours:
- 2016: 4,935
- 2017: 5,701
- 2018: 6,266
- 2020: 11,000
2020 TSUS Online Education Goals

LAMAR STATE COLLEGE - PORT ARTHUR

Online Programs

out of 6 (program goal)
Online education is an opportunity for TSUS members to work together by increasing the number of fully online students and programs, serving adult learners and underserved communities across the state.
Online education continues to grow in importance for institutions in the Texas State University System and for higher education. In many ways, degree programs offered online have become mainstream, in TSUS and beyond. But as the System continues to make strides with our own efforts, there are still numerous opportunities and challenges ahead for online education—most notably in terms of providing high-quality, student-friendly online programs and continuing the development and provision of sharing academic and technology services.

**Shared Online Education Services**

One of the key benefits of providing shared services is their role in maintaining operations in case of a natural disaster, like Hurricane Harvey, among the institutions of TSUS. Since the System includes institutions of widely varying size and available staff expertise, shared services help spread that expertise among all campuses and their online education operations.

Specific benefits of shared services to TSUS include an enhanced ability to maintain operations, retain state funding and business continuity, and provide practical help, for people whose lives have been disrupted by natural disasters or other emergencies, in resuming their educational objectives.

*Continued on page 29*
In response to the very difficult conditions stemming from unprecedented floods brought to the Houston-Huntsville area by Hurricane Harvey in late August 2017, Sam Houston State University prepared 181 online sections of a shortened semester schedule. The 7 1/2-week or “7B” class sections began on Wednesday, October 18, 2017. The university’s intention, in offering these additional sections, was to provide students who may have had to delay or drop classes due to the storm with a practical alternative that allowed them to keep their education plans on track.

Over 86% of students successfully completed their 7B semester due to the joint efforts of SHSU Online, SHSU Enrollment Management, and the faculty who volunteered at the last minute to teach in the shortened semester.

In addition to addressing humanitarian concerns, the 7B semester mitigated potential financial losses for Sam Houston State University. In fact, the 1,085 enrollments generated over $1.5 million in revenue.

Case Study:
Sam Houston State University
Real World Impact

Click here to learn about the full experience.

Sam Houston State University
7 1/2 week (7B) Class Summary
Total Enrollment: 1,085
Online Sections: 181
Individual Students: 859

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Also of note is that almost 10% (83 students) of those enrolled in the 7B term were not in close proximity to substantially damaged or flooded areas. This indicates a broadly-based demand from students for the shortened semester.

The successful SHSU Online response to the challenges of Hurricane Harvey suggests that two-year TSUS institutions in the Golden Triangle could remain operational by sharing core curriculum courses online. This shared services approach may prove equally valuable in meeting students' needs, mitigating losses, and generating additional revenue.

Continuing to explore shared services across the System will enhance collaboration. In addition, shared services strengthen the ability of institutions to provide streamlined degree pathways from the System's two-year institutions to its four-year universities online. Academic initiatives, such as designing a lecture capture solution for Sul Ross State University Rio Grande College to transition two-way interactive courses to fully online, will be undertaken. This initiative could dramatically increase enrollment, while enabling education opportunities for geographically isolated students.

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Continuing development in fully online education can increase educational opportunities for adult learners and underserved regions across the state.

A number of shared online education services are currently being explored, including:

- Shared instance of Blackboard
- System-wide license for proctoring software
- Lecture capture and video hosting software
- Media captioning and transcription
- ADA compliance software
- 24 x 7 support desk
- Data analytics
- Streamlined degree pathways between 2-year and 4-year institutions
- Joint graduate degree programs between institutions
- Workshops in online pedagogy
- Annual System-wide online education conference

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Institutional Collaboration

Over the last two years, in support of System-wide collaborative efforts, Sam Houston State University hosted week-long workshops in online pedagogy for faculty members from Sul Ross State University, Sul Ross State University Rio Grande College, Lamar Institute of Technology, and Lamar University-Orange who teach online. Collaborative activities like these workshops will continue to help increase the proficiency and familiarity of faculty members in all TSUS institutions with aspects of online pedagogy and technology.

As a result of the workshops in online pedagogy with Lamar Institute of Technology, SHSU has established a memorandum of understanding to support online education activities.

Sam Houston State University and Lamar Institute of Technology share common academic interests and seek to develop collaborations in the area of shared services to support online education. The activities undertaken pursuant to the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) are based on a spirit of cooperation and reciprocity that is intended to be of mutual benefit to both parties.

Both institutions agree to encourage the development of shared services for online education. The objective is sharing services and resources in alignment with the Texas State University System 2020 online education goals.

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Next Steps

Fully Online Students Across Texas

The following graphs illustrate the far-reaching impact of online programs and represents Sam Houston State University’s 100% online students and their location in the state of Texas.

The Texas State University System is well positioned to serve adult learners in metropolitan and rural areas across the state.

Partnerships between TSUS institutions create a stronger joint presence and enable the System to continue being the leader in online education in Texas... eventually exceeding the 14% level already attained.
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