



MONTANA
UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

Online Learning in Montana

September 2021 Report

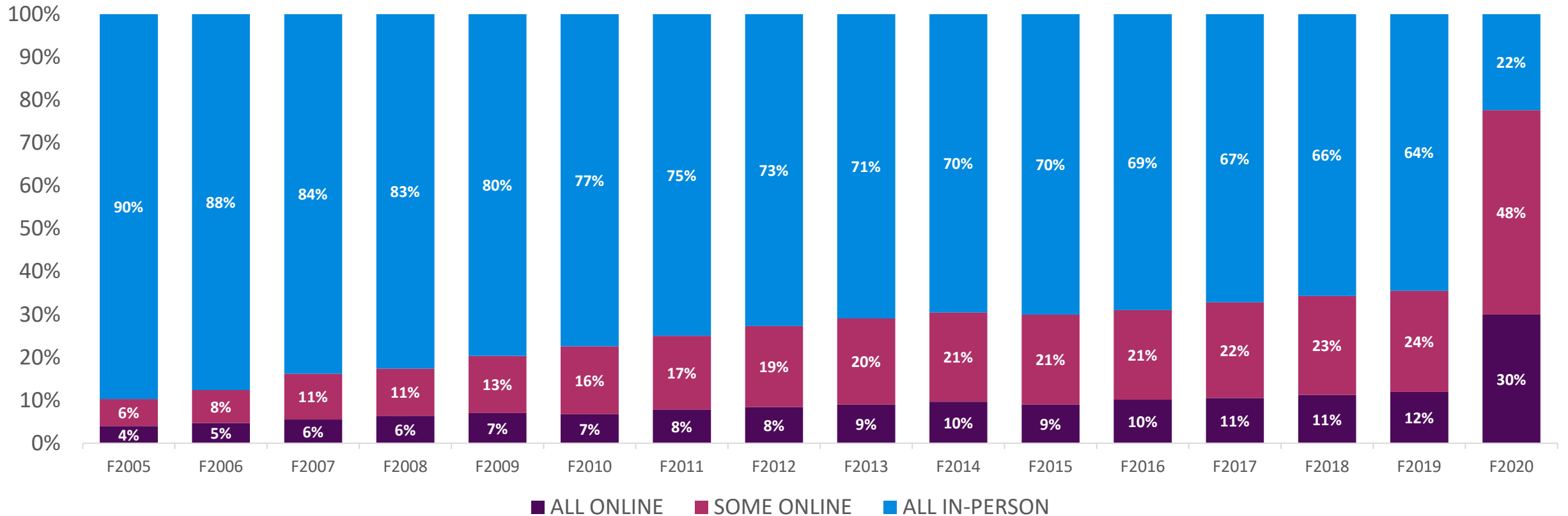


OCHE – Academic, Research, and Student Affairs

Online Has Grown in Montana

MUS resident students, all levels, by attendance modality

Source: MUS data warehouse



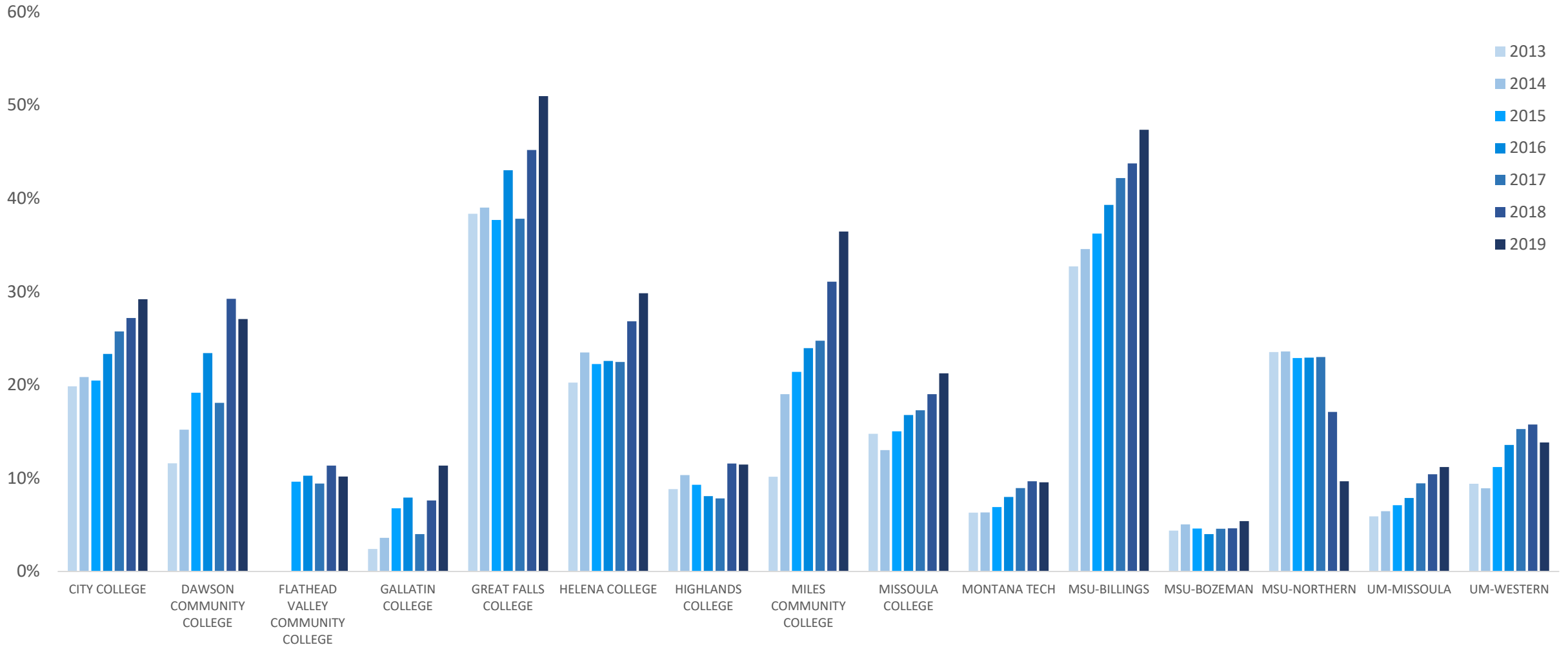
- Steady increase in online enrollments up to 2019, when 36% were taking at least some coursework online
- In Fall 2020, due to the pandemic, 78% took at least one online/distance course



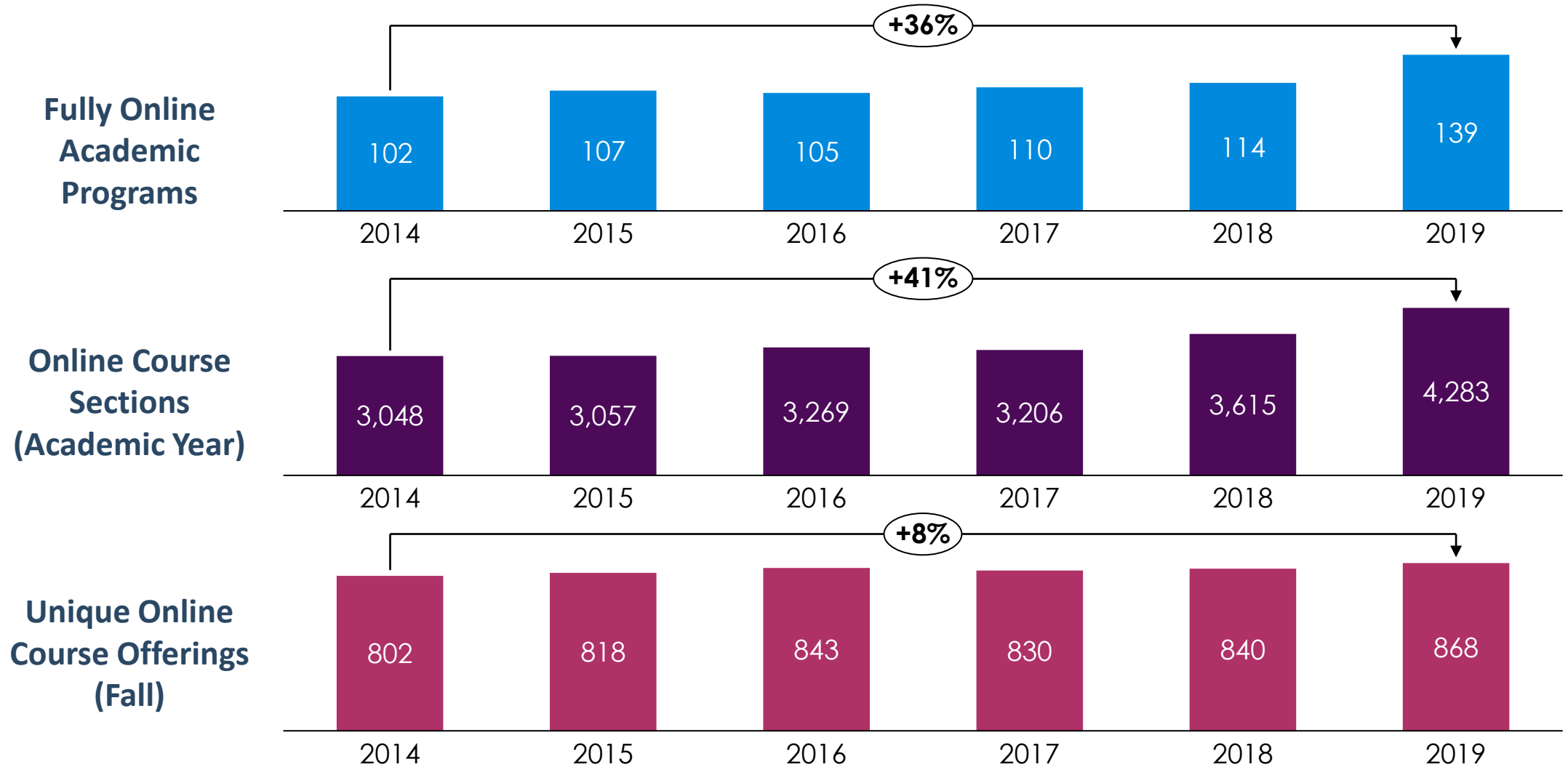
Online Has Grown in Montana

Proportion of student credit hours delivered online, 2013-2019, by campus

Source: MUS data warehouse



Online Has Grown in Montana



Who Attends Online?

Selected Demographics by Attendance Modality

(Fall 2019 EOT, MT Resident Students)

Source: MUS data warehouse; linked DLI UI wage data

| | Face-to-face | Some Distance | Online Only |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| % of total resident stud. (n) | 65.4% (20,231) | 22.5% (6,968) | 12.1% (3,731) |
| Non-traditional | 53.8% ▼ | 22.6% ▲ | 23.6% ▲ |
| Working Students* | 57.6% ▼ | 25.0% ▲ | 17.3% ▲ |
| Part-time | 62.6% ▼ | 12.0% ▼ | 25.5% ▲ |
| Graduate Students | 59.2% ▼ | 13.7% ▼ | 27.1% ▲ |
| Average Credit Load (undergraduates) | 11.7 | 13.6 | 7.3 |

* Fall 2017 figure reported. Student categorized as working if unemployment insurance wage data indicate >\$500 in earnings for the fourth quarter of 2017.

- Fully online students are much more likely to be non-traditional, work while attending, and attend part-time



Why Online?

REASON #1

Students want online options



Why Online?

5,361 Montanans enrolled online at out-of-state institutions in AY 2018-19.

Why?

Because online flexibility is attractive to key student demographics:

- Veterans
- Working professionals
- Place-bound and seeking a particular program

And these institutions specialize in serving them.

| Institution | State | Montana Residents Enrolled Online AY2018-19 |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|---|
| Western Governors University | Utah | 750 |
| Southern New Hampshire University | New Hampshire | 294 |
| University of Phoenix | Arizona | 267 |
| Grand Canyon University | Arizona | 249 |
| Liberty University | Virginia | 189 |
| American Public University System | West Virginia | 148 |
| Arizona State University | Arizona | 137 |
| Penn Foster College | Arizona | 136 |
| Colorado Technical University | Colorado | 128 |
| Capella University | Minnesota | 122 |
| Purdue University Global, Inc. | Indiana | 116 |
| Ashworth College | Georgia | 108 |
| Excelsior College | New York | 81 |
| Brigham Young University - Idaho | Idaho | 71 |
| Columbia Southern University | Alabama | 70 |
| OTHER CAMPUSES | | 2,495 |
| TOTAL | | 5,361 |

Source: NC-SARA, 2019 Enrollment Report



Why Online?

REASON #1 → Students want online options

Fully online
programs for
transitory
populations

*Ex. Great Falls College
online AA / AS*

Hybrid
programs for
place-bound
Montanans

*Ex. UM-Western
education pathways*

Take unique
programs to a
larger audience

*Ex. UM-Missoula Master
of Social Work*



Why Online?

REASON #2

Online facilitates efficient & sustainable program delivery



Looking for courses to complete your degree on a schedule that works for you?

It is easy to find and register for classes offered by other Montana University System institutions that will count as credit at your home campus. All available classes listed below.

YOUR INSTITUTION

- I don't have a home institution
- I have a home institution

Miles Community College ▼

SEARCH BY

- Keyword

COURSE CODE OR NAME

Enter a course code or name

Find Classes

collaboration and cross-registration could add substantial value



FULL CLASSROOMS

Under-enrolled courses can be opened to other MUS institutions, making it more likely that seats are full.



MORE OPTIONS

Small institutions can give their students more options by leveraging course offerings across the MUS.



MORE PROGRAMS

Hub and spoke program collaborations can make costly programs that require face-to-face or lab learning viable at small campuses.



What's Next?

1. Gain efficiencies through system technology adoption
 - System opt-in contract for key video capture and storage software
2. Review how we ensure and communicate the quality of online courses
 - Revised "Core Principles of Quality for eLearning Courses"
 - Shared professional development opportunities

