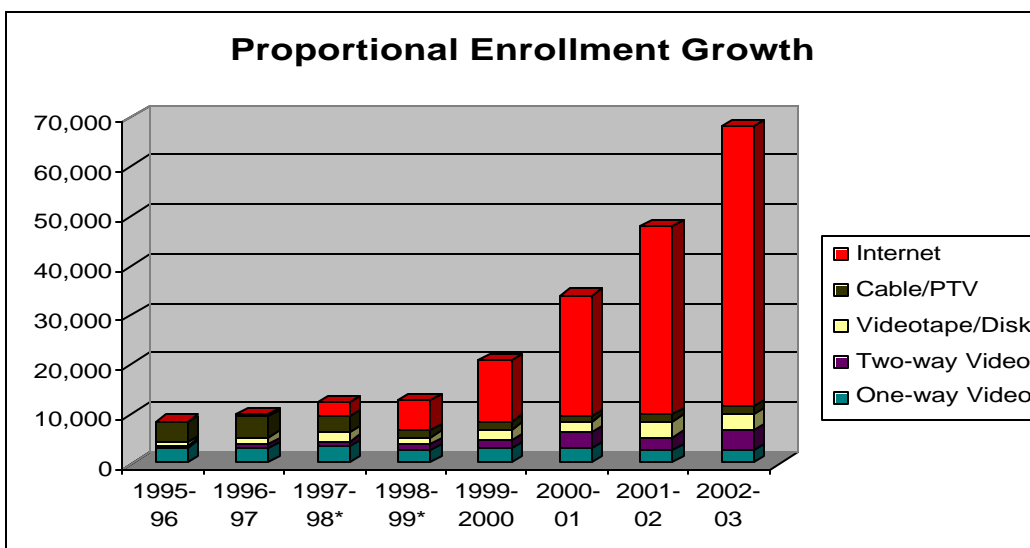


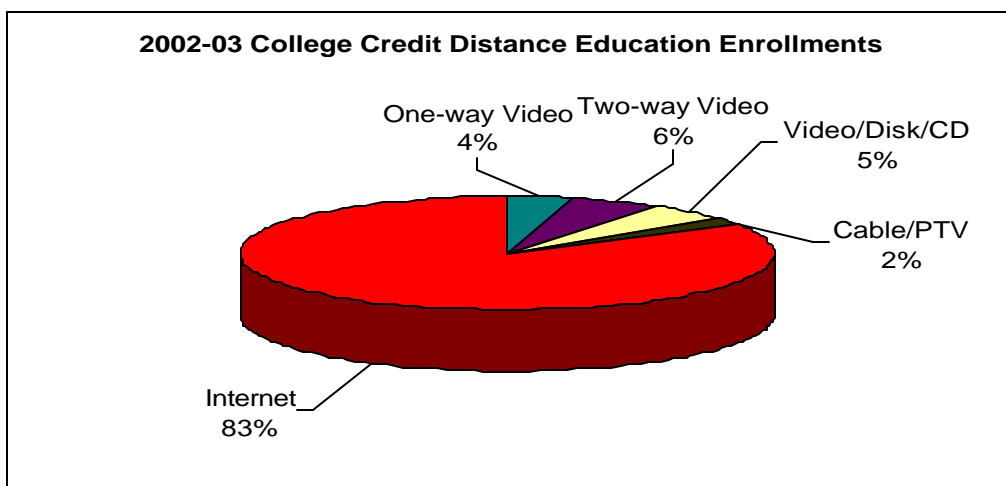
E-Learning Continues Upward Path in Indiana for 2002-03

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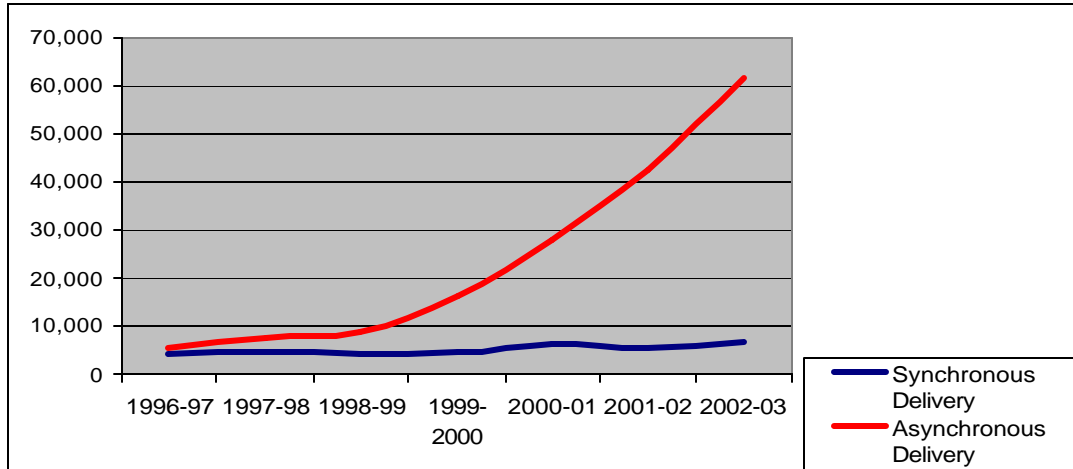
Indiana learners continued to respond in large numbers last year to educational opportunities made accessible through technology. In its annual report on college e-learning trends for 2002-03, the Indiana College Network reported 68,232 course enrollments at public postsecondary institutions—an increase of 42% over the previous year, and a five-year increase of 438%.



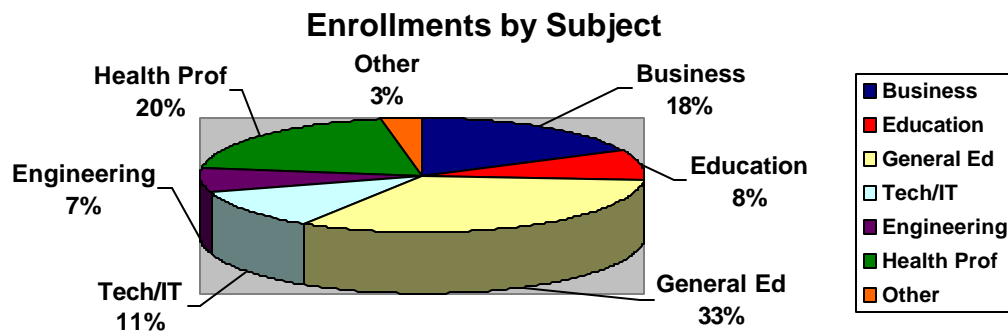
Continuing growth trends from the past few years, online learning now accounts for 83% of those enrollments. Videoconferencing enrollments also grew by 38%, videotape and cable classes increased by 20%, and satellite numbers remained steady, but the 48% increase in Internet course enrollments drove growth overall.



Though a stable core of students continues to prefer synchronous classes with “live” real-time interaction, adults’ needs for flexibility in class schedules favor “asynchronous” interaction modes such as Internet, videotape, DVD, and cable or public TV.



Indiana’s colleges and universities now offer 70 degree programs—roughly one-third each at associate, baccalaureate, and master’s degree levels—plus another 63 certificate and endorsement programs for completion at a distance via technology (many of the latter on a non-credit basis and therefore not included in this report). Approximately 80% of credit-course enrollments are at the undergraduate level. The remaining 20% are graduate students pursuing degrees such as MBA, engineering, nursing, and various teacher-education master’s and licensure programs. The proportions of enrollments by subject area have changed little over the past three years, though the numbers keep climbing in each area.



Approximately 1,600 technology-delivered credit classes are offered each semester, with enrollment increases handled occasionally by increasing class size but more often by opening new sections to help assure adequate instructor attention. Much of the growth in ICN catalog listings during the past two years has come from new high-school classes and from a variety of new non-credit self-study opportunities. (See the ICN online catalog at www.icn.org for more information.)

All of the public institutions shared in the e-learning growth, particularly those with new programs climbing an adoption curve.¹ Ivy Tech State College and Vincennes University, the Community College of Indiana partners, combine to account for 46% of total e-learning enrollments. Several recent program launches gave IUPUI the largest increase of any single campus, at approximately 83%, but even the well-established programs at Ball State University and Purdue University West Lafayette saw healthy increases. For comparison, total enrollment increases last year at public institutions averaged approximately 3%.

2002-03 Enrollment Growth by Institution

Institution	E-Learning Enrollment	Increase over 2001-02
Ball State University	2,819	11%
Indiana State University	6,635	33%
Indiana University System	18,132	74%
IUPUI	15,287	83%
Ivy Tech State College	28,368	36%
Purdue University West Lafayette*	2,429	60%
University of Southern Indiana	4,968	42%
Vincennes University	2,941	293%

**data unavailable for Purdue regional campuses*

Although the number of students engaged in e-learning is still only an estimated 6% of total postsecondary enrollments, their impact continues to grow. The nearly 203,000 credit hours of tuition and fees accounted for an estimated \$20.5 million in revenue, and the 6,732 annualized full-time-equivalent (FTE) student count is larger than most regional campuses.

Because Indiana's universities have been engaged for over thirty years in offering distance education to students in remote areas, they have made sure that students can actually complete a full degree program via technology with few if any trips to campus. As a result, unusual among state virtual university consortia, few Indiana e-learners are traditional on-campus students. Instead, most are working adults with job and family responsibilities that prevent their regular attendance at a campus or learning center, even if the campus is near their home or workplace. Most are women, most have children still at home, and the average age is in the early thirties.

As with trends more common in other states, Indiana is beginning to see some campus-based students use online learning to pick up a closed or cancelled class they need in order to stay on track to complete their degree in a timely manner. Often, they may be Ivy Tech students who work full time and care for children, take one class at the local Ivy Tech campus, and take another class—from Ivy Tech or another institution—via technology so they can complete their associate degree in four years or less on a part-time basis. Repeatedly, they praise the flexibility of distance learning. Actual geographic distance is seldom the issue, except for the extent to which greater distance means more time traveling to and from work, home, and campus. Their choice is typically not between on-campus and distance learning but rather between distance learning and nothing. Students report that had it not been for distance learning, they would not have been able to fulfill their educational goals.

¹Several independent universities now participate in ICN, and their e-learning enrollments will be included in future reports.

The Indiana College Network is a service of the Indiana Higher Education Telecommunication System.

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