33% of matriculated U.S. college students will take an online course this year.
42% of all students in an online class are working toward an undergraduate degree.
Why is online education so popular?
A Review of Literature

- **Flexibility & Accessibility** (Ilgaz & Gulbahar, 2017; Li & Irby, 2008; Nelson, 2008; El Mansour & Mupinga, 2007)
- **Sense of community** (Huang & Law, 2018)
- **Different perspectives through worldwide classroom** (Li & Irby, 2008).
- **Location** (Babson, 2018)
The Framework

7 Principles of Good Practice of Undergraduate Education (Chickering & Gamson, 1987)

1. Encourages contacts between students and faculty.
2. Develops reciprocity and cooperation among students.
3. Uses active learning techniques.
5. Emphasizes time on task.
6. Communicates high expectations.
7. Respects diverse talents and ways of learning.
Q-Methodology

33 Participants
21 Males & 12 Females
Concourse: 34 Statements
Most Like Me
Least Like Me
Participant Interviews
PQMethod Software
Factors & Analysis
# The Concourse

## 1. Encourages contacts between students and faculty.

| 1. | I like getting helpful, personal feedback from my online instructor. |
| 2. | I don’t need an instructor; I can teach myself. |
| 3. | I prefer online classes because I can direct-message or email my professor a question rather than ask a question in front of the whole class. |
| 4. | It’s hard to get ahead of my online course instructor when I have questions. |
| 5. | I enjoy building friendships with online classmates. |

## 2. Develops reciprocity and cooperation among students.

| 6. | Online group discussions are just as good as meeting with a study group. |
| 7. | Coordinating online group work is more difficult than I expected. |
| 8. | I like that we still have group projects in my online classes. |
| 9. | I wish I could have had study sessions with my classmates during my online class. |
| 10. | I would hate an online course that never offers contact with any other person because I learn so much from my classmates. |

## 3. Uses active learning techniques.

| 11. | Online interactive elements (games, discussions, etc.) make the course more entertaining for me. |
| 12. | The online courses simply repeats what the book says. |
| 13. | I feel like the learning techniques are effective. |
| 14. | I enjoy active interaction with the course. |
| 15. | Online courses are just a bunch of words that don’t keep me engaged. |

## 4. Gives prompt feedback

| 16. | I didn’t feel like my online professor explained why I was docked points on a test or a paper, so I didn’t know how to do better the next time. |
| 17. | The feedback is clear and simple from my instructor. |
| 18. | I feel important to my instructor by how quickly he responds to my emails and questions. |
| 19. | I didn’t mind that I never received feedback from an online instructor. |
| 20. | I hate it when an online instructor does not grade my work within two weeks. |

## 5. Emphasizes time on task

| 21. | I struggle with online courses when they don’t have concrete deadlines. |
| 22. | The online course never told me how much time to study or spend on classwork. I had no idea how many hours would be too many or too few. |
| 23. | Traditional classes waste time (the drive to and from school, walking to class, finding a seat and the endless distractions). |
| 24. | I still put in the recommended hours for studying and classwork, even though I knew I could get away with less. |
| 25. | I like it when the course is very clear about what to do when and for how long. |

## 6. Communicates high expectations.

| 26. | My online instructor encouraged me to do my best. |
| 27. | I liked that the online course expected me to master a large amount of information. |
| 28. | I did not like that the course requirements set high standards that were too difficult to reach. It’s like the instructor was trying to prove it was not easier than in-person class. |
| 29. | Because I was not in a face-to-face classroom, I slipped into an attitude of just trying to pass the class rather than learning everything thoroughly. |

## 7. Respects diverse talents and ways of learning.

| 30. | I never use online course video transcripts. |
| 31. | I love that recorded lectures let me replay the parts I don’t understand. |
| 32. | I appreciate that online courses allow me to study and learn in a way that’s best for me. |
| 33. | Videos help me learn and remember material better than just reading it. |
| 34. | I hate online courses that rely solely on reading, memorizing, and taking tests. |
FACTORS
Factor 1: The Busy Bees
Meet the Busy Bees.

These students are very independent. They are involved in many different activities in their life (work, school, parenting, socializing, hobbies, etc.)

They care deeply about learning and accumulating knowledge. They value education and a college degree. They want feedback to aid in their learning.

They like the ability to complete things on their own timetable. They want to complete things alone.
“Most Like Me” Statements:

Statement #1: I like getting helpful, personal feedback from my online instructor.

Statement #32: I appreciate that online courses allow me to study and learn in a way that’s best for me.

“Least Like Me” Statements:

Statement #16: I didn’t feel like my online professor explained why I was docked points on a test or a paper, so I didn’t know how to do better the next time.

Statement #8: I like that we still have group projects in my online classes.

Statement #5: I enjoy building friendships with my online classmates.
Busy Bee Quotes

“"It is very important to me to get high quality feedback on assignments...[to develop] a stronger understanding of the concepts being tested or assigned.”

“"I like being able to work ahead, seeing the assignments that are scheduled a few days out and get started on them.”

“I really appreciated the flexibility that my online classes provided for me. I would not have been able to complete my degree without them.”
“It was frustrating to me that I couldn't just do the work at my own pace because I had to coordinate with my group members.”

“The transcripts part I use all the time, and find them very helpful.”

“I really like being able to learn at the times that best fit with my schedule, which sometimes is 6 or 7 in the morning, or way late at night, just depending on what I've got going on that day and the work, activities, [or] homework that I've committed to in that time frame per day.”
Key Differences

➔ **Flexible Learning Opportunities**
Online courses allow them to study and learn in ways that best suit them (reading, videos, online activities, transcripts, etc.)

➔ **Feedback to Learn**
Genuinely want to learn, improve, & acquire knowledge.

➔ ** Academically Minded**
Value education. Enjoy reading and re-reading.

➔ **Independence**
Along with factor 3, these people loathe group work.

➔ **Use of Video Transcripts**
Achievement-oriented. Enjoy the process of learning.
Factor 2: Teacher-Reliant
Meet the Teacher-Reliant.

These students like to learn at their own pace, but they often procrastinate without concrete deadlines or a teacher keeping them on track.

They are learn better from visuals. They do not want to memorize information from a book. They want to see examples and learn in various ways.

They want the professor to teach them the material and/or tell them what to do and when to do it.
**Teacher-Reliant Statements**

**“Most Like Me” Statements:**

**Statement #33:** Videos help me learn and remember material better than just reading it.

**Statement #15:** Online courses are just a bunch of words that don’t keep me engaged.

**Statement #28:** I did not like that the course requirements set high standards that were too difficult to reach. It’s like the instructor was trying to prove it was not easier than an in-person class.

**Statement #25:** I like it when the course is very clear about what to do when and for how long.

**“Least Like Me” Statements:**

**Statement #27:** I liked that the online course expected me to master a large amount of information.

**Statement #2:** I don’t need an instructor; I can teach myself.

**Statement #3:** I prefer online classes because I can direct-message or email my professor a question rather than ask a question in front of the whole class.
“[Online classes] are a teach yourself class that is two times harder than a regular class because you don't have that same in-class discussion and ability to ask questions.”

“You just have too many deadlines. You think you'll get them done and you won't. . . . I wanted a professor. I can read the words out of a book myself. They take people’s’ answers and experiences and make more of it.”

“I never got feedback. I never knew what I missed. How am I supposed to know the correct answer or how to improve?”
Teacher-Reliant Quotes

“Online classes are meant to manage your time. But they try to put more work than necessary.”

“If there are no deadlines I don't know how much time to put in or I just procrastinate.”

“I am not very good at reading a book and understanding everything. I like to learn from a professor who will explain things to me when I don't totally understand them.”
Key Differences

➔ **Dependent on Instructor**
Access to a professor is needed to teach them or answer questions. The teacher is a mentor and expert in the field.

➔ **Manageable Expectations**
Online classes shouldn’t be twice as hard. Expectations need to be realistic.

➔ **Athletically Inclined**
50% of participants in this group were college athletes.

➔ **Visual Learners**
Dislike reading and memorizing information.

➔ **Feedback for Correct Answers**
Feedback is expected because it is key to know how to improve and get more points.
Factor 3: A-Loners
Meet the A-Loners.

These students want an A and to be left alone. They avoid group work and interaction with classmates at all costs.

They take online classes because they perceive them to be easier or less work. The online classes they take are generally required classes or GEs.

They enjoy the flexibility of completing homework. They want to do the least amount of work possible to get an A.
A-Loner Statements

Most Like Me:

**Statement #30:** I never use online course video transcripts.

**Statement #31:** I love that recorded lectures let me replay the parts I don’t understand.

**Statement #33:** Videos help me learn and remember material better than just reading it.

**Statement #20:** I hate it when an online instructor does not grade my work within two weeks.

Least Like Me:

**Statement #5:** I enjoy building friendships with online classmates.

**Statement #8:** I like that we still have group projects in my online classes.

**Statement #10:** I would hate an online course that never offers contact with any other person because I learn so much from my classmates.
A-Loner Quotes

“The reason I decided to take an online course is because I don’t like to interact with classmates.”

“[For subjects] I want to engage with, I don’t want to take online [classes].”

“It’s flexible and it seems easier.”
“Watching videos is a great learning tool.”

“I’m a very independent person, and if I need help in an online class, I’m not going to go to my classmates for help.”

“I am a kinesthetic learner...and do not like group work or discussions online.”
Key Differences

➔ **Avoid Group Work**
   A motivation for online courses is to avoid group work and interaction with classmates.

➔ **Visual Learners**
   Video content and demonstrations are ideal.

➔ **Academically Based**
   Online classes are used for the easy classes or courses they don't want to take.

➔ **Easy “A”**
   Minimal effort for an “A” grade.

➔ **Choice of Learning Style**
   Enjoy having the choice to learn how they want.
SO WHAT?
This Research...

1. Provides specific reasons why online classes are increasingly popular.
2. Uses a well-known and often-cited framework to strengthen the research in online education at the undergraduate level.
3. Defines what previous studies mean by “flexibility”.
4. Identifies inconsistencies and deficiencies in online courses.
5. Gives recommendations to improve online education.
6. Proves that online courses have a permanent place in the university setting and in undergraduate degrees.
7. Employs a different methodology from most current online education research.
8. Supports the proponents of online education expansion.
Evaluate Sessions and Win!

- Download and open OLC Conferences mobile app
- Navigate to specific session to evaluate
- Select “Evaluate Session” on session details screen (located under session type and track)
- Complete session evaluation*

*Each session evaluation completed (limited to one per session) = one contest entry

**Five (5) $25 gift cards** will be awarded
Must submit evals using the OLC Conferences mobile app or website