



UPCEA

ANNUAL CONFERENCE 26

APRIL 15–17, 2026
NEW ORLEANS, LA
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**When ‘Build It and They’ll Come’ Stops Working:
Leveraging Labor Market Insights and Strategic
Partnerships to Fuel Enrollment Growth**



EAB

LOYOLA
UNIVERSITY
NEW ORLEANS





Meet Your Presenters



Val Fox
EAB Adult Learner Recruitment



Natalie Wittmann
Ohio University
OHIO Online



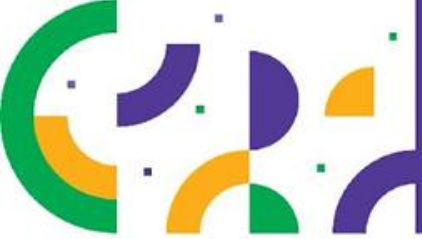
Paul Cesarini
Loyola New Orleans



Beth Donaldson
EAB Adult Learner Recruitment



Kathy Wilson
Ohio University
OHIO Online



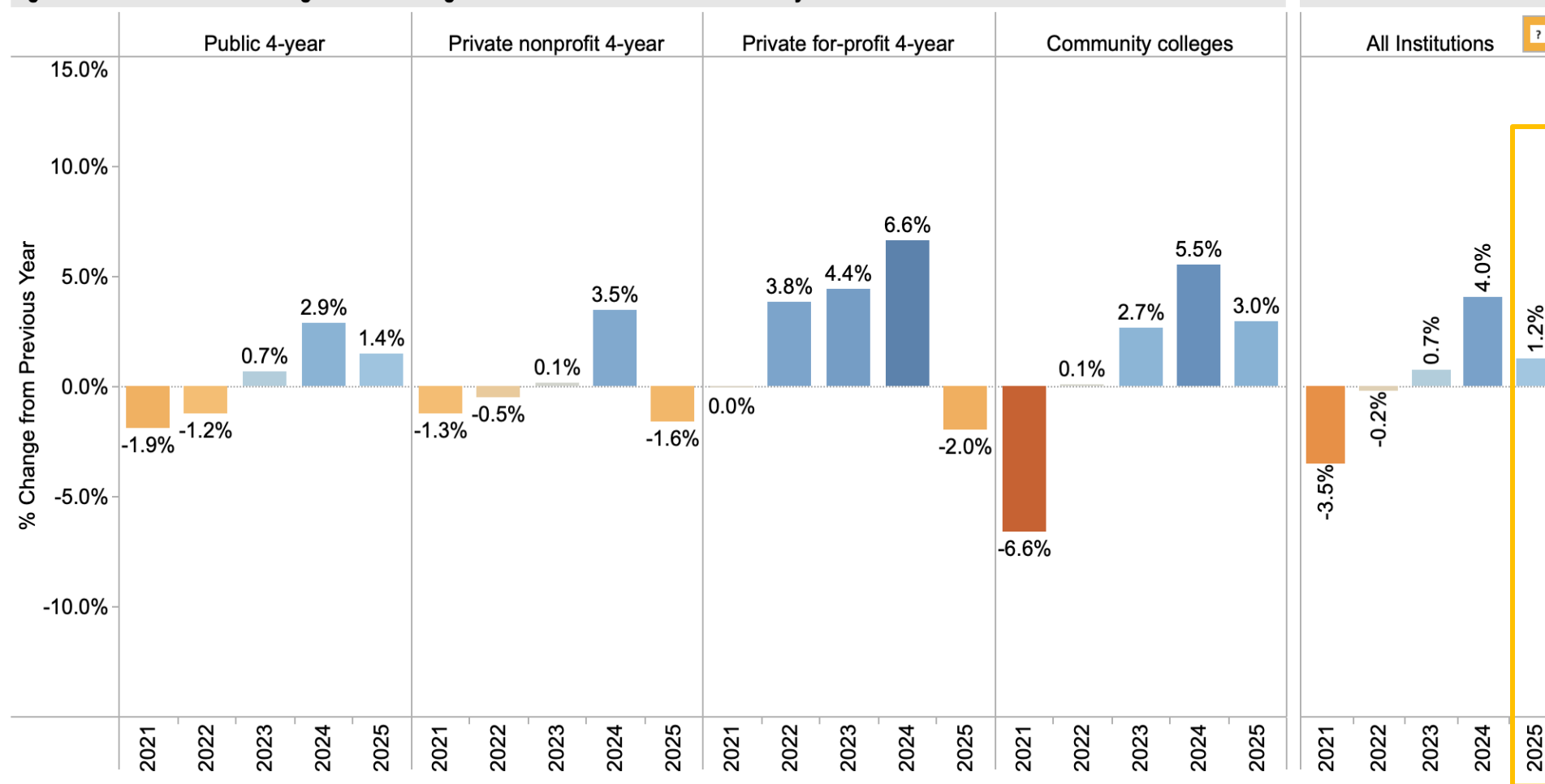
AGENDA

- **Trends in Online & Graduate Enrollment**
- Aligning Programs with Market Demand
- Strategic Partnership Case Studies
Ohio University & Loyola University, New Orleans



Fall 2025 Undergraduate Enrollment Highlights

Figure 2.1 Annual Percent Change in Fall Undergraduate Enrollment for All Students by Sector

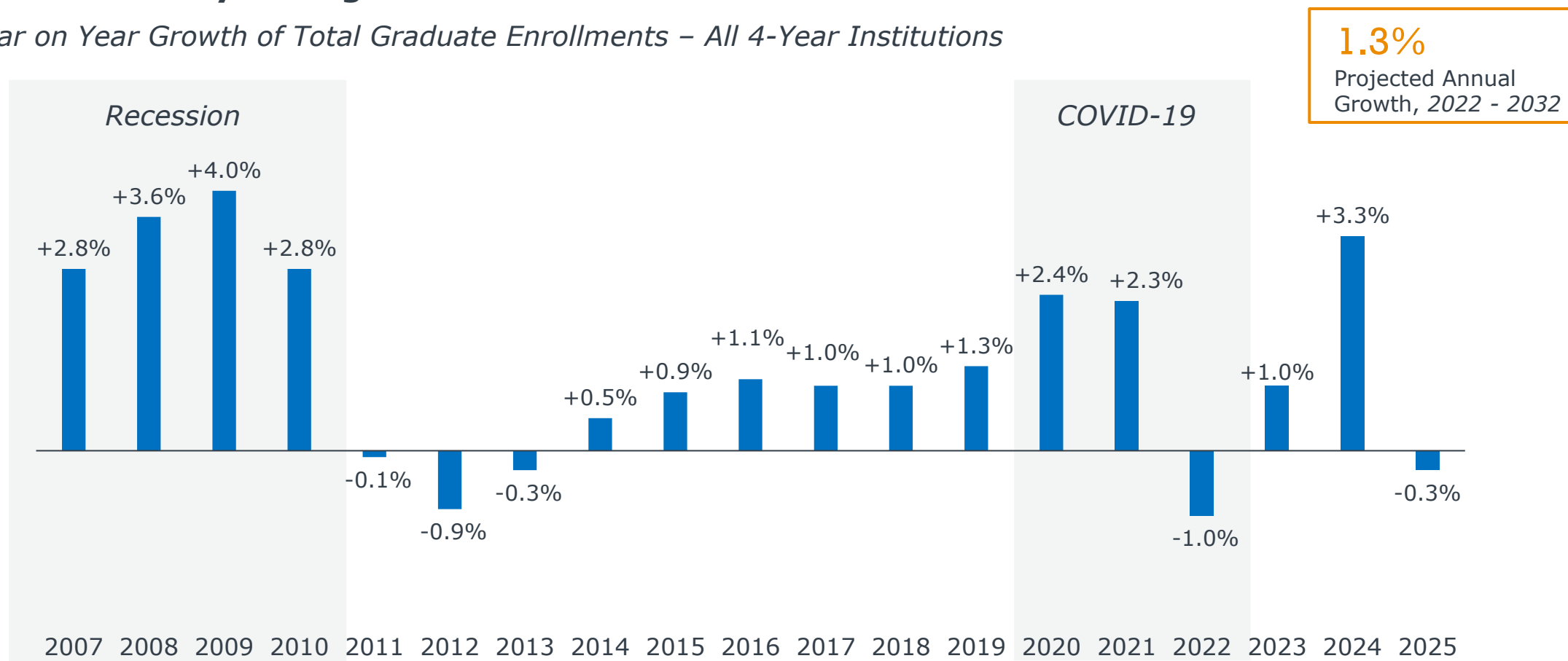




Grad Enrollment Growth Rebounds

Are We Already Seeing Recession-Like Graduate Enrollment Growth?

Year on Year Growth of Total Graduate Enrollments – All 4-Year Institutions





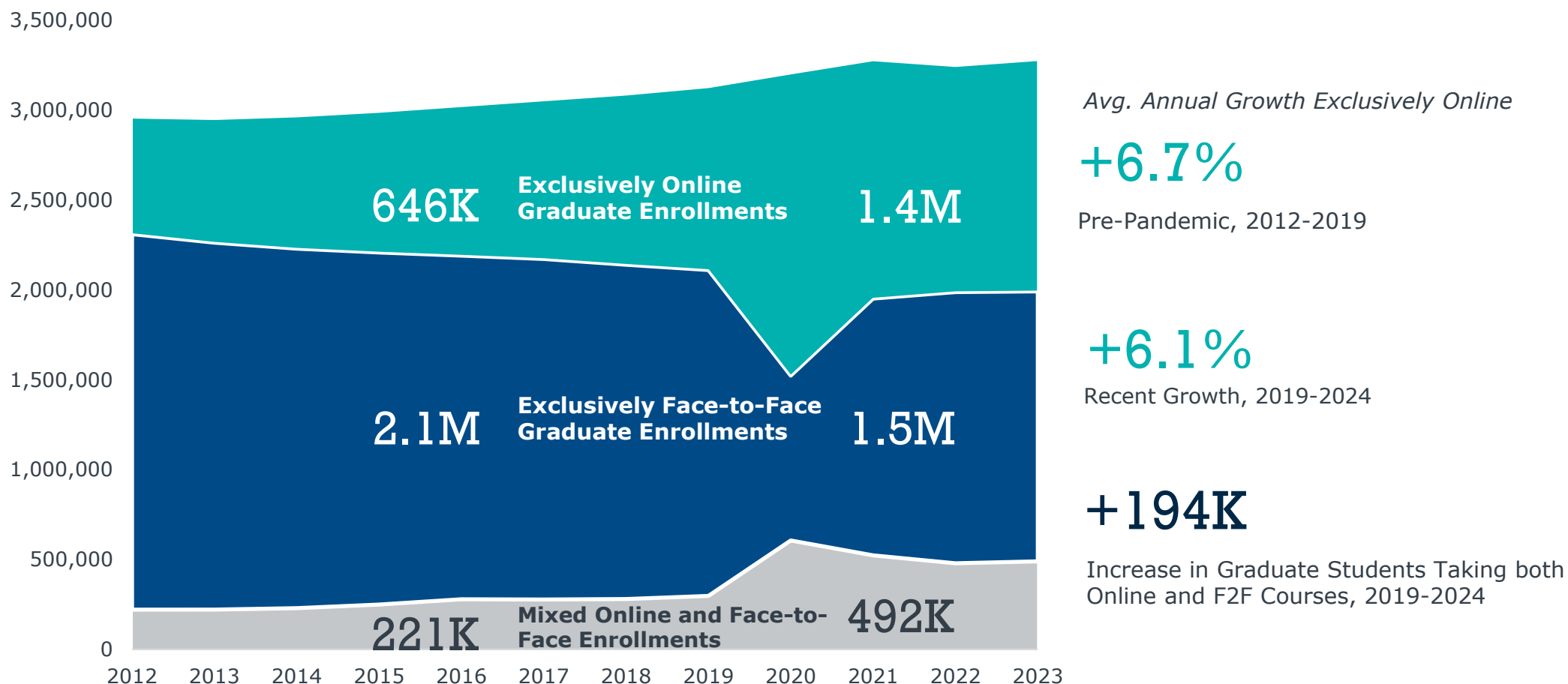
Fall 2025 Top Graduate Programs: National Trends

Figure 6.1 National Graduate Enrollment in Top 20 Major Field Families

	2020		2021		2022		2023		2024		2025	
	Enrollment	% Change from Previous Y..	Enrollment	% Change from Previous Y..	Enrollment	% Change from Previous Y..	Enrollment	% Change from Previous Y..	Enrollment	% Change from Previous Y..	Enrollment	% Change from Previous Y..
Health Professions a..	716,436		724,806	1.2%	712,002	-1.8%	710,638	-0.2%	745,723	4.9%	760,869	2.0%
Business, Manageme..	485,402		484,105	-0.3%	458,661	-5.3%	448,913	-2.1%	456,033	1.6%	457,089	0.2%
Education	465,168		455,976	-2.0%	431,560	-5.4%	422,739	-2.0%	427,918	1.2%	424,062	-0.9%
Computer and Inform..	140,196		163,070	16.3%	193,252	18.5%	218,843	13.2%	220,885	0.9%	190,002	-14.0%
Engineering	158,804		168,201	5.9%	176,139	4.7%	175,977	-0.1%	180,129	2.4%	176,159	-2.2%
Psychology	140,603		148,328	5.5%	148,454	0.1%	147,690	-0.5%	148,657	0.7%	157,313	5.8%
Legal Professions an..	131,801		139,810	6.1%	136,712	-2.2%	137,491	0.6%	137,096	-0.3%	142,299	3.8%
Public Administration ..	130,400		133,164	2.1%	126,876	-4.7%	122,482	-3.5%	127,399	4.0%	134,077	5.2%
Biological and Biome..	95,547		100,361	5.0%	103,077	2.7%	106,103	2.9%	110,354	4.0%	111,991	1.5%
Multi/Interdisciplinary ..	38,445		45,198	17.6%	59,155	30.9%	75,448	27.5%	88,751	17.6%	89,139	0.4%
Social Sciences	61,483		62,218	1.2%	60,884	-2.1%	58,953	-3.2%	58,322	-1.1%	58,265	-0.1%
Physical Sciences	53,727		54,870	2.1%	54,679	-0.3%	55,001	0.6%	56,023	1.9%	55,859	-0.3%
Visual and Performin..	48,705		49,389	1.4%	48,247	-2.3%	46,628	-3.4%	46,127	-1.1%	45,213	-2.0%
Theology and Religio..	45,965		44,470	-3.3%	44,226	-0.5%	45,973	4.0%	46,944	2.1%	45,045	-4.0%
Mathematics and Stat..	35,400		36,925	4.3%	36,879	-0.1%	36,701	-0.5%	36,701	0.0%	35,699	-2.7%
Agriculture, Agricultur..	29,148		29,920	2.6%	30,364	1.5%	31,086	2.4%	32,183	3.5%	32,807	1.9%
Security and Protecti..	31,977		31,634	-1.1%	28,767	-9.1%	27,153	-5.6%	28,098	3.5%	28,984	3.2%
Communication, Jour..	29,089		30,541	5.0%	29,009	-5.0%	27,615	-4.8%	27,636	0.1%	27,409	-0.8%
English Language an..	29,281		29,639	1.2%	27,326	-7.8%	25,922	-5.1%	25,434	-1.9%	24,801	-2.5%
Parks, Recreation, Le..	24,042		23,425	-2.6%	21,366	-8.8%	20,734	-3.0%	21,277	2.6%	21,093	-0.9%

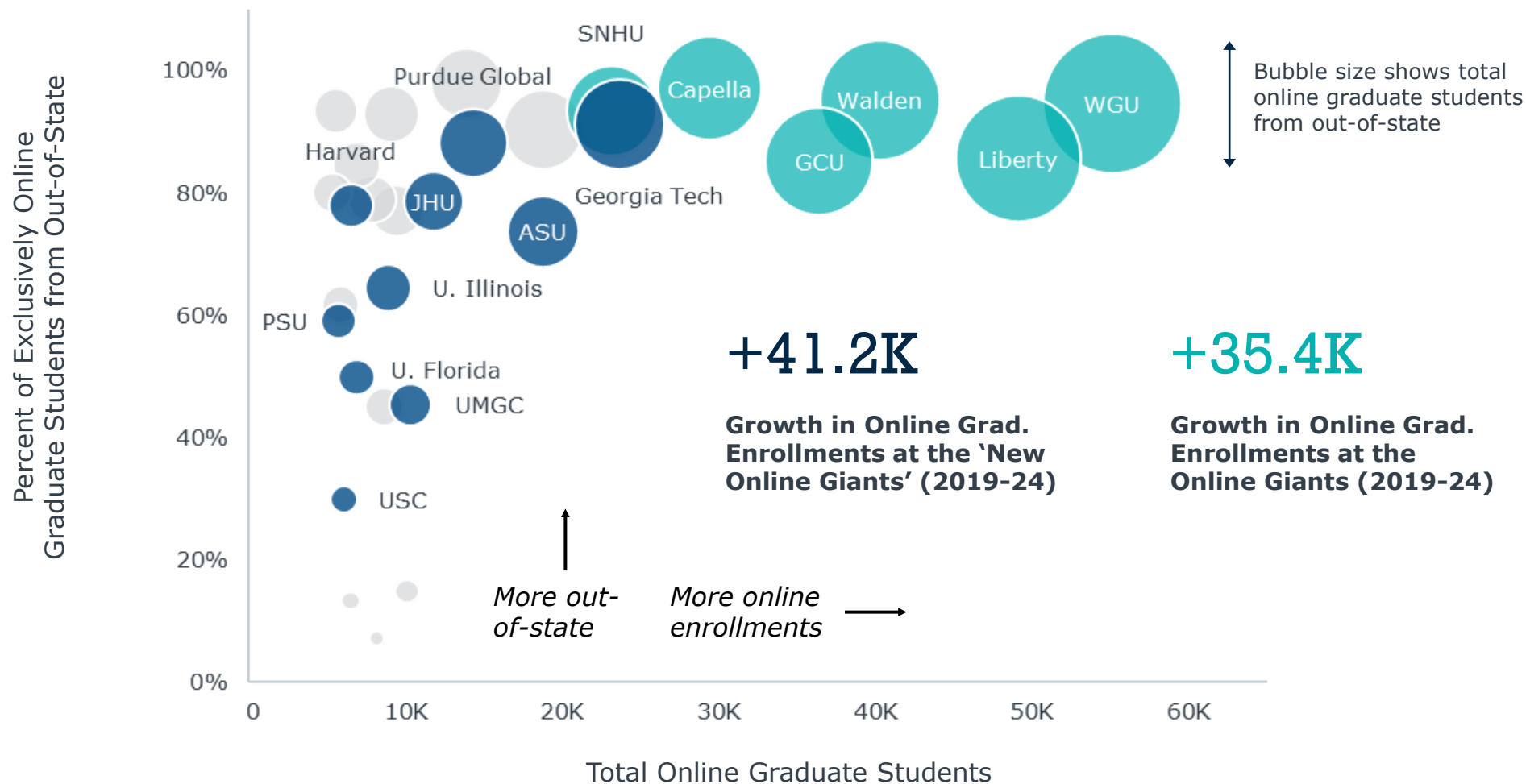


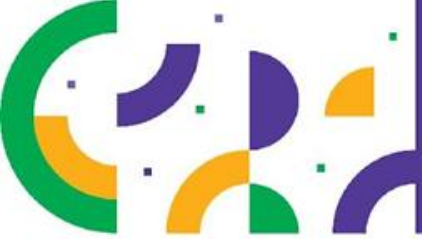
Long-Term Shift to Online & Hybrid Continues





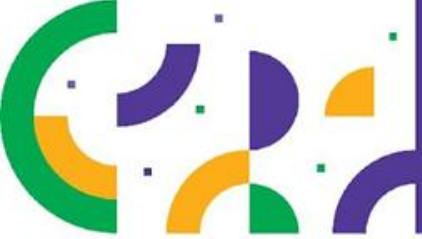
The Online Grad Market Consolidates at Scale





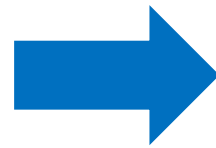
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Internal Signals Don't Equal Market Demand

Shifting from institutional intuition:



To data-driven evidence (IPEDS, BLS, etc.):

- The RN to BSN had record applications this year
- Our MAT programs have room to grow
- Corporate partners want our Business Analytics students
- BSN demand is up 23% in the past 5 years in our region
- Regional MAT competition is equitable
- Regional demand for analytics skills is up 35% with key industry employers



A Data-Driven Framework for Program Growth

*Growth through
New Opportunities*

*Growth through Repositioning
and Optimization*

Examining multiple
programs

1

Market Opportunity Scan

- Prioritized list of top 3-5 new growth opportunities
- Matched to regional labor market needs
- Analysis of market saturation and size data
- Peer program analysis

3

Portfolio Health Check

- Evaluates select academic portfolio's performance against **workforce demand** and competitive field
- Plots high performing programs and low-performing programs based on growth potential

Examining a single
program

2

Program Feasibility Study

- Validates market demand for new program
- Identifies top employers and in-demand job knowledge and skills
- Evaluates peer programs
- Provides curricular or marketing guidance

4

Program Benchmarking

- Evaluate the competitive landscape for an existing program through two angles:

- **Student demand trends**
- **Market saturation & size data**



Market Validation that BSN is a Strong Bet

85 competitors (up 6% since 2020)

85

Institutions

6% Growth (2020-2024)

10,093

Completions

1% Growth (2020-2024)

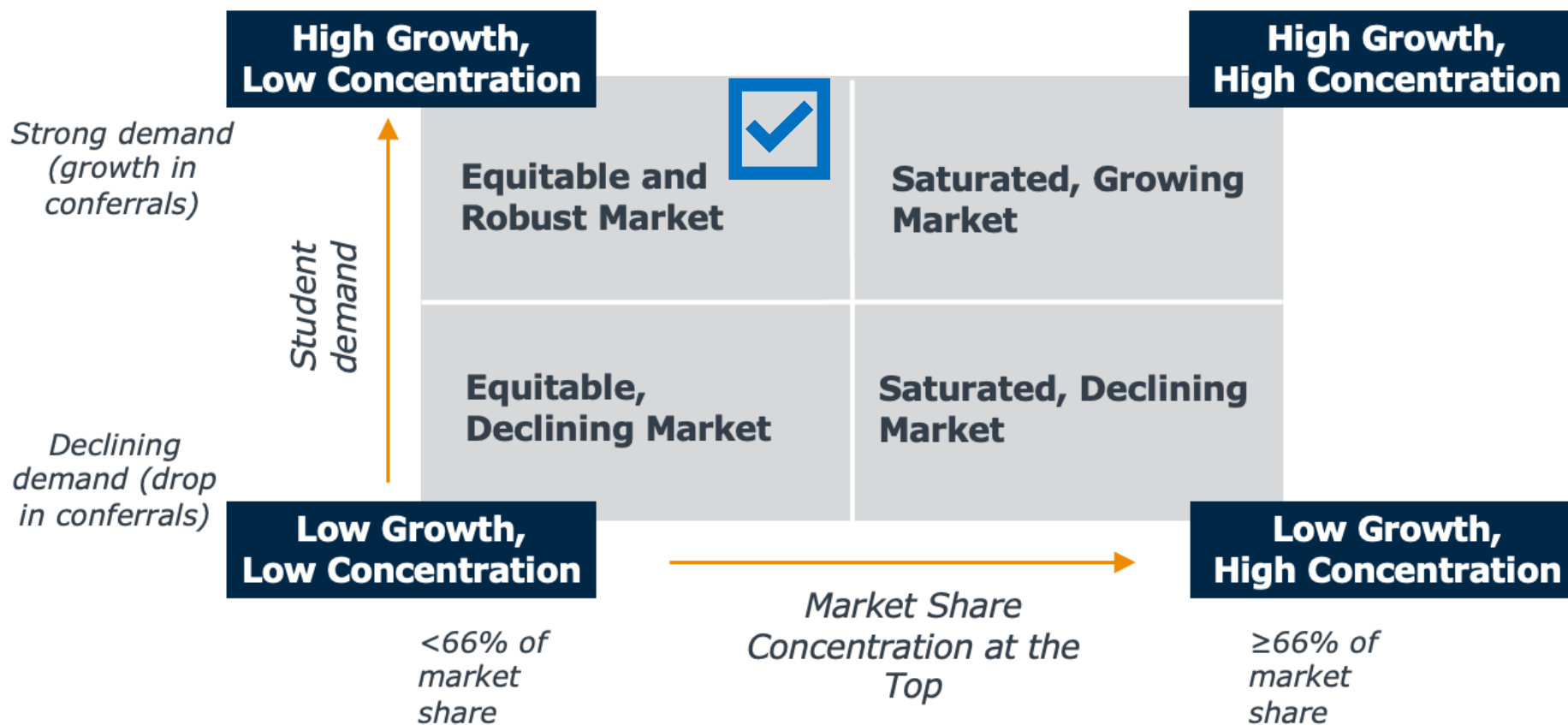
Sizeable market with student demand up 1%

Equitable market share

Institution	Bachelor's Degree Completions (2024)	Growth % YOY (2024)	Market Share (2024)	IPEDS Tuition & Fees (2023)	Completions Trend (2020-2024)
⊕ Chamberlain University-New Jersey	452	51.2%	4.5%	\$21,140	
⊕ New York University	426	-2.5%	4.2%	\$60,438	
⊕ William Paterson University of New Jersey	425	1.4%	4.2%	\$15,150	
⊕ University of Maryland, Baltimore	418	2.5%	4.1%	\$13,374	
⊕ Drexel University	381	-18.9%	3.8%	\$60,663	



BSN Market is Poised for Growth





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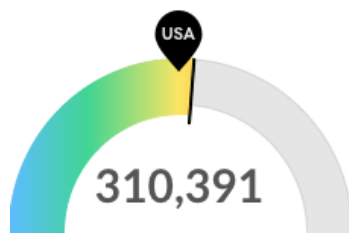
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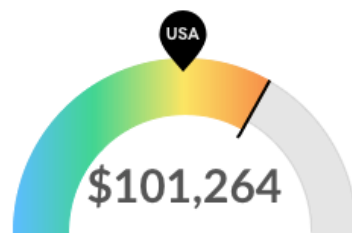
*Examining a single
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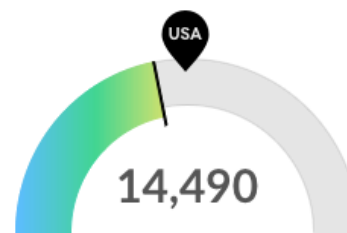
Occupational Outlook is Strong



Jobs (2023)



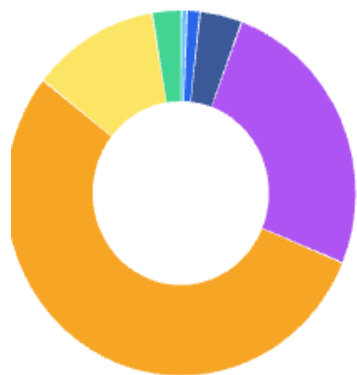
Compensation



Job Posting Demand

RN Job Postings & Salary

Job postings up 4% YoY with compensation above the national average



	% of Jobs
Less than high school diploma	0.5%
High school diploma or equivalent	1.2%
Some college, no degree	3.9%
Associate's degree	25.6%
Bachelor's degree	54.3%
Master's degree	11.8%
Doctoral or professional degree	2.7%

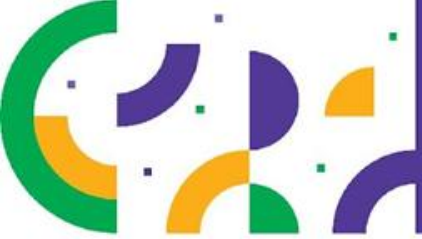
RN Degree Requirements

26% require Associate's
54% Bachelor's
12% require Master's



**Scan QR Code for
Complimentary EAB Resources**





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Ohio University

Rural, public school

Founded in 1804

HLC accreditation

R1 university

30,000 students; 8,000 are online

60+ online programs

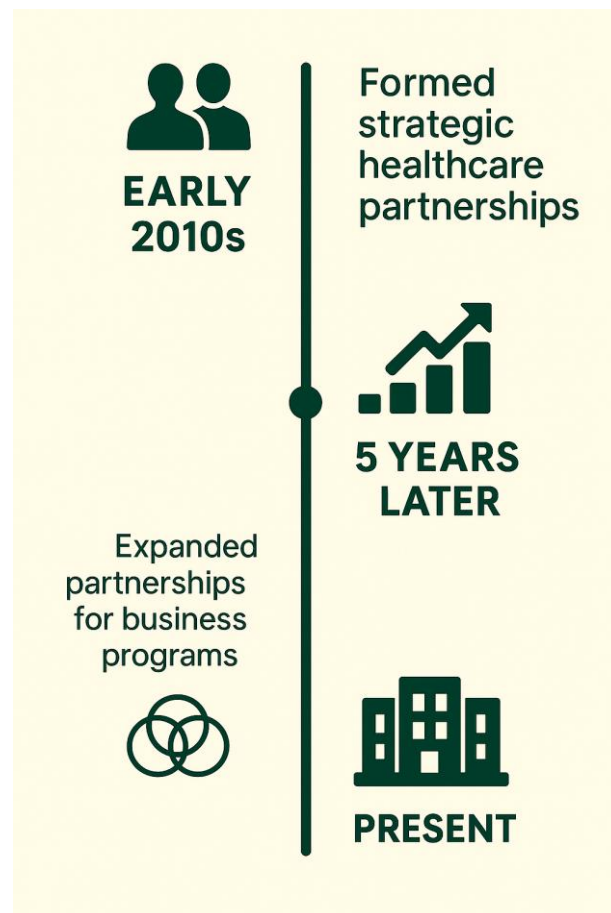
“Best Value” public school in Ohio for 6 years running (39th nationally)

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Ohio University-History of Partnerships

- The early 2010's, in order to support strategic enrollment growth for our online RN to BSN program—Ohio University worked to create strategic employment partners.
- These partnerships would lead to help create the largest online RN to BSN program in the state. We currently have over **45** healthcare partnerships where we actively recruit new students into our online to RN to BSN program and also growing many other healthcare and healthcare adjacent programs.
- 5 years later—expansion of partnerships to support the College of Business graduate programs
- In late 2019—OHIO Online created its own department **Affinity Groups and Student Engagement** to support all online graduate and undergraduate programs through strategic partnerships.
- We now have over **75** official businesses and many other unofficial to support our enrollment growth.





State Funded Grants- ESC



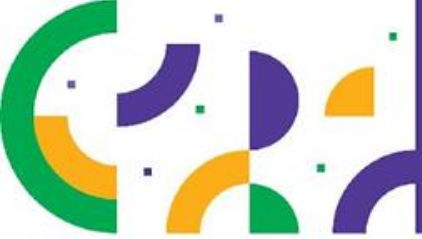
- In 2025, the state of Ohio granted funding to Educational Service Centers to support high school teachers in their region earning the credentials to teach College Credit Plus* courses.
- Required credentials vary by subject, but typically a master's degree in the subject, or a master's degree + 18 credits in the subject.
- The CCP Teacher Credentialing Grant was awarded to four ESCs, including Gallia-Vinton and Athens-Meigs, which are the closest counties to Ohio University.
- Awards totaled over \$3 million
- Full degrees or 18 credits in the subject, based on interest and needs

8College Credit Plus: Ohio's dual enrollment program that provides students in grades 7-12 the opportunity to earn college and high school credits simultaneously.

OHIO's Opportunity

- OHIO Online connected with local ESCs to develop a partnership based on the existing programs and OHIO's comprehensive wrap-around services, including enrollment advising and student support.
- Within two weeks, we had 2 in-person info sessions with 52 interested local teachers.
- 13 teachers were able to be admitted to four graduate programs in less than a week!
- 2026: partnership continues & evolves

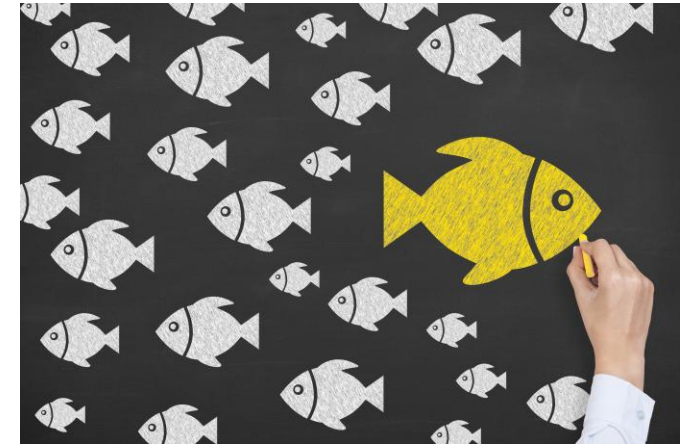
CCP Program of Interest	Count
Mathematics	20
Education	12
American History, American Government, Social Sciences, World History	11
English Language Arts	8
Biology/Life Sciences	5
Chemistry	3
Physics	3
Business	2
Communications	2
Psychology/Sociology	1
Agriculture	1
Environmental Sciences	1
Philosophy	1
Speech	1
Composition	1
Technical Report Writing	1



One Size Doesn't Fit All

How can partnerships help to build differing programs and goals?

- Close collaboration with program directors and faculty to understand the target audience—where are prospective students spending their time?
- Think differently about how to bring value to the partnerships—education, networking, space, employment opportunities, career services, etc.
- What opportunities are in your state community—grants, workforce initiatives, etc





Strategic Partnerships in Practice

Enrollment Growth	Workforce Needs
Project Management	Provide CEU Opportunities, Targeted local employers in need to fill these roles, Association Needs
Athletic Administration/Master of Coaching Education	Combined efforts to have an effect on a broader audience, memberships and associations were key. Ohio K-12 partnerships.
Accountancy	Employer meetings to determine the needs, targeted outreach at specific times in the year based on needs of the industry. Associations.
Performing Arts Medicine	Niche program, real need in the industry. Leveraing programs network to meet with industry leaders.
Community Colleges	Meet the needs of our current partners.





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Louisiana's
Community & Technical Colleges



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MGCCC
Mississippi Gulf Coast
Community College



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