

**College of San Mateo**  
***Distance Education Fast Facts***  
**Fall 2015**

**Students**

- In Fall 2015, the 2,219 students (unduplicated headcount) enrolled in CSM online coursework. This figure represents nearly one-fourth (23.6%) of all CSM students.
- These 2,219 unique students enrolled in a total of 2,732 online courses. In other words, the 'typical' CSM distance education student enrolls in 1.2 online courses.
- Gender: Online course-takers are majority female – 49.8% vs. 47.1%. In comparison, in Fall 2015, the overall CSM student population was 46.2% female and 50.4% male.
- Age: As compared to the total CSM student population, online course-takers are somewhat older. While 69.6% of all online course-takers are between 20 and 39 years of age, 53.0% of Fall 2015 students were of the same age.
- Ethnicity: Online course-takers generally reflect the ethnic profile of the total Fall 2015 CSM population. African American, Filipino, Native American, Pacific Islander, Multi Race, and White online students are represented in the same proportion (+/- 3 percentage points) as in the total CSM population. Asian online students are the most over-represented +6.9 points (24.7% vs. 17.8%) and Hispanic online students are the most under-represented –4.7 points (14.0% vs. 18.7%).

**Courses**

- In Fall 2015, there were 86 sections of courses offered online. This figure represents 9.4% of all CSM sections taught.

**Faculty**

- In Fall 2015, 49 CSM faculty were teaching online courses.
- Full-time and adjunct faculty are equally represented in the teaching of online coursework: 25 full-time faculty and 24 adjunct faculty had online teaching assignments.

**Student Success: Online vs. Comparable Face-to-face Coursework (Fall 2014)**

- The overall successful course completion rate in online coursework was 60.4% (i.e., grade of A, B, C, or P), while the corresponding rate of success in comparable face-to-face courses was 64.0%.
- Online students withdraw at a slightly higher rate: 21.3% compared to 16.6% of their counterparts enrolled in face-to-face coursework.
- Gender: Female students successfully complete online coursework at a somewhat higher rate than male students: 63.7% vs. 59.3%. This same differential is found in face-to-face coursework: 66.2% vs. 64.1%.
- Age: Successful course completion rates by age do not vary greatly, ranging from a low of 60.0% for students ages 20 to 24 years, to a high of 65.7% for students ages 35 to 39.

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Approximately the same age differentials are found for students enrolled in comparable face-to-face coursework.

- **Ethnicity:** There are major differences in the achievement levels of ethnic groups enrolling in online coursework. Asian – 73.4%; White – 63.2%; Filipino – 63.6%; Hispanic – 50.9%; Pacific Islander – 43.7%; African American – 40.0%; and Native American – 22.2%.
- Ethnic disparities in rates of successful course completion for comparable face-to-face coursework are not nearly as great as found in online coursework. White – 70.4%; Asian – 73.1%; Filipino – 63.1%; Hispanic – 56.2%; Pacific Islander – 53.9%; Native American – 52.8%; and African American – 50.3%.

### **Using Online Coursework to Complete Degree & Certificate Requirements (2014/15)**

- During the 2014/15 academic year, 982 AA/AS Degrees or Certificate award earners had taken at least one online course. Expressed different, more than three-quarters (80.2%) of all CSM award earners utilized online coursework.
- CSM award earners took an average of 4.5 online courses on the path to completing program requirements—approximately 25% of a 60 unit AA/AS Degree program.

### **Survey of Online Students Who Withdraw (Spring 2015)**

- Survey respondents indicate that they withdraw from online coursework for a variety of reasons. The top reasons for withdrawing are:
  - Difficulty accessing the Internet for my online coursework—25.9%
  - Do not have appropriate study environment—18.8%
  - Did not have the necessary computer skills—17.6%
  - Unable to attend required on-campus exams or meetings—17.6%
  - Academic difficulty—14.1%
  - Do not have current/appropriate version of software—14.1%
  - Course was more work than I expected—12.9%
  - Had a personal conflict (e.g., work schedule, family obligations, transportation, health, financial, etc.)—12.9%
  - Coursework not accessible to students with disabilities—11.8%
- Nearly one-third (32.1%) of students surveyed report not adequately anticipating the amount of work required by online coursework.

- When asked to indicate the primary reasons for enrolling in online coursework, students provided the following responses:
  - More comfortable learning in an online environment—32.9%
  - Easier to fit with my work or class schedule—31.8%
  - Fulfill a requirement (e.g., transfer, AA/AS Degree, Certificate, etc.)—25.9%
  - Thought online course would be easier—23.5%
  - Because of my disability—22.4%
  - Unable to come to campus—22.4%
  - Improve job skills—20.0%
  - On-campus sections were full—20.0%Class offered in online mode only—18.8%
  - Personal interest—18.8%
  
- The proportion who reported using any CSM support services prior to withdrawing:
  - Counseling—10.6%
  - Technical support—9.4%
  - Library services—8.2%
  - Technology Help Desk—8.2%
  - Financial Aid—7.1%
  - Tutorial and academic support services—5.9%
  
- Over two-thirds (67.1%) of students who withdrew had not visited CSM's Distance Education website prior to enrolling.
  
- More than one-third (36.9%) of students who withdrew were not aware of CSM's online self-assessment tool for determining readiness for online coursework.
  
- The overwhelmingly positive experience in CSM online coursework is indicated by survey respondent's answer to the question, "Would you take another online course at CSM?" A large majority of students (89.0%) answered "Yes."