



ACADEMIC PARTNERSHIPS



2020/2021
IMPACT REPORT

Helping transform lives through education

LETTER FROM THE CEO

The past 18+ months have tested all of us. The COVID-19 pandemic has forced us to adapt and create innovative solutions. Moreover, it has called on us to pause and reflect on our shared core values. Ultimately, it has highlighted the things that matter most – staying connected, striving to overcome and relying on one another. At Academic Partnerships (AP), it has showcased the incredible good we’re capable of as we continue to work closely with our university partners.

The pandemic has also reinforced that the mission of AP has never been more critical: expanding access to top-quality, affordable and workforce relevant education. Every day we strive to bring that mission to life.

As an online facilitator, AP is built on a strong commitment to the success of our university clients and their students. And we are proud to share that work in our first AP Impact Report (2020-21).

As you will see throughout this Report, AP’s business model matches its mission. Our model ensures that our not-for-profit university partners’ top-quality online programs are widely accessible, especially for working individuals like nurses and teachers. It is premised on affordable tuition, and it makes student success central for both universities and AP.

We believe in the power of equitable access to affordable education. We believe people should have the ability to advance their careers and transform their lives while simultaneously balancing work and family demands. For that reason, we deliberately choose to partner with universities that offer high-quality, affordable and workforce relevant programs online. Our university partners are essential regional institutions that have an outsized impact in offering affordable access to critical education, driving economic mobility and, through their collaborative efforts, sustaining and enhancing the local workforce.



We believe people should have the ability to advance their careers and transform their lives.... For that reason, we deliberately choose to partner with universities that offer high-quality, affordable and workforce relevant programs online.

We invite you to discover the details in this Impact Report – who we serve, what roles we play, what sets us apart and the impact we help make. The Report’s findings are a culmination of the collective efforts of our AP employees and our university partners, along with their faculty and students. Their combined determination, creativity and hard work make it all possible.

To learn more about AP and the [impact](#) we are making for our partners, please visit our website at www.academicpartnerships.com or reach out to us directly at info@academicpartnerships.com.

Affordable and equitable access to education is transformative for individuals and society as a whole. AP is honored to play a part.



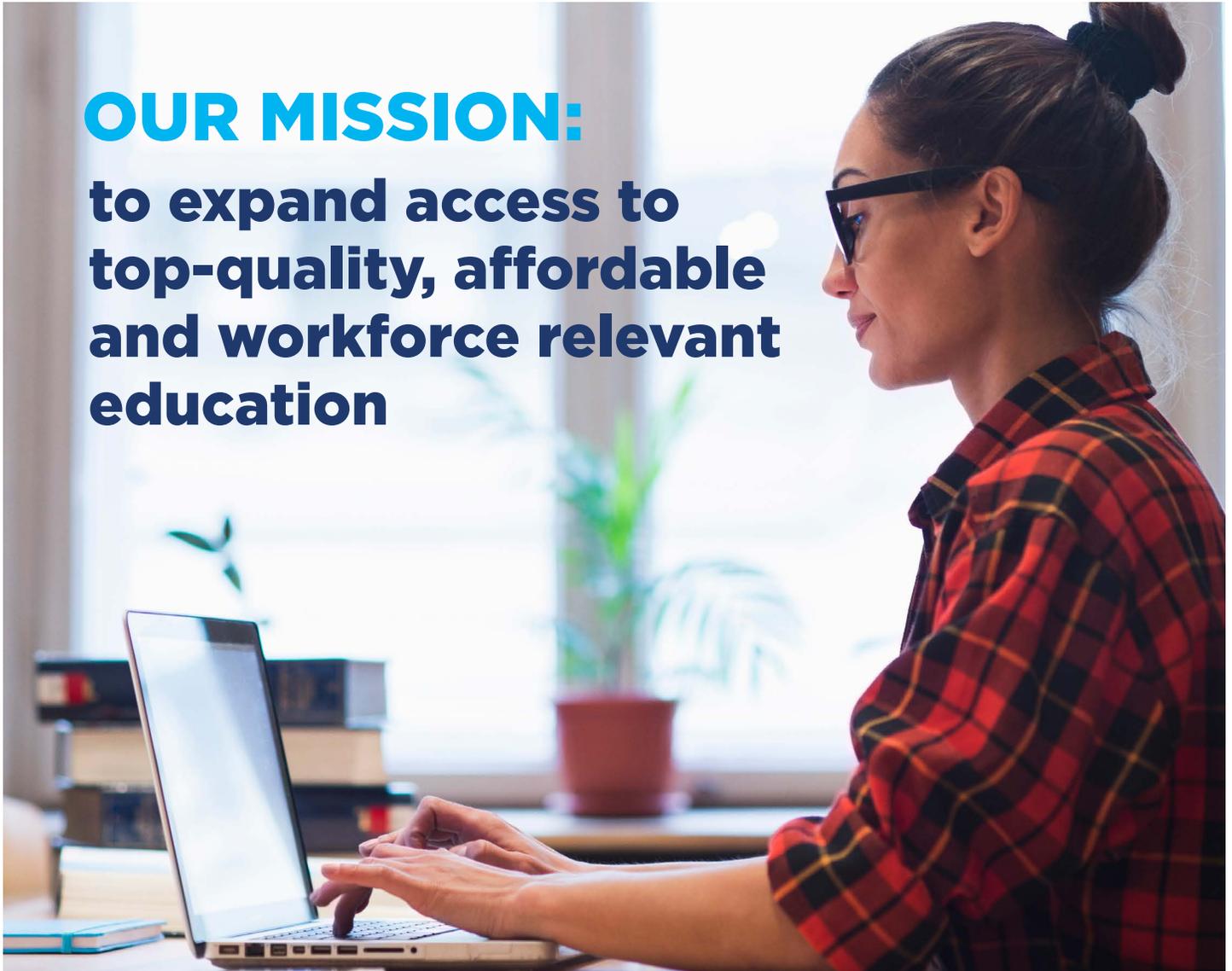
A blue ink signature that reads "Rob".

Darab (“Rob”) Ganji
Chief Executive Officer and Board Member
Academic Partnerships

WHO WE ARE

OUR MISSION:

to expand access to top-quality, affordable and workforce relevant education



As an online facilitator, Academic Partnerships fulfills its mission by helping make our university partners' high-quality programs available to students who seek the flexibility of online education. Approximately 97% of alumni and current students from AP-supported programs are working adults¹ like nurses and teachers who need to manage work and family demands while pursuing their educational goals.

AP focuses on:

- Serving only not-for-profit universities (of those, approximately 90% of AP partners² are regional public universities)
- Championing affordability with a weighted average tuition of approximately \$14,000³ for the entire degree across AP-supported programs
- Supporting programs in high-demand employment fields such as healthcare/nursing, education, business and technology, which help support state and local economic development

¹Source: AP Student Survey of 85,870 students at 11 AP university partners (9,260 total respondents; 6,263 respondents with completed degrees) conducted by Chief Outsiders (Jan. 2021)

^{2,3}Source: AP internal data, see endnotes for further details

WHAT WE DO

AP helps power a university's online programs. Our partners do what they do best—teach students—while we help by providing support services. In each of AP's relationships with universities, there is a shared commitment to student success. At the same time, there is a clear delineation of roles between AP and the university partner, which corresponds to the core competencies of each.



THE SERVICES PROVIDED BY AP INCLUDE:

- Knowledge, support and years of experience in converting programs to a high-quality online learning format
- Support for the university's efforts to streamline systems, technology and processes to optimize the student experience
- Market research, sector-specific integrated strategy and employer-based relationships to align workforce relevant offerings
- Prospective student outreach
- Student retention services to support students' success as they progress through their academic program on a course-by-course basis to completion



THE UNIVERSITY PARTNER RETAINS COMPLETE CONTROL OVER:

- All academic matters, including the hiring of faculty and teaching assistants, evaluation of faculty, development of curriculum and course content, grading and assessment of students, and awarding degrees and credentials
- All content-related intellectual property
- Student support and advisement
- All admissions standards
- All admissions decisions and the administration of the admissions process, including the number of applicants admitted
- The amount of tuition and fees charged to students
- The number of students enrolled in any given program or course
- All administration, advisement and disbursement of federal student financial aid and the billing and collection of tuition and fees
- All matters relating to accreditation

WHO WE SERVE

REGIONAL PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES

100% of AP's university partners are not-for-profit universities, and approximately 90% are regional public universities. There is increasing importance to offer high-quality, workforce-aligned and affordable degree programs that reach working individuals. Regional universities do just that, and they are economic engines for their communities with an outsized impact in driving economic mobility and sustaining and enhancing the local workforce.

OVER
50

UNIVERSITY PARTNERS
SUPPORTED⁴

OVER
650

EDUCATION PROGRAMS
SUPPORTED⁵

APPROXIMATELY
90%

OF AP'S PARTNERS ARE
REGIONAL PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES⁶

APPROXIMATELY **\$14K** WEIGHTED AVERAGE TUITION FOR THE ENTIRE
DEGREE ACROSS AP-SUPPORTED PROGRAMS⁷

“Regional public universities (RPUs) can serve as important anchor institutions to promote economic and community development for distressed communities.... Counties with an RPU have historically had both faster employment growth and higher per capita income than communities without an RPU,... [and as] anchor institutions, RPUs are among the largest (and sometimes the largest) employers in a community.”

-Brookings Institution, *Supporting Distressed Communities by Strengthening Regional Public Universities: A Federal Policy Proposal*, Robert Maxim and Mark Muro, July 2021, pg. 6.

Public not-for-profit institutions attract the majority of students from within their state/region⁸

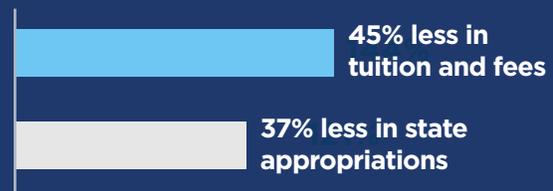


% of fully online undergraduate enrollments from same state as institution



% of fully online graduate enrollments from same state as institution

AP's regional public university partners generally face more financial challenges than Tier 1 public institutions⁹



^{4,5,6,7}Source: AP internal data, see endnotes for further details

^{8,9}Source: National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, see endnotes for further details

WHO WE SERVE

CASE STUDIES



EASTERN
MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

- 40 miles west of Detroit, MI
- Partnership with AP began in 2016
- Regional public, 4-year institution
- EMU's total enrollment: 16k+ students

With AP's support, Eastern Michigan University's (EMU) [RN to BSN nursing program](#) has flourished. The program's success and growth has had a big impact on the University, its partners and its community:

- Additional tuition revenue has strengthened EMU's finances and enabled it to reinvest in staff, technology and student services, and bring on additional faculty
- Many program graduates are serving in local hospitals like St. Joseph Mercy, drawing on their additional education to care for patients during the COVID-19 crisis
- When the public health crisis began, more than 100 of EMU's RN to BSN students quickly volunteered to support campus and community health needs in any way possible. Tapping this large group of experienced working nurses, EMU launched a new telehealth clinic to serve its campus and surrounding community

"Academic Partnerships has been a vital partner in the success of our RN to BSN program. Their team's expertise, investment, and hard work has helped EMU recruit more working nurses, enhance our support for these students, and ultimately meet critical needs in our community."

—Michael Williams, Ph.D., Director of the School of Nursing, Eastern Michigan University



- Within -100 miles of Raleigh, Charlotte, & Greensboro, NC
- Partnership with AP began in 2017
- Regional public, 4-year institution
- UNCP's total enrollment: 8k+ students

With AP's support, the [MBA business program](#) has become one of University of North Carolina at Pembroke's (UNCP) most successful programs in terms of reach, growth and impact on its surrounding communities:

- A recent [academic study](#) described the University's economic impact on its surrounding community as "irreplaceable," and *U.S. News & World Report* [has ranked UNCP](#) as the most diverse regional university in the South
- With the success of the AP partnership, the business school has increased faculty compensation and recruited new professors
- Similarly, extra funding has enabled more investment in UNCP's community entrepreneurship center to support local business people in its nine surrounding counties
- The University's profile has risen around the state as the number of highly qualified applicants from Charlotte, Raleigh, Greensboro and other major metro areas has greatly increased

"Academic Partnerships has delivered on everything they said they would do, and more, in terms of program and student support. UNCP could not be more pleased with the relationship and its positive impact on our MBA program, our university, and our community."

—Barry O'Brien, Ph.D., Dean of the School of Business (retired), University of North Carolina at Pembroke

WHO WE SERVE

The students in AP-supported programs are overwhelmingly working individuals, such as nurses and teachers. These are professionals who choose to earn an affordable degree from a reputable not-for-profit university because they know that it offers a pathway to a better future for themselves and their families. Most are juggling work and family demands; therefore, traditional on-campus education is not practical or feasible. The online option affords them the freedom and flexibility they need to pursue their degrees and help make smart investments in their futures.

WORKING ADULTS

~97%

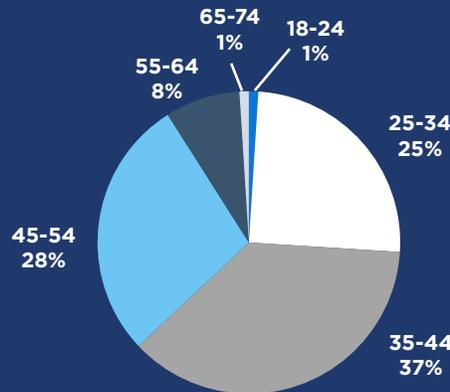
OF ALL SURVEY RESPONDENTS FROM AP-SUPPORTED PROGRAMS WERE EMPLOYED, PRIMARILY IN NURSING, EDUCATION AND BUSINESS¹⁰

OF THOSE WORKING ADULTS

~34% work in the K-12 Education industry¹¹

~32% work in the Healthcare/ Nursing industry¹²

STUDENT AGE OF THOSE SURVEYED¹³



OVER **25%** OF AP PARTNERS ARE MINORITY SERVING INSTITUTIONS¹⁴

“Students experience postsecondary value when provided equitable access and support to complete quality, affordable credentials that offer economic mobility and prepare them to advance racial and economic justice in our society.”

–Gates Foundation, Postsecondary Value Commission, May 2021 report on *“Equitable Value: Promoting Economic Mobility and Social Justice through Postsecondary Education”* Fig 2.2, page 28

^{10, 11, 12, 13}Source: Chief Outsiders Survey (Jan. 2021), see endnotes for further details

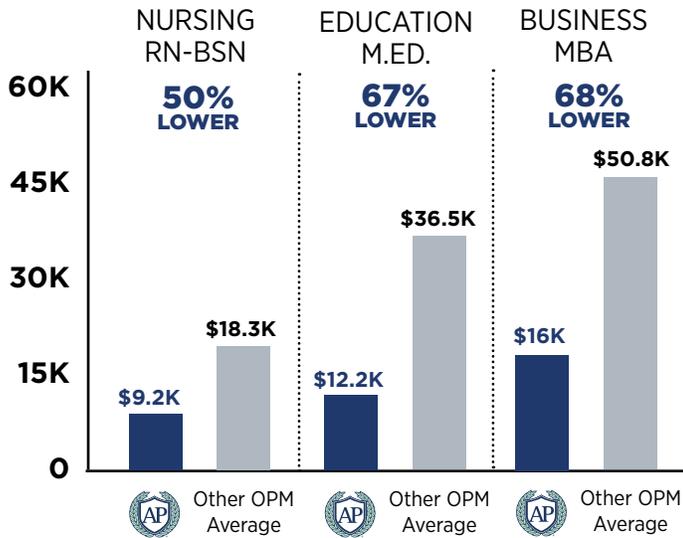
¹⁴Source: NASA List of Minority Serving Institutions, Minority University Research and Education Project (MUREP), see endnotes for further details

WHAT SETS US APART

AFFORDABILITY & ACCESSIBILITY

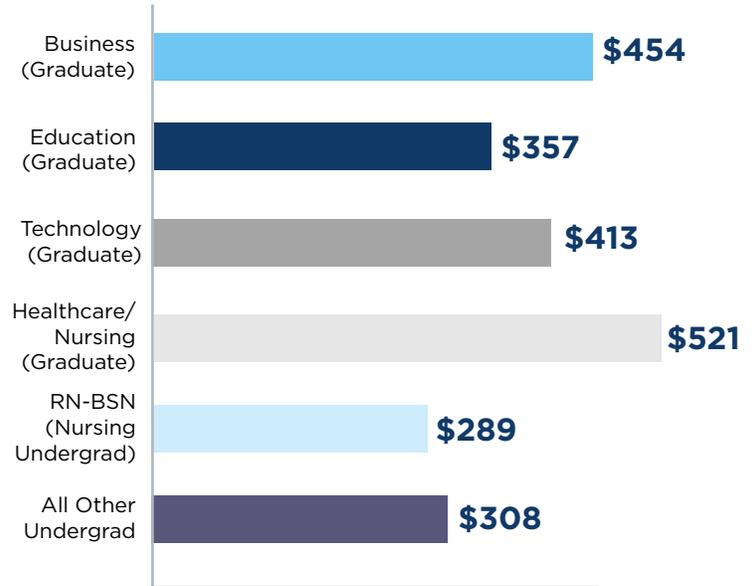
AP-supported degree programs provide an affordable option for career advancement.

STANDARD AVERAGE TUITION OF FULL DEGREE PROGRAMS SUPPORTED BY AP AND SELECT PEER COMPANIES¹⁵

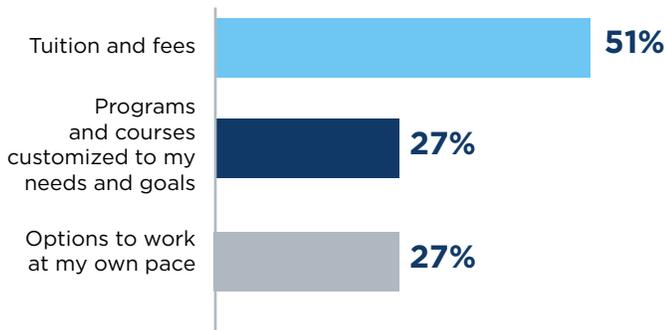


Boston Consulting Group (BCG) Analysis 2020

STANDARD AVERAGE TUITION PER CREDIT HOUR OF AP-SUPPORTED PROGRAMS¹⁶



TOP THREE FEATURES OF IMPORTANCE WHEN ADULT STUDENTS ARE SELECTING A DEGREE OR CERTIFICATE PROGRAM¹⁷



83%
OF STUDENTS SURVEYED SAID ONLINE STUDY ALLOWS THEM TO COMPLETE STUDIES FASTER¹⁸

¹⁵Source: Boston Consulting Group (BCG) Analysis 2020, AP internal data, HolonIQ, university websites, see endnotes for further details

¹⁶Source: AP internal data, see endnotes for further details

¹⁷Source: October 2020 Adult Prospect Survey, Eduventures Research, see endnotes for further details

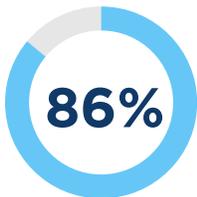
¹⁸Source: Online College Students 2021 Report, Education Dynamics, see endnotes for further details

WHAT SETS US APART

WORKFORCE RELEVANT PROGRAMS

On behalf of its university partners, AP has established relationships with thousands of employers, including hospitals and healthcare systems, schools and school districts, and businesses across the United States. These relationships allow AP to: (1) reach out to qualified prospective students who are employees of those employers; and (2) provide a conduit for information flow between employers and university partners, through which AP provides feedback for the university in identifying, assessing and responding to labor market dynamics.

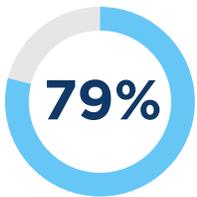
Large numbers of alumni of AP-supported programs said their degrees had positive impacts on their career and work, including:¹⁹



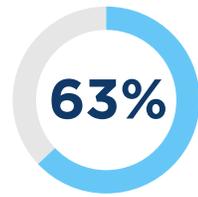
degree improved their industry knowledge



degree made them an attractive candidate for employers



degree prepared them for leadership positions



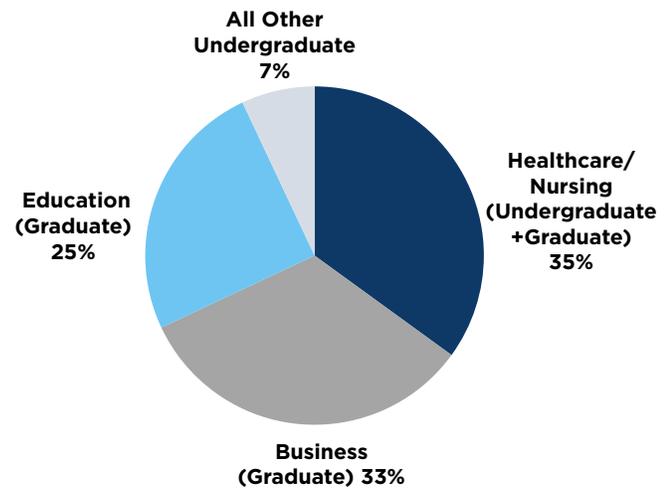
degree helped increase their earnings

~90%²⁰

of AP-supported programs are in high growth disciplines across healthcare/nursing, business, education and technology

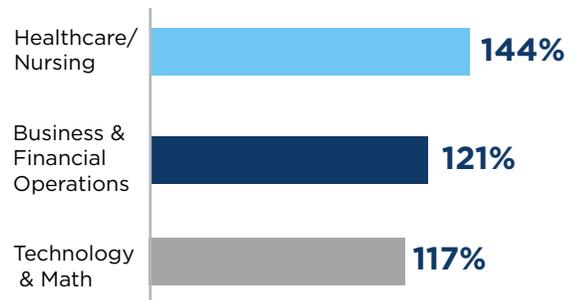
Enrollments in AP-Supported Programs²¹

AP recently added a focus on technology programs to meet growing workforce demand



EMPLOYER DEMAND OUTPACES SUPPLY IN KEY FIELDS²²

(ratio of open positions to available workers)



“With Academic Partnerships’ support, Arkansas State University has created high-quality online education programs that are affordable and convenient for working teachers in Arkansas and beyond. We are now the state’s largest provider of graduate and post-graduate degrees in education and are proud to be equipping thousands of teachers, principals, superintendents, and other education professionals each year to better serve students.”

–Thilla Sivakumaran, Ph.D., Vice Chancellor for Enrollment Management and Global Outreach, Arkansas State University

¹⁹Source: Chief Outsiders Survey (Jan. 2021), see endnotes for further details

²⁰Source: Boston Consulting Group (BCG) Analysis (2020), Thirty Two Edu, AP internal data, see endnotes for further details

²¹Source: AP internal data, see endnotes for further details

²²Source: Burning Glass, see endnotes for further details

WHAT SETS US APART

STUDENT SUCCESS

AP's interests are fully aligned with student success. AP-supported programs are designed so students pay the university on a per-course basis as they progress through their online degree programs. Likewise, AP receives payment from the university on a per-course basis as students progress through their online degree programs. Therefore, AP can only succeed if students succeed and our university partners succeed.

Alumni of AP-supported programs expressed high satisfaction with several features of their programs, with top answers being:²⁴

STUDENT SATISFACTION SURVEY

93%

SATISFIED OR VERY SATISFIED

with the AP-supported online degree programs at their respective universities²³



Affordability



Quality of the education



Types of degrees offered



Length of program



Convenience with their schedule

RETENTION/STUDENT SUCCESS IS THE PRIORITY

83%

TERM 1 TO TERM 2 PERSISTENCE²⁵
(DEGREE PROGRAMS)

“Our partnership with AP has enabled us to offer new competency-based programming to adult learners and those with some college, both here in Maine and far beyond. Ensuring an affordable and customized learning experience so that our students can complete their degrees is crucial to the success of individuals and their families, especially during these challenging times.”

—Raymond J. Rice, Ph.D., President, University of Maine at Presque Isle

^{23, 24} Source: Chief Outsiders Survey (Jan. 2021), see endnotes for further details

²⁵ Source: AP internal data, see endnotes for further details

HOW WE IMPACT OUR PARTNERS, THEIR STUDENTS AND COMMUNITIES



"I've had an incredible career with lots of success, but it's always been a little nugget in the back of my head. What more could I do? My favorite part of a triathlon is the finish line because you're done, you know you've accomplished something. I felt that way when I finished my MBA program and I had proven it to myself that I could do it."

-Chad Hullender, MBA, Southeastern Oklahoma State Online Graduate



"Partnerships like these are paramount to the future of higher education. They deliver new services efficiently, meet vital student interests, respond to local urgencies."

-Ashish Vaidya, Ph.D., President, Northern Kentucky University²⁷

OVER
300K
ALL-TIME ENROLLED
STUDENTS SUPPORTED²⁶

"I consider our collaboration with Academic Partnerships to be an unqualified success. The SIUE School of Business is committed to meeting the needs of working professionals by delivering quality, affordable graduate business education and AP is helping us to do just that."

-Timothy S. Schoenecker, Ph.D., Dean, School of Business at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville²⁸



"I honestly and truly believe that without this program, I would not have obtained my master's of science in nursing."

-Delphine Olivacce, MSN, University of Texas at Arlington Online Graduate



²⁶Source: AP internal data, see endnotes for further details

^{27, 28}Source: AP partner testimonials, see endnotes for further details

HOW WE SUPPORT PARTNERS AND COMMUNITIES

COVID-19 EMERGENCY RESPONSE

In response to COVID-19, Academic Partnerships offered immediate support in helping on-campus faculty facilitate remote teaching capabilities using virtual delivery platforms.

COVID RESPONSE RESOURCES TO CONVERT FACE-TO-FACE LEARNING TO ONLINE DELIVERY

Free Emergency COVID Response Resources for Universities and K-12

AP posted Emergency COVID Response Resources to our website (free to anyone), which included:

- Training and best practices for virtual delivery
- Just-in-time online teaching tips for faculty
- Technology tips for students
- A just-in-time emergency online teaching orientation



In the spring of 2020, AP released the AP Off Campus Toolkit, a robust set of resources and professional development services to help facilitate effective online learning. This was provided to our current university partners in the wake of COVID-19.

WHO AND HOW WE'VE HELPED:

Throughout the pandemic, AP has hosted meetings, given presentations and provided training to interested university partners:

1,000+

FACULTY SERVED WITH COVID-RELATED ONLINE LEARNING RESOURCES

In the spring 2020, AP released a COVID-related white paper entitled “Considerations for New and Emerging Realities in Higher Ed.”



AP presented at conferences for teachers/faculty on COVID-related topics:

- ASU K12 Summit on the K12/Higher Ed Collaboration in response to COVID (Jan. 2021)
- Wesley Peachtree Institute HBCU Forum to HBCU administrators/faculty on the critical need for equitable access through online learning, especially in light of COVID and going forward (Mar. 2021)
- ASU Remote Faculty Summit focused on the lasting impact of COVID (June 2021)



EASTERN
WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

Eastern Washington University (EWU) was one of the first schools in the United States to announce it was moving all its classes online in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Our partnership with AP was crucial in our ability to make this transition quickly and effectively. With AP’s help, EWU had already built a strong foundation of online expertise, instructional design, and know-how among our faculty and technology teams.”

–David May, Ph.D.,
Interim President,
Eastern Washington University

ENDNOTES

For questions regarding the AP Impact Report, please contact Angie Boliver, SVP of Communications, at Angie.Boliver@academicpartnerships.com.

^{1, 10, 11, 12, 13, 19, 23, 24} AP Student Survey of 85,870 students at 11 AP university partners (9,260 total respondents; 6,263 respondents with completed degrees) conducted by Chief Outsiders (Jan. 2021).

^{2, 6} The term “regional public university” is defined as any public university which is classified below Tier 1 (R1: Doctoral Universities – very high research activity) in the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education. The percentage of AP’s partners that meet this definition is based on AP internal data as of Jan. 2021. AP also serves several R1 universities and regional private universities.

^{3, 7} Weighted average tuition price includes all AP-supported programs at university partners over the 12-month period ending Jan. 2021. Tuition prices are weighted based on enrollments in programs.

⁴ Includes AP university partners with programs actively being supported by AP.

⁵ As of May 1, 2021, AP supported 683 online education programs with active enrollments. For definitional purposes, AP notes that often a single university partner offers one type of degree with several different concentrations—for example, one of AP’s university partners might offer an MBA with a Concentration in Accounting, an MBA with a Concentration in Entrepreneurship, and an MBA with a Concentration in Finance. AP counts each concentration as a separate “online education program” (such that the three MBAs mentioned in the example are counted as three separate “online education programs”).

⁸ Fall 2018 enrollment data as reported to the National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System.

⁹ Revenue per Full Time Equivalent enrollment, by source, as reported to the National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System for fiscal year 2019. The term “regional public university” is defined as any public university which is classified below Tier 1 (R1: Doctoral Universities – very high research activity) in the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education. AP also serves several R1 universities and regional private universities.

¹⁴ AP university partners with programs actively being supported by AP [listed](#) on the NASA List of Minority Serving Institutions, [NASA’s Minority University Research and Education Project](#) (Nov. 2020). Minority-serving institutions are defined as those within the following categories: Historically Black College or University, Hispanic-serving Institution, Tribal College or University, Alaska Native-serving Institution or a Native Hawaiian-serving Institution, Predominantly Black Institution, Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-serving institution, or Native American-serving Nontribal Institution.

¹⁵ Boston Consulting Group (BCG) analysis commissioned by AP in 2020. Tuition cost and estimated fees for full degree for OPM-supported programs as of December 2020. AP average tuition is based on partners with programs active in the market. Other OPM Average represents average of the tuition and fees for RN-BSN, M.Ed. and MBA programs across 2U, All Campus, Everspring, Helix Education, Keypath Education, Noodle Partners, Pearson and Wiley Education Services. Holon IQ and OPM websites used to identify OPM partner universities by program. HolonIQ market intelligence platform includes data on the types of programs offered by different OPMs and the respective universities. Note, within “Other OPM Average”, not all OPMs offer all of the three programs.

¹⁶Standard average tuition per credit hour of AP supported programs at university partners over the 12-month period ending Jan. 2021.

¹⁷October 2020 Adult Prospect Survey, Eduventures Research, Q. What are the top three features you care about the most when selecting a degree or certificate program? N=2,494.

¹⁸Aslanian, C.B., Fischer, Steven; Rick Kitchell, Creative Manager. Online College Students 2021. Hoboken. NJ: EducationDynamics.

²⁰BCG analysis of AP program mix based on university partners with active programs. Data based on Thirty Two Edu research report as of Jan. 2021: programs under Business, Education, Healthcare, STEM (e.g., cybersecurity, IT, analytics) areas.

²¹As of December 31, 2020, the breakdown of the total enrollments for AP university partners' programs is as follows: ~35% in healthcare (primarily nursing) programs, ~33% in business programs, ~25% in education programs, and ~7% in undergraduate programs (excluding nursing programs).

²²Dan Restuccia with Bledi Taska and Scott Bittle. Different Skills, Different Gaps. Burning Glass Technologies. March 2018.

²⁵Term 1 to Term 2 persistence means the trailing 12 months average of the percent of new students who remain through the university's add/drop date in at least one course during the first term and remain enrolled through the university's add/drop date in at least one course in the subsequent term.

²⁶"Over 300K all-time enrolled students supported" is defined as students enrolled in at least one course of an AP-supported program past the university's add/drop date since 2007.

^{27, 28}AP partner testimonials found in full at www.academicpartnerships.com/results/testimonials/.