

**The State of
Online Graduate Degree Programs
in Education
with Concentrations in
Leadership and/or Technology**



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Preface

Online graduate-level degree programs in the field of education come in a wide variety of shapes and sizes. At the private, not-for-profit Drexel University, for instance, prospective students interested in education-oriented online studies can choose from nine online graduate degrees offered by the Drexel School of Education. At the private, for-profit Capella University, prospective students can currently choose from four PhD programs, one EdD program, two EdS programs and nine MS programs in education—all listed under the “K-12 Profession” heading. The public, not-for-profit Arizona State University recently expanded its online programs for K-12 teachers, offering six programs this fall 2010 semester. The list goes on.

According to an American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) report published in April 2010, there has been a 12.3% increase in the number of AACTE institutions offering distance learning courses between 2003-04 and 2006-07. Nearly all public higher education institutions (91.2%) were offering distance learning courses in 2006-07, and 49.1% of private higher education institutions reported that they were offering distance learning courses. Additionally, among AACTE members, 60% reported that their teacher candidates are expected to demonstrate the ability to deliver instruction using technology.

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This report is an overview of online graduate programs in education that have concentrations in leadership and/or technology. It is the first phase of a larger study being undertaken by

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Lorenzo Associates, Inc., publisher of [Educational Pathways](#) since 2002. Most of the content for this first report is based on 16 interviews I have thus far conducted with professionals who are either managing online degree programs in education or represent national education organizations.

In addition to interviews, some articles, research reports and scholarly papers were referenced to help substantiate some of the information in this report. I tried to cite the most current resources available, but I am sure I missed many and would love to hear from anyone about suggestions for more resources to review in order to help round out this research for future reports. It seems to me, however, that overall there is a definite lack of information and scholarly research about online programs in the education discipline. The relative dearth of such research is one of the main reasons why I embarked on this project in the first place.

So far I have interviewed professionals by telephone from Capella University, CalState-TEACH, Drexel University, the University of Maryland University College, Michigan State University, Penn State University, and University of Massachusetts Lowell. I was able to get only an email interview with Walden University. I contacted Kaplan Univer-



sity, but they decided not to participate, which makes me wonder about how open they really are. After all, they are a charter member of the Transparency by Design Initiative, which is all about being “transparent.” I also interviewed by telephone representatives from [AACTE](#), the [National Education Association](#) (NEA) and the [National Association of Secondary School Principals](#) (NASSP). The [National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education](#) (NCATE) responded to an email request for an interview with one of their representatives by sending a return email with information about their accreditation policies for online programs. I am still working at interviewing more institutions and organizations for the next phases of this project, and I expect to have more extensive conversations with many more leaders in this field in the near future. Sometimes just linking up with people takes a good deal of time and effort, especially during the summer months. Other times it happens rather quickly with just one or two email requests for a telephone interview.

As what happens with many interviews I have had the great pleasure of conducting with academics over the past 10 years, the conversations are purposefully informal and some meander and flow without hitting the nail on the head, so to speak. Nonetheless, every interview always brings at least one golden nugget (and typically many more) of information that can be quoted, and I am always amazed by the passion educators have for their work and for their true friendliness and willingness to help.

It needs to be stated here that I am seeking funding/sponsorship for this project, which, to date, has been completely funded by my personal sweat equity as a freelance writer, editor and publisher. If you are an education technology vendor, institution or organization that is interested in sponsoring this effort, please contact me at georgelorenzo@edpath.com or by phone at

716-741-2271 during normal business hours, Eastern time.

Last, I must take a moment here to thank my daughter, Lisa Lorenzo, a bright sophomore in college who has been transcribing interviews for Lorenzo Associates, Inc., since she was a sophomore in high school. She types about 120-words a minute, and, I think, is unaware of how much she is actually learning on this part-time job.



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P.S.: Also see a newly created blog that covers online programs in education (comments encouraged), located at www.edpath.typepad.com/ote.