

The Changing Landscape For Higher Education

Colleges and universities worldwide face a far different landscape than they did a generation ago. Globalization of what is an increasingly technology-centric economy has heightened demand for highly skilled and highly knowledgeable workers. For many countries, globalization is opening up economic opportunities that were unimaginable in the past. To take advantage of these opportunities, a country must be able to meet hiring demands with an educated populace. This may require significant educational reform. It may also require scaling to make education accessible to constituencies, such as residents of remote communities and women, who may not have been previously served.

Graduates need to meet the knowledge and skill requirements of the workplace, so there is an increasing focus on the quality of the education that is offered. There is also a growing recognition that participants in today's economy will work collaboratively, beyond borders.

21ST CENTURY CHALLENGES TO HIGHER EDUCATION

- Educating citizens for a global, technology-centric economy
- Meeting the needs of an expanded population of learners
- Educational reform
- Heightened competition from a new wave of learning opportunities
- Economic pressures to lower costs and manage with less government funding



Technical innovations in learning are driven in part by the expectations of a generation of students well versed in the uses and benefits of technology.

Competition Intensifies

While demand for higher education has accelerated, so has competition. Public and privately funded colleges and universities compete with newer, for-profit institutions. Many learners enroll in distance learning classes, or in massive, open online courses (MOOCs). Some countries where schools traditionally welcome international students have become more aggressive in recruiting them. For state-run institutions, international students paying full tuition help make up for shortfalls in government funding. For smaller, liberal arts colleges that, especially in the current economic climate, have become less affordable to middle-class families, a large international student body can be a means of survival. Nationwide and worldwide, competition for students is intense, and students are increasingly discerning in their choices.

Financial Pressures Mount

The impact of the global economic downturn continues to be felt by many colleges and universities throughout the world. Institutions feel the pressure to increase revenues in the face of keen competition. They also struggle to lower their costs and stay affordable, while coping with government support that has become more stringent (even when countries need to ensure that they have the educated citizenry to support economic development).

TECHNOLOGY PLAYS A GROWING ROLE

Another important element in today's academic landscape is technology. Improved and more widely available communications and information technology has not only fostered the globalization of the economy, it is changing the way that education is delivered. Students can now learn through self-paced or real-time online courses. They collaborate online on special projects, and they meet with instructors during virtual office hours. Even in traditional classroom environments, instructors often take a blended approach, incorporating technology into their lectures, class assignments, and interaction with students.

Technical innovations in learning are driven in part by the expectations of a generation of students well versed in the uses and benefits of technology. Attracting, retaining, and engaging these students require that colleges and universities stay technically up to date.

What Does This Mean For Colleges And Universities

To meet the challenges of today's educational environment, colleges and universities must embrace learning technology. They must look to technology that enables them to develop online courses, both asynchronous and synchronous. They must look to technology that:

- **Helps them become more efficient**
- **Lets them provide opportunities for collaboration—among students, instructors, administrators, and other institutions**
- **Gives them the ability to measure and demonstrate learning outcomes**
- **Supports the mobility so essential for today's students, and which is only going to grow in importance**

With the right technology, institutions are able to:

IMPROVE LEARNING OUTCOMES

Foster student achievement by making learning mobile and more engaging, and driving continuous improvement through measured outcomes and analytics

Prepare students for the workforce through national and worldwide collaborations and social learning

Deliver higher-quality learning through efficiencies that enable educators to focus on teaching and learning, rather than administrative functions

KEEP COSTS DOWN

Drive greater efficiencies in both delivery of learning and provision of services

Save on meeting and event costs by conducting them virtually

Save on travel by enabling academic collaboration online

Scale learning delivery without having to build classrooms or support satellite campuses

REACH MORE STUDENTS, AND BETTER MEET THEIR NEEDS

Expand enrollment by making learning more accessible to more students who traditionally have not been served

Support academic continuity in developing regions with virtual meetings and classes that can be held despite transportation, weather, and bandwidth/connectivity challenges

Improve student retention both by making learning more engaging and through being perceived as a technology-innovator

Promote the institution more broadly to attract both on-campus students and distance learners

BLACKBOARD: THE RIGHT TECHNOLOGY, THE RIGHT APPROACH

Since 1997, Blackboard has been at the forefront of using the latest in technology to help college and universities worldwide meet the challenges of 21st century learning. As the world's leading provider of learning platforms, we have the expertise, understanding, and technology to improve every aspect of the education experience—for students, faculty members, and administrators.

We understand that each institution, region, and country experiences unique dynamics and has a unique strategy for addressing them. To help institutions shape an online program that will best meet their strategic and tactical learning technology needs, we are able to draw on Blackboard's team of experts, professionals with long experience working with colleges and universities.

As we design and implement our solutions, we are able to draw on an unparalleled breadth of offerings that support the full spectrum of learning needs and technology, including:

- **Mobile learning, collaboration, and connectivity**
- **Asynchronous web-based teaching and learning**
- **Synchronous online classrooms and collaboration**
- **Social learning and content/practices sharing**
- **Assessment**
- **Analytics and reporting on outcomes and for accreditation**



Blackboard's product platforms are all scalable and can be deployed locally. They are also integrated, providing a complete learning-technology solution. Close technical integration offers improved access and a seamless learning experience, along with cost-efficient administration.

Blackboard helps educational institutions worldwide:

- **Improve individual and institutional performance**
- **Make teaching and learning more effective—in the classroom and beyond**
- **Take the education experience mobile**
- **Make more informed decisions and improve outcomes**
- **Offer a more engaging, interactive, and individualized learning experience**
- **Deliver services and experiences that meet the new expectations of learners**
- **Attract and retain students**
- **Better compete by raising the bar on technology services and institutional agility, campus wide**

And do so resource efficiently and cost effectively.



A SAMPLING OF BLACKBOARD CUSTOMERS

Stanford University
University of Notre Dame
California State University, Chico
Northwestern
Tulane University
Loyola University
Stony Brook University
Florida International University
University of Sydney
University of Southern Denmark
University of London
Université Paris Dauphine
University of Warwick
American University of Dubai

