



THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO

UTEP CONNECT

Extended University

ANNUAL REPORT 2016-2017



RECAP of 2016-2017

The key word for the year is “growth.” We added two graduate degrees to the UTEP Connect portfolio. We also saw a 40% increase in the number of courses offered and an 36% increase in the number of seats enrolled in the online program courses. While growth is important and exciting, we continue to keep our focus on student success. Knowing that online learning can be challenging for many students, we do all we can to guide them through the processes of returning to school and achieving success in their courses.

UTEP Connect is committed to serving our online students with the same spirit with which we greet and nurture our on-campus students. We are grateful for UTEP’s faculty, staff, and administration’s support and dedication to making online education an option for UTEP students. We look forward to another productive year. Go Miners!

Programs/Courses

During the 2016-2017 academic year,
UTEP CONNECT worked with the faculty to
offer *two graduate programs*



in engineering:
**Construction Management
& Systems Engineering.**



Two new programs were developed this year:



the Graduate Certificate in
Systems Engineering

in Spring 2017 and a fully online

BA in Chicano Studies

for Fall 2017.



New programs planned for the
upcoming year include
a fully online graduate certificate in

Early Intervention Studies
(Summer 2018)

& a graduate certificate in
Urban and
Regional Planning
(Fall 2018).

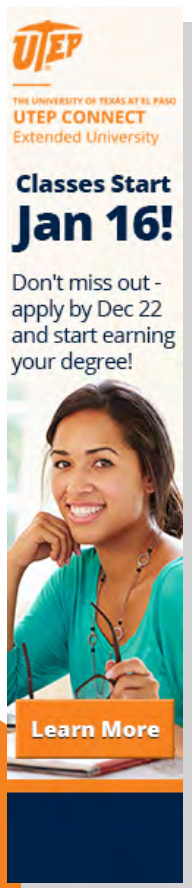


We continue to add to our roster of programs to provide prospective students with more choices.

	Fall 2016	Spring 2017	Summer 2017
Total number of courses	150	150	145
Total number of seats	2,700	3,276	2,333

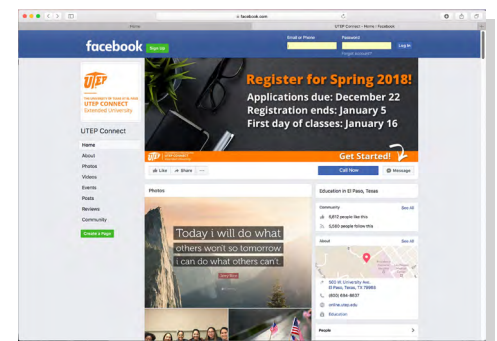
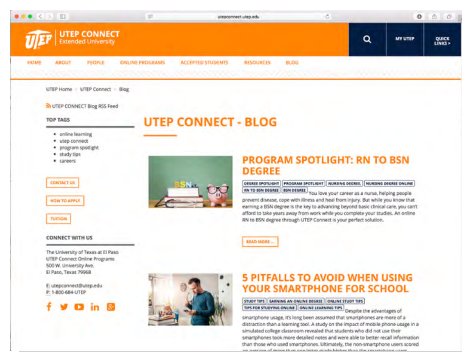


Marketing



UTEP Connect's marketing goals are to present information to students by way of advertising and then inspire them to interact with us—at which point, they become prospective students, or leads. Our enrollment counselors then work with these leads to help them decide if online learning at UTEP is the right choice for them. To help us reach a wider audience of potential UTEP students, we contracted with Blackboard Educational Marketing Services.

- Our digital marketing media mix includes paid generic and branded search, display ads, retargeting, social media marketing and search engine optimization.
- As of the beginning of June 2017, digital marketing had yielded 1,604 leads and 163 applications.
 - ▶ Of those who fill in our inquiry form, about 3% enroll in our programs.
 - ▶ The website used for digital marketing efforts is <http://online.utep.edu>.
- Ongoing search engine optimization (SEO) ensures we are easily found when someone is looking for an online program.
 - ▶ Our blog was established at the end of February 2017, and as of June, we have on average over 500 monthly views; this is expected to increase over time. On social media we have an average of 350 average monthly likes and 5,293 total followers; both of these are growing all the time. Visitors to our page also click on our posts (to like, share or otherwise engage with us) about 3,000 times a month.



TARGETED AUDIENCES

- Returning Students
- Security Stewards*
- High-Achieving Military
- Bilingual Career Climbers**

GEOGRAPHICAL REACH

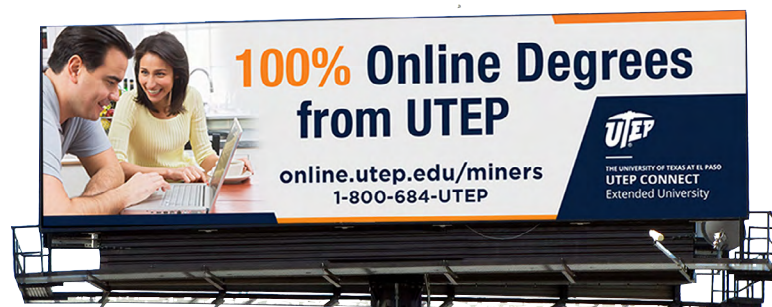
(includes specific metros in each state; additional expansion planned for next year)

- Texas
- Colorado
- Oklahoma
- Arizona

* **Security Stewards:** Motivated to switch careers and follow their passion by beginning a new career in law enforcement, homeland security, border patrol and national defense.

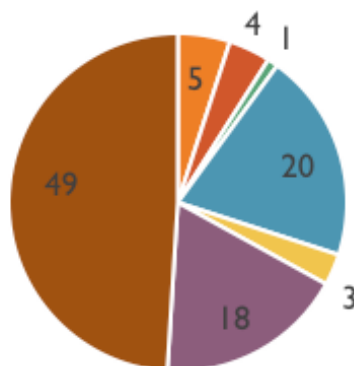
** **Bilingual Career Climbers:** Bilingual with previous degrees or credits.

- Digital marketing is supported by local and regional marketing efforts. Billboards, radio, TV, events and fairs, word of mouth, advertising on military bases and emails also generate interest in the online programs. We also find that contacting former UTEP students generates interest in either coming back to complete a degree or starting a new one.
- The following chart shows how different media sources contribute to the number of students admitted into UTEP Connect's online programs. Numbers are based on a YTD estimate (July 14, 2017 for 2016-17 AY) and only include students who self-report how they heard about us.



Percentage of admits from various sources

- Billboards
- Email
- Events & Fairs
- Online search
- Social Media
- Word of Mouth
- Other



- ▶ Several other media contribute our leads but at a lower rate than those included here; we cannot underestimate the importance of these efforts, however, as very often they build up awareness that leads to action.
- ▶ The two biggest subcategories that make up "Other" are: (a) Current students, former applicants, former students and alumni and (b) UTEP website and other unit sites.
- On average, approximately 35% of our leads become applicants with 70% of those applicants becoming admitted students.

At the beginning of
JUNE 2017,
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Recruitment

- A total of 384 undergraduate students and 496 graduate students were admitted over the course of the year.
- Our recruitment team increased local efforts and attended an average of 4 events per month. We developed more partnerships with local companies and organizations.
 - ▶ Our strongest partnerships (and most fruitful events) continue to be held at ADP and Region 19.
 - ▶ This year, AT&T and Verizon events were among the most prominent events we attended; we also have a steady presence at UTEP campus events such as Orange and Blue Day.
 - ▶ We sponsored an Education Fair for the Texas National Guard in Austin to improve visibility within the military community.
- We continue to coordinate with UTEP's enrollment services to improve online student application and admission processes.
- We maintain a steady presence at the campus outreach meetings and also work closely with the Graduate School to supply materials for their recruitment trips to Mexico.

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Student Success

- Enrollment continues to grow with 1,485 undergraduate and 1,418 graduate students enrolled in courses across all UTEP Connect programs (these numbers include both returning and new students).
- 162 undergraduate students and 123 graduate students graduated during the year. Since Summer 2015, when UTEP Connect was first launched, UTEP has graduated 602 online students (260 undergraduate students and 342 graduate students).
- UTEP Connect invited graduates to celebrate their achievement at its first graduation reception this May. As online students travelled to campus—some from the El Paso region and some from across the state—we welcomed their families and learned more about their paths to graduation. A couple of those testimonials are captured on our website at <http://www.utep.edu/extendeduniversity/utepconnect/online-programs/meet-our-students.html>.



Paloma Marinelarena

2017 Graduate,
Bachelor of Arts in Criminal Justice

CLASS of
2017

You are invited to UTEP Connect's
First Graduation Reception!

Saturday, May 13, 2017
11:30 a.m.-1 p.m.

Miner Village Housing Complex
Community Room

Join us for cake, punch and
a celebration of our online graduates.

RSVP to utepconnect@utep.edu
by Wednesday, May 10



THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO
UTEP CONNECT
Extended University



MEET ONE OF OUR
UTEP CONNECT
2017 GRADUATES

Candice Adame ▶

2017 Graduate,
Bachelor of Science in Nursing
RN to BSN Option

Student Success



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- We continue to work closely with other resource providers on campus and encourage students to make good use of the Library, University Writing Center and Miner Learning Center. The UTEP Connect student success team has worked with campus affiliates to develop and redesign communication to online students so that they know what resources are available and how to access them with ease.
- Most recently, we have developed a video about library resources for online students (see <https://vimeo.com/207483288>); similar projects are planned for the upcoming year.
- The advising team participated in the TEXAAN conference in Dallas at the beginning of the spring semester. The event helped the team build relationships and improve their advising skill set.

State Authorization

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State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA) membership is growing; Florida and the Virgin Islands recently became members, and Massachusetts plans to join by the end of 2017 or early 2018. As a requirement of both the new federal regulations and SARA, UTEP must

- disclose professional licensure information for programs leading to licensure
- report all out-of-state experiences including internships, clinicals, practica and other for-credit activities for both online and face-to-face programs

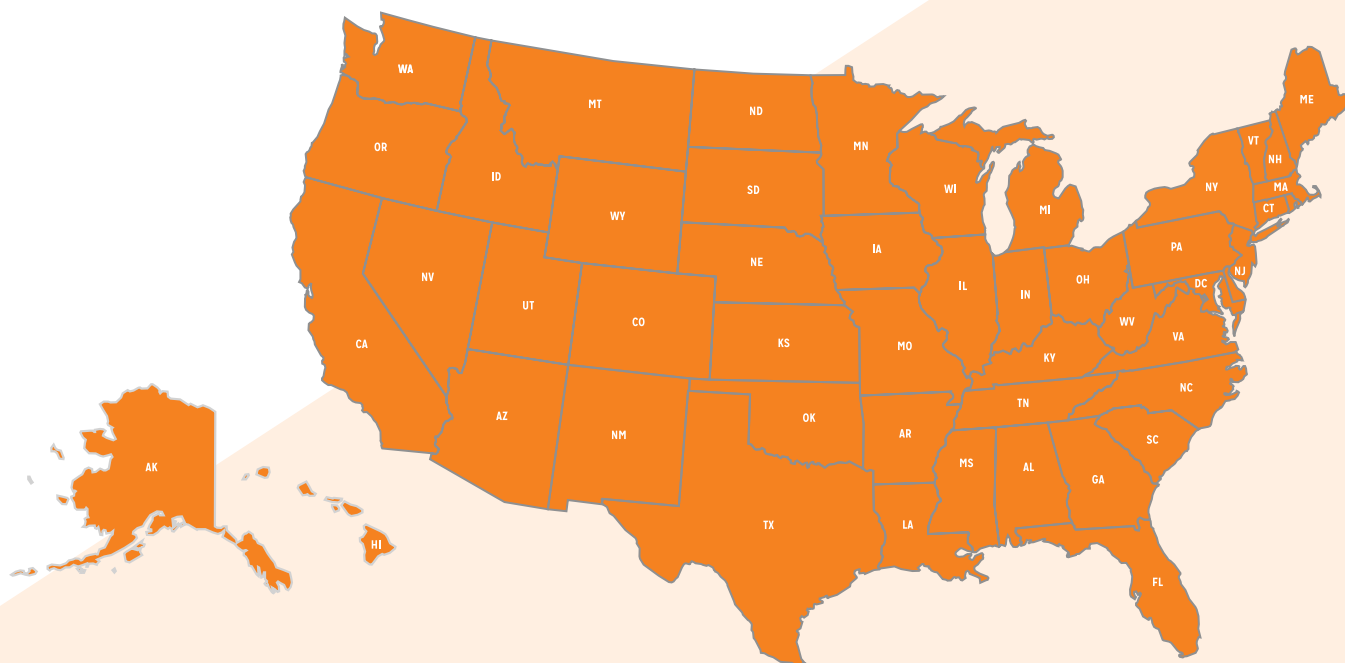
Any program in a licensing field must ensure that it is in compliance with state licensing boards. This is true even if the program does not lead to licensure. For example, the RN to BSN program is regulated by the Nursing Board in several states even though it is a post-licensure program. We reviewed the program across all states to determine compliance and as a result of this review, there are now several states where we will not offer the program. Other programs will be reviewed in a similar manner and all results of such reviews will be posted to the State Authorization page of the UTEP Connect website.



The State Authorization website now features an easy-to-navigate interactive chart. Check it out at:

<http://www.utep.edu/extendeduniversity/utepconnect/online-regulations/index.html>.

Finally, the federal state authorization regulations that were published last December may still be subject to review and revision. If they are not pulled back to negotiated rulemaking by the Department of Education, they will be effective on July 1, 2018. UTEP Connect will continue to monitor this closely to ensure we can achieve compliance prior to implementation.



What's in Store for AY 17-18

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As we enter the new academic year, we continue to experience enrollment growth, filling nearly 4,000 seats for the fall semester. In addition to strategic growth goals, our unit will focus on the continuous improvement of all unit processes and will work with the newly appointed Provost, Carol Parker, and college deans to establish a more comprehensive vision for the long-term role of online learning across campus.

The UTEP Connect online orientation will also be updated and released during the fall semester for prospective students. A module for enrolled students will be included within Blackboard to assist students in both the navigation of online courses as well as best practices for successful online learning.

Finally, our team is planning for a long-term internal and external networking and information campaign to promote UTEP Connect in an effort to forge stronger relationships across campus and within the El Paso community.

What's your Edge?

Another project that our unit is quite excited about is the incorporation of the University's UTEP Edge Student Service Philosophy within the various work streams of UTEP Connect. For example, in partnership with Blackboard, we will be developing a technologically enhanced platform to deliver the UTEP Edge activities created by Student Affairs. All of our service lines will be revamped to include the specific Edge language and approach.

UTEPEDGE

Have questions?
Contact us today.

UTEPCONNECT.UTEP.EDU | 1-800-684-UTEP