ANNUAL REPORT
2019-2020

UTEP

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO
UTEP CONNECT
EXTENDED UNIVERSITY

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO

FIVE SUCCESSFUL YEARS

The 2019-2020 academic year brought both celebrations and challenges. UTEP Connect celebrated its fifth anniversary of enrolling fully online students. And there were also significant challenges to higher education because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Although the pandemic prevented us from celebrating our anniversary with our colleagues in person, we want to celebrate the faculty, staff, and students who have worked with us. Since our first cohort in 2015, we have graduated 2,402 students across all of our programs. With your help, we will continue to take UTEP to those students unable to come to campus.

With online learning becoming the norm and with our students assuming additional responsibilities while working and learning from home, we are more focused than ever on student success and ensuring that student needs are met. Thanks to the continued support of our students and UTEP faculty, staff and administration, we have been successful in navigating changing scenarios over the past several months and ensuring that we continue to provide a quality online education to our students.

Go Miners!

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PROGRAMS/COURSES

During the 2019-2020 academic year, UTEP Connect worked with the College of Liberal Arts to add the Masters of Music in Conducting. In the coming year, we plan to add the following programs to our roster as well:

A graduate Certificate in STEM Education in Spring 2021 and an M.Ed. in Literacy Education in Fall 2021, both from the College of Education

A Master of Science in Industrial Engineering in Fall 2021 from the College of Engineering

	2019-2020
Total number of courses	657
Total number of seats	10,573

Undergraduate and Graduate Breakdown

|	FALL 2019		SPRING 2020		SUMMER 2020	
	UG	GD	UG	GD	UG	GD
Total number of courses	74	164	76	153	51	139
Total number of seats	2,134	1,969	1,967	1,858	1,034	1,611

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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. This is our fourth year (September 1, 2019 through August 31, 2020) of working on online lead generation with Blackboard Educational Marketing Services.

Note: For the purposes of this document, leads are defined as anybody who contacted us for the first time during the subject timeframe (09/01/19 through 08/31/20) or submitted an inquiry form during this timeframe.
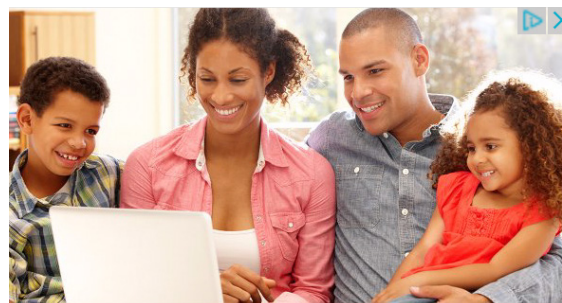
Online Programs | UTEP Connect

Pursue a Degree or Graduate Certificate Online. Explore UTEP's 100% Online Programs Today!

UTEP Connect
There's never been a better time to study online.

ONLINE.UTEP.EDU

Target Audiences

Our target audiences have stayed more or less the same for the past few years. Our main audiences for 2019-2020 were

- **Returning Students**
  - may have attended UTEP or another school and want to finish their degree

- **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 students with previous degrees or credits

- **Military**
  - high-achieving military personnel as a subset of any of the other audiences

Redefining Higher Education

There has never been a better time to study online.

We'll come to you.
100% online degree programs from UTEP.

- Bachelor of Arts in Security Studies
- Master of Defense and Strategic Studies

APPLY NOW FOR FALL 2020!

Have questions?
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online.utep.edu/bliss
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No official U.S. Army endorsement is implied.

- Between September 1, 2019 and August 31, 2020, marketing efforts as a whole brought in **5,176** total leads for the year, approximately **3,822** of whom filled out an inquiry form on the microsite.

- Digital advertising was concentrated in Texas and neighboring states including Colorado, Arizona, New Mexico and Oklahoma. As of the end of July, we also opened up marketing for graduate certificates to include Georgia, California, Florida, New Jersey and New York (based on data showing where our students come from). Moving forward and based on data, we will likely open up markets for other program areas as well.

- Our digital marketing media mix includes paid generic and branded search, display ads, retargeting, social media marketing (including Instagram stories that were recently added) and search engine optimization.

- **The microsite** (aka marketing website) used for digital marketing efforts is at https://online.utep.edu. Traffic to the marketing site remained concentrated in Texas (with El Paso, Dallas, Houston and Austin continuing to feature heavily) and Ciudad Juárez.

- The average microsite conversion rate September 1, 2019 – August 31, 2020 was **3.36%**; this is fairly steady from last year despite changes in the industry and market due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Time on page increased by **9 seconds**, and the number of pageviews increased by **100%** over last year.
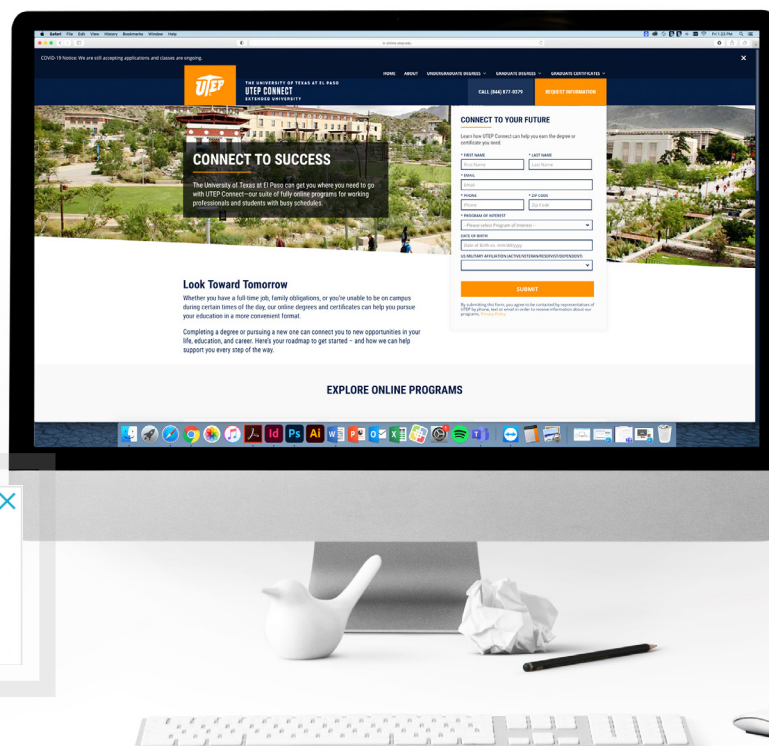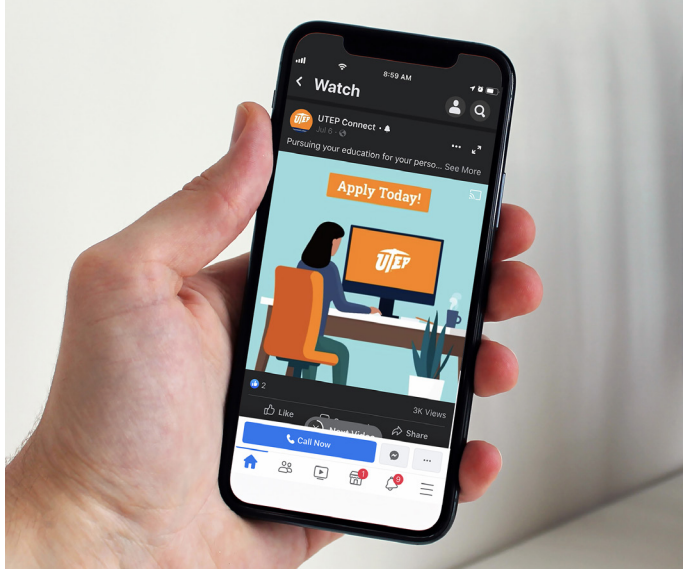
Prepárate hoy, para el mañana.

Hoy más que nunca, asume el reto y estudia una carrera **100%** en línea.

Inscripciones abiertas. Cursos de otoño disponibles.

Fecha límite para enviar aplicación: **31 julio.**

Las clases son impartidas en inglés.

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO
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▶ PARA MAYOR INFORMACIÓN
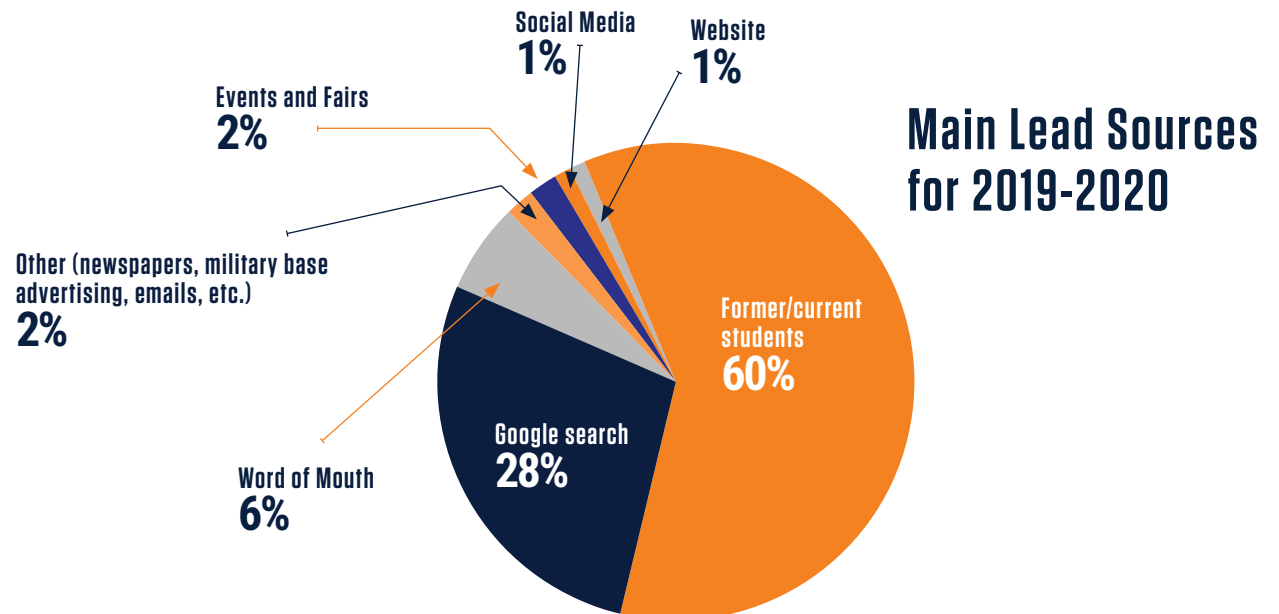
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- **Facebook**
  - We had close to **31,000** engaged users (up 54% from last year) and close to **12,000** link clicks (up 17% from last year)
  - Our total fans are now at **6,898** which is **1.8%** up from the previous year

- **Ongoing search engine optimization** (SEO) for https://utepconnect.utep.edu was a strong focus this year; this ensures we are easily found in organic search results when someone is looking for an online program. SEO efforts included:
  - User interface/User experience (UI/UX) Website Audit to evaluate the current state of the UTEP Connect website and to determine if it is optimized from a UI/UX perspective to achieve the division's strategic enrollment goals. The audit examined the site's functionality, usability, and content, and several recommended changes were implemented on the site.

- Keyword Audit of **20** program pages to determine the keywords the pages are currently ranking for and to find potential keyword gaps for future growth.
- Strategic changes to the blog, which is a key part of SEO efforts. In 2019-2020, the blog accounted for **48%** of all website pageviews and **42%** of all organic website pageviews. All parameters trended up when compared to 2018-2019:
  - Pageviews: 287,859 (+257%)
  - Unique pageviews: 262,145 (+265%)
  - Average time on page: 4 mins (+50%)
  - Entrances: 255,188 (+284%)

- Digital marketing is supported by marketing efforts in more traditional media. Attendance at events and fairs, word-of-mouth referrals, advertising on military bases, news outlets and emails also generate interest in the online programs. The biggest change in 2019-2020 has been the dramatic increase **(19%)** of leads generated by referrals from former/current students.

- The following chart shows how various media sources contribute to the number of students interested in UTEP Connect's online programs. Numbers only include students who self-report (about **10%** of total) how they heard about us. Note that only the top channels are included here, but there are several other media channels (e.g. TV, radio, advertising on military bases, etc.) which contribute to our leads indirectly as well. While they are not detailed here, we cannot underestimate the importance of these efforts as they build up awareness that leads to action.

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Main Lead Sources for 2019-2020

- Social Media 1%
- Website 1%
- Events and Fairs 2%
- Other (newspapers, military base advertising, emails, etc.) 2%
- Former/current students 60%
- Google search 28%
- Word of Mouth 6%

RECRUITMENT

- A total of **460 undergraduate** and **548 graduate students** were admitted over the course of the year.

- We continue to coordinate with UTEP's enrollment services to improve the online student application and admissions processes.

- The recruitment team typically attends community events including the EPISD and Dell City Education Fairs as well as several Hospitals of Providence Education Fairs. These efforts have currently been paused due to the COVID-19 pandemic and are expected to resume at a later date when it is safe to do so.

- We maintain a steady presence at the campus outreach meetings.
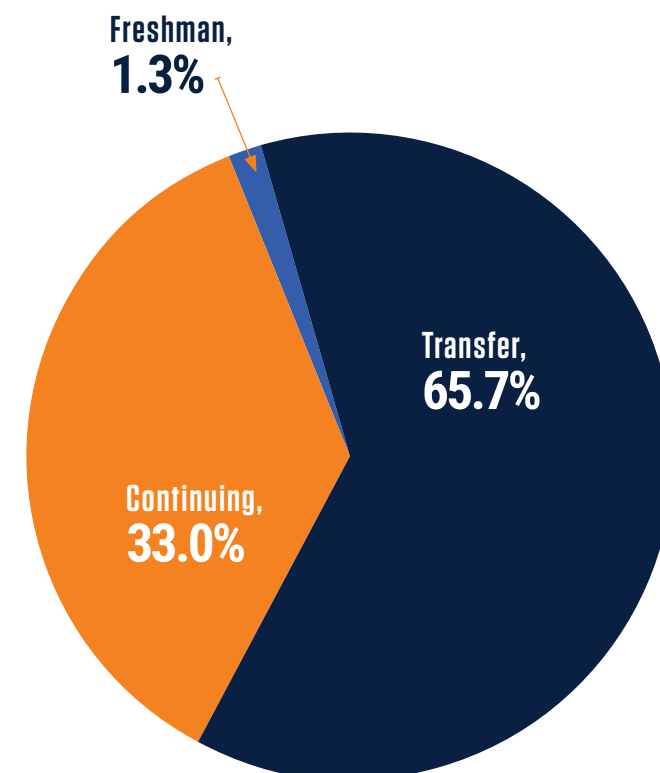
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The tables and chart below show the numbers admitted and the undergraduate breakdown by type for 2019-2020:

2019-2020 Admitted

Level	FALL 2019	SPRING 2020	SUMMER 2020	GRAND TOTAL
Undergraduate	223	145	92	460
Graduate	254	211	83	548
Grand Total	477	356	175	1,008

Undergraduate Admitted Student Type

Freshman, 1.3%

Transfer, 65.7%

Continuing, 33.0%

STUDENT SUCCESS

- A total of **1,929 students** were enrolled in UTEP Connect undergraduate and graduate programs for 2019-2020.

- UTEP Connect has graduated a total of **2,402 students** to date; **595 students** graduated during 2019-2020 across undergraduate and graduate programs.

We continue to work closely with other resource providers on campus and encourage students to make good use of online and on-campus resources such as the University Writing Center, the Military Student Success Center and the Library.

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2019-2020 Enrolled by Level

Level	FALL 2019	SPRING 2020	SUMMER 2020	GRAND TOTAL
Undergraduate	597	577	379	1,553
Graduate	811	767	643	2,221
Grand Total	1,408	1,344	1,022	3,774

Count of Graduations

Graduations	FALL 2019	SPRING 2020	SUMMER 2020	GRAND TOTAL
Graduate	153	113	70	336
Graduate Certificate	9	10	5	24
Undergraduate	84	92	59	235
Grand Total	246	215	134	595

Unique Count of Students Enrolled for 2019-2020 by Program

| Program	Student Count
Bachelor of Applied Arts and Science	10
Bachelor of Arts in Chicano Studies	13
Bachelor of Arts in Criminal Justice	201
Bachelor of Arts in Media Advertising	46
Bachelor of Arts in Organizational and Corporate Communication	78
Bachelor of Arts in Security Studies	79
Bachelor of Multidisciplinary Studies	190
Bachelor of Science in Nursing RN-BSN	186
Undergraduate Double Major	2
Undergraduate General Studies*	36
Graduate Certificate in Construction Management	7
Graduate Certificate in Early Intervention Studies	10
Graduate Certificate in Systems Engineering	1
Graduate Certificate in Technical and Professional Writing	31
Graduate Certificate in Urban and Regional Planning	9
Master of Defense and Strategic Studies	118
Master of Education in Curriculum & Instruction	133
Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing	68
Master of Arts in Music with a Concentration in Conducting	13
Master of Science in Construction Management	117
Master of Science in Systems Engineering	66
Master of Science in Nursing - Nursing Administration Management	78
Master of Science in Nursing - Nursing Education	92
Master of Science in Nursing - Nurse Practitioner	345

Grand Total 1,929

*Conditionally admitted students

STATE AUTHORIZATION

UTEP has remained a member of the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (NC-SARA) which allows for reciprocity of general distance education regulations with all states in the U.S. and many territories, with the one exception being California. This allows for continued mobility of UTEP's online students as well as many out-of-state internships that can be completed without the need for additional state applications, funds, and approvals.

Membership in NC-SARA has been particularly important this year with the significant number of courses being delivered remotely due to the pandemic. From Fall 2019 to Fall 2020, there has a more than 700% increase in the number of students learning remotely, all of whom must be tracked for State Authorization. As we continue to work through the challenges of this time, UTEP Connect will continue to monitor the location of all students studying remotely to ensure compliance.

New regulations from the Department of Education went into effect on July 1, 2020. These regulations require both public and individual disclosures for students in programs in professional licensure fields, regardless of modality. UTEP Connect has managed the implementation of these disclosures for all UTEP programs and continues to monitor licensing regulations as well as student location in all programs in professional licensing fields.
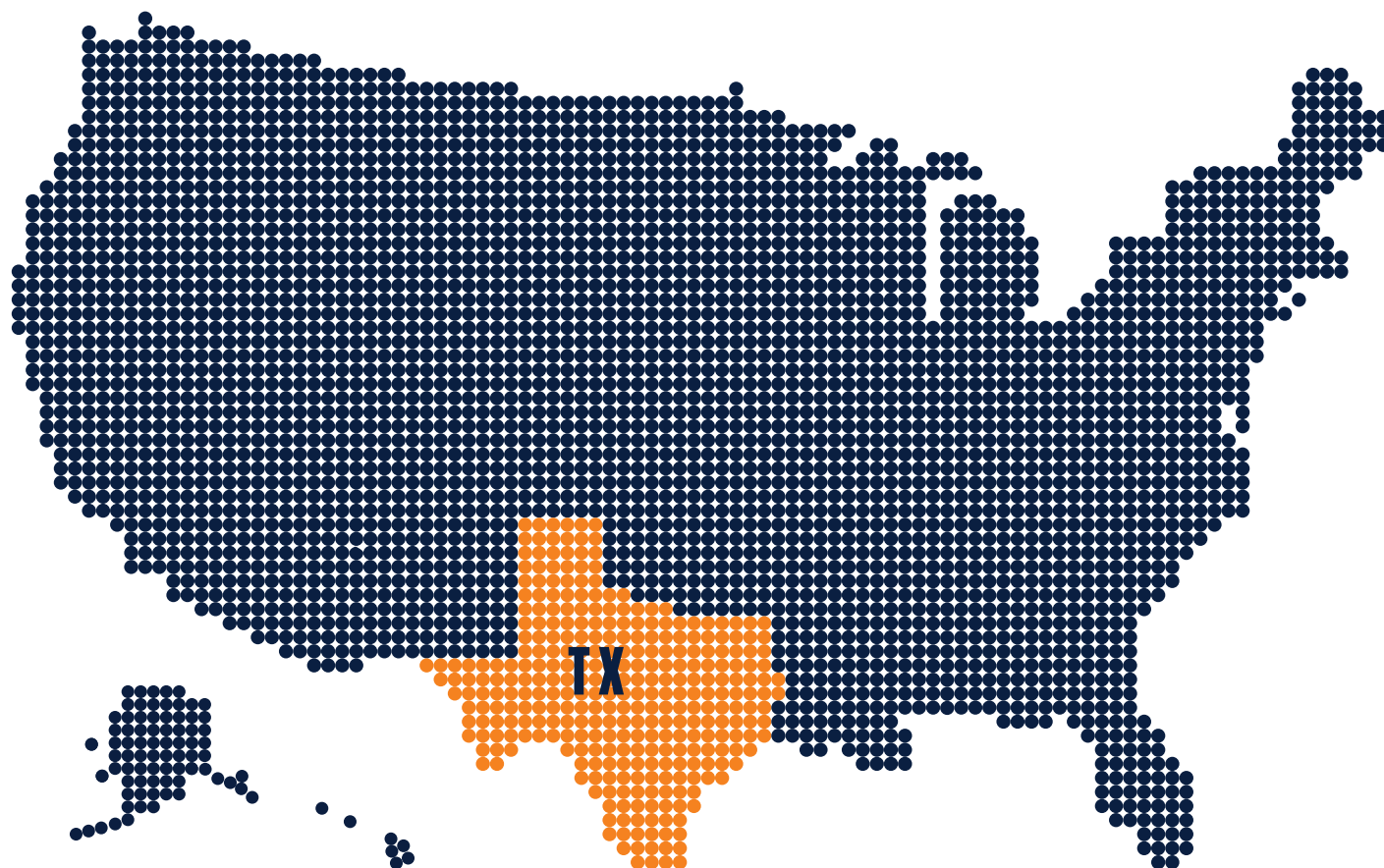
During the past academic year, UTEP has had students enrolled in 48 states and U.S. Territories, and 7 foreign locations, although 94% of enrollments are students located in the State of Texas.

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