



THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO
UTEP CONNECT
EXTENDED UNIVERSITY

2020/2021 ANNUAL REPORT

UTEP CONNECT





UTEP Connect successfully served its constituents throughout the 2020-2021 academic year as the COVID-19 pandemic brought significant challenges to higher education. Since our first cohort in 2015, we have graduated 2,858 students across all of the programs. With your help, we will continue to take UTEP to those students unable to come to campus.

With online learning becoming increasingly common and with our students assuming additional responsibilities while working and learning from home, we are more focused than ever on student success.

Go Miners!

PROGRAMS/COURSES

During the 2020-2021 academic year, UTEP Connect added a Graduate Certificate in STEM Education to our roster of programs.

Programs/Courses

	FALL 2020	SPRING 2021	SUMMER 2021
Total number of courses	235	219	139
Total number of seats	4,051	4,080	2,596

Undergraduate and Graduate Breakdown


	FALL 2020		SPRING 2021		SUMMER 2021	
	Undergraduate	Graduate	Undergraduate	Graduate	Undergraduate	Graduate
Total number of courses	73	162	62	157	44	95
Total number of seats	1,975	2,084	1,949	2,131	1,078	1,518

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 on-line learning at UTEP is the right choice for them. This is our fifth year (September 1, 2020 through August 31, 2021) 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 (09/01/20 through 08/31/21) or submitted an inquiry form during this timeframe.

- Between September 1, 2020 and August 31, 2021, marketing efforts as a whole brought in **6,356** total leads for the year, approximately **5,193** 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. Secondary markets were Georgia, California, Florida, New Jersey and New York (based on data showing where our students come from).
- Our digital marketing media mix includes program specific and brand paid search, retargeting, social media marketing and search engine optimization.




**UTEP Connect
Online Degrees**

**Online Degrees
& Certificates**

Affordable, high-quality degree programs from UTEP designed for busy lives.

Learn more!


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utepconnect.utep.edu
1-800-684-UTEP

Target Audiences

Our target audiences for 2020-2021 were

- **Young Hispanic Learners:**
Young Hispanic/Latino individuals looking to start or finish their degree without compromising their family's wishes or responsibilities.
- **Hands-On Career Climbers:**
Skills-based, hard-working professionals looking to take the next step and advance into higher roles within their field.
- **Passion-Driven Career Advancers:**
Emotionally motivated professionals seeking to advance their skillset for personal and professional impact.

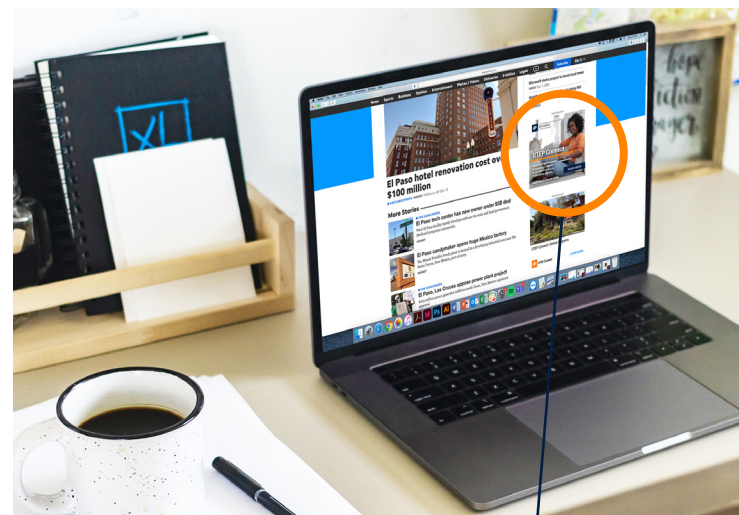
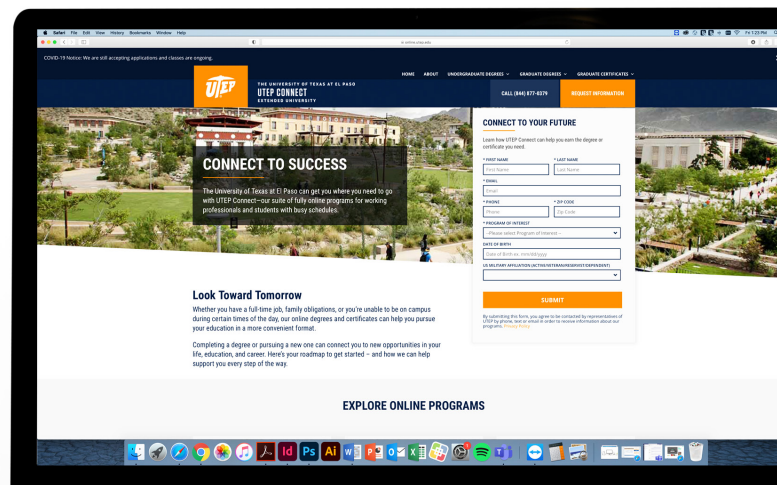
Returning students and the military are also subsets of these main groups.

MARKETING

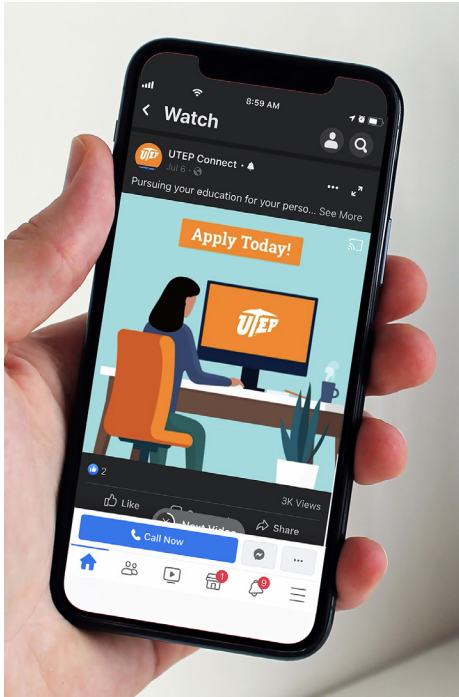
- **The microsite** (aka marketing website) used for digital marketing efforts is at <https://online.utep.edu>. Traffic to the marketing site remained concentrated in Texas (with El Paso, Dallas, Houston and Austin continuing to feature heavily) and Ciudad Juárez. The average microsite conversion rate September 1, 2020 – August 31, 2021 was **4.49%** (up from 3.36% the previous year) and the number of pageviews increased by **3%** over last year.
- **Facebook**
 - We had over **50,000** engaged users (up 62% from last year) and over **27,000** link clicks (up 114% from last year).
 - Our total fans are now at **7,385** which is **7.1%** up from the previous year.
 - Post reach increased by **81%**, impressions by **80%** and engagement by **65%**.
- **LinkedIn**
 - We had **1,039** followers (up 8% from last year).
 - Impressions increased by **206%** from last year and clicks by **111%**.
- **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 on-page optimization recommendations by degree level, continued content support (through the blog) and organic social media posts (Facebook and LinkedIn).
- **Blog**

In 2020-2021, the blog accounted for **67%** of all website pageviews and **60%** of all organic website pageviews. All parameters trended up year over year (YoY):

 - Pageviews: 551,931 (+92% YoY)
 - Unique pageviews: 495,880 (+89% YoY)
 - Average time on page: 5.15 mins (+16.5% YoY)
 - Entrances: 488,020 (+91% YoY)

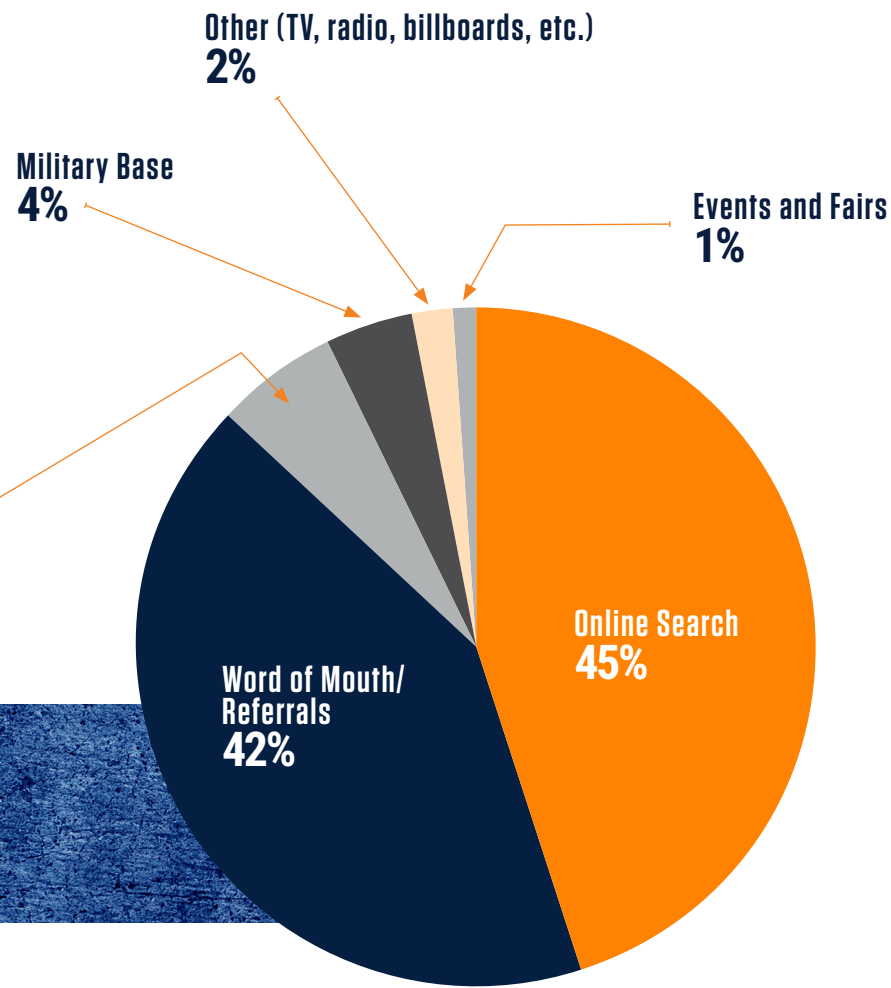
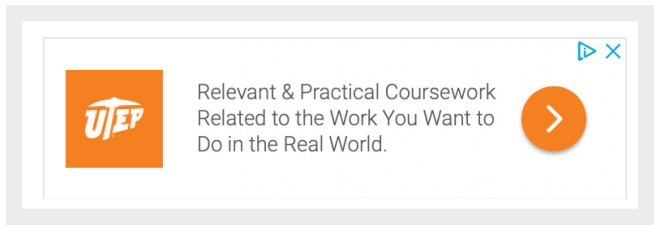


MARKETING



- Digital marketing is also 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 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 30% 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.) that 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. Some points to note:

- The percentage of students who reported how they heard about us increased about **20%** from the previous year.
- Over **80%** of word of mouth/referrals are from former/current students; however, these referrals from former/current students only constitute approximately **35%** of the total number of students who reported how they heard about us.
- Social media referrals increased by **5%** and inquiries from military base advertising increased as well. However, the percentage of referrals from events decreased by **1%** from 2019-2020 (this is not surprising, given the decrease in in-person events during this timeframe).



Main Lead Sources for 2020-2021

RECRUITMENT

- A total of **467 undergraduate** and **657 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 attended virtual recruitment events in partnership with the Office of International Programs. We also attended the local Hospitals of Providence Education Fair.
- We maintain a steady presence at campus outreach meetings.

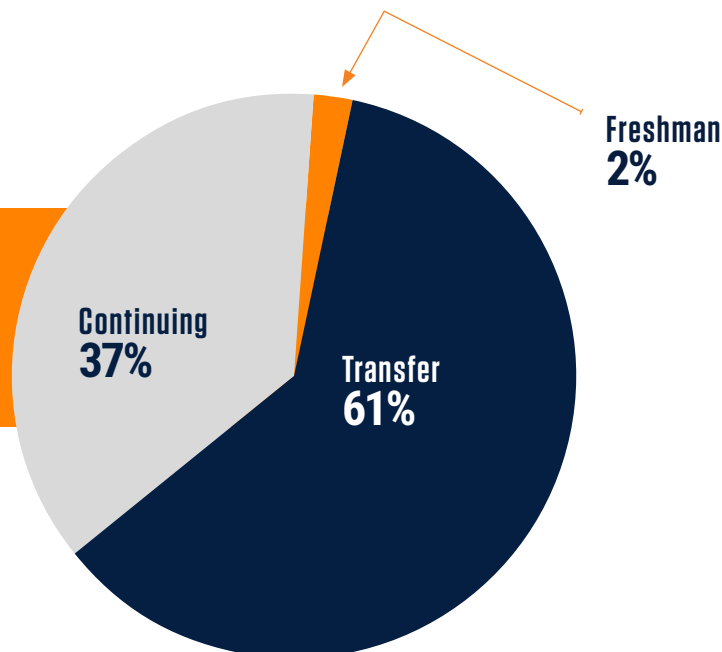
The tables and chart below show the numbers admitted and the undergraduate breakdown by type for 2020-2021:



Undergraduate and Graduate Breakdown

LEVEL	FALL 2020	SPRING 2021	SUMMER 2021	GRAND TOTAL
Undergraduate	216	167	84	467
Graduate	321	253	83	657
GRAND TOTAL	537	420	167	1,124

Undergraduate Admits by Student Type



STUDENT SUCCESS

- A total of **1,866 students** were enrolled in UTEP Connect undergraduate and graduate programs for 2020-2021.
- UTEP Connect has graduated a total of **2,858 students** to date; **532 students** graduated during 2020-2021 across undergraduate and graduate programs.

We continue to work closely with student resource providers on campus and encourage UTEP Connect students to make good use of both online and on-campus resources.



2020-2021 Enrolled by Level

LEVEL	FALL 2020	SPRING 2021	SUMMER 2021	GRAND TOTAL
Undergraduate	555	567	390	1,512
Graduate	808	853	654	2,315
GRAND TOTAL	1,363	1,420	1,044	3,827

Count of Graduations

GRADUATIONS	FALL 2020	SPRING 2021	SUMMER 2021	GRAND TOTAL
Graduate	108	118	72	298
Graduate Certificate	5	2	6	13
Undergraduate	78	77	66	221
GRAND TOTAL	191	197	144	532

STUDENT SUCCESS

Unique Count of Students Enrolled for 2020-2021 by Program

Program	Student Count
Bachelor of Applied Arts and Science	10
Bachelor of Arts in Chicano Studies	11
Bachelor of Arts in Criminal Justice	212
Bachelor of Arts in Media Advertising	31
Bachelor of Arts in Organizational and Corporate Communication	76
Bachelor of Arts in Security Studies	85
Bachelor of Multidisciplinary Studies	181
Bachelor of Science in Nursing RN-BSN	160
Undergraduate Double Major	1
Undergraduate General Studies*	1
Graduate Certificate in Construction Management	6
Graduate Certificate in Early Intervention Studies	8
Graduate Certificate in Technical and Professional Writing	24
Graduate Certificate in Urban and Regional Planning	8
Master of Defense and Strategic Studies	84
Master of Education in Curriculum & Instruction	130
Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing	88
Master of Arts in Music with a Concentration in Conducting	33
Master of Science in Construction Management	116
Master of Science in Systems Engineering	110
Master of Science in Nursing - Nursing Administration Management	72
Master of Science in Nursing - Nursing Education	73
Master of Science in Nursing - Nurse Practitioner	346
Grand Total	1,866

*Conditionally admitted students



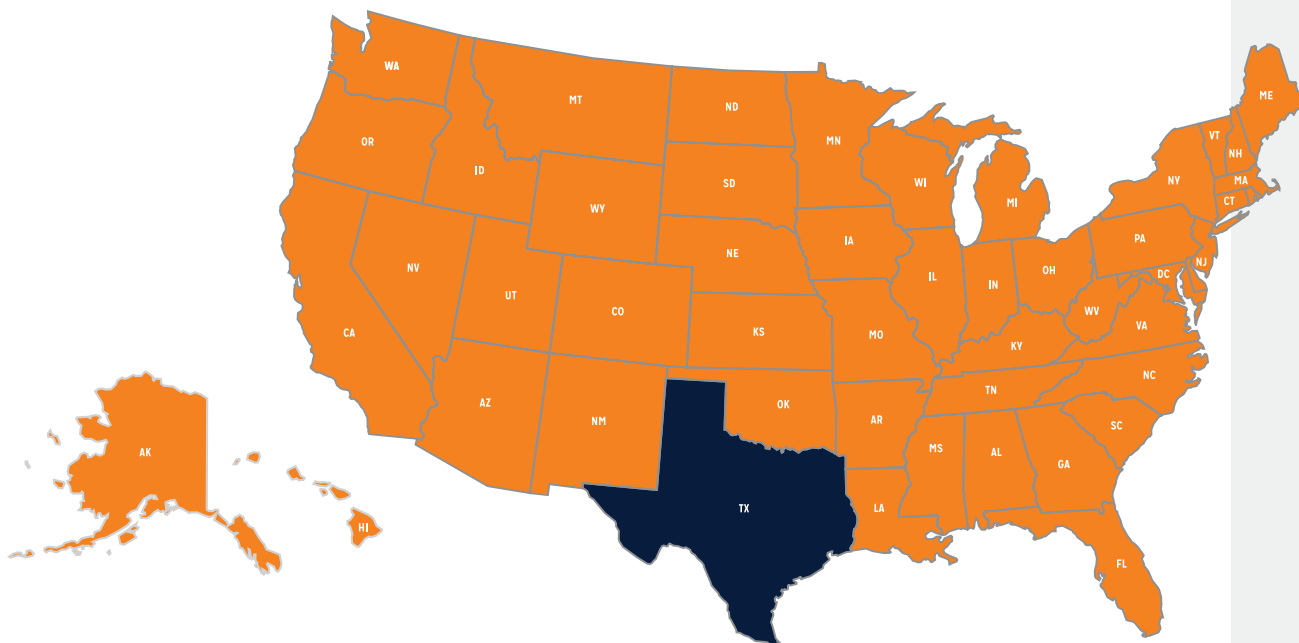
STATE AUTHORIZATION

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 was more than **700% increase in the number of UTEP students learning remotely**, all of whom must be tracked for State Authorization. In the Fall 2020 term alone, students studied remotely in 56 different locations outside of El Paso including states outside of Texas, US Territories and several foreign locations. Even with many students studying in places around the globe, over **82%** of students studying remotely remained in El Paso.

The number of students tracked for State Authorization in Fall 2021 has decreased by over **80%** from Fall 2020 because of the return to face-to-face learning for traditional students following the pandemic. However, compared to Fall 2019, the number of students studying remotely and tracked for State Authorization this fall has increased by **46%**.

UTEP Connect will continue to monitor student locations of all UTEP students studying remotely for authorization purposes as well as professional licensure compliance.





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