

# THE EVOLUTION OF Quality Distance Learning

IN AMERICAN HIGHER EDUCATION



## Distance Learning



Correspondence education is first offered; this initial form of distance education booms in the late 1800s and early 1900s.<sup>1</sup>

1728

1915

The National University Extension is created to address the quality of correspondence programs.<sup>1</sup>



Radio educational broadcasting emerges. Less than a decade later, legislation starts to regulate this form of communication.<sup>1</sup>

1906

1930

The National Advisory Council for Radio in Education is formed to promote radio broadcasting in distance-learning. The National Committee on Education is also established to protect the rights of educational broadcasting.<sup>1</sup>



Television is first used to deliver instruction. Televised courses continued to boom through the late 1960s and early 1970s.<sup>1</sup>

1932

1967

The Corporation for Public Broadcasting is formed to promote tele-education.<sup>1</sup>



Computer-based instruction emerges.<sup>1</sup>

1980

1987

The United States Distance Learning Association (USDLA) is formed to support the development, application, and legislation of distance learning.<sup>10</sup>

## Online Learning



The World Wide Web makes online delivery of higher education possible. Experimentation with Internet-mediated instruction continues in the early to mid 1990s. Many for-profits emerged and soon perished, to be outlived by the first ever institution to offer online education: the University of Phoenix. Higher education nonprofits adopted online education from the late 1990s.<sup>1</sup>

1991

The Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) begins collecting statistical data and evolves into the national transparency and accountability repository for colleges and universities.<sup>9</sup>

1992

The Alfred P. Sloan Foundation provides funding for higher-education online programs to contribute to the improvement of online education.<sup>1</sup>

1999

The Sloan Consortium of Colleges and Universities (Sloan-C) is established to advance online education into the mainstream<sup>2</sup> and introduces the Five Pillars of Online Education.<sup>3</sup> In 2014, the organization was renamed the Online Learning Consortium.<sup>2</sup>



Mobile learning emerges.<sup>4</sup>

2005

2003

The Maryland Online Consortium creates Quality Matters in an effort to measure and ensure quality in online courses.<sup>6</sup>

2006

Most higher-education institutions create a chief online education officer position to oversee online-education initiatives.<sup>11</sup>

2008

The first massive open online courses (MOOCs) begin to appear, pioneered by platform organizations such as Coursera, EdEx, and Khan Academy.<sup>5</sup>

2011

The Online Learning Consortium begins to launch elements of the Quality Scorecard suite to advance quality in online higher education.<sup>7</sup>

2013

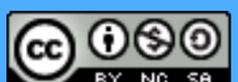
The National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA) is formed to address quality and integrity matters, among others.<sup>8</sup>

2020

In light of COVID-19, the U.S. Secretary of Education issues new distance-learning regulations.<sup>12</sup>

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