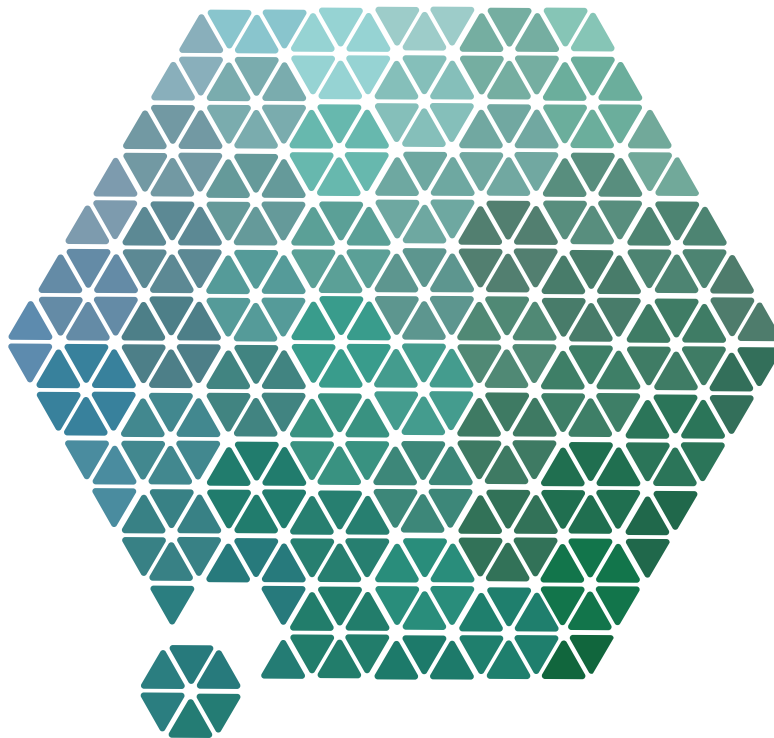


Together We Can Accomplish More:

A Survey of Multi-Institution Consortia and System Leaders



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WCET - WICHE Cooperative for Educational Technologies
wcet.wiche.edu

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WCET (wcet.wiche.edu) and
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About WCET

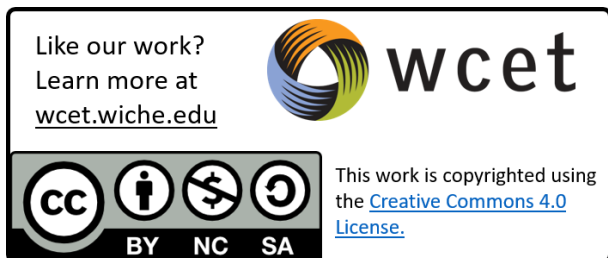
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Executive Summary

WCET has long been interested in multi-institutional consortia and systems that help their member institutions share resources with the goal of increasing the institutional capacity for technology-enhanced courses, programs, and student support services. WCET's Consortia Group has focused on the organization and leadership of these partnerships for many years, including face-to-face gatherings at WCET's Annual Meeting. WCET last conducted a survey of consortia in 2008, [The Funding of Academic Collaborations](#).

WCET's Consortia Group determined that it was time to conduct another survey to benchmark the current and future state of consortia and system (i.e., the unit of a public system responsibility for these activities) work. There are enormous pressures on higher education institutions to respond to reduced state investments, flattened or lowered enrollments, increased competition, and lessened ability to increase tuition and fees. Working through multi-institutional partnerships, colleges can realize economies of scale, provide services

Working across campuses, together we “solve problems that a single institution could not solve individually—at least not without tremendous capital burdens.”

they cannot on their own, and amplify their marketing reach. This report may help higher education leaders and government policymakers understand the opportunities that consortia and systems can provide.

Thirty-two respondents representing consortia and systems of all types from the United States and Canada responded to a survey that was conducted in the first half of 2018. Consortia

and system leaders remain hopeful that their partnerships will increase student access, improve student success, realize efficiencies, and test new innovations. The survey results reflect the complexity of running and maintaining organizations that require cooperation. While there have been many changes in the higher education landscape since the 2008 survey was conducted, what has remained consistent is the consortia and system leaders' commitment to live by the mantra: “together we can accomplish more.”

There Has Been Flux, But Most are Strengthening

There has been an unusual amount of flux for this number of organizations. To be fair, their activities are new and there is no one single model that fits all situations. For consortia and systems over the last ten years, seven new ones opened, five closed, and nine transitioned to new missions and/or names.

To remain relevant in a world of fast-changing technology and innovations requires constant attention to emerging member needs and willingness to reinvent the organization to provide relevant services. While some organizations have closed, many others have strengthened over time or transitioned into a new, more relevant version that better fits member needs.

Value is Found in Increasing Outcomes and Efficiencies...and Exploring New Innovations

As a leader of one of these organizations, it is not always easy to encapsulate the value of the organization. Consortia and systems have doubled-down on their primary value of increasing access to courses and program, promoting operational efficiencies, in addition to realizing cost savings from joint procurement and centralized operations. A significant minority reported increased value in joint problem-solving and exploration of the efficacy of innovations. Given that there will always be new technologies, jointly researching emerging innovations is a service will always be in demand.

A Wide Range of Services are Offered; Most Focus on Soft Skills

Consortia and systems offer an array of services to meet the needs of their member institutions, which may vary widely from organization to another. Of the top ten listed, only three are completely focused on technologies or managing technical operations on behalf of the members. The other services focus more on the “soft” skills in using technologies effectively or managing complex partnership arrangements. As with many technology enterprises, supporting the people is the most important part of the operations.

Most Offered Services (Percentages of respondents offering each service)

Brokering interinstitutional partnerships to meet institutional needs (89.7%).
Faculty development (84.4%).
Inter-institutional sharing of courses (77.4%).
Data gathering on enrollments and/or courses (71.0%).
Centralized or joint exploring/researching of emerging technologies (67.7%).
Joint online course listing or course catalog (65.7%).
Student readiness for online learning (60.0%).
Offering open educational resources (59.4%).
Operating learning object repository (53.2%).
Instructional design assistance (53.2%).

New Services Address Highly Varied Member Needs, But OER is Popular

The core set of services offered by most consortia and systems is fairly well set, but they are still adding new ones based on member needs, which represents a maturing of these organizations. Rather than chasing the next new “killer app,” they are now increasingly more involved in joint exploration of the value of new innovations. Based upon their analysis, they implement what works.

The one new service that is currently receiving the most attention is the implementation of Open Educational Resources (OER). This is not surprising given the great interest by policy makers and higher education leaders in assuring the college becomes more affordable for students.

Systems and Consortia are Maturing as Organizations

Based upon the closing of a few multi-institution partnerships, some critics have predicted further losses of consortia. Contrary to that opinion, the general trend is for these organizations to be growing and maturing. About one-third of the organizations now have a budget of more than \$5 million as compared to about 10% in 2008. Full-time staffing is also increasing. Since 2008, the smallest and largest categories saw declines in their numbers. The biggest growth was realized in organizations serving 31-50 institutions.

The changes that have taken place over the decade may be signs that these organizations are maturing. Those that persist are generating more revenues from services and/or appropriations. On the other hand, those consortia with smaller budgets may have ceased to exist, increased their budgets over time (thus growing out of the lowest category), or continue to meet member needs with a small budget. Also, the decline in consortia and systems that serve very large or very institutional populations might be an indicator of the difficulty in maintaining partnerships at those two extremes.

More Diverse Revenue Streams, But Still Dangerously Few for Many

Findings in the 2008 report raised some alarms about consortia and systems overly relying on a single funding stream. Still today, almost two-thirds (63.3) of respondents have only one or two revenue streams. Even those with more options may be heavily reliant on one source.

On the positive side, consortia and systems with limited funding options have found a model that works for them. Negatively, if anything should happen to a revenue stream, the consortium or system is at extreme risk. While there is more diversity now in revenue streams than in 2008, many of these organizations are still at risk to changes in governments, changes in system or institutional leadership and priorities, economic downturns, and other unseen occurrences.

A Final Word: Overall Trends are Positive

These organizations are complex to run as they must constantly monitor and balance changes in leadership, economics, technologies, personalities, enrollments, and other external pressures. Unlike institutions, they often do not have a natural constituency and sometimes are victims of political, leadership, or budget considerations not of their own making.

“We provide thought leadership, and model new and innovative services and practices that benefit our member institutions.”

With noted closures of some consortia or systems in recent years, some critics of multi-institution partnerships (including institutional leaders and editorial writers) declared them dead or dying. This survey shows that more have opened than have closed and several have repurposed themselves to meet changing needs.

Meanwhile -- on a whole -- they are expanding their services and increasing their budgets; most are prospering.

In times of uncertainty and budget fluctuations, institutional leaders should consider that their colleges and universities cannot be all things to all people. By judiciously partnering in consortia or system efforts, the result is that “together we can accomplish more.”

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Introduction

Purpose of this Report

WCET has long been interested in multi-institutional consortia and systems that help their member institutions share resources with the goal of increasing the institutional capacity for technology-enhanced courses, programs, and student support services. WCET’s Consortia Group has focused on the organization and leadership of these partnerships for many years, including face-to-face gatherings at WCET’s Annual Meeting. WCET last conducted a survey of consortia in 2008, [The Funding of Academic Collaborations](#), which was authored by Demaree Michelau (WICHE) and Russell Poulin. The Consortia Group determined that it was time to conduct another survey to benchmark the current state of consortia and system work. We also wanted to inquire about their future plans. A copy of the survey is available in Appendix A.

Definitions: Examples of What We Call “Consortia” and “Systems” as a Subset of Consortia

Given the variety of organizational structures, it is problematic to devise a term that fits everyone’s local definitions. Note that ten years ago we called them “academic collaborations.” WCET defines “consortium” as an organization that fosters inter-institutional partnerships to share resources with the goal of increasing the institutional capacity for technology-mediated courses and programs. Corporate service providers or membership organizations are typically not included in this definition.

In the public higher education sector, “systems” often serve the role of coordinating or governing a set of institutions. As stewards of public funds, systems often promote collaboration as a way to scale functions and maximize investments. They often manage multi-institution partnerships to meet that goal.

Models for system organization vary greatly. Some less-populated states (e.g., North Dakota) have a single system to cover all types of institutions, while more-populated states or provinces (e.g., California, New Carolina) may have separate systems for subsets of community colleges, baccalaureate colleges, and universities. Regarding multi-institution support of technology-enhanced education, some systems have units specifically tasked with organizing this support (e.g., Open SUNY, Colorado Community Colleges Online, eCampusOntario), while others integrate these tasks into all that they do (e.g., University of Hawai’i).

Public systems typically receive most, if not all, of their funding from government appropriations. Most non-system consortia lean on dues and other revenue streams to fund their operations. In this report, there will be times where we highlight the differences between systems and other consortia.

What Is a Consortium?

For the purposes of this report, a consortium is organization that fosters inter-institutional partnerships to share resources with the goal of increasing the institutional capacity for technology-mediated courses and programs.

What Is a System?

For the purposes of this report, systems are a subset of consortia. The term is used for the unit or activities of a public higher education system office that supports the goal of increasing the institutional capacity for technology-enhanced courses, programs, and student support services. System offices have responsibilities that range far beyond technology-enhanced education. It is handy to use the word “system” as a shorthand for the subset of activities that are the subject of this report.

Defining Characteristics of Consortia and Systems

Consortia have two major defining characteristics. First, consortia vastly differ in the services they offer, such as sharing software, sharing courses, joint procurement, joint marketing/enrollment management, sharing software/hardware, jointly testing technologies, and/or simply sharing information. Consortia can do all or only a few of these functions; the determining factor is that their members work in partnership across institutions.

Second, consortia may serve different geographies and/or constituencies. The following are some examples:

- A higher education system within a state or province that has a unit or a few individuals focused on technology-enhanced support and partnerships (e.g., [eCampusOntario](#), [Colorado Community Colleges Online](#), [Kentucky Virtual Campus](#), [Open SUNY University of Hawai'i](#), [University of Nebraska Online](#)).
- Consortia with members (primarily) within a state or province that are not tied to one system (e.g., [Connecticut Distance Learning Consortium](#), [Florida Virtual Campus](#)).
- Consortia that serve institutions across geographic lines (e.g., [Great Plains Interactive Distance Education Alliance](#), [Online Consortium of Independent Universities and Colleges](#)).

Methodology

WCET staff and the Survey Team developed a list of potential inter-institutional consortia in the U.S. and Canada. Invitations to participate in the survey were extended to the identified contacts at each consortium. Email recipients were told that they were the only person receiving the invitation for their consortium and were encouraged to pass the survey along to another person if that person would be in a better position to answer the questions on behalf of the organization. Recipients who did not respond to the email were sent reminder emails.

In total, fifty-nine email invitations were sent. Five respondents contacted WCET to indicate that they did not believe they were eligible consortia. Three consortia had closed. Thirty-two of the 51 eligible consortia or systems responded, which yields a response rate of 62.7%. WCET staff and the Consortia Group leadership appreciate the survey respondents thoughtful and complete contributions.

Of the thirty-two respondents to this survey:

- Three are located in Canada.
- Twenty-seven serve public institutions only, four serve a mix of institutional sectors, and one serves private institutions only.
- For the number of institutional members served:
 - 1 -- 10 members: 3
 - 6-10 members: 6
 - 11-20 members: 8
 - 21-30 members: 5
 - 31-50 members: 8
 - More than 50 members: 2
- Twenty-two represent organizations that are “systems.”

Survey Participants

A list of responding consortia and systems and their key characteristics follows.

Consortium / System	Public / Private / Mix*	Number of Institutional Members	Serves One Public System?
@ONE (California Community Colleges Online Network)	Public	More than 50	Yes**
California Community Colleges Online Education Initiative	Public	31 – 50	Yes
California State University	Public	21 – 30	Yes
Campus Manitoba	Public	6 – 10	Yes
Colorado Community Colleges Online (CCCOOnline)	Public	11 – 20	Yes
Connecticut Distance Learning Consortium (CTDLC)	Mix	31 – 50	
eCampusOntario	Public	31 – 50	Yes
Contact North Contact Nord	Public	31 - 50	Yes
eLearning Consortium of Colorado	Mix	11 – 20	
EDUKAN	Public	6 – 10	
Florida Virtual Campus	Public	31 – 50	
Great Plains IDEA	Public	11 – 20	
Illinois Community Colleges Online (ILCCO)	Public	21 – 30	Yes
Iowa Community College Online Consortium	Public	6 – 10	Yes
MarylandOnline	Mix	11 – 20	
Michigan Colleges Online	Public	21 – 30	Yes
Mississippi Virtual Community College	Public	11 – 20	Yes
NEXus: The Nursing Education Xchange	Mix	11 – 20	
Open SUNY – State University of New York System	Public	More than 50	Yes
Southeastern Pennsylvania Consortium for Higher Education	Private	6 – 10	
Tennessee eCampus	Public	31 – 50	Yes
Texas A&M University System Course Exchange Program	Public	11 - 20	Yes
University of Hawai'i System	Public	6 – 10	Yes
University of Illinois Online	Public	1 – 5	Yes
University of Nebraska Online	Public	1 – 5	Yes
University of Texas (UT) Online Consortium	Public	11 – 20	Yes
University of Wisconsin Consortium MBA Program	Public	1 – 5	Yes
University System of Georgia (USG) eCampus	Public	21 – 30	Yes
Unizin	Public	21 – 30	
Virtual College of Texas	Public	31 – 50	Yes
Washington State Board of Community and Technical Colleges	Public	31 – 50	Yes
Wyoming Distance Education Consortium (WyDEC)	Public	6 – 10	

*Mix – includes a mix of public and private institutions.

** “Yes” answers for those that are overseen by a public entity and serve public institutions in a single state or province.

Changes in Consortia and Systems Since 2008

Several changes and transitions have been noted in comparing the current survey respondents to those from the 2008 ([The Funding of Academic Collaborations](#)) survey conducted by WICHE and WCET.

New Organizations

Several consortia were founded in the last ten years:

- @ONE from the California Community Colleges.
- California Community Colleges Online Education Initiative (OEI).
- eCampusManitoba.
- eCampusOntario.
- NEXus – the Nursing Education Exchange serves doctoral nursing programs throughout the U.S.
- Texas A&M University System’s Course Exchange Program is modeled on the Virtual College of Texas.
- Unizin is a group of research universities that collaborate and share resources.

Major Changes

Some consortia have transitioned due to new branding and/or missions:

- Indiana Higher Education Telecommunications System (IHETS) is now incorporated in the Indiana College Network.
- The Jesuit Distance Education Network ceased its work as a consortium and instead incorporated some of its work into a new service provider, Centreity.
- Michigan Virtual University was transitioned to serve K-12 education only as the Michigan Virtual School, Michigan LearnPort, and Michigan Virtual Learning Research Institute.
- OpenSUNY – is an expansion of collaborative efforts of the State University of New York.
- Tennessee eCampus changed its name from the Regents Online Course Consortium to recognize a mission expanded beyond the sharing of online courses among campuses.
- The University of Illinois Virtual Campus became the University of Illinois Online.
- The University of Texas TeleCampus was closed, but several of their operations were still needed and now operate as the University of Texas Online Consortium.
- WashingtonOnline changed its course sharing model. Although the name was abandoned, the State Board of Community and Technical Colleges still coordinates shared services.
- WICHE ICE (Internet Course Exchange) changed from a consortium to a service provider and is no longer included in this survey.

Closed

A few consortia and system entities that responded to the 2008 survey have closed, including the following:

- Arizona Universities Network.
- Campus Saskatchewan.
- Ohio Learning Network.
- eCampusAlberta closed in the summer of 2017.
- The Connecticut Distance Learning Consortium closed in the summer of 2018.

Consortia and Systems Invited to Participate but Did Not Complete a Survey

The following consortia and systems were invited to participate in the survey, but did not do so. If a representative of an organization provided a reason for not participating, that reason is provided. All were still in operation at the time of the survey in the spring of 2018:

- ACCEP^TS: The Alliance for Cooperative Course Exchange in the Plant Sciences.
- Big 10 Online Leadership and Strategy Group – They felt that they did not rise to the level of full consortium yet. They are new and are mostly sharing information via calls and meetings.
- Distance Minnesota.
- The Electronic University Consortium of South Dakota.
- Indiana College Network.
- Kentucky Community and Technical College System.
- Kentucky Virtual Campus.
- Louisiana Community and Technical College System (LCTCS Online).
- Minnesota Learning Commons.
- Montana University System.
- National Universities Degree Consortium – This marketing partnership closed in summer 2018.
- NJEDge.Net.
- Online College in the High School Consortium (of Minnesota).
- North Dakota University System Advanced Learning Technologies – wanted to respond, but there was uncertainty regarding who was to respond between offices.
- UMassOnline.
- University Engineering Alliance.
- University of Maine System, University College.
- University of North Carolina System.
- University of Wisconsin System eCampus.
- Utah Education Network.

What is the Main Value Provided by Your Consortium or System?

Respondents seemed eager to describe the value of their consortium and some provided extended responses. A few included statements so exact and informative that they are worth highlighting and citing:

- “Our members collaborate to improve teaching and learning and to provide unique, shared learning experiences that no single member can provide.” – Southeastern Pennsylvania Consortium for Higher Education.
- “We provide thought leadership, and model new and innovative services and practices that benefit our member institutions.” – eCampusOntario.
- “Enabling underserved in 600 small, rural, remote, Indigenous and Francophone communities in Ontario to access post-secondary education and training without having to leave their communities” – Contact North/Contact Nord.

Beyond those statements, four major “value” themes emerged from the 30 responses:

- Student access and success.
- Centralized service management for efficiencies.
- Cost reduction / savings.
- Opportunities for collaborative innovation.

“We provide thought leadership, and model new and innovative services and practices that benefit our member institutions.”

Student Access and Success

A past WCET survey on the [“Price and Cost of Distance Education¹”](#) reported that distance education leaders focus primarily on their mission to broaden access to higher education. This survey question further substantiated those findings. Concepts related to “student access” and/or “student success” were mentioned in 19 of 30 survey responses. Responders said their work provided educational access to students who were time-strapped, remote, place-bound, or unable to get the courses they need at a single institution.

Advantages they cited for their students included the ability for them to:

- enroll in a wide variety of courses and/or programs that would not otherwise be available to them,
- complete their degrees without delay, and
- take classes from faculty who are experts in their fields.

“Scaling across the university system means seats are ALWAYS available in general education courses. Students are never told ‘all courses are filled - try again next semester.’”

Centralized Service Management for Efficiencies

Nearly half of all responses (14 out of 30) focused on the consortia and system’s ability to achieve monetary efficiencies by centralizing services. In some cases, non-monetary benefits were cited, such elevating the quality of their programs by providing program and course design, professional

development, and accessibility services. On the administrative/technical side of the equation, services mentioned included procurement, LMS management, data collection, and reporting. The goal was to realize efficiencies that would be absent if each institution acted on its own.

¹ “Price and Cost of Distance Education”: <https://wcet.wiche.edu/initiatives/research/price-cost-distance-ed>

Cost Reduction/Savings

In terms of value, eleven of the 30 respondents made “cents” of their usefulness in fiscal terms.

There is great value and cost savings for resources purchased at scale. 14 responses focused on their ability to jointly address common problems. Two respondents cited the ability to more equitably distribute resources among institutions of different sizes, resource levels, and access to funding by “helping provide products/services to all colleges that might otherwise be unattainable for many colleges due to costs.”

One system said it used costs savings as an accountability measure, asserting, “We report on annual cost savings and cost avoidances through systemwide procurement and service delivery.” Cost savings also expanded academic offerings: “It also means degree programs are available at institutions that would not otherwise be able to fund the program.”

Together we “solve problems that a single institution could not solve individually—at least not without tremendous capital burdens.”

Opportunities for Collaborative Innovation

12 (out of 30) respondents noted the collaborative value of assembling large and active communities of practice around emerging technologies, pedagogies, idea and resource sharing, and the development of new skills. Responses recognized the social advantages to participation:

“Members connect with a trusted group of professional colleagues who can assist with a particular eLearning problem or need.”

While all responses in this category indicated the advantage of shared member knowledge, two respondents said they lead by offering new and innovative services, models, and practices to the members.

Unique Statements

There were a couple outlier comments that are quite informative:

- MarylandOnline “also provides state and national advocacy for online education.” Other consortia may provide some form of this service, through informing their members of policy developments or suggesting positions for policymakers.
- Florida Virtual Campus said that they track “perceived value changes with each year and emphasis on different needs and initiatives and the level of our involvement.” To remain relevant, consortia leaders need to be aware of the changing needs of their member institutions and the policy makers who support and oversee their efforts.

What Academic Services Does the Consortium/System Offer?

Consortia and systems vary greatly in the services they offer. This survey sought to obtain an update on the services commonly provided to member institutions. An interest in understanding recent changes or planned additions to those services also fueled the survey. The long list of services was divided into three categories and this section begins with a focus on academic services. Subsequent questions focus on student services, technology, and planning/administrative services.

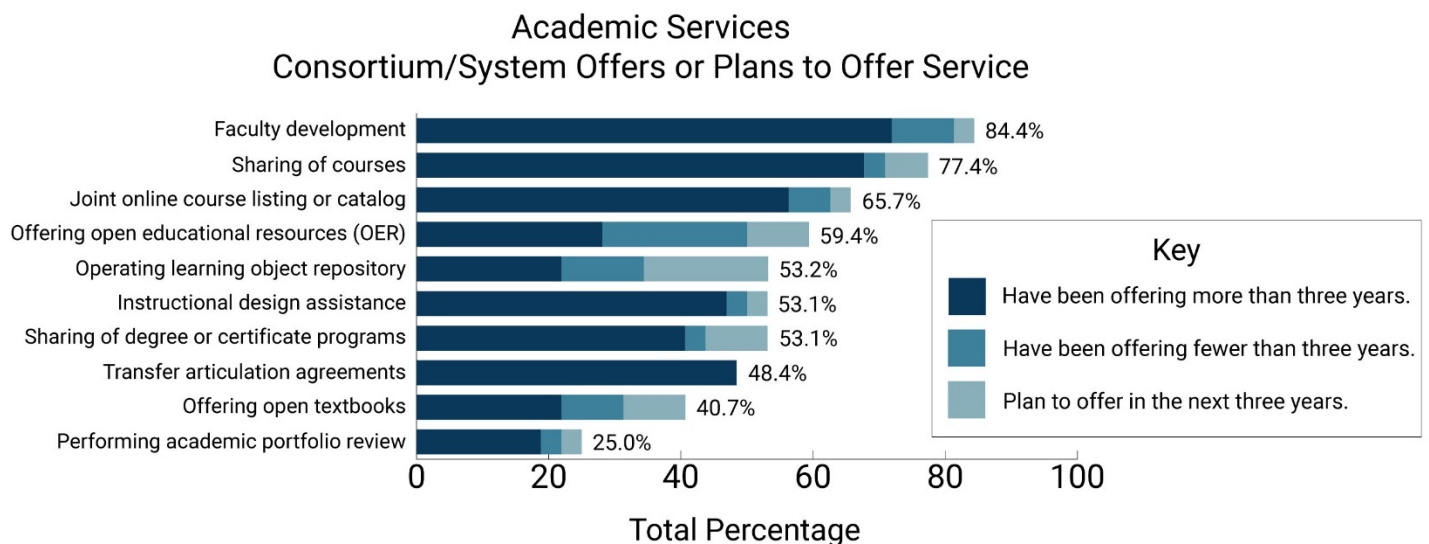
For each of a list of ten academic services offered by consortia or systems, respondents were asked to place each of those services into one of the following categories for their organization:

- Have been offering more than three years.
- Have been offering fewer than three years.
- Plan to offer in the next three years.
- Used to offer it, but no longer offer this service.
- Offered at each institution separate from the system.
- Not offered.
- Other.

The graphs that follow focus on what services are offered and what services are not offered by the consortia and systems. Additional analysis is provided on the responses given to an “other” option (to capture services not anticipated in the survey) and comparisons to responses from a similar survey that was conducted in 2008.

Services Offered or Plan to Be Offered

In the graph below, possible academic services are listed on the left. The overall percentage represents the total of three response options that differ only in how long the service has been offered.



Combining three response options (academic services that have been offered for more than three years and those offered for fewer than three years, and those planned to be offered in the next three years), the following services were reported as being offered by at least half of the consortia:

- Faculty development (84.4%).
- Inter-institutional sharing of courses (77.4%).
- Joint online course listing or course catalog (65.7%).
- Offering open educational resources (59.4%).
- Operating learning object repository (53.2%).
- Instructional design assistance (53.2%).

Many institutions have their own faculty development and instructional design assistance, yet faculty development tops the list and more than half of the respondents provide instructional design assistance.

Presumably, the consortia or systems are providing additional assistance that institutions could not accomplish on their own. For example, “train the trainer” or policy-focused faculty assistance may make more sense for multi-institution support, while campuses focus on the more practical concepts pertaining to individual faculty. Consortia and systems may also be providing assistance to those institutions with insufficient ability to provide faculty development or instructional design support on their own.

The sharing of courses (meaning that students from one institution can enroll in courses from another) and joint course listings (meaning that students can browse offerings from multiple institutions in one website) are activities that commonly lend themselves to inter-institutional coordination. These are cases in which the institutions can each contribute to the overall effort in which case they all benefit from collaboration.

A set of definitions was not provided for the options in these questions. It is likely that respondents differed in exactly what type of service that they thought might have fit a particular category. In reviewing the responses, the large planned increase in learning object repositories (a central storage place for digital electronic modules that faculty can use in their course) was unexpected. Those repositories have been stagnant for some time, but the renewed interest is likely tied to the increases in the use of open educational resources and open textbooks. The link between open content and the repositories was not directly asked, so the correlation is only conjecture.

Reviewing those services that are planned to be offered in the next few years, it is clear that there is no one new service that will be widely implemented across consortia and systems. The most popular new services are learning object repositories, which six respondents plan to implement in the next three years.

Top Academic Services Offered...

Offered for more than three years:

Faculty development – 79.0%.

Offered for fewer than three years:

Offering open ed resources – 21.9%.

Planned for the next three years:

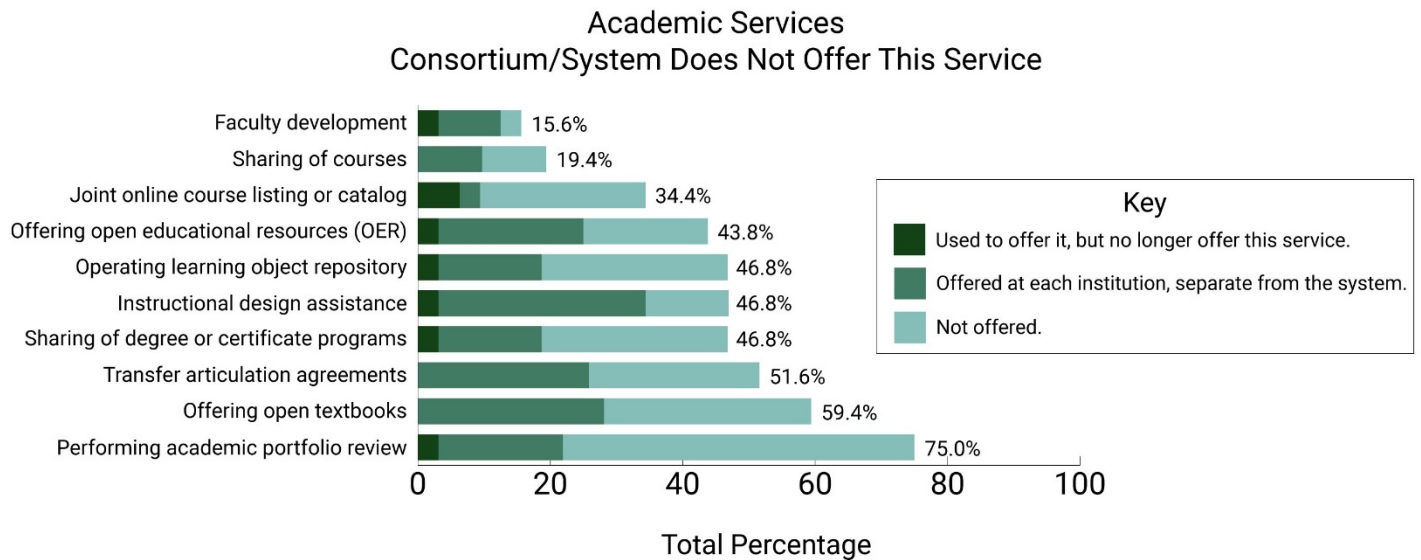
Operating a learning object.

repository – 18.8%

Three respondents are planning to add these services in the next three years: institutional sharing of degree or certificate programs, offering open educational resources (OER), and offering open textbooks. Most of those who are planning to offer learning object repositories have budgets of more than \$1 million.

Services Not Offered by the Consortium or System

The graph below lists survey options for which the service is not offered at all or is offered by the member institutions instead of the consortium/system.



In reviewing the services that are not offered by the consortium or system, the following services were not part of the consortium’s service set for at least half of the respondents:

- Performing academic portfolio reviews (75.0%).
- Offering open textbooks (62.6%).
- Inter-institutional transfer articulation agreements (57.9%).

Portfolio reviews are seldomly offered by consortia. Since institutions often tightly control the offering of academic credit, this may be a difficult service to offer in partnership.

The open textbook movement has gained its greatest momentum in only the past few years, so it may be an example of an emerging service. Looking back to the responses to the previous section on future services, the most action in the coming years are anticipated in the learning object repository, OER, and open textbook services. Services related to providing open content may become more common for consortia and systems as the acceptance of open philosophies becomes more widespread.

There were only a few services that were reported as no longer being offered. The dropped services were spread across the response options indicating that there was not massive flight away from any single service.

Additional Responses

An “Other” category allowed for open-ended responses on issues that were not addressed in the options provided. Several of the responses contained nothing but brief lists of service offerings.

Many of those responses were not categorized as “academic” for purposes of this survey and will be covered in later questions. Support for Quality Matters, “inclusive access” (often low or no cost, but not necessarily open) textbooks, and the relationship to service providers were highlights of the comments.

We received one comment by email from a respondent from a small system who shared that “several of the questions did not provide the opportunity to select a response when functions were at both the system level and at the campus level – the choices were either/or. My answers to those questions would have been different if given that choice.” This is a good point to consider for future surveys. That option was not included as it implies redundancy of offerings both centrally and at the institution. There are times where that makes sense, such as faculty development opportunities with different focuses or when a centralized service is needed by some (but, not all) of the member institutions.

A complete reporting of open-ended responses for all survey questions is available in Appendix B.

Comparison to 2008

In the 2008 survey, a similar question was offered with different options. If the three options for 2008 (offered by the collaborative’s central administration, offered by a partnership between institutions and central administration, or offered through a third-party provider under contract with the central administration) are compared to the three options for 2018 (have been offering more than 3 years, have been offering fewer than 3 years, plan to offer in next 3 years), the following percentages are calculated:

Services Ordered by 2018 Responses	2008	2018
Faculty development	66.7%	84.4%
Interinstitutional sharing of courses	59.0%	77.4%
Joint online course listing or course catalog	79.6%	65.7%
Interinstitutional sharing of degree or certificate programs	43.6%	53.1%

While it is difficult to compare survey results with different respondent sets, it is still interesting to see if there are any trends. Certainly, the 2018 results show much more attention to faculty development and interinstitutional sharing of courses than ten years prior. The current responses also reveal slightly less interest in course catalogs and a few consortia even reported dropping catalogs.

Academic Services—Please check the one option that best applies:								
	Have been offering more than 3 years	Have been offering fewer than 3 years	Plan to offer in the next 3 years	<i>Offered (Total of 3 columns to the left)</i>	Used to offer it, but no longer offer this service	Offered at each institution, separate from the system	Not offered	<i>Not Offered (Total of 3 columns to the left)</i>
Faculty development	71.90%	9.40%	3.10%	84.40%	3.10%	9.40%	3.10%	15.60%
Interinstitutional sharing of courses	67.70%	3.20%	6.50%	77.40%	3.20%	9.70%	9.70%	22.60%
Joint online course listing or course catalog	56.30%	6.30%	3.10%	65.70%	6.30%	3.10%	25.00%	34.40%
Offering open educational resources (OER)	28.10%	21.90%	9.40%	59.40%	0.00%	21.90%	18.80%	40.70%
Operating learning object repository	21.90%	12.50%	18.80%	53.20%	3.10%	15.60%	28.10%	46.80%
Instructional design assistance	46.90%	3.10%	3.10%	53.10%	3.10%	31.30%	12.50%	46.90%
Interinstitutional sharing of degree or certificate programs	40.60%	3.10%	9.40%	53.10%	3.10%	15.60%	28.10%	46.80%
Interinstitutional transfer articulation agreements	48.40%	0.00%	0.00%	48.40%	0.00%	25.80%	25.80%	51.60%
Offering open textbooks	21.90%	9.40%	9.40%	40.70%	0.00%	28.10%	31.30%	59.40%
Performing academic portfolio review	18.80%	3.10%	3.10%	25.00%	3.10%	18.80%	53.10%	75.00%

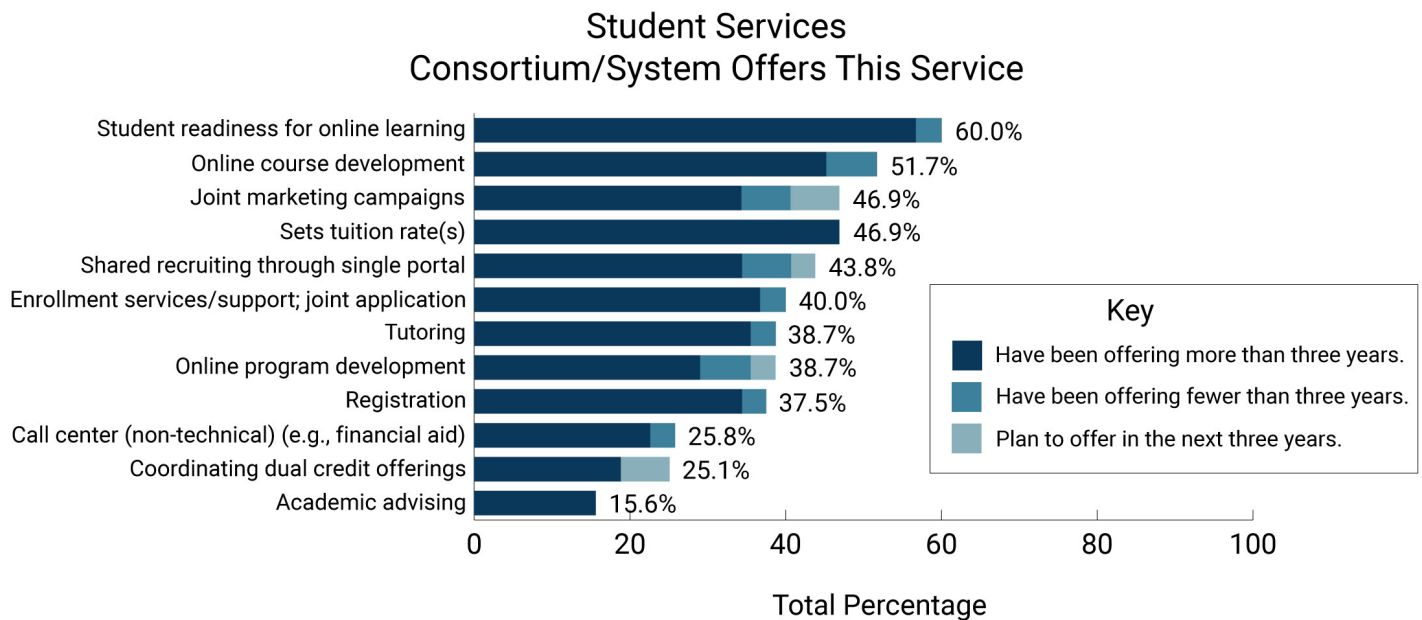
Note: Rows might not total 100.0% due to rounding.

What Student Services Does the Consortium/System Offer?

The previous section showed the great focus on the academic services that can be shared among institutions. Whether on-campus or off, to be successful, students require access to a long list of services to support their learning and continued success in achieving their academic objectives. The survey results reveal that there is less focus on shared student services than was witnessed for academic services. There are few current plans to add new student services in the future. The graphs below show the services (currently or planned to be) offered and the second graph shows the services not offered.

Services Offered or Plan to Be Offered

As in the previous section, the responses for services that were offered for more than three years, those offered for fewer than three years, and those planned to be offered were combined.



Note that only two services are offered by at least half of the respondents; however, setting tuition rates came close to being offered by at least half.

- Student readiness for online learning (60.0%).
- Online course development (51.7%).
- Set tuition rates (46.9%).

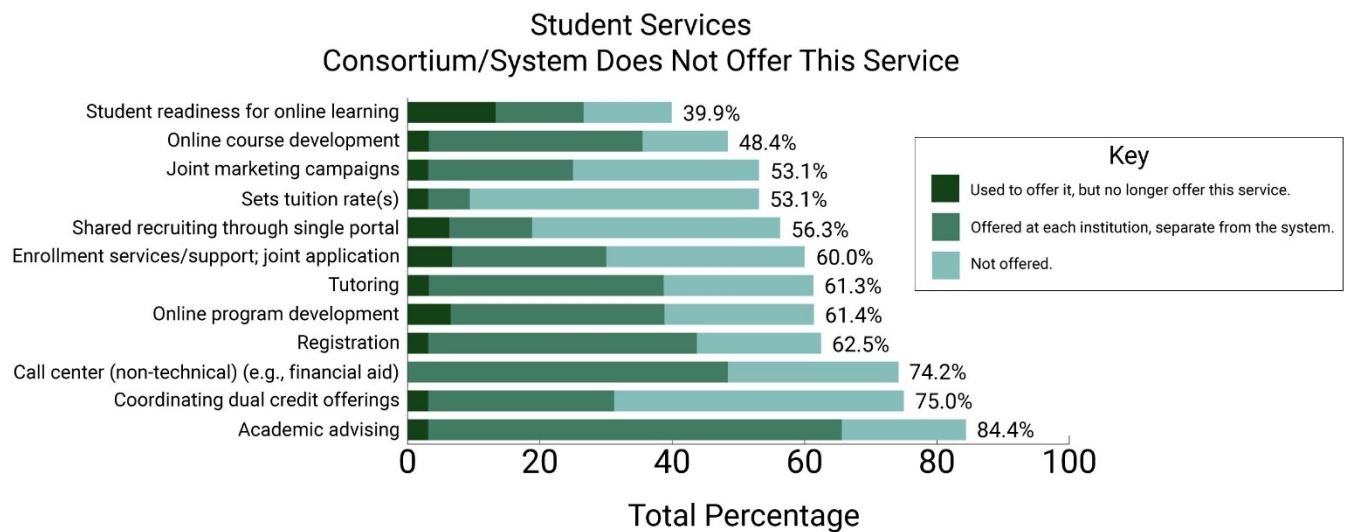
Student readiness refers to the practice by many consortia and individual institutions to provide some type of readiness preparation for taking an online course. These experiences may range greatly from simple and basic to completely engaging, including articles about what to expect, simple checklists, more complex self-analytical surveys, and even enrolling in short courses to prepare a student with online learning skills. These readiness exercises are particularly helpful for students without any prior experience in learning at a distance. There has been some disenchantment with this service in recent years, as indicated by four respondents reporting that they no longer offer student readiness for online learning assessments. With more students having taken online courses in high school or other settings, many come to the institution with these prior experiences.

Online course development (identifying needed courses and providing the design and coordination needed to create the course) is the only other service offered by more than half of the consortia or systems. This follows with the marks for faculty development, joint course offering, and instructional design in the academic set of questions. Upon review, this option may have been better placed in the academic section.

This analysis indicates that student support services are not currently a major focus of multi-institution organizations and there are few plans for offering new shared student services in the future. While these services have not been featured, this does leave an opportunity to expand into some of these services. Joint marketing campaigns (the member institutions share resources to advertise, co-brand, or otherwise attract new students) and coordinated dual credit offerings were reported as being added by a couple respondents.

Services Not Offered by the Consortium or System

The graph below lists survey options for which the service is not offered at all or is offered by the member institutions instead of the consortium/system.



In reviewing the services that are not offered by the consortium or system, the following services were not provided by at least half of the respondents:

- Academic advising (84.4%).
- Coordinating dual credit offerings (75.0%).
- Call center, non-technical (e.g., financial aid) (74.2%).
- Registration (62.5%).
- Online program development (61.4%).
- Tutoring (61.3%).
- Enrollment services/support joint application process (60.0%).
- Shared recruiting through single consortium/system level portal (56.3%).
- Joint marketing campaigns (53.2%).
- Sets tuition rate(s) (53.1%).

This is a long list. The two least frequently offered services were academic advising (helping students to make choices among programs and courses) and coordinating dual credit (courses that count for both high school and college credits) offerings. Some of the options may indicate wisdom on the part of consortia leadership to avoid responsibilities (e.g., academic advising) that are closely guarded by the faculty and others at their member institutions.

Top Student Services Offered...

***Offered for more than three years:
Student readiness – 56.7%.***

***Offered for fewer than three years:
Online course development, joint
marketing campaigns, shared
recruiting portal, online program
development – tied at 6.3 to 6.5%.***

***Planned for the next three years:
Joint marketing campaigns and
coordinating dual credit offerings –
tied at 6.3%.***

Registration (enrolling students in courses) is often handled by the institutions, but there are some consortia that serve as a middleman in providing coordination to meet a consortial agreement. For example, some course sharing agreements allocate a set number of seats in a course to be handled by the consortium or system.

A few items may reveal opportunities for future growth among consortia. A non-technical call center evolved at one consortium because analysis showed that many of the questions for financial aid support were about simple tasks such as where are the forms, what is the deadline, and what does a phrase mean. The bulk of the questions could be handled by front-line call staff with more complicated questions being referred to financial aid professionals.

Other candidates for future growth include: joint marketing, shared recruiting portal (creating a website with all the

system's offerings and helping students choose among those offerings), and tutoring (institutions sharing the burden in providing web-based services to help students in introductory English and Math courses).

Consortia and systems with budgets of less than \$500,000 have a greater tendency to not be offering these services. As the consortia and systems mature, they may grow into these services.

Additional Responses

An "Other" category allowed for open-ended responses on issues that were not addressed in the options. One respondent said that they use the "concierge" model in which there is one point of contact for all student services. That respondent also reported using "early alert" systems (often buoyed by analytical analysis of student behavior) to warn about students who might fail. Another respondent said that they are "exploring some of these topics at the leadership level but have not pursued anything yet."

Comparison to 2008

In the 2008 survey, a similar question was offered with different options. If we combined the options as they were for the academic services question, the following percentages are calculated:

Services Ordered by 2018 Responses	2008	2018
Student readiness	30.7%	60.0%
Marketing	53.8%	47.0%
Admissions/Joint application process	18.0%	40.0%
Tutoring	28.3%	38.7%
Registration	28.2%	37.5%
Call center (non-technical)	41.0%	25.8%

While there are differences in the respondent sets for the two surveys, there are large increases in three of the services included in the 2008 survey. Of special note is the large increase in student readiness assessments. It is unclear whether these assessments are mere checklists of what students might expect in a technology-mediated course, or deeper analyses. Either way, this may be a lower cost, higher impact service for institutions to offer and might explain the increase.

It is surprising to see the decline in non-technical call centers. Perhaps, these services were tried and found to be difficult to sustain, although none of the current respondents reported dropping this service in the last three years.

Open-ended responses were provided to clarify answers; no additional trends were identified in those responses.

Student Services—Please check the one option that best applies:

	Have been offering more than 3 years	Have been offering fewer than 3 years	Plan to offer in the next 3 years	<i>Offered (Total of 3 columns to the left)</i>	Used to offer it, but no longer offer this service	Offered at each institution, separate from the system	Not offered	<i>Not Offered (Total of 3 columns to the left)</i>
Student readiness for online learning	56.7%	3.3%	0.0%	60.0%	13.3%	13.3%	13.3%	39.9%
Online course development	45.2%	6.5%	0.0%	51.7%	3.2%	32.3%	12.9%	48.4%
Joint marketing campaigns	34.4%	6.3%	6.3%	47.0%	3.1%	6.3%	43.8%	53.2%
Sets tuition rate(s)	46.9%	0.0%	0.0%	46.9%	3.1%	21.9%	28.1%	53.1%
Shared recruiting through single consortium/system level portal	34.4%	6.3%	3.1%	43.8%	6.3%	12.5%	37.5%	56.3%
Enrollment Services/Support: joint application process	36.7%	3.3%	0.0%	40.0%	6.7%	23.3%	30.0%	60.0%
Tutoring	35.5%	3.2%	0.0%	38.7%	3.2%	35.5%	22.6%	61.3%
Online program development	29.0%	6.5%	3.2%	38.7%	6.5%	32.3%	22.6%	61.4%
Registration	34.4%	3.1%	0.0%	37.5%	3.1%	40.6%	18.8%	62.5%
Call center (non-technical) (e.g., Financial Aid)	22.6%	3.2%	0.0%	25.8%	0.0%	48.4%	25.8%	74.2%
Coordinating dual credit offerings	18.8%	0.0%	6.3%	25.1%	3.1%	28.1%	43.8%	75.0%
Academic advising	15.6%	0.0%	0.0%	15.6%	3.1%	62.5%	18.8%	84.4%

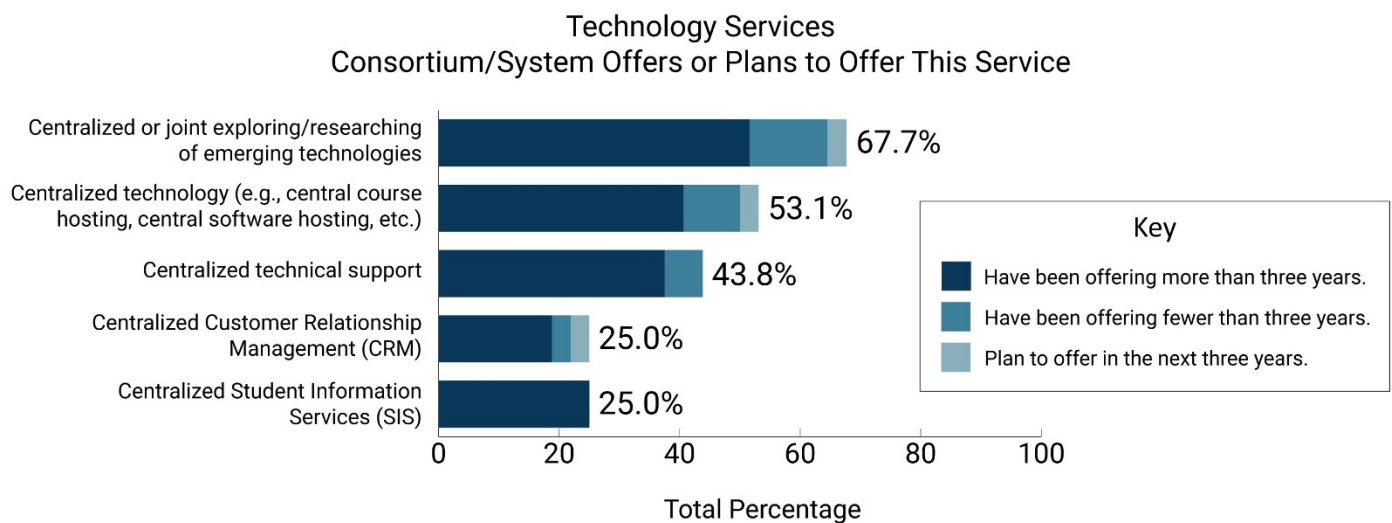
Note: Rows might not total 100.0% due to rounding.

What Technology Services Does the Consortium/System Offer?

In addition to academic services, many consortia got their start by sharing technology services. Coordinating this service seemed logical as the software and hardware were often both expensive and unfamiliar. Sharing the implementation of technology services helped the institutions obtain scale more quickly. As the technologies became more familiar or could be outsourced, the need for coordination for some of these services lessened over time. In this survey, institutions continue technical support in select areas, but do not envision adding many new technical services in the near future.

Services Offered or Plan to Be Offered

As in the previous sections, the responses for services that were offered for more than three years, those offered for fewer than three years, and those planned to be offered were combined.



Note that only two of the services are offered by at least half of the respondents and the last service came close to being offered by 50% of those responding:

- Centralized or joint exploring/researching of emerging technologies (67.7%).
- Centralized technology (53.1%).

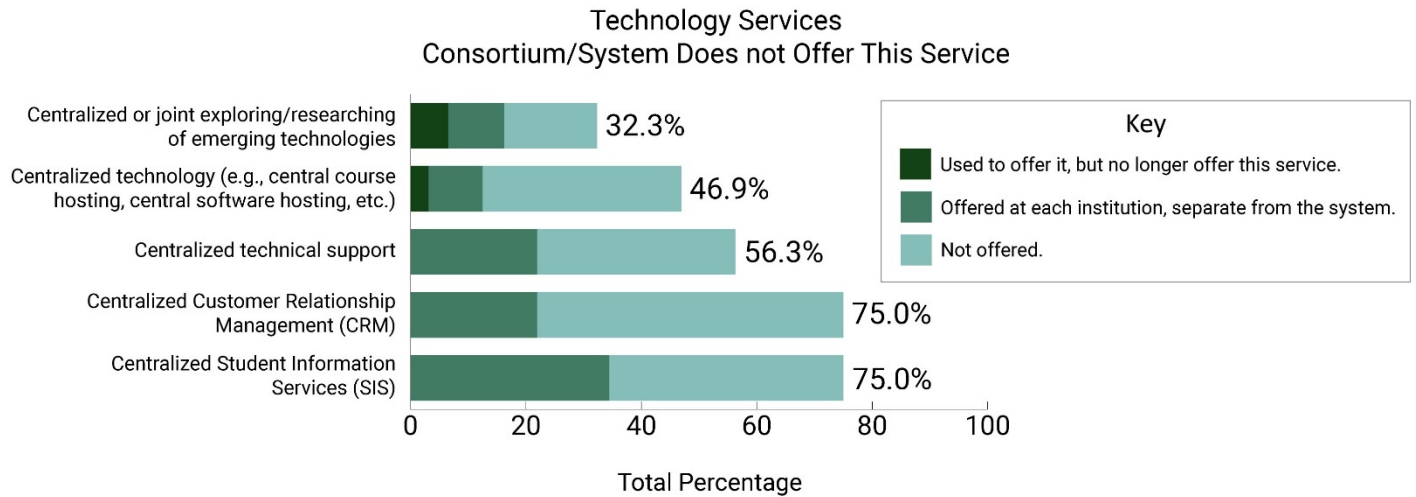
The exploring/research of emerging technologies is a logical and efficient way to investigate new innovations. One sure bet for the future is that someone will be inventing innovative technologies, software, and teaching methods. The question of which to pursue and which to forego can be tricky. Consortia and systems can offer ways to create a central “sandbox” or to appoint a few of the members to test the innovations and share the results. Since there will always be the new “next hot thing” on the horizon, this service will always be fresh. Even so, two respondents reported having abandoned joint technology exploration in the last few years.

Many consortia or systems were started to support centralized technology efforts. It was more cost efficient to contract for expensive telecommunications systems or technologies. Likewise, central hosting of software brought standardization and savings. About half of respondents continue this service. The survey did not identify specific hardware or software that is currently being shared.

There were only a few responses where consortia leaders said they would be adding new services. There was one response each in centralized technology hosting, joint exploration of technologies, and centralized customer relationship management (a database of students interested in attending the institution).

Services Not Offered by the Consortium or System

The graph below lists survey options for which the service is either not offered at all or is offered by the member institutions instead of the consortium/system.



The following services were reported as not being offered by at least half of the respondents:

- Centralized Customer Relationship Management (CRM) (75.0%).
- Centralized Student Information Services (SIS) (75.0%).
- Centralized technical support (56.3%).

Respondents were not inclined to offer Customer Relationship Management or Student Information Systems (databases that house the student's academic records and other transactions with the institution). It is likely that their institutions already have these services or that institutional personnel worried about sharing their student data with others given an increasingly competitive marketplace.

Centralized technical support (providing call centers and websites to help faculty and students use technology) may be a potential opportunity for growth. Surveys conducted by WCET² show that institutions have trouble offering extended technical support hours. Cooperation may help overcome that barrier. Working together, institutions can expand faculty and student 24/7, which covers more of the hours when students need assistance. The consortia that do not offer technical support services have budgets of less than \$500,000.

² Only 30% of reporting institutions offered 24/7 technical support in "Managing Online Education 2013: Practices in Ensuring Quality", p. 29. <https://wcet.wiche.edu/sites/default/files/2013ManagingOnlineEducationSurveyFinalResults.pdf>

Comparison to 2008

The 2008 survey asked a similar question, but with different options. While there are differences in the respondent sets for the two surveys, the responses remained remarkably similar for technology infrastructure and technical support. There seems to be only slightly more interest in 2018 in joint technology exploration and research sharing.

Services Ordered by 2018 Responses	2008	2018
Centralized exploring/researching of emerging technologies	56.4%	67.7%
Centralized technology infrastructure	48.8%	53.1%
Centralized technical support	41.1%	43.8%

A decade has passed since the 2008 survey and there have been many changes in technologies over that time. For example, smart phones have become ubiquitous, high speed internet to the home is common, there was the “year of the MOOC,” social media has exploded, many people search for answers by saying “Alexa” or “Hey Google,” video and audio files are much easier to create and share, and the list does not end there. New, unimagined technologies are certain to emerge. It is notable that consortia and systems have not made more inroads in supporting these technologies themselves, but perhaps assist in how to use innovations effectively through the support of “soft” skills.

This raises the question about central support of technologies. Could it be that technologies are being created too rapidly for centralized support to be an option? Alternatively, are the newer technologies cheap and user friendly enough to negate the need for large-scale central investments? Are services moving to cloud-based solution rather than remaining locally hosted? Or is it a question of control and colleges want full control of their technologies?

Where the consortia leaders have made progress is in the joint exploration and research of emerging technologies.

Helping members institutions share what they learn in experimenting with new educational techniques is a logical role for them to assume. There will always be innovative technologies or educational processes, so the “exploration of whatever is next” is a service that will never go out of date.

Top Technology Services Offered...

***Offered for more than three years:
Centralized or joint exploring/
researching of emerging
technologies – 51.6%.***

***Offered for fewer than three years:
Centralized or joint exploring/
researching of emerging
technologies – 12.9%.***

***Planned for the next three years:
Centralized technology, Centralized
or joint exploring/researching of
emerging technologies, and
centralized customer relationship
management – tied at 3.1%.***

Technology Services—Please check the one option that best applies:								
	Have been offering more than 3 years	Have been offering fewer than 3 years	Plan to offer in the next 3 years	<i>Offered (Total of 3 columns to the left)</i>	Used to offer it, but no longer offer this service	Offered at each institution, separate from the system	Not offered	<i>Not Offered (Total of 3 columns to the left)</i>
Centralized or joint exploring/researching of emerging technologies	51.6%	12.9%	3.2%	67.7%	6.5%	9.7%	16.1%	32.3%
Centralized technology (e.g., central course hosting, central software hosting, etc.)	40.6%	9.4%	3.1%	53.1%	3.1%	9.4%	34.4%	46.9%
Centralized technical support	37.5%	6.3%	0.0%	43.8%	0.0%	21.9%	34.4%	56.3%
Centralized Customer Relationship Management (CRM)	18.8%	3.1%	3.1%	25.0%	0.0%	21.9%	53.1%	75.0%
Centralized Student Information Services (SIS)	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%	25.0%	0.0%	34.4%	40.6%	75.0%

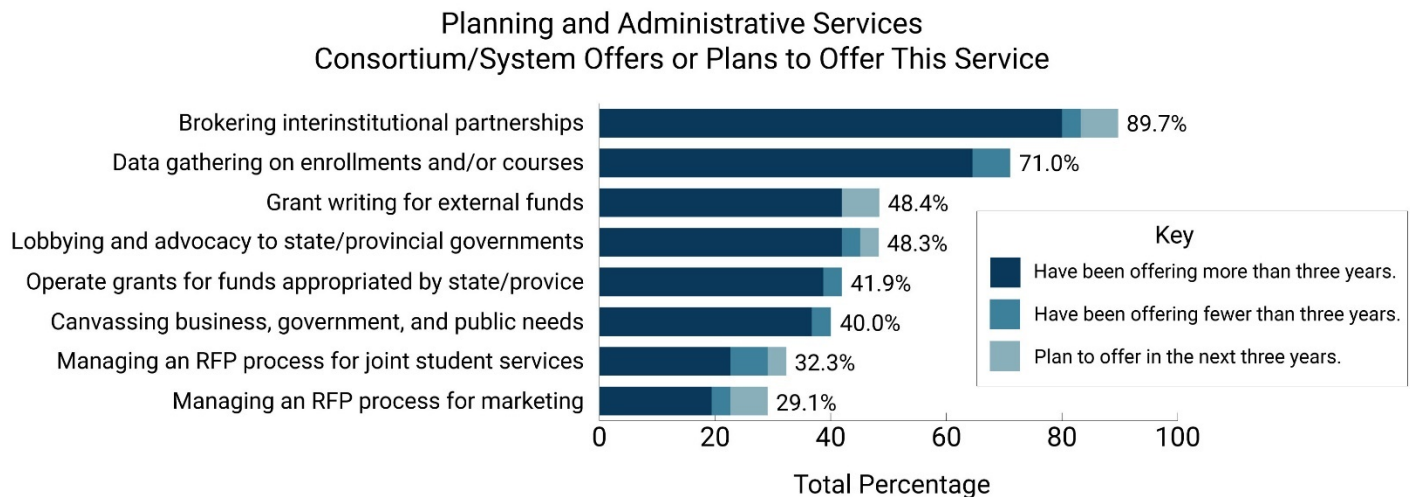
Note: Rows might not total 100.0% due to rounding.

What Planning and Administrative Services Does the Consortium/System Offer?

The above sections were all about the components (academic, student support, and technology) of technology-mediated courses and programs. In this section, consortia and system leaders were asked about management and oversight activities that are required to plan, fund, organize, and offer those courses.

Services Offered or Plan to Be Offered

As in the previous sections, the responses for services that were offered for more than three years, those offered for fewer than three years, and those planned to offer in next three years were combined.



Note that only two are offered by at least half of the respondents and those are offered by the great majority of respondents:

- Brokering interinstitutional partnerships to meet institutional needs (89.7%).
- Data gathering on enrollments and/or courses (71.0%).

The most popular services are not surprising. Brokering partnership speaks to the main purpose of most consortia and system efforts. They are expected to stay in touch with the needs of institutions, determine when those needs can be met by the institutions on their own, and identify situations when joint action will be the most productive path. Consortia and system leaders that do not stay abreast of their members' needs are in danger of having their organizations become obsolete. Although the survey did not ask about specific partnership strategies, the open-ended responses that are reviewed later in the report, speak to agreements that serve all the members, a subset of members, relationships with K-12, and partnerships with the employers and other non-educational entities.

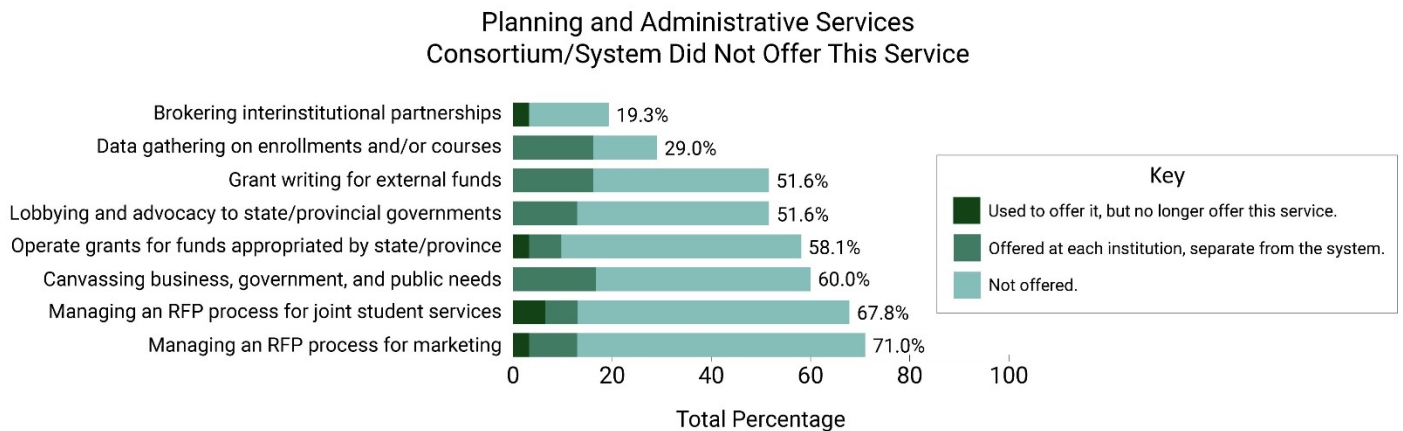
As for data gathering on enrollments, that service is essential for those consortia and systems that offer course sharing (students can enroll in select courses provided by member institutions) on behalf of their members. The data is needed so that they are able to report how much sharing took place and in which courses. If there are financial models tied to course sharing, there may be a fiscal impact to keeping accurate records. Data gathering may also be necessary to benchmark with other consortia and to demonstrate the impact of the service.

There were very few new services identified to be added in the near future. Among the emerging services, there was no real commonality in the services in the planning stages. A couple consortia or systems planned to expand into each of the following services: grant writing for external funds (seeking and applying for grants from philanthropic or government agencies), brokering inter-institutional partnerships to meet institutional needs, and managing an RFP process for marketing (coordinating a request for proposals to jointly advertise and promote institutional offerings). Single consortia are adding each of the following: lobbying and advocacy to state/provincial governments (requesting funding or changes to rules regarding institutional offerings and practices) and management of an RFP process for joint student services (coordinating a request for proposals).

There is opportunity for growth in these services. It is unclear as to the reasons why there is not more expansion of these administrative and planning services at this time other than lack of demand.

Services Not Offered by the Consortium or System

The graph below lists survey options for which the service is not offered at all or is offered by the member institutions instead of the consortium/system.



The following services were reported as not being offered by the consortia or system by at least half of the respondents:

- Managing an RFP process for marketing (71.0%).
- Managing an RFP process for joint student services (67.8%).
- Canvassing business, government, and public needs to broker solutions (60.0%).
- Operating a grant process of funds appropriated by the state or province (58.1%).
- Grant writing for external funds (51.6%).
- Lobbying and advocacy to state/provincial governments (51.6%).

Respondents were not inclined to manage request for proposals (RFP) for joint marketing or student services. The survey did not probe for reasons for not pursuing these joint services. Some consortia may leave marketing to their member institutions or focused more on technology and support services. As seen in the more-granular student services questions, there may be more opportunity for growth in joint procurement for those services.

Canvassing for business, government, and public needs in the way suggested by the question might be outside the current mission of many consortia or systems. Their focus is on serving the need of their member institutions. On the other hand, this is another area of potential growth. In the U.S., there is increasing pressure for institutions to meet workforce needs. This is a difficult process that might be accomplished more efficiently through coordination.

Slightly more than 40% operated grant processes for funds appropriated by the state or province. Given the cutbacks or limitations in state and provincial funding in recent years, this is a significant subset. Governmental grant funds are often a method for legislatures and governors to provide incentives for the activities that they wish to encourage. Apparently, it is still a mechanism they find useful to meet their goals.

Given the restricted opportunities for external grant funds in recent years, there has been less emphasis on grant writing than there was in the early days of technology-mediated education.

It is natural for those consortia funded or sponsored by a state or province to be involved in advocacy efforts to their respective governments. There are also still a high percentage of consortia that are administering appropriated grant funds. These funds often provide incentives for institutions to pursue activities that are of high priority to the legislative body. If only the state/provincial consortia were under consideration, then these percentages would be higher within that subset.

Additional Responses

An “Other” category allowed for open-ended responses on issues that were not addressed in the options. One respondent said that they manage an “RFP process and vendor management for university-wide technology contracts for both...products and services.” Another “hosts an annual leadership institute for online education,” which is a method for developing the next generation to assume responsibility.

Top Planning and Administrative Services Offered...

***Offered for more than three years:
Brokering interinstitutional partnerships to meet institutional needs – 80.06%.***

***Offered for fewer than three years:
Data gathering on enrollments and/or courses, managing an RFP process for student services – tied at 6.5%.***

***Planned for the next three years:
Brokering interinstitutional partnerships, managing an RFP for marketing – tied at 6.5%.***

Comparison to 2008

In the 2008 survey, a similar question was offered with different options. If the options are combined as they were for the academic services question, the following percentages are calculated as follows:

Services Ordered by 2018 Responses	2008	2018
Brokering interinstitutional partnerships to meet institutional needs	61.5%	89.7%
Data gathering on enrollments and/or courses	76.9%	71.0%
Grant writing for external funds	48.7%	48.4%
Lobbying and advocacy to state/provincial governments	53.9%	48.3%
Operating a grant process of funds appropriated by the state or province	28.2%	41.9%
Canvassing business, government, and public needs to broker solutions	48.7%	40.0%

Given the different populations for survey respondents in the two years, comparisons should be made with caution. Even so, there is significantly more attention to brokering interinstitutional partnerships in the 2018 responses than there was in 2008. It is difficult to pinpoint exactly what activities may have lead to this growth. In discussions with consortia leaders, they have indicated the need to stay informed about institutional needs and to create services that meet those needs. It is likely a reflection of the understanding to keep reinventing and updating the partnerships to remain relevant. This may also be part of increasingly varying types of partnerships that are identified in the open-response section of this survey. Most early agreements covered all the consortia/system members. Now, a partnership might be for only a subset of members or might be between the organization and external entities.

There is also significant growth in the operations of grant processes for appropriated funds. This growth is counter intuitive given a recent trend in many states and provinces to cut or restrict the growth of postsecondary funding. In the financial sections of the survey discussed later in this report, it will be noted that a few consortia or systems received significant appropriations to operate grant processes open to their member institutions. This action may be part of a trend in some state and provincial governments to move toward setting aside some of the higher education funding as incentives for colleges to conduct activities that are legislative priorities. As an example, in the U.S., California's Governor Brown has tried several approaches to expand postsecondary enrollments overall and to increase completions by populations typically underserved by the state's three higher education systems.

Planning and Administrative Services—Please check the one option that best applies:								
	Have been offering more than 3 years	Have been offering fewer than 3 years	Plan to offer in the next 3 years	<i>Offered (Total of 3 columns to the left)</i>	Used to offer it, but no longer offer this service	Offered at each institution, separate from the system	Not offered	<i>Not Offered (Total of 3 columns to the left)</i>
Brokering interinstitutional partnerships to meet institutional needs	80.00%	3.20%	6.50%	89.7%	3.20%	0.00%	16.10%	19.3%
Data gathering on enrollments and/or courses	64.50%	6.50%	0.00%	71.0%	0.00%	16.10%	12.90%	29.0%
Grant writing for external funds	41.90%	0.00%	6.50%	48.4%	0.00%	12.90%	38.70%	52.6%
Lobbying and advocacy to state/provincial governments	41.90%	3.20%	3.20%	48.3%	0.00%	16.10%	35.50%	51.6%
Operating a grant process of funds appropriated by the state or province	38.70%	3.20%	0.00%	41.9%	3.20%	6.50%	48.40%	58.1%
Canvassing business, government, and public needs to broker solutions	36.70%	3.30%	0.00%	40.0%	0.00%	16.70%	43.30%	60.0%
Managing an RFP process for joint student services	22.60%	6.50%	3.20%	32.3%	6.50%	6.50%	54.80%	67.8%
Managing an RFP process for marketing	19.40%	3.20%	6.50%	29.1%	3.20%	9.70%	58.10%	71.0%

Note: Rows might not total 100.0% due to rounding.

What Additional Services are Offered?

This question was included to provide an opportunity for respondents to share any additional services that were not offered as options nor captured in the previous questions. There may also have been new advances in services that would be good for others to consider adopting. The majority of the respondents listed specific activities already covered in the quantitative portion of the survey. Perhaps they missed those options among the multiple-choice questions or they are implementing variations that they felt were not fully described in the options provided. A few additional services that were particularly notable:

- Three respondents mentioned the sharing of interprofessional course and/or program exchanges for students in high-cost, low-enrollment programs.
- Two respondents said the system acts as consultants for campuses. For example, one respondent said the system offers “strategic consulting services for campus leadership teams to help build their institutional capabilities in online learning and help them with strategic positioning and planning for online learning as part of the overall institutional mission.”
- One respondent said the consortium has taken steps to increase diversity, equity, and inclusion by collecting and providing equity research, OER model classes, and underprepared student resources.
- A university consortium is exploring partnering with a college consortium in the same state. They seek to jointly manage and/or expand the course exchange programs that they now run separately.

Designed to capture new or unusual services that we did not capture in the above question options, respondents offered few new or unexpected items.

Additional Services

Many responses were merely terse lists of services with few or no details as to how exactly they have implemented each of them. Responses taken from those terse lists are categorized and listed below:

- Academic services:
 - Centralized object repository.
- Student services:
 - Captioning procurement.
 - System support for accessibility and support for accessibility technology.
- Technical Services:
 - Help desk.
 - Tutoring platform.
 - Advising platform.
 - Software development.
- Planning and administrative services:
 - Data collection.

How Have Services Changed in the Last Three Years?

Some consortia or systems passed the twenty-year mark in serving their members. How have they survived? How have they evolved to stay relevant? This question uncovered some unique services developed to address the shifting needs of members or to allow their members to address external forces beyond their control.

Some of the services identified are new. These services probably were not (or were barely) on institutional radars prior to a few years ago. They are interesting to note for other consortia and systems to consider adding in the future. Some highlights:

- A system-wide micro-credential platform.
- Moving from direct faculty training to train-the-trainer and providing resources for those trainers.
- Cloud-based solutions.
- Jointly addressing student academic integrity solutions.
- Strategic consulting for campus leadership teams.

While the respondents anticipated a wide range of service changes from the past three years and looking forward to the next three, a clear theme unites all of their answers: they are intent upon meeting the needs of their members while adapting to external factors. They feeling the pressures of budget reductions, expanded student needs, increased demand for online and technology-mediated education, and emerging technologies. As an example, the introduction of new technologies is multi-faceted endeavor and is not the end goal. It requires faculty and staff learning if and how to use these new tools can be used to best advantage students.

A recurring theme in the evolution of services: Consortia/systems are intent upon meeting the needs of their members while adjusting to shifting external factors.

From the responses of consortia and system leaders, it is clear that educating users is a priority. They focus on the needs both of the students and the faculty/staff of their member institutions. As one respondent from a multi-state consortium eloquently stated:

“In the last three years, (respondent) has created...proofs and prototypes while modifying designs and workflows based on direct feedback from our members, which has informed our roadmap.”

Another respondent pondered the need to stay apace of technologies and to evolve continually the organization. The pressures to do so can add value beyond technical support:

“Some agency units (primarily basic education for adults) continue to develop and disseminate hybrid, flipped classroom eLearning curriculum using grants from philanthropic organizations. eLearning is moving away from this type of activity in the OER and eLearning areas. We are currently researching ed tech management solutions and how the system office might add value to this in the system, researching alternative styles of procurement, researching how a workforce/professional technical platform might be a different thing than our traditional platform (LMS, video, webinar) for eLearning. We are also looking at how to support OER use in professional technical areas. Finally, we're moving rapidly toward implementing a system-wide micro-credentialing platform.”

Addressing Shifting Economic Needs

For public institutions, it is no secret that many state and provincial budgets are tightening. This may be coupled with declining student enrollments in many instances. Others have found new ways to share resources and support their members. Consortia and systems were founded on the notion that efficiencies and effectiveness could be realized through joint action. In maintaining that expectation, they are responding in a variety of ways, as reflected in the quotes below:

- “We have modified our funding formula to incentive (sic) the sharing of students since many colleges cannot support their own enrollments.”
- “In the past, state licenses were provided for several products/services, but several years ago became unsustainable due to budget cuts.”
- “Leveraged purchasing.”
- “The entire system shares in the resources at reduced costs.”
- “Increases in master enabling agreements for campuses with system to buy services effectively, efficiently, and affordably.”
- “As a System, we are trying to leverage resources by providing opt-in solutions. In other words, we have negotiated master agreements so universities can opt-in and tailor those to meet their needs.”
- “We’ve largely focused on academic collaborations; over time, we’ve increasingly explored administrative collaborations.”
- “Some of our services are being considered for cloud-based solutions.”

Consortia and systems were designed to scale and leverage resources. Not surprisingly, services that improve the fiscal standing of their members are front and center.

Addressing Shifting Student Service Needs

Eight respondents reported that they would be increasing student-focused services, such as call centers, enrollment services, accessibility services, and retention services. One is adding an online graduation ceremony. One respondent reported that “we’ve taken over responsibility for accessible technology initiatives.” As WCET’s recent partnership on this issue with the Online Learning Consortium uncovered, there is still concern and confusion (whether instructional designers, faculty, or campus administration) on how to best address this issue.

Another respondent reported that they will have “more focus on student integrity issues-trying to stay in front of concerns.” As enrollments grow in online courses and as technology-mediated courses expand on-campus, institutions are often finding the need to be more systematic in assuring that students are not cheating on assessments. These “academic integrity” services have become big business and have coordinated interinstitutional help in dealing with these vendors may be welcomed by institutions.

Addressing Shifting Professional Development Needs

Eight responses included changes in the professional development services that they offer. They addressed these needs in ways that made sense in meeting identified member needs. Variations include “a statewide professional development program” and customized “strategic consulting services for campus leadership teams.”

One cited the problems incurred due to personnel changes on member campuses:

“There has been an increase in the retirements of graduate nursing faculty and an increase in turn-over in our Campus Staff Coordinators, Campus Faculty Coordinators, and in key campus administrators. We are looking at ways to continually orient the new faculty/staff about our consortium.”

Two cited the need to provide new training after the implementation of a new Learning Management System.

Although most respondents to the earlier question on academic services reported that they offer faculty and professional development, outliers do exist in the data. One respondent reported a decreased training need:

“Part of our function is to serve the academic vice presidents for the community college system. Their requests of us have been minimized over the past 3-5 years. I'm not certain their need for us will change in the next 3 years.”

Another cited a change in the model they will use to support faculty:

“In the past three years, we are doing less direct faculty training and more train-the trainer/ resources development for faculty teaching online.”

Consortia and Systems Adjust to Meet the Shifting Needs of Members

Recognizing their own limitations to meet increasing demands, respondents cited the need to outsource, crowdsource, scale, and/or reinvent services they once provided directly to members. Some respondents said they have changed their models for offering some services. Instead of providing it directly to institutions, they now coordinate efforts:

- “We began as a centralized way to explore online learning resources, including LMS hosting, tools training, and instructional design and then shifted to direct service to each institution.”
- “We are currently researching ed tech management solutions and how the system office might add value to this in the system.”

Most consortia and systems periodically review the services they offer. Some are also changing who offers the services and how they are offered.

In What Partnerships Is the Consortium or System Involved?

The consortia and systems reported collaborative relationships that are many and varied. More than half (20 out of 32 or 63.5%) reported being involved with partnerships of some kind, there were only a few instances of commonality among the types of partnerships they pursue. A few of the respondents listed contracts with vendors as “partnerships,” which may not meet everyone’s definition. However, those responses were included anyway.

Academic Services

- With the increased interest in reducing the cost of higher education, it is no surprise that five respondents mentioned partnerships with organizations that are working on OER and open textbook initiatives.
- One said: “We are a consortium of 15 community colleges. We partner with Universities and business to offer courses and training to their students/employees.”
- One simply said that they are doing “more work with K-12 partners,” but did not elaborate.
- Another respondent said that they “run a statewide adult education high school program and a statewide workforce development program.”
- One is partnering with “the Carnegie Foundation's Math Pathways program to help bring remedial math courses online.”

When consortia and systems partner with other entities to achieve their goals, they are commonly focused on meeting academic or administrative needs.

Technology Services

- One cited its strong partnerships on the data front, saying that it “has a strong and innovative partnership with Instructure, centered on data capabilities and standards” and that it “is also active in signing agreements with other technology vendors who are early stage proponents of learning with data.”

Planning and Administrative Services

- Five respondents talked about collaborative relationships (or perhaps just memberships) with national organizations, such as WCET, Jobs for the Future, Quality Matters, and USDLA.
- Two talked about working with other entities in their state.
 - “We communicate regularly with other consortia in PA and beyond on topics of shared coursework, shared administrative functions through the Association for Collaborative Leadership.”
 - One partners with the Network of Illinois Resources in Community Colleges.
- Although one respondent has no current partners, it is actively pursuing some: “From an eLearning-only perspective, we have not done this, though we are currently exploring interstate organization of accessibility testing and information sharing and we are beginning to investigate the possibility of interstate procurement networking. The VERY beginning. procurement networking. The VERY beginning.”

What Initiatives Will Your Consortium or System Pursue in the Next Few Years?

Survey respondents were eager to talk about their consortium's plans for the future, as all but six of them provided input on this question. What was striking about their opportunities or initiatives for the future was the diversity of their ideas. Typically, these types of questions result in several of the respondents clustering around the same activities, particularly around the latest innovations or services. That was not the case.

The early days of consortia witnessed many of them pursuing the creation of course listings, sharing technologies (such as a learning management system), offering instructional design support, or providing joint technical support for students and faculty. While the analysis below organizes the initiatives to be pursued into broad categories, there is variety in precisely what activity is planned within all but one category.

Academic Sharing

Academic-focused services were the most popular items cited, as there were twelve open-ended responses focused on teaching and learning support. While there was a focus on academic issues, the initiatives they plan to pursue were quite different.

While Consortia and Systems have lots of new initiatives, there is little commonality in what they will pursue with the exception of open content and OER.

Several of the respondents plan to add or expand course exchange programs in which students can enroll easily in courses offered by institutions within the partnership. A few will expand beyond sharing courses to developing joint degree programs. While course exchanges have been common, there is still some flux in how they operate. For example, one consortium is seeking a financial model for shared courses and another is seeking to outsource its course exchange program.

Other academic sharing mentioned were each identified by just one respondent. They include: developing stackable credentials, exploring adaptive learning, moving to master course development, and offering a centralized design house for course/program development. The responses often did not provide more detail on what –exactly -- these services would entail.

Improving Quality

Related to academics, the desire to improve the quality of online and technology-enhanced offerings was mentioned by nine respondents. Three respondents plan to expand their use of the Quality Matters³ rubric, which helps institutions manage the quality of their online offerings. Some respondents did not provide much detail, but indicated their broad interest in improving instructional design, student outcomes, student success, eliminating achievement gaps (presumably for underserved groups), and just plain “working on quality.” One statewide public system will develop a course quality faculty development micro-credential.

³ Quality Matters: <https://www.qualitymatters.org/>

Open Educational Resources (OER) / Open Textbooks

Promoting and adopting open content is the one initiative that was mentioned most often, as nine respondents indicated having new plans on the horizon. While the above categories had more or as many mentions, the tasks under those categories are more diverse. There is great interest in identifying and sharing content with a few who are keen on creating repositories of open content for their faculty and students to use. One large, well-funded consortium is pushing for “Z-cred” programs with no textbook costs to students for an entire academic program.

Two respondents are using “inclusive-access models,” which include all textbook costs within tuition, but could be a mix of open or other low-cost academic resources. Inclusive-access usually leads to all textbook costs being included in existing tuition and fees. This model typically differs from open content as the course materials are often purchased from a vendor at a bulk rate.

Technology

Many consortia got their start in providing shared technology services or leveraging favorable procurements through joint purchasing. The technologies must be maturing, or institutions are now better able to handle technologies on their own, as there were only five mentions of new technology initiatives. The diverse list of technologies cited for future exploration include the following: video capture, artificial intelligence, experiential learning management software, virtual/augmented reality platforms, and consumer relationship management (CRM) software.

Other Initiatives

The list of other future initiatives in the planning stages again yields diverse directions for the consortia:

- Professional development was mentioned five times with opportunities for both faculty and staff. One public statewide consortium is expanding opportunities for emerging leaders in online learning.
- Data analytics was mentioned four times. Data related needs included academic research, shared decision making, predictive analytics, and overall data standards.
- Graduation initiatives focused on degree completion or student/adult success were mentioned three times.
- Student services included expanded shared services to increase accessibility, online tutoring, and expanding an academic call center.
- Some initiatives were mentioned only once or twice, but are interesting to note:
 - Promoting external grants.
 - Creating business/community program partnerships.
 - Addressing student affordability.
 - Marketing and student lead nurturing.
 - Focusing on workforce development.
 - Finding a new funding formula for the consortium.

What is the Budget of the Consortium or System?

In understanding the work of consortia or the part of a system that works on online learned and educational technologies, experience shows that there are vast differences in the operating budgets of these organizations. Understanding those differences assists in comprehending differences in the services offered and their ability to assist their member institutions.

It is difficult to craft a fiscal question to capture the characteristics of different organizations. The question has to address differences in national currencies and in dates for fiscal years. Leaders answering the survey were presented with the following question:

“We understand that organizations operate using different fiscal years. Therefore, for the fiscal year that includes January 1, 2018, what is your projected annual budget of your consortium’s central administrative unit? (If you are a Canadian entity, answer in Canadian dollars.) Please check one.”

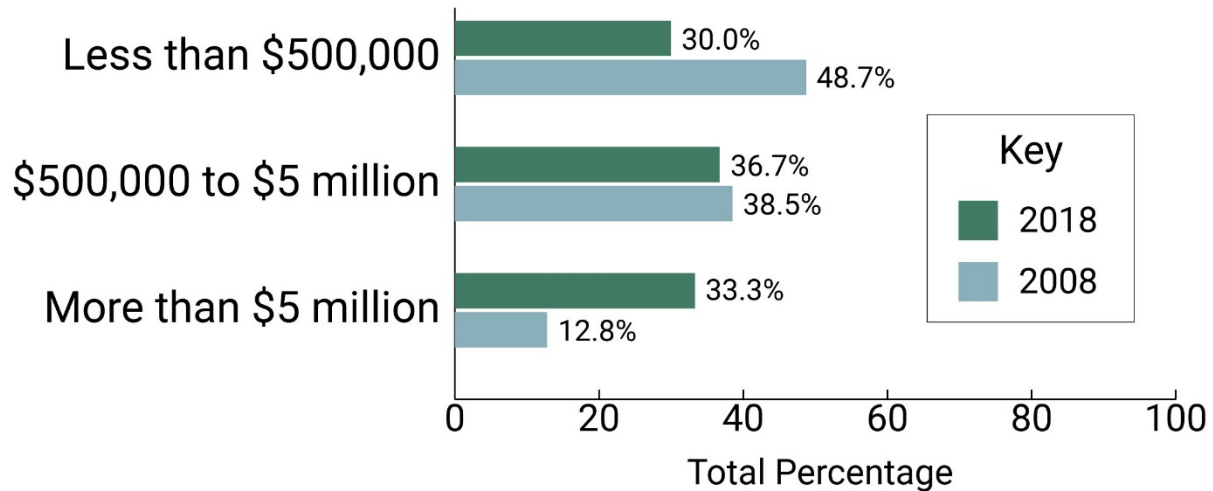
Consortia/System Annual Budget	2008	2018
Less than \$500,000	48.7%	30.0%
\$500,000 to \$1 million	15.4%	16.7%
\$1 million to \$3 million	20.5%	13.3%
\$3 million to \$5 million	2.6%	6.7%
\$5 million to \$8 million	7.7%	10.0%
More than \$8 million	5.1%	23.3%

Thirty of the leaders responded to this question and just under one-third (30.0%) of them operate multi-institution organizations with annual budgets of less than \$500,000. Meanwhile, about one-quarter (23.3%) enjoy financial support of more than \$8 million. Coordination among institutions takes time and effort, which is accomplished either by staffing or contributed time by personnel of the member institutions. Several consortia and systems manage complex contracts and services. To accomplish these tasks and oversee the agreements often requires a substantial budget.

Comparison to 2008

In the 2008 survey, the same question was asked, although the set of respondents was somewhat different than for the current survey. The following percentages are calculated for each survey year:

Consortia and System Finances



Finances in 2008 were essentially a bimodal distribution with about half of the respondents having budgets in the smallest category and almost 40% having budgets in the category that tops out at \$5 million. In 2008, only a few consortia or systems had budgets of more than \$5 million.

In 2018, the distribution changes to a trimodal distribution. Instead of being bimodal, there emerge three roughly equal categories:

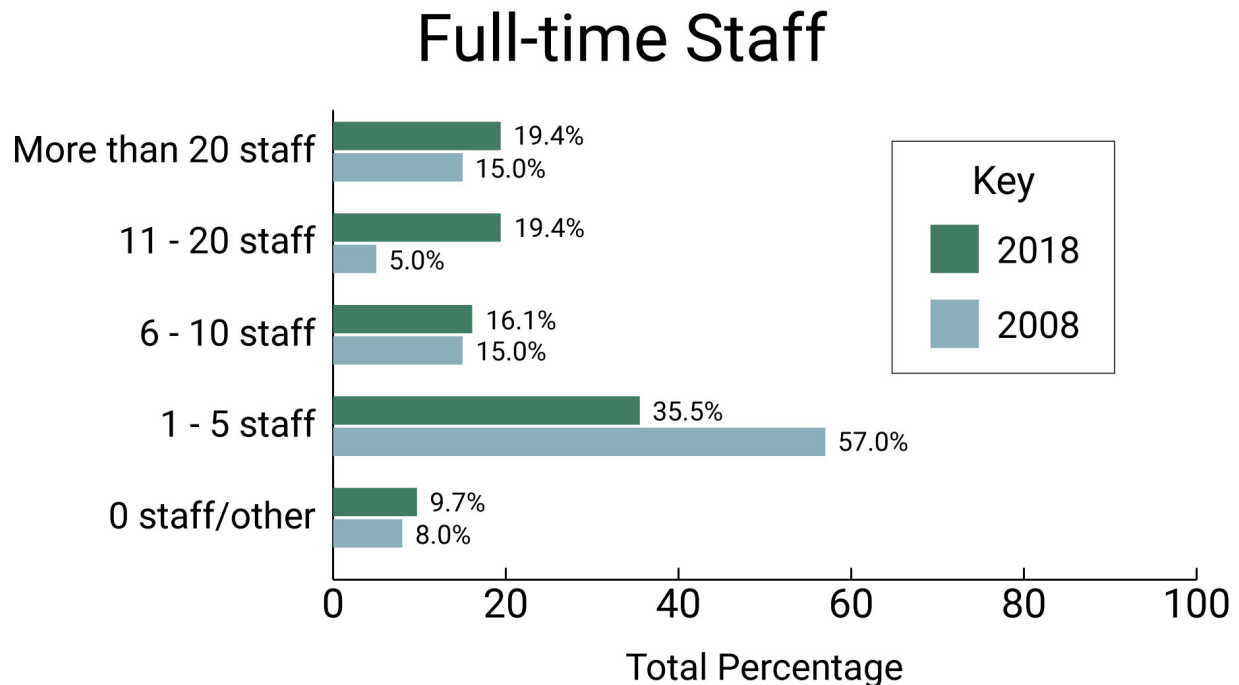
- About one-third (33.3%) of respondents reported annual budgets of \$5 million or more.
- Slightly fewer than a third (30.0%) reported budgets of less than \$500,000.
- The balance of respondents (36.7%) reported budgets between \$500,000 and \$5 million annually.

Over the ten-year period, the middle group (\$500,000 to \$5 million) remained roughly the same. Meanwhile, the lowest budget group shrank, and the largest budget group grew.

The changes over the decade may be due to a maturing of these organizations. Those that persist are generating more revenues from services and/or appropriations. There is at least one newer public entrant that emerged with a sizeable appropriation to fund their operations. On the other hand, those consortia with smaller budgets may have ceased to exist, increased their budgets over time -- thus growing out of the lowest category--, or continue to meet member needs with a small budget. Given the political will and local culture, some of those with the smallest budgets seem to have no other choice.

How Many Full-time Staff Are Employed by Your Consortium or System?

Closely related to the budget, the number of full-time staff members employed by a consortium or system, gives us a measure of the magnitude of the organization. Smaller consortia or systems may make greater use of part-time staff or staff donated by the member institutions. Since the question focused on full-time staff, those types of staffing options were not measured.



The most popular answer is one-to-five full-time staff with more than a third (35.5%) of respondents selecting that option. An additional nearly 10% indicated that there existed no full-time staff. For those organizations, their operations are probably run by part-time staff and/or time that is contributed by individuals at their member institutions. Together, almost half of respondents (45.2%) reported having five full-time staff or fewer. This is more evidence that many of the consortia are still small.

On the opposite end of the spectrum, nearly one-in-five (19.4%) of respondents employ more than 20 full-time staff. Another 19.4% reported having 11-20 staff members.

On the previous question regarding overall budgets, a third of the institutions reported having budgets of \$5 million or more. On this question, only about one-in-five respondents (19.4%) reported having the highest full-time staff levels of more than 20 full-time employees. Although the survey did not ask about this particular issue, some reasons for more than 10% difference between those two categories may be:

- Those larger organizations may coordinate pass-through grant money to support activities at their member institutions.
- Some of the staffing may be accomplished through contracting with faculty or staff at member campuses or other creative uses of part-time staffing.

Comparison to 2008

In the 2008 survey, the same question was asked, although the set of respondents was somewhat different than for the current survey. The above percentages were calculated for each survey year.

In 2008, there was not a category to report no staff, but there was an “other” option. In 2008, the feedback indicated that most of those who responded “other” had no full-time staff. In the above chart, the “other” option for 2008 and the zero staff for 2018 option are reported on the same option. If those response sets are the same over the two surveys, then the percentage of consortia or systems with no staff remained relatively stable over the last decade. While there is a large decrease in consortia with one-to-five full-time staff, the greatest increase is in those with 11-20 staff.

The budget question for 2018 resulted in a roughly equal trimodal distribution between the low, medium, and high-budget options. While there is a large number of responses on the low end for the full-time staff question, there is not a corresponding increase of responses for the higher staff options. This may be due to the higher budgets being spent less on staff and more on other expense areas. As mentioned previously, some of the larger consortia or systems may have pass-through grant funds that go to member institutions and/or contract with faculty and staff at member institutions to perform some functions.

How is Your Consortium or System Work Financed?

Beyond the size of the budget, the sources of funding also provide insight into the operations of consortia and systems. The respondents provided insights into the different income revenue streams that they developed to fund their operations. They also provided information about the distribution of income among those revenue streams.

Diversity of Revenue Streams

In examining a consortium or system, having multiple revenue streams may be the key to its survival. For example, if a public system loses its appropriations, then it will likely cease to exist. Respondents were asked to choose which sources of revenue they gather. Their options are indicated in the following list:

- State/provincial appropriations (not grants).
- Federal appropriations (not grants).
- Dues from member institutions/schools/organizations.
- Revenue sharing or fees for students registering for courses offered through your consortium.
- Fees for services (e.g., seminar registrations, contracted instructional design, charges for hosting services).
- Sales or licensing of products developed and/or marketed by your collaboration.
- Grants.
- Donated or in-kind services.
- Other.

Rather than have respondents provide exact percentages for their yearly amount they received from a revenue stream, they were asked to select from the following categories:

- 0%.
- 1 - 25%.
- 26 – 50%.
- 51 – 75%.
- 76 – 100%.

Number of Revenue Streams	Percentage of Consortia/Systems
1	30.0%
2	33.3%
3	20.0%
4	13.3%
5	0.0%
6	3.3%

Almost two-thirds of respondents have only one or two funding sources. While they are not limited to one funding source, an additional eight consortia or systems derive the bulk of their funds (defined as more than three-quarters of their funding) from a single source.

On the positive side, these consortia and systems have found a funding model that works for them. On the negative side, if anything should happen to that single revenue stream, the consortium or system is at extreme risk.

For the nine respondents that rely on a single source of funding:

- Eight of them serve only public institutions within a single system or across multiple systems of a state or province.
- Four derived their income solely from appropriations, two from dues, two from revenue sharing for courses, and one from “other” sources that were not identified.

The California State University System is the most active in seeking diversity in funding with six sources named. Less than half of their budget comes from state appropriations. They supplement the state’s share with federal appropriations, dues, revenue from course sharing, grants, and donated (in-kind) services.

The Connecticut Distance Learning Consortium (CTDLC) was cited in the 2008 report as being a model of diversity of revenue streams. After the survey was conducted, the state decided to close the Consortium as a cost savings measure. For this survey, CTDLC reported that less than one-quarter of its budget was derived from appropriations. More than half of CTDLC’s income was derived from fees for services. Given that the lost services to CTDLC members will probably cost the institutions more to provide than the collaborative alternative, it is difficult to understand where the savings will occur. In fact, the minor reliance on state funding may have been held against the organization, as it was not completely self-supporting. However, the cost of lost collaboration may outweigh the reclaimed appropriation dollars.

Even with that outcome, it is probably wise for consortia and systems to have at least some diversity in their revenue streams. Economic realities change over time, and it is useful to have alternatives on which to rely.

Primary Revenue Streams

There are several options for revenue streams to finance consortia or system work, and the question tried to capture the most common sources of funding. In addition to the diversity of revenue streams, it is helpful to look on how much an organization depends on each one. While trying to avoid over dependence on one source of revenue, consortia and system leaders will be interested in the alternatives that have been successful in other places and that they may wish to adopt.

The chart below lists the revenue stream for each respondent that provides the most funding for that organization. One respondent reported equal funding from two sources and another reported equal funding from four sources. The split responses in each case were allocated accordingly in the table below.

Primary Revenue Stream	Number of Consortia/Systems
Revenue from courses	8
State/provincial appropriations	7.75
Dues	7
Fees for services	2.5
Donated (in-kind)	2
Other	2
Federal appropriations	0.25
Grants	0.25
Sales of products	0.25

More than three-quarters (75.8%) of the primary funding sources are clustered into just three options: revenue sharing from courses, state appropriations, and dues. As witnessed in the 2008 report, most (not all) organizations serving public institutions enjoy at least some support from state budget appropriations. Traditionally, the primary sources of funding for many consortia and systems serving private institutions are dues and/or fees for services.

The response regarding revenue sharing or fees for students registering for courses was the primary source of funding for the greatest number of consortia or systems. Revenue share agreements result from a popular service enabling students at one-member institutions to take courses at a distance from other member institutions. To fund this access, institutions often agree to share a percentage of the revenue between the institution enrolling the student, the institution providing the instruction, and the consortium/system for coordinating and marketing the courses. In some cases, instead of revenue sharing, students are charged an extra fee to avail themselves of this service. The popularity of this option shows the ingenuity of these organizations in generating their own finances. On the other hand, with cuts to state appropriations, the costs of providing these services may (once again) be transferred directly to students.

A summary of the remaining responses for which an option was the primary revenue stream:

- **Fees for services.** Two systems (one moderate sized and another much larger one) generated more than half of their revenues from fees for services. Such services may include training, faculty development, instructional design, consulting, or student services (e.g., technical support, call centers, or tutoring).
- **Donated or in-kind services.** The donated and in-kind options are preferred by two loosely coordinated statewide efforts that focus mostly on an annual conference and some interim information sharing. Since faculty and staff already have full-time duties, it is usually difficult to provide robust services using this model. It may be hard to replace the initial staff who were dedicated to the partnership, but it is a good model for start-ups.
- **Other.** Unfortunately, there was not an opportunity provided for respondents to explain the “other” choices on this question. It would have been interesting to see if they were truly original in their financing efforts.
- **Federal appropriations and grants.** These two categories had much more impact a decade ago when online learning and the use of educational technologies were newer ideas. Now that they have become mainstream, these sources are less common.

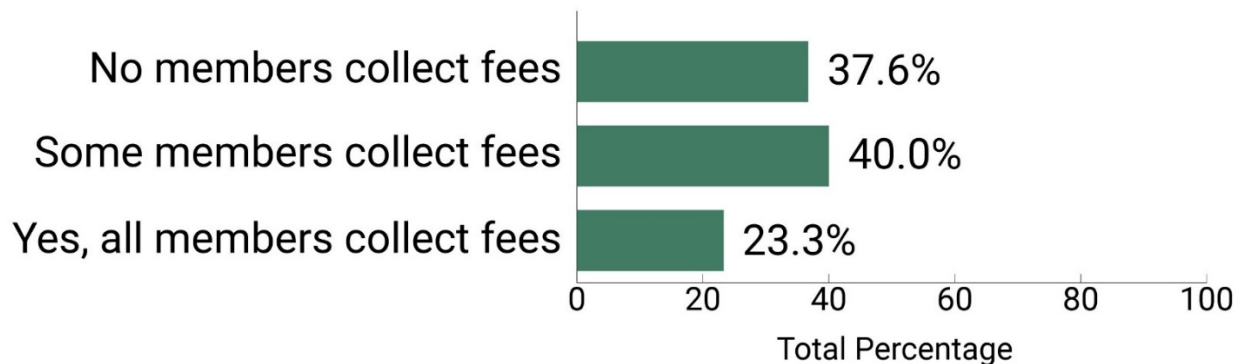
Revenue Stream	0%	1-25%	26-50%	51-75%	76-100%	Total # of Responses
State/provincial appropriations (not grants)	48.2%	11.1%	14.8%	7.4%	18.5%	27
Federal appropriations (not grants)	87.5%	12.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	24
Dues from member institutions/schools/organizations	55.6%	14.8%	3.7%	7.4%	18.5%	27
Revenue sharing or fees for students registering for courses offered through your consortium	55.6%	7.4%	11.1%	3.7%	22.2%	27
Fees for services (e.g., seminar registrations, contracted instructional design, charges for hosting services)	57.7%	34.6%	0.0%	7.7%	0.0%	26
Sales or licensing of products developed and/or marketed by your collaboration	92.0%	8.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	25
Grants	69.2%	23.1%	3.9%	3.9%	0.0%	26
Donated or in-kind services	80.0%	12.0%	0.0%	8.0%	0.0%	25
Other	90.0%	0.0%	0.0%	5.0%	5.0%	20

Note: Rows might not total 100.0% due to rounding.

Do Your Member Institutions Collect Distance Education (or Similar) Fees?

The issue of charging students additional fees to enroll in online courses has become a bit controversial. Some institutions charge these fees to cover the added costs incurred (e.g., software, technical support, faculty development) in offering distance education courses. Most policymakers believe that online courses cost less to produce, and that the costs savings should be passed along to students. A few consortia use extra fees to fund the costs of providing the services to administer collaboration.

Do Consortium Members Collect Distance Education Fees?



From the survey, practices on charging fees vary greatly. About a quarter (23.3%) of respondents reported that all of their consortium members collected fees from their students and 40.0% indicated that “some” of their members collected fees. That leaves 36.7% of reporting consortia who indicated that none of their members collect fees at this time.

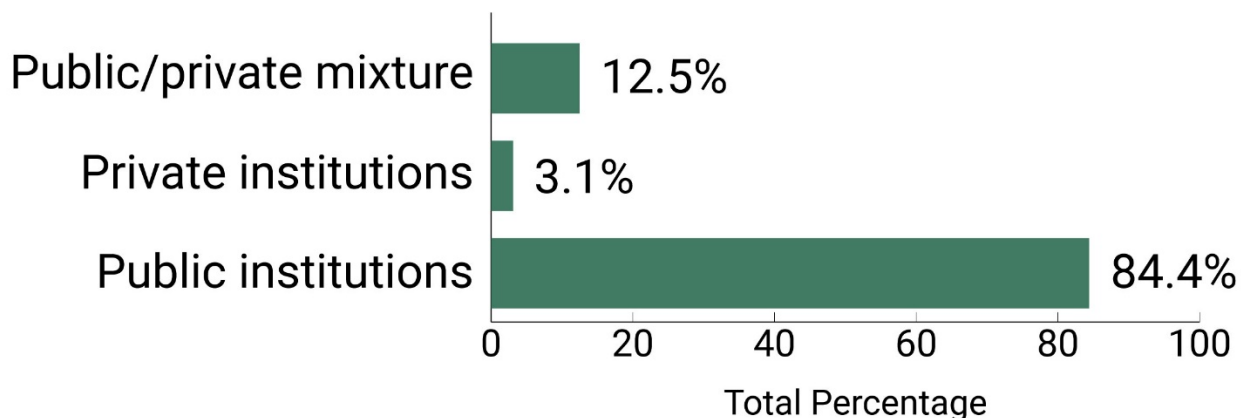
This issue has become political in the past few years as there has been talk in Florida and North Dakota about eliminating or limiting such fees. For example, the Wyoming legislature cut the appropriations for online courses to be only 80% of what is provided for face-to-face courses at the state’s community colleges. The institutional dependence on these fees may have a big impact on consortia and system finances in the future. Additionally, there may be an opportunity for systems to centralize communication with policymakers on the reasoning for implementing such fees.

Demographics of Consortia and Systems

To assist in understanding about their organizational structure and service areas, a few questions were asked about the characteristics of each consortium or system.

Sectors of Member Institutions

Higher Education Sector of Consortium/System Members



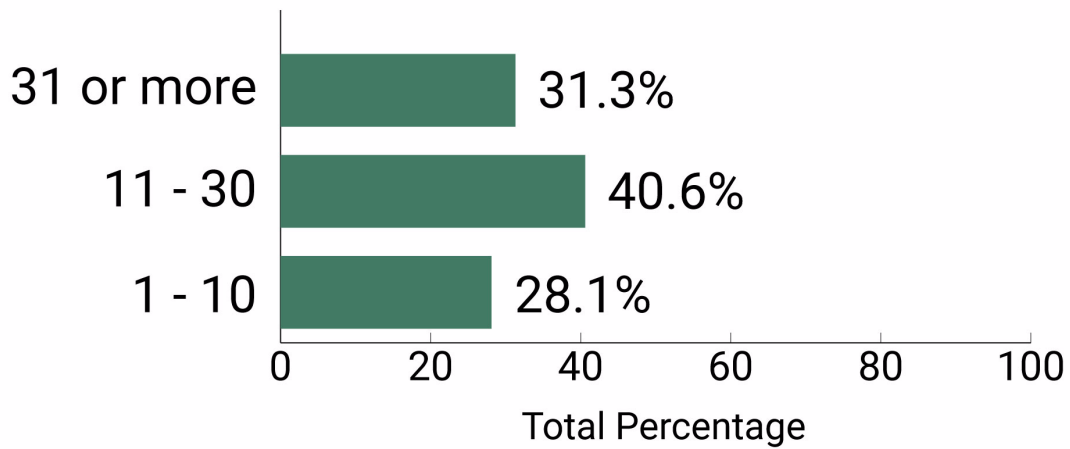
The vast majority (84.4%) of leaders reported that the institutions in their consortium or system served only public institution. This is not surprising as public college and university systems provide ready-made conduits for multi-institution collaboration. These institutions are already familiar with one another and may be engaged in other joint projects. Additionally, in some cases there may be mandates or incentives for public institutions to partner that arise from legislative or system board actions. Only one consortium that responded includes only private institutions.

Geographic Reach of the Consortium or System

Nine out of ten (90.6%) consortium and system leaders reported including members who were located within a single state or province. In the prior questions, the bulk of respondents represented public-only organizations. It follows that most system-based organizations focus within a single geographic region. The balance of respondents enjoy memberships that cross geographic lines.

Number of Institutions Served by the Consortium or System

Number of Institutions Served by the Consortium/System



The above graph combines response categories to show that roughly one-third (28.61) of respondents serve a small number of institution (1-10 members) and about one-third (31.3%) serve more than thirty institutions.

The following are the number of respondents to each category option in the original question:

- 1 - 5 members: 3
- 6-10 members: 6
- 11-20 members: 8
- 21-30 members: 5
- 31-50 members: 8
- More than 50 members: 2

There are few in the smallest (1-5 member) and largest (more than 50 member) categories. This might be an indicator that consortia or system efforts that are either too small or too large are difficult to maintain.

Comparison to 2008

	2008	2018
More than 50 institutions	8%	6.3%
31 - 50 institutions	5%	25.0%
11 - 30 institutions	46%	40.6%
1 – 10 institutions	41%	28.1%

The consortia or systems serving 30 or more institutions was only 13% in 2008. It is 31.3% in 2018. Meanwhile, there were a smaller percentage of the consortia serving a small group of institutions.

How Can WCET Help Leaders Better Serve Their Members?

WCET is always interested in improving and changing services to meet member needs. Many of the respondents are WCET members. The feedback on this question helps WCET leadership with strategic planning on how to best support leaders and staff at consortia and systems in the future. The response also provide membership at large with key ideas on which to reflect and act.

WCET staff are honored to have received some generous praise and suggestions:

- The MarylandOnline respondent said: “Keep up the great work WCET is doing in (1) consortia, sharing best practices among consortia as you have been doing; on (2) keeping members abreast of developments on the federal front; and (3) leadership and information sharing in OER.”
- Others echoed that sentiment in their appreciation for WCET providing a trusted, reasoned voice in times of uncertainty.
- Another comment articulated a challenge for WCET to involve student voices: “What do they need from our consortia...from the student perspective —what works and what doesn’t.”

This was an open-ended question and the responses below are organized into categories of similar suggestions, requests, or recommendations.

More Surveys and Data Sharing

Respondents encouraged more surveys, sharing of data across consortia, and benchmarking. While they like sharing data, there were differences in exactly what issues should be examined:

Respondents expressed a hunger for consortia and system leaders to learn more from each other.

- Survey system-wide implementation of technologies (e.g., LMS, SIS, tutoring).
- Share student success across the consortia.
- Develop national data standards for online learning and open educational resources.
- Compile national benchmarking and reference data.
- Conduct a needs assessment that identifies the professional development needs for both consortia and institutional members.
- Continue to share trends in distance education and technology-mediated education of all types.

Collaborations on Best Practices

Moving beyond data, other respondents wanted more insights on how administrative and service models work. They would like additional opportunities to share what activities they are doing and/or to develop joint recommendations on best practices and ways to meet emerging challenges on issues:

- How are consortia and systems operating:
 - Consortia and system-wide models of operations and services.
 - Revenue generating options for consortia.
 - Models for evaluation of programs and services.
 - Ways to determine institutional needs.

- How are consortia and systems addressing innovations, such as:
 - Competency-based education.
 - Open educational resources.
 - Alternative credentialing.
- Models for accreditation compliance.
- Opportunities to share services among consortia.
- Closing the equity gap for students.

Conclusion

As satisfying as it is to accomplish a task without any help from others, sometimes this is just not possible. The leaders of the consortia and systems surveyed share the goal to find ways in which faculty, staff, and students at member institutions can benefit from collaboration. Thirty-two respondents representing consortia and systems of all types from the United States and Canada responded to a survey conducted in the first half of 2018. They remain hopeful that their partnerships will increase student access, improve student success, realize efficiencies, and test new innovations.

As one respondent said, together we “solve problems that a single institution could not solve individually—at least not without tremendous capital burdens.”

The survey results reflect the complexity of running and maintaining organizations that require cooperation. There have been many changes in the landscape since a survey that asked some of the same questions in 2008. However, what has remained consistent is the commitment of these leaders, as they live the by the mantra: “together, we can accomplish more.”

There Has Been Flux, But Most are Strengthening

The press has focused on some recent closures of collaborative organizations and some have openly wondered if these types of organizations will survive. While those events are unsettling, the good news is often overlooked: new consortia and systems have been added and several others have been reimaged to better fit local needs:

- Seven opened. Of the seven new consortia and systems that opened since the 2008 survey, three are within a single system, two cover all the institutions within a Canadian province, and two are multi-state consortia.
- Five closed. Of the five that closed since 2008, one served all the universities in a state. Four served public institutions from across systems within a state or province.
- Nine transitioned. Nine assumed new missions and/or names with two of the organizations ceasing to be membership driven and becoming service providers. Several others underwent some form of reorganization that often included a name change.

Finding: While there has been an unusual amount of flux for this number of organizations, there is no one model that fits all situations. To remain relevant in a world of fast-changing technology and innovations requires constant attention to emerging member needs and willingness to reinvent the organization to provide relevant services. While some organizations have closed, many others have strengthened over time, or transitioned into a new, more relevant version that better fits member needs.

Value is Found in Increasing Outcomes and Efficiencies...and Exploring New Innovations

Consortia and systems are often challenged in describing what they do and articulating the value that they provide. The activities of institutions are obvious. While students benefit from system and consortium offerings, the impact is often less direct. When asked to describe the main value offered by the consortium or system, their responses could be categorized as follows:

- Student access and success. Access is expanded to students who are time-strapped, remote, place-bound, or unable to get the courses they need at a single institution.
- Centralized service management for efficiencies. While there may be monetary gains, partnerships also brought improved quality (e.g., course design, development) and student service improvements (e.g., accessibility/technical support, data collection).
- Cost reduction/savings. By partnering, the consortia/system is “helping provide products/services to all colleges that might otherwise be unattainable for many colleges due to costs.”
- Opportunities for collaborative innovation. In raising the vision beyond day-to-day operations: “We provide thought leadership, and model new and innovative services and practices that benefit our member institutions.”

Finding: Consortia and systems have doubled-down on their primary value of increasing access to courses and programs, promoting operational efficiencies, and realizing cost savings from joint procurement and centralized operations. A significant minority reported increased value in joint problem-solving and exploration of the efficacy of innovations. Given that there will always be new technologies, this service will always be in high demand.

A Wide Range of Services are Offered; Most Focus on Soft Skills

Consortia and systems offer an array of services to meet the needs of their member institutions. The set of services offered may vary widely from one to another. In response to a question about what services the consortia and system currently or plan to offer in the next three years, the following reflects the top ten services identified by the respondents:

- Brokering interinstitutional partnerships to meet institutional needs (89.7%).
- Faculty development (84.4%).
- Inter-institutional sharing of courses (77.4%).
- Data gathering on enrollments and/or courses (71.0%).
- Centralized or joint exploring/researching of emerging technologies (67.7%).
- Joint online course listing or course catalog (65.7%).
- Student readiness for online learning (60.0%).
- Offering open educational resources (59.4%).
- Operating learning object repository (53.2%).
- Instructional design assistance (53.2%).

Finding: In observing this list, only three of the items (exploring emerging technologies, operating a joint course listing or catalog, and operating a learning object repository) are completely focused on technologies or operating a technical service on behalf of the members. The other services focus more on the “soft” skills regarding how to use technologies effectively (faculty development, student readiness, instructional design) or managing complex partnership arrangements (brokering interinstitutional partnerships, sharing of courses). As with many technology enterprises, supporting the people is the most important component of the operations.

New Services Address Highly Varied Member Needs, But OER is Popular

While the 2008 survey does not provide a perfect comparison, we can infer some trends by analyzing the results of similar questions in both surveys. The technology landscape changed drastically in the last decade witnessed many changes in hardware, software, mobile usage, and broadband availability.

Even with a strong economy a significant number of respondents mentioned the need to adjust to declining funding and enrollment challenges. In reviewing the results, a picture forms of organizations that stay in touch with the evolving needs of their members and adjust services to meet those needs:

- There has been tremendous growth in some services. Over the past ten years faculty development, interinstitutional sharing of courses, and joint application processes have grown by almost 20% of respondents. Brokering interinstitutional partnerships and providing student readiness tools both grew by almost 30% of respondents.
- However, there is little commonality in new services adopted. In the early days of consortia and systems, most all the organizations were involved in a few of the same services. Now that those are in place, the new services are much more attuned to the unique needs of their member institutions.
- Except...offering Open Educational Resources (OER) is popular. One service was mentioned far more than all others as being a new service offering. That offering was OER and it reflects the growth in interest throughout higher education to use open resources to address student affordability concerns. It was the top new service introduced in the last three years and is the top service planned to be added in the upcoming three years.
- There is great value in exploring new technologies. There were relatively few mentions of adding services focused on specific new technologies or centralized technical/web services. The most popular technical service mentioned was centralized or joint researching of emerging technologies. Given that innovations are constantly emerging, sharing information on what works and what does not is a service that improves efficiency and which can persist over time.

Finding: The core set of services offered by most consortia and systems is fairly well set, but they are still adding new ones based upon member needs. This represents a maturing of these organizations. Rather than chasing the next new “killer app,” they are now increasingly more involved in joint exploration of the value of novel innovations. Based upon their analysis, they implement what works. The one new service that is currently receiving the most attention is the implementation of Open Educational Resources.

Systems and Consortia are Maturing as Organizations

Contrary to the notion that some read into the closing of a few consortia and systems, the general trend is for these organizations to be growing and maturing:

- Budgets are growing. In 2008, almost half of the consortia reported budgets of less than \$500,00 and only about one-in-ten exceeded the \$5 million budget level. In 2018, this changed considerably as consortia were almost evenly split among these categories: less than \$500,000, \$500,000 to \$5 million, and more than \$5 million. Over the decade, an additional 20% of organizations grew to the highest budget level.
- Staff size is growing...but at a slower pace. In 2008, more than half (57.0%) of respondents employed one-to-five full-time staff. This fell to about one-third (35.5%) in 2018, but remained the largest single category. All of the other higher staffing options grew. Since only full-time staff counts were requested, there may be part-time or contracted staff assuming some duties.
- There are fewer very small or very large numbers of institutions served. Since 2008, the smallest and largest categories saw declined in their numbers. The biggest growth was in organizations serving 31-50 institutions.

Finding: The changes that have occurred over the decade may be signs that these organizations are maturing. Those that persist are generating more revenues from services and/or appropriations. On the other hand, those consortia with smaller budgets may have ceased to exist, increased their budgets over time (thus growing out of the lowest category), or continue to meet member needs with a small budget. Also, the decline in consortia and systems that serve very large or very institutional populations might be an indicator of the difficulty to maintain partnerships at those two extremes.

More Diverse Revenue Streams, But Still Dangerously Few for Many

In the 2008 report, there were alarms raised about consortia and systems overly relying on a single funding stream. While not as pronounced, some of those concerns remain:

- Most rely on a few revenue streams. Almost two-thirds (63.3%) of respondents have only one or two sources for raising funds.
- The primary revenue sources are heavily focused on just three options. More than three-quarters (75.8%) of the primary funding sources (where they derive most of their funding) are clustered into just three options: revenue sharing from courses, state appropriations, and dues.

Finding: On the positive side, consortia and systems with limited funding options have found a model that works for them. Negatively, if anything should happen to a revenue stream, the consortium or system is at extreme risk. While there is more diversity in revenue streams than in 2008, many of these organizations are still at risk to changes in governments, changes in system or institutional leadership and priorities, economic downturns, and other overseen occurrences.

A Final Word: Overall Trends are Positive

These organizations are complex to run as they must constantly monitor and balance changes in leadership, economics, technologies, personalities, enrollments, and other external pressures. Unlike institutions, they often do not have a natural constituency and are sometimes victims of political, leadership, or budget considerations not of their own making.

With noted closures of some consortia or systems in recent years, there are those who have sought to declare them dead or dying. This survey shows that more have opened than have closed and several have repurposed themselves to meet changing needs.

Meanwhile -- on a whole -- they are expanding their services and increasing their budgets; most are prospering.

In times of uncertainty and budget fluctuations, it is imperative that institutional leaders understand that their colleges and universities cannot be all things to all people. By judiciously partnering in consortia or system efforts, the result is that "together we can accomplish more."

Appendix A: The Survey



1. What is the name of your consortium or system?

SERVICES

An e-Learning Consortium fosters inter-institutional partnerships to share resources with the goal of increasing the institutional capacity for technology-mediated courses and programs.

Consortia vary greatly in the services that they offer their member institutions. While not all of your member institutions use each service, these questions focus on what service options are available to your members.

2. Academic Services – Please check the one option that best applies:

	Have been offering for more than 3 years	Have been offering for fewer than 3 years	Plan to offer in the next 3 years	Used to offer it, but no longer offer this service	Offered at each institution, separate from the system	Not offered
Joint online course listing or course catalog	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Interinstitutional sharing of courses	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Interinstitutional sharing of degree or certificate programs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Interinstitutional transfer articulation agreements	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Performing academic portfolio review	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Faculty development	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Instructional design assistance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Operating a learning object repository	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Offering open educational resources (OER)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Offering open textbooks	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other (please specify)

3. Student Services – Please check the one option that best applies:

	Have been offering for more than 3 years	Have been offering for fewer than 3 years	Plan to offer in the next 3 years	Used to offer it, but no longer offer this service	Offered at each institution, separate from the system	Not offered
Student readiness for online learning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Enrollment Services/Support: joint application process	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Registration	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sets tuition rate(s)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Call center (non-technical) (e.g., Financial Aid)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Academic advising	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tutoring	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Shared recruiting through single consortium/system level portal	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Joint marketing campaigns	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Online course development	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Online program development	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Coordinating dual credit offerings	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other (please specify)

4. Technology Services – Please check the one option that best applies:

	Have been offering for more than 3 years	Have been offering for fewer than 3 years	Plan to offer in the next 3 years	Used to offer it, but no longer offer this service	Offered at each institution, separate from the system	Not offered
Centralized technology infrastructure (e.g., central course hosting, central software hosting, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Centralized or joint exploring/researching of emerging technologies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Centralized technical support	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Centralized Customer Relationship Management (CRM)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Centralized Student Information Services (SIS)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other (please specify)

5. Planning and Administrative Services – Please check the one option that best applies:

	Have been offering for more than 3 years	Have been offering for fewer than 3 years	Plan to offer in the next 3 years	Used to offer it, but no longer offer this service	Offered by each institution, separate from the system	Not offered
Data gathering on enrollments and/or courses	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lobbying and advocacy to state/provincial governments	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Grant writing for external funds	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Operating a grant process of funds appropriated by the state or province	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Brokering interinstitutional partnerships to meet institutional needs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Canvassing business, government, and public needs to broker solutions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Managing an RFP process for joint student services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Managing an RFP process for marketing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other (please specify)

6. Please describe any additional services that you are offering or planning to offer in the near future, but are not listed in the above questions.

7. Please describe how the set of services that you offered have changed over the last 3 years and how you think they will change over the next 3 years.

8. Please briefly describe any other significant collaborations in which your consortium is involved, such as partnerships within your state/province or partnerships with other consortia.

9. Some leaders have reported having trouble articulating and demonstrating the value of their consortium. How would you describe the main value provided by the consortium you lead?

FUNDING AND MANAGEMENT

10. We understand that organizations operate using different fiscal years. Therefore, for the fiscal year that includes January 1, 2018, what were the income sources for your consortium? Indicate the *rough percentage* of your consortium’s budget that you anticipate coming from each source.

	0%	1-25%	26-50%	51-75%	76-100%
State/provincial appropriations (not grants)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Federal appropriations (not grants)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Dues from member institutions/schools/organizations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Revenue sharing or fees for students registering for courses offered through your consortium	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fees for services (e.g., seminar registrations, contracted instructional design, charges for hosting services)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sales or licensing of products developed and/or marketed by your collaboration	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Grants	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Donated or in-kind services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

11. We understand that organizations operate using different fiscal years. Therefore, for the fiscal year that includes January 1, 2018, what is your projected annual budget of your consortium's central administrative unit? (If you are a Canadian entity, answer in Canadian dollars.) Please check one.

- Less than \$500,000
- \$500,00 to \$1 million
- \$1 million to \$3 million
- \$3 million to \$5 million
- \$5 million to \$8 million
- More than \$8 million

12. How many full-time staff members are employed in your consortium's central administrative unit?

- 0
- 1 - 5
- 6 - 10
- Other (please describe)
- 11 - 20
- More than 20

13. Do your member institutions collect distance education (or similar) fee?

- Yes, all consortium members collect fees.
- No, none of the consortium members collect fees.
- Some of the consortium members collect fees.

THE FUTURE

14. Please describe opportunities or initiatives that you and your consortium members are planning to pursue in the next few years.

15. What information, services, and data could WCET's consortia group provide you to help you better serve your members?

DEMOGRAPHICS

16. What is your name, title, and email address?

Name

Title

Email Address

17. The members of my consortium are:

- Public institutions
- Private institutions
- A mixture of public and private institutions

18. The members of my consortium are primarily located:

- Within a single state or province
- Across multiple states or provinces

19. How many institutions are members of your consortium?

- 1 – 5
- 6 – 10
- 11 – 20
- 21 – 30
- 31 – 50
- More than 50

Appendix B: Open-Ended Responses

Academic Services

Question: Academic Services—Please check the one option that best applies: (Question 2)

Note: Organizational identity has been blocked on these responses.

Open-Ended Responses
In the case of 'consortium name', "courses" refer to faculty professional development courses, workshops, and webinars.
Ours is an Exchange/Cross Registration System.
Grant support for OER program development; management of statewide Quality Matters activities; policy support for OER implementation and support. Shared Educational Technology (LMS, lecture capture, captioning, accessibility support).
Systemwide license of Turnitin, Annual conference.
Discounted contracts on technology software/services, convener of initiatives on topics of importance/value to membership.
Please note that interinstitutional sharing of degree or certificate programs, faculty development, instructional design assistance, and operating a learning object repository are provided by the 'consortium name' Flexible Learning HUB which was initiated by and is supported by 'consortium name', but operates independently.
Inclusive access for digital content and eTextbooks.
Offering subscriptions to Quality Matters, a provider of quality assurance services, of which 'consortium name' is the parent. Also, creating a Certificate for Online Adjunct Teaching and offering the course to 'consortium name' member institutions.
Another partner agency does transfer - ONCAT.ca.

Student Services

Question: Student Services—Please check the one option that best applies: (Question 3)

Open-Ended Responses
We do register students for 'consortia name' courses and facilitate registration issues for 'consortia name' students, but everything beyond is done by each campus.
Cross consortium professional development for faculty.
Note: Online course development is through the 'consortium name' Flexible Learning HUB.
Concierge - one point of contact for students; online demo course; early alerts systems.
We're exploring some of these topics at the leadership level but have not pursued anything yet.

We fund online course and program development.

Technology Services

Question: Technology Services—Please check the one option that best applies: (Question 4)

Open-Ended Responses

The 'consortium name' instance of Canvas is used to centrally host professional development content from a variety of 'consortium name' stakeholders.

We use the WICHE-ICE course catalogue.

'Consortium name' focus is on building an ecosystem focused on the teaching and learning space. While at times this means 'consortium name' may host technology, most of the products within our domain are hosted by 3rd party partners. 'Consortium name' is not involved with the sourcing, hosting, or support of enterprise IT outside of the teaching & learning space (SIS, accounting software, etc.). For the product that 'consortium name' produces, 'consortium name' handles tier 2 support, but only for our internal products. We do not assist with the outsourcing of university support. For the purpose of this survey, all of 'consortium name's' activities align with the “Centralized or joint exploring/researching of emerging technologies” category, though it would be more appropriate if “emerging” were excluded.

Each college has their own IT and eLearning Office.

LMS hosting/application support are provided centrally; CRM is provided both centrally and at the campus level.

Planning and Administrative Services

Question: Planning and Administrative Services—Please check the one option that best applies: (Question 5)

Open-Ended Responses

Colleges do on local level as well.

Note: Data gathering on enrollments and/or courses is limited to online courses accessed via our e-learning portal.

Managing RFP process and vendor management for university-wide technology contracts for both SW products and services.

'Consortium name' hosts an annual leadership institute for online education and operates a Seat Bank enabling member institutions to buy and sell student seats in online courses.

This question is slightly confusing given the scale that's provided. Suggest rank ordering the items on the left side of the survey section.

Additional Services

Question: Please describe any additional services that you are offering or planning to offer in the near future but are not listed in the above questions. (Question 6)

Open-Ended Responses

Sustainability is an ongoing issue and we are currently looking at diversifying revenue streams. For example, we are considering moving to interprofessional course exchanges for topics common to all graduate students, such as research methodology, etc.

VCT oversees the 'consortium name' system memberships (incl. SAN membership), captioning, pilots examining new tech & services, consortial agreements to reduce costs...

No significant changes.

'Consortium name's' primary focus is on student and faculty-generated data across the digital teaching and learning landscape. At present, 'consortium name' is laser-focused on the 'consortium name' Data Platform (UDP) and the 'consortium name' Common Data Model (UCDM). The UCDM ensures that all data coming in from disparate corners of the teaching & learning ecosystem are codified as to be more easily understood when viewed in the aggregate. The UDP stores this data and is a platform from which other tools (advising, for example) can generate custom or prebuilt reports delivering ecosystem data rather than individual product dashboard. The UDP is also a centralized repository where institutional and academic researchers across the consortium may gain access to the raw data.

Digital proctoring, plagiarism detection, LMS, student readiness tutorials, faculty training courses, help desk for LMS, platforms for advising and tutoring, 3rd party tutoring services, equity research, OER model classes, Underprepared student resources.

RFP or software development for shared ed tech management system; increased system support for accessible technology.

The 'consortium name' System Course Exchange facilitates the registration and transcripting process. We are looking at the College Consortium as a solution for managing and expanding the CEP.

Centralized learning object repository.

We have a secure web-based information system, ExpanSIS. This system allows us to build shared rosters and share student information/grades within the consortium in a secure manner.

Collaborative programs - sharing of programs/students in high cost, low enrollment programs among colleges.

Workforce education; non-credit courses.

We offer a couple of strategic consulting services for campus leadership teams to help build their institutional capabilities in online learning and help them with strategic positioning and planning for online learning as part of the overall institutional mission. We also operate a technical help desk for the learning management system. We provide professional development for anyone involved in support faculty who teach online and faculty and staff who provide support to online students. We promote research and innovation through an annual grant funding process and through funded research projects. Finally, we facilitate and support communities of practice across the system for faculty and staff with similar roles and interests.

Campus and online graduation ceremony.

The consortium provides a communication venue through meetings and a listserv.

We are working on an Inclusive Access Initiative for all consortium colleges for all course formats to give students the best possible pricing for all digital textbooks and content.

An OER referatory; a repository for online best practices and guidelines; an inter-institutional collaboration in teacher education; various projects in collaboration with Quality Matters.

Compliance; faculty development.

Joint career development opportunities, cross institutional summer undergraduate research, shared library collection and purchasing. There is a "Deeper Collaborations" document on the Association for Collaborative Leadership website detailing what various consortia provide including SEPCHE.

Shared educational technology applications and services: acquisition and collaborative governance. Supporting province-wide SSO implementation through Canadian Access Federation (CAF).

Will likely not be offering any additional services.

Qualitative Response Questions

Question: Please describe how the set of services that you offered have changed over the last 3 years and how you think they will change over the next 3 years. (Question 7)

Open-Ended Responses

Depending upon state and institutional desires - may provide assistance in shared courses and degree program advancement. Leveraged purchasing.

There has been an increase in the retirements of graduate nursing faculty, and an increase in turn-over in our Campus Staff Coordinators, Campus Faculty Coordinators, and in key campus administrators. We are looking at ways to continually orient the new faculty/staff about our consortium.

The VCT course-sharing system has declined over time and due to more robust online programs at member colleges. Still important, but less prevalent. In the past, state licenses were provided for several products/services, but several years ago became unsustainable due to budget cuts. In the next three years I see us expanding our mission by continuing to provide a still important course sharing program, while focusing more on VCT's three initiatives: Accessibility, Support, Quality.

No significant changes.

Some of our services are being considered for cloud-based solutions.

'Consortium name' was in its infancy three years ago. While the mission was clear, there were major road blocks that needed to be cleared, technology to be vetted, and proofs of concepts and prototypes to be created. In the last three years, 'consortium name' has created those proofs and prototypes while modifying designs and workflows based on direct feedback from our Members, which has informed our roadmap.

'Consortium name' vendor partners have grown from one to nearly two dozen agreements delivering platforms, services, and content. 'Consortium name' has acquired eText technology which allows digital content to be delivered on a consistent platform across institutions. 'Consortium name' is hard at work continuing to grow the partner base to include teaching and learning technology. We are adding vendors who are serious about delivering high-quality software and behavioral data back to our Members. In the next six months, 'consortium name' UDP will be officially released to our Member Institutions. Over the next three years, we will be building on the early planning and testing. 'Consortium name', which often seemed quiet on the outside, will be delivering products/services at a much more rapid rate and will, in turn, see rapid growth in the Membership and subscriber base.

They haven't.

More centralization of idea sharing.

No major change planned.

The services have grown and more colleges are adopting them at a fast rate. The consortium itself is centered around exchanging students; however, the entire system shares in the resources at reduced costs if they are not participating in the exchange.

This varies in parts of the agency. Some agency units (primarily basic education for adults) continue to develop and disseminate hybrid, flipped classroom eLearning curriculum using grants from philanthropic organizations. eLearning is moving away from this type of activity in the OER and eLearning areas. We are currently researching ed tech management solutions and how the system office might add value to this in the system, researching alternative styles of procurement, researching how a workforce/professional technical platform might be a different thing than our traditional platform (LMS, video, webinar) for eLearning. We are also looking at how to support OER use in professional technical areas. Finally, we're moving rapidly toward implementing a system-wide micro-credentialing platform. Additionally, we've taken over responsibility for accessible technology initiatives.

As a System, we are trying to leverage resources by providing opt-in solutions. In other words, we have negotiated master agreements so universities can opt-in and tailor those to meet their needs.

Increases in master enabling agreements for campuses with system to buy services effectively, efficiently, and affordably

We will have a new system President next year, so priorities may change.

Our board of directors offers mini-grants to programs (application process) as a part of an instructional enhancement initiative. Funds are earmarked for course improvements as a part of this larger scale quality improvement initiative.

Because 'consortium name' community colleges are offering more online courses/programs, the need for sharing online courses is in less demand - however, the need for the 'consortium name' structure and agreement services in collaborative programs is increasing.

The 'consortium name' is coordinated by the Board. Over the last three years we have seen a decline in the volume of shared student enrollments but an increase in shared resources, services, and ideas. We have modified our funding formula to incentive the sharing of students since many colleges can no support their own enrollments.

In the past three years, we are doing less direct faculty training and more train-the trainer/ resources development for faculty teaching online. We have also increased our student service offerings and established strategic consulting services for campus leadership teams.

More focus on student integrity issues - trying to stay in front of concerns.

Part of our function is to serve the academic vice presidents for the community college system. Their requests of us have been minimized over the past three-to-five years. I'm not certain their need for us will change in the next three years.

Most of our services have remained constant, but this past two years the 'consortium name' lead the transition to a new LMS and increased all faculty and student service training initiatives as well as migrated all courses and worked on new services to ensure student success.

We began as a centralized way to explore online learning resources, including LMS hosting, tools training, and instructional design and then shifted to direct service to each institution. Over time, we have moved to more collaborative solutions like online tutoring, academic call center, and have run broader programs, like an adult education high school program and a statewide professional development program. We a strong opportunity to expand the call center service to include more enrollment support as well as deeper retention services. We hope to launch a Design House to rapidly develop full programs across the system in online and hybrid formats.

'Consortium name' has evolved from focusing on student recruitment and intake to providing services to its member institutions in these three areas pertinent to online education: Expertise, Networking, and Advocacy.

More collaboration and coordination.

We've largely focused on academic collaborations; over time, we've increasingly explored administrative collaborations.

We expect to grow all of our services in three primary areas: open and collaborative practices; shared and collaborative services; applied research and innovation support through funding and knowledge dissemination

Basic services and operations remain the same. What changes tends to be areas of focus to aid member colleges. Over the last few years, we've begun a focus on data and OER. Leadership development may be an additional focus over the next few years.

Question: Please briefly describe any other significant collaborations in which your consortium is involved, such as partnerships within your state/province or partnerships with other consortia.
(Question 8)

Open-Ended Responses

Collaborations with K12 system in providing support services for high school students interested in PSE.

We have had a collaboration with the 'consortium name' consortium through which four schools of nursing joined 'consortium name', specifically to share courses with geriatric content. 'Consortium name' changed its funding focus, which impacted some of the programs that joined 'consortium name' through the collaboration with the 'consortium name' geriatrics group. We have retained half of those who joined through that collaboration.

Oversight of the 'consortium name,' strong relationship and cooperation/collaboration with Texas Distance Learning Association and US Distance Learning Association and other regional in-state consortia, and national organizations.

None.

More work with our K-12 partners.

'Consortium name' has a strong and innovative partnership with Instructure, centered on data capabilities and standards. 'Consortium name' is also active in signing agreements with other technology vendors who are early stage proponents of learning with data. Other significant partnerships include: Barnes & Noble, LoudCloud, Top Hat, OpenEdX, and major publishers like Pearson, Cengage, McGraw Hill and Macmillan.

We are working with the Colorado Distance Learning Association.

Our System offices manage the SARA process.

From an eLearning-only perspective, we have not done this, though we are currently exploring interstate organization of accessibility testing and information sharing and we are beginning to investigate the possibility of inter-state procurement networking. The VERY beginning.

I am not aware of any at this time.

Significant national and national consortium partnerships for free and open educational resources.

'Consortium name' participated in the Colorado's OER Council.

N/A.

We are a consortium of 15 community colleges. We partner with Universities and business to over courses and training to their students/employees.

'Consortium name' open textbook initiative is in partnership with BCcampus.

We are working with the Carnegie Foundation's Math Pathways program to help bring remedial math courses online. We are working with the Jobs for the Future 'consortium name' Student Success Center to connect online student services with other student success initiatives at both the System and Campus level.

Coordinate with campus-based programs.

'Consortium name' is working with the Wyoming Dept of Ed, the University of Wyoming and other entities to provide an annual professional development conference. 'Consortium name' members are also involved in a statewide effort to promote and use a single learning management system.

The 'consortium name' also works with other state community college to negotiate pricing on products such as tutoring, plagiarism detection, digital content, communication and more.

We run a national collaboration for online tutoring which includes other states, systems, and provinces. Within our home state, we run a statewide adult education high school program and a statewide workforce development program as well as our system, state, and regional role in support OER adoption.

Through the years, 'consortium name' has had three significant collaborations with the State of Maryland, and currently is working on a collaborative project with the University System of MD's Kirwan Center for Academic Innovation. 'Consortium name' most significant partnership is with the now-national Quality Matters organization, which it created through a FIPSE grant.

Great Plains IDEA;

We communicate regularly with other consortia in PA and beyond on topics of shared coursework, shared administrative functions through the Association for Collaborative Leadership.

We have just purchase a three-year license that provides access to LinkedIn's Lynda.com service for all students, faculty and staff at 45 public universities and colleges in Ontario.

We collaborate with NILRC, www.nilrc.org, looking for areas for partnership and awareness between the memberships.

Question: Some leaders have reported having trouble articulating and demonstrating the value of their consortium. How would you describe the main value provided by the consortium you lead? (Question 9)

Open-Ended Responses

Perceived value changes with each year and emphasis on different needs and initiatives and the level of our involvement.

We have created a student friendly consortium that has enabled doctoral students to: take courses from internationally known experts: get back on track in their programs of study; and facilitated the completion of their degrees without delay. Student survey feedback confirms these advantages of NEXus. In addition, we have helped our members fill the number of needed enrollments so they don't have to cancel courses, and provided needed courses so the members haven't had to hire additional faculty.

There is a great disparity in funding across all 50 community colleges in Texas. 'Consortium name' provides a way to level the playing field by helping provide products/services to all college that might otherwise be unattainable for many colleges due to costs.

Provides scalable, quality services leading to access and affordability. Scaling across the university system means seats are ALWAYS available in general education courses. Students are never told "all courses are filled - try again next semester." Collaboration on degree programs avoids duplication of effort and good stewardship of resources. It also means degree programs are available at institutions that would not otherwise be able to fund the program.

Increased purchasing power, greater efficiencies and better data as everyone is on the same system.

The problems 'consortium name' was created to solve are those which single institutions could not solve individually—at least not without tremendous capital burdens. 'Consortium name' was founded so that each Member Institution can contribute to solutions without shouldering heavy burdens while likeminded institutions spin their wheels in parallel.

'Consortium name' members have face-to-face and online access to a professional educational community that specializes in educational technology, instructional design and online learning in the Rocky Mountain region. Members connect with a trusted group of professional colleagues who can assist with a particular eLearning problem or need. In addition, the 'consortium name' provides opportunities for engagement with emergent technologies, pedagogies and the development of new skills.

Idea and resource sharing.

Enabling underserved in 600 small, rural, remote, Indigenous and Francophone communities in Ontario to access post-secondary education and training without having to leave their communities.

The value is the cost savings for resources purchased at scale. Also, collaboration regarding program and course design and development, as well as in professional development. The consortium makes some decisions for the system even though only those involved in the exchange are in the consortium. We are currently accepting applications for colleges who want to participate and have had a good response.

The primary value of the consortium is our ability to assemble large and active communities of practice around eLearning, accessibility and OER; another important value is economic – we create equity between larger and smaller colleges in our diverse system by using consortial 'buying power' around core eLearning technologies; finally, we have demonstrated the ability to drive conversation on emergent technologies and help the system understand and begin to plan for the impact of these technologies on their curriculum.

The CEP serves a purpose for the students. We have purposely kept it contained since many of the processes are somewhat manual.

Annual reports on institutional efficiencies. In academic affairs, we report on annual cost savings and cost avoidances through systemwide procurement and service delivery.

Delivering high quality online courses to students systemwide. Centrally managing the LMS, 24x7 help desk, and other shared services.

Collaboration (faculty, courses, etc.) allows us to do more with fewer resources. We give students access to top faculty across our institutions within a single program.

The community colleges in the state of Michigan are locally run - there is no state system or agency that provides oversight. Regarding online education - the 'consortium name' main value to colleges and their students is focused on assisting the colleges on increasing access and success.

Our consortium provides cost savings in the purchasing of services including our LMS. All services purchased are available for all students at the community colleges. Contracts are handled by one office. Colleges are able to share ideas, students and resources.

'Consortium name' facilitates student mobility, access to education, and coordinates collaborative system-level initiatives.

Our institutions tell us the greatest value we bring is in savings due to university-wide contracts, strategic consulting services, research basis for standards/models/best practices we establish at the system level that also drive our professional development activities. We also offer a comprehensive set of services for campuses to opt into based on their own institutional capabilities and priorities.

Program access to time strapped students.

Our main value is found in the shared listing of distance courses offered by member institutions. Beyond that, we are a self-support group for our individual members.

The 'consortium name' provides guidance and assistance for the colleges in the areas of student retention, success and provides tools for early alerts, tutoring and proctoring. In addition, we provide continued professional development throughout the year for faculty and student services. We also do all of the term and course management in our LMS, which includes enrolling instructors in their courses before the term starts. We provide project management and support for the enrollment services connecting the colleges SIS systems with our common LMS. Data analysis and reporting are also among many of the services we provide the consortium colleges for every term.

Through the consortium, students can enroll in courses that may not be offered by their home institution in the desired semester or are offered but are closed for enrollment. For host institutions, making online courses available to consortium students creates an opportunity fill seats that may have otherwise remained empty.

We are an incubator for new innovations, foster collaboration between institutions, and provide services that fill in institutional gaps.

Through its own offerings and those of Quality Matters, 'consortium name' offers its members leading-edge professional development for online education practitioners. 'Consortium name' also provides state and national advocacy for online education and facilitates networked services and projects among its members.

Cost efficiencies, shared services and collaborative programs.

Consistency and system level improvement for Student Success.

Our members collaborate to improve teaching and learning and to provide unique, shared learning experiences that no single member can provide.

We provide thought leadership, and model new and innovative services and practices that benefit our member institutions.

The main value is collaboration and sharing. Members benefit from the shared experience and knowledge of their peers. Secondly, member institutions who share courses value the additional offerings to assist in retention and completion.

Question: Please describe opportunities or initiatives that you and your consortium members are planning to pursue in the next few years. (Question 14)

Open-Ended Responses

AI and web-based services.

Regional partnerships across the 'consortium name' to expand professional development opportunities for faculty, staff, and administrators.

We have opened a pilot project to enroll Master's students in NEXus courses and to enroll Dental Hygiene doctoral students in applicable NEXus courses.

VCT's three initiatives (Accessibility, Support, & Quality) can continue to grow and be vital to our member colleges. Currently providing captioning services, but expansion into other accessibility areas to assist colleges with compliance issues. Continued membership to SAN to address state authorization. Consortial agreements with service companies like Upswing (online tutoring & student services platform), Ilos (video capture platform) to provide access to these and other products/services to all colleges at reduced rates. Continue expansion of TxQMC to provide Quality Matters reviews, services, and training to all interested institutions at discounted rates. Member institutions have requested a repository in which to share various items such as OER materials & processes/procedures, professional development, other student services, etc.

Continued growth and expansion. Emphasis on student outcomes and affordability. Currently exploring adaptive learning as a strategy for more personalized learning. Increasing integration of learning

management and data systems may provide opportunities for improved Client Relationship Management CRM systems.

Regional work on student success initiatives.

In the next few years, 'consortium name' plans to increase adoption of an inclusive access model for digital content. 'Consortium name' will also realize implementation of the 'consortium name' Data Platform, which increasingly yields data used in academic research at universities. The coming years will also see growth in our vendor's ecosystem, growth in our membership, and growth in our institution's ability to promote and successfully create, share and discover open and institution-generated content.

External grants.

Shared data and research strategies for decision making, increased state-wide participation in the exchange, more courses reviewed, more teachers, trained, higher success rates.

We are not a consortium in the sense that we do eLearning specific strategic planning. Rather, we respond to other planning initiatives at the college and system level, specifically the strategic technology plan for the system. That document sets the tone and creates a reference point for our activities. To be clear, we're a system office that manages a loosely federated group of colleges with roughly the same values and goals; we are driven by policy and state goals for student success, not bylaws or a strict governance structure. The governance structure that applies here applies generally to the college system -- eLearning is responsive to elements of larger instructional, student service and business system workplans, which are in turn driven by the agenda of the presidents of the colleges (and their local boards), the legislature and the governor-appointed State Board.

We are looking to outsource the Course Exchange Program.

Graduation Initiative, Degree Completion, Online Education, Affordable Learning Solutions, Basic Needs, Workforce Development, Eliminating the Achievement Gaps, and more....

OER, Learning Object Repository, Predictive Analytics.

N/A.

Looking at more collaborative program offerings and certifications - focused on adult (post traditional) students.

The consortium is focused on a new funding formula and model for sharing students. We are focusing on quality instructional design and implementing quality matters at the 15 colleges.

We are interested in collaborations with other consortia around data standards, OERs, and student success.

Additional marketing to focused segments.

Continued support for ongoing projects. Nothing new on the horizon.

Our current initiative is centered around Inclusive Access for our students for eTexts and Digital content. We are also working on course quality and master course development.

A centralized Design House for course and program development, course/seat exchange, expanded faculty development, business/community program partnerships designed to increase enrollment, and expansion of academic call center initiatives.

'Consortium name' will increase its professional development offerings in a variety of topics, from CBE to data analytics, and to focus significantly on OER, which are of interest to all our member schools. 'Consortium name' also will provide new repository and data collection services, facilitate inter-institutional program collaborations, and further grow its leadership institute for emerging leaders in online learning. Its stewardship of Quality Matters is an ongoing responsibility for 'consortium name'; QM's successes and challenges to some extent are shared by the 'consortium name' consortium.

Coordinated lead nurturing; stackable certificates.

Course Quality Faculty Development Micro-credentialing.

shared academic offerings- F2F, online and hybrid shared professional development related to compliance.

Open at scale initiative Z-cred Experiential learning management platforms VR/AR platforms Increased research and innovation support.

Question: What information, services, and data could WCET's consortia group provide you to help you better serve your members? (Question 15)

Open-Ended Responses

Needs assessments that identify the professional development needs of your members.

Any data on interesting projects consortia are undertaking, especially in terms of revenue generating will be helpful. WCET can play an important role in collecting and sharing data so there is an exchange of ideas and information.

I believe having the capability/opportunity to learn from each other will be extremely valuable to systems. Surveys and results regarding any type of system-wide implementation (LMS, SIS, Tutoring, etc.) will be exceptionally useful. The networking might be the most important of all. Just having someone to discuss things with who can understand a particular situation involving a number of institutions, or several people that you can ask for some advice on an issue will be a huge benefit.

Opportunities for further sharing and exploration of consortia models. Information on multi institutional systems integration and or data sharing. Models for multi-institutional evaluation of programs. Information on models for accreditation compliance. Information on consortia approaches to competency-based education.

Data on student success across the consortia.

We don't rely on WCET for information, services or data.

Continue to monitor, advocate, report, and clarify Federal policies. Continue to share effective practice strategies, particularly around equity in closing the gap.

We believe that mechanisms for sharing information -- about accessibility, about technology effectiveness, about procurement and about the impact of federal policies and probably others I can't think of -- are what gives WCET membership its primary value for system level discussion. We especially appreciate the policy work around educational policy, state authorization and hopefully accessibility in the future that only an organization like WCET and its members can accomplish.

N/A.

Continue keeping us up to date on ed-tech and best practices in distance ed. These are very valuable resources to us.

What models are other consortium following? Are they lead by a governing or coordinating board.

Continued opportunities to learn and share. Opportunity to collaborate with you on development or impacting national data standards for online learning and OER.

Keeping us informed about changing federal changes, e.g., Governor's State.

None, thanks.

Continued connections with other consortia and online programs. Updates on new technology and trends in higher ed for online learning.

Individual institution needs and perceptions on collaborative services - what do they need from our consortia. Alternative credentialing from the student perspective - what works and doesn't. Exploration of how consortia can partner or exchange services for the betterment of all.

Keep up the great work WCET is doing in (1) consortia, sharing best practices among consortia as you have been doing; on (2) keeping members abreast of developments on the federal front; and (3) leadership and information sharing in OER.

National benchmarking data; effective practices.

Not sure.

Reference data. Benchmarks.



WCET – the WICHE Cooperative for Educational Technologies - is the leader in the practice, policy, & advocacy of technology-enhanced learning in higher education. WCET is a national, member-driven, non-profit which brings together colleges and universities, higher education organizations and companies to collectively improve the quality and reach of technology-enhanced learning programs. The Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE), WCET's parent organization, serves states, students, and institutions throughout and beyond the American West, and is one of four U.S. regional interstate compacts. Learn more: <http://wcet.wiche.edu>