



Message From the Chair and Executive Director



OntarioLearn.com ranks as one of the largest providers of online course development and delivery in North America. Yet, as we have come to realize, it is likely one of the best kept secrets. With this inaugural annual report, we are sharing the story of our significant achievements in distance education as experienced by tens of thousands of learners—including traditionally underserved communities in rural areas.

Started in 1995, OntarioLearn.com is a consortium that consists of 22 Ontario community colleges servicing the rapidly growing market for online education with a unique and cost-effective curriculum-sharing delivery model. We are governed by an Executive Committee, a Board of Directors with a representative from each member college and several Regional Committees.

Over the years, we have seen a rapid growth in registrations which in 1995 numbered 750 and in 2010 approached 65,000. It is our belief that population growth through immigration, a larger number of high school graduates applying for limited on-campus spaces in post-secondary institutions, a preference for the flexibility that online learning offers and high unemployment numbers are just some of the factors contributing to the rise in interest in online education.



Mission Statement OntarioLearn.com is a consortium of 22 colleges devoted to the development and delivery of high quality, accessible, online learning opportunities.

Vision Statement OntarioLearn.com will be the national leader in college-based online education. This leadership will be ensured by maintaining the highest standards of curriculum design and delivery, leveraging our award-winning cooperative model, and pursuing ever-expanding markets.

The good news for Ontario learners is that OntarioLearn.com has kept pace with their needs. We offer choice without boundaries. Our business model enables students to register at one college in an online course developed and taught by another college. By pooling registrations this way, we make it more feasible to develop and offer courses in an economical manner. OntarioLearn.com now offers over 1,300 courses. Our expanded course inventory means greater opportunity for many, including laid-off workers who can retrain and get back into the workforce with new skills.

This past year, we worked diligently toward our vision of being a national leader in college-based online education. We made improvements to our systems' infrastructure which included changes to our e-portal to streamline logon procedures that will reduce help desk calls and simplify online access for students and faculty. We formally documented our operational procedures, initiated a faculty training project and refocused our strategic plan for the next three years. We also hired a Quality Assurance/Quality Control Specialist who joins a team that includes an Administrator, Administrative Assistant and Executive Director. True to the nature of the online world, these individuals work "at a distance" as a physical office does not exist.

As we move into the 2010-2011 school year, we are focusing on providing faculty with the tools and "best practice" guidelines that will continue to make our course offerings the best in the industry. With annual growth rates in excess of 15% over the last few years, we strongly believe that OntarioLearn.com has proven to be an economically viable solution to the province's goal of increasing the number of students in post-secondary education. Please read on to learn more about who we are and what we do.

Chairperson
Kim Walker

Executive Director
Alan Brady

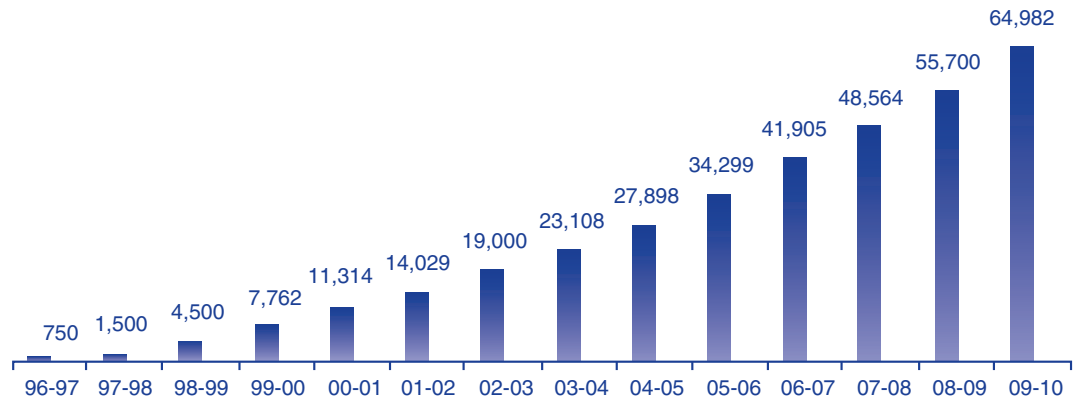


Our Growth and Strengths by the Numbers

Enrolment

OntarioLearn.com has seen consistent growth and enrolment since 1995. At March 2010, total enrolment for the 2009/10 fiscal year was 64,982. While enrolment varies by college, this nonetheless represents a 16.7% increase over the previous fiscal year.

OntarioLearn.com Enrolment Trends



“When I first signed up for online courses, I was not sure what to expect. I was relieved to find that it was the perfect way to pursue higher education while giving me flexibility to work and spend time with my family. I wanted to improve my knowledge and understanding of the healthcare profession. I have since completed the Nursing Unit Clerk certificate through OntarioLearn.com’s online program and

am continuing with courses related to the RPN program. I was pleased and thankful for the support I received both online and locally throughout the duration of the program. Going back to school was a huge decision and having training available within our community was great. Thanks to OntarioLearn.com and Canadore College for making this possible.”

Enrolment Activity by College 2008/09 – 2009/10

	2008/2009	2009/2010	Enrolment	% Growth from
College	Enrolment Activity	Enrolment Activity	Variance	Previous Year
Algonquin	6,461	7,114	653	10.1
Cambrian	850	865	15	1.8
Canadore	516	875	359	69.6
Centennial	3,185	3,000	-185	-5.8
Conestoga	2,843	3,436	593	20.9
Confederation	1,426	1,672	246	17.3
Durham	5,953	6,902	949	15.9
Fanshawe	1,636	2,085	449	27.4
Fleming	1,031	1,499	468	45.4
Georgian	616	1,108	492	79.9
George Brown	1,028	1,505	477	46.4
Humber	1,643	1,746	103	6.3
Lambton	1,578	2,088	510	32.3
Loyalist	3,952	4,518	566	14.3
Mohawk	6,997	7,953	956	13.7
Niagara	3,190	3,859	669	21.0
Northern	184	294	110	59.8
Sault	760	744	-16	-2.1
Seneca	6,711	7,768	1,057	15.8
Sheridan	3,678	4,075	397	10.8
St. Clair	223	273	50	22.4
St. Lawrence	1,239	1,603	364	29.4
Total	55,700	64,982	9,282	16.7

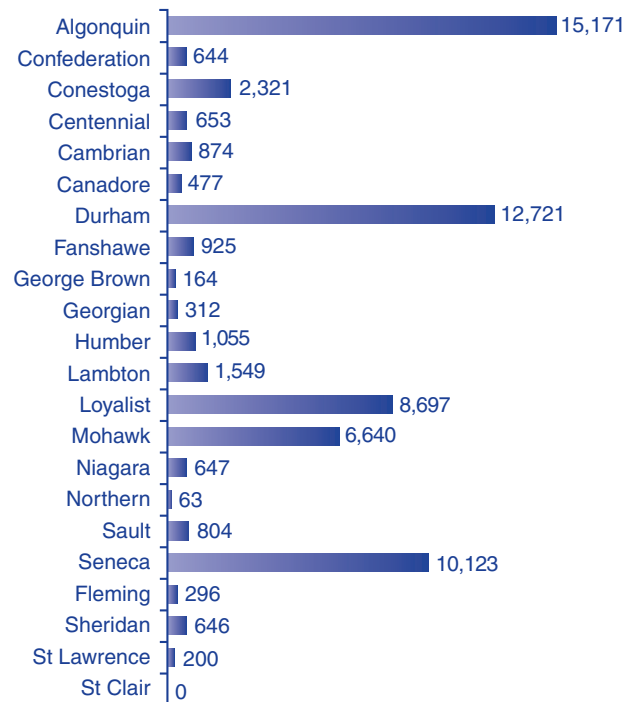


Hosting Activity and Financial Process

Host College Activity

Under our model, the Host College is defined as the college that designs, develops and delivers the course, and provides the students' final grades. The variance in hosting activity from one college to another is attributable to a confluence of factors which may include available financial and human resources and timing. However, because of OntarioLearn.com's collaborative model, our students have greater options and access, both of which allow them to take the course of their choice, typically, at the school of their choice.

OntarioLearn.com Hosting Activity 2009/10 Registrations per College



“OntarioLearn.com is an avenue of learning I will certainly consider in my future education endeavours.”

Monthly Intake Activity

Over the last few years, OntarioLearn.com’s online students have demanded more flexible intakes to start courses when they want, without the restriction of registering only at the start of a new semester. This demand has been driven in part by the economic downturn which forced many out of the workforce and pressured them to quickly investigate their retraining options. OntarioLearn.com has responded to this demand and as of March 2010 there were 13,466 monthly-intake enrolments reported for 2009/10. This translates to an 8.2% increase in monthly-intake activity over the previous year and accounts for 20.7% of the overall 2009/10 OntarioLearn.com enrolment activity.

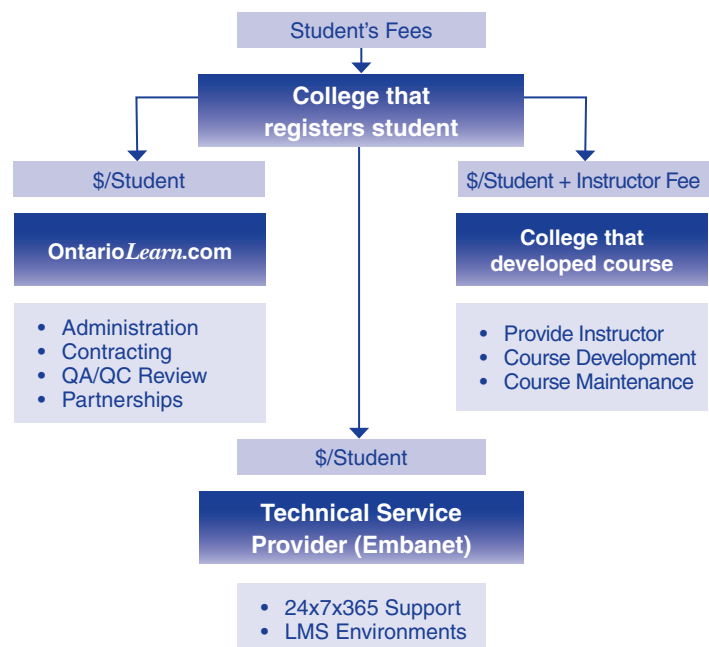
Financial Process

The OntarioLearn.com consortium has developed a financial model that allows student fees to be distributed among our various stakeholders. Fees are collected by the registering college and on a per student basis, portions are allocated for administration, instructor fees, course maintenance, hosting and help desk support. The diagram below demonstrates the process which has been automated.

OntarioLearn.com Monthly Intake Enrolment by Semester

Semester	2007/08 Enrol.	2008/09 Enrol.	2009/10 Enrol.	Enrol. Variance from Previous Year	% Growth from Previous Year
Spring	2,755	4,268	5,635	1,367	32.1%
Fall	2,718	4,179	4,218	39	0.9%
Winter	2,550	3,996	3,613	-383	-9.6%
Total	8,023	12,443	13,466	1,023	8.2%

Financial Process Schematic





Program Diversity and Success Rates

Available Program Areas

Many of the OntarioLearn.com partner colleges have designed certificate and diploma programs consisting of courses offered through the consortium. Each college determines the requirements for its program. Some of the certificates/diplomas are comprised entirely of courses available online through OntarioLearn.com while others may also require courses offered outside the consortium.

These program areas demonstrate the diversity of offerings available through OntarioLearn.com.

Academic and Career Entrance Program	Educational Assistant	Military Arts and Science
Accounting	General Interest	Ontario Management Development Program (OMDP)
Apprenticeship	Health Sciences	Police Foundations
Business	Home Inspection	Sciences
Business Writing	Hospitality/Travel & Tourism	Security
College Preparation	Human Resources	Social Sciences
Communications & Languages	Justice	Sports/Leisure & Recreation
Computer Programming	Legal/Office Administration	Teacher Training
Computer Software Applications	Library & Information Studies	Teacher Training for Online
Corrections	Management	Technology
Creative Writing/Literature	Marketing	Trades
Early Childhood Education	Mathematics	

“Taking this course has been a very convenient and enjoyable experience. I will definitely recommend these courses to my co-workers and friends. I also plan on taking more courses myself. Had these courses not been offered online, I am sure that I would not have had the opportunity to take them. Thank you OntarioLearn.com and Fanshawe!”

Success Rates

The success rate for online education through OntarioLearn.com has exceeded 70% for the last seven years. Using a 50% pass, the overall success rate during 2009 was 73.7%. The success rate increases to 84.2% when adjustments are made to factor in attrition. The retention rate for 2009 was 87.6%. It is worth noting that the average success rate for classroom instruction across the community colleges in Ontario is 65%*.

Success rate is defined as the % of students who achieved a final grade of 50% or higher (or a pass)

Attrition rate is defined as the % of students who did not complete the course and were assigned a grade of zero

Retention rate is defined as the % of students who were assigned a final grade

OntarioLearn.com Success Rate for 2003 - 2010

	2003 (%)	2004 (%)	2005 (%)	2006 (%)	2007 (%)	2008 (%)	2009 (%)	2010 (%)
Success Rate	71.0	71.8	72.7	73.2	74.1	73.8	73.7	76.5
Attrition Rate	15.1	14.9	14.3	13.7	13.0	12.7	12.4	11
Retention Rate	84.9	85.1	85.7	86.3	87.0	87.3	87.6	89



*Source: Colleges Ontario



Quantity and Quality in Course Inventory

Course Development & Offerings

One of the cornerstones of OntarioLearn.com's operation is the course development process. To maximize efficiencies, only one course covering one set of learning outcomes is allowed. This no-duplicate policy is maintained through a course claim process. Any college may enter a claim proposing a new course by providing the appropriate detail in a course outline. All other colleges have an opportunity to challenge this claim should they feel one of their existing courses already addresses the identical learning outcomes. Disputes are handled by the Executive Committee and an independent arbitrator who evaluates the competing courses. A college that is successful in submitting a claim will have one year to develop the course. If that college cannot deliver the course in that time frame, other colleges are free to pursue it following a similar process.

As of February 2010, there were 1,103 courses available to be offered each semester. Some courses in the course inventory are only offered at specific times during the year. During the final semester of 2009/10 more than 925 course subjects were available to partner colleges to include in their Winter 2010 offerings. When additional monthly intake offerings were considered, this number rose to 1,363 courses.

OntarioLearn.com Course Inventory	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
# of Available Courses	571	706	846	920	989	1,096	1,103

“This was my first OntarioLearn.com course and it definitely was one that I thoroughly enjoyed. It was convenient and suited my needs. I also liked the time frame of the course and the modules; they allowed me to make time and do the work at my own pace. Thank you to everyone involved.”

Course Quality Review

OntarioLearn.com’s quality standards are built on our members’ collective commitment to providing our students with a positive learning environment that ensures their academic success and satisfaction. Course quality is measured using two assessment tools. The first is a comprehensive student feedback questionnaire that measures the overall effectiveness of course content, instruction and students’ general perceptions of quality. OntarioLearn.com also administers a Course Standards Checklist designed to measure overall course design and student usability. The checklist is used to evaluate all new courses and reassesses those courses that fall below the expected student satisfaction levels. Member colleges are accountable for the overall quality of the course content, copyright and instructor recruitment, training and evaluation.

OntarioLearn.com’s Quality Assurance/Quality Control Specialist is responsible for conducting course reviews and providing the college under review with a summary of the checklist results and a findings report that summarizes what was observed and provides a recommended course of action. Colleges are expected to act on the changes and/or provide a rationale for the existing design decision by the end of the semester after which the review was conducted. If the changes are not made in a timely fashion, the college risks having the course removed from the OntarioLearn.com inventory.

Janis Miller, MA. Ed., Quality Assurance/ Quality Control Specialist



The quality of OntarioLearn.com’s courses has always been critical to our success. To ensure that only the best measures are in place to uphold these standards, the roles and responsibilities of the Quality

Assurance/Quality Control Specialist were redefined in early 2009. Janis Miller was hired into the position in June 2009 after completing a 35-year career at Humber College. She retired from the role of Dean of Corporate & Continuing Education where she specialized in adult learning strategies for part-time studies and workforce training. During our course review process, Janis compiled many “Best Practices” as they relate to online course design. She is spearheading a project to make these examples and general online design principles available to the entire OntarioLearn.com faculty.



Partnerships Innovate and Motivate

Partner Colleges

OntarioLearn.com's 22 member colleges continually demonstrate that much is possible when they work together for a common purpose. They have embraced the mandate of this unique consortium to share the development, expenses and delivery of online courses. Collaboratively, they have devised and implemented strategies to improve access to education that meet the rising and diverse needs for higher learning of Ontarians living in urban centres and rural communities alike.

Diploma in Military Arts and Science

This diploma was developed through an innovative partnership between OntarioLearn.com (Algonquin College consortium member), the Royal Military College, and the Canadian Defence Academy. It is intended specifically for, but not limited to, non-commissioned members (NCMs) of the Canadian Forces. Graduates have the potential for advanced standing in the Bachelor of Military Arts and Science program offered at the Royal Military College.

Academic and Career Entrance Program (ACE)

The ACE/OntarioLearn.com partnership began in 2008 and enables individuals to complete many grade 10 – 12 subjects through online education. Unemployed due to the economic downturn, and restricted from retraining opportunities due to their lack of a secondary school education, many individuals with families have had to find part-time jobs to make ends meet. Returning to school full-time to retrain is unaffordable.

Award for Excellence and Innovation in Partnership/Collaboration
In 2004, OntarioLearn.com was honoured by the Canadian Network for Innovation in Education (CNIE) for the innovation the consortium has shown in working together in a collaborative model to build OntarioLearn.com. This award

is presented to a project that is relevant and contributes to the support of open and distance education within both the K-12 and the post-secondary sectors. The purpose is to award a project that has demonstrated best practices and innovation in partnership collaboration.

Leveraging our existing IT infrastructure and administrative strengths, OntarioLearn.com has made a significant contribution to the program's success, and in 2009/10 recorded 2,076 enrolments in ACE courses alone. Working with the College Sector Committee for Adult Upgrading (CSC) – providers of the ACE program – OntarioLearn.com also continued to support CSC's "Learn to Learn" intake module which helps determine if individuals have the necessary personal, computer and academic skills to successfully participate in ACE distance courses.



World-class Systems and Support with Embanet

OntarioLearn.com has engaged Embanet to supply data hosting and help desk support services to the consortium. Located in Markham, Ontario, Embanet operates a world-class data centre with a state-of-the-art network infrastructure to ensure that the appropriate bandwidth is available to support our needs. The data centre includes alternative power generators, disaster planning procedures and an off-site data centre where operations can be relocated in the case of a local emergency.

Embanet supports five Learning Management Systems (LMS) including Angel, Blackboard 7.3, Blackboard CE8, FirstClass and Moodle. These high performing, reliable systems enhance and support online instruction to the point that Embanet can guarantee high uptimes and ensure customer satisfaction. Embanet also provides version migration services using these products, and operates a help desk that answers calls from both faculty and students 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Embanet has supported the explosive growth of OntarioLearn.com over the last 11 years, consistently adjusting its infrastructure to match our demand. As we enter into another five-year contract, service level agreements with significant penalties have been put in place to ensure our high standards are maintained and new CRM tools will provide enhanced monthly reporting.

In addition to supporting our operational needs, the staff at Embanet have significant experience with online course design and delivery. They have proven to be excellent partners when it comes to special projects that require rapid design and development of new initiatives.

embanet
Grow Students. Grow Reputation. Grow Online.



Strategic Initiatives for the Future

The three-year strategic plan, approved by OntarioLearn.com's Board of Directors in November 2009, identifies the following key initiatives:

- Evaluate current faculty training resources with the aim of creating online courses that can showcase best practices and the application of tools like Adobe's Buzzwords and Connect, designed for online word processing and web conferencing respectively.
- Provide resources for faculty and students to prepare for the online learning environment.
- Review all key systems and procedures to ensure they can cope with the projected growth of enrolment over the next three years.
- Conduct research aimed at determining the profile of our future students and the type of programs that will attract them.
- Create new specifications for any system changes and make recommendations for changes with budget information to the Board including, but not limited to, redevelopment of the OntarioLearn.com grades system and ongoing e-portal enhancements.

In addition, OntarioLearn.com continues to investigate the potential for incorporation. The legal name "OntarioLearn Online Collaborative" has been approved by the Board and draft legal documents and a background document have been created for submission to Colleges Ontario.

Learning Management Systems

OntarioLearn.com currently supports a total of five Learning Management Systems. Several LMS upgrades are scheduled for 2010 for us to continue to guarantee our high uptime. The

Blackboard 9 upgrade will be a major focus during 2010 as it will consolidate the current Blackboard 7.3 and Blackboard CE8 activity. A testing phase is currently in progress.

OntarioLearn.com will also collaborate with others in the development of the Ontario Online Institute initiated by the Government of Ontario.

These initiatives will be vigorously pursued as OntarioLearn.com strives to maintain its position as a relevant and responsive resource for all Ontarians.

Executive Committee

Kim Walker, Chair
Niagara College

Laurie Poirier, Co-Chair
Sault College

Alan Brady, Executive Director

Linda Rees, Treasurer
Algonquin College

Dan Piedra, Regional Representative
Conestoga College

Debbie Petrus, Regional Representative
Northern College

Michael Lefler, Regional Representative
Sheridan College

Judy Morris, Vice President
Academic (VPA) Liaison, Lambton College

Heather Ryan, Administrator

Board Members

Linda Rees
Algonquin College

Linda Renaud
Cambrian College

Tracie Marsh-Fior
Canadore College

Michelle DeCoste
Centennial College

Dan Piedra
Conestoga College

Vince Stilla
Confederation College

Nancy Martin
Durham College

Rosanna Stumpobal
Fanshawe College

Cal Shaw
George Brown College

Janice Priest
Georgian College

Ruth Hickey
Humber College

Donna Church
Lambton College

Judy Morris
Vice President
Academic (VPA) Liaison,
Lambton College

Karen Quinney
Loyalist College

Pat MacDonald
Mohawk College

Kim Walker
Niagara College

Debbie Petrus
Northern College

Laurie Poirier
Sault College

Susan Savoie
Seneca College

Michael Lefler
Sheridan College

Rosemary Newmaster
Fleming College

Ron Seguin
St Clair College

Lynn Walker
St Lawrence College

