-key findings

Across the populations surveyed, a number of key patterns surfaced that underpin the recommendations.

-undergraduate adult students

We collected data from a random sample of undergraduate adult students residing within a 50-mile radius of the University’s campuses in Gorham, Lewiston-Auburn, and Portland, Maine. From these data, we learned the following:

- **Personal Characteristics**
  1. Undergraduate adult students are most often Caucasian females 35 years of age. Most are not married and do not have children under 18 years of age. A slight majority live in the state of Maine. Massachusetts residents live in Newburyport or Salem; and New Hampshire residents live in Merrimack or Nashua. They are employed full time, and typically have a total family income of about $55,000. About 30 percent of undergraduate adult students had already earned a bachelor’s degree or more before they had most recently enrolled in undergraduate study. They most often use personal funds to support their education (57%), followed by student loans (40%), and grants (28%).

- **Motivation**
  2. They are most often motivated to enroll in college in order to change careers (28%), advance in their current career (26%), or enter a first career (16%).

- **Market Share**
  3. Undergraduate adult students study at many different institutions, but most often at (in order of largest to least market share):
     - University of Southern Maine
     - University of Maine at Augusta
     - Kaplan Career Institute
     - Salem State College

  4. Following are the institutions they prefer to study at (in order of largest to least market share):
     - University of Southern Maine
     - Southern New Hampshire University
     - University of New Hampshire-Durham
Details of Previous Institutions
5. The largest proportions, 36 percent and 35 percent respectively, studied at both two- and four-year institutions or four-year institutions only. A comparable 27 percent studied at community colleges or other two-year institutions.

6. The largest proportion—about 55 percent—studied at a two-year institution before attending a four-year institution.

7. Almost 55 percent of the respondents who had attended a two-year college before attending a four-year college enrolled at a four-year college within one year of attending a two-year college. About 30 percent of these respondents accumulated between one and 30 credits before they attended the four-year institution.

Visibility and Rating of Area Institutions
8. Among University of Southern Maine, University of New England, Saint Joseph’s College, Southern Maine Community College, Kaplan University, and University of Phoenix, respondents gave the highest average rating as a place to study to University of Southern Maine and University of New England (3.1 on a 5-point scale). However, University of Phoenix had the greatest visibility, with 77 percent of respondents knowing it well enough to rate.

Learning Patterns
9. Fifty-five percent of the undergraduate adult students we interviewed were studying for a degree (33 percent of whom were enrolled in a degree program while 22 percent were taking individual undergraduate courses for transfer to a bachelor’s degree program). About 95 percent are seeking bachelor’s degrees, while about five percent are seeking associate’s degrees.

10. Among the 45 percent of undergraduate adult students who were not enrolled in a degree program, 20 percent were taking individual courses, 15 percent were taking courses for an occupational/career diploma or certificate (most often in business and health professions), and ten percent were taking courses toward a license in a professional area (most often in health professions).

11. Business commands the greatest share of the degree market, with 33 percent, followed by social sciences, with 20 percent. Together, these two areas comprise about 55 percent of the undergraduate adult student degree market.

12. About 35 percent have enrolled in noncredit or professional development courses, seminars, webinars, or workshops related to their current career or in order to change career in the last five years. These respondents most often studied business at a training company in a classroom, which was paid for by the employer. On a 5-point scale, these respondents gave a 3.8 average rating to describe their satisfaction with their most recent noncredit or professional development study.
Schedule
13. About 75 percent of the undergraduate adult students were most recently enrolled in just one, two, or three courses at a time, while the other approximately 25 percent were taking 4 or more (typically a full-time course load.)

14. The largest proportion of undergraduate adult students—about 65 percent—prefers to study weekday evenings, while about 15 percent prefer to study weekday mornings.

15. About 25 percent of undergraduate adult students prefer courses that are eight weeks, while about 20 percent prefer 15-week or longer courses, and proportions of about 15 percent each prefer ten- or 12-week courses. About 60 percent of the undergraduate adult student market prefers to enroll in accelerated study—courses ranging from eight to 12 weeks.

Study Formats
16. About 60 percent were enrolled in semester-length courses in a classroom during the last term in which they were enrolled. However, 34 percent were enrolled in fully online courses, and proportions of 23 percent each were enrolled either in hybrid courses or accelerated courses of approximately eight weeks in a classroom. Therefore about 60 percent were enrolled in a course that had at least some online component.

17. On a 5-point scale of 1 not at all satisfied to 5 extremely satisfied, respondents gave average ratings between 4.1 and 4.2 to describe their satisfaction with their most recent course format, with hybrid courses achieving the highest average rating of satisfaction.

18. Forty-two percent of respondents most prefer fully online courses, while 36 percent prefer hybrid courses, and 22 percent prefer classroom-based courses.

19. Among respondents who took at least one of their courses in hybrid format, the largest proportion—about 55 percent—would prefer to visit campus once every other week if they were to take another hybrid course. Thirty percent of this pool’s most recent hybrid course utilized video streaming, while about 20 percent utilized social media/networks.

20. Using a 5-point scale of 1 not at all attractive to 5 very attractive, respondents gave a 3.4 average rating to describe their attraction to a low-residency program. Among those who gave a three or higher rating to describe their attraction to a low residency program, 43 percent could attend once per semester, while 41 percent could attend twice per semester. Two-thirds could dedicate either one or two days to visiting the campus of an institution that offered a low residency program, and about three-quarters would be willing to travel less than 50 miles from their home.
College Services

21. The largest proportion of undergraduate adult students frequently used online library and research services.

22. The largest proportions of those who use college services sometimes or frequently prefer to access the given services in person, with the exception of 24/7 technical help, which they prefer be offered online.

Course Costs

23. The largest proportion by far—about 70 percent—would not be willing to pay more for the convenience of enrolling in an online course rather than a classroom-based course.

24. Using a 5-point scale of 1 *not at all important* to 5 *extremely important*, undergraduate adult students responded with an average rating of 3.7 to describe the importance price had on their decision on where to enroll.

25. Undergraduate adult students gave an average rating of 3.3, on a 5-point scale of 1 *not at all important* to 5 *extremely important*, to describe how important the availability of financial aid was in their decision to enroll in a given institution.

26. For 36 percent of respondents, a three-credit course cost of $725 is higher than the cost at their most recent institution, while 35 percent found it lower and 29 percent found it about the same.

27. The optimum revenue-producing price for University of Southern Maine is $725 per course—comparable to a three-credit course at its current tuition of $253 per credit for residents.

28. Slightly more than half—53 percent—paid the full “sticker price” of the cost of courses the last time they were enrolled.

Promotion and Advertising

29. The large majority of undergraduate adult students would be most influenced to enroll at a college because students are able to take any mix of day, evening, weekend, accelerated, and online courses based on what meets their scheduling needs.

30. The largest proportion of undergraduate adult students was most influenced to enroll at the college they most recently attended because of its tuition and fees, with 23 percent, followed by its proximity to their home or work, with 22 percent.

31. The largest proportions of respondents would be more likely to consider University of Southern Maine because USM Online offers over 500 courses year-round that are fully online or a blend of online and on-campus.
32. According to respondents, the best methods to get useful information to a prospective student is via Internet search engines such as Google or Yahoo, followed by direct mail to students at home and Internet-based college search sites.

33. Respondents who told us ads on websites are somewhat likely or likely to attract their attention most often visit Google, Facebook, and Yahoo on a daily basis.

34. Respondents are most likely to participate in or access open houses and faculty/student chats/online open houses of a college in which they were considering enrolling.

35. Email, followed by mail to students at home, are the methods undergraduate adult students deem acceptable for institutions to use when reaching potential students.

36. Eighty-five percent of respondents used the internet in their most recent college search. About 60 percent of all respondents visited college websites as one of many ways of gathering information, while 25 percent only used the Internet to research colleges. About 15 percent did not use the Internet at all during their most recent college search.

37. About 70 percent of respondents made direct contact with the college they eventually enrolled in prior to submitting their application. The largest proportion made contact with the institution by calling, followed by a proportion who visited the institution.

38. About 45 percent of the respondents have Facebook profiles.

39. About 55 percent of respondents have a “smart phone,” such as an iPhone or Blackberry. Using a 5-point scale of 1 not at all likely to 5 very likely, these respondents gave a 3.3 average rating to describe how likely they would be to access the websites of the colleges that interest them on their smart phone.

Location

40. On a 5-point scale of 1 not at all satisfied to 5 extremely satisfied, respondents rated Portland, Maine and Portsmouth, New Hampshire as the most convenient locations for them to take a course. However, given both achieved a 2.3 average rating, neither are viewed as being particularly convenient.

41. The largest proportion, 55 percent, is willing to drive 16-30 minutes one way to attend class, while another 25 percent is willing to drive 31-45 minutes one way.

University of Southern Maine

42. Undergraduate adult students agree most strongly that University of Southern Maine offers flexible formats of instruction and has a good overall reputation.

43. The largest proportion—almost 40 percent—has heard of University of Southern Maine, but didn’t know anything about it until we interviewed them.
44. The largest proportions—40 percent and 37 percent respectively—knew of University of Southern Maine and some programs and services it offers before we interviewed them or have heard of University of Southern Maine but didn’t know anything about it until we interviewed them.

45. About 40 percent of the respondents who did not attend University of Southern Maine considered enrolling at the University.

46. Among the approximately 60 percent of those who did not consider enrolling at University of Southern Maine, about 70 percent told us they did not consider it because the location is not convenient.

47. Forty-five percent of respondents report that University of Southern Maine is less visible in the community than other area colleges, while about 35 percent report that it is about as visible as other area colleges.
Across the populations surveyed, a number of key patterns surfaced that underpin the preceding recommendations.

**Graduate Adult Students**

We collected data from a random sample of graduate adult students residing within a 50-mile radius of the University’s campuses in Gorham, Lewiston-Auburn, and Portland, Maine. From these data, we learned the following:

**Personal Characteristics**
1. Graduate adult students are most often Caucasian females 35 years of age. Slightly more than half are married and most do not have children under 18 years of age. They live in Massachusetts and New Hampshire. Massachusetts residents live in Peabody or Saugus; Maine residents live in Portland; and New Hampshire residents live in Concord. They are employed full time, and typically have a total family income of about $75,000. About 30 percent of graduate adult students had already earned a master’s degree or more before they had most recently enrolled in graduate study. They most often use personal funds to support their education (63%), followed by tuition reimbursement (35%), student loans (29%), and grants (17%).

**Motivation**
2. They are most often motivated to enroll in college in order to advance in their current careers (54%), change careers (16%), or keep up-to-date in their current career (15%).

**Market Share**
3. Graduate adult students study at many different institutions, but most often at (in order of largest to least market share):
   - University of Southern Maine
   - Harvard University
   - Northeastern University
   - Lesley University

4. Following are the institutions they prefer to study at (in order of largest to least market share):
   - Harvard University
   - University of Southern Maine
   - Boston University
   - University of New Hampshire-Durham

**Details of Previous Institutions**
5. About 35 percent of respondents accumulated between one and 30 graduate credits before they enrolled at their most recent institution.

**Visibility and Rating of Area Institutions**
6. Among University of New Hampshire, University of New England, University of Southern Maine, Southern New Hampshire University, Saint Joseph’s College, and
University of Maine-Orono, University of New Hampshire achieved both the highest average rating as a place to study (3.3 on a 5-point scale) as well as having the greatest visibility (86%).

Learning Patterns

7. About 45 percent of the graduate adult students we interviewed were studying for a degree. About 70 percent are seeking master’s degrees, while about 30 percent are seeking doctorate degrees.

8. Among the approximately 55 percent of graduate adult students who were not enrolled in a degree program, 21 percent were taking individual courses, 17 percent were taking courses toward a license in a professional area (most often in education), and 15 percent were taking courses for an occupational/career diploma or certificate (also most often in education).

9. Business commands the greatest share of the market, with 30 percent, followed by education with about 20 percent, and health professions, with about ten percent. Together, these three areas comprise 60 percent of the graduate adult student degree market.

10. Slightly more than half—51 percent—have enrolled in noncredit or professional development courses, seminars, webinars, or workshops related to their current career or in order to change careers in the last five years. These respondents most often studied business or education, followed by computer and information sciences at a training company in a classroom, which was paid for by the employer. On a 5-point scale, these respondents gave a 3.9 average rating to describe their satisfaction with their most recent noncredit or professional development study.

Schedule

11. While about 80 percent of the graduate adult students were studying on a part-time basis—taking just one, two, or three courses at a time—the other approximately 20 percent were full-time students.

12. The largest proportion of graduate adult students—about half—prefers to study weekday evenings, while about 20 percent prefer to study weekday mornings and 15 percent prefer to study weekday afternoons.

13. Twenty-five percent of graduate adult students prefer courses that are eight weeks, while 19 percent prefer 12-week courses and 17 percent prefer 15-week or longer courses. About 60 percent of the graduate adult student market prefers to enroll in accelerated study—courses ranging from eight to 12 weeks.

Study Formats

14. About half were enrolled in semester-length courses in a classroom during the last term in which they were enrolled. However, proportions of 29 percent each were enrolled in either fully online courses or accelerated courses of approximately eight weeks in a
classroom, and 24 percent were enrolled in hybrid courses. Therefore about 55 percent were enrolled in a course that had at least some online component.

15. On a 5-point scale of 1 not at all satisfied to 5 extremely satisfied, respondents gave average ratings between 4.2 and 4.3 to describe their satisfaction with their most recent course format, with hybrid courses achieving the highest average rating of satisfaction.

16. Proportions of 39 percent each prefer either fully online courses or hybrid courses, and 22 percent prefer classroom-based courses.

17. Among respondents who took at least one of their courses in hybrid format, the largest proportion—about 45 percent—would prefer to visit campus once every other week if they were to take another hybrid course. Twenty-five percent of this pool’s most recent hybrid course utilized video streaming, while 22 percent utilized social media/networks.

18. Using a 5-point scale of 1 not at all attractive to 5 very attractive, respondents gave a 3.4 average rating to describe their attraction to a low-residency program. Among those who gave a three or higher rating to describe their attraction to a low residency program, 39 percent could attend twice per semester, while 36 percent could attend once per semester. About 35 percent could dedicate two days to visiting the campus of an institution that offered a low residency program, while about 20 percent could dedicate one day. About 60 percent would be willing to travel less than 50 miles from their home.

**College Services**

19. The largest proportion of graduate adult students frequently used online library and research services.

20. The largest proportions of those who use college services sometimes or frequently prefer to access the given services in person, with the exception of 24/7 technical help, which they prefer be offered online, and writing and math assistance, which they prefer be offered online as well as in person.

**Course Costs**

21. The largest proportion by far—about 60 percent—would not be willing to pay more for the convenience of enrolling in an online course rather than a classroom-based course.

22. Using a 5-point scale of 1 not at all important to 5 extremely important, graduate adult students responded with an average rating of 3.8 to describe the importance price had on their decision on where to enroll.

23. Graduate adult students gave an average rating of 2.8, on a 5-point scale of 1 not at all important to 5 extremely important, to describe how important the availability of financial aid was in their decision to enroll in a given institution.
For about half of respondents, a three-credit course cost of $1,100 is lower than the cost at their most recent institution, while about 30 percent found it higher and 20 percent found it about the same.

The optimum revenue-producing price for University of Southern Maine is $1,100 per course—comparable to a three-credit course at its current tuition of $380 per credit for residents.

About 30 percent of respondents are currently paying off loans they incurred during their undergraduate study. Among this pool, 35 percent said their remaining undergraduate student debt played a role in their decision-making about their graduate studies.

About 60 percent paid less than the full “sticker price” through the award of financial aid, a scholarship, work study, or some other reduction.

Promotion and Advertising
28. The large majority of graduate adult students would be most influenced to enroll at a college because students are able to take any mix of day, evening, weekend, accelerated, and online courses based on what meets their scheduling needs.

29. The largest proportion of graduate adult students was most influenced to enroll at the college they most recently attended because of its reputation of the college or program, with 20 percent, followed by its accreditation of a specific program of interest (16%), its proximity to their home or work (16%), and its tuition and fees (15%).

30. The largest proportion of respondents would be more likely to consider University of Southern Maine because USM Online offers over 500 courses year-round that are fully online or a blend of online and on-campus.

31. After respondents received additional information about University of Southern Maine, they gave a 2.7 average rating on a 5-point scale of 1 not at all likely to 5 very likely to describe how likely they would be to consider it for future study.

32. According to respondents, the best methods to get useful information to a prospective student is via direct mail to them at home, followed by Internet search engines such as Google or Yahoo and Internet-based college search sites.

33. Respondents who told us ads on websites are somewhat likely or likely to attract their attention most often visit Google, Facebook, and Yahoo on a daily basis.

34. Respondents are most likely to participate in or access faculty/student chats/online open houses and open houses of a college in which they were considering enrolling.

35. Email, followed by mail to students at home, are the methods graduate adult students deem acceptable for institutions to use when reaching potential students.
36. About 70 percent of all respondents visited college websites as one of several methods of gathering information during their most recent college search, while about 25 percent only used the Internet to research colleges. About five percent did not use the Internet at all during their most recent college search.

37. About 65 percent of respondents made direct contact with the college they eventually enrolled in prior to submitting their application. The largest proportion—about 30 percent—made contact with the institution by calling, while 25 percent emailed the institution and 20 percent requested information directly on its website.

38. About half of the respondents have Facebook profiles.

39. Fifty-five percent of respondents have a “smart phone,” such as an iPhone or Blackberry. Using a 5-point scale of 1 not at all likely to 5 very likely, these respondents gave a 3.0 average rating to describe how likely they would be to access the websites of the colleges that interest them on their smart phone.

Location

40. On a 5-point scale of 1 not at all satisfied to 5 extremely satisfied, respondents rated Portsmouth, New Hampshire, followed by Portland, Maine as the most convenient locations for them to take a course. However, having achieved a 2.7 average rating, it isn’t viewed as being particularly convenient.

41. The largest proportion, 38 percent, is willing to drive 16-30 minutes one way to attend class, while another 35 percent is willing to drive 31-45 minutes one way, and 24 percent is willing to drive more than 45 minutes one way.

University of Southern Maine

42. Graduate adult students agree most strongly that University of Southern Maine has a good overall reputation and offers flexible formats of instruction.

43. The largest proportion—about 45 percent—has heard of University of Southern Maine, but didn’t know anything about it until we interviewed them, while about 40 percent knew University of Southern Maine and some of its programs and services before we interviewed them.

44. The largest proportion—about 45 percent—had heard of University of Southern Maine, but didn’t know anything about their specific programs until we interviewed them. About 35 percent knew of University of Southern Maine and some programs and services it offers before we interviewed them.

45. About 20 percent of the respondents who did not attend University of Southern Maine considered enrolling at the University.
46. Among the approximately 80 percent of those who did not consider enrolling at University of Southern Maine, about 60 percent told us they did not consider it because the location is not convenient.

47. About half of respondents report that University of Southern Maine is about as visible in the community as other area colleges, while about 40 percent report that it is less visible than other area colleges.
Employers/Organizations

We interviewed a total of 50 officials responsible for employer education and training at 50 organizations residing within a 50-mile radius of University of Southern Maine’s Portland, Maine campus. From these conversations, we learned the following:

General Familiarity with University of Southern Maine
1. The largest proportion of employers—about 55 percent—knows University of Southern Maine and some of its programs, while about 30 percent knows University of Southern Maine well and are very familiar with its programs. All in all, about 85 percent of the employers we interviewed are at least somewhat familiar with the University.

Ideas/Associations About University of Southern Maine
2. When employers who are at least somewhat familiar with the University of Southern Maine think of the University, the first thing that comes to mind for the largest proportion is that the University is local and/or convenient.

Visibility of University of Southern Maine in the Area
3. About half said University of Southern Maine is somewhat visible in the area, while about 40 percent said it is very visible in the area.

Reputation of University of Southern Maine in Preparing an Educated Workforce
4. About 65 percent rate University of Southern Maine’s reputation for preparing an educated workforce as being very satisfactory.

University of Southern Maine
5. Among a series of statements about University of Southern Maine, employers believe most strongly that it serves well the needs of commuter students.

Importance of Employees Pursuing Further Education and Training
6. Seventy percent of the employers think it is very important that employees working in their organization pursue further education and training while they are employed.

Important Educational Pursuits of Employees
7. According to officials, customer service and effective communication skills (written and oral) are very important to almost all of the employers (89%). However, the majority also found the following skills very important: proficiency in written and spoken English, specialized (industry-specific) technologies, personal time management skills, managerial/supervisory, conflict resolution and negotiation, complex problem-solving/critical thinking, ethical decision making, and leading teams.

Human Resources Role in Promoting Education and Training
8. According to officials, when employees are in need of further education or training, their human resources department is most likely to have the employee enroll in a course at a local college, training company, or association and reimburse all or part of employees’
costs, while about 70 percent are most likely to take a different action—most often to train employees in-house.

Workforce Care for Older Adults
9. About 90 percent of employers have a workforce that cares for older adults to some degree.

Need for Employees to Have Better Understanding of Working with Older Adults
10. Among respondents who have a workforce that cares for older adults, about 85 percent find their employees need to have a better understanding of the competencies/expertise (knowledge, attitudes, and skills) to work with older adults.

Encouragement of Employees to Register for Gerontology Certificate at USM
11. Sixty-five percent of respondents would encourage their employees to enroll in a 15-credit online post-baccalaureate gerontology certificate program in the next year if University of Southern Maine offered it, while about 25 percent said they might encourage them to enroll in this program.

Desired Outcome of Gerontology Certificate
12. Among those who would or might encourage their employees to enroll in a 15-credit online post-baccalaureate gerontology certificate program at University of Southern Maine in the next year, the majority hopes their employees would gain many outcomes, especially: increased knowledge about aging, the ability to meet the needs of consumers/clients/patients better, and personal satisfaction and growth.

Reason for Lack of Interest in Gerontology Certificate
13. Among those who would not encourage their employees to enroll in a 15-credit online post-baccalaureate gerontology certificate program at University of Southern Maine in the next year, all of these respondents told us it’s because the gerontology certificate is not helpful for the consumers/clients/patients they serve and their employees do not need advanced training/education in gerontology/geriatrics.

Contracting with Organizations in the Past Three Years
14. Forty-eight percent of employers have contracted with an organization (association, training company, colleges or universities, etc.) in the past three years to provide education and training programs to employees.

Contracting with Colleges or Universities in the Past Three Years
15. About 65 percent of this pool had contracted with colleges or universities in the past three years to provide education and training programs to employees. Education and/or training through University of Southern Maine was the institution contracted most often by employers, followed by Central Maine Community College. About 75 percent were very satisfied with the education and/or training the college or university provided for their organization.
Change in Hiring Practices Due to General Economic Situation
16. Twenty-five percent of employers have experienced significant changes to its hiring practices due to recent changes in the general economic situation; the largest proportion cited a decrease in hiring.

Tuition Reimbursement Offered
17. About 80 percent of the organizations we interviewed have tuition assistance programs.

Undergraduate Reimbursement
18. All of the employers that have tuition assistance programs cover undergraduate courses and programs, but for 85 percent of this population, those courses and/or programs must be job-related.

Graduate Reimbursement
19. Ninety-eight percent of the employers that have tuition assistance programs also cover graduate courses and programs, but for 90 percent of this population, those courses and/or programs must be job-related.

Noncredit Courses and Programs
20. Eighty-five percent of the employers that have tuition assistance programs cover noncredit continuing education or training, but for 92 percent of this population, those courses and/or programs must be job-related.

Education Programs Eligible for Tuition Assistance
21. Among employers who offer tuition assistance, 98 percent offer it for degree program study, 95 percent offer it for a certificate or licensure program, and 85 percent offer it for individual courses not part of any program.

Online and Distance Learning Tuition Assistance
22. Ninety-five percent of employers offer tuition assistance for online and distance learning courses.

Maximum Annual Tuition Assistance Offered to Each Employee
23. Employers cited a range of maximum annual tuition assistance offered to each employee annually (from $750 to an unlimited amount), but the median maximum annual tuition for undergraduate and graduate study is $3,000 and for noncredit study it is $875.

Restrictions/Qualification for Receiving Reimbursement
24. The largest proportion—82 percent—told us they only reimburse for tuition if the employee achieves a certain grade on a course, while a comparable proportion—80 percent—said the employee is eligible only after a specified length of time.

Likelihood of Seeking College or University to Address Unmet Needs
25. About five percent of employers will seek a college or university to provide education or training, while about 25 percent might turn to a college or university for education and
training. All of this pool are likely to seek degree programs or certificate or licensure programs from educational institutions in the near future, while two-thirds are likely to seek individual credit courses and one-third are likely to seek noncredit courses.

Subjects of Education and/or Training in Most Likely to Consider
26. Among employers that are at least somewhat likely to seek a college or university to address unmet education and/or training needs in the near future, a large range of subject areas are most likely to be considered, but the largest proportion cited education and training needs in communication or leadership.

Consideration of University of Southern Maine
27. All of the officials who are at least somewhat likely to seek education and training needs in the near future would consider University of Southern Maine.

Changes Employers Foresee in Industry
28. The largest proportion told us certain skills or courses are likely to be needed in the future, most often those in health professions.

Future Contact Desired to Discuss Education and Training for Their Employees
29. About 15 percent of the organizations are interested in having someone from University of Southern Maine contact them to discuss providing education and training for their employees. The largest proportions of the officials are interested in learning more about University of Southern Maine in general or learning more about arrangements to facilitate the use of tuition reimbursement for their employees.
School Districts

We interviewed a total of ten representatives at ten school districts residing within a 50-mile radius of University of Southern Maine’s Portland, Maine campus. From these conversations, we learned the following:

**Familiarity with University of Southern Maine**
1. The largest proportion of these school districts—half—is very familiar with the University of Southern Maine.

**College of Education Programs with Which Most Familiar**
2. Among those who are at least somewhat familiar with University of Southern Maine, respondents are most familiar with the Extended Teacher’s program and the regular Education program.

**College/University That Educates the Largest Number of Teachers**
3. Respondents told us University of Southern Maine was the college or university that educated the largest number of their teachers.

**University of Southern Maine**
4. Among a series of statements about University of Southern Maine, school districts believe most strongly that it offers a high quality education and has a good overall reputation.

**Contracting with Organizations in the Past Three Years**
5. Thirty percent of school districts have contracted with an organization (association, training company, colleges or universities, etc.) in the past three years to provide education and training programs to employees.

**Contracting with Colleges or Universities in the Past Three Years**
6. None of this pool had contracted with colleges or universities in the past three years to provide onsite education and training programs to employees.

**Anticipation of Contracting with Provider in the Next Year**
7. Ten percent will contract with a college, training company, association, or other provider in the next year to conduct education and training programs for their faculty or staff, while ten percent might do so.

**Likelihood of Seeking College or University to Address Unmet Needs**
8. Among school districts that will or might contract with a provider in the next year, all of them are likely to do so with a college or university.

**Credit or Noncredit Needs for Education and Training in the Next Year**
9. All of the representatives who will or might contract with educational institutions in the next year are looking for credit study as opposed to noncredit study.
Consideration of University of Southern Maine
10. Half of the representatives who are at least somewhat likely to seek education and training needs in the near future would consider University of Southern Maine.

Methods of Contact with Faculty or Staff
11. School district representatives are most amenable to receiving information from the University of Southern Maine describing what it could offer their faculty or staff via printed publications mailed to them or others at the school district, followed by periodic emails to them or others directing them to content on the College of Education’s web pages.

Future Contact Desired to Discuss Education and Training for Their Employees
12. Four of the ten school districts we interviewed are interested in having someone from University of Southern Maine contact them to discuss providing education and training for their employees. The largest proportion of the representatives is interested in learning more about University of Southern Maine in general.
Competitor Institutions: Undergraduate

EducationDynamics examined undergraduate degree and certificate offerings aimed at adult students at the following institutions, based on institutional comparability and survey results:

- Kaplan University-South Portland
- Southern Maine Community College
- Southern New Hampshire University-Brunswick
- University of Maine at Augusta
- University of Phoenix
- University of Southern Maine

Of the six competitor institutions analyzed, three are public institutions—University of Maine at Augusta, University of Southern Maine, and Southern Maine Community College (the latter being the only two-year institution)—two are proprietary, four-year institutions—University of Phoenix and Kaplan University-South Portland—and one is a private, four-year institution—Southern New Hampshire University-Brunswick.

Degree and Certificate Offerings: Undergraduate

1. Southern Maine Community College offers the greatest number of degree offerings for undergraduate students—about 45—while University of Southern Maine offers the fewest—four. All institutions offer study at the bachelor- and associate-level except University of Southern Maine, which offers study at the bachelor-level only and Southern Maine Community College, which offers study at the associate-level only.

   All the institutions offer certificate study. Southern Maine Community College offers the greatest quantity of certificates—ten.

Enrollment: Undergraduate

2. Based on NCES data for fall 2009 (the most recent year for which enrollment data are available), enrollments of undergraduate adult student ages 25 years and above varied from a total of 2,142 at Southern New Hampshire University-Brunswick to a total of 3,240 at University of Maine at Augusta. (Note: Enrollment data for Kaplan University’s South Portland campus were not available, and because University of Phoenix does not have a campus in Maine, enrollment data for the institution was not retrieved.)

Schedules: Undergraduate

3. University of Southern Maine, Southern Maine Community College, and Kaplan University-South Portland offers undergraduate study days, evenings, and weekends, while University of Maine at Augusta offers courses days and evenings, Southern New Hampshire University-Brunswick offers courses evenings and weekends, and University of Phoenix offers courses online only.

The schedules of study among the competitor institutions vary: University of Maine at Augusta, Southern Maine Community College, and University of Southern Maine offer courses during approximately 15-week spring and fall terms, with accelerated study
during the summer; Kaplan University-South Portland offers study during ten-week year round terms, Southern New Hampshire University-Brunswick offers study during seven-week year round terms, and University of Phoenix offers study during five-to-nine-week terms.

All of the institutions that offer distance learning study offer it on the same academic calendar as classroom-based study.

Costs: Undergraduate
4. Putting aside non-resident tuition among the institutions, the course costs among the competitor institutions range from $86 per credit for residents at Southern Maine Community College to $365-$550 per credit at University of Phoenix.

All of the institutions that offer distance learning study charge the same rate as classroom-based study, except for Southern New Hampshire University-Brunswick, which charges residents $311 per credit for distance learning (an additional $68 per credit more than classroom-based study).

Distance Learning Programs: Undergraduate
5. All of the institutions offer distance learning study at the undergraduate level: University of Southern Maine, University of Phoenix, Kaplan University-South Portland, and Southern New Hampshire University-Brunswick offer online courses, certificates, and degrees; University of Maine at Augusta offers online, web streaming, and interactive television courses, certificates, and degrees; and Southern Maine Community College offers online courses.

Transfer Credit Policy: Undergraduate
6. Transfer credit policies vary among the competitor institutions: Kaplan University-South Portland requires that a minimum of half the credits of a major be earned at the institution; University of Maine at Augusta requires that a minimum of 30 credits in a major be earned at the institution; University of Phoenix requires that a minimum of 30 credits toward core education be earned at the institution; University of Southern Maine requires that a minimum of 30 credits be earned at the institution; Southern Maine Community College requires that a minimum of 15 credits be earned at the institution; and Southern New Hampshire University-Brunswick accepts a maximum of 30 credits toward an associate’s degree and a maximum of 90 credits toward a bachelor’s degree.

Entrance Testing Required: Undergraduate
7. None of the institutions require applicants to submit entrance testing for admission into its undergraduate degree programs, except Southern Maine Community College, which requires students to submit Accuplacer test scores if they have no previous college credit or scored lower than a certain point on various standardized tests.
Competitor Institutions: Graduate

EducationDynamics examined graduate degree and certificate offerings at the following institutions, based on institutional comparability and survey results:

- Saint Joseph’s College of Maine
- Southern New Hampshire University-Brunswick
- University of Maine
- University of New England-Portland
- University of Southern Maine

Of the five competitor institutions analyzed, three are private, four-year institutions—Southern New Hampshire University-Brunswick, University of New England-Portland, and Saint Joseph’s College of Maine (the latter being religiously affiliated)—and two are public, four-year institutions—University of Maine-Orono and University of Southern Maine.

Degree and Certificate Offerings: Graduate

1. University of Maine-Orono offers the greatest number of degree offerings for graduate students by far—about 125—while Saint Joseph’s College of Maine offers the fewest—six. All institutions offer both master’s and doctoral programs except Saint Joseph’s College of Maine and Southern New Hampshire University-Brunswick, which offer master’s programs only. University of Southern Maine is the only institution to offer joint degrees (two graduate degrees that can be earned simultaneously).

All the institutions offer certificate study. University of Southern Maine offers the greatest number of certificate programs—about 30.

Enrollment: Graduate

2. Based on NCES data for fall 2009 (the most recent year for which enrollment data are available), enrollments of graduate students ages 25 and older varied from a total of 807 at Saint Joseph’s College of Maine to 1,975 at University of Maine-Orono.

Schedules: Graduate

3. All institutions offer study days, evenings, and weekends but Saint Joseph’s College of Maine, which offers study online only. University of Maine-Orono, University of New England-Portland, and University of Southern Maine offer study during approximately 15-week fall and spring terms, as well as accelerated study during the summer. Southern New Hampshire University-Brunswick offers study during 11-week year round terms, while Saint Joseph’s College of Maine offers study (online only) during 15-week year round, flexible terms.

All of the institutions that offer distance learning study offer it on the same academic calendar as classroom-based study except for University of New England-Portland, which offers distance learning study during two eight-week terms (within each 16-week fall and spring term for classroom-based study), as well as accelerated summertime study,
and Southern New Hampshire University-Brunswick, which offers distance learning study during seven-week year round terms.

**Costs: Graduate**

4. Putting aside non-resident tuition among the institutions, course costs among the competitor institutions range from $315-$600 per credit for at Saint Joseph’s College of Maine to $440-$715 per credit at University of New England-Portland.

All of the institutions that offer distance learning study charge the same rate as classroom-based study.

**Distance Learning Programs: Graduate**

5. All of the institutions offer distance learning study. Saint Joseph’s College of Maine and Southern New Hampshire University-Brunswick offer online courses, certificates, and degrees; University of Maine-Orono offers interactive television, compressed video, intranet, video streaming, and online courses, certificates, and degrees; University of New England-Portland offers online courses, certificates, and degrees and hybrid degrees; and University of Southern Maine offers online courses and online and hybrid degrees.

**Transfer Credit Policy: Graduate**

6. Transfer credits among the institutions vary: Saint Joseph’s College of Maine, Southern New Hampshire University-Brunswick, and University of Maine-Orono accept a maximum of six credits from another institution; University of Southern Maine accepts a maximum of six to 12 credits, depending on the program; and University of New England-Portland has a variety of policies, depending on the program, from accepting no credits at all, accepting them on a case-by-case basis, accepting a maximum of six credits, to requiring that a minimum of 32 credits be earned at the institution.

**Entrance Testing Required: Graduate**

7. University of Maine-Orono requires applicants to submit entrance testing for admission into its graduate programs, while University of Southern Maine requires it for most programs and University of New England-Portland requires it for some programs. Saint Joseph’s College of Maine and Southern New Hampshire University-Brunswick do not require entrance testing.