

# State of Continuing Education 2025

This year's data and insights

Produced by The EvoLLLution in collaboration with UPCEA

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**The 2025 state of continuing education research signals a broader recalibration within higher education, as institutions experiment with new program models and business strategies to stay relevant and resilient.**

The 2025 State of Continuing Education study examines the evolving role of online and professional continuing education (PCE) units in higher education, focusing on program offerings, institutional support, technology integration, and collaboration across academic units.

This year’s findings highlight a growing emphasis on workforce-aligned education, with institutions increasingly prioritizing corporate training, industry credentials, and employer partnerships to meet labor market demands. At the same time, fewer online and PCE units are offering microcredentials, badges, and select certificate programs compared to 2024 and 2023, citing concerns about their labor market relevance and administrative feasibility.

Overall enrollments in online and PCE programs have declined, reaching one of the lowest levels since 2021-2022. Online and PCE units are expanding their reach to new audiences, including government, health-care, and alumni learners, in an effort to diversify revenue streams.

While institutional support remains strong, staffing challenges have been reinvigorated, with a 10% decline in perceived adequate staffing from 2024 to 2025, signaling ongoing struggles with resource allocation. Administrative burden, market demand concerns, and time-to-market pressures continue to hinder credential expansion, while persistent struggles with technology integration limit real-time data access and collaboration. Though widely recognized as hubs of academic innovation, online and PCE units are still striving to reach full academic parity within their institutions.

The 2025 study expanded beyond what had traditionally been a North American focus to incorporate a more global perspective. This shift broadens the understanding of continuing education practices but also may introduce changes to baseline data, requiring a fresh lens when comparing trends over time. The 2025 state of continuing education research signals a broader recalibration within higher education, as institutions experiment with new program models and business strategies to stay relevant and resilient.

Corporate Partnerships

The percentage of online and PCE units offering corporate training and partnerships and tech/industry credential preparation has increased each year, while a smaller percentage are offering microcredentials compared to 2024.

Audience

The percentage of online and PCE units that service alumni, corporate audiences, government or municipal workers, and the healthcare community increased this year, while the percentage of units that serve adult learners/transfers decreased compared to 2024 and 2023 percentages.

Enrollments

Average online and PCE unit enrollments dropped to 15,925 in the 2023-2024 enrollment year, lower than all previous enrollment years except 2021-2022.

Staffing

The percentage of respondents who agreed with the statement that their online and PCE unit has the appropriate number of staff required to execute their institution's goals for the unit more than doubled between 2023 and 2024, then fell by 10% in 2025.

Challenges

When asked about challenges their online and PCE unit faces in expanding credentials, 59% said administrative burden, 56% have concerns around market demand, 40% have concerns around labor market relevance, and 39% said time-to-market for course offerings.

Credentials Offered

In 2025, a smaller percentage of online and PCE units offer non-credit certificates and credit-bearing undergraduate or graduate certificates. A significantly smaller percentage offer badges, dropping 30% since 2024.

Collaboration with online and PCE Units for continuing education has increased, but administrative burden remains a top challenge.

5,500

Median online and PCE unit enrollment

8%

Increase in collaboration with other units, schools, or colleges for CE programming

48%

Agree it is easy to access real-time enrollment data

Revenue

Twenty-seven percent (27%) said all revenue is sent back to the Provost's office or another centralized unit, 25% said a flat percentage of online and PCE revenue is sent, and 7% said their online and PCE unit does not return any revenue to the Provost's office or any other centralized unit.

Business Goals

When asked about essential elements required to achieve business goals in their online and PCE unit, 84% said easy and efficient registration processes, 68% said efficient course, section, and certificate creation/management, and 52% said dashboards to reporting tools to track learner engagement, retention, and success metrics.

Data Access

In 2025, 48% of respondents strongly agree or agree that it is easy for members of their institution to access real-time enrollment data for online and PCE students, compared to 2024 (29%), 2023 (34%), and 2022 (35%) surveys.

Collaboration

In this year's survey, a larger percentage of respondents strongly agree or agree that other units, schools, or colleges at their institution collaborate with the online and PCE unit for continuing education program development (71% versus 63% in 2024). Similarly, 58% strongly agree or agree that there is a concentrated effort from institutional leadership to organize and manage continuing education at their institution, compared to 45% in 2024.



# Understanding the state of continuing education is key to helping institutions better engage both existing and new audiences.

## Methodology

To better understand online and professional continuing education (PCE) unit program offerings, institutional support and capabilities, and to assess continuing education collaboration and integration, UPCEA and The EvoLLLution developed an in-depth survey.\*

### In Total:

156 institutions participated in the study, of which 126 completed the entire survey.

### Survey Goal

The goal is to understand the current state of continuing education so that institutions can better engage existing and new audiences.

### Survey Logistics

UPCEA, The EvoLLLution, CAUCE, and RECLA contacted their members to participate. Precautions were taken to ensure institutions were not contacted by more than one organization. The survey took place from January 13th to February 5th, 2025.

In 2025, UPCEA rebranded “PCO Units” as “Online and PCE Units.” In this report, “Online and PCE Units” will refer to 2025 data, while “PCO Units” will apply to previous years.

 \*Visit the Appendix ([Page 72](#)) for all tabulated data figures.



# Institutional & Respondent Demographics



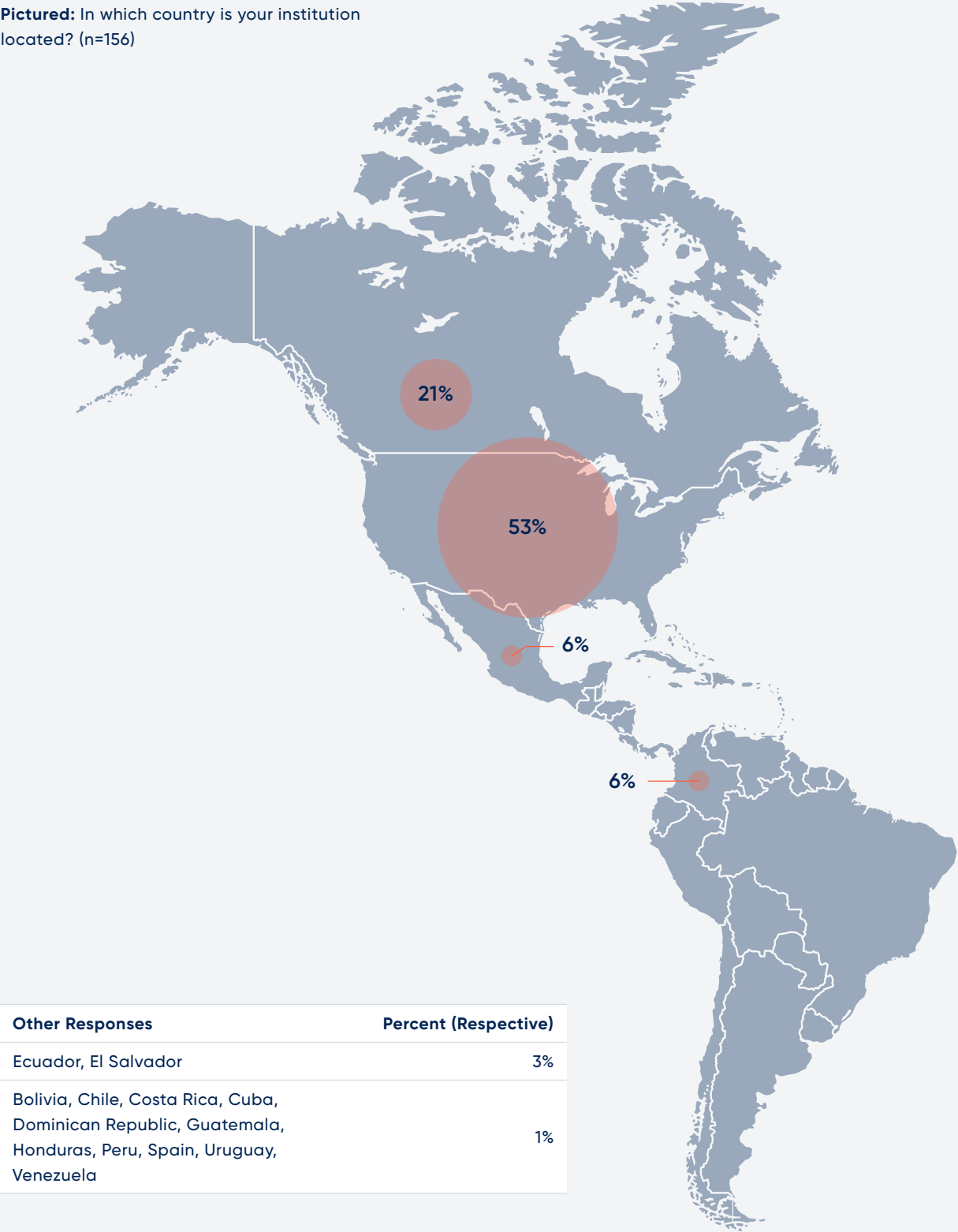
## Geography

Over half (53%) of respondents are from institutions located in the USA, 21% in Canada, 6% in Colombia, and 6% in Mexico.

### Respondent Geography

(2025, Map)

**Pictured:** In which country is your institution located? (n=156)



| Other Responses                                                                                            | Percent (Respective) |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Ecuador, El Salvador                                                                                       | 3%                   |
| Bolivia, Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Honduras, Peru, Spain, Uruguay, Venezuela | 1%                   |

Institution Types

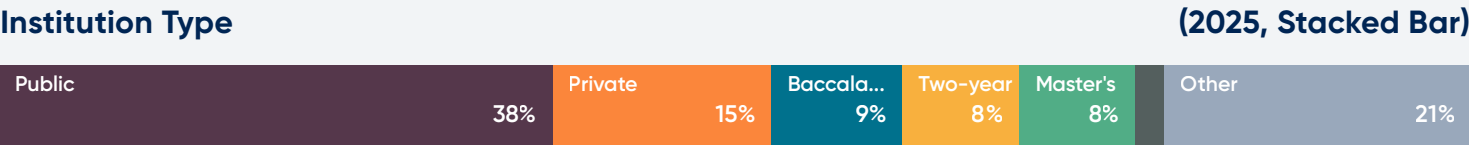
The most common institution type in the survey is public research institution (38%), followed by private research institution (15%), and baccalaureate/special focus institution (9%).

Twenty-one percent (21%) are grouped into the “Other” category; examples include non-credit community colleges, liberal arts universities, and technology universities, among others.

Institution Type

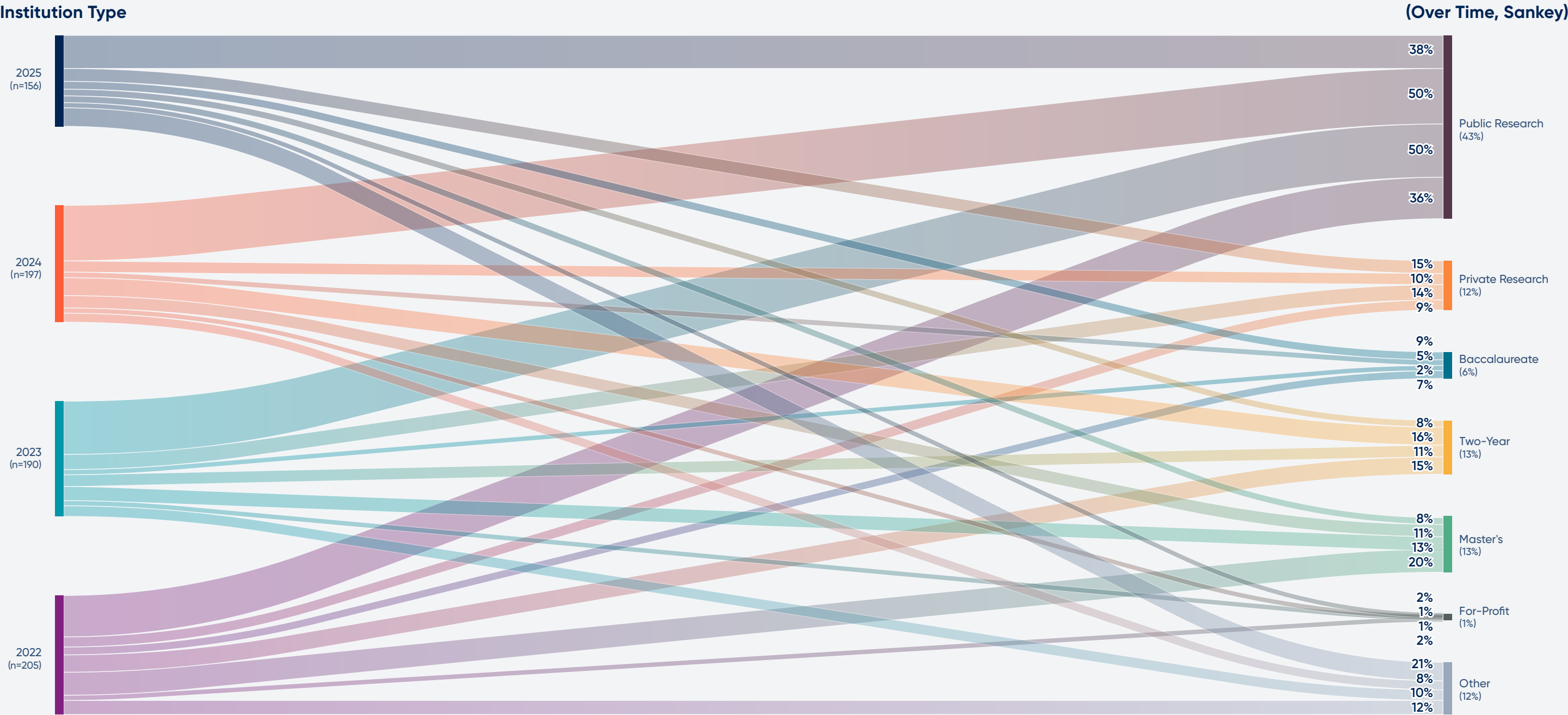
(Over Time, Table)

| Institution Type            | 2025 (n=156) | 2024 (n=197) | 2023 (n=190) | 2022 (n=205) |
|-----------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Public Research             | 38%          | 50%          | 50%          | 36%          |
| Private Research            | 15%          | 10%          | 14%          | 9%           |
| Baccalaureate/special focus | 9%           | 5%           | 2%           | 7%           |
| Two-year                    | 8%           | 16%          | 11%          | 15%          |
| Master's comprehensive      | 8%           | 11%          | 13%          | 20%          |
| For-profit                  | 2%           | 1%           | 1%           | 2%           |
| Other                       | 21%          | 8%           | 10%          | 12%          |



**i** This Sankey diagram shows the relationship between sample sizes per year and institution size via ribbon heights.

Note aggregate relationships, like the reduced total sample size (n) in 2025, and the overall representation of public research (43%) vs. for-profit institutions (1%).

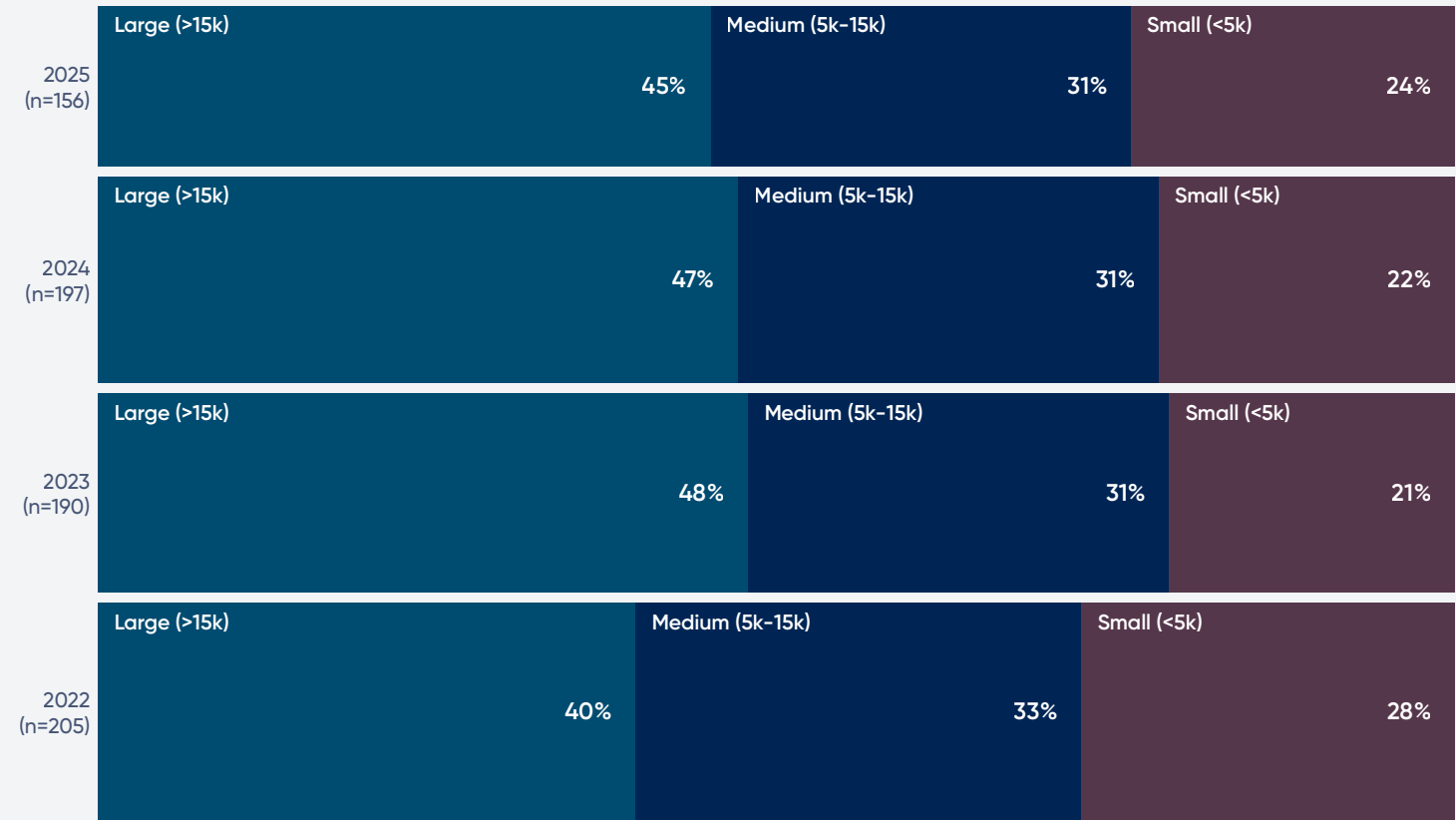




## Institution Sizes

**45%** Forty-five percent (45%) of participating institutions had more than 15,000 undergraduate and graduate students in 2025. 31% had 5,000 to 15,000, and 24% fewer than 5,000.

**Institution Size** (Over Time, Stacked Bar)



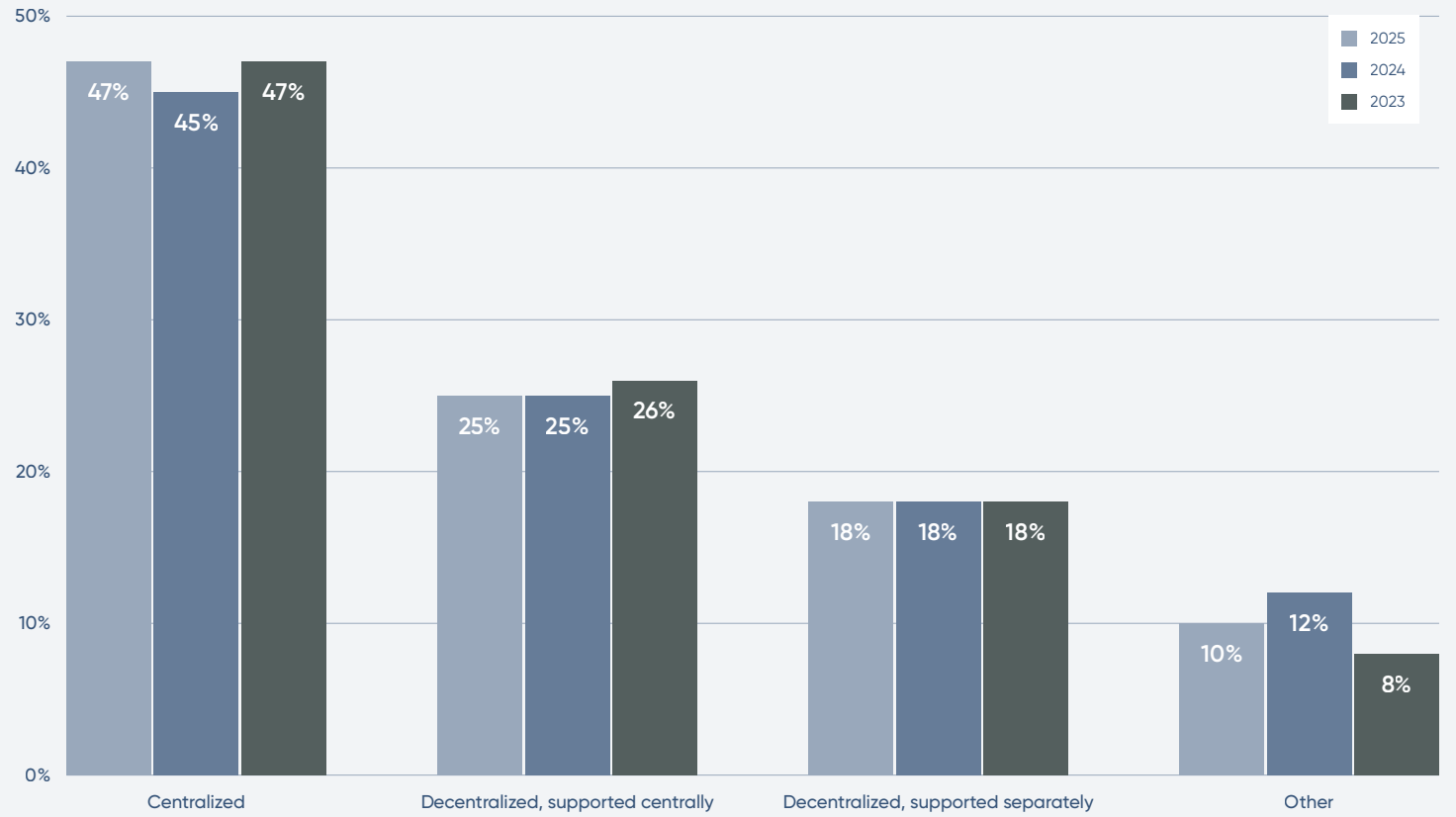
## Online and PCE Unit Description

**47%** Forty-seven percent of online and PCE units are centralized with programming and support coming primarily from one professional, continuing, and/or online education unit.

25% are decentralized with programming coming out of other academic colleges or units, but supported centrally by a continuing education unit.

18% are decentralized with programming and support coming from academic colleges/schools and different support units. The percentages are similar to those in the 2024 and 2023 surveys.

**Which of the following statements best describes your online and professional continuing education (PCE) unit?** (Over Time, Bar)



**Online and PCE Unit Description** (Over Time, Table)

| Description                                                                                                                           | 2025 (n=143) | 2024 (n=182) | 2023 (n=190) |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Centralized with programming and support coming primarily from one professional, continuing, and/or online education unit             | 47%          | 45%          | 47%          |
| Decentralized with programming coming out of other academic colleges or units, but supported centrally by a continuing education unit | 25%          | 25%          | 26%          |
| Decentralized with programming and support coming from academic colleges/schools and different support units                          | 18%          | 18%          | 18%          |
| Other                                                                                                                                 | 10%          | 12%          | 8%           |



Respondent Titles

|      |                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2025 | <p><b>Most common:</b></p> <p>The most common title of 2025 survey respondents was Director of Continuing Education (22%),</p>      | <p>followed by Senior/Executive Director (general) (12%), Director (general) (10%), Dean (general) (8%), and Assistant/Associate Vice President/Provost (8%).</p> <p>Responses that were mentioned fewer than three times were included in the “Other” category and included Lecturer, Technology Specialist, and Learning Experience Designer, among others.</p>   |
| 2024 | <p><b>Most common:</b></p> <p>The most common title of 2024 survey respondents was Director (general) (15%),</p>                    | <p>followed by Dean (general) (12%), Senior/Executive Director (general) (also 12%), Assistant/Associate Vice President/Provost (9%), and Director of Continuing Education (7%).</p> <p>Responses that were mentioned fewer than three times were included in the “Other” category and included Analyst, Developer, and Administrative Assistant, among others.</p> |
| 2023 | <p><b>Most common:</b></p> <p>The most common titles of 2023 respondents were Director (general) and Dean (general) (both 14%),</p> | <p>followed by Executive Director (general) (13%), Director of Continuing Education (8%), and Associate Dean/Provost (6%).</p> <p>Responses that were mentioned fewer than three times were included in the “Other” category and included Registrar, Assistant Professor, and Customer Service Representative, among others.</p>                                    |
| 2022 | <p><b>Most common:</b></p> <p>In 2022, the most common titles of respondents were Dean and Director (both 13%),</p>                 | <p>followed by Executive Director (12%), Associate Dean/Provost (8%), and Assistant/Associate Vice President (7%).</p> <p>Responses that were mentioned fewer than four times were included in the “Other” category and included Associate Director, Vice Chancellor, and Program Coordinator, among others.</p>                                                    |

Respondent Titles

(Over Time, Treemap)



Respondents are predominantly based in North America. Public institutions were the most common. Director is the most reported title. The structure of online and PCE units showed little variation.

While response numbers have trended downwards year-over-year, demographic proportions have remained largely the same. The vast majority of responses were submitted from North America, with a handful from South America.

Historically, Master's and Two-year institutions have been represented in larger numbers than this year. Institution sizes are fairly evenly distributed, favoring large sizes. There has been little change Over Time around online and PCO unit central/decentralization.

Most notably in regards to work titles, titles in the "Other" category dropped sharply in this year's survey.

Generally, a "Director" or similar title dominated the response count. "Dean" is downtrending. Other titles remain at similar distributions to previous years.

*"As the landscape of professional, continuing, and online education evolves, it's clear that while institutional structures remain steady, the voices shaping the field are refining. The consistency in representation underscores the enduring challenges and opportunities in the space—calling for renewed strategies to engage and innovate."*

-Shauna Cox

# Program Offerings and Enrollments

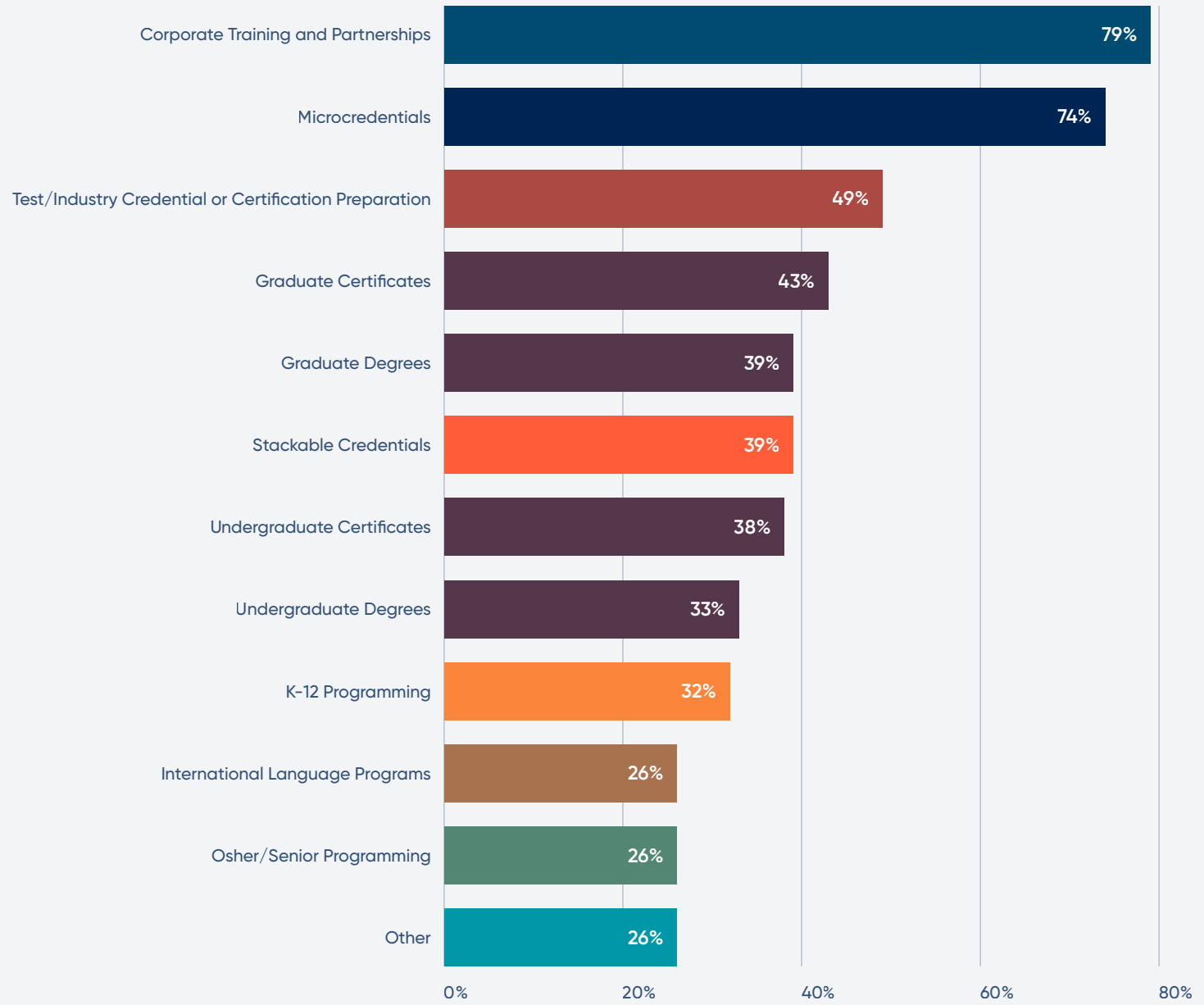


## Programs or Credentials Offered

Participants were asked what programs or credentials are offered at their online and PCE units.

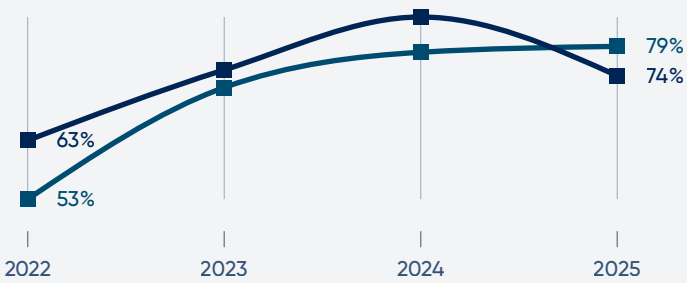
Seventy-nine percent (79%) offer corporate training and partnerships, 74% offer microcredentials, 74% offer microcredentials, and 49% offer test/industry credential or certification preparation.

Programs or Credentials Offered by Online and PCE Unit (2025, Bar) (n=140)



Programs or Credentials Offered

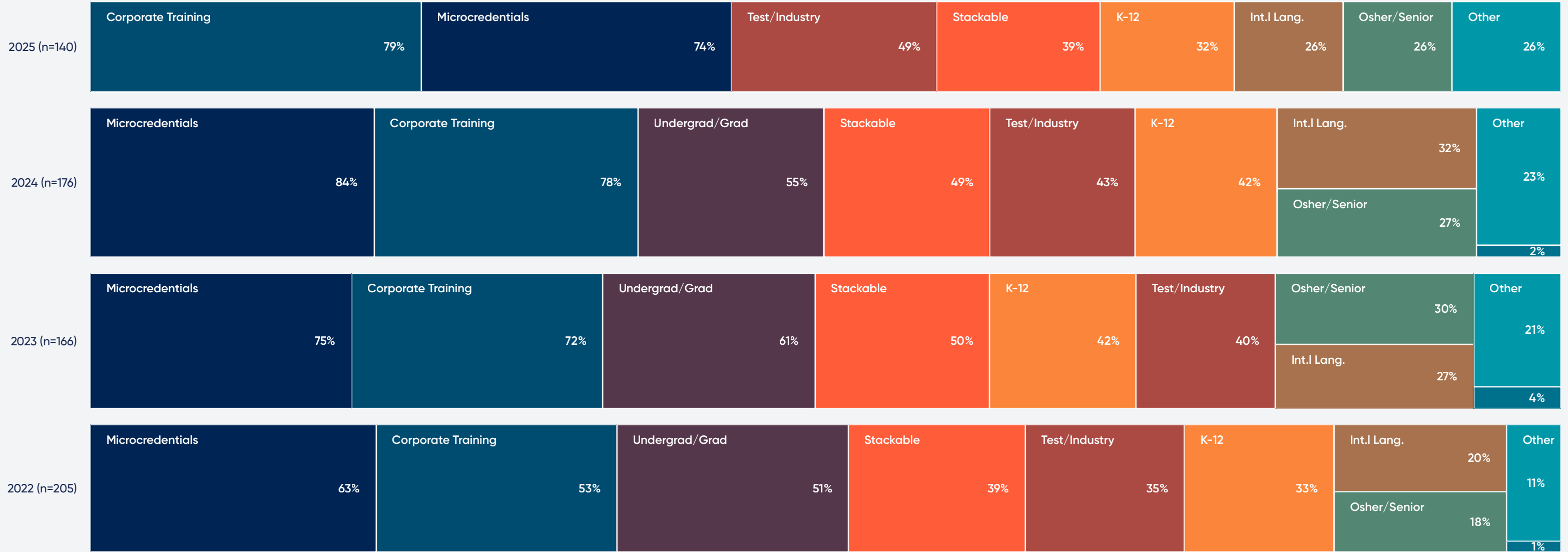
The percentage of online and PCE units offering corporate training and partnerships and test/industry credential preparation has increased each year since 2022, while a smaller percentage are offering microcredentials compared to 2024 and 2023.



Programs or Credentials Offered by Online and PCE Unit (Over Time, Table)

| Credential                                 | 2025 (n=140) | 2024 (n=176) | 2023 (n=166) | 2022 (n=205) |
|--------------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Corporate Training and Partnerships        | 79%          | 78%          | 72%          | 53%          |
| Microcredentials                           | 74%          | 84%          | 75%          | 63%          |
| Undergraduate and/or Graduate Certificates |              | 55%          | 61%          | 51%          |
| Test/Industry Credential Preparation       | 49%          | 43%          | 40%          | 35%          |
| Stackable Credentials                      | 39%          | 49%          | 50%          | 39%          |
| K-12 Programming                           | 32%          | 42%          | 42%          | 33%          |
| International Language Programs            | 26%          | 32%          | 27%          | 20%          |
| Osher/Senior Programming                   | 26%          | 27%          | 30%          | 18%          |
| Other                                      | 26%          | 23%          | 21%          | 11%          |
| None of the above                          |              | 2%           | 4%           | 1%           |

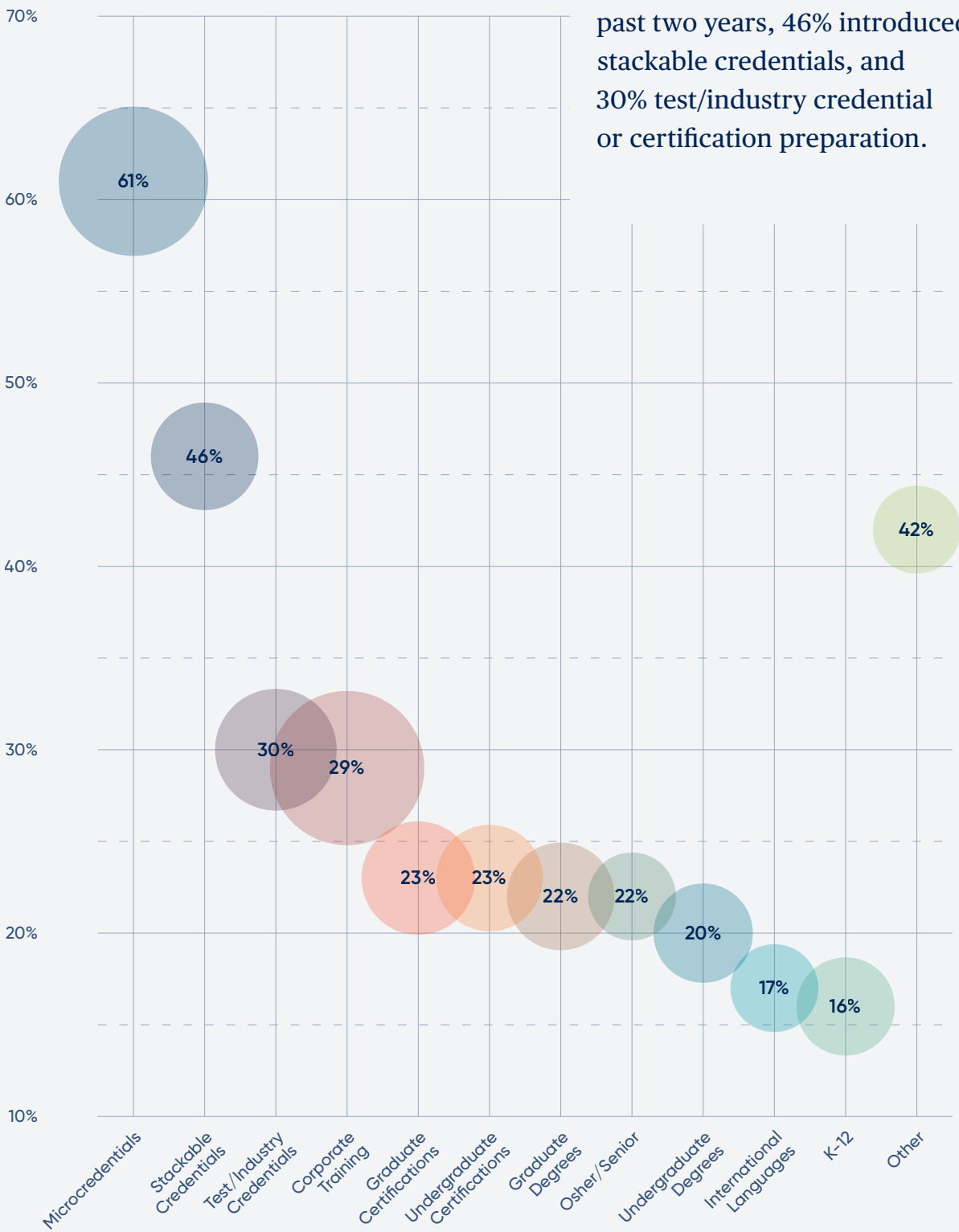
Programs or Credentials Offered by Online and PCE Unit (Over Time, Treemap)



# Programs or Credentials Introduced Since 2024

Programs or Credentials Introduced (2025, Scatterplot)

Right: Which of the following credential or program areas offered by your online and continuing education (PCE) unit have been introduced within the past two years? Please select all that apply.



Scatterplot where the height of the bubble represents percentage and the size of the bubble represents sample size (n).

Participants were asked if any of the credential or program areas they offer have been introduced within the past two years.

Sixty-one percent (61%) said they have introduced microcredentials within the past two years, 46% introduced stackable credentials, and 30% test/industry credential or certification preparation.



The momentum behind credentials continues to build, with institutions expanding their offerings to meet the evolving needs of learners and the workforce.

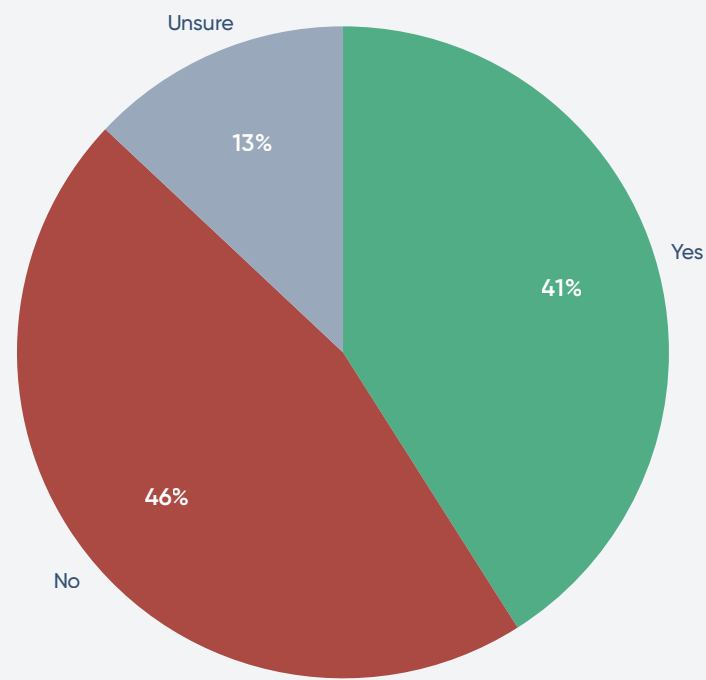


# Professional Certification Offerings

Forty-six percent (46%) of respondents said their online and PCE units do not offer any programs in which professional certifications are embedded, 41% do, and 13% were not sure.

**Chart:** Does your online and PCE unit offer any programs in which professional certifications (i.e., PMP, AWS, CISSP, etc.) are embedded in the program? (n=140)

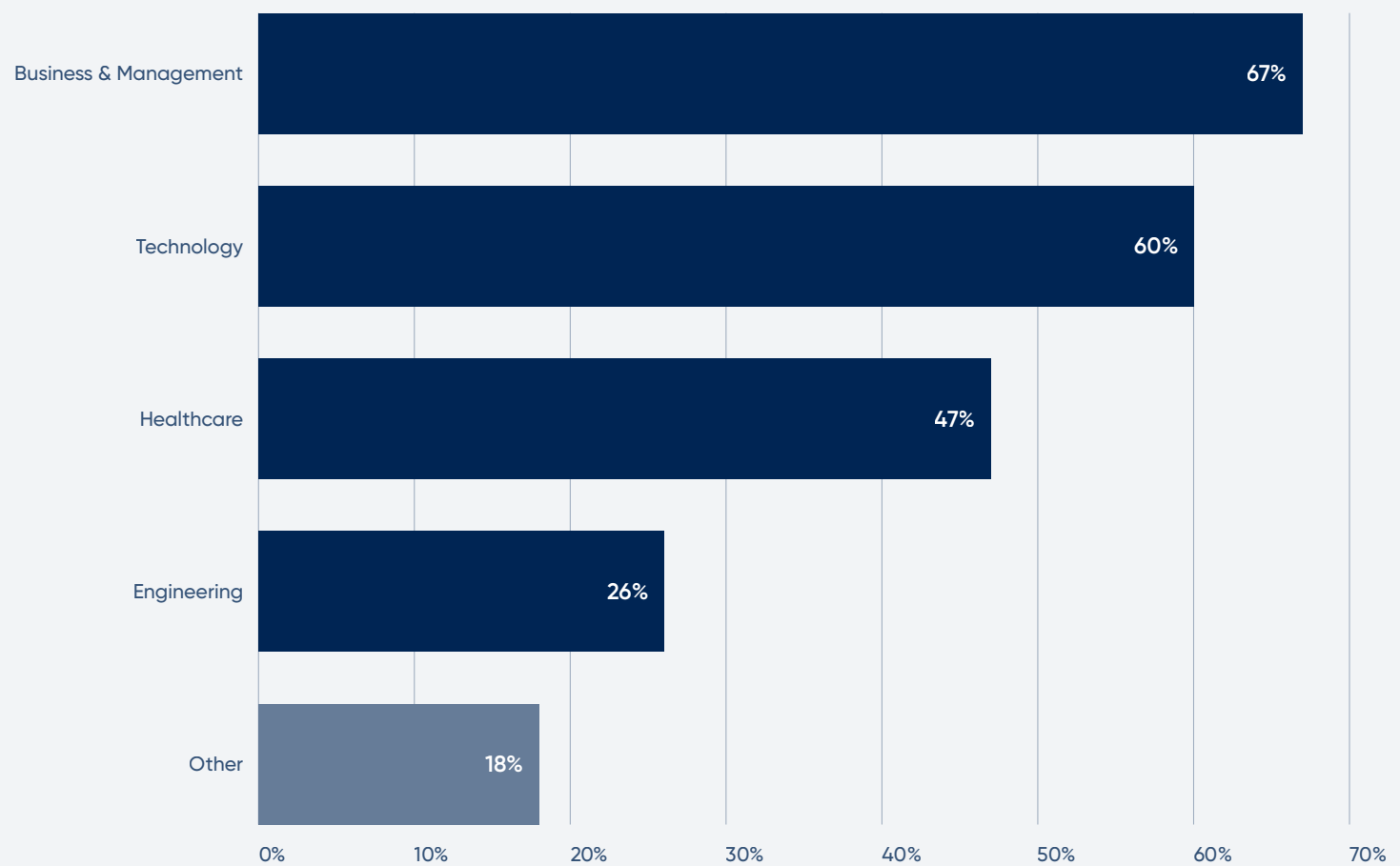
Professional Certification Offerings (2025, Pie)



| Response | 2025 (n=140) |
|----------|--------------|
| Yes      | 41%          |
| No       | 46%          |
| Unsure   | 13%          |

# Professional Certification Subject Areas

Professional Certification Subjects (2025, Bar) (n=57)

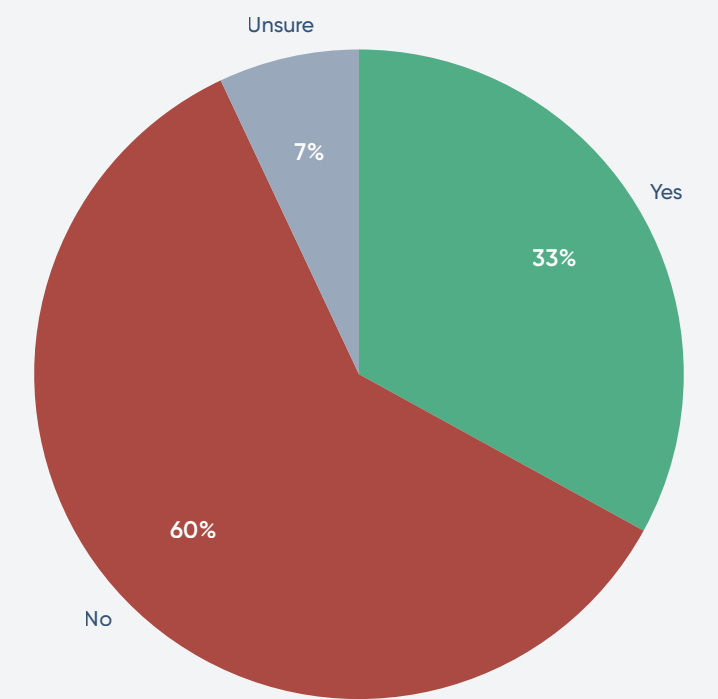


**Chart:** In which subject areas does your online and PCE unit embed professional certifications within programs? Please select all that apply. (n=57)

Among online and PCE units that embed professional certifications within programs, two-thirds (67%) embed them within business & management programs, 60% in technology programs, and 47% in healthcare programs.

# Credit for Prior Learning

Credit for Prior Learning (2025, Pie)



| Response | 2025 (n=140) |
|----------|--------------|
| Yes      | 33%          |
| No       | 60%          |
| Unsure   | 7%           |

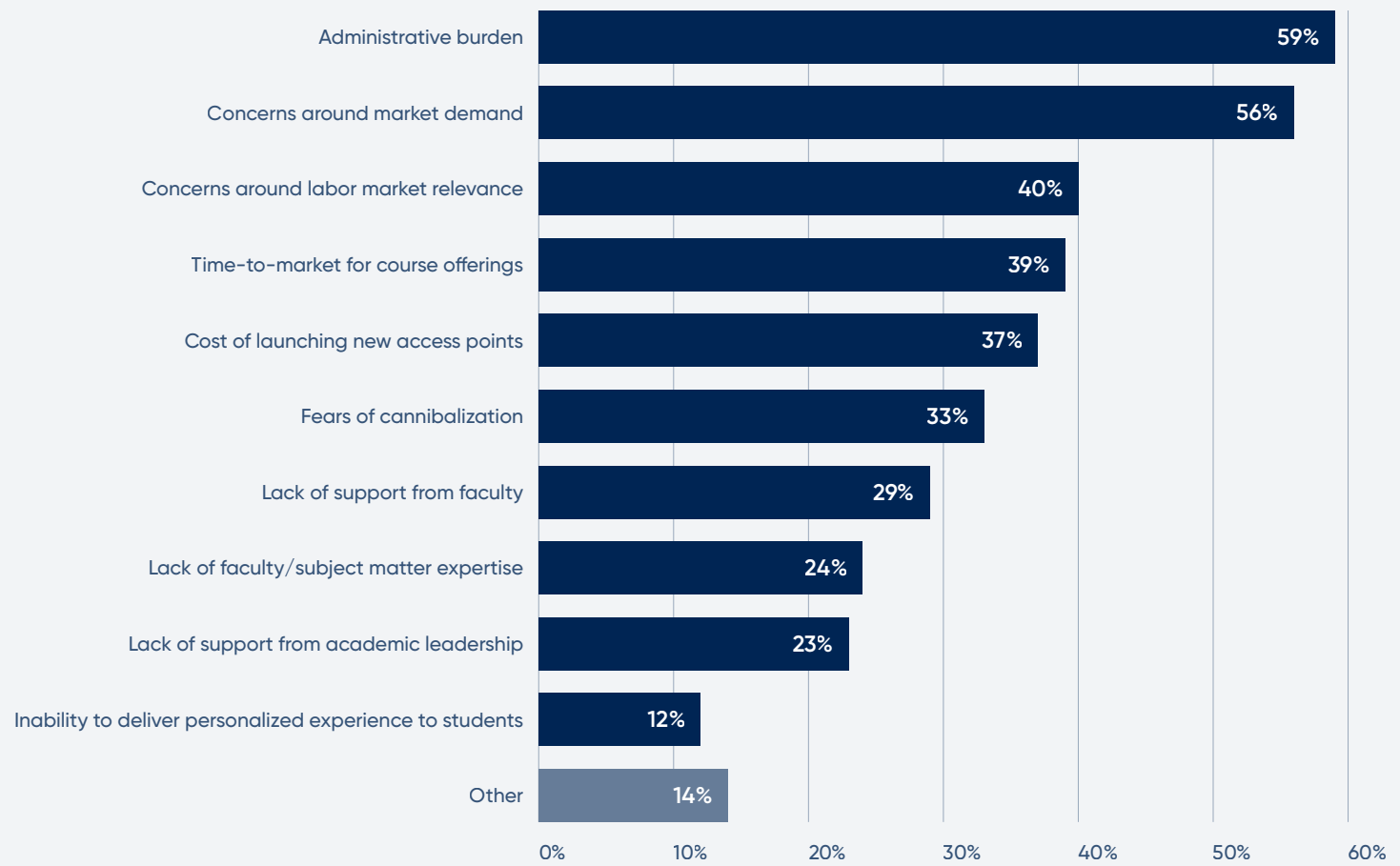
**60%** Sixty percent (60%) of respondents’ online and PCE units do not offer students credits for prior learning, while 33% do, and 7% were not sure.

Chart: Does your online and PCE unit offer credit for prior learning to students?

# Challenges

Chart: Which of the following are challenges your online and PCE unit faces in scaling or expanding credentials or programs at your institution? Please select all that apply. (n=135)

Challenges in Expanding Credentials (2025, Bar) (n=135)



When asked about challenges their online and PCE unit faces in expanding credentials,

59% said administrative burden, 56% have concerns around market demand, 40% have concerns around labor market relevance, and 39% said time-to-market for course offerings.

Audiences Served

Participants were asked what audiences their online and PCE unit programs serve.

Representation

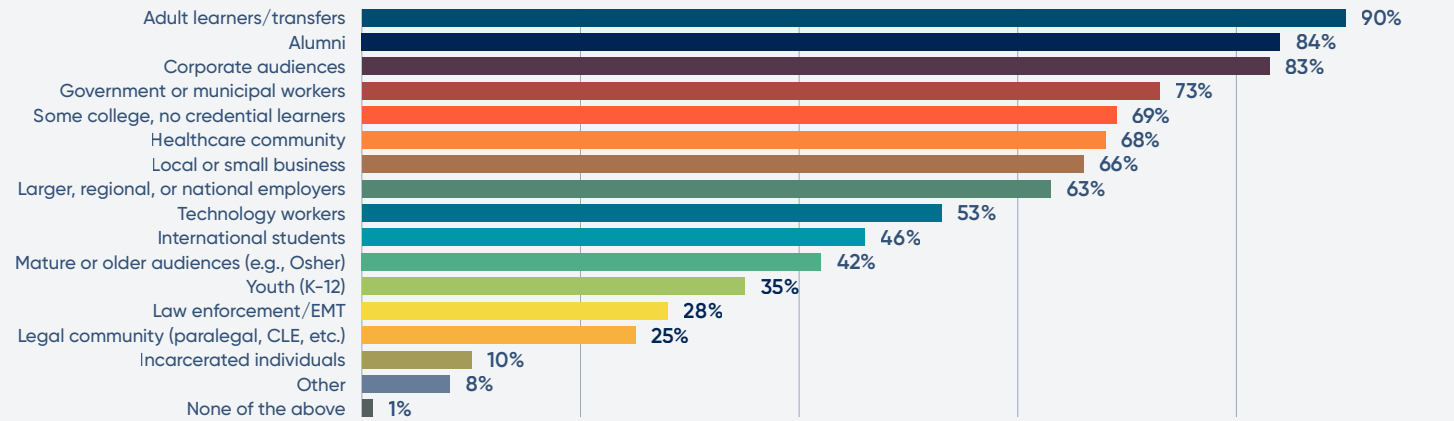
Adult learners/transfers (90%), alumni (84%), corporate audiences (83%), and government or municipal workers (73%) were listed as their main audiences in 2025.

Trends

The percentage of online and PCE units that serve alumni, corporate audiences, government or municipal workers, and the healthcare community increased this year, while the percentage of units that serve adult learners/transfers decreased compared to 2024 and 2023 percentages.

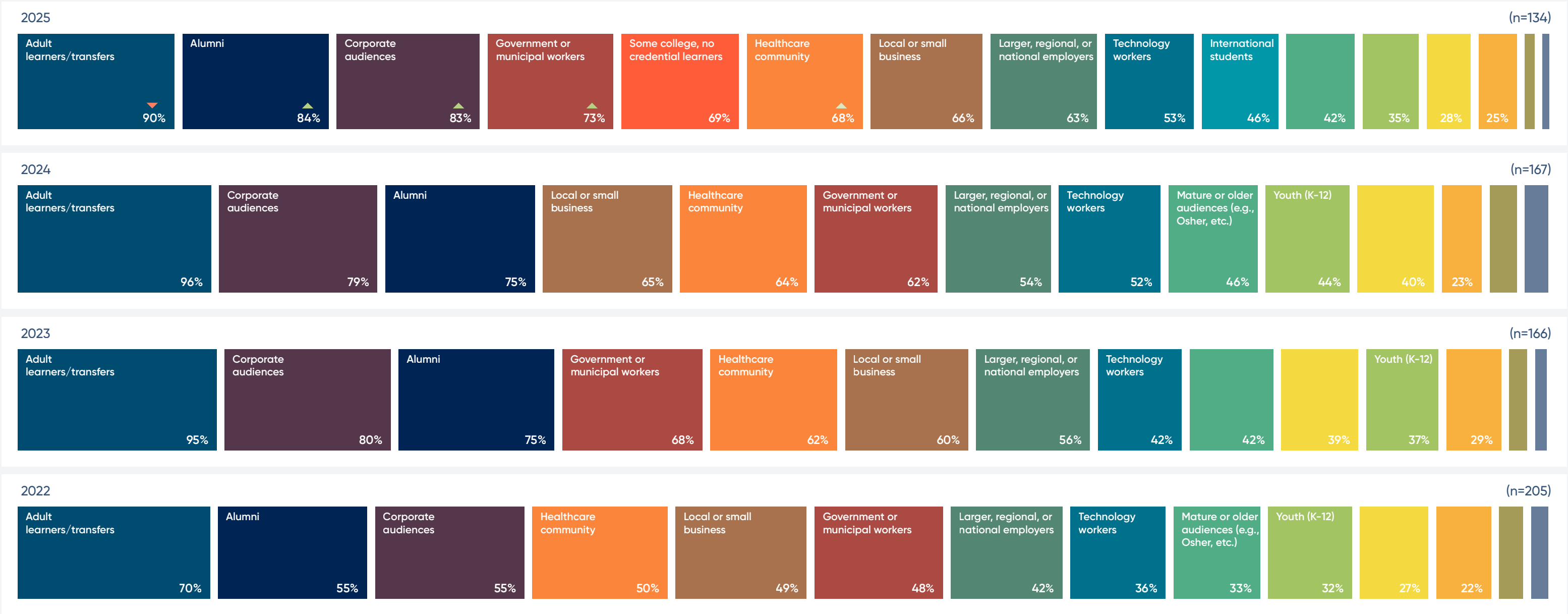
Audiences Served

(2025, Bar)



Audiences Served

(Over Time, Slice)



# Enrollments

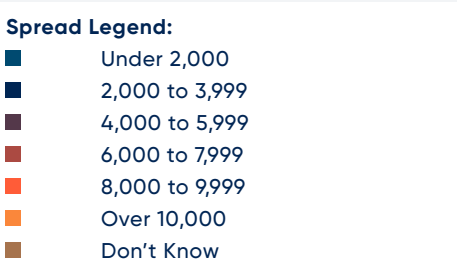
## Median

From July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024, institutions had an average online and PCE unit enrollment of 15,925, with a median of 5,500.

Twenty percent (20%) had under 2,000 enrollments, 10% between 2,000 and 3,999, 21% had over 10,000 enrollments, while 34% of respondents did not have enrollment data.

## Average

The average online and PCE unit enrollment dropped to 15,925 in the 2023-2024 enrollment year, lower than all previous PCO enrollment years except 2021-2022.

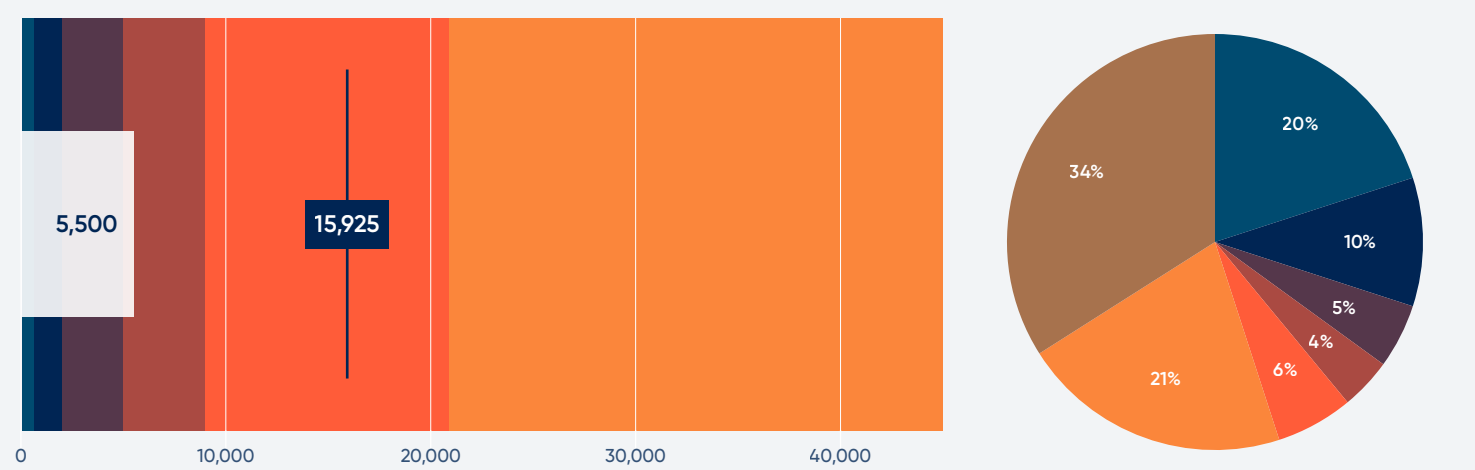


## Trends

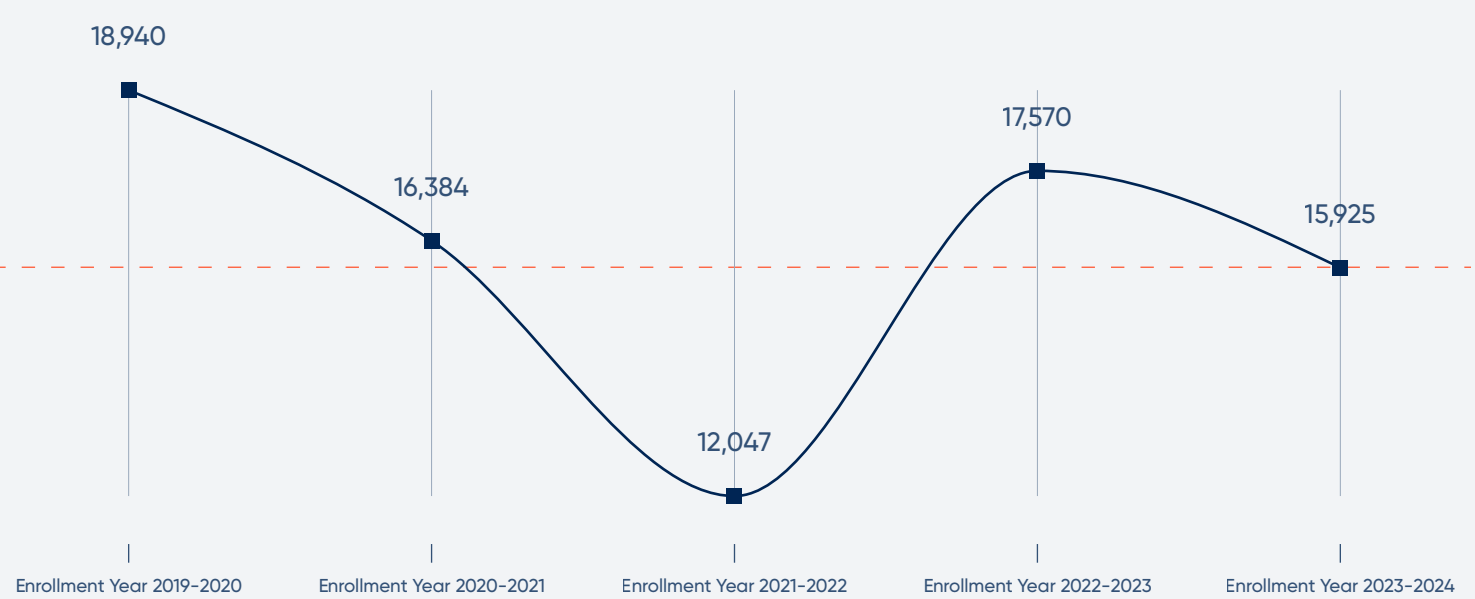
In the 2023 and 2024 enrollment year, a greater percentage of institutions had under 2,000 enrollments (20%) compared to previous years, yet the number of institutions with over 10,000 enrollments (21%) was similar to 2022-2023.

A smaller percentage of respondents (34%) didn't have enrollment data for this year's survey and the overall number of respondents was also smaller.

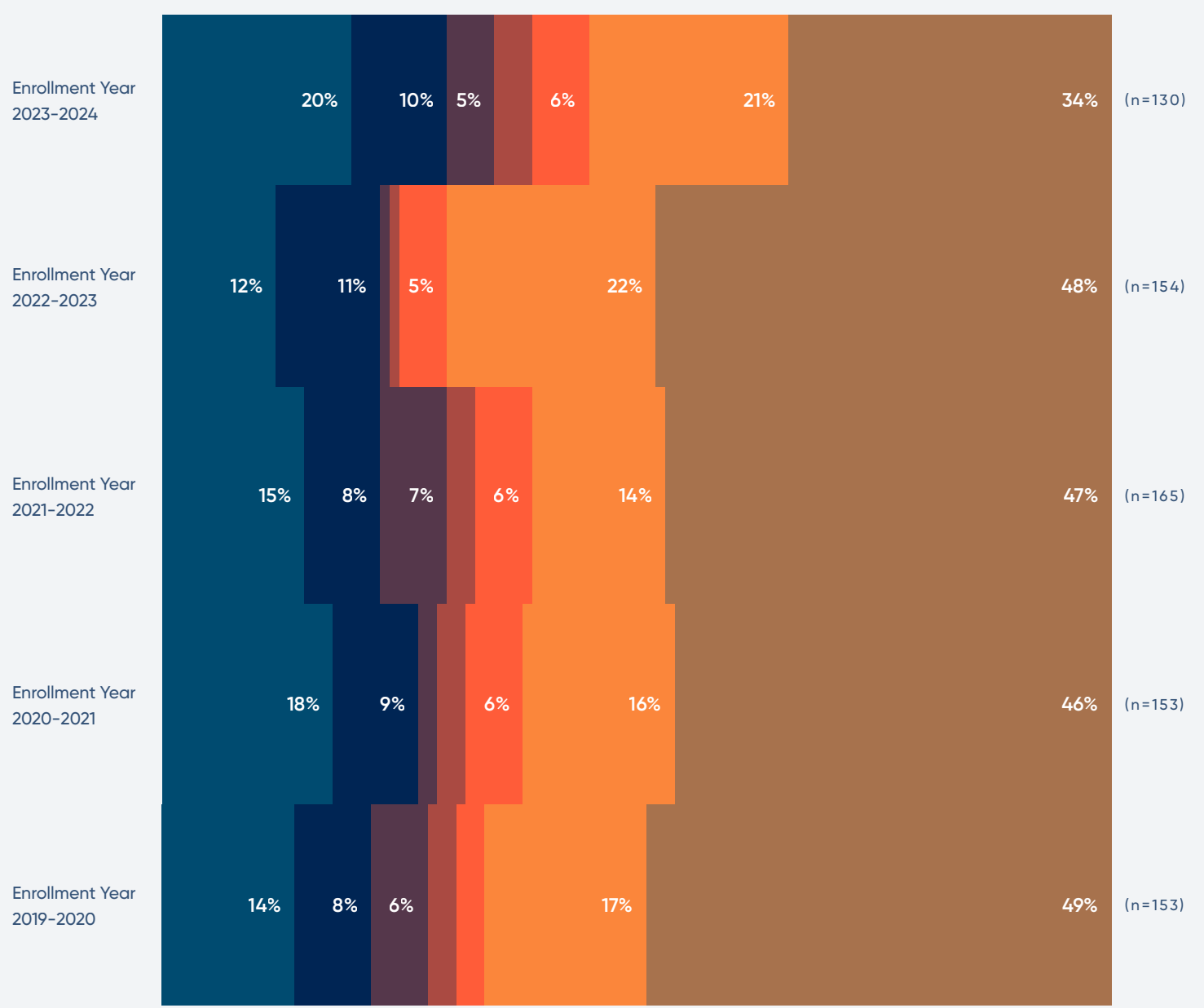
Online and PCE Unit Enrollments (EY 2023-2024, Box-and-Whisker, Pie)



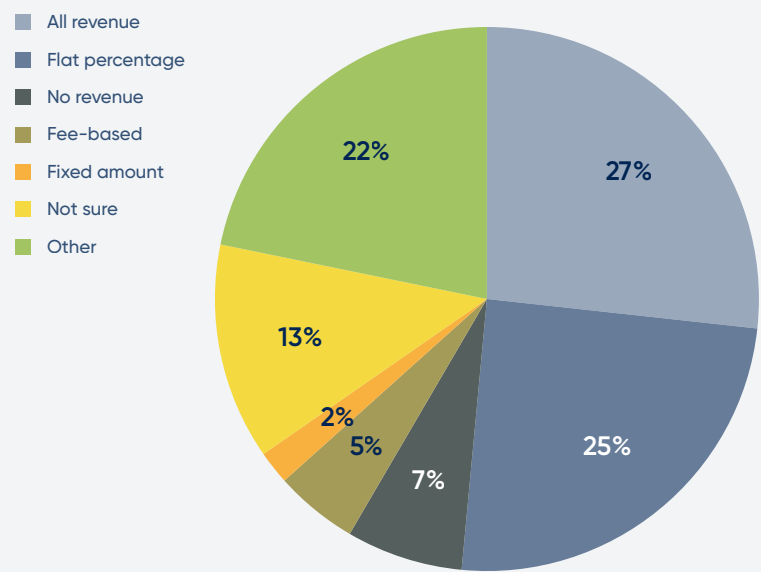
Average Online and PCE Unit Enrollments (Over Time, Line)



Online and PCE Unit Enrollments (Over Time, Stacked Bar)



Revenue to Centralized Units (2025, Pie)



**Chart:** Which of the following best describes how much revenue from your online and PCE unit is sent to the Provost’s office or another centralized unit, if any?

Participants were asked how much revenue is sent to the Provost’s office or another centralized unit, if any.

Twenty-seven percent (27%) said all revenue is sent back to the Provost’s office or another centralized unit,

25% said a flat percentage of online and PCE revenue is sent, and 7% said their online and PCE unit does not return any revenue to the Provost’s office or any other centralized unit.

Twenty-two percent (22%) gave responses in the “Other” category.

Revenue to Centralized Units (2025, Table)

| Response                                                                                                    | 2025 (n=132) |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| All revenue is sent back to the Provost’s office or another centralized unit.                               | 27%          |
| Flat percentage of online and PCE program revenue                                                           | 25%          |
| Online and PCE unit does NOT return any revenue to the Provost’s office or any other centralized unit.      | 7%           |
| A fee-based system in which we return revenue based on centralized services that were used for the programs | 5%           |
| Fixed dollar amount regardless of online and PCE program revenue                                            | 2%           |
| Not sure                                                                                                    | 13%          |
| Other                                                                                                       | 22%          |



Revenue flow varies across institutions, with some online and PCE units retaining funds while others contribute to centralized budgets—highlighting diverse financial models in continuing education.



# Microcredentials are still the leading new online and PCE program. Administrative burden limits expansion. A third of schools still don't know their enrollment numbers. Overall enrollments are dropping.

Microcredentials remain the most commonly introduced program in professional, continuing, and online (PCE) education, reflecting their growing demand. However, administrative burden continues to be a major obstacle to expansion, limiting the ability of institutions to scale these offerings effectively.

At the same time, a slight majority of institutions still lack clear visibility into their enrollment numbers, highlighting ongoing data access challenges. Compounding these issues, overall enrollments in online and PCE programs are declining, raising concerns about long-term sustainability.

Addressing these challenges will require institutions to streamline operations, improve data management, and develop strategies to maintain and grow learner engagement.

*“As microcredentials continue to lead new online and PCE programs, institutions face growing challenges in enrollment tracking and administrative burden. To meet modern learners’ expectations, institutions must blend human support with digital tools—ensuring a seamless path from education to career. The right technology can make all the difference in attracting, engaging and retaining learners for life.”*

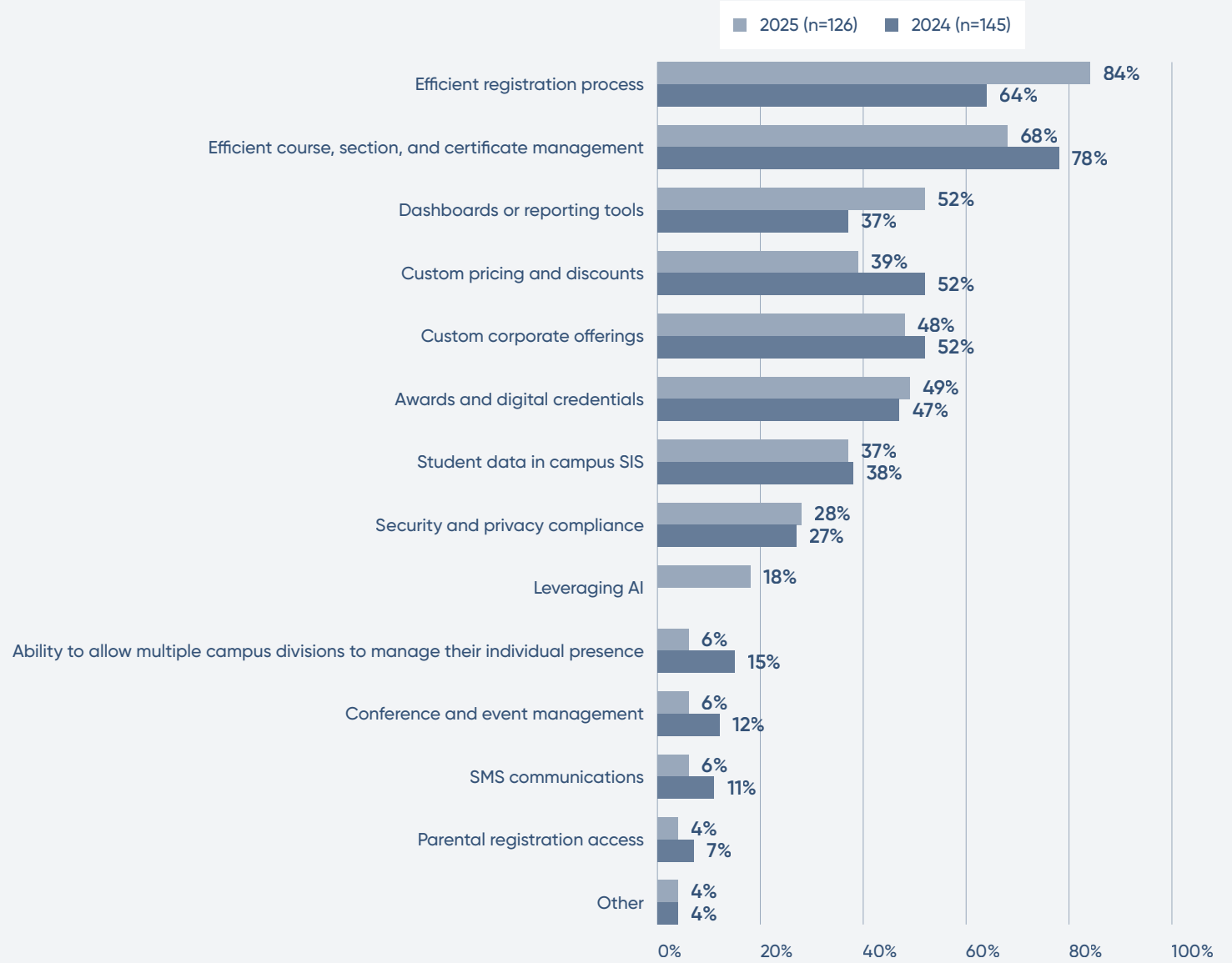
*-Shauna Cox*

# Institutional Support and Capabilities



## Business Goals

**Chart:** When thinking about essential elements that are required to achieve the business goals of your online and PCE unit, which of the following are most important? Please select no more than five.



### Business Goals (Over Time, Bar)

**2025**

When asked about the importance of essential elements required to achieve business goals in their online and PCE unit, 84% selected easy and efficient registration processes, 68% said efficient course, section, and certificate creation/management, and 52% used dashboards or reporting tools to track learner engagement, retention, and success metrics.

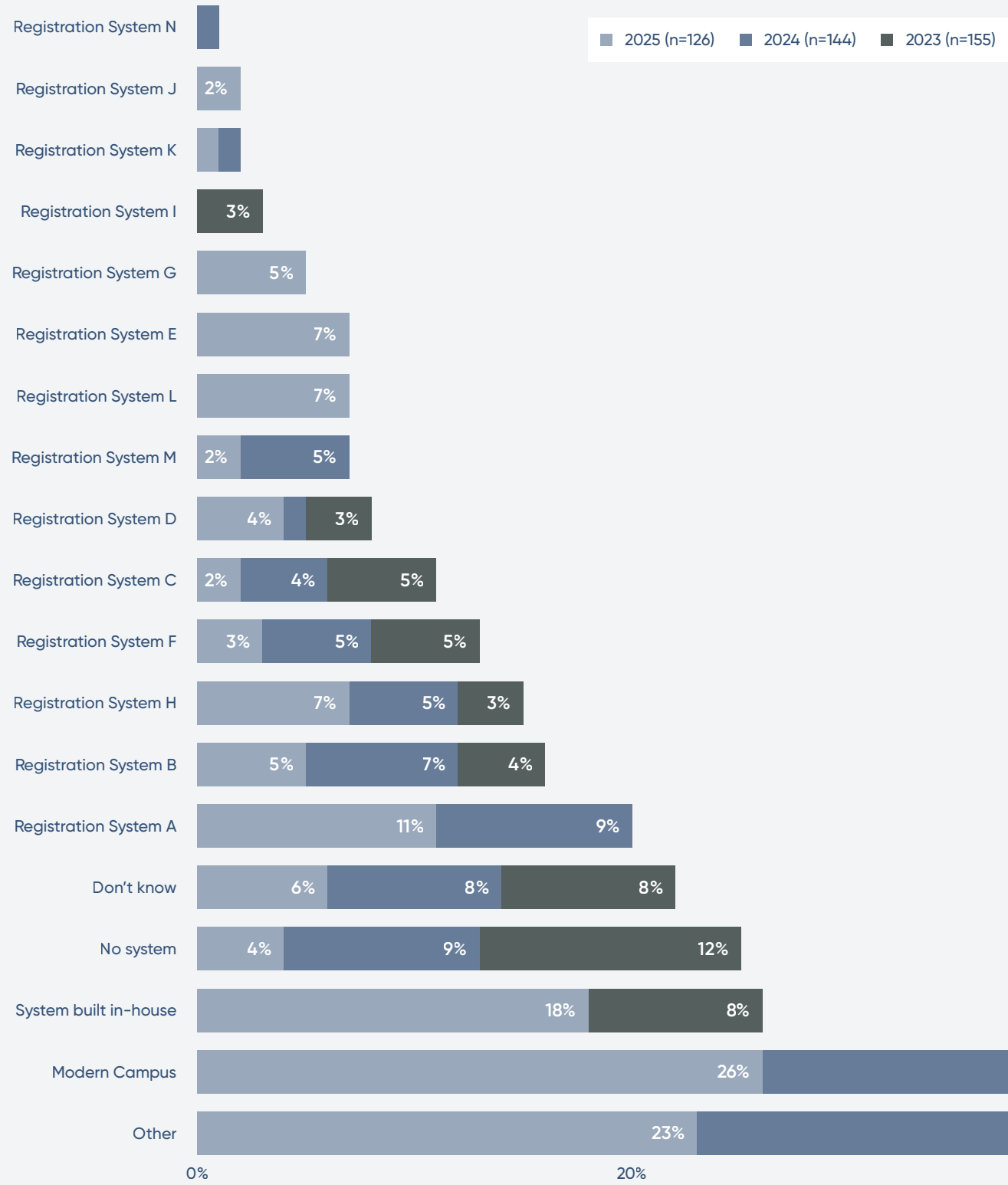
**2024**

Over three-quarters (78%) of participants said that efficient course, section, and certificate creation/management is among the most important elements to achieve their PCO unit's business goals, followed by an easy shopping cart experience for students (64%), custom pricing and discount options (52%), and offering customized offerings for corporate partners (52%).

# Registration Systems

Registration Systems Used

(Over Time, Bar)



## 2025

In 2025, the most common registration system respondents use to manage online and PCE unit programs is Modern Campus Lifelong Learning (26%), followed by systems built in-house (18%), and Registration System A (11%).

## 2024

The most common registration system respondents used to manage PCO unit programs in 2024 was Modern Campus (29%), while 9% used Registration System A, and 9% didn't use a registration system.

## 2023

In 2023 the most common registration systems respondents used to manage PCO unit programs were Modern Campus (20%) and Registration System A (11%), while 12% didn't use a registration system.

Registration Systems Used

(Over Time, Table)

| System                | 2025 (n=126) | 2024 (n=144) | 2023 (n=155) |
|-----------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Modern Campus         | 26%          | 29%          | 20%          |
| System built in-house | 18%          |              | 8%           |
| Registration System A | 11%          | 9%           |              |
| Registration System E | 7%           |              |              |
| Registration System H | 7%           | 5%           | 3%           |
| Registration System L | 7%           |              |              |
| Registration System B | 5%           | 7%           | 4%           |
| Registration System G | 5%           |              |              |
| Registration System D | 4%           | 1%           | 3%           |
| Registration System F | 3%           | 5%           | 5%           |
| Registration System M | 2%           | 5%           |              |
| Registration System C | 2%           | 4%           | 5%           |
| Registration System J | 2%           |              |              |
| Registration System N |              | 1%           |              |
| Registration System K | 1%           | 1%           |              |
| Registration System I |              |              | 3%           |
| Don't know            | 6%           | 8%           | 8%           |
| No system             | 4%           | 9%           | 12%          |
| Other                 | 23%          | 33%          | 30%          |

Registration Systems

Spread Legend:

Very Satisfied

Satisfied

Dissatisfied

Very Dissatisfied

Unsure

| System (2025)                          | Very Satisfied | Satisfied | Dissatisfied | Very Dissatisf... | Unsure |
|----------------------------------------|----------------|-----------|--------------|-------------------|--------|
| Modern Campus Lifelong Learning (n=33) | 9%             | 76%       | 9%           | 3%                | 3%     |
| System built in-house (n=23)           | 17%            | 39%       | 26%          | 13%               | 4%     |
| Registration System A (n=14)           | 7%             | 57%       | 14%          | 14%               | 7%     |
| Registration System E (n=9)            | 22%            | 33%       | 22%          |                   | 22%    |
| Registration System B (n=6)            |                | 67%       | 17%          | 17%               |        |
| Registration System G (n=6)            |                | 33%       |              | 33%               | 33%    |
| Registration System D (n=5)            |                | 40%       | 60%          |                   |        |
| Registration System C (n=2)            |                | 50%       |              | 50%               |        |
| Registration System J (n=2)            |                | 50%       | 50%          |                   |        |
| Registration System K (n=1)            |                |           | 100%         |                   |        |

| System (2024)                | Very Satisfied | Satisfied | Dissatisfied | Very Dissatisf... | Unsure |
|------------------------------|----------------|-----------|--------------|-------------------|--------|
| Modern Campus (n=42)         | 17%            | 62%       | 7%           | 2%                | 12%    |
| Registration System A (n=11) | 9%             | 64%       | 18%          | 9%                |        |
| Registration System B (n=9)  |                | 44%       | 11%          | 33%               | 11%    |
| Registration System C (n=6)  | 17%            | 17%       | 17%          | 50%               |        |
| Registration System D (n=1)  |                |           | 100%         |                   |        |
| Registration System K (n=1)  |                |           | 100%         |                   |        |

| System (2023)                | Very Satisfied | Satisfied | Dissatisfied | Very Dissatisf... | Unsure |
|------------------------------|----------------|-----------|--------------|-------------------|--------|
| Modern Campus (n=30)         | 23%            | 60%       | 7%           | 3%                | 7%     |
| Registration System A (n=16) |                | 56%       | 44%          |                   |        |
| In-House/Home-Grown (n=12)   | 8%             | 50%       | 8%           | 33%               |        |
| Registration System B (n=6)  | 17%            | 17%       | 17%          |                   | 50%    |
| Registration System C (n=7)  |                | 43%       | 43%          | 14%               |        |
| Registration System D (n=5)  |                | 80%       |              |                   | 20%    |
| Registration System F (n=8)  |                | 75%       | 13%          | 13%               |        |
| Registration System H (n=5)  | 20%            | 60%       | 20%          |                   |        |
| Registration System I (n=5)  |                | 40%       | 20%          | 40%               |        |

2025

Modern Campus Lifelong Learning had the greatest percentage of 2025 survey respondents very or somewhat satisfied (85%), followed by Registration System B (67%), and Registration System A (64%). Registration System E had the highest percentage of very satisfied respondents (22%).

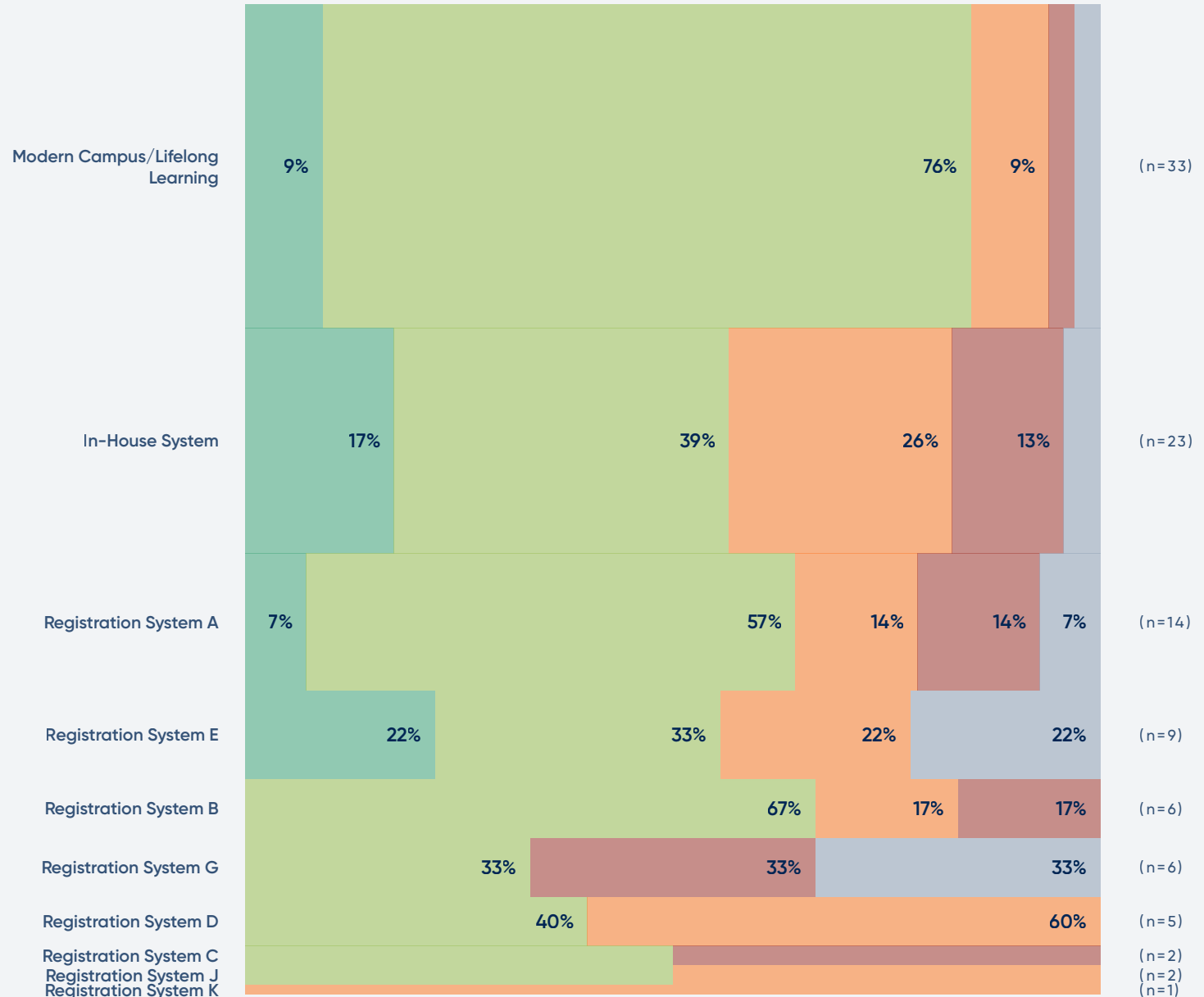
2024

Modern Campus had the greatest percentage of 2024 survey respondents very or somewhat satisfied (79%), followed by Registration System A (73%), and Registration System B (44%).

2023

In 2023 Modern Campus had the greatest percentage of respondents very or somewhat satisfied (83%).

Registration System Satisfaction (2025, Stacked Bar)

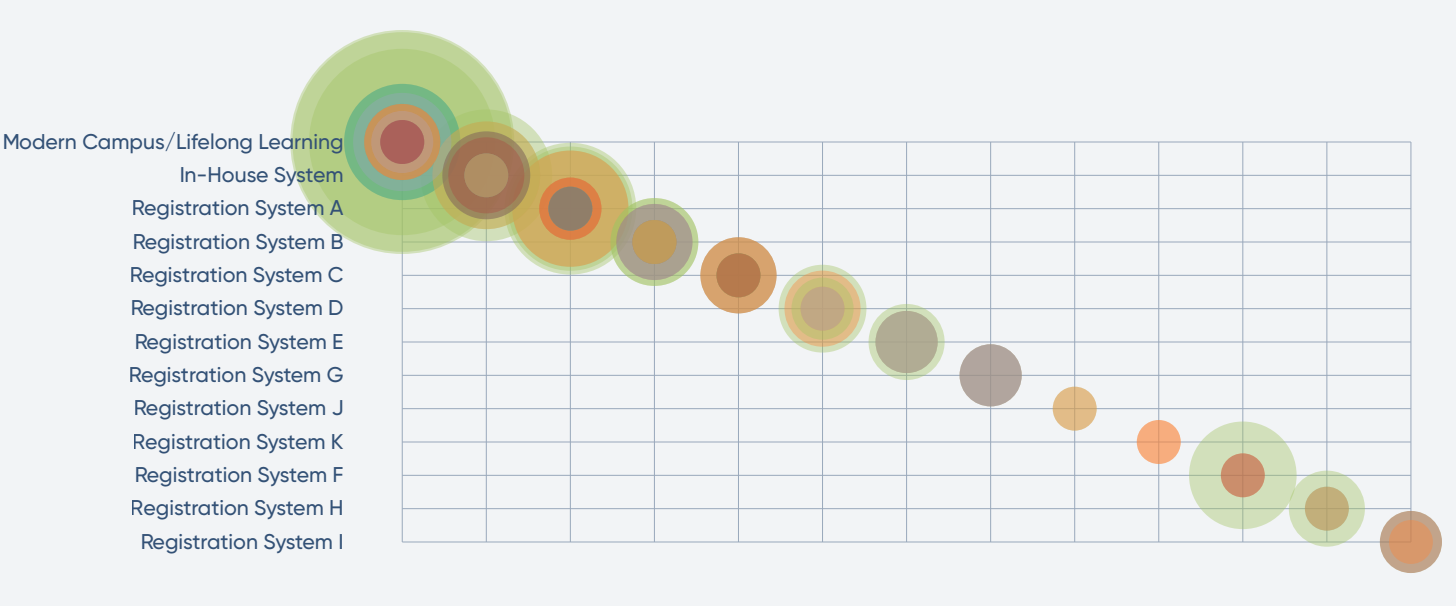
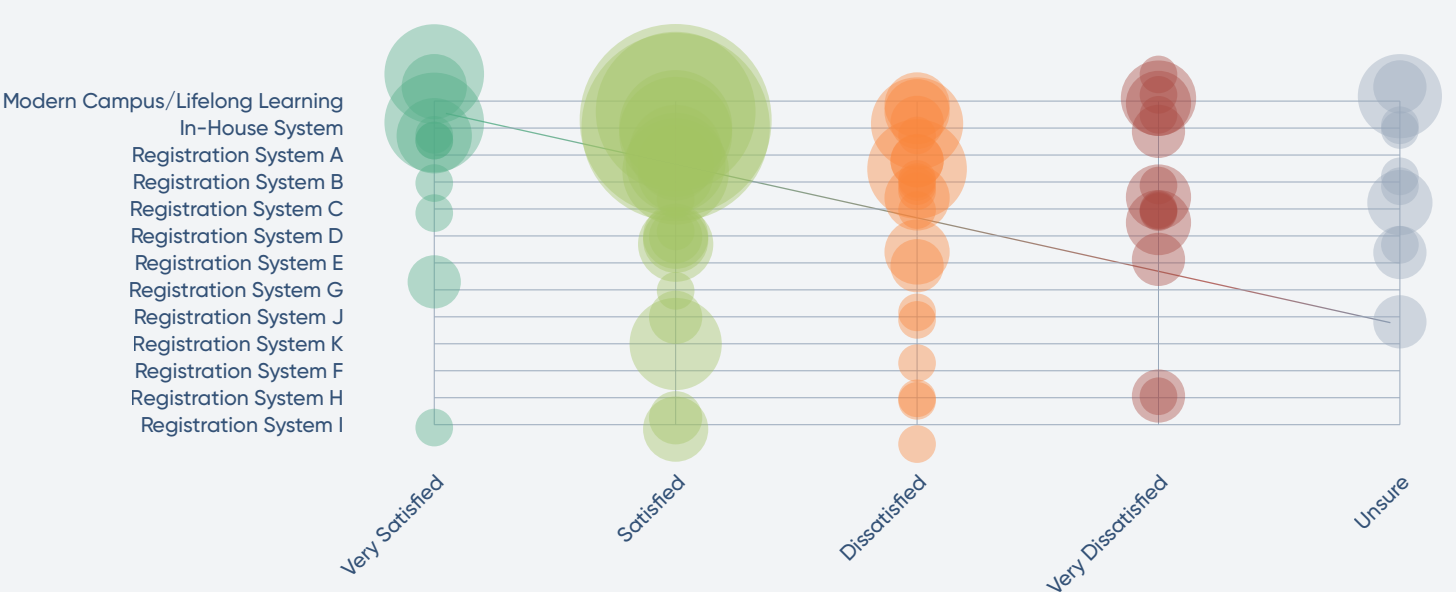
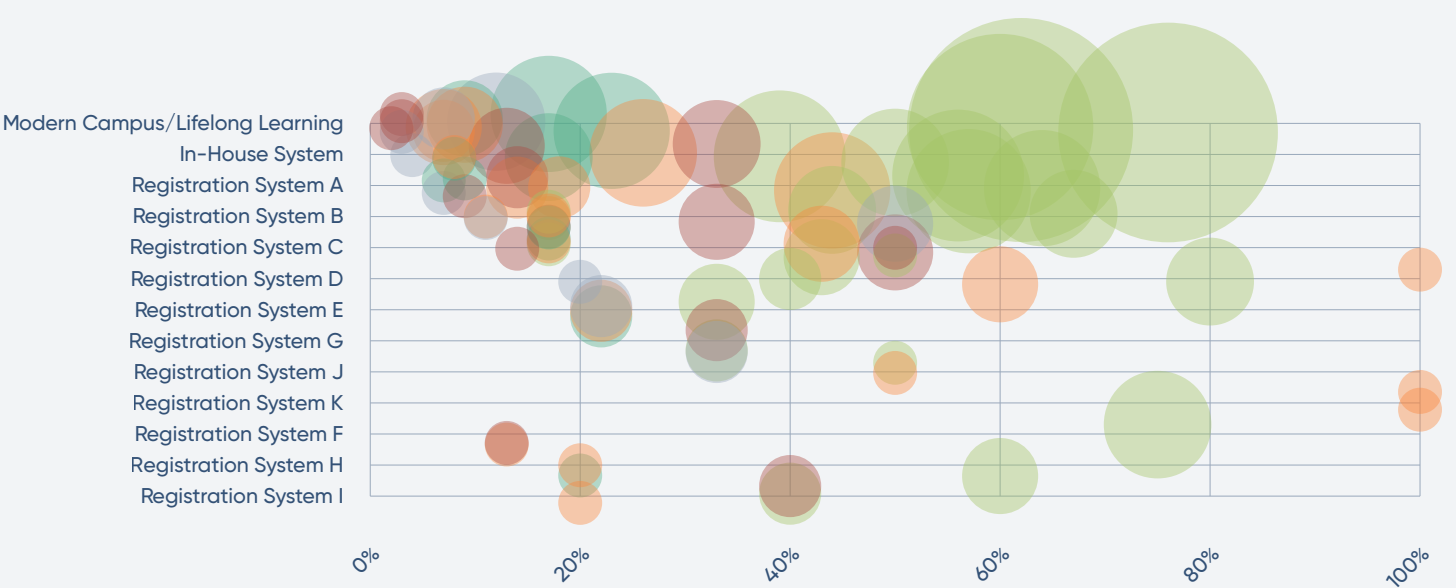


Registration Systems

Supplemental data visualizations aggregating satisfaction scores over the last three years; combined data.

**Spread Legend:**

- Very Satisfied
- Satisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Very Dissatisfied
- Unsure

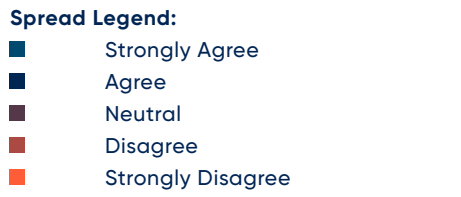
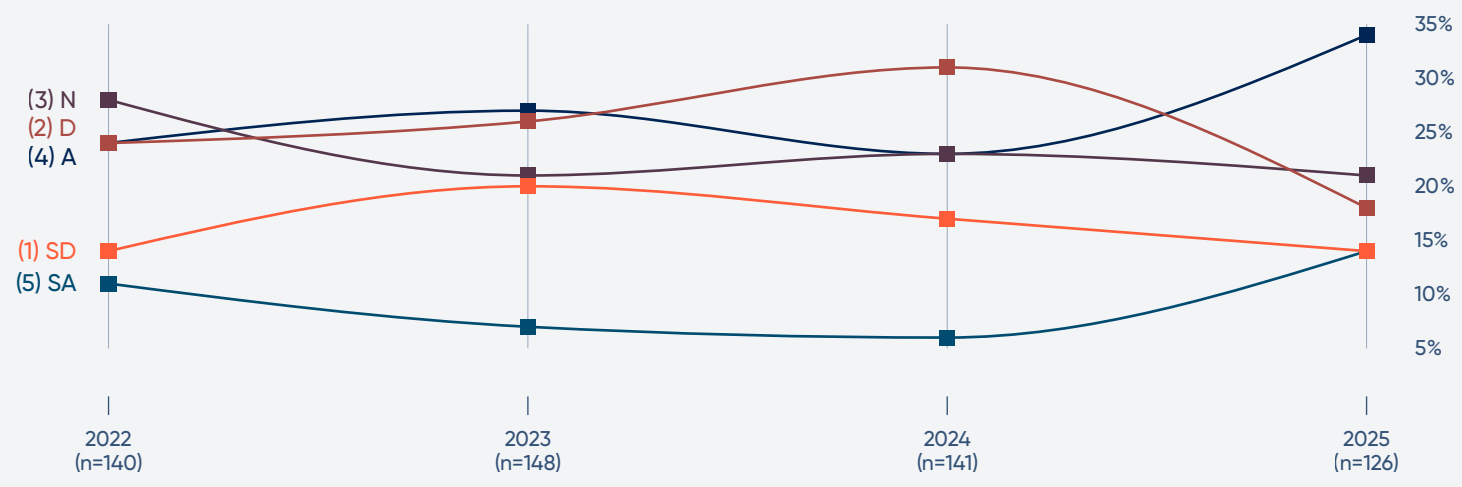




# Ease of Data Access

**Spread:** Please rate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statement:  
It is easy for members of my institution to access real-time enrollment data for online and PCE students.

Ease of Data Access Over Time (Over Time, Line)



## Over Time

In 2025, a greater percentage of respondents strongly agree or agree (48%) that it is easy for members of their institution to access real-time enrollment data for online and PCE students, compared to the 2024 (29%), 2023 (34%), and 2022 (35%) surveys.

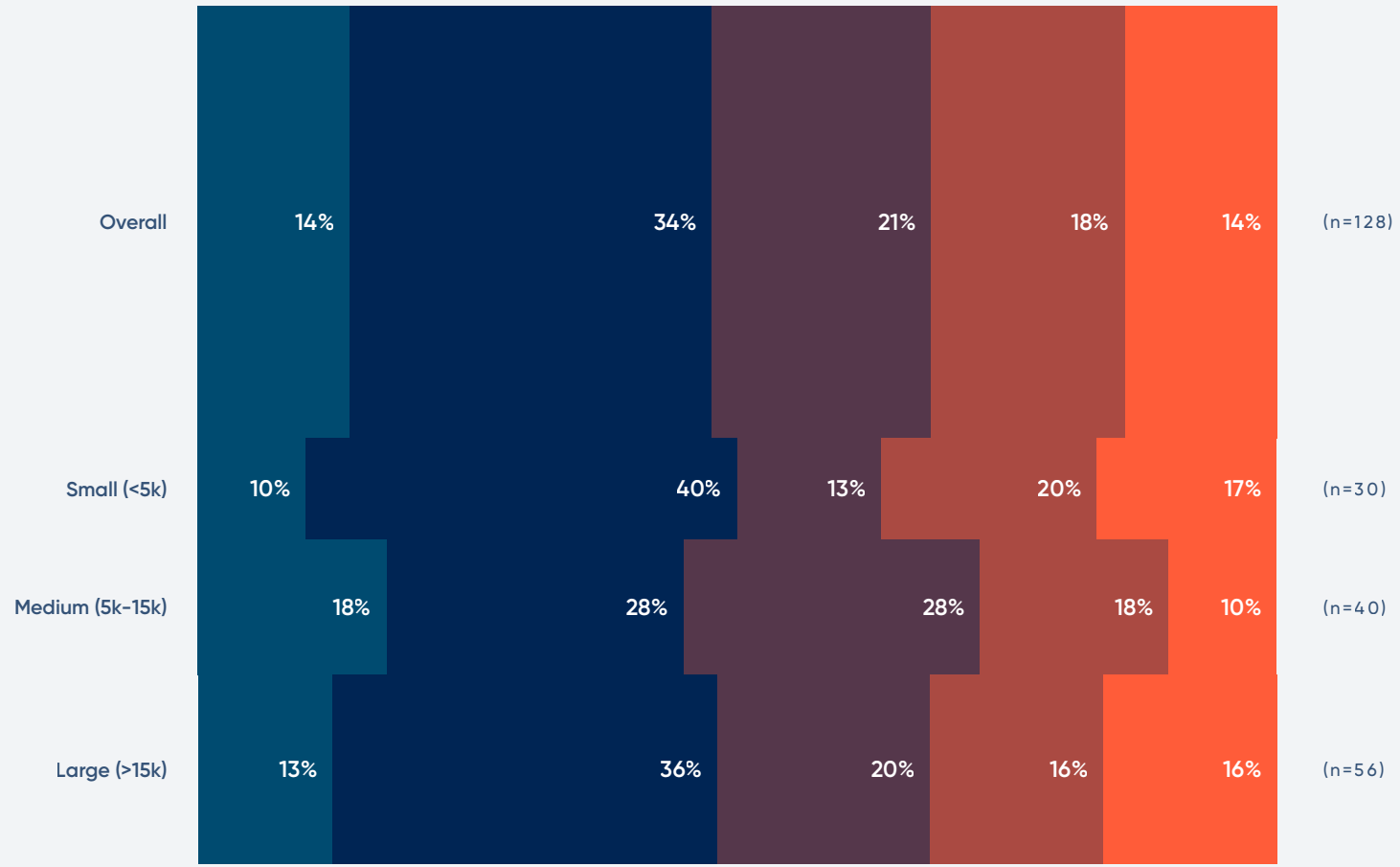
## By Size

Individuals from small institutions were slightly more likely to strongly agree or agree that it is easy for their members to access real-time enrollment data for online and PCE students (50%), compared to large (49%), and medium institutions (46%).

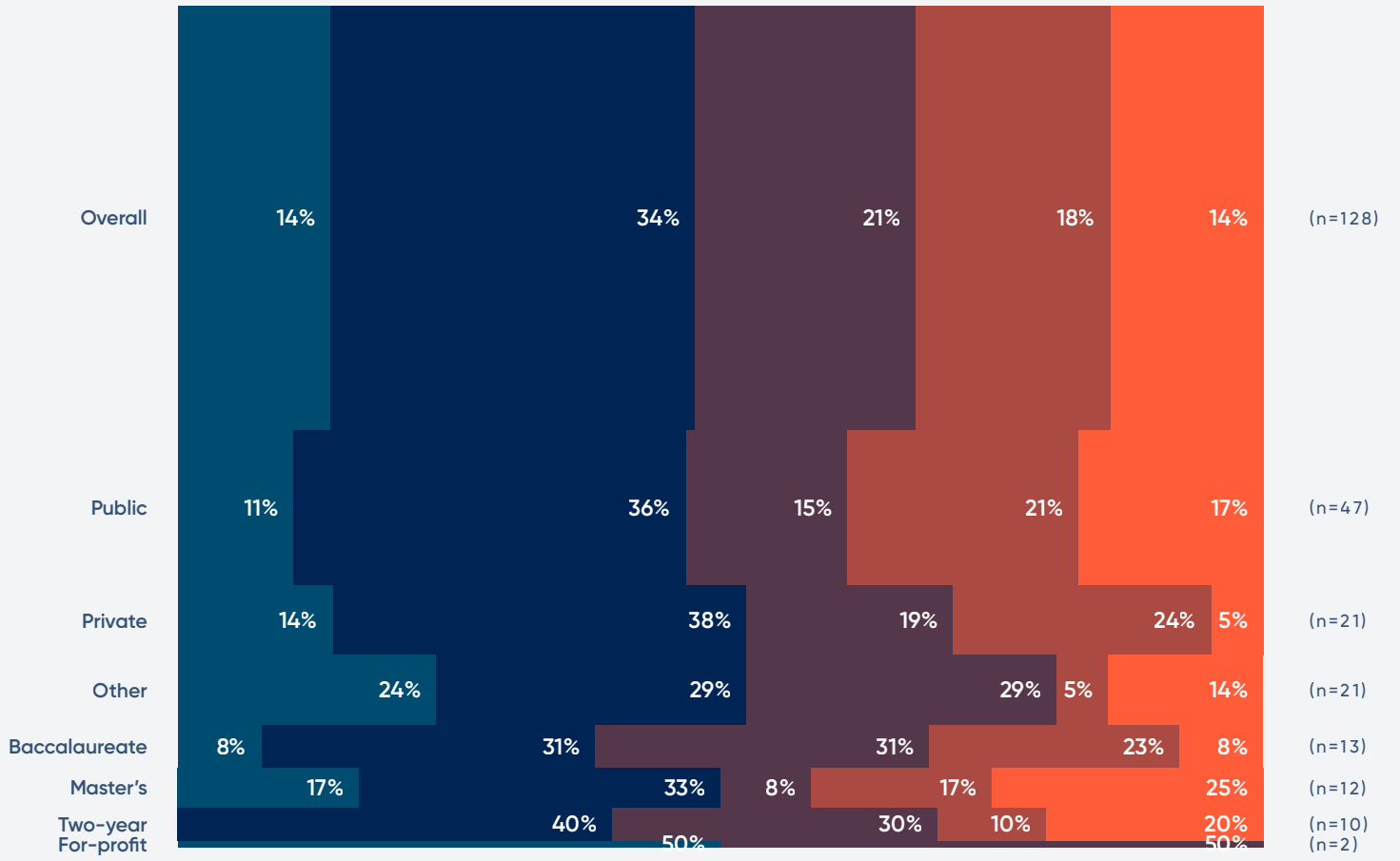
## By Type

Respondents from private research institutions are the most likely to strongly agree or agree that it is easy for members of their institution to access real-time enrollment data for online and PCE students (52%), while half of those from master’s comprehensive institutions are most likely to strongly agree or agree (50%).

Ease of Data Access by Size (2025, Stacked Bar)



Ease of Data Access by Type (2025, Stacked Bar)



Program Efficacy

Half (50%) disagree or strongly disagree that their unit has the appropriate amount of staff required to execute their institutions’ goals for the unit.

Staffing and Support

Seventy-nine percent (79%) of respondents strongly agree or agree that their online and PCE unit has the support and buy-in from senior leadership to scale and expand on-line and PCE credentials or programs, 69% strongly agree or agree that their online and PCE unit is successful in its mission to be revenue-generating, and 46% strongly agree or agree that their online and PCE unit is able to reinvest revenue back into the unit rather than to a centralized unit.

Below (line): Combined percentage of agree and strongly agree

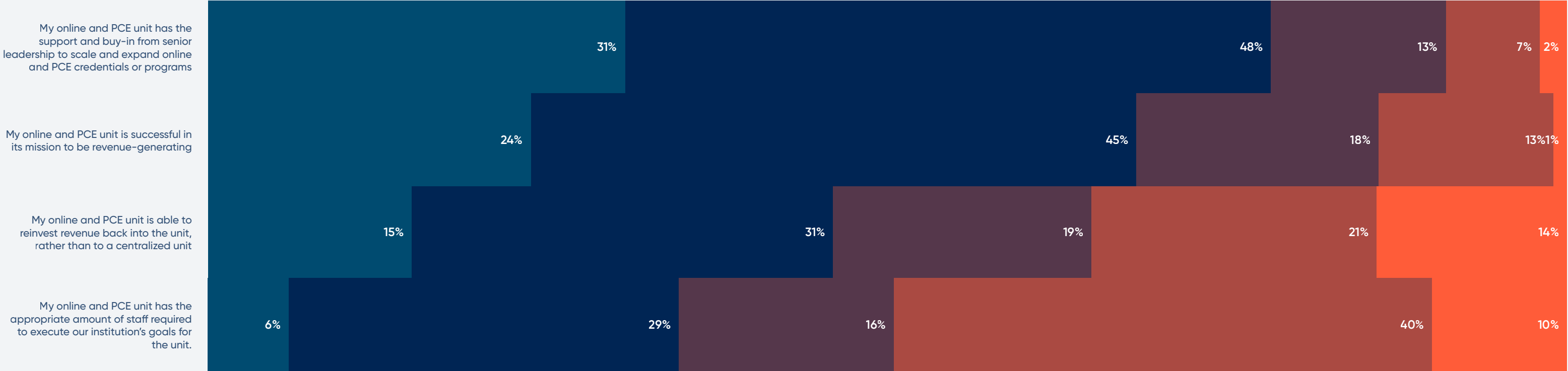
Staffing Trends

The percentage of respondents who agreed with the statement that their online and PCE unit has the appropriate amount of staff required to execute our institution’s goals for the unit more than doubled from 2023 and 2024, but then fell by 10% in 2025. The percentage of respondents agreeing that they have support and buy-in from senior academic leadership to scale and expand online and PCE courses and programs had increased year over year until slightly decreasing in 2025.

Staffing & Support

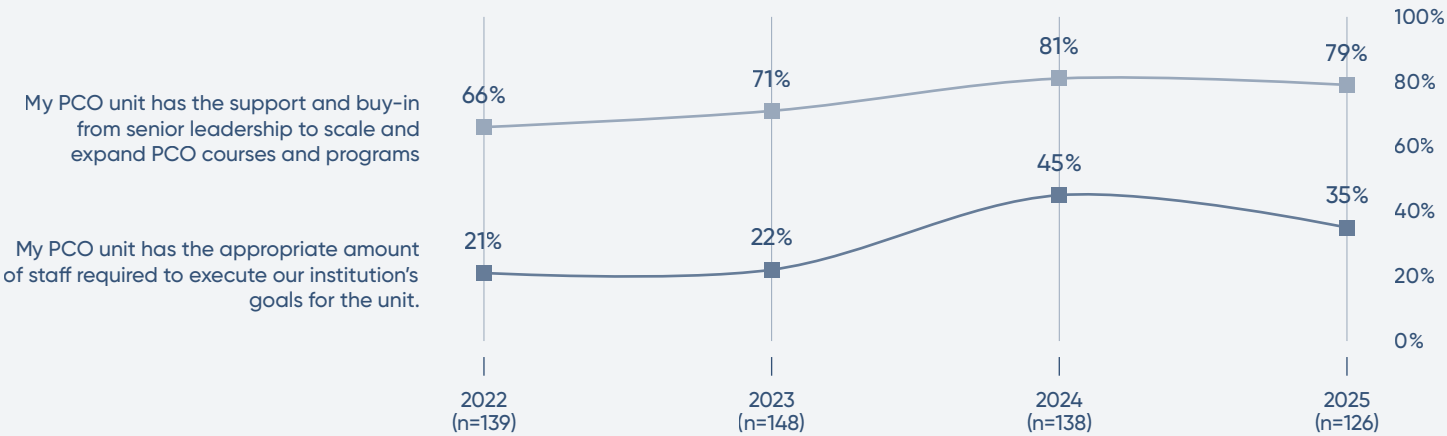
(2025, Bar) (n=126)

Opinion Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree



Staffing & Support, Agree & Strongly Agree

(Over Time, Line)



# Positions Lacking

## 2025

In 2025, twenty-seven percent (27%) of institutions currently lack finance/business analyst positions within their online and PCE units, followed by program managers/directors (17%), marketing support positions (14%), instructional designers (13%), and tech/data staff (12%).

Positions mentioned fewer than three times were placed in the “Other” category which included summer camp staff, faculty liaison staff, and community development officers, among others.

## 2024

In 2024, 29% of institutions lacked marketing support positions within their PCO units, followed by finance/business analysts (19%), program managers/directors (16%), administrative support (15%), and program developers/coordinators (15%).

Positions mentioned fewer than four times were placed in the “Other” category which included human resource specialists, recruiters, and learning specialists, among others.

Spread Legend:

2025 (n=126)

2024 (n=110)

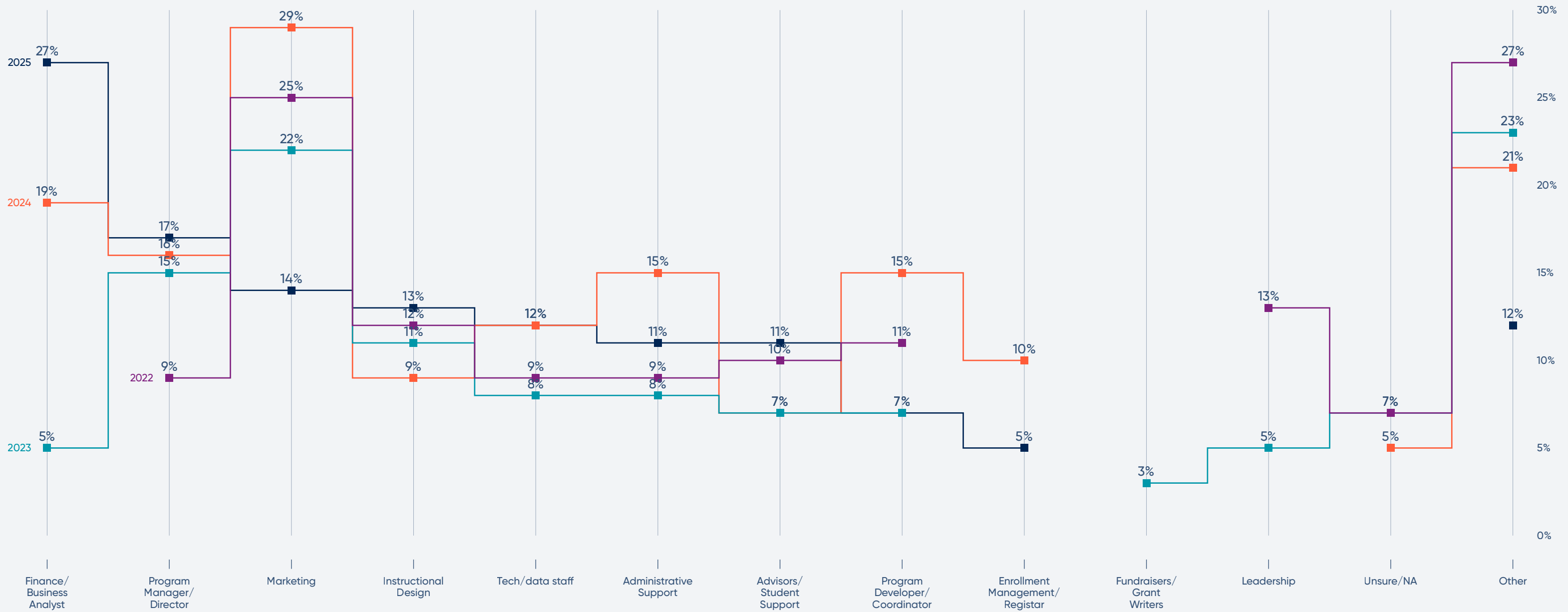
2023 (n=128)

2022 (n=124)

## Over Time

An increasing percentage of online and PCE/PCO units are lacking finance/business positions and program manager/director positions.

Positions Currently Lacking within Online and PCE/PCO Units

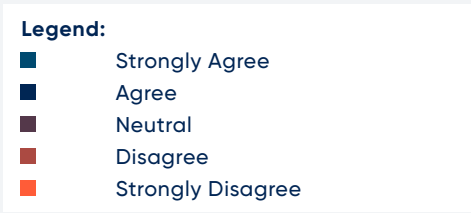


Digital Credentials

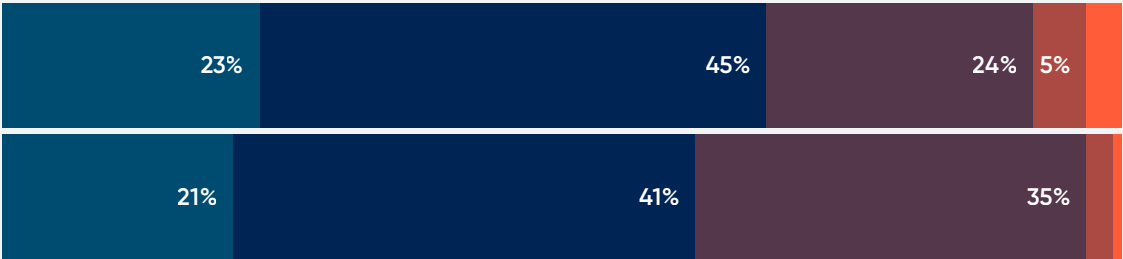
Opinions

Digital credentials effectively signal skills and competencies to employers

AI and other emerging technologies will help validate and verify digital credentials



(2025, Stacked Bar)



Opinions

Sixty-eight percent (68%) of online and PCE participants strongly agree or agree that digital credentials effectively signal skills and competencies to employers, while 62% strongly agree or agree that AI and other emerging technologies will help validate and verify digital credentials.

2025

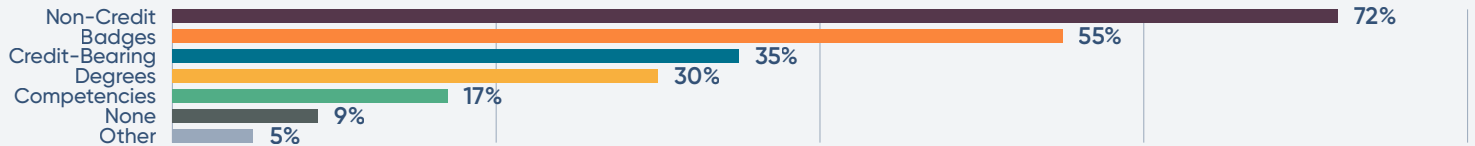
Seventy-two percent (72%) of on-line and PCE units currently offer non-credit certificates, 55% offer badges, 35% credit-bearing undergraduate or graduate certificates, 30% degrees, and 17% competencies, while 9% do not offer any digital credentials.

Over Time

In 2025, a smaller percentage of on-line and PCE units offer non-credit certificates and credit-bearing undergraduate or graduate certificates than previously. A significantly smaller percentage offer badges, from 28% to 36% less than prior years.

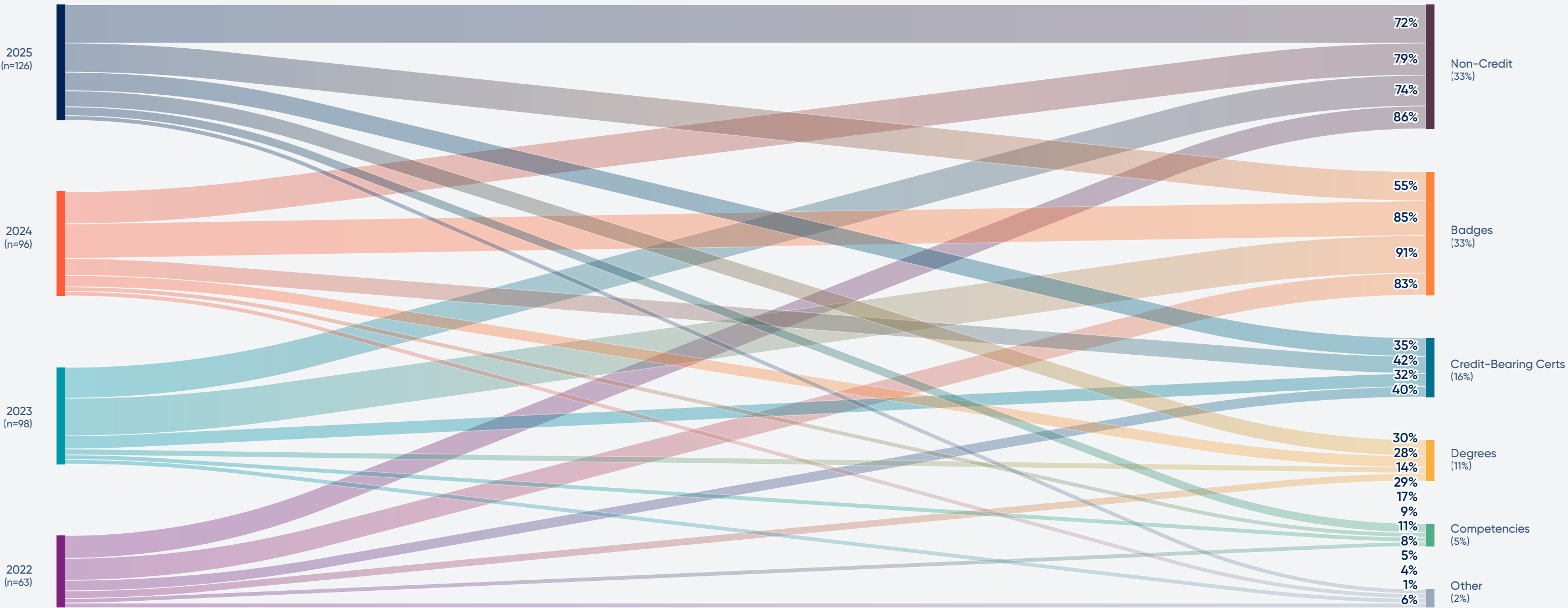
Offerings

(2025, Bar)



Offerings

(Over Time, Sankey)



This Sankey diagram shows the relationship between sample sizes per year and credentials offered via ribbon heights.

Note aggregate relationships, like the total sample size (n) and the overall representation of non-credit credentials (33%) vs. competencies (5%).

# Modern Campus is most used and liked. Ease of data access is climbing. Online and PCE Unit support remains high, despite lacking resources. Non-Credit/Badges are the most common digital credentials.

Institutions are improving access to data, making it easier to track and manage key metrics in professional, continuing, and online (PCE) education. Despite ongoing resource limitations, support for PCE units remains strong, reflecting their critical role in higher education. Digital credentials, particularly non-credit certificates and badges, continue to be the most widely offered, signaling sustained demand for flexible learning pathways.

As institutions navigate these shifts, efficient systems and strategic planning will be essential to optimizing resources, expanding credential offerings, and ensuring that learners have access to the skills and recognition needed to thrive in an evolving job market.

*“Institutions are making strides in data access and maintaining strong support for online and PCE units, even amid resource constraints. As digital credentials like non-credit certificates and badges continue to dominate, the need for streamlined systems and efficient management remains crucial for future growth.”*

*-Shauna Cox*



# Technology Integration and Innovation



Technology and innovation help institutions enhance student support, streamline operations, and maximize ROI in a competitive market.

# Technological Capacities

2025

Eighty-eight percent (88%) of respondents strongly agree or agree that it is important for technology used by their online and PCE unit to integrate seamlessly with the technology used by their main campus,

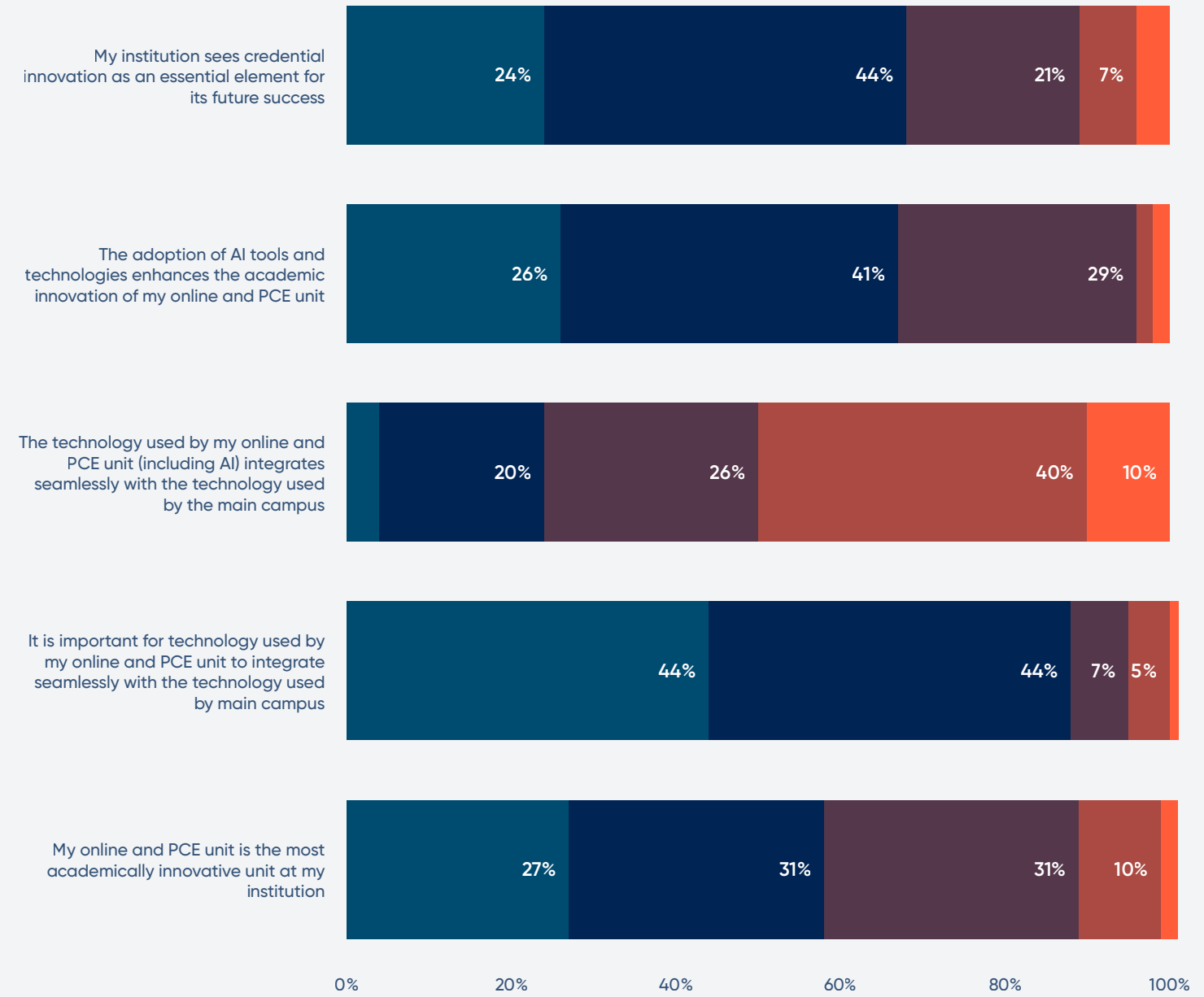
but 50% disagree or strongly disagree that this is taking place. Sixty-eight percent strongly agree or agree that their institution sees credential innovation as an essential element for its future success, as do 67% that the adoption of AI tools and technologies enhances the academic innovation of their online and PCE unit.



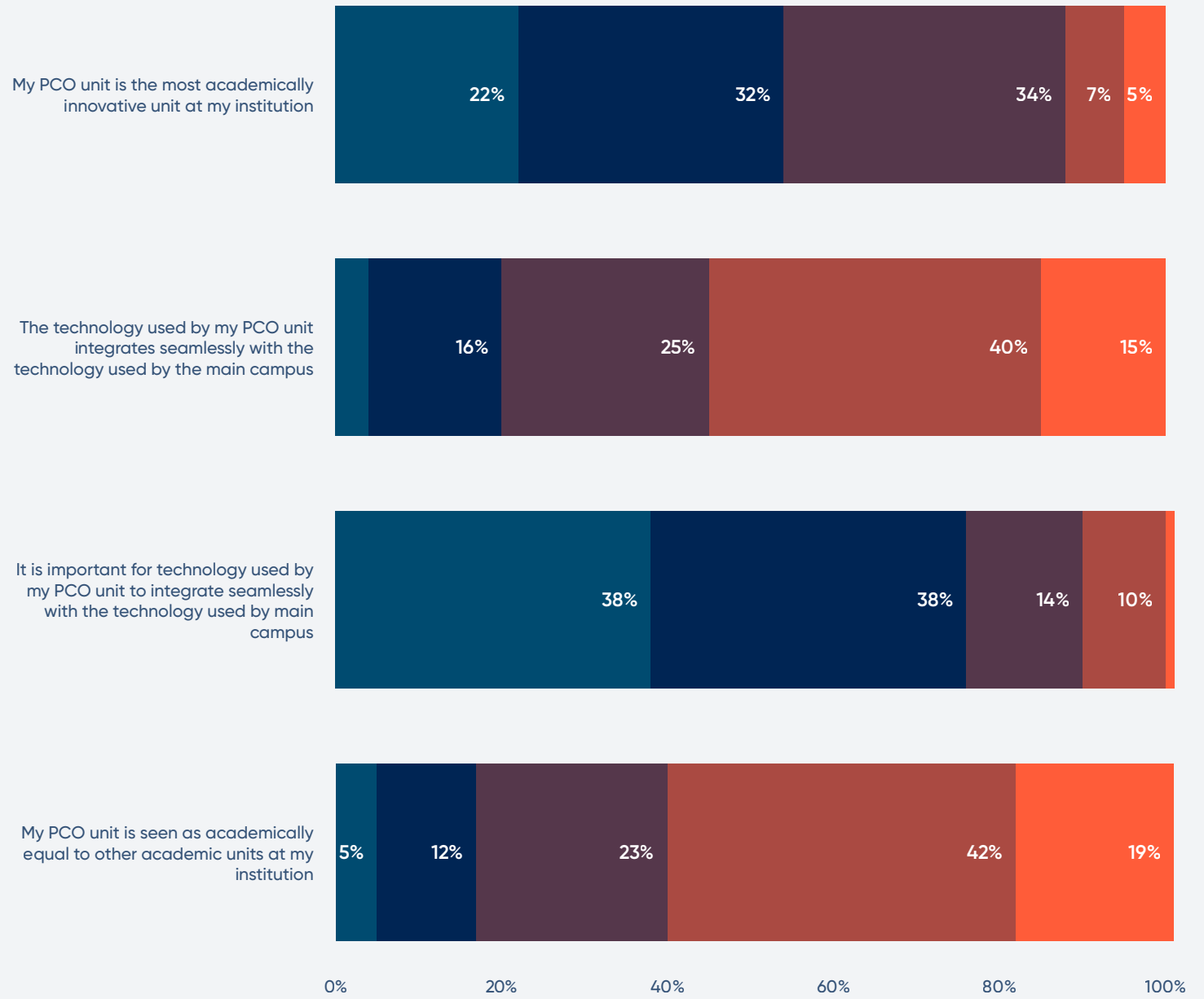
2024

In 2024, 76% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that it is important for technology used by their PCO unit to integrate seamlessly with the technology used by their main campus, but 55% disagreed or strongly disagreed that this is taking place. Fifty-four percent (54%) strongly agreed or agreed that their PCO unit is the most academically innovative unit at their institution, while only 17% strongly agreed or agreed that its PCO unit is seen as academically equal to other academic units at their institution.

Opinions on Technological and Academic Capacities (2025, Stacked Bar) (n=126)



Opinions on Technological and Academic Capacities (2024, Stacked Bar) (n=137)



# The majority of respondents agree that their tech should integrate with campus systems, and disagree that this is taking place.

Most respondents agree that their technology should integrate smoothly with campus systems, yet many report that this is not currently happening. The gap between expectation and reality highlights a critical challenge for institutions aiming to modernize operations and improve efficiency. Without proper integration, institutions face inefficiencies, data silos, and operational bottlenecks that hinder student support and administrative effectiveness. Addressing these issues requires a concerted effort to align technology with institutional needs, ensuring that systems communicate effectively and streamline workflows.

As digital transformation accelerates, seamless integration will be key to optimizing campus-wide technology and enhancing the overall student experience.

*“Institutions know seamless tech integration is crucial, yet many still struggle—creating inefficiencies that hinder student support, decision-making, and long-term success. To improve, they must prioritize strategic system alignment, invest in interoperable solutions and foster collaboration between IT and academic leaders.”*

*-Shauna Cox*

# Continuing Education Collaboration and Integration

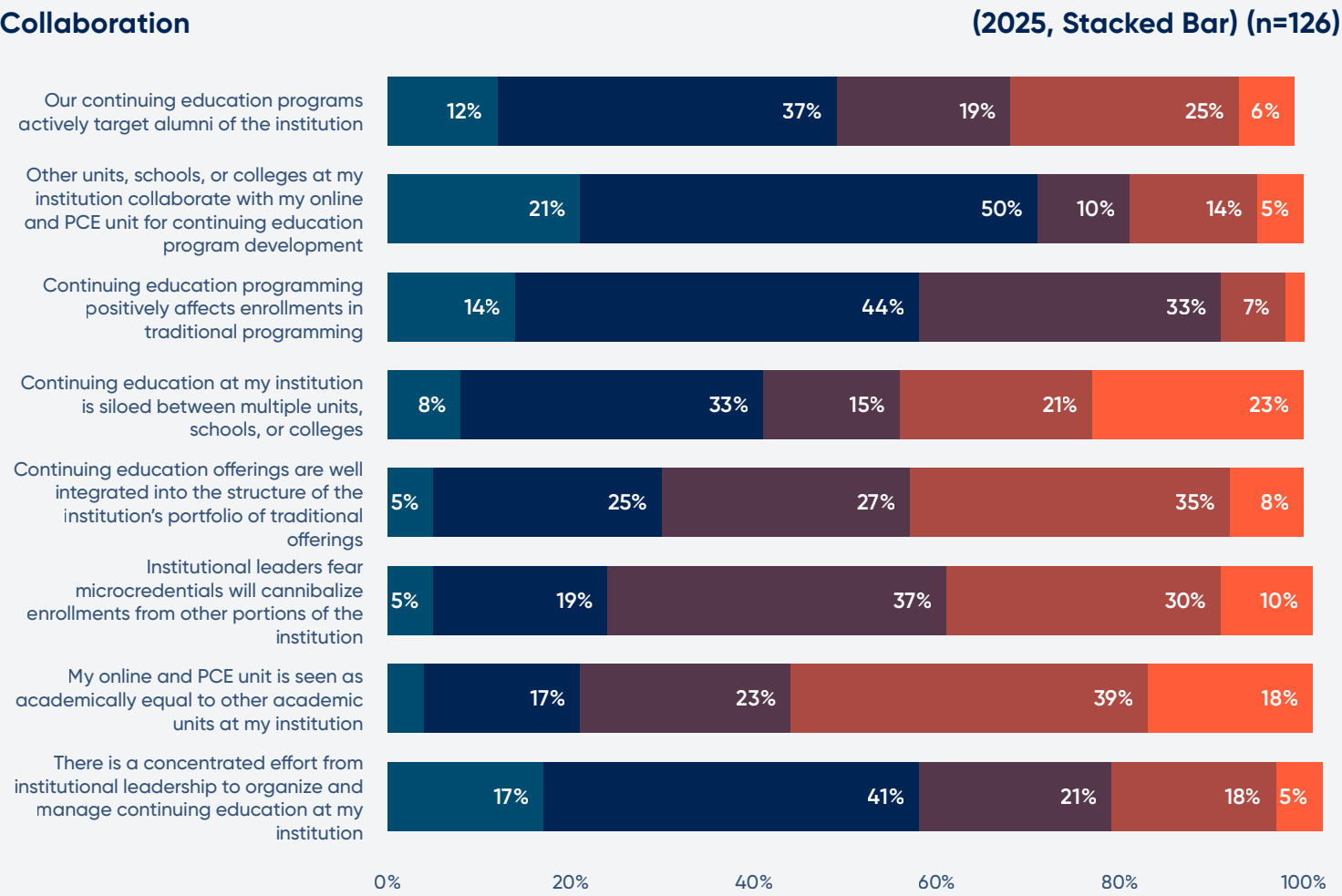


## Collaboration

**2025**

Respondents are most likely to strongly agree or agree that other units, schools, or colleges at their institution collaborate with their on-line and PCE unit for continuing education program development (71%), continuing education programming positively affects enrollments in traditional programming (58%), or that there is a concentrated effort from institutional leadership to organize and manage continuing education at their institution (58%).

Only 21% strongly agree or agree that their online and PCE unit is seen as academically equal to other academic units at their institution.

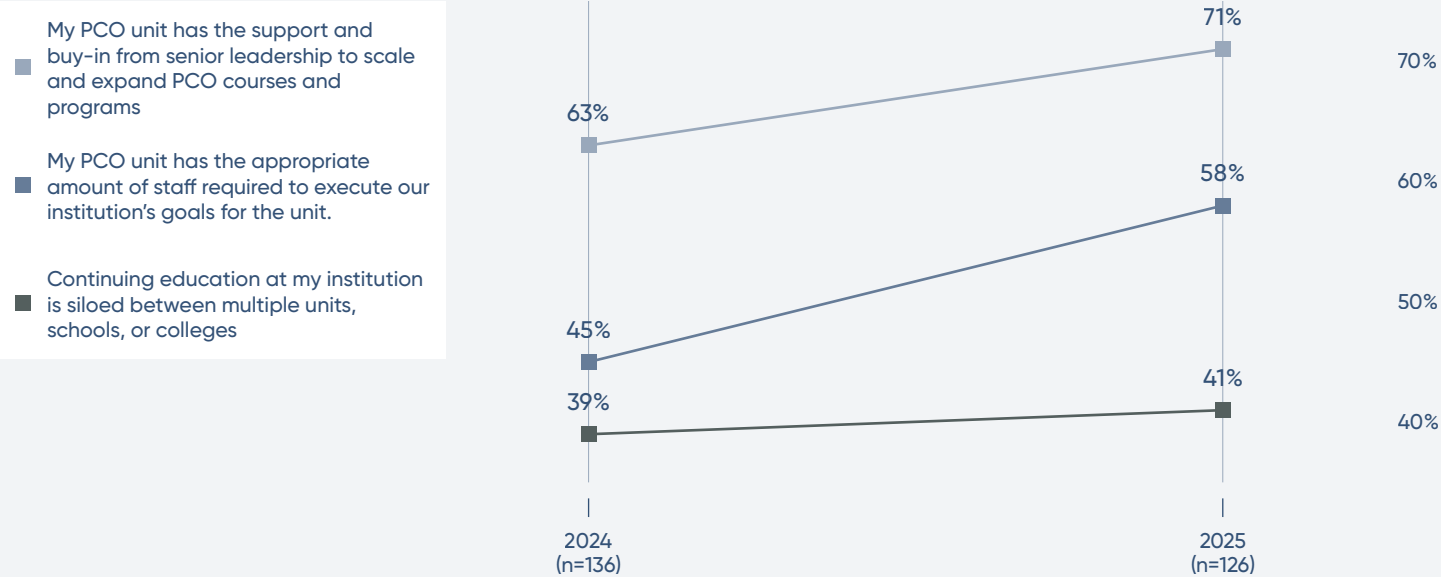


2024

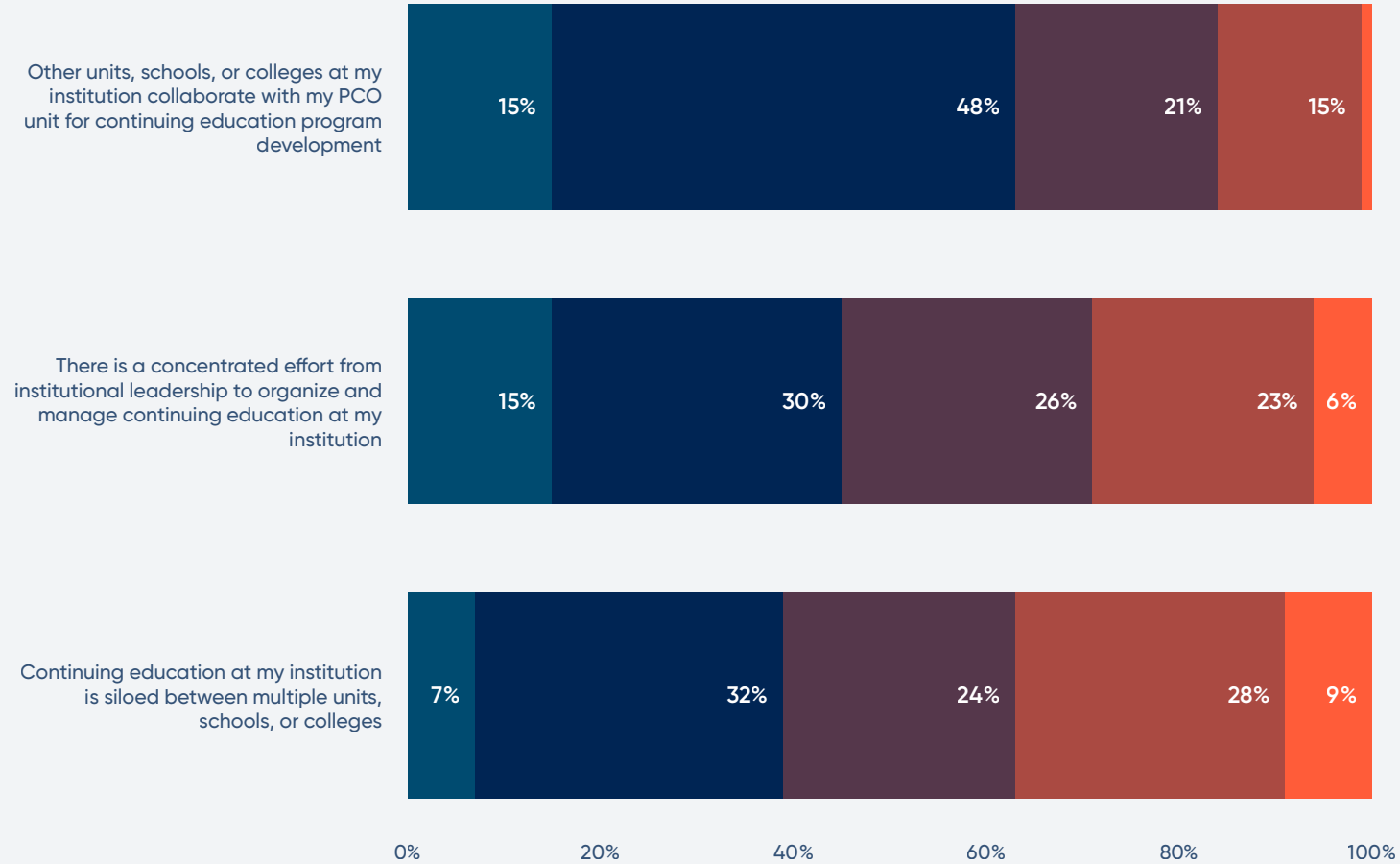
Sixty-three percent (63%) of 2024 survey respondents strongly agreed or agreed that other units, schools, or colleges at their institution collaborate with their PCO unit for continuing education program development, while 45% strongly agreed or agreed that there is a concentrated effort from institutional leadership to organize and manage continuing education at their institution.

Although 39% strongly agreed or agreed that continuing education is siloed between multiple units, schools, or colleges, 37% disagreed or strongly disagreed that this is the case.

Collaboration, Agree & Strongly Agree (Over Time, Line)



Collaboration (2024, Stacked Bar) (n=136)



**Over Time**

A greater percentage of 2025 respondents are most likely to strongly agree or agree with all statements regarding continuing education collaboration and integration compared to the 2024 survey.



# There is general agreement that collaboration between colleges and online and PCE Units facilitates programming. However, these units are still not seen as academically equal.

There is broad agreement that collaboration between colleges and professional, continuing, and online (PCE) units enhances program development, ensuring more responsive and workforce-aligned offerings. However, despite their growing role in higher education, online and PCE units continue to face challenges in being seen as academically equal to traditional departments. This perception gap can limit faculty buy-in, resource allocation, and integration into broader institutional strategies.

To bridge this divide, institutions must foster stronger partnerships, recognize the academic rigor of online and PCE programs, and create policies that position these units as essential contributors to the institution's educational mission and long-term success.

*“Stronger collaboration between colleges and online and PCE units drives innovation in programming, yet outdated perceptions continue to limit their academic standing—hindering their full potential to serve learners.”*  
-Shauna Cox



Higher education has made significant progress in the way of digital credentialing and online learning, but as always, there is still farther to go.

## Key Insights

The 2025 State of Continuing Education report findings spotlight a pivotal moment for higher education, as institutions navigate an evolving landscape shaped by shifting learner demands, workforce needs, technological limitations, and institutional constraints.

While facing enrollment challenges, staffing shortages, and concerns over credential viability, institutions are responding with strategic innovation. They are redefining continuing education models and expanding their reach to new learner demographics.





A key trend emerging from this study is the growing alignment between higher education and the labor market.

The percentage of online and PCE units offering corporate training, industry credential preparation, and workforce-aligned programming has increased year-over-year, signaling increased integration between education and industry needs. Among institutions that currently offer test/industry credentials or certification preparation, 30% have introduced these programs within the past two years, while 29% have introduced corporate training and partnerships in the same timeframe.

The 2025 study showed an increase in institutions serving larger, regional, or national employers’ audiences (63%). At the same time, however, the data reveals a slight decline in the percentage of institutions offering microcredentials, credit-bearing and non-credit certificates, and



Institutions are broadening their learner base.

*“The percentage of online and PCE units offering corporate training, industry credential preparation, and workforce-aligned programming has increased year-over-year, signaling increased integration between education and industry needs.”*

ing and meeting employer expectations could be driving this reassessment.

Institutions are also broadening their learner base, with a greater percentage of online and PCE units serving government agencies, healthcare professionals, and alumni learners compared to previous years. Conversely, the percentage of units serving adult learners and transfer students has decreased from 2024 and 2023. This shift reflects a strategic move beyond traditional adult learners, as institutions seek to attract a wider range of lifelong learners and professionals. Despite overall online and PCE enrollment reaching its lowest levels since 2021-2022, this expansion into new audiences presents a promising path for long-term institutional stability and growth.

Consistent with the 2024 State of Continuing Education report, institutional leadership support for online and PCE units remains strong, even as staffing constraints persist.

The percentage of respondents who felt their online and PCE unit had the appropriate staffing levels doubled between 2023 and 2024 but dropped by 10% in 2025. While investments have been made, institutions are still working to optimize resource allocation. When asked about staffing gaps, 27% of respondents cited a need for roles related to finance, business, and industry analysts, followed by program managers/directors (17%). This underscores the need for strong business expertise and leadership to help institutions adapt and expand their online and PCE programs effectively.

Online and PCE Units are evolving through opportunities and obstacles.



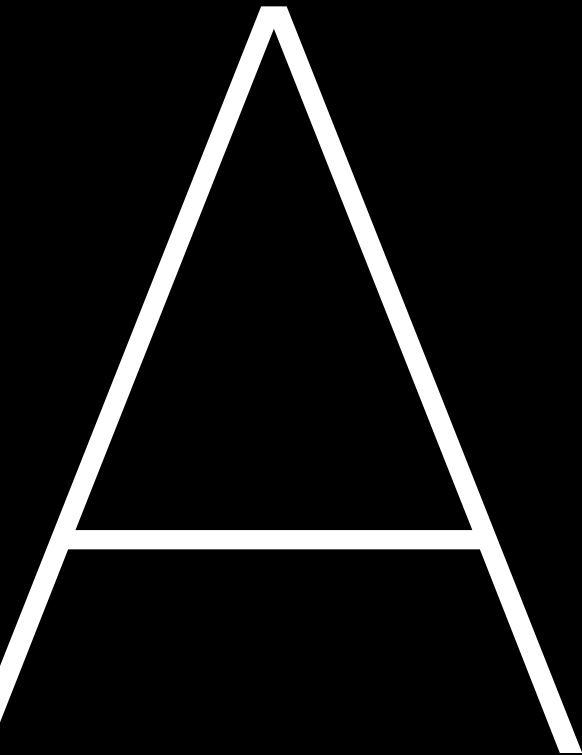
Online and PCE units continue to struggle with staffing and resource allocation.

Despite being recognized as the most innovative units on campus, online and PCE units still face both technological and institutional barriers.

Technology integration remains a critical area of opportunity. In 2025, 48% of respondents agreed that it is easy to access real-time enrollment data for online and PCE students, an improvement from previous years but still an obstacle for many. Additionally, only 21% of respondents believe that their units are viewed as academically equal to other academic departments, highlighting ongoing institutional hurdles. Strengthening technological infrastructure and institutional alignment will be essential to maximizing their impact and fully realizing their potential.

The 2025 State of Continuing Education study paints a clear picture: online and PCE units are evolving, with both opportunities and obstacles shaping their trajectory.

By prioritizing workforce alignment, expanding access to different types of learners, and addressing structural challenges, institutions can strengthen continuing education’s role as essential and enduring.



DEMOGRAPHICS

Title:  
Respondent  
Geography

Chart Type:  
Map

[Page 11](#)

| Country (2025)                                                                                             | Percent (Respective) |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|
| United States of America                                                                                   | 53%                  |
| Canada                                                                                                     | 21%                  |
| Columbia                                                                                                   | 6%                   |
| Mexico                                                                                                     | 6%                   |
| Ecuador, El Salvador                                                                                       | 3%                   |
| Bolivia, Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Honduras, Peru, Spain, Uruguay, Venezuela | 1%                   |

DEMOGRAPHICS

Title:  
Institution Type

Chart Type:  
Sankey

[Page 13](#)

| Institution Type            | 2025 (n=156) | 2024 (n=197) | 2023 (n=190) | 2022 (n=205) |
|-----------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Public Research             | 38%          | 50%          | 50%          | 36%          |
| Private Research            | 15%          | 10%          | 14%          | 9%           |
| Baccalaureate/special focus | 9%           | 5%           | 2%           | 7%           |
| Two-year                    | 8%           | 16%          | 11%          | 15%          |
| Master's comprehensive      | 8%           | 11%          | 13%          | 20%          |
| For-profit                  | 2%           | 1%           | 1%           | 2%           |
| Other                       | 21%          | 8%           | 10%          | 12%          |

DEMOGRAPHICS

Title:  
Institution Size

Chart Type:  
Stacked Bar

[Page 14](#)

| Institution Size         | 2025 (n=156) | 2024 (n=197) | 2023 (n=190) | 2022 (n=205) |
|--------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Large (over 15,000)      | 70%          | 93%          | 91%          | 82%          |
| Medium (5,000 to 15,000) | 48%          | 61%          | 59%          | 68%          |
| Small (fewer than 5,000) | 37%          | 43%          | 40%          | 57%          |

DEMOGRAPHICS

Title:  
Online and PCE Unit Description

Chart Type:  
Bar

[Page 15](#)

| Description                                                                                                                           | 2025 (n=143) | 2024 (n=182) | 2023 (n=190) |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Centralized with programming and support coming primarily from one professional, continuing, and/or online education unit             | 47%          | 45%          | 47%          |
| Decentralized with programming coming out of other academic colleges or units, but supported centrally by a continuing education unit | 25%          | 25%          | 26%          |
| Decentralized with programming and support coming from academic colleges/schools and different support units                          | 18%          | 18%          | 18%          |
| Other                                                                                                                                 | 10%          | 12%          | 8%           |

DEMOGRAPHICS

Title:  
Respondent Titles

Chart Type:  
Treemap

[Page 17](#)

| Respondent Title                      | 2025 (n=143) | 2024 (n=182) | 2023 (n=190) | 2022 (n=205) |
|---------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Director of Continuing Education      | 22%          | 7%           | 8%           | 5%           |
| (Sr.) Executive Director (general)    | 12%          | 12%          | 13%          | 12%          |
| Director (general)                    | 10%          | 15%          | 14%          | 13%          |
| Dean (general)                        | 8%           | 12%          | 14%          | 13%          |
| Assist./Assoc. Vice President/Provost | 8%           | 9%           | 4%           | 7%           |
| Manager                               | 7%           | 3%           | 6%           | 3%           |
| Vice President                        | 6%           | 3%           | 2%           | 6%           |
| Vice Provost                          | 6%           | 4%           | 4%           | 2%           |
| Project/Program Manager/Coordinator   | 5%           | 4%           |              |              |
| Vice/Assoc. Dean                      | 5%           | 6%           |              |              |
| Dean of Continuing Ed/Studies         | 4%           | 6%           | 5%           | 5%           |
| Assist./Assoc. Director               | 4%           | 2%           | 3%           |              |
| Professor/Advisor/Educator            |              | 5%           |              |              |
| President/CEO                         |              | 2%           | 2%           | 3%           |
| Assoc. Dean/Provost                   |              |              | 6%           | 8%           |
| Assoc. Professor                      |              |              |              | 2%           |
| Other                                 | 5%           | 11%          | 21%          | 21%          |

PROGRAMS

Title:  
Programs or Credentials Offered by Online and PCE Unit

Chart Type:  
Multiple

[Page 53](#)

| Credential                                 | 2025 (n=140) | 2024 (n=176) | 2023 (n=166) | 2022 (n=205) |
|--------------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Corporate Training and Partnerships        | 79%          | 78%          | 72%          | 53%          |
| Microcredentials                           | 74%          | 84%          | 75%          | 63%          |
| Undergraduate and/or Graduate Certificates |              | 55%          | 61%          | 51%          |
| Test/Industry Credential Preparation       | 49%          | 43%          | 40%          | 35%          |
| Stackable Credentials                      | 39%          | 49%          | 50%          | 39%          |
| K-12 Programming                           | 32%          | 42%          | 42%          | 33%          |
| International Language Programs            | 26%          | 32%          | 27%          | 20%          |
| Osher/Senior Programming                   | 26%          | 27%          | 30%          | 18%          |
| Other                                      | 26%          | 23%          | 21%          | 11%          |
| None of the above                          |              | 2%           | 4%           | 1%           |

PROGRAMS

Title:  
Programs or Credentials Introduced Since 2024

Chart Type:  
Scatterplot

[Page 24](#)

| Credential (2025)                                     | Percent | Count (n) |
|-------------------------------------------------------|---------|-----------|
| Microcredentials                                      | 61%     | 104       |
| Stackable Credentials                                 | 46%     | 54        |
| Test/Industry Credential or Certification Preparation | 30%     | 69        |
| Corporate Training and Partnerships                   | 29%     | 111       |
| Graduate Certificates                                 | 23%     | 60        |
| Undergraduate Certificates                            | 23%     | 53        |
| Graduate Degrees                                      | 22%     | 54        |
| Osher/Senior Programming                              | 22%     | 36        |
| Undergraduate Degrees                                 | 20%     | 46        |
| International Language Programs                       | 17%     | 36        |
| K-12 Programming                                      | 16%     | 45        |
| Other                                                 | 42%     | 36        |



PROGRAMS

Title:  
Professional  
Certification Offerings

Chart Type:  
Pie

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Chart: Does your online and PCE unit offer any programs in which professional certifications (i.e., PMP, AWS, CISSP, etc.) are embedded in the program? (n=140)

|             | Response | 2025 (n=140) |
|-------------|----------|--------------|
| <div></div> | Yes      | 41%          |
| <div></div> | No       | 46%          |
| <div></div> | Unsure   | 13%          |

PROGRAMS

Title:  
Professional  
Certification Subjects

Chart Type:  
Bar

[Page 27](#)

Chart: In which subject areas does your online and PCE unit embed professional certifications within programs? Please select all that apply. (n=57)

|             | Subject               | 2025 (n=57) |
|-------------|-----------------------|-------------|
| <div></div> | Business & Management | 67%         |
| <div></div> | Technology            | 60%         |
| <div></div> | Healthcare            | 47%         |
| <div></div> | Engineering           | 26%         |
| <div></div> | Other                 | 18%         |

PROGRAMS

Title:  
Credit for Prior  
Learning

Chart Type:  
Pie

[Page 28](#)

Chart: Does your online and PCE unit offer credit for prior learning to students?

|             | Response | 2025 (n=140) |
|-------------|----------|--------------|
| <div></div> | Yes      | 33%          |
| <div></div> | No       | 60%          |
| <div></div> | Unsure   | 7%           |

PROGRAMS

Title:  
Challenges in  
Expanding Credentials

Chart Type:  
Bar

[Page 29](#)

| Challenge                                                | 2025 (n=135) |
|----------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| Administrative burden                                    | 59%          |
| Concerns around market demand                            | 56%          |
| Concerns around labor market relevance                   | 40%          |
| Time-to-market for course offerings                      | 39%          |
| Cost of launching new access points                      | 37%          |
| Fears of cannibalization                                 | 33%          |
| Lack of support from faculty                             | 29%          |
| Lack of faculty/subject matter expertise                 | 24%          |
| Lack of support from academic leadership                 | 23%          |
| Inability to deliver personalized experience to students | 12%          |
| Other                                                    | 14%          |

PROGRAMS

Title:  
Audiences Served

Chart Type:  
Multiple

[Page 31](#)

|             | Audience                                       | 2025 (n=134) | 2024 (n=167) | 2023 (n=166) | 2022 (n=205) |
|-------------|------------------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| <div></div> | Adult learners/transfers                       | 90%          | 96%          | 95%          | 70%          |
| <div></div> | Alumni                                         | 84%          | 75%          | 75%          | 55%          |
| <div></div> | Corporate audiences                            | 83%          | 79%          | 80%          | 55%          |
| <div></div> | Government or municipal workers                | 73%          | 62%          | 68%          | 48%          |
| <div></div> | Some college, no credential learners           | 69%          |              |              |              |
| <div></div> | Healthcare community                           | 68%          | 64%          | 62%          | 50%          |
| <div></div> | Local or small business                        | 66%          | 65%          | 60%          | 49%          |
| <div></div> | Larger, regional, or national employers        | 63%          | 54%          | 56%          | 42%          |
| <div></div> | Technology workers                             | 53%          | 52%          | 42%          | 36%          |
| <div></div> | International students                         | 46%          |              |              |              |
| <div></div> | Mature or older audiences (e.g., Osher)        | 42%          | 46%          | 42%          | 33%          |
| <div></div> | Youth (K-12)                                   | 35%          | 44%          | 37%          | 32%          |
| <div></div> | Law enforcement/emergency management personnel | 28%          | 40%          | 39%          | 27%          |
| <div></div> | Legal community (paralegal, CLE, etc.)         | 25%          | 23%          | 29%          | 22%          |
| <div></div> | Incarcerated individuals                       | 10%          | 17%          | 12%          | 11%          |
| <div></div> | Other                                          | 8%           | 15%          | 9%           | 9%           |
| <div></div> | None of the above                              | 1%           | 1%           | 2%           | 1%           |

PROGRAMS

Title:  
Average Online and  
PCE Unit Enrollments

Chart Type:  
Multiple

[Page 32](#)

| Year                              | Size (Average) |
|-----------------------------------|----------------|
| Enrollment Year 2023–2024 (n=130) | 15,925         |
| Enrollment Year 2022–2023 (n=154) | 17,570         |
| Enrollment Year 2021–2022 (n=165) | 12,047         |
| Enrollment Year 2020–2021 (n=153) | 16,384         |
| Enrollment Year 2019–2020 (n=153) | 18,940         |

PROGRAMS

Title:  
Online and PCE Unit  
Enrollments

Chart Type:  
Stacked Bar

[Page 33](#)

| Enrollment Size  | EY 23–24<br>(n=130) | EY 22–23<br>(n=154) | EY 21–22<br>(n=165) | EY 20–21<br>(n=153) | EY 19–20<br>(n=153) |
|------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| ■ Under 2,000    | 20%                 | 12%                 | 15%                 | 18%                 | 14%                 |
| ■ 2,000 to 3,999 | 10%                 | 11%                 | 8%                  | 9%                  | 8%                  |
| ■ 4,000 to 5,999 | 5%                  | 1%                  | 7%                  | 2%                  | 6%                  |
| ■ 6,000 to 7,999 | 4%                  | 1%                  | 3%                  | 3%                  | 3%                  |
| ■ 8,000 to 9,999 | 6%                  | 5%                  | 6%                  | 6%                  | 3%                  |
| ■ Over 10,000    | 21%                 | 22%                 | 14%                 | 16%                 | 17%                 |
| ■ Don't know     | 34%                 | 48%                 | 47%                 | 46%                 | 49%                 |

PROGRAMS

Title:  
Revenue to  
Centralized Units

Chart Type:  
Pie

[Page 34](#)

| Response                                                                                                      | 2025 (n=132) |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| ■ All revenue is sent back to the Provost's office or another centralized unit.                               | 27%          |
| ■ Flat percentage of online and PCE program revenue                                                           | 25%          |
| ■ Online and PCE unit does NOT return any revenue to the Provost's office or any other centralized unit.      | 7%           |
| ■ A fee-based system in which we return revenue based on centralized services that were used for the programs | 5%           |
| ■ Fixed dollar amount regardless of online and PCE program revenue                                            | 2%           |
| ■ Not sure                                                                                                    | 13%          |
| ■ Other                                                                                                       | 22%          |

SUPPORT

Title:  
Business Goals

Chart Type:  
Bar

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**Chart:** When thinking about essential elements that are required to achieve the business goals of your online and PCE unit, which of the following are most important? Please select no more than five.

| Element                                                                        | ■ 2025 (n=126) | ■ 2024 (n=145) |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Efficient registration process                                                 | 84             | 64             |
| Efficient course, section, and certificate management                          | 68             | 78             |
| Dashboards or reporting tools                                                  | 52             | 37             |
| Custom pricing and discounts                                                   | 39             | 52             |
| Custom corporate offerings                                                     | 48             | 52             |
| Awards and digital credentials                                                 | 49             | 47             |
| Student data in campus SIS                                                     | 37             | 38             |
| Security and privacy compliance                                                | 28             | 27             |
| Leveraging AI                                                                  | 18             |                |
| Ability to allow multiple campus divisions to manage their individual presence | 6              | 15             |
| Conference and event management                                                | 6              | 12             |
| SMS communications                                                             | 6              | 11             |
| Parental registration access                                                   | 4              | 7              |
| Other                                                                          | 4              | 4              |

SUPPORT

Title:  
Registration Systems  
Used

Chart Type:  
Stacked Bar

[Page 40](#)

| System                | ■ 2025 (n=126) | ■ 2024 (n=144) | ■ 2023 (n=155) |
|-----------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Modern Campus         | 26%            | 29%            | 20%            |
| System built in-house | 18%            |                | 8%             |
| Registration System A | 11%            | 9%             |                |
| Registration System E | 7%             |                |                |
| Registration System H | 7%             | 5%             | 3%             |
| Registration System L | 7%             |                |                |
| Registration System B | 5%             | 7%             | 4%             |
| Registration System G | 5%             |                |                |
| Registration System D | 4%             | 1%             | 3%             |
| Registration System F | 3%             | 5%             | 5%             |
| Registration System M | 2%             | 5%             |                |
| Registration System C | 2%             | 4%             | 5%             |
| Registration System J | 2%             |                |                |
| Registration System N |                | 1%             |                |
| Registration System K | 1%             | 1%             |                |
| Registration System I |                |                | 3%             |
| Don't know            | 6%             | 8%             | 8%             |
| No system             | 4%             | 9%             | 12%            |
| Other                 | 23%            | 33%            | 30%            |

Title:  
Registration System  
Satisfaction

Chart Type:  
Multiple

Page 43

| System (2025)                       | Very Satisf... | Satisfied | Dissatisfied | Very Dissat.. | Unsure |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|-----------|--------------|---------------|--------|
| Modern Campus Lifelong Lea...(n=33) | 9%             | 76%       | 9%           | 3%            | 3%     |
| System built in-house (n=23)        | 17%            | 39%       | 26%          | 13%           | 4%     |
| Registration System A (n=14)        | 7%             | 57%       | 14%          | 14%           | 7%     |
| Registration System E (n=9)         | 22%            | 33%       | 22%          |               | 22%    |
| Registration System B (n=6)         |                | 67%       | 17%          | 17%           |        |
| Registration System G (n=6)         |                | 33%       |              | 33%           | 33%    |
| Registration System D (n=5)         |                | 40%       | 60%          |               |        |
| Registration System C (n=2)         |                | 50%       |              | 50%           |        |
| Registration System J (n=2)         |                | 50%       | 50%          |               |        |
| Registration System K (n=1)         |                |           | 100%         |               |        |

| System (2024)                | Very Satisf... | Satisfied | Dissatisfied | Very Dissat.. | Unsure |
|------------------------------|----------------|-----------|--------------|---------------|--------|
| Modern Campus (n=42)         | 17%            | 62%       | 7%           | 2%            | 12%    |
| Registration System A (n=11) | 9%             | 64%       | 18%          | 9%            |        |
| Registration System B (n=9)  |                | 44%       | 11%          | 33%           | 11%    |
| Registration System C (n=6)  | 17%            | 17%       | 17%          | 50%           |        |
| Registration System D (n=1)  |                |           | 100%         |               |        |
| Registration System K (n=1)  |                |           | 100%         |               |        |

| System (2023)                | Very Satisf... | Satisfied | Dissatisfied | Very Dissat.. | Unsure |
|------------------------------|----------------|-----------|--------------|---------------|--------|
| Modern Campus (n=30)         | 23%            | 60%       | 7%           | 3%            | 7%     |
| Registration System A (n=16) |                | 56%       | 44%          |               |        |
| In-House/Home-Grown (n=12)   | 8%             | 50%       | 8%           | 33%           |        |
| Registration System B (n=6)  | 17%            | 17%       | 17%          |               | 50%    |
| Registration System C (n=7)  |                | 43%       | 43%          | 14%           |        |
| Registration System D (n=5)  |                | 80%       |              |               | 20%    |
| Registration System F (n=8)  |                | 75%       | 13%          | 13%           |        |
| Registration System H (n=5)  | 20%            | 60%       | 20%          |               |        |
| Registration System I (n=5)  |                | 40%       | 20%          | 40%           |        |

Title:  
Ease of Data Access  
Over Time

Chart Type:  
Line

Page 46

| Opinion           | 2025 (n=126) | 2024 (n=141) | 2023 (n=148) | 2022 (n=140) |
|-------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Strongly Agree    | 14%          | 6%           | 7%           | 11%          |
| Agree             | 34%          | 23%          | 27%          | 24%          |
| Neutral           | 21%          | 23%          | 21%          | 28%          |
| Disagree          | 18%          | 31%          | 26%          | 24%          |
| Strongly Disagree | 14%          | 17%          | 20%          | 14%          |

Title:  
Ease of Data Access  
by Size

Chart Type:  
Stacked Bar

Page 46

| Opinion (2025)    | Overall (n=126) | Small (n=30) | Medium (n=40) | Large (n=56) |
|-------------------|-----------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|
| Strongly Agree    | 14%             | 10%          | 18%           | 13%          |
| Agree             | 34%             | 40%          | 28%           | 36%          |
| Neutral           | 21%             | 13%          | 28%           | 20%          |
| Disagree          | 18%             | 20%          | 18%           | 16%          |
| Strongly Disagree | 14%             | 17%          | 10%           | 16%          |

Title:  
Ease of Data Access  
by Type

Chart Type:  
Stacked Bar

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| Opinion (2025)    | Overall (n=126) | Public (n=30)  | Private (n=21)   | Baccal...(n=13) |
|-------------------|-----------------|----------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Strongly Agree    | 14              | 11             | 14               | 8               |
| Agree             | 34              | 36             | 38               | 31              |
| Neutral           | 21              | 15             | 19               | 31              |
| Disagree          | 18              | 21             | 24               | 23              |
| Strongly Disagree | 14              | 17             | 5                | 8               |
| Opinion (2025)    | Master's (n=12) | Two-Yr. (n=10) | For-Profit (n=2) | Other (n=21)    |
| Strongly Agree    | 17              | 0              | 50               | 24              |
| Agree             | 33              | 40             | 0                | 29              |
| Neutral           | 8               | 30             | 50               | 29              |
| Disagree          | 17              | 10             | 0                | 5               |
| Strongly Disagree | 25              | 20             | 0                | 14              |

|                                |                                                                                                                                     |     |     |     |     |     |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| SUPPORT                        | Statement (2025) (n=126)                                                                                                            | SA  | A   | N   | D   | SD  |
| Title:<br>Staffing and Support | My online and PCE unit has the support and buy-in from senior leadership to scale and expand online and PCE credentials or programs | 31% | 48% | 13% | 7%  | 2%  |
| Chart Type:<br>Stacked Bar     | My online and PCE unit is successful in its mission to be revenue-generating                                                        | 24% | 45% | 18% | 13% | 1%  |
| Page 48                        | My online and PCE unit is able to reinvest revenue back into the unit, rather than to a centralized unit                            | 15% | 31% | 19% | 21% | 14% |
|                                | My online and PCE unit has the appropriate amount of staff required to execute our institution's goals for the unit.                | 6%  | 29% | 16% | 40% | 10% |

|                                          |                                                                                                            |              |              |              |              |
|------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| SUPPORT                                  | Agree & Strongly Agree                                                                                     | 2025 (n=126) | 2024 (n=138) | 2023 (n=148) | 2022 (n=139) |
| Title:<br>Staffing and Support Over Time | My PCO unit has the support and buy-in from senior leadership to scale and expand PCO courses and programs | 79%          | 81%          | 71%          | 66%          |
| Chart Type:<br>Line                      | My PCO unit has the appropriate amount of staff required to execute our institution's goals for the unit.  | 35%          | 45%          | 22%          | 21%          |

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|                                       |                                 |              |              |              |              |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| SUPPORT                               | Position                        | 2025 (n=126) | 2024 (n=110) | 2023 (n=128) | 2022 (n=124) |
| Title:<br>Positions Currently Lacking | Finance/Business Analyst        | 27%          | 19%          | 5%           |              |
|                                       | Program Manager/Director        | 17%          | 16%          | 15%          | 9%           |
|                                       | Marketing                       | 14%          | 29%          | 22%          | 25%          |
|                                       | Instructional Design            | 13%          | 9%           | 11%          | 12%          |
|                                       | Tech/data staff                 | 12%          | 12%          | 8%           | 9%           |
|                                       | Administrative Support          | 11%          | 15%          | 8%           | 9%           |
|                                       | Advisors/Student Support"       | 11%          | 7%           | 7%           | 10%          |
|                                       | Program Developer/Coordinator   | 7%           | 15%          | 7%           | 11%          |
|                                       | Enrollment Management/Registrar | 5%           | 10%          |              |              |
|                                       | Fundraisers/Grant Writers       |              |              | 3%           |              |
|                                       | Leadership                      |              |              | 5%           | 13%          |
|                                       | Unsure/NA                       |              | 5%           | 7%           | 7%           |
| Page 51                               | Other                           | 12%          | 21%          | 23%          | 27%          |

|                                           |                   |                                                                             |                                                                                      |
|-------------------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| SUPPORT                                   | Opinion (2025)    | Digital credentials effectively signal skills and competencies to employers | AI and other emerging technologies will help validate and verify digital credentials |
| Title:<br>Opinions on Digital Credentials | Strongly Agree    | 23%                                                                         | 21%                                                                                  |
| Chart Type:<br>Stacked Bar                | Agree             | 45%                                                                         | 41%                                                                                  |
|                                           | Neutral           | 24%                                                                         | 35%                                                                                  |
|                                           | Disagree          | 5%                                                                          | 2%                                                                                   |
| Page 52                                   | Strongly Disagree | 3%                                                                          | 1%                                                                                   |

|                                       |                                                       |              |             |             |             |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| SUPPORT                               | Digital Credential                                    | 2025 (n=126) | 2024 (n=96) | 2023 (n=98) | 2022 (n=63) |
| Title:<br>Digital Credentials Offered | Non-Credit Certificates                               | 72%          | 79%         | 74%         | 86%         |
|                                       | Badges                                                | 55%          | 85%         | 91%         | 83%         |
| Chart Type:<br>Sankey                 | Credit-Bearing Undergraduate or Graduate Certificates | 35%          | 42%         | 32%         | 40%         |
|                                       | Degrees                                               | 30%          | 28%         | 14%         | 29%         |
| Page 53                               | Competencies                                          | 17%          | 9%          | 11%         | 8%          |
|                                       | Other                                                 | 5%           | 4%          | 1%          | 6%          |

| TECHNOLOGY                                                                                                                                                                         | Statement (2025) (n=126)                                                                                                       | SA  | A   | N   | D   | SD  |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| <p><b>Title:</b><br/>Opinions on Technological and Academic Capacities of Online and PCE Units (2025)</p> <p><b>Chart Type:</b><br/>Stacked Bar</p> <p><a href="#">Page 58</a></p> | It is important for technology used by my online and PCE unit to integrate seamlessly with the technology used by main campus  | 44% | 44% | 7%  | 5%  | 1%  |
|                                                                                                                                                                                    | My institution sees credential innovation as an essential element for its future success                                       | 24% | 44% | 21% | 7%  | 4%  |
|                                                                                                                                                                                    | The adoption of AI tools and technologies enhances the academic innovation of my online and PCE unit                           | 26% | 41% | 29% | 2%  | 2%  |
|                                                                                                                                                                                    | My online and PCE unit is the most academically innovative unit at my institution                                              | 27% | 31% | 31% | 10% | 2%  |
|                                                                                                                                                                                    | The technology used by my online and PCE unit (including AI) integrates seamlessly with the technology used by the main campus | 4%  | 20% | 26% | 40% | 10% |

| TECHNOLOGY                                                                                                                                                              | Statement (2024) (n=137)                                                                                           | SA  | A   | N   | D   | SD  |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| <p><b>Title:</b><br/>Opinions on Technological and Academic Capacities of PCO Units (2024)</p> <p><b>Chart Type:</b><br/>Stacked Bar</p> <p><a href="#">Page 59</a></p> | It is important for technology used by my PCO unit to integrate seamlessly with the technology used by main campus | 38% | 38% | 14% | 10% | 1%  |
|                                                                                                                                                                         | My PCO unit is the most academically innovative unit at my institution                                             | 22% | 32% | 34% | 7%  | 5%  |
|                                                                                                                                                                         | My PCO unit is seen as academically equal to other academic units at my institution                                | 5%  | 12% | 23% | 42% | 19% |
|                                                                                                                                                                         | The technology used by my PCO unit integrates seamlessly with the technology used by the main campus               | 4%  | 16% | 25% | 40% | 15% |

| COLLABORATION                                                                                                          | Statement (2024) (n=136)                                                                                                      | SA  | A   | N   | D   | SD |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|
| <p><b>Title:</b><br/>Collaboration (2024)</p> <p><b>Chart Type:</b><br/>Stacked Bar</p> <p><a href="#">Page 64</a></p> | Other units, schools, or colleges at my institution collaborate with my PCO unit for continuing education program development | 15% | 48% | 21% | 15% | 1% |
|                                                                                                                        | There is a concentrated effort from institutional leadership to organize and manage continuing education at my institution    | 15% | 30% | 26% | 23% | 6% |
|                                                                                                                        | Continuing education at my institution is siloed between multiple units, schools, or colleges                                 | 7%  | 32% | 24% | 28% | 9% |

| COLLABORATION                                                                                                          | Statement (2025) (n=126)                                                                                                                 | SA  | A   | N   | D   | SD  |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| <p><b>Title:</b><br/>Collaboration (2025)</p> <p><b>Chart Type:</b><br/>Stacked Bar</p> <p><a href="#">Page 63</a></p> | Other units, schools, or colleges at my institution collaborate with my online and PCE unit for continuing education program development | 21% | 50% | 10% | 14% | 5%  |
|                                                                                                                        | Continuing education programming positively affects enrollments in traditional programming                                               | 14% | 44% | 33% | 7%  | 2%  |
|                                                                                                                        | There is a concentrated effort from institutional leadership to organize and manage continuing education at my institution               | 17% | 41% | 21% | 18% | 5%  |
|                                                                                                                        | Our continuing education programs actively target alumni of the institution                                                              | 12% | 37% | 19% | 25% | 6%  |
|                                                                                                                        | Continuing education at my institution is siloed between multiple units, schools, or colleges                                            | 8%  | 33% | 15% | 21% | 23% |
|                                                                                                                        | Continuing education offerings are well integrated into the structure of the institution's portfolio of traditional offerings            | 5%  | 25% | 27% | 35% | 8%  |
|                                                                                                                        | Institutional leaders fear microcredentials will cannibalize enrollments from other portions of the institution                          | 5%  | 19% | 37% | 30% | 10% |
|                                                                                                                        | My online and PCE unit is seen as academically equal to other academic units at my institution                                           | 4%  | 17% | 23% | 39% | 18% |

| COLLABORATION                                                                                                                      | Agree & Strongly Agree                                                                                                                               | 2025 (n=126) | 2024 (n=136) |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| <p><b>Title:</b><br/>Collaboration, Agree and Strongly Agree</p> <p><b>Chart Type:</b><br/>Line</p> <p><a href="#">Page 65</a></p> | <div></div> Other units, schools, or colleges at my institution collaborate with my online and PCE unit for continuing education program development | 71%          | 63%          |
|                                                                                                                                    | <div></div> There is a concentrated effort from institutional leadership to organize and manage continuing education at my institution               | 58%          | 45%          |
|                                                                                                                                    | <div></div> Continuing education at my institution is siloed between multiple units, schools, or colleges                                            | 41%          | 39%          |

**Citation:** Etter, B., Sullberg, D., West, E. & Cox, S. (2025). (rep.). 2025 State of Continuing Education. UPCEA, The EvoLLLution, CAUCE, RECLA.





UPCEA is the online and professional education association. Our members continuously reinvent higher education, positively impacting millions of lives.

We proudly lead and support them through cutting edge research, professional development, networking and mentorship, conferences and seminars, and stakeholder advocacy. Our collaborative, entrepreneurial community brings together decision makers and influencers in education, industry, research, and policy interested in improving educational access and outcomes.

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The Canadian Association for University Continuing Education (CAUCE) is a professional association of deans, directors, senior administrative personnel and practitioners whose professional careers are in university continuing education in Canada.

Serving nearly 50 university continuing education units across the country, CAUCE is dedicated to supporting the success of its members in serving professional and adult learners and diverse learning communities. Through its annual conference, webinars, research, and community of practice networks, it fosters best practices in lifelong teaching and learning, flexible learning models, and university-community engagement. CAUCE strengthens the impact of universities through excellence in continuing education.

Visit [cauce-aepuc.ca](http://cauce-aepuc.ca) to learn more



The Red de Educación Continua de Latinoamérica y Europa (RECLA) is a non-profit organization founded in 1997, dedicated to advancing continuing education across Latin America and Europe.

Headquartered in Bogotá, Colombia, RECLA fosters collaboration among higher education institutions, facilitating networking, knowledge exchange, and internationalization. The organization provides a platform for discussing key educational issues, sharing best practices, and strengthening long-term partnerships between continuing education centers and global networks. By promoting innovation and integration in higher education, RECLA plays a vital role in shaping the future of lifelong learning across regions.

Visit [recla.org](http://recla.org) to learn more



The EvoLLLution is an online publication focused on the transforming higher education industry. Publishing articles and interviews by higher education leaders on the evolving postsecondary space since 2011, The EvoLLLution was founded by Modern Campus to create an open environment for higher education's most innovative thought leaders to come together and set out a new vision for what the industry can be.

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## State of Continuing Education 2025

The 2025 State of Continuing Education study examines the evolving role of online and professional continuing education (PCE) units in higher education, focusing on program offerings, institutional support, technology integration, and collaboration across academic units.

This year signals a broader recalibration within higher education, as institutions experiment with new program models and business strategies to stay relevant and resilient.

This report designed by Modern Campus contains rich survey data visualizations and insights, courtesy of the partnership between The EvoLLLution and UPCEA.

