Student Characteristics Based on Method of Instruction
Fall 2009 Students

Background
The current report compares student characteristics for students who took online, hybrid, or on-campus courses in fall 2009. As shown in the chart below, the primary method of instruction at Cypress College is face-to-face, on-campus instruction. The chart shows that 9% of students took only online or hybrid courses, and the majority of these students (7% of the total headcount) took only online courses, they never needed to come to the actual Cypress College campus.

Demographic Characteristics
The following tables and charts detail any differences in demographics found between students who were categorized as taking online/hybrid-only, lecture-only, and both online/hybrid and lecture courses. The charts below show the following findings:

- Proportionally more women enroll in online/hybrid classes than men.
- Most ethnic groups enroll in the different methods of instruction at equal rates, although Hispanic students are more likely to enroll exclusively in lecture courses while White students are proportionally more likely to enroll in online/hybrid courses (with or without also enrolling in lecture courses).
- Although slightly more on-campus students received financial aid than did the proportion of students in online/hybrid courses who received financial aid, the overall pattern was that most students who exclusively took online/hybrid courses or exclusively took on-campus courses did not receive financial aid. However, students who took both online/hybrid and lecture courses were more likely to receive financial aid than to not.
- Students who took a course in the summer or spring (summer 2009 or spring 2009) prior to the target fall term (fall 2009) and/or a course in the following spring term (spring 2010) may be considered “our students,” or students who have continued at Cypress College. There is a higher rate of continuing/returning students from the online-only course types than the other types of courses.
Although not pictured, it was also found that:

- Students who took online/hybrid courses were older than students who took only lecture courses or both lecture and online/hybrid courses (which did not differ from each other).
- Students who took online/hybrid courses tended to have been at Cypress College for fewer terms than students in lecture-only or took all three types courses (which did not differ from each other). Thus, newer students tend to take online/hybrid courses more than students who have attended for more semesters.
- Students who took lecture and online/hybrid types of courses had higher cumulative GPA’s compared to students who only took lecture courses. Students who took only online/hybrid courses did not differ from either of the two other groups on cumulative GPA.
- Students taking courses in these different methods of instruction had similar majors and were from similar cities.

**Performance**

The grade distribution and success rate for each type of course was also compared. Note that this information is duplicated across student, unlike the proportions described in the rest of the report. As found in other studies, students in lecture courses generally perform better than students in online/hybrid courses. This seems due to the high level of students who withdraw from their online/hybrid courses, rather than a difficulty in earning an “A” in their online/hybrid class. In fact, a higher proportion of students in online courses earn “A” grades than in the other types of classes.
Summary
Comparisons were described between students who take only on-campus lecture courses from students who take either fully online or hybrid courses. Surprisingly, students who took online or hybrid courses were more likely to attend Cypress College before or after the target term, compared to students who took the on-campus courses only. This suggests that online students are “our students,” not students from other areas or colleges that are just taking one online course. Indeed students from the online/hybrid courses were just as likely to be from cities in our service area as on-campus-only students.

As found in other studies, lecture courses have higher success rates than online or hybrid courses. This effect requires continued effort to educate students about the rigors of online courses before the census date (or even enrolling in the course) so that they can drop these difficult courses without receiving a “W” grade.