

## DISTANCE EDUCATION STUDENT FACTS

Average age: 32  
6% over age 50  
Live in Iowa: 73%  
18 states  
8 countries  
52% are male  
Work 38 hrs/wk  
Seeking MS: 45%  
Seeking BS: 35%  
First DE Class: 59%

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**Bringing the  
classroom  
to the world!**

## Distance Education by the Numbers



**Gaylan Scofield, Ph.D.**  
**Director : Brenton Center  
& College of Agriculture  
& Life Sciences Distance  
Education**

Distance Education numbers for the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences continue to grow by leaps and bounds. Fiscal Year 2007 set an all-time high enrollment for the college with 947 distinct students which accounted for 1,135 total course registrations. Steady growth in enrollment has been experienced since FY '05 (657 students / 830 registrations) and FY '06 (709 students / 910 registrations).

Fiscal Year 2008 continues to look great. Summer enrollment was 445 students / 488 course registrations. Based on the numbers available when this newsletter was published, FY '08 total distinct students was 654 / course registrations was 743.

I expect these number to increase on the final count for fall semester. If spring semester is average, the number of distinct students will be close to 1,000.

A total of 93 course offerings were available to students during FY '07. Undergraduate student credit hours increased to 1,601 (FY '06 was 892) and a slight decrease was observed in graduate student credit hours, 1,280 (FY '06 was 1,305). Eleven departments taught distance education courses during the summer : AGEDS, AGRON, BIOL, BBMB, C DEV, ECON, ENT, FSHN, GEN, HORT, TSM.

The Brenton Center assisted many of the faculty teaching during the summer as well as working with faculty developing new courses for delivery for fall or spring.

Departments or faculty considering teaching a distance education course should contact Gaylan Scofield, 4-0045 or [ggs@iastate.edu](mailto:ggs@iastate.edu).

## Pod Casts for Research

"Pod Casts for Research" is a new service from the Brenton Center. Starting fall semester, the Brenton Center will expand free Pod Casts to include research from faculty. These Pod Casts will be placed on the new college research web page under construction by Brenton Center staff.

Currently several departments are working with the Brenton Center on the development of free **Pod Casts for Recruitment** under a similar program that was started last spring. Several of these **Pod Casts for Recruitment** are

currently available for viewing from the "video" link on the college home page.

Departments or faculty who have an interest in **Pod Casts for Research** should contact **Rod Fischer at 4-9970 or [videoguy@iastate.edu](mailto:videoguy@iastate.edu)** to set a time to discuss the research project or for more information on how they can use Pod Casts. Faculty or departments will be asked for general information that can be placed on the new college research pages along with the short video clips.

# Getting Started With Your First Online Course

Getting off to a good start in any distance education course happens by design, not by accident. Distance education students like on-campus students need to know what you want and how to react to your assignments. The more students know about what to expect in your distance education course, the better they can perform and the easier it will be for you, the instructor. Your work designing the distance course ahead of time pays off in the long run.

Current research shows that online collaborations between the instructor and students, and between students themselves, positively and significantly influence student satisfaction and perceived learning. Building opportunities for such interactions into the design of your course will be a challenge, but it is the key to success.

## What can you do to guarantee success?

- \* Design a detailed course orientation
- \* Create consistent and complete course modules
- \* Use meaningful module / section titles
- \* Structure the course for easy navigation
- \* Provide detailed instructions for learning activities
- \* Set detailed timelines and stick with them
- \* Provide detailed information on evaluation methods
- \* Get students actively engaged, thinking, applying, defending, reporting, and self-assessing
- \* Identify when you are available for online office hours
- \* Provide timely feedback on questions & assignments
- \* Utilize various methods of communication (chat, email, discussion boards)
- \* Model your expectations with your own presence in the course

Source: Alexandra M. Pickett, Assistant Director, SUNY Learning  
<http://sln.suny.edu/index.html>

*“Distance Education is currently helping individuals meet their educational and occupational goals.”*

## New DE Programs Start Fall 2007

After many years of planning and lots of hard work, two new distance education programs are a reality.

The **Master of Science in Agricultural Education** on-line program is designed for agriculture teachers in secondary and post secondary settings, extension professionals, educators in public and private settings, and agricultural communicators. The program can be completed completely at a distance as there are no required on campus courses or meetings. The flexibility of the program makes it possible for working professionals to obtain a master’s while continuing to meet personal and professional responsibilities. For more information contact, Greg Miller, 4-2583 or [gsmiller@iastate.edu](mailto:gsmiller@iastate.edu).

The **Masters of Seed Technology and Business Management** program is designed for professionals working in industry and government. The degree ensures an advanced knowledge of seed science, technology and basic business and problem-solving skills. It emphasizes decision making for application to practical and technical issues in all aspects of the seed business. For more information, contact Paul Christensen, 4-8745 or [seedsci@iastate.edu](mailto:seedsci@iastate.edu).

If your department has an interest in placing your degree program on-line or developing a certificate program, contact Gaylan Scofield, 4-0045 or [ggs@iastate.edu](mailto:ggs@iastate.edu).

## Need to Publish an Event?

The Brenton Center recently upgrade the electronic messaging system used in the Curtiss Hall Rotunda. The new system allows the integration of video, graphics, animations, web pages, RSS feeds, and many more audio-visual elements on the same screen.

The system is designed to deliver messages to remote players in other campus buildings. Departments interested in exploring digital signage in their local areas should contact Gaylan Scofield, 4-0045 or [ggs@iastate.edu](mailto:ggs@iastate.edu).

Departments and clubs are encouraged to utilize the Curtiss Hall Rotunda messaging screens to promote their current events.

Send your content for display to Rod Fischer at [videoguy@iastate.edu](mailto:videoguy@iastate.edu). Content can be in the format of video (MPEG 1, 2, 3, & 4; AVI, WMV, ASF, Quick Time, & Real Player), Flash, PowerPoint, still graphics (BMP, JPEG, TGA), and web site page addresses. Be sure to include the dates you want the message to be played.

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