



1998	-	11
1999	-	201
2000	-	465
2001	-	670
2002	-	784
2003	-	873
2004	-	1,026
2005	-	1,154
2006	-	1,294

## DBU ONLINE EDUCATION CONTINUES GROWTH AND PROVIDES *quality education - any time, any place*

**A**n off-shore oil-rig worker facing hurricanes in the Gulf, an alumnus from Africa serving students in the Far East, a single mom with a full-time job pursuing her life-long dream—DBU is delivering higher education to the earth's most challenging situations.

At present, 1,294 students—in an array of different settings—are enrolled in online courses at DBU. But it all started in 1998 with one class and only 11 students.

When Kaye Shelton, director of online education at DBU, arrived on campus in 1998, the term “e-learning” had only begun breaking into the vocabulary of higher education. Within a year, online enrollment at DBU leaped to 201 students.

Over the next six and one-half years, the number of DBU students taking online classes grew by more than 500 percent. But most impressive is the ever-growing area—from Canada and Brazil, to the United Kingdom, Japan, and even Iraq—where students are logging on.

Recent DBU graduate Charles Richardson, an Exxon Mobil employee, spent his last semester on an oil rig in the Gulf of Mexico, perilously located in Hurricane Katrina's path. Though forced to evacuate the off-shore facility, Charles managed to stay online, completing his coursework and graduating on time.

Wayne Russell, an international student from South Africa, started his master's degree in higher education while teaching at a school in Shanghai, China. But the “any time, any place” advantage of online education has also helped students closer to home.

Many online students can also identify with the life demands of DBU student Carla Alexander. As a single mother of two, time is constantly in a crunch. In addition to staying involved at church, Carla volunteers at the American Red Cross as a case worker for military families. “Were it not for the online program, I would not

be able to obtain my degree and substantially improve the quality of life that my children and I lead,” said Carla. “Online education is absolutely the only way that it is possible.”

“In today's world, people want it all: family, career, and class,” explained Shelton. She sees DBU's distinctive Christ-centered characteristics as the online program's greatest feature. “DBU professors are doing the same things they do in the classroom—mentoring, praying, and encouraging—online,” she shared. “We have a niche, and now DBU can even make a difference around the world.”

Despite an overwhelming demand for online higher education, Shelton believes in letting quality drive progress. The DBU Online Education Department's staff of dedicated course developers works with professors to systematically convert syllabi into outstanding online learning experiences, a process typically lasting six months. Their goal: an online program that ranks among the top names in e-learning, such as Penn State, University of Michigan, or California State University, where Shelton was one of the first students to earn a master's degree in Online Teaching and Learning. As an employee, a wife, and a mother, she was able to complete her degree online.

In 2005, the DBU online education program won the first Blackboard Bionic Course Award, which recognizes the five best online courses from higher education institutions nationwide. This year brought another honor: the eLearning 2006 Outstanding Online Course award from the Instructional Technology Council.

From Shelton's perspective, the most rewarding aspect of tremendous growth and national recognition is the real-life impact online education is having on students' lives, no matter what the circumstances under which they log on. Her motto says it all, “Quality education—any time, any place.”