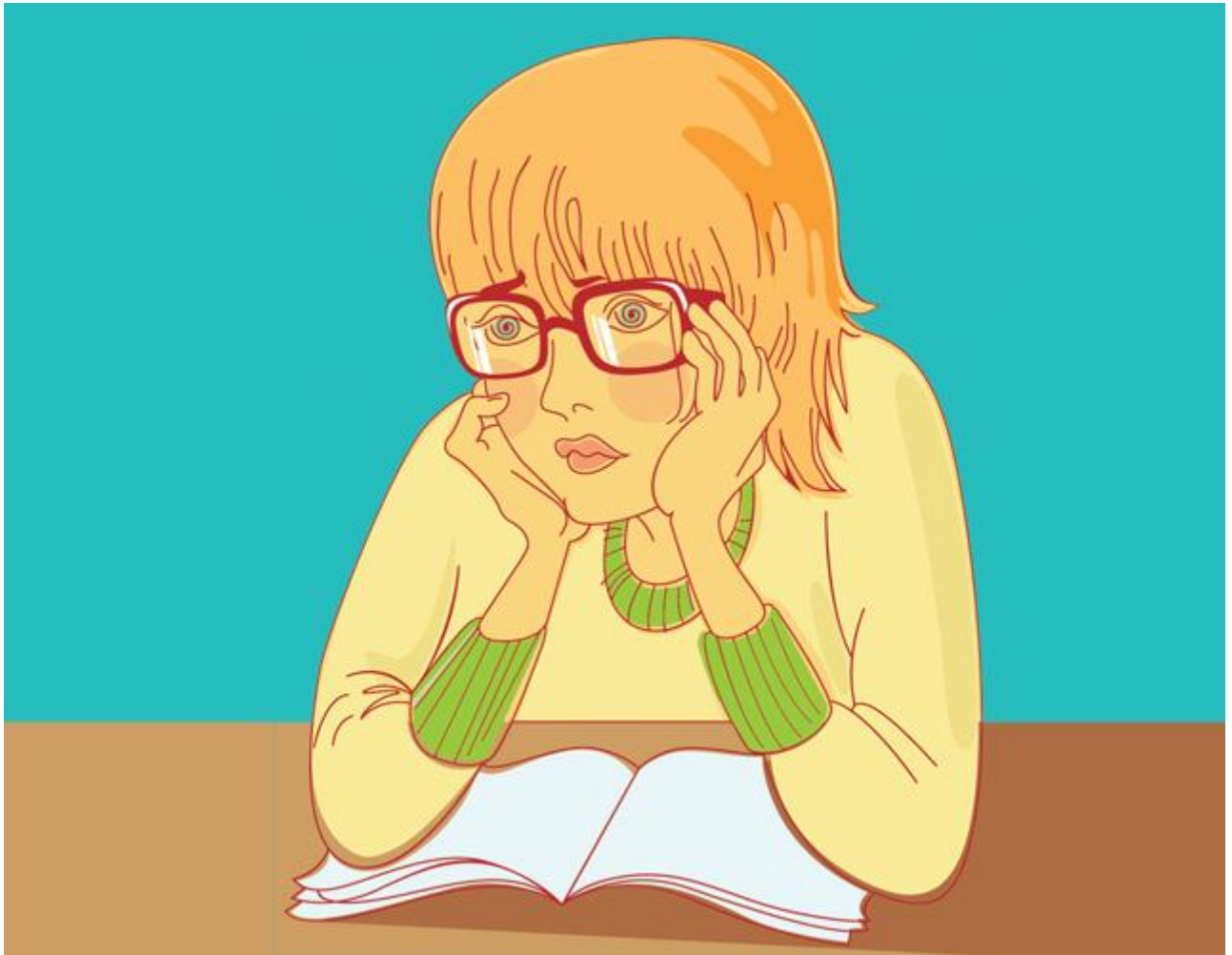# 30 Myths About eLearning That Need To Die In 2013

F or as long as eLearning has been around, it has been haunted by the voices of those who aim to

criticize its authenticity, viability, and quality. But is it true? Do students of traditional institutions

boast more success than those who've chosen distance learning?

It's time for some of these myths to die.

1. The technology is unreliable

Every other arena in society- financial institutions, businesses, and government- do not avoid updating their procedures and protocols because of the fear of unreliable technology. The reality is that most distance learning software requires *only* an Internet connection and a computer. Fancy tools or expensive software has not bogged down eLearning. And for most people, their Internet connection and computer are very dependable.

2. Students don't get group interaction

In recent years, the amount of social interaction between people has increased. With the explosion of social networks like Facebook and Twitter, many academic eLearning platforms have incorporated this type of software into their courses, giving people the chance to chat, interact, and enabling collaborative learning.

In fact, eLearners have the opportunity to connect with people all over the world; something that a traditional classroom cannot offer.

3. It puts the teaching profession at risk

Computers haven't replaced people. They simply make it easier for a person to reach a wider audience. The teaching profession will not suffer because of eLearning- quite the contrary- professors have more opportunity to reach students and branch out of their local school to reach the global market.

4. Students are less likely to finish without a teacher overseeing their work

Unmotivated students fail whether a teacher is watching him/her or not. While eLearning does not require a student to be in a certain place at a certain time, it still offers them access to the teacher and other classmates for help and support.

The old saying, "You can lead a horse to water but you can't make him drink," is applicable to this myth. Students lacking the desire to succeed will fail no matter how robust the program or the teacher. Placing the blame on eLearning is foolish. eLearning is simply the catalyst for delivering information, it cannot be responsible for a student's work habits.

5. The curriculum is less robust

Have you checked out some of MIT's open courseware? These classes are exact replicas of the traditional class syllabus. Students who embark on an eLearning class can receive the same instruction as traditional students. The quality of the curriculum is directly related to the instructor who put it together. The method of delivery (in this case digitally) does not affect its quality in any way.

6. There is no way to measure true learning

For years, administrators have tried to figure out ways to measure learning. Is it through exams? Success in the workplace? The ability to reteach the material? This argument is not exclusive to eLearning. Learning is a difficult thing to measure regardless, simply because there are so many different types of learning. But the truth is that eLearning courses have the same tools for measuring success as a traditional classroom.

7. Distance learning is passive

Sitting in a classroom listening to a lecture is quite passive. Those who sign up for eLearning courses must be more engaged because the responsibility is on the student to attend and interact.

It is more intentional to type out a chat response to a teacher during an online class than to get called on in class while you are playing Tetris on your phone in the back of the room. eLearners are set up to be more active because they've made the choice to show up to their computer for the class, even when no one is formally taking attendance (that's not to say that attendance cannot be taken digitally; it can).

8. It shelters students from the real world

The real world is full of computers. The real world is much larger than a campus in a small town. eLearners have the opportunity to interact with people from all over the world. eLearners are more ready for the digital world that we live in because *they never leave the real world* to get their education.

Editor's note: Check out article on how online learning prepares students for the real world.

9. You won't be taken seriously with a distance learning degree

This may have been true a decade ago, but the tides are changing. More and more employers recognize that distance education is proving to be as competitive as a traditional institution.

Many graduates from eLearning classes are more tech-savvy, motivated, and self-taught. Expect to see more and more eLearning colleges and companies pop up as well as an explosion in matriculation. Traditional education will have to make a radical shift to keep up with private

companies that don't have to wade through bureaucratic red tape to bring robust curriculum to the population at a fraction of the cost.

10. Students miss out on extra-curricular activities

The fact is that eLearners have more time for extra-curricular activities! A student doesn't have to drive to class and he/she can learn on their own timetable. This frees the student up to take an afternoon art class or participate in other activities that would otherwise be impossible because of a bogged down class schedule. It also makes it so that students can help with community projects that may occur during normal school hours.

11. It'll be harder to find a job without the college alumni connections

No doubt connections are important for job success. It is difficult to re-enter the job world after four years at a traditional institution. Distance learning doesn't require the person to ever leave the job market.
Education, job training, and networking happen simultaneously. In addition to this benefit, many online courses connect you with people that you would never otherwise meet in a traditional classroom. Since eLearners are filled with people who already have jobs, this means they usually also have connections.

12. eLearning is impersonal

Online classes are still run by real people. People who are available via email, chat, text, or Skype. eLearning is fully customizable. It can work around schedules, handicaps, and other life events that traditional classrooms don't make room for.
For people who are naturally shy, eLearning might be the perfect opportunity to interact more. It is easier to type a question in a chat box than it is to raise your hand in a large lecture hall.

13. Instructors don't take distance learning seriously

Yes they do.
In fact, many instructors who go the online route are more invested in their coursework and curriculum because of the possibility of reaching thousands and thousands of people.
The concept of going "viral" has erupted in the last decade and professors want recognition for their expertise just as badly as anyone else. As more eLearning enters the market, the competition will increase and professors will have to put their best foot forward to entice students to enroll.

14. eLearning is for people who are too lazy to go the traditional route

The traditional route to college is littered with problems, not the least of which is finances. College is brutally expensive. Many intelligent and motivated students cannot afford to go. eLearning is not the lazy way out. It may offer a more flexible time commitment, but the student must be fully engaged in the learning process in order to succeed.

15. eLearning is for people who dropped out of school or couldn't get into college

This is an old label that doesn't apply to current online learning. In the past, if a high school student dropped out, they might go online to get their GED. But now students are choosing online learning FIRST- because of the flexibility, reduced cost, and the ability to work while in school. Prestigious schools offer many online courses and the degree awarded is just as admirable.

16. Distance learning only benefits one type of learning style

With today's technology, students can learn through podcasts, videos, lecture notes, slides, text, group discussions, or real world experiments. The instructor and students aren't limited to a classroom, giving each person the ability to study and grow in a way that suits their particular personality.

17. The technology is too expensive

The technology is largely cheaper than the cost to run a traditional institution. The cost of the software, Internet connection, and computer is a fraction of the cost of just one college level class.

18. eLearning prevents students from learning how to communicate

Online education teaches students how to communicate effectively. With the barrier of a computer screen, questions, discussion, comments, and other engagement must be well thought out, written clearly, and concise. Communication between classmates and their instructor can be as abundant, if not more so than a traditional classroom because of the social networking aspect of the software.

19. There are too many real-world distractions to make eLearning effective

It is true that eLearning classes must contend with Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and millions of other digital distractions.
But this is true for the real world. Students must learn how to balance their time, monitor their online habits, and set priorities. A traditional classroom is a bit of a fabricated environment. As soon as that student graduates and gets a job, he/she will have to learn quickly how to juggle the demands of real life and all those distractions.
eLearners must do this from the start.

20. Students need a top of the line computer

Have you seen Google's Chromebook? It is priced at $249.00. It is a laptop that is ready to go right out of the box and can handle nearly every type of tool and software an online learner would need. Most courseware is through the Internet. Even if the student has a slow Internet connection, Wi-Fi hotspots are all over the place and offer fast connection speeds.

21. eLearners don't have access to resources that traditional students have

In the past, students at top schools like Harvard and Yale had access to professors and libraries that the general population could not get. But the Internet has changed all of that. Knowledge is free, abundant, and everywhere.
The playing field has been leveled and the "elite" mindset is quickly fading as online courses are boasting huge success with students.

22. eLearning is a trend that will never equal traditional education

The cost of traditional education is outrageous. Some scholars predict that we will see a crash similar to the United States real estate disaster a couple of years back. The reality is that traditional education is too expensive. It cannot be maintained. Online education is proving to be more cost-effective and just as successful for students. The entire academic world is on the brink of a revolution.

23. Colleges haven't come onboard fully with eLearning because it's inferior

Universities may not fully be onboard with distance learning, but it isn't because it's an inferior method. It is for other reasons slightly less admirable. There is a lot of money in traditional education. There are a lot of politics as well. Some administrators aren't willing to go with the changes ahead because it means the tower of elitism is crumbling. Make no mistake, there are online courses that are designed by some of the most brilliant minds on Earth.

24. It doesn't provide real life experience

It doesn't have to simulate a real life experience…because it is happening in real life. Traditional students have gotten used to compartmentalizing their lives, "School at this time, work at this time, family at this time." eLearning has made it so that real life weaves in and out of the learning process.

25. Distance learning looks like a cop out

For many students, it is their first choice.
The curriculum, the cost, and the ability to interact with people from all over the world is the reason why it will be the way to get educated in the future. Change is difficult. Traditional institutions have held a monopoly for hundreds of years. The academic sector has always been notoriously slow to catch up with technology, but one day- they may wake up and realize that the world has gone on without them.

26. eLearning is not that much cheaper than traditional education because of hidden costs

There is no question that there are costs involved for the institution to offer online classes. They must pay for the software, the server space, the instructor's time, an IT person, etc. But even with hidden costs, the amount of money it takes to employ staff to run a traditional brick and mortar school?
It would take thousands of dollars worth of hidden costs to ever make this argument a reality. eLearning is cheaper than traditional education no matter which way you look at it.

27. eLearning means more screen time, which is not good for the eyes

When the Internet boom happened, there were all sorts of dire warnings about the effect on the eyes from too much computer time. But each year technology produces safer and more ergonomic designs. When the kindle first came out, the world marveled at the ability to read on a screen that looked and felt like a book. Computers are here to stay and you can be sure that companies will continue to adjust and modify their products to sell more "eye-friendly" devices.

28. There's no way to judge the quality of the eLearning program

This argument can be said for traditional education as well. Whatever means we use to assess the success of a school we can use for eLearning as well. Distance education does not have limitations built into it.
Proctored exams can still be offered to eLearners. Presentations before the class or an instructor can be done digitally. Any difficulty in assessing quality may simply be because the industry hasn't yet figured out a way to accredit the rising number of programs available. But as eLearning becomes the way of the future, you can be sure they'll be further credentialing of quality classes.

29. eLearning is boring

If an online class is dubbed as "boring", it is simply because the teacher did not do a good job designing the class. There is nothing boring about the way a digital class is offered. Students can chat, raise hands, ask questions, interact with the professor, and use the power of the Internet to research, find resources, and build presentations.

30. eLearning will never become the WAY of education

If after the 29 reasons listed above, you still don't think that online learning will become the way of education? Well then, I'm not sure there is anything I can say to convince you.
We'll just have to wait and see!

Cited From: http://www.opencolleges.edu.au/informed/features/30-myths-about-elearning-that-need-to-die-in-2013/#ixzz2rKT0KS45