

How does Capella University compare to private, public, and online institutions?

We enlisted a respected,
impartial research firm to find out.

Noel-Levitz[®] SURVEY RESULTS 2012

When it comes to quality, value, and satisfaction, the numbers tell the story.

Making the right education choice

Private colleges, public universities, primarily online schools—it's hard to make clear comparisons and find the right fit. Which school will improve my chances of getting promoted? Which will help me get a better job? Which school will give me the best return on my education investment?

To find out, Capella University sponsored a major research project. We enlisted Noel-Levitz, a nationally recognized research firm, to **survey nearly 2,000 bachelor's, master's, and doctoral business-program graduates** who'd earned their degrees at private, public, and primarily online schools within the last 10 years.

**When the numbers were tallied
and the analysis done,
the answers emerged:**

They were a little surprising.

They were pretty encouraging.

But above all, they were **loud and clear.**

Key Finding 1

Capella graduates report **better learning and career outcomes**, particularly at the graduate level.



Key Finding 2

Capella graduates were much **more likely to experience career advancements** while they were still enrolled.



Key Finding 3

Capella graduates have a **higher overall rate of satisfaction** with their education.



Key Finding 4

Especially at the graduate level, Capella graduates feel strongly that their **degree was a good value.**





Key Finding 5

Capella graduates felt their **faculty were qualified, accessible, and committed** to student success.

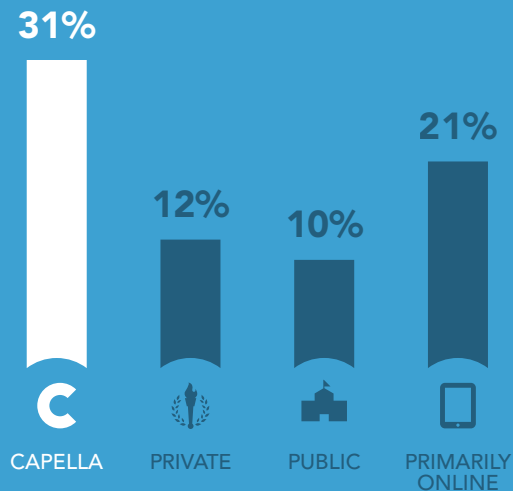
Key Finding 6

Capella graduates were **satisfied with the amount of time it took** to complete their degrees.



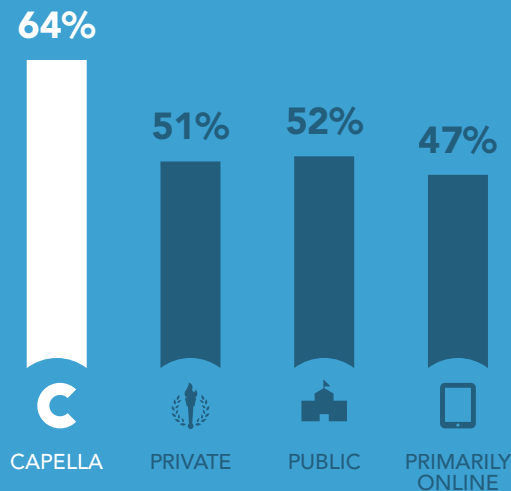
Career results—even while still enrolled.

Compared to public institutions, **three times as many** Capella alumni took on new responsibilities at work while enrolled.



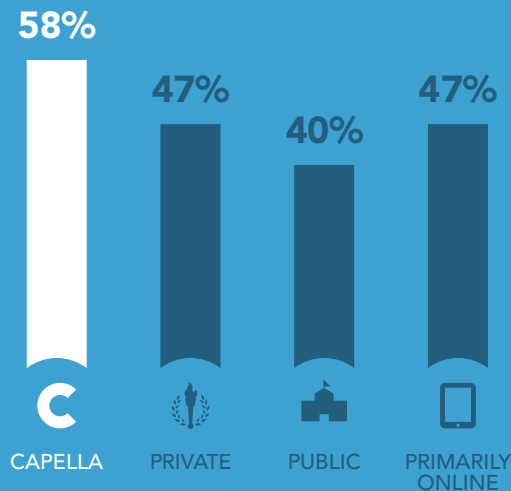
Capella grads recommend Capella to others.

64% said they were “very likely” to recommend their program to others—a rate 36% more than graduates of other primarily online institutions and 23% more than graduates of private or public schools.



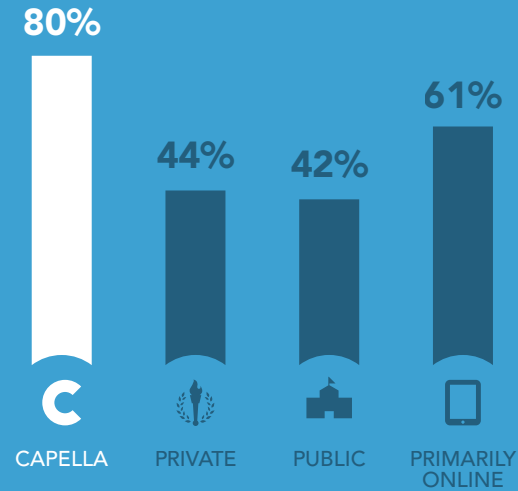
Faculty with real-world expertise.

Compared to public institutions, **45% more** Capella grads strongly agreed that their faculty had real-world expertise.



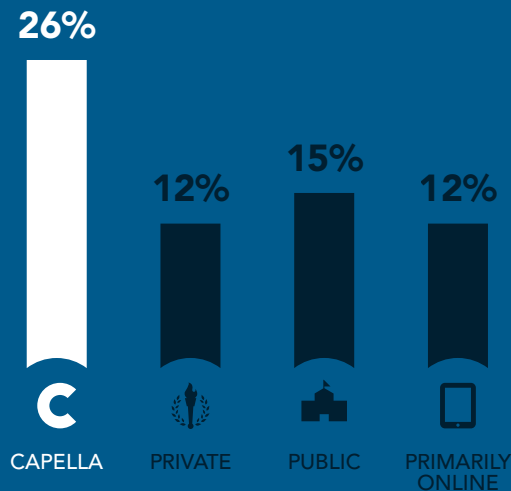
Flexibility to fit students' lives.

80% strongly agreed that Capella offered flexibility to complete their program on their own schedule.



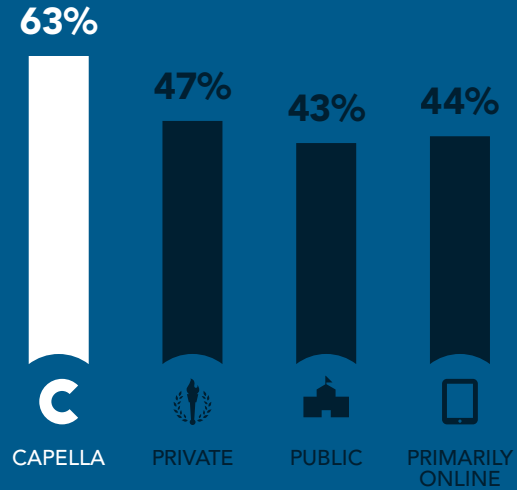
Earning promotions— while still enrolled.

Compared to other primarily online and private schools, **twice as many** Capella grads were promoted while enrolled.



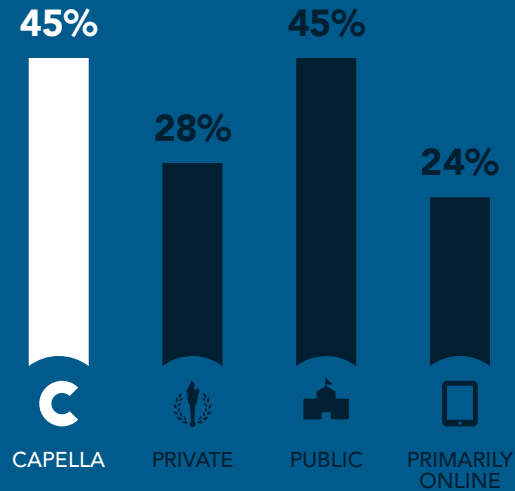
Capella delivers on its promises.

63% were very satisfied that they learned what they were promised they would learn.



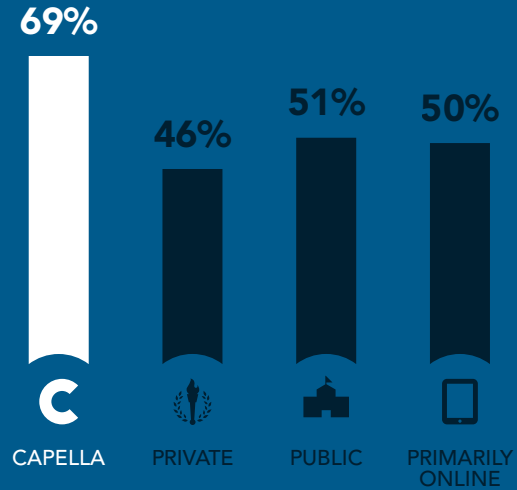
Return on investment? Capella wins.

Compared to other primarily online institutions, **87% more** Capella grads were very satisfied with the overall return on their education investment.



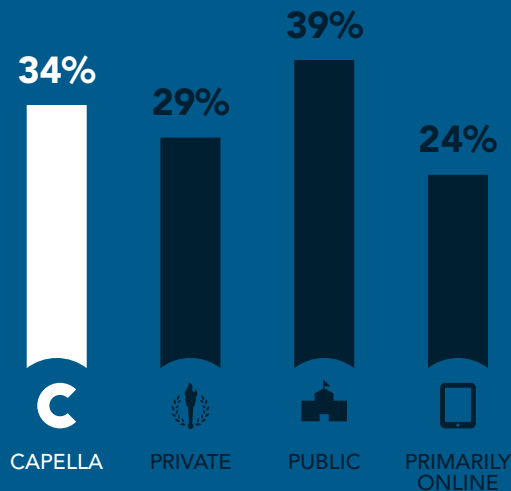
Capella grads finish on time.

69% were very satisfied with the amount of time it took to earn their degree.



Programs that employers respect.

Compared to other primarily online institutions, **41% more** Capella alumni felt strongly that their program had a good reputation with employers.



Expanded Results

Question by question, category by category, the data shows that in areas important to graduates, **Capella University delivered better results.** And when it didn't do that, Capella was rarely outclassed.

In virtually every category—overall satisfaction, impact on career, quality of faculty—Capella came out ahead.

In many, many areas, Capella outscored the others by double-digit margins. **Where Capella won, it usually did so convincingly.**

But even where the differences were not as glaring—even when Capella didn't have the highest results—it showed performance on par not only with other primarily online schools, but with traditional private institutions and state schools, too.

Inside the numbers: More than meets the eye

It might not always be clear exactly what a score on any individual metric actually means. But a closer look tells a fuller story. For example, on the statement “course content was relevant to my career,” 65% of Capella’s master’s and doctoral grads strongly agreed. Is 65% good? Doesn’t that mean 35% didn’t feel strongly that their program was relevant? That number by itself may not seem compelling.

But when compared to other universities, Capella’s 65% stands out.

Only 41% of private school grads strongly agreed that their program was relevant; only 44% of public school grads felt this way; and only 41% of other primarily online alumni.

Survey Results

Dig into the details of the Noel-Levitz study, and a more complex story takes shape—a story in which Capella earned a large number of small (and not so small) victories.

Add them up, and those victories become a landslide.

Capella business graduates report better learning and career outcomes—even while they were still enrolled.

BACHELOR'S DEGREES

- Twice as many Capella grads strongly agreed that **their program provided real-world experience**, compared to graduates of public institutions. Capella's rate was a 47% increase over private schools and 27% more than primarily online schools.
- 55% more Capella grads strongly agreed that **course content was relevant to their career** compared to public school grads. Capella's performance was 43% better than private schools and 26% better than primarily online institutions.

- Compared to public institutions, three times as many Capella graduates (over 30%) **took on additional responsibilities at their current job while enrolled in their degree program**. This rate was double that of private universities and 50% more than other primarily online schools.
- Compared to public institutions, two-and-a-half times as many Capella alumni **took on new leadership responsibilities with their current employer while enrolled**. Capella's performance here was twice that of private schools and nearly 20% higher than other primarily online schools.

GRADUATE DEGREES

- Compared to private schools, 41% more Capella grads strongly agreed that their **program provided real-world experience**. Capella's rate was 23% higher than public institutions and 14% higher than other primarily online schools.
- 65% strongly agreed that **course content was relevant to their career**; at all other schools, an average of 42% felt this way.

GRADUATE DEGREES CONT.

- Compared to other primarily online schools, twice as many Capella grads strongly agreed that their **program allowed them to advance in their career**. Private institutions scored 35% lower.
- Compared to private and primarily online schools, 58% more Capella graduates strongly agreed that they are **earning a competitive salary**. Public school alumni matched Capella in this category.
- More than a quarter were **promoted to a higher position while enrolled**—more than double graduates of primarily online and private schools and 85% more than the rate at which public university graduates were promoted.
- Nearly 25% **found a new job (with a new employer) while they were still enrolled**—a rate more than double that of private and other primarily online schools, and nearly three times the rate for public institutions.
- 90% more Capella graduates **took on additional responsibilities in their current job before they graduated** compared to all other institution types.
- Approximately a third took on **new leadership responsibilities at their current job while still pursuing their degree**, a rate 77% higher than graduates of public, private, or primarily online schools.
- Compared to public and private schools, nearly twice as many Capella grads **received a salary increase while enrolled**.

Capella business graduates have a higher overall rate of satisfaction with their education.

BACHELOR'S DEGREES

- Nearly 65% said they were **“very likely” to recommend their program to others**—a rate 28% higher than graduates of private or public schools and 40% higher than graduates of primarily online institutions.
- 60% strongly agreed that **course material was relevant and up to date** while only 41% of private school alums, 38% of public school grads, and 46% of primarily online students felt this way.
- 60% strongly agreed that **they enhanced their skills and knowledge**, while only 44% of private school alums, 40% of public school grads, and 47% of other primarily online students felt this way.
- Compared to public and private institutions, 65% more Capella grads strongly agreed that their **university’s support services were helpful**. Capella’s rate was 33% higher than other primarily online schools.
- 55% were very satisfied that they **learned what they were promised they would learn**. Only 41% of private school grads, 40% of public school grads, and 38% of primarily online students felt this way.
- Compared to public institutions, more than twice as many Capella alumni felt strongly that their **class sizes allowed for meaningful discussion**. Capella scored 24% higher than other primarily online schools and 11% higher than private universities.
- Compared to public universities, three times as many Capella alumni were **awarded a salary increase while still enrolled**. Capella’s performance nearly double that of private schools, and was on par with other primarily online institutions.

GRADUATE DEGREES

- 65% said they were **“very likely” to recommend their program to others**—a rate 16% higher than graduates of private schools, 48% higher than other primarily online schools, and comparable to graduates of public institutions.
- 70% strongly agreed that **course material was relevant and up to date**. Capella’s score was 40% higher than private school, public and primarily online alums.
- Nearly twice as many Capella alumni strongly agreed that their **university’s support services were helpful**, compared to private school grads. Compared to public schools, Capella scored 58% higher. And compared to primarily online schools, 44% higher.
- 72% strongly agreed that they **enhanced their skills and knowledge**—a rate 56% higher than other primarily online and public schools, and 41% higher than private schools.
- 63% were very satisfied that they **learned what they were promised they would learn**—45% more than graduates of public or primarily online schools, and 34% more than private schools.
- 66% felt strongly that their **class sizes allowed for meaningful discussion**. Private schools were in the ballpark at 56% while primarily online institutions lagged behind at 52%. Capella significantly outscored public schools, where only 47% felt class size was adequate.
- Compared to public and private universities, nearly twice as many Capella alumni were **awarded a salary increase while still enrolled**. Compared to other primarily online institutions, Capella had more than twice as many alumni who received salary increases.

Particularly at the graduate level, Capella business alumni feel strongly that their degree was a good value.

GRADUATE DEGREES

- Compared to private schools, 52% more Capella graduates were very **satisfied with the amount of money they spent on their degree**. Public school graduates outscored Capella grads here, but other primarily online schools scored 21% lower.
- Compared to other primarily online institutions, 87% more Capella grads were very **satisfied with the overall return on their education investment**. Although public universities matched this performance, Capella outperformed private schools by 60%.

Capella business alumni felt their faculty were qualified, accessible, and committed to student success.

BACHELOR'S DEGREES

- Compared to public schools, 40% more Capella alumni strongly agreed that their **faculty did a good job**. Compared to private and primarily online institutions, Capella's score was 26% higher.
- Compared to public institutions, 45% more Capella grads strongly agreed that their **faculty had real-world expertise**. Capella scored 23% higher than private and other primarily online grads.

- 43% strongly agreed that the **advice they got from faculty helped them complete their program in a timely manner**, compared to only 34% of private school grads, 27% of public school grads, and 30% of other primarily online grads.

GRADUATE DEGREES

- Compared to other primarily online universities, 48% more Capella graduates strongly agreed that their **faculty did a good job**. Compared to public institutions, Capella scored 38% higher. Compared to private schools, 31% higher.

- 68% strongly agreed that their **faculty had real-world expertise**, compared to only 47% of private school grads, 36% of public school grads, and 48% of other primarily online grads.
- 64% more Capella alumni strongly agreed that the **advice they got from faculty helped them complete their program in a timely manner**, compared to other primarily online schools. Compared to private and public schools, Capella scored 50% higher.

Capella business graduates felt that they were able to complete their programs in a timely fashion.

BACHELOR'S DEGREES

- 56% were very satisfied with the amount of **time it took to earn their degree**. This is a 19% higher rate of satisfaction than private or primarily online schools, and a 30% higher rate than public schools.
- 80% strongly agreed that Capella offered **flexibility to complete their program on their own schedule**. This is 75% more than the amount for public schools, 65% higher than private schools, and 43% higher than other primarily online institutions.

GRADUATE DEGREES

- 70% were very satisfied with the amount of **time it took to earn their degree**. This is a 52% higher rate of satisfaction than private schools and a 40% higher rate than public or primarily online schools.
- 86% strongly agreed that Capella offered **flexibility to complete their program on their own schedule**. This is twice the amount for private and public schools, and one-third higher than other primarily online institutions.

Capella's reputation among employers is seen as competitive, but some graduates have concerns about how Capella's reputation is viewed by family and friends.

BACHELOR'S DEGREES

- 33% strongly agreed that their **friends and family would say their school has a good reputation**, compared to 57% for private schools, 60 for public, and 44% for other primarily online universities.
- 29% strongly agreed that their **employer would say their school has a good reputation**, compared to 51% for private schools, 55% for public, and 40% for other primarily online institutions.

- **In spite of this perceived lack of reputation**, 50% of Capella alumni used employer reimbursement to pay for school, vs. 15% for private institutions, 12% for public, and 21% at other primarily online schools.

GRADUATE DEGREES

- 42% strongly agreed that their **friends and family would say their school has a good reputation**, compared to 59% for private schools, 62% for public schools. But Capella was comparable to other primarily online schools on this measure.

- 40% strongly agreed that their **employer would say their school has a good reputation**, compared to 59% for private schools, 57% for public, and 44% for other primarily online institutions.
- **In spite of this perceived lack of reputation**, 40% of Capella alumni were able to use employer reimbursement to pay for school, vs. 35% for private institutions, 26% for public, and 36% at other primarily online schools

Methodology

Who we surveyed: A closer look

Noel-Levitz surveyed a national sample of bachelor's, master's, and doctoral business graduates. Respondents were asked to identify the school where they earned their most recent degree. Then respondents were assigned to education sectors based on the type of the school they attended. All respondents had to have graduated between 2002 and 2012, earned a degree in business at the bachelor's, master's or doctoral level, and could not be employed by school where they had earned their most recent degree.

QUOTA GROUP	RESPONDENTS
Undergraduate, Private not for profit	241
Undergraduate, Public	239
Undergraduate, For profit	176
Undergraduate, Capella	123
Graduate, Private not for profit	239
Graduate, Public	213
Graduate, For profit	153
Graduate, Capella	395
TOTAL	1,779

What we asked them

A range of questions focusing on a few core issues:

- Satisfaction with the institution, faculty, degree program, and more.
- The career impact of earning a degree.
- The return on education investment.

Noel-Levitz[®] SURVEY RESULTS 2012

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