

**Program:** Purdue University Global – Personalized Online Education for the Working Adult

**Speaker:** Carolyn Nordstrom, VP, Faculty & Academic Resources, Purdue Global University

**Introduced by:** Marty Meisenheimer

**Attendance:** 103

**Guests:** Theresa Hatfield, Gale Voullet

**Scribe:** John Peer

**Editor:** Bill Elliott

Today's repeat presenter was Dr. Carolyn Nordstrom, VP, Faculty and Academic Resources, Purdue University Global. She has a BS in Secondary Education, an MS in Counseling Psychology, and a PhD in Educational Administration, all from Northwestern University.

Dr. Nordstrom presented an overview of Purdue Global since its inception 18 months ago in the spring of 2018. From the start, this was an initiative of Purdue President, Mitch Daniels trying to serve the global objective of Purdue as a Land Grant University. His driving goals, with an emphasis on Indiana residents were:

- Serving the adult population who had partial advanced education, but for various reasons, were not able to matriculate.
- Serving the growing need of employers for skills based trained employees
- Establishing a significant presence in the online education market place for non-University students.

The initiative to purchase the Kaplan University's online program addressed these goals. Purdue controls all educational aspects and the quality thereof. Kaplan provides back office support. Enrollment has been solid, but not as robust as initially forecast, so PG has modified their advertising.

The typical Purdue Global student is over 30, 2/3rds are female, 2/3rds have a dependent (restricting their ability to attend full time), and with over half never having had a parent attend college. For many, life happens; they have family and settle in their job, which locks them into not pursuing advancement. They are potential Purdue Global students. A key criterion to successfully participate is English composition; that is, all students must be able to write well. Assignments and team projects require written responses. This is insurance that the student is actively working the assignment. PG actively checks for plagiarism and, in fact, encourages the student to do so also. Multiple choice tests are not offered.

All Purdue Global degrees are accredited by the same accrediting agency that accredits Purdue University itself. Purdue Global offers many diverse programs, but they complement the degrees offered by Purdue University. They are not in competition.

The vision of President Daniels was to offer educational advancement all across Indiana and beyond, even overseas. To enhance that goal, Indiana residents receive a 40%

discount on tuition, military also receive discounts, and transfer credits are accepted to reduce the number of credits needed to receive a degree.

**Scribe's note > there has been large criticism of online "for profit" universities for false promises on job opportunities when they entice students to enroll.** Purdue Global directly addresses three critical concerns when prospective students inquire:

- What kind of job will I get? - directly in your field of study
- How much will it cost? - only \$15K to \$27K on average depending on degree
- How long will it take? - only 15 to 22 months on average

Dr. Nordstrom took pride in saying that Purdue Global directly addresses upfront all three questions. PG focuses on the kinds of jobs that employers need and actively works with employers to assure same.

A video of the online classroom experience was shown. There are about 1700 Staff spread around the world. Classes, assignments, and reading materials are all online. There is a weekly video seminar with the instructor with opportunity to ask questions. Collaborative team assignments can be worked on in "Hangout" chat rooms. All assignments are submitted via "Dropbox". A tutoring center is also offered in the "Brainiac Café". Attendance is taken by class participation; this is needed to qualify for government funding for some students.

In the Q&A, a question was asked about the sordid history of Kaplan University citing cases in TX, MA, and NC where Kaplan ultimately settled lawsuits by refunding tuition. Dr. Nordstrom replied saying there are many different situations and those lawsuits may have been against other units of Kaplan, not in the Purdue purchase, but regardless, as effective Dean of Students, no valid claims have been made against PG since the acquisition. **(Scribe's note: the implication being that with Purdue Global's upfront screening process, students will not be misled on their prospects.)**

PG also develops custom programs at an employer's request, based on the success of prior PG graduates. These are not offered in the public curriculum as they are custom offers per employer.

PG actively monitors their results by measuring salaries of graduates and how often they upgrade to better jobs.