



Use this guide to help you evaluate another school according to the criteria listed – and then compare it to Saint Leo University.

Online Degree Programs Comparison Guide

CRITERIA

#1 Accreditation

Many employers want students who have graduated from regionally accredited institutions. Regional accreditation is considered the “gold standard” of accreditation.



- Is the college you’re considering regionally accredited?
- Is your degree program nationally or professionally accredited?

SAINT LEO UNIVERSITY

VS.

SCHOOL #2

- Saint Leo is regionally accredited by SACS¹.
- School of Business accredited by IACBE.
- MBA Sport Business Program accredited by COSMA.
- MSW program accredited by CSWE.

YOUR NOTES:

#2 Mission & Values

To ensure that you will meet your educational goals, learn about the school’s mission and values.

- Does the school have a mission statement?
- Does the school live by its mission and values?
- Will the school’s mission and values help you meet your goals?

SAINT LEO UNIVERSITY

VS.

SCHOOL #2

- Saint Leo’s mission² is rooted in the 1,500-year-old Benedictine tradition.
- Core values – excellence, community, respect, personal development, responsible stewardship, integrity – woven into academic curriculum.

#3 Ranking & Reputation

The reputation of the school, including the rigor and quality of your degree program, matters to future employers.



- Is the online degree program offered through a well-established school?
- How does the school rank among its peers?
- Are graduates successful?

SAINT LEO UNIVERSITY

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SCHOOL #2

- Founded in 1889.
- Oldest Catholic college in Florida and one of largest in the nation.
- U.S. News & World Report “2013 Best Online Education Programs” and “Best Online Programs for Veterans;” also included in Military Advance Education and Guide to Online Schools rankings.
- 99% student satisfaction rate based on annual survey.

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#4 Online Degree Programs

A college degree is a major investment of time and money, so you want a degree program that is built to last – one that will enable you to succeed in a highly competitive job market.



- Does the school offer degree programs that prepare you for high-demand careers?
- Is the curriculum relevant to your professional goals?
- Do faculty understand real-world demands?

SAINT LEO UNIVERSITY

VS.

SCHOOL #2

- More than 40 online associate, bachelor's, master's, doctoral and graduate certificate programs.
- Preparation for growing career fields including business, accounting, criminal justice, computer information systems, and health care management.
- Curriculum addresses needs of adult learners.

YOUR NOTES:

#5 Tuition

Your education is one of the most important investments you will make in your lifetime. When comparing options consider total program costs rather than just credit costs.



- Does the school offer quarter credits or semester credits?
- How many credits are needed for your degree?

SAINT LEO UNIVERSITY

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SCHOOL #2

- Saint Leo offers semester credits. Associate programs are 60 credits, bachelor's are 120 credits, and graduate programs are typically 36 (with the exception of the Master of Accounting degree, which is 30 credits and the DBA, which is 57).
- Saint Leo tuition is among the lowest of all private, nonprofit universities in the country. Click the links below for more information:

[Associate/Bachelor's Tuition](#)

[Master's Tuition](#)

[Doctoral Tuition](#)

#6 Admissions & Enrollment

Admissions should be a simple and straightforward process that is focused on you, the student.

- Is the enrollment counselor concerned with you and your educational and career goals?
- Does the school offer convenient start dates?

SAINT LEO UNIVERSITY

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SCHOOL #2

- Rolling admissions. Six convenient start dates during the year.
- Caring, experienced enrollment counselors are knowledgeable about online education and committed to core values of integrity and respect.

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#7 Degree Completion

Adult learners want to earn their degrees in a timely manner. The ability to transfer credits or to earn credits for prior learning experiences can accelerate your degree completion.

- Will the school work with you to transfer credits from another institution?
- Can you apply previous service, work, or learning experiences toward academic credit?
- Can you earn credit by taking an exam in place of the actual course?
- Are graduates successful?

SAINT LEO UNIVERSITY

VS.

SCHOOL #2

- Transfer credits accepted from regionally accredited institutions.
- Credits may be granted for military, corporate, and other career courses and training.
- Online Prior Learning Assessment course for undergraduates.
- Credit by exam available for AP, CLEP, DANTES and ECEs.

YOUR NOTES:

#8 Academic Support Services

Academic support services are crucial to your success as an online student.

- Are professional tutoring services available?
- Will you have full access to library and research resources?
- Will you have a dedicated student advisor?

SAINT LEO UNIVERSITY

VS.

SCHOOL #2

- Personal student advisor throughout your college career.
- Free online tutoring available 24-7.
- Research assistance and full library access to all resources, including 116,000 e-books.



#9 Financial Aid Services

Knowledgeable advisors can step you through the financial aid process, offer guidance about loans, grants, and scholarships, and keep you informed about changes in federal and state aid.

- Does the school provide financial aid counseling services?
- Is the school's tuition affordable?

SAINT LEO UNIVERSITY

VS.

SCHOOL #2

- Expert team of counselors helps you navigate financial aid process.
- Team helps ensure you receive a financial aid package that meets your needs.
- Guidance provided regarding scholarships, grants, and loans.
- Military spouse and academic readiness scholarships available for online students.

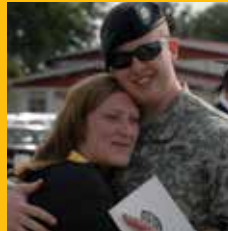
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#10 Military Support

If you are an active military servicemember or a veteran, you want to know what policies and programs a college has in place to support you and your family.

- Is the school recognized as a military-friendly institution?
- Do faculty members understand – and degree programs accommodate – the mobile lifestyle of military personnel?
- Are graduates successful?



SAINT LEO UNIVERSITY VS.

SCHOOL #2

- Proud 40-year history of serving active duty military, reservists, veterans, and families.
- More than 5,000 servicemembers enrolled in degree programs university-wide.
- Office of Veteran Services connects veterans to resources.
- VA certifying officials provide assistance with processing of VA educational benefits or military activation.

YOUR NOTES:

#11 Student Support Services

Online students may be off campus, but you should always feel as if you are part of a community.

- Are there opportunities to connect to other online students and faculty through social networks, peer mentoring, clubs and associations?



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- Social media outlets connect students with each other, faculty, and student services staff; online meetings through web conferencing and collaborative learning complement the classroom experience and strengthen connections.
- Dynamic online clubs provide professional development and networking opportunities.
- Peer mentoring increases academic success.

#12 Career Services

Online students should have access to the same types of student services as traditional campus students, including career services.

- Is personalized career counseling for online students offered?
- Are career services tools including webinars, online modules, and job-search resources available?

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- Comprehensive career services includes dedicated counselor for online students.
- Career planning webinars available at times convenient for working adults.
- Robust resources and tools available 24/7.
- Free resume builder software.

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#13 Faculty

Faculty should be student-focused and understand adult learners: your high expectations, busy lifestyle, and need for flexible programs and relevant coursework.

- How accessible are faculty?
- What are their credentials? Do the majority hold terminal degrees?
- What is the student-faculty ratio?



SAINT LEO UNIVERSITY VS.

SCHOOL #2

- Easily accessible with regular office hours.
- Understand needs of adult learners.
- Student-faculty ration: 18:1
- More than 50 percent of online faculty members hold terminal degrees in their disciplines.
- Online instructors are talented professionals who bring years of real-world experience to the classroom.

YOUR NOTES:

#14 Technical Support

Online students need to know that when needed, assistance in navigating the online learning environment is readily available.

- Is there 24-hour help desk support?
- How do you connect when you have a problem?



SAINT LEO UNIVERSITY VS.

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- Dependable, professional technical support available 24/7.

#15 Alumni

A vibrant alumni association can offer a wide range of benefits and services.

- How large is the school's alumni association?
- What types of services are available to alumni?



SAINT LEO UNIVERSITY VS.

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- Worldwide network of more than 74,000 alumni in 72 countries.
- All online students invited to commencement exercises at University Campus.
- Career Planning services available for alumni.

Undergraduate 888.875.8265 | Graduate 800.707.8846 | online.saintleo.edu

¹Saint Leo University is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to award the associate, bachelor's, master's, specialist, and doctoral degrees. Contact the Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097 or call 404-679-4500 for questions about the accreditation of Saint Leo University.

²Saint Leo University is a Catholic, liberal arts-based university serving people of all faiths. Rooted in the 1,500-year-old Benedictine tradition, the university seeks balanced growth in mind, body, and spirit for all members of its community. At University Campus, at education centers, and through the Center for Online Learning, Saint Leo University offers a practical, effective model for life and leadership in a challenging world; a model based on a steadfast moral consciousness that recognizes the dignity, value, and gifts of all people. To accomplish its mission, the university community creates a student-centered environment in which the love of learning is of prime importance. Members of the community are expected to examine and express their own values, listen respectfully to and respond to the opinions of others, serve the community in which they live, welcome others into their lives, and care for all of God's creations.