

# 6 factors to consider when building a connected campus



After shifting to online learning almost overnight, technology on college campuses is at a turning point. The transition highlights both the enormous potential and profound limitations of current educational technology. In an effort to learn more about how the demands for connectivity are changing, we surveyed IT professionals and administrators across higher education.<sup>1</sup>

There is no doubt 5G will play a valuable role in transforming the campus experience; **four out of five** decision makers say it is an important part of their modernization plans. Learn what factors are affecting their approach to new technology, and how they are bringing people together on connected campuses.

83%

of respondents feel 5G is very or extremely important to their IT modernization plans

## 1. CONNECTIVITY IS A REQUIREMENT FOR STUDENT SUCCESS

After growing up as digital natives and then becoming immersed in a hybrid learning model, students rely on technology for education. To many institutions, especially small and private ones, supplying technology is a way to create equity and boost success.



66%

of institutions say students are among the top beneficiaries of a connected campus



28%

of private institutions say improving student access to technology is a driving motivation

But knowing exactly what the students need, and putting a plan into action, can be a big hurdle:



25%

describe that determining what students need is a major roadblock



21%

say delivering equitable technology capabilities to students is a challenge

## 2. FACULTY NEED TOOLS TO TEACH AND INNOVATE

Faculty drive innovation inside and outside of the classroom. In order to connect with students and conduct research, they need smarter tools. At all institutions, faculty are a major consideration in IT modernization efforts.

67%

say faculty are among the top beneficiaries of a connected campus

22%

say improving faculty satisfaction with technology is their top goal for 2022

21%

say developing technology for academics and research is a top driving motivation

### A VIRTUAL PEDAGOGY

Faculty are building education plans around new technology. The future of the classroom will be defined by innovation labs, the internet of things (IoT), and extended reality (XR).

84%

of institutions use or plan to implement 5G innovation labs

79%

of institutions use or plan to implement IoT devices

75%

of institutions use or plan to implement XR technology

## 3. CONNECTIVITY AND ACCESS ARE THE LARGEST BENEFITS

Students, faculty, and staff alike need to be able to connect from anywhere. Many organizations struggle with dead spots across campus. Modern solutions like 5G offer potential to expand coverage, so students can study on the lawn or conduct research in edge environments.



36%

of institutions are increasing Wi-Fi coverage and network capabilities



45%

of institutions are planning to implement a 5G network

5G enabled campuses already see the benefits:



17%

greater likelihood of having optimal wireless network performance



33%

more exterior campus space covered by connectivity

## 4. INSTITUTIONS ARE FIGHTING FOR RETENTION

Over the last few decades, competition in higher education has been defined by an amenities arms race. In a world of hybrid learning, technology offerings will become the new defining factor for college enrollment, student satisfaction, and retention.



**#1 motivation driving technology investment:**  
The need to keep up with technology offered by competing institutions.

Institutions are more focused on retaining students with technology offerings than growing their student body:

34%

say improving student retention is their top goal for 2022

18%

say increasing enrollment rate is their top goal for 2022

## 5. HYBRID LEARNING WILL BE RELEVANT FOR YEARS TO COME

Even as the pandemic has less impact on the classroom, institutions are focused on the long-term value of distance learning. Faculty have found that it enables new teaching styles, and staff see it as a way to reach first-generation students.



89%

expect online/hybrid learning to increase in the next 4 years



28%

say ensuring learning can happen on or off campus is their top goal for 2022

But not all institutions are ready:

56%

of organizations are not completely prepared for the future of hybrid learning

## 6. SECURITY HAS ALREADY IMPACTED SPENDING

IT professionals across industries are focused on stopping emerging threats. Because campuses pose higher risks, network defenses are even more pressing in higher education. Cybersecurity is one area where institutions are already putting plans into action.

57%

of organizations already invest in network security

Privacy concerns are affecting solution choices:



21%

say concerns about security or privacy are a top concern



34%

are focusing on solutions with strong security measures

Colleges and universities have their sights set on 5G enabled smart campuses. This technology delivers high-speed connectivity and low latency to support virtual/hybrid learning and immersive experiences. Despite the demand for new technology, many colleges and universities don't know where to start:

30%

say their biggest roadblock is competing priorities

27%

say their lack of knowledgeable IT experts is an obstacle

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To learn more about the future of the connected campus, visit [T-Mobile.com/HigherEd](https://www.t-mobile.com/highered)

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<sup>1</sup> In a study commissioned by T-Mobile, Aberdeen conducted a survey of 202 higher education professionals in February, 2022.

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