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**Abstract**

A large number of studies have compared learning outcomes in fully online courses to those in face-to-face courses. Fewer studies have examined why students choose to enrol in fully online courses to begin with, and no study has yet addressed the question of why some students choose not to register in online courses. This study contributes to scholarly understanding of online education by examining for the first time why students may choose to take a large lecture course face-to-face, when they know that the same course is offered by their institution online in the same semester, for the same credit and at the same tuition cost. Through a survey, 48 students in a face-to-face offering of an introductory Educational Psychology course reported why they chose to attend lectures and tutorials in person when they could have earned the same credit without doing so. A majority of respondents suggested that they believed they would learn better face-to-face, and expressed informal theories about why this would be the case. We examine these informal theories, and the possible implications

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they may have for future research and institutional planning with regard to online course offerings.(HRK / Abstract übernommen) O'Neill, D. Kevin, E-Mail, koneill@sfu.ca