The following is part of a memorandum from the president of Humana University.

“Last year the number of students who enrolled in online degree programs offered by nearby Omni University increased by 50 percent**.** During the same year, Omni showed a significant decrease from prior years in expenditures for dormitory and classroom space, most likely because instruction in the online programs takes place via the Internet. In contrast, over the past three years, enrollment at Humana University has failed to grow, and the cost of maintaining buildings has increased along with our budget deficit. To address these problems, Humana University will begin immediately to create and actively promote online degree programs like those at Omni. We predict that instituting these online degree programs will help Humana both increase its total enrollment and solve its budget problems.”

**Write a response in which you examine the stated and/or unstated assumptions of the argument. Be sure to explain how the argument depends on these assumptions and what the implications are for the argument if the assumptions prove unwarranted.**

The writer of the argument states that in order to overcome the problems associated with budget deficit, lack of growth in student body of the university, and increased cost of building maintenance it is best to follow the path which Omni University has taken, which is offering online programs. However, this decision cannot be accepted since it is based on a number of questionable premises.

To begin with, it is assumed that Omni University’s expenditure decrease is most likely because of the programs taking place on the internet whereas this might not be the case. It might be so that the university has lowered its standards so that any further cost expenditure could be evaded. Another possibility is that the faculty members of the Omni University have not taken as many funded-projects as they used to, or the projects they are working on demand less budget than before last year. Whatever might be the case there is not enough evidence to support the assumption that the cost decrease has happened due to rising of the online programs.

In addition, another presumption is that the fifty percent growth in the student body of the Omni University is solely because it has offered online education while there are multiple explanations for this growth that are not necessarily relevant to offering such programs. For example, the quality of the online programs might have increased over the last year, therefore, the number of applicants – and in consequence admitted students – have also increased. Another explanation could be that the Omni University has put some of its budget for advertising its online programs – which is in harmony with the decreased expenditure on classroom and accommodation – to attract more students. Unless there is solid evidence showing that all students in general prefer online programs over in-person ones, it could not be concluded that offering online education by itself attracts students.

Another flaw in the writer’s conclusion is that even if the assumed reasons are responsible for the improvements taken place at Omni University, it does not mean that the same could work for Humana University. It could be possible that the academic programs offered by the two universities are completely different than each other; for example, Omni University could be an institution which only offers science degree programs that generally revolve around theoretical studies, and which does not require real experience. Such programs could easily be accomplished via online learning. On the contrary, Humana University could be a technical university in which experience plays a crucial role. Thus, in that case, Humana University would even face more severe problems for offering online programs for technical majors could repel them.

All in all, what the writer has argued is not likely to be the solution to the problem stated unless there is enough evidence to overcome the issues mentioned above. To be precise, it is important not to turn a blind eye on the differences, and not to fail noticing the subtleties that determine the solutions to a problem.