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.”

The writer of the argument concludes that problems related to high costs of instruction and the low rate of enrollment at the Humana University will be addressed if they create and promote online degree programs like those at Omni University. However, this conclusion cannot be accepted as it is in that it rests on a number of premises all of which can be challenged in one way or another.

The first problem with the argument is that the writer assumes that increase in the number of enrollments in the Omni University has been all for its online programs. However, there is no evidence to prove that this increase actually happened because of the online programs offered by the university. For example, maybe more people were attracted to this university due to its well-rounded professors who are popular among students. Another alternative scenario to be mentioned is that it is likely that Omni University is a ranked university which gives students a better opportunity to have a better job prospect, and this matter has caused a rise in the number of the enrollments.

Another problem with the argument is that the writer assumes that decrease in the costs of the instruction at the Omni University is due to its online courses, while it might have been other reasons that can justify this matter; For example, it is possible that paying a lot of money for instruction during previous years, the Omni University had not necessarily to allocate more money to instruction anymore. Also, maybe this university countered shortage budget during that particular year and had to minimize its costs in all areas containing instruction projects.

A third with the argument is that the writer assumes Humana University is identical to Omni University. Even if increase in the number of enrollments and decrease in the costs of the instructions has been for the Omni University's online programs, it does not guarantee that this plan will work at the same way for the Humana University. For example, maybe this university has not requirements of running online programs smoothly. If it was true, it would not be a rational decision to create online courses since it probably aggravates the situation and even reduces the number of its new students.

To recapitulate, the author's conclusion cannot be taken to be correct because, as it was shown in the body paragraphs above, it depends on a number of assumptions each of which is questionable. The conclusion can only be accepted if the weaknesses already referred to are all removed.