School Name	Eastern Gateway Community College, Steubenville, OH
Course Names	Principles of Management, Principles of Marketing, Introduction to Business, Business Math, Organizational Behavior, Business Law, Entrepreneurship
Course Format	On-ground, Blended, Online

Key Result CourseConnect enabled delivery of a consistent curriculum and common assessments across 7 courses with 10 instructors, 424 students, and 23 sections.

Submitted by

Ken Knox, Assistant Professor and Program Director, Business, Engineering and Information Technologies; Humanities and Social Sciences

Course materials

CourseConnect Introduction to Business with *Business Essentials* by Ebert and Griffin; CourseConnect Business Math with *Business Math* by Cleaves, Hobbs, and Noble; CourseConnect Introduction to Marketing with *Marketing* by Armstrong and Kotler; CourseConnect Business Law with *Business Law* by Cheeseman; CourseConnect Entrepreneurship with *Entrepreneurship* by Mariotti and Glackin; CourseConnect Principles of Management with *Management* by McKee; CourseConnect Organizational Behavior with *Essentials of Organizational Behavior* by Robbins and Judge

We offer a number of high-enrollment, high-demand courses in our Business Management department and as both an instructor and the Program Director, I am responsible to ensure that students experience a consistent curriculum regardless of course format or instructor. In order to accommodate all of our students, we hire adjunct faculty to teach alongside our full-time instructors. Some adjuncts are hired very close to the start of the term with little time to prepare. We have a responsibility to "pre-load" these adjuncts with the course content they need to teach effectively. In order to give students and instructors a high-quality, validated, consistent curriculum with common assessments, we adopted CourseConnect and deployed it across seven courses in on-ground, blended, and online formats beginning fall 2013.

Implementation

We offered Blackboard and CourseConnect training for all of our instructors before the start of the fall term. Training faculty at the outset helps to ensure the desired results. Some faculty voiced anxiety that adopting a modularized course content solution would mean a potential loss of academic freedom. We addressed this concern head-on in our faculty training. With CourseConnect's consistent curriculum, instructors' academic freedom is actually enhanced. With CourseConnect, instructors are free to personalize their lectures, knowing that students have a solid conceptual foundation from the Lesson Presentations. All of our faculty validated the CourseConnect content so we have agreement there. We're taking the academic freedom out of content and putting it into delivery—where it belongs.

We conduct our classes, whether on-ground, blended, or online, in the same fashion with CourseConnect. The only difference is that online students participate with instructors and each other via discussion forums rather than face-to-face. Students are expected to work through the week's Lesson Presentation before class. I give students a quiz (with clickers) on Monday based directly on the Lesson Presentation. After working through the required CourseConnect assignments and our class activities and discussion, students are ready for the higher stakes quiz at the end of the week. Students are required to complete a course project (a paper and presentation); there are five tests over the course of the semester and a comprehensive final exam.

Assessments

57 percent	Exams (five)
15 percent	Final exam
14 percent	Participation
14 percent	Course project

"With CourseConnect's consistent curriculum, instructors' academic freedom is actually enhanced. We're taking the academic freedom out of content and restoring it to delivery—where it belongs."
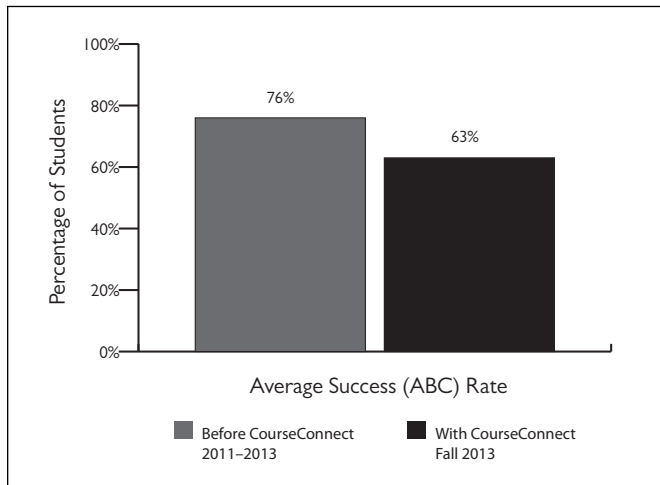

Figure 1. Average Success (ABC) Rate before (*n*=1562) and after (*n*=424) CourseConnect Implementation, 2011–Fall 2013

Results and data

I love the content and the experience of teaching with CourseConnect. CourseConnect makes it so easy for the instructor; it keeps me on track. CourseConnect helps students understand my lectures. The Lesson Presentations give students a solid foundation of the course concepts so that our class discussions can go deeper.

It may seem counter-intuitive to celebrate fewer students passing our courses, but this data indicates that we are fixing a serious problem. Business Management is the largest single program at EGCC. Our growth resulted in inconsistency in our curricula and a lack of accountability in our assessment. With CourseConnect, we have standardized our grading across all formats, instructors, and sections. CourseConnect enables us to guarantee a consistent curriculum and assessment for every student. As program director, I quantify all of the course assessments. There is no way for instructors to inflate grades; students complete the assessments and grades are assigned. Students who passed one of our courses in fall 2013 truly earned an A, B, or C; they did the work and demonstrated a genuine understanding of the course content.

Partway through our second term with CourseConnect, I've checked in with both instructors and students. Instructors who taught with CourseConnect in the fall are doing really well this

spring—they love the content and the quality. Students tell me they understand and appreciate the CourseConnect lesson presentations as a way to study and master the course content.

The student experience

When surveyed at the end of the fall 2013 term:

* 90% of students responded that they would take another CourseConnect course

* 91% of students responded that they would recommend CourseConnect to another student

"CourseConnect enables us to serve a large student population, offering courses of uniformly high quality in a variety of formats. CourseConnect's consistent curriculum and common assessments benefit students, and our instructors are back to their core expertise and joy: teaching."

Conclusion

CourseConnect enables us to serve a large student population, offering courses of uniformly high quality in a variety of formats. CourseConnect's consistent curriculum and common assessments benefit students, and our instructors are back to their core expertise and joy: teaching.

We are expanding our use of CourseConnect across campus. We're introducing CourseConnect in our paralegal courses this spring with plans to also use it in health sciences, accounting, business communication, economics and general education. In addition, this spring we are piloting four courses using Pearson's self-paced, student-directed courseware, Propero. These courses include Psychology, Sociology, American Government, and American History. Because the CourseConnect and Propero content is identical, offering Propero gives students additional flexibility to pick up courses they need on a self-directed platform. We intend to offer a suite of Propero courses this fall as high school dual-credit courses.