

School Name	Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO
Course Name	Criminology
Format	On-ground, Online

Key Results After implementation of CourseConnect, the percentage of students earning a final course grade of A or B significantly increased: from 77 percent without CourseConnect to 86 percent with it. In addition, the percentage of students who earned an A increased from 42 percent to 70 percent.

Submitted by

Lieutenant Staci Shaffer, CJM, MCJ
Deputy Sheriff, Larimer County Sheriff's Office
Adjunct Instructor, Colorado State University

Course materials

CourseConnect: Criminology, *Criminology Today* by Schmalleger

Colorado State University's OnlinePlus program offers a wide range of online courses and degree programs designed to improve access and flexibility for students pursuing academic goals alongside career, family, or military responsibilities. Lieutenant Staci Shaffer, Deputy Sheriff in the Larimer County Sheriff's Office, was tapped by CSU to develop an online Criminology course to be offered beginning in spring 2013. A first-time instructor, Lt. Shaffer carefully reviewed available course materials with the goal of developing a high-quality learning experience within a short amount of time. She chose to adopt CourseConnect: Criminology.

“CourseConnect enabled me to prepare my course—including customization with my own videos, test questions, and discussion topics—in less than five hours.”

“I am employed full-time as a Sheriff's Deputy, so completeness and ease of use are essential,” says Shaffer. “CourseConnect enabled me to prepare my course—including customization with my own videos, test questions, and discussion topics—in less than five hours, a savings of at least thirty hours. I can't imagine how I would have managed to put together a course of this quality without CourseConnect.”

Implementation

“I use CourseConnect for both online and on-ground course formats. Most of my energy as an instructor is in moderating discussions, both face-to-face for the on-ground class and via discussion forums for the online students. I have found, interestingly, that my online students are more intellectually engaged in the discussions. Both classes complete weekly assignments in CourseConnect and take weekly quizzes with questions drawn from both CourseConnect and the textbook's test bank. There is a midterm exam and a comprehensive final.”

Benefits

“CourseConnect is organized by learning objectives with dynamic lesson presentations followed by engaging activities that require students to think critically about course material. Many of the resources students use in CourseConnect are the same as the resources I use on the job in the sheriff's office. CourseConnect engages students academically while also building competencies that are relevant to their career goals.”

Assessments

36 percent	CourseConnect assignments
30 percent	Two exams
24 percent	Weekly quizzes
10 percent	Participation

“Students who engaged with the CourseConnect material found earning an A for the course entirely manageable.”

Results and Data

Final course grades from multiple instructors were analyzed from fall 2012 through summer 2013: four sections (152 students total) in fall 2012 and spring 2013 did not use CourseConnect; three sections (64 students total) in spring and summer 2013 used CourseConnect. Students using CourseConnect in both on-ground and online classes performed significantly better than students who did not use CourseConnect.

- 86 percent of students who used CourseConnect passed with an A or B compared to 77 percent of students who did not use CourseConnect.
- After the implementation of CourseConnect, the percentage of students earning an A increased from 42 percent to 70 percent.

Competency fosters workplace success

“Some of my former CourseConnect students now serve as interns in the sheriff’s office where they work on a range of projects including:

- *Prescreening services for an in-house jail therapy program.* One of the lessons in the criminology course explores psychological theories of crime. Understanding these theories prepares students to readily identify inmates suited for the therapeutic interventions.
- *Cataloging data measuring the rate of recidivism for inmates who attend a week-long intervention program.* The students engage with the raw data and identify short-view trends. Students are able to look beyond the tedium of data entry because they understand the theoretical basis for and importance of this research.

One former student and intern is now a part-time employee while she completes her degree. For her senior honors thesis, she is creating a comfort corner to soothe and entertain the children of inmates who come to visit a parent.

These student interns prove their competence every day. And I have the satisfaction of knowing that, thanks to CourseConnect, my students are entering the workforce fully prepared.”

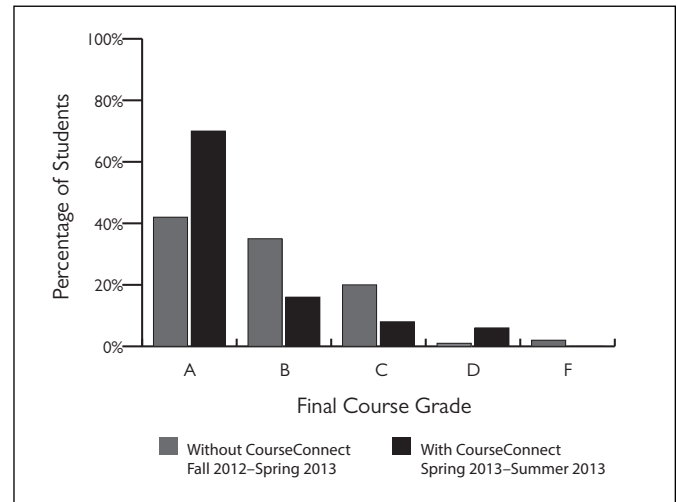


Figure 1. Criminology Grade Distribution with and without CourseConnect, Fall 2012–Summer 2013 (without n=152, with n=64)

The Student Experience

“Students who engaged with the CourseConnect material found earning an A for the course entirely manageable. The Study Guide deserves special mention as an enormously helpful and effective tool for students. The interface is completely intuitive, showing students green for the concepts they’ve mastered and orange or red for the areas they need to review or study more thoroughly.”

Conclusion

“Above all, I want to ensure that my students receive a first-class learning experience. Students are motivated to spend time on task because the CourseConnect materials are so current, so thought-provoking, and of such high quality. I am confident that, with CourseConnect, my course materials and delivery are academically sound and would pass any test for quality. I am grateful to Pearson for thinking of absolutely everything in CourseConnect, and I will continue using it in my courses.”