Full Online Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Product Name</th>
<th>CourseConnect Business and Management</th>
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<tr>
<td>School Name</td>
<td>Eastern Gateway Community College, Steubenville, OH</td>
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Key Results: CourseConnect enabled delivery of a consistent curriculum and common assessments across seven courses with 10 instructors, 424 students, and 23 sections.

Submitted by
Ken Knox, Assistant Professor and Program Director

Course materials
CourseConnect Business and Management and Business Essentials, Ebert and Griffin; Business Math, Cleaves, Hobbs, and Noble; Marketing, Armstrong and Kotler; Business Law, Cheeseman; Entrepreneurship, Mariotti and Glackin; Management, McKee; Essentials of Organizational Behavior, Robbins and Judge

Background
Eastern Gateway Community College serves approximately 2,500 students a year from its main campus in Steubenville, Ohio; campuses in Youngstown and Warren; and delivery sites at career centers across Jefferson, Columbiana, Mahoning, and Trumbull Counties. The college has an open-door admissions policy and offers placement tests for newly enrolled students. Eighty-two percent of students are in state, and more than half are part-time.

Challenges and Goals
Eastern Gateway Community College offers a number of high-enrollment, high-demand courses in its business management department. As both an instructor and the program director, Ken Knox ensures that students experience a consistent curriculum regardless of course format or instructor. To accommodate all of its students, the college hires adjunct faculty to teach alongside 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 preload these adjuncts with the course content they need to teach effectively,” says Knox.

To give students and instructors a high-quality, validated, consistent curriculum with common assessments, Knox adopted CourseConnect and deployed it across seven courses in on-ground, blended, and online formats beginning in fall 2013.

Implementation
Knox offered Blackboard and CourseConnect training for all of the instructors before the start of the fall term. Training faculty at the outset helps ensure the desired results. Some faculty expressed anxiety that adopting a modularized course content solution would mean a potential loss of academic freedom.

Knox addressed that concern head-on in the 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 acquire a solid conceptual foundation from the lesson presentations. “All of the faculty validated the CourseConnect content so we have agreement there,” says Knox. “We’re taking the academic freedom out of content and putting it into delivery—where it belongs.”

With CourseConnect, all classes—whether on ground, blended, or online—are conducted in the same fashion. 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. Knox gives students a quiz on Monday based directly on the lesson presentation. After working through the required CourseConnect assignments and 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 during 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
CourseConnect enables Eastern Gateway Community College to serve a large student population, offering uniformly high-quality courses in a variety of formats. Its consistent curriculum and common assessments benefit students, and instructors are back to their core expertise and joy: teaching.

![Figure 1. Average Success (A/B/C) Rate before (n = 1,562) and after (n = 424) CourseConnect Implementation, 2011–Fall 2013](image)

## Results and Data

“I love the content and the experience of teaching with CourseConnect,” says Knox. “CourseConnect makes it so easy for the instructor; it keeps me on track.” In addition, the program helps students understand his lectures. The lesson presentations give students a solid foundation of the course concepts so that class discussions can go deeper.

It may seem counterintuitive to celebrate fewer students passing courses, but data indicates CourseConnect is fixing a serious problem (Figure 1). Business Management is the largest single program at Eastern Gateway. The college’s growth resulted in inconsistency in its curricula and a lack of accountability in its assessments. CourseConnect facilitates standardized grading across all formats, instructors, and sections; and facilitates a guaranteed-consistent curriculum and assessment for every student. As program director, Knox quantifies 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 his courses in fall 2013 truly earned an A, B, or C because they did the work and demonstrated a genuine understanding of course content.

Partway through his second term with CourseConnect, Knox 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 him they understand and appreciate the CourseConnect lesson presentations as a way to study and master course content.

### The Student Experience

A fall 2013 end-of-semester survey suggests that students understand the value of CourseConnect:

- 90% responded that they would take another CourseConnect course.
- 91% responded that they would recommend CourseConnect to another student.

## Conclusion

CourseConnect enables Eastern Gateway Community College to serve a large student population, offering uniformly high-quality courses in a variety of formats. Its consistent curriculum and common assessments benefit students, and instructors are back to their core expertise and joy: teaching.

The college is expanding its use of CourseConnect across campus. The college is introducing CourseConnect in its paralegal courses this spring, with plans to also use it in health sciences, accounting, business communication, economics, and general education.

In addition, this spring the college is piloting four courses using Pearson’s self-paced, student-directed courseware, Propero. The 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. The college intends to offer a suite of Propero courses this fall as high school dual-credit courses.