

A CASE OF RAPID GROWTH IN ONLINE PROGRAMS

TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY

The rising STAR of Texas

The Challenge

Maintain the quality of online programs and expedite faculty development during a period of rapid growth.

Growing organically—it's not just for farmers and backyard gardeners. Organizations can grow organically as well. While some universities work toward specific targets and goals for growing their online learning programs, others, like Texas State University, utilize a faculty-driven approach for curriculum development, enabling more organic growth.

Using this approach, Texas State has recently experienced tremendous growth in its online offerings. According to Debbie Thorne, the University's associate VP for academic affairs and professor of marketing, this growth has been accompanied by some growing pains. As Debbie explains, the University's internal training resources could not immediately accommodate the faculty training required to support its progress.

According to Debbie, Texas State realized it needed to look beyond its internal resources for a partner that could not only help it get through its immediate faculty training crunch, but also ensure the quality of its online education programs, while continuing to apply its faculty-driven approach to curriculum development.



The Online Learning Consortium is the leading professional organization devoted to advancing excellence in online learning providing professional development, instruction, best practice publications and guidance to educators and institutions around the world.

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Studies in Quality

Advancing e-Education Through Online Learning Consortium (OLC) Membership



OLC provided the University opportunities to enhance its faculty development and to continuously improve its online learning programs and services.

As Debbie explains, “The staff at OLC were eager to partner with us in this venture and I’m pleased to report that Texas State will have an additional 27 faculty certified by OLC in the near future.”

The Quality Scorecard results, coupled with accreditation standards, provide the focal point for decisions and recommendations made by the University’s Distance and Extended Learning Steering Committee. Debbie reports the committee has already taken action to improve several elements of Texas State’s online education program and will continue working through these focal areas for several years.

“The Quality Scorecard is grounded in research, best practices and expert opinion, so I know the University is well-served by implementing the self-assessment process and demonstrating our continuous improvement processes and outcomes to accreditors,” she says.



THE RESULTS

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Debbie Thorne Associate VP for Academic Affairs and Professor of Marketing Texas State University



Debbie adds, "OLC is the standard-bearer in the field of online education. I know that I can count on the products, conferences and knowledge that OLC produces to add value to Texas State University's online programs and services. There are other resources out there, but I believe that OLC is the most comprehensive, especially for administrative and university-level oversight of distance learning."

Debbie Thorne Associate VP for Academic Affairs and Professor of Marketing Texas State University



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