

Why Collaboration?

eCore serves as a successful example for collaboratively delivering education in the online environment. It has evolved from being a small, early start-up collaborative (the first in the USG), to a growing model studied carefully by other systems. eCore program delivery results in high student retention and satisfaction, proven course quality and outcomes, and renewed interest. In FY 2016, eCore continued on this trajectory.

Hallmarks:

Providing Increased Institutional Capacities for Fully Online Programs

While most USG institutions offer online courses, many are unable (due to finite resources or institutional focus) to offer all areas of the core courses online each semester. Without the full core online, institutions cannot offer full undergraduate degree programs online and, thus, lose students to more expensive, proprietary institutions. Also, institutions that do offer online core courses often require at least one face-to-face meeting in these courses, whereas eCore courses do not.

Efficient Funding and Model Operations

eCore is one of only a few collaborative programs across the United States that is primarily self-sustaining.

While rising tuition is a reality at most higher education institutions, effective Fall 2014, eCore lowered the per credit hour tuition rate from \$189 to \$169, resulting in a tuition cost savings of over \$2,000,000 based on 106,562 credit hours. Additionally, since Spring 2013, implementation of open educational resources has resulted in a textbook cost savings of almost \$3,000,000.

Institutions offering eCore courses receive \$42 per credit hour of eCore tuition dollars and have no faculty, course development, or revision costs.

eCore relies on centralized support services (unduplicated at institutions). These include course development and revisions, faculty development and support, identification and follow-up of student intervention, student success initiatives, student orientations, non-technical call center, tutoring services, data analysis, bookstore, proctored exam scheduling services, open educational resources, and marketing.

Enrollment Management

eCore course sections are analyzed on a daily basis, during the registration periods, to provide for the optimum number of course sections. Almost all sections of eCore are managed so that enrollments are sufficient to cover instructional costs while providing a healthy faculty to student ratio. Institutions delivering eCore courses ensure just-in-time capacity for students' unrestricted progression through the core curriculum.

Ongoing Affiliate Support

As eCore continues to grow, there is greater need to scale processes while successfully offering diligent and consistent support.

Face-to-face partnership visits allow for development of professional relationships, continued eCore updates, and affiliate feedback for program improvement. Relationships with key campus staff and faculty are essential for successfully supporting student, affiliate, and Board of Regents goals.

Professional Faculty Development

eCore Support Services provides eCore instructors with a robust two-week certification process. Certification includes participation as a student in an online course, as well as comprehensive learning experiences relating to technology, online teaching, faculty expectations, community building, and the role of the instructor in student support. Ongoing support includes mentoring programs, an online community, an annual meeting, and webinars.

Many instructors who teach through eCore take their skills back to their home institutions, where they develop and teach higher-level online courses and mentor other faculty.

Consistent Quality Courses

All eCore courses meet and exceed the rigorous requirements for a 5-Star Online Course or Quality Matters.

All eCore courses are evaluated and substantially revised by teams of eCore faculty every three years. Smaller revisions take place on an ongoing basis.

All eCore faculty agree to engage in specific practices that enhance student learning and success, including: high visibility in courses, timely responsiveness and grading, quality feedback, and identification of students for intervention.

High Student Course Completion

eCore Support Services is staffed with professionals who are highly trained and have experience with the needs of online students, which can be markedly different than those of on-campus students.

eCore course completion has progressively increased, with a reported 90.19% for FY 2016.

There are several influences impacting the student course completion, which include:

1. A gated registration system which requires demonstrated understanding of the nature of the courses.
2. Streamlined, preemptive calling cycles.
3. Identification of students for purpose of reporting for intervention with faculty and eCore Student Support Team using the Student Engagement and Advancement Data System (SEADS) platform
4. Faculty training regarding the role of instructor with student success.
5. Highly intensive engagement with eCore Student Support Team members.

KEY BENEFITS

- Efficient, scalable and consistent student services, course design, and teaching
- Accessible, affordable, and flexible: Increasing institutional capacity and student opportunity

6. Student-friendly navigation within courses and an eConnections tutorial course available prior to semester start, which remains open throughout the term
7. Embedded tutors in math, science, and foreign language discipline areas
8. Ongoing evaluation of student withdrawal requests and course evaluation data
9. Embedded librarians for all courses except science and math
10. Streamlined proctored exam scheduling

Growth and Scalability

The improved financial model provides incentives for institutions to continue affiliation and provide faculty.

A standardized, streamlined process supports the increased student enrollment each term. There is continued focus on personalized, effective student engagement and quality support.

Through ongoing data collection and analysis, eCore Support Services aggressively identifies the changing needs of both member institutions and student populations and evolves accordingly.

Course Completion Rate

