



Detect Student At-Risk Behavior Early with Industry-leading Data Analytics from Pearson LearningStudio

Iowa Community College Online Consortium Increases Student Success with Pearson LearningStudio's Enterprise Reporting Suite

Education programs continually face the same question—How can we create greater student success rates? Many colleges and universities have turned to business-intelligence principles, like data-informed decisions, to help solve this challenge.

The Iowa Community College Online Consortium (ICCOC) developed a reporting strategy to proactively identify at-risk students before they fail or worse, drop out. The ICCOC's strategy leveraged Pearson LearningStudio's Enterprise Reporting suite, providing key indicators of student performance and patterns for success. Early identification allowed instructors and administrators to guide at-risk students toward more successful learning paths.

The ICCOC is comprised of seven Iowa community colleges that partner together to provide online education to their students. The community colleges that make up the consortium are Eastern Iowa Community College District (Clinton, Muscatine, and Scott), Iowa Lakes, Iowa Western, Northwest Iowa, Southeastern, Southwestern and Western Iowa Tech.

Using Pearson LearningStudio, the Consortium is able to offer more than 10 fully online degrees. In addition, ICCOC delivers more than 1,000 online course sections to more than 20,000 fully online enrollments each semester.

The Challenge:

Falling Student Success Rates and Difficult Reporting

The colleges of the ICCOC needed a means of increasing the number of students who successfully completed their online courses. The ICCOC wanted to improve the speed and accuracy at which it identified at-risk online students. In 2005, 40 percent of students were new to online learning and unfamiliar with the self-discipline needed to perform well in this environment. At that time, just 77 percent of at-risk students completed their courses, and only 57 percent got a "C" or higher.

The ICCOC had 3 main goals:

1. Quickly identify at-risk students to make changes before students fail or drop out
2. Provide support for students who need it
3. Increase student success (achieving a "C" or higher) rates

ICCOC Puts Students Back On Track Toward Successful Learning with Pearson LearningStudio's Enterprise Reporting Suite

The Solution: Pearson LearningStudio's Enterprise Reporting Suite Helps the ICCOC Detect At-Risk Behavior Early

To accomplish these goals, the ICCOC prioritized early identification of at-risk students and created an administrative role to target at-risk students and develop a plan for minimizing attrition. ICCOC hired a Coordinator of Student Services who was tasked with developing an at-risk reporting strategy that would enhance the program's student retention and success. Additionally, this coordinator would provide learning preparation resources to new students and develop at-risk identification criteria to intervene with these students.

However, in the beginning everything had to be done manually, thereby delaying their response time to students, slowing their ability to intervene and risking the students' ability to succeed.

The ICCOC turned to Pearson to provide a more effective method for gathering data.

Pearson LearningStudio's Enterprise Reporting suite provided the ICCOC with an efficient tool for identifying at-risk students across all courses in the consortium. Once the ICCOC had developed a reporting strategy, Pearson LearningStudio Enterprise Reporting suite offered the ICCOC centrally located, Web-based tools that provided enterprise-wide visibility of student activity and performance.

Pearson LearningStudio's Enterprise Reporting suite data warehousing and business-intelligence packages are capable of discriminating and aggregating detailed levels of program data. For example, Pearson LearningStudio's Student Activity Report displayed the time individual students were spending within a specific course or across the program's entire offering—in weekly snapshots or over a considerable period of time. Inactive students, or those who hadn't logged into their courses, were labeled at risk for failure. Enterprise Reporting also provided detailed insights into specific student activity. These include threaded discussion postings, and submissions to dropbox to turn in assignments.

Beyond the Student Activity Report, the ICCOC used Pearson LearningStudio's Enterprise Reporting suite to define other at-risk criteria.

ICCOC students were identified as at-risk if they had:

- Failed online courses in the previous two years
- Registered for three or more courses simultaneously
- Registered as first-time online students

With a more efficient data trending and reporting method, the ICCOC identified at-risk students earlier, allowing educators to intervene in time to put students back on track to achieving their academic goals.

The ICCOC also utilized a Pearson LearningStudio's Enterprise Reporting suite course-level communication tool that allows instructors to notify program administrators of at-risk behavior. The At-Risk Notification form is available in every ICCOC Pearson LearningStudio course, providing instructors with a roster of students, a list of reasons for concern and a text entry box for additional information. This student-specific information helped the ICCOC communicate more effectively with at-risk students.

With Pearson LearningStudio's Enterprise Reporting suite global Student Activity Reports, ICCOC can remind inactive students that the semester has begun or inform them of an approaching deadline. Moreover, the At-Risk Notification form provides ICCOC with enough information to provide students with the resources they need to successfully complete their courses.

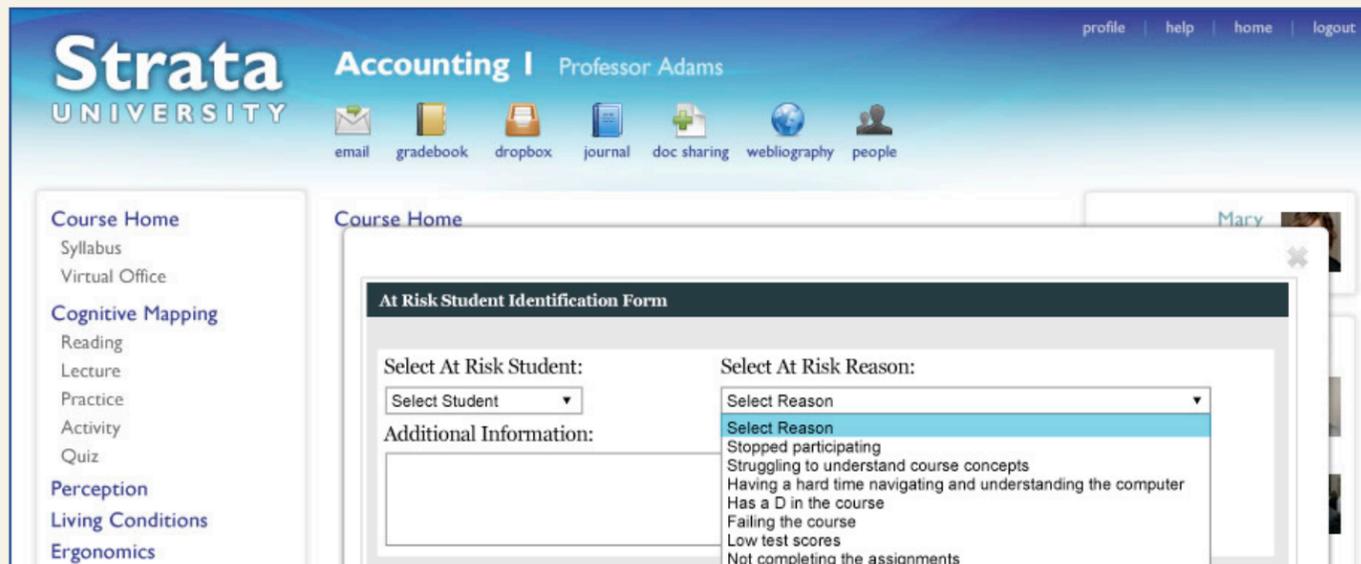


Figure 1: Example of At Risk Student Identification

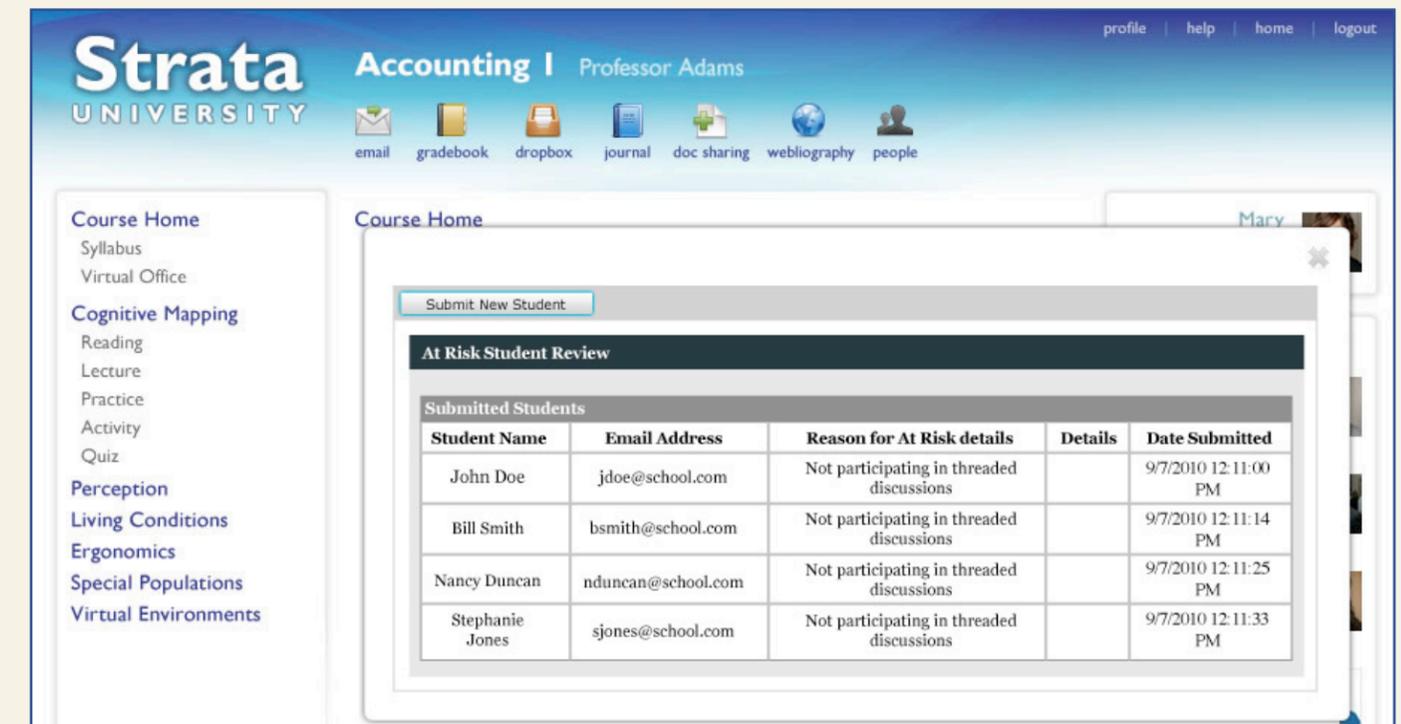


Figure 2: Example of Student Review

The Result: ICCOC Increases Student Success

The ICCOC was able to increase the student success rate for at-risk students by nine percent between fall 2005 and fall 2007. Students were considered “successful” if they completed an online course with a “C” or higher. At the same time, at-risk students’ course completion rates increased from 77 percent to 82 percent. In fall 2009, at-risk students’ course completion reached 85 percent, and at-risk student success reached 68 percent in 2010 (up from 62 percent in 2009).

“The Pearson LearningStudio reporting suite has evolved into an efficient tool which allows us to identify, track and target specific areas for improvement,” said Steve Rheinschmidt, Director of the ICCOC. “We can now proactively target our communication, professional development and operational planning where they have the greatest potential for improving student success.”

In addition, the ICCOC learned several lessons from this initiative that have helped transform its online programs, including:

- Monitor and act on key performance indicators
- Provide students with consistent and clear-cut examples of what constitutes success
- Set the optimal pace for each student to succeed by providing customized and appropriate learning paths guided by performance data
- Collect, provide feedback on, and score student success

| Table 1. At-Risk Students’ Course Completion and Success Rates | Fall 2005 | Fall 2006 | Fall 2007 | Fall 2008 | Fall 2009 | Fall 2010 |
|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| At-Risk Students Course Completion | 77% | 75% | 82% | 77% | 85% | 84% |
| At-Risk Students Success (completers who earned a grade of C or higher) | 57% | 60% | 66% | 55% | 62% | 68% |
| Number of At-Risk Students | 1767 | 2215 | 3524 | 2815 | 5332 | 8868 |
| Percentage of Students At-Risk | 27% | 27% | 32% | 25% | 55% | 81% |

Conclusion

As evidenced by five years of growth and improvement in at-risk student course completion and success rates at the ICCOC, Pearson LearningStudio’s Enterprise Reporting suite enhances the ability of institutions to identify at risk students by providing access to comprehensive data on student activity and performance that can be used to predict student completion and success. At the same time, Pearson LearningStudio’s Enterprise Reporting suite simplifies that process by doing the work and producing a list of at risk students that need attention, thereby allowing the institution to focus on assisting at risk students rather than identifying them. The ICCOC continues to use Pearson LearningStudio’s Enterprise Reporting suite to monitor and analyze trends in student performance.

“The Pearson LearningStudio reporting suite has evolved into an efficient tool which allows us to identify, track and target specific areas for improvement.”

– Steve Rheinschmidt, Director of the ICCOC.

www.pearsonlearningstudio.com

© 2011 Pearson. All Rights Reserved.