

**FINAL 1-Page Summary for Submission IMS Global Learning Impact Award 2013 Finalist
Student Success Category
Award Entry Title: Student Support Services Drives Student Success**

The Challenge

Lone Star is the fastest-growing college system in the United States, with a total of 90,000 students. Lone Star College-Online supports 11 fully online degrees and 23 fully online certificates. In Spring 2013, 32,726 students enrolled in a Lone Star online course, with 28,372 enrolled fully online, and 1,864 online or hybrid course sections were offered.

Lone Star College System defines student success as students achieving individual goals as participants in the community. The community college plays a vital role in assisting and guiding students in setting and attaining realistic, yet challenging goals with high standards of excellence. Community college students attending online are typically balancing work, school, and family obligations that do not enable them to use traditionally delivered student resources. Many are also geographically separated from Lone Star campuses. Additionally, students may need assistance in identifying their existing skills as well as skills that need remediation. Therefore, student success requires that Lone Star deliver support services in an accessible, convenient, robust, and high touch method that can be scaled appropriately to match rapidly growing fully online and hybrid enrollments.

The Solution

The solution to supporting student success for fully online and hybrid students was to deliver Integrated, accessible online student resources. Lone Star College-Online's Student Support Services proactively provides comprehensive services (e.g. SmarterMeasure, Online Advising Chat, Case Management Advising, Starfish Early Alert, and Smarthinking Online Tutoring). Services are conveniently accessible via the students' MyLoneStar portal at <https://sovmportssolb.lonestar.edu/studentselfservice/login.aspx>. SmarterMeasure provides student readiness self-assessment prior to enrollment. Online advising chat provides just-in-time, easily accessible advising seven days a week. Case management advising provides individualized, holistic advising that addresses both academic and career goals. Early alert is an interventional tool used to assist at-risk students and prevent withdrawals, drops, and course failures. Online tutoring is provided as a 24x7 on-demand solution for non-traditional students.

Learning Impact Outcomes

Lone Star's multi-pronged approach to providing support services even before online students are enrolled as well as throughout their coursework has resulted in enhanced learning outcomes. For Fall 2012, the completion rate for fully online students climbed to 83 percent, with a success rate of 71 percent (for grades A, B, or C). The hybrid completion rate was 90 percent, with a success rate of 84 percent. These online and hybrid rates may be compared to a completion and success rate for face-to-face courses of 86 percent and 79 percent, respectively.

Return on Investment

Lone Star College System is an investment from the perspectives of students and taxpayers, the major stakeholders. Students give up money and the opportunity cost of time to attend and complete college in return for a lifetime of higher income. Expected mean income within the Lone Star College System Service Area at the midpoint of an individual's working career is 26 percent higher for individuals with an associate's degree than for individuals with a high school diploma or the equivalent. The investment that Lone Star College System and taxpayers make in supporting students toward successful completion of degrees is then reflected in these students' contribution to the economy in terms of stimulating income production. While students earn more, businesses also earn more because student skills make capital more productive, raising profits and business property income. These increases in labor and capital income are the effect of a skilled workforce.