

# Dyersburg State Community College

## Case Study

**Students Enrolled in Student Success Course where Connect is required, are Retained at a Higher Level and Have Higher GPAs**

### Educational Challenges

Professor Andrea Franckowiak wanted an affordable program that could improve student success and retention rates that correlates with an increase in enrollment and graduation rates. Franckowiak had tried self-created materials, published work, different publishers' textbooks, and digital products. The primary selection criteria for adopting Connect included affordability for students, quality of materials, and training & support, as offered by McGraw Hill.

“

By implementing Connect for Student Success, I hoped to provide affordable materials for students and quality materials that would allow my instructors to be effective in helping students succeed.”



### Study Specifics

**School Name:**

Dyersburg State Community College

**Educator:**

Andrea Franckowiak

**Course Name:**

ORN 1010 Orientation: Learning to Succeed (Freshman Seminar)

**Program:**

McGraw Hill Connect® Student Success with *Power Learning, Strategies for Success in College & Life*, 9e, Feldman

**LMS Integration:**

D2L/Brightspace

## Implementation

### Breakdown of Course Grade

- Connect & SmartBook® Homework **40%**
- Final Exam administered in Connect **10%**
- In-Class Activities and Assignments, Check Point/Quizzes, Group Work **50%**

Students have access to Connect and the online textbook on the first day of class. "The ease with which students can access these materials is terrific," says Franckowiak. Instructors integrate 1-3 Connect assignments per week for in-class assignments (individual & group), homework, and quizzes. Instructors have the flexibility to pick how and when they integrate Connect and which activities/assignments, such as interactive assignments and videos, to assign. "There are so many great ways to ensure students learn about the topics found in each chapter," says Franckowiak. The department common final exam is administered in Connect and is 10% of the final grade.

Each chapter/topic takes at least one week to cover. The instructors break down all parts of each chapter into small, manageable parts, including the readings, assignments, interactive work, homework, reflective tools, and quizzes. "Because of the wide range of assignments and options, our instructors can engage our students in the class the entire semester," says Franckowiak.

Students access Connect from a link in the school's learning management system, D2L. Some of the assignments are linked directly from the content page to Connect, and the student's results transfer to the D2L grade book. "The integration between Connect and D2L makes life and learning easy for all involved," says Franckowiak.

With over 1,000 students and multiple instructors, training and support were crucial. "The support we have from our McGraw Hill team is amazing and so very helpful. They were a huge part of my decision to use Connect," says Franckowiak.



## Results

Dyersburg students who took the Freshman Seminar Course (ORN 1010) from Fall 2018 to Fall 2022 were retained, on average, 14% higher than students who did not take the course (Figure 1).

Students who took ORN 1010 also have higher overall GPAs than students who do not take ORN 1010 (Figure 2).

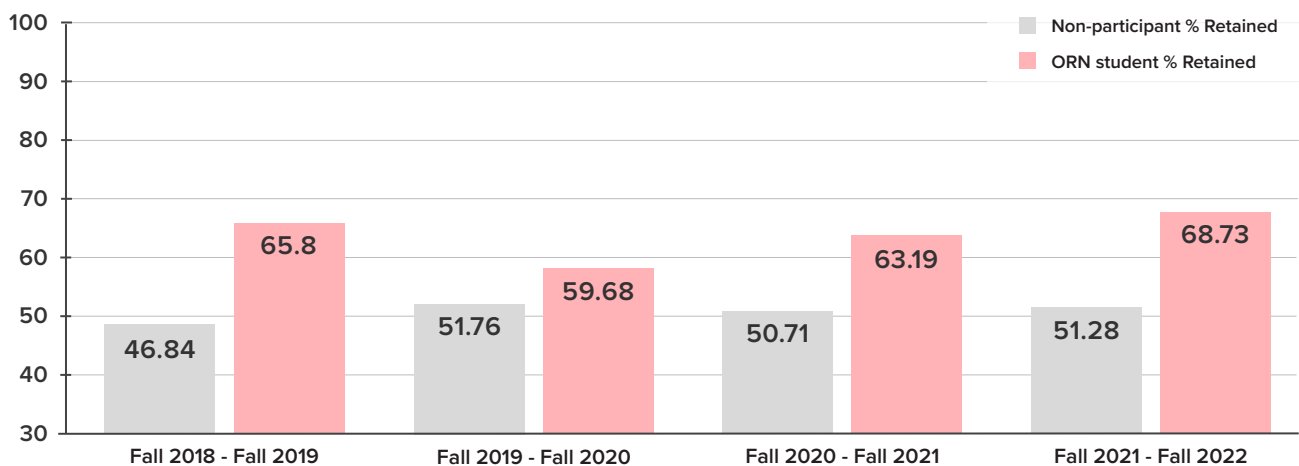


We consistently receive positive student reviews about our Student Success course. More importantly, our success and retention rates continue to improve for students who take this course."

**Figure 1**

### ORN 1010 (DSCC's Freshman Seminar Course) Fall 2018 to Fall 2022

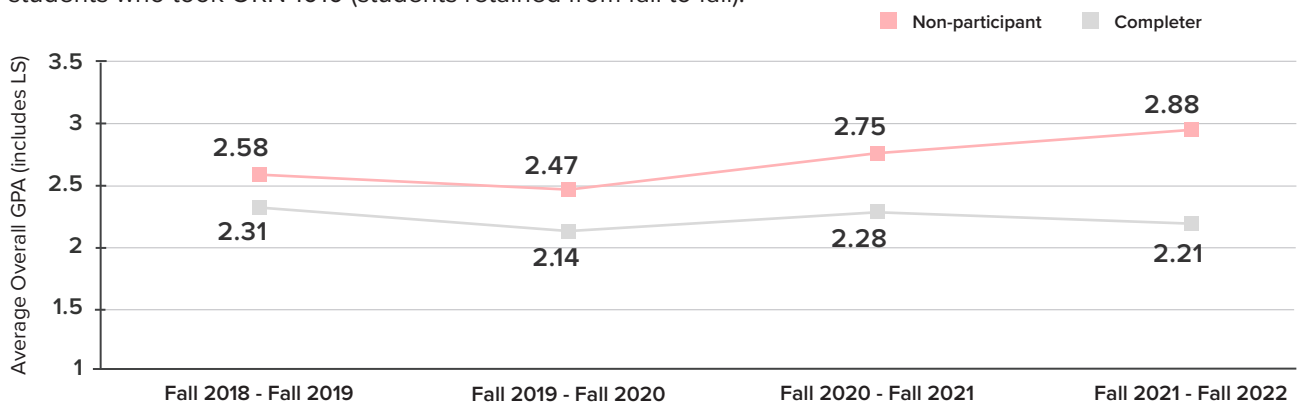
Fall to Fall Retention Rates of first-time, first-year students of non-participants compared with first-time, first-year students who took ORN 1010.



**Figure 2**

### ORN 1010 (DSCC's Freshman Seminar Course) Fall 2018 to Fall 2022

Average Overall GPA of first-time, first-year students of non-participants compared with first-time, first-year students who took ORN 1010 (students retained from fall to fall).



Since requiring Connect, Dyersburg State Community College has also seen a decrease in withdrawal rates. Before requiring Connect, the average withdrawal rate (2015-2017) was 7%, compared to the average withdrawal rate (2017-2019) for those taking ORN 1010 with Connect required, which was 5.15%. Since Dyersburg State Community College fully implemented Connect, the average withdrawal rate (2020-2022) for those taking ORN 1010 is 3.8% (Figure 3).



As a coordinator, using Connect allows me to easily provide my instructors with fantastic products that enhance their teaching. It also allows me to control course drift and ensure the students have a quality, impactful experience."

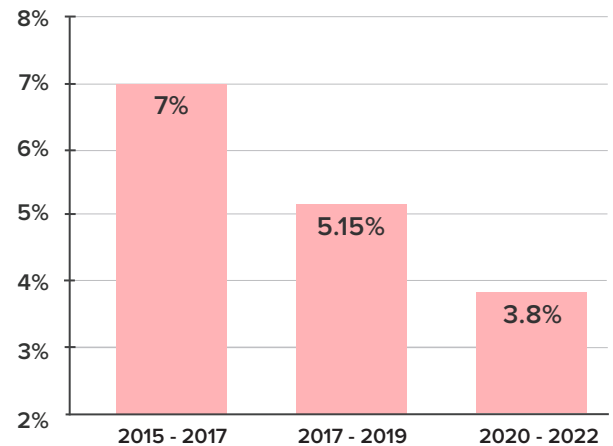
Course materials are affordable to students, instructors have access to quality materials to help students learn, and success and retention rates have improved. Enrollment and graduation rates have increased, even during the COVID-related challenges of the last two years. "Because of the positive experience and student outcomes, we use Connect for all English classes, Reading classes, Education classes, and for our Student Success course," says Franckowiak.

### Course Description

Orientation: Learning to Succeed is recommended for all DSCC students and is designed to provide an orientation to a variety of strategies and techniques necessary to learn and succeed in the college setting.

**Figure 3**

**Average Withdrawal Rate after taking ORN 1010**



## The Setting

Dyersburg State Community College (DSCC) is an open-access higher education institution that seeks to provide high-quality educational opportunities through its excellent technical and transfer degree programs, certificates, and workforce development initiatives. The College provides leadership in public service and collaborations with education, business, and industry partners to promote diversity and improve society at large through education. DSCC focuses on innovative approaches to student success and academic excellence. The College is strongly committed to the development of economic and community partnerships and civic and cultural opportunities.

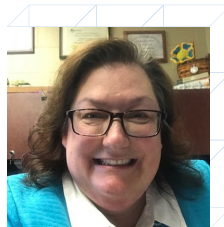
## Get In Touch

We share your passion for learning and we believe that all students should have access to affordable, high-quality learning solutions built to help them succeed.

[mheducation.com](http://mheducation.com)



**Suggestions: Training instructors is invaluable. Setting up Connect and sharing is helpful. Embedding a link to Connect in your Learning Management System is a must. And be sure to always assign content in very, very, very small doses for the best impact.**



## Instructor Bio

Andrea Franckowiak is an associate professor of English at Dyersburg State Community College and has worked at DSCC for twenty-six years. Andrea earned a Bachelor of Arts in English from the State University of New York at Geneseo College. She earned a Master of Arts in English from Clemson University. She teaches learning support writing, Composition I and II, World Literature, and the freshman seminar course, both on-ground and online. She is the chair of the English Department, Coordinator of Reading and the First Year Experience (freshman success course), and director of the Academic Success Centers, which offer tutoring services, review sessions, workshops, and study groups. She is also the coordinator for the Correctional Education Initiative Program; with this program, DSCC empowers incarcerated students to earn a degree. Andrea belongs to many organizations, including NCTE (National Council of Teachers of English), NOSS (National Organization for Student Success, formerly known as NADE) and TYCAT (Two-Year College English Association). Andrea is passionate about student success and the positive impact that well-developed courses and programs can have on students; more so, she loves being in the classroom. Andrea is an educator, a trainer, a course and curriculum designer, a program architect, and a presenter on a local, state, and national level.