

## OnCourse: A Suite of Course Level Supports to Increase First-Year GPA and Retention of Freshmen at The University of Texas at Tyler

### Abstract

Freshmen enter the university at times unprepared for the transition to college life, specifically the shift to more demanding coursework without the support system they have grown accustomed to in high school. While there are many variables that can help predict the academic and personal success of college students, the first-term and first-year GPA have been consistently shown as the best predictors of first-year retention and 4- and 6-year graduation. This proposal aims to positively impact the first-term and first-year GPA of freshman by providing a series of on-demand digital course-related support in the first-term and first-year classes and by supporting the faculty who teach those courses. The on-demand digital course related supports, *OnCourse*, will be created for the 35 most predictive courses that have historically been shown to impact student success. The *OnCourse* suite of course level supports will include on-demand video lectures from faculty, tutorials from faculty and peers, hints and tips for success from former students in those classes, and 24/7 access to course-specific tutoring services. In addition to the course level supports for students, a faculty development program will be implemented with a particular focus on cross-disciplinary professional development aimed at strengthening instructional practices and helping students utilize the Digital Success Toolkits, which will in turn improve students' academic performance and their persistence and engagement in learning. The University of Texas at Tyler is committed to creating an academic support system which focuses on *any-time, any-place, any-device* course-related support resources and enhanced teaching methods to provide every opportunity for our freshmen to build a successful foundation of their career during their first year in college, and ultimately fulfilling their dreams of attaining a degree.

